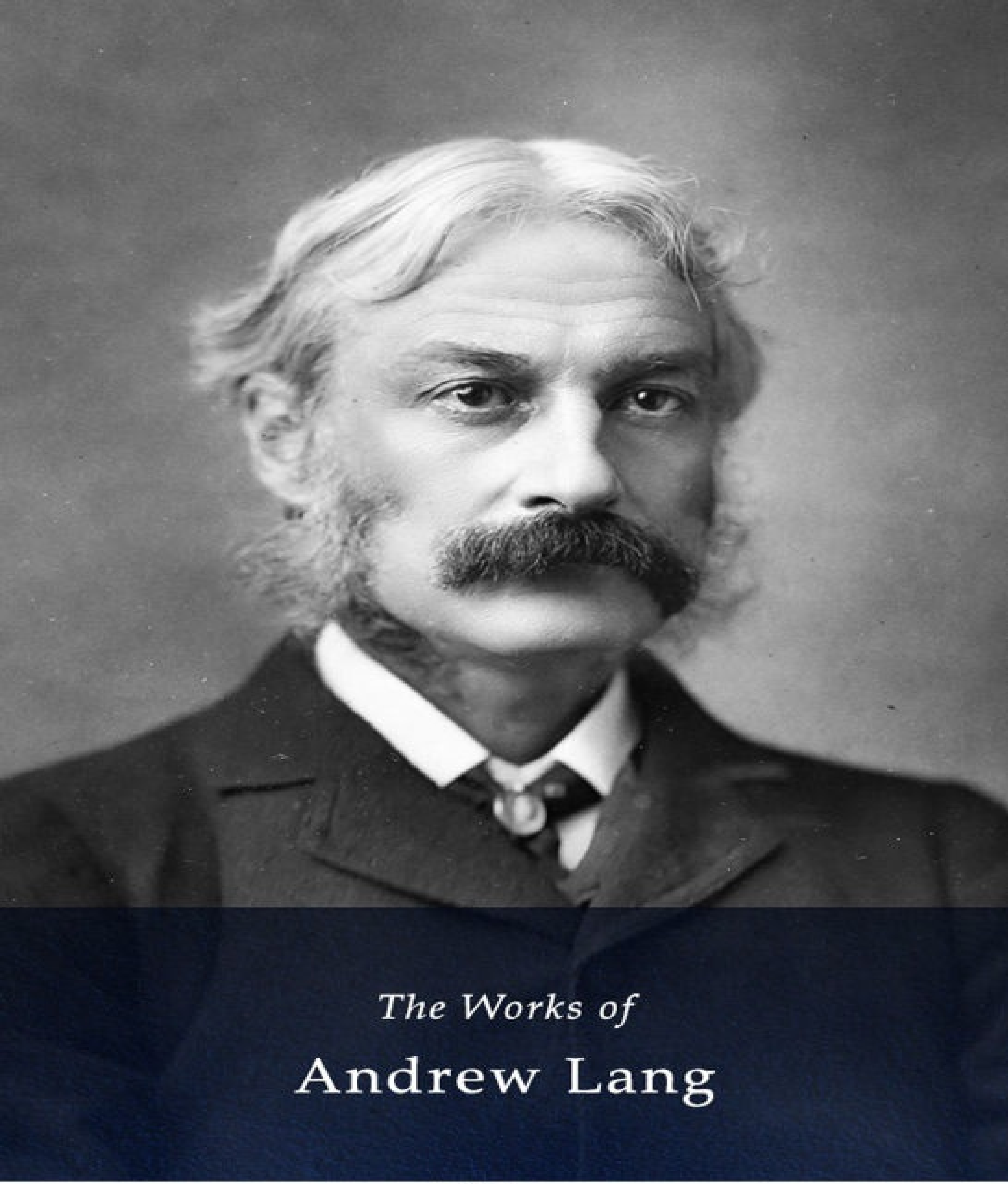

The Works of

Andrew Lang

DELPHI CLASSICS

Series Two

The Complete Works of

ANDREW LANG

(1844–1912)

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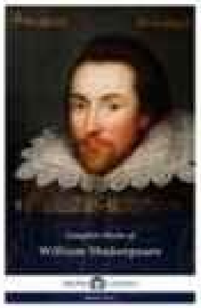

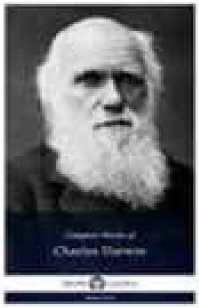
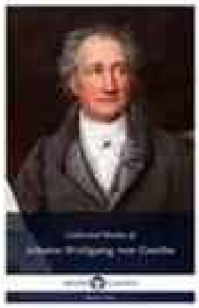

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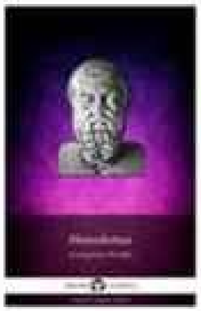
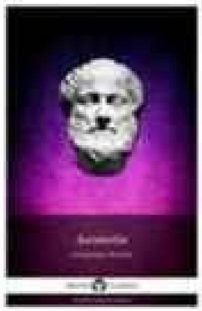
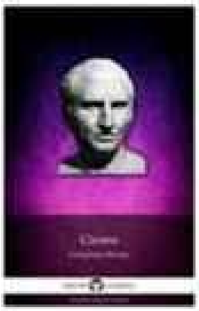

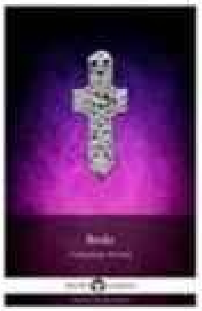

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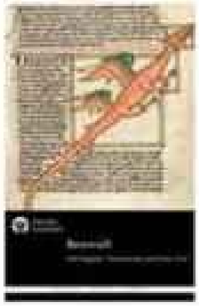
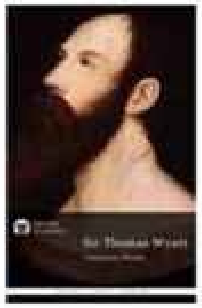
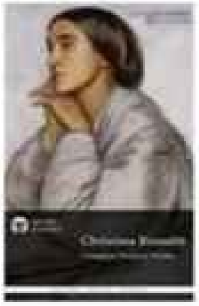

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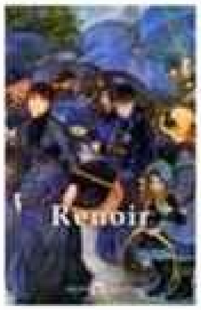

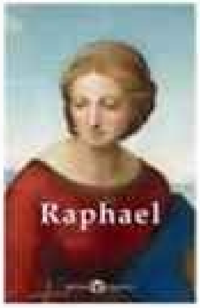

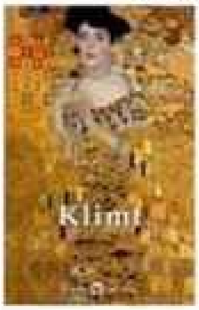

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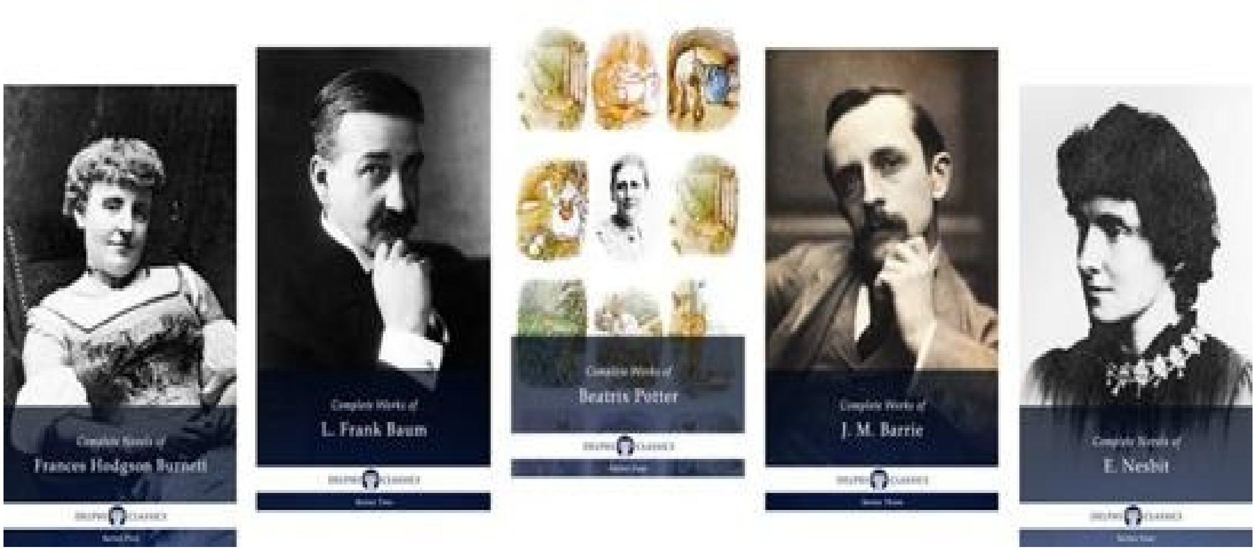
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The Fairy Books

Lang’s birthplace, Selkirk, Scottish Borders

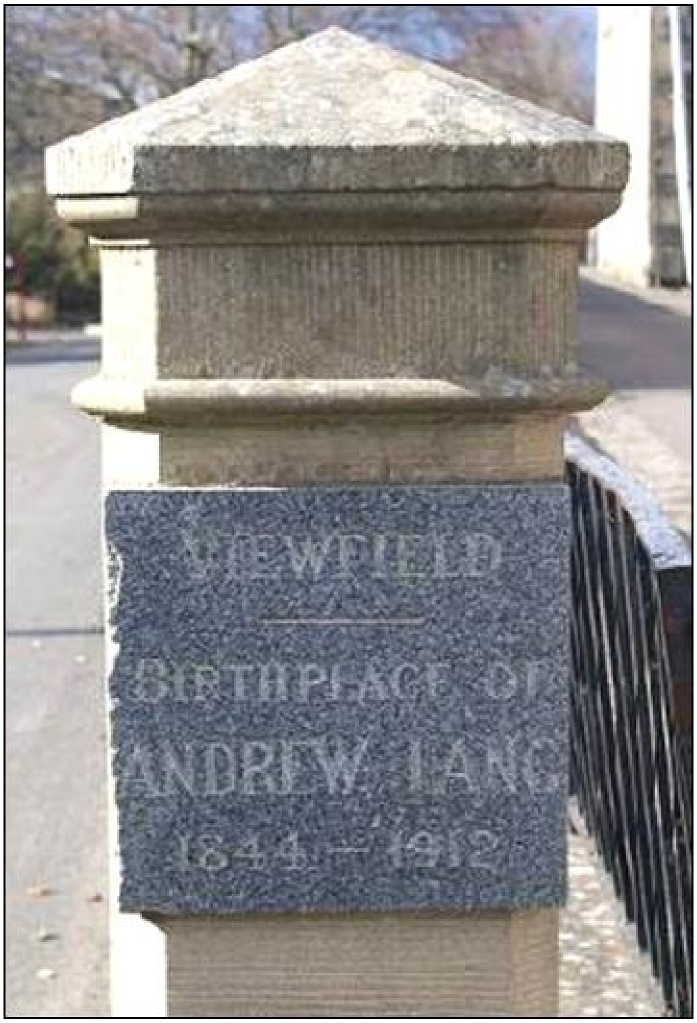
VIEWFIELD
BIRTHPLACE OF
ANDREW LANG
1844 – 1912

A plaque commemorating the birthplace

THE BLUE FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

This is the first volume of a series of twelve collections of fairy tales, published between 1889 and 1910. Altogether Lang collected 437 tales from a diverse range of cultures and sources, with many of the stories making their first appearance in English. As acknowledged in the prefaces, although Lang himself made most of the selections, his wife and other translators had a hand in a large amount of the retelling of the stories. Many of the fairy books were illustrated by Henry J. Ford, with Lancelot Speed and G. P. Jacomb-Hood also contributing.

Lang's life-long interest in folk and fairy tales of the English-Scottish border inspired him to collect and publish this series of stories. At the time of publication, such collections of English fairy-tales were rare and so they were to many critics a surprising success. Aided by Lang's reputation in folklore and by the attractive packaging of the volumes, the fairy-tale books were very popular and are now considered by many to be among the most influential works of children's literature at the time.

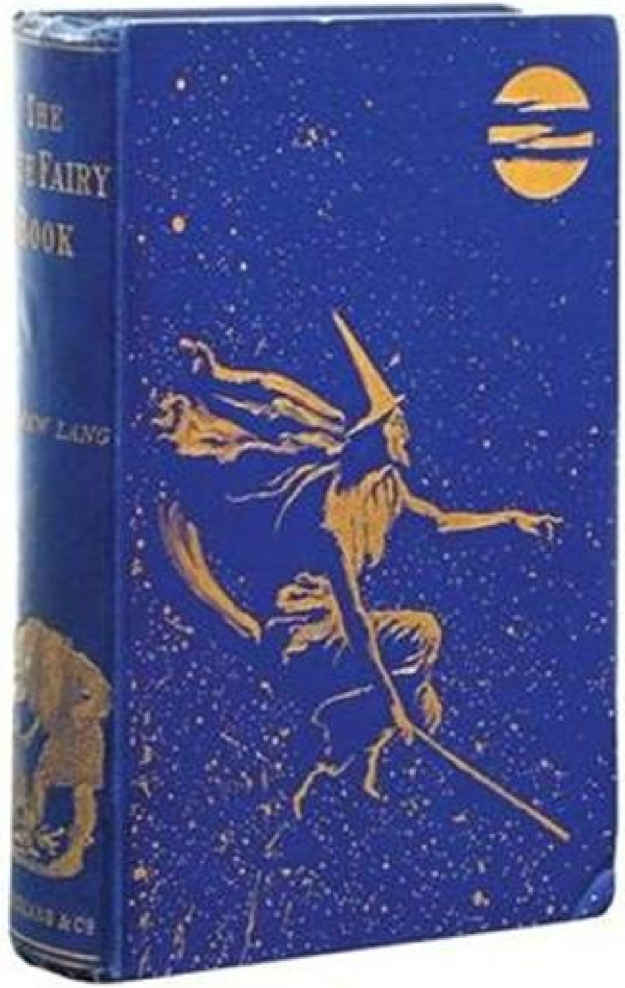
THE
FAIRY
BOOK
LANG
& Co

The first edition

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Lang as a young man

THE BLUE FAIRY BOOK

THE BRONZE RING

Once upon a time in a certain country there lived a king whose palace was surrounded by a spacious garden. But, though the gardeners were many and the soil was good, this garden yielded neither flowers nor fruits, not even grass or shady trees.

The King was in despair about it, when a wise old man said to him:

“Your gardeners do not understand their business: but what can you expect of men whose fathers were cobblers and carpenters? How should they have learned to cultivate your garden?”

“You are quite right,” cried the King.

“Therefore,” continued the old man, “you should send for a gardener whose father and grandfather have been gardeners before him, and very soon your garden will be full of green grass and gay flowers, and you will enjoy its delicious fruit.”

So the King sent messengers to every town, village, and hamlet in his dominions, to look for a gardener whose forefathers had been gardeners also, and after forty days one was found.

“Come with us and be gardener to the King,” they said to him.

“How can I go to the King,” said the gardener, “a poor wretch like me?”

“That is of no consequence,” they answered. “Here are new clothes for you and your family.”

“But I owe money to several people.”

“We will pay your debts,” they said.

So the gardener allowed himself to be persuaded, and went away with the messengers, taking his wife and his son with him; and the King, delighted to have found a real gardener, entrusted him with the care of his garden. The man found no difficulty in making the royal garden produce flowers and fruit, and at the end of a year the park was not like the same place, and the King showered gifts upon his new servant.

The gardener, as you have heard already, had a son, who was a very handsome young man, with most agreeable manners, and every day he carried the best fruit of the garden to the King, and all the prettiest flowers to his daughter. Now this princess was wonderfully pretty and was just sixteen years old, and the King was beginning to think it was time that she should be married.

“My dear child,” said he, “you are of an age to take a husband, therefore I am thinking of marrying you to the son of my prime minister.

"Father," replied the Princess, "I will never marry the son of the minister."

"Why not?" asked the King.

"Because I love the gardener's son," answered the Princess.

On hearing this the King was at first very angry, and then he wept and sighed, and declared that such a husband was not worthy of his daughter; but the young Princess was not to be turned from her resolution to marry the gardener's son.

Then the King consulted his ministers. "This is what you must do," they said. "To get rid of the gardener you must send both suitors to a very distant country, and the one who returns first shall marry your daughter."

The King followed this advice, and the minister's son was presented with a splendid horse and a purse full of gold pieces, while the gardener's son had only an old lame horse and a purse full of copper money, and every one thought he would never come back from his journey.

The day before they started the Princess met her lover and said to him:

"Be brave, and remember always that I love you. Take this purse full of jewels and make the best use you can of them for love of me, and come back quickly and demand my hand."

The two suitors left the town together, but the minister's son went off at a gallop on his good horse, and very soon was lost to sight behind the most distant hills. He traveled on for some days, and presently reached a fountain beside which an old woman all in rags sat upon a stone.

"Good-day to you, young traveler," said she.

But the minister's son made no reply.

"Have pity upon me, traveler," she said again. "I am dying of hunger, as you see, and three days have I been here and no one has given me anything."

"Let me alone, old witch," cried the young man; "I can do nothing for you," and so saying he went on his way.

That same evening the gardener's son rode up to the fountain upon his lame gray horse.

"Good-day to you, young traveler," said the beggar-woman.

"Good-day, good woman," answered he.

"Young traveler, have pity upon me."

"Take my purse, good woman," said he, "and mount behind me, for your legs can't be very strong."

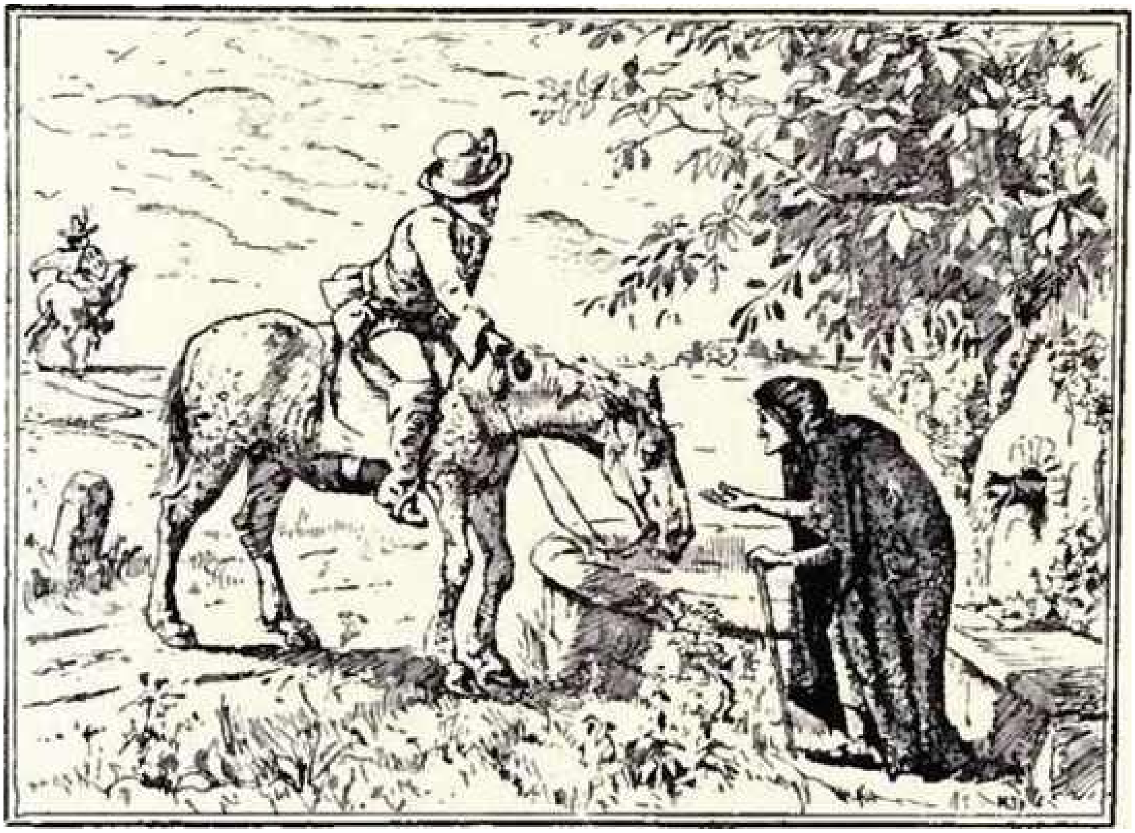

The old woman didn't wait to be asked twice, but mounted behind him, and in this style they reached the chief city of a powerful kingdom. The minister's son was lodged in a grand inn, the gardener's son and the old woman dismounted at the inn for beggars.

The next day the gardener's son heard a great noise in the street, and the King's heralds passed, blowing all kinds of instruments, and crying:

"The King, our master, is old and infirm. He will give a great reward to whoever will cure him and give him back the strength of his youth."

Then the old beggar-woman said to her benefactor:

"This is what you must do to obtain the reward which the King promises. Go out of the town by the south gate, and there you will find three little dogs of different colors; the first will be white, the second black, the third red. You must kill them and then burn them separately, and gather up the ashes. Put the ashes of each dog into a bag of its own color, then go before the door of the palace and cry out, 'A celebrated physician has come from Janina in Albania. He alone can cure the King and give him back the strength of his youth.' The King's physicians will say, This is an impostor, and not a learned man,' and they will make all sorts of difficulties, but you will overcome them all at last, and will present yourself before the sick King. You must then demand as much wood as three mules can carry, and a great cauldron, and must shut yourself up in a room with the Sultan, and when the cauldron boils you must throw him into it, and there leave him until his flesh is completely separated from his bones. Then arrange the bones in their proper places, and throw over them the ashes out of the three bags. The King will come back to life, and will be just as he was when he was twenty years old. For your reward you must demand the bronze ring which has the power to grant you everything you desire. Go, my son, and do not forget any of my instructions.”

The young man followed the old beggar-woman’s directions. On going out of the town he found the white, red, and black dogs, and killed and burnt them, gathering the ashes in three bags. Then he ran to the palace and cried:

“A celebrated physician has just come from Janina in Albania. He alone can cure the King and give him back the strength of his youth.”

The King’s physicians at first laughed at the unknown wayfarer, but the Sultan ordered that the stranger should be admitted. They brought the cauldron and the loads of wood, and very soon the King was boiling away. Toward mid-day the gardener’s son arranged the bones in their places, and he had hardly scattered the ashes over them before the old King revived, to find himself once more young and hearty.

“How can I reward you, my benefactor?” he cried. “Will you take half my treasures?”

“No,” said the gardener’s son.

“My daughter’s hand?”

“*No*.”

“Take half my kingdom.”

“No. Give me only the bronze ring which can instantly grant me anything I wish for.”

“Alas!” said the King, “I set great store by that marvelous ring; nevertheless, you shall have it.” And he gave it to him.

The gardener’s son went back to say good-by to the old beggar-woman; then he said to the bronze ring:

“Prepare a splendid ship in which I may continue my journey. Let the hull be of fine gold, the masts of silver, the sails of brocade; let the crew consist of twelve young men of noble appearance, dressed like kings. St. Nicholas will be at the helm. As to the cargo, let it be diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and carbuncles.”

And immediately a ship appeared upon the sea which resembled in every particular the description given by the gardener’s son, and, stepping on board, he continued his journey. Presently he arrived at a great town and established himself in a wonderful palace. After several days he met his rival, the minister’s son, who had spent all his money and was reduced to the disagreeable employment of a carrier of dust and rubbish. The gardener’s son said to him:

“What is your name, what is your family, and from what country do you come?”

“I am the son of the prime minister of a great nation, and yet see what a degrading occupation I am reduced to.”

“Listen to me; though I don’t know anything more about you, I am willing to help you. I will give you a ship to take you back to your own country upon one condition.”

“Whatever it may be, I accept it willingly.”

“Follow me to my palace.”

The minister’s son followed the rich stranger, whom he had not recognized. When they reached the palace the gardener’s son made a sign to his slaves, who completely undressed the new-comer.

“Make this ring red-hot,” commanded the master, “and mark the man with it upon his back.”

The slaves obeyed him.

“Now, young man,” said the rich stranger, “I am going to give you a vessel which will take you back to your own country.”

And, going out, he took the bronze ring and said:

“Bronze ring, obey thy master. Prepare me a ship of which the half-rotten timbers shall be painted black, let the sails be in rags, and the sailors infirm and sickly. One shall have lost a leg, another an arm, the third shall be a hunchback, another lame or club-footed or blind, and most of them shall be ugly and covered with scars. Go, and let my orders be executed.”

The minister’s son embarked in this old vessel, and thanks to favorable winds, at length reached his own country. In spite of the pitiable condition in which he returned they received him joyfully.

“I am the first to come back,” said he to the King; now fulfil your promise, and give me the princess in marriage.

So they at once began to prepare for the wedding festivities. As to the poor princess, she was sorrowful and angry enough about it.

The next morning, at daybreak, a wonderful ship with every sail set came to anchor before the town. The King happened at that moment to be at the palace window.

“What strange ship is this,” he cried, “that has a golden hull, silver masts, and silken sails, and who are the young men like princes who man it? And do I not see St. Nicholas at the helm? Go at once and invite the captain of the ship to come to the palace.”

His servants obeyed him, and very soon in came an enchantingly handsome young prince, dressed in rich silk, ornamented with pearls and diamonds.

“Young man,” said the King, “you are welcome, whoever you may be. Do me the favor to be my guest as long as you remain in my capital.”

“Many thanks, sire,” replied the captain, “I accept your offer.”

“My daughter is about to be married,” said the King; “will you give her away?”

“I shall be charmed, sire.”

Soon after came the Princess and her betrothed.

“Why, how is this?” cried the young captain; “would you marry this charming princess to such a man as that?”

“But he is my prime minister’s son!”

“What does that matter? I cannot give your daughter away. The man she is betrothed to is one of my servants.”

“Your servant?”

“Without doubt. I met him in a distant town reduced to carrying away dust and rubbish from the houses. I had pity on him and engaged him as one of my servants.”

“It is impossible!” cried the King.

“Do you wish me to prove what I say? This young man returned in a vessel which I fitted out for him, an unseaworthy ship with a black battered hull, and the sailors were infirm and crippled.”

“It is quite true,” said the King.

“It is false,” cried the minister’s son. “I do not know this man!”

“Sire,” said the young captain, “order your daughter’s betrothed to be stripped, and see if the mark of my ring is not branded upon his back.”

The King was about to give this order, when the minister’s son, to save himself from such an indignity, admitted that the story was true.

“And now, sire,” said the young captain, “do you not recognize me?”

“I recognize you,” said the Princess; “you are the gardener’s son whom I have always loved, and it is you I wish to marry.”

“Young man, you shall be my son-in-law,” cried the King. “The marriage festivities are already begun, so you shall marry my daughter this very day.”

And so that very day the gardener’s son married the beautiful Princess.

Several months passed. The young couple were as happy as the day was long, and the King was more and more pleased with himself for having secured such a son-in-law.

But, presently, the captain of the golden ship found it necessary to take a long voyage, and after embracing his wife tenderly he embarked.

Now in the outskirts of the capital there lived an old man, who had spent his life in studying black arts — alchemy, astrology, magic, and enchantment. This man found out that the gardener's son had only succeeded in marrying the Princess by the help of the genii who obeyed the bronze ring.

"I will have that ring," said he to himself. So he went down to the sea-shore and caught some little red fishes. Really, they were quite wonderfully pretty. Then he came back, and, passing before the Princess's window, he began to cry out:

"Who wants some pretty little red fishes?"

The Princess heard him, and sent out one of her slaves, who said to the old peddler:

"What will you take for your fish?"

"A bronze ring."

"A bronze ring, old simpleton! And where shall I find one?"

"Under the cushion in the Princess's room."

The slave went back to her mistress.

"The old madman will take neither gold nor silver," said she.

"What does he want then?"

"A bronze ring that is hidden under a cushion."

"Find the ring and give it to him," said the Princess.

And at last the slave found the bronze ring, which the captain of the golden ship had accidentally left behind and carried it to the man, who made off with it instantly.

Hardly had he reached his own house when, taking the ring, he said, "Bronze ring, obey thy master. I desire that the golden ship shall turn to black wood, and the crew to hideous negroes; that St. Nicholas shall leave the helm and that the only cargo shall be black cats."

And the genii of the bronze ring obeyed him.

Finding himself upon the sea in this miserable condition, the young captain understood that some one must have stolen the bronze ring from him, and he lamented his misfortune loudly; but that did him no good.

"Alas!" he said to himself, "whoever has taken my ring has probably taken my dear wife also. What good will it do me to go back to my own country?" And he sailed about from island to island, and from shore to shore, believing that wherever he went everybody was laughing at him, and very soon his poverty was so great that he and his crew and the poor black cats had nothing to eat but herbs and roots. After wandering about a long time he reached an island inhabited by mice. The captain landed upon the shore and began to explore the country. There were mice everywhere, and nothing but mice. Some of the black cats had followed him, and, not having been fed for several days, they were fearfully hungry, and made terrible havoc among the mice.

Then the queen of the mice held a council.

“These cats will eat every one of us,” she said, “if the captain of the ship does not shut the ferocious animals up. Let us send a deputation to him of the bravest among us.”

Several mice offered themselves for this mission and set out to find the young captain.

“Captain,” said they, “go away quickly from our island, or we shall perish, every mouse of us.”

“Willingly,” replied the young captain, “upon one condition. That is that you shall first bring me back a bronze ring which some clever magician has stolen from me. If you do not do this I will land all my cats upon your island, and you shall be exterminated.”

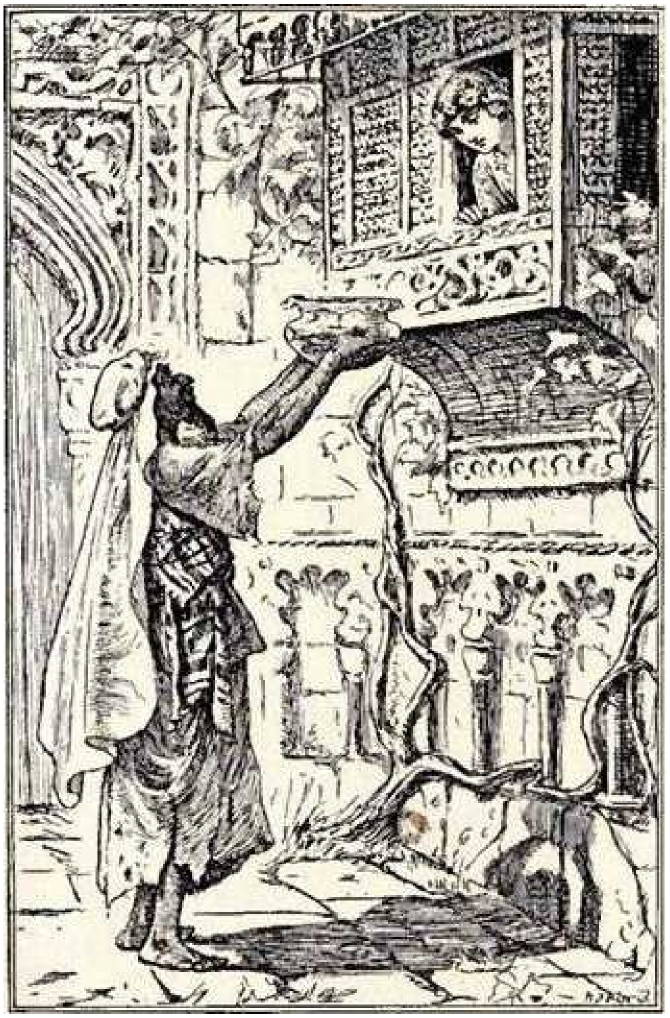

The mice withdrew in great dismay. “What is to be done?” said the Queen. “How can we find this bronze ring?” She held a new council, calling in mice from every quarter of the globe, but nobody knew where the bronze ring was. Suddenly three mice arrived from a very distant country. One was blind, the second lame, and the third had her ears cropped.

“Ho, ho, ho!” said the new-comers. “We come from a far distant country.”

“Do you know where the bronze ring is which the genii obey?”

“Ho, ho, ho! we know; an old sorcerer has taken possession of it, and now he keeps it in his pocket by day and in his mouth by night.”

“Go and take it from him, and come back as soon as possible.”

So the three mice made themselves a boat and set sail for the magician’s country. When they reached the capital they landed and ran to the palace, leaving only the blind mouse on the shore to take care of the boat. Then they waited till it was night. The wicked old man lay down in bed and put the bronze ring into his mouth, and very soon he was asleep.

“Now, what shall we do?” said the two little animals to each other.

The mouse with the cropped ears found a lamp full of oil and a bottle full of pepper. So she dipped her tail first in the oil and then in the pepper, and held it to the sorcerer’s nose.

“Atisha! atisha!” sneezed the old man, but he did not wake, and the shock made the bronze ring jump out of his mouth. Quick as thought the lame mouse snatched up the precious talisman and carried it off to the boat.

Imagine the despair of the magician when he awoke and the bronze ring was nowhere to be found!

But by that time our three mice had set sail with their prize. A favoring breeze was carrying them toward the island where the queen of the mice was awaiting them. Naturally they began to talk about the bronze ring.

“Which of us deserves the most credit?” they cried all at once.

“I do,” said the blind mouse, “for without my watchfulness our boat would have drifted away to the open sea.”

“No, indeed,” cried the mouse with the cropped ears; “the credit is mine. Did I not cause the ring to jump out of the man’s mouth?”

“No, it is mine,” cried the lame one, “for I ran off with the ring.”

And from high words they soon came to blows, and, alas! when the quarrel was fiercest the bronze ring fell into the sea.

“How are we to face our queen,” said the three mice “when by our folly we have lost the talisman and condemned our people to be utterly exterminated? We cannot go back to our country; let us land on this desert island and there end our miserable lives.” No sooner said than done. The boat reached the island, and the mice landed.

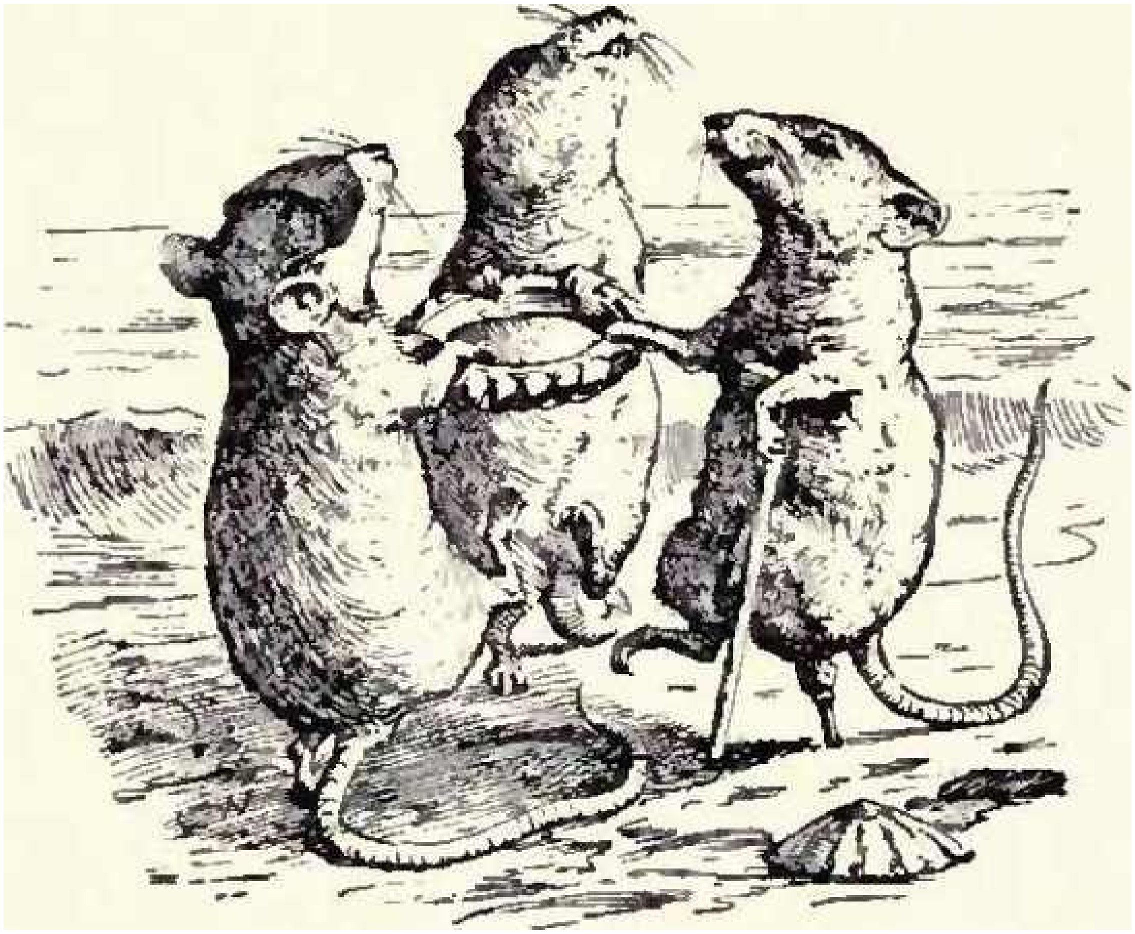

The blind mouse was speedily deserted by her two sisters, who went off to hunt flies, but as she wandered sadly along the shore she found a dead fish, and was eating it, when she felt something very hard. At her cries the other two mice ran up.

“It is the bronze ring! It is the talisman!” they cried joyfully, and, getting into their boat again, they soon reached the mouse island. It was time they did, for the captain was just going to land his cargo of cats, when a deputation of mice brought him the precious bronze ring.

“Bronze ring,” commanded the young man, “obey thy master. Let my ship appear as it was before.”

Immediately the genii of the ring set to work, and the old black vessel became once more the wonderful golden ship with sails of brocade; the handsome sailors ran to the silver masts and the silken ropes, and very soon they set sail for the capital.

Ah! how merrily the sailors sang as they flew over the glassy sea!

At last the port was reached.

The captain landed and ran to the palace, where he found the wicked old man asleep. The Princess clasped her husband in a long embrace. The magician tried to escape, but he was seized and bound with strong cords.

The next day the sorcerer, tied to the tail of a savage mule loaded with nuts, was broken into as many pieces as there were nuts upon the mule's back.(1)

(1) Traditions Populaires de l'Asie Mineure. Carnoy et Nicolaides. Paris: Maisonneuve, 1889.

PRINCE HYACINTH AND THE DEAR LITTLE PRINCESS

Once upon a time there lived a king who was deeply in love with a princess, but she could not marry anyone, because she was under an enchantment. So the King set out to seek a fairy, and asked what he could do to win the Princess's love. The Fairy said to him:

"You know that the Princess has a great cat which she is very fond of. Whoever is clever enough to tread on that cat's tail is the man she is destined to marry."

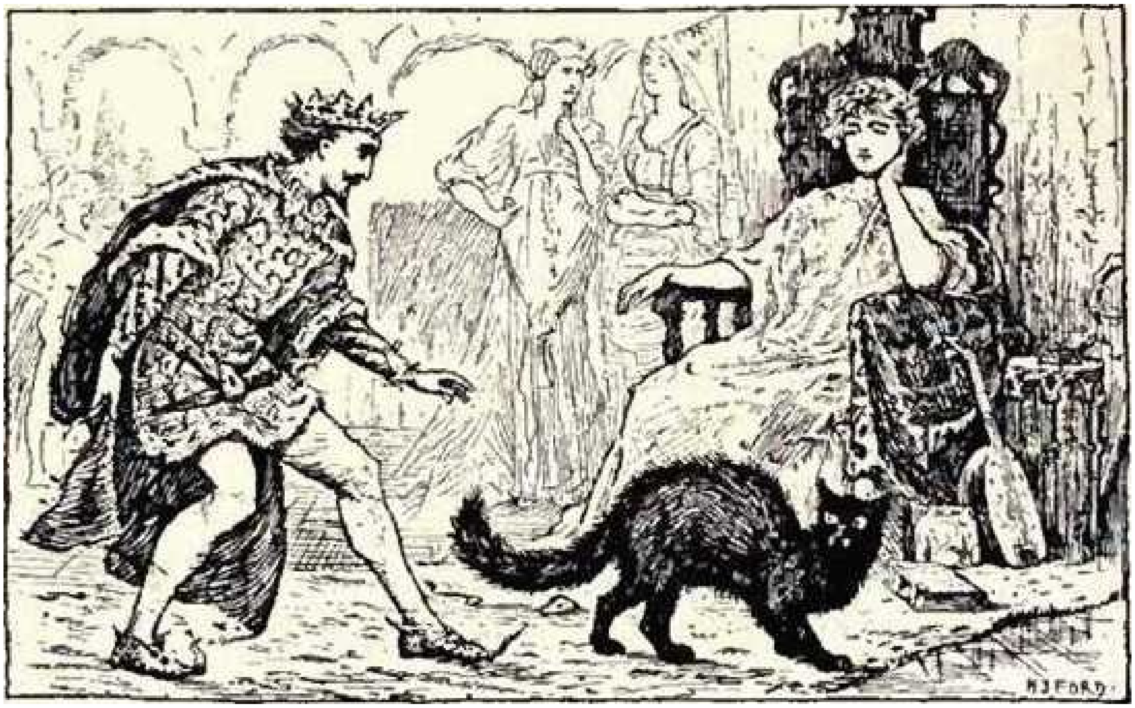

The King said to himself that this would not be very difficult, and he left the Fairy, determined to grind the cat's tail to powder rather than not tread on it at all.

You may imagine that it was not long before he went to see the Princess, and puss, as usual, marched in before him, arching his back. The King took a long step, and quite thought he had the tail under his foot, but the cat turned round so sharply that he only trod on air. And so it went on for eight days, till the King began to think that this fatal tail must be full of quicksilver — it was never still for a moment.

At last, however, he was lucky enough to come upon puss fast asleep and with his tail conveniently spread out. So the King, without losing a moment, set his foot upon it heavily.

With one terrific yell the cat sprang up and instantly changed into a tall man, who, fixing his angry eyes upon the King, said:

“You shall marry the Princess because you have been able to break the enchantment, but I will have my revenge. You shall have a son, who will never be happy until he finds out that his nose is too long, and if you ever tell anyone what I have just said to you, you shall vanish away instantly, and no one shall ever see you or hear of you again.”

Though the King was horribly afraid of the enchanter, he could not help laughing at this threat.

“If my son has such a long nose as that,” he said to himself, “he must always see it or feel it; at least, if he is not blind or without hands.”

But, as the enchanter had vanished, he did not waste any more time in thinking, but went to seek the Princess, who very soon consented to marry him. But after all, they had not been married very long when the King died, and the Queen had nothing left to care for but her little son, who was called Hyacinth. The little Prince had large blue eyes, the prettiest eyes in the world, and a sweet little mouth, but, alas! his nose was so enormous that it covered half his face. The Queen was inconsolable when she saw this great nose, but her ladies assured her that it was not really as large as it looked; that it was a Roman nose, and you had only to open any history to see that every hero has a large nose. The Queen, who was devoted to her baby, was pleased with what they told her, and when she looked at Hyacinth again, his nose certainly did not seem to her *quite* so large.

The Prince was brought up with great care; and, as soon as he could speak, they told him all sorts of dreadful stories about people who had short noses. No one was allowed to come near him whose nose did not more or less resemble his own, and the courtiers, to get into favor with the Queen, took to pulling their babies’ noses several times every day to make them grow long. But, do what they would, they were nothing by comparison with the Prince’s.

When he grew sensible he learned history; and whenever any great prince or beautiful princess was spoken of, his teachers took care to tell him that they had long noses.

His room was hung with pictures, all of people with very large noses; and the Prince grew up so convinced that a long nose was a great beauty, that he would not on any account have had his own a single inch shorter!

When his twentieth birthday was passed the Queen thought it was time that he should be married, so she commanded that the portraits of several princesses should be brought for him to see, and among the others was a picture of the Dear Little Princess!

Now, she was the daughter of a great king, and would some day possess several kingdoms herself; but Prince Hyacinth had not a thought to spare for anything of that sort, he was so much struck with her beauty. The Princess, whom he thought quite charming, had, however, a little saucy nose, which, in her face, was the prettiest thing possible, but it was a cause of great embarrassment to the courtiers, who had got into such a habit of laughing at little noses that they sometimes found themselves laughing at hers before they had time to think; but this did not do at all before the Prince, who quite failed to see the joke, and actually banished two of his courtiers who had dared to mention disrespectfully the Dear Little Princess's tiny nose!

The others, taking warning from this, learned to think twice before they spoke, and one even went so far as to tell the Prince that, though it was quite true that no man could be worth anything unless he had a long nose, still, a woman's beauty was a different thing; and he knew a learned man who understood Greek and had read in some old manuscripts that the beautiful Cleopatra herself had a "tip-tilted" nose!

The Prince made him a splendid present as a reward for this good news, and at once sent ambassadors to ask the Dear Little Princess in marriage. The King, her father, gave his consent; and Prince Hyacinth, who, in his anxiety to see the Princess, had gone three leagues to meet her was just advancing to kiss her hand when, to the horror of all who stood by, the enchanter appeared as suddenly as a flash of lightning, and, snatching up the Dear Little Princess, whirled her away out of their sight!

The Prince was left quite unconsolable, and declared that nothing should induce him to go back to his kingdom until he had found her again, and refusing to allow any of his courtiers to follow him, he mounted his horse and rode sadly away, letting the animal choose his own path.

So it happened that he came presently to a great plain, across which he rode all day long without seeing a single house, and horse and rider were terribly hungry, when, as the night fell, the Prince caught sight of a light, which seemed to shine from a cavern.

He rode up to it, and saw a little old woman, who appeared to be at least a hundred years old.

She put on her spectacles to look at Prince Hyacinth, but it was quite a long time before she could fix them securely because her nose was so very short.

The Prince and the Fairy (for that was who she was) had no sooner looked at one another than they went into fits of laughter, and cried at the same moment, “Oh, what a funny nose!”

“Not so funny as your own,” said Prince Hyacinth to the Fairy; “but, madam, I beg you to leave the consideration of our noses — such as they are — and to be good enough to give me something to eat, for I am starving, and so is my poor horse.”

“With all my heart,” said the Fairy. “Though your nose is so ridiculous you are, nevertheless, the son of my best friend. I loved your father as if he had been my brother. Now *he* had a very handsome nose!”

“And pray what does mine lack?” said the Prince.

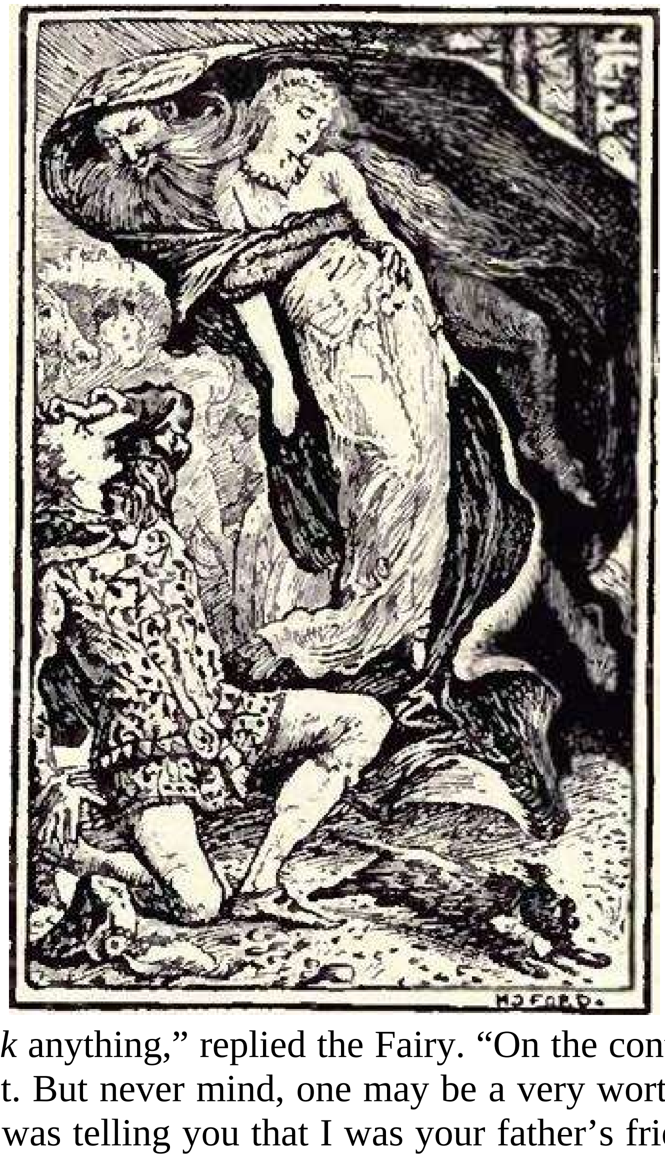

“Oh! it doesn’t *lack* anything,” replied the Fairy. “On the contrary quite, there is only too much of it. But never mind, one may be a very worthy man though his nose is too long. I was telling you that I was your father’s friend; he often came to see me in the old times, and you must know that I was very pretty in those days; at least, he used to say so. I should like to tell you of a conversation we had the last time I ever saw him.”

“Indeed,” said the Prince, “when I have supped it will give me the greatest pleasure to hear it; but consider, madam, I beg of you, that I have had nothing to eat to-day.”

“The poor boy is right,” said the Fairy; “I was forgetting. Come in, then, and I will give you some supper, and while you are eating I can tell you my story in a very few words — for I don’t like endless tales myself. Too long a tongue is worse than too long a nose, and I remember when I was young that I was so much admired for not being a great chatterer. They used to tell the Queen, my mother, that it was so. For though you see what I am now, I was the daughter of a great king. My father — —”

“Your father, I dare say, got something to eat when he was hungry!” interrupted the Prince.

“Oh! certainly,” answered the Fairy, “and you also shall have supper directly. I only just wanted to tell you — —”

“But I really cannot listen to anything until I have had something to eat,” cried the Prince, who was getting quite angry; but then, remembering that he had better be polite as he much needed the Fairy’s help, he added:

“I know that in the pleasure of listening to you I should quite forget my own hunger; but my horse, who cannot hear you, must really be fed!”

The Fairy was very much flattered by this compliment, and said, calling to her servants:

“You shall not wait another minute, you are so polite, and in spite of the enormous size of your nose you are really very agreeable.”

“Plague take the old lady! How she does go on about my nose!” said the Prince to himself. “One would almost think that mine had taken all the extra length that hers lacks! If I were not so hungry I would soon have done with this chatterpie who thinks she talks very little! How stupid people are not to see their own faults! That comes of being a princess: she has been spoiled by flatterers, who have made her believe that she is quite a moderate talker!”

Meanwhile the servants were putting the supper on the table, and the prince was much amused to hear the Fairy who asked them a thousand questions simply for the pleasure of hearing herself speak; especially he noticed one maid who, no matter what was being said, always contrived to praise her mistress’s wisdom.

“Well!” he thought, as he ate his supper, “I’m very glad I came here. This just shows me how sensible I have been in never listening to flatterers. People of that sort praise us to our faces without shame, and hide our faults or change them into virtues. For my part I never will be taken in by them. I know my own defects, I hope.”

Poor Prince Hyacinth! He really believed what he said, and hadn’t an idea that the people who had praised his nose were laughing at him, just as the Fairy’s maid was laughing at her; for the Prince had seen her laugh slyly when she could do so without the Fairy’s noticing her.

However, he said nothing, and presently, when his hunger began to be appeased, the Fairy said:

“My dear Prince, might I beg you to move a little more that way, for your nose casts such a shadow that I really cannot see what I have on my plate. Ah! thanks. Now let us speak of your father. When I went to his Court he was only a little boy, but that is forty years ago, and I have been in this desolate place ever since. Tell me what goes on nowadays; are the ladies as fond of amusement as ever? In my time one saw them at parties, theatres, balls, and promenades every day. Dear me! *what* a long nose you have! I cannot get used to it!”

“Really, madam,” said the Prince, “I wish you would leave off mentioning my nose. It cannot matter to you what it is like. I am quite satisfied with it, and have no wish to have it shorter. One must take what is given one.”

“Now you are angry with me, my poor Hyacinth,” said the Fairy, “and I assure you that I didn’t mean to vex you; on the contrary, I wished to do you a service. However, though I really cannot help your nose being a shock to me, I will try not to say anything about it. I will even try to think that you have an ordinary nose. To tell the truth, it would make three reasonable ones.”

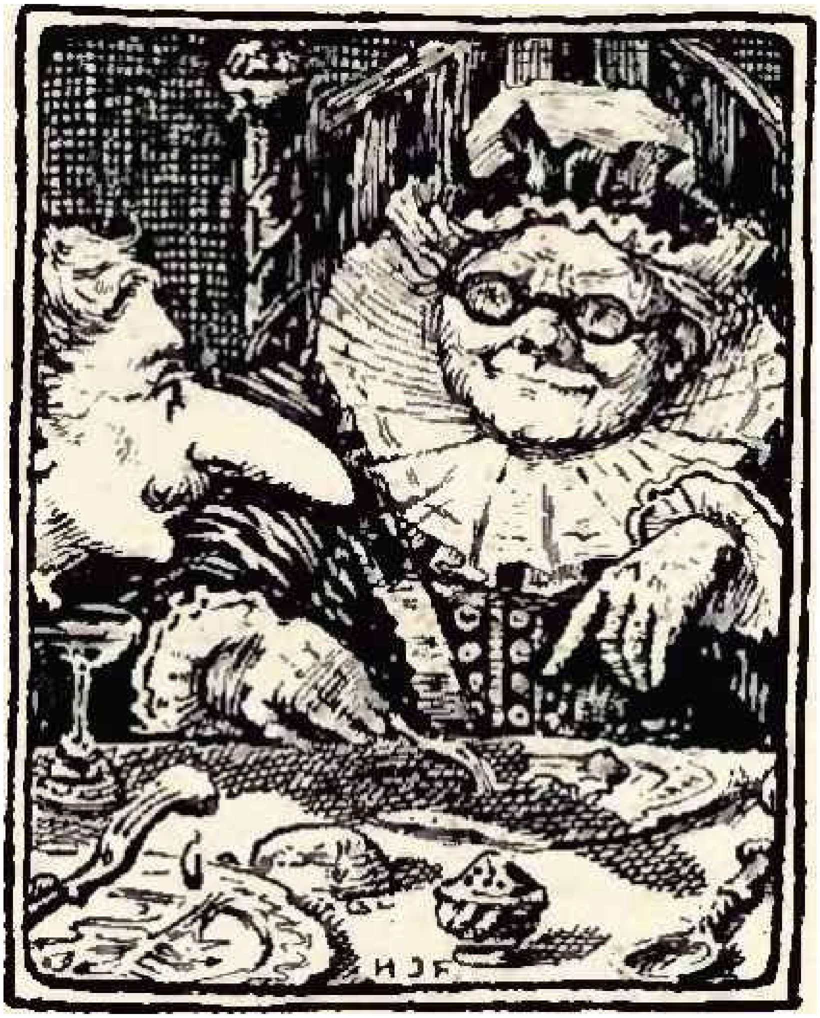

The Prince, who was no longer hungry, grew so impatient at the Fairy's continual remarks about his nose that at last he threw himself upon his horse and rode hastily away. But wherever he came in his journeyings he thought the people were mad, for they all talked of his nose, and yet he could not bring himself to admit that it was too long, he had been so used all his life to hear it called handsome.

The old Fairy, who wished to make him happy, at last hit upon a plan. She shut the Dear Little Princess up in a palace of crystal, and put this palace down where the Prince would not fail to find it. His joy at seeing the Princess again was extreme, and he set to work with all his might to try to break her prison; but in spite of all his efforts he failed utterly. In despair he thought at least that he would try to get near enough to speak to the Dear Little Princess, who, on her part, stretched out her hand that he might kiss it; but turn which way he might, he never could raise it to his lips, for his long nose always prevented it. For the first time he realized how long it really was, and exclaimed:

"Well, it must be admitted that my nose *is* too long!"

In an instant the crystal prison flew into a thousand splinters, and the old Fairy, taking the Dear Little Princess by the hand, said to the Prince:

"Now, say if you are not very much obliged to me. Much good it was for me to talk to you about your nose! You would never have found out how extraordinary it was if it hadn't hindered you from doing what you wanted to. You see how self-love keeps us from knowing our own defects of mind and body. Our reason tries in vain to show them to us; we refuse to see them till we find them in the way of our interests."

Prince Hyacinth, whose nose was now just like anyone's else, did not fail to profit by the lesson he had received. He married the Dear Little Princess, and they lived happily ever after.(1)

(1) Le Prince Desir et la Princesse Mignonne. Par Madame Leprince de Beaumont.

EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON

Once upon a time there was a poor husbandman who had many children and little to give them in the way either of food or clothing. They were all pretty, but the prettiest of all was the youngest daughter, who was so beautiful that there were no bounds to her beauty.

So once — it was late on a Thursday evening in autumn, and wild weather outside, terribly dark, and raining so heavily and blowing so hard that the walls of the cottage shook again — they were all sitting together by the fireside, each of them busy with something or other, when suddenly some one rapped three times against the window-pane. The man went out to see what could be the matter, and when he got out there stood a great big white bear.

“Good-evening to you,” said the White Bear.

“Good-evening,” said the man.

“Will you give me your youngest daughter?” said the White Bear; “if you will, you shall be as rich as you are now poor.”

Truly the man would have had no objection to be rich, but he thought to himself: “I must first ask my daughter about this,” so he went in and told them that there was a great white bear outside who had faithfully promised to make them all rich if he might but have the youngest daughter.

She said no, and would not hear of it; so the man went out again, and settled with the White Bear that he should come again next Thursday evening, and get her answer. Then the man persuaded her, and talked so much to her about the wealth that they would have, and what a good thing it would be for herself, that at last she made up her mind to go, and washed and mended all her rags, made herself as smart as she could, and held herself in readiness to set out. Little enough had she to take away with her.

Next Thursday evening the White Bear came to fetch her. She seated herself on his back with her bundle, and thus they departed. When they had gone a great part of the way, the White Bear said: “Are you afraid?”

“No, that I am not,” said she.

“Keep tight hold of my fur, and then there is no danger,” said he.

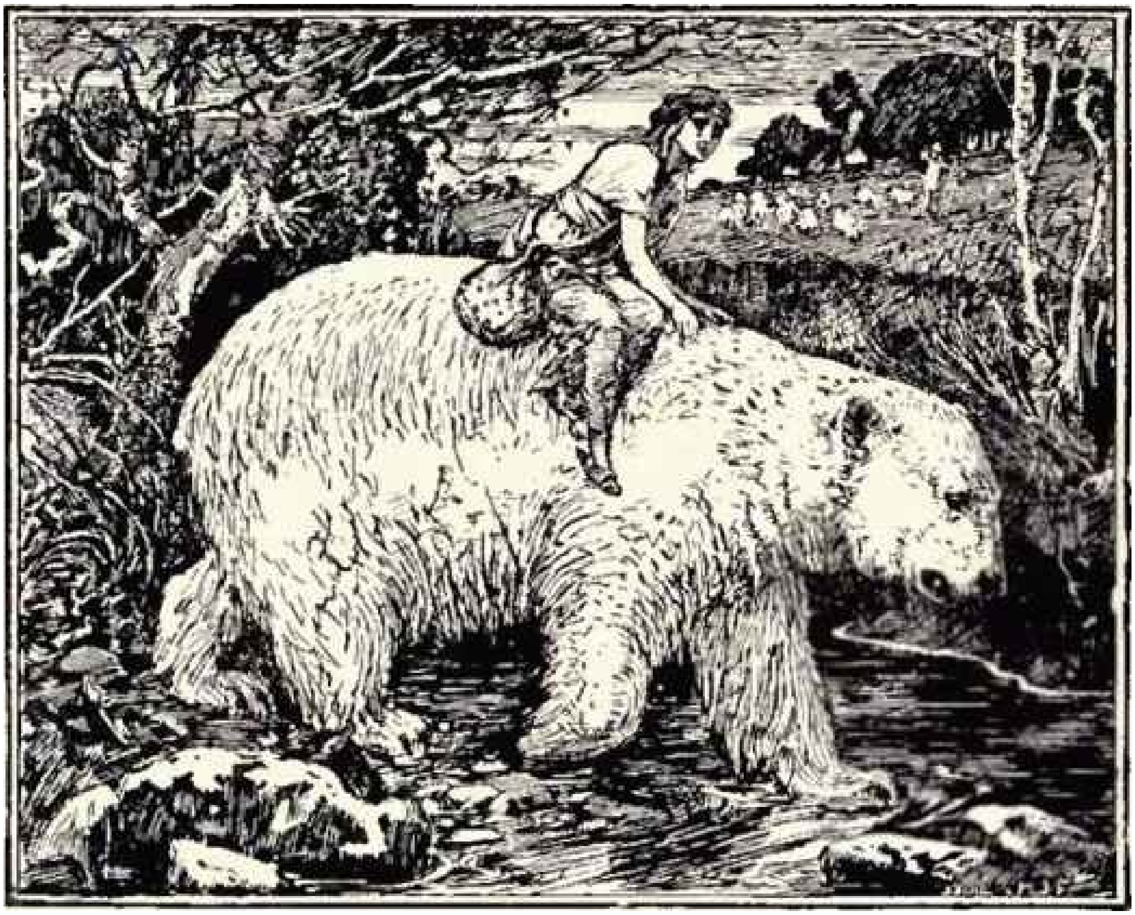

And thus she rode far, far away, until they came to a great mountain. Then the White Bear knocked on it, and a door opened, and they went into a castle where there were many brilliantly lighted rooms which shone with gold and silver, likewise a large hall in which there was a well-spread table, and it was so magnificent that it would be hard to make anyone understand how splendid it was. The White Bear gave her a silver bell, and told her that when she needed anything she had but to ring this bell, and what she wanted would appear. So after she had eaten, and night was drawing near, she grew sleepy after her journey, and thought she would like to go to bed. She rang the bell, and scarcely had she touched it before she found herself in a chamber where a bed stood ready made for her, which was as pretty as anyone could wish to sleep in. It had pillows of silk, and curtains of silk fringed with gold, and everything that was in the room was of gold or silver, but when she had lain down and put out the light a man came and lay down beside her, and behold it was the White Bear, who cast off the form of a beast during the night. She never saw him, however, for he always came after she had put out her light, and went away before daylight appeared.

So all went well and happily for a time, but then she began to be very sad and sorrowful, for all day long she had to go about alone; and she did so wish to go home to her father and mother and brothers and sisters. Then the White Bear asked what it was that she wanted, and she told him that it was so dull there in the mountain, and that she had to go about all alone, and that in her parents' house at home there were all her brothers and sisters, and it was because she could not go to them that she was so sorrowful.

"There might be a cure for that," said the White Bear, "if you would but promise me never to talk with your mother alone, but only when the others are there too; for she will take hold of your hand," he said, "and will want to lead you into a room to talk with you alone; but that you must by no means do, or you will bring great misery on both of us."

So one Sunday the White Bear came and said that they could now set out to see her father and mother, and they journeyed thither, she sitting on his back, and they went a long, long way, and it took a long, long time; but at last they came to a large white farmhouse, and her brothers and sisters were running about outside it, playing, and it was so pretty that it was a pleasure to look at it.

"Your parents dwell here now," said the White Bear; "but do not forget what I said to you, or you will do much harm both to yourself and me."

"No, indeed," said she, "I shall never forget;" and as soon as she was at home the White Bear turned round and went back again.

There were such rejoicings when she went in to her parents that it seemed as if they would never come to an end. Everyone thought that he could never be sufficiently grateful to her for all she had done for them all. Now they had everything that they wanted, and everything was as good as it could be. They all asked her how she was getting on where she was. All was well with her too, she said; and she had everything that she could want. What other answers she gave I cannot say, but I am pretty sure that they did not learn much from her. But in the afternoon, after they had dined at midday, all happened just as the White Bear had said. Her mother wanted to talk with her alone in her own chamber. But she remembered what the White Bear had said, and would on no account go. "What we have to say can be said at any time," she answered. But somehow or other her mother at last persuaded her, and she was forced to tell the whole story. So she told how every night a man came and lay down beside her when the lights were all put out, and how she never saw him, because he always went away before it grew light in the morning, and how she continually went about in sadness, thinking how happy she would be if she could but see him, and how all day long she had to go about alone, and it was so dull and solitary. "Oh!" cried the mother, in horror, "you are very likely sleeping with a troll! But I will teach you a way to see him. You shall have a bit of one of my candles, which you can take away with you hidden in your breast. Look at him with that when he is asleep, but take care not to let any tallow drop upon him."

So she took the candle, and hid it in her breast, and when evening drew near the White Bear came to fetch her away. When they had gone some distance on their way, the White Bear asked her if everything had not happened just as he had foretold, and she could not but own that it had. "Then, if you have done what your mother wished," said he, "you have brought great misery on both of us." "No," she said, "I have not done anything at all." So when she had reached home and had gone to bed it was just the same as it had been before, and a man came and lay down beside her, and late at night, when she could hear that he was sleeping, she got up and kindled a light, lit her candle, let her light shine on him, and saw him, and he was the handsomest prince that eyes had ever beheld, and she loved him so much that it seemed to her that she must die if she did not kiss him that very moment. So she did kiss him; but while she was doing it she let three drops of hot tallow fall upon his shirt, and he awoke. "What have you done now?" said he; "you have brought misery on both of us. If you had but held out for the space of one year I should have been free. I have a stepmother who has bewitched me so that I am a white bear by day and a man by night; but now all is at an end between you and me, and I must leave you, and go to her. She lives in a castle which lies east of the sun and west of the moon, and there too is a princess with a nose which is three ells long, and she now is the one whom I must marry."

She wept and lamented, but all in vain, for go he must. Then she asked him if she could not go with him. But no, that could not be. "Can you tell me the way then, and I will seek you — that I may surely be allowed to do!"

"Yes, you may do that," said he; "but there is no way thither. It lies east of the sun and west of the moon, and never would you find your way there."

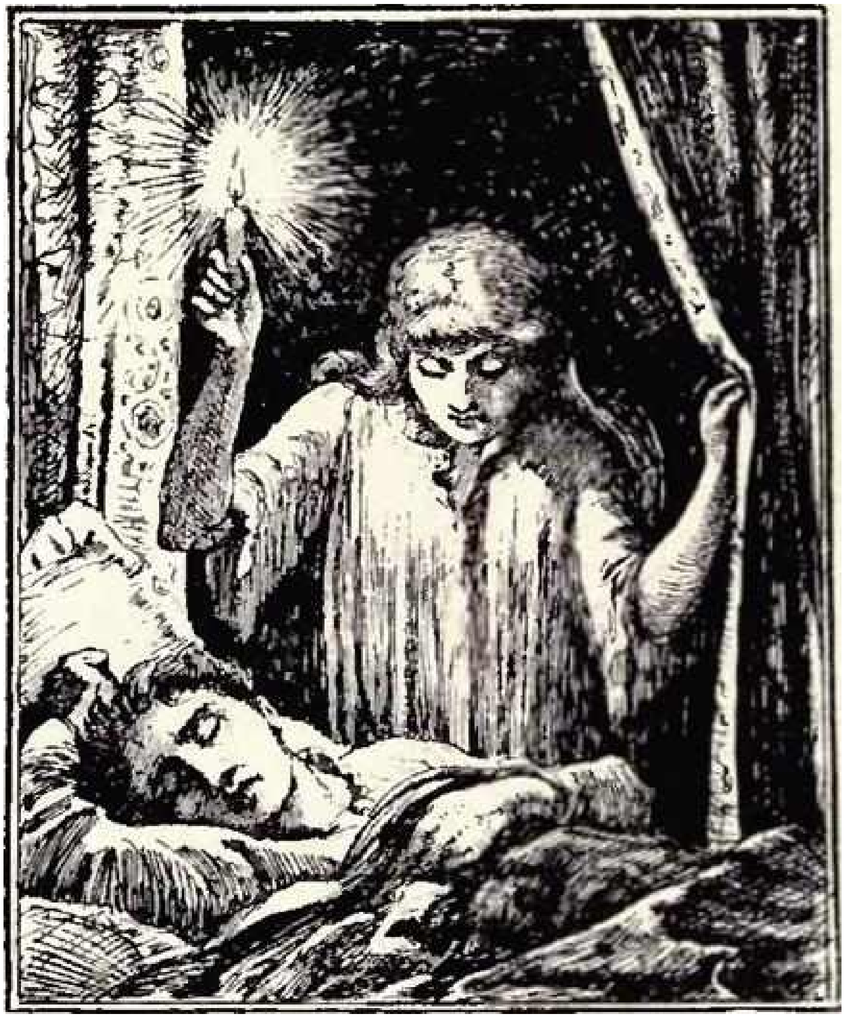

When she awoke in the morning both the Prince and the castle were gone, and she was lying on a small green patch in the midst of a dark, thick wood. By her side lay the self-same bundle of rags which she had brought with her from her own home. So when she had rubbed the sleep out of her eyes, and wept till she was weary, she set out on her way, and thus she walked for many and many a long day, until at last she came to a great mountain. Outside it an aged woman was sitting, playing with a golden apple. The girl asked her if she knew the way to the Prince who lived with his stepmother in the castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon, and who was to marry a princess with a nose which was three ells long. “How do you happen to know about him?” inquired the old woman; “maybe you are she who ought to have had him.” “Yes, indeed, I am,” she said. “So it is you, then?” said the old woman; “I know nothing about him but that he dwells in a castle which is east of the sun and west of the moon. You will be a long time in getting to it, if ever you get to it at all; but you shall have the loan of my horse, and then you can ride on it to an old woman who is a neighbor of mine: perhaps she can tell you about him. When you have got there you must just strike the horse beneath the left ear and bid it go home again; but you may take the golden apple with you.”

So the girl seated herself on the horse, and rode for a long, long way, and at last she came to the mountain, where an aged woman was sitting outside with a gold carding-comb. The girl asked her if she knew the way to the castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon; but she said what the first old woman had said: “I know nothing about it, but that it is east of the sun and west of the moon, and that you will be a long time in getting to it, if ever you get there at all; but you shall have the loan of my horse to an old woman who lives the nearest to me: perhaps she may know where the castle is, and when you have got to her you may just strike the horse beneath the left ear and bid it go home again.” Then she gave her the gold carding-comb, for it might, perhaps, be of use to her, she said.

So the girl seated herself on the horse, and rode a wearisome long way onward again, and after a very long time she came to a great mountain, where an aged woman was sitting, spinning at a golden spinning-wheel. Of this woman, too, she inquired if she knew the way to the Prince, and where to find the castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon. But it was only the same thing once again. “Maybe it was you who should have had the Prince,” said the old woman. “Yes, indeed, I should have been the one,” said the girl. But this old crone knew the way no better than the others — it was east of the sun and west of the moon, she knew that, “and you will be a long time in getting to it, if ever you get to it at all,” she said; “but you may have the loan of my horse, and I think you had better ride to the East Wind, and ask him: perhaps he may know where the castle is, and will blow you thither. But when you have got to him you must just strike the horse beneath the left ear, and he will come home again.” And then she gave her the golden spinning-wheel, saying: “Perhaps you may find that you have a use for it.”

The girl had to ride for a great many days, and for a long and wearisome time, before she got there; but at last she did arrive, and then she asked the East Wind if he could tell her the way to the Prince who dwelt east of the sun and west of the moon. “Well,” said the East Wind, “I have heard tell of the Prince, and of his castle, but I do not know the way to it, for I have never blown so far; but, if you like, I will go with you to my brother the West Wind: he may know that, for he is much stronger than I am. You may sit on my back, and then I can carry you there.” So she seated herself on his back, and they did go so swiftly! When they got there, the East Wind went in and said that the girl whom he had brought was the one who ought to have had the Prince up at the castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon, and that now she was traveling about to find him again, so he had come there with her, and would like to hear if the West Wind knew whereabout the castle was. “No,” said the West Wind; “so far as that have I never blown; but if you like I will go with you to the South Wind, for he is much stronger than either of us, and he has roamed far and wide, and perhaps he can tell you what you want to know. You may seat yourself on my back, and then I will carry you to him.”.

So she did this, and journeyed to the South Wind, neither was she very long on the way. When they had got there, the West Wind asked him if he could tell her the way to the castle that lay east of the sun and west of the moon, for she was the girl who ought to marry the Prince who lived there. “Oh, indeed!” said the South Wind, “is that she? Well,” said he, “I have wandered about a great deal in my time, and in all kinds of places, but I have never blown so far as that. If you like, however, I will go with you to my brother, the North Wind; he is the oldest and strongest of all of us, and if he does not know where it is no one in the whole world will be able to tell you. You may sit upon my back, and then I will carry you there.” So she seated herself on his back, and off he went from his house in great haste, and they were not long on the way. When they came near the North Wind’s dwelling, he was so wild and frantic that they felt cold gusts a long while before they got there. “What do you want?” he roared out from afar, and they froze as they heard. Said the South Wind: “It is I, and this is she who should have had the Prince who lives in the castle which lies east of the sun and west of the moon. And now she wishes to ask you if you have ever been there, and can tell her the way, for she would gladly find him again.”

“Yes,” said the North Wind, “I know where it is. I once blew an aspen leaf there, but I was so tired that for many days afterward I was not able to blow at all. However, if you really are anxious to go there, and are not afraid to go with me, I will take you on my back, and try if I can blow you there.”

“Get there I must,” said she; “and if there is any way of going I will; and I have no fear, no matter how fast you go.”

“Very well then,” said the North Wind; “but you must sleep here to-night, for if we are ever to get there we must have the day before us.”

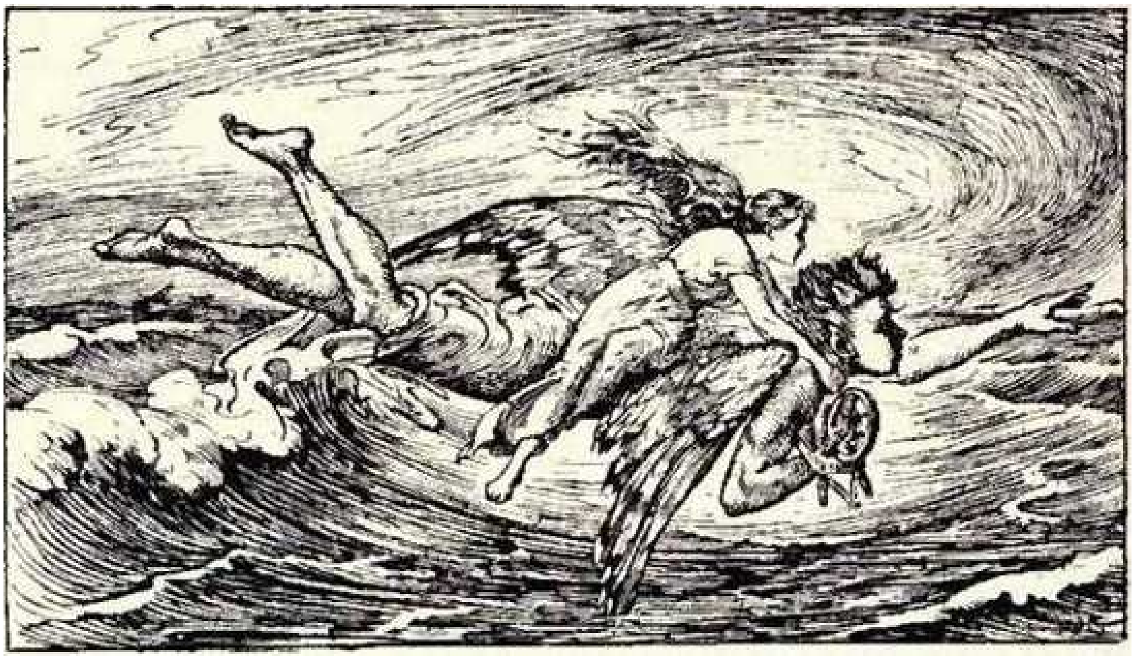

The North Wind woke her betimes next morning, and puffed himself up, and made himself so big and so strong that it was frightful to see him, and away they went, high up through the air, as if they would not stop until they had reached the very end of the world. Down below there was such a storm! It blew down woods and houses, and when they were above the sea the ships were wrecked by hundreds. And thus they tore on and on, and a long time went by, and then yet more time passed, and still they were above the sea, and the North Wind grew tired, and more tired, and at last so utterly weary that he was scarcely able to blow any longer, and he sank and sank, lower and lower, until at last he went so low that the waves dashed against the heels of the poor girl he was carrying. "Art thou afraid?" said the North Wind. "I have no fear," said she; and it was true. But they were not very, very far from land, and there was just enough strength left in the North Wind to enable him to throw her on to the shore, immediately under the windows of a castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon; but then he was so weary and worn out that he was forced to rest for several days before he could go to his own home again.

Next morning she sat down beneath the walls of the castle to play with the golden apple, and the first person she saw was the maiden with the long nose, who was to have the Prince. "How much do you want for that gold apple of yours, girl?" said she, opening the window. "It can't be bought either for gold or money," answered the girl. "If it cannot be bought either for gold or money, what will buy it? You may say what you please," said the Princess.

"Well, if I may go to the Prince who is here, and be with him to-night, you shall have it," said the girl who had come with the North Wind. "You may do that," said the Princess, for she had made up her mind what she would do. So the Princess got the golden apple, but when the girl went up to the Prince's apartment that night he was asleep, for the Princess had so contrived it. The poor girl called to him, and shook him, and between whiles she wept; but she could not wake him. In the morning, as soon as day dawned, in came the Princess with the long nose, and drove her out again. In the daytime she sat down once more beneath the windows of the castle, and began to card with her golden carding-comb; and then all happened as it had happened before. The Princess asked her what she wanted for it, and she replied that it was not for sale, either for gold or money, but that if she could get leave to go to the Prince, and be with him during the night, she should have it. But when she went up to the Prince's room he was again asleep, and, let her call him, or shake him, or weep as she would, he still slept on, and she could not put any life in him. When daylight came in the morning, the Princess with the long nose came too, and once more drove her away. When day had quite come, the girl seated herself under the castle windows, to spin with her golden spinning-wheel, and the Princess with the long nose wanted to have that also. So she opened the window, and asked what she would take for it. The girl said what she had said on each of the former occasions — that it was not for sale either for gold or for money, but if she could get leave to go to the Prince who lived there, and be with him during the night, she should have it.

"Yes," said the Princess, "I will gladly consent to that."

But in that place there were some Christian folk who had been carried off, and they had been sitting in the chamber which was next to that of the Prince, and had heard how a woman had been in there who had wept and called on him two nights running, and they told the Prince of this. So that evening, when the Princess came once more with her sleeping-drink, he pretended to drink, but threw it away behind him, for he suspected that it was a sleeping-drink. So, when the girl went into the Prince's room this time he was awake, and she had to tell him how she had come there. "You have come just in time," said the Prince, "for I should have been married to-morrow; but I will not have the long-nosed Princess, and you alone can save me. I will say that I want to see what my bride can do, and bid her wash the shirt which has the three drops of tallow on it. This she will consent to do, for she does not know that it is you who let them fall on it; but no one can wash them out but one born of Christian folk: it cannot be done by one of a pack of trolls; and then I will say that no one shall ever be my bride but the woman who can do this, and I know that you can." There was great joy and gladness between them all that night, but the next day, when the wedding was to take place, the Prince said, "I must see what my bride can do."

"That you may do," said the stepmother.

"I have a fine shirt which I want to wear as my wedding shirt, but three drops of tallow have got upon it which I want to have washed off, and I have vowed to marry no one but the woman who is able to do it. If she cannot do that, she is not worth having."

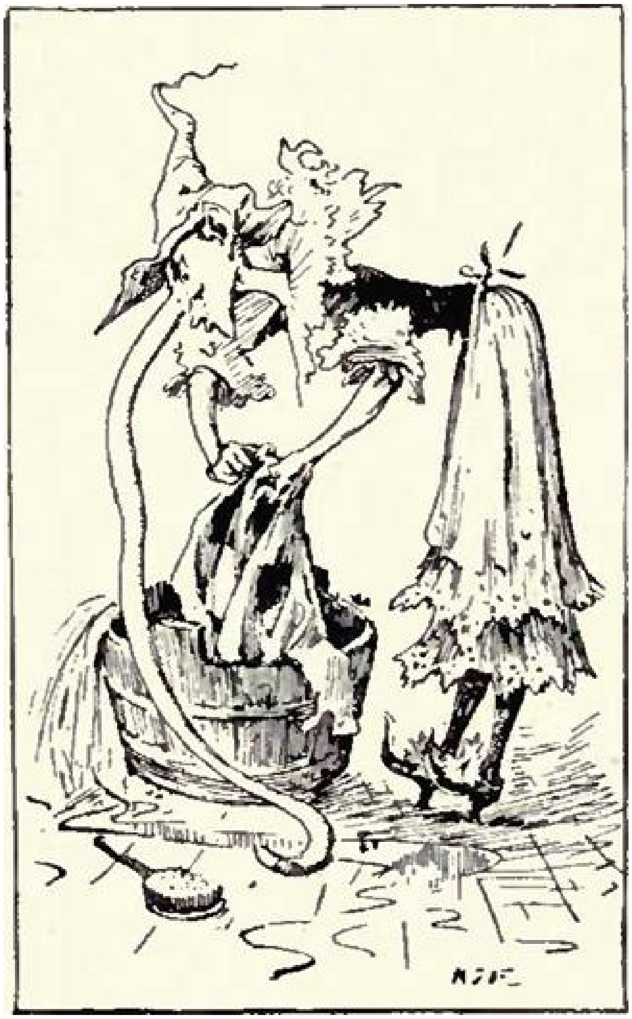

Well, that was a very small matter, they thought, and agreed to do it. The Princess with the long nose began to wash as well as she could, but, the more she washed and rubbed, the larger the spots grew. "Ah! you can't wash at all," said the old troll-hag, who was her mother. "Give it to me." But she too had not had the shirt very long in her hands before it looked worse still, and, the more she washed it and rubbed it, the larger and blacker grew the spots.

So the other trolls had to come and wash, but, the more they did, the blacker and uglier grew the shirt, until at length it was as black as if it had been up the chimney. "Oh," cried the Prince, "not one of you is good for anything at all!

There is a beggar-girl sitting outside the window, and I'll be bound that she can wash better than any of you! Come in, you girl there!" he cried. So she came in. "Can you wash this shirt clean?" he cried. "Oh! I don't know," she said; "but I will try." And no sooner had she taken the shirt and dipped it in the water than it was white as driven snow, and even whiter than that. "I will marry you," said the Prince.

Then the old troll-hag flew into such a rage that she burst, and the Princess with the long nose and all the little trolls must have burst too, for they have never been heard of since. The Prince and his bride set free all the Christian folk who were imprisoned there, and took away with them all the gold and silver that they could carry, and moved far away from the castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon.(1)

(1) Asbjornsen and Moe.

THE YELLOW DWARF

Once upon a time there lived a queen who had been the mother of a great many children, and of them all only one daughter was left. But then *she* was worth at least a thousand.

Her mother, who, since the death of the King, her father, had nothing in the world she cared for so much as this little Princess, was so terribly afraid of losing her that she quite spoiled her, and never tried to correct any of her faults. The consequence was that this little person, who was as pretty as possible, and was one day to wear a crown, grew up so proud and so much in love with her own beauty that she despised everyone else in the world.

The Queen, her mother, by her caresses and flatteries, helped to make her believe that there was nothing too good for her. She was dressed almost always in the prettiest frocks, as a fairy, or as a queen going out to hunt, and the ladies of the Court followed her dressed as forest fairies.

And to make her more vain than ever the Queen caused her portrait to be taken by the cleverest painters and sent it to several neighboring kings with whom she was very friendly.

When they saw this portrait they fell in love with the Princess — every one of them, but upon each it had a different effect. One fell ill, one went quite crazy, and a few of the luckiest set off to see her as soon as possible, but these poor princes became her slaves the moment they set eyes on her.

Never has there been a gayer Court. Twenty delightful kings did everything they could think of to make themselves agreeable, and after having spent ever so much money in giving a single entertainment thought themselves very lucky if the Princess said “That’s pretty.”

All this admiration vastly pleased the Queen. Not a day passed but she received seven or eight thousand sonnets, and as many elegies, madrigals, and songs, which were sent her by all the poets in the world. All the prose and the poetry that was written just then was about Bellissima — for that was the Princess’s name — and all the bonfires that they had were made of these verses, which crackled and sparkled better than any other sort of wood.

Bellissima was already fifteen years old, and every one of the Princes wished to marry her, but not one dared to say so. How could they when they knew that any of them might have cut off his head five or six times a day just to please her, and she would have thought it a mere trifle, so little did she care? You may imagine how hard-hearted her lovers thought her; and the Queen, who wished to see her married, did not know how to persuade her to think of it seriously.

"Bellissima," she said, "I do wish you would not be so proud. What makes you despise all these nice kings? I wish you to marry one of them, and you do not try to please me."

"I am so happy," Bellissima answered: "do leave me in peace, madam. I don't want to care for anyone."

"But you would be very happy with any of these Princes," said the Queen, "and I shall be very angry if you fall in love with anyone who is not worthy of you."

But the Princess thought so much of herself that she did not consider any one of her lovers clever or handsome enough for her; and her mother, who was getting really angry at her determination not to be married, began to wish that she had not allowed her to have her own way so much.

At last, not knowing what else to do, she resolved to consult a certain witch who was called "The Fairy of the Desert." Now this was very difficult to do, as she was guarded by some terrible lions; but happily the Queen had heard a long time before that whoever wanted to pass these lions safely must throw to them a cake made of millet flour, sugar-candy, and crocodile's eggs. This cake she prepared with her own hands, and putting it in a little basket, she set out to seek the Fairy. But as she was not used to walking far, she soon felt very tired and sat down at the foot of a tree to rest, and presently fell fast asleep. When she awoke she was dismayed to find her basket empty. The cake was all gone! and, to make matters worse, at that moment she heard the roaring of the great lions, who had found out that she was near and were coming to look for her.

"What shall I do?" she cried; "I shall be eaten up," and being too frightened to run a single step, she began to cry, and leaned against the tree under which she had been asleep.

Just then she heard some one say: "H'm, h'm!"

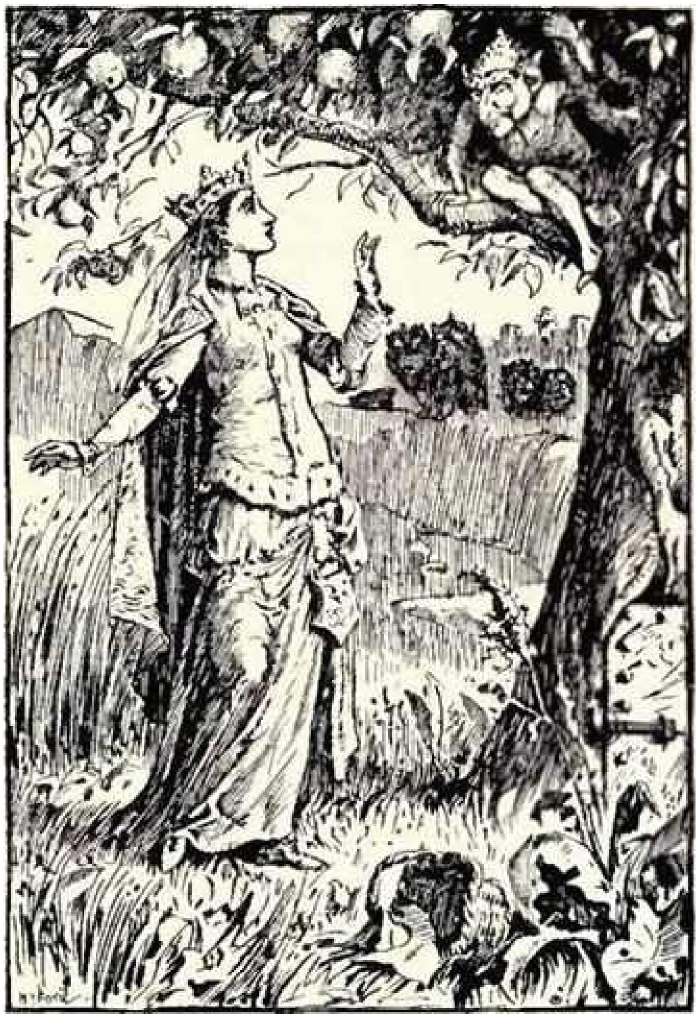

She looked all round her, and then up the tree, and there she saw a little tiny man, who was eating oranges.

“Oh! Queen,” said he, “I know you very well, and I know how much afraid you are of the lions; and you are quite right too, for they have eaten many other people: and what can you expect, as you have not any cake to give them?”

“I must make up my mind to die,” said the poor Queen. “Alas! I should not care so much if only my dear daughter were married.”

“Oh! you have a daughter,” cried the Yellow Dwarf (who was so called because he *was* a dwarf and had such a yellow face, and lived in the orange tree). “I’m really glad to hear that, for I’ve been looking for a wife all over the world. Now, if you will promise that she shall marry me, not one of the lions, tigers, or bears shall touch you.”

The Queen looked at him and was almost as much afraid of his ugly little face as she had been of the lions before, so that she could not speak a word.

“What! you hesitate, madam,” cried the Dwarf. “You must be very fond of being eaten up alive.”

And, as he spoke, the Queen saw the lions, which were running down a hill toward them.

Each one had two heads, eight feet, and four rows of teeth, and their skins were as hard as turtle shells, and were bright red.

At this dreadful sight, the poor Queen, who was trembling like a dove when it sees a hawk, cried out as loud as she could, “Oh! dear Mr. Dwarf, Bellissima shall marry you.”

“Oh, indeed!” said he disdainfully. “Bellissima is pretty enough, but I don’t particularly want to marry her — you can keep her.”

“Oh! noble sir,” said the Queen in great distress, “do not refuse her. She is the most charming Princess in the world.”

“Oh! well,” he replied, “out of charity I will take her; but be sure and don’t forget that she is mine.”

As he spoke a little door opened in the trunk of the orange tree, in rushed the Queen, only just in time, and the door shut with a bang in the faces of the lions.

The Queen was so confused that at first she did not notice another little door in the orange tree, but presently it opened and she found herself in a field of thistles and nettles. It was encircled by a muddy ditch, and a little further on was a tiny thatched cottage, out of which came the Yellow Dwarf with a very jaunty air. He wore wooden shoes and a little yellow coat, and as he had no hair and very long ears he looked altogether a shocking little object.

“I am delighted,” said he to the Queen, “that, as you are to be my mother-in-law, you should see the little house in which your Bellissima will live with me. With these thistles and nettles she can feed a donkey which she can ride whenever she likes; under this humble roof no weather can hurt her; she will drink the water of this brook and eat frogs — which grow very fat about here; and then she will have me always with her, handsome, agreeable, and gay as you see me now. For if her shadow stays by her more closely than I do I shall be surprised.”

The unhappy Queen, seeing all at once what a miserable life her daughter would have with this Dwarf could not bear the idea, and fell down insensible without saying a word.

When she revived she found to her great surprise that she was lying in her own bed at home, and, what was more, that she had on the loveliest lace night cap that she had ever seen in her life. At first she thought that all her adventures, the terrible lions, and her promise to the Yellow Dwarf that he should marry Bellissima, must have been a dream, but there was the new cap with its beautiful ribbon and lace to remind her that it was all true, which made her so unhappy that she could neither eat, drink, nor sleep for thinking of it.

The Princess, who, in spite of her wilfulness, really loved her mother with all her heart, was much grieved when she saw her looking so sad, and often asked her what was the matter; but the Queen, who didn't want her to find out the truth, only said that she was ill, or that one of her neighbors was threatening to make war against her. Bellissima knew quite well that something was being hidden from her — and that neither of these was the real reason of the Queen's uneasiness. So she made up her mind that she would go and consult the Fairy of the Desert about it, especially as she had often heard how wise she was, and she thought that at the same time she might ask her advice as to whether it would be as well to be married, or not.

So, with great care, she made some of the proper cake to pacify the lions, and one night went up to her room very early, pretending that she was going to bed; but instead of that, she wrapped herself in a long white veil, and went down a secret staircase, and set off all by herself to find the Witch.

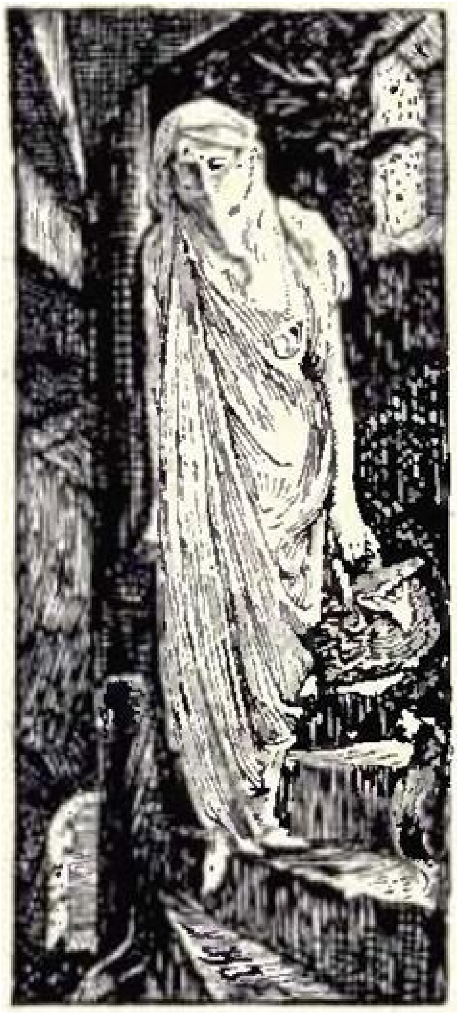

But when she got as far as the same fatal orange tree, and saw it covered with flowers and fruit, she stopped and began to gather some of the oranges — and then, putting down her basket, she sat down to eat them. But when it was time to go on again the basket had disappeared and, though she looked everywhere, not a trace of it could she find. The more she hunted for it, the more frightened she got, and at last she began to cry. Then all at once she saw before her the Yellow Dwarf.

"What's the matter with you, my pretty one?" said he. "What are you crying about?"

"Alas!" she answered; "no wonder that I am crying, seeing that I have lost the basket of cake that was to help me to get safely to the cave of the Fairy of the Desert."

"And what do you want with her, pretty one?" said the little monster, "for I am a friend of hers, and, for the matter of that, I am quite as clever as she is."

"The Queen, my mother," replied the Princess, "has lately fallen into such deep sadness that I fear that she will die; and I am afraid that perhaps I am the cause of it, for she very much wishes me to be married, and I must tell you truly that as yet I have not found anyone I consider worthy to be my husband. So for all these reasons I wished to talk to the Fairy."

"Do not give yourself any further trouble, Princess," answered the Dwarf. "I can tell you all you want to know better than she could. The Queen, your mother, has promised you in marriage — —"

"Has promised *me!*" interrupted the Princess. "Oh! no. I'm sure she has not. She would have told me if she had. I am too much interested in the matter for her to promise anything without my consent — you must be mistaken."

"Beautiful Princess," cried the Dwarf suddenly, throwing himself on his knees before her, "I flatter myself that you will not be displeased at her choice when I tell you that it is to *me* she has promised the happiness of marrying you."

"You!" cried Bellissima, starting back. "My mother wishes me to marry you! How can you be so silly as to think of such a thing?"

"Oh! it isn't that I care much to have that honor," cried the Dwarf angrily; "but here are the lions coming; they'll eat you up in three mouthfuls, and there will be an end of you and your pride."

And, indeed, at that moment the poor Princess heard their dreadful howls coming nearer and nearer.

"What shall I do?" she cried. "Must all my happy days come to an end like this?"

The malicious Dwarf looked at her and began to laugh spitefully. "At least," said he, “you have the satisfaction of dying unmarried. A lovely Princess like you must surely prefer to die rather than be the wife of a poor little dwarf like myself.”

“Oh, don’t be angry with me,” cried the Princess, clasping her hands. “I’d rather marry all the dwarfs in the world than die in this horrible way.”

“Look at me well, Princess, before you give me your word,” said he. “I don’t want you to promise me in a hurry.”

“Oh!” cried she, “the lions are coming. I have looked at you enough. I am so frightened. Save me this minute, or I shall die of terror.”

Indeed, as she spoke she fell down insensible, and when she recovered she found herself in her own little bed at home; how she got there she could not tell, but she was dressed in the most beautiful lace and ribbons, and on her finger was a little ring, made of a single red hair, which fitted so tightly that, try as she might, she could not get it off.

When the Princess saw all these things, and remembered what had happened, she, too, fell into the deepest sadness, which surprised and alarmed the whole Court, and the Queen more than anyone else. A hundred times she asked Bellissima if anything was the matter with her; but she always said that there was nothing.

At last the chief men of the kingdom, anxious to see their Princess married, sent to the Queen to beg her to choose a husband for her as soon as possible. She replied that nothing would please her better, but that her daughter seemed so unwilling to marry, and she recommended them to go and talk to the Princess about it themselves so this they at once did. Now Bellissima was much less proud since her adventure with the Yellow Dwarf, and she could not think of a better way of getting rid of the little monster than to marry some powerful king, therefore she replied to their request much more favorably than they had hoped, saying that, though she was very happy as she was, still, to please them, she would consent to marry the King of the Gold Mines. Now he was a very handsome and powerful Prince, who had been in love with the Princess for years, but had not thought that she would ever care about him at all. You can easily imagine how delighted he was when he heard the news, and how angry it made all the other kings to lose for ever the hope of marrying the Princess; but, after all, Bellissima could not have married twenty kings — indeed, she had found it quite difficult enough to choose one, for her vanity made her believe that there was nobody in the world who was worthy of her.

Preparations were begun at once for the grandest wedding that had ever been held at the palace. The King of the Gold Mines sent such immense sums of money that the whole sea was covered with the ships that brought it. Messengers were sent to all the gayest and most refined Courts, particularly to the Court of France, to seek out everything rare and precious to adorn the Princess, although her beauty was so perfect that nothing she wore could make her look prettier. At least that is what the King of the Gold Mines thought, and he was never happy unless he was with her.

As for the Princess, the more she saw of the King the more she liked him; he was so generous, so handsome and clever, that at last she was almost as much in love with him as he was with her. How happy they were as they wandered about in the beautiful gardens together, sometimes listening to sweet music! And the King used to write songs for Bellissima. This is one that she liked very much:

In the forest all is gay
When my Princess walks that way.
All the blossoms then are found
Downward fluttering to the ground,
Hoping she may tread on them.
And bright flowers on slender stem
Gaze up at her as she passes
Brushing lightly through the grasses.
Oh! my Princess, birds above
Echo back our songs of love,
As through this enchanted land
Blithe we wander, hand in hand.

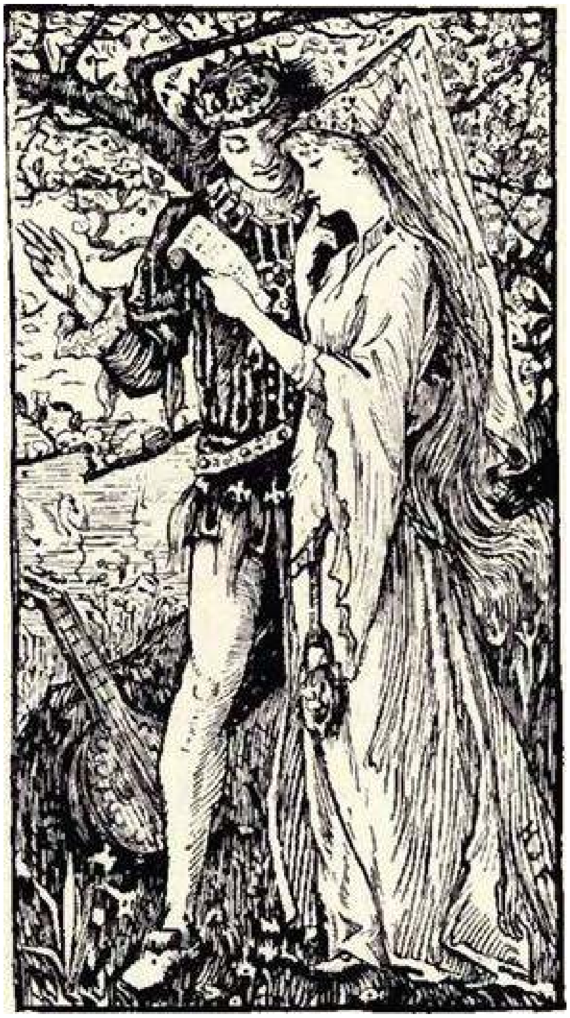

They really were as happy as the day was long. All the King's unsuccessful rivals had gone home in despair. They said good-by to the Princess so sadly that she could not help being sorry for them.

"Ah! madam," the King of the Gold Mines said to her "how is this? Why do you waste your pity on these princes, who love you so much that all their trouble would be well repaid by a single smile from you?"

"I should be sorry," answered Bellissima, "if you had not noticed how much I pitied these princes who were leaving me for ever; but for you, sire, it is very different: you have every reason to be pleased with me, but they are going sorrowfully away, so you must not grudge them my compassion."

The King of the Gold Mines was quite overcome by the Princess's good-natured way of taking his interference, and, throwing himself at her feet, he kissed her hand a thousand times and begged her to forgive him.

At last the happy day came. Everything was ready for Bellissima's wedding. The trumpets sounded, all the streets of the town were hung with flags and strewn with flowers, and the people ran in crowds to the great square before the palace. The Queen was so overjoyed that she had hardly been able to sleep at all, and she got up before it was light to give the necessary orders and to choose the jewels that the Princess was to wear. These were nothing less than diamonds, even to her shoes, which were covered with them, and her dress of silver brocade was embroidered with a dozen of the sun’s rays. You may imagine how much these had cost; but then nothing could have been more brilliant, except the beauty of the Princess! Upon her head she wore a splendid crown, her lovely hair waved nearly to her feet, and her stately figure could easily be distinguished among all the ladies who attended her.

The King of the Gold Mines was not less noble and splendid; it was easy to see by his face how happy he was, and everyone who went near him returned loaded with presents, for all round the great banqueting hall had been arranged a thousand barrels full of gold, and numberless bags made of velvet embroidered with pearls and filled with money, each one containing at least a hundred thousand gold pieces, which were given away to everyone who liked to hold out his hand, which numbers of people hastened to do, you may be sure — indeed, some found this by far the most amusing part of the wedding festivities.

The Queen and the Princess were just ready to set out with the King when they saw, advancing toward them from the end of the long gallery, two great basilisks, dragging after them a very badly made box; behind them came a tall old woman, whose ugliness was even more surprising than her extreme old age. She wore a ruff of black taffeta, a red velvet hood, and a farthingale all in rags, and she leaned heavily upon a crutch. This strange old woman, without saying a single word, hobbled three times round the gallery, followed by the basilisks, then stopping in the middle, and brandishing her crutch threateningly, she cried:

“Ho, ho, Queen! Ho, ho, Princess! Do you think you are going to break with impunity the promise that you made to my friend the Yellow Dwarf? I am the Fairy of the Desert; without the Yellow Dwarf and his orange tree my great lions would soon have eaten you up, I can tell you, and in Fairyland we do not suffer ourselves to be insulted like this. Make up your minds at once what you will do, for I vow that you shall marry the Yellow Dwarf. If you don’t, may I burn my crutch!”

“Ah! Princess,” said the Queen, weeping, “what is this that I hear? What have you promised?”

“Ah! my mother,” replied Bellissima sadly, “what did *you* promise, yourself?”

The King of the Gold Mines, indignant at being kept from his happiness by this wicked old woman, went up to her, and threatening her with his sword, said:

“Get away out of my country at once, and for ever, miserable creature, lest I take your life, and so rid myself of your malice.”

He had hardly spoken these words when the lid of the box fell back on the floor with a terrible noise, and to their horror out sprang the Yellow Dwarf, mounted upon a great Spanish cat. “Rash youth!” he cried, rushing between the Fairy of the Desert and the King. “Dare to lay a finger upon this illustrious Fairy! Your quarrel is with me only. I am your enemy and your rival. That faithless Princess who would have married you is promised to me. See if she has not upon her finger a ring made of one of my hairs. Just try to take it off, and you will soon find out that I am more powerful than you are!”

“Wretched little monster!” said the King; “do you dare to call yourself the Princess’s lover, and to lay claim to such a treasure? Do you know that you are a dwarf — that you are so ugly that one cannot bear to look at you — and that I should have killed you myself long before this if you had been worthy of such a glorious death?”

The Yellow Dwarf, deeply enraged at these words, set spurs to his cat, which yelled horribly, and leaped hither and thither — terrifying everybody except the brave King, who pursued the Dwarf closely, till he, drawing a great knife with which he was armed, challenged the King to meet him in single combat, and rushed down into the courtyard of the palace with a terrible clatter. The King, quite provoked, followed him hastily, but they had hardly taken their places facing one another, and the whole Court had only just had time to rush out upon the balconies to watch what was going on, when suddenly the sun became as red as blood, and it was so dark that they could scarcely see at all. The thunder crashed, and the lightning seemed as if it must burn up everything; the two basilisks appeared, one on each side of the bad Dwarf, like giants, mountains high, and fire flew from their mouths and ears, until they looked like flaming furnaces. None of these things could terrify the noble young King, and the boldness of his looks and actions reassured those who were looking on, and perhaps even embarrassed the Yellow Dwarf himself; but even *his* courage gave way when he saw what was happening to his beloved Princess. For the Fairy of the Desert, looking more terrible than before, mounted upon a winged griffin, and with long snakes coiled round her neck, had given her such a blow with the lance she carried that Bellissima fell into the Queen’s arms bleeding and senseless. Her fond mother, feeling as much hurt by the blow as the Princess herself, uttered such piercing cries and lamentations that the King, hearing them, entirely lost his courage and presence of mind. Giving up the combat, he flew toward the Princess, to rescue or to die with her; but the Yellow Dwarf was too quick for him. Leaping with his Spanish cat upon the balcony, he snatched Bellissima from the Queen’s arms, and before any of the ladies of the Court could stop him he had sprung upon the roof of the palace and disappeared with his prize.

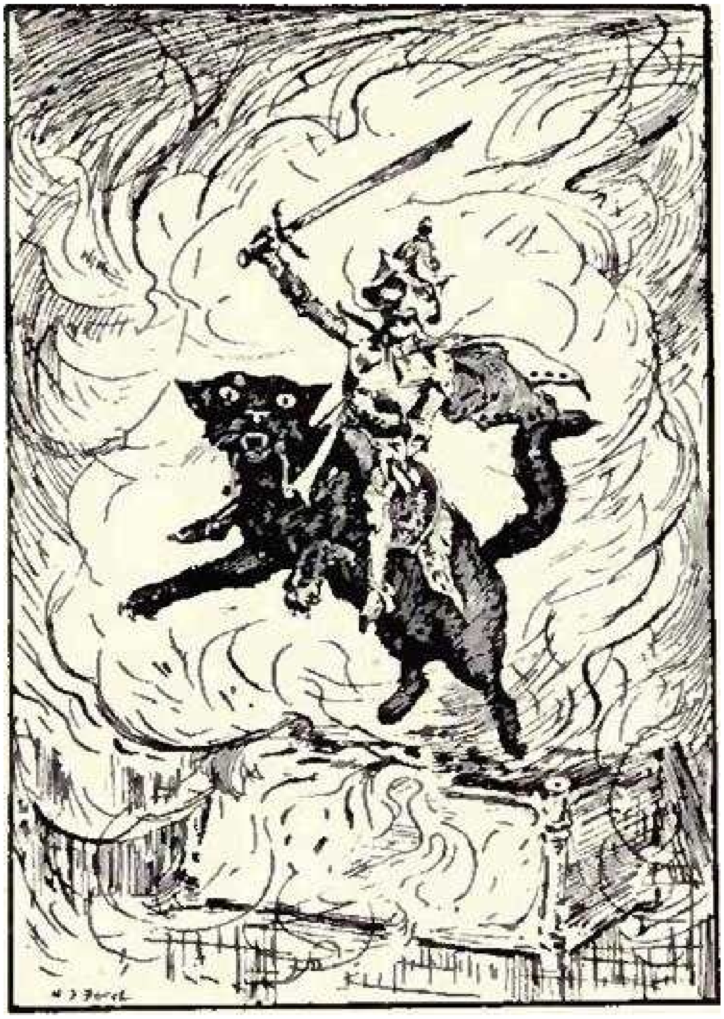

The King, motionless with horror, looked on despairingly at this dreadful occurrence, which he was quite powerless to prevent, and to make matters worse his sight failed him, everything became dark, and he felt himself carried along through the air by a strong hand.

This new misfortune was the work of the wicked Fairy of the Desert, who had come with the Yellow Dwarf to help him carry off the Princess, and had fallen in love with the handsome young King of the Gold Mines directly she saw him. She thought that if she carried him off to some frightful cavern and chained him to a rock, then the fear of death would make him forget Bellissima and become her slave. So, as soon as they reached the place, she gave him back his sight, but without releasing him from his chains, and by her magic power she appeared before him as a young and beautiful fairy, and pretended to have come there quite by chance.

“What do I see?” she cried. “Is it *you*, dear Prince? What misfortune has brought you to this dismal place?”

The King, who was quite deceived by her altered appearance, replied:

“Alas! beautiful Fairy, the fairy who brought me here first took away my sight, but by her voice I recognized her as the Fairy of the Desert, though what she should have carried me off for I cannot tell you.”

“Ah!” cried the pretended Fairy, “if you have fallen into *her* hands, you won’t get away until you have married her. She has carried off more than one Prince like this, and she will certainly have anything she takes a fancy to.” While she was thus pretending to be sorry for the King, he suddenly noticed her feet, which were like those of a griffin, and knew in a moment that this must be the Fairy of the Desert, for her feet were the one thing she could not change, however pretty she might make her face.

Without seeming to have noticed anything, he said, in a confidential way:

“Not that I have any dislike to the Fairy of the Desert, but I really cannot endure the way in which she protects the Yellow Dwarf and keeps me chained here like a criminal. It is true that I love a charming princess, but if the Fairy should set me free my gratitude would oblige me to love her only.”

“Do you really mean what you say, Prince?” said the Fairy, quite deceived.

“Surely,” replied the Prince; “how could I deceive you? You see it is so much more flattering to my vanity to be loved by a fairy than by a simple princess. But, even if I am dying of love for her, I shall pretend to hate her until I am set free.”

The Fairy of the Desert, quite taken in by these words, resolved at once to transport the Prince to a pleasanter place. So, making him mount her chariot, to which she had harnessed swans instead of the bats which generally drew it, away she flew with him. But imagine the distress of the Prince when, from the giddy height at which they were rushing through the air, he saw his beloved Princess in a castle built of polished steel, the walls of which reflected the sun’s rays so hotly that no one could approach it without being burnt to a cinder! Bellissima was sitting in a little thicket by a brook, leaning her head upon her hand and weeping bitterly, but just as they passed she looked up and saw the King and the Fairy of the Desert. Now, the Fairy was so clever that she could not only seem beautiful to the King, but even the poor Princess thought her the most lovely being she had ever seen.

“What!” she cried; “was I not unhappy enough in this lonely castle to which that frightful Yellow Dwarf brought me? Must I also be made to know that the King of the Gold Mines ceased to love me as soon as he lost sight of me? But who can my rival be, whose fatal beauty is greater than mine?”

While she was saying this, the King, who really loved her as much as ever, was feeling terribly sad at being so rapidly torn away from his beloved Princess, but he knew too well how powerful the Fairy was to have any hope of escaping from her except by great patience and cunning.

The Fairy of the Desert had also seen Bellissima, and she tried to read in the King’s eyes the effect that this unexpected sight had had upon him.

“No one can tell you what you wish to know better than I can,” said he. “This chance meeting with an unhappy princess for whom I once had a passing fancy, before I was lucky enough to meet you, has affected me a little, I admit, but you are so much more to me than she is that I would rather die than leave you.”

“Ah, Prince,” she said, “can I believe that you really love me so much?”

“Time will show, madam,” replied the King; “but if you wish to convince me that you have some regard for me, do not, I beg of you, refuse to aid Bellissima.”

“Do you know what you are asking?” said the Fairy of the Desert, frowning, and looking at him suspiciously. “Do you want me to employ my art against the Yellow Dwarf, who is my best friend, and take away from him a proud princess whom I can but look upon as my rival?”

The King sighed, but made no answer — indeed, what was there to be said to such a clear-sighted person? At last they reached a vast meadow, gay with all sorts of flowers; a deep river surrounded it, and many little brooks murmured softly under the shady trees, where it was always cool and fresh. A little way off stood a splendid palace, the walls of which were of transparent emeralds. As soon as the swans which drew the Fairy’s chariot had alighted under a porch, which was paved with diamonds and had arches of rubies, they were greeted on all sides by thousands of beautiful beings, who came to meet them joyfully, singing these words:

“When Love within a heart would reign,
Useless to strive against him ’tis.
The proud but feel a sharper pain,
And make a greater triumph his.”

The Fairy of the Desert was delighted to hear them sing of her triumphs; she led the King into the most splendid room that can be imagined, and left him alone for a little while, just that he might not feel that he was a prisoner; but he felt sure that she had not really gone quite away, but was watching him from some hiding-place. So walking up to a great mirror, he said to it, “Trusty counsellor, let me see what I can do to make myself agreeable to the charming Fairy of the Desert; for I can think of nothing but how to please her.”

And he at once set to work to curl his hair, and, seeing upon a table a grander coat than his own, he put it on carefully. The Fairy came back so delighted that she could not conceal her joy.

“I am quite aware of the trouble you have taken to please me,” said she, “and I must tell you that you have succeeded perfectly already. You see it is not difficult to do if you really care for me.”

The King, who had his own reasons for wishing to keep the old Fairy in a good humor, did not spare pretty speeches, and after a time he was allowed to walk by himself upon the sea-shore. The Fairy of the Desert had by her enchantments raised such a terrible storm that the boldest pilot would not venture out in it, so she was not afraid of her prisoner’s being able to escape; and he found it some relief to think sadly over his terrible situation without being interrupted by his cruel captor.

Presently, after walking wildly up and down, he wrote these verses upon the sand with his stick:

“At last may I upon this shore
Lighten my sorrow with soft tears.
Alas! alas! I see no more
My Love, who yet my sadness cheers.

“And thou, O raging, stormy Sea,
Stirred by wild winds, from depth to height,
Thou hold’st my loved one far from me,
And I am captive to thy might.

“My heart is still more wild than thine,
For Fate is cruel unto me.
Why must I thus in exile pine?
Why is my Princess snatched from me?

“O! lovely Nymphs, from ocean caves,
Who know how sweet true love may be,
Come up and calm the furious waves
And set a desperate lover free!”

While he was still writing he heard a voice which attracted his attention in spite of himself. Seeing that the waves were rolling in higher than ever, he looked all round, and presently saw a lovely lady floating gently toward him upon the crest of a huge billow, her long hair spread all about her; in one hand she held a mirror, and in the other a comb, and instead of feet she had a beautiful tail like a fish, with which she swam.

The King was struck dumb with astonishment at this unexpected sight; but as soon as she came within speaking distance, she said to him, “I know how sad you are at losing your Princess and being kept a prisoner by the Fairy of the Desert; if you like I will help you to escape from this fatal place, where you may otherwise have to drag on a weary existence for thirty years or more.”

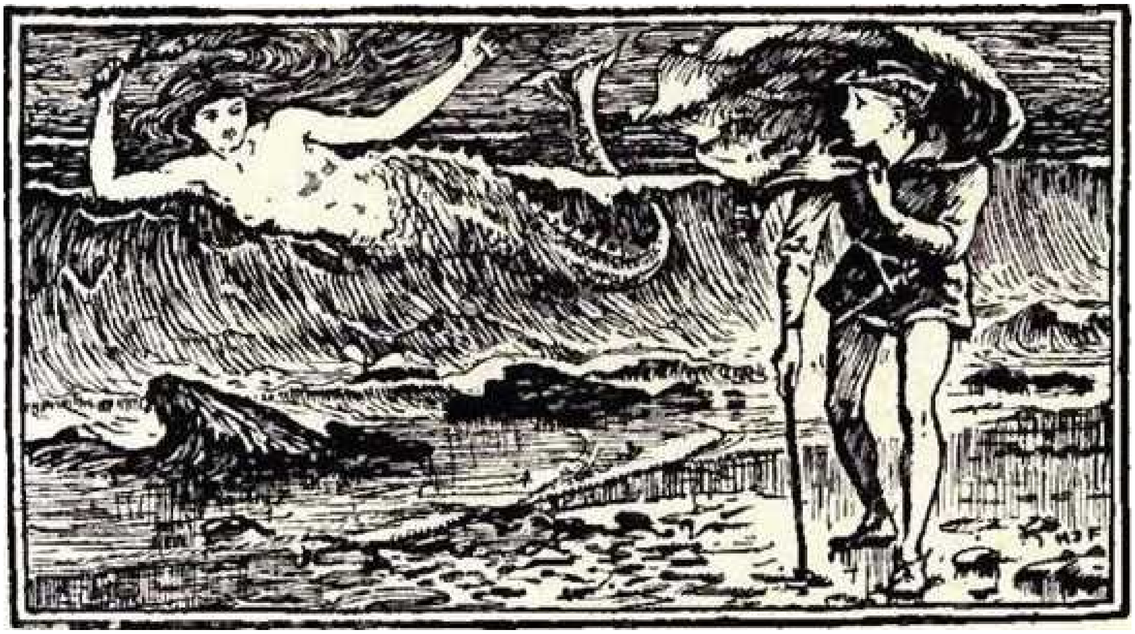

The King of the Gold Mines hardly knew what answer to make to this proposal. Not because he did not wish very much to escape, but he was afraid that this might be only another device by which the Fairy of the Desert was trying to deceive him. As he hesitated the Mermaid, who guessed his thoughts, said to him:

“You may trust me: I am not trying to entrap you. I am so angry with the Yellow Dwarf and the Fairy of the Desert that I am not likely to wish to help them, especially since I constantly see your poor Princess, whose beauty and goodness make me pity her so much; and I tell you that if you will have confidence in me I will help you to escape.”

“I trust you absolutely,” cried the King, “and I will do whatever you tell me; but if you have seen my Princess I beg of you to tell me how she is and what is happening to her.

“We must not waste time in talking,” said she. “Come with me and I will carry you to the Castle of Steel, and we will leave upon this shore a figure so like you that even the Fairy herself will be deceived by it."

So saying, she quickly collected a bundle of sea-weed, and, blowing it three times, she said:

"My friendly sea-weeds, I order you to stay here stretched upon the sand until the Fairy of the Desert comes to take you away." And at once the sea-weeds became like the King, who stood looking at them in great astonishment, for they were even dressed in a coat like his, but they lay there pale and still as the King himself might have lain if one of the great waves had overtaken him and thrown him senseless upon the shore. And then the Mermaid caught up the King, and away they swam joyfully together.

"Now," said she, "I have time to tell you about the Princess. In spite of the blow which the Fairy of the Desert gave her, the Yellow Dwarf compelled her to mount behind him upon his terrible Spanish cat; but she soon fainted away with pain and terror, and did not recover till they were within the walls of his frightful Castle of Steel. Here she was received by the prettiest girls it was possible to find, who had been carried there by the Yellow Dwarf, who hastened to wait upon her and showed her every possible attention. She was laid upon a couch covered with cloth of gold, embroidered with pearls as big as nuts."

"Ah!" interrupted the King of the Gold Mines, "if Bellissima forgets me, and consents to marry him, I shall break my heart."

"You need not be afraid of that," answered the Mermaid, "the Princess thinks of no one but you, and the frightful Dwarf cannot persuade her to look at him."

"Pray go on with your story," said the King.

"What more is there to tell you?" replied the Mermaid. "Bellissima was sitting in the wood when you passed, and saw you with the Fairy of the Desert, who was so cleverly disguised that the Princess took her to be prettier than herself; you may imagine her despair, for she thought that you had fallen in love with her."

"She believes that I love her!" cried the King. "What a fatal mistake! What is to be done to undeceive her?"

"You know best," answered the Mermaid, smiling kindly at him. "When people are as much in love with one another as you two are, they don't need advice from anyone else."

As she spoke they reached the Castle of Steel, the side next the sea being the only one which the Yellow Dwarf had left unprotected by the dreadful burning walls.

"I know quite well," said the Mermaid, "that the Princess is sitting by the brook-side, just where you saw her as you passed, but as you will have many enemies to fight with before you can reach her, take this sword; armed with it you may dare any danger, and overcome the greatest difficulties, only beware of one thing — that is, never to let it fall from your hand. Farewell; now I will wait by that rock, and if you need my help in carrying off your beloved Princess I will not fail you, for the Queen, her mother, is my best friend, and it was for her sake that I went to rescue you.”

So saying, she gave to the King a sword made from a single diamond, which was more brilliant than the sun. He could not find words to express his gratitude, but he begged her to believe that he fully appreciated the importance of her gift, and would never forget her help and kindness.

We must now go back to the Fairy of the Desert. When she found that the King did not return, she hastened out to look for him, and reached the shore, with a hundred of the ladies of her train, loaded with splendid presents for him. Some carried baskets full of diamonds, others golden cups of wonderful workmanship, and amber, coral, and pearls, others, again, balanced upon their heads bales of the richest and most beautiful stuffs, while the rest brought fruit and flowers, and even birds. But what was the horror of the Fairy, who followed this gay troop, when she saw, stretched upon the sands, the image of the King which the Mermaid had made with the sea-weeds. Struck with astonishment and sorrow, she uttered a terrible cry, and threw herself down beside the pretended King, weeping, and howling, and calling upon her eleven sisters, who were also fairies, and who came to her assistance. But they were all taken in by the image of the King, for, clever as they were, the Mermaid was still cleverer, and all they could do was to help the Fairy of the Desert to make a wonderful monument over what they thought was the grave of the King of the Gold Mines. But while they were collecting jasper and porphyry, agate and marble, gold and bronze, statues and devices, to immortalize the King’s memory, he was thanking the good Mermaid and begging her still to help him, which she graciously promised to do as she disappeared; and then he set out for the Castle of Steel. He walked fast, looking anxiously round him, and longing once more to see his darling Bellissima, but he had not gone far before he was surrounded by four terrible sphinxes who would very soon have torn him to pieces with their sharp talons if it had not been for the Mermaid’s diamond sword. For, no sooner had he flashed it before their eyes than down they fell at his feet quite helpless, and he killed them with one blow. But he had hardly turned to continue his search when he met six dragons covered with scales that were harder than iron. Frightful as this encounter was the King’s courage was unshaken, and by the aid of his wonderful sword he cut them in pieces one after the other. Now he hoped his difficulties were over, but at the next turning he was met by one which he did not know how to overcome. Four-and-twenty pretty and graceful nymphs advanced toward him, holding garlands of flowers, with which they barred the way.

"Where are you going, Prince?" they said; "it is our duty to guard this place, and if we let you pass great misfortunes will happen to you and to us. We beg you not to insist upon going on. Do you want to kill four-and-twenty girls who have never displeased you in any way?"

The King did not know what to do or to say. It went against all his ideas as a knight to do anything a lady begged him not to do; but, as he hesitated, a voice in his ear said:

"Strike! strike! and do not spare, or your Princess is lost for ever!"

So, without reply to the nymphs, he rushed forward instantly, breaking their garlands, and scattering them in all directions; and then went on without further hindrance to the little wood where he had seen Bellissima. She was seated by the brook looking pale and weary when he reached her, and he would have thrown himself down at her feet, but she drew herself away from him with as much indignation as if he had been the Yellow Dwarf.

"Ah! Princess," he cried, "do not be angry with me. Let me explain everything. I am not faithless or to blame for what has happened. I am a miserable wretch who has displeased you without being able to help himself."

"Ah!" cried Bellissima, "did I not see you flying through the air with the loveliest being imaginable? Was that against your will?"

"Indeed it was, Princess," he answered; "the wicked Fairy of the Desert, not content with chaining me to a rock, carried me off in her chariot to the other end of the earth, where I should even now be a captive but for the unexpected help of a friendly mermaid, who brought me here to rescue you, my Princess, from the unworthy hands that hold you. Do not refuse the aid of your most faithful lover." So saying, he threw himself at her feet and held her by her robe. But, alas! in so doing he let fall the magic sword, and the Yellow Dwarf, who was crouching behind a lettuce, no sooner saw it than he sprang out and seized it, well knowing its wonderful power.

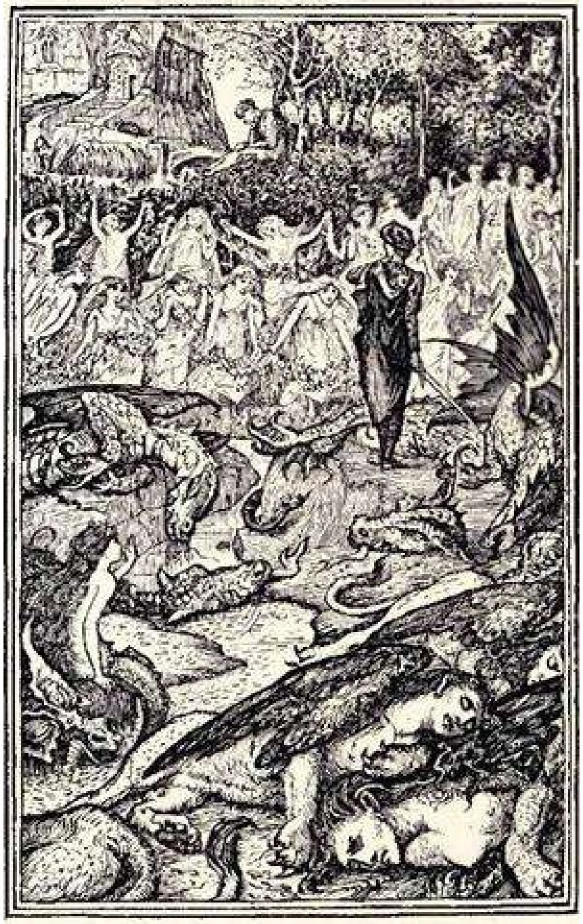

THE KING OF THE GOLD MINES ENCOUNTERS THE FOUR-AND-TWENTY MAIDENS.

The Princess gave a cry of terror on seeing the Dwarf, but this only irritated the little monster; muttering a few magical words he summoned two giants, who bound the King with great chains of iron.

“Now,” said the Dwarf, “I am master of my rival’s fate, but I will give him his life and permission to depart unharmed if you, Princess, will consent to marry me.”

“Let me die a thousand times rather,” cried the unhappy King.

“Alas!” cried the Princess, “must you die? Could anything be more terrible?”

“That you should marry that little wretch would be far more terrible,” answered the King.

“At least,” continued she, “let us die together.”

“Let me have the satisfaction of dying for you, my Princess,” said he.

“Oh, no, no!” she cried, turning to the Dwarf; “rather than that I will do as you wish.”

“Cruel Princess!” said the King, “would you make my life horrible to me by marrying another before my eyes?”

“Not so,” replied the Yellow Dwarf; “you are a rival of whom I am too much afraid; you shall not see our marriage.” So saying, in spite of Bellissima’s tears and cries, he stabbed the King to the heart with the diamond sword.

The poor Princess, seeing her lover lying dead at her feet, could no longer live without him; she sank down by him and died of a broken heart.

So ended these unfortunate lovers, whom not even the Mermaid could help, because all the magic power had been lost with the diamond sword.

As to the wicked Dwarf, he preferred to see the Princess dead rather than married to the King of the Gold Mines; and the Fairy of the Desert, when she heard of the King’s adventures, pulled down the grand monument which she had built, and was so angry at the trick that had been played her that she hated him as much as she had loved him before.

The kind Mermaid, grieved at the sad fate of the lovers, caused them to be changed into two tall palm trees, which stand always side by side, whispering together of their faithful love and caressing one another with their interlacing branches.(1)

(1) Madame d’Aulnoy.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Once upon a time there lived in a certain village a little country girl, the prettiest creature was ever seen. Her mother was excessively fond of her; and her grandmother doted on her still more. This good woman had made for her a little red riding-hood; which became the girl so extremely well that everybody called her Little Red Riding-Hood.

One day her mother, having made some custards, said to her:

“Go, my dear, and see how thy grandmamma does, for I hear she has been very ill; carry her a custard, and this little pot of butter.”

Little Red Riding-Hood set out immediately to go to her grandmother, who lived in another village.

As she was going through the wood, she met with Gaffer Wolf, who had a very great mind to eat her up, but he dared not, because of some faggot-makers hard by in the forest. He asked her whither she was going. The poor child, who did not know that it was dangerous to stay and hear a wolf talk, said to him:

“I am going to see my grandmamma and carry her a custard and a little pot of butter from my mamma.”

“Does she live far off?” said the Wolf.

“Oh! ay,” answered Little Red Riding-Hood; “it is beyond that mill you see there, at the first house in the village.”

“Well,” said the Wolf, “and I’ll go and see her too. I’ll go this way and you go that, and we shall see who will be there soonest.”

The Wolf began to run as fast as he could, taking the nearest way, and the little girl went by that farthest about, diverting herself in gathering nuts, running after butterflies, and making nosegays of such little flowers as she met with. The Wolf was not long before he got to the old woman’s house. He knocked at the door — tap, tap.

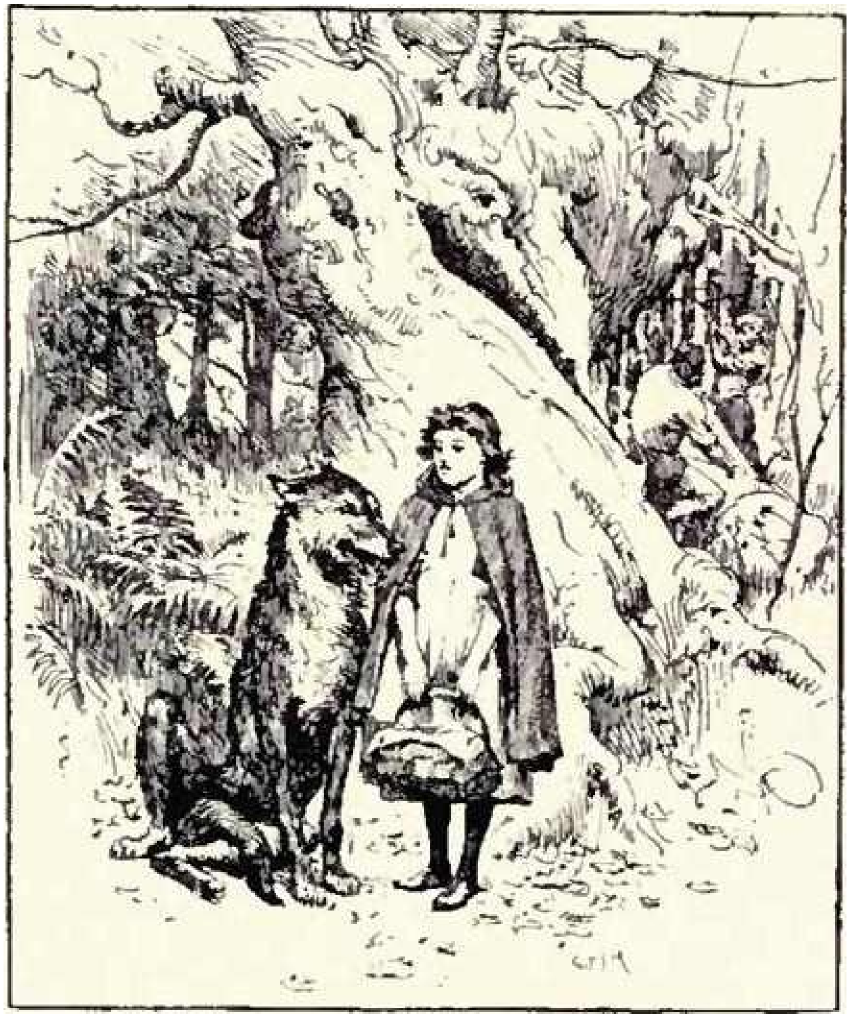

“Who’s there?”

“Your grandchild, Little Red Riding-Hood,” replied the Wolf, counterfeiting her voice; “who has brought you a custard and a little pot of butter sent you by mamma.”

The good grandmother, who was in bed, because she was somewhat ill, cried out:

“Pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up.”

The Wolf pulled the bobbin, and the door opened, and then presently he fell upon the good woman and ate her up in a moment, for it was above three days that he had not touched a bit. He then shut the door and went into the grandmother’s bed, expecting Little Red Riding-Hood, who came some time afterward and knocked at the door — tap, tap.

“Who’s there?”

Little Red Riding-Hood, hearing the big voice of the Wolf, was at first afraid; but believing her grandmother had got a cold and was hoarse, answered:

“’Tis your grandchild, Little Red Riding-Hood, who has brought you a custard and a little pot of butter mamma sends you."

The Wolf cried out to her, softening his voice as much as he could:

"Pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up."

Little Red Riding-Hood pulled the bobbin, and the door opened.

The Wolf, seeing her come in, said to her, hiding himself under the bed-clothes:

"Put the custard and the little pot of butter upon the stool, and come and lie down with me."

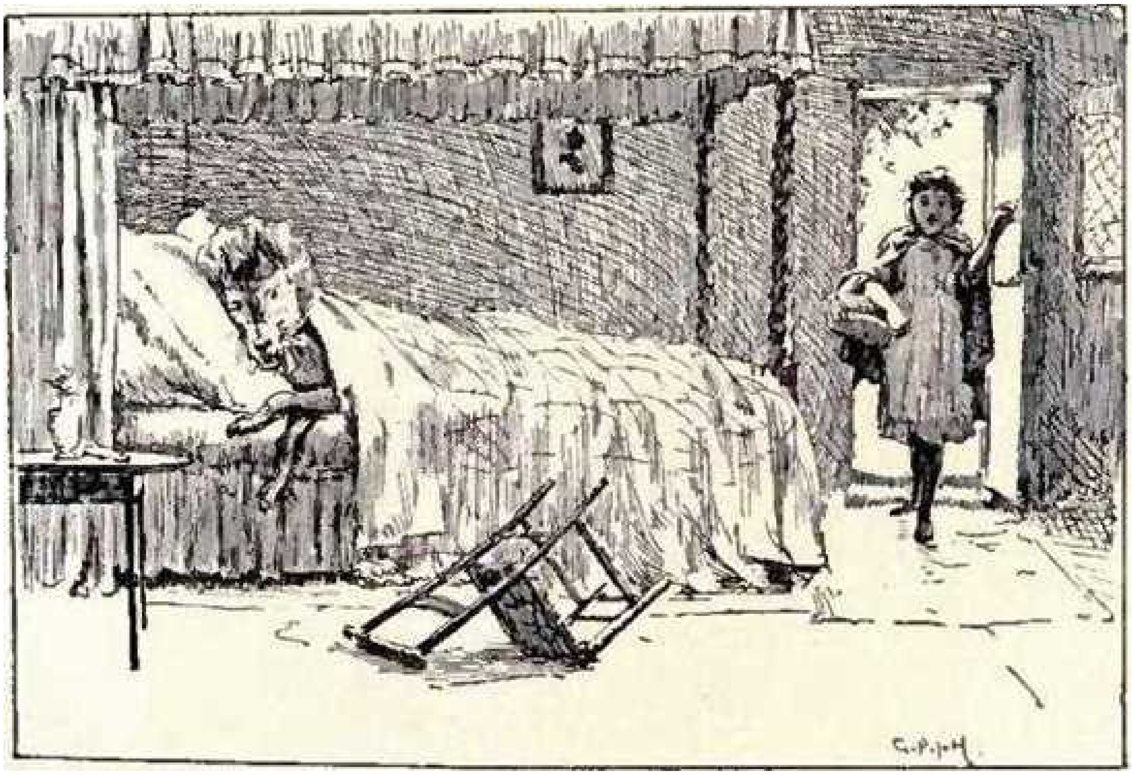

Little Red Riding-Hood undressed herself and went into bed, where, being greatly amazed to see how her grandmother looked in her night-clothes, she said to her:

"Grandmamma, what great arms you have got!"

"That is the better to hug thee, my dear."

"Grandmamma, what great legs you have got!"

"That is to run the better, my child."

"Grandmamma, what great ears you have got!"

"That is to hear the better, my child."

"Grandmamma, what great eyes you have got!"

"It is to see the better, my child."

"Grandmamma, what great teeth you have got!"

"That is to eat thee up."

And, saying these words, this wicked wolf fell upon Little Red Riding-Hood, and ate her all up.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY IN THE WOOD

There were formerly a king and a queen, who were so sorry that they had no children; so sorry that it cannot be expressed. They went to all the waters in the world; vows, pilgrimages, all ways were tried, and all to no purpose.

At last, however, the Queen had a daughter. There was a very fine christening; and the Princess had for her god-mothers all the fairies they could find in the whole kingdom (they found seven), that every one of them might give her a gift, as was the custom of fairies in those days. By this means the Princess had all the perfections imaginable.

After the ceremonies of the christening were over, all the company returned to the King's palace, where was prepared a great feast for the fairies. There was placed before every one of them a magnificent cover with a case of massive gold, wherein were a spoon, knife, and fork, all of pure gold set with diamonds and rubies. But as they were all sitting down at table they saw come into the hall a very old fairy, whom they had not invited, because it was above fifty years since she had been out of a certain tower, and she was believed to be either dead or enchanted.

The King ordered her a cover, but could not furnish her with a case of gold as the others, because they had only seven made for the seven fairies. The old Fairy fancied she was slighted, and muttered some threats between her teeth. One of the young fairies who sat by her overheard how she grumbled; and, judging that she might give the little Princess some unlucky gift, went, as soon as they rose from table, and hid herself behind the hangings, that she might speak last, and repair, as much as she could, the evil which the old Fairy might intend.

In the meanwhile all the fairies began to give their gifts to the Princess. The youngest gave her for gift that she should be the most beautiful person in the world; the next, that she should have the wit of an angel; the third, that she should have a wonderful grace in everything she did; the fourth, that she should dance perfectly well; the fifth, that she should sing like a nightingale; and the sixth, that she should play all kinds of music to the utmost perfection.

The old Fairy's turn coming next, with a head shaking more with spite than age, she said that the Princess should have her hand pierced with a spindle and die of the wound. This terrible gift made the whole company tremble, and everybody fell a-crying.

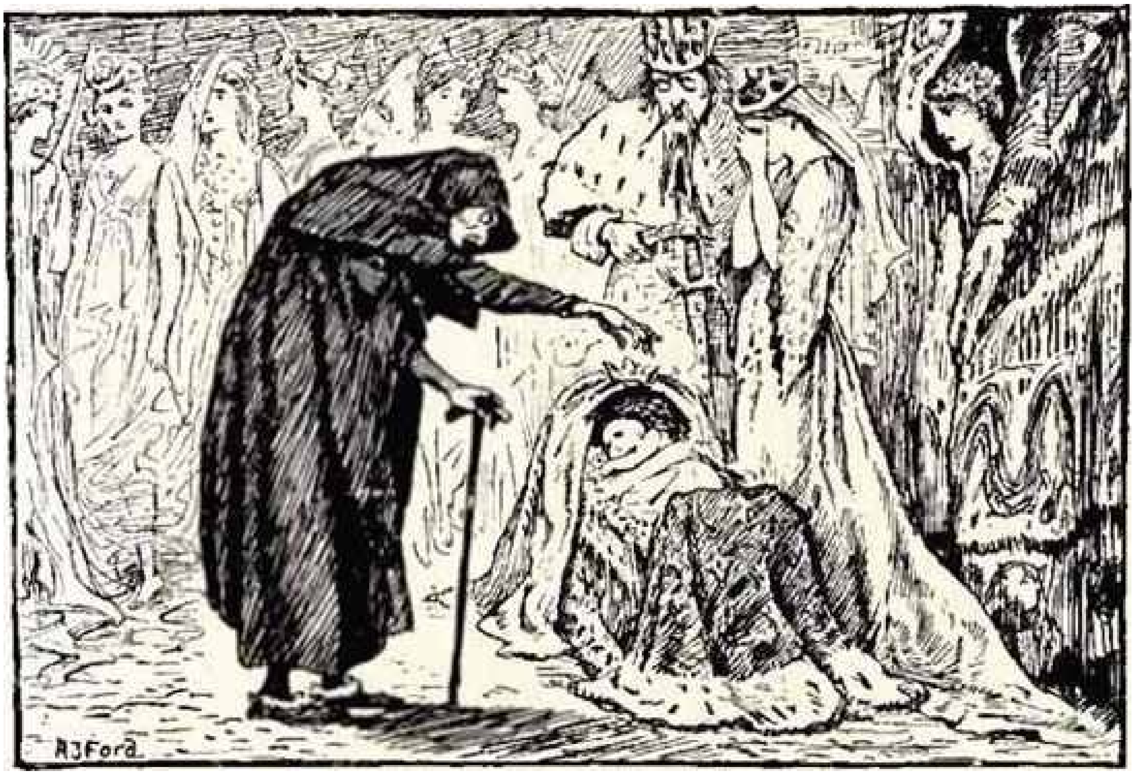

At this very instant the young Fairy came out from behind the hangings, and spake these words aloud:

“Assure yourselves, O King and Queen, that your daughter shall not die of this disaster. It is true, I have no power to undo entirely what my elder has done. The Princess shall indeed pierce her hand with a spindle; but, instead of dying, she shall only fall into a profound sleep, which shall last a hundred years, at the expiration of which a king’s son shall come and awake her.”

The King, to avoid the misfortune foretold by the old Fairy, caused immediately proclamation to be made, whereby everybody was forbidden, on pain of death, to spin with a distaff and spindle, or to have so much as any spindle in their houses. About fifteen or sixteen years after, the King and Queen being gone to one of their houses of pleasure, the young Princess happened one day to divert herself in running up and down the palace; when going up from one apartment to another, she came into a little room on the top of the tower, where a good old woman, alone, was spinning with her spindle. This good woman had never heard of the King’s proclamation against spindles.

“What are you doing there, goody?” said the Princess.

“I am spinning, my pretty child,” said the old woman, who did not know who she was.

“Ha!” said the Princess, “this is very pretty; how do you do it? Give it to me, that I may see if I can do so.”

She had no sooner taken it into her hand than, whether being very hasty at it, somewhat unhandy, or that the decree of the Fairy had so ordained it, it ran into her hand, and she fell down in a swoon.

The good old woman, not knowing very well what to do in this affair, cried out for help. People came in from every quarter in great numbers; they threw water upon the Princess's face, unlaced her, struck her on the palms of her hands, and rubbed her temples with Hungary-water; but nothing would bring her to herself.

And now the King, who came up at the noise, bethought himself of the prediction of the fairies, and, judging very well that this must necessarily come to pass, since the fairies had said it, caused the Princess to be carried into the finest apartment in his palace, and to be laid upon a bed all embroidered with gold and silver.

One would have taken her for a little angel, she was so very beautiful; for her swooning away had not diminished one bit of her complexion; her cheeks were carnation, and her lips were coral; indeed, her eyes were shut, but she was heard to breathe softly, which satisfied those about her that she was not dead. The King commanded that they should not disturb her, but let her sleep quietly till her hour of awaking was come.

The good Fairy who had saved her life by condemning her to sleep a hundred years was in the kingdom of Matakin, twelve thousand leagues off, when this accident befell the Princess; but she was instantly informed of it by a little dwarf, who had boots of seven leagues, that is, boots with which he could tread over seven leagues of ground in one stride. The Fairy came away immediately, and she arrived, about an hour after, in a fiery chariot drawn by dragons.

The King handed her out of the chariot, and she approved everything he had done, but as she had very great foresight, she thought when the Princess should awake she might not know what to do with herself, being all alone in this old palace; and this was what she did: she touched with her wand everything in the palace (except the King and Queen) — governesses, maids of honor, ladies of the bedchamber, gentlemen, officers, stewards, cooks, undercooks, scullions, guards, with their beefeaters, pages, footmen; she likewise touched all the horses which were in the stables, pads as well as others, the great dogs in the outward court and pretty little Mopsey too, the Princess's little spaniel, which lay by her on the bed.

Immediately upon her touching them they all fell asleep, that they might not awake before their mistress and that they might be ready to wait upon her when she wanted them. The very spits at the fire, as full as they could hold of partridges and pheasants, did fall asleep also. All this was done in a moment.

Fairies are not long in doing their business.

And now the King and the Queen, having kissed their dear child without waking her, went out of the palace and put forth a proclamation that nobody should dare to come near it.

This, however, was not necessary, for in a quarter of an hour's time there grew up all round about the park such a vast number of trees, great and small, bushes and brambles, twining one within another, that neither man nor beast could pass through; so that nothing could be seen but the very top of the towers of the palace; and that, too, not unless it was a good way off. Nobody; doubted but the Fairy gave herein a very extraordinary sample of her art, that the Princess, while she continued sleeping, might have nothing to fear from any curious people.

When a hundred years were gone and passed the son of the King then reigning, and who was of another family from that of the sleeping Princess, being gone a-hunting on that side of the country, asked:

What those towers were which he saw in the middle of a great thick wood?

Everyone answered according as they had heard. Some said:

That it was a ruinous old castle, haunted by spirits.

Others, That all the sorcerers and witches of the country kept there their sabbath or night's meeting.

The common opinion was: That an ogre lived there, and that he carried thither all the little children he could catch, that he might eat them up at his leisure, without anybody being able to follow him, as having himself only the power to pass through the wood.

The Prince was at a stand, not knowing what to believe, when a very good countryman spake to him thus:

"May it please your royal highness, it is now about fifty years since I heard from my father, who heard my grandfather say, that there was then in this castle a princess, the most beautiful was ever seen; that she must sleep there a hundred years, and should be waked by a king's son, for whom she was reserved."

The young Prince was all on fire at these words, believing, without weighing the matter, that he could put an end to this rare adventure; and, pushed on by love and honor, resolved that moment to look into it.

Scarce had he advanced toward the wood when all the great trees, the bushes, and brambles gave way of themselves to let him pass through; he walked up to the castle which he saw at the end of a large avenue which he went into; and what a little surprised him was that he saw none of his people could follow him, because the trees closed again as soon as he had passed through them. However, he did not cease from continuing his way; a young and amorous prince is always valiant.

He came into a spacious outward court, where everything he saw might have frozen the most fearless person with horror. There reigned all over a most frightful silence; the image of death everywhere showed itself, and there was nothing to be seen but stretched-out bodies of men and animals, all seeming to be dead. He, however, very well knew, by the ruby faces and pimpled noses of the beefeaters, that they were only asleep; and their goblets, wherein still remained some drops of wine, showed plainly that they fell asleep in their cups.

He then crossed a court paved with marble, went up the stairs and came into the guard chamber, where guards were standing in their ranks, with their muskets upon their shoulders, and snoring as loud as they could. After that he went through several rooms full of gentlemen and ladies, all asleep, some standing, others sitting. At last he came into a chamber all gilded with gold, where he saw upon a bed, the curtains of which were all open, the finest sight was ever beheld — a princess, who appeared to be about fifteen or sixteen years of age, and whose bright and, in a manner, resplendent beauty, had somewhat in it divine. He approached with trembling and admiration, and fell down before her upon his knees.

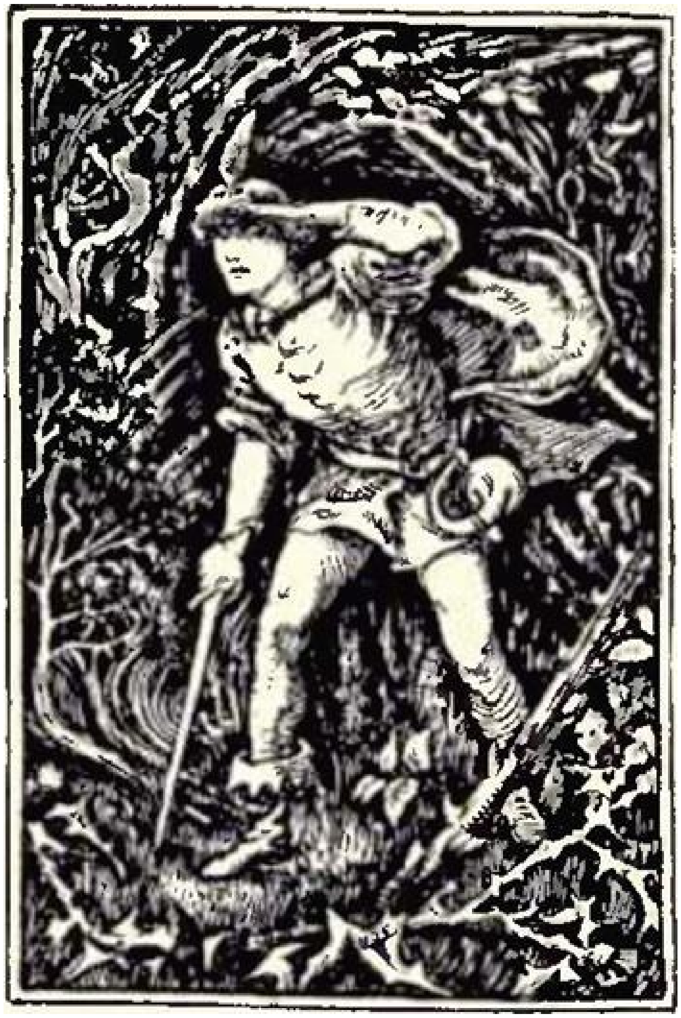

And now, as the enchantment was at an end, the Princess awaked, and looking on him with eyes more tender than the first view might seem to admit of:

“Is it you, my Prince?” said she to him. “You have waited a long while.”

The Prince, charmed with these words, and much more with the manner in which they were spoken, knew not how to show his joy and gratitude; he assured her that he loved her better than he did himself; their discourse was not well connected, they did weep more than talk — little eloquence, a great deal of love. He was more at a loss than she, and we need not wonder at it; she had time to think on what to say to him; for it is very probable (though history mentions nothing of it) that the good Fairy, during so long a sleep, had given her very agreeable dreams. In short, they talked four hours together, and yet they said not half what they had to say.

In the meanwhile all the palace awaked; everyone thought upon their particular business, and as all of them were not in love they were ready to die for hunger. The chief lady of honor, being as sharp set as other folks, grew very impatient, and told the Princess aloud that supper was served up. The Prince helped the Princess to rise; she was entirely dressed, and very magnificently, but his royal highness took care not to tell her that she was dressed like his great-grandmother, and had a point band peeping over a high collar; she looked not a bit less charming and beautiful for all that.

They went into the great hall of looking-glasses, where they supped, and were served by the Princess's officers, the violins and hautboys played old tunes, but very excellent, though it was now above a hundred years since they had played; and after supper, without losing any time, the lord almoner married them in the chapel of the castle, and the chief lady of honor drew the curtains. They had but very little sleep — the Princess had no occasion; and the Prince left her next morning to return to the city, where his father must needs have been in pain for him. The Prince told him:

That he lost his way in the forest as he was hunting, and that he had lain in the cottage of a charcoal-burner, who gave him cheese and brown bread.

The King, his father, who was a good man, believed him; but his mother could not be persuaded it was true; and seeing that he went almost every day a-hunting, and that he always had some excuse ready for so doing, though he had lain out three or four nights together, she began to suspect that he was married, for he lived with the Princess above two whole years, and had by her two children, the eldest of which, who was a daughter, was named Morning, and the youngest, who was a son, they called Day, because he was a great deal handsomer and more beautiful than his sister.

The Queen spoke several times to her son, to inform herself after what manner he did pass his time, and that in this he ought in duty to satisfy her. But he never dared to trust her with his secret; he feared her, though he loved her, for she was of the race of the Ogres, and the King would never have married her had it not been for her vast riches; it was even whispered about the Court that she had Ogreish inclinations, and that, whenever she saw little children passing by, she had all the difficulty in the world to avoid falling upon them. And so the Prince would never tell her one word.

But when the King was dead, which happened about two years afterward, and he saw himself lord and master, he openly declared his marriage; and he went in great ceremony to conduct his Queen to the palace. They made a magnificent entry into the capital city, she riding between her two children.

Soon after the King went to make war with the Emperor Contalabutte, his neighbor. He left the government of the kingdom to the Queen his mother, and earnestly recommended to her care his wife and children. He was obliged to continue his expedition all the summer, and as soon as he departed the Queen-mother sent her daughter-in-law to a country house among the woods, that she might with the more ease gratify her horrible longing.

Some few days afterward she went thither herself, and said to her clerk of the kitchen:

“I have a mind to eat little Morning for my dinner to-morrow.”

“Ah! madam,” cried the clerk of the kitchen.

“I will have it so,” replied the Queen (and this she spoke in the tone of an Ogress who had a strong desire to eat fresh meat), “and will eat her with a sauce Robert.”

The poor man, knowing very well that he must not play tricks with Ogresses, took his great knife and went up into little Morning’s chamber. She was then four years old, and came up to him jumping and laughing, to take him about the neck, and ask him for some sugar-candy. Upon which he began to weep, the great knife fell out of his hand, and he went into the back yard, and killed a little lamb, and dressed it with such good sauce that his mistress assured him that she had never eaten anything so good in her life. He had at the same time taken up little Morning, and carried her to his wife, to conceal her in the lodging he had at the bottom of the courtyard.

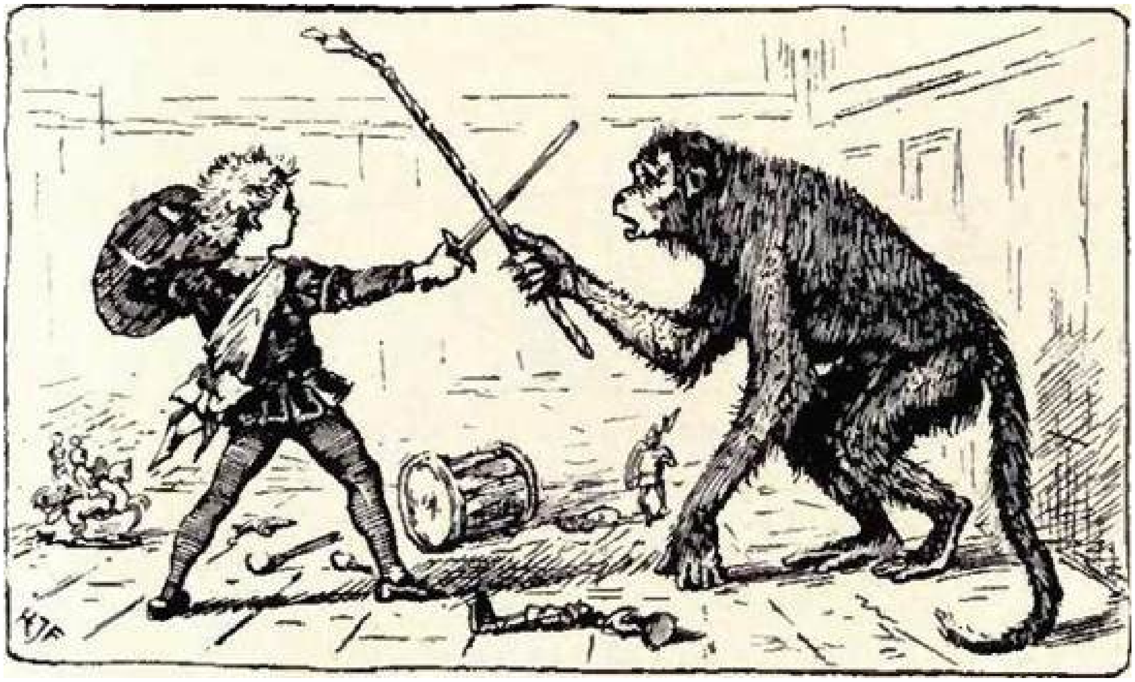

About eight days afterward the wicked Queen said to the clerk of the kitchen, “I will sup on little Day.”

He answered not a word, being resolved to cheat her as he had done before. He went to find out little Day, and saw him with a little foil in his hand, with which he was fencing with a great monkey, the child being then only three years of age. He took him up in his arms and carried him to his wife, that she might conceal him in her chamber along with his sister, and in the room of little Day cooked up a young kid, very tender, which the Ogress found to be wonderfully good.

This was hitherto all mighty well; but one evening this wicked Queen said to her clerk of the kitchen:

“I will eat the Queen with the same sauce I had with her children.”

It was now that the poor clerk of the kitchen despaired of being able to deceive her. The young Queen was turned of twenty, not reckoning the hundred years she had been asleep; and how to find in the yard a beast so firm was what puzzled him. He took then a resolution, that he might save his own life, to cut the Queen’s throat; and going up into her chamber, with intent to do it at once, he put himself into as great fury as he could possibly, and came into the young Queen’s room with his dagger in his hand. He would not, however, surprise her, but told her, with a great deal of respect, the orders he had received from the Queen-mother.

“Do it; do it” (said she, stretching out her neck). “Execute your orders, and then I shall go and see my children, my poor children, whom I so much and so tenderly loved.”

For she thought them dead ever since they had been taken away without her knowledge.

“No, no, madam” (cried the poor clerk of the kitchen, all in tears); “you shall not die, and yet you shall see your children again; but then you must go home with me to my lodgings, where I have concealed them, and I shall deceive the Queen once more, by giving her in your stead a young hind.”

Upon this he forthwith conducted her to his chamber, where, leaving her to embrace her children, and cry along with them, he went and dressed a young hind, which the Queen had for her supper, and devoured it with the same appetite as if it had been the young Queen. Exceedingly was she delighted with her cruelty, and she had invented a story to tell the King, at his return, how the mad wolves had eaten up the Queen his wife and her two children.

One evening, as she was, according to her custom, rambling round about the courts and yards of the palace to see if she could smell any fresh meat, she heard, in a ground room, little Day crying, for his mamma was going to whip him, because he had been naughty; and she heard, at the same time, little Morning begging pardon for her brother.

The Ogress presently knew the voice of the Queen and her children, and being quite mad that she had been thus deceived, she commanded next morning, by break of day (with a most horrible voice, which made everybody tremble), that they should bring into the middle of the great court a large tub, which she caused to be filled with toads, vipers, snakes, and all sorts of serpents, in order to have thrown into it the Queen and her children, the clerk of the kitchen, his wife and maid; all whom she had given orders should be brought thither with their hands tied behind them.

They were brought out accordingly, and the executioners were just going to throw them into the tub, when the King (who was not so soon expected) entered the court on horseback (for he came post) and asked, with the utmost astonishment, what was the meaning of that horrible spectacle.

No one dared to tell him, when the Ogress, all enraged to see what had happened, threw herself head foremost into the tub, and was instantly devoured by the ugly creatures she had ordered to be thrown into it for others. The King could not but be very sorry, for she was his mother; but he soon comforted himself with his beautiful wife and his pretty children.

CINDERELLA, OR THE LITTLE GLASS SLIPPER

Once there was a gentleman who married, for his second wife, the proudest and most haughty woman that was ever seen. She had, by a former husband, two daughters of her own humor, who were, indeed, exactly like her in all things. He had likewise, by another wife, a young daughter, but of unparalleled goodness and sweetness of temper, which she took from her mother, who was the best creature in the world.

No sooner were the ceremonies of the wedding over but the mother-in-law began to show herself in her true colors. She could not bear the good qualities of this pretty girl, and the less because they made her own daughters appear the more odious. She employed her in the meanest work of the house: she scoured the dishes, tables, etc., and scrubbed madam’s chamber, and those of misses, her daughters; she lay up in a sorry garret, upon a wretched straw bed, while her sisters lay in fine rooms, with floors all inlaid, upon beds of the very newest fashion, and where they had looking-glasses so large that they might see themselves at their full length from head to foot.

The poor girl bore all patiently, and dared not tell her father, who would have rattled her off; for his wife governed him entirely. When she had done her work, she used to go into the chimney-corner, and sit down among cinders and ashes, which made her commonly be called Cinderwench; but the youngest, who was not so rude and uncivil as the eldest, called her Cinderella. However, Cinderella, notwithstanding her mean apparel, was a hundred times handsomer than her sisters, though they were always dressed very richly.

It happened that the King’s son gave a ball, and invited all persons of fashion to it. Our young misses were also invited, for they cut a very grand figure among the quality. They were mightily delighted at this invitation, and wonderfully busy in choosing out such gowns, petticoats, and head-clothes as might become them. This was a new trouble to Cinderella; for it was she who ironed her sisters’ linen, and plaited their ruffles; they talked all day long of nothing but how they should be dressed.

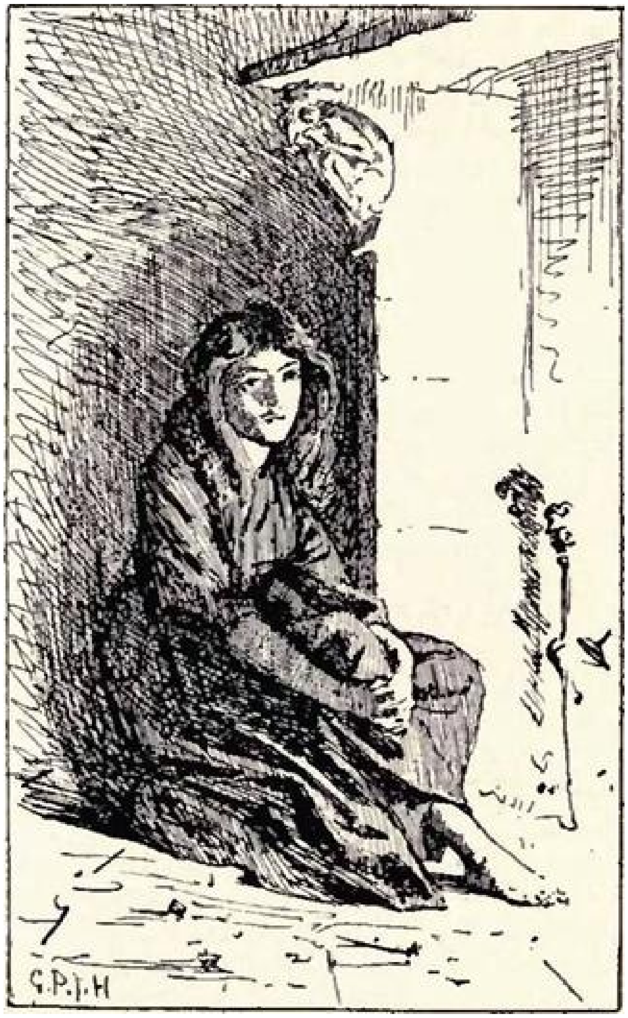

“For my part,” said the eldest, “I will wear my red velvet suit with French trimming.”

“And I,” said the youngest, “shall have my usual petticoat; but then, to make amends for that, I will put on my gold-flowered manteau, and my diamond stomacher, which is far from being the most ordinary one in the world.”

They sent for the best tire-woman they could get to make up their headdresses and adjust their double pinners, and they had their red brushes and patches from Mademoiselle de la Poche.

Cinderella was likewise called up to them to be consulted in all these matters, for she had excellent notions, and advised them always for the best, nay, and offered her services to dress their heads, which they were very willing she should do. As she was doing this, they said to her:

“Cinderella, would you not be glad to go to the ball?”

“Alas!” said she, “you only jeer me; it is not for such as I am to go thither.”

“Thou art in the right of it,” replied they; “it would make the people laugh to see a Cinderwench at a ball.”

Anyone but Cinderella would have dressed their heads awry, but she was very good, and dressed them perfectly well They were almost two days without eating, so much were they transported with joy. They broke above a dozen laces in trying to be laced up close, that they might have a fine slender shape, and they were continually at their looking-glass. At last the happy day came; they went to Court, and Cinderella followed them with her eyes as long as she could, and when she had lost sight of them, she fell a-crying.

Her godmother, who saw her all in tears, asked her what was the matter.

“I wish I could — I wish I could—”; she was not able to speak the rest, being interrupted by her tears and sobbing.

This godmother of hers, who was a fairy, said to her, “Thou wishest thou couldst go to the ball; is it not so?”

“Y — es,” cried Cinderella, with a great sigh.

“Well,” said her godmother, “be but a good girl, and I will contrive that thou shalt go.” Then she took her into her chamber, and said to her, “Run into the garden, and bring me a pumpkin.”

Cinderella went immediately to gather the finest she could get, and brought it to her godmother, not being able to imagine how this pumpkin could make her go to the ball. Her godmother scooped out all the inside of it, having left nothing but the rind; which done, she struck it with her wand, and the pumpkin was instantly turned into a fine coach, gilded all over with gold.

She then went to look into her mouse-trap, where she found six mice, all alive, and ordered Cinderella to lift up a little the trapdoor, when, giving each mouse, as it went out, a little tap with her wand, the mouse was that moment turned into a fine horse, which altogether made a very fine set of six horses of a beautiful mouse-colored dapple-gray. Being at a loss for a coachman,

“I will go and see,” says Cinderella, “if there is never a rat in the rat-trap — we may make a coachman of him.”

“Thou art in the right,” replied her godmother; “go and look.”

Cinderella brought the trap to her, and in it there were three huge rats. The fairy made choice of one of the three which had the largest beard, and, having touched him with her wand, he was turned into a fat, jolly coachman, who had the smartest whiskers eyes ever beheld. After that, she said to her:

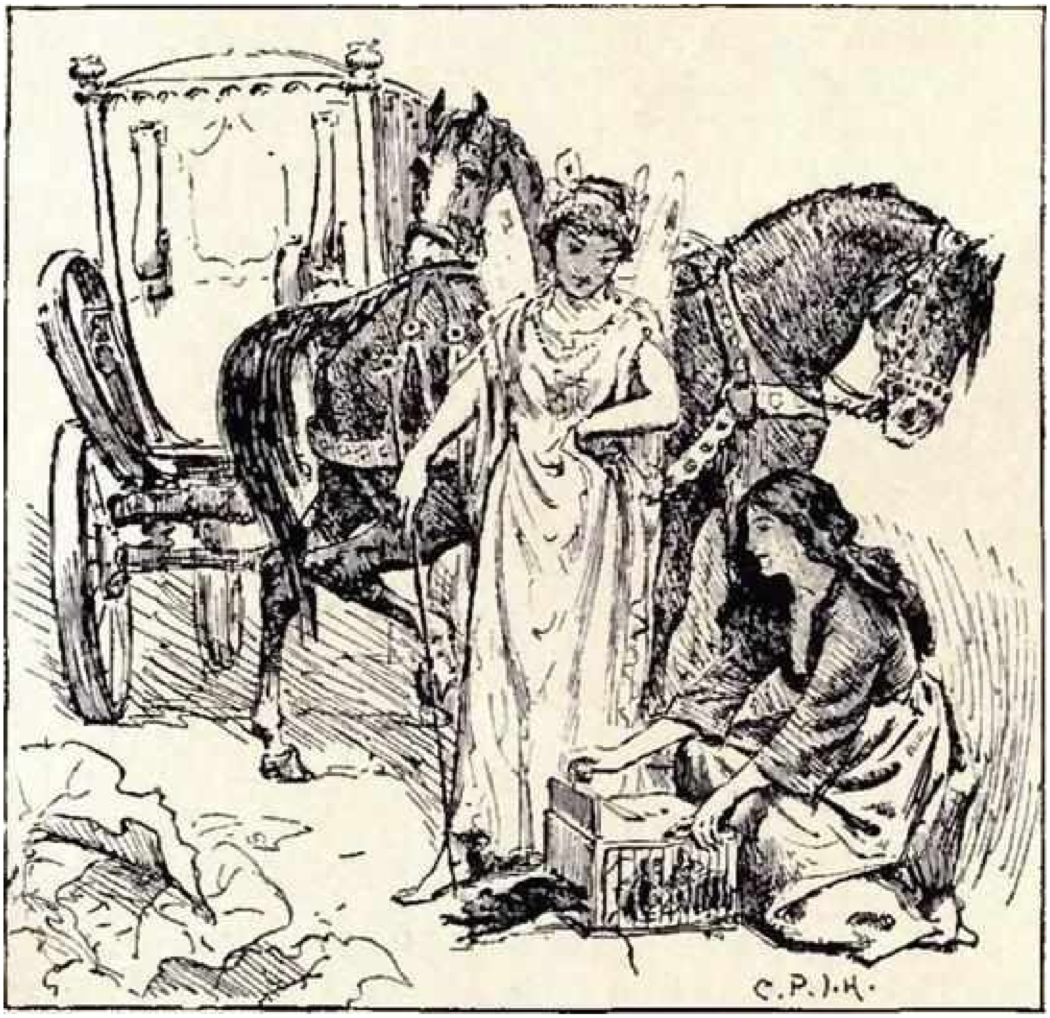

“Go again into the garden, and you will find six lizards behind the watering-pot, bring them to me.”

She had no sooner done so but her godmother turned them into six footmen, who skipped up immediately behind the coach, with their liveries all bedaubed with gold and silver, and clung as close behind each other as if they had done nothing else their whole lives. The Fairy then said to Cinderella:

“Well, you see here an equipage fit to go to the ball with; are you not pleased with it?”

“Oh! yes,” cried she; “but must I go thither as I am, in these nasty rags?”

Her godmother only just touched her with her wand, and, at the same instant, her clothes were turned into cloth of gold and silver, all beset with jewels. This done, she gave her a pair of glass slippers, the prettiest in the whole world. Being thus decked out, she got up into her coach; but her godmother, above all things, commanded her not to stay till after midnight, telling her, at the same time, that if she stayed one moment longer, the coach would be a pumpkin again, her horses mice, her coachman a rat, her footmen lizards, and her clothes become just as they were before.

She promised her godmother she would not fail of leaving the ball before midnight; and then away she drives, scarce able to contain herself for joy. The King’s son who was told that a great princess, whom nobody knew, was come, ran out to receive her; he gave her his hand as she alighted out of the coach, and led her into the ball, among all the company. There was immediately a profound silence, they left off dancing, and the violins ceased to play, so attentive was everyone to contemplate the singular beauties of the unknown new-comer. Nothing was then heard but a confused noise of:

“Ha! how handsome she is! Ha! how handsome she is!”

The King himself, old as he was, could not help watching her, and telling the Queen softly that it was a long time since he had seen so beautiful and lovely a creature.

All the ladies were busied in considering her clothes and headdress, that they might have some made next day after the same pattern, provided they could meet with such fine material and as able hands to make them.

The King’s son conducted her to the most honorable seat, and afterward took her out to dance with him; she danced so very gracefully that they all more and more admired her. A fine collation was served up, whereof the young prince ate not a morsel, so intently was he busied in gazing on her.

She went and sat down by her sisters, showing them a thousand civilities, giving them part of the oranges and citrons which the Prince had presented her with, which very much surprised them, for they did not know her. While Cinderella was thus amusing her sisters, she heard the clock strike eleven and three-quarters, whereupon she immediately made a courtesy to the company and hasted away as fast as she could.

When she got home she ran to seek out her godmother, and, after having thanked her, she said she could not but heartily wish she might go next day to the ball, because the King’s son had desired her.

As she was eagerly telling her godmother whatever had passed at the ball, her two sisters knocked at the door, which Cinderella ran and opened.

“How long you have stayed!” cried she, gaping, rubbing her eyes and stretching herself as if she had been just waked out of her sleep; she had not, however, any manner of inclination to sleep since they went from home.

“If thou hadst been at the ball,” said one of her sisters, “thou wouldst not have been tired with it. There came thither the finest princess, the most beautiful ever was seen with mortal eyes; she showed us a thousand civilities, and gave us oranges and citrons.”

Cinderella seemed very indifferent in the matter; indeed, she asked them the name of that princess; but they told her they did not know it, and that the King’s son was very uneasy on her account and would give all the world to know who she was. At this Cinderella, smiling, replied:

“She must, then, be very beautiful indeed; how happy you have been! Could not I see her? Ah! dear Miss Charlotte, do lend me your yellow suit of clothes which you wear every day.”

“Ay, to be sure!” cried Miss Charlotte; “lend my clothes to such a dirty Cinderwench as thou art! I should be a fool.”

Cinderella, indeed, expected well such answer, and was very glad of the refusal; for she would have been sadly put to it if her sister had lent her what she asked for jestingly.

The next day the two sisters were at the ball, and so was Cinderella, but dressed more magnificently than before. The King’s son was always by her, and never ceased his compliments and kind speeches to her; to whom all this was so far from being tiresome that she quite forgot what her godmother had recommended to her; so that she, at last, counted the clock striking twelve when she took it to be no more than eleven; she then rose up and fled, as nimble as a deer. The Prince followed, but could not overtake her. She left behind one of her glass slippers, which the Prince took up most carefully. She got home but quite out of breath, and in her nasty old clothes, having nothing left her of all her finery but one of the little slippers, fellow to that she dropped. The guards at the palace gate were asked:

If they had not seen a princess go out.

Who said: They had seen nobody go out but a young girl, very meanly dressed, and who had more the air of a poor country wench than a gentlewoman.

When the two sisters returned from the ball Cinderella asked them: If they had been well diverted, and if the fine lady had been there.

They told her: Yes, but that she hurried away immediately when it struck twelve, and with so much haste that she dropped one of her little glass slippers, the prettiest in the world, which the King’s son had taken up; that he had done nothing but look at her all the time at the ball, and that most certainly he was very much in love with the beautiful person who owned the glass slipper.

What they said was very true; for a few days after the King’s son caused it to be proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, that he would marry her whose foot the slipper would just fit. They whom he employed began to try it upon the princesses, then the duchesses and all the Court, but in vain; it was brought to the two sisters, who did all they possibly could to thrust their foot into the slipper, but they could not effect it. Cinderella, who saw all this, and knew her slipper, said to them, laughing:

“Let me see if it will not fit me.”

Her sisters burst out a-laughing, and began to banter her. The gentleman who was sent to try the slipper looked earnestly at Cinderella, and, finding her very handsome, said:

It was but just that she should try, and that he had orders to let everyone make trial.

He obliged Cinderella to sit down, and, putting the slipper to her foot, he found it went on very easily, and fitted her as if it had been made of wax. The astonishment her two sisters were in was excessively great, but still abundantly greater when Cinderella pulled out of her pocket the other slipper, and put it on her foot. Thereupon, in came her godmother, who, having touched with her wand Cinderella’s clothes, made them richer and more magnificent than any of those she had before.

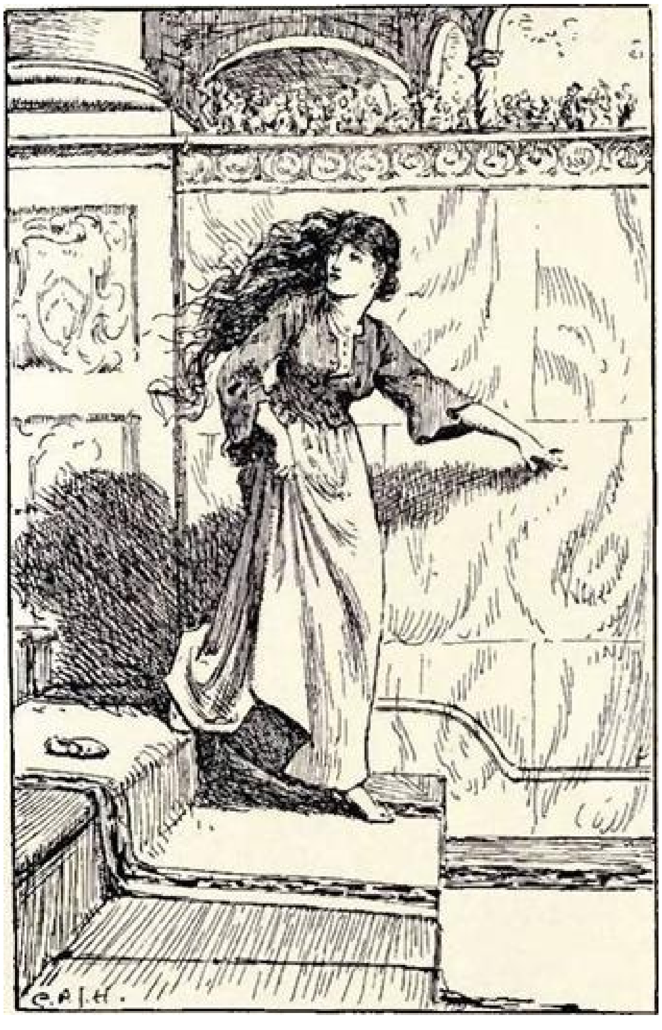

And now her two sisters found her to be that fine, beautiful lady whom they had seen at the ball. They threw themselves at her feet to beg pardon for all the ill-treatment they had made her undergo. Cinderella took them up, and, as she embraced them, cried:

That she forgave them with all her heart, and desired them always to love her.

She was conducted to the young prince, dressed as she was; he thought her more charming than ever, and, a few days after, married her. Cinderella, who was no less good than beautiful, gave her two sisters lodgings in the palace, and that very same day matched them with two great lords of the Court.(1)

(1) Charles Perrault.

ALADDIN AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP

There once lived a poor tailor, who had a son called Aladdin, a careless, idle boy who would do nothing but play ball all day long in the streets with little idle boys like himself. This so grieved the father that he died; yet, in spite of his mother’s tears and prayers, Aladdin did not mend his ways. One day, when he was playing in the streets as usual, a stranger asked him his age, and if he was not the son of Mustapha the tailor. “I am, sir,” replied Aladdin; “but he died a long while ago.” On this the stranger, who was a famous African magician, fell on his neck and kissed him, saying, “I am your uncle, and knew you from your likeness to my brother. Go to your mother and tell her I am coming.” Aladdin ran home and told his mother of his newly found uncle. “Indeed, child,” she said, “your father had a brother, but I always thought he was dead.” However, she prepared supper, and bade Aladdin seek his uncle, who came laden with wine and fruit. He presently fell down and kissed the place where Mustapha used to sit, bidding Aladdin’s mother not to be surprised at not having seen him before, as he had been forty years out of the country. He then turned to Aladdin, and asked him his trade, at which the boy hung his head, while his mother burst into tears. On learning that Aladdin was idle and would learn no trade, he offered to take a shop for him and stock it with merchandise. Next day he bought Aladdin a fine suit of clothes and took him all over the city, showing him the sights, and brought him home at nightfall to his mother, who was overjoyed to see her son so fine.

The next day the magician led Aladdin into some beautiful gardens a long way outside the city gates. They sat down by a fountain and the magician pulled a cake from his girdle, which he divided between them. They then journeyed onward till they almost reached the mountains. Aladdin was so tired that he begged to go back, but the magician beguiled him with pleasant stories, and led him on in spite of himself. At last they came to two mountains divided by a narrow valley. “We will go no farther,” said the false uncle. “I will show you something wonderful; only do you gather up sticks while I kindle a fire.” When it was lit the magician threw on it a powder he had about him, at the same time saying some magical words. The earth trembled a little and opened in front of them, disclosing a square flat stone with a brass ring in the middle to raise it by. Aladdin tried to run away, but the magician caught him and gave him a blow that knocked him down. “What have I done, uncle?” he said piteously; whereupon the magician said more kindly: “Fear nothing, but obey me. Beneath this stone lies a treasure which is to be yours, and no one else may touch it, so you must do exactly as I tell you.” At the word treasure Aladdin forgot his fears, and grasped the ring as he was told, saying the names of his father and grandfather. The stone came up quite easily, and some steps appeared. “Go down,” said the magician; “at the foot of those steps you will find an open door leading into three large halls. Tuck up your gown and go through them without touching anything, or you will die instantly. These halls lead into a garden of fine fruit trees. Walk on until you come to a niche in a terrace where stands a lighted lamp. Pour out the oil it contains, and bring it to me.” He drew a ring from his finger and gave it to Aladdin, bidding him prosper.

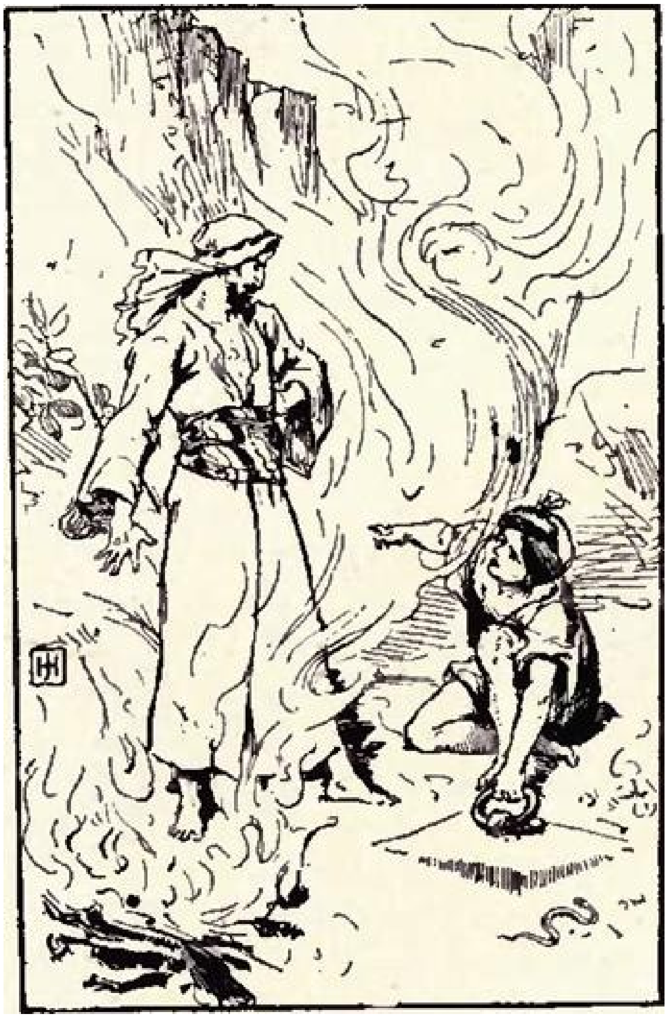

Aladdin found everything as the magician had said, gathered some fruit off the trees, and, having got the lamp, arrived at the mouth of the cave. The magician cried out in a great hurry: “Make haste and give me the lamp.” This Aladdin refused to do until he was out of the cave. The magician flew into a terrible passion, and throwing some more powder on to the fire, he said something, and the stone rolled back into its place.

The magician left Persia for ever, which plainly showed that he was no uncle of Aladdin’s, but a cunning magician, who had read in his magic books of a wonderful lamp, which would make him the most powerful man in the world. Though he alone knew where to find it, he could only receive it from the hand of another. He had picked out the foolish Aladdin for this purpose, intending to get the lamp and kill him afterward.

For two days Aladdin remained in the dark, crying and lamenting. At last he clasped his hands in prayer, and in so doing rubbed the ring, which the magician had forgotten to take from him. Immediately an enormous and frightful genie rose out of the earth, saying: “What wouldst thou with me? I am the Slave of the Ring, and will obey thee in all things.” Aladdin fearlessly replied: “Deliver me from this place!” whereupon the earth opened, and he found himself outside. As soon as his eyes could bear the light he went home, but fainted on the threshold. When he came to himself he told his mother what had passed, and showed her the lamp and the fruits he had gathered in the garden, which were, in reality, precious stones. He then asked for some food. “Alas! child,” she said, “I have nothing in the house, but I have spun a little cotton and will go and sell it.” Aladdin bade her keep her cotton, for he would sell the lamp instead. As it was very dirty she began to rub it, that it might fetch a higher price. Instantly a hideous genie appeared, and asked what she would have. She fainted away, but Aladdin, snatching the lamp, said boldly: “Fetch me something to eat!” The genie returned with a silver bowl, twelve silver plates containing rich meats, two silver cups, and two bottles of wine. Aladdin’s mother, when she came to herself, said: “Whence comes this splendid feast?” “Ask not, but eat,” replied Aladdin. So they sat at breakfast till it was dinner-time, and Aladdin told his mother about the lamp. She begged him to sell it, and have nothing to do with devils. “No,” said Aladdin, “since chance hath made us aware of its virtues, we will use it, and the ring likewise, which I shall always wear on my finger.” When they had eaten all the genie had brought, Aladdin sold one of the silver plates, and so on until none were left. He then had recourse to the genie, who gave him another set of plates, and thus they lived for many years.

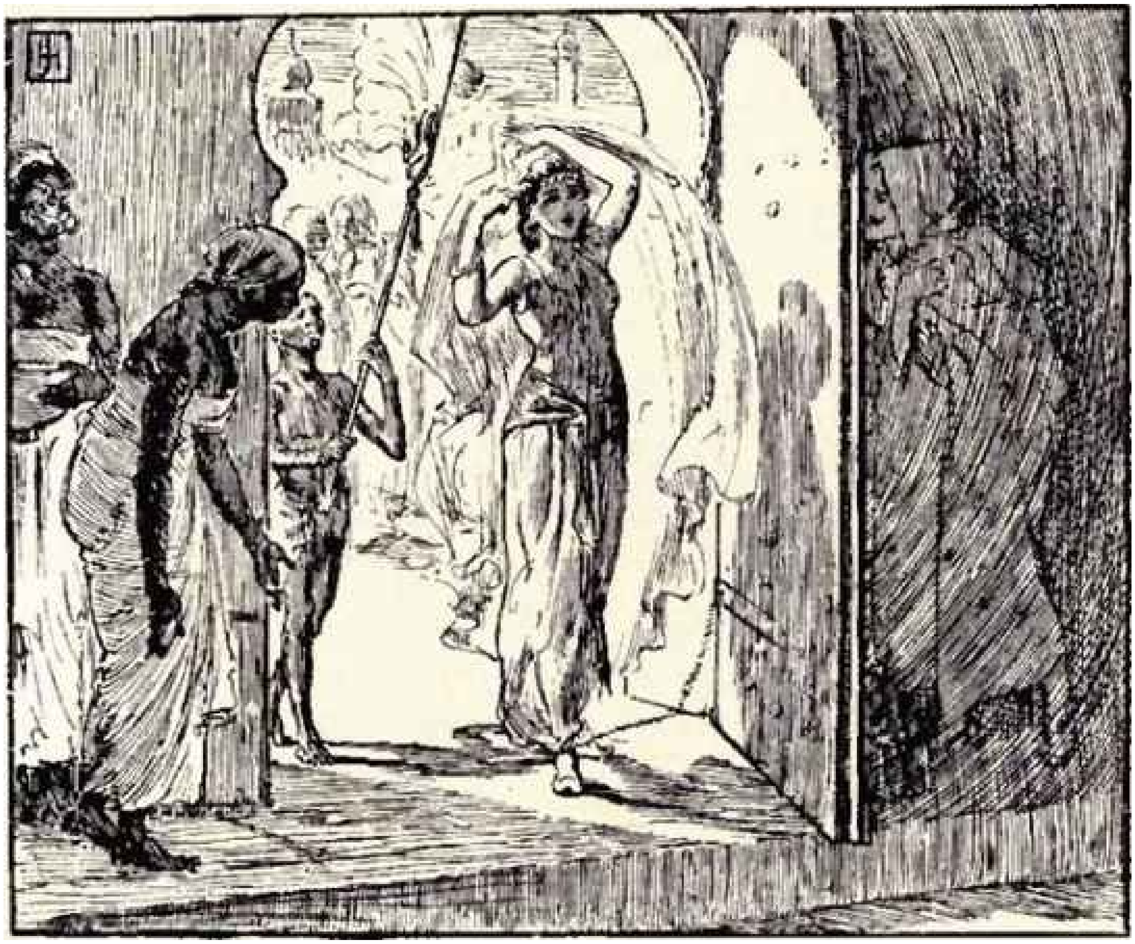

One day Aladdin heard an order from the Sultan proclaimed that everyone was to stay at home and close his shutters while the Princess, his daughter, went to and from the bath. Aladdin was seized by a desire to see her face, which was very difficult, as she always went veiled. He hid himself behind the door of the bath, and peeped through a chink. The Princess lifted her veil as she went in, and looked so beautiful that Aladdin fell in love with her at first sight. He went home so changed that his mother was frightened. He told her he loved the Princess so deeply that he could not live without her, and meant to ask her in marriage of her father. His mother, on hearing this, burst out laughing, but Aladdin at last prevailed upon her to go before the Sultan and carry his request. She fetched a napkin and laid in it the magic fruits from the enchanted garden, which sparkled and shone like the most beautiful jewels. She took these with her to please the Sultan, and set out, trusting in the lamp. The Grand Vizier and the lords of council had just gone in as she entered the hall and placed herself in front of the Sultan. He, however, took no notice of her. She went every day for a week, and stood in the same place. When the council broke up on the sixth day the Sultan said to his Vizier: “I see a certain woman in the audience-chamber every day carrying something in a napkin. Call her next time, that I may find out what she wants.” Next day, at a sign from the Vizier, she went up to the foot of the throne and remained kneeling till the Sultan said to her: “Rise, good woman, and tell me what you want.” She hesitated, so the Sultan sent away all but the Vizier, and bade her speak frankly, promising to forgive her beforehand for anything she might say. She then told him of her son’s violent love for the Princess. “I prayed him to forget her,” she said, “but in vain; he threatened to do some desperate deed if I refused to go and ask your Majesty for the hand of the Princess. Now I pray you to forgive not me alone, but my son Aladdin.” The Sultan asked her kindly what she had in the napkin, whereupon she unfolded the jewels and presented them. He was thunderstruck, and turning to the Vizier said: “What sayest thou? Ought I not to bestow the Princess on one who values her at such a price?” The Vizier, who wanted her for his own son, begged the Sultan to withhold her for three months, in the course of which he hoped his son would contrive to make him a richer present. The Sultan granted this, and told Aladdin’s mother that, though he consented to the marriage, she must not appear before him again for three months.

Aladdin waited patiently for nearly three months, but after two had elapsed his mother, going into the city to buy oil, found every one rejoicing, and asked what was going on. “Do you not know,” was the answer, “that the son of the Grand Vizier is to marry the Sultan’s daughter to-night?” Breathless, she ran and told Aladdin, who was overwhelmed at first, but presently bethought him of the lamp. He rubbed it, and the genie appeared, saying, “What is thy will?” Aladdin replied: “The Sultan, as thou knowest, has broken his promise to me, and the Vizier’s son is to have the Princess. My command is that to-night you bring hither the bride and bridegroom.” “Master, I obey,” said the genie. Aladdin then went to his chamber, where, sure enough, at midnight the genie transported the bed containing the Vizier’s son and the Princess. “Take this new-married man,” he said, “and put him outside in the cold, and return at daybreak.” Whereupon the genie took the Vizier’s son out of bed, leaving Aladdin with the Princess. “Fear nothing,” Aladdin said to her; “you are my wife, promised to me by your unjust father, and no harm shall come to you.” The Princess was too frightened to speak, and passed the most miserable night of her life, while Aladdin lay down beside her and slept soundly. At the appointed hour the genie fetched in the shivering bridegroom, laid him in his place, and transported the bed back to the palace.

Presently the Sultan came to wish his daughter good-morning. The unhappy Vizier’s son jumped up and hid himself, while the Princess would not say a word, and was very sorrowful. The Sultan sent her mother to her, who said:

“How comes it, child, that you will not speak to your father? What has happened?” The Princess sighed deeply, and at last told her mother how, during the night, the bed had been carried into some strange house, and what had passed there. Her mother did not believe her in the least, but bade her rise and consider it an idle dream.

The following night exactly the same thing happened, and next morning, on the Princess’s refusal to speak, the Sultan threatened to cut off her head. She then confessed all, bidding him to ask the Vizier’s son if it were not so. The Sultan told the Vizier to ask his son, who owned the truth, adding that, dearly as he loved the Princess, he had rather die than go through another such fearful night, and wished to be separated from her. His wish was granted, and there was an end to feasting and rejoicing.

When the three months were over, Aladdin sent his mother to remind the Sultan of his promise. She stood in the same place as before, and the Sultan, who had forgotten Aladdin, at once remembered him, and sent for her. On seeing her poverty the Sultan felt less inclined than ever to keep his word, and asked his Vizier’s advice, who counselled him to set so high a value on the Princess that no man living could come up to it. The Sultan then turned to Aladdin’s mother, saying: “Good woman, a Sultan must remember his promises, and I will remember mine, but your son must first send me forty basins of gold brimful of jewels, carried by forty black slaves, led by as many white ones, splendidly dressed. Tell him that I await his answer.” The mother of Aladdin bowed low and went home, thinking all was lost. She gave Aladdin the message, adding: “He may wait long enough for your answer!” “Not so long, mother, as you think,” her son replied. “I would do a great deal more than that for the Princess.” He summoned the genie, and in a few moments the eighty slaves arrived, and filled up the small house and garden. Aladdin made them set out to the palace, two and two, followed by his mother. They were so richly dressed, with such splendid jewels in their girdles, that everyone crowded to see them and the basins of gold they carried on their heads. They entered the palace, and, after kneeling before the Sultan, stood in a half-circle round the throne with their arms crossed, while Aladdin’s mother presented them to the Sultan. He hesitated no longer, but said: “Good woman, return and tell your son that I wait for him with open arms.” She lost no time in telling Aladdin, bidding him make haste. But Aladdin first called the genie. “I want a scented bath,” he said, “a richly embroidered habit, a horse surpassing the Sultan’s, and twenty slaves to attend me. Besides this, six slaves, beautifully dressed, to wait on my mother; and lastly, ten thousand pieces of gold in ten purses.” No sooner said than done. Aladdin mounted his horse and passed through the streets, the slaves strewing gold as they went. Those who had played with him in his childhood knew him not, he had grown so handsome. When the Sultan saw him he came down from his throne, embraced him, and led him into a hall where a feast was spread, intending to marry him to the Princess that very day. But Aladdin refused, saying, “I must build a palace fit for her,” and took his leave. Once home, he said to the genie: “Build me a palace of the finest marble, set with jasper, agate, and other precious stones. In the middle you shall build me a large hall with a dome, its four walls of massy gold and silver, each having six windows, whose lattices, all except one which is to be left unfinished, must be set with diamonds and rubies. There must be stables and horses and grooms and slaves; go and see about it!”

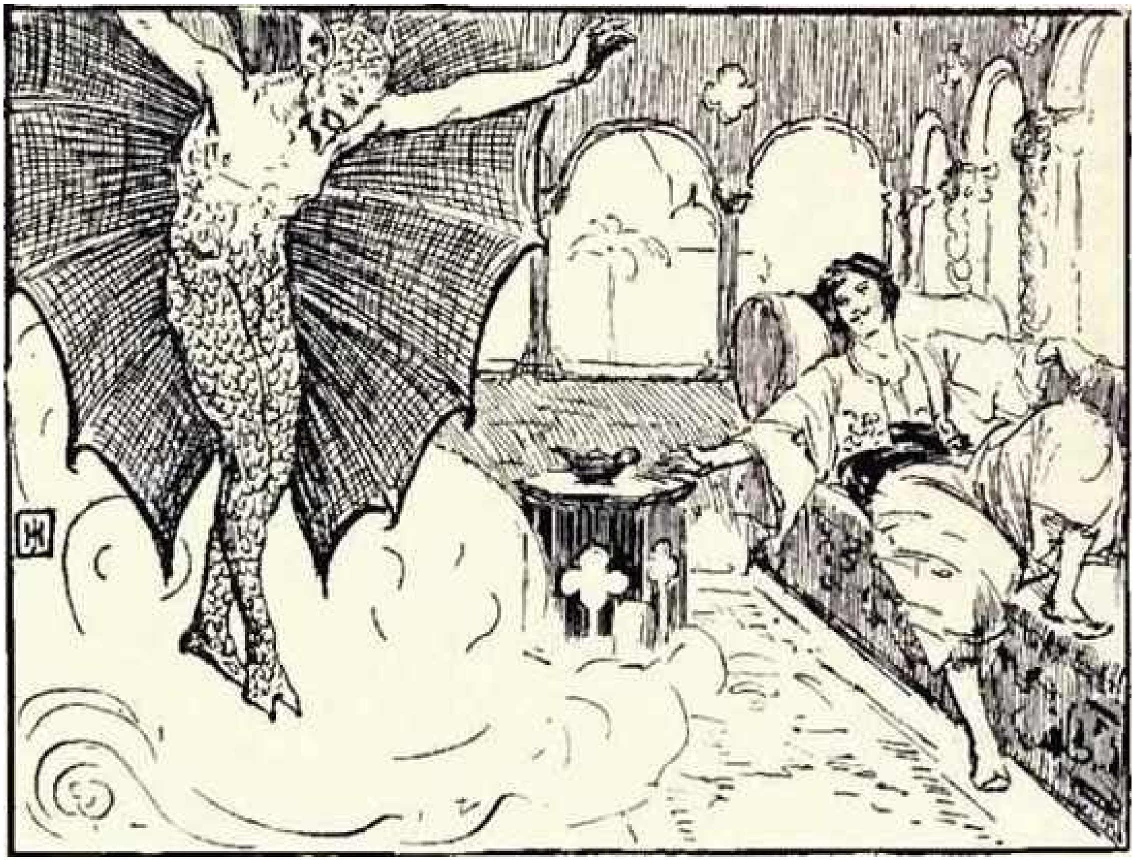

The palace was finished by the next day, and the genie carried him there and showed him all his orders faithfully carried out, even to the laying of a velvet carpet from Aladdin’s palace to the Sultan’s. Aladdin’s mother then dressed herself carefully, and walked to the palace with her slaves, while he followed her on horseback. The Sultan sent musicians with trumpets and cymbals to meet them, so that the air resounded with music and cheers. She was taken to the

Princess, who saluted her and treated her with great honor. At night the Princess said good-by to her father, and set out on the carpet for Aladdin's palace, with his mother at her side, and followed by the hundred slaves. She was charmed at the sight of Aladdin, who ran to receive her. "Princess," he said, "blame your beauty for my boldness if I have displeased you." She told him that, having seen him, she willingly obeyed her father in this matter. After the wedding had taken place Aladdin led her into the hall, where a feast was spread, and she supped with him, after which they danced till midnight. Next day Aladdin invited the Sultan to see the palace. On entering the hall with the four-and-twenty windows, with their rubies, diamonds, and emeralds, he cried: "It is a world's wonder! There is only one thing that surprises me. Was it by accident that one window was left unfinished?" "No, sir, by design," returned Aladdin. "I wished your Majesty to have the glory of finishing this palace." The Sultan was pleased, and sent for the best jewelers in the city. He showed them the unfinished window, and bade them fit it up like the others. "Sir," replied their spokesman, "we cannot find jewels enough." The Sultan had his own fetched, which they soon used, but to no purpose, for in a month's time the work was not half done. Aladdin, knowing that their task was vain, bade them undo their work and carry the jewels back, and the genie finished the window at his command. The Sultan was surprised to receive his jewels again, and visited Aladdin, who showed him the window finished. The Sultan embraced him, the envious Vizier meanwhile hinting that it was the work of enchantment.

Aladdin had won the hearts of the people by his gentle bearing. He was made captain of the Sultan's armies, and won several battles for him, but remained modest and courteous as before, and lived thus in peace and content for several years.

But far away in Africa the magician remembered Aladdin, and by his magic arts discovered that Aladdin, instead of perishing miserably in the cave, had escaped, and had married a princess, with whom he was living in great honor and wealth. He knew that the poor tailor's son could only have accomplished this by means of the lamp, and traveled night and day until he reached the capital of China, bent on Aladdin's ruin. As he passed through the town he heard people talking everywhere about a marvellous palace. "Forgive my ignorance," he asked, "what is this palace you speak Of?" "Have you not heard of Prince Aladdin's palace," was the reply, "the greatest wonder of the world? I will direct you if you have a mind to see it." The magician thanked him who spoke, and having seen the palace, knew that it had been raised by the Genie of the Lamp, and became half mad with rage. He determined to get hold of the lamp, and again plunge Aladdin into the deepest poverty.

Unluckily, Aladdin had gone a-hunting for eight days, which gave the magician plenty of time. He bought a dozen copper lamps, put them into a basket, and went to the palace, crying: “New lamps for old!” followed by a jeering crowd. The Princess, sitting in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, sent a slave to find out what the noise was about, who came back laughing, so that the Princess scolded her. “Madam,” replied the slave, “who can help laughing to see an old fool offering to exchange fine new lamps for old ones?” Another slave, hearing this, said: “There is an old one on the cornice there which he can have.” Now this was the magic lamp, which Aladdin had left there, as he could not take it out hunting with him. The Princess, not knowing its value, laughingly bade the slave take it and make the exchange. She went and said to the magician: “Give me a new lamp for this.” He snatched it and bade the slave take her choice, amid the jeers of the crowd. Little he cared, but left off crying his lamps, and went out of the city gates to a lonely place, where he remained till nightfall, when he pulled out the lamp and rubbed it. The genie appeared, and at the magician’s command carried him, together with the palace and the Princess in it, to a lonely place in Africa.

Next morning the Sultan looked out of the window toward Aladdin’s palace and rubbed his eyes, for it was gone. He sent for the Vizier and asked what had become of the palace. The Vizier looked out too, and was lost in astonishment. He again put it down to enchantment, and this time the Sultan believed him, and sent thirty men on horseback to fetch Aladdin in chains. They met him riding home, bound him, and forced him to go with them on foot. The people, however, who loved him, followed, armed, to see that he came to no harm. He was carried before the Sultan, who ordered the executioner to cut off his head. The executioner made Aladdin kneel down, bandaged his eyes, and raised his scimitar to strike. At that instant the Vizier, who saw that the crowd had forced their way into the courtyard and were scaling the walls to rescue Aladdin, called to the executioner to stay his hand. The people, indeed, looked so threatening that the Sultan gave way and ordered Aladdin to be unbound, and pardoned him in the sight of the crowd. Aladdin now begged to know what he had done. “False wretch!” said the Sultan, “come thither,” and showed him from the window the place where his palace had stood. Aladdin was so amazed that he could not say a word. “Where is my palace and my daughter?” demanded the Sultan. “For the first I am not so deeply concerned, but my daughter I must have, and you must find her or lose your head.” Aladdin begged for forty days in which to find her, promising, if he failed, to return and suffer death at the Sultan’s pleasure. His prayer was granted, and he went forth sadly from the Sultan’s presence. For three days he wandered about like a madman, asking everyone what had become of his palace, but they only laughed and pitied him. He came to the banks of a river, and knelt down to say his prayers before throwing himself in. In so doing he rubbed the magic ring he still wore. The genie he had seen in the cave appeared, and asked his will. “Save my life, genie,” said Aladdin, “bring my palace back.” “That is not in my power,” said the genie; “I am only the Slave of the Ring; you must ask him of the lamp.” “Even so,” said Aladdin, “but thou canst take me to the palace, and set me down under my dear wife’s window.” He at once found himself in Africa, under the window of the Princess, and fell asleep out of sheer weariness.

He was awakened by the singing of the birds, and his heart was lighter. He saw plainly that all his misfortunes were owing to the loss of the lamp, and vainly wondered who had robbed him of it.

That morning the Princess rose earlier than she had done since she had been carried into Africa by the magician, whose company she was forced to endure once a day. She, however, treated him so harshly that he dared not live there altogether. As she was dressing, one of her women looked out and saw Aladdin. The Princess ran and opened the window, and at the noise she made Aladdin looked up. She called to him to come to her, and great was the joy of these lovers at seeing each other again.

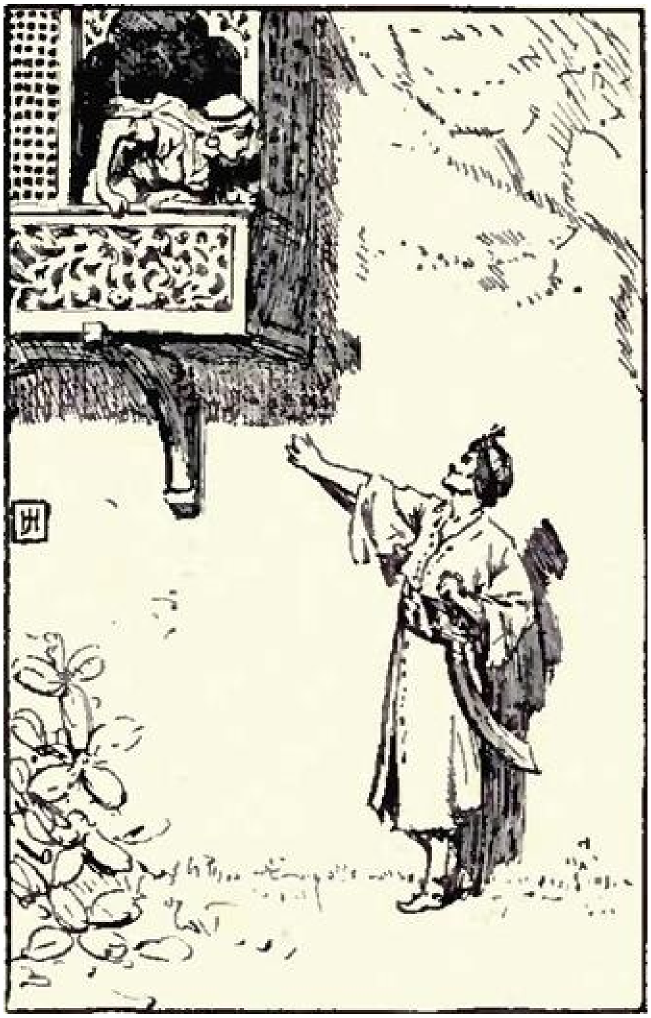

After he had kissed her Aladdin said: “I beg of you, Princess, in God’s name, before we speak of anything else, for your own sake and mine, tell me that has become of an old lamp I left on the cornice in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, when I went a-hunting.” “Alas!” she said, “I am the innocent cause of our sorrows,” and told him of the exchange of the lamp. “Now I know,” cried Aladdin, “that we have to thank the African magician for this! Where is the lamp?” “He carries it about with him,” said the Princess. “I know, for he pulled it out of his breast to show me. He wishes me to break my faith with you and marry him, saying that you were beheaded by my father’s command. He is for ever speaking ill of you but I only reply by my tears. If I persist, I doubt not but he will use violence.” Aladdin comforted her, and left her for a while. He changed clothes with the first person he met in the town, and having bought a certain powder, returned to the Princess, who let him in by a little side door. “Put on your most beautiful dress,” he said to her “and receive the magician with smiles, leading him to believe that you have forgotten me. Invite him to sup with you, and say you wish to taste the wine of his country. He will go for some and while he is gone I will tell you what to do." She listened carefully to Aladdin and when he left she arrayed herself gaily for the first time since she left China. She put on a girdle and head-dress of diamonds, and, seeing in a glass that she was more beautiful than ever, received the magician, saying, to his great amazement: "I have made up my mind that Aladdin is dead, and that all my tears will not bring him back to me, so I am resolved to mourn no more, and have therefore invited you to sup with me; but I am tired of the wines of China, and would fain taste those of Africa." The magician flew to his cellar, and the Princess put the powder Aladdin had given her in her cup. When he returned she asked him to drink her health in the wine of Africa, handing him her cup in exchange for his, as a sign she was reconciled to him. Before drinking the magician made her a speech in praise of her beauty, but the Princess cut him short, saying: "Let us drink first, and you shall say what you will afterward." She set her cup to her lips and kept it there, while the magician drained his to the dregs and fell back lifeless. The Princess then opened the door to Aladdin, and flung her arms round his neck; but Aladdin put her away, bidding her leave him, as he had more to do. He then went to the dead magician, took the lamp out of his vest, and bade the genie carry the palace and all in it back to China. This was done, and the Princess in her chamber only felt two little shocks, and little thought she was at home again.

The Sultan, who was sitting in his closet, mourning for his lost daughter, happened to look up, and rubbed his eyes, for there stood the palace as before! He hastened thither, and Aladdin received him in the hall of the four-and-twenty windows, with the Princess at his side. Aladdin told him what had happened, and showed him the dead body of the magician, that he might believe. A ten days' feast was proclaimed, and it seemed as if Aladdin might now live the rest of his life in peace; but it was not to be.

The African magician had a younger brother, who was, if possible, more wicked and more cunning than himself. He traveled to China to avenge his brother's death, and went to visit a pious woman called Fatima, thinking she might be of use to him. He entered her cell and clapped a dagger to her breast, telling her to rise and do his bidding on pain of death. He changed clothes with her, colored his face like hers, put on her veil, and murdered her, that she might tell no tales. Then he went toward the palace of Aladdin, and all the people, thinking he was the holy woman, gathered round him, kissing his hands and begging his blessing. When he got to the palace there was such a noise going on round him that the Princess bade her slave look out of the window and ask what was the matter. The slave said it was the holy woman, curing people by her touch of their ailments, whereupon the Princess, who had long desired to see

Fatima, sent for her. On coming to the Princess the magician offered up a prayer for her health and prosperity. When he had done the Princess made him sit by her, and begged him to stay with her always. The false Fatima, who wished for nothing better, consented, but kept his veil down for fear of discovery. The Princess showed him the hall, and asked him what he thought of it. “It is truly beautiful,” said the false Fatima. “In my mind it wants but one thing.” “And what is that?” said the Princess. “If only a roc’s egg,” replied he, “were hung up from the middle of this dome, it would be the wonder of the world.”

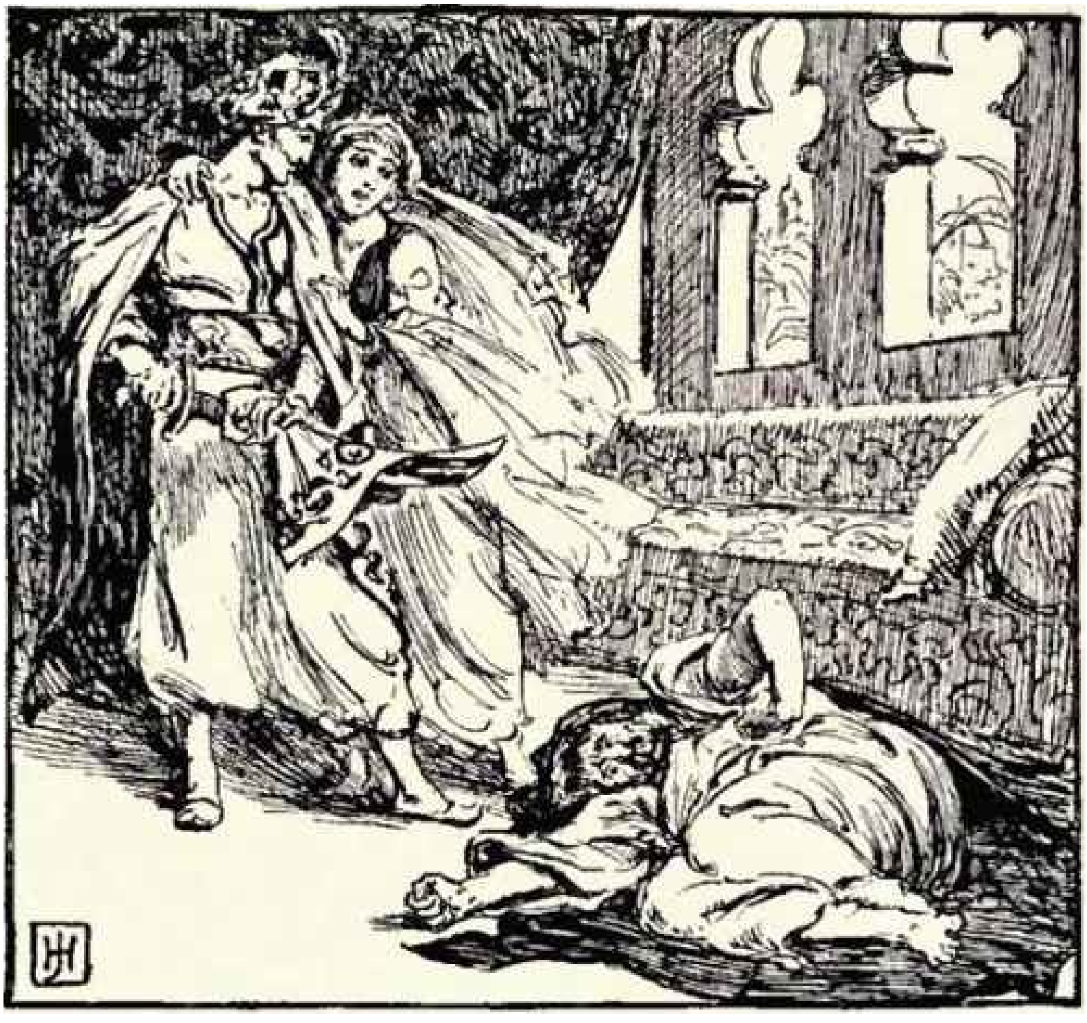

After this the Princess could think of nothing but the roc’s egg, and when Aladdin returned from hunting he found her in a very ill humor. He begged to know what was amiss, and she told him that all her pleasure in the hall was spoiled for the want of a roc’s egg hanging from the dome. “If that is all,” replied Aladdin, “you shall soon be happy.” He left her and rubbed the lamp, and when the genie appeared commanded him to bring a roc’s egg. The genie gave such a loud and terrible shriek that the hall shook. “Wretch!” he cried, “is it not enough that I have done everything for you, but you must command me to bring my master and hang him up in the midst of this dome? You and your wife and your palace deserve to be burnt to ashes, but that this request does not come from you, but from the brother of the African magician, whom you destroyed. He is now in your palace disguised as the holy woman — whom he murdered. He it was who put that wish into your wife’s head. Take care of yourself, for he means to kill you.” So saying, the genie disappeared.

Aladdin went back to the Princess, saying his head ached, and requesting that the holy Fatima should be fetched to lay her hands on it. But when the magician came near, Aladdin, seizing his dagger, pierced him to the heart. “What have you done?” cried the Princess. “You have killed the holy woman!” “Not so,” replied Aladdin, “but a wicked magician,” and told her of how she had been deceived.

After this Aladdin and his wife lived in peace. He succeeded the Sultan when he died, and reigned for many years, leaving behind him a long line of kings.(1)

(1) Arabian Nights.

THE TALE OF A YOUTH WHO SET OUT TO LEARN WHAT FEAR WAS

A father had two sons, of whom the eldest was clever and bright, and always knew what he was about; but the youngest was stupid, and couldn't learn or understand anything. So much so that those who saw him exclaimed: "What a burden he'll be to his father!" Now when there was anything to be done, the eldest had always to do it; but if something was required later or in the night-time, and the way led through the churchyard or some such ghostly place, he always replied: "Oh! no, father: nothing will induce me to go there, it makes me shudder!" for he was afraid. Or, when they sat of an evening around the fire telling stories which made one's flesh creep, the listeners sometimes said: "Oh! it makes one shudder," the youngest sat in a corner, heard the exclamation, and could not understand what it meant. "They are always saying it makes one shudder! it makes one shudder! Nothing makes me shudder. It's probably an art quite beyond me."

Now it happened that his father said to him one day: "Hearken, you there in the corner; you are growing big and strong, and you must learn to earn your own bread. Look at your brother, what pains he takes; but all the money I've spent on your education is thrown away." "My dear father," he replied, "I will gladly learn — in fact, if it were possible I should like to learn to shudder; I don't understand that a bit yet." The eldest laughed when he heard this, and thought to himself: "Good heavens! what a ninny my brother is! he'll never come to any good; as the twig is bent, so is the tree inclined." The father sighed, and answered him: "You'll soon learn to shudder; but that won't help you to make a living."

Shortly after this, when the sexton came to pay them a visit, the father broke out to him, and told him what a bad hand his youngest son was at everything: he knew nothing and learned nothing. "Only think! when I asked him how he purposed gaining a livelihood, he actually asked to be taught to shudder." "If that's all he wants," said the sexton, "I can teach him that; just you send him to me, I'll soon polish him up." The father was quite pleased with the proposal, because he thought: "It will be a good discipline for the youth." And so the sexton took him into his house, and his duty was to toll the bell. After a few days he woke him at midnight, and bade him rise and climb into the tower and toll.

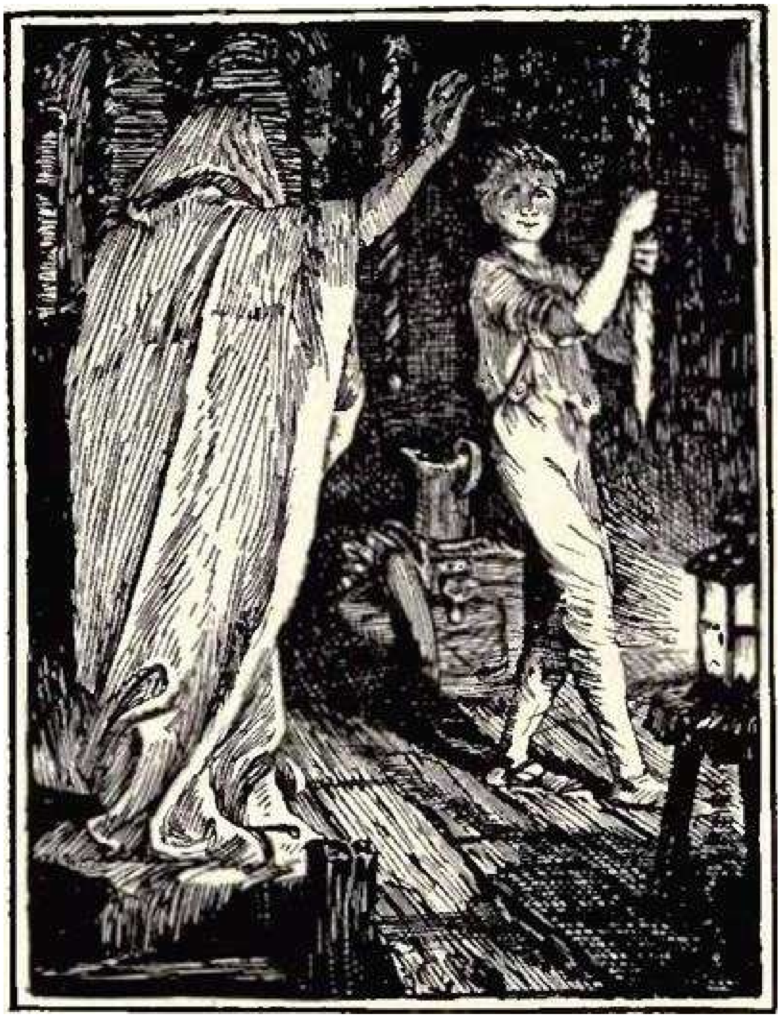

“Now, my friend, I’ll teach you to shudder,” thought he. He stole forth secretly in front, and when the youth was up above, and had turned round to grasp the bell-rope, he saw, standing opposite the hole of the belfry, a white figure. “Who’s there?” he called out, but the figure gave no answer, and neither stirred nor moved. “Answer,” cried the youth, “or begone; you have no business here at this hour of the night.” But the sexton remained motionless, so that the youth might think that it was a ghost. The youth called out the second time: “What do you want here? Speak if you are an honest fellow, or I’ll knock you down the stairs.” The sexton thought: “He can’t mean that in earnest,” so gave forth no sound, and stood as though he were made of stone. Then the youth shouted out to him the third time, and as that too had no effect, he made a dash at the spectre and knocked it down the stairs, so that it fell about ten steps and remained lying in a corner. Thereupon he tolled the bell, went home to bed without saying a word, and fell asleep. The sexton’s wife waited a long time for her husband, but he never appeared. At last she became anxious, and woke the youth, and asked: “Don’t you know where my husband is? He went up to the tower in front of you." "No," answered the youth; "but someone stood on the stairs up there just opposite the trap-door in the belfry, and because he wouldn't answer me, or go away, I took him for a rogue and knocked him down. You'd better go and see if it was he; I should be much distressed if it were." The wife ran and found her husband who was lying groaning in a corner, with his leg broken.

She carried him down, and then hurried with loud protestations to the youth's father. "Your son has been the cause of a pretty misfortune," she cried; "he threw my husband downstairs so that he broke his leg. Take the good-for-nothing wretch out of our house." The father was horrified, hurried to the youth, and gave him a scolding.

"What unholy pranks are these? The evil one must have put them into your head." "Father," he replied, "only listen to me; I am quite guiltless. He stood there in the night, like one who meant harm. I didn't know who it was, and warned him three times to speak or begone." "Oh!" groaned the father, "you'll bring me nothing but misfortune; get out of my sight, I won't have anything more to do with you." "Yes, father, willingly; only wait till daylight, then I'll set out and learn to shudder, and in that way I shall be master of an art which will gain me a living." "Learn what you will," said the father, "it's all one to me. Here are fifty dollars for you, set forth into the wide world with them; but see you tell no one where you come from or who your father is, for I am ashamed of you." "Yes, father, whatever you wish; and if that's all you ask, I can easily keep it in mind."

When day broke the youth put the fifty dollars into his pocket, set out on the hard high road, and kept muttering to himself: "If I could only shudder! if I could only shudder!" Just at this moment a man came by who heard the youth speaking to himself, and when they had gone on a bit and were in sight of the gallows the man said to him: "Look! there is the tree where seven people have been hanged, and are now learning to fly; sit down under it and wait till nightfall, and then you'll pretty soon learn to shudder." "If that's all I have to do," answered the youth, "it's easily done; but if I learn to shudder so quickly, then you shall have my fifty dollars. Just come back to me to-morrow morning early." Then the youth went to the gallows-tree and sat down underneath it, and waited for the evening; and because he felt cold he lit himself a fire. But at midnight it got so chill that in spite of the fire he couldn't keep warm. And as the wind blew the corpses one against the other, tossing them to and fro, he thought to himself: "If you are perishing down here by the fire, how those poor things up there must be shaking and shivering!" And because he had a tender heart, he put up a ladder, which he climbed unhooked one body after the other, and took down all the seven. Then he stirred the fire, blew it up, and placed them all round in a circle, that they might warm themselves. But they sat there and did not move, and the fire caught their clothes. Then he spoke: “Take care, or I’ll hang you up again.” But the dead men did not hear and let their rags go on burning. Then he got angry, and said: “If you aren’t careful yourselves, then I can’t help you, and I don’t mean to burn with you”; and he hung them up again in a row. Then he sat down at his fire and fell asleep. On the following morning the man came to him, and, wishing to get his fifty dollars, said: “Now you know what it is to shudder.” “No,” he answered, “how should I? Those fellows up there never opened their mouths, and were so stupid that they let those few old tatters they have on their bodies burn.” Then the man saw he wouldn’t get his fifty dollars that day, and went off, saying: “Well, I’m blessed if I ever met such a person in my life before.”

The youth went too on his way, and began to murmur to himself: “Oh! if I could only shudder! if I could only shudder!” A carrier who was walking behind him heard these words, and asked him: “Who are you” “I don’t know,” said the youth. “Where do you hail from?” “I don’t know.” “Who’s your father?” “I mayn’t say.” “What are you constantly muttering to yourself?” “Oh!” said the youth, “I would give worlds to shudder, but no one can teach me.” “Stuff and nonsense!” spoke the carrier; “come along with me, and I’ll soon put that right.” The youth went with the carrier, and in the evening they reached an inn, where they were to spend the night. Then, just as he was entering the room, he said again, quite aloud: “Oh! if I could only shudder! if I could only shudder!” The landlord, who heard this, laughed and said: “If that’s what you’re sighing for, you shall be given every opportunity here.” “Oh! hold your tongue!” said the landlord’s wife; “so many people have paid for their curiosity with their lives, it were a thousand pities if those beautiful eyes were never again to behold daylight.” But the youth said: “No matter how difficult, I insist on learning it; why, that’s what I’ve set out to do.” He left the landlord no peace till he told him that in the neighborhood stood a haunted castle, where one could easily learn to shudder if one only kept watch in it for three nights. The King had promised the man who dared to do this thing his daughter as wife, and she was the most beautiful maiden under the sun. There was also much treasure hid in the castle, guarded by evil spirits, which would then be free, and was sufficient to make a poor man more than rich. Many had already gone in, but so far none had ever come out again. So the youth went to the King and spoke: “If I were allowed, I should much like to watch for three nights in the castle.” The King looked at him, and because he pleased him, he said: “You can ask for three things, none of them living, and those you may take with you into the castle.” Then he answered: “Well, I shall beg for a fire, a turning lathe, and a carving bench with the knife attached.”

On the following day the King had everything put into the castle; and when night drew on the youth took up his position there, lit a bright fire in one of the rooms, placed the carving bench with the knife close to it, and sat himself down on the turning lathe. “Oh! if I could only shudder!” he said: “but I sha’n’t learn it here either.” Toward midnight he wanted to make up the fire, and as he was blowing up a blaze he heard a shriek from a corner. “Ou, miou! how cold we are!” “You fools!” he cried; “why do you scream? If you are cold, come and sit at the fire and warm yourselves.” And as he spoke two huge black cats sprang fiercely forward and sat down, one on each side of him, and gazed wildly at him with their fiery eyes. After a time, when they had warmed themselves, they said: “Friend, shall we play a little game of cards?” “Why not?” he replied; “but first let me see your paws.” Then they stretched out their claws. “Ha!” said he; “what long nails you’ve got! Wait a minute: I must first cut them off.” Thereupon he seized them by the scruff of their necks, lifted them on to the carving bench, and screwed down their paws firmly. “After watching you narrowly,” said he, “I no longer feel any desire to play cards with you”; and with these words he struck them dead and threw them out into the water. But when he had thus sent the two of them to their final rest, and was again about to sit down at the fire, out of every nook and corner came forth black cats and black dogs with fiery chains in such swarms that he couldn’t possibly get away from them.

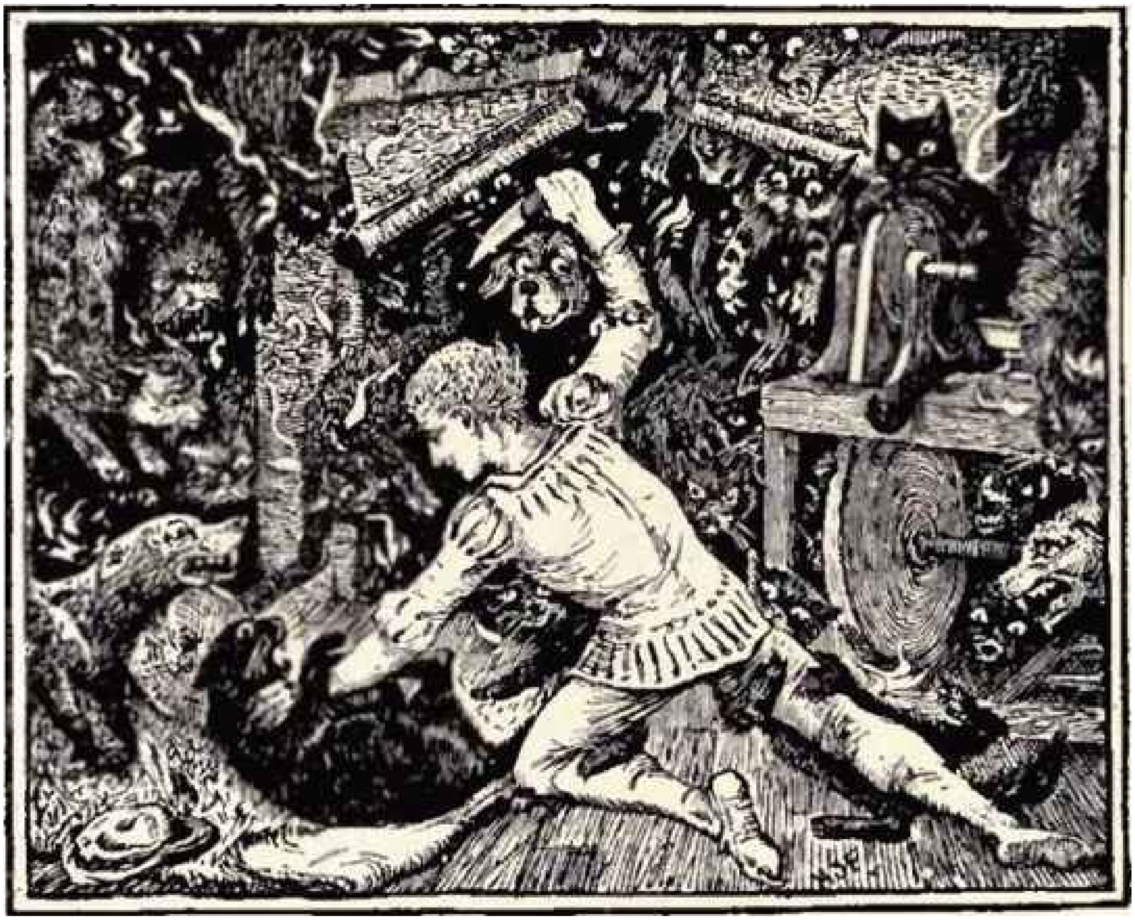

They yelled in the most ghastly manner, jumped upon his fire, scattered it all, and tried to put it out. He looked on quietly for a time, but when it got beyond a joke he seized his carving-knife and called out: “Be off, you rabble rout!” and let fly at them. Some of them fled away, and the others he struck dead and threw them out into the pond below. When he returned he blew up the sparks of the fire once more, and warmed himself. And as he sat thus his eyes refused to keep open any longer, and a desire to sleep stole over him. Then he looked around him and beheld in the corner a large bed. “The very thing,” he said, and laid himself down in it. But when he wished to close his eyes the bed began to move by itself, and ran all round the castle. “Capital,” he said, “only a little quicker.” Then the bed sped on as if drawn by six horses, over thresholds and stairs, up this way and down that. All of a sudden — crash, crash! with a bound it turned over, upside down, and lay like a mountain on the top of him. But he tossed the blankets and pillows in the air, emerged from underneath, and said: “Now anyone who has the fancy for it may go a drive,” lay down at his fire, and slept till daylight. In the morning the King came, and when he beheld him lying on the ground he imagined the ghosts had been too much for him, and that he was dead. Then he said: “What a pity! and such a fine fellow he was.” The youth heard this, got up, and said: “It’s not come to that yet.” Then the King was astonished, but very glad, and asked how it had fared with him. “First-rate,” he answered; “and now I’ve survived the one night, I shall get through the other two also.” The landlord, when he went to him, opened his eyes wide, and said: “Well, I never thought to see you alive again. Have you learned now what shuddering is?” “No,” he replied, “it’s quite hopeless; if someone could only tell me how to!”

The second night he went up again to the old castle, sat down at the fire, and began his old refrain: “If I could only shudder!” As midnight approached, a noise and din broke out, at first gentle, but gradually increasing; then all was quiet for a minute, and at length, with a loud scream, half of a man dropped down the chimney and fell before him. “Hi, up there!” shouted he; “there’s another half wanted down here, that’s not enough”; then the din commenced once more, there was a shrieking and a yelling, and then the other half fell down. “Wait a bit,” he said; “I’ll stir up the fire for you.” When he had done this and again looked around, the two pieces had united, and a horrible-looking man sat on his seat. “Come,” said the youth, “I didn’t bargain for that, the seat is mine.” The man tried to shove him away, but the youth wouldn’t allow it for a moment, and, pushing him off by force, sat down in his place again. Then more men dropped down, one after the other, who fetching nine skeleton legs and two skulls, put them up and played ninepins with them. The youth thought he would like to play too, and said: “Look here; do you mind my joining the game?” “No, not if you have money.” “I’ve money enough,” he replied, “but your balls aren’t round enough.” Then he took the skulls, placed them on his lathe, and turned them till they were round. “Now they’ll roll along better,” said he, “and houp-la! now the fun begins.” He played with them and lost some of his money, but when twelve struck everything vanished before his eyes. He lay down and slept peacefully. The next morning the King came, anxious for news. “How have you got on this time?” he asked. “I played ninepins,” he answered, “and lost a few pence.” “Didn’t you shudder then?” “No such luck,” said he; “I made myself merry. Oh! if I only knew what it was to shudder!”

On the third night he sat down again on his bench, and said, in the most desponding way: “If I could only shudder!” When it got late, six big men came in carrying a coffin. Then he cried: “Ha! ha! that’s most likely my little cousin who only died a few days ago”; and beckoning with his finger he called out: “Come, my small cousin, come.” They placed the coffin on the ground, and he approached it and took off the cover. In it lay a dead man. He felt his face, and it was cold as ice. “Wait,” he said “I’ll heat you up a bit,” went to the fire, warmed his hand, and laid it on the man’s face, but the dead remained cold. Then he lifted him out, sat down at the fire, laid him on his knee, and rubbed his arms that the blood should circulate again. When that too had no effect it occurred to him that if two people lay together in bed they warmed each other; so he put him into the bed, covered him up, and lay down beside him; after a time the corpse became warm and began to move. Then the youth said: “Now, my little cousin, what would have happened if I hadn’t warmed you?” But the dead man rose up and cried out: “Now I will strangle you.” “What!” said he, “is that all the thanks I get? You should be put straight back into your coffin,” lifted him up, threw him in, and closed the lid. Then the six men came and carried him out again. “I simply can’t shudder,” he said, “and it’s clear I sha’n’t learn it in a lifetime here.”

Then a man entered, of more than ordinary size and of a very fearful appearance; but he was old and had a white beard. “Oh! you miserable creature, now you will soon know what it is to shudder,” he cried, “for you must die.” “Not so quickly,” answered the youth. “If I am to die, you must catch me first.” “I shall soon lay hold of you,” spoke the monster. “Gently, gently, don’t boast too much, I’m as strong as you, and stronger too.” “We’ll soon see,” said the old man; “if you are stronger than I then I’ll let you off; come, let’s have a try.” Then he led him through some dark passages to a forge, and grasping an axe he drove one of the anvils with a blow into the earth. “I can do better than that,” cried the youth, and went to the other anvil. The old man drew near him in order to watch closely, and his white beard hung right down. The youth seized the axe, cleft the anvil open, and jammed in the old man’s beard. “Now I have you,” said the youth; “this time it’s your turn to die.” Then he seized an iron rod and belabored the old man till he, whimpering, begged him to leave off, and he would give him great riches. The youth drew out the axe and let him go. The old man led him back to the castle and showed him in a cellar three chests of gold. “One of these,” said he, “belongs to the poor, one to the King, and the third is yours.” At that moment twelve struck, and the spirit vanished, leaving the youth alone in the dark. “I’ll surely be able to find a way out,” said he, and groping about he at length found his way back to the room, and fell asleep at his fire. The next morning the King came, and said: “Well, now you’ve surely learned to shudder?”

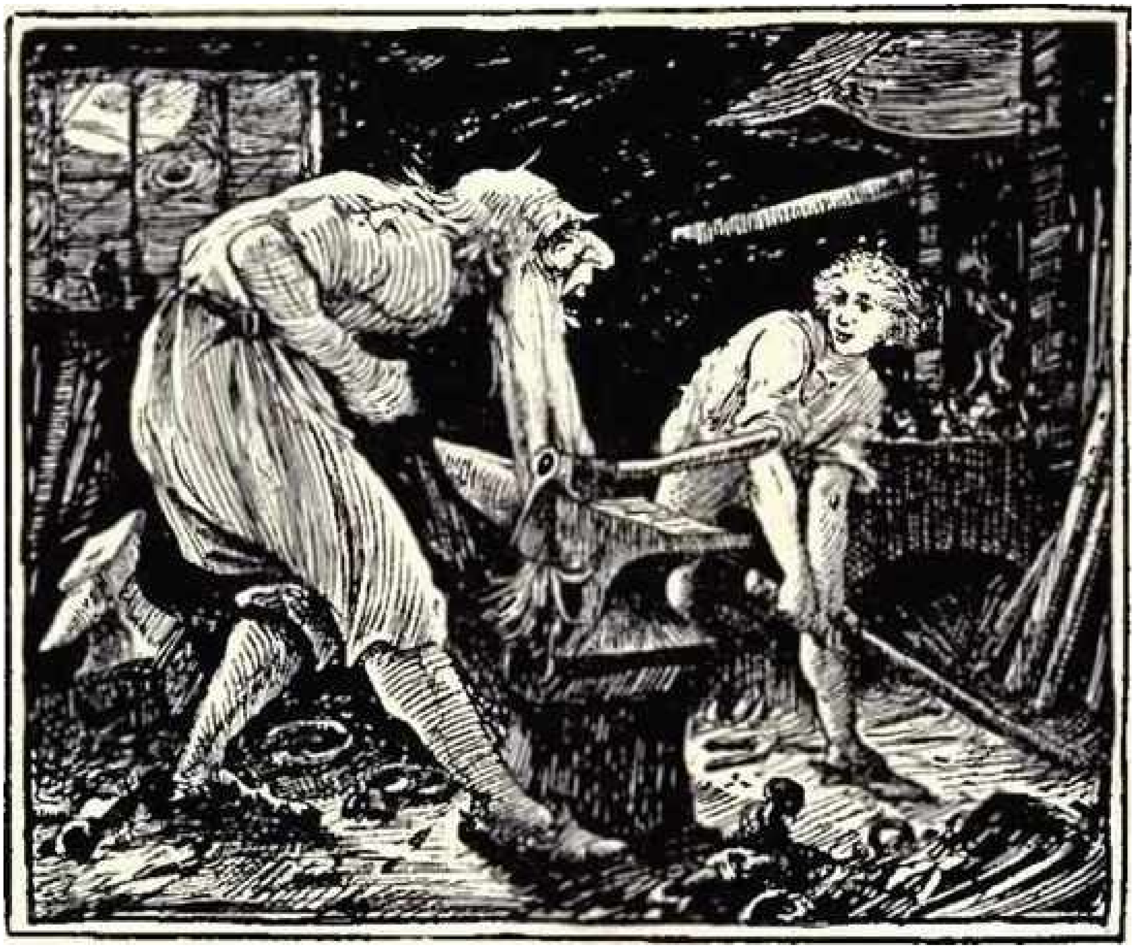

“No,” he answered; “what can it be? My dead cousin was here, and an old bearded man came, who showed me heaps of money down below there, but what shuddering is no one has told me.” Then the King spoke: “You have freed the castle from its curse, and you shall marry my daughter.” “That’s all charming,” he said; “but I still don’t know what it is to shudder.”

Then the gold was brought up, and the wedding was celebrated, but the young King, though he loved his wife dearly, and though he was very happy, still kept on saying: “If I could only shudder! if I could only shudder!” At last he reduced her to despair. Then her maid said: “I’ll help you; we’ll soon make him shudder.” So she went out to the stream that flowed through the garden, and had a pail full of little gudgeons brought to her. At night, when the young King was asleep, his wife had to pull the clothes off him, and pour the pail full of little gudgeons over him, so that the little fish swam all about him. Then he awoke and cried out: “Oh! how I shudder, how I shudder, dear wife! Yes, now I know what shuddering is.”(1)

(1) Grimm.

RUMPELSTILTZKIN

There was once upon a time a poor miller who had a very beautiful daughter. Now it happened one day that he had an audience with the King, and in order to appear a person of some importance he told him that he had a daughter who could spin straw into gold. “Now that’s a talent worth having,” said the King to the miller; “if your daughter is as clever as you say, bring her to my palace to-morrow, and I’ll put her to the test.” When the girl was brought to him he led her into a room full of straw, gave her a spinning-wheel and spindle, and said: “Now set to work and spin all night till early dawn, and if by that time you haven’t spun the straw into gold you shall die.” Then he closed the door behind him and left her alone inside.

So the poor miller’s daughter sat down, and didn’t know what in the world she was to do. She hadn’t the least idea of how to spin straw into gold, and became at last so miserable that she began to cry. Suddenly the door opened, and in stepped a tiny little man and said: “Good-evening, Miss Miller-maid; why are you crying so bitterly?” “Oh!” answered the girl, “I have to spin straw into gold, and haven’t a notion how it’s done.” “What will you give me if I spin it for you?” asked the manikin. “My necklace,” replied the girl. The little man took the necklace, sat himself down at the wheel, and whir, whir, whir, the wheel went round three times, and the bobbin was full. Then he put on another, and whir, whir, whir, the wheel went round three times, and the second too was full; and so it went on till the morning, when all the straw was spun away, and all the bobbins were full of gold. As soon as the sun rose the King came, and when he perceived the gold he was astonished and delighted, but his heart only lusted more than ever after the precious metal. He had the miller’s daughter put into another room full of straw, much bigger than the first, and bade her, if she valued her life, spin it all into gold before the following morning. The girl didn’t know what to do, and began to cry; then the door opened as before, and the tiny little man appeared and said: “What’ll you give me if I spin the straw into gold for you?” “The ring from my finger,” answered the girl.

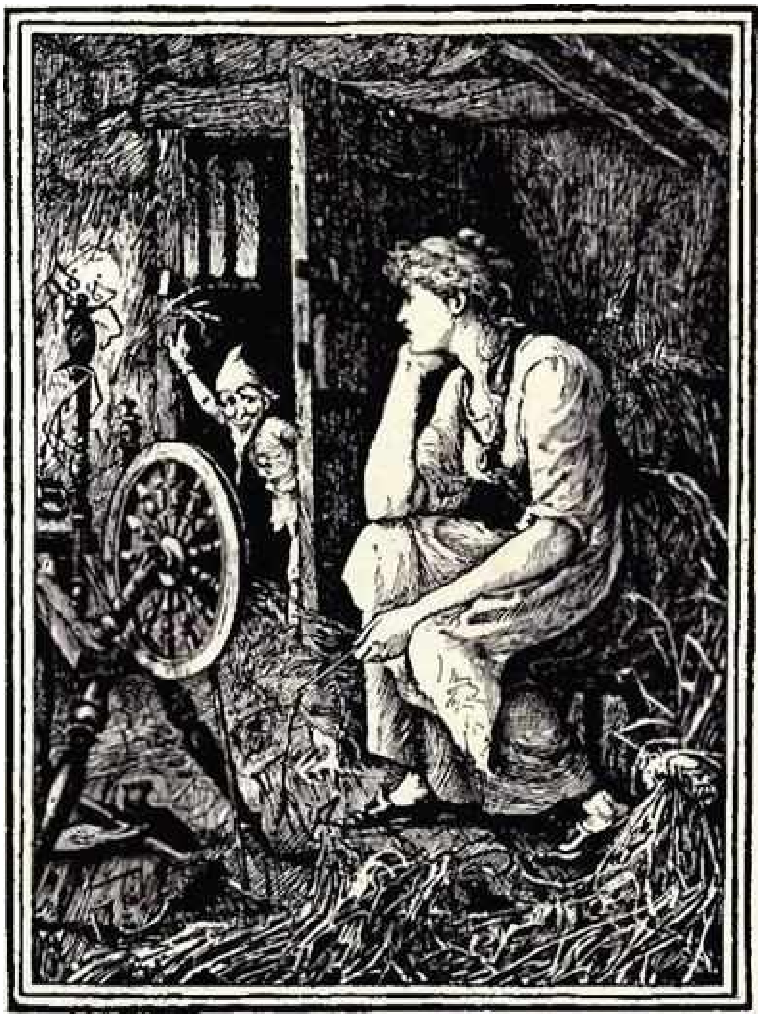

The manikin took the ring, and whir! round went the spinning-wheel again, and when morning broke he had spun all the straw into glittering gold. The King was pleased beyond measure at the sights but his greed for gold was still not satisfied, and he had the miller's daughter brought into a yet bigger room full of straw, and said: "You must spin all this away in the night; but if you succeed this time you shall become my wife." "She's only a miller's daughter, it's true," he thought; "but I couldn't find a richer wife if I were to search the whole world over." When the girl was alone the little man appeared for the third time, and said: "What'll you give me if I spin the straw for you once again?" "I've nothing more to give," answered the girl. "Then promise me when you are Queen to give me your first child." "Who knows what may not happen before that?" thought the miller's daughter; and besides, she saw no other way out of it, so she promised the manikin what he demanded, and he set to work once more and spun the straw into gold. When the King came in the morning, and found everything as he had desired, he straightway made her his wife, and the miller's daughter became a queen.

When a year had passed a beautiful son was born to her, and she thought no more of the little man, till all of a sudden one day he stepped into her room and said: “Now give me what you promised.” The Queen was in a great state, and offered the little man all the riches in her kingdom if he would only leave her the child. But the manikin said: “No, a living creature is dearer to me than all the treasures in the world.” Then the Queen began to cry and sob so bitterly that the little man was sorry for her, and said: “I’ll give you three days to guess my name, and if you find it out in that time you may keep your child.”

Then the Queen pondered the whole night over all the names she had ever heard, and sent a messenger to scour the land, and to pick up far and near any names he could come across. When the little man arrived on the following day she began with Kasper, Melchior, Belshazzar, and all the other names she knew, in a string, but at each one the manikin called out: “That’s not my name.” The next day she sent to inquire the names of all the people in the neighborhood, and had a long list of the most uncommon and extraordinary for the little man when he made his appearance. “Is your name, perhaps, Sheepshanks Cruickshanks, Spindleshanks?” but he always replied: “That’s not my name.” On the third day the messenger returned and announced: “I have not been able to find any new names, but as I came upon a high hill round the corner of the wood, where the foxes and hares bid each other good-night, I saw a little house, and in front of the house burned a fire, and round the fire sprang the most grotesque little man, hopping on one leg and crying:

“To-morrow I brew, to-day I bake,
And then the child away I’ll take;
For little deems my royal dame
That Rumpelstiltzkin is my name!”

You can imagine the Queen’s delight at hearing the name, and when the little man stepped in shortly afterward and asked: “Now, my lady Queen, what’s my name?” she asked first: “Is your name Conrad?” “No.” “Is your name Harry?” “No.” “Is your name perhaps, Rumpelstiltzkin?” “Some demon has told you that! some demon has told you that!” screamed the little man, and in his rage drove his right foot so far into the ground that it sank in up to his waist; then in a passion he seized the left foot with both hands and tore himself in two.(1)

(1) Grimm.

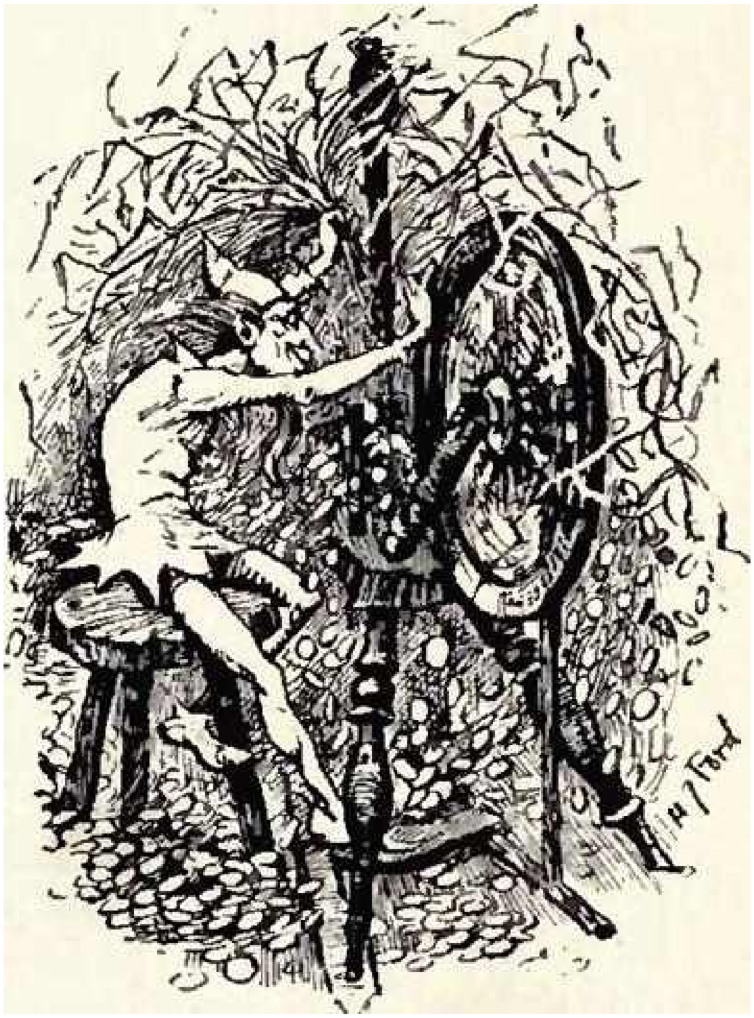
H J Ford

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Once upon a time, in a very far-off country, there lived a merchant who had been so fortunate in all his undertakings that he was enormously rich. As he had, however, six sons and six daughters, he found that his money was not too much to let them all have everything they fancied, as they were accustomed to do.

But one day a most unexpected misfortune befell them. Their house caught fire and was speedily burnt to the ground, with all the splendid furniture, the books, pictures, gold, silver, and precious goods it contained; and this was only the beginning of their troubles. Their father, who had until this moment prospered in all ways, suddenly lost every ship he had upon the sea, either by dint of pirates, shipwreck, or fire. Then he heard that his clerks in distant countries, whom he trusted entirely, had proved unfaithful; and at last from great wealth he fell into the direst poverty.

All that he had left was a little house in a desolate place at least a hundred leagues from the town in which he had lived, and to this he was forced to retreat with his children, who were in despair at the idea of leading such a different life. Indeed, the daughters at first hoped that their friends, who had been so numerous while they were rich, would insist on their staying in their houses now they no longer possessed one. But they soon found that they were left alone, and that their former friends even attributed their misfortunes to their own extravagance, and showed no intention of offering them any help. So nothing was left for them but to take their departure to the cottage, which stood in the midst of a dark forest, and seemed to be the most dismal place upon the face of the earth. As they were too poor to have any servants, the girls had to work hard, like peasants, and the sons, for their part, cultivated the fields to earn their living. Roughly clothed, and living in the simplest way, the girls regretted unceasingly the luxuries and amusements of their former life; only the youngest tried to be brave and cheerful. She had been as sad as anyone when misfortune overtook her father, but, soon recovering her natural gaiety, she set to work to make the best of things, to amuse her father and brothers as well as she could, and to try to persuade her sisters to join her in dancing and singing. But they would do nothing of the sort, and, because she was not as doleful as themselves, they declared that this miserable life was all she was fit for. But she was really far prettier and cleverer than they were; indeed, she was so lovely that she was always called Beauty. After two years, when they were all beginning to get used to their new life, something happened to disturb their tranquillity. Their father received the news that one of his ships, which he had believed to be lost, had come safely into port with a rich cargo. All the sons and daughters at once thought that their poverty was at an end, and wanted to set out directly for the town; but their father, who was more prudent, begged them to wait a little, and, though it was harvest time, and he could ill be spared, determined to go himself first, to make inquiries. Only the youngest daughter had any doubt but that they would soon again be as rich as they were before, or at least rich enough to live comfortably in some town where they would find amusement and gay companions once more. So they all loaded their father with commissions for jewels and dresses which it would have taken a fortune to buy; only Beauty, feeling sure that it was of no use, did not ask for anything. Her father, noticing her silence, said: “And what shall I bring for you, Beauty?”

“The only thing I wish for is to see you come home safely,” she answered.

But this only vexed her sisters, who fancied she was blaming them for having asked for such costly things. Her father, however, was pleased, but as he thought that at her age she certainly ought to like pretty presents, he told her to choose something.

“Well, dear father,” she said, “as you insist upon it, I beg that you will bring me a rose. I have not seen one since we came here, and I love them so much.”

So the merchant set out and reached the town as quickly as possible, but only to find that his former companions, believing him to be dead, had divided between them the goods which the ship had brought; and after six months of trouble and expense he found himself as poor as when he started, having been able to recover only just enough to pay the cost of his journey. To make matters worse, he was obliged to leave the town in the most terrible weather, so that by the time he was within a few leagues of his home he was almost exhausted with cold and fatigue. Though he knew it would take some hours to get through the forest, he was so anxious to be at his journey’s end that he resolved to go on; but night overtook him, and the deep snow and bitter frost made it impossible for his horse to carry him any further. Not a house was to be seen; the only shelter he could get was the hollow trunk of a great tree, and there he crouched all the night which seemed to him the longest he had ever known. In spite of his weariness the howling of the wolves kept him awake, and even when at last the day broke he was not much better off, for the falling snow had covered up every path, and he did not know which way to turn.

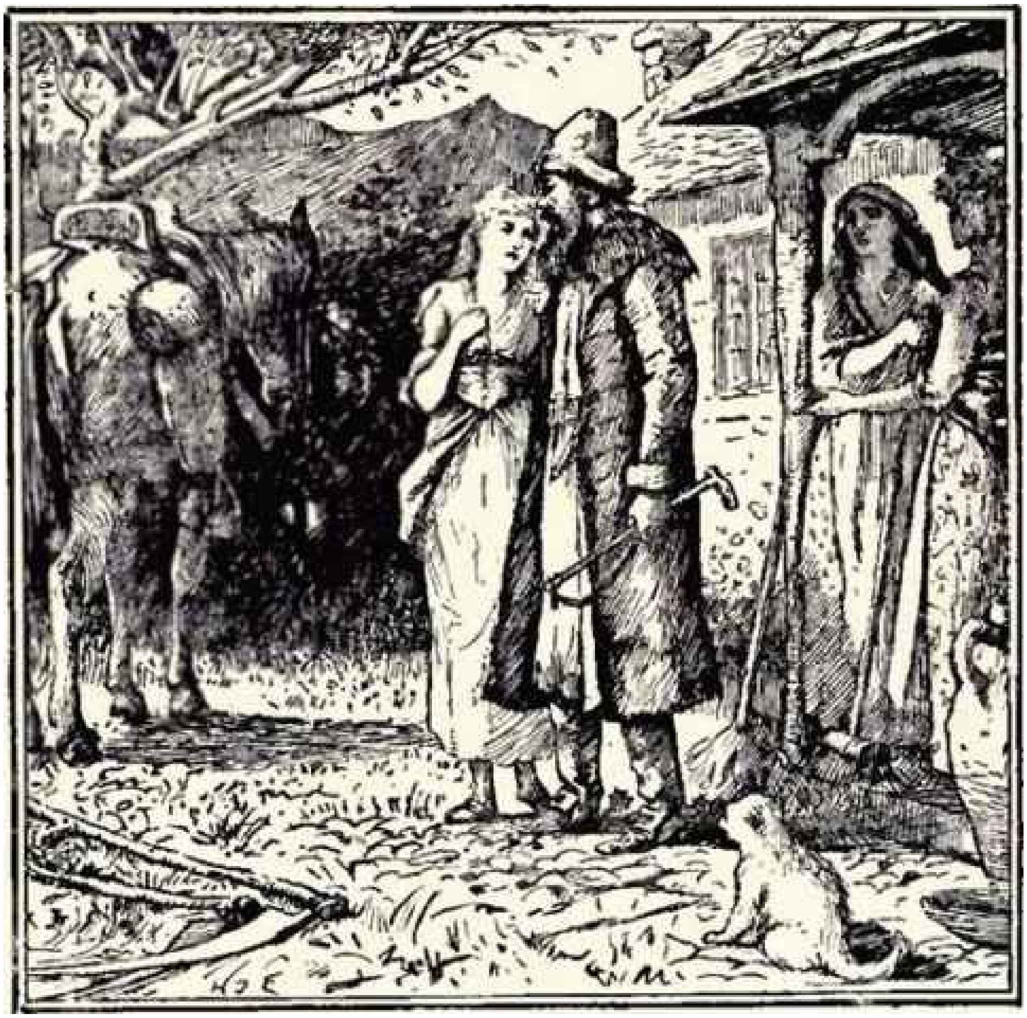

At length he made out some sort of track, and though at the beginning it was so rough and slippery that he fell down more than once, it presently became easier, and led him into an avenue of trees which ended in a splendid castle. It seemed to the merchant very strange that no snow had fallen in the avenue, which was entirely composed of orange trees, covered with flowers and fruit. When he reached the first court of the castle he saw before him a flight of agate steps, and went up them, and passed through several splendidly furnished rooms. The pleasant warmth of the air revived him, and he felt very hungry; but there seemed to be nobody in all this vast and splendid palace whom he could ask to give him something to eat. Deep silence reigned everywhere, and at last, tired of roaming through empty rooms and galleries, he stopped in a room smaller than the rest, where a clear fire was burning and a couch was drawn up closely to it. Thinking that this must be prepared for someone who was expected, he sat down to wait till he should come, and very soon fell into a sweet sleep.

When his extreme hunger wakened him after several hours, he was still alone; but a little table, upon which was a good dinner, had been drawn up close to him, and, as he had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours, he lost no time in beginning his meal, hoping that he might soon have an opportunity of thanking his considerate entertainer, whoever it might be. But no one appeared, and even after another long sleep, from which he awoke completely refreshed, there was no sign of anybody, though a fresh meal of dainty cakes and fruit was prepared upon the little table at his elbow. Being naturally timid, the silence began to terrify him, and he resolved to search once more through all the rooms; but it was of no use. Not even a servant was to be seen; there was no sign of life in the palace! He began to wonder what he should do, and to amuse himself by pretending that all the treasures he saw were his own, and considering how he would divide them among his children. Then he went down into the garden, and though it was winter everywhere else, here the sun shone, and the birds sang, and the flowers bloomed, and the air was soft and sweet. The merchant, in ecstacies with all he saw and heard, said to himself:

“All this must be meant for me. I will go this minute and bring my children to share all these delights.”

In spite of being so cold and weary when he reached the castle, he had taken his horse to the stable and fed it. Now he thought he would saddle it for his homeward journey, and he turned down the path which led to the stable. This path had a hedge of roses on each side of it, and the merchant thought he had never seen or smelt such exquisite flowers. They reminded him of his promise to Beauty, and he stopped and had just gathered one to take to her when he was startled by a strange noise behind him. Turning round, he saw a frightful Beast, which seemed to be very angry and said, in a terrible voice:

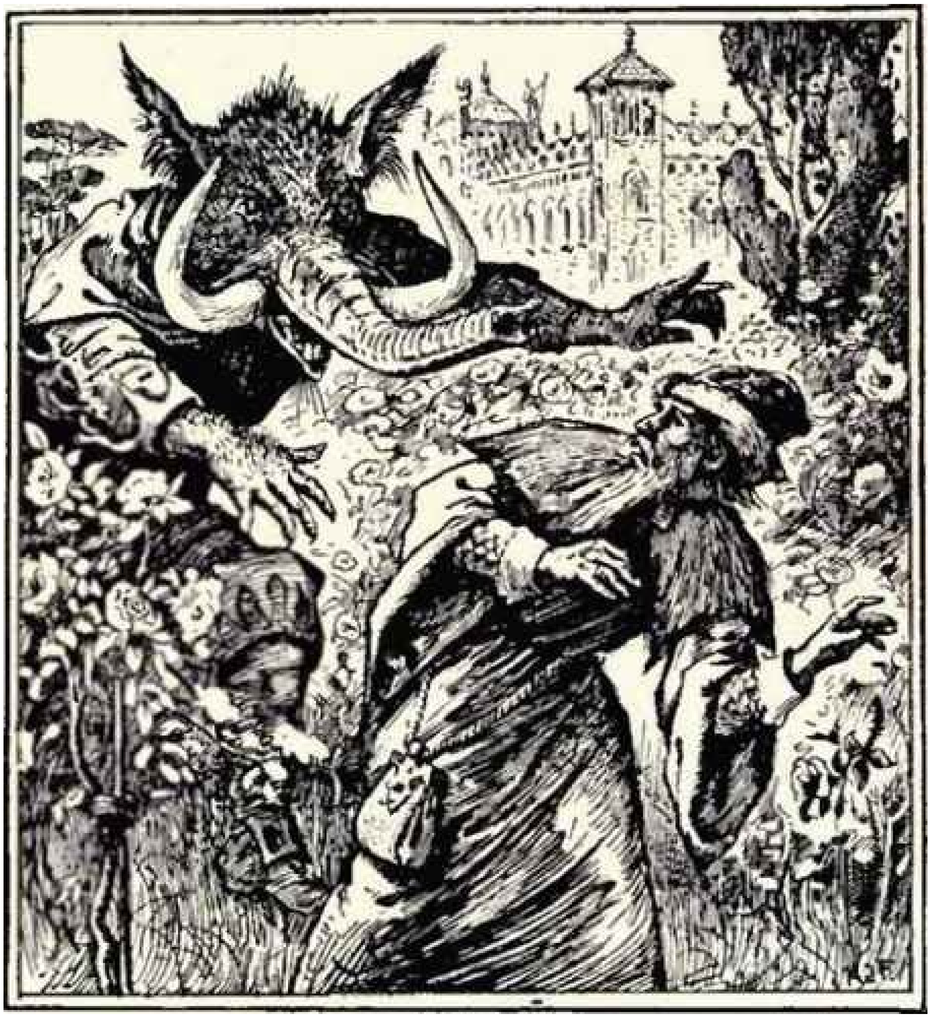

"Who told you that you might gather my roses? Was it not enough that I allowed you to be in my palace and was kind to you? This is the way you show your gratitude, by stealing my flowers! But your insolence shall not go unpunished." The merchant, terrified by these furious words, dropped the fatal rose, and, throwing himself on his knees, cried: "Pardon me, noble sir. I am truly grateful to you for your hospitality, which was so magnificent that I could not imagine that you would be offended by my taking such a little thing as a rose." But the Beast's anger was not lessened by this speech.

"You are very ready with excuses and flattery," he cried; "but that will not save you from the death you deserve."

"Alas!" thought the merchant, "if my daughter could only know what danger her rose has brought me into!"

And in despair he began to tell the Beast all his misfortunes, and the reason of his journey, not forgetting to mention Beauty's request.

"A king's ransom would hardly have procured all that my other daughters asked." he said: "but I thought that I might at least take Beauty her rose. I beg you to forgive me, for you see I meant no harm.”

The Beast considered for a moment, and then he said, in a less furious tone:

“I will forgive you on one condition — that is, that you will give me one of your daughters.”

“Ah!” cried the merchant, “if I were cruel enough to buy my own life at the expense of one of my children’s, what excuse could I invent to bring her here?”

“No excuse would be necessary,” answered the Beast. “If she comes at all she must come willingly. On no other condition will I have her. See if any one of them is courageous enough, and loves you well enough to come and save your life. You seem to be an honest man, so I will trust you to go home. I give you a month to see if either of your daughters will come back with you and stay here, to let you go free. If neither of them is willing, you must come alone, after bidding them good-by for ever, for then you will belong to me. And do not imagine that you can hide from me, for if you fail to keep your word I will come and fetch you!” added the Beast grimly.

The merchant accepted this proposal, though he did not really think any of his daughters could be persuaded to come. He promised to return at the time appointed, and then, anxious to escape from the presence of the Beast, he asked permission to set off at once. But the Beast answered that he could not go until next day.

“Then you will find a horse ready for you,” he said. “Now go and eat your supper, and await my orders.”

The poor merchant, more dead than alive, went back to his room, where the most delicious supper was already served on the little table which was drawn up before a blazing fire. But he was too terrified to eat, and only tasted a few of the dishes, for fear the Beast should be angry if he did not obey his orders. When he had finished he heard a great noise in the next room, which he knew meant that the Beast was coming. As he could do nothing to escape his visit, the only thing that remained was to seem as little afraid as possible; so when the Beast appeared and asked roughly if he had supped well, the merchant answered humbly that he had, thanks to his host’s kindness. Then the Beast warned him to remember their agreement, and to prepare his daughter exactly for what she had to expect.

“Do not get up to-morrow,” he added, “until you see the sun and hear a golden bell ring. Then you will find your breakfast waiting for you here, and the horse you are to ride will be ready in the courtyard. He will also bring you back again when you come with your daughter a month hence. Farewell. Take a rose to Beauty, and remember your promise!”

The merchant was only too glad when the Beast went away, and though he could not sleep for sadness, he lay down until the sun rose. Then, after a hasty breakfast, he went to gather Beauty’s rose, and mounted his horse, which carried him off so swiftly that in an instant he had lost sight of the palace, and he was still wrapped in gloomy thoughts when it stopped before the door of the cottage.

His sons and daughters, who had been very uneasy at his long absence, rushed to meet him, eager to know the result of his journey, which, seeing him mounted upon a splendid horse and wrapped in a rich mantle, they supposed to be favorable. He hid the truth from them at first, only saying sadly to Beauty as he gave her the rose:

“Here is what you asked me to bring you; you little know what it has cost.”

But this excited their curiosity so greatly that presently he told them his adventures from beginning to end, and then they were all very unhappy. The girls lamented loudly over their lost hopes, and the sons declared that their father should not return to this terrible castle, and began to make plans for killing the Beast if it should come to fetch him. But he reminded them that he had promised to go back. Then the girls were very angry with Beauty, and said it was all her fault, and that if she had asked for something sensible this would never have happened, and complained bitterly that they should have to suffer for her folly.

Poor Beauty, much distressed, said to them:

“I have, indeed, caused this misfortune, but I assure you I did it innocently. Who could have guessed that to ask for a rose in the middle of summer would cause so much misery? But as I did the mischief it is only just that I should suffer for it. I will therefore go back with my father to keep his promise.”

At first nobody would hear of this arrangement, and her father and brothers, who loved her dearly, declared that nothing should make them let her go; but Beauty was firm. As the time drew near she divided all her little possessions between her sisters, and said good-by to everything she loved, and when the fatal day came she encouraged and cheered her father as they mounted together the horse which had brought him back. It seemed to fly rather than gallop, but so smoothly that Beauty was not frightened; indeed, she would have enjoyed the journey if she had not feared what might happen to her at the end of it. Her father still tried to persuade her to go back, but in vain. While they were talking the night fell, and then, to their great surprise, wonderful colored lights began to shine in all directions, and splendid fireworks blazed out before them; all the forest was illuminated by them, and even felt pleasantly warm, though it had been bitterly cold before. This lasted until they reached the avenue of orange trees, where were statues holding flaming torches, and when they got nearer to the palace they saw that it was illuminated from the roof to the ground, and music sounded softly from the courtyard. “The Beast must be very hungry,” said

Beauty, trying to laugh, “if he makes all this rejoicing over the arrival of his prey.”

But, in spite of her anxiety, she could not help admiring all the wonderful things she saw.

The horse stopped at the foot of the flight of steps leading to the terrace, and when they had dismounted her father led her to the little room he had been in before, where they found a splendid fire burning, and the table daintily spread with a delicious supper.

The merchant knew that this was meant for them, and Beauty, who was rather less frightened now that she had passed through so many rooms and seen nothing of the Beast, was quite willing to begin, for her long ride had made her very hungry. But they had hardly finished their meal when the noise of the Beast’s footsteps was heard approaching, and Beauty clung to her father in terror, which became all the greater when she saw how frightened he was. But when the Beast really appeared, though she trembled at the sight of him, she made a great effort to hide her terror, and saluted him respectfully.

This evidently pleased the Beast. After looking at her he said, in a tone that might have struck terror into the boldest heart, though he did not seem to be angry:

“Good-evening, old man. Good-evening, Beauty.”

The merchant was too terrified to reply, but Beauty answered sweetly: “Good-evening, Beast.”

“Have you come willingly?” asked the Beast. “Will you be content to stay here when your father goes away?”

Beauty answered bravely that she was quite prepared to stay.

“I am pleased with you,” said the Beast. “As you have come of your own accord, you may stay. As for you, old man,” he added, turning to the merchant, “at sunrise to-morrow you will take your departure. When the bell rings get up quickly and eat your breakfast, and you will find the same horse waiting to take you home; but remember that you must never expect to see my palace again.”

Then turning to Beauty, he said:

“Take your father into the next room, and help him to choose everything you think your brothers and sisters would like to have. You will find two traveling-trunks there; fill them as full as you can. It is only just that you should send them something very precious as a remembrance of yourself.”

Then he went away, after saying, “Good-by, Beauty; good-by, old man”; and though Beauty was beginning to think with great dismay of her father’s departure, she was afraid to disobey the Beast’s orders; and they went into the next room, which had shelves and cupboards all round it. They were greatly surprised at the riches it contained. There were splendid dresses fit for a queen, with all the ornaments that were to be worn with them; and when Beauty opened the cupboards she was quite dazzled by the gorgeous jewels that lay in heaps upon every shelf. After choosing a vast quantity, which she divided between her sisters — for she had made a heap of the wonderful dresses for each of them — she opened the last chest, which was full of gold.

“I think, father,” she said, “that, as the gold will be more useful to you, we had better take out the other things again, and fill the trunks with it.” So they did this; but the more they put in the more room there seemed to be, and at last they put back all the jewels and dresses they had taken out, and Beauty even added as many more of the jewels as she could carry at once; and then the trunks were not too full, but they were so heavy that an elephant could not have carried them!

“The Beast was mocking us,” cried the merchant; “he must have pretended to give us all these things, knowing that I could not carry them away.”

“Let us wait and see,” answered Beauty. “I cannot believe that he meant to deceive us. All we can do is to fasten them up and leave them ready.”

So they did this and returned to the little room, where, to their astonishment, they found breakfast ready. The merchant ate his with a good appetite, as the Beast’s generosity made him believe that he might perhaps venture to come back soon and see Beauty. But she felt sure that her father was leaving her for ever, so she was very sad when the bell rang sharply for the second time, and warned them that the time had come for them to part. They went down into the courtyard, where two horses were waiting, one loaded with the two trunks, the other for him to ride. They were pawing the ground in their impatience to start, and the merchant was forced to bid Beauty a hasty farewell; and as soon as he was mounted he went off at such a pace that she lost sight of him in an instant. Then Beauty began to cry, and wandered sadly back to her own room. But she soon found that she was very sleepy, and as she had nothing better to do she lay down and instantly fell asleep. And then she dreamed that she was walking by a brook bordered with trees, and lamenting her sad fate, when a young prince, handsomer than anyone she had ever seen, and with a voice that went straight to her heart, came and said to her, “Ah, Beauty! you are not so unfortunate as you suppose. Here you will be rewarded for all you have suffered elsewhere. Your every wish shall be gratified. Only try to find me out, no matter how I may be disguised, as I love you dearly, and in making me happy you will find your own happiness. Be as true-hearted as you are beautiful, and we shall have nothing left to wish for.”

“What can I do, Prince, to make you happy?” said Beauty.

“Only be grateful,” he answered, “and do not trust too much to your eyes.

And, above all, do not desert me until you have saved me from my cruel misery.”

After this she thought she found herself in a room with a stately and beautiful lady, who said to her:

“Dear Beauty, try not to regret all you have left behind you, for you are destined to a better fate. Only do not let yourself be deceived by appearances.”

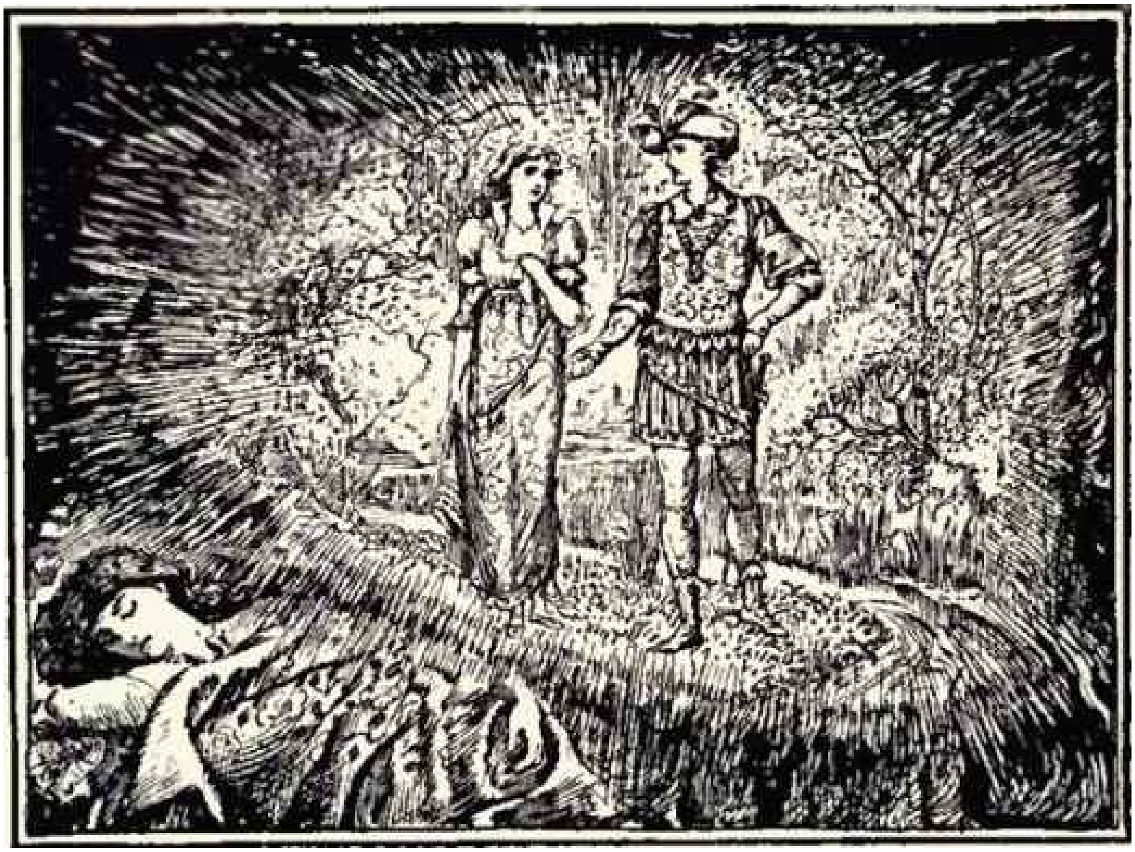

Beauty found her dreams so interesting that she was in no hurry to awake, but presently the clock roused her by calling her name softly twelve times, and then she got up and found her dressing-table set out with everything she could possibly want; and when her toilet was finished she found dinner was waiting in the room next to hers. But dinner does not take very long when you are all by yourself, and very soon she sat down cosily in the corner of a sofa, and began to think about the charming Prince she had seen in her dream.

“He said I could make him happy,” said Beauty to herself.

“It seems, then, that this horrible Beast keeps him a prisoner. How can I set him free? I wonder why they both told me not to trust to appearances? I don’t understand it. But, after all, it was only a dream, so why should I trouble myself about it? I had better go and find something to do to amuse myself.”

So she got up and began to explore some of the many rooms of the palace.

The first she entered was lined with mirrors, and Beauty saw herself reflected on every side, and thought she had never seen such a charming room. Then a bracelet which was hanging from a chandelier caught her eye, and on taking it down she was greatly surprised to find that it held a portrait of her unknown admirer, just as she had seen him in her dream. With great delight she slipped the bracelet on her arm, and went on into a gallery of pictures, where she soon found a portrait of the same handsome Prince, as large as life, and so well painted that as she studied it he seemed to smile kindly at her. Tearing herself away from the portrait at last, she passed through into a room which contained every musical instrument under the sun, and here she amused herself for a long while in trying some of them, and singing until she was tired. The next room was a library, and she saw everything she had ever wanted to read, as well as everything she had read, and it seemed to her that a whole lifetime would not be enough to even read the names of the books, there were so many. By this time it was growing dusk, and wax candles in diamond and ruby candlesticks were beginning to light themselves in every room.

Beauty found her supper served just at the time she preferred to have it, but she did not see anyone or hear a sound, and, though her father had warned her that she would be alone, she began to find it rather dull.

But presently she heard the Beast coming, and wondered tremblingly if he meant to eat her up now.

However, as he did not seem at all ferocious, and only said gruffly:

“Good-evening, Beauty,” she answered cheerfully and managed to conceal her terror. Then the Beast asked her how she had been amusing herself, and she told him all the rooms she had seen.

Then he asked if she thought she could be happy in his palace; and Beauty answered that everything was so beautiful that she would be very hard to please if she could not be happy. And after about an hour’s talk Beauty began to think that the Beast was not nearly so terrible as she had supposed at first. Then he got up to leave her, and said in his gruff voice:

“Do you love me, Beauty? Will you marry me?”

“Oh! what shall I say?” cried Beauty, for she was afraid to make the Beast angry by refusing.

“Say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ without fear,” he replied.

“Oh! no, Beast,” said Beauty hastily.

“Since you will not, good-night, Beauty,” he said.

And she answered, “Good-night, Beast,” very glad to find that her refusal had not provoked him. And after he was gone she was very soon in bed and asleep, and dreaming of her unknown Prince. She thought he came and said to her:

"Ah, Beauty! why are you so unkind to me? I fear I am fated to be unhappy for many a long day still."

And then her dreams changed, but the charming Prince figured in them all; and when morning came her first thought was to look at the portrait, and see if it was really like him, and she found that it certainly was.

This morning she decided to amuse herself in the garden, for the sun shone, and all the fountains were playing; but she was astonished to find that every place was familiar to her, and presently she came to the brook where the myrtle trees were growing where she had first met the Prince in her dream, and that made her think more than ever that he must be kept a prisoner by the Beast. When she was tired she went back to the palace, and found a new room full of materials for every kind of work — ribbons to make into bows, and silks to work into flowers. Then there was an aviary full of rare birds, which were so tame that they flew to Beauty as soon as they saw her, and perched upon her shoulders and her head.

"Pretty little creatures," she said, "how I wish that your cage was nearer to my room, that I might often hear you sing!"

So saying she opened a door, and found, to her delight, that it led into her own room, though she had thought it was quite the other side of the palace.

There were more birds in a room farther on, parrots and cockatoos that could talk, and they greeted Beauty by name; indeed, she found them so entertaining that she took one or two back to her room, and they talked to her while she was at supper; after which the Beast paid her his usual visit, and asked her the same questions as before, and then with a gruff "good-night" he took his departure, and Beauty went to bed to dream of her mysterious Prince. The days passed swiftly in different amusements, and after a while Beauty found out another strange thing in the palace, which often pleased her when she was tired of being alone. There was one room which she had not noticed particularly; it was empty, except that under each of the windows stood a very comfortable chair; and the first time she had looked out of the window it had seemed to her that a black curtain prevented her from seeing anything outside.

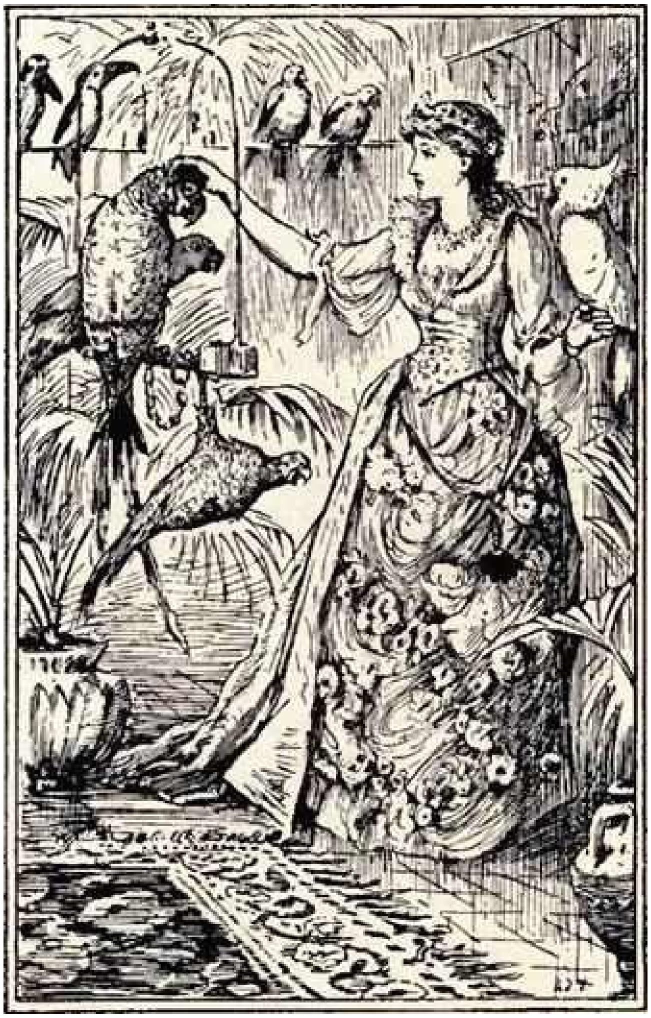

But the second time she went into the room, happening to be tired, she sat down in one of the chairs, when instantly the curtain was rolled aside, and a most amusing pantomime was acted before her; there were dances, and colored lights, and music, and pretty dresses, and it was all so gay that Beauty was in ecstacies. After that she tried the other seven windows in turn, and there was some new and surprising entertainment to be seen from each of them, so that Beauty never could feel lonely any more. Every evening after supper the Beast came to see her, and always before saying good-night asked her in his terrible voice:

“Beauty, will you marry me?”

And it seemed to Beauty, now she understood him better, that when she said, “No, Beast,” he went away quite sad. But her happy dreams of the handsome young Prince soon made her forget the poor Beast, and the only thing that at all disturbed her was to be constantly told to distrust appearances, to let her heart guide her, and not her eyes, and many other equally perplexing things, which, consider as she would, she could not understand.

So everything went on for a long time, until at last, happy as she was, Beauty began to long for the sight of her father and her brothers and sisters; and one night, seeing her look very sad, the Beast asked her what was the matter. Beauty had quite ceased to be afraid of him. Now she knew that he was really gentle in spite of his ferocious looks and his dreadful voice. So she answered that she was longing to see her home once more. Upon hearing this the Beast seemed sadly distressed, and cried miserably.

“Ah! Beauty, have you the heart to desert an unhappy Beast like this? What more do you want to make you happy? Is it because you hate me that you want to escape?”

“No, dear Beast,” answered Beauty softly, “I do not hate you, and I should be very sorry never to see you any more, but I long to see my father again. Only let me go for two months, and I promise to come back to you and stay for the rest of my life.”

The Beast, who had been sighing dolefully while she spoke, now replied:

“I cannot refuse you anything you ask, even though it should cost me my life. Take the four boxes you will find in the room next to your own, and fill them with everything you wish to take with you. But remember your promise and come back when the two months are over, or you may have cause to repent it, for if you do not come in good time you will find your faithful Beast dead. You will not need any chariot to bring you back. Only say good-by to all your brothers and sisters the night before you come away, and when you have gone to bed turn this ring round upon your finger and say firmly: ‘I wish to go back to my palace and see my Beast again.’ Good-night, Beauty. Fear nothing, sleep peacefully, and before long you shall see your father once more.”

As soon as Beauty was alone she hastened to fill the boxes with all the rare and precious things she saw about her, and only when she was tired of heaping things into them did they seem to be full.

Then she went to bed, but could hardly sleep for joy. And when at last she did begin to dream of her beloved Prince she was grieved to see him stretched upon a grassy bank, sad and weary, and hardly like himself.

“What is the matter?” she cried.

He looked at her reproachfully, and said:

“How can you ask me, cruel one? Are you not leaving me to my death perhaps?”

“Ah! don’t be so sorrowful,” cried Beauty; “I am only going to assure my father that I am safe and happy. I have promised the Beast faithfully that I will come back, and he would die of grief if I did not keep my word!”

“What would that matter to you?” said the Prince “Surely you would not care?”

"Indeed, I should be ungrateful if I did not care for such a kind Beast," cried Beauty indignantly. "I would die to save him from pain. I assure you it is not his fault that he is so ugly."

Just then a strange sound woke her — someone was speaking not very far away; and opening her eyes she found herself in a room she had never seen before, which was certainly not nearly so splendid as those she was used to in the Beast's palace. Where could she be? She got up and dressed hastily, and then saw that the boxes she had packed the night before were all in the room. While she was wondering by what magic the Beast had transported them and herself to this strange place she suddenly heard her father's voice, and rushed out and greeted him joyfully. Her brothers and sisters were all astonished at her appearance, as they had never expected to see her again, and there was no end to the questions they asked her. She had also much to hear about what had happened to them while she was away, and of her father's journey home. But when they heard that she had only come to be with them for a short time, and then must go back to the Beast's palace for ever, they lamented loudly. Then Beauty asked her father what he thought could be the meaning of her strange dreams, and why the Prince constantly begged her not to trust to appearances. After much consideration, he answered: "You tell me yourself that the Beast, frightful as he is, loves you dearly, and deserves your love and gratitude for his gentleness and kindness; I think the Prince must mean you to understand that you ought to reward him by doing as he wishes you to, in spite of his ugliness."

Beauty could not help seeing that this seemed very probable; still, when she thought of her dear Prince who was so handsome, she did not feel at all inclined to marry the Beast. At any rate, for two months she need not decide, but could enjoy herself with her sisters. But though they were rich now, and lived in town again, and had plenty of acquaintances, Beauty found that nothing amused her very much; and she often thought of the palace, where she was so happy, especially as at home she never once dreamed of her dear Prince, and she felt quite sad without him.

Then her sisters seemed to have got quite used to being without her, and even found her rather in the way, so she would not have been sorry when the two months were over but for her father and brothers, who begged her to stay, and seemed so grieved at the thought of her departure that she had not the courage to say good-by to them. Every day when she got up she meant to say it at night, and when night came she put it off again, until at last she had a dismal dream which helped her to make up her mind. She thought she was wandering in a lonely path in the palace gardens, when she heard groans which seemed to come from some bushes hiding the entrance of a cave, and running quickly to see what could be the matter, she found the Beast stretched out upon his side, apparently dying. He reproached her faintly with being the cause of his distress, and at the same moment a stately lady appeared, and said very gravely:

“Ah! Beauty, you are only just in time to save his life. See what happens when people do not keep their promises! If you had delayed one day more, you would have found him dead.”

Beauty was so terrified by this dream that the next morning she announced her intention of going back at once, and that very night she said good-by to her father and all her brothers and sisters, and as soon as she was in bed she turned her ring round upon her finger, and said firmly, “I wish to go back to my palace and see my Beast again,” as she had been told to do.

Then she fell asleep instantly, and only woke up to hear the clock saying “Beauty, Beauty” twelve times in its musical voice, which told her at once that she was really in the palace once more. Everything was just as before, and her birds were so glad to see her! But Beauty thought she had never known such a long day, for she was so anxious to see the Beast again that she felt as if suppertime would never come.

But when it did come and no Beast appeared she was really frightened; so, after listening and waiting for a long time, she ran down into the garden to search for him. Up and down the paths and avenues ran poor Beauty, calling him in vain, for no one answered, and not a trace of him could she find; until at last, quite tired, she stopped for a minute’s rest, and saw that she was standing opposite the shady path she had seen in her dream. She rushed down it, and, sure enough, there was the cave, and in it lay the Beast — asleep, as Beauty thought. Quite glad to have found him, she ran up and stroked his head, but, to her horror, he did not move or open his eyes.

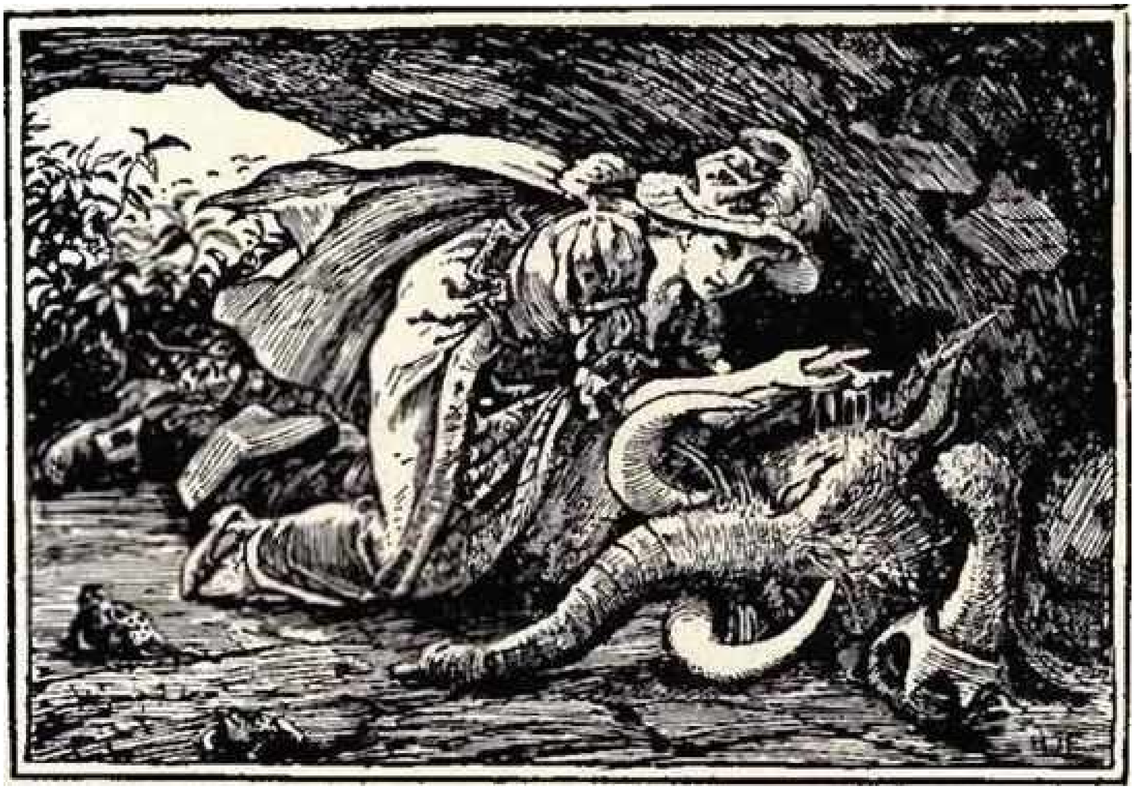

“Oh! he is dead; and it is all my fault,” said Beauty, crying bitterly.

But then, looking at him again, she fancied he still breathed, and, hastily fetching some water from the nearest fountain, she sprinkled it over his face, and, to her great delight, he began to revive.

“Oh! Beast, how you frightened me!” she cried. “I never knew how much I loved you until just now, when I feared I was too late to save your life.”

“Can you really love such an ugly creature as I am?” said the Beast faintly. “Ah! Beauty, you only came just in time. I was dying because I thought you had forgotten your promise. But go back now and rest, I shall see you again by and by.”

Beauty, who had half expected that he would be angry with her, was reassured by his gentle voice, and went back to the palace, where supper was awaiting her; and afterward the Beast came in as usual, and talked about the time she had spent with her father, asking if she had enjoyed herself, and if they had all been very glad to see her.

Beauty answered politely, and quite enjoyed telling him all that had happened to her. And when at last the time came for him to go, and he asked, as he had so often asked before, “Beauty, will you marry me?”

She answered softly, “Yes, dear Beast.”

As she spoke a blaze of light sprang up before the windows of the palace; fireworks crackled and guns banged, and across the avenue of orange trees, in letters all made of fire-flies, was written: “Long live the Prince and his Bride.”

Turning to ask the Beast what it could all mean, Beauty found that he had disappeared, and in his place stood her long-loved Prince! At the same moment the wheels of a chariot were heard upon the terrace, and two ladies entered the room. One of them Beauty recognized as the stately lady she had seen in her dreams; the other was also so grand and queenly that Beauty hardly knew which to greet first.

But the one she already knew said to her companion:

“Well, Queen, this is Beauty, who has had the courage to rescue your son from the terrible enchantment. They love one another, and only your consent to their marriage is wanting to make them perfectly happy.”

“I consent with all my heart,” cried the Queen. “How can I ever thank you enough, charming girl, for having restored my dear son to his natural form?”

And then she tenderly embraced Beauty and the Prince, who had meanwhile been greeting the Fairy and receiving her congratulations.

“Now,” said the Fairy to Beauty, “I suppose you would like me to send for all your brothers and sisters to dance at your wedding?”

And so she did, and the marriage was celebrated the very next day with the utmost splendor, and Beauty and the Prince lived happily ever after.(1)

(1) La Belle et la Bete. Par Madame de Villeneuve.

THE MASTER-MAID

Once upon a time there was a king who had many sons. I do not exactly know how many there were, but the youngest of them could not stay quietly at home, and was determined to go out into the world and try his luck, and after a long time the King was forced to give him leave to go. When he had traveled about for several days, he came to a giant's house, and hired himself to the giant as a servant. In the morning the giant had to go out to pasture his goats, and as he was leaving the house he told the King's son that he must clean out the stable. "And after you have done that," he said, "you need not do any more work to-day, for you have come to a kind master, and that you shall find. But what I set you to do must be done both well and thoroughly, and you must on no account go into any of the rooms which lead out of the room in which you slept last night. If you do, I will take your life."

"Well to be sure, he is an easy master!" said the Prince to himself as he walked up and down the room humming and singing, for he thought there would be plenty of time left to clean out the stable; "but it would be amusing to steal a glance into his other rooms as well," thought the Prince, "for there must be something that he is afraid of my seeing, as I am not allowed to enter them." So he went into the first room. A cauldron was hanging from the walls; it was boiling, but the Prince could see no fire under it. "I wonder what is inside it," he thought, and dipped a lock of his hair in, and the hair became just as if it were all made of copper. "That's a nice kind of soup. If anyone were to taste that his throat would be gilded," said the youth, and then he went into the next chamber. There, too, a cauldron was hanging from the wall, bubbling and boiling, but there was no fire under this either. "I will just try what this is like too," said the Prince, thrusting another lock of his hair into it, and it came out silvered over. "Such costly soup is not to be had in my father's palace," said the Prince; "but everything depends on how it tastes," and then he went into the third room. There, too, a cauldron was hanging from the wall, boiling, exactly the same as in the two other rooms, and the Prince took pleasure in trying this also, so he dipped a lock of hair in, and it came out so brightly gilded that it shone again. "Some talk about going from bad to worse," said the Prince; "but this is better and better. If he boils gold here, what can he boil in there?" He was determined to see, and went through the door into the fourth room. No cauldron was to be seen there, but on a bench someone was seated who was like a king's daughter, but, whosoever she was, she was so beautiful that never in the Prince's life had he seen her equal.

"Oh! in heaven's name what are you doing here?" said she who sat upon the bench.

"I took the place of servant here yesterday," said the Prince.

"May you soon have a better place, if you have come to serve here!" said she.

"Oh, but I think I have got a kind master," said the Prince. "He has not given me hard work to do to-day. When I have cleaned out the stable I shall be done."

"Yes, but how will you be able to do that?" she asked again. "If you clean it out as other people do, ten pitchforksful will come in for every one you throw out. But I will teach you how to do it; you must turn your pitchfork upside down, and work with the handle, and then all will fly out of its own accord."

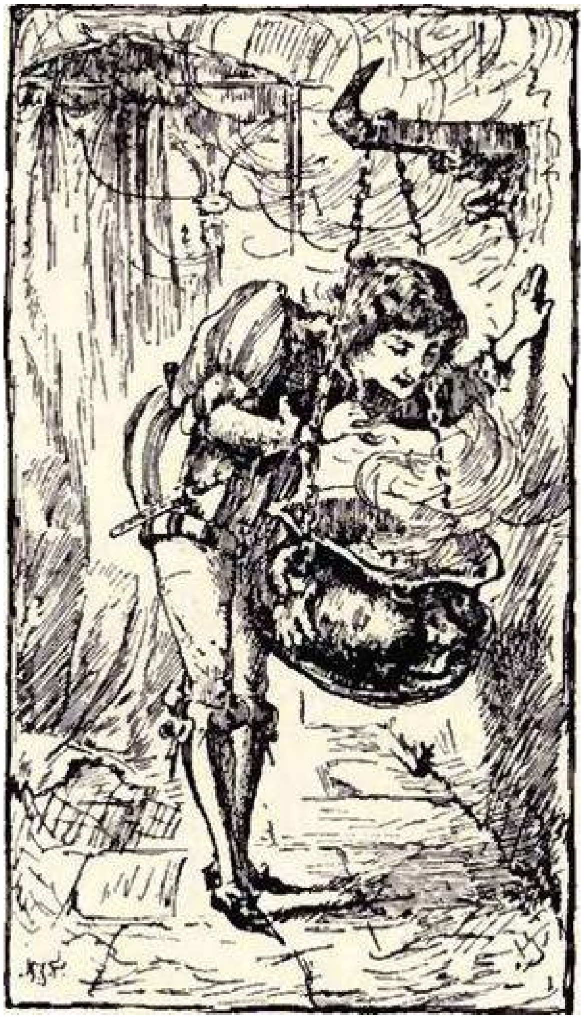

"Yes, I will attend to that," said the Prince, and stayed sitting where he was the whole day, for it was soon settled between them that they would marry each other, he and the King’s daughter; so the first day of his service with the giant did not seem long to him. But when evening was drawing near she said that it would now be better for him to clean out the stable before the giant came home. When he got there he had a fancy to try if what she had said were true, so he began to work in the same way that he had seen the stable-boys doing in his father’s stables, but he soon saw that he must give up that, for when he had worked a very short time he had scarcely any room left to stand. So he did what the Princess had taught him, turned the pitchfork round, and worked with the handle, and in the twinkling of an eye the stable was as clean as if it had been scoured. When he had done that, he went back again into the room in which the giant had given him leave to stay, and there he walked backward and forward on the floor, and began to hum and sing.

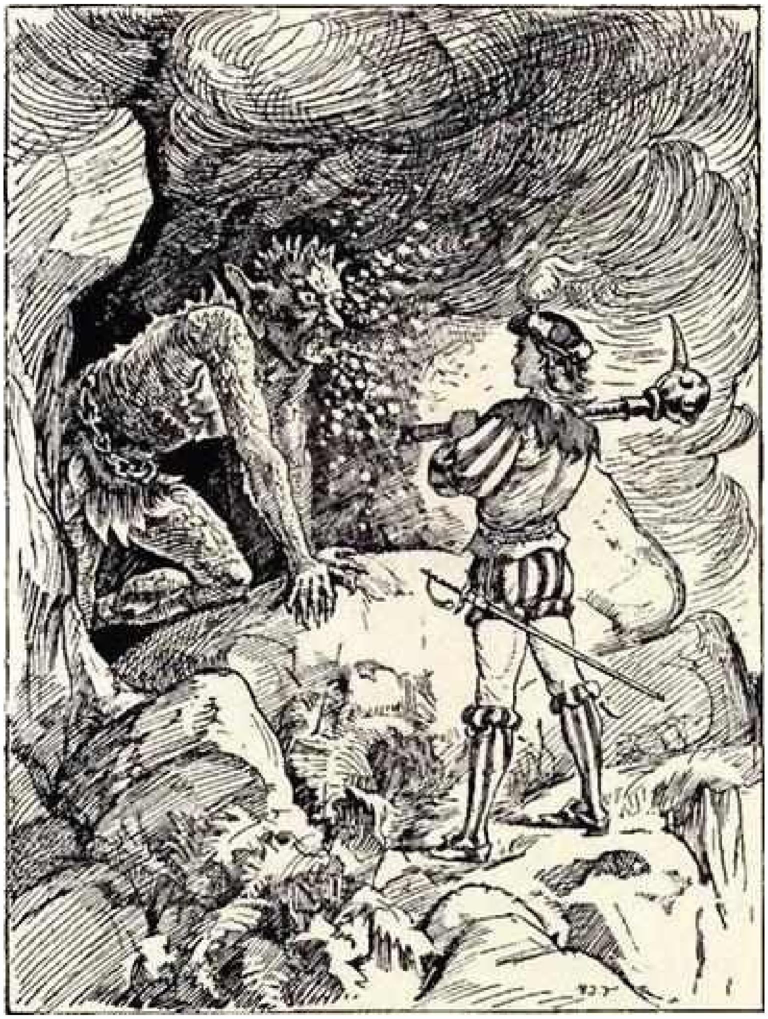

Then came the giant home with the goats. “Have you cleaned the stable?” asked the giant.

“Yes, now it is clean and sweet, master,” said the King’s son.

“I shall see about that,” said the giant, and went round to the stable, but it was just as the Prince had said.

“You have certainly been talking to my Master-maid, for you never got that out of your own head,” said the giant.

“Master-maid! What kind of a thing is that, master?” said the Prince, making himself look as stupid as an ass; “I should like to see that.”

“Well, you will see her quite soon enough,” said the giant.

On the second morning the giant had again to go out with his goats, so he told the Prince that on that day he was to fetch home his horse, which was out on the mountain-side, and when he had done that he might rest himself for the remainder of the day, “for you have come to a kind master, and that you shall find,” said the giant once more. “But do not go into any of the rooms that I spoke of yesterday, or I will wring your head off,” said he, and then went away with his flock of goats.

“Yes, indeed, you are a kind master,” said the Prince; “but I will go in and talk to the Master-maid again; perhaps before long she may like better to be mine than yours.”

So he went to her. Then she asked him what he had to do that day.

“Oh! not very dangerous work, I fancy,” said the King’s son. “I have only to go up the mountain-side after his horse.”

“Well, how do you mean to set about it?” asked the Master-maid.

“Oh! there is no great art in riding a horse home,” said the King’s son. “I think I must have ridden friskier horses before now.”

“Yes, but it is not so easy a thing as you think to ride the horse home,” said the Master-maid; “but I will teach you what to do. When you go near it, fire will burst out of its nostrils like flames from a pine torch; but be very careful, and take the bridle which is hanging by the door there, and fling the bit straight into his jaws, and then it will become so tame that you will be able to do what you like with it.” He said he would bear this in mind, and then he again sat in there the whole day by the Master-maid, and they chatted and talked of one thing and another, but the first thing and the last now was, how happy and delightful it would be if they could but marry each other, and get safely away from the giant; and the Prince would have forgotten both the mountain-side and the horse if the Master-maid had not reminded him of them as evening drew near, and said that now it would be better if he went to fetch the horse before the giant came. So he did this, and took the bridle which was hanging on a crook, and strode up the mountain-side, and it was not long before he met with the horse, and fire and red flames streamed forth out of its nostrils. But the youth carefully watched his opportunity, and just as it was rushing at him with open jaws he threw the bit straight into its mouth, and the horse stood as quiet as a young lamb, and there was no difficulty at all in getting it home to the stable. Then the Prince went back into his room again, and began to hum and to sing.

Toward evening the giant came home. “Have you fetched the horse back from the mountain-side?” he asked.

“That I have, master; it was an amusing horse to ride, but I rode him straight home, and put him in the stable too,” said the Prince.

“I will see about that,” said the giant, and went out to the stable, but the horse was standing there just as the Prince had said. “You have certainly been talking with my Master-maid, for you never got that out of your own head,” said the giant again.

“Yesterday, master, you talked about this Master-maid, and to-day you are talking about her; ah, heaven bless you, master, why will you not show me the thing? for it would be a real pleasure to me to see it,” said the Prince, who again pretended to be silly and stupid.

“Oh! you will see her quite soon enough,” said the giant.

On the morning of the third day the giant again had to go into the wood with the goats. “To-day you must go underground and fetch my taxes,” he said to the Prince. “When you have done this, you may rest for the remainder of the day, for you shall see what an easy master you have come to,” and then he went away.

“Well, however easy a master you may be, you set me very hard work to do,” thought the Prince; “but I will see if I cannot find your Master-maid; you say she is yours, but for all that she may be able to tell me what to do now,” and he went back to her. So, when the Master-maid asked him what the giant had set him to do that day, he told her that he was to go underground and get the taxes.

“And how will you set about that?” said the Master-maid.

“Oh! you must tell me how to do it,” said the Prince, “for I have never yet been underground, and even if I knew the way I do not know how much I am to demand.”

“Oh! yes, I will soon tell you that; you must go to the rock there under the mountain-ridge, and take the club that is there, and knock on the rocky wall,” said the Master-maid. “Then someone will come out who will sparkle with fire; you shall tell him your errand, and when he asks you how much you want to have you are to say: ‘As much as I can carry.’”

“Yes, I will keep that in mind,” said he, and then he sat there with the Master-maid the whole day, until night drew near, and he would gladly have stayed there till now if the Master-maid had not reminded him that it was time to be off to fetch the taxes before the giant came.

So he set out on his way, and did exactly what the Master-maid had told him. He went to the rocky wall, and took the club, and knocked on it. Then came one so full of sparks that they flew both out of his eyes and his nose. “What do you want?” said he.

“I was to come here for the giant, and demand the tax for him,” said the King’s son.

“How much are you to have then?” said the other.

“I ask for no more than I am able to carry with me,” said the Prince.

“It is well for you that you have not asked for a horse-load,” said he who had come out of the rock. “But now come in with me.”

This the Prince did, and what a quantity of gold and silver he saw! It was lying inside the mountain like heaps of stones in a waste place, and he got a load that was as large as he was able to carry, and with that he went his way. So in the evening, when the giant came home with the goats, the Prince went into the chamber and hummed and sang again as he had done on the other two evenings.

“Have you been for the tax?” said the giant.

“Yes, that I have, master,” said the Prince.

“Where have you put it then?” said the giant again.

“The bag of gold is standing there on the bench,” said the Prince.

“I will see about that,” said the giant, and went away to the bench, but the bag was standing there, and it was so full that gold and silver dropped out when the giant untied the string.

“You have certainly been talking with my Master-maid!” said the giant, “and if you have I will wring your neck.”

“Master-maid?” said the Prince; “yesterday my master talked about this Master-maid, and to-day he is talking about her again, and the first day of all it was talk of the same kind. I do wish I could see the thing myself,” said he.

“Yes, yes, wait till to-morrow,” said the giant, “and then I myself will take you to her.”

“Ah! master, I thank you — but you are only mocking me,” said the King’s son.

Next day the giant took him to the Master-maid. “Now you shall kill him, and boil him in the great big cauldron you know of, and when you have got the broth ready give me a call,” said the giant; then he lay down on the bench to sleep, and almost immediately began to snore so that it sounded like thunder among the hills.

So the Master-maid took a knife, and cut the Prince’s little finger, and dropped three drops of blood upon a wooden stool; then she took all the old rags, and shoe-soles, and all the rubbish she could lay hands on, and put them in the cauldron; and then she filled a chest with gold dust, and a lump of salt, and a water-flask which was hanging by the door, and she also took with her a golden apple, and two gold chickens; and then she and the Prince went away with all the speed they could, and when they had gone a little way they came to the sea, and then they sailed, but where they got the ship from I have never been able to learn.

Now, when the giant had slept a good long time, he began to stretch himself on the bench on which he was lying. “Will it soon boil?” said he.

“It is just beginning,” said the first drop of blood on the stool.

So the giant lay down to sleep again, and slept for a long, long time. Then he began to move about a little again. “Will it soon be ready now?” said he, but he did not look up this time any more than he had done the first time, for he was still half asleep.

“Half done!” said the second drop of blood, and the giant believed it was the Master-maid again, and turned himself on the bench, and lay down to sleep once more. When he had slept again for many hours, he began to move and stretch himself. “Is it not done yet?” said he.

“It is quite ready,” said the third drop of blood. Then the giant began to sit up and rub his eyes, but he could not see who it was who had spoken to him, so he asked for the Master-maid, and called her. But there was no one to give him an answer.

“Ah! well, she has just stolen out for a little,” thought the giant, and he took a spoon, and went off to the cauldron to have a taste; but there was nothing in it but shoe-soles, and rags, and such trumpery as that, and all was boiled up together, so that he could not tell whether it was porridge or milk pottage. When he saw this, he understood what had happened, and fell into such a rage that he hardly knew what he was doing. Away he went after the Prince and the Master-maid so fast that the wind whistled behind him, and it was not long before he came to the water, but he could not get over it. “Well, well, I will soon find a cure for that; I have only to call my river-sucker,” said the giant, and he did call him. So his river-sucker came and lay down, and drank one, two, three draughts, and with that the water in the sea fell so low that the giant saw the Master-maid and the Prince out on the sea in their ship. “Now you must throw out the lump of salt,” said the Master-maid, and the Prince did so, and it grew up into such a great high mountain right across the sea that the giant could not come over it, and the river-sucker could not drink any more water. “Well, well, I will soon find a cure for that,” said the giant, so he called to his hill-borer to come and bore through the mountain so that the river-sucker might be able to drink up the water again. But just as the hole was made, and the river-sucker was beginning to drink, the Master-maid told the Prince to throw one or two drops out of the flask, and when he did this the sea instantly became full of water again, and before the river-sucker could take one drink they reached the land and were in safety. So they determined to go home to the Prince's father, but the Prince would on no account permit the Master-maid to walk there, for he thought that it was unbecoming either for her or for him to go on foot.

"Wait here the least little bit of time, while I go home for the seven horses which stand in my father's stable," said he; "it is not far off, and I shall not be long away, but I will not let my betrothed bride go on foot to the palace."

"Oh! no, do not go, for if you go home to the King's palace you will forget me, I foresee that."

"How could I forget you? We have suffered so much evil together, and love each other so much," said the Prince; and he insisted on going home for the coach with the seven horses, and she was to wait for him there, by the sea-shore. So at last the Master-maid had to yield, for he was so absolutely determined to do it. "But when you get there you must not even give yourself time to greet anyone, but go straight into the stable, and take the horses, and put them in the coach, and drive back as quickly as you can. For they will all come round about you; but you must behave just as if you did not see them, and on no account must you taste anything, for if you do it will cause great misery both to you and to me," said she; and this he promised.

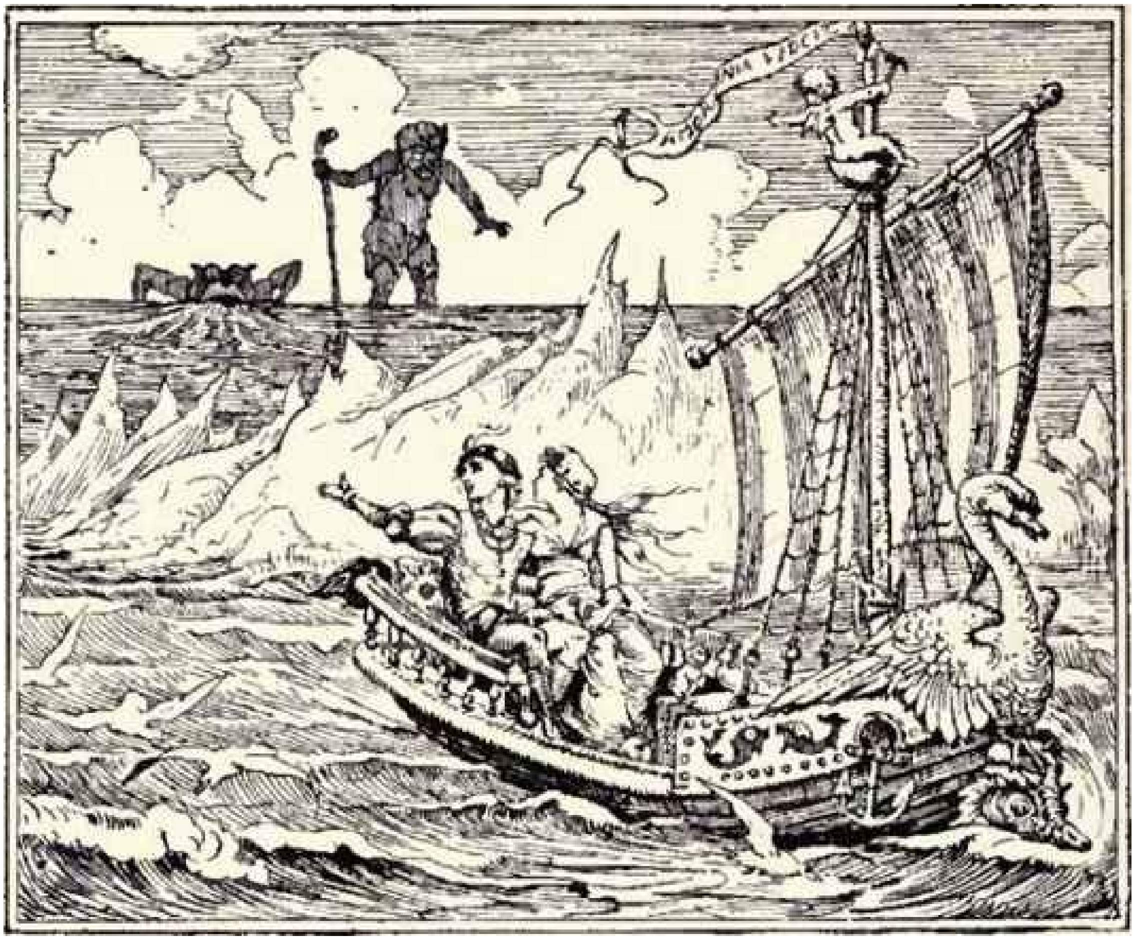

But when he got home to the King's palace one of his brothers was just going to be married, and the bride and all her kith and kin had come to the palace; so they all thronged round him, and questioned him about this and that, and wanted him to go in with them; but he behaved as if he did not see them, and went straight to the stable, and got out the horses and began to harness them. When they saw that they could not by any means prevail on him to go in with them, they came out to him with meat and drink, and the best of everything that they had prepared for the wedding; but the Prince refused to touch anything, and would do nothing but put the horses in as quickly as he could. At last, however, the bride's sister rolled an apple across the yard to him, and said: "As you won't eat anything else, you may like to take a bite of that, for you must be both hungry and thirsty after your long journey." And he took up the apple and bit a piece out of it. But no sooner had he got the piece of apple in his mouth than he forgot the Master-maid and that he was to go back in the coach to fetch her.

"I think I must be mad! what do I want with this coach and horses?" said he; and then he put the horses back into the stable, and went into the King's palace, and there it was settled that he should marry the bride's sister, who had rolled the apple to him.

The Master-maid sat by the sea-shore for a long, long time, waiting for the Prince, but no Prince came. So she went away, and when she had walked a short distance she came to a little hut which stood all alone in a small wood, hard by the King’s palace. She entered it and asked if she might be allowed to stay there. The hut belonged to an old crone, who was also an ill-tempered and malicious troll. At first she would not let the Master-maid remain with her; but at last, after a long time, by means of good words and good payment, she obtained leave. But the hut was as dirty and black inside as a pigsty, so the Master-maid said that she would smarten it up a little, that it might look a little more like what other people’s houses looked inside. The old crone did not like this either. She scowled, and was very cross, but the Master-maid did not trouble herself about that. She took out her chest of gold, and flung a handful of it or so into the fire, and the gold boiled up and poured out over the whole of the hut, until every part of it both inside and out was gilded. But when the gold began to bubble up the old hag grew so terrified that she fled as if the Evil One himself were pursuing her, and she did not remember to stoop down as she went through the doorway, and so she split her head and died. Next morning the sheriff came traveling by there. He was greatly astonished when he saw the gold hut shining and glittering there in the copse, and he was still more astonished when he went in and caught sight of the beautiful young maiden who was sitting there; he fell in love with her at once, and straightway on the spot he begged her, both prettily and kindly, to marry him.

“Well, but have you a great deal of money?” said the Master-maid.

“Oh! yes; so far as that is concerned, I am not ill off,” said the sheriff. So now he had to go home to get the money, and in the evening he came back, bringing with him a bag with two bushels in it, which he set down on the bench. Well, as he had such a fine lot of money, the Master-maid said she would have him, so they sat down to talk.

But scarcely had they sat down together before the Master-maid wanted to jump up again. “I have forgotten to see to the fire,” she said.

“Why should you jump up to do that?” said the sheriff; “I will do that!” So he jumped up, and went to the chimney in one bound.

“Just tell me when you have got hold of the shovel,” said the Master-maid.

“Well, I have hold of it now,” said the sheriff.

“Then you may hold the shovel, and the shovel you, and pour red-hot coals over you, till day dawns,” said the Master-maid. So the sheriff had to stand there the whole night and pour red-hot coals over himself, and, no matter how much he cried and begged and entreated, the red-hot coals did not grow the colder for that. When the day began to dawn, and he had power to throw down the shovel, he did not stay long where he was, but ran away as fast as he possibly could; and everyone who met him stared and looked after him, for he was flying as if he were mad, and he could not have looked worse if he had been both flayed and tanned, and everyone wondered where he had been, but for very shame he would tell nothing.

The next day the attorney came riding by the place where the Master-maid dwelt. He saw how brightly the hut shone and gleamed through the wood, and he too went into it to see who lived there, and when he entered and saw the beautiful young maiden he fell even more in love with her than the sheriff had done, and began to woo her at once. So the Master-maid asked him, as she had asked the sheriff, if he had a great deal of money, and the attorney said he was not ill off for that, and would at once go home to get it; and at night he came with a great big sack of money — this time it was a four-bushel sack — and set it on the bench by the Master-maid. So she promised to have him, and he sat down on the bench by her to arrange about it, but suddenly she said that she had forgotten to lock the door of the porch that night, and must do it.

“Why should you do that?” said the attorney; “sit still, I will do it.”

So he was on his feet in a moment, and out in the porch.

“Tell me when you have got hold of the door-latch,” said the Master-maid.

“I have hold of it now,” cried the attorney.

“Then you may hold the door, and the door you, and may you go between wall and wall till day dawns.”

What a dance the attorney had that night! He had never had such a waltz before, and he never wished to have such a dance again. Sometimes he was in front of the door, and sometimes the door was in front of him, and it went from one side of the porch to the other, till the attorney was well-nigh beaten to death. At first he began to abuse the Master-maid, and then to beg and pray, but the door did not care for anything but keeping him where he was till break of day.

As soon as the door let go its hold of him, off went the attorney. He forgot who ought to be paid off for what he had suffered, he forgot both his sack of money and his wooing, for he was so afraid lest the house-door should come dancing after him. Everyone who met him stared and looked after him, for he was flying like a madman, and he could not have looked worse if a herd of rams had been butting at him all night long.

On the third day the bailiff came by, and he too saw the gold house in the little wood, and he too felt that he must go and see who lived there; and when he caught sight of the Master-maid he became so much in love with her that he wooed her almost before he greeted her.

The Master-maid answered him as she had answered the other two, that if he had a great deal of money, she would have him. “So far as that is concerned, I am not ill off,” said the bailiff; so he was at once told to go home and fetch it, and this he did. At night he came back, and he had a still larger sack of money with him than the attorney had brought; it must have been at least six bushels, and he set it down on the bench. So it was settled that he was to have the Master-maid. But hardly had they sat down together before she said that she had forgotten to bring in the calf, and must go out to put it in the byre.

“No, indeed, you shall not do that,” said the bailiff; “I am the one to do that.” And, big and fat as he was, he went out as briskly as a boy.

“Tell me when you have got hold of the calf’s tail,” said the Master-maid.

“I have hold of it now,” cried the bailiff.

“Then may you hold the calf’s tail, and the calf’s tail hold you, and may you go round the world together till day dawns!” said the Master-maid. So the bailiff had to bestir himself, for the calf went over rough and smooth, over hill and dale, and, the more the bailiff cried and screamed, the faster the calf went. When daylight began to appear, the bailiff was half dead; and so glad was he to leave loose of the calf’s tail, that he forgot the sack of money and all else. He walked now slowly — more slowly than the sheriff and the attorney had done, but, the slower he went, the more time had everyone to stare and look at him; and they used it too, and no one can imagine how tired out and ragged he looked after his dance with the calf.

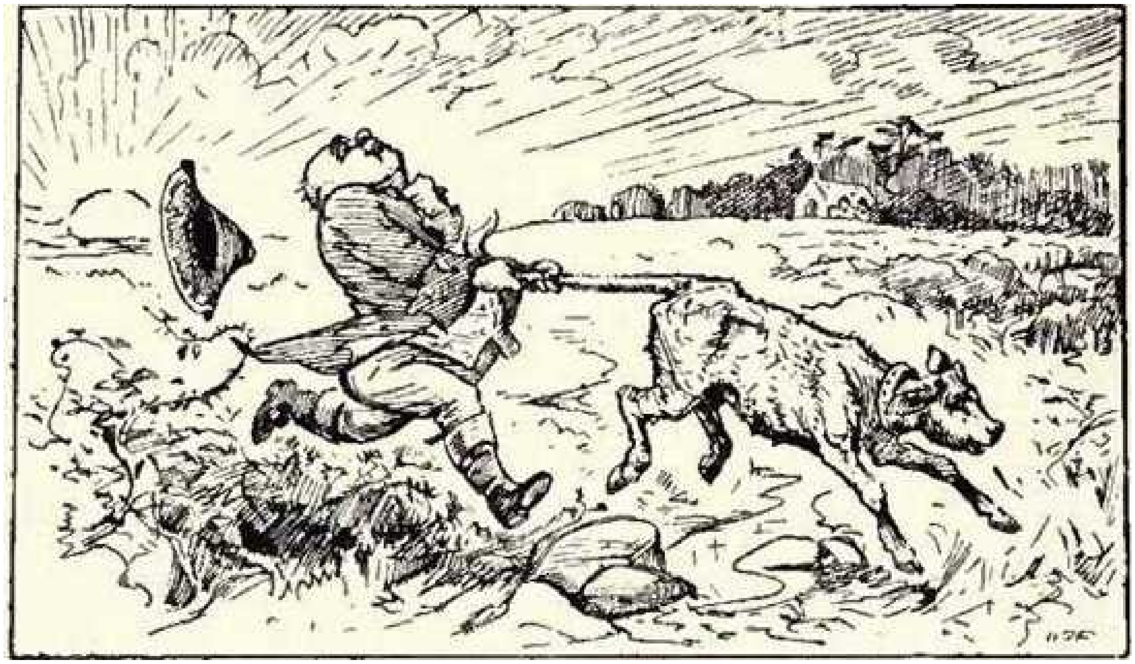

On the following day the wedding was to take place in the King's palace, and the elder brother was to drive to church with his bride, and the brother who had been with the giant with her sister. But when they had seated themselves in the coach and were about to drive off from the palace one of the trace-pins broke, and, though they made one, two, and three to put in its place, that did not help them, for each broke in turn, no matter what kind of wood they used to make them of. This went on for a long time, and they could not get away from the palace, so they were all in great trouble. Then the sheriff said (for he too had been bidden to the wedding at Court): "Yonder away in the thicket dwells a maiden, and if you can get her to lend you the handle of the shovel that she uses to make up her fire I know very well that it will hold fast." So they sent off a messenger to the thicket, and begged so prettily that they might have the loan of her shovel-handle of which the sheriff had spoken that they were not refused; so now they had a trace-pin which would not snap in two.

But all at once, just as they were starting, the bottom of the coach fell in pieces. They made a new bottom as fast as they could, but, no matter how they nailed it together, or what kind of wood they used, no sooner had they got the new bottom into the coach and were about to drive off than it broke again, so that they were still worse off than when they had broken the trace-pin. Then the attorney said, for he too was at the wedding in the palace: "Away there in the thicket dwells a maiden, and if you could but get her to lend you one-half of her porch-door I am certain that it will hold together." So they again sent a messenger to the thicket, and begged so prettily for the loan of the gilded porch-door of which the attorney had told them that they got it at once. They were just setting out again, but now the horses were not able to draw the coach. They had six horses already, and now they put in eight, and then ten, and then twelve, but the more they put in, and the more the coachman whipped them, the less good it did; and the coach never stirred from the spot. It was already beginning to be late in the day, and to church they must and would go, so everyone who was in the palace was in a state of distress. Then the bailiff spoke up and said: "Out there in the gilded cottage in the thicket dwells a girl, and if you could but get her to lend you her calf I know it could draw the coach, even if it were as heavy as a mountain." They all thought that it was ridiculous to be drawn to church by a calf, but there was nothing else for it but to send a messenger once more, and beg as prettily as they could, on behalf of the King, that she would let them have the loan of the calf that the bailiff had told them about. The Master-maid let them have it immediately — this time also she would not say "no."

Then they harnessed the calf to see if the coach would move; and away it went, over rough and smooth, over stock and stone, so that they could scarcely breathe, and sometimes they were on the ground, and sometimes up in the air; and when they came to the church the coach began to go round and round like a spinning-wheel, and it was with the utmost difficulty and danger that they were able to get out of the coach and into the church. And when they went back again the coach went quicker still, so that most of them did not know how they got back to the palace at all.

When they had seated themselves at the table the Prince who had been in service with the giant said that he thought they ought to have invited the maiden who had lent them the shovel-handle, and the porch-door, and the calf up to the palace, "for," said he, "if we had not got these three things, we should never have got away from the palace."

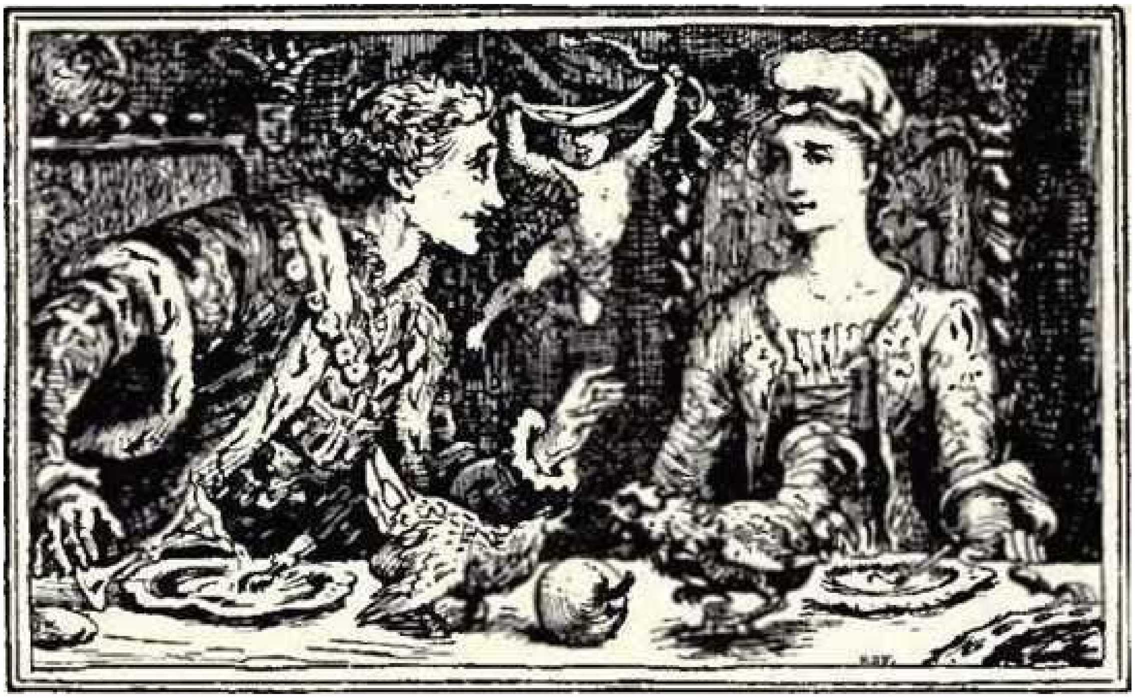

The King also thought that this was both just and proper, so he sent five of his best men down to the gilded hut, to greet the maiden courteously from the King, and to beg her to be so good as to come up to the palace to dinner at mid-day.

"Greet the King, and tell him that, if he is too good to come to me, I am too good to come to him," replied the Master-maid.

So the King had to go himself, and the Master-maid went with him immediately, and, as the King believed that she was more than she appeared to be, he seated her in the place of honor by the youngest bridegroom. When they had sat at the table for a short time, the Master-maid took out the cock, and the hen, and the golden apple which she had brought away with her from the giant's house, and set them on the table in front of her, and instantly the cock and the hen began to fight with each other for the golden apple.

"Oh! look how those two there are fighting for the golden apple," said the King's son.

"Yes, and so did we two fight to get out that time when we were in the mountain," said the Master-maid.

So the Prince knew her again, and you may imagine how delighted he was. He ordered the troll-witch who had rolled the apple to him to be torn in pieces between four-and-twenty horses, so that not a bit of her was left, and then for the first time they began really to keep the wedding, and, weary as they were, the sheriff, the attorney, and the bailiff kept it up too.(1)

(1) Asbjornsen and Moe.

WHY THE SEA IS SALT

Once upon a time, long, long ago, there were two brothers, the one rich and the other poor. When Christmas Eve came, the poor one had not a bite in the house, either of meat or bread; so he went to his brother, and begged him, in God's name, to give him something for Christmas Day. It was by no means the first time that the brother had been forced to give something to him, and he was not better pleased at being asked now than he generally was.

"If you will do what I ask you, you shall have a whole ham," said he. The poor one immediately thanked him, and promised this.

"Well, here is the ham, and now you must go straight to Dead Man's Hall," said the rich brother, throwing the ham to him.

"Well, I will do what I have promised," said the other, and he took the ham and set off. He went on and on for the livelong day, and at nightfall he came to a place where there was a bright light.

"I have no doubt this is the place," thought the man with the ham.

An old man with a long white beard was standing in the outhouse, chopping Yule logs.

"Good-evening," said the man with the ham.

"Good-evening to you. Where are you going at this late hour?" said the man.

"I am going to Dead Man's Hall, if only I am on the right track," answered the poor man.

"Oh! yes, you are right enough, for it is here," said the old man. "When you get inside they will all want to buy your ham, for they don't get much meat to eat there; but you must not sell it unless you can get the hand-mill which stands behind the door for it. When you come out again I will teach you how to stop the hand-mill, which is useful for almost everything."

So the man with the ham thanked the other for his good advice, and rapped at the door.

When he got in, everything happened just as the old man had said it would: all the people, great and small, came round him like ants on an ant-hill, and each tried to outbid the other for the ham.

"By rights my old woman and I ought to have it for our Christmas dinner, but, since you have set your hearts upon it, I must just give it up to you," said the man. "But, if I sell it, I will have the hand-mill which is standing there behind the door."

At first they would not hear of this, and haggled and bargained with the man, but he stuck to what he had said, and the people were forced to give him the hand-mill. When the man came out again into the yard, he asked the old woodcutter how he was to stop the hand-mill, and when he had learned that, he thanked him and set off home with all the speed he could, but did not get there until after the clock had struck twelve on Christmas Eve.

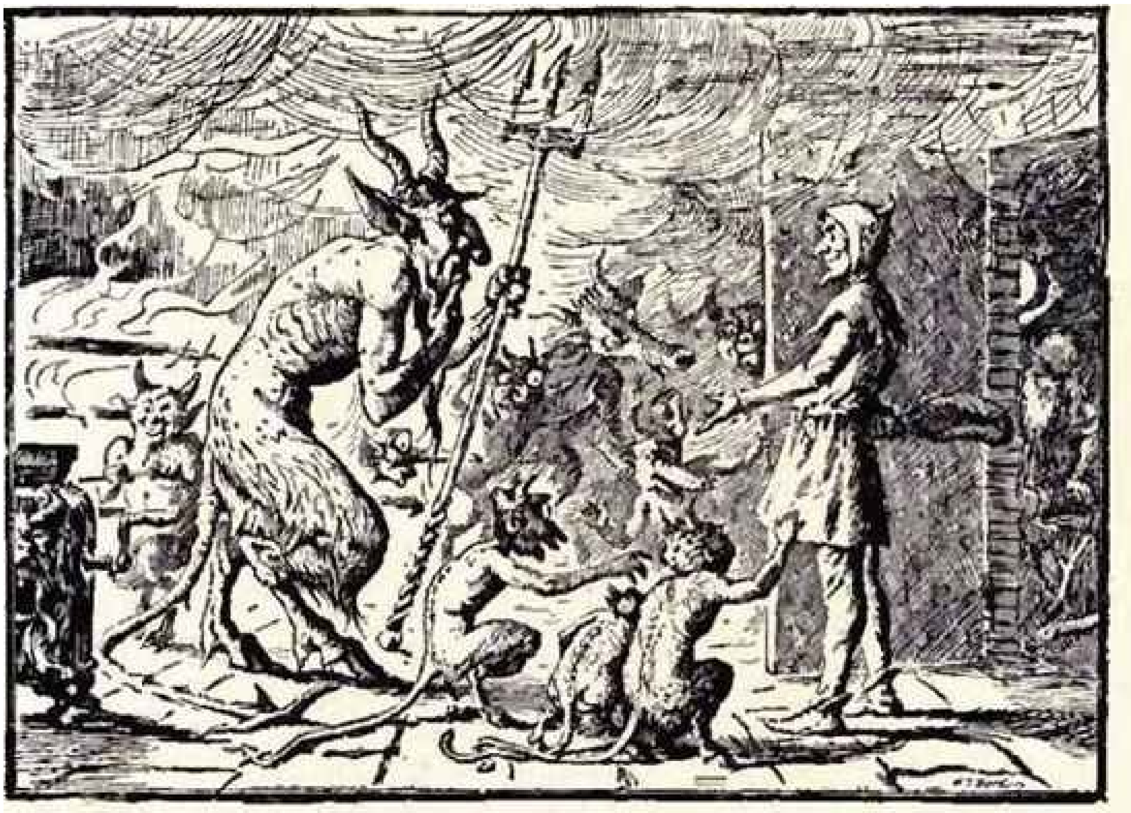

“Where in the world have you been?” said the old woman. “Here I have sat waiting hour after hour, and have not even two sticks to lay across each other under the Christmas porridge-pot.”

“Oh! I could not come before; I had something of importance to see about, and a long way to go, too; but now you shall just see!” said the man, and then he set the hand-mill on the table, and bade it first grind light, then a table-cloth, and then meat, and beer, and everything else that was good for a Christmas Eve’s supper; and the mill ground all that he ordered. “Bless me!” said the old woman as one thing after another appeared; and she wanted to know where her husband had got the mill from, but he would not tell her that.

“Never mind where I got it; you can see that it is a good one, and the water that turns it will never freeze,” said the man. So he ground meat and drink, and all kinds of good things, to last all Christmas-tide, and on the third day he invited all his friends to come to a feast.

Now when the rich brother saw all that there was at the banquet and in the house, he was both vexed and angry, for he grudged everything his brother had. “On Christmas Eve he was so poor that he came to me and begged for a trifle, for God’s sake, and now he gives a feast as if he were both a count and a king!” thought he. “But, for heaven’s sake, tell me where you got your riches from,” said he to his brother.

“From behind the door,” said he who owned the mill, for he did not choose to satisfy his brother on that point; but later in the evening, when he had taken a drop too much, he could not refrain from telling how he had come by the hand-mill. “There you see what has brought me all my wealth!” said he, and brought out the mill, and made it grind first one thing and then another. When the brother saw that, he insisted on having the mill, and after a great deal of persuasion got it; but he had to give three hundred dollars for it, and the poor brother was to keep it till the haymaking was over, for he thought: “If I keep it as long as that, I can make it grind meat and drink that will last many a long year.” During that time you may imagine that the mill did not grow rusty, and when hay-harvest came the rich brother got it, but the other had taken good care not to teach him how to stop it. It was evening when the rich man got the mill home, and in the morning he bade the old woman go out and spread the hay after the mowers, and he would attend to the house himself that day, he said.

So, when dinner-time drew near, he set the mill on the kitchen-table, and said: “Grind herrings and milk pottage, and do it both quickly and well.”

So the mill began to grind herrings and milk pottage, and first all the dishes and tubs were filled, and then it came out all over the kitchen-floor. The man twisted and turned it, and did all he could to make the mill stop, but, howsoever he turned it and screwed it, the mill went on grinding, and in a short time the pottage rose so high that the man was like to be drowned. So he threw open the parlor door, but it was not long before the mill had ground the parlor full too, and it was with difficulty and danger that the man could go through the stream of pottage and get hold of the door-latch. When he got the door open, he did not stay long in the room, but ran out, and the herrings and pottage came after him, and it streamed out over both farm and field. Now the old woman, who was out spreading the hay, began to think dinner was long in coming, and said to the women and the mowers: “Though the master does not call us home, we may as well go. It may be that he finds he is not good at making pottage and I should do well to help him.” So they began to straggle homeward, but when they had got a little way up the hill they met the herrings and pottage and bread, all pouring forth and winding about one over the other, and the man himself in front of the flood. “Would to heaven that each of you had a hundred stomachs! Take care that you are not drowned in the pottage!” he cried as he went by them as if Mischief were at his heels, down to where his brother dwelt. Then he begged him, for God’s sake, to take the mill back again, and that in an instant, for, said he: “If it grind one hour more the whole district will be destroyed by herrings and pottage.” But the brother would not take it until the other paid him three hundred dollars, and that he was obliged to do. Now the poor brother had both the money and the mill again. So it was not long before he had a farmhouse much finer than that in which his brother lived, but the mill ground him so much money that he covered it with plates of gold; and the farmhouse lay close by the sea-shore, so it shone and glittered far out to sea. Everyone who sailed by there now had to be put in to visit the rich man in the gold farmhouse, and everyone wanted to see the wonderful mill, for the report of it spread far and wide, and there was no one who had not heard tell of it.

After a long, long time came also a skipper who wished to see the mill. He asked if it could make salt. “Yes, it could make salt,” said he who owned it, and when the skipper heard that, he wished with all his might and main to have the mill, let it cost what it might, for, he thought, if he had it, he would get off having to sail far away over the perilous sea for freights of salt. At first the man would not hear of parting with it, but the skipper begged and prayed, and at last the man sold it to him, and got many, many thousand dollars for it. When the skipper had got the mill on his back he did not stay there long, for he was so afraid that the man would change his mind, and he had no time to ask how he was to stop it grinding, but got on board his ship as fast as he could.

When he had gone a little way out to sea he took the mill on deck. “Grind salt, and grind both quickly and well,” said the skipper. So the mill began to grind salt, till it spouted out like water, and when the skipper had got the ship filled he wanted to stop the mill, but whichsoever way he turned it, and how much soever he tried, it went on grinding, and the heap of salt grew higher and higher, until at last the ship sank. There lies the mill at the bottom of the sea, and still, day by day, it grinds on; and that is why the sea is salt.(1)

(1) Asbjornsen and Moe.

THE MASTER CAT; OR, PUSS IN BOOTS

There was a miller who left no more estate to the three sons he had than his mill, his ass, and his cat. The partition was soon made. Neither scrivener nor attorney was sent for. They would soon have eaten up all the poor patrimony. The eldest had the mill, the second the ass, and the youngest nothing but the cat. The poor young fellow was quite comfortless at having so poor a lot.

“My brothers,” said he, “may get their living handsomely enough by joining their stocks together; but for my part, when I have eaten up my cat, and made me a muff of his skin, I must die of hunger.”

The Cat, who heard all this, but made as if he did not, said to him with a grave and serious air:

“Do not thus afflict yourself, my good master. You have nothing else to do but to give me a bag and get a pair of boots made for me that I may scamper through the dirt and the brambles, and you shall see that you have not so bad a portion in me as you imagine.”

The Cat’s master did not build very much upon what he said. He had often seen him play a great many cunning tricks to catch rats and mice, as when he used to hang by the heels, or hide himself in the meal, and make as if he were dead; so that he did not altogether despair of his affording him some help in his miserable condition. When the Cat had what he asked for he booted himself very gallantly, and putting his bag about his neck, he held the strings of it in his two forepaws and went into a warren where was great abundance of rabbits. He put bran and sow-thistle into his bag, and stretching out at length, as if he had been dead, he waited for some young rabbits, not yet acquainted with the deceits of the world, to come and rummage his bag for what he had put into it.

Scarce was he lain down but he had what he wanted. A rash and foolish young rabbit jumped into his bag, and Monsieur Puss, immediately drawing close the strings, took and killed him without pity. Proud of his prey, he went with it to the palace and asked to speak with his majesty. He was shown upstairs into the King’s apartment, and, making a low reverence, said to him:

“I have brought you, sir, a rabbit of the warren, which my noble lord the Marquis of Carabas” (for that was the title which puss was pleased to give his master) “has commanded me to present to your majesty from him.”

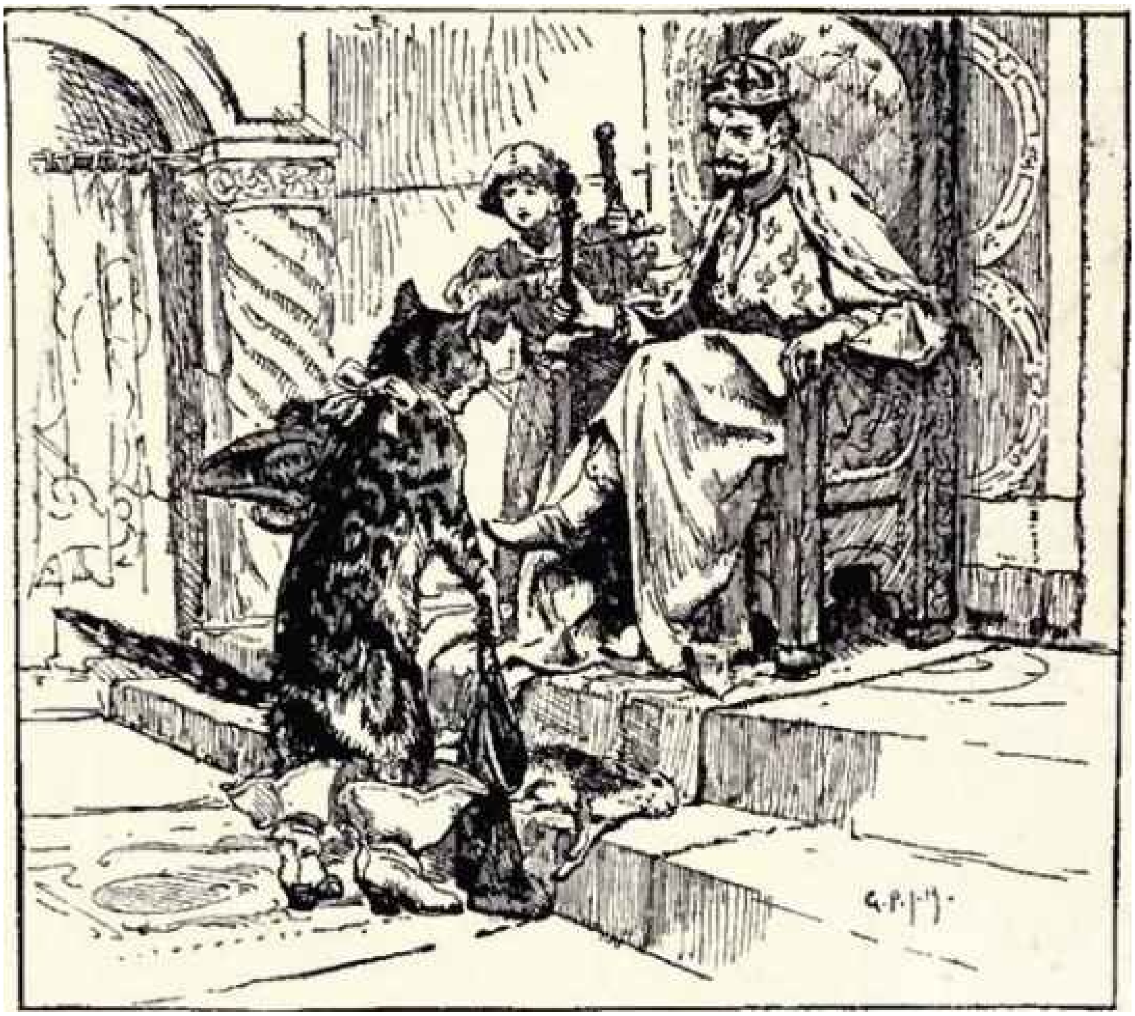

“Tell thy master,” said the king, “that I thank him and that he does me a great deal of pleasure.”

Another time he went and hid himself among some standing corn, holding still his bag open, and when a brace of partridges ran into it he drew the strings and so caught them both. He went and made a present of these to the king, as he had done before of the rabbit which he took in the warren. The king, in like manner, received the partridges with great pleasure, and ordered him some money for drink.

The Cat continued for two or three months thus to carry his Majesty, from time to time, game of his master’s taking. One day in particular, when he knew for certain that he was to take the air along the river-side, with his daughter, the most beautiful princess in the world, he said to his master:

“If you will follow my advice your fortune is made. You have nothing else to do but go and wash yourself in the river, in that part I shall show you, and leave the rest to me.”

The Marquis of Carabas did what the Cat advised him to, without knowing why or wherefore. While he was washing the King passed by, and the Cat began to cry out:

“Help! help! My Lord Marquis of Carabas is going to be drowned.”

At this noise the King put his head out of the coach-window, and, finding it was the Cat who had so often brought him such good game, he commanded his guards to run immediately to the assistance of his Lordship the Marquis of Carabas. While they were drawing the poor Marquis out of the river, the Cat came up to the coach and told the King that, while his master was washing, there came by some rogues, who went off with his clothes, though he had cried out: “Thieves! thieves!” several times, as loud as he could.

This cunning Cat had hidden them under a great stone. The King immediately commanded the officers of his wardrobe to run and fetch one of his best suits for the Lord Marquis of Carabas.

The King caressed him after a very extraordinary manner, and as the fine clothes he had given him extremely set off his good mien (for he was well made and very handsome in his person), the King’s daughter took a secret inclination to him, and the Marquis of Carabas had no sooner cast two or three respectful and somewhat tender glances but she fell in love with him to distraction. The King would needs have him come into the coach and take part of the airing. The Cat, quite overjoyed to see his project begin to succeed, marched on before, and, meeting with some countrymen, who were mowing a meadow, he said to them:

“Good people, you who are mowing, if you do not tell the King that the meadow you mow belongs to my Lord Marquis of Carabas, you shall be chopped as small as herbs for the pot.”

The King did not fail asking of the mowers to whom the meadow they were mowing belonged.

“To my Lord Marquis of Carabas,” answered they altogether, for the Cat’s threats had made them terribly afraid.

“You see, sir,” said the Marquis, “this is a meadow which never fails to yield a plentiful harvest every year.”

The Master Cat, who went still on before, met with some reapers, and said to them:

“Good people, you who are reaping, if you do not tell the King that all this corn belongs to the Marquis of Carabas, you shall be chopped as small as herbs for the pot.”

The King, who passed by a moment after, would needs know to whom all that corn, which he then saw, did belong.

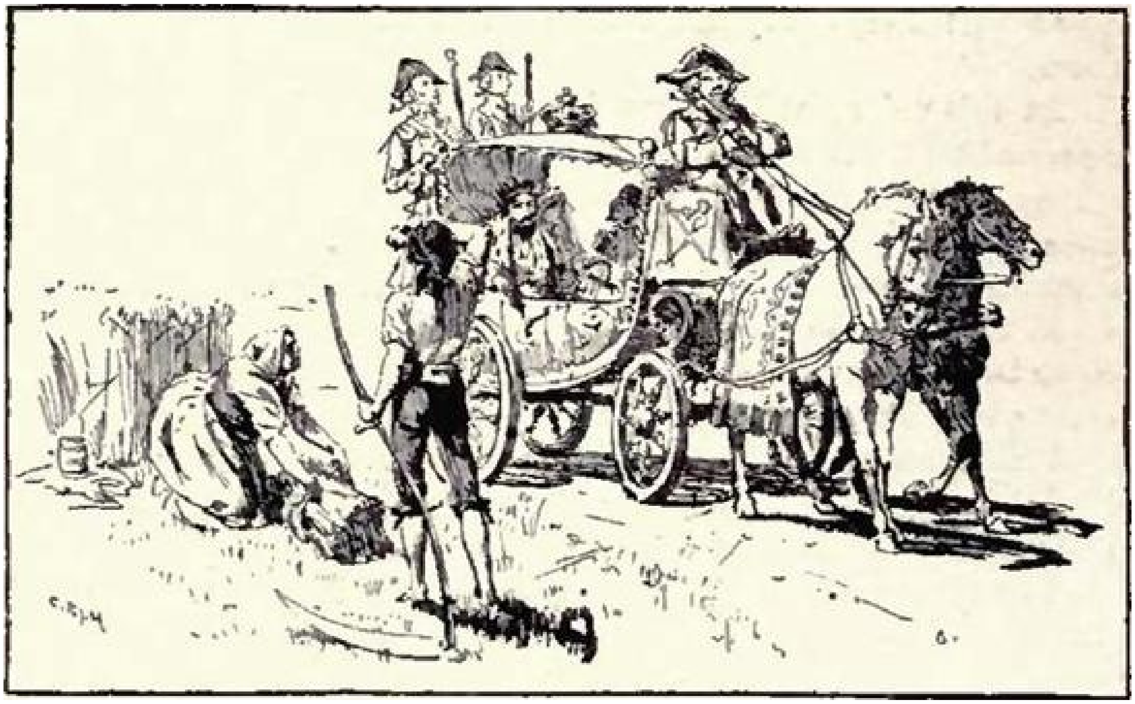

"To my Lord Marquis of Carabas," replied the reapers, and the King was very well pleased with it, as well as the Marquis, whom he congratulated thereupon. The Master Cat, who went always before, said the same words to all he met, and the King was astonished at the vast estates of my Lord Marquis of Carabas.

Monsieur Puss came at last to a stately castle, the master of which was an ogre, the richest had ever been known; for all the lands which the King had then gone over belonged to this castle. The Cat, who had taken care to inform himself who this ogre was and what he could do, asked to speak with him, saying he could not pass so near his castle without having the honor of paying his respects to him.

The ogre received him as civilly as an ogre could do, and made him sit down.

"I have been assured," said the Cat, "that you have the gift of being able to change yourself into all sorts of creatures you have a mind to; you can, for example, transform yourself into a lion, or elephant, and the like."

"That is true," answered the ogre very briskly; "and to convince you, you shall see me now become a lion."

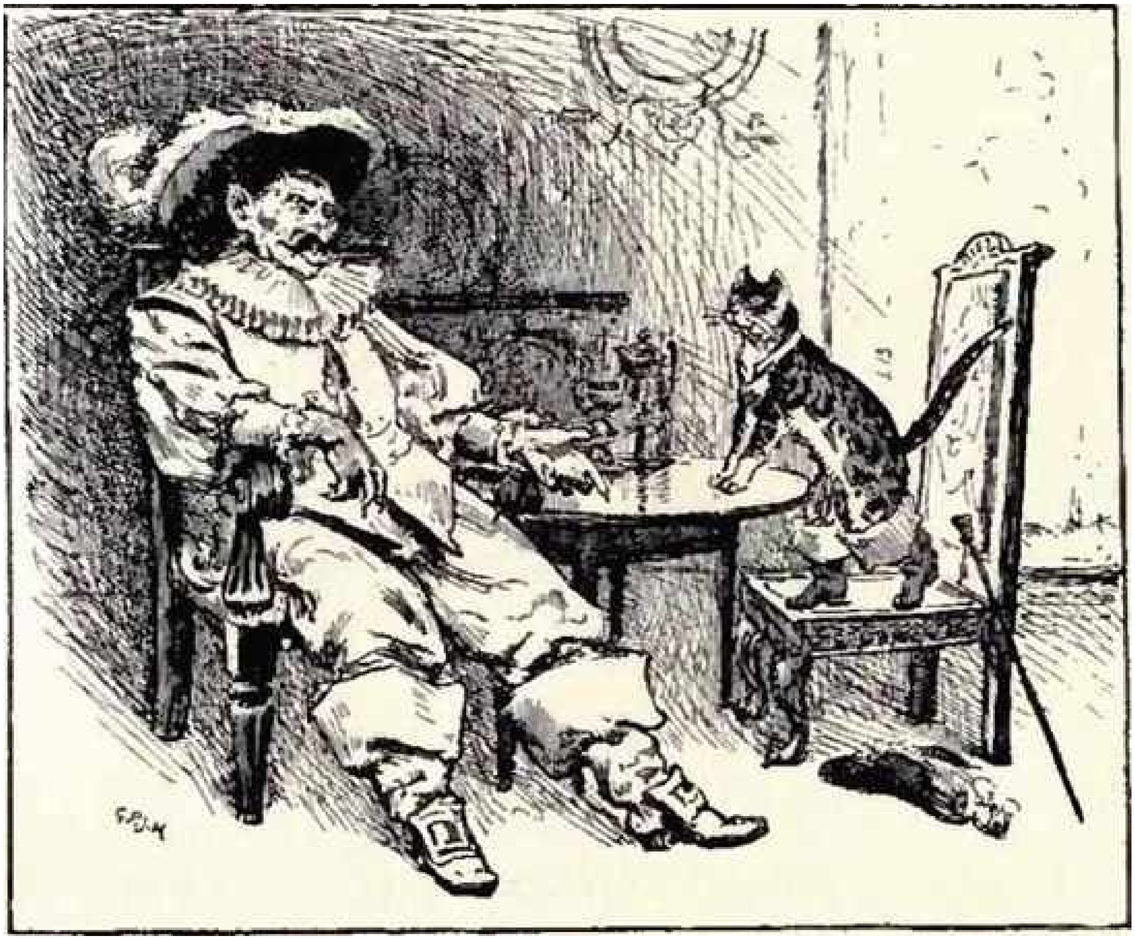

Puss was so sadly terrified at the sight of a lion so near him that he immediately got into the gutter, not without abundance of trouble and danger, because of his boots, which were of no use at all to him in walking upon the tiles. A little while after, when Puss saw that the ogre had resumed his natural form, he came down, and owned he had been very much frightened.

"I have been, moreover, informed," said the Cat, "but I know not how to believe it, that you have also the power to take on you the shape of the smallest animals; for example, to change yourself into a rat or a mouse; but I must own to you I take this to be impossible."

"Impossible!" cried the ogre; "you shall see that presently."

And at the same time he changed himself into a mouse, and began to run about the floor. Puss no sooner perceived this but he fell upon him and ate him up.

Meanwhile the King, who saw, as he passed, this fine castle of the ogre's, had a mind to go into it. Puss, who heard the noise of his Majesty's coach running over the draw-bridge, ran out, and said to the King:

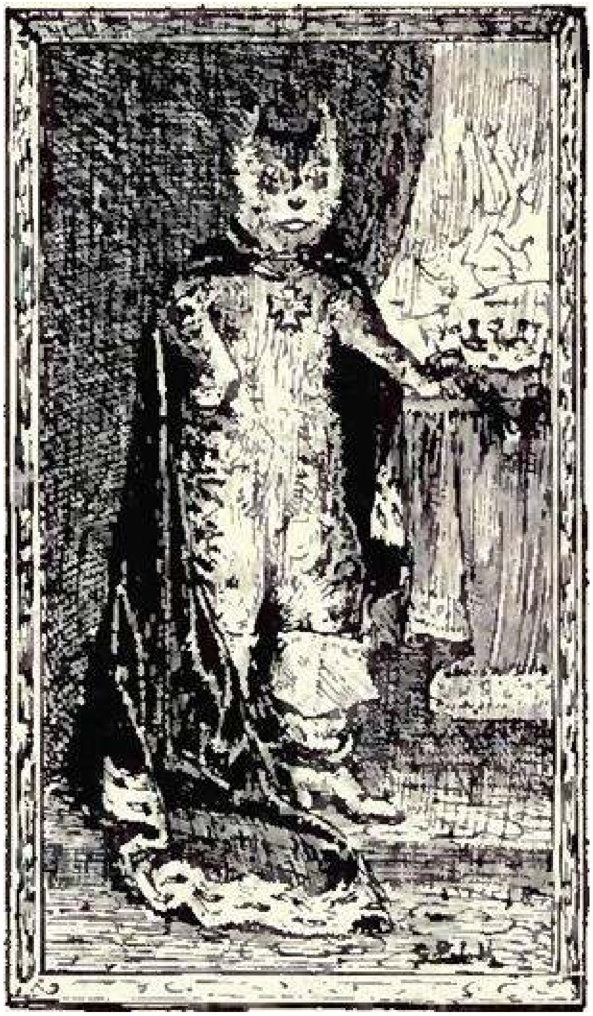

“Your Majesty is welcome to this castle of my Lord Marquis of Carabas.”

“What! my Lord Marquis,” cried the King, “and does this castle also belong to you? There can be nothing finer than this court and all the stately buildings which surround it; let us go into it, if you please.”

The Marquis gave his hand to the Princess, and followed the King, who went first. They passed into a spacious hall, where they found a magnificent collation, which the ogre had prepared for his friends, who were that very day to visit him, but dared not to enter, knowing the King was there. His Majesty was perfectly charmed with the good qualities of my Lord Marquis of Carabas, as was his daughter, who had fallen violently in love with him, and, seeing the vast estate he possessed, said to him, after having drunk five or six glasses:

“It will be owing to yourself only, my Lord Marquis, if you are not my son-in-law.”

The Marquis, making several low bows, accepted the honor which his Majesty conferred upon him, and forthwith, that very same day, married the Princess.

Puss became a great lord, and never ran after mice any more but only for his diversion.(1)

(1) Charles Perrault.

FELICIA AND THE POT OF PINKS

Once upon a time there was a poor laborer who, feeling that he had not much longer to live, wished to divide his possessions between his son and daughter, whom he loved dearly.

So he called them to him, and said: "Your mother brought me as her dowry two stools and a straw bed; I have, besides, a hen, a pot of pinks, and a silver ring, which were given me by a noble lady who once lodged in my poor cottage. When she went away she said to me:

"'Be careful of my gifts, good man; see that you do not lose the ring or forget to water the pinks. As for your daughter, I promise you that she shall be more beautiful than anyone you ever saw in your life; call her Felicia, and when she grows up give her the ring and the pot of pinks to console her for her poverty.' Take them both, then, my dear child," he added, "and your brother shall have everything else."

The two children seemed quite contented, and when their father died they wept for him, and divided his possessions as he had told them. Felicia believed that her brother loved her, but when she sat down upon one of the stools he said angrily:

"Keep your pot of pinks and your ring, but let my things alone. I like order in my house."

Felicia, who was very gentle, said nothing, but stood up crying quietly; while Bruno, for that was her brother's name, sat comfortably by the fire. Presently, when supper-time came, Bruno had a delicious egg, and he threw the shell to Felicia, saying:

"There, that is all I can give you; if you don't like it, go out and catch frogs; there are plenty of them in the marsh close by." Felicia did not answer, but she cried more bitterly than ever, and went away to her own little room. She found it filled with the sweet scent of the pinks, and, going up to them, she said sadly:

"Beautiful pinks, you are so sweet and so pretty, you are the only comfort I have left. Be very sure that I will take care of you, and water you well, and never allow any cruel hand to tear you from your stems."

As she leaned over them she noticed that they were very dry. So taking her pitcher, she ran off in the clear moonlight to the fountain, which was at some distance. When she reached it she sat down upon the brink to rest, but she had hardly done so when she saw a stately lady coming toward her, surrounded by numbers of attendants. Six maids of honor carried her train, and she leaned upon the arm of another.

When they came near the fountain a canopy was spread for her, under which was placed a sofa of cloth-of-gold, and presently a dainty supper was served, upon a table covered with dishes of gold and crystal, while the wind in the trees and the falling water of the fountain murmured the softest music.

Felicia was hidden in the shade, too much astonished by all she saw to venture to move; but in a few moments the Queen said:

“I fancy I see a shepherdess near that tree; bid her come hither.”

So Felicia came forward and saluted the Queen timidly, but with so much grace that all were surprised.

“What are you doing here, my pretty child?” asked the Queen. “Are you not afraid of robbers?”

“Ah! madam,” said Felicia, “a poor shepherdess who has nothing to lose does not fear robbers.”

“You are not very rich, then?” said the Queen, smiling.

“I am so poor,” answered Felicia, “that a pot of pinks and a silver ring are my only possessions in the world.”

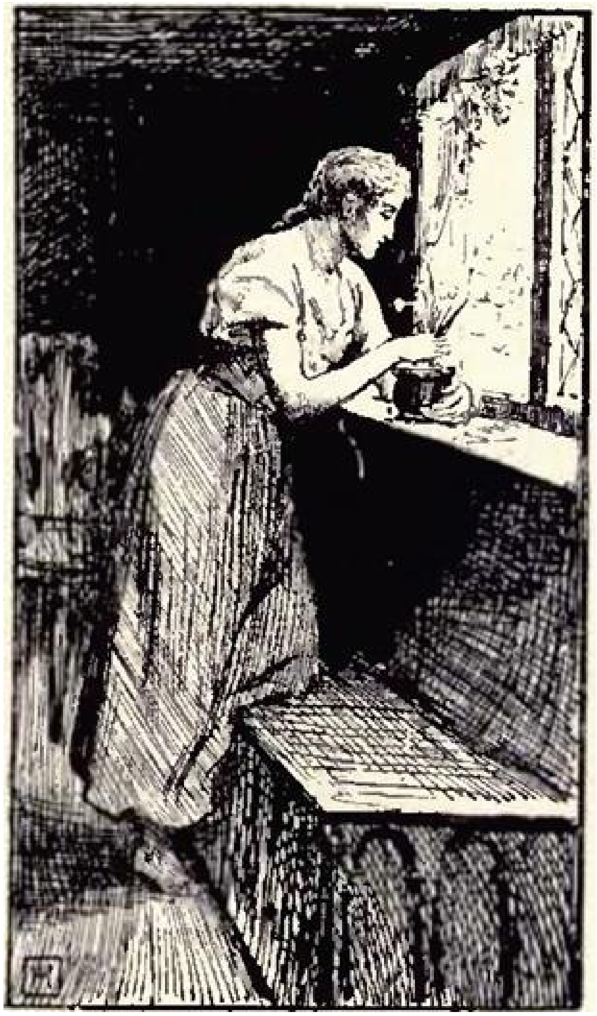

“But you have a heart,” said the Queen. “What should you say if anybody wanted to steal that?”

“I do not know what it is like to lose one’s heart, madam,” she replied; “but I have always heard that without a heart one cannot live, and if it is broken one must die; and in spite of my poverty I should be sorry not to live.”

“You are quite right to take care of your heart, pretty one,” said the Queen. “But tell me, have you supped?”

“No, madam,” answered Felicia; “my brother ate all the supper there was.”

Then the Queen ordered that a place should be made for her at the table, and herself loaded Felicia’s plate with good things; but she was too much astonished to be hungry.

“I want to know what you were doing at the fountain so late?” said the Queen presently.

“I came to fetch a pitcher of water for my pinks, madam,” she answered, stooping to pick up the pitcher which stood beside her; but when she showed it to the Queen she was amazed to see that it had turned to gold, all sparkling with great diamonds, and the water, of which it was full, was more fragrant than the sweetest roses. She was afraid to take it until the Queen said:

"It is yours, Felicia; go and water your pinks with it, and let it remind you that the Queen of the Woods is your friend."

The shepherdess threw herself at the Queen's feet, and thanked her humbly for her gracious words.

"Ah! madam," she cried, "if I might beg you to stay here a moment I would run and fetch my pot of pinks for you — they could not fall into better hands."

"Go, Felicia," said the Queen, stroking her cheek softly; "I will wait here until you come back."

So Felicia took up her pitcher and ran to her little room, but while she had been away Bruno had gone in and taken the pot of pinks, leaving a great cabbage in its place. When she saw the unlucky cabbage Felicia was much distressed, and did not know what to do; but at last she ran back to the fountain, and, kneeling before the Queen, said:

"Madam, Bruno has stolen my pot of pinks, so I have nothing but my silver ring; but I beg you to accept it as a proof of my gratitude."

"But if I take your ring, my pretty shepherdess," said the Queen, "you will have nothing left; and what will you do then?"

"Ah! madam," she answered simply, "if I have your friendship I shall do very well."

So the Queen took the ring and put it on her finger, and mounted her chariot, which was made of coral studded with emeralds, and drawn by six milk-white horses. And Felicia looked after her until the winding of the forest path hid her from her sight, and then she went back to the cottage, thinking over all the wonderful things that had happened.

The first thing she did when she reached her room was to throw the cabbage out of the window.

But she was very much surprised to hear an odd little voice cry out: "Oh! I am half killed!" and could not tell where it came from, because cabbages do not generally speak.

As soon as it was light, Felicia, who was very unhappy about her pot of pinks, went out to look for it, and the first thing she found was the unfortunate cabbage. She gave it a push with her foot, saying: "What are you doing here, and how dared you put yourself in the place of my pot of pinks?"

"If I hadn't been carried," replied the cabbage, "you may be very sure that I shouldn't have thought of going there."

It made her shiver with fright to hear the cabbage talk, but he went on:

"If you will be good enough to plant me by my comrades again, I can tell you where your pinks are at this moment — hidden in Bruno's bed!"

Felicia was in despair when she heard this, not knowing how she was to get them back. But she replanted the cabbage very kindly in his old place, and, as she finished doing it, she saw Bruno's hen, and said, catching hold of it:

"Come here, horrid little creature! you shall suffer for all the unkind things my brother has done to me."

"Ah! shepherdess," said the hen, "don't kill me; I am rather a gossip, and I can tell you some surprising things that you will like to hear. Don't imagine that you are the daughter of the poor laborer who brought you up; your mother was a queen who had six girls already, and the King threatened that unless she had a son who could inherit his kingdom she should have her head cut off.

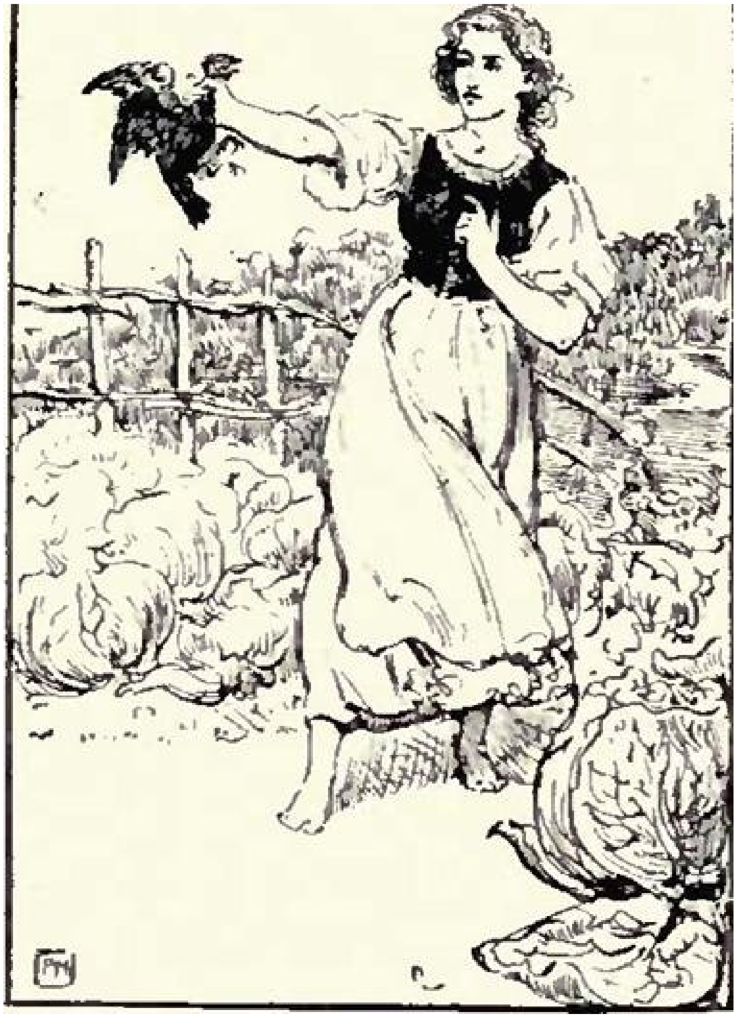

"So when the Queen had another little daughter she was quite frightened, and agreed with her sister (who was a fairy) to exchange her for the fairy's little son. Now the Queen had been shut up in a great tower by the King's orders, and when a great many days went by and still she heard nothing from the Fairy she made her escape from the window by means of a rope ladder, taking her little baby with her. After wandering about until she was half dead with cold and fatigue she reached this cottage. I was the laborer's wife, and was a good nurse, and the Queen gave you into my charge, and told me all her misfortunes, and then died before she had time to say what was to become of you.

"As I never in all my life could keep a secret, I could not help telling this strange tale to my neighbors, and one day a beautiful lady came here, and I told it to her also. When I had finished she touched me with a wand she held in her hand, and instantly I became a hen, and there was an end of my talking! I was very sad, and my husband, who was out when it happened, never knew what had become of me. After seeking me everywhere he believed that I must have been drowned, or eaten up by wild beasts in the forest. That same lady came here once more, and commanded that you should be called Felicia, and left the ring and the pot of pinks to be given to you; and while she was in the house twenty-five of the King's guards came to search for you, doubtless meaning to kill you; but she muttered a few words, and immediately they all turned into cabbages. It was one of them whom you threw out of your window yesterday.

"I don't know how it was that he could speak — I have never heard either of them say a word before, nor have I been able to do it myself until now."

The Princess was greatly astonished at the hen's story, and said kindly: "I am truly sorry for you, my poor nurse, and wish it was in my power to restore you to your real form. But we must not despair; it seems to me, after what you have told me, that something must be going to happen soon. Just now, however, I must go and look for my pinks, which I love better than anything in the world."

Bruno had gone out into the forest, never thinking that Felicia would search in his room for the pinks, and she was delighted by his unexpected absence, and thought to get them back without further trouble. But as soon as she entered the room she saw a terrible army of rats, who were guarding the straw bed; and when she attempted to approach it they sprang at her, biting and scratching furiously. Quite terrified, she drew back, crying out: "Oh! my dear pinks, how can you stay here in such bad company?"

Then she suddenly bethought herself of the pitcher of water, and, hoping that it might have some magic power, she ran to fetch it, and sprinkled a few drops over the fierce-looking swarm of rats. In a moment not a tail or a whisker was to be seen. Each one had made for his hole as fast as his legs could carry him, so that the Princess could safely take her pot of pinks. She found them nearly dying for want of water, and hastily poured all that was left in the pitcher upon them. As she bent over them, enjoying their delicious scent, a soft voice, that seemed to rustle among the leaves, said:

“Lovely Felicia, the day has come at last when I may have the happiness of telling you how even the flowers love you and rejoice in your beauty.”

The Princess, quite overcome by the strangeness of hearing a cabbage, a hen, and a pink speak, and by the terrible sight of an army of rats, suddenly became very pale, and fainted away.

At this moment in came Bruno. Working hard in the heat had not improved his temper, and when he saw that Felicia had succeeded in finding her pinks he was so angry that he dragged her out into the garden and shut the door upon her. The fresh air soon made her open her pretty eyes, and there before her stood the Queen of the Woods, looking as charming as ever.

“You have a bad brother,” she said; “I saw he turned you out. Shall I punish him for it?”

“Ah! no, madam,” she said; “I am not angry with him.

“But supposing he was not your brother, after all, what would you say then?” asked the Queen.

“Oh! but I think he must be,” said Felicia.

“What!” said the Queen, “have you not heard that you are a Princess?”

“I was told so a little while ago, madam, but how could I believe it without a single proof?”

“Ah! dear child,” said the Queen, “the way you speak assures me that, in spite of your humble upbringing, you are indeed a real princess, and I can save you from being treated in such a way again.”

She was interrupted at this moment by the arrival of a very handsome young man. He wore a coat of green velvet fastened with emerald clasps, and had a crown of pinks on his head. He knelt upon one knee and kissed the Queen’s hand.

“Ah!” she cried, “my pink, my dear son, what a happiness to see you restored to your natural shape by Felicia’s aid!” And she embraced him joyfully. Then, turning to Felicia, she said:

“Charming Princess, I know all the hen told you, but you cannot have heard that the zephyrs, to whom was entrusted the task of carrying my son to the tower where the Queen, your mother, so anxiously waited for him, left him instead in a garden of flowers, while they flew off to tell your mother. Whereupon a fairy with whom I had quarrelled changed him into a pink, and I could do nothing to prevent it.

“You can imagine how angry I was, and how I tried to find some means of undoing the mischief she had done; but there was no help for it. I could only bring Prince Pink to the place where you were being brought up, hoping that when you grew up he might love you, and by your care be restored to his natural form. And you see everything has come right, as I hoped it would. Your giving me the silver ring was the sign that the power of the charm was nearly over, and my enemy’s last chance was to frighten you with her army of rats. That she did not succeed in doing; so now, my dear Felicia, if you will be married to my son with this silver ring your future happiness is certain. Do you think him handsome and amiable enough to be willing to marry him?”

“Madam,” replied Felicia, blushing, “you overwhelm me with your kindness. I know that you are my mother’s sister, and that by your art you turned the soldiers who were sent to kill me into cabbages, and my nurse into a hen, and that you do me only too much honor in proposing that I shall marry your son. How can I explain to you the cause of my hesitation? I feel, for the first time in my life, how happy it would make me to be beloved. Can you indeed give me the Prince’s heart?”

“It is yours already, lovely Princess!” he cried, taking her hand in his; “but for the horrible enchantment which kept me silent I should have told you long ago how dearly I love you.”

This made the Princess very happy, and the Queen, who could not bear to see her dressed like a poor shepherdess, touched her with her wand, saying:

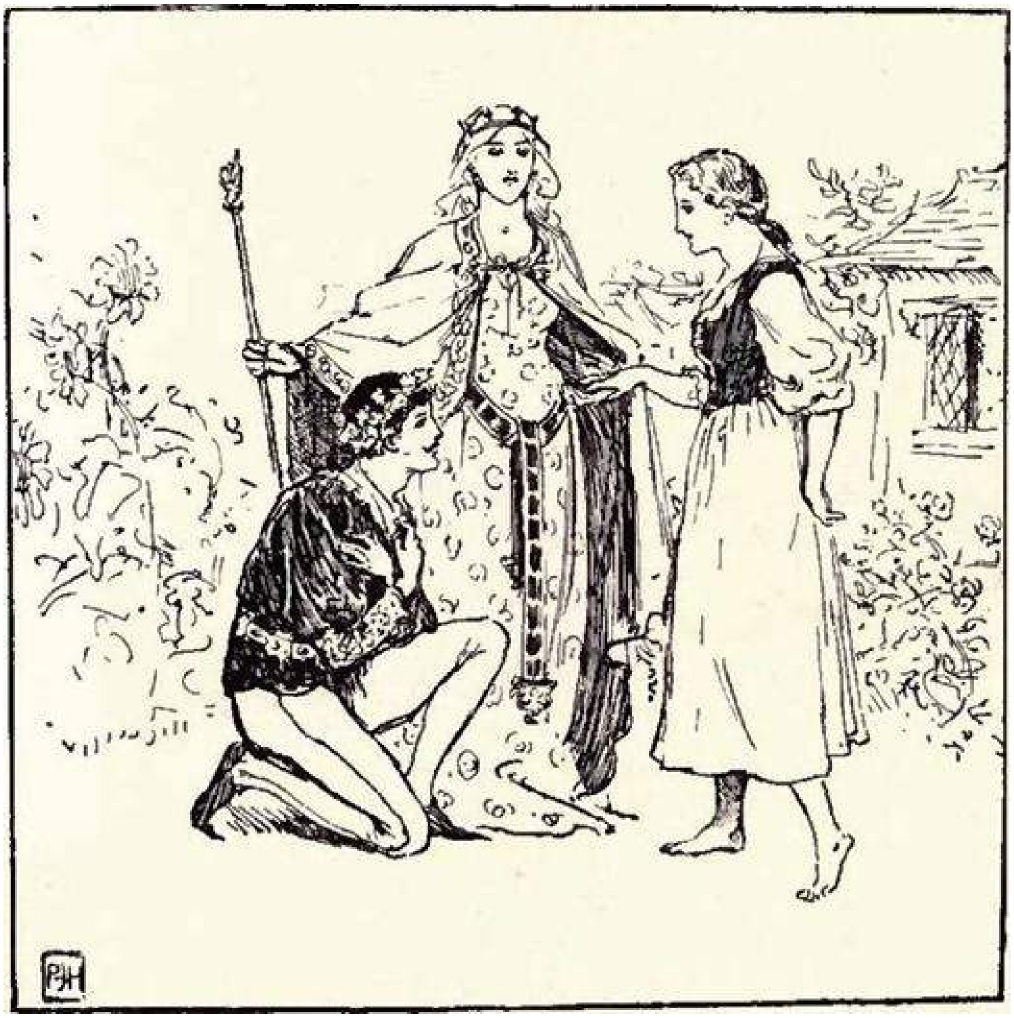

"I wish you to be attired as befits your rank and beauty." And immediately the Princess's cotton dress became a magnificent robe of silver brocade embroidered with carbuncles, and her soft dark hair was encircled by a crown of diamonds, from which floated a clear white veil. With her bright eyes, and the charming color in her cheeks, she was altogether such a dazzling sight that the Prince could hardly bear it.

"How pretty you are, Felicia!" he cried. "Don't keep me in suspense, I entreat you; say that you will marry me."

"Ah!" said the Queen, smiling, "I think she will not refuse now."

Just then Bruno, who was going back to his work, came out of the cottage, and thought he must be dreaming when he saw Felicia; but she called him very kindly, and begged the Queen to take pity on him.

"What!" she said, "when he was so unkind to you?"

"Ah! madam," said the Princess, "I am so happy that I should like everybody else to be happy too."

The Queen kissed her, and said: "Well, to please you, let me see what I can do for this cross Bruno.” And with a wave of her wand she turned the poor little cottage into a splendid palace, full of treasures; only the two stools and the straw bed remained just as they were, to remind him of his former poverty. Then the Queen touched Bruno himself, and made him gentle and polite and grateful, and he thanked her and the Princess a thousand times. Lastly, the Queen restored the hen and the cabbages to their natural forms, and left them all very contented. The Prince and Princess were married as soon as possible with great splendor, and lived happily ever after.(1)

(1) Fortunee. Par Madame la Comtesse d’Aulnoy.

THE WHITE CAT

Once upon a time there was a king who had three sons, who were all so clever and brave that he began to be afraid that they would want to reign over the kingdom before he was dead. Now the King, though he felt that he was growing old, did not at all wish to give up the government of his kingdom while he could still manage it very well, so he thought the best way to live in peace would be to divert the minds of his sons by promises which he could always get out of when the time came for keeping them.

So he sent for them all, and, after speaking to them kindly, he added:

“You will quite agree with me, my dear children, that my great age makes it impossible for me to look after my affairs of state as carefully as I once did. I begin to fear that this may affect the welfare of my subjects, therefore I wish that one of you should succeed to my crown; but in return for such a gift as this it is only right that you should do something for me. Now, as I think of retiring into the country, it seems to me that a pretty, lively, faithful little dog would be very good company for me; so, without any regard for your ages, I promise that the one who brings me the most beautiful little dog shall succeed me at once.”

The three Princes were greatly surprised by their father’s sudden fancy for a little dog, but as it gave the two younger ones a chance they would not otherwise have had of being king, and as the eldest was too polite to make any objection, they accepted the commission with pleasure. They bade farewell to the King, who gave them presents of silver and precious stones, and appointed to meet them at the same hour, in the same place, after a year had passed, to see the little dogs they had brought for him.

Then they went together to a castle which was about a league from the city, accompanied by all their particular friends, to whom they gave a grand banquet, and the three brothers promised to be friends always, to share whatever good fortune befell them, and not to be parted by any envy or jealousy; and so they set out, agreeing to meet at the same castle at the appointed time, to present themselves before the King together. Each one took a different road, and the two eldest met with many adventures; but it is about the youngest that you are going to hear. He was young, and gay, and handsome, and knew everything that a prince ought to know; and as for his courage, there was simply no end to it.

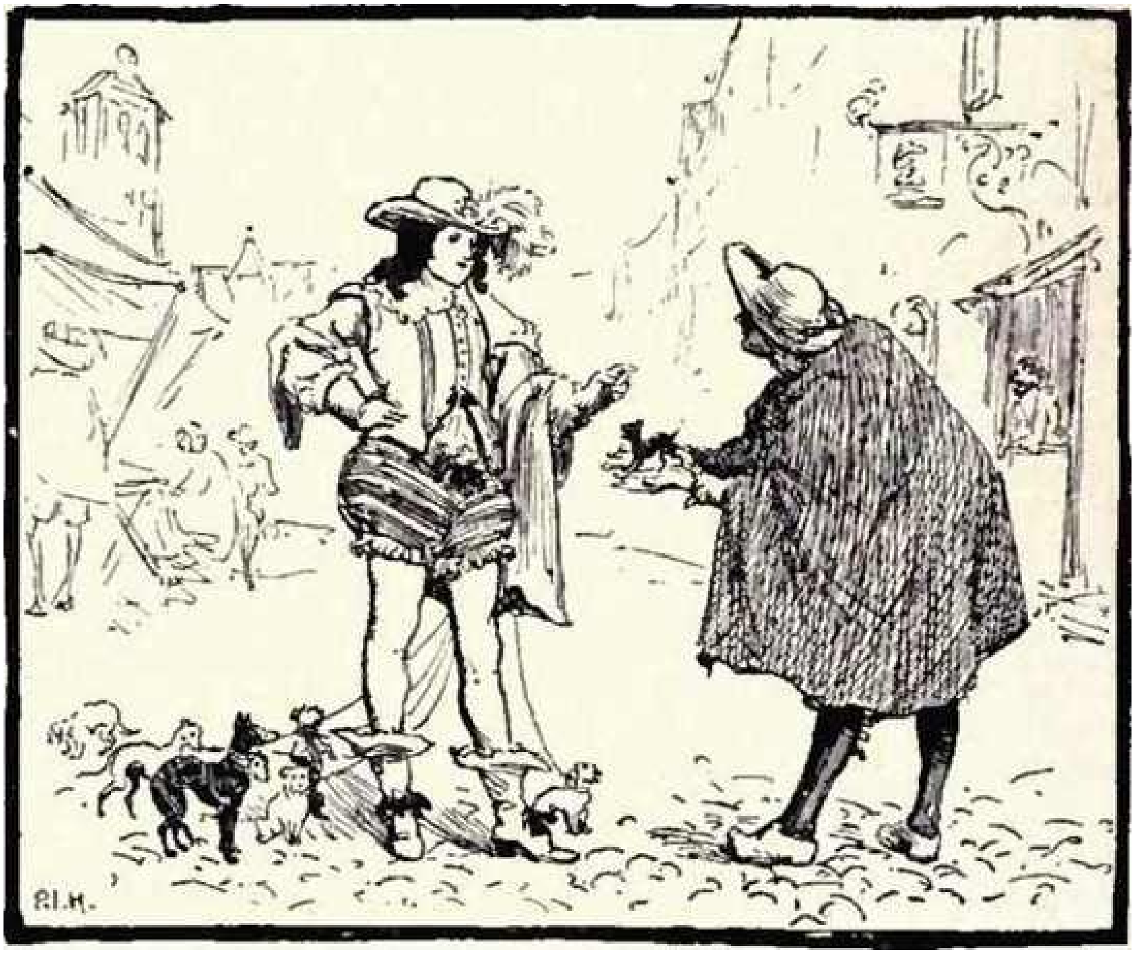

Hardly a day passed without his buying several dogs — big and little, greyhounds, mastiffs, spaniels, and lapdogs. As soon as he had bought a pretty one he was sure to see a still prettier, and then he had to get rid of all the others and buy that one, as, being alone, he found it impossible to take thirty or forty thousand dogs about with him. He journeyed from day to day, not knowing where he was going, until at last, just at nightfall, he reached a great, gloomy forest. He did not know his way, and, to make matters worse, it began to thunder, and the rain poured down. He took the first path he could find, and after walking for a long time he fancied he saw a faint light, and began to hope that he was coming to some cottage where he might find shelter for the night. At length, guided by the light, he reached the door of the most splendid castle he could have imagined. This door was of gold covered with carbuncles, and it was the pure red light which shone from them that had shown him the way through the forest. The walls were of the finest porcelain in all the most delicate colors, and the Prince saw that all the stories he had ever read were pictured upon them; but as he was terribly wet, and the rain still fell in torrents, he could not stay to look about any more, but came back to the golden door. There he saw a deer's foot hanging by a chain of diamonds, and he began to wonder who could live in this magnificent castle.

"They must feel very secure against robbers," he said to himself. "What is to hinder anyone from cutting off that chain and digging out those carbuncles, and making himself rich for life?"

He pulled the deer's foot, and immediately a silver bell sounded and the door flew open, but the Prince could see nothing but numbers of hands in the air, each holding a torch. He was so much surprised that he stood quite still, until he felt himself pushed forward by other hands, so that, though he was somewhat uneasy, he could not help going on. With his hand on his sword, to be prepared for whatever might happen, he entered a hall paved with lapis-lazuli, while two lovely voices sang:

"The hands you see floating above
Will swiftly your bidding obey;
If your heart dreads not conquering Love,
In this place you may fearlessly stay."

The Prince could not believe that any danger threatened him when he was welcomed in this way, so, guided by the mysterious hands, he went toward a door of coral, which opened of its own accord, and he found himself in a vast hall of mother-of-pearl, out of which opened a number of other rooms, glittering with thousands of lights, and full of such beautiful pictures and precious things that the Prince felt quite bewildered. After passing through sixty rooms the hands that conducted him stopped, and the Prince saw a most comfortable-looking arm-chair drawn up close to the chimney-corner; at the same moment the fire lighted itself, and the pretty, soft, clever hands took off the Prince's wet, muddy clothes, and presented him with fresh ones made of the richest stuffs, all embroidered with gold and emeralds. He could not help admiring everything he saw, and the deft way in which the hands waited on him, though they sometimes appeared so suddenly that they made him jump.

When he was quite ready — and I can assure you that he looked very different from the wet and weary Prince who had stood outside in the rain, and pulled the deer's foot — the hands led him to a splendid room, upon the walls of which were painted the histories of Puss in Boots and a number of other famous cats. The table was laid for supper with two golden plates, and golden spoons and forks, and the sideboard was covered with dishes and glasses of crystal set with precious stones. The Prince was wondering who the second place could be for, when suddenly in came about a dozen cats carrying guitars and rolls of music, who took their places at one end of the room, and under the direction of a cat who beat time with a roll of paper began to mew in every imaginable key, and to draw their claws across the strings of the guitars, making the strangest kind of music that could be heard. The Prince hastily stopped up his ears, but even then the sight of these comical musicians sent him into fits of laughter.

“What funny thing shall I see next?” he said to himself, and instantly the door opened, and in came a tiny figure covered by a long black veil. It was conducted by two cats wearing black mantles and carrying swords, and a large party of cats followed, who brought in cages full of rats and mice.

The Prince was so much astonished that he thought he must be dreaming, but the little figure came up to him and threw back its veil, and he saw that it was the loveliest little white cat it is possible to imagine. She looked very young and very sad, and in a sweet little voice that went straight to his heart she said to the Prince:

“King’s son, you are welcome; the Queen of the Cats is glad to see you.”

“Lady Cat,” replied the Prince, “I thank you for receiving me so kindly, but surely you are no ordinary pussy-cat? Indeed, the way you speak and the magnificence of your castle prove it plainly.”

“King’s son,” said the White Cat, “I beg you to spare me these compliments, for I am not used to them. But now,” she added, “let supper be served, and let the musicians be silent, as the Prince does not understand what they are saying.”

So the mysterious hands began to bring in the supper, and first they put on the table two dishes, one containing stewed pigeons and the other a fricassee of fat mice. The sight of the latter made the Prince feel as if he could not enjoy his supper at all; but the White Cat, seeing this, assured him that the dishes intended for him were prepared in a separate kitchen, and he might be quite certain that they contained neither rats nor mice; and the Prince felt so sure that she would not deceive him that he had no more hesitation in beginning.

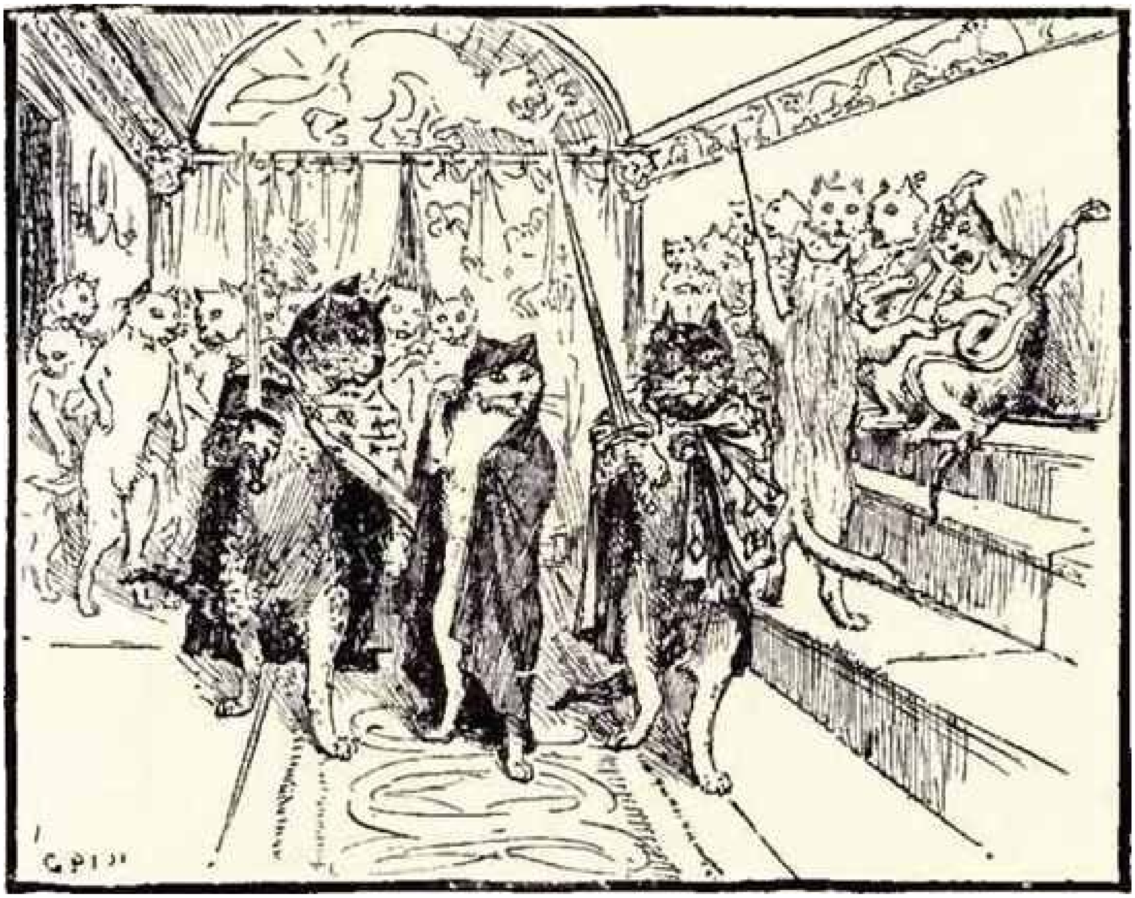

Presently he noticed that on the little paw that was next him the White Cat wore a bracelet containing a portrait, and he begged to be allowed to look at it. To his great surprise he found it represented an extremely handsome young man, who was so like himself that it might have been his own portrait! The White Cat sighed as he looked at it, and seemed sadder than ever, and the Prince dared not ask any questions for fear of displeasing her; so he began to talk about other things, and found that she was interested in all the subjects he cared for himself, and seemed to know quite well what was going on in the world. After supper they went into another room, which was fitted up as a theatre, and the cats acted and danced for their amusement, and then the White Cat said good-night to him, and the hands conducted him into a room he had not seen before, hung with tapestry worked with butterflies' wings of every color; there were mirrors that reached from the ceiling to the floor, and a little white bed with curtains of gauze tied up with ribbons. The Prince went to bed in silence, as he did not quite know how to begin a conversation with the hands that waited on him, and in the morning he was awakened by a noise and confusion outside of his window, and the hands came and quickly dressed him in hunting costume. When he looked out all the cats were assembled in the courtyard, some leading greyhounds, some blowing horns, for the White Cat was going out hunting. The hands led a wooden horse up to the Prince, and seemed to expect him to mount it, at which he was very indignant; but it was no use for him to object, for he speedily found himself upon its back, and it pranced gaily off with him.

The White Cat herself was riding a monkey, which climbed even up to the eagles' nests when she had a fancy for the young eaglets. Never was there a pleasanter hunting party, and when they returned to the castle the Prince and the White Cat supped together as before, but when they had finished she offered him a crystal goblet, which must have contained a magic draught, for, as soon as he had swallowed its contents, he forgot everything, even the little dog that he was seeking for the King, and only thought how happy he was to be with the White Cat! And so the days passed, in every kind of amusement, until the year was nearly gone. The Prince had forgotten all about meeting his brothers: he did not even know what country he belonged to; but the White Cat knew when he ought to go back, and one day she said to him:

"Do you know that you have only three days left to look for the little dog for your father, and your brothers have found lovely ones?"

Then the Prince suddenly recovered his memory, and cried:

"What can have made me forget such an important thing? My whole fortune depends upon it; and even if I could in such a short time find a dog pretty enough to gain me a kingdom, where should I find a horse who would carry me all that way in three days?" And he began to be very vexed. But the White Cat said to him: "King's son, do not trouble yourself; I am your friend, and will make everything easy for you. You can still stay here for a day, as the good wooden horse can take you to your country in twelve hours."

"I thank you, beautiful Cat," said the Prince; "but what good will it do me to get back if I have not a dog to take to my father?"

"See here," answered the White Cat, holding up an acorn; "there is a prettier one in this than in the Dogstar!"

"Oh! White Cat dear," said the Prince, "how unkind you are to laugh at me now!"

"Only listen," she said, holding the acorn to his ear.

And inside it he distinctly heard a tiny voice say: "Bow-wow!"

The Prince was delighted, for a dog that can be shut up in an acorn must be very small indeed. He wanted to take it out and look at it, but the White Cat said it would be better not to open the acorn till he was before the King, in case the tiny dog should be cold on the journey. He thanked her a thousand times, and said good-by quite sadly when the time came for him to set out.

"The days have passed so quickly with you," he said, "I only wish I could take you with me now.”

But the White Cat shook her head and sighed deeply in answer.

After all the Prince was the first to arrive at the castle where he had agreed to meet his brothers, but they came soon after, and stared in amazement when they saw the wooden horse in the courtyard jumping like a hunter.

The Prince met them joyfully, and they began to tell him all their adventures; but he managed to hide from them what he had been doing, and even led them to think that a turnspit dog which he had with him was the one he was bringing for the King. Fond as they all were of one another, the two eldest could not help being glad to think that their dogs certainly had a better chance. The next morning they started in the same chariot. The elder brothers carried in baskets two such tiny, fragile dogs that they hardly dared to touch them. As for the turnspit, he ran after the chariot, and got so covered with mud that one could hardly see what he was like at all. When they reached the palace everyone crowded round to welcome them as they went into the King’s great hall; and when the two brothers presented their little dogs nobody could decide which was the prettier. They were already arranging between themselves to share the kingdom equally, when the youngest stepped forward, drawing from his pocket the acorn the White Cat had given him. He opened it quickly, and there upon a white cushion they saw a dog so small that it could easily have been put through a ring. The Prince laid it upon the ground, and it got up at once and began to dance. The King did not know what to say, for it was impossible that anything could be prettier than this little creature. Nevertheless, as he was in no hurry to part with his crown, he told his sons that, as they had been so successful the first time, he would ask them to go once again, and seek by land and sea for a piece of muslin so fine that it could be drawn through the eye of a needle. The brothers were not very willing to set out again, but the two eldest consented because it gave them another chance, and they started as before. The youngest again mounted the wooden horse, and rode back at full speed to his beloved White Cat. Every door of the castle stood wide open, and every window and turret was illuminated, so it looked more wonderful than before. The hands hastened to meet him, and led the wooden horse off to the stable, while he hurried in to find the White Cat. She was asleep in a little basket on a white satin cushion, but she very soon started up when she heard the Prince, and was overjoyed at seeing him once more.

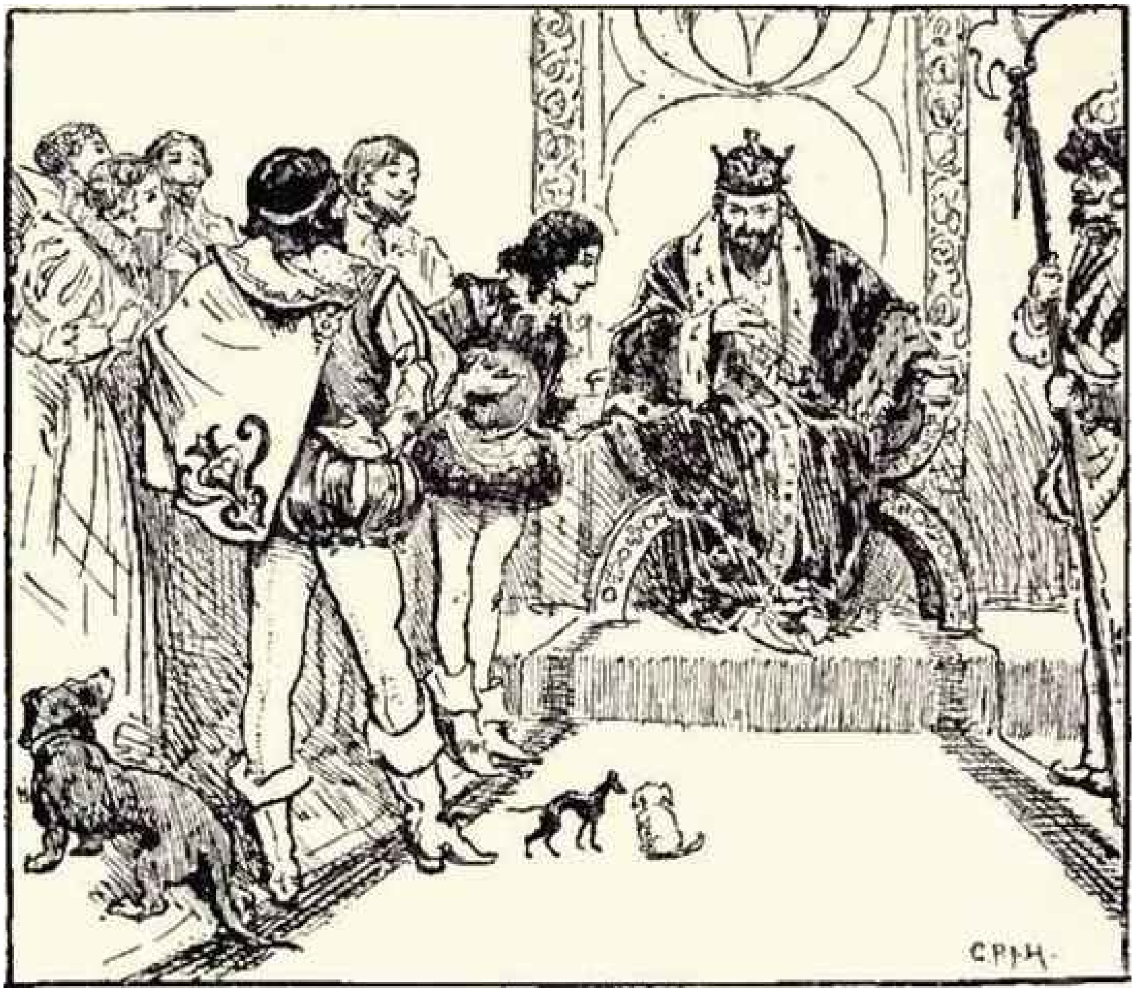

“How could I hope that you would come back to me King’s son?” she said. And then he stroked and petted her, and told her of his successful journey, and how he had come back to ask her help, as he believed that it was impossible to find what the King demanded. The White Cat looked serious, and said she must think what was to be done, but that, luckily, there were some cats in the castle who could spin very well, and if anybody could manage it they could, and she would set them the task herself.

And then the hands appeared carrying torches, and conducted the Prince and the White Cat to a long gallery which overlooked the river, from the windows of which they saw a magnificent display of fireworks of all sorts; after which they had supper, which the Prince liked even better than the fireworks, for it was very late, and he was hungry after his long ride. And so the days passed quickly as before; it was impossible to feel dull with the White Cat, and she had quite a talent for inventing new amusements — indeed, she was cleverer than a cat has any right to be. But when the Prince asked her how it was that she was so wise, she only said:

“King’s son, do not ask me; guess what you please. I may not tell you anything.”

The Prince was so happy that he did not trouble himself at all about the time, but presently the White Cat told him that the year was gone, and that he need not be at all anxious about the piece of muslin, as they had made it very well.

“This time,” she added, “I can give you a suitable escort”; and on looking out into the courtyard the Prince saw a superb chariot of burnished gold, enameled in flame color with a thousand different devices. It was drawn by twelve snow-white horses, harnessed four abreast; their trappings were flame-colored velvet, embroidered with diamonds. A hundred chariots followed, each drawn by eight horses, and filled with officers in splendid uniforms, and a thousand guards surrounded the procession. “Go!” said the White Cat, “and when you appear before the King in such state he surely will not refuse you the crown which you deserve. Take this walnut, but do not open it until you are before him, then you will find in it the piece of stuff you asked me for.”

“Lovely Blanchette,” said the Prince, “how can I thank you properly for all your kindness to me? Only tell me that you wish it, and I will give up for ever all thought of being king, and will stay here with you always.”

“King’s son,” she replied, “it shows the goodness of your heart that you should care so much for a little white cat, who is good for nothing but to catch mice; but you must not stay.”

So the Prince kissed her little paw and set out. You can imagine how fast he traveled when I tell you that they reached the King’s palace in just half the time it had taken the wooden horse to get there. This time the Prince was so late that he did not try to meet his brothers at their castle, so they thought he could not be coming, and were rather glad of it, and displayed their pieces of muslin to the King proudly, feeling sure of success.

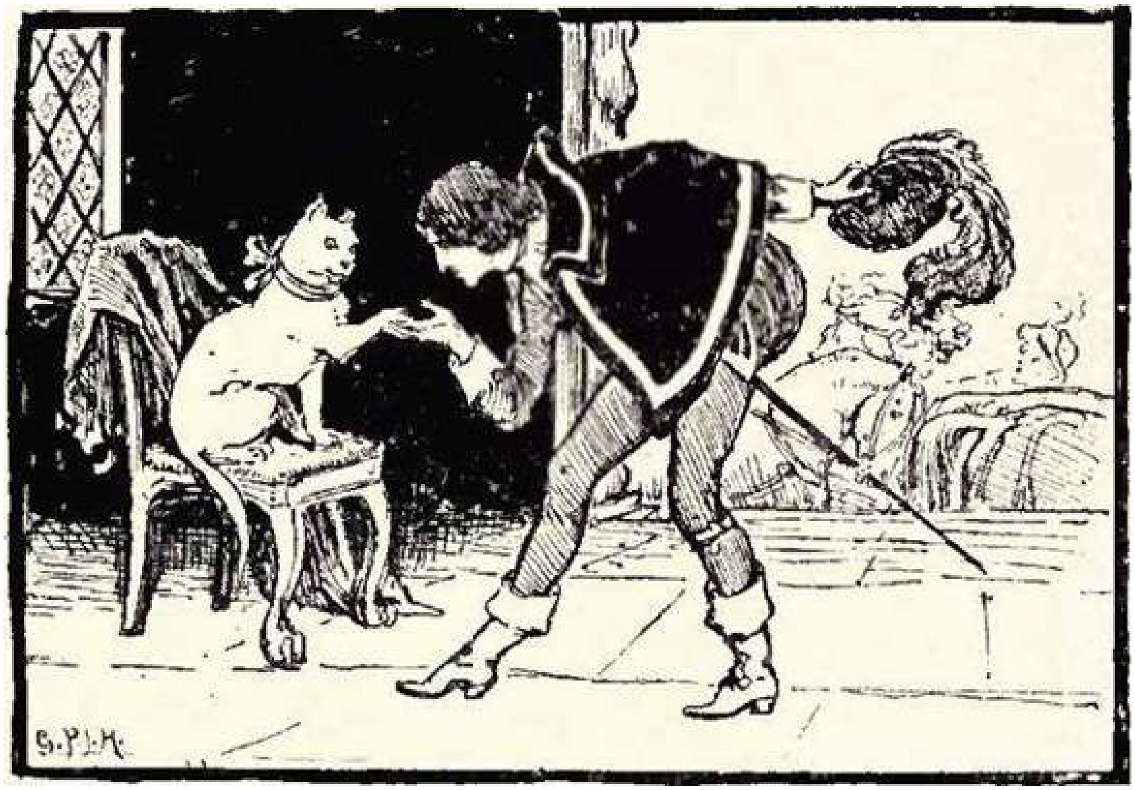

And indeed the stuff was very fine, and would go through the eye of a very large needle; but the King, who was only too glad to make a difficulty, sent for a particular needle, which was kept among the Crown jewels, and had such a small eye that everybody saw at once that it was impossible that the muslin should pass through it. The Princes were angry, and were beginning to complain that it was a trick, when suddenly the trumpets sounded and the youngest Prince came in. His father and brothers were quite astonished at his magnificence, and after he had greeted them he took the walnut from his pocket and opened it, fully expecting to find the piece of muslin, but instead there was only a hazel-nut. He cracked it, and there lay a cherry-stone. Everybody was looking on, and the King was chuckling to himself at the idea of finding the piece of muslin in a nutshell.

However, the Prince cracked the cherry-stone, but everyone laughed when he saw it contained only its own kernel. He opened that and found a grain of wheat, and in that was a millet seed. Then he himself began to wonder, and muttered softly:

"White Cat, White Cat, are you making fun of me?"

In an instant he felt a cat's claw give his hand quite a sharp scratch, and hoping that it was meant as an encouragement he opened the millet seed, and drew out of it a piece of muslin four hundred ells long, woven with the loveliest colors and most wonderful patterns; and when the needle was brought it went through the eye six times with the greatest ease! The King turned pale, and the other Princes stood silent and sorrowful, for nobody could deny that this was the most marvelous piece of muslin that was to be found in the world.

Presently the King turned to his sons, and said, with a deep sigh:

"Nothing could console me more in my old age than to realize your willingness to gratify my wishes. Go then once more, and whoever at the end of a year can bring back the loveliest princess shall be married to her, and shall, without further delay, receive the crown, for my successor must certainly be married." The Prince considered that he had earned the kingdom fairly twice over but still he was too well bred to argue about it, so he just went back to his gorgeous chariot, and, surrounded by his escort, returned to the White Cat faster than he had come. This time she was expecting him, the path was strewn with flowers, and a thousand braziers were burning scented woods which perfumed the air. Seated in a gallery from which she could see his arrival, the White Cat waited for him. "Well, King's son," she said, "here you are once more, without a crown." "Madam," said he, "thanks to your generosity I have earned one twice over; but the fact is that my father is so loth to part with it that it would be no pleasure to me to take it."

"Never mind," she answered, "it's just as well to try and deserve it. As you must take back a lovely princess with you next time I will be on the look-out for one for you. In the meantime let us enjoy ourselves; to-night I have ordered a battle between my cats and the river rats on purpose to amuse you." So this year slipped away even more pleasantly than the preceding ones. Sometimes the Prince could not help asking the White Cat how it was she could talk.

"Perhaps you are a fairy," he said. "Or has some enchanter changed you into a cat?"

But she only gave him answers that told him nothing. Days go by so quickly when one is very happy that it is certain the Prince would never have thought of its being time to go back, when one evening as they sat together the White Cat said to him that if he wanted to take a lovely princess home with him the next day he must be prepared to do what she told him.

"Take this sword," she said, "and cut off my head!"

"I!" cried the Prince, "I cut off your head! Blanchette darling, how could I do it?"

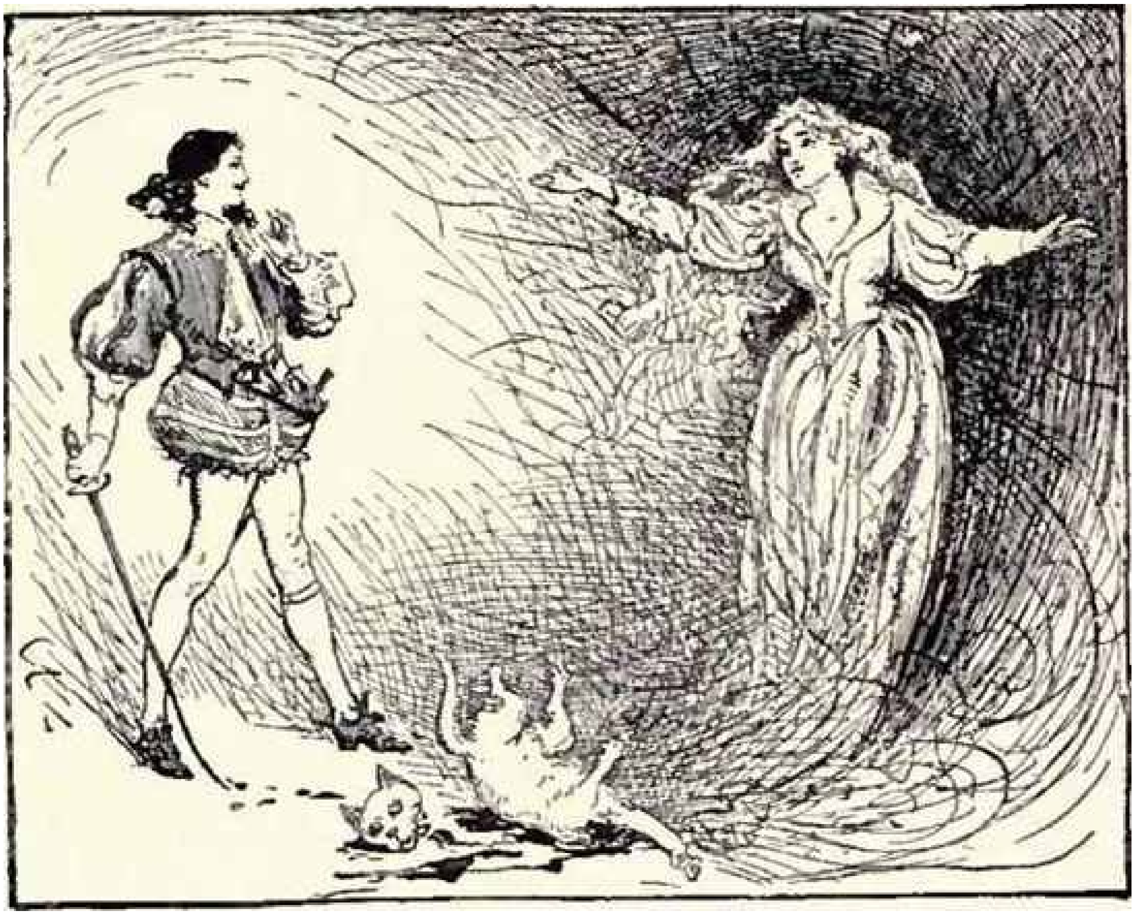

“I entreat you to do as I tell you, King’s son,” she replied.

The tears came into the Prince’s eyes as he begged her to ask him anything but that — to set him any task she pleased as a proof of his devotion, but to spare him the grief of killing his dear Pussy. But nothing he could say altered her determination, and at last he drew his sword, and desperately, with a trembling hand, cut off the little white head. But imagine his astonishment and delight when suddenly a lovely princess stood before him, and, while he was still speechless with amazement, the door opened and a goodly company of knights and ladies entered, each carrying a cat’s skin! They hastened with every sign of joy to the Princess, kissing her hand and congratulating her on being once more restored to her natural shape. She received them graciously, but after a few minutes begged that they would leave her alone with the Prince, to whom she said:

“You see, Prince, that you were right in supposing me to be no ordinary cat. My father reigned over six kingdoms. The Queen, my mother, whom he loved dearly, had a passion for traveling and exploring, and when I was only a few weeks old she obtained his permission to visit a certain mountain of which she had heard many marvelous tales, and set out, taking with her a number of her attendants. On the way they had to pass near an old castle belonging to the fairies. Nobody had ever been into it, but it was reported to be full of the most wonderful things, and my mother remembered to have heard that the fairies had in their garden such fruits as were to be seen and tasted nowhere else. She began to wish to try them for herself, and turned her steps in the direction of the garden. On arriving at the door, which blazed with gold and jewels, she ordered her servants to knock loudly, but it was useless; it seemed as if all the inhabitants of the castle must be asleep or dead. Now the more difficult it became to obtain the fruit, the more the Queen was determined that have it she would. So she ordered that they should bring ladders, and get over the wall into the garden; but though the wall did not look very high, and they tied the ladders together to make them very long, it was quite impossible to get to the top.

"The Queen was in despair, but as night was coming on she ordered that they should encamp just where they were, and went to bed herself, feeling quite ill, she was so disappointed. In the middle of the night she was suddenly awakened, and saw to her surprise a tiny, ugly old woman seated by her bedside, who said to her:

"'I must say that we consider it somewhat troublesome of your Majesty to insist upon tasting our fruit; but to save you annoyance, my sisters and I will consent to give you as much as you can carry away, on one condition — that is, that you shall give us your little daughter to bring up as our own.'

"'Ah! my dear madam,' cried the Queen, 'is there nothing else that you will take for the fruit? I will give you my kingdoms willingly.'

"'No,' replied the old fairy, 'we will have nothing but your little daughter. She shall be as happy as the day is long, and we will give her everything that is worth having in fairy-land, but you must not see her again until she is married.'

"'Though it is a hard condition,' said the Queen, 'I consent, for I shall certainly die if I do not taste the fruit, and so I should lose my little daughter either way.'

"So the old fairy led her into the castle, and, though it was still the middle of the night, the Queen could see plainly that it was far more beautiful than she had been told, which you can easily believe, Prince," said the White Cat, "when I tell you that it was this castle that we are now in. 'Will you gather the fruit yourself, Queen?' said the old fairy, 'or shall I call it to come to you?'

"'I beg you to let me see it come when it is called,' cried the Queen; 'that will be something quite new.' The old fairy whistled twice, then she cried:

"'Apricots, peaches, nectarines, cherries, plums, pears, melons, grapes, apples, oranges, lemons, gooseberries, strawberries, raspberries, come!'

"And in an instant they came tumbling in one over another, and yet they were neither dusty nor spoilt, and the Queen found them quite as good as she had fancied them. You see they grew upon fairy trees.

"The old fairy gave her golden baskets in which to take the fruit away, and it was as much as four hundred mules could carry. Then she reminded the Queen of her agreement, and led her back to the camp, and next morning she went back to her kingdom, but before she had gone very far she began to repent of her bargain, and when the King came out to meet her she looked so sad that he guessed that something had happened, and asked what was the matter. At first the Queen was afraid to tell him, but when, as soon as they reached the palace, five frightful little dwarfs were sent by the fairies to fetch me, she was obliged to confess what she had promised. The King was very angry, and had the Queen and myself shut up in a great tower and safely guarded, and drove the little dwarfs out of his kingdom; but the fairies sent a great dragon who ate up all the people he met, and whose breath burnt up everything as he passed through the country; and at last, after trying in vain to rid himself of this monster, the King, to save his subjects, was obliged to consent that I should be given up to the fairies. This time they came themselves to fetch me, in a chariot of pearl drawn by sea-horses, followed by the dragon, who was led with chains of diamonds. My cradle was placed between the old fairies, who loaded me with caresses, and away we whirled through the air to a tower which they had built on purpose for me. There I grew up surrounded with everything that was beautiful and rare, and learning everything that is ever taught to a princess, but without any companions but a parrot and a little dog, who could both talk; and receiving every day a visit from one of the old fairies, who came mounted upon the dragon. One day, however, as I sat at my window I saw a handsome young prince, who seemed to have been hunting in the forest which surrounded my prison, and who was standing and looking up at me.

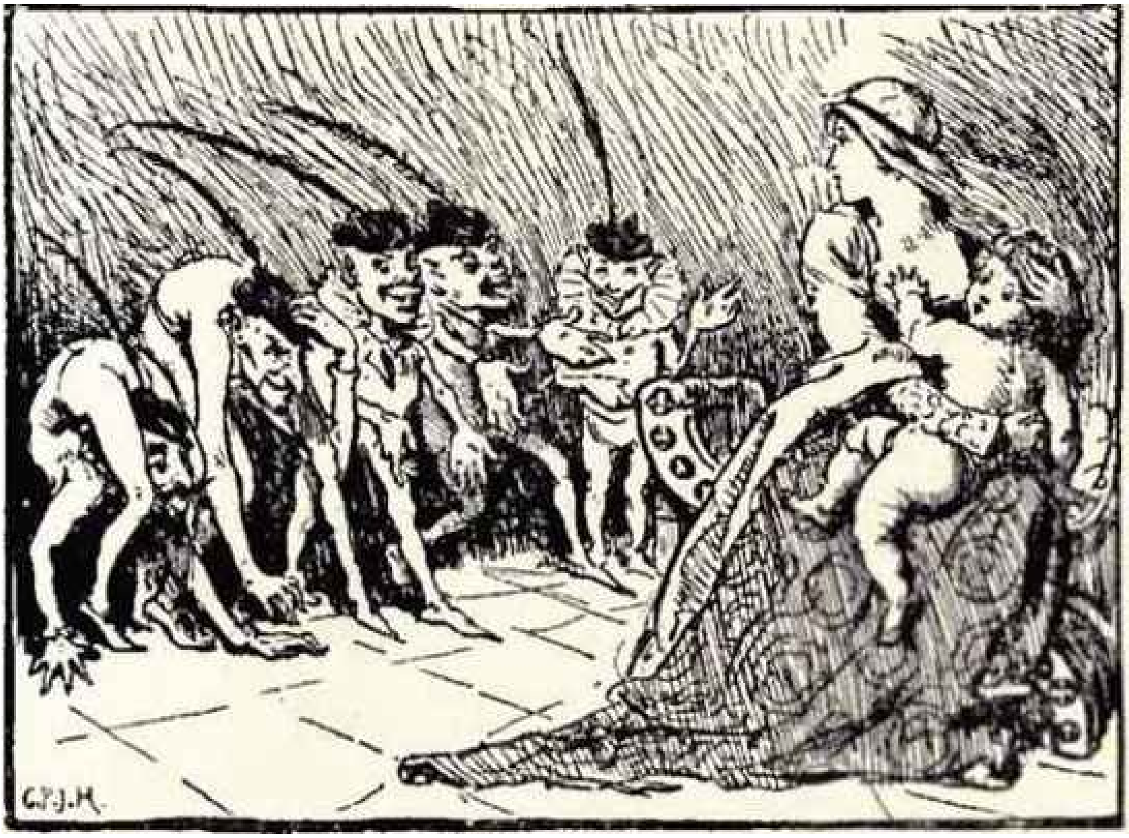

When he saw that I observed him he saluted me with great deference. You can imagine that I was delighted to have some one new to talk to, and in spite of the height of my window our conversation was prolonged till night fell, then my prince reluctantly bade me farewell. But after that he came again many times and at last I consented to marry him, but the question was how was I to escape from my tower. The fairies always supplied me with flax for my spinning, and by great diligence I made enough cord for a ladder that would reach to the foot of the tower; but, alas! just as my prince was helping me to descend it, the crossest and ugliest of the old fairies flew in. Before he had time to defend himself my unhappy lover was swallowed up by the dragon. As for me, the fairies, furious at having their plans defeated, for they intended me to marry the king of the dwarfs, and I utterly refused, changed me into a white cat. When they brought me here I found all the lords and ladies of my father’s court awaiting me under the same enchantment, while the people of lesser rank had been made invisible, all but their hands.

“As they laid me under the enchantment the fairies told me all my history, for until then I had quite believed that I was their child, and warned me that my only chance of regaining my natural form was to win the love of a prince who resembled in every way my unfortunate lover.

“And you have won it, lovely Princess,” interrupted the Prince.

“You are indeed wonderfully like him,” resumed the Princess— “in voice, in features, and everything; and if you really love me all my troubles will be at an end.”

“And mine too,” cried the Prince, throwing himself at her feet, “if you will consent to marry me.”

“I love you already better than anyone in the world,” she said; “but now it is time to go back to your father, and we shall hear what he says about it.”

So the Prince gave her his hand and led her out, and they mounted the chariot together; it was even more splendid than before, and so was the whole company. Even the horses’ shoes were of rubies with diamond nails, and I suppose that is the first time such a thing was ever seen.

As the Princess was as kind and clever as she was beautiful, you may imagine what a delightful journey the Prince found it, for everything the Princess said seemed to him quite charming.

When they came near the castle where the brothers were to meet, the Princess got into a chair carried by four of the guards; it was hewn out of one splendid crystal, and had silken curtains, which she drew round her that she might not be seen.

The Prince saw his brothers walking upon the terrace, each with a lovely princess, and they came to meet him, asking if he had also found a wife. He said that he had found something much rarer — a white cat! At which they laughed very much, and asked him if he was afraid of being eaten up by mice in the palace. And then they set out together for the town. Each prince and princess rode in a splendid carriage; the horses were decked with plumes of feathers, and glittered with gold. After them came the youngest prince, and last of all the crystal chair, at which everybody looked with admiration and curiosity. When the courtiers saw them coming they hastened to tell the King.

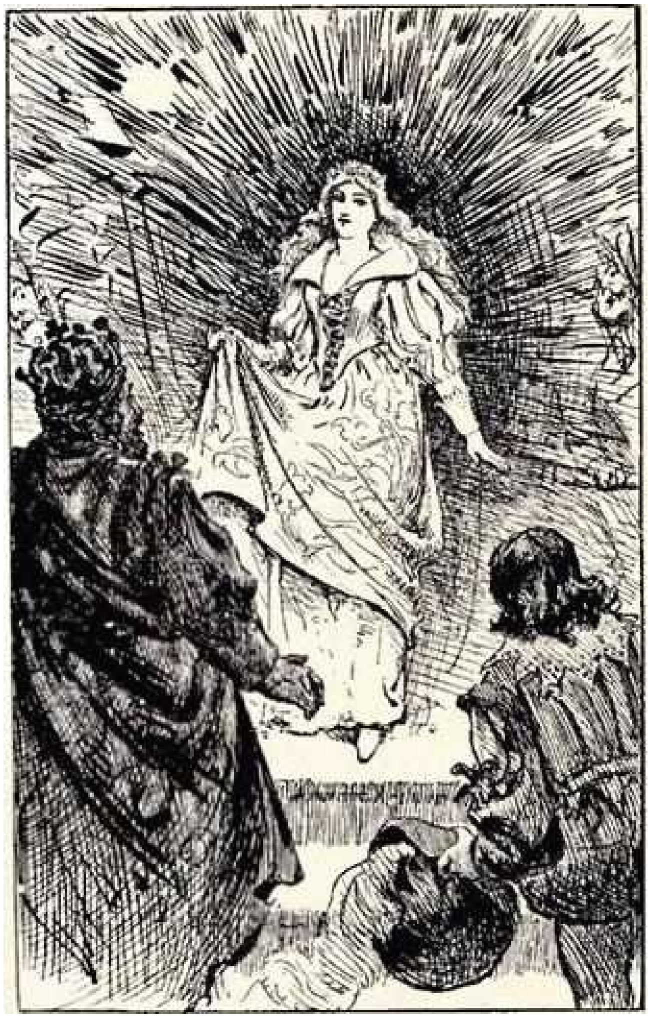

“Are the ladies beautiful?” he asked anxiously.

And when they answered that nobody had ever before seen such lovely princesses he seemed quite annoyed.

However, he received them graciously, but found it impossible to choose between them.

Then turning to his youngest son he said:

“Have you come back alone, after all?”

“Your Majesty,” replied the Prince, “will find in that crystal chair a little white cat, which has such soft paws, and mews so prettily, that I am sure you will be charmed with it.”

The King smiled, and went to draw back the curtains himself, but at a touch from the Princess the crystal shivered into a thousand splinters, and there she stood in all her beauty; her fair hair floated over her shoulders and was crowned with flowers, and her softly falling robe was of the purest white. She saluted the King gracefully, while a murmur of admiration rose from all around.

“Sire,” she said, “I am not come to deprive you of the throne you fill so worthily. I have already six kingdoms, permit me to bestow one upon you, and upon each of your sons. I ask nothing but your friendship, and your consent to my marriage with your youngest son; we shall still have three kingdoms left for ourselves.”

The King and all the courtiers could not conceal their joy and astonishment, and the marriage of the three Princes was celebrated at once. The festivities lasted several months, and then each king and queen departed to their own kingdom and lived happily ever after.(1)

(1) La Chatte blanche. Par Madame la Comtesse d’Aulnoy.

THE WATER-LILY. THE GOLD-SPINNERS

Once upon a time, in a large forest, there lived an old woman and three maidens. They were all three beautiful, but the youngest was the fairest. Their hut was quite hidden by trees, and none saw their beauty but the sun by day, and the moon by night, and the eyes of the stars. The old woman kept the girls hard at work, from morning till night, spinning gold flax into yarn, and when one distaff was empty another was given them, so they had no rest. The thread had to be fine and even, and when done was locked up in a secret chamber by the old woman, who twice or thrice every summer went a journey. Before she went she gave out work for each day of her absence, and always returned in the night, so that the girls never saw what she brought back with her, neither would she tell them whence the gold flax came, nor what it was to be used for.

Now, when the time came round for the old woman to set out on one of these journeys, she gave each maiden work for six days, with the usual warning: “Children, don’t let your eyes wander, and on no account speak to a man, for, if you do, your thread will lose its brightness, and misfortunes of all kinds will follow.” They laughed at this oft-repeated caution, saying to each other: “How can our gold thread lose its brightness, and have we any chance of speaking to a man?”

On the third day after the old woman’s departure a young prince, hunting in the forest, got separated from his companions, and completely lost. Weary of seeking his way, he flung himself down under a tree, leaving his horse to browse at will, and fell asleep.

The sun had set when he awoke and began once more to try and find his way out of the forest. At last he perceived a narrow foot-path, which he eagerly followed and found that it led him to a small hut. The maidens, who were sitting at the door of their hut for coolness, saw him approaching, and the two elder were much alarmed, for they remembered the old woman’s warning; but the youngest said: “Never before have I seen anyone like him; let me have one look.” They entreated her to come in, but, seeing that she would not, left her, and the Prince, coming up, courteously greeted the maiden, and told her he had lost his way in the forest and was both hungry and weary. She set food before him, and was so delighted with his conversation that she forgot the old woman’s caution, and lingered for hours. In the meantime the Prince’s companions sought him far and wide, but to no purpose, so they sent two messengers to tell the sad news to the King, who immediately ordered a regiment of cavalry and one of infantry to go and look for him.

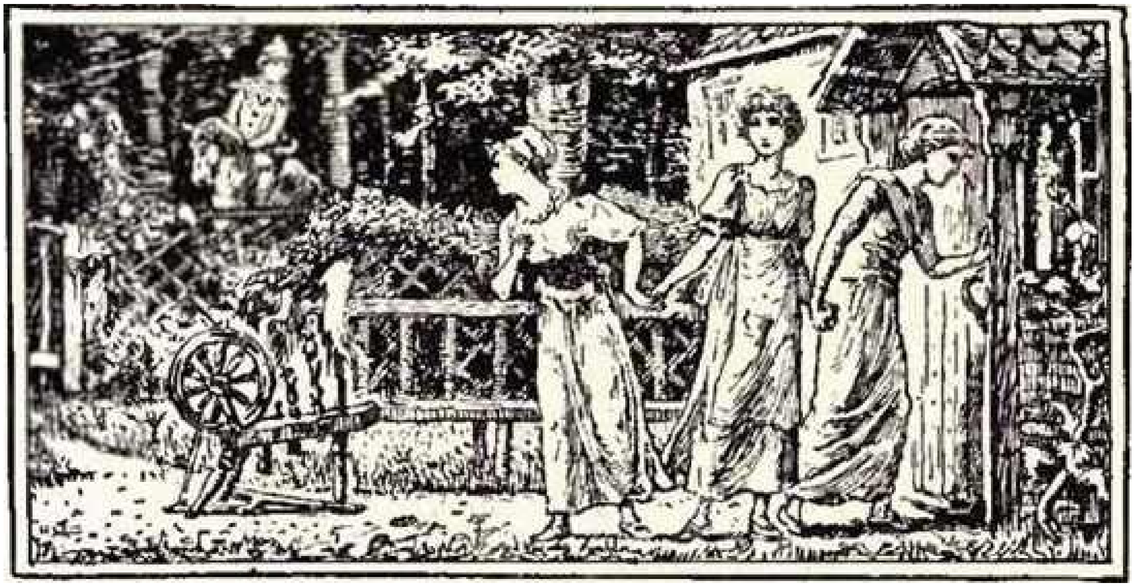

After three days' search, they found the hut. The Prince was still sitting by the door and had been so happy in the maiden's company that the time had seemed like a single hour. Before leaving he promised to return and fetch her to his father's court, where he would make her his bride. When he had gone, she sat down to her wheel to make up for lost time, but was dismayed to find that her thread had lost all its brightness. Her heart beat fast and she wept bitterly, for she remembered the old woman's warning and knew not what misfortune might now befall her.

The old woman returned in the night and knew by the tarnished thread what had happened in her absence. She was furiously angry and told the maiden that she had brought down misery both on herself and on the Prince. The maiden could not rest for thinking of this. At last she could bear it no longer, and resolved to seek help from the Prince.

As a child she had learned to understand the speech of birds, and this was now of great use to her, for, seeing a raven pluming itself on a pine bough, she cried softly to it: “Dear bird, cleverest of all birds, as well as swiftest on wing, wilt thou help me?” “How can I help thee?” asked the raven. She answered: “Fly away, until thou comest to a splendid town, where stands a king's palace; seek out the king's son and tell him that a great misfortune has befallen me.” Then she told the raven how her thread had lost its brightness, how terribly angry the old woman was, and how she feared some great disaster. The raven promised faithfully to do her bidding, and, spreading its wings, flew away. The maiden now went home and worked hard all day at winding up the yarn her elder sisters had spun, for the old woman would let her spin no longer. Toward evening she heard the raven's "craa, craa," from the pine tree and eagerly hastened thither to hear the answer.

By great good fortune the raven had found a wind wizard's son in the palace garden, who understood the speech of birds, and to him he had entrusted the message. When the Prince heard it, he was very sorrowful, and took counsel with his friends how to free the maiden. Then he said to the wind wizard's son: "Beg the raven to fly quickly back to the maiden and tell her to be ready on the ninth night, for then will I come and fetch her away." The wind wizard's son did this, and the raven flew so swiftly that it reached the hut that same evening. The maiden thanked the bird heartily and went home, telling no one what she had heard.

As the ninth night drew near she became very unhappy, for she feared lest some terrible mischance should arise and ruin all. On this night she crept quietly out of the house and waited trembling at some little distance from the hut. Presently she heard the muffled tramp of horses, and soon the armed troop appeared, led by the Prince, who had prudently marked all the trees beforehand, in order to know the way. When he saw the maiden he sprang from his horse, lifted her into the saddle, and then, mounting behind, rode homeward. The moon shone so brightly that they had no difficulty in seeing the marked trees.

By and by the coming of dawn loosened the tongues of all the birds, and, had the Prince only known what they were saying, or the maiden been listening, they might have been spared much sorrow, but they were thinking only of each other, and when they came out of the forest the sun was high in the heavens.

Next morning, when the youngest girl did not come to her work, the old woman asked where she was. The sisters pretended not to know, but the old woman easily guessed what had happened, and, as she was in reality a wicked witch, determined to punish the fugitives. Accordingly, she collected nine different kinds of enchanters' nightshade, added some salt, which she first bewitched, and, doing all up in a cloth into the shape of a fluffy ball, sent it after them on the wings of the wind, saying:

"Whirlwind! — mother of the wind!

Lend thy aid 'gainst her who sinned!
Carry with thee this magic ball.
Cast her from his arms for ever,
Bury her in the rippling river."

At midday the Prince and his men came to a deep river, spanned by so narrow a bridge that only one rider could cross at a time. The horse on which the Prince and the maiden were riding had just reached the middle when the magic ball flew by. The horse in its fright suddenly reared, and before anyone could stop it flung the maiden into the swift current below. The Prince tried to jump in after her, but his men held him back, and in spite of his struggles led him home, where for six weeks he shut himself up in a secret chamber, and would neither eat nor drink, so great was his grief. At last he became so ill his life was despaired of, and in great alarm the King caused all the wizards of his country to be summoned. But none could cure him. At last the wind wizard’s son said to the King: “Send for the old wizard from Finland he knows more than all the wizards of your kingdom put together.” A messenger was at once sent to Finland, and a week later the old wizard himself arrived on the wings of the wind. “Honored King,” said the wizard, “the wind has blown this illness upon your son, and a magic ball has snatched away his beloved. This it is which makes him grieve so constantly. Let the wind blow upon him that it may blow away his sorrow.” Then the King made his son go out into the wind, and he gradually recovered and told his father all. “Forget the maiden,” said the King, “and take another bride”; but the Prince said he could never love another.

A year afterward he came suddenly upon the bridge where his beloved met her death. As he recalled the misfortune he wept bitterly, and would have given all he possessed to have her once more alive. In the midst of his grief he thought he heard a voice singing, and looked round, but could see no one. Then he heard the voice again, and it said:

“Alas! bewitched and all forsaken, ’Tis I must lie for ever here! My beloved no thought has taken To free his bride, that was so dear.”

He was greatly astonished, sprang from his horse, and looked everywhere to see if no one were hidden under the bridge; but no one was there. Then he noticed a yellow water-lily floating on the surface of the water, half hidden by its broad leaves; but flowers do not sing, and in great surprise he waited, hoping to hear more. Then again the voice sang:

“Alas! bewitched and all forsaken,
’Tis I must lie for ever here!
My beloved no thought has taken
To free his bride, that was so dear.”

The Prince suddenly remembered the gold-spinners, and said to himself: “If I ride thither, who knows but that they could explain this to me?” He at once rode to the hut, and found the two maidens at the fountain. He told them what had befallen their sister the year before, and how he had twice heard a strange song, but yet could see no singer. They said that the yellow water-lily could be none other than their sister, who was not dead, but transformed by the magic ball. Before he went to bed, the eldest made a cake of magic herbs, which she gave him to eat. In the night he dreamed that he was living in the forest and could understand all that the birds said to each other. Next morning he told this to the maidens, and they said that the charmed cake had caused it, and advised him to listen well to the birds, and see what they could tell him, and when he had recovered his bride they begged him to return and deliver them from their wretched bondage.

Having promised this, he joyfully returned home, and as he was riding through the forest he could perfectly understand all that the birds said. He heard a thrush say to a magpie: “How stupid men are! they cannot understand the simplest thing. It is now quite a year since the maiden was transformed into a water-lily, and, though she sings so sadly that anyone going over the bridge must hear her, yet no one comes to her aid. Her former bridegroom rode over it a few days ago and heard her singing, but was no wiser than the rest.”

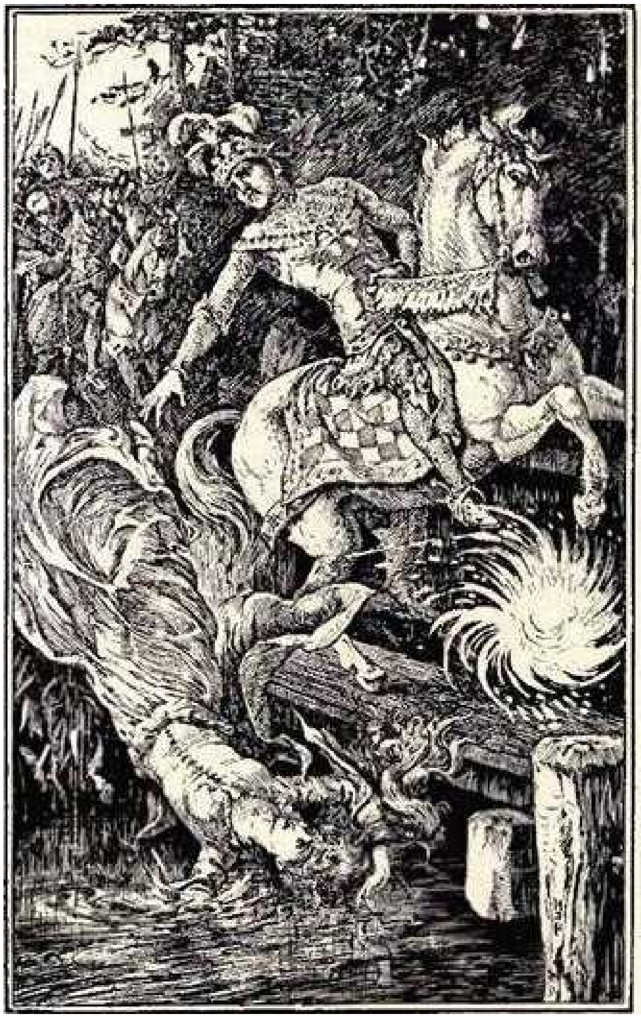

"And he is to blame for all her misfortunes," added the magpie. "If he heeds only the words of men she will remain a flower for ever. She were soon delivered were the matter only laid before the old wizard of Finland."

After hearing this, the Prince wondered how he could get a message conveyed to Finland. He heard one swallow say to another: "Come, let us fly to Finland; we can build better nests there."

"Stop, kind friends!" cried the Prince. "Will you do something for me?" The birds consented, and he said: "Take a thousand greetings from me to the wizard of Finland, and ask him how I may restore a maiden transformed into a flower to her own form."

The swallows flew away, and the Prince rode on to the bridge. There he waited, hoping to hear the song. But he heard nothing but the rushing of the water and the moaning of the wind, and, disappointed, rode home.

Shortly after, he was sitting in the garden, thinking that the swallows must have forgotten his message, when he saw an eagle flying above him. The bird gradually descended until it perched on a tree close to the Prince and said: "The wizard of Finland greets thee and bids me say that thou mayest free the maiden thus: Go to the river and smear thyself all over with mud; then say: ‘From a man into a crab,’ and thou wilt become a crab. Plunge boldly into the water, swim as close as thou canst to the water-lily’s roots, and loosen them from the mud and reeds. This done, fasten thy claws into the roots and rise with them to the surface. Let the water flow all over the flower, and drift with the current until thou comest to a mountain ash tree on the left bank. There is near it a large stone. Stop there and say: ‘From a crab into a man, from a water-lily into a maiden,’ and ye both will be restored to your own forms.”

Full of doubt and fear, the Prince let some time pass before he was bold enough to attempt to rescue the maiden. Then a crow said to him: “Why dost thou hesitate? The old wizard has not told thee wrong, neither have the birds deceived thee; hasten and dry the maiden’s tears.”

“Nothing worse than death can befall me,” thought the Prince, “and death is better than endless sorrow.” So he mounted his horse and went to the bridge. Again he heard the water-lily’s lament, and, hesitating no longer, smeared himself all over with mud, and, saying: “From a man into a crab,” plunged into the river. For one moment the water hissed in his ears, and then all was silent. He swam up to the plant and began to loosen its roots, but so firmly were they fixed in the mud and reeds that this took him a long time. He then grasped them and rose to the surface, letting the water flow over the flower. The current carried them down the stream, but nowhere could he see the mountain ash. At last he saw it, and close by the large stone. Here he stopped and said: “From a crab into a man, from a water-lily into a maiden,” and to his delight found himself once more a prince, and the maiden was by his side. She was ten times more beautiful than before, and wore a magnificent pale yellow robe, sparkling with jewels. She thanked him for having freed her from the cruel witch’s power, and willingly consented to marry him.

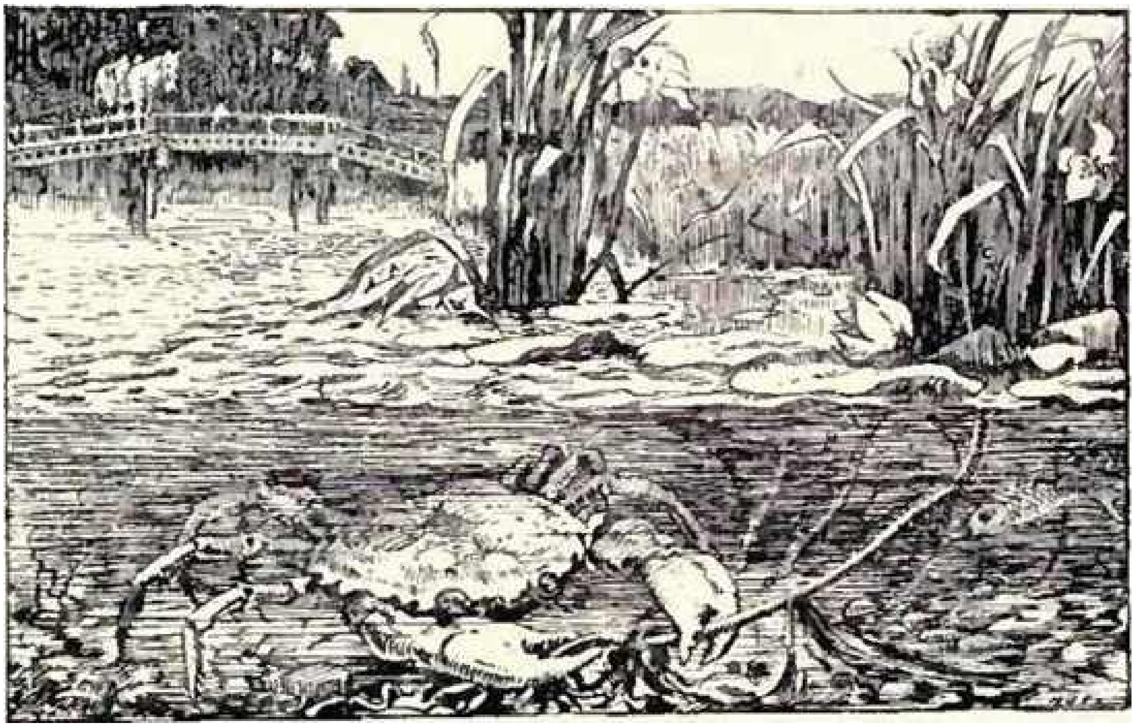

But when they came to the bridge where he had left his horse it was nowhere to be seen, for, though the Prince thought he had been a crab only a few hours, he had in reality been under the water for more than ten days. While they were wondering how they should reach his father’s court, they saw a splendid coach driven by six gaily caparisoned horses coming along the bank. In this they drove to the palace. The King and Queen were at church, weeping for their son, whom they had long mourned for dead. Great was their delight and astonishment when the Prince entered, leading the beautiful maiden by the hand. The wedding was at once celebrated and there was feasting and merry-making throughout the kingdom for six weeks.

Some time afterward the Prince and his bride were sitting in the garden, when a crow said to them: “Ungrateful creatures! Have you forgotten the two poor maidens who helped you in your distress? Must they spin gold flax for ever? Have no pity on the old witch. The three maidens are princesses, whom she stole away when they were children together, with all the silver utensils, which she turned into gold flax. Poison were her fittest punishment.”

The Prince was ashamed of having forgotten his promise and set out at once, and by great good fortune reached the hut when the old woman was away. The maidens had dreamed that he was coming, and were ready to go with him, but first they made a cake in which they put poison, and left it on a table where the old woman was likely to see it when she returned. She *did* see it, and thought it looked so tempting that she greedily ate it up and at once died.

In the secret chamber were found fifty wagon-loads of gold flax, and as much more was discovered buried. The hut was razed to the ground, and the Prince and his bride and her two sisters lived happily ever after.

THE TERRIBLE HEAD

Once upon a time there was a king whose only child was a girl. Now the King had been very anxious to have a son, or at least a grandson, to come after him, but he was told by a prophet whom he consulted that his own daughter’s son should kill him. This news terrified him so much that he determined never to let his daughter be married, for he thought it was better to have no grandson at all than to be killed by his grandson. He therefore called his workmen together, and bade them dig a deep round hole in the earth, and then he had a prison of brass built in the hole, and then, when it was finished, he locked up his daughter. No man ever saw her, and she never saw even the fields and the sea, but only the sky and the sun, for there was a wide open window in the roof of the house of brass. So the Princess would sit looking up at the sky, and watching the clouds float across, and wondering whether she should ever get out of her prison. Now one day it seemed to her that the sky opened above her, and a great shower of shining gold fell through the window in the roof, and lay glittering in her room. Not very long after, the Princess had a baby, a little boy, but when the King her father heard of it he was very angry and afraid, for now the child was born that should be his death. Yet, cowardly as he was, he had not quite the heart to kill the Princess and her baby outright, but he had them put in a huge brass-bound chest and thrust out to sea, that they might either be drowned or starved, or perhaps come to a country where they would be out of his way.

So the Princess and the baby floated and drifted in the chest on the sea all day and night, but the baby was not afraid of the waves nor of the wind, for he did not know that they could hurt him, and he slept quite soundly. And the Princess sang a song over him, and this was her song:

“Child, my child, how sound you sleep!
Though your mother’s care is deep,
You can lie with heart at rest
In the narrow brass-bound chest;
In the starless night and drear
You can sleep, and never hear
Billows breaking, and the cry
Of the night-wind wandering by;
In soft purple mantle sleeping

With your little face on mine,
Hearing not your mother weeping
And the breaking of the brine."

Well, the daylight came at last, and the great chest was driven by the waves against the shore of an island. There the brass-bound chest lay, with the Princess and her baby in it, till a man of that country came past, and saw it, and dragged it on to the beach, and when he had broken it open, behold! there was a beautiful lady and a little boy. So he took them home, and was very kind to them, and brought up the boy till he was a young man. Now when the boy had come to his full strength the King of that country fell in love with his mother, and wanted to marry her, but he knew that she would never part from her boy. So he thought of a plan to get rid of the boy, and this was his plan: A great Queen of a country not far off was going to be married, and this king said that all his subjects must bring him wedding presents to give her. And he made a feast to which he invited them all, and they all brought their presents; some brought gold cups, and some brought necklaces of gold and amber, and some brought beautiful horses; but the boy had nothing, though he was the son of a princess, for his mother had nothing to give him. Then the rest of the company began to laugh at him, and the King said: "If you have nothing else to give, at least you might go and fetch the Terrible Head."

The boy was proud, and spoke without thinking:

"Then I swear that I *will* bring the Terrible Head, if it may be brought by a living man. But of what head you speak I know not."

Then they told him that somewhere, a long way off, there dwelt three dreadful sisters, monstrous ogrish women, with golden wings and claws of brass, and with serpents growing on their heads instead of hair. Now these women were so awful to look on that whoever saw them was turned at once into stone. And two of them could not be put to death, but the youngest, whose face was very beautiful, could be killed, and it was *her* head that the boy had promised to bring. You may imagine it was no easy adventure.

When he heard all this he was perhaps sorry that he had sworn to bring the Terrible Head, but he was determined to keep his oath. So he went out from the feast, where they all sat drinking and making merry, and he walked alone beside the sea in the dusk of the evening, at the place where the great chest, with himself and his mother in it, had been cast ashore.

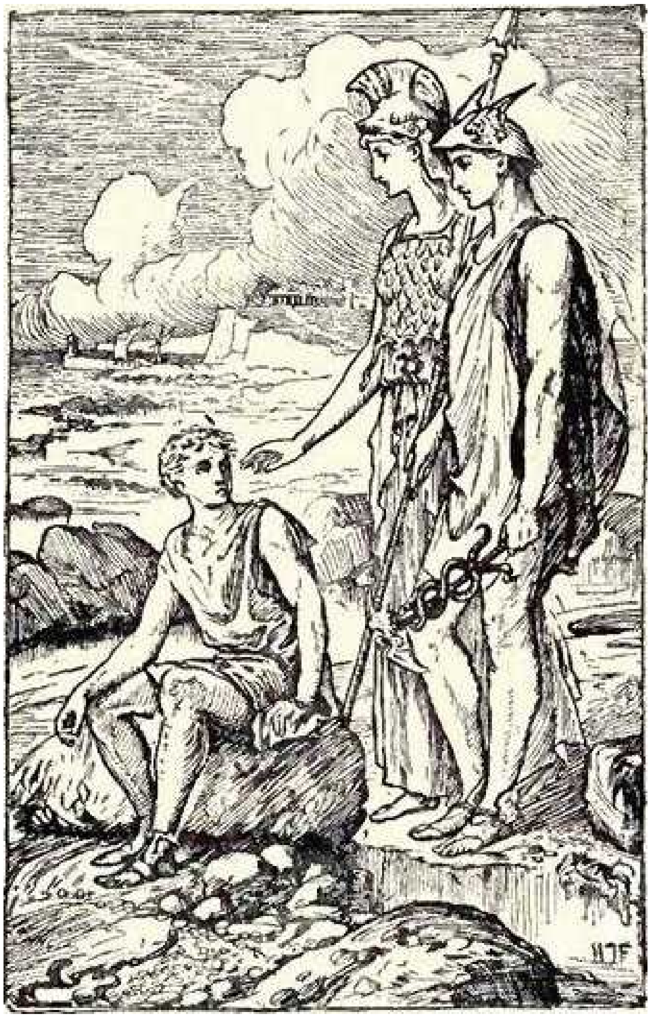

There he went and sat down on a rock, looking toward the sea, and wondering how he should begin to fulfill his vow. Then he felt some one touch him on the shoulder; and he turned, and saw a young man like a king’s son, having with him a tall and beautiful lady, whose blue eyes shone like stars. They were taller than mortal men, and the young man had a staff in his hand with golden wings on it, and two golden serpents twisted round it, and he had wings on his cap and on his shoes. He spoke to the boy, and asked him why he was so unhappy; and the boy told him how he had sworn to bring the Terrible Head, and knew not how to begin to set about the adventure.

Then the beautiful lady also spoke, and said that “it was a foolish oath and a hasty, but it might be kept if a brave man had sworn it.” Then the boy answered that he was not afraid, if only he knew the way.

Then the lady said that to kill the dreadful woman with the golden wings and the brass claws, and to cut off her head, he needed three things: first, a Cap of Darkness, which would make him invisible when he wore it; next, a Sword of Sharpness, which would cleave iron at one blow; and last, the Shoes of

Swiftness, with which he might fly in the air.

The boy answered that he knew not where such things were to be procured, and that, wanting them, he could only try and fail. Then the young man, taking off his own shoes, said: “First, you shall use these shoes till you have taken the Terrible Head, and then you must give them back to me. And with these shoes you will fly as fleet as a bird, or a thought, over the land or over the waves of the sea, wherever the shoes know the way. But there are ways which they do not know, roads beyond the borders of the world. And these roads have you to travel. Now first you must go to the Three Gray Sisters, who live far off in the north, and are so very cold that they have only one eye and one tooth among the three. You must creep up close to them, and as one of them passes the eye to the other you must seize it, and refuse to give it up till they have told you the way to the Three Fairies of the Garden, and *they* will give you the Cap of Darkness and the Sword of Sharpness, and show you how to wing beyond this world to the land of the Terrible Head.”

Then the beautiful lady said: “Go forth at once, and do not return to say good-by to your mother, for these things must be done quickly, and the Shoes of Swiftness themselves will carry you to the land of the Three Gray Sisters — for they know the measure of that way.”

So the boy thanked her, and he fastened on the Shoes of Swiftness, and turned to say good-by to the young man and the lady. But, behold! they had vanished, he knew not how or where! Then he leaped in the air to try the Shoes of Swiftness, and they carried him more swiftly than the wind, over the warm blue sea, over the happy lands of the south, over the northern peoples who drank mare’s milk and lived in great wagons, wandering after their flocks. Across the wide rivers, where the wild fowl rose and fled before him, and over the plains and the cold North Sea he went, over the fields of snow and the hills of ice, to a place where the world ends, and all water is frozen, and there are no men, nor beasts, nor any green grass. There in a blue cave of the ice he found the Three Gray Sisters, the oldest of living things. Their hair was as white as the snow, and their flesh of an icy blue, and they mumbled and nodded in a kind of dream, and their frozen breath hung round them like a cloud. Now the opening of the cave in the ice was narrow, and it was not easy to pass in without touching one of the Gray Sisters. But, floating on the Shoes of Swiftness, the boy just managed to steal in, and waited till one of the sisters said to another, who had their one eye:

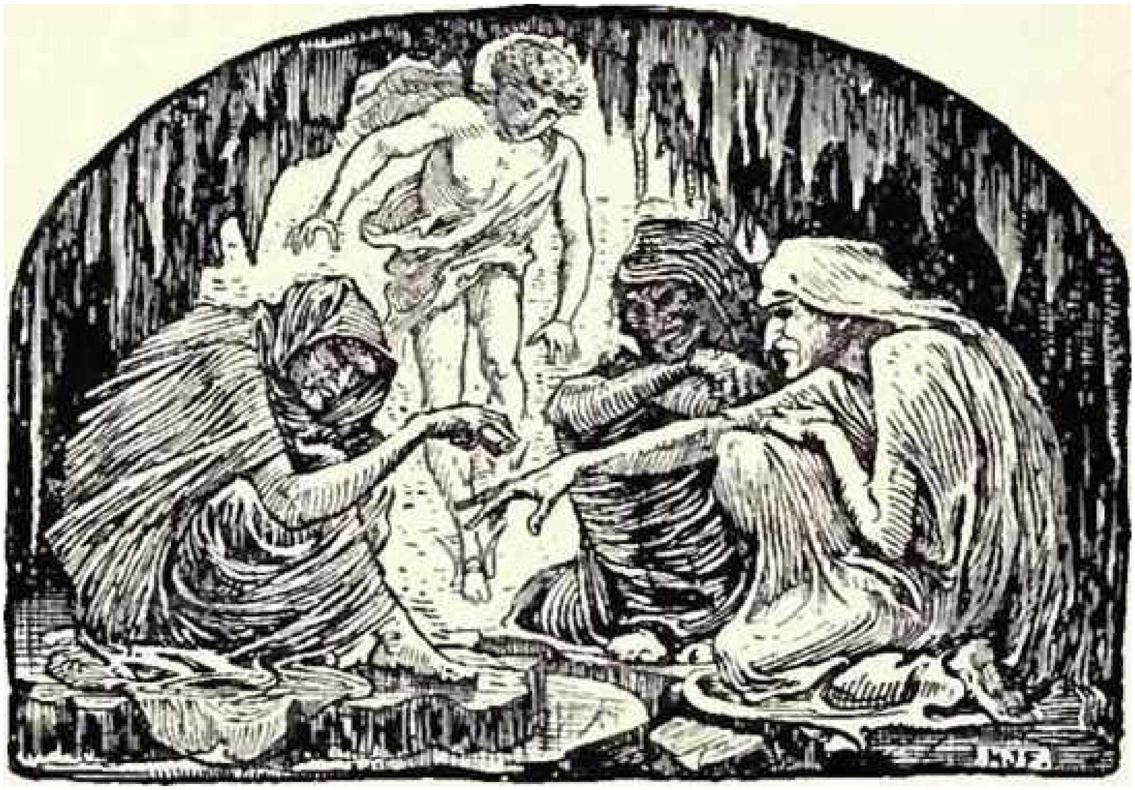

“Sister, what do you see? do you see old times coming back?”

“No, sister.”

“Then give *me* the eye, for perhaps I can see farther than you.”

Then the first sister passed the eye to the second, but as the second groped for it the boy caught it cleverly out of her hand.

“Where is the eye, sister?” said the second gray woman.

“You have taken it yourself, sister,” said the first gray woman.

“Have you lost the eye, sister? have you lost the eye?” said the third gray woman; “shall we *never* find it again, and see old times coming back?”

Then the boy slipped from behind them out of the cold cave into the air, and he laughed aloud.

When the gray women heard that laugh they began to weep, for now they knew that a stranger had robbed them, and that they could not help themselves, and their tears froze as they fell from the hollows where no eyes were, and rattled on the icy ground of the cave. Then they began to implore the boy to give them their eye back again, and he could not help being sorry for them, they were so pitiful. But he said he would never give them the eye till they told him the way to the Fairies of the Garden.

Then they wrung their hands miserably, for they guessed why he had come, and how he was going to try to win the Terrible Head. Now the Dreadful Women were akin to the Three Gray Sisters, and it was hard for them to tell the boy the way. But at last they told him to keep always south, and with the land on his left and the sea on his right, till he reached the Island of the Fairies of the Garden. Then he gave them back the eye, and they began to look out once more for the old times coming back again. But the boy flew south between sea and land, keeping the land always on his left hand, till he saw a beautiful island crowned with flowering trees. There he alighted, and there he found the Three Fairies of the Garden. They were like three very beautiful young women, dressed one in green, one in white, and one in red, and they were dancing and singing round an apple tree with apples of gold, and this was their song:

THE SONG OF THE WESTERN FAIRIES

Round and round the apples of gold,
Round and round dance we;
Thus do we dance from the days of old
About the enchanted tree;
Round, and round, and round we go,
While the spring is green, or the stream shall flow,
Or the wind shall stir the sea!

There is none may taste of the golden fruit
Till the golden new time come
Many a tree shall spring from shoot,
Many a blossom be withered at root,
Many a song be dumb;
Broken and still shall be many a lute
Or ever the new times come!

Round and round the tree of gold,
Round and round dance we,
So doth the great world spin from of old,
Summer and winter, and fire and cold,
Song that is sung, and tale that is told,
Even as we dance, that fold and unfold
Round the stem of the fairy tree!

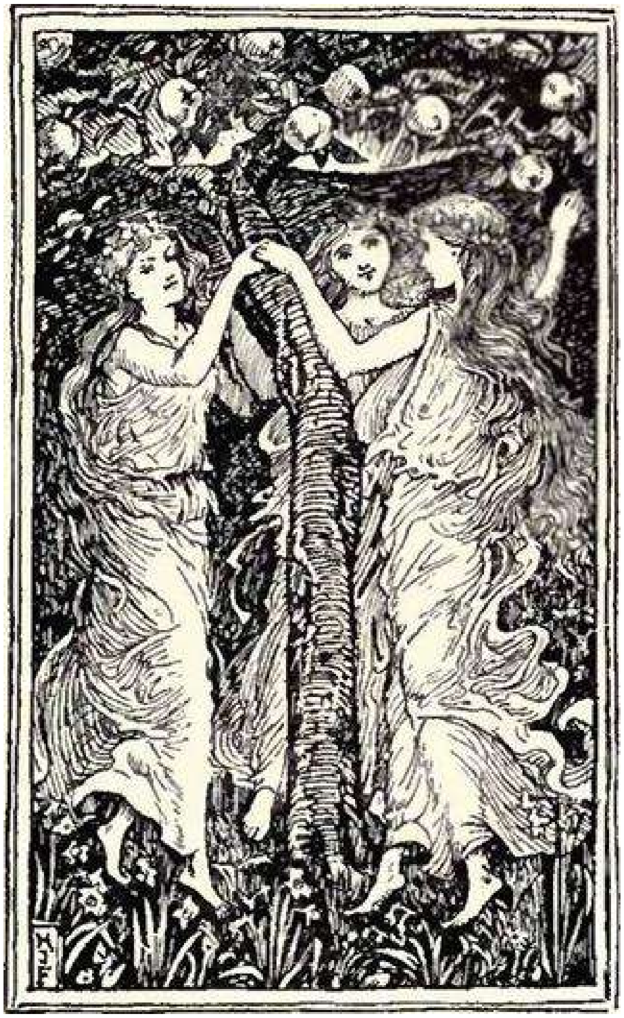

These grave dancing fairies were very unlike the Grey Women, and they were glad to see the boy, and treated him kindly. Then they asked him why he had come; and he told them how he was sent to find the Sword of Sharpness and the Cap of Darkness. And the fairies gave him these, and a wallet, and a shield, and belted the sword, which had a diamond blade, round his waist, and the cap they set on his head, and told him that now even they could not see him though they were fairies. Then he took it off, and they each kissed him and wished him good fortune, and then they began again their eternal dance round the golden tree, for it is their business to guard it till the new times come, or till the world's ending. So the boy put the cap on his head, and hung the wallet round his waist, and the shining shield on his shoulders, and flew beyond the great river that lies coiled like a serpent round the whole world. And by the banks of that river, there he found the three Terrible Women all asleep beneath a poplar tree, and the dead poplar leaves lay all about them. Their golden wings were folded and their brass claws were crossed, and two of them slept with their hideous heads beneath their wings like birds, and the serpents in their hair writhed out from under the feathers of gold. But the youngest slept between her two sisters, and she lay on her back, with her beautiful sad face turned to the sky; and though she slept her eyes were wide open. If the boy had seen her he would have been changed into stone by the terror and the pity of it, she was so awful; but he had thought of a plan for killing her without looking on her face. As soon as he caught sight of the three from far off he took his shining shield from his shoulders, and held it up like a mirror, so that he saw the Dreadful Women reflected in it, and did not see the Terrible Head itself. Then he came nearer and nearer, till he reckoned that he was within a sword's stroke of the youngest, and he guessed where he should strike a back blow behind him. Then he drew the Sword of Sharpness and struck once, and the Terrible Head was cut from the shoulders of the creature, and the blood leaped out and struck him like a blow. But he thrust the Terrible Head into his wallet, and flew away without looking behind. Then the two Dreadful Sisters who were left wakened, and rose in the air like great birds; and though they could not see him because of his Cap of Darkness, they flew after him up the wind, following by the scent through the clouds, like hounds hunting in a wood. They came so close that he could hear the clatter of their golden wings, and their shrieks to each other: "*here, here,*" "*no, there; this way he went,*" as they chased him. But the Shoes of Swiftness flew too fast for them, and at last their cries and the rattle of their wings died away as he crossed the great river that runs round the world.

Now when the horrible creatures were far in the distance, and the boy found himself on the right side of the river, he flew straight eastward, trying to seek his own country. But as he looked down from the air he saw a very strange sight — a beautiful girl chained to a stake at the high-water mark of the sea. The girl was so frightened or so tired that she was only prevented from falling by the iron chain about her waist, and there she hung, as if she were dead. The boy was very sorry for her and flew down and stood beside her. When he spoke she raised her head and looked round, but his voice only seemed to frighten her. Then he remembered that he was wearing the Cap of Darkness, and that she could only hear him, not see him. So he took it off, and there he stood before her, the handsomest young man she had ever seen in all her life, with short curly yellow hair, and blue eyes, and a laughing face. And he thought her the most beautiful girl in the world. So first with one blow of the Sword of Sharpness he cut the iron chain that bound her, and then he asked her what she did there, and why men treated her so cruelly. And she told him that she was the daughter of the King of that country, and that she was tied there to be eaten by a monstrous beast out of the sea; for the beast came and devoured a girl every day. Now the lot had fallen on her; and as she was just saying this a long fierce head of a cruel sea creature rose out of the waves and snapped at the girl. But the beast had been too greedy and too hurried, so he missed his aim the first time. Before he could rise and bite again the boy had whipped the Terrible Head out of his wallet and held it up. And when the sea beast leaped out once more its eyes fell on the head, and instantly it was turned into a stone. And the stone beast is there on the sea-coast to this day.

Then the boy and the girl went to the palace of the King, her father, where everyone was weeping for her death, and they could hardly believe their eyes when they saw her come back well. And the King and Queen made much of the boy, and could not contain themselves for delight when they found he wanted to marry their daughter. So the two were married with the most splendid rejoicings, and when they had passed some time at court they went home in a ship to the boy's own country. For he could not carry his bride through the air, so he took the Shoes of Swiftness, and the Cap of Darkness, and the Sword of Sharpness up to a lonely place in the hills. There he left them, and there they were found by the man and woman who had met him at home beside the sea, and had helped him to start on his journey.

When this had been done the boy and his bride set forth for home, and landed at the harbor of his native land. But whom should he meet in the very street of the town but his own mother, flying for her life from the wicked King, who now wished to kill her because he found that she would never marry him! For if she had liked the King ill before, she liked him far worse now that he had caused her son to disappear so suddenly. She did not know, of course, where the boy had gone, but thought the King had slain him secretly. So now she was running for her very life, and the wicked King was following her with a sword in his hand. Then, behold! she ran into her son's very arms, but he had only time to kiss her and step in front of her, when the King struck at him with his sword. The boy caught the blow on his shield, and cried to the King:

"I swore to bring you the Terrible Head, and see how I keep my oath!"

Then he drew forth the head from his wallet, and when the King's eyes fell on it, instantly he was turned into stone, just as he stood there with his sword lifted!

Now all the people rejoiced, because the wicked King should rule them no longer. And they asked the boy to be their king, but he said no, he must take his mother home to her father's house. So the people chose for king the man who had been kind to his mother when first she was cast on the island in the great chest.

Presently the boy and his mother and his wife set sail for his mother's own country, from which she had been driven so unkindly. But on the way they stayed at the court of a king, and it happened that he was holding games, and giving prizes to the best runners, boxers, and quoit-throwers. Then the boy would try his strength with the rest, but he threw the quoit so far that it went beyond what had ever been thrown before, and fell in the crowd, striking a man so that he died. Now this man was no other than the father of the boy's mother, who had fled away from his own kingdom for fear his grandson should find him and kill him after all. Thus he was destroyed by his own cowardice and by chance, and thus the prophecy was fulfilled. But the boy and his wife and his mother went back to the kingdom that was theirs, and lived long and happily after all their troubles.

THE STORY OF PRETTY GOLDILOCKS

Once upon a time there was a princess who was the prettiest creature in the world. And because she was so beautiful, and because her hair was like the finest gold, and waved and rippled nearly to the ground, she was called Pretty Goldilocks. She always wore a crown of flowers, and her dresses were embroidered with diamonds and pearls, and everybody who saw her fell in love with her.

Now one of her neighbors was a young king who was not married. He was very rich and handsome, and when he heard all that was said about Pretty Goldilocks, though he had never seen her, he fell so deeply in love with her that he could neither eat nor drink. So he resolved to send an ambassador to ask her in marriage. He had a splendid carriage made for his ambassador, and gave him more than a hundred horses and a hundred servants, and told him to be sure and bring the Princess back with him. After he had started nothing else was talked of at Court, and the King felt so sure that the Princess would consent that he set his people to work at pretty dresses and splendid furniture, that they might be ready by the time she came. Meanwhile, the ambassador arrived at the Princess's palace and delivered his little message, but whether she happened to be cross that day, or whether the compliment did not please her, is not known. She only answered that she was very much obliged to the King, but she had no wish to be married. The ambassador set off sadly on his homeward way, bringing all the King's presents back with him, for the Princess was too well brought up to accept the pearls and diamonds when she would not accept the King, so she had only kept twenty-five English pins that he might not be vexed.

When the ambassador reached the city, where the King was waiting impatiently, everybody was very much annoyed with him for not bringing the Princess, and the King cried like a baby, and nobody could console him. Now there was at the Court a young man, who was more clever and handsome than anyone else. He was called Charming, and everyone loved him, excepting a few envious people who were angry at his being the King's favorite and knowing all the State secrets. He happened to one day be with some people who were speaking of the ambassador's return and saying that his going to the Princess had not done much good, when Charming said rashly:

"If the King had sent me to the Princess Goldilocks I am sure she would have come back with me."

His enemies at once went to the King and said:

“You will hardly believe, sire, what Charming has the audacity to say — that if *he* had been sent to the Princess Goldilocks she would certainly have come back with him. He seems to think that he is so much handsomer than you that the Princess would have fallen in love with him and followed him willingly.” The King was very angry when he heard this.

“Ha, ha!” said he; “does he laugh at my unhappiness, and think himself more fascinating than I am? Go, and let him be shut up in my great tower to die of hunger.”

So the King’s guards went to fetch Charming, who had thought no more of his rash speech, and carried him off to prison with great cruelty. The poor prisoner had only a little straw for his bed, and but for a little stream of water which flowed through the tower he would have died of thirst.

One day when he was in despair he said to himself:

“How can I have offended the King? I am his most faithful subject, and have done nothing against him.”

The King chanced to be passing the tower and recognized the voice of his former favorite. He stopped to listen in spite of Charming’s enemies, who tried to persuade him to have nothing more to do with the traitor. But the King said:

“Be quiet, I wish to hear what he says.”

And then he opened the tower door and called to Charming, who came very sadly and kissed the King’s hand, saying:

“What have I done, sire, to deserve this cruel treatment?”

“You mocked me and my ambassador,” said the King, “and you said that if I had sent you for the Princess Goldilocks you would certainly have brought her back.”

“It is quite true, sire,” replied Charming; “I should have drawn such a picture of you, and represented your good qualities in such a way, that I am certain the Princess would have found you irresistible. But I cannot see what there is in that to make you angry.”

The King could not see any cause for anger either when the matter was presented to him in this light, and he began to frown very fiercely at the courtiers who had so misrepresented his favorite.

So he took Charming back to the palace with him, and after seeing that he had a very good supper he said to him:

“You know that I love Pretty Goldilocks as much as ever, her refusal has not made any difference to me; but I don’t know how to make her change her mind; I really should like to send you, to see if you can persuade her to marry me.”

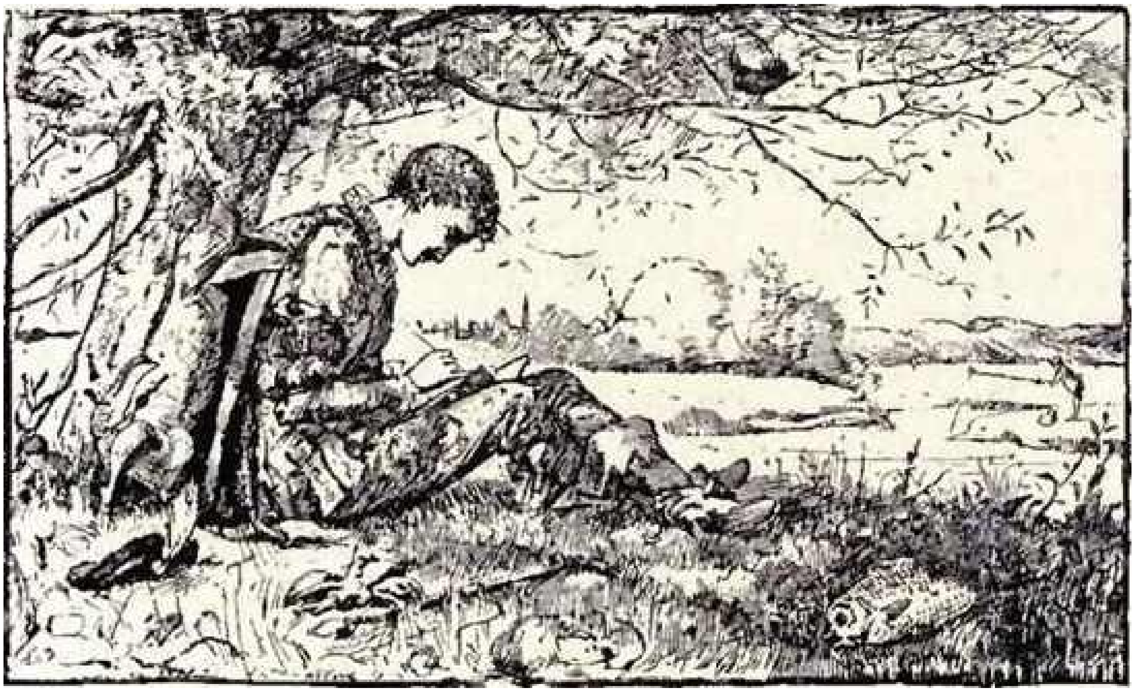

Charming replied that he was perfectly willing to go, and would set out the very next day.

"But you must wait till I can get a grand escort for you," said the King. But Charming said that he only wanted a good horse to ride, and the King, who was delighted at his being ready to start so promptly, gave him letters to the Princess, and bade him good speed. It was on a Monday morning that he set out all alone upon his errand, thinking of nothing but how he could persuade the Princess Goldilocks to marry the King. He had a writing-book in his pocket, and whenever any happy thought struck him he dismounted from his horse and sat down under the trees to put it into the harangue which he was preparing for the Princess, before he forgot it.

One day when he had started at the very earliest dawn, and was riding over a great meadow, he suddenly had a capital idea, and, springing from his horse, he sat down under a willow tree which grew by a little river. When he had written it down he was looking round him, pleased to find himself in such a pretty place, when all at once he saw a great golden carp lying gasping and exhausted upon the grass. In leaping after little flies she had thrown herself high upon the bank, where she had lain till she was nearly dead. Charming had pity upon her, and, though he couldn't help thinking that she would have been very nice for dinner, he picked her up gently and put her back into the water. As soon as Dame Carp felt the refreshing coolness of the water she sank down joyfully to the bottom of the river, then, swimming up to the bank quite boldly, she said:

"I thank you, Charming, for the kindness you have done me. You have saved my life; one day I will repay you.” So saying, she sank down into the water again, leaving Charming greatly astonished at her politeness.

Another day, as he journeyed on, he saw a raven in great distress. The poor bird was closely pursued by an eagle, which would soon have eaten it up, had not Charming quickly fitted an arrow to his bow and shot the eagle dead. The raven perched upon a tree very joyfully.

“Charming,” said he, “it was very generous of you to rescue a poor raven; I am not ungrateful, some day I will repay you.”

Charming thought it was very nice of the raven to say so, and went on his way.

Before the sun rose he found himself in a thick wood where it was too dark for him to see his path, and here he heard an owl crying as if it were in despair.

“Hark!” said he, “that must be an owl in great trouble, I am sure it has gone into a snare”; and he began to hunt about, and presently found a great net which some bird-catchers had spread the night before.

“What a pity it is that men do nothing but torment and persecute poor creatures which never do them any harm!” said he, and he took out his knife and cut the cords of the net, and the owl flitted away into the darkness, but then turning, with one flicker of her wings, she came back to Charming and said:

“It does not need many words to tell you how great a service you have done me. I was caught; in a few minutes the fowlers would have been here — without your help I should have been killed. I am grateful, and one day I will repay you.”

These three adventures were the only ones of any consequence that befell Charming upon his journey, and he made all the haste he could to reach the palace of the Princess Goldilocks.

When he arrived he thought everything he saw delightful and magnificent. Diamonds were as plentiful as pebbles, and the gold and silver, the beautiful dresses, the sweetmeats and pretty things that were everywhere quite amazed him; he thought to himself: “If the Princess consents to leave all this, and come with me to marry the King, he may think himself lucky!”

Then he dressed himself carefully in rich brocade, with scarlet and white plumes, and threw a splendid embroidered scarf over his shoulder, and, looking as gay and as graceful as possible, he presented himself at the door of the palace, carrying in his arm a tiny pretty dog which he had bought on the way. The guards saluted him respectfully, and a messenger was sent to the Princess to announce the arrival of Charming as ambassador of her neighbor the King.

“Charming,” said the Princess, “the name promises well; I have no doubt that he is good looking and fascinates everybody.”

“Indeed he does, madam,” said all her maids of honor in one breath. “We saw him from the window of the garret where we were spinning flax, and we could do nothing but look at him as long as he was in sight.”

“Well to be sure,” said the Princess, “that’s how you amuse yourselves, is it? Looking at strangers out of the window! Be quick and give me my blue satin embroidered dress, and comb out my golden hair. Let somebody make me fresh garlands of flowers, and give me my high-heeled shoes and my fan, and tell them to sweep my great hall and my throne, for I want everyone to say I am really ‘Pretty Goldilocks.’”

You can imagine how all her maids scurried this way and that to make the Princess ready, and how in their haste they knocked their heads together and hindered each other, till she thought they would never have done. However, at last they led her into the gallery of mirrors that she might assure herself that nothing was lacking in her appearance, and then she mounted her throne of gold, ebony, and ivory, while her ladies took their guitars and began to sing softly. Then Charming was led in, and was so struck with astonishment and admiration that at first not a word could he say. But presently he took courage and delivered his harangue, bravely ending by begging the Princess to spare him the disappointment of going back without her.

“Sir Charming,” answered she, “all the reasons you have given me are very good ones, and I assure you that I should have more pleasure in obliging you than anyone else, but you must know that a month ago as I was walking by the river with my ladies I took off my glove, and as I did so a ring that I was wearing slipped off my finger and rolled into the water. As I valued it more than my kingdom, you may imagine how vexed I was at losing it, and I vowed to never listen to any proposal of marriage unless the ambassador first brought me back my ring. So now you know what is expected of you, for if you talked for fifteen days and fifteen nights you could not make me change my mind.”

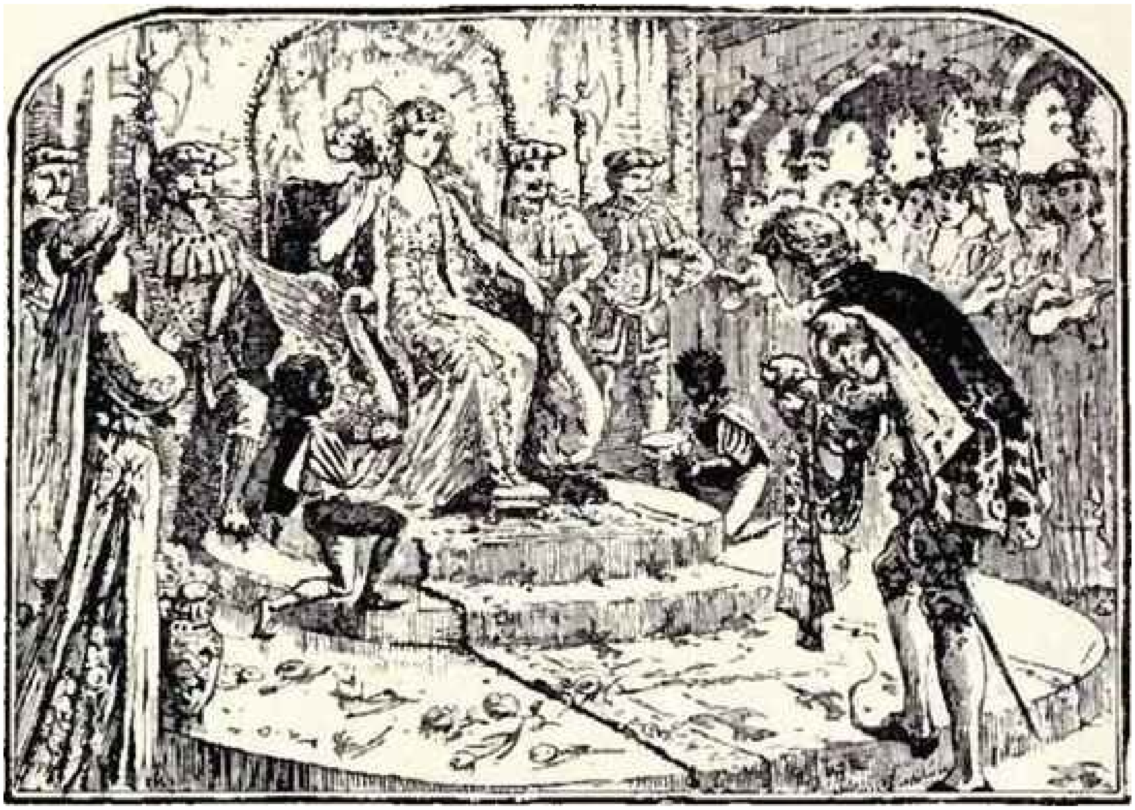

Charming was very much surprised by this answer, but he bowed low to the Princess, and begged her to accept the embroidered scarf and the tiny dog he had brought with him. But she answered that she did not want any presents, and that he was to remember what she had just told him. When he got back to his lodging he went to bed without eating any supper, and his little dog, who was called Frisk, couldn't eat any either, but came and lay down close to him. All night Charming sighed and lamented.

"How am I to find a ring that fell into the river a month ago?" said he. "It is useless to try; the Princess must have told me to do it on purpose, knowing it was impossible." And then he sighed again.

Frisk heard him and said:

"My dear master, don't despair; the luck may change, you are too good not to be happy. Let us go down to the river as soon as it is light."

But Charming only gave him two little pats and said nothing, and very soon he fell asleep.

At the first glimmer of dawn Frisk began to jump about, and when he had waked Charming they went out together, first into the garden, and then down to the river's brink, where they wandered up and down. Charming was thinking sadly of having to go back unsuccessful when he heard someone calling: "Charming, Charming!" He looked all about him and thought he must be dreaming, as he could not see anybody. Then he walked on and the voice called again: “Charming, Charming!”

“Who calls me?” said he. Frisk, who was very small and could look closely into the water, cried out: “I see a golden carp coming.” And sure enough there was the great carp, who said to Charming:

“You saved my life in the meadow by the willow tree, and I promised that I would repay you. Take this, it is Princess Goldilock’s ring.” Charming took the ring out of Dame Carp’s mouth, thanking her a thousand times, and he and tiny Frisk went straight to the palace, where someone told the Princess that he was asking to see her.

“Ah! poor fellow,” said she, “he must have come to say good-by, finding it impossible to do as I asked.”

So in came Charming, who presented her with the ring and said:

“Madam, I have done your bidding. Will it please you to marry my master?” When the Princess saw her ring brought back to her unhurt she was so astonished that she thought she must be dreaming.

“Truly, Charming,” said she, “you must be the favorite of some fairy, or you could never have found it.”

“Madam,” answered he, “I was helped by nothing but my desire to obey your wishes.”

“Since you are so kind,” said she, “perhaps you will do me another service, for till it is done I will never be married. There is a prince not far from here whose name is Galifron, who once wanted to marry me, but when I refused he uttered the most terrible threats against me, and vowed that he would lay waste my country. But what could I do? I could not marry a frightful giant as tall as a tower, who eats up people as a monkey eats chestnuts, and who talks so loud that anybody who has to listen to him becomes quite deaf. Nevertheless, he does not cease to persecute me and to kill my subjects. So before I can listen to your proposal you must kill him and bring me his head.”

Charming was rather dismayed at this command, but he answered:

“Very well, Princess, I will fight this Galifron; I believe that he will kill me, but at any rate I shall die in your defense.”

Then the Princess was frightened and said everything she could think of to prevent Charming from fighting the giant, but it was of no use, and he went out to arm himself suitably, and then, taking little Frisk with him, he mounted his horse and set out for Galifron’s country. Everyone he met told him what a terrible giant Galifron was, and that nobody dared go near him; and the more he heard, the more frightened he grew. Frisk tried to encourage him by saying: “While you are fighting the giant, dear master, I will go and bite his heels, and when he stoops down to look at me you can kill him."

Charming praised his little dog's plan, but knew that this help would not do much good.

At last he drew near the giant's castle, and saw to his horror that every path that led to it was strewn with bones. Before long he saw Galifron coming. His head was higher than the tallest trees, and he sang in a terrible voice:

"Bring out your little boys and girls,
Pray do not stay to do their curls,
For I shall eat so very many,
I shall not know if they have any."

Thereupon Charming sang out as loud as he could to the same tune:

"Come out and meet the valiant Charming
Who finds you not at all alarming;
Although he is not very tall,
He's big enough to make you fall."

The rhymes were not very correct, but you see he had made them up so quickly that it is a miracle that they were not worse; especially as he was horribly frightened all the time. When Galifron heard these words he looked all about him, and saw Charming standing, sword in hand this put the giant into a terrible rage, and he aimed a blow at Charming with his huge iron club, which would certainly have killed him if it had reached him, but at that instant a raven perched upon the giant's head, and, pecking with its strong beak and beating with its great wings so confused and blinded him that all his blows fell harmlessly upon the air, and Charming, rushing in, gave him several strokes with his sharp sword so that he fell to the ground. Whereupon Charming cut off his head before he knew anything about it, and the raven from a tree close by croaked out:

"You see I have not forgotten the good turn you did me in killing the eagle. To-day I think I have fulfilled my promise of repaying you."

"Indeed, I owe you more gratitude than you ever owed me," replied Charming.

And then he mounted his horse and rode off with Galifron's head.

When he reached the city the people ran after him in crowds, crying:

"Behold the brave Charming, who has killed the giant!" And their shouts reached the Princess's ear, but she dared not ask what was happening, for fear she should hear that Charming had been killed. But very soon he arrived at the palace with the giant's head, of which she was still terrified, though it could no longer do her any harm.

"Princess," said Charming, "I have killed your enemy; I hope you will now consent to marry the King my master."

"Oh dear! no," said the Princess, "not until you have brought me some water from the Gloomy Cavern.

"Not far from here there is a deep cave, the entrance to which is guarded by two dragons with fiery eyes, who will not allow anyone to pass them. When you get into the cavern you will find an immense hole, which you must go down, and it is full of toads and snakes; at the bottom of this hole there is another little cave, in which rises the Fountain of Health and Beauty. It is some of this water that I really must have: everything it touches becomes wonderful. The beautiful things will always remain beautiful, and the ugly things become lovely. If one is young one never grows old, and if one is old one becomes young. You see, Charming, I could not leave my kingdom without taking some of it with me."

"Princess," said he, "you at least can never need this water, but I am an unhappy ambassador, whose death you desire. Where you send me I will go, though I know I shall never return."

And, as the Princess Goldilocks showed no sign of relenting, he started with his little dog for the Gloomy Cavern. Everyone he met on the way said:

"What a pity that a handsome young man should throw away his life so carelessly! He is going to the cavern alone, though if he had a hundred men with him he could not succeed. Why does the Princess ask impossibilities?" Charming said nothing, but he was very sad. When he was near the top of a hill he dismounted to let his horse graze, while Frisk amused himself by chasing flies. Charming knew he could not be far from the Gloomy Cavern, and on looking about him he saw a black hideous rock from which came a thick smoke, followed in a moment by one of the dragons with fire blazing from his mouth and eyes. His body was yellow and green, and his claws scarlet, and his tail was so long that it lay in a hundred coils. Frisk was so terrified at the sight of it that he did not know where to hide. Charming, quite determined to get the water or die, now drew his sword, and, taking the crystal flask which Pretty Goldilocks had given him to fill, said to Frisk:

"I feel sure that I shall never come back from this expedition; when I am dead, go to the Princess and tell her that her errand has cost me my life. Then find the King my master, and relate all my adventures to him."

As he spoke he heard a voice calling: "Charming, Charming!"

"Who calls me?" said he; then he saw an owl sitting in a hollow tree, who said to him:

"You saved my life when I was caught in the net, now I can repay you. Trust me with the flask, for I know all the ways of the Gloomy Cavern, and can fill it from the Fountain of Beauty." Charming was only too glad to give her the flask, and she flitted into the cavern quite unnoticed by the dragon, and after some time returned with the flask, filled to the very brim with sparkling water. Charming thanked her with all his heart, and joyfully hastened back to the town.

He went straight to the palace and gave the flask to the Princess, who had no further objection to make. So she thanked Charming, and ordered that preparations should be made for her departure, and they soon set out together. The Princess found Charming such an agreeable companion that she sometimes said to him: “Why didn’t we stay where we were? I could have made you king, and we should have been so happy!”

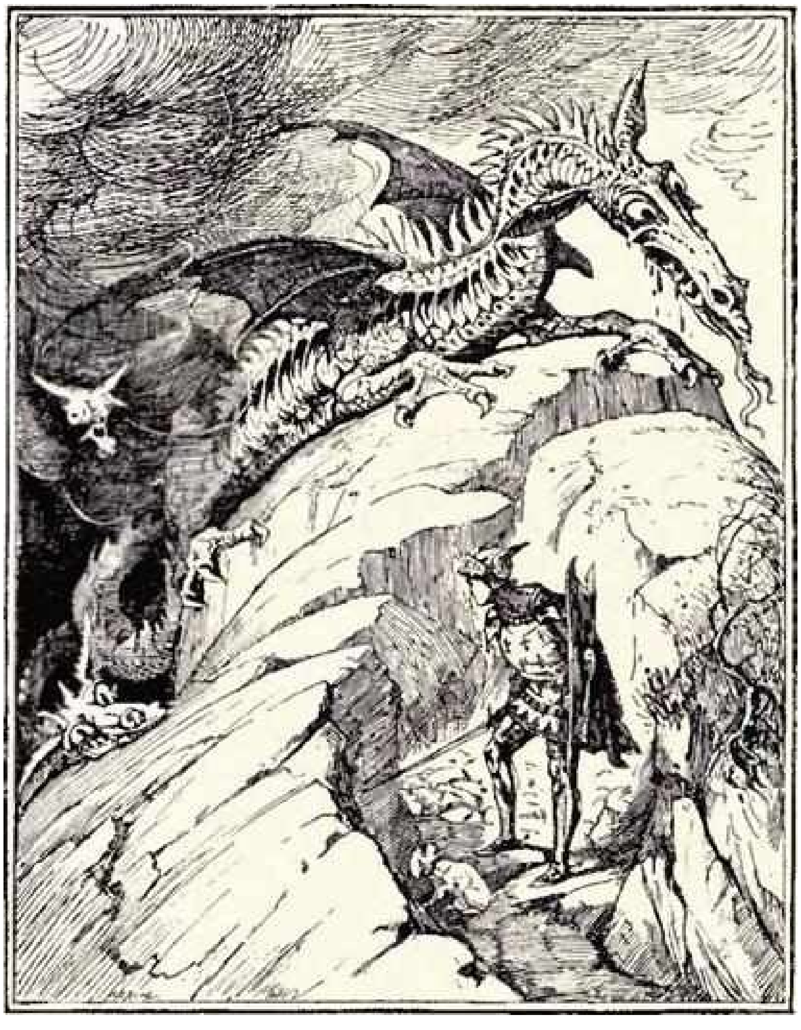

But Charming only answered:

“I could not have done anything that would have vexed my master so much, even for a kingdom, or to please you, though I think you are as beautiful as the sun.”

At last they reached the King’s great city, and he came out to meet the

Princess, bringing magnificent presents, and the marriage was celebrated with great rejoicings. But Goldilocks was so fond of Charming that she could not be happy unless he was near her, and she was always singing his praises.

"If it hadn't been for Charming," she said to the King, "I should never have come here; you ought to be very much obliged to him, for he did the most impossible things and got me water from the Fountain of Beauty, so I can never grow old, and shall get prettier every year."

Then Charming's enemies said to the King:

"It is a wonder that you are not jealous, the Queen thinks there is nobody in the world like Charming. As if anybody you had sent could not have done just as much!"

"It is quite true, now I come to think of it," said the King. "Let him be chained hand and foot, and thrown into the tower."

So they took Charming, and as a reward for having served the King so faithfully he was shut up in the tower, where he only saw the jailer, who brought him a piece of black bread and a pitcher of water every day.

However, little Frisk came to console him, and told him all the news.

When Pretty Goldilocks heard what had happened she threw herself at the King's feet and begged him to set Charming free, but the more she cried, the more angry he was, and at last she saw that it was useless to say any more; but it made her very sad. Then the King took it into his head that perhaps he was not handsome enough to please the Princess Goldilocks, and he thought he would bathe his face with the water from the Fountain of Beauty, which was in the flask on a shelf in the Princess's room, where she had placed it that she might see it often. Now it happened that one of the Princess's ladies in chasing a spider had knocked the flask off the shelf and broken it, and every drop of the water had been spilt. Not knowing what to do, she had hastily swept away the pieces of crystal, and then remembered that in the King's room she had seen a flask of exactly the same shape, also filled with sparkling water. So, without saying a word, she fetched it and stood it upon the Queen's shelf.

Now the water in this flask was what was used in the kingdom for getting rid of troublesome people. Instead of having their heads cut off in the usual way, their faces were bathed with the water, and they instantly fell asleep and never woke up any more. So, when the King, thinking to improve his beauty, took the flask and sprinkled the water upon his face, *he* fell asleep, and nobody could wake him.

Little Frisk was the first to hear the news, and he ran to tell Charming, who sent him to beg the Princess not to forget the poor prisoner. All the palace was in confusion on account of the King's death, but tiny Frisk made his way through the crowd to the Princess’s side, and said:

“Madam, do not forget poor Charming.”

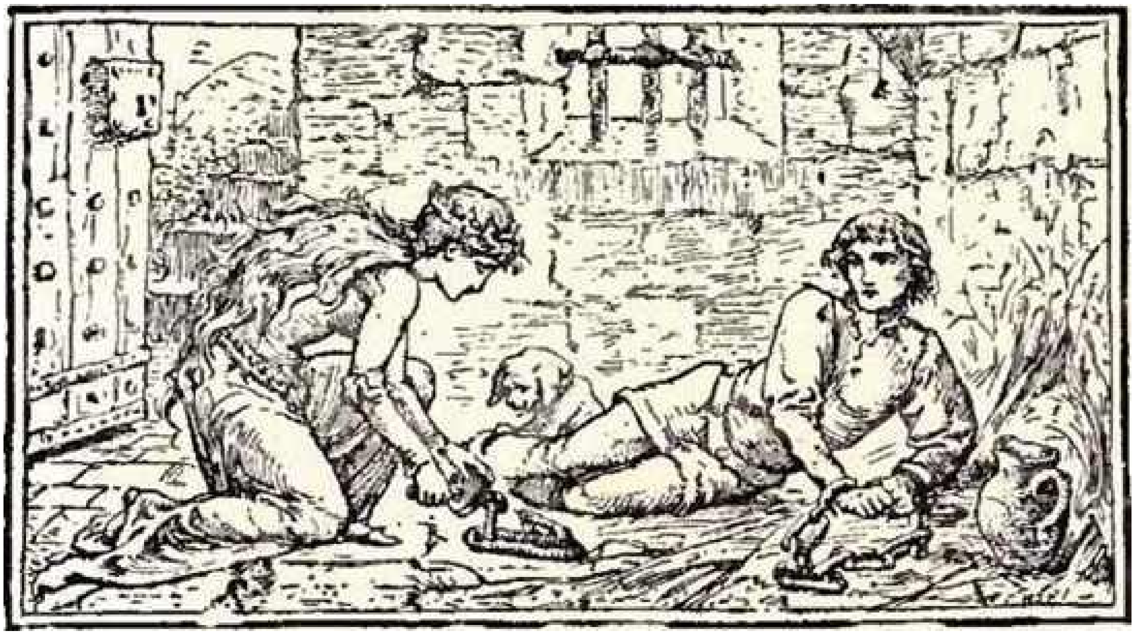

Then she remembered all he had done for her, and without saying a word to anyone went straight to the tower, and with her own hands took off Charming’s chains. Then, putting a golden crown upon his head, and the royal mantle upon his shoulders, she said:

“Come, faithful Charming, I make you king, and will take you for my husband.”

Charming, once more free and happy, fell at her feet and thanked her for her gracious words.

Everybody was delighted that he should be king, and the wedding, which took place at once, was the prettiest that can be imagined, and Prince Charming and Princess Goldilocks lived happily ever after.(1)

(1) Madame d’Aulnoy.

THE HISTORY OF WHITTINGTON

Dick Whittington was a very little boy when his father and mother died; so little, indeed, that he never knew them, nor the place where he was born. He strolled about the country as ragged as a colt, till he met with a wagoner who was going to London, and who gave him leave to walk all the way by the side of his wagon without paying anything for his passage. This pleased little Whittington very much, as he wanted to see London sadly, for he had heard that the streets were paved with gold, and he was willing to get a bushel of it; but how great was his disappointment, poor boy! when he saw the streets covered with dirt instead of gold, and found himself in a strange place, without a friend, without food, and without money.

Though the wagoner was so charitable as to let him walk up by the side of the wagon for nothing, he took care not to know him when he came to town, and the poor boy was, in a little time, so cold and hungry that he wished himself in a good kitchen and by a warm fire in the country.

In his distress he asked charity of several people, and one of them bid him "Go to work for an idle rogue." "That I will," said Whittington, "with all my heart; I will work for you if you will let me."

The man, who thought this savored of wit and impertinence (though the poor lad intended only to show his readiness to work), gave him a blow with a stick which broke his head so that the blood ran down. In this situation, and fainting for want of food, he laid himself down at the door of one Mr. Fitzwarren, a merchant, where the cook saw him, and, being an ill-natured hussy, ordered him to go about his business or she would scald him. At this time Mr. Fitzwarren came from the Exchange, and began also to scold at the poor boy, bidding him to go to work.

Whittington answered that he should be glad to work if anybody would employ him, and that he should be able if he could get some victuals to eat, for he had had nothing for three days, and he was a poor country boy, and knew nobody, and nobody would employ him.

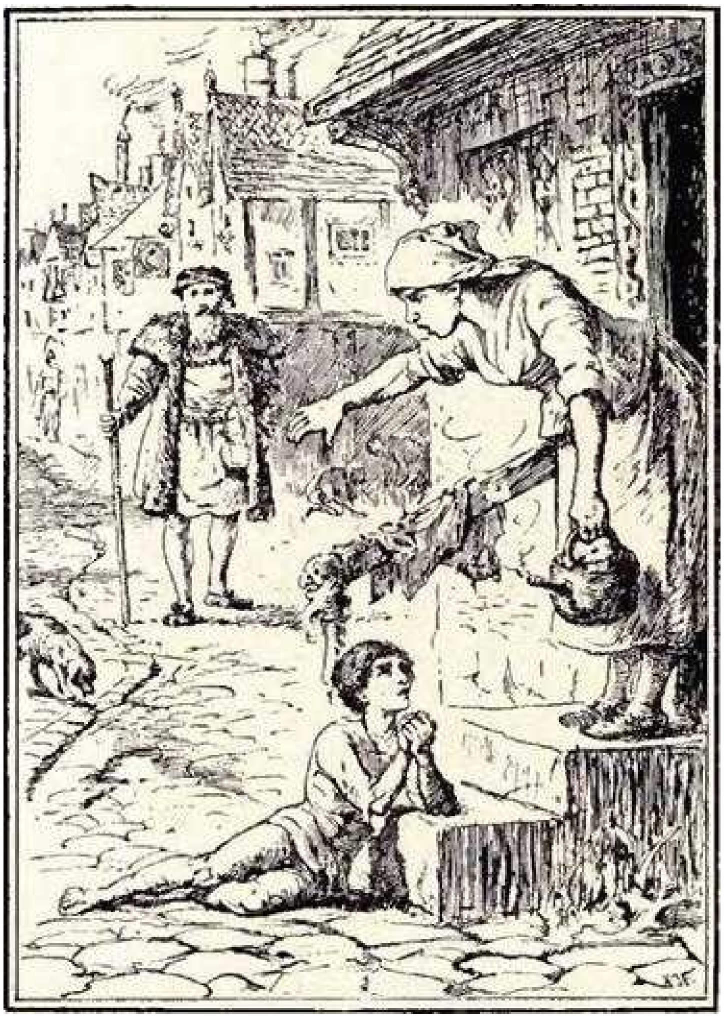

He then endeavored to get up, but he was so very weak that he fell down again, which excited so much compassion in the merchant that he ordered the servants to take him in and give him some meat and drink, and let him help the cook to do any dirty work that she had to set him about. People are too apt to reproach those who beg with being idle, but give themselves no concern to put them in the way of getting business to do, or considering whether they are able to do it, which is not charity.

But we return to Whittington, who could have lived happy in this worthy family had he not been bumped about by the cross cook, who must be always roasting and basting, or when the spit was idle employed her hands upon poor Whittington! At last Miss Alice, his master’s daughter, was informed of it, and then she took compassion on the poor boy, and made the servants treat him kindly.

Besides the crossness of the cook, Whittington had another difficulty to get over before he could be happy. He had, by order of his master, a flock-bed placed for him in a garret, where there was a number of rats and mice that often ran over the poor boy's nose and disturbed him in his sleep. After some time, however, a gentleman who came to his master's house gave Whittington a penny for brushing his shoes. This he put into his pocket, being determined to lay it out to the best advantage; and the next day, seeing a woman in the street with a cat under her arm, he ran up to know the price of it. The woman (as the cat was a good mouser) asked a deal of money for it, but on Whittington's telling her he had but a penny in the world, and that he wanted a cat sadly, she let him have it.

This cat Whittington concealed in the garret, for fear she should be beat about by his mortal enemy the cook, and here she soon killed or frightened away the rats and mice, so that the poor boy could now sleep as sound as a top.

Soon after this the merchant, who had a ship ready to sail, called for his servants, as his custom was, in order that each of them might venture something to try their luck; and whatever they sent was to pay neither freight nor custom, for he thought justly that God Almighty would bless him the more for his readiness to let the poor partake of his fortune.

All the servants appeared but poor Whittington, who, having neither money nor goods, could not think of sending anything to try his luck; but his good friend Miss Alice, thinking his poverty kept him away, ordered him to be called.

She then offered to lay down something for him, but the merchant told his daughter that would not do, it must be something of his own. Upon which poor Whittington said he had nothing but a cat which he bought for a penny that was given him. "Fetch thy cat, boy," said the merchant, "and send her." Whittington brought poor puss and delivered her to the captain, with tears in his eyes, for he said he should now be disturbed by the rats and mice as much as ever. All the company laughed at the adventure but Miss Alice, who pitied the poor boy, and gave him something to buy another cat.

While puss was beating the billows at sea, poor Whittington was severely beaten at home by his tyrannical mistress the cook, who used him so cruelly, and made such game of him for sending his cat to sea, that at last the poor boy determined to run away from his place, and having packed up the few things he had, he set out very early in the morning on All-Hallows day. He traveled as far as Holloway, and there sat down on a stone to consider what course he should take; but while he was thus ruminating, Bow bells, of which there were only six, began to ring; and he thought their sounds addressed him in this manner:

"Turn again, Whittington,
Thrice Lord Mayor of London."

"Lord Mayor of London!" said he to himself, "what would not one endure to be Lord Mayor of London, and ride in such a fine coach? Well, I'll go back again, and bear all the pummelling and ill-usage of Cicely rather than miss the opportunity of being Lord Mayor!” So home he went, and happily got into the house and about his business before Mrs. Cicely made her appearance.

We must now follow Miss Puss to the coast of Africa. How perilous are voyages at sea, how uncertain the winds and the waves, and how many accidents attend a naval life!

The ship that had the cat on board was long beaten at sea, and at last, by contrary winds, driven on a part of the coast of Barbary which was inhabited by Moors unknown to the English. These people received our countrymen with civility, and therefore the captain, in order to trade with them, showed them the patterns of the goods he had on board, and sent some of them to the King of the country, who was so well pleased that he sent for the captain and the factor to come to his palace, which was about a mile from the sea. Here they were placed, according to the custom of the country, on rich carpets, flowered with gold and silver; and the King and Queen being seated at the upper end of the room, dinner was brought in, which consisted of many dishes; but no sooner were the dishes put down but an amazing number of rats and mice came from all quarters and devoured all the meat in an instant.

The factor, in surprise, turned round to the nobles and asked if these vermin were not offensive. “Oh! yes,” said they, “very offensive; and the King would give half his treasure to be freed of them, for they not only destroy his dinner, as you see, but they assault him in his chamber, and even in bed, so that he is obliged to be watched while he is sleeping, for fear of them.”

The factor jumped for joy; he remembered poor Whittington and his cat, and told the King he had a creature on board the ship that would despatch all these vermin immediately. The King’s heart heaved so high at the joy which this news gave him that his turban dropped off his head. “Bring this creature to me,” said he; “vermin are dreadful in a court, and if she will perform what you say I will load your ship with gold and jewels in exchange for her.” The factor, who knew his business, took this opportunity to set forth the merits of Miss Puss. He told his Majesty that it would be inconvenient to part with her, as, when she was gone, the rats and mice might destroy the goods in the ship — but to oblige his Majesty he would fetch her. “Run, run,” said the Queen; “I am impatient to see the dear creature.”

Away flew the factor, while another dinner was providing, and returned with the cat just as the rats and mice were devouring that also. He immediately put down Miss Puss, who killed a great number of them.

The King rejoiced greatly to see his old enemies destroyed by so small a creature, and the Queen was highly pleased, and desired the cat might be brought near that she might look at her. Upon which the factor called “Pussy, pussy,

pussy!” and she came to him. He then presented her to the Queen, who started back, and was afraid to touch a creature who had made such havoc among the rats and mice; however, when the factor stroked the cat and called “Pussy, pussy!” the Queen also touched her and cried “Putty, putty!” for she had not learned English.

He then put her down on the Queen’s lap, where she, purring, played with her Majesty’s hand, and then sang herself to sleep.

The King, having seen the exploits of Miss Puss, and being informed that her kittens would stock the whole country, bargained with the captain and factor for the whole ship’s cargo, and then gave them ten times as much for the cat as all the rest amounted to. On which, taking leave of their Majesties and other great personages at court, they sailed with a fair wind for England, whither we must now attend them.

The morn had scarcely dawned when Mr. Fitzwarren arose to count over the cash and settle the business for that day. He had just entered the counting-house, and seated himself at the desk, when somebody came, tap, tap, at the door. “Who’s there?” said Mr. Fitzwarren. “A friend,” answered the other. “What friend can come at this unseasonable time?” “A real friend is never unseasonable,” answered the other. “I come to bring you good news of your ship Unicorn.” The merchant bustled up in such a hurry that he forgot his gout; instantly opened the door, and who should be seen waiting but the captain and factor, with a cabinet of jewels, and a bill of lading, for which the merchant lifted up his eyes and thanked heaven for sending him such a prosperous voyage. Then they told him the adventures of the cat, and showed him the cabinet of jewels which they had brought for Mr. Whittington. Upon which he cried out with great earnestness, but not in the most poetical manner:

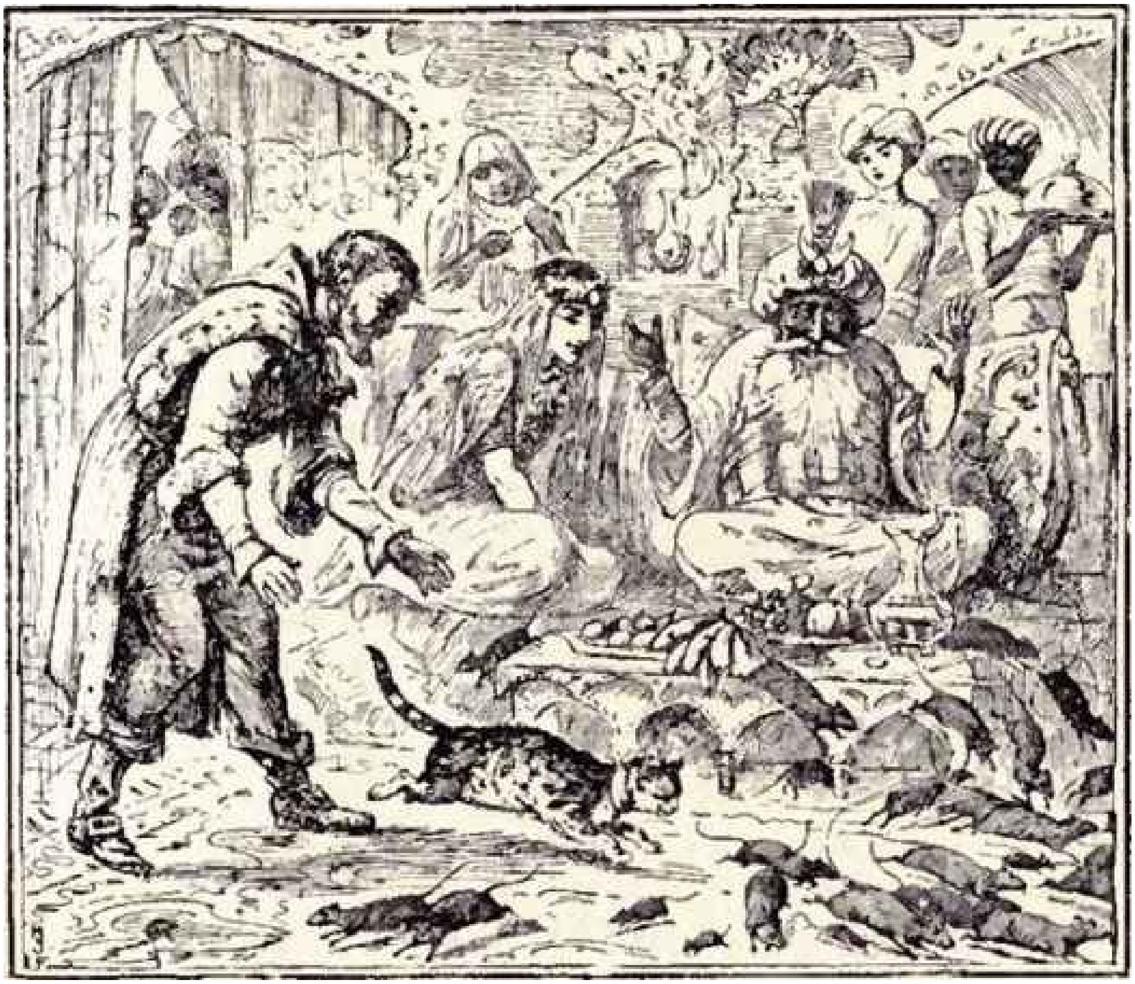

“Go, send him in, and tell him of his fame,
And call him Mr. Whittington by name.”

It is not our business to animadvert upon these lines; we are not critics, but historians. It is sufficient for us that they are the words of Mr. Fitzwarren; and though it is beside our purpose, and perhaps not in our power to prove him a good poet, we shall soon convince the reader that he was a good man, which was a much better character; for when some who were present told him that this treasure was too much for such a poor boy as Whittington, he said: “God forbid that I should deprive him of a penny; it is his own, and he shall have it to a farthing.” He then ordered Mr. Whittington in, who was at this time cleaning the kitchen and would have excused himself from going into the counting-house, saying the room was swept and his shoes were dirty and full of hob-nails. The merchant, however, made him come in, and ordered a chair to be set for him. Upon which, thinking they intended to make sport of him, as had been too often the case in the kitchen, he besought his master not to mock a poor simple fellow, who intended them no harm, but let him go about his business. The merchant, taking him by the hand, said: “Indeed, Mr. Whittington, I am in earnest with you, and sent for you to congratulate you on your great success. Your cat has procured you more money than I am worth in the world, and may you long enjoy it and be happy!”

At length, being shown the treasure, and convinced by them that all of it belonged to him, he fell upon his knees and thanked the Almighty for his providential care of such a poor and miserable creature. He then laid all the treasure at his master’s feet, who refused to take any part of it, but told him he heartily rejoiced at his prosperity, and hoped the wealth he had acquired would be a comfort to him, and would make him happy. He then applied to his mistress, and to his good friend Miss Alice, who refused to take any part of the money, but told him she heartily rejoiced at his good success, and wished him all imaginable felicity. He then gratified the captain, factor, and the ship’s crew for the care they had taken of his cargo. He likewise distributed presents to all the servants in the house, not forgetting even his old enemy the cook, though she little deserved it.

After this Mr. Fitzwarren advised Mr. Whittington to send for the necessary people and dress himself like a gentleman, and made him the offer of his house to live in till he could provide himself with a better.

Now it came to pass when Mr. Whittington’s face was washed, his hair curled, and he dressed in a rich suit of clothes, that he turned out a genteel young fellow; and, as wealth contributes much to give a man confidence, he in a little time dropped that sheepish behavior which was principally occasioned by a depression of spirits, and soon grew a sprightly and good companion, insomuch that Miss Alice, who had formerly pitied him, now fell in love with him.

When her father perceived they had this good liking for each other he proposed a match between them, to which both parties cheerfully consented, and the Lord Mayor, Court of Aldermen, Sheriffs, the Company of Stationers, the Royal Academy of Arts, and a number of eminent merchants attended the ceremony, and were elegantly treated at an entertainment made for that purpose.

History further relates that they lived very happy, had several children, and died at a good old age. Mr. Whittington served as Sheriff of London and was three times Lord Mayor. In the last year of his mayoralty he entertained King Henry V and his Queen, after his conquest of France, upon which occasion the King, in consideration of Whittington’s merit, said: “Never had prince such a subject”; which being told to Whittington at the table, he replied: “Never had subject such a king.” His Majesty, out of respect to his good character, conferred the honor of knighthood on him soon after.

Sir Richard many years before his death constantly fed a great number of poor citizens, built a church and a college to it, with a yearly allowance for poor scholars, and near it erected a hospital.

He also built Newgate for criminals, and gave liberally to St. Bartholomew’s Hospital and other public charities.

THE WONDERFUL SHEEP

Once upon a time — in the days when the fairies lived — there was a king who had three daughters, who were all young, and clever, and beautiful; but the youngest of the three, who was called Miranda, was the prettiest and the most beloved.

The King, her father, gave her more dresses and jewels in a month than he gave the others in a year; but she was so generous that she shared everything with her sisters, and they were all as happy and as fond of one another as they could be.

Now, the King had some quarrelsome neighbors, who, tired of leaving him in peace, began to make war upon him so fiercely that he feared he would be altogether beaten if he did not make an effort to defend himself. So he collected a great army and set off to fight them, leaving the Princesses with their governess in a castle where news of the war was brought every day — sometimes that the King had taken a town, or won a battle, and, at last, that he had altogether overcome his enemies and chased them out of his kingdom, and was coming back to the castle as quickly as possible, to see his dear little Miranda whom he loved so much.

The three Princesses put on dresses of satin, which they had had made on purpose for this great occasion, one green, one blue, and the third white; their jewels were the same colors. The eldest wore emeralds, the second turquoises, and the youngest diamonds, and thus adorned they went to meet the King, singing verses which they had composed about his victories.

When he saw them all so beautiful and so gay he embraced them tenderly, but gave Miranda more kisses than either of the others.

Presently a splendid banquet was served, and the King and his daughters sat down to it, and as he always thought that there was some special meaning in everything, he said to the eldest:

“Tell me why you have chosen a green dress.”

“Sire,” she answered, “having heard of your victories I thought that green would signify my joy and the hope of your speedy return.”

“That is a very good answer,” said the King; “and you, my daughter,” he continued, “why did you take a blue dress?”

“Sire,” said the Princess, “to show that we constantly hoped for your success, and that the sight of you is as welcome to me as the sky with its most beautiful stars.”

“Why,” said the King, “your wise answers astonish me, and you, Miranda. What made you dress yourself all in white?

“Because, sire,” she answered, “white suits me better than anything else.”

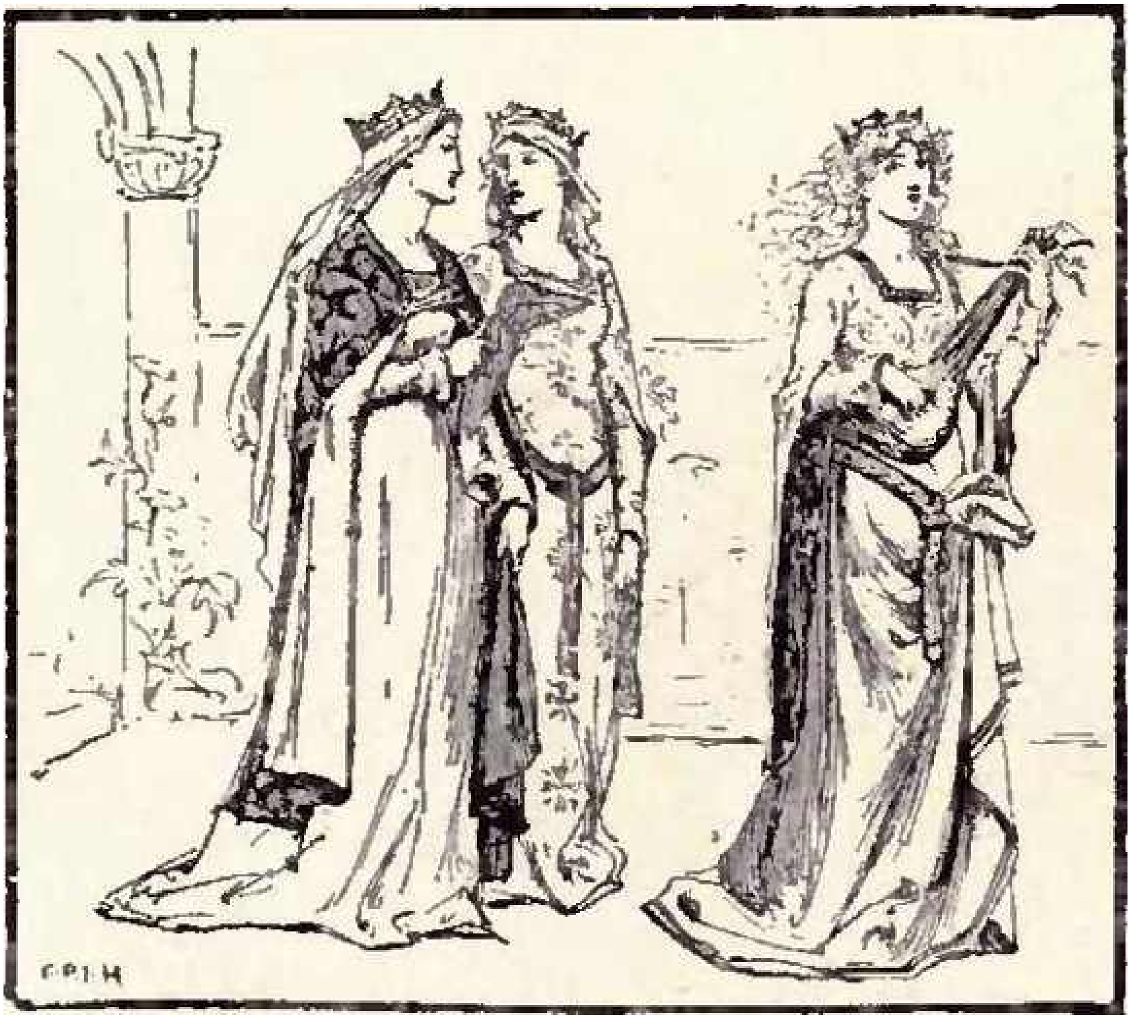

“What!” said the King angrily, “was that all you thought of, vain child?”

“I thought you would be pleased with me,” said the Princess; “that was all.”

The King, who loved her, was satisfied with this, and even pretended to be pleased that she had not told him all her reasons at first.

“And now,” said he, “as I have supped well, and it is not time yet to go to bed, tell me what you dreamed last night.”

The eldest said she had dreamed that he brought her a dress, and the precious stones and gold embroidery on it were brighter than the sun.

The dream of the second was that the King had brought her a spinning wheel and a distaff, that she might spin him some shirts.

But the youngest said: “I dreamed that my second sister was to be married, and on her wedding-day, you, father, held a golden ewer and said: ‘Come, Miranda, and I will hold the water that you may dip your hands in it.’”

The King was very angry indeed when he heard this dream, and frowned horribly; indeed, he made such an ugly face that everyone knew how angry he was, and he got up and went off to bed in a great hurry; but he could not forget his daughter’s dream.

“Does the proud girl wish to make me her slave?” he said to himself. “I am not surprised at her choosing to dress herself in white satin without a thought of me. She does not think me worthy of her consideration! But I will soon put an end to her pretensions!”

He rose in a fury, and although it was not yet daylight, he sent for the Captain of his Bodyguard, and said to him:

“You have heard the Princess Miranda’s dream? I consider that it means strange things against me, therefore I order you to take her away into the forest and kill her, and, that I may be sure it is done, you must bring me her heart and her tongue. If you attempt to deceive me you shall be put to death!”

The Captain of the Guard was very much astonished when he heard this barbarous order, but he did not dare to contradict the King for fear of making him still more angry, or causing him to send someone else, so he answered that he would fetch the Princess and do as the King had said. When he went to her room they would hardly let him in, it was so early, but he said that the King had sent for Miranda, and she got up quickly and came out; a little black girl called Patypata held up her train, and her pet monkey and her little dog ran after her. The monkey was called Grabugeon, and the little dog Tintin.

The Captain of the Guard begged Miranda to come down into the garden where the King was enjoying the fresh air, and when they got there, he pretended to search for him, but as he was not to be found, he said:

“No doubt his Majesty has strolled into the forest,” and he opened the little door that led to it and they went through.

By this time the daylight had begun to appear, and the Princess, looking at her conductor, saw that he had tears in his eyes and seemed too sad to speak.

“What is the matter?” she said in the kindest way. “You seem very sorrowful.”

“Alas! Princess,” he answered, “who would not be sorrowful who was ordered to do such a terrible thing as I am? The King has commanded me to kill you here, and carry your heart and your tongue to him, and if I disobey I shall lose my life.”

The poor Princess was terrified, she grew very pale and began to cry softly.

Looking up at the Captain of the Guard with her beautiful eyes, she said gently:

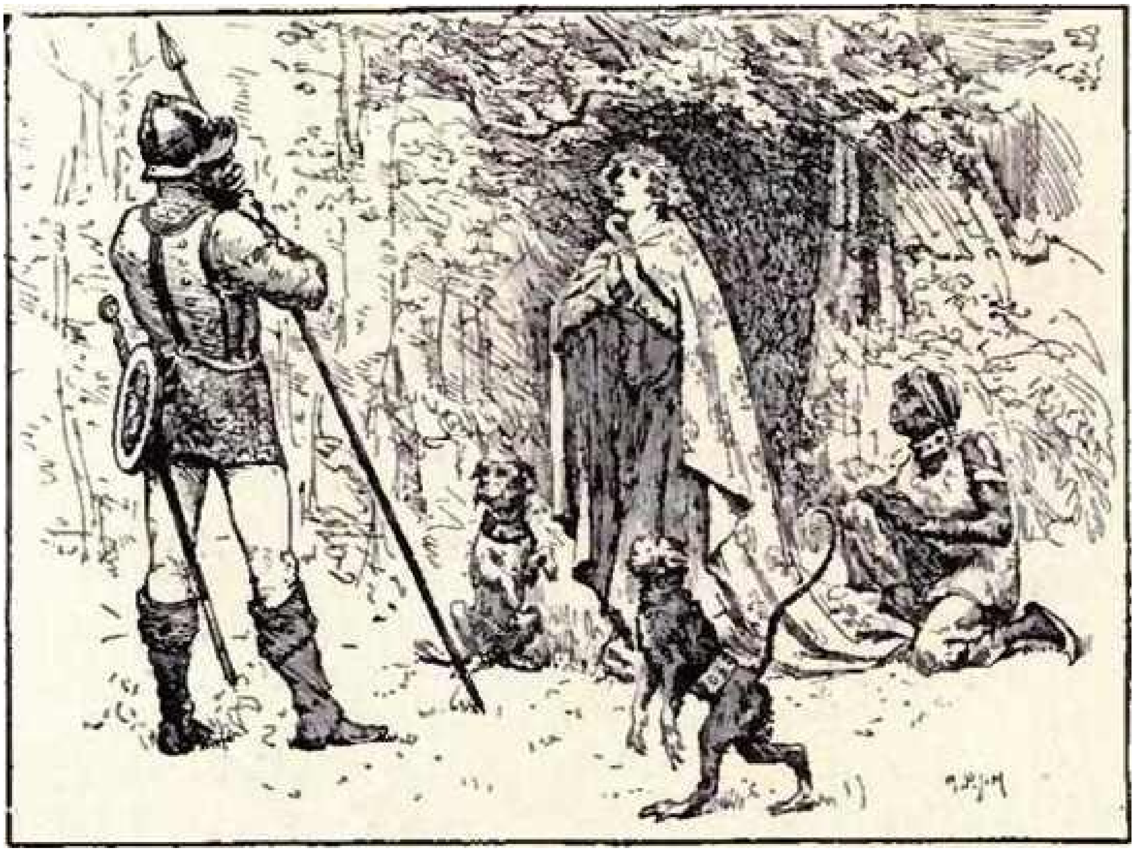

“Will you really have the heart to kill me? I have never done you any harm, and have always spoken well of you to the King. If I had deserved my father’s anger I would suffer without a murmur, but, alas! he is unjust to complain of me, when I have always treated him with love and respect.”

“Fear nothing, Princess,” said the Captain of the Guard. “I would far rather die myself than hurt you; but even if I am killed you will not be safe: we must find some way of making the King believe that you are dead.”

“What can we do?” said Miranda; “unless you take him my heart and my tongue he will never believe you.”

The Princess and the Captain of the Guard were talking so earnestly that they did not think of Patypata, but she had overheard all they said, and now came and threw herself at Miranda’s feet.

“Madam,” she said, “I offer you my life; let me be killed, I shall be only too happy to die for such a kind mistress.”

“Why, Patypata,” cried the Princess, kissing her, “that would never do; your life is as precious to me as my own, especially after such a proof of your affection as you have just given me.”

"You are right, Princess," said Grabugeon, coming forward, "to love such a faithful slave as Patypata; she is of more use to you than I am, I offer you my tongue and my heart most willingly, especially as I wish to make a great name for myself in Goblin Land."

"No, no, my little Grabugeon," replied Miranda, "I cannot bear the thought of taking your life."

"Such a good little dog as I am," cried Tintin, "could not think of letting either of you die for his mistress. If anyone is to die for her it must be me."

And then began a great dispute between Patypata, Grabugeon, and Tintin, and they came to high words, until at last Grabugeon, who was quicker than the others, ran up to the very top of the nearest tree, and let herself fall, head first, to the ground, and there she lay — quite dead!

The Princess was very sorry, but as Grabugeon was really dead, she allowed the Captain of the Guard to take her tongue; but, alas! it was such a little one — not bigger than the Princess's thumb — that they decided sorrowfully that it was of no use at all: the King would not have been taken in by it for a moment!

"Alas! my little monkey," cried the Princess, "I have lost you, and yet I am no better off than I was before."

"The honor of saving your life is to be mine," interrupted Patypata, and, before they could prevent her, she had picked up a knife and cut her head off in an instant.

But when the Captain of the Guard would have taken her tongue it turned out to be quite black, so that would not have deceived the King either.

"Am I not unlucky?" cried the poor Princess; "I lose everything I love, and am none the better for it."

"If you had accepted my offer," said Tintin, "you would only have had me to regret, and I should have had all your gratitude."

Miranda kissed her little dog, crying so bitterly, that at last she could bear it no longer, and turned away into the forest. When she looked back the Captain of the Guard was gone, and she was alone, except for Patypata, Grabugeon, and Tintin, who lay upon the ground. She could not leave the place until she had buried them in a pretty little mossy grave at the foot of a tree, and she wrote their names upon the bark of the tree, and how they had all died to save her life. And then she began to think where she could go for safety — for this forest was so close to her father's castle that she might be seen and recognized by the first passer-by, and, besides that, it was full of lions and wolves, who would have snapped up a princess just as soon as a stray chicken. So she began to walk as fast as she could, but the forest was so large and the sun was so hot that she nearly died of heat and terror and fatigue; look which way she would there seemed to be no end to the forest, and she was so frightened that she fancied every minute that she heard the King running after her to kill her. You may imagine how miserable she was, and how she cried as she went on, not knowing which path to follow, and with the thorny bushes scratching her dreadfully and tearing her pretty frock to pieces.

At last she heard the bleating of a sheep, and said to herself:

“No doubt there are shepherds here with their flocks; they will show me the way to some village where I can live disguised as a peasant girl. Alas! it is not always kings and princes who are the happiest people in the world. Who could have believed that I should ever be obliged to run away and hide because the King, for no reason at all, wishes to kill me?”

So saying she advanced toward the place where she heard the bleating, but what was her surprise when, in a lovely little glade quite surrounded by trees, she saw a large sheep; its wool was as white as snow, and its horns shone like gold; it had a garland of flowers round its neck, and strings of great pearls about its legs, and a collar of diamonds; it lay upon a bank of orange-flowers, under a canopy of cloth of gold which protected it from the heat of the sun. Nearly a hundred other sheep were scattered about, not eating the grass, but some drinking coffee, lemonade, or sherbet, others eating ices, strawberries and cream, or sweetmeats, while others, again, were playing games. Many of them wore golden collars with jewels, flowers, and ribbons.

Miranda stopped short in amazement at this unexpected sight, and was looking in all directions for the shepherd of this surprising flock, when the beautiful sheep came bounding toward her.

“Approach, lovely Princess,” he cried; “have no fear of such gentle and peaceable animals as we are.”

“What a marvel!” cried the Princess, starting back a little. “Here is a sheep that can talk.”

“Your monkey and your dog could talk, madam,” said he; “are you more astonished at us than at them?”

“A fairy gave them the power to speak,” replied Miranda. “So I was used to them.”

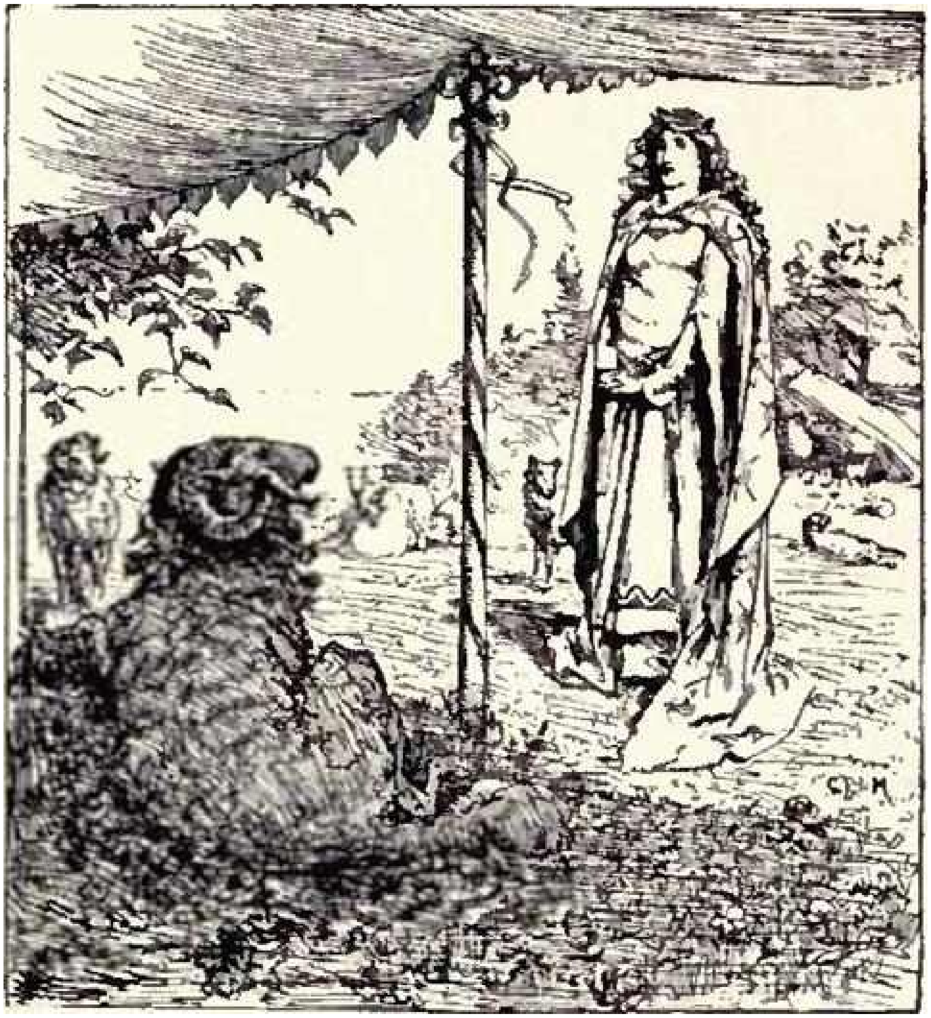

“Perhaps the same thing has happened to us,” he said, smiling sheepishly. “But, Princess, what can have led you here?”

“A thousand misfortunes, Sir Sheep,” she answered.

“I am the unhappiest princess in the world, and I am seeking a shelter against my father’s anger.”

“Come with me, madam,” said the Sheep; “I offer you a hiding-place which you only will know of, and where you will be mistress of everything you see.”

“I really cannot follow you,” said Miranda, “for I am too tired to walk another step.”

The Sheep with the golden horns ordered that his chariot should be fetched, and a moment after appeared six goats, harnessed to a pumpkin, which was so big that two people could quite well sit in it, and was all lined with cushions of velvet and down. The Princess stepped into it, much amused at such a new kind of carriage, the King of the Sheep took his place beside her, and the goats ran away with them at full speed, and only stopped when they reached a cavern, the entrance to which was blocked by a great stone. This the King touched with his foot, and immediately it fell down, and he invited the Princess to enter without fear. Now, if she had not been so alarmed by everything that had happened, nothing could have induced her to go into this frightful cave, but she was so afraid of what might be behind her that she would have thrown herself even down a well at this moment. So, without hesitation, she followed the Sheep, who went before her, down, down, down, until she thought they must come out at the other side of the world — indeed, she was not sure that he wasn't leading her into Fairyland. At last she saw before her a great plain, quite covered with all sorts of flowers, the scent of which seemed to her nicer than anything she had ever smelled before; a broad river of orange-flower water flowed round it and fountains of wine of every kind ran in all directions and made the prettiest little cascades and brooks. The plain was covered with the strangest trees, there were whole avenues where partridges, ready roasted, hung from every branch, or, if you preferred pheasants, quails, turkeys, or rabbits, you had only to turn to the right hand or to the left and you were sure to find them. In places the air was darkened by showers of lobster-patties, white puddings, sausages, tarts, and all sorts of sweetmeats, or with pieces of gold and silver, diamonds and pearls. This unusual kind of rain, and the pleasantness of the whole place, would, no doubt, have attracted numbers of people to it, if the King of the Sheep had been of a more sociable disposition, but from all accounts it is evident that he was as grave as a judge.

As it was quite the nicest time of the year when Miranda arrived in this delightful land the only palace she saw was a long row of orange trees, jasmines, honeysuckles, and musk-roses, and their interlacing branches made the prettiest rooms possible, which were hung with gold and silver gauze, and had great mirrors and candlesticks, and most beautiful pictures. The Wonderful Sheep begged that the Princess would consider herself queen over all that she saw, and assured her that, though for some years he had been very sad and in great trouble, she had it in her power to make him forget all his grief.

"You are so kind and generous, noble Sheep," said the Princess, "that I cannot thank you enough, but I must confess that all I see here seems to me so extraordinary that I don't know what to think of it."

As she spoke a band of lovely fairies came up and offered her amber baskets full of fruit, but when she held out her hands to them they glided away, and she could feel nothing when she tried to touch them.

"Oh!" she cried, "what can they be? Whom am I with?" and she began to cry.

At this instant the King of the Sheep came back to her, and was so distracted to find her in tears that he could have torn his wool.

"What is the matter, lovely Princess?" he cried. "Has anyone failed to treat you with due respect?”

“Oh! no,” said Miranda; “only I am not used to living with sprites and with sheep that talk, and everything here frightens me. It was very kind of you to bring me to this place, but I shall be even more grateful to you if you will take me up into the world again.”

“Do not be afraid,” said the Wonderful Sheep; “I entreat you to have patience, and listen to the story of my misfortunes. I was once a king, and my kingdom was the most splendid in the world. My subjects loved me, my neighbors envied and feared me. I was respected by everyone, and it was said that no king ever deserved it more.

“I was very fond of hunting, and one day, while chasing a stag, I left my attendants far behind; suddenly I saw the animal leap into a pool of water, and I rashly urged my horse to follow it, but before we had gone many steps I felt an extraordinary heat, instead of the coolness of the water; the pond dried up, a great gulf opened before me, out of which flames of fire shot up, and I fell helplessly to the bottom of a precipice.

“I gave myself up for lost, but presently a voice said: ‘Ungrateful Prince, even this fire is hardly enough to warm your cold heart!’

“‘Who complains of my coldness in this dismal place?’ I cried.

“‘An unhappy being who loves you hopelessly,’ replied the voice, and at the same moment the flames began to flicker and cease to burn, and I saw a fairy, whom I had known as long as I could remember, and whose ugliness had always horrified me. She was leaning upon the arm of a most beautiful young girl, who wore chains of gold on her wrists and was evidently her slave.

“‘Why, Ragotte,’ I said, for that was the fairy’s name, ‘what is the meaning of all this? Is it by your orders that I am here?’

“‘And whose fault is it,’ she answered, ‘that you have never understood me until now? Must a powerful fairy like myself condescend to explain her doings to you who are no better than an ant by comparison, though you think yourself a great king?’

“‘Call me what you like,’ I said impatiently; ‘but what is it that you want — my crown, or my cities, or my treasures?’

“‘Treasures!’ said the fairy, disdainfully. ‘If I chose I could make any one of my scullions richer and more powerful than you. I do not want your treasures, but,’ she added softly, ‘if you will give me your heart — if you will marry me — I will add twenty kingdoms to the one you have already; you shall have a hundred castles full of gold and five hundred full of silver, and, in short, anything you like to ask me for.’

“‘Madam Ragotte,’ said I, ‘when one is at the bottom of a pit where one has fully expected to be roasted alive, it is impossible to think of asking such a charming person as you are to marry one! I beg that you will set me at liberty, and then I shall hope to answer you fittingly.’

“‘Ah!’ said she, ‘if you really loved me you would not care where you were — a cave, a wood, a fox-hole, a desert, would please you equally well. Do not think that you can deceive me; you fancy you are going to escape, but I assure you that you are going to stay here and the first thing I shall give you to do will be to keep my sheep — they are very good company and speak quite as well as you do.

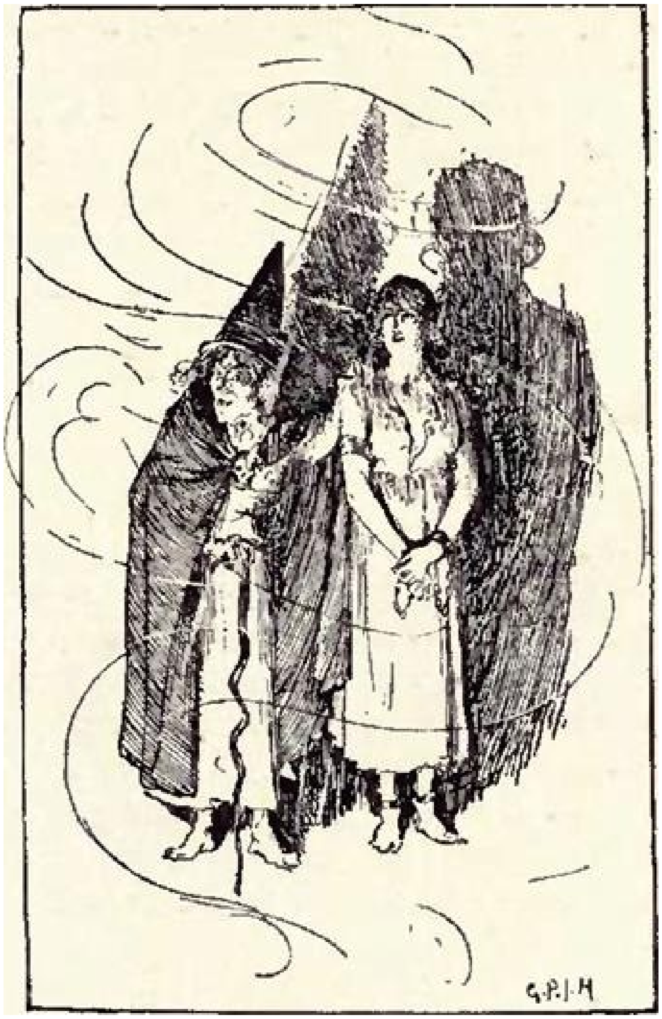

“As she spoke she advanced, and led me to this plain where we now stand, and showed me her flock, but I paid little attention to it or to her.

“To tell the truth, I was so lost in admiration of her beautiful slave that I forgot everything else, and the cruel Ragotte, perceiving this, turned upon her so furious and terrible a look that she fell lifeless to the ground.

"At this dreadful sight I drew my sword and rushed at Ragotte, and should certainly have cut off her head had she not by her magic arts chained me to the spot on which I stood; all my efforts to move were useless, and at last, when I threw myself down on the ground in despair, she said to me, with a scornful smile:

"'I intend to make you feel my power. It seems that you are a lion at present, I mean you to be a sheep.'

"So saying, she touched me with her wand, and I became what you see. I did not lose the power of speech, or of feeling the misery of my present state.

"'For five years,' she said, 'you shall be a sheep, and lord of this pleasant land, while I, no longer able to see your face, which I loved so much, shall be better able to hate you as you deserve to be hated.'

"She disappeared as she finished speaking, and if I had not been too unhappy to care about anything I should have been glad that she was gone.

"The talking sheep received me as their king, and told me that they, too, were unfortunate princes who had, in different ways, offended the revengeful fairy, and had been added to her flock for a certain number of years; some more, some less. From time to time, indeed, one regains his own proper form and goes back again to his place in the upper world; but the other beings whom you saw are the rivals or the enemies of Ragotte, whom she has imprisoned for a hundred years or so; though even they will go back at last. The young slave of whom I told you about is one of these; I have seen her often, and it has been a great pleasure to me. She never speaks to me, and if I were nearer to her I know I should find her only a shadow, which would be very annoying. However, I noticed that one of my companions in misfortune was also very attentive to this little sprite, and I found out that he had been her lover, whom the cruel Ragotte had taken away from her long before; since then I have cared for, and thought of, nothing but how I might regain my freedom. I have often been in the forest; that is where I have seen you, lovely Princess, sometimes driving your chariot, which you did with all the grace and skill in the world; sometimes riding to the chase on so spirited a horse that it seemed as if no one but yourself could have managed it, and sometimes running races on the plain with the Princesses of your Court — running so lightly that it was you always who won the prize. Oh! Princess, I have loved you so long, and yet how dare I tell you of my love! what hope can there be for an unhappy sheep like myself?"

Miranda was so surprised and confused by all that she had heard that she hardly knew what answer to give to the King of the Sheep, but she managed to make some kind of little speech, which certainly did not forbid him to hope, and said that she should not be afraid of the shadows now she knew that they would some day come to life again. “Alas!” she continued, “if my poor Patypata, my dear Grabugeon, and pretty little Tintin, who all died for my sake, were equally well off, I should have nothing left to wish for here!”

Prisoner though he was, the King of the Sheep had still some powers and privileges.

“Go,” said he to his Master of the Horse, “go and seek the shadows of the little black girl, the monkey, and the dog: they will amuse our Princess.”

And an instant afterward Miranda saw them coming toward her, and their presence gave her the greatest pleasure, though they did not come near enough for her to touch them.

The King of the Sheep was so kind and amusing, and loved Miranda so dearly, that at last she began to love him too. Such a handsome sheep, who was so polite and considerate, could hardly fail to please, especially if one knew that he was really a king, and that his strange imprisonment would soon come to an end. So the Princess’s days passed very gaily while she waited for the happy time to come. The King of the Sheep, with the help of all the flock, got up balls, concerts, and hunting parties, and even the shadows joined in all the fun, and came, making believe to be their own real selves.

One evening, when the couriers arrived (for the King sent most carefully for news — and they always brought the very best kinds), it was announced that the sister of the Princess Miranda was going to be married to a great Prince, and that nothing could be more splendid than all the preparations for the wedding.

“Ah!” cried the young Princess, “how unlucky I am to miss the sight of so many pretty things! Here am I imprisoned under the earth, with no company but sheep and shadows, while my sister is to be adorned like a queen and surrounded by all who love and admire her, and everyone but myself can go to wish her joy!”

“Why do you complain, Princess?” said the King of the Sheep. “Did I say that you were not to go to the wedding? Set out as soon as you please; only promise me that you will come back, for I love you too much to be able to live without you.”

Miranda was very grateful to him, and promised faithfully that nothing in the world should keep her from coming back. The King caused an escort suitable to her rank to be got ready for her, and she dressed herself splendidly, not forgetting anything that could make her more beautiful. Her chariot was of mother-of-pearl, drawn by six dun-colored griffins just brought from the other side of the world, and she was attended by a number of guards in splendid uniforms, who were all at least eight feet high and had come from far and near to ride in the Princess’s train.

Miranda reached her father’s palace just as the wedding ceremony began, and everyone, as soon as she came in, was struck with surprise at her beauty and the splendor of her jewels. She heard exclamations of admiration on all sides; and the King her father looked at her so attentively that she was afraid he must recognize her; but he was so sure that she was dead that the idea never occurred to him.

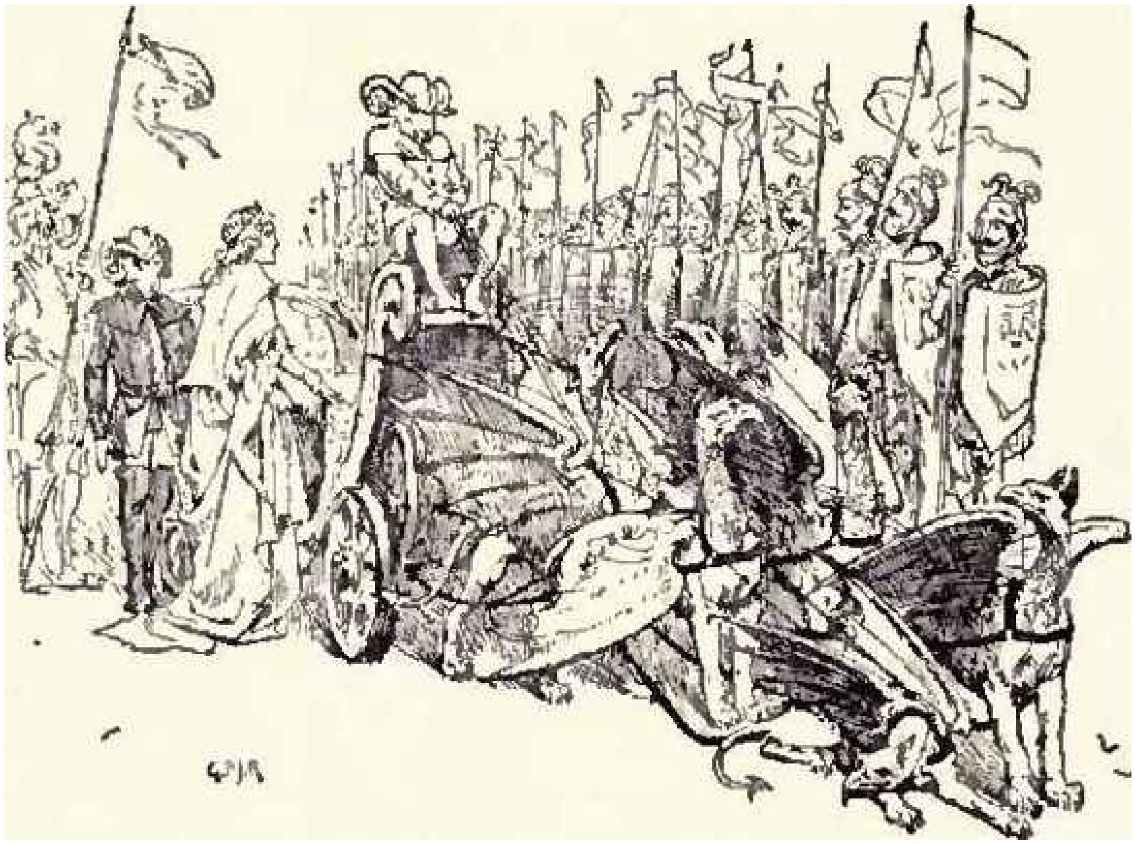

However, the fear of not getting away made her leave before the marriage was over. She went out hastily, leaving behind her a little coral casket set with emeralds. On it was written in diamond letters: “Jewels for the Bride,” and when they opened it, which they did as soon as it was found, there seemed to be no end to the pretty things it contained. The King, who had hoped to join the unknown Princess and find out who she was, was dreadfully disappointed when she disappeared so suddenly, and gave orders that if she ever came again the doors were to be shut that she might not get away so easily. Short as Miranda’s absence had been, it had seemed like a hundred years to the King of the Sheep. He was waiting for her by a fountain in the thickest part of the forest, and the ground was strewn with splendid presents which he had prepared for her to show his joy and gratitude at her coming back.

As soon as she was in sight he rushed to meet her, leaping and bounding like a real sheep. He caressed her tenderly, throwing himself at her feet and kissing her hands, and told her how uneasy he had been in her absence, and how impatient for her return, with an eloquence which charmed her.

After some time came the news that the King's second daughter was going to be married. When Miranda heard it she begged the King of the Sheep to allow her to go and see the wedding as before. This request made him feel very sad, as if some misfortune must surely come of it, but his love for the Princess being stronger than anything else he did not like to refuse her.

"You wish to leave me, Princess," said he; "it is my unhappy fate — you are not to blame. I consent to your going, but, believe me, I can give you no stronger proof of my love than by so doing."

The Princess assured him that she would only stay a very short time, as she had done before, and begged him not to be uneasy, as she would be quite as much grieved if anything detained her as he could possibly be.

So, with the same escort, she set out, and reached the palace as the marriage ceremony began. Everybody was delighted to see her; she was so pretty that they thought she must be some fairy princess, and the Princes who were there could not take their eyes off her.

The King was more glad than anyone else that she had come again, and gave orders that the doors should all be shut and bolted that very minute. When the wedding was all but over the Princess got up quickly, hoping to slip away unnoticed among the crowd, but, to her great dismay, she found every door fastened.

She felt more at ease when the King came up to her, and with the greatest respect begged her not to run away so soon, but at least to honor him by staying for the splendid feast which was prepared for the Princes and Princesses. He led her into a magnificent hall, where all the Court was assembled, and himself taking up the golden bowl full of water, he offered it to her that she might dip her pretty fingers into it.

At this the Princess could no longer contain herself; throwing herself at the King's feet, she cried out:

"My dream has come true after all — you have offered me water to wash my hands on my sister's wedding day, and it has not vexed you to do it."

The King recognized her at once — indeed, he had already thought several times how much like his poor little Miranda she was.

"Oh! my dear daughter," he cried, kissing her, "can you ever forget my cruelty? I ordered you to be put to death because I thought your dream portended the loss of my crown. And so it did," he added, "for now your sisters are both married and have kingdoms of their own — and mine shall be for you.” So saying he put his crown on the Princess’s head and cried:

“Long live Queen Miranda!”

All the Court cried: “Long live Queen Miranda!” after him, and the young Queen’s two sisters came running up, and threw their arms round her neck, and kissed her a thousand times, and then there was such a laughing and crying, talking and kissing, all at once, and Miranda thanked her father, and began to ask after everyone — particularly the Captain of the Guard, to whom she owed so much; but, to her great sorrow, she heard that he was dead. Presently they sat down to the banquet, and the King asked Miranda to tell them all that had happened to her since the terrible morning when he had sent the Captain of the Guard to fetch her. This she did with so much spirit that all the guests listened with breathless interest. But while she was thus enjoying herself with the King and her sisters, the King of the Sheep was waiting impatiently for the time of her return, and when it came and went, and no Princess appeared, his anxiety became so great that he could bear it no longer.

“She is not coming back any more,” he cried. “My miserable sheep’s face displeases her, and without Miranda what is left to me, wretched creature that I am! Oh! cruel Ragotte; my punishment is complete.”

For a long time he bewailed his sad fate like this, and then, seeing that it was growing dark, and that still there was no sign of the Princess, he set out as fast as he could in the direction of the town. When he reached the palace he asked for Miranda, but by this time everyone had heard the story of her adventures, and did not want her to go back again to the King of the Sheep, so they refused sternly to let him see her. In vain he begged and prayed them to let him in; though his entreaties might have melted hearts of stone they did not move the guards of the palace, and at last, quite broken-hearted, he fell dead at their feet.

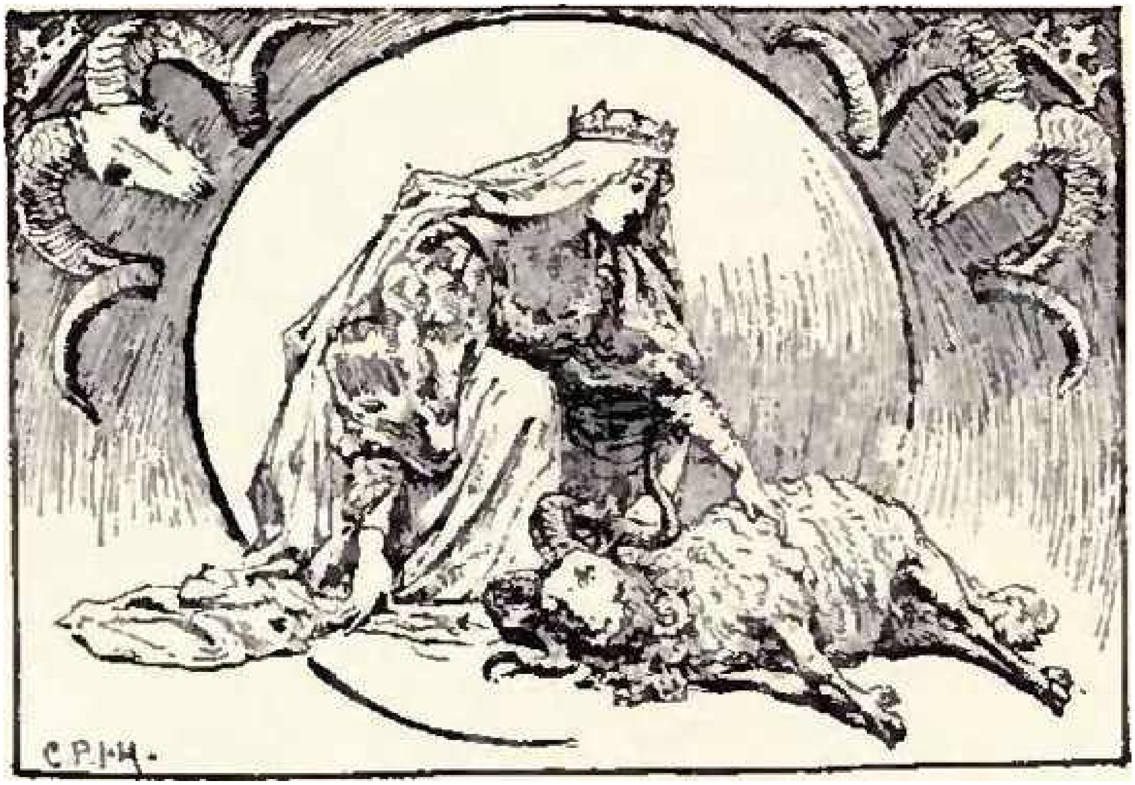

In the meantime the King, who had not the least idea of the sad thing that was happening outside the gate of his palace, proposed to Miranda that she should be driven in her chariot all round the town, which was to be illuminated with thousands and thousands of torches, placed in windows and balconies, and in all the grand squares. But what a sight met her eyes at the very entrance of the palace! There lay her dear, kind sheep, silent and motionless, upon the pavement!

She threw herself out of the chariot and ran to him, crying bitterly, for she realized that her broken promise had cost him his life, and for a long, long time she was so unhappy that they thought she would have died too.

So you see that even a princess is not always happy — especially if she forgets to keep her word; and the greatest misfortunes often happen to people just as they think they have obtained their heart’s desires!(1)

(1) Madame d’Aulnoy.

LITTLE THUMB

There was, once upon a time, a man and his wife fagot-makers by trade, who had several children, all boys. The eldest was but ten years old, and the youngest only seven.

They were very poor, and their seven children incommoded them greatly, because not one of them was able to earn his bread. That which gave them yet more uneasiness was that the youngest was of a very puny constitution, and scarce ever spoke a word, which made them take that for stupidity which was a sign of good sense. He was very little, and when born no bigger than one’s thumb, which made him be called Little Thumb.

The poor child bore the blame of whatsoever was done amiss in the house, and, guilty or not, was always in the wrong; he was, notwithstanding, more cunning and had a far greater share of wisdom than all his brothers put together; and, if he spake little, he heard and thought the more.

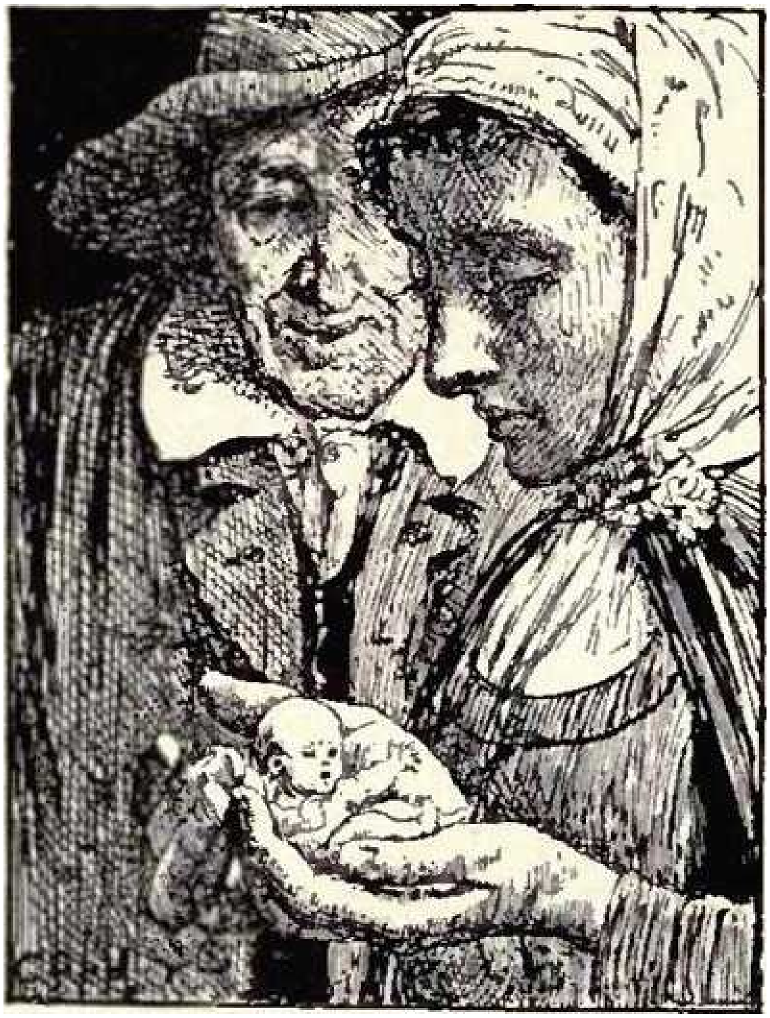

There happened now to come a very bad year, and the famine was so great that these poor people resolved to rid themselves of their children. One evening, when they were all in bed and the fagot-maker was sitting with his wife at the fire, he said to her, with his heart ready to burst with grief:

"Thou seest plainly that we are not able to keep our children, and I cannot see them starve to death before my face; I am resolved to lose them in the wood to-morrow, which may very easily be done; for, while they are busy in tying up fagots, we may run away, and leave them, without their taking any notice."

"Ah!" cried his wife; "and canst thou thyself have the heart to take thy children out along with thee on purpose to lose them?"

In vain did her husband represent to her their extreme poverty: she would not consent to it; she was indeed poor, but she was their mother. However, having considered what a grief it would be to her to see them perish with hunger, she at last consented, and went to bed all in tears.

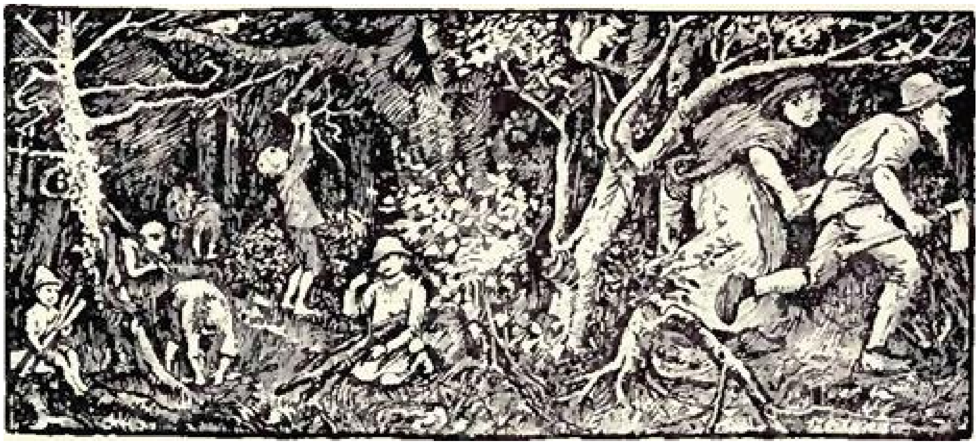

Little Thumb heard every word that had been spoken; for observing, as he lay in his bed, that they were talking very busily, he got up softly, and hid himself under his father’s stool, that he might hear what they said without being seen. He went to bed again, but did not sleep a wink all the rest of the night, thinking on what he had to do. He got up early in the morning, and went to the river-side, where he filled his pockets full of small white pebbles, and then returned home.

They all went abroad, but Little Thumb never told his brothers one syllable of what he knew. They went into a very thick forest, where they could not see one another at ten paces distance. The fagot-maker began to cut wood, and the children to gather up the sticks to make fagots. Their father and mother, seeing them busy at their work, got away from them insensibly, and ran away from them all at once, along a by-way through the winding bushes.

When the children saw they were left alone, they began to cry as loud as they could. Little Thumb let them cry on, knowing very well how to get home again, for, as he came, he took care to drop all along the way the little white pebbles he had in his pockets. Then he said to them:

“Be not afraid, brothers; father and mother have left us here, but I will lead you home again, only follow me.”

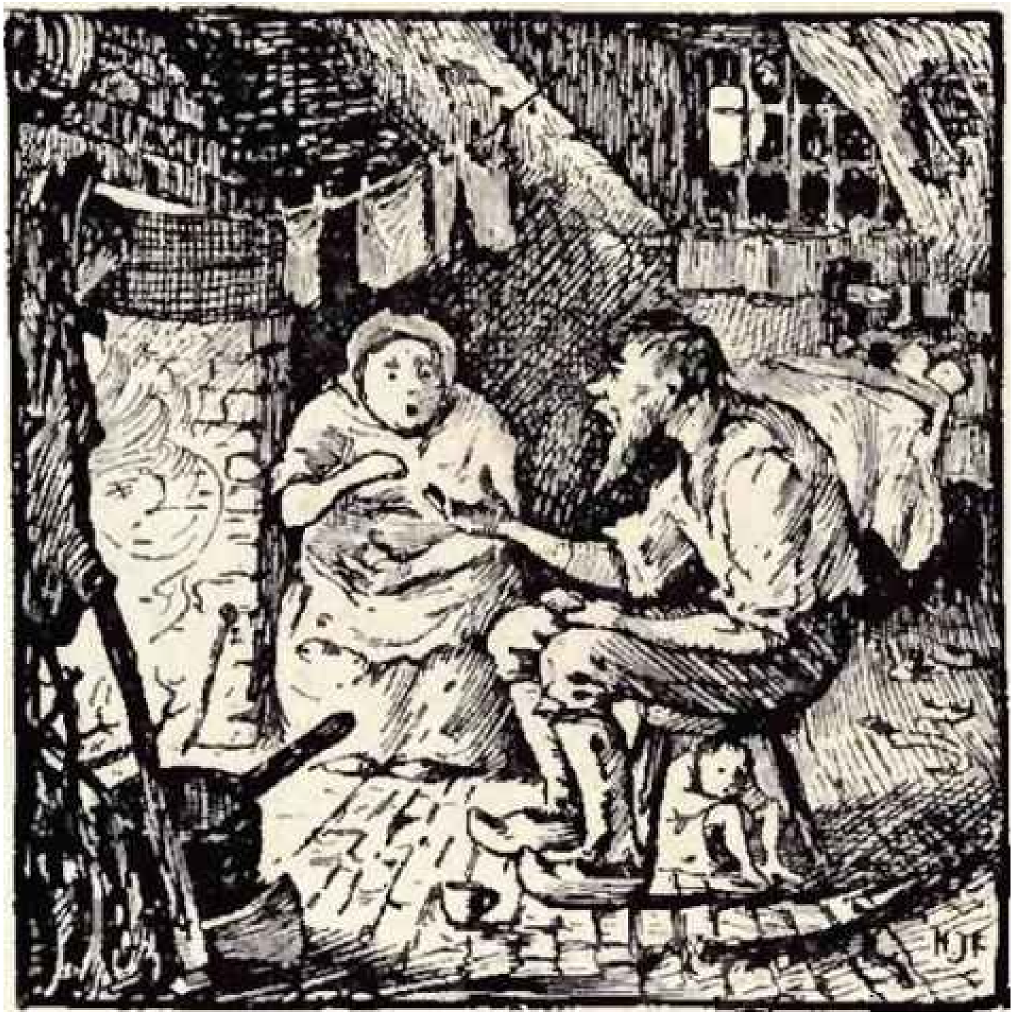

They did so, and he brought them home by the very same way they came into the forest. They dared not go in, but sat themselves down at the door, listening to what their father and mother were saying.

The very moment the fagot-maker and his wife reached home the lord of the manor sent them ten crowns, which he had owed them a long while, and which they never expected. This gave them new life, for the poor people were almost famished. The fagot-maker sent his wife immediately to the butcher’s. As it was a long while since they had eaten a bit, she bought thrice as much meat as would sup two people. When they had eaten, the woman said:

“Alas! where are now our poor children? they would make a good feast of what we have left here; but it was you, William, who had a mind to lose them: I told you we should repent of it. What are they now doing in the forest? Alas! dear God, the wolves have perhaps already eaten them up; thou art very inhuman thus to have lost thy children.”

The fagot-maker grew at last quite out of patience, for she repeated it above twenty times, that they should repent of it, and that she was in the right of it for so saying. He threatened to beat her if she did not hold her tongue. It was not that the fagot-maker was not, perhaps, more vexed than his wife, but that she teased him, and that he was of the humor of a great many others, who love wives to speak well, but think those very importunate who are continually doing so. She was half-drowned in tears, crying out:

"Alas! where are now my children, my poor children?"

She spoke this so very loud that the children, who were at the gate, began to cry out all together:

"Here we are! Here we are!"

She ran immediately to open the door, and said, hugging them:

"I am glad to see you, my dear children; you are very hungry and weary; and my poor Peter, thou art horribly bemired; come in and let me clean thee."

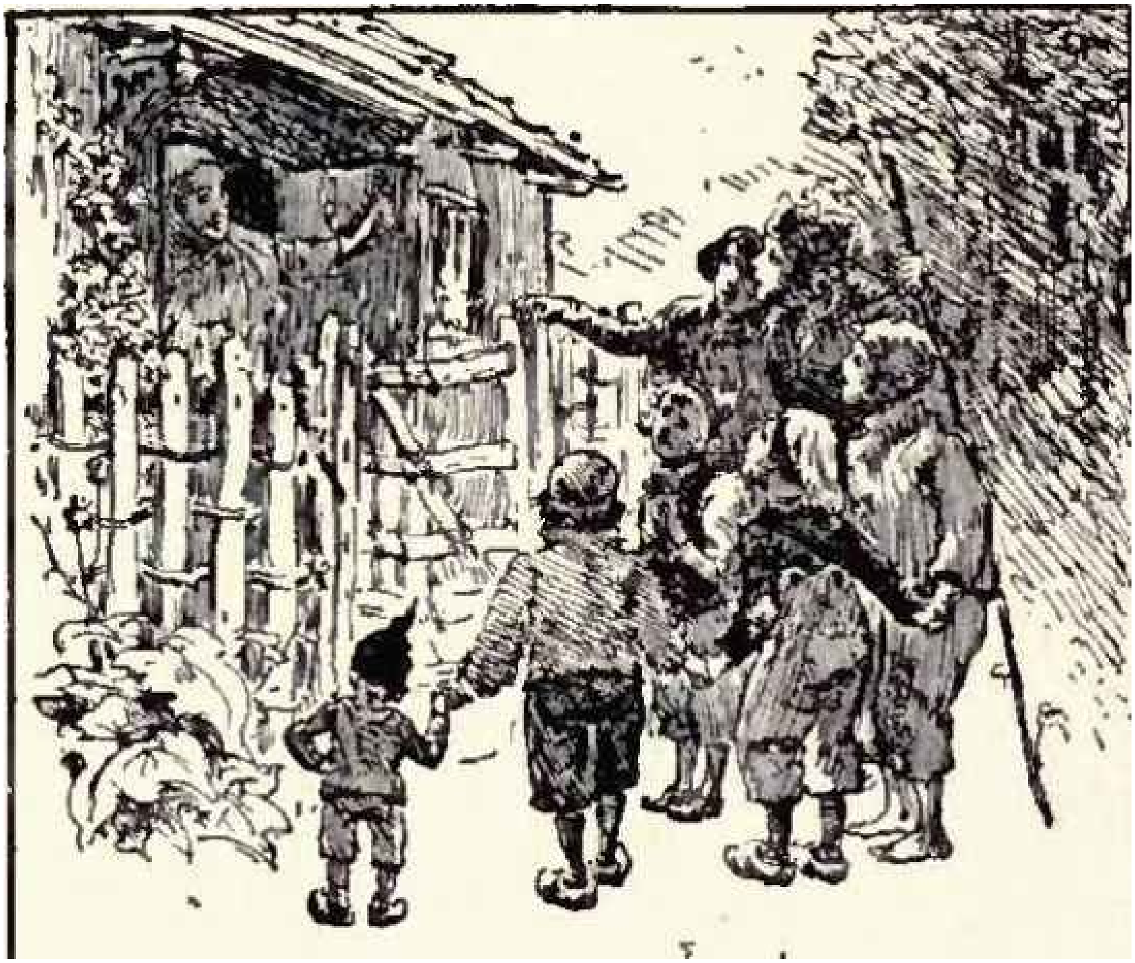

Now, you must know that Peter was her eldest son, whom she loved above all the rest, because he was somewhat carroty, as she herself was. They sat down to supper, and ate with such a good appetite as pleased both father and mother, whom they acquainted how frightened they were in the forest, speaking almost always all together. The good folks were extremely glad to see their children once more at home, and this joy continued while the ten crowns lasted; but, when the money was all gone, they fell again into their former uneasiness, and resolved to lose them again; and, that they might be the surer of doing it, to carry them to a much greater distance than before.

They could not talk of this so secretly but they were overheard by Little Thumb, who made account to get out of this difficulty as well as the former; but, though he got up very early in the morning to go and pick up some little pebbles, he was disappointed, for he found the house-door double-locked, and was at a stand what to do. When their father had given each of them a piece of bread for their breakfast, Little Thumb fancied he might make use of this instead of the pebbles by throwing it in little bits all along the way they should pass; and so he put the bread in his pocket.

Their father and mother brought them into the thickest and most obscure part of the forest, when, stealing away into a by-path, they there left them. Little Thumb was not very uneasy at it, for he thought he could easily find the way again by means of his bread, which he had scattered all along as he came; but he was very much surprised when he could not find so much as one crumb; the birds had come and had eaten it up, every bit. They were now in great affliction, for the farther they went the more they were out of their way, and were more and more bewildered in the forest.

Night now came on, and there arose a terribly high wind, which made them dreadfully afraid. They fancied they heard on every side of them the howling of wolves coming to eat them up. They scarce dared to speak or turn their heads. After this, it rained very hard, which wetted them to the skin; their feet slipped at every step they took, and they fell into the mire, whence they got up in a very dirty pickle; their hands were quite benumbed.

Little Thumb climbed up to the top of a tree, to see if he could discover anything; and having turned his head about on every side, he saw at last a glimmering light, like that of a candle, but a long way from the forest. He came down, and, when upon the ground, he could see it no more, which grieved him sadly. However, having walked for some time with his brothers toward that side on which he had seen the light, he perceived it again as he came out of the wood.

They came at last to the house where this candle was, not without an abundance of fear: for very often they lost sight of it, which happened every time they came into a bottom. They knocked at the door, and a good woman came and opened it; she asked them what they would have.

Little Thumb told her they were poor children who had been lost in the forest, and desired to lodge there for God’s sake.

The woman, seeing them so very pretty, began to weep, and said to them:

“Alas! poor babies; whither are ye come? Do ye know that this house belongs to a cruel ogre who eats up little children?”

“Ah! dear madam,” answered Little Thumb (who trembled every joint of him, as well as his brothers), “what shall we do? To be sure the wolves of the forest will devour us to-night if you refuse us to lie here; and so we would rather the gentleman should eat us; and perhaps he may take pity upon us, especially if you please to beg it of him.”

The Ogre’s wife, who believed she could conceal them from her husband till morning, let them come in, and brought them to warm themselves at a very good fire; for there was a whole sheep upon the spit, roasting for the Ogre’s supper.

As they began to be a little warm they heard three or four great raps at the door; this was the Ogre, who had come home. Upon this she hid them under the bed and went to open the door. The Ogre presently asked if supper was ready and the wine drawn, and then sat himself down to table. The sheep was as yet all raw and bloody; but he liked it the better for that. He sniffed about to the right and left, saying:

“I smell fresh meat.”

“What you smell so,” said his wife, “must be the calf which I have just now killed and flayed.”

“I smell fresh meat, I tell thee once more,” replied the Ogre, looking crossly at his wife; “and there is something here which I do not understand.”

As he spoke these words he got up from the table and went directly to the bed.

“Ah, ah!” said he; “I see then how thou wouldst cheat me, thou cursed woman; I know not why I do not eat thee up too, but it is well for thee that thou art a tough old carrion. Here is good game, which comes very quickly to entertain three ogres of my acquaintance who are to pay me a visit in a day or two.”

With that he dragged them out from under the bed one by one. The poor children fell upon their knees, and begged his pardon; but they had to do with one of the most cruel ogres in the world, who, far from having any pity on them, had already devoured them with his eyes, and told his wife they would be delicate eating when tossed up with good savory sauce. He then took a great knife, and, coming up to these poor children, whetted it upon a great whet-stone which he held in his left hand. He had already taken hold of one of them when his wife said to him:

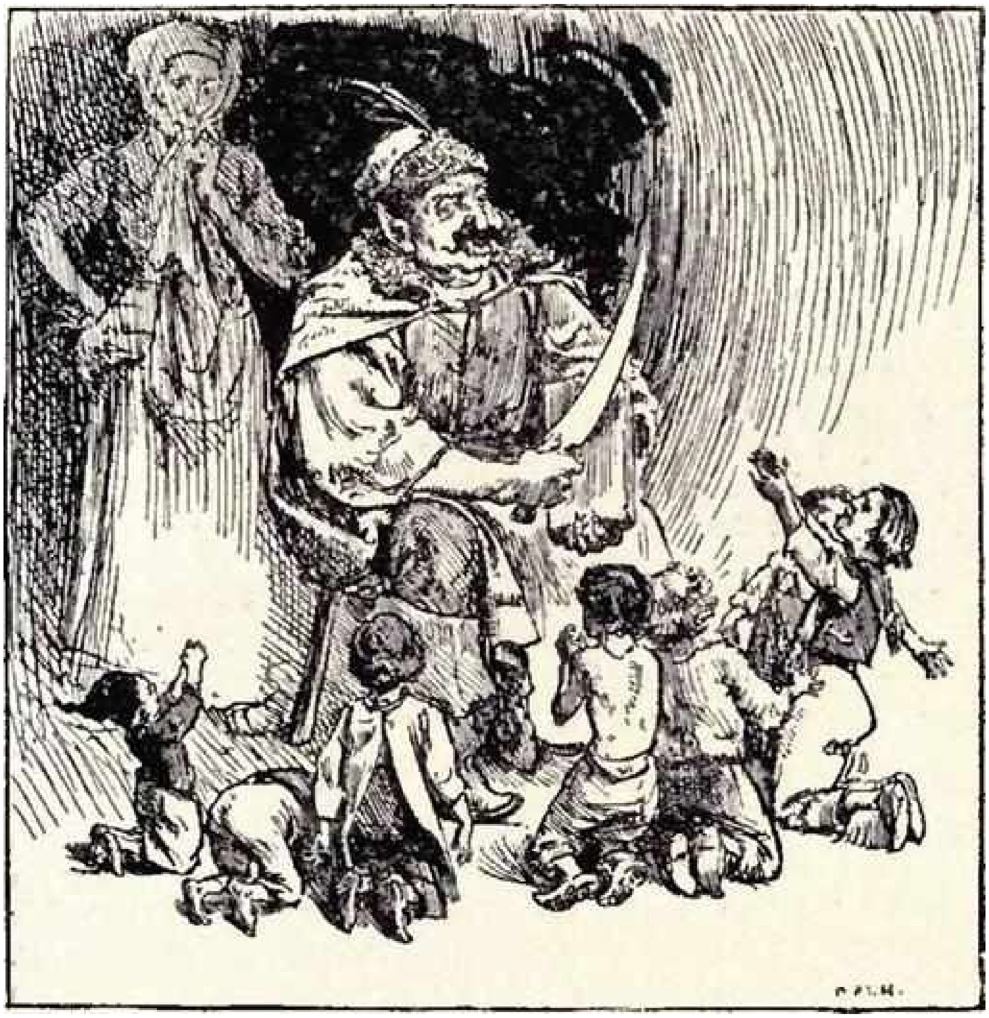

“Why need you do it now? Is it not time enough to-morrow?”

“Hold your prating,” said the Ogre; “they will eat the tenderer.

“But you have so much meat already,” replied his wife, “you have no occasion; here are a calf, two sheep, and half a hog.”

“That is true,” said the Ogre; “give them their belly full that they may not fall away, and put them to bed.”

The good woman was overjoyed at this, and gave them a good supper; but they were so much afraid they could not eat a bit. As for the Ogre, he sat down again to drink, being highly pleased that he had got wherewithal to treat his friends. He drank a dozen glasses more than ordinary, which got up into his head and obliged him to go to bed.

The Ogre had seven daughters, all little children, and these young ogresses had all of them very fine complexions, because they used to eat fresh meat like their father; but they had little gray eyes, quite round, hooked noses, and very long sharp teeth, standing at a good distance from each other. They were not as yet over and above mischievous, but they promised very fair for it, for they had already bitten little children, that they might suck their blood.

They had been put to bed early, with every one a crown of gold upon her head. There was in the same chamber a bed of the like bigness, and it was into this bed the Ogre's wife put the seven little boys, after which she went to bed to her husband.

Little Thumb, who had observed that the Ogre's daughters had crowns of gold upon their heads, and was afraid lest the Ogre should repent his not killing them, got up about midnight, and, taking his brothers' bonnets and his own, went very softly and put them upon the heads of the seven little ogresses, after having taken off their crowns of gold, which he put upon his own head and his brothers', that the Ogre might take them for his daughters, and his daughters for the little boys whom he wanted to kill.

All this succeeded according to his desire; for, the Ogre waking about midnight, and sorry that he deferred to do that till morning which he might have done over-night, threw himself hastily out of bed, and, taking his great knife,

"Let us see," said he, "how our little rogues do, and not make two jobs of the matter."

He then went up, groping all the way, into his daughters' chamber, and, coming to the bed where the little boys lay, and who were every soul of them fast asleep, except Little Thumb, who was terribly afraid when he found the Ogre fumbling about his head, as he had done about his brothers', the Ogre, feeling the golden crowns, said:

"I should have made a fine piece of work of it, truly; I find I drank too much last night."

Then he went to the bed where the girls lay; and, having found the boys' little bonnets,

"Ah!" said he, "my merry lads, are you there? Let us work as we ought."

And saying these words, without more ado, he cut the throats of all his seven daughters.

Well pleased with what he had done, he went to bed again to his wife. So soon as Little Thumb heard the Ogre snore, he waked his brothers, and bade them all put on their clothes presently and follow him. They stole down softly into the garden, and got over the wall. They kept running about all night, and trembled all the while, without knowing which way they went.

The Ogre, when he awoke, said to his wife: "Go upstairs and dress those young rascals who came here last night."

The wife was very much surprised at this goodness of her husband, not dreaming after what manner she should dress them; but, thinking that he had ordered her to go and put on their clothes, she went up, and was strangely astonished when she perceived her seven daughters killed, and weltering in their blood.

She fainted away, for this is the first expedient almost all women find in such cases. The Ogre, fearing his wife would be too long in doing what he had ordered, went up himself to help her. He was no less amazed than his wife at this frightful spectacle.

“Ah! what have I done?” cried he. “The wretches shall pay for it, and that instantly.”

He threw a pitcher of water upon his wife’s face, and, having brought her to herself, said:

“Give me quickly my boots of seven leagues, that I may go and catch them.”

He went out, and, having run over a vast deal of ground, both on this side and that, he came at last into the very road where the poor children were, and not above a hundred paces from their father’s house. They espied the Ogre, who went at one step from mountain to mountain, and over rivers as easily as the narrowest kennels. Little Thumb, seeing a hollow rock near the place where they were, made his brothers hide themselves in it, and crowded into it himself, minding always what would become of the Ogre.

The Ogre, who found himself much tired with his long and fruitless journey (for these boots of seven leagues greatly fatigued the wearer), had a great mind to rest himself, and, by chance, went to sit down upon the rock where the little boys had hid themselves. As it was impossible he could be more weary than he was, he fell asleep, and, after reposing himself some time, began to snore so frightfully that the poor children were no less afraid of him than when he held up his great knife and was going to cut their throats.

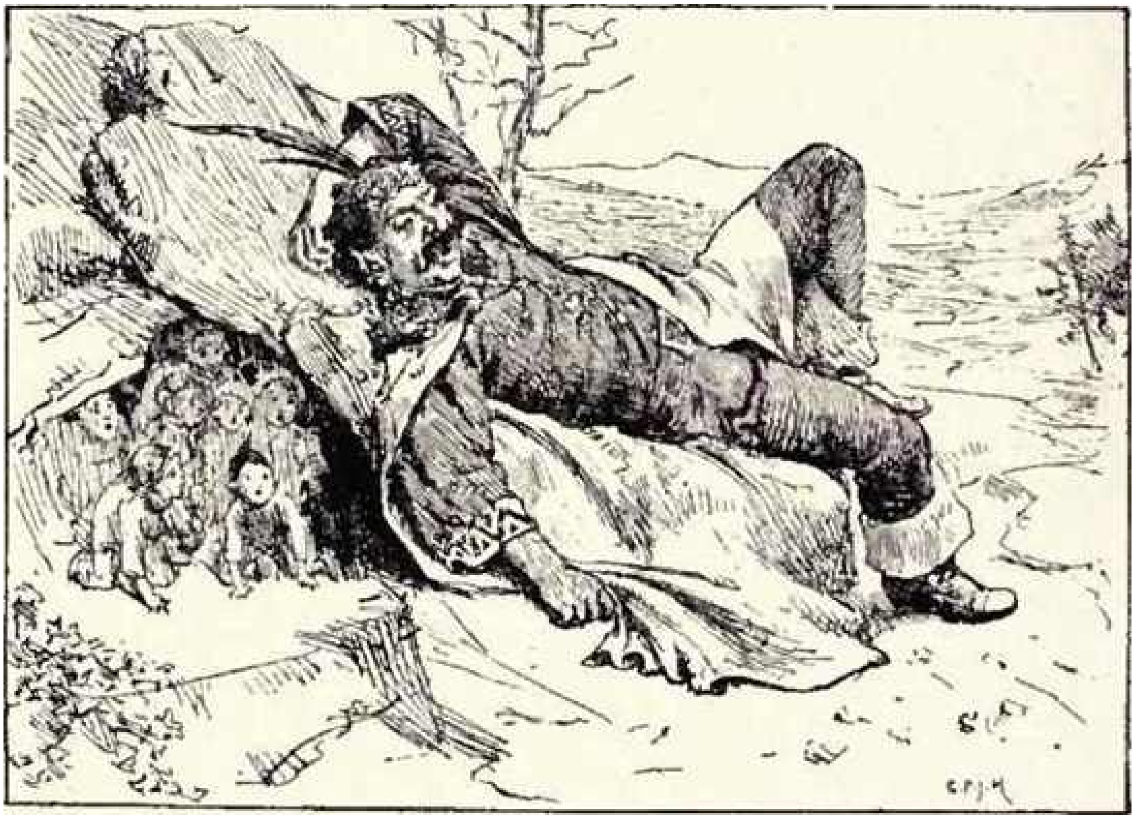

Little Thumb was not so much frightened as his brothers, and told them that they should run away immediately toward home while the Ogre was asleep so soundly, and that they should not be in any pain about him. They took his advice, and got home presently. Little Thumb came up to the Ogre, pulled off his boots gently and put them on his own legs. The boots were very long and large, but, as they were fairies, they had the gift of becoming big and little, according to the legs of those who wore them; so that they fitted his feet and legs as well as if they had been made on purpose for him. He went immediately to the Ogre's house, where he saw his wife crying bitterly for the loss of the Ogre's murdered daughters.

"Your husband," said Little Thumb, "is in very great danger, being taken by a gang of thieves, who have sworn to kill him if he does not give them all his gold and silver. The very moment they held their daggers at his throat he perceived me, and desired me to come and tell you the condition he is in, and that you should give me whatsoever he has of value, without retaining any one thing; for otherwise they will kill him without mercy; and, as his case is very pressing, he desired me to make use (you see I have them on) of his boots, that I might make the more haste and to show you that I do not impose upon you."

The good woman, being sadly frightened, gave him all she had: for this Ogre was a very good husband, though he used to eat up little children. Little Thumb, having thus got all the Ogre’s money, came home to his father’s house, where he was received with abundance of joy.

There are many people who do not agree in this circumstance, and pretend that Little Thumb never robbed the Ogre at all, and that he only thought he might very justly, and with a safe conscience, take off his boots of seven leagues, because he made no other use of them but to run after little children. These folks affirm that they are very well assured of this, and the more as having drunk and eaten often at the fagot-maker’s house. They aver that when Little Thumb had taken off the Ogre’s boots he went to Court, where he was informed that they were very much in pain about a certain army, which was two hundred leagues off, and the success of a battle. He went, say they, to the King, and told him that, if he desired it, he would bring him news from the army before night.

The King promised him a great sum of money upon that condition. Little Thumb was as good as his word, and returned that very same night with the news; and, this first expedition causing him to be known, he got whatever he pleased, for the King paid him very well for carrying his orders to the army. After having for some time carried on the business of a messenger, and gained thereby great wealth, he went home to his father, where it was impossible to express the joy they were all in at his return. He made the whole family very easy, bought places for his father and brothers, and, by that means, settled them very handsomely in the world, and, in the meantime, made his court to perfection.(1)

(1) Charles Perrault.

THE FORTY THIEVES

In a town in Persia there dwelt two brothers, one named Cassim, the other Ali Baba. Cassim was married to a rich wife and lived in plenty, while Ali Baba had to maintain his wife and children by cutting wood in a neighboring forest and selling it in the town. One day, when Ali Baba was in the forest, he saw a troop of men on horseback, coming toward him in a cloud of dust. He was afraid they were robbers, and climbed into a tree for safety. When they came up to him and dismounted, he counted forty of them. They unbridled their horses and tied them to trees. The finest man among them, whom Ali Baba took to be their captain, went a little way among some bushes, and said: “Open, Sesame!”(1) so plainly that Ali Baba heard him. A door opened in the rocks, and having made the troop go in, he followed them, and the door shut again of itself. They stayed some time inside, and Ali Baba, fearing they might come out and catch him, was forced to sit patiently in the tree. At last the door opened again, and the Forty Thieves came out. As the Captain went in last he came out first, and made them all pass by him; he then closed the door, saying: “Shut, Sesame!” Every man bridled his horse and mounted, the Captain put himself at their head, and they returned as they came.

(1) Sesame is a kind of grain.

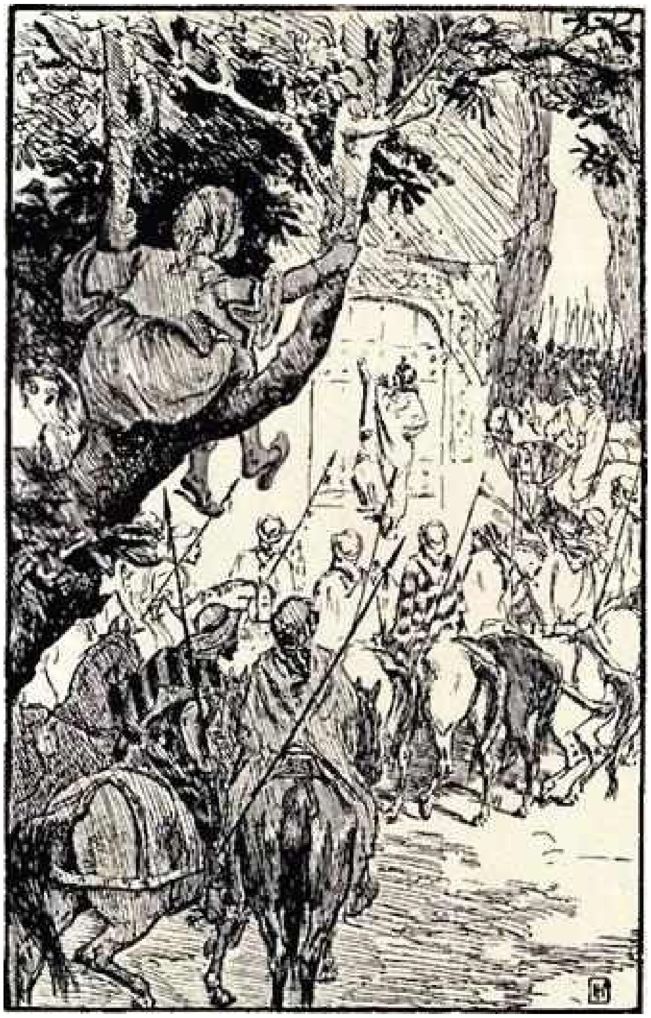

Then Ali Baba climbed down and went to the door concealed among the bushes, and said: “Open, Sesame!” and it flew open. Ali Baba, who expected a dull, dismal place, was greatly surprised to find it large and well lighted, hollowed by the hand of man in the form of a vault, which received the light from an opening in the ceiling. He saw rich bales of merchandise — silk, stuff-brocades, all piled together, and gold and silver in heaps, and money in leather purses. He went in and the door shut behind him. He did not look at the silver, but brought out as many bags of gold as he thought his asses, which were browsing outside, could carry, loaded them with the bags, and hid it all with fagots. Using the words: “Shut, Sesame!” he closed the door and went home.

Then he drove his asses into the yard, shut the gates, carried the money-bags to his wife, and emptied them out before her. He bade her keep the secret, and he would go and bury the gold. “Let me first measure it,” said his wife. “I will go borrow a measure of someone, while you dig the hole.” So she ran to the wife of Cassim and borrowed a measure. Knowing Ali Baba’s poverty, the sister was curious to find out what sort of grain his wife wished to measure, and artfully put some suet at the bottom of the measure. Ali Baba's wife went home and set the measure on the heap of gold, and filled it and emptied it often, to her great content. She then carried it back to her sister, without noticing that a piece of gold was sticking to it, which Cassim's wife perceived directly her back was turned. She grew very curious, and said to Cassim when he came home: "Cassim, your brother is richer than you. He does not count his money, he measures it." He begged her to explain this riddle, which she did by showing him the piece of money and telling him where she found it. Then Cassim grew so envious that he could not sleep, and went to his brother in the morning before sunrise. "Ali Baba," he said, showing him the gold piece, "you pretend to be poor and yet you measure gold." By this Ali Baba perceived that through his wife's folly Cassim and his wife knew their secret, so he confessed all and offered Cassim a share. "That I expect," said Cassim; "but I must know where to find the treasure, otherwise I will discover all, and you will lose all." Ali Baba, more out of kindness than fear, told him of the cave, and the very words to use. Cassim left Ali Baba, meaning to be beforehand with him and get the treasure for himself. He rose early next morning, and set out with ten mules loaded with great chests. He soon found the place, and the door in the rock. He said: "Open, Sesame!" and the door opened and shut behind him. He could have feasted his eyes all day on the treasures, but he now hastened to gather together as much of it as possible; but when he was ready to go he could not remember what to say for thinking of his great riches. Instead of "Sesame," he said: "Open, Barley!" and the door remained fast. He named several different sorts of grain, all but the right one, and the door still stuck fast. He was so frightened at the danger he was in that he had as much forgotten the word as if he had never heard it.

About noon the robbers returned to their cave, and saw Cassim's mules roving about with great chests on their backs. This gave them the alarm; they drew their sabres, and went to the door, which opened on their Captain's saying: "Open, Sesame!" Cassim, who had heard the trampling of their horses' feet, resolved to sell his life dearly, so when the door opened he leaped out and threw the Captain down. In vain, however, for the robbers with their sabres soon killed him. On entering the cave they saw all the bags laid ready, and could not imagine how anyone had got in without knowing their secret. They cut Cassim's body into four quarters, and nailed them up inside the cave, in order to frighten anyone who should venture in, and went away in search of more treasure.

As night drew on Cassim's wife grew very uneasy, and ran to her brother-in-law, and told him where her husband had gone. Ali Baba did his best to comfort her, and set out to the forest in search of Cassim. The first thing he saw on entering the cave was his dead brother. Full of horror, he put the body on one of his asses, and bags of gold on the other two, and, covering all with some fagots, returned home. He drove the two asses laden with gold into his own yard, and led the other to Cassim's house. The door was opened by the slave Morgiana, whom he knew to be both brave and cunning. Unloading the ass, he said to her: "This is the body of your master, who has been murdered, but whom we must bury as though he had died in his bed. I will speak with you again, but now tell your mistress I am come." The wife of Cassim, on learning the fate of her husband, broke out into cries and tears, but Ali Baba offered to take her to live with him and his wife if she would promise to keep his counsel and leave everything to Morgiana; whereupon she agreed, and dried her eyes.

Morgiana, meanwhile, sought an apothecary and asked him for some lozenges. "My poor master," she said, "can neither eat nor speak, and no one knows what his distemper is." She carried home the lozenges and returned next day weeping, and asked for an essence only given to those just about to die. Thus, in the evening, no one was surprised to hear the wretched shrieks and cries of Cassim's wife and Morgiana, telling everyone that Cassim was dead. The day after Morgiana went to an old cobbler near the gates of the town who opened his stall early, put a piece of gold in his hand, and bade him follow her with his needle and thread. Having bound his eyes with a handkerchief, she took him to the room where the body lay, pulled off the bandage, and bade him sew the quarters together, after which she covered his eyes again and led him home. Then they buried Cassim, and Morgiana his slave followed him to the grave, weeping and tearing her hair, while Cassim's wife stayed at home uttering lamentable cries. Next day she went to live with Ali Baba, who gave Cassim's shop to his eldest son.

The Forty Thieves, on their return to the cave, were much astonished to find Cassim's body gone and some of their money-bags. "We are certainly discovered," said the Captain, "and shall be undone if we cannot find out who it is that knows our secret. Two men must have known it; we have killed one, we must now find the other.

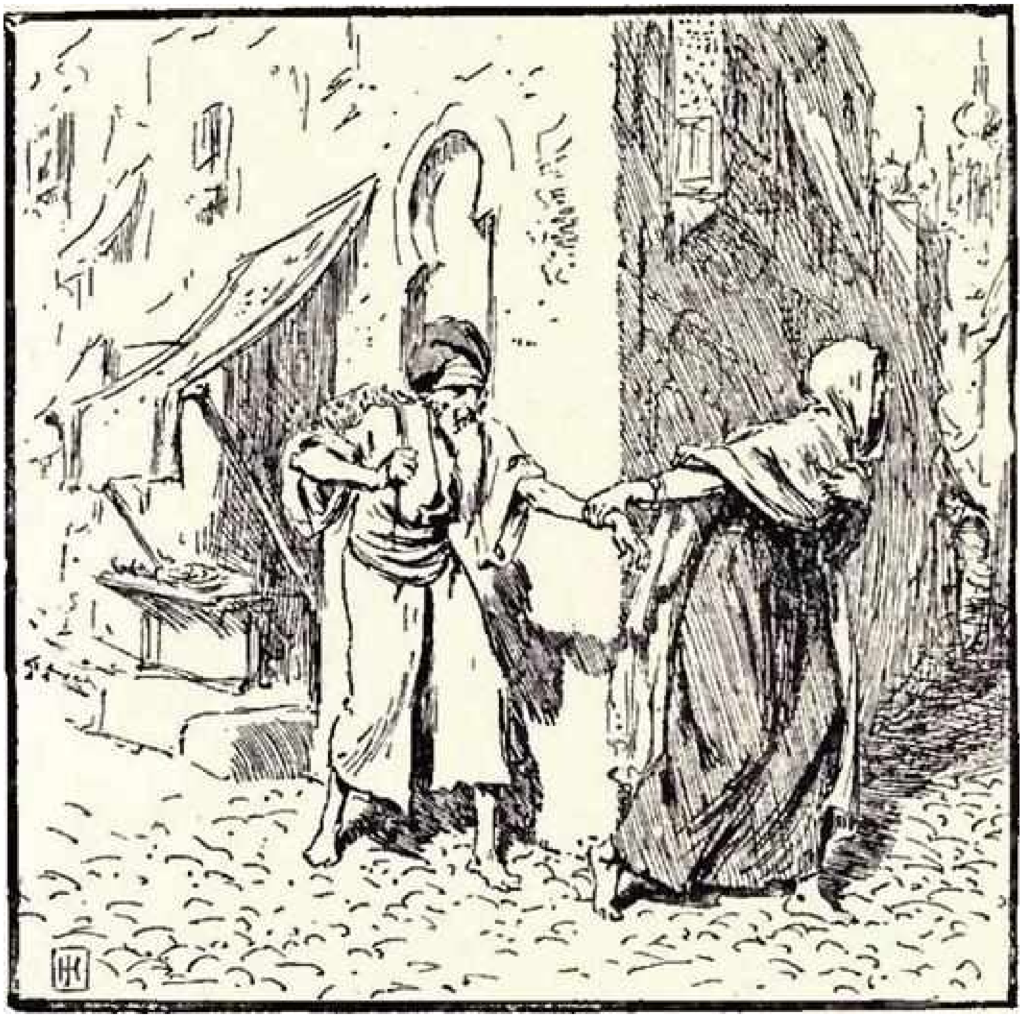

To this end one of you who is bold and artful must go into the city dressed as a traveler, and discover whom we have killed, and whether men talk of the strange manner of his death. If the messenger fails he must lose his life, lest we be betrayed." One of the thieves started up and offered to do this, and after the rest had highly commended him for his bravery he disguised himself, and happened to enter the town at daybreak, just by Baba Mustapha's stall. The thief bade him good-day, saying: "Honest man, how can you possibly see to stitch at your age?" "Old as I am," replied the cobbler, "I have very good eyes, and will you believe me when I tell you that I sewed a dead body together in a place where I had less light than I have now." The robber was overjoyed at his good fortune, and, giving him a piece of gold, desired to be shown the house where he stitched up the dead body. At first Mustapha refused, saying that he had been blindfolded; but when the robber gave him another piece of gold he began to think he might remember the turnings if blindfolded as before. This means succeeded; the robber partly led him, and was partly guided by him, right in front of Cassim's house, the door of which the robber marked with a piece of chalk. Then, well pleased, he bade farewell to Baba Mustapha and returned to the forest. By and by Morgiana, going out, saw the mark the robber had made, quickly guessed that some mischief was brewing, and fetching a piece of chalk marked two or three doors on each side, without saying anything to her master or mistress.

The thief, meantime, told his comrades of his discovery. The Captain thanked him, and bade him show him the house he had marked. But when they came to it they saw that five or six of the houses were chalked in the same manner. The guide was so confounded that he knew not what answer to make, and when they returned he was at once beheaded for having failed. Another robber was dispatched, and, having won over Baba Mustapha, marked the house in red chalk; but Morgiana being again too clever for them, the second messenger was put to death also. The Captain now resolved to go himself, but, wiser than the others, he did not mark the house, but looked at it so closely that he could not fail to remember it. He returned, and ordered his men to go into the neighboring villages and buy nineteen mules, and thirty-eight leather jars, all empty except one, which was full of oil. The Captain put one of his men, fully armed, into each, rubbing the outside of the jars with oil from the full vessel. Then the nineteen mules were loaded with thirty-seven robbers in jars, and the jar of oil, and reached the town by dusk. The Captain stopped his mules in front of Ali Baba's house, and said to Ali Baba, who was sitting outside for coolness: “I have brought some oil from a distance to sell at to-morrow's market, but it is now so late that I know not where to pass the night, unless you will do me the favor to take me in.” Though Ali Baba had seen the Captain of the robbers in the forest, he did not recognize him in the disguise of an oil merchant. He bade him welcome, opened his gates for the mules to enter, and went to Morgiana to bid her prepare a bed and supper for his guest. He brought the stranger into his hall, and after they had supped went again to speak to Morgiana in the kitchen, while the Captain went into the yard under pretense of seeing after his mules, but really to tell his men what to do. Beginning at the first jar and ending at the last, he said to each man: “As soon as I throw some stones from the window of the chamber where I lie, cut the jars open with your knives and come out, and I will be with you in a trice.” He returned to the house, and Morgiana led him to his chamber. She then told Abdallah, her fellow-slave, to set on the pot to make some broth for her master, who had gone to bed. Meanwhile her lamp went out, and she had no more oil in the house. “Do not be uneasy,” said Abdallah; “go into the yard and take some out of one of those jars.” Morgiana thanked him for his advice, took the oil pot, and went into the yard. When she came to the first jar the robber inside said softly: “Is it time?”

Any other slave but Morgiana, on finding a man in the jar instead of the oil she wanted, would have screamed and made a noise; but she, knowing the danger her master was in, bethought herself of a plan, and answered quietly: “Not yet, but presently.” She went to all the jars, giving the same answer, till she came to the jar of oil. She now saw that her master, thinking to entertain an oil merchant, had let thirty-eight robbers into his house. She filled her oil pot, went back to the kitchen, and, having lit her lamp, went again to the oil jar and filled a large kettle full of oil. When it boiled she went and poured enough oil into every jar to stifle and kill the robber inside. When this brave deed was done she went back to the kitchen, put out the fire and the lamp, and waited to see what would happen.

In a quarter of an hour the Captain of the robbers awoke, got up, and opened the window. As all seemed quiet, he threw down some little pebbles which hit the jars. He listened, and as none of his men seemed to stir he grew uneasy, and went down into the yard. On going to the first jar and saying, “Are you asleep?” he smelt the hot boiled oil, and knew at once that his plot to murder Ali Baba and his household had been discovered. He found all the gang was dead, and, missing the oil out of the last jar, became aware of the manner of their death. He then forced the lock of a door leading into a garden, and climbing over several walls made his escape. Morgiana heard and saw all this, and, rejoicing at her success, went to bed and fell asleep.

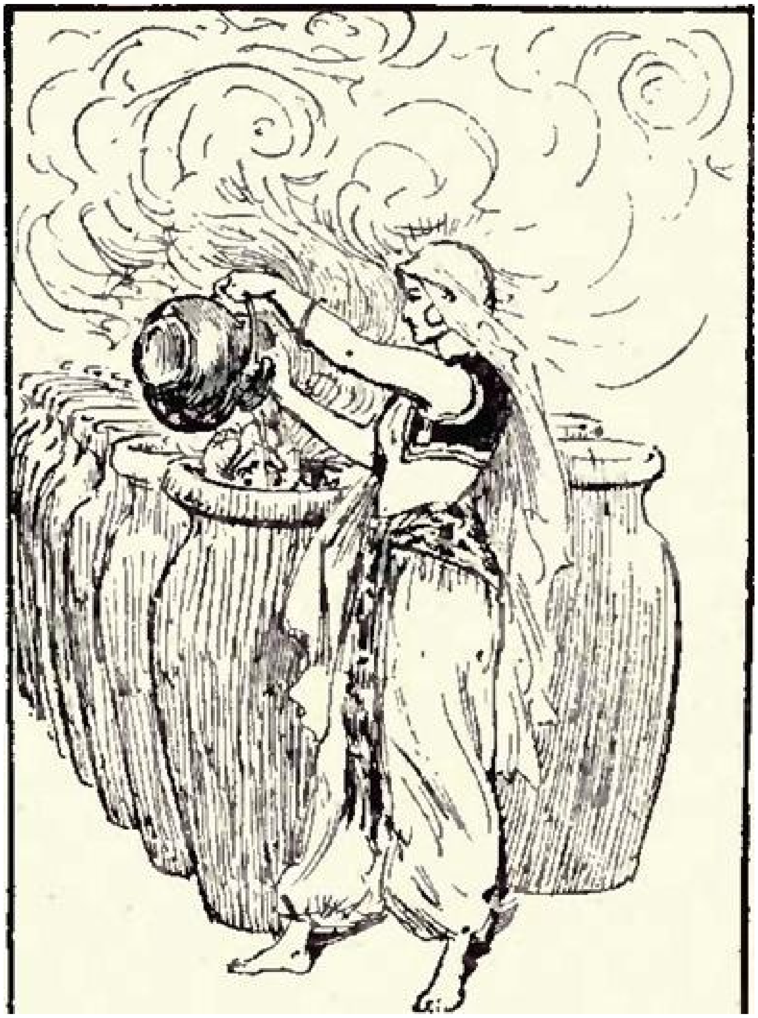

At daybreak Ali Baba arose, and, seeing the oil jars still there, asked why the merchant had not gone with his mules. Morgiana bade him look in the first jar and see if there was any oil. Seeing a man, he started back in terror. “Have no fear,” said Morgiana; “the man cannot harm you: he is dead.” Ali Baba, when he had recovered somewhat from his astonishment, asked what had become of the merchant. “Merchant!” said she, “he is no more a merchant than I am!” and she told him the whole story, assuring him that it was a plot of the robbers of the forest, of whom only three were left, and that the white and red chalk marks had something to do with it. Ali Baba at once gave Morgiana her freedom, saying that he owed her his life. They then buried the bodies in Ali Baba’s garden, while the mules were sold in the market by his slaves.

The Captain returned to his lonely cave, which seemed frightful to him without his lost companions, and firmly resolved to avenge them by killing Ali Baba. He dressed himself carefully, and went into the town, where he took lodgings in an inn. In the course of a great many journeys to the forest he carried away many rich stuffs and much fine linen, and set up a shop opposite that of Ali

Baba’s son. He called himself Cogia Hassan, and as he was both civil and well dressed he soon made friends with Ali Baba’s son, and through him with Ali Baba, whom he was continually asking to sup with him. Ali Baba, wishing to return his kindness, invited him into his house and received him smiling, thanking him for his kindness to his son. When the merchant was about to take his leave Ali Baba stopped him, saying: “Where are you going, sir, in such haste? Will you not stay and sup with me?” The merchant refused, saying that he had a reason; and, on Ali Baba’s asking him what that was, he replied: “It is, sir, that I can eat no victuals that have any salt in them.” “If that is all,” said Ali Baba, “let me tell you that there shall be no salt in either the meat or the bread that we eat to-night.” He went to give this order to Morgiana, who was much surprised. “Who is this man,” she said, “who eats no salt with his meat?” “He is an honest man, Morgiana,” returned her master; “therefore do as I bid you.” But she could not withstand a desire to see this strange man, so she helped Abdallah to carry up the dishes, and saw in a moment that Cogia Hassan was the robber Captain, and carried a dagger under his garment. “I am not surprised,” she said to herself, “that this wicked man, who intends to kill my master, will eat no salt with him; but I will hinder his plans.”

She sent up the supper by Abdallah, while she made ready for one of the boldest acts that could be thought on. When the dessert had been served, Cogia Hassan was left alone with Ali Baba and his son, whom he thought to make drunk and then to murder them. Morgiana, meanwhile, put on a head-dress like a dancing-girl’s, and clasped a girdle round her waist, from which hung a dagger with a silver hilt, and said to Abdallah: “Take your tabor, and let us go and divert our master and his guest.” Abdallah took his tabor and played before Morgiana until they came to the door, where Abdallah stopped playing and Morgiana made a low courtesy. “Come in, Morgiana,” said Ali Baba, “and let Cogia Hassan see what you can do”; and, turning to Cogia Hassan, he said: “She’s my slave and my housekeeper.” Cogia Hassan was by no means pleased, for he feared that his chance of killing Ali Baba was gone for the present; but he pretended great eagerness to see Morgiana, and Abdallah began to play and Morgiana to dance. After she had performed several dances she drew her dagger and made passes with it, sometimes pointing it at her own breast, sometimes at her master’s, as if it were part of the dance. Suddenly, out of breath, she snatched the tabor from Abdallah with her left hand, and, holding the dagger in her right hand, held out the tabor to her master. Ali Baba and his son put a piece of gold into it, and Cogia Hassan, seeing that she was coming to him, pulled out his purse to make her a present, but while he was putting his hand into it Morgiana plunged the dagger into his heart.

“Unhappy girl!” cried Ali Baba and his son, “what have you done to ruin us?”

“It was to preserve you, master, not to ruin you,” answered Morgiana. “See here,” opening the false merchant’s garment and showing the dagger; “see what an enemy you have entertained! Remember, he would eat no salt with you, and what more would you have? Look at him! he is both the false oil merchant and the Captain of the Forty Thieves.”

Ali Baba was so grateful to Morgiana for thus saving his life that he offered her to his son in marriage, who readily consented, and a few days after the wedding was celebrated with greatest splendor.

At the end of a year Ali Baba, hearing nothing of the two remaining robbers, judged they were dead, and set out to the cave. The door opened on his saying: “Open Sesame!” He went in, and saw that nobody had been there since the Captain left it. He brought away as much gold as he could carry, and returned to town. He told his son the secret of the cave, which his son handed down in his turn, so the children and grandchildren of Ali Baba were rich to the end of their lives.(1)

(1) Arabian Nights.

HANSEL AND GRETTEL

Once upon a time there dwelt on the outskirts of a large forest a poor woodcutter with his wife and two children; the boy was called Hansel and the girl Grettel. He had always little enough to live on, and once, when there was a great famine in the land, he couldn’t even provide them with daily bread. One night, as he was tossing about in bed, full of cares and worry, he sighed and said to his wife: “What’s to become of us? how are we to support our poor children, now that we have nothing more for ourselves?” “I’ll tell you what, husband,” answered the woman; “early to-morrow morning we’ll take the children out into the thickest part of the wood; there we shall light a fire for them and give them each a piece of bread; then we’ll go on to our work and leave them alone. They won’t be able to find their way home, and we shall thus be rid of them.” “No, wife,” said her husband, “that I won’t do; how could I find it in my heart to leave my children alone in the wood? The wild beasts would soon come and tear them to pieces.” “Oh! you fool,” said she, “then we must all four die of hunger, and you may just as well go and plane the boards for our coffins”; and she left him no peace till he consented. “But I can’t help feeling sorry for the poor children,” added the husband.

The children, too, had not been able to sleep for hunger, and had heard what their step-mother had said to their father. Grettel wept bitterly and spoke to Hansel: “Now it’s all up with us.” “No, no, Grettel,” said Hansel, “don’t fret yourself; I’ll be able to find a way to escape, no fear.” And when the old people had fallen asleep he got up, slipped on his little coat, opened the back door and stole out. The moon was shining clearly, and the white pebbles which lay in front of the house glittered like bits of silver. Hansel bent down and filled his pocket with as many of them as he could cram in. Then he went back and said to Grettel: “Be comforted, my dear little sister, and go to sleep: God will not desert us”; and he lay down in bed again.

At daybreak, even before the sun was up, the woman came and woke the two children: “Get up, you lie-abeds, we’re all going to the forest to fetch wood.” She gave them each a bit of bread and said: “There’s something for your luncheon, but don’t you eat it up before, for it’s all you’ll get.” Grettel took the bread under her apron, as Hansel had the stones in his pocket. Then they all set out together on the way to the forest. After they had walked for a little, Hansel stood still and looked back at the house, and this maneuver he repeated again and again. His father observed him, and said: “Hansel, what are you gazing at there, and why do you always remain behind? Take care, and don’t lose your footing.” “Oh! father,” said Hansel, “I am looking back at my white kitten, which is sitting on the roof, waving me a farewell.” The woman exclaimed: “What a donkey you are! that isn’t your kitten, that’s the morning sun shining on the chimney.” But Hansel had not looked back at his kitten, but had always dropped one of the white pebbles out of his pocket on to the path.

When they had reached the middle of the forest the father said: “Now, children, go and fetch a lot of wood, and I’ll light a fire that you may not feel cold.” Hansel and Grettel heaped up brushwood till they had made a pile nearly the size of a small hill. The brushwood was set fire to, and when the flames leaped high the woman said: “Now lie down at the fire, children, and rest yourselves: we are going into the forest to cut down wood; when we’ve finished we’ll come back and fetch you.” Hansel and Grettel sat down beside the fire, and at midday ate their little bits of bread. They heard the strokes of the axe, so they thought their father was quite near. But it was no axe they heard, but a bough he had tied on a dead tree, and that was blown about by the wind. And when they had sat for a long time their eyes closed with fatigue, and they fell fast asleep. When they awoke at last it was pitch dark. Grettel began to cry, and said: “How are we ever to get out of the wood?” But Hansel comforted her. “Wait a bit,” he said, “till the moon is up, and then we’ll find our way sure enough.” And when the full moon had risen he took his sister by the hand and followed the pebbles, which shone like new threepenny bits, and showed them the path. They walked on through the night, and at daybreak reached their father’s house again. They knocked at the door, and when the woman opened it she exclaimed: “You naughty children, what a time you’ve slept in the wood! we thought you were never going to come back.” But the father rejoiced, for his conscience had reproached him for leaving his children behind by themselves.

Not long afterward there was again great dearth in the land, and the children heard their mother address their father thus in bed one night: “Everything is eaten up once more; we have only half a loaf in the house, and when that’s done it’s all up with us. The children must be got rid of; we’ll lead them deeper into the wood this time, so that they won’t be able to find their way out again. There is no other way of saving ourselves.” The man’s heart smote him heavily, and he thought: “Surely it would be better to share the last bite with one’s children!” But his wife wouldn’t listen to his arguments, and did nothing but scold and reproach him. If a man yields once he’s done for, and so, because he had given in the first time, he was forced to do so the second.

But the children were awake, and had heard the conversation. When the old people were asleep Hansel got up, and wanted to go out and pick up pebbles again, as he had done the first time; but the woman had barred the door, and Hansel couldn’t get out. But he consoled his little sister, and said: “Don’t cry, Grettel, and sleep peacefully, for God is sure to help us.”

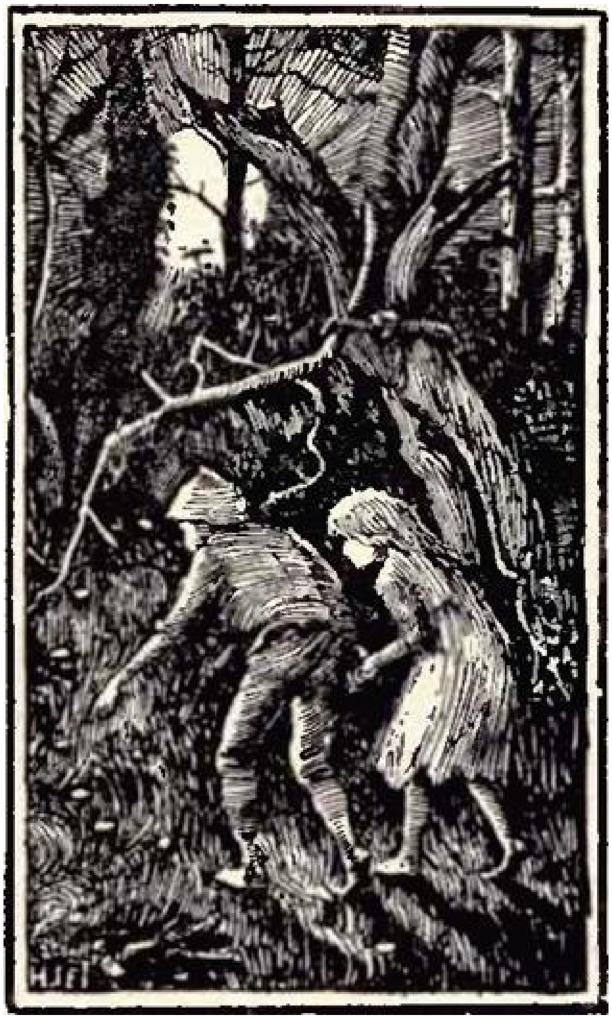

At early dawn the woman came and made the children get up. They received their bit of bread, but it was even smaller than the time before. On the way to the wood Hansel crumbled it in his pocket, and every few minutes he stood still and dropped a crumb on the ground. “Hansel, what are you stopping and looking about you for?” said the father. “I’m looking back at my little pigeon, which is sitting on the roof waving me a farewell,” answered Hansel. “Fool!” said the wife; “that isn’t your pigeon, it’s the morning sun glittering on the chimney.” But Hansel gradually threw all his crumbs on the path. The woman led the children still deeper into the forest farther than they had ever been in their lives before. Then a big fire was lit again, and the mother said: “Just sit down there, children, and if you're tired you can sleep a bit; we're going into the forest to cut down wood, and in the evening when we're finished we'll come back to fetch you." At midday Grettel divided her bread with Hansel, for he had strewn his all along their path. Then they fell asleep, and evening passed away, but nobody came to the poor children. They didn't awake till it was pitch dark, and Hansel comforted his sister, saying: "Only wait, Grettel, till the moon rises, then we shall see the bread-crumbs I scattered along the path; they will show us the way back to the house." When the moon appeared they got up, but they found no crumbs, for the thousands of birds that fly about the woods and fields had picked them all up. "Never mind," said Hansel to Grettel; "you'll see we'll find a way out"; but all the same they did not. They wandered about the whole night, and the next day, from morning till evening, but they could not find a path out of the wood. They were very hungry, too, for they had nothing to eat but a few berries they found growing on the ground. And at last they were so tired that their legs refused to carry them any longer, so they lay down under a tree and fell fast asleep.

On the third morning after they had left their father's house they set about their wandering again, but only got deeper and deeper into the wood, and now they felt that if help did not come to them soon they must perish. At midday they saw a beautiful little snow-white bird sitting on a branch, which sang so sweetly that they stopped still and listened to it. And when its song was finished it flapped its wings and flew on in front of them. They followed it and came to a little house, on the roof of which it perched; and when they came quite near they saw that the cottage was made of bread and roofed with cakes, while the window was made of transparent sugar. "Now we'll set to," said Hansel, "and have a regular blow-out.(1) I'll eat a bit of the roof, and you, Grettel, can eat some of the window, which you'll find a sweet morsel." Hansel stretched up his hand and broke off a little bit of the roof to see what it was like, and Grettel went to the casement and began to nibble at it. Thereupon a shrill voice called out from the room inside:

"Nibble, nibble, little mouse,
Who's nibbling my house?"
The children answered:
"Tis Heaven's own child,
The tempest wild,"

and went on eating, without putting themselves about. Hansel, who thoroughly appreciated the roof, tore down a big bit of it, while Grettel pushed out a whole round window-pane, and sat down the better to enjoy it. Suddenly the door opened, and an ancient dame leaning on a staff hobbled out. Hansel and Grettel were so terrified that they let what they had in their hands fall.

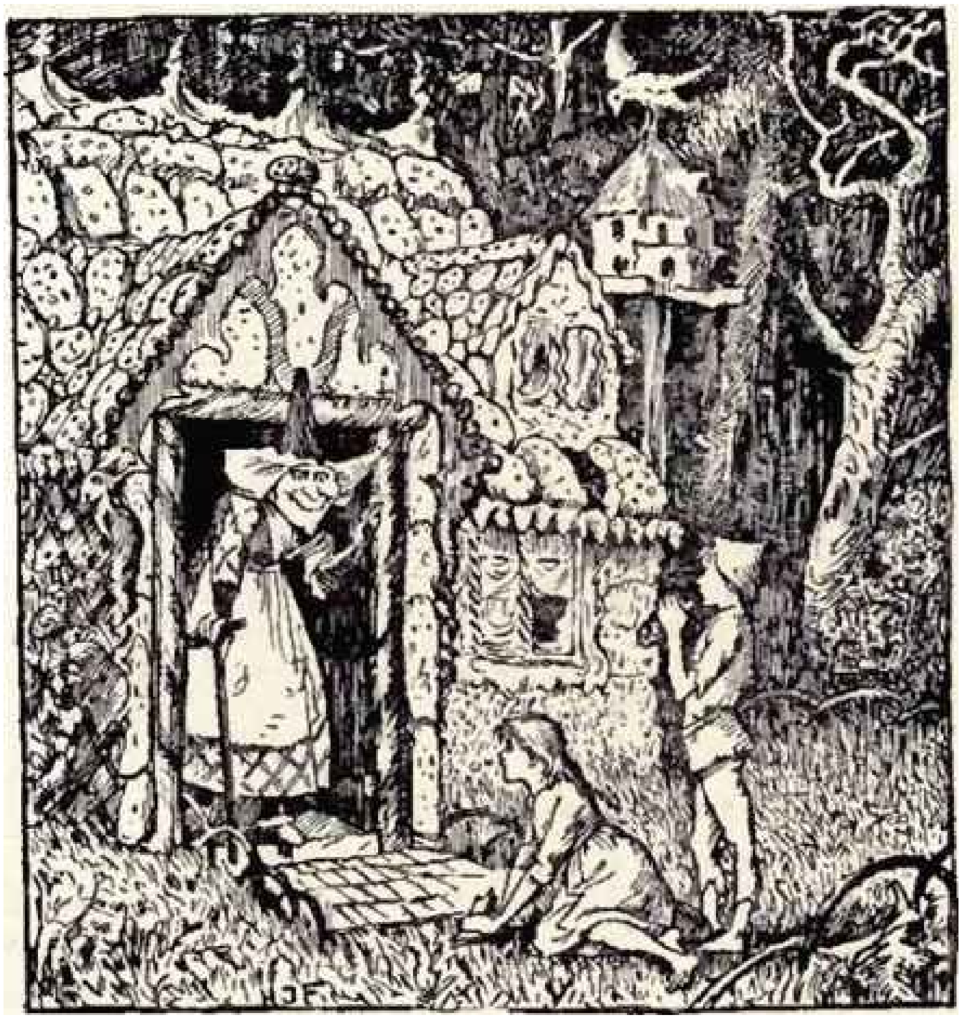

But the old woman shook her head and said: “Oh, ho! you dear children, who led you here? Just come in and stay with me, no ill shall befall you.” She took them both by the hand and let them into the house, and laid a most sumptuous dinner before them — milk and sugared pancakes, with apples and nuts. After they had finished, two beautiful little white beds were prepared for them, and when Hansel and Grettel lay down in them they felt as if they had got into heaven.

(1) He was a vulgar boy!

The old woman had appeared to be most friendly, but she was really an old witch who had waylaid the children, and had only built the little bread house in order to lure them in. When anyone came into her power she killed, cooked, and ate him, and held a regular feast-day for the occasion. Now witches have red eyes, and cannot see far, but, like beasts, they have a keen sense of smell, and know when human beings pass by. When Hansel and Grettel fell into her hands she laughed maliciously, and said jeeringly: “I’ve got them now; they sha’n’t escape me.” Early in the morning, before the children were awake, she rose up, and when she saw them both sleeping so peacefully, with their round rosy cheeks, she muttered to herself: “That’ll be a dainty bite.” Then she seized Hansel with her bony hand and carried him into a little stable, and barred the door on him; he might scream as much as he liked, it did him no good. Then she went to Grettel, shook her till she awoke, and cried: “Get up, you lazy-bones, fetch water and cook something for your brother. When he’s fat I’ll eat him up.” Grettel began to cry bitterly, but it was of no use; she had to do what the wicked witch bade her.

So the best food was cooked for poor Hansel, but Grettel got nothing but crab-shells. Every morning the old woman hobbled out to the stable and cried: “Hansel, put out your finger, that I may feel if you are getting fat.” But Hansel always stretched out a bone, and the old dame, whose eyes were dim, couldn’t see it, and thinking always it was Hansel’s finger, wondered why he fattened so slowly. When four weeks had passed and Hansel still remained thin, she lost patience and determined to wait no longer. “Hi, Grettel,” she called to the girl, “be quick and get some water. Hansel may be fat or thin, I’m going to kill him to-morrow and cook him.” Oh! how the poor little sister sobbed as she carried the water, and how the tears rolled down her cheeks! “Kind heaven help us now!” she cried; “if only the wild beasts in the wood had eaten us, then at least we should have died together.” “Just hold your peace,” said the old hag; “it won’t help you.”

Early in the morning Grettel had to go out and hang up the kettle full of water, and light the fire. “First we’ll bake,” said the old dame; “I’ve heated the oven already and kneaded the dough.” She pushed Grettel out to the oven, from which fiery flames were already issuing. “Creep in,” said the witch, “and see if it’s properly heated, so that we can shove in the bread.” For when she had got Grettel in she meant to close the oven and let the girl bake, that she might eat her up too. But Grettel perceived her intention, and said: “I don’t know how I’m to do it; how do I get in?” “You silly goose!” said the hag, “the opening is big enough; see, I could get in myself,” and she crawled toward it, and poked her head into the oven. Then Grettel gave her a shove that sent her right in, shut the iron door, and drew the bolt. Gracious! how she yelled, it was quite horrible; but Grettel fled, and the wretched old woman was left to perish miserably.

Grettel flew straight to Hansel, opened the little stable-door, and cried: “Hansel, we are free; the old witch is dead.” Then Hansel sprang like a bird out of a cage when the door is opened. How they rejoiced, and fell on each other's necks, and jumped for joy, and kissed one another! And as they had no longer any cause for fear, they went in the old hag's house, and here they found, in every corner of the room, boxes with pearls and precious stones. "These are even better than pebbles," said Hansel, and crammed his pockets full of them; and Grettel said: "I too will bring something home," and she filled her apron full. "But now," said Hansel, "let's go and get well away from the witch's wood." When they had wandered about for some hours they came to a big lake. "We can't get over," said Hansel; "I see no bridge of any sort or kind." "Yes, and there's no ferry-boat either," answered Grettel; "but look, there swims a white duck; if I ask her she'll help us over," and she called out:

"Here are two children, mournful very,
Seeing neither bridge nor ferry;
Take us upon your white back,
And row us over, quack, quack!"

The duck swam toward them, and Hansel got on her back and bade his little sister sit beside him. "No," answered Grettel, "we should be too heavy a load for the duck: she shall carry us across separately." The good bird did this, and when they were landed safely on the other side, and had gone for a while, the wood became more and more familiar to them, and at length they saw their father's house in the distance. Then they set off to run, and bounding into the room fell on their father's neck. The man had not passed a happy hour since he left them in the wood, but the woman had died. Grettel shook out her apron so that the pearls and precious stones rolled about the room, and Hansel threw down one handful after the other out of his pocket. Thus all their troubles were ended, and they lived happily ever afterward.

My story is done. See! there runs a little mouse; anyone who catches it may make himself a large fur cap out of it.(1)

(1) Grimm.

SNOW-WHITE AND ROSE-RED

A poor widow once lived in a little cottage with a garden in front of it, in which grew two rose trees, one bearing white roses and the other red. She had two children, who were just like the two rose trees; one was called Snow-white and the other Rose-red, and they were the sweetest and best children in the world, always diligent and always cheerful; but Snow-white was quieter and more gentle than Rose-red. Rose-red loved to run about the fields and meadows, and to pick flowers and catch butterflies; but Snow-white sat at home with her mother and helped her in the household, or read aloud to her when there was no work to do. The two children loved each other so dearly that they always walked about hand in hand whenever they went out together, and when Snow-white said, “We will never desert each other,” Rose-red answered: “No, not as long as we live”; and the mother added: “Whatever one gets she shall share with the other.” They often roamed about in the woods gathering berries and no beast offered to hurt them; on the contrary, they came up to them in the most confiding manner; the little hare would eat a cabbage leaf from their hands, the deer grazed beside them, the stag would bound past them merrily, and the birds remained on the branches and sang to them with all their might.

No evil ever befell them; if they tarried late in the wood and night overtook them, they lay down together on the moss and slept till morning, and their mother knew they were quite safe, and never felt anxious about them. Once, when they had slept all night in the wood and had been wakened by the morning sun, they perceived a beautiful child in a shining white robe sitting close to their resting-place. The figure got up, looked at them kindly, but said nothing, and vanished into the wood. And when they looked round about them they became aware that they had slept quite close to a precipice, over which they would certainly have fallen had they gone on a few steps further in the darkness. And when they told their mother of their adventure, she said what they had seen must have been the angel that guards good children.

Snow-white and Rose-red kept their mother’s cottage so beautifully clean and neat that it was a pleasure to go into it. In summer Rose-red looked after the house, and every morning before her mother awoke she placed a bunch of flowers before the bed, from each tree a rose. In winter Snow-white lit the fire and put on the kettle, which was made of brass, but so beautifully polished that it shone like gold. In the evening when the snowflakes fell their mother said:

“Snow-white, go and close the shutters,” and they drew round the fire, while the mother put on her spectacles and read aloud from a big book and the two girls listened and sat and span. Beside them on the ground lay a little lamb, and behind them perched a little white dove with its head tucked under its wings.

One evening as they sat thus cosily together someone knocked at the door as though he desired admittance. The mother said: “Rose-red, open the door quickly; it must be some traveler seeking shelter.” Rose-red hastened to unbar the door, and thought she saw a poor man standing in the darkness outside; but it was no such thing, only a bear, who poked his thick black head through the door. Rose-red screamed aloud and sprang back in terror, the lamb began to bleat, the dove flapped its wings, and Snow-white ran and hid behind her mother’s bed. But the bear began to speak, and said: “Don’t be afraid: I won’t hurt you. I am half frozen, and only wish to warm myself a little.” “My poor bear,” said the mother, “lie down by the fire, only take care you don’t burn your fur.” Then she called out: “Snow-white and Rose-red, come out; the bear will do you no harm; he is a good, honest creature.” So they both came out of their hiding-places, and gradually the lamb and dove drew near too, and they all forgot their fear. The bear asked the children to beat the snow a little out of his fur, and they fetched a brush and scrubbed him till he was dry. Then the beast stretched himself in front of the fire, and growled quite happily and comfortably. The children soon grew quite at their ease with him, and led their helpless guest a fearful life. They tugged his fur with their hands, put their small feet on his back, and rolled him about here and there, or took a hazel wand and beat him with it; and if he growled they only laughed. The bear submitted to everything with the best possible good-nature, only when they went too far he cried: “Oh! children, spare my life!

“Snow-white and Rose-red,
Don’t beat your lover dead.”

When it was time to retire for the night, and the others went to bed, the mother said to the bear: “You can lie there on the hearth, in heaven’s name; it will be shelter for you from the cold and wet.” As soon as day dawned the children led him out, and he trotted over the snow into the wood. From this time on the bear came every evening at the same hour, and lay down by the hearth and let the children play what pranks they liked with him; and they got so accustomed to him that the door was never shut till their black friend had made his appearance.

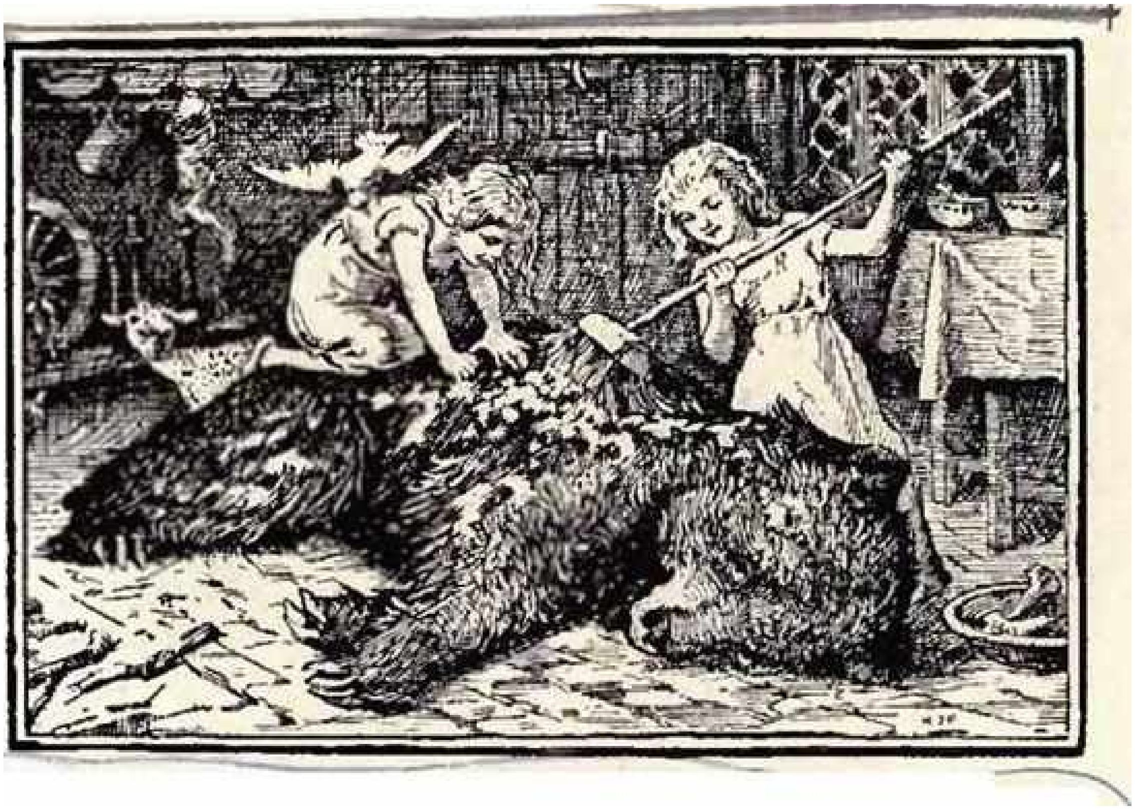

When spring came, and all outside was green, the bear said one morning to Snow-white: “Now I must go away, and not return again the whole summer.” “Where are you going to, dear bear?” asked Snow-white. “I must go to the wood and protect my treasure from the wicked dwarfs. In winter, when the earth is frozen hard, they are obliged to remain underground, for they can’t work their way through; but now, when the sun has thawed and warmed the ground, they break through and come up above to spy the land and steal what they can; what once falls into their hands and into their caves is not easily brought back to light.” Snow-white was quite sad over their friend’s departure, and when she unbarred the door for him, the bear, stepping out, caught a piece of his fur in the door-knocker, and Snow-white thought she caught sight of glittering gold beneath it, but she couldn’t be certain of it; and the bear ran hastily away, and soon disappeared behind the trees.

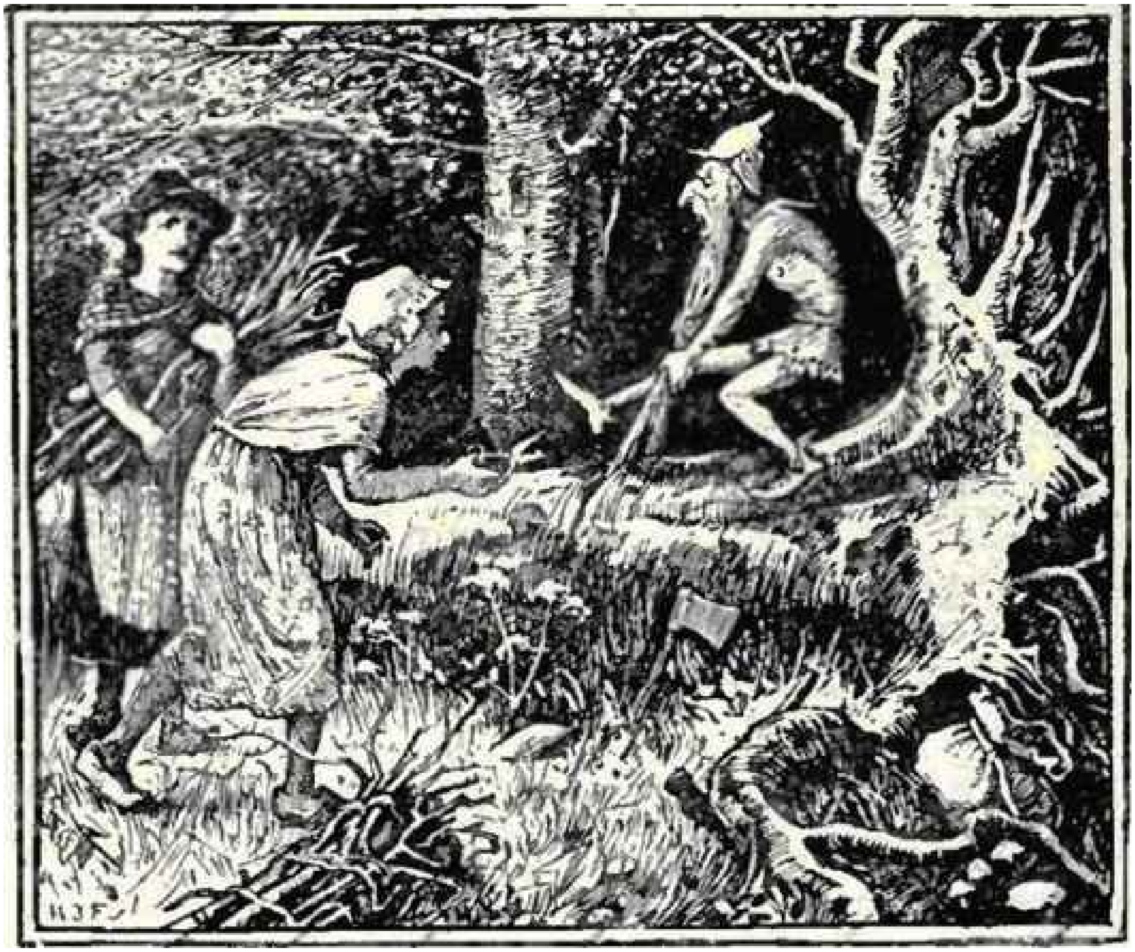

A short time after this the mother sent the children into the wood to collect fagots. They came in their wanderings upon a big tree which lay felled on the ground, and on the trunk among the long grass they noticed something jumping up and down, but what it was they couldn’t distinguish. When they approached nearer they perceived a dwarf with a wizened face and a beard a yard long. The end of the beard was jammed into a cleft of the tree, and the little man sprang about like a dog on a chain, and didn’t seem to know what he was to do. He glared at the girls with his fiery red eyes, and screamed out: “What are you standing there for? Can’t you come and help me?” “What were you doing, little man?” asked Rose-red. “You stupid, inquisitive goose!” replied the dwarf; “I wanted to split the tree, in order to get little chips of wood for our kitchen fire; those thick logs that serve to make fires for coarse, greedy people like yourselves quite burn up all the little food we need. I had successfully driven in the wedge, and all was going well, but the cursed wood was so slippery that it suddenly sprang out, and the tree closed up so rapidly that I had no time to take my beautiful white beard out, so here I am stuck fast, and I can’t get away; and you silly, smooth-faced, milk-and-water girls just stand and laugh! Ugh! what wretches you are!”

The children did all in their power, but they couldn’t get the beard out; it was wedged in far too firmly. “I will run and fetch somebody,” said Rose-red. “Crazy blockheads!” snapped the dwarf; “what’s the good of calling anyone else? You’re already two too many for me. Does nothing better occur to you than that?” “Don’t be so impatient,” said Snow-white, “I’ll see you get help,” and taking her scissors out of her pocket she cut off the end of his beard. As soon as the dwarf felt himself free he seized a bag full of gold which was hidden among the roots of the tree, lifted it up, and muttered aloud: “Curse these rude wretches, cutting off a piece of my splendid beard!” With these words he swung the bag over his back, and disappeared without as much as looking at the children again.

Shortly after this Snow-white and Rose-red went out to get a dish of fish. As they approached the stream they saw something which looked like an enormous grasshopper springing toward the water as if it were going to jump in. They ran forward and recognized their old friend the dwarf. “Where are you going to?” asked Rose-red; “you’re surely not going to jump into the water?” “I’m not such a fool,” screamed the dwarf. “Don’t you see that cursed fish is trying to drag me in?” The little man had been sitting on the bank fishing, when unfortunately the wind had entangled his beard in the line; and when immediately afterward a big fish bit, the feeble little creature had no strength to pull it out; the fish had the upper fin, and dragged the dwarf toward him. He clung on with all his might to every rush and blade of grass, but it didn’t help him much; he had to follow every movement of the fish, and was in great danger of being drawn into the water. The girls came up just at the right moment, held him firm, and did all they could to disentangle his beard from the line; but in vain, beard and line were in a hopeless muddle. Nothing remained but to produce the scissors and cut the beard, by which a small part of it was sacrificed.

When the dwarf perceived what they were about he yelled to them: “Do you call that manners, you toad-stools! to disfigure a fellow’s face? It wasn’t enough that you shortened my beard before, but you must now needs cut off the best bit of it. I can’t appear like this before my own people. I wish you’d been in Jericho first.” Then he fetched a sack of pearls that lay among the rushes, and without saying another word he dragged it away and disappeared behind a stone.

It happened that soon after this the mother sent the two girls to the town to buy needles, thread, laces, and ribbons. Their road led over a heath where huge boulders of rock lay scattered here and there. While trudging along they saw a big bird hovering in the air, circling slowly above them, but always descending lower, till at last it settled on a rock not far from them. Immediately afterward they heard a sharp, piercing cry. They ran forward, and saw with horror that the eagle had pounced on their old friend the dwarf, and was about to carry him off. The tender-hearted children seized hold of the little man, and struggled so long with the bird that at last he let go his prey. When the dwarf had recovered from the first shock he screamed in his screeching voice: “Couldn’t you have treated me more carefully? You have torn my thin little coat all to shreds, useless, awkward hussies that you are!” Then he took a bag of precious stones and vanished under the rocks into his cave. The girls were accustomed to his ingratitude, and went on their way and did their business in town. On their way home, as they were again passing the heath, they surprised the dwarf pouring out his precious stones on an open space, for he had thought no one would pass by at so late an hour. The evening sun shone on the glittering stones, and they glanced and gleamed so beautifully that the children stood still and gazed on them. “What are you standing there gaping for?” screamed the dwarf, and his ashen-gray face became scarlet with rage. He was about to go off with these angry words when a sudden growl was heard, and a black bear trotted out of the wood. The dwarf jumped up in great fright, but he hadn’t time to reach his place of retreat, for the bear was already close to him. Then he cried in terror: “Dear Mr. Bear, spare me! I’ll give you all my treasure. Look at those beautiful precious stones lying there. Spare my life! what pleasure would you get from a poor feeble little fellow like me? You won’t feel me between your teeth. There, lay hold of these two wicked girls, they will be a tender morsel for you, as fat as young quails; eat them up, for heaven’s sake.” But the bear, paying no attention to his words, gave the evil little creature one blow with his paw, and he never moved again.

The girls had run away, but the bear called after them: “Snow-white and Rose-red, don’t be afraid; wait, and I’ll come with you.” Then they recognized his voice and stood still, and when the bear was quite close to them his skin suddenly fell off, and a beautiful man stood beside them, all dressed in gold. “I am a king’s son,” he said, “and have been doomed by that unholy little dwarf, who had stolen my treasure, to roam about the woods as a wild bear till his death should set me free. Now he has got his well-merited punishment.”

Snow-white married him, and Rose-red his brother, and they divided the great treasure the dwarf had collected in his cave between them. The old mother lived for many years peacefully with her children; and she carried the two rose trees with her, and they stood in front of her window, and every year they bore the finest red and white roses.(1)

(1) Grimm.

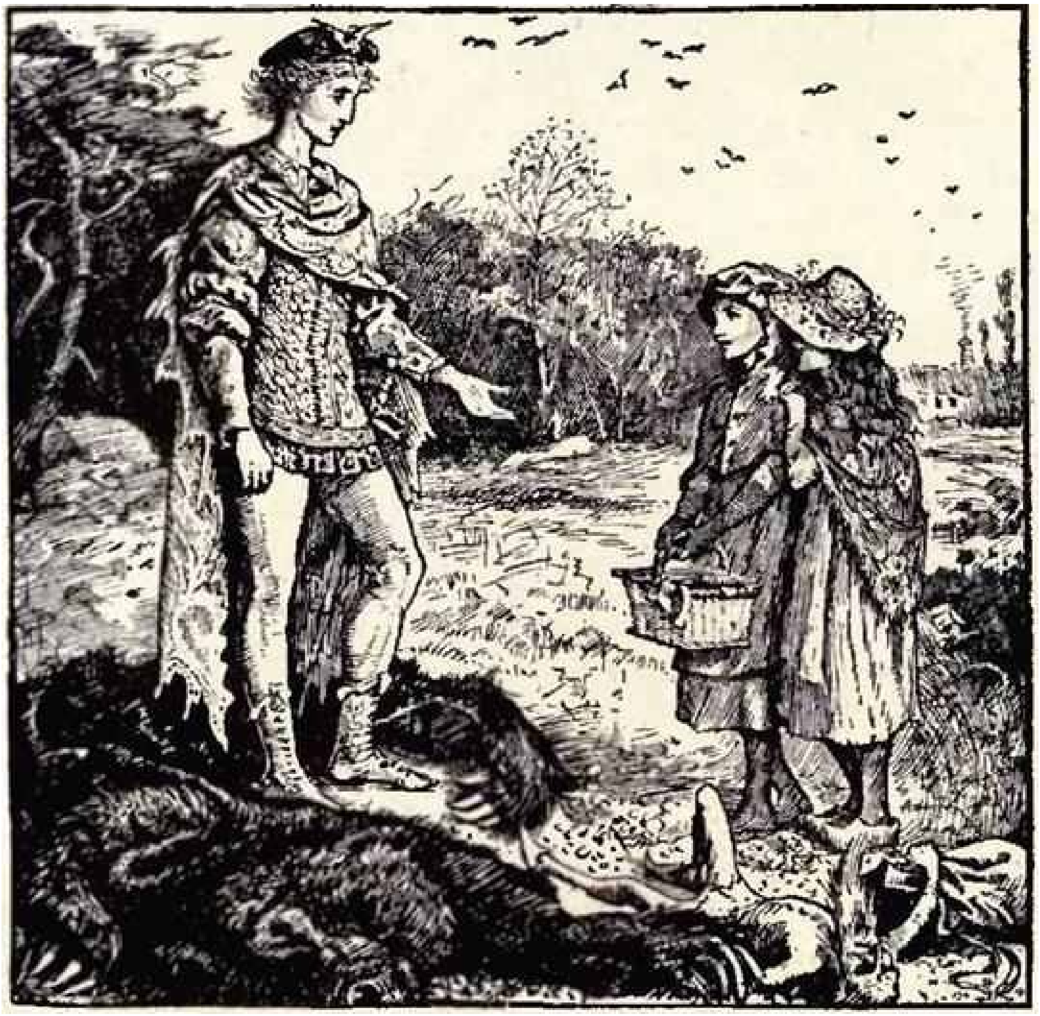

THE GOOSE-GIRL

Once upon a time an old queen, whose husband had been dead for many years, had a beautiful daughter. When she grew up she was betrothed to a prince who lived a great way off. Now, when the time drew near for her to be married and to depart into a foreign kingdom, her old mother gave her much costly baggage, and many ornaments, gold and silver, trinkets and knicknacks, and, in fact, everything that belonged to a royal trousseau, for she loved her daughter very dearly. She gave her a waiting-maid also, who was to ride with her and hand her over to the bridegroom, and she provided each of them with a horse for the journey. Now the Princess's horse was called Falada, and could speak.

When the hour for departure drew near the old mother went to her bedroom, and taking a small knife she cut her fingers till they bled; then she held a white rag under them, and letting three drops of blood fall into it, she gave it to her daughter, and said: "Dear child, take great care of this rag: it may be of use to you on the journey."

So they took a sad farewell of each other, and the Princess stuck the rag in front of her dress, mounted her horse, and set forth on the journey to her bridegroom's kingdom. After they had ridden for about an hour the Princess began to feel very thirsty, and said to her waiting-maid: "Pray get down and fetch me some water in my golden cup out of yonder stream: I would like a drink." "If you're thirsty," said the maid, "dismount yourself, and lie down by the water and drink; I don't mean to be your servant any longer." The Princess was so thirsty that she got down, bent over the stream, and drank, for she wasn't allowed to drink out of the golden goblet. As she drank she murmured: "Oh! heaven, what am I to do?" and the three drops of blood replied:

"If your mother only knew,
Her heart would surely break in two."

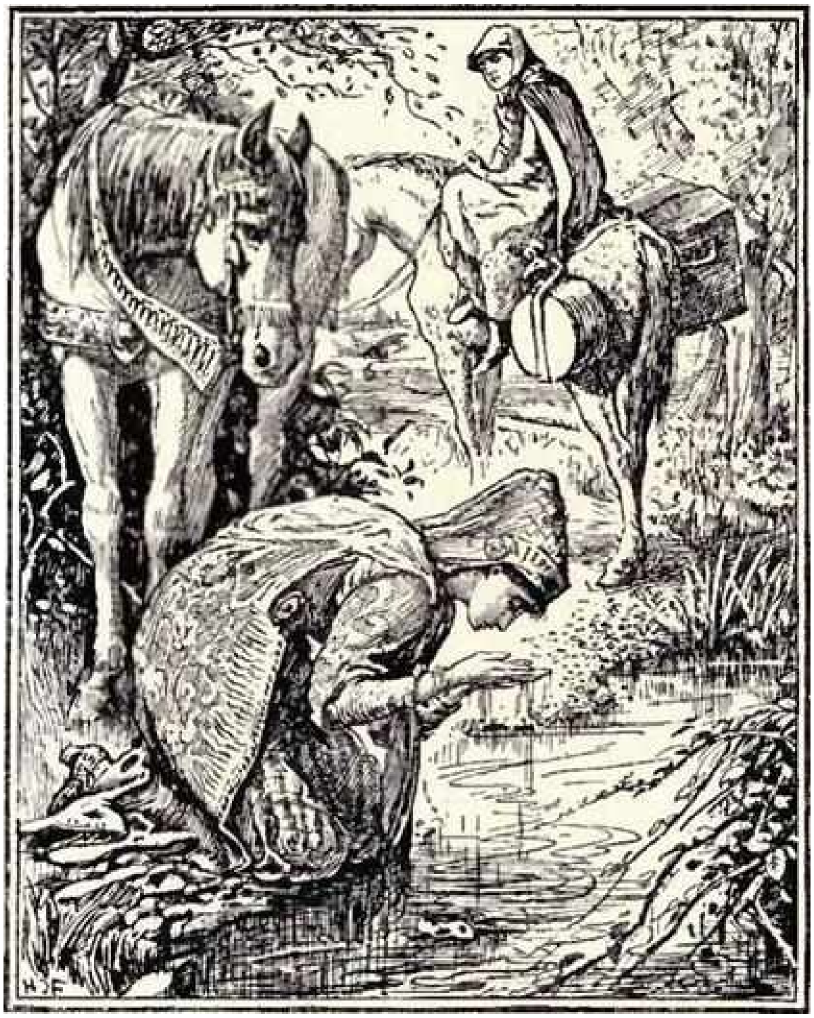

But the Princess was meek, and said nothing about her maid’s rude behavior, and quietly mounted her horse again. They rode on their way for several miles, but the day was hot, and the sun’s rays smote fiercely on them, so that the Princess was soon overcome by thirst again. And as they passed a brook she called once more to her waiting-maid: “Pray get down and give me a drink from my golden cup,” for she had long ago forgotten her maid’s rude words. But the waiting-maid replied, more haughtily even than before: “If you want a drink, you can dismount and get it; I don’t mean to be your servant.” Then the Princess was compelled by her thirst to get down, and bending over the flowing water she cried and said: “Oh! heaven, what am I to do?” and the three drops of blood replied:

“If your mother only knew,
Her heart would surely break in two.”

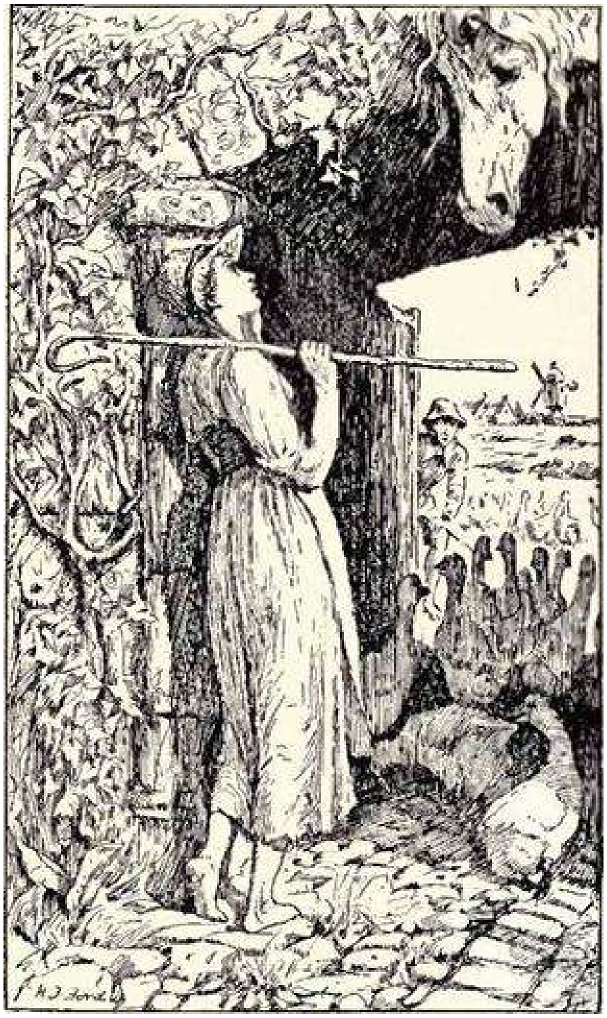

And as she drank thus, and leaned right over the water, the rag containing the three drops of blood fell from her bosom and floated down the stream, and she in her anxiety never even noticed her loss. But the waiting-maid had observed it with delight, as she knew it gave her power over the bride, for in losing the drops of blood the Princess had become weak and powerless. When she wished to get on her horse Falada again, the waiting-maid called out: “I mean to ride Falada: you must mount my beast”; and this too she had to submit to. Then the waiting-maid commanded her harshly to take off her royal robes, and to put on her common ones, and finally she made her swear by heaven not to say a word about the matter when they reached the palace; and if she hadn’t taken this oath she would have been killed on the spot. But Falada observed everything, and laid it all to heart.

The waiting-maid now mounted Falada, and the real bride the worse horse, and so they continued their journey till at length they arrived at the palace yard. There was great rejoicing over the arrival, and the Prince sprang forward to meet them, and taking the waiting-maid for his bride, he lifted her down from her horse and led her upstairs to the royal chamber. In the meantime the real Princess was left standing below in the courtyard. The old King, who was looking out of his window, beheld her in this plight, and it struck him how sweet and gentle, even beautiful, she looked. He went at once to the royal chamber, and asked the bride who it was she had brought with her and had left thus standing in the court below. “Oh!” replied the bride, “I brought her with me to keep me company on the journey; give the girl something to do, that she may not be idle.” But the old King had no work for her, and couldn’t think of anything; so he said, “I’ve a small boy who looks after the geese, she’d better help him.” The youth’s name was Curdken, and the real bride was made to assist him in herding geese.

Soon after this the false bride said to the Prince: “Dearest husband, I pray you grant me a favor.” He answered: “That I will.” “Then let the slaughterer cut off the head of the horse I rode here upon, because it behaved very badly on the journey.” But the truth was she was afraid lest the horse should speak and tell how she had treated the Princess. She carried her point, and the faithful Falada was doomed to die. When the news came to the ears of the real Princess she went to the slaughterer, and secretly promised him a piece of gold if he would do something for her. There was in the town a large dark gate, through which she had to pass night and morning with the geese; would he “kindly hang up Falada’s head there, that she might see it once again?” The slaughterer said he would do as she desired, chopped off the head, and nailed it firmly over the gateway.

Early next morning, as she and Curdken were driving their flock through the gate, she said as she passed under:

“Oh! Falada, ’tis you hang there”;

and the head replied:

“’Tis you; pass under, Princess fair:
If your mother only knew,
Her heart would surely break in two.”

Then she left the tower and drove the geese into a field. And when they had reached the common where the geese fed she sat down and unloosed her hair, which was of pure gold. Curdken loved to see it glitter in the sun, and wanted much to pull some hair out. Then she spoke:

“Wind, wind, gently sway,
Blow Curdken’s hat away;
Let him chase o’er field and wold
Till my locks of ruddy gold,
Now astray and hanging down,

Be combed and plaited in a crown.”

Then a gust of wind blew Curdken’s hat away, and he had to chase it over hill and dale. When he returned from the pursuit she had finished her combing and curling, and his chance of getting any hair was gone. Curdken was very angry, and wouldn’t speak to her. So they herded the geese till evening and then went home.

The next morning, as they passed under the gate, the girl said:

“Oh! Falada, ’tis you hang there;”

and the head replied:

“’Tis you; pass under, Princess fair:
If your mother only knew,
Her heart would surely break in two.”

Then she went on her way till she came to the common, where she sat down and began to comb out her hair; then Curdken ran up to her and wanted to grasp some of the hair from her head, but she called out hastily:

“Wind, wind, gently sway,
Blow Curdken’s hat away;
Let him chase o’er field and wold
Till my locks of ruddy gold,
Now astray and hanging down,
Be combed and plaited in a crown.”

Then a puff of wind came and blew Curdken’s hat far away, so that he had to run after it; and when he returned she had long finished putting up her golden locks, and he couldn’t get any hair; so they watched the geese till it was dark.

But that evening when they got home Curdken went to the old King, and said: “I refuse to herd geese any longer with that girl.” “For what reason?” asked the old King. “Because she does nothing but annoy me all day long,” replied Curdken; and he proceeded to relate all her iniquities, and said: “Every morning as we drive the flock through the dark gate she says to a horse’s head that hangs on the wall:

“‘Oh! Falada, ’tis you hang there’;

and the head replies:

“‘’Tis you; pass under, Princess fair:
If your mother only knew,
Her heart would surely break in two.’”

And Curdken went on to tell what passed on the common where the geese fed, and how he had always to chase his hat.

The old King bade him go and drive forth his flock as usual next day; and when morning came he himself took up his position behind the dark gate, and heard how the goose-girl greeted Falada. Then he followed her through the field, and hid himself behind a bush on the common. He soon saw with his own eyes how the goose-boy and the goose-girl looked after the geese, and how after a time the maiden sat down and loosed her hair, that glittered like gold, and repeated:

“Wind, wind, gently sway,
Blow Curdken’s hat away;
Let him chase o’er field and wold
Till my locks of ruddy gold
Now astray and hanging down,
Be combed and plaited in a crown.”

Then a gust of wind came and blew Curdken’s hat away, so that he had to fly over hill and dale after it, and the girl in the meantime quietly combed and plaited her hair: all this the old King observed, and returned to the palace without anyone having noticed him. In the evening when the goose-girl came home he called her aside, and asked her why she behaved as she did. “I may not tell you why; how dare I confide my woes to anyone? for I swore not to by heaven, otherwise I should have lost my life.”

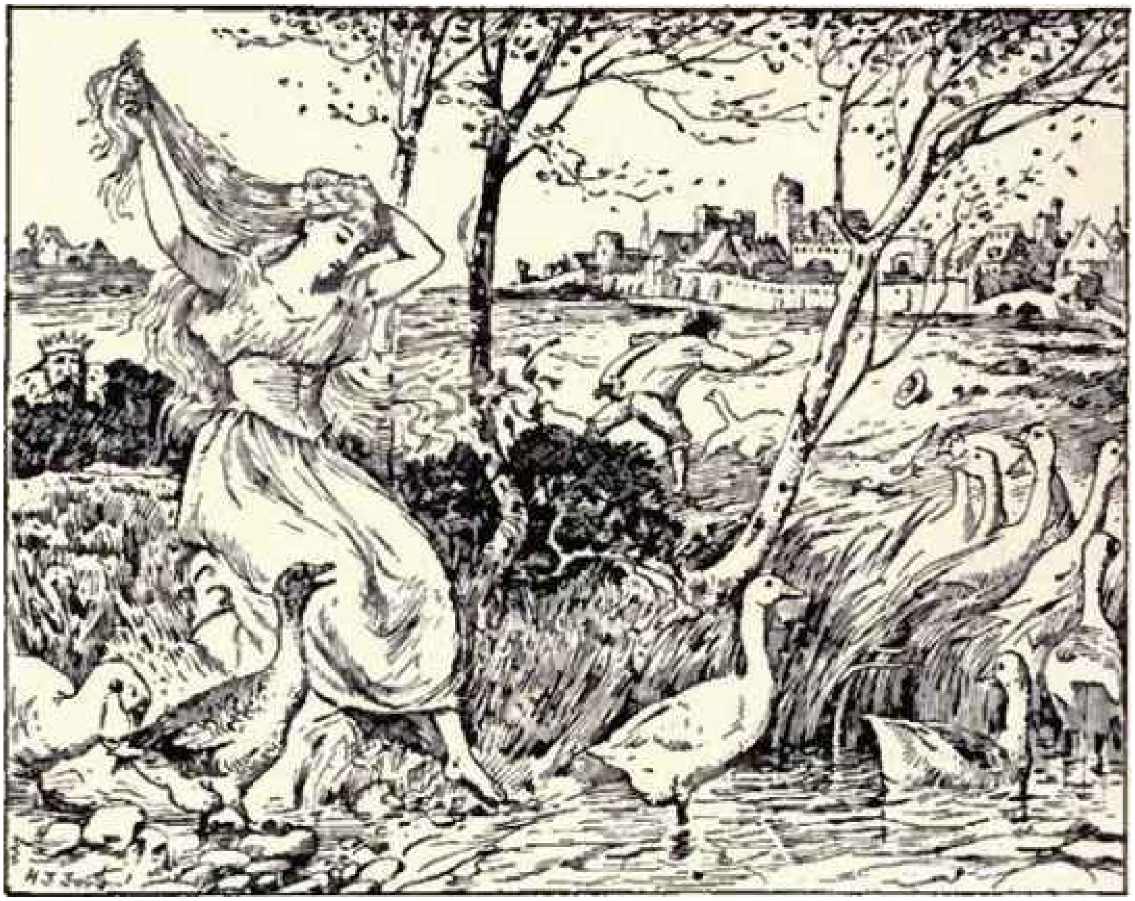

The old King begged her to tell him all, and left her no peace, but he could get nothing out of her. At last he said: “Well, if you won’t tell me, confide your trouble to the iron stove there,” and he went away. Then she crept to the stove, and began to sob and cry and to pour out her poor little heart, and said: “Here I sit, deserted by all the world, I who am a king’s daughter, and a false waiting-maid has forced me to take off my own clothes, and has taken my place with my bridegroom, while I have to fulfill the lowly office of goose-girl.

“If my mother only knew
Her heart would surely break in two.”

But the old King stood outside at the stove chimney, and listened to her words. Then he entered the room again, and bidding her leave the stove, he ordered royal apparel to be put on her, in which she looked amazingly lovely. Then he summoned his son, and revealed to him that he had got the false bride, who was nothing but a waiting-maid, while the real one, in the guise of the ex-goose-girl, was standing at his side. The young King rejoiced from his heart when he saw her beauty and learned how good she was, and a great banquet was prepared, to which everyone was bidden. The bridegroom sat at the head of the table, the Princess on one side of him and the waiting-maid on the other; but she was so dazzled that she did not recognize the Princess in her glittering garments. Now when they had eaten and drunk, and were merry, the old King asked the waiting-maid to solve a knotty point for him. “What,” said he, “should be done to a certain person who has deceived everyone?” and he proceeded to relate the whole story, ending up with, “Now what sentence should be passed?” Then the false bride answered: “She deserves to be put stark naked into a barrel lined with sharp nails, which should be dragged by two white horses up and down the street till she is dead.”

“You are the person,” said the King, “and you have passed sentence on yourself; and even so it shall be done to you.” And when the sentence had been carried out the young King was married to his real bride, and both reigned over the kingdom in peace and happiness.(1)

(1) Grimm.

TOADS AND DIAMONDS

THERE was once upon a time a widow who had two daughters. The eldest was so much like her in the face and humor that whoever looked upon the daughter saw the mother. They were both so disagreeable and so proud that there was no living with them.

The youngest, who was the very picture of her father for courtesy and sweetness of temper, was withal one of the most beautiful girls ever seen. As people naturally love their own likeness, this mother even doted on her eldest daughter and at the same time had a horrible aversion for the youngest — she made her eat in the kitchen and work continually.

Among other things, this poor child was forced twice a day to draw water above a mile and a-half off the house, and bring home a pitcher full of it. One day, as she was at this fountain, there came to her a poor woman, who begged of her to let her drink.

“Oh! ay, with all my heart, Goody,” said this pretty little girl; and rinsing immediately the pitcher, she took up some water from the clearest place of the fountain, and gave it to her, holding up the pitcher all the while, that she might drink the easier.

The good woman, having drunk, said to her:

“You are so very pretty, my dear, so good and so mannerly, that I cannot help giving you a gift.” For this was a fairy, who had taken the form of a poor country woman, to see how far the civility and good manners of this pretty girl would go. “I will give you for a gift,” continued the Fairy, “that, at every word you speak, there shall come out of your mouth either a flower or a jewel.”

When this pretty girl came home her mother scolded her for staying so long at the fountain.

“I beg your pardon, mamma,” said the poor girl, “for not making more haste.”

And in speaking these words there came out of her mouth two roses, two pearls, and two diamonds.

“What is it I see there?” said the mother, quite astonished. “I think I see pearls and diamonds come out of the girl’s mouth! How happens this, child?”

This was the first time she had ever called her child.

The poor creature told her frankly all the matter, not without dropping out infinite numbers of diamonds.

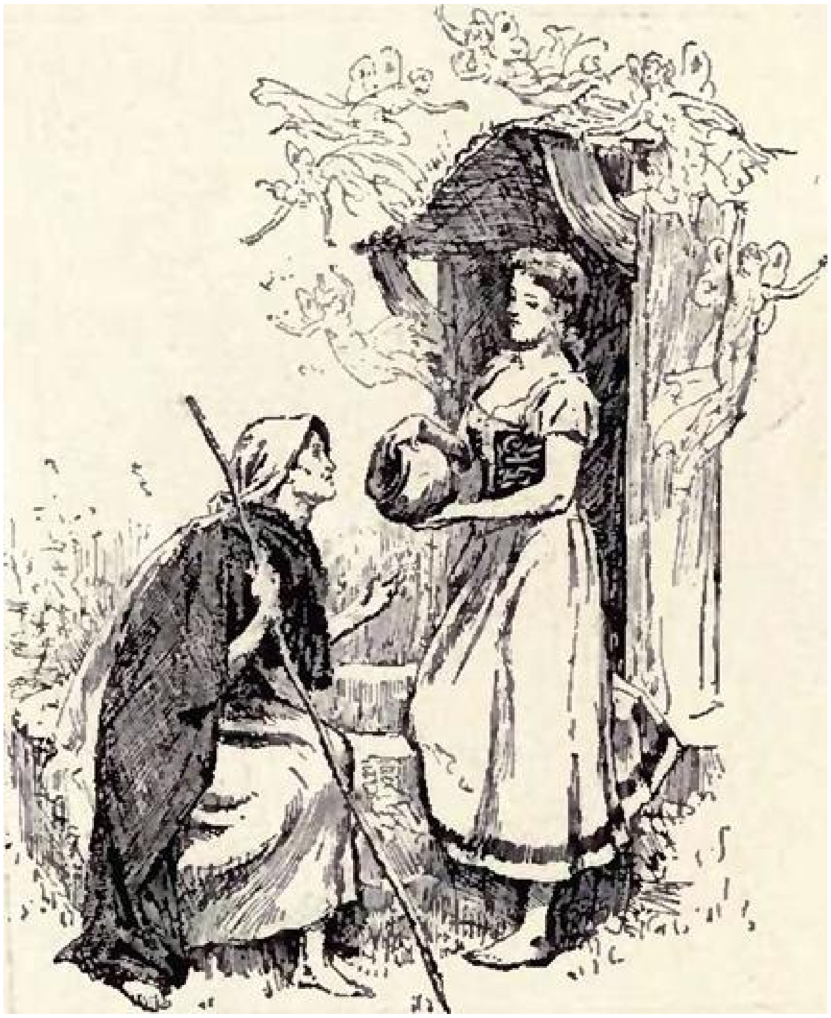

"In good faith," cried the mother, "I must send my child thither. Come hither, Fanny; look what comes out of thy sister's mouth when she speaks. Wouldst not thou be glad, my dear, to have the same gift given thee? Thou hast nothing else to do but go and draw water out of the fountain, and when a certain poor woman asks you to let her drink, to give it to her very civilly."

"It would be a very fine sight indeed," said this ill-bred minx, "to see me go draw water."

"You shall go, hussy!" said the mother; "and this minute."

So away she went, but grumbling all the way, taking with her the best silver tankard in the house.

She was no sooner at the fountain than she saw coming out of the wood a lady most gloriously dressed, who came up to her, and asked to drink. This was, you must know, the very fairy who appeared to her sister, but now had taken the air and dress of a princess, to see how far this girl's rudeness would go.

"Am I come hither," said the proud, saucy one, "to serve you with water, pray? I suppose the silver tankard was brought purely for your ladyship, was it?

However, you may drink out of it, if you have a fancy.”

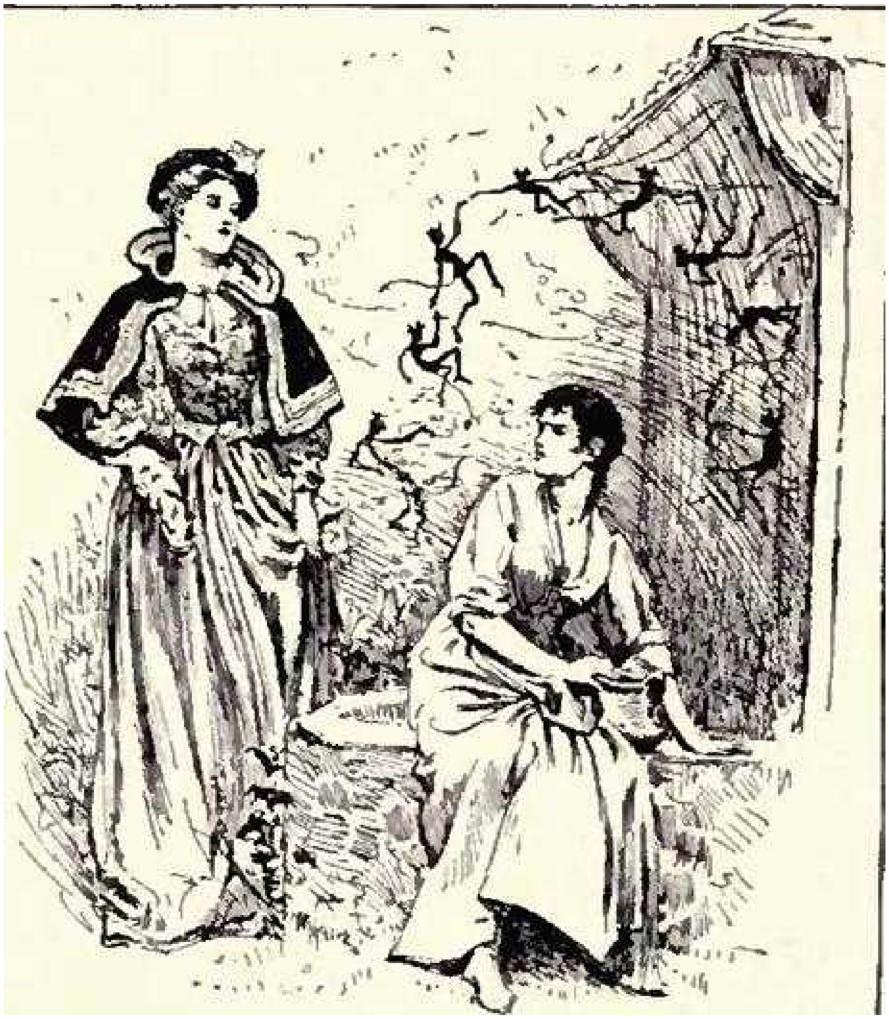

“You are not over and above mannerly,” answered the Fairy, without putting herself in a passion. “Well, then, since you have so little breeding, and are so disobliging, I give you for a gift that at every word you speak there shall come out of your mouth a snake or a toad.”

So soon as her mother saw her coming she cried out:

“Well, daughter?”

“Well, mother?” answered the pert hussy, throwing out of her mouth two vipers and two toads.

“Oh! mercy,” cried the mother; “what is it I see? Oh! it is that wretch her sister who has occasioned all this; but she shall pay for it”; and immediately she ran to beat her. The poor child fled away from her, and went to hide herself in the forest, not far from thence.

The King’s son, then on his return from hunting, met her, and seeing her so very pretty, asked her what she did there alone and why she cried.

“Alas! sir, my mamma has turned me out of doors.”

The King’s son, who saw five or six pearls and as many diamonds come out of her mouth, desired her to tell him how that happened. She thereupon told him the whole story; and so the King’s son fell in love with her, and, considering himself that such a gift was worth more than any marriage portion, conducted her to the palace of the King his father, and there married her.

As for the sister, she made herself so much hated that her own mother turned her off; and the miserable wretch, having wandered about a good while without finding anybody to take her in, went to a corner of the wood, and there died.(1)

(1) Charles Perrault.

PRINCE DARLING

ONCE upon a time there lived a king who was so just and kind that his subjects called him “the Good King.” It happened one day, when he was out hunting, that a little white rabbit, which his dogs were chasing, sprang into his arms for shelter. The King stroked it gently, and said to it:

“Well, bunny, as you have come to me for protection I will see that nobody hurts you.”

And he took it home to his palace and had it put in a pretty little house, with all sorts of nice things to eat.

That night, when he was alone in his room, a beautiful lady suddenly appeared before him; her long dress was as white as snow, and she had a crown of white roses upon her head. The good King was very much surprised to see her, for he knew his door had been tightly shut, and he could not think how she had got in. But she said to him:

“I am the Fairy Truth. I was passing through the wood when you were out hunting, and I wished to find out if you were really good, as everybody said you were, so I took the shape of a little rabbit and came to your arms for shelter, for I know that those who are merciful to animals will be still kinder to their fellow-men. If you had refused to help me I should have been certain that you were wicked. I thank you for the kindness you have shown me, which has made me your friend for ever. You have only to ask me for anything you want and I promise that I will give it to you.”

“Madam,” said the good King, “since you are a fairy you no doubt know all my wishes. I have but one son whom I love very dearly, that is why he is called Prince Darling. If you are really good enough to wish to do me a favor, I beg that you will become his friend.”

“With all my heart,” answered the Fairy. “I can make your son the handsomest prince in the world, or the richest, or the most powerful; choose whichever you like for him.”

“I do not ask either of these things for my son,” replied the good King; “but if you will make him the best of princes, I shall indeed be grateful to you. What good would it do him to be rich, or handsome, or to possess all the kingdoms of the world if he were wicked? You know well he would still be unhappy. Only a good man can be really contented.”

“You are quite right,” answered the Fairy; “but it is not in my power to make

Prince Darling a good man unless he will help me; he must himself try hard to become good, I can only promise to give him good advice, to scold him for his faults, and to punish him if he will not correct and punish himself.”

The good King was quite satisfied with this promise; and very soon afterward he died.

Prince Darling was very sorry, for he loved his father with all his heart, and he would willingly have given all his kingdoms and all his treasures of gold and silver if they could have kept the good King with him.

Two days afterward, when the Prince had gone to bed, the Fairy suddenly appeared to him and said:

“I promised your father that I would be your friend, and to keep my word I have come to bring you a present.” At the same time she put a little gold ring upon his finger.

“Take great care of this ring,” she said: “it is more precious than diamonds; every time you do a bad deed it will prick your finger, but if, in spite of its pricking, you go on in your own evil way, you will lose my friendship, and I shall become your enemy.”

So saying, the Fairy disappeared, leaving Prince Darling very much astonished.

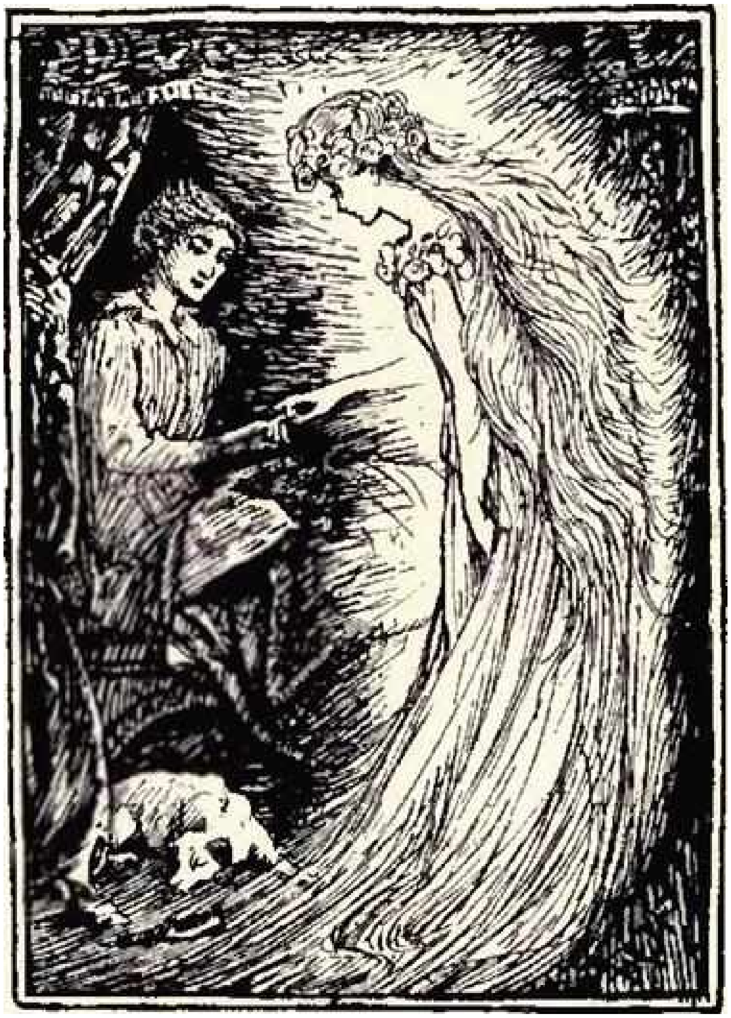

For some time he behaved so well that the ring never pricked him, and that made him so contented that his subjects called him Prince Darling the Happy.

One day, however, he went out hunting, but could get no sport, which put him in a very bad temper; it seemed to him as he rode along that his ring was pressing into his finger, but as it did not prick him he did not heed it. When he got home and went to his own room, his little dog Bibi ran to meet him, jumping round him with pleasure. “Get away!” said the Prince, quite gruffly. “I don’t want you, you are in the way.”

The poor little dog, who didn’t understand this at all, pulled at his coat to make him at least look at her, and this made Prince Darling so cross that he gave her quite a hard kick.

Instantly his ring pricked him sharply, as if it had been a pin. He was very much surprised, and sat down in a corner of his room feeling quite ashamed of himself.

“I believe the Fairy is laughing at me,” he thought. “Surely I can have done no great wrong in just kicking a tiresome animal! What is the good of my being ruler of a great kingdom if I am not even allowed to beat my own dog?”

“I am not making fun of you,” said a voice, answering Prince Darling’s thoughts. “You have committed three faults. First of all, you were out of temper because you could not have what you wanted, and you thought all men and animals were only made to do your pleasure; then you were really angry, which is very naughty indeed; and lastly, you were cruel to a poor little animal who did not in the least deserve to be ill-treated.

“I know you are far above a little dog, but if it were right and allowable that great people should ill-treat all who are beneath them, I might at this moment beat you, or kill you, for a fairy is greater than a man. The advantage of possessing a great empire is not to be able to do the evil that one desires, but to do all the good that one possibly can.”

The Prince saw how naughty he had been, and promised to try and do better in future, but he did not keep his word. The fact was he had been brought up by a foolish nurse, who had spoiled him when he was little. If he wanted anything he only had to cry and fret and stamp his feet and she would give him whatever he asked for, which had made him self-willed; also she had told him from morning to night that he would one day be a king, and that kings were very happy, because everyone was bound to obey and respect them, and no one could prevent them from doing just as they liked.

When the Prince grew old enough to understand, he soon learned that there could be nothing worse than to be proud, obstinate, and conceited, and he had really tried to cure himself of these defects, but by that time all his faults had become habits; and a bad habit is very hard to get rid of. Not that he was naturally of a bad disposition; he was truly sorry when he had been naughty, and said:

“I am very unhappy to have to struggle against my anger and pride every day; if I had been punished for them when I was little they would not be such a trouble to me now.”

His ring pricked him very often, and sometimes he left off what he was doing at once; but at other times he would not attend to it. Strangely enough, it gave him only a slight prick for a trifling fault, but when he was really naughty it made his finger actually bleed. At last he got tired of being constantly reminded, and wanted to be able to do as he liked, so he threw his ring aside, and thought himself the happiest of men to have got rid of its teasing pricks. He gave himself up to doing every foolish thing that occurred to him, until he became quite wicked and nobody could like him any longer.

One day, when the Prince was walking about, he saw a young girl who was so very pretty that he made up his mind at once that he would marry her. Her name was Celia, and she was as good as she was beautiful.

Prince Darling fancied that Celia would think herself only too happy if he offered to make her a great queen, but she said fearlessly:

“Sire, I am only a shepherdess, and a poor girl, but, nevertheless, I will not marry you.”

“Do you dislike me?” asked the Prince, who was very much vexed at this answer.

“No, my Prince,” replied Celia; “I cannot help thinking you very handsome; but what good would riches be to me, and all the grand dresses and splendid carriages that you would give me, if the bad deeds which I should see you do every day made me hate and despise you?”

The Prince was very angry at this speech, and commanded his officers to make Celia a prisoner and carry her off to his palace. All day long the remembrance of what she had said annoyed him, but as he loved her he could not make up his mind to have her punished.

One of the Prince’s favorite companions was his foster-brother, whom he trusted entirely; but he was not at all a good man, and gave Prince Darling very bad advice, and encouraged him in all his evil ways. When he saw the Prince so downcast he asked what was the matter, and when he explained that he could not bear Celia’s bad opinion of him, and was resolved to be a better man in order to please her, this evil adviser said to him:

“You are very kind to trouble yourself about this little girl; if I were you I would soon make her obey me. Remember that you are a king, and that it would be laughable to see you trying to please a shepherdess, who ought to be only too glad to be one of your slaves. Keep her in prison, and feed her on bread and water for a little while, and then, if she still says she will not marry you, have her head cut off, to teach other people that you mean to be obeyed. Why, if you cannot make a girl like that do as you wish, your subjects will soon forget that they are only put into this world for our pleasure.”

“But,” said Prince Darling, “would it not be a shame if I had an innocent girl put to death? For Celia has done nothing to deserve punishment.”

“If people will not do as you tell them they ought to suffer for it,” answered his foster-brother; “but even if it were unjust, you had better be accused of that by your subjects than that they should find out that they may insult and thwart you as often as they please.”

In saying this he was touching a weak point in his brother’s character; for the Prince’s fear of losing any of his power made him at once abandon his first idea of trying to be good, and resolve to try and frighten the shepherdess into consenting to marry him.

His foster-brother, who wanted him to keep this resolution, invited three young courtiers, as wicked as himself to sup with the Prince, and they persuaded him to drink a great deal of wine, and continued to excite his anger against Celia by telling him that she had laughed at his love for her; until at last, in quite a furious rage, he rushed off to find her, declaring that if she still refused to marry him she should be sold as a slave the very next day.

But when he reached the room in which Celia had been locked up, he was greatly surprised to find that she was not in it, though he had the key in his own pocket all the time. His anger was terrible, and he vowed vengeance against whoever had helped her to escape. His bad friends, when they heard him, resolved to turn his wrath upon an old nobleman who had formerly been his tutor; and who still dared sometimes to tell the Prince of his faults, for he loved him as if he had been his own son. At first Prince Darling had thanked him, but after a time he grew impatient and thought it must be just mere love of fault-finding that made his old tutor blame him when everyone else was praising and flattering him. So he ordered him to retire from his Court, though he still, from time to time, spoke of him as a worthy man whom he respected, even if he no longer loved him. His unworthy friends feared that he might some day take it into his head to recall his old tutor, so they thought they now had a good opportunity of getting him banished for ever.

They reported to the Prince that Suliman, for that was the tutor’s name, had boasted of having helped Celia to escape, and they bribed three men to say that Suliman himself had told them about it. The Prince, in great anger, sent his foster-brother with a number of soldiers to bring his tutor before him, in chains, like a criminal. After giving this order he went to his own room, but he had scarcely got into it when there was a clap of thunder which made the ground shake, and the Fairy Truth appeared suddenly before him.

“I promised your father,” said she sternly, “to give you good advice, and to punish you if you refused to follow it. You have despised my counsel, and have gone your own evil way until you are only outwardly a man; really you are a monster — the horror of everyone who knows you. It is time that I should fulfil my promise, and begin your punishment. I condemn you to resemble the animals whose ways you have imitated. You have made yourself like the lion by your anger, and like the wolf by your greediness. Like a snake, you have ungratefully turned upon one who was a second father to you; your churlishness has made you like a bull. Therefore, in your new form, take the appearance of all these animals.”

The Fairy had scarcely finished speaking when Prince Darling saw to his horror that her words were fulfilled. He had a lion’s head, a bull’s horns, a wolf’s feet, and a snake’s body. At the same instant he found himself in a great forest, beside a clear lake, in which he could see plainly the horrible creature he had become, and a voice said to him:

“Look carefully at the state to which your wickedness has brought you; believe me, your soul is a thousand times more hideous than your body.”

Prince Darling recognized the voice of the Fairy Truth and turned in a fury to catch her and eat her up if he possibly could; but he saw no one, and the same voice went on:

“I laugh at your powerlessness and anger, and I intend to punish your pride by letting you fall into the hands of your own subjects.”

The Prince began to think that the best thing he could do would be to get as far away from the lake as he could, then at least he would not be continually reminded of his terrible ugliness. So he ran toward the wood, but before he had gone many yards he fell into a deep pit which had been made to trap bears, and the hunters, who were hiding in a tree, leaped down, and secured him with several chains, and led him into the chief city of his own kingdom.

On the way, instead of recognizing that his own faults had brought this punishment upon him, he accused the Fairy of being the cause of all his misfortunes, and bit and tore at his chains furiously.

As they approached the town he saw that some great rejoicing was being held, and when the hunters asked what had happened they were told that the Prince, whose only pleasure it was to torment his people, had been found in his room, killed by a thunder-bolt (for that was what was supposed to have become of him). Four of his courtiers, those who had encouraged him in his wicked doings, had tried to seize the kingdom and divide it between them, but the people, who knew it was their bad counsels which had so changed the Prince, had cut off their heads, and had offered the crown to Suliman, whom the Prince had left in prison. This noble lord had just been crowned, and the deliverance of the kingdom was the cause of the rejoicing “For,” they said, “he is a good and just man, and we shall once more enjoy peace and prosperity.”

Prince Darling roared with anger when he heard this; but it was still worse for him when he reached the great square before his own palace. He saw Suliman seated upon a magnificent throne, and all the people crowded round, wishing him a long life that he might undo all the mischief done by his predecessor.

Presently Suliman made a sign with his hand that the people should be silent, and said: “I have accepted the crown you have offered me, but only that I may keep it for Prince Darling, who is not dead as you suppose; the Fairy has assured me that there is still hope that you may some day see him again, good and virtuous as he was when he first came to the throne. Alas!” he continued, “he was led away by flatterers. I knew his heart, and am certain that if it had not been for the bad influence of those who surrounded him he would have been a good king and a father to his people. We may hate his faults, but let us pity him and hope for his restoration. As for me, I would die gladly if that could bring back our Prince to reign justly and worthily once more.”

These words went to Prince Darling’s heart; he realized the true affection and faithfulness of his old tutor, and for the first time reproached himself for all his evil deeds; at the same instant he felt all his anger melting away, and he began quickly to think over his past life, and to admit that his punishment was not more than he had deserved. He left off tearing at the iron bars of the cage in which he was shut up, and became as gentle as a lamb.

The hunters who had caught him took him to a great menagerie, where he was chained up among all the other wild beasts, and he determined to show his sorrow for his past bad behavior by being gentle and obedient to the man who had to take care of him. Unfortunately, this man was very rough and unkind, and though the poor monster was quite quiet, he often beat him without rhyme or reason when he happened to be in a bad temper. One day when this keeper was asleep a tiger broke its chain, and flew at him to eat him up. Prince Darling, who saw what was going on, at first felt quite pleased to think that he should be delivered from his persecutor, but soon thought better of it and wished that he were free.

“I would return good for evil,” he said to himself, “and save the unhappy man’s life.” He had hardly wished this when his iron cage flew open, and he rushed to the side of the keeper, who was awake and was defending himself against the tiger. When he saw the monster had got out he gave himself up for lost, but his fear was soon changed into joy, for the kind monster threw itself upon the tiger and very soon killed it, and then came and crouched at the feet of the man it had saved.

Overcome with gratitude, the keeper stooped to caress the strange creature which had done him such a great service; but suddenly a voice said in his ear:

“A good action should never go unrewarded,” and at the same instant the monster disappeared, and he saw at his feet only a pretty little dog!

Prince Darling, delighted by the change, frisked about the keeper, showing his joy in every way he could, and the man, taking him up in his arms, carried him to the King, to whom he told the whole story.

The Queen said she would like to have this wonderful little dog, and the Prince would have been very happy in his new home if he could have forgotten that he was a man and a king. The Queen petted and took care of him, but she was so afraid that he would get too fat that she consulted the court physician, who said that he was to be fed only upon bread, and was not to have much even of that. So poor Prince Darling was terribly hungry all day long, but he was very patient about it.

One day, when they gave him his little loaf for breakfast, he thought he would like to eat it out in the garden; so he took it up in his mouth and trotted away toward a brook that he knew of a long way from the palace. But he was surprised to find that the brook was gone, and where it had been stood a great house that seemed to be built of gold and precious stones. Numbers of people splendidly dressed were going into it, and sounds of music and dancing and feasting could be heard from the windows.

But what seemed very strange was that those people who came out of the house were pale and thin, and their clothes were torn, and hanging in rags about them. Some fell down dead as they came out before they had time to get away; others crawled farther with great difficulty; while others again lay on the ground, fainting with hunger, and begged a morsel of bread from those who were going into the house, but they would not so much as look at the poor creatures.

Prince Darling went up to a young girl who was trying to eat a few blades of grass, she was so hungry. Touched with compassion, he said to himself:

“I am very hungry, but I shall not die of starvation before I get my dinner; if I give my breakfast to this poor creature perhaps I may save her life.”

So he laid his piece of bread in the girl’s hand, and saw her eat it up eagerly.

She soon seemed to be quite well again, and the Prince, delighted to have been able to help her, was thinking of going home to the palace, when he heard a great outcry, and, turning round, saw Celia, who was being carried against her will into the great house.

For the first time the Prince regretted that he was no longer the monster, then he would have been able to rescue Celia; now he could only bark feebly at the people who were carrying her off, and try to follow them, but they chased and kicked him away.

He determined not to quit the place till he knew what had become of Celia, and blamed himself for what had befallen her.

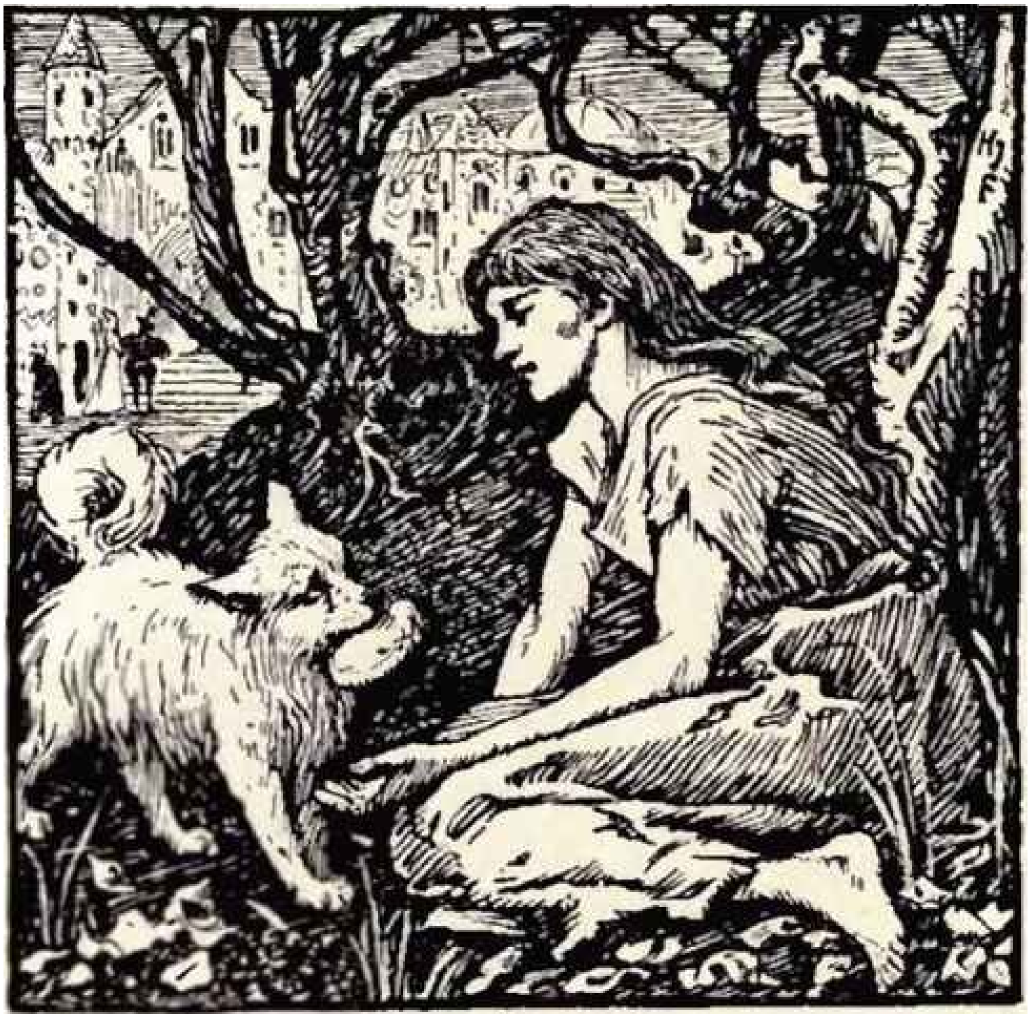

“Alas!” he said to himself, “I am furious with the people who are carrying Celia off, but isn’t that exactly what I did myself, and if I had not been prevented did I not intend to be still more cruel to her?”

Here he was interrupted by a noise above his head — someone was opening a window, and he saw with delight that it was Celia herself, who came forward and threw out a plate of most delicious-looking food, then the window was shut again, and Prince Darling, who had not had anything to eat all day, thought he might as well take the opportunity of getting something. He ran forward to begin, but the young girl to whom he had given his bread gave a cry of terror and took him up in her arms, saying:

“Don’t touch it, my poor little dog — that house is the palace of pleasure, and everything that comes out of it is poisoned!”

At the same moment a voice said:

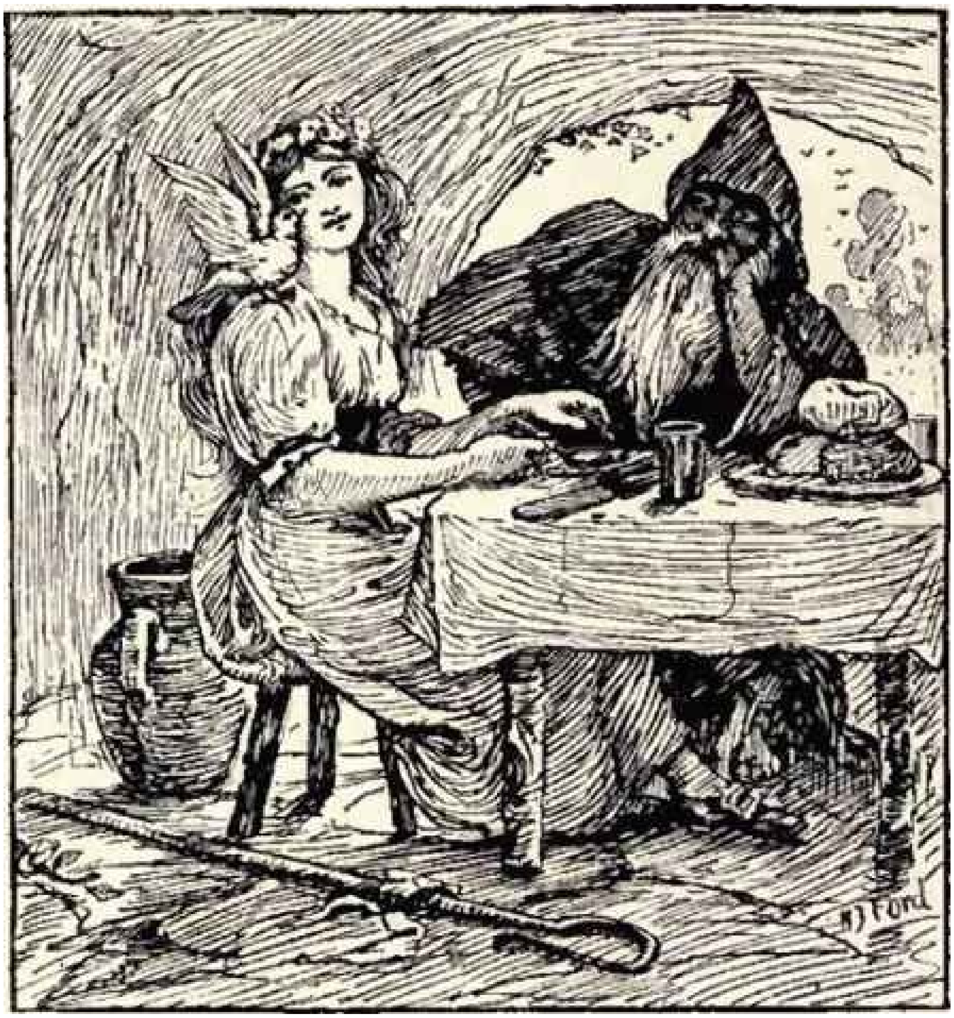

“You see a good action always brings its reward,” and the Prince found himself changed into a beautiful white dove. He remembered that white was the favorite color of the Fairy Truth, and began to hope that he might at last win back her favor. But just now his first care was for Celia, and rising into the air he flew round and round the house, until he saw an open window; but he searched through every room in vain. No trace of Celia was to be seen, and the Prince, in despair, determined to search through the world till he found her. He flew on and on for several days, till he came to a great desert, where he saw a cavern, and, to his delight, there sat Celia, sharing the simple breakfast of an old hermit.

Overjoyed to have found her, Prince Darling perched upon her shoulder, trying to express by his caresses how glad he was to see her again, and Celia, surprised and delighted by the tameness of this pretty white dove, stroked it softly, and said, though she never thought of its understanding her:

“I accept the gift that you make me of yourself, and I will love you always.”

“Take care what you are saying, Celia,” said the old hermit; “are you prepared to keep that promise?”

“Indeed, I hope so, my sweet shepherdess,” cried the Prince, who was at that moment restored to his natural shape. “You promised to love me always; tell me that you really mean what you said, or I shall have to ask the Fairy to give me back the form of the dove which pleased you so much.”

“You need not be afraid that she will change her mind,” said the Fairy, throwing off the hermit’s robe in which she had been disguised and appearing before them.

“Celia has loved you ever since she first saw you, only she would not tell you while you were so obstinate and naughty. Now you have repented and mean to be good you deserve to be happy, and so she may love you as much as she likes.”

Celia and Prince Darling threw themselves at the Fairy’s feet, and the Prince was never tired of thanking her for her kindness. Celia was delighted to hear how sorry he was for all his past follies and misdeeds, and promised to love him as long as she lived.

“Rise, my children,” said the Fairy, “and I will transport you to the palace, and Prince Darling shall have back again the crown he forfeited by his bad behavior.”

While she was speaking, they found themselves in Suliman’s hall, and his delight was great at seeing his dear master once more. He gave up the throne joyfully to the Prince, and remained always the most faithful of his subjects.

Celia and Prince Darling reigned for many years, but he was so determined to govern worthily and to do his duty that his ring, which he took to wearing again, never once pricked him severely.(1)

(1) Cabinet des Fees.

BLUE BEARD

There was a man who had fine houses, both in town and country, a deal of silver and gold plate, embroidered furniture, and coaches gilded all over with gold. But this man was so unlucky as to have a blue beard, which made him so frightfully ugly that all the women and girls ran away from him.

One of his neighbors, a lady of quality, had two daughters who were perfect beauties. He desired of her one of them in marriage, leaving to her choice which of the two she would bestow on him. They would neither of them have him, and sent him backward and forward from one another, not being able to bear the thoughts of marrying a man who had a blue beard, and what besides gave them disgust and aversion was his having already been married to several wives, and nobody ever knew what became of them.

Blue Beard, to engage their affection, took them, with the lady their mother and three or four ladies of their acquaintance, with other young people of the neighborhood, to one of his country seats, where they stayed a whole week.

There was nothing then to be seen but parties of pleasure, hunting, fishing, dancing, mirth, and feasting. Nobody went to bed, but all passed the night in rallying and joking with each other. In short, everything succeeded so well that the youngest daughter began to think the master of the house not to have a beard so very blue, and that he was a mighty civil gentleman.

As soon as they returned home, the marriage was concluded. About a month afterward, Blue Beard told his wife that he was obliged to take a country journey for six weeks at least, about affairs of very great consequence, desiring her to divert herself in his absence, to send for her friends and acquaintances, to carry them into the country, if she pleased, and to make good cheer wherever she was.

“Here,” said he, “are the keys of the two great wardrobes, wherein I have my best furniture; these are of my silver and gold plate, which is not every day in use; these open my strong boxes, which hold my money, both gold and silver; these my caskets of jewels; and this is the master-key to all my apartments. But for this little one here, it is the key of the closet at the end of the great gallery on the ground floor. Open them all; go into all and every one of them, except that little closet, which I forbid you, and forbid it in such a manner that, if you happen to open it, there’s nothing but what you may expect from my just anger and resentment.”

She promised to observe, very exactly, whatever he had ordered; when he, after having embraced her, got into his coach and proceeded on his journey.

Her neighbors and good friends did not stay to be sent for by the new married lady, so great was their impatience to see all the rich furniture of her house, not daring to come while her husband was there, because of his blue beard, which frightened them. They ran through all the rooms, closets, and wardrobes, which were all so fine and rich that they seemed to surpass one another.

After that they went up into the two great rooms, where was the best and richest furniture; they could not sufficiently admire the number and beauty of the tapestry, beds, couches, cabinets, stands, tables, and looking-glasses, in which you might see yourself from head to foot; some of them were framed with glass, others with silver, plain and gilded, the finest and most magnificent ever were seen.

They ceased not to extol and envy the happiness of their friend, who in the meantime in no way diverted herself in looking upon all these rich things, because of the impatience she had to go and open the closet on the ground floor. She was so much pressed by her curiosity that, without considering that it was very uncivil to leave her company, she went down a little back staircase, and with such excessive haste that she had twice or thrice like to have broken her neck.

Coming to the closet-door, she made a stop for some time, thinking upon her husband’s orders, and considering what unhappiness might attend her if she was disobedient; but the temptation was so strong she could not overcome it. She then took the little key, and opened it, trembling, but could not at first see anything plainly, because the windows were shut. After some moments she began to perceive that the floor was all covered over with clotted blood, on which lay the bodies of several dead women, ranged against the walls. (These were all the wives whom Blue Beard had married and murdered, one after another.) She thought she should have died for fear, and the key, which she pulled out of the lock, fell out of her hand.

After having somewhat recovered her surprise, she took up the key, locked the door, and went upstairs into her chamber to recover herself; but she could not, she was so much frightened. Having observed that the key of the closet was stained with blood, she tried two or three times to wipe it off, but the blood would not come out; in vain did she wash it, and even rub it with soap and sand; the blood still remained, for the key was magical and she could never make it quite clean; when the blood was gone off from one side, it came again on the other.

Blue Beard returned from his journey the same evening, and said he had received letters upon the road, informing him that the affair he went about was ended to his advantage. His wife did all she could to convince him she was extremely glad of his speedy return.

Next morning he asked her for the keys, which she gave him, but with such a trembling hand that he easily guessed what had happened.

“What!” said he, “is not the key of my closet among the rest?”

“I must certainly have left it above upon the table,” said she.

“Fail not to bring it to me presently,” said Blue Beard.

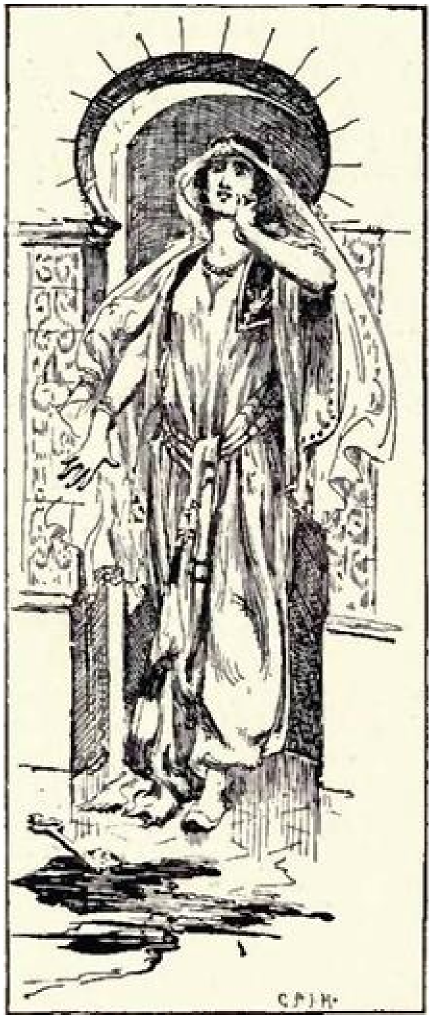

After several goings backward and forward she was forced to bring him the key. Blue Beard, having very attentively considered it, said to his wife,

“How comes this blood upon the key?”

“I do not know,” cried the poor woman, paler than death.

“You do not know!” replied Blue Beard. “I very well know. You were resolved to go into the closet, were you not? Mighty well, madam; you shall go in, and take your place among the ladies you saw there.”

Upon this she threw herself at her husband’s feet, and begged his pardon with all the signs of true repentance, vowing that she would never more be disobedient. She would have melted a rock, so beautiful and sorrowful was she; but Blue Beard had a heart harder than any rock!

“You must die, madam,” said he, “and that presently.”

“Since I must die,” answered she (looking upon him with her eyes all bathed in tears), “give me some little time to say my prayers.”

“I give you,” replied Blue Beard, “half a quarter of an hour, but not one moment more.”

When she was alone she called out to her sister, and said to her:

“Sister Anne” (for that was her name), “go up, I beg you, upon the top of the tower, and look if my brothers are not coming over; they promised me that they would come to-day, and if you see them, give them a sign to make haste.”

Her sister Anne went up upon the top of the tower, and the poor afflicted wife cried out from time to time:

“Anne, sister Anne, do you see anyone coming?”

And sister Anne said:

“I see nothing but the sun, which makes a dust, and the grass, which looks green.”

In the meanwhile Blue Beard, holding a great sabre in his hand, cried out as loud as he could bawl to his wife:

“Come down instantly, or I shall come up to you.”

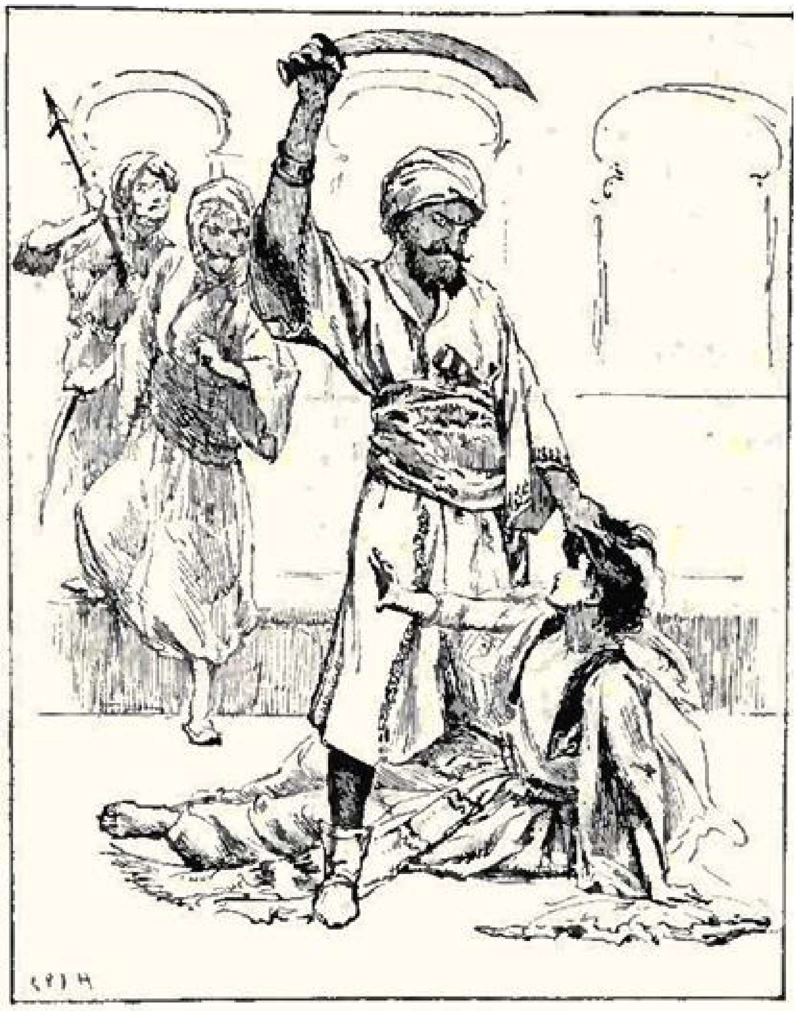

“One moment longer, if you please,” said his wife, and then she cried out very softly, “Anne, sister Anne, dost thou see anybody coming?”

And sister Anne answered:

“I see nothing but the sun, which makes a dust, and the grass, which is green.”

“Come down quickly,” cried Blue Beard, “or I will come up to you.”

“I am coming,” answered his wife; and then she cried, “Anne, sister Anne, dost thou not see anyone coming?”

“I see,” replied sister Anne, “a great dust, which comes on this side here.”

“Are they my brothers?”

“Alas! no, my dear sister, I see a flock of sheep.”

“Will you not come down?” cried Blue Beard

“One moment longer,” said his wife, and then she cried out: “Anne, sister Anne, dost thou see nobody coming?”

“I see,” said she, “two horsemen, but they are yet a great way off.”

“God be praised,” replied the poor wife joyfully; “they are my brothers; I will make them a sign, as well as I can, for them to make haste.”

Then Blue Beard bawled out so loud that he made the whole house tremble. The distressed wife came down, and threw herself at his feet, all in tears, with her hair about her shoulders.

“This signifies nothing,” says Blue Beard; “you must die”; then, taking hold of her hair with one hand, and lifting up the sword with the other, he was going to take off her head. The poor lady, turning about to him, and looking at him with dying eyes, desired him to afford her one little moment to recollect herself.

“No, no,” said he, “recommend thyself to God,” and was just ready to strike...

At this very instant there was such a loud knocking at the gate that Blue Beard made a sudden stop. The gate was opened, and presently entered two horsemen, who, drawing their swords, ran directly to Blue Beard. He knew them to be his wife’s brothers, one a dragoon, the other a musketeer, so that he ran away immediately to save himself; but the two brothers pursued so close that they overtook him before he could get to the steps of the porch, when they ran their swords through his body and left him dead. The poor wife was almost as dead as her husband, and had not strength enough to rise and welcome her brothers.

Blue Beard had no heirs, and so his wife became mistress of all his estate. She made use of one part of it to marry her sister Anne to a young gentleman who had loved her a long while; another part to buy captains commissions for her brothers, and the rest to marry herself to a very worthy gentleman, who made her forget the ill time she had passed with Blue Beard.(1)

(1) Charles Perrault.

TRUSTY JOHN

Once upon a time there was an old king who was so ill that he thought to himself, “I am most likely on my death-bed.” Then he said, “Send Trusty John to me.” Now Trusty John was his favorite servant, and was so called because all his life he had served him so faithfully.

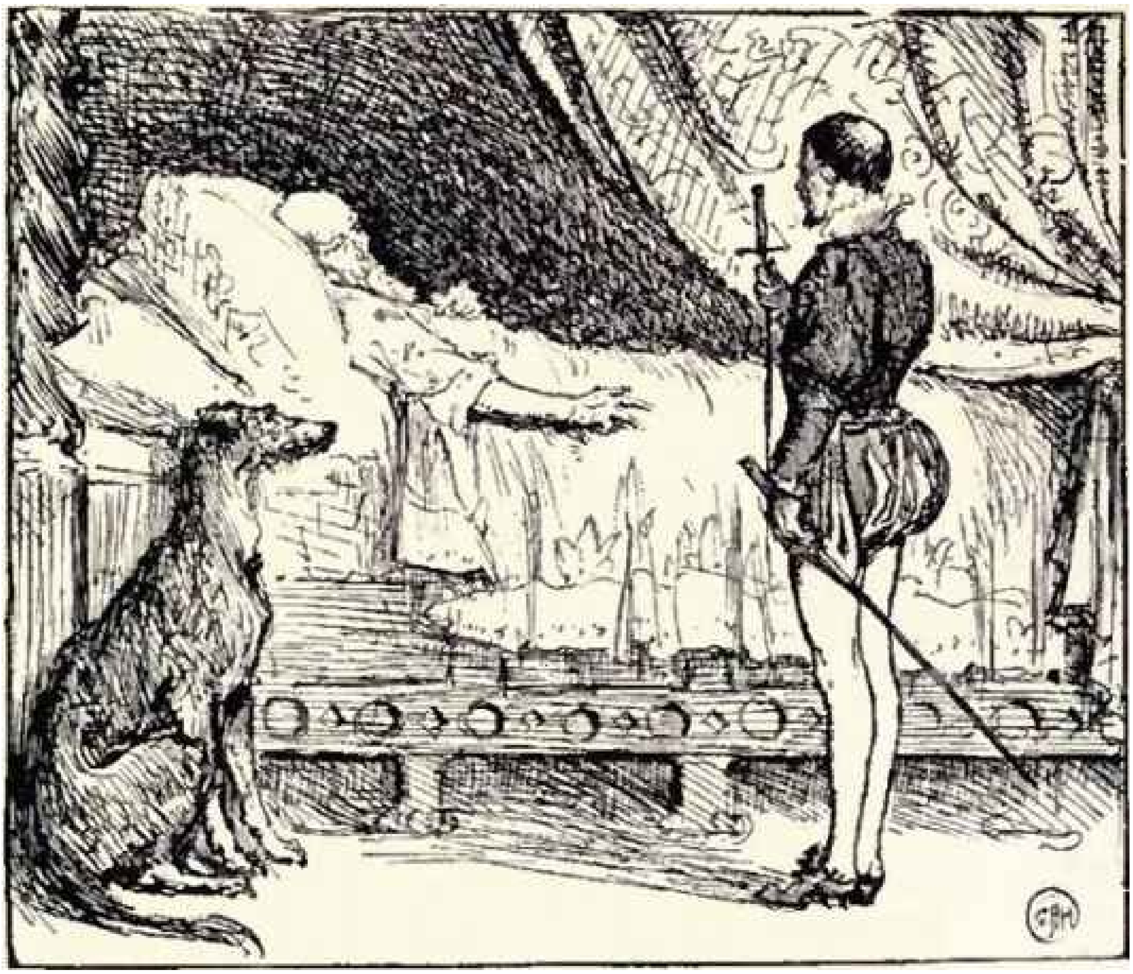

When he approached the bed the King spake to him: “Most trusty John, I feel my end is drawing near, and I could face it without a care were it not for my son. He is still too young to decide everything for himself, and unless you promise me to instruct him in all he should know, and to be to him as a father, I shall not close my eyes in peace.” Then Trusty John answered: “I will never desert him, and will serve him faithfully, even though it should cost me my life.” Then the old King said: “Now I die comforted and in peace”; and then he went on: “After my death you must show him the whole castle, all the rooms and apartments and vaults, and all the treasures that lie in them; but you must not show him the last room in the long passage, where the picture of the Princess of the Golden Roof is hidden. When he beholds that picture he will fall violently in love with it and go off into a dead faint, and for her sake he will encounter many dangers; you must guard him from this.” And when Trusty John had again given the King his hand upon it the old man became silent, laid his head on the pillow, and died.

When the old King had been carried to his grave Trusty John told the young King what he had promised his father on his death-bed, and added: “And I shall assuredly keep my word, and shall be faithful to you as I have been to him, even though it should cost me my life.”

Now when the time of mourning was over, Trusty John said to him: “It is time you should see your inheritance. I will show you your ancestral castle.” So he took him over everything, and let him see all the riches and splendid apartments, only the one room where the picture was he did not open. But the picture was placed so that if the door opened you gazed straight upon it, and it was so beautifully painted that you imagined it lived and moved, and that it was the most lovable and beautiful thing in the whole world. But the young King noticed that Trusty John always missed one door, and said: “Why do you never open this one for me?” “There is something inside that would appall you,” he answered. But the King replied: “I have seen the whole castle, and shall find out what is in there”; and with these words he approached the door and wanted to force it open. But Trusty John held him back, and said: “I promised your father before his death that you shouldn’t see what that room contains. It might bring both you and me to great grief.” “Ah! no,” answered the young King; “if I don’t get in, it will be my certain destruction; I should have no peace night or day till I had seen what was in the room with my own eyes. Now I don’t budge from the spot till you have opened the door.”

Then Trusty John saw there was no way out of it, so with a heavy heart and many sighs he took the key from the big bunch. When he had opened the door he stepped in first, and thought to cover the likeness so that the King might not perceive it; but it was hopeless: the King stood on tiptoe and looked over his shoulder. And when he saw the picture of the maid, so beautiful and glittering with gold and precious stones, he fell swooning to the ground. Trusty John lifted him up, carried him to bed, and thought sorrowfully: “The curse has come upon us; gracious heaven! what will be the end of it all?” Then he poured wine down his throat till he came to himself again. The first words he spoke were: “Oh! who is the original of the beautiful picture?” “She is the Princess of the Golden Roof,” answered Trusty John. Then the King continued: “My love for her is so great that if all the leaves on the trees had tongues they could not express it; my very life depends on my winning her. You are my most trusty John: you must stand by me."

The faithful servant pondered long how they were to set about the matter, for it was said to be difficult even to get into the presence of the Princess. At length he hit upon a plan, and spoke to the King: "All the things she has about her — tables, chairs, dishes, goblets, bowls, and all her household furniture — are made of gold. You have in your treasure five tons of gold; let the goldsmiths of your kingdom manufacture them into all manner of vases and vessels, into all sorts of birds and game and wonderful beasts; that will please her. We shall go to her with them and try our luck." The King summoned all his goldsmiths, and they had to work hard day and night, till at length the most magnificent things were completed. When a ship had been laden with them the faithful John disguised himself as a merchant, and the King had to do the same, so that they should be quite unrecognizable. And so they crossed the seas and journeyed till they reached the town where the Princess of the Golden Roof dwelt.

Trusty John made the King remain behind on the ship and await his return. "Perhaps," he said, "I may bring the Princess back with me, so see that everything is in order; let the gold ornaments be arranged and the whole ship decorated." Then he took a few of the gold things in his apron, went ashore, and proceeded straight to the palace. When he came to the courtyard he found a beautiful maiden standing at the well, drawing water with two golden pails. And as she was about to carry away the glittering water she turned round and saw the stranger, and asked him who he was. Then he replied: "I am a merchant," and opening his apron, he let her peep in. "Oh! my," she cried; "what beautiful gold wares!" she set down her pails, and examined one thing after the other. Then she said: "The Princess must see this, she has such a fancy for gold things that she will buy up all you have." She took him by the hand and let him into the palace, for she was the lady's maid.

When the Princess had seen the wares she was quite enchanted, and said: "They are all so beautifully made that I shall buy everything you have." But Trusty John said: "I am only the servant of a rich merchant, what I have here is nothing compared to what my master has on his ship; his merchandise is more artistic and costly than anything that has ever been made in gold before." She desired to have everything brought up to her, but he said: "There is such a quantity of things that it would take many days to bring them up, and they would take up so many rooms that you would have no space for them in your house." Thus her desire and curiosity were excited to such an extent that at last she said: "Take me to your ship; I shall go there myself and view your master's treasures.”

Then Trusty John was quite delighted, and brought her to the ship; and the King, when he beheld her, saw that she was even more beautiful than her picture, and thought every moment that his heart would burst. She stepped on to the ship, and the King led her inside. But Trusty John remained behind with the steersman, and ordered the ship to push off. “Spread all sail, that we may fly on the ocean like a bird in the air.” Meanwhile the King showed the Princess inside all his gold wares, every single bit of it — dishes, goblets, bowls, the birds and game, and all the wonderful beasts. Many hours passed thus, and she was so happy that she did not notice that the ship was sailing away.

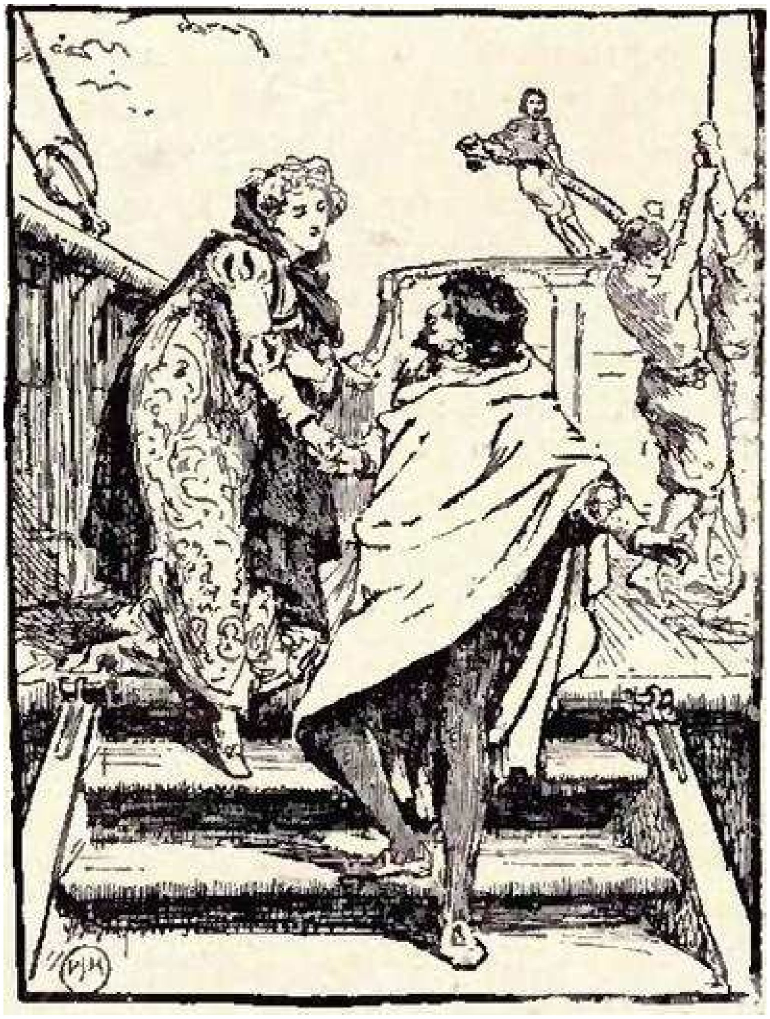

After she had seen the last thing she thanked the merchant and prepared to go home; but when she came to the ship’s side she saw that they were on the high seas, far from land, and that the ship was speeding on its way under full canvas. “Oh!” she cried in terror, “I am deceived, carried away and betrayed into the power of a merchant; I would rather have died!” But the King seized her hand and spake: “I am no merchant, but a king of as high birth as yourself; and it was my great love for you that made me carry you off by stratagem. The first time I saw your likeness I fell to the ground in a swoon.” When the Princess of the Golden Roof heard this she was comforted, and her heart went out to him, so that she willingly consented to become his wife.

Now it happened one day, while they were sailing on the high seas, that Trusty John, sitting on the forepart of the ship, fiddling away to himself, observed three ravens in the air flying toward him. He ceased playing, and listened to what they were saying, for he understood their language. The one croaked: “Ah, ha! so he’s bringing the Princess of the Golden Roof home.” “Yes,” answered the second, “but he’s not got her yet.” “Yes, he has,” spake the third, “for she’s sitting beside him on the ship.” Then number one began again and cried: “That’ll not help him! When they reach the land a chestnut horse will dash forward to greet them: the King will wish to mount it, and if he does it will gallop away with him, and disappear into the air, and he will never see his bride again.” “Is there no escape for him?” asked number two. “Oh! yes, if someone else mounts quickly and shoots the horse dead with the pistol that is sticking in the holster, then the young King is saved. But who’s to do that? And anyone who knows it and tells him will be turned into stone from his feet to his knees.” Then spake number two: “I know more than that: even if the horse is slain, the young King will still not keep his bride: when they enter the palace together they will find a ready-made wedding shirt in a cupboard, which looks as though it were woven of gold and silver, but is really made of nothing but sulphur and tar: when the King puts it on it will burn him to his marrow and bones.” Number three asked: “Is there no way of escape, then?” “Oh! yes,” answered number two: “If someone seizes the shirt with gloved hands and throws it into the fire, and lets it burn, then the young King is saved. But what’s the good? Anyone knowing this and telling it will have half his body turned into stone, from his knees to his heart.” Then number three spake: “I know yet more: though the bridal shirt too be burnt, the King hasn’t even then secured his bride: when the dance is held after the wedding, and the young Queen is dancing, she will suddenly grow deadly white, and drop down like one dead, and unless some one lifts her up and draws three drops of blood from her right side, and spits them out again, she will die. But if anyone who knows this betrays it, he will be turned into stone from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet.” When the ravens had thus conversed they fled onward, but Trusty John had taken it all in, and was sad and depressed from that time forward; for if he were silent to his master concerning what he had heard, he would involve him in misfortune; but if he took him into his confidence, then he himself would forfeit his life. At last he said: “I will stand by my master, though it should be my ruin.”

Now when they drew near the land it came to pass just as the ravens had predicted, and a splendid chestnut horse bounded forward. “Capital!” said the King; “this animal shall carry me to my palace,” and was about to mount, but Trusty John was too sharp for him, and, springing up quickly, seized the pistol out of the holster and shot the horse dead. Then the other servants of the King, who at no time looked favorably on Trusty John, cried out: “What a sin to kill the beautiful beast that was to bear the King to his palace!” But the King spake: “Silence! let him alone; he is ever my most trusty John. Who knows for what good end he may have done this thing?” So they went on their way and entered the palace, and there in the hall stood a cupboard in which lay the ready-made bridal shirt, looking for all the world as though it were made of gold and silver. The young King went toward it and was about to take hold of it, but Trusty John, pushing him aside, seized it with his gloved hands, threw it hastily into the fire, and let it burn The other servants commenced grumbling again, and said: “See, he’s actually burning the King’s bridal shirt.” But the young King spoke: “Who knows for what good purpose he does it? Let him alone, he is my most trusty John.” Then the wedding was celebrated, the dance began, and the bride joined in, but Trusty John watched her countenance carefully. Of a sudden she grew deadly white, and fell to the ground as if she were dead. He at once sprang hastily toward her, lifted her up, and bore her to a room, where he laid her down, and kneeling beside her he drew three drops of blood from her right side, and spat them out. She soon breathed again and came to herself; but the young King had watched the proceeding, and not knowing why Trusty John had acted as he did, he flew into a passion, and cried: “Throw him into prison.” On the following morning sentence was passed on Trusty John, and he was condemned to be hanged. As he stood on the gallows he said: “Every one doomed to death has the right to speak once before he dies; and I too have that privilege?” “Yes,” said the King, “it shall be granted to you.” So Trusty John spoke: “I am unjustly condemned, for I have always been faithful to you”; and he proceeded to relate how he had heard the ravens’ conversation on the sea, and how he had to do all he did in order to save his master. Then the King cried: “Oh! my most trusty John, pardon! pardon! Take him down.” But as he uttered the last word Trusty John had fallen lifeless to the ground, and was a stone.

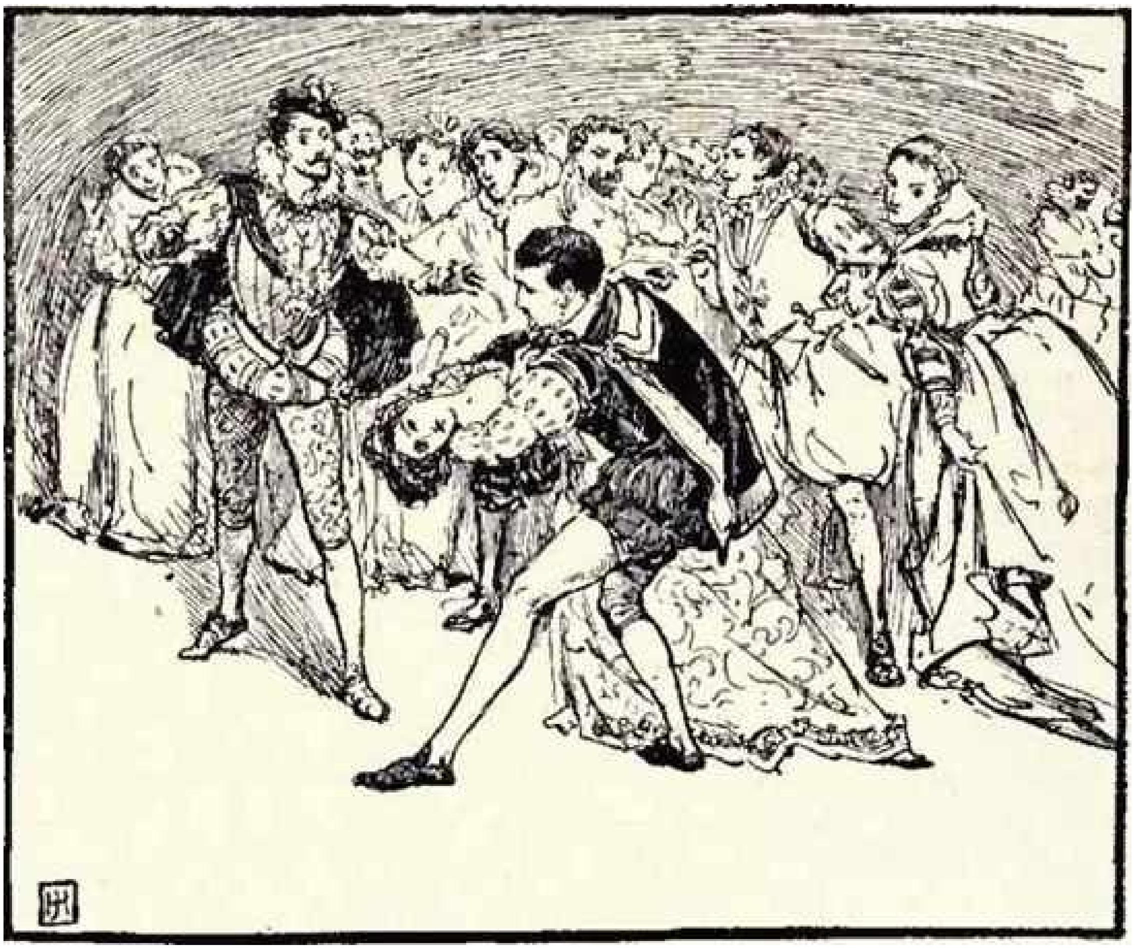

The King and Queen were in despair, and the King spake: “Ah! how ill have I rewarded such great fidelity!” and made them lift up the stone image and place it in his bedroom near his bed. As often as he looked at it he wept and said: “Oh! if I could only restore you to life, my most trusty John!” After a time the Queen gave birth to twins, two small sons, who throve and grew, and were a constant joy to her. One day when the Queen was at church, and the two children sat and played with their father, he gazed again full of grief on the stone statue, and sighing, wailed: “Oh, if I could only restore you to life, my most trusty John!” Suddenly the stone began to speak, and said: “Yes, you can restore me to life again if you are prepared to sacrifice what you hold most dear.” And the King cried out: “All I have in the world will I give up for your sake.” The stone continued: “If you cut off with your own hand the heads of your two children, and smear me with their blood, I shall come back to life.” The King was aghast when he heard that he had himself to put his children to death; but when he thought of Trusty John’s fidelity, and how he had even died for him, he drew his sword, and with his own hand cut the heads off his children. And when he had smeared the stone with their blood, life came back, and Trusty John stood once more safe and sound before him. He spake to the King: “Your loyalty shall be rewarded,” and taking up the heads of the children, he placed them on their bodies, smeared the wounds with their blood, and in a minute they were all right again and jumping about as if nothing had happened. Then the King was full of joy, and when he saw the Queen coming, he hid Trusty John and the two children in a big cupboard. As she entered he said to her: “Did you pray in church?” “Yes,” she answered, “but my thoughts dwelt constantly on Trusty John, and of what he has suffered for us.” Then he spake: “Dear wife, we can restore him to life, but the price asked is our two little sons; we must sacrifice them.” The Queen grew white and her heart sank, but she replied: “We owe it to him on account of his great fidelity.” Then he rejoiced that she was of the same mind as he had been, and going forward he opened the cupboard, and fetched the two children and Trusty John out, saying: “God be praised! Trusty John is free once more, and we have our two small sons again.” Then he related to her all that had passed, and they lived together happily ever afterward.(1)

(1) Grimm.

THE BRAVE LITTLE TAILOR

One summer’s day a little tailor sat on his table by the window in the best of spirits, and sewed for dear life. As he was sitting thus a peasant woman came down the street, calling out: “Good jam to sell, good jam to sell.” This sounded sweetly in the tailor’s ears; he put his frail little head out of the window, and shouted: “up here, my good woman, and you’ll find a willing customer.” The woman climbed up the three flights of stairs with her heavy basket to the tailor’s room, and he made her spread out all the pots in a row before him. He examined them all, lifted them up and smelled them, and said at last: “This jam seems good, weigh me four ounces of it, my good woman; and even if it’s a quarter of a pound I won’t stick at it.” The woman, who had hoped to find a good market, gave him what he wanted, but went away grumbling wrathfully. “Now heaven shall bless this jam for my use,” cried the little tailor, “and it shall sustain and strengthen me.” He fetched some bread out of a cupboard, cut a round off the loaf, and spread the jam on it. “That won’t taste amiss,” he said; “but I’ll finish that waistcoat first before I take a bite.” He placed the bread beside him, went on sewing, and out of the lightness of his heart kept on making his stitches bigger and bigger. In the meantime the smell of the sweet jam rose to the ceiling, where heaps of flies were sitting, and attracted them to such an extent that they swarmed on to it in masses. “Ha! who invited you?” said the tailor, and chased the unwelcome guests away. But the flies, who didn’t understand English, refused to let themselves be warned off, and returned again in even greater numbers. At last the little tailor, losing all patience, reached out of his chimney corner for a duster, and exclaiming: “Wait, and I’ll give it to you,” he beat them mercilessly with it. When he left off he counted the slain, and no fewer than seven lay dead before him with outstretched legs. “What a desperate fellow I am!” said he, and was filled with admiration at his own courage. “The whole town must know about this”; and in great haste the little tailor cut out a girdle, hemmed it, and embroidered on it in big letters, “Seven at a blow.” “What did I say, the town? no, the whole world shall hear of it,” he said; and his heart beat for joy as a lamb wags his tail.

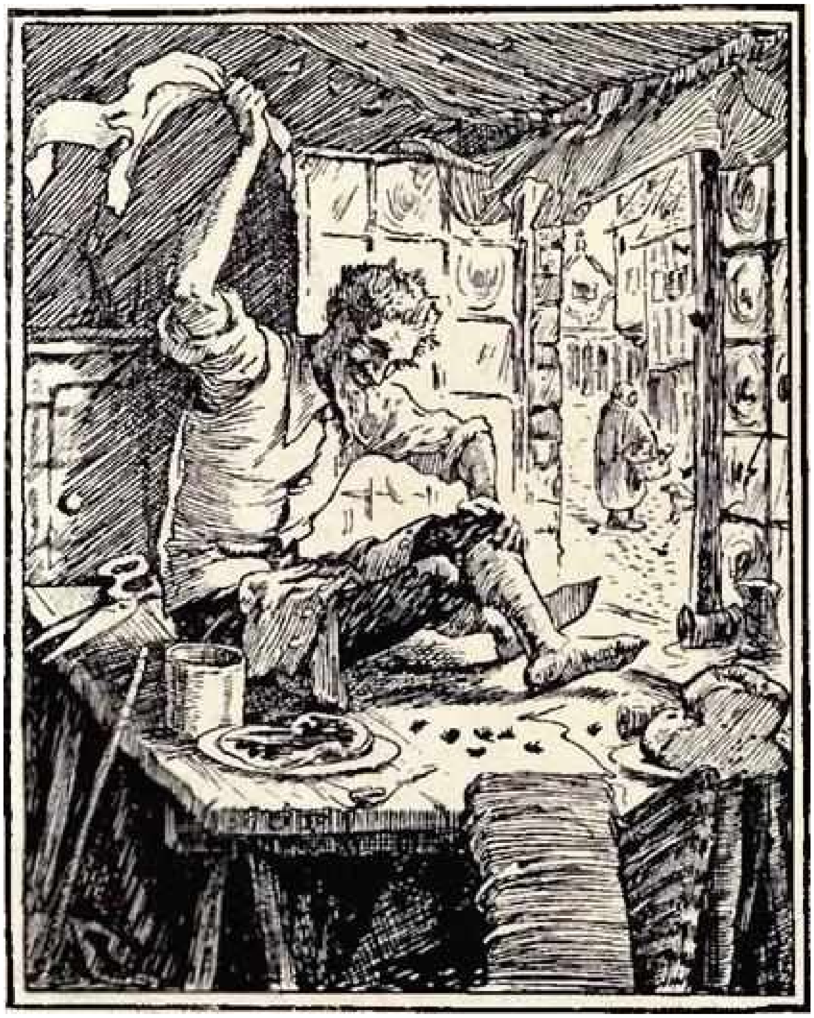

The tailor strapped the girdle round his waist and set out into the wide world, for he considered his workroom too small a field for his prowess. Before he set forth he looked round about him, to see if there was anything in the house he could take with him on his journey; but he found nothing except an old cheese, which he took possession of. In front of the house he observed a bird that had been caught in some bushes, and this he put into his wallet beside the cheese. Then he went on his way merrily, and being light and agile he never felt tired. His way led up a hill, on the top of which sat a powerful giant, who was calmly surveying the landscape. The little tailor went up to him, and greeting him cheerfully said: “Good-day, friend; there you sit at your ease viewing the whole wide world. I’m just on my way there. What do you say to accompanying me?” The giant looked contemptuously at the tailor, and said: “What a poor wretched little creature you are!” “That’s a good joke,” answered the little tailor, and unbuttoning his coat he showed the giant the girdle. “There now, you can read what sort of a fellow I am.” The giant read: “Seven at a blow”; and thinking they were human beings the tailor had slain, he conceived a certain respect for the little man. But first he thought he’d test him, so taking up a stone in his hand, he squeezed it till some drops of water ran out. “Now you do the same,” said the giant, “if you really wish to be thought strong.” “Is that all?” said the little tailor; “that’s child’s play to me,” so he dived into his wallet, brought out the cheese, and pressed it till the whey ran out. “My squeeze was in sooth better than yours,” said he. The giant didn’t know what to say, for he couldn’t have believed it of the little fellow. To prove him again, the giant lifted a stone and threw it so high that the eye could hardly follow it. “Now, my little pigmy, let me see you do that.” “Well thrown,” said the tailor; “but, after all, your stone fell to the ground; I’ll throw one that won’t come down at all.” He dived into his wallet again, and grasping the bird in his hand, he threw it up into the air. The bird, enchanted to be free, soared up into the sky, and flew away never to return. “Well, what do you think of that little piece of business, friend?” asked the tailor. “You can certainly throw,” said the giant; “but now let’s see if you can carry a proper weight.” With these words he led the tailor to a huge oak tree which had been felled to the ground, and said: “If you are strong enough, help me to carry the tree out of the wood.” “Most certainly,” said the little tailor: “just you take the trunk on your shoulder; I’ll bear the top and branches, which is certainly the heaviest part.” The giant laid the trunk on his shoulder, but the tailor sat at his ease among the branches; and the giant, who couldn’t see what was going on behind him, had to carry the whole tree, and the little tailor into the bargain. There he sat behind in the best of spirits, lustily whistling a tune, as if carrying the tree were mere sport. The giant, after dragging the heavy weight for some time, could get on no further, and shouted out: “Hi! I must let the tree fall.” The tailor sprang nimbly down, seized the tree with both hands as if he had carried it the whole way and said to the giant: “Fancy a big lout like you not being able to carry a tree!”

They continued to go on their way together, and as they passed by a cherry tree the giant grasped the top of it, where the ripest fruit hung, gave the branches into the tailor’s hand, and bade him eat. But the little tailor was far too weak to hold the tree down, and when the giant let go the tree swung back into the air, bearing the little tailor with it. When he had fallen to the ground again without hurting himself, the giant said: “What! do you mean to tell me you haven’t the strength to hold down a feeble twig?” “It wasn’t strength that was wanting,” replied the tailor; “do you think that would have been anything for a man who has killed seven at a blow? I jumped over the tree because the huntsmen are shooting among the branches near us. Do you do the like if you dare.” The giant made an attempt, but couldn’t get over the tree, and stuck fast in the branches, so that here too the little tailor had the better of him.

“Well, you’re a fine fellow, after all,” said the giant; “come and spend the night with us in our cave.” The little tailor willingly consented to do this, and following his friend they went on till they reached a cave where several other giants were sitting round a fire, each holding a roast sheep in his hand, of which he was eating. The little tailor looked about him, and thought: “Yes, there’s certainly more room to turn round in here than in my workshop.” The giant showed him a bed and bade him lie down and have a good sleep. But the bed was too big for the little tailor, so he didn’t get into it, but crept away into the corner. At midnight, when the giant thought the little tailor was fast asleep, he rose up, and taking his big iron walking-stick, he broke the bed in two with a blow, and thought he had made an end of the little grasshopper. At early dawn the giants went off to the wood, and quite forgot about the little tailor, till all of a sudden they met him trudging along in the most cheerful manner. The giants were terrified at the apparition, and, fearful lest he should slay them, they all took to their heels as fast as they could.

The little tailor continued to follow his nose, and after he had wandered about for a long time he came to the courtyard of a royal palace, and feeling tired he lay down on the grass and fell asleep. While he lay there the people came, and looking him all over read on his girdle: “Seven at a blow.” “Oh!” they said, “what can this great hero of a hundred fights want in our peaceful land? He must indeed be a mighty man of valor.” They went and told the King about him, and said what a weighty and useful man he’d be in time of war, and that it would be well to secure him at any price. This counsel pleased the King, and he sent one of his courtiers down to the little tailor, to offer him, when he awoke, a commission in their army. The messenger remained standing by the sleeper, and waited till he stretched his limbs and opened his eyes, when he tendered his proposal. “That’s the very thing I came here for,” he answered; “I am quite ready to enter the King’s service.” So he was received with all honor, and given a special house of his own to live in.

But the other officers resented the success of the little tailor, and wished him a thousand miles away. “What’s to come of it all?” they asked each other; “if we quarrel with him, he’ll let out at us, and at every blow seven will fall. There’ll soon be an end of us.” So they resolved to go in a body to the King, and all to send in their papers. “We are not made,” they said, “to hold out against a man who kills seven at a blow.” The King was grieved at the thought of losing all his faithful servants for the sake of one man, and he wished heartily that he had never set eyes on him, or that he could get rid of him. But he didn’t dare to send him away, for he feared he might kill him along with his people, and place himself on the throne. He pondered long and deeply over the matter, and finally came to a conclusion. He sent to the tailor and told him that, seeing what a great and warlike hero he was, he was about to make him an offer. In a certain wood of his kingdom there dwelled two giants who did much harm; by the way they robbed, murdered, burned, and plundered everything about them; "no one could approach them without endangering his life. But if he could overcome and kill these two giants he should have his only daughter for a wife, and half his kingdom into the bargain; he might have a hundred horsemen, too, to back him up." "That's the very thing for a man like me," thought the little tailor; "one doesn't get the offer of a beautiful princess and half a kingdom every day." "Done with you," he answered; "I'll soon put an end to the giants. But I haven't the smallest need of your hundred horsemen; a fellow who can slay seven men at a blow need not be afraid of two."

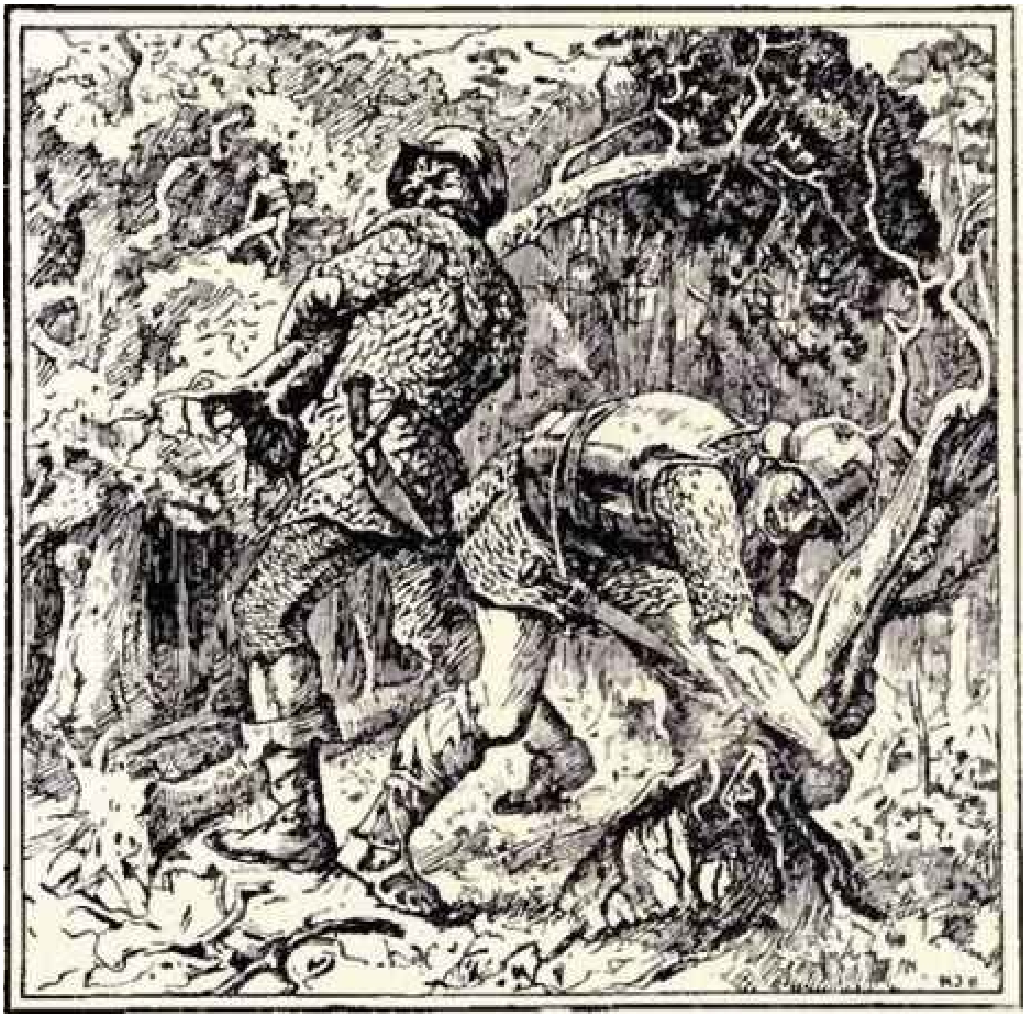

The little tailor set out, and the hundred horsemen followed him. When he came to the outskirts of the wood he said to his followers: "You wait here, I'll manage the giants by myself"; and he went on into the wood, casting his sharp little eyes right and left about him. After a while he spied the two giants lying asleep under a tree, and snoring till the very boughs bent with the breeze. The little tailor lost no time in filling his wallet with stones, and then climbed up the tree under which they lay. When he got to about the middle of it he slipped along a branch till he sat just above the sleepers, when he threw down one stone after the other on the nearest giant. The giant felt nothing for a long time, but at last he woke up, and pinching his companion said: “What did you strike me for?” “I didn’t strike you,” said the other, “you must be dreaming.” They both lay down to sleep again, and the tailor threw down a stone on the second giant, who sprang up and cried: “What’s that for? Why did you throw something at me?” “I didn’t throw anything,” growled the first one. They wrangled on for a time, till, as both were tired, they made up the matter and fell asleep again. The little tailor began his game once more, and flung the largest stone he could find in his wallet with all his force, and hit the first giant on the chest. “This is too much of a good thing!” he yelled, and springing up like a madman, he knocked his companion against the tree till he trembled. He gave, however, as good as he got, and they became so enraged that they tore up trees and beat each other with them, till they both fell dead at once on the ground. Then the little tailor jumped down. “It’s a mercy,” he said, “that they didn’t root up the tree on which I was perched, or I should have had to jump like a squirrel on to another, which, nimble though I am, would have been no easy job.” He drew his sword and gave each of the giants a very fine thrust or two on the breast, and then went to the horsemen and said: “The deed is done, I’ve put an end to the two of them; but I assure you it has been no easy matter, for they even tore up trees in their struggle to defend themselves; but all that’s of no use against one who slays seven men at a blow.” “Weren’t you wounded?” asked the horsemen.

“No fear,” answered the tailor; “they haven’t touched a hair of my head.” But the horsemen wouldn’t believe him till they rode into the wood and found the giants weltering in their blood, and the trees lying around, torn up by the roots.

The little tailor now demanded the promised reward from the King, but he repented his promise, and pondered once more how he could rid himself of the hero. “Before you obtain the hand of my daughter and half my kingdom,” he said to him, “you must do another deed of valor. A unicorn is running about loose in the wood, and doing much mischief; you must first catch it.” “I’m even less afraid of one unicorn than of two giants; seven at a blow, that’s my motto.” He took a piece of cord and an axe with him, went out to the wood, and again told the men who had been sent with him to remain outside. He hadn’t to search long, for the unicorn soon passed by, and, on perceiving the tailor, dashed straight at him as though it were going to spike him on the spot. “Gently,

gently," said he, "not so fast, my friend"; and standing still he waited till the beast was quite near, when he sprang lightly behind a tree; the unicorn ran with all its force against the tree, and rammed its horn so firmly into the trunk that it had no strength left to pull it out again, and was thus successfully captured. "Now I've caught my bird," said the tailor, and he came out from behind the tree, placed the cord round its neck first, then struck the horn out of the tree with his axe, and when everything was in order led the beast before the King.

Still the King didn't want to give him the promised reward and made a third demand. The tailor was to catch a wild boar for him that did a great deal of harm in the wood; and he might have the huntsmen to help him. "Willingly," said the tailor; "that's mere child's play." But he didn't take the huntsmen into the wood with him, and they were well enough pleased to remain behind, for the wild boar had often received them in a manner which did not make them desire its further acquaintance. As soon as the boar perceived the tailor it ran at him with foaming mouth and gleaming teeth, and tried to knock him down; but our alert little friend ran into a chapel that stood near, and got out of the window again with a jump. The boar pursued him into the church, but the tailor skipped round to the door, and closed it securely. So the raging beast was caught, for it was far too heavy and unwieldy to spring out of the window. The little tailor summoned the huntsmen together, that they might see the prisoner with their own eyes. Then the hero betook himself to the King, who was obliged now, whether he liked it or not, to keep his promise, and hand him over his daughter and half his kingdom. Had he known that no hero-warrior, but only a little tailor stood before him, it would have gone even more to his heart. So the wedding was celebrated with much splendor and little joy, and the tailor became a king.

After a time the Queen heard her husband saying one night in his sleep: "My lad, make that waistcoat and patch these trousers, or I'll box your ears." Thus she learned in what rank the young gentleman had been born, and next day she poured forth her woes to her father, and begged him to help her to get rid of a husband who was nothing more nor less than a tailor. The King comforted her, and said: "Leave your bedroom door open to-night, my servants shall stand outside, and when your husband is fast asleep they shall enter, bind him fast, and carry him on to a ship, which shall sail away out into the wide ocean." The Queen was well satisfied with the idea, but the armor-bearer, who had overheard everything, being much attached to his young master, went straight to him and revealed the whole plot. "I'll soon put a stop to the business," said the tailor. That night he and his wife went to bed at the usual time; and when she thought he had fallen asleep she got up, opened the door, and then lay down again. The little tailor, who had only pretended to be asleep, began to call out in a clear voice: “My lad, make that waistcoat and patch those trousers, or I’ll box your ears. I have killed seven at a blow, slain two giants, led a unicorn captive, and caught a wild boar, then why should I be afraid of those men standing outside my door?” The men, when they heard the tailor saying these words, were so terrified that they fled as if pursued by a wild army, and didn’t dare go near him again. So the little tailor was and remained a king all the days of his life.

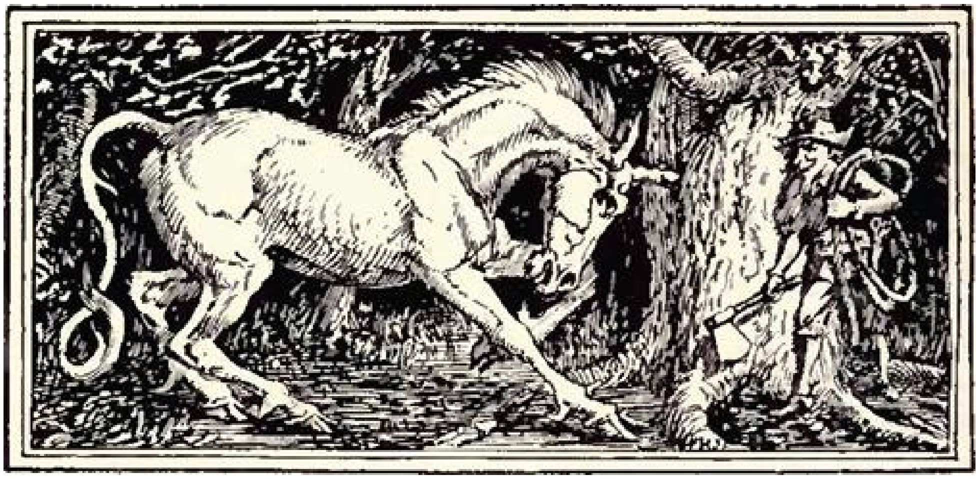

A VOYAGE TO LILLIPUT

CHAPTER I

My father had a small estate in Nottinghamshire, and I was the third of four sons. He sent me to Cambridge at fourteen years old, and after studying there three years I was bound apprentice to Mr. Bates, a famous surgeon in London. There, as my father now and then sent me small sums of money, I spent them in learning navigation, and other arts useful to those who travel, as I always believed it would be some time or other my fortune to do.

Three years after my leaving him my good master, Mr. Bates, recommended me as ship's surgeon to the "Swallow," on which I voyaged three years. When I came back I settled in London, and, having taken part of a small house, I married Miss Mary Burton, daughter of Mr. Edmund Burton, hosier.

But my good master Bates died two years after; and as I had few friends my business began to fail, and I determined to go again to sea. After several voyages, I accepted an offer from Captain W. Pritchard, master of the "Antelope," who was making a voyage to the South Sea. We set sail from Bristol, May 4, 1699; and our voyage at first was very prosperous.

But in our passage to the East Indies we were driven by a violent storm to the north-west of Van Diemen's Land. Twelve of our crew died from hard labor and bad food, and the rest were in a very weak condition. On the 5th of November, the weather being very hazy, the seamen spied a rock within 120 yards of the ship; but the wind was so strong that we were driven straight upon it, and immediately split. Six of the crew, of whom I was one, letting down the boat, got clear of the ship, and we rowed about three leagues, till we could work no longer. We therefore trusted ourselves to the mercy of the waves; and in about half an hour the boat was upset by a sudden squall. What became of my companions in the boat, or those who escaped on the rock or were left in the vessel, I cannot tell; but I conclude they were all lost. For my part, I swam as fortune directed me, and was pushed forward by wind and tide; but when I was able to struggle no longer I found myself within my depth. By this time the storm was much abated. I reached the shore at last, about eight o'clock in the evening, and advanced nearly half a mile inland, but could not discover any sign of inhabitants. I was extremely tired, and with the heat of the weather I found myself much inclined to sleep. I lay down on the grass, which was very short and soft, and slept sounder than ever I did in my life for about nine hours. When I woke, it was just daylight. I attempted to rise, but could not; for as I happened to be lying on my back, I found my arms and legs were fastened on each side to the ground; and my hair, which was long and thick, tied down in the same manner. I could only look upward. The sun began to grow hot, and the light hurt my eyes. I heard a confused noise about me, but could see nothing except the sky. In a little time I felt something alive and moving on my left leg, which, advancing gently over my breast, came almost up to my chin, when, bending my eyes downward, I perceived it to be a human creature, not six inches high, with a bow and arrow in his hands, and a quiver at his back. In the meantime I felt at least forty more following the first. I was in the utmost astonishment, and roared so loud that they all ran back in a fright; and some of them were hurt with the falls they got by leaping from my sides upon the ground. However, they soon returned, and one of them, who ventured so far as to get a full sight of my face, lifted up his hands in admiration. I lay all this while in great uneasiness; but at length, struggling to get loose, I succeeded in breaking the strings that fastened my left arm to the ground; and at the same time, with a violent pull that gave me extreme pain, I a little loosened the strings that tied down my hair, so that I was just able to turn my head about two inches. But the creatures ran off a second time before I could seize them, whereupon there was a great shout, and in an instant I felt above a hundred arrows discharged on my left hand, which pricked me like so many needles. Moreover, they shot another flight into the air, of which some fell on my face, which I immediately covered with my left hand. When this shower of arrows was over I groaned with grief and pain, and then, striving again to get loose, they discharged another flight of arrows larger than the first, and some of them tried to stab me with their spears; but by good luck I had on a leather jacket, which they could not pierce. By this time I thought it most prudent to lie still till night, when, my left hand being already loose, I could easily free myself; and as for the inhabitants, I thought I might be a match for the greatest army they could bring against me if they were all of the same size as him I saw. When the people observed that I was quiet they discharged no more arrows, but by the noise I heard I knew that their number was increased; and about four yards from me, for more than an hour, there was a knocking, like people at work.

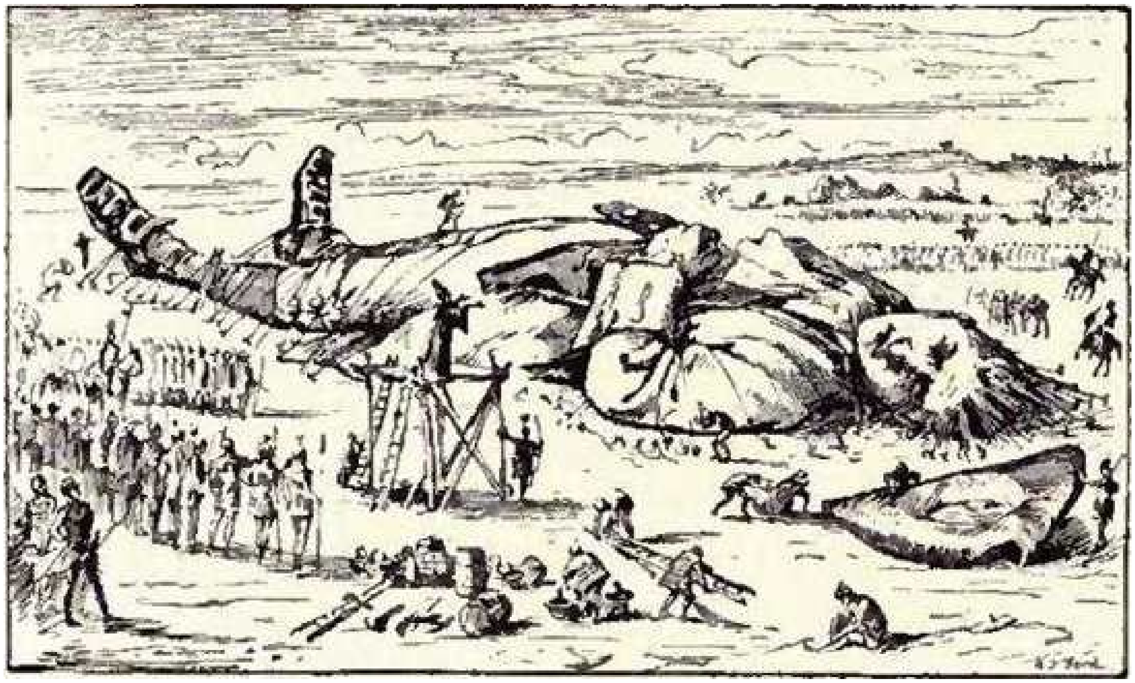

Then, turning my head that way as well as the pegs and strings would let me, I saw a stage set up, about a foot and a half from the ground, with two or three ladders to mount it. From this, one of them, who seemed to be a person of quality, made me a long speech, of which I could not understand a word, though I could tell from his manner that he sometimes threatened me, and sometimes spoke with pity and kindness. I answered in few words, but in the most submissive manner; and, being almost famished with hunger, I could not help showing my impatience by putting my finger frequently to my mouth, to signify that I wanted food. He understood me very well, and, descending from the stage, commanded that several ladders should be set against my sides, on which more than a hundred of the inhabitants mounted, and walked toward my mouth with baskets full of food, which had been sent by the King's orders when he first received tidings of me. There were legs and shoulders like mutton but smaller than the wings of a lark. I ate them two or three at a mouthful, and took three loaves at a time. They supplied me as fast as they could, with a thousand marks of wonder at my appetite. I then made a sign that I wanted something to drink. They guessed that a small quantity would not suffice me, and, being a most ingenious people, they slung up one of their largest hogsheads, then rolled it toward my hand, and beat out the top. I drank it off at a draught, which I might well do, for it did not hold half a pint. They brought me a second hogshead, which I drank, and made signs for more; but they had none to give me. However, I could not wonder enough at the daring of these tiny mortals, who ventured to mount and walk upon my body, while one of my hands was free, without trembling at the very sight of so huge a creature as I must have seemed to them. After some time there appeared before me a person of high rank from his Imperial Majesty. His Excellency, having mounted my right leg, advanced to my face, with about a dozen of his retinue, and spoke about ten minutes, often pointing forward, which, as I afterward found, was toward the capital city, about half a mile distant, whither it was commanded by his Majesty that I should be conveyed. I made a sign with my hand that was loose, putting it to the other (but over his Excellency's head, for fear of hurting him or his train), to show that I desired my liberty. He seemed to understand me well enough, for he shook his head, though he made other signs to let me know that I should have meat and drink enough, and very good treatment. Then I once more thought of attempting to escape; but when I felt the smart of their arrows on my face and hands, which were all in blisters and observed likewise that the number of my enemies increased, I gave tokens to let them know that they might do with me what they pleased. Then they daubed my face and hands with a sweet-smelling ointment, which in a few minutes removed all the smarts of the arrows. The relief from pain and hunger made me drowsy, and presently I fell asleep. I slept about eight hours, as I was told afterward; and it was no wonder, for the physicians, by the Emperor's orders, had mingled a sleeping draught in the hogsheads of wine.

It seems that, when I was discovered sleeping on the ground after my landing, the Emperor had early notice of it, and determined that I should be tied in the manner I have related (which was done in the night, while I slept), that plenty of meat and drink should be sent me, and a machine prepared to carry me to the capital city. Five hundred carpenters and engineers were immediately set to work to prepare the engine. It was a frame of wood, raised three inches from the ground, about seven feet long and four wide, moving upon twenty-two wheels. But the difficulty was to place me on it. Eighty poles were erected for this purpose, and very strong cords fastened to bandages which the workmen had tied round my neck, hands, body, and legs. Nine hundred of the strongest men were employed to draw up these cords by pulleys fastened on the poles, and in less than three hours I was raised and slung into the engine, and there tied fast. Fifteen hundred of the Emperor's largest horses, each about four inches and a half high, were then employed to draw me toward the capital. But while all this was done I still lay in a deep sleep, and I did not wake till four hours after we began our journey.

The Emperor and all his Court came out to meet us when we reached the capital; but his great officials would not suffer his Majesty to risk his person by mounting on my body. Where the carriage stopped there stood an ancient temple, supposed to be the largest in the whole kingdom, and here it was determined that I should lodge. Near the great gate, through which I could easily creep, they fixed ninety-one chains, like those which hang to a lady’s watch, which were locked to my left leg with thirty-six padlocks; and when the workmen found it was impossible for me to break loose, they cut all the strings that bound me. Then I rose up, feeling as melancholy as ever I did in my life. But the noise and astonishment of the people on seeing me rise and walk were inexpressible. The chains that held my left leg were about two yards long, and gave me not only freedom to walk backward and forward in a semicircle, but to creep in and lie at full length inside the temple. The Emperor, advancing toward me from among his courtiers, all most magnificently clad, surveyed me with great admiration, but kept beyond the length of my chain. He was taller by about the breadth of my nail than any of his Court, which alone was enough to strike awe into the beholders, and graceful and majestic. The better to behold him, I lay down on my side, so that my face was level with his, and he stood three yards off. However, I have had him since many times in my hand, and therefore cannot be deceived. His dress was very simple; but he wore a light helmet of gold, adorned with jewels and a plume. He held his sword drawn in his hand, to defend himself if I should break loose; it was almost three inches long, and the hilt was of gold, enriched with diamonds. His voice was shrill, but very clear. His Imperial Majesty spoke often to me, and I answered; but neither of us could understand a word.

CHAPTER II

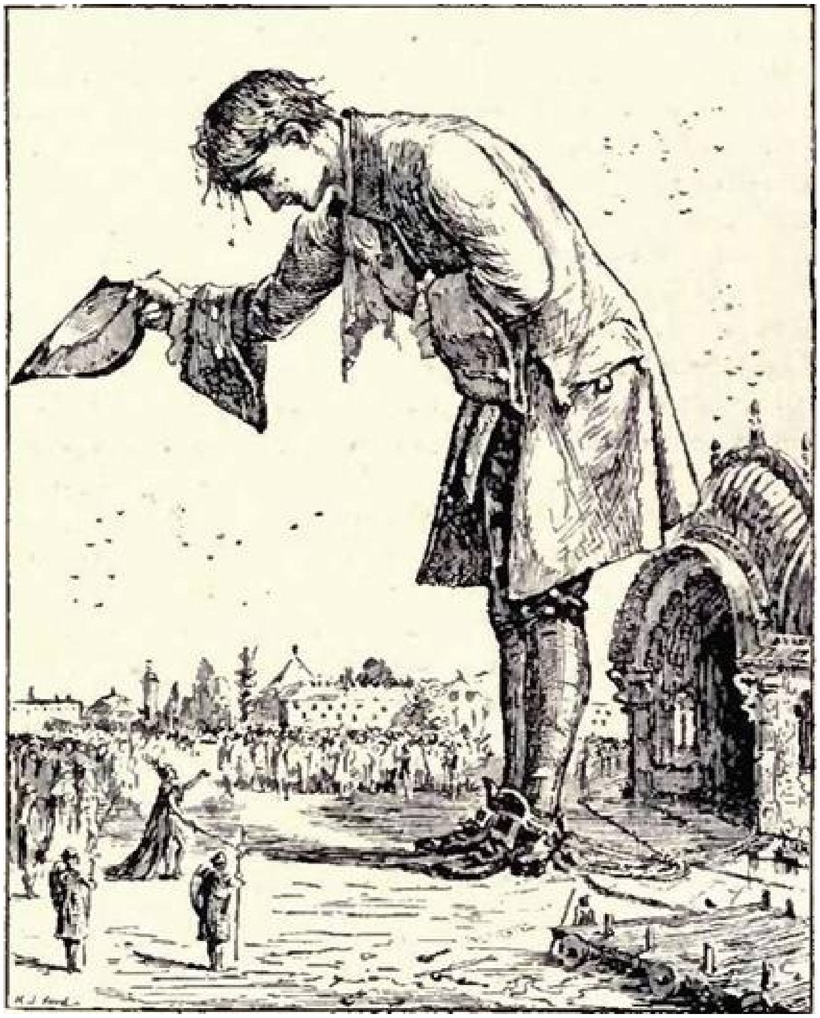

After about two hours the Court retired, and I was left with a strong guard to keep away the crowd, some of whom had had the impudence to shoot their arrows at me as I sat by the door of my house. But the colonel ordered six of them to be seized and delivered bound into my hands. I put five of them into my coat pocket; and as to the sixth, I made a face as if I would eat him alive. The poor man screamed terribly, and the colonel and his officers were much distressed, especially when they saw me take out my penknife. But I soon set them at ease, for, cutting the strings he was bound with, I put him gently on the ground, and away he ran. I treated the rest in the same manner, taking them one by one out of my pocket; and I saw that both the soldiers and people were delighted at this mark of my kindness.

Toward night I got with some difficulty into my house, where I lay on the ground, as I had to do for a fortnight, till a bed was prepared for me out of six hundred beds of the ordinary measure.

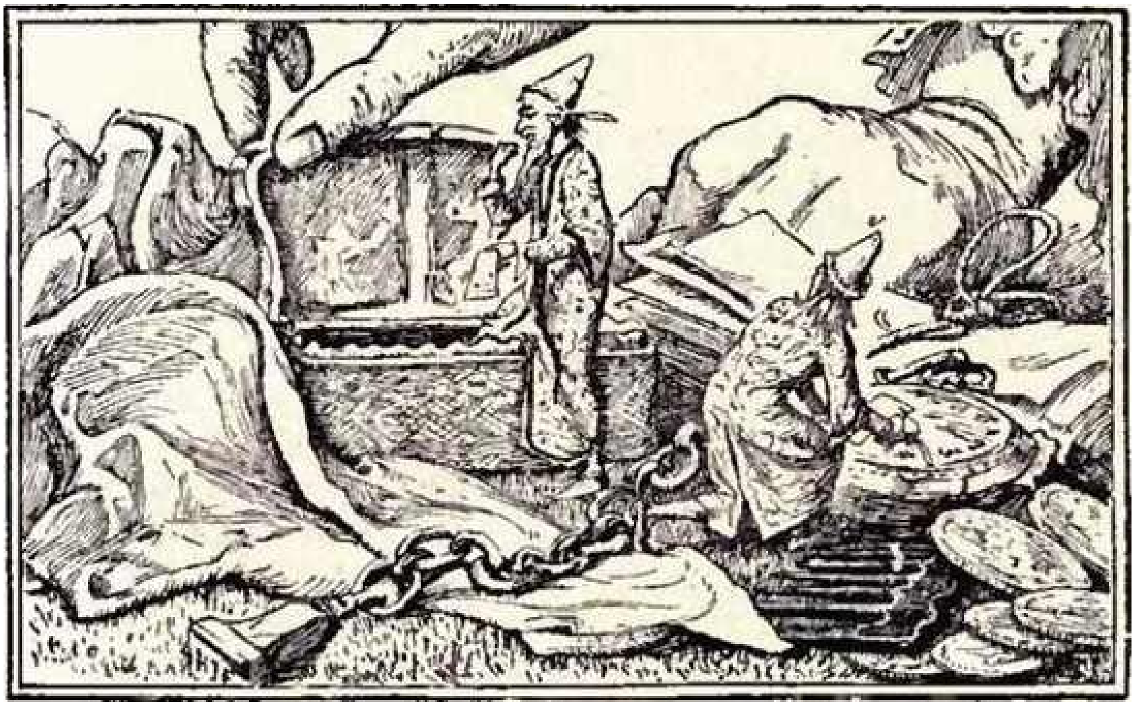

Six hundred servants were appointed me, and three hundred tailors made me a suit of clothes. Moreover, six of his Majesty's greatest scholars were employed to teach me their language, so that soon I was able to converse after a fashion with the Emperor, who often honored me with his visits. The first words I learned were to desire that he would please to give me my liberty, which I every day repeated on my knees; but he answered that this must be a work of time, and that first I must swear a peace with him and his kingdom. He told me also that by the laws of the nation I must be searched by two of his officers, and that as this could not be done without my help, he trusted them in my hands, and whatever they took from me should be returned when I left the country. I took up the two officers, and put them into my coat pockets. These gentlemen, having pen, ink, and paper about them, made an exact list of everything they saw, which I afterward translated into English, and which ran as follows:

"In the right coat pocket of the great Man-Mountain we found only one great piece of coarse cloth, large enough to cover the carpet of your Majesty's chief room of state. In the left pocket we saw a huge silver chest, with a silver cover, which we could not lift. We desired that it should be opened, and one of us stepping into it found himself up to the mid-leg in a sort of dust, some of which flying into our faces sent us both into a fit of sneezing. In his right waistcoat pocket we found a number of white thin substances, folded one over another, about the size of three men, tied with a strong cable, and marked with black figures, which we humbly conceive to be writings. In the left there was a sort of engine, from the back of which extended twenty long poles, with which, we conjecture, the Man-Mountain combs his head. In the smaller pocket on the right side were several round flat pieces of white and red metal, of different sizes. Some of the white, which appeared to be silver, were so large and heavy that my comrade and I could hardly lift them. From another pocket hung a huge silver chain, with a wonderful kind of engine fastened to it, a globe half silver and half of some transparent metal; for on the transparent side we saw certain strange figures, and thought we could touch them till we found our fingers stopped by the shining substance. This engine made an incessant noise, like a water-mill, and we conjecture it is either some unknown animal, or the god he worships, but probably the latter, for he told us that he seldom did anything without consulting it.

"This is a list of what we found about the body of the Man-Mountain, who treated us with great civility."

I had one private pocket which escaped their search, containing a pair of spectacles and a small spy-glass, which, being of no consequence to the Emperor, I did not think myself bound in honor to discover.

CHAPTER III

My gentleness and good behavior gained so far on the Emperor and his Court, and, indeed, on the people in general, that I began to have hopes of getting my liberty in a short time. The natives came by degrees to be less fearful of danger from me. I would sometimes lie down and let five or six of them dance on my hand; and at last the boys and girls ventured to come and play at hide-and-seek in my hair.

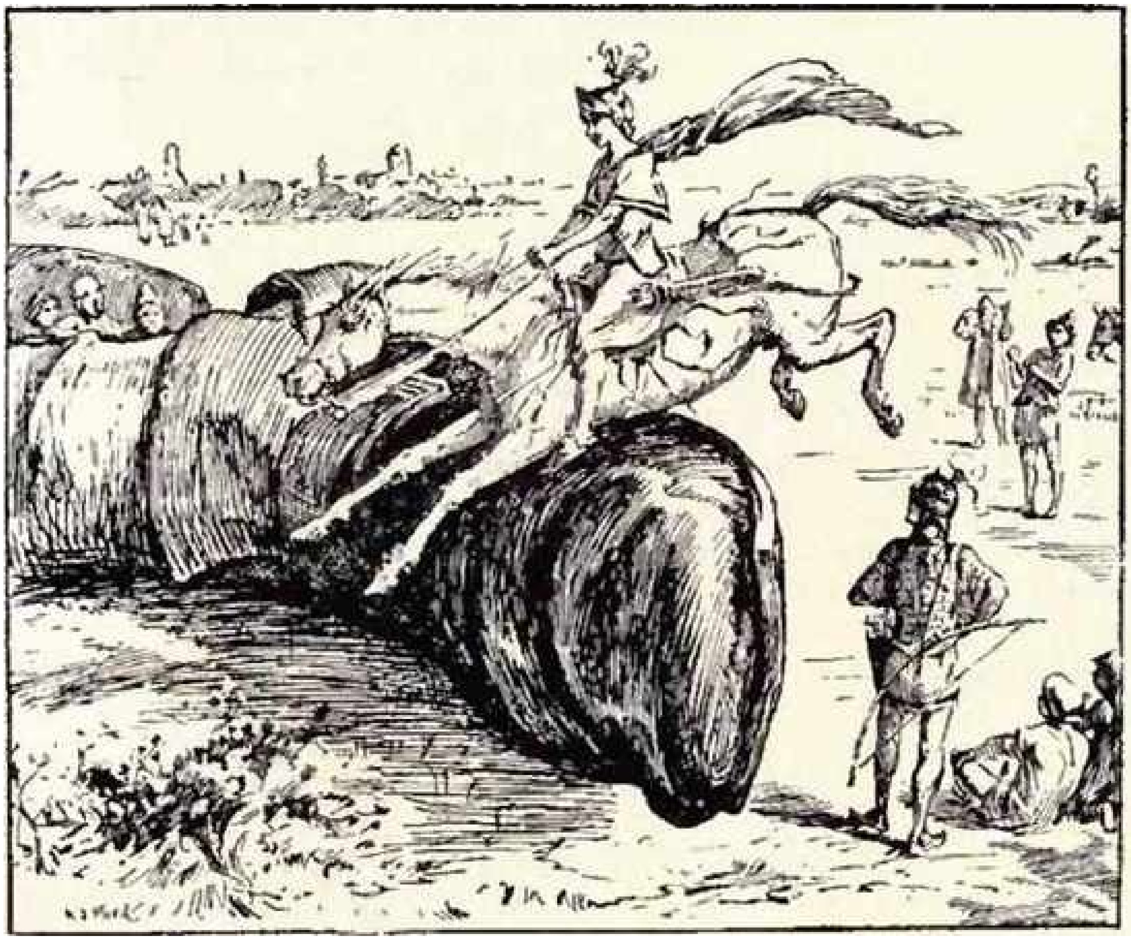

The horses of the army and of the royal stables were no longer shy, having been daily led before me; and one of the Emperor’s huntsmen, on a large courser, took my foot, shoe and all, which was indeed a prodigious leap. I amused the Emperor one day in a very extraordinary manner. I took nine sticks, and fixed them firmly in the ground in a square. Then I took four other sticks, and tied them parallel at each corner, about two feet from the ground. I fastened my handkerchief to the nine sticks that stood erect, and extended it on all sides till it was as tight as the top of a drum; and I desired the Emperor to let a troop of his best horse, twenty-four in number, come and exercise upon this plain. His majesty approved of the proposal, and I took them up one by one, with the proper officers to exercise them. As soon as they got into order they divided into two parties, discharged blunt arrows, drew their swords, fled and pursued, and, in short, showed the best military discipline I ever beheld. The parallel sticks secured them and their horses from falling off the stage, and the Emperor was so much delighted that he ordered this entertainment to be repeated several days, and persuaded the Empress herself to let me hold her in her chair within two yards of the stage, whence she could view the whole performance. Fortunately no accident happened, only once a fiery horse, pawing with his hoof, struck a hole in my handkerchief, and overthrew his rider and himself. But I immediately relieved them both, and covering the hole with one hand, I set down the troop with the other as I had taken them up. The horse that fell was strained in the shoulder; but the rider was not hurt, and I repaired my handkerchief as well as I could. However, I would not trust to the strength of it any more in such dangerous enterprises.

I had sent so many petitions for my liberty that his Majesty at length mentioned the matter in a full council, where it was opposed by none except Skyresh Bolgolam, admiral of the realm, who was pleased without any provocation to be my mortal enemy. However, he agreed at length, though he succeeded in himself drawing up the conditions on which I should be set free. After they were read I was requested to swear to perform them in the method prescribed by their laws, which was to hold my right foot in my left hand, and to place the middle finger of my right hand on the crown of my head, and my thumb on the top of my right ear. But I have made a translation of the conditions, which I here offer to the public:

"Golbaste Mamarem Evlame Gurdile Shefin Mully Ully Gue, Most Mighty Emperor of Lilliput, delight and terror of the universe, whose dominions extend to the ends of the globe, monarch of all monarchs, taller than the sons of men, whose feet press down to the center, and whose head strikes against the sun, at whose nod the princes of the earth shake their knees, pleasant as the spring, comfortable as the summer, fruitful as autumn, dreadful as winter: His Most Sublime Majesty proposeth to the Man-Mountain, lately arrived at our celestial dominions, the following articles, which by a solemn oath he shall be obliged to perform:

"First. The Man-Mountain shall not depart from our dominions without our license under the great seal.

"Second. He shall not presume to come into our metropolis without our express order, at which time the inhabitants shall have two hours' warning to keep within doors.

"Third. The said Man-Mountain shall confine his walks to our principal high roads, and not offer to walk or lie down in a meadow or field of corn.

"Fourth. As he walks the said roads he shall take the utmost care not to trample upon the bodies of any of our loving subjects, their horses or carriages, nor take any of our subjects into his hands without their own consent.

"Fifth. If an express requires extraordinary speed the Man-Mountain shall be obliged to carry in his pocket the messenger and horse a six days' journey, and return the said messenger (if so required) safe to our imperial presence.

“Sixth. He shall be our ally against our enemies in the island of Blefuscu, and do his utmost to destroy their fleet, which is now preparing to invade us.

“Lastly. Upon his solemn oath to observe all the above articles, the said Man-Mountain shall have a daily allowance of meat and drink sufficient for the support of 1,724 of our subjects, with free access to our royal person, and other marks of our favor. Given at our palace at Belfaburac, the twelfth day of the ninety-first moon of our reign.”

I swore to these articles with great cheerfulness, whereupon my chains were immediately unlocked, and I was at full liberty.

One morning, about a fortnight after I had obtained my freedom, Reldresal, the Emperor’s secretary for private affairs, came to my house, attended only by one servant. He ordered his coach to wait at a distance, and desired that I would give him an hour’s audience. I offered to lie down that he might the more conveniently reach my ear; but he chose rather to let me hold him in my hand during our conversation. He began with compliments on my liberty, but he added that, save for the present state of things at Court, perhaps I might not have obtained it so soon. “For,” he said, “however flourishing we may seem to foreigners, we are in danger of an invasion from the island of Blefuscu, which is the other great empire of the universe, almost as large and as powerful as this of his Majesty. For as to what we have heard you say, that there are other kingdoms in the world, inhabited by human creatures as large as yourself, our philosophers are very doubtful, and rather conjecture that you dropped from the moon, or one of the stars, because a hundred mortals of your size would soon destroy all the fruit and cattle of his Majesty’s dominions. Besides, our histories of six thousand moons make no mention of any other regions than the two mighty empires of Lilliput and Blefuscu, which, as I was going to tell you, are engaged in a most obstinate war, which began in the following manner: It is allowed on all hands that the primitive way of breaking eggs was upon the larger end; but his present Majesty’s grandfather, while he was a boy, going to eat an egg, and breaking it according to the ancient practice, happened to cut one of his fingers. Whereupon the Emperor, his father, made a law commanding all his subjects to break the smaller end of their eggs. The people so highly resented this law that there have been six rebellions raised on that account, wherein one emperor lost his life, and another his crown. It is calculated that eleven hundred persons have at different times suffered rather than break their eggs at the smaller end. But these rebels, the Bigendians, have found so much encouragement at the Emperor of Blefuscu’s Court, to which they always fled for refuge, that a bloody war, as I said, has been carried on between the two empires for six-and-thirty moons; and now the Blefuscudians have equipped a large fleet, and are preparing to descend upon us. Therefore his Imperial Majesty, placing great confidence in your valor and strength, has commanded me to set the case before you.”

I desired the secretary to present my humble duty to the Emperor, and to let him know that I was ready, at the risk of my life, to defend him against all invaders.

CHAPTER IV

It was not long before I communicated to his Majesty the plan I formed for seizing the enemy’s whole fleet. The Empire of Blefuscu is an island parted from Lilliput only by a channel eight hundred yards wide. I consulted the most experienced seamen on the depth of the channel, and they told me that in the middle, at high water, it was seventy glumguffs (about six feet of European measure). I walked toward the coast, where, lying down behind a hillock, I took out my spy-glass, and viewed the enemy’s fleet at anchor — about fifty men-of-war, and other vessels. I then came back to my house and gave orders for a great quantity of the strongest cables and bars of iron. The cable was about as thick as packthread, and the bars of the length and size of a knitting-needle. I trebled the cable to make it stronger, and for the same reason twisted three of the iron bars together, bending the ends into a hook. Having thus fixed fifty hooks to as many cables, I went back to the coast, and taking off my coat, shoes, and stockings, walked into the sea in my leather jacket about half an hour before high water. I waded with what haste I could, swimming in the middle about thirty yards, till I felt ground, and thus arrived at the fleet in less than half an hour. The enemy was so frightened when they saw me that they leaped out of their ships and swam ashore, where there could not be fewer than thirty thousand. Then, fastening a hook to the hole at the prow of each ship, I tied all the cords together at the end. Meanwhile the enemy discharged several thousand arrows, many of which stuck in my hands and face. My greatest fear was for my eyes, which I should have lost if I had not suddenly thought of the pair of spectacles which had escaped the Emperor’s searchers. These I took out and fastened upon my nose, and thus armed went on with my work in spite of the arrows, many of which struck against the glasses of my spectacles, but without any other effect than slightly disturbing them. Then, taking the knot in my hand, I began to pull; but not a ship would stir, for they were too fast held by their anchors. Thus the boldest part of my enterprise remained. Letting go the cord, I resolutely cut with my knife the cables that fastened the anchors, receiving more than two hundred shots in my face and hands. Then I took up again the knotted end of the cables to which my hooks were tied, and with great ease drew fifty of the enemy’s largest men-of-war after me.

When the Blefuscudians saw the fleet moving in order, and me pulling at the end, they set up a scream of grief and despair that it is impossible to describe. When I had got out of danger I stopped awhile to pick out the arrows that stuck in my hands and face, and rubbed on some of the same ointment that was given me at my arrival. I then took off my spectacles, and after waiting about an hour, till the tide was a little fallen, I waded on to the royal port of Lilliput.

The Emperor and his whole Court stood on the shore awaiting me. They saw the ships move forward in a large half-moon, but could not discern me, who, in the middle of the channel, was under water up to my neck. The Emperor concluded that I was drowned, and that the enemy’s fleet was approaching in a hostile manner. But he was soon set at ease, for, the channel growing shallower every step I made, I came in a short time within hearing, and holding up the end of the cable by which the fleet was fastened, I cried in a loud voice: “Long live the most puissant Emperor of Lilliput!” The Prince received me at my landing with all possible joy, and made me a Nardal on the spot, which is the highest title of honor among them.

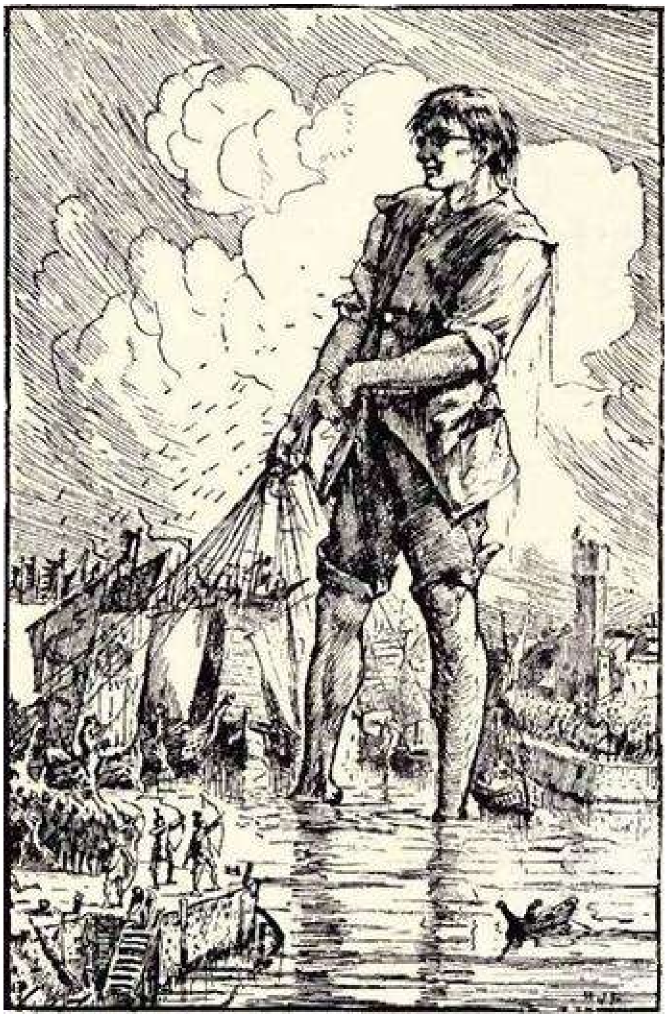

His Majesty desired that I would take some opportunity to bring all the rest of his enemy’s ships into his ports, and seemed to think of nothing less than conquering the whole Empire of Blefuscu, and becoming the sole monarch of the world. But I plainly protested that I would never be the means of bringing a free and brave people into slavery; and though the wisest of the Ministers were of my opinion, my open refusal was so opposed to his Majesty’s ambition that he could never forgive me. And from this time a plot began between himself and those of his Ministers who were my enemies, that nearly ended in my utter destruction.

About three weeks after this exploit there arrived an embassy from Blefuscu, with humble offers of peace, which was soon concluded, on terms very advantageous to our Emperor. There were six ambassadors, with a train of about five hundred persons, all very magnificent. Having been privately told that I had befriended them, they made me a visit, and paying me many compliments on my valor and generosity, invited me to their kingdom in the Emperor their master’s name. I asked them to present my most humble respects to the Emperor their master, whose royal person I resolved to attend before I returned to my own country. Accordingly, the next time I had the honor to see our Emperor I desired his general permission to visit the Blefuscudian monarch. This he granted me, but in a very cold manner, of which I afterward learned the reason.

When I was just preparing to pay my respects to the Emperor of Blefuscu, a distinguished person at Court, to whom I had once done a great service, came to my house very privately at night, and without sending his name desired admission. I put his lordship into my coat pocket, and, giving orders to a trusty servant to admit no one, I fastened the door, placed my visitor on the table, and sat down by it. His lordship's face was full of trouble; and he asked me to hear him with patience, in a matter that highly concerned my honor and my life.

"You are aware," he said, "that Skyresh Bolgolam has been your mortal enemy ever since your arrival, and his hatred is increased since your great success against Blefuscu, by which his glory as admiral is obscured. This lord and others have accused you of treason, and several councils have been called in the most private manner on your account. Out of gratitude for your favors I procured information of the whole proceedings, venturing my head for your service, and this was the charge against you:

"First, that you, having brought the imperial fleet of Blefuscu into the royal port, were commanded by his Majesty to seize all the other ships, and put to death all the Bigendian exiles, and also all the people of the empire who would not immediately consent to break their eggs at the smaller end. And that, like a false traitor to his Most Serene Majesty, you excused yourself from the service on pretence of unwillingness to force the consciences and destroy the liberties and lives of an innocent people.

"Again, when ambassadors arrived from the Court of Blefuscu, like a false traitor, you aided and entertained them, though you knew them to be servants of a prince lately in open war against his Imperial Majesty.

"Moreover, you are now preparing, contrary to the duty of a faithful subject, to voyage to the Court of Blefuscu.

"In the debate on this charge," my friend continued, "his Majesty often urged the services you had done him, while the admiral and treasurer insisted that you should be put to a shameful death. But Reldresal, secretary for private affairs, who has always proved himself your friend suggested that if his Majesty would please to spare your life and only give orders to put out both your eyes, justice might in some measure be satisfied. At this Bolgolam rose up in fury, wondering how the secretary dared desire to preserve the life of a traitor; and the treasurer, pointing out the expense of keeping you, also urged your death. But his Majesty was graciously pleased to say that since the council thought the loss of your eyes too easy a punishment, some other might afterward be inflicted. And the secretary, humbly desiring to be heard again, said that as to expense your allowance might be gradually lessened, so that, for want of sufficient food you should grow weak and faint, and die in a few months, when his Majesty's subjects might cut your flesh from your bones and bury it, leaving the skeleton for the admiration of posterity.

"Thus, through the great friendship of the secretary the affair was arranged. It was commanded that the plan of starving you by degrees should be kept a secret; but the sentence of putting out your eyes was entered on the books. In three days your friend the secretary will come to your house and read the accusation before you, and point out the great mercy of his Majesty, that only condemns you to the loss of your eyes — which, he does not doubt, you will submit to humbly and gratefully. Twenty of his Majesty's surgeons will attend, to see the operation well performed, by discharging very sharp-pointed arrows into the balls of your eyes as you lie on the ground.

"I leave you," said my friend, "to consider what measures you will take; and, to escape suspicion, I must immediately return, as secretly as I came."

His lordship did so; and I remained alone, in great perplexity. At first I was bent on resistance; for while I had liberty I could easily with stones pelt the metropolis to pieces; but I soon rejected that idea with horror, remembering the oath I had made to the Emperor, and the favors I had received from him. At last, having his Majesty's leave to pay my respects to the Emperor of Blefuscu, I resolved to take this opportunity. Before the three days had passed I wrote a letter to my friend the secretary telling him of my resolution; and, without waiting for an answer, went to the coast, and entering the channel, between wading and swimming reached the port of Blefuscu, where the people, who had long expected me, led me to the capital.

His Majesty, with the royal family and great officers of the Court, came out to receive me, and they entertained me in a manner suited to the generosity of so great a prince. I did not, however, mention my disgrace with the Emperor of Lilliput, since I did not suppose that prince would disclose the secret while I was out of his power. But in this, it soon appeared, I was deceived.

CHAPTER V

Three days after my arrival, walking out of curiosity to the northeast coast of the island, I observed at some distance in the sea something that looked like a boat overturned. I pulled off my shoes and stockings, and wading two or three hundred yards, I plainly saw it to be a real boat, which I supposed might by some tempest have been driven from a ship. I returned immediately to the city for help, and after a huge amount of labor I managed to get my boat to the royal port of Blefuscu, where a great crowd of people appeared, full of wonder at sight of so prodigious a vessel. I told the Emperor that my good fortune had thrown this boat in my way to carry me to some place whence I might return to my native country, and begged his orders for materials to fit it up, and leave to depart — which, after many kindly speeches, he was pleased to grant.

Meanwhile the Emperor of Lilliput, uneasy at my long absence (but never imagining that I had the least notice of his designs), sent a person of rank to inform the Emperor of Blefuscu of my disgrace; this messenger had orders to represent the great mercy of his master, who was content to punish me with the loss of my eyes, and who expected that his brother of Blefuscu would have me sent back to Lilliput, bound hand and foot, to be punished as a traitor. The Emperor of Blefuscu answered with many civil excuses. He said that as for sending me bound, his brother knew it was impossible. Moreover, though I had taken away his fleet he was grateful to me for many good offices I had done him in making the peace. But that both their Majesties would soon be made easy; for I had found a prodigious vessel on the shore, able to carry me on the sea, which he had given orders to fit up; and he hoped in a few weeks both empires would be free from me.

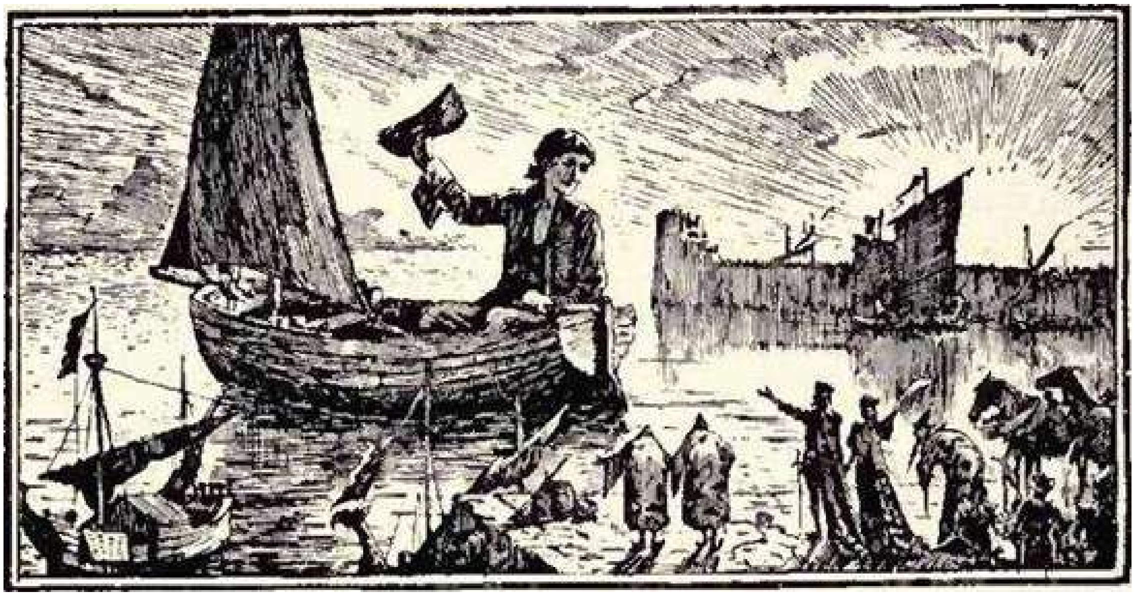

With this answer the messenger returned to Lilliput; and I (though the monarch of Blefuscu secretly offered me his gracious protection if I would continue in his service) hastened my departure, resolving never more to put confidence in princes.

In about a month I was ready to take leave. The Emperor of Blefuscu, with the Empress and the royal family, came out of the palace; and I lay down on my face to kiss their hands, which they graciously gave me. His Majesty presented me with fifty purses of sprugs (their greatest gold coin) and his picture at full length, which I put immediately into one of my gloves, to keep it from being hurt. Many other ceremonies took place at my departure.

I stored the boat with meat and drink, and took six cows and two bulls alive, with as many ewes and rams, intending to carry them into my own country; and to feed them on board, I had a good bundle of hay and a bag of corn. I would gladly have taken a dozen of the natives; but this was a thing the Emperor would by no means permit, and besides a diligent search into my pockets, his Majesty pledged my honor not to carry away any of his subjects, though with their own consent and desire.

Having thus prepared all things as well as I was able, I set sail. When I had made twenty-four leagues, by my reckoning, from the island of Blefuscu, I saw a sail steering to the northeast. I hailed her, but could get no answer; yet I found I gained upon her, for the wind slackened; and in half an hour she spied me, and discharged a gun. I came up with her between five and six in the evening, Sept. 26, 1701; but my heart leaped within me to see her English colors. I put my cows and sheep into my coat pockets, and got on board with all my little cargo. The captain received me with kindness, and asked me to tell him what place I came from last; but at my answer he thought I was raving. However, I took my black cattle and sheep out of my pocket, which, after great astonishment, clearly convinced him.

We arrived in England on the 13th of April, 1702. I stayed two months with my wife and family; but my eager desire to see foreign countries would suffer me to remain no longer. However, while in England I made great profit by showing my cattle to persons of quality and others; and before I began my second voyage I sold them for 600*l*. I left 1500*l*. with my wife, and fixed her in a good house; then taking leave of her and my boy and girl, with tears on both sides, I sailed on board the “Adventure.”(1)

(1) Swift.

THE PRINCESS ON THE GLASS HILL

Once upon a time there was a man who had a meadow which lay on the side of a mountain, and in the meadow there was a barn in which he stored hay. But there had not been much hay in the barn for the last two years, for every St. John’s eve, when the grass was in the height of its vigor, it was all eaten clean up, just as if a whole flock of sheep had gnawed it down to the ground during the night. This happened once, and it happened twice, but then the man got tired of losing his crop, and said to his sons — he had three of them, and the third was called Cinderlad — that one of them must go and sleep in the barn on St. John’s night, for it was absurd to let the grass be eaten up again, blade and stalk, as it had been the last two years, and the one who went to watch must keep a sharp look-out, the man said.

The eldest was quite willing to go to the meadow; he would watch the grass, he said, and he would do it so well that neither man, nor beast, nor even the devil himself should have any of it. So when evening came he went to the barn, and lay down to sleep, but when night was drawing near there was such a rumbling and such an earthquake that the walls and roof shook again, and the lad jumped up and took to his heels as fast as he could, and never even looked back, and the barn remained empty that year just as it had been for the last two.

Next St. John’s eve the man again said that he could not go on in this way, losing all the grass in the outlying field year after year, and that one of his sons must just go there and watch it, and watch well too. So the next oldest son was willing to show what he could do. He went to the barn and lay down to sleep, as his brother had done; but when night was drawing near there was a great rumbling, and then an earthquake, which was even worse than that on the former St. John’s night, and when the youth heard it he was terrified, and went off, running as if for a wager.

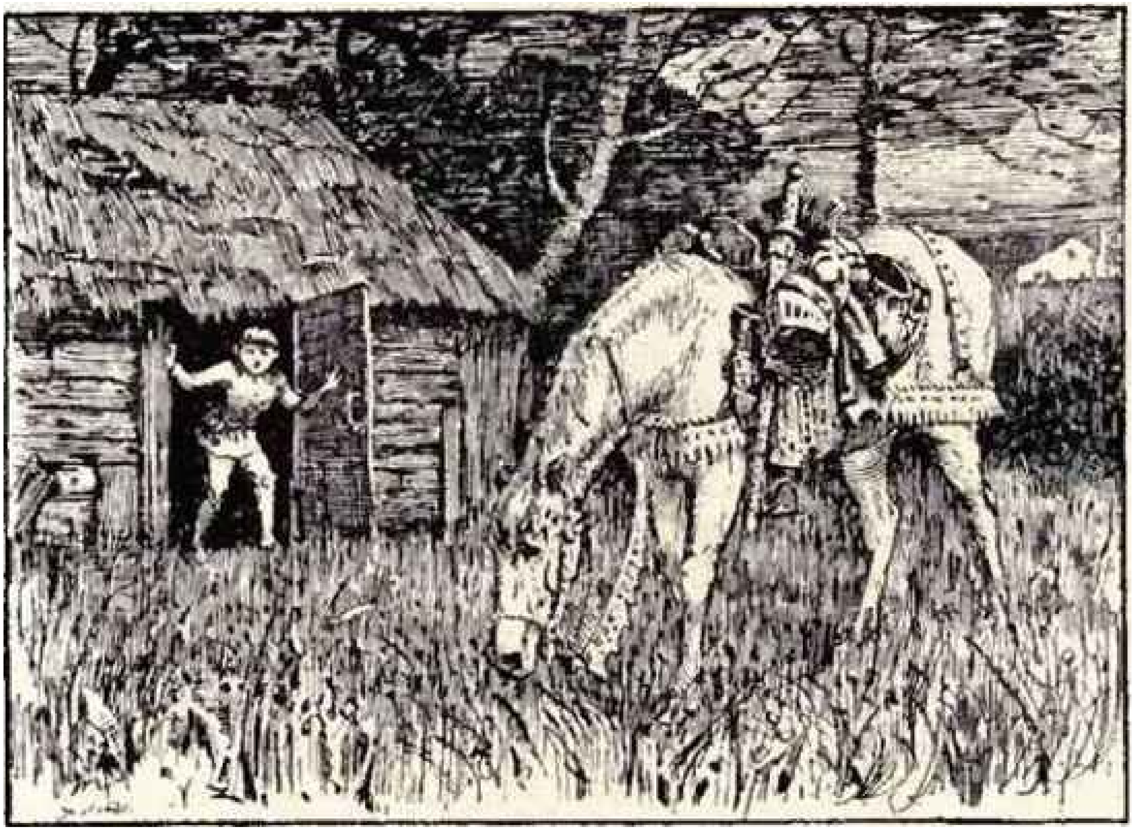

The year after, it was Cinderlad's turn, but when he made ready to go the others laughed at him, and mocked him. "Well, you are just the right one to watch the hay, you who have never learned anything but how to sit among the ashes and bake yourself!" said they. Cinderlad, however, did not trouble himself about what they said, but when evening drew near rambled away to the outlying field. When he got there he went into the barn and lay down, but in about an hour's time the rumbling and creaking began, and it was frightful to hear it. "Well, if it gets no worse than that, I can manage to stand it," thought Cinderlad. In a little time the creaking began again, and the earth quaked so that all the hay flew about the boy. "Oh! if it gets no worse than that I can manage to stand it," thought Cinderlad. But then came a third rumbling, and a third earthquake, so violent that the boy thought the walls and roof had fallen down, but when that was over everything suddenly grew as still as death around him. "I am pretty sure that it will come again," thought Cinderlad; but no, it did not. Everything was quiet, and everything stayed quiet, and when he had lain still a short time he heard something that sounded as if a horse were standing chewing just outside the barn door. He stole away to the door, which was ajar, to see what was there, and a horse was standing eating. It was so big, and fat, and fine a horse that Cinderlad had never seen one like it before, and a saddle and bridle lay upon it, and a complete suit of armor for a knight, and everything was of copper, and so bright that it shone again. “Ha, ha! it is thou who eatest up our hay then,” thought the boy; “but I will stop that.” So he made haste, and took out his steel for striking fire, and threw it over the horse, and then it had no power to stir from the spot, and became so tame that the boy could do what he liked with it. So he mounted it and rode away to a place which no one knew of but himself, and there he tied it up. When he went home again his brothers laughed and asked how he had got on.

“You didn’t lie long in the barn, if even you have been so far as the field!” said they.

“I lay in the barn till the sun rose, but I saw nothing and heard nothing, not I,” said the boy. “God knows what there was to make you two so frightened.”

“Well, we shall soon see whether you have watched the meadow or not,” answered the brothers, but when they got there the grass was all standing just as long and as thick as it had been the night before.

The next St. John’s eve it was the same thing, once again: neither of the two brothers dared to go to the outlying field to watch the crop, but Cinderlad went, and everything happened exactly the same as on the previous St. John’s eve: first there was a rumbling and an earthquake, and then there was another, and then a third: but all three earthquakes were much, very much more violent than they had been the year before. Then everything became still as death again, and the boy heard something chewing outside the barn door, so he stole as softly as he could to the door, which was slightly ajar, and again there was a horse standing close by the wall of the house, eating and chewing, and it was far larger and fatter than the first horse, and it had a saddle on its back, and a bridle was on it too, and a full suit of armor for a knight, all of bright silver, and as beautiful as anyone could wish to see. “Ho, ho!” thought the boy, “is it thou who eatest up our hay in the night? but I will put a stop to that.” So he took out his steel for striking fire, and threw it over the horse’s mane, and the beast stood there as quiet as a lamb. Then the boy rode this horse, too, away to the place where he kept the other, and then went home again.

“I suppose you will tell us that you have watched well again this time,” said the brothers.

“Well, so I have,” said Cinderlad. So they went there again, and there the grass was, standing as high and as thick as it had been before, but that did not make them any kinder to Cinderlad.

When the third St. John’s night came neither of the two elder brothers dared to lie in the outlying barn to watch the grass, for they had been so heartily frightened the night that they had slept there that they could not get over it, but Cinderlad dared to go, and everything happened just the same as on the two former nights. There were three earthquakes, each worse than the other, and the last flung the boy from one wall of the barn to the other, but then everything suddenly became still as death. When he had lain quietly a short time, he heard something chewing outside the barn door; then he once more stole to the door, which was slightly ajar, and behold, a horse was standing just outside it, which was much larger and fatter than the two others he had caught. “Ho, ho! it is thou, then, who art eating up our hay this time,” thought the boy; “but I will put a stop to that.” So he pulled out his steel for striking fire, and threw it over the horse, and it stood as still as if it had been nailed to the field, and the boy could do just what he liked with it. Then he mounted it and rode away to the place where he had the two others, and then he went home again. Then the two brothers mocked him just as they had done before, and told him that they could see that he must have watched the grass very carefully that night, for he looked just as if he were walking in his sleep; but Cinderlad did not trouble himself about that, but just bade them go to the field and see. They did go, and this time too the grass was standing, looking as fine and as thick as ever.

The King of the country in which Cinderlad’s father dwelt had a daughter whom he would give to no one who could not ride up to the top of the glass hill, for there was a high, high hill of glass, slippery as ice, and it was close to the King’s palace. Upon the very top of this the King’s daughter was to sit with three gold apples in her lap, and the man who could ride up and take the three golden apples should marry her, and have half the kingdom. The King had this proclaimed in every church in the whole kingdom, and in many other kingdoms too. The Princess was very beautiful, and all who saw her fell violently in love with her, even in spite of themselves. So it is needless to say that all the princes and knights were eager to win her, and half the kingdom besides, and that for this cause they came riding thither from the very end of the world, dressed so splendidly that their raiments gleamed in the sunshine, and riding on horses which seemed to dance as they went, and there was not one of these princes who did not think that he was sure to win the Princess.

When the day appointed by the King had come, there was such a host of knights and princes under the glass hill that they seemed to swarm, and everyone who could walk or even creep was there too, to see who won the King’s daughter. Cinderlad’s two brothers were there too, but they would not hear of letting him go with them, for he was so dirty and black with sleeping and grubbing among the ashes that they said everyone would laugh at them if they were seen in the company of such an oaf.

“Well, then, I will go all alone by myself,” said Cinderlad.

When the two brothers got to the glass hill, all the princes and knights were trying to ride up it, and their horses were in a foam; but it was all in vain, for no sooner did the horses set foot upon the hill than down they slipped, and there was not one which could get even so much as a couple of yards up. Nor was that strange, for the hill was as smooth as a glass window-pane, and as steep as the side of a house. But they were all eager to win the King's daughter and half the kingdom, so they rode and they slipped, and thus it went on. At length all the horses were so tired that they could do no more, and so hot that the foam dropped from them and the riders were forced to give up the attempt. The King was just thinking that he would cause it to be proclaimed that the riding should begin afresh on the following day, when perhaps it might go better, when suddenly a knight came riding up on so fine a horse that no one had ever seen the like of it before, and the knight had armor of copper, and his bridle was of copper too, and all his accoutrements were so bright that they shone again. The other knights all called out to him that he might just as well spare himself the trouble of trying to ride up the glass hill, for it was of no use to try; but he did not heed them, and rode straight off to it, and went up as if it were nothing at all. Thus he rode for a long way — it may have been a third part of the way up — but when he had got so far he turned his horse round and rode down again. But the Princess thought that she had never yet seen so handsome a knight, and while he was riding up she was sitting thinking, “Oh! how I hope he may be able to come up to the top!” And when she saw that he was turning his horse back she threw one of the golden apples down after him, and it rolled into his shoe. But when he had come down from off the hill he rode away, and that so fast that no one knew what had become of him.

So all the princes and knights were bidden to present themselves before the King that night, so that he who had ridden so far up the glass hill might show the golden apple which the King's daughter had thrown down. But no one had anything to show. One knight presented himself after the other, and none could show the apple.

At night, too, Cinderlad's brothers came home again and had a long story to tell about riding up the glass hill. At first, they said, there was not one who was able to get even so much as one step up, but then came a knight who had armor of copper, and a bridle of copper, and his armor and trappings were so bright that they shone to a great distance, and it was something like a sight to see him riding. He rode one-third of the way up the glass hill, and he could easily have ridden the whole of it if he had liked; but he had turned back, for he had made up his mind that that was enough for once. “Oh! I should have liked to see him too, that I should,” said Cinderlad, who was as usual sitting by the chimney among the cinders. “You, indeed!” said the brothers, “you look as if you were fit to be among such great lords, nasty beast that you are to sit there!"

Next day the brothers were for setting out again, and this time too Cinderlad begged them to let him go with them and see who rode; but no, they said he was not fit to do that, for he was much too ugly and dirty. "Well, well, then I will go all alone by myself," said Cinderlad. So the brothers went to the glass hill, and all the princes and knights began to ride again, and this time they had taken care to roughen the shoes of their horses; but that did not help them: they rode and they slipped as they had done the day before, and not one of them could get even so far as a yard up the hill. When they had tired out their horses, so that they could do no more, they again had to stop altogether. But just as the King was thinking that it would be well to proclaim that the riding should take place next day for the last time, so that they might have one more chance, he suddenly bethought himself that it would be well to wait a little longer to see if the knight in copper armor would come on this day too. But nothing was to be seen of him. Just as they were still looking for him, however, came a knight riding on a steed that was much, much finer than that which the knight in copper armor had ridden, and this knight had silver armor and a silver saddle and bridle, and all were so bright that they shone and glistened when he was a long way off. Again the other knights called to him, and said that he might just as well give up the attempt to ride up the glass hill, for it was useless to try; but the knight paid no heed to that, but rode straight away to the glass hill, and went still farther up than the knight in copper armor had gone; but when he had ridden two-thirds of the way up he turned his horse around, and rode down again. The Princess liked this knight still better than she had liked the other, and sat longing that he might be able to get up above, and when she saw him turning back she threw the second apple after him, and it rolled into his shoe, and as soon as he had got down the glass hill he rode away so fast that no one could see what had become of him.

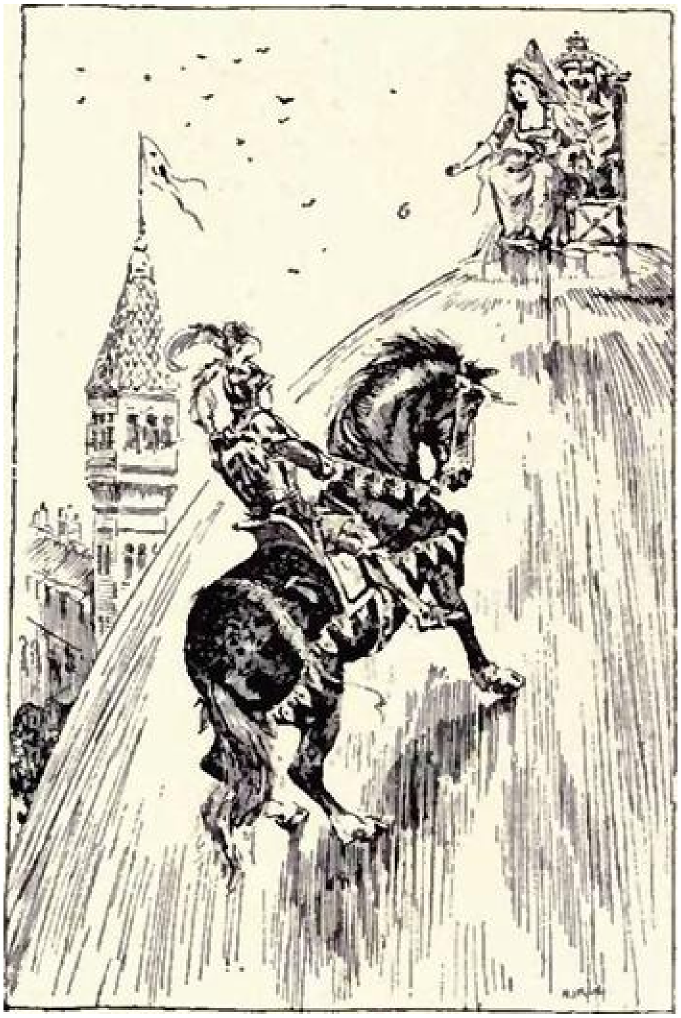

In the evening, when everyone was to appear before the King and Princess, in order that he who had the golden apple might show it, one knight went in after the other, but none of them had a golden apple to show.

At night the two brothers went home as they had done the night before, and told how things had gone, and how everyone had ridden, but no one had been able to get up the hill. “But last of all,” they said, “came one in silver armor, and he had a silver bridle on his horse, and a silver saddle, and oh, but he could ride! He took his horse two-thirds of the way up the hill, but then he turned back. He was a fine fellow,” said the brothers, “and the Princess threw the second golden apple to him!”

“Oh, how I should have liked to see him too!” said Cinderlad.

“Oh, indeed! He was a little brighter than the ashes that you sit grubbing among, you dirty black creature!” said the brothers.

On the third day everything went just as on the former days. Cinderlad wanted to go with them to look at the riding, but the two brothers would not have him in their company, and when they got to the glass hill there was no one who could ride even so far as a yard up it, and everyone waited for the knight in silver armor, but he was neither to be seen nor heard of. At last, after a long time, came a knight riding upon a horse that was such a fine one, its equal had never yet been seen. The knight had golden armor, and the horse a golden saddle and bridle, and these were all so bright that they shone and dazzled everyone, even while the knight was still at a great distance. The other princes and knights were not able even to call to tell him how useless it was to try to ascend the hill, so amazed were they at sight of his magnificence. He rode straight away to the glass hill, and galloped up it as if it were no hill at all, so that the Princess had not even time to wish that he might get up the whole way. As soon as he had ridden to the top, he took the third golden apple from the lap of the Princess and then turned his horse about and rode down again, and vanished from their sight before anyone was able to say a word to him.

When the two brothers came home again at night they had much to tell of how the riding had gone off that day, and at last they told about the knight in the golden armor too. “He was a fine fellow, that was! Such another splendid knight is not to be found on earth!” said the brothers.

“Oh, how I should have liked to see him too!” said Cinderlad.

“Well, he shone nearly as brightly as the coal-heaps that thou art always lying raking among, dirty black creature that thou art!” said the brothers.

Next day all the knights and princes were to appear before the King and Princess — it had been too late for them to do it the night before — in order that he who had the golden apple might produce it. They all went in turn, first princes, and then knights, but none of them had a golden apple.

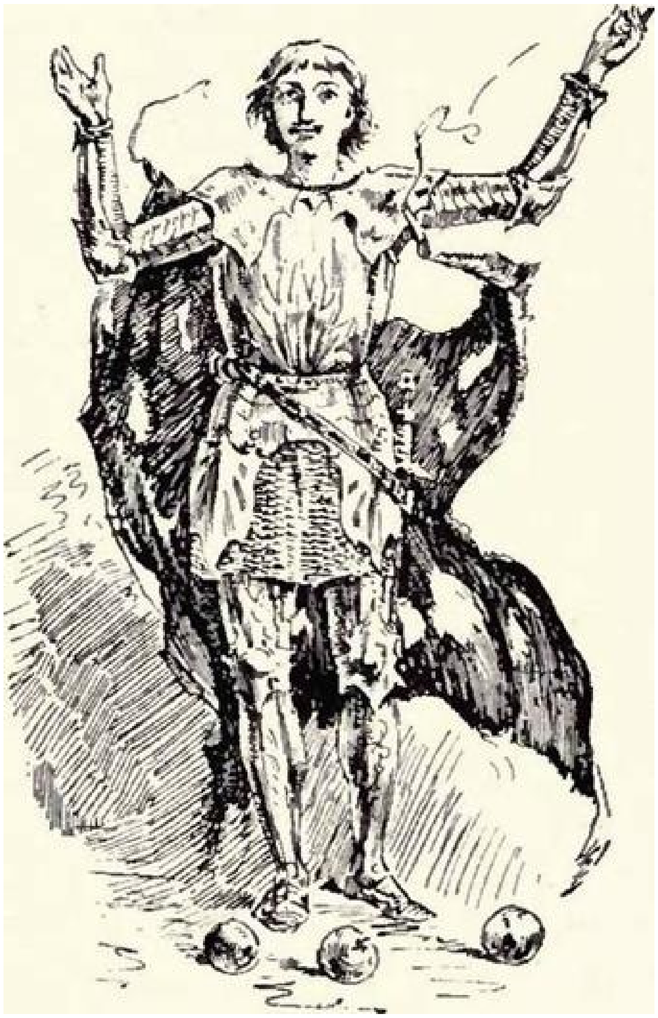

“But somebody must have it,” said the King, “for with our own eyes we all saw a man ride up and take it.” So he commanded that everyone in the kingdom should come to the palace, and see if he could show the apple. And one after the other they all came, but no one had the golden apple, and after a long, long time Cinderlad’s two brothers came likewise. They were the last of all, so the King inquired of them if there was no one else in the kingdom left to come.

“Oh! yes, we have a brother,” said the two, “but he never got the golden apple! He never left the cinder-heap on any of the three days.”

“Never mind that,” said the King; “as everyone else has come to the palace, let him come too.”

So Cinderlad was forced to go to the King’s palace.

“Hast thou the golden apple?” asked the King.

“Yes, here is the first, and here is the second, and here is the third, too,” said Cinderlad, and he took all three apples out of his pocket, and with that drew off his sooty rags, and appeared there before them in his bright golden armor, which gleamed as he stood.

“Thou shalt have my daughter, and the half of my kingdom, and thou hast well earned both!” said the King. So there was a wedding, and Cinderlad got the King’s daughter, and everyone made merry at the wedding, for all of them could make merry, though they could not ride up the glass hill, and if they have not left off their merry-making they must be at it still.(1)

(1) Asbjornsen and Moe.

THE STORY OF PRINCE AHMED AND THE FAIRY PARIBANOU

There was a sultan, who had three sons and a niece. The eldest of the Princes was called Houssain, the second Ali, the youngest Ahmed, and the Princess, his niece, Nouronnihar.

The Princess Nouronnihar was the daughter of the younger brother of the Sultan, who died, and left the Princess very young. The Sultan took upon himself the care of his daughter's education, and brought her up in his palace with the three Princes, proposing to marry her when she arrived at a proper age, and to contract an alliance with some neighboring prince by that means. But when he perceived that the three Princes, his sons, loved her passionately, he thought more seriously on that affair. He was very much concerned; the difficulty he foresaw was to make them agree, and that the two youngest should consent to yield her up to their elder brother. As he found them positively obstinate, he sent for them all together, and said to them: "Children, since for your good and quiet I have not been able to persuade you no longer to aspire to the Princess, your cousin, I think it would not be amiss if every one traveled separately into different countries, so that you might not meet each other. And, as you know I am very curious, and delight in everything that's singular, I promise my niece in marriage to him that shall bring me the most extraordinary rarity; and for the purchase of the rarity you shall go in search after, and the expense of traveling, I will give you every one a sum of money."

As the three Princes were always submissive and obedient to the Sultan's will, and each flattered himself fortune might prove favorable to him, they all consented to it. The Sultan paid them the money he promised them; and that very day they gave orders for the preparations for their travels, and took their leave of the Sultan, that they might be the more ready to go the next morning. Accordingly they all set out at the same gate of the city, each dressed like a merchant, attended by an officer of confidence dressed like a slave, and all well mounted and equipped. They went the first day's journey together, and lay all at an inn, where the road was divided into three different tracts. At night, when they were at supper together, they all agreed to travel for a year, and to meet at that inn; and that the first that came should wait for the rest; that, as they had all three taken their leave together of the Sultan, they might all return together. The next morning by break of day, after they had embraced and wished each other good success, they mounted their horses and took each a different road.

Prince Houssain, the eldest brother, arrived at Bisnagar, the capital of the kingdom of that name, and the residence of its king. He went and lodged at a khan appointed for foreign merchants; and, having learned that there were four principal divisions where merchants of all sorts sold their commodities, and kept shops, and in the midst of which stood the castle, or rather the King’s palace, he went to one of these divisions the next day.

Prince Houssain could not view this division without admiration. It was large, and divided into several streets, all vaulted and shaded from the sun, and yet very light too. The shops were all of a size, and all that dealt in the same sort of goods lived in one street; as also the handicrafts-men, who kept their shops in the smaller streets.

The multitude of shops, stocked with all sorts of merchandise, as the finest linens from several parts of India, some painted in the most lively colors, and representing beasts, trees, and flowers; silks and brocades from Persia, China, and other places, porcelain both from Japan and China, and tapestries, surprised him so much that he knew not how to believe his own eyes; but when he came to the goldsmiths and jewelers he was in a kind of ecstacy to behold such prodigious quantities of wrought gold and silver, and was dazzled by the lustre of the pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and other jewels exposed to sale.

Another thing Prince Houssain particularly admired was the great number of rose-sellers who crowded the streets; for the Indians are so great lovers of that flower that no one will stir without a nosegay in his hand or a garland on his head; and the merchants keep them in pots in their shops, that the air is perfectly perfumed.

After Prince Houssain had run through that division, street by street, his thoughts fully employed on the riches he had seen, he was very much tired, which a merchant perceiving, civilly invited him to sit down in his shop, and he accepted; but had not been sat down long before he saw a crier pass by with a piece of tapestry on his arm, about six feet square, and cried at thirty purses. The Prince called to the crier, and asked to see the tapestry, which seemed to him to be valued at an exorbitant price, not only for the size of it, but the meanness of the stuff; when he had examined it well, he told the crier that he could not comprehend how so small a piece of tapestry, and of so indifferent appearance, could be set at so high a price.

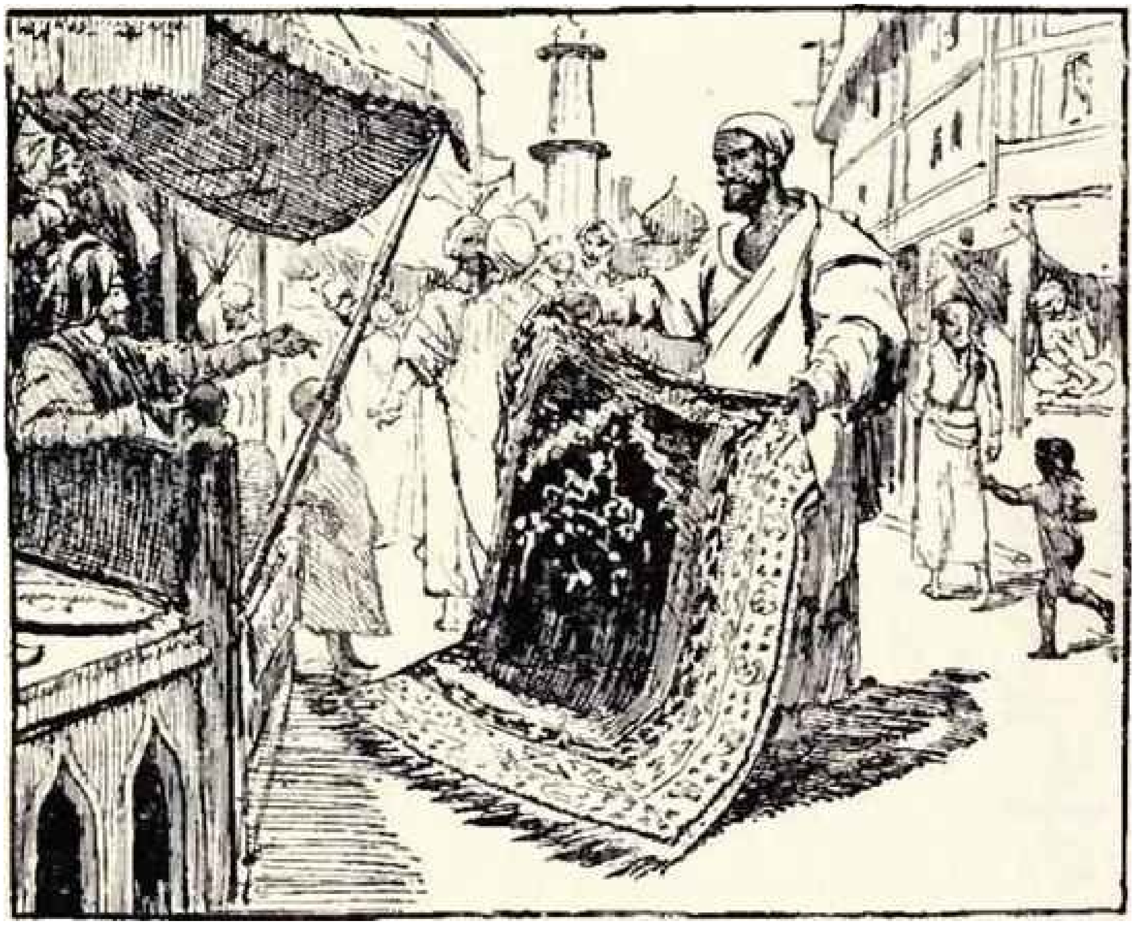

The crier, who took him for a merchant, replied: “If this price seems so extravagant to you, your amazement will be greater when I tell you I have orders to raise it to forty purses, and not to part with it under.” “Certainly,” answered Prince Houssain, “it must have something very extraordinary in it, which I know nothing of.” “You have guessed it, sir,” replied the crier, “and will own it when you come to know that whoever sits on this piece of tapestry may be transported in an instant wherever he desires to be, without being stopped by any obstacle.”

At this discourse of the crier the Prince of the Indies, considering that the principal motive of his travel was to carry the Sultan, his father, home some singular rarity, thought that he could not meet with any which could give him more satisfaction. “If the tapestry,” said he to the crier, “has the virtue you assign it, I shall not think forty purses too much, but shall make you a present besides.” “Sir,” replied the crier, “I have told you the truth; and it is an easy matter to convince you of it, as soon as you have made the bargain for forty purses, on condition I show you the experiment. But, as I suppose you have not so much about you, and to receive them I must go with you to your khan, where you lodge, with the leave of the master of the shop, we will go into the back shop, and I will spread the tapestry; and when we have both sat down, and you have formed the wish to be transported into your apartment of the khan, if we are not transported thither it shall be no bargain, and you shall be at your liberty. As to your present, though I am paid for my trouble by the seller, I shall receive it as a favor, and be very much obliged to you, and thankful.”

On the credit of the crier, the Prince accepted the conditions, and concluded the bargain; and, having got the master’s leave, they went into his back shop; they both sat down on it, and as soon as the Prince formed his wish to be transported into his apartment at the khan he presently found himself and the crier there; and, as he wanted not a more sufficient proof of the virtue of the tapestry, he counted the crier out forty pieces of gold, and gave him twenty pieces for himself.

In this manner Prince Houssain became the possessor of the tapestry, and was overjoyed that at his arrival at Bisnagar he had found so rare a piece, which he never disputed would gain him the hand of Nouronnihar. In short, he looked upon it as an impossible thing for the Princes his younger brothers to meet with anything to be compared with it. It was in his power, by sitting on his tapestry, to be at the place of meeting that very day; but, as he was obliged to stay there for his brothers, as they had agreed, and as he was curious to see the King of Bisnagar and his Court, and to inform himself of the strength, laws, customs, and religion of the kingdom, he chose to make a longer abode there, and to spend some months in satisfying his curiosity.

Prince Houssain might have made a longer abode in the kingdom and Court of Bisnagar, but he was so eager to be nearer the Princess that, spreading the tapestry, he and the officer he had brought with him sat down, and as soon as he had formed his wish were transported to the inn at which he and his brothers were to meet, and where he passed for a merchant till they came.

Prince Ali, Prince Houssain’s second brother, who designed to travel into Persia, took the road, having three days after he parted with his brothers joined a caravan, and after four days’ travel arrived at Schiraz, which was the capital of the kingdom of Persia. Here he passed for a jeweler.

The next morning Prince Ali, who traveled only for his pleasure, and had brought nothing but just necessaries along with him, after he had dressed himself, took a walk into that part of the town which they at Schiraz called the bezestein.

Among all the criers who passed backward and forward with several sorts of goods, offering to sell them, he was not a little surprised to see one who held an ivory telescope in his hand of about a foot in length and the thickness of a man’s thumb, and cried it at thirty purses. At first he thought the crier mad, and to inform himself went to a shop, and said to the merchant, who stood at the door:

“Pray, sir, is not that man” (pointing to the crier who cried the ivory perspective glass at thirty purses) “mad? If he is not, I am very much deceived.”

“Indeed, sir,” answered the merchant, “he was in his right senses yesterday; I can assure you he is one of the ablest criers we have, and the most employed of any when anything valuable is to be sold. And if he cries the ivory perspective glass at thirty purses it must be worth as much or more, on some account or other. He will come by presently, and we will call him, and you shall be satisfied; in the meantime sit down on my sofa, and rest yourself.”

Prince Ali accepted the merchant’s obliging offer, and presently afterward the crier passed by. The merchant called him by his name, and, pointing to the Prince, said to him: “Tell that gentleman, who asked me if you were in your right senses, what you mean by crying that ivory perspective glass, which seems not to be worth much, at thirty purses. I should be very much amazed myself if I did not know you.” The crier, addressing himself to Prince Ali, said: “Sir, you are not the only person that takes me for a madman on account of this perspective glass. You shall judge yourself whether I am or no, when I have told you its property and I hope you will value it at as high a price as those I have showed it to already, who had as bad an opinion of me as you.

“First, sir,” pursued the crier, presenting the ivory pipe to the Prince, “observe that this pipe is furnished with a glass at both ends; and consider that by looking through one of them you see whatever object you wish to behold.” “I am,” said the Prince, “ready to make you all imaginable reparation for the scandal I have thrown on you if you will make the truth of what you advance appear,” and as he had the ivory pipe in his hand, after he had looked at the two glasses he said: “Show me at which of these ends I must look that I may be satisfied.” The crier presently showed him, and he looked through, wishing at the same time to see the Sultan his father, whom he immediately beheld in perfect health, set on his throne, in the midst of his council. Afterward, as there was nothing in the world so dear to him, after the Sultan, as the Princess Nouronnihar, he wished to see her; and saw her at her toilet laughing, and in a pleasant humor, with her women about her.

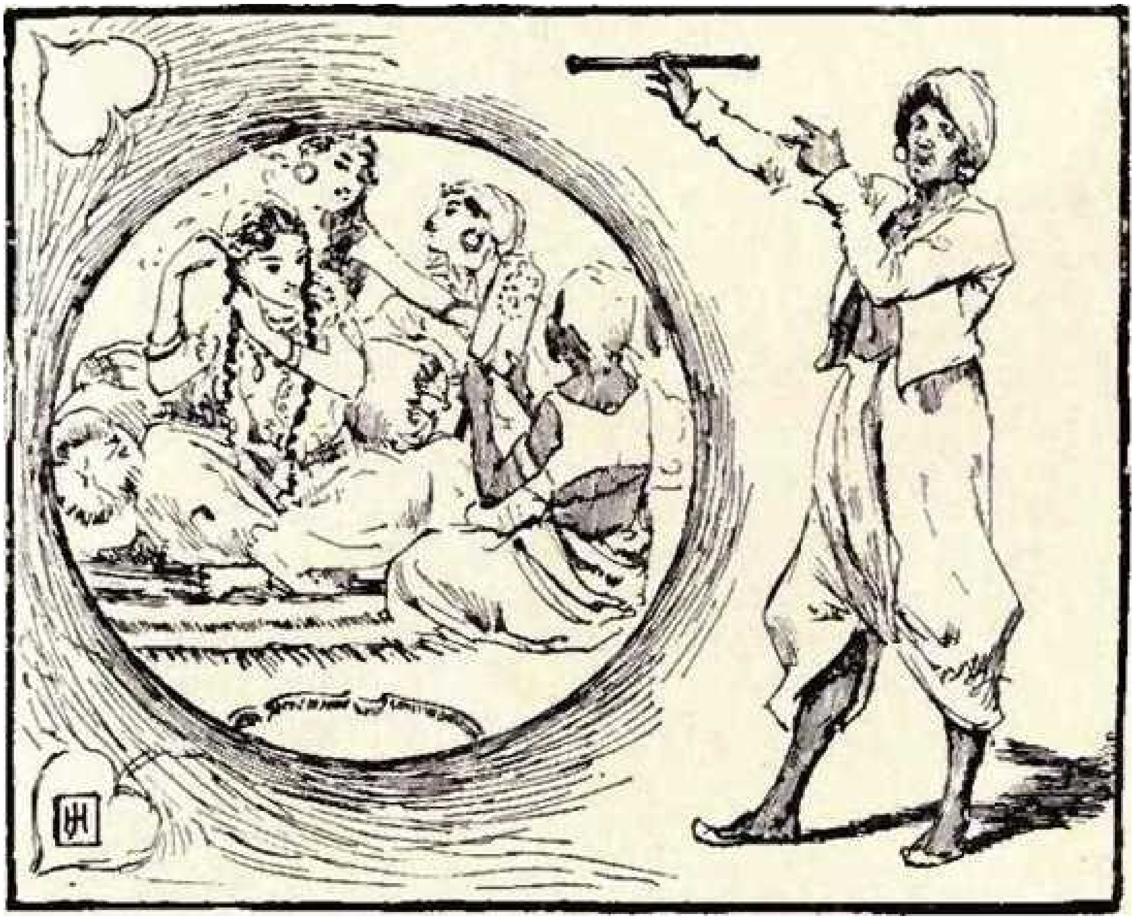

Prince Ali wanted no other proof to be persuaded that this perspective glass was the most valuable thing in the world, and believed that if he should neglect to purchase it he should never meet again with such another rarity. He therefore took the crier with him to the khan where he lodged, and counted him out the money, and received the perspective glass.

Prince Ali was overjoyed at his bargain, and persuaded himself that, as his brothers would not be able to meet with anything so rare and admirable, the Princess Nouronnihar would be the recompense of his fatigue and trouble; that he thought of nothing but visiting the Court of Persia incognito, and seeing whatever was curious in Schiraz and thereabouts, till the caravan with which he came returned back to the Indies. As soon as the caravan was ready to set out, the Prince joined them, and arrived happily without any accident or trouble, otherwise than the length of the journey and fatigue of traveling, at the place of rendezvous, where he found Prince Houssain, and both waited for Prince Ahmed.

Prince Ahmed, who took the road of Samarcand, the next day after his arrival there went, as his brothers had done, into the bezestein, where he had not walked long but heard a crier, who had an artificial apple in his hand, cry it at five and thirty purses; upon which he stopped the crier, and said to him: “Let me see that apple, and tell me what virtue and extraordinary properties it has, to be valued at so high a rate.” “Sir,” said the crier, giving it into his hand, “if you look at the outside of this apple, it is very worthless, but if you consider its properties, virtues, and the great use and benefit it is to mankind, you will say it is no price for it, and that he who possesses it is master of a great treasure. In short, it cures all sick persons of the most mortal diseases; and if the patient is dying it will recover him immediately and restore him to perfect health; and this is done after the easiest manner in the world, which is by the patient’s smelling the apple.”

“If I may believe you,” replied Prince Ahmed, “the virtues of this apple are wonderful, and it is invaluable; but what ground have I, for all you tell me, to be persuaded of the truth of this matter?” “Sir,” replied the crier, “the thing is known and averred by the whole city of Samarcand; but, without going any further, ask all these merchants you see here, and hear what they say. You will find several of them will tell you they had not been alive this day if they had not made use of this excellent remedy. And, that you may better comprehend what it is, I must tell you it is the fruit of the study and experiments of a celebrated philosopher of this city, who applied himself all his lifetime to the study and knowledge of the virtues of plants and minerals, and at last attained to this composition, by which he performed such surprising cures in this town as will never be forgot, but died suddenly himself, before he could apply his sovereign remedy, and left his wife and a great many young children behind him, in very indifferent circumstances, who, to support her family and provide for her children, is resolved to sell it.”

While the crier informed Prince Ahmed of the virtues of the artificial apple, a great many persons came about them and confirmed what he said; and one among the rest said he had a friend dangerously ill, whose life was despaired of; and that was a favorable opportunity to show Prince Ahmed the experiment. Upon which Prince Ahmed told the crier he would give him forty purses if he cured the sick person.

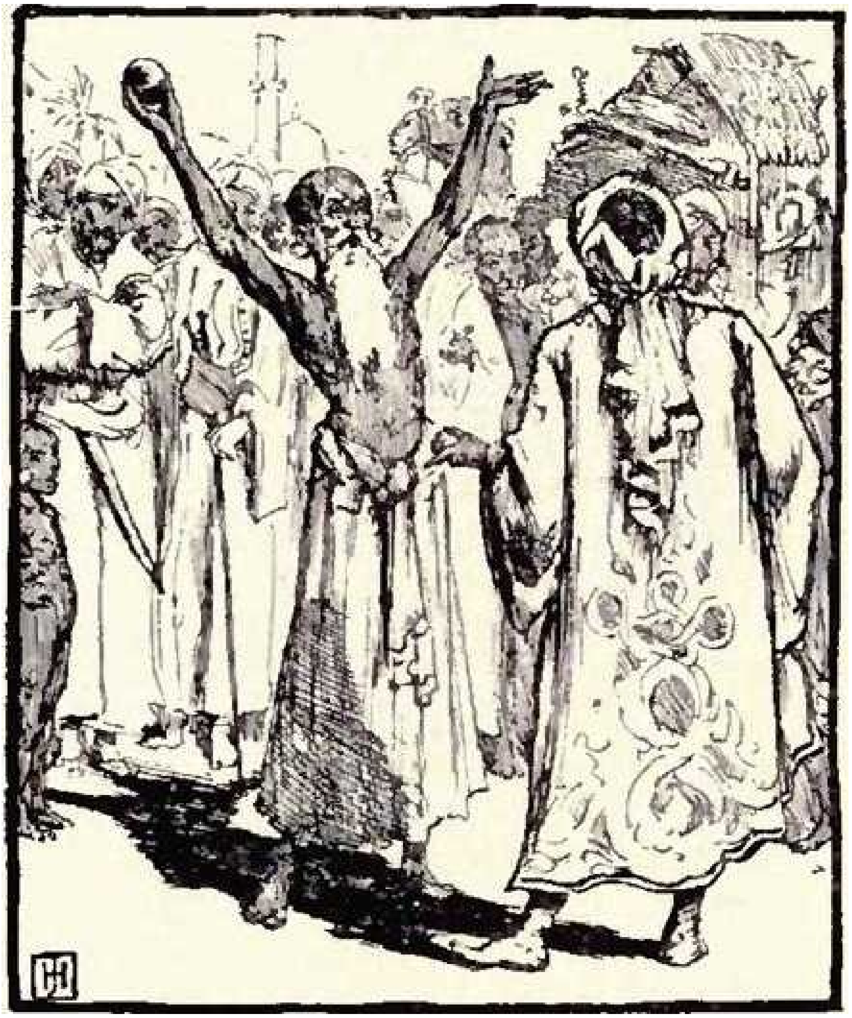

The crier, who had orders to sell it at that price, said to Prince Ahmed: “Come, sir, let us go and make the experiment, and the apple shall be yours; and I can assure you that it will always have the desired effect.” In short, the experiment succeeded, and the Prince, after he had counted out to the crier forty purses, and he had delivered the apple to him, waited patiently for the first caravan that should return to the Indies, and arrived in perfect health at the inn where the Princes Houssain and Ali waited for him.

When the Princes met they showed each other their treasures, and immediately saw through the glass that the Princess was dying. They then sat down on the carpet, wished themselves with her, and were there in a moment.

Prince Ahmed no sooner perceived himself in Nouronnihar’s chamber than he rose off the tapestry, as did also the other two Princes, and went to the bedside, and put the apple under her nose; some moments after the Princess opened her eyes, and turned her head from one side to another, looking at the persons who stood about her; and then rose up in the bed, and asked to be dressed, just as if she had waked out of a sound sleep. Her women having presently informed her, in a manner that showed their joy, that she was obliged to the three Princes for the sudden recovery of her health, and particularly to Prince Ahmed, she immediately expressed her joy to see them, and thanked them all together, and afterward Prince Ahmed in particular.

While the Princess was dressing the Princes went to throw themselves at the Sultan their father's feet, and pay their respects to him. But when they came before him they found he had been informed of their arrival by the chief of the Princess's eunuchs, and by what means the Princess had been perfectly cured. The Sultan received and embraced them with the greatest joy, both for their return and the recovery of the Princess his niece, whom he loved as well as if she had been his own daughter, and who had been given over by the physicians. After the usual ceremonies and compliments the Princes presented each his rarity: Prince Houssain his tapestry, which he had taken care not to leave behind him in the Princess's chamber; Prince Ali his ivory perspective glass, and Prince Ahmed his artificial apple; and after each had commended their present, when they put it into the Sultan's hands, they begged of him to pronounce their fate, and declare to which of them he would give the Princess Nouronnihar for a wife, according to his promise.

The Sultan of the Indies, having heard, without interrupting them, all that the Princes could represent further about their rarities, and being well informed of what had happened in relation to the Princess Nouronnihar's cure, remained some time silent, as if he were thinking on what answer he should make. At last he broke the silence, and said to them: "I would declare for one of you children with a great deal of pleasure if I could do it with justice; but consider whether I can do it or no. 'Tis true, Prince Ahmed, the Princess my niece is obliged to your artificial apple for her cure; but I must ask you whether or no you could have been so serviceable to her if you had not known by Prince Ali's perspective glass the danger she was in, and if Prince Houssain's tapestry had not brought you so soon. Your perspective glass, Prince Ali, informed you and your brothers that you were like to lose the Princess your cousin, and there you must own a great obligation.

"You must also grant that that knowledge would have been of no service without the artificial apple and the tapestry. And lastly, Prince Houssain, the Princess would be very ungrateful if she should not show her acknowledgment of the service of your tapestry, which was so necessary a means toward her cure. But consider, it would have been of little use if you had not been acquainted with the Princess's illness by Prince Ali's glass, and Prince Ahmed had not applied his artificial apple. Therefore, as neither tapestry, ivory perspective glass, nor artificial apple have the least preference one before the other, but, on the contrary, there’s a perfect equality, I cannot grant the Princess to any one of you; and the only fruit you have reaped from your travels is the glory of having equally contributed to restore her health.

“If all this be true,” added the Sultan, “you see that I must have recourse to other means to determine certainly in the choice I ought to make among you; and that, as there is time enough between this and night, I’ll do it to-day. Go and get each of you a bow and arrow, and repair to the great plain, where they exercise horses. I’ll soon come to you, and declare I will give the Princess Nouronnihar to him that shoots the farthest.”

The three Princes had nothing to say against the decision of the Sultan. When they were out of his presence they each provided themselves with a bow and arrow, which they delivered to one of their officers, and went to the plain appointed, followed by a great concourse of people.

The Sultan did not make them wait long for him, and as soon as he arrived Prince Houssain, as the eldest, took his bow and arrow and shot first; Prince Ali shot next, and much beyond him; and Prince Ahmed last of all, but it so happened that nobody could see where his arrow fell; and, notwithstanding all the diligence that was used by himself and everybody else, it was not to be found far or near. And though it was believed that he shot the farthest, and that he therefore deserved the Princess Nouronnihar, it was, however, necessary that his arrow should be found to make the matter more evident and certain; and, notwithstanding his remonstrance, the Sultan judged in favor of Prince Ali, and gave orders for preparations to be made for the wedding, which was celebrated a few days after with great magnificence.

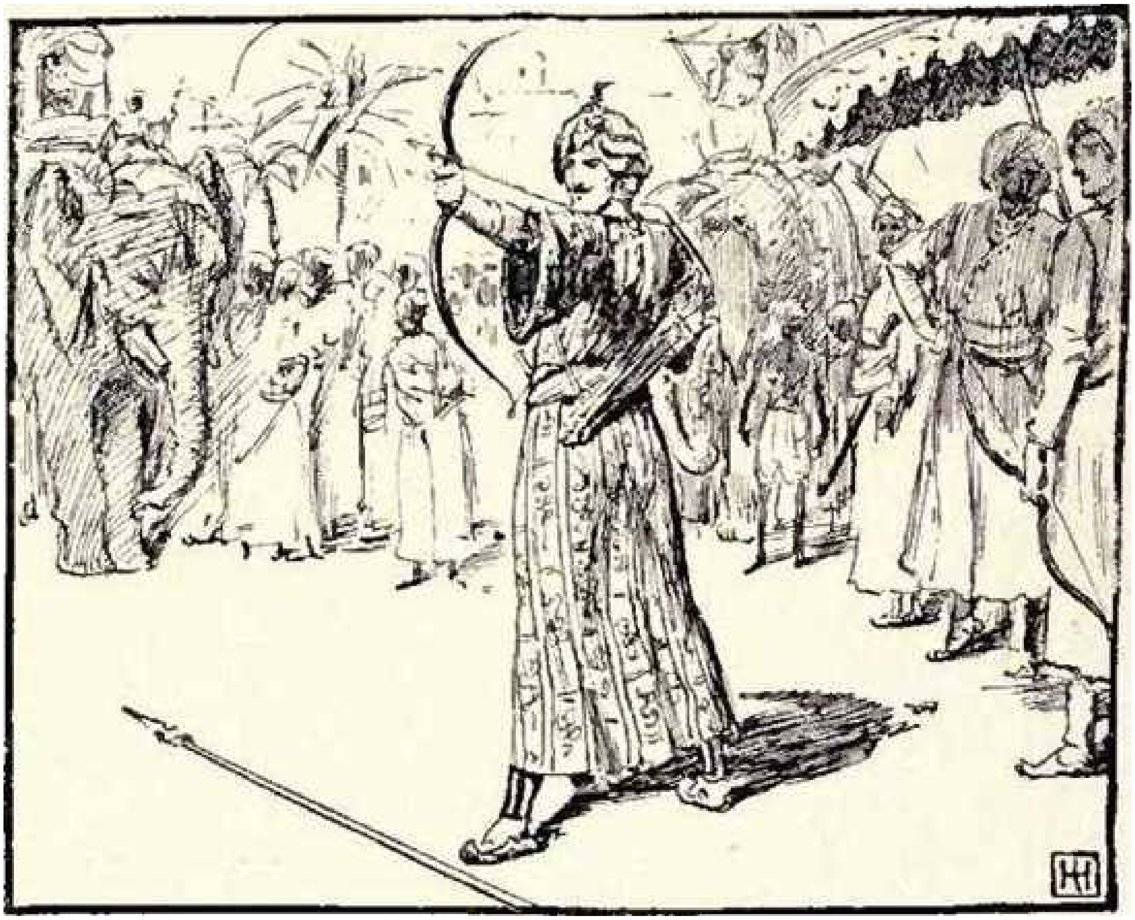

Prince Houssain would not honor the feast with his presence. In short, his grief was so violent and insupportable that he left the Court, and renounced all right of succession to the crown, to turn hermit.

Prince Ahmed, too, did not come to Prince Ali’s and the Princess Nouronnihar’s wedding any more than his brother Houssain, but did not renounce the world as he had done. But, as he could not imagine what had become of his arrow, he stole away from his attendants and resolved to search after it, that he might not have anything to reproach himself with. With this intent he went to the place where the Princes Houssain’s and Ali’s were gathered up, and, going straight forward from there, looking carefully on both sides of him, he went so far that at last he began to think his labor was all in vain; but yet he could not help going forward till he came to some steep craggy rocks, which were bounds to his journey, and were situated in a barren country, about four leagues distant from where he set out.

II

When Prince Ahmed came pretty nigh to these rocks he perceived an arrow, which he gathered up, looked earnestly at it, and was in the greatest astonishment to find it was the same he shot away. “Certainly,” said he to himself, “neither I nor any man living could shoot an arrow so far,” and, finding it laid flat, not sticking into the ground, he judged that it rebounded against the rock. “There must be some mystery in this,” said he to himself again, “and it may be advantageous to me. Perhaps fortune, to make me amends for depriving me of what I thought the greatest happiness, may have reserved a greater blessing for my comfort.”

As these rocks were full of caves and some of those caves were deep, the Prince entered into one, and, looking about, cast his eyes on an iron door, which seemed to have no lock, but he feared it was fastened. However, thrusting against it, it opened, and discovered an easy descent, but no steps, which he walked down with his arrow in his hand. At first he thought he was going into a dark, obscure place, but presently a quite different light succeeded that which he came out of, and, entering into a large, spacious place, at about fifty or sixty paces distant, he perceived a magnificent palace, which he had not then time enough to look at. At the same time a lady of majestic port and air advanced as far as the porch, attended by a large troop of ladies, so finely dressed and beautiful that it was difficult to distinguish which was the mistress.

As soon as Prince Ahmed perceived the lady, he made all imaginable haste to go and pay his respects; and the lady, on her part, seeing him coming, prevented him from addressing his discourse to her first, but said to him: “Come nearer, Prince Ahmed, you are welcome.”

It was no small surprise to the Prince to hear himself named in a place he had never heard of, though so nigh to his father’s capital, and he could not comprehend how he should be known to a lady who was a stranger to him. At last he returned the lady’s compliment by throwing himself at her feet, and, rising up again, said to her:

“Madam, I return you a thousand thanks for the assurance you give me of a welcome to a place where I believed my imprudent curiosity had made me penetrate too far. But, madam, may I, without being guilty of ill manners, dare to ask you by what adventure you know me? and how you, who live in the same neighborhood with me, should be so great a stranger to me?”

“Prince,” said the lady, “let us go into the hall, there I will gratify you in your request.”

After these words the lady led Prince Ahmed into the hall. Then she sat down on a sofa, and when the Prince by her entreaty had done the same she said: “You are surprised, you say, that I should know you and not be known by you, but you will be no longer surprised when I inform you who I am. You are undoubtedly sensible that your religion teaches you to believe that the world is inhabited by genies as well as men. I am the daughter of one of the most powerful and distinguished genies, and my name is Paribanou. The only thing that I have to add is, that you seemed to me worthy of a more happy fate than that of possessing the Princess Nouronnihar; and, that you might attain to it, I was present when you drew your arrow, and foresaw it would not go beyond Prince Houssain's. I took it in the air, and gave it the necessary motion to strike against the rocks near which you found it, and I tell you that it lies in your power to make use of the favorable opportunity which presents itself to make you happy."

As the Fairy Paribanou pronounced these last words with a different tone, and looked, at the same time, tenderly upon Prince Ahmed, with a modest blush on her cheeks, it was no hard matter for the Prince to comprehend what happiness she meant. He presently considered that the Princess Nouronnihar could never be his and that the Fairy Paribanou excelled her infinitely in beauty, agreeableness, wit, and, as much as he could conjecture by the magnificence of the palace, in immense riches. He blessed the moment that he thought of seeking after his arrow a second time, and, yielding to his love, "Madam," replied he, "should I all my life have the happiness of being your slave, and the admirer of the many charms which ravish my soul, I should think myself the most blessed of men. Pardon in me the boldness which inspires me to ask this favor, and don't refuse to admit me into your Court, a prince who is entirely devoted to you."

"Prince," answered the Fairy, "will you not pledge your faith to me, as well as I give mine to you?" "Yes, madam," replied the Prince, in an ecstacy of joy; "what can I do better, and with greater pleasure? Yes, my sultaness, my queen, I'll give you my heart without the least reserve." "Then," answered the Fairy, "you are my husband, and I am your wife. But, as I suppose," pursued she, "that you have eaten nothing to-day, a slight repast shall be served up for you, while preparations are making for our wedding feast at night, and then I will show you the apartments of my palace, and you shall judge if this hall is not the meanest part of it."

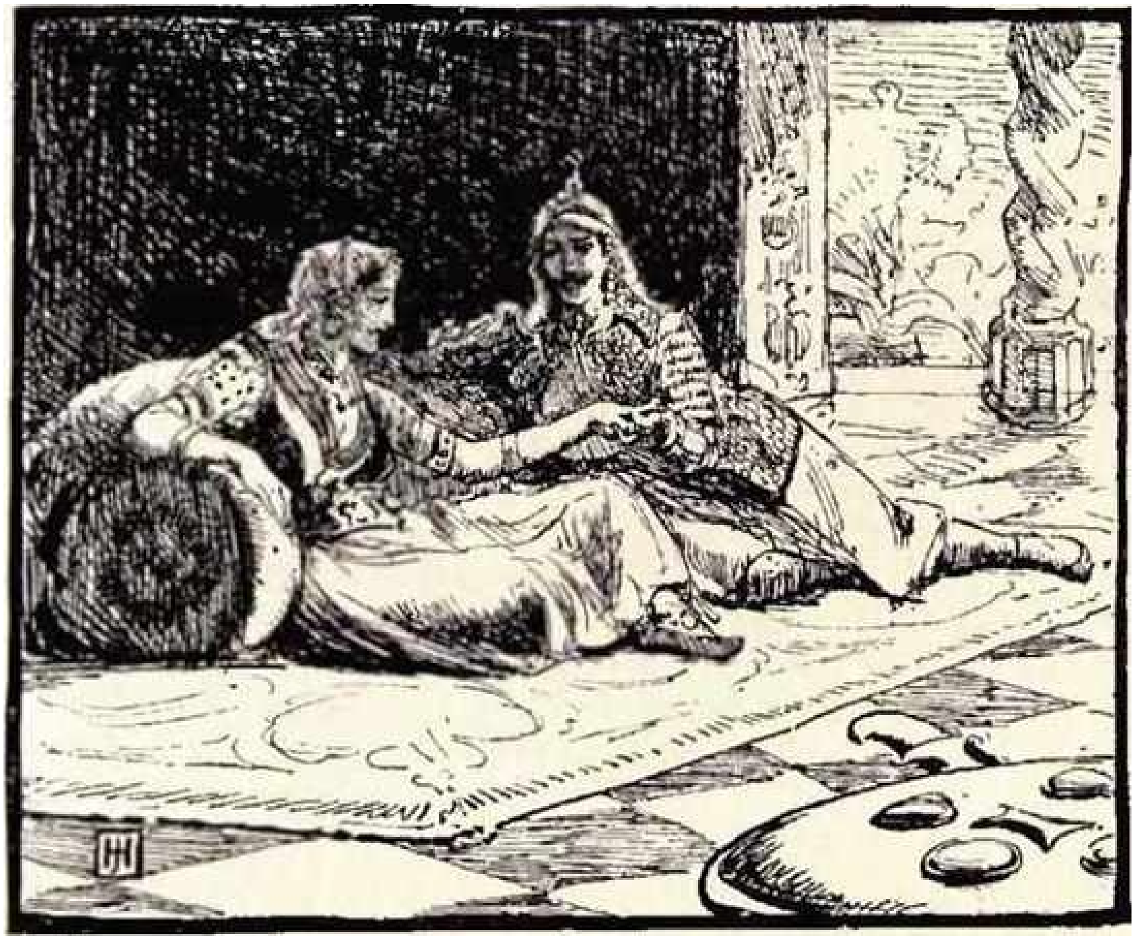

Some of the Fairy's women, who came into the hall with them, and guessed her intentions, went immediately out, and returned presently with some excellent meats and wines.

When Prince Ahmed had ate and drunk as much as he cared for, the Fairy Paribanou carried him through all the apartments, where he saw diamonds, rubies, emeralds and all sorts of fine jewels, intermixed with pearls, agate, jasper, porphyry, and all sorts of the most precious marbles. But, not to mention the richness of the furniture, which was inestimable, there was such a profuseness throughout that the Prince, instead of ever having seen anything like it, owned that he could not have imagined that there was anything in the world that could come up to it. "Prince," said the Fairy, "if you admire my palace so much, which, indeed, is very beautiful, what would you say to the palaces of the chief of our genies, which are much more beautiful, spacious, and magnificent? I could also charm you with my gardens, but we will let that alone till another time. Night draws near, and it will be time to go to supper."

The next hall which the Fairy led the Prince into, and where the cloth was laid for the feast, was the last apartment the Prince had not seen, and not in the least inferior to the others. At his entrance into it he admired the infinite number of sconces of wax candles perfumed with amber, the multitude of which, instead of being confused, were placed with so just a symmetry as formed an agreeable and pleasant sight. A large side table was set out with all sorts of gold plate, so finely wrought that the workmanship was much more valuable than the weight of the gold. Several choruses of beautiful women richly dressed, and whose voices were ravishing, began a concert, accompanied with all sorts of the most harmonious instruments; and when they were set down at table the Fairy Paribanou took care to help Prince Ahmed to the most delicate meats, which she named as she invited him to eat of them, and which the Prince found to be so exquisitely nice that he commended them with exaggeration, and said that the entertainment far surpassed those of man. He found also the same excellence in the wines, which neither he nor the Fairy tasted of till the dessert was served up, which consisted of the choicest sweetmeats and fruits.

The wedding feast was continued the next day, or, rather, the days following the celebration were a continual feast.

At the end of six months Prince Ahmed, who always loved and honored the Sultan his father, conceived a great desire to know how he was, and that desire could not be satisfied without his going to see; he told the Fairy of it, and desired she would give him leave.

“Prince,” said she, “go when you please. But first, don’t take it amiss that I give you some advice how you shall behave yourself where you are going. First, I don’t think it proper for you to tell the Sultan your father of our marriage, nor of my quality, nor the place where you have been. Beg of him to be satisfied in knowing you are happy, and desire no more; and let him know that the sole end of your visit is to make him easy, and inform him of your fate.”

She appointed twenty gentlemen, well mounted and equipped, to attend him. When all was ready Prince Ahmed took his leave of the Fairy, embraced her, and renewed his promise to return soon. Then his horse, which was most finely caparisoned, and was as beautiful a creature as any in the Sultan of Indies’ stables, was led to him, and he mounted him with an extraordinary grace; and, after he had bid her a last adieu, set forward on his journey.

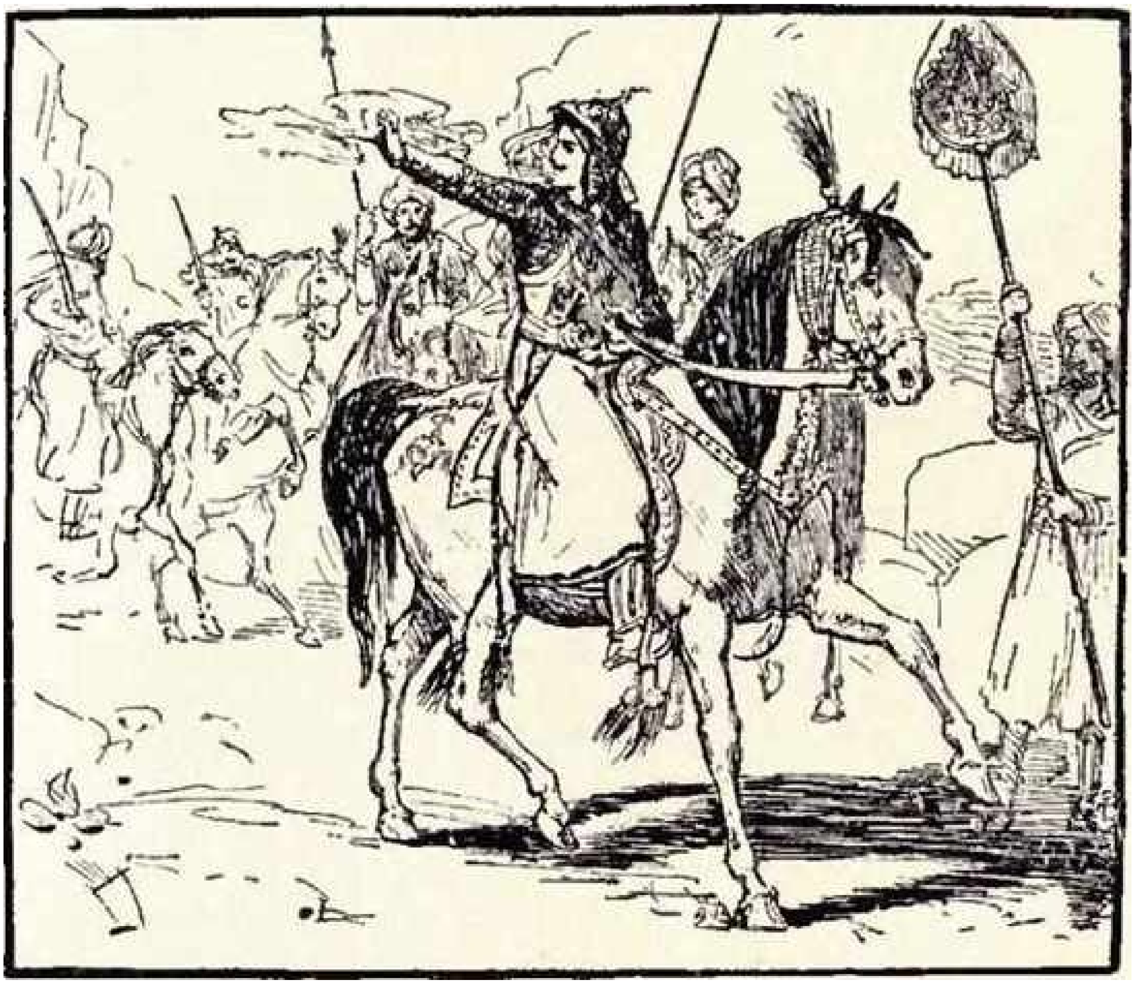

As it was not a great way to his father’s capital, Prince Ahmed soon arrived there. The people, glad to see him again, received him with acclamations of joy, and followed him in crowds to the Sultan’s apartment. The Sultan received and embraced him with great joy, complaining at the same time, with a fatherly tenderness, of the affliction his long absence had been to him, which he said was the more grievous for that, fortune having decided in favor of Prince Ali his brother, he was afraid he might have committed some rash action.

The Prince told a story of his adventures without speaking of the Fairy, whom he said that he must not mention, and ended: “The only favor I ask of your Majesty is to give me leave to come often and pay you my respects, and to know how you do.”

“Son,” answered the Sultan of the Indies, “I cannot refuse you the leave you ask me; but I should much rather you would resolve to stay with me; at least tell me where I may send to you if you should fail to come, or when I may think your presence necessary.” “Sir,” replied Prince Ahmed, “what your Majesty asks of me is part of the mystery I spoke to your Majesty of. I beg of you to give me leave to remain silent on this head, for I shall come so frequently that I am afraid that I shall sooner be thought troublesome than be accused of negligence in my duty."

The Sultan of the Indies pressed Prince Ahmed no more, but said to him: "Son, I penetrate no farther into your secrets, but leave you at your liberty; but can tell you that you could not do me a greater pleasure than to come, and by your presence restore to me the joy I have not felt this long time, and that you shall always be welcome when you come, without interrupting your business or pleasure."

Prince Ahmed stayed but three days at the Sultan his father's Court, and the fourth returned to the Fairy Paribanou, who did not expect him so soon.

A month after Prince Ahmed's return from paying a visit to his father, as the Fairy Paribanou had observed that the Prince, since the time that he gave her an account of his journey, his discourse with his father, and the leave he asked to go and see him often, had never talked of the Sultan, as if there had been no such person in the world, whereas before he was always speaking of him, she thought he forebore on her account; therefore she took an opportunity to say to him one day: "Prince, tell me, have you forgot the Sultan your father? Don't you remember the promise you made to go and see him often? For my part I have not forgot what you told me at your return, and so put you in mind of it, that you may not be long before you acquit yourself of your promise."

So Prince Ahmed went the next morning with the same attendance as before, but much finer, and himself more magnificently mounted, equipped, and dressed, and was received by the Sultan with the same joy and satisfaction. For several months he constantly paid his visits, always in a richer and finer equipage.

At last some viziers, the Sultan's favorites, who judged of Prince Ahmed's grandeur and power by the figure he cut, made the Sultan jealous of his son, saying it was to be feared he might inveigle himself into the people's favor and dethrone him.

The Sultan of the Indies was so far from thinking that Prince Ahmed could be capable of so pernicious a design as his favorites would make him believe that he said to them: "You are mistaken; my son loves me, and I am certain of his tenderness and fidelity, as I have given him no reason to be disgusted."

But the favorites went on abusing Prince Ahmed till the Sultan said: "Be it as it will, I don't believe my son Ahmed is so wicked as you would persuade me he is; how ever, I am obliged to you for your good advice, and don't dispute but that it proceeds from your good intentions."

The Sultan of the Indies said this that his favorites might not know the impressions their discourse had made on his mind; which had so alarmed him that he resolved to have Prince Ahmed watched unknown to his grand vizier. So he sent for a female magician, who was introduced by a back door into his apartment. “Go immediately,” he said, “and follow my son, and watch him so well as to find out where he retires, and bring me word.”

The magician left the Sultan, and, knowing the place where Prince Ahmed found his arrow, went immediately thither, and hid herself near the rocks, so that nobody could see her.

The next morning Prince Ahmed set out by daybreak, without taking leave either of the Sultan or any of his Court, according to custom. The magician, seeing him coming, followed him with her eyes, till on a sudden she lost sight of him and his attendants.

As the rocks were very steep and craggy, they were an insurmountable barrier, so that the magician judged that there were but two things for it: either that the Prince retired into some cavern, or an abode of genies or fairies. Thereupon she came out of the place where she was hid and went directly to the hollow way, which she traced till she came to the farther end, looking carefully about on all sides; but, notwithstanding all her diligence, could perceive no opening, not so much as the iron gate which Prince Ahmed discovered, which was to be seen and opened to none but men, and only to such whose presence was agreeable to the Fairy Paribanou.

The magician, who saw it was in vain for her to search any farther, was obliged to be satisfied with the discovery she had made, and returned to give the Sultan an account.

The Sultan was very well pleased with the magician’s conduct, and said to her: “Do you as you think fit; I’ll wait patiently the event of your promises,” and to encourage her made her a present of a diamond of great value.

As Prince Ahmed had obtained the Fairy Paribanou’s leave to go to the Sultan of the Indies’ Court once a month, he never failed, and the magician, knowing the time, went a day or two before to the foot of the rock where she lost sight of the Prince and his attendants, and waited there.

The next morning Prince Ahmed went out, as usual, at the iron gate, with the same attendants as before, and passed by the magician, whom he knew not to be such, and, seeing her lie with her head against the rock, and complaining as if she were in great pain, he pitied her, turned his horse about, went to her, and asked her what was the matter with her, and what he could do to ease her.

The artful sorceress looked at the Prince in a pitiful manner, without ever lifting up her head, and answered in broken words and sighs, as if she could hardly fetch her breath, that she was going to the capital city, but on the way thither she was taken with so violent a fever that her strength failed her, and she was forced to lie down where he saw her, far from any habitation, and without any hopes of assistance.

"Good woman," replied Prince Ahmed, "you are not so far from help as you imagine. I am ready to assist you, and convey you where you will meet with a speedy cure; only get up, and let one of my people take you behind him."

At these words the magician, who pretended sickness only to know where the Prince lived and what he did, refused not the charitable offer he made her, and that her actions might correspond with her words she made many pretended vain endeavors to get up. At the same time two of the Prince's attendants, alighting off their horses, helped her up, and set her behind another, and mounted their horses again, and followed the Prince, who turned back to the iron gate, which was opened by one of his retinue who rode before. And when he came into the outward court of the Fairy, without dismounting himself, he sent to tell her he wanted to speak with her.

The Fairy Paribanou came with all imaginable haste, not knowing what made Prince Ahmed return so soon, who, not giving her time to ask him the reason, said: "Princess, I desire you would have compassion on this good woman," pointing to the magician, who was held up by two of his retinue. "I found her in the condition you see her in, and promised her the assistance she stands in need of, and am persuaded that you, out of your own goodness, as well as upon my entreaty, will not abandon her."

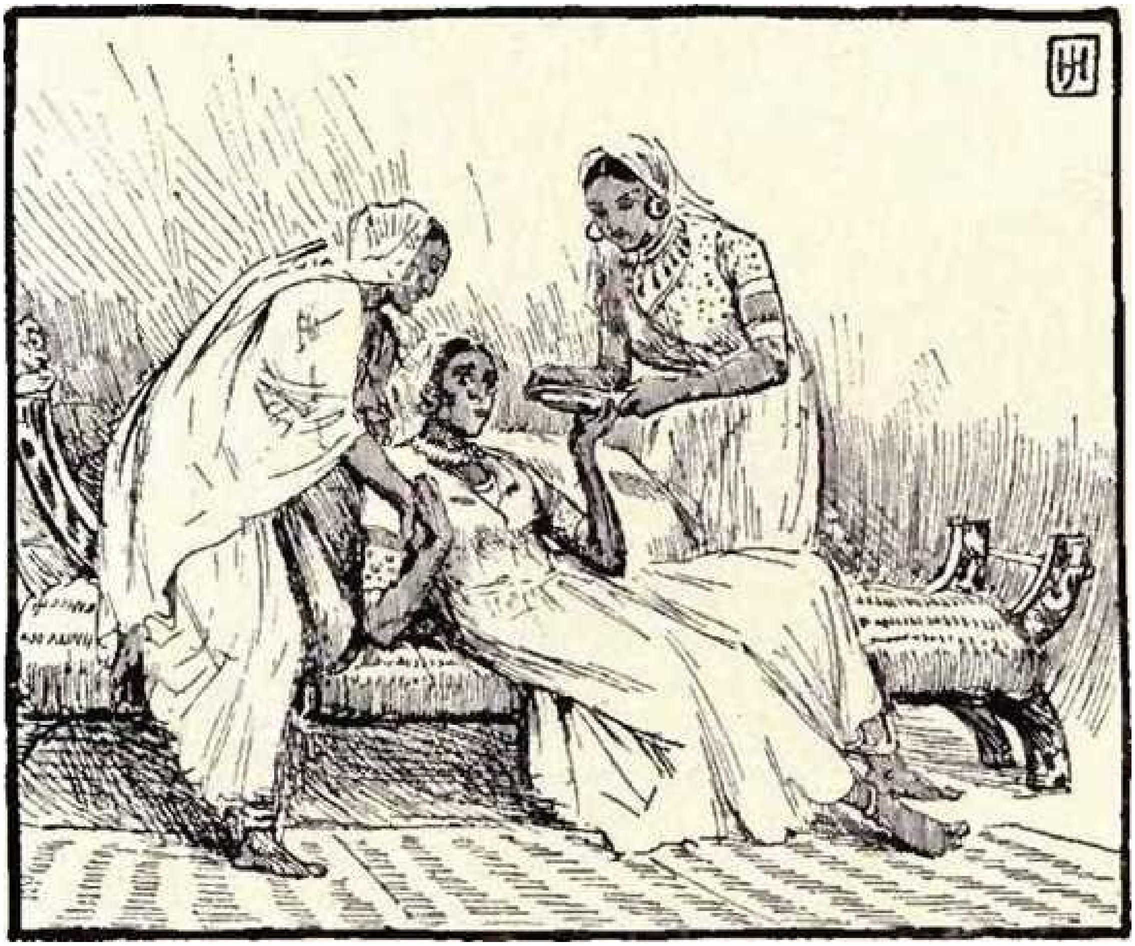

The Fairy Paribanou, who had her eyes fixed upon the pretended sick woman all the time that the Prince was talking to her, ordered two of her women who followed her to take her from the two men that held her, and carry her into an apartment of the palace, and take as much care of her as she would herself.

While the two women executed the Fairy's commands, she went up to Prince Ahmed, and, whispering in his ear, said: "Prince, this woman is not so sick as she pretends to be; and I am very much mistaken if she is not an impostor, who will be the cause of a great trouble to you. But don't be concerned, let what will be devised against you; be persuaded that I will deliver you out of all the snares that shall be laid for you. Go and pursue your journey."

This discourse of the Fairy's did not in the least frighten Prince Ahmed. "My Princess," said he, "as I do not remember I ever did or designed anybody an injury, I cannot believe anybody can have a thought of doing me one, but if they have I shall not, nevertheless, forbear doing good whenever I have an opportunity." Then he went back to his father's palace.

In the meantime the two women carried the magician into a very fine apartment, richly furnished. First they sat her down upon a sofa, with her back supported with a cushion of gold brocade, while they made a bed on the same sofa before her, the quilt of which was finely embroidered with silk, the sheets of the finest linen, and the coverlet cloth-of-gold. When they had put her into bed (for the old sorceress pretended that her fever was so violent she could not help herself in the least) one of the women went out, and returned soon again with a china dish in her hand, full of a certain liquor, which she presented to the magician, while the other helped her to sit up. “Drink this liquor,” said she; “it is the Water of the Fountain of Lions, and a sovereign remedy against all fevers whatsoever. You will find the effect of it in less than an hour’s time.”

The magician, to dissemble the better, took it after a great deal of entreaty; but at last she took the china dish, and, holding back her head, swallowed down the liquor. When she was laid down again the two women covered her up. “Lie quiet,” said she who brought her the china cup, “and get a little sleep if you can. We’ll leave you, and hope to find you perfectly cured when we come again an hour hence.”

The two women came again at the time they said they should, and found the magician up and dressed, and sitting upon the sofa. “Oh, admirable potion!” she said: “it has wrought its cure much sooner than you told me it would, and I shall be able to prosecute my journey.”

The two women, who were fairies as well as their mistress, after they had told the magician how glad they were that she was cured so soon, walked before her, and conducted her through several apartments, all more noble than that wherein she lay, into a large hall, the most richly and magnificently furnished of all the palace.

Fairy Paribanou sat in this hall on a throne of massive gold, enriched with diamonds, rubies, and pearls of an extraordinary size, and attended on each hand by a great number of beautiful fairies, all richly clothed. At the sight of so much majesty, the magician was not only dazzled, but was so amazed that, after she had prostrated herself before the throne, she could not open her lips to thank the Fairy as she proposed. However, Paribanou saved her the trouble, and said to her: “Good woman, I am glad I had an opportunity to oblige you, and to see you are able to pursue your journey. I won’t detain you, but perhaps you may not be displeased to see my palace; follow my women, and they will show it you.”

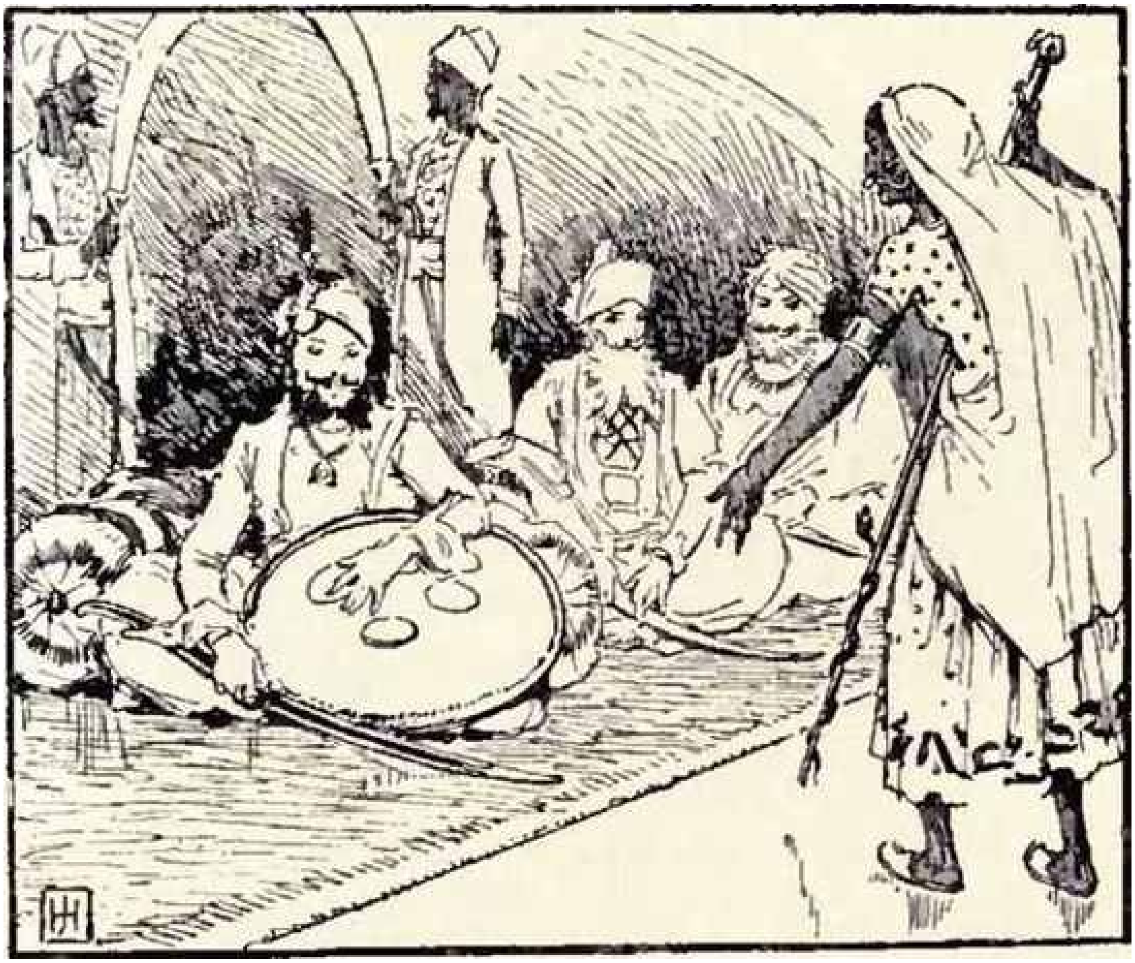

Then the magician went back and related to the Sultan of the Indies all that had happened, and how very rich Prince Ahmed was since his marriage with the Fairy, richer than all the kings in the world, and how there was danger that he should come and take the throne from his father.

Though the Sultan of the Indies was very well persuaded that Prince Ahmed’s natural disposition was good, yet he could not help being concerned at the discourse of the old sorceress, to whom, when she was taking her leave, he said: “I thank thee for the pains thou hast taken, and thy wholesome advice. I am so sensible of the great importance it is to me that I shall deliberate upon it in council.”

Now the favorites advised that the Prince should be killed, but the magician advised differently: “Make him give you all kinds of wonderful things, by the Fairy’s help, till she tires of him and sends him away. As, for example, every time your Majesty goes into the field, you are obliged to be at a great expense, not only in pavilions and tents for your army, but likewise in mules and camels to carry their baggage. Now, might not you engage him to use his interest with the Fairy to procure you a tent which might be carried in a man’s hand, and which should be so large as to shelter your whole army against bad weather?”

When the magician had finished her speech, the Sultan asked his favorites if they had anything better to propose; and, finding them all silent, determined to follow the magician’s advice, as the most reasonable and most agreeable to his mild government.

Next day the Sultan did as the magician had advised him, and asked for the pavilion.

Prince Ahmed never expected that the Sultan his father would have asked such a thing, which at first appeared so difficult, not to say impossible. Though he knew not absolutely how great the power of genies and fairies was, he doubted whether it extended so far as to compass such a tent as his father desired. At last he replied: “Though it is with the greatest reluctance imaginable, I will not fail to ask the favor of my wife your Majesty desires, but will not promise you to obtain it; and if I should not have the honor to come again to pay you my respects that shall be the sign that I have not had success. But beforehand, I desire you to forgive me, and consider that you yourself have reduced me to this extremity.”

“Son,” replied the Sultan of the Indies, “I should be very sorry if what I ask of you should cause me the displeasure of never seeing you more. I find you don’t know the power a husband has over a wife; and yours would show that her love to you was very indifferent if she, with the power she has of a fairy, should refuse you so trifling a request as this I desire you to ask of her for my sake.” The Prince went back, and was very sad for fear of offending the Fairy. She kept pressing him to tell her what was the matter, and at last he said: “Madam, you may have observed that hitherto I have been content with your love, and have never asked you any other favor. Consider then, I conjure you, that it is not I, but the Sultan my father, who indiscreetly, or at least I think so, begs of you a pavilion large enough to shelter him, his Court, and army from the violence of the weather, and which a man may carry in his hand. But remember it is the Sultan my father asks this favor.”

“Prince,” replied the Fairy, smiling, “I am sorry that so small a matter should disturb you, and make you so uneasy as you appeared to me.”

Then the Fairy sent for her treasurer, to whom, when she came, she said: “Nourgihan” — which was her name— “bring me the largest pavilion in my treasury.” Nourgiham returned presently with the pavilion, which she could not only hold in her hand, but in the palm of her hand when she shut her fingers, and presented it to her mistress, who gave it to Prince Ahmed to look at.

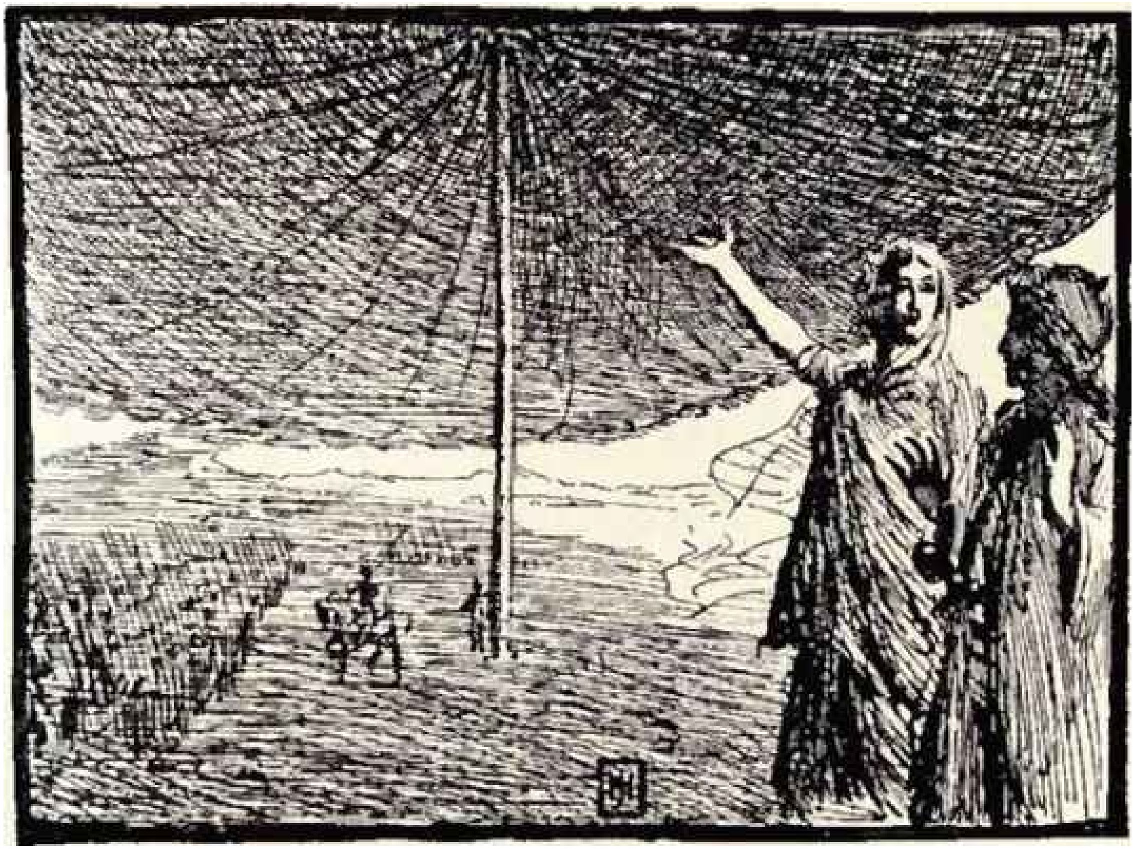

When Prince Ahmed saw the pavilion which the Fairy called the largest in her treasury, he fancied she had a mind to jest with him, and thereupon the marks of his surprise appeared presently in his countenance; which Paribanou perceiving burst out laughing. “What! Prince,” cried she, “do you think I jest with you? You’ll see presently that I am in earnest. Nourgihan,” said she to her treasurer, taking the tent out of Prince Ahmed’s hands, “go and set it up, that the Prince may judge whether it may be large enough for the Sultan his father.”

The treasurer went immediately with it out of the palace, and carried it a great way off; and when she had set it up one end reached to the very palace; at which time the Prince, thinking it small, found it large enough to shelter two greater armies than that of the Sultan his father’s, and then said to Paribanou: “I ask my Princess a thousand pardons for my incredulity; after what I have seen I believe there is nothing impossible to you.” “You see,” said the Fairy, “that the pavilion is larger than what your father may have occasion for; for you must know that it has one property — that it is larger or smaller according to the army it is to cover.”

The treasurer took down the tent again, and brought it to the Prince, who took it, and, without staying any longer than till the next day, mounted his horse, and went with the same attendants to the Sultan his father.

The Sultan, who was persuaded that there could not be any such thing as such a tent as he asked for, was in a great surprise at the Prince's diligence. He took the tent and after he had admired its smallness his amazement was so great that he could not recover himself. When the tent was set up in the great plain, which we have before mentioned, he found it large enough to shelter an army twice as large as he could bring into the field.

But the Sultan was not yet satisfied. "Son," said he, "I have already expressed to you how much I am obliged to you for the present of the tent you have procured me; that I look upon it as the most valuable thing in all my treasury. But you must do one thing more for me, which will be every whit as agreeable to me. I am informed that the Fairy, your spouse, makes use of a certain water, called the Water of the Fountain of Lions, which cures all sorts of fevers, even the most dangerous, and, as I am perfectly well persuaded my health is dear to you, I don't doubt but you will ask her for a bottle of that water for me, and bring it me as a sovereign medicine, which I may make use of when I have occasion. Do me this other important piece of service, and thereby complete the duty of a good son toward a tender father."

The Prince returned and told the Fairy what his father had said; "There's a great deal of wickedness in this demand?" she answered, "as you will understand by what I am going to tell you. The Fountain of Lions is situated in the middle of a court of a great castle, the entrance into which is guarded by four fierce lions, two of which sleep alternately, while the other two are awake. But don't let that frighten you: I'll give you means to pass by them without any danger."

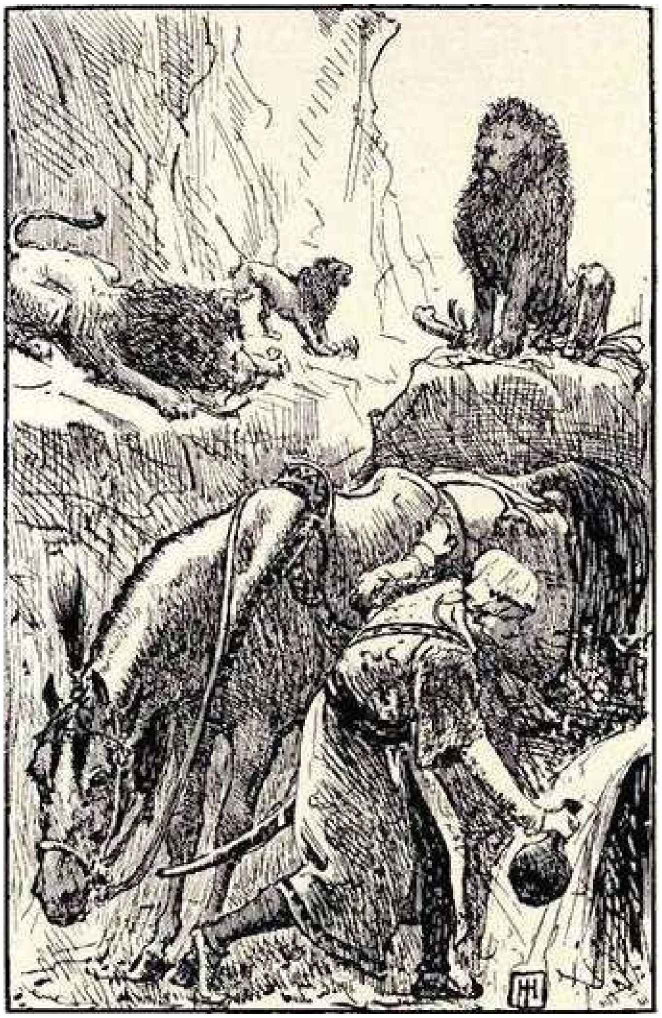

The Fairy Paribanou was at that time very hard at work, and, as she had several clews of thread by her, she took up one, and, presenting it to Prince Ahmed, said: “First take this clew of thread. I’ll tell you presently the use of it. In the second place, you must have two horses; one you must ride yourself, and the other you must lead, which must be loaded with a sheep cut into four quarters, that must be killed to-day. In the third place, you must be provided with a bottle, which I will give you, to bring the water in. Set out early to-morrow morning, and when you have passed the iron gate throw the clew of thread before you, which will roll till it comes to the gates of the castle. Follow it, and when it stops, as the gates will be open, you will see the four lions: the two that are awake will, by their roaring, wake the other two, but don’t be frightened, but throw each of them a quarter of mutton, and then clap spurs to your horse and ride to the fountain; fill your bottle without alighting, and then return with the same expedition. The lions will be so busy eating they will let you pass by them.”

Prince Ahmed set out the next morning at the time appointed by the Fairy, and followed her directions exactly. When he arrived at the gates of the castle he distributed the quarters of mutton among the four lions, and, passing through the midst of them bravely, got to the fountain, filled his bottle, and returned back as safe and sound as he went. When he had gone a little distance from the castle gates he turned him about, and, perceiving two of the lions coming after him, he drew his sabre and prepared himself for defense. But as he went forward he saw one of them turned out of the road at some distance, and showed by his head and tail that he did not come to do him any harm, but only to go before him, and that the other stayed behind to follow, he put his sword up again in its scabbard. Guarded in this manner, he arrived at the capital of the Indies, but the lions never left him till they had conducted him to the gates of the Sultan's palace; after which they returned the same way they came, though not without frightening all that saw them, for all they went in a very gentle manner and showed no fierceness.

A great many officers came to attend the Prince while he dismounted his horse, and afterward conducted him into the Sultan's apartment, who was at that time surrounded with his favorites. He approached toward the throne, laid the bottle at the Sultan's feet, and kissed the rich tapestry which covered his footstool, and then said:

"I have brought you, sir, the healthful water which your Majesty desired so much to keep among your other rarities in your treasury, but at the same time wish you such extraordinary health as never to have occasion to make use of it."

After the Prince had made an end of his compliment the Sultan placed him on his right hand, and then said to him: "Son, I am very much obliged to you for this valuable present, as also for the great danger you have exposed yourself to upon my account (which I have been informed of by a magician who knows the Fountain of Lions); but do me the pleasure," continued he, "to inform me by what address, or, rather, by what incredible power, you have been secured."

"Sir," replied Prince Ahmed, "I have no share in the compliment your Majesty is pleased to make me; all the honor is due to the Fairy my spouse, whose good advice I followed." Then he informed the Sultan what those directions were, and by the relation of this his expedition let him know how well he had behaved himself. When he had done the Sultan, who showed outwardly all the demonstrations of great joy, but secretly became more jealous, retired into an inward apartment, where he sent for the magician.

The magician, at her arrival, saved the Sultan the trouble to tell her of the success of Prince Ahmed's journey, which she had heard of before she came, and therefore was prepared with an infallible means, as she pretended. This means she communicated to the Sultan who declared it the next day to the

Prince, in the midst of all his courtiers, in these words: “Son,” said he, “I have one thing more to ask of you, after which I shall expect nothing more from your obedience, nor your interest with your wife. This request is, to bring me a man not above a foot and a half high, and whose beard is thirty feet long who carries a bar of iron upon his shoulders of five hundredweight, which he uses as a quarterstaff.”

Prince Ahmed, who did not believe that there was such a man in the world as his father described, would gladly have excused himself; but the Sultan persisted in his demand, and told him the Fairy could do more incredible things.

The next day the Prince returned to his dear Paribanou, to whom he told his father’s new demand, which, he said, he looked upon to be a thing more impossible than the two first; “for,” added he, “I cannot imagine there can be such a man in the world; without doubt, he has a mind to try whether or no I am so silly as to go about it, or he has a design on my ruin. In short, how can he suppose that I should lay hold of a man so well armed, though he is but little? What arms can I make use of to reduce him to my will? If there are any means, I beg you will tell them, and let me come off with honor this time.”

“Don’t affright yourself, Prince,” replied the Fairy; “you ran a risk in fetching the Water of the Fountain of Lions for your father, but there’s no danger in finding out this man, who is my brother Schaibar, but is so far from being like me, though we both had the same father, that he is of so violent a nature that nothing can prevent his giving cruel marks of his resentment for a slight offense; yet, on the other hand, is so good as to oblige anyone in whatever they desire. He is made exactly as the Sultan your father has described him, and has no other arms than a bar of iron of five hundred pounds weight, without which he never stirs, and which makes him respected. I’ll send for him, and you shall judge of the truth of what I tell you; but be sure to prepare yourself against being frightened at his extraordinary figure when you see him.” “What! my Queen,” replied Prince Ahmed, “do you say Schaibar is your brother? Let him be never so ugly or deformed I shall be so far from being frightened at the sight of him that, as our brother, I shall honor and love him.”

The Fairy ordered a gold chafing-dish to be set with a fire in it under the porch of her palace, with a box of the same metal, which was a present to her, out of which taking a perfume, and throwing it into the fire, there arose a thick cloud of smoke.

Some moments after the Fairy said to Prince Ahmed: “See, there comes my brother.” The Prince immediately perceived Schaibar coming gravely with his heavy bar on his shoulder, his long beard, which he held up before him, and a pair of thick mustachios, which he tucked behind his ears and almost covered his face; his eyes were very small and deep-set in his head, which was far from being of the smallest size, and on his head he wore a grenadier's cap; besides all this, he was very much hump-backed.

If Prince Ahmed had not known that Schaibar was Paribanou's brother, he would not have been able to have looked at him without fear, but, knowing first who he was, he stood by the Fairy without the least concern.

Schaibar, as he came forward, looked at the Prince earnestly enough to have chilled his blood in his veins, and asked Paribanou, when he first accosted her, who that man was. To which she replied: "He is my husband, brother. His name is Ahmed; he is son to the Sultan of the Indies. The reason why I did not invite you to my wedding was I was unwilling to divert you from an expedition you were engaged in, and from which I heard with pleasure you returned victorious, and so took the liberty now to call for you."

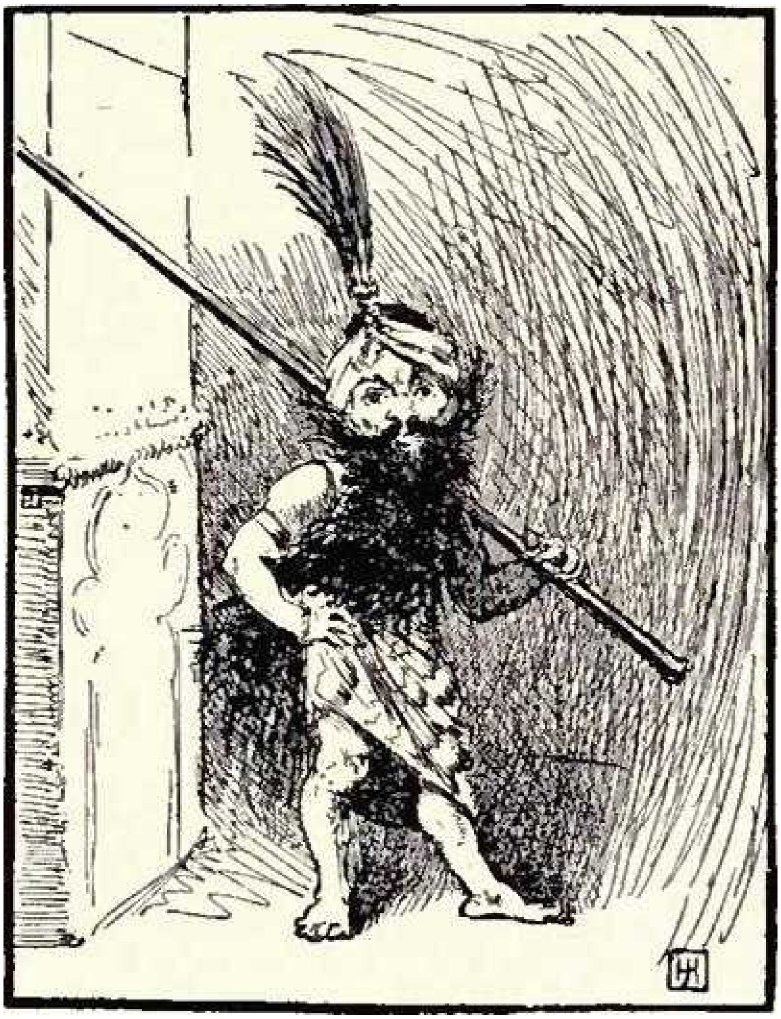

At these words, Schaibar, looking on Prince Ahmed favorably, said: "Is there anything else, sister, wherein I can serve him? It is enough for me that he is your husband to engage me to do for him whatever he desires.” “The Sultan, his father,” replied Paribanou, “has a curiosity to see you, and I desire he may be your guide to the Sultan’s Court.” “He needs but lead me the way I’ll follow him.” “Brother,” replied Paribanou, “it is too late to go to-day, therefore stay till to-morrow morning; and in the meantime I’ll inform you of all that has passed between the Sultan of the Indies and Prince Ahmed since our marriage.”

The next morning, after Schaibar had been informed of the affair, he and Prince Ahmed set out for the Sultan’s Court. When they arrived at the gates of the capital the people no sooner saw Schaibar but they ran and hid themselves; and some shut up their shops and locked themselves up in their houses, while others, flying, communicated their fear to all they met, who stayed not to look behind them, but ran too; insomuch that Schaibar and Prince Ahmed, as they went along, found the streets all desolate till they came to the palaces where the porters, instead of keeping the gates, ran away too, so that the Prince and Schaibar advanced without any obstacle to the council-hall, where the Sultan was seated on his throne, and giving audience. Here likewise the ushers, at the approach of Schaibar, abandoned their posts, and gave them free admittance.

Schaibar went boldly and fiercely up to the throne, without waiting to be presented by Prince Ahmed, and accosted the Sultan of the Indies in these words: “Thou hast asked for me,” said he; “see, here I am; what wouldst thou have with me?”

The Sultan, instead of answering him, clapped his hands before his eyes to avoid the sight of so terrible an object; at which uncivil and rude reception Schaibar was so much provoked, after he had given him the trouble to come so far, that he instantly lifted up his iron bar and killed him before Prince Ahmed could intercede in his behalf. All that he could do was to prevent his killing the grand vizier, who sat not far from him, representing to him that he had always given the Sultan his father good advice. “These are they, then,” said Schaibar, “who gave him bad,” and as he pronounced these words he killed all the other viziers and flattering favorites of the Sultan who were Prince Ahmed’s enemies. Every time he struck he killed some one or other, and none escaped but they who were not so frightened as to stand staring and gaping, and who saved themselves by flight.

When this terrible execution was over Schaibar came out of the council-hall into the midst of the courtyard with the iron bar upon his shoulder, and, looking hard at the grand vizier, who owed his life to Prince Ahmed, he said: “I know here is a certain magician, who is a greater enemy of my brother-in-law than all these base favorites I have chastised. Let the magician be brought to me presently.” The grand vizier immediately sent for her, and as soon as she was brought Schaibar said, at the time he fetched a stroke at her with his iron bar: “Take the reward of thy pernicious counsel, and learn to feign sickness again.”

After this he said: “This is not yet enough; I will use the whole town after the same manner if they do not immediately acknowledge Prince Ahmed, my brother-in-law, for their Sultan and the Sultan of the Indies.” Then all that were there present made the air echo again with the repeated acclamations of: “Long life to Sultan Ahmed”; and immediately after he was proclaimed through the whole town. Schaibar made him be clothed in the royal vestments, installed him on the throne, and after he had caused all to swear homage and fidelity to him went and fetched his sister Paribanou, whom he brought with all the pomp and grandeur imaginable, and made her to be owned Sultaness of the Indies.

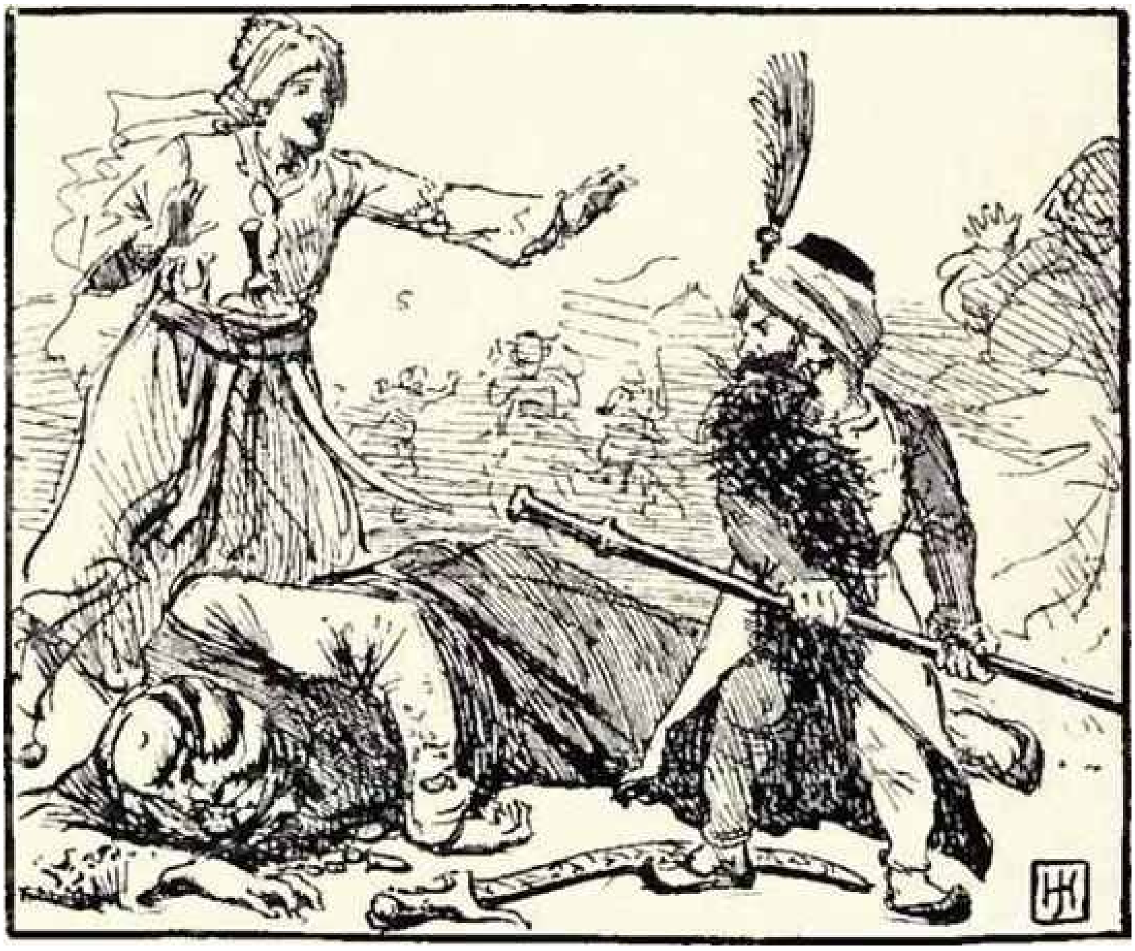

As for Prince Ali and Princess Nouronnihar, as they had no hand in the conspiracy against Prince Ahmed and knew nothing of any, Prince Ahmed assigned them a considerable province, with its capital, where they spent the rest of their lives. Afterwards he sent an officer to Prince Houssain to acquaint him with the change and make him an offer of which province he liked best; but that Prince thought himself so happy in his solitude that he bade the officer return the Sultan his brother thanks for the kindness he designed him, assuring him of his submission; and that the only favor he desired of him was to give him leave to live retired in the place he had made choice of for his retreat.(1)

(1) Arabian Nights.

THE HISTORY OF JACK THE GIANT-KILLER

In the reign of the famous King Arthur there lived in Cornwall a lad named Jack, who was a boy of a bold temper, and took delight in hearing or reading of conjurers, giants, and fairies; and used to listen eagerly to the deeds of the knights of King Arthur's Round Table.

In those days there lived on St. Michael's Mount, off Cornwall, a huge giant, eighteen feet high and nine feet round; his fierce and savage looks were the terror of all who beheld him.

He dwelt in a gloomy cavern on the top of the mountain, and used to wade over to the mainland in search of prey; when he would throw half a dozen oxen upon his back, and tie three times as many sheep and hogs round his waist, and march back to his own abode.

The giant had done this for many years when Jack resolved to destroy him.

Jack took a horn, a shovel, a pickaxe, his armor, and a dark lantern, and one winter's evening he went to the mount. There he dug a pit twenty-two feet deep and twenty broad. He covered the top over so as to make it look like solid ground. He then blew his horn so loudly that the giant awoke and came out of his den crying out: "You saucy villain! you shall pay for this I'll broil you for my breakfast!"

He had just finished, when, taking one step further, he tumbled headlong into the pit, and Jack struck him a blow on the head with his pickaxe which killed him. Jack then returned home to cheer his friends with the news.

Another giant, called Blunderbore, vowed to be revenged on Jack if ever he should have him in his power. This giant kept an enchanted castle in the midst of a lonely wood; and some time after the death of Cormoran Jack was passing through a wood, and being weary, sat down and went to sleep.

The giant, passing by and seeing Jack, carried him to his castle, where he locked him up in a large room, the floor of which was covered with the bodies, skulls and bones of men and women.

Soon after the giant went to fetch his brother who was likewise a giant, to take a meal off his flesh; and Jack saw with terror through the bars of his prison the two giants approaching.

Jack, perceiving in one corner of the room a strong cord, took courage, and making a slip-knot at each end, he threw them over their heads, and tied it to the window-bars; he then pulled till he had choked them. When they were black in the face he slid down the rope and stabbed them to the heart.

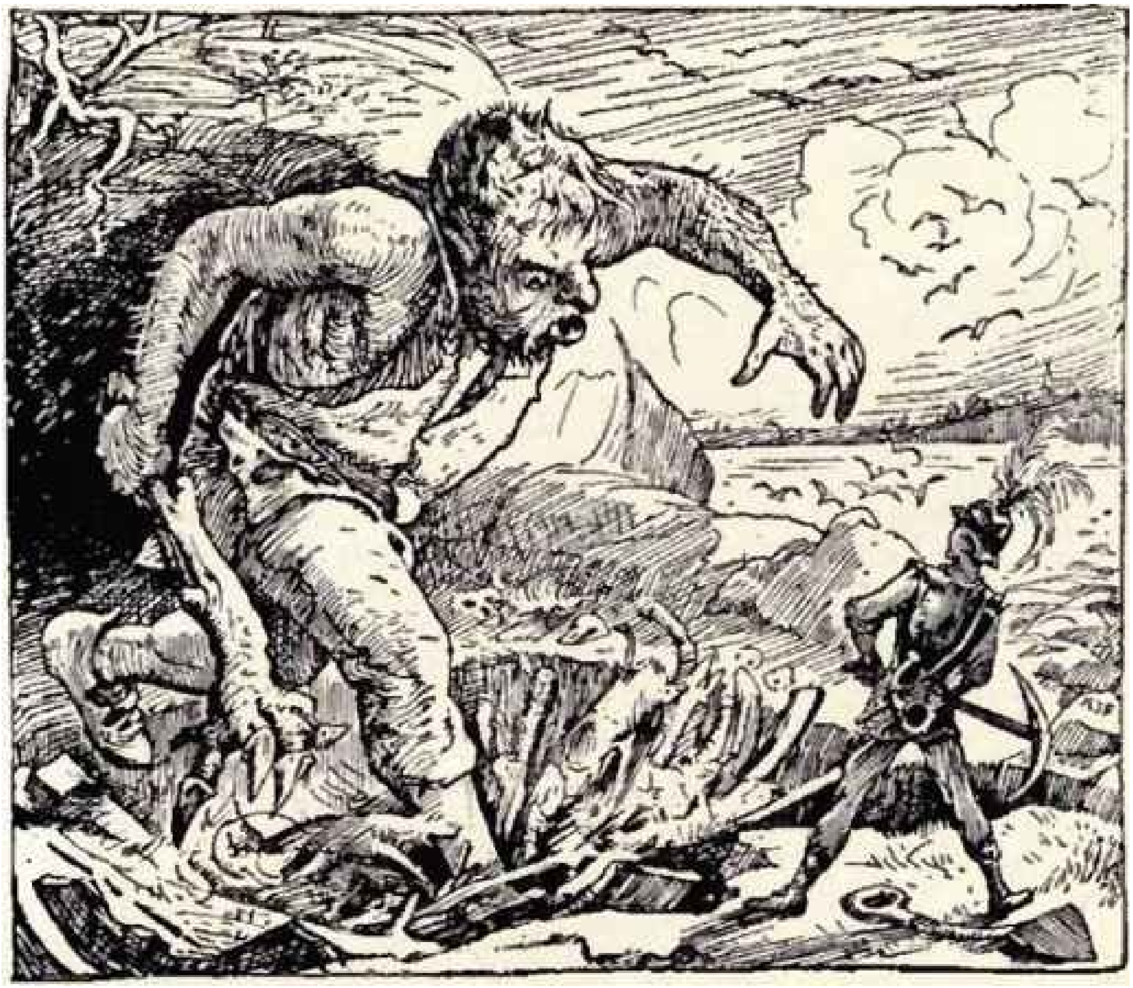

Jack next took a great bunch of keys from the pocket of Blunderbore, and went into the castle again. He made a strict search through all the rooms, and in one of them found three ladies tied up by the hair of their heads, and almost starved to death. They told him that their husbands had been killed by the giants, who had then condemned them to be starved to death because they would not eat the flesh of their own dead husbands.

"Ladies," said Jack, "I have put an end to the monster and his wicked brother; and I give you this castle and all the riches it contains, to make some amends for the dreadful pains you have felt." He then very politely gave them the keys of the castle, and went further on his journey to Wales.

As Jack had but little money, he went on as fast as possible. At length he came to a handsome house. Jack knocked at the door, when there came forth a Welsh giant. Jack said he was a traveler who had lost his way, on which the giant made him welcome, and let him into a room where there was a good bed to sleep in.

Jack took off his clothes quickly, but though he was weary he could not go to sleep. Soon after this he heard the giant walking backward and forward in the next room, and saying to himself:

“Though here you lodge with me this night,
You shall not see the morning light;
My club shall dash your brains out quite.”

“Say you so?” thought Jack. “Are these your tricks upon travelers? But I hope to prove as cunning as you are.” Then, getting out of bed, he groped about the room, and at last found a large thick billet of wood. He laid it in his own place in the bed, and then hid himself in a dark corner of the room.

The giant, about midnight, entered the apartment, and with his bludgeon struck many blows on the bed, in the very place where Jack had laid the log; and then he went back to his own room, thinking he had broken all Jack’s bones.

Early in the morning Jack put a bold face upon the matter, and walked into the giant’s room to thank him for his lodging. The giant started when he saw him, and began to stammer out: “Oh! dear me; is it you? Pray how did you sleep last night? Did you hear or see anything in the dead of the night?”

“Nothing to speak of,” said Jack, carelessly; “a rat, I believe, gave me three or four slaps with its tail, and disturbed me a little; but I soon went to sleep again.”

The giant wondered more and more at this; yet he did not answer a word, but went to bring two great bowls of hasty-pudding for their breakfast. Jack wanted to make the giant believe that he could eat as much as himself, so he contrived to button a leathern bag inside his coat, and slip the hasty-pudding into this bag, while he seemed to put it into his mouth.

When breakfast was over he said to the giant: “Now I will show you a fine trick. I can cure all wounds with a touch; I could cut off my head in one minute, and the next put it sound again on my shoulders. You shall see an example.” He then took hold of the knife, ripped up the leathern bag, and all the hasty-pudding tumbled out upon the floor.

“Ods splutter hur nails!” cried the Welsh giant, who was ashamed to be outdone by such a little fellow as Jack, “hur can do that hurself”; so he snatched up the knife, plunged it into his own stomach, and in a moment dropped down dead.

Jack, having hitherto been successful in all his undertakings, resolved not to be idle in future; he therefore furnished himself with a horse, a cap of knowledge, a sword of sharpness, shoes of swiftness, and an invisible coat, the better to perform the wonderful enterprises that lay before him.

He traveled over high hills, and on the third day he came to a large and spacious forest through which his road lay. Scarcely had he entered the forest when he beheld a monstrous giant dragging along by the hair of their heads a handsome knight and his lady. Jack alighted from his horse, and tying him to an oak tree, put on his invisible coat, under which he carried his sword of sharpness.

When he came up to the giant he made several strokes at him, but could not reach his body, but wounded his thighs in several places; and at length, putting both hands to his sword and aiming with all his might, he cut off both his legs. Then Jack, setting his foot upon his neck, plunged his sword into the giant's body, when the monster gave a groan and expired.

The knight and his lady thanked Jack for their deliverance, and invited him to their house, to receive a proper reward for his services. "No," said Jack, "I cannot be easy till I find out this monster's habitation." So, taking the knight's directions, he mounted his horse and soon after came in sight of another giant, who was sitting on a block of timber waiting for his brother's return.

Jack alighted from his horse, and, putting on his invisible coat, approached and aimed a blow at the giant's head, but, missing his aim, he only cut off his nose. On this the giant seized his club and laid about him most unmercifully.

"Nay," said Jack, "if this be the case I'd better dispatch you!" so, jumping upon the block, he stabbed him in the back, when he dropped down dead.

Jack then proceeded on his journey, and traveled over hills and dales, till arriving at the foot of a high mountain he knocked at the door of a lonely house, when an old man let him in.

When Jack was seated the hermit thus addressed him: "My son, on the top of this mountain is an enchanted castle, kept by the giant Galligantus and a vile magician. I lament the fate of a duke's daughter, whom they seized as she was walking in her father's garden, and brought hither transformed into a deer."

Jack promised that in the morning, at the risk of his life, he would break the enchantment; and after a sound sleep he rose early, put on his invisible coat, and got ready for the attempt.

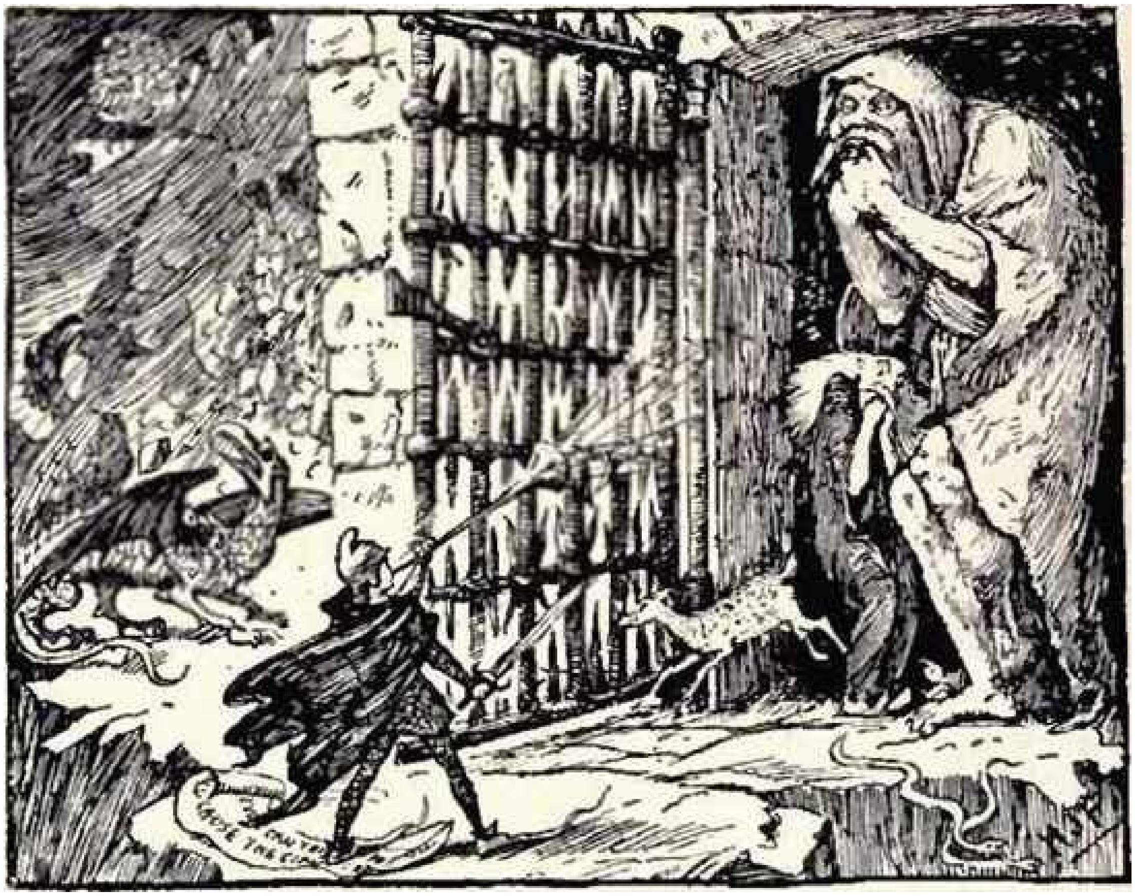

When he had climbed to the top of the mountain he saw two fiery griffins, but he passed between them without the least fear of danger, for they could not see him because of his invisible coat. On the castle gate he found a golden trumpet, under which were written these lines:

“Whoever can this trumpet blow
Shall cause the giant’s overthrow.”

As soon as Jack had read this he seized the trumpet and blew a shrill blast, which made the gates fly open and the very castle itself tremble.

The giant and the conjurer now knew that their wicked course was at an end, and they stood biting their thumbs and shaking with fear. Jack, with his sword of sharpness, soon killed the giant, and the magician was then carried away by a whirlwind; and every knight and beautiful lady who had been changed into birds and beasts returned to their proper shapes. The castle vanished away like smoke, and the head of the giant Galligantus was then sent to King Arthur.

The knights and ladies rested that night at the old man’s hermitage, and next day they set out for the Court. Jack then went up to the King, and gave his Majesty an account of all his fierce battles.

Jack’s fame had now spread through the whole country, and at the King’s desire the duke gave him his daughter in marriage, to the joy of all his kingdom. After this the King gave him a large estate, on which he and his lady lived the rest of their days in joy and contentment.(1)

(1) Old Chapbook.

THE BLACK BULL OF NORROWAY

And many a hunting song they sung,
And song of game and glee;
Then tuned to plaintive strains their tongue,
"Of Scotland's luve and lee."
To wilder measures next they turn
"The Black, Black Bull of Norroway!"
Sudden the tapers cease to burn,
The minstrels cease to play.

"The Cout of Keeldar," by J. Leyden.

In Norroway, langsyne, there lived a certain lady, and she had three dochters. The auldest o' them said to her mither: "Mither, bake me a bannock, and roast me a collop, for I'm gaun awa' to seek my fortune." Her mither did sae; and the dochter gaed awa' to an auld witch washerwife and telled her purpose. The auld wife bade her stay that day, and gang and look out o' her back door, and see what she could see. She saw nocht the first day. The second day she did the same, and saw nocht. On the third day she looked again, and saw a coach-and-six coming along the road. She ran in and telled the auld wife what she saw. "Aweel," quo' the auld wife, "yon's for you." Sae they took her into the coach, and galloped aff.

The second dochter next says to her mither: "Mither, bake me a bannock, and roast me a collop, fur I'm gaun awa' to seek my fortune." Her mither did sae; and awa' she gaed to the auld wife, as her sister had dune. On the third day she looked out o' the back door, and saw a coach-and-four coming along the road. "Aweel," quo' the auld wife, "yon's for you." Sae they took her in, and aff they set.

The third dochter says to her mither: "Mither, bake me a bannock, and roast me a collop, for I'm gaun awa' to seek my fortune." Her mither did sae; and awa' she gaed to the auld witch-wife. She bade her look out o' her back door, and see what she could see. She did sae; and when she came back said she saw nocht. The second day she did the same, and saw nocht. The third day she looked again, and on coming back said to the auld wife she saw nocht but a muckle Black Bull coming roaring alang the road. "Aweel," quo' the auld wife, "yon's for you." On hearing this she was next to distracted wi' grief and terror;

but she was lifted up and set on his back, and awa’ they went.

Aye they traveled, and on they traveled, till the lady grew faint wi’ hunger. “Eat out o’ my right lug,” says the Black Bull, “and drink out o’ my left lug, and set by your leavings.” Sae she did as he said, and was wonderfully refreshed. And lang they gaed, and sair they rade, till they came in sight o’ a very big and bonny castle. “Yonder we maun be this night,” quo’ the bull; “for my auld brither lives yonder”; and presently they were at the place. They lifted her aff his back, and took her in, and sent him away to a park for the night. In the morning, when they brought the bull hame, they took the lady into a fine shining parlor, and gave her a beautiful apple, telling her no to break it till she was in the greatest strait ever mortal was in in the world, and that wad bring her o’t. Again she was lifted on the bull’s back, and after she had ridden far, and farer than I can tell, they came in sight o’ a far bonnier castle, and far farther awa’ than the last. Says the bull till her: “Yonder we maun be the night, for my second brither lives yonder”; and they were at the place directly. They lifted her down and took her in, and sent the bull to the field for the night. In the morning they took the lady into a fine and rich room, and gave her the finest pear she had ever seen, bidding her no to break it till she was in the greatest strait ever mortal could be in, and that wad get her out o’t. Again she was lifted and set on his back, and awa’ they went. And lang they gaed, and sair they rade, till they came in sight o’ the far biggest castle, and far farthest aff, they had yet seen. “We maun be yonder the night,” says the bull, “for my young brither lives yonder”; and they were there directly. They lifted her down, took her in, and sent the bull to the field for the night. In the morning they took her into a room, the finest of a’, and gied her a plum, telling her no to break it till she was in the greatest strait mortal could be in, and that wad get her out o’t. Presently they brought hame the bull, set the lady on his back, and awa’ they went.

And aye they gaed, and on they rade, till they came to a dark and ugsome glen, where they stopped, and the lady lighted down. Says the bull to her: “Here ye maun stay till I gang and fight the deil. Ye maun seat yoursel’ on that stane, and move neither hand nor fit till I come back, else I’ll never find ye again. And if everything round about ye turns blue I hae beated the deil; but should a’ things turn red he’ll hae conquered me.” She set hersel’ down on the stane, and by-and-by a’ round her turned blue. O’ercome wi’ joy, she lifted the ae fit and crossed it owre the ither, sae glad was she that her companion was victorious. The bull returned and sought for but never could find her.

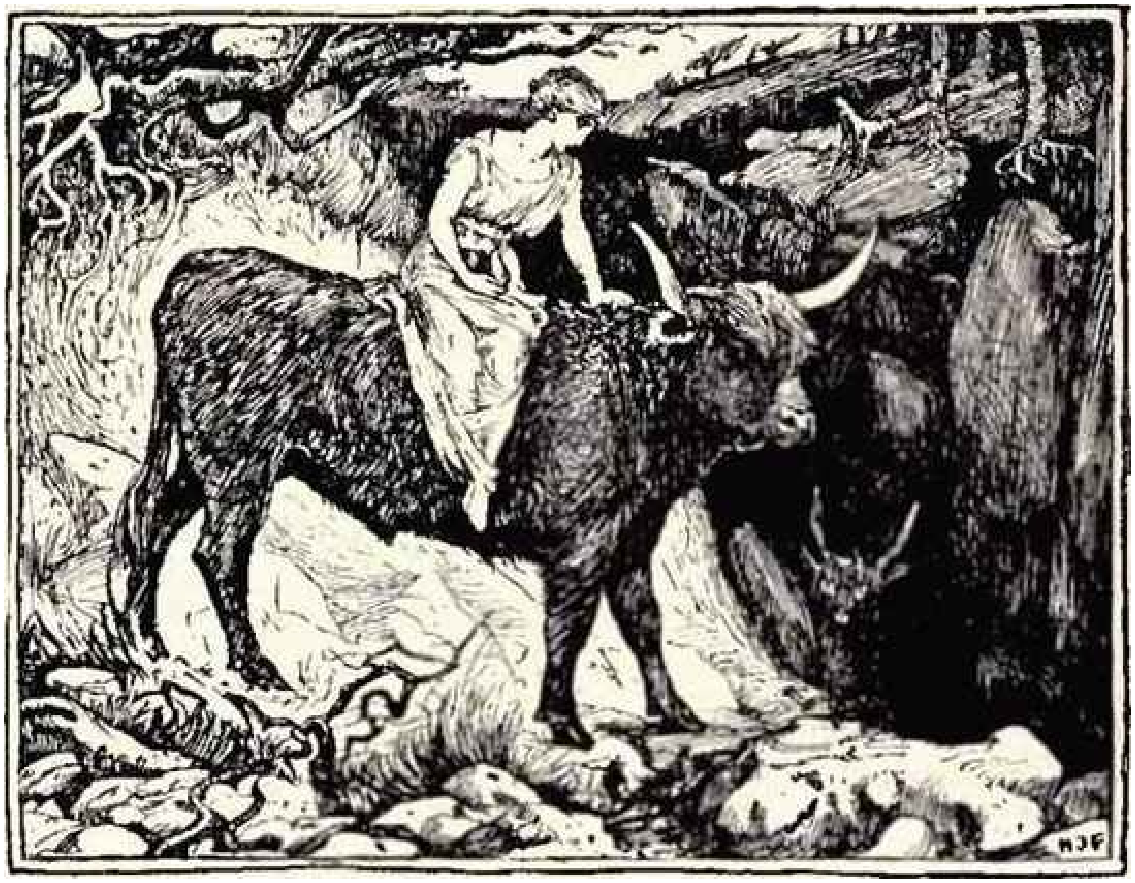

Lang she sat, and aye she grat, till she wearied. At last she rase and gaed awa’, she kedna whaur till. On she wandered till she came to a great hill o’ glass, that she tried a’ she could to climb, bat wasna able. Round the bottom o’ the hill she gaed, sabbing and seeking a passage owre, till at last she came to a smith’s house; and the smith promised, if she wad serve him seven years, he wad make her iron shoon, wherewi’ she could climb owre the glassy hill. At seven years’ end she got her iron shoon, clamb the glassy hill, and chanced to come to the auld washerwife’s habitation. There she was telled of a gallant young knight that had given in some bluidy sarks to wash, and whaever washed thae sarks was to be his wife. The auld wife had washed till she was tired, and then she set to her dochter, and baith washed, and they washed, and they better washed, in hopes of getting the young knight; but a’ they could do they couldna bring out a stain. At length they set the stranger damosel to wark; and whenever she began the stains came out pure and clean, but the auld wife made the knight believe it was her dochter had washed the sarks. So the knight and the eldest dochter were to be married, and the stranger damosel was distracted at the thought of it, for she was deeply in love wi’ him. So she bethought her of her apple, and breaking it, found it filled with gold and precious jewelry, the richest she had ever seen. “All these,” she said to the eldest dochter, “I will give you, on condition that you put off your marriage for ae day, and allow me to go into his room alone at night." So the lady consented; but meanwhile the auld wife had prepared a sleeping-drink, and given it to the knight, wha drank it, and never wakened till next morning. The lee-lang night ther damosel sabbed and sang:

"Seven lang years I served for thee,
The glassy hill I clamb for thee,
The bluidy shirt I wrang for thee;
And wilt thou no wauken and turn to me?"

Next day she kentna what to do for grief. She then brak the pear, and found it filled wi' jewelry far richer than the contents o' the apple. Wi' thae jewels she bargained for permission to be a second night in the young knight's chamber; but the auld wife gied him anither sleeping-drink, and he again sleepit till morning. A' night she kept sighing and singing as before:

"Seven lang years I served for thee," &c. Still he sleepit, and she nearly lost hope a'thegither. But that day when he was out at the hunting, somebody asked him what noise and moaning was yon they heard all last night in his bedchamber. He said he heardna ony noise. But they assured him there was sae; and he resolved to keep waking that night to try what he could hear. That being the third night, and the damosel being between hope and despair, she brak her plum, and it held far the richest jewelry of the three. She bargained as before; and the auld wife, as before, took in the sleeping-drink to the young knight's chamber; but he telled her he couldna drink it that night without sweetening. And when she gaed awa' for some honey to sweeten it wi', he poured out the drink, and sae made the auld wife think he had drunk it. They a' went to bed again, and the damosel began, as before, singing:

"Seven lang years I served for thee,
The glassy hill I clamb for thee,
The bluidy shirt I wrang for thee;
And wilt thou no wauken and turn to me?"

He heard, and turned to her. And she telled him a' that had befa'en her, and he telled her a' that had happened to him. And he caused the auld washerwife and her dochter to be burned. And they were married, and he and she are living happy till this day, for aught I ken.(1)

(1) Chambers, Popular Traditions of Scotland.

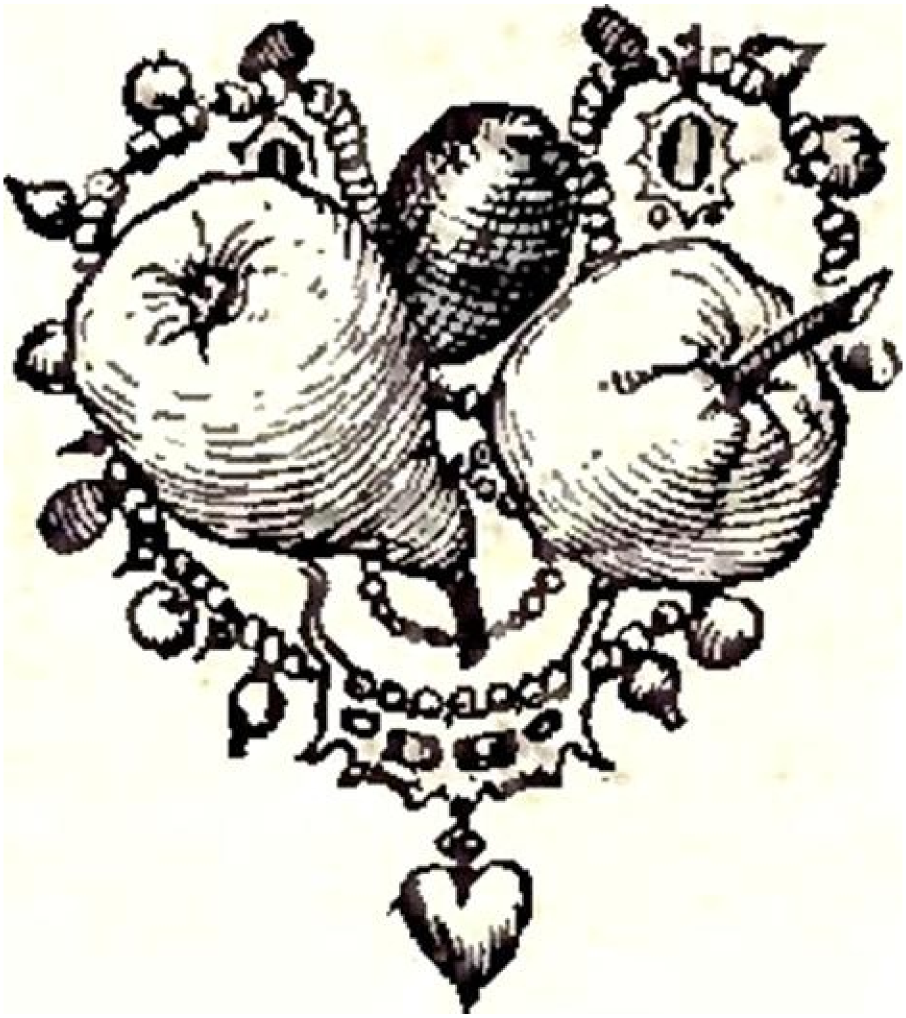

THE RED ETIN

There were ance twa widows that lived on a small bit o’ ground, which they rented from a farmer. Ane of them had twa sons, and the other had ane; and by-and-by it was time for the wife that had twa sons to send them away to seeke their fortune. So she told her eldest son ae day to take a can and bring her water from the well, that she might bake a cake for him; and however much or however little water he might bring, the cake would be great or sma’ accordingly; and that cake was to be a’ that she could gie him when he went on his travels.

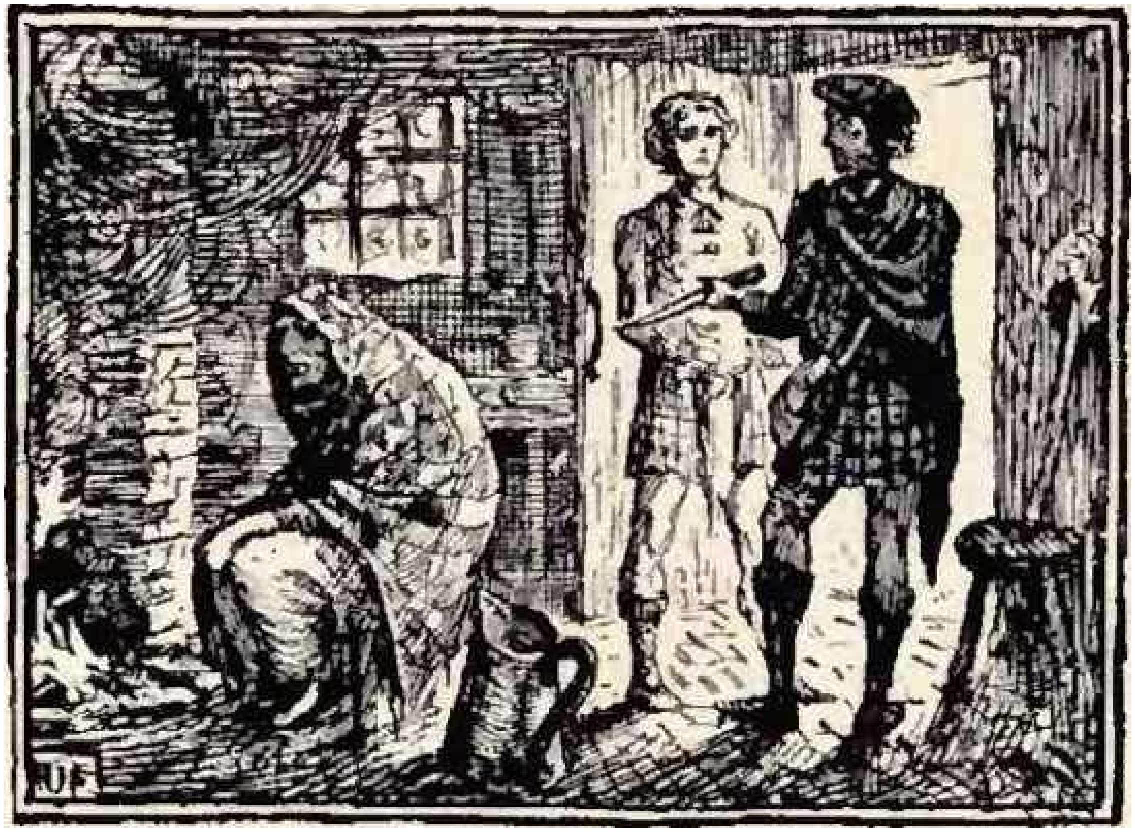

The lad gaed away wi’ the can to the well, and filled it wi’ water, and then came away hame again; but the can being broken the maist part of the water had run out before he got back. So his cake was very sma’; yet sma’ as it was, his mother asked if he was willing to take the half of it with her blessing, telling him that, if he chose rather to have the hale, he would only get it wi’ her curse. The young man, thinking he might hae to travel a far way, and not knowing when or how he might get other provisions, said he would like to hae the hale cake, com of his mother’s malison what like; so she gave him the hale cake, and her malison alang wi’t. Then he took his brither aside, and gave him a knife to keep till he should come back, desiring him to look at it every morning, and as lang as it continued to be clear, then he might be sure that the owner of it was well; but if it grew dim and rusty, then for certain some ill had befallen him.

So the young man set out to seek his fortune. And he gaed a’ that day, and a’ the next day; and on the third day, in the afternoon, he came up to where a shepherd was sitting with a flock o’ sheep. And he gaed up to the shepherd and asked him wha the sheep belanged to; and the man answered:

“The Red Etin of Ireland
Ance lived in Bellygan,
And stole King Malcolm’s daughter,
The King of fair Scotland.
He beats her, he binds her,
He lays her on a band;
And every day he dings her
With a bright silver wand
Like Julian the Roman
He’s one that fears no man.
It’s said there’s ane predestinate
To be his mortal foe;
But that man is yet unborn
And lang may it be so.”

The young man then went on his journey; and he had not gone far when he espied an old man with white locks herding a flock of swine; and he gaed up to him and asked whose swine these were, when the man answered:

“The Red Etin of Ireland” —
(Repeat the verses above.)

Then the young man gaed on a bit farther, and came to another very old man herding goats; and when he asked whose goats they were, the answer was:

“The Red Etin of Ireland” —
(Repeat the verses again.)

This old man also told him to beware of the next beasts that he should meet, for they were of a very different kind from any he had yet seen.

So the young man went on, and by-and-by he saw a multitude of very dreadfu’ beasts, ilk ane o’ them wi’ twa heads, and on every head four horns. And he was sore frightened, and ran away from them as fast as he could; and glad was he when he came to a castle that stood on a hillock, wi’ the door standing wide to the wa’. And he gaed into the castle for shelter, and there he saw an auld wife sitting beside the kitchen fire. He asked the wife if he might stay there for the night, as he was tired wi’ a lang journey; and the wife said he might, but it was not a good place for him to be in, as it belanged to the Red Etin, who was a very terrible beast, wi’ three heads, that spared no living man he could get hold of. The young man would have gone away, but he was afraid of the beasts on the outside of the castle; so he beseeched the old woman to conceal him as well as she could, and not to tell the Etin that he was there. He thought, if he could put over the night, he might get away in the morning without meeting wi’ the beasts, and so escape. But he had not been long in his hidy-hole before the awful Etin came in; and nae sooner was he in than he was heard crying:

“Snouk but and snouk ben,
I find the smell of an earthly man;
Be he living, or be he dead,
His heart this night shall kitchen(1) my bread.”

(1) “Kitchen,” that is, “season.”

The monster soon found the poor young man, and pulled him from his hole. And when he had got him out he told him that if he could answer him three questions his life should be spared. The first was: Whether Ireland or Scotland was first inhabited? The second was: Whether man was made for woman, or woman for man? The third was: Whether men or brutes were made first? The lad not being able to answer one of these questions, the Red Etin took a mace and knocked him on the head, and turned him into a pillar of stone.

On the morning after this happened the younger brither took out the knife to look at it, and he was grieved to find it a’ brown wi’ rust. He told his mother that the time was now come for him to go away upon his travels also; so she requested him to take the can to the well for water, that she might bake a cake for him. The can being broken, he brought hame as little water as the other had done, and the cake was as little. She asked whether he would have the hale cake wi’ her malison, or the half wi’ her blessing; and, like his brither, he thought it best to have the hale cake, come o’ the malison what might. So he gaed away; and everything happened to him that had happened to his brother!

The other widow and her son heard of a’ that had happened frae a fairy, and the young man determined that he would also go upon his travels, and see if he could do anything to relieve his twa friends. So his mother gave him a can to go to the well and bring home water, that she might bake him a cake for his journey. And he gaed, and as he was bringing hame the water, a raven owre abune his head cried to him to look, and he would see that the water was running out. And he was a young man of sense, and seeing the water running out, he took some clay and patched up the holes, so that he brought home enough water to bake a large cake. When his mother put it to him to take the half-cake wi' her blessing, he took it in preference to having the hale wi' her malison; and yet the half was bigger than what the other lads had got a'thegither.

So he gaed away on his journey; and after he had traveled a far way he met wi' an auld woman, that asked him if he would give her a bit of his bannock. And he said he would gladly do that, and so he gave her a piece of the bannock; and for that she gied him a magical wand, that she said might yet be of service to him if he took care to use it rightly. Then the auld woman, who was a fairy, told him a great deal that whould happen to him, and what he ought to do in a' circumstances; and after that she vanished in an instant out o' his sight. He gaed on a great way farther, and then he came up to the old man herding the sheep; and when he asked whose sheep these were, the answer was:

"The Red Etin of Ireland
Ance lived in Bellygan,
And stole King Malcolm's daughter,
The King of fair Scotland.
He beats her, he binds her,
He lays her on a band;
And every day he dings her
With a bright silver wand.
Like Julian the Roman,
He's one that fears no man,
But now I fear his end is near,
And destiny at hand;
And you're to be, I plainly see,
The heir of all his land."

(Repeat the same inquiries to the man attending the swine and the man attending the goats, with the same answer in each case.)

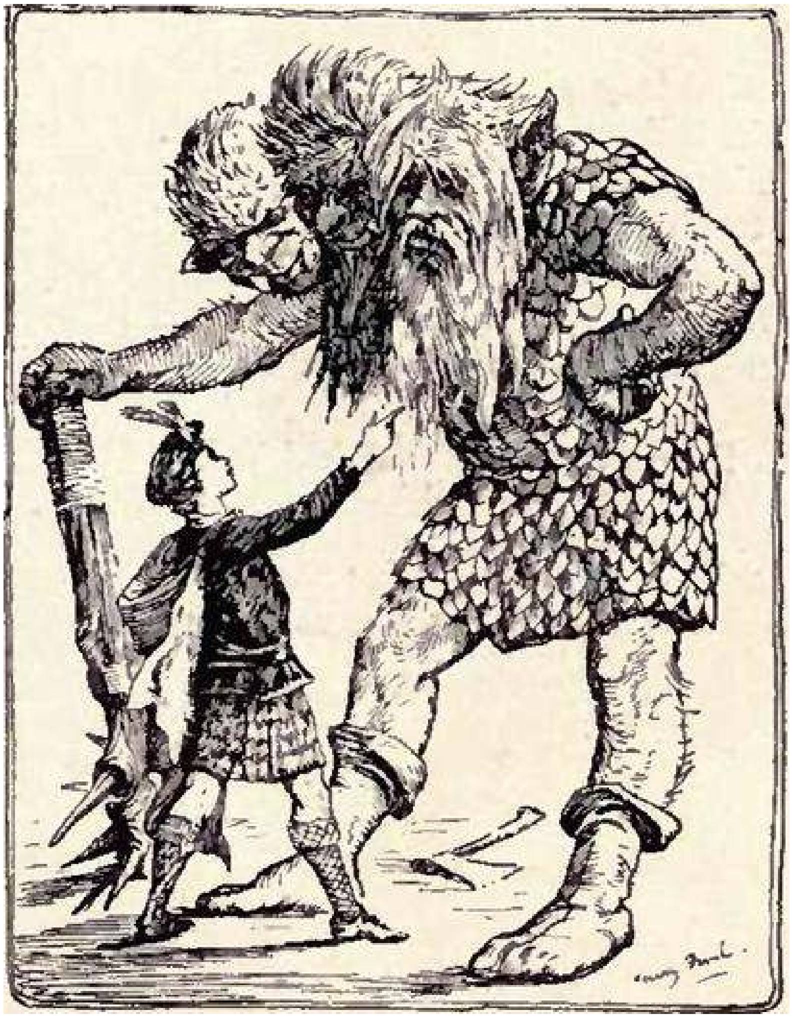

When he came to the place where the monstrous beasts were standing, he did not stop nor run away, but went boldly through among them. One came up roaring with open mouth to devour him, when he struck it with his wand, and laid it in an instant dead at his feet. He soon came to the Etin’s castle, where he knocked, and was admitted. The auld woman that sat by the fire warned him of the terrible Etin, and what had been the fate of the twa brithers; but he was not to be daunted. The monster soon came in, saying:

“Snouk but and snouk ben,
I find the smell of an earthly man;
Be he living, or be he dead,
His heart shall be kitchen to my bread.”

He quickly espied the young man, and bade him come forth on the floor. And then he put the three questions to him, but the young man had been told everything by the good fairy, so he was able to answer all the questions. When the Etin found this he knew that his power was gone. The young man then took up the axe and hewed off the monster's three heads. He next asked the old woman to show him where the King's daughters lay; and the old woman took him upstairs and opened a great many doors, and out of every door came a beautiful lady who had been imprisoned there by the Etin; and ane o' the ladies was the King's daughter. She also took him down into a low room, and there stood two stone pillars that he had only to touch wi' his wand, when his two friends and neighbors started into life. And the hale o' the prisoners were overjoyed at their deliverance, which they all acknowledged to be owing to the prudent young man. Next day they a' set out for the King's Court, and a gallant company they made. And the King married his daughter to the young man that had delivered her, and gave a noble's daughter to ilk ane o' the other young men; and so they a' lived happily a' the rest o' their days.(1)

(1) Chambers, Popular Traditions of Scotland.

THE RED FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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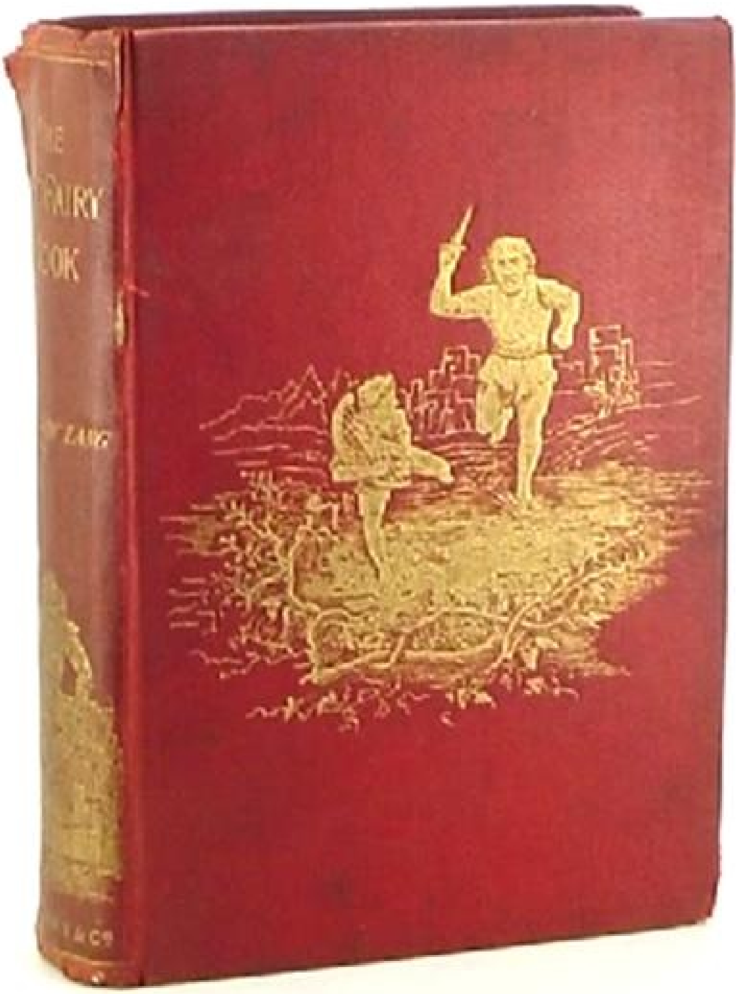

The first edition

THE RED FAIRY BOOK

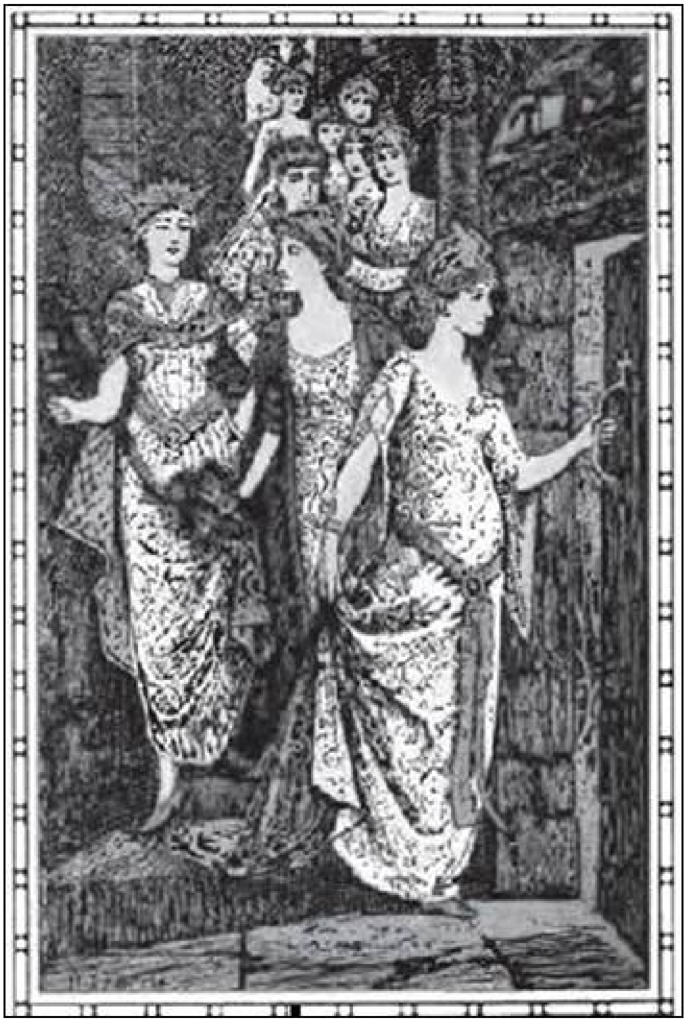

THE TWELVE DANCING PRINCESSES

I

ONCE upon a time there lived in the village of Montignies-sur-Roc a little cow-boy, without either father or mother. His real name was Michael, but he was always called the Star Gazer, because when he drove his cows over the commons to seek for pasture, he went along with his head in the air, gaping at nothing.

As he had a white skin, blue eyes, and hair that curled all over his head, the village girls used to cry after him, ‘Well, Star Gazer, what are you doing?’ and Michael would answer, ‘Oh, nothing,’ and go on his way without even turning to look at them.

The fact was he thought them very ugly, with their sun-burnt necks, their great red hands, their coarse petticoats and their wooden shoes. He had heard that somewhere in the world there were girls whose necks were white and whose hands were small, who were always dressed in the finest silks and laces, and were called princesses, and while his companions round the fire saw nothing in the flames but common everyday fancies, he dreamed that he had the happiness to marry a princess.

II

One morning about the middle of August, just at mid-day when the sun was hottest, Michael ate his dinner of a piece of dry bread, and went to sleep under an oak. And while he slept he dreamt that there appeared before him a beautiful lady, dressed in a robe of cloth of gold, who said to him: ‘Go to the castle of Beloeil, and there you shall marry a princess.’

That evening the little cow-boy, who had been thinking a great deal about the advice of the lady in the golden dress, told his dream to the farm people. But, as was natural, they only laughed at the Star Gazer.

The next day at the same hour he went to sleep again under the same tree. The lady appeared to him a second time, and said: ‘Go to the castle of Beloeil, and you shall marry a princess.’

In the evening Michael told his friends that he had dreamed the same dream again, but they only laughed at him more than before. ‘Never mind,’ he thought to himself; ‘if the lady appears to me a third time, I will do as she tells me.’

The following day, to the great astonishment of all the village, about two o’clock in the afternoon a voice was heard singing:

‘Raleo, raleo, How the cattle go!’

It was the little cow-boy driving his herd back to the byre.

The farmer began to scold him furiously, but he answered quietly, ‘I am going away,’ made his clothes into a bundle, said good-bye to all his friends, and boldly set out to seek his fortunes.

There was great excitement through all the village, and on the top of the hill the people stood holding their sides with laughing, as they watched the Star Gazer trudging bravely along the valley with his bundle at the end of his stick.

It was enough to make anyone laugh, certainly.

III

It was well known for full twenty miles round that there lived in the castle of Beloeil twelve princesses of wonderful beauty, and as proud as they were beautiful, and who were besides so very sensitive and of such truly royal blood, that they would have felt at once the presence of a pea in their beds, even if the mattresses had been laid over it.

It was whispered about that they led exactly the lives that princesses ought to lead, sleeping far into the morning, and never getting up till mid-day. They had twelve beds all in the same room, but what was very extraordinary was the fact that though they were locked in by triple bolts, every morning their satin shoes were found worn into holes.

When they were asked what they had been doing all night, they always answered that they had been asleep; and, indeed, no noise was ever heard in the room, yet the shoes could not wear themselves out alone!

At last the Duke of Beloeil ordered the trumpet to be sounded, and a proclamation to be made that whoever could discover how his daughters wore out their shoes should choose one of them for his wife.

On hearing the proclamation a number of princes arrived at the castle to try their luck. They watched all night behind the open door of the princesses, but when the morning came they had all disappeared, and no one could tell what had become of them.

IV

When he reached the castle, Michael went straight to the gardener and offered his services. Now it happened that the garden boy had just been sent away, and though the Star Gazer did not look very sturdy, the gardener agreed to take him, as he thought that his pretty face and golden curls would please the princesses.

The first thing he was told was that when the princesses got up he was to present each one with a bouquet, and Michael thought that if he had nothing more unpleasant to do than that he should get on very well.

Accordingly he placed himself behind the door of the princesses' room, with the twelve bouquets in a basket. He gave one to each of the sisters, and they took them without even deigning to look at the lad, except Lina the youngest, who fixed her large black eyes as soft as velvet on him, and exclaimed, 'Oh, how pretty he is — our new flower boy!' The rest all burst out laughing, and the eldest pointed out that a princess ought never to lower herself by looking at a garden boy.

Now Michael knew quite well what had happened to all the princes, but notwithstanding, the beautiful eyes of the Princess Lina inspired him with a violent longing to try his fate. Unhappily he did not dare to come forward, being afraid that he should only be jeered at, or even turned away from the castle on account of his impudence.

V

Nevertheless, the Star Gazer had another dream. The lady in the golden dress appeared to him once more, holding in one hand two young laurel trees, a cherry laurel and a rose laurel, and in the other hand a little golden rake, a little golden bucket, and a silken towel. She thus addressed him:

'Plant these two laurels in two large pots, rake them over with the rake, water them with the bucket, and wipe them with the towel. When they have grown as tall as a girl of fifteen, say to each of them, ''My beautiful laurel, with the golden rake I have raked you, with the golden bucket I have watered you, with the silken towel I have wiped you.'' Then after that ask anything you choose, and the laurels will give it to you.'

Michael thanked the lady in the golden dress, and when he woke he found the two laurel bushes beside him. So he carefully obeyed the orders he had been given by the lady.

The trees grew very fast, and when they were as tall as a girl of fifteen he said to the cherry laurel, ‘My lovely cherry laurel, with the golden rake I have raked thee, with the golden bucket I have watered thee, with the silken towel I have wiped thee. Teach me how to become invisible.’ Then there instantly appeared on the laurel a pretty white flower, which Michael gathered and stuck into his button-hole.

VI

That evening, when the princesses went upstairs to bed, he followed them barefoot, so that he might make no noise, and hid himself under one of the twelve beds, so as not to take up much room.

The princesses began at once to open their wardrobes and boxes. They took out of them the most magnificent dresses, which they put on before their mirrors, and when they had finished, turned themselves all round to admire their appearances.

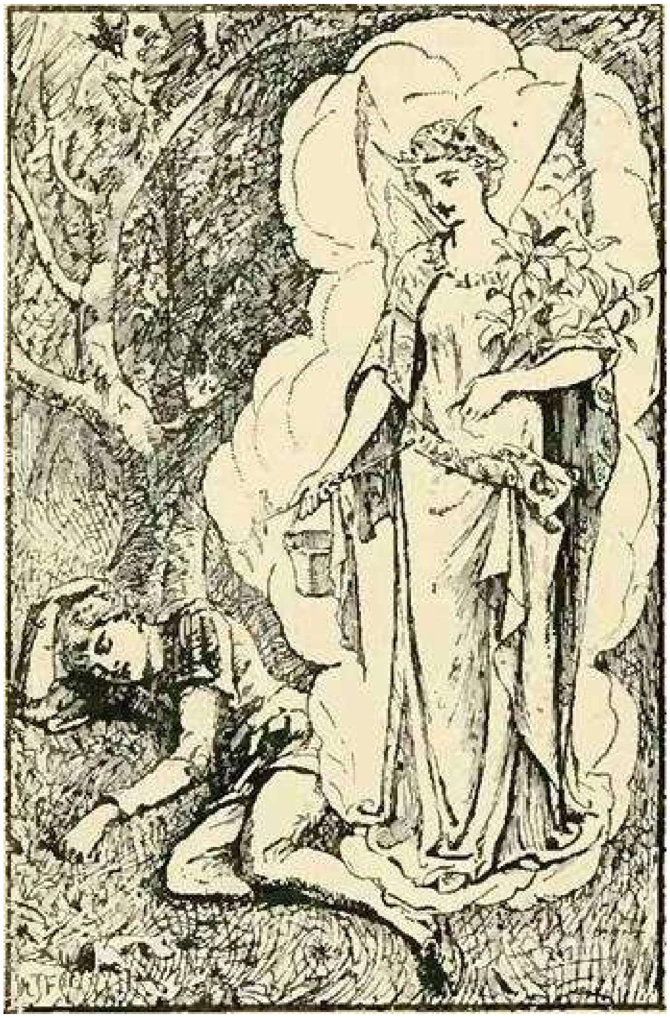

Michael could see nothing from his hiding-place, but he could hear everything, and he listened to the princesses laughing and jumping with pleasure. At last the eldest said, ‘Be quick, my sisters, our partners will be impatient.’ At the end of an hour, when the Star Gazer heard no more noise, he peeped out and saw the twelve sisters in splendid garments, with their satin shoes on their feet, and in their hands the bouquets he had brought them.

‘Are you ready?’ asked the eldest.

‘Yes,’ replied the other eleven in chorus, and they took their places one by one behind her.

Then the eldest Princess clapped her hands three times and a trap door opened. All the princesses disappeared down a secret staircase, and Michael hastily followed them.

As he was following on the steps of the Princess Lina, he carelessly trod on her dress.

‘There is somebody behind me,’ cried the Princess; ‘they are holding my dress.’

‘You foolish thing,’ said her eldest sister, ‘you are always afraid of something. It is only a nail which caught you.’

VII

They went down, down, down, till at last they came to a passage with a door at one end, which was only fastened with a latch. The eldest Princess opened it, and they found themselves immediately in a lovely little wood, where the leaves were spangled with drops of silver which shone in the brilliant light of the moon.

They next crossed another wood where the leaves were sprinkled with gold, and after that another still, where the leaves glittered with diamonds.

At last the Star Gazer perceived a large lake, and on the shores of the lake twelve little boats with awnings, in which were seated twelve princes, who, grasping their oars, awaited the princesses.

Each princess entered one of the boats, and Michael slipped into that which held the youngest. The boats glided along rapidly, but Lina’s, from being heavier, was always behind the rest. ‘We never went so slowly before,’ said the Princess; ‘what can be the reason?’

‘I don’t know,’ answered the Prince. ‘I assure you I am rowing as hard as I can.’

On the other side of the lake the garden boy saw a beautiful castle splendidly illuminated, whence came the lively music of fiddles, kettle-drums, and trumpets.

In a moment they touched land, and the company jumped out of the boats; and the princes, after having securely fastened their barques, gave their arms to the princesses and conducted them to the castle.

VIII

Michael followed, and entered the ball-room in their train. Everywhere were mirrors, lights, flowers, and damask hangings.

The Star Gazer was quite bewildered at the magnificence of the sight.

He placed himself out of the way in a corner, admiring the grace and beauty of the princesses. Their loveliness was of every kind. Some were fair and some were dark; some had chestnut hair, or curls darker still, and some had golden locks. Never were so many beautiful princesses seen together at one time, but the one whom the cow-boy thought the most beautiful and the most fascinating was the little Princess with the velvet eyes.

With what eagerness she danced! leaning on her partner’s shoulder she swept by like a whirlwind. Her cheeks flushed, her eyes sparkled, and it was plain that she loved dancing better than anything else.

The poor boy envied those handsome young men with whom she danced so gracefully, but he did not know how little reason he had to be jealous of them.

The young men were really the princes who, to the number of fifty at least, had tried to steal the princesses’ secret. The princesses had made them drink something of a philtre, which froze the heart and left nothing but the love of dancing.

IX

They danced on till the shoes of the princesses were worn into holes. When the cock crowed the third time the fiddles stopped, and a delicious supper was served by negro boys, consisting of sugared orange flowers, crystallised rose leaves, powdered violets, cracknels, wafers, and other dishes, which are, as everyone knows, the favourite food of princesses.

After supper, the dancers all went back to their boats, and this time the Star Gazer entered that of the eldest Princess. They crossed again the wood with the diamond-spangled leaves, the wood with gold-sprinkled leaves, and the wood whose leaves glittered with drops of silver, and as a proof of what he had seen, the boy broke a small branch from a tree in the last wood. Lina turned as she heard the noise made by the breaking of the branch.

‘What was that noise?’ she said.

‘It was nothing,’ replied her eldest sister; ‘it was only the screech of the barn-owl that roosts in one of the turrets of the castle.’

While she was speaking Michael managed to slip in front, and running up the staircase, he reached the princesses’ room first. He flung open the window, and sliding down the vine which climbed up the wall, found himself in the garden just as the sun was beginning to rise, and it was time for him to set to his work.

X

That day, when he made up the bouquets, Michael hid the branch with the silver drops in the nosegay intended for the youngest Princess.

When Lina discovered it she was much surprised. However, she said nothing to her sisters, but as she met the boy by accident while she was walking under the shade of the elms, she suddenly stopped as if to speak to him; then, altering her mind, went on her way.

The same evening the twelve sisters went again to the ball, and the Star Gazer again followed them and crossed the lake in Lina’s boat. This time it was the Prince who complained that the boat seemed very heavy.

‘It is the heat,’ replied the Princess. ‘I, too, have been feeling very warm.’

During the ball she looked everywhere for the gardener’s boy, but she never saw him.

As they came back, Michael gathered a branch from the wood with the gold-spangled leaves, and now it was the eldest Princess who heard the noise that it made in breaking.

‘It is nothing,’ said Lina; ‘only the cry of the owl which roosts in the turrets of the castle.’

XI

As soon as she got up she found the branch in her bouquet. When the sisters went down she stayed a little behind and said to the cow-boy: ‘Where does this branch come from?’

‘Your Royal Highness knows well enough,’ answered Michael.

‘So you have followed us?’

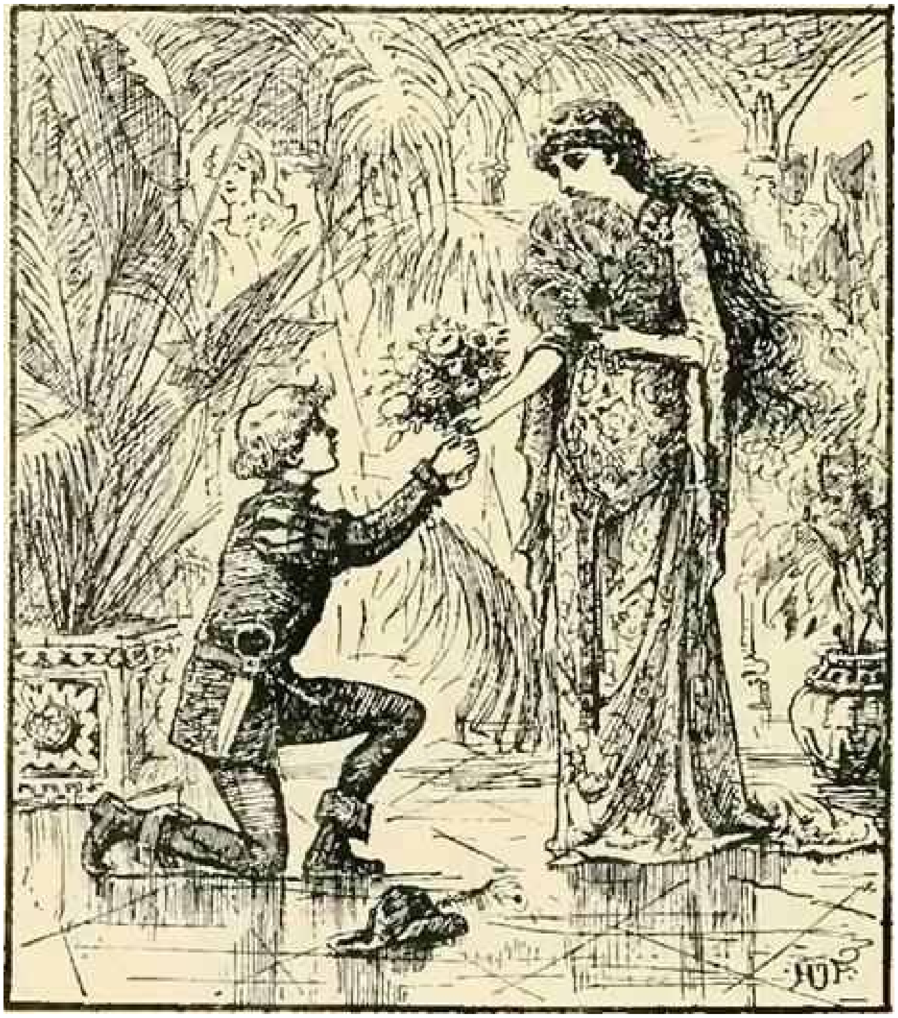

‘Yes, Princess.’

‘How did you manage it? we never saw you.’

‘I hid myself,’ replied the Star Gazer quietly.

The Princess was silent a moment, and then said:

‘You know our secret! — keep it. Here is the reward of your discretion.’ And she flung the boy a purse of gold.

‘I do not sell my silence,’ answered Michael, and he went away without picking up the purse.

For three nights Lina neither saw nor heard anything extraordinary; on the fourth she heard a rustling among the diamond-spangled leaves of the wood. That day there was a branch of the trees in her bouquet.

She took the Star Gazer aside, and said to him in a harsh voice:

‘You know what price my father has promised to pay for our secret?’

‘I know, Princess,’ answered Michael.

‘Don’t you mean to tell him?’

‘That is not my intention.’

‘Are you afraid?’

‘No, Princess.’

‘What makes you so discreet, then?’

But Michael was silent.

XII

Lina’s sisters had seen her talking to the little garden boy, and jeered at her for it.

‘What prevents your marrying him?’ asked the eldest, ‘you would become a gardener too; it is a charming profession. You could live in a cottage at the end of the park, and help your husband to draw up water from the well, and when we get up you could bring us our bouquets.’

The Princess Lina was very angry, and when the Star Gazer presented her bouquet, she received it in a disdainful manner.

Michael behaved most respectfully. He never raised his eyes to her, but nearly all day she felt him at her side without ever seeing him.

One day she made up her mind to tell everything to her eldest sister.

‘What!’ said she, ‘this rogue knows our secret, and you never told me! I must lose no time in getting rid of him.’

‘But how?’

‘Why, by having him taken to the tower with the dungeons, of course.’

For this was the way that in old times beautiful princesses got rid of people who knew too much.

But the astonishing part of it was that the youngest sister did not seem at all to relish this method of stopping the mouth of the gardener’s boy, who, after all, had said nothing to their father.

XIII

It was agreed that the question should be submitted to the other ten sisters. All were on the side of the eldest. Then the youngest sister declared that if they laid a finger on the little garden boy, she would herself go and tell their father the secret of the holes in their shoes.

At last it was decided that Michael should be put to the test; that they would take him to the ball, and at the end of supper would give him the philtre which was to enchant him like the rest.

They sent for the Star Gazer, and asked him how he had contrived to learn their secret; but still he remained silent.

Then, in commanding tones, the eldest sister gave him the order they had agreed upon.

He only answered:

‘I will obey.’

He had really been present, invisible, at the council of princesses, and had heard all; but he had made up his mind to drink of the philtre, and sacrifice himself to the happiness of her he loved.

Not wishing, however, to cut a poor figure at the ball by the side of the other dancers, he went at once to the laurels, and said:

‘My lovely rose laurel, with the golden rake I have raked thee, with the golden bucket I have watered thee, with a silken towel I have dried thee. Dress me like a prince.’

A beautiful pink flower appeared. Michael gathered it, and found himself in a moment clothed in velvet, which was as black as the eyes of the little Princess, with a cap to match, a diamond aigrette, and a blossom of the rose laurel in his button-hole.

Thus dressed, he presented himself that evening before the Duke of Beloeil, and obtained leave to try and discover his daughters’ secret. He looked so distinguished that hardly anyone would have known who he was.

XIV

The twelve princesses went upstairs to bed. Michael followed them, and waited behind the open door till they gave the signal for departure.

This time he did not cross in Lina’s boat. He gave his arm to the eldest sister, danced with each in turn, and was so graceful that everyone was delighted with him. At last the time came for him to dance with the little Princess. She found him the best partner in the world, but he did not dare to speak a single word to her.

When he was taking her back to her place she said to him in a mocking voice:

‘Here you are at the summit of your wishes: you are being treated like a prince.’

‘Don’t be afraid,’ replied the Star Gazer gently. ‘You shall never be a gardener’s wife.’

The little Princess stared at him with a frightened face, and he left her without waiting for an answer.

When the satin slippers were worn through the fiddles stopped, and the negro boys set the table. Michael was placed next to the eldest sister, and opposite to the youngest.

They gave him the most exquisite dishes to eat, and the most delicate wines to drink; and in order to turn his head more completely, compliments and flattery were heaped on him from every side.

But he took care not to be intoxicated, either by the wine or the compliments.

XV

At last the eldest sister made a sign, and one of the black pages brought in a large golden cup.

‘The enchanted castle has no more secrets for you,’ she said to the Star Gazer. ‘Let us drink to your triumph.’

He cast a lingering glance at the little Princess, and without hesitation lifted the cup.

‘Don’t drink!’ suddenly cried out the little Princess; ‘I would rather marry a gardener.’

And she burst into tears.

Michael flung the contents of the cup behind him, sprang over the table, and fell at Lina’s feet. The rest of the princes fell likewise at the knees of the princesses, each of whom chose a husband and raised him to her side. The charm was broken.

The twelve couples embarked in the boats, which crossed back many times in order to carry over the other princes. Then they all went through the three woods, and when they had passed the door of the underground passage a great noise was heard, as if the enchanted castle was crumbling to the earth.

They went straight to the room of the Duke of Beloeil, who had just awoke. Michael held in his hand the golden cup, and he revealed the secret of the holes in the shoes.

‘Choose, then,’ said the Duke, ‘whichever you prefer.’

‘My choice is already made,’ replied the garden boy, and he offered his hand to the youngest Princess, who blushed and lowered her eyes.

XVI

The Princess Lina did not become a gardener’s wife; on the contrary, it was the Star Gazer who became a Prince: but before the marriage ceremony the Princess insisted that her lover should tell her how he came to discover the secret.

So he showed her the two laurels which had helped him, and she, like a prudent girl, thinking they gave him too much advantage over his wife, cut them off at the root and threw them in the fire. And this is why the country girls go about singing:

Nous n'irons plus au bois,
Les lauriers sont coupes,'

and dancing in summer by the light of the moon.

THE PRINCESS MAYBLOSSOM

ONCE upon a time there lived a King and Queen whose children had all died, first one and then another, until at last only one little daughter remained, and the Queen was at her wits' end to know where to find a really good nurse who would take care of her, and bring her up. A herald was sent who blew a trumpet at every street corner, and commanded all the best nurses to appear before the Queen, that she might choose one for the little Princess. So on the appointed day the whole palace was crowded with nurses, who came from the four corners of the world to offer themselves, until the Queen declared that if she was ever to see the half of them, they must be brought out to her, one by one, as she sat in a shady wood near the palace.

This was accordingly done, and the nurses, after they had made their curtsey to the King and Queen, ranged themselves in a line before her that she might choose. Most of them were fair and fat and charming, but there was one who was dark-skinned and ugly, and spoke a strange language which nobody could understand. The Queen wondered how she dared offer herself, and she was told to go away, as she certainly would not do. Upon which she muttered something and passed on, but hid herself in a hollow tree, from which she could see all that happened. The Queen, without giving her another thought, chose a pretty rosy-faced nurse, but no sooner was her choice made than a snake, which was hidden in the grass, bit that very nurse on her foot, so that she fell down as if dead. The Queen was very much vexed by this accident, but she soon selected another, who was just stepping forward when an eagle flew by and dropped a large tortoise upon her head, which was cracked in pieces like an egg-shell. At this the Queen was much horrified; nevertheless, she chose a third time, but with no better fortune, for the nurse, moving quickly, ran into the branch of a tree and blinded herself with a thorn. Then the Queen in dismay cried that there must be some malignant influence at work, and that she would choose no more that day; and she had just risen to return to the palace when she heard peals of malicious laughter behind her, and turning round saw the ugly stranger whom she had dismissed, who was making very merry over the disasters and mocking everyone, but especially the Queen. This annoyed Her Majesty very much, and she was about to order that she should be arrested, when the witch — for she was a witch — with two blows from a wand summoned a chariot of fire drawn by winged dragons, and was whirled off through the air uttering threats and cries. When the King saw this he cried:

‘Alas! now we are ruined indeed, for that was no other than the Fairy Carabosse, who has had a grudge against me ever since I was a boy and put sulphur into her porridge one day for fun.’

Then the Queen began to cry.

‘If I had only known who it was,’ she said, ‘I would have done my best to make friends with her; now I suppose all is lost.’

The King was sorry to have frightened her so much, and proposed that they should go and hold a council as to what was best to be done to avert the misfortunes which Carabosse certainly meant to bring upon the little Princess.

So all the counsellors were summoned to the palace, and when they had shut every door and window, and stuffed up every keyhole that they might not be overheard, they talked the affair over, and decided that every fairy for a thousand leagues round should be invited to the christening of the Princess, and that the time of the ceremony should be kept a profound secret, in case the Fairy Carabosse should take it into her head to attend it.

The Queen and her ladies set to work to prepare presents for the fairies who were invited: for each one a blue velvet cloak, a petticoat of apricot satin, a pair of high-heeled shoes, some sharp needles, and a pair of golden scissors. Of all the fairies the Queen knew, only five were able to come on the day appointed, but they began immediately to bestow gifts upon the Princess. One promised that she should be perfectly beautiful, the second that she should understand anything — no matter what — the first time it was explained to her, the third that she should sing like a nightingale, the fourth that she should succeed in everything she undertook, and the fifth was opening her mouth to speak when a tremendous rumbling was heard in the chimney, and Carabosse, all covered with soot, came rolling down, crying:

‘I say that she shall be the unluckiest of the unlucky until she is twenty years old.’

Then the Queen and all the fairies began to beg and beseech her to think better of it, and not be so unkind to the poor little Princess, who had never done her any harm. But the ugly old Fairy only grunted and made no answer. So the last Fairy, who had not yet given her gift, tried to mend matters by promising the Princess a long and happy life after the fatal time was over. At this Carabosse laughed maliciously, and climbed away up the chimney, leaving them all in great consternation, and especially the Queen. However, she entertained the fairies splendidly, and gave them beautiful ribbons, of which they are very fond, in addition to the other presents.

When they were going away the oldest Fairy said that they were of opinion that it would be best to shut the Princess up in some place, with her waiting-women, so that she might not see anyone else until she was twenty years old. So the King had a tower built on purpose. It had no windows, so it was lighted with wax candles, and the only way into it was by an underground passage, which had iron doors only twenty feet apart, and guards were posted everywhere.

The Princess had been named Mayblossom, because she was as fresh and blooming as Spring itself, and she grew up tall and beautiful, and everything she did and said was charming. Every time the King and Queen came to see her they were more delighted with her than before, but though she was weary of the tower, and often begged them to take her away from it, they always refused. The Princess’s nurse, who had never left her, sometimes told her about the world outside the tower, and though the Princess had never seen anything for herself, yet she always understood exactly, thanks to the second Fairy’s gift. Often the King said to the Queen:

‘We were cleverer than Carabosse after all. Our Mayblossom will be happy in spite of her predictions.’

And the Queen laughed until she was tired at the idea of having outwitted the old Fairy. They had caused the Princess’s portrait to be painted and sent to all the neighbouring Courts, for in four days she would have completed her twentieth year, and it was time to decide whom she should marry. All the town was rejoicing at the thought of the Princess’s approaching freedom, and when the news came that King Merlin was sending his ambassador to ask her in marriage for his son, they were still more delighted. The nurse, who kept the Princess informed of everything that went forward in the town, did not fail to repeat the news that so nearly concerned her, and gave such a description of the splendour in which the ambassador Fanfaronade would enter the town, that the Princess was wild to see the procession for herself.

‘What an unhappy creature I am,’ she cried, ‘to be shut up in this dismal tower as if I had committed some crime! I have never seen the sun, or the stars, or a horse, or a monkey, or a lion, except in pictures, and though the King and Queen tell me I am to be set free when I am twenty, I believe they only say it to keep me amused, when they never mean to let me out at all.’

And then she began to cry, and her nurse, and the nurse’s daughter, and the cradle-rocker, and the nursery-maid, who all loved her dearly, cried too for company, so that nothing could be heard but sobs and sighs. It was a scene of woe. When the Princess saw that they all pitied her she made up her mind to have her own way. So she declared that she would starve herself to death if they did not find some means of letting her see Fanfaronade’s grand entry into the town.

‘If you really love me,’ she said, ‘you will manage it, somehow or other, and the King and Queen need never know anything about it.’

Then the nurse and all the others cried harder than ever, and said everything they could think of to turn the Princess from her idea. But the more they said the more determined she was, and at last they consented to make a tiny hole in the tower on the side that looked towards the city gates.

After scratching and scraping all day and all night, they presently made a hole through which they could, with great difficulty, push a very slender needle, and out of this the Princess looked at the daylight for the first time. She was so dazzled and delighted by what she saw, that there she stayed, never taking her eyes away from the peep-hole for a single minute, until presently the ambassador’s procession appeared in sight.

At the head of it rode Fanfaronade himself upon a white horse, which pranced and caracoled to the sound of the trumpets. Nothing could have been more splendid than the ambassador’s attire. His coat was nearly hidden under an embroidery of pearls and diamonds, his boots were solid gold, and from his helmet floated scarlet plumes. At the sight of him the Princess lost her wits entirely, and determined that Fanfaronade and nobody else would she marry.

‘It is quite impossible,’ she said, ‘that his master should be half as handsome and delightful. I am not ambitious, and having spent all my life in this tedious tower, anything — even a house in the country — will seem a delightful change. I am sure that bread and water shared with Fanfaronade will please me far better than roast chicken and sweetmeats with anybody else.’

And so she went on talk, talk, talking, until her waiting-women wondered where she got it all from. But when they tried to stop her, and represented that her high rank made it perfectly impossible that she should do any such thing, she would not listen, and ordered them to be silent.

As soon as the ambassador arrived at the palace, the Queen started to fetch her daughter.

All the streets were spread with carpets, and the windows were full of ladies who were waiting to see the Princess, and carried baskets of flowers and sweetmeats to shower upon her as she passed.

They had hardly begun to get the Princess ready when a dwarf arrived, mounted upon an elephant. He came from the five fairies, and brought for the Princess a crown, a sceptre, and a robe of golden brocade, with a petticoat marvellously embroidered with butterflies’ wings. They also sent a casket of jewels, so splendid that no one had ever seen anything like it before, and the Queen was perfectly dazzled when she opened it. But the Princess scarcely gave a glance to any of these treasures, for she thought of nothing but Fanfaronade.

The Dwarf was rewarded with a gold piece, and decorated with so many ribbons that it was hardly possible to see him at all. The Princess sent to each of the fairies a new spinning-wheel with a distaff of cedar wood, and the Queen said she must look through her treasures and find something very charming to send them also.

When the Princess was arrayed in all the gorgeous things the Dwarf had brought, she was more beautiful than ever, and as she walked along the streets the people cried: ‘How pretty she is! How pretty she is!’

The procession consisted of the Queen, the Princess, five dozen other princesses her cousins, and ten dozen who came from the neighbouring kingdoms; and as they proceeded at a stately pace the sky began to grow dark, then suddenly the thunder growled, and rain and hail fell in torrents. The Queen put her royal mantle over her head, and all the princesses did the same with their trains. Mayblossom was just about to follow their example when a terrific croaking, as of an immense army of crows, rooks, ravens, screech-owls, and all birds of ill-omen was heard, and at the same instant a huge owl skimmed up to the Princess, and threw over her a scarf woven of spiders’ webs and embroidered with bats’ wings. And then peals of mocking laughter rang through the air, and they guessed that this was another of the Fairy Carabosse’s unpleasant jokes.

The Queen was terrified at such an evil omen, and tried to pull the black scarf from the Princess’s shoulders, but it really seemed as if it must be nailed on, it clung so closely.

‘Ah!’ cried the Queen, ‘can nothing appease this enemy of ours? What good was it that I sent her more than fifty pounds of sweetmeats, and as much again of the best sugar, not to mention two Westphalia hams? She is as angry as ever.’

While she lamented in this way, and everybody was as wet as if they had been dragged through a river, the Princess still thought of nothing but the ambassador, and just at this moment he appeared before her, with the King, and there was a great blowing of trumpets, and all the people shouted louder than ever. Fanfaronade was not generally at a loss for something to say, but when he saw the Princess, she was so much more beautiful and majestic than he had expected that he could only stammer out a few words, and entirely forgot the harangue which he had been learning for months, and knew well enough to have repeated it in his sleep. To gain time to remember at least part of it, he made several low bows to the Princess, who on her side dropped half-a-dozen curtseys without stopping to think, and then said, to relieve his evident embarrassment:

‘Sir Ambassador, I am sure that everything you intend to say is charming, since it is you who mean to say it; but let us make haste into the palace, as it is pouring cats and dogs, and the wicked Fairy Carabosse will be amused to see us all stand dripping here. When we are once under shelter we can laugh at her.'

Upon this the Ambassador found his tongue, and replied gallantly that the Fairy had evidently foreseen the flames that would be kindled by the bright eyes of the Princess, and had sent this deluge to extinguish them. Then he offered his hand to conduct the Princess, and she said softly:

'As you could not possibly guess how much I like you, Sir Fanfaronade, I am obliged to tell you plainly that, since I saw you enter the town on your beautiful prancing horse, I have been sorry that you came to speak for another instead of for yourself. So, if you think about it as I do, I will marry you instead of your master. Of course I know you are not a prince, but I shall be just as fond of you as if you were, and we can go and live in some cosy little corner of the world, and be as happy as the days are long.'

The Ambassador thought he must be dreaming, and could hardly believe what the lovely Princess said. He dared not answer, but only squeezed the Princess's hand until he really hurt her little finger, but she did not cry out. When they reached the palace the King kissed his daughter on both cheeks, and said:

'My little lambkin, are you willing to marry the great King Merlin's son, for this Ambassador has come on his behalf to fetch you?'

'If you please, sire,' said the Princess, dropping a curtsey.

'I consent also,' said the Queen; 'so let the banquet be prepared.'

This was done with all speed, and everybody feasted except Mayblossom and Fanfaronade, who looked at one another and forgot everything else.

After the banquet came a ball, and after that again a ballet, and at last they were all so tired that everyone fell asleep just where he sat. Only the lovers were as wide-awake as mice, and the Princess, seeing that there was nothing to fear, said to Fanfaronade:

'Let us be quick and run away, for we shall never have a better chance than this.'

Then she took the King's dagger, which was in a diamond sheath, and the Queen's neck-handkerchief, and gave her hand to Fanfaronade, who carried a lantern, and they ran out together into the muddy street and down to the sea-shore. Here they got into a little boat in which the poor old boatman was sleeping, and when he woke up and saw the lovely Princess, with all her diamonds and her spiders' — web scarf, he did not know what to think, and obeyed her instantly when she commanded him to set out. They could see neither moon nor stars, but in the Queen's neck-handkerchief there was a carbuncle which glowed like fifty torches. Fanfaronade asked the Princess where she would like to go, but she only answered that she did not care where she went as long as he was with her.

‘But, Princess,’ said he, ‘I dare not take you back to King Merlin’s court. He would think hanging too good for me.’

‘Oh, in that case,’ she answered, ‘we had better go to Squirrel Island; it is lonely enough, and too far off for anyone to follow us there.’

So she ordered the old boatman to steer for Squirrel Island.

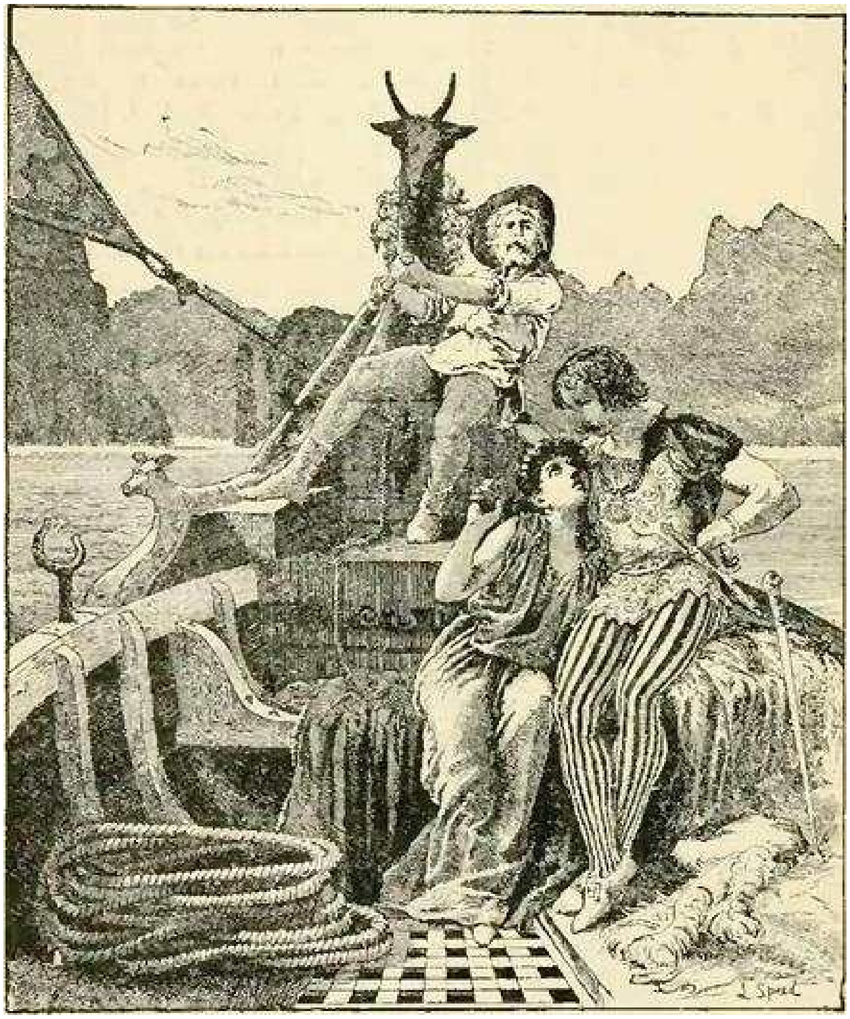

Meanwhile the day was breaking, and the King and Queen and all the courtiers began to wake up and rub their eyes, and think it was time to finish the preparations for the wedding. And the Queen asked for her neck-handkerchief, that she might look smart. Then there was a scurrying hither and thither, and a hunting everywhere: they looked into every place, from the wardrobes to the stoves, and the Queen herself ran about from the garret to the cellar, but the handkerchief was nowhere to be found.

By this time the King had missed his dagger, and the search began all over again. They opened boxes and chests of which the keys had been lost for a hundred years, and found numbers of curious things, but not the dagger, and the King tore his beard, and the Queen tore her hair, for the handkerchief and the dagger were the most valuable things in the kingdom.

When the King saw that the search was hopeless he said:

‘Never mind, let us make haste and get the wedding over before anything else is lost.’ And then he asked where the Princess was. Upon this her nurse came forward and said:

‘Sire, I have been seeking her these two hours, but she is nowhere to be found.’ This was more than the Queen could bear. She gave a shriek of alarm and fainted away, and they had to pour two barrels of eau-de-cologne over her before she recovered. When she came to herself everybody was looking for the Princess in the greatest terror and confusion, but as she did not appear, the King said to his page:

‘Go and find the Ambassador Fanfaronade, who is doubtless asleep in some corner, and tell him the sad news.’

So the page hunted hither and thither, but Fanfaronade was no more to be found than the Princess, the dagger, or the neck-handkerchief!

Then the King summoned his counsellors and his guards, and, accompanied by the Queen, went into his great hall. As he had not had time to prepare his speech beforehand, the King ordered that silence should be kept for three hours, and at the end of that time he spoke as follows:

‘Listen, great and small! My dear daughter Mayblossom is lost: whether she has been stolen away or has simply disappeared I cannot tell. The Queen’s neck-handkerchief and my sword, which are worth their weight in gold, are also missing, and, what is worst of all, the Ambassador Fanfaronade is nowhere to be found. I greatly fear that the King, his master, when he receives no tidings from him, will come to seek him among us, and will accuse us of having made mince-meat of him. Perhaps I could bear even that if I had any money, but I assure you that the expenses of the wedding have completely ruined me. Advise me, then, my dear subjects, what had I better do to recover my daughter, Fanfaronade, and the other things.’

This was the most eloquent speech the King had been known to make, and when everybody had done admiring it the Prime Minister made answer:

‘Sire, we are all very sorry to see you so sorry. We would give everything we value in the world to take away the cause of your sorrow, but this seems to be another of the tricks of the Fairy Carabosse. The Princess’s twenty unlucky years were not quite over, and really, if the truth must be told, I noticed that Fanfaronade and the Princess appeared to admire one another greatly. Perhaps this may give some clue to the mystery of their disappearance.’

Here the Queen interrupted him, saying, ‘Take care what you say, sir. Believe me, the Princess Mayblossom was far too well brought up to think of falling in love with an Ambassador.’

At this the nurse came forward, and, falling on her knees, confessed how they had made the little needle-hole in the tower, and how the Princess had declared when she saw the Ambassador that she would marry him and nobody else. Then the Queen was very angry, and gave the nurse, and the cradle-rocker, and the nursery-maid such a scolding that they shook in their shoes. But the Admiral Cocked-Hat interrupted her, crying:

‘Let us be off after this good-for-nothing Fanfaronade, for with out a doubt he has run away with our Princess.’

Then there was a great clapping of hands, and everybody shouted, ‘By all means let us be after him.’

So while some embarked upon the sea, the others ran from kingdom to kingdom beating drums and blowing trumpets, and wherever a crowd collected they cried:

‘Whoever wants a beautiful doll, sweetmeats of all kinds, a little pair of scissors, a golden robe, and a satin cap has only to say where Fanfaronade has hidden the Princess Mayblossom.’

But the answer everywhere was, ‘You must go farther, we have not seen them.’

However, those who went by sea were more fortunate, for after sailing about for some time they noticed a light before them which burned at night like a great fire. At first they dared not go near it, not knowing what it might be, but by-and-by it remained stationary over Squirrel Island, for, as you have guessed already, the light was the glowing of the carbuncle. The Princess and Fanfaronade on landing upon the island had given the boatman a hundred gold pieces, and made him promise solemnly to tell no one where he had taken them; but the first thing that happened was that, as he rowed away, he got into the midst of the fleet, and before he could escape the Admiral had seen him and sent a boat after him.

When he was searched they found the gold pieces in his pocket, and as they were quite new coins, struck in honour of the Princess’s wedding, the Admiral felt certain that the boatman must have been paid by the Princess to aid her in her flight. But he would not answer any questions, and pretended to be deaf and dumb.

Then the Admiral said: ‘Oh! deaf and dumb is he? Lash him to the mast and give him a taste of the cat-o’-nine-tails. I don’t know anything better than that for curing the deaf and dumb!’

And when the old boatman saw that he was in earnest, he told all he knew about the cavalier and the lady whom he had landed upon Squirrel Island, and the Admiral knew it must be the Princess and Fanfaronade; so he gave the order for the fleet to surround the island.

Meanwhile the Princess Mayblossom, who was by this time terribly sleepy, had found a grassy bank in the shade, and throwing herself down had already fallen into a profound slumber, when Fanfaronade, who happened to be hungry and not sleepy, came and woke her up, saying, very crossly:

‘Pray, madam, how long do you mean to stay here? I see nothing to eat, and though you may be very charming, the sight of you does not prevent me from famishing.’

‘What! Fanfaronade,’ said the Princess, sitting up and rubbing her eyes, ‘is it possible that when I am here with you you can want anything else? You ought to be thinking all the time how happy you are.’

‘Happy!’ cried he; ‘say rather unhappy. I wish with all my heart that you were back in your dark tower again.’

‘Darling, don’t be cross,’ said the Princess. ‘I will go and see if I can find some wild fruit for you.’

‘I wish you might find a wolf to eat you up,’ growled Fanfaronade.

The Princess, in great dismay, ran hither and thither all about the wood, tearing her dress, and hurting her pretty white hands with the thorns and brambles, but she could find nothing good to eat, and at last she had to go back sorrowfully to Fanfaronade. When he saw that she came empty-handed he got up and left her, grumbling to himself.

The next day they searched again, but with no better success.

‘Alas!’ said the Princess, ‘if only I could find something for you to eat, I should not mind being hungry myself.’

‘No, I should not mind that either,’ answered Fanfaronade.

‘Is it possible,’ said she, ‘that you would not care if I died of hunger? Oh, Fanfaronade, you said you loved me!’

‘That was when we were in quite another place and I was not hungry,’ said he. ‘It makes a great difference in one’s ideas to be dying of hunger and thirst on a desert island.’

At this the Princess was dreadfully vexed, and she sat down under a white rose bush and began to cry bitterly.

‘Happy roses,’ she thought to herself, ‘they have only to blossom in the sunshine and be admired, and there is nobody to be unkind to them.’ And the tears ran down her cheeks and splashed on to the rose-tree roots. Presently she was surprised to see the whole bush rustling and shaking, and a soft little voice from the prettiest rosebud said:

‘Poor Princess! look in the trunk of that tree, and you will find a honeycomb, but don’t be foolish enough to share it with Fanfaronade.’

Mayblossom ran to the tree, and sure enough there was the honey. Without losing a moment she ran with it to Fanfaronade, crying gaily:

‘See, here is a honeycomb that I have found. I might have eaten it up all by myself, but I had rather share it with you.’

But without looking at her or thanking her he snatched the honey comb out of her hands and ate it all up — every bit, without offering her a morsel. Indeed, when she humbly asked for some he said mockingly that it was too sweet for her, and would spoil her teeth.

Mayblossom, more downcast than ever, went sadly away and sat down under an oak tree, and her tears and sighs were so piteous that the oak fanned her with his rustling leaves, and said:

‘Take courage, pretty Princess, all is not lost yet. Take this pitcher of milk and drink it up, and whatever you do, don’t leave a drop for Fanfaronade.’

The Princess, quite astonished, looked round, and saw a big pitcher full of milk, but before she could raise it to her lips the thought of how thirsty Fanfaronade must be, after eating at least fifteen pounds of honey, made her run back to him and say:

‘Here is a pitcher of milk; drink some, for you must be thirsty I am sure; but pray save a little for me, as I am dying of hunger and thirst.’

But he seized the pitcher and drank all it contained at a single draught, and then broke it to atoms on the nearest stone, saying with a malicious smile: ‘As you have not eaten anything you cannot be thirsty.’

‘Ah!’ cried the Princess, ‘I am well punished for disappointing the King and Queen, and running away with this Ambassador about whom I knew nothing.’

And so saying she wandered away into the thickest part of the wood, and sat down under a thorn tree, where a nightingale was singing. Presently she heard him say: ‘Search under the bush Princess; you will find some sugar, almonds, and some tarts there But don’t be silly enough to offer Fanfaronade any.’ And this time the Princess, who was fainting with hunger, took the nightingale’s advice, and ate what she found all by herself. But Fanfaronade, seeing that she had found something good, and was not going to share it with him, ran after her in such a fury that she hastily drew out the Queen’s carbuncle, which had the property of rendering people invisible if they were in danger, and when she was safely hidden from him she reproached him gently for his unkindness.

Meanwhile Admiral Cocked-Hat had despatched Jack-the-Chatterer-of-the-Straw-Boots, Courier in Ordinary to the Prime Minister, to tell the King that the Princess and the Ambassador had landed on Squirrel Island, but that not knowing the country he had not pursued them, for fear of being captured by concealed enemies. Their Majesties were overjoyed at the news, and the King sent for a great book, each leaf of which was eight ells long. It was the work of a very clever Fairy, and contained a description of the whole earth. He very soon found that Squirrel Island was uninhabited.

‘Go,’ said he, to Jack-the-Chatterer, ‘tell the Admiral from me to land at once. I am surprised at his not having done so sooner.’ As soon as this message reached the fleet, every preparation was made for war, and the noise was so great that it reached the ears of the Princess, who at once flew to protect her lover. As he was not very brave he accepted her aid gladly.

‘You stand behind me,’ said she, ‘and I will hold the carbuncle which will make us invisible, and with the King’s dagger I can protect you from the enemy.’ So when the soldiers landed they could see nothing, but the Princess touched them one after another with the dagger, and they fell insensible upon the sand, so that at last the Admiral, seeing that there was some enchantment, hastily gave orders for a retreat to be sounded, and got his men back into their boats in great confusion.

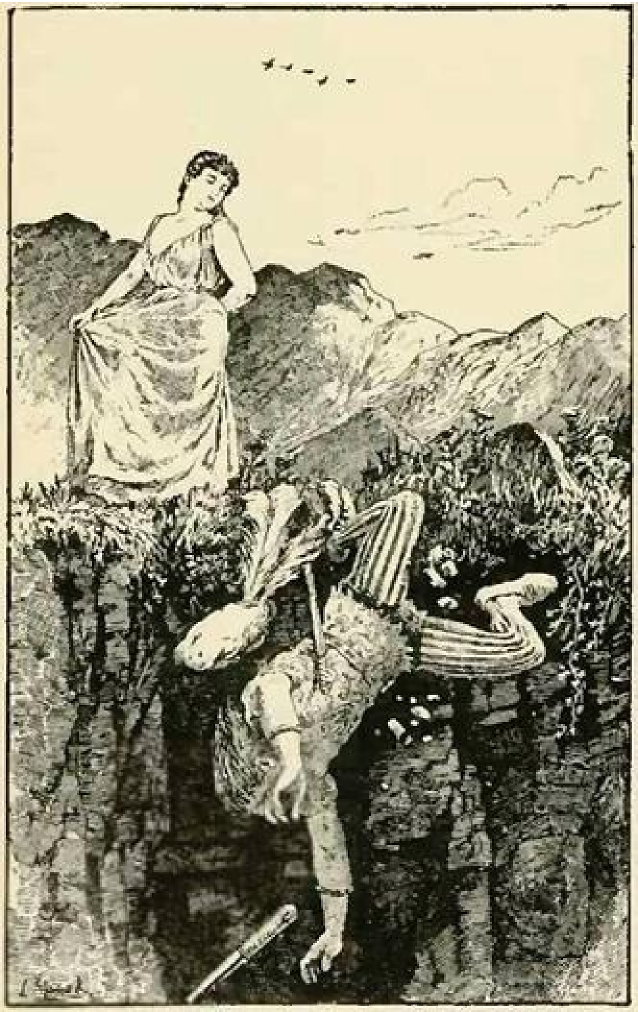

Fanfaronade, being once more left with the Princess, began to think that if he could get rid of her, and possess himself of the carbuncle and the dagger, he would be able to make his escape. So as they walked back over the cliffs he gave the Princess a great push, hoping she would fall into the sea; but she stepped aside so quickly that he only succeeded in overbalancing himself, and over he went, and sank to the bottom of the sea like a lump of lead, and was never heard of any more. While the Princess was still looking after him in horror, her attention was attracted by a rushing noise over her head, and looking up she saw two chariots approaching rapidly from opposite directions. One was bright and glittering, and drawn by swans and peacocks, while the Fairy who sat in it was beautiful as a sunbeam; but the other was drawn by bats and ravens, and contained a frightful little Dwarf, who was dressed in a snake’s skin, and wore a great toad upon her head for a hood. The chariots met with a frightful crash in mid-air, and the Princess looked on in breathless anxiety while a furious battle took place between the lovely Fairy with her golden lance, and the hideous little Dwarf and her rusty pike. But very soon it was evident that the Beauty had the best of it, and the Dwarf turned her bats' heads and flickered away in great confusion, while the Fairy came down to where the Princess stood, and said, smiling, 'You see Princess, I have completely routed that malicious old Carabosse. Will you believe it! she actually wanted to claim authority over you for ever, because you came out of the tower four days before the twenty years were ended. However, I think I have settled her pretensions, and I hope you will be very happy and enjoy the freedom I have won for you.'

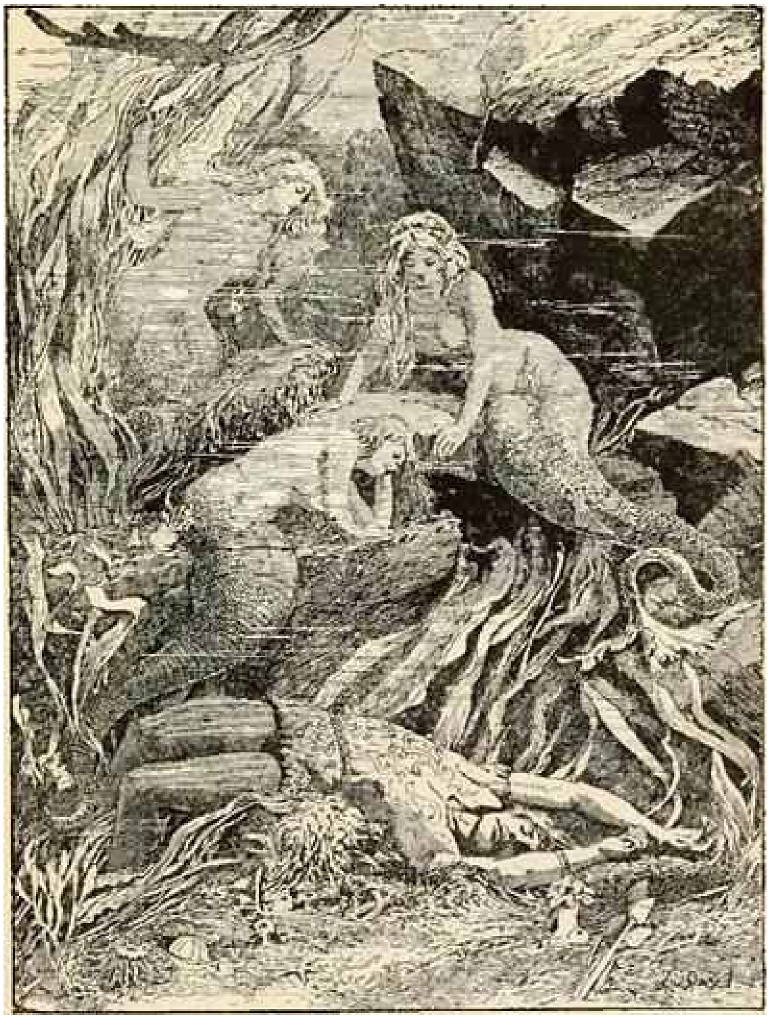

The Princess thanked her heartily, and then the Fairy despatched one of her peacocks to her palace to bring a gorgeous robe for Mayblossom, who certainly needed it, for her own was torn to shreds by the thorns and briars. Another peacock was sent to the Admiral to tell him that he could now land in perfect safety, which he at once did, bringing all his men with him, even to Jack-the-Chatterer, who, happening to pass the spit upon which the Admiral's dinner was roasting, snatched it up and brought it with him.

Admiral Cocked-Hat was immensely surprised when he came upon the golden chariot, and still more so to see two lovely ladies walking under the trees a little farther away. When he reached them, of course he recognised the Princess, and he went down on his knees and kissed her hand quite joyfully. Then she presented him to the Fairy, and told him how Carabosse had been finally routed, and he thanked and congratulated the Fairy, who was most gracious to him. While they were talking she cried suddenly:

‘I declare I smell a savoury dinner.’

‘Why yes, Madam, here it is,’ said Jack-the-Chatterer, holding up the spit, where all the pheasants and partridges were frizzling. ‘Will your Highness please to taste any of them?’

‘By all means,’ said the Fairy, ‘especially as the Princess will certainly be glad of a good meal.’

So the Admiral sent back to his ship for everything that was needful, and they feasted merrily under the trees. By the time they had finished the peacock had come back with a robe for the Princess, in which the Fairy arrayed her. It was of green and gold brocade, embroidered with pearls and rubies, and her long golden hair was tied back with strings of diamonds and emeralds, and crowned with flowers. The Fairy made her mount beside her in the golden chariot, and took her on board the Admiral’s ship, where she bade her farewell, sending many messages of friendship to the Queen, and bidding the Princess tell her that she was the fifth Fairy who had attended the christening. Then salutes were fired, the fleet weighed anchor, and very soon they reached the port. Here the King and Queen were waiting, and they received the Princess with such joy and kindness that she could not get a word in edgewise, to say how sorry she was for having run away with such a very poor spirited Ambassador. But, after all, it must have been all Carabosse’s fault. Just at this lucky moment who should arrive but King Merlin’s son, who had become uneasy at not receiving any news from his Ambassador, and so had started himself with a magnificent escort of a thousand horsemen, and thirty body-guards in gold and scarlet uniforms, to see what could have happened. As he was a hundred times handsomer and braver than the Ambassador, the Princess found she could like him very much. So the wedding was held at once, with so much splendour and rejoicing that all the previous misfortunes were quite forgotten.(1)

(1) La Princesse Printaniere. Par *Mme.* d’Aulnoy.

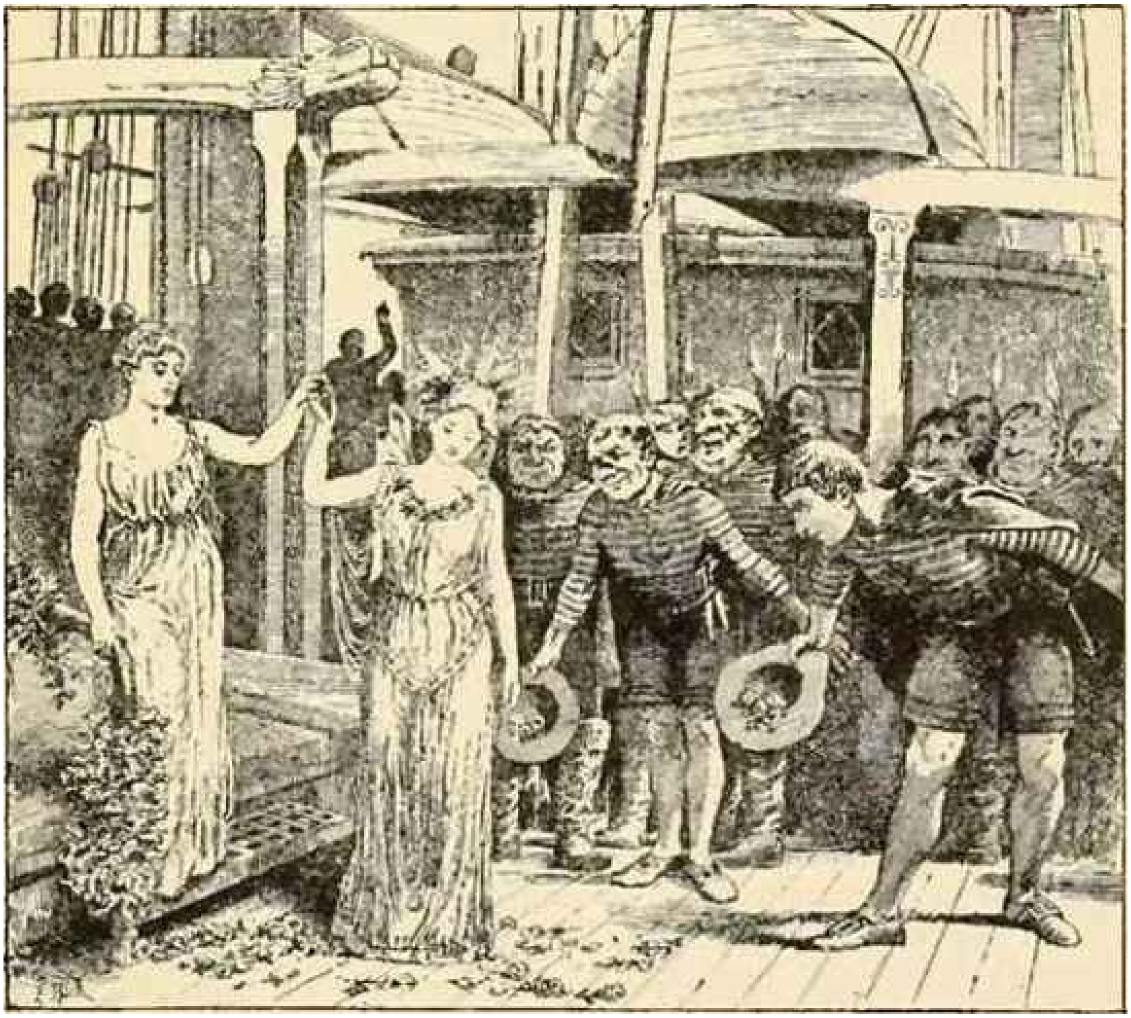

SORIA MORIA CASTLE

THERE was once upon a time a couple of folks who had a son called Halvor. Ever since he had been a little boy he had been unwilling to do any work, and had just sat raking about among the ashes. His parents sent him away to learn several things, but Halvor stayed nowhere, for when he had been gone two or three days he always ran away from his master, hurried off home, and sat down in the chimney corner to grub among the ashes again.

One day, however, a sea captain came and asked Halvor if he hadn't a fancy to come with him and go to sea, and behold foreign lands. And Halvor had a fancy for that, so he was not long in getting ready.

How long they sailed I have no idea, but after a long, long time there was a terrible storm, and when it was over and all had become calm again, they knew not where they were, for they had been driven away to a strange coast of which none of them had any knowledge.

As there was no wind at all they lay there becalmed, and Halvor asked the skipper to give him leave to go on shore to look about him, for he would much rather do that than lie there and sleep.

'Dost thou think that thou art fit to go where people can see thee?' said the skipper; 'thou hast no clothes but those rags thou art going about in!'

Halvor still begged for leave, and at last got it, but he was to come back at once if the wind began to rise.

So he went on shore, and it was a delightful country; whithersoever he went there were wide plains with fields and meadows, but as for people, there were none to be seen. The wind began to rise, but Halvor thought that he had not seen enough yet, and that he would like to walk about a little longer, to try if he could not meet somebody. So after a while he came to a great highway, which was so smooth that an egg might have been rolled along it without breaking. Halvor followed this, and when evening drew near he saw a big castle far away in the distance, and there were lights in it. So as he had now been walking the whole day and had not brought anything to eat away with him, he was frightfully hungry. Nevertheless, the nearer he came to the castle the more afraid he was.

A fire was burning in the castle, and Halvor went into the kitchen, which was more magnificent than any kitchen he had ever yet beheld. There were vessels of gold and silver, but not one human being was to be seen. When Halvor had stood there for some time, and no one had come out, he went in and opened a door, and inside a Princess was sitting at her wheel spinning.

‘Nay!’ she cried, ‘can Christian folk dare to come hither? But the best thing that you can do is to go away again, for if not the Troll will devour you. A Troll with three heads lives here.’

‘I should have been just as well pleased if he had had four heads more, for I should have enjoyed seeing the fellow,’ said the youth; ‘and I won’t go away, for I have done no harm, but you must give me something to eat, for I am frightfully hungry.’

When Halvor had eaten his fill, the Princess told him to try if he could wield the sword which was hanging on the wall, but he could not wield it, nor could he even lift it up.

‘Well, then, you must take a drink out of that bottle which is hanging by its side, for that’s what the Troll does whenever he goes out and wants to use the sword,’ said the Princess.

Halvor took a draught, and in a moment he was able to swing the sword about with perfect ease. And now he thought it was high time for the Troll to make his appearance, and at that very moment he came, panting for breath.

Halvor got behind the door.

‘Hutetu!’ said the Troll as he put his head in at the door. ‘It smells just as if there were Christian man’s blood here!’

‘Yes, you shall learn that there is!’ said Halvor, and cut off all his heads.

The Princess was so rejoiced to be free that she danced and sang, but then she remembered her sisters, and said: ‘If my sisters were but free too!’

‘Where are they?’ asked Halvor.

So she told him where they were. One of them had been taken away by a Troll to his castle, which was six miles off, and the other had been carried off to a castle which was nine miles farther off still.

‘But now,’ said she, ‘you must first help me to get this dead body away from here.’

Halvor was so strong that he cleared everything away, and made all clean and tidy very quickly. So then they ate and drank, and were happy, and next morning he set off in the grey light of dawn. He gave himself no rest, but walked or ran the livelong day. When he came in sight of the castle he was again just a little afraid. It was much more splendid than the other, but here too there was not a human being to be seen. So Halvor went into the kitchen, and did not linger there either, but went straight in.

‘Nay! do Christian folk dare to come here?’ cried the second Princess. ‘I know not how long it is since I myself came, but during all that time I have never seen a Christian man. It will be better for you to depart at once, for a Troll lives here who has six heads.’

‘No, I shall not go,’ said Halvor; ‘even if he had six more I would not.’

‘He will swallow you up alive,’ said the Princess.

But she spoke to no purpose, for Halvor would not go; he was not afraid of the Troll, but he wanted some meat and drink, for he was hungry after his journey. So she gave him as much as he would have, and then she once more tried to make him go away.

‘No,’ said Halvor, ‘I will not go, for I have not done anything wrong, and I have no reason to be afraid.’

‘He won’t ask any questions about that,’ said the Princess, ‘for he will take you without leave or right; but as you will not go, try if you can wield that sword which the Troll uses in battle.’

He could not brandish the sword; so the Princess said that he was to take a draught from the flask which hung by its side, and when he had done that he could wield the sword.

Soon afterwards the Troll came, and he was so large and stout that he was forced to go sideways to get through the door. When the Troll got his first head in he cried: ‘Hutetu! It smells of a Christian man’s blood here!’

With that Halvor cut off the first head, and so on with all the rest. The Princess was now exceedingly delighted, but then she remembered her sisters, and wished that they too were free. Halvor thought that might be managed, and wanted to set off immediately; but first he had to help the Princess to remove the Troll’s body, so it was not until morning that he set forth on his way.

It was a long way to the castle, and he both walked and ran to get there in time. Late in the evening he caught sight of it, and it was very much more magnificent than either of the others. And this time he was not in the least afraid, but went into the kitchen, and then straight on inside the castle. There a Princess was sitting, who was so beautiful that there was never anyone to equal her. She too said what the others had said, that no Christian folk had ever been there since she had come, and entreated him to go away again, or else the Troll would swallow him up alive. The Troll had nine heads, she told him.

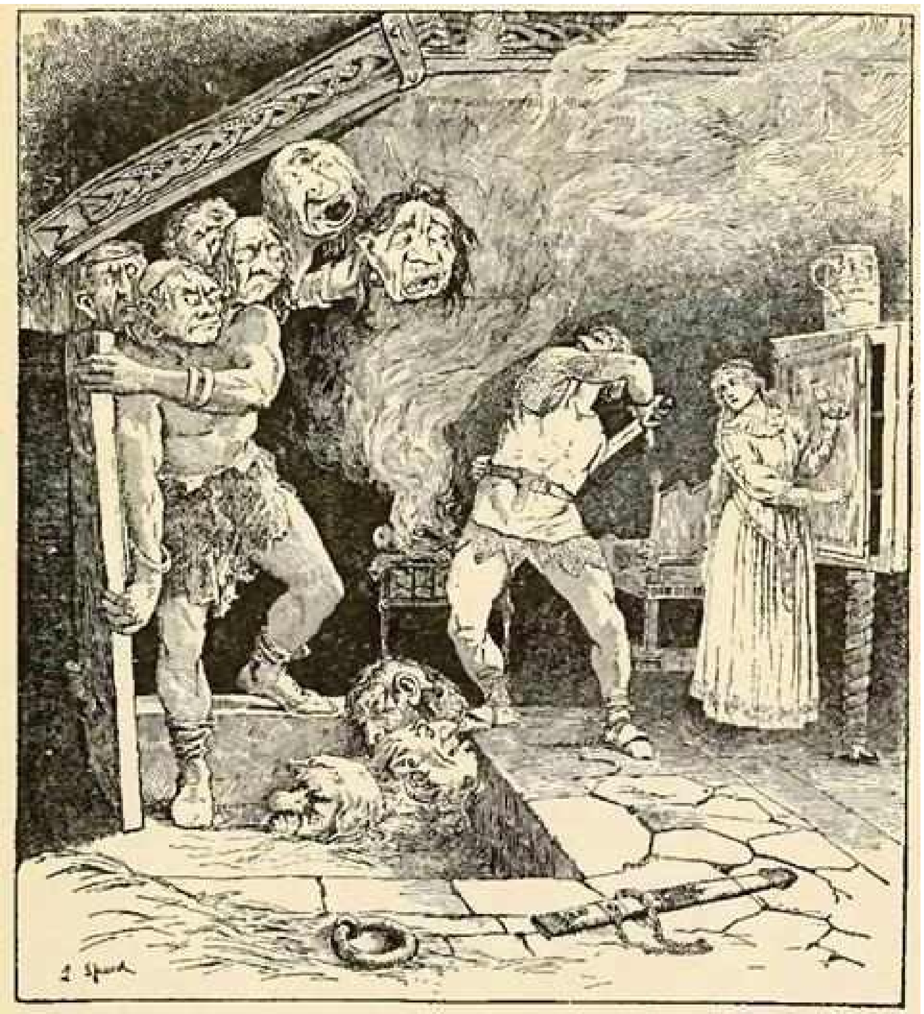

‘Yes, and if he had nine added to the nine, and then nine more still, I would not go away,’ said Halvor, and went and stood by the stove.

The Princess begged him very prettily to go lest the Troll should devour him; but Halvor said, ‘Let him come when he will.’

So she gave him the Troll’s sword, and bade him take a drink from the flask to enable him to wield it.

At that same moment the Troll came, breathing hard, and he was ever so much bigger and stouter than either of the others, and he too was forced to go sideways to get in through the door.

‘Hutetu! what a smell of Christian blood there is here!’ said he.

Then Halvor cut off the first head, and after that the others, but the last was the toughest of them all, and it was the hardest work that Halvor had ever done to get it off, but he still believed that he would have strength enough to do it.

And now all the Princesses came to the castle, and were together again, and they were happier than they had ever been in their lives; and they were delighted with Halvor, and he with them, and he was to choose the one he liked best; but of the three sisters the youngest loved him best.

But Halvor went about and was so strange and so mournful and quiet that the Princesses asked what it was that he longed for, and if he did not like to be with them. He said that he did like to be with them, for they had enough to live on, and he was very comfortable there; but he longed to go home, for his father and mother were alive, and he had a great desire to see them again.

They thought that this might easily be done.

‘You shall go and return in perfect safety if you will follow our advice,’ said the Princesses.

So he said that he would do nothing that they did not wish.

Then they dressed him so splendidly that he was like a King’s son; and they put a ring on his finger, and it was one which would enable him to go there and back again by wishing, but they told him that he must not throw it away, or name their names; for if he did, all his magnificence would be at an end, and then he would never see them more.

‘If I were but at home again, or if home were but here!’ said Halvor, and no sooner had he wished this than it was granted. Halvor was standing outside his father and mother’s cottage before he knew what he was about. The darkness of night was coming on, and when the father and mother saw such a splendid and stately stranger walk in, they were so startled that they both began to bow and curtsey.

Halvor then inquired if he could stay there and have lodging for the night. No, that he certainly could not. ‘We can give you no such accommodation,’ they said, ‘for we have none of the things that are needful when a great lord like you is to be entertained. It will be better for you to go up to the farm. It is not far off, you can see the chimney-pots from here, and there they have plenty of everything.’

Halvor would not hear of that, he was absolutely determined to stay where he was; but the old folks stuck to what they had said, and told him that he was to go to the farm, where he could get both meat and drink, whereas they themselves had not even a chair to offer him.

‘No,’ said Halvor, ‘I will not go up there till early to-morrow morning; let me stay here to-night. I can sit down on the hearth.’

They could say nothing against that, so Halvor sat down on the hearth, and began to rake about among the ashes just as he had done before, when he lay there idling away his time.

They chattered much about many things, and told Halvor of this and of that, and at last he asked them if they had never had any child.

‘Yes,’ they said; they had had a boy who was called Halvor, but they did not know where he had gone, and they could not even say whether he were dead or alive.

‘Could I be he?’ said Halvor.

‘I should know him well enough,’ said the old woman rising. ‘Our Halvor was so idle and slothful that he never did anything at all, and he was so ragged that one hole ran into another all over his clothes. Such a fellow as he was could never turn into such a man as you are, sir.’

In a short time the old woman had to go to the fireplace to stir the fire, and when the blaze lit up Halvor, as it used to do when he was at home raking up the ashes, she knew him again.

‘Good Heavens! is that you, Halvor?’ said she, and such great gladness fell on the old parents that there were no bounds to it. And now he had to relate everything that had befallen him, and the old woman was so delighted with him that she would take him up to the farm at once to show him to the girls who had formerly looked down on him so. She went there first, and Halvor followed her. When she got there she told them how Halvor had come home again, and now they should just see how magnificent he was. ‘He looks like a prince,’ she said.

‘We shall see that he is just the same ragamuffin that he was before,’ said the girls, tossing their heads.

At that same moment Halvor entered, and the girls were so astonished that they left their kirtles lying in the chimney corner, and ran away in nothing but their petticoats. When they came in again they were so shamefaced that they hardly dared to look at Halvor, towards whom they had always been so proud and haughty before.

‘Ay, ay! you have always thought that you were so pretty and dainty that no one was equal to you,’ said Halvor, ‘but you should just see the eldest Princess whom I set free. You look like herds-women compared with her, and the second Princess is also much prettier than you; but the youngest, who is my sweetheart, is more beautiful than either sun or moon. I wish to Heaven they were here, and then you would see them.’

Scarcely had he said this before they were standing by his side, but then he was very sorrowful, for the words which they had said to him came to his mind.

Up at the farm a great feast was made ready for the Princesses, and much respect paid to them, but they would not stay there.

‘We want to go down to your parents,’ they said to Halvor, ‘so we will go out and look about us.’

He followed them out, and they came to a large pond outside the farm-house. Very near the water there was a pretty green bank, and there the Princesses said they would sit down and while away an hour, for they thought that it would be pleasant to sit and look out over the water, they said.

There they sat down, and when they had sat for a short time the youngest Princess said, ‘I may as well comb your hair a little, Halvor.’

So Halvor laid his head down on her lap, and she combed it, and it was not long before he fell asleep. Then she took her ring from him and put another in its place, and then she said to her sisters: ‘Hold me as I am holding you. I would that we were at Soria Moria Castle.’

When Halvor awoke he knew that he had lost the Princesses, and began to weep and lament, and was so unhappy that he could not be comforted. In spite of all his father’s and mother’s entreaties, he would not stay, but bade them farewell, saying that he would never see them more, for if he did not find the Princess again he did not think it worth while to live.

He again had three hundred dollars, which he put into his pocket and went on his way. When he had walked some distance he met a man with a tolerably good horse. Halvor longed to buy it, and began to bargain with the man.

‘Well, I have not exactly been thinking of selling him,’ said the man, ‘but if we could agree, perhaps — —’

Halvor inquired how much he wanted to have for the horse.

‘I did not give much for him, and he is not worth much; he is a capital horse to ride, but good for nothing at drawing; but he will always be able to carry your bag of provisions and you too, if you walk and ride by turns.’ At last they agreed about the price, and Halvor laid his bag on the horse, and sometimes he walked and sometimes he rode. In the evening he came to a green field, where stood a great tree, under which he seated himself. Then he let the horse loose and lay down to sleep, but before he did that he took his bag off the horse. At daybreak he set off again, for he did not feel as if he could take any rest. So he walked and rode the whole day, through a great wood where there were many green places which gleamed very prettily among the trees. He did not know where he was or whither he was going, but he never lingered longer in any place than was enough to let his horse get a little food when they came to one of these green spots, while he himself took out his bag of provisions.

So he walked and he rode, and it seemed to him that the wood would never come to an end. But on the evening of the second day he saw a light shining through the trees.

‘If only there were some people up there I might warm myself and get something to eat,’ thought Halvor.

When he got to the place where the light had come from, he saw a wretched little cottage, and through a small pane of glass he saw a couple of old folks inside. They were very old, and as grey-headed as a pigeon, and the old woman had such a long nose that she sat in the chimney corner and used it to stir the fire.

‘Good evening I good evening!’ said the old hag; ‘but what errand have you that can bring you here? No Christian folk have been here for more than a hundred years.’

So Halvor told her that he wanted to get to Soria Moria Castle, and inquired if she knew the way thither.

‘No,’ said the old woman, ‘that I do not, but the Moon will be here presently, and I will ask her, and she will know. She can easily see it, for she shines on all things.’

So when the Moon stood clear and bright above the tree-tops the old woman went out. ‘Moon! Moon!’ she screamed. ‘Canst thou tell me the way to Soria Moria Castle?’

‘No,’ said the Moon, ‘that I can’t, for when I shone there, there was a cloud before me.’

‘Wait a little longer,’ said the old woman to Halvor, ‘for the West Wind will presently be here, and he will know it, for he breathes gently or blows into every corner.’

‘What! have you a horse too?’ she said when she came in again. ‘Oh! let the poor creature loose in our bit of fenced-in pasture, and don’t let it stand there starving at our very door. But won’t you exchange him with me? We have a pair of old boots here with which you can go fifteen quarters of a mile at each step. You shall have them for the horse, and then you will be able to get sooner to Soria Moria Castle.’

Halvor consented to this at once, and the old woman was so delighted with the horse that she was ready to dance. ‘For now I, too, shall be able to ride to church,’ she said. Halvor could take no rest, and wanted to set off immediately; but the old woman said that there was no need to hasten. ‘Lie down on the bench and sleep a little, for we have no bed to offer you,’ said she, ‘and I will watch for the coming of the West Wind.’

Ere long came the West Wind, roaring so loud that the walls creaked.

The old woman went out and cried:

‘West Wind! West Wind! Canst thou tell me the way to Soria Moria Castle? Here is one who would go thither.’

‘Yes, I know it well,’ said the West Wind. ‘I am just on my way there to dry the clothes for the wedding which is to take place. If he is fleet of foot he can go with me.’

Out ran Halvor.

‘You will have to make haste if you mean to go with me,’ said the West Wind;

and away it went over hill and dale, and moor and morass, and Halvor had enough to do to keep up with it.

‘Well, now I have no time to stay with you any longer,’ said the West Wind, ‘for I must first go and tear down a bit of spruce fir before I go to the bleaching-ground to dry the clothes; but just go along the side of the hill, and you will come to some girls who are standing there washing clothes, and then you will not have to walk far before you are at Soria Moria Castle.’

Shortly afterwards Halvor came to the girls who were standing washing, and they asked him if he had seen anything of the West Wind, who was to come there to dry the clothes for the wedding.

‘Yes,’ said Halvor, ‘he has only gone to break down a bit of spruce fir. It won’t be long before he is here.’ And then he asked them the way to Soria Moria Castle. They put him in the right way, and when he came in front of the castle it was so full of horses and people that it swarmed with them. But Halvor was so ragged and torn with following the West Wind through bushes and bogs that he kept on one side, and would not go among the crowd until the last day, when the feast was to be held at noon.

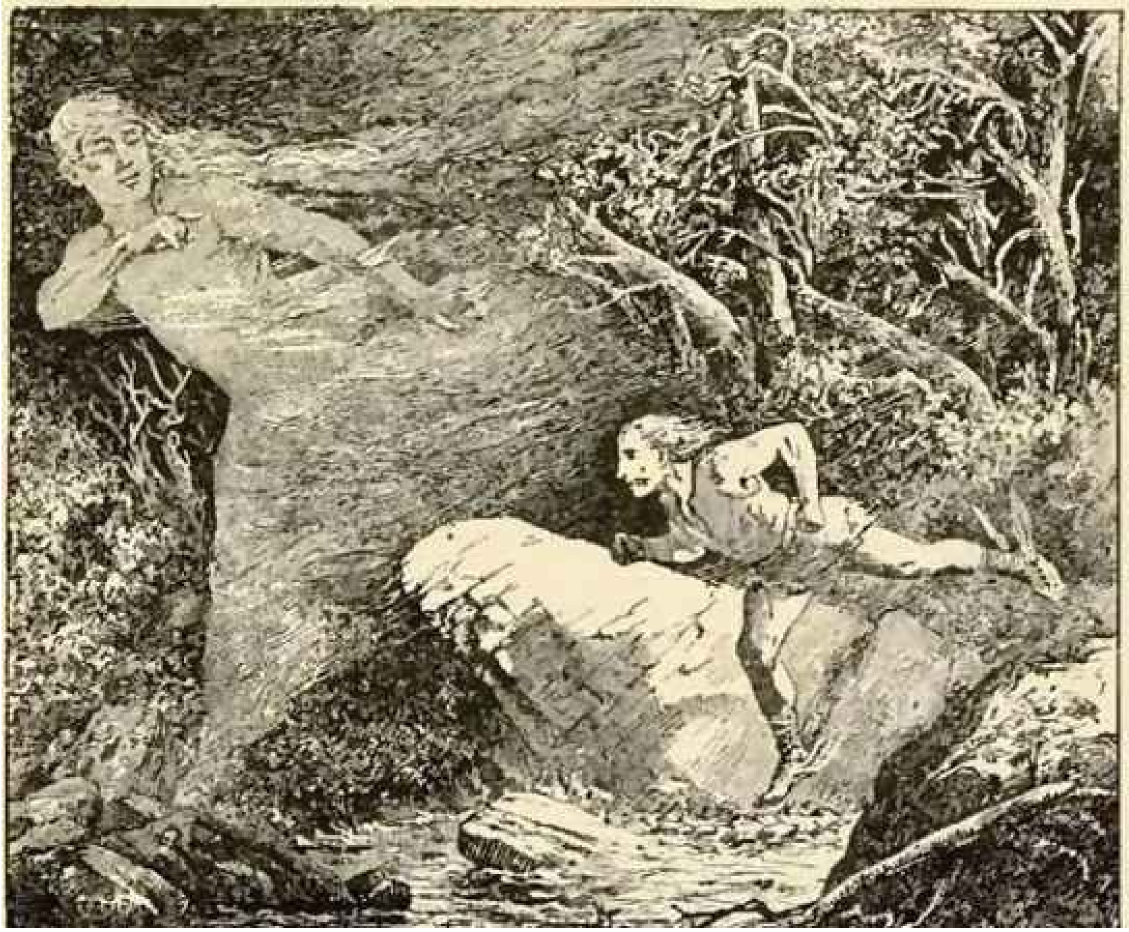

So when, as was the usage and custom, all were to drink to the bride and the young girls who were present, the cup-bearer filled the cup for each in turn, both bride and bridegroom, and knights and servants, and at last, after a very long time, he came to Halvor. He drank their health, and then slipped the ring which the Princess had put on his finger when they were sitting by the waterside into the glass, and ordered the cup-bearer to carry the glass to the bride from him and greet her.

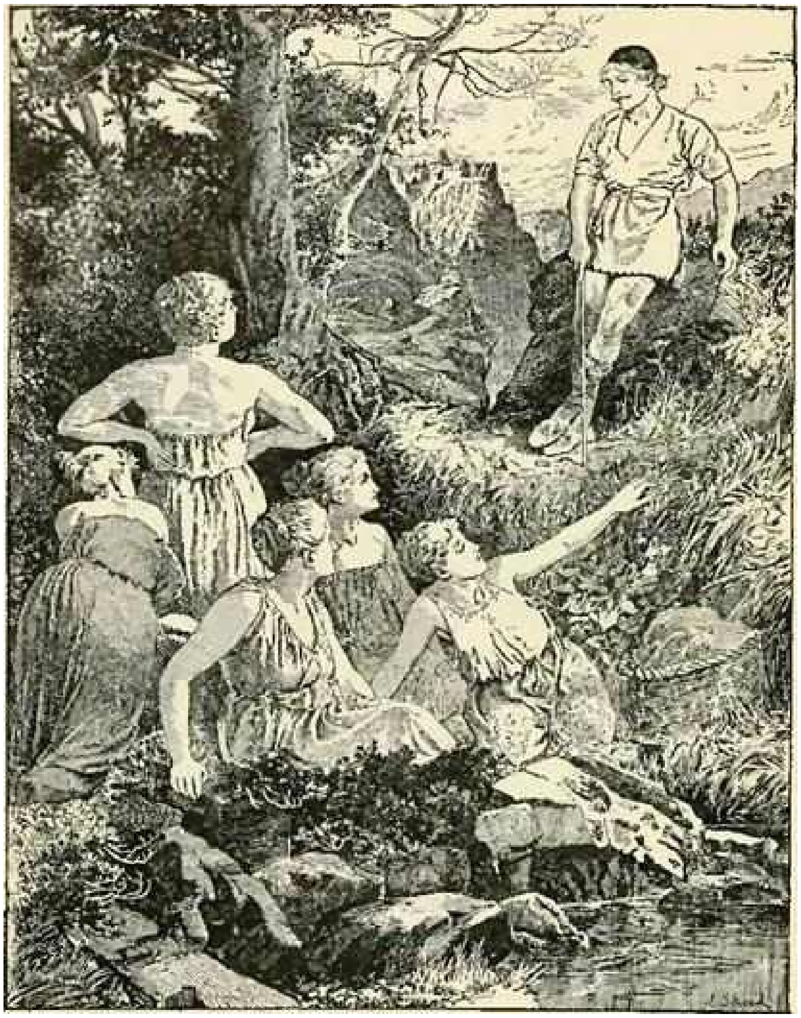

Then the Princess at once rose up from the table, and said, ‘Who is most worthy to have one of us — he who has delivered us from the Trolls or he who is sitting here as bridegroom?’

There could be but one opinion as to that, everyone thought, and when Halvor heard what they said he was not long in flinging off his beggar’s rags and arraying himself as a bridegroom.

‘Yes, he is the right one,’ cried the youngest Princess when she caught sight of him; so she flung the other out of the window and held her wedding with Halvor. (2)

(2) From P. C. Asbjornsen.

THE DEATH OF KOSHCHEI THE DEATHLESS

IN a certain kingdom there lived a Prince Ivan. He had three sisters. The first was the Princess Marya, the second the Princess Olga, the third the Princess Anna. When their father and mother lay at the point of death, they had thus enjoined their son: ‘Give your sisters in marriage to the very first suitors who come to woo them. Don’t go keeping them by you!’

They died, and the Prince buried them, and then, to solace his grief, he went with his sisters into the garden green to stroll. Suddenly the sky was covered by a black cloud; a terrible storm arose.

‘Let us go home, sisters!’ he cried.

Hardly had they got into the palace, when the thunder pealed, the ceiling split open, and into the room where they were came flying a falcon bright. The Falcon smote upon the ground, became a brave youth, and said: ‘Hail, Prince Ivan! Before I came as a guest, but now I have come as a wooer! I wish to propose for your sister, the Princess Marya.’

‘If you find favour in the eyes of my sister, I will not interfere with her wishes. Let her marry you, in God’s name!’

The Princess Marya gave her consent; the Falcon married her and bore her away into his own realm.

Days follow days, hours chase hours; a whole year goes by. One day Prince Ivan and his two sisters went out to stroll in the garden green. Again there arose a storm-cloud, with whirlwind and lightning.

‘Let us go home, sisters!’ cries the Prince. Scarcely had they entered the palace when the thunder crashed, the roof burst into a blaze, the ceiling split in twain, and in flew an eagle. The Eagle smote upon the ground and became a brave youth.

‘Hail, Prince Ivan! I Before I came as a guest, but now I have come as a wooer!’

And he asked for the hand of the Princess Olga. Prince Ivan replied:

‘If you find favour in the eyes of the Princess Olga, then let her marry you. I will not interfere with her liberty of choice.’

The Princess Olga gave her consent and married the Eagle. The Eagle took her and carried her off to his own kingdom.

Another year went by. Prince Ivan said to his youngest sister:

‘Let us go out and stroll in the garden green!’

They strolled about for a time. Again there arose a storm-cloud, with whirlwind and lightning.

‘Let us return home, sister!’ said he.

They returned home, but they hadn’t had time to sit down when the thunder crashed, the ceiling split open, and in flew a raven. The Raven smote upon the floor and became a brave youth. The former youths had been handsome, but this one was handsomer still.

‘Well, Prince Ivan! Before I came as a guest, but now I have come as a wooer! Give me the Princess Anna to wife.’

‘I won’t interfere with my sister’s freedom. If you gain her affections, let her marry you.’

So the Princess Anna married the Raven, and he bore her away into his own realm. Prince Ivan was left alone. A whole year he lived without his sisters; then he grew weary, and said: ‘I will set out in search of my sisters.’

He got ready for the journey, he rode and rode, and one day he saw a whole army lying dead on the plain. He cried aloud, ‘If there be a living man there, let him make answer! Who has slain this mighty host?’

There replied unto him a living man:

‘All this mighty host has been slain by the fair Princess Marya Morevna.’

Prince Ivan rode further on, and came to a white tent, and forth came to meet him the fair Princess Marya Morevna.

‘Hail, Prince!’ says she; ‘whither does God send you? and is it of your free will or against your will?’

Prince Ivan replied, ‘Not against their will do brave youths ride!’

‘Well, if your business be not pressing, tarry awhile in my tent.’

Thereat was Prince Ivan glad. He spent two nights in the tent, and he found favour in the eyes of Marya Morevna, and she married him. The fair Princess, Marya Morevna, carried him off into her own realm.

They spent some time together, and then the Princess took it into her head to go a warring. So she handed over all the house-keeping affairs to Prince Ivan, and gave him these instructions: ‘Go about everywhere, keep watch over everything; only do not venture to look into that closet there.’

He couldn’t help doing so. The moment Marya Morevna had gone he rushed to the closet, pulled open the door, and looked in — there hung Koshchei the Deathless, fettered by twelve chains. Then Koshchei entreated Prince Ivan, saying: ‘Have pity upon me and give me to drink! Ten years long have I been here in torment, neither eating nor drinking; my throat is utterly dried up.’

The Prince gave him a bucketful of water; he drank it up and asked for more, saying:

‘A single bucket of water will not quench my thirst; give me more!’

The Prince gave him a second bucketful. Koshchei drank it up and asked for a third, and when he had swallowed the third bucketful, he regained his former strength, gave his chains a shake, and broke all twelve at once.

‘Thanks, Prince Ivan!’ cried Koshchei the Deathless, ‘now you will sooner see your own ears than Marya Morevna!’ and out of the window he flew in the shape of a terrible whirlwind. And he came up with the fair Princess Marya Morevna as she was going her way, laid hold of her and carried her off home with him. But Prince Ivan wept full sore, and he arrayed himself and set out a-wandering, saying to himself, ‘Whatever happens, I will go and look for Marya Morevna!’

One day passed, another day passed; at the dawn of the third day he saw a wondrous palace, and by the side of the palace stood an oak, and on the oak sat a falcon bright. Down flew the Falcon from the oak, smote upon the ground, turned into a brave youth, and cried aloud: ‘Ha, dear brother-in-law! how deals the Lord with you?’

Out came running the Princess Marya, joyfully greeted her brother Ivan, and began inquiring after his health, and telling him all about herself. The Prince spent three days with them; then he said: ‘I cannot abide with you; I must go in search of my wife, the fair Princess Marya Morevna.’

‘Hard will it be for you to find her,’ answered the Falcon. ‘At all events leave with us your silver spoon. We will look at it and remember you.’ So Prince Ivan left his silver spoon at the Falcon’s, and went on his way again.

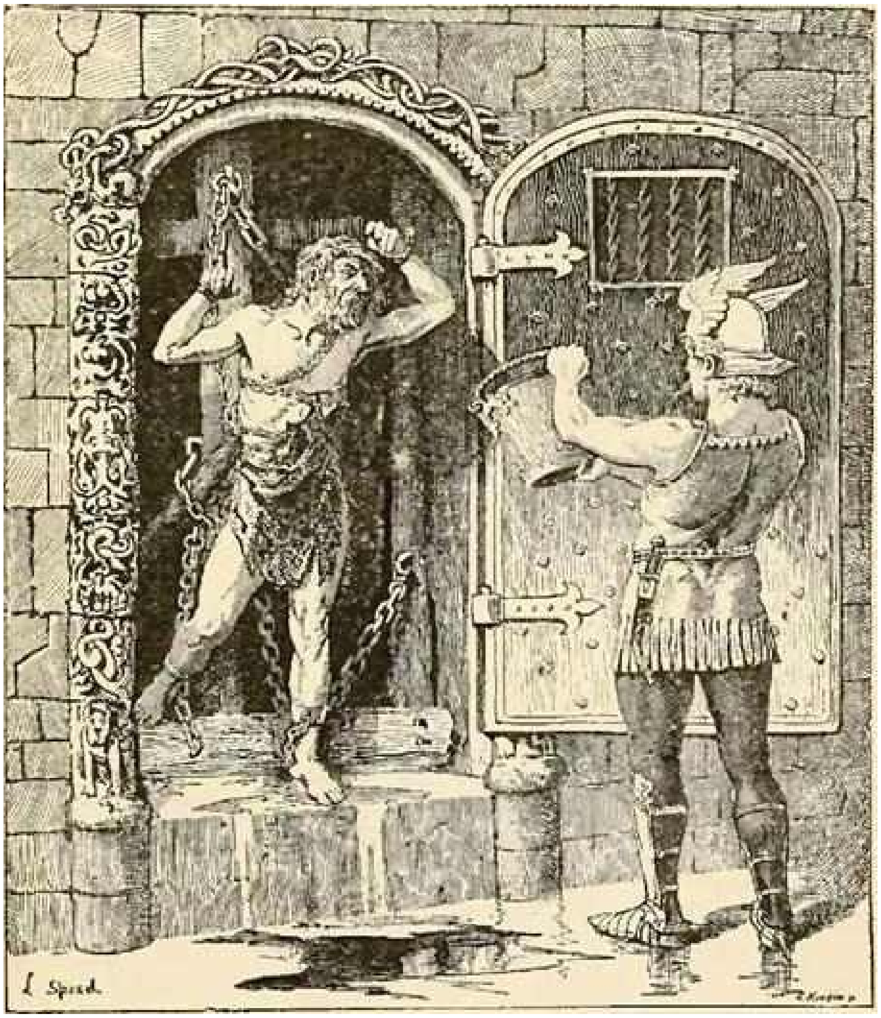

On he went one day, on he went another day, and by the dawn of the third day he saw a palace still grander than the former one and hard by the palace stood an oak, and on the oak sat an eagle. Down flew the Eagle from the oak, smote upon the ground, turned into a brave youth, and cried aloud: ‘Rise up, Princess Olga! Hither comes our brother dear!’

The Princess Olga immediately ran to meet him, and began kissing him and embracing him, asking after his health, and telling him all about herself. With them Prince Ivan stopped three days; then he said: ‘I cannot stay here any longer. I am going to look for my wife, the fair Princess Marya Morevna.’

‘Hard will it be for you to find her,’ replied the Eagle. ‘Leave with us a silver fork. We will look at it and remember you.’

He left a silver fork behind, and went his way. He travelled one day, he travelled two days; at daybreak on the third day he saw a palace grander than the first two, and near the palace stood an oak, and on the oak sat a raven. Down flew the Raven from the oak, smote upon the ground, turned into a brave youth, and cried aloud: ‘Princess Anna, come forth quickly I our brother is coming.’

Out ran the Princess Anna, greeted him joyfully, and began kissing and embracing him, asking after his health and telling him all about herself. Prince Ivan stayed with them three days; then he said: ‘Farewell! I am going to look for my wife, the fair Princess Marya Morevna.’

‘Hard will it be for you to find her,’ replied the Raven. ‘Anyhow, leave your silver snuff-box with us. We will look at it and remember you.’

The Prince handed over his silver snuff-box, took his leave, and went his way. One day he went, another day he went, and on the third day he came to where Marya Morevna was. She caught sight of her love, flung her arms around his neck, burst into tears, and exclaimed: ‘Oh, Prince Ivan! why did you disobey me and go looking into the closet and letting out Koshchei the Deathless?’

‘Forgive me, Marya Morevna! Remember not the past; much better fly with me while Koshchei the Deathless is out of sight. Perhaps he won’t catch us.’

So they got ready and fled. Now Koshchei was out hunting. Towards evening he was returning home, when his good steed stumbled beneath him.

‘Why stumblest thou, sorry jade? Scentest thou some ill?’ The steed replied:

‘Prince Ivan has come and carried off Marya Morevna.’ ‘Is it possible to catch them?’

‘It is possible to sow wheat, to wait till it grows up, to reap it and thresh it, to grind it to flour, to make five pies of it, to eat those pies, and then to start in pursuit — and even then to be in time.’ Koshchei galloped off and caught up Prince Ivan.

‘Now,’ says he, ‘this time I will forgive you, in return for your kindness in giving me water to drink. And a second time I will forgive you; but the third time beware! I will cut you to bits.’

Then he took Marya Morevna from him, and carried her off. But Prince Ivan sat down on a stone and burst into tears. He wept and wept — and then returned back again to Marya Morevna. Now Koshchei the Deathless happened not to be at home.

‘Let us fly, Marya Morevna!’

‘Ah, Prince Ivan! he will catch us.’

‘Suppose he does catch us. At all events we shall have spent an hour or two together.’

So they got ready and fled. As Koshchei the Deathless was returning home, his good steed stumbled beneath him.

‘Why stumblest thou, sorry jade? Scentest thou some ill?’

‘Prince Ivan has come and carried off Marya Morevna.’

‘Is it possible to catch them?’

‘It is possible to sow barley, to wait till it grows up, to reap it and thresh it, to brew beer, to drink ourselves drunk on it, to sleep our fill, and then to set off in pursuit — and yet to be in time.'

Koshchei galloped off, caught up Prince Ivan:

'Didn't I tell you that you should not see Marya Morevna any more than your own ears?'

And he took her away and carried her off home with him.

Prince Ivan was left there alone. He wept and wept; then he went back again after Marya Morevna. Koshchei happened to be away from home at that moment.

'Let us fly, Marya Morevna!'

'Ah, Prince Ivan! he is sure to catch us and hew you in pieces.'

'Let him hew away! I cannot live without you.

So they got ready and fled.

Koshchei the Deathless was returning home when his good steed stumbled beneath him.

'Why stumblest thou? Scentest thou any ill?'

'Prince Ivan has come and has carried off Marya Morevna.'

Koshchei galloped off, caught Prince Ivan, chopped him into little pieces, put them into a barrel, smeared it with pitch and bound it with iron hoops, and flung it into the blue sea. But Marya Morevna he carried off home.

At that very time the silver articles turned black which Prince Ivan had left with his brothers-in-law.

'Ah!' said they, 'the evil is accomplished sure enough!'

Then the Eagle hurried to the blue sea, caught hold of the barrel, and dragged it ashore; the Falcon flew away for the Water of Life, and the Raven for the Water of Death.

Afterwards they all three met, broke open the barrel, took out the remains of Prince Ivan, washed them, and put them together in fitting order. The Raven sprinkled them with the Water of Death — the pieces joined together, the body became whole. The Falcon sprinkled it with the Water of Life — Prince Ivan shuddered, stood up, and said: 'Ah! what a time I've been sleeping!'

'You'd have gone on sleeping a good deal longer if it hadn't been for us,' replied his brothers-in-law. 'Now come and pay us a visit.'

'Not so, brothers; I shall go and look for Marya Morevna.'

And when he had found her, he said to her:

'Find out from Koshchei the Deathless whence he got so good a steed.'

So Marya Morevna chose a favourable moment, and began asking Koshchei about it. Koshchei replied: 'Beyond thrice nine lands, in the thirtieth kingdom, on the other side of the fiery river, there lives a Baba Yaga. She has so good a mare that she flies right round the world on it every day. And she has many other splendid mares. I watched her herds for three days without losing a single mare, and in return for that the Baba Yaga gave me a foal.'

'But how did you get across the fiery river?'

'Why, I've a handkerchief of this kind — when I wave it thrice on the right hand, there springs up a very lofty bridge, and the fire cannot reach it.'

Marya Morevna listened to all this, and repeated it to Prince Ivan, and she carried off the handkerchief and gave it to him. So he managed to get across the fiery river, and then went on to the Baba Yaga's. Long went he on without getting anything either to eat or to drink. At last he came across an outlandish bird and its young ones. Says Prince Ivan: 'I'll eat one of these chickens.'

'Don't eat it, Prince Ivan!' begs the outlandish bird; 'some time or other I'll do you a good turn.'

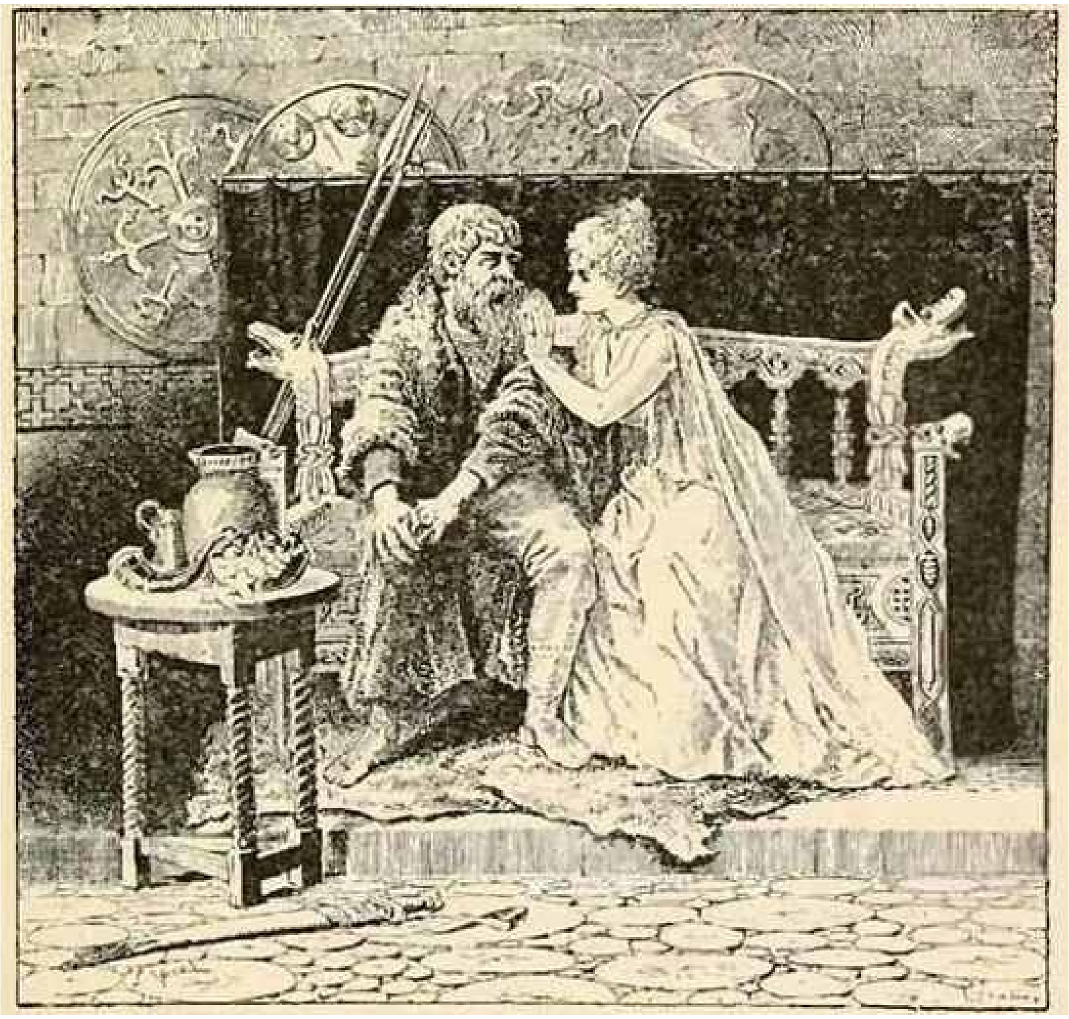

He went on farther and saw a hive of bees in the forest.

‘I’ll get a bit of honeycomb,’ says he.

‘Don’t disturb my honey, Prince Ivan!’ exclaims the queen-bee; ‘some time or other I’ll do you a good turn.’

So he didn’t disturb it, but went on. Presently there met him a lioness with her cub.

‘Anyhow, I’ll eat this lion cub,’ says he; ‘I’m so hungry I feel quite unwell!’

‘Please let us alone, Prince Ivan!’ begs the lioness; ‘some time or other I’ll do you a good turn.’

‘Very well; have it your own way,’ says he.

Hungry and faint he wandered on, walked farther and farther, and at last came to where stood the house of the Baba Yaga. Round the house were set twelve poles in a circle, and on each of eleven of these poles was stuck a human head; the twelfth alone remained unoccupied.

‘Hail, granny!’

‘Hail, Prince Ivan! wherefore have you come? Is it of your own accord, or on compulsion?’

‘I have come to earn from you an heroic steed.’

‘So be it, Prince! You won’t have to serve a year with me, but just three days. If you take good care of my mares, I’ll give you an heroic steed. But if you don’t — why, then you mustn’t be annoyed at finding your head stuck on top of the last pole up there.’

Prince Ivan agreed to these terms. The Baba Yaga gave him food and drink, and bade him set about his business. But the moment he had driven the mares afield, they cocked up their tails, and away they tore across the meadows in all directions. Before the Prince had time to look round they were all out of sight. Thereupon he began to weep and to disquiet himself, and then he sat down upon a stone and went to sleep. But when the sun was near its setting the outlandish bird came flying up to him, and awakened him, saying: ‘Arise, Prince Ivan! The mares are at home now.’

The Prince arose and returned home. There the Baba Yaga was storming and raging at her mares, and shrieking: ‘Whatever did ye come home for?’

‘How could we help coming home?’ said they. ‘There came flying birds from every part of the world, and all but pecked our eyes out.’

‘Well, well! to-morrow don’t go galloping over the meadows, but disperse amid the thick forests.’

Prince Ivan slept all night. In the morning the Baba Yaga says to him:

‘Mind, Prince! if you don’t take good care of the mares, if you lose merely one of them — your bold head will be stuck on that pole!’

He drove the mares afield. Immediately they cocked up their tails and dispersed among the thick forests. Again did the Prince sit down on the stone, weep and weep, and then go to sleep. The sun went down behind the forest. Up came running the lioness.

‘Arise, Prince Ivan! The mares are all collected.’

Prince Ivan arose and went home. More than ever did the Baba Yaga storm at her mares and shriek: ‘Whatever did ye come back home for?’

‘How could we help coming back? Beasts of prey came running at us from all parts of the world, and all but tore us utterly to pieces.’

‘Well, to-morrow run off into the blue sea.’

Again did Prince Ivan sleep through the night. Next morning the Baba Yaga sent him forth to watch the mares.

‘If you don’t take good care of them,’ says she, ‘your bold head will be stuck on that pole!’

He drove the mares afield. Immediately they cocked up their tails, disappeared from sight, and fled into the blue sea. There they stood, up to their necks in water. Prince Ivan sat down on the stone, wept, and fell asleep. But when the sun had set behind the forest, up came flying a bee, and said: ‘Arise, Prince! The mares are all collected. But when you get home, don’t let the Baba Yaga set eyes on you, but go into the stable and hide behind the mangers. There you will find a sorry colt rolling in the muck. Do you steal it, and at the dead of night ride away from the house.’

Prince Ivan arose, slipped into the stable, and lay down behind the mangers, while the Baba Yaga was storming away at her mares and shrieking: ‘Why did ye come back?’

‘How could we help coming back? There came flying bees in countless numbers from all parts of the world, and began stinging us on all sides till the blood came!’

The Baba Yaga went to sleep. In the dead of the night Prince Ivan stole the sorry colt, saddled it, jumped on its back, and galloped away to the fiery river. When he came to that river he waved the handkerchief three times on the right hand, and suddenly, springing goodness knows whence, there hung across the river, high in the air, a splendid bridge. The Prince rode across the bridge and waved the handkerchief twice only on the left hand; there remained across the river a thin, ever so thin a bridge!

When the Baba Yaga got up in the morning the sorry colt was not to be seen! Off she set in pursuit. At full speed did she fly in her iron mortar, urging it on with the pestle, sweeping away her traces with the broom. She dashed up to the fiery river, gave a glance, and said, ‘A capital bridge!’ She drove on to the bridge, but had only got half-way when the bridge broke in two, and the Baba

Yaga went flop into the river. There truly did she meet with a cruel death!

Prince Ivan fattened up the colt in the green meadows, and it turned into a wondrous steed. Then he rode to where Marya Morevna was. She came running out, and flung herself on his neck, crying: ‘By what means has God brought you back to life?’

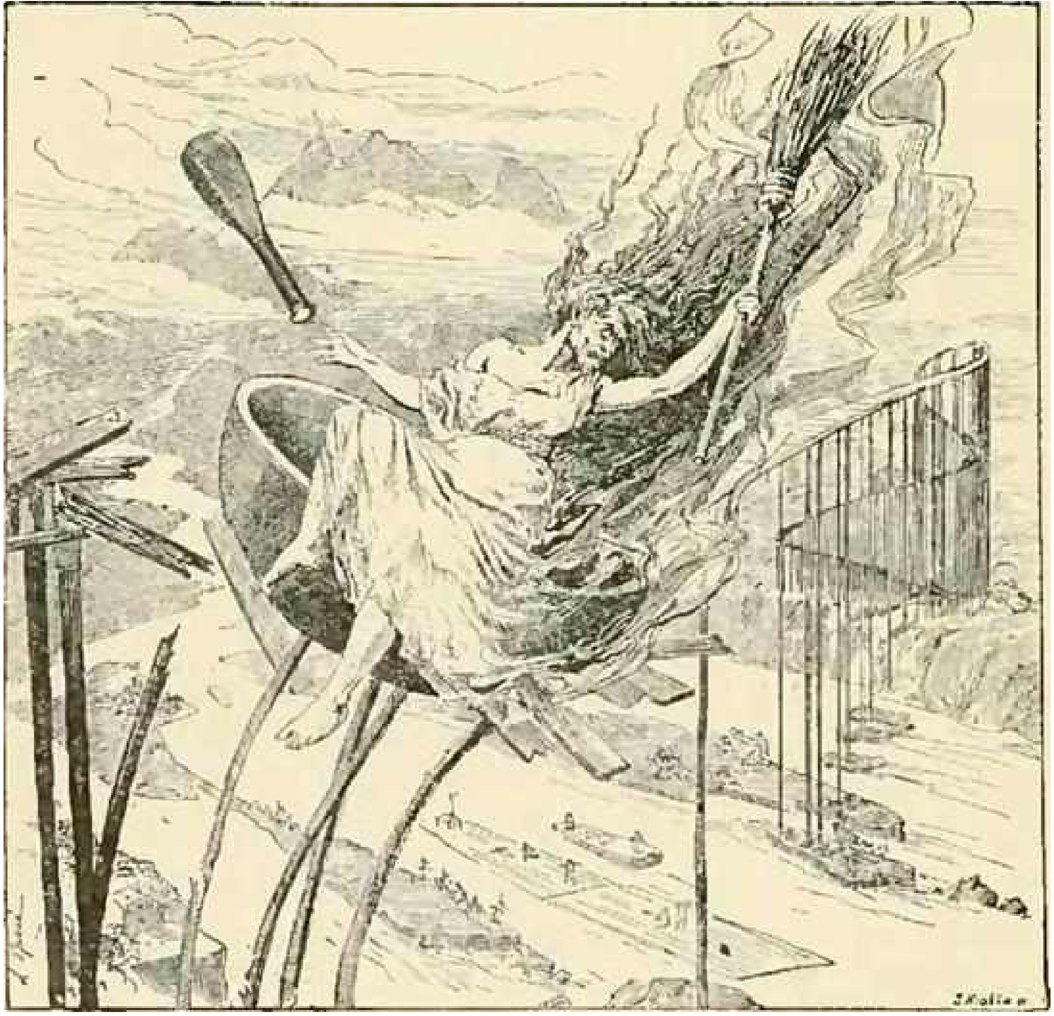

‘Thus and thus,’ says he. ‘Now come along with me.’

‘I am afraid, Prince Ivan! If Koshchei catches us you will be cut in pieces again.’

‘No, he won’t catch us! I have a splendid heroic steed now; it flies just like a bird.’ So they got on its back and rode away.

Koshchei the Deathless was returning home when his horse stumbled beneath him.

‘What art thou stumbling for, sorry jade? Dost thou scent any ill?’

‘Prince Ivan has come and carried off Marya Morevna.’

‘Can we catch them?’

‘God knows! Prince Ivan has a horse now which is better than I.’

‘Well, I can’t stand it,’ says Koshchei the Deathless. ‘I will pursue.’

After a time he came up with Prince Ivan, lighted on the ground, and was going to chop him up with his sharp sword. But at that moment Prince Ivan’s horse smote Koshchei the Deathless full swing with its hoof, and cracked his skull, and the Prince made an end of him with a club. Afterwards the Prince heaped up a pile of wood, set fire to it, burnt Koshchei the Deathless on the pyre, and scattered his ashes to the wind. Then Marya Morevna mounted Koshchei’s horse and Prince Ivan got on his own, and they rode away to visit first the Raven, and then the Eagle, and then the Falcon. Wherever they went they met with a joyful greeting.

‘Ah, Prince Ivan! why, we never expected to see you again. Well, it wasn’t for nothing that you gave yourself so much trouble. Such a beauty as Marya Morevna one might search for all the world over — and never find one like her!’

And so they visited, and they feasted; and afterwards they went off to their own realm.(3)

(3) Ralston.

THE BLACK THIEF AND KNIGHT OF THE GLEN.

IN times of yore there was a King and a Queen in the south of Ireland who had three sons, all beautiful children; but the Queen, their mother, sickened unto death when they were yet very young, which caused great grief throughout the Court, particularly to the King, her husband, who could in no wise be comforted. Seeing that death was drawing near her, she called the King to her and spoke as follows:

‘I am now going to leave you, and as you are young and in your prime, of course after my death you will marry again. Now all the request I ask of you is that you will build a tower in an island in the sea, wherein you will keep your three sons until they are come of age and fit to do for themselves; so that they may not be under the power or jurisdiction of any other woman. Neglect not to give them education suitable to their birth, and let them be trained up to every exercise and pastime requisite for king’s sons to learn. This is all I have to say, so farewell.’

The King had scarce time, with tears in his eyes, to assure her she should be obeyed in everything, when she, turning herself in her bed, with a smile gave up the ghost. Never was greater mourning seen than was throughout the Court and the whole kingdom; for a better woman than the Queen, to rich and poor, was not to be found in the world. She was interred with great pomp and magnificence, and the King, her husband, became in a manner inconsolable for the loss of her. However, he caused the tower to be built and his sons placed in it, under proper guardians, according to his promise.

In process of time the lords and knights of the kingdom counselled the King (as he was young) to live no longer as he had done, but to take a wife; which counsel prevailing, they chose him a rich and beautiful princess to be his consort — a neighbouring King’s daughter, of whom he was very fond. Not long after, the Queen had a fine son, which caused great feasting and rejoicing at the Court, insomuch that the late Queen, in a manner, was entirely forgotten. That fared well, and King and Queen lived happy together for several years.

At length the Queen, having some business with the hen-wife, went herself to her, and, after a long conference passed, was taking leave of her, when the hen-wife prayed that if ever she should come back to her again she might break her neck. The Queen, greatly incensed at such a daring insult from one of her meanest subjects, demanded immediately the reason, or she would have her put to death.

‘It was worth your while, madam,’ says the hen-wife, ‘to pay me well for it, for the reason I prayed so on you concerns you much.’

‘What must I pay you?’ asked the Queen.

‘You must give me,’ says she, ‘the full of a pack of wool, and I have an ancient crock which you must fill with butter, likewise a barrel which you must fill for me full of wheat.’

‘How much wool will it take to the pack?’ says the Queen.

‘It will take seven herds of sheep,’ said she, ‘and their increase for seven years.’

‘How much butter will it take to fill your crock?’

‘Seven dairies,’ said she, ‘and their increase for seven years.’

‘And how much will it take to fill the barrel you have?’ says the Queen.

‘It will take the increase of seven barrels of wheat for seven years.’

‘That is a great quantity,’ says the Queen; ‘but the reason must be extraordinary, and before I want it, I will give you all you demand.’

‘Well,’ says the hen-wife, ‘it is because you are so stupid that you don’t observe or find out those affairs that are so dangerous and hurtful to yourself and your child.’

‘What is that?’ says the Queen.

‘Why,’ says she, ‘the King your husband has three fine sons he had by the late Queen, whom he keeps shut up in a tower until they come of age, intending to divide the kingdom between them, and let your son push his fortune; now, if you don’t find some means of destroying them; your child and perhaps yourself will be left desolate in the end.’

‘And what would you advise me to do?’ said she; ‘I am wholly at a loss in what manner to act in this affair.’

‘You must make known to the King,’ says the hen-wife, ‘that you heard of his sons, and wonder greatly that he concealed them all this time from you; tell him you wish to see them, and that it is full time for them to be liberated, and that you would be desirous he would bring them to the Court. The King will then do so, and there will be a great feast prepared on that account, and also diversions of every sort to amuse the people; and in these sports,’ said she, ‘ask the King’s sons to play a game at cards with you, which they will not refuse. Now,’ says the hen-wife, ‘you must make a bargain, that if you win they must do whatever you command them, and if they win, that you must do whatever they command you to do; this bargain must be made before the assembly, and here is a pack of cards,’ says she, ‘that I am thinking you will not lose by.’

The Queen immediately took the cards, and, after returning the hen-wife thanks for her kind instruction, went back to the palace, where she was quite uneasy until she got speaking to the King in regard of his children; at last she broke it off to him in a very polite and engaging manner, so that he could see no muster or design in it. He readily consented to her desire, and his sons were sent for to the tower, who gladly came to Court, rejoicing that they were freed from such confinement. They were all very handsome, and very expert in all arts and exercises, so that they gained the love and esteem of all that had seen them.

The Queen, more jealous with them than ever, thought it an age until all the feasting and rejoicing was over, that she might get making her proposal, depending greatly on the power of the hen-wife's cards. At length this royal assembly began to sport and play at all kinds of diversions, and the Queen very cunningly challenged the three Princes to play at cards with her, making bargain with them as she had been instructed.

They accepted the challenge, and the eldest son and she played the first game, which she won; then the second son played, and she won that game likewise; the third son and she then played the last game, and he won it, which sorely grieved her that she had not him in her power as well as the rest, being by far the handsomest and most beloved of the three.

However, everyone was anxious to hear the Queen's commands in regard to the two Princes, not thinking that she had any ill design in her head against them. Whether it was the hen-wife instructed her, or whether it was from her own knowledge, I cannot tell; but she gave out they must go and bring her the Knight of the Glen's wild Steed of Bells, or they should lose their heads.

The young Princes were not in the least concerned, not knowing what they had to do; but the whole Court was amazed at her demand, knowing very well that it was impossible for them ever to get the steed, as all that ever sought him perished in the attempt. However, they could not retract the bargain, and the youngest Prince was desired to tell what demand he had on the Queen, as he had won his game.

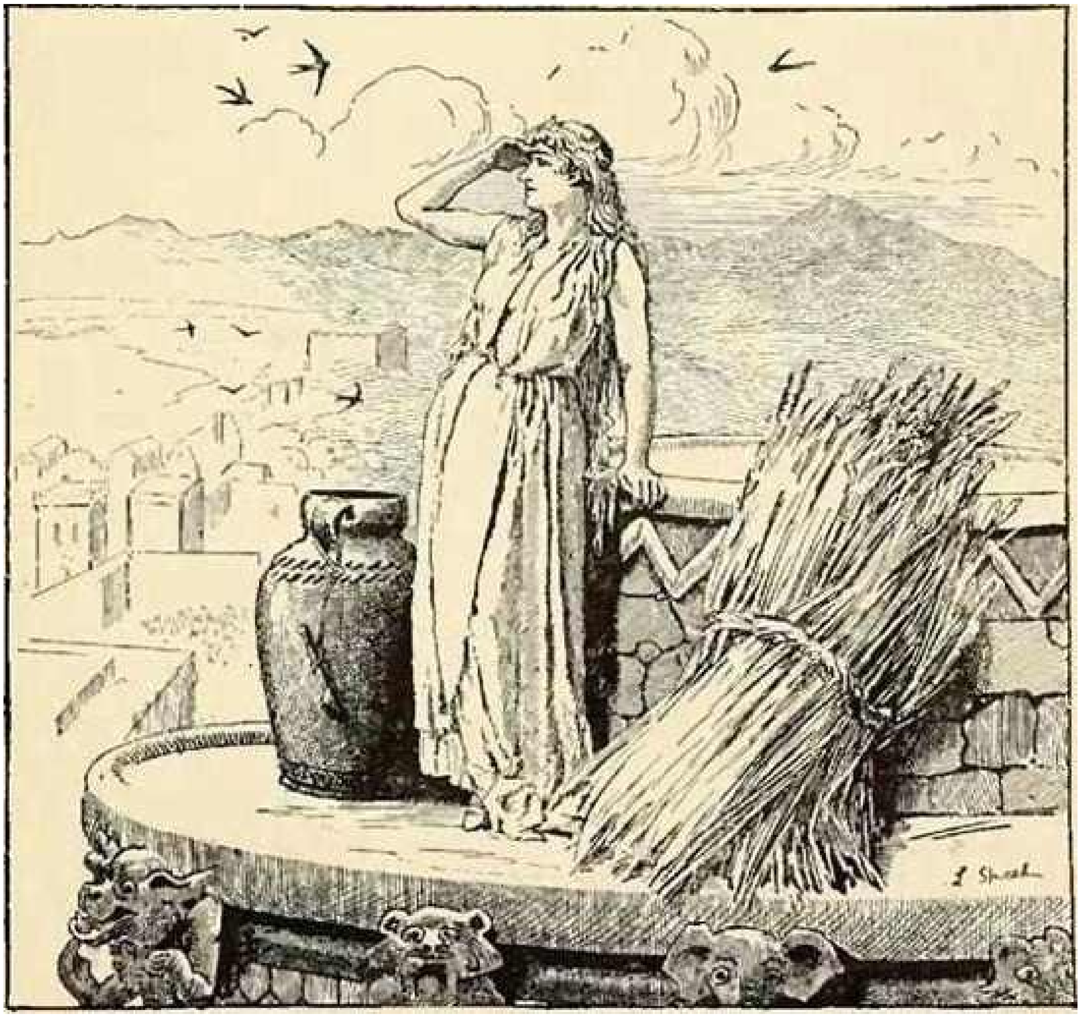

‘My brothers,’ says he, ‘are now going to travel, and, as I understand, a perilous journey wherein they know not what road to take or what may happen them. I am resolved, therefore, not to stay here, but to go with them, let what will betide; and I request and command, according to my bargain, that the Queen shall stand on the highest tower of the palace until we come back (or find out that we are certainly dead), with nothing but sheaf corn for her food and cold water for her drink, if it should be for seven years and longer.’

All things being now fixed, the three princes departed the Court in search of the Knight of the Glen’s palace, and travelling along the road they came up with a man who was a little lame, and seemed to be somewhat advanced in years; they soon fell into discourse, and the youngest of the princes asked the stranger his name, or what was the reason he wore so remarkable a black cap as he saw on him.

‘I am called,’ said he, ‘the Thief of Sloan, and sometimes the Black Thief from my cap; ‘and so telling the prince the most of his adventures, he asked him again where they were bound for, or what they were about.

The prince, willing to gratify his request, told him their affairs from the beginning to the end. ‘And now,’ said he, ‘we are travelling, and do not know whether we are on the right road or not.’

‘Ah! my brave fellows,’ says the Black Thief, ‘you little know the danger you run. I am after that steed myself these seven years, and can never steal him on account of a silk covering he has on him in the stable, with sixty bells fixed to it, and whenever you approach the place he quickly observes it and shakes himself; which, by the sound of the bells, not only alarms the prince and his guards, but the whole country round, so that it is impossible ever to get him, and those that are so unfortunate as to be taken by the Knight of the Glen are boiled in a red-hot fiery furnace.’

‘Bless me,’ says the young prince, ‘what will we do? If we return without the steed we will lose our heads, so I see we are ill fixed on both sides.’

‘Well,’ says the Thief of Sloan, ‘if it were my case I would rather die by the Knight than by the wicked Queen; besides, I will go with you myself and show you the road, and whatever fortune you will have, I will take chance of the same.’

They returned him sincere thanks for his kindness, and he, being well acquainted with the road, in a short time brought them within view of the knight’s castle.

‘Now,’ says he, ‘we must stay here till night comes; for I know all the ways of the place, and if there be any chance for it, it is when they are all at rest; for the steed is all the watch the knight keeps there.’

Accordingly, in the dead hour of the night, the King’s three sons and the Thief of Sloan attempted the Steed of Bells in order to carry him away, but before they could reach the stables the steed neighed most terribly and shook himself so, and the bells rung with such noise, that the knight and all his men were up in a moment.

The Black Thief and the King’s sons thought to make their escape, but they were suddenly surrounded by the knight’s guards and taken prisoners; where they were brought into that dismal part of the palace where the knight kept a furnace always boiling, in which he threw all offenders that ever came in his way, which in a few moments would entirely consume them.

‘Audacious villains!’ says the Knight of the Glen, ‘how dare you attempt so bold an action as to steal my steed? See, now, the reward of your folly; for your greater punishment I will not boil you all together, but one after the other, so that he that survives may witness the dire afflictions of his unfortunate companions.’

So saying he ordered his servants to stir up the fire: ‘We will boil the eldest-looking of these young men first,’ said he, ‘and so on to the last, which will be this old champion with the black cap. He seems to be the captain, and looks as if he had come through many toils.’

‘I was as near death once as the prince is yet,’ says the Black Thief, ‘and escaped; and so will he too.’

‘No, you never were,’ said the knight; ‘for he is within two or three minutes of his latter end.’

‘But,’ says the Black Thief, ‘I was within one moment of my death, and I am here yet.’

‘How was that?’ says the knight; ‘I would be glad to hear it, for it seems impossible.’

‘If you think, sir knight,’ says the Black Thief, ‘that the danger I was in surpasses that of this young man, will you pardon him his crime?’

‘I will,’ says the knight, ‘so go on with your story.’

‘I was, sir,’ says he, ‘a very wild boy in my youth, and came through many distresses; once in particular, as I was on my rambling, I was benighted and could find no lodging. At length I came to an old kiln, and being much fatigued I went up and lay on the ribs. I had not been long there when I saw three witches coming in with three bags of gold. Each put their bags of gold under their heads, as if to sleep. I heard one of them say to the other that if the Black Thief came on them while they slept, he would not leave them a penny. I found by their discourse that everybody had got my name into their mouth, though I kept silent as death during their discourse. At length they fell fast asleep, and then I stole softly down, and seeing some turf convenient, I placed one under each of their heads, and off I went, with their gold, as fast as I could.

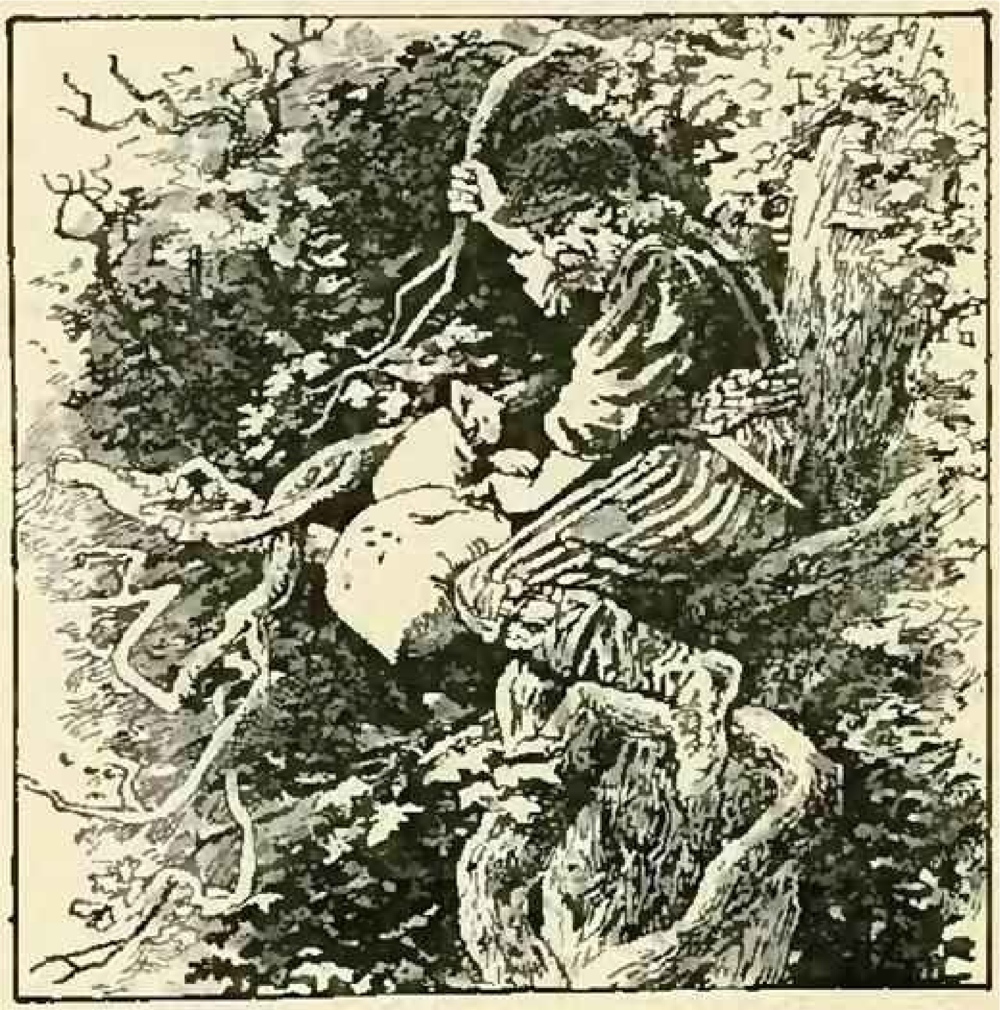

‘I had not gone far,’ continued the Thief of Sloan, ‘until I saw a grey-hound, a hare, and a hawk in pursuit of me, and began to think it must be the witches that had taken the shapes in order that I might not escape them unseen either by land or water. Seeing they did not appear in any formidable shape, I was more than once resolved to attack them, thinking that with my broad sword I could easily destroy them. But considering again that it was perhaps still in their power to become alive again, I gave over the attempt and climbed with difficulty up a tree, bringing my sword in my hand and all the gold along with me. However, when they came to the tree they found what I had done, and making further use of their hellish art, one of them was changed into a smith’s anvil and another into a piece of iron, of which the third soon made a hatchet. Having the hatchet made, she fell to cutting down the tree, and in the course of an hour it began to shake with me. At length it began to bend, and I found that one or two blows at the most would put it down. I then began to think that my death was inevitable, considering that those who were capable of doing so much would soon end my life; but just as she had the stroke drawn that would terminate my fate, the cock crew, and the witches disappeared, having resumed their natural shapes for fear of being known, and I got safe off with my bags of gold.

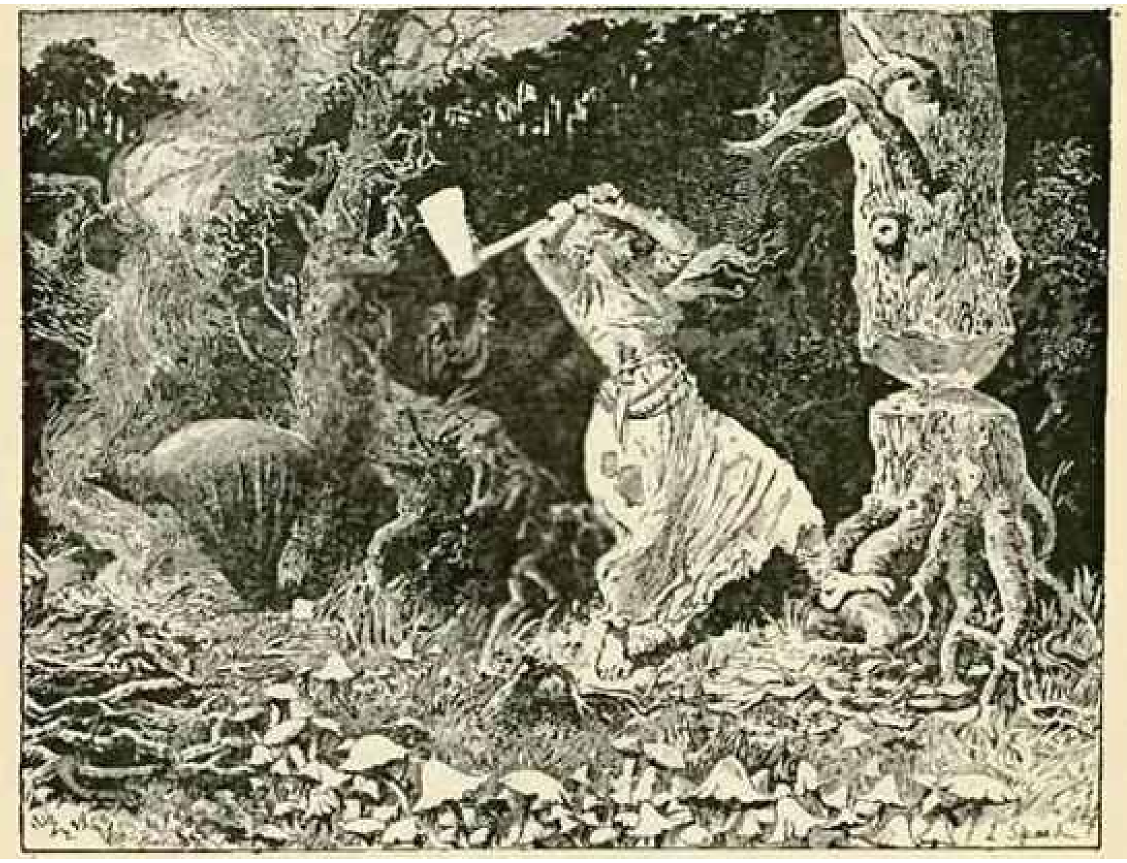

‘Now, sir,’ says he to the Knight of the Glen, ‘if that be not as great an adventure as ever you heard, to be within one blow of a hatchet of my end, and that blow even drawn, and after all to escape, I leave it to yourself.’

‘Well, I cannot say but it is very extraordinary,’ says the Knight of the Glen, ‘and on that account pardon this young man his crime; so stir up the fire, till I boil this second one.’

‘Indeed,’ says the Black Thief, ‘I would fain think he would not die this time either.’

‘How so?’ says the knight; ‘it is impossible for him to escape.’

‘I escaped death more wonderfully myself,’ says the Thief of Sloan, ‘than if you had him ready to throw into the furnace, and I hope it will be the case with him likewise.’

‘Why, have you been in another great danger?’ says the knight. ‘I would be glad to hear the story too, and if it be as wonderful as the last, I will pardon this young man as I did the other.’

‘My way of living, sir,’ says the Black Thief, ‘was not good, as I told you before; and being at a certain time fairly run out of cash, and meeting with no enterprise worthy of notice, I was reduced to great straits. At length a rich bishop died in the neighbourhood I was then in, and I heard he was interred with a great deal of jewels and rich robes upon him, all which I intended in a short time to be master of. Accordingly that very night I set about it, and coming to the place, I understood he was placed at the further end of a long dark vault, which I slowly entered.

I had not gone in far until I heard a foot coming towards me with a quick pace, and although naturally bold and daring, yet, thinking of the deceased bishop and the crime I was engaged in, I lost courage, and ran towards the entrance of the vault. I had retreated but a few paces when I observed, between me and the light, the figure of a tall black man standing in the entrance. Being in great fear and not knowing how to pass, I fired a pistol at him, and he immediately fell across the entrance. Perceiving he still retained the figure of a mortal man, I began to imagine that it could not be the bishop’s ghost; recovering myself therefore from the fear I was in, I ventured to the upper end of the vault, where I found a large bundle, and upon further examination I found that the corpse was already rifled, and that which I had taken to be a ghost was no more than one of his own clergy. I was then very sorry that I had the misfortune to kill him, but it then could not be helped. I took up the bundle that contained everything belonging to the corpse that was valuable, intending to take my departure from this melancholy abode; but just as I came to the mouth of the entrance I saw the guards of the place coming towards me, and distinctly heard them saying that they would look in the vault, for that the Black Thief would think little of robbing the corpse if he was anywhere in the place. I did not then know in what manner to act, for if I was seen I would surely lose my life, as everybody had a look-out at that time, and because there was no person bold enough to come in on me. I knew very well on the first sight of me that could be got, I would be shot like a dog. However, I had not time to lose. I took and raised up the man which I had killed, as if he was standing on his feet, and I, crouching behind him, bore him up as well as I could, so that the guards readily saw him as they came up to the vault. Seeing the man in black, one of the men cried that was the Black Thief, and, presenting his piece, fired at the man, at which I let him fall, and crept into a little dark corner myself, that was at the entrance of the place. When they saw the man fall, they ran all into the vault, and never stopped until they were at the end of it, for fear, as I thought, that there might be some others along with him that was killed. But while they were busy inspecting the corpse and the vault to see what they could miss, I slipped out, and, once away, and still away; but they never had the Black Thief in their power since.’

‘Well, my brave fellow,’ says the Knight of the Glen, ‘I see you have come through many dangers: you have freed these two princes by your stories; but I am sorry myself that this young prince has to suffer for all. Now, if you could tell me something as wonderful as you have told already, I would pardon him likewise; I pity this youth and do not want to put him to death if I could help it.’

‘That happens well,’ says the Thief of Sloan, ‘for I like him best myself, and have reserved the most curious passage for the last on his account.’

‘Well, then,’ says the knight, ‘let us hear it.’

‘I was one day on my travels,’ says the Black Thief, ‘and I came into a large forest, where I wandered a long time, and could not get out of it. At length I came to a large castle, and fatigue obliged me to call in the same, where I found a young woman and a child sitting on her knee, and she crying. I asked her what made her cry, and where the lord of the castle was, for I wondered greatly that I saw no stir of servants or any person about the place.

‘“It is well for you,” says the young woman, “that the lord of this castle is not at home at present; for he is a monstrous giant, with but one eye on his forehead, who lives on human flesh. He brought me this child,” says she, “I do not know where he got it, and ordered me to make it into a pie, and I cannot help crying at the command.”

‘I told her that if she knew of any place convenient that I could leave the child safely I would do it, rather than it should be killed by such a monster.

‘She told me of a house a distance off where I would get a woman who would take care of it. “But what will I do in regard of the pie?”

‘“Cut a finger off it,” said I, “and I will bring you in a young wild pig out of the forest, which you may dress as if it was the child, and put the finger in a certain place, that if the giant doubts anything about it you may know where to turn it over at the first, and when he sees it he will be fully satisfied that the pie is made of the child.”

‘She agreed to the scheme I proposed, and, cutting off the child’s finger, by her direction I soon had it at the house she told me of, and brought her the little pig in the place of it. She then made ready the pie, and after eating and drinking heartily myself, I was just taking my leave of the young woman when we observed the giant coming through the castle gates.

‘“Bless me,” said she, “what will you do now? Run away and lie down among the dead bodies that he has in the room (showing me the place), and strip off your clothes that he may not know you from the rest if he has occasion to go that way.”

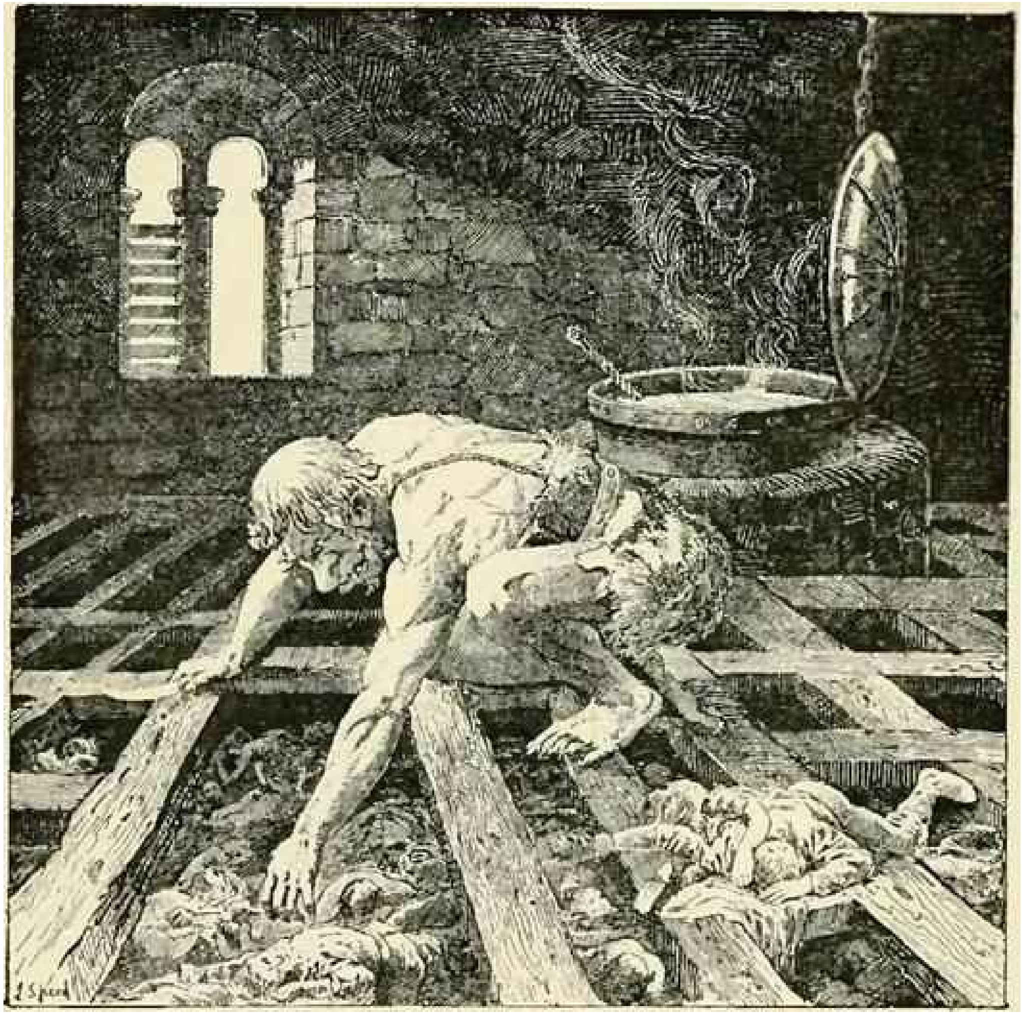

‘I took her advice, and laid myself down among the rest, as if dead, to see how he would behave. The first thing I heard was him calling for his pie. When she set it down before him he swore it smelled like swine’s flesh, but knowing where to find the finger, she immediately turned it up, which fairly convinced him of the contrary. The pie only served to sharpen his appetite, and I heard him sharpening his knife and saying he must have a collop or two, for he was not near satisfied. But what was my terror when I heard the giant groping among the bodies, and, fancying myself, cut the half of my hip off, and took it with him to be roasted. You may be certain I was in great pain, but the fear of being killed prevented me from making any complaint. However, when he had eaten all he began to drink hot liquors in great abundance, so that in a short time he could not hold up his head, but threw himself on a large creel he had made for the purpose, and fell fast asleep. When I heard him snoring, as I was I went up and caused the woman to bind my wound with a handkerchief; and, taking the giant’s spit, reddened it in the fire, and ran it through the eye, but was not able to kill him.

‘However, I left the spit sticking in his head, and took to my heels; but I soon found he was in pursuit of me, although blind; and having an enchanted ring he threw it at me, and it fell on my big toe and remained fastened to it.

‘The giant then called to the ring, where it was, and to my great surprise it made him answer on my foot; and he, guided by the same, made a leap at me which I had the good luck to observe, and fortunately escaped the danger. However, I found running was of no use in saving me, as long as I had the ring on my foot; so I took my sword and cut off the toe it was fastened on, and threw both into a large fish-pond that was convenient. The giant called again to the ring, which by the power of enchantment always made him answer; but he, not knowing what I had done, imagined it was still on some part of me, and made a violent leap to seize me, when he went into the pond, over head and ears, and was drowned. Now, sir knight,’ says the Thief of Sloan, ‘you see what dangers I came through and always escaped; but, indeed, I am lame for the want of my toe ever since.’

‘My lord and master,’ says an old woman that was listening all the time, ‘that story is but too true, as I well know, for I am the very woman that was in the giant’s castle, and you, my lord, the child that I was to make into a pie; and this is the very man that saved your life, which you may know by the want of your finger that was taken off, as you have heard, to deceive the giant.’

The Knight of the Glen, greatly surprised at what he had heard the old woman tell, and knowing he wanted his finger from his childhood, began to understand that the story was true enough.

‘And is this my deliverer?’ says he. ‘O brave fellow, I not only pardon you all, but will keep you with myself while you live, where you shall feast like princes, and have every attendance that I have myself.’

They all returned thanks on their knees, and the Black Thief told him the reason they attempted to steal the Steed of Bells, and the necessity they were under in going home.

‘Well,’ says the Knight of the Glen, ‘if that’s the case I bestow you my steed rather than this brave fellow should die; so you may go when you please, only remember to call and see me betimes, that we may know each other well.’

They promised they would, and with great joy they set off for the King their father’s palace, and the Black Thief along with them.

The wicked Queen was standing all this time on the tower, and, hearing the bells ringing at a great distance off, knew very well it was the princes coming home, and the steed with them, and through spite and vexation precipitated herself from the tower and was shattered to pieces.

The three princes lived happy and well during their father’s reign, and always keeping the Black Thief along with them; but how they did after the old King's death is not known.(4)

(4) The Hibernian Tales.

THE MASTER THIEF

THERE was once upon a time a husbandman who had three sons. He had no property to bequeath to them, and no means of putting them in the way of getting a living, and did not know what to do, so he said that they had his leave to take to anything they most fancied, and go to any place they best liked. He would gladly accompany them for some part of their way, he said, and that he did. He went with them till they came to a place where three roads met, and there each of them took his own way, and the father bade them farewell and returned to his own home again. What became of the two elder I have never been able to discover, but the youngest went both far and wide.

It came to pass, one night, as he was going through a great wood, that a terrible storm came on. It blew so hard and rained so heavily that he could scarcely keep his eyes open, and before he was aware of it he had got quite out of the track, and could neither find road nor path. But he went on, and at last he saw a light far away in the wood. Then he thought he must try and get to it, and after a long, long time he did reach it. There was a large house, and the fire was burning so brightly inside that he could tell that the people were not in bed. So he went in, and inside there was an old woman who was busy about some work.

‘Good evening, mother!’ said the youth.

‘Good evening!’ said the old woman.

‘Hutetu! it is terrible weather outside to-night,’ said the young fellow.

‘Indeed it is,’ said the old woman.

‘Can I sleep here, and have shelter for the night?’ asked the youth.

‘It wouldn’t be good for you to sleep here,’ said the old hag, ‘for if the people of the house come home and find you, they will kill both you and me.’

‘What kind of people are they then, who dwell here?’ said the youth.

‘Oh! robbers, and rabble of that sort,’ said the old woman; ‘they stole me away when I was little, and I have had to keep house for them ever since.’

‘I still think I will go to bed, all the same,’ said the youth. ‘No matter what happens, I’ll not go out to-night in such weather as this.’

‘Well, then, it will be the worse for yourself,’ said the old woman.

The young man lay down in a bed which stood near, but he dared not go to sleep: and it was better that he didn’t, for the robbers came, and the old woman said that a young fellow who was a stranger had come there, and she had not been able to get him to go away again.

‘Did you see if he had any money?’ said the robbers.

‘He’s not one to have money, he is a tramp! If he has a few clothes to his back, that is all.’

Then the robbers began to mutter to each other apart about what they should do with him, whether they should murder him, or what else they should do. In the meantime the boy got up and began to talk to them, and ask them if they did not want a man-servant, for he could find pleasure enough in serving them.

‘Yes,’ said they, ‘if you have a mind to take to the trade that we follow, you may have a place here.’

‘It’s all the same to me what trade I follow,’ said the youth, ‘for when I came away from home my father gave me leave to take to any trade I fancied.’

‘Have you a fancy for stealing, then?’ said the robbers.

‘Yes,’ said the boy, for he thought that was a trade which would not take long to learn.

Not very far off there dwelt a man who had three oxen, one of which he was to take to the town to sell. The robbers had heard of this, so they told the youth that if he were able to steal the ox from him on the way, without his knowing, and without doing him any harm, he should have leave to be their servant-man. So the youth set off, taking with him a pretty shoe with a silver buckle that was lying about in the house. He put this in the road by which the man must go with his ox, and then went into the wood and hid himself under a bush. When the man came up he at once saw the shoe.

‘That’s a brave shoe,’ said he. ‘If I had but the fellow to it, I would carry it home with me, and then I should put my old woman into a good humour for once.’

For he had a wife who was so cross and ill-tempered that the time between the beatings she gave him was very short. But then he bethought himself that he could do nothing with one shoe if he had not the fellow to it, so he journeyed onwards and let it lie where it was. Then the youth picked up the shoe and hurried off away through the wood as fast as he was able, to get in front of the man, and then put the shoe in the road before him again.

When the man came with the ox and saw the shoe, he was quite vexed at having been so stupid as to leave the fellow to it lying where it was, instead of bringing it on with him.

‘I will just run back again and fetch it now,’ he said to himself, ‘and then I shall take back a pair of good shoes to the old woman, and she may perhaps throw a kind word to me for once.’

So he went and searched and searched for the other shoe for a long, long time, but no shoe was to be found, and at last he was forced to go back with the one which he had.

In the meantime the youth had taken the ox and gone off with it. When the man got there and found that his ox was gone, he began to weep and wail, for he was afraid that when his old woman got to know she would be the death of him. But all at once it came into his head to go home and get the other ox, and drive it to the town, and take good care that his old wife knew nothing about it. So he did this; he went home and took the ox without his wife's knowing about it, and went on his way to the town with it. But the robbers they knew it well, because they got out their magic. So they told the youth that if he could take this ox also without the man knowing anything about it, and without doing him any hurt, he should then be on an equality with them.

'Well, that will not be a very hard thing to do,' thought the youth.

This time he took with him a rope and put it under his arms and tied himself up to a tree, which hung over the road that the man would have to take. So the man came with his ox, and when he saw the body hanging there he felt a little queer.

'What a hard lot yours must have been to make you hang yourself!' said he. 'Ah, well! you may hang there for me; I can't breathe life into you again.'

So on he went with his ox. Then the youth sprang down from the tree, ran by a short cut and got before him, and once more hung himself up on a tree in the road before the man.

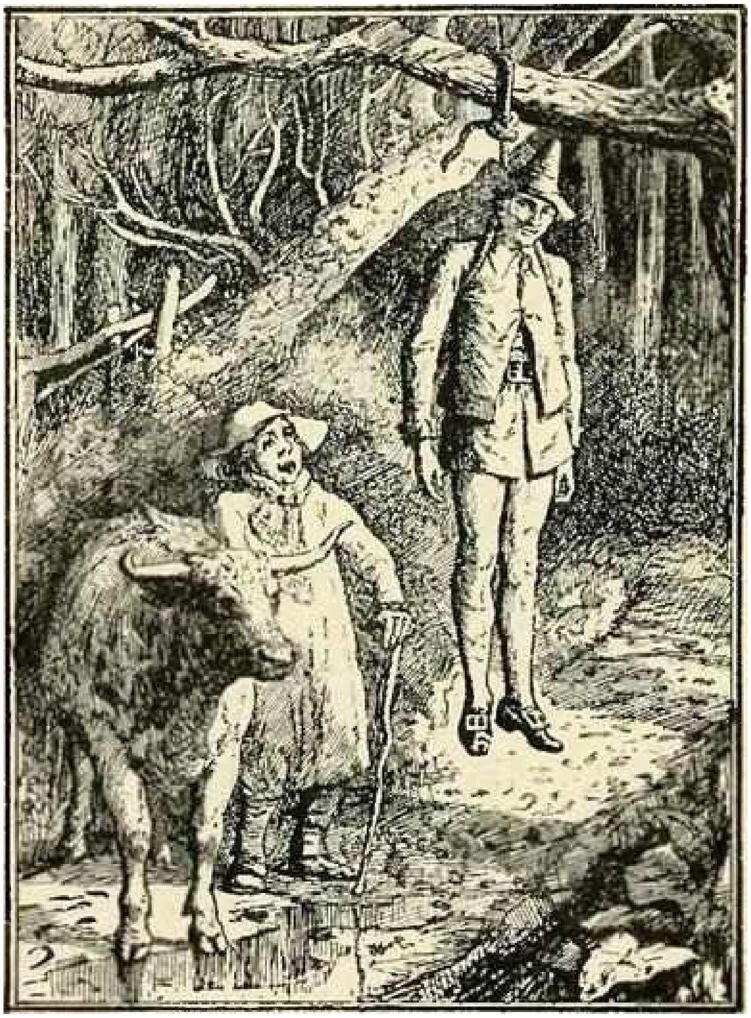

‘How I should like to know if you really were so sick at heart that you hanged yourself there, or if it is only a hobgoblin that’s before me!’ said the man. ‘Ah, well! you may hang there for me, whether you are a hobgoblin or not,’ and on he went with his ox.

Once more the youth did just as he had done twice already; jumped down from the tree, ran by a short cut through the wood, and again hanged himself in the very middle of the road before him.

But when the man once more saw this he said to himself, ‘What a bad business this is! Can they all have been so heavy-hearted that they have all three hanged themselves? No, I can’t believe that it is anything but witchcraft! But I will know the truth,’ he said; ‘if the two others are still hanging there it is true but if they are not it’s nothing else but witchcraft.’

So he tied up his ox and ran back to see if they really were hanging there. While he was going, and looking up at every tree as he went, the youth leapt down and took his ox and went off with it. Any one may easily imagine what a fury the man fell into when he came back and saw that his ox was gone. He wept and he raged, but at last he took comfort and told himself that the best thing to do was to go home and take the third ox, without letting his wife know anything about it, and then try to sell it so well that he got a good sum of money for it. So he went home and took the third ox, and drove it off without his wife knowing anything about it. But the robbers knew all about it, and they told the youth that if he could steal this as he had stolen the two others, he should be master of the whole troop. So the youth set out and went to the wood, and when the man was coming along with the ox he began to bellow loudly, just like a great ox somewhere inside the wood. When the man heard that he was right glad, for he fancied he recognised the voice of his big bullock, and thought that now he should find both of them again. So he tied up the third, and ran away off the road to look for them in the wood. In the meantime the youth went away with the third ox. When the man returned and found that he had lost that too, he fell into such a rage that there was no bounds to it. He wept and lamented, and for many days he did not dare to go home again, for he was afraid that the old woman would slay him outright. The robbers, also, were not very well pleased at this, for they were forced to own that the youth was at the head of them all. So one day they made up their minds to set to work to do something which it was not in his power to accomplish, and they all took to the road together, and left him at home alone. When they were well out of the house, the first thing that he did was to drive the oxen out on the road, whereupon they all ran home again to the man from whom he had stolen them, and right glad was the husbandman to see them. Then he brought out all the horses the robbers had, and loaded them with the most valuable things which he could find — vessels of gold and of silver, and clothes and other magnificent things — and then he told the old woman to greet the robbers from him and thank them from him, and say that he had gone away, and that they would have a great deal of difficulty in finding him again, and with that he drove the horses out of the courtyard. After a long, long time he came to the road on which he was travelling when he came to the robbers. And when he had got very near home, and was in sight of the house where his father lived, he put on a uniform which he had found among the things he had taken from the robbers, and which was made just like a general’s, and drove into the yard just as if he were a great man. Then he entered the house and asked if he could find a lodging there.

‘No, indeed you can’t!’ said his father. ‘How could I possibly be able to lodge such a great gentleman as you? It is all that I can do to find clothes and bedding for myself, and wretched they are.’

‘You were always a hard man,’ said the youth, ‘and hard you are still if you refuse to let your own son come into your house.’

‘Are you my son?’ said the man.

‘Do you not know me again then?’ said the youth.

Then he recognised him and said, ‘But what trade have you taken to that has made you such a great man in so short a time?’

‘Oh, that I will tell you,’ answered the youth. ‘You said that I might take to anything I liked, so I apprenticed myself to some thieves and robbers, and now I have served my time and have become Master Thief.’

Now the Governor of the province lived by his father’s cottage, and this Governor had such a large house and so much money that he did not even know how much it was, and he had a daughter too who was both pretty and dainty, and good and wise. So the Master Thief was determined to have her to wife, and told his father that he was to go to the Governor, and ask for his daughter for him. ‘If he asks what trade I follow, you may say that I am a Master Thief,’ said he.

‘I think you must be crazy,’ said the man, ‘for you can’t be in your senses if you think of anything so foolish.’

‘You must go to the Governor and beg for his daughter — there is no help,’ said the youth.

‘But I dare not go to the Governor and say this. He is so rich and has so much wealth of all kinds,’ said the man.

‘There is no help for it,’ said the Master Thief; ‘go you must, whether you like it or not. If I can’t get you to go by using good words, I will soon make you go with bad ones.’

But the man was still unwilling, so the Master Thief followed him, threatening him with a great birch stick, till he went weeping and wailing through the door to the Governor of the province.

‘Now, my man, and what’s amiss with you?’ said the Governor.

So he told him that he had three sons who had gone away one day, and how he had given them permission to go where they chose, and take to whatsoever work they fancied. ‘Now,’ he said, ‘the youngest of them has come home, and has threatened me till I have come to you to ask for your daughter for him, and I am to say that he is a Master Thief,’ and again the man fell a-weeping and lamenting.

‘Console yourself, my man,’ said the Governor, laughing. ‘You may tell him from me that he must first give me some proof of this. If he can steal the joint off the spit in the kitchen on Sunday, when every one of us is watching it, he shall have my daughter. Will you tell him that?’

The man did tell him, and the youth thought it would be easy enough to do it. So he set himself to work to catch three hares alive, put them in a bag, clad himself in some old rags so that he looked so poor and wretched that it was quite pitiable to see him, and in this guise on Sunday forenoon he sneaked into the passage with his bag, like any beggar boy. The Governor himself and every one in the house was in the kitchen, keeping watch over the joint. While they were doing this the youth let one of the hares slip out of his bag, and off it set and began to run round the yard.

‘Just look at that hare,’ said the people in the kitchen, and wanted to go out and catch it.

The Governor saw it too, but said, ‘Oh, let it go! it’s no use to think of catching a hare when it’s running away.’

It was not long before the youth let another hare out, and the people in the kitchen saw this too, and thought that it was the same. So again they wanted to go out and catch it, but the Governor again told them that it was of no use to try.

Very soon afterwards, however, the youth let slip the third hare, and it set off and ran round and round the courtyard. The people in the kitchen saw this too, and believed that it was still the same hare that was running about, so they wanted to go out and catch it.

‘It’s a remarkably fine hare!’ said the Governor. ‘Come and let us see if we can get hold of it.’ So out he went, and the others with him, and away went the hare, and they after it, in real earnest.

In the meantime, however, the Master Thief took the joint and ran off with it, and whether the Governor got any roast meat for his dinner that day I know not, but I know that he had no roast hare, though he chased it till he was both hot and tired. At noon came the Priest, and when the Governor had told him of the trick played by the Master Thief there was no end to the ridicule he cast on the Governor.

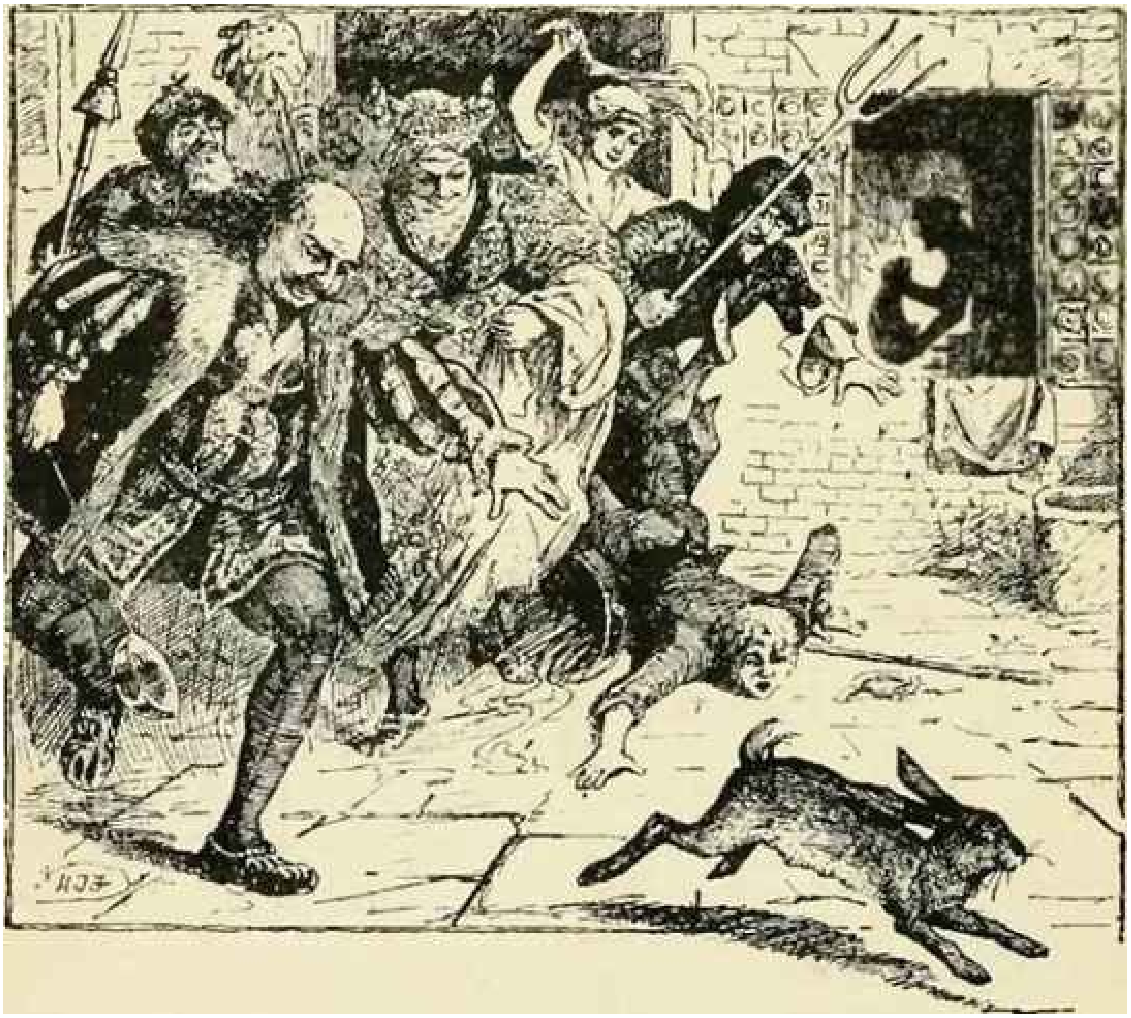

‘For my part,’ said the Priest, ‘I can’t imagine myself being made a fool of by such a fellow as that!’

‘Well, I advise you to be careful,’ said the Governor, ‘for he may be with you before you are at all aware.’

But the Priest repeated what he had said, and mocked the Governor for having allowed himself to be made such a fool of.

Later in the afternoon the Master Thief came and wanted to have the Governor’s daughter as he had promised.

‘You must first give some more samples of your skill,’ said the Governor, trying to speak him fair, ‘for what you did to-day was no such very great thing after all. Couldn’t you play off a really good trick on the Priest? for he is sitting inside there and calling me a fool for having let myself be taken in by such a fellow as you.’

‘Well, it wouldn’t be very hard to do that,’ said the Master Thief. So he dressed himself up like a bird, and threw a great white sheet over himself; broke off a goose’s wings, and set them on his back; and in this attire climbed into a great maple tree which stood in the Priest’s garden. So when the Priest returned home in the evening the youth began to cry, ‘Father Lawrence! Father Lawrence! ‘for the Priest was called Father Lawrence.

‘Who is calling me?’ said the Priest.

‘I am an angel sent to announce to thee that because of thy piety thou shalt be taken away alive into heaven,’ said the Master Thief. ‘Wilt thou hold thyself in readiness to travel away next Monday night? for then will I come and fetch thee, and bear thee away with me in a sack, and thou must lay all thy gold and silver, and whatsoever thou may ‘st possess of this world’s wealth, in a heap in thy best parlour.’

So Father Lawrence fell down on his knees before the angel and thanked him, and the following Sunday he preached a farewell sermon, and gave out that an angel had come down into the large maple tree in his garden, and had announced to him that, because of his righteousness, he should be taken up alive into heaven, and as he thus preached and told them this everyone in the church, old or young, wept.

On Monday night the Master Thief once more came as an angel, and before the Priest was put into the sack he fell on his knees and thanked him; but no sooner was the Priest safely inside it than the Master Thief began to drag him away over stocks and stones.

‘Oh! oh! ‘cried the Priest in the sack. ‘Where are you taking me?’

‘This is the way to heaven. The way to heaven is not an easy one,’ said the Master Thief, and dragged him along till he all but killed him.

At last he flung him into the Governor’s goose-house, and the geese began to hiss and peck at him, till he felt more dead than alive.

‘Oh! oh! oh! Where am I now?’ asked the Priest.

‘Now you are in Purgatory,’ said the Master Thief, and off he went and took the gold and the silver and all the precious things which the Priest had laid together in his best parlour.

Next morning, when the goose-girl came to let out the geese, she heard the Priest bemoaning himself as he lay in the sack in the goose-house.

‘Oh, heavens! who is that, and what ails you?’ said she.

‘Oh,’ said the Priest, ‘if you are an angel from heaven do let me out and let me go back to earth again, for no place was ever so bad as this — the little fiends nip me so with their tongs.’

‘I am no angel,’ said the girl, and helped the Priest out of the sack. ‘I only look after the Governor’s geese, that’s what I do, and they are the little fiends which have pinched your reverence.’

‘This is the Master Thief’s doing! Oh, my gold and my silver and my best clothes!’ shrieked the Priest, and, wild with rage, he ran home so fast that the goose-girl thought he had suddenly gone mad.

When the Governor learnt what had happened to the Priest he laughed till he nearly killed himself, but when the Master Thief came and wanted to have his daughter according to promise, he once more gave him nothing but fine words, and said, ‘You must give me one more proof of your skill, so that I can really judge of your worth. I have twelve horses in my stable, and I will put twelve stable boys in it, one on each horse. If you are clever enough to steal the horses from under them, I will see what I can do for you.’

‘What you set me to do can be done,’ said the Master Thief, ‘but am I certain to get your daughter when it is?’

‘Yes; if you can do that I will do my best for you,’ said the Governor.

So the Master Thief went to a shop, and bought enough brandy to fill two pocket flasks, and he put a sleeping drink into one of these, but into the other he poured brandy only. Then he engaged eleven men to lie that night in hiding behind the Governor’s stable. After this, by fair words and good payment, he borrowed a ragged gown and a jerkin from an aged woman, and then, with a staff in his hand and a poke on his back, he hobbled off as evening came on towards the Governor’s stable. The stable boys were just watering the horses for the night, and it was quite as much as they could do to attend to that.

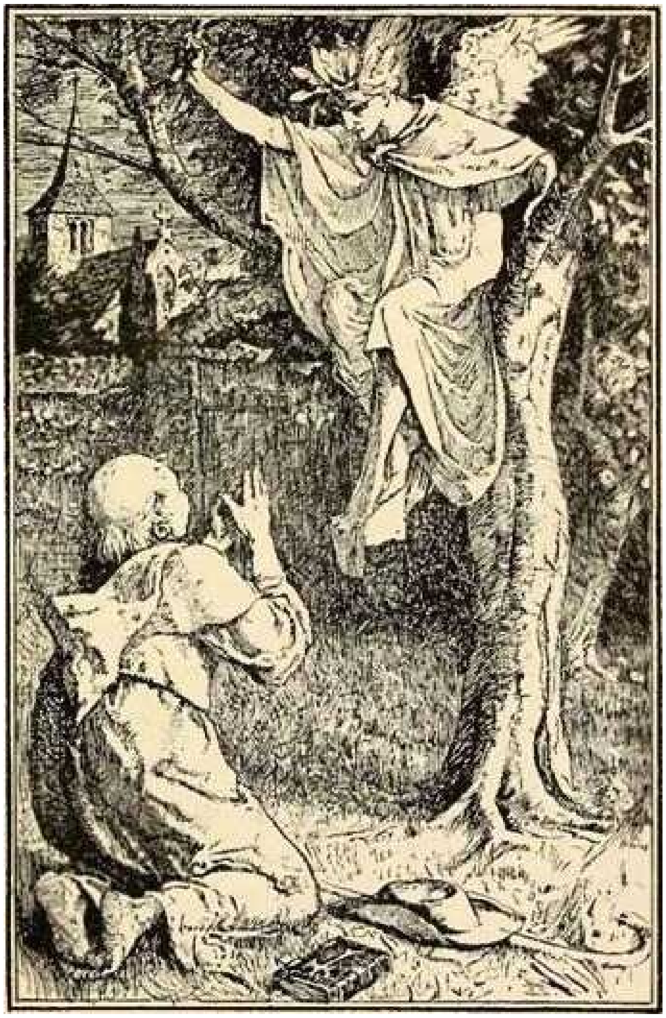

‘What on earth do you want here?’ said one of them to the old woman.

‘Oh dear! oh dear! How cold it is!’ she said, sobbing, and shivering with cold. ‘Oh dear! oh dear! it’s cold enough to freeze a poor old body to death!’ and she shivered and shook again, and said, ‘For heaven’s sake give me leave to stay here and sit just inside the stable door.’

‘You will get nothing of the kind! Be off this moment! If the Governor were to catch sight of you here, he would lead us a pretty dance,’ said one.

‘Oh! what a poor helpless old creature!’ said another, who felt sorry for her. ‘That poor old woman can do no harm to anyone. She may sit there and welcome.’

The rest of them thought that she ought not to stay, but while they were disputing about this and looking after the horses, she crept farther and farther into the stable, and at last sat down behind the door, and when once she was inside no one took any more notice of her.

As the night wore on the stable boys found it rather cold work to sit still on horseback.

‘Hutetu! But it is fearfully cold!’ said one, and began to beat his arms backwards and forwards across his breast.

‘Yes, I am so cold that my teeth are chattering,’ said another.

‘If one had but a little tobacco,’ said a third.

Well, one of them had a little, so they shared it among them, though there was very little for each man, but they chewed it. This was some help to them, but very soon they were just as cold as before.

‘Hutetu!’ said one of them, shivering again.

‘Hutetu!’ said the old woman, gnashing her teeth together till they chattered inside her mouth; and then she got out the flask which contained nothing but brandy, and her hands trembled so that she shook the bottle about, and when she drank it made a great gulp in her throat.

‘What is that you have in your flask, old woman?’ asked one of the stable boys.

‘Oh, it’s only a little drop of brandy, your honour,’ she said.

‘Brandy! What! Let me have a drop! Let me have a drop!’ screamed all the twelve at once.

‘Oh, but what I have is so little,’ whimpered the old woman. ‘It will not even wet your mouths.’

But they were determined to have it, and there was nothing to be done but give it; so she took out the flask with the sleeping drink and put it to the lips of the first of them; and now she shook no more, but guided the flask so that each of them got just as much as he ought, and the twelfth had not done drinking before the first was already sitting snoring. Then the Master Thief flung off his beggar’s rags, and took one stable boy after the other and gently set him astride on the partitions which divided the stalls, and then he called his eleven men who were waiting outside, and they rode off with the Governor’s horses.

In the morning when the Governor came to look after his stable boys they were just beginning to come to again. They were driving their spurs into the partition till the splinters flew about, and some of the boys fell off, and some still hung on and sat looking like fools. ‘Ah, well,’ said the Governor, ‘it is easy to see who has been here; but what a worthless set of fellows you must be to sit here and let the Master Thief steal the horses from under you!’ And they all got a beating for not having kept watch better.

Later in the day the Master Thief came and related what he had done, and wanted to have the Governor’s daughter as had been promised. But the Governor gave him a hundred dollars, and said that he must do something that was better still.

‘Do you think you can steal my horse from under me when I am out riding on it?' said he.

'Well, it might be done,' said the Master Thief, 'if I were absolutely certain that I should get your daughter.'

So the Governor said that he would see what he could do, and then he said that on a certain day he would ride out to a great common where they drilled the soldiers.

So the Master Thief immediately got hold of an old worn-out mare, and set himself to work to make a collar for it of green withies and branches of broom; bought a shabby old cart and a great cask, and then he told a poor old beggar woman that he would give her ten dollars if she would get into the cask and keep her mouth wide-open beneath the tap-hole, into which he was going to stick his finger. No harm should happen to her, he said; she should only be driven about a little, and if he took his finger out more than once, she should have ten dollars more. Then he dressed himself in rags, dyed himself with soot, and put on a wig and a great beard of goat's hair, so that it was impossible to recognise him, and went to the parade ground, where the Governor had already been riding about a long time.

When the Master Thief got there the mare went along so slowly and quietly that the cart hardly seemed to move from the spot. The mare pulled it a little forward, and then a little back, and then it stopped quite short. Then the mare pulled a little forward again, and it moved with such difficulty that the Governor had not the least idea that this was the Master Thief. He rode straight up to him, and asked if he had seen anyone hiding anywhere about in a wood that was close by.

'No,' said the man, 'that have I not.'

'Hark you,' said the Governor. 'If you will ride into that wood, and search it carefully to see if you can light upon a fellow who is hiding in there, you shall have the loan of my horse and a good present of money for your trouble.'

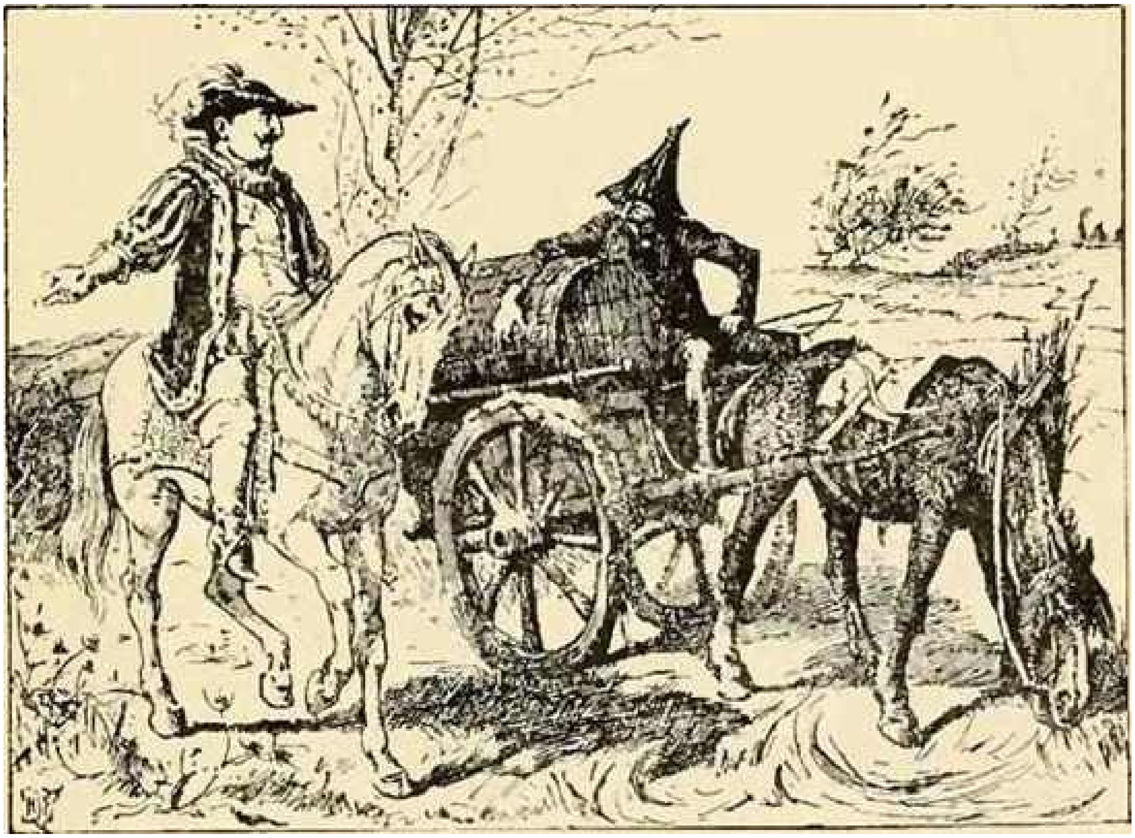

‘I am not sure that I can do it,’ said the man, ‘for I have to go to a wedding with this cask of mead which I have been to fetch, and the tap has fallen out on the way, so now I have to keep my finger in the tap-hole as I drive.’

‘Oh, just ride off,’ said the Governor, ‘and I will look after the cask and the horse too.’

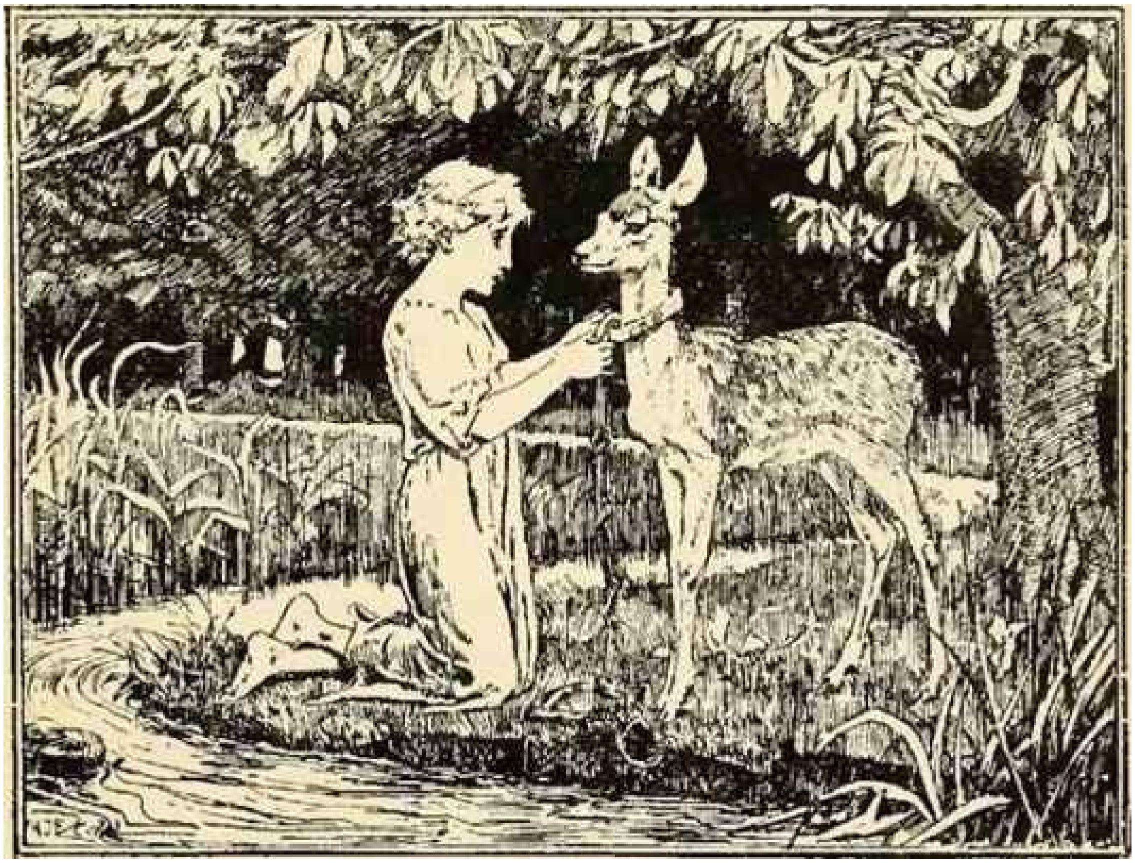

So the man said that if he would do that he would go, but he begged the Governor to be very careful to put his finger into the tap-hole the moment he took his out.

So the Governor said that he would do his very best, and the Master Thief got on the Governor’s horse.

But time passed, and it grew later and later, and still the man did not come back, and at last the Governor grew so weary of keeping his finger in the tap-hole that he took it out.

‘Now I shall have ten dollars more!’ cried the old woman inside the cask; so he soon saw what kind of mead it was, and set out homewards. When he had gone a very little way he met his servant bringing him the horse, for the Master Thief had already taken it home.

The following day he went to the Governor and wanted to have his daughter according to promise. But the Governor again put him off with fine words, and only gave him three hundred dollars, saying that he must do one more masterpiece of skill, and if he were but able to do that he should have her.

Well, the Master Thief thought he might if he could hear what it was.

‘Do you think you can steal the sheet off our bed, and my wife’s night-gown?’ said the Governor.

‘That is by no means impossible,’ said the Master Thief. ‘I only wish I could get your daughter as easily.’

So late at night the Master Thief went and cut down a thief who was hanging on the gallows, laid him on his own shoulders, and took him away with him. Then he got hold of a long ladder, set it up against the Governor’s bedroom window, and climbed up and moved the dead man’s head up and down, just as if he were some one who was standing outside and peeping in.

‘There’s the Master Thief, mother!’ said the Governor, nudging his wife. ‘Now I’ll just shoot him, that I will!’

So he took up a rifle which he had laid at his bedside.

‘Oh no, you must not do that,’ said his wife; ‘you yourself arranged that he was to come here.’

‘Yes, mother, I will shoot him,’ said he, and lay there aiming, and then aiming again, for no sooner was the head up and he caught sight of it than it was gone again. At last he got a chance and fired, and the dead body fell with a loud thud to the ground, and down went the Master Thief too, as fast as he could.

‘Well,’ said the Governor, ‘I certainly am the chief man about here, but people soon begin to talk, and it would be very unpleasant if they were to see this dead body; the best thing that I can do is to go out and bury him.’

‘Just do what you think best, father,’ said his wife.

So the Governor got up and went downstairs, and as soon as he had gone out through the door, the Master Thief stole in and went straight upstairs to the woman.

‘Well, father dear,’ said she, for she thought it was her husband. ‘Have you got done already?’

‘Oh yes, I only put him into a hole,’ said he, ‘and raked a little earth over him; that’s all I have been able to do to-night, for it is fearful weather outside. I will bury him better afterwards, but just let me have the sheet to wipe myself with, for he was bleeding, and I have got covered with blood with carrying him.’

So she gave him the sheet.

‘You will have to let me have your night-gown too,’ he said, ‘for I begin to see that the sheet won’t be enough.’

Then she gave him her night-gown, but just then it came into his head that he had forgotten to lock the door, and he was forced to go downstairs and do it before he could lie down in bed again. So off he went with the sheet, and the night-gown too.

An hour later the real Governor returned.

‘Well, what a time it has taken to lock the house door, father!’ said his wife, ‘and what have you done with the sheet and the night-gown?’

‘What do you mean?’ asked the Governor.

‘Oh, I am asking you what you have done with the night-gown and sheet that you got to wipe the blood off yourself with,’ said she.

‘Good heavens!’ said the Governor, ‘has he actually got the better of me again?’

When day came the Master Thief came too, and wanted to have the Governor’s daughter as had been promised, and the Governor dared do no otherwise than give her to him, and much money besides, for he feared that if he did not the Master Thief might steal the very eyes out of his head, and that he himself would be ill spoken of by all men. The Master Thief lived well and happily from that time forth, and whether he ever stole any more or not I cannot tell you, but if he did it was but for pastime.

(5) From P. C. Asbjornsen.

BROTHER AND SISTER

BROTHER took sister by the hand and said: ‘Look here; we haven’t had one single happy hour since our mother died. That stepmother of ours beats us regularly every day, and if we dare go near her she kicks us away. We never get anything but hard dry crusts to eat — why, the dog under the table is better off than we are. She does throw him a good morsel or two now and then. Oh dear! if our own dear mother only knew all about it! Come along, and let us go forth into the wide world together.’

So off they started through fields and meadows, over hedges and ditches, and walked the whole day long, and when it rained sister said:

‘Heaven and our hearts are weeping together.’

Towards evening they came to a large forest, and were so tired out with hunger and their long walk, as well as all their trouble, that they crept into a hollow tree and soon fell fast asleep.

Next morning, when they woke up, the sun was already high in the heavens and was shining down bright and warm into the tree. Then said brother:

‘I’m so thirsty, sister; if I did but know where to find a little stream, I’d go and have a drink. I do believe I hear one.’ He jumped up, took sister by the hand, and they set off to hunt for the brook.

Now their cruel stepmother was in reality a witch, and she knew perfectly well that the two children had run away. She had crept secretly after them, and had cast her spells over all the streams in the forest.

Presently the children found a little brook dancing and glittering over the stones, and brother was eager to drink of it, but as it rushed past sister heard it murmuring:

‘Who drinks of me will be a tiger! who drinks of me will be a tiger!’

So she cried out, ‘Oh! dear brother, pray don’t drink, or you’ll be turned into a wild beast and tear me to pieces.’

Brother was dreadfully thirsty, but he did not drink.

‘Very well,’ said he, ‘I’ll wait till we come to the next spring.’

When they came to the second brook, sister heard it repeating too:

‘Who drinks of me will be a wolf I who drinks of me will be a wolf!’

And she cried, ‘Oh! brother, pray don’t drink here either, or you’ll be turned into a wolf and eat me up.’

Again brother did not drink, but he said:

‘Well, I’ll wait a little longer till we reach the next stream, but then, whatever you may say, I really must drink, for I can bear this thirst no longer.’

And when they got to the third brook, sister heard it say as it rushed past:

‘Who drinks of me will be a roe! who drinks of me will be a roe!’

And she begged, ‘Ah! brother, don’t drink yet, or you’ll become a roe and run away from me.’

But her brother was already kneeling by the brook and bending over it to drink, and, sure enough, no sooner had his lips touched the water than he fell on the grass transformed into a little Roebuck.

Sister cried bitterly over her poor bewitched brother, and the little Roe wept too, and sat sadly by her side. At last the girl said:

‘Never mind, dear little fawn, I will never forsake you,’ and she took off her golden garter and tied it round the Roe’s neck.

Then she plucked rushes and plaited a soft cord of them, which she fastened to the collar. When she had done this she led the Roe farther and farther, right into the depths of the forest.

After they had gone a long, long way they came to a little house, and when the girl looked into it she found it was quite empty, and she thought ‘perhaps we might stay and live here.’

So she hunted up leaves and moss to make a soft bed for the little Roe, and every morning and evening she went out and gathered roots, nuts, and berries for herself, and tender young grass for the fawn. And he fed from her hand, and played round her and seemed quite happy. In the evening, when sister was tired, she said her prayers and then laid her head on the fawn’s back and fell sound asleep with it as a pillow. And if brother had but kept his natural form, really it would have been a most delightful kind of life.

They had been living for some time in the forest in this way, when it came to pass that the King of that country had a great hunt through the woods. Then the whole forest rang with such a blowing of horns, baying of dogs, and joyful cries of huntsmen, that the little Roe heard it and longed to join in too.

‘Ah!’ said he to sister, ‘do let me go off to the hunt! I can’t keep still any longer.’

And he begged and prayed till at last she consented.

‘But,’ said she, ‘mind you come back in the evening. I shall lock my door fast for fear of those wild huntsmen; so, to make sure of my knowing you, knock at the door and say, “My sister dear, open; I’m here.” If you don’t speak I shan’t open the door.’

So off sprang the little Roe, and he felt quite well and happy in the free open air.

The King and his huntsmen soon saw the beautiful creature and started in pursuit, but they could not come up with it, and whenever they thought they were sure to catch it, it bounded off to one side into the bushes and disappeared. When night came on it ran home, and knocking at the door of the little house cried:

‘My sister dear, open; I’m here.’ The door opened, and he ran in and rested all night on his soft mossy bed.

Next morning the hunt began again, and as soon as the little Roe heard the horns and the ‘Ho! ho! ‘of the huntsmen, he could not rest another moment, and said:

‘Sister, open the door, I must get out.’

So sister opened the door and said, ‘Now mind and get back by nightfall, and say your little rhyme.’

As soon as the King and his huntsmen saw the Roe with the golden collar they all rode off after it, but it was far too quick and nimble for them. This went on all day, but as evening came on the huntsmen had gradually encircled the Roe, and one of them wounded it slightly in the foot, so that it limped and ran off slowly.

Then the huntsman stole after it as far as the little house, and heard it call out, ‘My sister dear, open; I’m here,’ and he saw the door open and close immediately the fawn had run in.

The huntsman remembered all this carefully, and went off straight to the King and told him all he had seen and heard.

‘To-morrow we will hunt again,’ said the King.

Poor sister was terribly frightened when she saw how her little Fawn had been wounded. She washed off the blood, bound up the injured foot with herbs, and said: ‘Now, dear, go and lie down and rest, so that your wound may heal.’

The wound was really so slight that it was quite well next day, and the little Roe did not feel it at all. No sooner did it hear the sounds of hunting in the forest than it cried:

‘I can’t stand this, I must be there too; I’ll take care they shan’t catch me.’

Sister began to cry, and said, ‘They are certain to kill you, and then I shall be left all alone in the forest and forsaken by everyone. I can’t and won’t let you out.’

‘Then I shall die of grief,’ replied the Roe, ‘for when I hear that horn I feel as if I must jump right out of my skin.’

So at last, when sister found there was nothing else to be done, she opened the door with a heavy heart, and the Roe darted forth full of glee and health into the forest.

As soon as the King saw the Roe, he said to his huntsman, ‘Now then, give chase to it all day till evening, but mind and be careful not to hurt it.'

When the sun had set the King said to his huntsman, 'Now come and show me the little house in the wood.'

And when he got to the house he knocked at the door and said, 'My sister dear, open; I'm here.' Then the door opened and the King walked in, and there stood the loveliest maiden he had ever seen.

The girl was much startled when instead of the little Roe she expected she saw a man with a gold crown on his head walk in. But the King looked kindly at her, held out his hand, and said, 'Will you come with me to my castle and be my dear wife?'

'Oh yes!' replied the maiden, 'but you must let my Roe come too. I could not possibly forsake it.'

'It shall stay with you as long as you live, and shall want for nothing,' the King promised.

In the meantime the Roe came bounding in, and sister tied the rush cord once more to its collar, took the end in her hand, and so they left the little house in the forest together.

The King lifted the lonely maiden on to his horse, and led her to his castle, where the wedding was celebrated with the greatest splendour. The Roe was petted and caressed, and ran about at will in the palace gardens.

Now all this time the wicked stepmother, who had been the cause of these poor children's misfortunes and trying adventures, was feeling fully persuaded that sister had been torn to pieces by wild beasts, and brother shot to death in the shape of a Roe. When she heard how happy and prosperous they were, her heart was filled with envy and hatred, and she could think of nothing but how to bring some fresh misfortune on them. Her own daughter, who was as hideous as night and had only one eye, reproached her by saying, 'It is I who ought to have had this good luck and been Queen.'

'Be quiet, will you,' said the old woman; 'when the time comes I shall be at hand.'

Now after some time it happened one day when the King was out hunting that the Queen gave birth to a beautiful little boy. The old witch thought here was a good chance for her; so she took the form of the lady in waiting, and, hurrying into the room where the Queen lay in her bed, called out, 'The bath is quite ready; it will help to make you strong again. Come, let us be quick, for fear the water should get cold.' Her daughter was at hand, too, and between them they carried the Queen, who was still very weak, into the bath-room and laid her in the bath; then they locked the door and ran away.

They took care beforehand to make a blazing hot fire under the bath, so that the lovely young Queen might be suffocated.

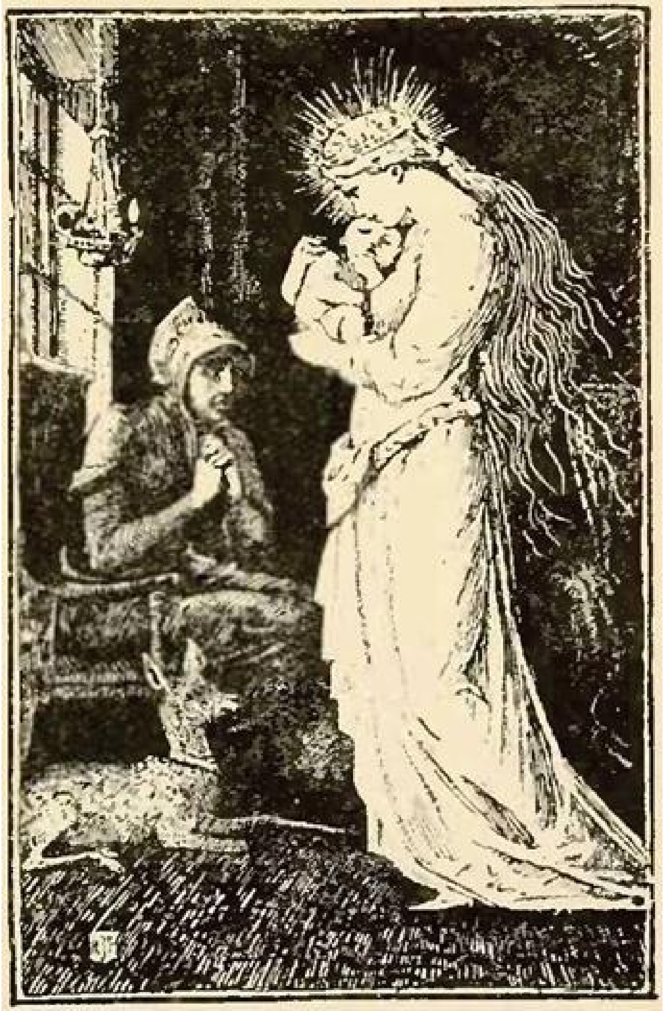

As soon as they were sure this was the case, the old witch tied a cap on her daughter’s head and laid her in the Queen’s bed. She managed, too, to make her figure and general appearance look like the Queen’s, but even her power could not restore the eye she had lost; so she made her lie on the side of the missing eye, in order to prevent the King’s noticing anything.

In the evening, when the King came home and heard the news of his son’s birth, he was full of delight, and insisted on going at once to his dear wife’s bedside to see how she was getting on. But the old witch cried out, ‘Take care and keep the curtains drawn; don’t let the light get into the Queen’s eyes; she must be kept perfectly quiet.’ So the King went away and never knew that it was a false Queen who lay in the bed.

When midnight came and everyone in the palace was sound asleep, the nurse who alone watched by the baby’s cradle in the nursery saw the door open gently, and who should come in but the real Queen. She lifted the child from its cradle, laid it on her arm, and nursed it for some time. Then she carefully shook up the pillows of the little bed, laid the baby down and tucked the coverlet in all round him. She did not forget the little Roe either, but went to the corner where it lay, and gently stroked its back. Then she silently left the room, and next morning when the nurse asked the sentries if they had seen any one go into the castle that night, they all said, ‘No, we saw no one at all.’

For many nights the Queen came in the same way, but she never spoke a word, and the nurse was too frightened to say anything about her visits.

After some little time had elapsed the Queen spoke one night, and said:

‘Is my child well? Is my Roe well?
I’ll come back twice and then farewell.’

The nurse made no answer, but as soon as the Queen had disappeared she went to the King and told him all. The King exclaimed, ‘Good heavens! what do you say? I will watch myself to-night by the child’s bed.’

When the evening came he went to the nursery, and at midnight the Queen appeared and said:

‘Is my child well? Is my Roe well?
I’ll come back once and then farewell.’

And she nursed and petted the child as usual before she disappeared. The King dared not trust himself to speak to her, but the following night he kept watch again.

That night when the Queen came she said:

‘Is my child well? Is my Roe well?
I’ve come this once, and now farewell.’

Then the King could restrain himself no longer, but sprang to her side and cried, ‘You can be no one but my dear wife!’

‘Yes,’ said she, ‘I am your dear wife!’ and in the same moment she was restored to life, and was as fresh and well and rosy as ever. Then she told the King all the cruel things the wicked witch and her daughter had done. The King had them both arrested at once and brought to trial, and they were condemned to death. The daughter was led into the forest, where the wild beasts tore her to pieces, and the old witch was burnt at the stake.

As soon as she reduced to ashes the spell was taken off the little Roe, and he was restored to his natural shape once more, and so brother and sister lived happily ever after.(6)

(6) Grimm.

PRINCESS ROSETTE

ONCE upon a time there lived a King and Queen who had two beautiful sons and one little daughter, who was so pretty that no one who saw her could help loving her. When it was time for the christening of the Princess, the Queen — as she always did — sent for all the fairies to be present at the ceremony, and afterwards invited them to a splendid banquet.

When it was over, and they were preparing to go away, the Queen said to them:

‘Do not forget your usual good custom. Tell me what is going to happen to Rosette.’

For that was the name they had given the Princess.

But the fairies said they had left their book of magic at home, and they would come another day and tell her.

‘Ah!’ said the Queen, ‘I know very well what that means — you have nothing good to say; but at least I beg that you will not hide anything from me.’

So, after a great deal of persuasion, they said:

‘Madam, we fear that Rosette may be the cause of great misfortunes to her brothers; they may even meet with their death through her; that is all we have been able to foresee about your dear little daughter. We are very sorry to have nothing better to tell you.’

Then they went away, leaving the Queen very sad, so sad that the King noticed it, and asked her what was the matter.

The Queen said that she had been sitting too near the fire, and had burnt all the flax that was upon her distaff.

‘Oh! is that all?’ said the King, and he went up into the garret and brought her down more flax than she could spin in a hundred years. But the Queen still looked sad, and the King asked her again what was the matter. She answered that she had been walking by the river and had dropped one of her green satin slippers into the water.

‘Oh! if that’s all,’ said the King, and he sent to all the shoe-makers in his kingdom, and they very soon made the Queen ten thousand green satin slippers, but still she looked sad. So the King asked her again what was the matter, and this time she answered that in eating her porridge too hastily she had swallowed her wedding-ring. But it so happened that the King knew better, for he had the ring himself, and he said:

‘Oh I you are not telling me the truth, for I have your ring here in my purse.’

Then the Queen was very much ashamed, and she saw that the King was vexed with her; so she told him all that the fairies had predicted about Rosette, and begged him to think how the misfortunes might be prevented.

Then it was the King’s turn to look sad, and at last he said:

‘I see no way of saving our sons except by having Rosette’s head cut off while she is still little.’

But the Queen cried that she would far rather have her own head cut off, and that he had better think of something else, for she would never consent to such a thing. So they thought and thought, but they could not tell what to do, until at last the Queen heard that in a great forest near the castle there was an old hermit, who lived in a hollow tree, and that people came from far and near to consult him; so she said:

‘I had better go and ask his advice; perhaps he will know what to do to prevent the misfortunes which the fairies foretold.’

She set out very early the next morning, mounted upon a pretty little white mule, which was shod with solid gold, and two of her ladies rode behind her on beautiful horses. When they reached the forest they dismounted, for the trees grew so thickly that the horses could not pass, and made their way on foot to the hollow tree where the hermit lived. At first when he saw them coming he was vexed, for he was not fond of ladies; but when he recognised the Queen, he said:

‘You are welcome, Queen. What do you come to ask of me?’

Then the Queen told him all the fairies had foreseen for Rosette, and asked what she should do, and the hermit answered that she must shut the Princess up in a tower and never let her come out of it again. The Queen thanked and rewarded him, and hastened back to the castle to tell the King. When he heard the news he had a great tower built as quickly as possible, and there the Princess was shut up, and the King and Queen and her two brothers went to see her every day that she might not be dull. The eldest brother was called ‘the Great Prince,’ and the second ‘the Little Prince.’ They loved their sister dearly, for she was the sweetest, prettiest princess who was ever seen, and the least little smile from her was worth more than a hundred pieces of gold. When Rosette was fifteen years old the Great Prince went to the King and asked if it would not soon be time for her to be married, and the Little Prince put the same question to the Queen.

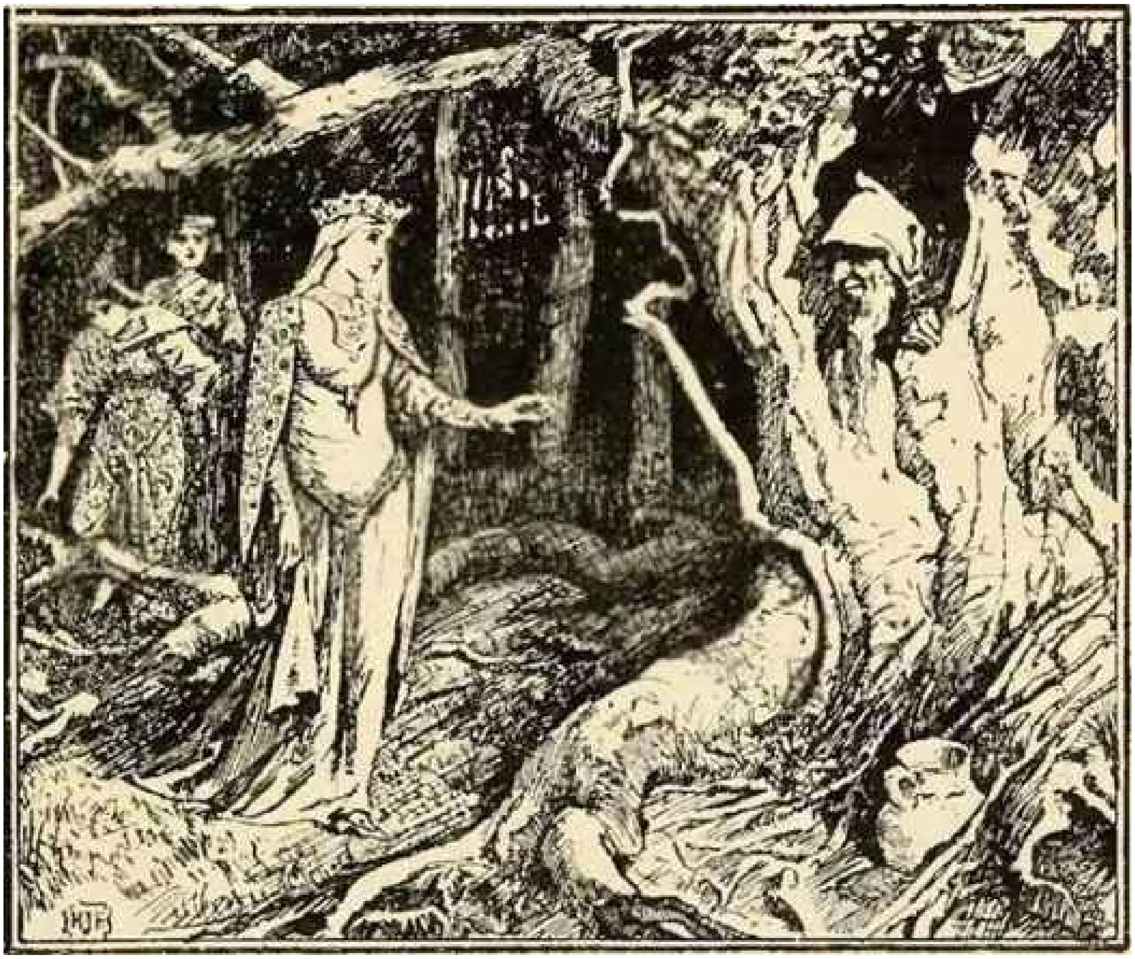

Their majesties were amused at them for thinking of it, but did not make any reply, and soon after both the King and the Queen were taken ill, and died on the same day. Everybody was sorry, Rosette especially, and all the bells in the kingdom were tolled.

Then all the dukes and counsellors put the Great Prince upon a golden throne, and crowned him with a diamond crown, and they all cried, ‘Long live the King!’ And after that there was nothing but feasting and rejoicing.

The new King and his brother said to one another:

‘Now that we are the masters, let us take our sister out of that dull tower which she is so tired of.’

They had only to go across the garden to reach the tower, which was very high, and stood up in a corner. Rosette was busy at her embroidery, but when she saw her brothers she got up, and taking the King’s hand cried:

‘Good morning, dear brother. Now that you are King, please take me out of this dull tower, for I am so tired of it.’

Then she began to cry, but the King kissed her and told her to dry her tears, as that was just what they had come for, to take her out of the tower and bring her to their beautiful castle, and the Prince showed her the pocketful of sugar plums he had brought for her, and said:

‘Make haste, and let us get away from this ugly tower, and very soon the King will arrange a grand marriage for you.’

When Rosette saw the beautiful garden, full of fruit and flowers, with green grass and sparkling fountains, she was so astonished that not a word could she say, for she had never in her life seen anything like it before. She looked about her, and ran hither and thither gathering fruit and flowers, and her little dog Frisk, who was bright green all over, and had but one ear, danced before her, crying ‘Bow-wow-wow,’ and turning head over heels in the most enchanting way.

Everybody was amused at Frisk’s antics, but all of a sudden he ran away into a little wood, and the Princess was following him, when, to her great delight, she saw a peacock, who was spreading his tail in the sunshine. Rosette thought she had never seen anything so pretty. She could not take her eyes off him, and there she stood entranced until the King and the Prince came up and asked what was amusing her so much. She showed them the peacock, and asked what it was, and they answered that it was a bird which people sometimes ate.

‘What!’ said the Princess, ‘do they dare to kill that beautiful creature and eat it? I declare that I will never marry any one but the King of the Peacocks, and when I am Queen I will take very good care that nobody eats any of my subjects.’

At this the King was very much astonished.

‘But, little sister,’ said he, ‘where shall we find the King of the Peacocks?’

‘Oh! wherever you like, sire,’ she answered, ‘but I will never marry any one else.’

After this they took Rosette to the beautiful castle, and the peacock was brought with her, and told to walk about on the terrace outside her windows, so that she might always see him, and then the ladies of the court came to see the Princess, and they brought her beautiful presents — dresses and ribbons and sweetmeats, diamonds and pearls and dolls and embroidered slippers, and she was so well brought up, and said, ‘Thank you!’ so prettily, and was so gracious, that everyone went away delighted with her.

Meanwhile the King and the Prince were considering how they should find the King of the Peacocks, if there was such a person in the world. And first of all they had a portrait made of the Princess, which was so like her that you really would not have been surprised if it had spoken to you. Then they said to her:

‘Since you will not marry anyone but the King of the Peacocks, we are going out together into the wide world to search for him. If we find him for you we shall be very glad. In the meantime, mind you take good care of our kingdom.'

Rosette thanked them for all the trouble they were taking on her account, and promised to take great care of the kingdom, and only to amuse herself by looking at the peacock, and making Frisk dance while they were away.

So they set out, and asked everyone they met —

'Do you know the King of the Peacocks?'

But the answer was always, 'No, no.'

Then they went on and on, so far that no one has ever been farther, and at last they came to the Kingdom of the Cockchafers.

They had never before seen such a number of cockchafers, and the buzzing was so loud that the King was afraid he should be deafened by it. He asked the most distinguished-looking cockchafer they met if he knew where they could find the King of the Peacocks.

'Sire,' replied the cockchafer, 'his kingdom is thirty thousand leagues from this; you have come the longest way.'

'And how do you know that?' said the King.

'Oh!' said the cockchafer, 'we all know you very well, since we spend two or three months in your garden every year.'

Thereupon the King and the Prince made great friends with him, and they all walked arm-in-arm and dined together, and afterwards the cockchafer showed them all the curiosities of his strange country, where the tiniest green leaf costs a gold piece and more. Then they set out again to finish their journey, and this time, as they knew the way, they were not long upon the road. It was easy to guess that they had come to the right place, for they saw peacocks in every tree, and their cries could be heard a long way off:

When they reached the city they found it full of men and women who were dressed entirely in peacocks' feathers, which were evidently thought prettier than anything else.

They soon met the King, who was driving about in a beautiful little golden carriage which glittered with diamonds, and was drawn at full speed by twelve peacocks. The King and the Prince were delighted to see that the King of the Peacocks was as handsome as possible. He had curly golden hair and was very pale, and he wore a crown of peacocks' feathers.

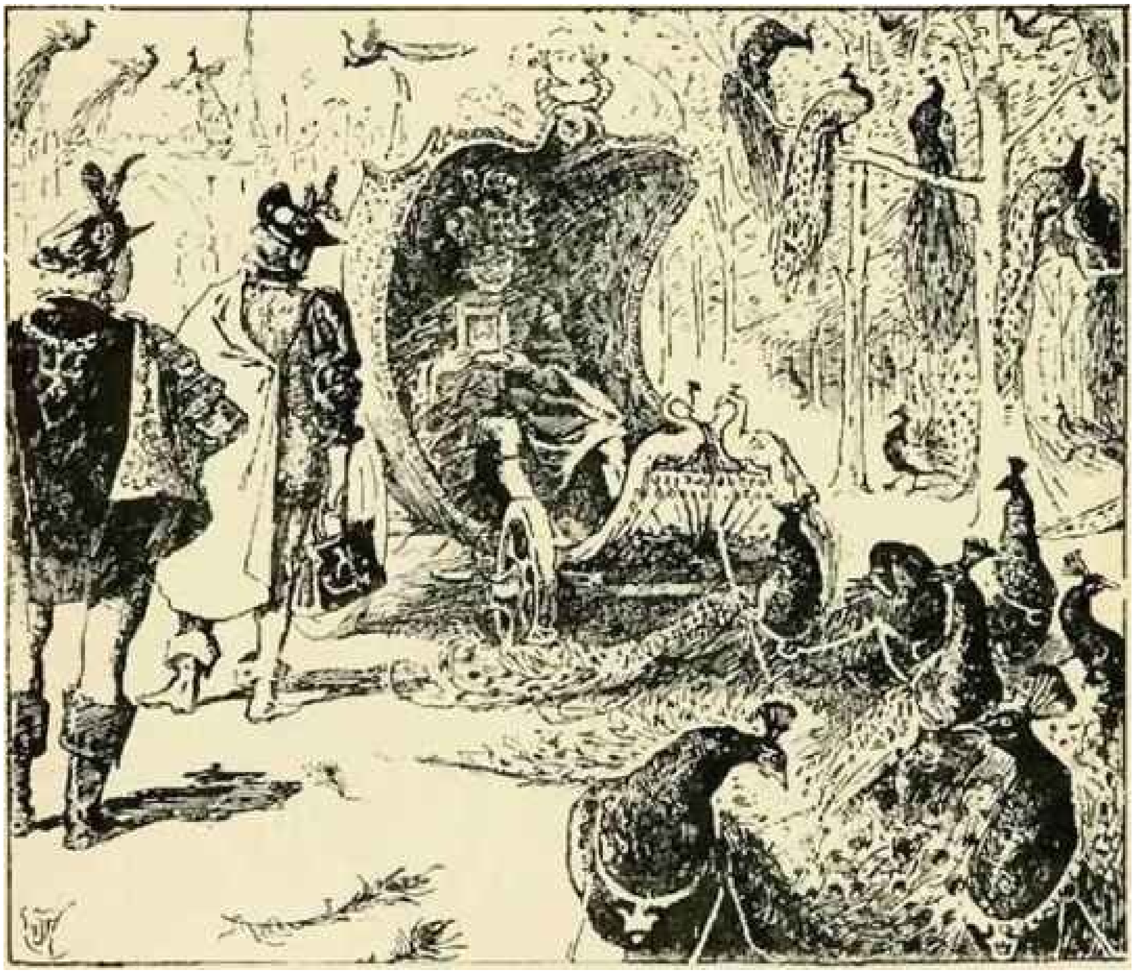

When he saw Rosette’s brothers he knew at once that they were strangers, and stopping his carriage he sent for them to speak to him. When they had greeted him they said:

‘Sire, we have come from very far away to show you a beautiful portrait.’

So saying they drew from their travelling bag the picture of Rosette.

The King looked at it in silence a long time, but at last he said:

‘I could not have believed that there was such a beautiful Princess in the world!’

‘Indeed, she is really a hundred times as pretty as that,’ said her brothers.

‘I think you must be making fun of me,’ replied the King of the Peacocks.

‘Sire,’ said the Prince, ‘my brother is a King, like yourself. He is called “the King,” I am called “the Prince,” and that is the portrait of our sister, the Princess Rosette. We have come to ask if you would like to marry her. She is as good as she is beautiful, and we will give her a bushel of gold pieces for her dowry.’

‘Oh! with all my heart,’ replied the King, ‘and I will make her very happy. She shall have whatever she likes, and I shall love her dearly; only I warn you that if she is not as pretty as you have told me, I will have your heads cut off.’

‘Oh! certainly, we quite agree to that,’ said the brothers in one breath.

‘Very well. Off with you into prison, and stay there until the Princess arrives,’ said the King of the Peacocks.

And the Princes were so sure that Rosette was far prettier than her portrait that they went without a murmur. They were very kindly treated, and that they might not feel dull the King came often to see them. As for Rosette’s portrait that was taken up to the palace, and the King did nothing but gaze at it all day and all night.

As the King and the Prince had to stay in prison, they sent a letter to the Princess telling her to pack up all her treasures as quickly as possible, and come to them, as the King of the Peacocks was waiting to marry her; but they did not say that they were in prison, for fear of making her uneasy.

When Rosette received the letter she was so delighted that she ran about telling everyone that the King of the Peacocks was found, and she was going to marry him.

Guns were fired, and fireworks let off. Everyone had as many cakes and sweetmeats as he wanted. And for three days everybody who came to see the Princess was presented with a slice of bread-and-jam, a nightingale’s egg, and some hippocras. After having thus entertained her friends, she distributed her dolls among them, and left her brother’s kingdom to the care of the wisest old men of the city, telling them to take charge of everything, not to spend any money, but save it all up until the King should return, and above all, not to forget to feed her peacock. Then she set out, only taking with her her nurse, and the nurse’s daughter, and the little green dog Frisk.

They took a boat and put out to sea, carrying with them the bushel of gold pieces, and enough dresses to last the Princess ten years if she wore two every day, and they did nothing but laugh and sing. The nurse asked the boatman:

‘Can you take us, can you take us to the kingdom of the peacocks?’

But he answered:

‘Oh no! oh no!’

Then she said:

‘You must take us, you must take us.’

And he answered:

‘Very soon, very soon.’

Then the nurse said:

‘Will you take us? will you take us?’

And the boatman answered:

‘Yes, yes.’

Then she whispered in his ear:

‘Do you want to make your fortune?’

And he said:

‘Certainly I do.’

‘I can tell you how to get a bag of gold,’ said she.

‘I ask nothing better,’ said the boatman.

‘Well,’ said the nurse, ‘to-night, when the Princess is asleep, you must help me to throw her into the sea, and when she is drowned I will put her beautiful clothes upon my daughter, and we will take her to the King of the Peacocks, who will be only too glad to marry her, and as your reward you shall have your boat full of diamonds.’

The boatman was very much surprised at this proposal, and said:

‘But what a pity to drown such a pretty Princess!’

However, at last the nurse persuaded him to help her, and when the night came and the Princess was fast asleep as usual, with Frisk curled up on his own cushion at the foot of her bed, the wicked nurse fetched the boatman and her daughter, and between them they picked up the Princess, feather bed, mattress, pillows, blankets and all, and threw her into the sea, without even waking her. Now, luckily, the Princess’s bed was entirely stuffed with phoenix feathers, which are very rare, and have the property of always floating upon water, so Rosette went on swimming about as if she had been in a boat. After a little while she began to feel very cold, and turned round so often that she woke Frisk, who started up, and, having a very good nose, smelt the soles and herrings so close to him that he began to bark. He barked so long and so loud that he woke all the other fish, who came swimming up round the Princess’s bed, and poking at it with their great heads. As for her, she said to herself:

‘How our boat does rock upon the water! I am really glad that I am not often as uncomfortable as I have been to-night.’

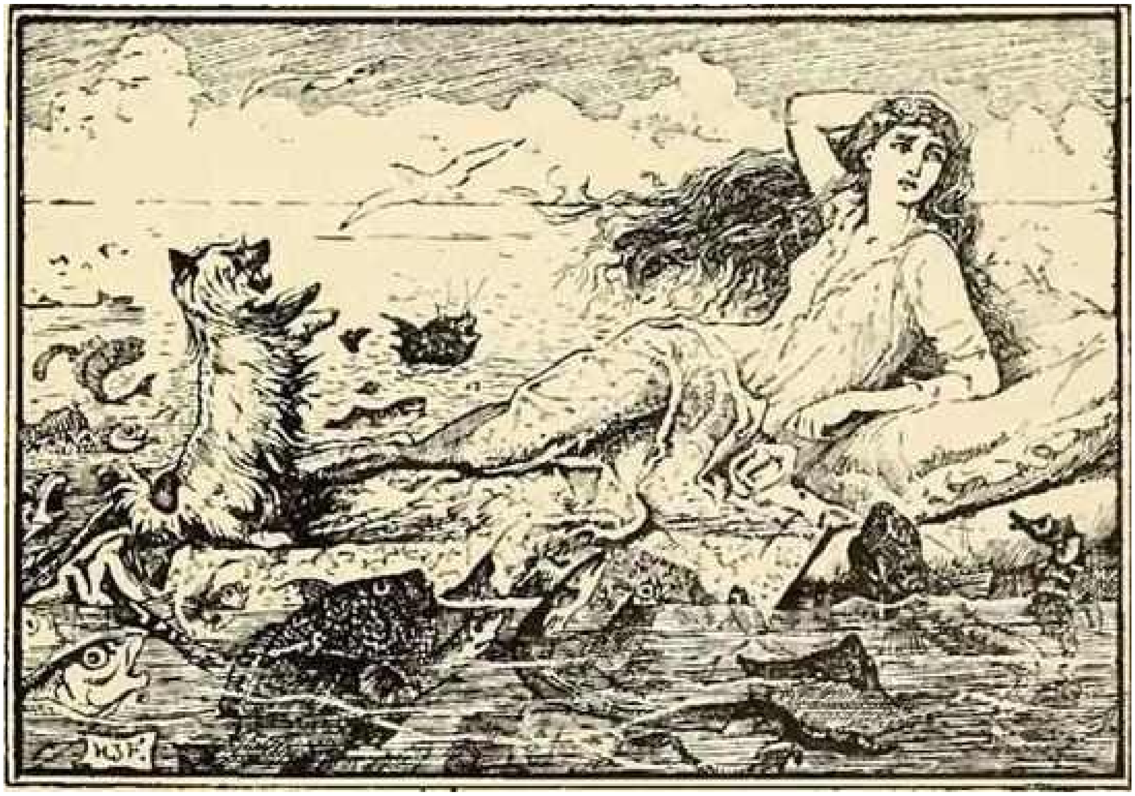

The wicked nurse and the boatman, who were by this time quite a long way off, heard Frisk barking, and said to each other:

‘That horrid little animal and his mistress are drinking our health in sea-water now. Let us make haste to land, for we must be quite near the city of the King of the Peacocks.’

The King had sent a hundred carriages to meet them, drawn by every kind of strange animal. There were lions, bears, wolves, stags, horses, buffaloes, eagles, and peacocks. The carriage intended for the Princess Rosette had six blue monkeys, which could turn summer-saults, and dance on a tight-rope, and do many other charming tricks. Their harness was all of crimson velvet with gold buckles, and behind the carriage walked sixty beautiful ladies chosen by the King to wait upon Rosette and amuse her.

The nurse had taken all the pains imaginable to deck out her daughter. She put on her Rosette’s prettiest frock, and covered her with diamonds from head to foot. But she was so ugly that nothing could make her look nice, and what was worse, she was sulky and ill-tempered, and did nothing but grumble all the time.

When she stepped from the boat and the escort sent by the King of the Peacocks caught sight of her, they were so surprised that they could not say a single word.

‘Now then, look alive,’ cried the false Princess. ‘If you don’t bring me something to eat I will have all your heads cut off!’

Then they whispered one to another:

‘Here’s a pretty state of things! she is as wicked as she is ugly. What a bride for our poor King! She certainly was not worth bringing from the other end of the world!’

But she went on ordering them all about, and for no fault at all would give slaps and pinches to everyone she could reach.

As the procession was so long it advanced but slowly, and the nurse’s daughter sat up in her carriage trying to look like a Queen. But the peacocks, who were sitting upon every tree waiting to salute her, and who had made up their minds to cry, ‘Long live our beautiful Queen!’ when they caught sight of the false bride could not help crying instead:

‘Oh! how ugly she is!’

Which offended her so much that she said to the guards:

‘Make haste and kill all these insolent peacocks who have dared to insult me.’

But the peacocks only flew away, laughing at her.

The rogue of a boatman, who noticed all this, said softly to the nurse:

‘This is a bad business for us, gossip; your daughter ought to have been prettier.’

But she answered:

‘Be quiet, stupid, or you will spoil everything.’

Now they told the King that the Princess was approaching.

‘Well,’ said he, ‘did her brothers tell me truly? Is she prettier than her portrait?’

‘Sire,’ they answered, ‘if she were as pretty that would do very well.’

‘That’s true,’ said the King; ‘I for one shall be quite satisfied if she is. Let us go and meet her.’ For they knew by the uproar that she had arrived, but they could not tell what all the shouting was about. The King thought he could hear the words:

‘How ugly she is! How ugly she is!’ and he fancied they must refer to some dwarf the Princess was bringing with her. It never occurred to him that they could apply to the bride herself.

The Princess Rosette’s portrait was carried at the head of the procession, and after it walked the King surrounded by his courtiers. He was all impatience to see the lovely Princess, but when he caught sight of the nurse’s daughter he was furiously angry, and would not advance another step. For she was really ugly enough to have frightened anybody.

‘What!’ he cried, ‘have the two rascals who are my prisoners dared to play me such a trick as this? Do they propose that I shall marry this hideous creature? Let her be shut up in my great tower, with her nurse and those who brought her here;

and as for them, I will have their heads cut off.’

Meanwhile the King and the Prince, who knew that their sister must have arrived, had made themselves smart, and sat expecting every minute to be summoned to greet her. So when the gaoler came with soldiers, and carried them down into a black dungeon which swarmed with toads and bats, and where they were up to their necks in water, nobody could have been more surprised and dismayed than they were.

‘This is a dismal kind of wedding,’ they said; ‘what can have happened that we should be treated like this? They must mean to kill us.’

And this idea annoyed them very much. Three days passed before they heard any news, and then the King of the Peacocks came and berated them through a hole in the wall.

‘You have called yourselves King and Prince,’ he cried, ‘to try and make me marry your sister, but you are nothing but beggars, not worth the water you drink. I mean to make short work with you, and the sword is being sharpened that will cut off your heads!’

‘King of the Peacocks,’ answered the King angrily, ‘you had better take care what you are about. I am as good a King as yourself, and have a splendid kingdom and robes and crowns, and plenty of good red gold to do what I like with. You are pleased to jest about having our heads cut off; perhaps you think we have stolen something from you?’

At first the King of the Peacocks was taken aback by this bold speech, and had half a mind to send them all away together; but his Prime Minister declared that it would never do to let such a trick as that pass unpunished, everybody would laugh at him; so the accusation was drawn up against them, that they were impostors, and that they had promised the King a beautiful Princess in marriage who, when she arrived, proved to be an ugly peasant girl.

This accusation was read to the prisoners, who cried out that they had spoken the truth, that their sister was indeed a Princess more beautiful than the day, and that there was some mystery about all this which they could not fathom. Therefore they demanded seven days in which to prove their innocence, The King of the Peacocks was so angry that he would hardly even grant them this favour, but at last he was persuaded to do so.

While all this was going on at court, let us see what had been happening to the real Princess. When the day broke she and Frisk were equally astonished at finding themselves alone upon the sea, with no boat and no one to help them. The Princess cried and cried, until even the fishes were sorry for her.

‘Alas!’ she said, ‘the King of the Peacocks must have ordered me to be thrown into the sea because he had changed his mind and did not want to marry me. But how strange of him, when I should have loved him so much, and we should have been so happy together!’

And then she cried harder than ever, for she could not help still loving him. So for two days they floated up and down the sea, wet and shivering with the cold, and so hungry that when the Princess saw some oysters she caught them, and she and Frisk both ate some, though they didn’t like them at all. When night came the Princess was so frightened that she said to Frisk:

‘Oh! Do please keep on barking for fear the soles should come and eat us up!’

Now it happened that they had floated close in to the shore, where a poor old man lived all alone in a little cottage. When he heard Frisk’s barking he thought to himself:

‘There must have been a shipwreck!’ (for no dogs ever passed that way by any chance), and he went out to see if he could be of any use. He soon saw the Princess and Frisk floating up and down, and Rosette, stretching out her hands to him, cried:

‘Oh! Good old man, do save me, or I shall die of cold and hunger!’

When he heard her cry out so piteously he was very sorry for her, and ran back into his house to fetch a long boat-hook. Then he waded into the water up to his chin, and after being nearly drowned once or twice he at last succeeded in getting hold of the Princess’s bed and dragging it on shore.

Rosette and Frisk were joyful enough to find themselves once more on dry land, and the Princess thanked the old man heartily; then, wrapping herself up in her blankets, she daintily picked her way up to the cottage on her little bare feet. There the old man lighted a fire of straw, and then drew from an old box his wife’s dress and shoes, which the Princess put on, and thus roughly clad looked as charming as possible, and Frisk danced his very best to amuse her.

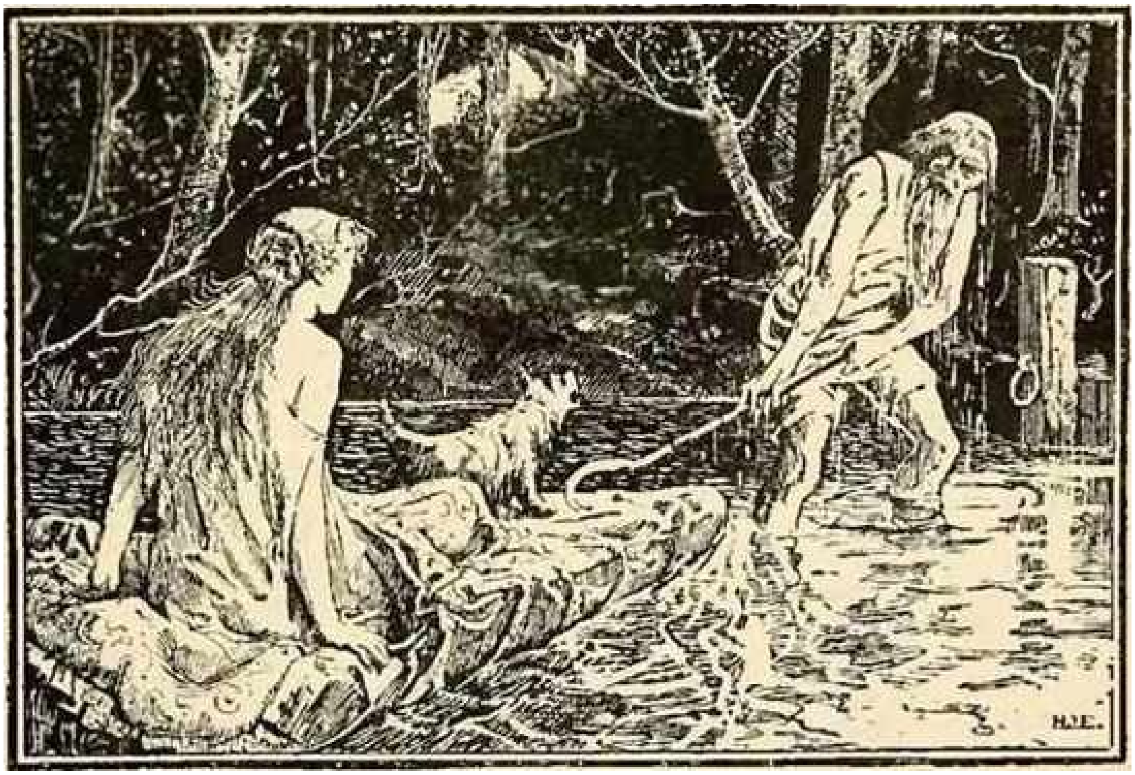

The old man saw that Rosette must be some great lady, for her bed coverings were all of satin and gold. He begged that she would tell him all her history, as she might safely trust him. The Princess told him everything, weeping bitterly again at the thought that it was by the King’s orders that she had been thrown overboard.

‘And now, my daughter, what is to be done?’ said the old man. ‘You are a great Princess, accustomed to fare daintily, and I have nothing to offer you but black bread and radishes, which will not suit you at all. Shall I go and tell the King of the Peacocks that you are here? If he sees you he will certainly wish to marry you.’

‘Oh no!’ cried Rosette, ‘he must be wicked, since he tried to drown me. Don’t let us tell him, but if you have a little basket give it to me.’

The old man gave her a basket, and tying it round Frisk’s neck she said to him: ‘Go and find out the best cooking-pot in the town and bring the contents to me.’

Away went Frisk, and as there was no better dinner cooking in all the town than the King’s, he adroitly took the cover off the pot and brought all it contained to the Princess, who said:

‘Now go back to the pantry, and bring the best of everything you find there.’

So Frisk went back and filled his basket with white bread, and red wine, and every kind of sweetmeat, until it was almost too heavy for him to carry.

When the King of the Peacocks wanted his dinner there was nothing in the pot and nothing in the pantry. All the courtiers looked at one another in dismay, and the King was terribly cross.

‘Oh well! ‘he said, ‘if there is no dinner I cannot dine, but take care that plenty of things are roasted for supper.’

When evening came the Princess said to Frisk:

‘Go into the town and find out the best kitchen, and bring me all the nicest morsels that are being roasted upon the spit.’

Frisk did as he was told, and as he knew of no better kitchen than the King’s, he went in softly, and when the cook’s back was turned took everything that was upon the spit, As it happened it was all done to a turn, and looked so good that it made him hungry only to see it. He carried his basket to the Princess, who at once sent him back to the pantry to bring all the tarts and sugar plums that had been prepared for the King’s supper.

The King, as he had had no dinner, was very hungry and wanted his supper early, but when he asked for it, lo and behold it was all gone, and he had to go to bed half-starved and in a terrible temper. The next day the same thing happened, and the next, so that for three days the King got nothing at all to eat, because just when the dinner or the supper was ready to be served it mysteriously disappeared. At last the Prime Minister began to be afraid that the King would be starved to death, so he resolved to hide himself in some dark corner of the kitchen, and never take his eyes off the cooking-pot. His surprise was great when he presently saw a little green dog with one ear slip softly into the kitchen, uncover the pot, transfer all its contents to his basket, and run off. The Prime Minister followed hastily, and tracked him all through the town to the cottage of the good old man; then he ran back to the King and told him that he had found out where all his dinners and suppers went. The King, who was very much astonished, said he should like to go and see for himself. So he set out, accompanied by the Prime Minister and a guard of archers, and arrived just in time to find the old man and the Princess finishing his dinner.

The King ordered that they should be seized and bound with ropes, and Frisk also.

When they were brought back to the palace some one told the King, who said:

‘To-day is the last day of the respite granted to those impostors; they shall have their heads cut off at the same time as these stealers of my dinner.’ Then the old man went down on his knees before the King and begged for time to tell him everything. While he spoke the King for the first time looked attentively at the Princess, because he was sorry to see how she cried, and when he heard the old man saying that her name was Rosette, and that she had been treacherously thrown into the sea, he turned head over heels three times without stopping, in spite of being quite weak from hunger, and ran to embrace her, and untied the ropes which bound her with his own hands, declaring that he loved her with all his heart.

Messengers were sent to bring the Princes out of prison, and they came very sadly, believing that they were to be executed at once: the nurse and her daughter and the boatman were brought also. As soon as they came in Rosette ran to embrace her brothers, while the traitors threw themselves down before her and begged for mercy. The King and the Princess were so happy that they freely forgave them, and as for the good old man he was splendidly rewarded, and spent the rest of his days in the palace. The King of the Peacocks made ample amends to the King and Prince for the way in which they had been treated, and did everything in his power to show how sorry he was.

The nurse restored to Rosette all her dresses and jewels, and the bushel of gold pieces; the wedding was held at once, and they all lived happily ever after — even to Frisk, who enjoyed the greatest luxury, and never had anything worse than the wing of a partridge for dinner all the rest of his life.(7)

(7) Madame d’Aulnoy.

THE ENCHANTED PIG

ONCE upon a time there lived a King who had three daughters. Now it happened that he had to go out to battle, so he called his daughters and said to them:

‘My dear children, I am obliged to go to the wars. The enemy is approaching us with a large army. It is a great grief to me to leave you all. During my absence take care of yourselves and be good girls; behave well and look after everything in the house. You may walk in the garden, and you may go into all the rooms in the palace, except the room at the back in the right-hand corner; into that you must not enter, for harm would befall you.’

‘You may keep your mind easy, father,’ they replied. ‘We have never been disobedient to you. Go in peace, and may heaven give you a glorious victory!’

When everything was ready for his departure, the King gave them the keys of all the rooms and reminded them once more of what he had said. His daughters kissed his hands with tears in their eyes, and wished him prosperity, and he gave the eldest the keys.

Now when the girls found themselves alone they felt so sad and dull that they did not know what to do. So, to pass the time, they decided to work for part of the day, to read for part of the day, and to enjoy themselves in the garden for part of the day. As long as they did this all went well with them. But this happy state of things did not last long. Every day they grew more and more curious, and you will see what the end of that was.

‘Sisters,’ said the eldest Princess, ‘all day long we sew, spin, and read. We have been several days quite alone, and there is no corner of the garden that we have not explored. We have been in all the rooms of our father’s palace, and have admired the rich and beautiful furniture: why should not we go into the room that our father forbad us to enter?’

Sister,’ said the youngest, ‘I cannot think how you can tempt us to break our father’s command. When he told us not to go into that room he must have known what he was saying, and have had a good reason for saying it.’

‘Surely the sky won’t fall about our heads if we DO go in,’ said the second Princess. ‘Dragons and such like monsters that would devour us will not be hidden in the room. And how will our father ever find out that we have gone in?’

While they were speaking thus, encouraging each other, they had reached the room; the eldest fitted the key into the lock, and snap! the door stood open.

The three girls entered, and what do you think they saw?

The room was quite empty, and without any ornament, but in the middle stood a large table, with a gorgeous cloth, and on it lay a big open book.

Now the Princesses were curious to know what was written in the book, especially the eldest, and this is what she read:

‘The eldest daughter of this King will marry a prince from the East.’

Then the second girl stepped forward, and turning over the page she read:

‘The second daughter of this King will marry a prince from the West.’

The girls were delighted, and laughed and teased each other.

But the youngest Princess did not want to go near the table or to open the book. Her elder sisters however left her no peace, and will she, nill she, they dragged her up to the table, and in fear and trembling she turned over the page and read:

‘The youngest daughter of this King will be married to a pig from the North.’

Now if a thunderbolt had fallen upon her from heaven it would not have frightened her more.

She almost died of misery, and if her sisters had not held her up, she would have sunk to the ground and cut her head open.

When she came out of the fainting fit into which she had fallen in her terror, her sisters tried to comfort her, saying:

‘How can you believe such nonsense? When did it ever happen that a king’s daughter married a pig?’

‘What a baby you are!’ said the other sister; ‘has not our father enough soldiers to protect you, even if the disgusting creature did come to woo you?’

The youngest Princess would fain have let herself be convinced by her sisters’ words, and have believed what they said, but her heart was heavy. Her thoughts kept turning to the book, in which stood written that great happiness waited her sisters, but that a fate was in store for her such as had never before been known in the world.

Besides, the thought weighed on her heart that she had been guilty of disobeying her father. She began to get quite ill, and in a few days she was so changed that it was difficult to recognise her; formerly she had been rosy and merry, now she was pale and nothing gave her any pleasure. She gave up playing with her sisters in the garden, ceased to gather flowers to put in her hair, and never sang when they sat together at their spinning and sewing.

In the meantime the King won a great victory, and having completely defeated and driven off the enemy, he hurried home to his daughters, to whom his thoughts had constantly turned. Everyone went out to meet him with cymbals and fifes and drums, and there was great rejoicing over his victorious return. The King’s first act on reaching home was to thank Heaven for the victory he had gained over the enemies who had risen against him. He then entered his palace, and the three Princesses stepped forward to meet him. His joy was great when he saw that they were all well, for the youngest did her best not to appear sad.

In spite of this, however, it was not long before the King noticed that his third daughter was getting very thin and sad-looking. And all of a sudden he felt as if a hot iron were entering his soul, for it flashed through his mind that she had disobeyed his word. He felt sure he was right; but to be quite certain he called his daughters to him, questioned them, and ordered them to speak the truth. They confessed everything, but took good care not to say which had led the other two into temptation.

The King was so distressed when he heard it that he was almost overcome by grief. But he took heart and tried to comfort his daughters, who looked frightened to death. He saw that what had happened had happened, and that a thousand words would not alter matters by a hair’s-breadth.

Well, these events had almost been forgotten when one fine day a prince from the East appeared at the Court and asked the King for the hand of his eldest daughter. The King gladly gave his consent. A great wedding banquet was prepared, and after three days of feasting the happy pair were accompanied to the frontier with much ceremony and rejoicing.

After some time the same thing befell the second daughter, who was wooed and won by a prince from the West.

Now when the young Princess saw that everything fell out exactly as had been written in the book, she grew very sad. She refused to eat, and would not put on her fine clothes nor go out walking, and declared that she would rather die than become a laughing-stock to the world. But the King would not allow her to do anything so wrong, and he comforted her in all possible ways.

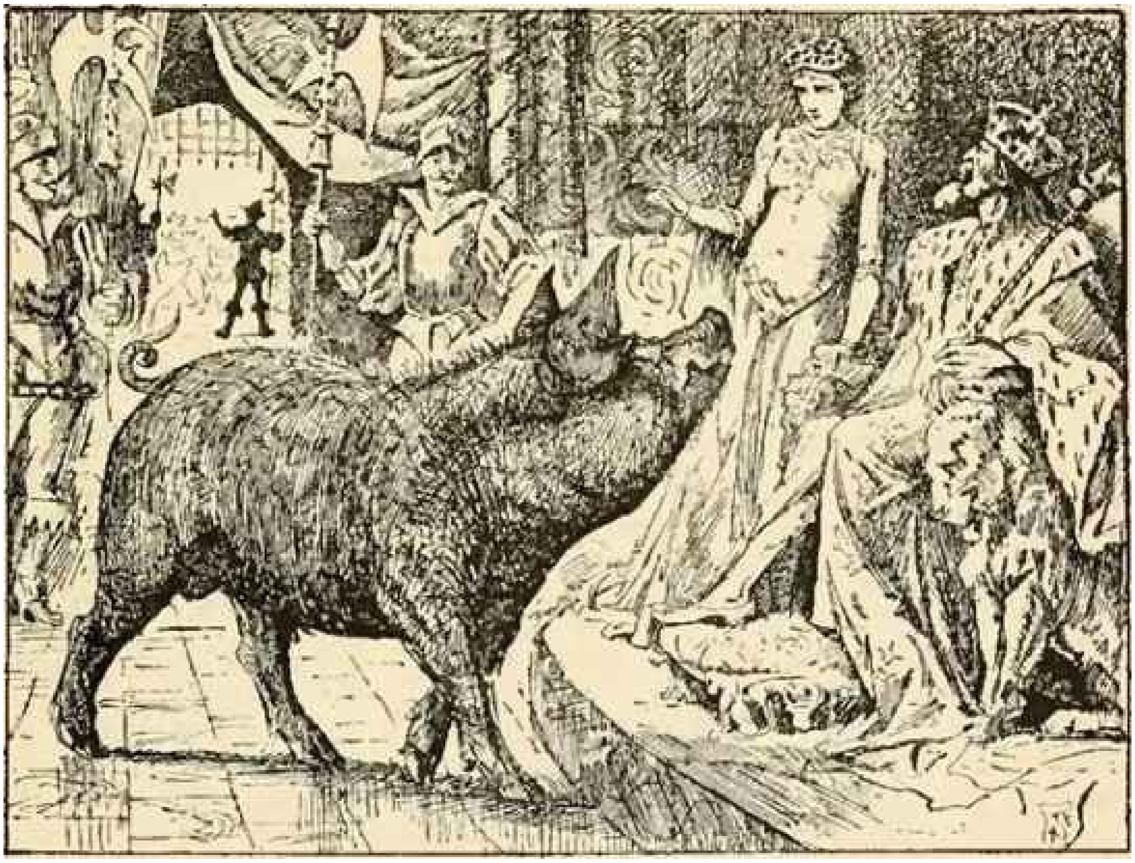

So the time passed, till lo and behold! one fine day an enormous pig from the North walked into the palace, and going straight up to the King said, ‘Hail! oh King. May your life be as prosperous and bright as sunrise on a clear day!’

‘I am glad to see you well, friend,’ answered the King, ‘but what wind has brought you hither?’

‘I come a-wooing,’ replied the Pig.

Now the King was astonished to hear so fine a speech from a Pig, and at once it occurred to him that something strange was the matter. He would gladly have turned the Pig’s thoughts in another direction, as he did not wish to give him the Princess for a wife; but when he heard that the Court and the whole street were full of all the pigs in the world he saw that there was no escape, and that he must give his consent. The Pig was not satisfied with mere promises, but insisted that the wedding should take place within a week, and would not go away till the King had sworn a royal oath upon it.

The King then sent for his daughter, and advised her to submit to fate, as there was nothing else to be done. And he added:

‘My child, the words and whole behaviour of this Pig are quite unlike those of other pigs. I do not myself believe that he always was a pig. Depend upon it some magic or witchcraft has been at work. Obey him, and do everything that he wishes, and I feel sure that Heaven will shortly send you release.’

‘If you wish me to do this, dear father, I will do it,’ replied the girl.

In the meantime the wedding-day drew near. After the marriage, the Pig and his bride set out for his home in one of the royal carriages. On the way they passed a great bog, and the Pig ordered the carriage to stop, and got out and rolled about in the mire till he was covered with mud from head to foot; then he got back into the carriage and told his wife to kiss him. What was the poor girl to do? She bethought herself of her father’s words, and, pulling out her pocket handkerchief, she gently wiped the Pig’s snout and kissed it.

By the time they reached the Pig’s dwelling, which stood in a thick wood, it was quite dark. They sat down quietly for a little, as they were tired after their drive; then they had supper together, and lay down to rest. During the night the Princess noticed that the Pig had changed into a man. She was not a little surprised, but remembering her father’s words, she took courage, determined to wait and see what would happen.

And now she noticed that every night the Pig became a man, and every morning he was changed into a Pig before she awoke. This happened several nights running, and the Princess could not understand it at all. Clearly her husband must be bewitched. In time she grew quite fond of him, he was so kind and gentle.

One fine day as she was sitting alone she saw an old witch go past. She felt quite excited, as it was so long since she had seen a human being, and she called out to the old woman to come and talk to her. Among other things the witch told her that she understood all magic arts, and that she could foretell the future, and knew the healing powers of herbs and plants.

‘I shall be grateful to you all my life, old dame,’ said the Princess, ‘if you will tell me what is the matter with my husband. Why is he a Pig by day and a human being by night?’

‘I was just going to tell you that one thing, my dear, to show you what a good fortune-teller I am. If you like, I will give you a herb to break the spell.’

‘If you will only give it to me,’ said the Princess, ‘I will give you anything you choose to ask for, for I cannot bear to see him in this state.’

‘Here, then, my dear child,’ said the witch, ‘take this thread, but do not let him know about it, for if he did it would lose its healing power. At night, when he is asleep, you must get up very quietly, and fasten the thread round his left foot as firmly as possible; and you will see in the morning he will not have changed back into a Pig, but will still be a man. I do not want any reward. I shall be sufficiently repaid by knowing that you are happy. It almost breaks my heart to think of all you have suffered, and I only wish I had known it sooner, as I should have come to your rescue at once.’

When the old witch had gone away the Princess hid the thread very carefully, and at night she got up quietly, and with a beating heart she bound the thread round her husband’s foot. Just as she was pulling the knot tight there was a crack, and the thread broke, for it was rotten.

Her husband awoke with a start, and said to her, ‘Unhappy woman, what have you done? Three days more and this unholy spell would have fallen from me, and now, who knows how long I may have to go about in this disgusting shape? I must leave you at once, and we shall not meet again until you have worn out three pairs of iron shoes and blunted a steel staff in your search for me.’ So saying he disappeared.

Now, when the Princess was left alone she began to weep and moan in a way that was pitiful to hear; but when she saw that her tears and groans did her no good, she got up, determined to go wherever fate should lead her.

On reaching a town, the first thing she did was to order three pairs of iron sandals and a steel staff, and having made these preparations for her journey, she set out in search of her husband. On and on she wandered over nine seas and across nine continents; through forests with trees whose stems were as thick as beer-barrels; stumbling and knocking herself against the fallen branches, then picking herself up and going on; the boughs of the trees hit her face, and the shrubs tore her hands, but on she went, and never looked back. At last, wearied with her long journey and worn out and overcome with sorrow, but still with hope at her heart, she reached a house.

Now who do you think lived there? The Moon.

The Princess knocked at the door, and begged to be let in that she might rest a little. The mother of the Moon, when she saw her sad plight, felt a great pity for her, and took her in and nursed and tended her. And while she was here the Princess had a little baby.

One day the mother of the Moon asked her:

‘How was it possible for you, a mortal, to get hither to the house of the Moon?’

Then the poor Princess told her all that happened to her, and added ‘I shall always be thankful to Heaven for leading me hither, and grateful to you that you took pity on me and on my baby, and did not leave us to die. Now I beg one last favour of you; can your daughter, the Moon, tell me where my husband is?’

‘She cannot tell you that, my child,’ replied the goddess, ‘but, if you will travel towards the East until you reach the dwelling of the Sun, he may be able to tell you something.’

Then she gave the Princess a roast chicken to eat, and warned her to be very careful not to lose any of the bones, because they might be of great use to her.

When the Princess had thanked her once more for her hospitality and for her good advice, and had thrown away one pair of shoes that were worn out, and had put on a second pair, she tied up the chicken bones in a bundle, and taking her baby in her arms and her staff in her hand, she set out once more on her wanderings.

On and on and on she went across bare sandy deserts, where the roads were so heavy that for every two steps that she took forwards she fell back one; but she struggled on till she had passed these dreary plains; next she crossed high rocky mountains, jumping from crag to crag and from peak to peak. Sometimes she would rest for a little on a mountain, and then start afresh always farther and farther on. She had to cross swamps and to scale mountain peaks covered with flints, so that her feet and knees and elbows were all torn and bleeding, and sometimes she came to a precipice across which she could not jump, and she had to crawl round on hands and knees, helping herself along with her staff.

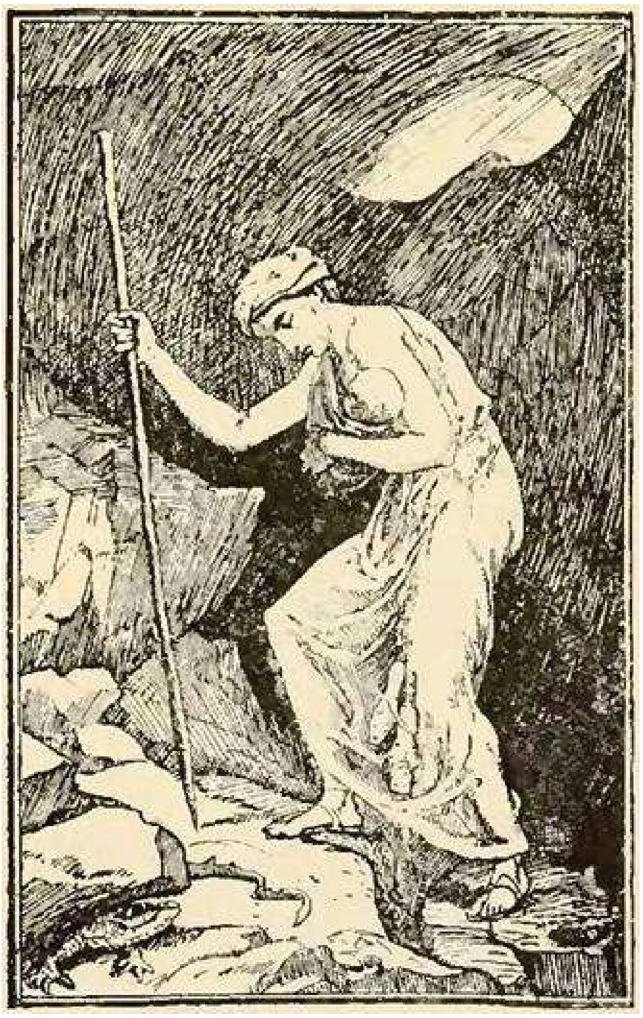

At length, wearied to death, she reached the palace in which the Sun lived. She knocked and begged for admission. The mother of the Sun opened the door, and was astonished at beholding a mortal from the distant earthly shores, and wept with pity when she heard of all she had suffered. Then, having promised to ask her son about the Princess's husband, she hid her in the cellar, so that the Sun might notice nothing on his return home, for he was always in a bad temper when he came in at night. The next day the Princess feared that things would not go well with her, for the Sun had noticed that some one from the other world had been in the palace. But his mother had soothed him with soft words, assuring him that this was not so. So the Princess took heart when she saw how kindly she was treated, and asked:

'But how in the world is it possible for the Sun to be angry? He is so beautiful and so good to mortals.'

'This is how it happens,' replied the Sun's mother. 'In the morning when he stands at the gates of paradise he is happy, and smiles on the whole world, but during the day he gets cross, because he sees all the evil deeds of men, and that is why his heat becomes so scorching; but in the evening he is both sad and angry, for he stands at the gates of death; that is his usual course. From there he comes back here.'

She then told the Princess that she had asked about her husband, but that her son had replied that he knew nothing about him, and that her only hope was to go and inquire of the Wind.

Before the Princess left the mother of the Sun gave her a roast chicken to eat, and advised her to take great care of the bones, which she did, wrapping them up in a bundle. She then threw away her second pair of shoes, which were quite worn out, and with her child on her arm and her staff in her hand, she set forth on her way to the Wind.

In these wanderings she met with even greater difficulties than before, for she came upon one mountain of flints after another, out of which tongues of fire would flame up; she passed through woods which had never been trodden by human foot, and had to cross fields of ice and avalanches of snow. The poor woman nearly died of these hardships, but she kept a brave heart, and at length she reached an enormous cave in the side of a mountain. This was where the Wind lived. There was a little door in the railing in front of the cave, and here the Princess knocked and begged for admission. The mother of the Wind had pity on her and took her in, that she might rest a little. Here too she was hidden away, so that the Wind might not notice her.

The next morning the mother of the Wind told her that her husband was living in a thick wood, so thick that no axe had been able to cut a way through it; here he had built himself a sort of house by placing trunks of trees together and fastening them with withes and here he lived alone, shunning human kind.

After the mother of the Wind had given the Princess a chicken to eat, and had warned her to take care of the bones, she advised her to go by the Milky Way, which at night lies across the sky, and to wander on till she reached her goal.

Having thanked the old woman with tears in her eyes for her hospitality, and for the good news she had given her, the Princess set out on her journey and rested neither night nor day, so great was her longing to see her husband again. On and on she walked until her last pair of shoes fell in pieces. So she threw them away and went on with bare feet, not heeding the bogs nor the thorns that wounded her, nor the stones that bruised her. At last she reached a beautiful green meadow on the edge of a wood. Her heart was cheered by the sight of the flowers and the soft cool grass, and she sat down and rested for a little. But hearing the birds chirping to their mates among the trees made her think with longing of her husband, and she wept bitterly, and taking her child in her arms, and her bundle of chicken bones on her shoulder, she entered the wood.

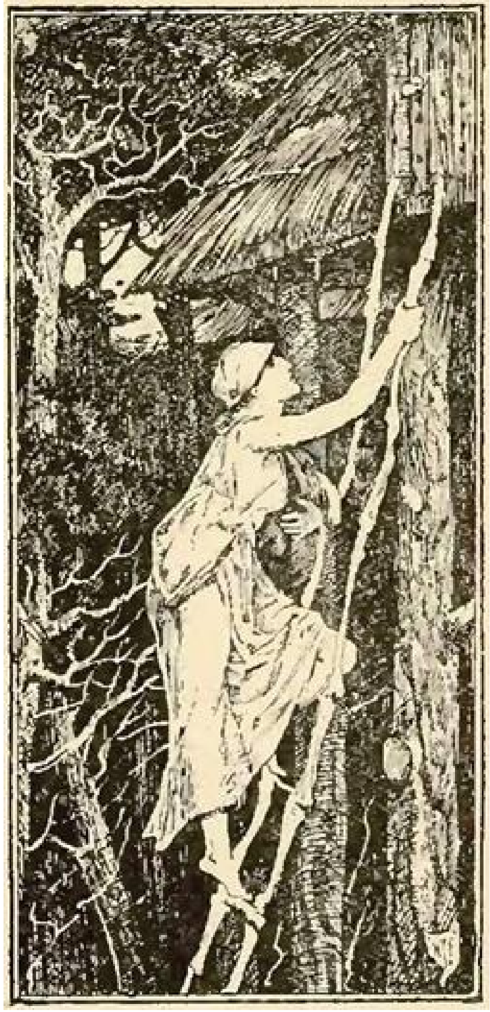

For three days and three nights she struggled through it, but could find nothing. She was quite worn out with weariness and hunger, and even her staff was no further help to her, for in her many wanderings it had become quite blunted. She almost gave up in despair, but made one last great effort, and suddenly in a thicket she came upon the sort of house that the mother of the Wind had described. It had no windows, and the door was up in the roof. Round the house she went, in search of steps, but could find none. What was she to do? How was she to get in? She thought and thought, and tried in vain to climb up to the door. Then suddenly she bethought her of the chicken bones that she had dragged all that weary way, and she said to herself: ‘They would not all have told me to take such good care of these bones if they had not had some good reason for doing so. Perhaps now, in my hour of need, they may be of use to me.’

So she took the bones out of her bundle, and having thought for a moment, she placed the two ends together. To her surprise they stuck tight; then she added the other bones, till she had two long poles the height of the house; these she placed against the wall, at a distance of a yard from one another. Across them she placed the other bones, piece by piece, like the steps of a ladder. As soon as one step was finished she stood upon it and made the next one, and then the next, till she was close to the door. But just as she got near the top she noticed that there were no bones left for the last rung of the ladder. What was she to do? Without that last step the whole ladder was useless. She must have lost one of the bones. Then suddenly an idea came to her. Taking a knife she chopped off her little finger, and placing it on the last step, it stuck as the bones had done. The ladder was complete, and with her child on her arm she entered the door of the house. Here she found everything in perfect order. Having taken some food, she laid the child down to sleep in a trough that was on the floor, and sat down herself to rest.

When her husband, the Pig, came back to his house, he was startled by what he saw. At first he could not believe his eyes, and stared at the ladder of bones, and at the little finger on the top of it. He felt that some fresh magic must be at work, and in his terror he almost turned away from the house; but then a better idea came to him, and he changed himself into a dove, so that no witchcraft could have power over him, and flew into the room without touching the ladder. Here he found a woman rocking a child. At the sight of her, looking so changed by all that she had suffered for his sake, his heart was moved by such love and longing and by so great a pity that he suddenly became a man.

The Princess stood up when she saw him, and her heart beat with fear, for she did not know him. But when he had told her who he was, in her great joy she forgot all her sufferings, and they seemed as nothing to her. He was a very handsome man, as straight as a fir tree. They sat down together and she told him all her adventures, and he wept with pity at the tale. And then he told her his own history.

‘I am a King’s son. Once when my father was fighting against some dragons, who were the scourge of our country, I slew the youngest dragon. His mother, who was a witch, cast a spell over me and changed me into a Pig. It was she who in the disguise of an old woman gave you the thread to bind round my foot. So that instead of the three days that had to run before the spell was broken, I was forced to remain a Pig for three more years. Now that we have suffered for each other, and have found each other again, let us forget the past.’

And in their joy they kissed one another.

Next morning they set out early to return to his father’s kingdom. Great was the rejoicing of all the people when they saw him and his wife; his father and his mother embraced them both, and there was feasting in the palace for three days and three nights.

Then they set out to see her father. The old King nearly went out of his mind with joy at beholding his daughter again. When she had told him all her adventures, he said to her:

'Did not I tell you that I was quite sure that that creature who wooed and won you as his wife had not been born a Pig? You see, my child, how wise you were in doing what I told you.'

And as the King was old and had no heirs, he put them on the throne in his place. And they ruled as only kings rule who have suffered many things. And if they are not dead they are still living and ruling happily.(8)

(8) Rumanische Marchen ubersetzt von Nite Kremnitz.

THE NORKA

ONCE upon a time there lived a King and Queen. They had three sons, two of them with their wits about them, but the third a simpleton. Now the King had a deer park in which were quantities of wild animals of different kinds. Into that park there used to come a huge beast — Norka was its name — and do fearful mischief, devouring some of the animals every night. The King did all he could, but he was unable to destroy it. So at last he called his sons together and said, ‘Whoever will destroy the Norka, to him will I give the half of my kingdom.’

Well, the eldest son undertook the task. As soon as it was night, he took his weapons and set out. But before he reached the park, he went into a traktir (or tavern), and there he spent the whole night in revelry. When he came to his senses it was too late; the day had already dawned. He felt himself disgraced in the eyes of his father, but there was no help for it. The next day the second son went, and did just the same. Their father scolded them both soundly, and there was an end of it.

Well, on the third day the youngest son undertook the task. They all laughed him to scorn, because he was so stupid, feeling sure he wouldn’t do anything. But he took his arms, and went straight into the park, and sat down on the grass in such a position that the moment he went asleep his weapons would prick him, and he would awake.

Presently the midnight hour sounded. The earth began to shake, and the Norka came rushing up, and burst right through the fence into the park, so huge was it. The Prince pulled himself together, leapt to his feet, crossed himself, and went straight at the beast. It fled back, and the Prince ran after it. But he soon saw that he couldn’t catch it on foot, so he hastened to the stable, laid his hands on the best horse there, and set off in pursuit. Presently he came up with the beast, and they began a fight. They fought and fought; the Prince gave the beast three wounds. At last they were both utterly exhausted, so they lay down to take a short rest. But the moment the Prince closed his eyes, up jumped the beast and took to flight. The Prince’s horse awoke him; up he jumped in a moment, and set off again in pursuit, caught up the beast, and again began fighting with it. Again the Prince gave the beast three wounds, and then he and the beast lay down again to rest. Thereupon away fled the beast as before. The Prince caught it up, and again gave it three wounds. But all of a sudden, just as the Prince began chasing it for the fourth time, the beast fled to a great white stone, tilted it up, and escaped into the other world, crying out to the Prince: ‘Then only will you overcome me, when you enter here.’

The Prince went home, told his father all that had happened, and asked him to have a leather rope plaited, long enough to reach to the other world. His father ordered this to be done. When the rope was made, the Prince called for his brothers, and he and they, having taken servants with them, and everything that was needed for a whole year, set out for the place where the beast had disappeared under the stone. When they got there, they built a palace on the spot, and lived in it for some time. But when everything was ready, the youngest brother said to the others: ‘Now, brothers, who is going to lift this stone?’

Neither of them could so much as stir it, but as soon as he touched it, away it flew to a distance, though it was ever so big — big as a hill. And when he had flung the stone aside, he spoke a second time to his brothers, saying:

‘Who is going into the other world, to overcome the Norka?’

Neither of them offered to do so. Then he laughed at them for being such cowards, and said:

‘Well, brothers, farewell! Lower me into the other world, and don’t go away from here, but as soon as the cord is jerked, pull it up.’

His brothers lowered him accordingly, and when he had reached the other world, underneath the earth, he went on his way. He walked and walked. Presently he espied a horse with rich trappings, and it said to him:

‘Hail, Prince Ivan! Long have I awaited thee!’

He mounted the horse and rode on — rode and rode, until he saw standing before him a palace made of copper. He entered the courtyard, tied up his horse, and went indoors. In one of the rooms a dinner was laid out. He sat down and dined, and then went into a bedroom. There he found a bed, on which he lay down to rest. Presently there came in a lady, more beautiful than can be imagined anywhere but in a fairy tale, who said:

‘Thou who art in my house, name thyself! If thou art an old man, thou shalt be my father; if a middle-aged man, my brother; but if a young man, thou shalt be my husband dear. And if thou art a woman, and an old one, thou shalt be my grandmother; if middle-aged, my mother; and if a girl, thou shalt be my own sister.’

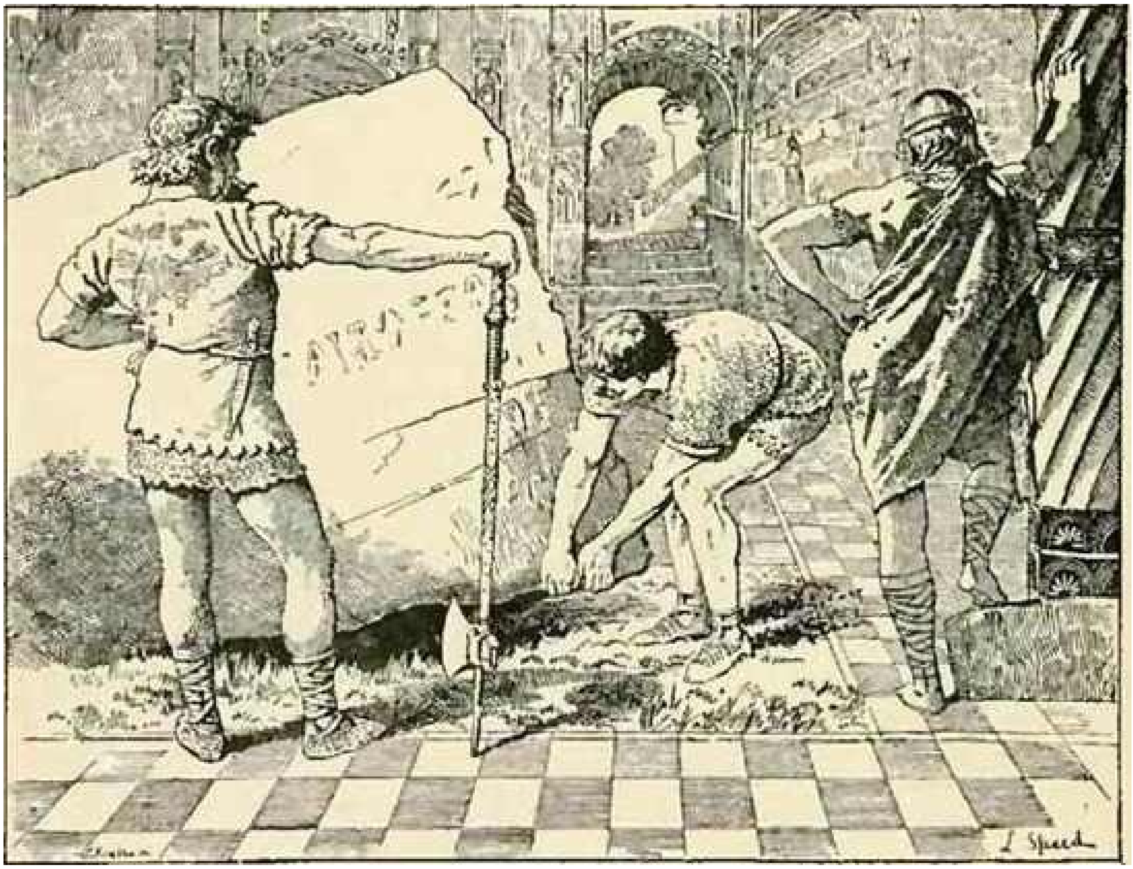

Thereupon he came forth. And when she saw him she was delighted with him, and said:

‘Wherefore, O Prince Ivan — my husband dear shalt thou be! — wherefore hast thou come hither?’

Then he told her all that had happened, and she said:

‘That beast which thou wishest to overcome is my brother. He is staying just now with my second sister, who lives not far from here in a silver palace. I bound up three of the wounds which thou didst give him.’

Well, after this they drank, and enjoyed themselves, and held sweet converse together, and then the Prince took leave of her, and went on to the second sister, the one who lived in the silver palace, and with her also he stayed awhile. She told him that her brother Norka was then at her youngest sister’s. So he went on to the youngest sister, who lived in a golden palace. She told him that her brother was at that time asleep on the blue sea, and she gave him a sword of steel and a draught of the Water of Strength, and she told him to cut off her brother’s head at a single stroke. And when he had heard these things, he went his way.

And when the Prince came to the blue sea, he looked — there slept the Norka on a stone in the middle of the sea; and when it snored, the water was agitated for seven miles around. The Prince crossed himself, went up to it, and smote it on the head with his sword. The head jumped off, saying the while, ‘Well, I’m done for now!’ and rolled far away into the sea.

After killing the beast, the Prince went back again, picking up all the three sisters by the way, with the intention of taking them out into the upper world: for they all loved him and would not be separated from him. Each of them turned her palace into an egg — for they were all enchantresses — and they taught him how to turn the eggs into palaces, and back again, and they handed over the eggs to him. And then they all went to the place from which they had to be hoisted into the upper world. And when they came to where the rope was, the Prince took hold of it and made the maidens fast to it. Then he jerked away at the rope and his brothers began to haul it up. And when they had hauled it up, and had set eyes on the wondrous maidens, they went aside and said: ‘Let’s lower the rope, pull our brother part of the way up, and then cut the rope. Perhaps he’ll be killed; but then if he isn’t, he’ll never give us these beauties as wives.’

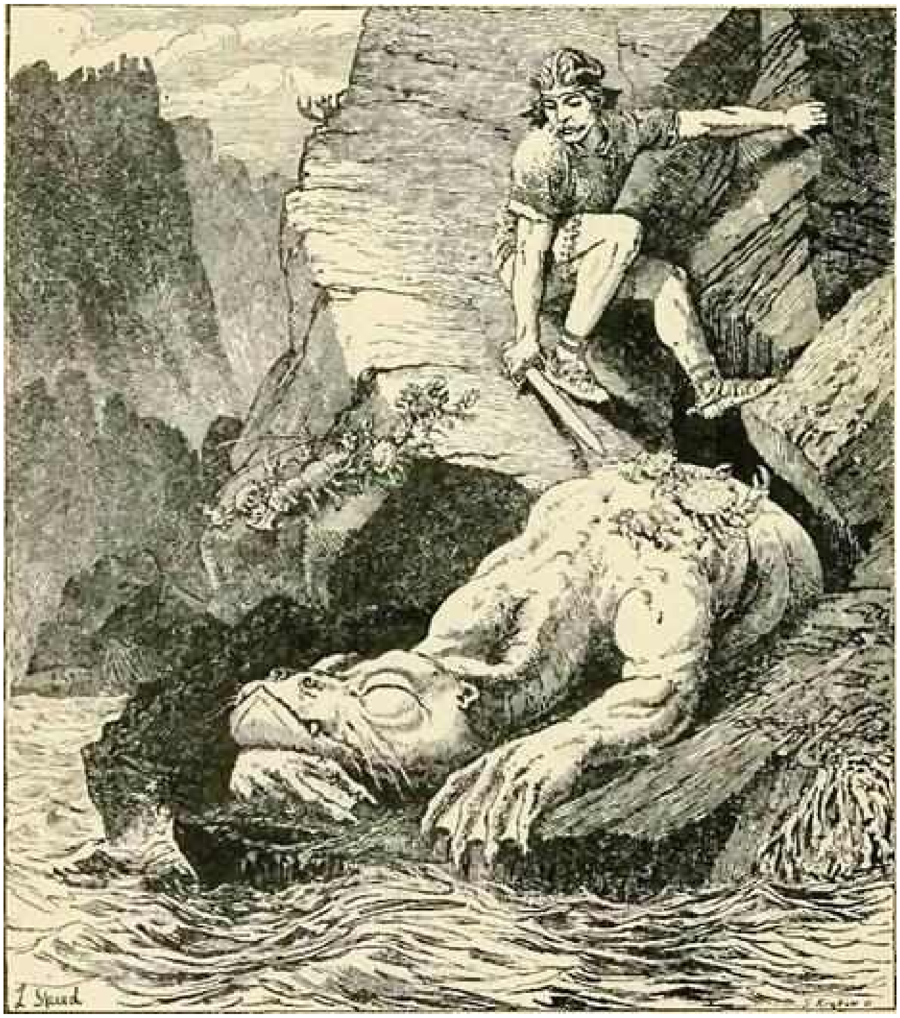

So when they had agreed on this, they lowered the rope. But their brother was no fool; he guessed what they were at, so he fastened the rope to a stone, and then gave it a pull. His brothers hoisted the stone to a great height, and then cut the rope. Down fell the stone and broke in pieces; the Prince poured forth tears and went away. Well, he walked and walked. Presently a storm arose; the lightning flashed, the thunder roared, the rain fell in torrents. He went up to a tree in order to take shelter under it, and on that tree he saw some young birds which were being thoroughly drenched. So he took off his coat and covered them over with it, and he himself sat down under the tree. Presently there came flying a bird — such a big one that the light was blotted out by it. It had been dark there before, but now it became darker still. Now this was the mother of those small birds which the Prince had covered up. And when the bird had come flying up, she perceived that her little ones were covered over, and she said, ‘Who has wrapped up my nestlings?’ and presently, seeing the Prince, she added: ‘Didst thou do that? Thanks! In return, ask of me anything thou desirest. I will do anything for thee.’

‘Then carry me into the other world,’ he replied.

‘Make me a large vessel with a partition in the middle,’ she said; ‘catch all sorts of game, and put them into one half of it, and into the other half pour water; so that there may be meat and drink for me.’

All this the Prince did. Then the bird — having taken the vessel on her back, with the Prince sitting in the middle of it — began to fly. And after flying some distance she brought him to his journey’s end, took leave of him, and flew away back. But he went to the house of a certain tailor, and engaged himself as his servant. So much the worse for wear was he, so thoroughly had he altered in appearance, that nobody would have suspected him of being a Prince.

Having entered into the service of this master, the Prince began to ask what was going on in that country. And his master replied: ‘Our two Princes — for the third one has disappeared — have brought away brides from the other world, and want to marry them, but those brides refuse. For they insist on having all their wedding-clothes made for them first, exactly like those which they used to have in the other world, and that without being measured for them. The King has called all the workmen together, but not one of them will undertake to do it.’

The Prince, having heard all this, said, ‘Go to the King, master, and tell him that you will provide everything that’s in your line.’

‘However can I undertake to make clothes of that sort? I work for quite common folks,’ says his master.

‘Go along, master! I will answer for everything,’ says the Prince.

So the tailor went. The King was delighted that at least one good workman had been found, and gave him as much money as ever he wanted. When his tailor had settled everything, he went home. And the Prince said to him:

‘Now then, pray to God, and lie down to sleep; to-morrow all will be ready.’ And the tailor followed his lad’s advice, and went to bed.

Midnight sounded. The Prince arose, went out of the city into the fields, took out of his pocket the eggs which the maidens had given him, and, as they had taught him, turned them into three palaces. Into each of these he entered, took the maidens’ robes, went out again, turned the palaces back into eggs, and went home. And when he got there he hung up the robes on the wall, and lay down to sleep.

Early in the morning his master awoke, and behold! there hung such robes as he had never seen before, all shining with gold and silver and precious stones. He was delighted, and he seized them and carried them off to the King. When the Princesses saw that the clothes were those which had been theirs in the other world, they guessed that Prince Ivan was in this world, so they exchanged glances with each other, but they held their peace. And the master, having handed over the clothes, went home, but he no longer found his dear journeyman there. For the Prince had gone to a shoemaker’s, and him too he sent to work for the King; and in the same way he went the round of all the artificers, and they all proffered him thanks, inasmuch as through him they were enriched by the King.

By the time the princely workman had gone the round of all the artificers, the Princesses had received what they had asked for; all their clothes were just like what they had been in the other world. Then they wept bitterly because the Prince had not come, and it was impossible for them to hold out any longer; it was necessary that they should be married. But when they were ready for the wedding, the youngest bride said to the King:

‘Allow me, my father, to go and give alms to the beggars.’

He gave her leave, and she went and began bestowing alms upon them, and examining them closely. And when she had come to one of them, and was going to give him some money, she caught sight of the ring which she had given to the Prince in the other world, and her sisters’ rings too — for it really was he. So she seized him by the hand, and brought him into the hall, and said to the King:

‘Here is he who brought us out of the other world. His brothers forbade us to say that he was alive, threatening to slay us if we did.’

Then the King was wroth with those sons, and punished them as he thought best. And afterwards three weddings were celebrated.

THE WONDERFUL BIRCH

ONCE upon a time there were a man and a woman, who had an only daughter. Now it happened that one of their sheep went astray, and they set out to look for it, and searched and searched, each in a different part of the wood. Then the good wife met a witch, who said to her: ‘If you spit, you miserable creature, if you spit into the sheath of my knife, or if you run between my legs, I shall change you into a black sheep.’

The woman neither spat, nor did she run between her legs, but yet the witch changed her into a sheep. Then she made herself look exactly like the woman, and called out to the good man: ‘Ho, old man, halloa! I have found the sheep already!’

The man thought the witch was really his wife, and he did not know that his wife was the sheep; so he went home with her, glad at heart because his sheep was found. When they were safe at home the witch said to the man: ‘Look here, old man, we must really kill that sheep lest it run away to the wood again.’

The man, who was a peaceable quiet sort of fellow, made no objections, but simply said:

‘Good, let us do so.’

The daughter, however, had overheard their talk, and she ran to the flock and lamented aloud:

‘Oh, dear little mother, they are going to slaughter you!’

‘Well, then, if they do slaughter me,’ was the black sheep’s answer, ‘eat you neither the meat nor the broth that is made of me, but gather all my bones, and bury them by the edge of the field.’

Shortly after this they took the black sheep from the flock and slaughtered it. The witch made pease-soup of it, and set it before the daughter. But the girl remembered her mother’s warning. She did not touch the soup, but she carried the bones to the edge of the field and buried them there; and there sprang up on the spot a birch tree — a very lovely birch tree.

Some time had passed away — who can tell how long they might have been living there? — when the witch, to whom a child had been born in the meantime, began to take an ill-will to the man’s daughter, and to torment her in all sorts of ways.

Now it happened that a great festival was to be held at the palace, and the King had commanded that all the people should be invited, and that this

proclamation should be made: ‘Come, people all!
Poor and wretched, one and all!
Blind and crippled though ye be,
Mount your steeds or come by sea.’

And so they drove into the King’s feast all the outcasts, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. In the good man’s house, too, preparations were made to go to the palace. The witch said to the man: ‘Go you on in front, old man, with our youngest; I will give the elder girl work to keep her from being dull in our absence.’

So the man took the child and set out. But the witch kindled a fire on the hearth, threw a potful of barleycorns among the cinders, and said to the girl: ‘If you have not picked the barley out of the ashes, and put it all back in the pot before nightfall, I shall eat you up!’

Then she hastened after the others, and the poor girl stayed at home and wept. She tried to be sure to pick up the grains of barley, but she soon saw how useless her labour was; and so she went in her sore trouble to the birch tree on her mother’s grave, and cried and cried, because her mother lay dead beneath the sod and could help her no longer. In the midst of her grief she suddenly heard her mother’s voice speak from the grave, and say to her: ‘Why do you weep, little daughter?’

‘The witch has scattered barleycorns on the hearth, and bid me pick them out of the ashes,’ said the girl; ‘that is why I weep, dear little mother.’

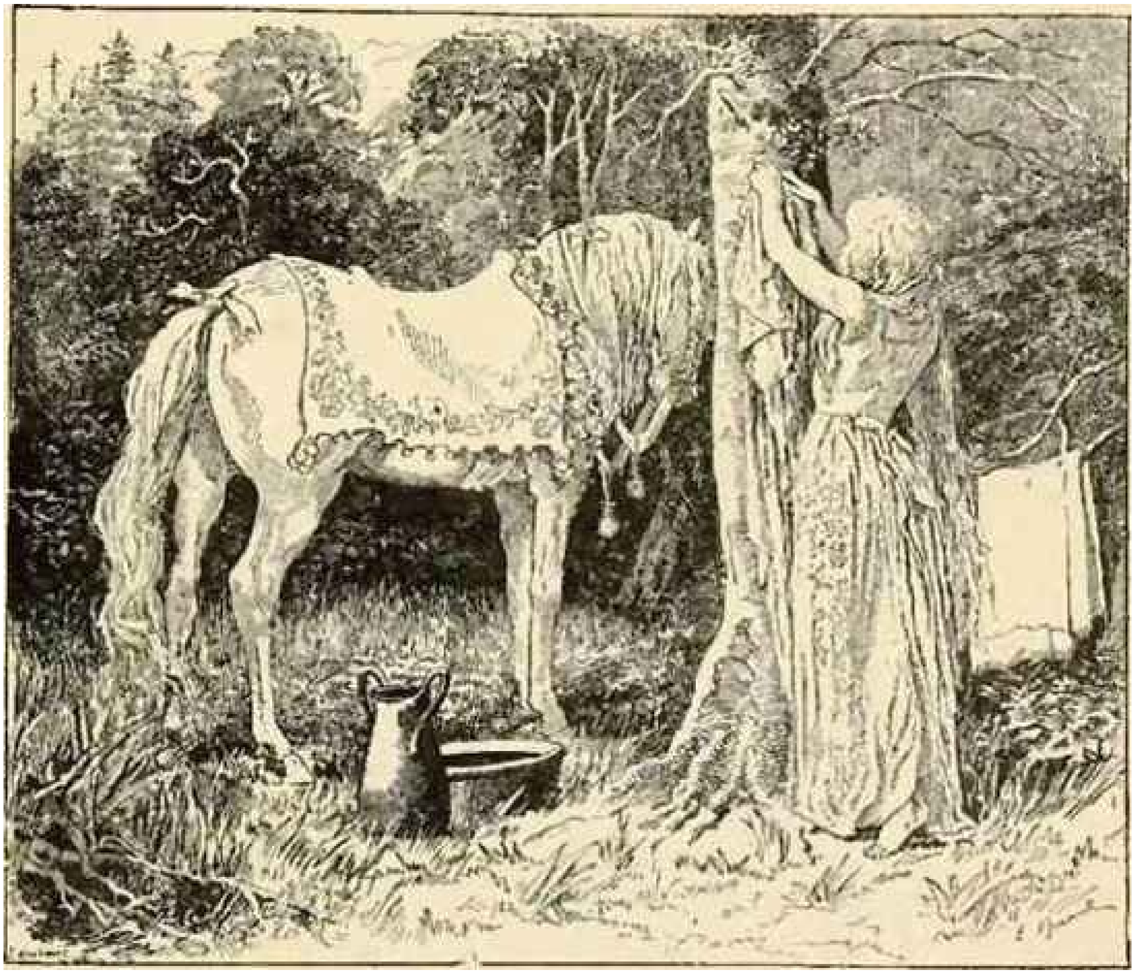

‘Do not weep,’ said her mother consolingly. ‘Break off one of my branches, and strike the hearth with it crosswise, and all will be put right.’ The girl did so. She struck the hearth with the birchen branch, and lo! the barleycorns flew into the pot, and the hearth was clean. Then she went back to the birch tree and laid the branch upon the grave. Then her mother bade her bathe on one side of the stem, dry herself on another, and dress on the third. When the girl had done all that, she had grown so lovely that no one on earth could rival her. Splendid clothing was given to her, and a horse, with hair partly of gold, partly of silver, and partly of something more precious still. The girl sprang into the saddle, and rode as swift as an arrow to the palace. As she turned into the courtyard of the castle the King’s son came out to meet her, tied her steed to a pillar, and led her in. He never left her side as they passed through the castle rooms; and all the people gazed at her, and wondered who the lovely maiden was, and from what castle she came; but no one knew her — no one knew anything about her. At the banquet the Prince invited her to sit next him in the place of honour; but the witch’s daughter gnawed the bones under the table. The Prince did not see her, and thinking it was a dog, he gave her such a push with his foot that her arm was broken. Are you not sorry for the witch's daughter? It was not her fault that her mother was a witch.

Towards evening the good man's daughter thought it was time to go home; but as she went, her ring caught on the latch of the door, for the King's son had had it smeared with tar. She did not take time to pull it off, but, hastily unfastening her horse from the pillar, she rode away beyond the castle walls as swift as an arrow. Arrived at home, she took off her clothes by the birch tree, left her horse standing there, and hastened to her place behind the stove. In a short time the man and the woman came home again too, and the witch said to the girl: 'Ah! you poor thing, there you are to be sure! You don't know what fine times we have had at the palace! The King's son carried my daughter about, but the poor thing fell and broke her arm.'

The girl knew well how matters really stood, but she pretended to know nothing about it, and sat dumb behind the stove.

The next day they were invited again to the King's banquet.

'Hey! old man,' said the witch, 'get on your clothes as quick as you can; we are bidden to the feast. Take you the child; I will give the other one work, lest she weary.'

She kindled the fire, threw a potful of hemp seed among the ashes, and said to the girl:

'If you do not get this sorted, and all the seed back into the pot, I shall kill you!'

The girl wept bitterly; then she went to the birch tree, washed herself on one side of it and dried herself on the other; and this time still finer clothes were given to her, and a very beautiful steed. She broke off a branch of the birch tree, struck the hearth with it, so that the seeds flew into the pot, and then hastened to the castle.

Again the King's son came out to meet her, tied her horse to a pillar, and led her into the banqueting hall. At the feast the girl sat next him in the place of honour, as she had done the day before. But the witch's daughter gnawed bones under the table, and the Prince gave her a push by mistake, which broke her leg — he had never noticed her crawling about among the people's feet. She was VERY unlucky!

The good man's daughter hastened home again betimes, but the King's son had smeared the door-posts with tar, and the girl's golden circlet stuck to it. She had not time to look for it, but sprang to the saddle and rode like an arrow to the birch tree. There she left her horse and her fine clothes, and said to her mother: 'I have lost my circlet at the castle; the door-post was tarred, and it stuck fast.'

‘And even had you lost two of them,’ answered her mother, ‘I would give you finer ones.’

Then the girl hastened home, and when her father came home from the feast with the witch, she was in her usual place behind the stove. Then the witch said to her: ‘You poor thing! what is there to see here compared with what WE have seen at the palace? The King’s son carried my daughter from one room to another; he let her fall, ’tis true, and my child’s foot was broken.’

The man’s daughter held her peace all the time, and busied herself about the hearth.

The night passed, and when the day began to dawn, the witch awakened her husband, crying:

‘Hi! get up, old man! We are bidden to the royal banquet.’

So the old man got up. Then the witch gave him the child, saying:

‘Take you the little one; I will give the other girl work to do, else she will weary at home alone.’

She did as usual. This time it was a dish of milk she poured upon the ashes, saying:

‘If you do not get all the milk into the dish again before I come home, you will suffer for it.’

How frightened the girl was this time! She ran to the birch tree, and by its magic power her task was accomplished; and then she rode away to the palace as before. When she got to the courtyard she found the Prince waiting for her. He led her into the hall, where she was highly honoured; but the witch’s daughter sucked the bones under the table, and crouching at the people’s feet she got an eye knocked out, poor thing! Now no one knew any more than before about the good man’s daughter, no one knew whence she came; but the Prince had had the threshold smeared with tar, and as she fled her gold slippers stuck to it. She reached the birch tree, and laying aside her finery, she said: ‘Alas I dear little mother, I have lost my gold slippers!’

‘Let them be,’ was her mother’s reply; ‘if you need them I shall give you finer ones.’

Scarcely was she in her usual place behind the stove when her father came home with the witch. Immediately the witch began to mock her, saying: ‘Ah! you poor thing, there is nothing for you to see here, and WE — ah: what great things we have seen at the palace! My little girl was carried about again, but had the ill-luck to fall and get her eye knocked out. You stupid thing, you, what do you know about anything?’

‘Yes, indeed, what can I know?’ replied the girl; ‘I had enough to do to get the hearth clean.’

Now the Prince had kept all the things the girl had lost, and he soon set about finding the owner of them. For this purpose a great banquet was given on the fourth day, and all the people were invited to the palace. The witch got ready to go too. She tied a wooden beetle on where her child’s foot should have been, a log of wood instead of an arm, and stuck a bit of dirt in the empty socket for an eye, and took the child with her to the castle. When all the people were gathered together, the King’s son stepped in among the crowd and cried: ‘The maiden whose finger this ring slips over, whose head this golden hoop encircles, and whose foot this shoe fits, shall be my bride.’

What a great trying on there was now among them all! The things would fit no one, however.

‘The cinder wench is not here,’ said the Prince at last; ‘go and fetch her, and let her try on the things.’

So the girl was fetched, and the Prince was just going to hand the ornaments to her, when the witch held him back, saying: ‘Don’t give them to her; she soils everything with cinders; give them to my daughter rather.’

Well, then the Prince gave the witch’s daughter the ring, and the woman filed and pared away at her daughter’s finger till the ring fitted. It was the same with the circlet and the shoes of gold. The witch would not allow them to be handed to the cinder wench; she worked at her own daughter’s head and feet till she got the things forced on. What was to be done now? The Prince had to take the witch’s daughter for his bride whether he would or no; he sneaked away to her father’s house with her, however, for he was ashamed to hold the wedding festivities at the palace with so strange a bride. Some days passed, and at last he had to take his bride home to the palace, and he got ready to do so. Just as they were taking leave, the kitchen wench sprang down from her place by the stove, on the pretext of fetching something from the cowhouse, and in going by she whispered in the Prince’s ear as he stood in the yard: ‘Alas! dear Prince, do not rob me of my silver and my gold.’

Thereupon the King’s son recognised the cinder wench; so he took both the girls with him, and set out. After they had gone some little way they came to the bank of a river, and the Prince threw the witch’s daughter across to serve as a bridge, and so got over with the cinder wench. There lay the witch’s daughter then, like a bridge over the river, and could not stir, though her heart was consumed with grief. No help was near, so she cried at last in her anguish: ‘May there grow a golden hemlock out of my body! perhaps my mother will know me by that token.’

Scarcely had she spoken when a golden hemlock sprang up from her, and stood upon the bridge.

Now, as soon as the Prince had got rid of the witch’s daughter he greeted the cinder wench as his bride, and they wandered together to the birch tree which grew upon the mother’s grave. There they received all sorts of treasures and riches, three sacks full of gold, and as much silver, and a splendid steed, which bore them home to the palace. There they lived a long time together, and the young wife bore a son to the Prince. Immediately word was brought to the witch that her daughter had borne a son — for they all believed the young King’s wife to be the witch’s daughter.

‘So, so,’ said the witch to herself; ‘I had better away with my gift for the infant, then.’

And so saying she set out. Thus it happened that she came to the bank of the river, and there she saw the beautiful golden hemlock growing in the middle of the bridge, and when she began to cut it down to take to her grandchild, she heard a voice moaning: ‘Alas! dear mother, do not cut me so!’

‘Are you here?’ demanded the witch.

‘Indeed I am, dear little mother,’ answered the daughter ‘They threw me across the river to make a bridge of me.’

In a moment the witch had the bridge shivered to atoms, and then she hastened away to the palace. Stepping up to the young Queen’s bed, she began to try her magic arts upon her, saying: ‘Spit, you wretch, on the blade of my knife; bewitch my knife’s blade for me, and I shall change you into a reindeer of the forest.’

‘Are you there again to bring trouble upon me?’ said the young woman.

She neither spat nor did anything else, but still the witch changed her into a reindeer, and smuggled her own daughter into her place as the Prince’s wife. But now the child grew restless and cried, because it missed its mother’s care. They took it to the court, and tried to pacify it in every conceivable way, but its crying never ceased.

‘What makes the child so restless?’ asked the Prince, and he went to a wise widow woman to ask her advice.

‘Ay, ay, your own wife is not at home,’ said the widow woman; ‘she is living like a reindeer in the wood; you have the witch’s daughter for a wife now, and the witch herself for a mother-in-law.’

‘Is there any way of getting my own wife back from the wood again?’ asked the Prince.

‘Give me the child,’ answered the widow woman. ‘I’ll take it with me to-morrow when I go to drive the cows to the wood. I’ll make a rustling among the birch leaves and a trembling among the aspens — perhaps the boy will grow quiet when he hears it.’

‘Yes, take the child away, take it to the wood with you to quiet it,’ said the

Prince, and led the widow woman into the castle.

'How now? you are going to send the child away to the wood?' said the witch in a suspicious tone, and tried to interfere.

But the King's son stood firm by what he had commanded, and said:

'Carry the child about the wood; perhaps that will pacify it.'

So the widow woman took the child to the wood. She came to the edge of a marsh, and seeing a herd of reindeer there, she began all at once to sing —

'Little Bright-eyes, little Redskin,
 Come nurse the child you bore!
That bloodthirsty monster,
That man-eater grim,
 Shall nurse him, shall tend him no more.
They may threaten and force as they will,
He turns from her, shrinks from her still,'

and immediately the reindeer drew near, and nursed and tended the child the whole day long; but at nightfall it had to follow the herd, and said to the widow woman: 'Bring me the child to-morrow, and again the following day; after that I must wander with the herd far away to other lands.'

The following morning the widow woman went back to the castle to fetch the child. The witch interfered, of course, but the Prince said: 'Take it, and carry it about in the open air; the boy is quieter at night, to be sure, when he has been in the wood all day.'

So the widow took the child in her arms, and carried it to the marsh in the forest. There she sang as on the preceding day —

'Little Bright-eyes, little Redskin,
 Come nurse the child you bore!
That bloodthirsty monster,
That man-eater grim,
 Shall nurse him, shall tend him no more.
They may threaten and force as they will,
He turns from her, shrinks from her still,'

and immediately the reindeer left the herd and came to the child, and tended it as on the day before. And so it was that the child throve, till not a finer boy was to be seen anywhere. But the King's son had been pondering over all these things, and he said to the widow woman: 'Is there no way of changing the reindeer into a human being again?'

'I don't rightly know,' was her answer. 'Come to the wood with me, however; when the woman puts off her reindeer skin I shall comb her head for her; whilst I am doing so you must burn the skin.'

Thereupon they both went to the wood with the child; scarcely were they there when the reindeer appeared and nursed the child as before. Then the widow woman said to the reindeer: ‘Since you are going far away to-morrow, and I shall not see you again, let me comb your head for the last time, as a remembrance of you.’

Good; the young woman stript off the reindeer skin, and let the widow woman do as she wished. In the meantime the King’s son threw the reindeer skin into the fire unobserved.

‘What smells of singeing here?’ asked the young woman, and looking round she saw her own husband. ‘Woe is me! you have burnt my skin. Why did you do that?’

‘To give you back your human form again.’

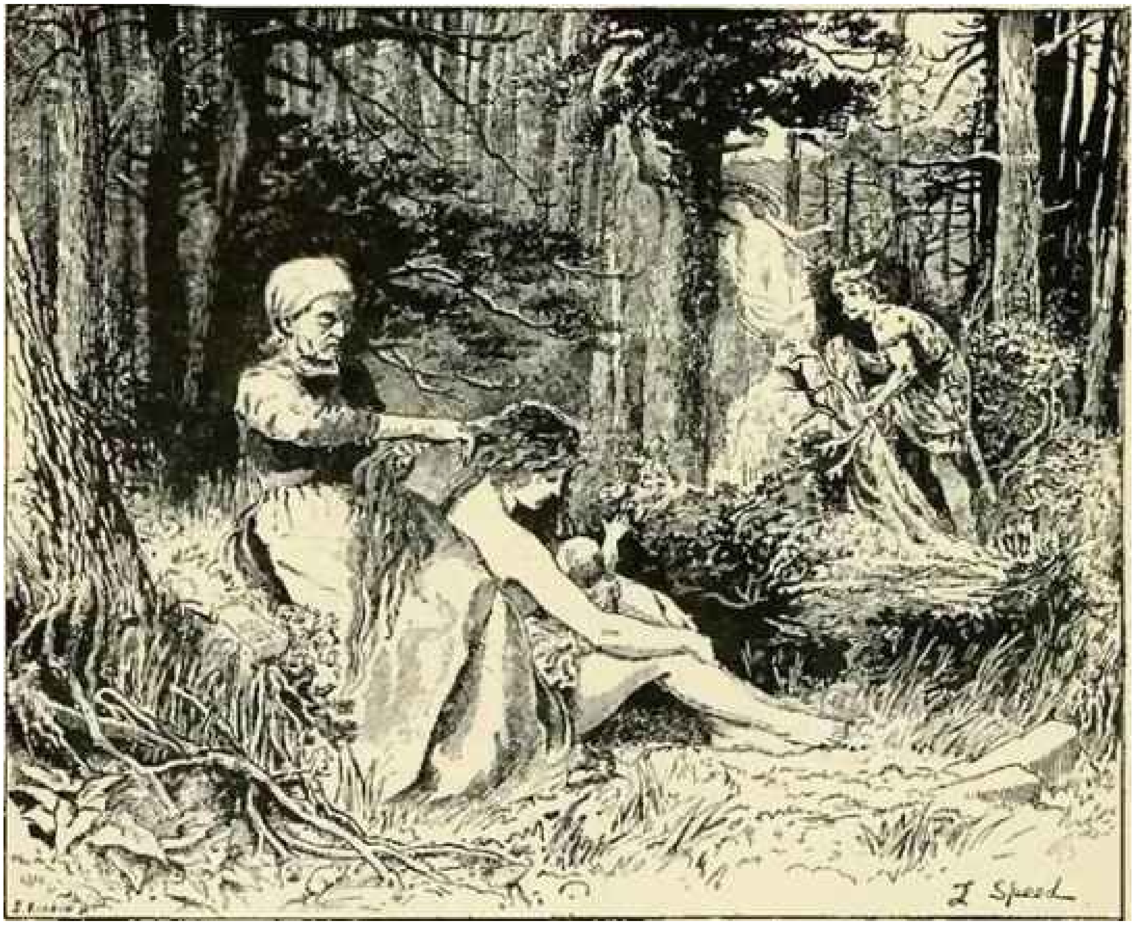

‘Alack-a-day! I have nothing to cover me now, poor creature that I am!’ cried the young woman, and transformed herself first into a distaff, then into a wooden beetle, then into a spindle, and into all imaginable shapes. But all these shapes the King’s son went on destroying till she stood before him in human form again.

Alas! wherefore take me home with you again,’ cried the young woman, ‘since the witch is sure to eat me up?’

‘She will not eat you up,’ answered her husband; and they started for home with the child.

But when the witch wife saw them she ran away with her daughter, and if she has not stopped she is running still, though at a great age. And the Prince, and his wife, and the baby lived happy ever afterwards.(9) (9) From the Russo-Karelian.

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

JACK SELLS THE COW

ONCE upon a time there was a poor widow who lived in a little cottage with her only son Jack.

Jack was a giddy, thoughtless boy, but very kind-hearted and affectionate. There had been a hard winter, and after it the poor woman had suffered from fever and ague. Jack did no work as yet, and by degrees they grew dreadfully poor. The widow saw that there was no means of keeping Jack and herself from starvation but by selling her cow; so one morning she said to her son, ‘I am too weak to go myself, Jack, so you must take the cow to market for me, and sell her.’

Jack liked going to market to sell the cow very much; but as he was on the way, he met a butcher who had some beautiful beans in his hand. Jack stopped to look at them, and the butcher told the boy that they were of great value, and persuaded the silly lad to sell the cow for these beans.

When he brought them home to his mother instead of the money she expected for her nice cow, she was very vexed and shed many tears, scolding Jack for his folly. He was very sorry, and mother and son went to bed very sadly that night; their last hope seemed gone.

At daybreak Jack rose and went out into the garden.

‘At least,’ he thought, ‘I will sow the wonderful beans. Mother says that they are just common scarlet-runners, and nothing else; but I may as well sow them.’

So he took a piece of stick, and made some holes in the ground, and put in the beans.

That day they had very little dinner, and went sadly to bed, knowing that for the next day there would be none and Jack, unable to sleep from grief and vexation, got up at day-dawn and went out into the garden.

What was his amazement to find that the beans had grown up in the night, and climbed up and up till they covered the high cliff that sheltered the cottage, and disappeared above it! The stalks had twined and twisted themselves together till they formed quite a ladder.

‘It would be easy to climb it,’ thought Jack.

And, having thought of the experiment, he at once resolved to carry it out, for Jack was a good climber. However, after his late mistake about the cow, he thought he had better consult his mother first.

WONDERFUL GROWTH OF THE BEANSTALK

So Jack called his mother, and they both gazed in silent wonder at the Beanstalk, which was not only of great height, but was thick enough to bear Jack’s weight.

‘I wonder where it ends,’ said Jack to his mother; ‘I think I will climb up and see.’

His mother wished him not to venture up this strange ladder, but Jack coaxed her to give her consent to the attempt, for he was certain there must be something wonderful in the Beanstalk; so at last she yielded to his wishes.

Jack instantly began to climb, and went up and up on the ladder-like bean till everything he had left behind him — the cottage, the village, and even the tall church tower — looked quite little, and still he could not see the top of the Beanstalk.

Jack felt a little tired, and thought for a moment that he would go back again; but he was a very persevering boy, and he knew that the way to succeed in anything is not to give up. So after resting for a moment he went on.

After climbing higher and higher, till he grew afraid to look down for fear he should be giddy, Jack at last reached the top of the Beanstalk, and found himself in a beautiful country, finely wooded, with beautiful meadows covered with sheep. A crystal stream ran through the pastures; not far from the place where he had got off the Beanstalk stood a fine, strong castle.

Jack wondered very much that he had never heard of or seen this castle before; but when he reflected on the subject, he saw that it was as much separated from the village by the perpendicular rock on which it stood as if it were in another land.

While Jack was standing looking at the castle, a very strange-looking woman came out of the wood, and advanced towards him.

She wore a pointed cap of quilted red satin turned up with ermine, her hair streamed loose over her shoulders, and she walked with a staff. Jack took off his cap and made her a bow.

‘If you please, ma’am,’ said he, ‘is this your house?’

‘No,’ said the old lady. ‘Listen, and I will tell you the story of that castle.

‘Once upon a time there was a noble knight, who lived in this castle, which is on the borders of Fairyland. He had a fair and beloved wife and several lovely children: and as his neighbours, the little people, were very friendly towards him, they bestowed on him many excellent and precious gifts.

‘Rumour whispered of these treasures; and a monstrous giant, who lived at no great distance, and who was a very wicked being, resolved to obtain possession of them.

‘So he bribed a false servant to let him inside the castle, when the knight was in bed and asleep, and he killed him as he lay. Then he went to the part of the castle which was the nursery, and also killed all the poor little ones he found there.

‘Happily for her, the lady was not to be found. She had gone with her infant son, who was only two or three months old, to visit her old nurse, who lived in the valley; and she had been detained all night there by a storm.

‘The next morning, as soon as it was light, one of the servants at the castle, who had managed to escape, came to tell the poor lady of the sad fate of her husband and her pretty babes. She could scarcely believe him at first, and was eager at once to go back and share the fate of her dear ones; but the old nurse, with many tears, besought her to remember that she had still a child, and that it was her duty to preserve her life for the sake of the poor innocent.

‘The lady yielded to this reasoning, and consented to remain at her nurse’s house as the best place of concealment; for the servant told her that the giant had vowed, if he could find her, he would kill both her and her baby. Years rolled on. The old nurse died, leaving her cottage and the few articles of furniture it contained to her poor lady, who dwelt in it, working as a peasant for her daily bread. Her spinning-wheel and the milk of a cow, which she had purchased with the little money she had with her, sufficed for the scanty subsistence of herself and her little son. There was a nice little garden attached to the cottage, in which they cultivated peas, beans, and cabbages, and the lady was not ashamed to go out at harvest time, and glean in the fields to supply her little son’s wants.

‘Jack, that poor lady is your mother. This castle was once your father’s, and must again be yours.’

Jack uttered a cry of surprise.

‘My mother! oh, madam, what ought I to do? My poor father! My dear mother!’

‘Your duty requires you to win it back for your mother. But the task is a very difficult one, and full of peril, Jack. Have you courage to undertake it?’

‘I fear nothing when I am doing right,’ said Jack.

‘Then,’ said the lady in the red cap, ‘you are one of those who slay giants. You must get into the castle, and if possible possess yourself of a hen that lays golden eggs, and a harp that talks. Remember, all the giant possesses is really yours.’ As she ceased speaking, the lady of the red hat suddenly disappeared, and of course Jack knew she was a fairy.

Jack determined at once to attempt the adventure; so he advanced, and blew the horn which hung at the castle portal. The door was opened in a minute or two by a frightful giantess, with one great eye in the middle of her forehead.

As soon as Jack saw her he turned to run away, but she caught him, and dragged him into the castle.

‘Ho, ho!’ she laughed terribly. ‘You didn’t expect to see me here, that is clear! No, I shan’t let you go again. I am weary of my life. I am so overworked, and I don’t see why I should not have a page as well as other ladies. And you shall be my boy. You shall clean the knives, and black the boots, and make the fires, and help me generally when the giant is out. When he is at home I must hide you, for he has eaten up all my pages hitherto, and you would be a dainty morsel, my little lad.’

While she spoke she dragged Jack right into the castle. The poor boy was very much frightened, as I am sure you and I would have been in his place. But he remembered that fear disgraces a man; so he struggled to be brave and make the best of things.

‘I am quite ready to help you, and do all I can to serve you, madam,’ he said, ‘only I beg you will be good enough to hide me from your husband, for I should not like to be eaten at all.’

‘That’s a good boy,’ said the Giantess, nodding her head; ‘it is lucky for you that you did not scream out when you saw me, as the other boys who have been here did, for if you had done so my husband would have awakened and have eaten you, as he did them, for breakfast. Come here, child; go into my wardrobe: he never ventures to open THAT; you will be safe there.’

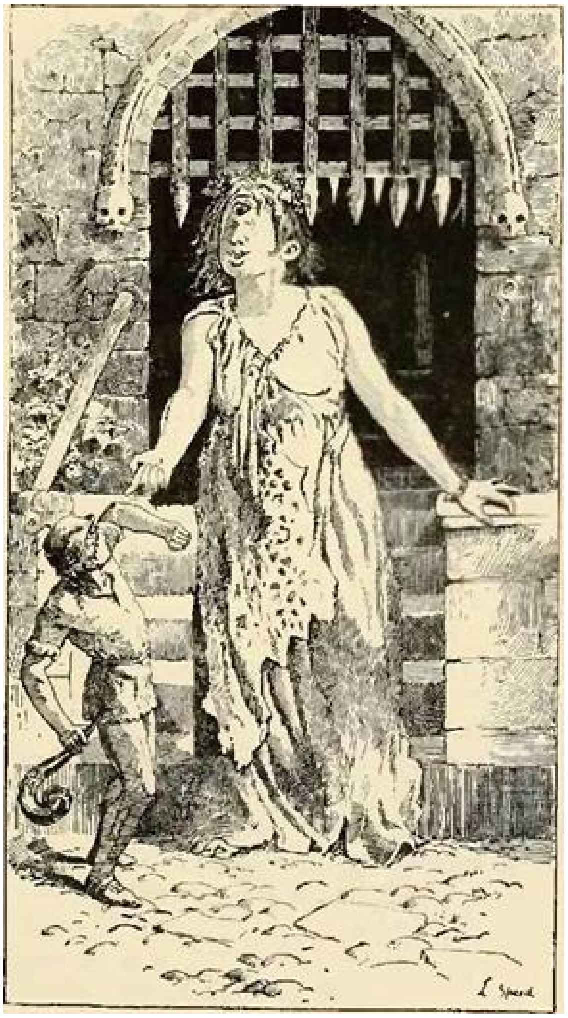

And she opened a huge wardrobe which stood in the great hall, and shut him into it. But the keyhole was so large that it admitted plenty of air, and he could see everything that took place through it. By-and-by he heard a heavy tramp on the stairs, like the lumbering along of a great cannon, and then a voice like thunder cried out;

‘Fe, fa, fi-fo-fum,
I smell the breath of an Englishman.
Let him be alive or let him be dead,
I’ll grind his bones to make my bread.’

‘Wife,’ cried the Giant, ‘there is a man in the castle. Let me have him for breakfast.’

‘You are grown old and stupid,’ cried the lady in her loud tones. ‘It is only a nice fresh steak off an elephant, that I have cooked for you, which you smell. There, sit down and make a good breakfast.’

And she placed a huge dish before him of savoury steaming meat, which greatly pleased him, and made him forget his idea of an Englishman being in the castle. When he had breakfasted he went out for a walk; and then the Giantess opened the door, and made Jack come out to help her. He helped her all day. She fed him well, and when evening came put him back in the wardrobe.

THE HEN THAT LAYS GOLDEN EGGS.

The Giant came in to supper. Jack watched him through the keyhole, and was amazed to see him pick a wolf's bone, and put half a fowl at a time into his capacious mouth.

When the supper was ended he bade his wife bring him his hen that laid the golden eggs.

'It lays as well as it did when it belonged to that paltry knight,' he said; 'indeed I think the eggs are heavier than ever.'

The Giantess went away, and soon returned with a little brown hen, which she placed on the table before her husband. 'And now, my dear,' she said, 'I am going for a walk, if you don't want me any longer.'

'Go,' said the Giant; 'I shall be glad to have a nap by-and-by.'

Then he took up the brown hen and said to her:

'Lay!' And she instantly laid a golden egg.

'Lay!' said the Giant again. And she laid another.

'Lay!' he repeated the third time. And again a golden egg lay on the table.

Now Jack was sure this hen was that of which the fairy had spoken.

By-and-by the Giant put the hen down on the floor, and soon after went fast asleep, snoring so loud that it sounded like thunder.

Directly Jack perceived that the Giant was fast asleep, he pushed open the door of the wardrobe and crept out; very softly he stole across the room, and, picking up the hen, made haste to quit the apartment. He knew the way to the kitchen, the door of which he found was left ajar; he opened it, shut and locked it after him, and flew back to the Beanstalk, which he descended as fast as his feet would move.

When his mother saw him enter the house she wept for joy, for she had feared that the fairies had carried him away, or that the Giant had found him. But Jack put the brown hen down before her, and told her how he had been in the Giant's castle, and all his adventures. She was very glad to see the hen, which would make them rich once more.

THE MONEY BAGS.

Jack made another journey up the Beanstalk to the Giant's castle one day while his mother had gone to market; but first he dyed his hair and disguised himself. The old woman did not know him again, and dragged him in as she had done before, to help her to do the work; but she heard her husband coming, and hid him in the wardrobe, not thinking that it was the same boy who had stolen the hen. She bade him stay quite still there, or the Giant would eat him.

Then the Giant came in saying:

‘Fe, fa, fi-fo-fum, I smell the breath of an Englishman. Let him be alive or let him be dead, I’ll grind his bones to make my bread.’

‘Nonsense!’ said the wife, ‘it is only a roasted bullock that I thought would be a tit-bit for your supper; sit down and I will bring it up at once.’ The Giant sat down, and soon his wife brought up a roasted bullock on a large dish, and they began their supper. Jack was amazed to see them pick the bones of the bullock as if it had been a lark. As soon as they had finished their meal, the Giantess rose and said:

‘Now, my dear, with your leave I am going up to my room to finish the story I am reading. If you want me call for me.’

‘First,’ answered the Giant, ‘bring me my money bags, that I may count my golden pieces before I sleep.’ The Giantess obeyed. She went and soon returned with two large bags over her shoulders, which she put down by her husband.

‘There,’ she said; ‘that is all that is left of the knight’s money. When you have spent it you must go and take another baron’s castle.’

‘That he shan’t, if I can help it,’ thought Jack.

The Giant, when his wife was gone, took out heaps and heaps of golden pieces, and counted them, and put them in piles, till he was tired of the amusement. Then he swept them all back into their bags, and leaning back in his chair fell fast asleep, snoring so loud that no other sound was audible.

Jack stole softly out of the wardrobe, and taking up the bags of money (which were his very own, because the Giant had stolen them from his father), he ran off, and with great difficulty descending the Beanstalk, laid the bags of gold on his mother’s table. She had just returned from town, and was crying at not finding Jack.

‘There, mother, I have brought you the gold that my father lost.’

‘Oh, Jack! you are a very good boy, but I wish you would not risk your precious life in the Giant’s castle. Tell me how you came to go there again.’

And Jack told her all about it.

Jack’s mother was very glad to get the money, but she did not like him to run any risk for her.

But after a time Jack made up his mind to go again to the Giant’s castle.

THE TALKING HARP.

So he climbed the Beanstalk once more, and blew the horn at the Giant’s gate. The Giantess soon opened the door; she was very stupid, and did not know him again, but she stopped a minute before she took him in. She feared another robbery; but Jack’s fresh face looked so innocent that she could not resist him, and so she bade him come in, and again hid him away in the wardrobe.

By-and-by the Giant came home, and as soon as he had crossed the threshold he roared out:

'Fe, fa, fi-fo-fum, I smell the breath of an Englishman. Let him be alive or let him be dead, I'll grind his bones to make my bread.'

'You stupid old Giant,' said his wife, 'you only smell a nice sheep, which I have grilled for your dinner.'

And the Giant sat down, and his wife brought up a whole sheep for his dinner. When he had eaten it all up, he said:

'Now bring me my harp, and I will have a little music while you take your walk.'

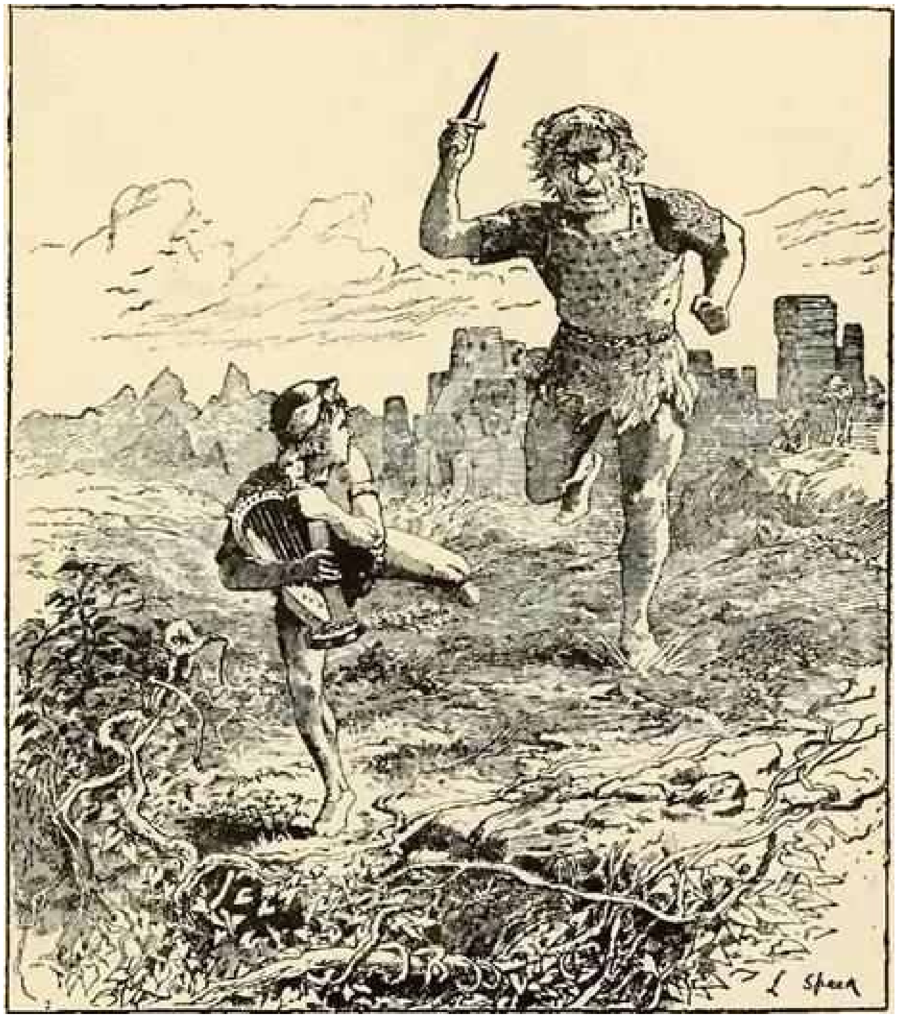

The Giantess obeyed, and returned with a beautiful harp. The framework was all sparkling with diamonds and rubies, and the strings were all of gold.

'This is one of the nicest things I took from the knight,' said the Giant. 'I am very fond of music, and my harp is a faithful servant.’

So he drew the harp towards him, and said:

‘Play!’

And the harp played a very soft, sad air.

‘Play something merrier!’ said the Giant.

And the harp played a merry tune.

‘Now play me a lullaby,’ roared the Giant; and the harp played a sweet lullaby, to the sound of which its master fell asleep.

Then Jack stole softly out of the wardrobe, and went into the huge kitchen to see if the Giantess had gone out; he found no one there, so he went to the door and opened it softly, for he thought he could not do so with the harp in his hand.

Then he entered the Giant’s room and seized the harp and ran away with it; but as he jumped over the threshold the harp called out:

‘MASTER! MASTER!’

And the Giant woke up.

With a tremendous roar he sprang from his seat, and in two strides had reached the door.

But Jack was very nimble. He fled like lightning with the harp, talking to it as he went (for he saw it was a fairy), and telling it he was the son of its old master, the knight.

Still the Giant came on so fast that he was quite close to poor Jack, and had stretched out his great hand to catch him. But, luckily, just at that moment he stepped upon a loose stone, stumbled, and fell flat on the ground, where he lay at his full length.

This accident gave Jack time to get on the Beanstalk and hasten down it; but just as he reached their own garden he beheld the Giant descending after him.

‘Mother I mother!’ cried Jack, ‘make haste and give me the axe.’

His mother ran to him with a hatchet in her hand, and Jack with one tremendous blow cut through all the Beanstalks except one.

‘Now, mother, stand out of the way!’ said he.

THE GIANT BREAKS HIS NECK.

Jack’s mother shrank back, and it was well she did so, for just as the Giant took hold of the last branch of the Beanstalk, Jack cut the stem quite through and darted from the spot.

Down came the Giant with a terrible crash, and as he fell on his head, he broke his neck, and lay dead at the feet of the woman he had so much injured.

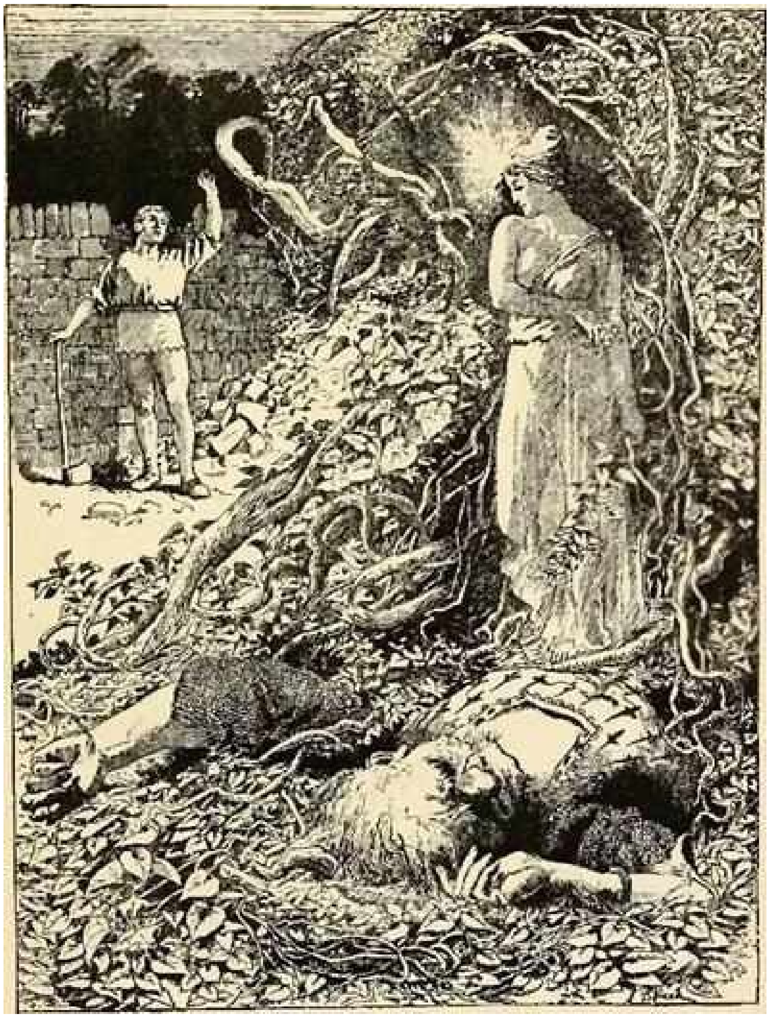

Before Jack and his mother had recovered from their alarm and agitation, a beautiful lady stood before them.

‘Jack,’ said she, ‘you have acted like a brave knight’s son, and deserve to have your inheritance restored to you. Dig a grave and bury the Giant, and then go and kill the Giantess.’

‘But,’ said Jack, ‘I could not kill anyone unless I were fighting with him; and I could not draw my sword upon a woman. Moreover, the Giantess was very kind to me.’

The Fairy smiled on Jack.

‘I am very much pleased with your generous feeling,’ she said. ‘Nevertheless, return to the castle, and act as you will find needful.’

Jack asked the Fairy if she would show him the way to the castle, as the Beanstalk was now down. She told him that she would drive him there in her chariot, which was drawn by two peacocks. Jack thanked her, and sat down in the chariot with her.

The Fairy drove him a long distance round, till they reached a village which lay at the bottom of the hill. Here they found a number of miserable-looking men assembled. The Fairy stopped her carriage and addressed them:

‘My friends,’ said she, ‘the cruel giant who oppressed you and ate up all your flocks and herds is dead, and this young gentleman was the means of your being delivered from him, and is the son of your kind old master, the knight.’

The men gave a loud cheer at these words, and pressed forward to say that they would serve Jack as faithfully as they had served his father. The Fairy bade them follow her to the castle, and they marched thither in a body, and Jack blew the horn and demanded admittance.

The old Giantess saw them coming from the turret loop-hole. She was very much frightened, for she guessed that something had happened to her husband; and as she came downstairs very fast she caught her foot in her dress, and fell from the top to the bottom and broke her neck.

When the people outside found that the door was not opened to them, they took crowbars and forced the portal. Nobody was to be seen, but on leaving the hall they found the body of the Giantess at the foot of the stairs.

Thus Jack took possession of the castle. The Fairy went and brought his mother to him, with the hen and the harp. He had the Giantess buried, and endeavoured as much as lay in his power to do right to those whom the Giant had robbed.

Before her departure for fairyland, the Fairy explained to Jack that she had sent the butcher to meet him with the beans, in order to try what sort of lad he was.

If you had looked at the gigantic Beanstalk and only stupidly wondered about it,’ she said, ‘I should have left you where misfortune had placed you, only restoring her cow to your mother. But you showed an inquiring mind, and great courage and enterprise, therefore you deserve to rise; and when you mounted the Beanstalk you climbed the Ladder of Fortune.’

She then took her leave of Jack and his mother.

THE LITTLE GOOD MOUSE

ONCE upon a time there lived a King and Queen who loved each other so much that they were never happy unless they were together. Day after day they went out hunting or fishing; night after night they went to balls or to the opera; they sang, and danced, and ate sugar-plums, and were the gayest of the gay, and all their subjects followed their example so that the kingdom was called the Joyous Land. Now in the next kingdom everything was as different as it could possibly be. The King was sulky and savage, and never enjoyed himself at all. He looked so ugly and cross that all his subjects feared him, and he hated the very sight of a cheerful face; so if he ever caught anyone smiling he had his head cut off that very minute. This kingdom was very appropriately called the Land of Tears. Now when this wicked King heard of the happiness of the Jolly King, he was so jealous that he collected a great army and set out to fight him, and the news of his approach was soon brought to the King and Queen. The Queen, when she heard of it, was frightened out of her wits, and began to cry bitterly. 'Sire,' she said, 'let us collect all our riches and run away as far as ever we can, to the other side of the world.'

But the King answered:

'Fie, madam! I am far too brave for that. It is better to die than to be a coward.'

Then he assembled all his armed men, and after bidding the Queen a tender farewell, he mounted his splendid horse and rode away. When he was lost to sight the Queen could do nothing but weep, and wring her hands, and cry.

'Alas! If the King is killed, what will become of me and of my little daughter?' and she was so sorrowful that she could neither eat nor sleep.

The King sent her a letter every day, but at last, one morning, as she looked out of the palace window, she saw a messenger approaching in hot haste.

'What news, courier? What news?' cried the Queen, and he answered:

'The battle is lost and the King is dead, and in another moment the enemy will be here.'

The poor Queen fell back insensible, and all her ladies carried her to bed, and stood round her weeping and wailing. Then began a tremendous noise and confusion, and they knew that the enemy had arrived, and very soon they heard the King himself stamping about the palace seeking the Queen. Then her ladies put the little Princess into her arms, and covered her up, head and all, in the bedclothes, and ran for their lives, and the poor Queen lay there shaking, and hoping she would not be found. But very soon the wicked King clattered into the room, and in a fury because the Queen would not answer when he called to her, he tore back her silken coverings and tweaked off her lace cap, and when all her lovely hair came tumbling down over her shoulders, he wound it three times round his hand and threw her over his shoulder, where he carried her like a sack of flour.

The poor Queen held her little daughter safe in her arms and shrieked for mercy, but the wicked King only mocked her, and begged her to go on shrieking, as it amused him, and so mounted his great black horse, and rode back to his own country. When he got there he declared that he would have the Queen and the little Princess hanged on the nearest tree; but his courtiers said that seemed a pity, for when the baby grew up she would be a very nice wife for the King's only son.

The King was rather pleased with this idea, and shut the Queen up in the highest room of a tall tower, which was very tiny, and miserably furnished with a table and a very hard bed upon the floor. Then he sent for a fairy who lived near his kingdom, and after receiving her with more politeness than he generally showed, and entertaining her at a sumptuous feast, he took her up to see the Queen. The fairy was so touched by the sight of her misery that when she kissed her hand she whispered:

'Courage, madam! I think I see a way to help you.'

The Queen, a little comforted by these words, received her graciously, and begged her to take pity upon the poor little Princess, who had met with such a sudden reverse of fortune. But the King got very cross when he saw them whispering together, and cried harshly:

'Make an end of these fine speeches, madam. I brought you here to tell me if the child will grow up pretty and fortunate.'

Then the Fairy answered that the Princess would be as pretty, and clever, and well brought up as it was possible to be, and the old King growled to the Queen that it was lucky for her that it was so, as they would certainly have been hanged if it were otherwise. Then he stamped off, taking the Fairy with him, and leaving the poor Queen in tears.

'How can I wish my little daughter to grow up pretty if she is to be married to that horrid little dwarf, the King's son,' she said to herself, 'and yet, if she is ugly we shall both be killed. If I could only hide her away somewhere, so that the cruel King could never find her.'

As the days went on, the Queen and the little Princess grew thinner and thinner, for their hard-hearted gaoler gave them every day only three boiled peas and a tiny morsel of black bread, so they were always terribly hungry. At last, one evening, as the Queen sat at her spinning-wheel — for the King was so avaricious that she was made to work day and night — she saw a tiny, pretty little mouse creep out of a hole, and said to it:

‘Alas, little creature! what are you coming to look for here? I only have three peas for my day’s provision, so unless you wish to fast you must go elsewhere.’

But the mouse ran hither and thither, and danced and capered so prettily, that at last the Queen gave it her last pea, which she was keeping for her supper, saying: ‘Here, little one, eat it up; I have nothing better to offer you, but I give this willingly in return for the amusement I have had from you.’

She had hardly spoken when she saw upon the table a delicious little roast partridge, and two dishes of preserved fruit. ‘Truly,’ said she, ‘a kind action never goes unrewarded; ‘and she and the little Princess ate their supper with great satisfaction, and then the Queen gave what was left to the little mouse, who danced better than ever afterwards. The next morning came the gaoler with the Queen’s allowance of three peas, which he brought in upon a large dish to make them look smaller; but as soon as he set it down the little mouse came and ate up all three, so that when the Queen wanted her dinner there was nothing left for her. Then she was quite provoked, and said:

‘What a bad little beast that mouse must be! If it goes on like this I shall be starved.’ But when she glanced at the dish again it was covered with all sorts of nice things to eat, and the Queen made a very good dinner, and was gayer than usual over it. But afterwards as she sat at her spinning-wheel she began to consider what would happen if the little Princess did not grow up pretty enough to please the King, and she said to herself:

‘Oh! if I could only think of some way of escaping.’

As she spoke she saw the little mouse playing in a corner with some long straws. The Queen took them and began to plait them, saying:

‘If only I had straws enough I would make a basket with them, and let my baby down in it from the window to any kind passer-by who would take care of her.’

By the time the straws were all plaited the little mouse had dragged in more and more, until the Queen had plenty to make her basket, and she worked at it day and night, while the little mouse danced for her amusement; and at dinner and supper time the Queen gave it the three peas and the bit of black bread, and always found something good in the dish in their place. She really could not imagine where all the nice things came from. At last one day when the basket was finished, the Queen was looking out of the window to see how long a cord she must make to lower it to the bottom of the tower, when she noticed a little old woman who was leaning upon her stick and looking up at her. Presently she said:

‘I know your trouble, madam. If you like I will help you.’

‘Oh! my dear friend,’ said the Queen. ‘If you really wish to be of use to me you will come at the time that I will appoint, and I will let down my poor little baby in a basket. If you will take her, and bring her up for me, when I am rich I will reward you splendidly.’

‘I don’t care about the reward,’ said the old woman, ‘but there is one thing I should like. You must know that I am very particular about what I eat, and if there is one thing that I fancy above all others, it is a plump, tender little mouse. If there is such a thing in your garret just throw it down to me, and in return I will promise that your little daughter shall be well taken care of.’

The Queen when she heard this began to cry, but made no answer, and the old woman after waiting a few minutes asked her what was the matter.

‘Why,’ said the Queen, ‘there is only one mouse in this garret, and that is such a dear, pretty little thing that I cannot bear to think of its being killed.’

‘What!’ cried the old woman, in a rage. ‘Do you care more for a miserable mouse than for your own baby? Good-bye, madam! I leave you to enjoy its company, and for my own part I thank my stars that I can get plenty of mice without troubling you to give them to me.’

And she hobbled off grumbling and growling. As to the Queen, she was so disappointed that, in spite of finding a better dinner than usual, and seeing the little mouse dancing in its merriest mood, she could do nothing but cry. That night when her baby was fast asleep she packed it into the basket, and wrote on a slip of paper, ‘This unhappy little girl is called Delicia!’ This she pinned to its robe, and then very sadly she was shutting the basket, when in sprang the little mouse and sat on the baby’s pillow.

‘Ah! little one,’ said the Queen, ‘it cost me dear to save your life. How shall I know now whether my Delicia is being taken care of or no? Anyone else would have let the greedy old woman have you, and eat you up, but I could not bear to do it.’ Whereupon the Mouse answered:

‘Believe me, madam, you will never repent of your kindness.’

The Queen was immensely astonished when the Mouse began to speak, and still more so when she saw its little sharp nose turn to a beautiful face, and its paws to hands and feet; then it suddenly grew tall, and the Queen recognised the Fairy who had come with the wicked King to visit her.

The Fairy smiled at her astonished look, and said:

‘I wanted to see if you were faithful and capable of feeling a real friendship for me, for you see we fairies are rich in everything but friends, and those are hard to find.’

‘It is not possible that YOU should want for friends, you charming creature,’ said the Queen, kissing her.

‘Indeed it is so,’ the Fairy said. ‘For those who are only friendly with me for their own advantage, I do not count at all. But when you cared for the poor little mouse you could not have known there was anything to be gained by it, and to try you further I took the form of the old woman whom you talked to from the window, and then I was convinced that you really loved me.’ Then, turning to the little Princess, she kissed her rosy lips three times, saying:

‘Dear little one, I promise that you shall be richer than your father, and shall live a hundred years, always pretty and happy, without fear of old age and wrinkles.’

The Queen, quite delighted, thanked the Fairy gratefully, and begged her to take charge of the little Delicia and bring her up as her own daughter. This she agreed to do, and then they shut the basket and lowered it carefully, baby and all, to the ground at the foot of the tower. The Fairy then changed herself back into the form of a mouse, and this delayed her a few seconds, after which she ran nimbly down the straw rope, but only to find when she got to the bottom that the baby had disappeared.

In the greatest terror she ran up again to the Queen, crying:

‘All is lost! my enemy Cancaline has stolen the Princess away. You must know that she is a cruel fairy who hates me, and as she is older than I am and has more power, I can do nothing against her. I know no way of rescuing Delicia from her clutches.’

When the Queen heard this terrible news she was heart-broken, and begged the Fairy to do all she could to get the poor little Princess back again. At this moment in came the gaoler, and when he missed the little Princess he at once told the King, who came in a great fury asking what the Queen had done with her. She answered that a fairy, whose name she did not know, had come and carried her off by force. Upon this the King stamped upon the ground, and cried in a terrible voice:

‘You shall be hung! I always told you you should.’ And without another word he dragged the unlucky Queen out into the nearest wood, and climbed up into a tree to look for a branch to which he could hang her. But when he was quite high up, the Fairy, who had made herself invisible and followed them, gave him a sudden push, which made him lose his footing and fall to the ground with a crash and break four of his teeth, and while he was trying to mend them the fairy carried the Queen off in her flying chariot to a beautiful castle, where she was so kind to her that but for the loss of Delicia the Queen would have been perfectly happy. But though the good little mouse did her very utmost, they could not find out where Cancaline had hidden the little Princess.

Thus fifteen years went by, and the Queen had somewhat recovered from her grief, when the news reached her that the son of the wicked King wished to marry the little maiden who kept the turkeys, and that she had refused him; the wedding-dresses had been made, nevertheless, and the festivities were to be so splendid that all the people for leagues round were flocking in to be present at them. The Queen felt quite curious about a little turkey-maiden who did not wish to be a Queen, so the little mouse conveyed herself to the poultry-yard to find out what she was like.

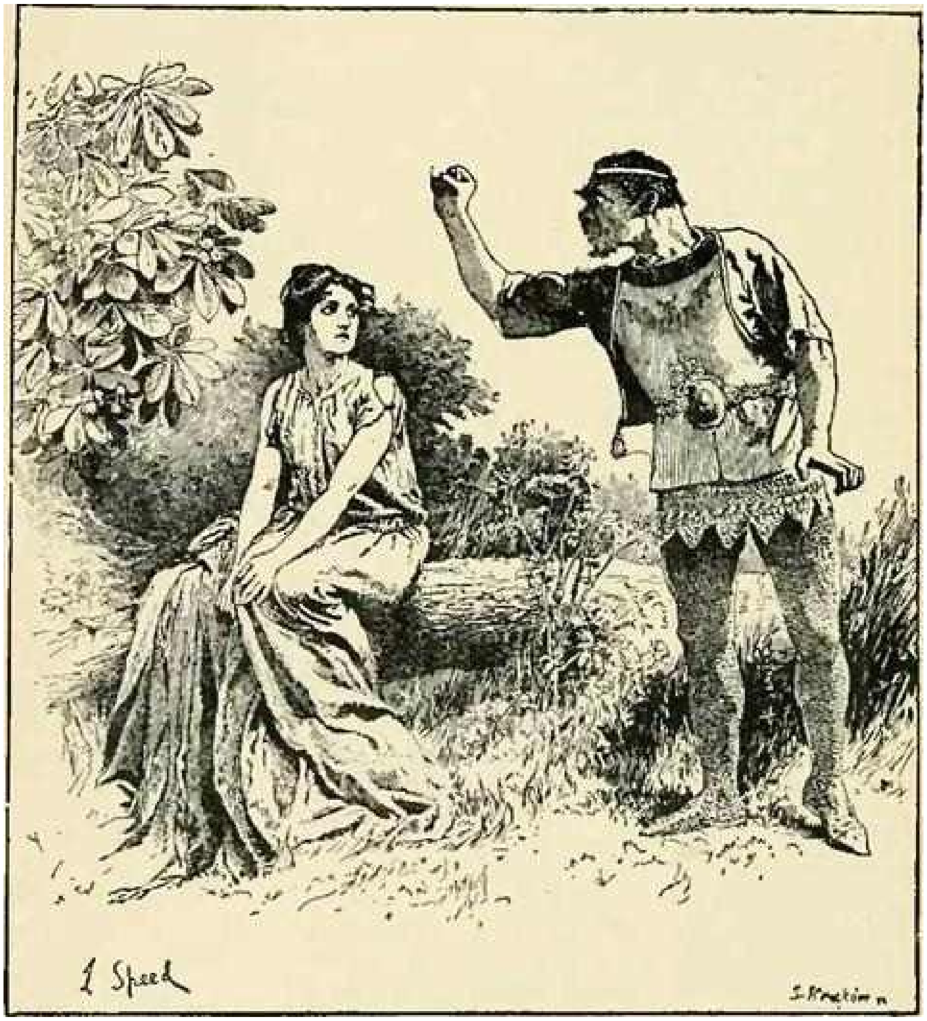

She found the turkey-maiden sitting upon a big stone, barefooted, and miserably dressed in an old, coarse linen gown and cap; the ground at her feet was all strewn with robes of gold and silver, ribbons and laces, diamonds and pearls, over which the turkeys were stalking to and fro, while the King’s ugly, disagreeable son stood opposite her, declaring angrily that if she would not marry him she should be killed.

The Turkey-maiden answered proudly:

‘I never will marry you I you are too ugly and too much like your cruel father. Leave me in peace with my turkeys, which I like far better than all your fine gifts.’

The little mouse watched her with the greatest admiration, for she was as beautiful as the spring; and as soon as the wicked Prince was gone, she took the form of an old peasant woman and said to her:

‘Good day, my pretty one! you have a fine flock of turkeys there.’

The young Turkey-maiden turned her gentle eyes upon the old woman, and answered:

‘Yet they wish me to leave them to become a miserable Queen! what is your advice upon the matter?’

‘My child,’ said the Fairy, ‘a crown is a very pretty thing, but you know neither the price nor the weight of it.’

‘I know so well that I have refused to wear one,’ said the little maiden, ‘though I don’t know who was my father, or who was my mother, and I have not a friend in the world.’

‘You have goodness and beauty, which are of more value than ten kingdoms,’ said the wise Fairy. ‘But tell me, child, how came you here, and how is it you have neither father, nor mother, nor friend?’

‘A Fairy called Cancaline is the cause of my being here,’ answered she, ‘for while I lived with her I got nothing but blows and harsh words, until at last I could bear it no longer, and ran away from her without knowing where I was going, and as I came through a wood the wicked Prince met me, and offered to give me charge of the poultry-yard. I accepted gladly, not knowing that I should have to see him day by day. And now he wants to marry me, but that I will never consent to.’

Upon hearing this the Fairy became convinced that the little Turkey-maiden was none other than the Princess Delicia.

‘What is your name, my little one?’ said she.

‘I am called Delicia, if it please you,’ she answered.

Then the Fairy threw her arms round the Princess’s neck, and nearly smothered her with kisses, saying:

‘Ah, Delicia! I am a very old friend of yours, and I am truly glad to find you at last; but you might look nicer than you do in that old gown, which is only fit for a kitchen-maid. Take this pretty dress and let us see the difference it will make.’

So Delicia took off the ugly cap, and shook out all her fair shining hair, and bathed her hands and face in clear water from the nearest spring till her cheeks were like roses, and when she was adorned with the diamonds and the splendid robe the Fairy had given her, she looked the most beautiful Princess in the world, and the Fairy with great delight cried:

‘Now you look as you ought to look, Delicia: what do you think about it yourself?’

And Delicia answered:

‘I feel as if I were the daughter of some great king.’

‘And would you be glad if you were?’ said the Fairy.

‘Indeed I should,’ answered she.

‘Ah, well,’ said the Fairy, ‘to-morrow I may have some pleasant news for you.’

So she hurried back to her castle, where the Queen sat busy with her embroidery, and cried:

‘Well, madam! will you wager your thimble and your golden needle that I am bringing you the best news you could possibly hear?’

‘Alas!’ sighed the Queen, ‘since the death of the Jolly King and the loss of my Delicia, all the news in the world is not worth a pin to me.

‘There, there, don’t be melancholy,’ said the Fairy. ‘I assure you the Princess is quite well, and I have never seen her equal for beauty. She might be a Queen to-morrow if she chose; ‘and then she told all that had happened, and the Queen first rejoiced over the thought of Delicia’s beauty, and then wept at the idea of her being a Turkey-maiden.

‘I will not hear of her being made to marry the wicked King’s son,’ she said. ‘Let us go at once and bring her here.’

In the meantime the wicked Prince, who was very angry with Delicia, had sat himself down under a tree, and cried and howled with rage and spite until the King heard him, and cried out from the window:

‘What is the matter with you, that you are making all this disturbance?’

The Prince replied:

‘It is all because our Turkey-maiden will not love me!’

‘Won’t love you? eh!’ said the King. ‘We’ll very soon see about that!’ So he called his guards and told them to go and fetch Delicia. ‘See if I don’t make her change her mind pretty soon!’ said the wicked King with a chuckle.

Then the guards began to search the poultry-yard, and could find nobody there but Delicia, who, with her splendid dress and her crown of diamonds, looked such a lovely Princess that they hardly dared to speak to her. But she said to them very politely:

‘Pray tell me what you are looking for here?’

‘Madam,’ they answered, ‘we are sent for an insignificant little person called Delicia.’

‘Alas!’ said she, ‘that is my name. What can you want with me?’

So the guards tied her hands and feet with thick ropes, for fear she might run away, and brought her to the King, who was waiting with his son.

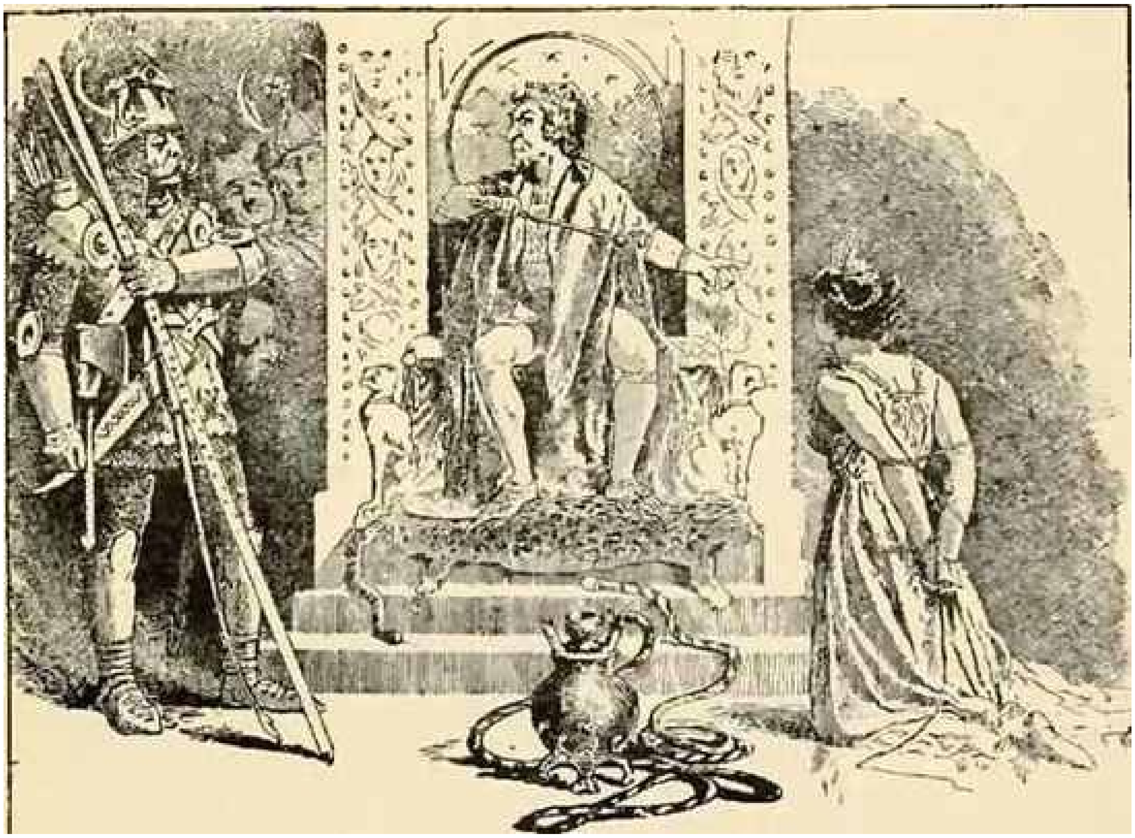

When he saw her he was very much astonished at her beauty, which would have made anyone less hard-hearted sorry for her. But the wicked King only laughed and mocked at her, and cried: ‘Well, little fright, little toad! why don’t you love my son, who is far too handsome and too good for you? Make haste and begin to love him this instant, or you shall be tarred and feathered.’

Then the poor little Princess, shaking with terror, went down on her knees, crying:

‘Oh, don’t tar and feather me, please! It would be so uncomfortable. Let me have two or three days to make up my mind, and then you shall do as you like with me.’

The wicked Prince would have liked very much to see her tarred and feathered, but the King ordered that she should be shut up in a dark dungeon. It was just at this moment that the Queen and the Fairy arrived in the flying chariot, and the Queen was dreadfully distressed at the turn affairs had taken, and said miserably that she was destined to be unfortunate all her days. But the Fairy bade her take courage.

'I'll pay them out yet,' said she, nodding her head with an air of great determination.

That very same night, as soon as the wicked King had gone to bed, the Fairy changed herself into the little mouse, and creeping up on to his pillow nibbled his ear, so that he squealed out quite loudly and turned over on his other side; but that was no good, for the little mouse only set to work and gnawed away at the second ear until it hurt more than the first one.

Then the King cried 'Murder!' and 'Thieves!' and all his guards ran to see what was the matter, but they could find nothing and nobody, for the little mouse had run off to the Prince's room and was serving him in exactly the same way. All night long she ran from one to the other, until at last, driven quite frantic by terror and want of sleep, the King rushed out of the palace crying:

'Help! help! I am pursued by rats.'

The Prince when he heard this got up also, and ran after the King, and they had not gone far when they both fell into the river and were never heard of again.

Then the good Fairy ran to tell the Queen, and they went together to the black dungeon where Delicia was imprisoned. The Fairy touched each door with her wand, and it sprang open instantly, but they had to go through forty before they came to the Princess, who was sitting on the floor looking very dejected. But when the Queen rushed in, and kissed her twenty times in a minute, and laughed, and cried, and told Delicia all her history, the Princess was wild with delight. Then the Fairy showed her all the wonderful dresses and jewels she had brought for her, and said:

'Don't let us waste time; we must go and harangue the people.'

So she walked first, looking very serious and dignified, and wearing a dress the train of which was at least ten ells long. Behind her came the Queen wearing a blue velvet robe embroidered with gold, and a diamond crown that was brighter than the sun itself. Last of all walked Delicia, who was so beautiful that it was nothing short of marvellous.

They proceeded through the streets, returning the salutations of all they met, great or small, and all the people turned and followed them, wondering who these noble ladies could be.

When the audience hall was quite full, the Fairy said to the subjects of the Wicked King that if they would accept Delicia, who was the daughter of the Jolly King, as their Queen, she would undertake to find a suitable husband for her, and would promise that during their reign there should be nothing but rejoicing and merry-making, and all dismal things should be entirely banished. Upon this the people cried with one accord, ‘We will, we will! we have been gloomy and miserable too long already.’ And they all took hands and danced round the Queen, and Delicia, and the good Fairy, singing: ‘Yes, yes; we will, we will!’

Then there were feasts and fireworks in every street in the town, and early the next morning the Fairy, who had been all over the world in the night, brought back with her, in her flying chariot, the most handsome and good-tempered Prince she could find anywhere. He was so charming that Delicia loved him from the moment their eyes met, and as for him, of course he could not help thinking himself the luckiest Prince in the world. The Queen felt that she had really come to the end of her misfortunes at last, and they all lived happily ever after.(10)

(10) La bonne vetite Souris’ par Madame d’Aulnoy.

GRACIOSA AND PERCINET

ONCE upon a time there lived a King and Queen who had one charming daughter. She was so graceful and pretty and clever that she was called Graciosa, and the Queen was so fond of her that she could think of nothing else.

Everyday she gave the Princess a lovely new frock of gold brocade, or satin, or velvet, and when she was hungry she had bowls full of sugar-plums, and at least twenty pots of jam. Everybody said she was the happiest Princess in the world. Now there lived at this same court a very rich old duchess whose name was Grumbly. She was more frightful than tongue can tell; her hair was red as fire, and she had but one eye, and that not a pretty one! Her face was as broad as a full moon, and her mouth was so large that everybody who met her would have been afraid they were going to be eaten up, only she had no teeth. As she was as cross as she was ugly, she could not bear to hear everyone saying how pretty and how charming Graciosa was; so she presently went away from the court to her own castle, which was not far off. But if anybody who went to see her happened to mention the charming Princess, she would cry angrily:

‘It’s not true that she is lovely. I have more beauty in my little finger than she has in her whole body.’

Soon after this, to the great grief of the Princess, the Queen was taken ill and died, and the King became so melancholy that for a whole year he shut himself up in his palace. At last his physicians, fearing that he would fall ill, ordered that he should go out and amuse himself; so a hunting party was arranged, but as it was very hot weather the King soon got tired, and said he would dismount and rest at a castle which they were passing.

This happened to be the Duchess Grumbly’s castle, and when she heard that the King was coming she went out to meet him, and said that the cellar was the coolest place in the whole castle if he would condescend to come down into it. So down they went together, and the King seeing about two hundred great casks ranged side by side, asked if it was only for herself that she had this immense store of wine.

‘Yes, sire,’ answered she, ‘it is for myself alone, but I shall be most happy to let you taste some of it. Which do you like, canary, St. Julien, champagne, hermitage sack, raisin, or cider?’

‘Well,’ said the King, ‘since you are so kind as to ask me, I prefer champagne to anything else.’

Then Duchess Grumbly took up a little hammer and tapped upon the cask twice, and out came at least a thousand crowns.

‘What’s the meaning of this?’ said she smiling.

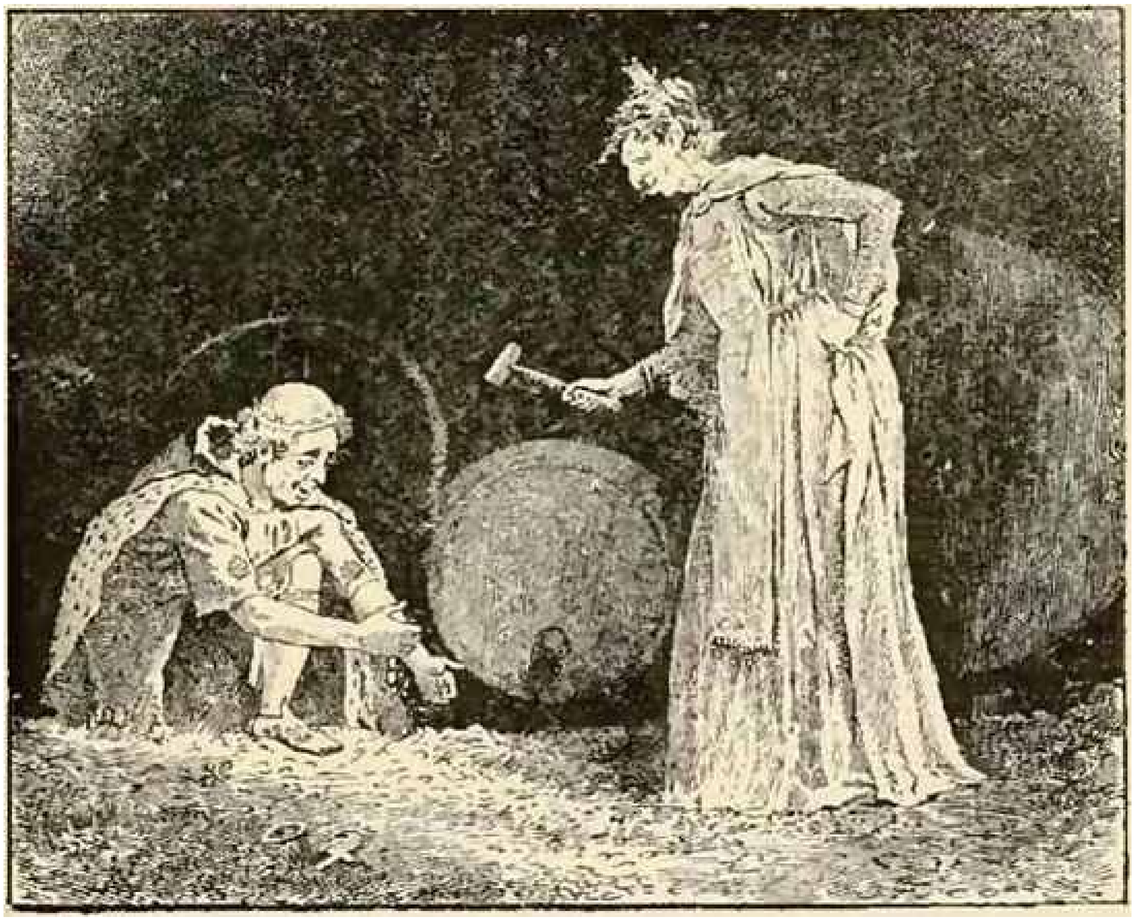

Then she tapped the next cask, and out came a bushel of gold pieces.

‘I don’t understand this at all,’ said the Duchess, smiling more than before.

Then she went on to the third cask, tap, tap, and out came such a stream of diamonds and pearls that the ground was covered with them.

‘Ah!’ she cried, ‘this is altogether beyond my comprehension, sire. Someone must have stolen my good wine and put all this rubbish in its place.’

‘Rubbish, do you call it, Madam Grumbly?’ cried the King. ‘Rubbish! why there is enough there to buy ten kingdoms.’

‘Well,’ said she, ‘you must know that all those casks are full of gold and jewels, and if you like to marry me it shall all be yours.’

Now the King loved money more than anything else in the world, so he cried joyfully:

‘Marry you? why with all my heart! to-morrow if you like.’

‘But I make one condition,’ said the Duchess; ‘I must have entire control of your daughter to do as I please with her.’

‘Oh certainly, you shall have your own way; let us shake hands upon the bargain,’ said the King.

So they shook hands and went up out of the cellar of treasure together, and the Duchess locked the door and gave the key to the King.

When he got back to his own palace Graciosa ran out to meet him, and asked if he had had good sport.

‘I have caught a dove,’ answered he.

‘Oh! do give it to me,’ said the Princess, ‘and I will keep it and take care of it.’

‘I can hardly do that,’ said he, ‘for, to speak more plainly, I mean that I met the Duchess Grumbly, and have promised to marry her.’

‘And you call her a dove?’ cried the Princess. ‘*I* should have called her a screech owl.’

‘Hold your tongue,’ said the King, very crossly. ‘I intend you to behave prettily to her. So now go and make yourself fit to be seen, as I am going to take you to visit her.’

So the Princess went very sorrowfully to her own room, and her nurse, seeing her tears, asked what was vexing her.

‘Alas! who would not be vexed?’ answered she, ‘for the King intends to marry again, and has chosen for his new bride my enemy, the hideous Duchess Grumbly.’

‘Oh, well!’ answered the nurse, ‘you must remember that you are a Princess, and are expected to set a good example in making the best of whatever happens. You must promise me not to let the Duchess see how much you dislike her.’

At first the Princess would not promise, but the nurse showed her so many good reasons for it that in the end she agreed to be amiable to her step-mother.

Then the nurse dressed her in a robe of pale green and gold brocade, and combed out her long fair hair till it floated round her like a golden mantle, and put on her head a crown of roses and jasmine with emerald leaves.

When she was ready nobody could have been prettier, but she still could not help looking sad.

Meanwhile the Duchess Grumbly was also occupied in attiring herself. She had one of her shoe heels made an inch or so higher than the other, that she might not limp so much, and put in a cunningly made glass eye in the place of the one she had lost. She dyed her red hair black, and painted her face. Then she put on a gorgeous robe of lilac satin lined with blue, and a yellow petticoat trimmed with violet ribbons, and because she had heard that queens always rode into their new dominions, she ordered a horse to be made ready for her to ride.

While Graciosa was waiting until the King should be ready to set out, she went down all alone through the garden into a little wood, where she sat down upon a mossy bank and began to think. And her thoughts were so doleful that very soon she began to cry, and she cried, and cried, and forgot all about going back to the palace, until she suddenly saw a handsome page standing before her. He was dressed in green, and the cap which he held in his hand was adorned with white plumes. When Graciosa looked at him he went down on one knee, and said to her:

'Princess, the King awaits you.'

The Princess was surprised, and, if the truth must be told, very much delighted at the appearance of this charming page, whom she could not remember to have seen before. Thinking he might belong to the household of the Duchess, she said:

'How long have you been one of the King's pages?'

'I am not in the service of the King, madam,' answered he, 'but in yours.'

'In mine?' said the Princess with great surprise. 'Then how is it that I have never seen you before?'

'Ah, Princess!' said he, 'I have never before dared to present myself to you, but now the King's marriage threatens you with so many dangers that I have resolved to tell you at once how much I love you already, and I trust that in time I may win your regard. I am Prince Percinet, of whose riches you may have heard, and whose fairy gift will, I hope, be of use to you in all your difficulties, if you will permit me to accompany you under this disguise.'

'Ah, Percinet!' cried the Princess, 'is it really you? I have so often heard of you and wished to see you. If you will indeed be my friend, I shall not be afraid of that wicked old Duchess any more.'

So they went back to the palace together, and there Graciosa found a beautiful horse which Percinet had brought for her to ride. As it was very spirited he led it by the bridle, and this arrangement enabled him to turn and look at the Princess often, which he did not fail to do. Indeed, she was so pretty that it was a real pleasure to look at her. When the horse which the Duchess was to ride appeared beside Graciosa's, it looked no better than an old cart horse, and as to their trappings, there was simply no comparison between them, as the Princess's saddle and bridle were one glittering mass of diamonds. The King had so many other things to think of that he did not notice this, but all his courtiers were entirely taken up with admiring the Princess and her charming Page in green, who was more handsome and distinguished-looking than all the rest of the court put together.

When they met the Duchess Grumbly she was seated in an open carriage trying in vain to look dignified. The King and the Princess saluted her, and her horse was brought forward for her to mount. But when she saw Graciosa's she cried angrily:

'If that child is to have a better horse than mine, I will go back to my own castle this very minute. What is the good of being a Queen if one is to be slighted like this?'

Upon this the King commanded Graciosa to dismount and to beg the Duchess to honour her by mounting her horse. The Princess obeyed in silence, and the Duchess, without looking at her or thanking her, scrambled up upon the beautiful horse, where she sat looking like a bundle of clothes, and eight officers had to hold her up for fear she should fall off.

Even then she was not satisfied, and was still grumbling and muttering, so they asked her what was the matter.

'I wish that Page in green to come and lead the horse, as he did when Graciosa rode it,' said she very sharply.

And the King ordered the Page to come and lead the Queen's horse. Percinet and the Princess looked at one another, but said never a word, and then he did as the King commanded, and the procession started in great pomp. The Duchess was greatly elated, and as she sat there in state would not have wished to change places even with Graciosa. But at the moment when it was least expected the beautiful horse began to plunge and rear and kick, and finally to run away at such a pace that it was impossible to stop him.

At first the Duchess clung to the saddle, but she was very soon thrown off and fell in a heap among the stones and thorns, and there they found her, shaken to a jelly, and collected what was left of her as if she had been a broken glass. Her bonnet was here and her shoes there, her face was scratched, and her fine clothes were covered with mud. Never was a bride seen in such a dismal plight. They carried her back to the palace and put her to bed, but as soon as she recovered enough to be able to speak, she began to scold and rage, and declared that the whole affair was Graciosa's fault, that she had contrived it on purpose to try and get rid of her, and that if the King would not have her punished, she would go back to her castle and enjoy her riches by herself.

At this the King was terribly frightened, for he did not at all want to lose all those barrels of gold and jewels. So he hastened to appease the Duchess, and told her she might punish Graciosa in any way she pleased.

Thereupon she sent for Graciosa, who turned pale and trembled at the summons, for she guessed that it promised nothing agreeable for her. She looked all about for Percinet, but he was nowhere to be seen; so she had no choice but to go to the Duchess Grumbly's room. She had hardly got inside the door when she was seized by four waiting women, who looked so tall and strong and cruel that the Princess shuddered at the sight of them, and still more when she saw them arming themselves with great bundles of rods, and heard the Duchess call out to them from her bed to beat the Princess without mercy. Poor Graciosa wished miserably that Percinet could only know what was happening and come to rescue her. But no sooner did they begin to beat her than she found, to her great relief, that the rods had changed to bundles of peacock's feathers, and though the Duchess's women went on till they were so tired that they could no longer raise their arms from their sides, yet she was not hurt in the least. However, the Duchess thought she must be black and blue after such a beating; so Graciosa, when she was released, pretended to feel very bad, and went away into her own room, where she told her nurse all that had happened, and then the nurse left her, and when the Princess turned round there stood Percinet beside her. She thanked him gratefully for helping her so cleverly, and they laughed and were very merry over the way they had taken in the Duchess and her waiting-maids; but Percinet advised her still to pretend to be ill for a few days, and after promising to come to her aid whenever she needed him, he disappeared as suddenly as he had come.

The Duchess was so delighted at the idea that Graciosa was really ill, that she herself recovered twice as fast as she would have done otherwise, and the wedding was held with great magnificence. Now as the King knew that, above all other things, the Queen loved to be told that she was beautiful, he ordered that her portrait should be painted, and that a tournament should be held, at which all the bravest knights of his court should maintain against all comers that Grumbly was the most beautiful princess in the world.

Numbers of knights came from far and wide to accept the challenge, and the hideous Queen sat in great state in a balcony hung with cloth of gold to watch the contests, and Graciosa had to stand up behind her, where her loveliness was so conspicuous that the combatants could not keep their eyes off her. But the Queen was so vain that she thought all their admiring glances were for herself, especially as, in spite of the badness of their cause, the King's knights were so brave that they were the victors in every combat.

However, when nearly all the strangers had been defeated, a young unknown knight presented himself. He carried a portrait, enclosed in a bow encrusted with diamonds, and he declared himself willing to maintain against them all that the Queen was the ugliest creature in the world, and that the Princess whose portrait he carried was the most beautiful.

So one by one the knights came out against him, and one by one he vanquished them all, and then he opened the box, and said that, to console them, he would show them the portrait of his Queen of Beauty, and when he did so everyone recognised the Princess Graciosa. The unknown knight then saluted her gracefully and retired, without telling his name to anybody. But Graciosa had no difficulty in guessing that it was Percinet.

As to the Queen, she was so furiously angry that she could hardly speak; but she soon recovered her voice, and overwhelmed Graciosa with a torrent of reproaches.

‘What!’ she said, ‘do you dare to dispute with me for the prize of beauty, and expect me to endure this insult to my knights? But I will not bear it, proud Princess. I will have my revenge.’

‘I assure you, Madam,’ said the Princess, ‘that I had nothing to do with it and am quite willing that you shall be declared Queen of Beauty

‘Ah! you are pleased to jest, popinjay!’ said the Queen, ‘but it will be my turn soon!’

The King was speedily told what had happened, and how the Princess was in terror of the angry Queen, but he only said: ‘The Queen must do as she pleases. Graciosa belongs to her!’

The wicked Queen waited impatiently until night fell, and then she ordered her carriage to be brought. Graciosa, much against her will, was forced into it, and away they drove, and never stopped until they reached a great forest, a hundred leagues from the palace. This forest was so gloomy, and so full of lions, tigers, bears and wolves, that nobody dared pass through it even by daylight, and here they set down the unhappy Princess in the middle of the black night, and left her in spite of all her tears and entreaties. The Princess stood quite still at first from sheer bewilderment, but when the last sound of the retreating carriages died away in the distance she began to run aimlessly hither and thither, sometimes knocking herself against a tree, sometimes tripping over a stone, fearing every minute that she would be eaten up by the lions. Presently she was too tired to advance another step, so she threw herself down upon the ground and cried miserably:

‘Oh, Percinet! where are you? Have you forgotten me altogether?’

She had hardly spoken when all the forest was lighted up with a sudden glow. Every tree seemed to be sending out a soft radiance, which was clearer than moonlight and softer than daylight, and at the end of a long avenue of trees opposite to her the Princess saw a palace of clear crystal which blazed like the sun. At that moment a slight sound behind her made her start round, and there stood Percinet himself.

‘Did I frighten you, my Princess?’ said he. ‘I come to bid you welcome to our fairy palace, in the name of the Queen, my mother, who is prepared to love you as much as I do.’ The Princess joyfully mounted with him into a little sledge, drawn by two stags, which bounded off and drew them swiftly to the wonderful palace, where the Queen received her with the greatest kindness, and a splendid banquet was served at once. Graciosa was so happy to have found Percinet, and to have escaped from the gloomy forest and all its terrors, that she was very hungry and very merry, and they were a gay party. After supper they went into another lovely room, where the crystal walls were covered with pictures, and the Princess saw with great surprise that her own history was represented, even down to the moment when Percinet found her in the forest.

‘Your painters must indeed be diligent,’ she said, pointing out the last picture to the Prince.

‘They are obliged to be, for I will not have anything forgotten that happens to you,’ he answered.

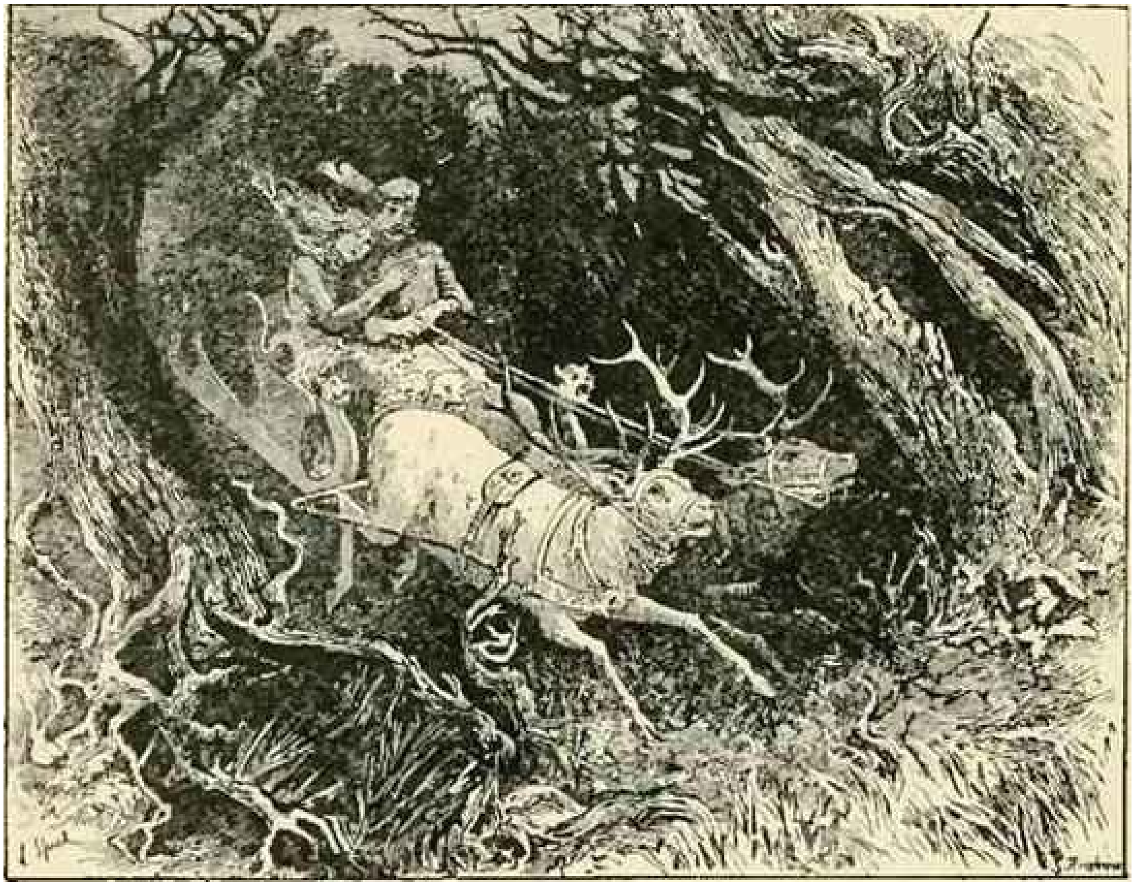

When the Princess grew sleepy, twenty-four charming maidens put her to bed in the prettiest room she had ever seen, and then sang to her so sweetly that Graciosa’s dreams were all of mermaids, and cool sea waves, and caverns, in which she wandered with Percinet; but when she woke up again her first thought was that, delightful as this fairy palace seemed to her, yet she could not stay in it, but must go back to her father. When she had been dressed by the four-and-twenty maidens in a charming robe which the Queen had sent for her, and in which she looked prettier than ever, Prince Percinet came to see her, and was bitterly disappointed when she told him what she had been thinking. He begged her to consider again how unhappy the wicked Queen would make her, and how, if she would but marry him, all the fairy palace would be hers, and his one thought would be to please her. But, in spite of everything he could say, the Princess was quite determined to go back, though he at last persuaded her to stay eight days, which were so full of pleasure and amusement that they passed like a few hours. On the last day, Graciosa, who had often felt anxious to know what was going on in her father's palace, said to Percinet that she was sure that he could find out for her, if he would, what reason the Queen had given her father for her sudden disappearance. Percinet at first offered to send his courier to find out, but the Princess said:

'Oh! isn't there a quicker way of knowing than that?'

'Very well,' said Percinet, 'you shall see for yourself.'

So up they went together to the top of a very high tower, which, like the rest of the castle, was built entirely of rock-crystal.

There the Prince held Graciosa's hand in his, and made her put the tip of her little finger into her mouth, and look towards the town, and immediately she saw the wicked Queen go to the King, and heard her say to him, 'That miserable Princess is dead, and no great loss either. I have ordered that she shall be buried at once.'

And then the Princess saw how she dressed up a log of wood and had it buried, and how the old King cried, and all the people murmured that the Queen had killed Graciosa with her cruelties, and that she ought to have her head cut off. When the Princess saw that the King was so sorry for her pretended death that he could neither eat nor drink, she cried:

'Ah, Percinet! take me back quickly if you love me.'

And so, though he did not want to at all, he was obliged to promise that he would let her go.

'You may not regret me, Princess,' he said sadly, 'for I fear that you do not love me well enough; but I foresee that you will more than once regret that you left this fairy palace where we have been so happy.'

But, in spite of all he could say, she bade farewell to the Queen, his mother, and prepared to set out; so Percinet, very unwillingly, brought the little sledge with the stags and she mounted beside him. But they had hardly gone twenty yards when a tremendous noise behind her made Graciosa look back, and she saw the palace of crystal fly into a million splinters, like the spray of a fountain, and vanish.

‘Oh, Percinet!’ she cried, ‘what has happened? The palace is gone.’

‘Yes,’ he answered, ‘my palace is a thing of the past; you will see it again, but not until after you have been buried.’

‘Now you are angry with me,’ said Graciosa in her most coaxing voice, ‘though after all I am more to be pitied than you are.’

When they got near the palace the Prince made the sledge and themselves invisible, so the Princess got in unobserved, and ran up to the great hall where the King was sitting all by himself. At first he was very much startled by Graciosa’s sudden appearance, but she told him how the Queen had left her out in the forest, and how she had caused a log of wood to be buried. The King, who did not know what to think, sent quickly and had it dug up, and sure enough it was as the Princess had said. Then he caressed Graciosa, and made her sit down to supper with him, and they were as happy as possible. But someone had by this time told the wicked Queen that Graciosa had come back, and was at supper with the King, and in she flew in a terrible fury. The poor old King quite trembled before her, and when she declared that Graciosa was not the Princess at all, but a wicked impostor, and that if the King did not give her up at once she would go back to her own castle and never see him again, he had not a word to say, and really seemed to believe that it was not Graciosa after all. So the Queen in great triumph sent for her waiting women, who dragged the unhappy Princess away and shut her up in a garret; they took away all her jewels and her pretty dress, and gave her a rough cotton frock, wooden shoes, and a little cloth cap. There was some straw in a corner, which was all she had for a bed, and they gave her a very little bit of black bread to eat. In this miserable plight Graciosa did indeed regret the fairy palace, and she would have called Percinet to her aid, only she felt sure he was still vexed with her for leaving him, and thought that she could not expect him to come.

Meanwhile the Queen had sent for an old Fairy, as malicious as herself, and said to her:

‘You must find me some task for this fine Princess which she cannot possibly do, for I mean to punish her, and if she does not do what I order, she will not be able to say that I am unjust.’ So the old Fairy said she would think it over, and come again the next day. When she returned she brought with her a skein of thread, three times as big as herself; it was so fine that a breath of air would break it, and so tangled that it was impossible to see the beginning or the end of it.

The Queen sent for Graciosa, and said to her:

‘Do you see this skein? Set your clumsy fingers to work upon it, for I must have it disentangled by sunset, and if you break a single thread it will be the worse for you.’ So saying she left her, locking the door behind her with three keys.

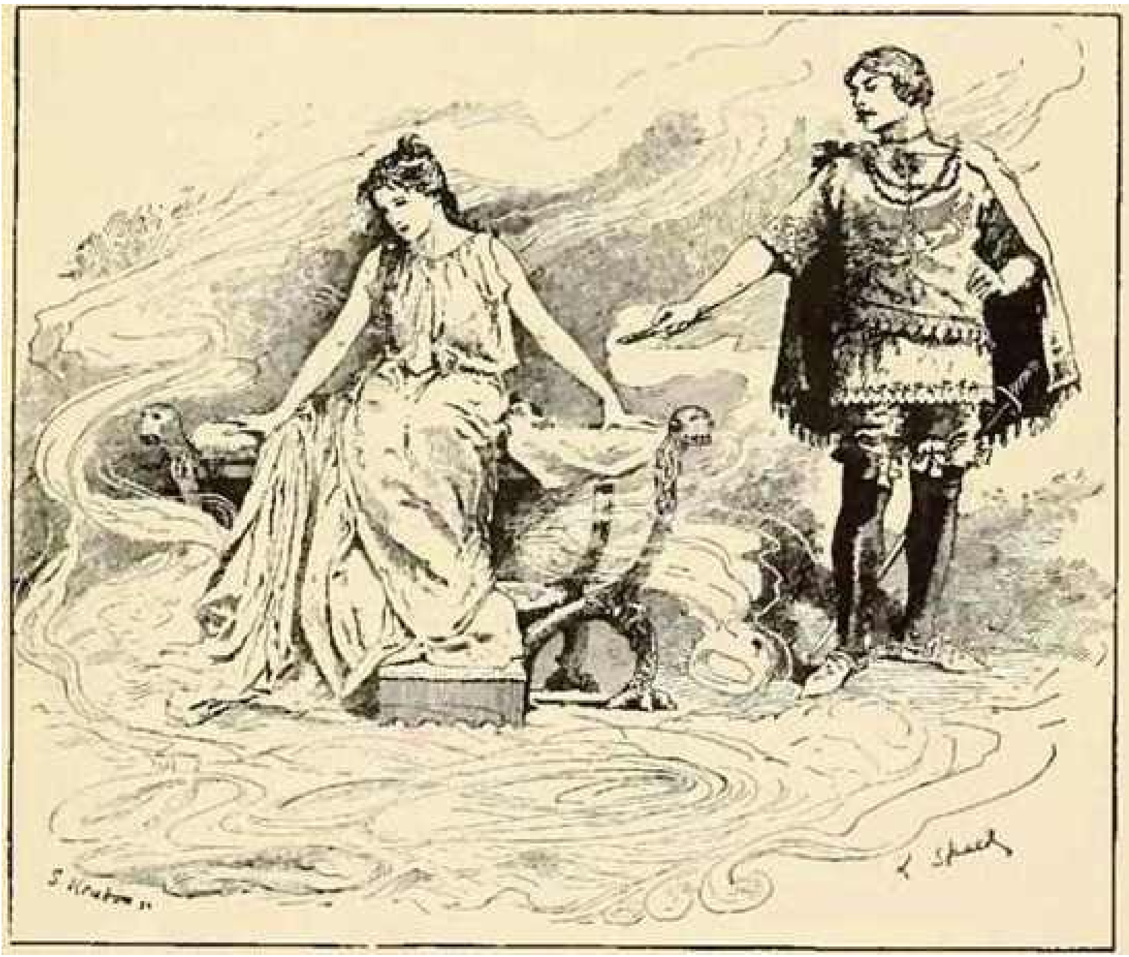

The Princess stood dismayed at the sight of the terrible skein. If she did but turn it over to see where to begin, she broke a thousand threads, and not one could she disentangle. At last she threw it into the middle of the floor, crying:

‘Oh, Percinet! this fatal skein will be the death of me if you will not forgive me and help me once more.’

And immediately in came Percinet as easily as if he had all the keys in his own possession.

‘Here I am, Princess, as much as ever at your service,’ said he, ‘though really you are not very kind to me.’

Then he just stroked the skein with his wand, and all the broken threads joined themselves together, and the whole skein wound itself smoothly off in the most surprising manner, and the Prince, turning to Graciosa, asked if there was nothing else that she wished him to do for her, and if the time would never come when she would wish for him for his own sake.

‘Don’t be vexed with me, Percinet,’ she said. ‘I am unhappy enough without that.’

‘But why should you be unhappy, my Princess?’ cried he. ‘Only come with me and we shall be as happy as the day is long together.’

‘But suppose you get tired of me?’ said Graciosa.

The Prince was so grieved at this want of confidence that he left her without another word.

The wicked Queen was in such a hurry to punish Graciosa that she thought the sun would never set; and indeed it was before the appointed time that she came with her four Fairies, and as she fitted the three keys into the locks she said:

‘I’ll venture to say that the idle minx has not done anything at all — she prefers to sit with her hands before her to keep them white.’

But, as soon as she entered, Graciosa presented her with the ball of thread in perfect order, so that she had no fault to find, and could only pretend to discover that it was soiled, for which imaginary fault she gave Graciosa a blow on each cheek, that made her white and pink skin turn green and yellow. And then she sent her back to be locked into the garret once more.

Then the Queen sent for the Fairy again and scolded her furiously. ‘Don’t make such a mistake again; find me something that it will be quite impossible for her to do,’ she said.

So the next day the Fairy appeared with a huge barrel full of the feathers of all sorts of birds. There were nightingales, canaries, goldfinches, linnets, tomtits, parrots, owls, sparrows, doves, ostriches, bustards, peacocks, larks, partridges, and everything else that you can think of. These feathers were all mixed up in such confusion that the birds themselves could not have chosen out their own. ‘Here,’ said the Fairy, ‘is a little task which it will take all your prisoner’s skill and patience to accomplish. Tell her to pick out and lay in a separate heap the feathers of each bird. She would need to be a fairy to do it.’

The Queen was more than delighted at the thought of the despair this task would cause the Princess. She sent for her, and with the same threats as before locked her up with the three keys, ordering that all the feathers should be sorted by sunset. Graciosa set to work at once, but before she had taken out a dozen feathers she found that it was perfectly impossible to know one from another.

‘Ah! well,’ she sighed, ‘the Queen wishes to kill me, and if I must die I must. I cannot ask Percinet to help me again, for if he really loved me he would not wait till I called him, he would come without that.’

‘I am here, my Graciosa,’ cried Percinet, springing out of the barrel where he had been hiding. ‘How can you still doubt that I love you with all my heart?’

Then he gave three strokes of his wand upon the barrel, and all the feathers flew out in a cloud and settled down in neat little separate heaps all round the room.

‘What should I do without you, Percinet?’ said Graciosa gratefully. But still she could not quite make up her mind to go with him and leave her father’s kingdom for ever; so she begged him to give her more time to think of it, and he had to go away disappointed once more.

When the wicked Queen came at sunset she was amazed and infuriated to find the task done. However, she complained that the heaps of feathers were badly arranged, and for that the Princess was beaten and sent back to her garret. Then the Queen sent for the Fairy once more, and scolded her until she was fairly terrified, and promised to go home and think of another task for Graciosa, worse than either of the others.

At the end of three days she came again, bringing with her a box.

‘Tell your slave,’ said he, ‘to carry this wherever you please, but on no account to open it. She will not be able to help doing so, and then you will be quite satisfied with the result.’ So the Queen came to Graciosa, and said:

‘Carry this box to my castle, and place it upon the table in my own room. But I forbid you on pain of death to look at what it contains.’

Graciosa set out, wearing her little cap and wooden shoes and the old cotton frock, but even in this disguise she was so beautiful that all the passers-by wondered who she could be. She had not gone far before the heat of the sun and the weight of the box tired her so much that she sat down to rest in the shade of a little wood which lay on one side of a green meadow. She was carefully holding the box upon her lap when she suddenly felt the greatest desire to open it.

‘What could possibly happen if I did?’ she said to herself. ‘I should not take anything out. I should only just see what was there.’

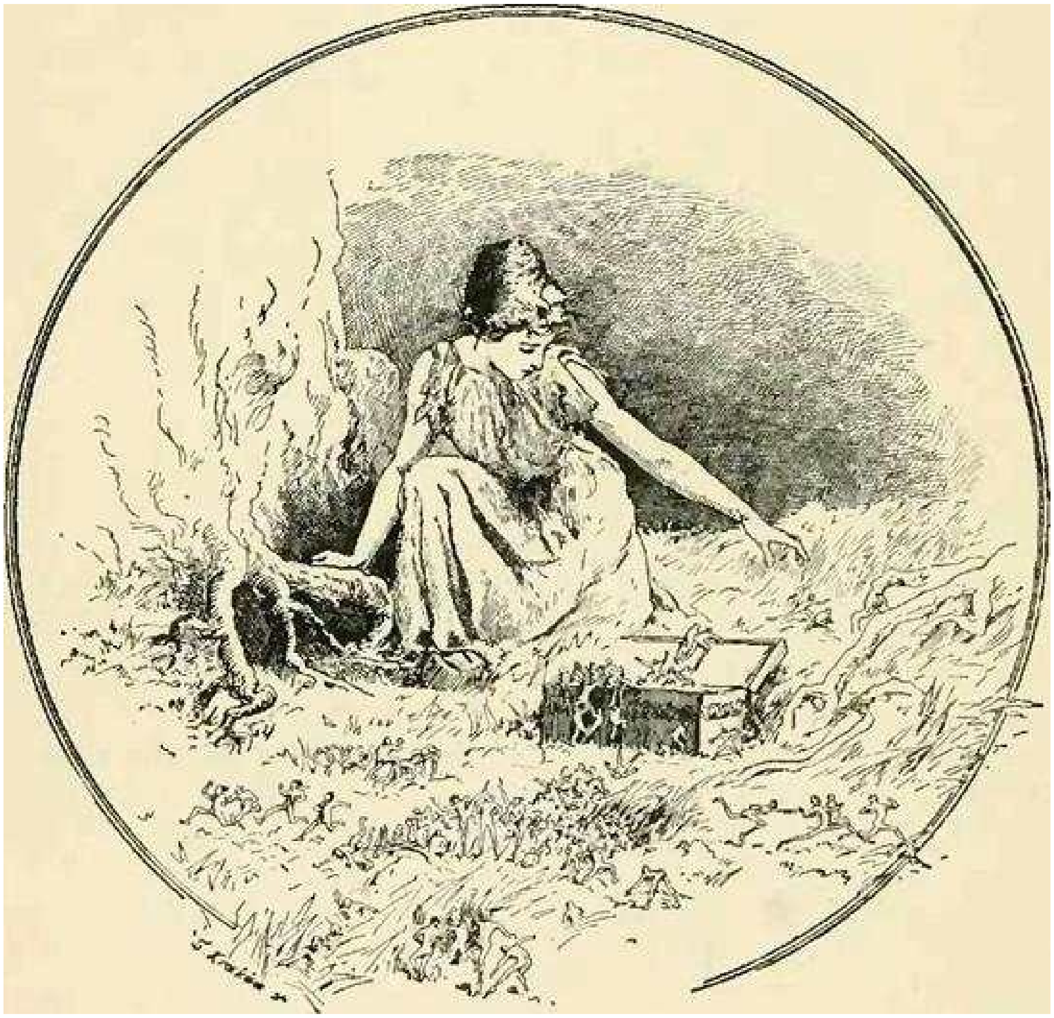

And without farther hesitation she lifted the cover.

Instantly out came swarms of little men and women, no taller than her finger, and scattered themselves all over the meadow, singing and dancing, and playing the merriest games, so that at first Graciosa was delighted and watched them with much amusement. But presently, when she was rested and wished to go on her way, she found that, do what she would, she could not get them back into their box. If she chased them in the meadow they fled into the wood, and if she pursued them into the wood they dodged round trees and behind sprigs of moss, and with peals of elfin laughter scampered back again into the meadow.

At last, weary and terrified, she sat down and cried.

‘It is my own fault,’ she said sadly. ‘Percinet, if you can still care for such an imprudent Princess, do come and help me once more.’

Immediately Percinet stood before her.

‘Ah, Princess!’ he said, ‘but for the wicked Queen I fear you would never think of me at all.’

‘Indeed I should,’ said Graciosa; ‘I am not so ungrateful as you think. Only wait a little and I believe I shall love you quite dearly.'

Percinet was pleased at this, and with one stroke of his wand compelled all the wilful little people to come back to their places in the box, and then rendering the Princess invisible he took her with him in his chariot to the castle.

When the Princess presented herself at the door, and said that the Queen had ordered her to place the box in her own room, the governor laughed heartily at the idea.

'No, no, my little shepherdess,' said he, 'that is not the place for you. No wooden shoes have ever been over that floor yet.'

Then Graciosa begged him to give her a written message telling the Queen that he had refused to admit her. This he did, and she went back to Percinet, who was waiting for her, and they set out together for the palace. You may imagine that they did not go the shortest way, but the Princess did not find it too long, and before they parted she had promised that if the Queen was still cruel to her, and tried again to play her any spiteful trick, she would leave her and come to Percinet for ever.

When the Queen saw her returning she fell upon the Fairy, whom she had kept with her, and pulled her hair, and scratched her face, and would really have killed her if a Fairy could be killed. And when the Princess presented the letter and the box she threw them both upon the fire without opening them, and looked very much as if she would like to throw the Princess after them. However, what she really did do was to have a great hole as deep as a well dug in her garden, and the top of it covered with a flat stone. Then she went and walked near it, and said to Graciosa and all her ladies who were with her:

'I am told that a great treasure lies under that stone; let us see if we can lift it.'

So they all began to push and pull at it, and Graciosa among the others, which was just what the Queen wanted; for as soon as the stone was lifted high enough, she gave the Princess a push which sent her down to the bottom of the well, and then the stone was let fall again, and there she was a prisoner. Graciosa felt that now indeed she was hopelessly lost, surely not even Percinet could find her in the heart of the earth.

'This is like being buried alive,' she said with a shudder. 'Oh, Percinet! if you only knew how I am suffering for my want of trust in you! But how could I be sure that you would not be like other men and tire of me from the moment you were sure I loved you?'

As she spoke she suddenly saw a little door open, and the sunshine blazed into the dismal well. Graciosa did not hesitate an instant, but passed through into a charming garden. Flowers and fruit grew on every side, fountains plashed, and birds sang in the branches overhead, and when she reached a great avenue of trees and looked up to see where it would lead her, she found herself close to the palace of crystal. Yes! there was no mistaking it, and the Queen and Percinet were coming to meet her.

‘Ah, Princess!’ said the Queen, ‘don’t keep this poor Percinet in suspense any longer. You little guess the anxiety he has suffered while you were in the power of that miserable Queen.’

The Princess kissed her gratefully, and promised to do as she wished in everything, and holding out her hand to Percinet, with a smile, she said:

‘Do you remember telling me that I should not see your palace again until I had been buried? I wonder if you guessed then that, when that happened, I should tell you that I love you with all my heart, and will marry you whenever you like?’

Prince Percinet joyfully took the hand that was given him, and, for fear the Princess should change her mind, the wedding was held at once with the greatest splendour, and Graciosa and Percinet lived happily ever after.(11)

(11) Gracieuse et Percinet. *Mdme.* d’Aulnoy.

THE THREE PRINCESSES OF WHITELAND

THERE was once upon a time a fisherman, who lived hard by a palace and fished for the King’s table. One day he was out fishing, but caught nothing at all. Let him do what he might with rod and line, there was never even so much as a sprat on his hook; but when the day was well nigh over, a head rose up out of the water, and said: ‘If you will give me what your wife shows you when you go home, you shall catch fish enough.’

So the man said ‘Yes’ in a moment, and then he caught fish in plenty; but when he got home at night, and his wife showed him a baby which had just been born, and fell a-weeping and wailing when he told her of the promise which he had given, he was very unhappy.

All this was soon told to the King up at the palace, and when he heard what sorrow the woman was in, and the reason of it, he said that he himself would take the child and see if he could not save it. The baby was a boy, and the King took him at once and brought him up as his own son until the lad grew up. Then one day he begged to have leave to go out with his father to fish; he had a strong desire to do this, he said. The King was very unwilling to permit it, but at last the lad got leave. He stayed with his father, and all went prosperously and well with them the whole day, until they came back to land in the evening. Then the lad found that he had lost his pocket-handkerchief, and would go out in the boat after it; but no sooner had he got into the boat than it began to move off with him so quickly that the water foamed all round about, and all that the lad did to keep the boat back with the oars was done to no purpose, for it went on and on the whole night through, and at last he came to a white strand that lay far, far away. There he landed, and when he had walked on for some distance he met an old man with a long white beard.

‘What is the name of this country?’ said the youth.

‘Whiteland,’ answered the man, and then he begged the youth to tell him whence he came and what he was going to do, and the youth did so.

‘Well, then,’ said the man, ‘if you walk on farther along the seashore here, you will come to three princesses who are standing in the earth so that their heads alone are out of it. Then the first of them will call you — she is the eldest — and will beg you very prettily to come to her and help her, and the second will do the same, but you must not go near either of them. Hurry past, as if you neither saw nor heard them; but you shall go to the third and do what she bids you; it will bring you good fortune.’

When the youth came to the first princess, she called to him and begged him to come to her very prettily, but he walked on as if he did not even see her, and he passed by the second in the same way, but he went up to the third.

‘If thou wilt do what I tell thee, thou shalt choose among us three,’ said the Princess.

So the lad said that he was most willing, and she told him that three Trolls had planted them all three there in the earth, but that formerly they had dwelt in the castle which he could see at some distance in the wood.

‘Now,’ she said, ‘thou shalt go into the castle, and let the Trolls beat thee one night for each of us, and if thou canst but endure that, thou wilt set us free.’

‘Yes,’ answered the lad, ‘I will certainly try to do so.’

‘When thou goest in,’ continued the Princess, ‘two lions will stand by the doorway, but if thou only goest straight between them they will do thee no harm; go straight forward into a small dark chamber; there thou shalt lie down. Then the Troll will come and beat thee, but thou shalt take the flask which is hanging on the wall, and anoint thyself wheresoever he has wounded thee, after which thou shalt be as well as before. Then lay hold of the sword which is hanging by the side of the flask, and smite the Troll dead.’

So he did what the Princess had told him. He walked straight in between the lions just as if he did not see them, and then into the small chamber, and lay down on the bed.

The first night a Troll came with three heads and three rods, and beat the lad most unmercifully; but he held out until the Troll was done with him, and then he took the flask and rubbed himself. Having done this, he grasped the sword and smote the Troll dead.

In the morning when he went to the seashore the Princesses were out of the earth as far as their waists.

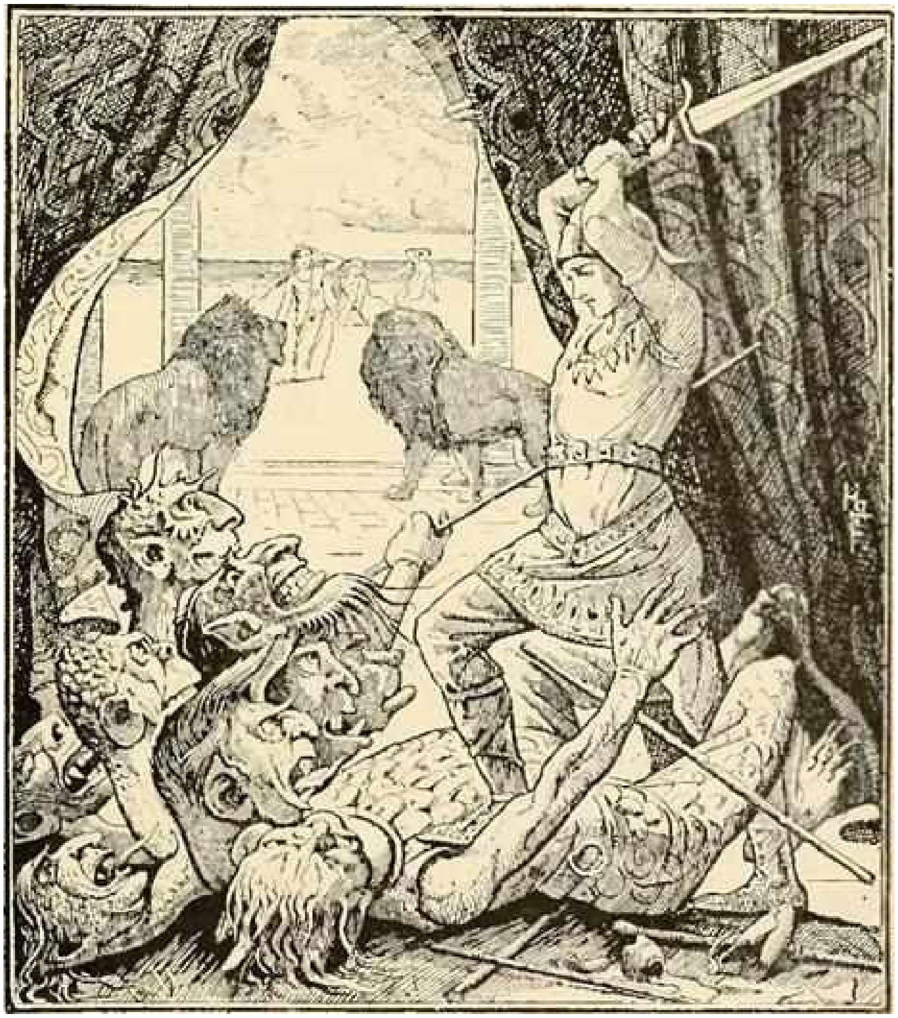

The next night everything happened in the same way, but the Troll who came then had six heads and six rods, and he beat him much more severely than the first had done but when the lad went out of doors next morning, the Princesses were out of the earth as far as their knees.

On the third night a Troll came who had nine heads and nine rods, and he struck the lad and flogged him so long, that at last he swooned away; so the Troll took him up and flung him against the wall, and this made the flask of ointment fall down, and it splashed all over him, and he became as strong as ever again.

Then, without loss of time, he grasped the sword and struck the Troll dead, and in the morning when he went out of the castle the Princesses were standing there entirely out of the earth. So he took the youngest for his Queen, and lived with her very happily for a long time.

At last, however, he took a fancy to go home for a short time to see his parents. His Queen did not like this, but when his longing grew so great that he told her he must and would go, she said to him:

‘One thing shalt thou promise me, and that is, to do what thy father bids thee, but not what thy mother bids thee,’ and this he promised.

So she gave him a ring, which enabled him who wore it to obtain two wishes.

He wished himself at home, and instantly found himself there; but his parents were so amazed at the splendour of his apparel that their wonder never ceased.

When he had been at home for some days his mother wanted him to go up to the palace, to show the King what a great man he had become.

The father said, ‘No; he must not do that, for if he does we shall have no more delight in him this time; ‘but he spoke in vain, for the mother begged and prayed until at last he went.

When he arrived there he was more splendid, both in raiment and in all else, than the other King, who did not like it, and said:

‘Well, you can see what kind of Queen mine is, but I can’t see yours. I do not believe you have such a pretty Queen as I have.’

‘Would to heaven she were standing here, and then you would be able to see!’ said the young King, and in an instant she was standing there.

But she was very sorrowful, and said to him, ‘Why didst thou not remember my words, and listen only to what thy father said? Now must I go home again at once, and thou hast wasted both thy wishes.’

Then she tied a ring in his hair, which had her name upon it, and wished herself at home again.

And now the young King was deeply afflicted, and day out and day in went about thinking of naught else but how to get back again to his Queen. ‘I will try to see if there is any place where I can learn how to find Whiteland,’ he thought, and journeyed forth out into the world.

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When he had gone some distance he came to a mountain, where he met a man who was Lord over all the beasts in the forest — for they all came to him when he blew a horn which he had. So the King asked where Whiteland was.

‘I do not know that,’ he answered, ‘but I will ask my beasts.’ Then he blew his horn and inquired whether any of them knew where Whiteland lay, but there was not one who knew that.

So the man gave him a pair of snow shoes. ‘When you have these on,’ he said, ‘you will come to my brother, who lives hundreds of miles from here; he is Lord over all the birds in the air — ask him. When you have got there, just turn the shoes so that the toes point this way, and then they will come home again of their own accord.’

When the King arrived there he turned the shoes as the Lord of the beasts had bidden him, and they went back.

And now he once more asked after Whiteland, and the man summoned all the birds together, and inquired if any of them knew where Whiteland lay. No, none knew this. Long after the others there came an old eagle. He had been absent ten whole years, but he too knew no more than the rest.

‘Well, well,’ said the man, ‘then you shall have the loan of a pair of snow shoes of mine. If you wear them you will get to my brother, who lives hundreds of miles from here. He is Lord of all the fish in the sea — you can ask him. But do not forget to turn the shoes round.’

The King thanked him, put on the shoes, and when he had got to him who was Lord of all the fish in the sea, he turned the snow shoes round, and back they went just as the others had gone, and he asked once more where Whiteland was.

The man called the fish together with his horn, but none of them knew anything about it. At last came an old, old pike, which he had great difficulty in bringing home to him.

When he asked the pike, it said, ‘Yes, Whiteland is well known to me, for I have been cook there these ten years. To-morrow morning I have to go back there, for now the Queen, whose King is staying away, is to marry some one else.’

‘If that be the case I will give you a piece of advice,’ said the man. ‘Not far from here on a moor stand three brothers, who have stood there a hundred years fighting for a hat, a cloak, and a pair of boots; if any one has these three things he can make himself invisible, and if he desires to go to any place, he has but to wish and he is there. You may tell them that you have a desire to try these things, and then you will be able to decide which of the men is to have them.’

So the King thanked him and went, and did what he had said.

‘What is this that you are standing fighting about for ever and ever?’ said he to the brothers; ‘let me make a trial of these things, and then I will judge between you.’

They willingly consented to this, but when he had got the hat, the cloak, and the boots, he said, ‘Next time we meet you shall have my decision,’ and hereupon he wished himself away.

While he was going quickly through the air he fell in with the North Wind.

‘And where may you be going?’ said the North Wind.

‘To Whiteland,’ said the King, and then he related what had happened to him.

‘Well,’ said the North Wind, ‘you can easily go a little quicker than I can, for I have to puff and blow into every corner; but when you get there, place yourself on the stairs by the side of the door, and then I will come blustering in as if I wanted to blow down the whole castle, and when the Prince who is to have your Queen comes out to see what is astir, just take him by the throat and fling him out, and then I will try to carry him away from court.'

As the North Wind had said, so did the King. He stood on the stairs, and when the North Wind came howling and roaring, and caught the roof and walls of the castle till they shook again, the Prince went out to see what was the matter; but as soon as he came the King took him by the neck and flung him out, and then the North Wind laid hold of him and carried him off. And when he was rid of him the King went into the castle. At first the Queen did not know him, because he had grown so thin and pale from having travelled so long and so sorrowfully; but when she saw her ring she was heartily glad, and then the rightful wedding was held, and held in such a way that it was talked about far and wide.(12)

(12) From J. Moe.

THE VOICE OF DEATH

ONCE upon a time there lived a man whose one wish and prayer was to get rich. Day and night he thought of nothing else, and at last his prayers were granted, and he became very wealthy. Now being so rich, and having so much to lose, he felt that it would be a terrible thing to die and leave all his possessions behind; so he made up his mind to set out in search of a land where there was no death. He got ready for his journey, took leave of his wife, and started. Whenever he came to a new country the first question that he asked was whether people died in that land, and when he heard that they did, he set out again on his quest. At last he reached a country where he was told that the people did not even know the meaning of the word death. Our traveller was delighted when he heard this, and said:

‘But surely there are great numbers of people in your land, if no one ever dies?’

‘No,’ they replied, ‘there are not great numbers, for you see from time to time a voice is heard calling first one and then another, and whoever hears that voice gets up and goes away, and never comes back.’

‘And do they see the person who calls them,’ he asked, ‘or do they only hear his voice?’

‘They both see and hear him,’ was the answer.

Well, the man was amazed when he heard that the people were stupid enough to follow the voice, though they knew that if they went when it called them they would never return. And he went back to his own home and got all his possessions together, and, taking his wife and family, he set out resolved to go and live in that country where the people did not die, but where instead they heard a voice calling them, which they followed into a land from which they never returned. For he had made up his own mind that when he or any of his family heard that voice they would pay no heed to it, however loudly it called.

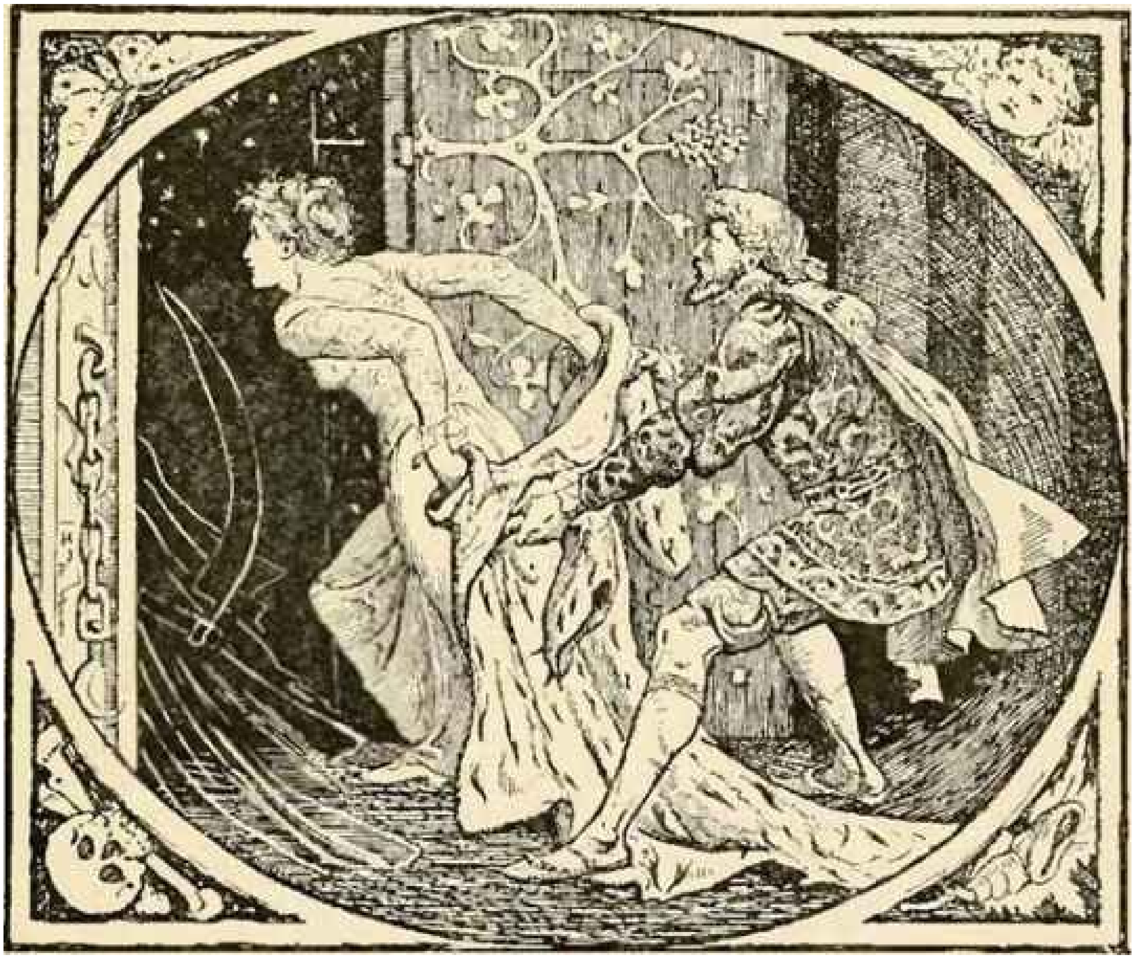

After he had settled down in his new home, and had got everything in order about him, he warned his wife and family that, unless they wanted to die, they must on no account listen to a voice which they might some day hear calling them.

For some years everything went well with them, and they lived happily in their new home. But one day, while they were all sit-ting together round the table, his wife suddenly started up, exclaiming in a loud voice:

‘I am coming! I am coming!’

And she began to look round the room for her fur coat, but her husband jumped up, and taking firm hold of her by the hand, held her fast, and reproached her, saying:

‘Don’t you remember what I told you? Stay where you are unless you wish to die.’

‘But don’t you hear that voice calling me?’ she answered. ‘I am merely going to see why I am wanted. I shall come back directly.’

So she fought and struggled to get away from her husband, and to go where the voice summoned. But he would not let her go, and had all the doors of the house shut and bolted. When she saw that he had done this, she said:

‘Very well, dear husband, I shall do what you wish, and remain where I am.’

So her husband believed that it was all right, and that she had thought better of it, and had got over her mad impulse to obey the voice. But a few minutes later she made a sudden dash for one of the doors, opened it and darted out, followed by her husband. He caught her by the fur coat, and begged and implored her not to go, for if she did she would certainly never return. She said nothing, but let her arms fall backwards, and suddenly bending herself forward, she slipped out of the coat, leaving it in her husband’s hands. He, poor man, seemed turned to stone as he gazed after her hurrying away from him, and calling at the top of her voice, as she ran:

‘I am coming! I am coming!’

When she was quite out of sight her husband recovered his wits and went back into his house, murmuring:

‘If she is so foolish as to wish to die, I can’t help it. I warned and implored her to pay no heed to that voice, however loudly it might call.’

Well, days and weeks and months and years passed, and nothing happened to disturb the peace of the household. But one day the man was at the barber’s as usual, being shaved. The shop was full of people, and his chin had just been covered with a lather of soap, when, suddenly starting up from the chair, he called out in a loud voice:

‘I won’t come, do you hear? I won’t come!’

The barber and the other people in the shop listened to him with amazement. But again looking towards the door, he exclaimed:

‘I tell you, once and for all, I do not mean to come, so go away.’

And a few minutes later he called out again:

‘Go away, I tell you, or it will be the worse for you. You may call as much as you like but you will never get me to come.’

And he got so angry that you might have thought that some one was actually standing at the door, tormenting him. At last he jumped up, and caught the razor out of the barber’s hand, exclaiming:

‘Give me that razor, and I’ll teach him to let people alone for the future.’

And he rushed out of the house as if he were running after some one, whom no one else saw. The barber, determined not to lose his razor, pursued the man, and they both continued running at full speed till they had got well out of the town, when all of a sudden the man fell head foremost down a precipice, and never was seen again. So he too, like the others, had been forced against his will to follow the voice that called him.

The barber, who went home whistling and congratulating himself on the escape he had made, described what had happened, and it was noised abroad in the country that the people who had gone away, and had never returned, had all fallen into that pit; for till then they had never known what had happened to those who had heard the voice and obeyed its call.

But when crowds of people went out from the town to examine the ill-fated pit that had swallowed up such numbers, and yet never seemed to be full, they could discover nothing. All that they could see was a vast plain, that looked as if it had been there since the beginning of the world. And from that time the people of the country began to die like ordinary mortals all the world over.(13)

(13) Roumanian Tales from the German of Mite Thremnitz.

THE SIX SILLIES

ONCE upon a time there was a young girl who reached the age of thirty-seven without ever having had a lover, for she was so foolish that no one wanted to marry her.

One day, however, a young man arrived to pay his addresses to her, and her mother, beaming with joy, sent her daughter down to the cellar to draw a jug of beer.

As the girl never came back the mother went down to see what had become of her, and found her sitting on the stairs, her head in her hands, while by her side the beer was running all over the floor, as she had forgotten to close the tap. ‘What are you doing there?’ asked the mother.

‘I was thinking what I shall call my first child after I am married to that young man. All the names in the calendar are taken already.’

The mother sat down on the staircase beside her daughter and said, ‘I will think about it with you, my dear.’

The father who had stayed upstairs with the young man was surprised that neither his wife nor his daughter came back, and in his turn went down to look for them. He found them both sitting on the stairs, while beside them the beer was running all over the ground from the tap, which was wide open.

‘What are you doing there? The beer is running all over the cellar.’

‘We were thinking what we should call the children that our daughter will have when she marries that young man. All the names in the calendar are taken already.’

‘Well,’ said the father, ‘I will think about it with you.’

As neither mother nor daughter nor father came upstairs again, the lover grew impatient, and went down into the cellar to see what they could all be doing. He found them all three sitting on the stairs, while beside them the beer was running all over the ground from the tap, which was wide open.

‘What in the world are you all doing that you don’t come upstairs, and that you let the beer run all over the cellar?’

‘Yes, I know, my boy,’ said the father, ‘but if you marry our daughter what shall you call your children? All the names in the calendar are taken.’

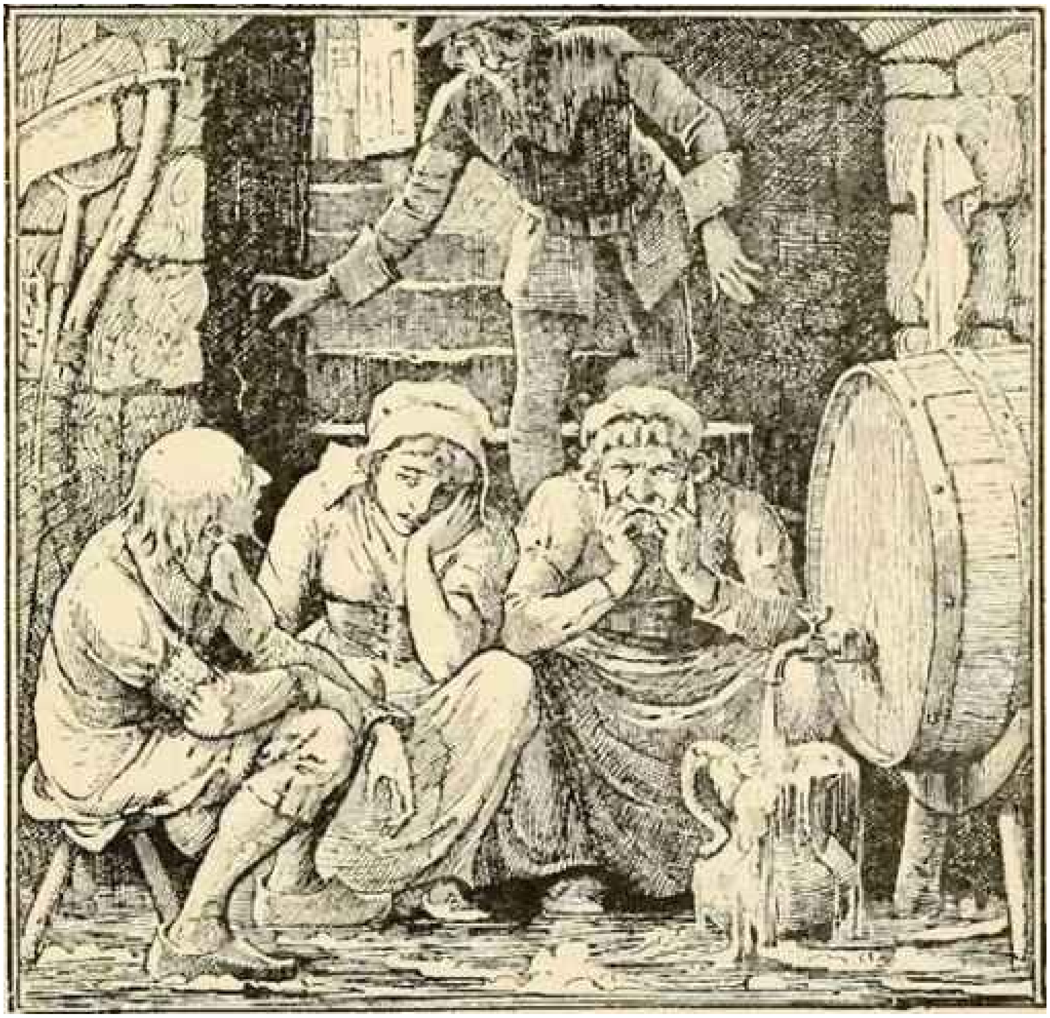

When the young man heard this answer he replied:

‘Well! good-bye, I am going away. When I shall have found three people sillier than you I will come back and marry your daughter.’

So he continued his journey, and after walking a long way he reached an orchard. Then he saw some people knocking down walnuts, and trying to throw them into a cart with a fork.

‘What are you doing there?’ he asked.

‘We want to load the cart with our walnuts, but we can’t manage to do it.’

The lover advised them to get a basket and to put the walnuts in it, so as to turn them into the cart.

‘Well,’ he said to himself, ‘I have already found someone more foolish than those three.’

So he went on his way, and by-and-by he came to a wood. There he saw a man who wanted to give his pig some acorns to eat, and was trying with all his might to make him climb up the oak-tree.

‘What are you doing, my good man?’ asked he.

‘I want to make my pig eat some acorns, and I can’t get him to go up the tree.’

‘If you were to climb up and shake down the acorns the pig would pick them up.’

‘Oh, I never thought of that.’

‘Here is the second idiot,’ said the lover to himself.

Some way farther along the road he came upon a man who had never worn any trousers, and who was trying to put on a pair. So he had fastened them to a tree and was jumping with all his might up in the air so that he should hit the two legs of the trousers as he came down.

‘It would be much better if you held them in your hands,’ said the young man, ‘and then put your legs one after the other in each hole.’

‘Dear me to be sure! You are sharper than I am, for that never occurred to me.’

And having found three people more foolish than his bride, or her father or her mother, the lover went back to marry the young lady.

And in course of time they had a great many children.

Story from Hainaut.

(M. Lemoine. La Tradition. No, 34,)

KARI WOODENGOWN

THERE was once upon a time a King who had become a widower. His Queen had left one daughter behind her, and she was so wise and so pretty that it was impossible for any one to be wiser or prettier. For a long time the King went sorrowing for his wife, for he had loved her exceedingly; but at last he grew tired of living alone, and married a Queen who was a widow, and she also had a daughter, who was just as ill-favoured and wicked as the other was good and beautiful. The stepmother and her daughter were envious of the King's daughter because she was so pretty, but so long as the King was at home they dared do her no harm, because his love for her was so great.

Then there came a time when he made war on another King and went away to fight, and then the new Queen thought that she could do what she liked; so she both hungered and beat the King's daughter and chased her about into every corner. At last she thought that everything was too good for her, and set her to work to look after the cattle. So she went about with the cattle, and herded them in the woods and in the fields. Of food she got little or none, and grew pale and thin, and was nearly always weeping and sad. Among the herd there was a great blue bull, which always kept itself very smart and sleek, and often came to the King's daughter and let her stroke him. So one day, when she was again sitting crying and sorrowing, the Bull came up to her and asked why she was always so full of care? She made no answer, but continued to weep.

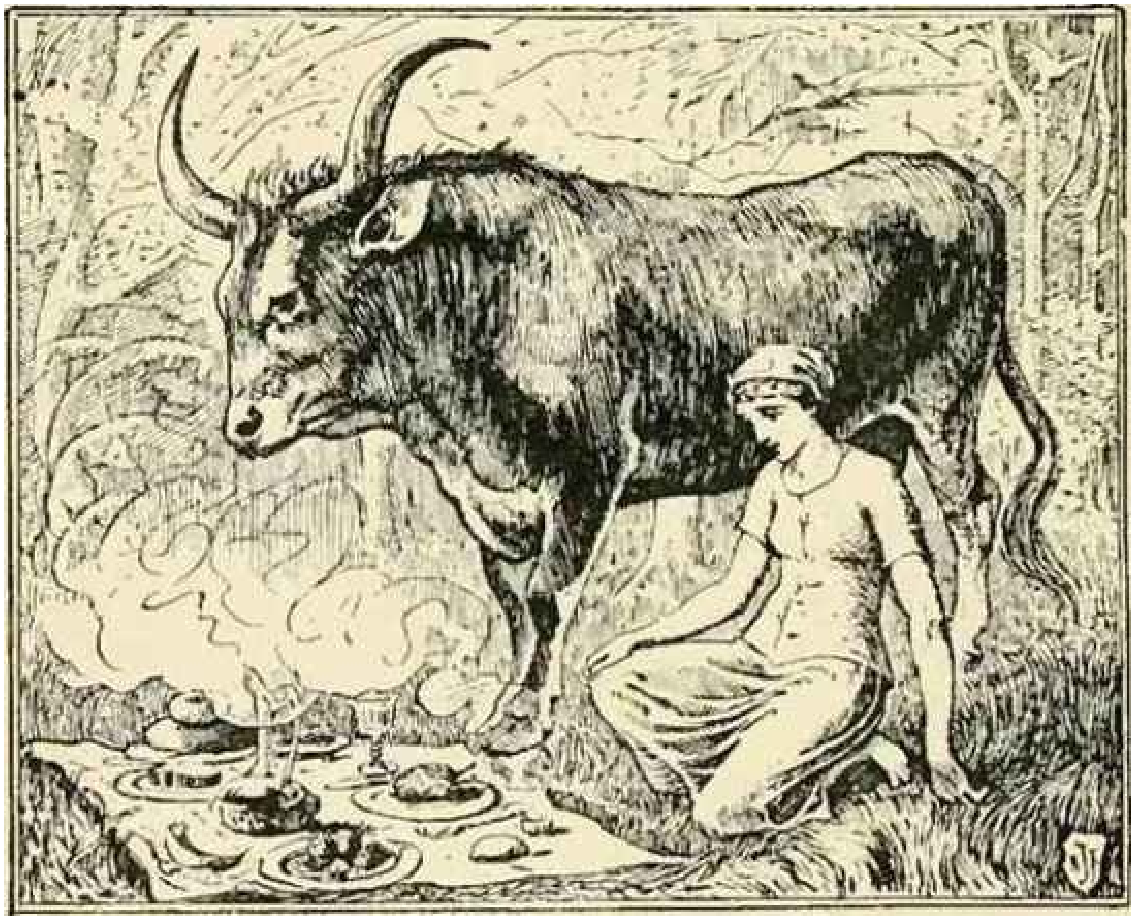

‘Well,’ said the Bull, ‘I know what it is, though you will not tell me; you are weeping because the Queen is unkind to you, and because she wants to starve you to death. But you need be under no concern about food, for in my left ear there lies a cloth, and if you will but take it and spread it out, you can have as many dishes as you like.’

So she did this, and took the cloth and spread it out upon the grass, and then it was covered with the daintiest dishes that any one could desire, and there was wine, and mead, and cake. And now she became brisk and well again, and grew so rosy, and plump, and fair that the Queen and her scraggy daughter turned blue and white with vexation at it. The Queen could not imagine how her step-daughter could look so well on such bad food, so she ordered one of her handmaidens to follow her into the wood and watch her, and see how it was, for she thought that some of the servants must be giving her food. So the maid followed her into the wood and watched, and saw how the step-daughter took the cloth out of the Blue Bull’s ear, and spread it out, and how the cloth was then covered with the most delicate dishes, which the step-daughter ate and regaled herself with. So the waiting-maid went home and told the Queen.

And now the King came home, and he had conquered the other King with whom he had been at war. So there was great gladness in the palace, but no one was more glad than the King’s daughter. The Queen, however, pretended to be ill, and gave the doctor much money to say that she would never be well again unless she had some of the flesh of the Blue Bull to eat. Both the King’s daughter and the people in the palace asked the doctor if there were no other means of saving her, and begged for the Bull’s life, for they were all fond of him, and they all declared that there was no such Bull in the whole country; but it was all in vain, he was to be killed, and should be killed, and nothing else would serve. When the King’s daughter heard it she was full of sorrow, and went down to the byre to the Bull. He too was standing there hanging his head, and looking so downcast that she fell a-weeping over him.

‘What are you weeping for?’ said the Bull.

So she told him that the King had come home again, and that the Queen had pretended to be ill, and that she had made the doctor say that she could never be well again unless some of the flesh of the Blue Bull was given her to eat, and that now he was to be killed.

‘When once they have taken my life they will soon kill you also,’ said the Bull. ‘If you are of the same mind with me, we will take our departure this very night.’

The King’s daughter thought that it was bad to go and leave her father, but that it was worse still to be in the same house with the Queen, so she promised the Bull that she would come.

At night, when all the others had gone to bed, the King’s daughter stole softly down to the byre to the Bull, and he took her on his back and got out of the courtyard as quickly as he could. So at cock-crow next morning, when the people came to kill the Bull, he was gone, and when the King got up and asked for his daughter she was gone too. He sent forth messengers to all parts of the kingdom to search for them, and published his loss in all the parish churches, but there was no one who had seen anything of them.

In the meantime the Bull travelled through many lands with the King’s daughter on his back, and one day they came to a great copper-wood, where the trees, and the branches, and the leaves, and the flowers, and everything else was of copper.

But before they entered the wood the Bull said to the King’s daughter:

‘When we enter into this wood, you must take the greatest care not to touch a leaf of it, or all will be over both with me and with you, for a Troll with three heads, who is the owner of the wood, lives here.’

So she said she would be on her guard, and not touch anything. And she was very careful, and bent herself out of the way of the branches, and put them aside with her hands; but it was so thickly wooded that it was all but impossible to get forward, and do what she might, she somehow or other tore off a leaf which got into her hand.

‘Oh! oh! What have you done now?’ said the Bull. ‘It will now cost us a battle for life or death; but do be careful to keep the leaf.’

Very soon afterwards they came to the end of the wood, and the Troll with three heads came rushing up to them.

‘Who is that who is touching my wood?’ said the Troll.

‘The wood is just as much mine as yours!’ said the Bull.

‘We shall have a tussle for that!’ shrieked the Troll.

‘That may be,’ said the Bull.

So they rushed on each other and fought, and as for the Bull he butted and kicked with all the strength of his body, but the Troll fought quite as well as he did, and the whole day went by before the Bull put an end to him, and then he himself was so full of wounds and so worn out that he was scarcely able to move. So they had to wait a day, and the Bull told the King’s daughter to take the horn of ointment which hung at the Troll’s belt, and rub him with it; then he was himself again, and the next day they set off once more. And now they journeyed on for many, many days, and then after a long, long time they came to a silver wood. The trees, and the boughs, and the leaves, and the flowers, and everything else was of silver.

Before the Bull went into the wood, he said to the King’s daughter: ‘When we enter into this wood you must, for Heaven’s sake, be very careful not to touch anything at all, and not to pluck off even so much as one leaf, or else all will be over both with you and with me. A Troll with six heads lives here, who is the owner of the wood, and I do not think I should be able to overcome him.’

‘Yes,’ said the King’s daughter, ‘I will take good care not to touch what you do not wish me to touch.’

But when they got into the wood it was so crowded, and the trees so close together, that they could scarcely get forward. She was as careful as she could be, and bent aside to get out of the way of the branches, and thrust them away from before her with her hands; but every instant a branch struck against her eyes, and in spite of all her care, she happened to pull off one leaf.

‘Oh! oh! What have you done now?’ said the Bull. It will now cost us a battle for life or death, for this Troll has six heads and is twice as strong as the other, but do be careful to keep the leaf.’

Just as he said this came the Troll. ‘Who is that who is touching my wood?’ he said.

‘It is just as much mine as yours!’

‘We shall have a tussle for that!’ screamed the Troll.

‘That may be,’ said the Bull, and rushed at the Troll, and gored out his eyes, and drove his horns right through him so that his entrails gushed out, but the Troll fought just as well as he did, and it was three whole days before the Bull got the life out of him. But the Bull was then so weak and worn out that it was only with pain and effort that he could move, and so covered with wounds that the blood streamed from him. So he told the King’s daughter to take the horn of ointment that was hanging at the Troll’s belt, and anoint him with it. She did this, and then he came to himself again, but they had to stay there and rest for a week before the Bull was able to go any farther.

At last they set forth on their way again, but the Bull was still weak, and at first could not go quickly. The King’s daughter wished to spare him, and said that she was so young and light of foot that she would willingly walk, but he would not give her leave to do that, and she was forced to seat herself on his back again. So they travelled for a long time, and through many lands, and the King’s daughter did not at all know where he was taking her, but after a long, long time they came to a gold wood. It was so golden that the gold dripped off it, and the trees, and the branches, and the flowers, and the leaves were all of pure gold. Here all happened just as it had happened in the copper wood and silver wood. The Bull told the King’s daughter that on no account was she to touch it, for there was a Troll with nine heads who was the owner, and that he was much larger and stronger than both the others put together, and that he did not believe that he could overcome him. So she said that she would take great care not to touch anything, and he should see that she did. But when they got into the wood it was still thicker than the silver wood, and the farther they got into it the worse it grew. The wood became thicker and thicker, and closer and closer, and at last she thought there was no way whatsoever by which they could get forward; she was so terrified lest she should break anything off, that she sat and twisted, and turned herself on this side and on that, to get out of the way of the branches, and pushed them away from her with her hands, but every moment they struck against her eyes, so that she could not see what she was clutching at, and before she knew what she was doing she had a golden apple in her hands. She was now in such terror that she began to cry, and wanted to throw it away, but the Bull said that she was to keep it, and take the greatest care of it, and comforted her as well as he could, but he believed that it would be a hard struggle, and he doubted whether it would go well with him.

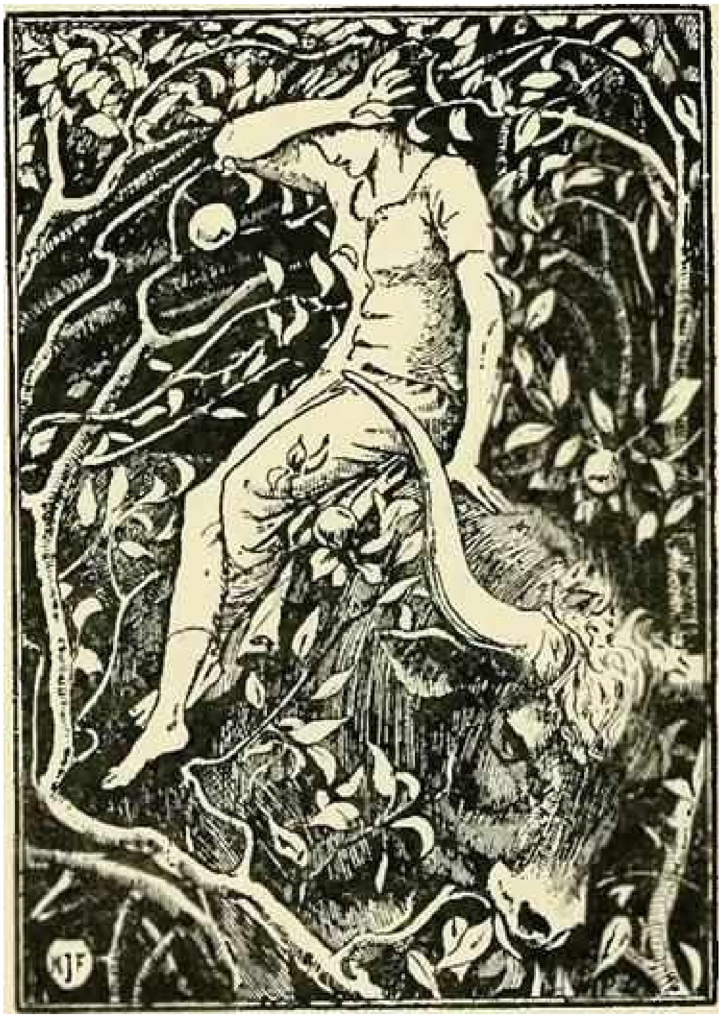

Just then the Troll with nine heads came, and he was so frightful that the King’s daughter scarcely dared to look at him

‘Who is this who is breaking my wood?’ he screamed

‘It is as much mine as yours!’ said the Bull.

‘We shall have a tussle for that!’ screamed the Troll.

‘That may be,’ said the Bull; so they rushed at each other, and fought, and it was such a dreadful sight that the King’s daughter very nearly swooned. The Bull gored the Troll’s eyes out and ran his horns right through him, but the Troll fought as well as he did, and when the Bull had gored one head to death the other heads breathed life into it again, so it was a whole week before the Bull was able to kill him. But then he himself was so worn out and weak that he could not move at all. His body was all one wound, and he could not even so much as tell the King’s daughter to take the horn of ointment out of the Troll’s belt and rub him with it. She did this without being told; so he came to himself again, but he had to lie there for three weeks and rest before he was in a state to move.

Then they journeyed onwards by degrees, for the Bull said that they had still a little farther to go, and in this way they crossed many high hills and thick woods. This lasted for a while, and then they came upon the fells.

‘Do you see anything?’ asked the Bull.

‘No, I see nothing but the sky above and the wild fell side,’ said the King’s daughter.

Then they climbed up higher, and the fell grew more level, so that they could see farther around them.

‘Do you see anything now?’ said the Bull.

‘Yes, I see a small castle, far, far away,’ said the Princess.

‘It is not so very little after all,’ said the Bull.

After a long, long time they came to a high hill, where there was a precipitous wall of rock.

‘Do you see nothing now?’ said the Bull.

‘Yes, now I see the castle quite near, and now it is much, much larger,’ said the King’s daughter.

‘Thither shall you go,’ said the Bull; ‘immediately below the castle there is a pig-sty, where you shall dwell. When you get there, you will find a wooden gown which you are to put on, and then go to the castle and say that you are called Kari Woodengown, and that you are seeking a place. But now you must take out your little knife and cut off my head with it, and then you must flay me and roll up my hide and put it there under the rock, and beneath the hide you must lay the copper leaf, and the silver leaf, and the golden apple. Close beside the rock a stick is standing, and when you want me for anything you have only to knock at the wall of rock with that.’

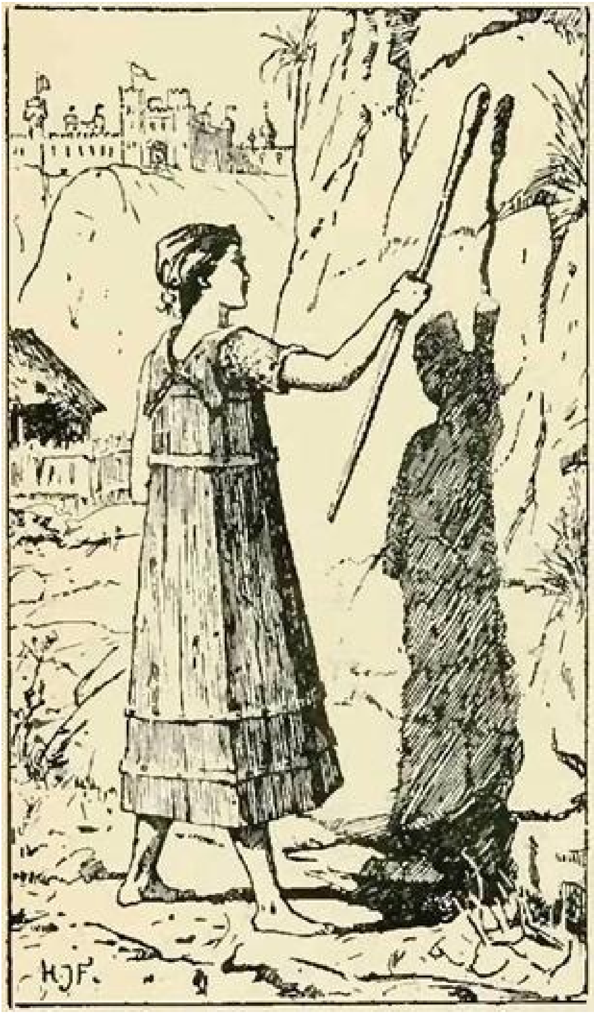

At first she would not do it, but when the Bull said that this was the only reward that he would have for what he had done for her, she could do no otherwise. So though she thought it very cruel, she slaved on and cut at the great animal with the knife till she had cut off his head and hide, and then she folded up the hide and laid it beneath the mountain wall, and put the copper leaf, and the silver leaf, and the golden apple inside it.

When she had done that she went away to the pig-sty, but all the way as she went she wept, and was very sorrowful. Then she put on the wooden gown, and walked to the King's palace. When she got there she went into the kitchen and begged for a place, saying that her name was Kari Woodengown.

The cook told her that she might have a place and leave to stay there at once and wash up, for the girl who had done that before had just gone away. 'And as soon as you get tired of being here you will take yourself off too,' said he.

'No,' said she, 'that I shall certainly not.'

And then she washed up, and did it very tidily.

On Sunday some strangers were coming to the King's palace, so Kari begged to have leave to carry up the water for the Prince's bath, but the others laughed at her and said, 'What do you want there? Do you think the Prince will ever look at such a fright as you?'

She would not give it up, however, but went on begging until at last she got leave. When she was going upstairs her wooden gown made such a clatter that the Prince came out and said, 'What sort of a creature may you be?'

'I was to take this water to you,' said Kari.

'Do you suppose that I will have any water that you bring?' said the Prince, and emptied it over her.

She had to bear that, but then she asked permission to go to church. She got that, for the church was very near. But first she went to the rock and knocked at it with the stick which was standing there, as the Bull had told her to do. Instantly a man came forth and asked what she wanted. The King's daughter said that she had got leave to go to church and listen to the priest, but that she had no clothes to go in. So he brought her a gown that was as bright as the copper wood, and she got a horse and saddle too from him. When she reached the church she was so pretty and so splendidly dressed that every one wondered who she could be, and hardly anyone listened to what the priest was saying, for they were all looking far too much at her, and the Prince himself liked her so well that he could not take his eyes off her for an instant. As she was walking out of church the Prince followed her and shut the church door after her, and thus he kept one of her gloves in his hand. Then she went away and mounted her horse again; the Prince again followed her, and asked her whence she came.

'Oh! I am from Bathland,' said Kari. And when the Prince took out the glove and wanted to give it back to her, she said:

'Darkness behind me, but light on my way, That the Prince may not see where I'm going to-day!'

The Prince had never seen the equal of that glove, and he went far and wide, asking after the country which the proud lady, who rode away without her glove, had said that she came from, but there was no one who could tell him where it lay.

Next Sunday some one had to take up a towel to the Prince.

'Ah! may I have leave to go up with that?' said Kari.

'What would be the use of that?' said the others who were in the kitchen; 'you saw what happened last time.'

Kari would not give in, but went on begging for leave till she got it, and then she ran up the stairs so that her wooden gown clattered again. Out came the Prince, and when he saw that it was Kari, he snatched the towel from her and flung it right in her eyes.

‘Be off at once, you ugly Troll,’ said he; ‘do you think that I will have a towel that has been touched by your dirty fingers?’

After that the Prince went to church, and Kari also asked leave to go. They all asked how she could want to go to church when she had nothing to wear but that wooden gown, which was so black and hideous. But Kari said she thought the priest was such a good man at preaching that she got so much benefit from what he said, and at last she got leave.

She went to the rock and knocked, whereupon out came the man and gave her a gown which was much more magnificent than the first. It was embroidered with silver all over it, and it shone like the silver wood, and he gave her also a most beautiful horse, with housings embroidered with silver, and a bridle of silver too.

When the King’s daughter got to church all the people were standing outside upon the hillside, and all of them wondered who on earth she could be, and the Prince was on the alert in a moment, and came and wanted to hold her horse while she alighted. But she jumped off and said that there was no need for that, for the horse was so well broken in that it stood still when she bade it and came when she called it. So they all went into the church together, but there was scarcely any one who listened to what the priest was saying, for they were all looking far too much at her, and the Prince fell much more deeply in love with her than he had been before.

When the sermon was over and she went out of the church, and was just going to mount her horse, the Prince again came and asked her where she came from.

‘I am from Towelland,’ said the King’s daughter, and as she spoke she dropped her riding-whip, and while the Prince was stooping to pick it up she said:

‘Darkness behind me, but light on my way,
That the Prince may not see where I’m going to-day!’

And she was gone again, neither could the Prince see what had become of her. He went far and wide to inquire for that country from whence she had said that she came, but there was no one who could tell him where it lay, so he was forced to have patience once more.

Next Sunday some one had to go to the Prince with a comb. Kari begged for leave to go with it, but the others reminded her of what had happened last time, and scolded her for wanting to let the Prince see her when she was so black and so ugly in her wooden gown, but she would not give up asking until they gave her leave to go up to the Prince with the comb. When she went clattering up the stairs again, out came the Prince and took the comb and flung it at her, and ordered her to be off as fast as she could. After that the Prince went to church, and Kari also begged for leave to go. Again they all asked what she would do there, she who was so black and ugly, and had no clothes that she could be seen in by other people. The Prince or some one else might very easily catch sight of her, they said, and then both she and they would suffer for it; but Kari said that they had something else to do than to look at her, and she never ceased begging until she got leave to go.

And now all happened just as it had happened twice already. She went away to the rock and knocked at it with the stick, and then the man came out and gave her a gown which was very much more magnificent than either of the others. It was almost entirely made of pure gold and diamonds, and she also got a noble horse with housings embroidered with gold, and a golden bridle.

When the King's daughter came to the church the priest and people were all standing on the hillside waiting for her, and the Prince ran up and wanted to hold the horse, but she jumped off, saying:

'No, thank you, there is no need; my horse is so well broken in that it will stand still when I bid it.'

So they all hastened into the church together and the priest got into the pulpit, but no one listened to what he said, for they were looking far too much at her and wondering whence she came; and the Prince was far more in love than he had been on either of the former occasions, and he was mindful of nothing but of looking at her.

When the sermon was over and the King's daughter was about to leave the church, the Prince had caused a firkin of tar to be emptied out in the porch in order that he might go to help her over it; she, however, did not trouble herself in the least about the tar, but set her foot down in the middle of it and jumped over it, and thus one of her gold shoes was left sticking in it. When she had seated herself on the horse the Prince came running out of the church and asked her whence she came.

'From Combland,' said Kari. But when the Prince wanted to reach her her gold shoe, she said:

'Darkness behind me, but light on my way,
That the Prince may not see where I'm going to-day!'

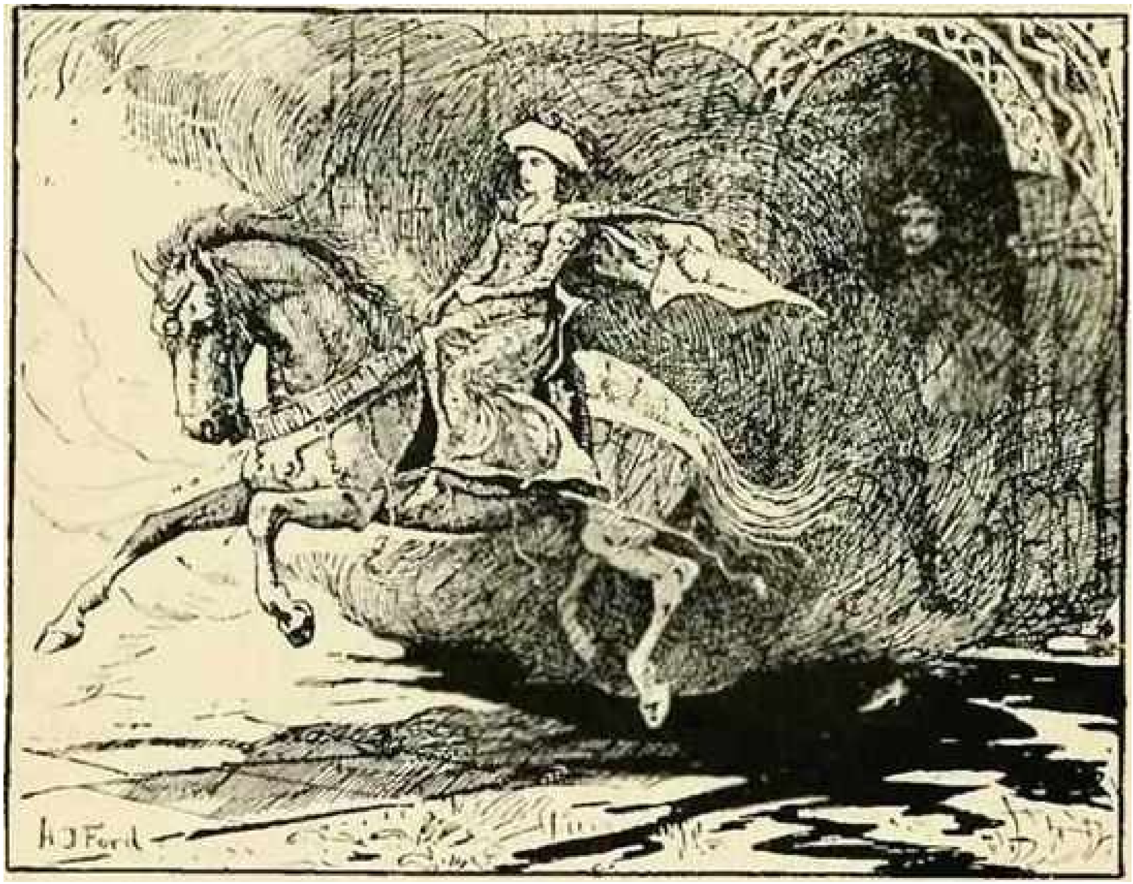

The Prince did not know what had become of her, so he travelled for a long and wearisome time all over the world, asking where Combland was; but when no one could tell him where that country was, he caused it to be made known everywhere that he would marry any woman who could put on the gold shoe. So fair maidens and ugly maidens came thither from all regions, but there was none who had a foot so small that she could put on the gold shoe. After a long, long while came Kari Woodengown's wicked stepmother, with her daughter too, and the shoe fitted her. But she was so ugly and looked so loathsome that the Prince was very unwilling to do what he had promised. Nevertheless all was got ready for the wedding, and she was decked out as a bride, but as they were riding to church a little bird sat upon a tree and sang:

'A slice off her heel
And a slice off her toes,
Kari Woodengown's shoe
Fills with blood as she goes!'

And when they looked to it the bird had spoken the truth, for blood was trickling out of the shoe. So all the waiting-maids, and all the womenkind in the castle had to come and try on the shoe, but there was not one whom it would fit.

'But where is Kari Woodengown, then?' asked the Prince, when all the others had tried on the shoe, for he understood the song of birds and it came to his mind what the bird had said.

‘Oh! that creature!’ said the others; ‘it’s not the least use for her to come here, for she has feet like a horse!’

‘That may be,’ said the Prince, ‘but as all the others have tried it, Kari may try it too.’

‘Kari!’ he called out through the door, and Kari came upstairs, and her wooden gown clattered as if a whole regiment of dragoons were coming up.

‘Now, you are to try on the gold shoe and be a Princess,’ said the other servants, and they laughed at her and mocked her. Kari took up the shoe, put her foot into it as easily as possible, and then threw off her wooden gown, and there she stood in the golden gown which flashed like rays of sunshine, and on her other foot she had the fellow to the gold shoe. The Prince knew her in a moment, and was so glad that he ran and took her in his arms and kissed her, and when he heard that she was a King’s daughter he was gladder still, and then they had the wedding.(14)

(14) From P. C. Asbjornsen.

DRAKESTAIL

DRAKESTAIL was very little, that is why he was called Drakestail; but tiny as he was he had brains, and he knew what he was about, for having begun with nothing he ended by amassing a hundred crowns. Now the King of the country, who was very extravagant and never kept any money, having heard that Drakestail had some, went one day in his own person to borrow his hoard, and, my word, in those days Drakestail was not a little proud of having lent money to the King. But after the first and second year, seeing that they never even dreamed of paying the interest, he became uneasy, so much so that at last he resolved to go and see His Majesty himself, and get repaid. So one fine morning Drakestail, very spruce and fresh, takes the road, singing: ‘Quack, quack, quack, when shall I get my money back?’

He had not gone far when he met friend Fox, on his rounds that way.

‘Good-morning, neighbour,’ says the friend, ‘where are you off to so early?’

‘I am going to the King for what he owes me.’

‘Oh! take me with thee!’

Drakestail said to himself: ‘One can’t have too many friends.’ ... ‘I will,’ says he, ‘but going on all-fours you will soon be tired. Make yourself quite small, get into my throat — go into my gizzard and I will carry you.’

‘Happy thought!’ says friend Fox.

He takes bag and baggage, and, presto! is gone like a letter into the post.

And Drakestail is off again, all spruce and fresh, still singing: ‘Quack, quack, quack, when shall I have my money back?’

He had not gone far when he met his lady-friend Ladder, leaning on her wall.

‘Good morning, my duckling,’ says the lady friend, ‘whither away so bold?’

‘I am going to the King for what he owes me.’

‘Oh! take me with thee!’

Drakestail said to himself: ‘One can’t have too many friends.’ ... ‘I will,’ says he, ‘but with your wooden legs you will soon be tired. Make yourself quite small, get into my throat — go into my gizzard and I will carry you.’

‘Happy thought!’ says my friend Ladder, and nimble, bag and baggage, goes to keep company with friend Fox.

And ‘Quack, quack, quack.’ Drakestail is off again, singing and spruce as before. A little farther he meets his sweetheart, my friend River, wandering quietly in the sunshine.

‘Thou, my cherub,’ says she, ‘whither so lonesome, with arching tail, on this muddy road?’

‘I am going to the King, you know, for what he owes me.’

‘Oh! take me with thee!’

Drakestail said to himself: ‘We can’t be too many friends.’... ‘I will,’ says he, ‘but you who sleep while you walk will soon be tired. Make yourself quite small, get into my throat — go into my gizzard and I will carry you.’

‘Ah! happy thought!’ says my friend River.

She takes bag and baggage, and glou, glou, glou, she takes her place between friend Fox and my friend Ladder.

And ‘Quack, quack, quack.’ Drakestail is off again singing.

A little farther on he meets comrade Wasp’s-nest, manoeuvring his wasps.

‘Well, good-morning, friend Drakestail,’ said comrade Wasp’s-nest, ‘where are we bound for so spruce and fresh?’

‘I am going to the King for what he owes me.’

‘Oh! take me with thee!’

Drakestail said to himself, ‘One can’t have too many friends.’... ‘I will,’ says he, ‘but with your battalion to drag along, you will soon be tired. Make yourself quite small, go into my throat — get into my gizzard and I will carry you.’

‘By Jove I that’s a good idea!’ says comrade Wasp’s-nest.

And left file! he takes the same road to join the others with all his party. There was not much more room, but by closing up a bit they managed.... And Drakestail is off again singing.

He arrived thus at the capital, and threaded his way straight up the High Street, still running and singing ‘Quack, quack, quack, when shall I get my money back?’ to the great astonishment of the good folks, till he came to the King’s palace.

He strikes with the knocker: ‘Toc! toc!’

‘Who is there?’ asks the porter, putting his head out of the wicket.

‘’Tis I, Drakestail. I wish to speak to the King.’

‘Speak to the King!... That’s easily said. The King is dining, and will not be disturbed.’

‘Tell him that it is I, and I have come he well knows why.’

The porter shuts his wicket and goes up to say it to the King, who was just sitting down to dinner with a napkin round his neck, and all his ministers.

‘Good, good!’ said the King laughing. ‘I know what it is! Make him come in, and put him with the turkeys and chickens.’

The porter descends.

‘Have the goodness to enter.’

‘Good!’ says Drakestail to himself, ‘I shall now see how they eat at court.’

‘This way, this way,’ says the porter. ‘One step further.... There, there you are.’

‘How? what? in the poultry yard?’

Fancy how vexed Drakestail was!

‘Ah! so that’s it,’ says he. ‘Wait! I will compel you to receive me. Quack, quack, quack, when shall I get my money back?’ But turkeys and chickens are creatures who don’t like people that are not as themselves. When they saw the new-comer and how he was made, and when they heard him crying too, they began to look black at him.

‘What is it? what does he want?’

Finally they rushed at him all together, to overwhelm him with pecks.

‘I am lost!’ said Drakestail to himself, when by good luck he remembers his comrade friend Fox, and he cries:

‘Reynard, Reynard, come out of your earth, Or Drakestail’s life is of little worth.’

Then friend Fox, who was only waiting for these words, hastens out, throws himself on the wicked fowls, and quick! quack! he tears them to pieces; so much so that at the end of five minutes there was not one left alive. And Drakestail, quite content, began to sing again, ‘Quack, quack, quack, when shall I get my money back?’

When the King who was still at table heard this refrain, and the poultry woman came to tell him what had been going on in the yard, he was terribly annoyed.

He ordered them to throw this tail of a drake into the well, to make an end of him.

And it was done as he commanded. Drakestail was in despair of getting himself out of such a deep hole, when he remembered his lady friend, the Ladder.

‘Ladder, Ladder, come out of thy hold,
Or Drakestail’s days will soon be told.’

My friend Ladder, who was only waiting for these words, hastens out, leans her two arms on the edge of the well, then Drakestail climbs nimbly on her back, and hop! he is in the yard, where he begins to sing louder than ever.

When the King, who was still at table and laughing at the good trick he had played his creditor, heard him again reclaiming his money, he became livid with rage.

He commanded that the furnace should be heated, and this tail of a drake thrown into it, because he must be a sorcerer.

The furnace was soon hot, but this time Drakestail was not so afraid; he counted on his sweetheart, my friend River.

‘River, River, outward flow,
Or to death Drakestail must go.’

My friend River hastens out, and errouf! throws herself into the furnace, which she floods, with all the people who had lighted it; after which she flowed growling into the hall of the palace to the height of more than four feet.

And Drakestail, quite content, begins to swim, singing deafeningly, ‘Quack, quack, quack, when shall I get my money back?’

The King was still at table, and thought himself quite sure of his game; but when he heard Drakestail singing again, and when they told him all that had passed, he became furious and got up from table brandishing his fists.

‘Bring him here, and I’ll cut his throat! bring him here quick!’ cried he.

And quickly two footmen ran to fetch Drakestail.

‘At last,’ said the poor chap, going up the great stairs, ‘they have decided to receive me.’

Imagine his terror when on entering he sees the King as red as a turkey cock, and all his ministers attending him standing sword in hand. He thought this time it was all up with him. Happily, he remembered that there was still one remaining friend, and he cried with dying accents:

‘Wasp’s-nest, Wasp’s-nest, make a sally,
Or Drakestail nevermore may rally.’

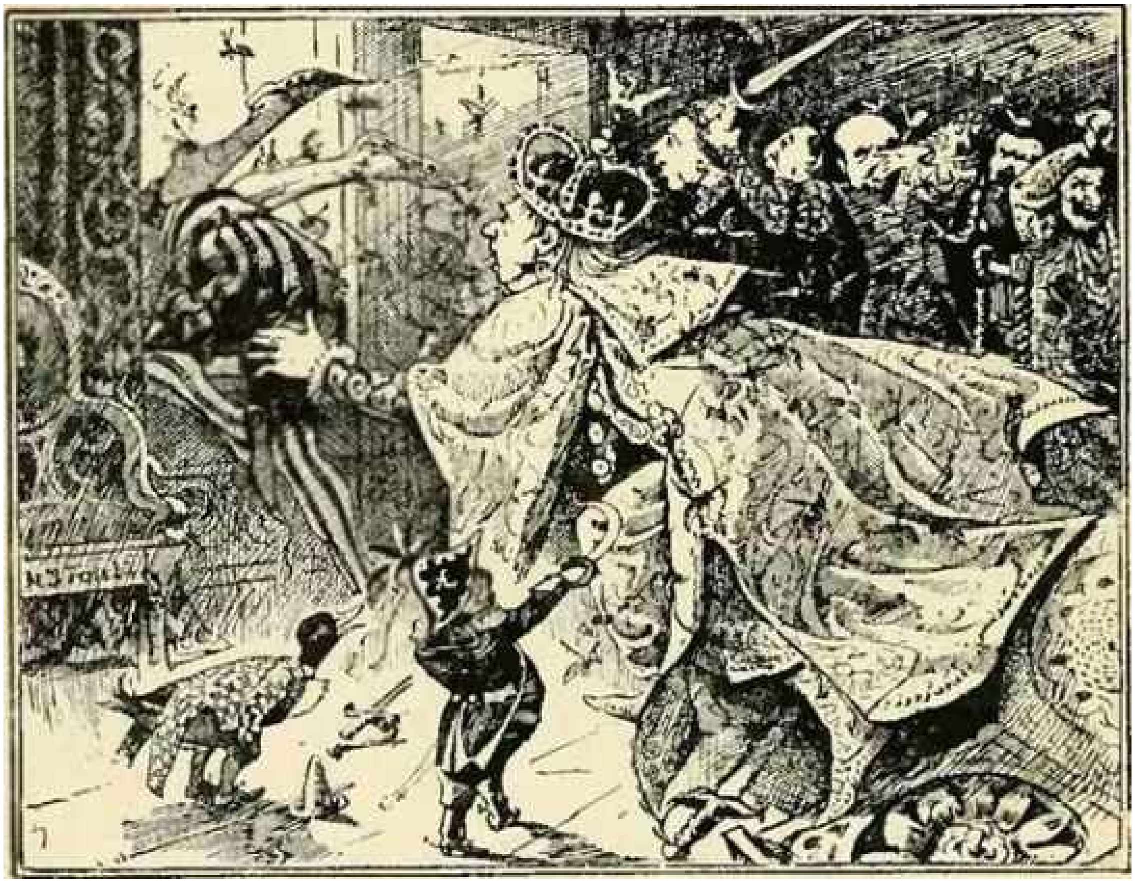

Hereupon the scene changes.

‘Bs, bs, bayonet them! ‘The brave Wasp’s-nest rushes out with all his wasps. They threw themselves on the infuriated King and his ministers, and stung them so fiercely in the face that they lost their heads, and not knowing where to hide themselves they all jumped pell-mell from the window and broke their necks on the pavement.

Behold Drakestail much astonished, all alone in the big saloon and master of the field. He could not get over it.

Nevertheless, he remembered shortly what he had come for to the palace, and improving the occasion, he set to work to hunt for his dear money. But in vain he rummaged in all the drawers; he found nothing; all had been spent.

And ferreting thus from room to room he came at last to the one with the throne in it, and feeling fatigued, he sat himself down on it to think over his adventure. In the meanwhile the people had found their King and his ministers with their feet in the air on the pavement, and they had gone into the palace to know how it had occurred. On entering the throne-room, when the crowd saw that there was already someone on the royal seat, they broke out in cries of surprise and joy:

‘The King is dead, long live the King!

Heaven has sent us down this thing.’

Drakestail, who was no longer surprised at anything, received the acclamations of the people as if he had never done anything else all his life.

A few of them certainly murmured that a Drakestail would make a fine King; those who knew him replied that a knowing Drakestail was a more worthy King than a spendthrift like him who was lying on the pavement. In short, they ran and took the crown off the head of the deceased, and placed it on that of Drakestail, whom it fitted like wax.

Thus he became King.

‘And now,’ said he after the ceremony, ‘ladies and gentlemen, let’s go to supper. I am so hungry!’(15)

(15) Contes of Ch. Marelles.

THE RATCATCHER

A VERY long time ago the town of Hamel in Germany was invaded by bands of rats, the like of which had never been seen before nor will ever be again.

They were great black creatures that ran boldly in broad daylight through the streets, and swarmed so, all over the houses, that people at last could not put their hand or foot down anywhere without touching one. When dressing in the morning they found them in their breeches and petticoats, in their pockets and in their boots; and when they wanted a morsel to eat, the voracious horde had swept away everything from cellar to garret. The night was even worse. As soon as the lights were out, these untiring nibblers set to work. And everywhere, in the ceilings, in the floors, in the cupboards, at the doors, there was a chase and a rummage, and so furious a noise of gimlets, pincers, and saws, that a deaf man could not have rested for one hour together.

Neither cats nor dogs, nor poison nor traps, nor prayers nor candles burnt to all the saints — nothing would do anything. The more they killed the more came. And the inhabitants of Hamel began to go to the dogs (not that THEY were of much use), when one Friday there arrived in the town a man with a queer face, who played the bagpipes and sang this refrain:

‘Qui vivra verra:
Le voila,
Le preneur des rats.’

He was a great gawky fellow, dry and bronzed, with a crooked nose, a long rat-tail moustache, two great yellow piercing and mocking eyes, under a large felt hat set off by a scarlet cock’s feather. He was dressed in a green jacket with a leather belt and red breeches, and on his feet were sandals fastened by thongs passed round his legs in the gipsy fashion.

That is how he may be seen to this day, painted on a window of the cathedral of Hamel.

He stopped on the great market-place before the town hall, turned his back on the church and went on with his music, singing:

‘Who lives shall see:
This is he,
The ratcatcher.’

The town council had just assembled to consider once more this plague of Egypt, from which no one could save the town.

The stranger sent word to the counsellors that, if they would make it worth his while, he would rid them of all their rats before night, down to the very last.

‘Then he is a sorcerer!’ cried the citizens with one voice; ‘we must beware of him.’

The Town Counsellor, who was considered clever, reassured them.

He said: ‘Sorcerer or no, if this bagpiper speaks the truth, it was he who sent us this horrible vermin that he wants to rid us of to-day for money. Well, we must learn to catch the devil in his own snares. You leave it to me.’

‘Leave it to the Town Counsellor,’ said the citizens one to another.

And the stranger was brought before them.

‘Before night,’ said he, ‘I shall have despatched all the rats in Hamel if you will but pay me a gros a head.’

‘A gros a head!’ cried the citizens, ‘but that will come to millions of florins!’

The Town Counsellor simply shrugged his shoulders and said to the stranger:

‘A bargain! To work; the rats will be paid one gros a head as you ask.’

The bagpiper announced that he would operate that very evening when the moon rose. He added that the inhabitants should at that hour leave the streets free, and content themselves with looking out of their windows at what was passing, and that it would be a pleasant spectacle. When the people of Hamel heard of the bargain, they too exclaimed: ‘A gros a head! but this will cost us a deal of money!’

‘Leave it to the Town Counsellor,’ said the town council with a malicious air. And the good people of Hamel repeated with their counsellors, ‘Leave it to the Town Counsellor.’

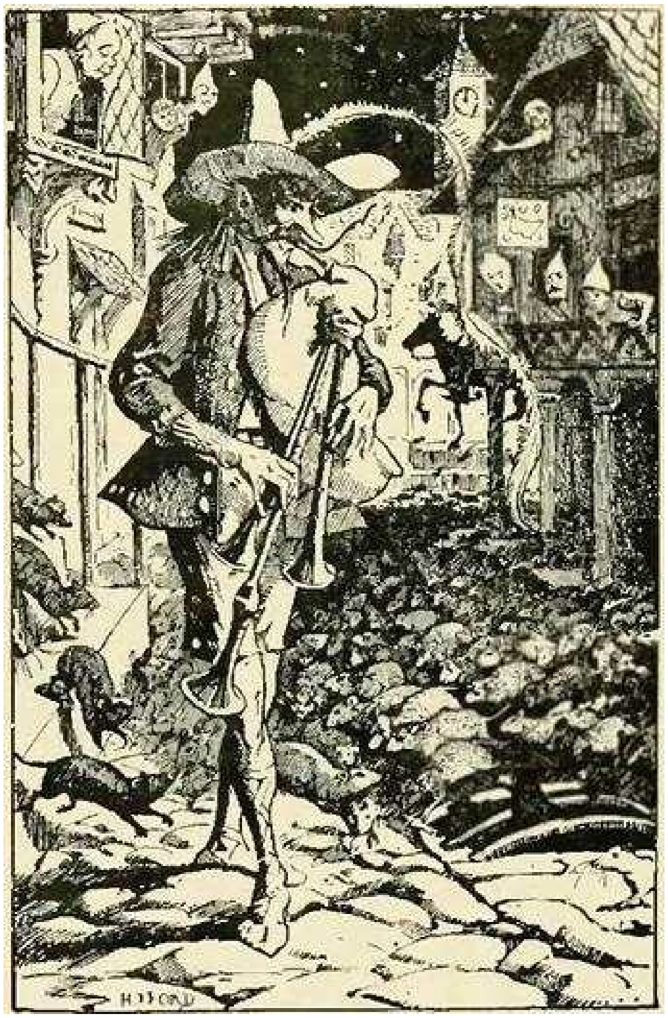

Towards nine at night the bagpiper re-appeared on the market place. He turned, as at first, his back to the church, and the moment the moon rose on the horizon, ‘Trarira, trari!’ the bagpipes resounded.

It was first a slow, caressing sound, then more and more lively and urgent, and so sonorous and piercing that it penetrated as far as the farthest alleys and retreats of the town.

Soon from the bottom of the cellars, the top of the garrets, from under all the furniture, from all the nooks and corners of the houses, out come the rats, search for the door, fling themselves into the street, and trip, trip, trip, begin to run in file towards the front of the town hall, so squeezed together that they covered the pavement like the waves of flooded torrent.

When the square was quite full the bagpiper faced about, and, still playing briskly, turned towards the river that runs at the foot of the walls of Hamel.

Arrived there he turned round; the rats were following.

‘Hop! hop!’ he cried, pointing with his finger to the middle of the stream, where the water whirled and was drawn down as if through a funnel. And hop!

hop! without hesitating, the rats took the leap, swam straight to the funnel, plunged in head foremost and disappeared.

The plunging continued thus without ceasing till midnight.

At last, dragging himself with difficulty, came a big rat, white with age, and stopped on the bank.

It was the king of the band.

‘Are they all there, friend Blanchet?’ asked the bagpiper.

‘They are all there,’ replied friend Blanchet.

‘And how many were they?’

‘Nine hundred and ninety thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine.’

‘Well reckoned?’

‘Well reckoned.’

‘Then go and join them, old sire, and au revoir.’

Then the old white rat sprang in his turn into the river, swam to the whirlpool and disappeared.

When the bagpiper had thus concluded his business he went to bed at his inn. And for the first time during three months the people of Hamel slept quietly through the night.

The next morning, at nine o’clock, the bagpiper repaired to the town hall, where the town council awaited him.

‘All your rats took a jump into the river yesterday,’ said he to the counsellors, ‘and I guarantee that not one of them comes back. They were nine hundred and ninety thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine, at one gros a head. Reckon!’

‘Let us reckon the heads first. One gros a head is one head the gros. Where are the heads?’

The ratcatcher did not expect this treacherous stroke. He paled with anger and his eyes flashed fire.

‘The heads!’ cried he, ‘if you care about them, go and find them in the river.’

‘So,’ replied the Town Counsellor, ‘you refuse to hold to the terms of your agreement? We ourselves could refuse you all payment. But you have been of use to us, and we will not let you go without a recompense,’ and he offered him fifty crowns.

‘Keep your recompense for yourself,’ replied the ratcatcher proudly. ‘If you do not pay me I will be paid by your heirs.’

Thereupon he pulled his hat down over his eyes, went hastily out of the hall, and left the town without speaking to a soul.

When the Hamel people heard how the affair had ended they rubbed their hands, and with no more scruple than their Town Counsellor, they laughed over the ratcatcher, who, they said, was caught in his own trap. But what made them laugh above all was his threat of getting himself paid by their heirs. Ha! they wished that they only had such creditors for the rest of their lives.

Next day, which was a Sunday, they all went gaily to church, thinking that after Mass they would at last be able to eat some good thing that the rats had not tasted before them.

They never suspected the terrible surprise that awaited them on their return home. No children anywhere, they had all disappeared!

‘Our children! where are our poor children?’ was the cry that was soon heard in all the streets.

Then through the east door of the town came three little boys, who cried and wept, and this is what they told:

While the parents were at church a wonderful music had resounded. Soon all the little boys and all the little girls that had been left at home had gone out, attracted by the magic sounds, and had rushed to the great market-place. There they found the ratcatcher playing his bagpipes at the same spot as the evening before. Then the stranger had begun to walk quickly, and they had followed, running, singing and dancing to the sound of the music, as far as the foot of the mountain which one sees on entering Hamel. At their approach the mountain had opened a little, and the bagpiper had gone in with them, after which it had closed again. Only the three little ones who told the adventure had remained outside, as if by a miracle. One was bandy-legged and could not run fast enough; the other, who had left the house in haste, one foot shod the other bare, had hurt himself against a big stone and could not walk without difficulty; the third had arrived in time, but in harrying to go in with the others had struck so violently against the wall of the mountain that he fell backwards at the moment it closed upon his comrades.

At this story the parents redoubled their lamentations. They ran with pikes and mattocks to the mountain, and searched till evening to find the opening by which their children had disappeared, without being able to find it. At last, the night falling, they returned desolate to Hamel.

But the most unhappy of all was the Town Counsellor, for he lost three little boys and two pretty little girls, and to crown all, the people of Hamel overwhelmed him with reproaches, forgetting that the evening before they had all agreed with him.

What had become of all these unfortunate children?

The parents always hoped they were not dead, and that the ratcatcher, who certainly must have come out of the mountain, would have taken them with him to his country. That is why for several years they sent in search of them to different countries, but no one ever came on the trace of the poor little ones.

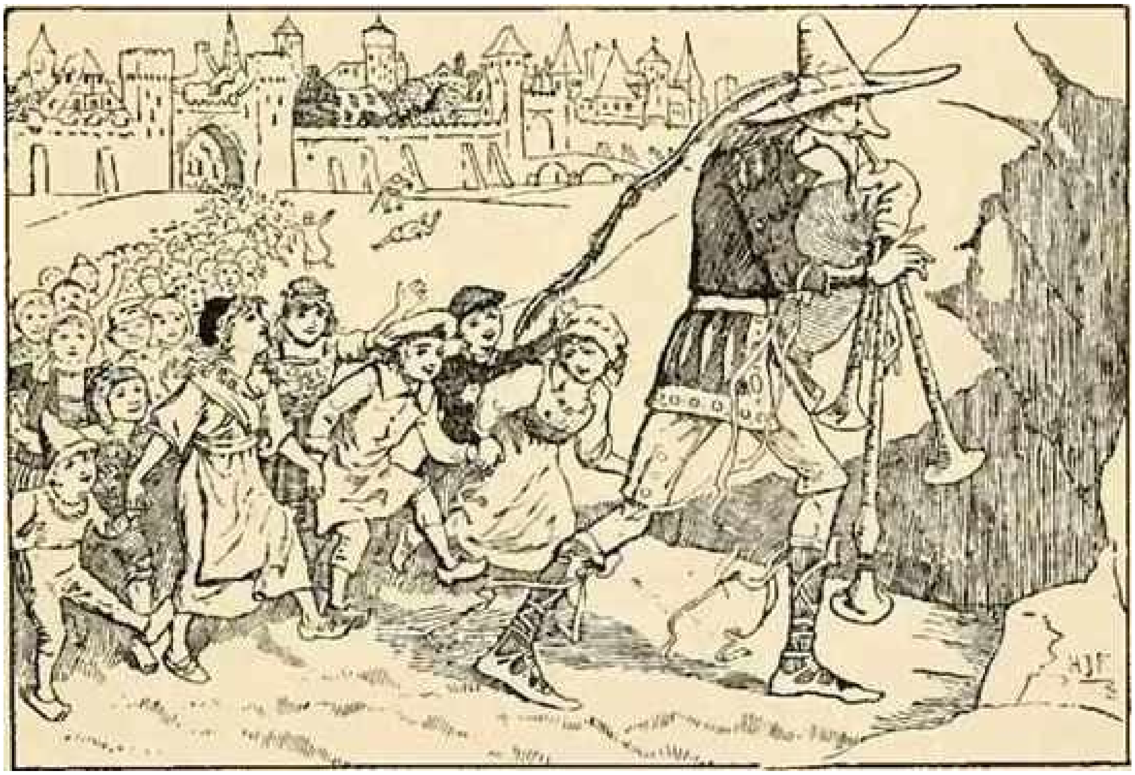

It was not till much later that anything was to be heard of them.

About one hundred and fifty years after the event, when there was no longer one left of the fathers, mothers, brothers or sisters of that day, there arrived one evening in Hamel some merchants of Bremen returning from the East, who asked to speak with the citizens. They told that they, in crossing Hungary, had sojourned in a mountainous country called Transylvania, where the inhabitants only spoke German, while all around them nothing was spoken but Hungarian. These people also declared that they came from Germany, but they did not know how they chanced to be in this strange country. ‘Now,’ said the merchants of Bremen, ‘these Germans cannot be other than the descendants of the lost children of Hamel.’

The people of Hamel did not doubt it; and since that day they regard it as certain that the Transylvanians of Hungary are their country folk, whose ancestors, as children, were brought there by the ratcatcher. There are more difficult things to believe than that.(16)

(16) Ch. Marelles.

THE TRUE HISTORY OF LITTLE GOLDEN HOOD

YOU know the tale of poor Little Red Riding-hood, that the Wolf deceived and devoured, with her cake, her little butter can, and her Grandmother; well, the true story happened quite differently, as we know now. And first of all the little girl was called and is still called Little Golden-hood; secondly, it was not she, nor the good grand-dame, but the wicked Wolf who was, in the end, caught and devoured.

Only listen.

The story begins something like the tale.

There was once a little peasant girl, pretty and nice as a star in its season. Her real name was Blanchette, but she was more often called Little Golden-hood, on account of a wonderful little cloak with a hood, gold-and fire-coloured, which she always had on. This little hood was given her by her Grandmother, who was so old that she did not know her age; it ought to bring her good luck, for it was made of a ray of sunshine, she said. And as the good old woman was considered something of a witch, everyone thought the little hood rather bewitched too.

And so it was, as you will see.

One day the mother said to the child: ‘Let us see, my little Golden-hood, if you know now how to find your way by yourself. You shall take this good piece of cake to your Grandmother for a Sunday treat to-morrow. You will ask her how she is, and come back at once, without stopping to chatter on the way with people you don’t know. Do you quite understand?’

‘I quite understand,’ replied Blanchette gaily. And off she went with the cake, quite proud of her errand.

But the Grandmother lived in another village, and there was a big wood to cross before getting there. At a turn of the road under the trees, suddenly ‘Who goes there?’

‘Friend Wolf.’

He had seen the child start alone, and the villain was waiting to devour her; when at the same moment he perceived some wood-cutters who might observe him, and he changed his mind. Instead of falling upon Blanchette he came frisking up to her like a good dog.

‘’Tis you! my nice Little Golden-hood,’ said he. So the little girl stops to talk with the Wolf, who, for all that, she did not know in the least.

‘You know me, then!’ said she; ‘what is your name?’

‘My name is friend Wolf. And where are you going thus, my pretty one, with your little basket on your arm?’

‘I am going to my Grandmother, to take her a good piece of cake for her Sunday treat to-morrow.’

‘And where does she live, your Grandmother?’

‘She lives at the other side of the wood, in the first house in the village, near the windmill, you know.’

‘Ah! yes! I know now,’ said the Wolf. ‘Well, that’s just where I’m going; I shall get there before you, no doubt, with your little bits of legs, and I’ll tell her you’re coming to see her; then she’ll wait for you.’

Thereupon the Wolf cuts across the wood, and in five minutes arrives at the Grandmother’s house.

He knocks at the door: toc, toc.

No answer.

He knocks louder.

Nobody.

Then he stands up on end, puts his two fore-paws on the latch and the door opens.

Not a soul in the house.

The old woman had risen early to sell herbs in the town, and she had gone off in such haste that she had left her bed unmade, with her great night-cap on the pillow.

‘Good!’ said the Wolf to himself, ‘I know what I’ll do.’

He shuts the door, pulls on the Grandmother’s night-cap down to his eyes, then he lies down all his length in the bed and draws the curtains.

In the meantime the good Blanchette went quietly on her way, as little girls do, amusing herself here and there by picking Easter daisies, watching the little birds making their nests, and running after the butterflies which fluttered in the sunshine.

At last she arrives at the door.

Knock, knock.

‘Who is there?’ says the Wolf, softening his rough voice as best he can.

‘It’s me, Granny, your little Golden-hood. I’m bringing you a big piece of cake for your Sunday treat to-morrow.’

‘Press your finger on the latch, then push and the door opens.’

‘Why, you’ve got a cold, Granny,’ said she, coming in.

‘Ahem! a little, a little...’ replies the Wolf, pretending to cough. ‘Shut the door well, my little lamb. Put your basket on the table, and then take off your frock and come and lie down by me: you shall rest a little.'

The good child undresses, but observe this! She kept her little hood upon her head. When she saw what a figure her Granny cut in bed, the poor little thing was much surprised.

'Oh!' cries she, 'how like you are to friend Wolf, Grandmother!'

'That's on account of my night-cap, child,' replies the Wolf.

'Oh! what hairy arms you've got, Grandmother!'

'All the better to hug you, my child.'

'Oh! what a big tongue you've got, Grandmother!'

'All the better for answering, child.'

'Oh! what a mouthful of great white teeth you have, Grandmother!'

'That's for crunching little children with! 'And the Wolf opened his jaws wide to swallow Blanchette.

But she put down her head crying:

'Mamma! Mamma!' and the Wolf only caught her little hood.

Thereupon, oh dear! oh dear! he draws back, crying and shaking his jaw as if he had swallowed red-hot coals.

It was the little fire-coloured hood that had burnt his tongue right down his throat.

The little hood, you see, was one of those magic caps that they used to have in former times, in the stories, for making oneself invisible or invulnerable.

So there was the Wolf with his throat burnt, jumping off the bed and trying to find the door, howling and howling as if all the dogs in the country were at his heels.

Just at this moment the Grandmother arrives, returning from the town with her long sack empty on her shoulder.

'Ah, brigand!' she cries, 'wait a bit!' Quickly she opens her sack wide across the door, and the maddened Wolf springs in head downwards.

It is he now that is caught, swallowed like a letter in the post.

For the brave old dame shuts her sack, so; and she runs and empties it in the well, where the vagabond, still howling, tumbles in and is drowned.

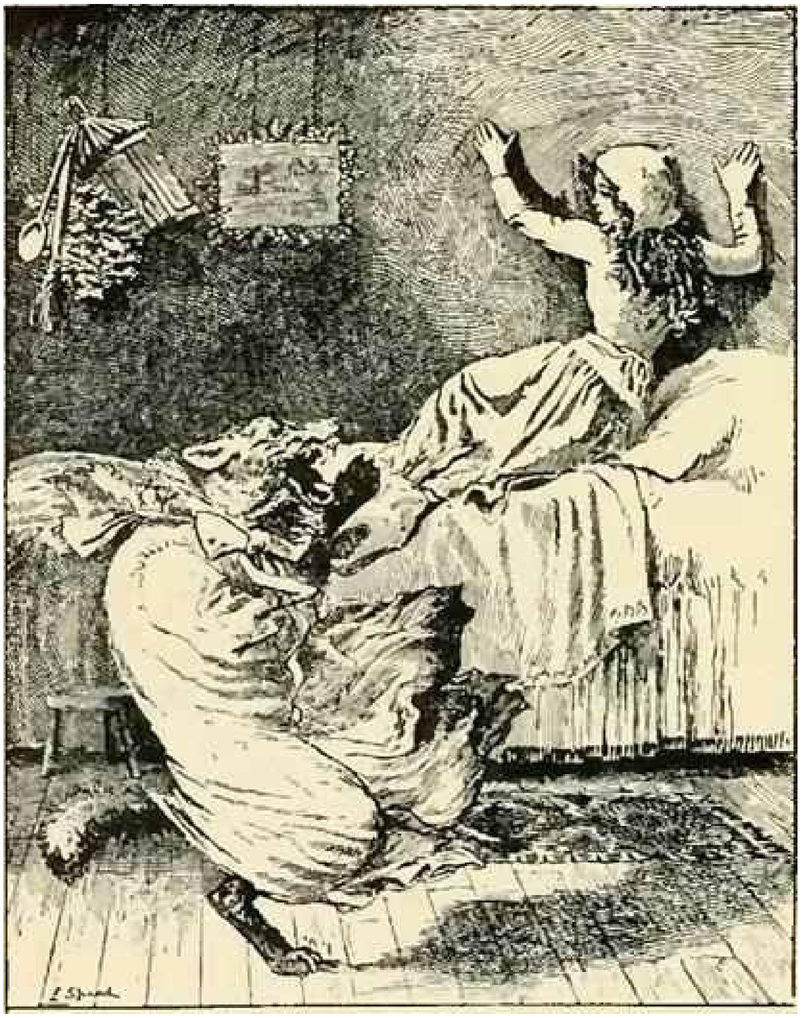

‘Ah, scoundrel! you thought you would crunch my little grandchild! Well, to-morrow we will make her a muff of your skin, and you yourself shall be crunched, for we will give your carcass to the dogs.’

Thereupon the Grandmother hastened to dress poor Blanchette, who was still trembling with fear in the bed.

‘Well,’ she said to her, ‘without my little hood where would you be now, darling?’ And, to restore heart and legs to the child, she made her eat a good piece of her cake, and drink a good draught of wine, after which she took her by the hand and led her back to the house.

And then, who was it who scolded her when she knew all that had happened?

It was the mother.

But Blanchette promised over and over again that she would never more stop to listen to a Wolf, so that at last the mother forgave her.

And Blanchette, the Little Golden-hood, kept her word. And in fine weather she may still be seen in the fields with her pretty little hood, the colour of the sun.

But to see her you must rise early.(17)

(17) Ch. Marelles

THE GOLDEN BRANCH

ONCE upon a time there was a King who was so morose and disagreeable that he was feared by all his subjects, and with good reason, as for the most trifling offences he would have their heads cut off. This King Grumpy, as he was called, had one son, who was as different from his father as he could possibly be. No prince equalled him in cleverness and kindness of heart, but unfortunately he was most terribly ugly. He had crooked legs and squinting eyes, a large mouth all on one side, and a hunchback. Never was there a beautiful soul in such a frightful little body, but in spite of his appearance everybody loved him. The Queen, his mother, called him Curlicue, because it was a name she rather liked, and it seemed to suit him.

King Grumpy, who cared a great deal more for his own grandeur than for his son's happiness, wished to betroth the Prince to the daughter of a neighbouring King, whose great estates joined his own, for he thought that this alliance would make him more powerful than ever, and as for the Princess she would do very well for Prince Curlicue, for she was as ugly as himself. Indeed, though she was the most amiable creature in the world, there was no concealing the fact that she was frightful, and so lame that she always went about with a crutch, and people called her Princess Cabbage-Stalk.

The King, having asked for and received a portrait of this Princess, had it placed in his great hall under a canopy, and sent for Prince Curlicue, to whom he said that as this was the portrait of his future bride, he hoped the Prince found it charming.

The Prince after one glance at it turned away with a disdainful air, which greatly offended his father.

'Am I to understand that you are not pleased?' he said very sharply.

'No, sire,' replied the Prince. 'How could I be pleased to marry an ugly, lame Princess?'

'Certainly it is becoming in YOU to object to that,' said King Grumpy, 'since you are ugly enough to frighten anyone yourself.'

'That is the very reason,' said the Prince, 'that I wish to marry someone who is not ugly. I am quite tired enough of seeing myself.'

'I tell you that you shall marry her,' cried King Grumpy angrily.

And the Prince, seeing that it was of no use to remonstrate, bowed and retired.

As King Grumpy was not used to being contradicted in anything, he was very much displeased with his son, and ordered that he should be imprisoned in the tower that was kept on purpose for rebellious Princes, but had not been used for about two hundred years, because there had not been any. The Prince thought all the rooms looked strangely old-fashioned, with their antique furniture, but as there was a good library he was pleased, for he was very fond of reading, and he soon got permission to have as many books as he liked. But when he looked at them he found that they were written in a forgotten language, and he could not understand a single word, though he amused himself with trying.

King Grumpy was so convinced that Prince Curlicue would soon get tired of being in prison, and so consent to marry the Princess Cabbage-Stalk, that he sent ambassadors to her father proposing that she should come and be married to his son, who would make her perfectly happy.

The King was delighted to receive so good an offer for his unlucky daughter, though, to tell the truth, he found it impossible to admire the Prince's portrait which had been sent to him. However, he had it placed in as favourable a light as possible, and sent for the Princess, but the moment she caught sight of it she looked the other way and began to cry. The King, who was very much annoyed to see how greatly she disliked it, took a mirror, and holding it up before the unhappy Princess, said:

'I see you do not think the Prince handsome, but look at yourself, and see if you have any right to complain about that.'

'Sire,' she answered, 'I do not wish to complain, only I beg of you do not make me marry at all. I had rather be the unhappy Princess Cabbage-Stalk all my life than inflict the sight of my ugliness on anyone else.'

But the King would not listen to her, and sent her away with the ambassadors.

In the meantime the Prince was kept safely locked up in his tower, and, that he might be as dull as possible, King Grumpy ordered that no one should speak to him, and that they should give him next to nothing to eat. But all the Princess guards were so fond of him that they did everything they dared, in spite of the King, to make the time pass pleasantly.

One day, as the Prince was walking up and down the great gallery, thinking how miserable it was to be so ugly, and to be forced to marry an equally frightful Princess, he looked up suddenly and noticed that the painted windows were particularly bright and beautiful, and for the sake of doing something that would change his sad thoughts he began to examine them attentively. He found that the pictures seemed to be scenes from the life of a man who appeared in every window, and the Prince, fancying that he saw in this man some resemblance to himself, began to be deeply interested. In the first window there was a picture of him in one of the turrets of the tower, farther on he was seeking something in a chink in the wall, in the next picture he was opening an old cabinet with a golden key, and so it went on through numbers of scenes, and presently the Prince noticed that another figure occupied the most important place in each scene, and this time it was a tall handsome young man: poor Prince Curlicue found it a pleasure to look at him, he was so straight and strong. By this time it had grown dark, and the Prince had to go back to his own room, and to amuse himself he took up a quaint old book and began to look at the pictures. But his surprise was great to find that they represented the same scenes as the windows of the gallery, and what was more, that they seemed to be alive. In looking at pictures of musicians he saw their hands move and heard sweet sounds; there was a picture of a ball, and the Prince could watch the little dancing people come and go. He turned a page, and there was an excellent smell of a savoury dinner, and one of the figures who sat at the feast looked at him and said:

‘We drink your health, Curlicue. Try to give us our Queen again, for if you do you will be rewarded; if not, it will be the worse for you.’

At these words the Prince, who had been growing more and more astonished, was fairly terrified, and dropping the book with a crash he sank back insensible. The noise he made brought his guards to his aid, and as soon as he revived they asked him what was the matter. He answered that he was so faint and giddy with hunger that he had imagined he saw and heard all sorts of strange things. Thereupon, in spite of the King’s orders, the guards gave him an excellent supper, and when he had eaten it he again opened his book, but could see none of the wonderful pictures, which convinced him that he must have been dreaming before.

However, when he went into he gallery next day and looked at the painted windows again, he found that they moved, and the figures came and went as if they had been alive, and after watching the one who was like himself find the key in the crack of the turret wall and open the old cabinet, he determined to go and examine the place himself, and try to find out what the mystery was. So he went up into the turret and began to search about and tap upon the walls, and all at once he came upon a place that sounded hollow. Taking a hammer he broke away a bit of the stone, and found behind it a little golden key. The next thing to do was to find the cabinet, and the Prince soon came to it, hidden away in a dark corner, though indeed it was so old and battered-looking that he would never have noticed it of his own accord. At first he could not see any keyhole, but after a careful search he found one hidden in the carving, and the golden key just fitted it; so the Prince gave it a vigorous turn and the doors flew open.

Ugly and old as the cabinet was outside, nothing could have been more rich and beautiful than what met the Prince’s astonished eyes. Every drawer was made of crystal, of amber, or of some precious stone, and was quite full of every kind of treasure. Prince Curlicue was delighted; he opened one after another, until at last he came to one tiny drawer which contained only an emerald key.

‘I believe that this must open that little golden door in the middle,’ said the Prince to himself. And he fitted in the little key and turned it. The tiny door swung back, and a soft crimson light gleamed over the whole cabinet. The Prince found that it proceeded from an immense glowing carbuncle, made into a box, which lay before him. He lost no time in opening it, but what was his horror when he found that it contained a man’s hand, which was holding a portrait. His first thought was to put back the terrible box and fly from the turret; but a voice in his ear said, ‘This hand belonged to one whom you can help and restore. Look at this beautiful portrait, the original of which was the cause of all my misfortunes, and if you wish to help me, go without a moment’s delay to the great gallery, notice where the sun’s rays fall most brightly, and if you seek there you will find my treasure.’

The voice ceased, and though the Prince in his bewilderment asked various questions, he received no answer. So he put back the box and locked the cabinet up again, and, having replaced the key in the crack in the wall, hastened down to the gallery.

When he entered it all the windows shook and clattered in the strangest way, but the Prince did not heed them; he was looking so carefully for the place where the sun shone most brightly, and it seemed to him that it was upon the portrait of a most splendidly handsome young man.

He went up and examined it, and found that it rested against the ebony and gold panelling, just like any of the other pictures in the gallery. He was puzzled, not knowing what to do next, until it occurred to him to see if the windows would help him, and, looking at the nearest, he saw a picture of himself lifting the picture from the wall.

The Prince took the hint, and lifting aside the picture without difficulty, found himself in a marble hall adorned with statues; from this he passed on through numbers of splendid rooms, until at last he reached one all hung with blue gauze. The walls were of turquoises, and upon a low couch lay a lovely lady, who seemed to be asleep. Her hair, black as ebony, was spread across the pillows, making her face look ivory white, and the Prince noticed that she was unquiet; and when he softly advanced, fearing to wake her, he could hear her sigh, and murmur to herself:

‘Ah! how dared you think to win my love by separating me from my beloved Florimond, and in my presence cutting off that dear hand that even you should have feared and honoured?’

And then the tears rolled slowly down the lovely lady's cheeks, and Prince Curlicue began to comprehend that she was under an enchantment, and that it was the hand of her lover that he had found.

At this moment a huge Eagle flew into the room, holding in its talons a Golden Branch, upon which were growing what looked like clusters of cherries, only every cherry was a single glowing ruby.

This he presented to the Prince, who guessed by this time that he was in some way to break the enchantment that surrounded the sleeping lady. Taking the branch he touched her lightly with it, saying:

'Fair one, I know not by what enchantment thou art bound, but in the name of thy beloved Florimond I conjure thee to come back to the life which thou hast lost, but not forgotten.'

Instantly the lady opened her lustrous eyes, and saw the Eagle hovering near.

'Ah! stay, dear love, stay,' she cried. But the Eagle, uttering a dolorous cry, fluttered his broad wings and disappeared. Then the lady turned to Prince Curlicue, and said:

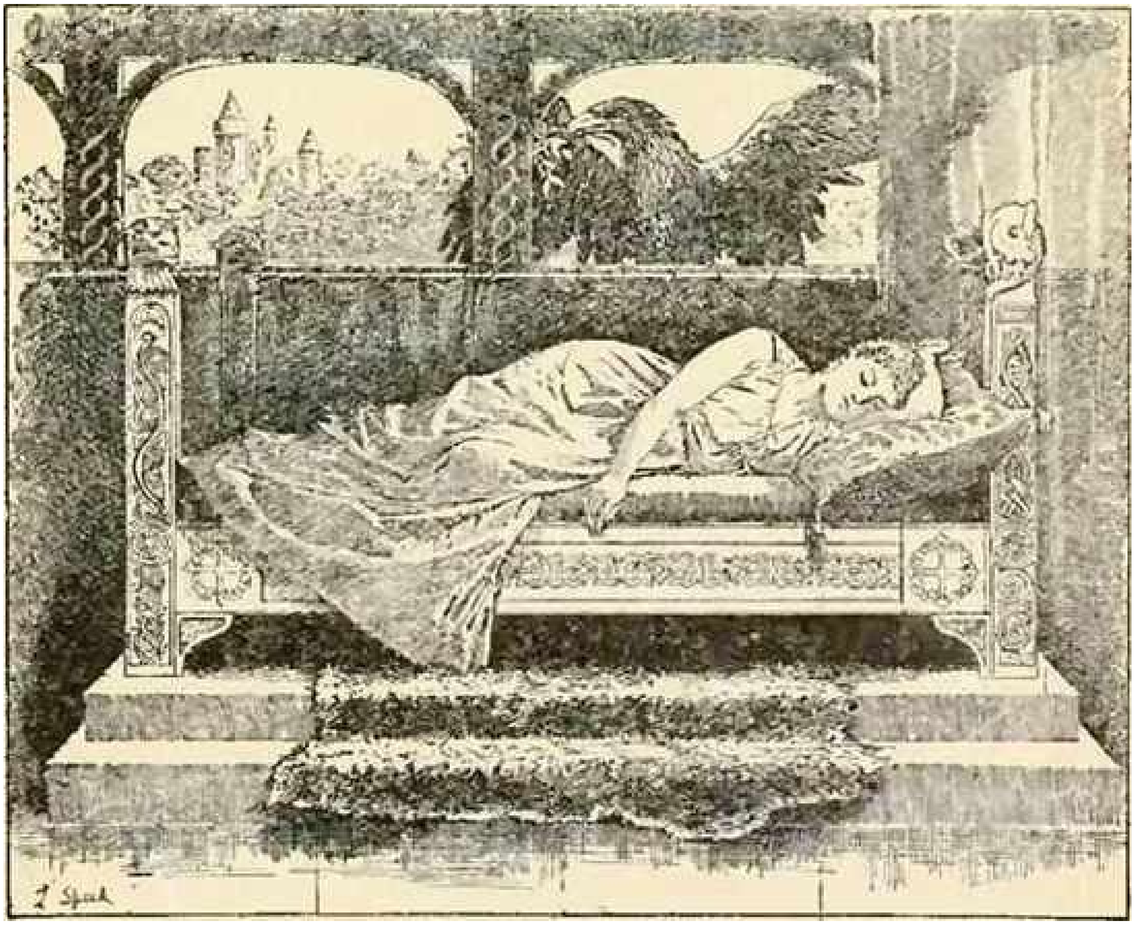

‘I know that it is to you I owe my deliverance from an enchantment which has held me for two hundred years. If there is anything that I can do for you in return, you have only to tell me, and all my fairy power shall be used to make you happy.’

‘Madam,’ said Prince Curlicue, ‘I wish to be allowed to restore your beloved Florimond to his natural form, since I cannot forget the tears you shed for him.’

‘That is very amiable of you, dear Prince,’ said the Fairy, ‘but it is reserved for another person to do that. I cannot explain more at present. But is there nothing you wish for yourself?’

‘Madam,’ cried the Prince, flinging himself down at her feet, ‘only look at my ugliness. I am called Curlicue, and am an object of derision; I entreat you to make me less ridiculous.’

‘Rise, Prince,’ said the Fairy, touching him with the Golden Branch. ‘Be as accomplished as you are handsome, and take the name of Prince Peerless, since that is the only title which will suit you now.’

Silent from joy, the Prince kissed her hand to express his thanks, and when he rose and saw his new reflection in the mirrors which surrounded him, he understood that Curlicue was indeed gone for ever.

‘How I wish,’ said the Fairy, ‘that I dared to tell you what is in store for you, and warn you of the traps which lie in your path, but I must not. Fly from the tower, Prince, and remember that the Fairy Douceline will be your friend always.’

When she had finished speaking, the Prince, to his great astonishment, found himself no longer in the tower, but set down in a thick forest at least a hundred leagues away from it. And there we must leave him for the present, and see what was happening elsewhere.

When the guards found that the Prince did not ask for his supper as usual, they went into his room, and not finding him there, were very much alarmed, and searched the tower from turret to dungeon, but without success. Knowing that the King would certainly have their heads cut off for allowing the Prince to escape, they then agreed to say that he was ill, and after making the smallest among them look as much like Prince Curlicue as possible, they put him into his bed and sent to inform the King.

King Grumpy was quite delighted to hear that his son was ill, for he thought that he would all the sooner be brought to do as he wished, and marry the Princess. So he sent back to the guards to say that the Prince was to be treated as severely as before, which was just what they had hoped he would say. In the meantime the Princess Cabbage-Stalk had reached the palace, travelling in a litter.

King Grumpy went out to meet her, but when he saw her, with a skin like a tortoise’s, her thick eyebrows meeting above her large nose, and her mouth from ear to ear, he could not help crying out:

‘Well, I must say Curlicue is ugly enough, but I don’t think YOU need have thought twice before consenting to marry him.’

‘Sire,’ she replied, ‘I know too well what I am like to be hurt by what you say, but I assure you that I have no wish to marry your son I had rather be called Princess Cabbage-Stalk than Queen Curlicue.’

This made King Grumpy very angry.

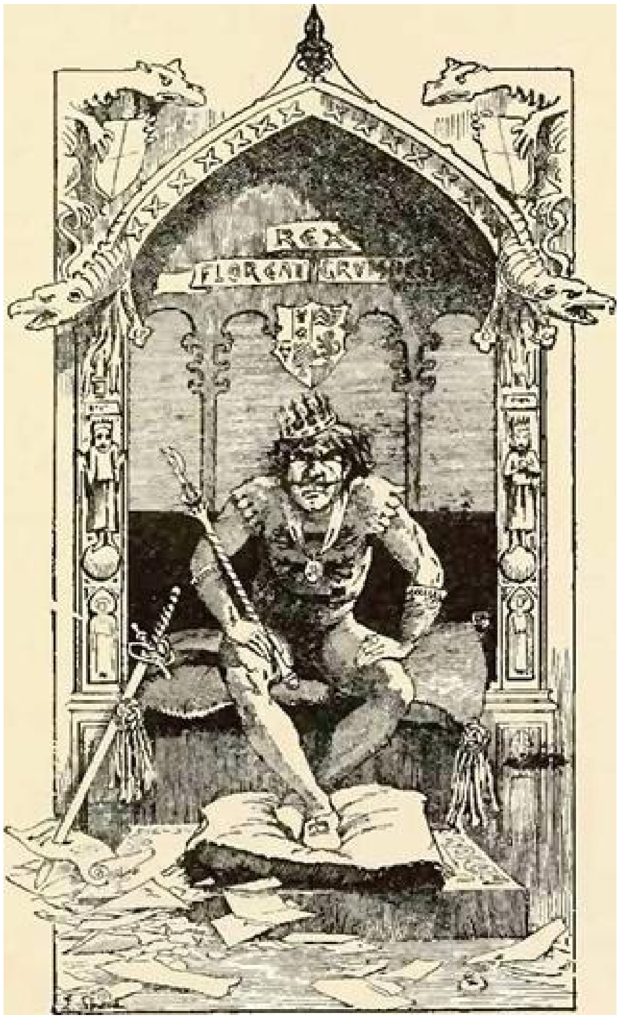

‘Your father has sent you here to marry my son,’ he said, ‘and you may be sure that I am not going to offend him by altering his arrangements.’ So the poor Princess was sent away in disgrace to her own apartments, and the ladies who attended upon her were charged to bring her to a better mind.

At this juncture the guards, who were in great fear that they would be found out, sent to tell the King that his son was dead, which annoyed him very much. He at once made up his mind that it was entirely the Princess's fault, and gave orders that she should be imprisoned in the tower in Prince Curlicue's place. The Princess Cabbage-Stalk was immensely astonished at this unjust proceeding, and sent many messages of remonstrance to King Grumpy, but he was in such a temper that no one dared to deliver them, or to send the letters which the Princess wrote to her father. However, as she did not know this, she lived in hope of soon going back to her own country, and tried to amuse herself as well as she could until the time should come. Every day she walked up and down the long gallery, until she too was attracted and fascinated by the ever-changing pictures in the windows, and recognised herself in one of the figures. 'They seem to have taken a great delight in painting me since I came to this country,' she said to herself. 'One would think that I and my crutch were put in on purpose to make that slim, charming young shepherdess in the next picture look prettier by contrast. Ah! how nice it would be to be as pretty as that.' And then she looked at herself in a mirror, and turned away quickly with tears in her eyes from the doleful sight. All at once she became aware that she was not alone, for behind her stood a tiny old woman in a cap, who was as ugly again as herself and quite as lame.

'Princess,' she said, 'your regrets are so piteous that I have come to offer you the choice of goodness or beauty. If you wish to be pretty you shall have your way, but you will also be vain, capricious, and frivolous. If you remain as you are now, you shall be wise and amiable and modest.'

'Alas I madam,' cried the Princess, 'is it impossible to be at once wise and beautiful?'

'No, child,' answered the old woman, 'only to you it is decreed that you must choose between the two. See, I have brought with me my white and yellow muff. Breathe upon the yellow side and you will become like the pretty shepherdess you so much admire, and you will have won the love of the handsome shepherd whose picture I have already seen you studying with interest. Breathe upon the white side and your looks will not alter, but you will grow better and happier day by day. Now you may choose.'

'Ah well,' said the Princess, 'I suppose one can't have everything, and it's certainly better to be good than pretty.'

And so she breathed upon the white side of the muff and thanked the old fairy, who immediately disappeared. The Princess Cabbage-Stalk felt very forlorn when she was gone, and began to think that it was quite time her father sent an army to rescue her.

‘If I could but get up into the turret,’ she thought, ‘to see if any one is coming.’ But to climb up there seemed impossible. Nevertheless she presently hit upon a plan. The great clock was in the turret, as she knew, though the weights hung down into the gallery. Taking one of them off the rope, she tied herself on in its place, and when the clock was wound, up she went triumphantly into the turret. She looked out over the country the first thing, but seeing nothing she sat down to rest a little, and accidentally leant back against the wall which Curlicue, or rather Prince Peerless, had so hastily mended. Out fell the broken stone, and with it the golden key. The clatter it made upon the floor attracted the Princess Cabbage-Stalk’s attention.

She picked it up, and after a moment’s consideration decided that it must belong to the curious old cabinet in the corner, which had no visible keyhole. And then it was not long before she had it open, and was admiring the treasures it contained as much as Prince Peerless had done before her, and at last she came to the carbuncle box. No sooner had she opened it than with a shudder of horror she tried to throw it down, but found that some mysterious power compelled her to hold it against her will. And at this moment a voice in her ear said softly:

‘Take courage, Princess; upon this adventure your future happiness depends.’

‘What am I to do?’ said the Princess trembling.

‘Take the box,’ replied the voice, ‘and hide it under your pillow, and when you see an Eagle, give it to him without losing a moment.’

Terrified as the Princess was, she did not hesitate to obey, and hastened to put back all the other precious things precisely as she had found them. By this time her guards were seeking her everywhere, and they were amazed to find her up in the turret, for they said she could only have got there by magic. For three days nothing happened, but at last in the night the Princess heard something flutter against her window, and drawing back her curtains she saw in the moonlight that it was an Eagle.

Limping across at her utmost speed she threw the window open, and the great Eagle sailed in beating with his wings for joy. The Princess lost no time in offering it the carbuncle box, which it grasped in its talons, and instantly disappeared, leaving in its place the most beautiful Prince she had ever seen, who was splendidly dressed, and wore a diamond crown.

‘Princess,’ said he, ‘for two hundred years has a wicked enchanter kept me here. We both loved the same Fairy, but she preferred me. However, he was more powerful than I, and succeeded, when for a moment I was off my guard, in changing me into an Eagle, while my Queen was left in an enchanted sleep. I knew that after two hundred years a Prince would recall her to the light of day, and a Princess, in restoring to me the hand which my enemy had cut off, would give me back my natural form. The Fairy who watches over your destiny told me this, and it was she who guided you to the cabinet in the turret, where she had placed my hand. It is she also who permits me to show my gratitude to you by granting whatever favour you may ask of me. Tell me, Princess, what is it that you wish for most? Shall I make you as beautiful as you deserve to be?’

‘Ah, if you only would!’ cried the Princess, and at the same moment she heard a crick-cracking in all her bones. She grew tall and straight and pretty, with eyes like shining stars, and a skin as white as milk.

‘Oh, wonderful! can this really be my poor little self?’ she exclaimed, looking down in amazement at her tiny worn-out crutch as it lay upon the floor.

‘Indeed, Princess,’ replied Florimond, ‘it is yourself, but you must have a new name, since the old one does not suit you now. Be called Princess Sunbeam, for you are bright and charming enough to deserve the name.’

And so saying he disappeared, and the Princess, without knowing how she got there, found herself walking under shady trees by a clear river. Of course, the first thing she did was to look at her own reflection in the water, and she was extremely surprised to find that she was exactly like the shepherdess she had so much admired, and wore the same white dress and flowery wreath that she had seen in the painted windows. To complete the resemblance, her flock of sheep appeared, grazing round her, and she found a gay crook adorned with flowers upon the bank of the river. Quite tired out by so many new and wonderful experiences, the Princess sat down to rest at the foot of a tree, and there she fell fast asleep. Now it happened that it was in this very country that Prince Peerless had been set down, and while the Princess Sunbeam was still sleeping peacefully, he came strolling along in search of a shady pasture for his sheep.

The moment he caught sight of the Princess he recognised her as the charming shepherdess whose picture he had seen so often in the tower, and as she was far prettier than he had remembered her, he was delighted that chance had led him that way.

He was still watching her admiringly when the Princess opened her eyes, and as she also recognised him they were soon great friends. The Princess asked Prince Peerless, as he knew the country better than she did, to tell her of some peasant who would give her a lodging, and he said he knew of an old woman whose cottage would be the very place for her, it was so nice and so pretty. So they went there together, and the Princess was charmed with the old woman and everything belonging to her. Supper was soon spread for her under a shady tree, and she invited the Prince to share the cream and brown bread which the old woman provided. This he was delighted to do, and having first fetched from his own garden all the strawberries, cherries, nuts and flowers he could find. they sat down together and were very merry. After this they met every day as they guarded their flocks, and were so happy that Prince Peerless begged the Princess to marry him, so that they might never be parted again. Now though the Princess Sunbeam appeared to be only a poor shepherdess, she never forgot that she was a real Princess, and she was not at all sure that she ought to marry a humble shepherd, though she knew she would like to do so very much.

So she resolved to consult an Enchanter of whom she had heard a great deal since she had been a shepherdess, and without saying a word to anybody she set out to find the castle in which he lived with his sister, who was a powerful Fairy. The way was long, and lay through a thick wood, where the Princess heard strange voices calling to her from every side, but she was in such a hurry that she stopped for nothing, and at last she came to the courtyard of the Enchanter's castle.

The grass and briers were growing as high as if it were a hundred years since anyone had set foot there, but the Princess got through at last, though she gave herself a good many scratches by the way, and then she went into a dark, gloomy hall, where there was but one tiny hole in the wall through which the daylight could enter. The hangings were all of bats' wings, and from the ceiling hung twelve cats, who filled the hall with their ear piercing yells. Upon the long table twelve mice were fastened by the tail, and just in front of each one's nose, but quite beyond its reach, lay a tempting morsel of fat bacon. So the cats could always see the mice, but could not touch them, and the hungry mice were tormented by the sight and smell of the delicious morsels which they could never seize.

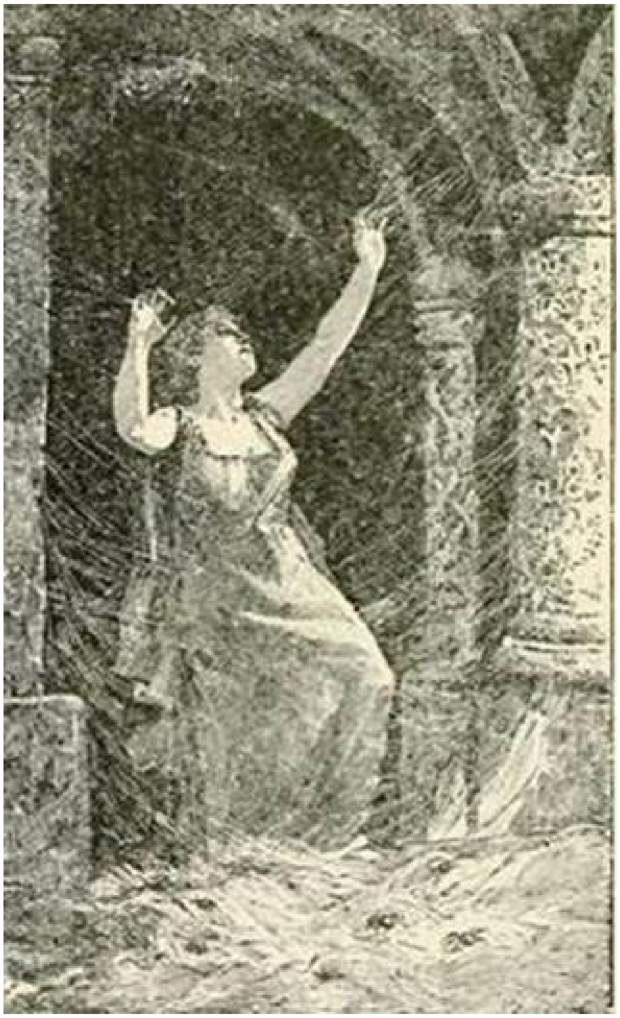

The Princess was looking at the poor creatures in dismay, when the Enchanter suddenly entered, wearing a long black robe and with a crocodile upon his head. In his hand he carried a whip made of twenty long snakes, all alive and writhing, and the Princess was so terrified at the sight that she heartily wished she had never come. Without saying a word she ran to the door, but it was covered with a thick spider's web, and when she broke it she found another, and another, and another. In fact, there was no end to them; the Princess's arms ached with tearing them down, and yet she was no nearer to getting out, and the wicked Enchanter behind her laughed maliciously. At last he said:

'You might spend the rest of your life over that without doing any good, but as you are young, and quite the prettiest creature I have seen for a long time, I will marry you if you like, and I will give you those cats and mice that you see there for your own. They are princes and princesses who have happened to offend me. They used to love one another as much as they now hate one another. Aha! It's a pretty little revenge to keep them like that.'

'Oh! If you would only change me into a mouse too,' cried the Princess.

‘Oh! so you won’t marry me?’ said he. ‘Little simpleton, you should have everything heart can desire.’

‘No, indeed; nothing should make me marry you; in fact, I don’t think I shall ever love anyone,’ cried the Princess.

‘In that case,’ said the Enchanter, touching her, ‘you had better become a particular kind of creature that is neither fish nor fowl; you shall be light and airy, and as green as the grass you live in. Off with you, Madam Grasshopper.’ And the Princess, rejoicing to find herself free once more, skipped out into the garden, the prettiest little green Grasshopper in the world. But as soon as she was safely out she began to be rather sorry for herself.

‘Ah! Florimond,’ she sighed, ‘is this the end of your gift? Certainly beauty is short-lived, and this funny little face and a green crape dress are a comical end to it. I had better have married my amiable shepherd. It must be for my pride that I am condemned to be a Grasshopper, and sing day and night in the grass by this brook, when I feel far more inclined to cry.’

In the meantime Prince Peerless had discovered the Princess’s absence, and was lamenting over it by the river’s brim, when he suddenly became aware of the presence of a little old woman. She was quaintly dressed in a ruff and farthingale, and a velvet hood covered her snow-white hair.

‘You seem sorrowful, my son,’ she said. ‘What is the matter?’

‘Alas! mother,’ answered the Prince, ‘I have lost my sweet shepherdess, but I am determined to find her again, though I should have to traverse the whole world in search of her.’

‘Go that way, my son,’ said the old woman, pointing towards the path that led to the castle. ‘I have an idea that you will soon overtake her.’

The Prince thanked her heartily and set out. As he met with no hindrance, he soon reached the enchanted wood which surrounded the castle, and there he thought he saw the Princess Sunbeam gliding before him among the trees. Prince Peerless hastened after her at the top of his speed, but could not get any nearer; then he called to her:

‘Sunbeam, my darling — only wait for me a moment.’

But the phantom did but fly the faster, and the Prince spent the whole day in this vain pursuit. When night came he saw the castle before him all lighted up, and as he imagined that the Princess must be in it, he made haste to get there too. He entered without difficulty, and in the hall the terrible old Fairy met him. She was so thin that the light shone through her, and her eyes glowed like lamps; her skin was like a shark’s, her arms were thin as laths, and her fingers like spindles. Nevertheless she wore rouge and patches, a mantle of silver brocade and a crown of diamonds, and her dress was covered with jewels, and green and pink ribbons.

‘At last you have come to see me, Prince,’ said she. ‘Don’t waste another thought upon that little shepherdess, who is unworthy of your notice. I am the Queen of the Comets, and can bring you to great honour if you will marry me.’

‘Marry you, Madam,’ cried the Prince, in horror. ‘No, I will never consent to that.’

Thereupon the Fairy, in a rage, gave two strokes of her wand and filled the gallery with horrible goblins, against whom the Prince had to fight for his life. Though he had only his dagger, he defended himself so well that he escaped without any harm, and presently the old Fairy stopped the fray and asked the Prince if he was still of the same mind. When he answered firmly that he was, she called up the appearance of the Princess Sunbeam to the other end of the gallery, and said:

‘You see your beloved there? Take care what you are about, for if you again refuse to marry me she shall be torn in pieces by two tigers.’

The Prince was distracted, for he fancied he heard his dear shepherdess weeping and begging him to save her. In despair he cried:

‘Oh, Fairy Douceline, have you abandoned me after so many promises of friendship? Help, help us now!’

Immediately a soft voice said in his ear:

‘Be firm, happen what may, and seek the Golden Branch.’

Thus encouraged, the Prince persevered in his refusal, and at length the old Fairy in a fury cried:

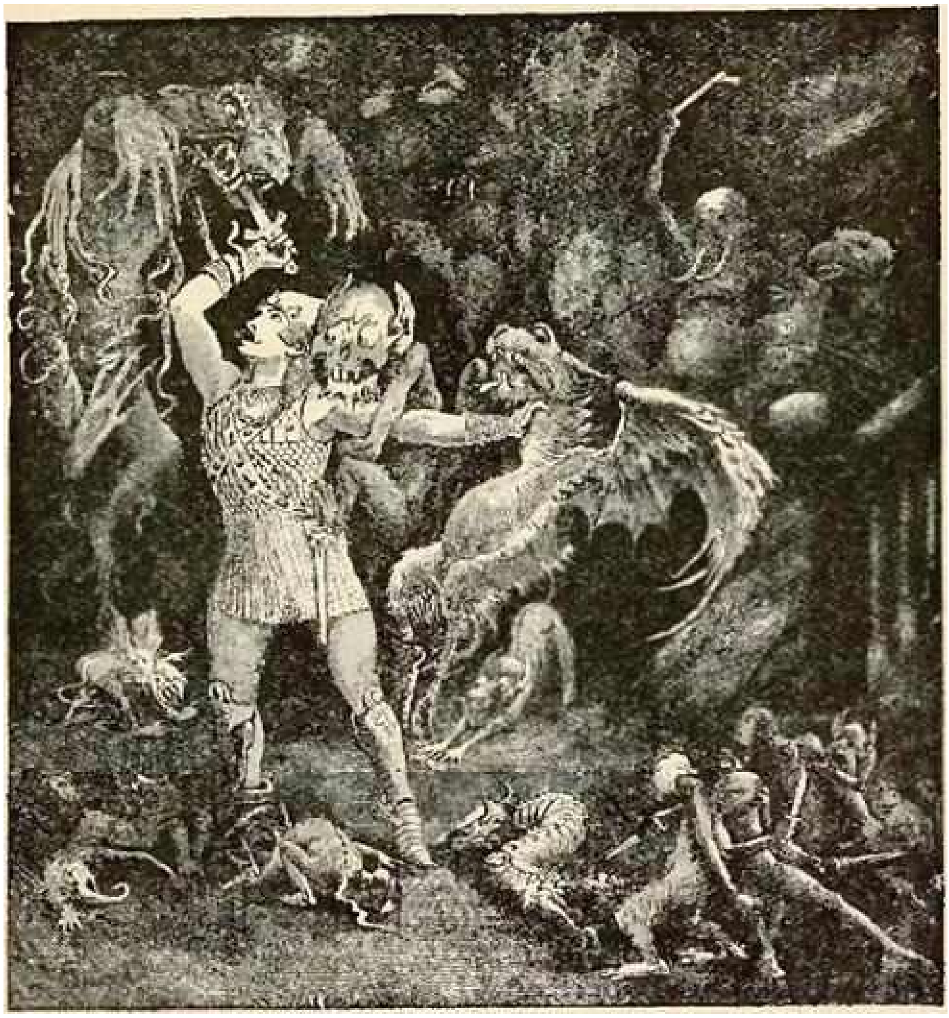

‘Get out of my sight, obstinate Prince. Become a Cricket!’

And instantly the handsome Prince Peerless became a poor little black Cricket, whose only idea would have been to find himself a cosy cranny behind some blazing hearth, if he had not luckily remembered the Fairy Douceline’s injunction to seek the Golden Branch.

So he hastened to depart from the fatal castle, and sought shelter in a hollow tree, where he found a forlorn looking little Grasshopper crouching in a corner, too miserable to sing.

Without in the least expecting an answer, the Prince asked it:

‘And where may you be going, Gammer Grasshopper?’

‘Where are you going yourself, Gaffer Cricket?’ replied the Grasshopper.

‘What! can you speak?’ said he.

‘Why should I not speak as well as you? Isn’t a Grasshopper as good as a Cricket?’ said she.

‘I can talk because I was a Prince,’ said the Cricket.

‘And for that very same reason I ought to be able to talk more than you, for I was a Princess,’ replied the Grasshopper.

‘Then you have met with the same fate as I have,’ said he. ‘But where are you going now? Cannot we journey together?’

‘I seemed to hear a voice in the air which said: “Be firm, happen what may, and seek the Golden Branch,”’ answered the Grasshopper, ‘and I thought the command must be for me, so I started at once, though I don’t know the way.’

At this moment their conversation was interrupted by two mice, who, breathless from running, flung themselves headlong through the hole into the tree, nearly crushing the Grasshopper and the Cricket, though they got out of the way as fast as they could and stood up in a dark corner.

‘Ah, Madam,’ said the fatter of the two, ‘I have such a pain in my side from running so fast. How does your Highness find yourself?’

‘I have pulled my tail off,’ replied the younger Mouse, ‘but as I should still be on the sorcerer’s table unless I had, I do not regret it. Are we pursued, think you? How lucky we were to escape!’

‘I only trust that we may escape cats and traps, and reach the Golden Branch soon,’ said the fat Mouse.

‘You know the way then?’ said the other.

‘Oh dear, yes! as well as the way to my own house, Madam. This Golden Branch is indeed a marvel, a single leaf from it makes one rich for ever. It breaks enchantments, and makes all who approach it young and beautiful. We must set out for it at the break of day.’

‘May we have the honour of travelling with you — this respectable Cricket and myself?’ said the Grasshopper, stepping forward. ‘We also are on a pilgrimage to the Golden Branch.’

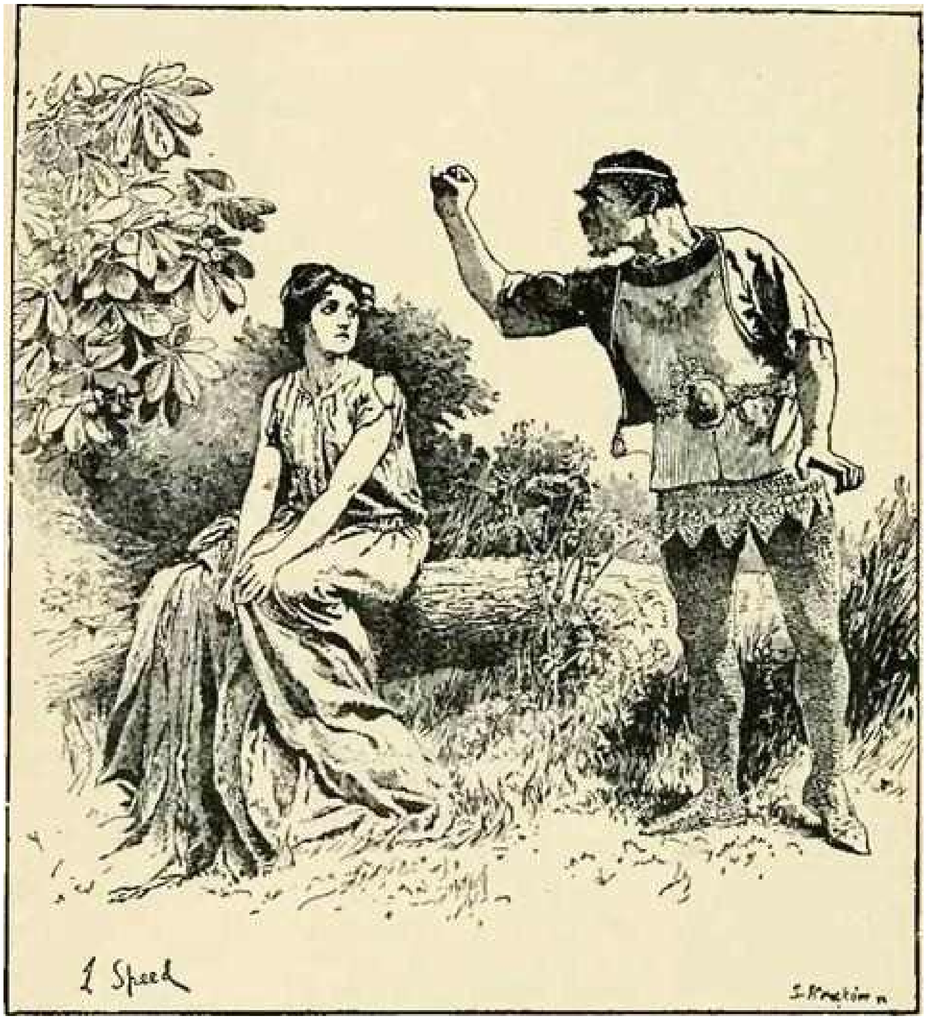

The Mice courteously assented, and after many polite speeches the whole party fell asleep. With the earliest dawn they were on their way, and though the Mice were in constant fear of being overtaken or trapped, they reached the Golden Branch in safety.

It grew in the midst of a wonderful garden, all the paths of which were strewn with pearls as big as peas. The roses were crimson diamonds, with emerald leaves. The pomegranates were garnets, the marigolds topazes, the daffodils yellow diamonds, the violets sapphires, the corn-flowers turquoises, the tulips amethysts, opals and diamonds, so that the garden borders blazed like the sun. The Golden Branch itself had become as tall as a forest tree, and sparkled with ruby cherries to its topmost twig. No sooner had the Grasshopper and the Cricket touched it than they were restored to their natural forms, and their surprise and joy were great when they recognised each other. At this moment Florimond and the Fairy Douceline appeared in great splendour, and the Fairy, as she descended from her chariot, said with a smile:

‘So you two have found one another again, I see, but I have still a surprise left for you. Don’t hesitate, Princess, to tell your devoted shepherd how dearly you love him, as he is the very Prince your father sent you to marry. So come here both of you and let me crown you, and we will have the wedding at once.’

The Prince and Princess thanked her with all their hearts, and declared that to her they owed all their happiness, and then the two Princesses, who had so lately been Mice, came and begged that the Fairy would use her power to release their unhappy friends who were still under the Enchanter’s spell.

‘Really,’ said the Fairy Douceline, ‘on this happy occasion I cannot find it in my heart to refuse you anything.’ And she gave three strokes of her wand upon the Golden Branch, and immediately all the prisoners in the Enchanter’s castle found themselves free, and came with all speed to the wonderful garden, where one touch of the Golden Branch restored each one to his natural form, and they greeted one another with many rejoicings. To complete her generous work the Fairy presented them with the wonderful cabinet and all the treasures it contained, which were worth at least ten kingdoms. But to Prince Peerless and the Princess Sunbeam she gave the palace and garden of the Golden Branch, where, immensely rich and greatly beloved by all their subjects, they lived happily ever after.(18)

(18) Le Rameau d’Or. Par Madame d’Aulnoy.

THE THREE DWARFS

THERE was once upon a time a man who lost his wife, and a woman who lost her husband; and the man had a daughter and so had the woman. The two girls were great friends and used often to play together. One day the woman turned to the man’s daughter and said:

‘Go and tell your father that I will marry him, and then you shall wash in milk and drink wine, but my own daughter shall wash in water and drink it too.’

The girl went straight home and told her father what the woman had said.

‘What am I to do?’ he answered. ‘Marriage is either a success or it is a failure.’

At last, being of an undecided character and not being able to make up his mind, he took off his boot, and handing it to his daughter, said:

‘Take this boot which has a hole in the sole, hang it up on a nail in the hayloft, and pour water into it. If it holds water I will marry again, but if it doesn’t I won’t.’ The girl did as she was bid, but the water drew the hole together and the boot filled up to the very top. So she went and told her father the result. He got up and went to see for himself, and when he saw that it was true and no mistake, he accepted his fate, proposed to the widow, and they were married at once.

On the morning after the wedding, when the two girls awoke, milk was standing for the man’s daughter to wash in and wine for her to drink; but for the woman’s daughter, only water to wash in and only water to drink. On the second morning, water to wash in and water to drink was standing for the man’s daughter as well. And on the third morning, water to wash in and water to drink was standing for the man’s daughter, and milk to wash in and wine to drink for the woman’s daughter; and so it continued ever after. The woman hated her stepdaughter from the bottom of her heart, and did all she could to make her life miserable. She was as jealous as she could possibly be, because the girl was so beautiful and charming, while her own daughter was both ugly and repulsive.

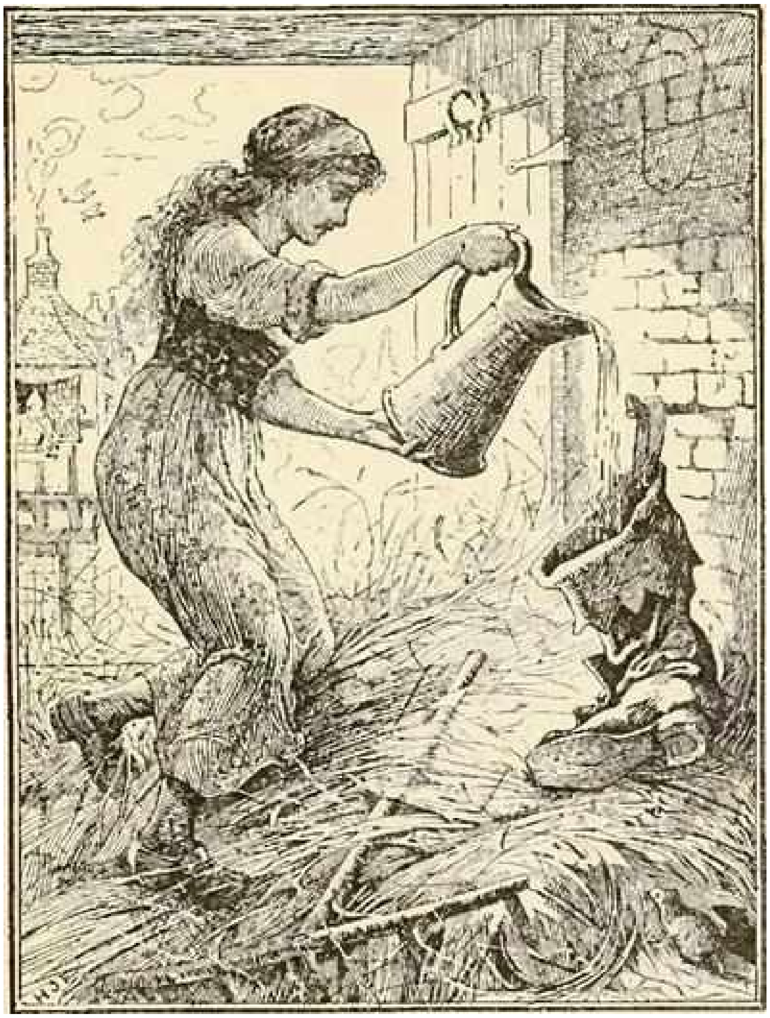

One winter’s day when there was a hard frost, and mountain and valley were covered with snow, the woman made a dress of paper, and calling the girl to her said:

‘There, put on this dress and go out into the wood and fetch me a basket of strawberries!’

‘Now Heaven help us,’ replied her stepdaughter; ‘strawberries don’t grow in winter; the earth is all frozen and the snow has covered up everything; and why send me in a paper dress? it is so cold outside that one’s very breath freezes; the wind will whistle through my dress, and the brambles tear it from my body.’

‘How dare you contradict me!’ said her stepmother; ‘be off with you at once, and don’t show your face again till you have filled the basket with strawberries.’

Then she gave her a hard crust of bread, saying:

‘That will be enough for you to-day,’ and she thought to herself: ‘The girl will certainly perish of hunger and cold outside, and I shan’t be bothered with her any more.’

The girl was so obedient that she put on the paper dress and set out with her little basket. There was nothing but snow far and near, and not a green blade of grass to be seen anywhere. When she came to the wood she saw a little house, and out of it peeped three little dwarfs. She wished them good-day, and knocked modestly at the door. They called out to her to enter, so she stepped in and sat down on a seat by the fire, wishing to warm herself and eat her breakfast. The Dwarfs said at once: ‘Give us some of your food!’

‘Gladly,’ she said, and breaking her crust in two, she gave them the half.

Then they asked her what she was doing in the depths of winter in her thin dress.

‘Oh,’ she answered, ‘I have been sent to get a basketful of strawberries, and I daren’t show my face again at home till I bring them with me.’

When she had finished her bread they gave her a broom and told her to sweep away the snow from the back door. As soon as she left the room to do so, the three little men consulted what they should give her as a reward for being so sweet and good, and for sharing her last crust with them.

The first said: ‘Every day she shall grow prettier.’

The second: ‘Every time she opens her mouth a piece of gold shall fall out.’

And the third: ‘A King shall come and marry her.’

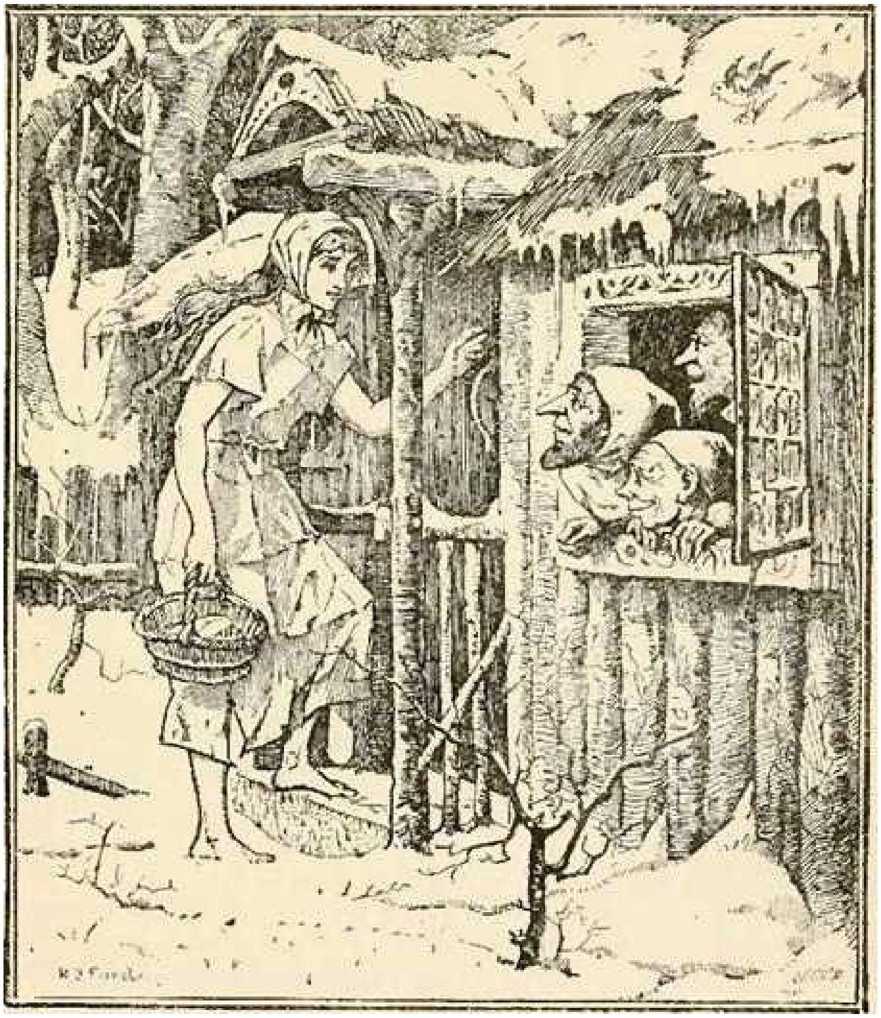

The girl in the meantime was doing as the Dwarfs had bidden her, and was sweeping the snow away from the back door, and what do you think she found there? — heaps of fine ripe strawberries that showed out dark red against the white snow. She joyfully picked enough to fill her basket, thanked the little men for their kindness, shook hands with them, and ran home to bring her stepmother what she had asked for. When she walked in and said; Good evening,’ a piece of gold fell out of her mouth. Then she told what had hap-pened to her in the wood, and at every word pieces of gold dropped from her mouth, so that the room was soon covered with them.

‘She’s surely more money than wit to throw gold about like that,’ said her stepsister, but in her secret heart she was very jealous, and determined that she too would go to the wood and look for strawberries. But her mother refused to let her go, saying:

‘My dear child, it is far too cold; you might freeze to death.’

The girl however left her no peace, so she was forced at last to give in, but she insisted on her putting on a beautiful fur cloak, and she gave her bread and butter and cakes to eat on the way.

The girl went straight to the little house in the wood, and as before the three little men were looking out of the window. She took no notice of them, and without as much as ‘By your leave,’ or ‘With your leave,’ she flounced into the room, sat herself down at the fire, and began to eat her bread and butter and cakes.

‘Give us some,’ cried the Dwarfs.

But she answered: ‘No, I won’t, it’s hardly enough for myself; so catch me giving you any.’

When she had finished eating they said:

‘There’s a broom for you, go and clear up our back door.’

‘I’ll see myself further,’ she answered rudely. ‘Do it yourselves; I’m not your servant.’

When she saw that they did not mean to give her anything, she left the house in no amiable frame of mind. Then the three little men consulted what they should do to her, because she was so bad and had such an evil, covetous heart, that she grudged everybody their good fortune.

The first said: ‘She shall grow uglier every day.’

The second: ‘Every time she speaks a toad shall jump out of her mouth.’

And the third: ‘She shall die a most miserable death.’

The girl searched for strawberries, but she found none, and returned home in a very bad temper. When she opened her mouth to tell her mother what had befallen her in the wood, a toad jumped out, so that everyone was quite disgusted with her.

Then the stepmother was more furious than ever, and did nothing but plot mischief against the man’s daughter, who was daily growing more and more beautiful. At last, one day the wicked woman took a large pot, put it on the fire and boiled some yarn in it. When it was well scalded she hung it round the poor girl’s shoulder, and giving her an axe, she bade her break a hole in the frozen river, and rinse the yarn in it. Her stepdaughter obeyed as usual, and went and broke a hole in the ice. When she was in the act of wringing out the yarn a magnificent carriage passed, and the King sat inside. The carriage stood still, and the King asked her:

‘My child, who are you, and what in the wide world are you doing here?’

‘I am only a poor girl,’ she answered, ‘and am rinsing out my yarn in the river.’ Then the King was sorry for her, and when he saw how beautiful she was he said:

‘Will you come away with me?’

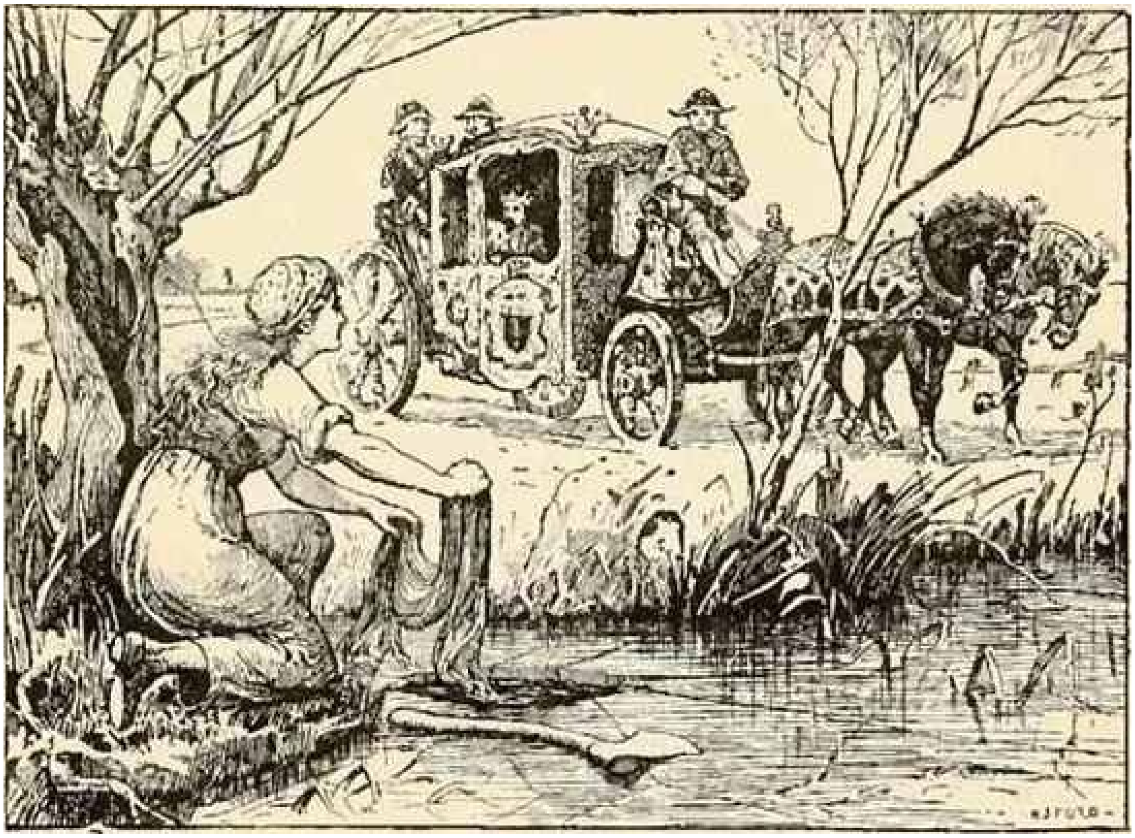

'Most gladly,' she replied, for she knew how willingly she would leave her stepmother and sister, and how glad they would be to be rid of her.

So she stepped into the carriage and drove away with the King, and when they reached his palace the wedding was celebrated with much splendour. So all turned out just as the three little Dwarfs had said. After a year the Queen gave birth to a little son. When her stepmother heard of her good fortune she came to the palace with her daughter by way of paying a call, and took up her abode there. Now one day, when the King was out and nobody else near, the bad woman took the Queen by her head, and the daughter took her by her heels, and they dragged her from her bed, and flung her out of the window into the stream which flowed beneath it. Then the stepmother laid her ugly daughter in the Queen's place, and covered her up with the clothes, so that nothing of her was seen. When the King came home and wished to speak to his wife the woman called out:

'Quietly, quietly I this will never do; your wife is very ill, you must let her rest all to-day.' The King suspected no evil, and didn't come again till next morning. When he spoke to his wife and she answered him, instead of the usual piece of gold a toad jumped out of her mouth. Then he asked what it meant, and the old woman told him it was nothing but weakness, and that she would soon be all right again.

But that same evening the scullion noticed a duck swimming up the gutter, saying as it passed:

‘What does the King, I pray you tell,
Is he awake or sleeps he well?’

and receiving no reply, it continued:

‘And all my guests, are they asleep?’

and the Scullion answered:

‘Yes, one and all they slumber deep.’

Then the Duck went on:

‘And what about my baby dear?’

and he answered:

‘Oh, it sleeps soundly, never fear.’

Then the Duck assumed the Queen’s shape, went up to the child’s room, tucked him up comfortably in his cradle, and then swam back down the gutter again, in the likeness of a Duck. This was repeated for two nights, and on the third the Duck said to the Scullion:

‘Go and tell the King to swing his sword three times over me on the threshold.’

The Scullion did as the creature bade him, and the King came with his sword and swung it three times over the bird, and lo and behold! his wife stood before him once more, alive, and as blooming as ever.

The King rejoiced greatly, but he kept the Queen in hiding till the Sunday on which the child was to be christened. After the christening he said:

‘What punishment does that person deserve who drags another out of bed, and throws him or her, as the case may be, into the water?’

Then the wicked old stepmother answered:

‘No better fate than to be put into a barrel lined with sharp nails, and to be rolled in it down the hill into the water.’

‘You have pronounced your own doom,’ said the King; and he ordered a barrel to be made lined with sharp nails, and in it he put the bad old woman and her daughter. Then it was fastened down securely, and the barrel was rolled down the hill till it fell into the river.(19)

(19) Grimm.

DAPPLEGRIM

THERE was once upon a time a couple of rich folks who had twelve sons, and when the youngest was grown up he would not stay at home any longer, but would go out into the world and seek his fortune. His father and mother said that they thought he was very well off at home, and that he was welcome to stay with them; but he could not rest, and said that he must and would go, so at last they had to give him leave. When he had walked a long way, he came to a King's palace. There he asked for a place and got it.

Now the daughter of the King of that country had been carried off into the mountains by a Troll, and the King had no other children, and for this cause both he and all his people were full of sorrow and affliction, and the King had promised the Princess and half his kingdom to anyone who could set her free; but there was no one who could do it, though a great number had tried. So when the youth had been there for the space of a year or so, he wanted to go home again to pay his parents a visit; but when he got there his father and mother were dead, and his brothers had divided everything that their parents possessed between themselves, so that there was nothing at all left for him.

'Shall I, then, receive nothing at all of my inheritance?' asked the youth.

'Who could know that you were still alive — you who have been a wanderer so long?' answered the brothers. 'However, there are twelve mares upon the hills which we have not yet divided among us, and if you would like to have them for your share, you may take them.'

So the youth, well pleased with this, thanked them, and at once set off to the hill where the twelve mares were at pasture. When he got up there and found them, each mare had her foal, and by the side of one of them was a big dapple-grey foal as well, which was so sleek that it shone again.

'Well, my little foal, you are a fine fellow!' said the youth.

'Yes, but if you will kill all the other little foals so that I can suck all the mares for a year, you shall see how big and handsome I shall be then!' said the Foal.

So the youth did this — he killed all the twelve foals, and then went back again.

Next year, when he came home again to look after his mares and the foal, it was as fat as it could be, and its coat shone with brightness, and it was so big that the lad had the greatest difficulty in getting on its back, and each of the mares had another foal.

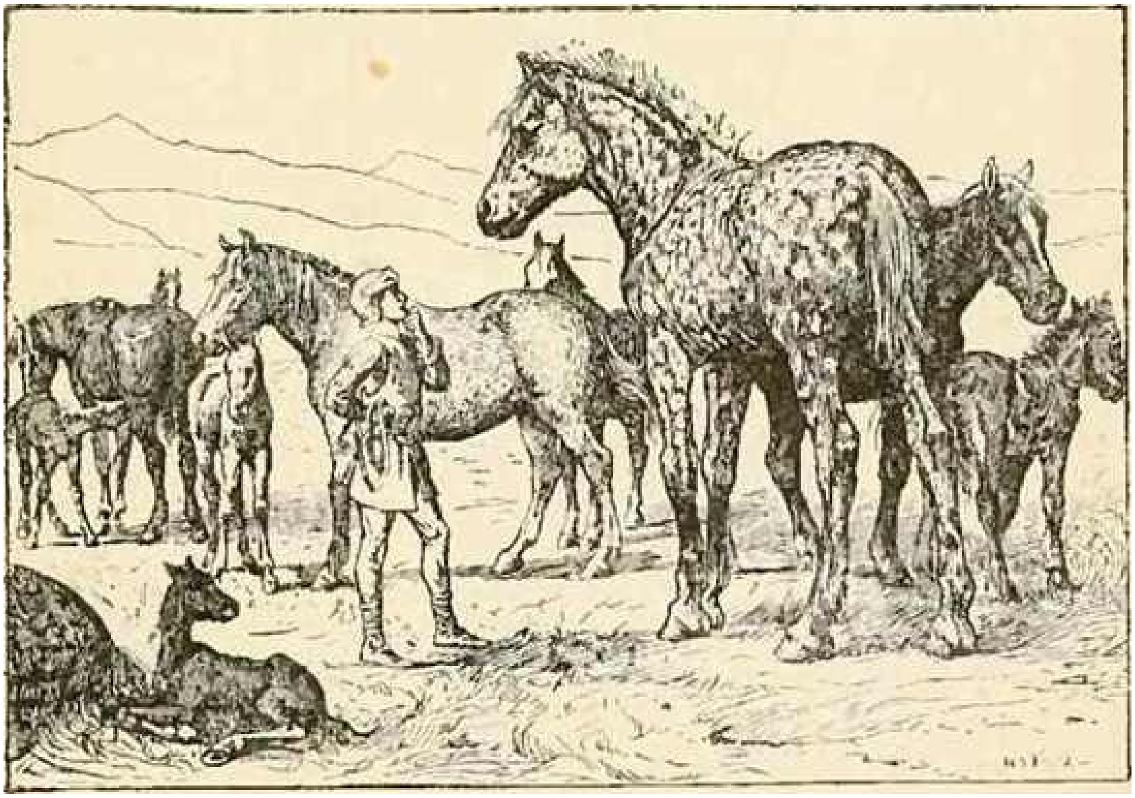

‘Well, it’s very evident that I have lost nothing by letting you suck all my mares,’ said the lad to the yearling; ‘but now you are quite big enough, and must come away with me.’

‘No,’ said the Colt, ‘I must stay here another year; kill the twelve little foals, and then I can suck all the mares this year also, and you shall see how big and handsome I shall be by summer.’

So the youth did it again, and when he went up on the hill next year to look after his colt and the mares, each of the mares had her foal again; but the dappled colt was so big that when the lad wanted to feel its neck to see how fat it was, he could not reach up to it, it was so high? and it was so bright that the light glanced off its coat.

‘Big and handsome you were last year, my colt, but this year you are ever so much handsomer,’ said the youth; ‘in all the King’s court no such horse is to be found. But now you shall come away with me.’

‘No,’ said the dappled Colt once more; ‘here I must stay for another year. Just kill the twelve little foals again, so that I can suck the mares this year also, and then come and look at me in the summer.’

So the youth did it — he killed all the little foals, and then went home again.

But next year, when he returned to look after the dappled colt and the mares, he was quite appalled. He had never imagined that any horse could become so big and overgrown, for the dappled horse had to lie down on all fours before the youth could get on his back, and it was very hard to do that even when it was lying down, and it was so plump that its coat shone and glistened just as if it had been a looking-glass. This time the dappled horse was not unwilling to go away with the youth, so he mounted it, and when he came riding home to his brothers they all smote their hands together and crossed themselves, for never in their lives had they either seen or heard tell of such a horse as that.

‘If you will procure me the best shoes for my horse, and the most magnificent saddle and bridle that can be found,’ said the youth, ‘you may have all my twelve mares just as they are standing out on the hill, and their twelve foals into the bargain.’ For this year also each mare had her foal. The brothers were quite willing to do this; so the lad got such shoes for his horse that the sticks and stones flew high up into the air as he rode away over the hills, and such a gold saddle and such a gold bridle that they could be seen glittering and glancing from afar.

‘And now we will go to the King’s palace,’ said Dapplegrim — that was the horse’s name, ‘but bear in mind that you must ask the King for a good stable and excellent fodder for me.’

So the lad promised not to forget to do that. He rode to the palace, and it will be easily understood that with such a horse as he had he was not long on the way.

When he arrived there, the King was standing out on the steps, and how he did stare at the man who came riding up!

‘Nay,’ said he, ‘never in my whole life have I seen such a man and such a horse.’

And when the youth inquired if he could have a place in the King’s palace, the King was so delighted that he could have danced on the steps where he was standing, and there and then the lad was told that he should have a place.

‘Yes; but I must have a good stable and most excellent fodder for my horse,’ said he.

So they told him that he should have sweet hay and oats, and as much of them as the dappled horse chose to have, and all the other riders had to take their horses out of the stable that Dapplegrim might stand alone and really have plenty of room.

But this did not last long, for the other people in the King’s Court became envious of the lad, and there was no bad thing that they would not have done to him if they had but dared. At last they bethought themselves of telling the King that the youth had said that, if he chose, he was quite able to rescue the Princess who had been carried off into the mountain a long time ago by the Troll.

The King immediately summoned the lad into his presence, and said that he had been informed that he had said that it was in his power to rescue the Princess, so he was now to do it. If he succeeded in this, he no doubt knew that the King had promised his daughter and half the kingdom to anyone who set her free, which promise should be faithfully and honourably kept, but if he failed he should be put to death. The youth denied that he had said this, but all to no purpose, for the King was deaf to all his words; so there was nothing to be done but say that he would make the attempt.

He went down into the stable, and very sad and full of care he was. Then Dapplegrim inquired why he was so troubled, and the youth told him, and said that he did not know what to do, ‘for as to setting the Princess free, that was downright impossible.’

‘Oh, but it might be done,’ said Dapplegrim. ‘I will help you; but you must first have me well shod. You must ask for ten pounds of iron and twelve pounds of steel for the shoeing, and one smith to hammer and one to hold.’

So the youth did this, and no one said him nay. He got both the iron and the steel, and the smiths, and thus was Dapplegrim shod strongly and well, and when the youth went out of the King’s palace a cloud of dust rose up behind him. But when he came to the mountain into which the Princess had been carried, the difficulty was to ascend the precipitous wall of rock by which he was to get on to the mountain beyond, for the rock stood right up on end, as steep as a house side and as smooth as a sheet of glass. The first time the youth rode at it he got a little way up the precipice, but then both Dapplegrim’s fore legs slipped, and down came horse and rider with a sound like thunder among the mountains. The next time that he rode at it he got a little farther up, but then one of Dapplegrim’s fore legs slipped, and down they went with the sound of a landslip. But the third time Dapplegrim said: ‘Now we must show what we can do,’ and went at it once more till the stones sprang up sky high, and thus they got up. Then the lad rode into the mountain cleft at full gallop and caught up the Princess on his saddle-bow, and then out again before the Troll even had time to stand up, and thus the Princess was set free.

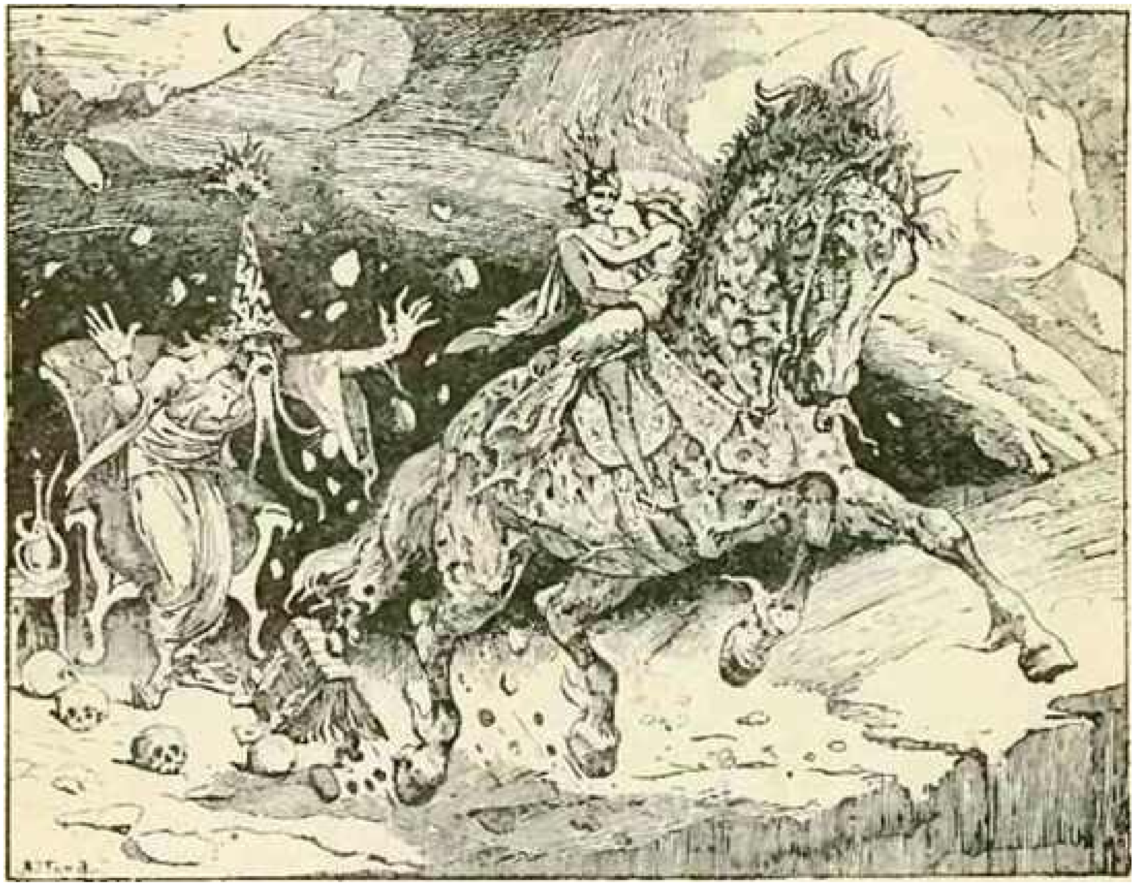

When the youth returned to the palace the King was both happy and delighted to get his daughter back again, as may easily be believed, but somehow or other the people about the Court had so worked on him that he was angry with the lad too. ‘Thou shalt have my thanks for setting my Princess free,’ he said, when the youth came into the palace with her, and was then about to go away.

She ought to be just as much my Princess as she is yours now, for you are a man of your word,’ said the youth.

‘Yes, yes,’ said the King. ‘Have her thou shalt, as I have said it; but first of all thou must make the sun shine into my palace here.’

For there was a large and high hill outside the windows which overshadowed the palace so much that the sun could not shine in.

‘That was no part of our bargain,’ answered the youth. ‘But as nothing that I can say will move you, I suppose I shall have to try to do my best, for the Princess I will have.’

So he went down to Dapplegrim again and told him what the King desired, and Dapplegrim thought that it might easily be done; but first of all he must have new shoes, and ten pounds of iron and twelve pounds of steel must go to the making of them, and two smiths were also necessary, one to hammer and one to hold, and then it would be very easy to make the sun shine into the King’s palace.

The lad asked for these things and obtained them instantly, for the King thought that for very shame he could not refuse to give them, and so Dapplegrim got new shoes, and they were good ones. The youth seated himself on him, and once more they went their way, and for each hop that Dapplegrim made, down went the hill fifteen ells into the earth, and so they went on until there was no hill left for the King to see.

When the youth came down again to the King’s palace he asked the King if the Princess should not at last be his, for now no one could say that the sun was not shining into the palace. But the other people in the palace had again stirred up the King, and he answered that the youth should have her, and that he had never intended that he should not; but first of all he must get her quite as good a horse to ride to the wedding on as that which he had himself. The youth said that the King had never told him he was to do that, and it seemed to him that he had now really earned the Princess; but the King stuck to what he had said, and if the youth were unable to do it he was to lose his life, the King said. The youth went down to the stable again, and very sad and sorrowful he was, as anyone may well imagine. Then he told Dapplegrim that the King had now required that he should get the Princess as good a bridal horse as that which the bridegroom had, or he should lose his life. ‘But that will be no easy thing to do,’ said he, ‘for your equal is not to be found in all the world.’

‘Oh yes, there is one to match me,’ said Dapplegrim. ‘But it will not be easy to get him, for he is underground. However, we will try. Now you must go up to the King and ask for new shoes for me, and for them we must again have ten pounds of iron, twelve pounds of steel, and two smiths, one to hammer and one to hold, but be very particular to see that the hooks are very sharp. And you must also ask for twelve barrels of rye, and twelve slaughtered oxen must we have with us, and all the twelve ox-hides with twelve hundred spikes set in each of them; all these things must we have, likewise a barrel of tar with twelve tons of tar in it. The youth went to the King and asked for all the things that Dapplegrim had named, and once more, as the King thought that it would be disgraceful to refuse them to him, he obtained them all.

So he mounted Dapplegrim and rode away from the Court, and when he had ridden for a long, long time over hills and moors, Dapplegrim asked: ‘Do you hear anything?’

‘Yes; there is such a dreadful whistling up above in the air that I think I am growing alarmed,’ said the youth.

‘That is all the wild birds in the forest flying about; they are sent to stop us,’ said Dapplegrim. ‘But just cut a hole in the corn sacks, and then they will be so busy with the corn that they will forget us.’

The youth did it. He cut holes in the corn sacks so that barley and rye ran out on every side, and all the wild birds that were in the forest came in such numbers that they darkened the sun. But when they caught sight of the corn they could not refrain from it, but flew down and began to scratch and pick at the corn and rye, and at last they began to fight among themselves, and forgot all about the youth and Dapplegrim, and did them no harm.

And now the youth rode onwards for a long, long time, over hill and dale, over rocky places and morasses, and then Dapplegrim began to listen again, and asked the youth if he heard anything now.

‘Yes; now I hear such a dreadful crackling and crashing in the forest on every side that I think I shall be really afraid,’ said the youth.

‘That is all the wild beasts in the forest,’ said Dapplegrim; ‘they are sent out to stop us. But just throw out the twelve carcasses of the oxen, and they will be so much occupied with them that they will quite forget us.’ So the youth threw out the carcasses of the oxen, and then all the wild beasts in the forest, both bears and wolves, and lions, and grim beasts of all kinds, came. But when they caught sight of the carcasses of the oxen they began to fight for them till the blood flowed, and they entirely forgot Dapplegrim and the youth.

So the youth rode onwards again, and many and many were the new scenes they saw, for travelling on Dapplegrim’s back was not travelling slowly, as may be imagined, and then Dapplegrim neighed.

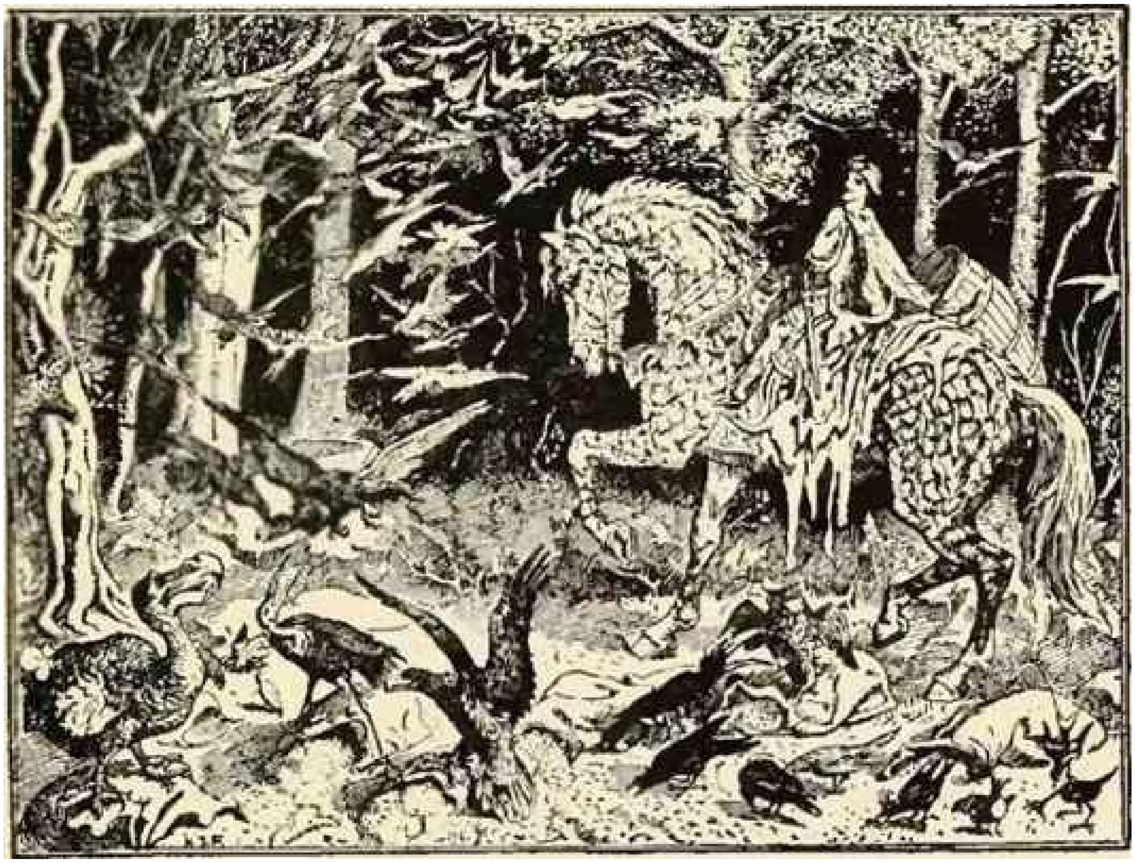

‘Do you hear anything? he said.

‘Yes; I heard something like a foal neighing quite plainly a long, long way off,’ answered the youth.

‘That’s a full-grown colt,’ said Dapplegrim, ‘if you hear it so plainly when it is so far away from us.’

So they travelled onwards a long time, and saw one new scene after another once more. Then Dapplegrim neighed again.

‘Do you hear anything now?’ said he.

‘Yes; now I heard it quite distinctly, and it neighed like a full-grown horse,’ answered the youth.

‘Yes, and you will hear it again very soon,’ said Dapplegrim; ‘and then you will hear what a voice it has.’ So they travelled on through many more different kinds of country, and then Dapplegrim neighed for the third time; but before he could ask the youth if he heard anything, there was such a neighing on the other side of the heath that the youth thought that hills and rocks would be rent in pieces.

‘Now he is here!’ said Dapplegrim. ‘Be quick, and fling over me the ox-hides that have the spikes in them, throw the twelve tons of tar over the field, and climb up into that great spruce fir tree. When he comes, fire will spurt out of both his nostrils, and then the tar will catch fire. Now mark what I say — if the flame ascends I conquer, and if it sinks I fail; but if you see that I am winning, fling the bridle, which you must take off me, over his head, and then he will become quite gentle.’

Just as the youth had flung all the hides with the spikes over Dapplegrim, and the tar over the field, and had got safely up into the spruce fir, a horse came with flame spouting from his nostrils, and the tar caught fire in a moment; and Dapplegrim and the horse began to fight until the stones leapt up to the sky. They bit, and they fought with their fore legs and their hind legs, and sometimes the youth looked at them. And sometimes he looked at the tar, but at last the flames began to rise, for wheresoever the strange horse bit or wheresoever he kicked he hit upon the spikes in the hides, and at length he had to yield. When the youth saw that, he was not long in getting down from the tree and flinging the bridle over the horse’s head, and then he became so tame that he might have been led by a thin string.

This horse was dappled too, and so like Dapplegrim that no one could distinguish the one from the other. The youth seated himself on the dappled horse which he had captured, and rode home again to the King’s palace, and Dapplegrim ran loose by his side. When he got there, the King was standing outside in the courtyard.

‘Can you tell me which is the horse I have caught, and which is the one I had before?’ said the youth. ‘If you can’t, I think your daughter is mine.’

The King went and looked at both the dappled horses; he looked high and he looked low, he looked before and he looked behind, but there was not a hair’s difference between the two.

‘No,’ said the King; ‘that I cannot tell thee, and as thou hast procured such a splendid bridal horse for my daughter thou shalt have her; but first we must have one more trial, just to see if thou art fated to have her. She shall hide herself twice, and then thou shalt hide thyself twice. If thou canst find her each time that she hides herself, and if she cannot find thee in thy hiding-places, then it is fated, and thou shalt have the Princess.’

‘That, too, was not in our bargain,’ said the youth. ‘But we will make this trial since it must be so.’

So the King’s daughter was to hide herself first.

Then she changed herself into a duck, and lay swimming in a lake that was just outside the palace. But the youth went down into the stable and asked Dapplegrim what she had done with herself.

‘Oh, all that you have to do is to take your gun, and go down to the water and aim at the duck which is swimming about there, and she will soon discover herself,’ said Dapplegrim.

The youth snatched up his gun and ran to the lake. ‘I will just have a shot at that duck,’ said he, and began to aim at it.

‘Oh, no, dear friend, don’t shoot! It is I,’ said the Princess. So he had found her once.

The second time the Princess changed herself into a loaf, and laid herself on the table among four other loaves; and she was so like the other loaves that no one could see any difference between them.

But the youth again went down to the stable to Dapplegrim, and told him that the Princess had hidden herself again, and that he had not the least idea what had become of her.

‘Oh, just take a very large bread-knife, sharpen it, and pretend that you are going to cut straight through the third of the four loaves which are lying on the kitchen table in the King’s palace — count them from right to left — and you will soon find her,’ said Dapplegrim.

So the youth went up to the kitchen, and began to sharpen the largest bread-knife that he could find; then he caught hold of the third loaf on the left-hand side, and put the knife to it as if he meant to cut it straight in two. ‘I will have a bit of this bread for myself,’ said he.

‘No, dear friend, don’t cut, it is I!’ said the Princess again; so he had found her the second time.

And now it was his turn to go and hide himself; but Dapplegrim had given him such good instructions that it was not easy to find him. First he turned himself into a horse-fly, and hid himself in Dapplegrim’s left nostril. The Princess went poking about and searching everywhere, high and low, and wanted to go into Dapplegrim’s stall too, but he began to bite and kick about so that she was afraid to go there, and could not find the youth. ‘Well,’ said she, ‘as I am unable to find you, you must show yourself; ‘whereupon the youth immediately appeared standing there on the stable floor.

Dapplegrim told him what he was to do the second time, and he turned himself into a lump of earth, and stuck himself between the hoof and the shoe on Dapplegrim’s left fore foot. Once more the King’s daughter went and sought everywhere, inside and outside, until at last she came into the stable, and wanted to go into the stall beside Dapplegrim. So this time he allowed her to go into it, and she peered about high and low, but she could not look under his hoofs, for he stood much too firmly on his legs for that, and she could not find the youth.

‘Well, you will just have to show where you are yourself, for I can’t find you,’ said the Princess, and in an instant the youth was standing by her side on the floor of the stable.

‘Now you are mine!’ said he to the Princess.

‘Now you can see that it is fated that she should be mine,’ he said to the King.

‘Yes, fated it is,’ said the King. ‘So what must be, must.’

Then everything was made ready for the wedding with great splendour and promptitude, and the youth rode to church on Dapplegrim, and the King’s daughter on the other horse. So everyone must see that they could not be long on their way thither.(20)

(20) From J. Moe.

THE ENCHANTED CANARY

I

ONCE upon a time, in the reign of King Cambrinus, there lived at Avesnes one of his lords, who was the finest man — by which I mean the fattest — in the whole country of Flanders. He ate four meals a day, slept twelve hours out of the twenty-four, and the only thing he ever did was to shoot at small birds with his bow and arrow.

Still, with all his practice he shot very badly, he was so fat and heavy, and as he grew daily fatter, he was at last obliged to give up walking, and be dragged about in a wheel-chair, and the people made fun of him, and gave him the name of my Lord Tubby.

Now, the only trouble that Lord Tubby had was about his son, whom he loved very much, although they were not in the least alike, for the young Prince was as thin as a cuckoo. And what vexed him more than all was, that though the young ladies throughout all his lands did their best to make the Prince fall in love with them, he would have nothing to say to any of them, and told his father he did not wish to marry.

Instead of chatting with them in the dusk, he wandered about the woods, whispering to the moon. No wonder the young ladies thought him very odd, but they liked him all the better for that; and as he had received at his birth the name of Desire, they all called him d'Amour Desire.

'What is the matter with you?' his father often said to him. 'You have everything you can possibly wish for: a good bed, good food, and tuns full of beer. The only thing you want, in order to become as fat as a pig, is a wife that can bring you broad, rich lands. So marry, and you will be perfectly happy.'

'I ask nothing better than to marry,' replied Desire, 'but I have never seen a woman that pleases me. All the girls here are pink and white, and I am tired to death of their eternal lilie and roses.

'My faith!' cried Tubby; 'do you want to marry a negress, and give me grandchildren as ugly as monkeys and as stupid as owls?'

'No, father, nothing of the sort. But there must be women somewhere in the world who are neither pink nor white, and I tell you, once for all, that I will never marry until I have found one exactly to my taste.'

II

Some time afterwards, it happened that the Prior of the Abbey of Saint Amand sent to the Lord of Avesnes a basket of oranges, with a beautifully-written letter saying that these golden fruit, then unknown in Flanders, came straight from a land where the sun always shone.

That evening Tubby and his son ate the golden apples at supper, and thought them delicious.

Next morning as the day dawned, Desire went down to the stable and saddled his pretty white horse. Then he went, all dressed for a journey, to the bedside of Tubby, and found him smoking his first pipe.

‘Father,’ he said gravely, ‘I have come to bid you farewell. Last night I dreamed that I was walking in a wood, where the trees were covered with golden apples. I gathered one of them, and when I opened it there came out a lovely princess with a golden skin. That is the wife I want, and I am going to look for her.’

The Lord of Avesnes was so much astonished that he let his pipe fall to the ground; then he became so diverted at the notion of his son marrying a yellow woman, and a woman shut up inside an orange, that he burst into fits of laughter.

Desire waited to bid him good-bye until he was quiet again; but as his father went on laughing and showed no signs of stopping, the young man took his hand, kissed it tenderly, opened the door, and in the twinkling of an eye was as at the bottom of the staircase. He jumped lightly on his horse, and was a mile from home before Tubby had ceased laughing.

‘A yellow wife! He must be mad! fit for a strait waistcoat!’ cried the good man, when he was able to speak. ‘Here! quick! bring him back to me.’

The servants mounted their horses and rode after the Prince; but as they did not know which road he had taken, they went all ways except the right one, and instead of bringing him back they returned themselves when it grew dark, with their horses worn out and covered with dust.

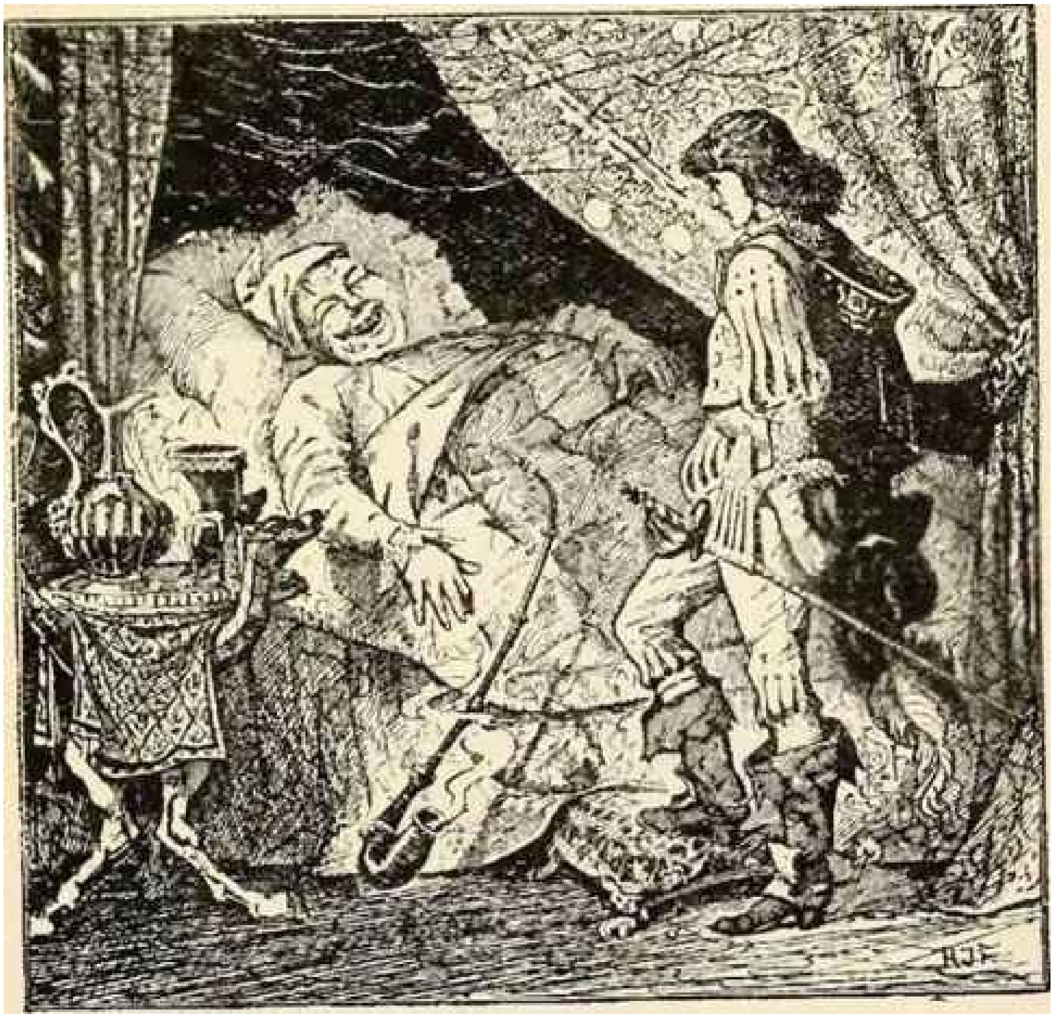

III

When Desire thought they could no longer catch him, he pulled his horse into a walk, like a prudent man who knows he has far to go. He travelled in this way for many weeks, passing by villages, towns, mountains, valleys, and plains, but always pushing south, where every day the sun seemed hotter and more brilliant.

At last one day at sunset Desire felt the sun so warm, that he thought he must now be near the place of his dream. He was at that moment close to the corner of a wood where stood a little hut, before the door of which his horse stopped of his own accord. An old man with a white beard was sitting on the doorstep enjoying the fresh air. The Prince got down from his horse and asked leave to rest.

‘Come in, my young friend,’ said the old man; ‘my house is not large, but it is big enough to hold a stranger.’

The traveller entered, and his host put before him a simple meal. When his hunger was satisfied the old man said to him:

‘If I do not mistake, you come from far. May I ask where you are going?’

‘I will tell you,’ answered Desire, ‘though most likely you will laugh at me. I dreamed that in the land of the sun there was a wood full of orange trees, and that in one of the oranges I should find a beautiful princess who is to be my wife. It is she I am seeking.’

‘Why should I laugh?’ asked the old man. ‘Madness in youth is true wisdom. Go, young man, follow your dream, and if you do not find the happiness that you seek, at any rate you will have had the happiness of seeking it.’

IV

The next day the Prince arose early and took leave of his host.

‘The wood that you saw in your dream is not far from here,’ said the old man. ‘It is in the depth of the forest, and this road will lead you there. You will come to a vast park surrounded by high walls. In the middle of the park is a castle, where dwells a horrible witch who allows no living being to enter the doors. Behind the castle is the orange grove. Follow the wall till you come to a heavy iron gate. Don’t try to press it open, but oil the hinges with this,’ and the old man gave him a small bottle.

‘The gate will open of itself,’ he continued, ‘and a huge dog which guards the castle will come to you with his mouth wide open, but just throw him this oat cake. Next, you will see a baking woman leaning over her heated oven. Give her this brush. Lastly, you will find a well on your left; do not forget to take the cord of the bucket and spread it in the sun. When you have done this, do not enter the castle, but go round it and enter the orange grove. Then gather three oranges, and get back to the gate as fast as you can. Once out of the gate, leave the forest by the opposite side.

‘Now, attend to this: whatever happens, do not open your oranges till you reach the bank of a river, or a fountain. Out of each orange will come a princess, and you can choose which you like for your wife. Your choice once made, be very careful never to leave your bride for an instant, and remember that the danger which is most to be feared is never the danger we are most afraid of.’

V

Desire thanked his host warmly, and took the road he pointed out. In less than an hour he arrived at the wall, which was very high indeed. He sprang to the ground, fastened his horse to a tree, and soon found the iron gate. Then he took out his bottle and oiled the hinges, when the gate opened of itself, and he saw an old castle standing inside. The Prince entered boldly into the courtyard.

Suddenly he heard fierce howls, and a dog as tall as a donkey, with eyes like billiard balls, came towards him, showing his teeth, which were like the prongs of a fork. Desire flung him the oat cake, which the great dog instantly snapped up, and the young Prince passed quietly on.

A few yards further he saw a huge oven, with a wide, red-hot gaping mouth. A woman as tall as a giant was leaning over the oven. Desire gave her the brush, which she took in silence.

Then he went on to the well, drew up the cord, which was half rotten, and stretched it out in the sun.

Lastly he went round the castle, and plunged into the orange grove. There he gathered the three most beautiful oranges he could find, and turned to go back to the gate.

But just at this moment the sun was darkened, the earth trembled, and Desire heard a voice crying:

‘Baker, baker, take him by his feet, and throw him into the oven!’

‘No,’ replied the baker; ‘a long time has passed since I first began to scour this oven with my own flesh. YOU never cared to give me a brush; but he has given me one, and he shall go in peace.’

‘Rope, O rope!’ cried the voice again, ‘twine yourself round his neck and strangle him.’

‘No,’ replied the rope; ‘you have left me for many years past to fall to pieces with the damp. He has stretched me out in the sun. Let him go in peace.’

‘Dog, my good dog,’ cried the voice, more and more angry, ‘jump at his throat and eat him up.’

‘No,’ replied the dog; ‘though I have served you long, you never gave me any bread. He has given me as much as I want. Let him go in peace.’

‘Iron gate, iron gate,’ cried the voice, growling like thunder, ‘fall on him and grind him to powder.’

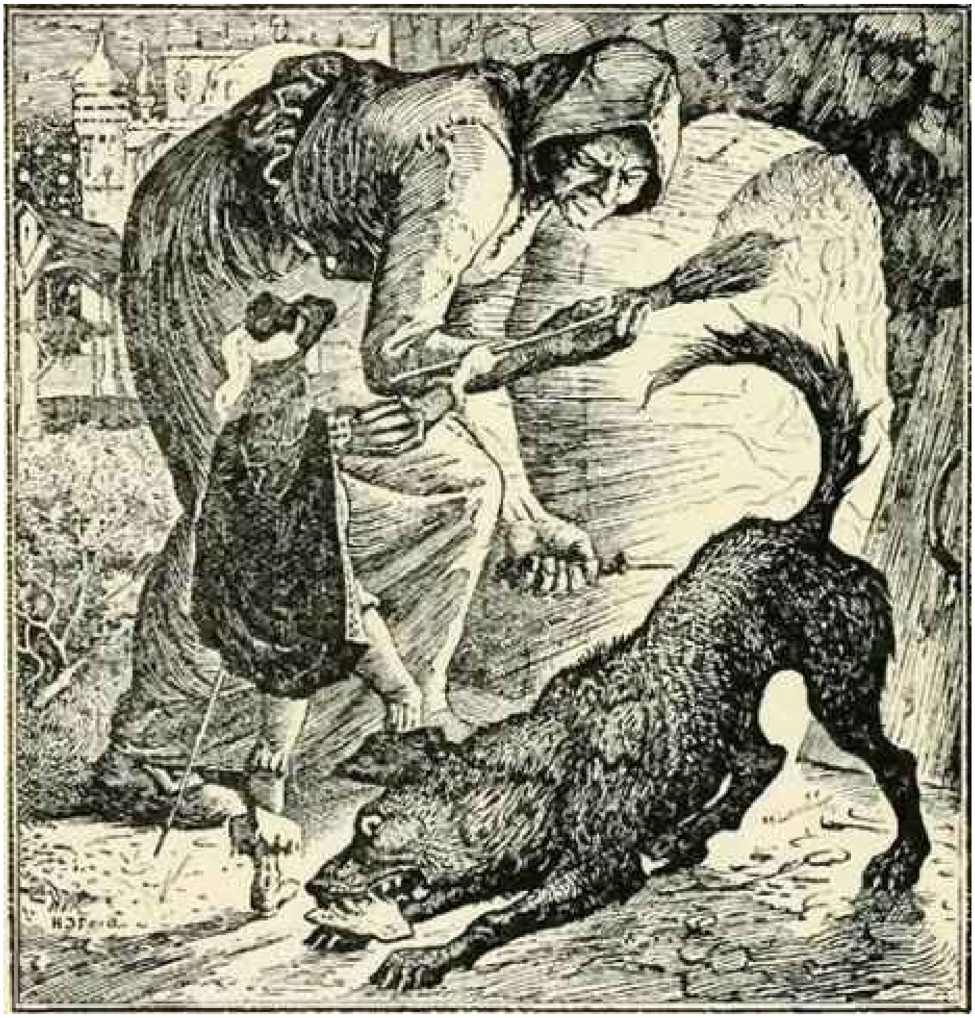

‘No,’ replied the gate; ‘it is a hundred years since you left me to rust, and he has oiled me. Let him go in peace.’

VI

Once outside, the young adventurer put his oranges into a bag that hung from his saddle, mounted his horse, and rode quickly out of the forest.

Now, as he was longing to see the princesses, he was very anxious to come to a river or a fountain, but, though he rode for hours, a river or fountain was nowhere to be seen. Still his heart was light, for he felt that he had got through the most difficult part of his task, and the rest was easy.

About mid-day he reached a sandy plain, scorching in the sun. Here he was seized with dreadful thirst; he took his gourd and raised it to his lips.

But the gourd was empty; in the excitement of his joy he had forgotten to fill it. He rode on, struggling with his sufferings, but at last he could bear it no longer.

He let himself slide to the earth, and lay down beside his horse, his throat burning, his chest heaving, and his head going round. Already he felt that death was near him, when his eyes fell on the bag where the oranges peeped out.

Poor Desire, who had braved so many dangers to win the lady of his dreams, would have given at this moment all the princesses in the world, were they pink or golden, for a single drop of water.

‘Ah!’ he said to himself. ‘If only these oranges were real fruit — fruit as refreshing as what I ate in Flanders! And, after all, who knows?’

This idea put some life into him. He had the strength to lift himself up and put his hand into his bag. He drew out an orange and opened it with his knife.

Out of it flew the prettiest little female canary that ever was seen.

‘Give me something to drink, I am dying of thirst,’ said the golden bird.

‘Wait a minute,’ replied Desire, so much astonished that he forgot his own sufferings; and to satisfy the bird he took a second orange, and opened it without thinking what he was doing. Out of it flew another canary, and she too began to cry:

‘I am dying of thirst; give me something to drink.’

Then Tubby’s son saw his folly, and while the two canaries flew away he sank on the ground, where, exhausted by his last effort, he lay unconscious.

VII

When he came to himself, he had a pleasant feeling of freshness all about him. It was night, the sky was sparkling with stars, and the earth was covered with a heavy dew.

The traveller having recovered, mounted his horse, and at the first streak of dawn he saw a stream dancing in front of him, and stooped down and drank his fill.

He hardly had courage to open his last orange. Then he remembered that the night before he had disobeyed the orders of the old man. Perhaps his terrible thirst was a trick of the cunning witch, and suppose, even though he opened the orange on the banks of the stream, that he did not find in it the princess that he sought?

He took his knife and cut it open. Alas! out of it flew a little canary, just like the others, who cried:

‘I am thirsty; give me something to drink.’

Great was the disappointment of Desire. However, he was determined not to let this bird fly away; so he took up some water in the palm of his hand and held it to its beak.

Scarcely had the canary drunk when she became a beautiful girl, tall and straight as a poplar tree, with black eyes and a golden skin. Desire had never seen anyone half so lovely, and he stood gazing at her in delight.

On her side she seemed quite bewildered, but she looked about her with happy eyes, and was not at all afraid of her deliverer.

He asked her name. She answered that she was called the Princess Zizi; she was about sixteen years old, and for ten years of that time the witch had kept her shut up in an orange, in the shape of a canary.

‘Well, then, my charming Zizi,’ said the young Prince, who was longing to marry her, ‘let us ride away quickly so as to escape from the wicked witch.’

But Zizi wished to know where he meant to take her.

‘To my father’s castle,’ he said.

He mounted his horse and took her in front of him, and, holding her carefully in his arms, they began their journey.

VIII

Everything the Princess saw was new to her, and in passing through mountains, valleys, and towns, she asked a thousand questions. Desire was charmed to answer them. It is so delightful to teach those one loves!

Once she inquired what the girls in his country were like.

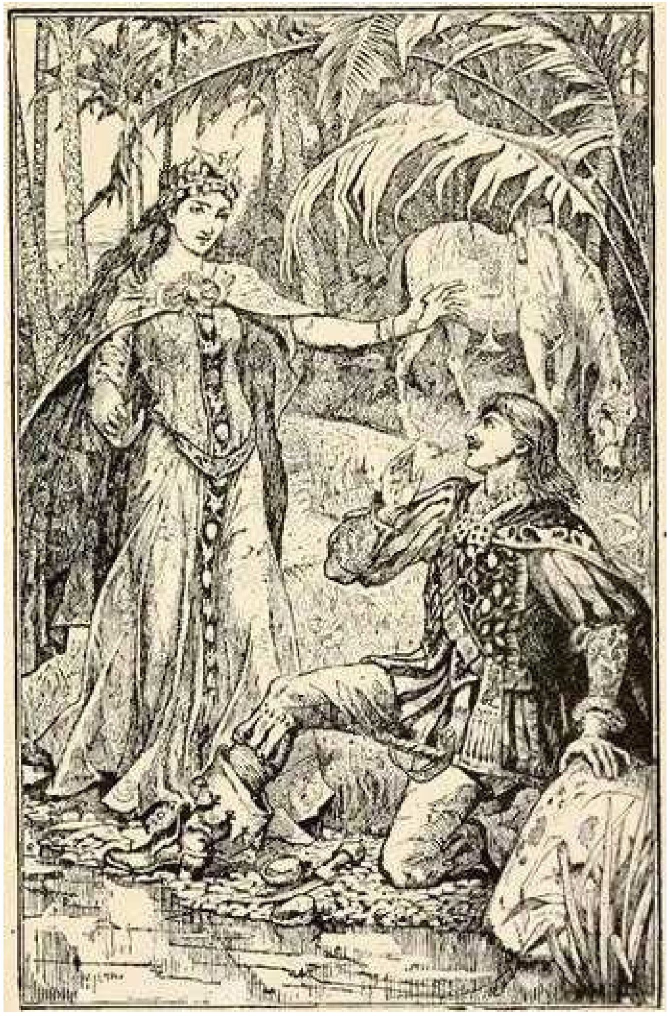

‘They are pink and white,’ he replied, ‘and their eyes are blue.’

‘Do you like blue eyes?’ said the Princess; but Desire thought it was a good opportunity to find out what was in her heart, so he did not answer.

‘And no doubt,’ went on the Princess, ‘one of them is your intended bride?’

Still he was silent, and Zizi drew herself up proudly.

‘No,’ he said at last. ‘None of the girls of my own country are beautiful in my eyes, and that is why I came to look for a wife in the land of the sun. Was I wrong, my lovely Zizi?’

This time it was Zizi’s turn to be silent.

IX

Talking in this way they drew near to the castle. When they were about four stone-throws from the gates they dismounted in the forest, by the edge of a fountain.

‘My dear Zizi,’ said Tubby’s son, ‘we cannot present ourselves before my father like two common people who have come back from a walk. We must enter the castle with more ceremony. Wait for me here, and in an hour I will return with carriages and horses fit for a princess.’

‘Don’t be long,’ replied Zizi, and she watched him go with wistful eyes.

When she was left by herself the poor girl began to feel afraid. She was alone for the first time in her life, and in the middle of a thick forest.

Suddenly she heard a noise among the trees. Fearing lest it should be a wolf, she hid herself in the hollow trunk of a willow tree which hung over the fountain. It was big enough to hold her altogether, but she peeped out, and her pretty head was reflected in the clear water.

Then there appeared, not a wolf, but a creature quite as wicked and quite as ugly. Let us see who this creature was.

X

Not far from the fountain there lived a family of bricklayers. Now, fifteen years before this time, the father in walking through the forest found a little girl, who had been deserted by the gypsies. He carried her home to his wife, and the good woman was sorry for her, and brought her up with her own sons. As she grew older, the little gypsy became much more remarkable for strength and cunning than for sense or beauty. She had a low forehead, a flat nose, thick lips, coarse hair, and a skin not golden like that of Zizi, but the colour of clay.

As she was always being teased about her complexion, she got as noisy and cross as a titmouse. So they used to call her Titty.

Titty was often sent by the bricklayer to fetch water from the fountain, and as she was very proud and lazy the gypsy disliked this very much.

It was she who had frightened Zizi by appearing with her pitcher on her shoulder. Just as she was stooping to fill it, she saw reflected in the water the lovely image of the Princess.

‘What a pretty face!’ she exclaimed, ‘Why, it must be mine! How in the world can they call me ugly? I am certainly much too pretty to be their water carrier!’

So saying, she broke her pitcher and went home.

‘Where is your pitcher?’ asked the bricklayer.

‘Well, what do you expect? The pitcher may go many times to the well....’

‘But at last it is broken. Well, here is a bucket that will not break.’

The gypsy returned to the fountain, and addressing once more the image of Zizi, she said:

‘No; I don’t mean to be a beast of burden any longer.’ And she flung the bucket so high in the air that it stuck in the branches of an oak.

‘I met a wolf,’ she told the bricklayer, ‘and I broke the bucket across his nose.’

The bricklayer asked her no more questions, but took down a broom and gave her such a beating that her pride was humbled a little.

Then he handed to her an old copper milk-can, and said:

‘If you don’t bring it back full, your bones shall suffer for it.’

XI

Titty went off rubbing her sides; but this time she did not dare to disobey, and in a very bad temper stooped down over the well. It was not at all easy to fill the milk-can, which was large and round. It would not go down into the well, and the gypsy had to try again and again.

At last her arms grew so tired that when she did manage to get the can properly under the water she had no strength to pull it up, and it rolled to the bottom.

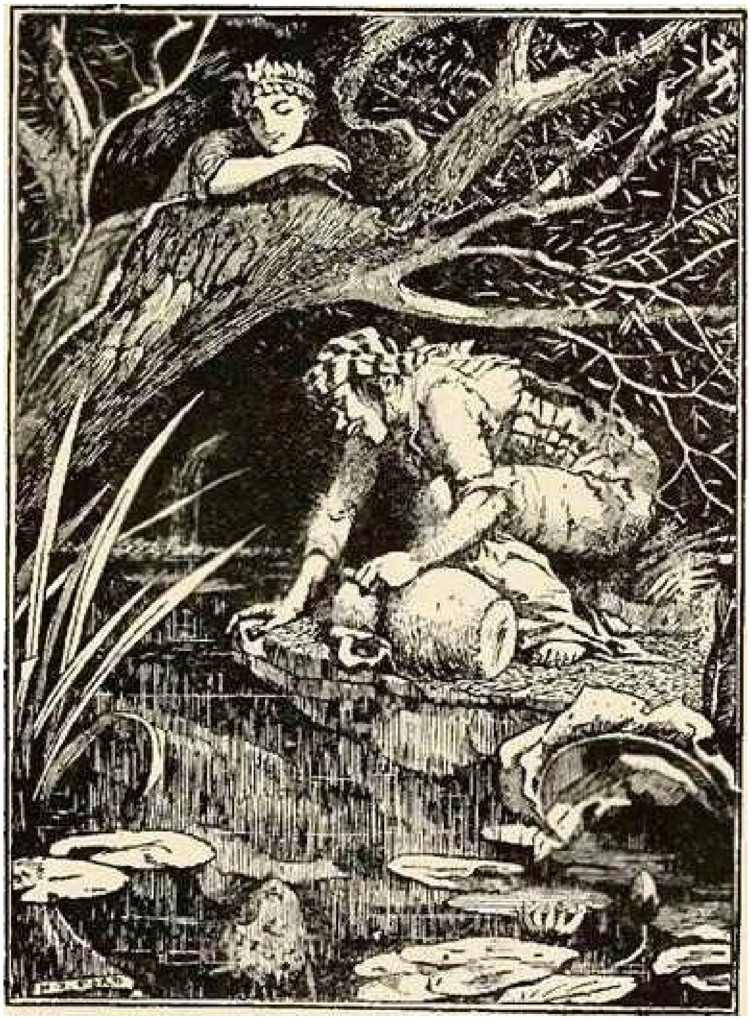

On seeing the can disappear, she made such a miserable face that Zizi, who had been watching her all this time, burst into fits of laughter.

Titty turned round and perceived the mistake she had made; and she felt so angry that she made up her mind to be revenged at once.

‘What are you doing there, you lovely creature?’ she said to Zizi.

‘I am waiting for my lover,’ Zizi replied; and then, with a simplicity quite natural in a girl who so lately had been a canary, she told all her story.

The gypsy had often seen the young Prince pass by, with his gun on his shoulder, when he was going after crows. She was too ugly and ragged for him ever to have noticed her, but Titty on her side had admired him, though she thought he might well have been a little fatter.

‘Dear, dear!’ she said to herself. ‘So he likes yellow women! Why, I am yellow too, and if I could only think of a way — —’

It was not long before she did think of it.

‘What!’ cried the sly Titty, ‘they are coming with great pomp to fetch you, and you are not afraid to show yourself to so many fine lords and ladies with your hair down like that? Get down at once, my poor child, and let me dress your hair for you!’

The innocent Zizi came down at once, and stood by Titty. The gypsy began to comb her long brown locks, when suddenly she drew a pin from her stays, and, just as the titmouse digs its beak into the heads of linnets and larks, Titty dug the pin into the head of Zizi.

No sooner did Zizi feel the prick of the pin than she became a bird again, and, spreading her wings, she flew away.

‘That was neatly done,’ said the gypsy. ‘The Prince will be clever if he finds his bride.’ And, arranging her dress, she seated herself on the grass to await Desire.

XII

Meanwhile the Prince was coming as fast as his horse could carry him. He was so impatient that he was always full fifty yards in front of the lords and ladies sent by Tubby to bring back Zizi.

At the sight of the hideous gypsy he was struck dumb with surprise and horror.

‘Ah me!’ said Titty, ‘so you don’t know your poor Zizi? While you were away the wicked witch came, and turned me into this. But if you only have the courage to marry me I shall get back my beauty.’ And she began to cry bitterly.

Now the good-natured Desire was as soft-hearted as he was brave.

‘Poor girl,’ he thought to himself. ‘It is not her fault, after all, that she has grown so ugly, it is mine. Oh! why did I not follow the old man’s advice? Why did I leave her alone? And besides, it depends on me to break the spell, and I love her too much to let her remain like this.’

So he presented the gypsy to the lords and ladies of the Court, explaining to them the terrible misfortune which had befallen his beautiful bride.

They all pretended to believe it, and the ladies at once put on the false princess the rich dresses they had brought for Zizi.

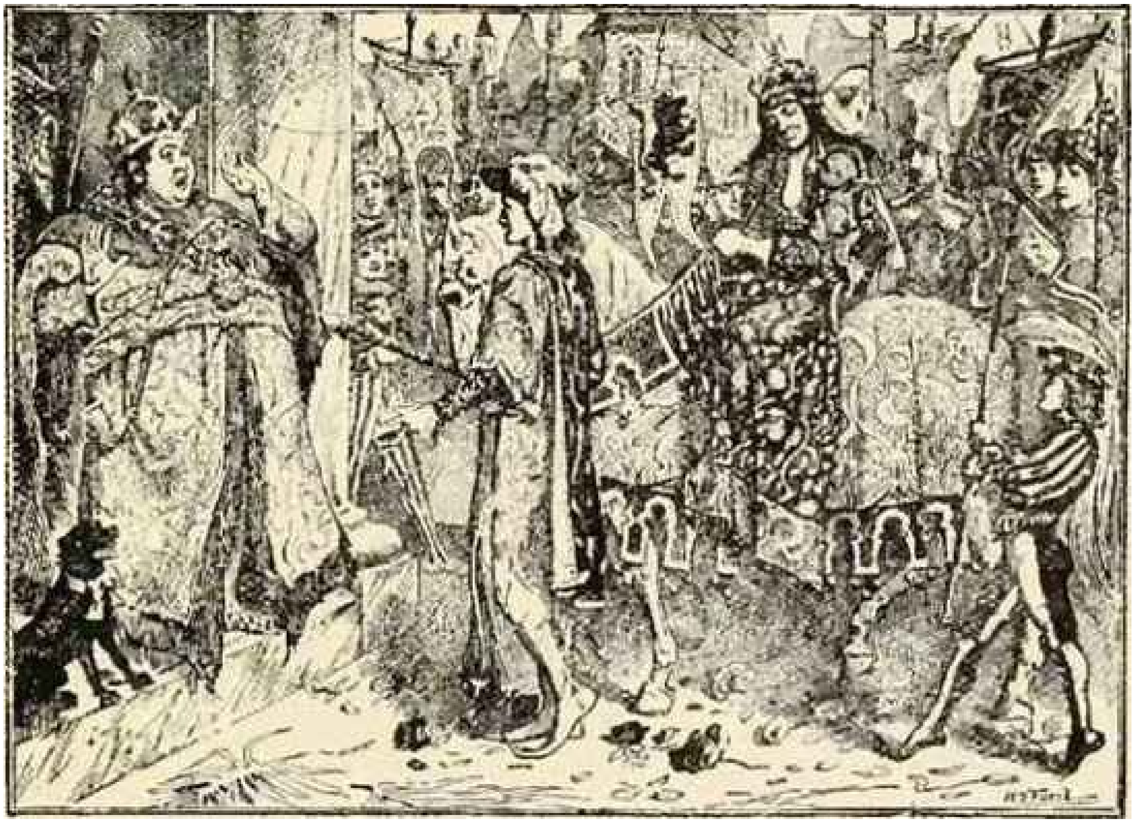

She was then perched on the top of a magnificent ambling palfrey, and they set forth to the castle.

But unluckily the rich dress and jewels only made Titty look uglier still, and Desire could not help feeling hot and uncomfortable when he made his entry with her into the city.

Bells were pealing, chimes ringing, and the people filling the streets and standing at their doors to watch the procession go by, and they could hardly believe their eyes as they saw what a strange bride their Prince had chosen.

In order to do her more honour, Tubby came to meet her at the foot of the great marble staircase. At the sight of the hideous creature he almost fell backwards.

‘What!’ he cried. ‘Is this the wonderful beauty?’

‘Yes, father, it is she,’ replied Desire with a sheepish look. ‘But she has been bewitched by a wicked sorceress, and will not regain her beauty until she is my wife.’

‘Does she say so? Well, if you believe that, you may drink cold water and think it bacon,’ the unhappy Tubby answered crossly.

But all the same, as he adored his son, he gave the gypsy his hand and led her to the great hall, where the bridal feast was spread.

XIII

The feast was excellent, but Desire hardly touched anything. However, to make up, the other guests ate greedily, and, as for Tubby, nothing ever took away his appetite.

When the moment arrived to serve the roast goose, there was a pause, and Tubby took the opportunity to lay down his knife and fork for a little. But as the goose gave no sign of appearing, he sent his head carver to find out what was the matter in the kitchen.

Now this was what had happened.

While the goose was turning on the spit, a beautiful little canary hopped on to the sill of the open window.

‘Good-morning, my fine cook,’ she said in a silvery voice to the man who was watching the roast.

‘Good-morning, lovely golden bird,’ replied the chief of the scullions, who had been well brought up.

‘I pray that Heaven may send you to sleep,’ said the golden bird, ‘and that the goose may burn, so that there may be none left for Titty.’

And instantly the chief of the scullions fell fast asleep, and the goose was burnt to a cinder.

When he awoke he was horrified, and gave orders to pluck another goose, to stuff it with chestnuts, and put it on the spit.

While it was browning at the fire, Tubby inquired for his goose a second time. The Master Cook himself mounted to the hall to make his excuses, and to beg his lord to have a little patience. Tubby showed his patience by abusing his son.

‘As if it wasn’t enough,’ he grumbled between his teeth, ‘that the boy should pick up a hag without a penny, but the goose must go and burn now. It isn’t a wife he has brought me, it is Famine herself.’

XIV

While the Master Cook was upstairs, the golden bird came again to perch on the window-sill, and called in his clear voice to the head scullion, who was watching the spit:

‘Good-morning, my fine Scullion!’

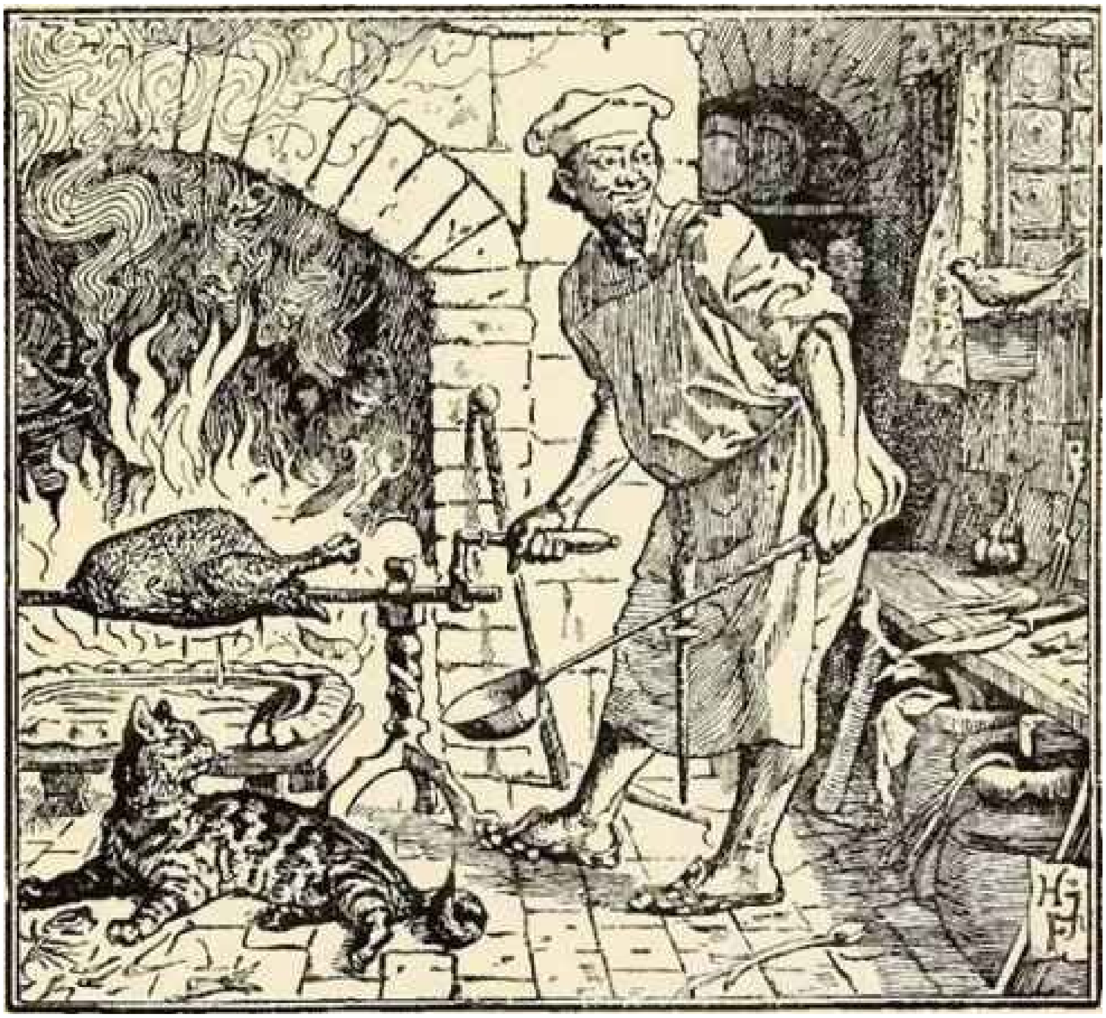

‘Good-morning, lovely Golden Bird,’ replied the Scullion, whom the Master Cook had forgotten in his excitement to warn.

‘I pray Heaven,’ went on the Canary, ‘that it will send you to sleep, and that the goose may burn, so that there may be none left for Titty.’

And the Scullion fell fast asleep, and when the Master Cook came back he found the goose as black as the chimney.

In a fury he woke the Scullion, who in order to save himself from blame told the whole story.

‘That accursed bird,’ said the Cook; ‘it will end by getting me sent away. Come, some of you, and hide yourselves, and if it comes again, catch it and wring its neck.’

He spitted a third goose, lit a huge fire, and seated himself by it.

The bird appeared a third time, and said: ‘Good-morning, my fine Cook.’

‘Good-morning, lovely Golden Bird,’ replied the Cook, as if nothing had happened, and at the moment that the Canary was beginning, ‘I pray Heaven that it may send,’ a scullion who was hidden outside rushed out and shut the shutters.

The bird flew into the kitchen. Then all the cooks and scullions sprang after it, knocking at it with their aprons. At length one of them caught it just at the very moment that Tubby entered the kitchen, waving his sceptre. He had come to see for himself why the goose had never made its appearance.

The Scullion stopped at once, just as he was about to wring the Canary’s neck.

XV

‘Will some one be kind enough to tell me the meaning of all this?’ cried the Lord of Avesnes.

‘Your Excellency, it is the bird,’ replied the Scullion, and he placed it in his hand.

‘Nonsense! What a lovely bird!’ said Tubby, and in stroking its head he touched a pin that was sticking between its feathers. He pulled it out, and lo! the Canary at once became a beautiful girl with a golden skin who jumped lightly to the ground.

‘Gracious! what a pretty girl!’ said Tubby.

‘Father! it is she! it is Zizi!’ exclaimed Desire, who entered at this moment.

And he took her in his arms, crying: ‘My darling Zizi, how happy I am to see you once more!’

‘Well, and the other one?’ asked Tubby.

The other one was stealing quietly to the door.

‘Stop her! called Tubby. ‘We will judge her cause at once.’

And he seated himself solemnly on the oven, and condemned Titty to be burned alive. After which the lords and cooks formed themselves in lines, and Tubby betrothed Desire to Zizi.

XVI

The marriage took place a few days later. All the boys in the country side were there, armed with wooden swords, and decorated with epaulets made of gilt paper.

Zizi obtained Titty’s pardon, and she was sent back to the brick-fields, followed and hooted at by all the boys. And this is why to-day the country boys always throw stones at a titmouse.

On the evening of the wedding-day all the larders, cellars, cupboards and tables of the people, whether rich or poor, were loaded as if by enchantment with bread, wine, beer, cakes and tarts, roast larks, and even geese, so that Tubby could not complain any more that his son had married Famine.

Since that time there has always been plenty to eat in that country, and since that time, too, you see in the midst of the fair-haired blue-eyed women of Flanders a few beautiful girls, whose eyes are black and whose skins are the colour of gold. They are the descendants of Zizi.(21)

(21) Charles Deulin, Contes du Roi Gambrinus.

THE TWELVE BROTHERS

THERE were once upon a time a King and a Queen who lived happily together, and they had twelve children, all of whom were boys. One day the King said to his wife:

‘If our thirteenth child is a girl, all her twelve brothers must die, so that she may be very rich and the kingdom hers alone.’

Then he ordered twelve coffins to be made, and filled them with shavings, and placed a little pillow in each. These he put away in an empty room, and, giving the key to his wife, he bade her tell no one of it.

The Queen grieved over the sad fate of her sons and refused to be comforted, so much so that the youngest boy, who was always with her, and whom she had christened Benjamin, said to her one day:

‘Dear mother, why are you so sad?’

‘My child,’ she answered, ‘I may not tell you the reason.’

But he left her no peace, till she went and unlocked the room and showed him the twelve coffins filled with shavings, and with the little pillow laid in each.

Then she said: ‘My dearest Benjamin, your father has had these coffins made for you and your eleven brothers, because if I bring a girl into the world you are all to be killed and buried in them.’

She wept bitterly as she spoke, but her son comforted her and said:

‘Don’t cry, dear mother; we’ll manage to escape somehow, and will fly for our lives.’

‘Yes,’ replied his mother, ‘that is what you must do — go with your eleven brothers out into the wood, and let one of you always sit on the highest tree you can find, keeping watch on the tower of the castle. If I give birth to a little son I will wave a white flag, and then you may safely return; but if I give birth to a little daughter I will wave a red flag, which will warn you to fly away as quickly as you can, and may the kind Heaven have pity on you. Every night I will get up and pray for you, in winter that you may always have a fire to warm yourselves by, and in summer that you may not languish in the heat.’

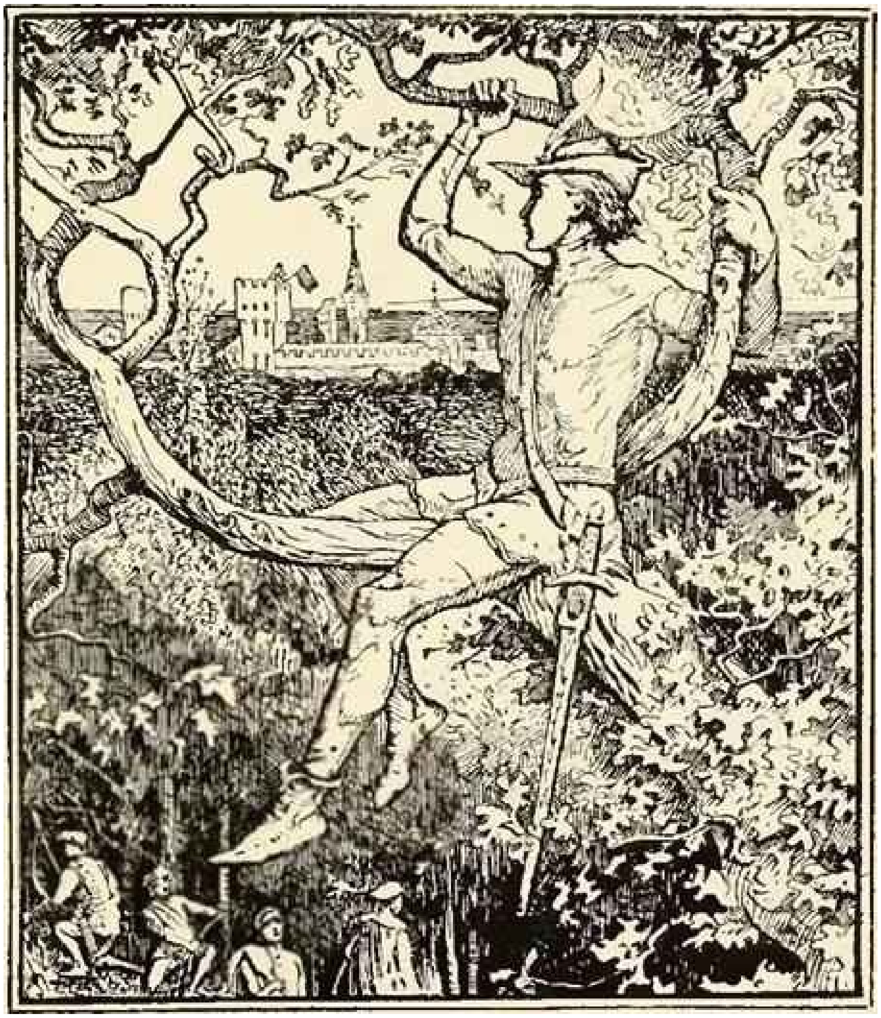

Then she blessed her sons and they set out into the wood. They found a very high oak tree, and there they sat, turn about, keeping their eyes always fixed on the castle tower. On the twelfth day, when the turn came to Benjamin, he noticed a flag waving in the air, but alas! it was not white, but blood red, the sign which told them they must all die. When the brothers heard this they were very angry, and said:

‘Shall we forsooth suffer death for the sake of a wretched girl? Let us swear vengeance, and vow that wherever and whenever we shall meet one of her sex, she shall die at our hands.’

Then they went their way deeper into the wood, and in the middle of it, where it was thickest and darkest, they came upon a little enchanted house which stood empty.

‘Here,’ they said, ‘let us take up our abode, and you, Benjamin, you are the youngest and weakest, you shall stay at home and keep house for us; we others will go out and fetch food.’ So they went forth into the wood, and shot hares and roe-deer, birds and wood-pigeons, and any other game they came across. They always brought their spoils home to Benjamin, who soon learnt to make them into dainty dishes. So they lived for ten years in this little house, and the time slipped merrily away.

In the meantime their little sister at home was growing up quickly. She was kind-hearted and of a fair countenance, and she had a gold star right in the middle of her forehead. One day a big washing was going on at the palace, and the girl looking down from her window saw twelve men’s shirts hanging up to dry, and asked her mother:

‘Who in the world do these shirts belong to? Surely they are far too small for my father?’

And the Queen answered sadly: ‘Dear child, they belong to your twelve brothers.’

‘But where are my twelve brothers?’ said the girl. ‘I have never even heard of them.’

‘Heaven alone knows in what part of the wide world they are wandering,’ replied her mother.

Then she took the girl and opened the locked-up room; she showed her the twelve coffins filled with shavings, and with the little pillow laid in each.

‘These coffins,’ she said, ‘were intended for your brothers, but they stole secretly away before you were born.’

Then she to tell her all that had happened, and when she had finished her daughter said:

‘Do not cry, dearest mother; I will go and seek my brothers till I find them.’

So she took the twelve shirts and went on straight into the middle of the big wood. She walked all day long, and came in the evening to the little enchanted house. She stepped in and found a youth who, marvelling at her beauty, at the royal robes she wore, and at the golden star on her forehead, asked her where she came from and whither she was going.

‘I am a Princess,’ she answered, ‘and am seeking for my twelve brothers. I mean to wander as far as the blue sky stretches over the earth till I find them.’

Then she showed him the twelve shirts which she had taken with her, and Benjamin saw that it must be his sister, and said:

‘I am Benjamin, your youngest brother.’

So they wept for joy, and kissed and hugged each other again and again. After a time Benjamin said:

‘Dear sister, there is still a little difficulty, for we had all agreed that any girl we met should die at our hands, because it was for the sake of a girl that we had to leave our kingdom.’

‘But,’ she replied, ‘I will gladly die if by that means I can restore my twelve brothers to their own.’

‘No,’ he answered, ‘there is no need for that; only go and hide under that tub till our eleven brothers come in, and I’ll soon make matters right with them.’

She did as she was bid, and soon the others came home from the chase and sat down to supper.

‘Well, Benjamin, what’s the news?’ they asked. But he replied, ‘I like that; have you nothing to tell me?’

‘No,’ they answered.

Then he said: ‘Well, now, you’ve been out in the wood all the day and I’ve stayed quietly at home, and all the same I know more than you do.’

‘Then tell us,’ they cried.

But he answered: ‘Only on condition that you promise faithfully that the first girl we meet shall not be killed.’

‘She shall be spared,’ they promised, ‘only tell us the news.’

Then Benjamin said: ‘Our sister is here!’ and he lifted up the tub and the Princess stepped forward, with her royal robes and with the golden star on her forehead, looking so lovely and sweet and charming that they all fell in love with her on the spot.

They arranged that she should stay at home with Benjamin and help him in the house work, while the rest of the brothers went out into the wood and shot hares and roe-deer, birds and wood-pigeons. And Benjamin and his sister cooked their meals for them. She gathered herbs to cook the vegetables in, fetched the wood, and watched the pots on the fire, and always when her eleven brothers returned she had their supper ready for them. Besides this, she kept the house in order, tidied all the rooms, and made herself so generally useful that her brothers were delighted, and they all lived happily together.

One day the two at home prepared a fine feast, and when they were all assembled they sat down and ate and drank and made merry.

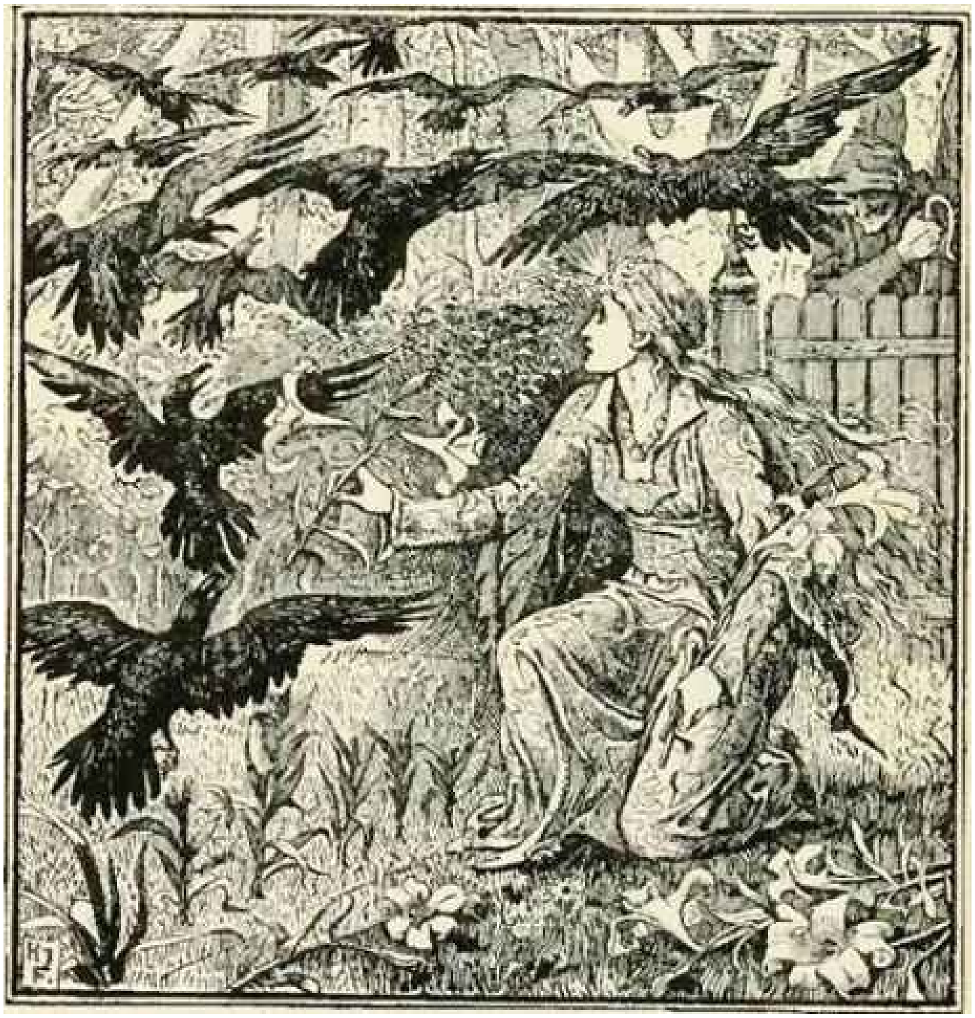

Now there was a little garden round the enchanted house, in which grew twelve tall lilies. The girl, wishing to please her brothers, plucked the twelve flowers, meaning to present one to each of them as they sat at supper. But hardly had she plucked the flowers when her brothers were turned into twelve ravens, who flew croaking over the wood, and the house and garden vanished also.

So the poor girl found herself left all alone in the wood, and as she looked round her she noticed an old woman standing close beside her, who said:

‘My child, what have you done? Why didn’t you leave the flowers alone? They were your twelve brothers. Now they are changed for ever into ravens.’

The girl asked, sobbing: ‘Is there no means of setting them free?’

‘No,’ said the old woman, ‘there is only one way in the whole world, and that is so difficult that you won’t free them by it, for you would have to be dumb and not laugh for seven years, and if you spoke a single word, though but an hour were wanting to the time, your silence would all have been in vain, and that one word would slay your brothers.’

Then the girl said to herself: ‘If that is all I am quite sure I can free my brothers.’ So she searched for a high tree, and when she had found one she climbed up it and spun all day long, never laughing or speaking one word.

Now it happened one day that a King who was hunting in the wood had a large greyhound, who ran sniffing to the tree on which the girl sat, and jumped round it, yelping and barking furiously. The King’s attention was attracted, and when he looked up and beheld the beautiful Princess with the golden star on her forehead, he was so enchanted by her beauty that he asked her on the spot to be his wife. She gave no answer, but nodded slightly with her head. Then he climbed up the tree himself, lifted her down, put her on his horse and bore her home to his palace.

The marriage was celebrated with much pomp and ceremony, but the bride neither spoke nor laughed.

When they had lived a few years happily together, the King’s mother, who was a wicked old woman, began to slander the young Queen, and said to the King:

‘She is only a low-born beggar maid that you have married; who knows what mischief she is up to? If she is deaf and can’t speak, she might at least laugh; depend upon it, those who don’t laugh have a bad conscience.’ At first the King paid no heed to her words, but the old woman harped so long on the subject, and accused the young Queen of so many bad things, that at last he let himself be talked over, and condemned his beautiful wife to death.

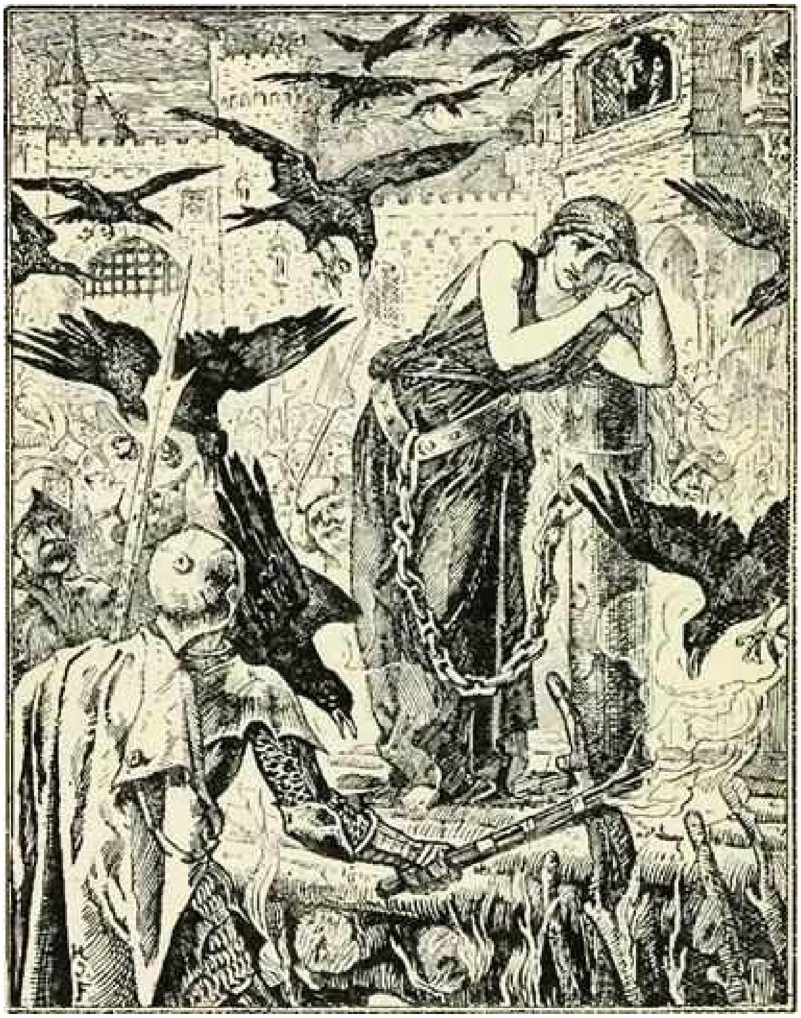

So a great fire was lit in the courtyard of the palace, where she was to be burnt, and the King watched the proceedings from an upper window, crying bitterly the while, for he still loved his wife dearly. But just as she had been bound to the stake, and the flames were licking her garments with their red tongues, the very last moment of the seven years had come. Then a sudden rushing sound was heard in the air, and twelve ravens were seen flying overhead. They swooped downwards, and as soon as they touched the ground they turned into her twelve brothers, and she knew that she had freed them.

They quenched the flames and put out the fire, and, unbinding their dear sister from the stake, they kissed and hugged her again and again. And now that she was able to open her mouth and speak, she told the King why she had been dumb and not able to laugh.

The King rejoiced greatly when he heard she was innocent, and they all lived happily ever afterwards.(22)

(22) Grimm.

RAPUNZEL

ONCE upon a time there lived a man and his wife who were very unhappy because they had no children. These good people had a little window at the back of their house, which looked into the most lovely garden, full of all manner of beautiful flowers and vegetables; but the garden was surrounded by a high wall, and no one dared to enter it, for it belonged to a witch of great power, who was feared by the whole world. One day the woman stood at the window overlooking the garden, and saw there a bed full of the finest rampion: the leaves looked so fresh and green that she longed to eat them. The desire grew day by day, and just because she knew she couldn't possibly get any, she pined away and became quite pale and wretched. Then her husband grew alarmed and said:

'What ails you, dear wife?'

'Oh,' she answered, 'if I don't get some rampion to eat out of the garden behind the house, I know I shall die.'

The man, who loved her dearly, thought to himself, 'Come! rather than let your wife die you shall fetch her some rampion, no matter the cost.' So at dusk he climbed over the wall into the witch's garden, and, hastily gathering a handful of rampion leaves, he returned with them to his wife. She made them into a salad, which tasted so good that her longing for the forbidden food was greater than ever. If she were to know any peace of mind, there was nothing for it but that her husband should climb over the garden wall again, and fetch her some more. So at dusk over he got, but when he reached the other side he drew back in terror, for there, standing before him, was the old witch.

'How dare you,' she said, with a wrathful glance, 'climb into my garden and steal my rampion like a common thief? You shall suffer for your foolhardiness.'

'Oh!' he implored, 'pardon my presumption; necessity alone drove me to the deed. My wife saw your rampion from her window, and conceived such a desire for it that she would certainly have died if her wish had not been gratified.' Then the Witch's anger was a little appeased, and she said:

'If it's as you say, you may take as much rampion away with you as you like, but on one condition only — that you give me the child your wife will shortly bring into the world. All shall go well with it, and I will look after it like a mother.'

The man in his terror agreed to everything she asked, and as soon as the child was born the Witch appeared, and having given it the name of Rapunzel, which is the same as rampion, she carried it off with her.

Rapunzel was the most beautiful child under the sun. When she was twelve years old the Witch shut her up in a tower, in the middle of a great wood, and the tower had neither stairs nor doors, only high up at the very top a small window. When the old Witch wanted to get in she stood underneath and called out:

‘Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
Let down your golden hair,’

for Rapunzel had wonderful long hair, and it was as fine as spun gold. Whenever she heard the Witch’s voice she unloosed her plaits, and let her hair fall down out of the window about twenty yards below, and the old Witch climbed up by it.

After they had lived like this for a few years, it happened one day that a Prince was riding through the wood and passed by the tower. As he drew near it he heard someone singing so sweetly that he stood still spell-bound, and listened. It was Rapunzel in her loneliness trying to while away the time by letting her sweet voice ring out into the wood. The Prince longed to see the owner of the voice, but he sought in vain for a door in the tower. He rode home, but he was so haunted by the song he had heard that he returned every day to the wood and listened. One day, when he was standing thus behind a tree, he saw the old Witch approach and heard her call out:

‘Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
Let down your golden hair.’

Then Rapunzel let down her plaits, and the Witch climbed up by them.

‘So that’s the staircase, is it?’ said the Prince. ‘Then I too will climb it and try my luck.’

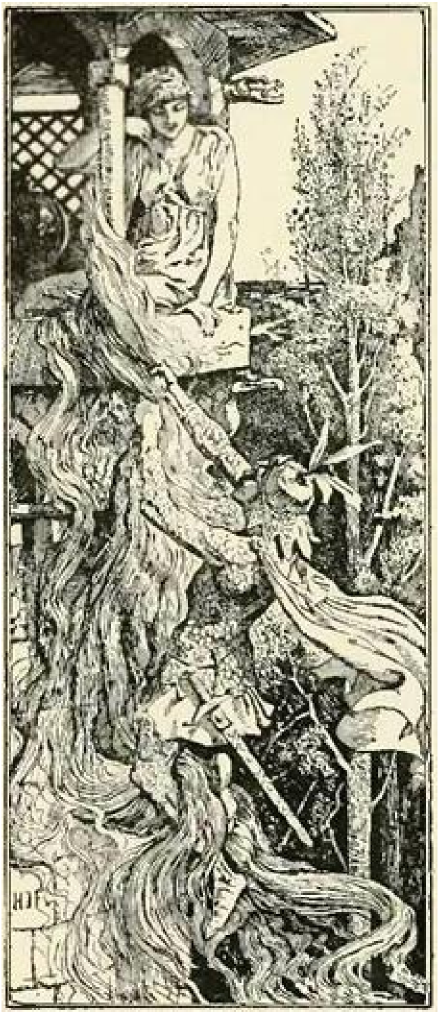

So on the following day, at dusk, he went to the foot of the tower and cried:

‘Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
Let down your golden hair,’

and as soon as she had let it down the Prince climbed up.

At first Rapunzel was terribly frightened when a man came in, for she had never seen one before; but the Prince spoke to her so kindly, and told her at once that his heart had been so touched by her singing, that he felt he should know no peace of mind till he had seen her. Very soon Rapunzel forgot her fear, and when he asked her to marry him she consented at once. ‘For,’ she thought, ‘he is young and handsome, and I’ll certainly be happier with him than with the old Witch.’ So she put her hand in his and said:

‘Yes, I will gladly go with you, only how am I to get down out of the tower? Every time you come to see me you must bring a skein of silk with you, and I will make a ladder of them, and when it is finished I will climb down by it, and you will take me away on your horse.’

They arranged that till the ladder was ready, he was to come to her every evening, because the old woman was with her during the day. The old Witch, of course, knew nothing of what was going on, till one day Rapunzel, not thinking of what she was about, turned to the Witch and said:

‘How is it, good mother, that you are so much harder to pull up than the young Prince? He is always with me in a moment.’

‘Oh! you wicked child,’ cried the Witch. ‘What is this I hear? I thought I had hidden you safely from the whole world, and in spite of it you have managed to deceive me.’

In her wrath she seized Rapunzel’s beautiful hair, wound it round and round her left hand, and then grasping a pair of scissors in her right, snip snap, off it came, and the beautiful plaits lay on the ground. And, worse than this, she was so hard-hearted that she took Rapunzel to a lonely desert place, and there left her to live in loneliness and misery.

But on the evening of the day in which she had driven poor Rapunzel away, the Witch fastened the plaits on to a hook in the window, and when the Prince came and called out:

‘Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
Let down your golden hair,’

she let them down, and the Prince climbed up as usual, but instead of his beloved Rapunzel he found the old Witch, who fixed her evil, glittering eyes on him, and cried mockingly:

‘Ah, ah! you thought to find your lady love, but the pretty bird has flown and its song is dumb; the cat caught it, and will scratch out your eyes too. Rapunzel is lost to you for ever — you will never see her more.’

The Prince was beside himself with grief, and in his despair he jumped right down from the tower, and, though he escaped with his life, the thorns among which he fell pierced his eyes out. Then he wandered, blind and miserable, through the wood, eating nothing but roots and berries, and weeping and lamenting the loss of his lovely bride. So he wandered about for some years, as wretched and unhappy as he could well be, and at last he came to the desert place where Rapunzel was living. Of a sudden he heard a voice which seemed strangely familiar to him. He walked eagerly in the direction of the sound, and when he was quite close, Rapunzel recognised him and fell on his neck and wept. But two of her tears touched his eyes, and in a moment they became quite clear again, and he saw as well as he had ever done. Then he led her to his kingdom, where they were received and welcomed with great joy, and they lived happily ever after.(23)

(23) Grimm.

THE NETTLE SPINNER

I

ONCE upon a time there lived at Quesnoy, in Flanders, a great lord whose name was Burchard, but whom the country people called Burchard the Wolf. Now Burchard had such a wicked, cruel heart, that it was whispered how he used to harness his peasants to the plough, and force them by blows from his whip to till his land with naked feet.

His wife, on the other hand, was always tender and pitiful to the poor and miserable.

Every time that she heard of another misdeed of her husband's she secretly went to repair the evil, which caused her name to be blessed throughout the whole country-side. This Countess was adored as much as the Count was hated.

II

One day when he was out hunting the Count passed through a forest, and at the door of a lonely cottage he saw a beautiful girl spinning hemp.

'What is your name?' he asked her.

'Renelde, my lord.'

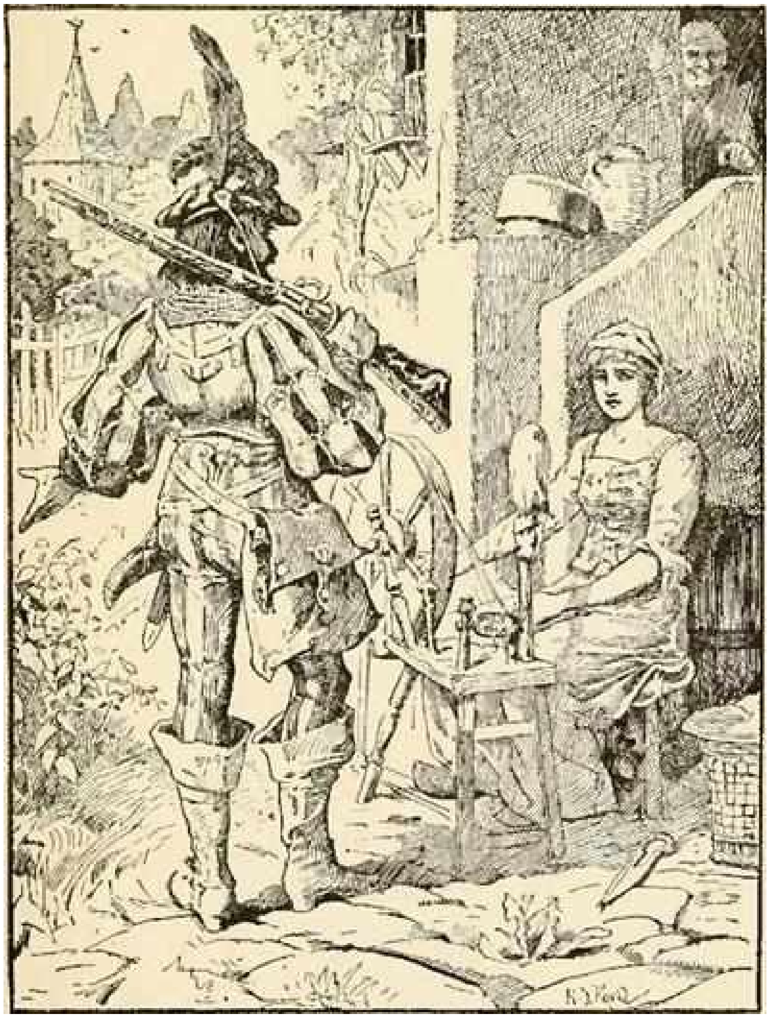

‘You must get tired of staying in such a lonely place?’

‘I am accustomed to it, my lord, and I never get tired of it.’

‘That may be so; but come to the castle, and I will make you lady’s maid to the Countess.’

‘I cannot do that, my lord. I have to look after my grandmother, who is very helpless.’

‘Come to the castle, I tell you. I shall expect you this evening,’ and he went on his way.

But Renelde, who was betrothed to a young wood-cutter called Guilbert, had no intention of obeying the Count, and she had, besides, to take care of her grandmother.

Three days later the Count again passed by.

‘Why didn’t you come?’ he asked the pretty spinner.

‘I told you, my lord, that I have to look after my grandmother.’ ‘Come to-morrow, and I will make you lady-in-waiting to the Countess,’ and he went on his way.

This offer produced no more effect than the other, and Renelde did not go to the castle.

‘If you will only come,’ said the Count to her when next he rode by, ‘I will send away the Countess, and will marry you.’

But two years before, when Renelde’s mother was dying of a long illness, the Countess had not forgotten them, but had given help when they sorely needed it. So even if the Count had really wished to marry Renelde, she would always have refused.

III

Some weeks passed before Burchard appeared again.

Renelde hoped she had got rid of him, when one day he stopped at the door, his duck-gun under his arm and his game-bag on his shoulder. This time Renelde was spinning not hemp, but flax.

‘What are you spinning?’ he asked in a rough voice.

‘My wedding shift, my lord.’

‘You are going to be married, then?’

‘Yes, my lord, by your leave.’

For at that time no peasant could marry without the leave of his master.

‘I will give you leave on one condition. Do you see those tall nettles that grow on the tombs in the churchyard? Go and gather them, and spin them into two fine shifts. One shall be your bridal shift, and the other shall be my shroud. For you shall be married the day that I am laid in my grave.’ And the Count turned away with a mocking laugh.

Renelde trembled. Never in all Locquignol had such a thing been heard of as the spinning of nettles.

And besides, the Count seemed made of iron and was very proud of his strength, often boasting that he should live to be a hundred.

Every evening, when his work was done, Guilbert came to visit his future bride. This evening he came as usual, and Renelde told him what Burchard had said.

‘Would you like me to watch for the Wolf, and split his skull with a blow from my axe?’

‘No,’ replied Renelde, ‘there must be no blood on my bridal bouquet. And then we must not hurt the Count. Remember how good the Countess was to my mother.’

An old, old woman now spoke: she was the mother of Renelde’s grandmother, and was more than ninety years old. All day long she sat in her chair nodding her head and never saying a word.

‘My children,’ she said, ‘all the years that I have lived in the world, I have never heard of a shift spun from nettles. But what God commands, man can do. Why should not Renelde try it?’

IV

Renelde did try, and to her great surprise the nettles when crushed and prepared gave a good thread, soft and light and firm. Very soon she had spun the first shift, which was for her own wedding. She wove and cut it out at once, hoping that the Count would not force her to begin the other. Just as she had finished sewing it, Burchard the Wolf passed by.

‘Well,’ said he, ‘how are the shifts getting on?’

‘Here, my lord, is my wedding garment,’ answered Renelde, showing him the shift, which was the finest and whitest ever seen.

The Count grew pale, but he replied roughly, ‘Very good. Now begin the other.’

The spinner set to work. As the Count returned to the castle, a cold shiver passed over him, and he felt, as the saying is, that some one was walking over his grave. He tried to eat his supper, but could not; he went to bed shaking with fever. But he did not sleep, and in the morning could not manage to rise.

This sudden illness, which every instant became worse, made him very uneasy. No doubt Renelde’s spinning-wheel knew all about it. Was it not necessary that his body, as well as his shroud, should be ready for the burial?

The first thing Burchard did was to send to Renelde and to stop her wheel.

Renelde obeyed, and that evening Guilbert asked her:

‘Has the Count given his consent to our marriage?’

‘No,’ said Renelde.

‘Continue your work, sweetheart. It is the only way of gaining it. You know he told you so himself.’

V

The following morning, as soon as she had put the house in order, the girl sat down to spin. Two hours after there arrived some soldiers, and when they saw her spinning they seized her, tied her arms and legs, and carried her to the bank of the river, which was swollen by the late rains.

When they reached the bank they flung her in, and watched her sink, after which they left her. But Renelde rose to the surface, and though she could not swim she struggled to land.

Directly she got home she sat down and began to spin.

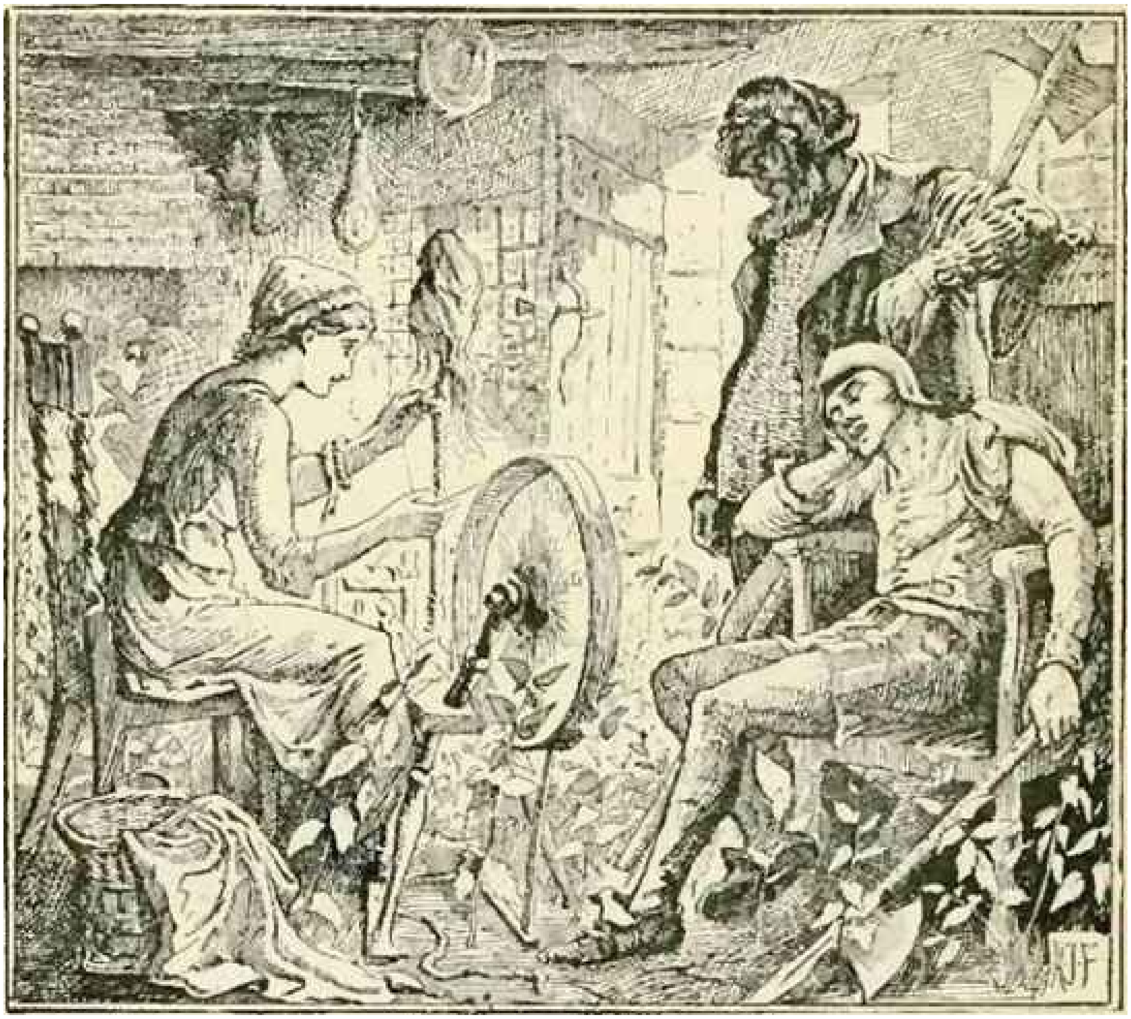

Again came the two soldiers to the cottage and seized the girl, carried her to the river bank, tied a stone to her neck and flung her into the water.

The moment their backs were turned the stone untied itself. Renelde waded the ford, returned to the hut, and sat down to spin.

This time the Count resolved to go to Locquignol himself; but, as he was very weak and unable to walk, he had himself borne in a litter. And still the spinner spun.

When he saw her he fired a shot at her, as he would have fired at a wild beast. The bullet rebounded without harming the spinner, who still spun on.

Burchard fell into such a violent rage that it nearly killed him. He broke the wheel into a thousand pieces, and then fell fainting on the ground. He was carried back to the castle, unconscious.

The next day the wheel was mended, and the spinner sat down to spin. Feeling that while she was spinning he was dying, the Count ordered that her hands should be tied, and that they should not lose sight of her for one instant.

But the guards fell asleep, the bonds loosed themselves, and the spinner spun on.

Burchard had every nettle rooted up for three leagues round. Scarcely had they been torn from the soil when they sowed themselves afresh, and grew as you were looking at them.

They sprung up even in the well-trodden floor of the cottage, and as fast as they were uprooted the distaff gathered to itself a supply of nettles, crushed, prepared, and ready for spinning.

And every day Burchard grew worse, and watched his end approaching.

VI

Moved by pity for her husband, the Countess at last found out the cause of his illness, and entreated him to allow himself to be cured. But the Count in his pride refused more than ever to give his consent to the marriage.

So the lady resolved to go without his knowledge to pray for mercy from the spinner, and in the name of Renelde's dead mother she besought her to spin no more. Renelde gave her promise, but in the evening Guilbert arrived at the cottage. Seeing that the cloth was no farther advanced than it was the evening before, he inquired the reason. Renelde confessed that the Countess had prayed her not to let her husband die.

'Will he consent to our marriage?'

'No.'

'Let him die then.'

'But what will the Countess say?'

'The Countess will understand that it is not your fault; the Count alone is guilty of his own death.'

'Let us wait a little. Perhaps his heart may be softened.'

So they waited for one month, for two, for six, for a year. The spinner spun no more. The Count had ceased to persecute her, but he still refused his consent to the marriage. Guilbert became impatient.

The poor girl loved him with her whole soul, and she was more unhappy than she had been before, when Burchard was only tormenting her body.

‘Let us have done with it,’ said Guilbert.

‘Wait a little still,’ pleaded Renelde.

But the young man grew weary. He came more rarely to Locquignol, and very soon he did not come at all. Renelde felt as if her heart would break, but she held firm.

One day she met the Count. She clasped her hands as if in prayer, and cried:

‘My lord, have mercy!’

Burchard the Wolf turned away his head and passed on.

She might have humbled his pride had she gone to her spinning-wheel again, but she did nothing of the sort.

Not long after she learnt that Guilbert had left the country. He did not even come to say good-bye to her, but, all the same, she knew the day and hour of his departure, and hid herself on the road to see him once more.

When she came in she put her silent wheel into a corner, and cried for three days and three nights.

VII

So another year went by. Then the Count fell ill, and the Countess supposed that Renelde, weary of waiting, had begun her spinning anew; but when she came to the cottage to see, she found the wheel silent.

However, the Count grew worse and worse till he was given up by the doctors. The passing bell was rung, and he lay expecting Death to come for him. But Death was not so near as the doctors thought, and still he lingered.

He seemed in a desperate condition, but he got neither better nor worse. He could neither live nor die; he suffered horribly, and called loudly on Death to put an end to his pains.

In this extremity he remembered what he had told the little spinner long ago. If Death was so slow in coming, it was because he was not ready to follow him, having no shroud for his burial.

He sent to fetch Renelde, placed her by his bedside, and ordered her at once to go on spinning his shroud.

Hardly had the spinner begun to work when the Count began to feel his pains grow less.

Then at last his heart melted; he was sorry for all the evil he had done out of pride, and implored Renelde to forgive him. So Renelde forgave him, and went on spinning night and day.

When the thread of the nettles was spun she wove it with her shuttle, and then cut the shroud and began to sew it.

And as before, when she sewed the Count felt his pains grow less, and the life sinking within him, and when the needle made the last stitch he gave his last sigh.

VIII

At the same hour Guilbert returned to the country, and, as he had never ceased to love Renelde, he married her eight days later.

He had lost two years of happiness, but comforted himself with thinking that his wife was a clever spinner, and, what was much more rare, a brave and good woman.(24)

(24) Ch. Denlin.

FARMER WEATHERBEARD

THERE was once upon a time a man and a woman who had an only son, and he was called Jack. The woman thought that it was his duty to go out to service, and told her husband that he was to take him somewhere.

‘You must get him such a good place that he will become master of all masters,’ she said, and then she put some food and a roll of tobacco into a bag for them.

Well, they went to a great many masters, but all said that they could make the lad as good as they were themselves, but better than that they could not make him. When the man came home to the old woman with this answer, she said, ‘I shall be equally well pleased whatever you do with him; but this I do say, that you are to have him made a master over all masters.’ Then she once more put some food and a roll of tobacco into the bag, and the man and his son had to set out again.

When they had walked some distance they got upon the ice, and there they met a man in a carriage who was driving a black horse.

‘Where are you going?’ he said.

‘I have to go and get my son apprenticed to someone who will be able to teach him a trade, for my old woman comes of such well-to-do folk that she insists on his being taught to be master of all masters,’ said the man.

‘We are not ill met, then,’ said the man who was driving, ‘for I am the kind of man who can do that, and I am just looking out for such an apprentice. Get up behind with you,’ he said to the boy, and off the horse went with them straight up into the air.

‘No, no, wait a little!’ screamed the father of the boy. ‘I ought to know what your name is and where you live.’

‘Oh, I am at home both in the north and the south and the east and the west, and I am called Farmer Weatherbeard,’ said the master. ‘You may come here again in a year’s time, and then I will tell you if the lad suits me.’ And then they set off again and were gone.

When the man got home the old woman inquired what had become of the son.

‘Ah! Heaven only knows what has become of him!’ said the man. ‘They went up aloft.’ And then he told her what had happened.

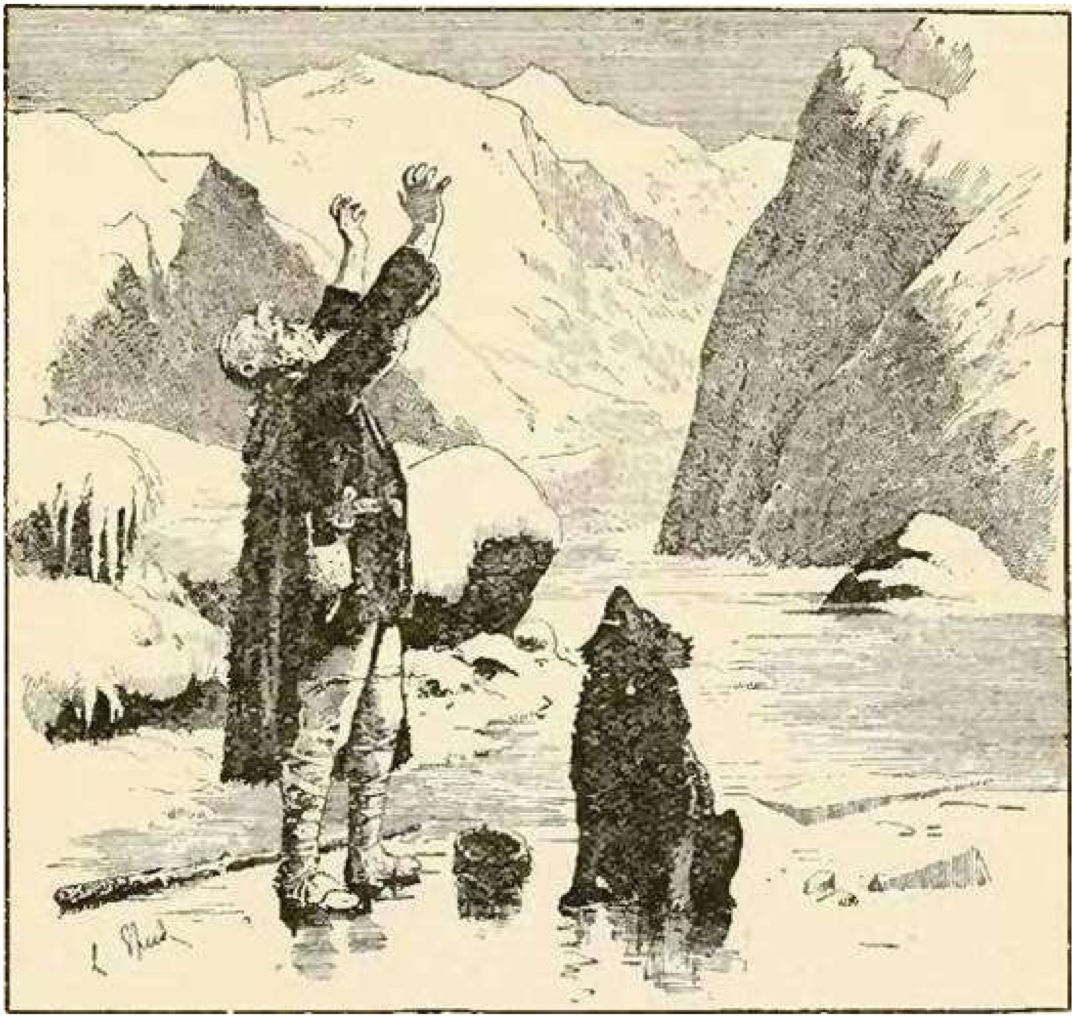

But when the woman heard that, and found that the man did not at all know either when their son would be out of his apprentice-ship, or where he had gone, she packed him off again to find out, and gave him a bag of food and a roll of tobacco to take away with him.

When he had walked for some time he came to a great wood, and it stretched before him all day long as he went on, and when night began to fall he saw a great light, and went towards it. After a long, long time he came to a small hut at the foot of a rock, outside which an old woman was standing drawing water up from a well with her nose, it was so long.

‘Good-evening, mother,’ said the man.

‘Good-evening to you too,’ said the old woman. ‘No one has called me mother this hundred years.’

‘Can I lodge here to-night?’ said the man.

‘No,’ said the old woman. But the man took out his roll of tobacco, lighted a little of it, and then gave her a whiff. Then she was so delighted that she began to dance, and thus the man got leave to stay the night there. It was not long before he asked about Farmer Weatherbeard.

She said that she knew nothing about him, but that she ruled over all the four-footed beasts, and some of them might know him. So she gathered them all together by blowing a whistle which she had, and questioned them, but there was not one of them which knew anything about Farmer Weatherbeard.

‘Well,’ said the old woman, ‘there are three of us sisters; it may be that one of the other two knows where he is to be found. You shall have the loan of my horse and carriage, and then you will get there by night; but her house is three hundred miles off, go the nearest way you will.’

The man set out and got there at night. When he arrived, this old woman also was standing drawing water out of the well with her nose.

‘Good-evening, mother,’ said the man.

‘Good-evening to you,’ said the old woman. ‘No one has ever called me mother this hundred years.’

‘Can I lodge here to-night?’ said the man.

‘No,’ said the old woman.

Then he took out the roll of tobacco, took a whiff, and gave the old woman some snuff on the back of her hand. Then she was so delighted that she began to dance, and the man got leave to stay all night. It was not long before he began to ask about Farmer Weatherbeard.

She knew nothing about him, but she ruled over all the fishes, she said, and perhaps some of them might know something. So she gathered them all together by blowing a whistle which she had, and questioned them, but there was not one of them which knew anything about Farmer Weatherbeard.

‘Well,’ said the old woman, ‘I have another sister; perhaps she may know something about him. She lives six hundred miles off, but you shall have my horse and carriage, and then you will get there by nightfall.’

So the man set off and he got there by nightfall. The old woman was standing raking the fire, and she was doing it with her nose, so long it was.

‘Good-evening, mother,’ said the man.

‘Good-evening to you,’ said the old woman. ‘No one has called me mother this hundred years.’

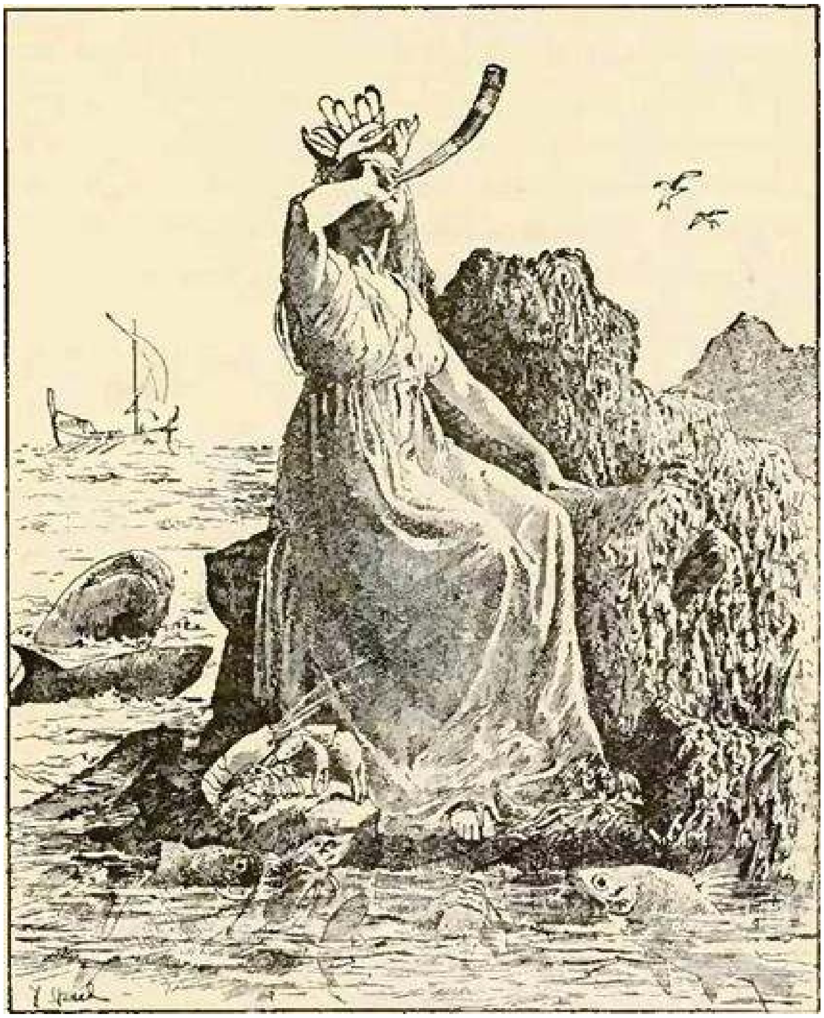

‘Can I lodge here to-night?’ said the man.

‘No,’ said the old woman. But the man pulled out his roll of tobacco again, and filled his pipe with some of it, and gave the old woman enough snuff to cover the back of her hand. Then she was so delighted that she began to dance, and the man got leave to stay in her house. It was not long before he asked about Farmer Weatherbeard. She knew nothing at all about him, she said, but she governed all the birds; and she gathered them together with her whistle. When she questioned them all, the eagle was not there, but it came soon afterwards, and when asked, it said that it had just come from Farmer Weatherbeard’s. Then the old woman said that it was to guide the man to him. But the eagle would have something to eat first, and then it wanted to wait until the next day, for it was so tired with the long journey that it was scarcely able to rise from the earth.

When the eagle had had plenty of food and rest, the old woman plucked a feather out of its tail, and set the man in the feather’s place, and then the bird flew away with him, but they did not get to Farmer Weatherbeard’s before midnight.

When they got there the Eagle said: ‘There are a great many dead bodies lying outside the door, but you must not concern yourself about them. The people who are inside the house are all so sound asleep that it will not be easy to awake them; but you must go straight to the table-drawer, and take out three bits of bread, and if you hear anyone snoring, pluck three feathers from his head; he will not waken for that.’

The man did this; when he had got the bits of bread he first plucked out one feather.

‘Oof!’ screamed Farmer Weatherbeard.

So the man plucked out another, and then Farmer Weatherbeard shrieked ‘Oof!’ again; but when the man had plucked the third, Farmer Weatherbeard screamed so loudly that the man thought that brick and mortar would be rent in twain, but for all that he went on sleeping. And now the Eagle told the man what he was to do next, and he did it. He went to the stable door, and there he stumbled against a hard stone, which he picked up, and beneath it lay three splinters of wood, which he also picked up. He knocked at the stable door and it opened at once. He threw down the three little bits of bread and a hare came out and ate them. He caught the hare. Then the Eagle told him to pluck three feathers out of its tail, and put in the hare, the stone, the splinters of wood and himself instead of them, and then he would be able to carry them all home.

When the Eagle had flown a long way it alighted on a stone.

‘Do you see anything?’ it asked.

‘Yes; I see a flock of crows coming flying after us,’ said the man.

‘Then we shall do well to fly on a little farther,’ said the Eagle, and off it set.

In a short time it asked again, ‘Do you see anything now?’

‘Yes; now the crows are close behind us,’ said the man.

‘Then throw down the three feathers which you plucked out of his head,’ said the Eagle.

So the man did this, and no sooner had he flung them down than the feathers became a flock of ravens, which chased the crows home again. Then the Eagle flew on much farther with the man, but at length it alighted on a stone for a while.

‘Do you see anything?’ it said.

‘I am not quite certain,’ said the man, ‘but I think I see something coming in the far distance.’

‘Then we shall do well to fly on a little farther,’ said the Eagle, and away it went.

‘Do you see anything now?’ it said, after some time had gone by.

‘Yes; now they are close behind us,’ said the man.

‘Then throw down the splinters of wood which you took from beneath the gray stone by the stable door,’ said the Eagle. The man did this, and no sooner had he flung them down than they grew up into a great thick wood, and Farmer Weatherbeard had to go home for an axe to cut his way through it. So the Eagle flew on a long, long way, but then it grew tired and sat down on a fir tree.

‘Do you see anything?’ it asked.

‘Yes; I am not quite certain,’ said the man, ‘but I think I can catch a glimpse of something far, far away.’

‘Then we shall do well to fly on a little farther,’ said the Eagle, and it set off again.

‘Do you see anything now?’ it said after some time had gone by.

‘Yes; he is close behind us now,’ said the man.

‘Then you must fling down the great stone which you took away from the stable door,’ said the Eagle.

The man did so, and it turned into a great high mountain of stone, which Farmer Weatherbeard had to break his way through before he could follow them. But when he had got to the middle of the mountain he broke one of his legs, so he had to go home to get it put right.

While he was doing this the Eagle flew off to the man’s home with him, and with the hare, and when they had got home the man went to the churchyard, and had some Christian earth laid upon the hare, and then it turned into his son Jack.

When the time came for the fair the youth turned himself into a light-coloured horse, and bade his father go to the market with him. ‘If anyone should come who wants to buy me,’ said he, ‘you are to tell him that you want a hundred dollars for me; but you must not forget to take off the halter, for if you do I shall never be able to get away from Farmer Weatherbeard, for he is the man who will come and bargain for me.’

And thus it happened. A horse-dealer came who had a great fancy to bargain for the horse, and the man got a hundred dollars for it, but when the bargain was made, and Jack’s father had got the money, the horse-dealer wanted to have the halter.

‘That was no part of our bargain,’ said the man, ‘and the halter you shall not have, for I have other horses which I shall have to sell.’

So each of them went his way. But the horse dealer had not got very far with Jack before he resumed his own form again, and when the man got home he was sitting on the bench by the stove.

The next day he changed himself into a brown horse and told his father that he was to set off to market with him. ‘If a man should come who wants to buy me,’ said Jack, ‘you are to tell him that you want two hundred dollars, for that he will give, and treat you besides; but whatsoever you drink, and whatsoever you do, don’t forget to take the halter off me, or you will never see me more.’

And thus it happened. The man got his two hundred dollars for the horse, and was treated as well, and when they parted from each other it was just as much as he could do to remember to take off the halter. But the buyer had not got far on his way before the youth took his own form again, and when the man reached home Jack was already sitting on the bench by the stove.

On the third day all happened in the same way. The youth changed himself into a great black horse, and told his father that if a man came and offered him three hundred dollars, and treated him well and handsomely into the bargain, he was to sell him, but whatsoever he did, or how much soever he drank, he must not forget to take off the halter, or else he himself would never get away from Farmer Weatherbeard as long as he lived.

‘No,’ said the man, ‘I will not forget.’

When he got to the market, he received the three hundred dollars, but Farmer Weatherbeard treated him so handsomely that he quite forgot to take off the halter; so Farmer Weatherbeard went away with the horse.

When he had got some distance he had to go into an inn to get some more brandy; so he set a barrel full of red-hot nails under his horse’s nose, and a trough filled with oats beneath its tail, and then he tied the halter fast to a hook and went away into the inn. So the horse stood there stamping, and kicking, and snorting, and rearing, and out came a girl who thought it a sin and a shame to treat a horse so ill.

‘Ah, poor creature, what a master you must have to treat you thus!’ she said, and pushed the halter off the hook so that the horse might turn round and eat the oats.

‘I am here!’ shrieked Farmer Weatherbeard, rushing out of doors. But the horse had already shaken off the halter and flung himself into a goose-pond, where he changed himself into a little fish. Farmer Weatherbeard went after him, and changed himself into a great pike. So Jack turned himself into a dove, and Farmer Weatherbeard turned himself into a hawk, and flew after the dove and struck it. But a Princess was standing at a window in the King’s palace watching the struggle.

‘If thou didst but know as much as I know, thou wouldst fly in to me through the window,’ said the Princess to the dove.

So the dove came flying in through the window and changed itself into Jack again, and told her all as it had happened.

’Change thyself into a gold ring, and set thyself on my finger,’ said the Princess.

‘No, that will not do,’ said Jack, ‘for then Farmer Weatherbeard will make the King fall sick, and there will be no one who can make him well again before Farmer Weatherbeard comes and cures him, and for that he will demand the gold ring.’

‘I will say that it was my mother’s, and that I will not part with it,’ said the Princess.

So Jack changed himself into a gold ring, and set himself on the Princess’s finger, and Farmer Weatherbeard could not get at him there. But then all that the youth had foretold came to pass.

The King became ill, and there was no doctor who could cure him till Farmer Weatherbeard arrived, and he demanded the ring which was on the Princess’s finger as a reward.

So the King sent a messenger to the Princess for the ring. She, however, refused to part with it, because she had inherited it from her mother. When the King was informed of this he fell into a rage, and said that he would have the ring, let her have inherited it from whom she might.

‘Well, it’s of no use to be angry about it,’ said the Princess, ‘for I can’t get it off. If you want the ring you will have to take the finger too!’

‘I will try, and then the ring will very soon come off,’ said Farmer Weatherbeard.

‘No, thank you, I will try myself,’ said the Princess, and she went away to the fireplace and put some ashes on the ring.

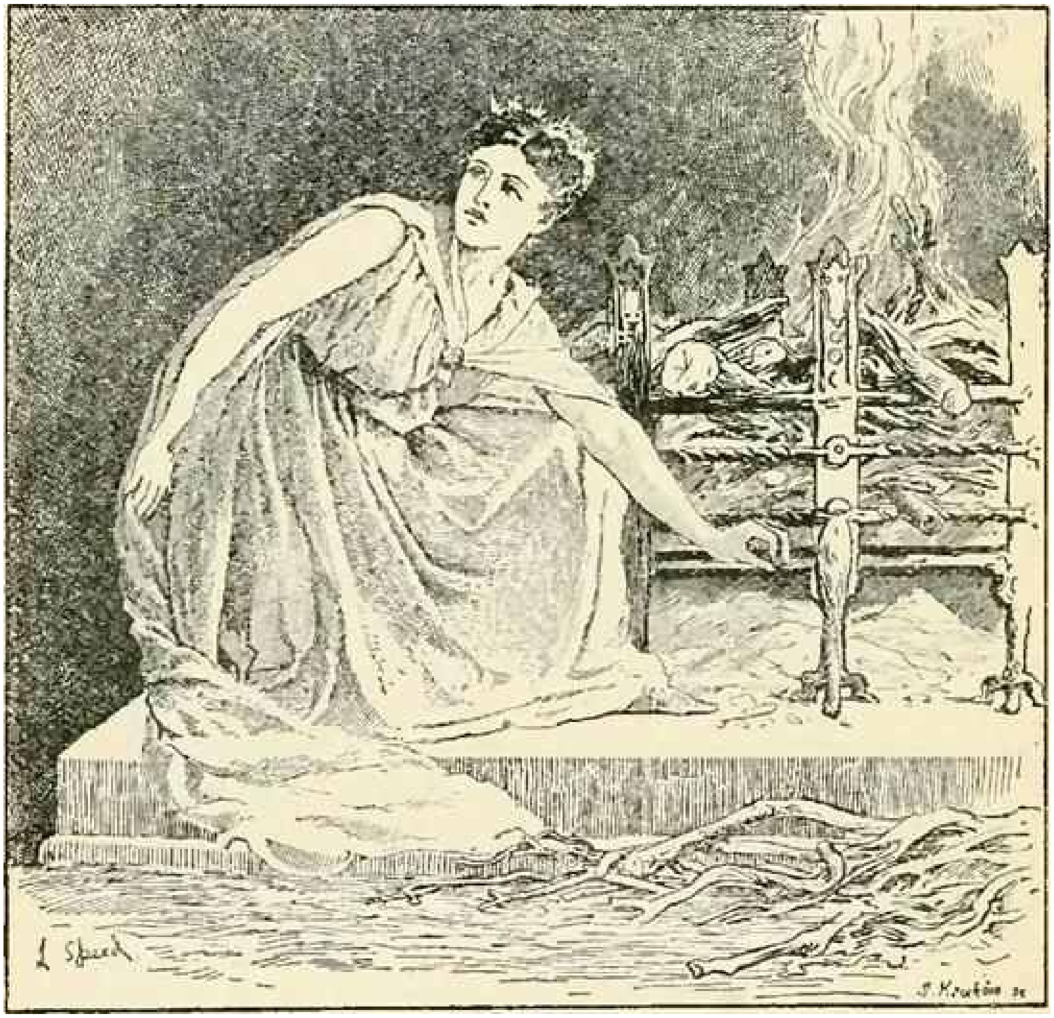

So the ring came off and was lost among the ashes.

Farmer Weatherbeard changed himself into a hare, which scratched and scraped about in the fireplace after the ring until the ashes were up to its ears. But Jack changed himself into a fox, and bit the hare's head off, and if Farmer Weatherbeard was possessed by the evil one all was now over with him.(25)

(25) From P. C. Asbjornsen.

MOTHER HOLLE

ONCE upon a time there was a widow who had two daughters; one of them was pretty and clever, and the other ugly and lazy. But as the ugly one was her own daughter, she liked her far the best of the two, and the pretty one had to do all the work of the house, and was in fact the regular maid of all work. Every day she had to sit by a well on the high road, and spin till her fingers were so sore that they often bled. One day some drops of blood fell on her spindle, so she dipped it into the well meaning to wash it, but, as luck would have it, it dropped from her hand and fell right in. She ran weeping to her stepmother, and told her what had happened, but she scolded her harshly, and was so merciless in her anger that she said:

‘Well, since you’ve dropped the spindle down, you must just go after it yourself, and don’t let me see your face again until you bring it with you.’

Then the poor girl returned to the well, and not knowing what she was about, in the despair and misery of her heart she sprang into the well and sank to the bottom. For a time she lost all consciousness, and when she came to herself again she was lying in a lovely meadow, with the sun shining brightly overhead, and a thousand flowers blooming at her feet. She rose up and wandered through this enchanted place, till she came to a baker’s oven full of bread, and the bread called out to her as she passed:

‘Oh! take me out, take me out, or I shall be burnt to a cinder. I am quite done enough.’

So she stepped up quickly to the oven and took out all the loaves one after the other. Then she went on a little farther and came to a tree laden with beautiful rosy-cheeked apples, and as she passed by it called out:

‘Oh I shake me, shake me, my apples are all quite ripe.’

She did as she was asked, and shook the tree till the apples fell like rain and none were left hanging. When she had gathered them all up into a heap she went on her way again, and came at length to a little house, at the door of which sat an old woman. The old dame had such large teeth that the girl felt frightened and wanted to run away, but the old woman called after her:

‘What are you afraid of, dear child? Stay with me and be my little maid, and if you do your work well I will reward you handsomely; but you must be very careful how you make my bed — you must shake it well till the feathers fly; then people in the world below say it snows, for I am Mother Holle.’

She spoke so kindly that the girl took heart and agreed readily to enter her service. She did her best to please the old woman, and shook her bed with such a will that the feathers flew about like snow-flakes; so she led a very easy life, was never scolded, and lived on the fat of the land. But after she had been some time with Mother Holle she grew sad and depressed, and at first she hardly knew herself what was the matter. At last she discovered that she was homesick, so she went to Mother Holle and said:

‘I know I am a thousand times better off here than I ever was in my life before, but notwithstanding, I have a great longing to go home, in spite of all your kindness to me. I can remain with you no longer, but must return to my own people.’

‘Your desire to go home pleases me,’ said Mother Holle, ‘and because you have served me so faithfully, I will show you the way back into the world myself.’

So she took her by the hand and led her to an open door, and as the girl passed through it there fell a heavy shower of gold all over her, till she was covered with it from top to toe.

‘That’s a reward for being such a good little maid,’ said Mother Holle, and she gave her the spindle too that had fallen into the well. Then she shut the door, and the girl found herself back in the world again, not far from her own house; and when she came to the courtyard the old hen, who sat on the top of the wall, called out:

‘Click, clock, clack,
Our golden maid’s come back.’

Then she went in to her stepmother, and as she had returned covered with gold she was welcomed home.

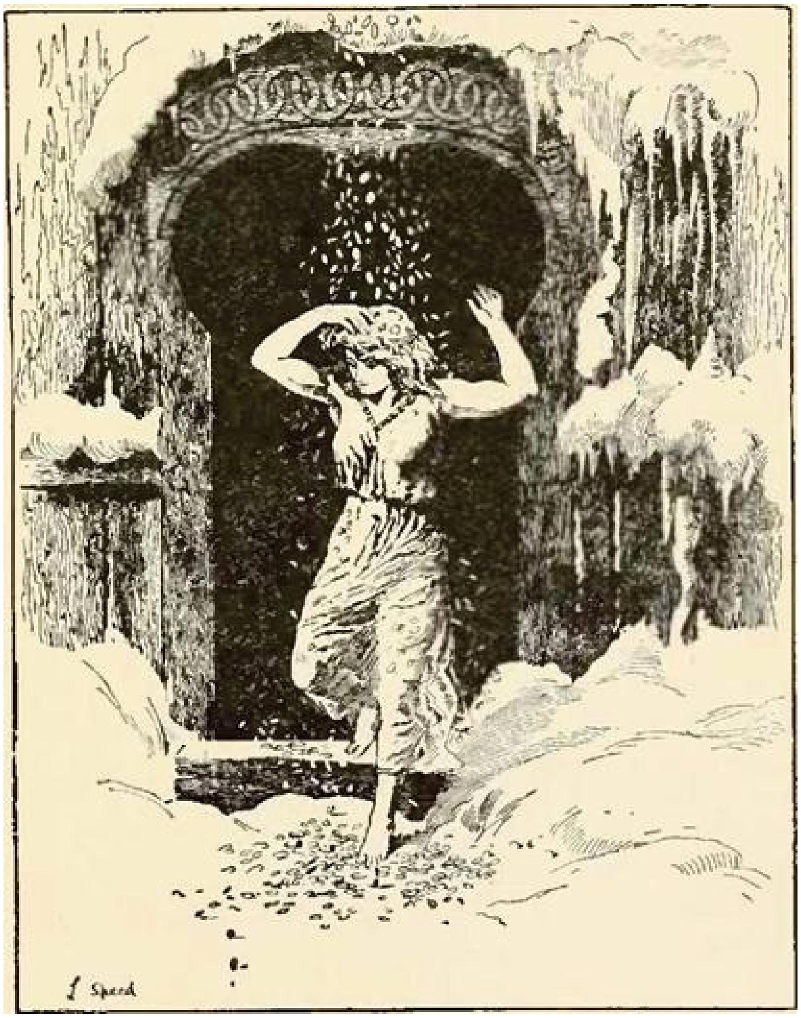

She proceeded to tell all that had happened to her, and when the mother heard how she had come by her riches, she was most anxious to secure the same luck for her own idle, ugly daughter; so she told her to sit at the well and spin. In order to make her spindle bloody, she stuck her hand into a hedge of thorns and pricked her finger. Then she threw the spindle into the well, and jumped in herself after it. Like her sister she came to the beautiful meadow, and followed the same path. When she reached the baker's oven the bread called out as before:

'Oh! take me out, take me out, or I shall be burnt to a cinder. I am quite done enough.'

But the good-for-nothing girl answered:

'A pretty joke, indeed; just as if I should dirty my hands for you!'

And on she went. Soon she came to the apple tree, which cried:

'Oh! shake me, shake me, my apples are all quite ripe.'

'I'll see myself farther,' she replied, 'one of them might fall on my head.'

And so she pursued her way. When she came to Mother Holle's house she wasn't the least afraid, for she had been warned about her big teeth, and she readily agreed to become her maid. The first day she worked very hard, and did all her mistress told her, for she thought of the gold she would give her; but on the second day she began to be lazy, and on the third she wouldn't even get up in the morning. She didn't make Mother Holle's bed as she ought to have done, and never shook it enough to make the feathers fly. So her mistress soon grew weary of her, and dismissed her, much to the lazy creature's delight.

'For now,' she thought, 'the shower of golden rain will come.'

Mother Holle led her to the same door as she had done her sister, but when she passed through it, instead of the gold rain a kettle full of pitch came showering over her.

'That's a reward for your service,' said Mother Holle, and she closed the door behind her.

So the lazy girl came home all covered with pitch, and when the old hen on the top of the wall saw her, it called out:

'Click, clock, clack, Our dirty slut's come back.'

But the pitch remained sticking to her, and never as long as she lived could it be got off.(26)

(26) Grimm.

MINNIKIN

THERE was once upon a time a couple of needy folk who lived in a wretched hut, in which there was nothing but black want; so they had neither food to eat nor wood to burn. But if they had next to nothing of all else they had the blessing of God so far as children were concerned, and every year brought them one more. The man was not overpleased at this. He was always going about grumbling and growling, and saying that it seemed to him that there might be such a thing as having too many of these good gifts; so shortly before another baby was born he went away into the wood for some firewood, saying that he did not want to see the new child; he would hear him quite soon enough when he began to squall for some food.

As soon as this baby was born it began to look about the room. ‘Ah, my dear mother!’ said he, ‘give me some of my brothers’ old clothes, and food enough for a few days, and I will go out into the world and seek my fortune, for, so far as I can see, you have children enough.’

‘Heaven help thee, my son!’ said the mother, ‘that will never do; thou art still far too little.’

But the little creature was determined to do it, and begged and prayed so long that the mother was forced to let him have some old rags, and tie up a little food for him, and then gaily and happily he went out into the world.

But almost before he was out of the house another boy was born, and he too looked about him, and said, ‘Ah, my dear mother! give me some of my brothers’ old clothes, and food for some days, and then I will go out into the world and find my twin brother, for you have children enough.’

‘Heaven help thee, little creature! thou art far too little for that,’ said the woman; ‘it would never do.’

But she spoke to no purpose, for the boy begged and prayed until he had got some old rags and a bundle of provisions, and then he set out manfully into the world to find his twin brother.

When the younger had walked for some time he caught sight of his brother a short distance in front of him, and called to him and bade him to stop.

‘Wait a minute,’ he said; ‘you are walking as if for a wager, but you ought to have stayed to see your younger brother before you hurried off into the world.’

So the elder stood still and looked back, and when the younger had got up to him, and had told him that he was his brother, he said: ‘But now, let us sit down and see what kind of food our mother has given us,’ and that they did.

When they had walked on a little farther they came to a brook which ran through a green meadow, and there the younger said that they ought to christen each other. ‘As we had to make such haste, and had no time to do it at home, we may as well do it here,’ said he.

‘What will you be called?’ asked the elder.

‘I will be called Minnikin,’ answered the second; ‘and you, what will you be called?’

‘I will be called King Pippin,’ answered the elder.

They christened each other and then went onwards. When they had walked for some time they came to a crossway, and there they agreed to part, and each take his own road. This they did, but no sooner had they walked a short distance than they met again. So they parted once more, and each took his own road, but in a very short time the same thing happened again — they met each other before they were at all aware, and so it happened the third time also. Then they arranged with each other that each should choose his own quarter, and one should go east and the other west.

‘But if ever you fall into any need or trouble,’ said the elder, ‘call me thrice, and I will come and help you; only you must not call me until you are in the utmost need.’

‘In that case we shall not see each other for some time,’ said Minnikin; so they bade farewell to each other, and Minnikin went east and King Pippin went west.

When Minnikin had walked a long way alone, he met an old, old crook-backed hag, who had only one eye. Minnikin stole it.

‘Oh! oh!’ cried the old hag, ‘what has become of my eye?’

‘What will you give me to get your eye back?’ said Minnikin.

‘I will give thee a sword which is such a sword that it can conquer a whole army, let it be ever so great,’ replied the woman.

‘Let me have it, then,’ said Minnikin.

The old hag gave him the sword, so she got her eye back. Then Minnikin went onwards, and when he had wandered on for some time he again met an old, old crook-backed hag, who had only one eye. Minnikin stole it before she was aware.

‘Oh! oh! what has become of my eye?’ cried the old hag.

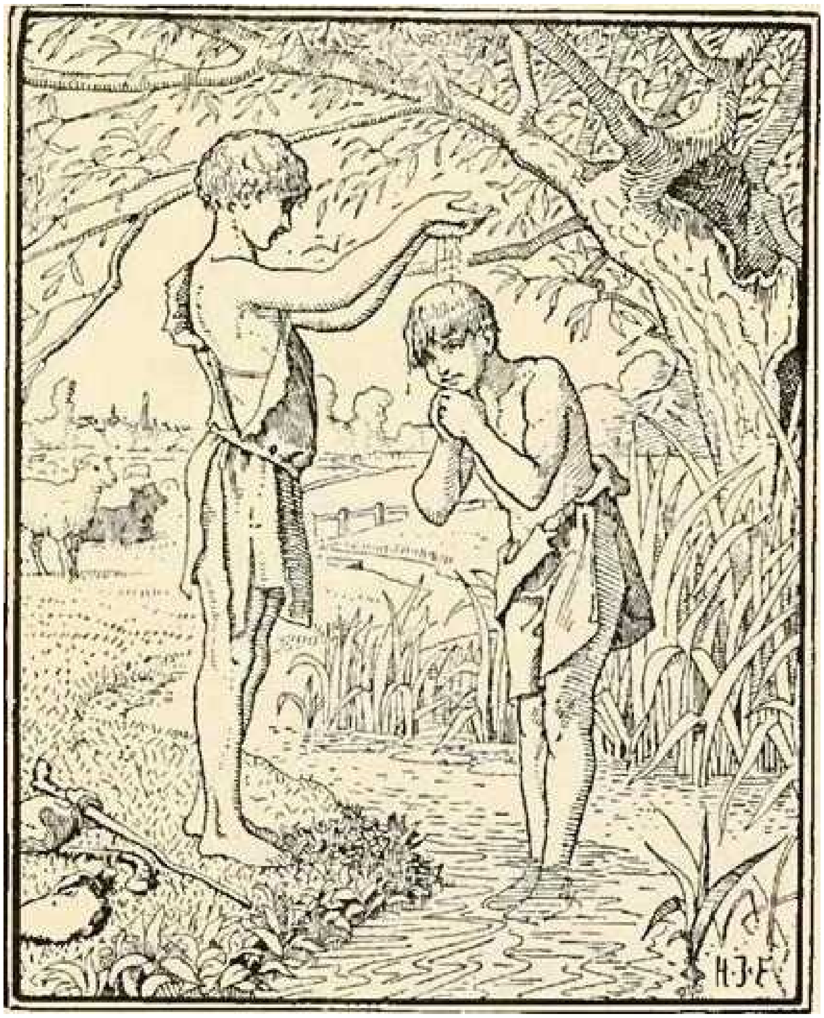

‘What will you give me to get your eye back?’ said Minnikin.

‘I will give thee a ship which can sail over fresh water and salt water, over high hills and deep dales,’ answered the old woman.

‘Let me have it then,’ said Minnikin.

So the old woman gave him a little bit of a ship which was no bigger than he could put in his pocket, and then she got her eye back, and she went her way and Minnikin his. When he had walked on for a long time, he met for the third time an old, old crook-backed hag, who had only one eye. This eye also Minnikin stole, and when the woman screamed and lamented, and asked what had become of her eye, Minnikin said, ‘What will you give me to get your eye back?’

‘I will give thee the art to brew a hundred lasts of malt in one brewing.’

So, for teaching that art, the old hag got her eye back, and they both went away by different roads.

But when Minnikin had walked a short distance, it seemed to him that it might be worth while to see what his ship could do; so he took it out of his pocket, and first he put one foot into it, and then the other, and no sooner had he put one foot into the ship than it became much larger, and when he set the other foot into it, it grew as large as ships that sail on the sea.

Then Minnikin said: ‘Now go over fresh water and salt water, over high hills and deep dales, and do not stop until thou comest to the King’s palace.’

And in an instant the ship went away as swiftly as any bird in the air till it got just below the King’s palace, and there it stood still.

From the windows of the King’s palace many persons had seen Minnikin come sailing thither, and had stood to watch him; and they were all so astounded that they ran down to see what manner of man this could be who came sailing in a ship through the air. But while they were running down from the King’s palace, Minnikin had got out of the ship and had put it in his pocket again; for the moment he got out of it, it once more became as small as it had been when he got it from the old woman, and those who came from the King’s palace could see nothing but a ragged little boy who was standing down by the sea-shore. The King asked where he had come from, but the boy said he did not know, nor yet could he tell them how he had got there, but he begged very earnestly and prettily for a place in the King’s palace. If there was nothing else for him to do, he said he would fetch wood and water for the kitchen-maid, and that he obtained leave to do.

When Minnikin went up to the King’s palace he saw that everything there was hung with black both outside and inside, from the bottom to the top; so he asked the kitchen-maid what that meant.

‘Oh, I will tell you that,’ answered the kitchen-maid. ‘The King’s daughter was long ago promised away to three Trolls, and next Thursday evening one of them is to come to fetch her. Ritter Red has said that he will be able to set her free, but who knows whether he will be able to do it? so you may easily imagine what grief and distress we are in here.’

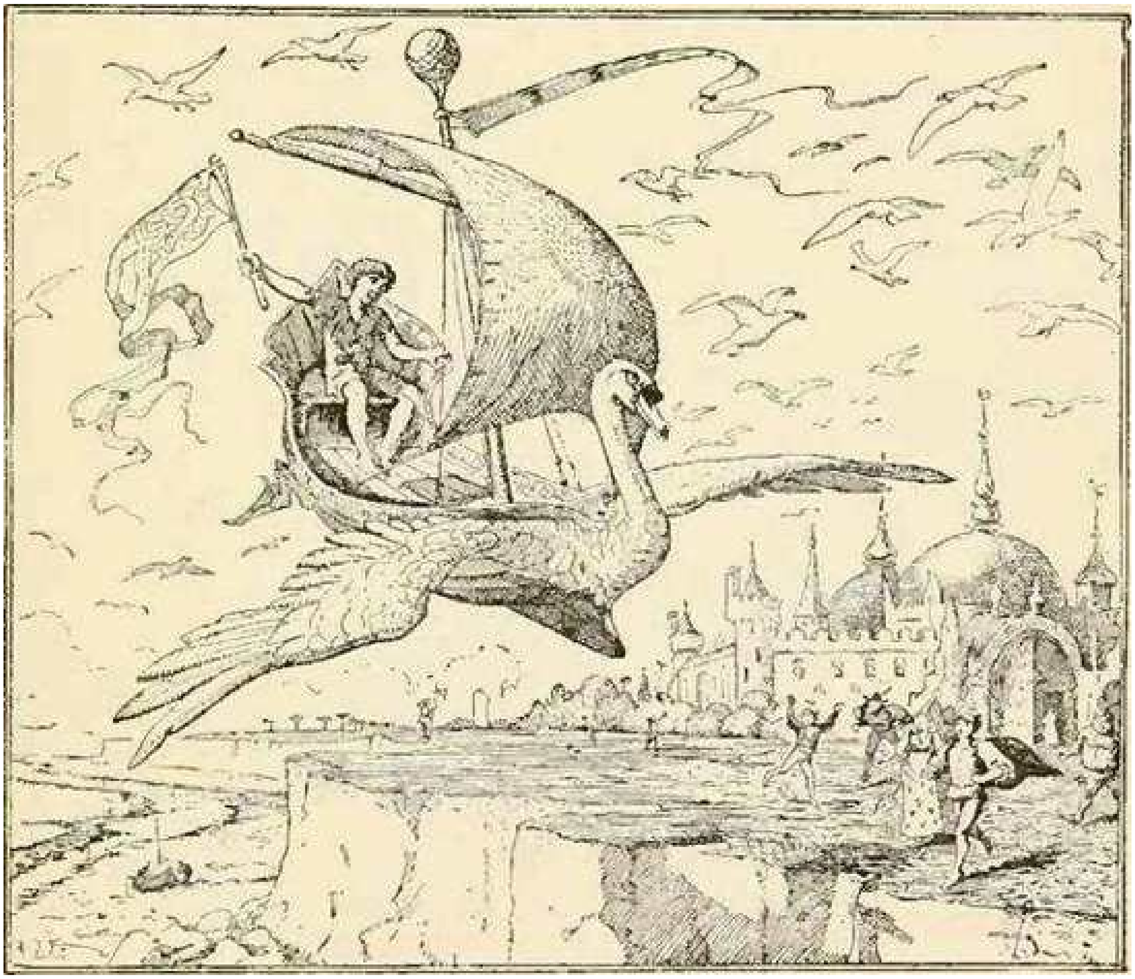

So when Thursday evening came, Ritter Red accompanied the Princess to the sea-shore; for there she was to meet the Troll, and Ritter Red was to stay with her and protect her. He, however, was very unlikely to do the Troll much injury, for no sooner had the Princess seated herself by the sea-shore than Ritter Red climbed up into a great tree which was standing there, and hid himself as well as he could among the branches.

The Princess wept, and begged him most earnestly not to go and leave her; but Ritter Red did not concern himself about that. ‘It is better that one should die than two,’ said he.

In the meantime Minnikin begged the kitchen-maid very prettily to give him leave to go down to the strand for a short time.

‘Oh, what could you do down at the strand?’ said the kitchen-maid. ‘You have nothing to do there.’

‘Oh yes, my dear, just let me go,’ said Minnikin. ‘I should so like to go and amuse myself with the other children.’

‘Well, well, go then!’ said the kitchen-maid, ‘but don’t let me find you staying there over the time when the pan has to be set on the fire for supper, and the roast put on the spit; and mind you bring back a good big armful of wood for the kitchen.'

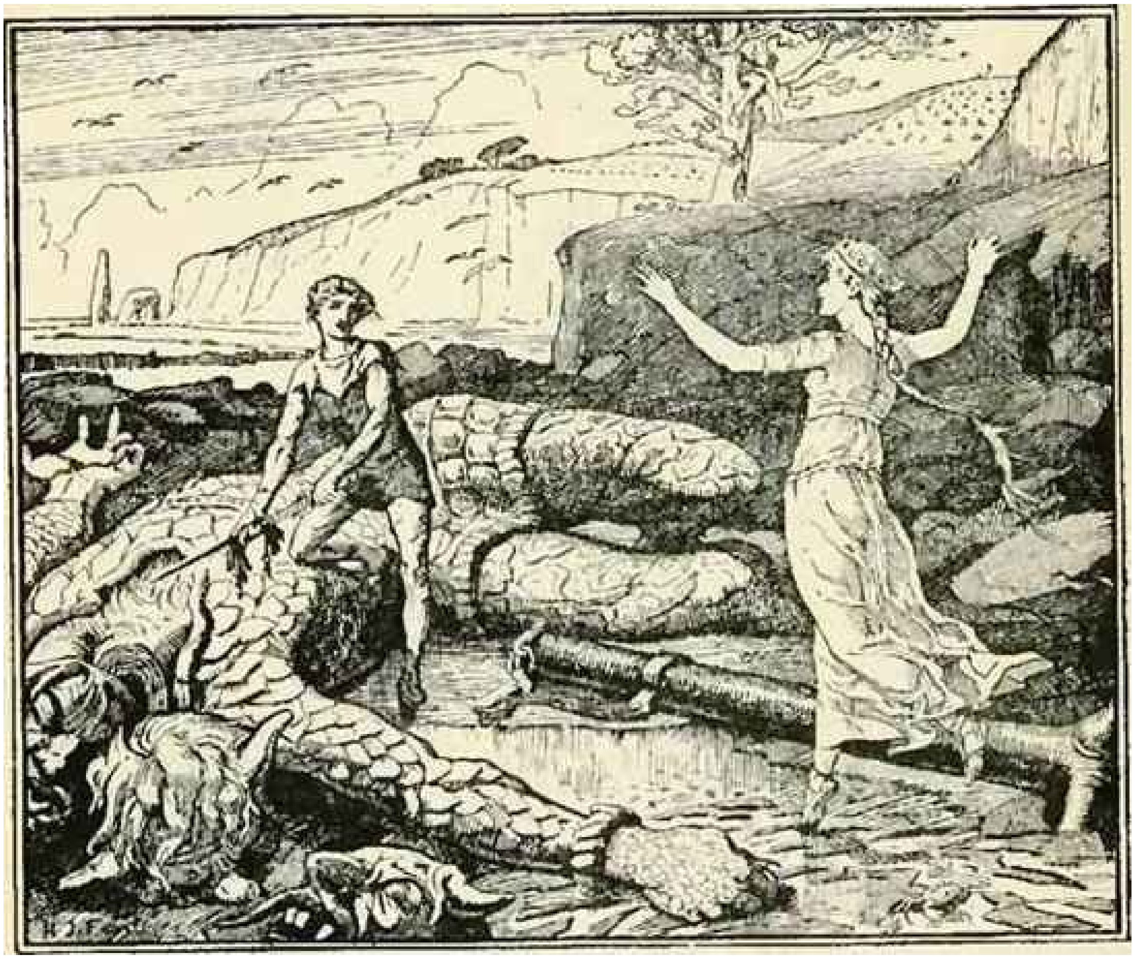

Minnikin promised this, and ran down to the sea-shore.

Just as he got to the place where the King's daughter was sitting, the Troll came rushing up with a great whistling and whirring, and he was so big and stout that he was terrible to see, and he had five heads.

'Fire!' screeched the Troll.

'Fire yourself!' said Minnikin.

'Can you fight?' roared the Troll.

'If not, I can learn,' said Minnikin.

So the Troll struck at him with a great thick iron bar which he had in his fist, till the sods flew five yards up into the air.

'Fie!' said Minnikin. 'That was not much of a blow. Now you shall see one of mine.'

So he grasped the sword which he had got from the old crook-backed woman, and slashed at the Troll so that all five heads went flying away over the sands.

When the Princess saw that she was delivered she was so delighted that she did not know what she was doing, and skipped and danced.

‘Come and sleep a bit with your head in my lap,’ she said to Minnikin, and as he slept she put a golden dress on him.

But when Ritter Red saw that there was no longer any danger afoot, he lost no time in creeping down from the tree. He then threatened the Princess, until at length she was forced to promise to say that it was he who had rescued her, for he told her that if she did not he would kill her. Then he took the Troll’s lungs and tongue and put them in his pocket-handkerchief, and led the Princess back to the King’s palace; and whatsoever had been lacking to him in the way of honour before was lacking no longer, for the King did not know how to exalt him enough, and always set him on his own right hand at table.

As for Minnikin, first he went out on the Troll’s ship and took a great quantity of gold and silver hoops away with him, and then he trotted back to the King’s palace.

When the kitchen-maid caught sight of all this gold and silver she was quite amazed, and said: ‘My dear friend Minnikin, where have you got all that from?’ for she was half afraid that he had not come by it honestly.

‘Oh,’ answered Minnikin, ‘I have been home a while, and these hoops had fallen off some of our buckets, so I brought them away with me for you.’

So when the kitchen-maid heard that they were for her, she asked no more questions about the matter. She thanked Minnikin, and everything was right again at once.

Next Thursday evening all went just the same, and everyone was full of grief and affliction, but Ritter Red said that he had been able to deliver the King’s daughter from one Troll, so that he could very easily deliver her from another, and he led her down to the sea-shore. But he did not do much harm to this Troll either, for when the time came when the Troll might be expected, he said as he had said before: ‘It is better that one should die than two,’ and then climbed up into the tree again.

Minnikin once more begged the cook’s leave to go down to the sea-shore for a short time.

‘Oh, what can you do there?’ said the cook.

‘My dear, do let me go!’ said Minnikin; ‘I should so like to go down there and amuse myself a little with the other children.’

So this time also she said that he should have leave to go, but he must first promise that he would be back by the time the joint was turned and that he would bring a great armful of wood with him.

No sooner had Minnikin got down to the strand than the Troll came rushing along with a great whistling and whirring, and he was twice as big as the first Troll, and he had ten heads.

‘Fire!’ shrieked the Troll.

‘Fire yourself!’ said Minnikin.

‘Can you fight?’ roared the Troll.

‘If not, I can learn,’ said Minnikin.

So the Troll struck at him with his iron club — which was still bigger than that which the first Troll had had — so that the earth flew ten yards up in the air.

‘Fie!’ said Minnikin. ‘That was not much of a blow. Now you shall see one of my blows.’

Then he grasped his sword and struck at the Troll, so that all his ten heads danced away over the sands.

And again the King’s daughter said to him, ‘Sleep a while on my lap,’ and while Minnikin lay there she drew some silver raiment over him.

As soon as Ritter Red saw that there was no longer any danger afoot, he crept down from the tree and threatened the Princess, until at last she was again forced to promise to say that it was he who had rescued her; after which he took the tongue and the lungs of the Troll and put them in his pocket-handkerchief, and then he conducted the Princess back to the palace. There was joy and gladness in the palace, as may be imagined, and the King did not know how to show enough honour and respect to Ritter Red.

Minnikin, however, took home with him an armful of gold and silver hoops from the Troll’s ship. When he came back to the King’s palace the kitchen-maid clapped her hands and wondered where he could have got all that gold and silver; but Minnikin answered that he had been home for a short time, and that it was only the hoops which had fallen off some pails, and that he had brought them away for the kitchen-maid.

When the third Thursday evening came, everything happened exactly as it had happened on the two former occasions. Everything in the King’s palace was hung with black, and everyone was sorrowful and distressed; but Ritter Red said that he did not think that they had much reason to be afraid — he had delivered the King’s daughter from two Trolls, so he could easily deliver her from the third as well.

He led her down to the strand, but when the time drew near for the Troll to come, he climbed up into the tree again and hid himself.

The Princess wept and entreated him to stay, but all to no purpose. He stuck to his old speech, ‘It is better that one life should be lost than two.’

This evening also, Minnikin begged for leave to go down to the sea-shore.

‘Oh, what can you do there?’ answered the kitchen-maid.

However, he begged until at last he got leave to go, but he was forced to promise that he would be back again in the kitchen when the roast had to be turned.

Almost immediately after he had got down to the sea-shore the Troll came with a great whizzing and whirring, and he was much, much bigger than either of the two former ones, and he had fifteen heads.

‘Fire!’ roared the Troll.

‘Fire yourself!’ said Minnikin.

‘Can you fight?’ screamed the Troll.

‘If not, I can learn,’ said Minnikin.

‘I will teach you,’ yelled the Troll, and struck at him with his iron club so that the earth flew up fifteen yards high into the air.

‘Fie!’ said Minnikin. ‘That was not much of a blow. Now I will let you see one of my blows.’

So saying he grasped his sword, and cut at the Troll in such a way that all his fifteen heads danced away over the sands.

Then the Princess was delivered, and she thanked Minnikin and blessed him for saving her.

‘Sleep a while now on my lap,’ said she, and while he lay there she put a garment of brass upon him.

‘But now, how shall we have it made known that it was you who saved me?’ said the King’s daughter.

‘That I will tell you,’ answered Minnikin. ‘When Ritter Red has taken you home again, and given out that it was he who rescued you, he will, as you know, have you to wife, and half the kingdom. But when they ask you on your wedding-day whom you will have to be your cup-bearer, you must say, “I will have the ragged boy who is in the kitchen, and carries wood and water for the kitchen-maid;” and when I am filling your cups for you, I will spill a drop upon his plate but none upon yours, and then he will be angry and strike me, and this will take place thrice. But the third time you must say, “Shame on you thus to smite the beloved of mine heart. It is he who delivered me from the Troll, and he is the one whom I will have.”’

Then Minnikin ran back to the King’s palace as he had done before, but first he went on board the Troll’s ship and took a great quantity of gold and silver and other precious things, and out of these he once more gave to the kitchen-maid a whole armful of gold and silver hoops.

No sooner did Ritter Red see that all danger was over than he crept down from the tree, and threatened the King’s daughter till he made her promise to say that he had rescued her. Then he conducted her back to the King’s palace, and if honour enough had not been done him before it was certainly done now, for the King had no other thought than how to make much of the man who had saved his daughter from the three Trolls; and it was settled then that Ritter Red should marry her, and receive half the kingdom.

On the wedding-day, however, the Princess begged that she might have the little boy who was in the kitchen, and carried wood and water for the kitchen-maid, to fill the wine-cups at the wedding feast.

‘Oh, what can you want with that dirty, ragged boy, in here?’ said Ritter Red, but the Princess said that she insisted on having him as cup-bearer and would have no one else; and at last she got leave, and then everything was done as had been agreed on between the Princess and Minnikin. He spilt a drop on Ritter Red’s plate but none upon hers, and each time that he did it Ritter Red fell into a rage and struck him. At the first blow all the ragged garments which he had worn in the kitchen fell from off Minnikin, at the second blow the brass garments fell off, and at the third the silver raiment, and there he stood in the golden raiment, which was so bright and splendid that light flashed from it.

Then the King’s daughter said: ‘Shame on you thus to smite the beloved of my heart. It is he who delivered me from the Troll, and he is the one whom I will have.’

Ritter Red swore that he was the man who had saved her, but the King said: ‘He who delivered my daughter must have some token in proof of it.’

So Ritter Red ran off at once for his handkerchief with the lungs and tongue, and Minnikin went and brought all the gold and silver and precious things which he had taken out of the Trolls’ ships; and they each of them laid these tokens before the King.

‘He who has such precious things in gold and silver and diamonds,’ said the King, ‘must be the one who killed the Troll, for such things are not to be had anywhere else.’ So Ritter Red was thrown into the snake-pit, and Minnikin was to have the Princess, and half the kingdom.

One day the King went out walking with Minnikin, and Minnikin asked him if he had never had any other children.

‘Yes,’ said the King, ‘I had another daughter, but the Troll carried her away because there was no one who could deliver her. You are going to have one daughter of mine, but if you can set free the other, who has been taken by the Troll, you shall willingly have her too, and the other half of the kingdom as well.’

‘I may as well make the attempt,’ said Minnikin, ‘but I must have an iron rope which is five hundred ells long, and then I must have five hundred men with me, and provisions for five weeks, for I have a long voyage before me.'

So the King said he should have these things, but the King was afraid that he had no ship large enough to carry them all.

'But I have a ship of my own,' said Minnikin, and he took the one which the old woman had given him out of his pocket. The King laughed at him and thought that it was only one of his jokes, but Minnikin begged him just to give him what he had asked for, and then he should see something. Then all that Minnikin had asked for was brought; and first he ordered them to lay the cable in the ship, but there was no one who was able to lift it, and there was only room for one or two men at a time in the little bit of a ship. Then Minnikin himself took hold of the cable, and laid one or two links of it into the ship, and as he threw the links into it the ship grew bigger and bigger, and at last it was so large that the cable, and the five hundred men, and provisions, and Minnikin himself, had room enough.

'Now go over fresh water and salt water, over hill and dale, and do not stop until thou comest to where the King's daughter is,' said Minnikin to the ship, and off it went in a moment over land and water till the wind whistled and moaned all round about it.

When they had sailed thus a long, long way, the ship stopped short in the middle of the sea.

'Ah, now we have got there,' said Minnikin, 'but how we are to get back again is a very different thing.'

Then he took the cable and tied one end of it round his body. 'Now I must go to the bottom,' he said, 'but when I give a good jerk to the cable and want to come up again, you must all pull like one man, or there will be an end of all life both for you and for me.' So saying he sprang into the water, and yellow bubbles rose up all around him. He sank lower and lower, and at last he came to the bottom. There he saw a large hill with a door in it, and in he went. When he had got inside he found the other Princess sitting sewing, but when she saw Minnikin she clapped her hands.

'Ah, heaven be praised!' she cried, 'I have not seen a Christian man since I came here.'

'I have come for you,' said Minnikin.

'Alas! you will not be able to get me,' said the King's daughter. 'It is no use even to think of that; if the Troll catches sight of you he will take your life.'

'You had better tell me about him,' said Minnikin. 'Where is he gone? It would be amusing to see him.'

So the King's daughter told Minnikin that the Troll was out trying to get hold of someone who could brew a hundred lasts of malt at one brewing, for there was to be a feast at the Troll’s, at which less than that would not be drunk.

‘I can do that,’ said Minnikin.

‘Ah! if only the Troll were not so quick-tempered I might have told him that,’ answered the Princess, ‘but he is so ill-natured that he will tear you to pieces, I fear, as soon as he comes in. But I will try to find some way of doing it. Can you hide yourself here in the cupboard? and then we will see what happens.’

Minnikin did this, and almost before he had crept into the cupboard and hidden himself, came the Troll.

‘Huf! What a smell of Christian man’s blood!’ said the Troll.

‘Yes, a bird flew over the roof with a Christian man’s bone in his bill, and let it fall down our chimney,’ answered the Princess. ‘I made haste enough to get it away again, but it must be that which smells so, notwithstanding.’

‘Yes, it must be that,’ said the Troll.

Then the Princess asked if he had got hold of anyone who could brew a hundred lasts of malt at one brewing.

‘No, there is no one who can do it,’ said the Troll.

‘A short time since there was a man here who said he could do it,’ said the King’s daughter.

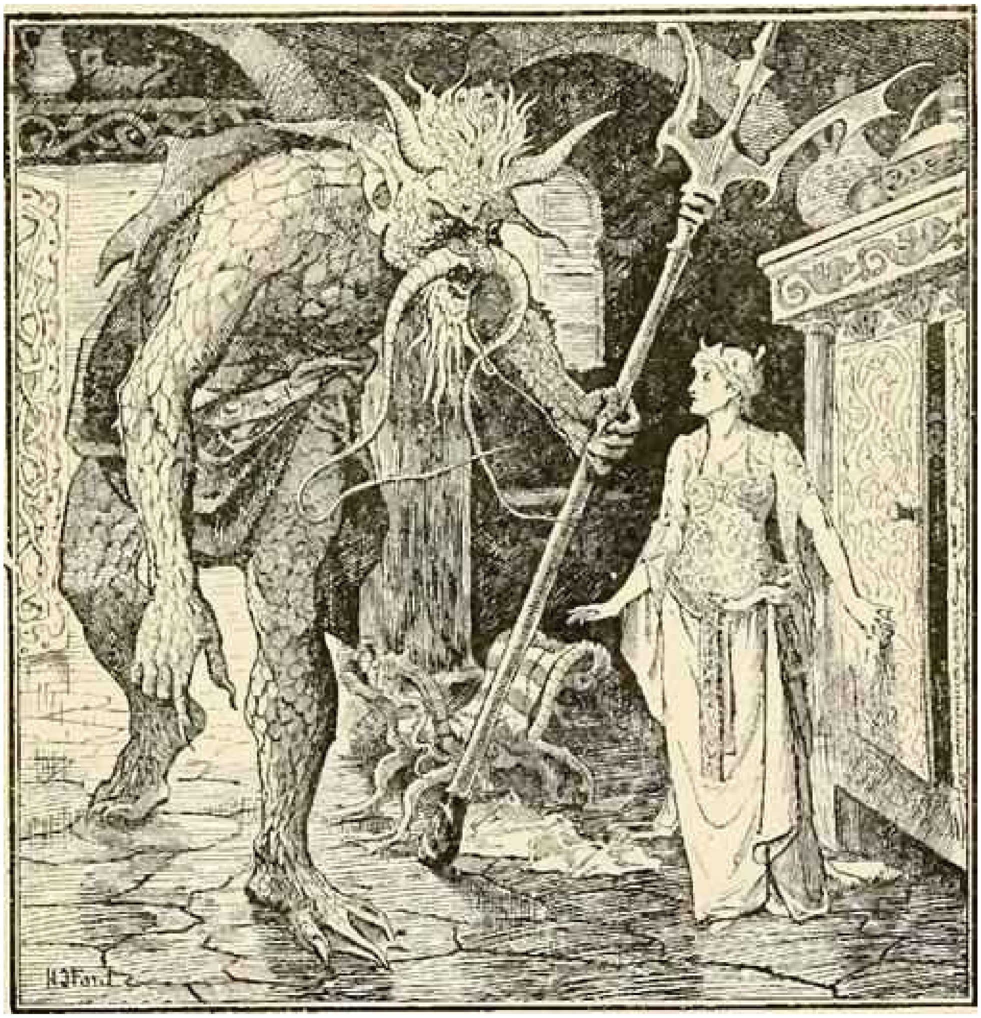

‘How clever you always are!’ said the Troll. ‘How could you let him go away? You must have known that I was just wanting a man of that kind.’

‘Well, but I didn’t let him go, after all,’ said the Princess; ‘but father is so quick-tempered, so I hid him in the cupboard, but if father has not found any one then the man is still here.’

‘Let him come in,’ said the Troll.

When Minnikin came, the Troll asked if it were true that he could brew a hundred lasts of malt at one brewing.

‘Yes,’ said Minnikin, ‘it is.’

‘It is well then that I have lighted on thee,’ said the Troll. ‘Fall to work this very minute, but Heaven help thee if thou dost not brew the ale strong.’

‘Oh, it shall taste well,’ said Minnikin, and at once set himself to work to brew.

‘But I must have more trolls to help to carry what is wanted,’ said Minnikin; ‘these that I have are good for nothing.’

So he got more and so many that there was a swarm of them, and then the brewing went on. When the sweet-wort was ready they were all, as a matter of course, anxious to taste it, first the Troll himself and then the others; but Minnikin had brewed the wort so strong that they all fell down dead like so many flies as soon as they had drunk any of it. At last there was no one left but one wretched old hag who was lying behind the stove.

‘Oh, poor old creature!’ said Minnikin, ‘you shall have a taste of the wort too like the rest.’ So he went away and scooped up a little from the bottom of the brewing vat in a milk pan, and gave it to her, and then he was quit of the whole of them.

While Minnikin was now standing there looking about him, he cast his eye on a large chest. This he took and filled it with gold and silver, and then he tied the cable round himself and the Princess and the chest, and tugged at the rope with all his might, whereupon his men drew them up safe and sound.

As soon as Minnikin had got safely on his ship again, he said: ‘Now go over salt water and fresh water, over hill and dale, and do not stop until thou comest unto the King’s palace.’ And in a moment the ship went off so fast that the yellow foam rose up all round about it.

When those who were in the King’s palace saw the ship, they lost no time in going to meet him with song and music, and thus they marched up towards Minnikin with great rejoicings; but the gladdest of all was the King, for now he had got his other daughter back again.

But now Minnikin was not happy, for both the Princesses wanted to have him, and he wanted to have none other than the one whom he had first saved, and she was the younger. For this cause he was continually walking backwards and forwards, thinking how he could contrive to get her, and yet do nothing that was unkind to her sister. One day when he was walking about and thinking of this, it came into his mind that if he only had his brother, King Pippin, with him, who was so like himself that no one could distinguish the one from the other, he could let him have the elder Princess and half the kingdom; as for himself, he thought, the other half was quite enough. As soon as this thought occurred to him he went outside the palace and called for King Pippin, but no one came. So he called a second time, and a little louder, but no! still no one came. So Minnikin called for the third time, and with all his might, and there stood his brother by his side.

‘I told you that you were not to call me unless you were in the utmost need,’ he said to Minnikin, ‘and there is not even so much as a midge here who can do you any harm!’ and with that he gave Minnikin such a blow that he rolled over on the grass.

‘Shame on you to strike me!’ said Minnikin. ‘First have I won one Princess and half the kingdom, and then the other Princess and the other half of the kingdom; and now, when I was just thinking that I would give you one of the Princesses and one of the halves of the kingdom, do you think you have any reason to give me such a blow?'

When King Pippin heard that he begged his brother's pardon, and they were reconciled at once and became good friends.

'Now, as you know,' said Minnikin, 'we are so like each other that no one can tell one of us from the other; so just change clothes with me and go up to the palace, and then the Princesses will think that I am coming in, and the one who kisses you first shall be yours, and I will have the other.' For he knew that the elder Princess was the stronger, so he could very well guess how things would go.

King Pippin at once agreed to this. He changed clothes with his brother, and went into the palace. When he entered the Princess's apartments they believed that he was Minnikin, and both of them ran up to him at once; but the elder, who was bigger and stronger, pushed her sister aside, and threw her arms round King Pippin's neck and kissed him; so he got her to wife, and Minnikin the younger sister. It will be easy to understand that two weddings took place, and they were so magnificent that they were heard of and talked about all over seven kingdoms. (27)

(27) From J. Moe.

BUSHY BRIDE

THERE was once on a time a widower who had a son and a daughter by his first wife. They were both good children, and loved each other with all their hearts. After some time had gone by the man married again, and he chose a widow with one daughter who was ugly and wicked, and her mother was ugly and wicked too. From the very day that the new wife came into the house there was no peace for the man's children, and not a corner to be found where they could get any rest; so the boy thought that the best thing he could do was to go out into the world and try to earn his own bread.

When he had roamed about for some time he came to the King's palace, where he obtained a place under the coachman; and very brisk and active he was, and the horses that he looked after were so fat and sleek, that they shone again.

But his sister, who was still at home, fared worse and worse. Both her stepmother and her step-sister were always finding fault with her, whatsoever she did and whithersoever she went, and they scolded her and abused her so that she never had an hour's peace. They made her do all the hard work, and hard words fell to her lot early and late, but little enough food accompanied them.

One day they sent her to the brook to fetch some water home, and an ugly and horrible head rose up out of the water, and said, 'Wash me, girl!'

'Yes, I will wash you with pleasure,' said the girl, and began to wash and scrub the ugly face, but she couldn't help thinking that it was a very unpleasant piece of work. When she had done it, and done it well, another head rose up out of the water, and this one was uglier still.

'Brush me, girl!' said the head.

'Yes, I will brush you with pleasure,' said the girl, and set to work with the tangled hair, and, as may be easily imagined, this too was by no means pleasant work.

When she had got it done, another and a much more ugly and horrible-looking head rose up out of the water.

'Kiss me, girl!' said the head.

'Yes, I will kiss you,' said the man's daughter, and she did it, but she thought it was the worst bit of work that she had ever had to do in her life.

So the heads all began to talk to each other, and to ask what they should do for this girl who was so full of kindliness.

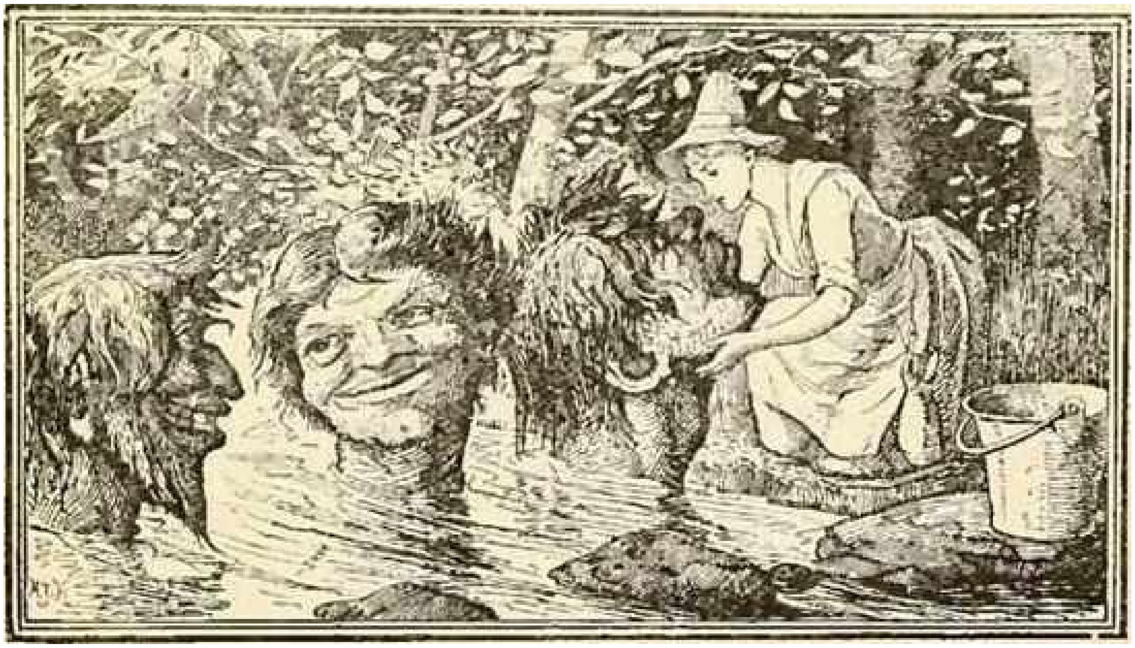

‘She shall be the prettiest girl that ever was, and fair and bright as the day,’ said the first head.

‘Gold shall drop from her hair whenever she brushes it,’ said the second.

‘Gold shall drop from her mouth whenever she speaks,’ said the third head.

So when the man’s daughter went home, looking as beautiful and bright as day, the stepmother and her daughter grew much more ill-tempered, and it was worse still when she began to talk, and they saw that golden coins dropped from her mouth. The stepmother fell into such a towering passion that she drove the man’s daughter into the pig-stye — she might stay there with her fine show of gold, the stepmother said, but she should not be permitted to set foot in the house.

It was not long before the mother wanted her own daughter to go to the stream to fetch some water.

When she got there with her pails, the first head rose up out of the water close to the bank. ‘Wash me, girl!’ it said.

‘Wash yourself!’ answered the woman’s daughter.

Then the second head appeared.

‘Brush me, girl!’ said the head.

‘Brush yourself!’ said the woman’s daughter.

So down it went to the bottom, and the third head came up.

‘Kiss me, girl!’ said the head.

‘As if I would kiss your ugly mouth!’ said the girl.

So again the heads talked together about what they should do for this girl who was so ill-tempered and full of her own importance, and they agreed that she should have a nose that was four ells long, and a jaw that was three ells, and a fir bush in the middle of her forehead, and every time she spoke ashes should fall from her mouth.

When she came back to the cottage door with her pails, she called to her mother who was inside, ‘Open the door!’

‘Open the door yourself, my own dear child!’ said the mother.

‘I can’t get near, because of my nose,’ said the daughter.

When the mother came and saw her you may imagine what a state of mind she was in, and how she screamed and lamented, but neither the nose nor the jaw grew any the less for that.

Now the brother, who was in service in the King’s palace, had taken a portrait of his sister, and he had carried the picture away with him, and every morning and evening he knelt down before it and prayed for his sister, so dearly did he love her.

The other stable-boys had heard him doing this, so they peeped through the key-hole into his room, and saw that he was kneeling there before a picture; so they told everyone that every morning and evening the youth knelt down and prayed to an idol which he had; and at last they went to the King himself, and begged that he too would peep through the key-hole, and see for himself what the youth did. At first the King would not believe this, but after a long, long time, they prevailed with him, and he crept on tip-toe to the door, peeped through, and saw the youth on his knees, with his hands clasped together before a picture which was hanging on the wall.

‘Open the door!’ cried the King, but the youth did not hear.

So the King called to him again, but the youth was praying so fervently that he did not hear him this time either.

‘Open the door, I say!’ cried the King again. ‘It is I! I want to come in.’

So the youth sprang to the door and unlocked it, but in his haste he forgot to hide the picture.

When the King entered and saw it, he stood still as if he were in fetters, and could not stir from the spot, for the picture seemed to him so beautiful.

‘There is nowhere on earth so beautiful a woman as this!’ said the King.

But the youth told him that she was his sister, and that he had painted her, and that if she was not prettier than the picture she was at all events not uglier.

‘Well, if she is as beautiful as that, I will have her for my Queen,’ said the King, and he commanded the youth to go home and fetch her without a moment’s delay, and to lose no time in coming back. The youth promised to make all the haste he could, and set forth from the King’s palace.

When the brother arrived at home to fetch his sister, her stepmother and stepsister would go too. So they all set out together, and the man’s daughter took with her a casket in which she kept her gold, and a dog which was called Little Snow. These two things were all that she had inherited from her mother. When they had travelled for some time they had to cross the sea, and the brother sat down at the helm, and the mother and the two half-sisters went to the fore-part of the vessel, and they sailed a long, long way. At last they came in sight of land.

‘Look at that white strand there; that is where we shall land,’ said the brother, pointing across the sea.

‘What is my brother saying?’ inquired the man’s daughter.

‘He says that you are to throw your casket out into the sea,’ answered the stepmother.

‘Well, if my brother says so, I must do it,’ said the man’s daughter, and she flung her casket into the sea.

When they had sailed for some time longer, the brother once more pointed over the sea. ‘There you may see the palace to which we are bound,’ said he.

‘What is my brother saying?’ asked the man’s daughter.

‘Now he says that you are to throw your dog into the sea,’ answered the stepmother.

The man’s daughter wept, and was sorely troubled, for Little Snow was the dearest thing she had on earth, but at last she threw him overboard.

‘If my brother says that, I must do it, but Heaven knows how unwilling I am to throw thee out, Little Snow!’ said she.

So they sailed onwards a long way farther.

‘There may’st thou see the King coming out to meet thee,’ said the brother, pointing to the sea-shore.

‘What is my brother saying?’ asked his sister again.

‘Now he says that you are to make haste and throw yourself overboard,’ answered the stepmother.

She wept and she wailed, but as her brother had said that, she thought she must do it; so she leaped into the sea.

But when they arrived at the palace, and the King beheld the ugly bride with a nose that was four ells long, a jaw that was three ells, and a forehead that had a bush in the middle of it, he was quite terrified; but the wedding feast was all prepared, as regarded brewing and baking, and all the wedding guests were sitting waiting, so, ugly as she was, the King was forced to take her.

But he was very wroth, and none can blame him for that; so he caused the brother to be thrown into a pit full of snakes.

On the first Thursday night after this, a beautiful maiden came into the kitchen of the palace, and begged the kitchen-maid, who slept there, to lend her a brush.

She begged very prettily, and got it, and then she brushed her hair, and the gold dropped from it.

A little dog was with her, and she said to it, ‘Go out, Little Snow, and see if it will soon be day!’

This she said thrice, and the third time that she sent out the dog to see, it was very near dawn. Then she was forced to depart, but as she went she said:

‘Out on thee, ugly Bushy Bride,
Sleeping so soft by the young King’s side,
On sand and stones my bed I make,
And my brother sleeps with the cold snake,
Unpitied and unwept.’

I shall come twice more, and then never again,’ said she.

In the morning the kitchen-maid related what she had seen and heard, and the King said that next Thursday night he himself would watch in the kitchen and see if this were true, and when it had begun to grow dark he went out into the kitchen to the girl. But though he rubbed his eyes and did everything he could to keep himself awake it was all in vain, for the Bushy Bride crooned and sang till his eyes were fast closed, and when the beautiful young maiden came he was sound asleep and snoring.

This time also, as before, she borrowed a brush and brushed her hair with it, and the gold dropped down as she did it; and again she sent the dog out three times, and when day dawned she departed, but as she was going she said as she had said before, ‘I shall come once more, and then never again.’

On the third Thursday night the King once more insisted on keeping watch. Then he set two men to hold him; each of them was to take an arm, and shake him and jerk him by the arm whenever he seemed to be going to fall asleep; and he set two men to watch his Bushy Bride. But as the night wore on the Bushy Bride again began to croon and to sing, so that his eyes began to close and his head to droop on one side. Then came the lovely maiden, and got the brush and brushed her hair till the gold dropped from it, and then she sent her Little Snow out to see if it would soon be day, and this she did three times. The third time it was just beginning to grow light, and then she said:

‘Out on thee, ugly Bushy Bride,
Sleeping so soft by the young King’s side,
On sand and stones my bed I make,
And my brother sleeps with the cold snake,
Unpitied and unwept.’

‘Now I shall never come again,’ she said, and then she turned to go. But the two men who were holding the King by the arms seized his hands and forced a knife into his grasp, and then made him cut her little finger just enough to make it bleed.

Thus the true bride was freed. The King then awoke, and she told him all that had taken place, and how her stepmother and step-sister had betrayed her. Then the brother was at once taken out of the snake-pit — the snakes had never touched him — and the stepmother and step-sister were flung down into it instead of him.

No one can tell how delighted the King was to get rid of that hideous Bushy Bride, and get a Queen who was bright and beautiful as day itself.

And now the real wedding was held, and held in such a way that it was heard of and spoken about all over seven kingdoms. The King and his bride drove to church, and Little Snow was in the carriage too. When the blessing was given they went home again, and after that I saw no more of them.(28)

(28) From J. Moe.

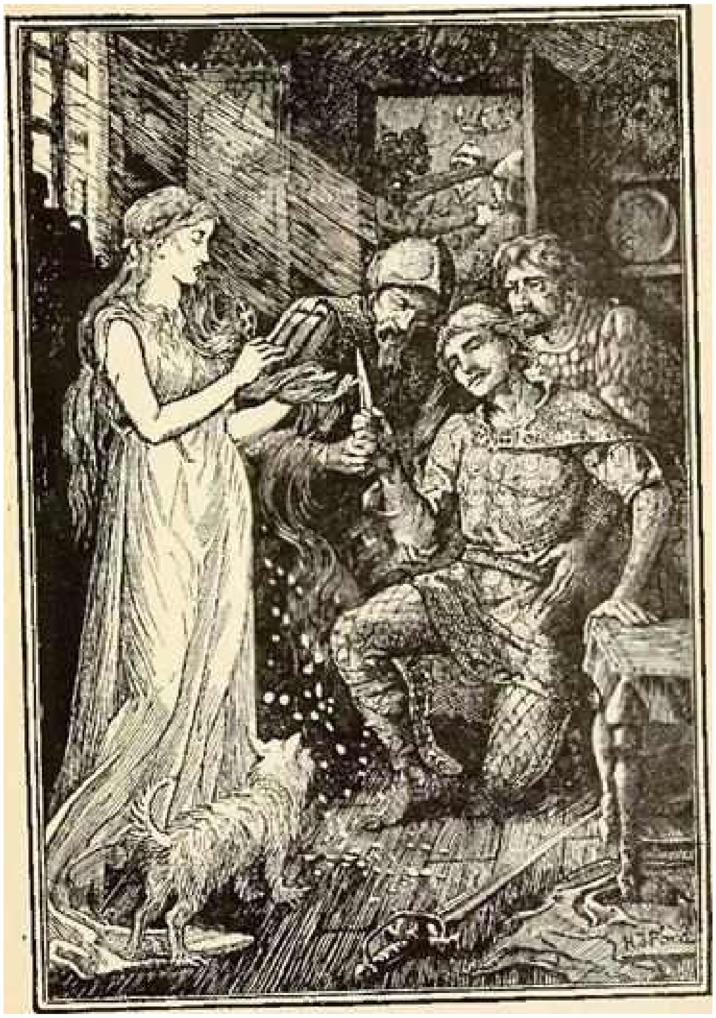
H.J.Ford

SNOWDROP

ONCE upon a time, in the middle of winter when the snow-flakes were falling like feathers on the earth, a Queen sat at a window framed in black ebony and sewed. And as she sewed and gazed out to the white landscape, she pricked her finger with the needle, and three drops of blood fell on the snow outside, and because the red showed out so well against the white she thought to herself:

‘Oh! what wouldn’t I give to have a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as ebony!’

And her wish was granted, for not long after a little daughter was born to her, with a skin as white as snow, lips and cheeks as red as blood, and hair as black as ebony. They called her Snowdrop, and not long after her birth the Queen died.

After a year the King married again. His new wife was a beautiful woman, but so proud and overbearing that she couldn’t stand any rival to her beauty. She possessed a magic mirror, and when she used to stand before it gazing at her own reflection and ask:

‘Mirror, mirror, hanging there,
Who in all the land’s most fair?’

it always replied:

‘You are most fair, my Lady Queen,
None fairer in the land, I ween.’

Then she was quite happy, for she knew the mirror always spoke the truth.

But Snowdrop was growing prettier and prettier every day, and when she was seven years old she was as beautiful as she could be, and fairer even than the Queen herself. One day when the latter asked her mirror the usual question, it replied:

‘My Lady Queen, you are fair, ’tis true,
But Snowdrop is fairer far than you.’

Then the Queen flew into the most awful passion, and turned every shade of green in her jealousy. From this hour she hated poor Snowdrop like poison, and every day her envy, hatred, and malice grew, for envy and jealousy are like evil weeds which spring up and choke the heart. At last she could endure Snowdrop’s presence no longer, and, calling a huntsman to her, she said:

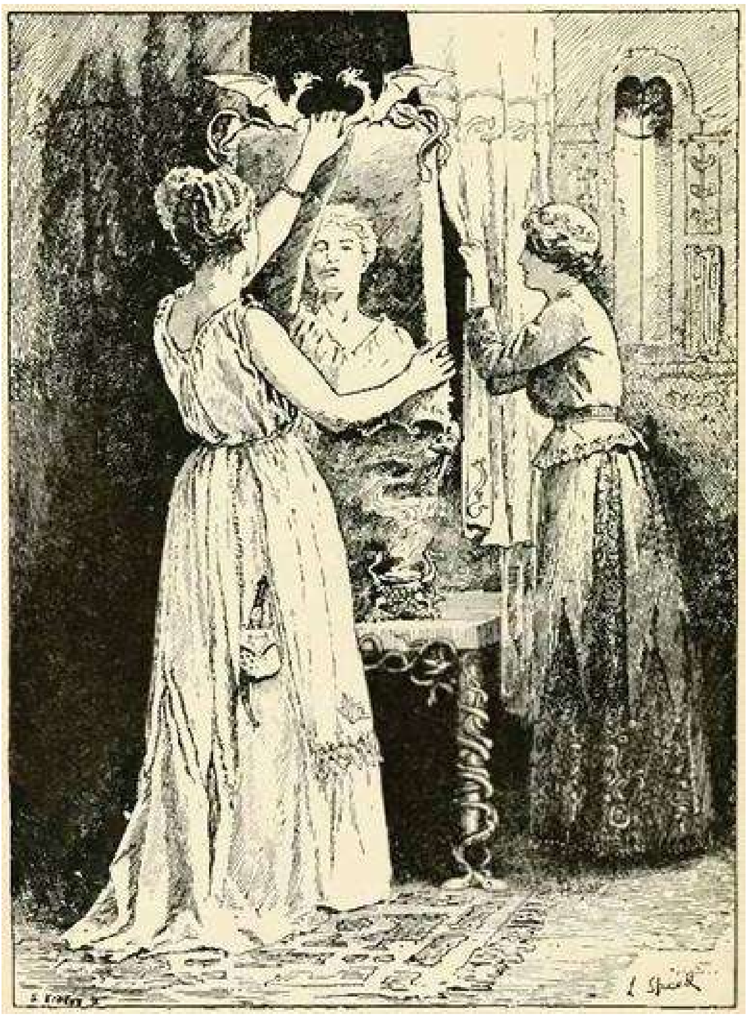

‘Take the child out into the wood, and never let me see her face again. You must kill her, and bring me back her lungs and liver, that I may know for certain she is dead.’

The Huntsman did as he was told and led Snowdrop out into the wood, but as he was in the act of drawing out his knife to slay her, she began to cry, and said:

‘Oh, dear Huntsman, spare my life, and I will promise to fly forth into the wide wood and never to return home again.’

And because she was so young and pretty the Huntsman had pity on her, and said:

‘Well, run along, poor child.’ For he thought to himself: ‘The wild beasts will soon eat her up.’

And his heart felt lighter because he hadn’t had to do the deed himself. And as he turned away a young boar came running past, so he shot it, and brought its lungs and liver home to the Queen as a proof that Snowdrop was really dead. And the wicked woman had them stewed in salt, and ate them up, thinking she had made an end of Snowdrop for ever.

Now when the poor child found herself alone in the big wood the very trees around her seemed to assume strange shapes, and she felt so frightened she didn’t know what to do. Then she began to run over the sharp stones, and through the bramble bushes, and the wild beasts ran past her, but they did her no harm. She ran as far as her legs would carry her, and as evening approached she saw a little house, and she stepped inside to rest. Everything was very small in the little house, but cleaner and neater than anything you can imagine. In the middle of the room there stood a little table, covered with a white tablecloth, and seven little plates and forks and spoons and knives and tumblers. Side by side against the wall there were seven little beds, covered with snow-white counterpanes. Snowdrop felt so hungry and so thirsty that she ate a bit of bread and a little porridge from each plate, and drank a drop of wine out of each tumbler. Then feeling tired and sleepy she lay down on one of the beds, but it wasn’t comfortable; then she tried all the others in turn, but one was too long, and another too short, and it was only when she got to the seventh that she found one to suit her exactly. So she lay down upon it, said her prayers like a good child, and fell fast asleep.

When it got quite dark the masters of the little house returned. They were seven dwarfs who worked in the mines, right down deep in the heart of the mountain. They lighted their seven little lamps, and as soon as their eyes got accustomed to the glare they saw that someone had been in the room, for all was not in the same order as they had left it.

The first said:

‘Who’s been sitting on my little chair?’

The second said:

‘Who’s been eating my little loaf?’

The third said:

‘Who’s been tasting my porridge?’

The fourth said:

‘Who’s been eating out of my little plate?’

The fifth said:

‘Who’s been using my little fork?’

The sixth said:

‘Who’s been cutting with my little knife?’

The seventh said:

‘Who’s been drinking out of my little tumbler?’

Then the first Dwarf looked round and saw a little hollow in his bed, and he asked again:

‘Who’s been lying on my bed?’

The others came running round, and cried when they saw their beds:

‘Somebody has lain on ours too.’

But when the seventh came to his bed, he started back in amazement, for there he beheld Snowdrop fast asleep. Then he called the others, who turned their little lamps full on the bed, and when they saw Snowdrop lying there they nearly fell down with surprise.

‘Goodness gracious!’ they cried, ‘what a beautiful child!’

And they were so enchanted by her beauty that they did not wake her, but let her sleep on in the little bed. But the seventh Dwarf slept with his companions one hour in each bed, and in this way he managed to pass the night.

In the morning Snowdrop awoke, but when she saw the seven little Dwarfs she felt very frightened. But they were so friendly and asked her what her name was in such a kind way, that she replied:

‘I am Snowdrop.’

‘Why did you come to our house?’ continued the Dwarfs.

Then she told them how her stepmother had wished her put to death, and how the Huntsman had spared her life, and how she had run the whole day till she had come to their little house. The Dwarfs, when they had heard her sad story, asked her:

‘Will you stay and keep house for us, cook, make the beds, the washing, sew and knit? and if you give satisfaction and keep everything neat and clean, you shall want for nothing.’

‘Yes,’ answered Snowdrop, ‘I will gladly do all you ask.’

And so she took up her abode with them. Every morning the Dwarfs went into the mountain to dig for gold, and in the evening, when they returned home, Snowdrop always had their supper ready for them. But during the day the girl was left quite alone, so the good Dwarfs warned her, saying:

‘Beware of your stepmother. She will soon find out you are here, and whatever you do don’t let anyone into the house.’

Now the Queen, after she thought she had eaten Snowdrop’s lungs and liver, never dreamed but that she was once more the most beautiful woman in the world; so stepping before her mirror one day she said:

‘Mirror, mirror, hanging there, Who in all the land’s most fair?’

and the mirror replied:

‘My Lady Queen, you are fair, ’tis true, But Snowdrop is fairer far than you. Snowdrop, who dwells with the seven little men, Is as fair as you, as fair again.’

When the Queen heard these words she was nearly struck dumb with horror, for the mirror always spoke the truth, and she knew now that the Huntsman must have deceived her, and that Snowdrop was still alive. She pondered day and night how she might destroy her, for as long as she felt she had a rival in the land her jealous heart left her no rest. At last she hit upon a plan. She stained her face and dressed herself up as an old peddler wife, so that she was quite unrecognisable. In this guise she went over the seven hills till she came to the house of the seven Dwarfs. There she knocked at the door, calling out at the same time:

‘Fine wares to sell, fine wares to sell!’

Snowdrop peeped out of the window, and called out:

‘Good-day, mother, what have you to sell?’

‘Good wares, fine wares,’ she answered; ‘laces of every shade and description,’ and she held one up that was made of some gay coloured silk.

‘Surely I can let the honest woman in,’ thought Snowdrop; so she unbarred the door and bought the pretty lace.

‘Good gracious! child,’ said the old woman, ‘what a figure you’ve got. Come! I’ll lace you up properly for once.’

Snowdrop, suspecting no evil, stood before her and let her lace her bodice up, but the old woman laced her so quickly and so tightly that it took Snowdrop’s breath away, and she fell down dead.

‘Now you are no longer the fairest,’ said the wicked old woman, and then she hastened away.

In the evening the seven Dwarfs came home, and you may think what a fright they got when they saw their dear Snowdrop lying on the floor, as still and motionless as a dead person. They lifted her up tenderly, and when they saw how tightly laced she was they cut the lace in two, and she began to breathe a little and gradually came back to life. When the Dwarfs heard what had happened, they said:

‘Depend upon it, the old peddler wife was none other than the old Queen. In future you must be sure to let no one in, if we are not at home.’

As soon as the wicked old Queen got home she went straight to her mirror, and said:

‘Mirror, mirror, hanging there,
Who in all the land’s most fair?’

and the mirror answered as before:

‘My Lady Queen, you are fair, ’tis true,
But Snowdrop is fairer far than you.
Snowdrop, who dwells with the seven little men,
Is as fair as you, as fair again.’

When she heard this she became as pale as death, because she saw at once that Snowdrop must be alive again.

‘This time,’ she said to herself, ‘I will think of something that will make an end of her once and for all.’

And by the witchcraft which she understood so well she made a poisonous comb; then she dressed herself up and assumed the form of another old woman. So she went over the seven hills till she reached the house of the seven Dwarfs, and knocking at the door she called out:

‘Fine wares for sale.’

Snowdrop looked out of the window and said:

‘You must go away, for I may not let anyone in.’

‘But surely you are not forbidden to look out?’ said the old woman, and she held up the poisonous comb for her to see.

It pleased the girl so much that she let herself be taken in, and opened the door. When they had settled their bargain the old woman said:

‘Now I’ll comb your hair properly for you, for once in the way.’

Poor Snowdrop thought no evil, but hardly had the comb touched her hair than the poison worked and she fell down unconscious.

‘Now, my fine lady, you’re really done for this time,’ said the wicked woman, and she made her way home as fast as she could.

Fortunately it was now near evening, and the seven Dwarfs returned home. When they saw Snowdrop lying dead on the ground, they at once suspected that her wicked stepmother had been at work again; so they searched till they found the poisonous comb, and the moment they pulled it out of her head Snowdrop came to herself again, and told them what had happened. Then they warned her once more to be on her guard, and to open the door to no one.

As soon as the Queen got home she went straight to her mirror, and asked:

‘Mirror, mirror, hanging there, Who in all the land’s most fair?’

and it replied as before:

‘My Lady Queen, you are fair, ’tis true,
But Snowdrop is fairer far than you.
Snowdrop, who dwells with the seven little men,
Is as fair as you, as fair again.’

When she heard these words she literally trembled and shook with rage.

‘Snowdrop shall die,’ she cried; ‘yes, though it cost me my own life.’

Then she went to a little secret chamber, which no one knew of but herself, and there she made a poisonous apple. Outwardly it looked beautiful, white with red cheeks, so that everyone who saw it longed to eat it, but anyone who might do so would certainly die on the spot. When the apple was quite finished she stained her face and dressed herself up as a peasant, and so she went over the seven hills to the seven Dwarfs’. She knocked at the door, as usual, but

Snowdrop put her head out of the window and called out:

‘I may not let anyone in, the seven Dwarfs have forbidden me to do so.’

‘Are you afraid of being poisoned?’ asked the old woman. ‘See, I will cut this apple in half. I’ll eat the white cheek and you can eat the red.’

But the apple was so cunningly made that only the red cheek was poisonous. Snowdrop longed to eat the tempting fruit, and when she saw that the peasant woman was eating it herself, she couldn’t resist the temptation any longer, and stretching out her hand she took the poisonous half. But hardly had the first bite passed her lips than she fell down dead on the ground. Then the eyes of the cruel Queen sparkled with glee, and laughing aloud she cried:

‘As white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as ebony, this time the Dwarfs won’t be able to bring you back to life.’

When she got home she asked the mirror:

‘Mirror, mirror, hanging there,
Who in all the land’s most fair?’

and this time it replied:

‘You are most fair, my Lady Queen,
None fairer in the land, I ween.’

Then her jealous heart was at rest — at least, as much at rest as a jealous heart can ever be.

When the little Dwarfs came home in the evening they found Snowdrop lying on the ground, and she neither breathed nor stirred. They lifted her up, and looked round everywhere to see if they could find anything poisonous about. They unlaced her bodice, combed her hair, washed her with water and wine, but all in vain; the child was dead and remained dead. Then they placed her on a bier, and all the seven Dwarfs sat round it, weeping and sobbing for three whole days. At last they made up their minds to bury her, but she looked as blooming as a living being, and her cheeks were still such a lovely colour, that they said:

‘We can’t hide her away in the black ground.’

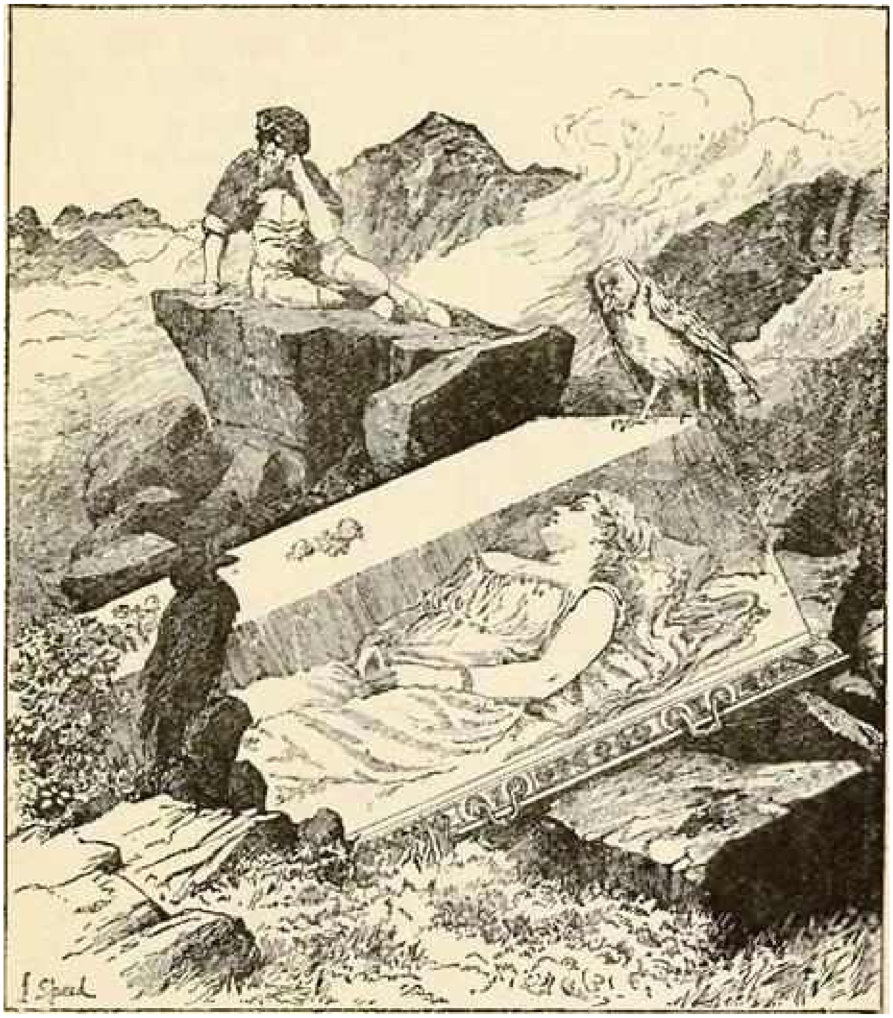

So they had a coffin made of transparent glass, and they laid her in it, and wrote on the lid in golden letters that she was a royal Princess. Then they put the coffin on the top of the mountain, and one of the Dwarfs always remained beside it and kept watch over it. And the very birds of the air came and bewailed Snowdrop’s death, first an owl, and then a raven, and last of all a little dove.

Snowdrop lay a long time in the coffin, and she always looked the same, just as if she were fast asleep, and she remained as white as snow, as red as blood, and her hair as black as ebony.

Now it happened one day that a Prince came to the wood and passed by the Dwarfs’ house. He saw the coffin on the hill, with the beautiful Snowdrop inside it, and when he had read what was written on it in golden letters, he said to the Dwarf:

‘Give me the coffin. I’ll give you whatever you like for it.’

But the Dwarf said: ‘No; we wouldn’t part with it for all the gold in the world.’

‘Well, then,’ he replied, ‘give it to me, because I can’t live without Snowdrop.

I will cherish and love it as my dearest possession.’

He spoke so sadly that the good Dwarfs had pity on him, and gave him the coffin, and the Prince made his servants bear it away on their shoulders. Now it happened that as they were going down the hill they stumbled over a bush, and jolted the coffin so violently that the poisonous bit of apple Snowdrop had swallowed fell out of her throat. She gradually opened her eyes, lifted up the lid of the coffin, and sat up alive and well.

‘Oh! dear me, where am I?’ she cried.

The Prince answered joyfully, ‘You are with me,’ and he told her all that had happened, adding, ‘I love you better than anyone in the whole wide world. Will you come with me to my father’s palace and be my wife?’

Snowdrop consented, and went with him, and the marriage was celebrated with great pomp and splendour.

Now Snowdrop’s wicked stepmother was one of the guests invited to the wedding feast. When she had dressed herself very gorgeously for the occasion, she went to the mirror, and said:

‘Mirror, mirror, hanging there,
Who in all the land’s most fair?’

and the mirror answered:

‘My Lady Queen, you are fair, ’tis true,
But Snowdrop is fairer far than you.’

When the wicked woman heard these words she uttered a curse, and was beside herself with rage and mortification. At first she didn’t want to go to the wedding at all, but at the same time she felt she would never be happy till she had seen the young Queen. As she entered Snowdrop recognised her, and nearly fainted with fear; but red-hot iron shoes had been prepared for the wicked old Queen, and she was made to get into them and dance till she fell down dead.(29)

(29) Grimm.

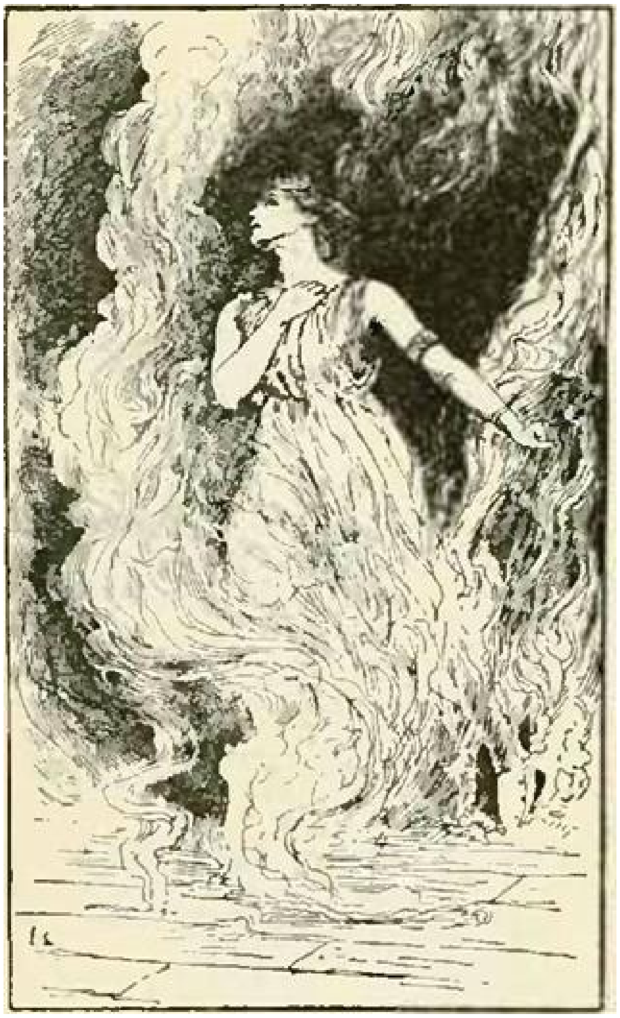

THE GOLDEN GOOSE

THERE was once a man who had three sons. The youngest of them was called Dullhead, and was sneered and jeered at and snubbed on every possible opportunity.

One day it happened that the eldest son wished to go into the forest to cut wood, and before he started his mother gave him a fine rich cake and a bottle of wine, so that he might be sure not to suffer from hunger or thirst.

When he reached the forest he met a little old grey man who wished him ‘Good-morning,’ and said: ‘Do give me a piece of that cake you have got in your pocket, and let me have a draught of your wine — I am so hungry and thirsty.’

But this clever son replied: ‘If I give you my cake and wine I shall have none left for myself; you just go your own way;’ and he left the little man standing there and went further on into the forest. There he began to cut down a tree, but before long he made a false stroke with his axe, and cut his own arm so badly that he was obliged to go home and have it bound up.

Then the second son went to the forest, and his mother gave him a good cake and a bottle of wine as she had to his elder brother. He too met the little old grey man, who begged him for a morsel of cake and a draught of wine.

But the second son spoke most sensibly too, and said: ‘Whatever I give to you I deprive myself of. Just go your own way, will you?’ Not long after his punishment overtook him, for no sooner had he struck a couple of blows on a tree with his axe, than he cut his leg so badly that he had to be carried home.

So then Dullhead said: ‘Father, let me go out and cut wood.’

But his father answered: ‘Both your brothers have injured themselves. You had better leave it alone; you know nothing about it.’

But Dullhead begged so hard to be allowed to go that at last his father said: ‘Very well, then — go. Perhaps when you have hurt yourself, you may learn to know better.’ His mother only gave him a very plain cake made with water and baked in the cinders, and a bottle of sour beer.

When he got to the forest, he too met the little grey old man, who greeted him and said: ‘Give me a piece of your cake and a draught from your bottle; I am so hungry and thirsty.’

And Dullhead replied: ‘I’ve only got a cinder-cake and some sour beer, but if you care to have that, let us sit down and eat.’

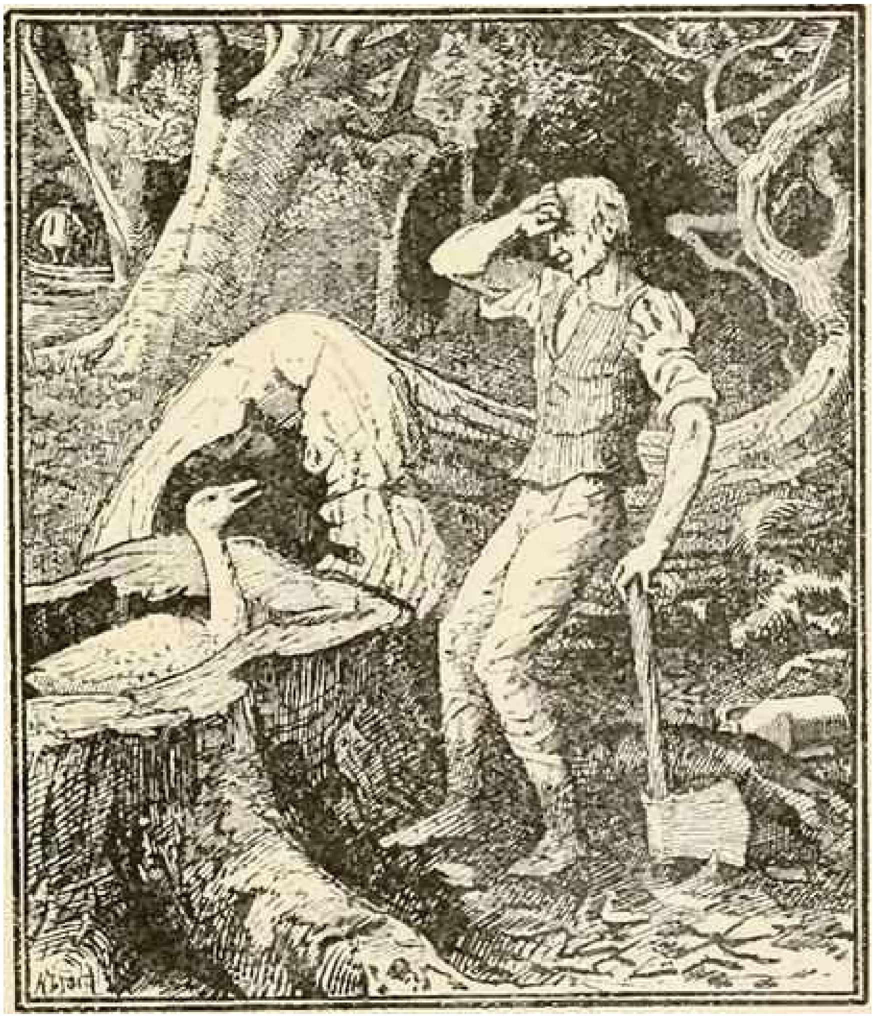

So they sat down, and when Dullhead brought out his cake he found it had turned into a fine rich cake, and the sour beer into excellent wine. Then they ate and drank, and when they had finished the little man said: ‘Now I will bring you luck, because you have a kind heart and are willing to share what you have with others. There stands an old tree; cut it down, and amongst its roots you’ll find something.’ With that the little man took leave.

Then Dullhead fell to at once to hew down the tree, and when it fell he found amongst its roots a goose, whose feathers were all of pure gold. He lifted it out, carried it off, and took it with him to an inn where he meant to spend the night.

Now the landlord of the inn had three daughters, and when they saw the goose they were filled with curiosity as to what this wonderful bird could be, and each longed to have one of its golden feathers.

The eldest thought to herself: ‘No doubt I shall soon find a good opportunity to pluck out one of its feathers,’ and the first time Dullhead happened to leave the room she caught hold of the goose by its wing. But, lo and behold! her fingers seemed to stick fast to the goose, and she could not take her hand away.

Soon after the second daughter came in, and thought to pluck a golden feather for herself too; but hardly had she touched her sister than she stuck fast as well. At last the third sister came with the same intentions, but the other two cried out: ‘Keep off! for Heaven’s sake, keep off!’

The younger sister could not imagine why she was to keep off, and thought to herself: ‘If they are both there, why should not I be there too?’

So she sprang to them; but no sooner had she touched one of them than she stuck fast to her. So they all three had to spend the night with the goose.

Next morning Dullhead tucked the goose under his arm and went off, without in the least troubling himself about the three girls who were hanging on to it. They just had to run after him right or left as best they could. In the middle of a field they met the parson, and when he saw this procession he cried: ‘For shame, you bold girls! What do you mean by running after a young fellow through the fields like that? Do you call that proper behaviour?’ And with that he caught the youngest girl by the hand to try and draw her away. But directly he touched her he hung on himself, and had to run along with the rest of them.

Not long after the clerk came that way, and was much surprised to see the parson following the footsteps of three girls. ‘Why, where is your reverence going so fast?’ cried he; ‘don’t forget there is to be a christening to-day;’ and he ran after him, caught him by the sleeve, and hung on to it himself: As the five of them trotted along in this fashion one after the other, two peasants were coming from their work with their hoes. On seeing them the parson called out and begged them to come and rescue him and the clerk. But no sooner did they touch the clerk than they stuck on too, and so there were seven of them running after Dullhead and his goose.

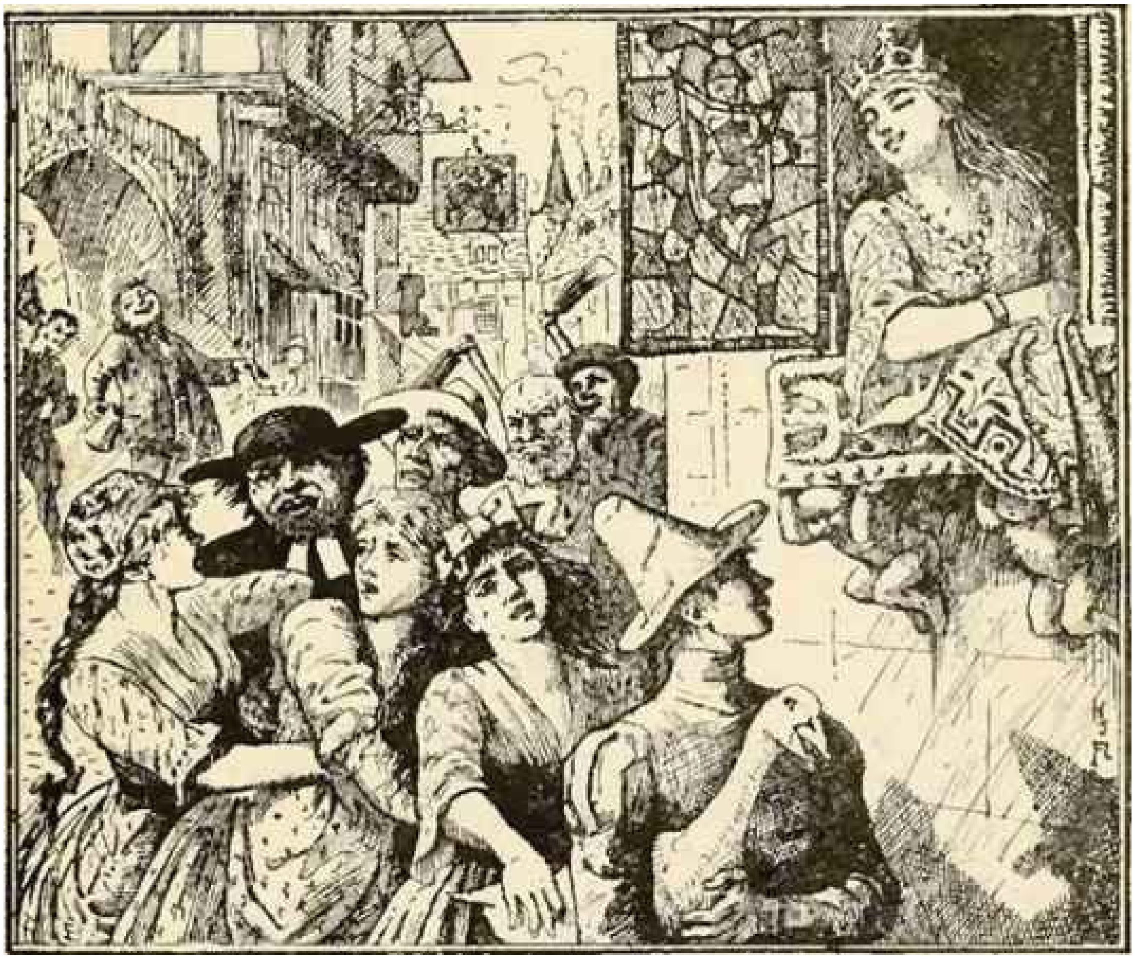

After a time they all came to a town where a King reigned whose daughter was so serious and solemn that no one could ever manage to make her laugh. So the King had decreed that whoever should succeed in making her laugh should marry her.

When Dullhead heard this he marched before the Princess with his goose and its appendages, and as soon as she saw these seven people continually running after each other she burst out laughing, and could not stop herself. Then Dullhead claimed her as his bride, but the King, who did not much fancy him as a son-in-law, made all sorts of objections, and told him he must first find a man who could drink up a whole cellarful of wine.

Dullhead bethought him of the little grey man, who could, he felt sure, help him; so he went off to the forest, and on the very spot where he had cut down the tree he saw a man sitting with a most dismal expression of face.

Dullhead asked him what he was taking so much to heart, and the man answered: ‘I don’t know how I am ever to quench this terrible thirst I am suffering from. Cold water doesn’t suit me at all. To be sure I’ve emptied a whole barrel of wine, but what is one drop on a hot stone?’

‘I think I can help you,’ said Dullhead. ‘Come with me, and you shall drink to your heart’s content.’ So he took him to the King’s cellar, and the man sat down before the huge casks and drank and drank till he drank up the whole contents of the cellar before the day closed.

Then Dullhead asked once more for his bride, but the King felt vexed at the idea of a stupid fellow whom people called ‘Dullhead’ carrying off his daughter, and he began to make fresh conditions. He required Dullhead to find a man who could eat a mountain of bread. Dullhead did not wait to consider long but went straight off to the forest, and there on the same spot sat a man who was drawing in a strap as tight as he could round his body, and making a most woeful face the while. Said he: ‘I’ve eaten up a whole oven full of loaves, but what’s the good of that to anyone who is as hungry as I am? I declare my stomach feels quite empty, and I must draw my belt tight if I’m not to die of starvation.’

Dullhead was delighted, and said: ‘Get up and come with me, and you shall have plenty to eat,’ and he brought him to the King’s Court.

Now the King had given orders to have all the flour in his kingdom brought together, and to have a huge mountain baked of it. But the man from the wood just took up his stand before the mountain and began to eat, and in one day it had all vanished.

For the third time Dullhead asked for his bride, but again the King tried to make some evasion, and demanded a ship ‘which could sail on land or water! When you come sailing in such a ship,’ said he, ‘you shall have my daughter without further delay.’

Again Dullhead started off to the forest, and there he found the little old grey man with whom he had shared his cake, and who said: ‘I have eaten and I have drunk for you, and now I will give you the ship. I have done all this for you because you were kind and merciful to me.’

Then he gave Dullhead a ship which could sail on land or water, and when the King saw it he felt he could no longer refuse him his daughter.

So they celebrated the wedding with great rejoicings; and after the King’s death Dullhead succeeded to the kingdom, and lived happily with his wife for many years after.(30)

(30) Grimm.

THE SEVEN FOALS

THERE was once upon a time a couple of poor folks who lived in a wretched hut, far away from everyone else, in a wood. They only just managed to live from hand to mouth, and had great difficulty in doing even so much as that, but they had three sons, and the youngest of them was called Cinderlad, for he did nothing else but lie and poke about among the ashes.

One day the eldest lad said that he would go out to earn his living; he soon got leave to do that, and set out on his way into the world. He walked on and on for the whole day, and when night was beginning to fall he came to a royal palace. The King was standing outside on the steps, and asked where he was going.

‘Oh, I am going about seeking a place, my father,’ said the youth.

‘Wilt thou serve me, and watch my seven foals?’ asked the King. ‘If thou canst watch them for a whole day and tell me at night what they eat and drink, thou shalt have the Princess and half my kingdom, but if thou canst not, I will cut three red stripes on thy back.’

The youth thought that it was very easy work to watch the foals, and that he could do it well enough.

Next morning, when day was beginning to dawn, the King’s Master of the Horse let out the seven foals; and they ran away, and the youth after them just as it chanced, over hill and dale, through woods end bogs. When the youth had run thus for a long time he began to be tired, and when he had held on a little longer he was heartily weary of watching at all, and at the same moment he came to a cleft in a rock where an old woman was sitting spinning with her distaff in her hand.

As soon as she caught sight of the youth, who was running after the foals till the perspiration streamed down his face, she cried:

‘Come hither, come hither, my handsome son, and let me comb your hair for you.’

The lad was willing enough, so he sat down in the cleft of the rock beside the old hag, and laid his head on her knees, and she combed his hair all day while he lay there and gave himself up to idleness.

When evening was drawing near, the youth wanted to go.

‘I may just as well go straight home again,’ said he, ‘for it is no use to go to the King’s palace.’

‘Wait till it is dusk,’ said the old hag, ‘and then the King’s foals will pass by this place again, and you can run home with them; no one will ever know that you have been lying here all day instead of watching the foals.’

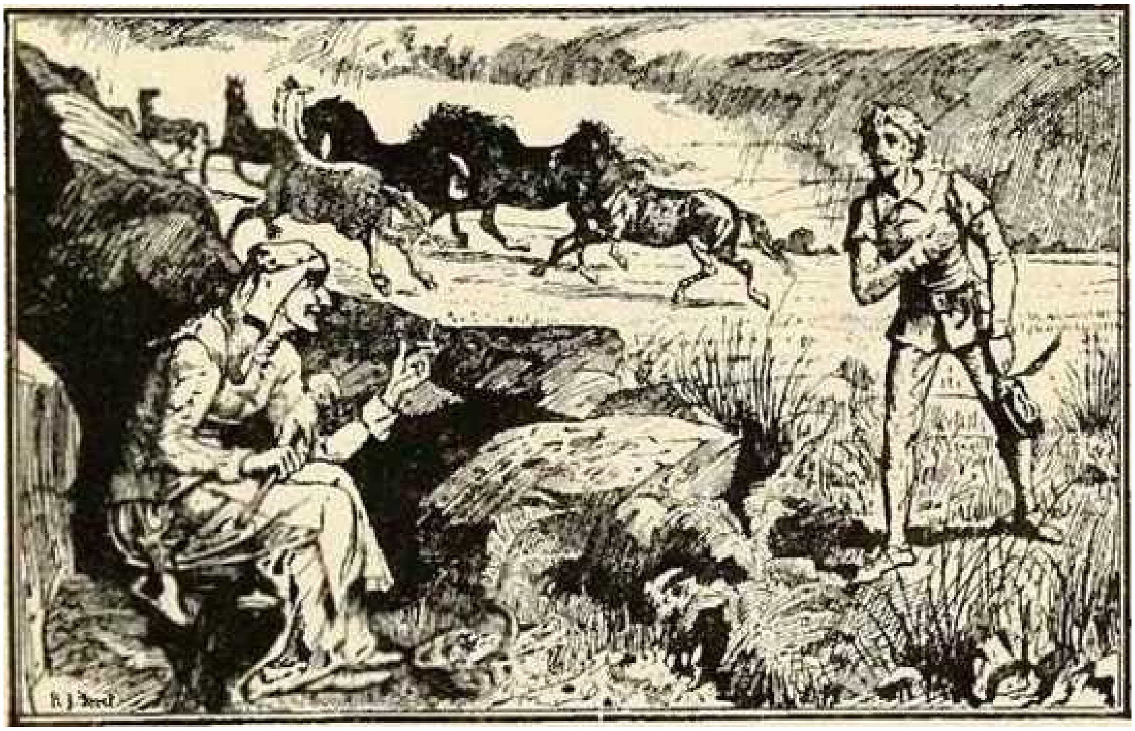

So when they came she gave the lad a bottle of water and a bit of moss, and told him to show these to the King and say that this was what his seven foals ate and drank.

‘Hast thou watched faithfully and well the whole day long?’ said the King, when the lad came into his presence in the evening.

‘Yes, that I have!’ said the youth.

‘Then you are able to tell me what it is that my seven foals eat and drink,’ said the King.

So the youth produced the bottle of water and the bit of moss which he had got from the old woman, saying:

‘Here you see their meat, and here you see their drink.’

Then the King knew how his watching had been done, and fell into such a rage that he ordered his people to chase the youth back to his own home at once; but first they were to cut three red stripes in his back, and rub salt into them.

When the youth reached home again, anyone can imagine what a state of mind he was in. He had gone out once to seek a place, he said, but never would he do such a thing again.

Next day the second son said that he would now go out into the world to seek his fortune. His father and mother said ‘No,’ and bade him look at his brother’s back, but the youth would not give up his design, and stuck to it, and after a long, long time he got leave to go, and set forth on his way. When he had walked all day he too came to the King’s palace, and the King was standing outside on the steps, and asked where he was going; and when the youth replied that he was going about in search of a place, the King said that he might enter into his service and watch his seven foals. Then the King promised him the same punishment and the same reward that he had promised his brother.

The youth at once consented to this and entered into the King’s service, for he thought he could easily watch the foals and inform the King what they ate and drank.

In the grey light of dawn the Master of the Horse let out the seven foals, and off they went again over hill and dale, and off went the lad after them. But all went with him as it had gone with his brother. When he had run after the foals for a long, long time and was hot and tired, he passed by a cleft in the rock where an old woman was sitting spinning with a distaff, and she called to him:

‘Come hither, come hither, my handsome son, and let me comb your hair.’

The youth liked the thought of this, let the foals run where they chose, and seated himself in the cleft of the rock by the side of the old hag. So there he sat with his head on her lap, taking his ease the livelong day.

The foals came back in the evening, and then he too got a bit of moss and a bottle of water from the old hag, which things he was to show to the King. But when the King asked the youth: ‘Canst thou tell me what my seven foals eat and drink?’ and the youth showed him the bit of moss and the bottle of water, and said: ‘Yes here may you behold their meat, and here their drink,’ the King once more became wroth, and commanded that three red stripes should be cut on the lad’s back, that salt should be strewn upon them, and that he should then be instantly chased back to his own home. So when the youth got home again he too related all that had happened to him, and he too said that he had gone out in search of a place once, but that never would he do it again.

On the third day Cinderlad wanted to set out. He had a fancy to try to watch the seven foals himself, he said.

The two others laughed at him, and mocked him. ‘What I when all went so ill with us, do you suppose that you are going to succeed? You look like succeeding — you who have never done anything else but lie and poke about among the ashes!’ said they.

‘Yes, I will go too,’ said Cinderlad, ‘for I have taken it into my head.’

The two brothers laughed at him, and his father and mother begged him not to go, but all to no purpose, and Cinderlad set out on his way. So when he had walked the whole day, he too came to the King’s palace as darkness began to fall.

There stood the King outside on the steps, and he asked whither he was bound.

‘I am walking about in search of a place,’ said Cinderlad.

‘From whence do you come, then?’ inquired the King, for by this time he wanted to know a little more about the men before he took any of them into his service.

So Cinderlad told him whence he came, and that he was brother to the two who had watched the seven foals for the King, and then he inquired if he might be allowed to try to watch them on the following day.

‘Oh, shame on them!’ said the King, for it enraged him even to think of them. ‘If thou art brother to those two, thou too art not good for much. I have had enough of such fellows.’

‘Well, but as I have come here, you might just give me leave to make the attempt,’ said Cinderlad.

‘Oh, very well, if thou art absolutely determined to have thy back flayed, thou may’st have thine own way if thou wilt,’ said the King.

‘I would much rather have the Princess,’ said Cinderlad.

Next morning, in the grey light of dawn, the Master of the Horse let out the seven foals again, and off they set over hill and dale, through woods and bogs, and off went Cinderlad after them. When he had run thus for a long time, he too came to the cleft in the rock. There the old hag was once more sitting spinning from her distaff, and she cried to Cinderlad;

‘Come hither, come hither, my handsome son, and let me comb your hair for you.’

‘Come to me, then; come to me!’ said Cinderlad, as he passed by jumping and running, and keeping tight hold of one of the foals’ tails.

When he had got safely past the cleft in the rock, the youngest foal said:

‘Get on my back, for we have still a long way to go.’ So the lad did this.

And thus they journeyed onwards a long, long way.

‘Dost thou see anything now?’ said the Foal.

‘No,’ said Cinderlad.

So they journeyed onwards a good bit farther.

‘Dost thou see anything now?’ asked the Foal.

‘Oh, no,’ said the lad.

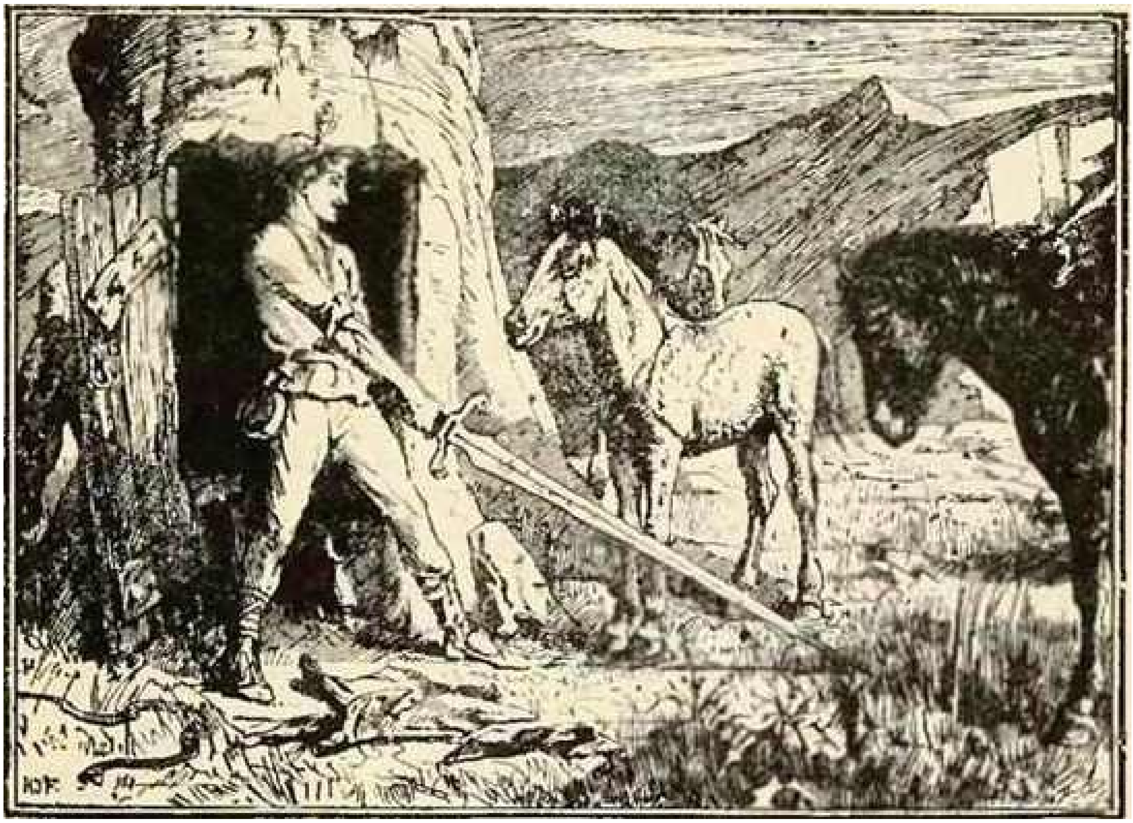

When they had gone thus for a long, long way, the Foal again asked:

‘Dost thou see anything now?’

‘Yes, now I see something that is white,’ said Cinderlad. ‘It looks like the trunk of a great thick birch tree.’

‘Yes, that is where we are to go in,’ said the Foal.

When they got to the trunk, the eldest foal broke it down on one side, and then they saw a door where the trunk had been standing, and inside this there was a small room, and in the room there was scarcely anything but a small fire-place and a couple of benches, but behind the door hung a great rusty sword and a small pitcher.

‘Canst thou wield that sword?’ asked the Foal.

Cinderlad tried, but could not do it; so he had to take a draught from the pitcher, and then one more, and after that still another, and then he was able to wield the sword with perfect ease.

‘Good,’ said the Foal; ‘and now thou must take the sword away with thee, and with it shalt thou cut off the heads of all seven of us on thy wedding-day, and then we shall become princes again as we were before. For we are brothers of the Princess whom thou art to have when thou canst tell the King what we eat and drink, but there is a mighty Troll who has cast a spell over us. When thou hast cut off our heads, thou must take the greatest care to lay each head at the tail
]

of the body to which it belonged before, and then the spell which the Troll has cast upon us will lose all its power.’

Cinderlad promised to do this, and then they went on farther.

When they had travelled a long, long way, the Foal said:

‘Dost thou see anything?’

‘No,’ said Cinderlad.

So they went on a great distance farther.

‘And now?’ inquired the Foal, ‘seest thou nothing now?’

‘Alas! no,’ said Cinderlad.

So they travelled onwards again, for many and many a mile, over hill and dale.

‘Now, then,’ said the Foal, ‘dost thou not see anything now?’

‘Yes,’ said Cinderlad; ‘now I see something like a bluish streak, far, far away.’

‘That is a river,’ said the Foal, ‘and we have to cross it.’

There was a long, handsome bridge over the river, and when they had got to the other side of it they again travelled on a long, long way, and then once more the Foal inquired if Cinderlad saw anything. Yes, this time he saw something that looked black, far, far away, and was rather like a church tower.

‘Yes,’ said the Foal, ‘we shall go into that.’

When the Foals got into the churchyard they turned into men and looked like the sons of a king, and their clothes were so magnificent that they shone with splendour, and they went into the church and received bread and wine from the priest, who was standing before the altar, and Cinderlad went in too. But when the priest had laid his hands on the princes and read the blessing, they went out of the church again, and Cinderlad went out too, but he took with him a flask of wine and some consecrated bread. No sooner had the seven princes come out into the churchyard than they became foals again, and Cinderlad got upon the back of the youngest, and they returned by the way they had come, only they went much, much faster.

First they went over the bridge, and then past the trunk of the birch tree, and then past the old hag who sat in the cleft of the rock spinning, and they went by so fast that Cinderlad could not hear what the old hag screeched after him, but just heard enough to understand that she was terribly enraged.

It was all but dark when they got back to the King at nightfall, and he himself was standing in the courtyard waiting for them.

‘Hast thou watched well and faithfully the whole day?’ said the King to Cinderlad.

‘I have done my best,’ replied Cinderlad.

‘Then thou canst tell me what my seven foals eat and drink?’ asked the King.

So Cinderlad pulled out the consecrated bread and the flask of wine, and showed them to the King. ‘Here may you behold their meat, and here their drink,’ said he.

‘Yes, diligently and faithfully hast thou watched,’ said the King, ‘and thou shalt have the Princess and half the kingdom.’

So all was made ready for the wedding, and the King said that it was to be so stately and magnificent that everyone should hear of it, and everyone inquire about it.

But when they sat down to the marriage-feast, the bridegroom arose and went down to the stable, for he said that he had forgotten something which he must go and look to. When he got there, he did what the foals had bidden him, and cut off the heads of all the seven. First the eldest, and then the second, and so on according to their age, and he was extremely careful to lay each head at the tail of the foal to which it had belonged, and when that was done, all the foals became princes again. When he returned to the marriage-feast with the seven princes, the King was so joyful that he both kissed Cinderlad and clapped him on the back, and his bride was still more delighted with him than she had been before.

‘Half my kingdom is thine already,’ said the King, ‘and the other half shall be thine after my death, for my sons can get countries and kingdoms for themselves now that they have become princes again.’

Therefore, as all may well believe, there was joy and merriment at that wedding.(31)

(31) From J. Moe.

THE MARVELLOUS MUSICIAN

THERE was once upon a time a marvellous musician. One day he was wandering through a wood all by himself, thinking now of one thing, now of another, till there was nothing else left to think about. Then he said to himself: ‘Time hangs very heavily on my hands when I’m all alone in the wood. I must try and find a pleasant companion.’

So he took his fiddle out, and fiddled till he woke the echoes round. After a time a wolf came through the thicket and trotted up to the musician.

‘Oh! it’s a Wolf, is it?’ said he. ‘I’ve not the smallest wish for his society.’

But the Wolf approached him and said:

‘Oh, my dear musician, how beautifully you play! I wish you’d teach me how it’s done.’

‘That’s easily learned,’ answered the fiddler; ‘you must only do exactly as I tell you.’

‘Of course I will,’ replied the Wolf. ‘I can promise that you will find me a most apt pupil.’

So they joined company and went on their way together, and after a time they came to an old oak tree, which was hollow and had a crack in the middle of the trunk.

‘Now,’ said the Musician, ‘if you want to learn to fiddle, here’s your chance. Lay your front paws in this crack.’

The Wolf did as he was told, and the Musician quickly seized a stone, and wedged both his fore paws so firmly into the crack that he was held there, a fast prisoner.

‘Wait there till I return,’ said the Fiddler, and he went on his way.

After a time he said to himself again:

‘Time hangs very heavily on my hands when I’m all alone in the wood; I must try and find a companion.’

So he drew out his fiddle, and fiddled away lustily. Presently a fox slunk through the trees.

‘Aha I what have we here?’ said the Musician. ‘A fox; well, I haven’t the smallest desire for his company.’

The Fox came straight up to him and said:

‘My dear friend, how beautifully you play the fiddle; I would like to learn how you do it.’

‘Nothing easier,’ said the Musician, ‘if you’ll promise to do exactly as I tell you.’

‘Certainly,’ answered the Fox, ‘you have only to say the word.’

‘Well, then, follow me,’ replied the Fiddler.

When they had gone a bi of the way, they came to a path with high trees on each side. Here the Musician halted, bent a stout hazel bough down to the ground from one side of the path, and put his foot on the end of it to keep it down. Then he bent a branch down from the other side and said: ‘Give me your left front paw, my little Fox, if you really wish to learn how it’s done.’

The Fox did as he was told, and the Musician tied his front paw to the end of one of the branches.

‘Now, my friend,’ he said, ‘give me your right paw.’

This he bound to the other branch, and having carefully seen that his knots were all secure, he stepped off the ends of the branches, and they sprang back, leaving the poor Fox suspended in mid-air.

‘Just you wait where you are till I return,’ said the Musician, and he went on his way again.

Once more he said to himself:

‘Time hangs heavily on my hands when I’m all alone in the wood; I must try and find another companion.’

So he took out his fiddle and played as merrily as before. This time a little hare came running up at the sound.

‘Oh! here comes a hare,’ said the Musician; ‘I’ve not the smallest desire for his company.’

‘How beautifully you play, dear Mr. Fiddler,’ said the little Hare. ‘I wish I could learn how you do it.’

‘It’s easily learnt,’ answered the Musician; ‘just do exactly as I tell you.’

‘That I will,’ said the Hare, ‘you will find me a most attentive pupil.’

They went on a bit together, till they came to a thin part of the wood, where they found an aspen tree growing. The Musician bound a long cord round the little Hare’s neck, the other end of which he fastened to the tree.

‘Now, my merry little friend,’ said the Musician, ‘run twenty times round the tree.’

The little Hare obeyed, and when it had run twenty times round the tree, the cord had twisted itself twenty times round the trunk, so that the poor little beast was held a fast prisoner, and it might bite and tear as much as it liked, it couldn’t free itself, and the cord only cut its tender neck.

‘Wait there till I return,’ said the Musician, and went on his way.

In the meantime the Wolf had pulled and bitten and scratched at the stone, till at last he succeeded in getting his paws out. Full of anger, he hurried after the Musician, determined when he met him to tear him to pieces. When the Fox saw him running by, he called out as loud as he could: ‘Brother Wolf, come to my rescue, the Musician has deceived me too.’

The Wolf pulled the branches down, bit the cord in two, and set the Fox free. So they went on their way together, both vowing vengeance on the Musician. They found the poor imprisoned little Hare, and having set him free also, they all set out to look for their enemy.

During this time the Musician had once more played his fiddle, and had been more fortunate in the result. The sounds pierced to the ears of a poor woodman, who instantly left his work, and with his hatchet under his arm came to listen to the music.

‘At last I’ve got a proper sort of companion,’ said the Musician, ‘for it was a human being I wanted all along, and not a wild animal.’

And he began playing so enchantingly that the poor man stood there as if bewitched, and his heart leapt for joy as he listened.

And as he stood thus, the Wolf and Fox and little Hare came up, and the woodman saw at once that they meant mischief. He lifted his glittering axe and placed himself in front of the Musician, as much as to say: ‘If you touch a hair of his head, beware, for you will have to answer for it to me.’

Then the beasts were frightened, and they all three ran back into the wood, and the Musician played the woodman one of his best tunes, by way of thanks, and then continued his way.(32) (32) Grimm.

THE STORY OF SIGURD

(This is a very old story: the Danes who used to fight with the English in King Alfred’s time knew this story. They have carved on the rocks pictures of some of the things that happen in the tale, and those carvings may still be seen. Because it is so old and so beautiful the story is told here again, but it has a sad ending — indeed it is all sad, and all about fighting and killing, as might be expected from the Danes.)

ONCE upon a time there was a King in the North who had won many wars, but now he was old. Yet he took a new wife, and then another Prince, who wanted to have married her, came up against him with a great army. The old King went out and fought bravely, but at last his sword broke, and he was wounded and his men fled. But in the night, when the battle was over, his young wife came out and searched for him among the slain, and at last she found him, and asked whether he might be healed. But he said ‘No,’ his luck was gone, his sword was broken, and he must die. And he told her that she would have a son, and that son would be a great warrior, and would avenge him on the other King, his enemy. And he bade her keep the broken pieces of the sword, to make a new sword for his son, and that blade should be called Gram.

Then he died. And his wife called her maid to her and said, ‘Let us change clothes, and you shall be called by my name, and I by yours, lest the enemy finds us.’

So this was done, and they hid in a wood, but there some strangers met them and carried them off in a ship to Denmark. And when they were brought before the King, he thought the maid looked like a Queen, and the Queen like a maid. So he asked the Queen, ‘How do you know in the dark of night whether the hours are wearing to the morning?’

And she said:

‘I know because, when I was younger, I used to have to rise and light the fires, and still I waken at the same time.’

‘A strange Queen to light the fires,’ thought the King.

Then he asked the Queen, who was dressed like a maid, ‘How do you know in the dark of night whether the hours are wearing near the dawn?’

‘My father gave me a gold ring,’ said she, ‘and always, ere the dawning, it grows cold on my finger.’

‘A rich house where the maids wore gold,’ said the King. ‘Truly you are no maid, but a King’s daughter.’

So he treated her royally, and as time went on she had a son called Sigurd, a beautiful boy and very strong. He had a tutor to be with him, and once the tutor bade him go to the King and ask for a horse.

‘Choose a horse for yourself,’ said the King; and Sigurd went to the wood, and there he met an old man with a white beard, and said, ‘Come! help me in horse-choosing.’

Then the old man said, ‘Drive all the horses into the river, and choose the one that swims across.’

So Sigurd drove them, and only one swam across. Sigurd chose him: his name was Grani, and he came of Sleipnir’s breed, and was the best horse in the world. For Sleipnir was the horse of Odin, the God of the North, and was as swift as the wind.

But a day or two later his tutor said to Sigurd, ‘There is a great treasure of gold hidden not far from here, and it would become you to win it.’

But Sigurd answered, ‘I have heard stories of that treasure, and I know that the dragon Fafnir guards it, and he is so huge and wicked that no man dares to go near him.’

‘He is no bigger than other dragons,’ said the tutor, ‘and if you were as brave as your father you would not fear him.’

‘I am no coward,’ says Sigurd; ‘why do you want me to fight with this dragon?’

Then his tutor, whose name was Regin, told him that all this great hoard of red gold had once belonged to his own father. And his father had three sons — the first was Fafnir, the Dragon; the next was Otter, who could put on the shape of an otter when he liked; and the next was himself, Regin, and he was a great smith and maker of swords.

Now there was at that time a dwarf called Andvari, who lived in a pool beneath a waterfall, and there he had hidden a great hoard of gold. And one day Otter had been fishing there, and had killed a salmon and eaten it, and was sleeping, like an otter, on a stone. Then someone came by, and threw a stone at the otter and killed it, and flayed off the skin, and took it to the house of Otter’s father. Then he knew his son was dead, and to punish the person who had killed him he said he must have the Otter’s skin filled with gold, and covered all over with red gold, or it should go worse with him. Then the person who had killed Otter went down and caught the Dwarf who owned all the treasure and took it from him.

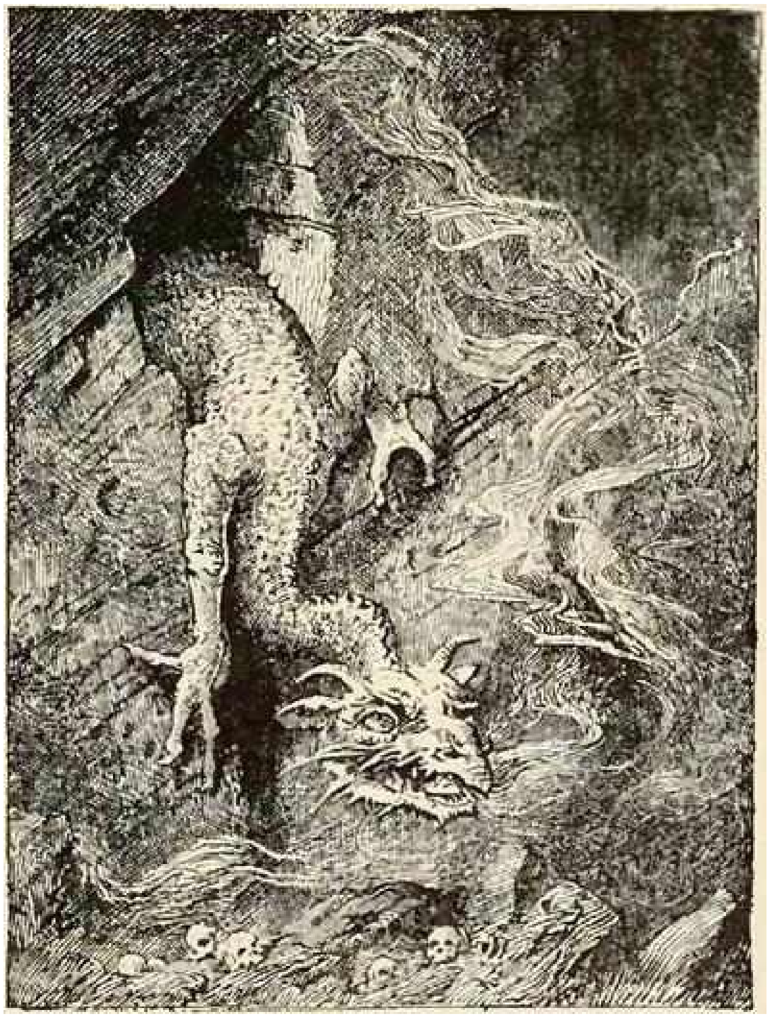

Only one ring was left, which the Dwarf wore, and even that was taken from him.

Then the poor Dwarf was very angry, and he prayed that the gold might never bring any but bad luck to all the men who might own it, for ever.

Then the otter skin was filled with gold and covered with gold, all but one hair, and that was covered with the poor Dwarf's last ring.

But it brought good luck to nobody. First Fafnir, the Dragon, killed his own father, and then he went and wallowed on the gold, and would let his brother have none, and no man dared go near it.

When Sigurd heard the story he said to Regin:

'Make me a good sword that I may kill this Dragon.'

So Regin made a sword, and Sigurd tried it with a blow on a lump of iron, and the sword broke.

Another sword he made, and Sigurd broke that too.

Then Sigurd went to his mother, and asked for the broken pieces of his father's blade, and gave them to Regin. And he hammered and wrought them into a new sword, so sharp that fire seemed to burn along its edges.

Sigurd tried this blade on the lump of iron, and it did not break, but split the iron in two. Then he threw a lock of wool into the river, and when it floated down against the sword it was cut into two pieces. So Sigurd said that sword would do. But before he went against the Dragon he led an army to fight the men who had killed his father, and he slew their King, and took all his wealth, and went home.

When he had been at home a few days, he rode out with Regin one morning to the heath where the Dragon used to lie. Then he saw the track which the Dragon made when he went to a cliff to drink, and the track was as if a great river had rolled along and left a deep valley.

Then Sigurd went down into that deep place, and dug many pits in it, and in one of the pits he lay hidden with his sword drawn. There he waited, and presently the earth began to shake with the weight of the Dragon as he crawled to the water. And a cloud of venom flew before him as he snorted and roared, so that it would have been death to stand before him.

But Sigurd waited till half of him had crawled over the pit, and then he thrust the sword Gram right into his very heart.

Then the Dragon lashed with his tail till stones broke and trees crashed about him.

Then he spoke, as he died, and said:

‘Whoever thou art that hast slain me this gold shall be thy ruin, and the ruin of all who own it.’

Sigurd said:

‘I would touch none of it if by losing it I should never die. But all men die, and no brave man lets death frighten him from his desire. Die thou, Fafnir,’ and then Fafnir died.

And after that Sigurd was called Fafnir’s Bane, and Dragonslayer.

Then Sigurd rode back, and met Regin, and Regin asked him to roast Fafnir’s heart and let him taste of it.

So Sigurd put the heart of Fafnir on a stake, and roasted it. But it chanced that he touched it with his finger, and it burned him. Then he put his finger in his mouth, and so tasted the heart of Fafnir.

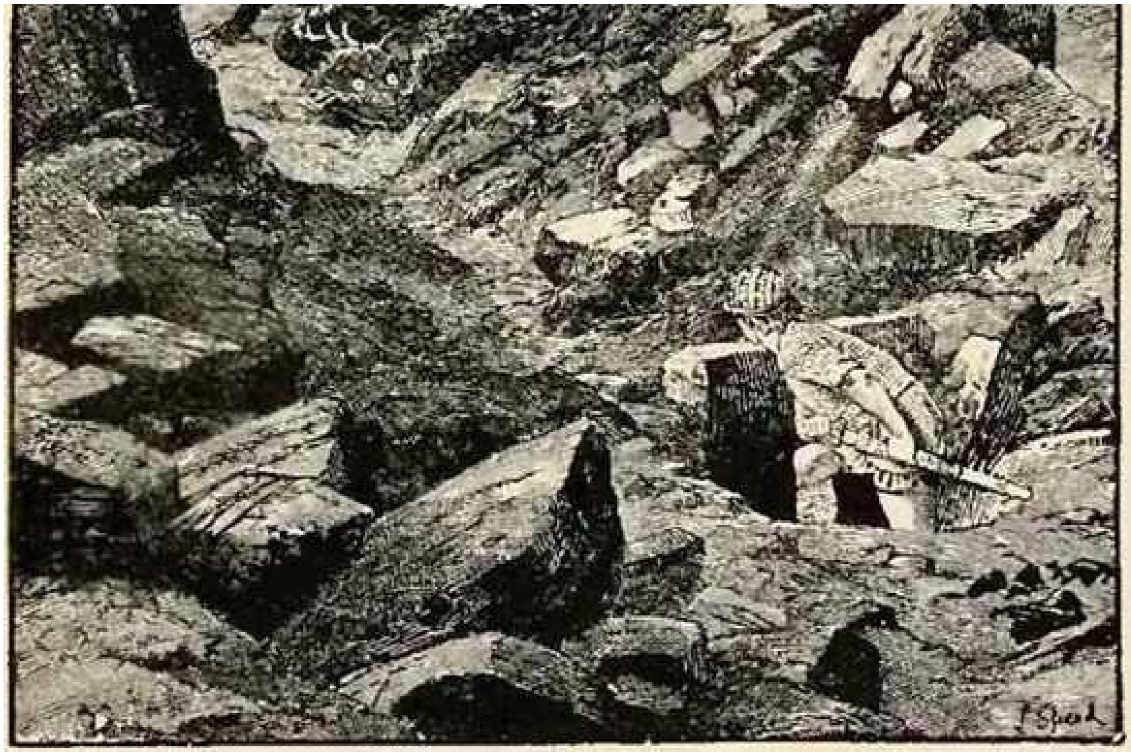

Then immediately he understood the language of birds, and he heard the Woodpeckers say:

‘There is Sigurd roasting Fafnir’s heart for another, when he should taste of it himself and learn all wisdom.’

The next bird said:

‘There lies Regin, ready to betray Sigurd, who trusts him.’

The third bird said:

‘Let him cut off Regin’s head, and keep all the gold to himself.’

The fourth bird said:

‘That let him do, and then ride over Hindfell, to the place where Brynhild sleeps.’

When Sigurd heard all this, and how Regin was plotting to betray him, he cut off Regin’s head with one blow of the sword Gram.

Then all ‘he birds broke out singing:

‘We know a fair maid,
A fair maiden sleeping;
Sigurd, be not afraid,
Sigurd, win thou the maid
Fortune is keeping.

‘High over Hindfell

Red fire is flaming,
There doth the maiden dwell
She that should love thee well,
Meet for thy taming.

‘There must she sleep till thou
Comest for her waking
Rise up and ride, for now
Sure she will swear the vow
Fearless of breaking.’

Then Sigurd remembered how the story went that somewhere, far away, there was a beautiful lady enchanted. She was under a spell, so that she must always sleep in a castle surrounded by flaming fire; there she must sleep for ever till there came a knight who would ride through the fire and waken her. There he determined to go, but first he rode right down the horrible trail of Fafnir. And Fafnir had lived in a cave with iron doors, a cave dug deep down in the earth, and full of gold bracelets, and crowns, and rings; and there, too, Sigurd found the Helm of Dread, a golden helmet, and whoever wears it is invisible. All these he piled on the back of the good horse Grani, and then he rode south to Hindfell.

Now it was night, and on the crest of the hill Sigurd saw a red fire blazing up into the sky, and within the flame a castle, and a banner on the topmost tower. Then he set the horse Grani at the fire, and he leaped through it lightly, as if it had been through the heather. So Sigurd went within the castle door, and there he saw someone sleeping, clad all in armour. Then he took the helmet off the head of the sleeper, and behold, she was a most beautiful lady. And she wakened and said, ‘Ah! is it Sigurd, Sigmund’s son, who has broken the curse, and comes here to waken me at last?’

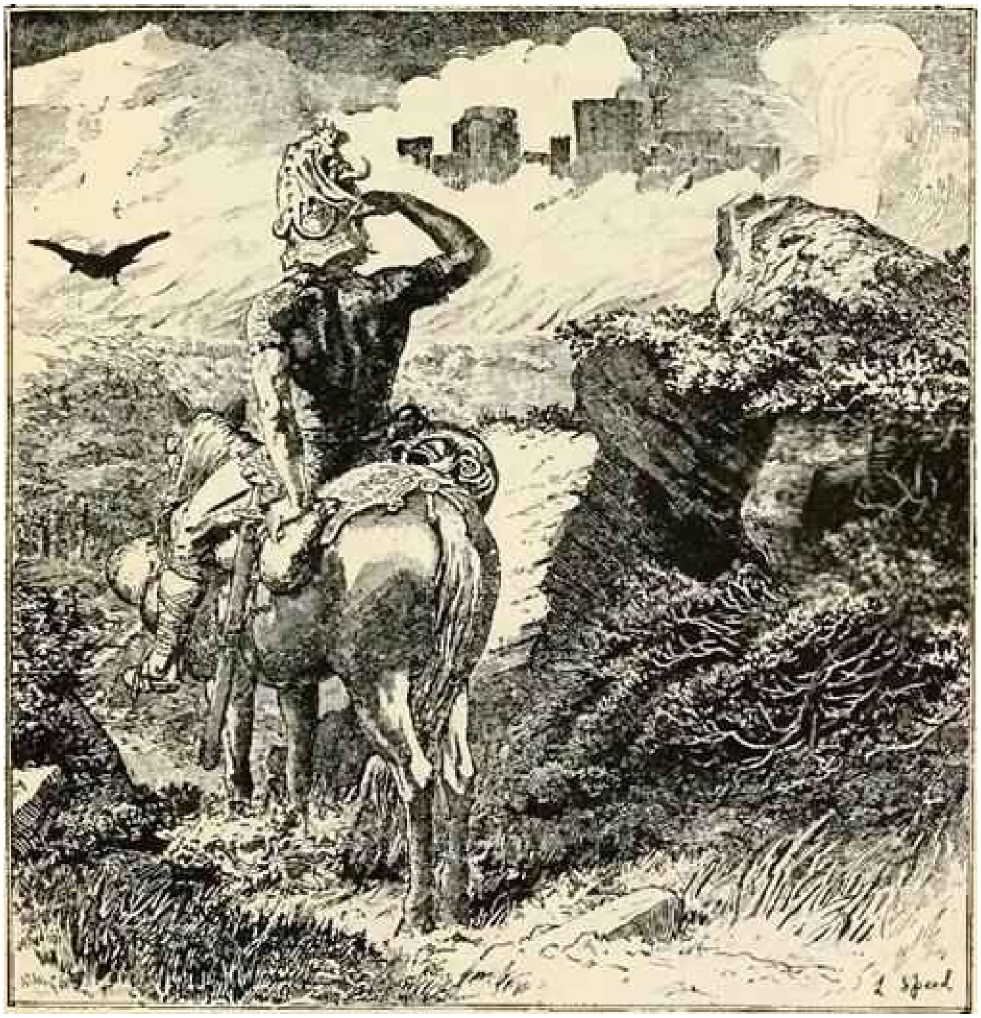

This curse came upon her when the thorn of the tree of sleep ran into her hand long ago as a punishment because she had displeased Odin the God. Long ago, too, she had vowed never to marry a man who knew fear, and dared not ride through the fence of flaming fire. For she was a warrior maid herself, and went armed into the battle like a man. But now she and Sigurd loved each other, and promised to be true to each other, and he gave her a ring, and it was the last ring taken from the dwarf Andvari. Then Sigurd rode away, and he came to the house of a King who had a fair daughter. Her name was Gudrun, and her mother was a witch. Now Gudrun fell in love with Sigurd, but he was always talking of Brynhild, how beautiful she was and how dear. So one day Gudrun’s witch mother put poppy and forgetful drugs in a magical cup, and bade Sigurd drink to her health, and he drank, and instantly he forgot poor Brynhild and he loved Gudrun, and they were married with great rejoicings.

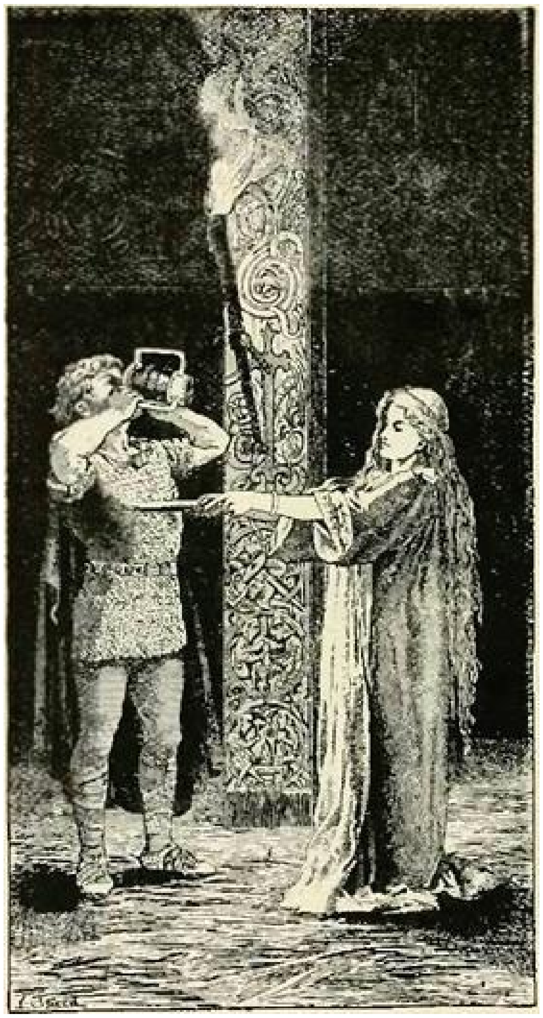

Now the witch, the mother of Gudrun, wanted her son Gunnar to marry Brynhild, and she bade him ride out with Sigurd and go and woo her. So forth they rode to her father's house, for Brynhild had quite gone out of Sigurd's mind by reason of the witch's wine, but she remembered him and loved him still. Then Brynhild's father told Gunnar that she would marry none but him who could ride the flame in front of her enchanted tower, and thither they rode, and Gunnar set his horse at the flame, but he would not face it. Then Gunnar tried Sigurd's horse Grani, but he would not move with Gunnar on his back. Then Gunnar remembered witchcraft that his mother had taught him, and by his magic he made Sigurd look exactly like himself, and he looked exactly like Gunnar. Then Sigurd, in the shape of Gunnar and in his mail, mounted on Grani, and Grani leaped the fence of fire, and Sigurd went in and found Brynhild, but he did not remember her yet, because of the forgetful medicine in the cup of the witch's wine.

Now Brynhild had no help but to promise she would be his wife, the wife of Gunnar as she supposed, for Sigurd wore Gunnar's shape, and she had sworn to wed whoever should ride the flames. And he gave her a ring, and she gave him back the ring he had given her before in his own shape as Sigurd, and it was the last ring of that poor dwarf Andvari. Then he rode out again, and he and Gunnar changed shapes, and each was himself again, and they went home to the witch Queen's, and Sigurd gave the dwarf's ring to his wife, Gudrun. And Brynhild went to her father, and said that a King had come called Gunnar, and had ridden the fire, and she must marry him. 'Yet I thought,' she said, 'that no man could have done this deed but Sigurd, Fafnir's bane, who was my true love. But he has forgotten me, and my promise I must keep.'

So Gunnar and Brynhild were married, though it was not Gunnar but Sigurd in Gunnar's shape, that had ridden the fire.

And when the wedding was over and all the feast, then the magic of the witch's wine went out of Sigurd's brain, and he remembered all. He remembered how he had freed Brynhild from the spell, and how she was his own true love, and how he had forgotten and had married another woman, and won Brynhild to be the wife of another man.

But he was brave, and he spoke not a word of it to the others to make them unhappy. Still he could not keep away the curse which was to come on every one who owned the treasure of the dwarf Andvari, and his fatal golden ring.

And the curse soon came upon all of them. For one day, when Brynhild and Gudrun were bathing, Brynhild waded farthest out into the river, and said she did that to show she was Guirun's superior. For her husband, she said, had ridden through the flame when no other man dared face it.

Then Gudrun was very angry, and said that it was Sigurd, not Gunnar, who had ridden the flame, and had received from Brynhild that fatal ring, the ring of the dwarf Andvari.

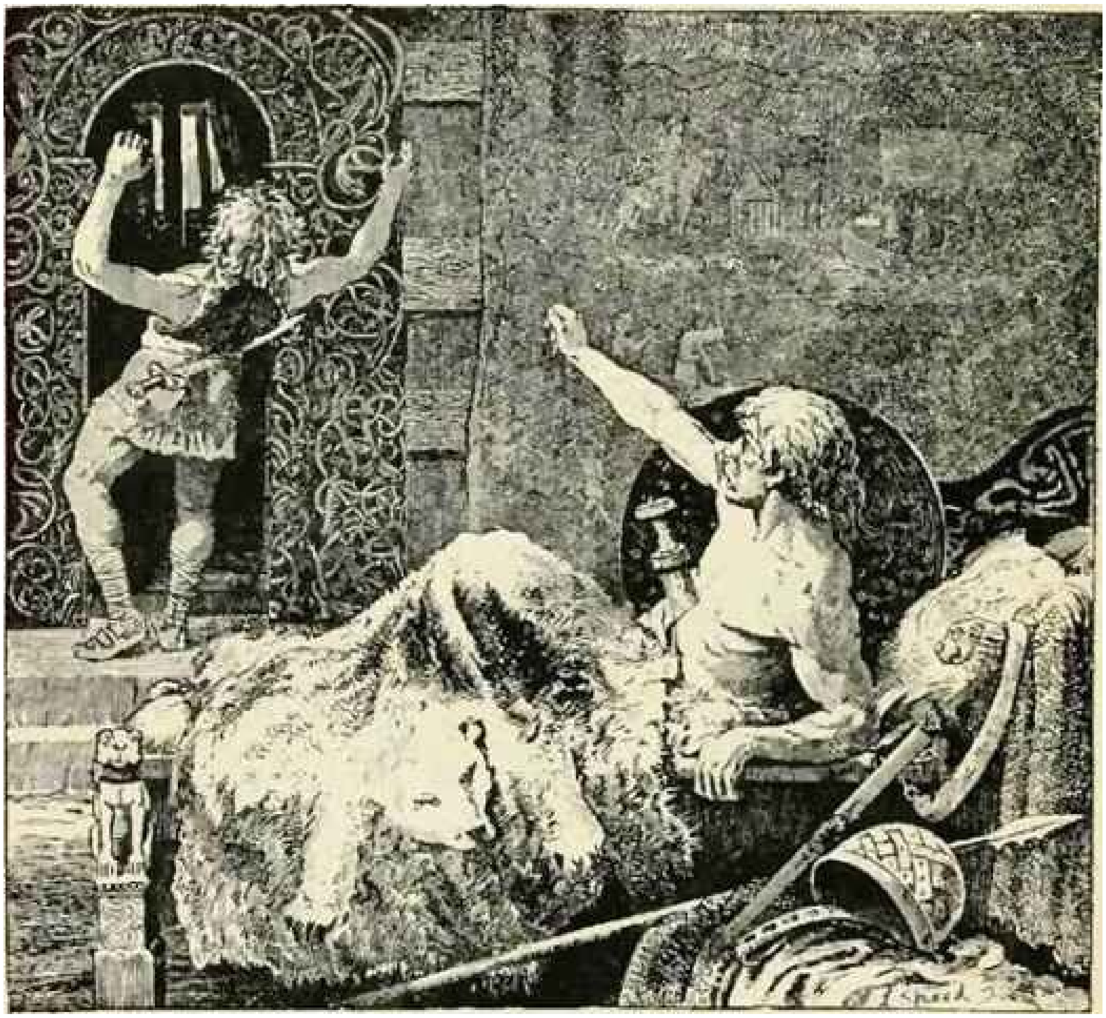

Then Brynhild saw the ring which Sigard had given to Gudrun, and she knew it and knew all, and she turned as pale as a dead woman, and went home. All that evening she never spoke. Next day she told Gunnar, her husband, that he was a coward and a liar, for he had never ridden the flame, but had sent Sigurd to do it for him, and pretended that he had done it himself. And she said he would never see her glad in his hall, never drinking wine, never playing chess, never embroidering with the golden thread, never speaking words of kindness. Then she rent all her needlework asunder and wept aloud, so that everyone in the house heard her. For her heart was broken, and her pride was broken in the same hour. She had lost her true love, Sigurd, the slayer of Fafnir, and she was married to a man who was a liar.

Then Sigurd came and tried to comfort her, but she would not listen, and said she wished the sword stood fast in his heart.

‘Not long to wait,’ he said, ‘till the bitter sword stands fast in my heart, and thou will not live long when I am dead. But, dear Brynhild, live and be comforted, and love Gunnar thy husband, and I will give thee all the gold, the treasure of the dragon Fafnir.'

Brynhild said:

'It is too late.'

Then Sigurd was so grieved and his heart so swelled in his breast that it burst the steel rings of his shirt of mail.

Sigurd went out and Brynhild determined to slay him. She mixed serpent's venom and wolf's flesh, and gave them in one dish to her husband's younger brother, and when he had tasted them he was mad, and he went into Sigurd's chamber while he slept and pinned him to the bed with a sword. But Sigurd woke, and caught the sword Gram into his hand, and threw it at the man as he fled, and the sword cut him in twain. Thus died Sigurd, Fafnir's bane, whom no ten men could have slain in fair fight. Then Gudrun wakened and saw him dead, and she moaned aloud, and Brynhild heard her and laughed; but the kind horse Grani lay down and died of very grief. And then Brynhild fell a-weeping till her heart broke. So they attired Sigurd in all his golden armour, and built a great pile of wood on board his ship, and at night laid on it the dead Sigurd and the dead Brynhild, and the good horse, Grani, and set fire to it, and launched the ship. And the wind bore it blazing out to sea, flaming into the dark. So there were Sigurd and Brynhild burned together, and the curse of the dwarf Andvari was fulfilled.(33)

(33) The Volsunga Saga.

THE GREEN FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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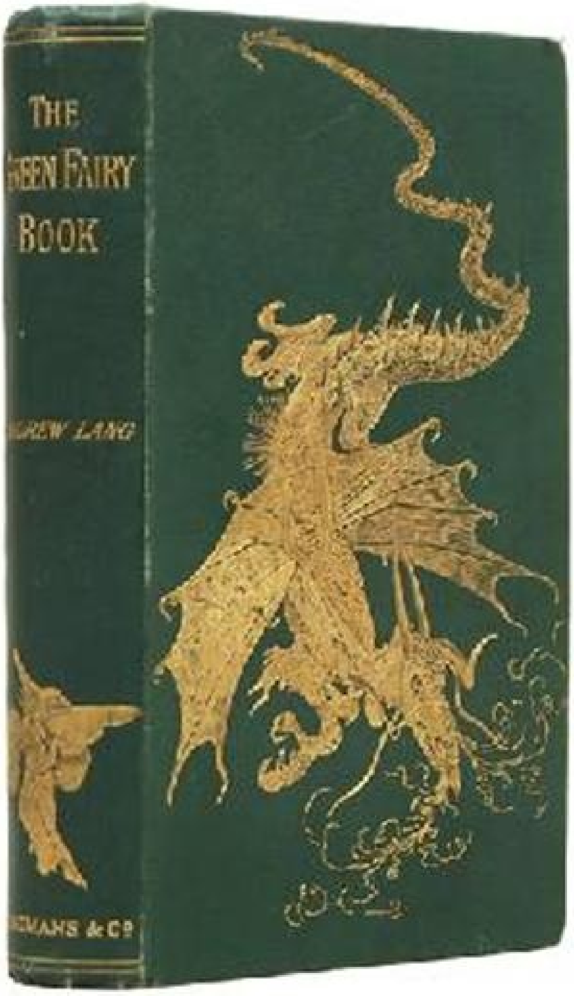
THE
GREEN FAIRY
BOOK
ANDREW LANG
LONGMANS & Co

The first edition

THE GREEN FAIRY BOOK

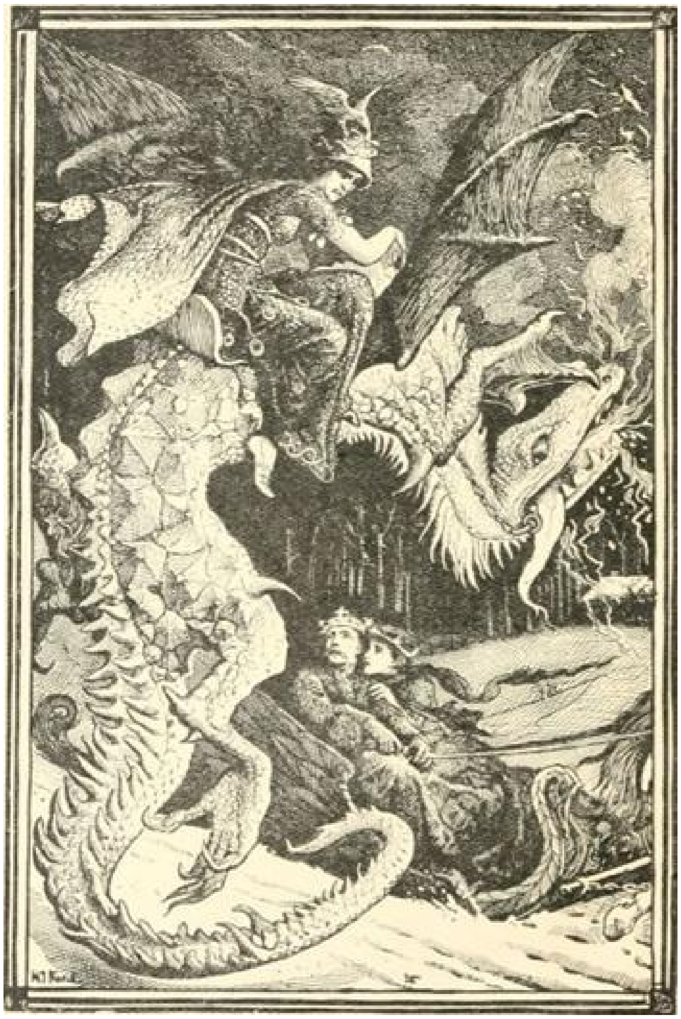

TO

STELLA MARGARET ALLEYNE

THE GREEN FAIRY BOOK
IS DEDICATED

TO THE FRIENDLY READER

This is the third, and probably the last, of the Fairy Books of many colours. First there was the *Blue Fairy Book*; then, children, you asked for more, and we made up the *Red Fairy Book*; and, when you wanted more still, the *Green Fairy Book* was put together. The stories in all the books are borrowed from many countries; some are French, some German, some Russian, some Italian, some Scottish, some English, one Chinese. However much these nations differ about trifles, they all agree in liking fairy tales. The reason, no doubt, is that men were much like children in their minds long ago, long, long ago, and so before they took to writing newspapers, and sermons, and novels, and long poems, they told each other stories, such as you read in the fairy books. They believed that witches could turn people into beasts, that beasts could speak, that magic rings could make their owners invisible, and all the other wonders in the stories. Then, as the world became grown-up, the fairy tales which were not written down would have been quite forgotten but that the old grannies remembered them, and told them to the little grandchildren: and when they, in their turn, became grannies, they remembered them, and told them also. In this way these tales are older than reading and writing, far older than printing. The oldest fairy tales ever written down were written down in Egypt, about Joseph’s time, nearly three thousand five hundred years ago. Other fairy stories Homer knew, in Greece, nearly three thousand years ago, and he made them all up into a poem, the *Odyssey*, which I hope you will read some day. Here you will find the witch who turns men into swine, and the man who bores out the big foolish giant’s eye, and the cap of darkness, and the shoes of swiftness, that were worn later by Jack the Giant-Killer. These fairy tales are the oldest stories in the world, and as they were first made by men who were childlike for their own amusement, so they amuse children still, and also grown-up people who have not forgotten how they once were children.

Some of the stories were made, no doubt, not only to amuse, but to teach goodness. You see, in the tales, how the boy who is kind to beasts, and polite, and generous, and brave, always comes best through his trials, and no doubt these tales were meant to make their hearers kind, unselfish, courteous, and courageous. This is the moral of them. But, after all, we think more as we read them of the diversion than of the lesson. There are grown-up people now who say that the stories are not good for children, because they are not true, because there are no witches, nor talking beasts, and because people are killed in them, especially wicked giants. But probably you who read the tales know very well how much is true and how much is only make-believe, and I never yet heard of a child who killed a very tall man merely because Jack killed the giants, or who was unkind to his stepmother, if he had one, because, in fairy tales, the stepmother is often disagreeable. If there are frightful monsters in fairy tales, they do not frighten you now, because that kind of monster is no longer going about the world, whatever he may have done long, long ago. He has been turned into stone, and you may see his remains in museums. Therefore, I am not afraid that you will be afraid of the magicians and dragons; besides, you see that a really brave boy or girl was always their master, even in the height of their power.

Some of the tales here, like *The Half-Chick*, are for very little children; others for older ones. The longest tales, like *Heart of Ice*, were not invented when the others were, but were written in French, by clever men and women, such as Madame d’Aulnoy, and the Count de Caylus, about two hundred years ago. There are not many people now, perhaps there are none, who can write really good fairy tales, because they do not believe enough in their own stories, and because they want to be wittier than it has pleased Heaven to make them.

So here we give you the last of the old stories, for the present, and hope you will like them, and feel grateful to the Brothers Grimm, who took them down from the telling of old women, and to M. Sébillot and M. Charles Marelles, who have lent us some tales from their own French people, and to Mr. Ford, who drew the pictures, and to the ladies, Miss Blackley, Miss Alma Alleyne, Miss Eleanor Sellar, Miss May Sellar, Miss Wright, and Mrs. Lang, who translated many of the tales out of French, German, and other languages.

If we have a book for you next year, it shall not be a fairy book. What it is to be is a secret, but we hope that it will not be dull. So good-bye, and when you have read a fairy book, lend it to other children who have none, or tell them the stories in your own way, which is a very pleasant mode of passing the time.

THE BLUE BIRD

Once upon a time there lived a King who was immensely rich. He had broad lands, and sacks overflowing with gold and silver; but he did not care a bit for all his riches, because the Queen, his wife, was dead. He shut himself up in a little room and knocked his head against the walls for grief, until his courtiers were really afraid that he would hurt himself. So they hung feather-beds between the tapestry and the walls, and then he could go on knocking his head as long as it was any consolation to him without coming to much harm. All his subjects came to see him, and said whatever they thought would comfort him: some were grave, even gloomy with him; and some agreeable, even gay; but not one could make the least impression upon him. Indeed, he hardly seemed to hear what they said. At last came a lady who was wrapped in a black mantle, and seemed to be in the deepest grief. She wept and sobbed until even the King's attention was attracted; and when she said that, far from coming to try and diminish his grief, she, who had just lost a good husband, was come to add her tears to his, since she knew what he must be feeling, the King redoubled his lamentations. Then he told the sorrowful lady long stories about the good qualities of his departed Queen, and she in her turn recounted all the virtues of her departed husband; and this passed the time so agreeably that the King quite forgot to thump his head against the feather-beds, and the lady did not need to wipe the tears from her great blue eyes as often as before. By degrees they came to talking about other things in which the King took an interest, and in a wonderfully short time the whole kingdom was astonished by the news that the King was married again — to the sorrowful lady.

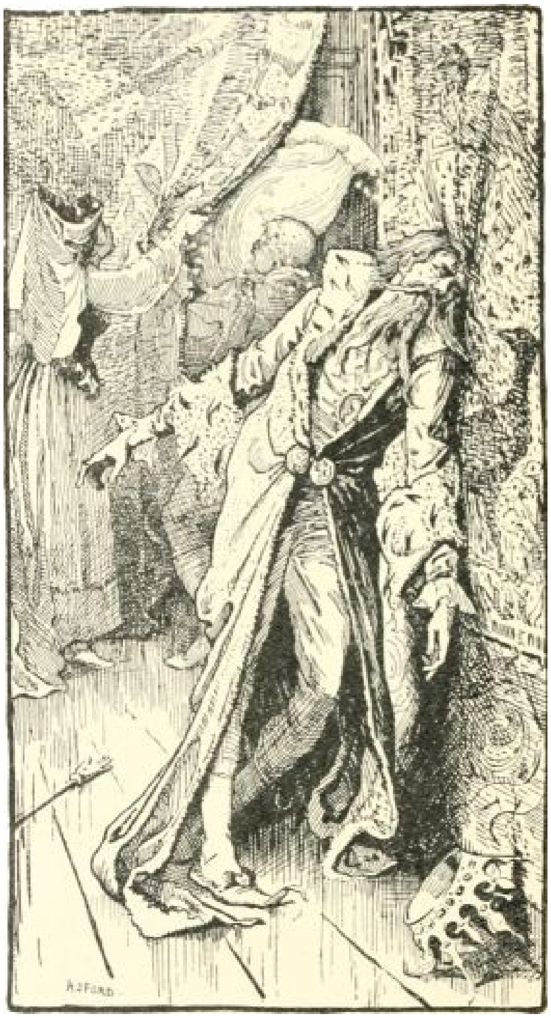

Now the King had one daughter, who was just fifteen years old. Her name was Fiordelisa, and she was the prettiest and most charming Princess imaginable, always gay end merry. The new Queen, who also had a daughter, very soon sent for her to come to the Palace. Turritella, for that was her name, had been brought up by her godmother, the Fairy Mazilla, but in spite of all the care bestowed upon her, she was neither beautiful nor gracious. Indeed, when the Queen saw how ill-tempered and ugly she appeared beside Fiordelisa she was in despair, and did everything in her power to turn the King against his own daughter, in the hope that he might take a fancy to Turritella. One day the King said that it was time Fiordelisa and Turritella were married, so he would give one of them to the first suitable Prince who visited his Court. The Queen answered:

‘My daughter certainly ought to be the first to be married; she is older than yours, and a thousand times more charming!’

The King, who hated disputes, said, ‘Very well, it’s no affair of mine, settle it your own way.’

Very soon after came the news that King Charming, who was the most handsome and magnificent Prince in all the country round, was on his way to visit the King. As soon as the Queen heard this, she set all her jewellers, tailors, weavers, and embroiderers to work upon splendid dresses and ornaments for Turritella, but she told the King that Fiordelisa had no need of anything new, and the night before the King was to arrive, she bribed her waiting woman to steal away all the Princess's own dresses and jewels, so that when the day came, and Fiordelisa wished to adorn herself as became her high rank, not even a ribbon could she find.

However, as she easily guessed who had played her such a trick, she made no complaint, but sent to the merchants for some rich stuffs. But they said that the Queen had expressly forbidden them to supply her with any, and they dared not disobey. So the Princess had nothing left to put on but the little white frock she had been wearing the day before; and dressed in that, she went down when the time of the King's arrival came, and sat in a corner hoping to escape notice. The Queen received her guest with great ceremony, and presented him to her daughter, who was gorgeously attired, but so much splendour only made her ugliness more noticeable, and the King, after one glance at her, looked the other way. The Queen, however, only thought that he was bashful, and took pains to keep Turritella in full view. King Charming then asked if there was not another Princess, called Fiordelisa.

'Yes,' said Turritella, pointing with her finger, 'there she is, trying to keep out of sight because she is not smart.'

At this Fiordelisa blushed, and looked so shy and so lovely, that the King was fairly astonished. He rose, and bowing low before her, said —

'Madam, your incomparable beauty needs no adornment.'

'Sire,' answered the Princess, 'I assure you that I am not in the habit of wearing dresses as crumpled and untidy as this one, so I should have been better pleased if you had not seen me at all.'

'Impossible!' cried King Charming. 'Wherever such a marvellously beautiful Princess appears I can look at nothing else.'

Here the Queen broke in, saying sharply —

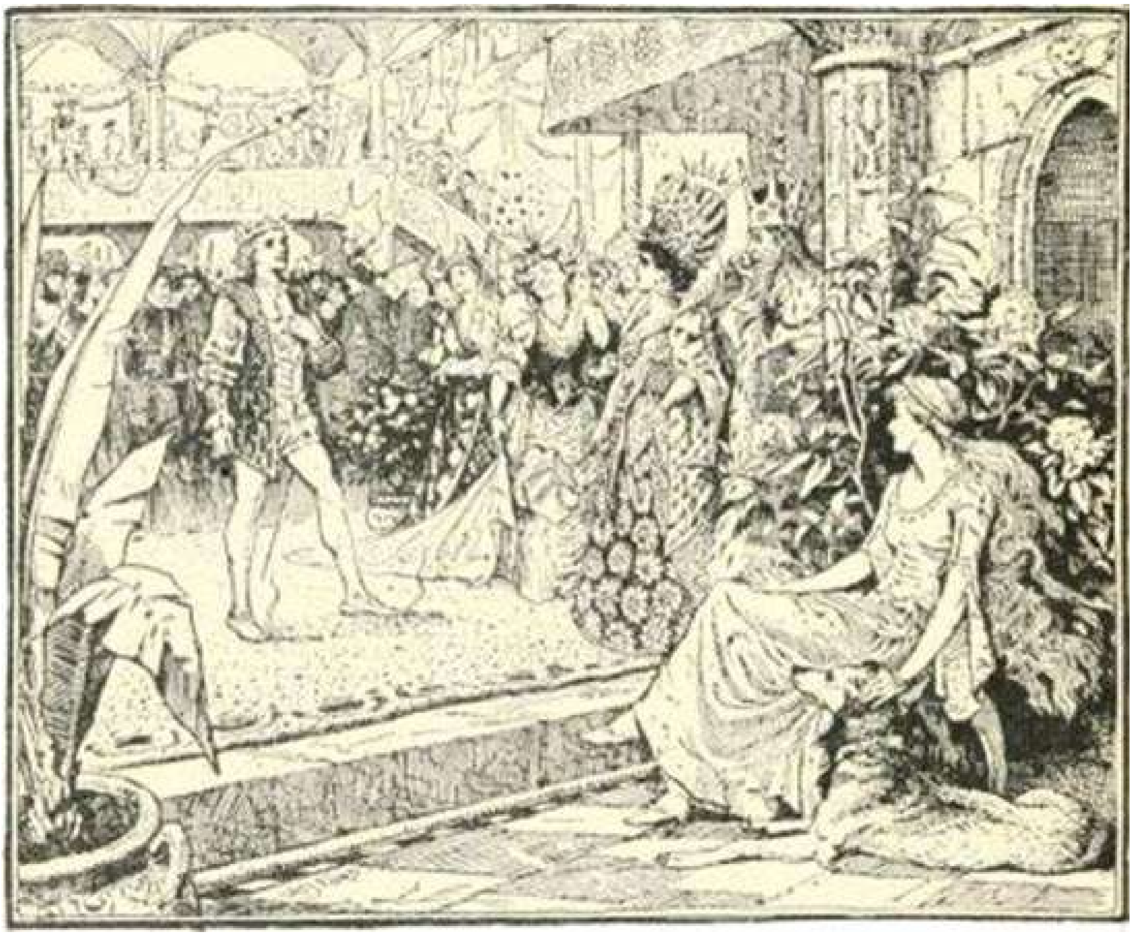

‘I assure you, Sire, that Fiordelisa is vain enough already. Pray make her no more flattering speeches.’

The King quite understood that she was not pleased, but that did not matter to him, so he admired Fiordelisa to his heart’s content, and talked to her for three hours without stopping.

The Queen was in despair, and so was Turritella, when they saw how much the King preferred Fiordelisa. They complained bitterly to the King, and begged and teased him, until he at last consented to have the Princess shut up somewhere out of sight while King Charming’s visit lasted. So that night, as she went to her room, she was seized by four masked figures, and carried up into the topmost room of a high tower, where they left her in the deepest dejection. She easily guessed that she was to be kept out of sight for fear the King should fall in love with her; but then, how disappointing that was, for she already liked him very much, and would have been quite willing to be chosen for his bride! As King Charming did not know what had happened to the Princess, he looked forward impatiently to meeting her again, and he tried to talk about her with the courtiers who were placed in attendance on him. But by the Queen’s orders they would say nothing good of her, but declared that she was vain, capricious, and bad-tempered; that she tormented her waiting-maids, and that, in spite of all the money that the King gave her, she was so mean that she preferred to go about dressed like a poor shepherdess, rather than spend any of it. All these things vexed the King very much, and he was silent.

‘It is true,’ thought he, ‘that she was very poorly dressed, but then she was so ashamed that it proves that she was not accustomed to be so. I cannot believe that with that lovely face she can be as ill-tempered and contemptible as they say. No, no, the Queen must be jealous of her for the sake of that ugly daughter of hers, and so these evil reports are spread.’

The courtiers could not help seeing that what they had told the King did not please him, and one of them cunningly began to praise Fiordelisa, when he could talk to the King without being heard by the others.

King Charming thereupon became so cheerful, and interested in all he said, that it was easy to guess how much he admired the Princess. So when the Queen sent for the courtiers and questioned them about all they had found out, their report confirmed her worst fears. As to the poor Princess Fiordelisa, she cried all night without stopping.

‘It would have been quite bad enough to be shut up in this gloomy tower before I had ever seen King Charming,’ she said; ‘but now when he is here, and they are all enjoying themselves with him, it is too unkind.’

The next day the Queen sent King Charming splendid presents of jewels and rich stuffs, and among other things an ornament made expressly in honour of the approaching wedding. It was a heart cut out of one huge ruby, and was surrounded by several diamond arrows, and pierced by one. A golden true-lover’s knot above the heart bore the motto, ‘But one can wound me,’ and the whole jewel was hung upon a chain of immense pearls. Never, since the world has been a world, had such a thing been made, and the King was quite amazed when it was presented to him. The page who brought it begged him to accept it from the Princess, who chose him to be her knight.

‘What!’ cried he, ‘does the lovely Princess Fiordelisa deign to think of me in this amiable and encouraging way?’

‘You confuse the names, Sire,’ said the page hastily. ‘I come on behalf of the Princess Turritella.’

‘Oh, it is Turritella who wishes me to be her knight,’ said the King coldly. ‘I am sorry that I cannot accept the honour.’ And he sent the splendid gifts back to the Queen and Turritella, who were furiously angry at the contempt with which they were treated. As soon as he possibly could, King Charming went to see the King and Queen, and as he entered the hall he looked for Fiordelisa, and every time anyone came in he started round to see who it was, and was altogether so uneasy and dissatisfied that the Queen saw it plainly. But she would not take any notice, and talked of nothing but the entertainments she was planning. The Prince answered at random, and presently asked if he was not to have the pleasure of seeing the Princess Fiordelisa.

‘Sire,’ answered the Queen haughtily, ‘her father has ordered that she shall not leave her own apartments until my daughter is married.’

‘What can be the reason for keeping that lovely Princess a prisoner?’ cried the King in great indignation.

‘That I do not know,’ answered the Queen; ‘and even if I did, I might not feel bound to tell you.’

The King was terribly angry at being thwarted like this. He felt certain that Turritella was to blame for it, so casting a furious glance at her he abruptly took leave of the Queen, and returned to his own apartments. There he said to a young squire whom he had brought with him: ‘I would give all I have in the world to gain the good will of one of the Princess’s waiting-women, and obtain a moment’s speech with Fiordelisa.’

‘Nothing could be easier,’ said the young squire; and he very soon made friends with one of the ladies, who told him that in the evening Fiordelisa would be at a little window which looked into the garden, where he could come and talk to her. Only, she said, he must take very great care not to be seen, as it would be as much as her place was worth to be caught helping King Charming to see the Princess. The squire was delighted, and promised all she asked; but the moment he had run off to announce his success to the King, the false waiting-woman went and told the Queen all that had passed. She at once determined that her own daughter should be at the little window; and she taught her so well all she was to say and do, that even the stupid Turritella could make no mistake.

The night was so dark that the King had not a chance of finding out the trick that was being played upon him, so he approached the window with the greatest delight, and said everything that he had been longing to say to Fiordelisa to persuade her of his love for her. Turritella answered as she had been taught, that she was very unhappy, and that there was no chance of her being better treated by the Queen until her daughter was married. And then the King entreated her to marry him; and thereupon he drew his ring from his finger and put it upon Turritella’s, and she answered him as well as she could. The King could not help thinking that she did not say exactly what he would have expected from his darling Fiordelisa, but he persuaded himself that the fear of being surprised by the Queen was making her awkward and unnatural. He would not leave her until she had promised to see him again the next night, which Turritella did willingly enough. The Queen was overjoyed at the success of her stratagem, and promised herself that all would now be as she wished; and sure enough, as soon as it was dark the following night the King came, bringing with him a chariot which had been given him by an Enchanter who was his friend. This chariot was drawn by flying frogs, and the King easily persuaded Turritella to come out and let him put her into it, then mounting beside her he cried triumphantly —

‘Now, my Princess, you are free; where will it please you that we shall hold our wedding?’

And Turritella, with her head muffled in her mantle, answered that the Fairy Mazilla was her godmother, and that she would like it to be at her castle. So the King told the Frogs, who had the map of the whole world in their heads, and very soon he and Turritella were set down at the castle of the Fairy Mazilla. The King would certainly have found out his mistake the moment they stepped into the brilliantly lighted castle, but Turritella held her mantle more closely round her, and asked to see the Fairy by herself, and quickly told her all that had happened, and how she had succeeded in deceiving King Charming.

‘Oho! my daughter,’ said the Fairy, ‘I see we have no easy task before us. He loves Fiordelisa so much that he will not be easily pacified. I feel sure he will defy us!’ Meanwhile the King was waiting in a splendid room with diamond walls, so clear that he could see the Fairy and Turritella as they stood whispering together, and he was very much puzzled.

‘Who can have betrayed us?’ he said to himself. ‘How comes our enemy here? She must be plotting to prevent our marriage. Why doesn’t my lovely Fiordelisa make haste and come back to me?’

But it was worse than anything he had imagined when the Fairy Mazilla entered, leading Turritella by the hand, and said to him —

‘King Charming, here is the Princess Turritella to whom you have plighted your faith. Let us have the wedding at once.’

‘I!’ cried the King. ‘I marry that little creature! What do you take me for? I have promised her nothing!’

‘Say no more. Have you no respect for a Fairy?’ cried she angrily.

‘Yes, madam,’ answered the King, ‘I am prepared to respect you as much as a Fairy can be respected, if you will give me back my Princess.’

‘Am I not here?’ interrupted Turritella. ‘Here is the ring you gave me. With whom did you talk at the little window, if it was not with me?’

‘What!’ cried the King angrily, ‘have I been altogether deceived and deluded? Where is my chariot? Not another moment will I stay here.’

‘Oho,’ said the Fairy, ‘not so fast.’ And she touched his feet, which instantly became as firmly fixed to the floor as if they had been nailed there.

‘Oh! do whatever you like with me,’ said the King; ‘you may turn me to stone, but I will marry no one but Fiordelisa.’

And not another word would he say, though the Fairy scolded and threatened, and Turritella wept and raged for twenty days and twenty nights. At last the Fairy Mazilla said furiously (for she was quite tired out by his obstinacy), ‘Choose whether you will marry my goddaughter, or do penance seven years for breaking your word to her.’

And then the King cried gaily: ‘Pray do whatever you like with me, as long as you deliver me from this ugly scold!’

‘Scold!’ cried Turritella angrily. ‘Who are you, I should like to know, that you dare to call me a scold? A miserable King who breaks his word, and goes about in a chariot drawn by croaking frogs out of a marsh!’

‘Let us have no more of these insults,’ cried the Fairy. ‘Fly from that window, ungrateful King, and for seven years be a Blue Bird.’ As she spoke the King’s face altered, his arms turned to wings, his feet to little crooked black claws. In a moment he had a slender body like a bird, covered with shining blue feathers, his beak was like ivory, his eyes were bright as stars, and a crown of white feathers adorned his head.

As soon as the transformation was complete the King uttered a dolorous cry and fled through the open window, pursued by the mocking laughter of Turritella and the Fairy Mazilla. He flew on until he reached the thickest part of the wood, and there, perched upon a cypress tree, he bewailed his miserable fate. ‘Alas! in seven years who knows what may happen to my darling Fiordelisa!’ he said. ‘Her cruel stepmother may have married her to someone else before I am myself again, and then what good will life be to me?’

In the meantime the Fairy Mazilla had sent Turritella back to the Queen, who was all anxiety to know how the wedding had gone off. But when her daughter arrived and told her all that had happened she was terribly angry, and of course all her wrath fell upon Fiordelisa. ‘She shall have cause to repent that the King admires her,’ said the Queen, nodding her head meaningly, and then she and Turritella went up to the little room in the tower where the Princess was imprisoned. Fiordelisa was immensely surprised to see that Turritella was wearing a royal mantle and a diamond crown, and her heart sank when the Queen said: ‘My daughter is come to show you some of her wedding presents, for she is King Charming’s bride, and they are the happiest pair in the world, he loves her to distraction.’ All this time Turritella was spreading out lace, and jewels, and rich brocades, and ribbons before Fiordelisa’s unwilling eyes, and taking good care to display King Charming’s ring, which she wore upon her thumb. The Princess recognised it as soon as her eyes fell upon it, and after that she could no longer doubt that he had indeed married Turritella. In despair she cried, ‘Take away these miserable gauds! what pleasure has a wretched captive in the sight of them?’ and then she fell insensible upon the floor, and the cruel Queen laughed maliciously, and went away with Turritella, leaving her there without comfort or aid. That night the Queen said to the King, that his daughter was so infatuated with King Charming, in spite of his never having shown any preference for her, that it was just as well she should stay in the tower until she came to her senses. To which he answered that it was her affair, and she could give what orders she pleased about the Princess.

When the unhappy Fiordelisa recovered, and remembered all she had just heard, she began to cry bitterly, believing that King Charming was lost to her for ever, and all night long she sat at her open window sighing and lamenting; but when it was dawn she crept away into the darkest corner of her little room and sat there, too unhappy to care about anything. As soon as night came again she once more leaned out into the darkness and bewailed her miserable lot.

Now it happened that King Charming, or rather the Blue Bird, had been flying round the palace in the hope of seeing his beloved Princess, but had not dared to go too near the windows for fear of being seen and recognised by Turritella. When night fell he had not succeeded in discovering where Fiordelisa was imprisoned, and, weary and sad, he perched upon a branch of a tall fir tree which grew close to the tower, and began to sing himself to sleep. But soon the sound of a soft voice lamenting attracted his attention, and listening intently he heard it say —

‘Ah! cruel Queen! what have I ever done to be imprisoned like this? And was I not unhappy enough before, that you must needs come and taunt me with the happiness your daughter is enjoying now she is King Charming’s bride?’

The Blue Bird, greatly surprised, waited impatiently for the dawn, and the moment it was light flew off to see who it could have been who spoke thus. But he found the window shut, and could see no one. The next night, however, he was on the watch, and by the clear moonlight he saw that the sorrowful lady at the window was Fiordelisa herself.

‘My Princess! have I found you at last?’ said he, alighting close to her.

‘Who is speaking to me?’ cried the Princess in great surprise.

‘Only a moment since you mentioned my name, and now you do not know me, Fiordelisa,’ said he sadly. ‘But no wonder, since I am nothing but a Blue Bird, and must remain one for seven years.’

‘What! Little Blue Bird, are you really the powerful King Charming?’ said the Princess, caressing him.

‘It is too true,’ he answered. ‘For being faithful to you I am thus punished. But believe me, if it were for twice as long I would bear it joyfully rather than give you up.’

‘Oh! what are you telling me?’ cried the Princess. ‘Has not your bride, Turritella, just visited me, wearing the royal mantle and the diamond crown you gave her? I cannot be mistaken, for I saw your ring upon her thumb.’

Then the Blue Bird was furiously angry, and told the Princess all that had happened, how he had been deceived into carrying off Turritella, and how, for refusing to marry her, the Fairy Mazilla had condemned him to be a Blue Bird for seven years.

The Princess was very happy when she heard how faithful her lover was, and would never have tired of hearing his loving speeches and explanations, but too soon the sun rose, and they had to part lest the Blue Bird should be discovered. After promising to come again to the Princess’s window as soon as it was dark, he flew away, and hid himself in a little hole in the fir-tree, while Fiordelisa remained devoured by anxiety lest he should be caught in a trap, or eaten up by an eagle.

But the Blue Bird did not long stay in his hiding-place. He flew away, and away, until he came to his own palace, and got into it through a broken window, and there he found the cabinet where his jewels were kept, and chose out a splendid diamond ring as a present for the Princess. By the time he got back, Fiordelisa was sitting waiting for him by the open window, and when he gave her the ring, she scolded him gently for having run such a risk to get it for her.

‘Promise me that you will wear it always!’ said the Blue Bird. And the Princess promised on condition that he should come and see her in the day as well as by night. They talked all night long, and the next morning the Blue Bird flew off to his kingdom, and crept into his palace through the broken window, and chose from his treasures two bracelets, each cut out of a single emerald. When he presented them to the Princess, she shook her head at him reproachfully, saying —

‘Do you think I love you so little that I need all these gifts to remind me of you?’

And he answered —

‘No, my Princess; but I love you so much that I feel I cannot express it, try as I may. I only bring you these worthless trifles to show that I have not ceased to think of you, though I have been obliged to leave you for a time.’ The following night he gave Fiordelisa a watch set in a single pearl. The Princess laughed a little when she saw it, and said —

‘You may well give me a watch, for since I have known you I have lost the power of measuring time. The hours you spend with me pass like minutes, and the hours that I drag through without you seem years to me.'

'Ah, Princess, they cannot seem so long to you as they do to me!' he answered. Day by day he brought more beautiful things for the Princess — diamonds, and rubies, and opals; and at night she decked herself with them to please him, but by day she hid them in her straw mattress. When the sun shone the Blue Bird, hidden in the tall fir-tree, sang to her so sweetly that all the passers-by wondered, and said that the wood was inhabited by a spirit. And so two years slipped away, and still the Princess was a prisoner, and Turritella was not married. The Queen had offered her hand to all the neighbouring Princes, but they always answered that they would marry Fiordelisa with pleasure, but not Turritella on any account. This displeased the Queen terribly. 'Fiordelisa must be in league with them, to annoy me!' she said. 'Let us go and accuse her of it.'

So she and Turritella went up into the tower. Now it happened that it was nearly midnight, and Fiordelisa, all decked with jewels, was sitting at the window with the Blue Bird, and as the Queen paused outside the door to listen she heard the Princess and her lover singing together a little song he had just taught her. These were the words: —

'Oh! what a luckless pair are we,
One in a prison, and one in a tree.
All our trouble and anguish came
From our faithfulness spoiling our enemies' game.
But vainly they practise their cruel arts,
For nought can sever our two fond hearts.'

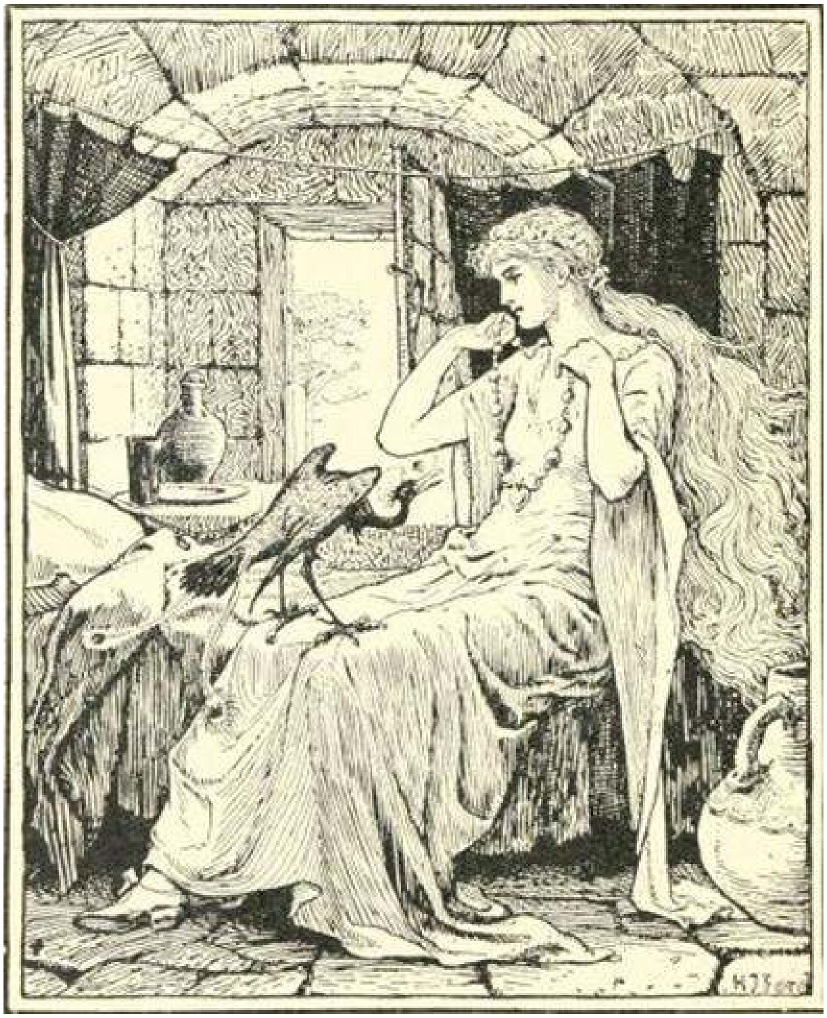

They sound melancholy perhaps, but the two voices sang them gaily enough, and the Queen burst open the door, crying, ‘Ah! my Turritella, there is some treachery going on here!’

As soon as she saw her, Fiordelisa, with great presence of mind, hastily shut her little window, that the Blue Bird might have time to escape, and then turned to meet the Queen, who overwhelmed her with a torrent of reproaches.

‘Your intrigues are discovered, Madam,’ she said furiously; ‘and you need not hope that your high rank will save you from the punishment you deserve.’

‘And with whom do you accuse me of intriguing, Madam?’ said the Princess. ‘Have I not been your prisoner these two years, and who have I seen except the gaolers sent by you?’

While she spoke the Queen and Turritella were looking at her in the greatest surprise, perfectly dazzled by her beauty and the splendour of her jewels, and the Queen said:

‘If one may ask, Madam, where did you get all these diamonds? Perhaps you mean to tell me that you have discovered a mine of them in the tower!’

‘I certainly did find them here,’ answered the Princess.

‘And pray,’ said the Queen, her wrath increasing every moment, ‘for whose admiration are you decked out like this, since I have often seen you not half as fine on the most important occasions at Court?’

‘For my own,’ answered Fiordelisa. ‘You must admit that I have had plenty of time on my hands, so you cannot be surprised at my spending some of it in making myself smart.’

‘That’s all very fine,’ said the Queen suspiciously. ‘I think I will look about, and see for myself.’

So she and Turritella began to search every corner of the little room, and when they came to the straw mattress out fell such a quantity of pearls, diamonds, rubies, opals, emeralds, and sapphires, that they were amazed, and could not tell what to think. But the Queen resolved to hide somewhere a packet of false letters to prove that the Princess had been conspiring with the King’s enemies, and she chose the chimney as a good place. Fortunately for Fiordelisa this was exactly where the Blue Bird had perched himself, to keep an eye upon her proceedings, and try to avert danger from his beloved Princess, and now he cried:

‘Beware, Fiordelisa! Your false enemy is plotting against you.’

This strange voice so frightened the Queen that she took the letter and went away hastily with Turritella, and they held a council to try and devise some means of finding out what Fairy or Enchanter was favouring the Princess. At last they sent one of the Queen’s maids to wait upon Fiordelisa, and told her to pretend to be quite stupid, and to see and hear nothing, while she was really to watch the Princess day and night, and keep the Queen informed of all her doings.

Poor Fiordelisa, who guessed she was sent as a spy, was in despair, and cried bitterly that she dared not see her dear Blue Bird for fear that some evil might happen to him if he were discovered.

The days were so long, and the nights so dull, but for a whole month she never went near her little window, lest he should fly to her as he used to do.

However, at last the spy, who had never taken her eyes off the Princess day or night, was so overcome with weariness that she fell into a deep sleep, and as soon as the Princess saw that, she flew to open her window and cried softly:

‘Blue Bird, blue as the sky,
Fly to me now, there’s nobody by.’

And the Blue Bird, who had never ceased to flutter round within sight and hearing of her prison, came in an instant. They had so much to say, and were so overjoyed to meet once more, that it scarcely seemed to them five minutes before the sun rose, and the Blue Bird had to fly away.

But the next night the spy slept as soundly as before, so that the Blue Bird came, and he and the Princess began to think they were perfectly safe, and to make all sorts of plans for being happy as they were before the Queen’s visit. But, alas! the third night the spy was not quite so sleepy, and when the Princess opened her window and cried as usual:

‘Blue Bird, blue as the sky,
Fly to me now, there’s nobody nigh,’

she was wide awake in a moment, though she was sly enough to keep her eyes shut at first. But presently she heard voices, and peeping cautiously, she saw by the moonlight the most lovely blue bird in the world, who was talking to the Princess, while she stroked and caressed it fondly.

The spy did not lose a single word of the conversation, and as soon as the day dawned, and the Blue Bird had reluctantly said good-bye to the Princess, she rushed off to the Queen, and told her all she had seen and heard.

Then the Queen sent for Turritella, and they talked it over, and very soon came to the conclusion than this Blue Bird was no other than King Charming himself.

‘Ah! that insolent Princess!’ cried the Queen. ‘To think that when we supposed her to be so miserable, she was all the while as happy as possible with that false King. But I know how we can avenge ourselves!’

So the spy was ordered to go back and pretend to sleep as soundly as ever, and indeed she went to bed earlier than usual, and snored as naturally as possible, and the poor Princess ran to the window and cried:

‘Blue Bird, blue as the sky,
Fly to me now, there’s nobody by!’

But no bird came. All night long she called, and waited, and listened, but still there was no answer, for the cruel Queen had caused the fir tree to be hung all over with knives, swords, razors, shears, bill-hooks, and sickles, so that when the Blue Bird heard the Princess call, and flew towards her, his wings were cut, and his little black feet clipped off, and all pierced and stabbed in twenty places, he fell back bleeding into his hiding place in the tree, and lay there groaning and despairing, for he thought the Princess must have been persuaded to betray him, to regain her liberty.

‘Ah! Fiordelisa, can you indeed be so lovely and so faithless?’ he sighed, ‘then I may as well die at once!’ And he turned over on his side and began to die. But it happened that his friend the Enchanter had been very much alarmed at seeing the Frog chariot come back to him without King Charming, and had been round the world eight times seeking him, but without success. At the very moment when the King gave himself up to despair, he was passing through the wood for the eighth time, and called, as he had done all over the world:

‘Charming! King Charming! Are you here?’

The King at once recognised his friend’s voice, and answered very faintly:

‘I am here.’

The Enchanter looked all round him, but could see nothing, and then the King said again:

‘I am a Blue Bird.’

Then the Enchanter found him in an instant, and seeing his pitiable condition, ran hither and thither without a word, until he had collected a handful of magic herbs, with which, and a few incantations, he speedily made the King whole and sound again.

‘Now,’ said he, ‘let me hear all about it. There must be a Princess at the bottom of this.’

‘There are two!’ answered King Charming, with a wry smile.

And then he told the whole story, accusing Fiordelisa of having betrayed the secret of his visits to make her peace with the Queen, and indeed saying a great many hard things about her fickleness and her deceitful beauty, and so on. The Enchanter quite agreed with him, and even went further, declaring that all Princesses were alike, except perhaps in the matter of beauty, and advised him to have done with Fiordelisa, and forget all about her. But, somehow or other, this advice did not quite please the King.

‘What is to be done next?’ said the Enchanter, ‘since you still have five years to remain a Blue Bird.’

‘Take me to your palace,’ answered the King; ‘there you can at least keep me in a cage safe from cats and swords.’

‘Well, that will be the best thing to do for the present,’ said his friend. ‘But I am not an Enchanter for nothing. I’m sure to have a brilliant idea for you before long.’

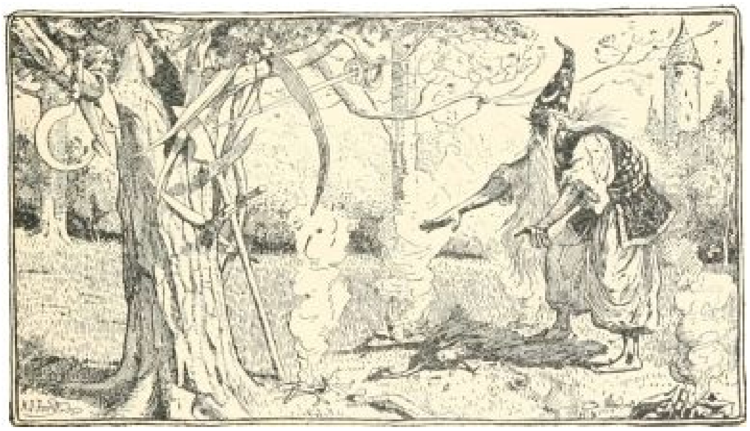

In the meantime Fiordelisa, quite in despair, sat at her window day and night calling her dear Blue Bird in vain, and imagining over and over again all the terrible things that could have happened to him, until she grew quite pale and thin. As for the Queen and Turritella, they were triumphant; but their triumph was short, for the King, Fiordelisa's father, fell ill and died, and all the people rebelled against the Queen and Turritella, and came in a body to the palace demanding Fiordelisa.

The Queen came out upon the balcony with threats and haughty words, so that at last they lost their patience, and broke open the doors of the palace, one of which fell back upon the Queen and killed her. Turritella fled to the Fairy Mazilla, and all the nobles of the kingdom fetched the Princess Fiordelisa from her prison in the tower, and made her Queen. Very soon, with all the care and attention they bestowed upon her, she recovered from the effects of her long captivity and looked more beautiful than ever, and was able to take counsel with her courtiers, and arrange for the governing of her kingdom during her absence. And then, taking a bagful of jewels, she set out all alone to look for the Blue Bird, without telling anyone where she was going.

Meanwhile, the Enchanter was taking care of King Charming, but as his power was not great enough to counteract the Fairy Mazilla's, he at last resolved to go and see if he could make any kind of terms with her for his friend; for you see, Fairies and Enchanters are cousins in a sort of way, after all; and after knowing one another for five or six hundred years and falling out, and making it up again pretty often, they understand one another well enough. So the Fairy Mazilla received him graciously. 'And what may you be wanting, Gossip?' said she.

'You can do a good turn for me if you will,' he answered. 'A King, who is a friend of mine, was unlucky enough to offend you — —'

'Aha! I know who you mean,' interrupted the Fairy. 'I am sorry not to oblige you, Gossip, but he need expect no mercy from me unless he will marry my goddaughter, whom you see yonder looking so pretty and charming. Let him think over what I say.'

The Enchanter hadn't a word to say, for he thought Turritella really frightful, but he could not go away without making one more effort for his friend the King, who was really in great danger as long as he lived in a cage. Indeed, already he had met with several alarming accidents. Once the nail on which his cage was hung had given way, and his feathered Majesty had suffered much from the fall, while Madam Puss, who happened to be in the room at the time, had given him a scratch in the eye which came very near blinding him. Another time they had forgotten to give him any water to drink, so that he was nearly dead with thirst; and the worst thing of all was that he was in danger of losing his kingdom, for he had been absent so long that all his subjects believed him to be dead. So considering all these things the Enchanter agreed with the Fairy Mazilla that she should restore the King to his natural form, and should take Turritella to stay in his palace for several months, and if, after the time was over, he still could not make up his mind to marry her, he should once more be changed into a Blue Bird.

Then the Fairy dressed Turritella in a magnificent gold and silver robe, and they mounted together upon a flying Dragon, and very soon reached King Charming's palace, where he, too, had just been brought by his faithful friend the Enchanter.

Three strokes of the Fairy's wand restored his natural form, and he was as handsome and delightful as ever, but he considered that he paid dearly for his restoration when he caught sight of Turritella, and the mere idea of marrying her made him shudder.

Meanwhile, Queen Fiordelisa, disguised as a poor peasant girl, wearing a great straw hat that concealed her face, and carrying an old sack over her shoulder, had set out upon her weary journey, and had travelled far, sometimes by sea and sometimes by land; sometimes on foot, and sometimes on horseback, but not knowing which way to go. She feared all the time that every step she took was leading her farther from her lover. One day as she sat, quite tired and sad, on the bank of a little brook, cooling her white feet in the clear running water, and combing her long hair that glittered like gold in the sunshine, a little bent old woman passed by, leaning on a stick. She stopped, and said to Fiordelisa:

'What, my pretty child, are you all alone?'

'Indeed, good mother, I am too sad to care for company,' she answered; and the tears ran down her cheeks.

'Don't cry,' said the old woman, 'but tell me truly what is the matter. Perhaps I can help you.'

The Queen told her willingly all that had happened, and how she was seeking the Blue Bird. Thereupon the little old woman suddenly stood up straight, and grew tall, and young, and beautiful, and said with a smile to the astonished Fiordelisa:

'Lovely Queen, the King whom you seek is no longer a bird. My sister Mazilla has given his own form back to him, and he is in his own kingdom. Do not be afraid, you will reach him, and will prosper. Take these four eggs; if you break one when you are in any great difficulty, you will find aid.'

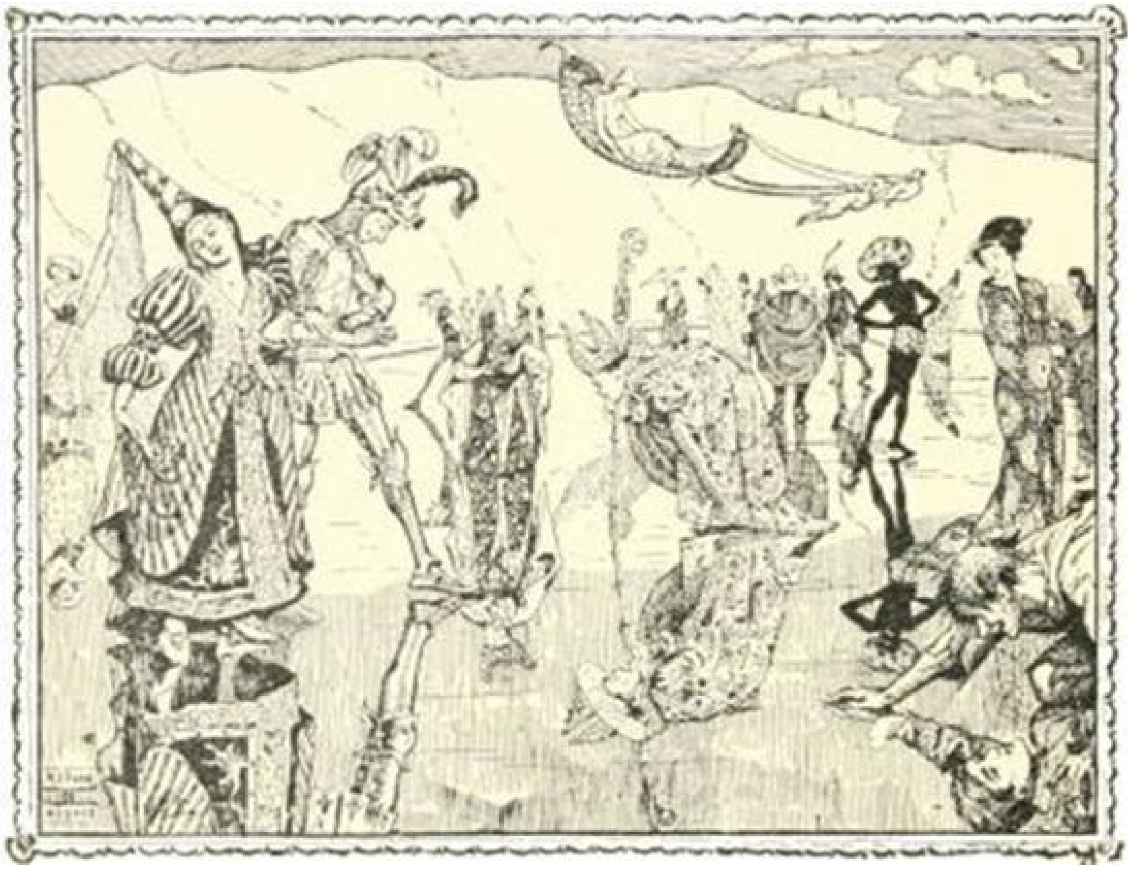

So saying, she disappeared, and Fiordelisa, feeling much encouraged, put the eggs into her bag and turned her steps towards Charming's kingdom. After walking on and on for eight days and eight nights, she came at last to a tremendously high hill of polished ivory, so steep that it was impossible to get a foothold upon it. Fiordelisa tried a thousand times, and scrambled and slipped, but always in the end found herself exactly where she started from. At last she sat down at the foot of it in despair, and then suddenly bethought herself of the eggs. Breaking one quickly, she found in it some little gold hooks, and with these fastened to her feet and hands, she mounted the ivory hill without farther trouble, for the little hooks saved her from slipping. As soon as she reached the top a new difficulty presented itself, for all the other side, and indeed the whole valley, was one polished mirror, in which thousands and thousands of people were admiring their reflections. For this was a magic mirror, in which people saw themselves just as they wished to appear, and pilgrims came to it from the four corners of the world. But nobody had ever been able to reach the top of the hill, and when they saw Fiordelisa standing there, they raised a terrible outcry, declaring that if she set foot upon their glass she would break it to pieces. The Queen, not knowing what to do, for she saw it would be dangerous to try to go down, broke the second egg, and out came a chariot, drawn by two white doves, and Fiordelisa got into it, and was floated softly away. After a night and a day the doves alighted outside the gate of King Charming's kingdom. Here the Queen got out of the chariot, and kissed the doves and thanked them, and then with a beating heart she walked into the town, asking the people she met where she could see the King. But they only laughed at her, crying:

'See the King? And pray, why do you want to see the King, my little kitchen-maid? You had better go and wash your face first, your eyes are not clear enough to see him!' For the Queen had disguised herself, and pulled her hair down about her eyes, that no one might know her. As they would not tell her, she went on farther, and presently asked again, and this time the people answered that to-morrow she might see the King driving through the streets with the Princess Turritella, as it was said that at last he had consented to marry her. This was indeed terrible news to Fiordelisa. Had she come all this weary way only to find Turritella had succeeded in making King Charming forget her?

She was too tired and miserable to walk another step, so she sat down in a doorway and cried bitterly all night long. As soon as it was light she hastened to the palace, and after being sent away fifty times by the guards, she got in at last, and saw the thrones set in the great hall for the King and Turritella, who was already looked upon as Queen.

Fiordelisa hid herself behind a marble pillar, and very soon saw Turritella make her appearance, richly dressed, but as ugly as ever, and with her came the King, more handsome and splendid even than Fiordelisa had remembered him. When Turritella had seated herself upon the throne, the Queen approached her.

'Who are you, and how dare you come near my high-mightiness, upon my golden throne?' said Turritella, frowning fiercely at her.

'They call me the little kitchen-maid,' she replied, 'and I come to offer some precious things for sale,' and with that she searched in her old sack, and drew out the emerald bracelets King Charming had given her.

'Ho, ho!' said Turritella, 'those are pretty bits of glass. I suppose you would like five silver pieces for them.’

‘Show them to someone who understands such things, Madam,’ answered the Queen; ‘after that we can decide upon the price.’

Turritella, who really loved King Charming as much as she could love anybody, and was always delighted to get a chance of talking to him, now showed him the bracelets, asking how much he considered them worth. As soon as he saw them he remembered those he had given to Fiordelisa, and turned very pale and sighed deeply, and fell into such sad thought that he quite forgot to answer her. Presently she asked him again, and then he said, with a great effort:

‘I believe these bracelets are worth as much as my kingdom. I thought there was only one such pair in the world; but here, it seems, is another.’

Then Turritella went back to the Queen, and asked her what was the lowest price she would take for them.

‘More than you would find it easy to pay, Madam,’ answered she; ‘but if you will manage for me to sleep one night in the Chamber of Echoes, I will give you the emeralds.’

‘By all means, my little kitchen-maid,’ said Turritella, highly delighted.

The King did not try to find out where the bracelets had come from, not because he did not want to know, but because the only way would have been to ask Turritella, and he disliked her so much that he never spoke to her if he could possibly avoid it. It was he who had told Fiordelisa about the Chamber of Echoes, when he was a Blue Bird. It was a little room below the King’s own bed-chamber, and was so ingeniously built that the softest whisper in it was plainly heard in the King’s room. Fiordelisa wanted to reproach him for his faithlessness, and could not imagine a better way than this. So when, by Turritella’s orders, she was left there she began to weep and lament, and never ceased until daybreak.

The King’s pages told Turritella, when she asked them, what a sobbing and sighing they had heard, and she asked Fiordelisa what it was all about. The Queen answered that she often dreamed and talked aloud.

But by an unlucky chance the King heard nothing of all this, for he took a sleeping draught every night before he lay down, and did not wake up until the sun was high.

The Queen passed the day in great disquietude.

‘If he did hear me,’ she said, ‘could he remain so cruelly indifferent? But if he did not hear me, what can I do to get another chance? I have plenty of jewels, it is true, but nothing remarkable enough to catch Turritella’s fancy.’

Just then she thought of the eggs, and broke one, out of which came a little carriage of polished steel ornamented with gold, drawn by six green mice. The coachman was a rose-coloured rat, the postilion a grey one, and the carriage was occupied by the tiniest and most charming figures, who could dance and do wonderful tricks. Fiordelisa clapped her hands and danced for joy when she saw this triumph of magic art, and as soon as it was evening, went to a shady garden-path down which she knew Turritella would pass, and then she made the mice galop, and the tiny people show off their tricks, and sure enough Turritella came, and the moment she saw it all cried:

‘Little kitchen-maid, little kitchen-maid, what will you take for your mouse-carriage?’

And the Queen answered:

‘Let me sleep once more in the Chamber of Echoes.’

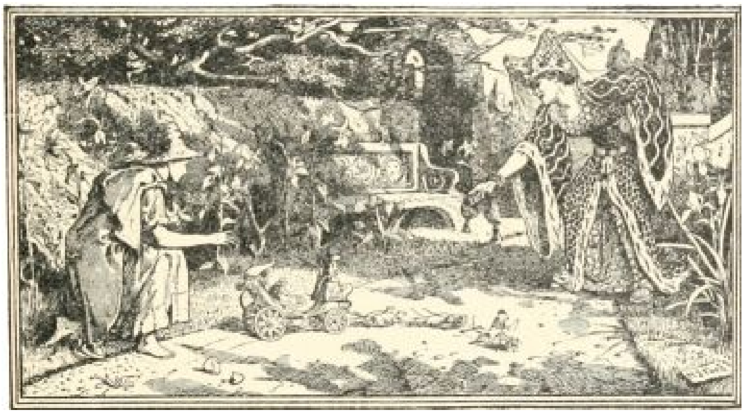

‘I won’t refuse your request, poor creature,’ said Turritella condescendingly.

And then she turned to her ladies and whispered:

‘The silly creature does not know how to profit by her chances; so much the better for me.’

When night came Fiordelisa said all the loving words she could think of, but alas! with no better success than before, for the King slept heavily after his draught. One of the pages said:

‘This peasant girl must be crazy;’ but another answered:

‘Yet what she says sounds very sad and touching.’

As for Fiordelisa, she thought the King must have a very hard heart if he could hear how she grieved and yet pay her no attention. She had but one more chance, and on breaking the last egg she found to her great delight that it contained a more marvellous thing than ever. It was a pie made of six birds, cooked to perfection, and yet they were all alive, and singing and talking, and they answered questions and told fortunes in the most amusing way. Taking this treasure Fiordelisa once more set herself to wait in the great hall through which Turritella was sure to pass, and as she sat there one of the King’s pages came by, and said to her:

‘Well, little kitchen-maid, it is a good thing that the King always takes a sleeping draught, for if not he would be kept awake all night by your sighing and lamenting.’

Then Fiordelisa knew why the King had not heeded her, and taking a handful of pearls and diamonds out of her sack, she said, ‘If you can promise me that to-night the King shall not have his sleeping draught, I will give you all these jewels.’

‘Oh! I promise that willingly,’ said the page.

At this moment Turritella appeared, and at the first sight of the savoury pie, with the pretty little birds all singing and chattering, she cried: —

‘That is an admirable pie, little kitchen-maid. Pray what will you take for it?’

‘The usual price,’ she answered. ‘To sleep once more in the Chamber of Echoes.’

‘By all means, only give me the pie,’ said the greedy Turritella. And when night was come, Queen Fiordelisa waited until she thought everybody in the palace would be asleep, and then began to lament as before.

‘Ah, Charming!’ she said, ‘what have I ever done that you should forsake me and marry Turritella? If you could only know all I have suffered, and what a weary way I have come to seek you.’

Now the page had faithfully kept his word, and given King Charming a glass of water instead of his usual sleeping draught, so there he lay wide awake, and heard every word Fiordelisa said, and even recognised her voice, though he could not tell where it came from.

‘Ah, Princess!’ he said, ‘how could you betray me to our cruel enemies when I loved you so dearly?’

Fiordelisa heard him, and answered quickly:

‘Find out the little kitchen-maid, and she will explain everything.’

Then the King in a great hurry sent for his pages and said:

‘If you can find the little kitchen-maid, bring her to me at once.’

‘Nothing could be easier, Sire,’ they answered, ‘for she is in the Chamber of Echoes.’

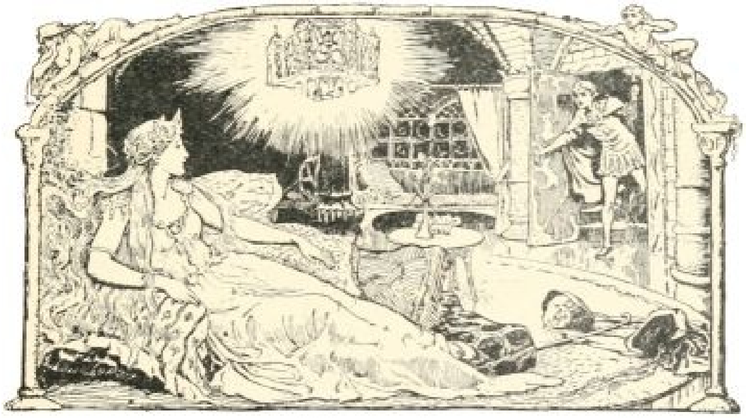

The King was very much puzzled when he heard this. How could the lovely Princess Fiordelisa be a little kitchen-maid? or how could a little kitchen-maid have Fiordelisa’s own voice? So he dressed hastily, and ran down a little secret staircase which led to the Chamber of Echoes. There, upon a heap of soft cushions, sat his lovely Princess. She had laid aside all her ugly disguises and wore a white silken robe, and her golden hair shone in the soft lamp-light. The King was overjoyed at the sight, and rushed to throw himself at her feet, and asked her a thousand questions without giving her time to answer one. Fiordelisa was equally happy to be with him once more, and nothing troubled them but the remembrance of the Fairy Mazilla. But at this moment in came the Enchanter, and with him a famous Fairy, the same in fact who had given Fiordelisa the eggs. After greeting the King and Queen, they said that as they were united in wishing to help King Charming, the Fairy Mazilla had no longer any power against him, and he might marry Fiordelisa as soon as he pleased. The King’s joy may be imagined, and as soon as it was day the news was spread through the palace, and everybody who saw Fiordelisa loved her directly. When Turritella heard what had happened she came running to the King, and when she saw Fiordelisa with him she was terribly angry, but before she could say a word the Enchanter and the Fairy changed her into a big brown owl, and she floated away out of one of the palace windows, hooting dismally. Then the wedding was held with great splendour, and King Charming and Queen Fiordelisa lived happily ever after.

L’Oiseau Bleu. Par *Mme.* d’Aulnoy.

THE HALF-CHICK

Once upon a time there was a handsome black Spanish hen, who had a large brood of chickens. They were all fine, plump little birds, except the youngest, who was quite unlike his brothers and sisters. Indeed, he was such a strange, queer-looking creature, that when he first chipped his shell his mother could scarcely believe her eyes, he was so different from the twelve other fluffy, downy, soft little chicks who nestled under her wings. This one looked just as if he had been cut in two. He had only one leg, and one wing, and one eye, and he had half a head and half a beak. His mother shook her head sadly as she looked at him and said:

‘My youngest born is only a half-chick. He can never grow up a tall handsome cock like his brothers. They will go out into the world and rule over poultry yards of their own; but this poor little fellow will always have to stay at home with his mother.’ And she called him Medio Pollito, which is Spanish for half-chick.

Now though Medio Pollito was such an odd, helpless-looking little thing, his mother soon found that he was not at all willing to remain under her wing and protection. Indeed, in character he was as unlike his brothers and sisters as he was in appearance. They were good, obedient chickens, and when the old hen chicked after them, they chirped and ran back to her side. But Medio Pollito had a roving spirit in spite of his one leg, and when his mother called to him to return to the coop, he pretended that he could not hear, because he had only one ear.

When she took the whole family out for a walk in the fields, Medio Pollito would hop away by himself, and hide among the Indian corn. Many an anxious minute his brothers and sisters had looking for him, while his mother ran to and fro cackling in fear and dismay.

As he grew older he became more self-willed and disobedient, and his manner to his mother was often very rude, and his temper to the other chickens very disagreeable.

One day he had been out for a longer expedition than usual in the fields. On his return he strutted up to his mother with the peculiar little hop and kick which was his way of walking, and cocking his one eye at her in a very bold way he said:

‘Mother, I am tired of this life in a dull farmyard, with nothing but a dreary maize field to look at. I’m off to Madrid to see the King.’

‘To Madrid, Medio Pollito!’ exclaimed his mother; ‘why, you silly chick, it would be a long journey for a grown-up cock, and a poor little thing like you would be tired out before you had gone half the distance. No, no, stay at home with your mother, and some day, when you are bigger, we will go a little journey together.’

But Medio Pollito had made up his mind, and he would not listen to his mother’s advice, nor to the prayers and entreaties of his brothers and sisters.

‘What is the use of our all crowding each other up in this poky little place?’ he said. ‘When I have a fine courtyard of my own at the King’s palace, I shall perhaps ask some of you to come and pay me a short visit,’ and scarcely waiting to say good-bye to his family, away he stumped down the high road that led to Madrid.

‘Be sure that you are kind and civil to everyone you meet,’ called his mother, running after him; but he was in such a hurry to be off, that he did not wait to answer her, or even to look back.

A little later in the day, as he was taking a short cut through a field, he passed a stream. Now the stream was all choked up, and overgrown with weeds and water-plants, so that its waters could not flow freely.

‘Oh! Medio Pollito,’ it cried, as the half-chick hopped along its banks, ‘do come and help me by clearing away these weeds.’

‘Help you, indeed!’ exclaimed Medio Pollito, tossing his head, and shaking the few feathers in his tail. ‘Do you think I have nothing to do but to waste my time on such trifles? Help yourself, and don’t trouble busy travellers. I am off to Madrid to see the King,’ and hoppity-kick, hoppity-kick, away stumped Medio Pollito.

A little later he came to a fire that had been left by some gipsies in a wood. It was burning very low, and would soon be out.

‘Oh! Medio Pollito,’ cried the fire, in a weak, wavering voice as the half-chick approached, ‘in a few minutes I shall go quite out, unless you put some sticks and dry leaves upon me. Do help me, or I shall die!’

‘Help you, indeed!’ answered Medio Pollito. ‘I have other things to do. Gather sticks for yourself, and don’t trouble me. I am off to Madrid to see the King,’ and hoppity-kick, hoppity-kick, away stumped Medio Pollito.

The next morning, as he was getting near Madrid, he passed a large chestnut tree, in whose branches the wind was caught and entangled. ‘Oh! Medio Pollito,’ called the wind, ‘do hop up here, and help me to get free of these branches. I cannot come away, and it is so uncomfortable.’

‘It is your own fault for going there,’ answered Medio Pollito. ‘I can’t waste all my morning stopping here to help you. Just shake yourself off, and don’t hinder me, for I am off to Madrid to see the King,' and hoppity-kick, hoppity-kick, away stumped Medio Pollito in great glee, for the towers and roofs of Madrid were now in sight. When he entered the town he saw before him a great splendid house, with soldiers standing before the gates. This he knew must be the King's palace, and he determined to hop up to the front gate and wait there until the King came out. But as he was hopping past one of the back windows the King's cook saw him:

'Here is the very thing I want,' he exclaimed, 'for the King has just sent a message to say that he must have chicken broth for his dinner,' and opening the window he stretched out his arm, caught Medio Pollito, and popped him into the broth-pot that was standing near the fire. Oh! how wet and clammy the water felt as it went over Medio Pollito's head, making his feathers cling to his side.

'Water, water!' he cried in his despair, 'do have pity upon me, and do not wet me like this.'

'Ah! Medio Pollito,' replied the water, 'you would not help me when I was a little stream away on the fields, now you must be punished.'

Then the fire began to burn and scald Medio Pollito, and he danced and hopped from one side of the pot to the other, trying to get away from the heat, and crying out in pain:

'Fire, fire! do not scorch me like this; you can't think how it hurts.'

'Ah! Medio Pollito,' answered the fire, 'you would not help me when I was dying away in the wood. You are being punished.'

At last, just when the pain was so great that Medio Pollito thought he must die, the cook lifted up the lid of the pot to see if the broth was ready for the King's dinner.

'Look here!' he cried in horror, 'this chicken is quite useless.

It is burnt to a cinder. I can't send it up to the royal table;' and opening the window he threw Medio Pollito out into the street. But the wind caught him up, and whirled him through the air so quickly that Medio Pollito could scarcely breathe, and his heart beat against his side till he thought it would break.

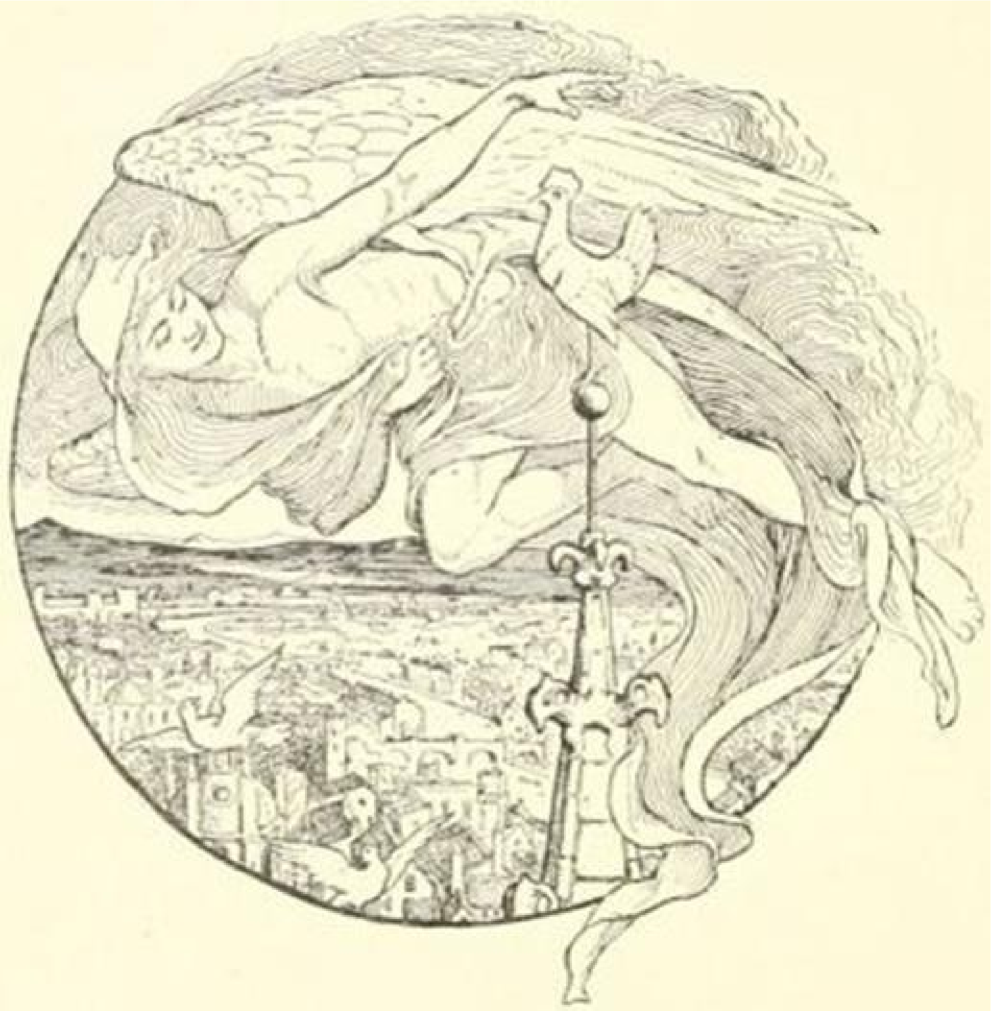

‘Oh, wind!’ at last he gasped out, ‘if you hurry me along like this you will kill me. Do let me rest a moment, or — —’ but he was so breathless that he could not finish his sentence.

‘Ah! Medio Pollito,’ replied the wind, ‘when I was caught in the branches of the chestnut tree you would not help me; now you are punished.’ And he swirled Medio Pollito over the roofs of the houses till they reached the highest church in the town, and there he left him fastened to the top of the steeple.

And there stands Medio Pollito to this day. And if you go to Madrid, and walk through the streets till you come to the highest church, you will see Medio Pollito perched on his one leg on the steeple, with his one wing drooping at his side, and gazing sadly out of his one eye over the town.

Spanish Tradition.

THE STORY OF CALIPH STORK

I.

Caliph Chasid, of Bagdad, was resting comfortably on his divan one fine afternoon. He was smoking a long pipe, and from time to time he sipped a little coffee which a slave handed to him, and after each sip he stroked his long beard with an air of enjoyment. In short, anyone could see that the Caliph was in an excellent humour. This was, in fact, the best time of day in which to approach him, for just now he was pretty sure to be both affable and in good spirits, and for this reason the Grand Vizier Mansor always chose this hour in which to pay his daily visit.

He arrived as usual this afternoon, but, contrary to his usual custom, with an anxious face. The Caliph withdrew his pipe for a moment from his lips and asked, ‘Why do you look so anxious, Grand Vizier?’

The Grand Vizier crossed his arms on his breast and bent low before his master as he answered:

‘Oh, my Lord! whether my countenance be anxious or not I know not, but down below, in the court of the palace, is a pedlar with such beautiful things that I cannot help feeling annoyed at having so little money to spare.’

The Caliph, who had wished for some time past to give his Grand Vizier a present, ordered his black slave to bring the pedlar before him at once. The slave soon returned, followed by the pedlar, a short stout man with a swarthy face, and dressed in very ragged clothes. He carried a box containing all manner of wares — strings of pearls, rings, richly mounted pistols, goblets, and combs. The Caliph and his Vizier inspected everything, and the Caliph chose some handsome pistols for himself and Mansor, and a jewelled comb for the Vizier’s wife. Just as the pedlar was about to close his box, the Caliph noticed a small drawer, and asked if there was anything else in it for sale. The pedlar opened the drawer and showed them a box containing a black powder, and a scroll written in strange characters, which neither the Caliph nor the Mansor could read.

‘I got these two articles from a merchant who had picked them up in the street at Mecca,’ said the pedlar. ‘I do not know what they may contain, but as they are of no use to me, you are welcome to have them for a trifle.’

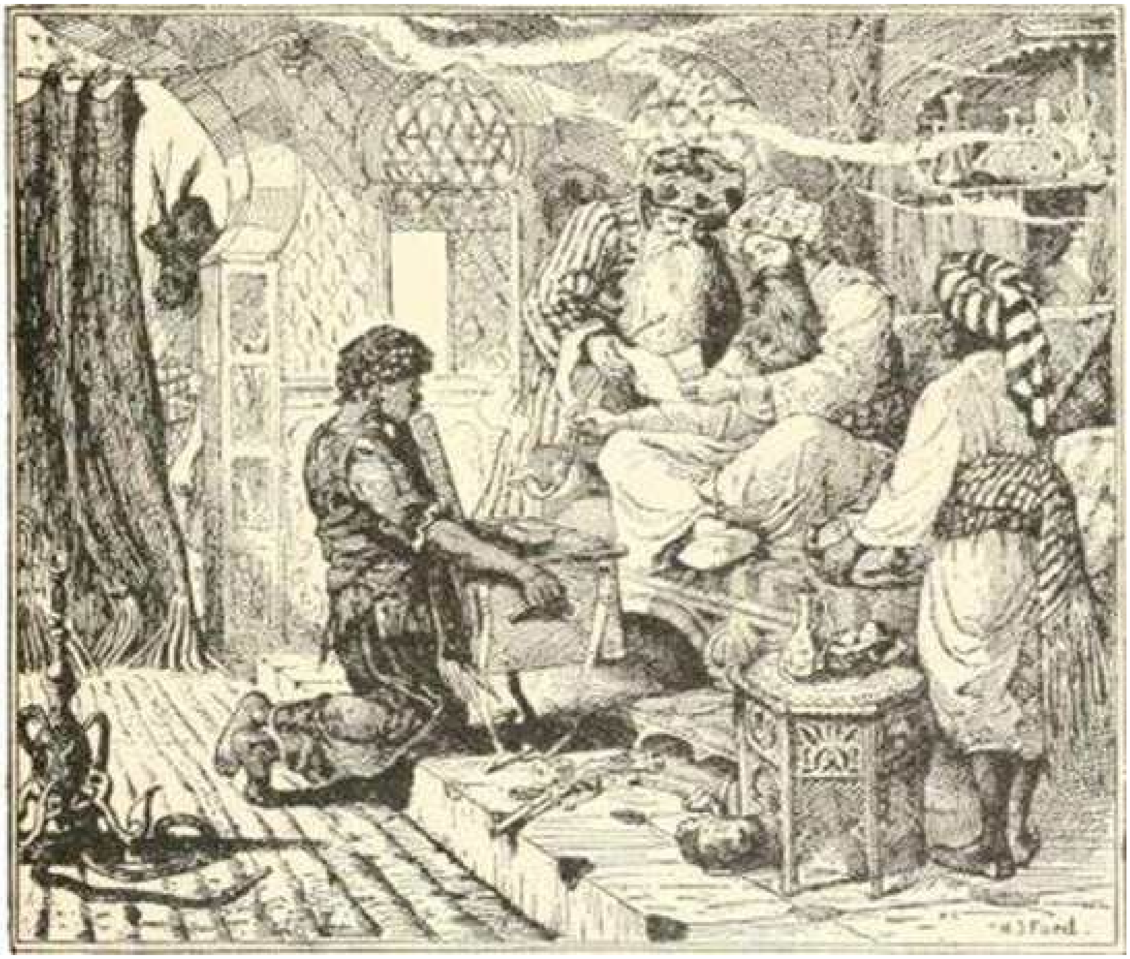

The Caliph, who liked to have old manuscripts in his library, even though he could not read them, purchased the scroll and the box, and dismissed the pedlar. Then, being anxious to know what might be the contents of the scroll, he asked the Vizier if he did not know of anyone who might be able to decipher it.

‘Most gracious Lord and master,’ replied the Vizier, ‘near the great Mosque lives a man called Selim the learned, who knows every language under the sun. Send for him; it may be that he will be able to interpret these mysterious characters.’

The learned Selim was summoned immediately.

‘Selim,’ said the Caliph, ‘I hear you are a scholar. Look well at this scroll and see whether you can read it. If you can, I will give you a robe of honour; but if you fail, I will order you to receive twelve strokes on your cheeks, and five-and-twenty on the soles of your feet, because you have been falsely called Selim the learned.’

Selim prostrated himself and said, ‘Be it according to your will, oh master!’ Then he gazed long at the scroll. Suddenly he exclaimed: ‘May I die, oh, my Lord, if this isn’t Latin!’

‘Well,’ said the Caliph, ‘if it is Latin, let us hear what it means.’

So Selim began to translate: ‘Thou who mayest find this, praise Allah for his mercy. Whoever shall snuff the powder in this box, and at the same time shall pronounce the word “Mutabor!” can transform himself into any creature he likes, and will understand the language of all animals. When he wishes to resume the human form, he has only to bow three times towards the east, and to repeat the same word. Be careful, however, when wearing the shape of some beast or bird, not to laugh, or thou wilt certainly forget the magic word and remain an animal for ever.’

When Selim the learned had read this, the Caliph was delighted. He made the wise man swear not to tell the matter to anyone, gave him a splendid robe, and dismissed him. Then he said to his Vizier, ‘That’s what I call a good bargain, Mansor. I am longing for the moment when I can become some animal. To-morrow morning I shall expect you early; we will go into the country, take some snuff from my box, and then hear what is being said in air, earth, and water.’

II.

Next morning Caliph Chasid had barely finished dressing and breakfasting, when the Grand Vizier arrived, according to orders, to accompany him in his expedition. The Caliph stuck the snuff-box in his girdle, and, having desired his servants to remain at home, started off with the Grand Vizier only in attendance. First they walked through the palace gardens, but they looked in vain for some creature which could tempt them to try their magic power. At length the Vizier suggested going further on to a pond which lay beyond the town, and where he had often seen a variety of creatures, especially storks, whose grave, dignified appearance and constant chatter had often attracted his attention.

The Caliph consented, and they went straight to the pond. As soon as they arrived they remarked a stork strutting up and down with a stately air, hunting for frogs, and now and then muttering something to itself. At the same time they saw another stork far above in the sky flying towards the same spot.

‘I would wager my beard, most gracious master,’ said the Grand Vizier, ‘that these two long legs will have a good chat together. How would it be if we turned ourselves into storks?’

‘Well said,’ replied the Caliph; ‘but first let us remember carefully how we are to become men once more. True! Bow three times towards the east and say “Mutabor!” and I shall be Caliph and you my Grand Vizier again. But for Heaven’s sake don’t laugh or we are lost!’

As the Caliph spoke he saw the second stork circling round his head and gradually flying towards the earth. Quickly he drew the box from his girdle, took a good pinch of the snuff, and offered one to Mansor, who also took one, and both cried together ‘Mutabor!’

Instantly their legs shrivelled up and grew thin and red; their smart yellow slippers turned to clumsy stork’s feet, their arms to wings; their necks began to sprout from between their shoulders and grew a yard long; their beards disappeared, and their bodies were covered with feathers.

‘You’ve got a fine long bill, Sir Vizier,’ cried the Caliph, after standing for some time lost in astonishment. ‘By the beard of the Prophet I never saw such a thing in all my life!’

‘My very humble thanks,’ replied the Grand Vizier, as he bent his long neck; ‘but, if I may venture to say so, your Highness is even handsomer as a stork than as a Caliph. But come, if it so pleases you, let us go near our comrades there and find out whether we really do understand the language of storks.’

Meantime the second stork had reached the ground. It first scraped its bill with its claw, stroked down its feathers, and then advanced towards the first stork. The two newly made storks lost no time in drawing near, and to their amazement overheard the following conversation:

‘Good morning, Dame Longlegs. You are out early this morning!’

‘Yes, indeed, dear Chatterbill! I am getting myself a morsel of breakfast. May I offer you a joint of lizard or a frog’s thigh?’

‘A thousand thanks, but I have really no appetite this morning. I am here for a very different purpose. I am to dance to-day before my father’s guests, and I have come to the meadow for a little quiet practice.’

Thereupon the young stork began to move about with the most wonderful steps. The Caliph and Mansor looked on in surprise for some time; but when at last she balanced herself in a picturesque attitude on one leg, and flapped her wings gracefully up and down, they could hold out no longer; a prolonged peal burst from each of their bills, and it was some time before they could recover their composure. The Caliph was the first to collect himself. ‘That was the best joke,’ said he, ‘I’ve ever seen. It’s a pity the stupid creatures were scared away by our laughter, or no doubt they would have sung next!’

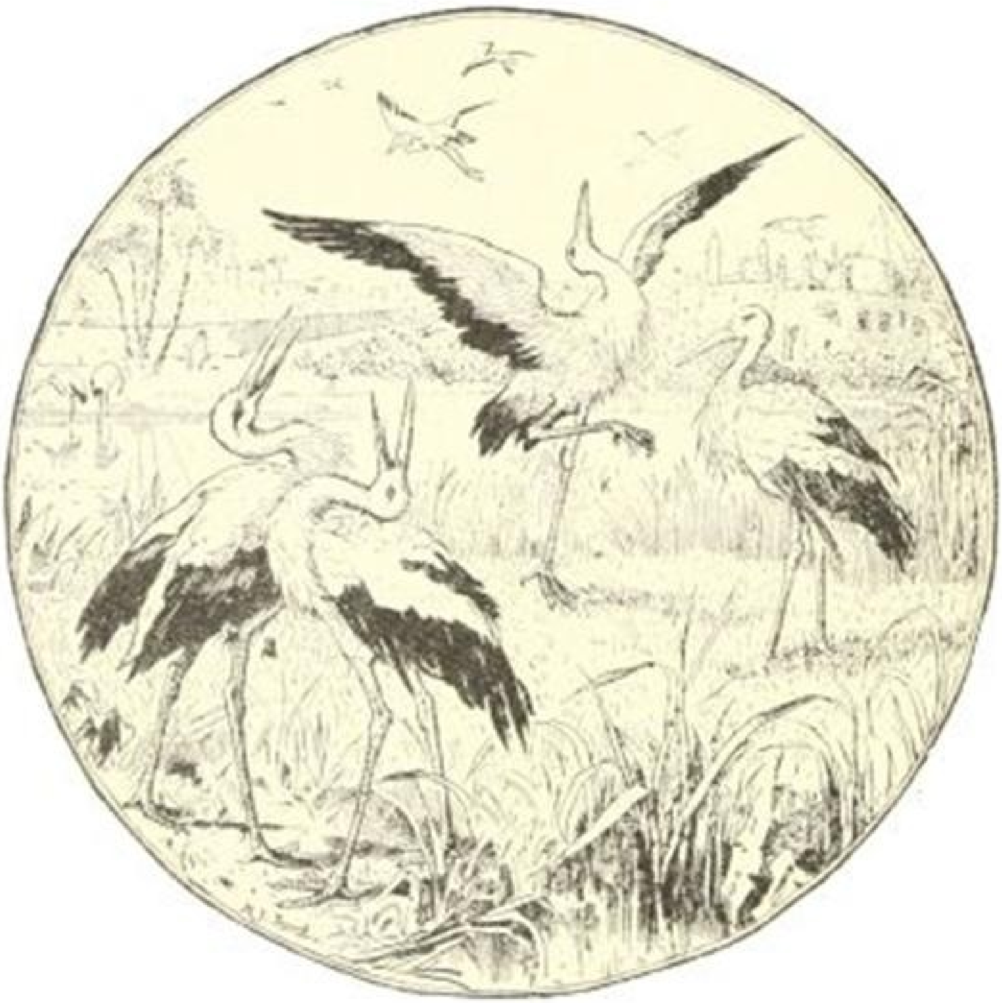

Suddenly, however, the Vizier remembered how strictly they had been warned not to laugh during their transformation. He at once communicated his fears to the Caliph, who exclaimed, ‘By Mecca and Medina! it would indeed prove but a poor joke if I had to remain a stork for the remainder of my days! Do just try and remember the stupid word, it has slipped my memory.’

‘We must bow three times eastwards and say “Mu . . . mu . . . mu . . .”’

They turned to the east and fell to bowing till their bills touched the ground, but, oh horror — the magic word was quite forgotten, and however often the Caliph bowed and however touchingly his Vizier cried ‘Mu . . . mu . . .’ they could not recall it, and the unhappy Chasid and Mansor remained storks as they were.

III.

The two enchanted birds wandered sadly on through the meadows. In their misery they could not think what to do next. They could not rid themselves of their new forms; there was no use in returning to the town and saying who they were; for who would believe a stork who announced that he was a Caliph; and even if they did believe him, would the people of Bagdad consent to let a stork rule over them?

So they lounged about for several days, supporting themselves on fruits, which, however, they found some difficulty in eating with their long bills. They did not much care to eat frogs or lizards. Their one comfort in their sad plight was the power of flying, and accordingly they often flew over the roofs of Bagdad to see what was going on there.

During the first few days they noticed signs of much disturbance and distress in the streets, but about the fourth day, as they sat on the roof of the palace, they perceived a splendid procession passing below them along the street. Drums and trumpets sounded, a man in a scarlet mantle, embroidered in gold, sat on a splendidly caparisoned horse surrounded by richly dressed slaves; half Bagdad crowded after him, and they all shouted, ‘Hail, Mirza, the Lord of Bagdad!’

The two storks on the palace roof looked at each other, and Caliph Chasid said, ‘Can you guess now, Grand Vizier, why I have been enchanted? This Mirza is the son of my deadly enemy, the mighty magician Kaschnur, who in an evil moment vowed vengeance on me. Still I will not despair! Come with me, my faithful friend; we will go to the grave of the Prophet, and perhaps at that sacred spot the spell may be loosed.’

They rose from the palace roof, and spread their wings toward Medina.

But flying was not quite an easy matter, for the two storks had had but little practice as yet.

‘Oh, my Lord!’ gasped the Vizier, after a couple of hours, ‘I can get on no longer; you really fly too quick for me. Besides, it is nearly evening, and we should do well to find some place in which to spend the night.’

Chasib listened with favour to his servant’s suggestion, and perceiving in the valley beneath them a ruin which seemed to promise shelter they flew towards it. The building in which they proposed to pass the night had apparently been formerly a castle. Some handsome pillars still stood amongst the heaps of ruins, and several rooms, which yet remained in fair preservation, gave evidence of former splendour. Chasid and his companion wandered along the passages seeking a dry spot, when suddenly Mansor stood still.

‘My Lord and master,’ he whispered, ‘if it were not absurd for a Grand Vizier, and still more for a stork, to be afraid of ghosts, I should feel quite nervous, for someone, or something close by me, has sighed and moaned quite audibly.’

The Caliph stood still and distinctly heard a low weeping sound which seemed to proceed from a human being rather than from any animal. Full of curiosity he was about to rush towards the spot from whence the sounds of woe came, when the Vizier caught him by the wing with his bill, and implored him not to expose himself to fresh and unknown dangers. The Caliph, however, under whose stork's breast a brave heart beat, tore himself away with the loss of a few feathers, and hurried down a dark passage. He saw a door which stood ajar, and through which he distinctly heard sighs, mingled with sobs. He pushed open the door with his bill, but remained on the threshold, astonished at the sight which met his eyes. On the floor of the ruined chamber — which was but scantily lighted by a small barred window — sat a large screech owl. Big tears rolled from its large round eyes, and in a hoarse voice it uttered its complaints through its crooked beak. As soon as it saw the Caliph and his Vizier — who had crept up meanwhile — it gave vent to a joyful cry. It gently wiped the tears from its eyes with its spotted brown wings, and to the great amazement of the two visitors, addressed them in good human Arabic.

'Welcome, ye storks! You are a good sign of my deliverance, for it was foretold me that a piece of good fortune should befall me through a stork.'

When the Caliph had recovered from his surprise, he drew up his feet into a graceful position, bent his long neck, and said: 'Oh, screech owl! from your words I am led to believe that we see in you a companion in misfortune. But, alas! your hope that you may attain your deliverance through us is but a vain one. You will know our helplessness when you have heard our story.'

The screech owl begged him to relate it, and the Caliph accordingly told him what we already know.

IV.

When the Caliph had ended, the owl thanked him and said: 'You hear my story, and own that I am no less unfortunate than yourselves. My father is the King of the Indies. I, his only daughter, am named Lusa. That magician Kaschnur, who enchanted you, has been the cause of my misfortunes too. He came one day to my father and demanded my hand for his son Mirza. My father — who is rather hasty — ordered him to be thrown downstairs. The wretch not long after managed to approach me under another form, and one day, when I was in the garden, and asked for some refreshment, he brought me — in the disguise of a slave — a draught which changed me at once to this horrid shape. Whilst I was fainting with terror he transported me here, and cried to me with his awful voice: "There shall you remain, lonely and hideous, despised even by the brutes, till the end of your days, or till some one of his own free will asks you to be his wife. Thus do I avenge myself on you and your proud father."

'Since then many months have passed away. Sad and lonely do I live like any hermit within these walls, avoided by the world and a terror even to animals; the beauties of nature are hidden from me, for I am blind by day, and it is only when the moon sheds her pale light on this spot that the veil falls from my eyes and I can see.’ The owl paused, and once more wiped her eyes with her wing, for the recital of her woes had drawn fresh tears from her.

The Caliph fell into deep thought on hearing this story of the Princess. ‘If I am not much mistaken,’ said he, ‘there is some mysterious connection between our misfortunes, but how to find the key to the riddle is the question.’

The owl answered: ‘Oh, my Lord! I too feel sure of this, for in my earliest youth a wise woman foretold that a stork would bring me some great happiness, and I think I could tell you how we might save ourselves.’ The Caliph was much surprised, and asked her what she meant.

‘The Magician who has made us both miserable,’ said she, ‘comes once a month to these ruins. Not far from this room is a large hall where he is in the habit of feasting with his companions. I have often watched them. They tell each other all about their evil deeds, and possibly the magic word which you have forgotten may be mentioned.’

‘Oh, dearest Princess!’ exclaimed the Caliph, ‘say, when does he come, and where is the hall?’

The owl paused a moment and then said: ‘Do not think me unkind, but I can only grant your request on one condition.’

‘Speak, speak!’ cried Chasid; ‘command, I will gladly do whatever you wish!’

‘Well,’ replied the owl, ‘you see I should like to be free too; but this can only be if one of you will offer me his hand in marriage.’

The storks seemed rather taken aback by this suggestion, and the Caliph beckoned to his Vizier to retire and consult with him.

When they were outside the door the Caliph said: ‘Grand Vizier, this is a tiresome business. However, you can take her.’

‘Indeed!’ said the Vizier; ‘so that when I go home my wife may scratch my eyes out! Besides, I am an old man, and your Highness is still young and unmarried, and a far more suitable match for a young and lovely Princess.’

‘That’s just where it is,’ sighed the Caliph, whose wings drooped in a dejected manner; ‘how do you know she is young and lovely? I call it buying a pig in a poke.’

They argued on for some time, but at length, when the Caliph saw plainly that his Vizier would rather remain a stork to the end of his days than marry the owl, he determined to fulfil the condition himself. The owl was delighted. She owned that they could not have arrived at a better time, as most probably the magicians would meet that very night.

She then proceeded to lead the two storks to the chamber. They passed through a long dark passage till at length a bright ray of light shone before them through the chinks of a half-ruined wall. When they reached it the owl advised them to keep very quiet. Through the gap near which they stood they could with ease survey the whole of the large hall. It was adorned with splendid carved pillars; a number of coloured lamps replaced the light of day. In the middle of the hall stood a round table covered with a variety of dishes, and about the table was a divan on which eight men were seated. In one of these bad men the two recognised the pedlar who had sold the magic powder. The man next him begged him to relate all his latest doings, and amongst them he told the story of the Caliph and his Vizier.

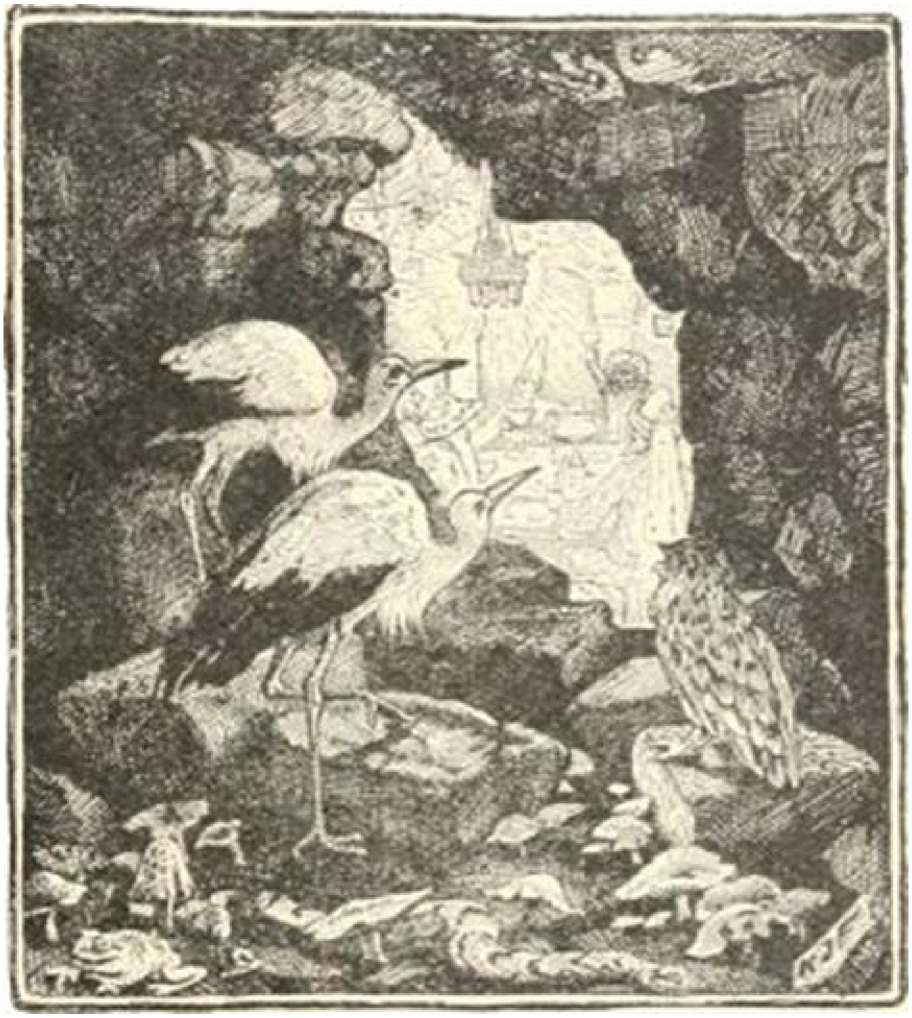

‘And what kind of word did you give them?’ asked another old sorcerer.

‘A very difficult Latin word; it is “Mutabor.”’

V.

As soon as the storks heard this they were nearly beside themselves with joy. They ran at such a pace to the door of the ruined castle that the owl could scarcely keep up with them. When they reached it the Caliph turned to the owl, and said with much feeling: ‘Deliverer of my friend and myself, as a proof of my eternal gratitude, accept me as your husband.’ Then he turned towards the east. Three times the storks bowed their long necks to the sun, which was just rising over the mountains. ‘Mutabor!’ they both cried, and in an instant they were once more transformed. In the rapture of their newly-given lives master and servant fell laughing and weeping into each other’s arms. Who shall describe their surprise when they at last turned round and beheld standing before them a beautiful lady exquisitely dressed!

With a smile she held out her hand to the Caliph, and asked: ‘Do you not recognise your screech owl?’

It was she! The Caliph was so enchanted by her grace and beauty, that he declared being turned into a stork had been the best piece of luck which had ever befallen him. The three set out at once for Bagdad. Fortunately, the Caliph found not only the box with the magic powder, but also his purse in his girdle; he was, therefore, able to buy in the nearest village all they required for their journey, and so at last they reached the gates of Bagdad.

Here the Caliph’s arrival created the greatest sensation. He had been quite given up for dead, and the people were greatly rejoiced to see their beloved ruler again.

Their rage with the usurper Mirza, however, was great in proportion. They marched in force to the palace and took the old magician and his son prisoners. The Caliph sent the magician to the room where the Princess had lived as an owl, and there had him hanged. As the son, however, knew nothing of his father’s acts, the Caliph gave him his choice between death and a pinch of the magic snuff. When he chose the latter, the Grand Vizier handed him the box. One good pinch, and the magic word transformed him to a stork. The Caliph ordered him to be confined in an iron cage, and placed in the palace gardens.

Caliph Chasid lived long and happily with his wife the Princess. His merriest time was when the Grand Vizier visited him in the afternoon; and when the Caliph was in particularly high spirits he would condescend to mimic the Vizier’s appearance when he was a stork. He would strut gravely, and with well-stiffened legs, up and down the room, chattering, and showing how he had vainly bowed to the east and cried ‘Mu . . . Mu . . .’ The Caliphess and her children were always much entertained by this performance; but when the Caliph went on nodding and bowing, and calling ‘Mu . . . mu . . .’ too long, the Vizier would threaten laughingly to tell the Caliphess the subject of the discussion carried on one night outside the door of Princess Screech Owl.

THE ENCHANTED WATCH

Once upon a time there lived a rich man who had three sons. When they grew up, he sent the eldest to travel and see the world, and three years passed before his family saw him again. Then he returned, magnificently dressed, and his father was so delighted with his behaviour, that he gave a great feast in his honour, to which all the relations and friends were invited.

When the rejoicings were ended, the second son begged leave of his father to go in his turn to travel and mix with the world. The father was enchanted at the request, and gave him plenty of money for his expenses, saying, ‘If you behave as well as your brother, I will do honour to you as I did to him.’ The young man promised to do his best, and his conduct during three years was all that it should be. Then he went home, and his father was so pleased with him that his feast of welcome was even more splendid than the one before.

The third brother, whose name was Jenik, or Johnnie, was considered the most foolish of the three. He never did anything at home except sit over the stove and dirty himself with the ashes; but he also begged his father’s leave to travel for three years. ‘Go if you like, you idiot; but what good will it do you?’

The youth paid no heed to his father’s observations as long as he obtained permission to go. The father saw him depart with joy, glad to get rid of him, and gave him a handsome sum of money for his needs.

Once, as he was making one of his journeys, Jenik chanced to cross a meadow where some shepherds were just about to kill a dog. He entreated them to spare it, and to give it to him instead, which they willingly did, and he went on his way, followed by the dog. A little further on he came upon a cat, which someone was going to put to death. He implored its life, and the cat followed him. Finally, in another place, he saved a serpent, which was also handed over to him, and now they made a party of four — the dog behind Jenik, the cat behind the dog, and the serpent behind the cat.

Then the serpent said to Jenik, ‘Go wherever you see me go,’ for in the autumn, when all the serpents hide themselves in their holes, this serpent was going in search of his king, who was king of all the snakes.

Then he added: ‘My king will scold me for my long absence, everyone else is housed for the winter, and I am very late. I shall have to tell him what danger I have been in, and how, without your help, I should certainly have lost my life. The king will ask what you would like in return, and be sure you beg for the watch which hangs on the wall. It has all sorts of wonderful properties, you only need to rub it to get whatever you like.'

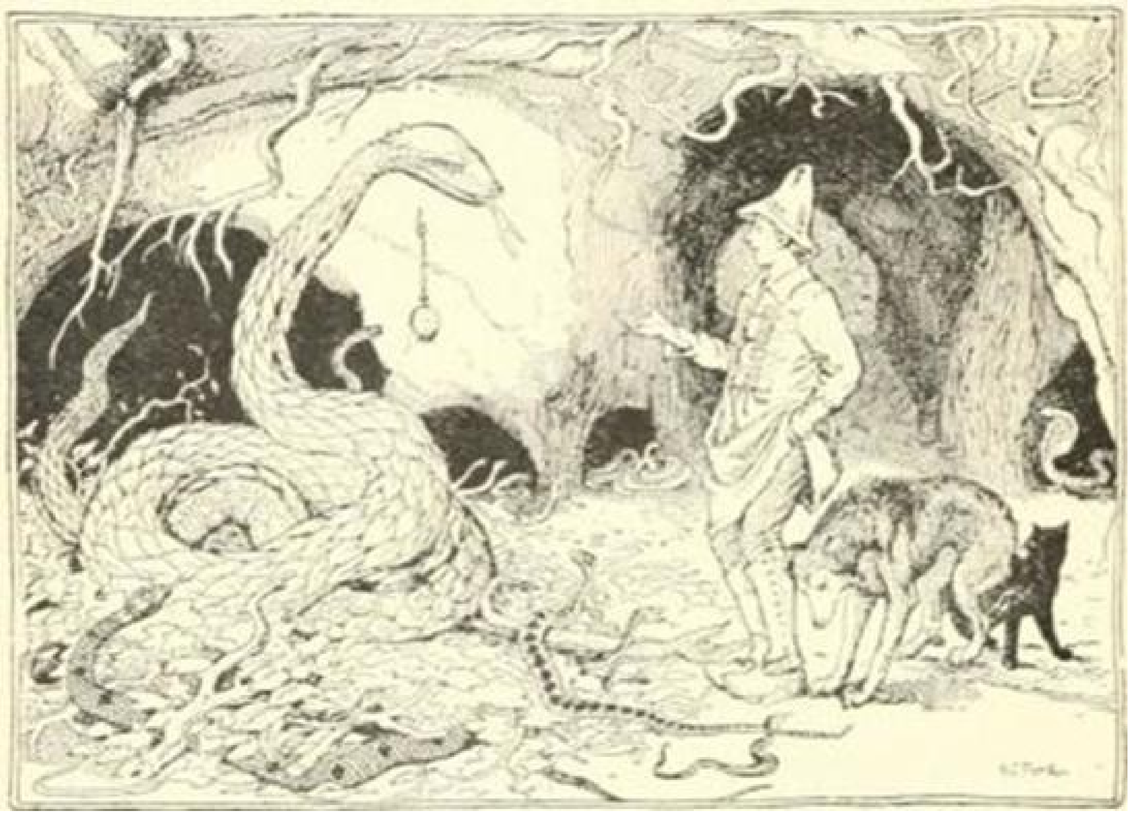

No sooner said than done. Jenik became the master of the watch, and the moment he got out he wished to put its virtues to the proof. He was hungry, and thought it would be delightful to eat in the meadow a loaf of new bread and a steak of good beef washed down by a flask of wine, so he scratched the watch, and in an instant it was all before him. Imagine his joy!

Evening soon came, and Jenik rubbed his watch, and thought it would be very pleasant to have a room with a comfortable bed and a good supper. In an instant they were all before him. After supper he went to bed and slept till morning, as every honest man ought to do. Then he set forth for his father's house, his mind dwelling on the feast that would be awaiting him. But as he returned in the same old clothes in which he went away, his father flew into a great rage, and refused to do anything for him. Jenik went to his old place near the stove, and dirtied himself in the ashes without anybody minding.

The third day, feeling rather dull, he thought it would be nice to see a three-story house filled with beautiful furniture, and with vessels of silver and gold. So he rubbed the watch, and there it all was. Jenik went to look for his father, and said to him: ‘You offered me no feast of welcome, but permit me to give one to you, and come and let me show you my plate.’

The father was much astonished, and longed to know where his son had got all this wealth. Jenik did not reply, but begged him to invite all their relations and friends to a grand banquet.

So the father invited all the world, and everyone was amazed to see such splendid things, so much plate, and so many fine dishes on the table. After the first course Jenik prayed his father to invite the King, and his daughter the Princess. He rubbed his watch and wished for a carriage ornamented with gold and silver, and drawn by six horses, with harness glittering with precious stones. The father did not dare to sit in this gorgeous coach, but went to the palace on foot. The King and his daughter were immensely surprised with the beauty of the carriage, and mounted the steps at once to go to Jenik’s banquet. Then Jenik rubbed his watch afresh, and wished that for six miles the way to the house should be paved with marble. Who ever felt so astonished as the King? Never had he travelled over such a gorgeous road.

When Jenik heard the wheels of the carriage, he rubbed his watch and wished for a still more beautiful house, four stories high, and hung with gold, silver, and damask; filled with wonderful tables, covered with dishes such as no king had ever eaten before. The King, the Queen, and the Princess were speechless with surprise. Never had they seen such a splendid palace, nor such a high feast! At dessert the King asked Jenik’s father to give him the young man for a son-in-law. No sooner said than done! The marriage took place at once, and the King returned to his own palace, and left Jenik with his wife in the enchanted house.

Now Jenik was not a very clever man, and at the end of a very short time he began to bore his wife. She inquired how he managed to build palaces and to get so many precious things. He told her all about the watch, and she never rested till she had stolen the precious talisman. One night she took the watch, rubbed it, and wished for a carriage drawn by four horses; and in this carriage she at once set out for her father’s palace. There she called to her own attendants, bade them follow her into the carriage, and drove straight to the sea-side. Then she rubbed her watch, and wished that the sea might be crossed by a bridge, and that a magnificent palace might arise in the middle of the sea. No sooner said than done. The Princess entered the house, rubbed her watch, and in an instant the bridge was gone.

Left alone, Jenik felt very miserable. His father, mother, and brothers, and, indeed, everybody else, all laughed at him. Nothing remained to him but the cat and dog whose lives he had once saved. He took them with him and went far away, for he could no longer live with his family. He reached at last a great desert, and saw some crows flying towards a mountain. One of them was a long way behind, and when he arrived his brothers inquired what had made him so late. ‘Winter is here,’ they said, ‘and it is time to fly to other countries.’ He told them that he had seen in the middle of the sea the most wonderful house that ever was built.

On hearing this, Jenik at once concluded that this must be the hiding-place of his wife. So he proceeded directly to the shore with his dog and his cat. When he arrived on the beach, he said to the dog: ‘You are an excellent swimmer, and you, little one, are very light; jump on the dog’s back and he will take you to the palace. Once there, he will hide himself near the door, and you must steal secretly in and try to get hold of my watch.’

No sooner said than done. The two animals crossed the sea; the dog hid near the house, and the cat stole into the chamber. The Princess recognised him, and guessed why he had come; and she took the watch down to the cellar and locked it in a box. But the cat wriggled its way into the cellar, and the moment the Princess turned her back, he scratched and scratched till he had made a hole in the box. Then he took the watch between his teeth, and waited quietly till the Princess came back. Scarcely had she opened the door when the cat was outside, and the watch into the bargain.

The cat was no sooner beyond the gates than she said to the dog:

‘We are going to cross the sea; be very careful not to speak to me.’

The dog laid this to heart and said nothing; but when they approached the shore he could not help asking, ‘Have you got the watch?’

The cat did not answer — he was afraid that he might let the talisman fall. When they touched the shore the dog repeated his question.

‘Yes,’ said the cat.

And the watch fell into the sea. Then our two friends began each to accuse the other, and both looked sorrowfully at the place where their treasure had fallen in. Suddenly a fish appeared near the edge of the sea. The cat seized it, and thought it would make them a good supper.

‘I have nine little children,’ cried the fish. ‘Spare the father of a family!’

‘Granted,’ replied the cat; ‘but on condition that you find our watch.’

The fish executed his commission, and they brought the treasure back to their master. Jenik rubbed the watch and wished that the palace, with the Princess and all its inhabitants, should be swallowed up in the sea. No sooner said than done. Jenik returned to his parents, and he and his watch, his cat and his dog, lived together happily to the end of their days.

Deulin.

ROSANELLA

Everybody knows that though the fairies live hundreds of years they do sometimes die, and especially as they are obliged to pass one day in every week under the form of some animal, when of course they are liable to accident. It was in this way that death once overtook the Queen of the Fairies, and it became necessary to call a general assembly to elect a new sovereign. After much discussion, it appeared that the choice lay between two fairies, one called Surcantine and the other Paridamie; and their claims were so equal that it was impossible without injustice to prefer one to the other. Under these circumstances it was unanimously decided that whichever of the two could show to the world the greatest wonder should be Queen; but it was to be a special kind of wonder, no moving of mountains or any such common fairy tricks would do. Surcantine, therefore, resolved that she would bring up a Prince whom nothing could make constant. While Paridamie decided to display to admiring mortals a Princess so charming that no one could see her without falling in love with her. They were allowed to take their own time, and meanwhile the four oldest fairies were to attend to the affairs of the kingdom.

Now Paridamie had for a long time been very friendly with King Bardondon, who was a most accomplished Prince, and whose court was the model of what a court should be. His Queen, Balanice, was also charming; indeed it is rare to find a husband and wife so perfectly of one mind about everything. They had one little daughter, whom they had named ‘Rosanella,’ because she had a little pink rose printed upon her white throat. From her earliest infancy she had shown the most astonishing intelligence, and the courtiers knew her smart sayings by heart, and repeated them on all occasions. In the middle of the night following the assembly of fairies, Queen Balanice woke up with a shriek, and when her maids of honour ran to see what was the matter, they found she had had a frightful dream.

‘I thought,’ said she, ‘that my little daughter had changed into a bouquet of roses, and that as I held it in my hand a bird swooped down suddenly and snatched it from me and carried it away.’

‘Let some one run and see that all is well with the Princess,’ she added.

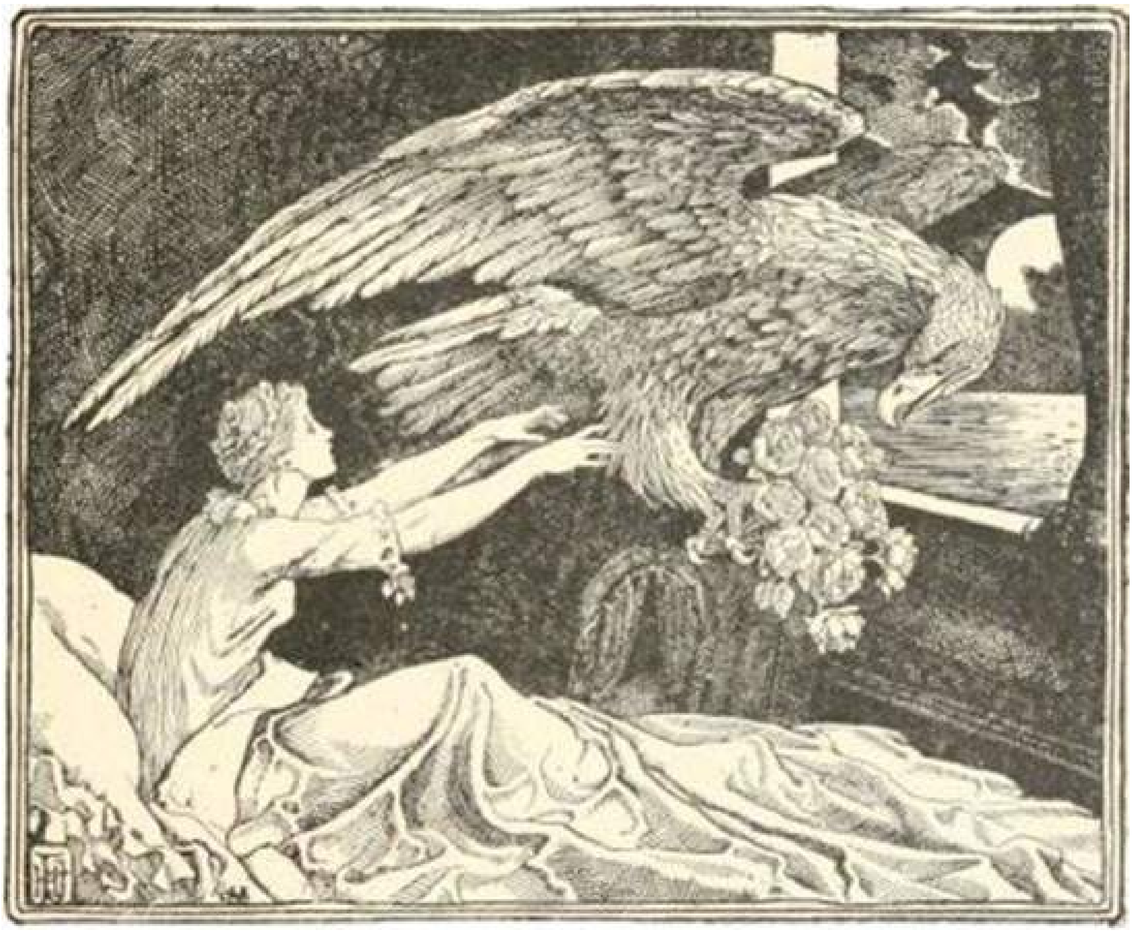

So they ran; but what was their dismay when they found that the cradle was empty; and though they sought high and low, not a trace of Rosanella could they discover. The Queen was inconsolable, and so, indeed, was the King, only being a man he did not say quite so much about his feelings. He presently proposed to Balanice that they should spend a few days at one of their palaces in the country; and to this she willingly agreed, since her grief made the gaiety of the capital distasteful to her. One lovely summer evening, as they sat together on a shady lawn shaped like a star, from which radiated twelve splendid avenues of trees, the Queen looked round and saw a charming peasant-girl approaching by each path, and what was still more singular was that everyone carried something in a basket which appeared to occupy her whole attention. As each drew near she laid her basket at Balanice’s feet, saying:

‘Charming Queen, may this be some slight consolation to you in your unhappiness!’

The Queen hastily opened the baskets, and found in each a lovely baby-girl, about the same age as the little Princess for whom she sorrowed so deeply. At first the sight of them renewed her grief; but presently their charms so gained upon her that she forgot her melancholy in providing them with nursery-maids, cradle-rockers, and ladies-in-waiting, and in sending hither and thither for swings and dolls and tops, and bushels of the finest sweetmeats.

Oddly enough, every baby had upon its throat a tiny pink rose. The Queen found it so difficult to decide on suitable names for all of them, that until she could settle the matter she chose a special colour for everyone, by which it was known, so that when they were all together they looked like nothing so much as a nosegay of gay flowers. As they grew older it became evident that though they were all remarkably intelligent, and profited equally by the education they received, yet they differed one from another in disposition, so much so that they gradually ceased to be known as ‘Pearl,’ or ‘Primrose,’ or whatever might have been their colour, and the Queen instead would say:

‘Where is my Sweet?’ or ‘my Beautiful,’ or ‘my Gay.’

Of course, with all these charms they had lovers by the dozen. Not only in their own court, but princes from afar, who were constantly arriving, attracted by the reports which were spread abroad; but these lovely girls, the first Maids of Honour, were as discreet as they were beautiful, and favoured no one.

But let us return to Surcantine. She had fixed upon the son of a king who was cousin to Bardondon, to bring up as her fickle Prince. She had before, at his christening, given him all the graces of mind and body that a prince could possibly require; but now she redoubled her efforts, and spared no pains in adding every imaginable charm and fascination. So that whether he happened to be cross or amiable, splendidly or simply attired, serious or frivolous, he was always perfectly irresistible! In truth, he was a charming young fellow, since the Fairy had given him the best heart in the world as well as the best head, and had left nothing to be desired but — constancy. For it cannot be denied that Prince Mirliflor was a desperate flirt, and as fickle as the wind; so much so, that by the time he arrived at his eighteenth birthday there was not a heart left for him to conquer in his father’s kingdom — they were all his own, and he was tired of everyone! Things were in this state when he was invited to visit the court of his father’s cousin, King Bardondon.

Imagine his feelings when he arrived and was presented at once to twelve of the loveliest creatures in the world, and his embarrassment was heightened by the fact that they all liked him as much as he liked each one of them, so that things came to such a pass that he was never happy a single instant without them. For could he not whisper soft speeches to Sweet, and laugh with Joy, while he looked at Beauty? And in his more serious moments what could be pleasanter than to talk to Grave upon some shady lawn, while he held the hand of Loving in his own, and all the others lingered near in sympathetic silence? For the first time in his life he really loved, though the object of his devotion was not one person, but twelve, to whom he was equally attached, and even Surcantine was deceived into thinking that this was indeed the height of inconstancy. But Paridamie said not a word.

In vain did Prince Mirliflor's father write commanding him to return, and proposing for him one good match after another. Nothing in the world could tear him from his twelve enchantresses.

One day the Queen gave a large garden-party, and just as the guests were all assembled, and Prince Mirliflor was as usual dividing his attentions between the twelve beauties, a humming of bees was heard. The Rose-maidens, fearing their stings, uttered little shrieks, and fled all together to a distance from the rest of the company. Immediately, to the horror of all who were looking on, the bees pursued them, and, growing suddenly to an enormous size, pounced each upon a maiden and carried her off into the air, and in an instant they were all lost to view. This amazing occurrence plunged the whole court into the deepest affliction, and Prince Mirliflor, after giving way to the most violent grief at first, fell gradually into a state of such deep dejection that it was feared if nothing could rouse him he would certainly die. Surcantine came in all haste to see what she could do for her darling, but he rejected with scorn all the portraits of lovely princesses which she offered him for his collection. In short, it was evident that he was in a bad way, and the Fairy was at her wits' end. One day, as he wandered about absorbed in melancholy reflections, he heard sudden shouts and exclamations of amazement, and if he had taken the trouble to look up he could not have helped being as astonished as everyone else, for through the air a chariot of crystal was slowly approaching which glittered in the sunshine. Six lovely maidens with shining wings drew it by rose-coloured ribbons, while a whole flight of others, equally beautiful, were holding long garlands of roses crossed above it, so as to form a complete canopy. In it sat the Fairy Paridamie, and by her side a Princess whose beauty positively dazzled all who saw her. At the foot of the great staircase they descended, and proceeded to the Queen's apartments, though everyone had run together to see this marvel, till it was quite difficult to make a way through the crowd; and exclamations of wonder rose on all sides at the loveliness of the strange Princess. 'Great Queen,' said Paridamie, 'permit me to restore to you your daughter Rosanella, whom I stole out of her cradle.'

After the first transports of joy were over the Queen said to Paridamie:

'But my twelve lovely ones, are they lost to me for ever? Shall I never see them again?'

But Paridamie only said:

'Very soon you will cease to miss them!' in a tone that evidently meant 'Don't ask me any more questions.’ And then mounting again into her chariot she swiftly disappeared.

The news of his beautiful cousin’s arrival was soon carried to the Prince, but he had hardly the heart to go and see her. However, it became absolutely necessary that he should pay his respects, and he had scarcely been five minutes in her presence before it seemed to him that she combined in her own charming person all the gifts and graces which had so attracted him in the twelve Rose-maidens whose loss he had so truly mourned; and after all it is really more satisfactory to make love to one person at a time. So it came to pass that before he knew where he was he was entreating his lovely cousin to marry him, and the moment the words had left his lips, Paridamie appeared, smiling and triumphant, in the chariot of the Queen of the Fairies, for by that time they had all heard of her success, and declared her to have earned the kingdom. She had to give a full account of how she had stolen Rosanella from her cradle, and divided her character into twelve parts, that each might charm Prince Mirliflor, and when once more united might cure him of his inconstancy once and for ever.

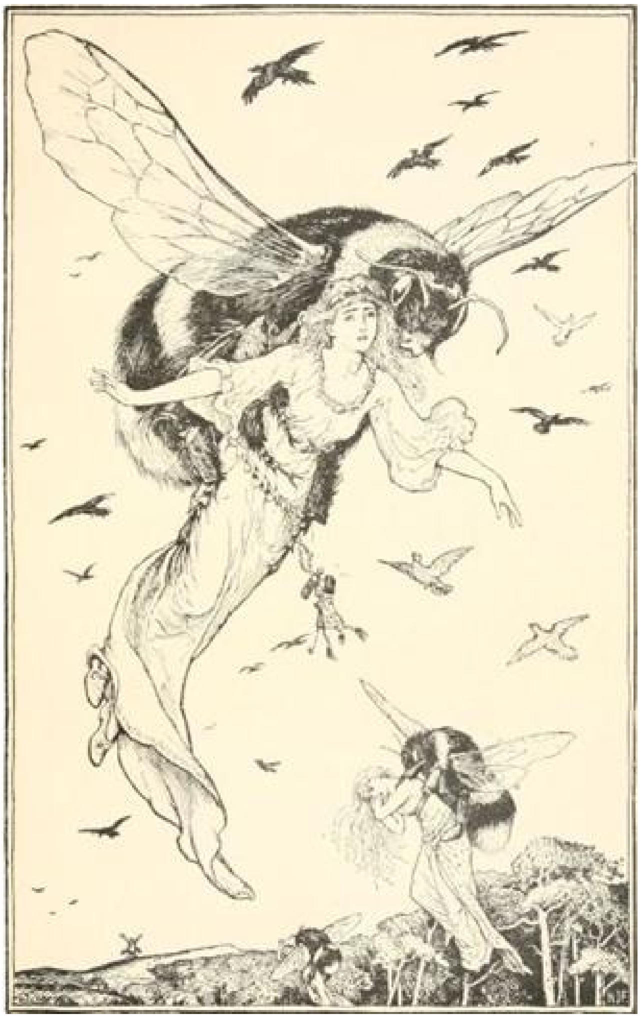

THE PRINCESS CARRIED OFF BY THE BEES

And as one more proof of the fascination of the whole Rosanella, I may tell you that even the defeated Surcantine sent her a wedding gift, and was present at the ceremony which took place as soon as the guests could arrive. Prince Mirliflor was constant for the rest of his life. And indeed who would not have been in his place? As for Rosanella, she loved him as much as all the twelve beauties put together, so they reigned in peace and happiness to the end of their long lives.

By the Comte de Caylus.

SYLVAIN AND JOCOSA

Once upon a time there lived in the same village two children, one called Sylvain and the other Jocosa, who were both remarkable for beauty and intelligence. It happened that their parents were not on terms of friendship with one another, on account of some old quarrel, which had, however, taken place so long ago, that they had quite forgotten what it was all about, and only kept up the feud from force of habit. Sylvain and Jocosa for their parts were far from sharing this enmity, and indeed were never happy when apart. Day after day they fed their flocks of sheep together, and spent the long sunshiny hours in playing, or resting upon some shady bank. It happened one day that the Fairy of the Meadows passed by and saw them, and was so much attracted by their pretty faces and gentle manners that she took them under her protection, and the older they grew the dearer they became to her. At first she showed her interest by leaving in their favourite haunts many little gifts such as they delighted to offer one to the other, for they loved each other so much that their first thought was always, ‘What will Jocosa like?’ or, ‘What will please Sylvain?’ And the Fairy took a great delight in their innocent enjoyment of the cakes and sweetmeats she gave them nearly every day. When they were grown up she resolved to make herself known to them, and chose a time when they were sheltering from the noonday sun in the deep shade of a flowery hedgerow. They were startled at first by the sudden apparition of a tall and slender lady, dressed all in green, and crowned with a garland of flowers. But when she spoke to them sweetly, and told them how she had always loved them, and that it was she who had given them all the pretty things which it had so surprised them to find, they thanked her gratefully, and took pleasure in answering the questions she put to them. When she presently bade them farewell, she told them never to tell anyone else that they had seen her. ‘You will often see me again,’ added she, ‘and I shall be with you frequently, even when you do not see me.’ So saying she vanished, leaving them in a state of great wonder and excitement. After this she came often, and taught them numbers of things, and showed them many of the marvels of her beautiful kingdom, and at last one day she said to them, ‘You know that I have always been kind to you; now I think it is time you did something for me in your turn. You both remember the fountain I call my favourite? Promise me that every morning before the sun rises you will go to it and clear away every stone that impedes its course, and every dead leaf or broken twig that sullies its clear waters. I shall take it as a proof of your gratitude to me if you neither forget nor delay this duty, and I promise that so long as the sun’s earliest rays find my favourite spring the clearest and sweetest in all my meadows, you two shall not be parted from one another.’

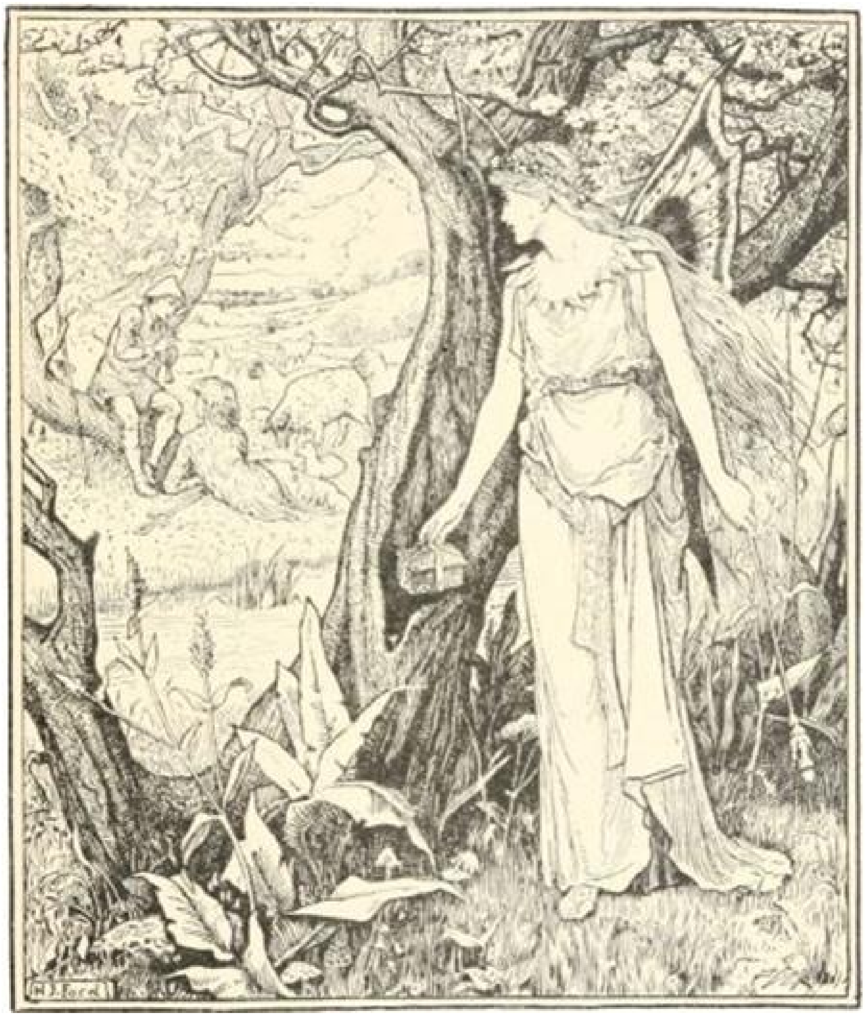

Sylvain and Jocosa willingly undertook this service, and indeed felt that it was but a very small thing in return for all that the fairy had given and promised to them. So for a long time the fountain was tended with the most scrupulous care, and was the clearest and prettiest in all the country round. But one morning in the spring, long before the sun rose, they were hastening towards it from opposite directions, when, tempted by the beauty of the myriads of gay flowers which grew thickly on all sides, they paused each to gather some for the other.

‘I will make Sylvain a garland,’ said Jocosa, and ‘How pretty Jocosa will look in this crown!’ thought Sylvain.

Hither and thither they strayed, led ever farther and farther, for the brightest flowers seemed always just beyond them, until at last they were startled by the first bright rays of the rising sun. With one accord they turned and ran towards the fountain, reaching it at the same moment, though from opposite sides. But what was their horror to see its usually tranquil waters seething and bubbling, and even as they looked down rushed a mighty stream, which entirely engulfed it, and Sylvain and Jocosa found themselves parted by a wide and swiftly-rushing river. All this had happened with such rapidity that they had only time to utter a cry, and each to hold up to the other the flowers they had gathered; but this was explanation enough. Twenty times did Sylvain throw himself into the turbulent waters, hoping to be able to swim to the other side, but each time an irresistible force drove him back upon the bank he had just quitted, while, as for Jocosa, she even essayed to cross the flood upon a tree which came floating down torn up by the roots, but her efforts were equally useless. Then with heavy hearts they set out to follow the course of the stream, which had now grown so wide that it was only with difficulty they could distinguish each other. Night and day, over mountains and through valleys, in cold or in heat, they struggled on, enduring fatigue and hunger and every hardship, and consoled only by the hope of meeting once more — until three years had passed, and at last they stood upon the cliffs where the river flowed into the mighty sea.

And now they seemed farther apart than ever, and in despair they tried once more to throw themselves into the foaming waves. But the Fairy of the Meadows, who had really never ceased to watch over them, did not intend that they should be drowned at last, so she hastily waved her wand, and immediately they found themselves standing side by side upon the golden sand. You may imagine their joy and delight when they realised that their weary struggle was ended, and their utter contentment as they clasped each other by the hand. They had so much to say that they hardly knew where to begin, but they agreed in blaming themselves bitterly for the negligence which had caused all their trouble; and when she heard this the Fairy immediately appeared to them. They threw themselves at her feet and implored her forgiveness, which she granted freely, and promised at the same time that now their punishment was ended she would always befriend them. Then she sent for her chariot of green rushes, ornamented with May dew-drops, which she particularly valued and always collected with great care; and ordered her six short-tailed moles to carry them all back to the well-known pastures, which they did in a remarkably short time; and Sylvain and Jocosa were overjoyed to see their dearly-loved home once more after all their toilful wanderings. The Fairy, who had set her mind upon securing their happiness, had in their absence quite made up the quarrel between their parents, and gained their consent to the marriage of the faithful lovers; and now she conducted them to the most charming little cottage that can be imagined, close to the fountain, which had once more resumed its peaceful aspect, and flowed gently down into the little brook which enclosed the garden and orchard and pasture which belonged to the cottage. Indeed, nothing more could have been thought of, either for Sylvain and Jocosa or for their flocks; and their delight satisfied even the Fairy who had planned it all to please them. When they had explored and admired until they were tired they sat down to rest under the rose-covered porch, and the Fairy said that to pass the time until the wedding guests whom she had invited could arrive she would tell them a story. This is it:

THE YELLOW BIRD

Once upon a time a Fairy, who had somehow or other got into mischief, was condemned by the High Court of Fairyland to live for several years under the form of some creature, and at the moment of resuming her natural appearance once again to make the fortune of two men. It was left to her to choose what form she would take, and because she loved yellow she transformed herself into a lovely bird with shining golden feathers such as no one had ever seen before. When the time of her punishment was at an end the beautiful yellow bird flew to Bagdad, and let herself be caught by a Fowler at the precise moment when Badi-al-Zaman was walking up and down outside his magnificent summer palace. This Badi-al-Zaman — whose name means 'Wonder-of-the-World' — was looked upon in Bagdad as the most fortunate creature under the sun, because of his vast wealth. But really, what with anxiety about his riches and being weary of everything, and always desiring something he had not, he never knew a moment's real happiness. Even now he had come out of his palace, which was large and splendid enough for fifty kings, weary and cross because he could find nothing new to amuse him. The Fowler thought that this would be a favourable opportunity for offering him the marvellous bird, which he felt certain he would buy the instant he saw it. And he was not mistaken, for when Badi-al-Zaman took the lovely prisoner into his own hands, he saw written under its right wing the words, 'He who eats my head will become a king,' and under its left wing, 'He who eats my heart will find a hundred gold pieces under his pillow every morning.' In spite of all his wealth he at once began to desire the promised gold, and the bargain was soon completed. Then the difficulty arose as to how the bird was to be cooked; for among all his army of servants not one could Badi-al-Zaman trust. At last he asked the Fowler if he were married, and on hearing that he was he bade him take the bird home with him and tell his wife to cook it.

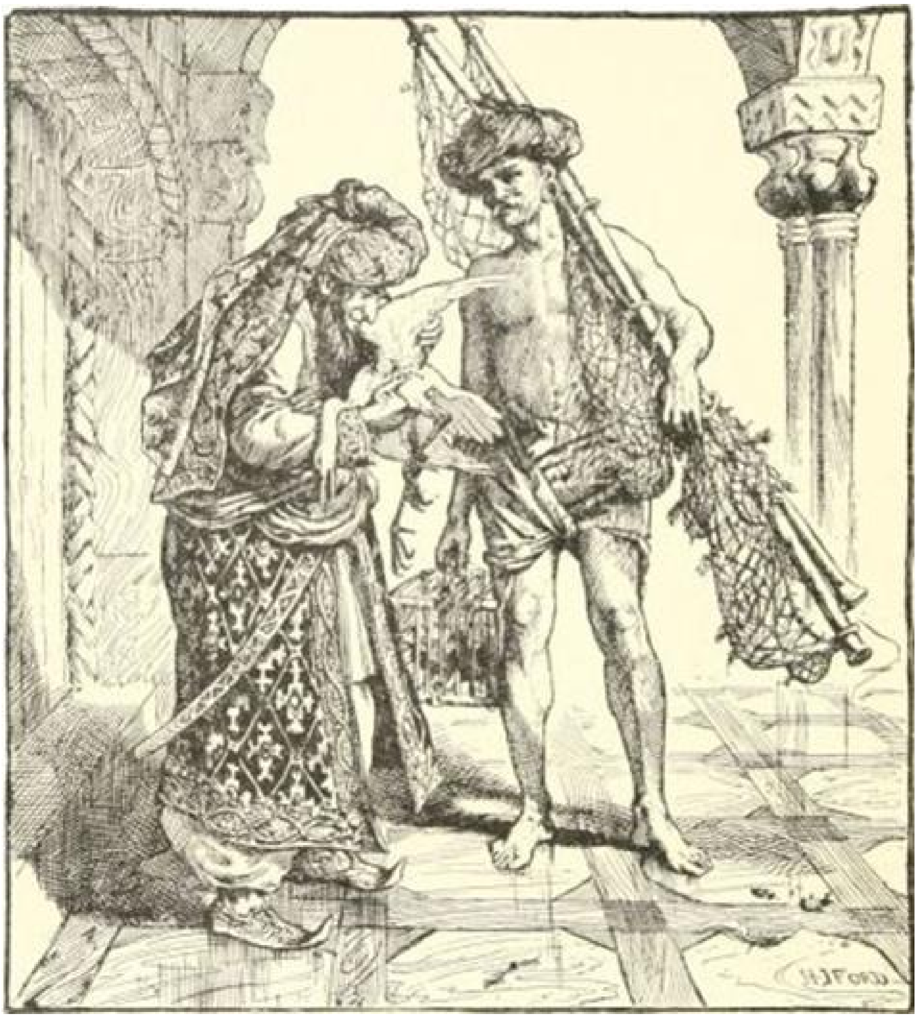

‘Perhaps,’ said he, ‘this will give me an appetite, which I have not had for many a long day, and if so your wife shall have a hundred pieces of silver.’

The Fowler with great joy ran home to his wife, who speedily made a savoury stew of the Yellow Bird. But when Badi-al-Zaman reached the cottage and began eagerly to search in the dish for its head and its heart he could not find either of them, and turned to the Fowler’s wife in a furious rage. She was so terrified that she fell upon her knees before him and confessed that her two children had come in just before he arrived, and had so teased her for some of the dish she was preparing that she had presently given the head to one and the heart to the other, since these morsels are not generally much esteemed; and Badi-al-Zaman rushed from the cottage vowing vengeance against the whole family. The wrath of a rich man is generally to be feared, so the Fowler and his wife resolved to send their children out of harm’s way; but the wife, to console her husband, confided to him that she had purposely given them the head and heart of the bird because she had been able to read what was written under its wings. So, believing that their children’s fortunes were made, they embraced them and sent them forth, bidding them get as far away as possible, to take different roads, and to send news of their welfare. For themselves, they remained hidden and disguised in the town, which was really rather clever of them; but very soon afterwards Badi-al-Zaman died of vexation and annoyance at the loss of the promised treasure, and then they went back to their cottage to wait for news of their children. The younger, who had eaten the heart of the Yellow Bird, very soon found out what it had done for him, for each morning when he awoke he found a purse containing a hundred gold pieces under his pillow. But, as all poor people may remember for their consolation, nothing in the world causes so much trouble or requires so much care as a great treasure. Consequently, the Fowler's son, who spent with reckless profusion and was supposed to be possessed of a great hoard of gold, was before very long attacked by robbers, and in trying to defend himself was so badly wounded that he died.

The elder brother, who had eaten the Yellow Bird's head, travelled a long way without meeting with any particular adventure, until at last he reached a large city in Asia, which was all in an uproar over the choosing of a new Emir. All the principal citizens had formed themselves into two parties, and it was not until after a prolonged squabble that they agreed that the person to whom the most singular thing happened should be Emir. Our young traveller entered the town at this juncture, with his agreeable face and jaunty air, and all at once felt something alight upon his head, which proved to be a snow-white pigeon. Thereupon all the people began to stare, and to run after him, so that he presently reached the palace with the pigeon upon his head and all the inhabitants of the city at his heels, and before he knew where he was they made him Emir, to his great astonishment.

As there is nothing more agreeable than to command, and nothing to which people get accustomed more quickly, the young Emir soon felt quite at his ease in his new position; but this did not prevent him from making every kind of mistake, and so misgoverning the kingdom that at last the whole city rose in revolt and deprived him at once of his authority and his life — a punishment which he richly deserved, for in the days of his prosperity he disowned the Fowler and his wife, and allowed them to die in poverty.

'I have told you this story, my dear Sylvain and Jocosa,' added the Fairy, 'to prove to you that this little cottage and all that belongs to it is a gift more likely to bring you happiness and contentment than many things that would at first seem grander and more desirable. If you will faithfully promise me to till your fields and feed your flocks, and will keep your word better than you did before, I will see that you never lack anything that is really for your good.'

Sylvain and Jocosa gave their faithful promise, and as they kept it they always enjoyed peace and prosperity. The Fairy had asked all their friends and neighbours to their wedding, which took place at once with great festivities and rejoicings, and they lived to a good old age, always loving one another with all their hearts.

By the Comte de Caylus.

FAIRY GIFTS

It generally happens that people’s surroundings reflect more or less accurately their minds and dispositions, so perhaps that is why the Flower Fairy lived in a lovely palace, with the most delightful garden you can imagine, full of flowers, and trees, and fountains, and fish-ponds, and everything nice. For the Fairy herself was so kind and charming that everybody loved her, and all the young princes and princesses who formed her court, were as happy as the day was long, simply because they were near her. They came to her when they were quite tiny, and never left her until they were grown up and had to go away into the great world; and when that time came she gave to each whatever gift he asked of her. But it is chiefly of the Princess Sylvia that you are going to hear now. The Fairy loved her with all her heart, for she was at once original and gentle, and she had nearly reached the age at which the gifts were generally bestowed. However, the Fairy had a great wish to know how the other princesses who had grown up and left her, were prospering, and before the time came for Sylvia to go herself, she resolved to send her to some of them. So one day her chariot, drawn by butterflies, was made ready, and the Fairy said: ‘Sylvia, I am going to send you to the court of Iris; she will receive you with pleasure for my sake as well as for your own. In two months you may come back to me again, and I shall expect you to tell me what you think of her.’

Sylvia was very unwilling to go away, but as the Fairy wished it she said nothing — only when the two months were over she stepped joyfully into the butterfly chariot, and could not get back quickly enough to the Flower-Fairy, who, for her part, was equally delighted to see her again.

‘Now, child,’ said she, ‘tell me what impression you have received.’

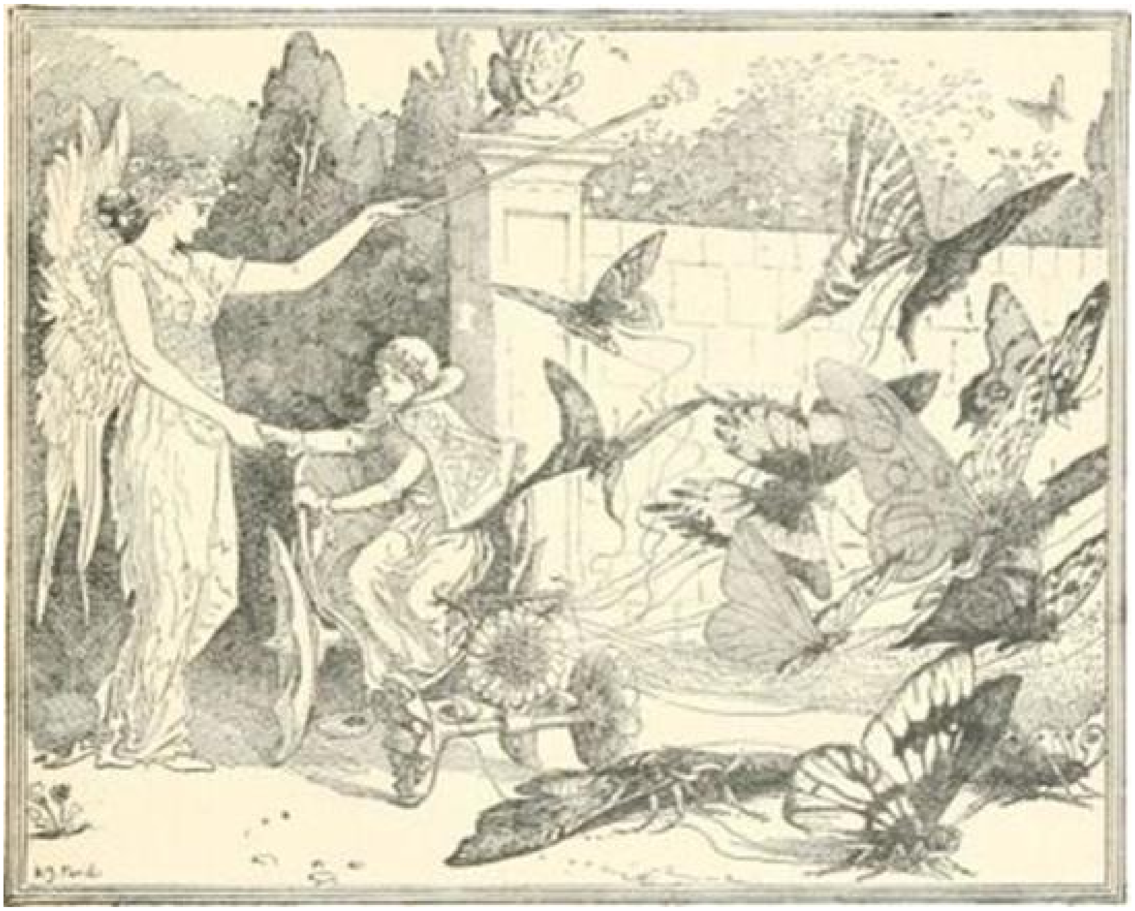

‘You sent me, madam,’ answered Sylvia, ‘to the Court of Iris, on whom you had bestowed the gift of beauty. She never tells anyone, however, that it was your gift, though she often speaks of your kindness in general. It seemed to me that her loveliness, which fairly dazzled me at first, had absolutely deprived her of the use of any of her other gifts or graces. In allowing herself to be seen, she appeared to think that she was doing all that could possibly be required of her. But, unfortunately, while I was still with her she became seriously ill, and though she presently recovered, her beauty is entirely gone, so that she hates the very sight of herself, and is in despair. She entreated me to tell you what had happened, and to beg you, in pity, to give her beauty back to her. And, indeed, she does need it terribly, for all the things in her that were tolerable, and even agreeable, when she was so pretty, seem quite different now she is ugly, and it is so long since she thought of using her mind or her natural cleverness, that I really don’t think she has any left now. She is quite aware of all this herself, so you may imagine how unhappy she is, and how earnestly she begs for your aid.’

‘You have told me what I wanted to know,’ cried the Fairy, ‘but alas! I cannot help her; my gifts can be given but once.’

Some time passed in all the usual delights of the Flower-Fairy’s palace, and then she sent for Sylvia again, and told her she was to stay for a little while with the Princess Daphne, and accordingly the butterflies whisked her off, and set her down in quite a strange kingdom. But she had only been there a very little time before a wandering butterfly brought a message from her to the Fairy, begging that she might be sent for as soon as possible, and before very long she was allowed to return.

‘Ah! madam,’ cried she, ‘what a place you sent me to that time!’

‘Why, what was the matter?’ asked the Fairy. ‘Daphne was one of the princesses who asked for the gift of eloquence, if I remember rightly.’

‘And very ill the gift of eloquence becomes a woman,’ replied Sylvia, with an air of conviction. ‘It is true that she speaks well, and her expressions are well chosen; but then she never leaves off talking, and though at first one may be amused, one ends by being wearied to death. Above all things she loves any assembly for settling the affairs of her kingdom, for on those occasions she can talk and talk without fear of interruption; but, even then, the moment it is over she is ready to begin again about anything or nothing, as the case may be. Oh! how glad I was to come away I cannot tell you.’

The Fairy smiled at Sylvia’s unfeigned disgust at her late experience; but after allowing her a little time to recover she sent her to the Court of the Princess Cynthia, where she left her for three months. At the end of that time Sylvia came back to her with all the joy and contentment that one feels at being once more beside a dear friend. The Fairy, as usual, was anxious to hear what she thought of Cynthia, who had always been amiable, and to whom she had given the gift of pleasing.

‘I thought at first,’ said Sylvia, ‘that she must be the happiest Princess in the world; she had a thousand lovers who vied with one another in their efforts to please and gratify her. Indeed, I had nearly decided that I would ask a similar gift.’

‘Have you altered your mind, then?’ interrupted the Fairy.

‘Yes, indeed, madam,’ replied Sylvia; ‘and I will tell you why. The longer I stayed the more I saw that Cynthia was not really happy. In her desire to please everyone she ceased to be sincere, and degenerated into a mere coquette; and even her lovers felt that the charms and fascinations which were exercised upon all who approached her without distinction were valueless, so that in the end they ceased to care for them, and went away disdainfully.’

‘I am pleased with you, child,’ said the Fairy; ‘enjoy yourself here for awhile and presently you shall go to Phyllida.’

Sylvia was glad to have leisure to think, for she could not make up her mind at all what she should ask for herself, and the time was drawing very near.

However, before very long the Fairy sent her to Phyllida, and waited for her report with unabated interest.

‘I reached her court safely,’ said Sylvia, ‘and she received me with much kindness, and immediately began to exercise upon me that brilliant wit which you had bestowed upon her. I confess that I was fascinated by it, and for a week thought that nothing could be more desirable; the time passed like magic, so great was the charm of her society. But I ended by ceasing to covet that gift more than any of the others I have seen, for, like the gift of pleasing, it cannot really give satisfaction. By degrees I wearied of what had so delighted me at first, especially as I perceived more and more plainly that it is impossible to be constantly smart and amusing without being frequently ill-natured, and too apt to turn all things, even the most serious, into mere occasions for a brilliant jest.’

The Fairy in her heart agreed with Sylvia’s conclusions, and felt pleased with herself for having brought her up so well.

But now the time was come for Sylvia to receive her gift, and all her companions were assembled; the Fairy stood in the midst and in the usual manner asked what she would take with her into the great world.

Sylvia paused for a moment, and then answered: ‘A quiet spirit.’ And the Fairy granted her request.

This lovely gift makes life a constant happiness to its possessor, and to all who are brought into contact with her. She has all the beauty of gentleness and contentment in her sweet face; and if at times it seems less lovely through some chance grief or disquietude, the hardest thing that one ever hears said is:

‘Sylvia’s dear face is pale to-day. It grieves one to see her so.’

And when, on the contrary, she is gay and joyful, the sunshine of her presence rejoices all who have the happiness of being near her.

By the Comte de Caylus.

PRINCE NARCISSUS AND THE PRINCESS POTENTILLA

Once upon a time there lived a King and Queen who, though it is a very long while since they died, were much the same in their tastes and pursuits as people nowadays. The King, who was called Cloverleaf, liked hunting better than anything else; but he nevertheless bestowed as much care upon his kingdom as he felt equal to — that is to say, he never made an end of folding and unfolding the State documents. As to the Queen, she had once been very pretty, and she liked to believe that she was so still, which is, of course, always made quite easy for queens. Her name was Frivola, and her one occupation in life was the pursuit of amusement. Balls, masquerades, and picnics followed one another in rapid succession, as fast as she could arrange them, and you may imagine that under these circumstances the kingdom was somewhat neglected. As a matter of fact, if anyone had a fancy for a town, or a province, he helped himself to it; but as long as the King had his horses and dogs, and the Queen her musicians and her actors, they did not trouble themselves about the matter. King Cloverleaf and Queen Frivola had but one child, and this Princess had from her very babyhood been so beautiful, that by the time she was four years old the Queen was desperately jealous of her, and so fearful that when she was grown up she would be more admired than herself, that she resolved to keep her hidden away out of sight. To this end she caused a little house to be built not far beyond the Palace gardens, on the bank of a river. This was surrounded by a high wall, and in it the charming Potentilla was imprisoned. Her nurse, who was dumb, took care of her, and the necessaries of life were conveyed to her through a little window in the wall, while guards were always pacing to and fro outside, with orders to cut off the head of anyone who tried to approach, which they would certainly have done without thinking twice about it. The Queen told everyone, with much pretended sorrow, that the Princess was so ugly, and so troublesome, and altogether so impossible to love, that to keep her out of sight was the only thing that could be done for her. And this tale she repeated so often, that at last the whole court believed it. Things were in this state, and the Princess was about fifteen years old when Prince Narcissus, attracted by the report of Queen Frivola’s gay doings, presented himself at the court. He was not much older than the Princess, and was as handsome a Prince as you would see in a day’s journey, and really, for his age, not so very scatter-brained. His parents were a King and Queen, whose story you will perhaps read some day. They died almost at the same time, leaving their kingdom to the eldest of their children, and commending their youngest son, Prince Narcissus, to the care of the Fairy Melinette. In this they did very well for him, for the Fairy was as kind as she was powerful, and she spared no pains in teaching the little Prince everything it was good for him to know, and even imparted to him some of her own Fairy lore. But as soon as he was grown up she sent him out to see the world for himself, though all the time she was secretly keeping watch over him, ready to help in any time of need. Before he started she gave him a ring which would render him invisible when he put it on his finger. These rings seem to be quite common; you must often have heard of them, even if you have never seen one. It was in the course of the Prince's wanderings, in search of experience of men and things, that he came to the court of Queen Frivola, where he was extremely well received. The Queen was delighted with him, so were all her ladies; and the King was very polite to him, though he did not quite see why the whole court was making such a fuss over him.

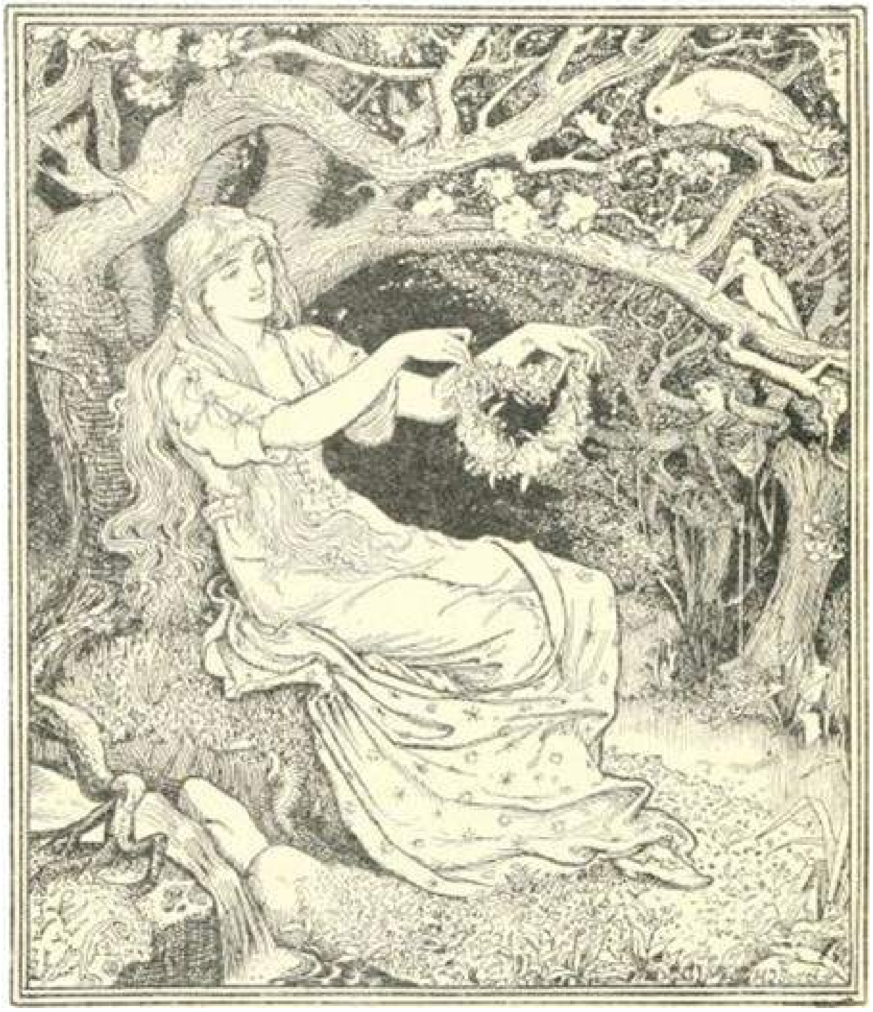

Prince Narcissus enjoyed all that went on, and found the time pass very pleasantly. Before long, of course, he heard the story about the Princess Potentilla, and, as it had by that time been repeated many times, and had been added to here and there, she was represented as such a monster of ugliness that he was really quite curious to see her, and resolved to avail himself of the magic power of his ring to accomplish his design. So he made himself invisible, and passed the guard without their so much as suspecting that anyone was near. Climbing the wall was rather a difficulty, but when he at length found himself inside it he was charmed with the peaceful beauty of the little domain it enclosed, and still more delighted when he perceived a slender, lovely maiden wandering among the flowers. It was not until he had sought vainly for the imaginary monster that he realised that this was the Princess herself, and by that time he was deeply in love with her, for indeed it would have been hard to find anyone prettier than Potentilla, as she sat by the brook, weaving a garland of blue forget-me-nots to crown her waving golden locks, or to imagine anything more gentle than the way she tended all the birds and beasts who inhabited her small kingdom, and who all loved and followed her. Prince Narcissus watched her every movement, and hovered near her in a dream of delight, not daring as yet to appear to her, so humble had he suddenly become in her presence. And when evening came, and the nurse fetched the Princess into her little house, he felt obliged to go back to Frivola’s palace, for fear his absence should be noticed and someone should discover his new treasure. But he forgot that to go back absent, and dreamy, and indifferent, when he had before been gay and ardent about everything, was the surest way of awakening suspicion; and when, in response to the jesting questions which were put to him upon the subject, he only blushed and returned evasive answers, all the ladies were certain that he had lost his heart, and did their utmost to discover who was the happy possessor of it. As to the Prince, he was becoming day by day more attached to Potentilla, and his one thought was to attend her, always invisible, and help her in everything she did, and provide her with everything that could possibly amuse or please her. And the Princess, who had learnt to find diversion in very small things in her quiet life, was in a continual state of delight over the treasures which the Prince constantly laid where she must find them. Then Narcissus implored his faithful friend Melinette to send the Princess such dreams of him as should make her recognise him as a friend when he actually appeared before her eyes; and this device was so successful that the Princess quite dreaded the cessation of these amusing dreams, in which a certain Prince Narcissus was such a delightful lover and companion. After that he went a step further and began to have long talks with the Princess — still, however, keeping himself invisible, until she begged him so earnestly to appear to her that he could no longer resist, and after making her promise that, no matter what he was like, she would still love him, he drew the ring from his finger, and the Princess saw with delight that he was as handsome as he was agreeable. Now, indeed, they were perfectly happy, and they passed the whole long summer day in Potentilla’s favourite place by the brook, and when at last Prince Narcissus had to leave her it seemed to them both that the hours had gone by with the most amazing swiftness. The Princess stayed where she was, dreaming of her delightful Prince, and nothing could have been further from her thoughts than any trouble or misfortune, when suddenly, in a cloud of dust and shavings, by came the enchanter Grumedan, and unluckily he chanced to catch sight of Potentilla. Down he came straightway and alighted at her feet, and one look at her charming blue eyes and smiling lips quite decided him that he must appear to her at once, though he was rather annoyed to remember that he had on only his second-best cloak. The Princess sprang to her feet with a cry of terror at this sudden apparition, for really the Enchanter was no beauty. To begin with, he was very big and clumsy, then he had but one eye, and his teeth were long, and he stammered badly; nevertheless, he had an excellent opinion of himself, and mistook the Princess's cry of terror for an exclamation of delighted surprise. After pausing a moment to give her time to admire him, the Enchanter made her the most complimentary speech he could invent, which, however, did not please her at all, though he was extremely delighted with it himself. Poor Potentilla only shuddered and cried:

'Oh! where is my Narcissus?'

To which he replied with a self-satisfied chuckle: 'You want a narcissus, madam? Well, they are not rare; you shall have as many as you like.'

Whereupon he waved his wand, and the Princess found herself surrounded and half buried in the fragrant flowers. She would certainly have betrayed that this was not the kind of narcissus she wanted, but for the Fairy Melinette, who had been anxiously watching the interview, and now thought it quite time to interfere. Assuming the Prince's voice, she whispered in Potentilla's ear:

'We are menaced by a great danger, but my only fear is for you, my Princess. Therefore I beg you to hide what you really feel, and we will hope that some way out of the difficulty may present itself.'

The Princess was much agitated by this speech, and feared lest the Enchanter should have overheard it; but he had been loudly calling her attention to the flowers, and chuckling over his own smartness in getting them for her; and it was rather a blow to him when she said very coldly that they were not the sort she preferred, and she would be glad if he would send them all away. This he did, but afterwards wished to kiss the Princess's hand as a reward for having been so obliging; but the Fairy Melinette was not going to allow anything of that kind. She appeared suddenly, in all her splendour, and cried:

'Stay, Grumedan; this Princess is under my protection, and the smallest impertinence will cost you a thousand years of captivity. If you can win Potentilla's heart by the ordinary methods I cannot oppose you, but I warn you that I will not put up with any of your usual tricks.'

This declaration was not at all to the Enchanter's taste; but he knew that there was no help for it, and that he would have to behave well, and pay the Princess all the delicate attentions he could think of, though they were not at all the sort of thing he was used to. However, he decided that to win such a beauty it was quite worth while; and Melinette, feeling that she could now leave the Princess in safety, hurried off to tell Prince Narcissus what was going forward. Of course, at the very mention of the Enchanter as a rival he was furious, and I don't know what foolish things he would not have done if Melinette had not been there to calm him down. She represented to him what a powerful enchanter Grumedan was, and how, if he were provoked, he might avenge himself upon the Princess, since he was the most unjust and churlish of all the enchanters, and had often before had to be punished by the Fairy Queen for some of his ill-deeds. Once he had been imprisoned in a tree, and was only released when it was blown down by a furious wind; another time he was condemned to stay under a big stone at the bottom of a river, until by some chance the stone should be turned over; but nothing could ever really improve him. The Fairy finally made Narcissus promise that he would remain invisible when he was with the Princess, since she felt sure that this would make things easier for all of them. Then began a struggle between Grumedan and the Prince, the latter under the name of Melinette, as to which could best delight and divert the Princess and win her approbation. Prince Narcissus first made friends with all the birds in Potentilla's little domain, and taught them to sing her name and her praises, with all their sweetest trills and most touching melodies, and all day long to tell her how dearly he loved her. Grumedan, thereupon, declared that there was nothing new about that, since the birds had sung since the world began, and all lovers had imagined that they sang for them alone. Therefore he said he would himself write an opera that should be absolutely a novelty and something worth hearing. When the time came for the performance (which lasted five weary hours) the Princess found to her dismay that the 'opera' consisted of this more than indifferent verse, chanted with all their might by ten thousand frogs:

'Admirable Potentilla,
Do you think it kind or wise
In this sudden way to kill a
Poor Enchanter with your eyes?'

Really, if Narcissus had not been there to whisper in her ear and divert her attention, I don't know what would have become of poor Potentilla, for though the first repetition of this absurdity amused her faintly, she nearly died of weariness before the time was over. Luckily Grumedan did not perceive this, as he was too much occupied in whipping up the frogs, many of whom perished miserably from fatigue, since he did not allow them to rest for a moment. The Prince's next idea for Potentilla's amusement was to cause a fleet of boats exactly like those of Cleopatra, of which you have doubtless read in history, to come up the little river, and upon the most gorgeously decorated of these reclined the great Queen herself, who, as soon as she reached the place where Potentilla sat in rapt attention, stepped majestically on shore and presented the Princess with that celebrated pearl of which you have heard so much, saying:

'You are more beautiful than I ever was. Let my example warn you to make a better use of your beauty!’

And then the little fleet sailed on, until it was lost to view in the windings of the river. Grumedan was also looking on at the spectacle, and said very contemptuously:

‘I cannot say I think these marionettes amusing. What a to-do to make over a single pearl! But if you like pearls, madam, why, *I* will soon gratify you.’

So saying, he drew a whistle from his pocket, and no sooner had he blown it than the Princess saw the water of the river bubble and grow muddy, and in another instant up came hundreds of thousands of great oysters, who climbed slowly and laboriously towards her and laid at her feet all the pearls they contained.

‘Those are what I call pearls,’ cried Grumedan in high glee. And truly there were enough of them to pave every path in Potentilla’s garden and leave some to spare! The next day Prince Narcissus had prepared for the Princess’s pleasure a charming arbour of leafy branches, with couches of moss and grassy floor and garlands everywhere, with her name written in different-coloured blossoms. Here he caused a dainty little banquet to be set forth, while hidden musicians played softly, and the silvery fountains splashed down into their marble basins, and when presently the music stopped a single nightingale broke the stillness with his delicious chant.

‘Ah!’ cried the Princess, recognising the voice of one of her favourites, ‘Philomel, my sweet one, who taught you that new song?’

And he answered: ‘Love, my Princess.’

Meanwhile the Enchanter was very ill-pleased with the entertainment, which he declared was dullness itself.

‘You don’t seem to have any idea in these parts beyond little squeaking birds!’ said he. ‘And fancy giving a banquet without so much as an ounce of plate!’

So the next day, when the Princess went out into her garden, there stood a summer-house built of solid gold, decorated within and without with her initials and the Enchanter’s combined. And in it was spread an enormous repast, while the table so glittered with golden cups and plates, flagons and dishes, candlesticks and a hundred other things beside, that it was hardly possible to look steadily at it. The Enchanter ate like six ogres, but the Princess could not touch a morsel. Presently Grumedan remarked with a grin:

‘I have provided neither musicians nor singers; but as you seem fond of music I will sing to you myself.’

Whereupon he began, with a voice like a screech-owl’s, to chant the words of his ‘opera,’ only this time happily not at such a length, and without the frog accompaniment. After this the Prince again asked the aid of his friends the birds, and when they had assembled from all the country round he tied about the neck of each one a tiny lamp of some brilliant colour, and when darkness fell he made them go through a hundred pretty tricks before the delighted Potentilla, who clapped her little hands with delight when she saw her own name traced in points of light against the dark trees, or when the whole flock of sparks grouped themselves into bouquets of different colours, like living flowers. Grumedan leaning back in his arm-chair, with one knee crossed over the other and his nose in the air, looked on disdainfully.

‘Oh! if you like fireworks, Princess,’ said he; and the next night all the will-o’-the-wisps in the country came and danced on the plain, which could be seen from the Princess’s windows, and as she was looking out, and rather enjoying the sight, up sprang a frightful volcano, pouring out smoke and flames which terrified her greatly, to the intense amusement of the Enchanter, who laughed like a pack of wolves quarrelling. After this, as many of the will-o’-the-wisps as could get in crowded into Potentilla’s garden, and by their light the tall yew-trees danced minuets until the Princess was weary and begged to be excused from looking at anything more that night. But, in spite of Potentilla’s efforts to behave politely to the tiresome old Enchanter, whom she detested, he could not help seeing that he failed to please her, and then he began to suspect very strongly that she must love someone else, and that somebody besides Melinette was responsible for all the festivities he had witnessed. So after much consideration he devised a plan for finding out the truth. He went to the Princess suddenly, and announced that he was most unwillingly forced to leave her, and had come to bid her farewell. Potentilla could scarcely hide her delight when she heard this, and his back was hardly turned before she was entreating Prince Narcissus to make himself visible once more. The poor Prince had been getting quite thin with anxiety and annoyance, and was only too delighted to comply with her request. They greeted one another rapturously, and were just sitting down to talk over everything cosily, and enjoy the Enchanter’s discomfiture together, when out he burst in a fury from behind a bush. With his huge club he aimed a terrific blow at Narcissus, which must certainly have killed him but for the adroitness of the Fairy Melinette, who arrived upon the scene just in time to snatch him up and carry him off at lightning speed to her castle in the air. Poor Potentilla, however, had not the comfort of knowing this, for at the sight of the Enchanter threatening her beloved Prince she had given one shriek and fallen back insensible. When she recovered her senses she was more than ever convinced that he was dead, since even Melinette was no longer near her, and no one was left to defend her from the odious old Enchanter.

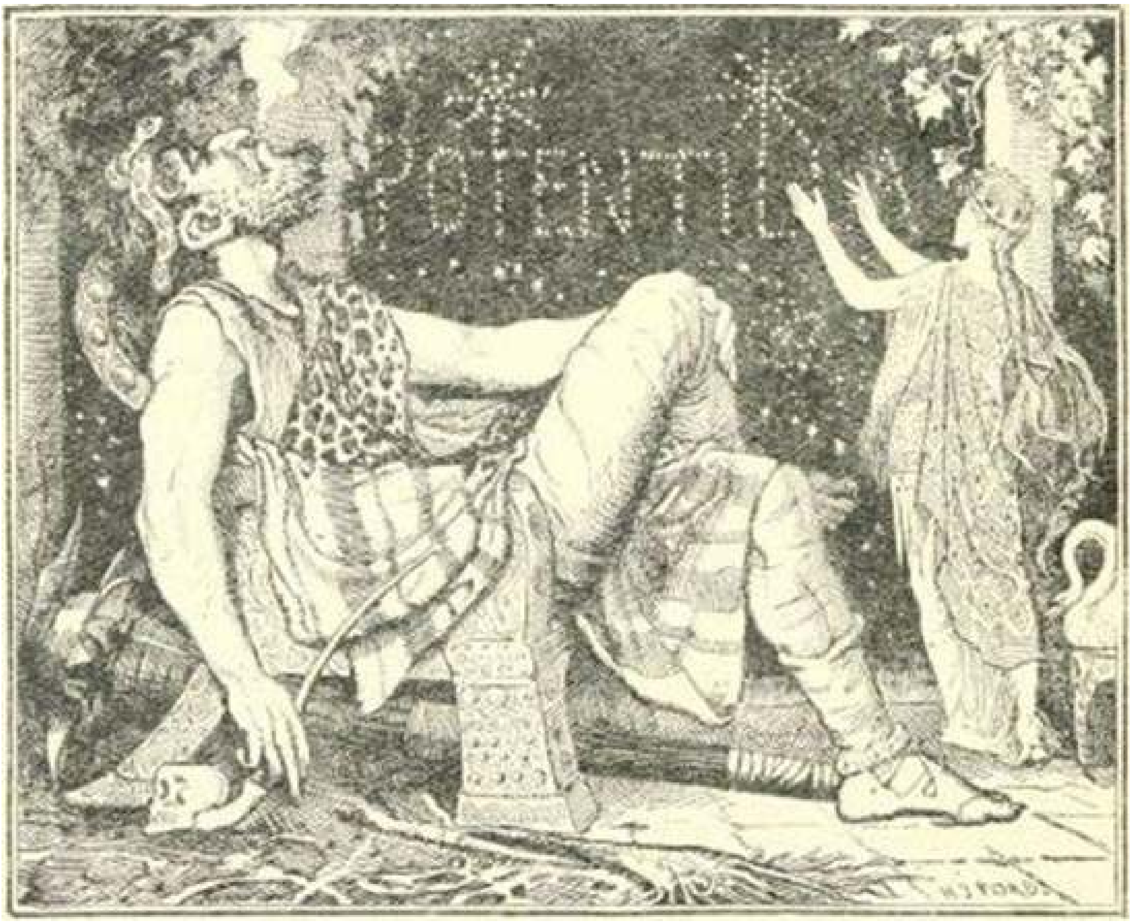

To make matters worse, he seemed to be in a very bad temper, and came blustering and raging at the poor Princess.

‘I tell you what it is, madam,’ said he: ‘whether you love this whipper-snapper Prince or not doesn’t matter in the least. You are going to marry me, so you may as well make up your mind to it; and I am going away this very minute to make all the arrangements. But in case you should get into mischief in my absence, I think I had better put you to sleep.’

So saying, he waved his wand over her, and in spite of her utmost efforts to keep awake she sank into a profound and dreamless slumber.

As he wished to make what he considered a suitable entry into the King’s palace, he stepped outside the Princess’s little domain, and mounted upon an immense chariot with great solid wheels, and shafts like the trunk of an oak-tree, but all of solid gold. This was drawn with great difficulty by forty-eight strong oxen; and the Enchanter reclined at his ease, leaning upon his huge club, and holding carelessly upon his knee a tawny African lion, as if it had been a little lapdog. It was about seven o’clock in the morning when this extraordinary chariot reached the palace gates; the King was already astir, and about to set off on a hunting expedition; as for the Queen, she had only just gone off into her first sleep, and it would have been a bold person indeed who ventured to wake her.

The King was greatly annoyed at having to stay and see a visitor at such a time, and pulled off his hunting boots again with many grimaces. Meantime the Enchanter was stumping about in the hall, crying:

‘Where is this King? Let him be told that I must see him and his wife also.’

The King, who was listening at the top of the staircase, thought this was not very polite; however, he took counsel with his favourite huntsman, and, following his advice, presently went down to see what was wanted of him. He was struck with astonishment at the sight of the chariot, and was gazing at it, when the Enchanter strode up to him, exclaiming:

‘Shake hands, Cloverleaf, old fellow! Don’t you know me?’

‘No, I can’t say I do,’ replied the King, somewhat embarrassed.

‘Why, I am Grumedan, the Enchanter,’ said he, ‘and I am come to make your fortune. Let us come in and talk things over a bit.’

Thereupon he ordered the oxen to go about their business, and they bounded off like stags, and were out of sight in a moment. Then, with one blow of his club, he changed the massive chariot into a perfect mountain of gold pieces.

‘Those are for your lackeys,’ said he to the King, ‘that they may drink my health.’

Naturally a great scramble ensued, and at last the laughter and shouting awoke the Queen, who rang for her maids to ask the reason of such an unwonted hurly-burly. When they said that a visitor was asking for her, and then proceeded each one to tell breathlessly a different tale of wonder, in which she could only distinguish the words, ‘oxen,’ ‘gold,’ ‘club,’ ‘giant,’ ‘lion,’ she thought they were all out of their minds. Meanwhile the King was asking the Enchanter to what he was indebted for the honour of this visit, and on his replying that he would not say until the Queen was also present, messenger after messenger was dispatched to her to beg her immediate attendance. But Frivola was in a very bad humour at having been so unceremoniously awakened, and declared that she had a pain in her little finger, and that nothing should induce her to come.

When the Enchanter heard this he insisted that she must come.

‘Take my club to her Majesty,’ said he, ‘and tell her that if she smells the end of it she will find it wonderfully reviving.’

So four of the King’s strongest men-at-arms staggered off with it; and after some persuasion the Queen consented to try this novel remedy. She had hardly smelt it for an instant when she declared herself to be perfectly restored; but whether that was due to the scent of the wood or to the fact that as soon as she touched it out fell a perfect shower of magnificent jewels, I leave you to decide.

At any rate, she was now all eagerness to see the mysterious stranger, and hastily throwing on her royal mantle, popped her second-best diamond crown over her night-cap, put a liberal dab of rouge upon each cheek, and holding up her largest fan before her nose — for she was not used to appearing in broad daylight — she went mincing into the great hall. The Enchanter waited until the King and Queen had seated themselves upon their throne, and then, taking his place between them, he began solemnly:

‘My name is Grumedan. I am an extremely well-connected Enchanter; my power is immense. In spite of all this, the charms of your daughter Potentilla have so fascinated me that I cannot live without her. She fancies that she loves a certain contemptible puppy called Narcissus; but I have made very short work with him. I really do not care whether you consent to my marriage with your daughter or not, but I am bound to ask your consent, on account of a certain meddling Fairy called Melinette, with whom I have reason for wishing to keep on good terms.’

The King and Queen were somewhat embarrassed to know what answer to make to this terrible suitor, but at last they asked for time to talk over the matter: since, they said, their subjects might think that the heir to the throne should not be married with as little consideration as a dairymaid.

‘Oh! take a day or two if you like,’ said the Enchanter; ‘but in the meantime, I am going to send for your daughter. Perhaps you will be able to induce her to be reasonable.’

So saying, he drew out his favourite whistle, and blew one ear-piercing note — whereupon the great lion, who had been dozing in the sunny courtyard, come bounding in on his soft, heavy feet. ‘Orion,’ said the Enchanter, ‘go and fetch me the Princess, and bring her here at once. Be gentle now!’

At these words Orion went off at a great pace, and was soon at the other end of the King’s gardens. Scattering the guards right and left, he cleared the wall at a bound, and seizing the sleeping Princess, he threw her on to his back, where he kept her by holding her robe in his teeth. Then he trotted gently back, and in less than five minutes stood in the great hall before the astonished King and Queen.

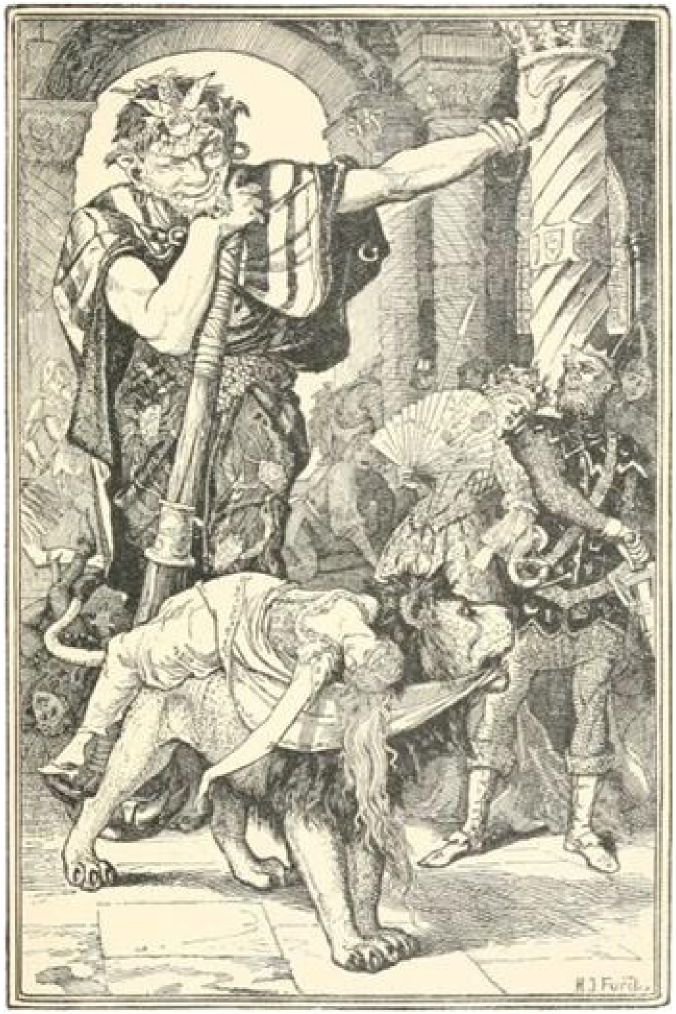
H J Ford

GRUMEDAN’S LION FETCHES IN THE PRINCESS

The Enchanter held his club close to the Princess’s charming little nose, whereupon she woke up and shrieked with terror at finding herself in a strange place with the detested Grumedan. Frivola, who had stood by, stiff with displeasure at the sight of the lovely Princess, now stepped forward, and with much pretended concern proposed to carry off Potentilla to her own apartments that she might enjoy the quiet she seemed to need. Really her one idea was to let the Princess be seen by as few people as possible; so, throwing a veil over her head, she led her away and locked her up securely. All this time Prince Narcissus, gloomy and despairing, was kept a prisoner by Melinette in her castle in the air, and in spite of all the splendour by which he was surrounded, and all the pleasures which he might have enjoyed, his one thought was to get back to Potentilla. The Fairy, however, left him there, promising to do her very best for him, and commanding all her swallows and butterflies to wait upon him and do his bidding. One day, as he paced sadly to and fro, he thought he heard a voice he knew calling to him, and sure enough there was the faithful Philomel, Potentilla’s favourite, who told him all that had passed, and how the sleeping Princess had been carried off by the Lion to the great grief of all her four-footed and feathered subjects, and how, not knowing what to do, he had wandered about until he heard the swallows telling one another of the Prince who was in their airy castle and had come to see if it could be Narcissus. The Prince was more distracted than ever, and tried vainly to escape from the castle, by leaping from the roof into the clouds; but every time they caught him, and rolling softly up, brought him back to the place from which he started, so at last he gave up the attempt and waited with desperate patience for the return of Melinette. Meanwhile matters were advancing rapidly in the court of King Cloverleaf, for the Queen quite made up her mind that such a beauty as Potentilla must be got out of the way as quickly as possible. So she sent for the Enchanter secretly, and after making him promise that he would never turn herself and King Cloverleaf out of their kingdom, and that he would take Potentilla far away, so that never again might she set eyes upon her, she arranged the wedding for the next day but one.

You may imagine how Potentilla lamented her sad fate, and entreated to be spared. All the comfort she could get out of Frivola was, that if she preferred a cup of poison to a rich husband she would certainly provide her with one.

When, then, the fatal day came the unhappy Potentilla was led into the great hall between the King and Queen, the latter wild with envy at the murmurs of admiration which rose on all sides at the loveliness of the Princess. An instant later in came Grumedan by the opposite door. His hair stood on end, and he wore a huge bag-purse and a cravat tied in a bow, his mantle was made of a shower of silver coins with a lining of rose colour, and his delight in his own appearance knew no bounds. That any Princess could prefer a cup of poison to himself never for an instant occurred to him. Nevertheless, that was what did happen, for when Queen Frivola in jest held out the fatal cup to the Princess, she took it eagerly, crying:

‘Ah! beloved Narcissus, I come to thee!’ and was just raising it to her lips when the window of the great hall burst open, and the Fairy Melinette floated in upon a glowing sunset cloud, followed by the Prince himself.

All the court looked on in dazzled surprise, while Potentilla, catching sight of her lover, dropped the cup and ran joyfully to meet him.

The Enchanter’s first thought was to defend himself when he saw Melinette appear, but she slipped round to his blind side, and catching him by the eyelashes dragged him off to the ceiling of the hall, where she held him kicking for a while just to give him a lesson, and then touching him with her wand she imprisoned him for a thousand years in a crystal ball which hung from the roof. ‘Let this teach you to mind what I tell you another time,’ she remarked severely. Then turning to the King and Queen, she begged them to proceed with the wedding, since she had provided a much more suitable bridegroom. She also deprived them of their kingdom, for they had really shown themselves unfit to manage it, and bestowed it upon the Prince and Princess, who, though they were unwilling to take it, had no choice but to obey the Fairy. However, they took care that the King and Queen were always supplied with everything they could wish for.

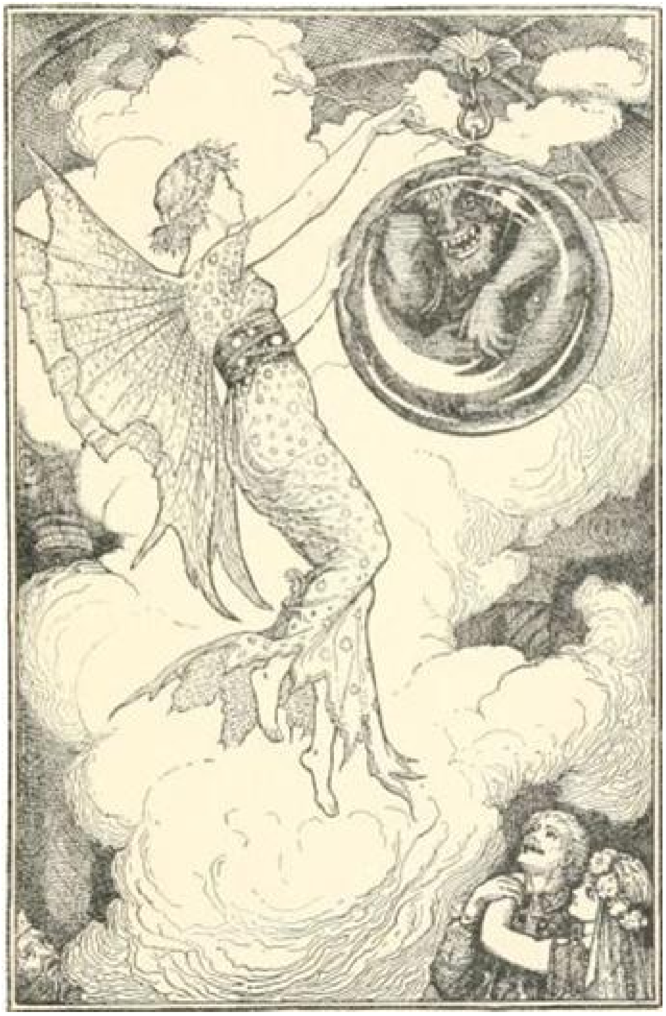

Prince Narcissus and Princess Potentilla lived long and happily, beloved by all their subjects. As for the Enchanter, I don’t believe he has been let out yet.

La Princesse Pimprenella et Le Prince Romarin.

PRINCE FEATHERHEAD AND THE PRINCESS CELANDINE

Once upon a time there lived a King and Queen, who were the best creatures in the world, and so kind-hearted that they could not bear to see their subjects want for anything. The consequence was they gradually gave away all their treasures, till they positively had nothing left to live upon; and this coming to the ears of their neighbour, King Bruin, he promptly raised a large army and marched into their country. The poor King, having no means of defending his kingdom, was forced to disguise himself with a false beard, and carrying his only son, the little Prince Featherhead, in his arms, and accompanied only by the Queen, to make the best of his way into the wild country. They were lucky enough to escape the soldiers of King Bruin, and at last, after unheard-of fatigues and adventures, they found themselves in a charming green valley, through which flowed a stream clear as crystal and overshadowed by beautiful trees. As they looked round them with delight, a voice said suddenly: ‘Fish, and see what you will catch.’ Now the King had always loved fishing, and never went anywhere without a fish-hook or two in his pocket, so he drew one out hastily, and the Queen lent him her girdle to fasten it to, and it had hardly touched the water before it caught a big fish, which made them an excellent meal — and not before they needed it, for they had found nothing until then but a few wild berries and roots. They thought that for the present they could not do better than stay in this delightful place, and the King set to work, and soon built a bower of branches to shelter them; and when it was finished the Queen was so charmed with it that she declared nothing was lacking to complete her happiness but a flock of sheep, which she and the little Prince might tend while the King fished. They soon found that the fish were not only abundant and easily caught, but also very beautiful, with glittering scales of every imaginable hue; and before long the King discovered that he could teach them to talk and whistle better than any parrot. Then he determined to carry some to the nearest town and try to sell them; and as no one had ever before seen any like them the people flocked about him eagerly and bought all he had caught, so that presently not a house in the city was considered complete without a crystal bowl full of fish, and the King’s customers were very particular about having them to match the rest of the furniture, and gave him a vast amount of trouble in choosing them. However, the money he obtained in this way enabled him to buy the Queen her flock of sheep, as well as many of the other things which go to make life pleasant, so that they never once regretted their lost kingdom. Now it happened that the Fairy of the Beech-Woods lived in the lovely valley to which chance had led the poor fugitives, and it was she who had, in pity for their forlorn condition, sent the King such good luck to his fishing, and generally taken them under her protection. This she was all the more inclined to do as she loved children, and little Prince Featherhead, who never cried and grew prettier day by day, quite won her heart. She made the acquaintance of the King and the Queen without at first letting them know that she was a fairy, and they soon took a great fancy to her, and even trusted her with the precious Prince, whom she carried off to her palace, where she regaled him with cakes and tarts and every other good thing. This was the way she chose of making him fond of her; but afterwards, as he grew older, she spared no pains in educating and training him as a prince should be trained. But unfortunately, in spite of all her care, he grew so vain and frivolous that he quitted his peaceful country life in disgust, and rushed eagerly after all the foolish gaieties of the neighbouring town, where his handsome face and charming manners speedily made him popular. The King and Queen deeply regretted this alteration in their son, but did not know how to mend matters, since the good old Fairy had made him so self-willed.

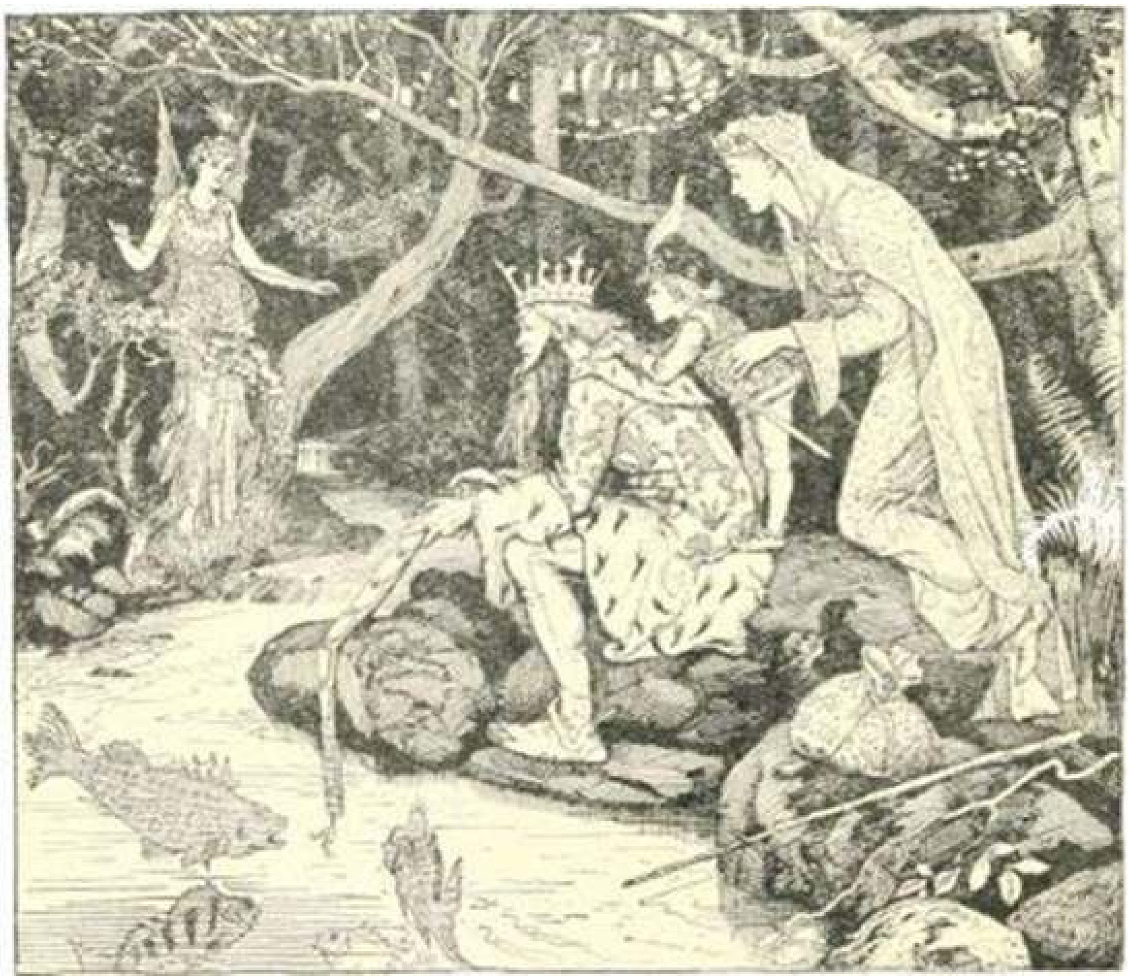

Just at this time the Fairy of the Beech-Woods received a visit from an old friend of hers called Saradine, who rushed into her house so breathless with rage that she could hardly speak.

‘Dear, dear! what *is* the matter?’ said the Fairy of the Beech-Woods soothingly.

‘The matter!’ cried Saradine. ‘You shall soon hear all about it. You know that, not content with endowing Celandine, Princess of the Summer Islands, with everything she could desire to make her charming, I actually took the trouble to bring her up myself; and now what does she do but come to me with more coaxings and caresses than usual to beg a favour. And what do you suppose this favour turns out to be — when I have been cajoled, into promising to grant it? Nothing more nor less than a request that I will take back all my gifts— “since,” says my young madam, “if I have the good fortune to please you, how am I to know that it is really I, myself? And that’s how it will be all my life long, whenever I meet anybody. You see what a weariness my life will be to me under these circumstances, and yet I assure you I am not ungrateful to you for all your kindness!” I did all I could,’ continued Saradine, ‘to make her think better of it, but in vain; so after going through the usual ceremony for taking back my gifts, I’m come to you for a little peace and quietness. But, after all, I have not taken anything of consequence from this provoking Celandine. Nature had already made her so pretty, and given her such a ready wit of her own, that she will do perfectly well without me. However, I thought she deserved a little lesson, so to begin with I have whisked her off into the desert, and there left her!’

‘What! all alone, and without any means of existence?’ cried the kind-hearted old Fairy. ‘You had better hand her over to me. I don’t think so very badly of her after all. I’ll just cure her vanity by making her love someone better than herself. Really, when I come to consider of it, I declare the little minx has shown more spirit and originality in the matter than one expects of a princess.’

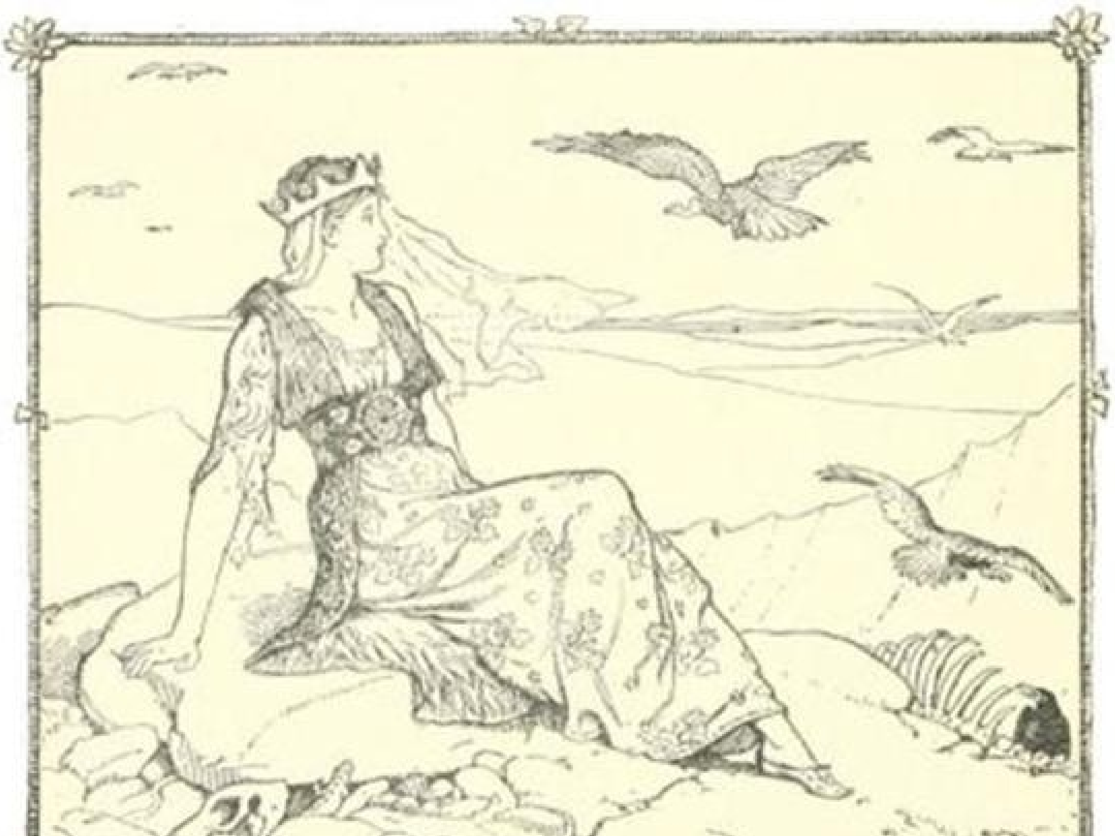

Saradine willingly consented to this arrangement, and the old Fairy’s first care was to smooth away all the difficulties which surrounded the Princess, and lead her by the mossy path overhung with trees to the bower of the King and Queen, who still pursued their peaceful life in the valley.

They were immensely surprised at her appearance, but her charming face, and the deplorably ragged condition to which the thorns and briers had reduced her once elegant attire, speedily won their compassion; they recognised her as a companion in misfortune, and the Queen welcomed her heartily, and begged her to share their simple repast. Celandine gracefully accepted their hospitality, and soon told them what had happened to her. The King was charmed with her spirit, while the Queen thought she had indeed been daring thus to go against the Fairy's wishes.

'Since it has ended in my meeting you,' said the Princess, 'I cannot regret the step I have taken, and if you will let me stay with you, I shall be perfectly happy.'

The King and Queen were only too delighted to have this charming Princess to supply the place of Prince Featherhead, whom they saw but seldom, since the Fairy had provided him with a palace in the neighbouring town, where he lived in the greatest luxury, and did nothing but amuse himself from morning to night. So Celandine stayed, and helped the Queen to keep house, and very soon they loved her dearly. When the Fairy of the Beech-Woods came to them, they presented the Princess to her, and told her story, little thinking that the Fairy knew more about Celandine than they did. The old Fairy was equally delighted with her, and often invited her to visit her Leafy Palace, which was the most enchanting place that could be imagined, and full of treasures. Often she would say to the Princess, when showing her some wonderful thing:

'This will do for a wedding gift some day.' And Celandine could not help thinking that it was to her that the Fairy meant to give the two blue wax-torches which burned without ever getting smaller, or the diamond from which more diamonds were continually growing, or the boat that sailed under water, or whatever beautiful or wonderful thing they might happen to be looking at. It is true that she never said so positively, but she certainly allowed the Princess to believe it, because she thought a little disappointment would be good for her. But the person she really relied upon for curing Celandine of her vanity was Prince Featherhead. The old Fairy was not at all pleased with the way he had been going on for some time, but her heart was so soft towards him that she was unwilling to take him away from the pleasures he loved, except by offering him something better, which is not the most effectual mode of correction, though it is without doubt the most agreeable.

However, she did not even hint to the Princess that Featherhead was anything but absolutely perfect, and talked of him so much that when at last she announced that he was coming to visit her, Celandine made up her mind that this delightful Prince would be certain to fall in love with her at once, and was quite pleased at the idea. The old Fairy thought so too, but as this was not at all what she wished, she took care to throw such an enchantment over the Princess that she appeared to Featherhead quite ugly and awkward, though to every one else she looked just as usual. So when he arrived at the Leafy Palace, more handsome and fascinating even than ever she had been led to expect, he hardly so much as glanced at the Princess, but bestowed all his attention upon the old Fairy, to whom he seemed to have a hundred things to say. The Princess was immensely astonished at his indifference, and put on a cold and offended air, which, however, he did not seem to observe. Then as a last resource she exerted all her wit and gaiety to amuse him, but with no better success, for he was of an age to be more attracted by beauty than by anything else, and though he responded politely enough, it was evident that his thoughts were elsewhere. Celandine was deeply mortified, since for her part the Prince pleased her very well, and for the first time she bitterly regretted the fairy gifts she had been anxious to get rid of. Prince Featherhead was almost equally puzzled, for he had heard nothing from the King and Queen but the praises of this charming Princess, and the fact that they had spoken of her as so very beautiful only confirmed his opinion that people who live in the country have no taste. He talked to them of his charming acquaintances in the town, the beauties he had admired, did admire, or thought he was going to admire, until Celandine, who heard it all, was ready to cry with vexation. The Fairy too was quite shocked at his conceit, and hit upon a plan for curing him of it. She sent to him by an unknown messenger a portrait of Princess Celandine as she really was, with this inscription: ‘All this beauty and sweetness, with a loving heart and a great kingdom, might have been yours but for your well-known fickleness.’

This message made a great impression upon the Prince, but not so much as the portrait. He positively could not tear his eyes away from it, and exclaimed aloud that never, never had he seen anything so lovely and so graceful. Then he began to think that it was too absurd that he, the fascinating Featherhead, should fall in love with a portrait; and, to drive away the recollections of its haunting eyes, he rushed back to the town; but somehow everything seemed changed. The beauties no longer pleased him, their witty speeches had ceased to amuse; and indeed, for their parts, they found the Prince far less amiable than of yore, and were not sorry when he declared that, after all, a country life suited him best, and went back to the Leafy Palace. Meanwhile, the Princess Celandine had been finding the time pass but slowly with the King and Queen, and was only too pleased when Featherhead reappeared. She at once noticed the change in him, and was deeply curious to find the reason of it. Far from avoiding her, he now sought her company and seemed to take pleasure in talking to her, and yet the Princess did not for a moment flatter herself with the idea that he was in love with her, though it did not take her long to decide that he certainly loved someone. But one day the Princess, wandering sadly by the river, spied Prince Featherhead fast asleep in the shade of a tree, and stole nearer to enjoy the delight of gazing at his dear face unobserved. Judge of her astonishment when she saw that he was holding in his hand a portrait of herself! In vain did she puzzle over the apparent contradictoriness of his behaviour. Why did he cherish her portrait while he was so fatally indifferent to herself? At last she found an opportunity of asking him the name of the Princess whose picture he carried about with him always.

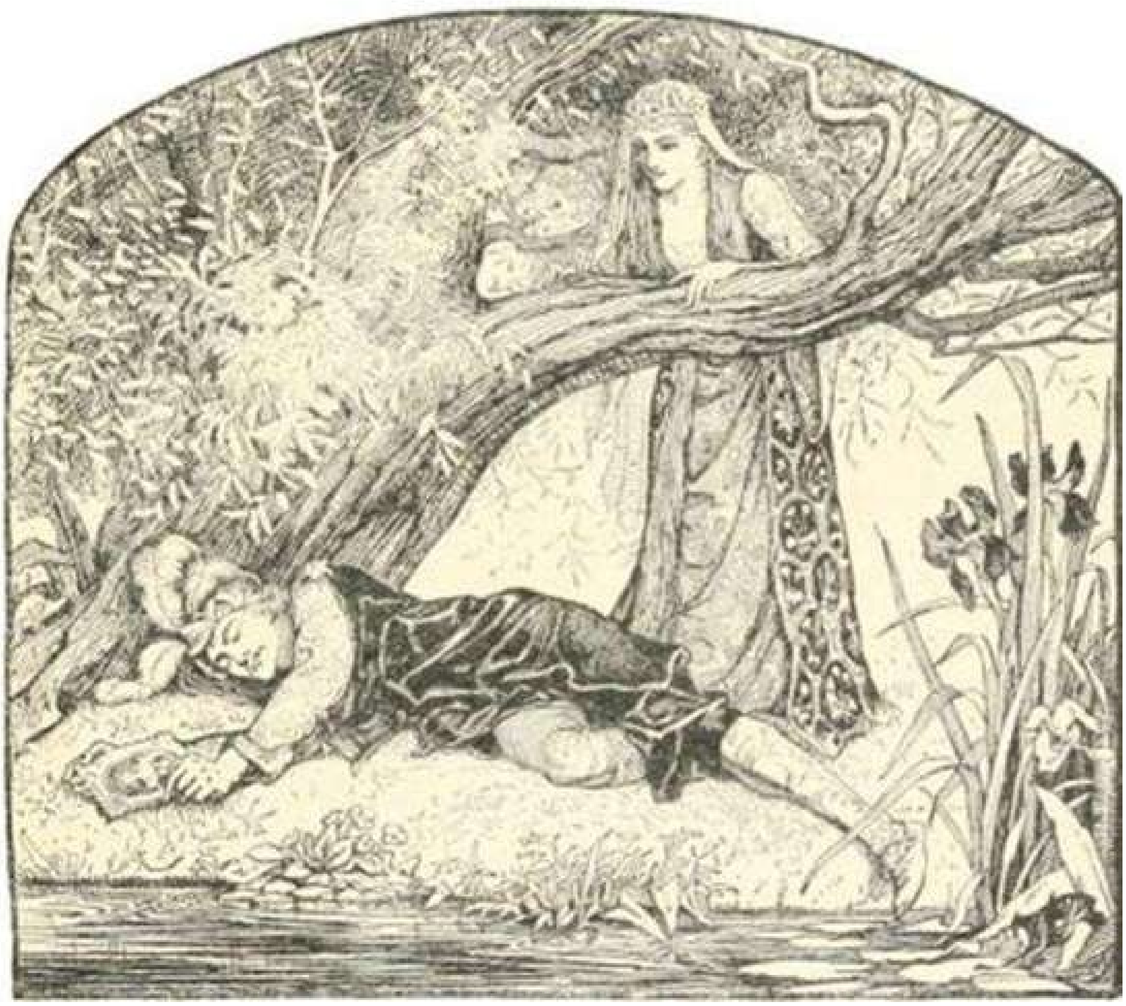

'Alas! how can I tell you?' replied he.

'Why should you not?' said the Princess timidly. 'Surely there is nothing to prevent you.'

'Nothing to prevent me!' repeated he, 'when my utmost efforts have failed to discover the lovely original. Should I be so sad if I could but find her? But I do not even know her name.’

More surprised than ever, the Princess asked to be allowed to see the portrait, and after examining it for a few minutes returned it, remarking shyly that at least the original had every cause to be satisfied with it.

‘That means that you consider it flattered,’ said the Prince severely. ‘Really, Celandine, I thought better of you, and should have expected you to be above such contemptible jealousy. But all women are alike!’

‘Indeed, I meant only that it was a good likeness,’ said the Princess meekly.

‘Then you know the original,’ cried the Prince, throwing himself on his knees beside her. ‘Pray tell me at once who it is, and don’t keep me in suspense!’

‘Oh! don’t you see that it is meant for me?’ cried Celandine.

The Prince sprang to his feet, hardly able to refrain from telling her that she must be blinded by vanity to suppose she resembled the lovely portrait even in the slightest degree; and after gazing at her for an instant with icy surprise, turned and left her without another word, and in a few hours quitted the Leafy Palace altogether.

Now the Princess was indeed unhappy, and could no longer bear to stay in a place where she had been so cruelly disdained. So, without even bidding farewell to the King and Queen, she left the valley behind her, and wandered sadly away, not caring whither. After walking until she was weary, she saw before her a tiny house, and turned her slow steps towards it. The nearer she approached the more miserable it appeared, and at length she saw a little old woman sitting upon the door-step, who said grimly:

‘Here comes one of these fine beggars who are too idle to do anything but run about the country!’

‘Alas! madam,’ said Celandine, with tears in her pretty eyes, ‘a sad fate forces me to ask you for shelter.’

‘Didn’t I tell you what it would be?’ growled the old hag. ‘From shelter we shall proceed to demand supper, and from supper money to take us on our way. Upon my word, if I could be sure of finding some one every day whose head was as soft as his heart, I wouldn’t wish for a more agreeable life myself! But I have worked hard to build my house and secure a morsel to eat, and I suppose you think that I am to give away everything to the first passer-by who chooses to ask for it. Not at all! I wager that a fine lady like you has more money than I have. I must search her, and see if it is not so,’ she added, hobbling towards Celandine with the aid of her stick.

‘Alas! madam,’ replied the Princess, ‘I only wish I had. I would give it to you with all the pleasure in life.’

‘But you are very smartly dressed for the kind of life you lead,’ continued the old woman.

‘What!’ cried the Princess, ‘do you think I am come to beg of you?’

‘I don’t know about that,’ answered she; ‘but at any rate you don’t seem to have come to bring me anything. But what is it that you do want? Shelter? Well, that does not cost much; but after that comes supper, and that I can’t hear of. Oh dear no! Why, at your age one is always ready to eat; and now you have been walking, and I suppose you are ravenous?’

‘Indeed no, madam,’ answered the poor Princess, ‘I am too sad to be hungry.’

‘Oh, well! if you will promise to go on being sad, you may stay for the night,’ said the old woman mockingly.

Thereupon she made the Princess sit down beside her, and began fingering her silken robe, while she muttered ‘Lace on top, lace underneath! This must have cost you a pretty penny! It would have been better to save enough to feed yourself, and not come begging to those who want all they have for themselves. Pray, what may you have paid for these fine clothes?’

‘Alas! madam,’ answered the Princess, ‘I did not buy them, and I know nothing about money.’

‘What *do* you know, if I may ask?’ said the old dame.

‘Not much; but indeed I am very unhappy,’ cried Celandine, bursting into tears, ‘and if my services are any good to you — —’

‘Services!’ interrupted the hag crossly. ‘One has to pay for services, and I am not above doing my own work.’

‘Madam, I will serve you for nothing,’ said the poor Princess, whose spirits were sinking lower and lower. ‘I will do anything you please; all I wish is to live quietly in this lonely spot.’

‘Oh! I know you are only trying to take me in,’ answered she; ‘and if I do let you serve me, is it fitting that you should be so much better dressed than I am? If I keep you, will you give me your clothes and wear some that I will provide you with? It is true that I am getting old and may want someone to take care of me some day.’

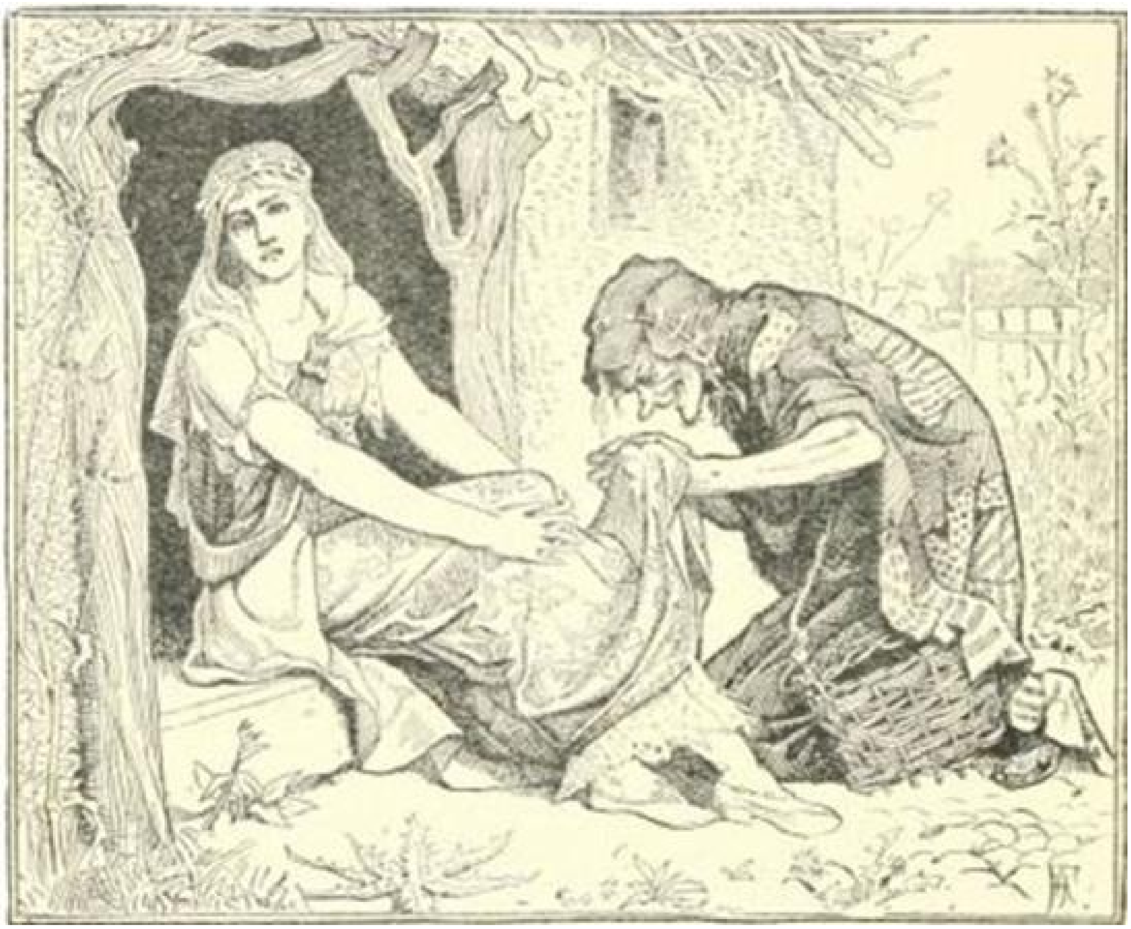

‘Oh! for pity’s sake, do what you please with my clothes,’ cried poor Celandine miserably.

And the old woman hobbled off with great alacrity, and fetched a little bundle containing a wretched dress, such as the Princess had never even seen before, and nimbly skipped round, helping her to put it on instead of her own rich robe, with many exclamations of:

‘Saints! — what a magnificent lining! And the width of it! It will make me four dresses at least. Why, child, I wonder you could walk under such a weight, and certainly in my house you would not have had room to turn round.’

So saying, she folded up the robe, and put it by with great care, while she remarked to Celandine:

‘That dress of mine certainly suits you to a marvel; be sure you take great care of it.’

When supper-time came she went into the house, declining all the Princess’s offers of assistance, and shortly afterwards brought out a very small dish, saying:

‘Now let us sup.’

Whereupon she handed Celandine a small piece of black bread and uncovered the dish, which contained two dried plums.

‘We will have one between us,’ continued the old dame; ‘and as you are the visitor, you shall have the half which contains the stone; but be very careful that you don’t swallow it, for I keep them against the winter, and you have no idea what a good fire they make. Now, you take my advice which won’t cost you anything — and remember that it is always more economical to buy fruit with stones on this account.’

Celandine, absorbed in her own sad thoughts, did not even hear this prudent counsel, and quite forgot to eat her share of the plum, which delighted the old woman, who put it by carefully for her breakfast, saying:

‘I am very much pleased with you, and if you go on as you have begun, we shall do very well, and I can teach you many useful things which people don’t generally know. For instance, look at my house! It is built entirely of the seeds of all the pears I have eaten in my life. Now, most people throw them away, and that only shows what a number of things are wasted for want of a little patience and ingenuity.’

But Celandine did not find it possible to be interested in this and similar pieces of advice. And the old woman soon sent her to bed, for fear the night air might give her an appetite. She passed a sleepless night; but in the morning the old dame remarked:

‘I heard how well you slept. After such a night you cannot want any breakfast; so while I do my household tasks you had better stay in bed, since the more one sleeps the less one need eat; and as it is market-day I will go to town and buy a pennyworth of bread for the week’s eating.’

And so she chattered on, but poor Celandine did not hear or heed her; she wandered out into the desolate country to think over her sad fate. However, the good Fairy of the Beech-Woods did not want her to be starved, so she sent her an unlooked-for relief in the shape of a beautiful white cow, which followed her back to the tiny house. When the old woman saw it her joy knew no bounds.

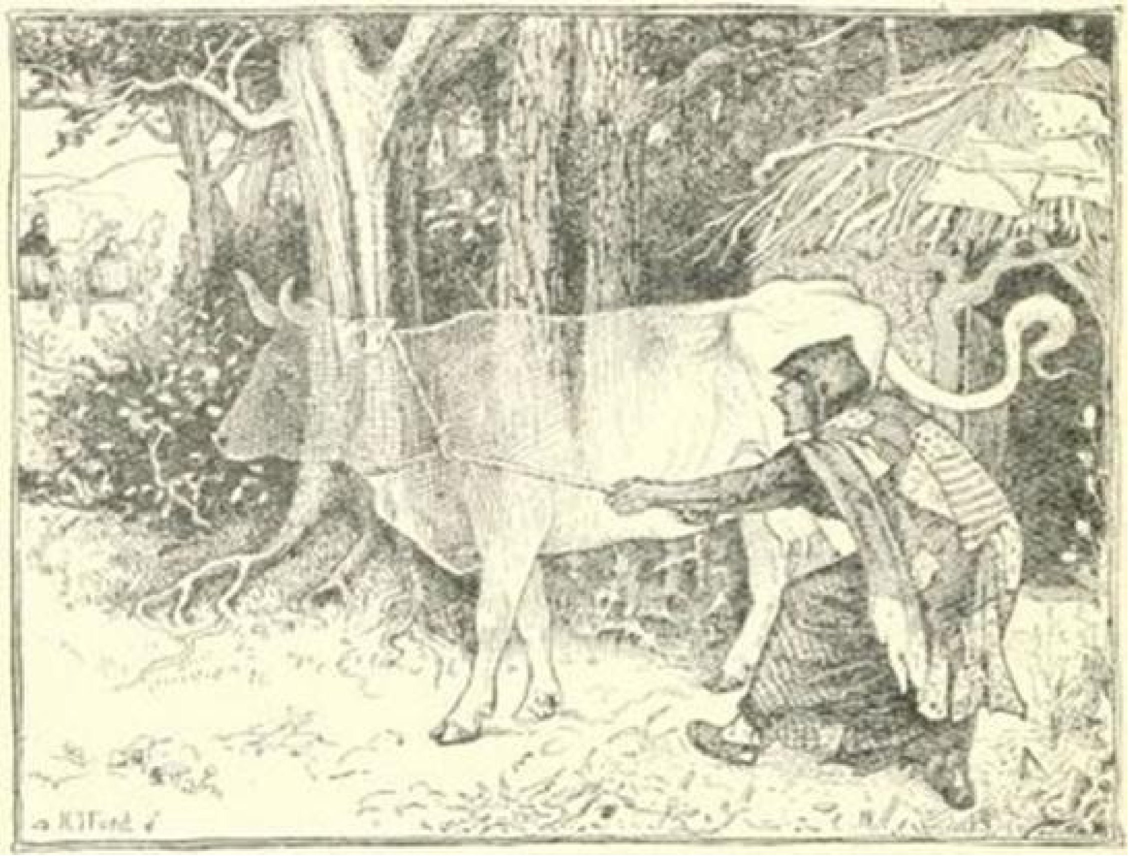

‘Now we can have milk and cheese and butter!’ cried she. ‘Ah! how good milk is! What a pity it is so ruinously expensive!’ So they made a little shelter of branches for the beautiful creature, which was quite gentle, and followed Celandine about like a dog when she took it out every day to graze. One morning as she sat by a little brook, thinking sadly, she suddenly saw a young stranger approaching, and got up quickly, intending to avoid him. But Prince Featherhead, for it was he, perceiving her at the same moment, rushed towards her with every demonstration of joy: for he had recognised her, not as the Celandine whom he had slighted, but as the lovely Princess whom he had sought vainly for so long. The fact was that the Fairy of the Beech-Woods, thinking she had been punished enough, had withdrawn the enchantment from her, and transferred it to Featherhead, thereby in an instant depriving him of the good looks which had done so much towards making him the fickle creature he was. Throwing himself down at the Princess’s feet, he implored her to stay, and at least speak to him, and she at last consented, but only because he seemed to wish it so very much. After that he came every day in the hope of meeting her again, and often expressed his delight at being with her. But one day, when he had been begging Celandine to love him, she confided to him that it was quite impossible, since her heart was already entirely occupied by another.

‘I have,’ said she, ‘the unhappiness of loving a Prince who is fickle, frivolous, proud, incapable of caring for anyone but himself, who has been spoilt by flattery, and, to crown all, who does not love me.’

‘But’ cried Prince Featherhead, ‘surely you cannot care for so contemptible and worthless a creature as that.’

‘Alas! but I do care,’ answered the Princess, weeping.

‘But where can his eyes be,’ said the Prince, ‘that your beauty makes no impression upon him? As for me, since I have possessed your portrait I have wandered over the whole world to find you, and, now we have met, I see that you are ten times lovelier than I could have imagined, and I would give all I own to win your love.’

‘My portrait?’ cried Celandine with sudden interest. ‘Is it possible that Prince Featherhead can have parted with it?’

‘He would part with his life sooner, lovely Princess,’ answered he; ‘I can assure you of that, for *I* am Prince Featherhead.’

At the same moment the Fairy of the Beech-Woods took away the enchantment, and the happy Princess recognised her lover, now truly hers, for the trials they had both undergone had so changed and improved them that they were capable of a real love for each other. You may imagine how perfectly happy they were, and how much they had to hear and to tell. But at length it was time to go back to the little house, and as they went along Celandine remembered for the first time what a ragged old dress she was wearing, and what an odd appearance she must present. But the Prince declared that it became her vastly, and that he thought it most picturesque. When they reached the house the old woman received them very crossly.

‘I declare,’ said she, ‘that it’s perfectly true: wherever there is a girl you may be sure that a young man will appear before long! But don’t imagine that I’m going to have you here — not a bit of it; be off with you, my fine fellow!’

Prince Featherhead was inclined to be angry at this uncivil reception, but he was really too happy to care much, so he only demanded, on Celandine’s behalf, that the old dame should give her back her own attire, that she might go away suitably dressed.

This request roused her to fury, since she had counted upon the Princess’s fine robes to clothe her for the rest of her life, so that it was some time before the Prince could make himself heard to explain that he was willing to pay for them. The sight of a handful of gold pieces somewhat mollified her, however, and after making them both promise faithfully that on no consideration would they ask for the gold back again, she took the Princess into the house and grudgingly doled out to her just enough of her gay attire to make her presentable, while the rest she pretended to have lost. After this they found that they were very hungry, for one cannot live on love, any more than on air, and then the old woman’s lamentations were louder than before. ‘What!’ she cried, ‘feed people who were as happy as all that! Why, it was simply ruinous!’

But as the Prince began to look angry, she, with many sighs and mutterings, brought out a morsel of bread, a bowl of milk, and six plums, with which the lovers were well content: for as long as they could look at one another they really did not know what they were eating. It seemed as if they would go on for ever with their reminiscences, the Prince telling how he had wandered all over the world from beauty to beauty, always to be disappointed when he found that no one resembled the portrait; the Princess wondering how it was he could have been so long with her and yet never have recognised her, and over and over again pardoning him for his cold and haughty behaviour to her.

‘For,’ she said, ‘you see, Featherhead, I love you, and love makes everything right! But we cannot stay here,’ she added; ‘what are we to do?’

The Prince thought they had better find their way to the Fairy of the Beech-Woods and put themselves once more under her protection, and they had hardly agreed upon this course when two little chariots wreathed with jasmine and honeysuckle suddenly appeared, and, stepping into them, they were whirled away to the Leafy Palace. Just before they lost sight of the little house they heard loud cries and lamentations from the miserly old dame, and, looking round, perceived that the beautiful cow was vanishing in spite of her frantic efforts to hold it fast. And they afterwards heard that she spent the rest of her life in trying to put the handful of gold the Prince had thrown to her into her money-bag. For the Fairy, as a punishment for her avarice, caused it to slip out again as fast as she dropped it in.

The Fairy of the Beech-Woods ran to welcome the Prince and Princess with open arms, only too delighted to find them so much improved that she could, with a clear conscience, begin to spoil them again. Very soon the Fairy Saradine also arrived, bringing the King and Queen with her. Princess Celandine implored her pardon, which she graciously gave; indeed the Princess was so charming she could refuse her nothing. She also restored to her the Summer Islands, and promised her protection in all things. The Fairy of the Beech-Woods then informed the King and Queen that their subjects had chased King Bruin from the throne, and were waiting to welcome them back again; but they at once abdicated in favour of Prince Featherhead, declaring that nothing could induce them to forsake their peaceful life, and the Fairies undertook to see the Prince and Princess established in their beautiful kingdoms. Their marriage took place the next day, and they lived happily ever afterwards, for Celandine was never vain and Featherhead was never fickle any more.

Le Prince Muguet et la Princesse Zaza.

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

There was once upon a time a pig who lived with her three children on a large, comfortable, old-fashioned farmyard. The eldest of the little pigs was called Browny, the second Whitey, and the youngest and best looking Blacky. Now Browny was a very dirty little pig, and I am sorry to say spent most of his time rolling and wallowing about in the mud. He was never so happy as on a wet day, when the mud in the farmyard got soft, and thick, and slab. Then he would steal away from his mother's side, and finding the muddiest place in the yard, would roll about in it and thoroughly enjoy himself. His mother often found fault with him for this, and would shake her head sadly and say: 'Ah, Browny! some day you will be sorry that you did not obey your old mother.' But no words of advice or warning could cure Browny of his bad habits.

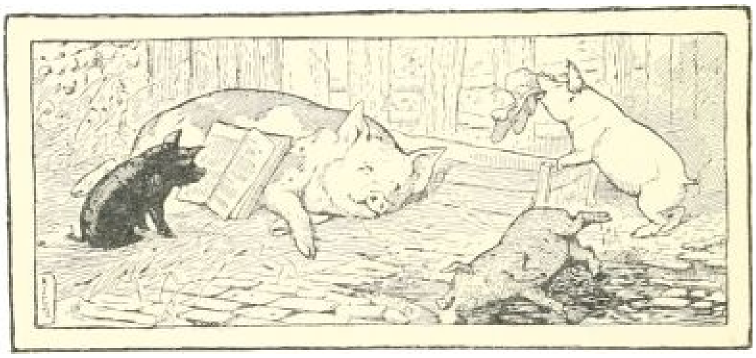

Whitey was quite a clever little pig, but she was greedy. She was always thinking of her food, and looking forward to her dinner; and when the farm girl was seen carrying the pails across the yard, she would rise up on her hind legs and dance and caper with excitement. As soon as the food was poured into the trough she jostled Blacky and Browny out of the way in her eagerness to get the best and biggest bits for herself. Her mother often scolded her for her selfishness, and told her that some day she would suffer for being so greedy and grabbing.

Blacky was a good, nice little pig, neither dirty nor greedy. He had nice dainty ways (for a pig), and his skin was always as smooth and shining as black satin. He was much cleverer than Browny and Whitey, and his mother's heart used to swell with pride when she heard the farmer's friends say to each other that some day the little black fellow would be a prize pig.

Now the time came when the mother pig felt old and feeble and near her end.

One day she called the three little pigs round her and said:

‘My children, I feel that I am growing old and weak, and that I shall not live long. Before I die I should like to build a house for each of you, as this dear old sty in which we have lived so happily will be given to a new family of pigs, and you will have to turn out. Now, Browny, what sort of a house would you like to have?’

‘A house of mud,’ replied Browny, looking longingly at a wet puddle in the corner of the yard.

‘And you, Whitey?’ said the mother pig in rather a sad voice, for she was disappointed that Browny had made so foolish a choice.

‘A house of cabbage,’ answered Whitey, with a mouth full, and scarcely raising her snout out of the trough in which she was grubbing for some potato-parings.

‘Foolish, foolish child!’ said the mother pig, looking quite distressed, ‘And you, Blacky?’ turning to her youngest son, ‘what sort of a house shall I order for you?’

‘A house of brick, please mother, as it will be warm in winter, and cool in summer, and safe all the year round.’

‘That is a sensible little pig,’ replied his mother, looking fondly at him. ‘I will see that the three houses are got ready at once. And now one last piece of advice. You have heard me talk of our old enemy the fox. When he hears that I am dead, he is sure to try and get hold of you, to carry you off to his den. He is very sly and will no doubt disguise himself, and pretend to be a friend, but you must promise me not to let him enter your houses on any pretext whatever.’

And the little pigs readily promised, for they had always had a great fear of the fox, of whom they had heard many terrible tales. A short time afterwards the old pig died, and the little pigs went to live in their own houses.

Browny was quite delighted with his soft mud walls and with the clay floor, which soon looked like nothing but a big mud pie. But that was what Browny enjoyed, and he was as happy as possible, rolling about all day and making himself in such a mess. One day, as he was lying half asleep in the mud, he heard a soft knock at his door, and a gentle voice said:

‘May I come in, Master Browny? I want to see your beautiful new house.’

‘Who are you?’ said Browny, starting up in great fright, for though the voice sounded gentle, he felt sure it was a feigned voice, and he feared it was the fox.

‘I am a friend come to call on you,’ answered the voice.

‘No, no,’ replied Browny, ‘I don’t believe you are a friend. You are the wicked fox, against whom our mother warned us. I won’t let you in.’

‘Oho! is that the way you answer me?’ said the fox, speaking very roughly in his natural voice. ‘We shall soon see who is master here,’ and with his paws he set to work and scraped a large hole in the soft mud walls. A moment later he had jumped through it, and catching Browny by the neck, flung him on his shoulders and trotted off with him to his den.

The next day, as Whitey was munching a few leaves of cabbage out of the corner of her house, the fox stole up to her door, determined to carry her off to join her brother in his den. He began speaking to her in the same feigned gentle voice in which he had spoken to Browny; but it frightened her very much when he said:

‘I am a friend come to visit you, and to have some of your good cabbage for my dinner.’

‘Please don’t touch it,’ cried Whitey in great distress. ‘The cabbages are the walls of my house, and if you eat them you will make a hole, and the wind and rain will come in and give me a cold. Do go away; I am sure you are not a friend, but our wicked enemy the fox.’ And poor Whitey began to whine and to whimper, and to wish that she had not been such a greedy little pig, and had chosen a more solid material than cabbages for her house. But it was too late now, and in another minute the fox had eaten his way through the cabbage walls, and had caught the trembling, shivering Whitey, and carried her off to his den.

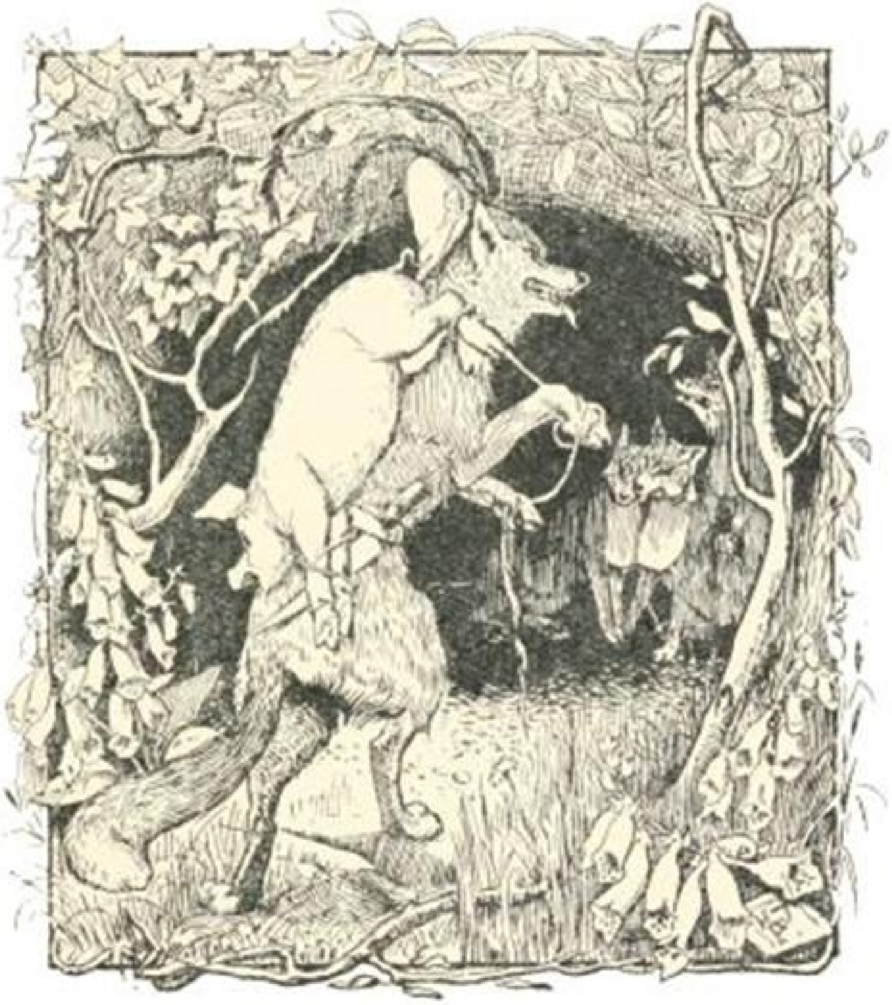

The next day the fox started off for Blacky’s house, because he had made up his mind that he would get the three little pigs together in his den, and then kill them, and invite all his friends to a feast. But when he reached the brick house, he found that the door was bolted and barred, so in his sly manner he began, ‘Do let me in, dear Blacky. I have brought you a present of some eggs that I picked up in a farmyard on my way here.’

‘No, no, Mister Fox,’ replied Blacky, ‘I am not going to open my door to you. I know your cunning ways. You have carried off poor Browny and Whitey, but you are not going to get me.’

At this the fox was so angry that he dashed with all his force against the wall, and tried to knock it down. But it was too strong and well-built; and though the fox scraped and tore at the bricks with his paws he only hurt himself, and at last he had to give it up, and limp away with his fore-paws all bleeding and sore.

‘Never mind!’ he cried angrily as he went off, ‘I’ll catch you another day, see if I don’t, and won’t I grind your bones to powder when I have got you in my den!’ and he snarled fiercely and showed his teeth.

Next day Blacky had to go into the neighbouring town to do some marketing and to buy a big kettle. As he was walking home with it slung over his shoulder, he heard a sound of steps stealthily creeping after him. For a moment his heart stood still with fear, and then a happy thought came to him. He had just reached the top of a hill, and could see his own little house nestling at the foot of it among the trees. In a moment he had snatched the lid off the kettle and had jumped in himself. Coiling himself round he lay quite snug in the bottom of the kettle, while with his fore-leg he managed to put the lid on, so that he was entirely hidden. With a little kick from the inside he started the kettle off, and down the hill it rolled full tilt; and when the fox came up, all that he saw was a large black kettle spinning over the ground at a great pace. Very much disappointed, he was just going to turn away, when he saw the kettle stop close to the little brick house, and in a moment later Blacky jumped out of it and escaped with the kettle into the house, when he barred and bolted the door, and put the shutter up over the window.

‘Oho!’ exclaimed the fox to himself, ‘you think you will escape me that way, do you? We shall soon see about that, my friend,’ and very quietly and stealthily he prowled round the house looking for some way to climb on to the roof.

In the meantime Blacky had filled the kettle with water, and having put it on the fire, sat down quietly waiting for it to boil. Just as the kettle was beginning to sing, and steam to come out of the spout, he heard a sound like a soft, muffled step, patter, patter, patter overhead, and the next moment the fox’s head and fore-paws were seen coming down the chimney. But Blacky very wisely had not put the lid on the kettle, and, with a yelp of pain, the fox fell into the boiling water, and before he could escape, Blacky had popped the lid on, and the fox was scalded to death.

As soon as he was sure that their wicked enemy was really dead, and could do them no further harm, Blacky started off to rescue Browny and Whitey. As he approached the den he heard piteous grunts and squeals from his poor little brother and sister who lived in constant terror of the fox killing and eating them. But when they saw Blacky appear at the entrance to the den their joy knew no bounds. He quickly found a sharp stone and cut the cords by which they were tied to a stake in the ground, and then all three started off together for Blacky’s house, where they lived happily ever after; and Browny quite gave up rolling in the mud, and Whitey ceased to be greedy, for they never forgot how nearly these faults had brought them to an untimely end.

HEART OF ICE

Once upon a time there lived a King and Queen who were foolish beyond all telling, but nevertheless they were vastly fond of one another. It is true that certain spiteful people were heard to say that this was only one proof the more of their exceeding foolishness, but of course you will understand that these were not their own courtiers, since, after all, they *were* a King and Queen, and up to this time all things had prospered with them. For in those days the one thing to be thought of in governing a kingdom was to keep well with all the Fairies and Enchanters, and on no account to stint them of the cakes, the ells of ribbon, and similar trifles which were their due, and, above all things, when there was a christening, to remember to invite every single one, good, bad, or indifferent, to the ceremony. Now, the foolish Queen had one little son who was just going to be christened, and for several months she had been hard at work preparing an enormous list of the names of those who were to be invited, but she quite forgot that it would take nearly as long to read it over as it had taken to write it out. So, when the moment of the christening arrived the King — to whom the task had been entrusted — had barely reached the end of the second page and his tongue was tripping with fatigue and haste as he repeated the usual formula: 'I conjure and pray you, Fairy so-and-so' — or 'Enchanter such-a-one'— 'to honour me with a visit, and graciously bestow your gifts upon my son.'

To make matters worse, word was brought to him that the Fairies asked on the first page had already arrived and were waiting impatiently in the Great Hall, and grumbling that nobody was there to receive them. Thereupon he gave up the list in despair and hurried to greet those whom he had succeeded in asking, imploring their goodwill so humbly that most of them were touched, and promised that they would do his son no harm. But there happened to be among them a Fairy from a far country about whom they knew nothing, though her name had been written on the first page of the list. This Fairy was annoyed that after having taken the trouble to come so quickly, there had been no one to receive her, or help her to alight from the great ostrich on which she had travelled from her distant home, and now she began to mutter to herself in the most alarming way.

'Oh! prate away,' said she, 'your son will never be anything to boast of. Say what you will, he will be nothing but a Mannikin — —'

No doubt she would have gone on longer in this strain, and given the unhappy little Prince half-a-dozen undesirable gifts, if it had not been for the good Fairy Genesta, who held the kingdom under her special protection, and who luckily hurried in just in time to prevent further mischief. When she had by compliments and entreaties pacified the unknown Fairy, and persuaded her to say no more, she gave the King a hint that now was the time to distribute the presents, after which ceremony they all took their departure, excepting the Fairy Genesta, who then went to see the Queen, and said to her:

‘A nice mess you seem to have made of this business, madam. Why did you not condescend to consult me? But foolish people like you always think they can do without help or advice, and I observe that, in spite of all my goodness to you, you had not even the civility to invite me!’

‘Ah! dear madam,’ cried the King, throwing himself at her feet; ‘did I ever have time to get as far as your name? See where I put in this mark when I abandoned the hopeless undertaking which I had but just begun!’

‘There! there!’ said the Fairy, ‘I am not offended. I don’t allow myself to be put out by trifles like that with people I really am fond of. But now about your son: I have saved him from a great many disagreeable things, but you must let me take him away and take care of him, and you will not see him again until he is all covered with fur!’

At these mysterious words the King and Queen burst into tears, for they lived in such a hot climate themselves that how or why the Prince should come to be covered with fur they could not imagine, and thought it must portend some great misfortune to him.

However, Genesta told them not to disquiet themselves.

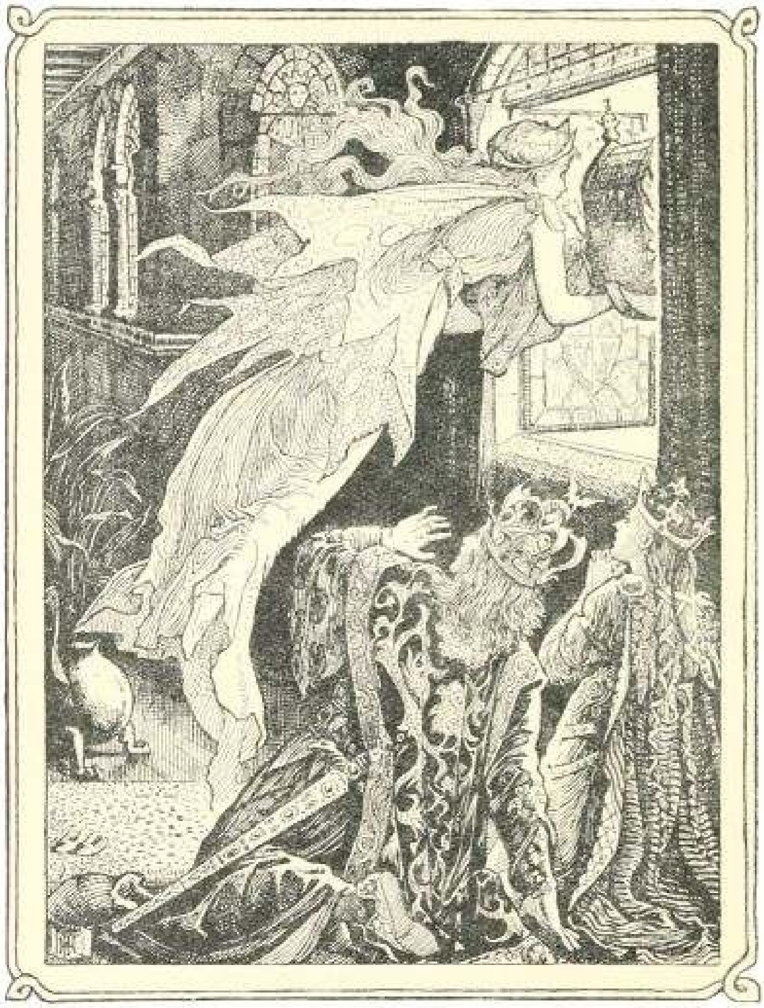

‘If I left him to you to bring up,’ said she, ‘you would be certain to make him as foolish as yourselves. I do not even intend to let him know that he is your son. As for you, you had better give your minds to governing your kingdom properly.’ So saying, she opened the window, and catching up the little Prince, cradle and all, she glided away in the air as if she were skating upon ice, leaving the King and Queen in the greatest affliction. They consulted everyone who came near them as to what the Fairy could possibly have meant by saying that when they saw their son again he would be covered with fur. But nobody could offer any solution of the mystery, only they all seemed to agree that it must be something frightful, and the King and Queen made themselves more miserable than ever, and wandered about their palace in a way to make anyone pity them. Meantime the Fairy had carried off the little Prince to her own castle, and placed him under the care of a young peasant woman, whom she bewitched so as to make her think that this new baby was one of her own children. So the Prince grew up healthy and strong, leading the simple life of a young peasant, for the Fairy thought that he could have no better training; only as he grew older she kept him more and more with herself, that his mind might be cultivated and exercised as well as his body. But her care did not cease there: she resolved that he should be tried by hardships and disappointments and the knowledge of his fellowmen; for indeed she knew the Prince would need every advantage that she could give him, since, though he increased in years, he did not increase in height, but remained the tiniest of Princes. However, in spite of this he was exceedingly active and well formed, and altogether so handsome and agreeable that the smallness of his stature was of no real consequence. The Prince was perfectly aware that he was called by the ridiculous name of 'Mannikin,' but he consoled himself by vowing that, happen what might, he would make it illustrious.

In order to carry out her plans for his welfare the Fairy now began to send Prince Mannikin the most wonderful dreams of adventure by sea and land, and of these adventures he himself was always the hero. Sometimes he rescued a lovely Princess from some terrible danger, again he earned a kingdom by some brave deed, until at last he longed to go away and seek his fortune in a far country where his humble birth would not prevent his gaining honour and riches by his courage, and it was with a heart full of ambitious projects that he rode one day into a great city not far from the Fairy's castle. As he had set out intending to hunt in the surrounding forest he was quite simply dressed, and carried only a bow and arrows and a light spear; but even thus arrayed he looked graceful and distinguished. As he entered the city he saw that the inhabitants were all racing with one accord towards the market-place, and he also turned his horse in the same direction, curious to know what was going forward. When he reached the spot he found that certain foreigners of strange and outlandish appearance were about to make a proclamation to the assembled citizens, and he hastily pushed his way into the crowd until he was near enough to hear the words of the venerable old man who was their spokesman:

'Let the whole world know that he who can reach the summit of the Ice Mountain shall receive as his reward, not only the incomparable Sabella, fairest of the fair, but also all the realms of which she is Queen!' 'Here,' continued the old man after he had made this proclamation— 'here is the list of all those Princes who, struck by the beauty of the Princess, have perished in the attempt to win her; and here is the list of those who have just entered upon the high emprise.'

Prince Mannikin was seized with a violent desire to inscribe his name among the others, but the remembrance of his dependent position and his lack of wealth held him back. But while he hesitated the old man, with many respectful ceremonies, unveiled a portrait of the lovely Sabella, which was carried by some of the attendants, and after one glance at it the Prince delayed no longer, but, rushing forward, demanded permission to add his name to the list. When they saw his tiny stature and simple attire the strangers looked at each other doubtfully, not knowing whether to accept or refuse him. But the Prince said haughtily:

‘Give me the paper that I may sign it,’ and they obeyed. What between admiration for the Princess and annoyance at the hesitation shown by her ambassadors the Prince was too much agitated to choose any other name than the one by which he was always known. But when, after all the grand titles of the other Princes, he simply wrote ‘Mannikin,’ the ambassadors broke into shouts of laughter.

‘Miserable wretches!’ cried the Prince; ‘but for the presence of that lovely portrait I would cut off your heads.’

But he suddenly remembered that, after all, it *was* a funny name, and that he had not yet had time to make it famous; so he was calm, and enquired the way to the Princess Sabella’s country.

Though his heart did not fail him in the least, still he felt there were many difficulties before him, and he resolved to set out at once, without even taking leave of the Fairy, for fear she might try to stop him. Everybody in the town who knew him made great fun of the idea of Mannikin’s undertaking such an expedition, and it even came to the ears of the foolish King and Queen, who laughed over it more than any of the others, without having an idea that the presumptuous Mannikin was their only son!

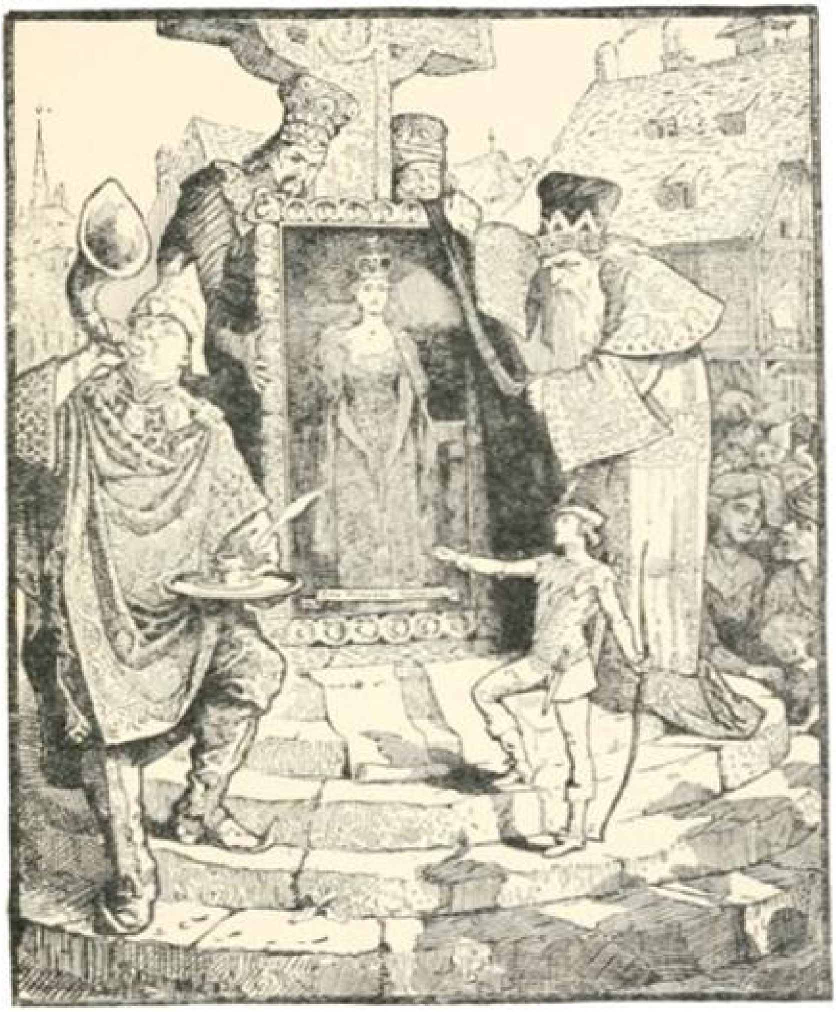

Meantime the Prince was travelling on, though the directions he had received for his journey were none of the clearest.

‘Four hundred leagues north of Mount Caucasus you will receive your orders and instructions for the conquest of the Ice Mountain.’

Fine marching orders, those, for a man starting from a country near where Japan is nowadays!

However, he fared eastward, avoiding all towns, lest the people should laugh at his name, for, you see, he was not a very experienced traveller, and had not yet learned to enjoy a joke even if it were against himself. At night he slept in the woods, and at first he lived upon wild fruits; but the Fairy, who was keeping a benevolent eye upon him, thought that it would never do to let him be half-starved in that way, so she took to feeding him with all sorts of good things while he was asleep, and the Prince wondered very much that when he was awake he never felt hungry! True to her plan the Fairy sent him various adventures to prove his courage, and he came successfully through them all, only in his last fight with a furious monster rather like a tiger he had the ill luck to lose his horse. However, nothing daunted, he struggled on on foot, and at last reached a seaport. Here he found a boat sailing for the coast which he desired to reach, and, having just enough money to pay his passage, he went on board and they started. But after some days a fearful storm came on, which completely wrecked the little ship, and the Prince only saved his life by swimming a long, long way to the only land that was in sight, and which proved to be a desert island. Here he lived by fishing and hunting, always hoping that the good Fairy would presently rescue him. One day, as he was looking sadly out to sea, he became aware of a curious-looking boat which was drifting slowly towards the shore, and which presently ran into a little creek and there stuck fast in the sand. Prince Mannikin rushed down eagerly to examine it, and saw with amazement that the masts and spars were all branched, and covered thickly with leaves until it looked like a little wood. Thinking from the stillness that there could be no one on board, the Prince pushed aside the branches and sprang over the side, and found himself surrounded by the crew, who lay motionless as dead men and in a most deplorable condition. They, too, had become almost like trees, and were growing to the deck, or to the masts, or to the sides of the vessel, or to whatever they had happened to be touching when the enchantment fell upon them. Mannikin was struck with pity for their miserable plight, and set to work with might and main to release them. With the sharp point of one of his arrows he gently detached their hands and feet from the wood which held them fast, and carried them on shore, one after another, where he rubbed their rigid limbs, and bathed them with infusions of various herbs with such success, that, after a few days, they recovered perfectly and were as fit to manage a boat as ever. You may be sure that the good Fairy Genesta had something to do with this marvellous cure, and she also put it into the Prince's head to rub the boat itself with the same magic herbs, which cleared it entirely, and not before it was time, for, at the rate at which it was growing before, it would very soon have become a forest! The gratitude of the sailors was extreme, and they willingly promised to land the Prince upon any coast he pleased; but, when he questioned them about the extraordinary thing that had happened to them and to their ship, they could in no way explain it, except that they said that, as they were passing along a thickly wooded coast, a sudden gust of wind had reached them from the land and enveloped them in a dense cloud of dust, after which everything in the boat that was not metal had sprouted and blossomed, as the Prince had seen, and that they themselves had grown gradually numb and heavy, and had finally lost all consciousness. Prince Mannikin was deeply interested in this curious story, and collected a quantity of the dust from the bottom of the boat, which he carefully preserved, thinking that its strange property might one day stand him in good stead.

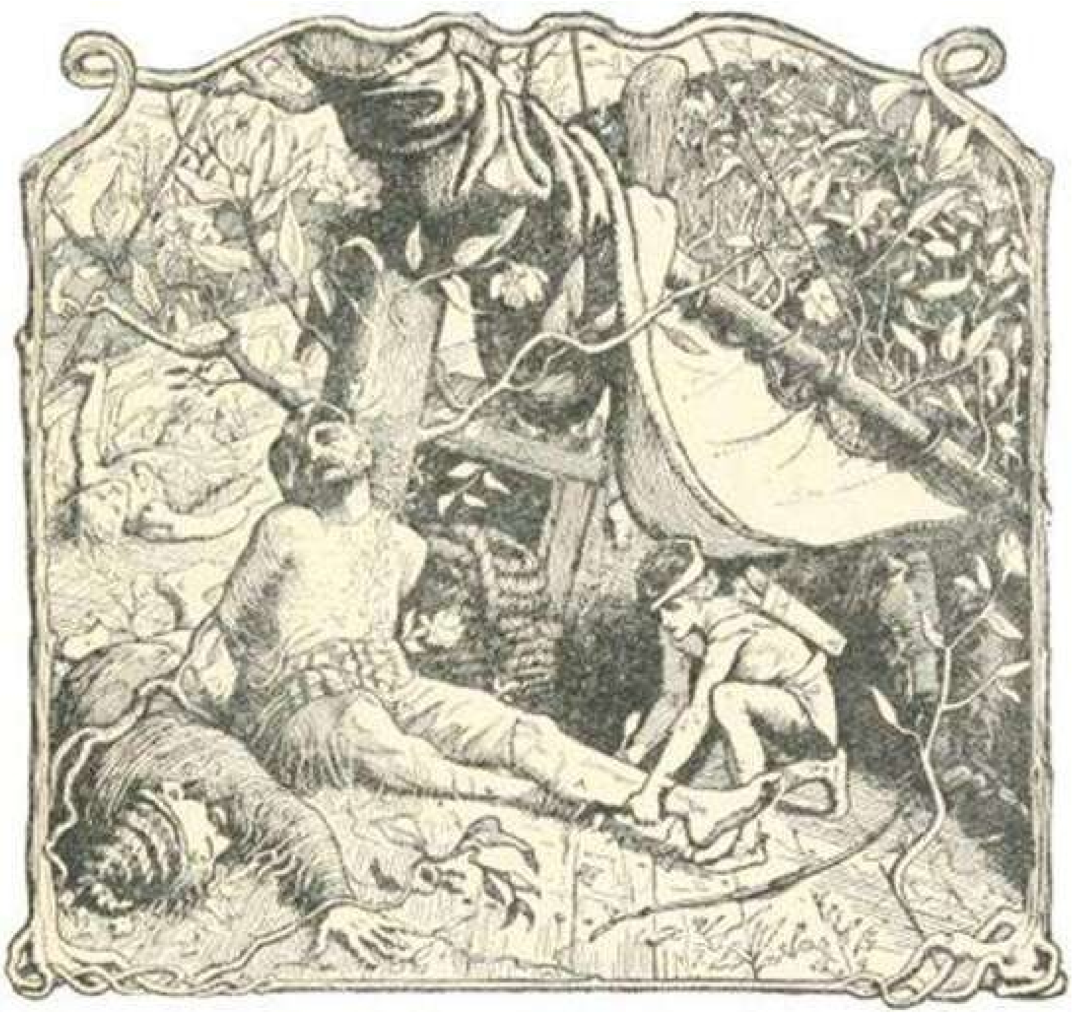

Then they joyfully left the desert island, and after a long and prosperous voyage over calm seas they at length came in sight of land, and resolved to go on shore, not only to take in a fresh stock of water and provisions, but also to find out, if possible, where they were and in what direction to proceed.

As they neared the coast they wondered if this could be another uninhabited land, for no human beings could be distinguished, and yet that something was stirring became evident, for in the dust-clouds that moved near the ground small dark forms were dimly visible. These appeared to be assembling at the exact spot where they were preparing to run ashore, and what was their surprise to find they were nothing more nor less than large and beautiful spaniels, some mounted as sentries, others grouped in companies and regiments, all eagerly watching their disembarkation. When they found that Prince Mannikin, instead of saying, ‘Shoot them,’ as they had feared, said ‘Hi, good dog!’ in a thoroughly friendly and ingratiating way, they crowded round him with a great wagging of tails and giving of paws, and very soon made him understand that they wanted him to leave his men with the boat and follow them. The Prince was so curious to know more about them that he agreed willingly; so, after arranging with the sailors to wait for him fifteen days, and then, if he had not come back, to go on their way without him, he set out with his new friends. Their way lay inland, and Mannikin noticed with great surprise that the fields were well cultivated and that the carts and ploughs were drawn by horses or oxen, just as they might have been in any other country, and when they passed any village the cottages were trim and pretty, and an air of prosperity was everywhere. At one of the villages a dainty little repast was set before the Prince, and while he was eating, a chariot was brought, drawn by two splendid horses, which were driven with great skill by a large spaniel. In this carriage he continued his journey very comfortably, passing many similar equipages upon the road, and being always most courteously saluted by the spaniels who occupied them. At last they drove rapidly into a large town, which Prince Mannikin had no doubt was the capital of the kingdom. News of his approach had evidently been received, for all the inhabitants were at their doors and windows, and all the little spaniels had climbed upon the wall and gates to see him arrive. The Prince was delighted with the hearty welcome they gave him, and looked round him with the deepest interest. After passing through a few wide streets, well paved, and adorned with avenues of fine trees, they drove into the courtyard of a grand palace, which was full of spaniels who were evidently soldiers. ‘The King’s body-guard,’ thought the Prince to himself as he returned their salutations, and then the carriage stopped, and he was shown into the presence of the King, who lay upon a rich Persian carpet surrounded by several little spaniels, who were occupied in chasing away the flies lest they should disturb his Majesty. He was the most beautiful of all spaniels, with a look of sadness in his large eyes, which, however, quite disappeared as he sprang up to welcome Prince Mannikin with every demonstration of delight; after which he made a sign to his courtiers, who came one by one to pay their respects to the visitor. The Prince thought that he would find himself puzzled as to how he should carry on a conversation, but as soon as he and the King were once more left alone, a Secretary of State was sent for, who wrote from his Majesty’s dictation a most polite speech, in which he regretted much that they were unable to converse, except in writing, the language of dogs being difficult to understand. As for the writing, it had remained the same as the Prince’s own.

Mannikin thereupon wrote a suitable reply, and then begged the King to satisfy his curiosity about all the strange things he had seen and heard since his landing. This appeared to awaken sad recollections in the King’s mind, but he informed the Prince that he was called King Bayard, and that a Fairy, whose kingdom was next his own, had fallen violently in love with him, and had done all she could to persuade him to marry her; but that he could not do so, as he himself was the devoted lover of the Queen of the Spice Islands. Finally, the Fairy, furious at the indifference with which her love was treated, had reduced him to the state in which the Prince found him, leaving him unchanged in mind, but deprived of the power of speech; and, not content with wreaking her vengeance upon the King alone, she had condemned all his subjects to a similar fate, saying:

'Bark, and run upon four feet, until the time comes when virtue shall be rewarded by love and fortune.'

Which, as the poor King remarked, was very much the same thing as if she had said, 'Remain a spaniel for ever and ever.'

Prince Mannikin was quite of the same opinion; nevertheless he said what we should all have said in the same circumstances:

'Your Majesty must have patience.'

He was indeed deeply sorry for poor King Bayard, and said all the consoling things he could think of, promising to aid him with all his might if there was anything to be done. In short they became firm friends, and the King proudly displayed to Mannikin the portrait of the Queen of the Spice Islands, and he quite agreed that it was worth while to go through anything for the sake of a creature so lovely. Prince Mannikin in his turn told his own history, and the great undertaking upon which he had set out, and King Bayard was able to give him some valuable instructions as to which would be the best way for him to proceed, and then they went together to the place where the boat had been left. The sailors were delighted to see the Prince again, though they had known that he was safe, and when they had taken on board all the supplies which the King had sent for them, they started once more. The King and Prince parted with much regret, and the former insisted that Mannikin should take with him one of his own pages, named Mousta, who was charged to attend to him everywhere, and serve him faithfully, which he promised to do.

The wind being favourable they were soon out of hearing of the general howl of regret from the whole army, which had been given by order of the King, as a great compliment, and it was not long before the land was entirely lost to view. They met with no further adventures worth speaking of, and presently found themselves within two leagues of the harbour for which they were making. The Prince, however, thought it would suit him better to land where he was, so as to avoid the town, since he had no money left and was very doubtful as to what he should do next. So the sailors set him and Mousta on shore, and then went back sorrowfully to their ship, while the Prince and his attendant walked off in what looked to them the most promising direction. They soon reached a lovely green meadow on the border of a wood, which seemed to them so pleasant after their long voyage that they sat down to rest in the shade and amused themselves by watching the gambols and antics of a pretty tiny monkey in the trees close by. The Prince presently became so fascinated by it that he sprang up and tried to catch it, but it eluded his grasp and kept just out of arm's reach, until it had made him promise to follow wherever it led him, and then it sprang upon his shoulder and whispered in his ear:

'We have no money, my poor Mannikin, and we are altogether badly off, and at a loss to know what to do next.'

'Yes, indeed,' answered the Prince ruefully, 'and I have nothing to give you, no sugar or biscuits, or anything that you like, my pretty one.'

'Since you are so thoughtful for me, and so patient about your own affairs,' said the little monkey, 'I will show you the way to the Golden Rock, only you must leave Mousta to wait for you here.'

Prince Mannikin agreed willingly, and then the little monkey sprang from his shoulder to the nearest tree, and began to run through the wood from branch to branch, crying, 'Follow me.'

This the Prince did not find quite so easy, but the little monkey waited for him and showed him the easiest places, until presently the wood grew thinner and they came out into a little clear grassy space at the foot of a mountain, in the midst of which stood a single rock, about ten feet high. When they were quite close to it the little monkey said:

'This stone looks pretty hard, but give it a blow with your spear and let us see what will happen.'

So the Prince took his spear and gave the rock a vigorous dig, which split off several pieces, and showed that, though the surface was thinly coated with stone, inside it was one solid mass of pure gold.

Thereupon the little monkey said, laughing at his astonishment:

'I make you a present of what you have broken off; take as much of it as you think proper.'

The Prince thanked her gratefully, and picked up one of the smallest of the lumps of gold; as he did so the little monkey was suddenly transformed into a tall and gracious lady, who said to him:

'If you are always as kind and persevering and easily contented as you are now you may hope to accomplish the most difficult tasks; go on your way and have no fear that you will be troubled any more for lack of gold, for that little piece which you modestly chose shall never grow less, use it as much as you will. But that you may see the danger you have escaped by your moderation, come with me.’ So saying she led him back into the wood by a different path, and he saw that it was full of men and women; their faces were pale and haggard, and they ran hither and thither seeking madly upon the ground, or in the air, starting at every sound, pushing and trampling upon one another in their frantic eagerness to find the way to the Golden Rock.

‘You see how they toil,’ said the Fairy; ‘but it is all of no avail: they will end by dying of despair, as hundreds have done before them.’

As soon as they had got back to the place where they had left Mousta the Fairy disappeared, and the Prince and his faithful Squire, who had greeted him with every demonstration of joy, took the nearest way to the city. Here they stayed several days, while the Prince provided himself with horses and attendants, and made many enquiries about the Princess Sabella, and the way to her kingdom, which was still so far away that he could hear but little, and that of the vaguest description, but when he presently reached Mount Caucasus it was quite a different matter. Here they seemed to talk of nothing but the Princess Sabella, and strangers from all parts of the world were travelling towards her father’s Court.

The Prince heard plenty of assurances as to her beauty and her riches, but he also heard of the immense number of his rivals and their power. One brought an army at his back, another had vast treasures, a third was as handsome and accomplished as it was possible to be; while, as to poor Mannikin, he had nothing but his determination to succeed, his faithful spaniel, and his ridiculous name — which last was hardly likely to help him, but as he could not alter it he wisely determined not to think of it any more. After journeying for two whole months they came at last to Trelintin, the capital of the Princess Sabella’s kingdom, and here he heard dismal stories about the Ice Mountain, and how none of those who had attempted to climb it had ever come back. He heard also the story of King Farda-Kinbras, Sabella’s father. It appeared that he, being a rich and powerful monarch, had married a lovely Princess named Birbantine, and they were as happy as the day was long — so happy that as they were out sledging one day they were foolish enough to defy fate to spoil their happiness.

‘We shall see about that,’ grumbled an old hag who sat by the wayside blowing her fingers to keep them warm. The King thereupon was very angry, and wanted to punish the woman; but the Queen prevented him, saying:

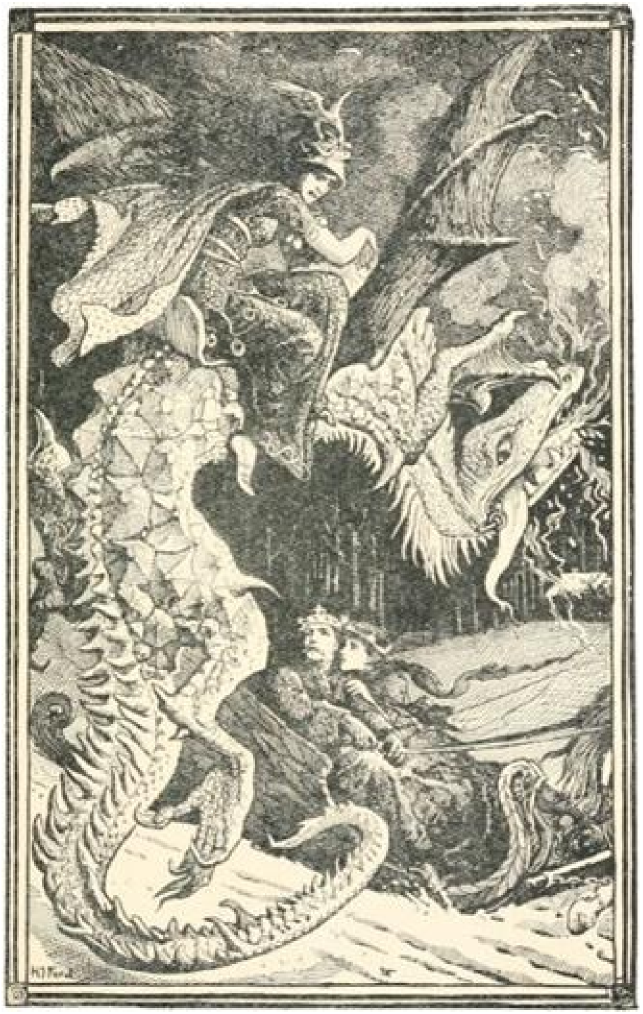
H J Ford

GORGONZOLA FLIES OFF ON HER DRAGON

‘Alas! sire, do not let us make bad worse; no doubt this is a Fairy!’

‘You are right there,’ said the old woman, and immediately she stood up, and as they gazed at her in horror she grew gigantic and terrible, her staff turned to a fiery dragon with outstretched wings, her ragged cloak to a golden mantle, and her wooden shoes to two bundles of rockets. ‘You are right there, and you will see what will come of your fine goings on, and remember the Fairy Gorgonzola!’ So saying she mounted the dragon and flew off, the rockets shooting in all directions and leaving long trails of sparks.

In vain did Farda-Kinbras and Birbantine beg her to return, and endeavour by their humble apologies to pacify her; she never so much as looked at them, and was very soon out of sight, leaving them a prey to all kinds of dismal forebodings. Very soon after this the Queen had a little daughter, who was the most beautiful creature ever seen; all the Fairies of the North were invited to her christening, and warned against the malicious Gorgonzola. She also was invited, but she neither came to the banquet nor received her present; but as soon as all the others were seated at table, after bestowing their gifts upon the little Princess, she stole into the Palace, disguised as a black cat, and hid herself under the cradle until the nurses and the cradle-rockers had all turned their backs, and then she sprang out, and in an instant had stolen the little Princess’s heart and made her escape, only being chased by a few dogs and scullions on her way across the courtyard. Once outside she mounted her chariot and flew straight away to the North Pole, where she shut up her stolen treasure on the summit of the Ice Mountain, and surrounded it with so many difficulties that she felt quite easy about its remaining there as long as the Princess lived, and then she went home, chuckling at her success. As to the other Fairies, they went home after the banquet without discovering that anything was amiss, and so the King and Queen were quite happy. Sabella grew prettier day by day. She learnt everything a Princess ought to know without the slightest trouble, and yet something always seemed lacking to make her perfectly charming. She had an exquisite voice, but whether her songs were grave or gay it did not matter, she did not seem to know what they meant; and everyone who heard her said:

‘She certainly sings perfectly; but there is no tenderness, no heart in her voice.’ Poor Sabella! how could there be when her heart was far away on the Ice Mountains? And it was just the same with all the other things that she did. As time went on, in spite of the admiration of the whole Court and the blind fondness of the King and Queen, it became more and more evident that something was fatally wrong: for those who love no one cannot long be loved; and at last the King called a general assembly, and invited the Fairies to attend, that they might, if possible, find out what was the matter. After explaining their grief as well as he could, he ended by begging them to see the Princess for themselves. ‘It is certain,’ said he, ‘that something is wrong — *what* it is I don’t know how to tell you, but in some way your work is imperfect.’

They all assured him that, so far as they knew, everything had been done for the Princess, and they had forgotten nothing that they could bestow on so good a neighbour as the King had been to them. After this they went to see Sabella; but they had no sooner entered her presence than they cried out with one accord:

‘Oh! horror! — she has no heart!’

On hearing this frightful announcement, the King and Queen gave a cry of despair, and entreated the Fairies to find some remedy for such an unheard-of misfortune. Thereupon the eldest Fairy consulted her Book of Magic, which she always carried about with her, hung to her girdle by a thick silver chain, and there she found out at once that it was Gorgonzola who had stolen the Princess’s heart, and also discovered what the wicked old Fairy had done with it.

‘What shall we do? What shall we do?’ cried the King and Queen in one breath.

‘You must certainly suffer much annoyance from seeing and loving Sabella, who is nothing but a beautiful image,’ replied the Fairy, ‘and this must go on for a long time; but I think I see that, in the end, she will once more regain her heart. My advice is that you shall at once cause her portrait to be sent all over the world, and promise her hand and all her possessions to the Prince who is successful in reaching her heart. Her beauty alone is sufficient to engage all the Princes of the world in the quest.’

This was accordingly done, and Prince Mannikin heard that already five hundred Princes had perished in the snow and ice, not to mention their squires and pages, and that more continued to arrive daily, eager to try their fortune. After some consideration he determined to present himself at Court; but his arrival made no stir, as his retinue was as inconsiderable as his stature, and the splendour of his rivals was great enough to throw even Farda-Kinbras himself into the shade. However, he paid his respects to the King very gracefully, and asked permission to kiss the hand of the Princess in the usual manner; but when he said he was called ‘Mannikin,’ the King could hardly repress a smile, and the Princes who stood by openly shouted with laughter.

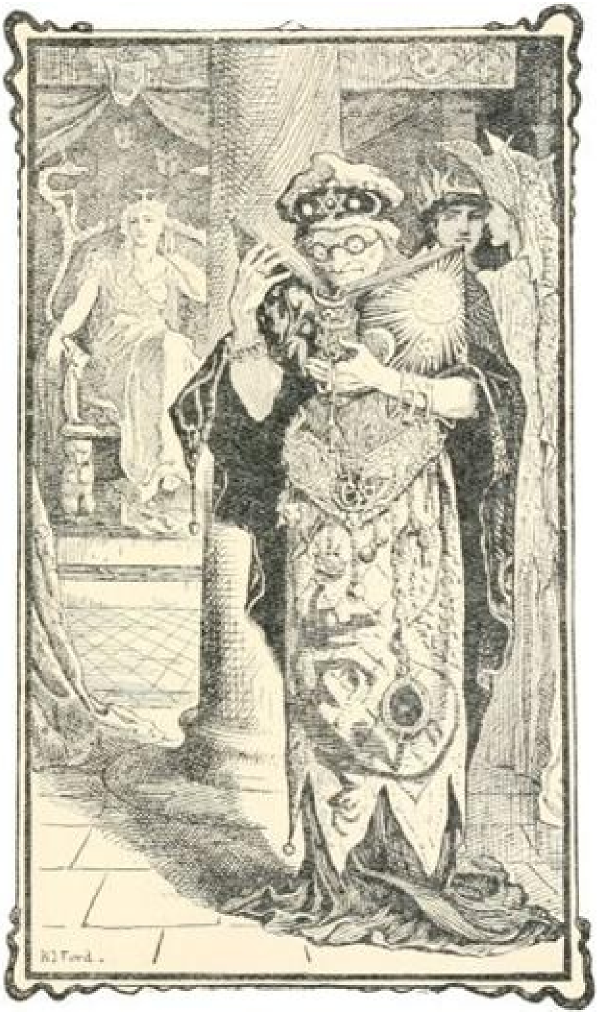

Turning to the King, Prince Mannikin said with great dignity:

‘Pray laugh if it pleases your Majesty, I am glad that it is in my power to afford you any amusement; but I am not a plaything for these gentlemen, and I must beg them to dismiss any ideas of that kind from their minds at once,’ and with that he turned upon the one who had laughed the loudest and proudly challenged him to a single combat. This Prince, who was called Fadasse, accepted the challenge very scornfully, mocking at Mannikin, whom he felt sure had no chance against himself; but the meeting was arranged for the next day. When Prince Mannikin quitted the King’s presence he was conducted to the audience hall of the Princess Sabella. The sight of so much beauty and magnificence almost took his breath away for an instant, but, recovering himself with an effort, he said:

‘Lovely Princess, irresistibly drawn by the beauty of your portrait, I come from the other end of the world to offer my services to you. My devotion knows no bounds, but my absurd name has already involved me in a quarrel with one of your courtiers. To-morrow I am to fight this ugly, overgrown Prince, and I beg you to honour the combat with your presence, and prove to the world that there is nothing in a name, and that you deign to accept Mannikin as your knight.'

When it came to this the Princess could not help being amused, for, though she had no heart, she was not without humour. However, she answered graciously that she accepted with pleasure, which encouraged the Prince to entreat further that she would not show any favour to his adversary.

'Alas!' said she, 'I favour none of these foolish people, who weary me with their sentiment and their folly. I do very well as I am, and yet from one year's end to another they talk of nothing but delivering me from some imaginary affliction. Not a word do I understand of all their pratings about love, and who knows what dull things besides, which, I declare to you, I cannot even remember.'

Mannikin was quick enough to gather from this speech that to amuse and interest the Princess would be a far surer way of gaining her favour than to add himself to the list of those who continually teased her about that mysterious thing called 'love' which she was so incapable of comprehending. So he began to talk of his rivals, and found in each of them something to make merry over, in which diversion the Princess joined him heartily, and so well did he succeed in his attempt to amuse her that before very long she declared that of all the people at Court he was the one to whom she preferred to talk.

The following day, at the time appointed for the combat, when the King, the Queen, and the Princess had taken their places, and the whole Court and the whole town were assembled to see the show, Prince Fadasse rode into the lists magnificently armed and accoutred, followed by twenty-four squires and a hundred men-at-arms, each one leading a splendid horse, while Prince Mannikin entered from the other side armed only with his spear and followed by the faithful Mousta. The contrast between the two champions was so great that there was a shout of laughter from the whole assembly; but when at the sounding of a trumpet the combatants rushed upon each other, and Mannikin, eluding the blow aimed at him, succeeded in thrusting Prince Fadasse from his horse and pinning him to the sand with his spear, it changed to a murmur of admiration.

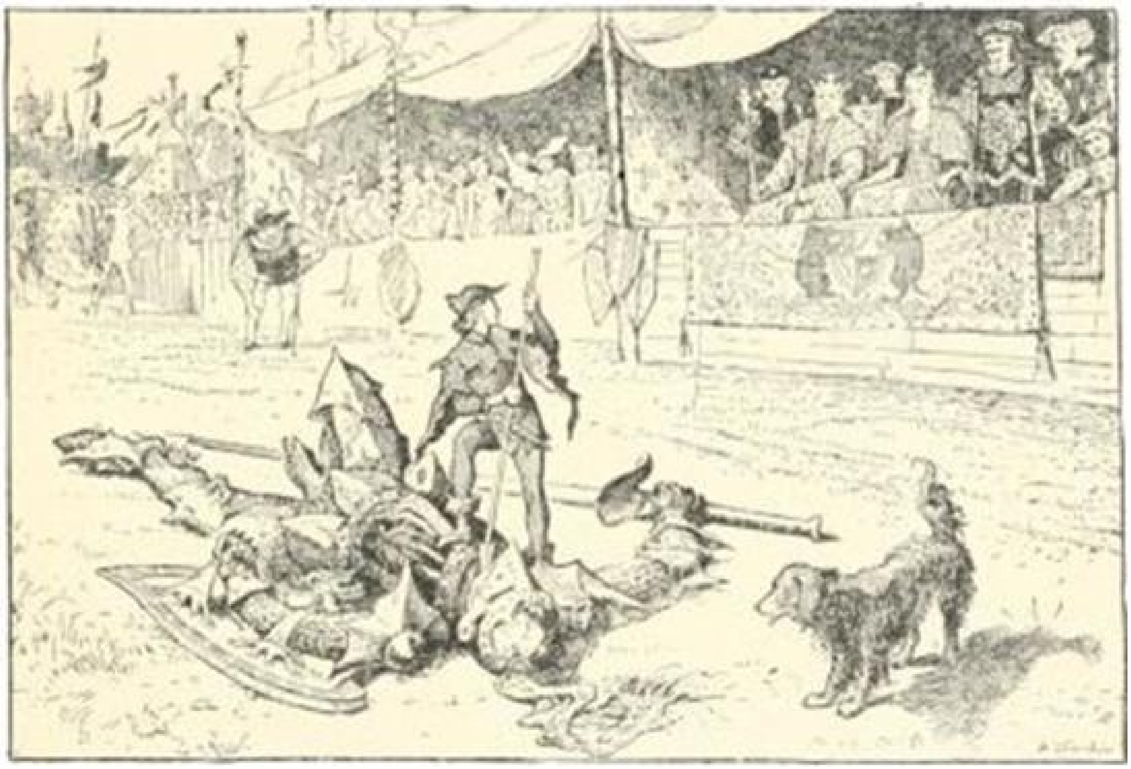

So soon as he had him at his mercy, however, Mannikin, turning to the Princess, assured her that he had no desire to kill anyone who called himself her courtier, and then he bade the furious and humiliated Fadasse rise and thank the Princess to whom he owed his life. Then, amid the sounding of the trumpets and the shoutings of the people, he and Mousta retired gravely from the lists.

The King soon sent for him to congratulate him upon his success, and to offer him a lodging in the Palace, which he joyfully accepted. While the Princess expressed a wish to have Mousta brought to her, and, when the Prince sent for him, she was so delighted with his courtly manners and his marvellous intelligence that she entreated Mannikin to give him to her for her own. The Prince consented with alacrity, not only out of politeness, but because he foresaw that to have a faithful friend always near the Princess might some day be of great service to him. All these events made Prince Mannikin a person of much more consequence at the Court. Very soon after, there arrived upon the frontier the Ambassador of a very powerful King, who sent to Farda-Kinbras the following letter, at the same time demanding permission to enter the capital in state to receive the answer:

‘I, Brandatimor, to Farda-Kinbras send greeting. If I had before this time seen the portrait of your beautiful daughter Sabella I should not have permitted all these adventurers and petty Princes to be dancing attendance and getting themselves frozen with the absurd idea of meriting her hand. For myself I am not afraid of any rivals, and, now I have declared my intention of marrying your daughter, no doubt they will at once withdraw their pretensions. My Ambassador has orders, therefore, to make arrangements for the Princess to come and be married to me without delay — for I attach no importance at all to the farrago of nonsense which you have caused to be published all over the world about this Ice Mountain. If the Princess really has no heart, be assured that I shall not concern myself about it, since, if anybody can help her to discover one, it is myself. My worthy father-in-law, farewell!'

The reading of this letter embarrassed and displeased Farda-Kinbras and Birbantine immensely, while the Princess was furious at the insolence of the demand. They all three resolved that its contents must be kept a profound secret until they could decide what reply should be sent, but Mousta contrived to send word of all that had passed to Prince Mannikin. He was naturally alarmed and indignant, and, after thinking it over a little, he begged an audience of the Princess, and led the conversation so cunningly up to the subject that was uppermost in her thoughts, as well as his own, that she presently told him all about the matter and asked his advice as to what it would be best to do. This was exactly what he had not been able to decide for himself; however, he replied that he should advise her to gain a little time by promising her answer after the grand entry of the Ambassador, and this was accordingly done.

The Ambassador did not at all like being put off after that fashion, but he was obliged to be content, and only said very arrogantly that so soon as his equipages arrived, as he expected they would do very shortly, he would give all the people of the city, and the stranger Princes with whom it was inundated, an idea of the power and the magnificence of his master. Mannikin, in despair, resolved that he would for once beg the assistance of the kind Fairy Genesta. He often thought of her and always with gratitude, but from the moment of his setting out he had determined to seek her aid only on the greatest occasions. That very night, when he had fallen asleep quite worn out with thinking over all the difficulties of the situation, he dreamed that the Fairy stood beside him, and said:

'Mannikin, you have done very well so far; continue to please me and you shall always find good friends when you need them most. As for this affair with the Ambassador, you can assure Sabella that she may look forward tranquilly to his triumphal entry, since it will all turn out well for her in the end.'

The Prince tried to throw himself at her feet to thank her, but woke to find it was all a dream; nevertheless he took fresh courage, and went next day to see the Princess, to whom he gave many mysterious assurances that all would yet be well. He even went so far as to ask her if she would not be very grateful to anyone who would rid her of the insolent Brandatimor. To which she replied that her gratitude would know no bounds. Then he wanted to know what would be her best wish for the person who was lucky enough to accomplish it. To which she said that she would wish them to be as insensible to the folly called ‘love’ as she was herself!

This was indeed a crushing speech to make to such a devoted lover as Prince Mannikin, but he concealed the pain it caused him with great courage.

And now the Ambassador sent to say that on the very next day he would come in state to receive his answer, and from the earliest dawn the inhabitants were astir, to secure the best places for the grand sight; but the good Fairy Genesta was providing them an amount of amusement they were far from expecting, for she so enchanted the eyes of all the spectators that when the Ambassador’s gorgeous procession appeared, the splendid uniforms seemed to them miserable rags that a beggar would have been ashamed to wear, the prancing horses appeared as wretched skeletons hardly able to drag one leg after the other, while their trappings, which really sparkled with gold and jewels, looked like old sheepskins that would not have been good enough for a plough horse. The pages resembled the ugliest sweeps. The trumpets gave no more sound than whistles made of onion-stalks, or combs wrapped in paper; while the train of fifty carriages looked no better than fifty donkey carts. In the last of these sat the Ambassador with the haughty and scornful air which he considered becoming in the representative of so powerful a monarch: for this was the crowning point of the absurdity of the whole procession, that all who took part in it wore the expression of vanity and self-satisfaction and pride in their own appearance and all their surroundings which they believed their splendour amply justified.

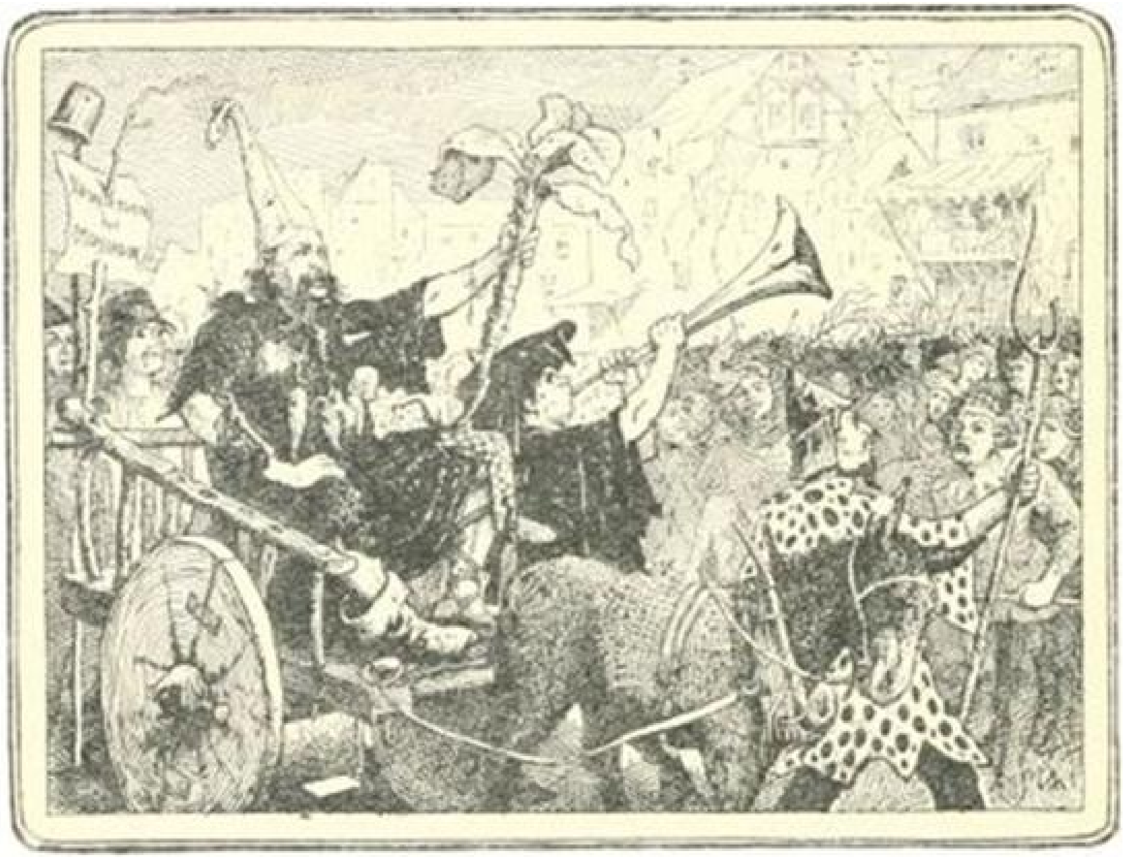

The laughter and howls of derision from the whole crowd rose ever louder and louder as the extraordinary cortège advanced, and at last reached the ears of the King as he waited in the audience hall, and before the procession reached the palace he had been informed of its nature, and, supposing that it must be intended as an insult, he ordered the gates to be closed. You may imagine the fury of the Ambassador when, after all his pomp and pride, the King absolutely and unaccountably refused to receive him. He raved wildly both against King and people, and the cortège retired in great confusion, jeered at and pelted with stones and mud by the enraged crowd. It is needless to say that he left the country as fast as horses could carry him, but not before he had declared war, with the most terrible menaces, threatening to devastate the country with fire and sword.

Some days after this disastrous embassy King Bayard sent couriers to Prince Mannikin with a most friendly letter, offering his services in any difficulty, and enquiring with the deepest interest how he fared.

Mannikin at once replied, relating all that had happened since they parted, not forgetting to mention the event which had just involved Farda-Kinbras and Brandatimor in this deadly quarrel, and he ended by entreating his faithful friend to despatch a few thousands of his veteran spaniels to his assistance.

Neither the King, the Queen, nor the Princess could in the least understand the amazing conduct of Brandatimor's Ambassador; nevertheless the preparations for the war went forward briskly and all the Princes who had not gone on towards the Ice Mountain offered their services, at the same time demanding all the best appointments in the King's army. Mannikin was one of the first to volunteer, but he only asked to go as aide-de-camp to the Commander-in-chief, who was a gallant soldier and celebrated for his victories. As soon as the army could be got together it was marched to the frontier, where it met the opposing force headed by Brandatimor himself, who was fall of fury, determined to avenge the insult to his Ambassador and to possess himself of the Princess Sabella. All the army of Farda-Kinbras could do, being so heavily outnumbered, was to act upon the defensive, and before long Mannikin won the esteem of the officers for his ability, and of the soldiers for his courage, and care for their welfare, and in all the skirmishes which he conducted he had the good fortune to vanquish the enemy.

At last Brandatimor engaged the whole army in a terrific conflict, and though the troops of Farda-Kinbras fought with desperate courage, their general was killed, and they were defeated and forced to retreat with immense loss. Mannikin did wonders, and half-a-dozen times turned the retreating forces and beat back the enemy; and he afterwards collected troops enough to keep them in check until, the severe winter setting in, put an end to hostilities for a while.

He then returned to the Court, where consternation reigned. The King was in despair at the death of his trusty general, and ended by imploring Mannikin to take the command of the army, and his counsel was followed in all the affairs of the Court. He followed up his former plan of amusing the Princess, and on no account reminding her of that tedious thing called 'love,' so that she was always glad to see him, and the winter slipped by gaily for both of them.

The Prince was all the while secretly making plans for the next campaign; he received private intelligence of the arrival of a strong reinforcement of Spaniels, to whom he sent orders to post themselves along the frontier without attracting attention, and as soon as he possibly could he held a consultation with their Commander, who was an old and experienced warrior. Following his advice, he decided to have a pitched battle as soon as the enemy advanced, and this Brandatimor lost not a moment in doing, as he was perfectly persuaded that he was now going to make an end of the war and utterly vanquish Farda-Kinbras. But no sooner had he given the order to charge than the Spaniels, who had mingled with his troops unperceived, leaped each upon the horse nearest to him, and not only threw the whole squadron into confusion by the terror they caused, but, springing at the throats of the riders, unhorsed many of them by the suddenness of their attack; then turning the horses to the rear, they spread consternation everywhere, and made it easy for Prince Mannikin to gain a complete victory. He met Brandatimor in single combat, and succeeded in taking him prisoner; but he did not live to reach the Court, to which Mannikin had sent him: his pride killed him at the thought of appearing before Sabella under these altered circumstances. In the meantime Prince Fadasse and all the others who had remained behind were setting out with all speed for the conquest of the Ice Mountain, being afraid that Prince Mannikin might prove as successful in that as he seemed to be in everything else, and when Mannikin returned he heard of it with great annoyance. True he had been serving the Princess, but she only admired and praised him for his gallant deeds, and seemed no whit nearer bestowing on him the love he so ardently desired, and all the comfort Mousta could give him on the subject was that at least she loved no one else, and with that he had to content himself. But he determined that, come what might, he would delay no longer, but attempt the great undertaking for which he had come so far. When he went to take leave of the King and Queen they entreated him not to go, as they had just heard that Prince Fadasse, and all who accompanied him, had perished in the snow; but he persisted in his resolve. As for Sabella, she gave him her hand to kiss with precisely the same gracious indifference as she had given it to him the first time they met. It happened that this farewell took place before the whole Court, and so great a favourite had Prince Mannikin become that they were all indignant at the coldness with which the Princess treated him.

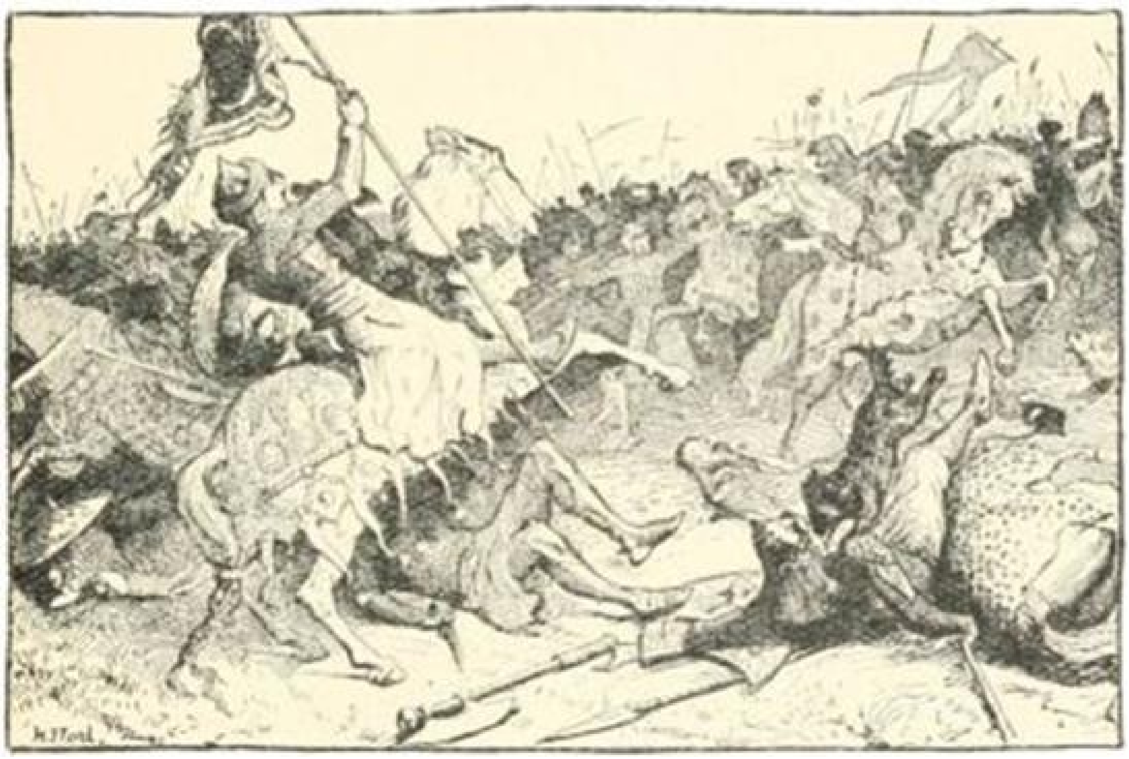

Finally the King said to him:

‘Prince, you have constantly refused all the gifts which, in my gratitude for your invaluable services, I have offered to you, but I wish the Princess to present you with her cloak of marten’s fur, and *that* I hope you will not reject!’ Now this was a splendid fur mantle which the Princess was very fond of wearing, not so much because she felt cold, as that its richness set off to perfection the delicate tints of her complexion and the brilliant gold of her hair. However, she took it off, and with graceful politeness begged Prince Mannikin to accept it, which you may be sure he was charmed to do, and, taking only this and a little bundle of all kinds of wood, and accompanied only by two spaniels out of the fifty who had stayed with him when the war was ended, he set forth, receiving many tokens of love and favour from the people in every town he passed through. At the last little village he left his horse behind him, to begin his toilful march through the snow, which extended, blank and terrible, in every direction as far as the eye could see. Here he had appointed to meet the other forty-eight spaniels, who received him joyfully, and assured him that, happen what might, they would follow and serve him faithfully. And so they started, full of heart and hope. At first there was a slight track, difficult, but not impossible to follow; but this was soon lost, and the Pole Star was their only guide. When the time came to call a halt, the Prince, who had after much consideration decided on his plan of action, caused a few twigs from the faggot he had brought with him to be planted in the snow, and then he sprinkled over them a pinch of the magic powder he had collected from the enchanted boat. To his great joy they instantly began to sprout and grow, and in a marvellously short time the camp was surrounded by a perfect grove of trees of all sorts, which blossomed and bore ripe fruit, so that all their wants were easily supplied, and they were able to make huge fires to warm themselves. The Prince then sent out several spaniels to reconnoitre, and they had the good luck to discover a horse laden with provisions stuck fast in the snow. They at once fetched their comrades, and brought the spoil triumphantly into the camp, and, as it consisted principally of biscuits, not a spaniel among them went supperless to sleep. In this way they journeyed by day and encamped safely at night, always remembering to take on a few branches to provide them with food and shelter. They passed by the way armies of those who had set out upon the perilous enterprise, who stood frozen stiffly, without sense or motion; but Prince Mannikin strictly forbade that any attempt should be made to thaw them. So they went on and on for more than three months, and day by day the Ice Mountain, which they had seen for a long time, grew clearer, until at last they stood close to it, and shuddered at its height and steepness. But by patience and perseverance they crept up foot by foot, aided by their fires of magic wood, without which they must have perished in the intense cold, until presently they stood at the gates of the magnificent Ice Palace which crowned the mountain, where, in deadly silence and icy sleep, lay the heart of Sabella. Now the difficulty became immense, for if they maintained enough heat to keep themselves alive they were in danger every moment of melting the blocks of solid ice of which the palace was entirely built, and bringing the whole structure down upon their heads; but cautiously and quickly they traversed courtyards and halls, until they found themselves at the foot of a vast throne, where, upon a cushion of snow, lay an enormous and brilliantly sparkling diamond, which contained the heart of the lovely Princess Sabella. Upon the lowest step of the throne was inscribed in icy letters, ‘Whosoever thou art who by courage and virtue canst win the heart of Sabella enjoy peacefully the good fortune which thou hast richly deserved.’

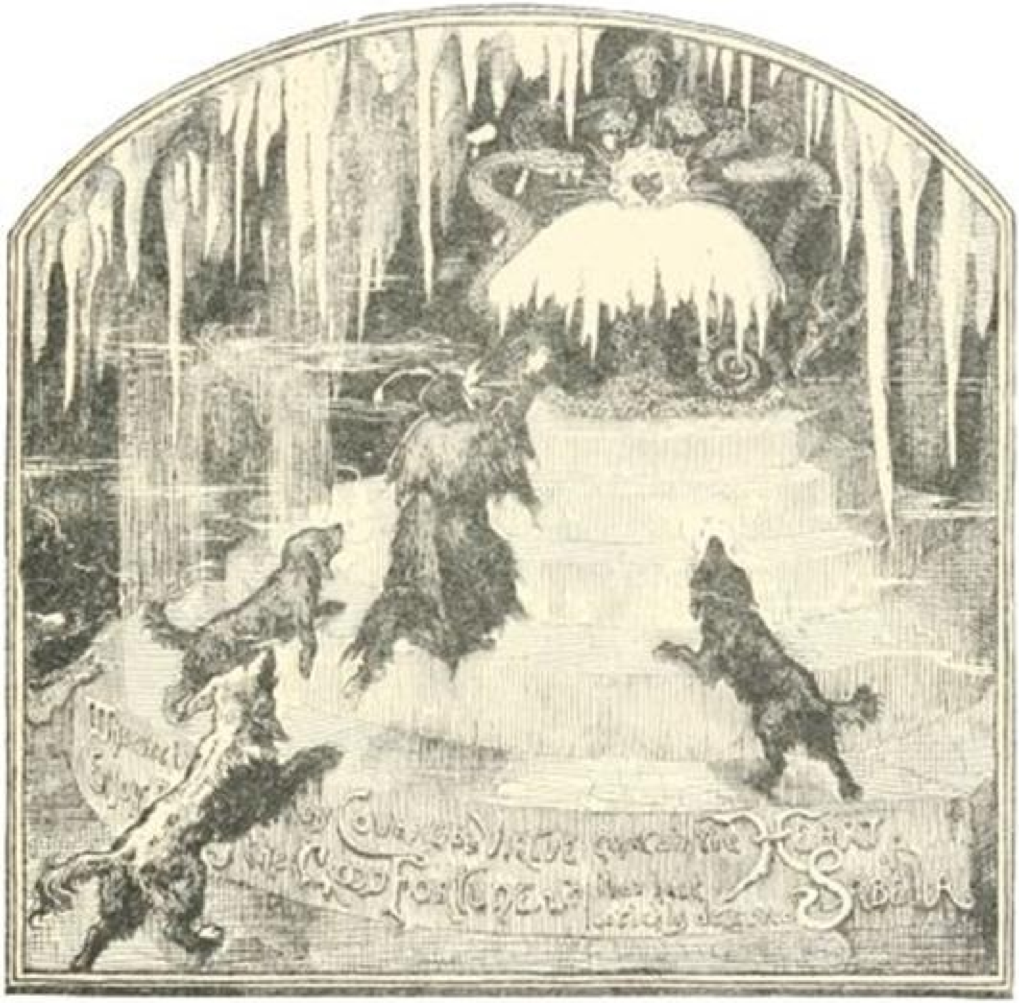

Prince Mannikin bounded forward, and had just strength left to grasp the precious diamond which contained all he coveted in the world before he fell insensible upon the snowy cushion. But his good spaniels lost no time in rushing to the rescue, and between them they bore him hastily from the hall, and not a moment too soon, for all around them they heard the clang of the falling blocks of ice as the Fairy Palace slowly collapsed under the unwonted heat. Not until they reached the foot of the mountain did they pause to restore the Prince to consciousness, and then his joy to find himself the possessor of Sabella’s heart knew no bounds.

With all speed they began to retrace their steps, but this time the happy Prince could not bear the sight of his defeated and disappointed rivals, whose frozen forms lined his triumphant way. He gave orders to his spaniels to spare no pains to restore them to life, and so successful were they that day by day his train increased, so that by the time he got back to the little village where he had left his horse he was escorted by five hundred sovereign Princes, and knights and squires without number, and he was so courteous and unassuming that they all followed him willingly, anxious to do him honour. But then he was so happy and blissful himself that he found it easy to be at peace with all the world. It was not long before he met the faithful Mousta, who was coming at the top of his speed hoping to meet the Prince, that he might tell him of the sudden and wonderful change that had come over the Princess, who had become gentle and thoughtful and had talked to him of nothing but Prince Mannikin, of the hardships she feared he might be suffering, and of her anxiety for him, and all this with a hundred tender expressions which put the finishing stroke to the Prince's delight. Then came a courier bearing the congratulations of the King and Queen, who had just heard of his successful return, and there was even a graceful compliment from Sabella herself. The Prince sent Mousta back to her, and he was welcomed with joy, for was he not her lover's present?

At last the travellers reached the capital, and were received with regal magnificence. Farda-Kinbras and Birbantine embraced Prince Mannikin, declaring that they regarded him as their heir and the future husband of the Princess, to which he replied that they did him too much honour. And then he was admitted into the presence of the Princess, who for the first time in her life blushed as he kissed her hand, and could not find a word to say. But the Prince, throwing himself on his knees beside her, held out the splendid diamond, saying:

'Madam, this treasure is yours, since none of the dangers and difficulties I have gone through have been sufficient to make me deserve it.'

'Ah! Prince,' said she, 'if I take it, it is only that I may give it back to you, since truly it belongs to you already.'

At this moment in came the King and Queen, and interrupted them by asking all the questions imaginable, and not infrequently the same over and over again. It seems that there is always one thing that is sure to be said about an event by everybody, and Prince Mannikin found that the question which he was asked by more than a thousand people on this particular occasion was:

'And didn't you find it very cold?'

The King had come to request Prince Mannikin and the Princess to follow him to the Council Chamber, which they did, not knowing that he meant to present the Prince to all the nobles assembled there as his son-in-law and successor. But when Mannikin perceived his intention, he begged permission to speak first, and told his whole story, even to the fact that he believed himself to be a peasant's son. Scarcely had he finished speaking when the sky grew black, the thunder growled, and the lightning flashed, and in the blaze of light the good Fairy Genesta suddenly appeared. Turning to Prince Mannikin, she said:

'I am satisfied with you, since you have shown not only courage but a good heart.' Then she addressed King Farda-Kinbras, and informed him of the real history of the Prince, and how she had determined to give him the education she knew would be best for a man who was to command others. ‘You have already found the advantage of having a faithful friend,’ she added to the Prince, ‘and now you will have the pleasure of seeing King Bayard and his subjects regain their natural forms as a reward for his kindness to you.’

Just then arrived a chariot drawn by eagles, which proved to contain the foolish King and Queen, who embraced their long-lost son with great joy, and were greatly struck with the fact that they did indeed find him covered with fur! While they were caressing Sabella and wringing her hands (which is a favourite form of endearment with foolish people) chariots were seen approaching from all points of the compass, containing numbers of Fairies.

‘Sire,’ said Genesta to Farda-Kinbras, ‘I have taken the liberty of appointing your Court as a meeting-place for all the Fairies who could spare the time to come; and I hope you can arrange to hold the great ball, which we have once in a hundred years, on this occasion.’

The King having suitably acknowledged the honour done him, was next reconciled to Gorgonzola, and they two presently opened the ball together. The Fairy Marsontine restored their natural forms to King Bayard and all his subjects, and he appeared once more as handsome a king as you could wish to see. One of the Fairies immediately despatched her chariot for the Queen of the Spice Islands, and their wedding took place at the same time as that of Prince Mannikin and the lovely and gracious Sabella. They lived happily ever afterwards, and their vast kingdoms were presently divided between their children.

The Prince, out of grateful remembrance of the Princess Sabella’s first gift to him, bestowed the right of bearing her name upon the most beautiful of the martens, and that is why they are called *sables* to this day.

Comte de Caylus.

THE ENCHANTED RING

Once upon a time there lived a young man named Rosimond, who was as good and handsome as his elder brother Bramintho was ugly and wicked. Their mother detested her eldest son, and had only eyes for the youngest. This excited Bramintho's jealousy, and he invented a horrible story in order to ruin his brother. He told his father that Rosimond was in the habit of visiting a neighbour who was an enemy of the family, and betraying to him all that went on in the house, and was plotting with him to poison their father.

The father flew into a rage, and flogged his son till the blood came. Then he threw him into prison and kept him for three days without food, and after that he turned him out of the house, and threatened to kill him if he ever came back. The mother was miserable, and did nothing but weep, but she dared not say anything.

The youth left his home with tears in his eyes, not knowing where to go, and wandered about for many hours till he came to a thick wood. Night overtook him at the foot of a great rock, and he fell asleep on a bank of moss, lulled by the music of a little brook.

It was dawn when he woke, and he saw before him a beautiful woman seated on a grey horse, with trappings of gold, who looked as if she were preparing for the hunt.

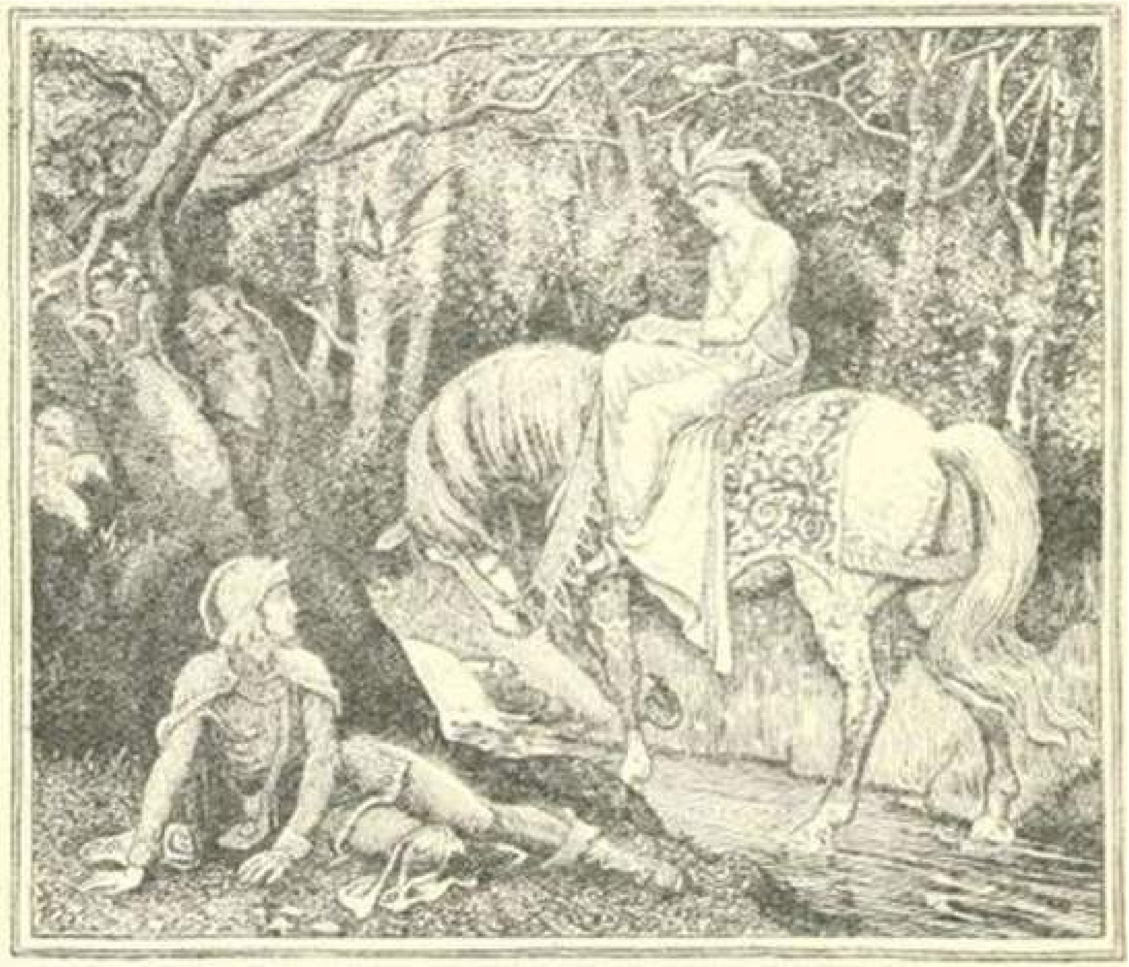

‘Have you seen a stag and some deerhounds go by?’ she asked.

‘No, madam,’ he replied.

Then she added, ‘You look unhappy; is there anything the matter? Take this ring, which will make you the happiest and most powerful of men, provided you never make a bad use of it. If you turn the diamond inside, you will become invisible. If you turn it outside, you will become visible again. If you place it on your little finger, you will take the shape of the King’s son, followed by a splendid court. If you put it on your fourth finger, you will take your own shape.’

Then the young man understood that it was a Fairy who was speaking to him, and when she had finished she plunged into the woods. The youth was very impatient to try the ring, and returned home immediately. He found that the Fairy had spoken the truth, and that he could see and hear everything, while he himself was unseen. It lay with him to revenge himself, if he chose, on his brother, without the slightest danger to himself, and he told no one but his mother of all the strange things that had befallen him. He afterwards put the enchanted ring on his little finger, and appeared as the King’s son, followed by a hundred fine horses, and a guard of officers all richly dressed.

His father was much surprised to see the King’s son in his quiet little house, and he felt rather embarrassed, not knowing what was the proper way to behave on such a grand occasion. Then Rosimond asked him how many sons he had.

‘Two,’ replied he.

‘I wish to see them,’ said Rosimond. ‘Send for them at once. I desire to take them both to Court, in order to make their fortunes.’

The father hesitated, then answered: ‘Here is the eldest, whom I have the honour to present to your Highness.’

‘But where is the youngest? I wish to see him too,’ persisted Rosimond.

‘He is not here,’ said the father. ‘I had to punish him for a fault, and he has run away.’

Then Rosimond replied, ‘You should have shown him what was right, but not have punished him. However, let the elder come with me, and as for you, follow these two guards, who will escort you to a place that I will point out to them.’

Then the two guards led off the father, and the Fairy of whom you have heard found him in the forest, and beat him with a golden birch rod, and cast him into a cave that was very deep and dark, where he lay enchanted. ‘Lie there,’ she said, ‘till your son comes to take you out again.’

Meanwhile the son went to the King’s palace, and arrived just when the real prince was absent. He had sailed away to make war on a distant island, but the winds had been contrary, and he had been shipwrecked on unknown shores, and taken captive by a savage people. Rosimond made his appearance at Court in the character of the Prince, whom everyone wept for as lost, and told them that he had been rescued when at the point of death by some merchants. His return was the signal for great public rejoicings, and the King was so overcome that he became quite speechless, and did nothing but embrace his son. The Queen was even more delighted, and fêtes were ordered over the whole kingdom.

One day the false Prince said to his real brother, ‘Bramintho, you know that I brought you here from your native village in order to make your fortune; but I have found out that you are a liar, and that by your deceit you have been the cause of all the troubles of your brother Rosimond. He is in hiding here, and I desire that you shall speak to him, and listen to his reproaches.’

Bramintho trembled at these words, and, flinging himself at the Prince’s feet, confessed his crime.

‘That is not enough,’ said Rosimond. ‘It is to your brother that you must confess, and I desire that you shall ask his forgiveness. He will be very generous if he grants it, and it will be more than you deserve. He is in my ante-room, where you shall see him at once. I myself will retire into another apartment, so as to leave you alone with him.’

Bramintho entered, as he was told, into the ante-room. Then Rosimond changed the ring, and passed into the room by another door.

Bramintho was filled with shame as soon as he saw his brother’s face. He implored his pardon, and promised to atone for all his faults. Rosimond embraced him with tears, and at once forgave him, adding, ‘I am in great favour with the King. It rests with me to have your head cut off, or to condemn you to pass the remainder of your life in prison; but I desire to be as good to you as you have been wicked to me.’ Bramintho, confused and ashamed, listened to his words without daring to lift his eyes or to remind Rosimond that he was his brother. After this, Rosimond gave out that he was going to make a secret voyage, to marry a Princess who lived in a neighbouring kingdom; but in reality he only went to see his mother, whom he told all that had happened at the Court, giving her at the same time some money that she needed, for the King allowed him to take exactly what he liked, though he was always careful not to abuse this permission. Just then a furious war broke out between the King his master and the Sovereign of the adjoining country, who was a bad man and one that never kept his word. Rosimond went straight to the palace of the wicked King, and by means of his ring was able to be present at all the councils, and learnt all their schemes, so that he was able to forestall them and bring them to naught. He took the command of the army which was brought against the wicked King, and defeated him in a glorious battle, so that peace was at once concluded on conditions that were just to everyone.

Henceforth the King’s one idea was to marry the young man to a Princess who was the heiress to a neighbouring kingdom, and, besides that, was as lovely as the day. But one morning, while Rosimond was hunting in the forest where for the first time he had seen the Fairy, his benefactress suddenly appeared before him. ‘Take heed,’ she said to him in severe tones, ‘that you do not marry anybody who believes you to be a Prince. You must never deceive anyone. The real Prince, whom the whole nation thinks you are, will have to succeed his father, for that is just and right. Go and seek him in some distant island, and I will send winds that will swell your sails and bring you to him. Hasten to render this service to your master, although it is against your own ambition, and prepare, like an honest man, to return to your natural state. If you do not do this, you will become wicked and unhappy, and I will abandon you to all your former troubles.’

Rosimond took these wise counsels to heart. He gave out that he had undertaken a secret mission to a neighbouring state, and embarked on board a vessel, the winds carrying him straight to the island where the Fairy had told him he would find the real Prince. This unfortunate youth had been taken captive by a savage people, who had kept him to guard their sheep. Rosimond, becoming invisible, went to seek him amongst the pastures, where he kept his flock, and, covering him with his mantle, he delivered him out of the hands of his cruel masters, and bore him back to the ship. Other winds sent by the Fairy swelled the sails, and together the two young men entered the King’s presence.

Rosimond spoke first and said, ‘You have believed me to be your son. I am not he, but I have brought him back to you.’ The King, filled with astonishment, turned to his real son and asked, ‘Was it not you, my son, who conquered my enemies and won such a glorious peace? Or is it true that you have been shipwrecked and taken captive, and that Rosimond has set you free?’

‘Yes, my father,’ replied the Prince. ‘It is he who sought me out in my captivity and set me free, and to him I owe the happiness of seeing you once more. It was he, not I, who gained the victory.’

The King could hardly believe his ears; but Rosimond, turning the ring, appeared before him in the likeness of the Prince, and the King gazed distractedly at the two youths who seemed both to be his son. Then he offered Rosimond immense rewards for his services, which were refused, and the only favour the young man would accept was that one of his posts at Court should be conferred on his brother Bramintho. For he feared for himself the changes of fortune, the envy of mankind and his own weakness. His desire was to go back to his mother and his native village, and to spend his time in cultivating the land.

One day, when he was wandering through the woods, he met the Fairy, who showed him the cavern where his father was imprisoned, and told him what words he must use in order to set him free. He repeated them joyfully, for he had always longed to bring the old man back and to make his last days happy. Rosimond thus became the benefactor of all his family, and had the pleasure of doing good to those who had wished to do him evil. As for the Court, to whom he had rendered such services, all he asked was the freedom to live far from its corruption; and, to crown all, fearing that if he kept the ring he might be tempted to use it in order to regain his lost place in the world, he made up his mind to restore it to the Fairy. For many days he sought her up and down the woods and at last he found her. ‘I want to give you back,’ he said, holding out the ring, ‘a gift as dangerous as it is powerful, and which I fear to use wrongfully. I shall never feel safe till I have made it impossible for me to leave my solitude and to satisfy my passions.’

While Rosimond was seeking to give back the ring to the Fairy, Bramintho, who had failed to learn any lessons from experience, gave way to all his desires, and tried to persuade the Prince, lately become King, to ill-treat Rosimond. But the Fairy, who knew all about everything, said to Rosimond, when he was imploring her to accept the ring:

‘Your wicked brother is doing his best to poison the mind of the King towards you, and to ruin you. He deserves to be punished, and he must die; and in order that he may destroy himself, I shall give the ring to him.’

Rosimond wept at these words, and then asked:

‘What do you mean by giving him the ring as a punishment? He will only use it to persecute everyone, and to become master.’

‘The same things,’ answered the Fairy, ‘are often a healing medicine to one person and a deadly poison to another. Prosperity is the source of all evil to a naturally wicked man. If you wish to punish a scoundrel, the first thing to do is to give him power. You will see that with this rope he will soon hang himself.’

Having said this, she disappeared, and went straight to the Palace, where she showed herself to Bramintho under the disguise of an old woman covered with rags. She at once addressed him in these words:

‘I have taken this ring from the hands of your brother, to whom I had lent it, and by its help he covered himself with glory. I now give it to you, and be careful what you do with it.’

Bramintho replied with a laugh:

‘I shall certainly not imitate my brother, who was foolish enough to bring back the Prince instead of reigning in his place,’ and he was as good as his word. The only use he made of the ring was to find out family secrets and betray them, to commit murders and every sort of wickedness, and to gain wealth for himself unlawfully. All these crimes, which could be traced to nobody, filled the people with astonishment. The King, seeing so many affairs, public and private, exposed, was at first as puzzled as anyone, till Bramintho’s wonderful prosperity and amazing insolence made him suspect that the enchanted ring had become his property. In order to find out the truth he bribed a stranger just arrived at Court, one of a nation with whom the King was always at war, and arranged that he was to steal in the night to Bramintho and to offer him untold honours and rewards if he would betray the State secrets.

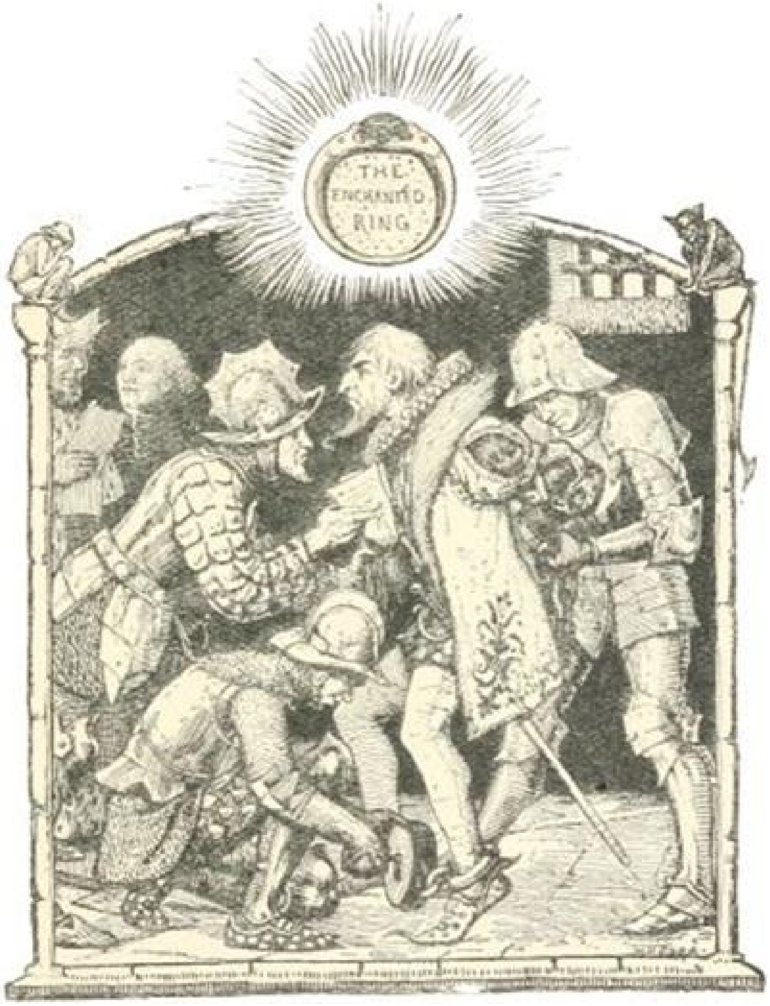

Bramintho promised everything, and accepted at once the first payment of his crime, boasting that he had a ring which rendered him invisible, and that by means of it he could penetrate into the most private places. But his triumph was short. Next day he was seized by order of the King, and his ring was taken from him. He was searched, and on him were found papers which proved his crimes; and, though Rosimond himself came back to the Court to entreat his pardon, it was refused. So Bramintho was put to death, and the ring had been even more fatal to him than it had been useful in the hands of his brother.

To console Rosimond for the fate of Bramintho, the King gave him back the enchanted ring, as a pearl without price. The unhappy Rosimond did not look upon it in the same light, and the first thing he did on his return home was to seek the Fairy in the woods.

‘Here,’ he said, ‘is your ring. My brother’s experience has made me understand many things that I did not know before. Keep it, it has only led to his destruction. Ah! without it he would be alive now, and my father and mother would not in their old age be bowed to the earth with shame and grief! Perhaps he might have been wise and happy if he had never had the chance of gratifying his wishes! Oh! how dangerous it is to have more power than the rest of the world! Take back your ring, and as ill fortune seems to follow all on whom you bestow it, I will implore you, as a favour to myself, that you will never give it to anyone who is dear to me.’

Fénelon.

THE SNUFF-BOX

As often happens in this world, there was once a young man who spent all his time in travelling. One day, as he was walking along, he picked up a snuff-box. He opened it, and the snuff-box said to him in the Spanish language, ‘What do you want?’ He was very much frightened, but, luckily, instead of throwing the box away, he only shut it tight, and put it in his pocket. Then he went on, away, away, away, and as he went he said to himself, ‘If it says to me again “What do you want?” I shall know better what to say this time.’ So he took out the snuff-box and opened it, and again it asked ‘What do you want?’ ‘My hat full of gold,’ answered the youth, and immediately it was full.

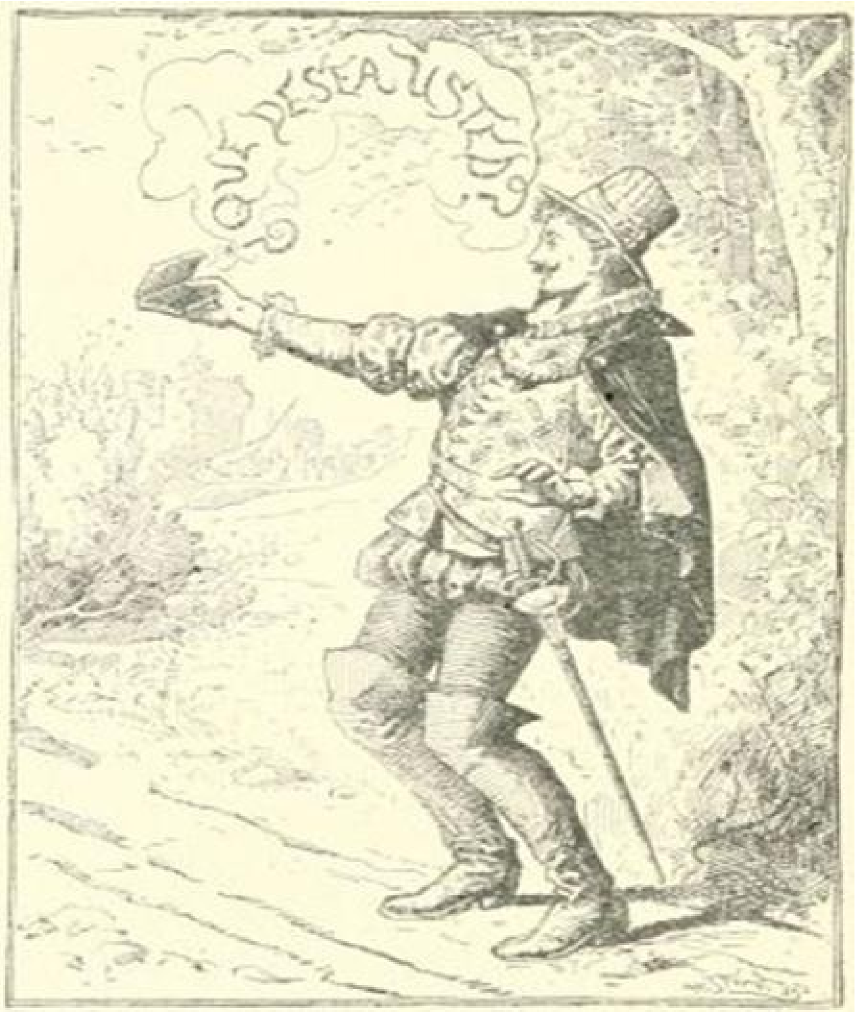
¿QUE DESEA USTED?

Our young man was enchanted. Henceforth he should never be in need of anything. So on he travelled, away, away, away, through thick forests, till at last he came to a beautiful castle. In the castle there lived a King. The young man walked round and round the castle, not caring who saw him, till the King noticed him, and asked what he was doing there. ‘I was just looking at your castle.’ ‘You would like to have one like it, wouldn’t you?’ The young man did not reply, but when it grew dark he took his snuff-box and opened the lid. ‘What do you want?’ ‘Build me a castle with laths of gold and tiles of diamond, and the furniture all of silver and gold.’ He had scarcely finished speaking when there stood in front of him, exactly opposite the King’s palace, a castle built precisely as he had ordered. When the King awoke he was struck dumb at the sight of the magnificent house shining in the rays of the sun. The servants could not do their work for stopping to stare at it. Then the King dressed himself, and went to see the young man. And he told him plainly that he was a very powerful Prince; and that he hoped that they might all live together in one house or the other, and that the King would give him his daughter to wife. So it all turned out just as the King wished. The young man married the Princess, and they lived happily in the palace of gold.

But the King’s wife was jealous both of the young man and of her own daughter The Princess had told her mother about the snuff-box, which gave them everything they wanted, and the Queen bribed a servant to steal the snuff-box. They noticed carefully where it was put away every night, and one evening, when the whole world was asleep, the woman stole it and brought it to her old mistress. Oh how happy the Queen was! She opened the lid, and the snuff-box said to her ‘What do you want?’ And she answered at once ‘I want you to take me and my husband and my servants and this beautiful house and set us down on the other side of the Red Sea, but my daughter and her husband are to stay behind.’

When the young couple woke up, they found themselves back in the old castle, without their snuff-box. They hunted for it high and low, but quite vainly. The young man felt that no time was to be lost, and he mounted his horse and filled his pockets with as much gold as he could carry. On he went, away, away, away, but he sought the snuff-box in vain all up and down the neighbouring countries, and very soon he came to the end of all his money. But still he went on, as fast as the strength of his horse would let him, begging his way.

Someone told him that he ought to consult the moon, for the moon travelled far, and might be able to tell him something. So he went away, away, away, and ended, somehow or other, by reaching the land of the moon. There he found a little old woman who said to him ‘What are you doing here? My son eats all living things he sees, and if you are wise, you will go away without coming any further.’ But the young man told her all his sad tale, and how he possessed a wonderful snuff-box, and how it had been stolen from him, and how he had nothing left, now that he was parted from his wife and was in need of everything. And he said that perhaps her son, who travelled so far, might have seen a palace with laths of gold and tiles of diamond, and furnished all in silver and gold. As he spoke these last words, the moon came in and said he smelt mortal flesh and blood. But his mother told him that it was an unhappy man who had lost everything, and had come all this way to consult him, and bade the young man not to be afraid, but to come forward and show himself. So he went boldly up to the moon, and asked if by any accident he had seen a palace with the laths of gold and the tiles of diamond, and all the furniture of silver and gold. Once this house belonged to him, but now it was stolen. And the moon said no, but that the sun travelled farther than he did, and that the young man had better go and ask him.

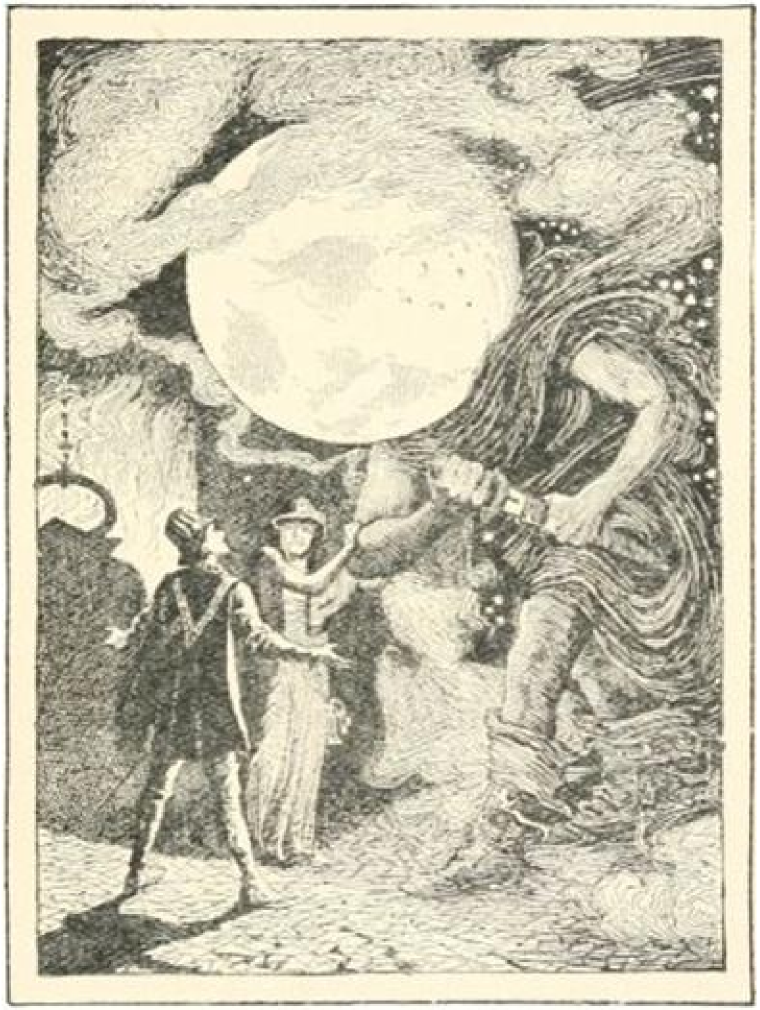

So the young man departed, and went away, away, away, as well as his horse would take him, begging his living as he rode along, and, somehow or other, at last he got to the land of the sun. There he found a little old woman, who asked him, ‘What are you doing here? Go away. Have you not heard that my son feeds upon Christians?’ But he said no, and that he would not go, for he was so miserable that it was all one to him whether he died or not; that he had lost everything, and especially a splendid palace like none other in the whole world, for it had laths of gold and tiles of diamond, and all the furniture was of silver and gold. And that he had sought it far and long, and in all the earth there was no man more unhappy. So the old woman’s heart melted, and she agreed to hide him.

When the Sun arrived, he declared that he smelt Christian flesh, and he meant to have it for his dinner. But his mother told him such a pitiful story of the miserable wretch who had lost everything, and had come from far to ask his help, that at last he promised to see him.

So the young man came out from his hiding-place and begged the sun to tell him if in the course of his travels he had not seen somewhere a palace that had not its like in the whole world, for its laths were of gold and its tiles of diamond, and all the furniture in silver and gold.

And the sun said no, but that perhaps the wind had seen it, for he entered everywhere, and saw things that no one else ever saw, and if anyone knew where it was, it was certainly the wind.

Then the poor young man again set forth as well as his horse could take him, begging his living as he went, and, somehow or other, he ended by reaching the home of the wind. He found there a little old woman busily occupied in filling great barrels with water. She asked him what had put it into his head to come there, for her son ate everything he saw, and that he would shortly arrive quite mad, and that the young man had better look out. But he answered that he was so unhappy that he had ceased to mind anything, even being eaten, and then he told her that he had been robbed of a palace that had not its equal in all the world, and of all that was in it, and that he had even left his wife, and was wandering over the world until he found it. And that it was the sun who had sent him to consult the wind. So she hid him under the staircase, and soon they heard the south wind arrive, shaking the house to its foundations. Thirsty as he was, he did not wait to drink, but he told his mother that he smelt the blood of a Christian man, and that she had better bring him out at once and make him ready to be eaten. But she bade her son eat and drink what was before him, and said that the poor young man was much to be pitied, and that the sun had granted him his life in order that he might consult the wind. Then she brought out the young man, who explained how he was seeking for his palace, and that no man had been able to tell him where it was, so he had come to the wind. And he added that he had been shamefully robbed, and that the laths were of gold and the tiles of diamond, and all the furniture in silver and gold, and he inquired if the wind had not seen such a palace during his wanderings.

And the wind said yes, and that all that day he had been blowing backwards and forwards over it without being able to move one single tile. ‘Oh, do tell me where it is,’ cried the young man. ‘It is a long way off,’ replied the wind, ‘on the other side of the Red Sea.’ But our traveller was not discouraged, he had already journeyed too far.

So he set forth at once, and, somehow or other, he managed to reach that distant land. And he enquired if anyone wanted a gardener. He was told that the head gardener at the castle had just left, and perhaps he might have a chance of getting the place. The young man lost no time, but walked up to the castle and asked if they were in want of a gardener; and how happy he was when they agreed to take him! Now he passed most of his day in gossiping with the servants about the wealth of their masters and the wonderful things in the house. He made friends with one of the maids, who told him the history of the snuff-box, and he coaxed her to let him see it. One evening she managed to get hold of it, and the young man watched carefully where she hid it away, in a secret place in the bedchamber of her mistress.

The following night, when everyone was fast asleep, he crept in and took the snuff-box. Think of his joy as he opened the lid! When it asked him, as of yore, ‘What do you want?’ he replied: ‘What do I want? What do I want? Why, I want to go with my palace to the old place, and for the King and the Queen and all their servants to be drowned in the Red Sea.’ He hardly finished speaking when he found himself back again with his wife, while all the other inhabitants of the palace were lying at the bottom of the Red Sea.

Sébillot.

THE GOLDEN BLACKBIRD

Once upon a time there was a great lord who had three sons.

He fell very ill, sent for doctors of every kind, even bone-setters, but they, none of them, could find out what was the matter with him, or even give him any relief. At last there came a foreign doctor, who declared that the Golden Blackbird alone could cure the sick man.

So the old lord despatched his eldest son to look for the wonderful bird, and promised him great riches if he managed to find it and bring it back.

The young man began his journey, and soon arrived at a place where four roads met. He did not know which to choose, and tossed his cap in the air, determining that the direction of its fall should decide him. After travelling for two or three days, he grew tired of walking without knowing where or for how long, and he stopped at an inn which was filled with merrymakers and ordered something to eat and drink.

‘My faith,’ said he, ‘it is sheer folly to waste more time hunting for this bird. My father is old, and if he dies I shall inherit his goods.’

The old man, after waiting patiently for some time, sent his second son to seek the Golden Blackbird. The youth took the same direction as his brother, and when he came to the cross roads, he too tossed up which road he should take. The cap fell in the same place as before, and he walked on till he came to the spot where his brother had halted. The latter, who was leaning out of the window of the inn, called to him to stay where he was and amuse himself.

‘You are right,’ replied the youth. ‘Who knows if I should ever find the Golden Blackbird, even if I sought the whole world through for it. At the worst, if the old man dies, we shall have his property.’

He entered the inn and the two brothers made merry and feasted, till very soon their money was all spent. They even owed something to their landlord, who kept them as hostages till they could pay their debts.

The youngest son set forth in his turn, and he arrived at the place where his brothers were still prisoners. They called to him to stop, and did all they could to prevent his going further.

‘No,’ he replied, ‘my father trusted me, and I will go all over the world till I find the Golden Blackbird.’

‘Bah,’ said his brothers, ‘you will never succeed any better than we did. Let him die if he wants to; we will divide the property.’

As he went his way he met a little hare, who stopped to look at him, and asked:

‘Where are you going, my friend?’

‘I really don’t quite know,’ answered he. ‘My father is ill, and he cannot be cured unless I bring him back the Golden Blackbird. It is a long time since I set out, but no one can tell me where to find it.’

‘Ah,’ said the hare, ‘you have a long way to go yet. You will have to walk at least seven hundred miles before you get to it.’

‘And how am I to travel such a distance?’

‘Mount on my back,’ said the little hare, ‘and I will conduct you.’

The young man obeyed: at each bound the little hare went seven miles, and it was not long before they reached a castle that was as large and beautiful as a castle could be.

‘The Golden Blackbird is in a little cabin near by,’ said the little hare, ‘and you will easily find it. It lives in a little cage, with another cage beside it made all of gold. But whatever you do, be sure not to put it in the beautiful cage, or everybody in the castle will know that you have stolen it.’

The youth found the Golden Blackbird standing on a wooden perch, but as stiff and rigid as if he was dead. And beside the beautiful cage was the cage of gold.

‘Perhaps he would revive if I were to put him in that lovely cage,’ thought the youth.

The moment that Golden Bird had touched the bars of the splendid cage he awoke, and began to whistle, so that all the servants of the castle ran to see what was the matter, saying that he was a thief and must be put in prison.

‘No,’ he answered, ‘I am not a thief. If I have taken the Golden Blackbird, it is only that it may cure my father, who is ill, and I have travelled more than seven hundred miles in order to find it.’

‘Well,’ they replied, ‘we will let you go, and will even give you the Golden Bird, if you are able to bring us the Porcelain Maiden.’

The youth departed, weeping, and met the little hare, who was munching wild thyme.

‘What are you crying for, my friend?’ asked the hare.

‘It is because,’ he answered, ‘the castle people will not allow me to carry off the Golden Blackbird without giving them the Porcelain Maiden in exchange.’

‘You have not followed my advice,’ said the little hare. ‘And you have put the Golden Bird into the fine cage.’

‘Alas! yes!’

‘Don’t despair! the Porcelain Maiden is a young girl, beautiful as Venus, who dwells two hundred miles from here. Jump on my back and I will take you there.’

The little hare, who took seven miles in a stride, was there in no time at all, and he stopped on the borders of a lake.

‘The Porcelain Maiden,’ said the hare to the youth, ‘will come here to bathe with her friends, while I just eat a mouthful of thyme to refresh me. When she is in the lake, be sure you hide her clothes, which are of dazzling whiteness, and do not give them back to her unless she consents to follow you.’

The little hare left him, and almost immediately the Porcelain Maiden arrived with her friends. She undressed herself and got into the water. Then the young man glided up noiselessly and laid hold of her clothes, which he hid under a rock at some distance.

When the Porcelain Maiden was tired of playing in the water she came out to dress herself, but, though she hunted for her clothes high and low, she could find them nowhere. Her friends helped her in the search, but, seeing at last that it was of no use, they left her, alone on the bank, weeping bitterly.

‘Why do you cry?’ said the young man, approaching her.

‘Alas!’ answered she, ‘while I was bathing someone stole my clothes, and my friends have abandoned me.’

‘I will find your clothes if you will only come with me.’

And the Porcelain Maiden agreed to follow him, and after having given up her clothes, the young man bought a small horse for her, which went like the wind. The little hare brought them both back to seek for the Golden Blackbird, and when they drew near to the castle where it lived the little hare said to the young man:

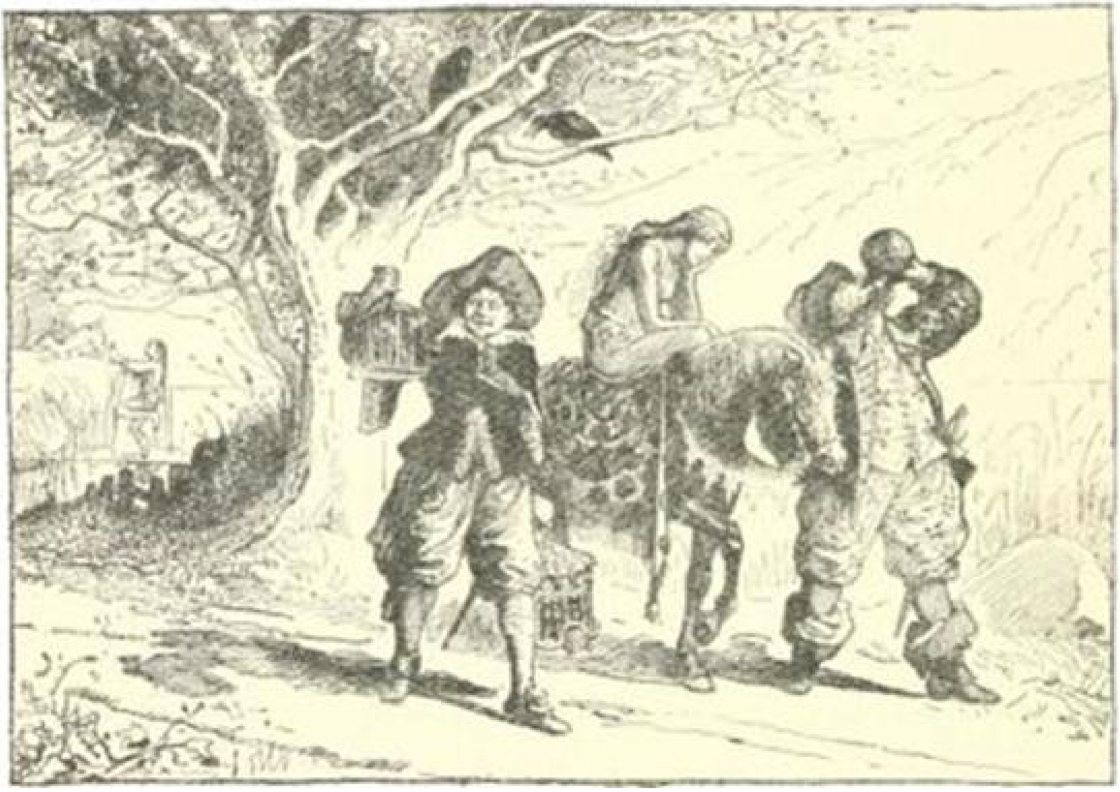

‘Now, do be a little sharper than you were before, and you will manage to carry off both the Golden Blackbird and the Porcelain Maiden. Take the golden cage in one hand, and leave the bird in the old cage where he is, and bring that away too.’

The little hare then vanished; the youth did as he was bid, and the castle servants never noticed that he was carrying off the Golden Bird. When he reached the inn where his brothers were detained, he delivered them by paying their debt. They set out all together, but as the two elder brothers were jealous of the success of the youngest, they took the opportunity as they were passing by the shores of a lake to throw themselves upon him, seize the Golden Bird, and fling him in the water. Then they continued their journey, taking with them the Porcelain Maiden, in the firm belief that their brother was drowned. But, happily, he had snatched in falling at a tuft of rushes and called loudly for help. The little hare came running to him, and said ‘Take hold of my leg and pull yourself out of the water.’

When he was safe on shore the little hare said to him:

‘Now this is what you have to do: dress yourself like a Breton seeking a place as stable-boy, and go and offer your services to your father. Once there, you will easily be able to make him understand the truth.’

The young man did as the little hare bade him, and he went to his father’s castle and enquired if they were not in want of a stable-boy.

‘Yes,’ replied his father, ‘very much indeed. But it is not an easy place. There is a little horse in the stable which will not let anyone go near it, and it has already kicked to death several people who have tried to groom it.’

‘I will undertake to groom it,’ said the youth. ‘I never saw the horse I was afraid of yet.’ The little horse allowed itself to be rubbed down without a toss of its head and without a kick.

‘Good gracious!’ exclaimed the master; ‘how is it that he lets you touch him, when no one else can go near him?’

‘Perhaps he knows me,’ answered the stable-boy.

Two or three days later the master said to him: ‘The Porcelain Maiden is here: but, though she is as lovely as the dawn, she is so wicked that she scratches everyone that approaches her. Try if she will accept your services.’

When the youth entered the room where she was, the Golden Blackbird broke forth into a joyful song, and the Porcelain Maiden sang too, and jumped for joy.

‘Good gracious!’ cried the master. ‘The Porcelain Maiden and the Golden Blackbird know you too?’

‘Yes,’ replied the youth, ‘and the Porcelain Maiden can tell you the whole truth, if she only will.’

Then she told all that had happened, and how she had consented to follow the young man who had captured the Golden Blackbird.

‘Yes,’ added the youth, ‘I delivered my brothers, who were kept prisoners in an inn, and, as a reward, they threw me into a lake. So I disguised myself and came here, in order to prove the truth to you.’

So the old lord embraced his son, and promised that he should inherit all his possessions, and he put to death the two elder ones, who had deceived him and had tried to slay their own brother.

The young man married the Porcelain Maiden, and had a splendid wedding-feast.

Sébillot.

THE LITTLE SOLDIER

I

Once upon a time there was a little soldier who had just come back from the war. He was a brave little fellow, but he had lost neither arms nor legs in battle. Still, the fighting was ended and the army disbanded, so he had to return to the village where he was born.

Now the soldier’s name was really John, but for some reason or other his friends always called him the Kinglet; why, no one ever knew, but so it was.

As he had no father or mother to welcome him home, he did not hurry himself, but went quietly along, his knapsack on his back and his sword by his side, when suddenly one evening he was seized with a wish to light his pipe. He felt for his match-box to strike a light, but to his great disgust he found he had lost it.

He had only gone about a stone’s throw after making this discovery when he noticed a light shining through the trees. He went towards it, and perceived before him an old castle, with the door standing open.

The little soldier entered the courtyard, and, peeping through a window, saw a large fire blazing at the end of a low hall. He put his pipe in his pocket and knocked gently, saying politely:

‘Would you give me a light?’

But he got no answer.

After waiting for a moment John knocked again, this time more loudly. There was still no reply.

He raised the latch and entered; the hall was empty.

The little soldier made straight for the fireplace, seized the tongs, and was stooping down to look for a nice red hot coal with which to light his pipe, when clic! something went, like a spring giving way, and in the very midst of the flames an enormous serpent reared itself up close to his face.

And what was more strange still, this serpent had the head of a woman.

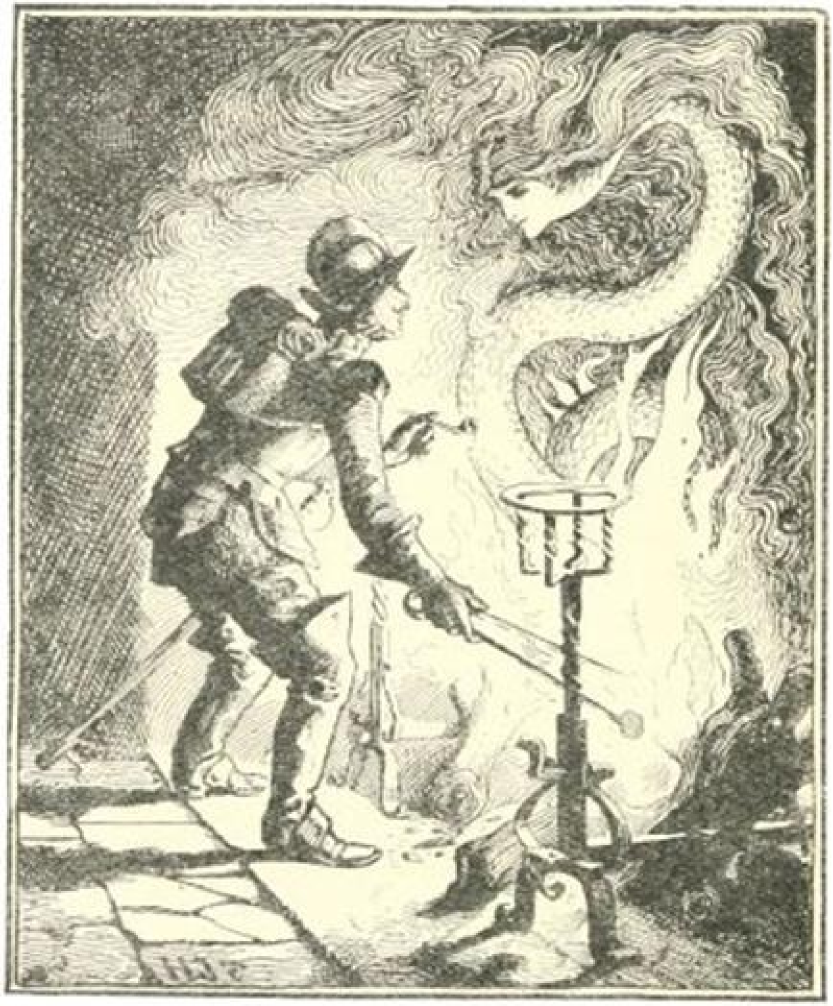

At such an unexpected sight many men would have turned and run for their lives; but the little soldier, though he *was* so small, had a true soldier's heart. He only made one step backwards, and grasped the hilt of his sword.

'Don't unsheath it,' said the serpent. 'I have been waiting for you, as it is you who must deliver me.'

'Who are you?'

'My name is Ludovine, and I am the daughter of the King of the Low Countries. Deliver me, and I will marry you and make you happy for ever after.'

Now, some people might not have liked the notion of being made happy by a serpent with the head of a woman, but the Kinglet had no such fears. And, besides, he felt the fascination of Ludovine's eyes, which looked at him as a snake looks at a little bird. They were beautiful green eyes, not round like those of a cat, but long and almond-shaped, and they shone with a strange light, and the golden hair which floated round them seemed all the brighter for their lustre. The face had the beauty of an angel, though the body was only that of a serpent.

'What must I do?' asked the Kinglet.

‘Open that door. You will find yourself in a gallery with a room at the end just like this. Cross that, and you will see a closet, out of which you must take a tunic, and bring it back to me.’

The little soldier boldly prepared to do as he was told. He crossed the gallery in safety, but when he reached the room he saw by the light of the stars eight hands on a level with his face, which threatened to strike him. And, turn his eyes which way he would, he could discover no bodies belonging to them.

He lowered his head and rushed forward amidst a storm of blows, which he returned with his fists. When he got to the closet, he opened it, took down the tunic, and brought it to the first room.

‘Here it is,’ he panted, rather out of breath.

‘Clic!’ once more the flames parted. Ludovine was a woman down to her waist. She took the tunic and put it on.

It was a magnificent tunic of orange velvet, embroidered in pearls, but the pearls were not so white as her own neck.

‘That is not all,’ she said. ‘Go to the gallery, take the staircase which is on the left, and in the second room on the first story you will find another closet with my skirt. Bring this to me.’

The Kinglet did as he was told, but in entering the room he saw, instead of merely hands, eight arms, each holding an enormous stick. He instantly unsheathed his sword and cut his way through with such vigour that he hardly received a scratch.

He brought back the skirt, which was made of silk as blue as the skies of Spain.

‘Here it is,’ said John, as the serpent appeared. She was now a woman as far as her knees.

‘I only want my shoes and stockings now,’ she said. ‘Go and get them from the closet which is on the second story.’

The little soldier departed, and found himself in the presence of eight goblins armed with hammers, and flames darting from their eyes. This time he stopped short at the threshold. ‘My sword is no use,’ he thought to himself; ‘these wretches will break it like glass, and if I can’t think of anything else, I am a dead man.’ At this moment his eyes fell on the door, which was made of oak, thick and heavy. He wrenched it off its hinges and held it over his head, and then went straight at the goblins, whom he crushed beneath it. After that he took the shoes and stockings out of the closet and brought them to Ludovine, who, directly she had put them on, became a woman all over.

When she was quite dressed in her white silk stockings and little blue slippers dotted over with carbuncles, she said to her deliverer, ‘Now you must go away, and never come back here, whatever happens. Here is a purse with two hundred ducats. Sleep to-night at the inn which is at the edge of the wood, and awake early in the morning: for at nine o’clock I shall pass the door, and shall take you up in my carriage.’ ‘Why shouldn’t we go now?’ asked the little soldier. ‘Because the time has not yet come,’ said the Princess. ‘But first you may drink my health in this glass of wine,’ and as she spoke she filled a crystal goblet with a liquid that looked like melted gold.

John drank, then lit his pipe and went out.

II

When he arrived at the inn he ordered supper, but no sooner had he sat down to eat it than he felt that he was going sound asleep.

‘I must be more tired than I thought,’ he said to himself, and, after telling them to be sure to wake him next morning at eight o’clock, he went to bed.

All night long he slept like a dead man. At eight o’clock they came to wake him, and at half-past, and a quarter of an hour later, but it was no use; and at last they decided to leave him in peace.

The clocks were striking twelve when John awoke. He sprang out of bed, and, scarcely waiting to dress himself, hastened to ask if anyone had been to inquire for him.

‘There came a lovely princess,’ replied the landlady, ‘in a coach of gold. She left you this bouquet, and a message to say that she would pass this way to-morrow morning at eight o’clock.’

The little soldier cursed his sleep, but tried to console himself by looking at his bouquet, which was of *immortelles*.

‘It is the flower of remembrance,’ thought he, forgetting that it is also the flower of the dead.

When the night came, he slept with one eye open, and jumped up twenty times an hour. When the birds began to sing he could lie still no longer, and climbed out of his window into the branches of one of the great lime-trees that stood before the door. There he sat, dreamily gazing at his bouquet till he ended by going fast asleep.

Once asleep, nothing was able to wake him; neither the brightness of the sun, nor the songs of the birds, nor the noise of Ludovine’s golden coach, nor the cries of the landlady who sought him in every place she could think of.

As the clock struck twelve he woke, and his heart sank as he came down out of his tree and saw them laying the table for dinner.

‘Did the Princess come?’ he asked.

‘Yes, indeed, she did. She left this flower-coloured scarf for you; said she would pass by to-morrow at seven o’clock, but it would be the last time.’

‘I must have been bewitched,’ thought the little soldier. Then he took the scarf, which had a strange kind of scent, and tied it round his left arm, thinking all the while that the best way to keep awake was not to go to bed at all. So he paid his bill, and bought a horse with the money that remained, and when the evening came he mounted his horse and stood in front of the inn door, determined to stay there all night.

Every now and then he stooped to smell the sweet perfume of the scarf round his arm; and gradually he smelt it so often that at last his head sank on to the horse’s neck, and he and his horse snored in company.

When the Princess arrived, they shook him, and beat him, and screamed at him, but it was all no good. Neither man nor horse woke till the coach was seen vanishing away in the distance.

Then John put spurs to his horse, calling with all his might ‘Stop! stop!’ But the coach drove on as before, and though the little soldier rode after it for a day and a night, he never got one step nearer.

Thus they left many villages and towns behind them, till they came to the sea itself. Here John thought that at last the coach must stop, but, wonder of wonders! it went straight on, and rolled over the water as easily as it had done over the land. John’s horse, which had carried him so well, sank down from fatigue, and the little soldier sat sadly on the shore, watching the coach which was fast disappearing on the horizon.

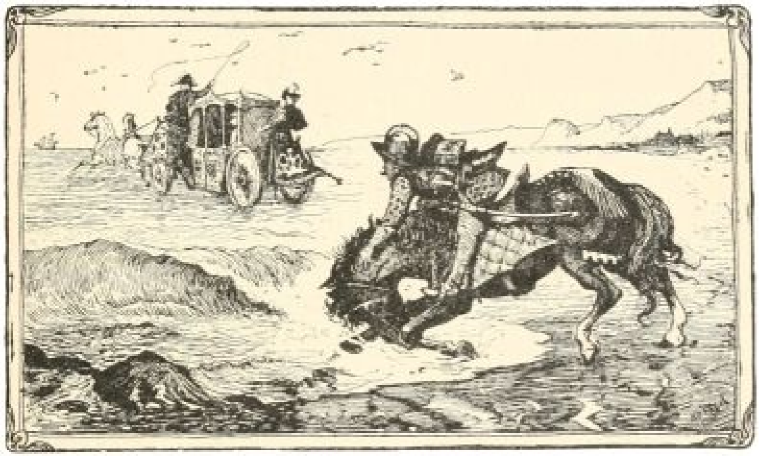

III

However, he soon plucked up his spirits again, and walked along the beach to try and find a boat in which he could sail after the Princess. But no boat was there, and at last, tired and hungry, he sat down to rest on the steps of a fisherman's hut.

In the hut was a young girl who was mending a net. She invited John to come in, and set before him some wine and fried fish, and John ate and drank and felt comforted, and he told his adventures to the little fisher-girl. But though she was very pretty, with a skin as white as a gull's breast, for which her neighbours gave her the name of the Seagull, he did not think about her at all, for he was dreaming of the green eyes of the Princess.

When he had finished his tale, she was filled with pity and said:

'Last week, when I was fishing, my net suddenly grew very heavy, and when I drew it in I found a great copper vase, fastened with lead. I brought it home and placed it on the fire. When the lead had melted a little, I opened the vase with my knife and drew out a mantle of red cloth and a purse containing fifty crowns. That is the mantle, covering my bed, and I have kept the money for my marriage-portion. But take it and go to the nearest seaport, where you will find a ship sailing for the Low Countries, and when you become King you will bring me back my fifty crowns.'

And the Kinglet answered: 'When I am King of the Low Countries, I will make you lady-in-waiting to the Queen, for you are as good as you are beautiful. So farewell,' said he, and as the Seagull went back to her fishing he rolled himself in the mantle and threw himself down on a heap of dried grass, thinking of the strange things that had befallen him, till he suddenly exclaimed:

'Oh, how I wish I was in the capital of the Low Countries!'

IV

In one moment the little soldier found himself standing before a splendid palace. He rubbed his eyes and pinched himself, and when he was quite sure he was not dreaming he said to a man who was smoking his pipe before the door, 'Where am I?'

'Where are you? Can't you see? Before the King's palace, of course.'

'What King?'

'Why the King of the Low Countries!' replied the man, laughing and supposing that he was mad.

Was there ever anything so strange? But as John was an honest fellow, he was troubled at the thought that the Seagull would think he had stolen her mantle and purse. And he began to wonder how he could restore them to her the soonest. Then he remembered that the mantle had some hidden charm that enabled the bearer to transport himself at will from place to place, and in order to make sure of this he wished himself in the best inn of the town. In an instant he was there.

Enchanted with this discovery, he ordered supper, and as it was too late to visit the King that night he went to bed.

The next day, when he got up, he saw that all the houses were wreathed with flowers and covered with flags, and all the church bells were ringing. The little soldier inquired the meaning of all this noise, and was told that the Princess Ludovine, the King's beautiful daughter, had been found, and was about to make her triumphal entry. 'That will just suit me,' thought the Kinglet; 'I will stand at the door and see if she knows me.'

He had scarcely time to dress himself when the golden coach of Ludovine went by. She had a crown of gold upon her head, and the King and Queen sat by her side. By accident her eyes fell upon the little soldier, and she grew pale and turned away her head.

'Didn't she know me?' the little soldier asked himself, 'or was she angry because I missed our meetings?' and he followed the crowd till he got to the palace. When the royal party entered he told the guards that it was he who had delivered the Princess, and wished to speak to the King. But the more he talked the more they believed him mad and refused to let him pass.

The little soldier was furious. He felt that he needed his pipe to calm him, and he entered a tavern and ordered a pint of beer. 'It is this miserable soldier's helmet,' said he to himself. 'If I had only money enough I could look as splendid as the lords of the Court; but what is the good of thinking of that when I have only the remains of the Seagull's fifty crowns?'

He took out his purse to see what was left, and he found that there were still fifty crowns.

'The Seagull must have miscounted,' thought he, and he paid for his beer. Then he counted his money again, and there were still fifty crowns. He took away five and counted a third time, but there were still fifty. He emptied the purse altogether and then shut it; when he opened it the fifty crowns were still there!

Then a plan came into his head, and he determined to go at once to the Court tailor and coachbuilder.

He ordered the tailor to make him a mantle and vest of blue velvet embroidered with pearls, and the coachbuilder to make him a golden coach like the coach of the Princess Ludovine. If the tailor and the coachbuilder were quick he promised to pay them double.

A few days later the little soldier was driven through the city in his coach drawn by six white horses, and with four lacqueys richly dressed standing behind. Inside sat John, clad in blue velvet, with a bouquet of immortelles in his hand and a scarf bound round his arm. He drove twice round the city, throwing money to the right and left, and the third time, as he passed under the palace windows, he saw Ludovine lift a corner of the curtain and peep out.

V

The next day no one talked of anything but the rich lord who had distributed money as he drove along. The talk even reached the Court, and the Queen, who was very curious, had a great desire to see the wonderful Prince.

‘Very well,’ said the King; ‘let him be asked to come and play cards with me.’

This time the Kinglet was not late for his appointment.

The King sent for the cards and they sat down to play. They had six games, and John always lost. The stake was fifty crowns, and each time he emptied his purse, which was full the next instant.

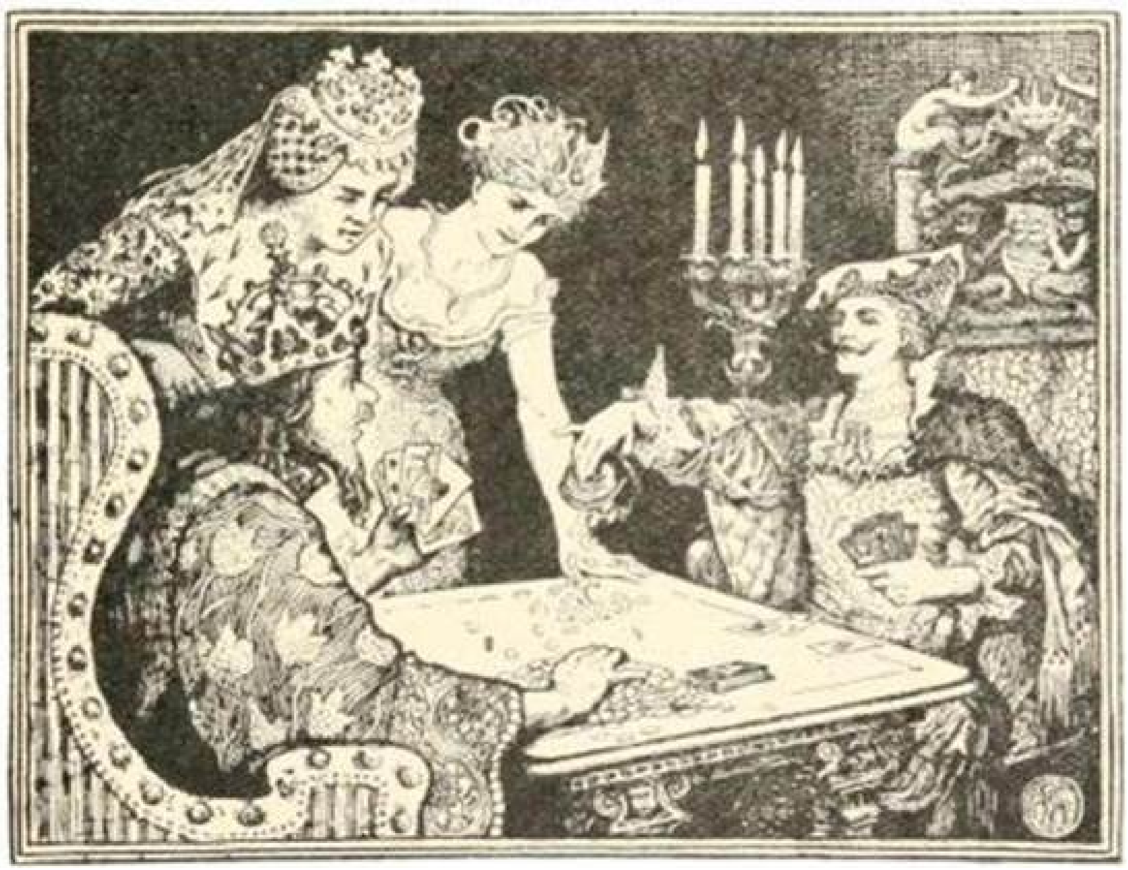

The sixth time the King exclaimed, ‘It is amazing!’

The Queen cried, ‘It is astonishing!’

The Princess said, ‘It is bewildering!’

‘Not so bewildering,’ replied the little soldier, ‘as your change into a serpent.’

‘Hush!’ interrupted the King, who did not like the subject.

‘I only spoke of it,’ said John, ‘because you see in me the man who delivered the Princess from the goblins and whom she promised to marry.’

‘Is that true?’ asked the King of the Princess.

‘Quite true,’ answered Ludovine. ‘But I told my deliverer to be ready to go with me when I passed by with my coach. I passed three times, but he slept so soundly that no one could wake him.’

‘What is your name?’ said the King, ‘and who are you?’

‘My name is John. I am a soldier, and my father is a boatman.’

‘You are not a fit husband for my daughter. Still, if you will give us your purse, you shall have her for your wife.’

‘My purse does not belong to me, and I cannot give it away.’

‘But you can lend it to me till our wedding-day,’ said the Princess with one of those glances the little soldier never could resist.

‘And when will that be?’

‘At Easter,’ said the monarch.

‘Or in a blue moon!’ murmured the Princess; but the Kinglet did not hear her and let her take his purse.

Next evening he presented himself at the palace to play picquet with the King and to make his court to the Princess. But he was told that the King had gone into the country to receive his rents. He returned the following day, and had the same answer. Then he asked to see the Queen, but she had a headache. When this had happened five or six times, he began to understand that they were making fun of him.

‘That is not the way for a King to behave,’ thought John. ‘Old scoundrel!’ and then suddenly he remembered his red cloak.

‘Ah, what an idiot I am!’ said he. ‘Of course I can get in whenever I like with the help of this.’

That evening he was in front of the palace, wrapped in his red cloak.

On the first story one window was lighted, and John saw on the curtains the shadow of the Princess.

‘I wish myself in the room of the Princess Ludovine,’ said he, and in a second he was there.

The King’s daughter was sitting before a table counting the money that she emptied from the inexhaustible purse.

‘Eight hundred and fifty, nine hundred, nine hundred and fifty — —’

‘A thousand,’ finished John. ‘Good evening everybody!’

The Princess jumped and gave a little cry. ‘*You* here! What business have you to do it? Leave at once, or I shall call — —’

‘I have come,’ said the Kinglet, ‘to remind you of your promise. The day after to-morrow is Easter Day, and it is high time to think of our marriage.’

Ludovine burst out into a fit of laughter. ‘Our marriage! Have you really been foolish enough to believe that the daughter of the King of the Low Countries would ever marry the son of a boatman?’

‘Then give me back the purse,’ said John.

‘Never,’ said the Princess, and put it calmly in her pocket.

‘As you like,’ said the little soldier. ‘He laughs best who laughs the last;’ and he took the Princess in his arms. ‘I wish,’ he cried, ‘that we were at the ends of the earth;’ and in one second he was there, still clasping the Princess tightly in his arms.

‘Ouf,’ said John, laying her gently at the foot of a tree. ‘I never took such a long journey before. What do you say, madam?’ The Princess understood that it was no time for jesting, and did not answer. Besides she was still feeling giddy from her rapid flight, and had not yet collected her senses.

VI

The King of the Low Countries was not a very scrupulous person, and his daughter took after him. This was why she had been changed into a serpent. It had been prophesied that she should be delivered by a little soldier, and that she must marry him, unless he failed to appear at the meeting-place three times running. The cunning Princess then laid her plans accordingly.

The wine that she had given to John in the castle of the goblins, the bouquet of immortelles, and the scarf, all had the power of producing sleep like death. And we know how they had acted on John.

However, even in this critical moment, Ludovine did not lose her head.

‘I thought you were simply a street vagabond,’ said she, in her most coaxing voice; ‘and I find you are more powerful than any king. Here is your purse. Have you got my scarf and my bouquet?’

‘Here they are,’ said the Kinglet, delighted with this change of tone, and he drew them from his bosom. Ludovine fastened one in his button-hole and the other round his arm. ‘Now,’ she said, ‘you are my lord and master, and I will marry you at your good pleasure.’

‘You are kinder than I thought,’ said John; ‘and you shall never be unhappy, for I love you.’

‘Then, my little husband, tell me how you managed to carry me so quickly to the ends of the world.’

The little soldier scratched his head. ‘Does she really mean to marry me,’ he thought to himself, ‘or is she only trying to deceive me again?’

But Ludovine repeated, ‘Won’t you tell me?’ in such a tender voice he did not know how to resist her.

‘After all,’ he said to himself, ‘what does it matter telling her the secret, as long as I don’t give her the cloak.’

And he told her the virtue of the red mantle.

‘Oh dear, how tired I am!’ sighed Ludovine. ‘Don’t you think we had better take a nap? And then we can talk over our plans.’

She stretched herself on the grass, and the Kinglet did the same. He laid his head on his left arm, round which the scarf was tied, and was soon fast asleep.

Ludovine was watching him out of one eye, and no sooner did she hear him snore than she unfastened the mantle, drew it gently from under him and wrapped it round her, took the purse from his pocket, and put it in hers, and said: ‘I wish I was back in my own room.’ In another moment she was there.

VII

Who felt foolish but John, when he awoke, twenty-four hours after, and found himself without purse, without mantle, and without Princess? He tore his hair, he beat his breast, he trampled on the bouquet, and tore the scarf of the traitress to atoms.

Besides this he was very hungry, and he had nothing to eat.

He thought of all the wonderful things his grandmother had told him when he was a child, but none of them helped him now. He was in despair, when suddenly he looked up and saw that the tree under which he had been sleeping was a superb plum, covered with fruit as yellow as gold.

‘Here goes for the plums,’ he said to himself, ‘all is fair in war.’

He climbed the tree and began to eat steadily. But he had hardly swallowed two plums when, to his horror, he felt as if something was growing on his forehead. He put up his hand and found that he had two horns!

He leapt down from the tree and rushed to a stream that flowed close by. Alas! there was no escape: two charming little horns, that would not have disgraced the head of a goat.

Then his courage failed him.

‘As if it was not enough,’ said he, ‘that a woman should trick me, but the devil must mix himself up in it and lend me his horns. What a pretty figure I should cut if I went back into the world!’

But as he was still hungry, and the mischief was done, he climbed boldly up another tree, and plucked two plums of a lovely green colour. No sooner had he swallowed two than the horns disappeared. The little soldier was enchanted, though greatly surprised, and came to the conclusion that it was no good to despair too quickly. When he had done eating an idea suddenly occurred to him.

‘Perhaps,’ thought he, ‘these pretty little plums may help me to recover my purse, my cloak, and my heart from the hands of this wicked Princess. She has the eyes of a deer already; let her have the horns of one. If I can manage to set her up with a pair, I will bet any money that I shall cease to want her for my wife. A horned maiden is by no means lovely to look at.’ So he plaited a basket out of the long willows, and placed in it carefully both sorts of plums. Then he walked bravely on for many days, having no food but the berries by the wayside, and was in great danger from wild beasts and savage men. But he feared nothing, except that his plums should decay, and this never happened.

At last he came to a civilised country, and with the sale of some jewels that he had about him on the evening of his flight he took passage on board a vessel for the Low Countries. So, at the end of a year and a day, he arrived at the capital of the kingdom.

VIII

The next day he put on a false beard and the dress of a date merchant, and, taking a little table, he placed himself before the door of the church.

He spread carefully out on a fine white cloth his Mirabelle plums, which looked for all the world as if they had been freshly gathered, and when he saw the Princess coming out of church he began to call out in a feigned voice: ‘Fine plums! lovely plums!’

‘How much are they?’ said the Princess.

‘Fifty crowns each.’

‘Fifty crowns! But what is there so very precious about them? Do they give one wit, or will they increase one’s beauty?’

‘They could not increase what is perfect already, fair Princess, but still they might add something.’

Rolling stones gather no moss, but they sometimes gain polish; and the months which John had spent in roaming about the world had not been wasted. Such a neatly turned compliment flattered Ludovine.

‘What will they add?’ she smilingly asked.

‘You will see, fair Princess, when you taste them. It will be a surprise for you.’

Ludovine’s curiosity was roused. She drew out the purse and shook out as many little heaps of fifty crowns as there were plums in the basket. The little soldier was seized with a wild desire to snatch the purse from her and proclaim her a thief, but he managed to control himself.

His plums all sold, he shut up shop, took off his disguise, changed his inn, and kept quiet, waiting to see what would happen.

No sooner had she reached her room than the Princess exclaimed, ‘Now let us see what these fine plums can add to my beauty,’ and throwing off her hood, she picked up a couple and ate them.

Imagine with what surprise and horror she felt all of a sudden that something was growing out of her forehead. She flew to her mirror and uttered a piercing cry.

‘Horns! so that was what he promised me! Let someone find the plum-seller at once and bring him to me! Let his nose and ears be cut off! Let him be flayed alive, or burnt at a slow fire and his ashes scattered to the winds! Oh, I shall die of shame and despair!’

Her women ran at the sound of her screams, and tried to wrench off the horns, but it was of no use, and they only gave her a violent headache.

The King then sent round a herald to proclaim that he would give the hand of the Princess to anyone who would rid her of her strange ornaments. So all the doctors and sorcerers and surgeons in the Low Countries and the neighbouring kingdoms thronged to the palace, each with a remedy of his own. But it was all no good, and the Princess suffered so much from their remedies that the King was obliged to send out a second proclamation that anyone who undertook to cure the Princess, and who failed to do it, should be hanged up to the nearest tree.

But the prize was too great for any proclamation to put a stop to the efforts of the crowd of suitors, and that year the orchards of the Low Countries all bore a harvest of dead men.

IX

The King had given orders that they should seek high and low for the plum-seller, but in spite of all their pains, he was nowhere to be found.

When the little soldier discovered that their patience was worn out, he pressed the juice of the green Queen Claude plums into a small phial, bought a doctor’s robe, put on a wig and spectacles, and presented himself before the King of the Low Countries. He gave himself out as a famous physician who had come from distant lands, and he promised that he would cure the Princess if only he might be left alone with her.

‘Another madman determined to be hanged,’ said the King. ‘Very well, do as he asks; one should refuse nothing to a man with a rope round his neck.’

As soon as the little soldier was in the presence of the Princess he poured some drops of the liquid into a glass. The Princess had scarcely tasted it, when the tip of the horns disappeared.

‘They would have disappeared completely,’ said the pretended doctor, ‘if there did not exist something to counteract the effect. It is only possible to cure people whose souls are as clean as the palm of my hand. Are you sure you have not committed some little sin? Examine yourself well.’

Ludovine had no need to think over it long, but she was torn in pieces between the shame of a humiliating confession, and the desire to be unhorned. At last she made answer with downcast eyes,

‘I have stolen a leather purse from a little soldier.’

‘Give it to me. The remedy will not act till I hold the purse in my hands.’

It cost Ludovine a great pang to give up the purse, but she remembered that riches would not benefit her if she was still to keep the horns.

With a sigh, she handed the purse to the doctor, who poured more of the liquid into the glass, and when the Princess had drunk it, she found that the horns had diminished by one half.

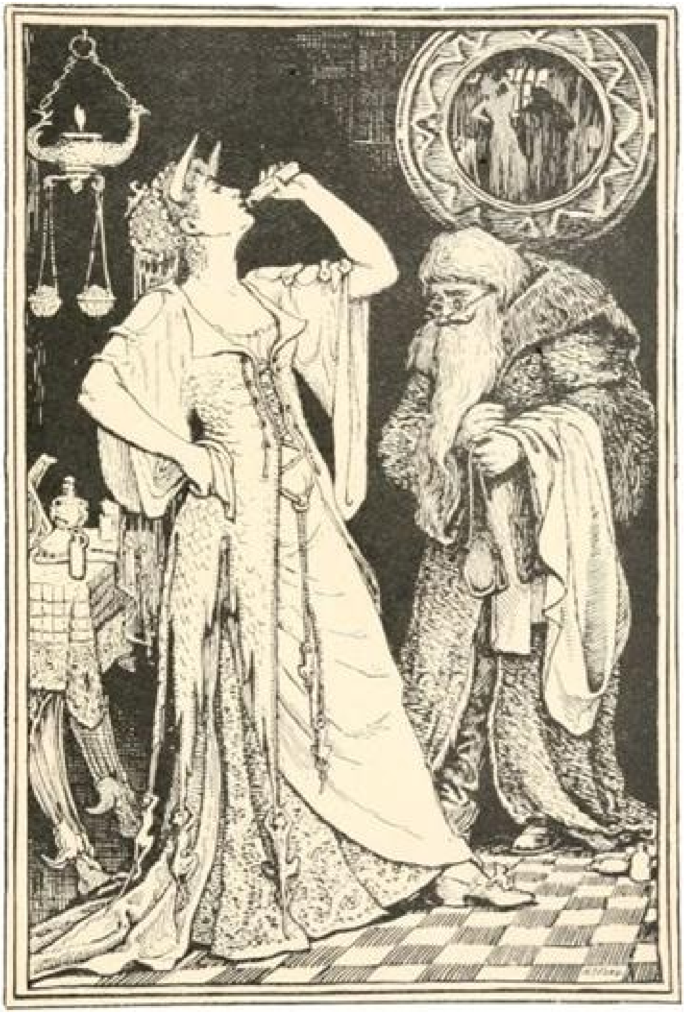

THE PRINCESS DRINKS THE PHIAL TO TAKE AWAY THE HORNS

‘You must really have another little sin on your conscience. Did you steal nothing from this soldier but his purse?’

‘I also stole from him his cloak.’

‘Give it me.’

‘Here it is.’

This time Ludovine thought to herself that when once the horns had departed, she would call her attendants and take the things from the doctor by force.

She was greatly pleased with this idea, when suddenly the pretended physician wrapped himself in the cloak, flung away the wig and spectacles, and showed to the traitress the face of the Little Soldier.

She stood before him dumb with fright.

‘I might,’ said John, ‘have left you horned to the end of your days, but I am a good fellow and I once loved you, and besides — you are too like the devil to have any need of his horns.’

X

John had wished himself in the house of the Seagull. Now the Seagull was seated at the window, mending her net, and from time to time her eyes wandered to the sea as if she was expecting someone. At the noise made by the little soldier, she looked up and blushed.

‘So it is you!’ she said. ‘How did you get here?’ And then she added in a low voice, ‘And have you married your Princess?’

Then John told her all his adventures, and when he had finished, he restored to her the purse and the mantle.

‘What can I do with them?’ said she. ‘You have proved to me that happiness does not lie in the possession of treasures.’

‘It lies in work and in the love of an honest women,’ replied the little soldier, who noticed for the first time what pretty eyes she had. ‘Dear Seagull, will you have me for a husband?’ and he held out his hand.

‘Yes, I will,’ answered the fisher maiden, blushing very red, ‘but only on condition that we seal up the purse and the mantle in the copper vessel and throw them into the sea.’

And this they did.

Charles Deulin.

THE MAGIC SWAN

There were once upon a time three brothers, of whom the eldest was called Jacob, the second Frederick, and the youngest Peter. This youngest brother was made a regular butt of by the other two, and they treated him shamefully. If anything went wrong with their affairs, Peter had to bear the blame and put things right for them, and he had to endure all this ill-treatment because he was weak and delicate and couldn’t defend himself against his stronger brothers. The poor creature had a most trying life of it in every way, and day and night he pondered how he could make it better. One day, when he was in the wood gathering sticks and crying bitterly, a little old woman came up to him and asked him what was the matter; and he told her all his troubles.

‘Come, my good youth,’ said the old dame, when he had finished his tale of woe, ‘isn’t the world wide enough? Why don’t you set out and try your fortune somewhere else?’

Peter took her words to heart, and left his father’s house early one morning to try his fortune in the wide world, as the old woman had advised him. But he felt very bitterly parting from the home where he had been born, and where he had at least passed a short but happy childhood, and sitting down on a hill he gazed once more fondly on his native place.

Suddenly the little old woman stood before him, and, tapping him on the shoulder, said, ‘So far good, my boy; but what do you mean to do now?’

Peter was at a loss what to answer, for so far he had always thought that fortune would drop into his mouth like a ripe cherry. The old woman, who guessed his thoughts, laughed kindly and said, ‘I’ll tell you what you must do, for I’ve taken a fancy to you, and I’m sure you won’t forget me when you’ve made your fortune.’

Peter promised faithfully he wouldn’t, and the old woman continued:

‘This evening at sunset go to yonder pear-tree which you see growing at the cross roads. Underneath it you will find a man lying asleep, and a beautiful large swan will be fastened to the tree close to him. You must be careful not to waken the man, but you must unfasten the swan and take it away with you. You will find that everyone will fall in love with its beautiful plumage, and you must allow anyone who likes to pull out a feather. But as soon as the swan feels as much as a finger on it, it will scream out, and then you must say, “Swan, hold fast.” Then the hand of the person who has touched the bird will be held as in a vice, and nothing will set it free, unless you touch it with this little stick which I will make you a present of. When you have captured a whole lot of people in this way, lead your train straight on with you; you will come to a big town where a Princess lives who has never been known to laugh. If you can only make her laugh your fortune is made; then I beg you won’t forget your old friend.’

Peter promised again that he wouldn’t, and at sunset he went to the tree the old woman had mentioned. The man lay there fast asleep, and a large beautiful swan was fastened to the tree beside him by a red cord. Peter loosed the bird, and led it away with him without disturbing the bird’s master.

He walked on with the swan for some time, and came at last to a building-yard where some men were busily at work. They were all lost in admiration of the bird’s beautiful plumage, and one forward youth, who was covered with clay from head to foot, called out, ‘Oh, if I’d only one of those feathers how happy I should be!’

‘Pull one out then,’ said Peter kindly, and the youth seized one from the bird’s tail; instantly the swan screamed, and Peter called out, ‘Swan, hold fast,’ and do what he could the poor youth couldn’t get his hand away. The more he howled the more the others laughed, till a girl who had been washing clothes in the neighbouring stream hurried up to see what was the matter. When she saw the poor boy fastened to the swan she felt so sorry for him that she stretched out her hand to free him. The bird screamed.

‘Swan, hold fast,’ called out Peter, and the girl was caught also.

When Peter had gone on for a bit with his captives, they met a chimney sweep, who laughed loudly over the extraordinary troop, and asked the girl what she was doing.

‘Oh, dearest John,’ replied the girl, ‘give me your hand and set me free from this cursed young man.’

‘Most certainly I will, if that’s all you want,’ replied the sweep, and gave the girl his hand. The bird screamed.

‘Swan, hold fast,’ said Peter, and the black man was added to their number.

They soon came to a village where a fair was being held. A travelling circus was giving a performance, and the clown was just doing his tricks. He opened his eyes wide with amazement when he saw the remarkable trio fastened on to the swan’s tail.

‘Have you gone raving mad, Blackie?’ he asked as well as he could for laughing.

‘It’s no laughing matter,’ the sweep replied. ‘This wench has got so tight hold of me that I feel as if I were glued to her. Do set me free, like a good clown, and I’ll do you a good turn some day.’

Without a moment’s hesitation the clown grasped the black outstretched hand. The bird screamed.

‘Swan, hold fast,’ called out Peter, and the clown became the fourth of the party.

Now in the front row of the spectators sat the respected and popular Mayor of the village, who was much put out by what he considered nothing but a foolish trick. So much annoyed was he that he seized the clown by the hand and tried to tear him away, in order to hand him over to the police.

Then the bird screamed, and Peter called out, ‘Swan, hold fast,’ and the dignified Mayor shared the fate of his predecessors.

The Mayoress, a long thin stick of a woman, enraged at the insult done to her husband, seized his free arm and tore at it with all her might, with the only result that she too was forced to swell the procession. After this no one else had any wish to join them.

Soon Peter saw the towers of the capital in front of him. Just before entering it, a glittering carriage came out to meet him, in which was seated a young lady as beautiful as the day, but with a very solemn and serious expression. But no sooner had she perceived the motley crowd fastened to the swan’s tail than she burst into a loud fit of laughter, in which she was joined by all her servants and ladies in waiting.

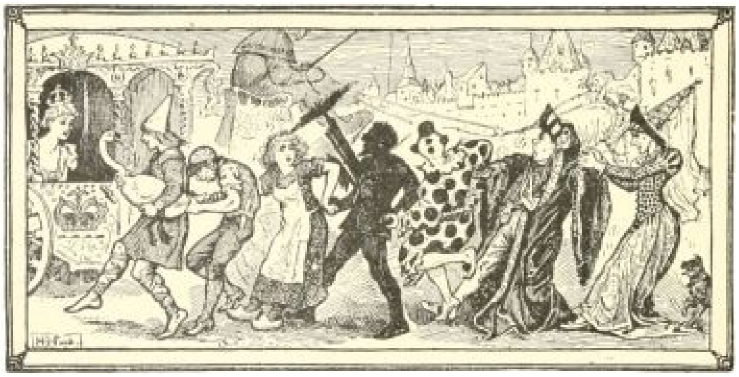

‘The Princess has laughed at last,’ they all cried with joy.

She stepped out of her carriage to look more closely at the wonderful sight, and laughed again over the capers the poor captives cut. She ordered her carriage to be turned round and drove slowly back into the town, never taking her eyes off Peter and his procession.

When the King heard the news that his daughter had actually laughed, he was more than delighted, and had Peter and his marvellous train brought before him. He laughed himself when he saw them till the tears rolled down his cheeks.

‘My good friend,’ he said to Peter, ‘do you know what I promised the person who succeeded in making the Princess laugh?’

‘No, I don’t,’ said Peter.

‘Then I’ll tell you,’ answered the King; ‘a thousand gold crowns or a piece of land. Which will you choose?’

Peter decided in favour of the land. Then he touched the youth, the girl, the sweep, the clown, the Mayor, and the Mayoress with his little stick, and they were all free again, and ran away home as if a fire were burning behind them; and their flight, as you may imagine, gave rise to renewed merriment.

Then the Princess felt moved to stroke the swan, at the same time admiring its plumage. The bird screamed.

‘Swan, hold fast,’ called out Peter, and so he won the Princess for his bride. But the swan flew up into the air, and vanished in the blue horizon. Peter now received a duchy as a present, and became a very great man indeed; but he did not forget the little old woman who had been the cause of all his good fortune, and appointed her as head housekeeper to him and his royal bride in their magnificent castle.

Kletke.

THE DIRTY SHEPHERDESS

Once upon a time there lived a King who had two daughters, and he loved them with all his heart. When they grew up, he was suddenly seized with a wish to know if they, on their part, truly loved him, and he made up his mind that he would give his kingdom to whichever best proved her devotion.

So he called the elder Princess and said to her, ‘How much do you love me?’

‘As the apple of my eye!’ answered she.

‘Ah!’ exclaimed the King, kissing her tenderly as he spoke, ‘you are indeed a good daughter.’

Then he sent for the younger, and asked her how much she loved him.

‘I look upon you, my father,’ she answered, ‘as I look upon salt in my food.’

But the King did not like her words, and ordered her to quit the Court, and never again to appear before him. The poor Princess went sadly up to her room and began to cry, but when she was reminded of her father’s commands, she dried her eyes, and made a bundle of her jewels and her best dresses and hurriedly left the castle where she was born.

She walked straight along the road in front of her, without knowing very well where she was going or what was to become of her, for she had never been shown how to work, and all she had learnt consisted of a few household rules, and receipts of dishes which her mother had taught her long ago. And as she was afraid that no housewife would want to engage a girl with such a pretty face, she determined to make herself as ugly as she could.

She therefore took off the dress that she was wearing and put on some horrible old rags belonging to a beggar, all torn and covered with mud. After that she smeared mud all over her hands and face, and shook her hair into a great tangle. Having thus changed her appearance, she went about offering herself as a goose-girl or shepherdess. But the farmers’ wives would have nothing to say to such a dirty maiden, and sent her away with a morsel of bread for charity’s sake.

After walking for a great many days without being able to find any work, she came to a large farm where they were in want of a shepherdess, and engaged her gladly.

One day when she was keeping her sheep in a lonely tract of land, she suddenly felt a wish to dress herself in her robes of splendour. She washed herself carefully in the stream, and as she always carried her bundle with her, it was easy to shake off her rags, and transform herself in a few moments into a great lady.

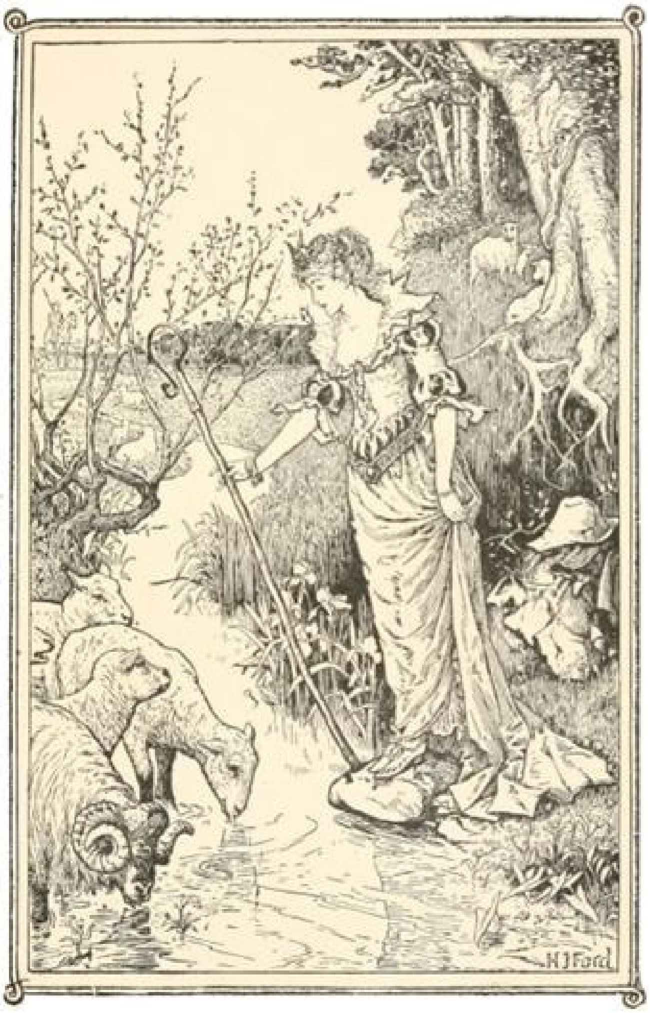

The King’s son, who had lost his way out hunting, perceived this lovely damsel a long way off, and wished to look at her closer. But as soon as the girl saw what he was at, she fled into the wood as swiftly as a bird. The Prince ran after her, but as he was running he caught his foot in the root of a tree and fell, and when he got up again, she was nowhere to be seen.

When she was quite safe, she put on her rags again, and smeared over her face and hands. However the young Prince, who was both hot and thirsty, found his way to the farm, to ask for a drink of cider, and he inquired the name of the beautiful lady that kept the sheep. At this everyone began to laugh, for they said that the shepherdess was one of the ugliest and dirtiest creatures under the sun.

The Prince thought some witchcraft must be at work, and he hastened away before the return of the shepherdess, who became that evening the butt of everybody’s jests.

But the King’s son thought often of the lovely maiden whom he had only seen for a moment, though she seemed to him much more fascinating than any lady of the Court. At last he dreamed of nothing else, and grew thinner day by day till his parents inquired what was the matter, promising to do all they could to make him as happy as he once was. He dared not tell them the truth, lest they should laugh at him, so he only said that he should like some bread baked by the kitchen girl in the distant farm.

Although the wish appeared rather odd, they hastened to fulfil it, and the farmer was told the request of the King’s son. The maiden showed no surprise at receiving such an order, but merely asked for some flour, salt, and water, and also that she might be left alone in a little room adjoining the oven, where the kneading-trough stood. Before beginning her work she washed herself carefully, and even put on her rings; but, while she was baking, one of her rings slid into the dough. When she had finished she dirtied herself again, and let lumps of the dough stick to her fingers, so that she became as ugly as before.

The loaf, which was a very little one, was brought to the King’s son, who ate it with pleasure. But in cutting it he found the ring of the Princess, and declared to his parents that he would marry the girl whom that ring fitted.

So the King made a proclamation through his whole kingdom, and ladies came from afar to lay claim to the honour. But the ring was so tiny that even those who had the smallest hands could only get it on their little fingers. In a short time all the maidens of the kingdom, including the peasant girls, had tried on the ring, and the King was just about to announce that their efforts had been in vain, when the Prince observed that he had not yet seen the shepherdess.

They sent to fetch her, and she arrived covered with rags, but with her hands cleaner than usual, so that she could easily slip on the ring. The King’s son declared that he would fulfil his promise, and when his parents mildly remarked that the girl was only a keeper of sheep, and a very ugly one too, the maiden boldly said that she was born a princess, and that, if they would only give her some water and leave her alone in a room for a few minutes, she would show that she could look as well as anyone in fine clothes.

They did what she asked, and when she entered in a magnificent dress, she looked so beautiful that all saw she must be a princess in disguise. The King’s son recognised the charming damsel of whom he had once caught a glimpse, and, flinging himself at her feet, asked if she would marry him. The Princess then told her story, and said that it would be necessary to send an ambassador to her father to ask his consent and to invite him to the wedding.

The Princess’s father, who had never ceased to repent his harshness towards his daughter, had sought her through the land, but as no one could tell him anything of her, he supposed her dead. Therefore it was with great joy he heard that she was living and that a king’s son asked her in marriage, and he quitted his kingdom with his elder daughter so as to be present at the ceremony.

By the orders of the bride, they only served her father at the wedding breakfast bread without salt, and meat without seasoning. Seeing him make faces, and eat very little, his daughter, who sat beside him, inquired if his dinner was not to his taste.

‘No,’ he replied, ‘the dishes are carefully cooked and sent up, but they are all so dreadfully tasteless.’

‘Did not I tell you, my father, that salt was the best thing in life? And yet, when I compared you to salt, to show how much I loved you, you thought slightingly of me and you chased me from your presence.’

The King embraced his daughter, and allowed that he had been wrong to misinterpret her words. Then, for the rest of the wedding feast they gave him bread made with salt, and dishes with seasoning, and he said they were the very best he had ever eaten.

Sébillot.

THE ENCHANTED SNAKE

There was once upon a time a poor woman who would have given all she possessed for a child, but she hadn’t one.

Now it happened one day that her husband went to the wood to collect brushwood, and when he had brought it home, he discovered a pretty little snake among the twigs.

When Sabatella, for that was the name of the peasant’s wife, saw the little beast, she sighed deeply and said, ‘Even the snakes have their brood; I alone am unfortunate and have no children.’ No sooner had she said these words than, to her intense surprise, the little snake looked up into her face and spoke: ‘Since you have no children, be a mother to me instead, and I promise you will never repent it, for I will love you as if I were your own son.’

At first Sabatella was frightened to death at hearing a snake speak, but plucking up her courage, she replied, ‘If it weren’t for any other reason than your kindly thought, I would agree to what you say, and I will love you and look after you like a mother.’

So she gave the snake a little hole in the house for its bed, fed it with all the nicest food she could think of, and seemed as if she never could show it enough kindness. Day by day it grew bigger and fatter, and at last one morning it said to Cola-Mattheo, the peasant, whom it always regarded as its father, ‘Dear papa, I am now of a suitable age and wish to marry.’

‘I’m quite agreeable,’ answered Mattheo, ‘and I’ll do my best to find another snake like yourself and arrange a match between you.’

‘Why, if you do that,’ replied the snake, ‘we shall be no better than the vipers and reptiles, and that’s not what I want at all. No; I’d much prefer to marry the King’s daughter; therefore I pray you go without further delay, and demand an audience of the King, and tell him a snake wishes to marry his daughter.’

Cola-Mattheo, who was rather a simpleton, went as he was desired to the King, and having obtained an audience, he said, ‘Your Majesty, I have often heard that people lose nothing by asking, so I have come to inform you that a snake wants to marry your daughter, and I’d be glad to know if you are willing to mate a dove with a serpent?’

The King, who saw at once that the man was a fool, said, in order to get quit of him, ‘Go home and tell your friend the snake that if he can turn this palace into ivory, inlaid with gold and silver, before to-morrow at noon, I will let him marry my daughter.’ And with a hearty laugh he dismissed the peasant.

When Cola-Mattheo brought this answer back to the snake, the little creature didn’t seem the least put out, but said, ‘To-morrow morning, before sunrise, you must go to the wood and gather a bunch of green herbs, and then rub the threshold of the palace with them, and you’ll see what will happen.’

Cola-Mattheo, who was, as I have said before, a great simpleton, made no reply; but before sunrise next morning he went to the wood and gathered a bunch of St. John’s Wort, and rosemary, and suchlike herbs, and rubbed them, as he had been told, on the floor of the palace. Hardly had he done so than the walls immediately turned into ivory, so richly inlaid with gold and silver that they dazzled the eyes of all beholders. The King, when he rose and saw the miracle that had been performed, was beside himself with amazement, and didn’t know what in the world he was to do.

But when Cola-Mattheo came next day, and, in the name of the snake, demanded the hand of the Princess, the King replied, ‘Don’t be in such a hurry; if the snake really wants to marry my daughter, he must do some more things first, and one of these is to turn all the paths and walls of my garden into pure gold before noon to-morrow.’

When the snake was told of this new condition, he replied, ‘To-morrow morning, early, you must go and collect all the odds and ends of rubbish you can find in the streets, and then take them and throw them on the paths and walls of the garden, and you’ll see then if we won’t be more than a match for the old King.’

So Cola-Mattheo rose at cock-crow, took a large basket under his arm, and carefully collected all the broken fragments of pots and pans, and jugs and lamps, and other trash of that sort. No sooner had he scattered them over the paths and walls of the King’s garden than they became one blaze of glittering gold, so that everyone’s eyes were dazzled with the brilliancy, and everyone’s soul was filled with wonder. The King, too, was amazed at the sight, but still he couldn’t make up his mind to part with his daughter, so when Cola-Mattheo came to remind him of his promise he replied, ‘I have still a third demand to make. If the snake can turn all the trees and fruit of my garden into precious stones, then I promise him my daughter in marriage.’

When the peasant informed the snake what the King had said, he replied, ‘To-morrow morning, early, you must go to the market and buy all the fruit you see there, and then sow all the stones and seeds in the palace garden, and, if I’m not mistaken, the King will be satisfied with the result.’

Cola-Mattheo rose at dawn, and taking a basket on his arm, he went to the market, and bought all the pomegranates, apricots, cherries, and other fruit he could find there, and sowed the seeds and stones in the palace garden. In one moment, the trees were all ablaze with rubies, emeralds, diamonds, and every other precious stone you can think of.

This time the King felt obliged to keep his promise, and calling his daughter to him, he said, ‘My dear Grannonia,’ for that was the Princess’s name, ‘more as a joke than anything else, I demanded what seemed to me impossibilities from your bridegroom, but now that he has done all I required, I am bound to stick to my part of the bargain. Be a good child, and as you love me, do not force me to break my word, but give yourself up with as good grace as you can to a most unhappy fate.’

‘Do with me what you like, my lord and father, for your will is my law,’ answered Grannonia.

When the King heard this, he told Cola-Mattheo to bring the snake to the palace, and said that he was prepared to receive the creature as his son-in-law.

The snake arrived at court in a carriage made of gold and drawn by six white elephants; but wherever it appeared on the way, the people fled in terror at the sight of the fearful reptile.

When the snake reached the palace, all the courtiers shook and trembled with fear down to the very scullion, and the King and Queen were in such a state of nervous collapse that they hid themselves in a far-away turret. Grannonia alone kept her presence of mind, and although both her father and mother implored her to fly for her life, she wouldn’t move a step, saying, ‘I’m certainly not going to fly from the man you have chosen for my husband.’

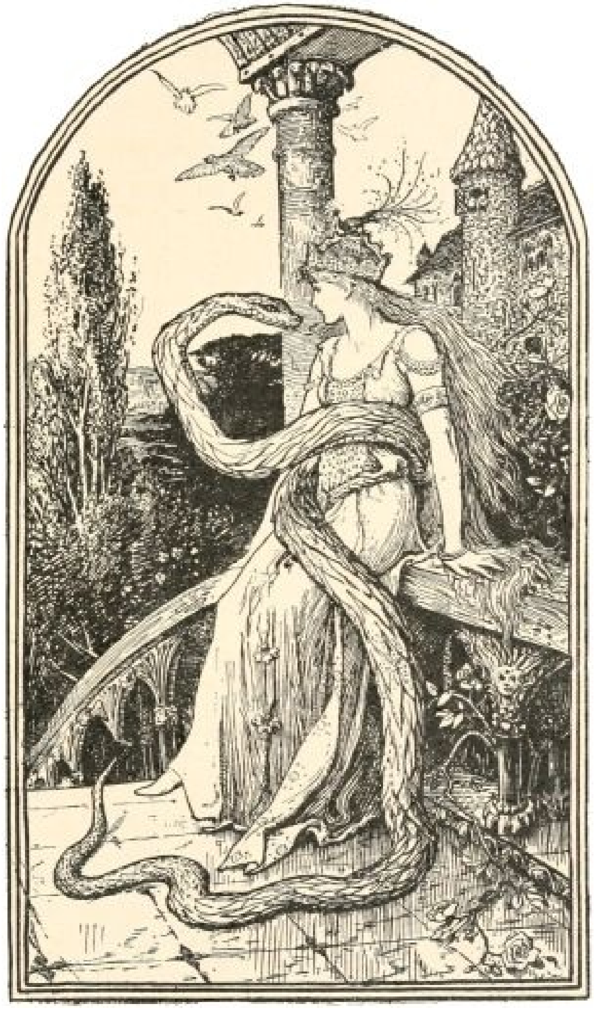

As soon as the snake saw Grannonia, it wound its tail round her and kissed her. Then, leading her into a room, it shut the door, and throwing off its skin, it changed into a beautiful young man with golden locks, and flashing eyes, who embraced Grannonia tenderly, and said all sorts of pretty things to her.

When the King saw the snake shut itself into a room with his daughter, he said to his wife, ‘Heaven be merciful to our child, for I fear it is all over with her now. This cursed snake has most likely swallowed her up.’ Then they put their eyes to the keyhole to see what had happened.

Their amazement knew no bounds when they saw a beautiful youth standing before their daughter with the snake’s skin lying on the floor beside him. In their excitement they burst open the door, and seizing the skin they threw it into the fire. But no sooner had they done this than the young man called out, ‘Oh, wretched people! what have you done?’ and before they had time to look round he had changed himself into a dove, and dashing against the window he broke a pane of glass, and flew away from their sight.

But Grannonia, who in one and the same moment saw herself merry and sad, cheerful and despairing, rich and beggared, complained bitterly over this robbery of her happiness, this poisoning of her cup of joy, this unlucky stroke of fortune, and laid all the blame on her parents, though they assured her that they had meant no harm. But the Princess refused to be comforted, and at night, when all the inhabitants of the palace were asleep, she stole out by a back door, disguised as a peasant woman, determined to seek for her lost happiness till she found it. When she got to the outskirts of the town, led by the light of the moon, she met a fox, who offered to accompany her, an offer which Grannonia gladly accepted, saying 'You are most heartily welcome, for I don't know my way at all about the neighbourhood.'

So they went on their way together, and came at last to a wood, where, being tired with walking, they paused to rest under the shade of a tree, where a spring of water sported with the tender grass, refreshing it with its crystal spray.

They laid themselves down on the green carpet and soon fell fast asleep, and did not waken again till the sun was high in the heavens. They rose up and stood for some time listening to the birds singing, because Grannonia delighted in their songs.

When the fox perceived this, he said: 'If you only understood, as I do, what these little birds are saying, your pleasure would be even greater.'

Provoked by his words — for we all know that curiosity is as deeply inborn in every woman as even the love of talking — Grannonia implored the fox to tell her what the birds had said.

At first the wily fox refused to tell her what he had gathered from the conversation of the birds, but at last he gave way to her entreaties, and told her that they had spoken of the misfortunes of a beautiful young Prince, whom a wicked enchantress had turned into a snake for the period of seven years. At the end of this time he had fallen in love with a charming Princess, but that when he had shut himself up into a room with her, and had thrown off his snake's skin, her parents had forced their way into the room and had burnt the skin, whereupon the Prince, changed into the likeness of a dove, had broken a pane of glass in trying to fly out of the window, and had wounded himself so badly that the doctors despaired of his life.

Grannonia, when she learnt that they were talking of her lover, asked at once whose son he was, and if there was any hope of his recovery; to which the fox made answer that the birds had said he was the son of the King of Vallone Grosso, and that the only thing that could cure him was to rub the wounds on his head with the blood of the very birds who had told the tale.

Then Grannonia knelt down before the fox, and begged him in her sweetest way to catch the birds for her and procure their blood, promising at the same time to reward him richly.

‘All right,’ said the fox, ‘only don’t be in such a hurry; let’s wait till night, when the little birds have gone to roost, then I’ll climb up and catch them all for you.’

So they passed the day, talking now of the beauty of the Prince, now of the father of the Princess, and then of the misfortune that had happened. At last the night arrived, and all the little birds were asleep high up on the branches of a big tree. The fox climbed up stealthily and caught the little creatures with his paws one after the other; and when he had killed them all he put their blood into a little bottle which he wore at his side, and returned with it to Grannonia, who was beside herself with joy at the result of the fox’s raid. But the fox said, ‘My dear daughter, your joy is in vain, because, let me tell you, this blood is of no earthly use to you unless you add some of mine to it,’ and with these words he took to his heels.

Grannonia, who saw her hopes dashed to the ground in this cruel way, had recourse to flattery and cunning, weapons which have often stood the sex in good stead, and called out after the fox, ‘Father Fox, you would be quite right to save your skin, if, in the first place, I didn’t feel I owed so much to you, and if, in the second, there weren’t other foxes in the world; but as you know how grateful I feel to you, and as there are heaps of other foxes about, you can trust yourself to me. Don’t behave like the cow that kicks the pail over after it has filled it with milk, but continue your journey with me, and when we get to the capital you can sell me to the King as a servant girl.’

It never entered the fox’s head that even foxes can be outwitted, so after a bit he consented to go with her; but he hadn’t gone far before the cunning girl seized a stick, and gave him such a blow with it on the head, that he dropped down dead on the spot. Then Grannonia took some of his blood and poured it into her little bottle, and went on her way as fast as she could to Vallone Grosso.

When she arrived there she went straight to the Royal palace, and let the King be told she had come to cure the young Prince.

The King commanded her to be brought before him at once, and was much astonished when he saw that it was a girl who undertook to do what all the cleverest doctors of his kingdom had failed in. As an attempt hurts no one, he willingly consented that she should do what she could.

‘All I ask,’ said Grannonia, ‘is that, should I succeed in what you desire, you will give me your son in marriage.’

The King, who had given up all hopes of his son’s recovery, replied: ‘Only restore him to life and health and he shall be yours. It is only fair to give her a husband who gives me a son.’

And so they went into the Prince’s room. The moment Grannonia had rubbed the blood on his wounds the illness left him, and he was as sound and well as ever. When the King saw his son thus marvellously restored to life and health, he turned to him and said: ‘My dear son, I thought of you as dead, and now, to my great joy and amazement, you are alive again. I promised this young woman that if she should cure you, to bestow your hand and heart on her, and seeing that Heaven has been gracious, you must fulfil the promise I made her; for gratitude alone forces me to pay this debt.’

But the Prince answered: ‘My lord and father, I would that my will were as free as my love for you is great. But as I have plighted my word to another maiden, you will see yourself, and so will this young woman, that I cannot go back from my word, and be faithless to her whom I love.’

When Grannonia heard these words, and saw how deeply rooted the Prince’s love for her was, she felt very happy, and blushing rosy red, she said: ‘But should I get the other lady to give up her rights, would you then consent to marry me?’

‘Far be it from me,’ replied the Prince, ‘to banish the beautiful picture of my love from my heart. Whatever she may say, my heart and desire will remain the same, and though I were to lose my life for it, I couldn’t consent to this exchange.’

Grannonia could keep silence no longer, and throwing off her peasant’s disguise, she discovered herself to the Prince, who was nearly beside himself with joy when he recognised his fair lady-love. He then told his father at once who she was, and what she had done and suffered for his sake.

Then they invited the King and Queen of Starza-Longa to their Court, and had a great wedding feast, and proved once more that there is no better seasoning for the joys of true love than a few pangs of grief.

Kletke.

THE BITER BIT

Once upon a time there lived a man called Simon, who was very rich, but at the same time as stingy and miserly as he could be. He had a housekeeper called Nina, a clever capable woman, and as she did her work carefully and conscientiously, her master had the greatest respect for her.

In his young days Simon had been one of the gayest and most active youths of the neighbourhood, but as he grew old and stiff he found it very difficult to walk, and his faithful servant urged him to get a horse so as to save his poor old bones. At last Simon gave way to the request and persuasive eloquence of his housekeeper, and betook himself one day to the market where he had seen a mule, which he thought would just suit him, and which he bought for seven gold pieces.

Now it happened that there were three merry rascals hanging about the market-place, who much preferred living on other people's goods to working for their own living. As soon as they saw that Simon had bought a mule, one of them said to his two boon companions, 'My friends, this mule must be ours before we are many hours older.'

'But how shall we manage it,' asked one of them.

'We must all three station ourselves at different intervals along the old man's homeward way, and must each in his turn declare that the mule he has bought is a donkey. If we only stick to it you'll see the mule will soon be ours.' This proposal quite satisfied the others, and they all separated as they had agreed.

Now when Simon came by, the first rogue said to him, 'God bless you, my fine gentleman.'

'Thanks for your courtesy,' replied Simon.

'Where have you been?' asked the thief.

'To the market,' was the reply.

'And what did you buy there?' continued the rogue.

'This mule.'

'Which mule?'

'The one I'm sitting upon, to be sure,' replied Simon.

'Are you in earnest, or only joking?'

'What do you mean?'

'Because it seems to me you've got hold of a donkey, and not of a mule.'

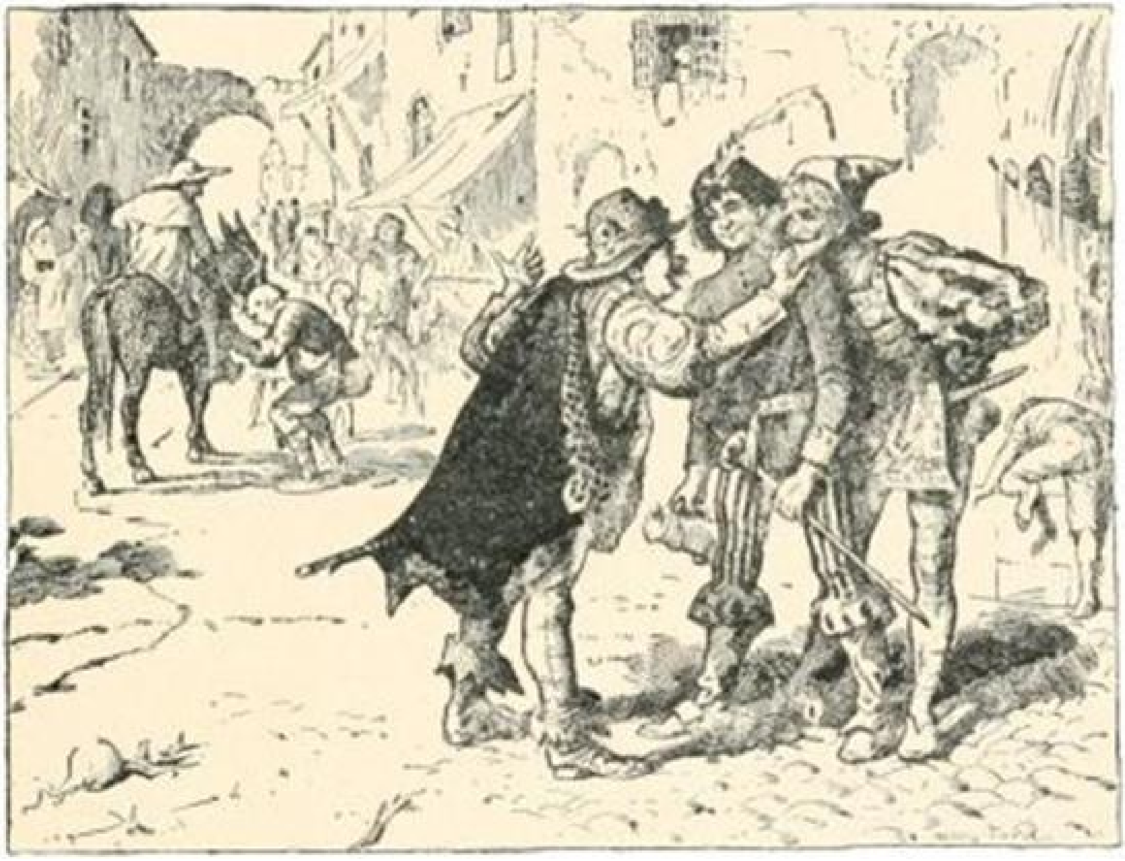

‘A donkey? Rubbish!’ screamed Simon, and without another word he rode on his way. After a few hundred yards he met the second confederate, who addressed him, ‘Good day, dear sir, where are you coming from?’

‘From the market,’ answered Simon.

‘Did things go pretty cheap?’ asked the other.

‘I should just think so,’ said Simon.

‘And did you make any good bargain yourself?’

‘I bought this mule on which you see me.’

‘Is it possible that you really bought that beast for a mule?’

‘Why certainly.’

‘But, good heavens, it’s nothing but a donkey!’

‘A donkey!’ repeated Simon, ‘you don’t mean to say so; if a single other person tells me that, I’ll make him a present of the wretched animal.’

With these words he continued his way, and very soon met the third knave, who said to him, ‘God bless you, sir; are you by any chance coming from the market?’

‘Yes, I am,’ replied Simon.

‘And what bargain did you drive there?’ asked the cunning fellow.

‘I bought this mule on which I am riding.’

‘A mule! Are you speaking seriously, or do you wish to make a fool of me?’

‘I’m speaking in sober earnest,’ said Simon; ‘it wouldn’t occur to me to make a joke of it.’

‘Oh, my poor friend,’ cried the rascal, ‘don’t you see that is a donkey and not a mule? you have been taken in by some wretched cheats.’

‘You are the third person in the last two hours who has told me the same thing,’ said Simon, ‘but I couldn’t believe it,’ and dismounting from the mule he spoke: ‘Keep the animal, I make you a present of it.’ The rascal took the beast, thanked him kindly, and rode on to join his comrades, while Simon continued his journey on foot.

As soon as the old man got home, he told his housekeeper that he had bought a beast under the belief that it was a mule, but that it had turned out to be a donkey — at least, so he had been assured by several people he had met on the road, and that in disgust he had at last given it away.

‘Oh, you simpleton!’ cried Nina; ‘didn’t you see that they were only playing you a trick? Really, I thought you’d have had more gumption than that; they wouldn’t have taken me in in that way.’

‘Never mind,’ replied Simon, ‘I’ll play them one worth two of that; for depend upon it they won’t be contented with having got the donkey out of me, but they’ll try by some new dodge to get something more, or I’m much mistaken.’

Now there lived in the village not far from Simon’s house, a peasant who had two goats, so alike in every respect that it was impossible to distinguish one from the other. Simon bought them both, paid as small a price as he could for them, and leading them home with him, he told Nina to prepare a good meal, as he was going to invite some friends to dinner. He ordered her to roast some veal, and to boil a pair of chickens, and gave her some herbs to make a good savoury, and told her to bake the best tart she could make. Then he took one of the goats and tied it to a post in the courtyard, and gave it some grass to eat; but he bound a cord round the neck of the other goat and led it to the market.

Hardly had he arrived there, than the three gentlemen who had got his mule perceived him, and coming up to him said: ‘Welcome, Mr. Simon, what brings you here; are you on the look out for a bargain?’

‘I’ve come to get some provisions,’ he answered, ‘because some friends are coming to dine with me to-day, and it would give me much pleasure if you were to honour me with your company also.’

The accomplices willingly accepted this invitation; and after Simon had made all his purchases, he tied them on to the goat’s back, and said to it, in the presence of the three cheats, ‘Go home now, and tell Nina to roast the veal, and boil the chickens, and tell her to prepare a savoury with herbs, and to bake the best tart she can make. Have you followed me? Then go, and Heaven's blessing go with you.'

As soon as it felt itself free, the laden goat trotted off as quickly as it could, and to this day nobody knows what became of it. But Simon, after wandering about the market for some time with his three friends and some others he had picked up, returned home to his house.

When he and his guests entered the courtyard, they noticed the goat tied to the post quietly chewing the cud. They were not a little astonished at this, for of course they thought it was the same goat that Simon had sent home laden with provisions. As soon as they reached the house Mr. Simon said to his housekeeper, 'Well, Nina, have you done what I told the goat to tell you to do?' The artful woman, who at once understood her master, answered, 'Certainly I have. The veal is roasted, and the chickens boiled.'

'That's all right,' said Simon.

When the three rogues saw the cooked meats, and the tart in the oven, and heard Nina's words, they were nearly beside themselves with amazement, and began to consult at once how they were to get the goat into their own possession. At last, towards the end of the meal, having sought in vain for some cunning dodge to get the goat away from Mr. Simon, one of them said to him, 'My worthy host, you must sell your goat to us.'

Simon replied that he was most unwilling to part with the creature, as no amount of money would make up to him for its loss; still, if they were quite set on it, he would let them have the goat for fifty gold pieces.

The knaves, who thought they were doing a capital piece of business, paid down the fifty gold pieces at once, and left the house quite happily, leading the goat with them. When they got home they said to their wives, 'You needn't begin to cook the dinner to-morrow till we send the provisions home.'

The following day they went to the market and bought chickens and other eatables, and after they had packed them on the back of the goat (which they had brought with them), they told it all the dishes they wished their wives to prepare. As soon as the goat felt itself free, it ran as quickly as it could, and was very soon lost to sight, and, as far as I know, was never heard of again.

When the dinner hour approached all three went home and asked their wives if the goat had returned with the necessary provisions, and had told them what they wished prepared for their meal.

'Oh, you fools and blockheads!' cried their wives, 'how could you ever believe for a moment that a goat would do the work of a servant-maid? You have been finely deceived for once in a way. Of course, if you are always taking in other people, your turn to be taken in comes too, and this time you've been made to look pretty foolish.’

When the three comrades saw that Mr. Simon had got the better of them, and done them out of fifty gold pieces, they flew into such a rage that they made up their minds to kill him, and, seizing their weapons for this purpose, went to his house.

But the sly old man, who was terrified for his life that the three rogues might do him some harm, was on his guard, and said to his housekeeper, ‘Nina, take this bladder, which is filled with blood, and hide it under your cloak; then when these thieves come I’ll lay all the blame on you, and will pretend to be so angry with you that I will run at you with my knife, and pierce the bladder with it; then you must fall on the ground as if you were dead, and leave the rest to me.’

Hardly had Simon said these words when the three rogues appeared and fell on him to kill him.

‘My friends,’ called out Simon to them, ‘what do you accuse me of? I am in no way to blame; perhaps my housekeeper has done you some injury of which I know nothing.’ And with these words, he turned on Nina with his knife, and stuck it right into her, so that he pierced the bladder filled with blood. Instantly the housekeeper fell down as if she were dead, and the blood streamed all over the ground.

Simon then pretended to be seized with remorse at the sight of this dreadful catastrophe, and cried out in a loud voice, ‘Unhappy wretch that I am! What have I done? Like a madman I have killed the woman who is the prop and stay of my old age. How could I ever go on living without her?’ Then he seized a pipe, and when he had blown into it for some time Nina sprang up alive and well.

The rogues were more amazed than ever; they forgot their anger, and buying the pipe for two hundred gold pieces, they went joyfully home.

Not long after this one of them quarrelled with his wife, and in his rage he thrust his knife into her breast so that she fell dead on the ground. Then he took Simon’s pipe and blew into it with all his might, in the hopes of calling his wife back to life. But he blew in vain, for the poor soul was as dead as a door-nail.

When one of his comrades heard what had happened, he said, ‘You blockhead, you can’t have done it properly; just let me have a try,’ and with these words he seized his wife by the roots of her hair, cut her throat with a razor, and then took the pipe and blew into it with all his might but he couldn’t bring her back to life. The same thing happened to the third rogue, so that they were now all three without wives.

Full of wrath they ran to Simon’s house, and, refusing to listen to a word of explanation or excuse, they seized the old man and put him into a sack, meaning to drown him in the neighbouring river. On their way there, however, a sudden noise threw them into such a panic that they dropped the sack with Simon in it and ran for their lives.

Soon after this a shepherd happened to pass by with his flock, and while he was slowly following the sheep, who paused here and there by the wayside to browse on the tender grass, he heard a pitiful voice wailing, ‘They insist on my taking her, and I don’t want her, for I am too old, and I really can’t have her.’ The shepherd was much startled, for he couldn’t make out where these words, which were repeated more than once, came from, and looked about him to the right and left; at last he perceived the sack in which Simon was hidden, and going up to it he opened it and discovered Simon repeating his dismal complaint. The shepherd asked him why he had been left there tied up in a sack.

Simon replied that the king of the country had insisted on giving him one of his daughters as a wife, but that he had refused the honour because he was too old and too frail. The simple-minded shepherd, who believed his story implicitly, asked him, ‘Do you think the king of the country would give his daughter to me?’

‘Yes, certainly, I know he would,’ answered Simon, ‘if you were tied up in this sack instead of me.’ Then getting out of the sack, he tied the confiding shepherd up in it instead, and at his request fastened it securely and drove the sheep on himself.

An hour had scarcely passed when the three rogues returned to the place where they had left Simon in the sack, and without opening it, one of them seized it and threw it into the river. And so the poor shepherd was drowned instead of Mr. Simon!

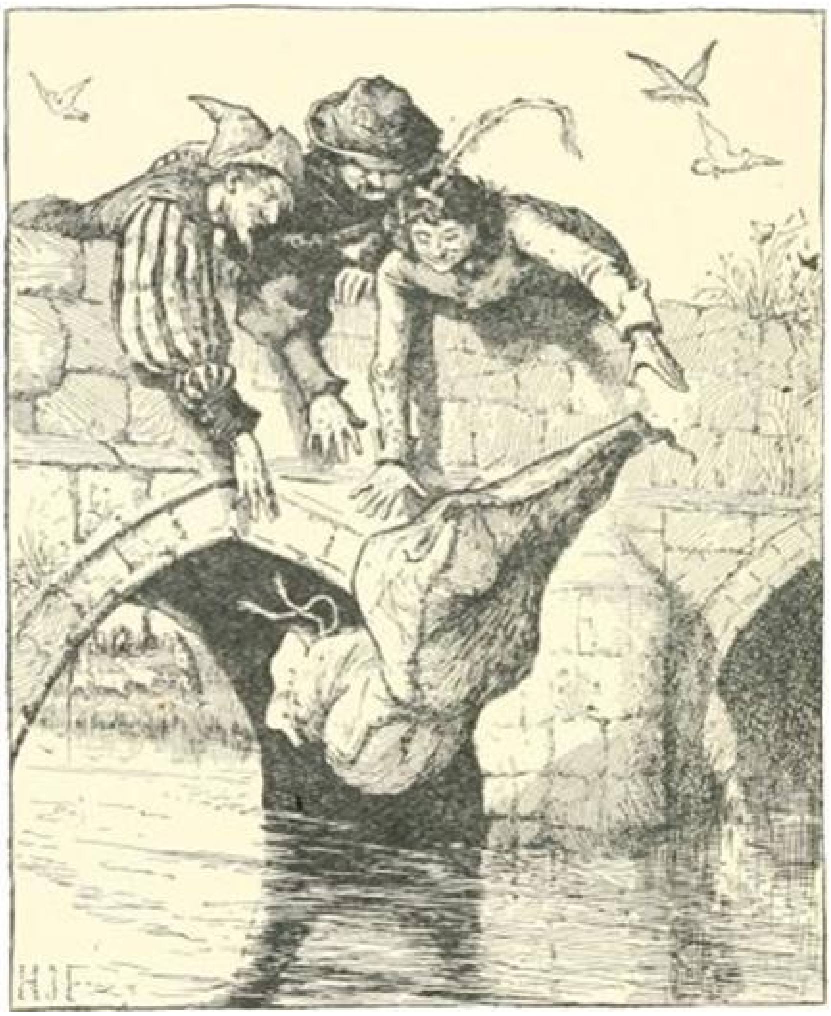

The three rogues, having wreaked their vengeance, set out for home. On their way they noticed a flock of sheep grazing not far from the road. They longed to steal a few of the lambs, and approached the flock, and were more than startled to recognise Mr. Simon, whom they had drowned in the river, as the shepherd who was looking after the sheep. They asked him how he had managed to get out of the river, to which he replied:

‘Get along with you — you are no better than silly donkeys without any sense; if you had only drowned me in deeper water I would have returned with three times as many sheep.’

When the three rogues heard this, they said to him: ‘Oh, dear Mr. Simon, do us the favour to tie us up in sacks and throw us into the river that we may give up our thieving ways and become the owners of flocks.’

‘I am ready,’ answered Simon, ‘to do what you please; there’s nothing in the world I wouldn’t do for you.’

So he took three strong sacks and put a man in each of them, and fastened them up so tightly that they couldn’t get out, and then he threw them all into the river; and that was the end of the three rogues. But Mr. Simon returned home to his faithful Nina rich in flocks and gold; and lived for many a year in health and happiness.

Kletke.

KING KOJATA

(FROM THE RUSSIAN)

There was once upon a time a king called Kojata, whose beard was so long that it reached below his knees. Three years had passed since his marriage, and he lived very happily with his wife, but Heaven granted him no heir, which grieved the King greatly. One day he set forth from his capital, in order to make a journey through his kingdom. He travelled for nearly a year through the different parts of his territory, and then, having seen all there was to be seen, he set forth on his homeward way. As the day was very hot and sultry he commanded his servants to pitch tents in the open field, and there await the cool of the evening. Suddenly a frightful thirst seized the King, and as he saw no water near, he mounted his horse, and rode through the neighbourhood looking for a spring. Before long he came to a well filled to the brim with water clear as crystal, and on the bosom of which a golden jug was floating. King Kojata at once tried to seize the vessel, but though he endeavoured to grasp it with his right hand, and then with his left, the wretched thing always eluded his efforts and refused to let itself be caught. First with one hand, and then with two, did the King try to seize it, but like a fish the goblet always slipped through his fingers and bobbed to the ground only to reappear at some other place, and mock the King.

‘Plague on you!’ said King Kojata. ‘I can quench my thirst without you,’ and bending over the well he lapped up the water so greedily that he plunged his face, beard and all, right into the crystal mirror. But when he had satisfied his thirst, and wished to raise himself up, he couldn’t lift his head, because someone held his beard fast in the water. ‘Who’s there? let me go!’ cried King Kojata, but there was no answer; only an awful face looked up from the bottom of the well with two great green eyes, glowing like emeralds, and a wide mouth reaching from ear to ear showing two rows of gleaming white teeth, and the King’s beard was held, not by mortal hands, but by two claws. At last a hoarse voice sounded from the depths. ‘Your trouble is all in vain, King Kojata; I will only let you go on condition that you give me something you know nothing about, and which you will find on your return home.’

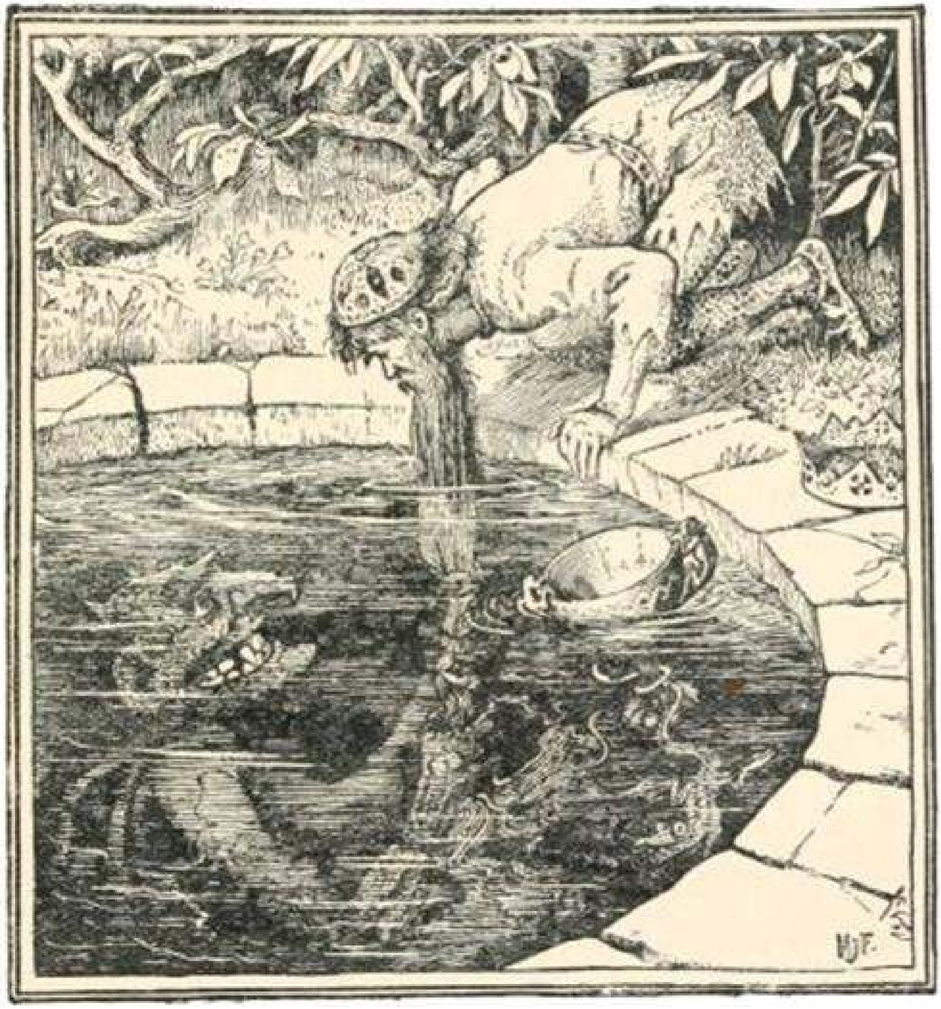

The King didn't pause to ponder long, 'for what,' thought he, 'could be in my palace without my knowing about it — the thing is absurd;' so he answered quickly:

'Yes, I promise that you shall have it.'

The voice replied, 'Very well; but it will go ill with you if you fail to keep your promise.' Then the claws relaxed their hold, and the face disappeared in the depths. The King drew his chin out of the water, and shook himself like a dog; then he mounted his horse and rode thoughtfully home with his retinue. When they approached the capital, all the people came out to meet them with great joy and acclamation, and when the King reached his palace the Queen met him on the threshold; beside her stood the Prime Minister, holding a little cradle in his hands, in which lay a new-born child as beautiful as the day. Then the whole thing dawned on the King, and groaning deeply he muttered to himself, 'So this is what I did not know about,' and the tears rolled down his cheeks. All the courtiers standing round were much amazed at the King's grief, but no one dared to ask him the cause of it. He took the child in his arms and kissed it tenderly;

then laying it in its cradle, he determined to control his emotion and began to reign again as before.

The secret of the King remained a secret, though his grave, careworn expression escaped no one’s notice. In the constant dread that his child would be taken from him, poor Kojata knew no rest night or day. However, time went on and nothing happened. Days and months and years passed, and the Prince grew up into a beautiful youth, and at last the King himself forgot all about the incident that had happened so long ago.

One day the Prince went out hunting, and going in pursuit of a wild boar he soon lost the other huntsmen, and found himself quite alone in the middle of a dark wood. The trees grew so thick and near together that it was almost impossible to see through them, only straight in front of him lay a little patch of meadowland, overgrown with thistles and rank weeds, in the centre of which a leafy lime tree reared itself. Suddenly a rustling sound was heard in the hollow of the tree, and an extraordinary old man with green eyes and chin crept out of it.

‘A fine day, Prince Milan,’ he said; ‘you’ve kept me waiting a good number of years; it was high time for you to come and pay me a visit.’

‘Who are you, in the name of wonder?’ demanded the astonished Prince.

‘You’ll find out soon enough, but in the meantime do as I bid you. Greet your father King Kojata from me, and don’t forget to remind him of his debt; the time has long passed since it was due, but now he will have to pay it. Farewell for the present; we shall meet again.’

With these words the old man disappeared into the tree, and the Prince returned home rather startled, and told his father all that he had seen and heard.

The King grew as white as a sheet when he heard the Prince’s story, and said, ‘Woe is me, my son! The time has come when we must part,’ and with a heavy heart he told the Prince what had happened at the time of his birth.

‘Don’t worry or distress yourself, dear father,’ answered Prince Milan. ‘Things are never as bad as they look. Only give me a horse for my journey, and I wager you’ll soon see me back again.’

The King gave him a beautiful charger, with golden stirrups, and a sword. The Queen hung a little cross round his neck, and after much weeping and lamentation the Prince bade them all farewell and set forth on his journey.

He rode straight on for two days, and on the third he came to a lake as smooth as glass and as clear as crystal. Not a breath of wind moved, not a leaf stirred, all was silent as the grave, only on the still bosom of the lake thirty ducks, with brilliant plumage, swam about in the water. Not far from the shore Prince Milan noticed thirty little white garments lying on the grass, and dismounting from his horse, he crept down under the high bulrushes, took one of the garments and hid himself with it behind the bushes which grew round the lake. The ducks swam about all over the place, dived down into the depths and rose again and glided through the waves. At last, tired of disporting themselves, they swam to the shore, and twenty-nine of them put on their little white garments and instantly turned into so many beautiful maidens. Then they finished dressing and disappeared. Only the thirtieth little duck couldn’t come to the land; it swam about close to the shore, and, giving out a piercing cry, it stretched its neck up timidly, gazed wildly around, and then dived under again. Prince Milan’s heart was so moved with pity for the poor little creature that he came out from behind the bulrushes, to see if he could be of any help. As soon as the duck perceived him, it cried in a human voice, ‘Oh, dear Prince Milan, for the love of Heaven give me back my garment, and I will be so grateful to you.’ The Prince laid the little garment on the bank beside her, and stepped back into the bushes. In a few seconds a beautiful girl in a white robe stood before him, so fair and sweet and young that no pen could describe her. She gave the Prince her hand and spoke.

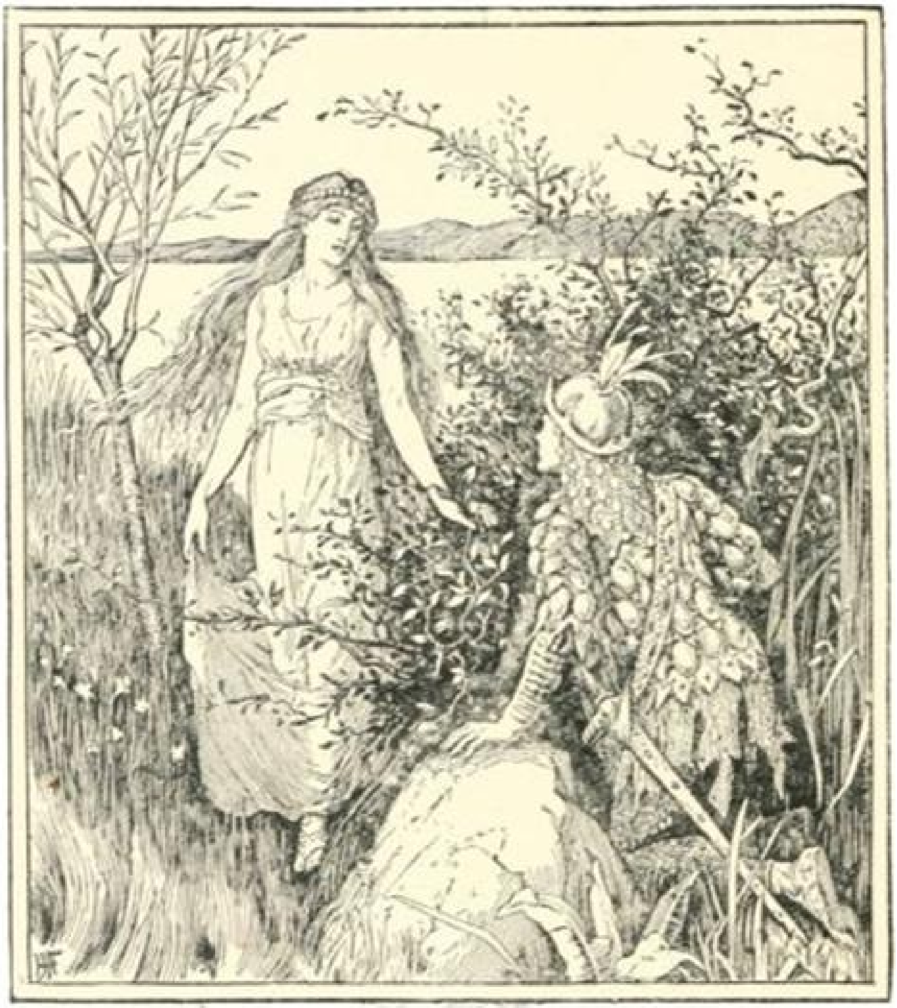

‘Many thanks, Prince Milan, for your courtesy. I am the daughter of a wicked magician, and my name is Hyacinthia. My father has thirty young daughters, and is a mighty ruler in the underworld, with many castles and great riches. He has been expecting you for ages, but you need have no fear if you will only follow my advice. As soon as you come into the presence of my father, throw yourself at once on the ground and approach him on your knees. Don’t mind if he stamps furiously with his feet and curses and swears. I’ll attend to the rest, and in the meantime we had better be off.’

With these words the beautiful Hyacinthia stamped on the ground with her little foot, and the earth opened and they both sank down into the lower world.

The palace of the Magician was all hewn out of a single carbuncle, lighting up the whole surrounding region, and Prince Milan walked into it gaily.

The Magician sat on a throne, a sparkling crown on his head; his eyes blazed like a green fire, and instead of hands he had claws. As soon as Prince Milan entered he flung himself on his knees. The Magician stamped loudly with his feet, glared frightfully out of his green eyes, and cursed so loudly that the whole underworld shook. But the Prince, mindful of the counsel he had been given, wasn't the least afraid, and approached the throne still on his knees. At last the Magician laughed aloud and said, 'You rogue, you have been well advised to make me laugh; I won't be your enemy any more. Welcome to the underworld! All the same, for your delay in coming here, we must demand three services from you. For to-day you may go, but to-morrow I shall have something more to say to you.'

Then two servants led Prince Milan to a beautiful apartment, and he lay down fearlessly on the soft bed that had been prepared for him, and was soon fast asleep.

Early the next morning the Magician sent for him, and said, 'Let's see now what you've learnt. In the first place you must build me a palace to-night, the roof of purest gold, the walls of marble, and the windows of crystal; all round you must lay out a beautiful garden, with fishponds and artistic waterfalls. If you do all this, I will reward you richly; but if you don't, you shall lose your head.'

'Oh, you wicked monster!' thought Prince Milan, 'you might as well have put me to death at once.' Sadly he returned to his room, and with bent head sat brooding over his cruel fate till evening. When it grew dark, a little bee flew by, and knocking at the window, it said, 'Open, and let me in.'

Milan opened the window quickly, and as soon as the bee had entered, it changed into the beautiful Hyacinthia.

'Good evening, Prince Milan. Why are you so sad?'

'How can I help being sad? Your father threatens me with death, and I see myself already without a head.'

'And what have you made up your mind to do?'

'There's nothing to be done, and after all I suppose one can only die once.'

'Now, don't be so foolish, my dear Prince; but keep up your spirits, for there is no need to despair. Go to bed, and when you wake up to-morrow morning the palace will be finished. Then you must go all round it, giving a tap here and there on the walls to look as if you had just finished it.'

And so it all turned out just as she had said. As soon as it was daylight Prince Milan stepped out of his room, and found a palace which was quite a work of art down to the very smallest detail. The Magician himself was not a little astonished at its beauty, and could hardly believe his eyes.

'Well, you certainly are a splendid workman,' he said to the Prince. 'I see you are very clever with your hands, now I must see if you are equally accomplished with your head. I have thirty daughters in my house, all beautiful princesses. To-morrow I will place the whole thirty in a row. You must walk past them three times, and the third time you must show me which is my youngest daughter

Hyacinthia. If you don’t guess rightly, you shall lose your head.’

‘This time you’ve made a mistake,’ thought Prince Milan, and going to his room he sat down at the window. ‘Just fancy my not recognising the beautiful Hyacinthia! Why, that’s the easiest thing in the world.’

‘Not so easy as you think,’ cried the little bee, who was flying past. ‘If I weren’t to help you, you’d never guess. We are thirty sisters so exactly alike that our own father can hardly distinguish us apart.’

‘Then what am I to do?’ asked Prince Milan.

‘Listen,’ answered Hyacinthia. ‘You will recognise me by a tiny fly I shall have on my left cheek, but be careful, for you might easily make a mistake.’

The next day the Magician again commanded Prince Milan to be led before him. His daughters were all arranged in a straight row in front of him, dressed exactly alike, and with their eyes bent on the ground.

‘Now, you genius,’ said the Magician, ‘look at these beauties three times, and then tell us which is the Princess Hyacinthia.’

Prince Milan went past them and looked at them closely. But they were all so precisely alike that they looked like one face reflected in thirty mirrors, and the fly was nowhere to be seen; the second time he passed them he still saw nothing; but the third time he perceived a little-fly stealing down one cheek, causing it to blush a faint pink. Then the Prince seized the girl’s hand and cried out, ‘This is the Princess Hyacinthia!’

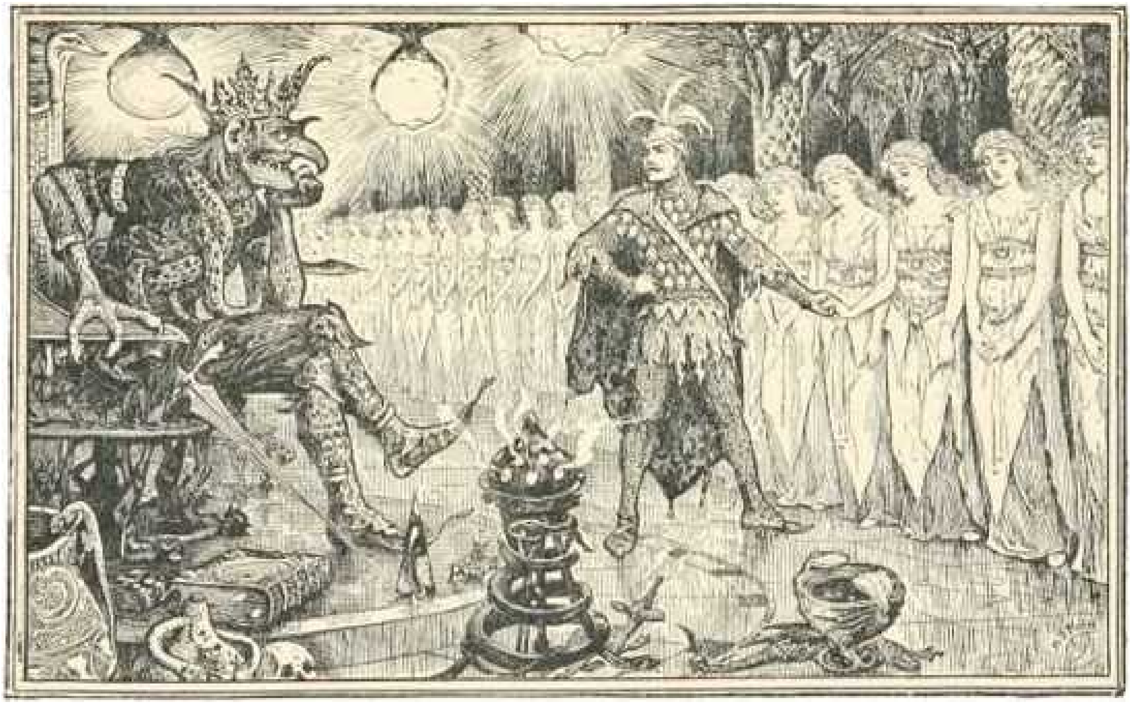

‘You’re right again,’ said the Magician in amazement; ‘but I’ve still another task for you to do. Before this candle, which I shall light, burns to the socket, you must have made me a pair of boots reaching to my knees. If they aren’t finished in that time, off comes your head.’

The Prince returned to his room in despair; then the Princess Hyacinthia came to him once more changed into the likeness of a bee, and asked him, ‘Why so sad, Prince Milan?’

‘How can I help being sad? Your father has set me this time an impossible task. Before a candle which he has lit burns to the socket, I am to make a pair of boots. But what does a prince know of shoemaking? If I can’t do it, I lose my head.’

‘And what do you mean to do?’ asked Hyacinthia.

‘Well, what is there to be done? What he demands I can’t and won’t do, so he must just make an end of me.’

‘Not so, dearest. I love you dearly, and you shall marry me, and I’ll either save your life or die with you. We must fly now as quickly as we can, for there is no other way of escape.’

With these words she breathed on the window, and her breath froze on the pane. Then she led Milan out of the room with her, shut the door, and threw the key away. Hand in hand, they hurried to the spot where they had descended into the lower world, and at last reached the banks of the lake. Prince Milan’s charger was still grazing on the grass which grew near the water. The horse no sooner recognised his master, than it neighed loudly with joy, and springing towards him, it stood as if rooted to the ground, while Prince Milan and Hyacinthia jumped on its back. Then it sped onwards like an arrow from a bow.

In the meantime the Magician was waiting impatiently for the Prince. Enraged by the delay, he sent his servants to fetch him, for the appointed time was past.

The servants came to the door, and finding it locked, they knocked; but the frozen breath on the window replied in Prince Milan’s voice, ‘I am coming directly.’ With this answer they returned to the Magician. But when the Prince still did not appear, after a time he sent his servants a second time to bring him. The frozen breath always gave the same answer, but the Prince never came. At last the Magician lost all patience, and commanded the door to be burst open. But when his servants did so, they found the room empty, and the frozen breath laughed aloud. Out of his mind with rage, the Magician ordered the Prince to be pursued.

Then a wild chase began. ‘I hear horses’ hoofs behind us,’ said Hyacinthia to the Prince. Milan sprang from the saddle, put his ear to the ground and listened.

‘Yes,’ he answered, ‘they are pursuing us, and are quite close.’ ‘Then no time must be lost,’ said Hyacinthia, and she immediately turned herself into a river, Prince Milan into an iron bridge, and the charger into a blackbird. Behind the bridge the road branched off into three ways.

The Magician’s servants hurried after the fresh tracks, but when they came to the bridge, they stood, not knowing which road to take, as the footprints stopped suddenly, and there were three paths for them to choose from. In fear and trembling they returned to tell the Magician what had happened. He flew into a dreadful rage when he saw them, and screamed out, ‘Oh, you fools! the river and bridge were they! Go back and bring them to me at once, or it will be the worse for you.’

Then the pursuit began afresh. ‘I hear horses’ hoofs,’ sighed Hyacinthia. The Prince dismounted and put his ear to the ground. ‘They are hurrying after us, and are already quite near.’ In a moment the Princess Hyacinthia had changed herself, the Prince, and his charger into a thick wood where a thousand paths and roads crossed each other. Their pursuers entered the forest, but searched in vain for Prince Milan and his bride. At last they found themselves back at the same spot they had started from; and in despair they returned once more with empty hands to the Magician.

‘Then I’ll go after the wretches myself,’ he shouted. ‘Bring a horse at once; they shan’t escape me.’

Once more the beautiful Hyacinthia murmured, ‘I hear horses’ hoofs quite near.’ And the Prince answered, ‘They are pursuing us hotly and are quite close.’

‘We are lost now, for that is my father himself. But at the first church we come to his power ceases; he may chase us no further. Hand me your cross.’

Prince Milan loosened from his neck the little gold cross his mother had given him, and as soon as Hyacinthia grasped it, she had changed herself into a church, Milan into a monk, and the horse into a belfry. They had hardly done this when the magician and his servants rode up.

‘Did you see no one pass by on horseback, reverend father?’ he asked the monk.

‘Prince Milan and Princess Hyacinthia have just gone on this minute; they stopped for a few minutes in the church to say their prayers, and bade me light this wax candle for you, and give you their love.’

‘I’d like to wring their necks,’ said the magician, and made all haste home, where he had every one of his servants beaten to within an inch of their lives.

Prince Milan rode on slowly with his bride without fearing any further pursuit. The sun was just setting, and its last rays lit up a large city they were approaching. Prince Milan was suddenly seized with an ardent desire to enter the town.

‘Oh my beloved,’ implored Hyacinthia, ‘please don’t go; for I am frightened and fear some evil.’

‘What are you afraid of?’ asked the Prince. ‘We’ll only go and look at what’s to be seen in the town for about an hour, and then we’ll continue our journey to my father’s kingdom.’

‘The town is easy to get into, but more difficult to get out of,’ sighed Hyacinthia. ‘But let it be as you wish. Go, and I will await you here, but I will first change myself into a white milestone; only I pray you be very careful. The King and Queen of the town will come out to meet you, leading a little child with them. Whatever you do, don’t kiss the child, or you will forget me and all that has happened to us. I will wait for you here for three days.’

The Prince hurried to the town, but Hyacinthia remained behind disguised as a white milestone on the road. The first day passed, and then the second, and at last the third also, but Prince Milan did not return, for he had not taken Hyacinthia’s advice. The King and Queen came out to meet him as she had said, leading with them a lovely fair-haired little girl, whose eyes shone like two clear stars. The child at once caressed the Prince, who, carried away by its beauty, bent down and kissed it on the cheek. From that moment his memory became a blank, and he forgot all about the beautiful Hyacinthia.

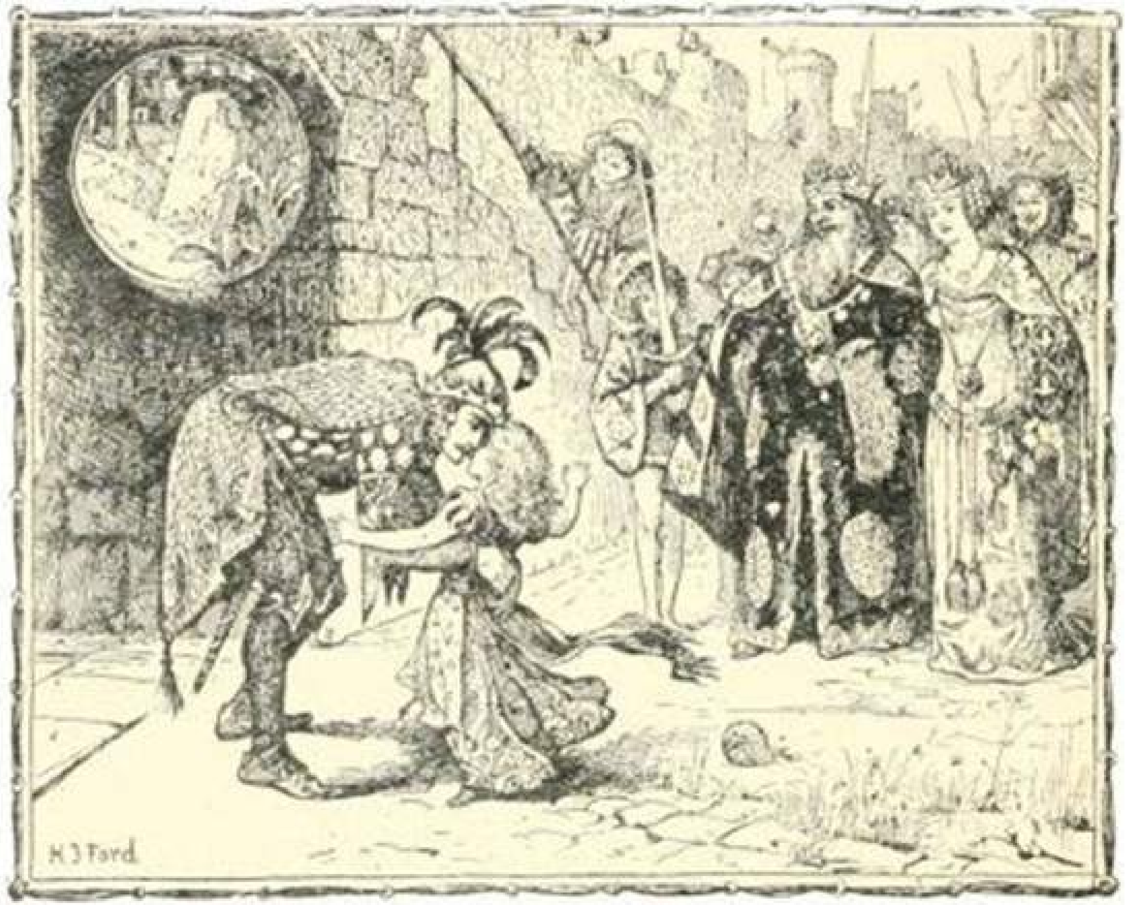

When the Prince did not return, poor Hyacinthia wept bitterly and changing herself from a milestone into a little blue field flower, she said, ‘I will grow here on the wayside till some passer-by tramples me under foot.’ And one of her tears remained as a dew-drop and sparkled on the little blue flower.

Now it happened shortly after this that an old man passed by, and seeing the flower, he was delighted with its beauty. He pulled it up carefully by the roots and carried it home. Here he planted it in a pot, and watered and tended the little plant carefully. And now the most extraordinary thing happened, for from this moment everything in the old man’s house was changed. When he awoke in the morning he always found his room tidied and put into such beautiful order that not a speck of dust was to be found anywhere. When he came home at midday, he found a table laid out with the most dainty food, and he had only to sit down and enjoy himself to his heart’s content. At first he was so surprised he didn’t know what to think, but after a time he grew a little uncomfortable, and went to an old witch to ask for advice.

The witch said, ‘Get up before the cock crows, and watch carefully till you see something move, and then throw this cloth quickly over it, and you’ll see what will happen.’

All night the old man never closed an eye. When the first ray of light entered the room, he noticed that the little blue flower began to tremble, and at last it rose out of the pot and flew about the room, put everything in order, swept away the dust, and lit the fire. In great haste the old man sprang from his bed, and covered the flower with the cloth the old witch had given him, and in a moment the beautiful Princess Hyacinthia stood before him.

‘What have you done?’ she cried. ‘Why have you called me back to life? For I have no desire to live since my bridegroom, the beautiful Prince Milan, has deserted me.’

‘Prince Milan is just going to be married,’ replied the old man. ‘Everything is being got ready for the feast, and all the invited guests are flocking to the palace from all sides.’

The beautiful Hyacinthia cried bitterly when she heard this; then she dried her tears, and went into the town dressed as a peasant woman. She went straight to the King’s kitchen, where the white-aproned cooks were running about in great confusion. The Princess went up to the head cook, and said, ‘Dear cook, please listen to my request, and let me make a wedding-cake for Prince Milan.’

The busy cook was just going to refuse her demand and order her out of the kitchen, but the words died on his lips when he turned and beheld the beautiful Hyacinthia, and he answered politely, ‘You have just come in the nick of time, fair maiden. Bake your cake, and I myself will lay it before Prince Milan.’

The cake was soon made. The invited guests were already thronging round the table, when the head cook entered the room, bearing a beautiful wedding cake on a silver dish, and laid it before Prince Milan. The guests were all lost in admiration, for the cake was quite a work of art. Prince Milan at once proceeded to cut it open, when to his surprise two white doves sprang out of it, and one of them said to the other: ‘My dear mate, do not fly away and leave me, and forget me as Prince Milan forgot his beloved Hyacinthia.’

Milan sighed deeply when he heard what the little dove said. Then he jumped up suddenly from the table and ran to the door, where he found the beautiful Hyacinthia waiting for him. Outside stood his faithful charger, pawing the ground. Without pausing for a moment, Milan and Hyacinthia mounted him and galloped as fast as they could into the country of King Kojata. The King and Queen received them with such joy and gladness as had never been heard of before, and they all lived happily for the rest of their lives.

Kletke.

PRINCE FICKLE AND FAIR HELENA

(FROM THE GERMAN)

There was once upon a time a beautiful girl called Helena. Her own mother had died when she was quite a child, and her stepmother was as cruel and unkind to her as she could be. Helena did all she could to gain her love, and performed the heavy work given her to do cheerfully and well; but her stepmother's heart wasn't in the least touched, and the more the poor girl did the more she asked her to do.

One day she gave Helena twelve pounds of mixed feathers and bade her separate them all before evening, threatening her with a heavy punishment if she failed to do so.

The poor child sat down to her task with her eyes so full of tears that she could hardly see to begin. And when she had made one little heap of feathers, she sighed so deeply that they all blew apart again. And so it went on, and the poor girl grew more and more miserable. She bowed her head in her hands and cried, 'Is there no one under heaven who will take pity on me?'

Suddenly a soft voice replied, 'Be comforted, my child: I have come to help you.'

Terrified to death, Helena looked up and saw a Fairy standing in front of her, who asked in the kindest way possible, 'Why are you crying, my dear?'

Helena, who for long had heard no friendly voice, confided her sad tale of woe to the Fairy, and told her what the new task she had been given to do was, and how she despaired of ever accomplishing it.

'Don't worry yourself about it any more,' said the kind Fairy; 'lie down and go to sleep, and I'll see that your work is done all right.' So Helena lay down, and when she awoke all the feathers were sorted into little bundles; but when she turned to thank the good Fairy she had vanished.

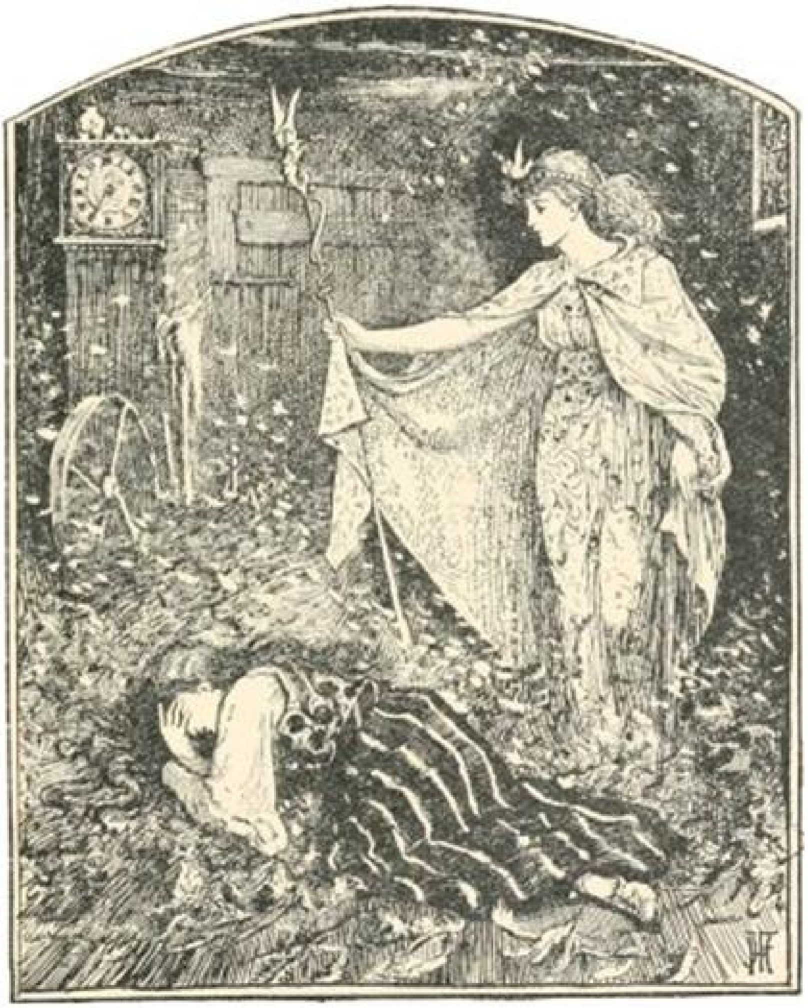

In the evening her stepmother returned and was much amazed to find Helena sitting quietly with her work all finished before her.

She praised her diligence, but at the same time racked her brain as to what harder task she could set her to do.

The next day she told Helena to empty a pond near the house with a spoon which was full of holes. Helena set to work at once, but she very soon found that what her stepmother had told her to do was an impossibility. Full of despair and misery, she was in the act of throwing the spoon away, when suddenly the kind Fairy stood before her again, and asked her why she was so unhappy?

When Helena told her of her stepmother's new demand she said, 'Trust to me and I will do your task for you. Lie down and have a sleep in the meantime.'

Helena was comforted and lay down, and before you would have believed it possible the Fairy roused her gently and told her the pond was empty. Full of joy and gratitude, Helena hurried to her stepmother, hoping that now at last her heart would be softened towards her. But the wicked woman was furious at the frustration of her own evil designs, and only thought of what harder thing she could set the girl to do.

Next morning she ordered her to build before evening a beautiful castle, and to furnish it all from garret to basement. Helena sat down on the rocks which had been pointed out to her as the site of the castle, feeling very depressed, but at the same time with the lurking hope that the kind Fairy would come once more to her aid.

And so it turned out. The Fairy appeared, promised to build the castle, and told Helena to lie down and go to sleep in the meantime. At the word of the Fairy the rocks and stones rose and built themselves into a beautiful castle, and before sunset it was all furnished inside, and left nothing to be desired. You may think how grateful Helena was when she awoke and found her task all finished.

But her stepmother was anything but pleased, and went through the whole castle from top to bottom, to see if she couldn’t find some fault for which she could punish Helena. At last she went down into one of the cellars, but it was so dark that she fell down the steep stairs and was killed on the spot.

So Helena was now mistress of the beautiful castle, and lived there in peace and happiness. And soon the noise of her beauty spread abroad, and many wooers came to try and gain her hand.

Among them came one Prince Fickle by name, who very quickly won the love of fair Helena. One day, as they were sitting happily together under a lime-tree in front of the castle, Prince Fickle broke the sad news to Helena that he must return to his parents to get their consent to his marriage. He promised faithfully to come back to her as soon as he could, and begged her to await his return under the lime-tree where they had spent so many happy hours.

Helena kissed him tenderly at parting on his left cheek, and begged him not to let anyone else kiss him there while they were parted, and she promised to sit and wait for him under the lime-tree, for she never doubted that the Prince would be faithful to her and would return as quickly as he could.

And so she sat for three days and three nights under the tree without moving. But when her lover never returned, she grew very unhappy, and determined to set out to look for him. She took as many of her jewels as she could carry, and three of her most beautiful dresses, one embroidered with stars, one with moons, and the third with suns, all of pure gold. Far and wide she wandered through the world, but nowhere did she find any trace of her bridegroom. At last she gave up the search in despair. She could not bear to return to her own castle where she had been so happy with her lover, but determined rather to endure her loneliness and desolation in a strange land. She took a place as herd-girl with a peasant, and buried her jewels and beautiful dresses in a safe and hidden spot.

Every day she drove the cattle to pasture, and all the time she thought of nothing but her faithless bridegroom. She was very devoted to a certain little calf in the herd, and made a great pet of it, feeding it out of her own hands. She taught it to kneel before her, and then she whispered in its ear:

‘Kneel, little calf, kneel;
Be faithful and leal,
Not like Prince Fickle,
Who once on a time
Left his fair Helena
Under the lime.’

After some years passed in this way, she heard that the daughter of the king of the country she was living in was going to marry a Prince called ‘Fickle.’ Everybody rejoiced at the news except poor Helena, to whom it was a fearful blow, for at the bottom of her heart she had always believed her lover to be true.

Now it chanced that the way to the capital led right past the village where Helena was, and often when she was leading her cattle forth to the meadows Prince Fickle rode past her, without ever noticing the poor herd-girl, so engrossed was he in thoughts of his new bride. Then it occurred to Helena to put his heart to the test and to see if it weren’t possible to recall herself to him. So one day as Prince Fickle rode by she said to her little calf:

‘Kneel, little calf, kneel;
Be faithful and leal,
Not like Prince Fickle,
Who once on a time
Left his poor Helena
Under the lime.’

When Prince Fickle heard her voice it seemed to him to remind him of something, but of what he couldn’t remember, for he hadn’t heard the words distinctly, as Helena had only spoken them very low and with a shaky voice. Helena herself had been far too moved to let her see what impression her words had made on the Prince, and when she looked round he was already far away. But she noticed how slowly he was riding, and how deeply sunk he was in thought, so she didn’t quite give herself up as lost.

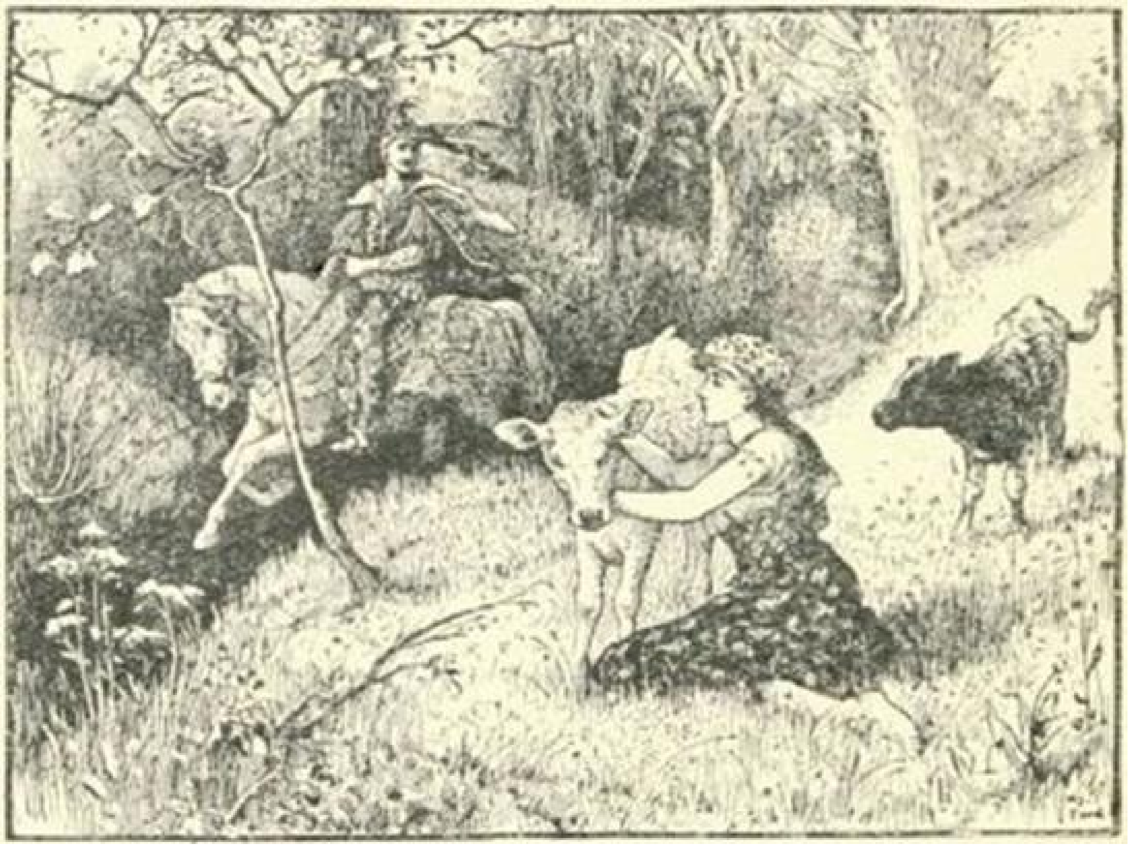

In honour of the approaching wedding a feast lasting many nights was to be given in the capital. Helena placed all her hopes on this, and determined to go to the feast and there to seek out her bridegroom.

When evening drew near she stole out of the peasant’s cottage secretly, and, going to her hiding-place, she put on her dress embroidered with the gold suns, and all her jewels, and loosed her beautiful golden hair, which up to now she had always worn under a kerchief, and, adorned thus, she set out for the town.

When she entered the ball-room all eyes were turned on her, and everyone marvelled at her beauty, but no one knew who she was. Prince Fickle, too, was quite dazzled by the charms of the beautiful maiden, and never guessed that she had once been his own ladylove. He never left her side all night, and it was with great difficulty that Helena escaped from him in the crowd when it was time to return home. Prince Fickle searched for her everywhere, and longed eagerly for the next night, when the beautiful lady had promised to come again.

The following evening the fair Helena started early for the feast.

This time she wore her dress embroidered with silver moons, and in her hair she placed a silver crescent. Prince Fickle was enchanted to see her again, and she seemed to him even more beautiful than she had been the night before. He never left her side, and refused to dance with anyone else. He begged her to tell him who she was, but this she refused to do. Then he implored her to return again next evening, and this she promised him she would.

On the third evening Prince Fickle was so impatient to see his fair enchantress again, that he arrived at the feast hours before it began, and never took his eyes from the door. At last Helena arrived in a dress all covered with gold and silver stars, and with a girdle of stars round her waist, and a band of stars in her hair. Prince Fickle was more in love with her than ever, and begged her once again to tell him her name.

Then Helena kissed him silently on the left cheek, and in one moment Prince Fickle recognised his old love. Full of remorse and sorrow, he begged for her forgiveness, and Helena, only too pleased to have got him back again, did not, you may be sure, keep him waiting very long for her pardon, and so they were married and returned to Helena’s castle, where they are no doubt still sitting happily together under the lime-tree.

Kletke.

PUDDOCKY

(FROM THE GERMAN)

There was once upon a time a poor woman who had one little daughter called ‘Parsley.’ She was so called because she liked eating parsley better than any other food, indeed she would hardly eat anything else. Her poor mother hadn’t enough money always to be buying parsley for her, but the child was so beautiful that she could refuse her nothing, and so she went every night to the garden of an old witch who lived near and stole great branches of the coveted vegetable, in order to satisfy her daughter.

This remarkable taste of the fair Parsley soon became known, and the theft was discovered. The witch called the girl’s mother to her, and proposed that she should let her daughter come and live with her, and then she could eat as much parsley as she liked. The mother was quite pleased with this suggestion, and so the beautiful Parsley took up her abode with the old witch.

One day three Princes, whom their father had sent abroad to travel, came to the town where Parsley lived and perceived the beautiful girl combing and plaiting her long black hair at the window. In one moment they all fell hopelessly in love with her, and longed ardently to have the girl for their wife; but hardly had they with one breath expressed their desire than, mad with jealousy, they drew their swords and all three set upon each other. The struggle was so violent and the noise so loud that the old witch heard it, and said at once ‘Of course Parsley is at the bottom of all this.’

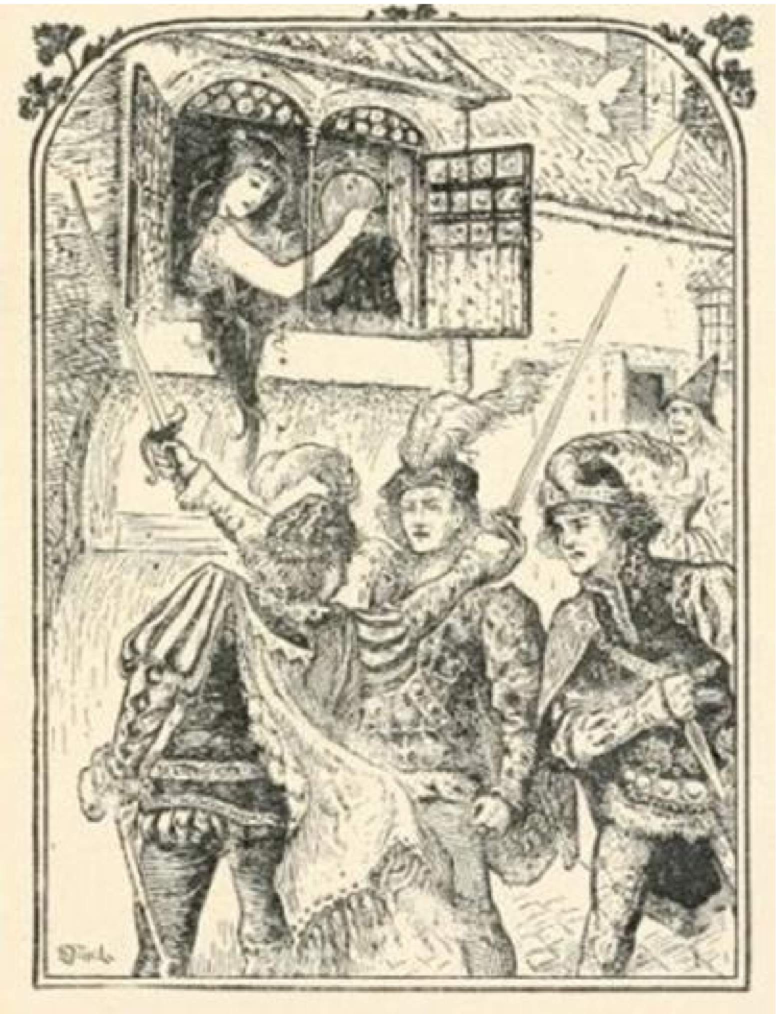

And when she had convinced herself that this was so, she stepped forward, and, full of wrath over the quarrels and feuds Parsley's beauty gave rise to, she cursed the girl and said, 'I wish you were an ugly toad, sitting under a bridge at the other end of the world.'

Hardly were the words out of her mouth than Parsley was changed into a toad and vanished from their sight. The Princes, now that the cause of their dispute was removed, put up their swords, kissed each other affectionately, and returned to their father.

The King was growing old and feeble, and wished to yield his sceptre and crown in favour of one of his sons, but he couldn't make up his mind which of the three he should appoint as his successor. He determined that fate should decide for him. So he called his three children to him and said, 'My dear sons, I am growing old, and am weary of reigning, but I can't make up my mind to which of you three I should yield my crown, for I love you all equally. At the same time I would like the best and cleverest of you to rule over my people. I have, therefore, determined to set you three tasks to do, and the one that performs them best shall be my heir. The first thing I shall ask you to do is to bring me a piece of linen a hundred yards long, so fine that it will go through a gold ring.’ The sons bowed low, and, promising to do their best, they started on their journey without further delay.

The two elder brothers took many servants and carriages with them, but the youngest set out quite alone. In a short time they came to three cross roads; two of them were gay and crowded, but the third was dark and lonely.

The two elder brothers chose the more frequented ways, but the youngest, bidding them farewell, set out on the dreary road.

Wherever fine linen was to be bought, there the two elder brothers hastened. They loaded their carriages with bales of the finest linen they could find and then returned home.

The youngest brother, on the other hand, went on his weary way for many days, and nowhere did he come across any linen that would have done. So he journeyed on, and his spirits sank with every step. At last he came to a bridge which stretched over a deep river flowing through a flat and marshy land. Before crossing the bridge he sat down on the banks of the stream and sighed dismally over his sad fate. Suddenly a misshapen toad crawled out of the swamp, and, sitting down opposite him, asked: ‘What’s the matter with you, my dear Prince?’

The Prince answered impatiently, ‘There’s not much good my telling you, Puddocky, for you couldn’t help me if I did.’

‘Don’t be too sure of that,’ replied the toad; ‘tell me your trouble and we’ll see.’

Then the Prince became most confidential and told the little creature why he had been sent out of his father’s kingdom.

‘Prince, I will certainly help you,’ said the toad, and, crawling back into her swamp, she returned dragging after her a piece of linen not bigger than a finger, which she lay before the Prince, saying, ‘Take this home, and you’ll see it will help you.’

The Prince had no wish to take such an insignificant bundle with him; but he didn’t like to hurt Puddocky’s feelings by refusing it, so he took up the little packet, put it in his pocket, and bade the little toad farewell. Puddocky watched the Prince till he was out of sight and then crept back into the water.

The further the Prince went the more he noticed that the pocket in which the little roll of linen lay became heavier, and in proportion his heart grew lighter. And so, greatly comforted, he returned to the Court of his father, and arrived home just at the same time as his brothers with their caravans. The King was delighted to see them all again, and at once drew the ring from his finger and the trial began. In all the waggon-loads there was not one piece of linen the tenth part of which would go through the ring, and the two elder brothers, who had at first sneered at their youngest brother for returning with no baggage, began to feel rather small. But what were their feelings when he drew a bale of linen out of his pocket which in fineness, softness, and purity of colour was unsurpassable! The threads were hardly visible, and it went through the ring without the smallest difficulty, at the same time measuring a hundred yards quite correctly.

The father embraced his fortunate son, and commanded the rest of the linen to be thrown into the water; then, turning to his children he said, ‘Now, dear Princes, prepare yourselves for the second task. You must bring me back a little dog that will go comfortably into a walnut-shell.’

The sons were all in despair over this demand, but as they each wished to win the crown, they determined to do their best, and after a very few days set out on their travels again.

At the cross roads they separated once more. The youngest went by himself along his lonely way, but this time he felt much more cheerful. Hardly had he sat down under the bridge and heaved a sigh, than Puddocky came out; and, sitting down opposite him, asked, ‘What’s wrong with you now, dear Prince?’

The Prince, who this time never doubted the little toad’s power to help him, told her his difficulty at once. ‘Prince, I will help you,’ said the toad again, and crawled back into her swamp as fast as her short little legs would carry her. She returned, dragging a hazel-nut behind her, which she laid at the Prince’s feet and said, ‘Take this nut home with you and tell your father to crack it very carefully, and you’ll see then what will happen.’ The Prince thanked her heartily and went on his way in the best of spirits while the little puddock crept slowly back into the water.

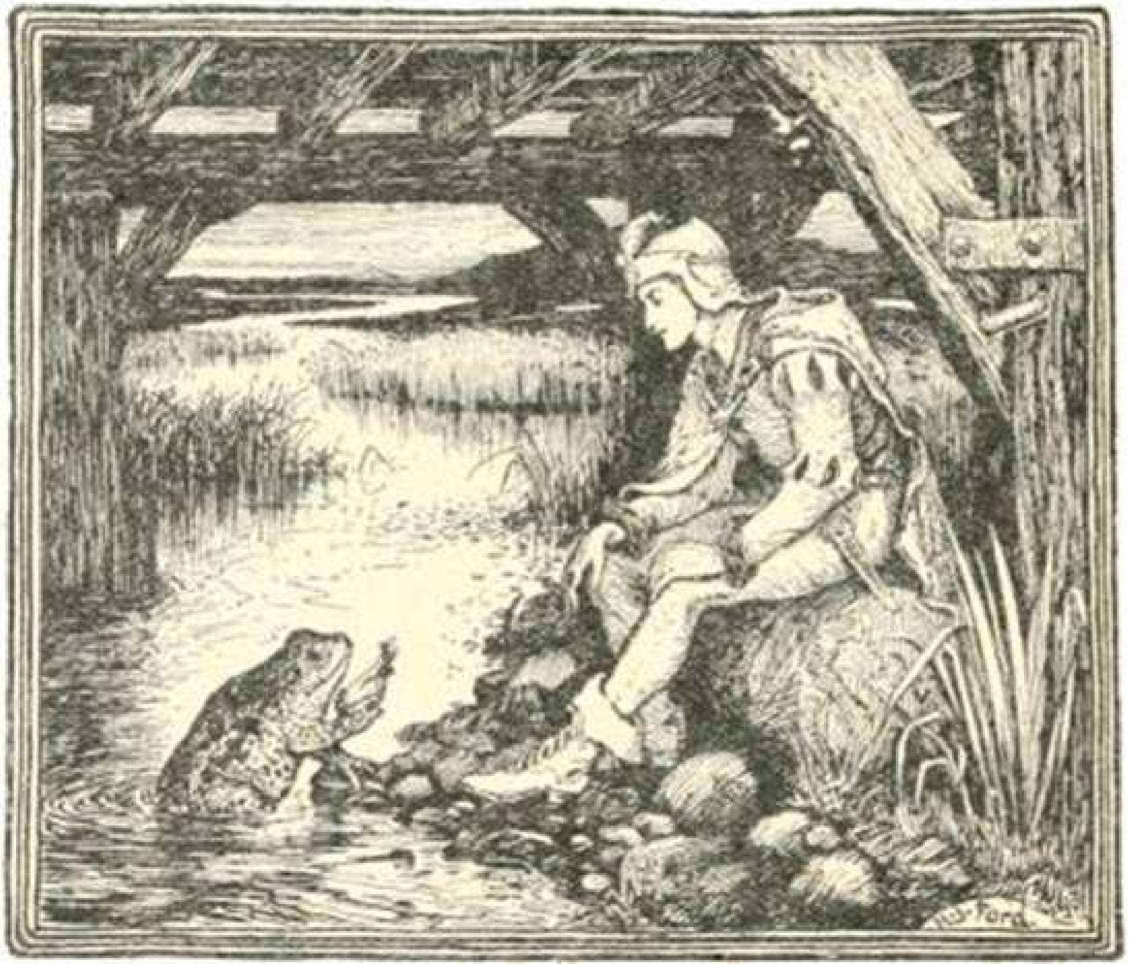

When the Prince got home he found his brothers had just arrived with great waggon-loads of little dogs of all sorts. The King had a walnut shell ready, and the trial began; but not one of the dogs the two eldest sons had brought with them would in the least fit into the shell. When they had tried all their little dogs, the youngest son handed his father the hazel-nut, with a modest bow, and begged him to crack it carefully. Hardly had the old King done so than a lovely tiny dog sprang out of the nutshell, and ran about on the King's hand, wagging its tail and barking lustily at all the other little dogs. The joy of the Court was great. The father again embraced his fortunate son, commanded the rest of the small dogs to be thrown into the water and drowned, and once more addressed his sons. 'The two most difficult tasks have been performed. Now listen to the third and last: whoever brings the fairest wife home with him shall be my heir.'

This demand seemed so easy and agreeable and the reward was so great, that the Princes lost no time in setting forth on their travels. At the cross roads the two elder brothers debated if they should go the same way as the youngest, but when they saw how dreary and deserted it looked they made up their minds that it would be impossible to find what they sought in these wilds, and so they stuck to their former paths.

The youngest was very depressed this time and said to himself, ‘Anything else Puddocky could have helped me in, but this task is quite beyond her power. How could she ever find a beautiful wife for me? Her swamps are wide and empty, and no human beings dwell there; only frogs and toads and other creatures of that sort.’ However, he sat down as usual under the bridge, and this time he sighed from the bottom of his heart.

In a few minutes the toad stood in front of him and asked, ‘What’s the matter with you now, my dear Prince?’

‘Oh, Puddocky, this time you can’t help me, for the task is beyond even your power,’ replied the Prince.

‘Still,’ answered the toad, ‘you may as well tell me your difficulty, for who knows but I mayn’t be able to help you this time also.’

The Prince then told her the task they had been set to do. ‘I’ll help you right enough, my dear Prince,’ said the little toad; ‘just you go home, and I’ll soon follow you.’ With these words, Puddocky, with a spring quite unlike her usual slow movements, jumped into the water and disappeared.

The Prince rose up and went sadly on his way, for he didn’t believe it possible that the little toad could really help him in his present difficulty. He had hardly gone a few steps when he heard a sound behind him, and, looking round, he saw a carriage made of cardboard, drawn by six big rats, coming towards him. Two hedgehogs rode in front as outriders, and on the box sat a fat mouse as coachman, and behind stood two little frogs as footmen. In the carriage itself sat Puddocky, who kissed her hand to the Prince out of the window as she passed by.

Sunk deep in thought over the fickleness of fortune that had granted him two of his wishes and now seemed about to deny him the last and best, the Prince hardly noticed the absurd equipage, and still less did he feel inclined to laugh at its comic appearance.

The carriage drove on in front of him for some time and then turned a corner. But what was his joy and surprise when suddenly, round the same corner, but coming towards him, there appeared a beautiful coach drawn by six splendid horses, with outriders, coachmen, footmen and other servants all in the most gorgeous liveries, and seated in the carriage was the most beautiful woman the Prince had ever seen, and in whom he at once recognised the beautiful Parsley, for whom his heart had formerly burned. The carriage stopped when it reached him, and the footmen sprang down and opened the door for him. He got in and sat down beside the beautiful Parsley, and thanked her heartily for her help, and told her how much he loved her.

And so he arrived at his father’s capital, at the same moment as his brothers who had returned with many carriage-loads of beautiful women. But when they were all led before the King, the whole Court with one consent awarded the prize of beauty to the fair Parsley.

The old King was delighted, and embraced his thrice fortunate son and his new daughter-in-law tenderly, and appointed them as his successors to the throne. But he commanded the other women to be thrown into the water and drowned, like the bales of linen and the little dogs. The Prince married Puddocky and reigned long and happily with her, and if they aren’t dead I suppose they are living still.

THE STORY OF HOK LEE AND THE DWARFS

There once lived in a small town in China a man named Hok Lee. He was a steady industrious man, who not only worked hard at his trade, but did all his own house-work as well, for he had no wife to do it for him. ‘What an excellent industrious man is this Hok Lee!’ said his neighbours; ‘how hard he works: he never leaves his house to amuse himself or to take a holiday as others do!’

But Hok Lee was by no means the virtuous person his neighbours thought him. True, he worked hard enough by day, but at night, when all respectable folk were fast asleep, he used to steal out and join a dangerous band of robbers, who broke into rich people’s houses and carried off all they could lay hands on.

This state of things went on for some time, and, though a thief was caught now and then and punished, no suspicion ever fell on Hok Lee, he was such a *very* respectable, hard-working man.

Hok Lee had already amassed a good store of money as his share of the proceeds of these robberies when it happened one morning on going to market that a neighbour said to him:

‘Why, Hok Lee, what is the matter with your face? One side of it is all swelled up.’

True enough, Hok Lee’s right cheek was twice the size of his left, and it soon began to feel very uncomfortable.

‘I will bind up my face,’ said Hok Lee; ‘doubtless the warmth will cure the swelling.’ But no such thing. Next day it was worse, and day by day it grew bigger and bigger till it was nearly as large as his head and became very painful.

Hok Lee was at his wits’ ends what to do. Not only was his cheek unsightly and painful, but his neighbours began to jeer and make fun of him, which hurt his feelings very much indeed.

One day, as luck would have it, a travelling doctor came to the town. He sold not only all kinds of medicine, but also dealt in many strange charms against witches and evil spirits.

Hok Lee determined to consult him, and asked him into his house.

After the doctor had examined him carefully, he spoke thus: ‘This, O Hok Lee, is no ordinary swelled face. I strongly suspect you have been doing some wrong deed which has called down the anger of the spirits on you. None of my drugs will avail to cure you, but, if you are willing to pay me handsomely, I can tell you how you may be cured.’

Then Hok Lee and the doctor began to bargain together, and it was a long time before they could come to terms. However, the doctor got the better of it in the end, for he was determined not to part with his secret under a certain price, and Hok Lee had no mind to carry his huge cheek about with him to the end of his days. So he was obliged to part with the greater portion of his ill-gotten gains.

When the Doctor had pocketed the money, he told Hok Lee to go on the first night of the full moon to a certain wood and there to watch by a particular tree. After a time he would see the dwarfs and little sprites who live underground come out to dance. When they saw him they would be sure to make him dance too. ‘And mind you dance your very best,’ added the doctor. ‘If you dance well and please them they will grant you a petition and you can then beg to be cured; but if you dance badly they will most likely do you some mischief out of spite.’ With that he took leave and departed.

Happily the first night of the full moon was near, and at the proper time Hok Lee set out for the wood. With a little trouble he found the tree the doctor had described, and, feeling nervous, he climbed up into it.

He had hardly settled himself on a branch when he saw the little dwarfs assembling in the moonlight. They came from all sides, till at length there appeared to be hundreds of them. They seemed in high glee, and danced and skipped and capered about, whilst Hok Lee grew so eager watching them that he crept further and further along his branch till at length it gave a loud crack. All the dwarfs stood still, and Hok Lee felt as if his heart stood still also.

Then one of the dwarfs called out, ‘Someone is up in that tree. Come down at once, whoever you are, or we must come and fetch you.’

In great terror, Hok Lee proceeded to come down; but he was so nervous that he tripped near the ground and came rolling down in the most absurd manner. When he had picked himself up, he came forward with a low bow, and the dwarf who had first spoken and who appeared to be the leader, said, ‘Now, then, who art thou, and what brings thee here?’

So Hok Lee told him the sad story of his swelled cheek, and how he had been advised to come to the forest and beg the dwarfs to cure him.

‘It is well,’ replied the dwarf. ‘We will see about that. First, however, thou must dance before us. Should thy dancing please us, perhaps we may be able to do something; but shouldst thou dance badly, we shall assuredly punish thee, so now take warning and dance away.’

With that, he and all the other dwarfs sat down in a large ring, leaving Hok Lee to dance alone in the middle. He felt half frightened to death, and besides was a good deal shaken by his fall from the tree and did not feel at all inclined to dance. But the dwarfs were not to be trifled with.

‘Begin!’ cried their leader, and ‘Begin!’ shouted the rest in chorus.

So in despair Hok Lee began. First he hopped on one foot and then on the other, but he was so stiff and so nervous that he made but a poor attempt, and after a time sank down on the ground and vowed he could dance no more.

The dwarfs were very angry. They crowded round Hok Lee and abused him. ‘Thou to come here to be cured, indeed!’ they cried, ‘thou hast brought one big cheek with thee, but thou shalt take away two.’ And with that they ran off and disappeared, leaving Hok Lee to find his way home as best he might.

He hobbled away, weary and depressed, and not a little anxious on account of the dwarfs’ threat.

Nor were his fears unfounded, for when he rose next morning his left cheek was swelled up as big as his right, and he could hardly see out of his eyes. Hok Lee felt in despair, and his neighbours jeered at him more than ever. The doctor, too, had disappeared, so there was nothing for it but to try the dwarfs once more.

He waited a month till the first night of the full moon came round again, and then he trudged back to the forest, and sat down under the tree from which he had fallen. He had not long to wait. Ere long the dwarfs came trooping out till all were assembled.

‘I don’t feel quite easy,’ said one; ‘I feel as if some horrid human being were near us.’

When Hok Lee heard this he came forward and bent down to the ground before the dwarfs, who came crowding round, and laughed heartily at his comical appearance with his two big cheeks.

‘What dost thou want?’ they asked; and Hok Lee proceeded to tell them of his fresh misfortunes, and begged so hard to be allowed one more trial at dancing that the dwarfs consented, for there is nothing they love so much as being amused.

Now, Hok Lee knew how much depended on his dancing well, so he plucked up a good spirit and began, first quite slowly, and faster by degrees, and he danced so well and gracefully, and made such new and wonderful steps, that the dwarfs were quite delighted with him.

They clapped their tiny hands, and shouted, ‘Well done, Hok Lee, well done; go on, dance more, for we are pleased.’

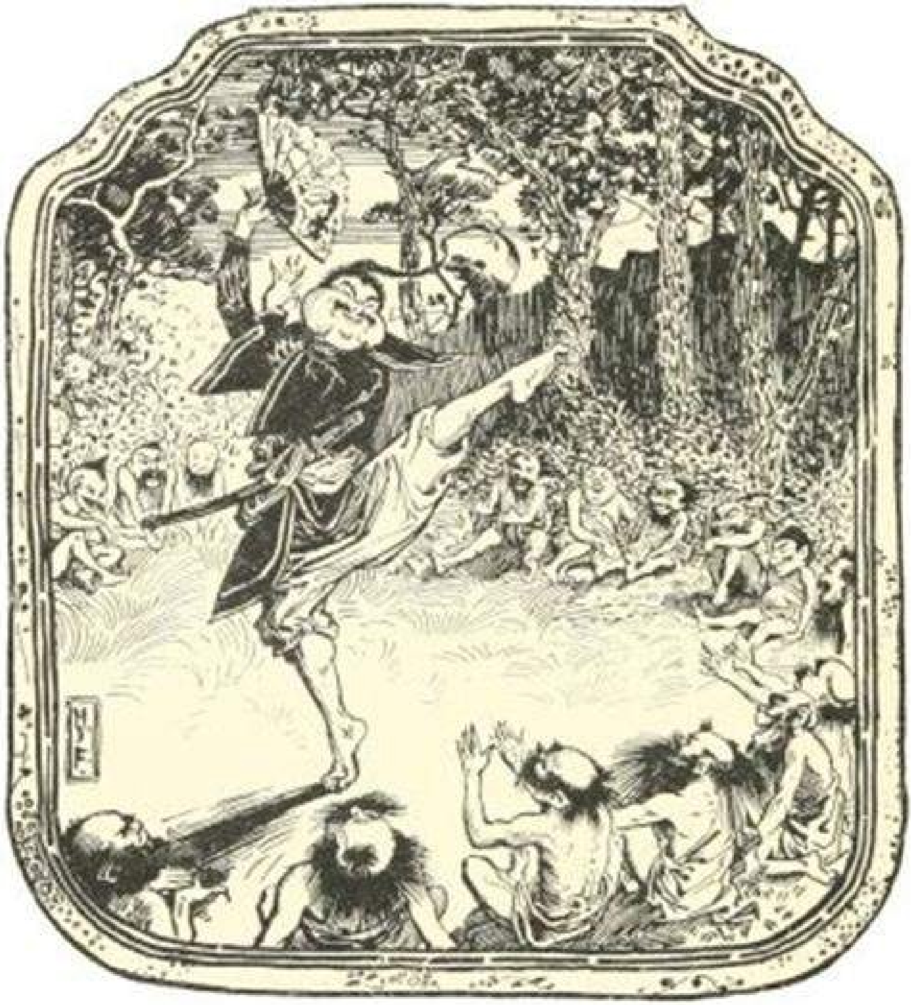

And Hok Lee danced on and on, till he really could dance no more, and was obliged to stop.

Then the leader of the dwarfs said, ‘We are well pleased, Hok Lee, and as a recompense for thy dancing thy face shall be cured. Farewell.’

With these words he and the other dwarfs vanished, and Hok Lee, putting his hands to his face, found to his great joy that his cheeks were reduced to their natural size. The way home seemed short and easy to him, and he went to bed happy, and resolved never to go out robbing again.

Next day the whole town was full of the news of Hok’s sudden cure. His neighbours questioned him, but could get nothing from him, except the fact that he had discovered a wonderful cure for all kinds of diseases.

After a time a rich neighbour, who had been ill for some years, came, and offered to give Hok Lee a large sum of money if he would tell him how he might get cured. Hok Lee consented on condition that he swore to keep the secret. He did so, and Hok Lee told him of the dwarfs and their dances.

The neighbour went off, carefully obeyed Hok Lee’s directions, and was duly cured by the dwarfs. Then another and another came to Hok Lee to beg his secret, and from each he extracted a vow of secrecy and a large sum of money. This went on for some years, so that at length Hok Lee became a very wealthy man, and ended his days in peace and prosperity.

From the Chinese.

THE STORY OF THE THREE BEARS

Once upon a time there were Three Bears, who lived together in a house of their own in a wood. One of them was a Little, Small, Wee Bear; and one was a Middle-sized Bear, and the other was a Great, Huge Bear. They had each a pot for their porridge, a little pot for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; and a middle-sized pot for the Middle Bear; and a great pot for the Great, Huge Bear. And they had each a chair to sit in; a little chair for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; and a middle-sized chair for the Middle Bear; and a great chair for the Great, Huge Bear. And they had each a bed to sleep in; a little bed for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; and a middle-sized bed for the Middle Bear; and a great bed for the Great, Huge Bear.

One day, after they had made the porridge for their breakfast, and poured it into their porridge-pots, they walked out into the wood while the porridge was cooling, that they might not burn their mouths by beginning too soon to eat it. And while they were walking, a little old woman came to the house. She could not have been a good, honest old woman; for, first, she looked in at the window, and then she peeped in at the keyhole; and, seeing nobody in the house, she lifted the latch. The door was not fastened, because the bears were good bears, who did nobody any harm, and never suspected that anybody would harm them. So the little old woman opened the door and went in; and well pleased she was when she saw the porridge on the table. If she had been a good little old woman she would have waited till the bears came home, and then, perhaps, they would have asked her to breakfast; for they were good bears — a little rough or so, as the manner of bears is, but for all that very good-natured and hospitable. But she was an impudent, bad old woman, and set about helping herself.

So first she tasted the porridge of the Great, Huge Bear, and that was too hot for her; and she said a bad word about that. And then she tasted the porridge of the Middle Bear; and that was too cold for her; and she said a bad word about that too. And then she went to the porridge of the Little, Small, Wee Bear, and tasted that; and that was neither too hot nor too cold, but just right; and she liked it so well, that she ate it all up: but the naughty old woman said a bad word about the little porridge-pot, because it did not hold enough for her.

Then the little old woman sate down in the chair of the Great, Huge Bear, and that was too hard for her. And then she sate down in the chair of the Middle Bear, and that was too soft for her. And then she sate down in the chair of the Little, Small, Wee Bear, and that was neither too hard nor too soft, but just right.

So she seated herself in it, and there she sate till the bottom of the chair came out, and down came she, plump upon the ground. And the naughty old woman said a wicked word about that too.

Then the little old woman went up stairs into the bedchamber in which the three bears slept. And first she lay down upon the bed of the Great, Huge Bear; but that was too high at the head for her. And next she lay down upon the bed of the Middle Bear; and that was too high at the foot for her. And then she lay down upon the bed of the Little, Small, Wee Bear; and that was neither too high at the head, nor at the foot, but just right. So she covered herself up comfortably, and lay there till she fell fast asleep.

By this time the three bears thought their porridge would be cool enough; so they came home to breakfast. Now the little old woman had left the spoon of the Great, Huge Bear, standing in his porridge.

‘SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY PORRIDGE!’

said the Great, Huge Bear, in his great gruff voice. And when the Middle Bear looked at his, he saw that the spoon was standing in it too. They were wooden spoons; if they had been silver ones, the naughty old woman would have put them in her pocket.

‘Somebody Has Been At My Porridge!’

said the Middle Bear, in his middle voice.

Then the Little, Small, Wee Bear looked at his, and there was the spoon in the porridge-pot, but the porridge was all gone.

‘*Somebody has been at my porridge, and has eaten it all up!*’

said the Little, Small Wee Bear, in his little, small wee voice.

Upon this the three bears, seeing that some one had entered their house, and eaten up the Little, Small Wee Bear’s breakfast, began to look about them. Now the little old woman had not put the hard cushion straight when she rose from the chair of the Great, Huge Bear.

‘SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR!’

said the Great, Huge Bear, in his great, rough, gruff voice.

And the little old woman had squatted down the soft cushion of the Middle Bear.

‘Somebody Has Been Sitting In My Chair!’

said the Middle Bear, in his middle voice.

And you know what the little old woman had done to the third chair.

‘*Somebody has been sitting in my chair, and has sate the bottom of it out!*’

said the Little, Small, Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.

Then the three bears thought it necessary that they should make farther search; so they went up stairs into their bedchamber. Now the little old woman had pulled the pillow of the Great, Huge Bear out of its place.

‘SOMEBODY HAS BEEN LYING IN MY BED!’

said the Great, Huge Bear, in his great, rough, gruff voice.

And the little old woman had pulled the bolster of the Middle Bear out of its place.

‘Somebody Has Been Lying In My Bed!’

said the Middle Bear in his middle voice.

And when the Little, Small, Wee Bear came to look at his bed, there was the bolster in its place, and the pillow in its place upon the bolster, and upon the pillow was the little old woman’s ugly, dirty head, — which was not in its place, for she had no business there.

‘*Somebody has been lying in my bed, — and here she is!’*

said the Little, Small, Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.

The little old woman had heard in her sleep the great, rough, gruff voice of the Great, Huge Bear; but she was so fast asleep that it was no more to her than the roaring of wind or the rumbling of thunder. And she had heard the middle voice of the Middle Bear, but it was only as if she had heard someone speaking in a dream. But when she heard the little, small, wee voice of the Little, Small, Wee Bear, it was so sharp, and so shrill, that it awakened her at once. Up she started; and when she saw the Three Bears on one side of the bed, she tumbled herself out at the other, and ran to the window. Now the window was open, because the bears, like good, tidy bears as they were, always opened their bedchamber window when they got up in the morning. Out the little old woman jumped; and whether she broke her neck in the fall, or ran into the wood and was lost there, or found her way out of the wood and was taken up by the constable and sent to the House of Correction for a vagrant as she was, I cannot tell. But the Three Bears never saw anything more of her.

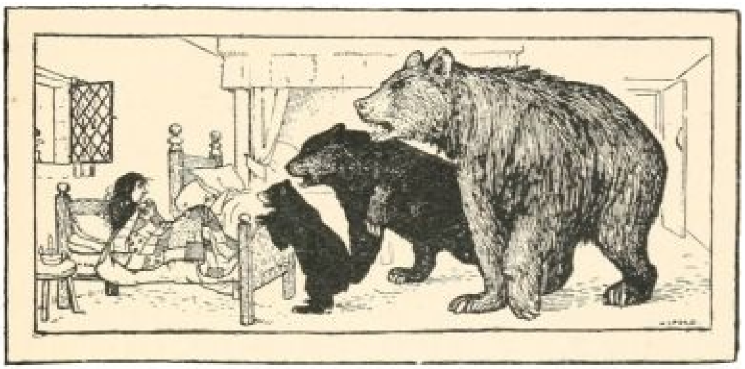

Southey.

PRINCE VIVIEN AND THE PRINCESS PLACIDA

Once upon a time there lived a King and Queen who loved one another dearly. Indeed the Queen, whose name was Santorina, was so pretty and so kind-hearted that it would have been a wonder if her husband had not been fond of her, while King Gridelin himself was a perfect bundle of good qualities, for the Fairy who presided at his christening had summoned the shades of all his ancestors, and taken something good from each of them to form his character. Unfortunately, though, she had given him rather too much kindness of heart, which is a thing that generally gets its possessor into trouble, but so far all things had prospered with King Gridelin. However, it was not to be expected such good fortune could last, and before very long the Queen had a lovely little daughter who was named Placida. Now the King, who thought that if she resembled her mother in face and mind she would need no other gift, never troubled to ask any of the Fairies to her christening, and this offended them mortally, so that they resolved to punish him severely for thus depriving them of their rights. So, to the despair of King Gridelin, the Queen first of all became very ill, and then disappeared altogether. If it had not been for the little Princess there is no saying what would have become of him, he was so miserable, but there she was to be brought up, and luckily the good Fairy Lolotte, in spite of all that had passed, was willing to come and take charge of her, and of her little cousin Prince Vivien, who was an orphan and had been placed under the care of his uncle, King Gridelin, when he was quite a baby. Although she neglected nothing that could possibly have been done for them, their characters, as they grew up, plainly proved that education only softens down natural defects, but cannot entirely do away with them; for Placida, who was perfectly lovely, and with a capacity and intelligence which enabled her to learn and understand anything that presented itself, was at the same time as lazy and indifferent as it is possible for anyone to be, while Vivien on the contrary was only too lively, and was for ever taking up some new thing and as promptly tiring of it, and flying off to something else which held his fickle fancy an equally short time. As these two children would possibly inherit the kingdom, it was natural that their people should take a great interest in them, and it fell out that all the tranquil and peace-loving citizens desired that Placida should one day be their Queen, while the rash and quarrelsome hoped great things for Vivien. Such a division of ideas seemed to promise civil wars and all kinds of troubles to the State, and even in the Palace the two parties frequently came into collision. As for the children themselves, though they were too well brought up to quarrel, still the difference in all their tastes and feelings made it impossible for them to like one another, so there seemed no chance of their ever consenting to be married, which was a pity, since that was the only thing that would have satisfied both parties. Prince Vivien was fully aware of the feeling in his favour, but being too honourable to wish to injure his pretty cousin, and perhaps too impatient and volatile to care to think seriously about anything, he suddenly took it into his head that he would go off by himself in search of adventure. Luckily this idea occurred to him when he was on horseback, for he would certainly have set out on foot rather than lose an instant. As it was, he simply turned his horse's head, without another thought than that of getting out of the kingdom as soon as possible. This abrupt departure was a great blow to the State, especially as no one had any idea what had become of the Prince. Even King Gridelin, who had never cared for anything since the disappearance of Queen Santorina, was roused by this new loss, and though he could not so much as look at the Princess Placida without shedding floods of tears, he resolved to see for himself what talents and capabilities she showed. He very soon found out that in addition to her natural indolence, she was being as much indulged and spoilt day by day as if the Fairy had been her grandmother, and was obliged to remonstrate very seriously upon the subject. Lolotte took his reproaches meekly, and promised faithfully that she would not encourage the Princess in her idleness and indifference any more. From this moment poor Placida's troubles began! She was actually expected to choose her own dresses, to take care of her jewels, and to find her own amusements; but rather than take so much trouble she wore the same old frock from morning till night, and never appeared in public if she could possibly avoid it. However, this was not all, King Gridelin insisted that the affairs of the kingdom should be explained to her, and that she should attend all the councils and give her opinion upon the matter in hand whenever it was asked of her, and this made her life such a burden to her that she implored Lolotte to take her away from a country where too much was required of an unhappy Princess.

The Fairy refused at first with a great show of firmness, but who could resist the tears and entreaties of anyone so pretty as Placida? It came to this in the end, that she transported the Princess just as she was, cosily tucked up upon her favourite couch, to her own Grotto, and this new disappearance left all the people in despair, and Gridelin went about looking more distracted than ever. But now let us return to Prince Vivien, and see what his restless spirit has brought him to. Though Placida's kingdom was a large one, his horse had carried him gallantly to the limit of it, but it could go no further, and the Prince was obliged to dismount and continue his journey on foot, though this slow mode of progress tired his patience severely.

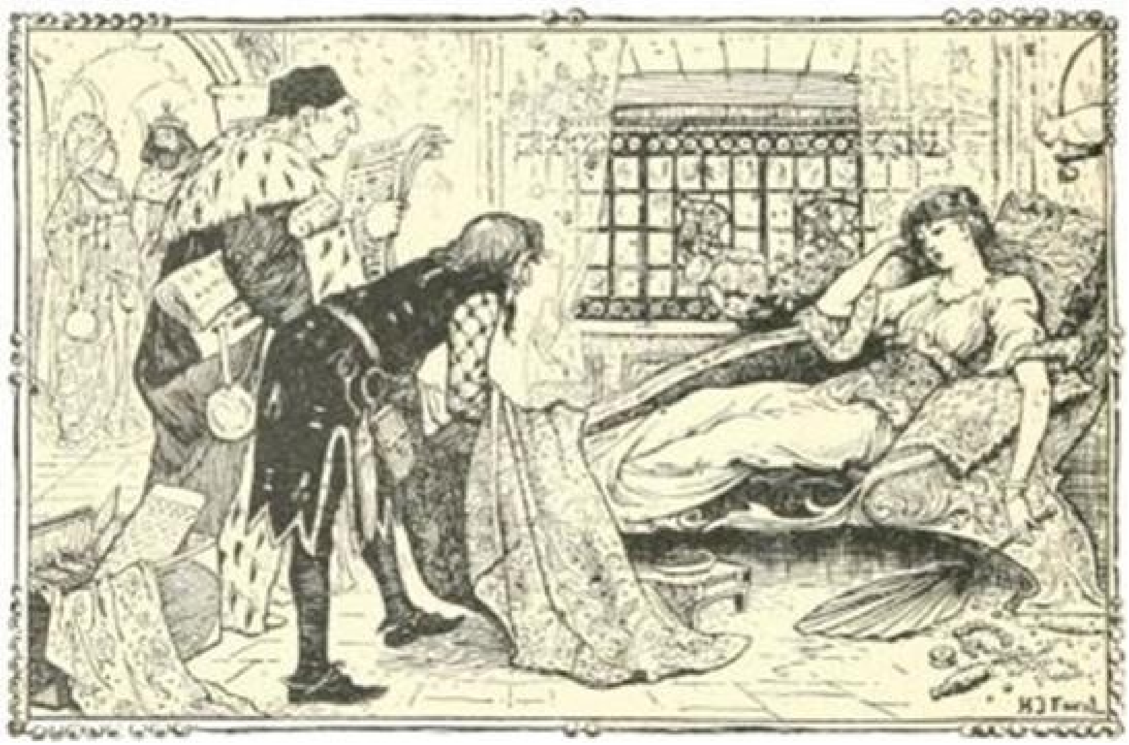

After what seemed to him a very long time, he found himself all alone in a vast forest, so dark and gloomy that he secretly shuddered; however, he chose the most promising looking path he could find, and marched along it courageously at his best speed, but in spite of all his efforts, night fell before he reached the edge of the wood.

For some time he stumbled along, keeping to the path as well as he could in the darkness, and just as he was almost wearied out he saw before him a gleam of light.

This sight revived his drooping spirits, and he made sure that he was now close to the shelter and supper he needed so much, but the more he walked towards the light the further away it seemed; sometimes he even lost sight of it altogether, and you may imagine how provoked and impatient he was by the time he finally arrived at the miserable cottage from which the light proceeded. He gave a loud knock at the door, and an old woman’s voice answered from within, but as she did not seem to be hurrying herself to open it he redoubled his blows, and demanded to be let in imperiously, quite forgetting that he was no longer in his own kingdom. But all this had no effect upon the old woman, who only noticed all the uproar he was making by saying gently:

‘You must have patience.’

He could hear that she really was coming to open the door to him, only she was so very long about it. First she chased away her cat, lest it should run away when the door was opened, then he heard her talking to herself and made out that her lamp wanted trimming, that she might see better who it was that knocked, and then that it lacked fresh oil, and she must refill it. So what with one thing and another she was an immense time trotting to and fro, and all the while she now and again bade the Prince have patience. When at last he stood within the little hut he saw with despair that it was a picture of poverty, and that not a crumb of anything eatable was to be seen, and when he explained to the old woman that he was dying of hunger and fatigue she only answered tranquilly that he must have patience. However, she presently showed him a bundle of straw on which he could sleep.

‘But what can I have to eat?’ cried Prince Vivien sharply.

‘Wait a little, wait a little,’ she replied. ‘If you will only have patience I am just going out into the garden to gather some peas: we will shell them at our leisure, then I will light a fire and cook them, and when they are thoroughly done, we can enjoy them peaceably; there is no hurry.’

‘I shall have died of starvation by the time all that is done,’ said the Prince ruefully.

‘Patience, patience,’ said the old woman looking at him with her slow gentle smile, ‘I can’t be hurried. “All things come at last to him who waits;” you must have heard that often.’

Prince Vivien was wild with aggravation, but there was nothing to be done.

‘Come then,’ said the old woman, ‘you shall hold the lamp to light me while I pick the peas.’

The Prince in his haste snatched it up so quickly that it went out, and it took him a long time to light it again with two little bits of glowing charcoal which he had to dig out from the pile of ashes upon the hearth. However, at last the peas were gathered and shelled, and the fire lighted, but then they had to be carefully counted, since the old woman declared that she would cook fifty-four, and no more. In vain did the Prince represent to her that he was famished — that fifty-four peas would go no way towards satisfying his hunger — that a few peas, more or less, surely could not matter. It was quite useless, in the end he had to count out the fifty-four, and worse than that, because he dropped one or two in his hurry, he had to begin again from the very first, to be sure the number was complete. As soon as they were cooked the old dame took a pair of scales and a morsel of bread from the cupboard, and was just about to divide it when Prince Vivien, who really could wait no longer, seized the whole piece and ate it up, saying in his turn, ‘Patience.’

‘You mean that for a joke,’ said the old woman, as gently as ever, ‘but that is really my name, and some day you will know more about me.’

Then they each ate their twenty-seven peas, and the Prince was surprised to find that he wanted nothing more, and he slept as sweetly upon his bed of straw as he had ever done in his palace.

In the morning the old woman gave him milk and bread for his breakfast, which he ate contentedly, rejoicing that there was nothing to be gathered, or counted, or cooked, and when he had finished he begged her to tell him who she was.

‘That I will, with pleasure,’ she replied. ‘But it will be a long story.’

‘Oh! if it’s long, I can’t listen,’ cried the Prince.

‘But,’ said she, ‘at your age, you should attend to what old people say, and learn to have patience.’

‘But, but,’ said the Prince, in his most impatient tone, ‘old people should not be so long-winded! Tell me what country I have got into, and nothing else.’

‘With all my heart,’ said she. ‘You are in the Forest of the Black Bird; it is here that he utters his oracles.’

‘An Oracle,’ cried the Prince. ‘Oh! I must go and consult him.’ Thereupon he drew a handful of gold from his pocket, and offered it to the old woman, and when she would not take it, he threw it down upon the table and was off like a flash of lightning, without even staying to ask the way. He took the first path that presented itself and followed it at the top of his speed, often losing his way, or stumbling over some stone, or running up against a tree, and leaving behind him without regret the cottage which had been as little to his taste as the character of its possessor. After some time he saw in the distance a huge black castle which commanded a view of the whole forest. The Prince felt certain that this must be the abode of the Oracle, and just as the sun was setting he reached its outermost gates. The whole castle was surrounded by a deep moat, and the drawbridge and the gates, and even the water in the moat, were all of the same sombre hue as the walls and towers. Upon the gate hung a huge bell, upon which was written in red letters:

‘Mortal, if thou art curious to know thy fate, strike this bell, and submit to what shall befall thee.’

The Prince, without the smallest hesitation, snatched up a great stone, and hammered vigorously upon the bell, which gave forth a deep and terrible sound, the gate flew open, and closed again with a thundering clang the moment the Prince had passed through it, while from every tower and battlement rose a wheeling, screaming crowd of bats which darkened the whole sky with their multitudes. Anyone but Prince Vivien would have been terrified by such an uncanny sight, but he strode stoutly forward till he reached the second gate, which was opened to him by sixty black slaves covered from head to foot in long mantles.

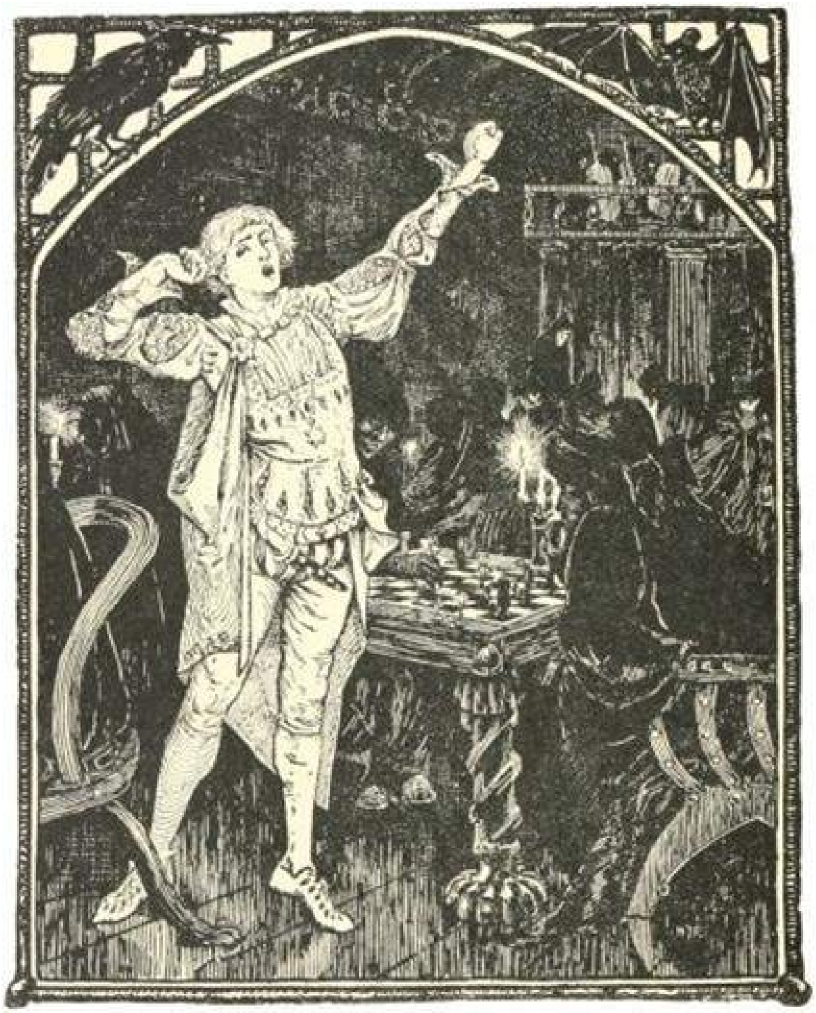

He wished to speak to them, but soon discovered that they spoke an utterly unknown language, and did not seem to understand a word he said. This was a great aggravation to the Prince, who was not accustomed to keep his ideas to himself, and he positively found himself wishing for his old friend Patience. However, he had to follow his guides in silence, and they led him into a magnificent hall; the floor was of ebony, the walls of jet, and all the hangings were of black velvet, but the Prince looked round it in vain for something to eat, and then made signs that he was hungry. In the same manner he was respectfully given to understand that he must wait, and after several hours the sixty hooded and shrouded figures re-appeared, and conducted him with great ceremony, and also very very slowly, to a banqueting hall, where they all placed themselves at a long table. The dishes were arranged down the centre of it, and with his usual impetuosity the Prince seized the one that stood in front of him to draw it nearer, but soon found that it was firmly fixed in its place. Then he looked at his solemn and lugubrious neighbours, and saw that each one was supplied with a long hollow reed through which he slowly sucked up his portion, and the Prince was obliged to do the same, though he found it a frightfully tedious process. After supper, they returned as they had come to the ebony room, where he was compelled to look on while his companions played interminable games of chess, and not until he was nearly dying of weariness did they, slowly and ceremoniously as before, conduct him to his sleeping apartment. The hope of consulting the Oracle woke him very early the next morning, and his first demand was to be allowed to present himself before it, but, without replying, his attendants conducted him to a huge marble bath, very shallow at one end, and quite deep at the other, and gave him to understand that he was to go into it. The Prince, nothing loth, was for springing at once into deep water, but he was gently but forcibly held back and only allowed to stand where it was about an inch deep, and he was nearly wild with impatience when he found that this process was to be repeated every day in spite of all he could say or do, the water rising higher and higher by inches, so that for sixty days he had to live in perpetual silence, ceremoniously conducted to and fro, supping all his meals through the long reed, and looking on at innumerable games of chess, the game of all others which he detested most. But at last the water rose as high as his chin, and his bath was complete. And that day the slaves in their black robes, and each having a large bat perched upon his head, marched in slow procession with the Prince in their midst, chanting a melancholy song, to the iron gate that led into a kind of Temple. At the sound of their chanting, another band of slaves appeared, and took possession of the unhappy Vivien.

They looked to him exactly like the ones he had left, except that they moved more slowly still, and each one held a raven upon his wrist, and their harsh croakings re-echoed through the dismal place. Holding the Prince by the arms, not so much to do him honour as to restrain his impatience, they proceeded by slow degrees up the steps of the Temple, and when they at last reached the top he thought his long waiting must be at an end. But on the contrary, after slowly enshrouding him in a long black robe like their own, they led him into the Temple itself, where he was forced to witness numbers of lengthy rites and ceremonies. By this time Vivien's active impatience had subsided into passive weariness, his yawns were continual and scandalous, but nobody heeded him, he stared hopelessly at the thick black curtain which hung down straight in front of him, and could hardly believe his eyes when it presently began to slide back, and he saw before him the Black Bird. It was of enormous size, and was perched upon a thick bar of iron which ran across from one side of the Temple to the other. At the sight of it all the slaves fell upon their knees and hid their faces, and when it had three times flapped its mighty wings it uttered distinctly in Prince Vivien's own language the words:

'Prince, your only chance of happiness depends upon that which is most opposed to your own nature.'

Then the curtain fell before it once more, and the Prince, after many ceremonies, was presented with a raven which perched upon his wrist, and was conducted slowly back to the iron gate. Here the raven left him and he was handed over once more to the care of the first band of slaves, while a large bat flickered down and settled upon his head of its own accord, and so he was taken back to the marble bath, and had to go through the whole process again, only this time he began in deep water which receded daily inch by inch. When this was over the slaves escorted him to the outer gate, and took leave of him with every mark of esteem and politeness, to which it is to be feared he responded but indifferently, since the gate was no sooner opened than he took to his heels, and fled away with all his might, his one idea being to put as much space as possible between himself and the dreary place into which he had ventured so rashly, just to consult a tedious Oracle who after all had told him nothing. He actually reflected for about five seconds on his folly, and came to the conclusion that it might sometimes be advisable to think before one acted.

After wandering about for several days until he was weary and hungry, he at last succeeded in finding a way out of the forest, and soon came to a wide and rapid river, which he followed, hoping to find some means of crossing it, and it happened that as the sun rose the next morning he saw something of a dazzling whiteness moored out in the middle of the stream. Upon looking more attentively at it he found that it was one of the prettiest little ships he had ever seen, and the boat that belonged to it was made fast to the bank quite close to him. The Prince was immediately seized with the most ardent desire to go on board the ship, and shouted loudly to attract the notice of her crew, but no one answered. So he sprang into the little boat and rowed away without finding it at all hard work, for the boat was made all of white paper and was as light as a rose leaf. The ship was made of white paper too, as the Prince presently discovered when he reached it. He found not a soul on board, but there was a very cosy little bed in the cabin, and an ample supply of all sorts of good things to eat and drink, which he made up his mind to enjoy until something new happened. Having been thoroughly well brought up at the court of King Gridelin, of course he understood the art of navigation, but when once he had started, the current carried the vessel down at such a pace that before he knew where he was the Prince found himself out at sea, and a wind springing up behind him just at this moment soon drove him out of sight of land. By this time he was somewhat alarmed, and did his best to put the ship about and get back to the river, but wind and tide were too strong for him, and he began to think of the number of times, from his childhood up, that he had been warned not to meddle with water. But it was too late now to do anything but wish vainly that he had stayed on shore, and to grow heartily weary of the boat and the sea and everything connected with it. These two things, however, he did most thoroughly. To put the finishing touch to his misfortunes he presently found himself becalmed in mid-ocean, a state of affairs which would be considered trying by the most patient of men, so you may imagine how it affected Prince Vivien! He even came to wishing himself back at the Castle of the Black Bird, for there at least he saw some living beings, whereas on board the white-paper ship he was absolutely alone, and could not imagine how he was ever to get away from his wearisome prison. However, after a very long time, he did see land, and his impatience to be on shore was so great that he at once flung himself over the ship's side that he might reach it sooner by swimming. But this was quite useless, for spring as far as he might from the vessel, it was always under his feet again before he reached the water, and he had to resign himself to his fate, and wait with what patience he could muster until the winds and waves carried the ship into a kind of natural harbour which ran far into the land. After his long imprisonment at sea the Prince was delighted with the sight of the great trees which grew down to the very edge of the water, and leaping lightly on shore he speedily lost himself in the thick forest. When he had wandered a long way he stopped to rest beside a clear spring of water, but scarcely had he thrown himself down upon the mossy bank when there was a great rustling in the bushes close by, and out sprang a pretty little gazelle panting and exhausted, which fell at his feet gasping out —

'Oh! Vivien, save me!'

The Prince in great astonishment leapt to his feet, and had just time to draw his sword before he found himself face to face with a large green lion which had been hotly pursuing the poor little gazelle. Prince Vivien attacked it gallantly and a fierce combat ensued, which, however, ended before long in the Prince's dealing his adversary a terrific blow which felled him to the earth. As he fell the lion whistled loudly three times with such force that the forest rang again, and the sound must have been heard for more than two leagues round, after which having apparently nothing more to do in the world he rolled over on his side and died. The Prince without paying any further heed to him or to his whistling returned to the pretty gazelle, saying:

‘Well! are you satisfied now? Since you can talk, pray tell me instantly what all this is about, and how you happen to know my name.’

‘Oh, I must rest for a long time before I can talk,’ she replied, ‘and beside, I very much doubt if you will have leisure to listen, for the affair is by no means finished. In fact,’ she continued in the same languid tone, ‘you had better look behind you now.’

The Prince turned sharply round and to his horror saw a huge Giant approaching with mighty strides, crying fiercely —

‘Who has made my lion whistle I should like to know?’

‘I have,’ replied Prince Vivien boldly, ‘but I can answer for it that he will not do it again!’

At these words the Giant began to howl and lament.

‘Alas, my poor Tiny, my sweet little pet,’ he cried, ‘but at least I can avenge thy death.’

Thereupon he rushed at the Prince, brandishing an immense serpent which was coiled about his wrist. Vivien, without losing his coolness, aimed a terrific blow at it with his sword, but no sooner did he touch the snake than it changed into a Giant and the Giant into a snake, with such rapidity that the Prince felt perfectly giddy, and this happened at least half-a-dozen times, until at last with a fortunate stroke he cut the serpent in halves, and picking up one morsel flung it with all his force at the nose of the Giant, who fell insensible on top of the lion, and in an instant a thick black cloud rolled up which hid them from view, and when it cleared away they had all disappeared.

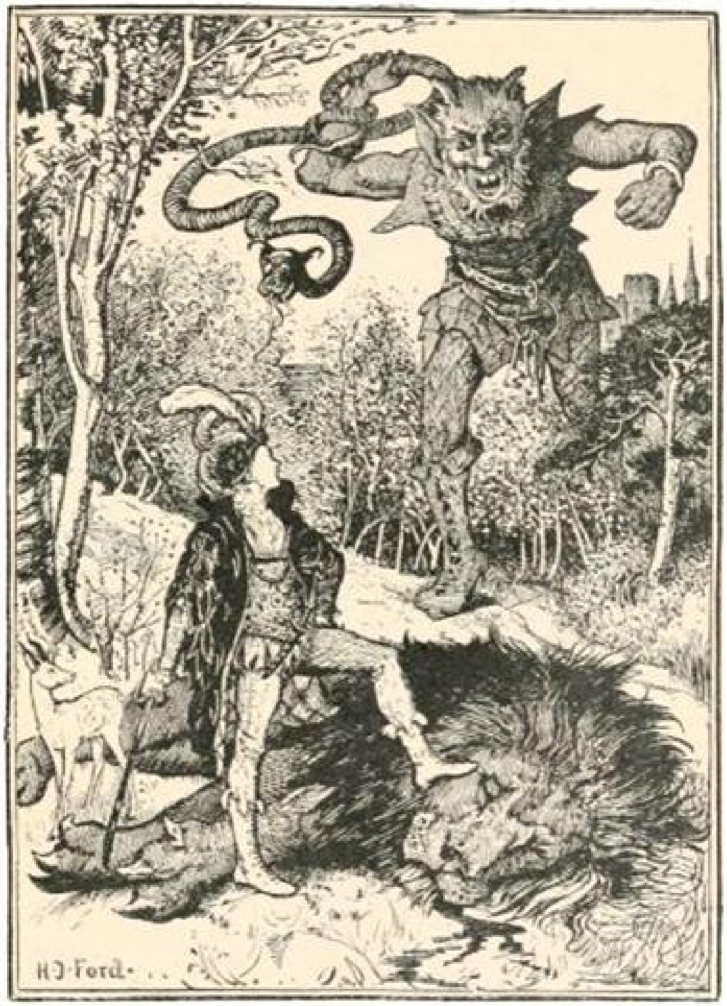

Then the Prince, without even waiting to sheathe his sword, rushed back to the gazelle, crying:

‘Now you have had plenty of time to recover your wits, and you have nothing more to fear, so tell me who you are, and what this horrible Giant, with his lion and his serpent, have to do with you, and for pity’s sake be quick about it.’

‘I will tell you with pleasure,’ she answered, ‘but where is the hurry? I want you to come back with me to the Green Castle, but I don’t want to walk there, it is so far, and walking is so fatiguing.’

‘Let us set out at once then,’ replied the Prince severely, ‘or else really I shall have to leave you where you are. Surely a young and active gazelle like you ought to be ashamed of not being able to walk a few steps. The further off this castle is the faster we ought to walk, but as you don’t appear to enjoy that, I will promise that we will go gently, and we can talk by the way.’

‘It would be better still if you would carry me,’ said she sweetly, ‘but as I don’t like to see people giving themselves trouble, you may carry me, and make that snail carry you.’ So saying, she pointed languidly with one tiny foot at what the Prince had taken for a block of stone, but now he saw that it was a huge snail.

‘What! I ride a snail!’ cried the Prince; ‘you are laughing at me, and beside we should not get there for a year.’

‘Oh! well then don’t do it,’ replied the gazelle, ‘I am quite willing to stay here. The grass is green, and the water clear. But if I were you I should take the advice that was given me and ride the snail.’

So, though it did not please him at all, the Prince took the gazelle in his arms, and mounted upon the back of the snail, which glided along very peaceably, entirely declining to be hurried by frequent blows from the Prince’s heels. In vain did the gazelle represent to him that she was enjoying herself very much, and that this was the easiest mode of conveyance she had ever discovered. Prince Vivien was wild with impatience, and thought that the Green Castle would never be reached. However, at last, they did get there, and everyone who was in it ran to see the Prince dismount from his singular steed.

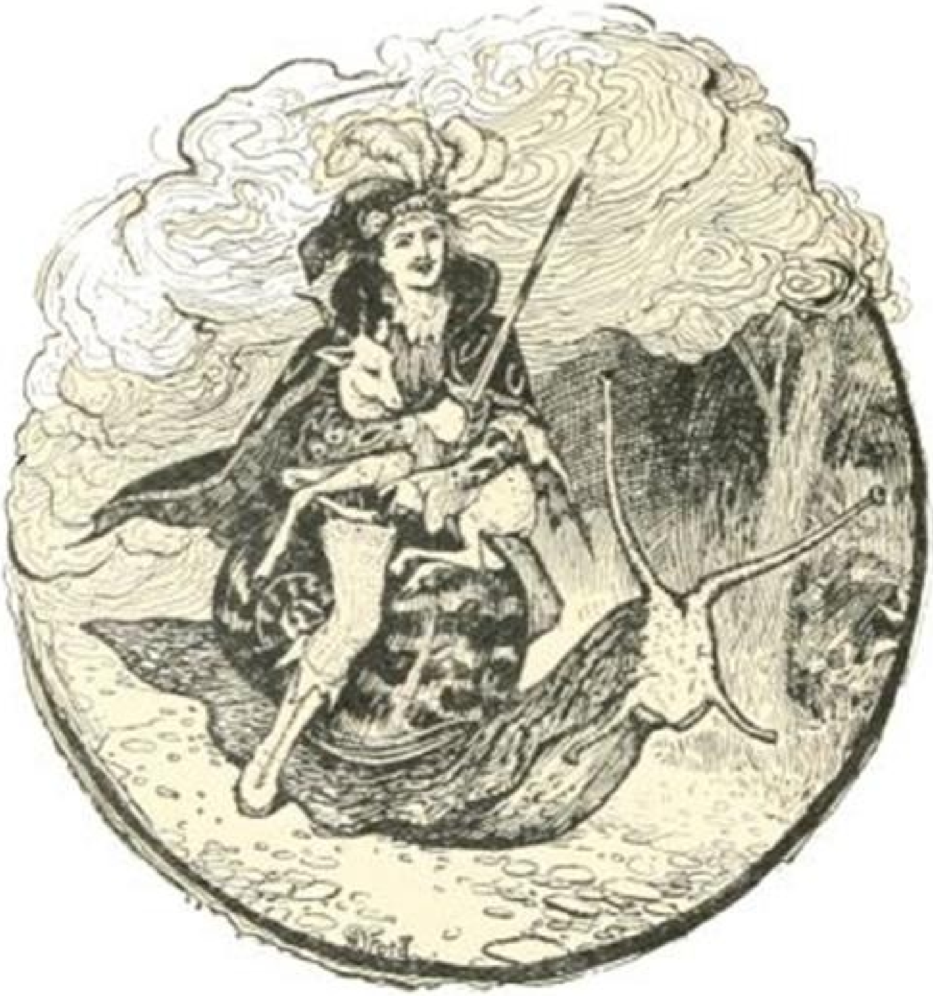

But what was his surprise, when having at her request set the gazelle gently down upon the steps which led up to the castle, he saw her suddenly change into a charming Princess, and recognised in her his pretty cousin Placida, who greeted him with her usual tranquil sweetness. His delight knew no bounds, and he followed her eagerly up into the castle, impatient to know what strange events had brought her there. But after all he had to wait for the Princess's story, for the inhabitants of the Green Lands, hearing that the Giant was dead, ran to offer the kingdom to his vanquisher, and Prince Vivien had to listen to various complimentary harangues, which took a great deal of time, though he cut them as short as politeness allowed — if not shorter. But at last he was free to rejoin Placida, who at once began the story of her adventures.

'After you had gone away,' said she, 'they tried to make me learn how to govern the kingdom, which wearied me to death, so that I begged and prayed Lolotte to take me away with her, and this she presently did, but very reluctantly. However, having been transported to her grotto upon my favourite couch, I spent several delicious days, soothed by the soft green light, which was like a beech wood in the spring, and by the murmuring of bees and the tinkle of falling water. But alas! Lolotte was forced to go away to a general assembly of the Fairies, and she came back in great dismay, telling me that her indulgence to me had cost her dear, for she had been severely reprimanded and ordered to hand me over to the Fairy Mirlifiche, who was already taking charge of you, and who had been much commended for her management of you.'

'Fine management, indeed,' interrupted the Prince, 'if it is to her I owe all the adventures I have met with! But go on with your story, my cousin. I can tell you all about my doings afterwards, and then you can judge for yourself.'

'At first I was grieved to see Lolotte cry,' resumed the Princess, 'but I soon found that grieving was very troublesome, so I thought it better to be calm, and very soon afterwards I saw the Fairy Mirlifiche arrive, mounted upon her great unicorn. She stopped before the grotto and bade Lolotte bring me out to her, at which she cried worse than ever, and kissed me a dozen times, but she dared not refuse. I was lifted up on to the unicorn, behind Mirlifiche, who said to me —

'"Hold on tight, little girl, if you don't want to break your neck."

'And, indeed, I had to hold on with all my might, for her horrible steed trotted so violently that it positively took my breath away. However, at last we stopped at a large farm, and the farmer and his wife ran out as soon as they saw the Fairy, and helped us to dismount.

'I knew that they were really a King and Queen, whom the Fairies were punishing for their ignorance and idleness. You may imagine that I was by this time half dead with fatigue, but Mirlifiche insisted upon my feeding her unicorn before I did anything else. To accomplish this I had to climb up a long ladder into the hayloft, and bring down, one after another, twenty-four handfuls of hay. Never, never before, did I have such a wearisome task! It makes me shudder to think of it now, and that was not all. In the same way I had to carry the twenty-four handfuls of hay to the stable, and then it was supper time, and I had to wait upon all the others. After that I really thought I should be allowed to go peaceably to my little bed, but, oh dear no! First of all I had to make it, for it was all in confusion, and then I had to make one for the Fairy, and tuck her in, and draw the curtains round her, beside rendering her a dozen little services which I was not at all accustomed to. Finally, when I was perfectly exhausted by all this toil, I was free to go to bed myself, but as I had never before undressed myself, and really did not know how to begin, I lay down as I was. Unfortunately, the Fairy found this out, and just as I was falling into a sweet slumber, she made me get up once more, but even then I managed to escape her vigilance, and only took off my upper robe. Indeed, I may tell you in confidence, that I always find disobedience answer very well. One is often scolded, it is true, but then one has been saved some trouble.

‘At the earliest dawn of day Mirlifiche woke me, and made me take many journeys to the stable to bring her word how her unicorn had slept, and how much hay he had eaten, and then to find out what time it was, and if it was a fine day. I was so slow, and did my errands so badly, that before she left she called the King and Queen and said to them:

‘“I am much more pleased with you this year. Continue to make the best of your farm, if you wish to get back to your kingdom, and also take care of this little Princess for me, and teach her to be useful, that when I come I may find her cured of her faults. If she is not — —”

‘Here she broke off with a significant look, and mounting my enemy the unicorn, speedily disappeared.

‘Then the King and Queen, turning to me, asked me what I could do.

‘“Nothing at all, I assure you,” I replied in a tone which really ought to have convinced them, but they went on to describe various employments, and tried to discover which of them would be most to my taste. However, at last I persuaded them that to do nothing whatever would be the only thing that would suit me, and that if they really wanted to be kind to me, they would let me go to bed and to sleep, and not tease me about doing anything. To my great joy, they not only permitted this, but actually, when they had their own meals, the Queen brought my portion up to me. But early the next morning she appeared at my bedside, saying, with an apologetic air:

‘“My pretty child, I am afraid you must really make up your mind to get up to-day. I know quite well how delightful it is to be thoroughly idle, for when my husband and I were King and Queen we did nothing at all from morning to night, and I sincerely hope that it will not be long before those happy days will come again for us. But at present we have not reached them, nor have you, and you know from what the Fairy said that perhaps worse things may happen to us if she is not obeyed. Make haste, I beg of you, and come down to breakfast, for I have put by some delicious cream for you.”

‘It was really very tiresome, but as there was no help for it I went down!

‘But the instant breakfast was over they began again their cuckoo-cry of “What will you do?” In vain did I answer —

‘“Nothing at all, if it please you, madam.”

‘The Queen at last gave me a spindle and about four pounds of hemp upon a distaff, and sent me out to keep the sheep, assuring me that there could not be a pleasanter occupation, and that I could take my ease as much as I pleased. I was forced to set out, very unwillingly, as you may imagine, but I had not walked far before I came to a shady bank in what seemed to me a charming place. I stretched myself cosily upon the soft grass, and with the bundle of hemp for a pillow slept as tranquilly as if there were no such things as sheep in the world, while they for their part wandered hither and thither at their own sweet will, as if there were no such thing as a shepherdess, invading every field, and browsing upon every kind of forbidden dainty, until the peasants, alarmed by the havoc they were making, raised a clamour, which at last reached the ears of the King and Queen, who ran out, and seeing the cause of the commotion, hastily collected their flock. And, indeed, the sooner the better, since they had to pay for all the damage they had done. As for me I lay still and watched them run, for I was very comfortable, and there I might be still if they had not come up, all panting and breathless, and compelled me to get up and follow them; they also reproached me bitterly, but I need hardly tell you that they did not again entrust me with the flock.

‘But whatever they found for me to do it was always the same thing, I spoilt and mismanaged it all, and was so successful in provoking even the most patient people, that one day I ran away from the farm, for I was really afraid the Queen would be obliged to beat me. When I came to the little river in which the King used to fish, I found the boat tied to a tree, and stepping in I unfastened it, and floated gently down with the current. The gliding of the boat was so soothing that I did not trouble myself in the least when the Queen caught sight of me and ran along the bank, crying —

‘“My boat, my boat! Husband, come and catch the little Princess who is running away with my boat!”

‘The current soon carried me out of hearing of her cries, and I dreamed to the song of the ripples and the whisper of the trees, until the boat suddenly stopped, and I found it was stuck fast beside a fresh green meadow, and that the sun was rising. In the distance I saw some little houses which seemed to be built in a most singular fashion, but as I was by this time very hungry I set out towards them, but before I had walked many steps, I saw that the air was full of shining objects which seemed to be fixed, and yet I could not see what they hung from.

‘I went nearer, and saw a silken cord hanging down to the ground, and pulled it just because it was so close to my hand. Instantly the whole meadow resounded to the melodious chiming of a peal of silver bells, and they sounded so pretty that I sat down to listen, and to watch them as they swung shining in the sunbeams. Before they ceased to sound, came a great flight of birds, and each one perching upon a bell added its charming song to the concert. As they ended, I looked up and saw a tall and stately dame advancing towards me, surrounded and followed by a vast flock of every kind of bird.

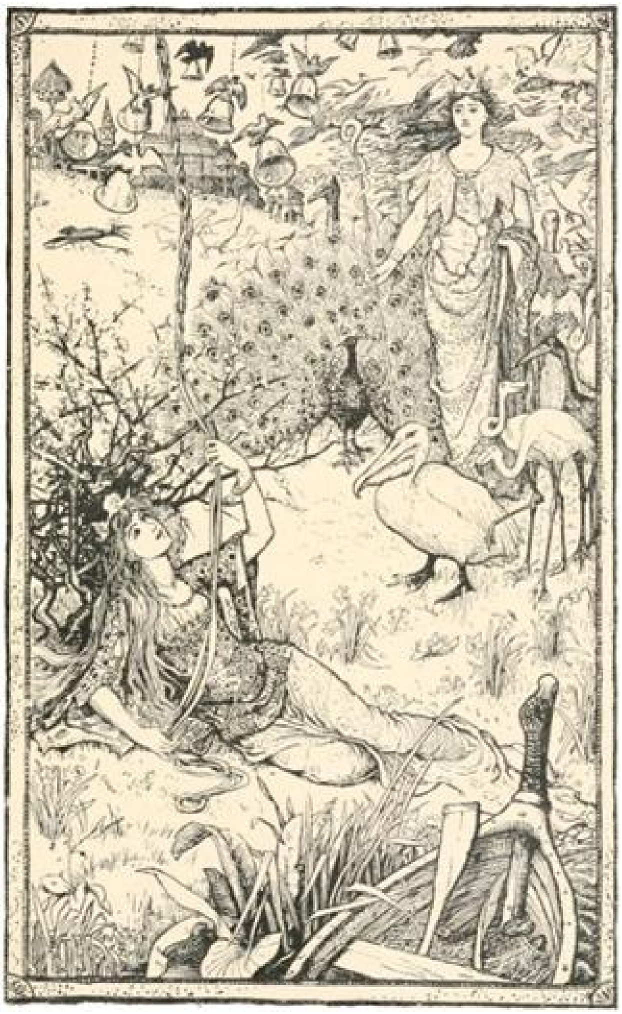

'"Who are you, little girl," said she, "who dares to come where I allow no mortal to live, lest my birds should be disturbed? Still, if you are clever at anything," she added, "I might be able to put up with your presence."

'"Madam," I answered, rising, "you may be very sure that I shall not do anything to alarm your birds. I only beg you, for pity's sake, to give me something to eat."

'"I will do that," she replied, "before I send you where you deserve to go."

'And thereupon she despatched six jays, who were her pages, to fetch me all sorts of biscuits, while some of the other birds brought ripe fruits. In fact, I had a delicious breakfast, though I do not like to be waited upon so quickly. It is so disagreeable to be hurried. I began to think I should like very well to stay in this pleasant country, and I said so to the stately lady, but she answered with the greatest disdain:

'"Do you think I would keep you here? *You!* Why what do you suppose would be the good of you in this country, where everybody is wide-awake and busy? No, no, I have shown you all the hospitality you will get from me."

‘With these words she turned and gave a vigorous pull to the silken rope which I mentioned before, but instead of a melodious chime, there arose a hideous clanging which quite terrified me, and in an instant a huge Black Bird appeared, which alighted at the Fairy’s feet, saying in a frightful voice —

‘“What do you want of me, my sister?”

‘“I wish you to take this little Princess to my cousin, the Giant of the Green Castle, at once,” she replied, “and beg him from me to make her work day and night upon his beautiful tapestry.”

‘At these words the great Bird snatched me up, regardless of my cries, and flew off at a terrific pace — —’

‘Oh! you are joking, cousin,’ interrupted Prince Vivien; ‘you mean as slowly as possible. I know that horrible Black Bird, and the lengthiness of all his proceedings and surroundings.’

‘Have it your own way,’ replied Placida, tranquilly. ‘I cannot bear arguing. Perhaps, this was not even the same bird. At any rate, he carried me off at a prodigious speed, and set me gently down in this very castle of which you are now the master. We entered by one of the windows, and when the Bird had handed me over to the Giant from whom you have been good enough to deliver me, and given the Fairy’s message, it departed.

‘Then the Giant turned to me, saying,

‘“So you are an idler! Ah! well, we must teach you to work. You won’t be the first we have cured of laziness. See how busy all my guests are.”

‘I looked up as he spoke, and saw that an immense gallery ran all round the hall, in which were tapestry frames, spindles, skeins of wool, patterns, and all necessary things. Before each frame about a dozen people were sitting, hard at work, at which terrible sight I fainted away, and as soon as I recovered they began to ask me what I could do.

‘It was in vain that I replied as before, and with the strongest desire to be taken at my word, “Nothing at all.”

‘The Giant only said,

‘“Then you must learn to do something; in this world there is enough work for everybody.”

‘It appeared that they were working into the tapestry all the stories the Fairies liked best, and they began to try and teach me to help them, but from the first class, where they tried me to begin with, I sank lower and lower, and not even the most simple stitches could I learn.

‘In vain they punished me by all the usual methods. In vain the Giant showed me his menagerie, which was entirely composed of children who would not work! Nothing did me any good, and at last I was reduced to drawing water for the dyeing of the wools, and even over that I was so slow that this morning the Giant flew into a rage and changed me into a gazelle. He was just putting me into the menagerie when I happened to catch sight of a dog, and was seized with such terror that I fled away at my utmost speed, and escaped through the outer court of the castle. The Giant, fearing that I should be lost altogether, sent his green lion after me, with orders to bring me back, cost what it might, and I should certainly have let myself be caught, or eaten up, or anything, rather than run any further, if I had not luckily met you by the fountain. And oh!' concluded the Princess, 'how delightful it is once more to be able to sit still in peace. I was so tired of trying to learn things.'

Prince Vivien said that, for his part, he had been kept a great deal too still, and had not found it at all amusing, and then he recounted all his adventures with breathless rapidity. How he had taken shelter with Dame Patience, and consulted the Oracle, and voyaged in the paper ship. Then they went hand in hand to release all the prisoners in the castle, and all the Princes and Princesses who were in cages in the menagerie, for the instant the Green Giant was dead they had resumed their natural forms. As you may imagine, they were all very grateful, and Princess Placida entreated them never, never to do another stitch of work so long as they lived, and they promptly made a great bonfire in the courtyard, and solemnly burnt all the embroidery frames and spinning wheels. Then the Princess gave them splendid presents, or rather sat by while Prince Vivien gave them, and there were great rejoicings in the Green Castle, and everyone did his best to please the Prince and Princess. But with all their good intentions, they often made mistakes, for Vivien and Placida were never of one mind about their plans, so it was very confusing, and they frequently found themselves obeying the Prince's orders, very, very slowly, and rushing off with lightning speed to do something that the Princess did not wish to have done at all, until, by-and-by, the two cousins took to consulting with, and consoling one another in all these little vexations, and at last came to be so fond of each other that for Placida's sake Vivien became quite patient, and for Vivien's sake Placida made the most unheard-of exertions. But now the Fairies who had been watching all these proceedings with interest, thought it was time to interfere, and ascertain by further trials if this improvement was likely to continue, and if they really loved one another. So they caused Placida to seem to have a violent fever, and Vivien to languish and grow dull, and made each of them very uneasy about the other, and then, finding a moment when they were apart, the Fairy Mirlifiche suddenly appeared to Placida, and said —

'I have just seen Prince Vivien, and he seemed to me to be very ill.'

'Alas! yes, madam,' she answered, 'and if you will but cure him, you may take me back to the farm, or bring the Green Giant to life again, and you shall see how obedient I will be.'

'If you really wish him to recover,' said the Fairy, 'you have only to catch the Trotting Mouse and the Chaffinch-on-the-Wing and bring them to me. Only remember that time presses!'

She had hardly finished speaking before the Princess was rushing headlong out of the castle gate, and the Fairy after watching her till she was lost to sight, gave a little chuckle and went in search of the Prince, who begged her earnestly to send him back to the Black Castle, or to the paper boat if she would but save Placida's life. The Fairy shook her head, and looked very grave. She quite agreed with him, the Princess was in a bad way— 'But,' said she, 'if you can find the Rosy Mole, and give him to her she will recover.' So now it was the Prince's turn to set off in a vast hurry, only as soon as he left the Castle he happened to go in exactly the opposite direction to the one Placida had taken. Now you can imagine these two devoted lovers hunting night and day. The Princess in the woods, always running, always listening, pursuing hotly after two creatures which seemed to her very hard to catch, which she yet never ceased from pursuing. The Prince on the other hand wandering continually across the meadows, his eyes fixed upon the ground, attentive to every movement among the moles. He was forced to walk slowly — slowly upon tip-toe, hardly venturing to breathe. Often he stood for hours motionless as a statue, and if the desire to succeed could have helped him he would soon have possessed the Rosy Mole. But alas! all that he caught were black and ordinary, though strange to say he never grew impatient, but always seemed ready to begin the tedious hunt again. But this changing of character is one of the most ordinary miracles which love works. Neither the Prince nor the Princess gave a thought to anything but their quest. It never even occurred to them to wonder what country they had reached. So you may guess how astonished they were one day, when having at last been successful after their long and weary chase, they cried aloud at the same instant: 'At last I have saved my beloved,' and then recognising each other's voice looked up, and rushed to meet one another with the wildest joy. Surprise kept them silent while for one delicious moment they gazed into each other's eyes, and just then who should come up but King Gridelin, for it was into his kingdom they had accidentally strayed. He recognised them in his turn and greeted them joyfully, but when they turned afterwards to look for the Rosy Mole, the Chaffinch, and the Trotting-Mouse, they had vanished, and in their places stood a lovely lady whom they did not know, the Black Bird, and the Green Giant. King Gridelin had no sooner set eyes upon the lady than with a cry of joy he clasped her in his arms, for it was no other than his long-lost wife, Santorina, about whose imprisonment in Fairyland you may perhaps read some day.

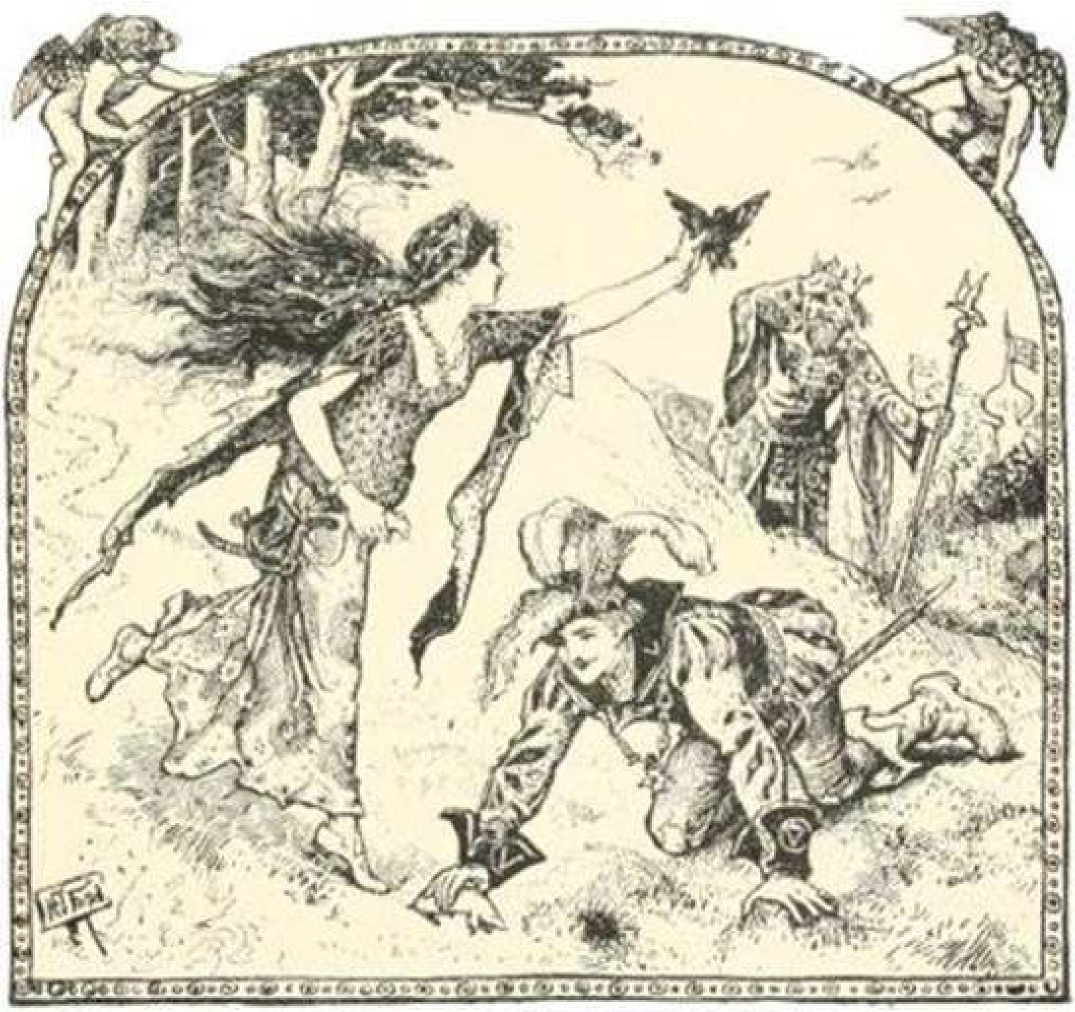

Then the Black Bird and the Green Giant resumed their natural form, for they were enchanters, and up flew Lolotte and Mirlifiche in their chariots, and then there was a great kissing and congratulating, for everybody had regained someone he loved, including the enchanters, who loved their natural forms dearly. After this they repaired to the Palace, and the wedding of Prince Vivien and Princess Placida was held at once with all the splendour imaginable.

King Gridelin and Queen Santorina, after all their experiences, had no further desire to reign, so they retired happily to a peaceful place, leaving their kingdom to the Prince and Princess, who were beloved by all their subjects, and found their greatest happiness all their lives long in making other people happy.

Nonchalante et Papillon.

LITTLE ONE-EYE, LITTLE TWO-EYES, AND LITTLE THREE-EYES

There was once a woman who had three daughters, of whom the eldest was called Little One-eye, because she had only one eye in the middle of her forehead; and the second, Little Two-eyes, because she had two eyes like other people; and the youngest, Little Three-eyes, because she had three eyes, and *her* third eye was also in the middle of her forehead. But because Little Two-eyes did not look any different from other children, her sisters and mother could not bear her. They would say to her, 'You with your two eyes are no better than common folk; you don't belong to us.' They pushed her here, and threw her wretched clothes there, and gave her to eat only what they left, and they were as unkind to her as ever they could be.

It happened one day that Little Two-eyes had to go out into the fields to take care of the goat, but she was still quite hungry because her sisters had given her so little to eat. So she sat down in the meadow and began to cry, and she cried so much that two little brooks ran out of her eyes. But when she looked up once in her grief there stood a woman beside her who asked, 'Little Two-eyes, what are you crying for?' Little Two-eyes answered, 'Have I not reason to cry? Because I have two eyes like other people, my sisters and my mother cannot bear me; they push me out of one corner into another, and give me nothing to eat except what they leave. To-day they have given me so little that I am still quite hungry.' Then the wise woman said, 'Little Two-eyes, dry your eyes, and I will tell you something so that you need never be hungry again. Only say to your goat,

"Little goat, bleat,
Little table, appear,"

and a beautifully spread table will stand before you, with the most delicious food on it, so that you can eat as much as you want. And when you have had enough and don't want the little table any more, you have only to say,

"Little goat, bleat,
Little table, away,"

and then it will vanish.' Then the wise woman went away.

But Little Two-eyes thought, 'I must try at once if what she has told me is true, for I am more hungry than ever'; and she said,

'Little goat, bleat,
Little table appear,'

and scarcely had she uttered the words, when there stood a little table before her covered with a white cloth, on which were arranged a plate, with a knife and fork and a silver spoon, and the most beautiful dishes, which were smoking hot, as if they had just come out of the kitchen. Then Little Two-eyes said the shortest grace she knew, and set to work and made a good dinner. And when she had had enough, she said, as the wise woman had told her,

'Little goat, bleat,
Little table, away,'

and immediately the table and all that was on it disappeared again. 'That is a splendid way of housekeeping,' thought Little Two-eyes, and she was quite happy and contented.

In the evening, when she went home with her goat, she found a little earthenware dish with the food that her sisters had thrown to her, but she did not touch it. The next day she went out again with her goat, and left the few scraps which were given her. The first and second times her sisters did not notice this, but when it happened continually, they remarked it and said, 'Something is the matter with Little Two-eyes, for she always leaves her food now, and she used to gobble up all that was given her. She must have found other means of getting food.' So in order to get at the truth, Little One-eye was told to go out with Little Two-eyes when she drove the goat to pasture, and to notice particularly what she got there, and whether anyone brought her food and drink.

Now when Little Two-eyes was setting out, Little One-eye came up to her and said, 'I will go into the field with you and see if you take good care of the goat, and if you drive him properly to get grass.' But Little Two-eyes saw what Little One-eye had in her mind, and she drove the goat into the long grass and said, 'Come, Little One-eye, we will sit down here, and I will sing you something.' Little One-eye sat down, and as she was very much tired by the long walk to which she was not used, and by the hot day, and as Little Two-eyes went on singing

'Little One-eye, are you awake?
Little One-eye, are you asleep?'

she shut her one eye and fell asleep. When Little Two-eyes saw that Little One-eye was asleep and could find out nothing, she said,

‘Little goat, bleat,
Little table, appear,’

and sat down at her table and ate and drank as much as she wanted. Then she said again,

‘Little goat, bleat,
Little table, away.’

and in the twinkling of an eye all had vanished.

Little Two-eyes then woke Little One-eye and said, ‘Little One-eye, you meant to watch, and, instead, you went to sleep; in the meantime the goat might have run far and wide. Come, we will go home.’ So they went home, and Little Two-eyes again left her little dish untouched, and Little One-eye could not tell her mother why she would not eat, and said as an excuse, ‘I was so sleepy out-of-doors.’

The next day the mother said to Little Three-eyes, ‘This time you shall go with Little Two-eyes and watch whether she eats anything out in the fields, and whether anyone brings her food and drink, for eat and drink she must secretly.’ So Little Three-eyes went to Little Two-eyes and said, ‘I will go with you and see if you take good care of the goat, and if you drive him properly to get grass.’ But little Two-eyes knew what Little Three-eyes had in her mind, and she drove the goat out into the tall grass and said, ‘We will sit down here, Little Three-eyes, and I will sing you something.’ Little Three-eyes sat down; she was tired by the walk and the hot day, and Little Two-eyes sang the same little song again;

‘Little Three-eyes, are you awake?’

but instead of singing as she ought to have done,

‘Little Three-eyes, are you asleep?’

she sang, without thinking,

‘Little *Two-eyes*, are you asleep?’

She went on singing,

‘Little Three-eyes, are you awake?
Little *Two-eyes*, are you asleep?’

so that the two eyes of Little Three-eyes fell asleep, but the third, which was not spoken to in the little rhyme, did not fall asleep. Of course Little Three-eyes shut that eye also out of cunning, to look as if she were asleep, but it was blinking and could see everything quite well.

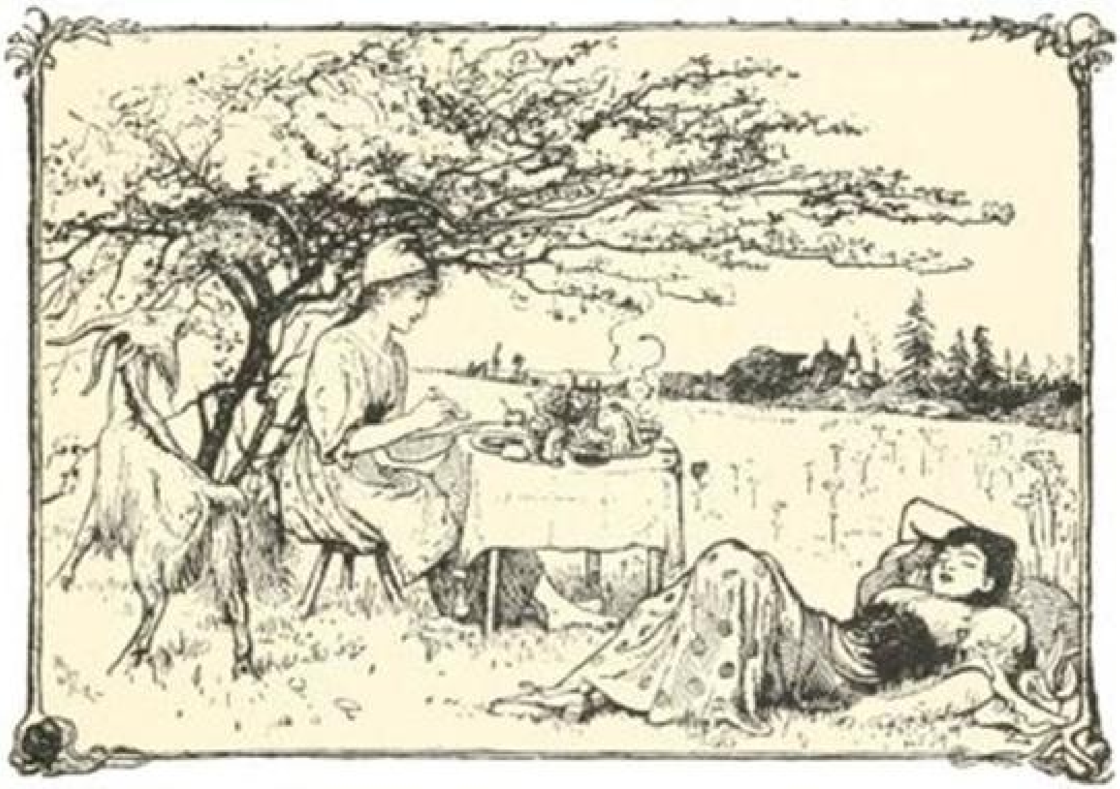

And when Little Two-eyes thought that Little Three-eyes was sound asleep, she said her rhyme,

‘Little goat, bleat,
Little table, appear,’

and ate and drank to her heart’s content, and then made the table go away again, by saying,

‘Little goat, bleat,
Little table, away.’

But Little Three-eyes had seen everything. Then Little Two-eyes came to her, and woke her and said, ‘Well, Little Three-eyes, have you been asleep? You watch well! Come, we will go home.’ When they reached home, Little Two-eyes did not eat again, and Little Three-eyes said to the mother, ‘I know now why that proud thing eats nothing. When she says to the goat in the field,

“Little goat, bleat,
Little table, appear,”

a table stands before her, spread with the best food, much better than we have; and when she has had enough, she says,

“Little goat, bleat,
Little table, away,”

and everything disappears again. I saw it all exactly. She made two of my eyes go to sleep with a little rhyme, but the one in my forehead remained awake, luckily!’

Then the envious mother cried out, ‘Will you fare better than we do? you shall not have the chance to do so again!’ and she fetched a knife, and killed the goat.

When Little Two-eyes saw this, she went out full of grief, and sat down in the meadow and wept bitter tears. Then again the wise woman stood before her, and said, ‘Little Two-eyes, what are you crying for?’ ‘Have I not reason to cry?’ she answered, ‘the goat, which when I said the little rhyme, spread the table so beautifully, my mother has killed, and now I must suffer hunger and want again.’ The wise woman said, ‘Little Two-eyes, I will give you a good piece of advice. Ask your sisters to give you the heart of the dead goat, and bury it in the earth before the house-door; that will bring you good luck.’ Then she disappeared, and Little Two-eyes went home, and said to her sisters, ‘Dear sisters, do give me something of my goat; I ask nothing better than its heart.’ Then they laughed and said, ‘You can have that if you want nothing more.’ And Little Two-eyes took the heart and buried it in the evening when all was quiet, as the wise woman had told her, before the house-door. The next morning when they all awoke and came to the house-door, there stood a most wonderful tree, which had leaves of silver and fruit of gold growing on it — you never saw anything more lovely and gorgeous in your life! But they did not know how the tree had grown up in the night; only Little Two-eyes knew that it had sprung from the heart of the goat, for it was standing just where she had buried it in the ground. Then the mother said to Little One-eye, ‘Climb up, my child, and break us off the fruit from the tree.’ Little One-eye climbed up, but just when she was going to take hold of one of the golden apples the bough sprang out of her hands; and this happened every time, so that she could not break off a single apple, however hard she tried. Then the mother said, ‘Little Three-eyes, do you climb up; you with your three eyes can see round better than Little One-eye.’ So Little One-eye slid down, and Little Three-eyes climbed up; but she was not any more successful; look round as she might, the golden apples bent themselves back. At last the mother got impatient and climbed up herself, but she was even less successful than Little One-eye and Little Three-eyes in catching hold of the fruit, and only grasped at the empty air. Then Little Two-eyes said, ‘I will just try once, perhaps I shall succeed better.’ The sisters called out, ‘You with your two eyes will no doubt succeed!’ But Little Two-eyes climbed up, and the golden apples did not jump away from her, but behaved quite properly, so that she could pluck them off, one after the other, and brought a whole apron-full down with her. The mother took them from her, and, instead of behaving better to poor Little Two-eyes, as they ought to have done, they were jealous that she only could reach the fruit and behaved still more unkindly to her.

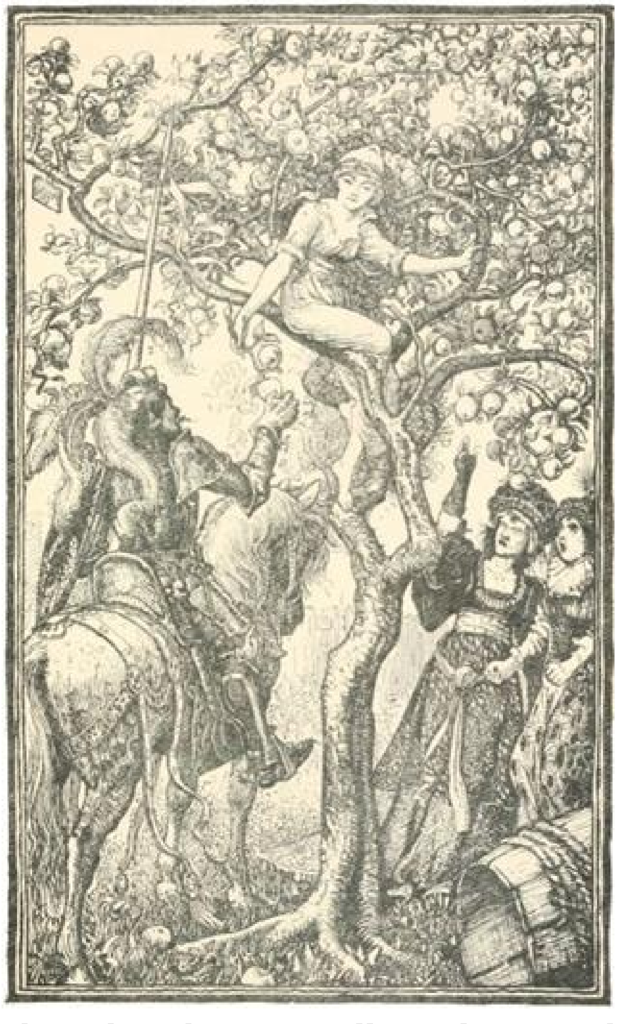

It happened one day that when they were all standing together by the tree that a young knight came riding along. ‘Be quick, Little Two-eyes,’ cried the two sisters, ‘creep under this, so that you shall not disgrace us,’ and they put over poor Little Two-eyes as quickly as possible an empty cask, which was standing close to the tree, and they pushed the golden apples which she had broken off under with her. When the knight, who was a very handsome young man, rode up, he wondered to see the marvellous tree of gold and silver, and said to the two sisters, ‘Whose is this beautiful tree? Whoever will give me a twig of it shall have whatever she wants.’ Then Little One-eye and Little Three-eyes answered that the tree belonged to them, and that they would certainly break him off a twig. They gave themselves a great deal of trouble, but in vain; the twigs and fruit bent back every time from their hands. Then the knight said, ‘It is very strange that the tree should belong to you, and yet that you have not the power to break anything from it!’ But they would have that the tree was theirs; and while they were saying this, Little Two-eyes rolled a couple of golden apples from under the cask, so that they lay at the knight’s feet, for she was angry with Little One-eye and Little Three-eyes for not speaking the truth. When the knight saw the apples he was astonished, and asked where they came from. Little One-eye and Little Three-eyes answered that they had another sister, but she could not be seen because she had only two eyes, like ordinary people. But the knight demanded to see her, and called out, ‘Little Two-eyes, come forth.’ Then Little Two-eyes came out from under the cask quite happily, and the knight was astonished at her great beauty, and said, ‘Little Two-eyes, I am sure you can break me off a twig from the tree.’ ‘Yes,’ answered Little Two-eyes, ‘I can, for the tree is mine.’ So she climbed up and broke off a small branch with its silver leaves and golden fruit without any trouble, and gave it to the knight. Then he said, ‘Little Two-eyes, what shall I give you for this?’ ‘Ah,’ answered Little Two-eyes, ‘I suffer hunger and thirst, want and sorrow, from early morning till late in the evening; if you would take me with you, and free me from this, I should be happy!’ Then the knight lifted Little Two-eyes on his horse, and took her home to his father’s castle. There he gave her beautiful clothes, and food and drink, and because he loved her so much he married her, and the wedding was celebrated with great joy.

When the handsome knight carried Little Two-eyes away with him, the two sisters envied her good luck at first. ‘But the wonderful tree is still with us, after all,’ they thought, ‘and although we cannot break any fruit from it, everyone will stop and look at it, and will come to us and praise it; who knows whether *we* may not reap a harvest from it?’ But the next morning the tree had flown, and their hopes with it; and when Little Two-eyes looked out of her window there it stood underneath, to her great delight. Little Two-eyes lived happily for a long time. Once two poor women came to the castle to beg alms. Then Little Two-eyes looked at them and recognised both her sisters, Little One-eye and Little Three-eyes, who had become so poor that they came to beg bread at her door.

But Little Two-eyes bade them welcome, and was so good to them that they both repented from their hearts of having been so unkind to their sister.

Grimm.

JORINDE AND JORINGEL

There was once upon a time a castle in the middle of a thick wood where lived an old woman quite alone, for she was an enchantress. In the day-time she changed herself into a cat or a night-owl, but in the evening she became like an ordinary woman again. She could entice animals and birds to come to her, and then she would kill and cook them. If any youth came within a hundred paces of the castle, he was obliged to stand still, and could not stir from the spot till she set him free; but if a pretty girl came within this boundary, the old enchantress changed her into a bird, and shut her up in a wicker cage, which she put in one of the rooms in the castle. She had quite seven thousand of such cages in the castle with very rare birds in them.

Now, there was once a maiden called Jorinde, who was more beautiful than other maidens. She and a youth named Joringel, who was just as good-looking as she was, were betrothed to one another. Their greatest delight was to be together, and so that they might get a good long talk, they went one evening for a walk in the wood. ‘Take care,’ said Joringel, ‘not to come too close to the castle.’ It was a beautiful evening; the sun shone brightly between the stems of the trees among the dark green leaves of the forest, and the turtle-dove sang clearly on the old may bushes.

Jorinde wept from time to time, and she sat herself down in the sunshine and lamented, and Joringel lamented too. They felt as sad as if they had been condemned to die; they looked round and got quite confused, and did not remember which was their way home. Half the sun was still above the mountain and half was behind it when Joringel looked through the trees and saw the old wall of the castle quite near them. He was terrified and half dead with fright. Jorinde sang:

‘My little bird with throat so red
Sings sorrow, sorrow, sorrow;
He sings to the little dove that’s dead,
Sings sorrow, sor —— jug, jug, jug.’

Joringel looked up at Jorinde. She had been changed into a nightingale, who was singing ‘jug, jug.’ A night-owl with glowing eyes flew three times round her, and screeched three times ‘tu-whit, tu-whit, tu-whoo.’ Joringel could not stir; he stood there like a stone; he could not weep, or speak, or move hand or foot. Now the sun set; the owl flew into a bush, and immediately an old, bent woman came out of it; she was yellow-skinned and thin, and had large red eyes and a hooked nose, which met her chin. She muttered to herself, caught the nightingale, and carried her away in her hand. Joringel could say nothing; he could not move from the spot, and the nightingale was gone. At last the woman came back again, and said in a gruff voice, ‘Good evening, Zachiel; when the young moon shines in the basket, you are freed early, Zachiel.’ Then Joringel was free. He fell on his knees before the old woman and implored her to give him back his Jorinde, but she said he should never have her again, and then went away. He called after her, he wept and lamented, but all in vain. ‘What is to become of me!’ he thought. Then he went away, and came at last to a strange village, where he kept sheep for a long time. He often went round the castle while he was there, but never too close. At last he dreamt one night that he had found a blood-red flower, which had in its centre a beautiful large pearl. He plucked this flower and went with it to the castle; and there everything which he touched with the flower was freed from the enchantment, and he got his Jorinde back again through it. When he awoke in the morning he began to seek mountain and valley to find such a flower. He sought it for eight days, and on the ninth early in the morning he found the blood-red flower. In its centre was a large dew-drop, as big as the most lovely pearl. He travelled day and night with this flower till he arrived at the castle. When he came within a hundred paces of it he did not cease to be able to move, but he went on till he reached the gate. He was delighted at his success, touched the great gate with the flower, and it sprung open. He entered, passed through the courtyard, and then stopped to listen for the singing of the birds; at last he heard it. He went in and found the hall in which was the enchantress, and with her seven thousand birds in their wicker cages. When she saw Joringel she was furious, and breathed out poison and gall at him, but she could not move a step towards him. He took no notice of her, and went and looked over the cages of birds; but there were many hundred nightingales, and how was he to find his Jorinde from among them? Whilst he was considering, he observed the old witch take up a cage secretly and go with it towards the door. Instantly he sprang after her, touched the cage with the flower, and the old woman as well. Now she could no longer work enchantments, and there stood Jorinde before him, with her arms round his neck, and more beautiful than ever. Then he turned all the other birds again into maidens, and he went home with his Jorinde, and they lived a long and happy life.

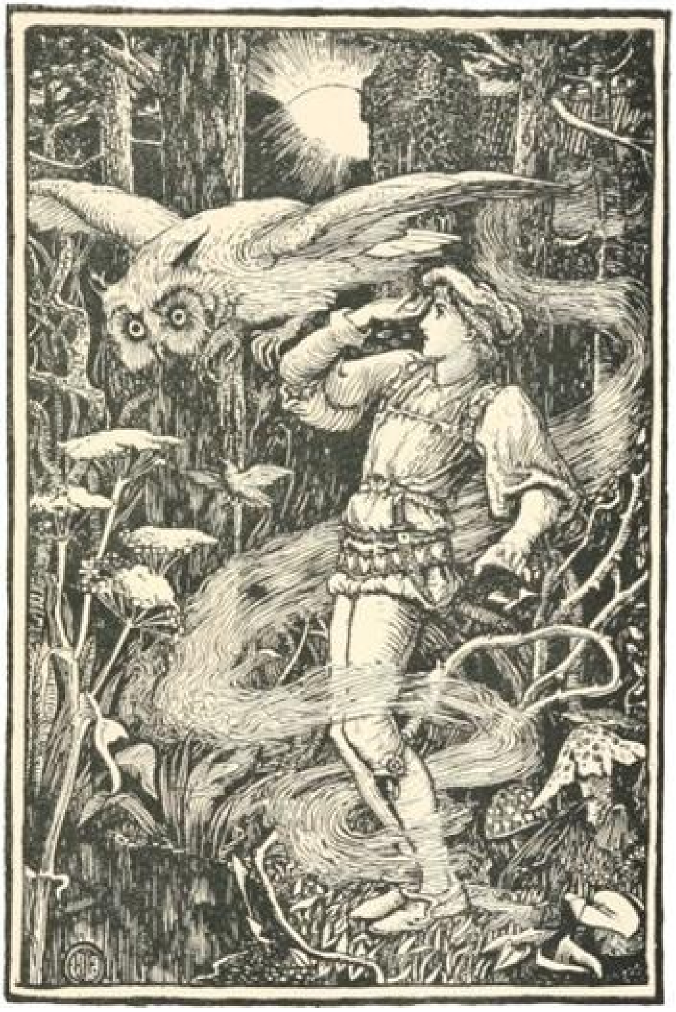

Grimm.

ALLERLEIRAUH; OR, THE MANY-FURRED CREATURE

There was once upon a time a King who had a wife with golden hair, and she was so beautiful that you couldn’t find anyone like her in the world. It happened that she fell ill, and when she felt that she must soon die, she sent for the King, and said, ‘If you want to marry after my death, make no one queen unless she is just as beautiful as I am, and has just such golden hair as I have. Promise me this.’ After the King had promised her this, she closed her eyes and died.

For a long time the King was not to be comforted, and he did not even think of taking a second wife. At last his councillors said, ‘The King *must* marry again, so that we may have a queen.’ So messengers were sent far and wide to seek for a bride equal to the late Queen in beauty. But there was no one in the wide world, and if there had been she could not have had such golden hair. Then the messengers came home again, not having been able to find a queen.

Now, the King had a daughter, who was just as beautiful as her dead mother, and had just such golden hair. One day when she had grown up, her father looked at her, and saw that she was exactly like her mother, so he said to his councillors, ‘I will marry my daughter to one of you, and she shall be queen, for she is exactly like her dead mother, and when I die her husband shall be king.’ But when the Princess heard of her father’s decision, she was not at all pleased, and said to him, ‘Before I do your bidding, I must have three dresses; one as golden as the sun, one as silver as the moon, and one as shining as the stars. Besides these, I want a cloak made of a thousand different kinds of skin; every animal in your kingdom must give a bit of his skin to it.’ But she thought to herself, ‘This will be quite impossible, and I shall not have to marry someone I do not care for.’ The King, however, was not to be turned from his purpose, and he commanded the most skilled maidens in his kingdom to weave the three dresses, one as golden as the sun, and one as silver as the moon, and one as shining as the stars; and he gave orders to all his huntsmen to catch one of every kind of beast in the kingdom, and to get a bit of its skin to make the cloak of a thousand pieces of fur. At last, when all was ready, the King commanded the cloak to be brought to him, and he spread it out before the Princess, and said, ‘To-morrow shall be your wedding-day.’ When the Princess saw that there was no more hope of changing her father’s resolution, she determined to flee away. In the night, when everyone else was sleeping, she got up and took three things from her treasures, a gold ring, a little gold spinning-wheel, and a gold reel; she put the sun, moon, and star dresses in a nut-shell, drew on the cloak of many skins, and made her face and hands black with soot. Then she commended herself to God, and went out and travelled the whole night till she came to a large forest. And as she was very much tired she sat down inside a hollow tree and fell asleep.

The sun rose and she still slept on and on, although it was nearly noon. Now, it happened that the king to whom this wood belonged was hunting in it. When his dogs came to the tree, they sniffed, and ran round and round it, barking. The King said to the huntsmen, ‘See what sort of a wild beast is in there.’ The huntsmen went in, and then came back and said, ‘In the hollow tree there lies a wonderful animal that we don’t know, and we have never seen one like it; its skin is made of a thousand pieces of fur; but it is lying down asleep.’ The King said, ‘See if you can catch it alive, and then fasten it to the cart, and we will take it with us.’ When the huntsmen seized the maiden, she awoke and was frightened, and cried out to them, ‘I am a poor child, forsaken by father and mother; take pity on me, and let me go with you.’ Then they said to her, ‘Many-furred Creature, you can work in the kitchen; come with us and sweep the ashes together.’ So they put her in the cart and they went back to the palace. There they showed her a tiny room under the stairs, where no daylight came, and said to her, ‘Many-furred Creature, you can live and sleep here.’ Then she was sent into the kitchen, where she carried wood and water, poked the fire, washed vegetables, plucked fowls, swept up the ashes, and did all the dirty work.

So the Many-furred Creature lived for a long time in great poverty. Ah, beautiful King’s daughter, what is going to befall you now?

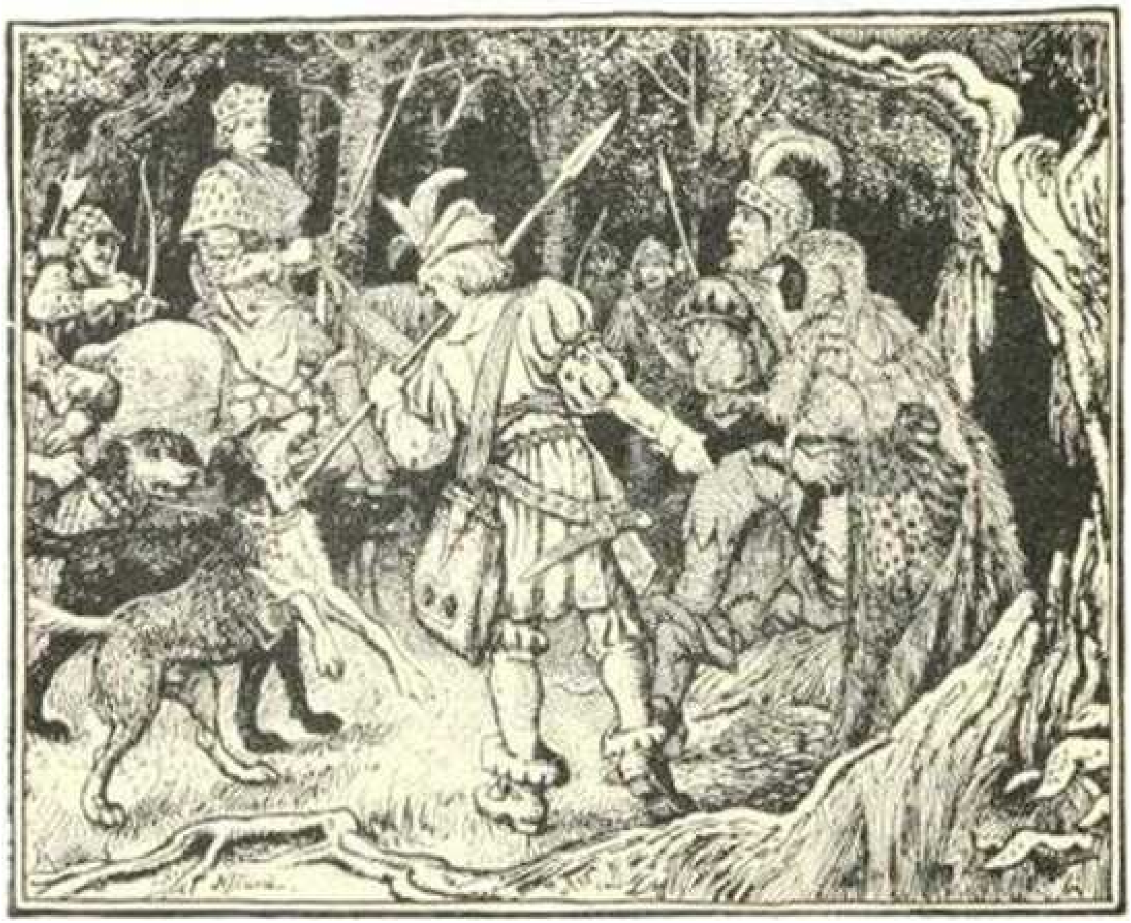

It happened once when a great feast was being held in the palace, that she said to the cook, ‘Can I go upstairs for a little bit and look on? I will stand outside the doors.’ The cook replied, ‘Yes, you can go up, but in half-an-hour you must be back here to sweep up the ashes.’ Then she took her little oil-lamp, and went into her little room, drew off her fur cloak, and washed off the soot from her face and hands, so that her beauty shone forth, and it was as if one sunbeam after another were coming out of a black cloud. Then she opened the nut, and took out the dress as golden as the sun. And when she had done this, she went up to the feast, and everyone stepped out of her way, for nobody knew her, and they thought she must be a King’s daughter. But the King came towards her and gave her his hand, and danced with her, thinking to himself, ‘My eyes have never beheld anyone so fair!’ When the dance was ended, she curtseyed to him, and when the King looked round she had disappeared, no one knew whither. The guards who were standing before the palace were called and questioned, but no one had seen her.

She had run to her little room and had quickly taken off her dress, made her face and hands black, put on the fur cloak, and was once more the Many-furred Creature. When she came into the kitchen and was setting about her work of sweeping the ashes together, the cook said to her, ‘Let that wait till to-morrow, and just cook the King’s soup for me; I want to have a little peep at the company upstairs; but be sure that you do not let a hair fall into it, otherwise you will get nothing to eat in future!’ So the cook went away, and the Many-furred Creature cooked the soup for the King. She made a bread-soup as well as she possibly could, and when it was done, she fetched her gold ring from her little room, and laid it in the tureen in which the soup was to be served up.

When the dance was ended, the King had his soup brought to him and ate it, and it was so good that he thought he had never tasted such soup in his life. But when he came to the bottom of the dish he saw a gold ring lying there, and he could not imagine how it got in. Then he commanded the cook to be brought before him. The cook was terrified when he heard the command, and said to the Many-furred Creature, ‘You must have let a hair fall into the soup, and if you have you deserve a good beating!’ When he came before the King, the King asked who had cooked the soup. The cook answered, ‘I cooked it.’ But the King said, ‘That’s not true, for it was quite different and much better soup than you have ever cooked.’ Then the cook said, ‘I must confess; *I* did not cook the soup; the Many-furred Creature did.’ ‘Let her be brought before me,’ said the King. When the Many-furred Creature came, the King asked her who she was. ‘I am a poor child without father or mother.’ Then he asked her, ‘What do you do in my palace?’ ‘I am of no use except to have boots thrown at my head.’ ‘How did you get the ring which was in the soup?’ he asked. ‘I know nothing at all about the ring,’ she answered. So the King could find out nothing, and was obliged to send her away.

After a time there was another feast, and the Many-furred Creature begged the cook as at the last one to let her go and look on. He answered, ‘Yes, but come back again in half-an-hour and cook the King the bread-soup that he likes so much.’ So she ran away to her little room, washed herself quickly, took out of the nut the dress as silver as the moon and put it on. Then she went upstairs looking just like a King’s daughter, and the King came towards her, delighted to see her again, and as the dance had just begun, they danced together. But when the dance was ended, she disappeared again so quickly that the King could not see which way she went. She ran to her little room and changed herself once more into the Many-furred Creature, and went into the kitchen to cook the bread-soup. When the cook was upstairs, she fetched the golden spinning-wheel and put it in the dish so that the soup was poured over it. It was brought to the King, who ate it, and liked it as much as the last time. He had the cook sent to him, and again he had to confess that the Many-furred Creature had cooked the soup. Then the Many-furred Creature came before the King, but she said again that she was of no use except to have boots thrown at her head, and that she knew nothing at all of the golden spinning-wheel.

When the King had a feast for the third time, things did not turn out quite the same as at the other two. The cook said, ‘You must be a witch, Many-furred Creature, for you always put something in the soup, so that it is much better and tastes nicer to the King than any that I cook.’ But because she begged hard, he let her go up for the usual time. Now she put on the dress as shining as the stars, and stepped into the hall in it.

The King danced again with the beautiful maiden, and thought she had never looked so beautiful. And while he was dancing, he put a gold ring on her finger without her seeing it, and he commanded that the dance should last longer than usual. When it was finished he wanted to keep her hands in his, but she broke from him, and sprang so quickly away among the people that she vanished from his sight. She ran as fast as she could to her little room under the stairs, but because she had stayed too long beyond the half-hour, she could not stop to take off the beautiful dress, but only threw the fur cloak over it, and in her haste she did not make herself quite black with the soot, one finger remaining white. The Many-furred Creature now ran into the kitchen, cooked the King’s bread-soup, and when the cook had gone, she laid the gold reel in the dish. When the King found the reel at the bottom, he had the Many-furred Creature brought to him, and then he saw the white finger, and the ring which he had put on her hand in the dance. Then he took her hand and held her tightly, and as she was trying to get away, she undid the fur-cloak a little bit and the star-dress shone out. The King seized the cloak and tore it off her. Her golden hair came down, and she stood there in her full splendour, and could not hide herself away any more. And when the soot and ashes had been washed from her face, she looked more beautiful than anyone in the world. But the King said, ‘You are my dear bride, and we will never be separated from one another.’ So the wedding was celebrated and they lived happily ever after.

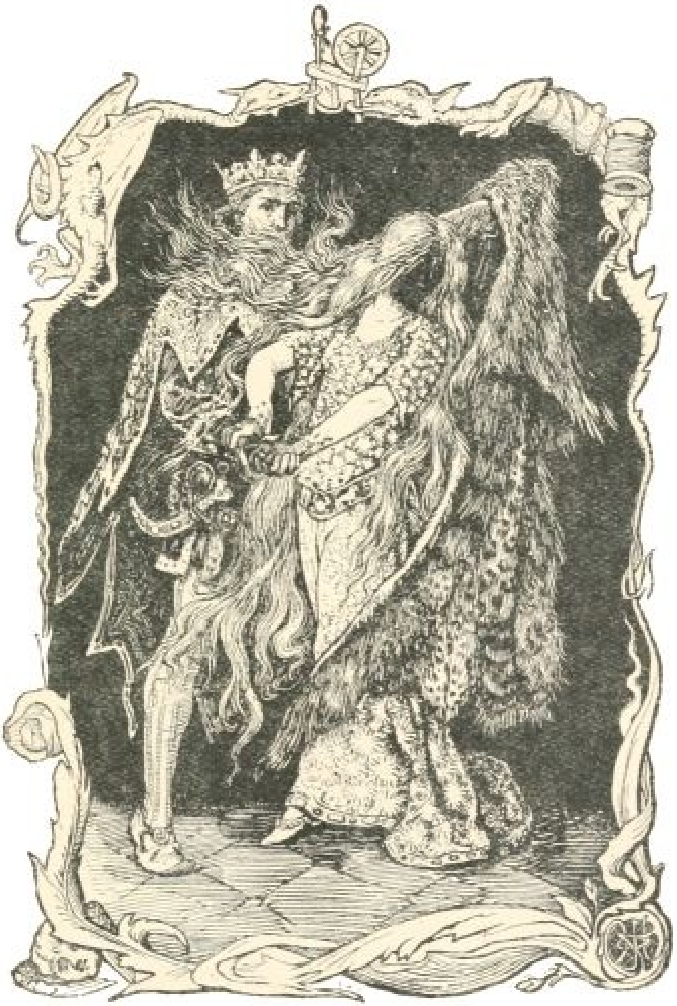

Grimm.

THE TWELVE HUNTSMEN

Once upon a time there was a King’s son who was engaged to a Princess whom he dearly loved. One day as he sat by her side feeling very happy, he received news that his father was lying at the point of death, and desired to see him before his end. So he said to his love: ‘Alas! I must go off and leave you, but take this ring and wear it as a remembrance of me, and when I am King I will return and fetch you home.’

Then he rode off, and when he reached his father he found him mortally ill and very near death.

The King said: ‘Dearest son, I have desired to see you again before my end. Promise me, I beg of you, that you will marry according to my wishes’; and he then named the daughter of a neighbouring King who he was anxious should be his son’s wife. The Prince was so overwhelmed with grief that he could think of nothing but his father, and exclaimed: ‘Yes, yes, dear father, whatever you desire shall be done.’ Thereupon the King closed his eyes and died.

After the Prince had been proclaimed King, and the usual time of mourning had elapsed, he felt that he must keep the promise he had made to his father, so he sent to ask for the hand of the King’s daughter, which was granted to him at once.

Now, his first love heard of this, and the thought of her lover’s desertion grieved her so sadly that she pined away and nearly died. Her father said to her: ‘My dearest child, why are you so unhappy? If there is anything you wish for, say so, and you shall have it.’

His daughter reflected for a moment, and then said: ‘Dear father, I wish for eleven girls as nearly as possible of the same height, age, and appearance as myself.’

Said the King: ‘If the thing is possible your wish shall be fulfilled’; and he had his kingdom searched till he found eleven maidens of the same height, size, and appearance as his daughter.

Then the Princess desired twelve complete huntsmen’s suits to be made, all exactly alike, and the eleven maidens had to dress themselves in eleven of the suits, while she herself put on the twelfth. After this she took leave of her father, and rode off with her girls to the court of her former lover.

Here she enquired whether the King did not want some huntsmen, and if he would not take them all into his service. The King saw her but did not recognise her, and as he thought them very good-looking young people, he said, ‘Yes, he would gladly engage them all.’ So they became the twelve royal huntsmen.

Now, the King had a most remarkable Lion, for it knew every hidden or secret thing.

One evening the Lion said to the King: ‘So you think you have got twelve huntsmen, do you?’

‘Yes, certainly,’ said the King, ‘they *are* twelve huntsmen.’

‘There you are mistaken,’ said the Lion; ‘they are twelve maidens.’

‘That cannot possibly be,’ replied the King; ‘how do you mean to prove that?’

‘Just have a number of peas strewed over the floor of your ante-chamber,’ said the Lion, ‘and you will soon see. Men have a strong, firm tread, so that if they happen to walk over peas not one will stir, but girls trip, and slip, and slide, so that the peas roll all about.’

The King was pleased with the Lion’s advice, and ordered the peas to be strewn in his ante-room.

Fortunately one of the King’s servants had become very partial to the young huntsmen, and hearing of the trial they were to be put to, he went to them and said: ‘The Lion wants to persuade the King that you are only girls’; and then told them all the plot.

The King’s daughter thanked him for the hint, and after he was gone she said to her maidens: ‘Now make every effort to tread firmly on the peas.’

Next morning, when the King sent for his twelve huntsmen, and they passed through the ante-room which was plentifully strewn with peas, they trod so firmly and walked with such a steady, strong step that not a single pea rolled away or even so much as stirred. After they were gone the King said to the Lion: ‘There now — you have been telling lies — you see yourself they walk like men.’

‘Because they knew they were being put to the test,’ answered the Lion; ‘and so they made an effort; but just have a dozen spinning-wheels placed in the ante-room. When they pass through you’ll see how pleased they will be, quite unlike any man.’

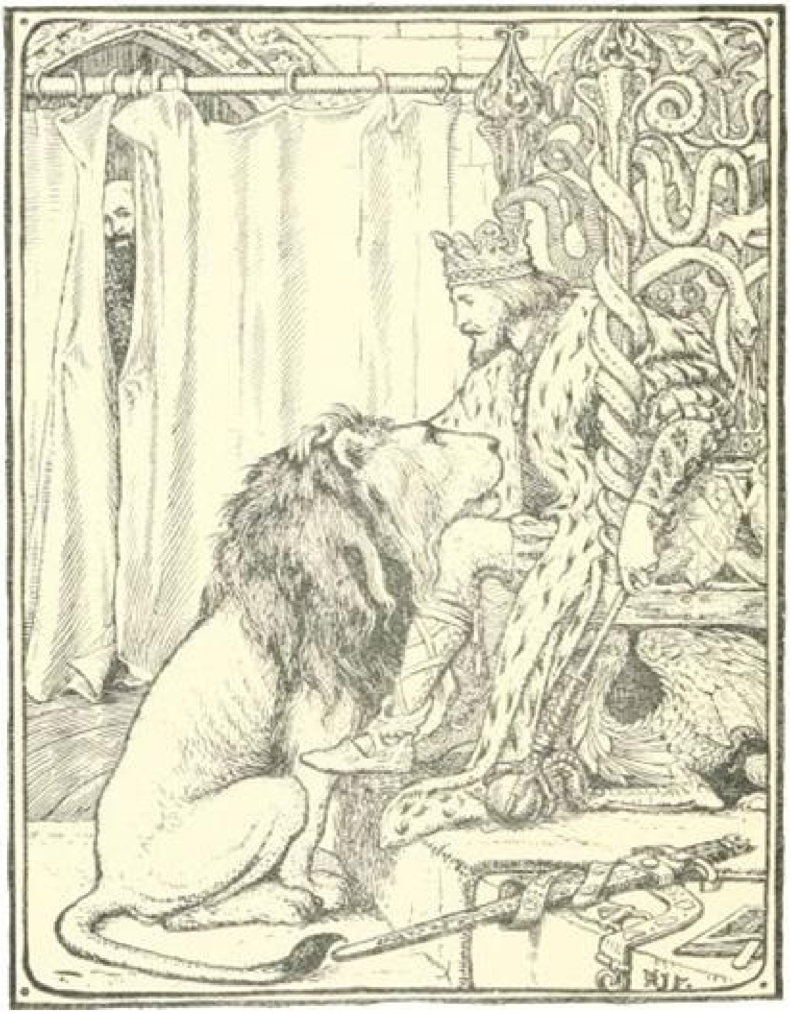

The King was pleased with the advice, and desired twelve spinning-wheels to be placed in his ante-chamber.

But the good-natured servant went to the huntsmen and told them all about this fresh plot. Then, as soon as the King’s daughter was alone with her maidens, she exclaimed: ‘Now, pray make a great effort and don’t even *look* at those spinning-wheels.’

When the King sent for his twelve huntsmen next morning they walked through the ante-room without even casting a glance at the spinning-wheels.’

Then the King said once more to the Lion: ‘You have deceived me again; they *are* men, for they never once looked at the spinning-wheels.’

The Lion replied: ‘They knew they were being tried, and they did violence to their feelings.’ But the King declined to believe in the Lion any longer.

So the twelve huntsmen continued to follow the King, and he grew daily fonder of them. One day whilst they were all out hunting it so happened that news was brought that the King’s intended bride was on her way and might soon be expected. When the true bride heard of this she felt as though a knife had pierced her heart, and she fell fainting to the ground. The King, fearing something had happened to his dear huntsman, ran up to help, and began drawing off his gloves. Then he saw the ring which he had given to his first love, and as he gazed into her face he knew her again, and his heart was so touched that he kissed her, and as she opened her eyes, he cried: ‘I am thine and thou art mine, and no power on earth can alter that.’

To the other Princess he despatched a messenger to beg her to return to her own kingdom with all speed. ‘For,’ said he, ‘I have got a wife, and he who finds an old key again does not require a new one.’

Thereupon the wedding was celebrated with great pomp, and the Lion was restored to the royal favour, for after all he had told the truth.

Grimm.

SPINDLE, SHUTTLE, AND NEEDLE

Once upon a time there lived a girl who lost her father and mother when she was quite a tiny child. Her godmother lived all alone in a little cottage at the far end of the village, and there she earned her living by spinning, weaving, and sewing. The old woman took the little orphan home with her and brought her up in good, pious, industrious habits.

When the girl was fifteen years old, her godmother fell ill, and, calling the child to her bedside, she said: ‘My dear daughter, I feel that my end is near. I leave you my cottage, which will, at least, shelter you, and also my spindle, my weaver’s shuttle, and my needle, with which to earn your bread.’

Then she laid her hands on the girl’s head, blessed her, and added: ‘Mind and be good, and then all will go well with you.’ With that she closed her eyes for the last time, and when she was carried to her grave the girl walked behind her coffin weeping bitterly, and paid her all the last honours.

After this the girl lived all alone in the little cottage. She worked hard, spinning, weaving, and sewing, and her old godmother’s blessing seemed to prosper all she did. The flax seemed to spread and increase; and when she wove a carpet or a piece of linen, or made a shirt, she was sure to find a customer who paid her well, so that not only did she feel no want herself, but she was able to help those who did.

Now, it happened that about this time the King’s son was making a tour through the entire country to look out for a bride. He could not marry a poor woman, and he did not wish for a rich one.

‘She shall be my wife,’ said he, ‘who is at once the poorest and the richest.’

When he reached the village where the girl lived, he inquired who was the richest and who the poorest woman in it. The richest was named first; the poorest, he was told, was a young girl who lived alone in a little cottage at the far end of the village.

The rich girl sat at her door dressed out in all her best clothes, and when the King’s son came near she got up, went to meet him, and made him a low curtsey. He looked well at her, said nothing, but rode on further.

When he reached the poor girl’s house he did not find her at her door, for she was at work in her room. The Prince reined in his horse, looked in at the window through which the sun was shining brightly, and saw the girl sitting at her wheel busily spinning away.

She looked up, and when she saw the King’s son gazing in at her, she blushed red all over, cast down her eyes and span on. Whether the thread was quite as even as usual I really cannot say, but she went on spinning till the King’s son had ridden off. Then she stepped to the window and opened the lattice, saying, ‘The room is so hot,’ but she looked after him as long as she could see the white plumes in his hat.

Then she sat down to her work once more and span on, and as she did so an old saying which, she had often heard her godmother repeat whilst at work, came into her head, and she began to sing:

‘Spindle, spindle, go and see,
If my love will come to me.’

Lo, and behold! the spindle leapt from her hand and rushed out of the room, and when she had sufficiently recovered from her surprise to look after it she saw it dancing merrily through the fields, dragging a long golden thread after it, and soon it was lost to sight.

The girl, having lost her spindle, took up the shuttle and, seating herself at her loom, began to weave. Meantime the spindle danced on and on, and just as it had come to the end of the golden thread, it reached the King’s son.

‘What do I see?’ he cried; ‘this spindle seems to wish to point out the way to me.’ So he turned his horse’s head and rode back beside the golden thread.

Meantime the girl sat weaving, and sang:

‘Shuttle, weave both web and woof,
Bring my love beneath my roof.’

The shuttle instantly escaped from her hand, and with one bound was out at the door. On the threshold it began weaving the loveliest carpet that was ever seen. Roses and lilies bloomed on both sides, and in the centre a thicket seemed to grow with rabbits and hares running through it, stags and fawns peeping through the branches, whilst on the topmost boughs sat birds of brilliant plumage and so life-like one almost expected to hear them sing. The shuttle flew from side to side and the carpet seemed almost to grow of itself.

As the shuttle had run away the girl sat down to sew. She took her needle and sang:

‘Needle, needle, stitch away,
Make my chamber bright and gay,’

and the needle promptly slipped from her fingers and flew about the room like lightning. You would have thought invisible spirits were at work, for in next to no time the table and benches were covered with green cloth, the chairs with velvet, and elegant silk curtains hung before the windows. The needle had barely put in its last stitch when the girl, glancing at the window, spied the white plumed hat of the King's son who was being led back by the spindle with the golden thread.

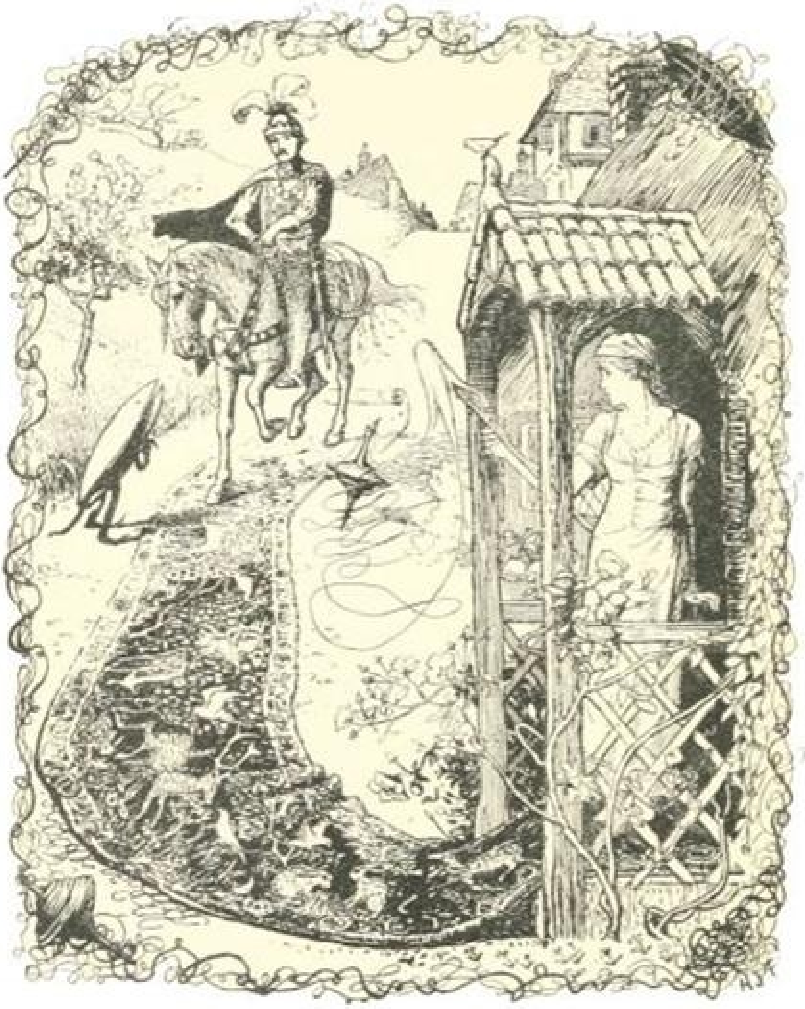

He dismounted and walked over the carpet into the house, and when he entered the room there stood the girl blushing like any rose. 'You are the poorest and yet the richest,' said he: 'come with me, you shall be my bride.'

She said nothing, but she held out her hand. Then he kissed her, and led her out, lifted her on his horse and took her to his royal palace, where the wedding was celebrated with great rejoicings.

The spindle, the shuttle, and the needle were carefully placed in the treasury, and were always held in the very highest honour.

Grimm.

THE CRYSTAL COFFIN

Now let no one say that a poor tailor can’t get on in the world, and, indeed, even attain to very high honour. Nothing is required but to set the right way to work, but of course the really important thing is to succeed.

A very bright active young tailor once set off on his travels, which led him into a wood, and as he did not know the way he soon lost himself. Night came on, and there seemed to be nothing for it but to seek out the best resting-place he could find. He could have made himself quite comfortable with a bed of soft moss, but the fear of wild beasts disturbed his mind, and at last he determined to spend the night in a tree.

He sought out a tall oak tree, climbed up to the top, and felt devoutly thankful that his big smoothing-iron was in his pocket, for the wind in the tree-tops was so high that he might easily have been blown away altogether.

After passing some hours of the night, not without considerable fear and trembling, he noticed a light shining at a little distance, and hoping it might proceed from some house where he could find a better shelter than in the top of the tree, he cautiously descended and went towards the light. It led him to a little hut all woven together of reeds and rushes. He knocked bravely at the door, which opened, and by the light which shone from within he saw an old grey-haired man dressed in a coat made of bright-coloured patches. ‘Who are you, and what do you want?’ asked the old man roughly.

‘I am a poor tailor,’ replied the youth. ‘I have been benighted in the forest, and I entreat you to let me take shelter in your hut till morning.’

‘Go your way,’ said the old man in a sulky tone, ‘I’ll have nothing to do with tramps. You must just go elsewhere.’

With these words he tried to slip back into his house, but the tailor laid hold of his coat-tails, and begged so hard to be allowed to stay that the old fellow, who was by no means as cross as he appeared, was at length touched by his entreaties, let him come in, and after giving him some food, showed him quite a nice bed in one corner of the room. The weary tailor required no rocking to rest, but slept sound till early morning, when he was roused from his slumbers by a tremendous noise. Loud screams and shouts pierced the thin walls of the little hut. The tailor, with new-born courage, sprang up, threw on his clothes with all speed and hurried out. There he saw a huge black bull engaged in a terrible fight with a fine large stag. They rushed at each other with such fury that the ground seemed to tremble under them and the whole air to be filled with their cries. For some time it appeared quite uncertain which would be the victor, but at length the stag drove his antlers with such force into his opponent's body that the bull fell to the ground with a terrific roar, and a few more strokes finished him.

The tailor, who had been watching the fight with amazement, was still standing motionless when the stag bounded up to him, and before he had time to escape forked him up with its great antlers, and set off at full gallop over hedges and ditches, hill and dale, through wood and water. The tailor could do nothing but hold on tight with both hands to the stag's horns and resign himself to his fate. He felt as if he were flying along. At length the stag paused before a steep rock and gently let the tailor down to the ground.

Feeling more dead than alive, he paused for a while to collect his scattered senses, but when he seemed somewhat restored the stag struck such a blow on a door in the rock that it flew open. Flames of fire rushed forth, and such clouds of steam followed that the stag had to avert its eyes. The tailor could not think what to do or which way to turn to get away from this awful wilderness, and to find his way back amongst human beings once more.

As he stood hesitating, a voice from the rock cried to him: 'Step in without fear, no harm shall befall you.'

He still lingered, but some mysterious power seemed to impel him, and passing through the door he found himself in a spacious hall, whose ceiling, walls, and floor were covered with polished tiles carved all over with unknown figures. He gazed about, full of wonder, and was just preparing to walk out again when the same voice bade him: 'Tread on the stone in the middle of the hall, and good luck will attend you.'

By this time he had grown so courageous that he did not hesitate to obey the order, and hardly had he stepped on the stone than it began to sink gently with him into the depths below. On reaching firm ground he found himself in a hall of much the same size as the upper one, but with much more in it to wonder at and admire. Round the walls were several niches, in each of which stood glass vessels filled with some bright-coloured spirit or bluish smoke. On the floor stood two large crystal boxes opposite each other, and these attracted his curiosity at once.

Stepping up to one of them, he saw within it what looked like a model in miniature of a fine castle surrounded by farms, barns, stables, and a number of other buildings. Everything was quite tiny, but so beautifully and carefully finished that it might have been the work of an accomplished artist. He would have continued gazing much longer at this remarkable curiosity had not the voice desired him to turn round and look at the crystal coffin which stood opposite.

What was his amazement at seeing a girl of surpassing loveliness lying in it! She lay as though sleeping, and her long, fair hair seemed to wrap her round like some costly mantle. Her eyes were closed, but the bright colour in her face, and the movement of a ribbon, which rose and fell with her breath, left no doubt as to her being alive.

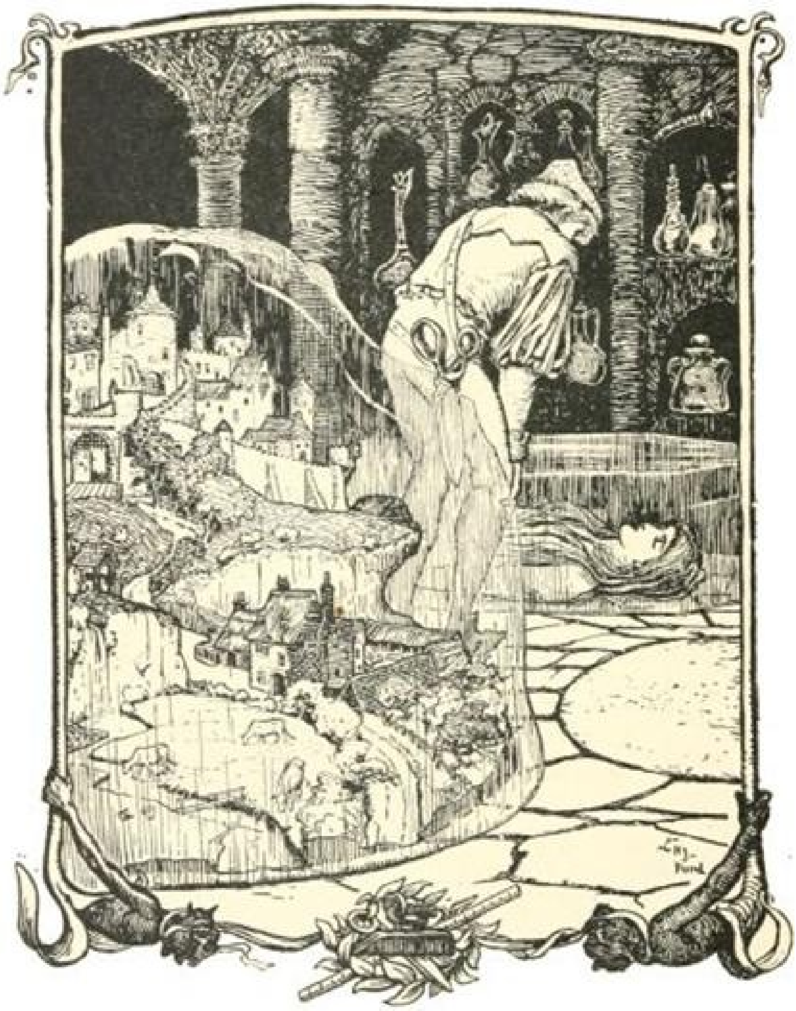

As the tailor stood gazing at her with a beating heart, the maiden suddenly opened her eyes, and started with delighted surprise.

'Great heavens!' she cried, 'my deliverance approaches! Quick, quick, help me out of my prison; only push back the bolt of this coffin and I am free.'

The tailor promptly obeyed, when she quickly pushed back the crystal lid, stepped out of the coffin and hurried to a corner of the hall, when she proceeded to wrap herself in a large cloak. Then she sat down on a stone, desired the young man to come near, and, giving him an affectionate kiss, she said, 'My long-hoped-for deliverer, kind heaven has led you to me, and has at length put an end to all my sufferings. You are my destined husband, and, beloved by me, and endowed with every kind of riches and power, you shall spend the remainder of your life in peace and happiness. Now sit down and hear my story. I am the daughter of a wealthy nobleman. My parents died when I was very young, and they left me to the care of my eldest brother, by whom I was carefully educated. We loved each other so tenderly, and our tastes and interests were so much alike that we determined never to marry, but to spend our entire lives together. There was no lack of society at our home. Friends and neighbours paid us frequent visits, and we kept open house for all. Thus it happened that one evening a stranger rode up to the castle and asked for hospitality, as he could not reach the nearest town that night. We granted his request with ready courtesy, and during supper he entertained us with most agreeable conversation, mingled with amusing anecdotes. My brother took such a fancy to him that he pressed him to spend a couple of days with us, which, after a little hesitation, the stranger consented to do. We rose late from table, and whilst my brother was showing our guest to his room I hurried to mine, for I was very tired and longed to get to bed. I had hardly dropped off to sleep when I was roused by the sound of some soft and charming music. Wondering whence it could come, I was about to call to my maid who slept in the room next mine, when, to my surprise, I felt as if some heavy weight on my chest had taken all power from me, and I lay there unable to utter the slightest sound. Meantime, by the light of the night lamp, I saw the stranger enter my room, though the double doors had been securely locked. He drew near and told me that through the power of his magic arts he had caused the soft music to waken me, and had made his way through bolts and bars to offer me his hand and heart. My repugnance to his magic was so great that I would not condescend to give any answer. He waited motionless for some time, hoping no doubt for a favourable reply, but as I continued silent he angrily declared that he would find means to punish my pride, and therewith he left the room in a rage.

‘I spent the night in the greatest agitation, and only fell into a doze towards morning. As soon as I awoke I jumped up, and hurried to tell my brother all that had happened, but he had left his room, and his servant told me that he had gone out at daybreak to hunt with the stranger.

‘My mind misgave me. I dressed in all haste, had my palfrey saddled, and rode of at full gallop towards the forest, attended by one servant only. I pushed on without pausing, and ere long I saw the stranger coming towards me, and leading a fine stag. I asked him where he had left my brother, and how he had got the stag, whose great eyes were overflowing with tears. Instead of answering he began to laugh, and I flew into such a rage that I drew a pistol and fired at him; but the bullet rebounded from his breast and struck my horse in the forehead. I fell to the ground, and the stranger muttered some words, which robbed me of my senses.

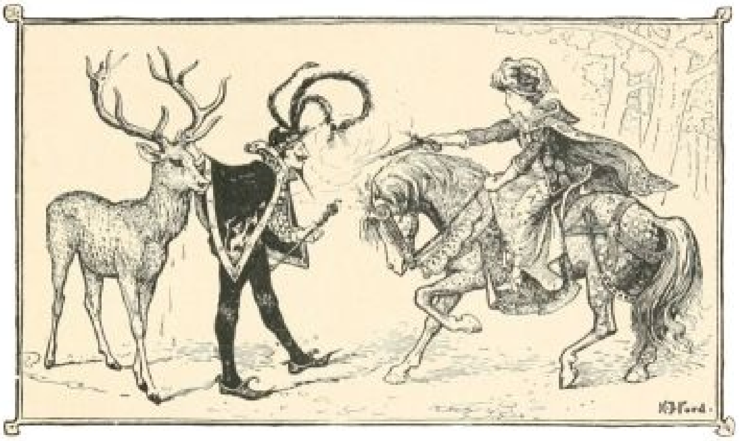

‘When I came to myself I was lying in a crystal coffin in this subterranean vault. The Magician appeared again, and told me that he had transformed my brother into a stag, had reduced our castle and all its defences to miniature and locked them up in a glass box, and after turning all our household into different vapours had banished them into glass phials. If I would only yield to his wishes he could easily open these vessels, and all would then resume their former shapes.

‘I would not say a word more than I had done previously, and he vanished, leaving me in my prison, where a deep sleep soon fell on me. Amongst the many dreams which floated through my brain was a cheering one of a young man who was to come and release me, and to-day, when I opened my eyes, I recognised you and saw that my dream was fulfilled. Now help me to carry out the rest of my vision. The first thing is to place the glass box which contains my castle on this large stone.’

As soon as this was done the stone gently rose through the air and transported them into the upper hall, whence they easily carried the box into the outer air. The lady then removed the lid, and it was marvellous to watch the castle, houses, and farmyards begin to grow and spread themselves till they had regained their proper size. Then the young couple returned by means of the movable stone, and brought up all the glass vessels filled with smoke. No sooner were they uncorked than the blue vapours poured out and became transformed to living people, in whom the lady joyfully recognised her many servants and attendants.

Her delight was complete when her brother (who had killed the Magician under the form of a bull) was seen coming from the forest in his proper shape, and that very day, according to her promise, she gave her hand in marriage to the happy young tailor.

Grimm.

THE THREE SNAKE-LEAVES

There was once a poor man who could no longer afford to keep his only son at home. So the son said to him, ‘Dear father, you are so poor that I am only a burden to you; I would rather go out into the world and see if I can earn my own living.’ The father gave him his blessing and took leave of him with much sorrow. About this time the King of a very powerful kingdom was carrying on a war; the youth therefore took service under him and went on the campaign. When they came before the enemy, a battle took place, there was some hot fighting, and it rained bullets so thickly that his comrades fell around him on all sides. And when their leader fell too the rest wished to take to flight; but the youth stepped forward and encouraged them and called out, ‘We must not let our country be ruined!’ Then others followed him, and he pressed on and defeated the enemy. When the King heard that he had to thank him alone for the victory, he raised him higher than anyone else in rank, gave him great treasures and made him the first in the kingdom.

The King had a daughter who was very beautiful, but she was also very capricious. She had made a vow to marry no one who would not promise her that if she died first, he would allow himself to be buried alive with her. ‘If he loves me truly,’ she used to say, ‘what use would life be to him then?’ At the same time she was willing to do the same, and if he died first to be buried with him. This curious vow had up to this time frightened away all suitors, but the young man was so captivated by her beauty, that he hesitated at nothing and asked her hand of her father. ‘Do you know,’ asked the King, ‘what you have to promise?’ ‘I shall have to go into her grave with her,’ he answered, ‘if I outlive her, but my love is so great that I do not think of the risk.’ So the King consented, and the wedding was celebrated with great splendour.

Now, they lived for a long time very happily with one another, but then it came to pass that the young Queen fell seriously ill, and no doctor could save her. And when she lay dead, the young King remembered what he had promised, and it made him shudder to think of lying in her grave alive, but there was no escape. The King had set guards before all the gates, and it was not possible to avoid his fate.

When the day arrived on which the corpse was to be laid in the royal vault, he was led thither, then the entrance was bolted and closed up.

Near the coffin stood a table on which were placed four candles, four loaves of bread, and four bottles of wine. As soon as this provision came to an end he would have to die. So he sat there full of grief and misery, eating every day only a tiny bit of bread, and drinking only a mouthful of wine, and he watched death creeping nearer and nearer to him. One day as he was sitting staring moodily in front of him, he saw a snake creep out of the corner towards the corpse. Thinking it was going to touch it, he drew his sword and saying, ‘As long as I am alive you shall not harm her,’ he cut it in three pieces. After a little time a second snake crept out of the corner, but when it saw the first one lying dead and in pieces it went back and came again soon, holding three green leaves in its mouth. Then it took the three bits of the snake and laid them in order, and put one of the leaves on each wound. Immediately the pieces joined together, the snake moved itself and became alive and then both hurried away. The leaves remained lying on the ground, and it suddenly occurred to the unfortunate man who had seen everything, that the wonderful power of the leaves might also be exercised upon a human being.

So he picked up the leaves and laid one of them on the mouth and the other two on the eyes of the dead woman. And scarcely had he done this, before the blood began to circulate in her veins, then it mounted and brought colour back to her white face. Then she drew her breath, opened her eyes, and said, ‘Ah! where am I?’ ‘You are with me, dear lady,’ he answered, and told her all that had happened, and how he had brought her to life again. He then gave her some wine and bread, and when all her strength had returned she got up, and they went to the door and knocked and called so loudly that the guards heard them, and told the King. The King came himself to open the door, and there he found both happy and well, and he rejoiced with them that now all trouble was over. But the young King gave the three snake-leaves to a servant, saying to him, ‘Keep them carefully for me, and always carry them with you; who knows but that they may help us in a time of need!’

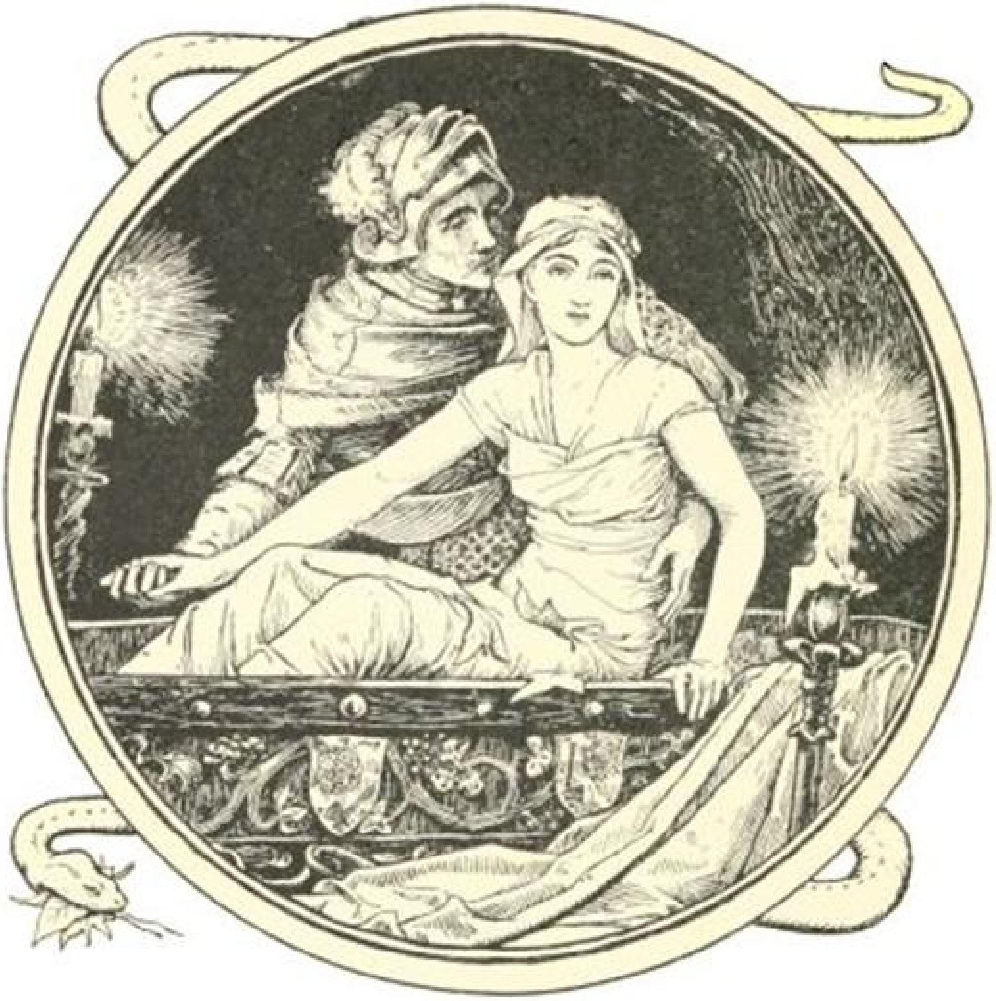

It seemed, however, as if a change had come over the young Queen after she had been restored to life, and as if all her love for her husband had faded from her heart. Some time afterwards, when he wanted to take a journey over the sea to his old father, and they were on board the ship, she forgot the great love and faithfulness he had shown her and how he had saved her from death, and fell in love with the captain. And one day when the young King was lying asleep, she called the captain to her, and seized the head of the sleeping King and made him take his feet, and together they threw him into the sea. When they had done this wicked deed, she said to him, ‘Now let us go home and say that he died on the journey. I will praise you so much to my father that he will marry me to you and make you the heir to the throne.’ But the faithful servant, who had seen everything, let down a little boat into the sea, unobserved by them, and rowed after his master while the traitors sailed on. He took the drowned man out of the water, and with the help of the three snake-leaves which he carried with him, placing them on his mouth and eyes, he brought him to life again.

They both rowed as hard as they could night and day, and their little boat went so quickly that they reached the old King before the other two did. He was much astonished to see them come back alone, and asked what had happened to them. When he heard the wickedness of his daughter, he said, ‘I cannot believe that she has acted so wrongly, but the truth will soon come to light.’ He made them both go into a secret chamber, and let no one see them.

Soon after this the large ship came in, and the wicked lady appeared before her father with a very sad face. He said to her, ‘Why have you come back alone? Where is your husband?’

‘Ah, dear father,’ she replied, ‘I have come home in great grief; my husband fell ill on the voyage quite suddenly, and died, and if the good captain had not given me help, I should have died too. He was at his death-bed and can tell you everything.’

The King said, ‘I will bring the dead to life again,’ and he opened the door of the room and called them both out. The lady was as if thunderstruck when she caught sight of her husband; she fell on her knees and begged for mercy. But the King said, ‘You shall have no mercy. He was ready to die with you, and restored you to life again; but you killed him when he was sleeping, and shall receive your deserts.’

So she and her accomplice were put in a ship which was bored through with holes, and were drawn out into the sea, where they soon perished in the waves.

Grimm.

THE RIDDLE

A King’s son once had a great desire to travel through the world, so he started off, taking no one with him but one trusty servant. One day he came to a great forest, and as evening drew on he could find no shelter, and could not think where to spend the night. All of a sudden he saw a girl going towards a little house, and as he drew nearer he remarked that she was both young and pretty. He spoke to her, and said, ‘Dear child, could I and my servant spend the night in this house?’

‘Oh yes,’ said the girl in a sad tone, ‘you can if you like, but I should not advise you to do so. Better not go in.’

‘Why not?’ asked the King’s son.

The girl sighed and answered, ‘My stepmother deals in black arts, and she is not very friendly to strangers.’

The Prince guessed easily that he had fallen on a witch’s house, but as by this time it was quite dark and he could go no further, and as moreover he was not at all afraid, he stepped in.

An old woman sat in an armchair near the fire, and as the strangers entered she turned her red eyes on them. ‘Good evening,’ she muttered, and pretending to be quite friendly. ‘Won’t you sit down?’

She blew up the fire on which she was cooking something in a little pot, and her daughter secretly warned the travellers to be very careful not to eat or drink anything, as the old woman’s brews were apt to be dangerous.

They went to bed, and slept soundly till morning. When they were ready to start and the King’s son had already mounted his horse the old woman said: ‘Wait a minute, I must give you a stirrup cup.’ Whilst she went to fetch it the King’s son rode off, and the servant who had waited to tighten his saddle-girths was alone when the witch returned.

‘Take that to your master,’ she said; but as she spoke the glass cracked and the poison spurted over the horse, and it was so powerful that the poor creature sank down dead. The servant ran after his master and told him what had happened, and then, not wishing to lose the saddle as well as the horse, he went back to fetch it. When he got to the spot he saw that a raven had perched on the carcase and was pecking at it. ‘Who knows whether we shall get anything better to eat to-day!’ said the servant, and he shot the raven and carried it off.

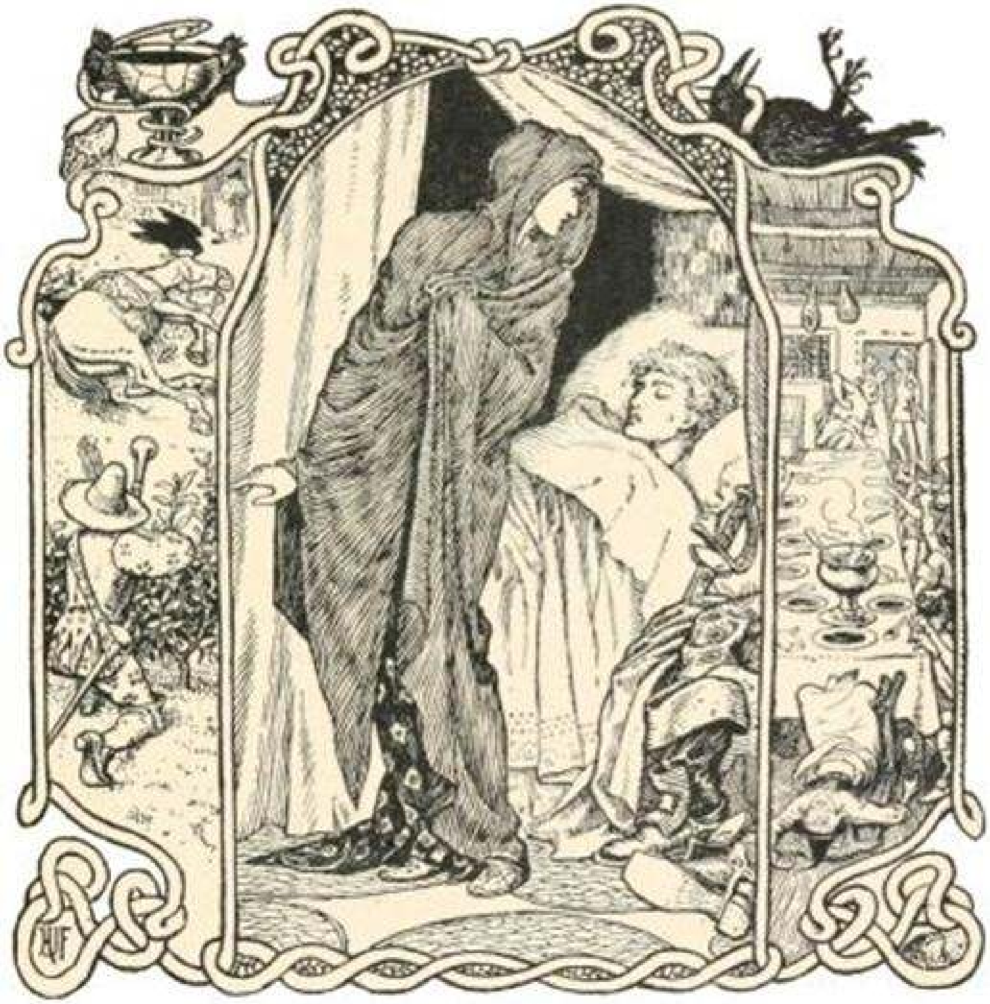

Then they rode on all day through the forest without coming to the end. At nightfall they reached an inn, which they entered, and the servant gave the landlord the raven to dress for their supper. Now, as it happened, this inn was a regular resort of a band of murderers, and the old witch too was in the habit of frequenting it.

As soon as it was dark twelve murderers arrived, with the full intention of killing and robbing the strangers. Before they set to work, however, they sat down to table, and the landlord and the old witch joined them, and they all ate some broth in which the flesh of the raven had been stewed down. They had hardly taken a couple of spoonfuls when they all fell down dead, for the poison had passed from the horse to the raven and so into the broth. So there was no one left belonging to the house but the landlord’s daughter, who was a good, well-meaning girl, and had taken no part in all the evil doings.

She opened all the doors, and showed the strangers the treasures the robbers had gathered together; but the Prince bade her keep them all for herself, as he wanted none of them, and so he rode further with his servant.

After travelling about for some length of time they reached a town where lived a lovely but most arrogant Princess. She had given out that anyone who asked her a riddle which she found herself unable to guess should be her husband, but should she guess it he must forfeit his head. She claimed three days in which to think over the riddles, but she was so very clever that she invariably guessed them in a much shorter time. Nine suitors had already lost their lives when the King's son arrived, and, dazzled by her beauty, determined to risk his life in hopes of winning her.

So he came before her and propounded his riddle. 'What is this?' he asked. 'One slew none and yet killed twelve.'

She could not think what it was! She thought, and thought, and looked through all her books of riddles and puzzles, but she found nothing to help her, and could not guess; in fact, she was at her wits' end. As she could think of no way to guess the riddle, she ordered her maid to steal at night into the Prince's bedroom and to listen, for she thought that he might perhaps talk aloud in his dreams and so betray the secret. But the clever servant had taken his master's place, and when the maid came he tore off the cloak she had wrapped herself in and hunted her off with a whip.

On the second night the Princess sent her lady-in-waiting, hoping that she might succeed better, but the servant took away her mantle and chased her away also.

On the third night the King's son thought he really might feel safe, so he went to bed. But in the middle of the night the Princess came herself, all huddled up in a misty grey mantle, and sat down near him. When she thought he was fast asleep, she spoke to him, hoping he would answer in the midst of his dreams, as many people do; but he was wide awake all the time, and heard and understood everything very well.

Then she asked: 'One slew none — what is that?' and he answered: 'A raven which fed on the carcase of a poisoned horse.'

She went on: 'And yet killed twelve — what is that?' 'Those are twelve murderers who ate the raven and died of it.'

As soon as she knew the riddle she tried to slip away, but he held her mantle so tightly that she was obliged to leave it behind.

Next morning the Princess announced that she had guessed the riddle, and sent for the twelve judges, before whom she declared it. But the young man begged to be heard, too, and said: 'She came by night to question me, otherwise she never could have guessed it.'

The judges said: 'Bring us some proof.' So the servant brought out the three cloaks, and when the judges saw the grey one, which the Princess was in the habit of wearing, they said: ‘Let it be embroidered with gold and silver; it shall be your wedding mantle.’

Grimm.

JACK MY HEDGEHOG

There was once a farmer who lived in great comfort. He had both lands and money, but, though he was so well off, one thing was wanting to complete his happiness; he had no children. Many and many a time, when he met other farmers at the nearest market town, they would teaze him, asking how it came about that he was childless. At length he grew so angry that he exclaimed: 'I must and will have a child of some sort or kind, even should it only be a hedgehog!'

Not long after this his wife gave birth to a child, but though the lower half of the little creature was a fine boy, from the waist upwards it was a hedgehog, so that when his mother first saw him she was quite frightened, and said to her husband, 'There now, you have cursed the child yourself.' The farmer said, 'What's the use of making a fuss? I suppose the creature must be christened, but I don't see how we are to ask anyone to be sponsor to him, and what are we to call him?'

'There is nothing we can possibly call him but Jack my Hedgehog,' replied the wife.

So they took him to be christened, and the parson said: You'll never be able to put that child in a decent bed on account of his prickles.' Which was true, but they shook down some straw for him behind the stove, and there he lay for eight years. His father grew very tired of him and often wished him dead, but he did not die, but lay on there year after year.

Now one day there was a big fair at the market town to which the farmer meant to go, so he asked his wife what he should bring her from it. 'Some meat and a couple of big loaves for the house,' said she. Then he asked the maid what she wanted, and she said a pair of slippers and some stockings. Lastly he said, 'Well, Jack my Hedgehog, and what shall I bring you?'

'Daddy,' said he, 'do bring me a bagpipe.' When the farmer came home he gave his wife and the maid the things they had asked for, and then he went behind the stove and gave Jack my Hedgehog the bagpipes.

When Jack had got his bagpipes he said, 'Daddy, do go to the smithy and have the house cock shod for me; then I'll ride off and trouble you no more.' His father, who was delighted at the prospect of getting rid of him, had the cock shod, and when it was ready Jack my Hedgehog mounted on its back and rode off to the forest, followed by all the pigs and asses which he had promised to look after.

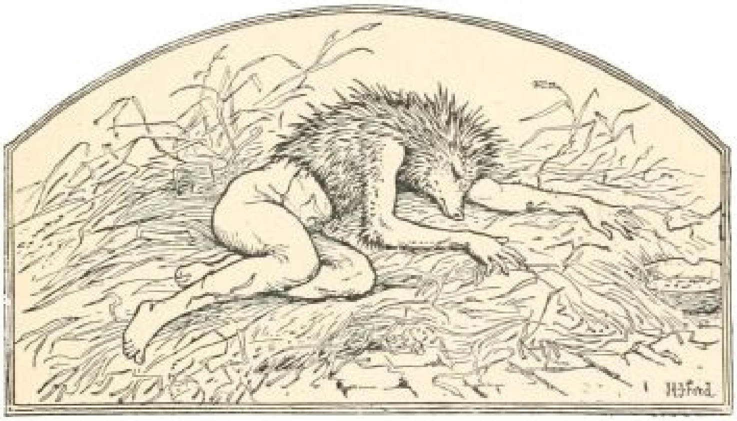

Having reached the forest he made the cock fly up to the top of a very tall tree with him, and there he sat looking after his pigs and donkeys, and he sat on and on for several years till he had quite a big herd; but all this time his father knew nothing about him.

As he sat up in his tree he played away on his pipes and drew the loveliest music from them. As he was playing one day a King, who had lost his way, happened to pass close by, and hearing the music he was much surprised, and sent one of his servants to find out where it came from. The man peered about, but he could see nothing but a little creature which looked like a cock with a hedgehog sitting on it, perched up in a tree. The King desired the servant to ask the strange creature why it sat there, and if it knew the shortest way to his kingdom.

On this Jack my Hedgehog stepped down from his tree and said he would undertake to show the King his way home if the King on his part would give him his written promise to let him have whatever first met him on his return.

The King thought to himself, ‘That’s easy enough to promise. The creature won’t understand a word about it, so I can just write what I choose.’

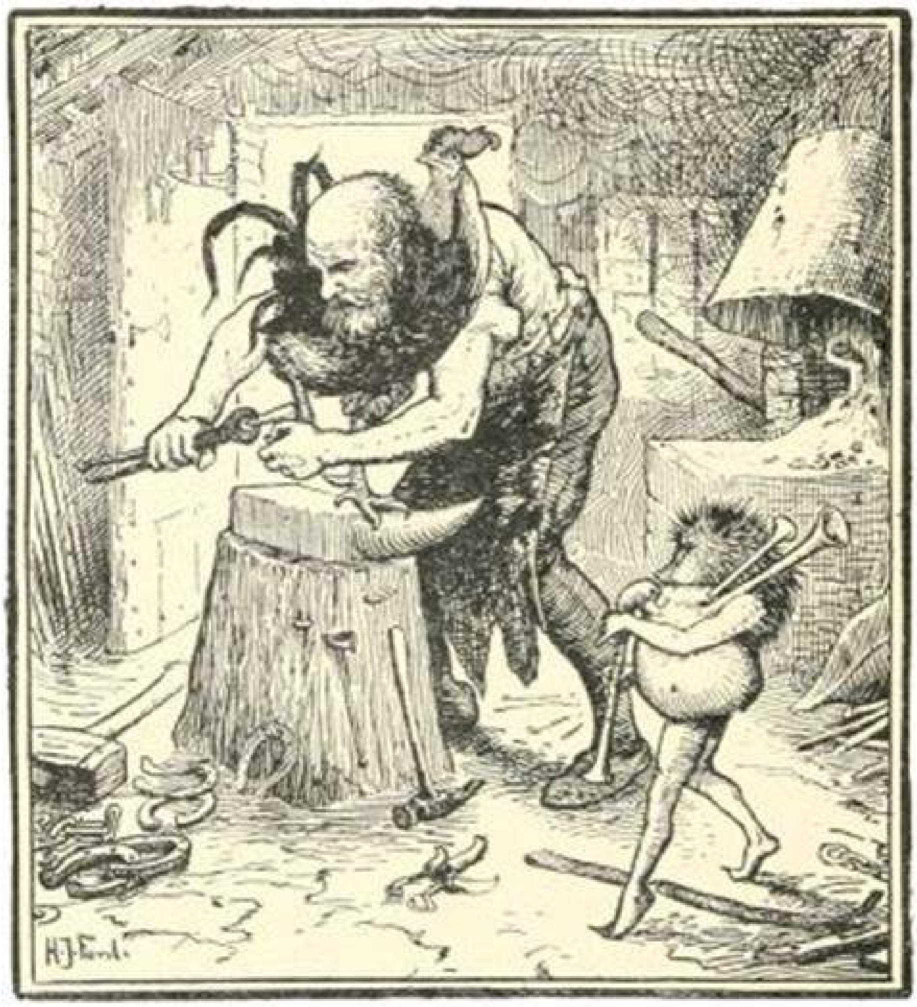

So he took pen and ink and wrote something, and when he had done Jack my Hedgehog pointed out the way and the King got safely home.

Now when the King’s daughter saw her father returning in the distance she was so delighted that she ran to meet him and threw herself into his arms. Then the King remembered Jack my Hedgehog, and he told his daughter how he had been obliged to give a written promise to bestow whatever he first met when he got home on an extraordinary creature which had shown him the way. The creature, said he, rode on a cock as though it had been a horse, and it made lovely music, but as it certainly could not read he had just written that he would *not* give it anything at all. At this the Princess was quite pleased, and said how cleverly her father had managed, for that of course nothing would induce her to have gone off with Jack my Hedgehog.

Meantime Jack minded his asses and pigs, sat aloft in his tree, played his bagpipes, and was always merry and cheery. After a time it so happened that another King, having lost his way, passed by with his servants and escort, wondering how he could find his way home, for the forest was very vast. He too heard the music, and told one of his men to find out whence it came. The man came under the tree, and looking up to the top there he saw Jack my Hedgehog astride on the cock.

The servant asked Jack what he was doing up there. ‘I’m minding my pigs and donkeys; but what do you want?’ was the reply. Then the servant told him they had lost their way, and wanted some one to show it them. Down came Jack my Hedgehog with his cock, and told the old King he would show him the right way if he would solemnly promise to give him the first thing he met in front of his royal castle.

The King said ‘Yes,’ and gave Jack a written promise to that effect.

Then Jack rode on in front pointing out the way, and the King reached his own country in safety.

Now he had an only daughter who was extremely beautiful, and who, delighted at her father’s return, ran to meet him, threw her arms round his neck and kissed him heartily. Then she asked where he had been wandering so long, and he told her how he had lost his way and might never have reached home at all but for a strange creature, half-man, half-hedgehog, which rode a cock and sat up in a tree making lovely music, and which had shown him the right way. He also told her how he had been obliged to pledge his word to give the creature the first thing which met him outside his castle gate, and he felt very sad at the thought that she had been the first thing to meet him.

But the Princess comforted him, and said she should be quite willing to go with Jack my Hedgehog whenever he came to fetch her, because of the great love she bore to her dear old father.

Jack my Hedgehog continued to herd his pigs, and they increased in number till there were so many that the forest seemed full of them. So he made up his mind to live there no longer, and sent a message to his father telling him to have all the stables and outhouses in the village cleared, as he was going to bring such an enormous herd that all who would might kill what they chose. His father was much vexed at this news, for he thought Jack had died long ago. Jack my Hedgehog mounted his cock, and driving his pigs before him into the village, he let every one kill as many as they chose, and such a hacking and hewing of pork went on as you might have heard for miles off.

Then said Jack, ‘Daddy, let the blacksmith shoe my cock once more; then I’ll ride off, and I promise you I’ll never come back again as long as I live.’ So the father had the cock shod, and rejoiced at the idea of getting rid of his son.

Then Jack my Hedgehog set off for the first kingdom, and there the King had given strict orders that if anyone should be seen riding a cock and carrying a bagpipe he was to be chased away and shot at, and on no account to be allowed to enter the palace. So when Jack my Hedgehog rode up the guards charged him with their bayonets, but he put spurs to his cock, flew up over the gate right to the King’s windows, let himself down on the sill, and called out that if he was not given what had been promised him, both the King and his daughter should pay for it with their lives. Then the King coaxed and entreated his daughter to go with Jack and so save both their lives.

The Princess dressed herself all in white, and her father gave her a coach with six horses and servants in gorgeous liveries and quantities of money. She stepped into the coach, and Jack my Hedgehog with his cock and pipes took his place beside her. They both took leave, and the King fully expected never to set eyes on them again. But matters turned out very differently from what he had expected, for when they had got a certain distance from the town Jack tore all the Princess’s smart clothes off her, and pricked her all over with his bristles, saying: ‘That’s what you get for treachery. Now go back, I’ll have no more to say to you.’ And with that he hunted her home, and she felt she had been disgraced and put to shame till her life’s end.

Then Jack my Hedgehog rode on with his cock and bagpipes to the country of the second King to whom he had shown the way. Now this King had given orders that, in the event of Jack’s coming the guards were to present arms, the people to cheer, and he was to be conducted in triumph to the royal palace.

When the King’s daughter saw Jack my Hedgehog, she was a good deal startled, for he certainly was very peculiar looking; but after all she considered that she had given her word and it couldn’t be helped. So she made Jack welcome and they were betrothed to each other, and at dinner he sat next her at the royal table, and they ate and drank together.

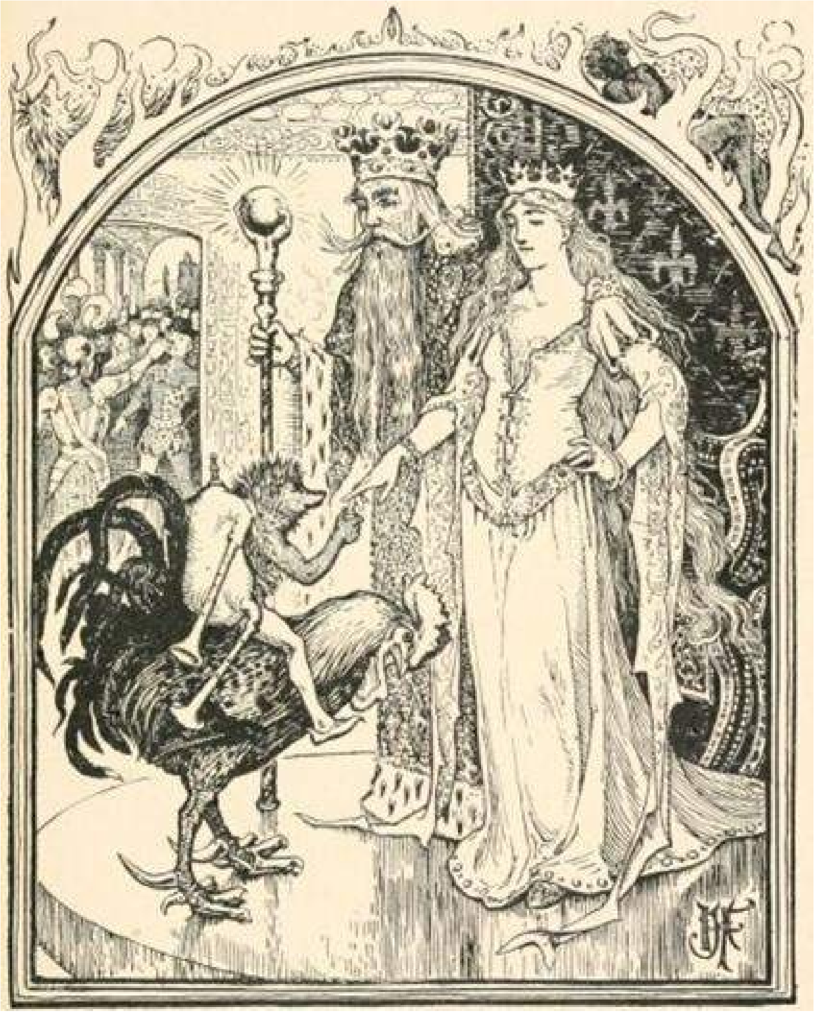

When they retired to rest the Princess feared lest Jack should kiss her because of his prickles, but he told her not to be alarmed as no harm should befall her. Then he begged the old King to place a watch of four men just outside his bedroom door, and to desire them to make a big fire. When he was about to lie down in bed he would creep out of his hedgehog skin, and leave it lying at the bedside; then the men must rush in, throw the skin into the fire, and stand by till it was entirely burnt up.

And so it was, for when it struck eleven, Jack my Hedgehog went to his room, took off his skin and left it at the foot of the bed. The men rushed in, quickly seized the skin and threw it on the fire, and directly it was all burnt Jack was released from his enchantment and lay in his bed a man from head to foot, but quite black as though he had been severely scorched.

The King sent off for his physician in ordinary, who washed Jack all over with various essences and salves, so that he became white and was a remarkably handsome young man. When the King's daughter saw him she was greatly pleased, and next day the marriage ceremony was performed, and the old King bestowed his kingdom on Jack my Hedgehog.

After some years Jack and his wife went to visit his father, but the farmer did not recognise him, and declared he had no son; he had had one, but that one was born with bristles like a hedgehog, and had gone off into the wide world. Then Jack told his story, and his old father rejoiced and returned to live with him in his kingdom.

Grimm.

THE GOLDEN LADS

A poor man and his wife lived in a little cottage, where they supported themselves by catching fish in the nearest river, and got on as best they could, living from hand to mouth. One day it happened that when the fisherman drew in his net he found in it a remarkable fish, for it was entirely of gold. As he was inspecting it with some surprise, the fish opened its mouth and said: ‘Listen to me, fisher; if you will just throw me back into the water I’ll turn your poor little cottage into a splendid castle.’

The fisher replied: ‘What good, pray, will a castle be to me if I have nothing to eat in it?’

‘Oh,’ said the gold fish, ‘I’ll take care of that. There will be a cupboard in the castle, in which you will find dishes of every kind of food you can wish for most.’

‘If that’s the case,’ said the man, ‘I’ve no objection to oblige you.’

‘Yes,’ observed the fish, ‘but there is one condition attached to my offer, and that is that you are not to reveal to a soul where your good fortune comes from. If you say a word about it, it will all vanish.’

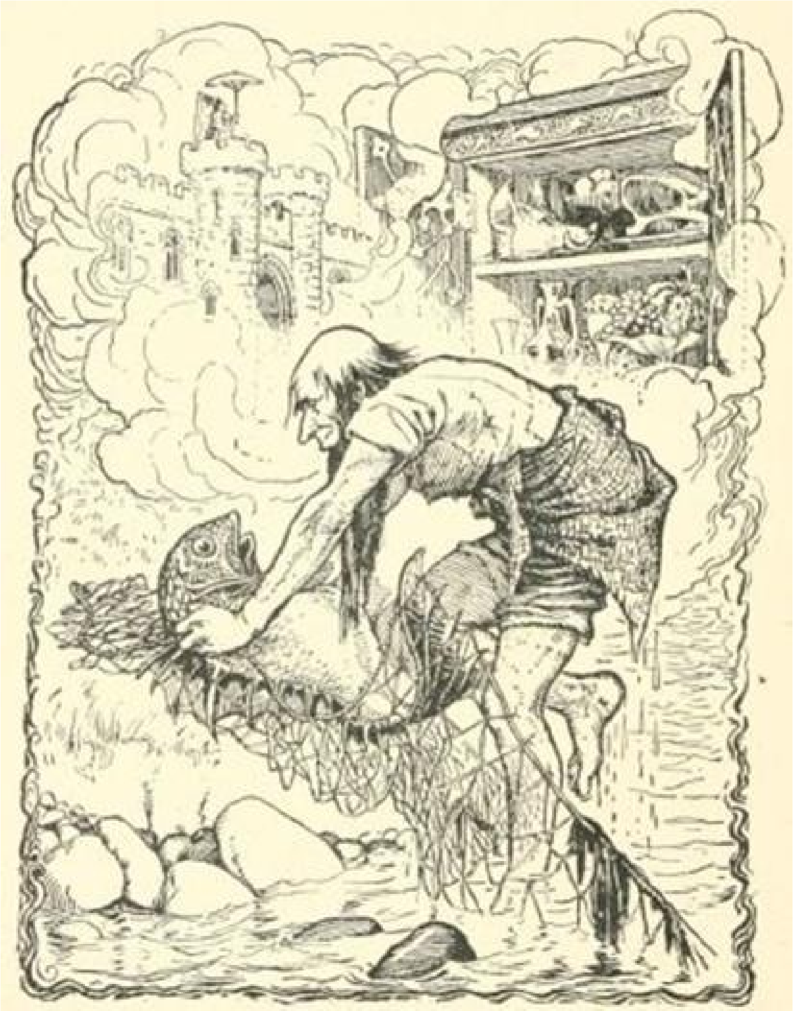

The man threw the fish back into the water, and went home. But on the spot where his cottage used to stand he found a spacious castle. He opened his eyes wide, went in and found his wife dressed out in smart clothes, sitting in a splendidly furnished drawing-room. She was in high spirits, and cried out: ‘Oh husband! how can this all have happened? I am so pleased!’

‘Yes,’ said her husband, ‘so am I pleased; but I’m uncommonly hungry, and I want something to eat at once.’

Said his wife, ‘I’ve got nothing, and I don’t know where anything is in this new house.’

‘Never mind,’ replied the man. ‘I see a big cupboard there. Suppose you unlock it.’

When the cupboard was opened they found meat, cakes, fruit, and wine, all spread out in the most tempting fashions. The wife clapped her hands with joy, and cried: ‘Dear heart! what more can one wish for?’ and they sat down and ate and drank.

When they had finished the wife asked, ‘But husband, where do all these riches come from?’

‘Ah!’ said he, ‘don’t ask me. I dare not tell you. If I reveal the secret to anyone, it will be all up with us.’

‘Very well,’ she replied, ‘if I’m not to be told, of course I don’t want to know anything about it.’

But she was not really in earnest, for her curiosity never left her a moment’s peace by day or night, and she teazed and worried her husband to such a pitch, that at length he quite lost patience and blurted out that it all came from a wonderful golden fish which he had caught and set free again. Hardly were the words well out of his mouth, when castle, cupboard, and all vanished, and there they were sitting in their poor little fishing hut once more.

The man had to betake himself to his former trade, and set to fishing again. As luck would have it, he caught the golden fish a second time.

‘Now listen,’ said the fish, ‘if you’ll throw me back into the water, I’ll give you back the castle and the cupboard with all its good things; but now take care, and don’t for your life betray where you got them, or you’ll just lose them again.’

‘I’ll be very careful,’ promised the fisher, and threw the fish back into the water. When he went home he found all their former splendour restored, and his wife overjoyed at their good fortune. But her curiosity still continued to torment her, and after restraining it with a great effort for a couple of days, she began questioning her husband again, as to what had happened, and how he had managed.

The man kept silence for some time, but at last she irritated him so much that he burst out with the secret, and in one moment the castle was gone, and they sat once more in their wretched old hut.

‘There!’ exclaimed the man, ‘you *would* have it — now we may just go on short commons.’

‘Ah!’ said his wife, ‘after all I’d rather not have all the riches in the world if I can’t know where they come from — I shall not have a moment’s peace.’

The man took to his fishing again, and one day fate brought the gold fish into his net for the third time. ‘Well,’ said the fish, ‘I see that I am evidently destined to fall into your hands. Now take me home, and cut me into six pieces. Give two bits to your wife to eat, two to your horse, and plant the remaining two in your garden, and they will bring you a blessing.’

The man carried the fish home, and did exactly as he had been told. After a time, it came to pass that from the two pieces he had planted in the garden two golden lilies grew up, and that his horse had two golden foals, whilst his wife gave birth to twin boys who were all golden.

The children grew up both tall and handsome, and the foals and the lilies grew with them.

One day the children came to their father and said, ‘Father, we want to mount on golden steeds, and ride forth to see the world.’

Their father answered sadly, ‘How can I bear it if, when you are far away, I know nothing about you?’ and they said, ‘The golden lilies will tell you all about us if you look at them. If they seem to droop, you will know we are ill, and if they fall down and fade away, it will be a sign we are dead.’

So off they rode, and came to an inn where were a number of people who, as soon as they saw the two golden lads, began to laugh and jeer at them. When one of them heard this, his heart failed him, and he thought he would go no further into the world, so he turned back and rode home to his father, but his brother rode on till he reached the outskirts of a huge forest. Here he was told, ‘It will never do for you to ride through the forest, it is full of robbers, and you’re sure to come to grief, especially when they see that you and your horse are golden. They will certainly fall on you and kill you.’ However, he was not to be intimidated, but said, ‘I must and will ride on.’

So he procured some bears’ skins, and covered himself and his horse with them, so that not a particle of gold could be seen, and then rode bravely on into the heart of the forest.

When he had got some way he heard a rustling through the bushes and presently a sound of voices. Someone whispered on one side of him: ‘There goes someone,’ and was answered from the other side: ‘Oh, let him pass. He’s only a bear-keeper, and as poor as any church mouse.’ So golden lad rode through the forest and no harm befell him.

One day he came to a village, where he saw a girl who struck him as being the loveliest creature in the whole world, and as he felt a great love for her, he went up to her and said: ‘I love you with all my heart; will you be my wife?’ And the girl liked him so much that she put her hand in his and replied: ‘Yes, I will be your wife, and will be true to you as long as I live.’

So they were married, and in the middle of all the festivities and rejoicings the bride’s father came home and was not a little surprised at finding his daughter celebrating her wedding. He enquired: ‘And who is the bridegroom?’

Then someone pointed out to him the golden lad, who was still wrapped up in the bear’s skin, and the father exclaimed angrily: ‘Never shall a mere bear-keeper have my daughter,’ and tried to rush at him and kill him. But the bride did all she could to pacify him, and begged hard, saying: ‘After all he is my husband, and I love him with all my heart,’ so that at length he gave in.

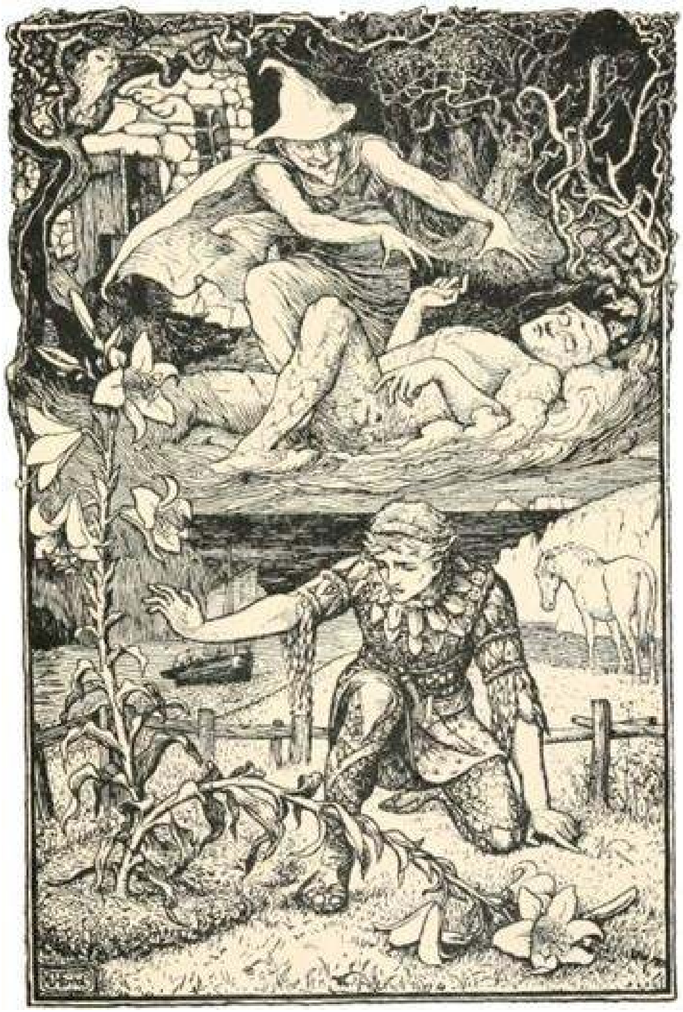

However, he could not dismiss the thought from his mind, and next morning he rose very early, for he felt he must go and look at his daughter’s husband and see whether he really was nothing better than a mere ragged beggar. So he went to his son-in-law’s room, and who should he see lying in the bed but a splendid golden man, and the rough bearskin thrown on the ground close by. Then he slipped quietly away, and thought to himself, ‘How lucky that I managed to control my rage! I should certainly have committed a great crime.’

Meantime the golden lad dreamt that he was out hunting and was giving chase to a noble stag, and when he woke he said to his bride: ‘I must go off and hunt.’ She felt very anxious, and begged he would stay at home, adding: ‘Some mishap might so easily befall you,’ but he answered, ‘I must and will go.’

So he went off into the forest, and before long a fine stag, such as he had seen in his dream, stopped just in front of him. He took aim, and was about to fire when the stag bounded away. Then he started off in pursuit, making his way through bushes and briars, and never stopped all day; but in the evening the stag entirely disappeared, and when golden lad came to look about him he found himself just opposite a hut in which lived a witch. He knocked at the door, which was opened by a little old woman who asked, ‘What do you want at this late hour in the midst of this great forest?’

He said, ‘Haven’t you seen a stag about here?’

‘Yes,’ said she, ‘I know the stag well,’ and as she spoke a little dog ran out of the house and began barking and snapping at the stranger.

‘Be quiet, you little toad,’ he cried, ‘or I’ll shoot you dead.’

Then the witch flew into a great rage, and screamed out, ‘What! you’ll kill my dog, will you?’ and the next moment he was turned to stone and lay there immovable, whilst his bride waited for him in vain and thought to herself, ‘Alas! no doubt the evil I feared, and which has made my heart so heavy, has befallen him.’

Meantime, the other brother was standing near the golden lilies at home, when suddenly one of them bent over and fell to the ground. ‘Good heavens!’ cried he, ‘some great misfortune has befallen my brother. I must set off at once; perhaps I may still be in time to save him.’

His father entreated him, ‘Stay at home. If I should lose you too, what would become of me?’

But his son replied, ‘I must and will go.’

Then he mounted his golden horse, and rode off till he reached the forest where his brother lay transformed to stone. The old witch came out of her house and called to him, for she would gladly have cast her spells on him too, but he took care not to go near her, and called out: ‘Restore my brother to life at once, or I’ll shoot you down on the spot.’

Reluctantly she touched the stone with her finger, and in a moment it resumed its human shape. The two golden lads fell into each other’s arms and kissed each other with joy, and then rode off together to the edge of the forest, where they parted, one to return to his old father, and the other to his bride.

When the former got home his father said, ‘I knew you had delivered your brother, for all of a sudden the golden lily reared itself up and burst into blossom.’

Then they all lived happily to their lives’ ends, and all things went well with them.

Grimm.

THE WHITE SNAKE

Not very long ago there lived a King, the fame of whose wisdom was spread far and wide. Nothing appeared to be unknown to him, and it really seemed as if tidings of the most secret matters must be borne to him by the winds. He had one very peculiar habit. Every day, after the dinner table had been cleared, and everyone had retired, a confidential servant brought in a dish. It was covered, and neither the servant nor anyone else had any idea what was on it, for the King never removed the cover or partook of the dish, till he was quite alone.

This went on for some time till, one day, the servant who removed the dish was so overcome with curiosity, that he could not resist carrying it off to his own room. After carefully locking the door, he lifted the cover, and there he saw a white snake lying on the dish. On seeing it he could not restrain his desire to taste it, so he cut off a small piece and put it in his mouth.

Hardly had it touched his tongue than he heard a strange sort of whispering of tiny voices outside his window. He stepped to the casement to listen, and found that the sound proceeded from the sparrows, who were talking together and telling each other all they had seen in the fields and woods. The piece of the white snake which he had eaten had enabled him to understand the language of animals.

Now on this particular day, it so happened that the Queen lost her favourite ring, and suspicion fell on the confidential servant who had access to all parts of the palace. The King sent for him, and threatened him angrily, saying that if he had not found the thief by the next day, he should himself be taken up and tried.

It was useless to assert his innocence; he was dismissed without ceremony. In his agitation and distress, he went down to the yard to think over what he could do in this trouble. Here were a number of ducks resting near a little stream, and pluming themselves with their bills, whilst they kept up an animated conversation amongst themselves. The servant stood still listening to them. They were talking of where they had been waddling about all the morning, and of the good food they had found, but one of them remarked rather sadly, ‘There’s something lying very heavy on my stomach, for in my haste I’ve swallowed a ring, which was lying just under the Queen’s window.’

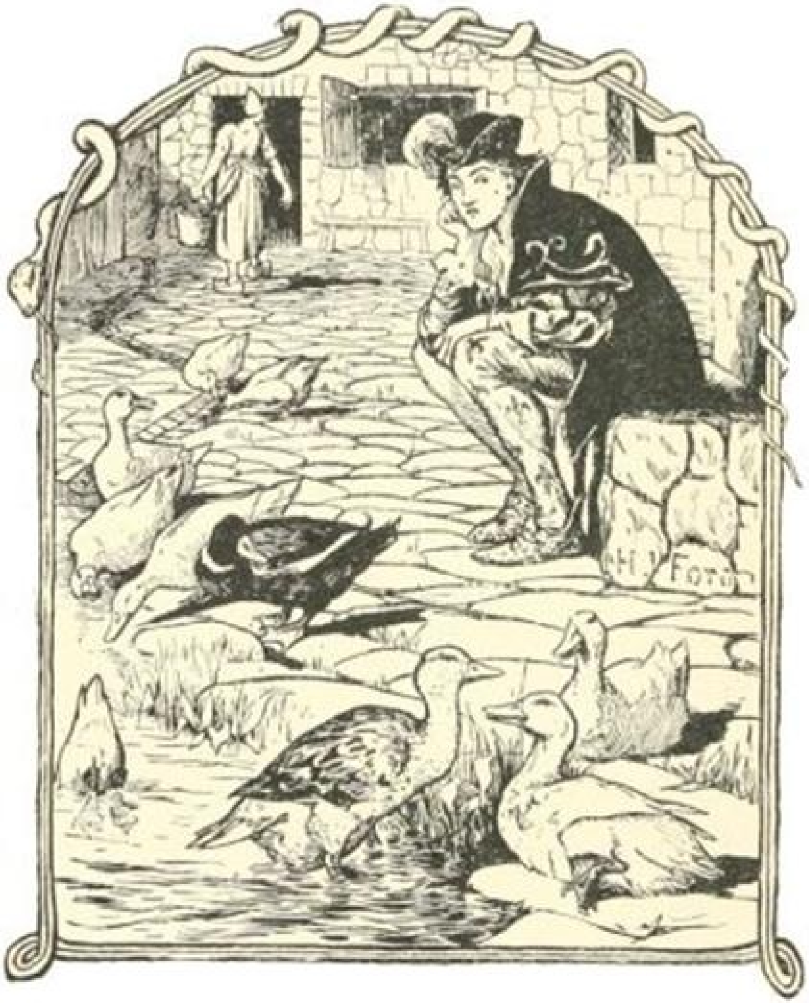

No sooner did the servant hear this than he seized the duck by the neck, carried it off to the kitchen, and said to the cook, ‘Suppose you kill this duck; you see she’s nice and fat.’

‘Yes, indeed,’ said the cook, weighing the duck in his hand, ‘she certainly has spared no pains to stuff herself well, and must have been waiting for the spit for some time.’ So he chopped off her head, and when she was opened there was the Queen’s ring in her stomach.

It was easy enough now for the servant to prove his innocence, and the King, feeling he had done him an injustice, and anxious to make some amends, desired him to ask any favour he chose, and promised to give him the highest post at Court he could wish for.

The servant, however, declined everything, and only begged for a horse and some money to enable him to travel, as he was anxious to see something of the world.

When his request was granted, he set off on his journey, and in the course of it he one day came to a large pond, on the edge of which he noticed three fishes which had got entangled in the reeds and were gasping for water. Though fish are generally supposed to be quite mute, he heard them grieving aloud at the prospect of dying in this wretched manner. Having a very kind heart he dismounted and soon set the prisoners free, and in the water once more. They flapped with joy, and stretching up their heads cried to him: ‘We will remember, and reward you for saving us.’

He rode further, and after a while he thought he heard a voice in the sand under his feet. He paused to listen, and heard the King of the Ants complaining: ‘If only men with their awkward beasts would keep clear of us! That stupid horse is crushing my people mercilessly to death with his great hoofs.’ The servant at once turned into a side path, and the Ant-King called after him, ‘We’ll remember and reward you.’

The road next led through a wood, where he saw a father and a mother raven standing by their nest and throwing out their young: ‘Away with you, you young rascals!’ they cried, ‘we can’t feed you any longer. You are quite big enough to support yourselves now.’ The poor little birds lay on the ground flapping and beating their wings, and shrieked, ‘We poor helpless children, feed ourselves indeed! Why, we can’t even fly yet; what can we do but die of hunger?’ Then the kind youth dismounted, drew his sword, and killing his horse left it there as food for the young ravens. They hopped up, satisfied their hunger, and piped: ‘We’ll remember, and reward you!’

He was now obliged to trust to his own legs, and after walking a long way he reached a big town. Here he found a great crowd and much commotion in the streets, and a herald rode about announcing, ‘The King’s daughter seeks a husband, but whoever would woo her must first execute a difficult task, and if he does not succeed he must be content to forfeit his life.’ Many had risked their lives, but in vain. When the youth saw the King’s daughter, he was so dazzled by her beauty, that he forgot all idea of danger, and went to the King to announce himself a suitor.

On this he was led out to a large lake, and a gold ring was thrown into it before his eyes. The King desired him to dive after it, adding, ‘If you return without it you will be thrown back into the lake time after time, till you are drowned in its depths.’

Everyone felt sorry for the handsome young fellow, and left him alone on the shore. There he stood thinking and wondering what he could do, when all of a sudden he saw three fishes swimming along, and recognised them as the very same whose lives he had saved. The middle fish held a mussel in its mouth, which it laid at the young man’s feet, and when he picked it up and opened it, there was the golden ring inside.

Full of delight he brought it to the King’s daughter, expecting to receive his promised reward. The haughty Princess, however, on hearing that he was not her equal by birth despised him, and exacted the fulfilment of a second task.

She went into the garden, and with her own hands she strewed ten sacks full of millet all over the grass. ‘He must pick all that up to-morrow morning before sunrise,’ she said; ‘not a grain must be lost.’

The youth sat down in the garden and wondered how it would be possible for him to accomplish such a task, but he could think of no expedient, and sat there sadly expecting to meet his death at daybreak.

But when the first rays of the rising sun fell on the garden, he saw the ten sacks all completely filled, standing there in a row, and not a single grain missing. The Ant-King, with his thousands and thousands of followers, had come during the night, and the grateful creatures had industriously gathered all the millet together and put it in the sacks.

The King’s daughter came down to the garden herself, and saw to her amazement that her suitor had accomplished the task she had given him. But even now she could not bend her proud heart, and she said, ‘Though he has executed these two tasks, yet he shall not be my husband till he brings me an apple from the tree of life.’

The young man did not even know where the tree of life grew, but he set off, determined to walk as far as his legs would carry him, though he had no hope of ever finding it.

After journeying through three different kingdoms he reached a wood one night, and lying down under a tree prepared to go to sleep there. Suddenly he heard a sound in the boughs, and a golden apple fell right into his hand. At the same moment three ravens flew down to him, perched on his knee and said, ‘We are the three young ravens whom you saved from starvation. When we grew up and heard you were searching for the golden apple, we flew far away over the seas to the end of the world, where the tree of life grows, and fetched the golden apple for you.’

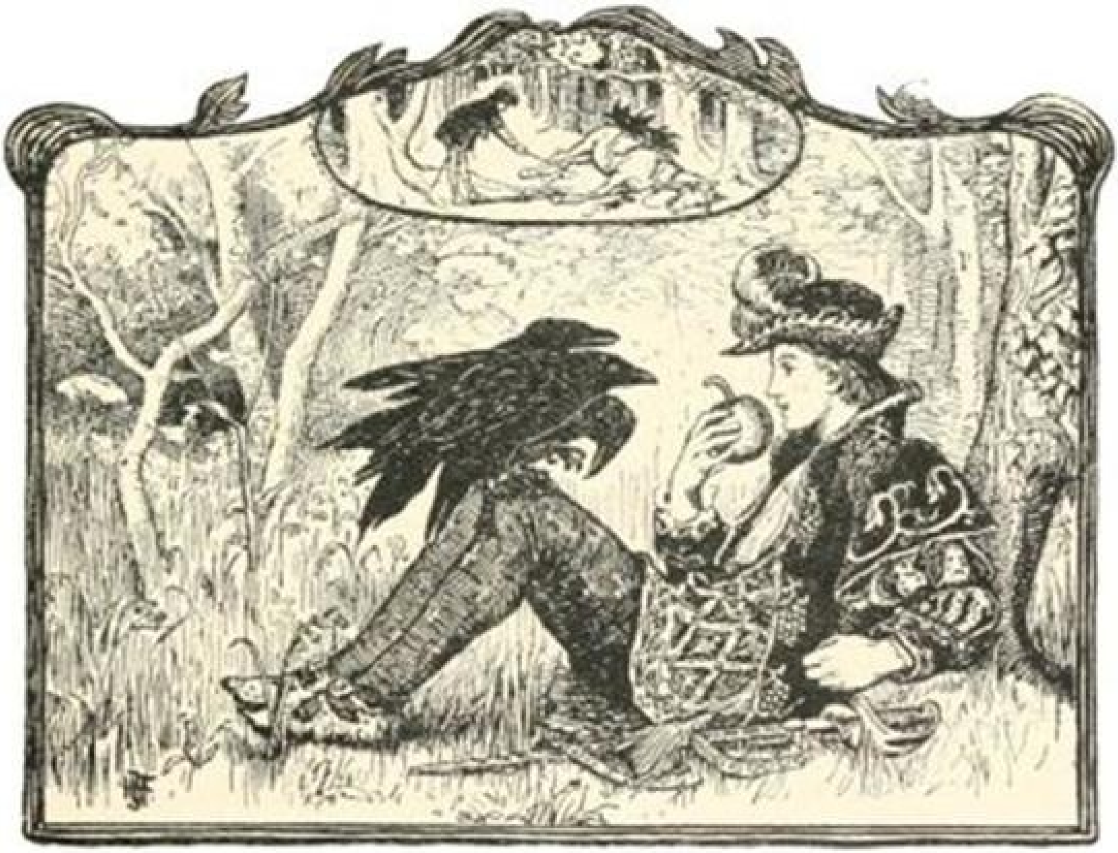

Full of joy the young man started on his way back and brought the golden apple to the lovely Princess, whose objections were now entirely silenced. They divided the apple of life and ate it together, and her heart grew full of love for him, so they lived together to a great age in undisturbed happiness.

Grimm.

THE STORY OF A CLEVER TAILOR

Once upon a time there lived an exceedingly proud Princess. If any suitor for her hand ventured to present himself, she would give him some riddle or conundrum to guess, and if he failed to do so, he was hunted out of the town with scorn and derision. She gave out publicly that all comers were welcome to try their skill, and that whoever could solve her riddle should be her husband.

Now it happened that three tailors had met together, and the two elder thought, that after having successfully put in so many fine and strong stitches with never a wrong one amongst them, they were certain to do the right thing here too. The third tailor was a lazy young scamp who did not even know his own trade properly, but who thought that surely luck would stand by him now, just for once, for, if not, what *was* to become of him?

The two others said to him, ‘You just stay at home, you’ll never get on much with your small allowance of brains.’ But the little tailor was not to be daunted, and said he had set his mind on it and meant to shift for himself, so off he started as though the whole world belonged to him.

The three tailors arrived at Court, where they had themselves duly presented to the Princess, and begged she would propound her riddles, ‘for,’ said they, ‘here were the right men at last, with wits so sharp and so fine you might almost thread a needle with them.’

Then said the Princess, ‘I have on my head two different kinds of hair. Of what colours are they?’

‘If that’s all,’ said the first tailor, ‘they are most likely black and white, like the kind of cloth we call pepper-and-salt.’

‘Wrong,’ said the Princess.

‘Then,’ said the second tailor, ‘if they are not black and white, no doubt they are red and brown, like my father’s Sunday coat.’

‘Wrong again,’ said the Princess; ‘now let the third speak. I see he thinks he knows all about it.’

Then the young tailor stepped boldly to the front and said, ‘The Princess has one silver and one golden hair on her head, and those are the two colours.’

When the Princess heard this she turned quite pale, and almost fainted away with fear, for the little tailor had hit the mark, and she had firmly believed that not a soul could guess it. When she had recovered herself she said, ‘Don’t fancy you have won me yet, there is something else you must do first. Below in the stable is a bear with whom you must spend the night, and if when I get up in the morning I find you still alive you shall marry me.’

She quite expected to rid herself of the tailor in this way, for the bear had never left anyone alive who had once come within reach of his claws. The tailor, however, had no notion of being scared, but said cheerily, ‘Bravely dared is half won.’

When evening came on he was taken to the stable. The bear tried to get at him at once and to give him a warm welcome with his great paws. ‘Gently, gently,’ said the tailor, ‘I’ll soon teach you to be quiet,’ and he coolly drew a handful of walnuts from his pocket and began cracking and eating them as though he had not a care or anxiety in the world. When the bear saw this he began to long for some nuts himself. The tailor dived into his pocket and gave him a handful, but they were pebbles, not nuts. The bear thrust them into his mouth, but try as he might he could not manage to crack them. ‘Dear me,’ thought he, ‘what a stupid fool I must be — can’t even crack a nut,’ and he said to the tailor, ‘I say, crack my nuts for me, will you?’

‘You’re a nice sort of fellow,’ said the tailor; ‘the idea of having those great jaws and not being able even to crack a walnut!’ So he took the stone, quickly changed it for a nut, and crack! it split open in a moment.

‘Let me try again,’ said the bear; ‘when I see the thing done it looks so easy I fancy I *must* be able to manage it myself.’

So the tailor gave him some more pebbles, and the bear bit and gnawed away as hard as he could, but I need hardly say that he did not succeed in cracking one of them.

Presently the tailor took out a little fiddle and began playing on it. When the bear heard the music he could not help dancing, and after he had danced some time he was so pleased that he said to the tailor, ‘I say, is fiddling difficult?’ ‘Mere child’s play,’ replied the tailor; ‘look here! you press the strings with the fingers of the left hand, and with the right you draw the bow across them, so — then it goes as easily as possible, up and down, tra la la la la—’

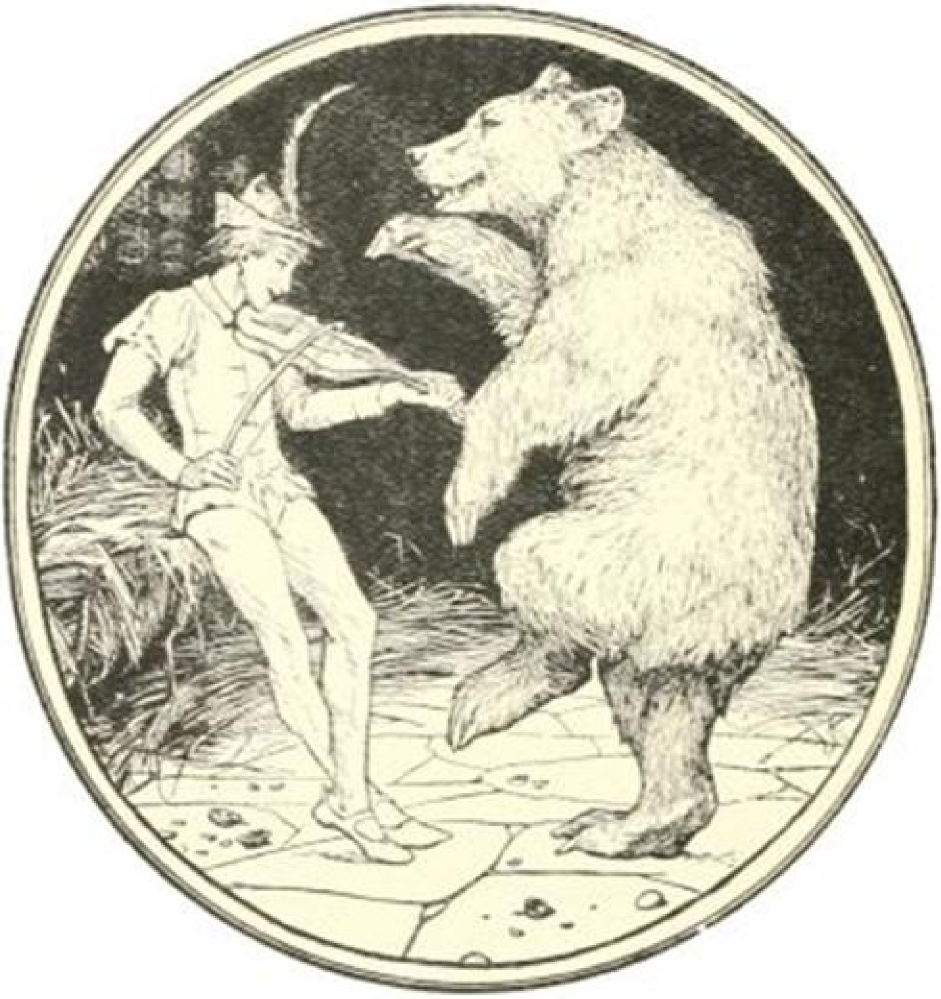

‘Oh,’ cried the bear, ‘I do wish I could play like that, then I could dance whenever the fancy took me. What do you think? Would you give me some lessons?’

‘With all my heart,’ said the tailor, ‘if you are sharp about it. But just let me look at your paws. Dear me, your nails are terribly long; I must really cut them first.’ Then he fetched a pair of stocks, and the bear laid his paws on them, and the tailor screwed them up tight. ‘Now just wait whilst I fetch my scissors,’ said he, and left the bear growling away to his heart’s content, whilst he lay down in a corner and fell fast asleep.

When the Princess heard the bear growling so loud that night, she made sure he was roaring with delight as he worried the tailor. Next morning she rose feeling quite cheerful and free from care, but when she looked across towards the stables, there stood the tailor in front of the door looking as fresh and lively as a fish in the water.

After this it was impossible to break the promise she had made so publicly, so the King ordered out the state coach to take her and the tailor to church to be married.

As they were starting, the two bad-hearted other tailors, who were envious of the younger one’s happiness, went to the stable and unscrewed the bear. Off he tore after the carriage, foaming with rage. The Princess heard his puffing and roaring, and growing frightened she cried: ‘Oh dear! the bear is after us and will certainly catch us up!’ The tailor remained quite unmoved. He quietly stood on his head, stuck his legs out at the carriage window and called out to the bear, ‘Do you see my stocks? If you don’t go home this minute I’ll screw you tight into them.’

When the bear saw and heard this he turned right round and ran off as fast as his legs would carry him. The tailor drove on unmolested to church, where he and the Princess were married, and he lived with her many years as happy and merry as a lark. Whoever does not believe this story must pay a dollar.

Grimm.

THE GOLDEN MERMAID

A powerful king had, among many other treasures, a wonderful tree in his garden, which bore every year beautiful golden apples. But the King was never able to enjoy his treasure, for he might watch and guard them as he liked, as soon as they began to get ripe they were always stolen. At last, in despair, he sent for his three sons, and said to the two eldest, ‘Get yourselves ready for a journey. Take gold and silver with you, and a large retinue of servants, as beseems two noble princes, and go through the world till you find out who it is that steals my golden apples, and, if possible, bring the thief to me that I may punish him as he deserves.’ His sons were delighted at this proposal, for they had long wished to see something of the world, so they got ready for their journey with all haste, bade their father farewell, and left the town.

The youngest Prince was much disappointed that he too was not sent out on his travels; but his father wouldn’t hear of his going, for he had always been looked upon as the stupid one of the family, and the King was afraid of something happening to him. But the Prince begged and implored so long, that at last his father consented to let him go, and furnished him with gold and silver as he had done his brothers. But he gave him the most wretched horse in his stable, because the foolish youth hadn’t asked for a better. So he too set out on his journey to secure the thief, amid the jeers and laughter of the whole court and town.

His path led him first through a wood, and he hadn’t gone very far when he met a lean-looking wolf who stood still as he approached. The Prince asked him if he were hungry, and when the wolf said he was, he got down from his horse and said, ‘If you are really as you say and look, you may take my horse and eat it.’

The wolf didn’t wait to have the offer repeated, but set to work, and soon made an end of the poor beast. When the Prince saw how different the wolf looked when he had finished his meal, he said to him, ‘Now, my friend, since you have eaten up my horse, and I have such a long way to go, that, with the best will in the world, I couldn’t manage it on foot, the least you can do for me is to act as my horse and to take me on your back.’

‘Most certainly,’ said the wolf, and, letting the Prince mount him, he trotted gaily through the wood. After they had gone a little way he turned round and asked his rider where he wanted to go to, and the Prince proceeded to tell him the whole story of the golden apples that had been stolen out of the King’s garden, and how his other two brothers had set forth with many followers to find the thief. When he had finished his story, the wolf, who was in reality no wolf but a mighty magician, said he thought he could tell him who the thief was, and could help him to secure him. ‘There lives,’ he said, ‘in a neighbouring country, a mighty emperor who has a beautiful golden bird in a cage, and this is the creature who steals the golden apples, but it flies so fast that it is impossible to catch it at its theft. You must slip into the Emperor’s palace by night and steal the bird with the cage; but be very careful not to touch the walls as you go out.’

The following night the Prince stole into the Emperor’s palace, and found the bird in its cage as the wolf had told him he would. He took hold of it carefully, but in spite of all his caution he touched the wall in trying to pass by some sleeping watchmen. They awoke at once, and, seizing him, beat him and put him into chains. Next day he was led before the Emperor, who at once condemned him to death and to be thrown into a dark dungeon till the day of his execution arrived.

The wolf, who, of course, knew by his magic arts all that had happened to the Prince, turned himself at once into a mighty monarch with a large train of followers, and proceeded to the Court of the Emperor, where he was received with every show of honour. The Emperor and he conversed on many subjects, and, among other things, the stranger asked his host if he had many slaves. The Emperor told him he had more than he knew what to do with, and that a new one had been captured that very night for trying to steal his magic bird, but that as he had already more than enough to feed and support, he was going to have this last captive hanged next morning.

‘He must have been a most daring thief,’ said the King, ‘to try and steal the magic bird, for depend upon it the creature must have been well guarded. I would really like to see this bold rascal.’ ‘By all means,’ said the Emperor; and he himself led his guest down to the dungeon where the unfortunate Prince was kept prisoner. When the Emperor stepped out of the cell with the King, the latter turned to him and said, ‘Most mighty Emperor, I have been much disappointed. I had thought to find a powerful robber, and instead of that I have seen the most miserable creature I can imagine. Hanging is far too good for him. If I had to sentence him I should make him perform some very difficult task, under pain of death. If he did it so much the better for you, and if he didn’t, matters would just be as they are now and he could still be hanged.’ ‘Your counsel,’ said the Emperor, ‘is excellent, and, as it happens, I’ve got the very thing for him to do. My nearest neighbour, who is also a mighty Emperor, possesses a golden horse which he guards most carefully. The prisoner shall be told to steal this horse and bring it to me.’

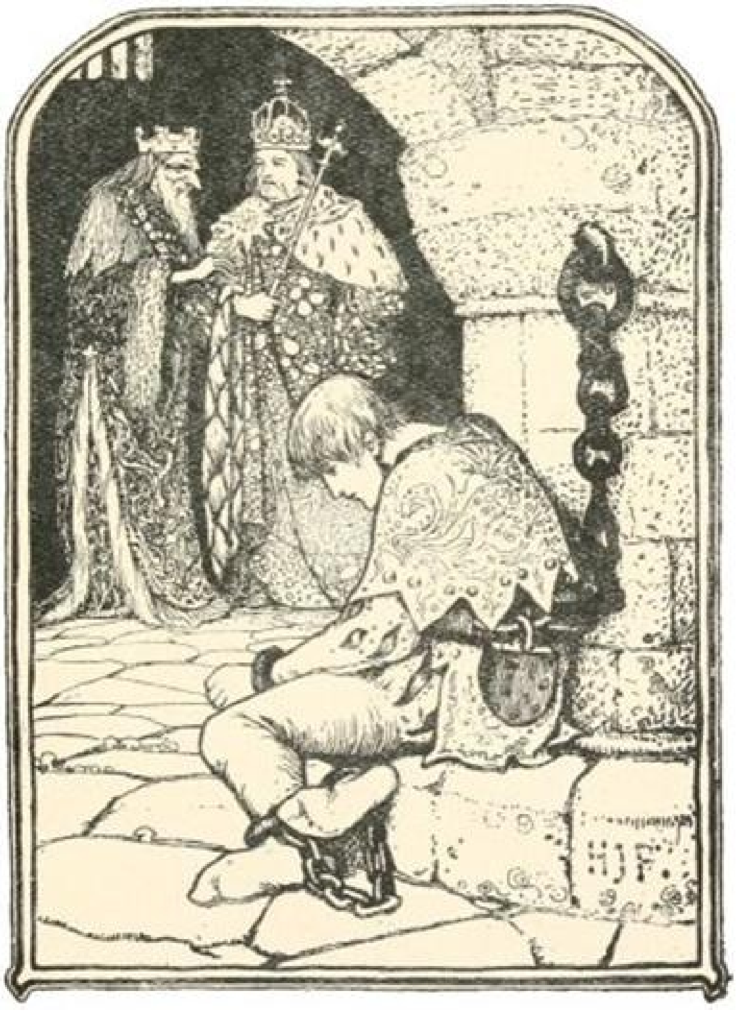

The Prince was then let out of his dungeon, and told his life would be spared if he succeeded in bringing the golden horse to the Emperor. He did not feel very elated at this announcement, for he did not know how in the world he was to set about the task, and he started on his way weeping bitterly, and wondering what had made him leave his father’s house and kingdom. But before he had gone far his friend the wolf stood before him and said, ‘Dear Prince, why are you so cast down? It is true you didn’t succeed in catching the bird; but don’t let that discourage you, for this time you will be all the more careful, and will doubtless catch the horse.’ With these and like words the wolf comforted the Prince, and warned him specially not to touch the wall or let the horse touch it as he led it out, or he would fail in the same way as he had done with the bird.

After a somewhat lengthy journey the Prince and the wolf came to the kingdom ruled over by the Emperor who possessed the golden horse. One evening late they reached the capital, and the wolf advised the Prince to set to work at once, before their presence in the city had aroused the watchfulness of the guards. They slipped unnoticed into the Emperor’s stables and into the very place where there were the most guards, for there the wolf rightly surmised they would find the horse. When they came to a certain inner door the wolf told the Prince to remain outside, while he went in. In a short time he returned and said, ‘My dear Prince, the horse is most securely watched, but I have bewitched all the guards, and if you will only be careful not to touch the wall yourself, or let the horse touch it as you go out, there is no danger and the game is yours.’ The Prince, who had made up his mind to be more than cautious this time, went cheerfully to work. He found all the guards fast asleep, and, slipping into the horse’s stall, he seized it by the bridle and led it out; but, unfortunately, before they had got quite clear of the stables a gadfly stung the horse and caused it to switch its tail, whereby it touched the wall. In a moment all the guards awoke, seized the Prince and beat him mercilessly with their horse-whips, after which they bound him with chains, and flung him into a dungeon. Next morning they brought him before the Emperor, who treated him exactly as the King with the golden bird had done, and commanded him to be beheaded on the following day.

When the wolf-magician saw that the Prince had failed this time too, he transformed himself again into a mighty king, and proceeded with an even more gorgeous retinue than the first time to the Court of the Emperor. He was courteously received and entertained, and once more after dinner he led the conversation on to the subject of slaves, and in the course of it again requested to be allowed to see the bold robber who had dared to break into the Emperor’s stable to steal his most valuable possession. The Emperor consented, and all happened exactly as it had done at the court of the Emperor with the golden bird; the prisoner’s life was to be spared only on condition that within three days he should obtain possession of the golden mermaid, whom hitherto no mortal had ever approached.

Very depressed by his dangerous and difficult task, the Prince left his gloomy prison; but, to his great joy, he met his friend the wolf before he had gone many miles on his journey. The cunning creature pretended he knew nothing of what had happened to the Prince, and asked him how he had fared with the horse. The Prince told him all about his misadventure, and the condition on which the Emperor had promised to spare his life. Then the wolf reminded him that he had twice got him out of prison, and that if he would only trust in him, and do exactly as he told him, he would certainly succeed in this last undertaking. Thereupon they bent their steps towards the sea, which stretched out before them, as far as their eyes could see, all the waves dancing and glittering in the bright sunshine. ‘Now,’ continued the wolf, ‘I am going to turn myself into a boat full of the most beautiful silken merchandise, and you must jump boldly into the boat, and steer with my tail in your hand right out into the open sea. You will soon come upon the golden mermaid. Whatever you do, don’t follow her if she calls you, but on the contrary say to her, “The buyer comes to the seller, not the seller to the buyer.” After which you must steer towards the land, and she will follow you, for she won’t be able to resist the beautiful wares you have on board your ship.’

The Prince promised faithfully to do all he had been told, whereupon the wolf changed himself into a ship full of most exquisite silks, of every shade and colour imaginable. The astonished Prince stepped into the boat, and, holding the wolf’s tail in his hand, he steered boldly out into the open sea, where the sun was gilding the blue waves with its golden rays. Soon he saw the golden mermaid swimming near the ship, beckoning and calling to him to follow her; but, mindful of the wolf’s warning, he told her in a loud voice that if she wished to buy anything she must come to him. With these words he turned his magic ship round and steered back towards the land. The mermaid called out to him to stand still, but he refused to listen to her and never paused till he reached the sand of the shore. Here he stopped and waited for the mermaid, who had swum after him. When she drew near the boat he saw that she was far more beautiful than any mortal he had ever beheld. She swam round the ship for some time, and then swung herself gracefully on board, in order to examine the beautiful silken stuffs more closely. Then the Prince seized her in his arms, and kissing her tenderly on the cheeks and lips, he told her she was his for ever; at the same moment the boat turned into a wolf again, which so terrified the mermaid that she clung to the Prince for protection.

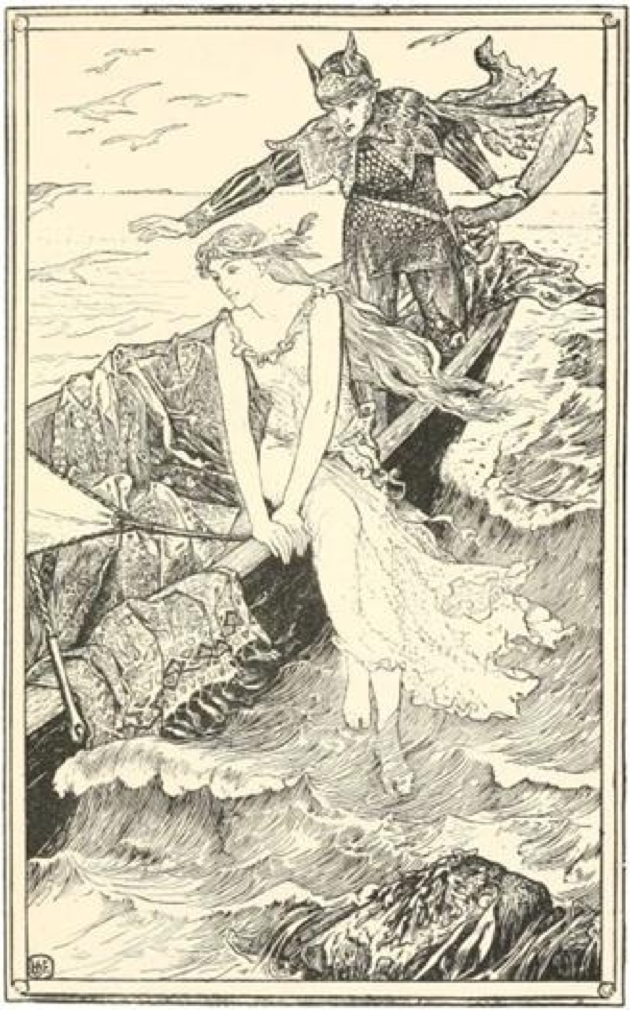

So the golden mermaid was successfully caught, and she soon felt quite happy in her new life when she saw she had nothing to fear either from the Prince or the wolf — she rode on the back of the latter, and the Prince rode behind her. When they reached the country ruled over by the Emperor with the golden horse, the Prince jumped down, and, helping the mermaid to alight, he led her before the Emperor. At the sight of the beautiful mermaid and of the grim wolf, who stuck close to the Prince this time, the guards all made respectful obeisance, and soon the three stood before his Imperial Majesty. When the Emperor heard from the Prince how he had gained possession of his fair prize, he at once recognised that he had been helped by some magic art, and on the spot gave up all claim to the beautiful mermaid. ‘Dear youth,’ he said, ‘forgive me for my shameful conduct to you, and, as a sign that you pardon me, accept the golden horse as a present. I acknowledge your power to be greater even than I can understand, for you have succeeded in gaining possession of the golden mermaid, whom hitherto no mortal has ever been able to approach.’ Then they all sat down to a huge feast, and the Prince had to relate his adventures all over again, to the wonder and astonishment of the whole company.

But the Prince was wearying now to return to his own kingdom, so as soon as the feast was over he took farewell of the Emperor, and set out on his homeward way. He lifted the mermaid on to the golden horse, and swung himself up behind her — and so they rode on merrily, with the wolf trotting behind, till they came to the country of the Emperor with the golden bird. The renown of the Prince and his adventure had gone before him, and the Emperor sat on his throne awaiting the arrival of the Prince and his companions. When the three rode into the courtyard of the palace, they were surprised and delighted to find everything festively illuminated and decorated for their reception. When the Prince and the golden mermaid, with the wolf behind them, mounted the steps of the palace, the Emperor came forward to meet them, and led them to the throne room. At the same moment a servant appeared with the golden bird in its golden cage, and the Emperor begged the Prince to accept it with his love, and to forgive him the indignity he had suffered at his hands. Then the Emperor bent low before the beautiful mermaid, and, offering her his arm, he led her into dinner, closely followed by the Prince and her friend the wolf; the latter seating himself at table, not the least embarrassed that no one had invited him to do so.

As soon as the sumptuous meal was over, the Prince and his mermaid took leave of the Emperor, and, seating themselves on the golden horse, continued their homeward journey. On the way the wolf turned to the Prince and said, ‘Dear friends, I must now bid you farewell, but I leave you under such happy circumstances that I cannot feel our parting to be a sad one.’ The Prince was very unhappy when he heard these words, and begged the wolf to stay with them always; but this the good creature refused to do, though he thanked the Prince kindly for his invitation, and called out as he disappeared into the thicket, ‘Should any evil befall you, dear Prince, at any time, you may rely on my friendship and gratitude.’ These were the wolf’s parting words, and the Prince could not restrain his tears when he saw his friend vanishing in the distance; but one glance at his beloved mermaid soon cheered him up again, and they continued on their journey merrily.

The news of his son’s adventures had already reached his father’s Court, and everyone was more than astonished at the success of the once despised Prince. His elder brothers, who had in vain gone in pursuit of the thief of the golden apples, were furious over their younger brother’s good fortune, and plotted and planned how they were to kill him. They hid themselves in the wood through which the Prince had to pass on his way to the palace, and there fell on him, and, having beaten him to death, they carried off the golden horse and the golden bird. But nothing they could do would persuade the golden mermaid to go with them or move from the spot, for ever since she had left the sea, she had so attached herself to her Prince that she asked nothing else than to live or die with him.

For many weeks the poor mermaid sat and watched over the dead body of her lover, weeping salt tears over his loss, when suddenly one day their old friend the wolf appeared and said, ‘Cover the Prince’s body with all the leaves and flowers you can find in the wood.’ The maiden did as he told her, and then the wolf breathed over the flowery grave, and, lo and behold! the Prince lay there sleeping as peacefully as a child. ‘Now you may wake him if you like,’ said the wolf, and the mermaid bent over him and gently kissed the wounds his brothers had made on his forehead, and the Prince awoke, and you may imagine how delighted he was to find his beautiful mermaid beside him, though he felt a little depressed when he thought of the loss of the golden bird and the golden horse. After a time the wolf, who had likewise fallen on the Prince’s neck, advised them to continue their journey, and once more the Prince and his lovely bride mounted on the faithful beast’s back.

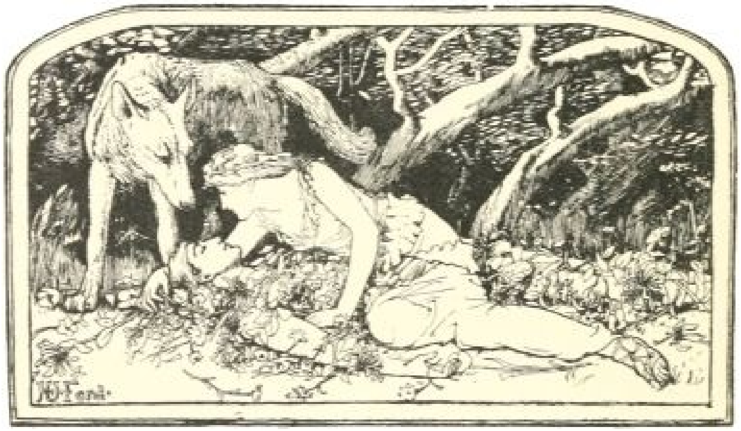

The King’s joy was great when he embraced his youngest son, for he had long since despaired of his return. He received the wolf and the beautiful golden mermaid most cordially too, and the Prince was made to tell his adventures all over from the beginning. The poor old father grew very sad when he heard of the shameful conduct of his elder sons, and had them called before him. They turned as white as death when they saw their brother, whom they thought they had murdered, standing beside them alive and well, and so startled were they that when the King asked them why they had behaved so wickedly to their brother they could think of no lie, but confessed at once that they had slain the young Prince in order to obtain possession of the golden horse and the golden bird. Their father’s wrath knew no bounds, and he ordered them both to be banished, but he could not do enough to honour his youngest son and his marriage with the beautiful mermaid was celebrated with much pomp and magnificence. When the festivities were over, the wolf bade them all farewell, and returned once more to his life in the woods, much to the regret of the old King and the young Prince and his bride.

And so ended the adventures of the Prince with his friend the wolf.

Grimm.

THE WAR OF THE WOLF AND THE FOX

There was once upon a time a man and his wife who had an old cat and an old dog. One day the man, whose name was Simon, said to his wife, whose name was Susan, ‘Why should we keep our old cat any longer? She never catches any mice now-a-days, and is so useless that I have made up my mind to drown her.’

But his wife replied, ‘Don’t do that, for I’m sure she could still catch mice.’

‘Rubbish,’ said Simon. ‘The mice might dance on her and she would never catch one. I’ve quite made up my mind that the next time I see her, I shall put her in the water.’

Susan was very unhappy when she heard this, and so was the cat, who had been listening to the conversation behind the stove. When Simon went off to his work, the poor cat miawed so pitifully, and looked up so pathetically into Susan’s face, that the woman quickly opened the door and said, ‘Fly for your life, my poor little beast, and get well away from here before your master returns.’

The cat took her advice, and ran as quickly as her poor old legs would carry her into the wood, and when Simon came home, his wife told him that the cat had vanished.

‘So much the better for her,’ said Simon. ‘And now we have got rid of her, we must consider what we are to do with the old dog. He is quite deaf and blind, and invariably barks when there is no need, and makes no sound when there is. I think the best thing I can do with him is to hang him.’

But soft-hearted Susan replied, ‘Please don’t do so; he’s surely not so useless as all that.’

‘Don’t be foolish,’ said her husband. ‘The courtyard might be full of thieves and he’d never discover it. No, the first time I see him, it’s all up with him, I can tell you.’

Susan was very unhappy at his words, and so was the dog, who was lying in the corner of the room and had heard everything. As soon as Simon had gone to his work, he stood up and howled so touchingly that Susan quickly opened the door, and said ‘Fly for your life, poor beast, before your master gets home.’ And the dog ran into the wood with his tail between his legs.

When her husband returned, his wife told him that the dog had disappeared.

‘That’s lucky for him,’ said Simon, but Susan sighed, for she had been very fond of the poor creature.

Now it happened that the cat and dog met each other on their travels, and though they had not been the best of friends at home, they were quite glad to meet among strangers. They sat down under a holly tree and both poured forth their woes.

Presently a fox passed by, and seeing the pair sitting together in a disconsolate fashion, he asked them why they sat there, and what they were grumbling about.

The cat replied, ‘I have caught many a mouse in my day, but now that I am old and past work, my master wants to drown me.’

And the dog said, ‘Many a night have I watched and guarded my master’s house, and now that I am old and deaf, he wants to hang me.’

The fox answered, ‘That’s the way of the world. But I’ll help you to get back into your master’s favour, only you must first help me in my own troubles.’

They promised to do their best, and the fox continued, ‘The wolf has declared war against me, and is at this moment marching to meet me in company with the bear and the wild boar, and to-morrow there will be a fierce battle between us.’

‘All right,’ said the dog and the cat, ‘we will stand by you, and if we are killed, it is at any rate better to die on the field of battle than to perish ignobly at home,’ and they shook paws and concluded the bargain. The fox sent word to the wolf to meet him at a certain place, and the three set forth to encounter him and his friends.

The wolf, the bear, and the wild boar arrived on the spot first, and when they had waited some time for the fox, the dog, and the cat, the bear said, ‘I’ll climb up into the oak tree, and look if I can see them coming.’

The first time he looked round he said, ‘I can see nothing,’ and the second time he looked round he said, ‘I can still see nothing.’ But the third time he said, ‘I see a mighty army in the distance, and one of the warriors has the biggest lance you ever saw!’

This was the cat, who was marching along with her tail erect.

And so they laughed and jeered, and it was so hot that the bear said, ‘The enemy won’t be here at this rate for many hours to come, so I’ll just curl myself up in the fork of the tree and have a little sleep.’

And the wolf lay down under the oak, and the wild boar buried himself in some straw, so that nothing was seen of him but one ear.

And while they were lying there, the fox, the cat and the dog arrived. When the cat saw the wild boar’s ear, she pounced upon it, thinking it was a mouse in the straw.

The wild boar got up in a dreadful fright, gave one loud grunt and disappeared into the wood. But the cat was even more startled than the boar, and, spitting with terror, she scrambled up into the fork of the tree, and as it happened right into the bear’s face. Now it was the bear’s turn to be alarmed, and with a mighty growl he jumped down from the oak and fell right on the top of the wolf and killed him as dead as a stone.

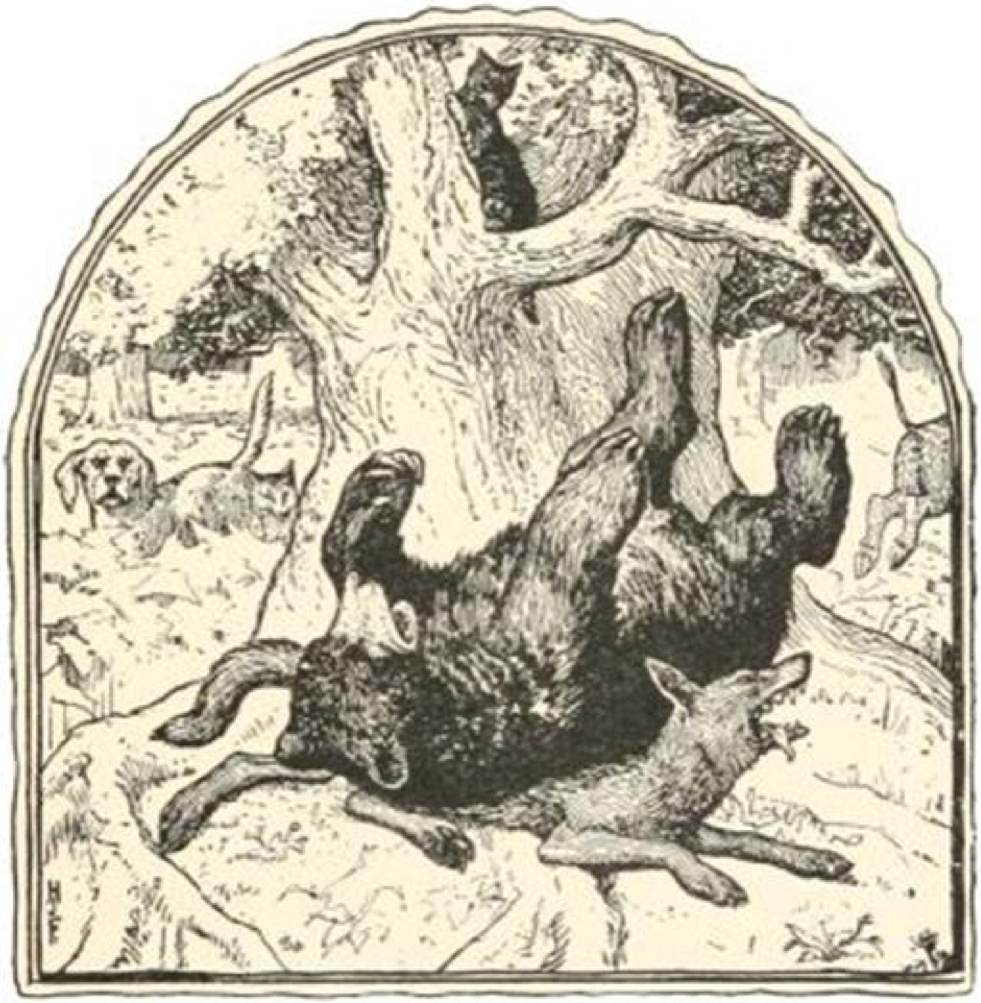

On their way home from the war the fox caught a score of mice, and when they reached Simon’s cottage he put them all on the stove and said to the cat, ‘Now go and fetch one mouse after the other, and lay them down before your master.’

‘All right,’ said the cat, and did exactly as the fox told her.

When Susan saw this she said to her husband, ‘Just look, here is our old cat back again, and see what a lot of mice she has caught.’

‘Wonders will never cease,’ cried Simon. ‘I certainly never thought the old cat would ever catch another mouse.’

But Susan answered, ‘There, you see, I always said our cat was a most excellent creature — but you men always think you know best.’

In the meantime the fox said to the dog, ‘Our friend Simon has just killed a pig; when it gets a little darker, you must go into the courtyard and bark with all your might.'

'All right,' said the dog, and as soon as it grew dusk he began to bark loudly.

Susan, who heard him first, said to her husband, 'Our dog must have come back, for I hear him barking lustily. Do go out and see what's the matter; perhaps thieves may be stealing our sausages.'

But Simon answered, 'The foolish brute is as deaf as a post and is always barking at nothing,' and he refused to get up.

The next morning Susan got up early to go to church at the neighbouring town, and she thought she would take some sausages to her aunt who lived there. But when she went to her larder, she found all the sausages gone, and a great hole in the floor. She called out to her husband, 'I was perfectly right. Thieves have been here last night, and they have not left a single sausage. Oh! if you had only got up when I asked you to!'

Then Simon scratched his head and said, 'I can't understand it at all. I certainly never believed the old dog was so quick at hearing.'

But Susan replied, 'I always told you our old dog was the best dog in the world — but as usual you thought you knew so much better. Men are the same all the world over.'

And the fox scored a point too, for he had carried away the sausages himself!

Grimm.

THE STORY OF THE FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE

There was once a fisherman and his wife who lived together in a little hut close to the sea, and the fisherman used to go down every day to fish; and he would fish and fish. So he used to sit with his rod and gaze into the shining water; and he would gaze and gaze.

Now, once the line was pulled deep under the water, and when he hauled it up he hauled a large flounder with it. The flounder said to him, ‘Listen, fisherman. I pray you to let me go; I am not a real flounder, I am an enchanted Prince. What good will it do you if you kill me — I shall not taste nice? Put me back into the water and let me swim away.’

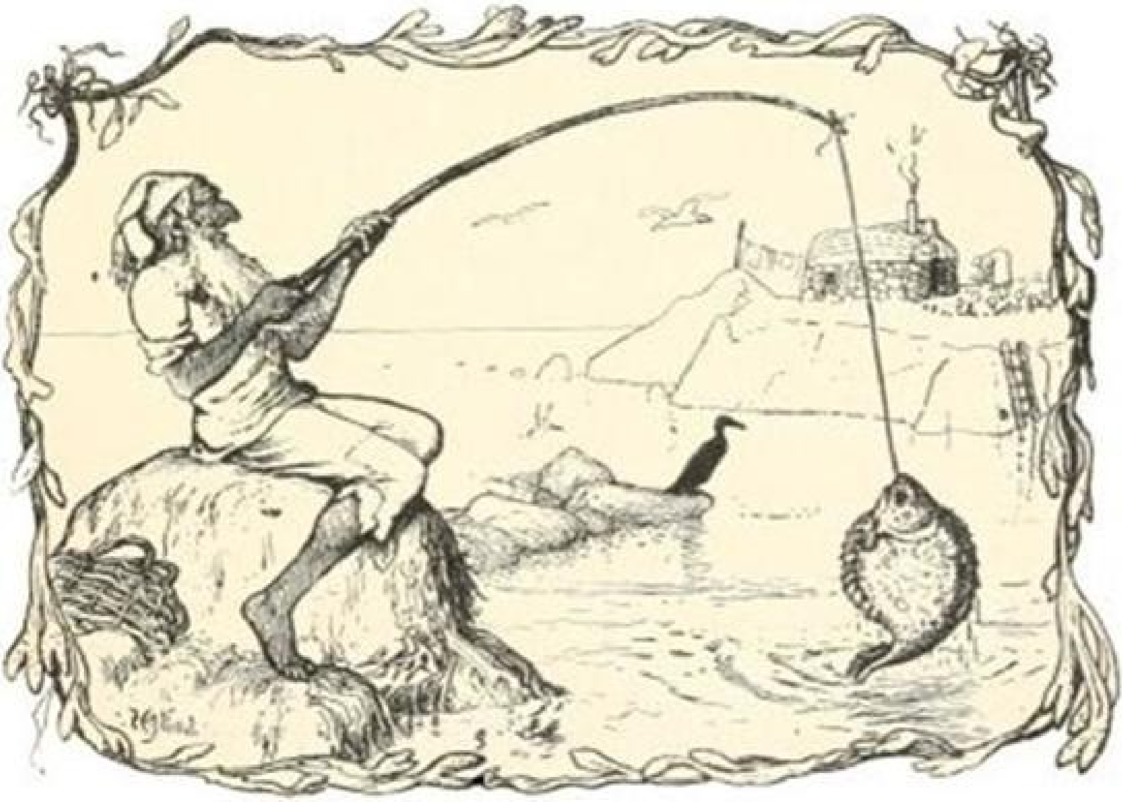

‘Well,’ said the man, ‘you need not make so much noise about it; I am sure I had much better let a flounder that can talk swim away.’ With these words he put him back again into the shining water, and the flounder sank to the bottom, leaving a long streak of blood behind. Then the fisherman got up, and went home to his wife in the hut.

‘Husband,’ said his wife, ‘have you caught nothing to-day?’

‘No,’ said the man. ‘I caught a flounder who said he was an enchanted prince, so I let him swim away again.’

‘Did you wish nothing from him?’ said his wife.

‘No,’ said the man; ‘what should I have wished from him?’

‘Ah!’ said the woman, ‘it’s dreadful to have to live all one’s life in this hut that is so small and dirty; you ought to have wished for a cottage. Go now and call him; say to him that we choose to have a cottage, and he will certainly give it you.’

‘Alas!’ said the man, ‘why should I go down there again?’

‘Why,’ said his wife, ‘you caught him, and then let him go again, so he is sure to give you what you ask. Go down quickly.’

The man did not like going at all, but as his wife was not to be persuaded, he went down to the sea.

When he came there the sea was quite green and yellow, and was no longer shining. So he stood on the shore and said: ‘Once a prince, but changed you be
Into a flounder in the sea.
Come! for my wife, Ilsebel,
Wishes what I dare not tell.’

Then the flounder came swimming up and said, ‘Well, what does she want?’

‘Alas!’ said the man, ‘my wife says I ought to have kept you and wished something from you. She does not want to live any longer in the hut; she would like a cottage.’

‘Go home, then,’ said the flounder; ‘she has it.’

So the man went home, and there was his wife no longer in the hut, but in its place was a beautiful cottage, and his wife was sitting in front of the door on a bench. She took him by the hand and said to him, ‘Come inside, and see if this is not much better.’ They went in, and inside the cottage was a tiny hall, and a beautiful sitting-room, and a bedroom in which stood a bed, a kitchen and a dining-room all furnished with the best of everything, and fitted up with every kind of tin and copper utensil. And outside was a little yard in which were chickens and ducks, and also a little garden with vegetables and fruit trees.

‘See,’ said the wife, ‘isn’t this nice?’

‘Yes,’ answered her husband; ‘here we shall remain and live very happily.’

‘We will think about that,’ said his wife.

With these words they had their supper and went to bed. All went well for a week or a fortnight, then the wife said: ‘Listen, husband; the cottage is much too small, and so is the yard and the garden; the flounder might just as well have sent us a larger house. I should like to live in a great stone castle. Go down to the flounder, and tell him to send us a castle.'

'Ah, wife!' said the fisherman, 'the cottage is quite good enough; why do we choose to live in a castle?'

'Why?' said the wife. 'You go down; the flounder can quite well do that.'

'No, wife,' said the man; 'the flounder gave us the cottage. I do not like to go to him again; he might take it amiss.'

'Go,' said his wife. 'He can certainly give it us, and ought to do so willingly. Go at once.'

The fisherman's heart was very heavy, and he did not like going. He said to himself, 'It is not right.' Still, he went down.

When he came to the sea, the water was all violet and dark-blue, and dull and thick, and no longer green and yellow, but it was still smooth.

So he stood there and said:

'Once a prince, but changed you be
Into a flounder in the sea.
Come! for my wife, Ilsebel,
Wishes what I dare not tell.'

'What does she want now?' said the flounder.

'Ah!' said the fisherman, half-ashamed, 'she wants to live in a great stone castle.'

'Go home; she is standing before the door,' said the flounder.

The fisherman went home and thought he would find no house. When he came near, there stood a great stone palace, and his wife was standing on the steps, about to enter. She took him by the hand and said, 'Come inside.'

Then he went with her, and inside the castle was a large hall with a marble floor, and there were heaps of servants who threw open the great doors, and the walls were covered with beautiful tapestry, and in the apartments were gilded chairs and tables, and crystal chandeliers hung from the ceiling, and all the rooms were beautifully carpeted. The best of food and drink also was set before them when they wished to dine. And outside the house was a large courtyard with horse and cow stables and a coach-house — all fine buildings; and a splendid garden with most beautiful flowers and fruit, and in a park quite a league long were deer and roe and hares, and everything one could wish for, 'Now,' said the wife, 'isn't this beautiful?'

'Yes, indeed,' said the fisherman. 'Now we will stay here and live in this beautiful castle, and be very happy.’

‘We will consider the matter,’ said his wife, and they went to bed.

The next morning the wife woke up first at daybreak, and looked out of the bed at the beautiful country stretched before her. Her husband was still sleeping, so she dug her elbows into his side and said: ‘Husband, get up and look out of the window. Could we not become the king of all this land? Go down to the flounder and tell him we choose to be king.’

‘Ah, wife!’ replied her husband, ‘why should we be king? *I* don’t want to be king.’

‘Well,’ said his wife, ‘if you don’t want to be king, *I* will be king. Go down to the flounder; I will be king.’

‘Alas! wife,’ said the fisherman, ‘why do you want to be king? I can’t ask him that.’

‘And why not?’ said his wife. ‘Go down at once. I must be king.’

So the fisherman went, though much vexed that his wife wanted to be king. ‘It is not right! It is not right,’ he thought. He did not wish to go, yet he went.

When he came to the sea, the water was a dark-grey colour, and it was heaving against the shore. So he stood and said: ‘Once a prince, but changed you be
Into a flounder in the sea.
Come! for my wife, Ilsebel,
Wishes what I dare not tell.’

‘What does she want now?’ asked the flounder.

‘Alas!’ said the fisherman, ‘she wants to be king.’

‘Go home; she is that already,’ said the flounder.

The fisherman went home, and when he came near the palace he saw that it had become much larger, and that it had great towers and splendid ornamental carving on it. A sentinel was standing before the gate, and there were numbers of soldiers with kettledrums and trumpets. And when he went into the palace, he found everything was of pure marble and gold, and the curtains of damask with tassels of gold. Then the doors of the hall flew open, and there stood the whole Court round his wife, who was sitting on a high throne of gold and diamonds; she wore a great golden crown, and had a sceptre of gold and precious stones in her hand, and by her on either side stood six pages in a row, each one a head taller than the other. Then he went before her and said: ‘Ah, wife! are you king now?’

‘Yes,’ said his wife; ‘now I am king.’

He stood looking at her, and when he had looked for some time, he said:

‘Let that be enough, wife, now that you are king! Now we have nothing more to wish for.’

‘Nay, husband,’ said his wife restlessly, ‘my wishing powers are boundless; I cannot restrain them any longer. Go down to the flounder; king I am, now I must be emperor.’

‘Alas! wife,’ said the fisherman, ‘why do you want to be emperor?’

‘Husband,’ said she, ‘go to the flounder; I *will* be emperor.’

‘Ah, wife,’ he said, ‘he cannot make you emperor; I don’t like to ask him that. There is only one emperor in the kingdom. Indeed and indeed he cannot make you emperor.’

‘What!’ said his wife. ‘I am king, and you are my husband. Will you go at once? Go! If he can make king he can make emperor, and emperor I must and will be. Go!’

So he had to go. But as he went, he felt quite frightened, and he thought to himself, ‘This can’t be right; to be emperor is too ambitious; the flounder will be tired out at last.’

Thinking this he came to the shore. The sea was quite black and thick, and it was breaking high on the beach; the foam was flying about, and the wind was blowing; everything looked bleak. The fisherman was chilled with fear. He stood and said: ‘Once a prince, but changed you be
Into a flounder in the sea.
Come! for my wife, Ilsebel,
Wishes what I dare not tell.’

‘What does she want now?’ asked the flounder.

‘Alas! flounder,’ he said, ‘my wife wants to be emperor.’

‘Go home,’ said the flounder; ‘she is that already.’

So the fisherman went home, and when he came there he saw the whole castle was made of polished marble, ornamented with alabaster statues and gold. Before the gate soldiers were marching, blowing trumpets and beating drums. Inside the palace were walking barons, counts, and dukes, acting as servants; they opened the door, which was of beaten gold. And when he entered, he saw his wife upon a throne which was made out of a single block of gold, and which was quite six cubits high. She had on a great golden crown which was three yards high and set with brilliants and sparkling gems. In one hand she held a sceptre, and in the other the imperial globe, and on either side of her stood two rows of halberdiers, each smaller than the other, from a seven-foot giant to the tiniest little dwarf no higher than my little finger. Many princes and dukes were standing before her. The fisherman went up to her quietly and said: ‘Wife, are you emperor now?’

‘Yes,’ she said, ‘I am emperor.’

He stood looking at her magnificence, and when he had watched her for some time, said: ‘Ah, wife, let that be enough, now that you are emperor.’

‘Husband,’ said she, ‘why are you standing there? I am emperor now, and I want to be pope too; go down to the flounder.’

‘Alas! wife,’ said the fisherman, ‘what more do you want? You cannot be pope; there is only one pope in Christendom, and he cannot make you that.’

‘Husband,’ she said, ‘I *will* be pope. Go down quickly; I must be pope to-day.’

‘No, wife,’ said the fisherman; ‘I can’t ask him that. It is not right; it is too much. The flounder cannot make you pope.’

‘Husband, what nonsense!’ said his wife. ‘If he can make emperor, he can make pope too. Go down this instant; I am emperor and you are my husband. Will you be off at once?’

So he was frightened and went out; but he felt quite faint, and trembled and shook, and his knees and legs began to give way under him. The wind was blowing fiercely across the land, and the clouds flying across the sky looked as gloomy as if it were night; the leaves were being blown from the trees; the water was foaming and seething and dashing upon the shore, and in the distance he saw the ships in great distress, dancing and tossing on the waves. Still the sky was very blue in the middle, although at the sides it was an angry red as in a great storm. So he stood shuddering in anxiety, and said: ‘Once a prince, but changed you be
Into a flounder in the sea.
Come! for my wife, Ilsebel,
Wishes what I dare not tell.’

‘Well, what does she want now?’ asked the flounder.

‘Alas!’ said the fisherman, ‘she wants to be pope.’

‘Go home, then; she is that already,’ said the flounder.

Then he went home, and when he came there he saw, as it were, a large church surrounded by palaces. He pushed his way through the people. The interior was lit up with thousands and thousands of candles, and his wife was dressed in cloth of gold and was sitting on a much higher throne, and she wore three great golden crowns. Round her were numbers of Church dignitaries, and on either side were standing two rows of tapers, the largest of them as tall as a steeple, and the smallest as tiny as a Christmas-tree candle. All the emperors and kings were on their knees before her, and were kissing her foot.

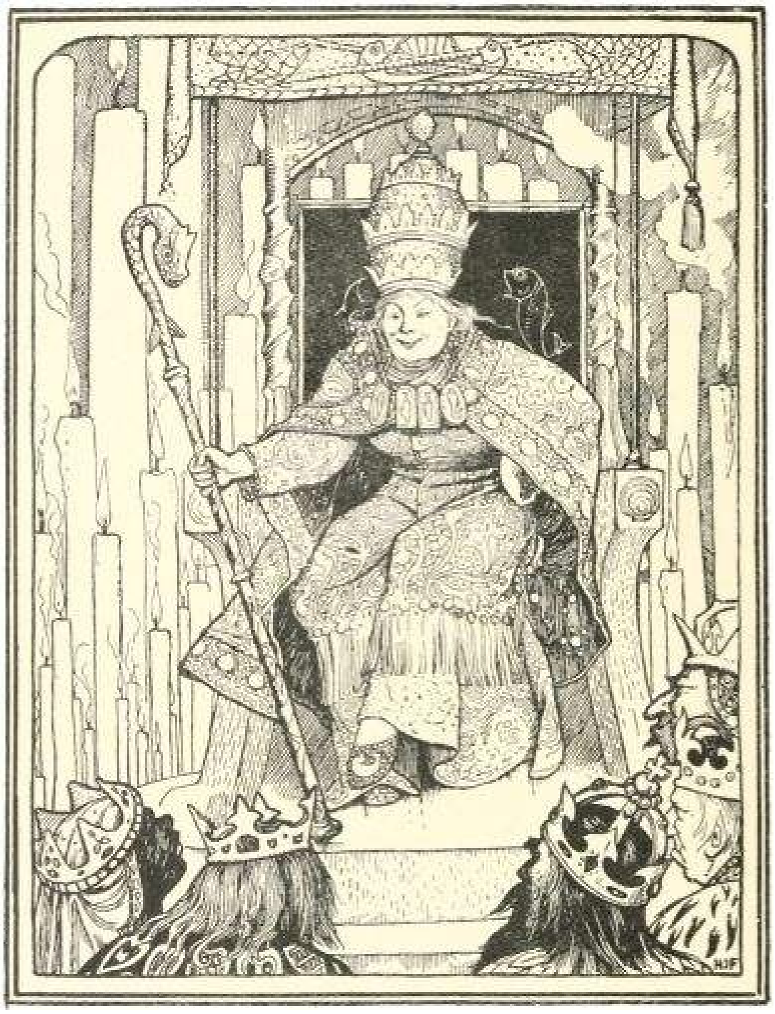

‘Wife,’ said the fisherman looking at her, ‘are you pope now?’

‘Yes,’ said she; ‘I am pope.’

So he stood staring at her, and it was as if he were looking at the bright sun. When he had watched her for some time he said: ‘Ah, wife, let it be enough now that you are pope.’

But she sat as straight as a tree, and did not move or bend the least bit. He said again: ‘Wife, be content now that you are pope. You cannot become anything more.’

‘We will think about that,’ said his wife.

With these words they went to bed. But the woman was not content; her greed would not allow her to sleep, and she kept on thinking and thinking what she could still become. The fisherman slept well and soundly, for he had done a great deal that day, but his wife could not sleep at all, and turned from one side to another the whole night long, and thought, till she could think no longer, what more she could become. Then the sun began to rise, and when she saw the red dawn she went to the end of the bed and looked at it, and as she was watching the sun rise, out of the window, she thought, ‘Ha! could I not make the sun and man rise?’

‘Husband,’ said she, poking him in the ribs with her elbows, ‘wake up. Go down to the flounder; I will be a god.’

The fisherman was still half asleep, yet he was so frightened that he fell out of bed. He thought he had not heard aright, and opened his eyes wide and said: ‘What did you say, wife?’

‘Husband,’ she said, ‘if I cannot make the sun and man rise when I appear I cannot rest. I shall never have a quiet moment till I can make the sun and man rise.’

He looked at her in horror, and a shudder ran over him.

‘Go down at once; I will be a god.’

‘Alas! wife,’ said the fisherman, falling on his knees before her, ‘the flounder cannot do that. Emperor and pope he can make you. I implore you, be content and remain pope.’

Then she flew into a passion, her hair hung wildly about her face, she pushed him with her foot and screamed: ‘I am not contented, and I shall not be contented! Will you go?’

So he hurried on his clothes as fast as possible, and ran away as if he were mad.

But the storm was raging so fiercely that he could scarcely stand. Houses and trees were being blown down, the mountains were being shaken, and pieces of rock were rolling in the sea. The sky was as black as ink, it was thundering and lightening, and the sea was tossing in great waves as high as church towers and mountains, and each had a white crest of foam.

So he shouted, not able to hear his own voice:

‘Once a prince, but changed you be
Into a flounder in the sea.
Come! for my wife, Ilsebel,
Wishes what I dare not tell.’

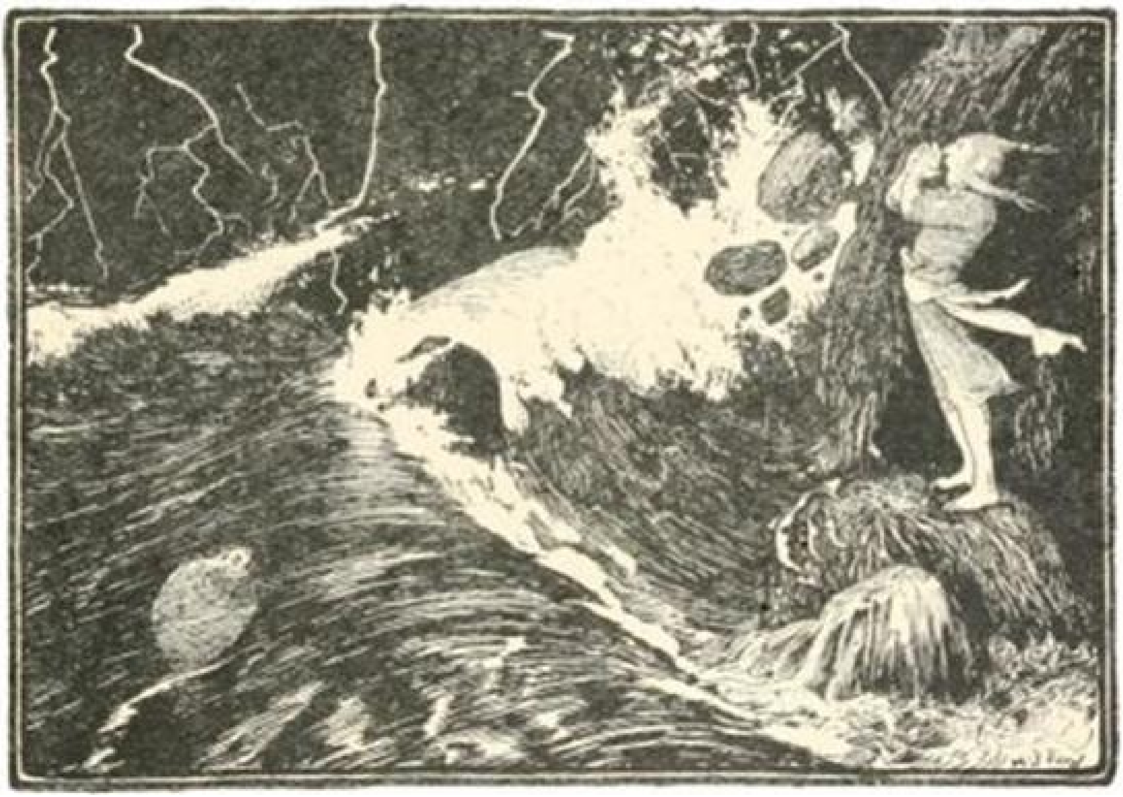

‘Well, what does she want now?’ asked the flounder.

‘Alas!’ said he, ‘she wants to be a god.’

‘Go home, then; she is sitting again in the hut.’

And there they are sitting to this day.

Grimm.

THE THREE MUSICIANS

Once upon a time three musicians left their home and set out on their travels. They had all learnt music from the same master, and they determined to stick together and to seek their fortune in foreign lands. They wandered merrily from place to place and made quite a good living, and were much appreciated by everyone who heard them play. One evening they came to a village where they delighted all the company with their beautiful music. At last they ceased playing, and began to eat and drink and listen to the talk that was going on around them. They heard all the gossip of the place, and many wonderful things were related and discussed. At last the conversation fell on a castle in the neighbourhood, about which many strange and marvellous things were told. One person said that hidden treasure was to be found there; another that the richest food was always to be had there, although the castle was uninhabited; and a third, that an evil spirit dwelt within the walls, so terrible, that anyone who forced his way into the castle came out of it more dead than alive.

As soon as the three musicians were alone in their bedroom they agreed to go and examine the mysterious castle, and, if possible, to find and carry away the hidden treasure. They determined, too, to make the attempt separately, one after the other, according to age, and they settled that a whole day was to be given to each adventurer in which to try his luck.

The fiddler was the first to set out on his adventures, and did so in the best of spirits and full of courage. When he reached the castle he found the outer gate open, quite as if he were an expected guest, but no sooner had he stepped across the entry than the heavy door closed behind him with a bang, and was bolted with a huge iron bar, exactly as if a sentinel were doing his office and keeping watch, but no human being was to be seen anywhere. An awful terror overcame the fiddler; but it was hopeless to think of turning back or of standing still, and the hopes of finding gold and other treasures gave him strength and courage to force his way further into the castle. Upstairs and downstairs he wandered, through lofty halls, splendid rooms, and lovely little boudoirs, everything beautifully arranged, and all kept in the most perfect order. But the silence of death reigned everywhere, and no living thing, not even a fly, was to be seen. Notwithstanding, the youth felt his spirits return to him when he entered the lower regions of the castle, for in the kitchen the most tempting and delicious food was spread out, the cellars were full of the most costly wine, and the store-room crammed with pots of every sort of jam you can imagine. A cheerful fire was burning in the kitchen, before which a roast was being basted by unseen hands, and all kinds of vegetables and other dainty dishes were being prepared in like manner. Before the fiddler had time to think, he was ushered into a little room by invisible hands, and there a table was spread for him with all the delicious food he had seen cooking in the kitchen.

The youth first seized his fiddle and played a beautiful air on it which echoed through the silent halls, and then he fell to and began to eat a hearty meal. Before long, however, the door opened and a tiny man stepped into the room, not more than three feet high, clothed in a dressing-gown, and with a small wrinkled face, and a grey beard which reached down to the silver buckles of his shoes. And the little man sat down beside the fiddler and shared his meal. When they got to the game course the fiddler handed the dwarf a knife and fork, and begged him to help himself first, and then to pass the dish on. The little creature nodded, but helped himself so clumsily that he dropped the piece of meat he had carved on to the floor.

The good-natured fiddler bent down to pick it up, but in the twinkling of an eye the little man had jumped on to his back, and beat him till he was black and blue all over his head and body. At last, when the fiddler was nearly dead, the little wretch left off, and shoved the poor fellow out of the iron gate which he had entered in such good spirits a few hours before. The fresh air revived him a little, and in a short time he was able to stagger with aching limbs back to the inn where his companions were staying. It was night when he reached the place, and the other two musicians were fast asleep. The next morning they were much astonished at finding the fiddler in bed beside them, and overwhelmed him with questions; but their friend hid his back and face, and answered them very shortly, saying, ‘Go there yourselves, and see what’s to be seen! It is a ticklish matter, that I can assure you.’

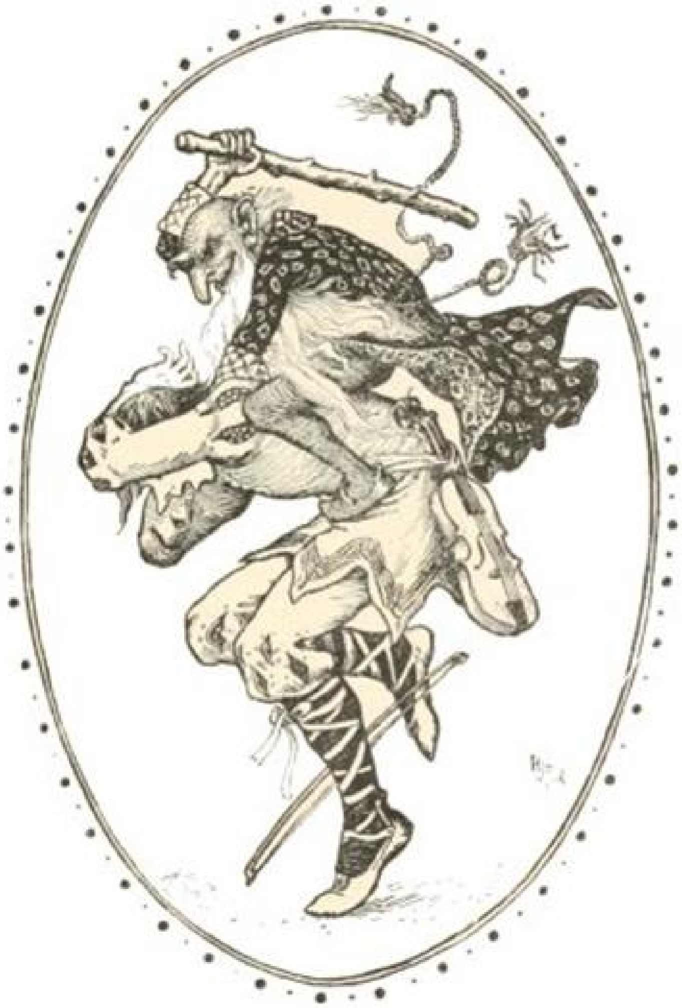

The second musician, who was a trumpeter, now made his way to the castle, and everything happened to him exactly as it had to the fiddler. He was just as hospitably entertained at first, and then just as cruelly beaten and belaboured, so that next morning he too lay in his bed like a wounded hare, assuring his friends that the task of getting into the haunted castle was no enviable one. Notwithstanding the warning of his companions, the third musician, who played the flute, was still determined to try his luck, and, full of courage and daring, he set out, resolved, if possible, to find and secure the hidden treasure.

Fearlessly he wandered through the whole castle, and as he roamed through the splendid empty apartments he thought to himself how nice it would be to live there always, especially with a full larder and cellar at his disposal. A table was spread for him too, and when he had wandered about for some time, singing and playing the flute, he sat down as his companions had done, prepared to enjoy the delicious food that was spread out in front of him. Then the little man with the beard entered as before and seated himself beside the flute-player, who wasn’t the least startled at his appearance, but chatted away to him as if he had known him all his life. But he didn’t find his companion very communicative. At last they came to the game, and, as usual, the little man let his piece fall on the ground. The flute-player was good-naturedly just going to pick it up, when he perceived that the little dwarf was in the act of springing on his back. Then he turned round sharply, and, seizing the little creature by his beard, he gave him such a shaking that he tore his beard out, and the dwarf sank groaning to the ground.

But as soon as the youth had the beard in his hands he felt so strong that he was fit for anything, and he perceived all sorts of things in the castle that he had not noticed before, but, on the other hand, all strength seemed to have gone from the little man. He whined and sobbed out: ‘Give, oh give me my beard again, and I will instruct you in all the magic art that surrounds this castle, and will help you to carry-off the hidden treasure, which will make you rich and happy for ever.’

But the cunning flute-player replied: ‘I will give you back your beard, but you must first help me as you have promised to do. Till you have done so, I don’t let your beard out of my hands.’

Then the old man found himself obliged to fulfil his promise, though he had had no intention of doing so, and had only desired to get his beard back. He made the youth follow him through dark secret passages, underground vaults, and grey rocks till at last they came to an open field, which looked as if it belonged to a more beautiful world than ours. Then they came to a stream of rushing water; but the little man drew out a wand and touched the waves, whereupon the waters parted and stood still, and the two crossed the river with dry feet. And how beautiful everything on the other side was! lovely green paths leading through woods and fields covered with flowers, birds with gold and silver feathers singing on the trees, lovely butterflies and glittering beetles fluttered and crawled about, and dear little beasts hid in the bushes and hedges. The sky above them was not blue, but like rays of pure gold, and the stars looked twice their usual size, and far more brilliant than on our earth.

The youth grew more and more astonished when the little grey man led him into a castle far bigger and more splendid than the one they had left. Here, too, the deepest silence reigned. They wandered all through the castle, and came at last to a room in the middle of which stood a bed hung all round with heavy curtains. Over the bed hung a bird’s cage, and the bird inside it was singing beautiful songs into the silent space. The little grey man lifted the curtains from the bed and beckoned the youth to approach. On the rich silk cushions embroidered with gold a lovely maiden lay sleeping. She was as beautiful as an angel, with golden hair which fell in curls over her marble shoulders, and a diamond crown sparkled on her forehead. But a sleep as of death held her in its spell, and no noise seemed able to waken the sleeper.

Then the little man turned to the wondering youth and said: ‘See, here is the sleeping child! She is a mighty Princess. This splendid castle and this enchanted land are hers, but for hundreds of years she has slept this magic sleep, and during all that time no human being has been able to find their way here. I alone have kept guard over her, and have gone daily to my own castle to get food and to beat the greedy gold-seekers who forced their way into my dwelling. I have watched over the Princess carefully all these years and saw that no stranger came near her, but all my magic power lay in my beard, and now that you have taken it away I am helpless, and can no longer hold the beautiful Princess in her enchanted sleep, but am forced to reveal my treasured secret to you. So set to work and do as I tell you. Take the bird which hangs over the Princess’s head, and which by its song sang her into this enchanted sleep — a song which it has had to continue ever since; take it and kill it, and cut its little heart out and burn it to a powder, and then put it into the Princess’s mouth; then she will instantly awaken, and will bestow on you her heart and hand, her kingdom and castle, and all her treasures.

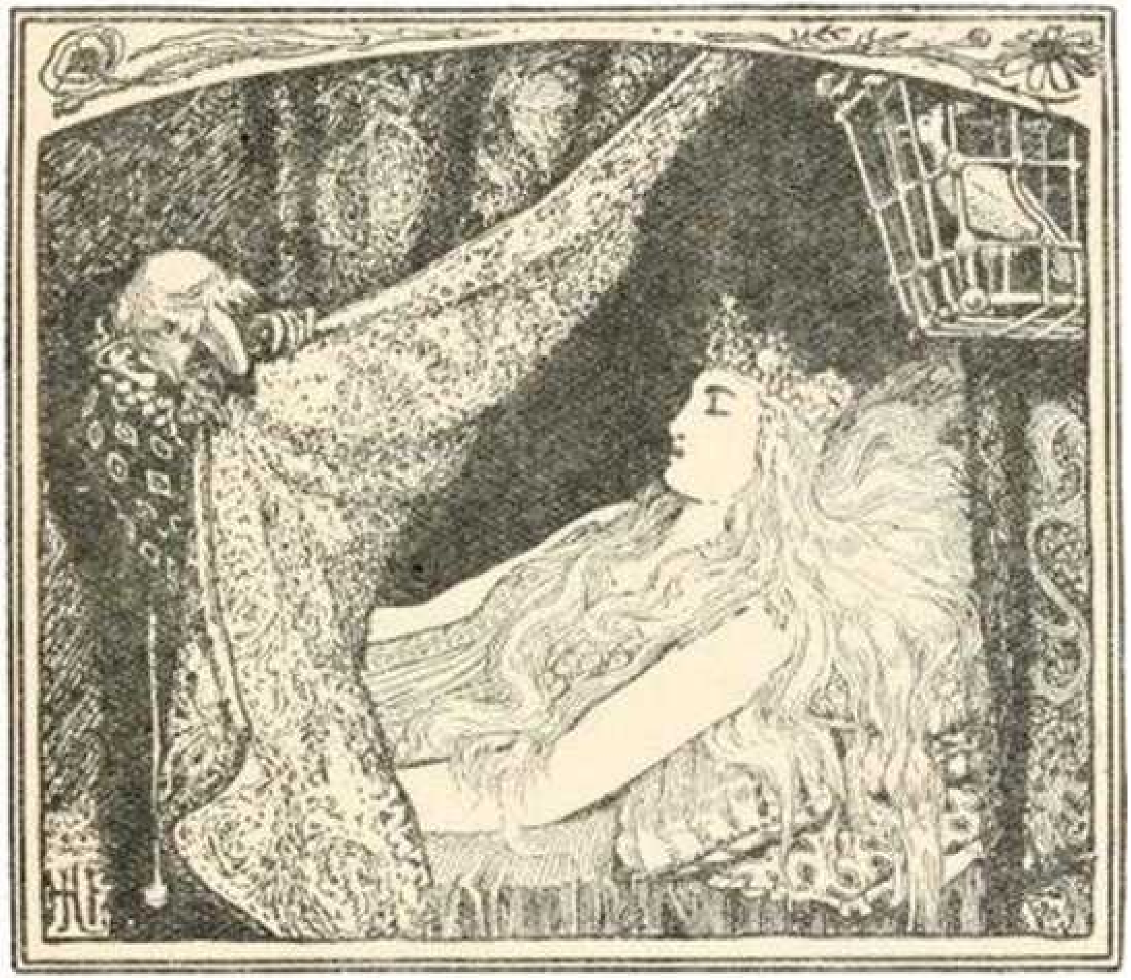

The little dwarf paused, quite worn out, and the youth did not wait long to do his bidding. He did all he was told carefully and promptly, and having cut the little bird’s heart out he proceeded to make it into a powder. No sooner had he placed it in the Princess’s mouth than she opened her lovely eyes, and, looking up into the happy youth’s face, she kissed him tenderly, thanked him for freeing her from her magic sleep, and promised to be his wife. At the same moment a sound as of thunder was heard all over the castle, and on all the staircases and in every room sounds were to be heard. Then a troop of servants, male and female, flocked into the apartment where the happy couple sat, and after wishing the Princess and her bridegroom joy, they dispersed all over the castle to their different occupations.

But the little grey dwarf began now to demand his beard again from the youth, for in his wicked heart he was determined to make an end of all their happiness; he knew that if only his beard were once more on his chin, he would be able to do what he liked with them all. But the clever flute-player was quite a match for the little man in cunning, and said: ‘All right, you needn’t be afraid, you shall get your beard back before we part; but you must allow my bride and me to accompany you a bit on your homeward way.’

The dwarf could not refuse this request, and so they all went together through the beautiful green paths and flowery meadows, and came at last to the river which flowed for miles round the Princess’s land and formed the boundary of her kingdom. There was no bridge or ferry-boat to be seen anywhere, and it was impossible to get over to the other side, for the boldest swimmer would not have dared to brave the fierce current and roaring waters. Then the youth said to the dwarf: ‘Give me your wand in order that I may part the waves.’

And the dwarf was forced to do as he was told because the youth still kept his beard from him; but the wicked little creature chuckled with joy and thought to himself: ‘The foolish youth will hand me my beard as soon as we have crossed the river, and then my power will return, and I will seize my wand and prevent them both ever returning to their beautiful country.’

But the dwarf’s wicked intentions were doomed to disappointment. The happy youth struck the water with his wand, and the waves at once parted and stood still, and the dwarf went on in front and crossed the stream. No sooner had he done so than the waters closed behind him, and the youth and his lovely bride stood safe on the other side. Then they threw his beard to the old man across the river, but they kept his wand, so that the wicked dwarf could never again enter their kingdom. So the happy couple returned to their castle, and lived there in peace and plenty for ever after. But the other two musicians waited in vain for the return of their companion; and when he never came they said: ‘Ah, he’s gone to play the flute,’ till the saying passed into a proverb, and was always said of anyone who set out to perform a task from which he never returned.

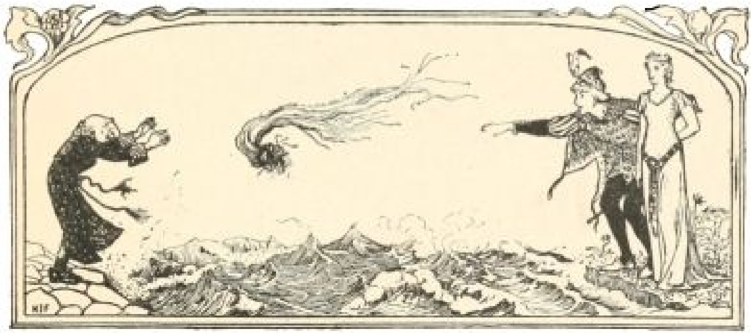

Grimm.

THE THREE DOGS

There was once upon a time a shepherd who had two children, a son and a daughter. When he was on his death-bed he turned to them and said, ‘I have nothing to leave you but three sheep and a small house; divide them between you, as you like, but don’t quarrel over them whatever you do.’

When the shepherd was dead, the brother asked his sister which she would like best, the sheep or the little house; and when she had chosen the house he said, ‘Then I’ll take the sheep and go out to seek my fortune in the wide world. I don’t see why I shouldn’t be as lucky as many another who has set out on the same search, and it wasn’t for nothing that I was born on a Sunday.’

And so he started on his travels, driving his three sheep in front of him, and for a long time it seemed as if fortune didn’t mean to favour him at all. One day he was sitting disconsolately at a cross road, when a man suddenly appeared before him with three black dogs, each one bigger than the other.

‘Hullo, my fine fellow,’ said the man, ‘I see you have three fat sheep. I’ll tell you what; if you’ll give them to me, I’ll give you my three dogs.’

In spite of his sadness, the youth smiled and replied, ‘What would I do with your dogs? My sheep at least feed themselves, but I should have to find food for the dogs.’

‘My dogs are not like other dogs,’ said the stranger; ‘they will feed you instead of you them, and will make your fortune. The smallest one is called “Salt,” and will bring you food whenever you wish; the second is called “Pepper,” and will tear anyone to pieces who offers to hurt you; and the great big strong one is called “Mustard,” and is so powerful that it will break iron or steel with its teeth.’

The shepherd at last let himself be persuaded, and gave the stranger his sheep. In order to test the truth of his statement about the dogs, he said at once, ‘Salt, I am hungry,’ and before the words were out of his mouth the dog had disappeared, and returned in a few minutes with a large basket full of the most delicious food. Then the youth congratulated himself on the bargain he had made, and continued his journey in the best of spirits.

One day he met a carriage and pair, all draped in black; even the horses were covered with black trappings, and the coachman was clothed in crape from top to toe. Inside the carriage sat a beautiful girl in a black dress crying bitterly. The horses advanced slowly and mournfully, with their heads bent on the ground.

‘Coachman, what’s the meaning of all this grief?’ asked the shepherd.

At first the coachman wouldn’t say anything, but when the youth pressed him he told him that a huge dragon dwelt in the neighbourhood, and required yearly the sacrifice of a beautiful maiden. This year the lot had fallen on the King’s daughter, and the whole country was filled with woe and lamentation in consequence.

The shepherd felt very sorry for the lovely maiden, and determined to follow the carriage. In a little it halted at the foot of a high mountain. The girl got out, and walked slowly and sadly to meet her terrible fate. The coachman perceived that the shepherd wished to follow her, and warned him not to do so if he valued his life; but the shepherd wouldn’t listen to his advice. When they had climbed about half-way up the hill they saw a terrible-looking monster with the body of a snake, and with huge wings and claws, coming towards them, breathing forth flames of fire, and preparing to seize its victim. Then the shepherd called, ‘Pepper, come to the rescue,’ and the second dog set upon the dragon, and after a fierce struggle bit it so sharply in the neck that the monster rolled over, and in a few moments breathed its last. Then the dog ate up the body, all except its two front teeth, which the shepherd picked up and put in his pocket.

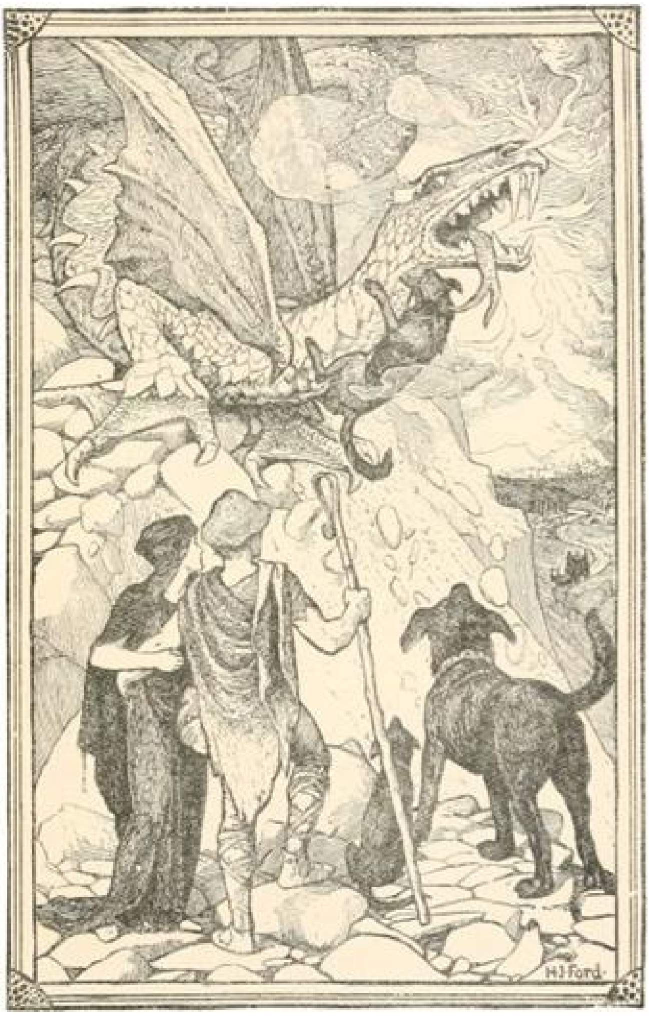

The Princess was quite overcome with terror and joy, and fell fainting at the feet of her deliverer. When she recovered her consciousness she begged the shepherd to return with her to her father, who would reward him richly. But the youth answered that he wanted to see something of the world, and that he would return again in three years, and nothing would make him change this resolve. The Princess seated herself once more in her carriage, and, bidding each other farewell, she and the shepherd separated, she to return home, and he to see the world.

But while the Princess was driving over a bridge the carriage suddenly stood still, and the coachman turned round to her and said, ‘Your deliverer has gone, and doesn’t thank you for your gratitude. It would be nice of you to make a poor fellow happy; therefore you may tell your father that it was I who slew the dragon, and if you refuse to, I will throw you into the river, and no one will be any the wiser, for they will think the dragon has devoured you.’

The maiden was in a dreadful state when she heard these words; but there was nothing for her to do but to swear that she would give out the coachman as her deliverer, and not to divulge the secret to anyone. So they returned to the capital, and everyone was delighted when they saw the Princess had returned unharmed; the black flags were taken down from all the palace towers, and gay-coloured ones put up in their place, and the King embraced his daughter and her supposed rescuer with tears of joy, and, turning to the coachman, he said, ‘You have not only saved the life of my child, but you have also freed the country from a terrible scourge; therefore, it is only fitting that you should be richly rewarded. Take, therefore, my daughter for your wife; but as she is still so young, do not let the marriage be celebrated for another year.’

The coachman thanked the King for his graciousness, and was then led away to be richly dressed and instructed in all the arts and graces that befitted his new position. But the poor Princess wept bitterly, though she did not dare to confide her grief to anyone. When the year was over, she begged so hard for another year’s respite that it was granted to her. But this year passed also, and she threw herself at her father’s feet, and begged so piteously for one more year that the King’s heart was melted, and he yielded to her request, much to the Princess’s joy, for she knew that her real deliverer would appear at the end of the third year. And so the year passed away like the other two, and the wedding-day was fixed, and all the people were prepared to feast and make merry.

But on the wedding-day it happened that a stranger came to the town with three black dogs. He asked what the meaning of all the feasting and fuss was, and they told him that the King’s daughter was just going to be married to the man who had slain the terrible dragon. The stranger at once denounced the coachman as a liar; but no one would listen to him, and he was seized and thrown into a cell with iron doors.

While he was lying on his straw pallet, pondering mournfully on his fate, he thought he heard the low whining of his dogs outside; then an idea dawned on him, and he called out as loudly as he could, ‘Mustard, come to my help,’ and in a second he saw the paws of his biggest dog at the window of his cell, and before he could count two the creature had bitten through the iron bars and stood beside him. Then they both let themselves out of the prison by the window, and the poor youth was free once more, though he felt very sad when he thought that another was to enjoy the reward that rightfully belonged to him. He felt hungry too, so he called his dog ‘Salt,’ and asked him to bring home some food. The faithful creature trotted off, and soon returned with a table-napkin full of the most delicious food, and the napkin itself was embroidered with a kingly crown.

The King had just seated himself at the wedding-feast with all his Court, when the dog appeared and licked the Princess’s hand in an appealing manner. With a joyful start she recognised the beast, and bound her own table-napkin round his neck. Then she plucked up her courage and told her father the whole story. The King at once sent a servant to follow the dog, and in a short time the stranger was led into the King's presence. The former coachman grew as white as a sheet when he saw the shepherd, and, falling on his knees, begged for mercy and pardon. The Princess recognised her deliverer at once, and did not need the proof of the two dragon's teeth which he drew from his pocket. The coachman was thrown into a dark dungeon, and the shepherd took his place at the Princess's side, and this time, you may be sure, she did not beg for the wedding to be put off.

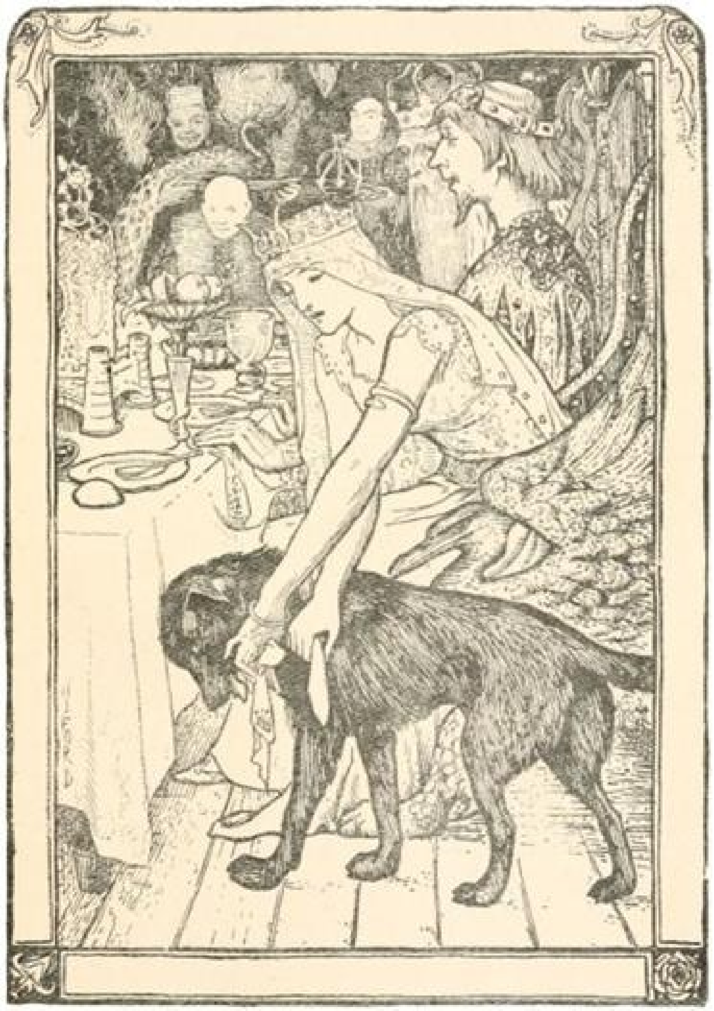

The young couple lived for some time in great peace and happiness, when suddenly one day the former shepherd bethought himself of his poor sister and expressed a wish to see her again, and to let her share in his good fortune. So they sent a carriage to fetch her, and soon she arrived at the court, and found herself once more in her brother's arms. Then one of the dogs spoke and said, ‘Our task is done; you have no more need of us. We only waited to see that you did not forget your sister in your prosperity.’ And with these words the three dogs became three birds and flew away into the heavens.

Grimm.

THE YELLOW FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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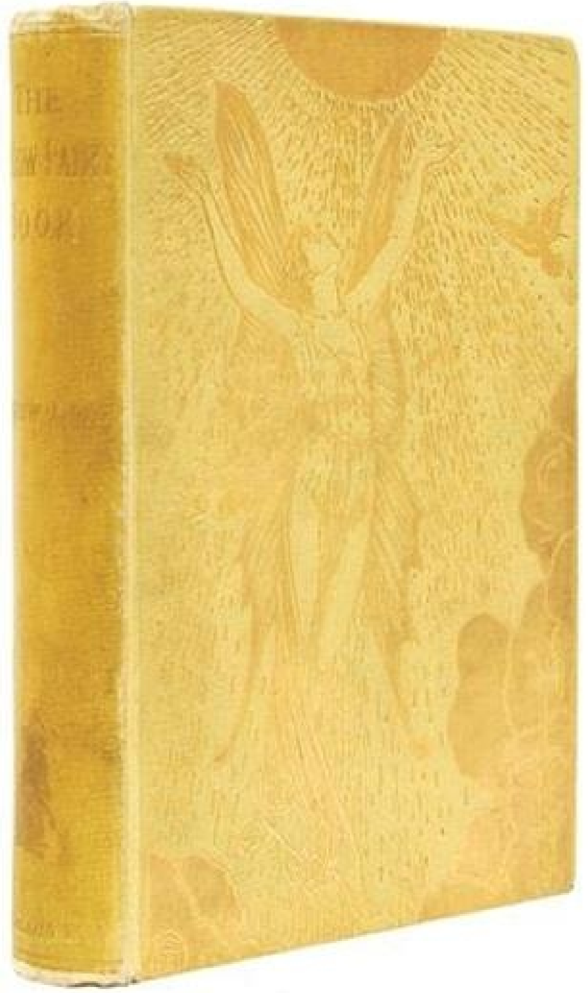

The first edition

THE YELLOW FAIRY BOOK

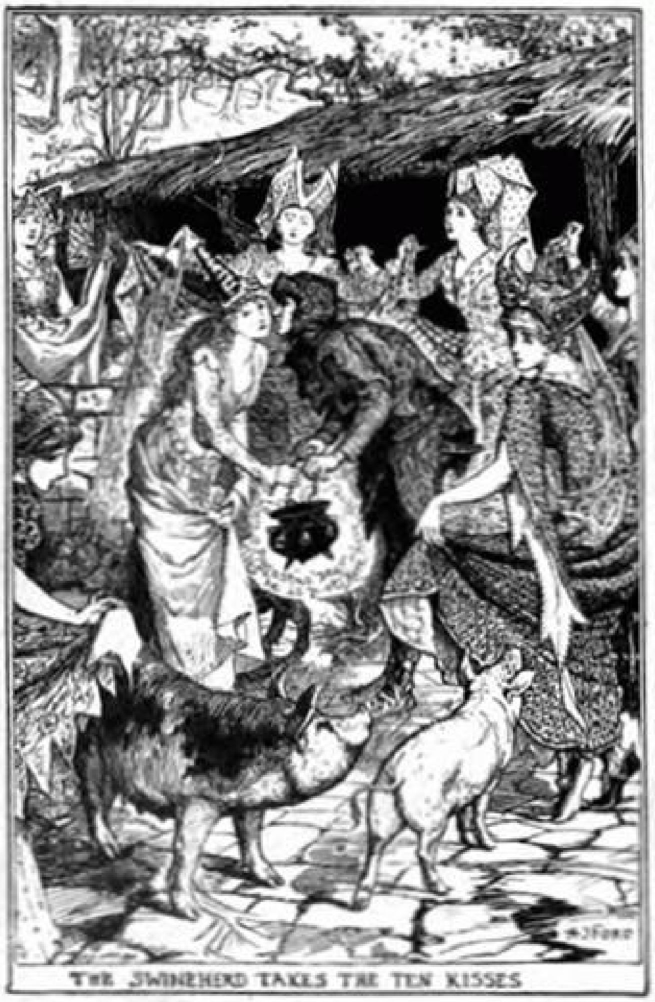

THE SWINEHERD TAKES THE TEN KISSES

DEDICATION

TO

JOAN, TODDLES, AND TINY

Books Yellow, Red, and Green and Blue, All true, or just as good as true, And here’s the Yellow Book for *you*!

Hard is the path from A to Z, And puzzling to a curly head, Yet leads to Books — Green, Blue, and Red For every child should understand That letters from the first were planned To guide us into Fairy Land So labour at your Alphabet, For by that learning shall you get To lands where Fairies may be met.

And going where this pathway goes, You too, at last, may find, who knows?

The Garden of the Singing Rose.

PREFACE

The Editor thinks that children will readily forgive him for publishing another Fairy Book. We have had the Blue, the Red, the Green, and here is the Yellow. If children are pleased, and they are so kind as to say that they *are* pleased, the Editor does not care very much for what other people may say. Now, there is one gentleman who seems to think that it is not quite right to print so many fairy tales, with pictures, and to publish them in red and blue covers. He is named Mr. G. Laurence Gomme, and he is president of a learned body called the Folk Lore Society. Once a year he makes his address to his subjects, of whom the Editor is one, and Mr. Joseph Jacobs (who has published many delightful fairy tales with pretty pictures) is another. Fancy, then, the dismay of Mr. Jacobs, and of the Editor, when they heard their president say that he did not think it very nice in them to publish fairy books, above all, red, green, and blue fairy books! They said that they did not see any harm in it, and they were ready to 'put themselves on their country,' and be tried by a jury of children. And, indeed, they still see no harm in what they have done; nay, like Father William in the poem, they are ready 'to do it again and again.'

Where is the harm? The truth is that the Folk Lore Society — made up of the most clever, learned, and beautiful men and women of the country — is fond of studying the history and geography of Fairy Land. This is contained in very old tales, such as country people tell, and savages:

'Little Sioux and little Crow,
Little frosty Eskimo.'

These people are thought to know most about fairyland and its inhabitants. But, in the Yellow Fairy Book, and the rest, are many tales by persons who are neither savages nor rustics, such as Madame D'Aulnoy and Herr Hans Christian Andersen. The Folk Lore Society, or its president, say that *their* tales are not so true as the rest, and should not be published with the rest. But *we* say that all the stories which are pleasant to read are quite true enough for us; so here they are, with pictures by Mr. Ford, and we do not think that either the pictures or the stories are likely to mislead children.

As to whether there are really any fairies or not, that is a difficult question.

Professor Huxley thinks there are none. The Editor never saw any himself, but he knows several people who have seen them — in the Highlands — and heard their music. If ever you are in Nether Lochaber, go to the Fairy Hill, and you may hear the music yourself, as grown-up people have done, but you must go on a fine day. Again, if there are really no fairies, why do people believe in them, all over the world? The ancient Greeks believed, so did the old Egyptians, and the Hindoos, and the Red Indians, and is it likely, if there are no fairies, that so many different peoples would have seen and heard them? The Rev. Mr. Baring-Gould saw several fairies when he was a boy, and was travelling in the land of the Troubadours. For these reasons, the Editor thinks that there are certainly fairies, but they never do anyone any harm; and, in England, they have been frightened away by smoke and schoolmasters. As to Giants, they have died out, but real Dwarfs are common in the forests of Africa. Probably a good many stories not perfectly true have been told about fairies, but such stories have also been told about Napoleon, Claverhouse, Julius Cæsar, and Joan of Arc, all of whom certainly existed. A wise child will, therefore, remember that, if he grows up and becomes a member of the Folk Lore Society, *all* the tales in this book were not offered to him as absolutely truthful, but were printed merely for his entertainment. The exact facts he can learn later, or he can leave them alone.

There are Russian, German, French, Icelandic, Red Indian, and other stories here. They were translated by Miss Cheape, Miss Alma, and Miss Thyra Alleyne, Miss Sellar, Mr. Craigie (he did the Icelandic tales), Miss Blackley, Mrs. Dent, and Mrs. Lang, but the Red Indian stories are copied from English versions published by the Smithsonian Bureau of Ethnology, in America. Mr. Ford did the pictures, and it is hoped that children will find the book not less pleasing than those which have already been submitted to their consideration. The Editor cannot say ‘good-bye’ without advising them, as they pursue their studies, to read *The Rose and the Ring*, by the late Mr. Thackeray, with pictures by the author. This book he thinks quite indispensable in every child’s library, and parents should be urged to purchase it at the first opportunity, as without it no education is complete.

A. LANG.

THE CAT AND THE MOUSE IN PARTNERSHIP

THE PARTNERSHIP

A cat had made acquaintance with a mouse, and had spoken so much of the great love and friendship she felt for her, that at last the Mouse consented to live in the same house with her, and to go shares in the housekeeping. ‘But we must provide for the winter or else we shall suffer hunger,’ said the Cat. ‘You, little Mouse, cannot venture everywhere in case you run at last into a trap.’ This good counsel was followed, and a little pot of fat was bought. But they did not know where to put it. At length, after long consultation, the Cat said, ‘I know of no place where it could be better put than in the church. No one will trouble to take it away from there. We will hide it in a corner, and we won’t touch it till we are in want.' So the little pot was placed in safety; but it was not long before the Cat had a great longing for it, and said to the Mouse, 'I wanted to tell you, little Mouse, that my cousin has a little son, white with brown spots, and she wants me to be godmother to it. Let me go out to-day, and do you take care of the house alone.'

'Yes, go certainly,' replied the Mouse, 'and when you eat anything good, think of me; I should very much like a drop of the red christening wine.'

But it was all untrue. The Cat had no cousin, and had not been asked to be godmother. She went straight to the church, slunk to the little pot of fat, began to lick it, and licked the top off. Then she took a walk on the roofs of the town, looked at the view, stretched herself out in the sun, and licked her lips whenever she thought of the little pot of fat. As soon as it was evening she went home again.

'Ah, here you are again!' said the Mouse; 'you must certainly have had an enjoyable day.'

'It went off very well,' answered the Cat.

'What was the child's name?' asked the Mouse.

'Top Off,' said the Cat drily.

'Topoff!' echoed the Mouse, 'it is indeed a wonderful and curious name. Is it in your family?'

'What is there odd about it?' said the Cat. 'It is not worse than Breadthief, as your godchild is called.'

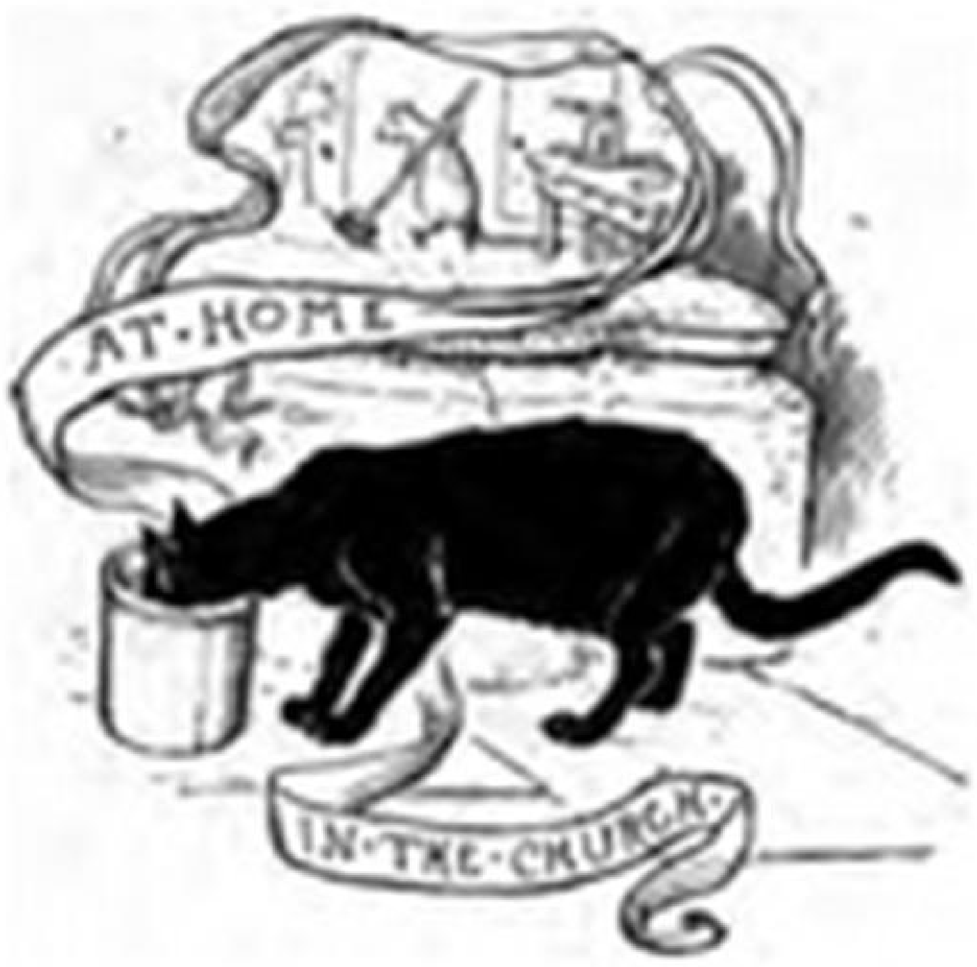

Not long after this another great longing came over the Cat. She said to the Mouse, ‘You must again be kind enough to look after the house alone, for I have been asked a second time to stand godmother, and as this child has a white ring round its neck, I cannot refuse.’

The kind Mouse agreed, but the Cat slunk under the town wall to the church, and ate up half of the pot of fat. ‘Nothing tastes better,’ said she, ‘than what one eats by oneself,’ and she was very much pleased with her day’s work. When she came home the Mouse asked, ‘What was this child called?’

‘Half Gone,’ answered the Cat.

‘Halfgone! what a name! I have never heard it in my life. I don’t believe it is in the calendar.’

Soon the Cat’s mouth began to water once more after her licking business. ‘All good things in threes,’ she said to the Mouse; ‘I have again to stand godmother. The child is quite black, and has very white paws, but not a single white hair on its body. This only happens once in two years, so you will let me go out?’

‘Topoff! Halfgone!’ repeated the Mouse, ‘they are such curious names; they make me very thoughtful.’

‘Oh, you sit at home in your dark grey coat and your long tail,’ said the Cat, ‘and you get fanciful. That comes of not going out in the day.’

The Mouse had a good cleaning out while the Cat was gone, and made the house tidy; but the greedy Cat ate the fat every bit up. ‘When it is all gone one can be at rest,’ she said to herself, and at night she came home sleek and satisfied. The Mouse asked at once after the third child’s name.

‘It won’t please you any better,’ said the Cat, ‘he was called Clean Gone.’

‘Cleangone!’ repeated the Mouse. ‘I do not believe that name has been printed any more than the others. Cleangone! What can it mean?’ She shook her head, curled herself up, and went to sleep.

From this time on no one asked the Cat to stand godmother; but when the winter came and there was nothing to be got outside, the Mouse remembered their provision and said, ‘Come, Cat, we will go to our pot of fat which we have stored away; it will taste very good.’

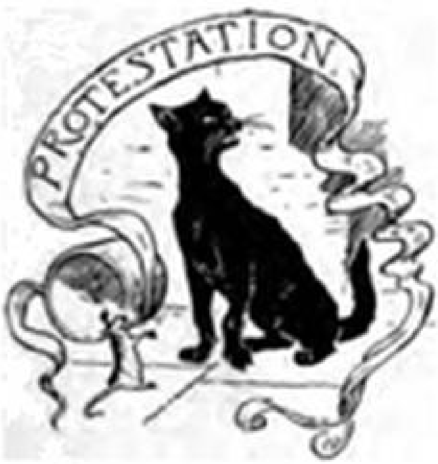

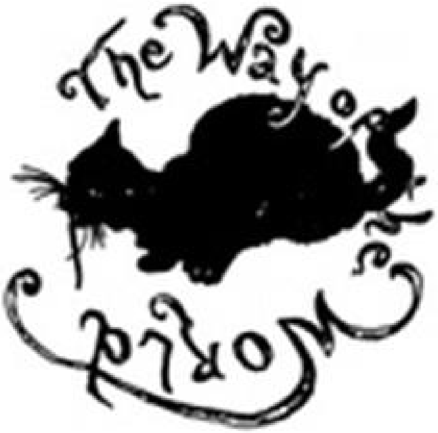
The Way of the World

‘Yes, indeed,’ answered the Cat; ‘it will taste as good to you as if you stretched your thin tongue out of the window.’

They started off, and when they reached it they found the pot in its place, but quite empty!

‘Ah,’ said the Mouse, ‘now I know what has happened! It has all come out! You are a true friend to me! You have eaten it all when you stood godmother; first the top off, then half of it gone, then — —’

‘Will you be quiet!’ screamed the Cat. ‘Another word and I will eat you up.’

‘Cleangone’ was already on the poor Mouse’s tongue, and scarcely was it out than the Cat made a spring at her, seized and swallowed her.

You see that is the way of the world.

THE SIX SWANS

A King was once hunting in a great wood, and he hunted the game so eagerly that none of his courtiers could follow him. When evening came on he stood still and looked round him, and he saw that he had quite lost himself. He sought a way out, but could find none. Then he saw an old woman with a shaking head coming towards him; but she was a witch.

‘Good woman,’ he said to her, ‘can you not show me the way out of the wood?’

‘Oh, certainly, Sir King,’ she replied, ‘I can quite well do that, but on one condition, which if you do not fulfil you will never get out of the wood, and will die of hunger.’

‘What is the condition?’ asked the King.

‘I have a daughter,’ said the old woman, ‘who is so beautiful that she has not her equal in the world, and is well fitted to be your wife; if you will make her lady-queen I will show you the way out of the wood.’

The King in his anguish of mind consented, and the old woman led him to her little house where her daughter was sitting by the fire. She received the King as if she were expecting him, and he saw that she was certainly very beautiful; but she did not please him, and he could not look at her without a secret feeling of horror. As soon as he had lifted the maiden on to his horse the old woman showed him the way, and the King reached his palace, where the wedding was celebrated.

The King had already been married once, and had by his first wife seven children, six boys and one girl, whom he loved more than anything in the world. And now, because he was afraid that their step-mother might not treat them well and might do them harm, he put them in a lonely castle that stood in the middle of a wood. It lay so hidden, and the way to it was so hard to find, that he himself could not have found it out had not a wise-woman given him a reel of thread which possessed a marvellous property: when he threw it before him it unwound itself and showed him the way. But the King went so often to his dear children that the Queen was offended at his absence. She grew curious, and wanted to know what he had to do quite alone in the wood. She gave his servants a great deal of money, and they betrayed the secret to her, and also told her of the reel which alone could point out the way. She had no rest now till she had found out where the King guarded the reel, and then she made some little white shirts, and, as she had learnt from her witch-mother, sewed an enchantment in each of them.

And when the King had ridden off she took the little shirts and went into the wood, and the reel showed her the way. The children, who saw someone coming in the distance, thought it was their dear father coming to them, and sprang to meet him very joyfully. Then she threw over each one a little shirt, which when it had touched their bodies changed them into swans, and they flew away over the forest. The Queen went home quite satisfied, and thought she had got rid of her step-children; but the girl had not run to meet her with her brothers, and she knew nothing of her.

The next day the King came to visit his children, but he found no one but the girl.

‘Where are your brothers?’ asked the King.

‘Alas! dear father,’ she answered, ‘they have gone away and left me all alone.’ And she told him that looking out of her little window she had seen her brothers flying over the wood in the shape of swans, and she showed him the feathers which they had let fall in the yard, and which she had collected. The King mourned, but he did not think that the Queen had done the wicked deed, and as he was afraid the maiden would also be taken from him, he wanted to take her with him. But she was afraid of the step-mother, and begged the King to let her stay just one night more in the castle in the wood. The poor maiden thought, ‘My home is no longer here; I will go and seek my brothers.’ And when night came she fled away into the forest. She ran all through the night and the next day, till she could go no farther for weariness. Then she saw a little hut, went in, and found a room with six little beds. She was afraid to lie down on one, so she crept under one of them, lay on the hard floor, and was going to spend the night there. But when the sun had set she heard a noise, and saw six swans flying in at the window. They stood on the floor and blew at one another, and blew all their feathers off, and their swan-skin came off like a shirt. Then the maiden recognised her brothers, and overjoyed she crept out from under the bed. Her brothers were not less delighted than she to see their little sister again, but their joy did not last long.

‘You cannot stay here,’ they said to her. ‘This is a den of robbers; if they were to come here and find you they would kill you.’

‘Could you not protect me?’ asked the little sister.

‘No,’ they answered, ‘for we can only lay aside our swan skins for a quarter of an hour every evening. For this time we regain our human forms, but then we are changed into swans again.’

Then the little sister cried and said, ‘Can you not be freed?’

‘Oh, no,’ they said, ‘the conditions are too hard. You must not speak or laugh for six years, and must make in that time six shirts for us out of star-flowers. If a single word comes out of your mouth, all your labour is vain.’ And when the brothers had said this the quarter of an hour came to an end, and they flew away out of the window as swans.

But the maiden had determined to free her brothers even if it should cost her her life. She left the hut, went into the forest, climbed a tree, and spent the night there. The next morning she went out, collected star-flowers, and began to sew. She could speak to no one, and she had no wish to laugh, so she sat there, looking only at her work.

When she had lived there some time, it happened that the King of the country was hunting in the forest, and his hunters came to the tree on which the maiden sat. They called to her and said ‘Who are you?’

But she gave no answer.

‘Come down to us,’ they said, ‘we will do you no harm.’

But she shook her head silently. As they pressed her further with questions, she threw them the golden chain from her neck. But they did not leave off, and she threw them her girdle, and when this was no use, her garters, and then her dress. The hunts-men would not leave her alone, but climbed the tree, lifted the maiden down, and led her to the King. The King asked, ‘Who are you? What are you doing up that tree?’

But she answered nothing.

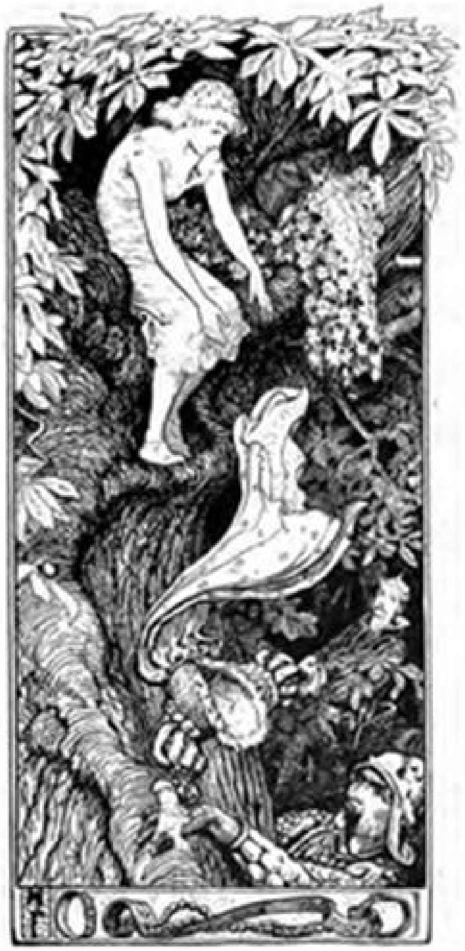

And then her dress '

He asked her in all the languages he knew, but she remained as dumb as a fish. Because she was so beautiful, however, the King's heart was touched, and he was seized with a great love for her. He wrapped her up in his cloak, placed her before him on his horse, and brought her to his castle. There he had her dressed in rich clothes, and her beauty shone out as bright as day, but not a word could be drawn from her. He set her at table by his side, and her modest ways and behaviour pleased him so much that he said, 'I will marry this maiden and none other in the world,' and after some days he married her. But the King had a wicked mother who was displeased with the marriage, and said wicked things of the young Queen. 'Who knows who this girl is?' she said; 'she cannot speak, and is not worthy of a king.'

After a year, when the Queen had her first child, the old mother took it away from her. Then she went to the King and said that the Queen had killed it. The King would not believe it, and would not allow any harm to be done her. But she sat quietly sewing at the shirts and troubling herself about nothing. The next time she had a child the wicked mother did the same thing, but the King could not make up his mind to believe her. He said, ‘She is too sweet and good to do such a thing as that. If she were not dumb and could defend herself, her innocence would be proved.’ But when the third child was taken away, and the Queen was again accused, and could not utter a word in her own defence, the King was obliged to give her over to the law, which decreed that she must be burnt to death. When the day came on which the sentence was to be executed, it was the last day of the six years in which she must not speak or laugh, and now she had freed her dear brothers from the power of the enchantment. The six shirts were done; there was only the left sleeve wanting to the last.

When she was led to the stake, she laid the shirts on her arm, and as she stood on the pile and the fire was about to be lighted, she looked around her and saw six swans flying through the air. Then she knew that her release was at hand and her heart danced for joy. The swans fluttered round her, and hovered low so that she could throw the shirts over them. When they had touched them the swan-skins fell off, and her brothers stood before her living, well and beautiful. Only the youngest had a swan’s wing instead of his left arm. They embraced and kissed each other, and the Queen went to the King, who was standing by in great astonishment, and began to speak to him, saying, ‘Dearest husband, now I can speak and tell you openly that I am innocent and have been falsely accused.’

She told him of the old woman’s deceit, and how she had taken the three children away and hidden them. Then they were fetched, to the great joy of the King, and the wicked mother came to no good end.

But the King and the Queen with their six brothers lived many years in happiness and peace.

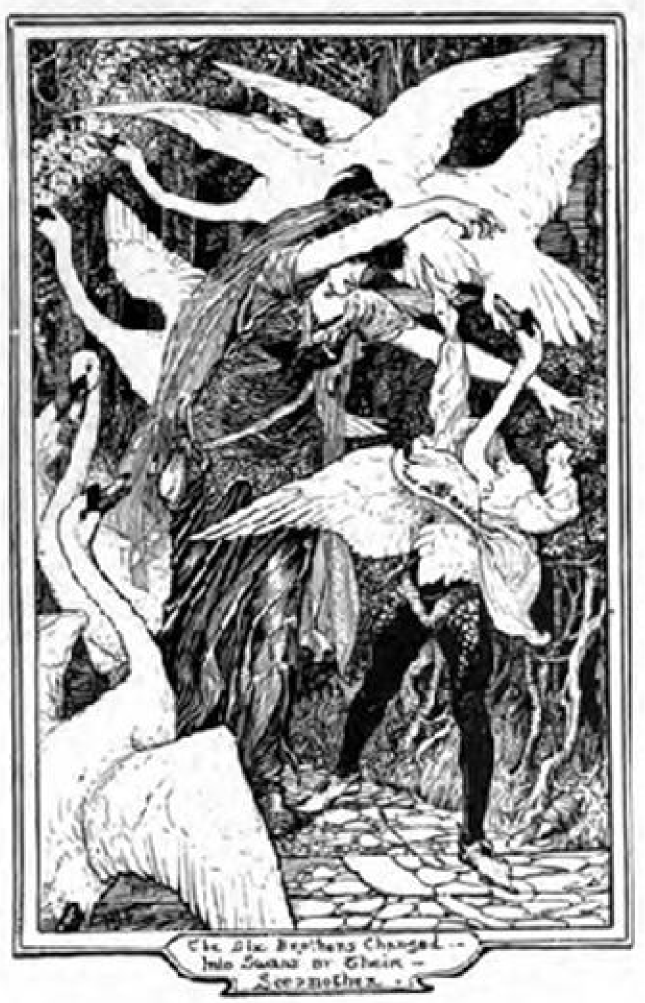
The Six Brothers Changed into Swans by their Stepmother

THE DRAGON OF THE NORTH

Very long ago, as old people have told me, there lived a terrible monster, who came out of the North, and laid waste whole tracts of country, devouring both men and beasts; and this monster was so destructive that it was feared that unless help came no living creature would be left on the face of the earth. It had a body like an ox, and legs like a frog, two short fore-legs, and two long ones behind, and besides that it had a tail like a serpent, ten fathoms in length. When it moved it jumped like a frog, and with every spring it covered half a mile of ground. Fortunately its habit was to remain for several years in the same place, and not to move on till the whole neighbourhood was eaten up. Nothing could hunt it, because its whole body was covered with scales, which were harder than stone or metal; its two great eyes shone by night, and even by day, like the brightest lamps, and anyone who had the ill luck to look into those eyes became as it were bewitched, and was obliged to rush of his own accord into the monster's jaws. In this way the Dragon was able to feed upon both men and beasts without the least trouble to itself, as it needed not to move from the spot where it was lying. All the neighbouring kings had offered rich rewards to anyone who should be able to destroy the monster, either by force or enchantment, and many had tried their luck, but all had miserably failed. Once a great forest in which the Dragon lay had been set on fire; the forest was burnt down, but the fire did not do the monster the least harm. However, there was a tradition amongst the wise men of the country that the Dragon might be overcome by one who possessed King Solomon's signet-ring, upon which a secret writing was engraved. This inscription would enable anyone who was wise enough to interpret it to find out how the Dragon could be destroyed. Only no one knew where the ring was hidden, nor was there any sorcerer or learned man to be found who would be able to explain the inscription.

At last a young man, with a good heart and plenty of courage, set out to search for the ring. He took his way towards the sun-rising, because he knew that all the wisdom of old time comes from the East. After some years he met with a famous Eastern magician, and asked for his advice in the matter. The magician answered:

'Mortal men have but little wisdom, and can give you no help, but the birds of the air would be better guides to you if you could learn their language. I can help you to understand it if you will stay with me a few days.’

The youth thankfully accepted the magician’s offer, and said, ‘I cannot now offer you any reward for your kindness, but should my undertaking succeed your trouble shall be richly repaid.’

Then the magician brewed a powerful potion out of nine sorts of herbs which he had gathered himself all alone by moonlight, and he gave the youth nine spoonfuls of it daily for three days, which made him able to understand the language of birds.

At parting the magician said to him, ‘If you ever find Solomon’s ring and get possession of it, then come back to me, that I may explain the inscription on the ring to you, for there is no one else in the world who can do this.’

From that time the youth never felt lonely as he walked along; he always had company, because he understood the language of birds; and in this way he learned many things which mere human knowledge could never have taught him. But time went on, and he heard nothing about the ring. It happened one evening, when he was hot and tired with walking, and had sat down under a tree in a forest to eat his supper, that he saw two gaily-plumaged birds, that were strange to him, sitting at the top of the tree talking to one another about him. The first bird said:

‘I know that wandering fool under the tree there, who has come so far without finding what he seeks. He is trying to find King Solomon’s lost ring.’

The other bird answered, ‘He will have to seek help from the *Witch-maiden,* who will doubtless be able to put him on the right track. If she has not got the ring herself, she knows well enough who has it.’

‘But where is he to find the Witch-maiden?’ said the first bird. ‘She has no settled dwelling, but is here to-day and gone to-morrow. He might as well try to catch the wind.’

The other replied, ‘I do not know, certainly, where she is at present, but in three nights from now she will come to the spring to wash her face, as she does every month when the moon is full, in order that she may never grow old nor wrinkled, but may always keep the bloom of youth.’

‘Well,’ said the first bird, ‘the spring is not far from here. Shall we go and see how it is she does it?’

‘Willingly, if you like,’ said the other.

The youth immediately resolved to follow the birds to the spring, only two things made him uneasy: first, lest he might be asleep when the birds went, and secondly, lest he might lose sight of them, since he had not wings to carry him along so swiftly. He was too tired to keep awake all night, yet his anxiety prevented him from sleeping soundly, and when with the earliest dawn he looked up to the tree-top, he was glad to see his feathered companions still asleep with their heads under their wings. He ate his breakfast, and waited until the birds should start, but they did not leave the place all day. They hopped about from one tree to another looking for food, all day long until the evening, when they went back to their old perch to sleep. The next day the same thing happened, but on the third morning one bird said to the other, ‘To-day we must go to the spring to see the Witch-maiden wash her face.’ They remained on the tree till noon; then they flew away and went towards the south. The young man’s heart beat with anxiety lest he should lose sight of his guides, but he managed to keep the birds in view until they again perched upon a tree. The young man ran after them until he was quite exhausted and out of breath, and after three short rests the birds at length reached a small open space in the forest, on the edge of which they placed themselves on the top of a high tree. When the youth had overtaken them, he saw that there was a clear spring in the middle of the space. He sat down at the foot of the tree upon which the birds were perched, and listened attentively to what they were saying to each other.

‘The sun is not down yet,’ said the first bird; ‘we must wait yet awhile till the moon rises and the maiden comes to the spring. Do you think she will see that young man sitting under the tree?’

Nothing is likely to escape her eyes, certainly not a young man, said the other bird. ‘Will the youth have the sense not to let himself be caught in her toils?’

‘We will wait,’ said the first bird, ‘and see how they get on together.’

The evening light had quite faded, and the full moon was already shining down upon the forest, when the young man heard a slight rustling sound. After a few moments there came out of the forest a maiden, gliding over the grass so lightly that her feet seemed scarcely to touch the ground, and stood beside the spring. The youth could not turn away his eyes from the maiden, for he had never in his life seen a woman so beautiful. Without seeming to notice anything, she went to the spring, looked up to the full moon, then knelt down and bathed her face nine times, then looked up to the moon again and walked nine times round the well, and as she walked she sang this song:

‘Full-faced moon with light unshaded,
Let my beauty ne’er be faded.
Never let my cheek grow pale!
While the moon is waning nightly,
May the maiden bloom more brightly,
May her freshness never fail!’

Then she dried her face with her long hair, and was about to go away, when her eye suddenly fell upon the spot where the young man was sitting, and she turned towards the tree. The youth rose and stood waiting. Then the maiden said, ‘You ought to have a heavy punishment because you have presumed to watch my secret doings in the moonlight. But I will forgive you this time, because you are a stranger and knew no better. But you must tell me truly who you are and how you came to this place, where no mortal has ever set foot before.’

The youth answered humbly: ‘Forgive me, beautiful maiden, if I have unintentionally offended you. I chanced to come here after long wandering, and found a good place to sleep under this tree. At your coming I did not know what to do, but stayed where I was, because I thought my silent watching could not offend you.’

The maiden answered kindly, ‘Come and spend this night with us. You will sleep better on a pillow than on damp moss.’

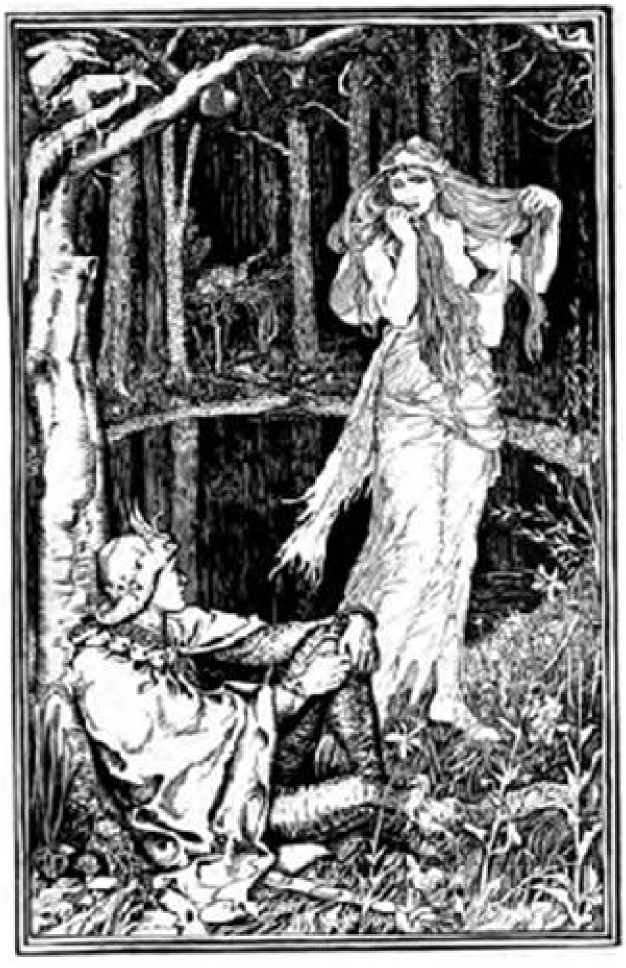

THE WITCH-MAIDEN SEES THE YOUNG MAN UNDER A TREE

The youth hesitated for a little, but presently he heard the birds saying from the top of the tree, ‘Go where she calls you, but take care to give no blood, or you will sell your soul.’ So the youth went with her, and soon they reached a beautiful garden, where stood a splendid house, which glittered in the moonlight as if it was all built out of gold and silver. When the youth entered he found many splendid chambers, each one finer than the last. Hundreds of tapers burnt upon golden candlesticks, and shed a light like the brightest day. At length they reached a chamber where a table was spread with the most costly dishes. At the table were placed two chairs, one of silver, the other of gold. The maiden seated herself upon the golden chair, and offered the silver one to her companion. They were served by maidens dressed in white, whose feet made no sound as they moved about, and not a word was spoken during the meal. Afterwards the youth and the Witch-maiden conversed pleasantly together, until a woman, dressed in red, came in to remind them that it was bedtime. The youth was now shown into another room, containing a silken bed with down cushions, where he slept delightfully, yet he seemed to hear a voice near his bed which repeated to him, ‘Remember to give no blood!’

The next morning the maiden asked him whether he would not like to stay with her always in this beautiful place, and as he did not answer immediately, she continued: ‘You see how I always remain young and beautiful, and I am under no one’s orders, but can do just what I like, so that I have never thought of marrying before. But from the moment I saw you I took a fancy to you, so if you agree, we might be married and might live together like princes, because I have great riches.’

The youth could not but be tempted with the beautiful maiden’s offer, but he remembered how the birds had called her the witch, and their warning always sounded in his ears. Therefore he answered cautiously, ‘Do not be angry, dear maiden, if I do not decide immediately on this important matter. Give me a few days to consider before we come to an understanding.’

‘Why not?’ answered the maiden. ‘Take some weeks to consider if you like, and take counsel with your own heart.’ And to make the time pass pleasantly, she took the youth over every part of her beautiful dwelling, and showed him all her splendid treasures. But these treasures were all produced by enchantment, for the maiden could make anything she wished appear by the help of King Solomon’s signet ring; only none of these things remained fixed; they passed away like the wind without leaving a trace behind. But the youth did not know this; he thought they were all real.

One day the maiden took him into a secret chamber, where a little gold box was standing on a silver table. Pointing to the box, she said, ‘Here is my greatest treasure, whose like is not to be found in the whole world. It is a precious gold ring. When you marry me, I will give you this ring as a marriage gift, and it will make you the happiest of mortal men. But in order that our love may last for ever, you must give me for the ring three drops of blood from the little finger of your left hand.'

When the youth heard these words a cold shudder ran over him, for he remembered that his soul was at stake. He was cunning enough, however, to conceal his feelings and to make no direct answer, but he only asked the maiden, as if carelessly, what was remarkable about the ring?

She answered, 'No mortal is able entirely to understand the power of this ring, because no one thoroughly understands the secret signs engraved upon it. But even with my half-knowledge I can work great wonders. If I put the ring upon the little finger of my left hand, then I can fly like a bird through the air wherever I wish to go. If I put it on the third finger of my left hand I am invisible, and I can see everything that passes around me, though no one can see me. If I put the ring upon the middle finger of my left hand, then neither fire nor water nor any sharp weapon can hurt me. If I put it on the forefinger of my left hand, then I can with its help produce whatever I wish. I can in a single moment build houses or anything I desire. Finally, as long as I wear the ring on the thumb of my left hand, that hand is so strong that it can break down rocks and walls. Besides these, the ring has other secret signs which, as I said, no one can understand. No doubt it contains secrets of great importance. The ring formerly belonged to King Solomon, the wisest of kings, during whose reign the wisest men lived. But it is not known whether this ring was ever made by mortal hands: it is supposed that an angel gave it to the wise King.'

When the youth heard all this he determined to try and get possession of the ring, though he did not quite believe in all its wonderful gifts. He wished the maiden would let him have it in his hand, but he did not quite like to ask her to do so, and after a while she put it back into the box. A few days after they were again speaking of the magic ring, and the youth said, 'I do not think it possible that the ring can have all the power you say it has.'

Then the maiden opened the box and took the ring out, and it glittered as she held it like the clearest sunbeam. She put it on the middle finger of her left hand, and told the youth to take a knife and try as hard as he could to cut her with it, for he would not be able to hurt her. He was unwilling at first, but the maiden insisted. Then he tried, at first only in play, and then seriously, to strike her with the knife, but an invisible wall of iron seemed to be between them, and the maiden stood before him laughing and unhurt. Then she put the ring on her third finger, and in an instant she had vanished from his eyes. Presently she was beside him again laughing, and holding the ring between her fingers.

‘Do let me try,’ said the youth, ‘whether I can do these wonderful things.’

The maiden, suspecting no treachery, gave him the magic ring.

The youth pretended to have forgotten what to do, and asked what finger he must put the ring on so that no sharp weapon could hurt him?

‘Oh, the middle finger of your left hand,’ the maiden answered, laughing.

She took the knife and tried to strike the youth, and he even tried to cut himself with it, but found it impossible. Then he asked the maiden to show him how to split stones and rocks with the help of the ring. So she led him into a courtyard where stood a great boulder-stone. ‘Now,’ she said, ‘put the ring upon the thumb of your left hand, and you will see how strong that hand has become. The youth did so, and found to his astonishment that with a single blow of his fist the stone flew into a thousand pieces. Then the youth bethought him that he who does not use his luck when he has it is a fool, and that this was a chance which once lost might never return. So while they stood laughing at the shattered stone he placed the ring, as if in play, upon the third finger of his left hand.

‘Now,’ said the maiden, ‘you are invisible to me until you take the ring off again.’

But the youth had no mind to do that; on the contrary, he went farther off, then put the ring on the little finger of his left hand, and soared into the air like a bird.

When the maiden saw him flying away she thought at first that he was still in play, and cried, ‘Come back, friend, for now you see I have told you the truth.’ But the young man never came back.

Then the maiden saw she was deceived, and bitterly repented that she had ever trusted him with the ring.

The young man never halted in his flight until he reached the dwelling of the wise magician who had taught him the speech of birds. The magician was delighted to find that his search had been successful, and at once set to work to interpret the secret signs engraved upon the ring, but it took him seven weeks to make them out clearly. Then he gave the youth the following instructions how to overcome the Dragon of the North: ‘You must have an iron horse cast, which must have little wheels under each foot. You must also be armed with a spear two fathoms long, which you will be able to wield by means of the magic ring upon your left thumb. The spear must be as thick in the middle as a large tree, and both its ends must be sharp. In the middle of the spear you must have two strong chains ten fathoms in length. As soon as the Dragon has made himself fast to the spear, which you must thrust through his jaws, you must spring quickly from the iron horse and fasten the ends of the chains firmly to the ground with iron stakes, so that he cannot get away from them. After two or three days the monster’s strength will be so far exhausted that you will be able to come near him. Then you can put Solomon's ring upon your left thumb and give him the finishing stroke, but keep the ring on your third finger until you have come close to him, so that the monster cannot see you, else he might strike you dead with his long tail. But when all is done, take care you do not lose the ring, and that no one takes it from you by cunning.'

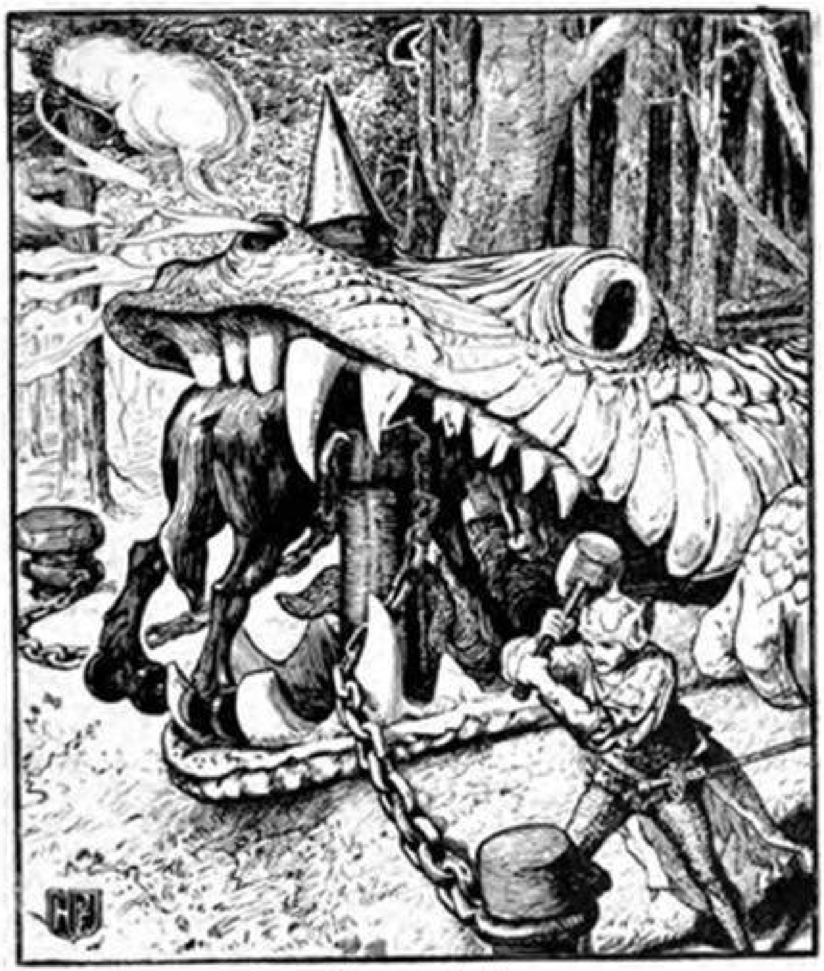

The youth secures the dragon

The young man thanked the magician for his directions, and promised, should they succeed, to reward him. But the magician answered, 'I have profited so much by the wisdom the ring has taught me that I desire no other reward.' Then they parted, and the youth quickly flew home through the air. After remaining in his own home for some weeks, he heard people say that the terrible Dragon of the North was not far off, and might shortly be expected in the country. The King announced publicly that he would give his daughter in marriage, as well as a large part of his kingdom, to whosoever should free the country from the monster. The youth then went to the King and told him that he had good hopes of subduing the Dragon, if the King would grant him all he desired for the purpose. The King willingly agreed, and the iron horse, the great spear, and the chains were all prepared as the youth requested. When all was ready, it was found that the iron horse was so heavy that a hundred men could not move it from the spot, so the youth found there was nothing for it but to move it with his own strength by means of the magic ring. The Dragon was now so near that in a couple of springs he would be over the frontier. The youth now began to consider how he should act, for if he had to push the iron horse from behind he could not ride upon it as the sorcerer had said he must. But a raven unexpectedly gave him this advice: ‘Ride upon the horse, and push the spear against the ground, as if you were pushing off a boat from the land.’ The youth did so, and found that in this way he could easily move forwards. The Dragon had his monstrous jaws wide open, all ready for his expected prey. A few paces nearer, and man and horse would have been swallowed up by them! The youth trembled with horror, and his blood ran cold, yet he did not lose his courage; but, holding the iron spear upright in his hand, he brought it down with all his might right through the monster’s lower jaw. Then quick as lightning he sprang from his horse before the Dragon had time to shut his mouth. A fearful clap like thunder, which could be heard for miles around, now warned him that the Dragon’s jaws had closed upon the spear. When the youth turned round he saw the point of the spear sticking up high above the Dragon’s upper jaw, and knew that the other end must be fastened firmly to the ground; but the Dragon had got his teeth fixed in the iron horse, which was now useless. The youth now hastened to fasten down the chains to the ground by means of the enormous iron pegs which he had provided. The death struggle of the monster lasted three days and three nights; in his writhing he beat his tail so violently against the ground, that at ten miles’ distance the earth trembled as if with an earthquake. When he at length lost power to move his tail, the youth with the help of the ring took up a stone which twenty ordinary men could not have moved, and beat the Dragon so hard about the head with it that very soon the monster lay lifeless before him.

You can fancy how great was the rejoicing when the news was spread abroad that the terrible monster was dead. His conqueror was received into the city with as much pomp as if he had been the mightiest of kings. The old King did not need to urge his daughter to marry the slayer of the Dragon; he found her already willing to bestow her hand upon this hero, who had done all alone what whole armies had tried in vain to do. In a few days a magnificent wedding was celebrated, at which the rejoicings lasted four whole weeks, for all the neighbouring kings had met together to thank the man who had freed the world from their common enemy. But everyone forgot amid the general joy that they ought to have buried the Dragon’s monstrous body, for it began now to have such a bad smell that no one could live in the neighbourhood, and before long the whole air was poisoned, and a pestilence broke out which destroyed many hundreds of people. In this distress, the King’s son-in-law resolved to seek help once more from the Eastern magician, to whom he at once travelled through the air like a bird by the help of the ring. But there is a proverb which says that ill-gotten gains never prosper, and the Prince found that the stolen ring brought him ill-luck after all. The Witch-maiden had never rested night nor day until she had found out where the ring was. As soon as she had discovered by means of magical arts that the Prince in the form of a bird was on his way to the Eastern magician, she changed herself into an eagle and watched in the air until the bird she was waiting for came in sight, for she knew him at once by the ring which was hung round his neck by a ribbon. Then the eagle pounced upon the bird, and the moment she seized him in her talons she tore the ring from his neck before the man in bird’s shape had time to prevent her. Then the eagle flew down to the earth with her prey, and the two stood face to face once more in human form.

‘Now, villain, you are in my power!’ cried the Witch-maiden. ‘I favoured you with my love, and you repaid me with treachery and theft. You stole my most precious jewel from me, and do you expect to live happily as the King’s son-in-law? Now the tables are turned; you are in my power, and I will be revenged on you for your crimes.’

‘Forgive me! forgive me!’ cried the Prince; ‘I know too well how deeply I have wronged you, and most heartily do I repent it.’

The maiden answered, ‘Your prayers and your repentance come too late, and if I were to spare you everyone would think me a fool. You have doubly wronged me; first you scorned my love, and then you stole my ring, and you must bear the punishment.’

With these words she put the ring upon her left thumb, lifted the young man with one hand, and walked away with him under her arm. This time she did not take him to a splendid palace, but to a deep cave in a rock, where there were chains hanging from the wall. The maiden now chained the young man’s hands and feet so that he could not escape; then she said in an angry voice, ‘Here you shall remain chained up until you die. I will bring you every day enough food to prevent you dying of hunger, but you need never hope for freedom any more.’ With these words she left him.

The old King and his daughter waited anxiously for many weeks for the Prince’s return, but no news of him arrived. The King’s daughter often dreamed that her husband was going through some great suffering; she therefore begged her father to summon all the enchanters and magicians, that they might try to find out where the Prince was and how he could be set free. But the magicians, with all their arts, could find out nothing, except that he was still living and undergoing great suffering; but none could tell where he was to be found. At last a celebrated magician from Finland was brought before the King, who had found out that the King’s son-in-law was imprisoned in the East, not by men, but by some more powerful being. The King now sent messengers to the East to look for his son-in-law, and they by good luck met with the old magician who had interpreted the signs on King Solomon’s ring, and thus was possessed of more wisdom than anyone else in the world. The magician soon found out what he wished to know, and pointed out the place where the Prince was imprisoned, but said: ‘He is kept there by enchantment, and cannot be set free without my help. I will therefore go with you myself.’

So they all set out, guided by birds, and after some days came to the cave where the unfortunate Prince had been chained up for nearly seven years. He recognised the magician immediately, but the old man did not know him, he had grown so thin. However, he undid the chains by the help of magic, and took care of the Prince until he recovered and became strong enough to travel. When he reached home he found that the old King had died that morning, so that he was now raised to the throne. And now after his long suffering came prosperity, which lasted to the end of his life; but he never got back the magic ring, nor has it ever again been seen by mortal eyes.

Now, if *you* had been the Prince, would you not rather have stayed with the pretty witch-maiden?

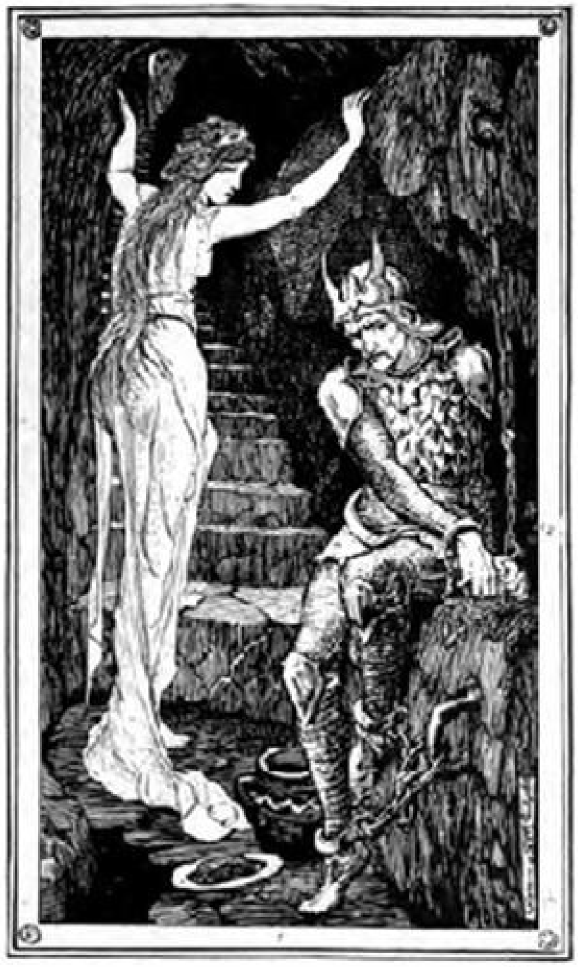

'HERE YOU SHALL REMAIN CHAINED UP UNTIL YOU DIE'

STORY OF THE EMPEROR’S NEW CLOTHES

Many years ago there lived an Emperor who was so fond of new clothes that he spent all his money on them in order to be beautifully dressed. He did not care about his soldiers, he did not care about the theatre; he only liked to go out walking to show off his new clothes. He had a coat for every hour of the day; and just as they say of a king, ‘He is in the council-chamber,’ they always said here, ‘The Emperor is in the wardrobe.’

In the great city in which he lived there was always something going on; every day many strangers came there. One day two impostors arrived who gave themselves out as weavers, and said that they knew how to manufacture the most beautiful cloth imaginable. Not only were the texture and pattern uncommonly beautiful, but the clothes which were made of the stuff possessed this wonderful property that they were invisible to anyone who was not fit for his office, or who was unpardonably stupid.

‘Those must indeed be splendid clothes,’ thought the Emperor. ‘If I had them on I could find out which men in my kingdom are unfit for the offices they hold; I could distinguish the wise from the stupid! Yes, this cloth must be woven for me at once.’ And he gave both the impostors much money, so that they might begin their work.

They placed two weaving-looms, and began to do as if they were working, but they had not the least thing on the looms. They also demanded the finest silk and the best gold, which they put in their pockets, and worked at the empty looms till late into the night.

‘I should like very much to know how far they have got on with the cloth,’ thought the Emperor. But he remembered when he thought about it that whoever was stupid or not fit for his office would not be able to see it. Now he certainly believed that he had nothing to fear for himself, but he wanted first to send somebody else in order to see how he stood with regard to his office. Everybody in the whole town knew what a wonderful power the cloth had, and they were all curious to see how bad or how stupid their neighbour was.

‘I will send my old and honoured minister to the weavers,’ thought the Emperor. ‘He can judge best what the cloth is like, for he has intellect, and no one understands his office better than he.’

Now the good old minister went into the hall where the two impostors sat working at the empty weaving-looms. ‘Dear me!’ thought the old minister, opening his eyes wide, ‘I can see nothing!’ But he did not say so.

Both the impostors begged him to be so kind as to step closer, and asked him if it were not a beautiful texture and lovely colours. They pointed to the empty loom, and the poor old minister went forward rubbing his eyes; but he could see nothing, for there was nothing there.

‘Dear, dear!’ thought he, ‘can I be stupid? I have never thought that, and nobody must know it! Can I be not fit for my office? No, I must certainly not say that I cannot see the cloth!’

‘Have you nothing to say about it?’ asked one of the men who was weaving.

‘Oh, it is lovely, most lovely!’ answered the old minister, looking through his spectacles. ‘What a texture! What colours! Yes, I will tell the Emperor that it pleases me very much.’

‘Now we are delighted at that,’ said both the weavers, and thereupon they named the colours and explained the make of the texture.

The old minister paid great attention, so that he could tell the same to the Emperor when he came back to him, which he did.

The impostors now wanted more money, more silk, and more gold to use in their weaving. They put it all in their own pockets, and there came no threads on the loom, but they went on as they had done before, working at the empty loom. The Emperor soon sent another worthy statesman to see how the weaving was getting on, and whether the cloth would soon be finished. It was the same with him as the first one; he looked and looked, but because there was nothing on the empty loom he could see nothing.

‘Is it not a beautiful piece of cloth?’ asked the two impostors, and they pointed to and described the splendid material which was not there.

‘Stupid I am not!’ thought the man, ‘so it must be my good office for which I am not fitted. It is strange, certainly, but no one must be allowed to notice it.’ And so he praised the cloth which he did not see, and expressed to them his delight at the beautiful colours and the splendid texture. ‘Yes, it is quite beautiful,’ he said to the Emperor.

Everybody in the town was talking of the magnificent cloth.

Now the Emperor wanted to see it himself while it was still on the loom. With a great crowd of select followers, amongst whom were both the worthy statesmen who had already been there before, he went to the cunning impostors, who were now weaving with all their might, but without fibre or thread.

‘Is it not splendid!’ said both the old statesmen who had already been there. ‘See, your Majesty, what a texture! What colours!’ And then they pointed to the empty loom, for they believed that the others could see the cloth quite well.

‘What!’ thought the Emperor, ‘I can see nothing! This is indeed horrible! Am I stupid? Am I not fit to be Emperor? That were the most dreadful thing that could happen to me. Oh, it is very beautiful,’ he said. ‘It has my gracious approval.’ And then he nodded pleasantly, and examined the empty loom, for he would not say that he could see nothing.

His whole Court round him looked and looked, and saw no more than the others; but they said like the Emperor, ‘Oh! it is beautiful!’ And they advised him to wear these new and magnificent clothes for the first time at the great procession which was soon to take place. ‘Splendid! Lovely! Most beautiful!’ went from mouth to mouth; everyone seemed delighted over them, and the Emperor gave to the impostors the title of Court weavers to the Emperor.

Throughout the whole of the night before the morning on which the procession was to take place, the impostors were up and were working by the light of over sixteen candles. The people could see that they were very busy making the Emperor’s new clothes ready. They pretended they were taking the cloth from the loom, cut with huge scissors in the air, sewed with needles without thread, and then said at last, ‘Now the clothes are finished!’

The Emperor came himself with his most distinguished knights, and each impostor held up his arm just as if he were holding something, and said, ‘See! here are the breeches! Here is the coat! Here the cloak!’ and so on.

‘Spun clothes are so comfortable that one would imagine one had nothing on at all; but that is the beauty of it!’

‘Yes,’ said all the knights, but they could see nothing, for there was nothing there.

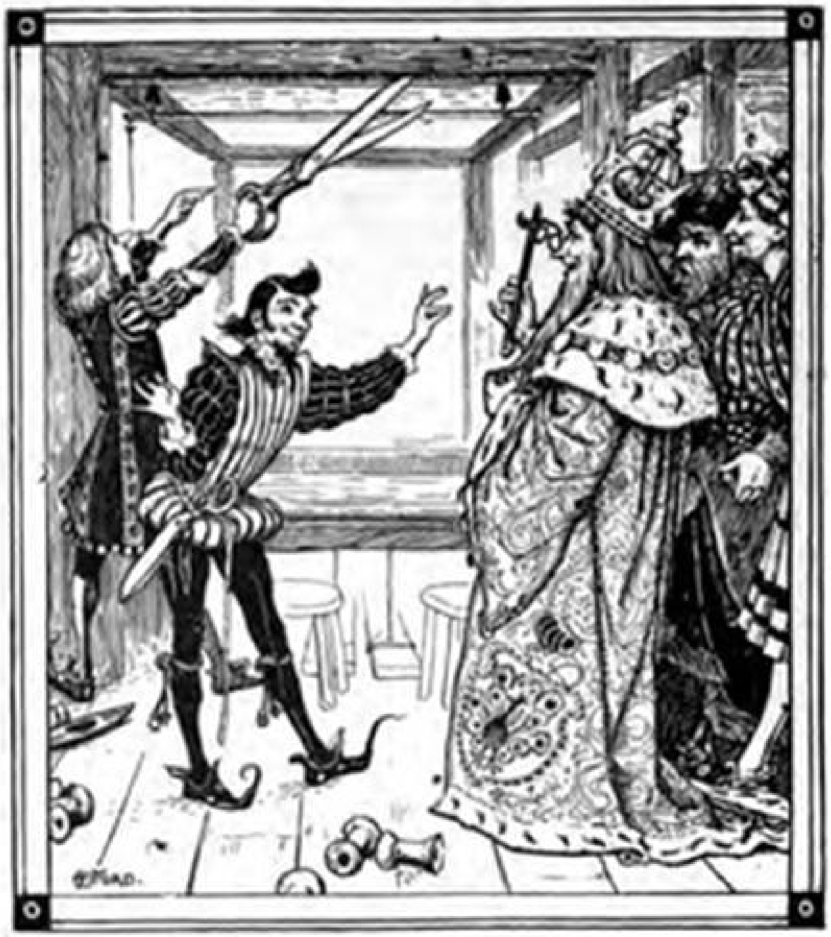

The Emperor comes to see his new clothes

‘Will it please your Majesty graciously to take off your clothes,’ said the impostors, ‘then we will put on the new clothes, here before the mirror.’

The Emperor took off all his clothes, and the impostors placed themselves before him as if they were putting on each part of his new clothes which was ready, and the Emperor turned and bent himself in front of the mirror.

‘How beautifully they fit! How well they sit!’ said everybody. ‘What material! What colours! It is a gorgeous suit!’

‘They are waiting outside with the canopy which your Majesty is wont to have borne over you in the procession,’ announced the Master of the Ceremonies.

‘Look, I am ready,’ said the Emperor. ‘Doesn’t it sit well!’ And he turned himself again to the mirror to see if his finery was on all right.

The chamberlains who were used to carry the train put their hands near the floor as if they were lifting up the train; then they did as if they were holding something in the air. They would not have it noticed that they could see nothing.

So the Emperor went along in the procession under the splendid canopy, and all the people in the streets and at the windows said, ‘How matchless are the Emperor’s new clothes! That train fastened to his dress, how beautifully it hangs!’

No one wished it to be noticed that he could see nothing, for then he would have been unfit for his office, or else very stupid. None of the Emperor’s clothes had met with such approval as these had.

‘But he has nothing on!’ said a little child at last.

‘Just listen to the innocent child!’ said the father, and each one whispered to his neighbour what the child had said.

‘But he has nothing on!’ the whole of the people called out at last.

This struck the Emperor, for it seemed to him as if they were right; but he thought to himself, ‘I must go on with the procession now.’ And the chamberlains walked along still more uprightly, holding up the train which was not there at all.

THE GOLDEN CRAB

Once upon a time there was a fisherman who had a wife and three children. Every morning he used to go out fishing, and whatever fish he caught he sold to the King. One day, among the other fishes, he caught a golden crab. When he came home he put all the fishes together into a great dish, but he kept the Crab separate because it shone so beautifully, and placed it upon a high shelf in the cupboard. Now while the old woman, his wife, was cleaning the fish, and had tucked up her gown so that her feet were visible, she suddenly heard a voice, which said:

‘Let down, let down thy petticoat
That lets thy feet be seen.’

She turned round in surprise, and then she saw the little creature, the Golden Crab.

‘What! You can speak, can you, you ridiculous crab?’ she said, for she was not quite pleased at the Crab’s remarks. Then she took him up and placed him on a dish.

When her husband came home and they sat down to dinner, they presently heard the Crab’s little voice saying, ‘Give me some too.’ They were all very much surprised, but they gave him something to eat. When the old man came to take away the plate which had contained the Crab’s dinner, he found it full of gold, and as the same thing happened every day he soon became very fond of the Crab.

One day the Crab said to the fisherman’s wife, ‘Go to the King and tell him I wish to marry his younger daughter.’

The old woman went accordingly, and laid the matter before the King, who laughed a little at the notion of his daughter marrying a crab, but did not decline the proposal altogether, because he was a prudent monarch, and knew that the Crab was likely to be a prince in disguise. He said, therefore, to the fisherman’s wife, ‘Go, old woman, and tell the Crab I will give him my daughter if by to-morrow morning he can build a wall in front of my castle much higher than my tower, upon which all the flowers of the world must grow and bloom.’

The fisherman’s wife went home and gave this message.

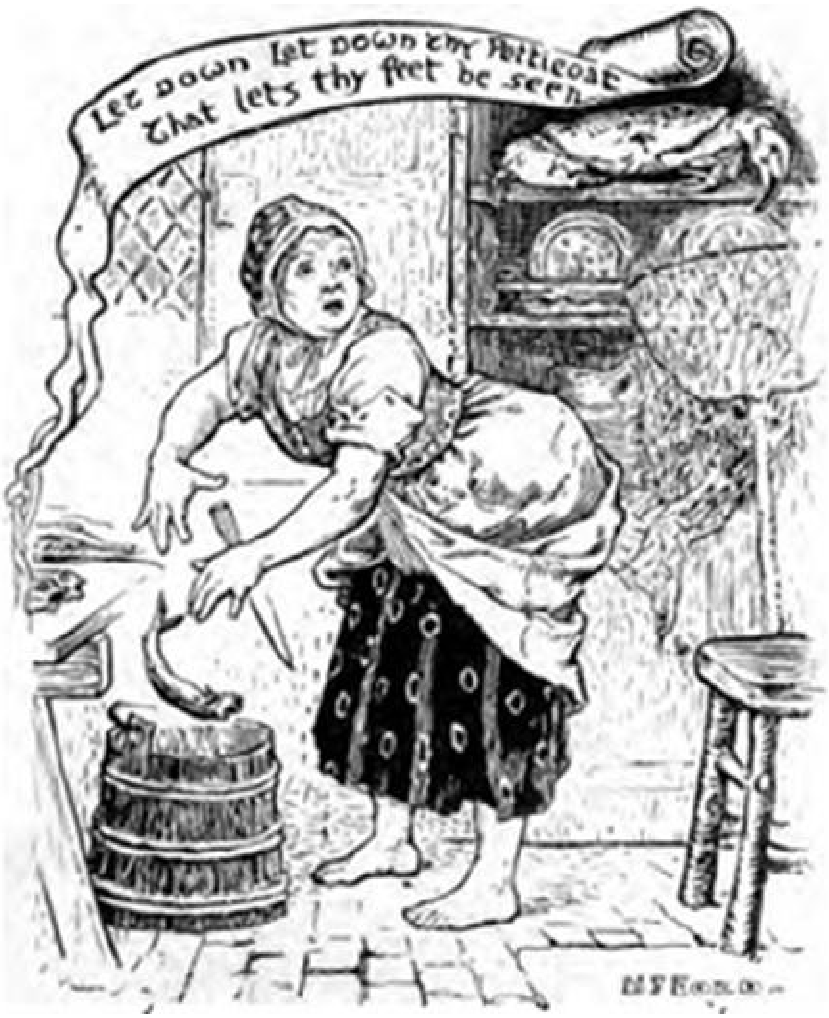
Let down let down thy petticoat
That lets thy feet be seen

Then the Crab gave her a golden rod, and said, ‘Go and strike with this rod three times upon the ground on the place which the King showed you, and to-morrow morning the wall will be there.’

The old woman did so and went away again.

The next morning, when the King awoke, what do you think he saw? The wall stood there before his eyes, exactly as he had bespoken it!

Then the old woman went back to the King and said to him, ‘Your Majesty’s orders have been fulfilled.’

‘That is all very well,’ said the King, ‘but I cannot give away my daughter until there stands in front of my palace a garden in which there are three fountains, of which the first must play gold, the second diamonds, and the third brilliants.’

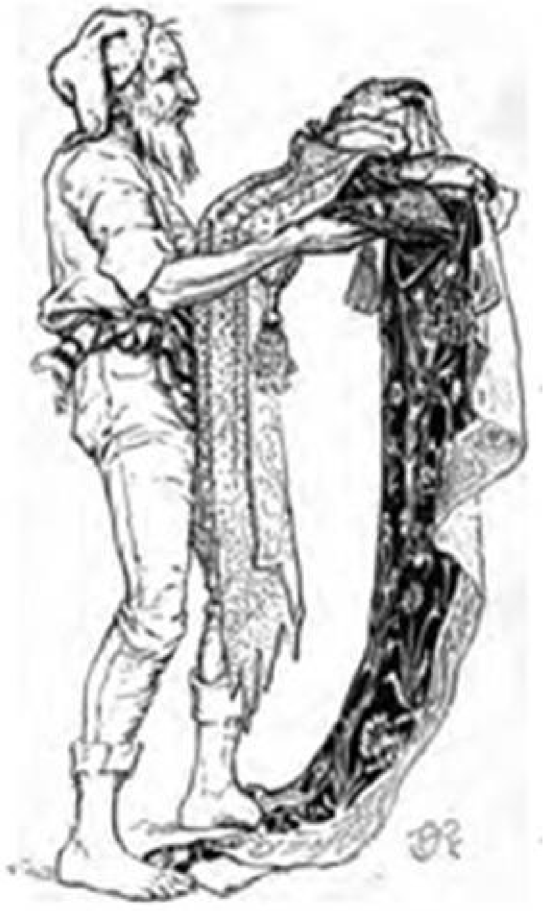

The fisherman brings the crab on the golden cushion

So the old woman had to strike again three times upon the ground with the rod, and the next morning the garden was there. The King now gave his consent, and the wedding was fixed for the very next day.

Then the Crab said to the old fisherman, ‘Now take this rod; go and knock with it on a certain mountain; then a black man will come out and ask you what you wish for. Answer him thus: “Your master, the King, has sent me to tell you that you must send him his golden garment that is like the sun.” Make him give you, besides, the queenly robes of gold and precious stones which are like the flowery meadows, and bring them both to me. And bring me also the golden cushion.’

The old man went and did his errand. When he had brought the precious robes, the Crab put on the golden garment and then crept upon the golden cushion, and in this way the fisherman carried him to the castle, where the Crab presented the other garment to his bride. Now the ceremony took place, and when the married pair were alone together the Crab made himself known to his young wife, and told her how he was the son of the greatest king in the world, and how he was enchanted, so that he became a crab by day and was a man only at night; and he could also change himself into an eagle as often as he wished. No sooner had he said this than he shook himself, and immediately became a handsome youth, but the next morning he was forced to creep back again into his crab-shell. And the same thing happened every day. But the Princess's affection for the Crab, and the polite attention with which she behaved to him, surprised the royal family very much. They suspected some secret, but though they spied and spied, they could not discover it. Thus a year passed away, and the Princess had a son, whom she called Benjamin. But her mother still thought the whole matter very strange. At last she said to the King that he ought to ask his daughter whether she would not like to have another husband instead of the Crab? But when the daughter was questioned she only answered:

'I am married to the Crab, and him only will I have.'

Then the King said to her, 'I will appoint a tournament in your honour, and I will invite all the princes in the world to it, and if any one of them pleases you, you shall marry him.'

In the evening the Princess told this to the Crab, who said to her, 'Take this rod, go to the garden gate and knock with it, then a black man will come out and say to you, "Why have you called me, and what do you require of me?" Answer him thus: "Your master the King has sent me hither to tell you to send him his golden armour and his steed and the silver apple." And bring them to me.'

The Princess did so, and brought him what he desired.

The following evening the Prince dressed himself for the tournament. Before he went he said to his wife, 'Now mind you do not say when you see me that I am the Crab. For if you do this evil will come of it. Place yourself at the window with your sisters; I will ride by and throw you the silver apple. Take it in your hand, but if they ask you who I am, say that you do not know.' So saying, he kissed her, repeated his warning once more, and went away.

The Princess went with her sisters to the window and looked on at the tournament. Presently her husband rode by and threw the apple up to her. She caught it in her hand and went with it to her room, and by-and-by her husband came back to her. But her father was much surprised that she did not seem to care about any of the Princes; he therefore appointed a second tournament.

The Crab then gave his wife the same directions as before, only this time the apple which she received from the black man was of gold. But before the Prince went to the tournament he said to his wife, 'Now I know you will betray me to-day.'

But she swore to him that she would not tell who he was. He then repeated his warning and went away.

In the evening, while the Princess, with her mother and sisters, was standing at the window, the Prince suddenly galloped past on his steed and threw her the golden apple.

Then her mother flew into a passion, gave her a box on the ear, and cried out, ‘Does not even that prince please you, you fool?’

The Princess in her fright exclaimed, ‘That is the Crab himself!’

Her mother was still more angry because she had not been told sooner, ran into her daughter’s room where the crab-shell was still lying, took it up and threw it into the fire. Then the poor Princess cried bitterly, but it was of no use; her husband did not come back.

Now we must leave the Princess and turn to the other persons in the story. One day an old man went to a stream to dip in a crust of bread which he was going to eat, when a dog came out of the water, snatched the bread from his hand, and ran away. The old man ran after him, but the dog reached a door, pushed it open, and ran in, the old man following him. He did not overtake the dog, but found himself above a staircase, which he descended. Then he saw before him a stately palace, and, entering, he found in a large hall a table set for twelve persons. He hid himself in the hall behind a great picture, that he might see what would happen. At noon he heard a great noise, so that he trembled with fear. When he took courage to look out from behind the picture, he saw twelve eagles flying in. At this sight his fear became still greater. The eagles flew to the basin of a fountain that was there and bathed themselves, when suddenly they were changed into twelve handsome youths. Now they seated themselves at the table, and one of them took up a goblet filled with wine, and said, ‘A health to my father!’ And another said, ‘A health to my mother!’ and so the healths went round. Then one of them said:

‘A health to my dearest lady,
Long may she live and well!
But a curse on the cruel mother
That burnt my golden shell!’

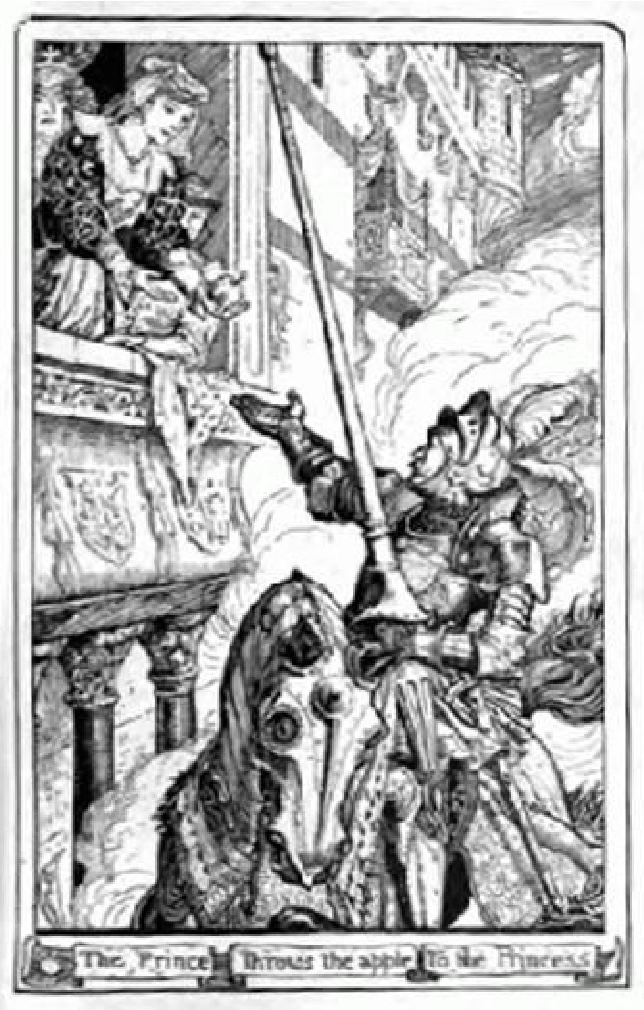

The Prince throws the apple to the Princess

And so saying he wept bitterly. Then the youths rose from the table, went back to the great stone fountain, turned themselves into eagles again, and flew away.

Then the old man went away too, returned to the light of day, and went home. Soon after he heard that the Princess was ill, and that the only thing that did her good was having stories told to her. He therefore went to the royal castle, obtained an audience of the Princess, and told her about the strange things he had seen in the underground palace. No sooner had he finished than the Princess asked him whether he could find the way to that palace.

‘Yes,’ he answered, ‘certainly.’

And now she desired him to guide her thither at once. The old man did so, and when they came to the palace he hid her behind the great picture and advised her to keep quite still, and he placed himself behind the picture also. Presently the eagles came flying in, and changed themselves into young men, and in a moment the Princess recognised her husband amongst them all, and tried to come out of her hiding-place; but the old man held her back. The youths seated themselves at the table; and now the Prince said again, while he took up the cup of wine:

‘A health to my dearest lady,
Long may she live and well!
But a curse on the cruel mother
That burnt my golden shell!’

Then the Princess could restrain herself no longer, but ran forward and threw her arms round her husband. And immediately he knew her again, and said:

‘Do you remember how I told you that day that you would betray me? Now you see that I spoke the truth. But all that bad time is past. Now listen to me: I must still remain enchanted for three months. Will you stay here with me till that time is over?’

So the Princess stayed with him, and said to the old man, ‘Go back to the castle and tell my parents that I am staying here.’

Her parents were very much vexed when the old man came back and told them this, but as soon as the three months of the Prince’s enchantment were over, he ceased to be an eagle and became once more a man, and they returned home together. And then they lived happily, and we who hear the story are happier still.

THE IRON STOVE

Once upon a time when wishes came true there was a king's son who was enchanted by an old witch, so that he was obliged to sit in a large iron stove in a wood. There he lived for many years, and no one could free him. At last a king's daughter came into the wood; she had lost her way, and could not find her father's kingdom again. She had been wandering round and round for nine days, and she came at last to the iron case. A voice came from within and asked her, 'Where do you come from, and where do you want to go?' She answered, 'I have lost my way to my father's kingdom, and I shall never get home again.' Then the voice from the iron stove said, 'I will help you to find your home again, and that in a very short time, if you will promise to do what I ask you. I am a greater prince than you are a princess, and I will marry you.' Then she grew frightened, and thought, 'What can a young lassie do with an iron stove?' But as she wanted very much to go home to her father, she promised to do what he wished. He said, 'You must come again, and bring a knife with you to scrape a hole in the iron.'

Then he gave her someone for a guide, who walked near her and said nothing, but he brought her in two hours to her house. There was great joy in the castle when the Princess came back, and the old King fell on her neck and kissed her. But she was very much troubled, and said, 'Dear father, listen to what has befallen me! I should never have come home again out of the great wild wood if I had not come to an iron stove, to whom I have had to promise that I will go back to free him and marry him!' The old King was so frightened that he nearly fainted, for she was his only daughter. So they consulted together, and determined that the miller's daughter, who was very beautiful, should take her place. They took her there, gave her a knife, and said she must scrape at the iron stove. She scraped for twenty-four hours, but did not make the least impression. When the day broke, a voice called from the iron stove, 'It seems to me that it is day outside.' Then she answered, 'It seems so to me; I think I hear my father's mill rattling.'

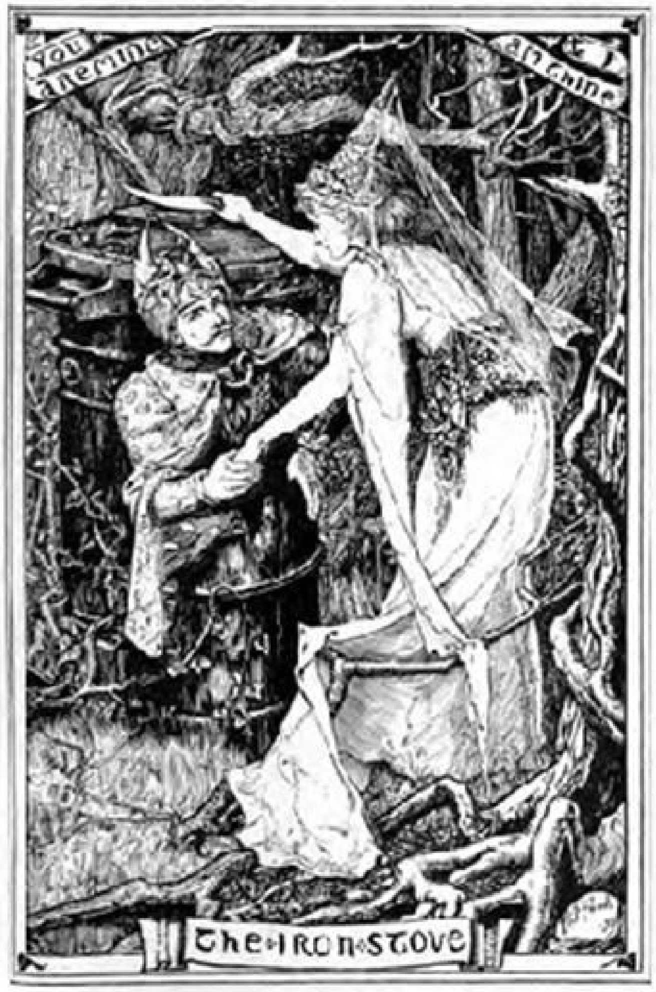

‘So you are a miller’s daughter! Then go away at once, and tell the King’s daughter to come.’

Then she went away, and told the old King that the thing inside the iron stove would not have her, but wanted the Princess. The old King was frightened, and his daughter wept. But they had a swineherd’s daughter who was even more beautiful than the miller’s daughter, and they gave her a piece of gold to go to the iron stove instead of the Princess. Then she was taken out, and had to scrape for four-and-twenty hours, but she could make no impression. As soon as the day broke the voice from the stove called out, ‘It seems to be daylight outside.’ Then she answered, ‘It seems so to me too; I think I hear my father blowing his horn.’ ‘So you are a swineherd’s daughter! Go away at once, and let the King’s daughter come. And say to her that what I foretell shall come to pass, and if she does not come everything in the kingdom shall fall into ruin, and not one stone shall be left upon another.’ When the Princess heard this she began to cry, but it was no good; she had to keep her word. She took leave of her father, put a knife in her belt, and went to the iron stove in the wood. As soon as she reached it she began to scrape, and the iron gave way and before two hours had passed she had made a little hole. Then she peeped in and saw such a beautiful youth all shining with gold and precious stones that she fell in love with him on the spot. So she scraped away harder than ever, and made the hole so large that he could get out. Then he said, ‘You are mine, and I am thine; you are my bride and have set me free!’ He wanted to take her with him to his kingdom, but she begged him just to let her go once more to her father; and the Prince let her go, but told her not to say more than three words to her father, then to come back again. So she went home, but alas! she said *more than three words*; and immediately the iron stove vanished and went away over a mountain of glass and sharp swords. But the Prince was free, and was no longer shut up in it. Then she said good-bye to her father, and took a little money with her, and went again into the great wood to look for the iron stove; but she could not find it. She sought it for nine days, and then her hunger became so great that she did not know how she could live any longer. And when it was evening she climbed a little tree and wished that the night would not come, because she was afraid of the wild beasts. When midnight came she saw afar off a little light, and thought, ‘Ah! if only I could reach that!’ Then she got down from the tree and went towards the light. She came to a little old house with a great deal of grass growing round, and stood in front of a little heap of wood. She thought, ‘Alas! what am I coming to?’ and peeped through the window; but she saw nothing inside except big and little toads, and a table beautifully spread with roast meats and wine, and all the dishes and drinking-cups were of silver. Then she took heart and knocked. Then a fat toad called out: ‘Little green toad with leg like crook, Open wide the door, and look Who it was the latch that shook.’

And a little toad came forward and let her in. When she entered they all bid her welcome, and made her sit down. They asked her how she came there and what she wanted. Then she told everything that had happened to her, and how, because she had exceeded her permission only to speak three words, the stove had disappeared with the Prince; and how she had searched a very long time, and must wander over mountain and valley till she found him.

Then the old toad said: ‘Little green toad whose leg doth twist, Go to the corner of which you wist, And bring to me the large old kist.’

And the little toad went and brought out a great chest. Then they gave her food and drink, and led her to a beautifully made bed of silk and samite, on which she lay down and slept soundly. When the day dawned she arose, and the old toad gave her three things out of the huge chest to take with her. She would have need of them, for she had to cross a high glass mountain, three cutting swords, and a great lake. When she had passed these she would find her lover again. So she was given three large needles, a plough-wheel, and three nuts, which she was to take great care of. She set out with these things, and when she came to the glass mountain which was so slippery she stuck the three needles behind her feet and then in front, and so got over it, and when she was on the other side put them carefully away.

Then she reached the three cutting swords, and got on her plough-wheel and rolled over them. At last she came to a great lake, and, when she had crossed that, arrived at a beautiful castle. She went in and gave herself out as a servant, a poor maid who would gladly be engaged. But she knew that the Prince whom she had freed from the iron stove in the great wood was in the castle. So she was taken on as a kitchenmaid for very small wages. Now the Prince was about to marry another princess, for he thought she was dead long ago.

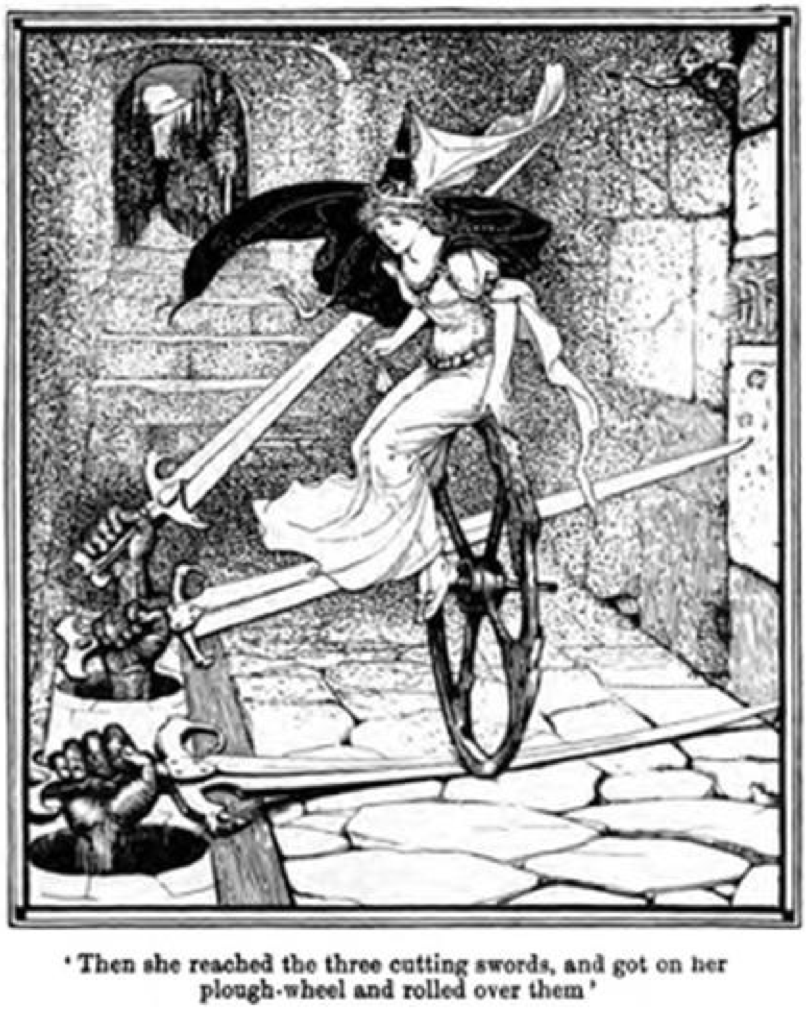

'Then she reached the three cutting swords, and got on her plough-wheel and rolled over them'

In the evening, when she had washed up and was ready, she felt in her pocket and found the three nuts which the old toad had given her. She cracked one and was going to eat the kernel, when behold! there was a beautiful royal dress inside it! When the bride heard of this, she came and begged for the dress, and wanted to buy it, saying that it was not a dress for a serving-maid. Then she said she would not sell it unless she was granted one favour — namely, to sleep by the Prince's door. The bride granted her this, because the dress was so beautiful and she had so few like it. When it was evening she said to her bridegroom, 'That stupid maid wants to sleep by your door.'

'If you are contented, I am,' he said. But she gave him a glass of wine in which she had poured a sleeping-draught. Then they both went to his room, but he slept so soundly that she could not wake him. The maid wept all night long, and said, 'I freed you in the wild wood out of the iron stove; I have sought you, and have crossed a glassy mountain, three sharp swords, and a great lake before I found you, and will you not hear me now?' The servants outside heard how she cried the whole night, and they told their master in the morning.

When she had washed up the next evening she bit the second nut, and there was a still more beautiful dress inside. When the bride saw it she wanted to buy it also. But the maid did not want money, and asked that she should sleep again by the Prince's door. The bride, however, gave him a sleeping-draught, and he slept so soundly that he heard nothing. But the kitchenmaid wept the whole night long, and said, 'I have freed you in a wood and from an iron stove; I sought you and have crossed a glassy mountain, three sharp swords, and a great lake to find you, and now you will not hear me!' The servants outside heard how she cried the whole night, and in the morning they told their master. And when she had washed up on the third night she bit the third nut, and there was a still more beautiful dress inside that was made of pure gold. When the bride saw it she wanted to have it, but the maid would only give it her on condition that she should sleep for the third time by the Prince's door. But the Prince took care not to drink the sleeping-draught. When she began to weep and to say, 'Dearest sweetheart, I freed you in the horrible wild wood, and from an iron stove,' he jumped up and said, 'You are right. You are mine, and I am thine.' Though it was still night, he got into a carriage with her, and they took the false bride's clothes away, so that she could not follow them. When they came to the great lake they rowed across, and when they reached the three sharp swords they sat on the plough-wheel, and on the glassy mountain they stuck the three needles in. So they arrived at last at the little old house, but when they stepped inside it turned into a large castle. The toads were all freed, and were beautiful King's children, running about for joy. There they were married, and they remained in the castle, which was much larger than that of the Princess's father's. But because the old man did not like being left alone, they went and fetched him. So they had two kingdoms and lived in great wealth.

A mouse has run, My story’s done.

THE DRAGON AND HIS GRANDMOTHER

There was once a great war, and the King had a great many soldiers, but he gave them so little pay that they could not live upon it. Then three of them took counsel together and determined to desert.

One of them said to the others, ‘If we are caught, we shall be hanged on the gallows; how shall we set about it?’ The other said, ‘Do you see that large cornfield there? If we were to hide ourselves in that, no one could find us. The army cannot come into it, and to-morrow it is to march on.’

They crept into the corn, but the army did not march on, but remained encamped close around them. They sat for two days and two nights in the corn, and grew so hungry that they nearly died; but if they were to venture out, it was certain death.

They said at last, ‘What use was it our deserting? We must perish here miserably.’

Whilst they were speaking a fiery dragon came flying through the air. It hovered near them, and asked why they were hidden there. They answered, ‘We are three soldiers, and have deserted because our pay was so small. Now if we remain here we shall die of hunger, and if we move out we shall be strung up on the gallows.’ ‘If you will serve me for seven years,’ said the dragon, I will lead you through the midst of the army so that no one shall catch you.’ ‘We have no choice, and must take your offer,’ said they. Then the dragon seized them in his claws, took them through the air over the army, and set them down on the earth a long way from it.

He gave them a little whip, saying, ‘Whip and slash with this, and as much money as you want will jump up before you. You can then live as great lords, keep horses, and drive about in carriages. But after seven years you are mine.’ Then he put a book before them, which he made all three of them sign. ‘I will then give you a riddle,’ he said; ‘if you guess it, you shall be free and out of my power.’ The dragon then flew away, and they journeyed on with their little whip. They had as much money as they wanted, wore grand clothes, and made their way into the world. Wherever they went they lived in merrymaking and splendour, drove about with horses and carriages, ate and drank, but did nothing wrong.

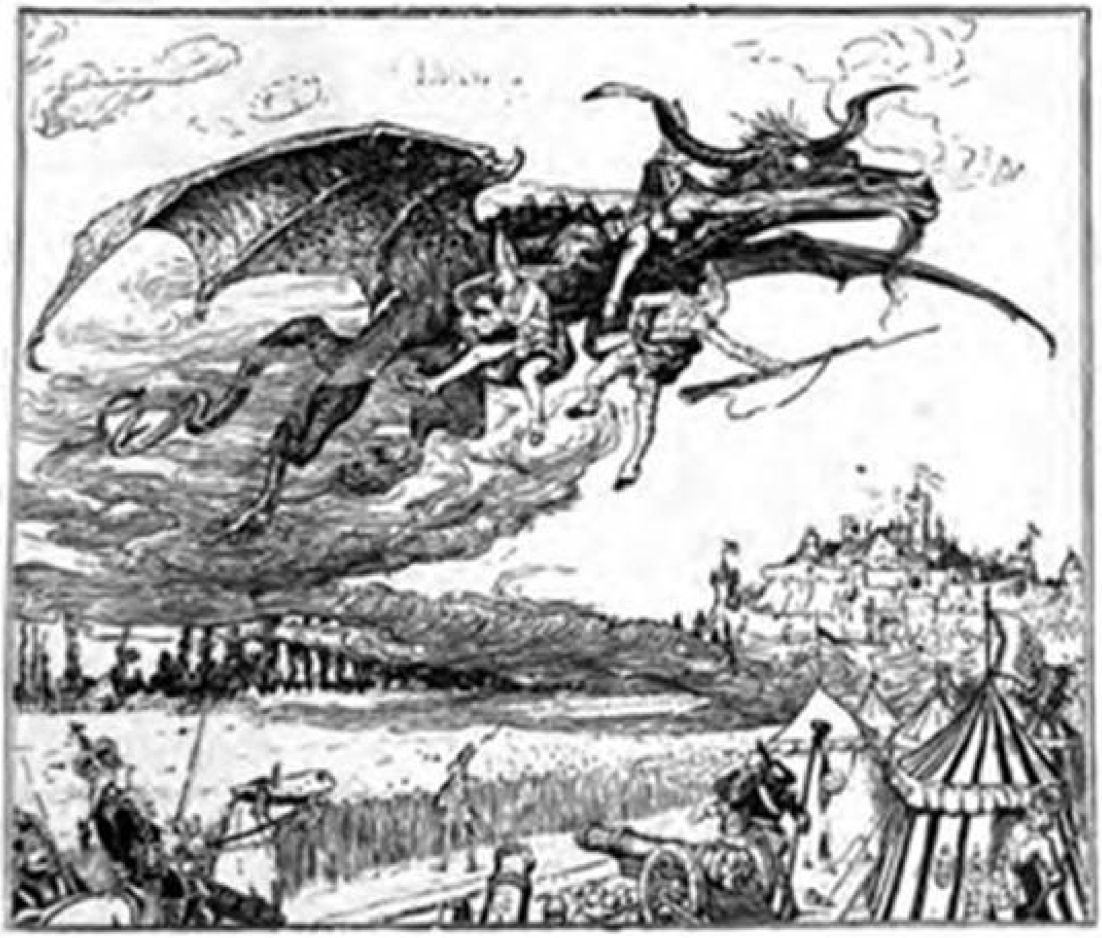

The Dragon carries off the three soldiers

The time passed quickly away, and when the seven years were nearly ended two of them grew terribly anxious and frightened, but the third made light of it, saying, ‘Don’t be afraid, brothers, I wasn’t born yesterday; I will guess the riddle.’

They went into a field, sat down, and the two pulled long faces. An old woman passed by, and asked them why they were so sad. ‘Alas! what have you to do with it? You cannot help us.’ ‘Who knows?’ she answered. ‘Only confide your trouble in me.’

Then they told her that they had become the servants of the Dragon for seven long years, and how he had given them money as plentifully as blackberries; but as they had signed their names they were his, unless when the seven years had passed they could guess a riddle. The old woman said, ‘If you would help yourselves, one of you must go into the wood, and there he will come upon a tumble-down building of rocks which looks like a little house. He must go in, and there he will find help.’

The two melancholy ones thought, ‘That won’t save us!’ and they remained where they were. But the third and merry one jumped up and went into the wood till he found the rock hut. In the hut sat a very old woman, who was the Dragon's grandmother. She asked him how he came, and what was his business there. He told her all that happened, and because she was pleased with him she took compassion on him, and said she would help him.

She lifted up a large stone which lay over the cellar, saying, 'Hide yourself there; you can hear all that is spoken in this room. Only sit still and don't stir. When the Dragon comes, I will ask him what the riddle is, for he tells me everything; then listen carefully what he answers.'

At midnight the Dragon flew in, and asked for his supper. His grandmother laid the table, and brought out food and drink till he was satisfied, and they ate and drank together. Then in the course of the conversation she asked him what he had done in the day, and how many souls he had conquered.

'I haven't had much luck to-day,' he said, 'but I have a tight hold on three soldiers.'

'Indeed! three soldiers!' said she. 'Who cannot escape you?'

'They are mine,' answered the Dragon scornfully, 'for I shall only give them one riddle which they will never be able to guess.'

'What sort of a riddle is it?' she asked.

'I will tell you this. In the North Sea lies a dead sea-cat — that shall be their roast meat; and the rib of a whale — that shall be their silver spoon; and the hollow foot of a dead horse — that shall be their wineglass.'

When the Dragon had gone to bed, his old grandmother pulled up the stone and let out the soldier.

'Did you pay attention to everything?'

'Yes,' he replied, 'I know enough, and can help myself splendidly.'

Then he went by another way through the window secretly, and in all haste back to his comrades. He told them how the Dragon had been outwitted by his grandmother, and how he had heard from his own lips the answer to the riddle.

Then they were all delighted and in high spirits, took out their whip, and cracked so much money that it came jumping up from the ground. When the seven years had quite gone, the Fiend came with his book, and, pointing at the signatures, said, 'I will take you underground with me; you shall have a meal there. If you can tell me what you will get for your roast meat, you shall be free, and shall also keep the whip.'

Then said the first soldier, 'In the North Sea lies a dead sea-cat; that shall be the roast meat.'

The Dragon was much annoyed, and hummed and hawed a good deal, and asked the second, 'But what shall be your spoon?'

‘The rib of a whale shall be our silver spoon.’

The Dragon made a face, and growled again three times, ‘Hum, hum, hum,’ and said to the third, ‘Do you know what your wineglass shall be?’

‘An old horse’s hoof shall be our wineglass.’

Then the Dragon flew away with a loud shriek, and had no more power over them. But the three soldiers took the little whip, whipped as much money as they wanted, and lived happily to their lives’ end.

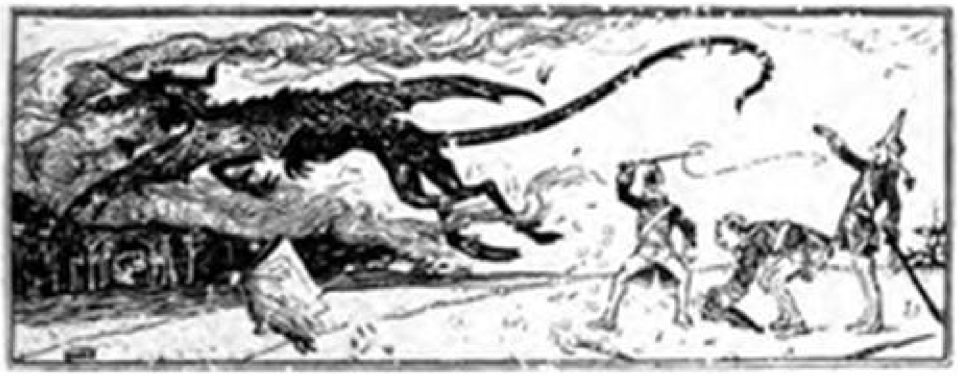

The Fiend defeated

THE DONKEY CABBAGE

There was once a young Hunter who went boldly into the forest. He had a merry and light heart, and as he went whistling along there came an ugly old woman, who said to him, ‘Good-day, dear hunter! You are very merry and contented, but I suffer hunger and thirst, so give me a trifle.’ The Hunter was sorry for the poor old woman, and he felt in his pocket and gave her all he could spare. He was going on then, but the old woman stopped him and said, ‘Listen, dear hunter, to what I say. Because of your kind heart I will make you a present. Go on your way, and in a short time you will come to a tree on which sit nine birds who have a cloak in their claws and are quarrelling over it. Then take aim with your gun and shoot in the middle of them; they will let the cloak fall, but one of the birds will be hit and will drop down dead. Take the cloak with you; it is a wishing-cloak, and when you throw it on your shoulders you have only to wish yourself at a certain place, and in the twinkling of an eye you are there. Take the heart out of the dead bird and swallow it whole, and early every morning when you get up you will find a gold piece under your pillow.’

The Hunter thanked the wise woman, and thought to himself ‘These are splendid things she has promised me, if only they come to pass!’ So he walked on about a hundred yards, and then he heard above him in the branches such a screaming and chirping that he looked up, and there he saw a heap of birds tearing a cloth with their beaks and feet, shrieking, tugging, and fighting, as if each wanted it for himself. ‘Well,’ said the Hunter, ‘this is wonderful! It is just as the old woman said’; and he took his gun on his shoulder, pulled the trigger, and shot into the midst of them, so that their feathers flew about. Then the flock took flight with much screaming, but one fell dead, and the cloak fluttered down. Then the Hunter did as the old woman had told him: he cut open the bird, found its heart, swallowed it, and took the cloak home with him. The next morning when he awoke he remembered the promise, and wanted to see if it had come true. But when he lifted up his pillow, there sparkled the gold piece, and the next morning he found another, and so on every time he got up. He collected a heap of gold, but at last he thought to himself, ‘What good is all my gold to me if I stay at home? I will travel and look a bit about me in the world.’ So he took leave of his parents, slung his hunting knapsack and his gun round him, and journeyed into the world.

It happened that one day he went through a thick wood, and when he came to the end of it there lay in the plain before him a large castle. At one of the windows in it stood an old woman with a most beautiful maiden by her side, looking out. But the old woman was a witch, and she said to the girl, ‘There comes one out of the wood who has a wonderful treasure in his body which we must manage to possess ourselves of, darling daughter; we have more right to it than he. He has a bird’s heart in him, and so every morning there lies a gold piece under his pillow.’

She told her how they could get hold of it, and how she was to coax it from him, and at last threatened her angrily, saying, ‘And if you do not obey me, you shall repent it!’

When the Hunter came nearer he saw the maiden, and said to himself, ‘I have travelled so far now that I will rest, and turn into this beautiful castle; money I have in plenty.’ But the real reason was that he had caught sight of the lovely face.

He went into the house, and was kindly received and hospitably entertained. It was not long before he was so much in love with the witch-maiden that he thought of nothing else, and only looked in her eyes, and whatever she wanted, that he gladly did. Then the old witch said, ‘Now we must have the bird-heart; he will not feel when it is gone.’ She prepared a drink, and when it was ready she poured it in a goblet and gave it to the maiden, who had to hand it to the hunter.

‘Drink to me now, my dearest,’ she said. Then he took the goblet, and when he had swallowed the drink the bird-heart came out of his mouth. The maiden had to get hold of it secretly and then swallow it herself, for the old witch wanted to have it. Thenceforward he found no more gold under his pillow, and it lay under the maiden’s; but he was so much in love and so much bewitched that he thought of nothing except spending all his time with the maiden.

Then the old witch said, ‘We have the bird-heart, but we must also get the wishing-cloak from him.’

The maiden answered, ‘We will leave him that; he has already lost his wealth!’

The old witch grew angry, and said, ‘Such a cloak is a wonderful thing, it is seldom to be had in the world, and have it I must and will.’ She beat the maiden, and said that if she did not obey it would go ill with her.

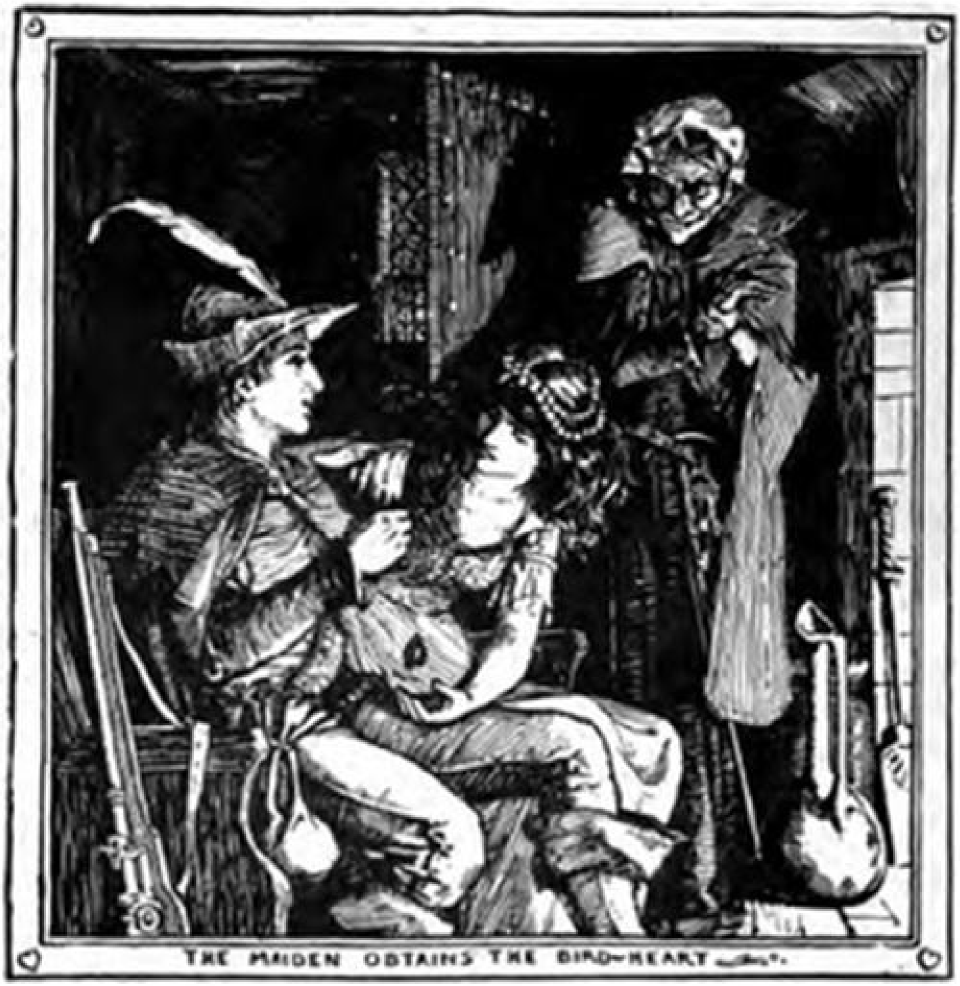

THE MAIDEN OBTAINS THE BIRD-HEART

So she did her mother’s bidding, and, standing one day by the window, she looked away into the far distance as if she were very sad.

‘Why are you standing there looking so sad?’ asked the Hunter.

‘Alas, my love,’ she replied, ‘over there lies the granite mountain where the costly precious stones grow. I have a great longing to go there, so that when I think of it I am very sad. For who can fetch them? Only the birds who fly; a man, never.’

‘If you have no other trouble,’ said the Hunter, ‘that one I can easily remove from your heart.’

So he wrapped her round in his cloak and wished themselves to the granite mountain, and in an instant there they were, sitting on it! The precious stones sparkled so brightly on all sides that it was a pleasure to see them, and they collected the most beautiful and costly together. But now the old witch had through her witchcraft caused the Hunter’s eyes to become heavy.

He said to the maiden, ‘We will sit down for a little while and rest; I am so tired that I can hardly stand on my feet.’

So they sat down, and he laid his head on her lap and fell asleep. As soon as he was sound asleep she unfastened the cloak from his shoulders, threw it on her own, left the granite and stones, and wished herself home again.

But when the Hunter had finished his sleep and awoke, he found that his love had betrayed him and left him alone on the wild mountain. ‘Oh,’ said he, ‘why is faithlessness so great in the world?’ and he sat down in sorrow and trouble, not knowing what to do.

But the mountain belonged to fierce and huge giants, who lived on it and traded there, and he had not sat long before he saw three of them striding towards him. So he lay down as if he had fallen into a deep sleep.

The giants came up, and the first pushed him with his foot, and said, ‘What sort of an earthworm is that?’

The second said, ‘Crush him dead.’

But the third said contemptuously, ‘It is not worth the trouble! Let him live; he cannot remain here, and if he goes higher up the mountain the clouds will take him and carry him off.’

Talking thus they went away. But the Hunter had listened to their talk, and as soon as they had gone he rose and climbed to the summit. When he had sat there a little while a cloud swept by, and, seizing him, carried him away. It travelled for a time in the sky, and then it sank down and hovered over a large vegetable garden surrounded by walls, so that he came safely to the ground amidst cabbages and vegetables. The Hunter then looked about him, saying, ‘If only I had something to eat! I am so hungry, and it will go badly with me in the future, for I see here not an apple or pear or fruit of any kind — nothing but vegetables everywhere.’ At last he thought, ‘At a pinch I can eat a salad; it does not taste particularly nice, but it will refresh me.’ So he looked about for a good head and ate it, but no sooner had he swallowed a couple of mouthfuls than he felt very strange, and found himself wonderfully changed. Four legs began to grow on him, a thick head, and two long ears, and he saw with horror that he had changed into a donkey. But as he was still very hungry and this juicy salad tasted very good to his present nature, he went on eating with a still greater appetite. At last he got hold of another kind of cabbage, but scarcely had swallowed it when he felt another change, and he once more regained his human form.

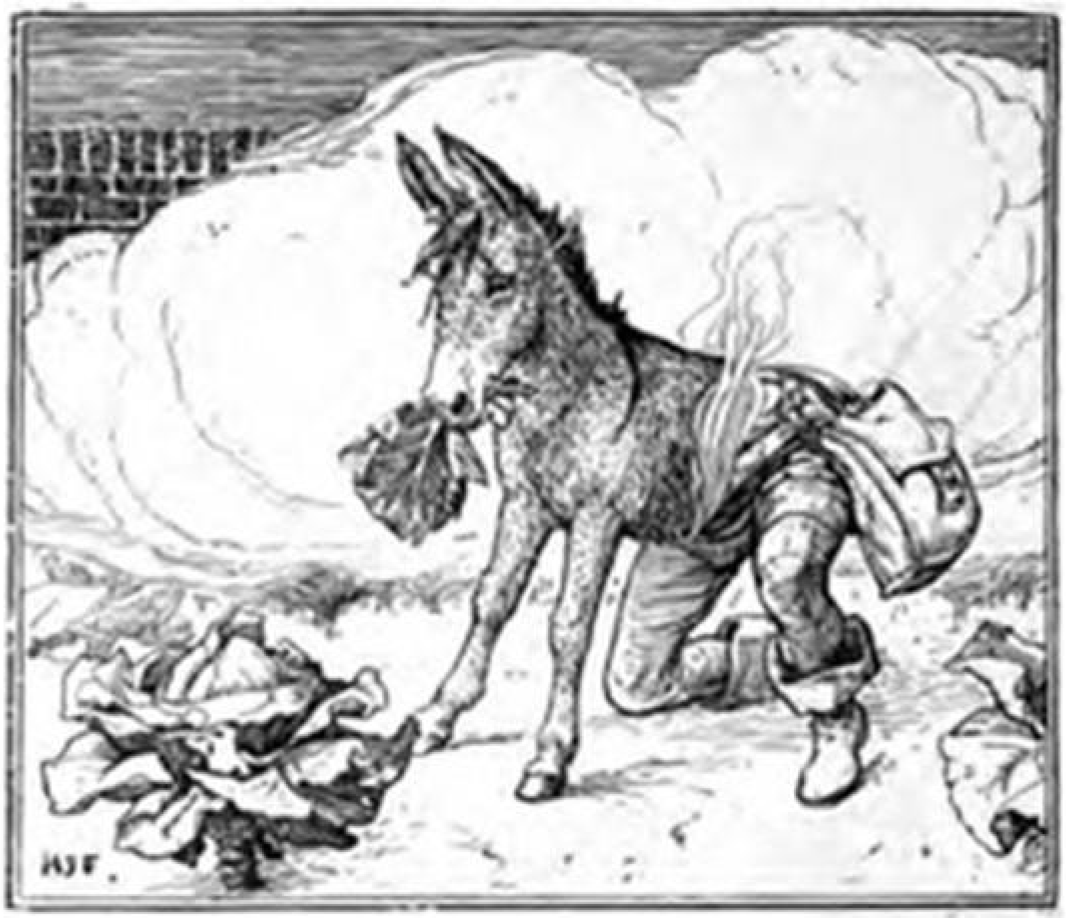

The hunter is transformed into a donkey

The Hunter now lay down and slept off his weariness. When he awoke the next morning he broke off a head of the bad and a head of the good cabbage, thinking, ‘This will help me to regain my own, and to punish faithlessness.’ Then he put the heads in his pockets, climbed the wall, and started off to seek the castle of his love. When he had wandered about for a couple of days he found it quite easily. He then browned his face quickly, so that his own mother would not have known him, and went into the castle, where he begged for a lodging.

‘I am so tired,’ he said, ‘I can go no farther.’

The witch asked, ‘Countryman, who are you, and what is your business?’

He answered, ‘I am a messenger of the King, and have been sent to seek the finest salad that grows under the sun. I have been so lucky as to find it, and am bringing it with me; but the heat of the sun is so great that the tender cabbage threatens to grow soft, and I do not know if I shall be able to bring it any farther.’

When the old witch heard of the fine salad she wanted to eat it, and said, ‘Dear countryman, just let me taste the wonderful salad.’

‘Why not?’ he answered; ‘I have brought two heads with me, and will give you one.’

So saying, he opened his sack and gave her the bad one. The witch suspected no evil, and her mouth watered to taste the new dish, so that she went into the kitchen to prepare it herself. When it was ready she could not wait till it was served at the table, but she immediately took a couple of leaves and put them in her mouth. No sooner, however, had she swallowed them than she lost human form, and ran into the courtyard in the shape of a donkey.

Now the servant came into the kitchen, and when she saw the salad standing there ready cooked she was about to carry it up, but on the way, according to her old habit, she tasted it and ate a couple of leaves. Immediately the charm worked, and she became a donkey, and ran out to join the old witch, and the dish with the salad in it fell to the ground. In the meantime, the messenger was sitting with the lovely maiden, and as no one came with the salad, and she wanted very much to taste it, she said, ‘I don’t know where the salad is.’

Then thought the Hunter, ‘The cabbage must have already begun to work.’ And he said, ‘I will go to the kitchen and fetch it myself.’

When he came there he saw the two donkeys running about in the courtyard, but the salad was lying on the ground.

‘That’s all right,’ said he; ‘two have had their share!’ And lifting the remaining leaves up, he laid them on the dish and brought them to the maiden.

‘I am bringing you the delicious food my own self,’ he said, ‘so that you need not wait any longer.’

Then she ate, and, as the others had done, she at once lost her human form, and ran as a donkey into the yard.

When the Hunter had washed his face, so that the changed ones might know him, he went into the yard, saying, ‘Now you shall receive a reward for your faithlessness.’

He tied them all three with a rope, and drove them away till he came to a mill. He knocked at the window, and the miller put his head out and asked what he wanted.

‘I have three tiresome animals,’ he answered, ‘which I don’t want to keep any longer. If you will take them, give them food and stabling, and do as I tell you with them, I will pay you as much as you want.’

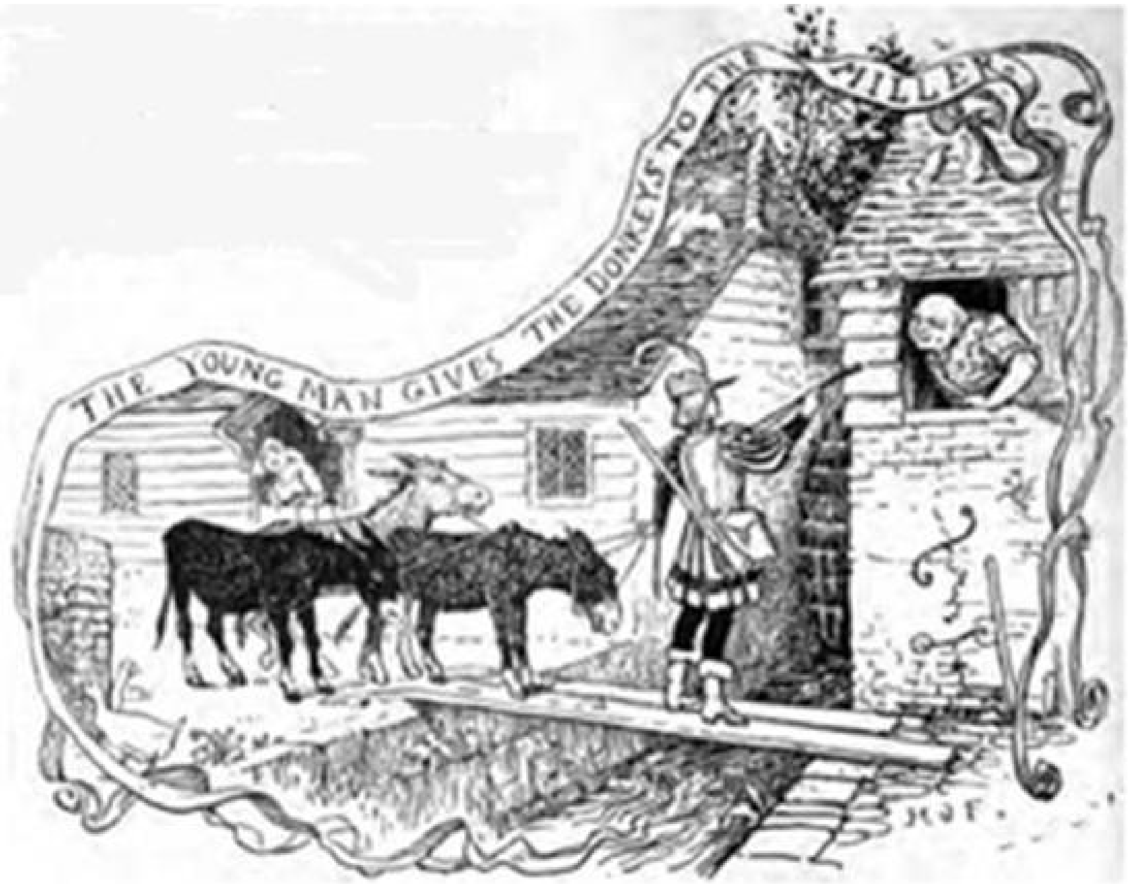
THE YOUNG MAN GIVES THE DONKEYS TO THE MILLER

The miller replied, ‘Why not? What shall I do with them?’

Then the Hunter said that to the old donkey, which was the witch, three beatings and one meal; to the younger one, which was the servant, one beating and three meals; and to the youngest one, which was the maiden, no beating and three meals; for he could not find it in his heart to let the maiden be beaten.

Then he went back into the castle, and he found there all that he wanted. After a couple of days the miller came and said that he must tell him that the old donkey which was to have three beatings and only one meal had died. ‘The two others,’ he added, ‘are certainly not dead, and get their three meals every day, but they are so sad that they cannot last much longer.’

Then the Hunter took pity on them, laid aside his anger, and told the miller to drive them back again. And when they came he gave them some of the good cabbage to eat, so that they became human again. Then the beautiful maiden fell on her knees before him, saying, ‘Oh, my dearest, forgive me the ill I have done you! My mother compelled me to do it; it was against my will, for I love you dearly. Your wishing-cloak is hanging in a cupboard, and as for the bird-heart I will make a drink and give it back to you.’

But he changed his mind, and said, ‘Keep it; it makes no difference, for I will take you to be my own dear true wife.'

And the wedding was celebrated, and they lived happy together till death.

THE LITTLE GREEN FROG

In a part of the world whose name I forget lived once upon a time two kings, called Peridor and Diamantino. They were cousins as well as neighbours, and both were under the protection of the fairies; though it is only fair to say that the fairies did not love them half so well as their wives did.

Now it often happens that as princes can generally manage to get their own way it is harder for them to be good than it is for common people. So it was with Peridor and Diamantino; but of the two, the fairies declared that Diamantino was much the worst; indeed, he behaved so badly to his wife Aglantino, that the fairies would not allow him to live any longer; and he died, leaving behind him a little daughter. As she was an only child, of course this little girl was the heiress of the kingdom, but, being still only a baby, her mother, the widow of Diamantino, was proclaimed regent. The Queen-dowager was wise and good, and tried her best to make her people happy. The only thing she had to vex her was the absence of her daughter; for the fairies, for reasons of their own, determined to bring up the little Princess Serpentine among themselves.

As to the other King, he was really fond of his wife, Queen Constance, but he often grieved her by his thoughtless ways, and in order to punish him for his carelessness, the fairies caused her to die quite suddenly. When she was gone the King felt how much he had loved her, and his grief was so great (though he never neglected his duties) that his subjects called him Peridor the Sorrowful. It seems hardly possible that any man should live like Peridor for fifteen years plunged in such depth of grief, and most likely he would have died too if it had not been for the fairies.

The one comfort the poor King had was his son, Prince Saphir, who was only three years old at the time of his mother’s death, and great care was given to his education. By the time he was fifteen Saphir had learnt everything that a prince should know, and he was, besides, charming and agreeable.

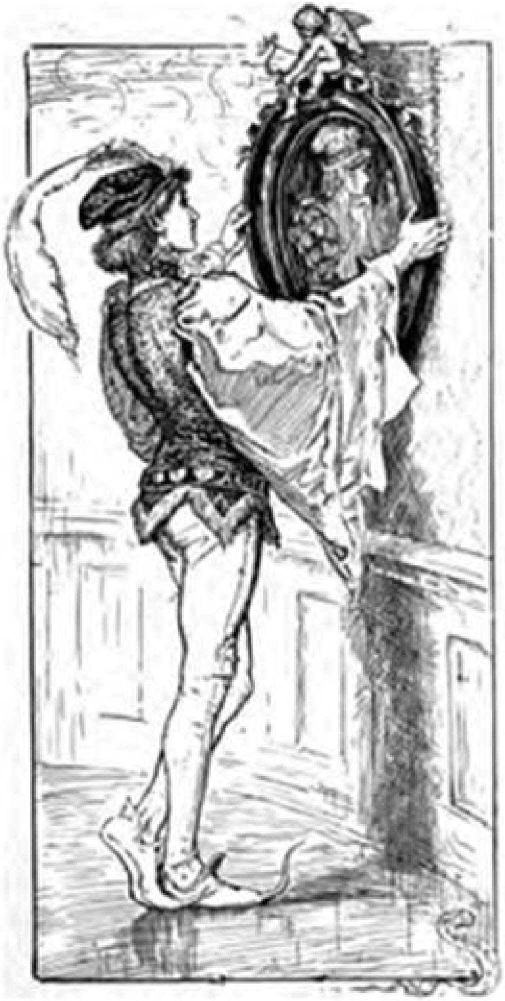

It was about this time that the fairies suddenly took fright lest his love for his father should interfere with the plans they had made for the young prince. So, to prevent this, they placed in a pretty little room of which Saphir was very fond a little mirror in a black frame, such as were often brought from Venice. The Prince did not notice for some days that there was anything new in the room, but at last he perceived it, and went up to look at it more closely. What was his surprise to see reflected in the mirror, not his own face, but that of a young girl as lovely as the morning! And, better still, every movement of the girl, just growing out of childhood, was also reflected in the wonderful glass.

As might have been expected, the young Prince lost his heart completely to the beautiful image, and it was impossible to get him out of the room, so busy was he in watching the lovely unknown. Certainly it was very delightful to be able to see her whom he loved at any moment he chose, but his spirits sometimes sank when he wondered what was to be the end of this adventure.

The magic mirror had been for about a year in the Prince’s possession, when one day a new subject of disquiet seized upon him. As usual, he was engaged in looking at the girl, when suddenly he thought he saw a second mirror reflected in the first, exactly like his own, and with the same power. And in this he was perfectly right. The young girl had only possessed it for a short time, and neglected all her duties for the sake of the mirror. Now it was not difficult for Saphir to guess the reason of the change in her, nor why the new mirror was consulted so often; but try as he would he could never see the face of the person who was reflected in it, for the young girl's figure always came between. All he knew was that the face was that of a man, and this was quite enough to make him madly jealous. This was the doing of the fairies, and we must suppose that they had their reasons for acting as they did.

When these things happened Saphir was about eighteen years old, and fifteen years had passed away since the death of his mother. King Peridor had grown more and more unhappy as time went on, and at last he fell so ill that it seemed as if his days were numbered. He was so much beloved by his subjects that this sad news was heard with despair by the nation, and more than all by the Prince.

During his whole illness the King never spoke of anything but the Queen, his sorrow at having grieved her, and his hope of one day seeing her again. All the doctors and all the water-cures in the kingdom had been tried, and nothing would do him any good. At last he persuaded them to let him lie quietly in his room, where no one came to trouble him.

Perhaps the worst pain he had to bear was a sort of weight on his chest, which made it very hard for him to breathe. So he commanded his servants to leave the windows open in order that he might get more air. One day, when he had been left alone for a few minutes, a bird with brilliant plumage came and fluttered round the window, and finally rested on the sill. His feathers were sky-blue and gold, his feet and his beak of such glittering rubies that no one could bear to look at them, his eyes made the brightest diamonds look dull, and on his head he wore a crown. I cannot tell you what the crown was made of, but I am quite certain that it was still more splendid than all the rest. As to his voice I can say nothing about that, for the bird never sang at all. In fact, he did nothing but gaze steadily at the King, and as he gazed, the King felt his strength come back to him. In a little while the bird flew into the room, still with his eyes fixed on the King, and at every glance the strength of the sick man became greater, till he was once more as well as he used to be before the Queen died. Filled with joy at his cure, he tried to seize the bird to whom he owed it all, but, swifter than a swallow, it managed to avoid him. In vain he described the bird to his attendants, who rushed at his first call; in vain they sought the wonderful creature both on horse and foot, and summoned the fowlers to their aid: the bird could nowhere be found. The love the people bore King Peridor was so strong, and the reward he promised was so large, that in the twinkling of an eye every man, woman, and child had fled into the fields, and the towns were quite empty.

All this bustle, however, ended in nothing but confusion, and, what was worse, the King soon fell back into the same condition as he was in before. Prince Saphir, who loved his father very dearly, was so unhappy at this that he persuaded himself that he might succeed where the others had failed, and at once prepared himself for a more distant search. In spite of the opposition he met with, he rode away, followed by his household, trusting to chance to help him. He had formed no plan, and there was no reason that he should choose one path more than another. His only idea was to make straight for those spots which were the favourite haunts of birds. But in vain he examined all the hedges and all the thickets; in vain he questioned everyone he met along the road. The more he sought the less he found.

At last he came to one of the largest forests in all the world, composed entirely of cedars. But in spite of the deep shadows cast by the wide-spreading branches of the trees, the grass underneath was soft and green, and covered with the rarest flowers. It seemed to Saphir that this was exactly the place where the birds would choose to live, and he determined not to quit the wood until he had examined it from end to end. And he did more. He ordered some nets to be prepared and painted of the same colours as the bird’s plumage, thinking that we are all easily caught by what is like ourselves. In this he had to help him not only the fowlers by profession, but also his attendants, who excelled in this art. For a man is not a courtier unless he can do everything.

After searching as usual for nearly a whole day Prince Saphir began to feel overcome with thirst. He was too tired to go any farther, when happily he discovered a little way off a bubbling fountain of the clearest water. Being an experienced traveller, he drew from his pocket a little cup (without which no one should ever take a journey), and was just about to dip it in the water, when a lovely little green frog, much prettier than frogs generally are, jumped into the cup. Far from admiring its beauty, Saphir shook it impatiently off; but it was no good, for quick as lightning the frog jumped back again. Saphir, who was raging with thirst, was just about to shake it off anew, when the little creature fixed upon him the most beautiful eyes in the world, and said, ‘I am a friend of the bird you are seeking, and when you have quenched your thirst listen to me.’

So the Prince drank his fill, and then, by the command of the Little Green Frog, he lay down on the grass to rest himself.

‘Now,’ she began, ‘be sure you do exactly in every respect what I tell you. First you must call together your attendants, and order them to remain in a little hamlet close by until you want them. Then go, quite alone, down a road that you will find on your right hand, looking southwards. This road is planted all the way with cedars of Lebanon; and after going down it a long way you will come at last to a magnificent castle. And now,’ she went on, ‘attend carefully to what I am going to say. Take this tiny grain of sand, and put it into the ground as close as you can to the gate of the castle. It has the virtue both of opening the gate and also of sending to sleep all the inhabitants. Then go at once to the stable, and pay no heed to anything except what I tell you. Choose the handsomest of all the horses, leap quickly on its back, and come to me as fast as you can. Farewell, Prince; I wish you good luck,’ and with these words the Little Frog plunged into the water and disappeared.

The Prince, who felt more hopeful than he had done since he left home, did precisely as he had been ordered. He left his attendants in the hamlet, found the road the frog had described to him, and followed it all alone, and at last he arrived at the gate of the castle, which was even more splendid than he had expected, for it was built of crystal, and all its ornaments were of massive gold. However, he had no thoughts to spare for its beauty, and quickly buried his grain of sand in the earth. In one instant the gates flew open, and all the dwellers inside fell sound asleep. Saphir flew straight to the stable, and already had his hand on the finest horse it contained, when his eye was caught by a suit of magnificent harness hanging up close by. It occurred to him directly that the harness belonged to the horse, and without ever thinking of harm (for indeed he who steals a horse can hardly be blamed for taking his saddle), he hastily placed it on the animal’s back. Suddenly the people in the castle became broad awake, and rushed to the stable. They flung themselves on the Prince, seized him, and dragged him before their lord; but, luckily for the Prince, who could only find very lame excuses for his conduct, the lord of the castle took a fancy to his face, and let him depart without further questions.

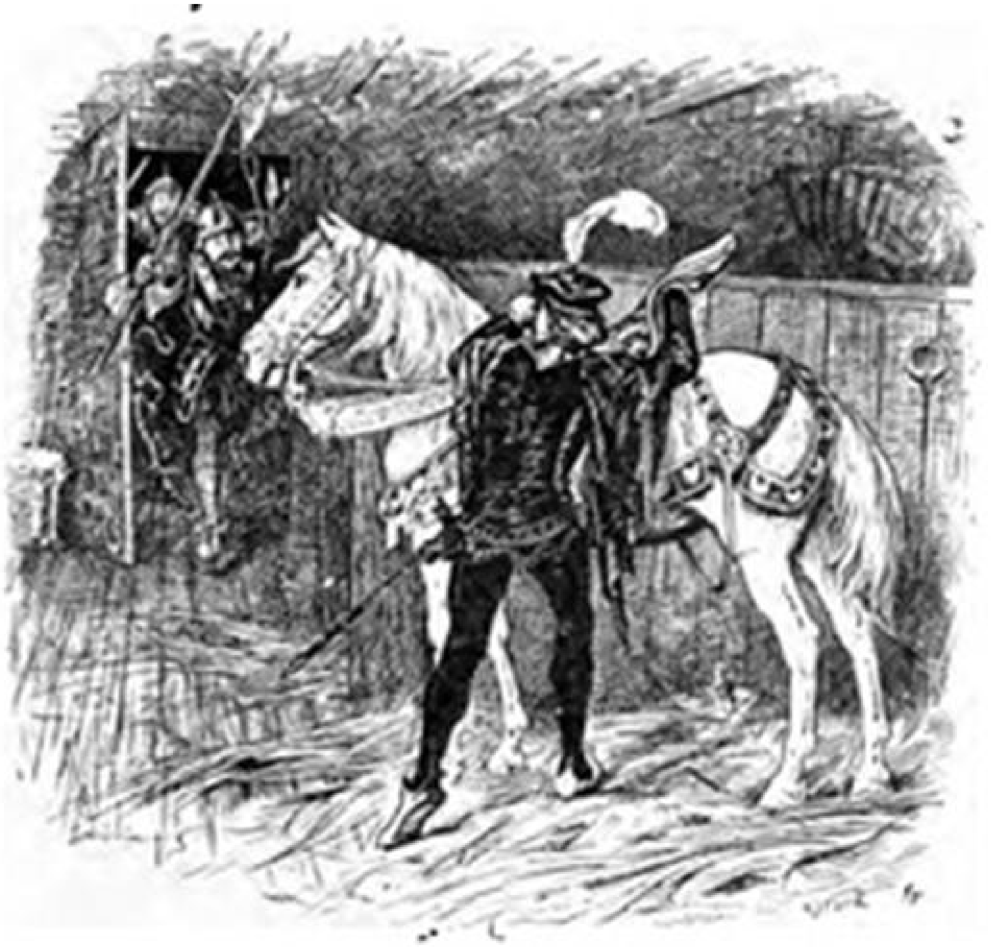

Prince Saphir steals the horse and harness

Very sad, and very much ashamed of himself poor Saphir crept back to the fountain, where the Frog was awaiting him with a good scolding.

‘Whom do you take me for?’ she exclaimed angrily. ‘Do you really believe that it was just for the pleasure of talking that I gave you the advice you have neglected so abominably?’

But the Prince was so deeply grieved, and apologised so very humbly, that after some time the heart of the good little Frog was softened, and she gave him another tiny little grain, but instead of being sand it was now a grain of gold. She directed him to do just as he had done before, with only this difference, that instead of going to the stable which had been the ruin of his hopes, he was to enter right into the castle itself, and to glide as fast as he could down the passages till he came to a room filled with perfume, where he would find a beautiful maiden asleep on a bed. He was to wake the maiden instantly and carry her off, and to be sure not to pay any heed to whatever resistance she might make.

The Prince obeyed the Frog’s orders one by one, and all went well for this second time also. The gate opened, the inhabitants fell sound asleep, and he walked down the passage till he found the girl on her bed, exactly as he had been told he would. He woke her, and begged her firmly, but politely, to follow him quickly. After a little persuasion the maiden consented, but only on condition that she was allowed first to put on her dress. This sounded so reasonable and natural that it did not enter the Prince's head to refuse her request.

But the maiden's hand had hardly touched the dress when the palace suddenly awoke from its sleep, and the Prince was seized and bound. He was so vexed with his own folly, and so taken aback at the disaster, that he did not attempt to explain his conduct, and things would have gone badly with him if his friends the fairies had not softened the hearts of his captors, so that they once more allowed him to leave quietly. However, what troubled him most was the idea of having to meet the Frog who had been his benefactress. How was he ever to appear before her with this tale? Still, after a long struggle with himself, he made up his mind that there was nothing else to be done, and that he deserved whatever she might say to him. And she said a great deal, for she had worked herself into a terrible passion; but the Prince humbly implored her pardon, and ventured to point out that it would have been very hard to refuse the young lady's reasonable request. 'You must learn to do as you are told,' was all the Frog would reply.

But poor Saphir was so unhappy, and begged so hard for forgiveness, that at last the Frog's anger gave way, and she held up to him a tiny diamond stone. 'Go back,' she said, 'to the castle, and bury this little diamond close to the door. But be careful not to return to the stable or to the bedroom; they have proved too fatal to you. Walk straight to the garden and enter through a portico, into a small green wood, in the midst of which is a tree with a trunk of gold and leaves of emeralds. Perched on this tree you will see the beautiful bird you have been seeking so long. You must cut the branch on which it is sitting, and bring it back to me without delay. But I warn you solemnly that if you disobey my directions, as you have done twice before, you have nothing more to expect either of me or anyone else.'

With these words she jumped into the water, and the Prince, who had taken her threats much to heart, took his departure, firmly resolved not to deserve them. He found it all just as he had been told: the portico, the wood, the magnificent tree, and the beautiful bird, which was sleeping soundly on one of the branches. He speedily lopped off the branch, and though he noticed a splendid golden cage hanging close by, which would have been very useful for the bird to travel in, he left it alone, and came back to the fountain, holding his breath and walking on tip-toe all the way, for fear lest he should awake his prize.

But what was his surprise, when instead of finding the fountain in the spot where he had left it, he saw in its place a little rustic palace built in the best taste, and standing in the doorway a charming maiden, at whose sight his mind seemed to give way.

‘What! Madam!’ he cried, hardly knowing what he said. ‘What! Is it you?’

The maiden blushed and answered: ‘Ah, my lord, it is long since I first beheld your face, but I did not think you had ever seen mine.’

‘Oh, madam,’ replied he, ‘you can never guess the days and the hours I have passed lost in admiration of you.’ And after these words they each related all the strange things that had happened, and the more they talked the more they felt convinced of the truth of the images they had seen in their mirrors. After some time spent in the most tender conversation, the Prince could not restrain himself from asking the lovely unknown by what lucky chance she was wandering in the forest; where the fountain had gone; and if she knew anything of the Frog to whom he owed all his happiness, and to whom he must give up the bird, which, somehow or other, was still sound asleep.

‘Ah, my lord,’ she replied, with rather an awkward air, ‘as to the Frog, she stands before you. Let me tell you my story; it is not a long one. I know neither my country nor my parents, and the only thing I can say for certain is that I am called Serpentine. The fairies, who have taken care of me ever since I was born, wished me to be in ignorance as to my family, but they have looked after my education, and have bestowed on me endless kindness. I have always lived in seclusion, and for the last two years I have wished for nothing better. I had a mirror’ — here shyness and embarrassment choked her words — but regaining her self-control, she added, ‘You know that fairies insist on being obeyed without questioning. It was they who changed the little house you saw before you into the fountain for which you are now asking, and, having turned me into a frog, they ordered me to say to the first person who came to the fountain exactly what I repeated to you. But, my lord, when you stood before me, it was agony to my heart, filled as it was with thoughts of you, to appear to your eyes under so monstrous a form. However, there was no help for it, and, painful as it was, I had to submit. I desired your success with all my soul, not only for your own sake, but also for my own, because I could not get back my proper shape till you had become master of the beautiful bird, though I am quite ignorant as to your reason for seeking it.’

On this Saphir explained about the state of his father’s health, and all that has been told before.

On hearing this story Serpentine grew very sad, and her lovely eyes filled with tears.

‘Ah, my lord,’ she said, ‘you know nothing of me but what you have seen in the mirror; and I, who cannot even name my parents, learn that you are a king’s son.’

In vain Saphir declared that love made them equal; Serpentine would only reply: ‘I love you too much to allow you to marry beneath your rank. I shall be very unhappy, of course, but I shall never alter my mind. If I do not find from the fairies that my birth is worthy of you, then, whatever be my feelings, I will never accept your hand.’

The conversation was at this point, and bid fair to last some time longer, when one of the fairies appeared in her ivory car, accompanied by a beautiful woman past her early youth. At this moment the bird suddenly awakened, and, flying on to Saphir’s shoulder (which it never afterwards left), began fondling him as well as a bird can do. The fairy told Serpentine that she was quite satisfied with her conduct, and made herself very agreeable to Saphir, whom she presented to the lady she had brought with her, explaining that the lady was no other than his Aunt Aglantine, widow of Diamantino.

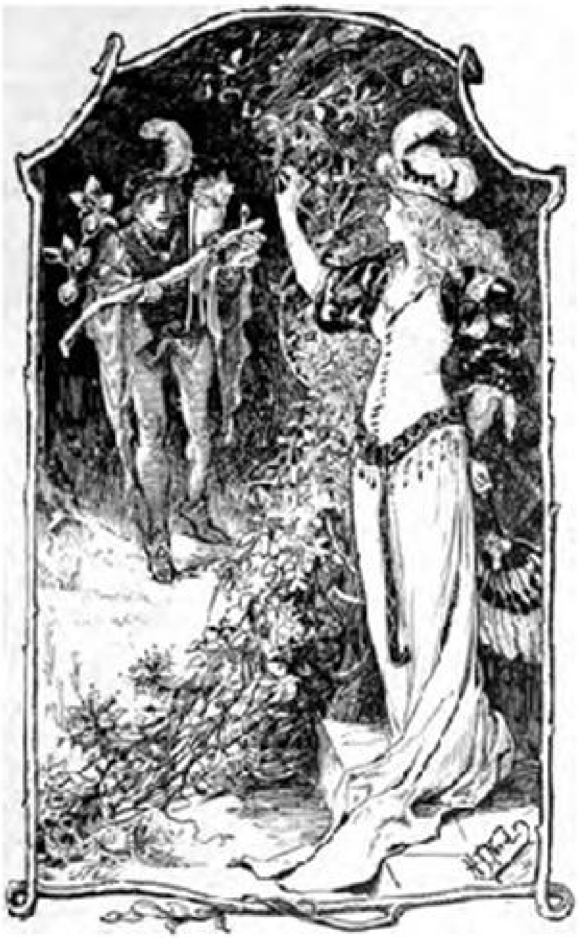

'STANDING IN THE DOORWAY A CHARMING MAIDEN AT WHOSE SIGHT HIS MIND SEEMED TO GIVE WAY'

Then they all fell into each other’s arms, till the fairy mounted her chariot, placed Aglantine by her side, and Saphir and Serpentine on the front seat. She also sent a message to the Prince’s attendants that they might travel slowly back to the Court of King Peridor, and that the beautiful bird had really been found. This matter being comfortably arranged, she started off her chariot. But in spite of the swiftness with which they flew through the air, the time passed even quicker for Saphir and Serpentine, who had so much to think about.

They were still quite confused with the pleasure of seeing each other, when the chariot arrived at King Peridor’s palace. He had had himself carried to a room on the roof, where his nurses thought that he would die at any moment. Directly the chariot drew within sight of the castle the beautiful bird took flight, and, making straight for the dying King, at once cured him of his sickness. Then she resumed her natural shape, and he found that the bird was no other than the Queen Constance, whom he had long believed to be dead. Peridor was rejoiced to embrace his wife and his son once more, and with the help of the fairies began to make preparations for the marriage of Saphir and Serpentine, who turned out to be the daughter of Aglantine and Diamantino, and as much a princess as he was a prince. The people of the kingdom were delighted, and everybody lived happy and contented to the end of their lives.

THE SEVEN-HEADED SERPENT

Once upon a time there was a king who determined to take a long voyage. He assembled his fleet and all the seamen, and set out. They went straight on night and day, until they came to an island which was covered with large trees, and under every tree lay a lion. As soon as the King had landed his men, the lions all rose up together and tried to devour them. After a long battle they managed to overcome the wild beasts, but the greater number of the men were killed. Those who remained alive now went on through the forest and found on the other side of it a beautiful garden, in which all the plants of the world flourished together. There were also in the garden three springs: the first flowed with silver, the second with gold, and the third with pearls. The men unbuckled their knapsacks and filled them with those precious things. In the middle of the garden they found a large lake, and when they reached the edge of it the Lake began to speak, and said to them, ‘What men are you, and what brings you here? Are you come to visit our king?’ But they were too much frightened to answer.

Then the Lake said, ‘You do well to be afraid, for it is at your peril that you are come hither. Our king, who has seven heads, is now asleep, but in a few minutes he will wake up and come to me to take his bath! Woe to anyone who meets him in the garden, for it is impossible to escape from him. This is what you must do if you wish to save your lives. Take off your clothes and spread them on the path which leads from here to the castle. The King will then glide over something soft, which he likes very much, and he will be so pleased with that that he will not devour you. He will give you some punishment, but then he will let you go.’

The men did as the Lake advised them, and waited for a time. At noon the earth began to quake, and opened in many places, and out of the openings appeared lions, tigers, and other wild beasts, which surrounded the castle, and thousands and thousands of beasts came out of the castle following their king, the Seven-headed Serpent. The Serpent glided over the clothes which were spread for him, came to the Lake, and asked it who had strewed those soft things on the path? The Lake answered that it had been done by people who had come to do him homage. The King commanded that the men should be brought before him. They came humbly on their knees, and in a few words told him their story. Then he spoke to them with a mighty and terrible voice, and said, ‘Because you have dared to come here, I lay upon you the punishment. Every year you must bring me from among your people twelve youths and twelve maidens, that I may devour them. If you do not do this, I will destroy your whole nation.’

Then he desired one of his beasts to show the men the way out of the garden, and dismissed them. They then left the island and went back to their own country, where they related what had happened to them. Soon the time came round when the king of the beasts would expect the youths and maidens to be brought to him. The King therefore issued a proclamation inviting twelve youths and twelve maidens to offer themselves up to save their country; and immediately many young people, far more than enough, hastened to do so. A new ship was built, and set with black sails, and in it the youths and maidens who were appointed for the king of the beasts embarked and set out for his country. When they arrived there they went at once to the Lake, and this time the lions did not stir, nor did the springs flow, and neither did the Lake speak. So they waited then, and it was not long before the earth quaked even more terribly than the first time. The Seven-headed Serpent came without his train of beasts, saw his prey waiting for him, and devoured it at one mouthful. Then the ship’s crew returned home, and the same thing happened yearly until many years had passed.

Now the King of this unhappy country was growing old, and so was the Queen, and they had no children. One day the Queen was sitting at the window weeping bitterly because she was childless, and knew that the crown would therefore pass to strangers after the King’s death. Suddenly a little old woman appeared before her, holding an apple in her hand, and said, ‘Why do you weep, my Queen, and what makes you so unhappy?’

‘Alas, good mother,’ answered the Queen, ‘I am unhappy because I have no children.’

‘Is that what vexes you?’ said the old woman. ‘Listen to me. I am a nun from the *Spinning Convent* and my mother when she died left me this apple. Whoever eats this apple shall have a child.’

The Queen gave money to the old woman, and bought the apple from her. Then she peeled it, ate it, and threw the rind out of the window, and it so happened that a mare that was running loose in the court below ate up the rind. After a time the Queen had a little boy, and the mare also had a male foal. The boy and the foal grew up together and loved each other like brothers. In course of time the King died, and so did the Queen, and their son, who was now nineteen years old, was left alone. One day, when he and his horse were talking together, the Horse said to him, ‘Listen to me, for I love you and wish for your good and that of the country. If you go on every year sending twelve youths and twelve maidens to the King of the Beasts, your country will very soon be ruined. Mount upon my back: I will take you to a woman who can direct you how to kill the Seven-headed Serpent.'

Then the youth mounted his horse, who carried him far away to a mountain which was hollow, for in its side was a great underground cavern. In the cavern sat an old woman spinning. This was the cloister of the nuns, and the old woman was the Abbess. They all spent their time in spinning, and that is why the convent has this name. All round the walls of the cavern there were beds cut out of the solid rock, upon which the nuns slept, and in the middle a light was burning. It was the duty of the nuns to watch the light in turns, that it might never go out, and if anyone of them let it go out the others put her to death.

As soon as the King's son saw the old Abbess spinning he threw himself at her feet and entreated her to tell him how he could kill the Seven-headed Serpent.

She made the youth rise, embraced him, and said, 'Know, my son, that it is I who sent the nun to your mother and caused you to be born, and with you the horse, with whose help you will be able to free the world from the monster. I will tell you what you have to do. Load your horse with cotton, and go by a secret passage which I will show you, which is hidden from the wild beasts, to the Serpent's palace. You will find the King asleep upon his bed, which is all hung round with bells, and over his bed you will see a sword hanging. With this sword only it is possible to kill the Serpent, because even if its blade breaks a new one will grow again for every head the monster has. Thus you will be able to cut off all his seven heads. And this you must also do in order to deceive the King: you must slip into his bed-chamber very softly, and stop up all the bells which are round his bed with cotton. Then take down the sword gently, and quickly give the monster a blow on his tail with it. This will make him waken up, and if he catches sight of you he will seize you. But you must quickly cut off his first head, and then wait till the next one comes up. Then strike it off also, and so go on till you have cut off all his seven heads.'

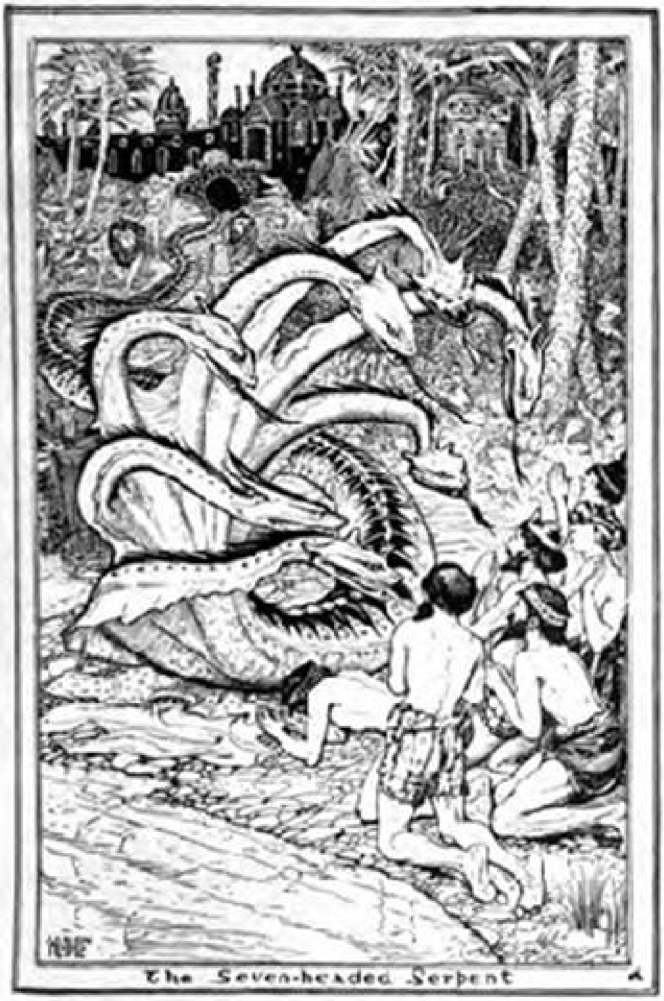

The Seven-headed Serpent

The old Abbess then gave the Prince her blessing, and he set out upon his enterprise, arrived at the Serpent’s castle by following the secret passage which she had shown him, and by carefully attending to all her directions he happily succeeded in killing the monster. As soon as the wild beasts heard of their king’s death, they all hastened to the castle, but the youth had long since mounted his horse and was already far out of their reach. They pursued him as fast as they could, but they found it impossible to overtake him, and he reached home in safety. Thus he freed his country from this terrible oppression.

THE GRATEFUL BEASTS

There was once upon a time a man and woman who had three fine-looking sons, but they were so poor that they had hardly enough food for themselves, let alone their children. So the sons determined to set out into the world and to try their luck. Before starting their mother gave them each a loaf of bread and her blessing, and having taken a tender farewell of her and their father the three set forth on their travels.

The youngest of the three brothers, whose name was Ferko, was a beautiful youth, with a splendid figure, blue eyes, fair hair, and a complexion like milk and roses. His two brothers were as jealous of him as they could be, for they thought that with his good looks he would be sure to be more fortunate than they would ever be.

One day all the three were sitting resting under a tree, for the sun was hot and they were tired of walking. Ferko fell fast asleep, but the other two remained awake, and the eldest said to the second brother, ‘What do you say to doing our brother Ferko some harm? He is so beautiful that everyone takes a fancy to him, which is more than they do to us. If we could only get him out of the way we might succeed better.’

‘I quite agree with you,’ answered the second brother, ‘and my advice is to eat up his loaf of bread, and then to refuse to give him a bit of ours until he has promised to let us put out his eyes or break his legs.’

His eldest brother was delighted with this proposal, and the two wicked wretches seized Ferko’s loaf and ate it all up, while the poor boy was still asleep.

When he did awake he felt very hungry and turned to eat his bread, but his brothers cried out, ‘You ate your loaf in your sleep, you glutton, and you may starve as long as you like, but you won’t get a scrap of ours.’

Ferko was at a loss to understand how he could have eaten in his sleep, but he said nothing, and fasted all that day and the next night. But on the following morning he was so hungry that he burst into tears, and implored his brothers to give him a little bit of their bread. Then the cruel creatures laughed, and repeated what they had said the day before; but when Ferko continued to beg and beseech them, the eldest said at last, ‘If you will let us put out one of your eyes and break one of your legs, then we will give you a bit of our bread.’

At these words poor Ferko wept more bitterly than before, and bore the torments of hunger till the sun was high in the heavens; then he could stand it no longer, and he consented to allow his left eye to be put out and his left leg to be broken. When this was done he stretched out his hand eagerly for the piece of bread, but his brothers gave him such a tiny scrap that the starving youth finished it in a moment and besought them for a second bit.

But the more Ferko wept and told his brothers that he was dying of hunger, the more they laughed and scolded him for his greed. So he endured the pangs of starvation all that day, but when night came his endurance gave way, and he let his right eye be put out and his right leg broken for a second piece of bread.

After his brothers had thus successfully maimed and disfigured him for life, they left him groaning on the ground and continued their journey without him.

Poor Ferko ate up the scrap of bread they had left him and wept bitterly, but no one heard him or came to his help. Night came on, and the poor blind youth had no eyes to close, and could only crawl along the ground, not knowing in the least where he was going. But when the sun was once more high in the heavens, Ferko felt the blazing heat scorch him, and sought for some cool shady place to rest his aching limbs. He climbed to the top of a hill and lay down in the grass, and as he thought under the shadow of a big tree. But it was no tree he leant against, but a gallows on which two ravens were seated. The one was saying to the other as the weary youth lay down, ‘Is there anything the least wonderful or remarkable about this neighbourhood?’

‘I should just think there was,’ replied the other; ‘many things that don’t exist anywhere else in the world. There is a lake down there below us, and anyone who bathes in it, though he were at death’s door, becomes sound and well on the spot, and those who wash their eyes with the dew on this hill become as sharp-sighted as the eagle, even if they have been blind from their youth.’

‘Well,’ answered the first raven, ‘my eyes are in no want of this healing bath, for, Heaven be praised, they are as good as ever they were; but my wing has been very feeble and weak ever since it was shot by an arrow many years ago, so let us fly at once to the lake that I may be restored to health and strength again.’ And so they flew away.

Their words rejoiced Ferko’s heart, and he waited impatiently till evening should come and he could rub the precious dew on his sightless eyes.

At last it began to grow dusk, and the sun sank behind the mountains; gradually it became cooler on the hill, and the grass grew wet with dew. Then Ferko buried his face in the ground till his eyes were damp with dew-drops, and in a moment he saw clearer than he had ever done in his life before. The moon was shining brightly, and lighted him to the lake where he could bathe his poor broken legs.

Then Ferko crawled to the edge of the lake and dipped his limbs in the water. No sooner had he done so than his legs felt as sound and strong as they had been before, and Ferko thanked the kind fate that had led him to the hill where he had overheard the ravens’ conversation. He filled a bottle with the healing water, and then continued his journey in the best of spirits.

He had not gone far before he met a wolf, who was limping disconsolately along on three legs, and who on perceiving Ferko began to howl dismally.

‘My good friend,’ said the youth, ‘be of good cheer, for I can soon heal your leg,’ and with these words he poured some of the precious water over the wolf’s paw, and in a minute the animal was springing about sound and well on all fours. The grateful creature thanked his benefactor warmly, and promised Ferko to do him a good turn if he should ever need it.

Ferko continued his way till he came to a ploughed field. Here he noticed a little mouse creeping wearily along on its hind paws, for its front paws had both been broken in a trap.

Ferko felt so sorry for the little beast that he spoke to it in the most friendly manner, and washed its small paws with the healing water. In a moment the mouse was sound and whole, and after thanking the kind physician it scampered away over the ploughed furrows.

Ferko again proceeded on his journey, but he hadn’t gone far before a queen bee flew against him, trailing one wing behind her, which had been cruelly torn in two by a big bird. Ferko was no less willing to help her than he had been to help the wolf and the mouse, so he poured some healing drops over the wounded wing. On the spot the queen bee was cured, and turning to Ferko she said, ‘I am most grateful for your kindness, and shall reward you some day.’ And with these words she flew away humming gaily.

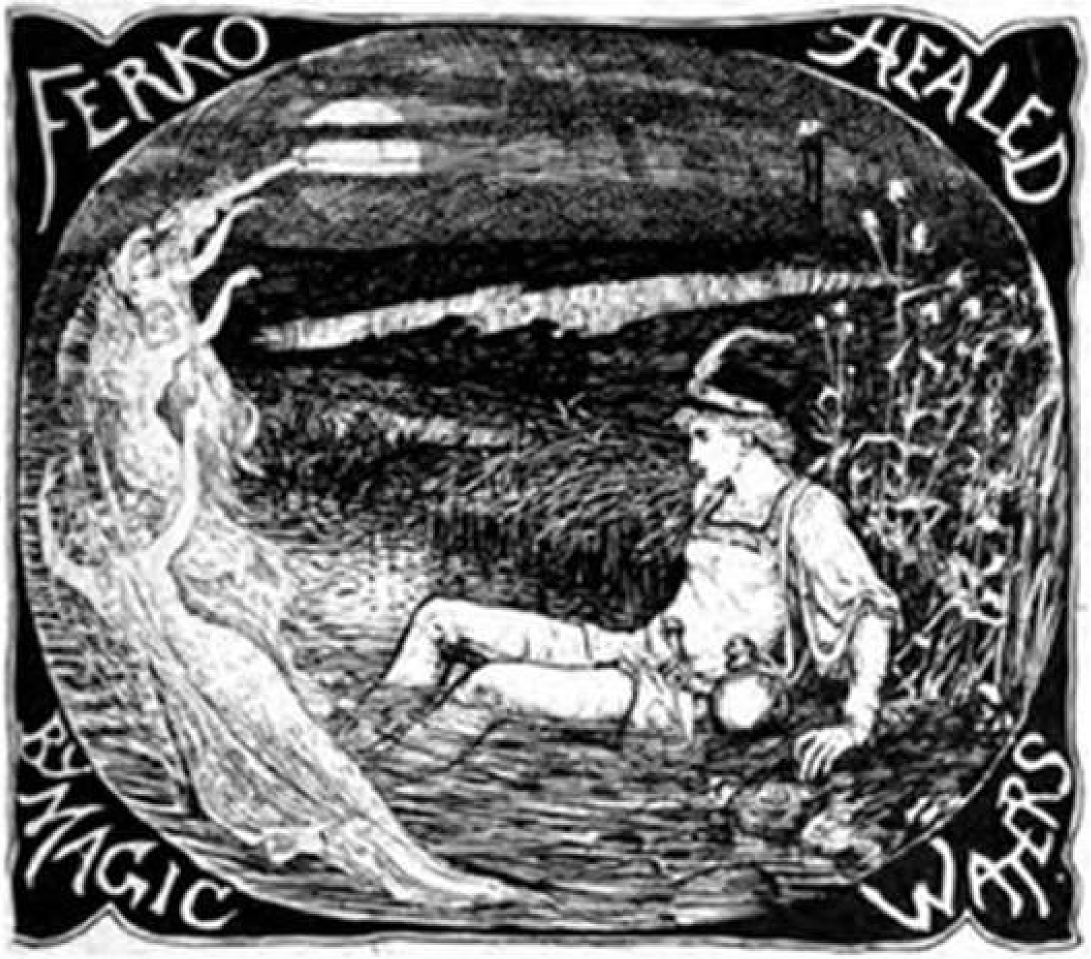

Then Ferko wandered on for many a long day, and at length reached a strange kingdom. Here, he thought to himself, he might as well go straight to the palace and offer his services to the King of the country, for he had heard that the King’s daughter was as beautiful as the day.

So he went to the royal palace, and as he entered the door the first people he saw were his two brothers who had so shamefully ill-treated him. They had managed to obtain places in the King’s service, and when they recognised Ferko with his eyes and legs sound and well they were frightened to death, for they feared he would tell the King of their conduct, and that they would be hung.

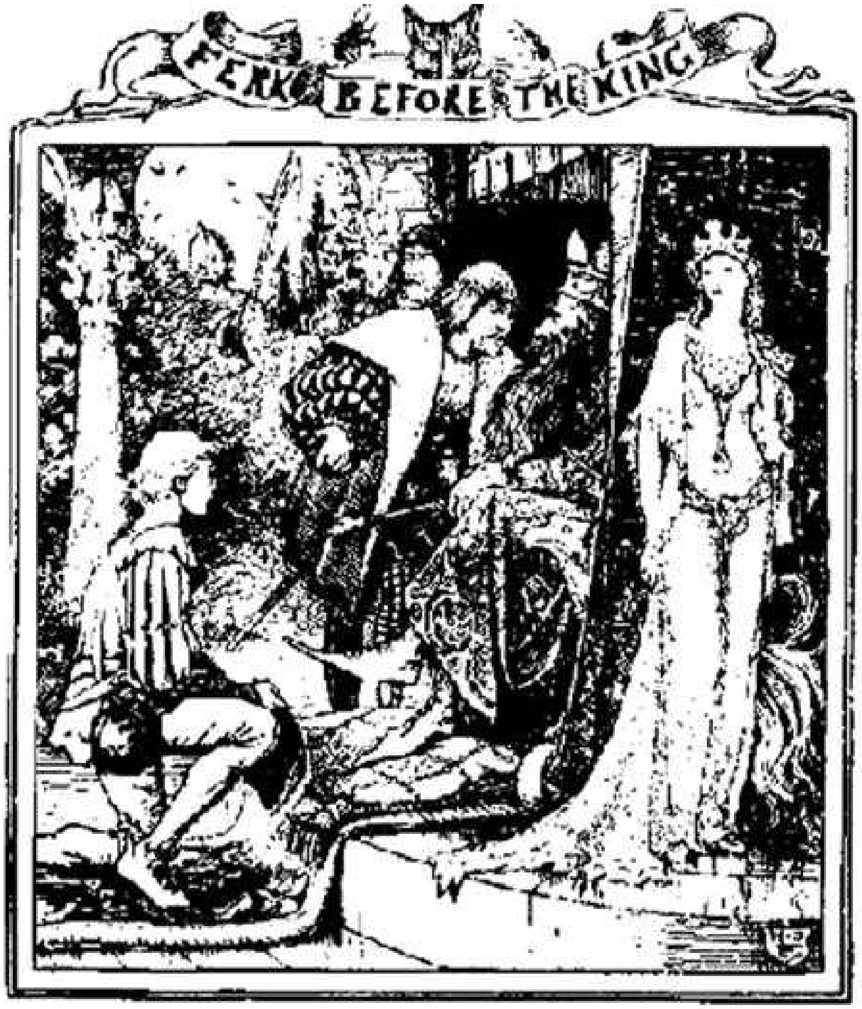

No sooner had Ferko entered the palace than all eyes were turned on the handsome youth, and the King's daughter herself was lost in admiration, for she had never seen anyone so handsome in her life before. His brothers noticed this, and envy and jealousy were added to their fear, so much so that they determined once more to destroy him. They went to the King and told him that Ferko was a wicked magician, who had come to the palace with the intention of carrying off the Princess.

Then the King had Ferko brought before him, and said, 'You are accused of being a magician who wishes to rob me of my daughter, and I condemn you to death; but if you can fulfil three tasks which I shall set you to do your life shall be spared, on condition you leave the country; but if you cannot perform what I demand you shall be hung on the nearest tree.'

And turning to the two wicked brothers he said, 'Suggest something for him to do; no matter how difficult, he must succeed in it or die.'

They did not think long, but replied, 'Let him build your Majesty in one day a more beautiful palace than this, and if he fails in the attempt let him be hung.'

The King was pleased with this proposal, and commanded Ferko to set to work on the following day. The two brothers were delighted, for they thought they had now got rid of Ferko for ever. The poor youth himself was heart-broken, and cursed the hour he had crossed the boundary of the King's domain. As he was wandering disconsolately about the meadows round the palace, wondering how he could escape being put to death, a little bee flew past, and settling on his shoulder whispered in his ear, 'What is troubling you, my kind benefactor? Can I be of any help to you? I am the bee whose wing you healed, and would like to show my gratitude in some way.'

Ferko recognised the queen bee, and said, 'Alas! how could you help me? for I have been set to do a task which no one in the whole world could do, let him be ever such a genius! To-morrow I must build a palace more beautiful than the King's, and it must be finished before evening.'

'Is that all?' answered the bee, 'then you may comfort yourself; for before the sun goes down to-morrow night a palace shall be built unlike any that King has dwelt in before. Just stay here till I come again and tell you that it is finished.' Having said this she flew merrily away, and Ferko, reassured by her words, lay down on the grass and slept peacefully till the next morning.

Early on the following day the whole town was on its feet, and everyone wondered how and where the stranger would build the wonderful palace. The Princess alone was silent and sorrowful, and had cried all night till her pillow was wet, so much did she take the fate of the beautiful youth to heart.

Ferko spent the whole day in the meadows waiting the return of the bee. And when evening was come the queen bee flew by, and perching on his shoulder she said, 'The wonderful palace is ready. Be of good cheer, and lead the King to the hill just outside the city walls.' And humming gaily she flew away again.

Ferko went at once to the King and told him the palace was finished. The whole court went out to see the wonder, and their astonishment was great at the sight which met their eyes. A splendid palace reared itself on the hill just outside the walls of the city, made of the most exquisite flowers that ever grew in mortal garden. The roof was all of crimson roses, the windows of lilies, the walls of white carnations, the floors of glowing auriculas and violets, the doors of gorgeous tulips and narcissi with sunflowers for knockers, and all round hyacinths and other sweet-smelling flowers bloomed in masses, so that the air was perfumed far and near and enchanted all who were present.

This splendid palace had been built by the grateful queen bee, who had summoned all the other bees in the kingdom to help her.

The King's amazement knew no bounds, and the Princess's eyes beamed with delight as she turned them from the wonderful building on the delighted Ferko.

But the two brothers had grown quite green with envy, and only declared the more that Ferko was nothing but a wicked magician.

The King, although he had been surprised and astonished at the way his commands had been carried out, was very vexed that the stranger should escape with his life, and turning to the two brothers he said, ‘He has certainly accomplished the first task, with the aid no doubt of his diabolical magic; but what shall we give him to do now? Let us make it as difficult as possible, and if he fails he shall die.’

Then the eldest brother replied, ‘The corn has all been cut, but it has not yet been put into barns; let the knave collect all the grain in the kingdom into one big heap before to-morrow night, and if as much as a stalk of corn is left let him be put to death.’

The Princess grew white with terror when she heard these words; but Ferko felt much more cheerful than he had done the first time, and wandered out into the meadows again, wondering how he was to get out of the difficulty. But he could think of no way of escape. The sun sank to rest and night came on, when a little mouse started out of the grass at Ferko’s feet, and said to him, ‘I’m delighted to see you, my kind benefactor; but why are you looking so sad? Can I be of any help to you, and thus repay your great kindness to me?’

Then Ferko recognised the mouse whose front paws he had healed, and replied, ‘Alas! how can you help me in a matter that is beyond any human power! Before to-morrow night all the grain in the kingdom has to be gathered into one big heap, and if as much as a stalk of corn is wanting I must pay for it with my life.’

‘Is that all?’ answered the mouse; ‘that needn’t distress you much. Just trust in me, and before the sun sets again you shall hear that your task is done.’ And with these words the little creature scampered away into the fields.

Ferko, who never doubted that the mouse would be as good as its word, lay down comforted on the soft grass and slept soundly till next morning. The day passed slowly, and with the evening came the little mouse and said, ‘Now there is not a single stalk of corn left in any field; they are all collected in one big heap on the hill out there.’

Then Ferko went joyfully to the King and told him that all he demanded had been done. And the whole Court went out to see the wonder, and were no less astonished than they had been the first time. For in a heap higher than the King’s palace lay all the grain of the country, and not a single stalk of corn had been left behind in any of the fields. And how had all this been done? The little mouse had summoned every other mouse in the land to its help, and together they had collected all the grain in the kingdom.

The King could not hide his amazement, but at the same time his wrath increased, and he was more ready than ever to believe the two brothers, who kept on repeating that Ferko was nothing more nor less than a wicked magician. Only the beautiful Princess rejoiced over Ferko’s success, and looked on him with friendly glances, which the youth returned.

The more the cruel King gazed on the wonder before him, the more angry he became, for he could not, in the face of his promise, put the stranger to death. He turned once more to the two brothers and said, ‘His diabolical magic has helped him again, but now what third task shall we set him to do? No matter how impossible it is, he must do it or die.’

The eldest answered quickly, ‘Let him drive all the wolves of the kingdom on to this hill before to-morrow night. If he does this he may go free; if not he shall be hung as you have said.’

At these words the Princess burst into tears, and when the King saw this he ordered her to be shut up in a high tower and carefully guarded till the dangerous magician should either have left the kingdom or been hung on the nearest tree.

Ferko wandered out into the fields again, and sat down on the stump of a tree wondering what he should do next. Suddenly a big wolf ran up to him, and standing still said, ‘I’m very glad to see you again, my kind benefactor. What are you thinking about all alone by yourself? If I can help you in any way only say the word, for I would like to give you a proof of my gratitude.’

Ferko at once recognised the wolf whose broken leg he had healed, and told him what he had to do the following day if he wished to escape with his life. ‘But how in the world,’ he added, ‘am I to collect all the wolves of the kingdom on to that hill over there?’

‘If that’s all you want done,’ answered the wolf, ‘you needn’t worry yourself. I’ll undertake the task, and you’ll hear from me again before sunset to-morrow. Keep your spirits up.’ And with these words he trotted quickly away.

Then the youth rejoiced greatly, for now he felt that his life was safe; but he grew very sad when he thought of the beautiful Princess, and that he would never see her again if he left the country. He lay down once more on the grass and soon fell fast asleep.

All the next day he spent wandering about the fields, and toward evening the wolf came running to him in a great hurry and said, ‘I have collected together all the wolves in the kingdom, and they are waiting for you in the wood. Go quickly to the King, and tell him to go to the hill that he may see the wonder you have done with his own eyes. Then return at once to me and get on my back, and I will help you to drive all the wolves together.’

Then Ferko went straight to the palace and told the King that he was ready to perform the third task if he would come to the hill and see it done. Ferko himself returned to the fields, and mounting on the wolf’s back he rode to the wood close by.

Quick as lightning the wolf flew round the wood, and in a minute many hundred wolves rose up before him, increasing in number every moment, till they could be counted by thousands. He drove them all before him on to the hill, where the King and his whole Court and Ferko’s two brothers were standing. Only the lovely Princess was not present, for she was shut up in her tower weeping bitterly.

The wicked brothers stamped and foamed with rage when they saw the failure of their wicked designs. But the King was overcome by a sudden terror when he saw the enormous pack of wolves approaching nearer and nearer, and calling out to Ferko he said, ‘Enough, enough, we don’t want any more.’

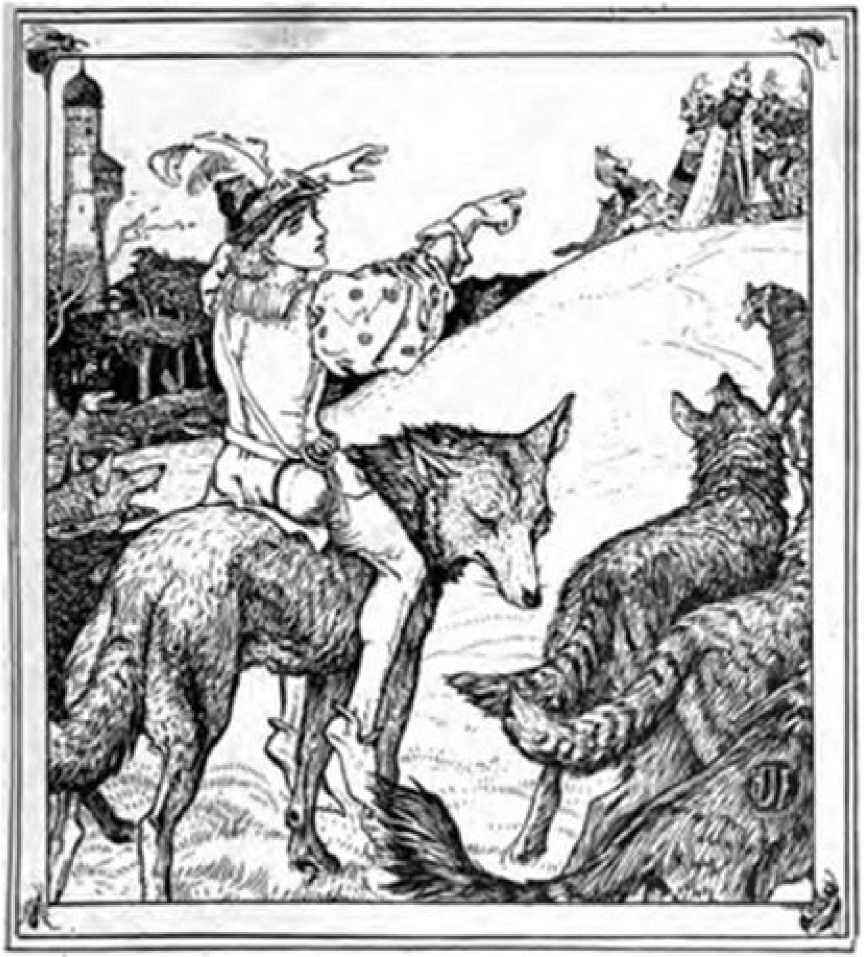

Ferko leads the wolves on.

But the wolf on whose back Ferko sat, said to its rider, ‘Go on! go on!’ and at the same moment many more wolves ran up the hill, howling horribly and showing their white teeth.

The King in his terror called out, ‘Stop a moment; I will give you half my kingdom if you will drive all the wolves away.’ But Ferko pretended not to hear, and drove some more thousands before him, so that everyone quaked with horror and fear.

Then the King raised his voice again and called out, ‘Stop! you shall have my whole kingdom, if you will only drive these wolves back to the places they came from.’

But the wolf kept on encouraging Ferko, and said, ‘Go on! go on!’ So he led the wolves on, till at last they fell on the King and on the wicked brothers, and ate them and the whole Court up in a moment.

Then Ferko went straight to the palace and set the Princess free, and on the same day he married her and was crowned King of the country. And the wolves all went peacefully back to their own homes, and Ferko and his bride lived for many years in peace and happiness together, and were much beloved by great and small in the land.

THE GIANTS AND THE HERD-BOY

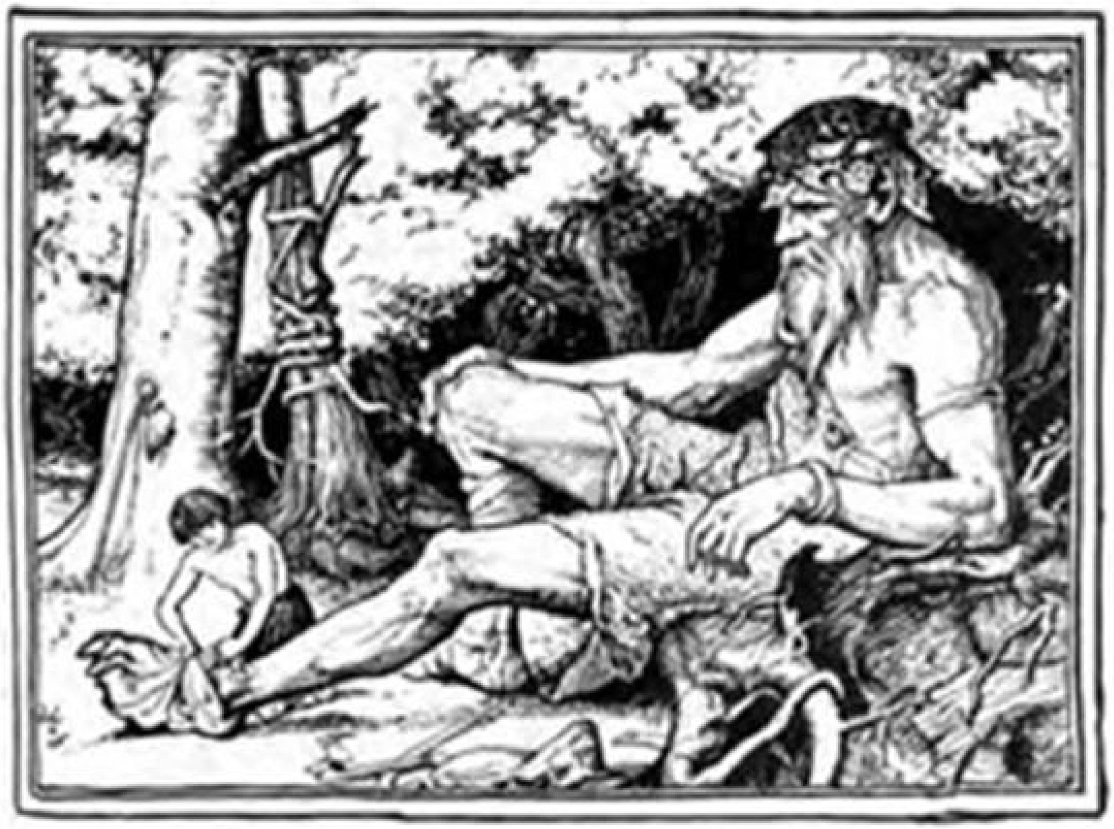

The Herd-boy binds up the Giant's foot.

There was once upon a time a poor boy who had neither father nor mother. In order to gain a living he looked after the sheep of a great Lord. Day and night he spent out in the open fields, and only when it was very wet and stormy did he take refuge in a little hut on the edge of a big forest. Now one night, when he was sitting on the grass beside his flocks, he heard not very far from him the sound as of some one crying. He rose up and followed the direction of the noise. To his dismay and astonishment he found a Giant lying at the entrance of the wood; he was about to run off as fast as his legs could carry him, when the Giant called out: 'Don't be afraid, I won't harm you. On the contrary, I will reward you handsomely if you will bind up my foot. I hurt it when I was trying to root up an oak-tree.' The Herd-boy took off his shirt, and bound up the Giant's wounded foot with it. Then the Giant rose up and said, ‘Now come and I will reward you. We are going to celebrate a marriage to-day, and I promise you we shall have plenty of fun. Come and enjoy yourself, but in order that my brothers mayn’t see you, put this band round your waist and then you’ll be invisible.’ With these words he handed the Herd-boy a belt, and walking on in front he led him to a fountain where hundreds of Giants and Giantesses were assembled preparing to hold a wedding. They danced and played different games till midnight; then one of the Giants tore up a plant by its roots, and all the Giants and Giantesses made themselves so thin that they disappeared into the earth through the hole made by the uprooting of the plant. The wounded Giant remained behind to the last and called out, ‘Herd-boy, where are you?’ ‘Here I am, close to you,’ was the reply. ‘Touch me,’ said the Giant, ‘so that you too may come with us under ground.’ The Herd-boy did as he was told, and before he could have believed it possible he found himself in a big hall, where even the walls were made of pure gold. Then to his astonishment he saw that the hall was furnished with the tables and chairs that belonged to his master. In a few minutes the company began to eat and drink. The banquet was a very gorgeous one, and the poor youth fell to and ate and drank lustily. When he had eaten and drunk as much as he could he thought to himself, ‘Why shouldn’t I put a loaf of bread in my pocket? I shall be glad of it to-morrow.’ So he seized a loaf when no one was looking and stowed it away under his tunic. No sooner had he done so than the wounded Giant limped up to him and whispered softly, ‘Herd-boy, where are you?’ ‘Here I am,’ replied the youth. ‘Then hold on to me,’ said the Giant, ‘so that I may lead you up above again.’ So the Herd-boy held on to the Giant, and in a few moments he found himself on the earth once more, but the Giant had vanished. The Herd-boy returned to his sheep, and took off the invisible belt which he hid carefully in his bag.

The next morning the lad felt hungry, and thought he would cut off a piece of the loaf he had carried away from the Giants’ wedding feast, and eat it. But although he tried with all his might, he couldn’t cut off the smallest piece. Then in despair he bit the loaf, and what was his astonishment when a piece of gold fell out of his mouth and rolled at his feet. He bit the bread a second and third time, and each time a piece of gold fell out of his mouth; but the bread remained untouched. The Herd-boy was very much delighted over his stroke of good fortune, and, hiding the magic loaf in his bag, he hurried off to the nearest village to buy himself something to eat, and then returned to his sheep.

Now the Lord whose sheep the Herd-boy looked after had a very lovely daughter, who always smiled and nodded to the youth when she walked with her father in his fields. For a long time the Herd-boy had made up his mind to prepare a surprise for this beautiful creature on her birthday. So when the day approached he put on his invisible belt, took a sack of gold pieces with him, and slipping into her room in the middle of the night, he placed the bag of gold beside her bed and returned to his sheep. The girl's joy was great, and so was her parents' next day when they found the sack full of gold pieces. The Herd-boy was so pleased to think what pleasure he had given that the next night he placed another bag of gold beside the girl's bed. And this he continued to do for seven nights, and the girl and her parents made up their minds that it must be a good Fairy who brought the gold every night. But one night they determined to watch, and see from their hiding-place who the bringer of the sack of gold really was.

On the eighth night a fearful storm of wind and rain came on while the Herd-boy was on his way to bring the beautiful girl another bag of gold. Then for the first time he noticed, just as he reached his master's house, that he had forgotten the belt which made him invisible. He didn't like the idea of going back to his hut in the wind and wet, so he just stepped as he was into the girl's room, laid the sack of gold beside her, and was turning to leave the room, when his master confronted him and said, 'You young rogue, so you were going to steal the gold that a good Fairy brings every night, were you?' The Herd-boy was so taken aback by his words, that he stood trembling before him, and did not dare to explain his presence. Then his master spoke. 'As you have hitherto always behaved well in my service I will not send you to prison; but leave your place instantly and never let me see your face again.' So the Herd-boy went back to his hut, and taking his loaf and belt with him, he went to the nearest town. There he bought himself some fine clothes, and a beautiful coach with four horses, hired two servants, and drove back to his master. You may imagine how astonished he was to see his Herd-boy returning to him in this manner! Then the youth told him of the piece of good luck that had befallen him, and asked him for the hand of his beautiful daughter. This was readily granted, and the two lived in peace and happiness to the end of their lives.

THE INVISIBLE PRINCE

Once upon a time there lived a Fairy who had power over the earth, the sea, fire, and the air; and this Fairy had four sons. The eldest, who was quick and lively, with a vivid imagination, she made Lord of Fire, which was in her opinion the noblest of all the elements. To the second son, whose wisdom and prudence made amends for his being rather dull, she gave the government of the earth. The third was wild and savage, and of monstrous stature; and the Fairy, his mother, who was ashamed of his defects, hoped to hide them by creating him King of the Seas. The youngest, who was the slave of his passions and of a very uncertain temper, became Prince of the Air.

Being the youngest, he was naturally his mother's favourite; but this did not blind her to his weaknesses, and she foresaw that some day he would suffer much pain through falling in love. So she thought the best thing she could do was to bring him up with a horror of women; and, to her great delight, she saw this dislike only increased as he grew older. From his earliest childhood he heard nothing but stories of princes who had fallen into all sorts of troubles through love; and she drew such terrible pictures of poor little Cupid that the young man had no difficulty in believing that he was the root of all evil.

All the time that this wise mother could spare from filling her son with hatred for all womenkind she passed in giving him a love of the pleasures of the chase, which henceforth became his chief joy. For his amusement she had made a new forest, planted with the most splendid trees, and turned loose in it every animal that could be found in any of the four quarters of the globe. In the midst of this forest she built a palace which had not its equal for beauty in the whole world, and then she considered that she had done enough to make any prince happy.

Now it is all very well to abuse the God of Love, but a man cannot struggle against his fate. In his secret heart the Prince got tired of his mother's constant talk on this subject; and when one day she quitted the palace to attend to some business, begging him never to go beyond the grounds, he at once jumped at the chance of disobeying her.

Left to himself the Prince soon forgot the wise counsels of his mother, and feeling very much bored with his own company, he ordered some of the spirits of the air to carry him to the court of a neighbouring sovereign. This kingdom was situated in the Island of Roses, where the climate is so delicious that the grass is always green and the flowers always sweet. The waves, instead of beating on the rocks, seemed to die gently on the shore; clusters of golden bushes covered the land, and the vines were bent low with grapes.

The King of this island had a daughter named Rosalie, who was more lovely than any girl in the whole world. No sooner had the eyes of the Prince of the Air rested on her than he forgot all the terrible woes which had been prophesied to him ever since he was born, for in one single moment the plans of years are often upset. He instantly began to think how best to make himself happy, and the shortest way that occurred to him was to have Rosalie carried off by his attendant spirits.

It is easy to imagine the feelings of the King when he found that his daughter had vanished. He wept her loss night and day, and his only comfort was to talk over it with a young and unknown prince, who had just arrived at the Court. Alas! he did not know what a deep interest the stranger had in Rosalie, for he too had seen her, and had fallen a victim to her charms.

One day the King, more sorrowful than usual, was walking sadly along the seashore, when after a long silence the unknown Prince, who was his only companion, suddenly spoke. ‘There is no evil without a remedy,’ he said to the unhappy father; ‘and if you will promise me your daughter in marriage, I will undertake to bring her back to you.’

‘You are trying to soothe me by vain promises,’ answered the King. ‘Did I not see her caught up into the air, in spite of cries which would have softened the heart of any one but the barbarian who has robbed me of her? The unfortunate girl is pining away in some unknown land, where perhaps no foot of man has ever trod, and I shall see her no more. But go, generous stranger; bring back Rosalie if you can, and live happy with her ever after in this country, of which I now declare you heir.’

Although the stranger’s name and rank were unknown to Rosalie’s father, he was really the son of the King of the Golden Isle, which had for capital a city that extended from one sea to another. The walls, washed by the quiet waters, were covered with gold, which made one think of the yellow sands. Above them was a rampart of orange and lemon trees, and all the streets were paved with gold.

The King of this beautiful island had one son, for whom a life of adventure had been foretold at his birth. This so frightened his father and mother that in order to comfort them a Fairy, who happened to be present at the time, produced a little pebble which she told them to keep for the Prince till he grew up, as by putting it in his mouth he would become invisible, as long as he did not try to speak, for if he did the stone would lose all its virtue. In this way the good fairy hoped that the Prince would be protected against all dangers.

No sooner did the Prince begin to grow out of boyhood than he longed to see if the other countries of the world were as splendid as the one in which he lived. So, under pretence of visiting some small islands that belonged to his father, he set out. But a frightful storm drove his ship on to unknown shores, where most of his followers were put to death by the savages, and the Prince himself only managed to escape by making use of his magic pebble. By this means he passed through the midst of them unseen, and wandered on till he reached the coast, where he re-embarked on board his ship.

The first land he sighted was the Island of Roses, and he went at once to the court of the King, Rosalie's father. The moment his eyes beheld the Princess, he fell in love with her like everyone else.

He had already spent several months in this condition when the Prince of the Air whirled her away, to the grief and despair of every man on the island. But sad though everybody was, the Prince of the Golden Isle was perfectly inconsolable, and he passed both days and nights in bemoaning his loss.

'Alas!' he cried; 'shall I never see my lovely Princess again? Who knows where she may be, and what fairy may have her in his keeping? I am only a man, but I am strong in my love, and I will seek the whole world through till I find her.'

So saying, he left the court, and made ready for his journey.

He travelled many weary days without hearing a single word of the lost Princess, till one morning, as he was walking through a thick forest, he suddenly perceived a magnificent palace standing at the end of a pine avenue, and his heart bounded to think that he might be gazing on Rosalie's prison. He hastened his steps, and quickly arrived at the gate of the palace, which was formed of a single agate. The gate swung open to let him through, and he next passed successively three courts, surrounded by deep ditches filled with running water, with birds of brilliant plumage flying about the banks. Everything around was rare and beautiful, but the Prince scarcely raised his eyes to all these wonders. He thought only of the Princess and where he should find her, but in vain he opened every door and searched in every corner; he neither saw Rosalie nor anyone else. At last there was no place left for him to search but a little wood, which contained in the centre a sort of hall built entirely of orange-trees, with four small rooms opening out of the corners. Three of these were empty except for statues and wonderful things, but in the fourth the Invisible Prince caught sight of Rosalie. His joy at beholding her again was, however, somewhat lessened by seeing that the Prince of the Air was kneeling at her feet, and pleading his own cause. But it was in vain that he implored her to listen; she only shook her head. ‘No,’ was all she would say; ‘you snatched me from my father whom I loved, and all the splendour in the world can never console me. Go! I can never feel anything towards you but hate and contempt.’ With these words she turned away and entered her own apartments.

Unknown to herself the Invisible Prince had followed her, but fearing to be discovered by the Princess in the presence of others, be made up his mind to wait quietly till dark; and employed the long hours in writing a poem to the Princess, which he laid on the bed beside her. This done, he thought of nothing but how best to deliver Rosalie, and he resolved to take advantage of a visit which the Prince of the Air paid every year to his mother and brothers in order to strike the blow.

One day Rosalie was sitting alone in her room thinking of her troubles when she suddenly saw a pen get up from off the desk and begin to write all by itself on a sheet of white paper. As she did not know that it was guided by an invisible hand she was very much astonished, and the moment that the pen had ceased to move she instantly went over to the table, where she found some lovely verses, telling her that another shared her distresses, whatever they might be, and loved her with all his heart; and that he would never rest until he had delivered her from the hands of the man she hated. Thus encouraged, she told him all her story, and of the arrival of a young stranger in her father’s palace, whose looks had so charmed her that since that day she had thought of no one else. At these words the Prince could contain himself no longer. He took the pebble from his mouth, and flung himself at Rosalie’s feet.

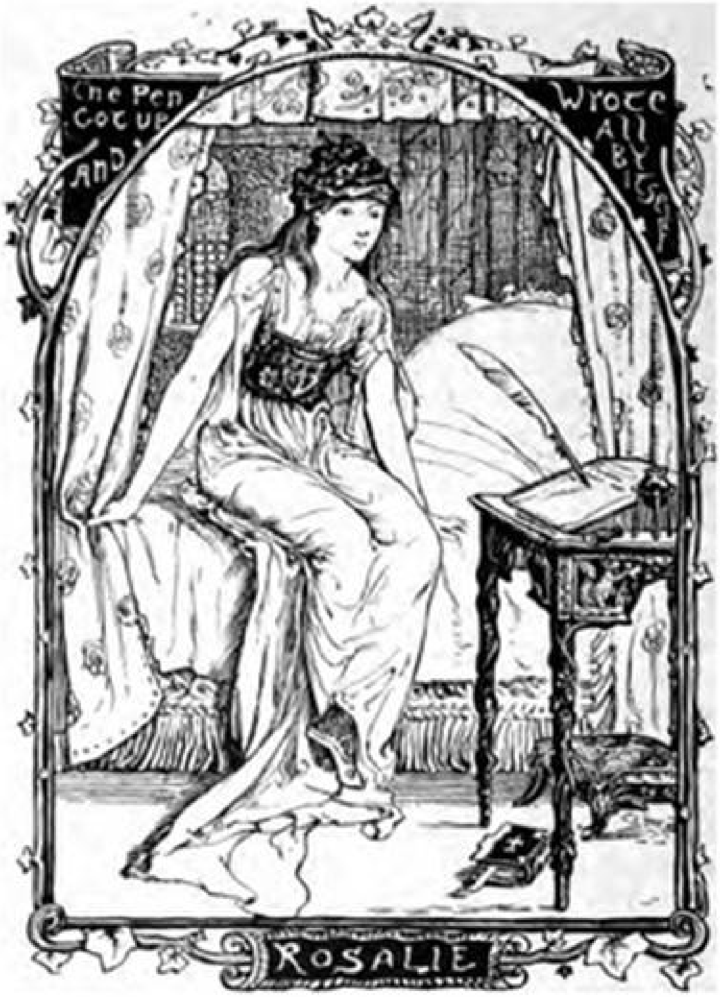

When they had got over the first rapture of meeting they began to make plans to escape from the power of the Prince of the Air. But this did not prove easy, for the magic stone would only serve for one person at a time, and in order to save Rosalie the Prince of the Golden Isle would have to expose himself to the fury of his enemy. But Rosalie would not hear of this.

‘No, Prince,’ she said; ‘since you are here this island no longer feels a prison. Besides, you are under the protection of a Fairy, who always visits your father’s court at this season. Go instantly and seek her, and when she is found implore the gift of another stone with similar powers. Once you have that, there will be no further difficulty in the way of escape.’

The Prince of the Air returned a few days later from his mother’s palace, but the Invisible Prince had already set out. He had, however, entirely forgotten the road by which he had come, and lost himself for so long in the forest, that when at last he reached home the Fairy had already left, and, in spite of all his grief, there was nothing for it but to wait till the Fairy’s next visit, and allow Rosalie to suffer three months longer. This thought drove him to despair, and he had almost made up his mind to return to the place of her captivity, when one day, as he was strolling along an alley in the woods, he saw a huge oak open its trunk, and out of it step two Princes in earnest conversation. As our hero had the magic stone in his mouth they imagined themselves alone, and did not lower their voices.

‘What!’ said one, ‘are you always going to allow yourself to be tormented by a passion which can never end happily, and in your whole kingdom can you find nothing else to satisfy you?’

‘What is the use,’ replied the other, ‘of being Prince of the Gnomes, and having a mother who is queen over all the four elements, if I cannot win the love of the Princess Argentine? From the moment that I first saw her, sitting in the forest surrounded by flowers, I have never ceased to think of her night and day, and, although I love her, I am quite convinced that she will never care for me. You know that I have in my palace the cabinets of the years. In the first, great mirrors reflect the past; in the second, we contemplate the present; in the third, the future can be read. It was here that I fled after I had gazed on the Princess Argentine, but instead of love I only saw scorn and contempt. Think how great must be my devotion, when, in spite of my fate, I still love on!’

Now the Prince of the Golden Isle was enchanted with this conversation, for the Princess Argentine was his sister, and he hoped, by means of her influence over the Prince of the Gnomes, to obtain from his brother the release of Rosalie. So he joyfully returned to his father’s palace, where he found his friend the Fairy, who at once presented him with a magic pebble like his own. As may be imagined, he lost no time in setting out to deliver Rosalie, and travelled so fast that he soon arrived at the forest, in the midst of which she lay a captive. But though he found the palace he did not find Rosalie. He hunted high and low, but there was no sign of her, and his despair was so great that he was ready, a thousand times over, to take his own life. At last he remembered the conversation of the two Princes about the cabinets of the years, and that if he could manage to reach the oak-tree, he would be certain to discover what had become of Rosalie. Happily, he soon found out the secret of the passage and entered the cabinet of the present, where he saw reflected in the mirrors the unfortunate Rosalie sitting on the floor weeping bitterly, and surrounded with genii, who never left her night or day.

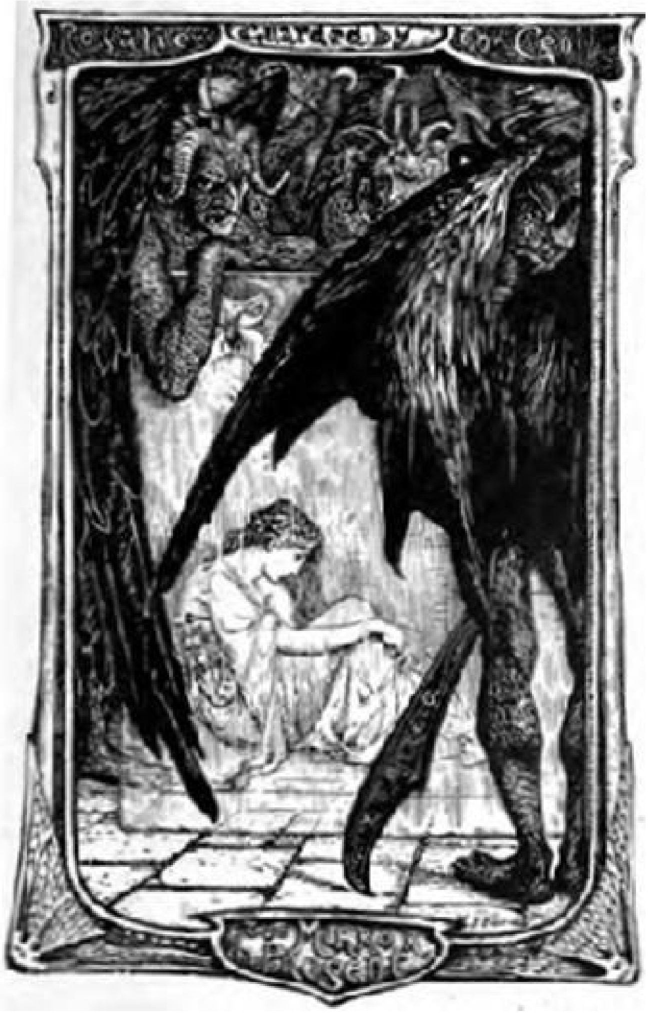
Rosalie Guarded by the Genii

This sight only increased the misery of the Prince, for he did not know where the castle was, nor how to set about finding it. However, he resolved to seek the whole world through till he came to the right place. He began by setting sail in a favourable wind, but his bad luck followed him even on the sea. He had scarcely lost sight of the land when a violent storm arose, and after several hours of beating about, the vessel was driven on to some rocks, on which it dashed itself to bits. The Prince was fortunate enough to be able to lay hold of a floating spar, and contrived to keep himself afloat; and, after a long struggle with the winds and waves, he was cast upon a strange island. But what was his surprise, on reaching the shore, to hear sounds of the most heartrending distress, mingled with the sweetest songs which had ever charmed him! His curiosity was instantly roused, and he advanced cautiously till he saw two huge dragons guarding the gate of a wood. They were terrible indeed to look upon. Their bodies were covered with glittering scales; their curly tails extended far over the land; flames darted from their mouths and noses, and their eyes would have made the bravest shudder; but as the Prince was invisible and they did not see him, he slipped past them into the wood. He found himself at once in a labyrinth, and wandered about for a long time without meeting anyone; in fact, the only sight he saw was a circle of human hands, sticking out of the ground above the wrist, each with a bracelet of gold, on which a name was written. The farther he advanced in the labyrinth the more curious he became, till he was stopped by two corpses lying in the midst of a cypress alley, each with a scarlet cord round his neck and a bracelet on his arm on which were engraved their own names, and those of two Princesses.

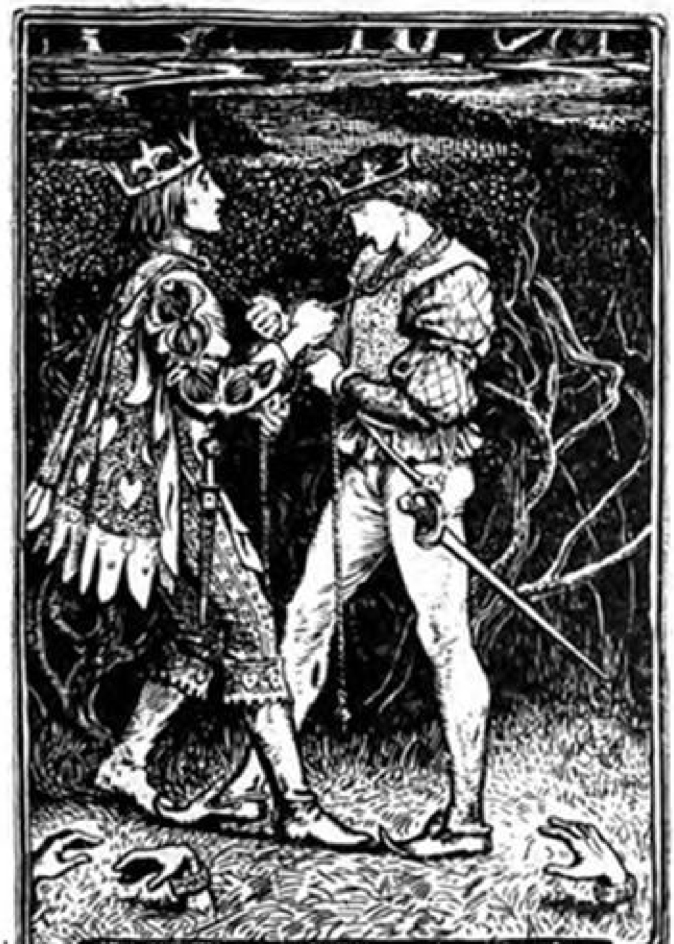

The invisible Prince recognised these dead men as Kings of two large islands near his own home, but the names of the Princesses were unknown to him. He grieved for their unhappy fate, and at once proceeded to bury them; but no sooner had he laid them in their graves, than their hands started up through the earth and remained sticking up like those of their fellows.

The Prince went on his way, thinking about this strange adventure, when suddenly at the turn of the walk he perceived a tall man whose face was the picture of misery, holding in his hands a silken cord of the exact colour of those round the necks of the dead men. A few steps further this man came up with another as miserable to the full as he himself; they silently embraced, and then without a word passed the cords round their throats, and fell dead side by side. In vain the Prince rushed to their assistance and strove to undo the cord. He could not loosen it; so he buried them like the others and continued his path.

He felt, however, that great prudence was necessary, or he himself might become the victim of some enchantment; and he was thankful to slip past the dragons, and enter a beautiful park, with clear streams and sweet flowers, and a crowd of men and maidens. But he could not forget the terrible things he had seen, and hoped eagerly for a clue to the mystery. Noticing two young people talking together, he drew near thinking that he might get some explanation of what puzzled him. And so he did.

‘You swear,’ said the Prince, ‘that you will love me till you die, but I fear your faithless heart, and I feel that I shall soon have to seek the Fairy Despair, ruler of half this island. She carries off the lovers who have been cast away by their mistresses, and wish to have done with life. She places them in a labyrinth where they are condemned to walk for ever, with a bracelet on their arms and a cord round their necks, unless they meet another as miserable as themselves. Then the cord is pulled and they lie where they fall, till they are buried by the first passer-by. Terrible as this death would be,’ added the Prince, ‘it would be sweeter than life if I had lost your love.’

The sight of all these happy lovers only made the Prince grieve the more, and he wandered along the seashore spending his days; but one day he was sitting on a rock bewailing his fate, and the impossibility of leaving the island, when all in a moment the sea appeared to raise itself nearly to the skies, and the caves echoed with hideous screams. As he looked a woman rose from the depths of the sea, flying madly before a furious giant. The cries she uttered softened the heart of the Prince; he took the stone from his mouth, and drawing his sword he rushed after the giant, so as to give the lady time to escape. But hardly had he come within reach of the enemy, than the giant touched him with a ring that he held in his hand, and the Prince remained immovable where he stood. The giant then hastily rejoined his prey, and, seizing her in his arms, he plunged her into the sea. Then he sent some tritons to bind chains about the Prince of the Golden Isle, and he too felt himself borne to the depths of the ocean, and without the hope of ever again seeing the Princess.

Now the giant whom the invisible had so rashly attacked was the Lord of the Sea, and the third son of the Queen of the Elements, and he had touched the youth with a magic ring which enabled a mortal to live under water. So the Prince of the Golden Isle found, when bound in chains by the tritons, he was carried through the homes of strange monsters and past immense seaweed forests, till he reached a vast sandy space, surrounded by huge rocks. On the tallest of the rocks sat the giant as on a throne.

'Rash mortal,' said he, when the Prince was dragged before him, 'you have deserved death, but you shall live only to suffer more cruelly. Go, and add to the number of those whom it is my pleasure to torture.'

At these words the unhappy Prince found himself tied to a rock; but he was not alone in his misfortunes, for all round him were chained Princes and Princesses, whom the giant had led captive. Indeed, it was his chief delight to create a storm, in order to add to the list of his prisoners.

As his hands were fastened, it was impossible for the Prince of the Golden Isle to make use of his magic stone, and he passed his nights and days dreaming of Rosalie. But at last the time came when the giant took it into his head to amuse himself by arranging fights between some of his captives. Lots were drawn, and one fell upon our Prince, whose chains were immediately loosened. The moment he was set free, he snatched up his stone, and became invisible.

The astonishment of the giant at the sudden disappearance of the Prince may well be imagined. He ordered all the passages to be watched, but it was too late, for the Prince had already glided between two rocks. He wandered for a long while through the forests, where he met nothing but fearful monsters; he climbed rock after rock, steered his way from tree to tree, till at length he arrived at the edge of the sea, at the foot of a mountain that he remembered to have seen in the cabinet of the present, where Rosalie was held captive.

Filled with joy, he made his way to the top of the mountain which pierced the clouds, and there he found a palace. He entered, and in the middle of a long gallery he discovered a crystal room, in the midst of which sat Rosalie, guarded night and day by genii. There was no door anywhere, nor any window. At this sight the Prince became more puzzled than ever, for he did not know how he was to warn Rosalie of his return. Yet it broke his heart to see her weeping from dawn till dark.

One day, as Rosalie was walking up and down her room, she was surprised to see that the crystal which served for a wall had grown cloudy, as if some one had breathed on it, and, what was more, wherever she moved the brightness of the crystal always became clouded. This was enough to cause the Princess to suspect that her lover had returned. In order to set the Prince of the Air's mind at rest she began by being very gracious to him, so that when she begged that her captivity might be a little lightened she should not be refused. At first the only favour she asked was to be allowed to walk for one hour every day up and down the long gallery. This was granted, and the Invisible Prince speedily took the opportunity of handing her the stone, which she at once slipped into her mouth. No words can paint the fury of her captor at her disappearance. He ordered the spirits of the air to fly through all space, and to bring back Rosalie wherever she might be. They instantly flew off to obey his commands, and spread themselves over the whole earth.

Meantime Rosalie and the Invisible Prince had reached, hand in hand, a door of the gallery which led through a terrace into the gardens. In silence they glided along, and thought themselves already safe, when a furious monster dashed itself by accident against Rosalie and the Invisible Prince, and in her fright she let go his hand. No one can speak as long as he is invisible, and besides, they knew that the spirits were all around them, and at the slightest sound they would be recognised; so all they could do was to feel about in the hope that their hands might once more meet.

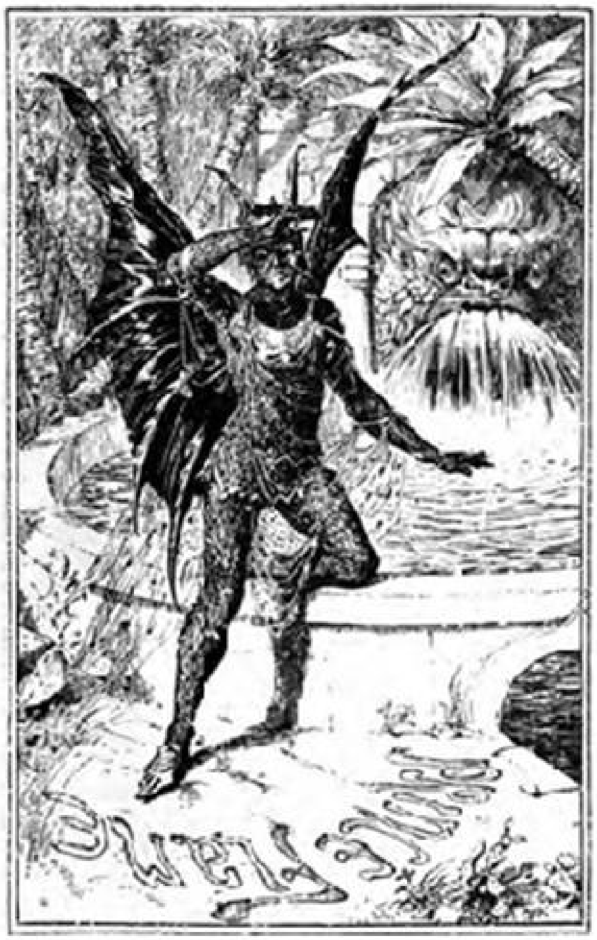

PRINCE GNOME LEARNS THE NAME OF HIS RIVAL AT THE GOLDEN FOUNTAIN

But, alas! the joy of liberty lasted but a short time. The Princess, having wandered in vain up and down the forest, stopped at last on the edge of a fountain. As she walked she wrote on the trees: ‘If ever the Prince, my lover, comes this way, let him know that it is here I dwell, and that I sit daily on the edge of this fountain, mingling my tears with its waters.’

These words were read by one of the genii, who repeated them to his master. The Prince of the Air, in his turn making himself invisible, was led to the fountain, and waited for Rosalie. When she drew near he held out his hand, which she grasped eagerly, taking it for that of her lover; and, seizing his opportunity, the Prince passed a cord round her arms, and throwing off his invisibility cried to his spirits to drag her into the lowest pit.

It was at this moment that the Invisible Prince appeared, and at the sight of the Prince of the Genii mounting into the air, holding a silken cord, he guessed instantly that he was carrying off Rosalie.

He felt so overwhelmed by despair that he thought for an instant of putting an end to his life. ‘Can I survive my misfortunes?’ he cried. ‘I fancied I had come to an end of my troubles, and now they are worse than ever. What will become of me? Never can I discover the place where this monster will hide Rosalie.'

The unhappy youth had determined to let himself die, and indeed his sorrow alone was enough to kill him, when the thought that by means of the cabinets of the years he might find out where the Princess was imprisoned, gave him a little ray of comfort. So he continued to walk on through the forest, and after some hours he arrived at the gate of a temple, guarded by two huge lions. Being invisible, he was able to enter unharmed. In the middle of the temple was an altar, on which lay a book, and behind the altar hung a great curtain. The Prince approached the altar and opened the book, which contained the names of all the lovers in the world; and in it he read that Rosalie had been carried off by the Prince of the Air to an abyss which had no entrance except the one that lay by way of the Fountain of Gold.

Now, as the Prince had not the smallest idea where this fountain was to be found, it might be thought that he was not much nearer Rosalie than before. This was not, however, the view taken by the Prince.

'Though every step that I take may perhaps lead me further from her,' he said to himself, 'I am still thankful to know that she is alive somewhere.'

On leaving the temple the Invisible Prince saw six paths lying before him, each of which led through the wood. He was hesitating which to choose, when he suddenly beheld two people coming towards him, down the track which lay most to his right. They turned out to be the Prince Gnome and his friend, and the sudden desire to get some news of his sister, Princess Argentine, caused the Invisible Prince to follow them and to listen to their conversation.

'Do you think,' the Prince Gnome was saying, 'do you think that I would not break my chains if I could? I know that the Princess Argentine will never love me, yet each day I feel her dearer still. And as if this were not enough, I have the horror of feeling that she probably loves another. So I have resolved to put myself out of my pain by means of the Golden Fountain. A single drop of its water falling on the sand around will trace the name of my rival in her heart. I dread the test, and yet this very dread convinces me of my misfortune.'

It may be imagined that after listening to these words the Invisible Prince followed Prince Gnome like his shadow, and after walking some time they arrived at the Golden Fountain. The unhappy lover stooped down with a sigh, and dipping his finger in the water let fall a drop on the sand. It instantly wrote the name of Prince Flame, his brother. The shock of this discovery was so real, that Prince Gnome sank fainting into the arms of his friend.

Meanwhile the Invisible Prince was turning over in his mind how he could best deliver Rosalie. As, since he had been touched by the Giant's ring, he had the power to live in the water as well as on land, he at once dived into the fountain. He perceived in one corner a door leading into the mountain, and at the foot of the mountain was a high rock on which was fixed an iron ring with a cord attached. The Prince promptly guessed that the cord was used to chain the Princess, and drew his sword and cut it. In a moment he felt the Princess's hand in his, for she had always kept her magic pebble in her mouth, in spite of the prayers and entreaties of the Prince of the Air to make herself visible.

So hand in hand the invisible Prince and Rosalie crossed the mountain; but as the Princess had no power of living under water, she could not pass the Golden Fountain. Speechless and invisible they clung together on the brink, trembling at the frightful tempest the Prince of the Air had raised in his fury. The storm had already lasted many days when tremendous heat began to make itself felt. The lightning flashed, the thunder rattled, fire bolts fell from heaven, burning up the forests and even the fields of corn. In one instant the very streams were dried up, and the Prince, seizing his opportunity, carried the Princess over the Golden Fountain.

It took them a long time still to reach the Golden Isle, but at last they got there, and we may be quite sure they never wanted to leave it any more.

THE CROW

Once upon a time there were three Princesses who were all three young and beautiful; but the youngest, although she was not fairer than the other two, was the most loveable of them all.

About half a mile from the palace in which they lived there stood a castle, which was uninhabited and almost a ruin, but the garden which surrounded it was a mass of blooming flowers, and in this garden the youngest Princess used often to walk.

One day when she was pacing to and fro under the lime trees, a black crow hopped out of a rose-bush in front of her. The poor beast was all torn and bleeding, and the kind little Princess was quite unhappy about it. When the crow saw this it turned to her and said:

‘I am not really a black crow, but an enchanted Prince, who has been doomed to spend his youth in misery. If you only liked, Princess, you could save me. But you would have to say good-bye to all your own people, and come and be my constant companion in this ruined castle. There is one habitable room in it, in which there is a golden bed; there you will have to live all by yourself, and don’t forget that whatever you may see or hear in the night you must not scream out, for if you give as much as a single cry my sufferings will be doubled.’

The good-natured Princess at once left her home and her family and hurried to the ruined castle, and took possession of the room with the golden bed.

When night approached she lay down, but though she shut her eyes tight sleep would not come. At midnight she heard to her great horror some one coming along the passage, and in a minute her door was flung wide open and a troop of strange beings entered the room. They at once proceeded to light a fire in the huge fire-place; then they placed a great cauldron of boiling water on it. When they had done this, they approached the bed on which the trembling girl lay, and, screaming and yelling all the time, they dragged her towards the cauldron. She nearly died with fright, but she never uttered a sound. Then of a sudden the cock crew, and all the evil spirits vanished.

At the same moment the crow appeared and hopped all round the room with joy. It thanked the Princess most heartily for her goodness, and said that its sufferings had already been greatly lessened.

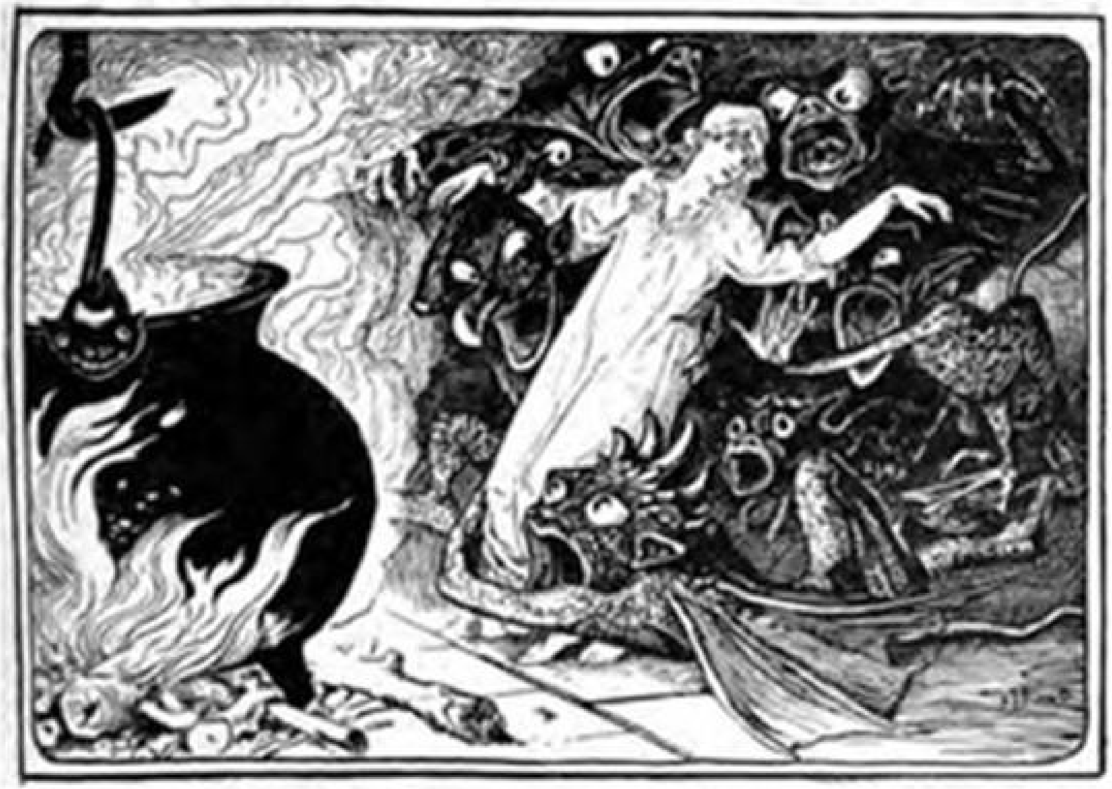

The evil spirits drag the girl to the cauldron

Now one of the Princess's elder sisters, who was very inquisitive, had found out about everything, and went to pay her youngest sister a visit in the ruined castle. She implored her so urgently to let her spend the night with her in the golden bed, that at last the good-natured little Princess consented. But at midnight, when the odd folk appeared, the elder sister screamed with terror, and from this time on the youngest Princess insisted always on keeping watch alone.

So she lived in solitude all the day-time, and at night she would have been frightened, had she not been so brave; but every day the crow came and thanked her for her endurance, and assured her that his sufferings were far less than they had been.

And so two years passed away, when one day the crow came to the Princess and said: 'In another year I shall be freed from the spell I am under at present, because then the seven years will be over. But before I can resume my natural form, and take possession of the belongings of my forefathers, you must go out into the world and take service as a maidservant.'

The young Princess consented at once, and for a whole year she served as a maid; but in spite of her youth and beauty she was very badly treated, and suffered many things. One evening, when she was spinning flax, and had worked her little white hands weary, she heard a rustling beside her and a cry of joy.

Then she saw a handsome youth standing beside her; who knelt down at her feet and kissed the little weary white hands.

‘I am the Prince,’ he said, ‘who you in your goodness, when I was wandering about in the shape of a black crow, freed from the most awful torments. Come now to my castle with me, and let us live there happily together.’

So they went to the castle where they had both endured so much. But when they reached it, it was difficult to believe that it was the same, for it had all been rebuilt and done up again. And there they lived for a hundred years, a hundred years of joy and happiness.

HOW SIX MEN TRAVELLED THROUGH THE WIDE WORLD

There was once upon a time a man who understood all sorts of arts; he served in the war, and bore himself bravely and well; but when the war was over, he got his discharge, and set out on his travels with three farthings of his pay in his pocket. ‘Wait,’ he said; ‘that does not please me; only let me find the right people, and the King shall yet give me all the treasures of his kingdom.’ He strode angrily into the forest, and there he saw a man standing who had uprooted six trees as if they were straws. He said to him, ‘Will you be my servant and travel with me?’

‘Yes,’ he answered; ‘but first of all I will take this little bundle of sticks home to my mother,’ and he took one of the trees and wound it round the other five, raised the bundle on his shoulders and bore it off. Then he came back and went with his master, who said, ‘We two ought to be able to travel through the wide world!’ And when they had gone a little way they came upon a hunter, who was on his knees, his gun on his shoulder, aiming at something. The master said to him, ‘Hunter, what are you aiming at?’

He answered, ‘Two miles from this place sits a fly on a branch of an oak; I want to shoot out its left eye.’

‘Oh, go with me,’ said the man; ‘if we three are together we shall easily travel through the wide world.’

The hunter agreed and went with him, and they came to seven windmills whose sails were going round quite fast, and yet there was not a breath of wind, nor was a leaf moving. The man said, ‘I don’t know what is turning those windmills; there is not the slightest breeze blowing.’ So he walked on with his servants, and when they had gone two miles they saw a man sitting on a tree, holding one of his nostrils and blowing out of the other.

‘Fellow, what are you puffing at up there?’ asked the man.

He replied, ‘Two miles from this place are standing seven windmills; see, I am blowing to drive them round.’

‘Oh, go with me,’ said the man; ‘if we four are together we shall easily travel through the wide world.’

So the blower got down and went with him, and after a time they saw a man who was standing on one leg, and had unstrapped the other and laid it near him. Then said the master, ‘You have made yourself very comfortable to rest!’

‘I am a runner,’ answered he; ‘and so that I shall not go too quickly, I have unstrapped one leg; when I run with two legs, I go faster than a bird flies.’

‘Oh, go with me; if we five are together, we shall easily travel through the wide world.’ So he went with him, and, not long afterwards, they met a man who wore a little hat, but he had it slouched over one ear.

‘Manners, manners!’ said the master to him; ‘don’t hang your hat over one ear; you look like a madman!’

‘I dare not,’ said the other, ‘for if I were to put my hat on straight, there would come such a frost that the very birds in the sky would freeze and fall dead on the earth.’

‘Oh, go with me,’ said the master; ‘if we six are together, we shall easily travel through the wide world.’

Now the Six came to a town in which the King had proclaimed that whoever should run with his daughter in a race, and win, should become her husband; but if he lost, he must lose his head. This was reported to the man who declared he would compete, ‘but,’ he said, ‘I shall let my servant run for me.’

The King replied, ‘Then both your heads must be staked, and your head and his must be guaranteed for the winner.’

When this was agreed upon and settled, the man strapped on the runner’s other leg, saying to him, ‘Now be nimble, and see that we win!’ It was arranged that whoever should first bring water out of a stream a long way off, should be the victor. Then the runner got a pitcher, and the King’s daughter another, and they began to run at the same time; but in a moment, when the King’s daughter was only just a little way off, no spectator could see the runner, and it seemed as if the wind had whistled past. In a short time he reached the stream, filled his pitcher with water, and turned round again. But, half way home, a great drowsiness came over him; he put down his pitcher, lay down, and fell asleep. He had, however, put a horse’s skull which was lying on the ground, for his pillow, so that he should not be too comfortable and might soon wake up.

In the meantime the King’s daughter, who could also run well, as well as an ordinary man could, reached the stream, and hastened back with her pitcher full of water. When she saw the runner lying there asleep, she was delighted, and said, ‘My enemy is given into my hands!’ She emptied his pitcher and ran on.

Everything now would have been lost, if by good luck the hunter had not been standing on the castle tower and had seen everything with his sharp eyes.

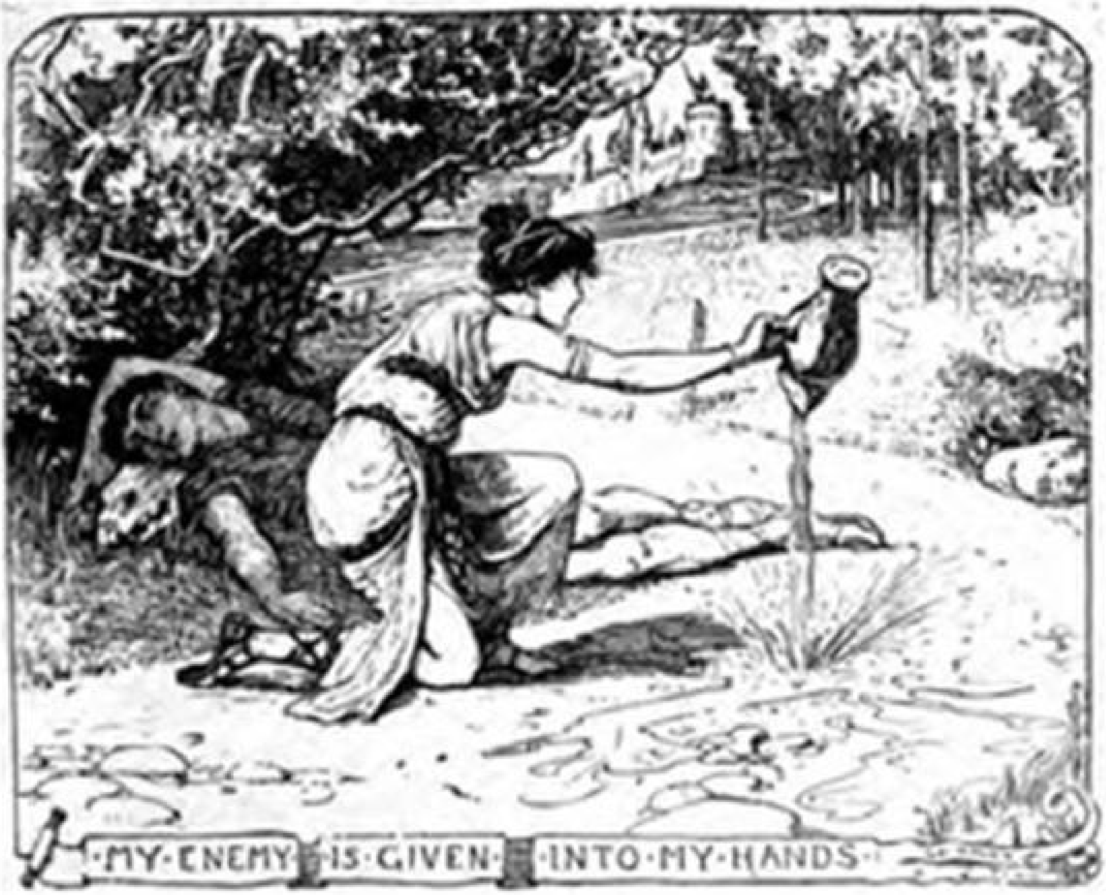

‘Ah,’ said he, ‘the King’s daughter shall not overreach us;’ and, loading his gun, he shot so cleverly, that he shot away the horse’s skull from under the runner’s head, without its hurting him. Then the runner awoke, jumped up, and saw that his pitcher was empty and the King’s daughter far ahead. But he did not lose courage, and ran back to the stream with his pitcher, filled it once more with water, and was home ten minutes before the King’s daughter arrived.

‘Look,’ said he, ‘I have only just exercised my legs; that was nothing of a run.’

But the King was angry, and his daughter even more so, that she should be carried away by a common, discharged soldier. They consulted together how they could destroy both him and his companions.

‘Then,’ said the King to her, ‘I have found a way. Don’t be frightened; they shall not come home again.’ He said to them, ‘You must now make merry together, and eat and drink,’ and he led them into a room which had a floor of iron; the doors were also of iron, and the windows were barred with iron. In the room was a table spread with delicious food. The King said to them, ‘Go in and enjoy yourselves,’ and as soon as they were inside he had the doors shut and bolted. Then he made the cook come, and ordered him to keep up a large fire under the room until the iron was red-hot. The cook did so, and the Six sitting round the table felt it grow very warm, and they thought this was because of their good fare; but when the heat became still greater and they wanted to go out, but found the doors and windows fastened, then they knew that the King meant them harm and was trying to suffocate them.

‘But he shall not succeed,’ cried he of the little hat, ‘I will make a frost come which shall make the fire ashamed and die out!’ So he put his hat on straight, and at once there came such a frost that all the heat disappeared and the food on the dishes began to freeze. When a couple of hours had passed, and the King thought they must be quite dead from the heat, he had the doors opened and went in himself to see.

But when the doors were opened, there stood all Six, alive and well, saying they were glad they could come out to warm themselves, for the great cold in the room had frozen all the food hard in the dishes. Then the King went angrily to the cook, and scolded him, and asked him why he had not done what he was told.

But the cook answered, ‘There is heat enough there; see for yourself.’ Then the King saw a huge fire burning under the iron room, and understood that he could do no harm to the Six in this way. The King now began again to think how he could free himself from his unwelcome guests. He commanded the master to come before him, and said, ‘If you will take gold, and give up your right to my daughter, you shall have as much as you like.’

‘Oh, yes, your Majesty,’ answered he, ‘give me as much as my servant can carry, and I will give up your daughter.’

The King was delighted, and the man said, ‘I will come and fetch it in fourteen days.’

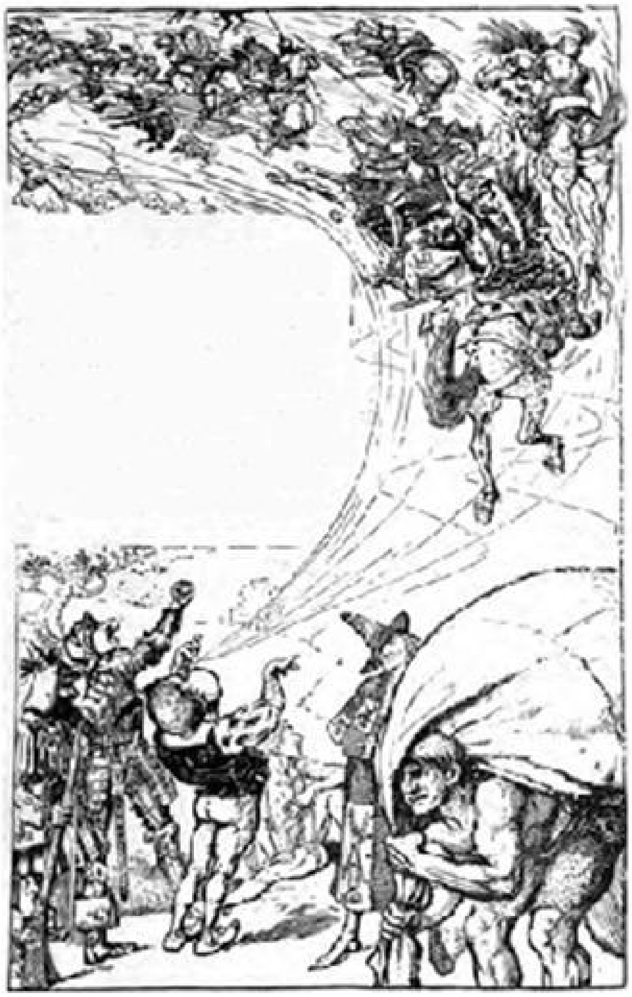

Then he called all the tailors in the kingdom together, and made them sit down for fourteen days sewing at a sack. When it was finished, he made the strong man who had uprooted the trees take the sack on his shoulder and go with him to the King. Then the King said, ‘What a powerful fellow that is, carrying that bale of linen as large as a house on his shoulder!’ and he was much frightened, and thought ‘What a lot of gold he will make away with!’ Then he had a ton of gold brought, which sixteen of the strongest men had to carry; but the strong man seized it with one hand, put it in the sack, saying, ‘Why don’t you bring me more? That scarcely covers the bottom!’ Then the King had to send again and again to fetch his treasures, which the strong man shoved into the sack, and the sack was only half full.

‘Bring more,’ he cried, ‘these crumbs don’t fill it.’ So seven thousand waggons of the gold of the whole kingdom were driven up; these the strong man shoved into the sack, oxen and all.

‘I will no longer be particular,’ he said, ‘and will take what comes, so that the sack shall be full.’

When everything was put in and there was not yet enough, he said, ‘I will make an end of this; it is easy to fasten a sack when it is not full.’ Then he threw it on his back and went with his companions.

Now, when the King saw how a single man was carrying away the wealth of the whole country he was very angry, and made his cavalry mount and pursue the Six, and bring back the strong man with the sack. Two regiments soon overtook them, and called to them, ‘You are prisoners! lay down the sack of gold or you shall be cut down.’

‘What do you say?’ said the blower, ‘we are prisoners? Before that, you shall dance in the air!’ And he held one nostril and blew with the other at the two regiments; they were separated and blown away in the blue sky over the mountains, one this way, and the other that. A sergeant-major cried for mercy, saying he had nine wounds, and was a brave fellow, and did not deserve this disgrace. So the blower let him off, and he came down without hurt. Then he said to him, ‘Now go home to the King, and say that if he sends any more cavalry I will blow them all into the air.’

When the King received the message, he said, ‘Let the fellows go; they are bewitched.’ Then the Six brought the treasure home, shared it among themselves, and lived contentedly till the end of their days.

THE WIZARD KING

In very ancient times there lived a King, whose power lay not only in the vast extent of his dominions, but also in the magic secrets of which he was master. After spending the greater part of his early youth in pleasure, he met a Princess of such remarkable beauty that he at once asked her hand in marriage, and, having obtained it, considered himself the happiest of men.

After a year’s time a son was born, worthy in every way of such distinguished parents, and much admired by the whole Court. As soon as the Queen thought him strong enough for a journey she set out with him secretly to visit her Fairy godmother. I said *secretly*, because the Fairy had warned the Queen that the King was a magician; and as from time immemorial there had been a standing feud between the Fairies and the Wizards, he might not have approved of his wife’s visit.

The Fairy godmother, who took the deepest interest in all the Queen’s concerns, and who was much pleased with the little Prince, endowed him with the power of pleasing everybody from his cradle, as well as with a wonderful ease in learning everything which could help to make him a perfectly accomplished Prince. Accordingly, to the delight of his teachers, he made the most rapid progress in his education, constantly surpassing everyone’s expectations. Before he was many years old, however, he had the great sorrow of losing his mother, whose last words were to advise him never to undertake anything of importance without consulting the Fairy under whose protection she had placed him.

The Prince’s grief at the death of his mother was great, but it was nothing compared to that of the King, his father, who was quite inconsolable for the loss of his dear wife. Neither time nor reason seemed to lighten his sorrow, and the sight of all the familiar faces and things about him only served to remind him of his loss.

He therefore resolved to travel for change, and by means of his magic art was able to visit every country he came to see under different shapes, returning every few weeks to the place where he had left a few followers.

Having travelled from land to land in this fashion without finding anything to rivet his attention, it occurred to him to take the form of an eagle, and in this shape he flew across many countries and arrived at length in a new and lovely spot, where the air seemed filled with the scent of jessamine and orange flowers with which the ground was thickly planted. Attracted by the sweet perfume he flew lower, and perceived some large and beautiful gardens filled with the rarest flowers, and with fountains throwing up their clear waters into the air in a hundred different shapes. A wide stream flowed through the garden, and on it floated richly ornamented barges and gondolas filled with people dressed in the most elegant manner and covered with jewels.

In one of these barges sat the Queen of that country with her only daughter, a maiden more beautiful than the Day Star, and attended by the ladies of the Court. No more exquisitely lovely mortal was ever seen than this Princess, and it needed all an eagle’s strength of sight to prevent the King being hopelessly dazzled. He perched on the top of a large orange tree, whence he was able to survey the scene and to gaze at pleasure on the Princess’s charms.

Now, an eagle with a King’s heart in his breast is apt to be bold, and accordingly he instantly made up his mind to carry off the lovely damsel, feeling sure that having once seen her he could not live without her.

He waited till he saw her in the act of stepping ashore, when, suddenly swooping down, he carried her off before her equerry in attendance had advanced to offer her his hand. The Princess, on finding herself in an eagle’s talons, uttered the most heart-breaking shrieks and cries; but her captor, though touched by her distress, would not abandon his lovely prey, and continued to fly through the air too fast to allow of his saying anything to comfort her.

At length, when he thought they had reached a safe distance, he began to lower his flight, and gradually descending to earth, deposited his burden in a flowery meadow. He then entreated her pardon for his violence, and told her that he was about to carry her to a great kingdom over which he ruled, and where he desired she should rule with him, adding many tender and consoling expressions.

For some time the Princess remained speechless; but recovering herself a little, she burst into a flood of tears. The King, much moved, said, ‘Adorable Princess, dry your tears. I implore you. My only wish is to make you the happiest person in the world.’

‘If you speak truth, my lord,’ replied the Princess, ‘restore to me the liberty you have deprived me of. Otherwise I can only look on you as my worst enemy.’

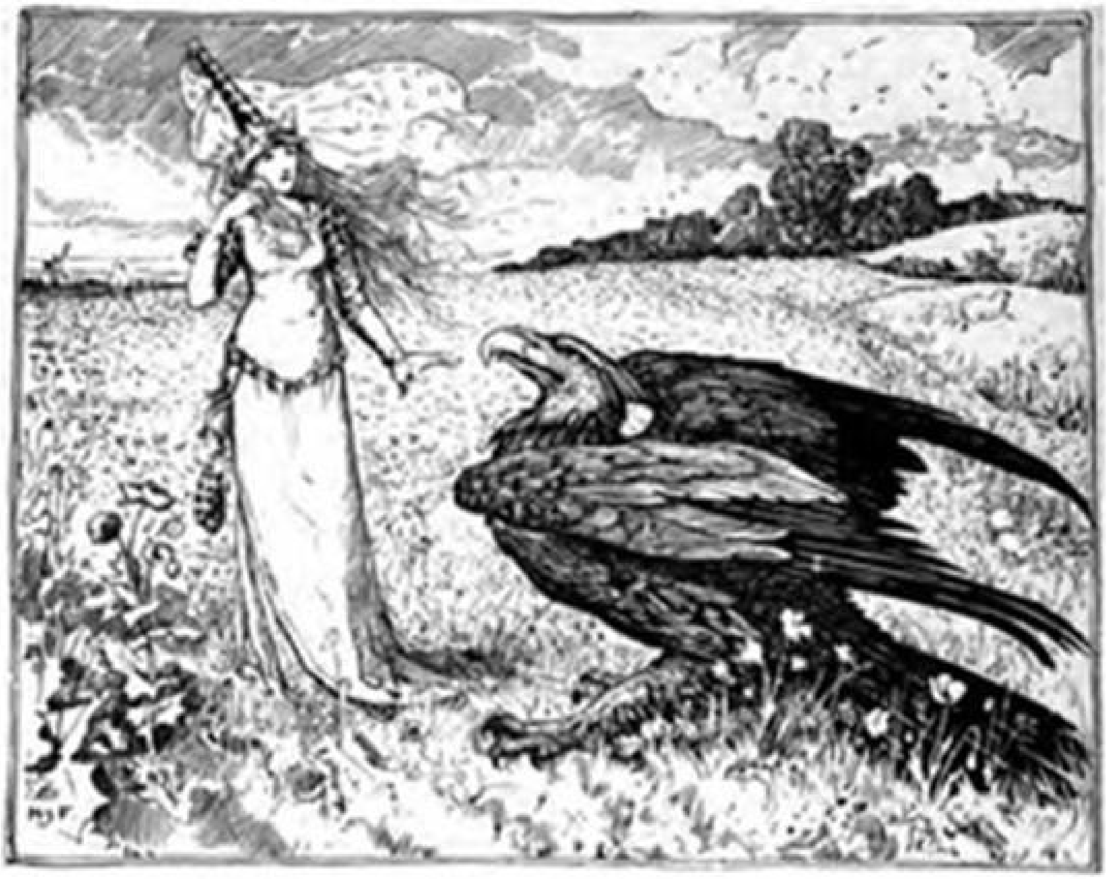

The Princess and the eagle in the flowery meadow

The King retorted that her opposition filled him with despair, but that he hoped to carry her to a place where all around would respect her, and where every pleasure would surround her. So saying, he seized her once more, and in spite of all her cries he rapidly bore her off to the neighbourhood of his capital. Here he gently placed her on a lawn, and as he did so she saw a magnificent palace spring up at her feet. The architecture was imposing, and in the interior the rooms were handsome and furnished in the best possible taste.

The Princess, who expected to be quite alone, was pleased at finding herself surrounded by a number of pretty girls, all anxious to wait on her, whilst a brilliantly-coloured parrot said the most agreeable things in the world.

On arriving at this palace the King had resumed his own form, and though no longer young, he might well have pleased any other than this Princess, who had been so prejudiced against him by his violence that she could only regard him with feelings of hatred, which she was at no pains to conceal. The King hoped, however, that time might not only soften her anger, but accustom her to his sight. He took the precaution of surrounding the palace with a dense cloud, and then hastened to his Court, where his prolonged absence was causing much anxiety.

The Prince and all the courtiers were delighted to see their beloved King again, but they had to submit themselves to more frequent absences than ever on his part. He made business a pretext for shutting himself up in his study, but it was really in order to spend the time with the Princess, who remained inflexible.

Not being able to imagine what could be the cause of so much obstinacy the King began to fear, lest, in spite of all his precautions, she might have heard of the charms of the Prince his son, whose goodness, youth and beauty, made him adored at Court. This idea made him horribly uneasy, and he resolved to remove the cause of his fears by sending the Prince on his travels escorted by a magnificent retinue.

The Prince, after visiting several Courts, arrived at the one where the lost Princess was still deeply mourned. The King and Queen received him most graciously, and some festivities were revived to do him honour.

One day when the Prince was visiting the Queen in her own apartments he was much struck by a most beautiful portrait. He eagerly inquired whose it was, and the Queen, with many tears, told him it was all that was left her of her beloved daughter, who had suddenly been carried off, she knew neither where nor how.

The Prince was deeply moved, and vowed that he would search the world for the Princess, and take no rest till he had found and restored her to her mother's arms. The Queen assured him of her eternal gratitude, and promised, should he succeed, to give him her daughter in marriage, together with all the estates she herself owned.

The Prince, far more attracted by the thoughts of possessing the Princess than her promised dower, set forth in his quest after taking leave of the King and Queen, the latter giving him a miniature of her daughter which she was in the habit of wearing. His first act was to seek the Fairy under whose protection he had been placed, and he implored her to give him all the assistance of her art and counsel in this important matter.

After listening attentively to the whole adventure, the Fairy asked for time to consult her books. After due consideration she informed the Prince that the object of his search was not far distant, but that it was too difficult for him to attempt to enter the enchanted palace where she was, as the King his father had surrounded it with a thick cloud, and that the only expedient she could think of would be to gain possession of the Princess's parrot. This, she added, did not appear impossible, as it often flew about to some distance in the neighbourhood.

Having told the Prince all this, the Fairy went out in hopes of seeing the parrot, and soon returned with the bird in her hand. She promptly shut it up in a cage, and, touching the Prince with her wand, transformed him into an exactly similar parrot; after which, she instructed him how to reach the Princess.

The Prince reached the palace in safety, but was so dazzled at first by the Princess's beauty, which far surpassed his expectations, that he was quite dumb for a time. The Princess was surprised and anxious, and fearing the parrot, who was her greatest comfort, had fallen ill, she took him in her hand and caressed him. This soon reassured the Prince, and encouraged him to play his part well, and he began to say a thousand agreeable things which charmed the Princess.

Presently the King appeared, and the parrot noticed with joy how much he was disliked. As soon as the King left, the Princess retired to her dressing-room, the parrot flew after her and overheard her lamentations at the continued persecutions of the King, who had pressed her to consent to their marriage. The parrot said so many clever and tender things to comfort her that she began to doubt whether this could indeed be her own parrot.

When he saw her well-disposed towards him, he exclaimed: 'Madam, I have a most important secret to confide to you, and I beg you not to be alarmed by what I am about to say. I am here on behalf of the Queen your mother, with the object of delivering your Highness; to prove which, behold this portrait which she gave me herself.' So saying he drew forth the miniature from under his wing. The Princess's surprise was great, but after what she had seen and heard it was impossible not to indulge in hope, for she had recognised the likeness of herself which her mother always wore.

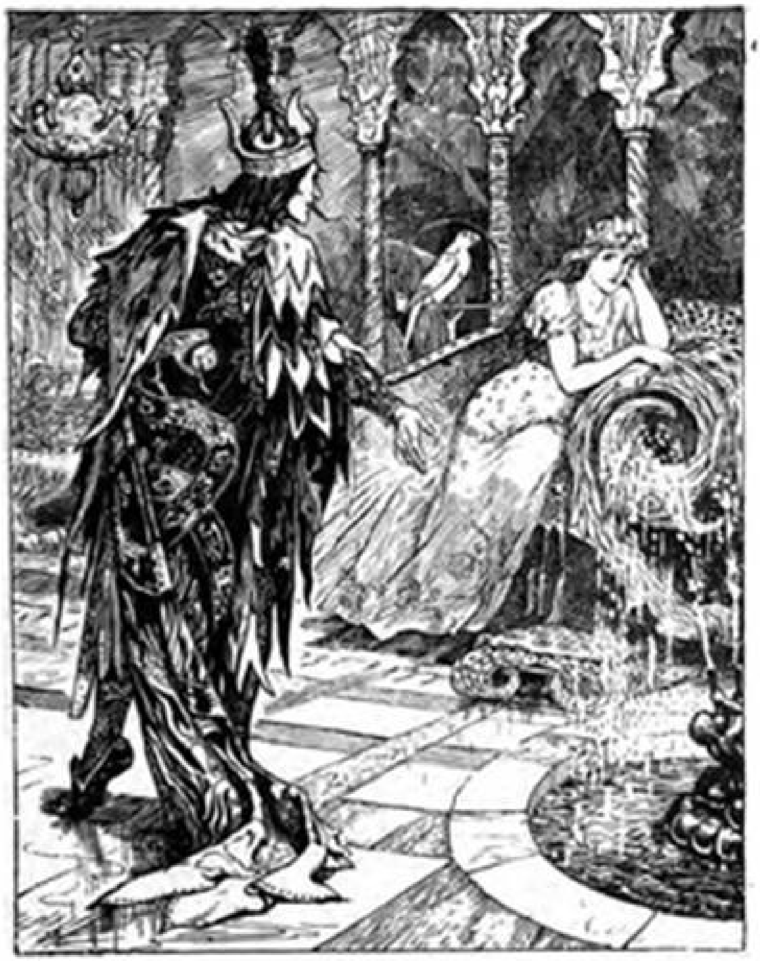

The Wizard King pays a visit to the Princess

The parrot, finding she was not much alarmed, told her who he was, all that her mother had promised him and the help he had already received from a Fairy who had assured him that she would give him means to transport the Princess to her mother’s arms.

When he found her listening attentively to him, he implored the Princess to allow him to resume his natural shape. She did not speak, so he drew a feather from his wing, and she beheld before her a Prince of such surpassing beauty that it was impossible not to hope that she might owe her liberty to so charming a person.

Meantime the Fairy had prepared a chariot, to which she harnessed two powerful eagles; then placing the cage, with the parrot in it, she charged the bird to conduct it to the window of the Princess’s dressing-room. This was done in a few minutes, and the Princess, stepping into the chariot with the Prince, was delighted to find her parrot again.

As they rose through the air the Princess remarked a figure mounted on an eagle’s back flying in front of the chariot. She was rather alarmed, but the Prince reassured her, telling her it was the good Fairy to whom she owed so much, and who was now conducting her in safety to her mother.

That same morning the King woke suddenly from a troubled sleep. He had dreamt that the Princess was being carried off from him, and, transforming himself into an eagle, he flew to the palace. When he failed to find her he flew into a terrible rage, and hastened home to consult his books, by which means he discovered that it was his son who had deprived him of this precious treasure. Immediately he took the shape of a harpy, and, filled with rage, was determined to devour his son, and even the Princess too, if only he could overtake them.

He set out at full speed; but he started too late, and was further delayed by a strong wind which the Fairy raised behind the young couple so as to baffle any pursuit.

You may imagine the rapture with which the Queen received the daughter she had given up for lost, as well as the amiable Prince who had rescued her. The Fairy entered with them, and warned the Queen that the Wizard King would shortly arrive, infuriated by his loss, and that nothing could preserve the Prince and Princess from his rage and magic unless they were actually married.

The Queen hastened to inform the King her husband, and the wedding took place on the spot.

As the ceremony was completed the Wizard King arrived. His despair at being so late bewildered him so entirely that he appeared in his natural form and attempted to sprinkle some black liquid over the bride and bridegroom, which was intended to kill them, but the Fairy stretched out her wand and the liquid dropped on the Magician himself. He fell down senseless, and the Princess’s father, deeply offended at the cruel revenge which had been attempted, ordered him to be removed and locked up in prison.

Now as magicians lose all their power as soon as they are in prison, the King felt himself much embarrassed at being thus at the mercy of those he had so greatly offended. The Prince implored and obtained his father’s pardon, and the prison doors were opened.

No sooner was this done than the Wizard King was seen in the air under the form of some unknown bird, exclaiming as he flew off that he would never forgive either his son or the Fairy the cruel wrong they had done him.

Everyone entreated the Fairy to settle in the kingdom where she now was, to which she consented. She built herself a magnificent palace, to which she transported her books and fairy secrets, and where she enjoyed the sight of the perfect happiness she had helped to bestow on the entire royal family.

THE NIXY

There was once upon a time a miller who was very well off, and had as much money and as many goods as he knew what to do with. But sorrow comes in the night, and the miller all of a sudden became so poor that at last he could hardly call the mill in which he sat his own. He wandered about all day full of despair and misery, and when he lay down at night he could get no rest, but lay awake all night sunk in sorrowful thoughts.

One morning he rose up before dawn and went outside, for he thought his heart would be lighter in the open air. As he wandered up and down on the banks of the mill-pond he heard a rustling in the water, and when he looked near he saw a white woman rising up from the waves.

He realised at once that this could be none other than the nixy of the mill-pond, and in his terror he didn’t know if he should fly away or remain where he was. While he hesitated the nixy spoke, called him by his name, and asked him why he was so sad.

When the miller heard how friendly her tone was, he plucked up heart and told her how rich and prosperous he had been all his life up till now, when he didn’t know what he was to do for want and misery.

Then the nixy spoke comforting words to him, and promised that she would make him richer and more prosperous than he had ever been in his life before, if he would give her in return the youngest thing in his house.

The miller thought she must mean one of his puppies or kittens, so promised the nixy at once what she asked, and returned to his mill full of hope. On the threshold he was greeted by a servant with the news that his wife had just given birth to a boy.

The poor miller was much horrified by these tidings, and went in to his wife with a heavy heart to tell her and his relations of the fatal bargain he had just struck with the nixy. ‘I would gladly give up all the good fortune she promised me,’ he said, ‘if I could only save my child.’ But no one could think of any advice to give him, beyond taking care that the child never went near the mill-pond.

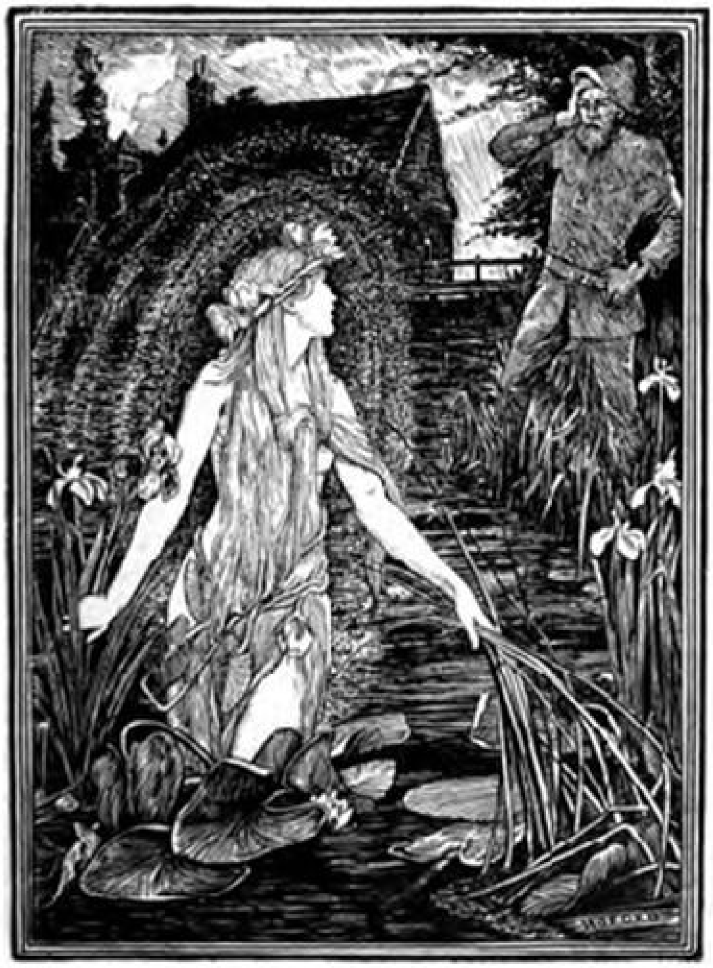

The miller sees the nixy of the mill pond

So the boy throve and grew big, and in the meantime all prospered with the miller, and in a few years he was richer than he had ever been before. But all the same he did not enjoy his good fortune, for he could not forget his compact with the nixy, and he knew that sooner or later she would demand his fulfilment of it. But year after year went by, and the boy grew up and became a great hunter, and the lord of the land took him into his service, for he was as smart and bold a hunter as you would wish to see. In a short time he married a pretty young wife, and lived with her in great peace and happiness.

One day when he was out hunting a hare sprang up at his feet, and ran for some way in front of him in the open field. The hunter pursued it hotly for some time, and at last shot it dead. Then he proceeded to skin it, never noticing that he was close to the mill-pond, which from childhood up he had been taught to avoid. He soon finished the skinning, and went to the water to wash the blood off his hands. He had hardly dipped them in the pond when the nixy rose up in the water, and seizing him in her wet arms she dragged him down with her under the waves.

When the hunter did not come home in the evening his wife grew very anxious, and when his game bag was found close to the mill-pond she guessed at once what had befallen him. She was nearly beside herself with grief, and roamed round and round the pond calling on her husband without ceasing. At last, worn out with sorrow and fatigue, she fell asleep and dreamt that she was wandering along a flowery meadow, when she came to a hut where she found an old witch, who promised to restore her husband to her.

When she awoke next morning she determined to set out and find the witch; so she wandered on for many a day, and at last she reached the flowery meadow and found the hut where the old witch lived. The poor wife told her all that had happened and how she had been told in a dream of the witch's power to help her.

The witch counselled her to go to the pond the first time there was a full moon, and to comb her black hair with a golden comb, and then to place the comb on the bank. The hunter's wife gave the witch a handsome present, thanked her heartily, and returned home.

Time dragged heavily till the time of the full moon, but it passed at last, and as soon as it rose the young wife went to the pond, combed her black hair with a golden comb, and when she had finished, placed the comb on the bank; then she watched the water impatiently. Soon she heard a rushing sound, and a big wave rose suddenly and swept the comb off the bank, and a minute after the head of her husband rose from the pond and gazed sadly at her. But immediately another wave came, and the head sank back into the water without having said a word. The pond lay still and motionless, glittering in the moonshine, and the hunter's wife was not a bit better off than she had been before.

In despair she wandered about for days and nights, and at last, worn out by fatigue, she sank once more into a deep sleep, and dreamt exactly the same dream about the old witch. So next morning she went again to the flowery meadow and sought the witch in her hut, and told her of her grief. The old woman counselled her to go to the mill-pond the next full moon and play upon a golden flute, and then to lay the flute on the bank.

As soon as the next moon was full the hunter's wife went to the mill-pond, played on a golden flute, and when she had finished placed it on the bank. Then a rushing sound was heard, and a wave swept the flute off the bank, and soon the head of the hunter appeared and rose up higher and higher till he was half out of the water. Then he gazed sadly at his wife and stretched out his arms towards her. But another rushing wave arose and dragged him under once more. The hunter's wife, who had stood on the bank full of joy and hope, sank into despair when she saw her husband snatched away again before her eyes.

But for her comfort she dreamt the same dream a third time, and betook herself once more to the old witch’s hut in the flowery meadow. This time the old woman told her to go the next full moon to the mill-pond, and to spin there with a golden spinning-wheel, and then to leave the spinning-wheel on the bank.

The hunter’s wife did as she was advised, and the first night the moon was full she sat and spun with a golden spinning-wheel, and then left the wheel on the bank. In a few minutes a rushing sound was heard in the waters, and a wave swept the spinning-wheel from the bank. Immediately the head of the hunter rose up from the pond, getting higher and higher each moment, till at length he stepped on to the bank and fell on his wife’s neck.

But the waters of the pond rose up suddenly, overflowed the bank where the couple stood, and dragged them under the flood. In her despair the young wife called on the old witch to help her, and in a moment the hunter was turned into a frog and his wife into a toad. But they were not able to remain together, for the water tore them apart, and when the flood was over they both resumed their own shapes again, but the hunter and the hunter’s wife found themselves each in a strange country, and neither knew what had become of the other.

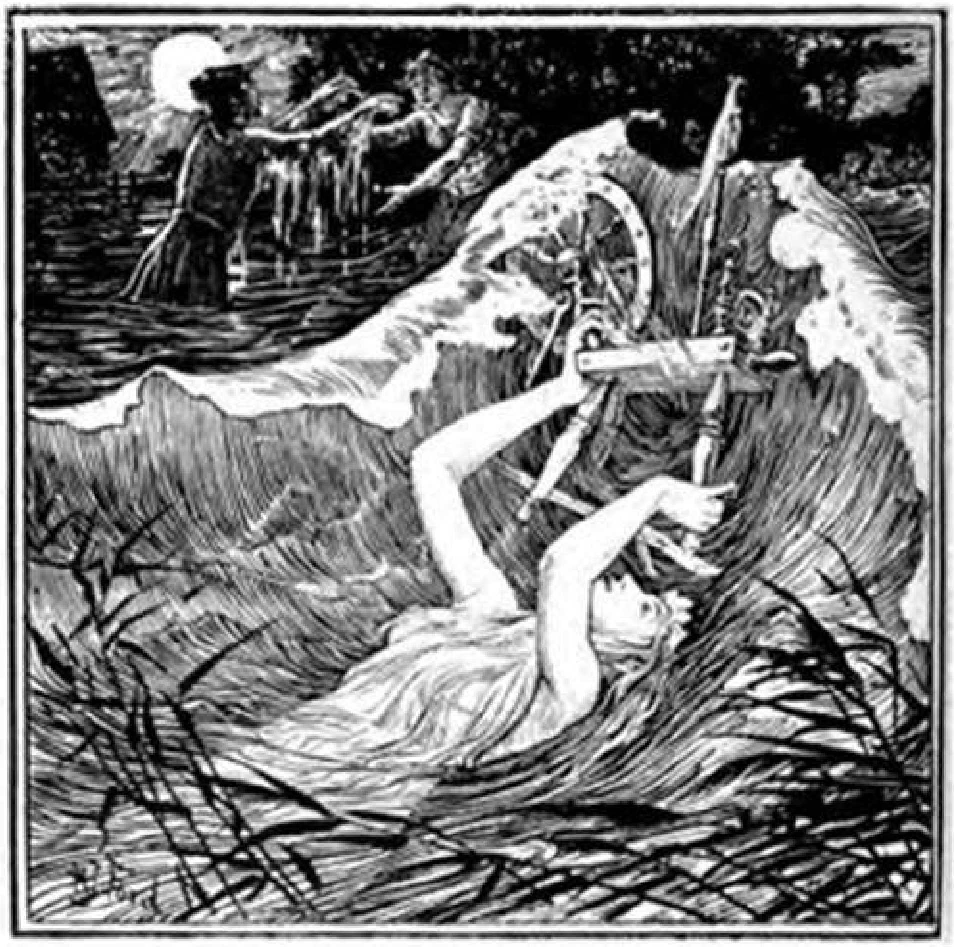

‘A wave swept the spinning-wheel from the bank’

The hunter determined to become a shepherd, and his wife too became a shepherdess. So they herded their sheep for many years in solitude and sadness.

Now it happened once that the shepherd came to the country where the shepherdess lived. The neighbourhood pleased him, and he saw that the pasture was rich and suitable for his flocks. So he brought his sheep there, and herded them as before. The shepherd and shepherdess became great friends, but they did not recognise each other in the least.

But one evening when the moon was full they sat together watching their flocks, and the shepherd played upon his flute. Then the shepherdess thought of that evening when she had sat at the full moon by the mill-pond and had played on the golden flute; the recollection was too much for her, and she burst into tears. The shepherd asked her why she was crying, and left her no peace till she told him all her story. Then the scales fell from the shepherd’s eyes, and he recognised his wife, and she him. So they returned joyfully to their own home, and lived in peace and happiness ever after.

THE GLASS MOUNTAIN

Once upon a time there was a Glass Mountain at the top of which stood a castle made of pure gold, and in front of the castle there grew an apple-tree on which there were golden apples.

Anyone who picked an apple gained admittance into the golden castle, and there in a silver room sat an enchanted Princess of surpassing fairness and beauty. She was as rich too as she was beautiful, for the cellars of the castle were full of precious stones, and great chests of the finest gold stood round the walls of all the rooms.

Many knights had come from afar to try their luck, but it was in vain they attempted to climb the mountain. In spite of having their horses shod with sharp nails, no one managed to get more than half-way up, and then they all fell back right down to the bottom of the steep slippery hill. Sometimes they broke an arm, sometimes a leg, and many a brave man had broken his neck even.

The beautiful Princess sat at her window and watched the bold knights trying to reach her on their splendid horses. The sight of her always gave men fresh courage, and they flocked from the four quarters of the globe to attempt the work of rescuing her. But all in vain, and for seven years the Princess had sat now and waited for some one to scale the Glass Mountain.

A heap of corpses both of riders and horses lay round the mountain, and many dying men lay groaning there unable to go any farther with their wounded limbs. The whole neighbourhood had the appearance of a vast churchyard. In three more days the seven years would be at an end, when a knight in golden armour and mounted on a spirited steed was seen making his way towards the fatal hill.

Sticking his spurs into his horse he made a rush at the mountain, and got up half-way, then he calmly turned his horse’s head and came down again without a slip or stumble. The following day he started in the same way; the horse trod on the glass as if it had been level earth, and sparks of fire flew from its hoofs. All the other knights gazed in astonishment, for he had almost gained the summit, and in another moment he would have reached the apple-tree; but of a sudden a huge eagle rose up and spread its mighty wings, hitting as it did so the knight’s horse in the eye. The beast shied, opened its wide nostrils and tossed its mane, then rearing high up in the air, its hind feet slipped and it fell with its rider down the steep mountain side. Nothing was left of either of them except their bones, which rattled in the battered golden armour like dry peas in a pod.

And now there was only one more day before the close of the seven years. Then there arrived on the scene a mere schoolboy — a merry, happy-hearted youth, but at the same time strong and well-grown. He saw how many knights had broken their necks in vain, but undaunted he approached the steep mountain on foot and began the ascent.

For long he had heard his parents speak of the beautiful Princess who sat in the golden castle at the top of the Glass Mountain. He listened to all he heard, and determined that he too would try his luck. But first he went to the forest and caught a lynx, and cutting off the creature’s sharp claws, he fastened them on to his own hands and feet.

Armed with these weapons he boldly started up the Glass Mountain. The sun was nearly going down, and the youth had not got more than half-way up. He could hardly draw breath he was so worn out, and his mouth was parched by thirst. A huge black cloud passed over his head, but in vain did he beg and beseech her to let a drop of water fall on him. He opened his mouth, but the black cloud sailed past and not as much as a drop of dew moistened his dry lips.

His feet were torn and bleeding, and he could only hold on now with his hands. Evening closed in, and he strained his eyes to see if he could behold the top of the mountain. Then he gazed beneath him, and what a sight met his eyes! A yawning abyss, with certain and terrible death at the bottom, reeking with half-decayed bodies of horses and riders! And this had been the end of all the other brave men who like himself had attempted the ascent.

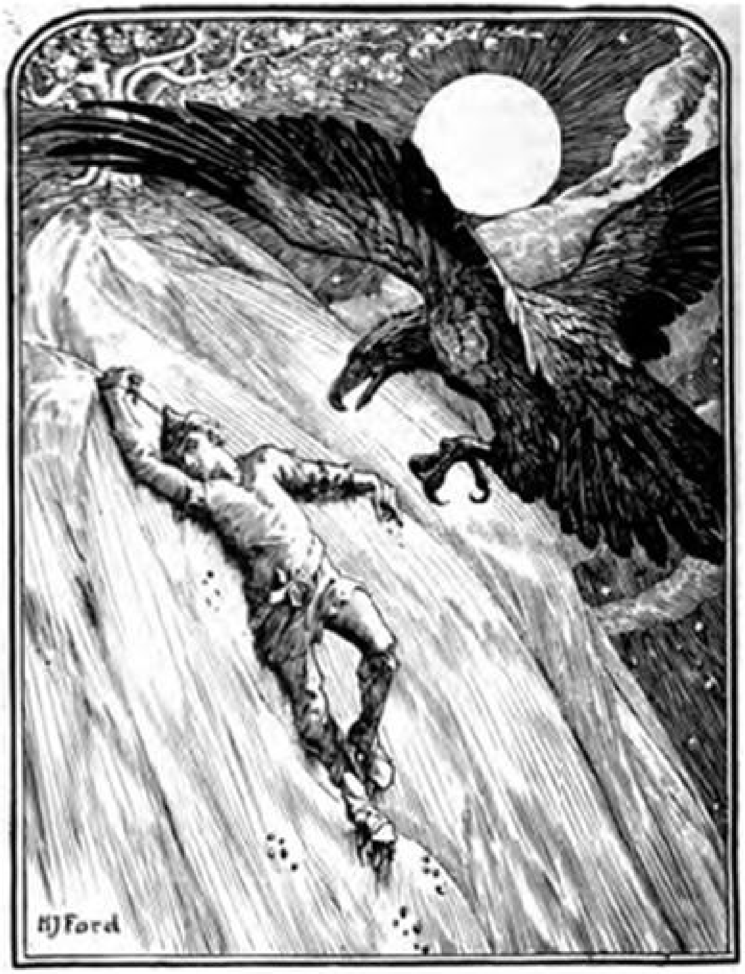

The boy attacked by the eagle on the Glass Mountain

It was almost pitch dark now, and only the stars lit up the Glass Mountain. The poor boy still clung on as if glued to the glass by his blood-stained hands. He made no struggle to get higher, for all his strength had left him, and seeing no hope he calmly awaited death. Then all of a sudden he fell into a deep sleep, and forgetful of his dangerous position, he slumbered sweetly. But all the same, although he slept, he had stuck his sharp claws so firmly into the glass that he was quite safe not to fall.

Now the golden apple-tree was guarded by the eagle which had overthrown the golden knight and his horse. Every night it flew round the Glass Mountain keeping a careful look-out, and no sooner had the moon emerged from the clouds than the bird rose up from the apple-tree, and circling round in the air, caught sight of the sleeping youth.

Greedy for carrion, and sure that this must be a fresh corpse, the bird swooped down upon the boy. But he was awake now, and perceiving the eagle, he determined by its help to save himself.

The eagle dug its sharp claws into the tender flesh of the youth, but he bore the pain without a sound, and seized the bird’s two feet with his hands. The creature in terror lifted him high up into the air and began to circle round the tower of the castle. The youth held on bravely. He saw the glittering palace, which by the pale rays of the moon looked like a dim lamp; and he saw the high windows, and round one of them a balcony in which the beautiful Princess sat lost in sad thoughts. Then the boy saw that he was close to the apple-tree, and drawing a small knife from his belt, he cut off both the eagle’s feet. The bird rose up in the air in its agony and vanished into the clouds, and the youth fell on to the broad branches of the apple-tree.

Then he drew out the claws of the eagle’s feet that had remained in his flesh, and put the peel of one of the golden apples on the wound, and in one moment it was healed and well again. He pulled several of the beautiful apples and put them in his pocket; then he entered the castle. The door was guarded by a great dragon, but as soon as he threw an apple at it, the beast vanished.

At the same moment a gate opened, and the youth perceived a courtyard full of flowers and beautiful trees, and on a balcony sat the lovely enchanted Princess with her retinue.

As soon as she saw the youth, she ran towards him and greeted him as her husband and master. She gave him all her treasures, and the youth became a rich and mighty ruler. But he never returned to the earth, for only the mighty eagle, who had been the guardian of the Princess and of the castle, could have carried on his wings the enormous treasure down to the world. But as the eagle had lost its feet it died, and its body was found in a wood on the Glass Mountain.

* * *

One day when the youth was strolling about in the palace garden with the Princess, his wife, he looked down over the edge of the Glass Mountain and saw to his astonishment a great number of people gathered there. He blew his silver whistle, and the swallow who acted as messenger in the golden castle flew past.

‘Fly down and ask what the matter is,’ he said to the little bird, who sped off like lightning and soon returned saying:

‘The blood of the eagle has restored all the people below to life. All those who have perished on this mountain are awakening up to-day, as it were from a sleep, and are mounting their horses, and the whole population are gazing on this unheard-of wonder with joy and amazement.’

ALPHEGE, OR THE GREEN MONKEY

Many years ago there lived a King, who was twice married. His first wife, a good and beautiful woman, died at the birth of her little son, and the King her husband was so overwhelmed with grief at her loss that his only comfort was in the sight of his heir.

When the time for the young Prince's christening came the King chose as godmother a neighbouring Princess, so celebrated for her wisdom and goodness that she was commonly called 'the Good Queen.' She named the baby Alphege, and from that moment took him to her heart.

Time wipes away the greatest griefs, and after two or three years the King married again. His second wife was a Princess of undeniable beauty, but by no means of so amiable a disposition as the first Queen. In due time a second Prince was born, and the Queen was devoured with rage at the thought that Prince Alphege came between her son and the throne. She took care however to conceal her jealous feelings from the King.

At length she could control herself no longer, so she sent a trusty servant to her old and faithful friend the Fairy of the Mountain, to beg her to devise some means by which she might get rid of her stepson.

The Fairy replied that, much as she desired to be agreeable to the Queen in every way, it was impossible for her to attempt anything against the young Prince, who was under the protection of some greater Power than her own.

The 'Good Queen' on her side watched carefully over her godson. She was obliged to do so from a distance, her own country being a remote one, but she was well informed of all that went on and knew all about the Queen's wicked designs. She therefore sent the Prince a large and splendid ruby, with injunctions to wear it night and day as it would protect him from all attacks, but added that the talisman only retained its power as long as the Prince remained within his father's dominions. The Wicked Queen knowing this made every attempt to get the Prince out of the country, but her efforts failed, till one day accident did what she was unable to accomplish.

The King had an only sister who was deeply attached to him, and who was married to the sovereign of a distant country. She had always kept up a close correspondence with her brother, and the accounts she heard of Prince Alphege made her long to become acquainted with so charming a nephew. She entreated the King to allow the Prince to visit her, and after some hesitation which was overruled by his wife, he finally consented.

Prince Alphege was at this time fourteen years old, and the handsomest and most engaging youth imaginable. In his infancy he had been placed in the charge of one of the great ladies of the Court, who, according to the prevailing custom, acted first as his head nurse and then as his governess. When he outgrew her care her husband was appointed as his tutor and governor, so that he had never been separated from this excellent couple, who loved him as tenderly as they did their only daughter Zayda, and were warmly loved by him in return.

When the Prince set forth on his travels it was but natural that this devoted couple should accompany him, and accordingly he started with them and attended by a numerous retinue.

For some time he travelled through his father's dominions and all went well; but soon after passing the frontier they had to cross a desert plain under a burning sun. They were glad to take shelter under a group of trees near, and here the Prince complained of burning thirst. Luckily a tiny stream ran close by and some water was soon procured, but no sooner had he tasted it than he sprang from his carriage and disappeared in a moment. In vain did his anxious followers seek for him, he was nowhere to be found.

As they were hunting and shouting through the trees a great black monkey suddenly appeared on a point of rock and said: 'Poor sorrowing people, you are seeking your Prince in vain. Return to your own country and know that he will not be restored to you till you have for some time failed to recognise him.'

With these words he vanished, leaving the courtiers sadly perplexed; but as all their efforts to find the Prince were useless they had no choice but to go home, bringing with them the sad news, which so greatly distressed the King that he fell ill and died not long after.

The Queen, whose ambition was boundless, was delighted to see the crown on her son's head and to have the power in her own hands. Her hard rule made her very unpopular, and it was commonly believed that she had made away with Prince Alphege. Indeed, had the King her son not been deservedly beloved a revolution would certainly have arisen.

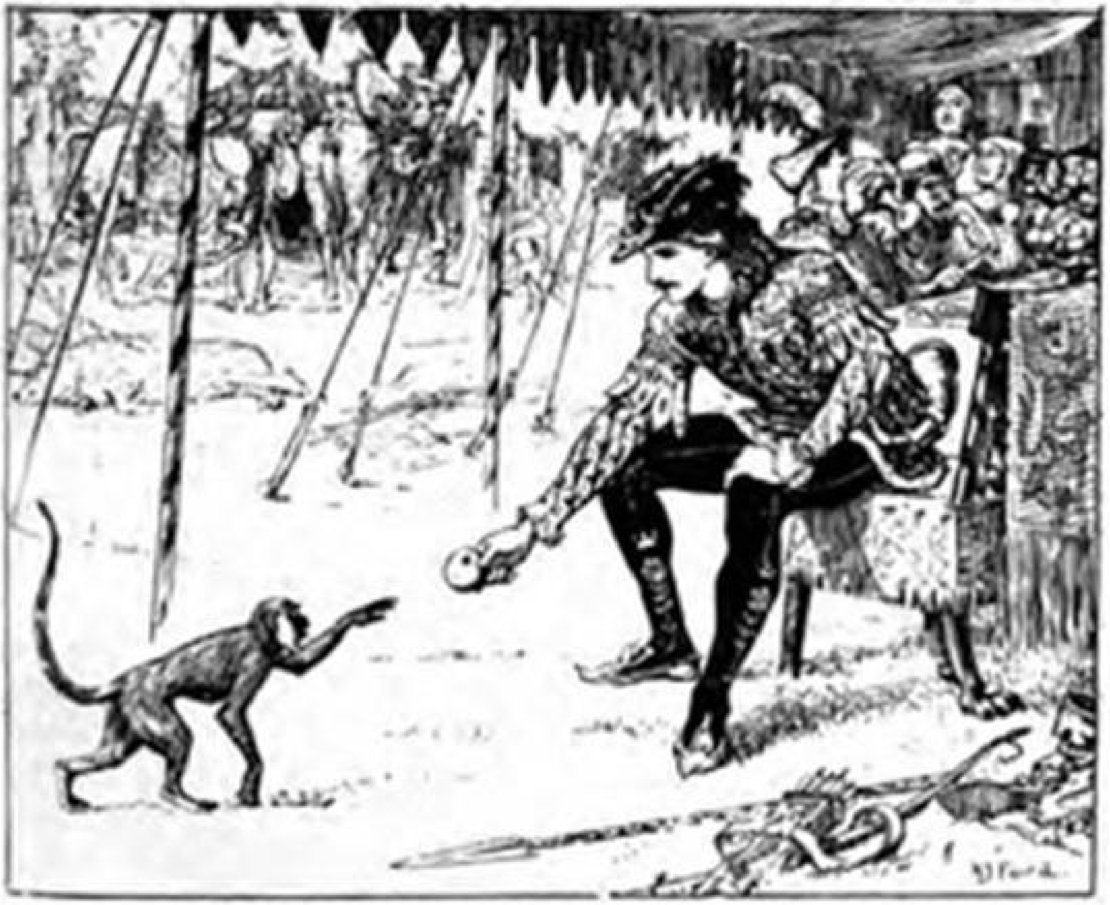

The King makes friends with the Green Monkey

Meantime the former governess of the unfortunate Alphege, who had lost her husband soon after the King’s death, retired to her own house with her daughter, who grew up a lovely and most loveable girl, and both continued to mourn the loss of their dear Prince.

The young King was devoted to hunting, and often indulged in his favourite pastime, attended by the noblest youths in his kingdom. One day, after a long morning’s chase he stopped to rest near a brook in the shade of a little wood, where a splendid tent had been prepared for him. Whilst at luncheon he suddenly spied a little monkey of the brightest green sitting on a tree and gazing so tenderly at him that he felt quite moved. He forbade his courtiers to frighten it, and the monkey, noticing how much attention was being paid him, sprang from bough to bough, and at length gradually approached the King, who offered him some food. The monkey took it very daintily and finally came to the table. The King took him on his knees, and, delighted with his capture, brought him home with him. He would trust no one else with its care, and the whole Court soon talked of nothing but the pretty green monkey.

One morning, as Prince Alphege's governess and her daughter were alone together, the little monkey sprang in through an open window. He had escaped from the palace, and his manners were so gentle and caressing that Zayda and her mother soon got over the first fright he had given them. He had spent some time with them and quite won their hearts by his insinuating ways, when the King discovered where he was and sent to fetch him back. But the monkey made such piteous cries, and seemed so unhappy when anyone attempted to catch him, that the two ladies begged the King to leave him a little longer with them, to which he consented.

One evening, as they sat by the fountain in the garden, the little monkey kept gazing at Zayda with such sad and loving eyes that she and her mother could not think what to make of it, and they were still more surprised when they saw big tears rolling down his cheeks.

Next day both mother and daughter were sitting in a jessamine bower in the garden, and they began to talk of the green monkey and his strange ways. The mother said, 'My dear child, I can no longer hide my feelings from you. I cannot get the thought out of my mind that the green monkey is no other than our beloved Prince Alphege, transformed in this strange fashion. I know the idea sounds wild, but I cannot get it out of my heart, and it leaves me no peace.'

As she spoke she glanced up, and there sat the little monkey, whose tears and gestures seemed to confirm her words.

The following night the elder lady dreamt that she saw the Good Queen, who said, 'Do not weep any longer but follow my directions. Go into your garden and lift up the little marble slab at the foot of the great myrtle tree. You will find beneath it a crystal vase filled with a bright green liquid. Take it with you and place the thing which is at present most in your thoughts into a bath filled with roses and rub it well with the green liquid.'

At these words the sleeper awoke, and lost no time in rising and hurrying to the garden, where she found all as the Good Queen had described. Then she hastened to rouse her daughter and together they prepared the bath, for they would not let their women know what they were about. Zayda gathered quantities of roses, and when all was ready they put the monkey into a large jasper bath, where the mother rubbed him all over with the green liquid.

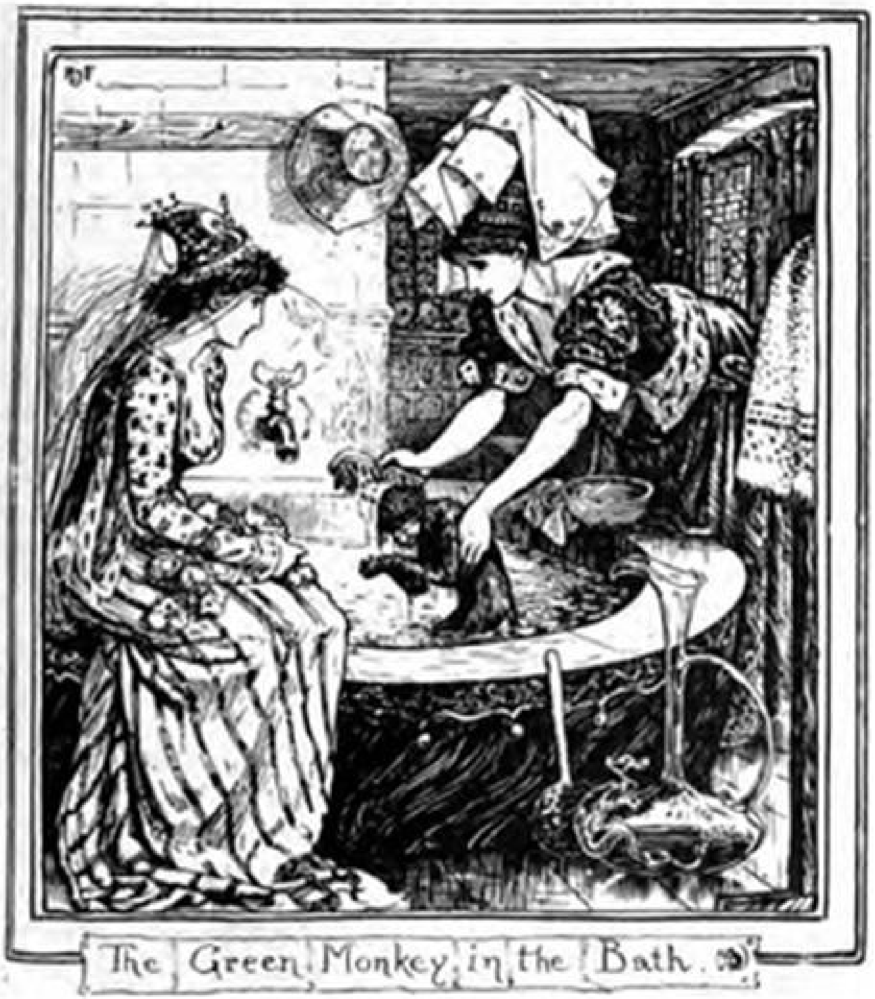

The Green Monkey in the Bath.

Their suspense was not long, for suddenly the monkey skin dropped off, and there stood Prince Alphege, the handsomest and most charming of men. The joy of such a meeting was beyond words. After a time the ladies begged the Prince to relate his adventures, and he told them of all his sufferings in the desert when he was first transformed. His only comfort had been in visits from the Good Queen, who had at length put him in the way of meeting his brother.

Several days were spent in these interesting conversations, but at length Zayda's mother began to think of the best means for placing the Prince on the throne, which was his by right.

The Queen on her side was feeling very anxious. She had felt sure from the first that her son's pet monkey was no other than Prince Alphege, and she longed to put an end to him. Her suspicions were confirmed by the Fairy of the Mountain, and she hastened in tears to the King, her son.

'I am informed,' she cried, 'that some ill-disposed people have raised up an impostor in the hopes of dethroning you. You must at once have him put to death.'

The King, who was very brave, assured the Queen that he would soon punish the conspirators. He made careful inquiries into the matter, and thought it hardly probable that a quiet widow and a young girl would think of attempting anything of the nature of a revolution.

He determined to go and see them, and to find out the truth for himself; so one night, without saying anything to the Queen or his ministers, he set out for the palace where the two ladies lived, attended only by a small band of followers.

The two ladies were at the moment deep in conversation with Prince Alphege, and hearing a knocking so late at night begged him to keep out of sight for a time. What was their surprise when the door was opened to see the King and his suite.

‘I know,’ said the King, ‘that you are plotting against my crown and person, and I have come to have an explanation with you.’

As she was about to answer Prince Alphege, who had heard all, came forward and said, ‘It is from me you must ask an explanation, brother.’ He spoke with such grace and dignity that everyone gazed at him with mute surprise.

At length the King, recovering from his astonishment at recognising the brother who had been lost some years before, exclaimed, ‘Yes, you are indeed my brother, and now that I have found you, take the throne to which I have no longer a right.’ So saying, he respectfully kissed the Prince’s hand.

Alphege threw himself into his arms, and the brothers hastened to the royal palace, where in the presence of the entire court he received the crown from his brother’s hand. To clear away any possible doubt, he showed the ruby which the Good Queen had given him in his childhood. As they were gazing at it, it suddenly split with a loud noise, and at the same moment the Wicked Queen expired.

King Alphege lost no time in marrying his dear and lovely Zayda, and his joy was complete when the Good Queen appeared at his wedding. She assured him that the Fairy of the Mountain had henceforth lost all power over him, and after spending some time with the young couple, and bestowing the most costly presents on them, she retired to her own country.

King Alphege insisted on his brother sharing his throne, and they all lived to a good old age, universally beloved and admired.

FAIRER-THAN-A-FAIRY

Once there lived a King who had no children for many years after his marriage. At length heaven granted him a daughter of such remarkable beauty that he could think of no name so appropriate for her as ‘Fairer-than-a-Fairy.’

It never occurred to the good-natured monarch that such a name was certain to call down the hatred and jealousy of the fairies in a body on the child, but this was what happened. No sooner had they heard of this presumptuous name than they resolved to gain possession of her who bore it, and either to torment her cruelly, or at least to conceal her from the eyes of all men.

The eldest of their tribe was entrusted to carry out their revenge. This Fairy was named Lagree; she was so old that she only had one eye and one tooth left, and even these poor remains she had to keep all night in a strengthening liquid. She was also so spiteful that she gladly devoted all her time to carrying out all the mean or ill-natured tricks of the whole body of fairies.

With her large experience, added to her native spite, she found but little difficulty in carrying off Fairer-than-a-Fairy. The poor child, who was only seven years old, nearly died of fear on finding herself in the power of this hideous creature. However, when after an hour’s journey underground she found herself in a splendid palace with lovely gardens, she felt a little reassured, and was further cheered when she discovered that her pet cat and dog had followed her.

The old Fairy led her to a pretty room which she said should be hers, at the same time giving her the strictest orders never to let out the fire which was burning brightly in the grate. She then gave two glass bottles into the Princess’s charge, desiring her to take the greatest care of them, and having enforced her orders with the most awful threats in case of disobedience, she vanished, leaving the little girl at liberty to explore the palace and grounds and a good deal relieved at having only two apparently easy tasks set her.

Several years passed, during which time the Princess grew accustomed to her lonely life, obeyed the Fairy’s orders, and by degrees forgot all about the court of the King her father.

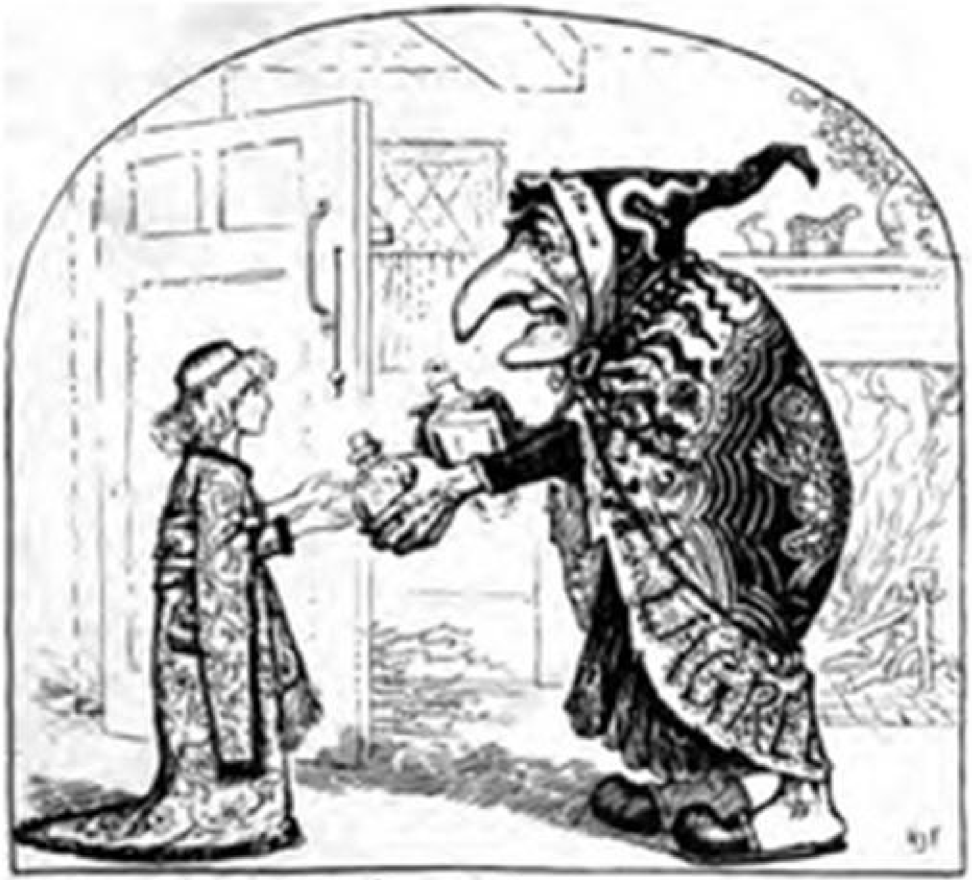

LAGREE gives the 2 bottles to FAIRERTHANAFAIRY.

One day, whilst passing near a fountain in the garden, she noticed that the sun’s rays fell on the water in such a manner as to produce a brilliant rainbow. She stood still to admire it, when, to her great surprise, she heard a voice addressing her which seemed to come from the centre of its rays. The voice was that of a young man, and its sweetness of tone and the agreeable things it uttered, led one to infer that its owner must be equally charming; but this had to be a mere matter of fancy, for no one was visible.

The beautiful Rainbow informed Fairer-than-a-Fairy that he was young, the son of a powerful king, and that the Fairy, Lagree, who owed his parents a grudge, had revenged herself by depriving him of his natural shape for some years; that she had imprisoned him in the palace, where he had found his confinement hard to bear for some time, but now, he owned, he no longer sighed for freedom since he had seen and learned to love Fairer-than-a-Fairy.

He added many other tender speeches to this declaration, and the Princess, to whom such remarks were a new experience, could not help feeling pleased and touched by his attentions.

The Prince could only appear or speak under the form of a Rainbow, and it was therefore necessary that the sun should shine on water so as to enable the rays to form themselves.

Fairer-than-a-Fairy lost no moment in which she could meet her lover, and they enjoyed many long and interesting interviews. One day, however, their conversation became so absorbing and time passed so quickly that the Princess forgot to attend to the fire, and it went out. Lagree, on her return, soon found out the neglect, and seemed only too pleased to have the opportunity of showing her spite to her lovely prisoner. She ordered Fairer-than-a-Fairy to start next day at dawn to ask Locrinos for fire with which to relight the one she had allowed to go out.

Now this Locrinos was a cruel monster who devoured everyone he came across, and especially enjoyed a chance of catching and eating any young girls. Our heroine obeyed with great sweetness, and without having been able to take leave of her lover she set off to go to Locrinos as to certain death. As she was crossing a wood a bird sang to her to pick up a shining pebble which she would find in a fountain close by, and to use it when needed. She took the bird’s advice, and in due time arrived at the house of Locrinos. Luckily she only found his wife at home, who was much struck by the Princess’s youth and beauty and sweet gentle manners, and still further impressed by the present of the shining pebble.

She readily let Fairer-than-a-Fairy have the fire, and in return for the stone she gave her another, which, she said, might prove useful some day. Then she sent her away without doing her any harm.

Lagree was as much surprised as displeased at the happy result of this expedition, and Fairer-than-a-Fairy waited anxiously for an opportunity of meeting Prince Rainbow and telling him her adventures. She found, however, that he had already been told all about them by a Fairy who protected him, and to whom he was related.

The dread of fresh dangers to his beloved Princess made him devise some more convenient way of meeting than by the garden fountain, and Fairer-than-a-Fairy carried out his plan daily with entire success. Every morning she placed a large basin full of water on her window-sill, and as soon as the sun’s rays fell on the water the Rainbow appeared as clearly as it had ever done in the fountain. By this means they were able to meet without losing sight of the fire or of the two bottles in which the old Fairy kept her eye and her tooth at night, and for some time the lovers enjoyed every hour of sunshine together.

One day Prince Rainbow appeared in the depths of woe. He had just heard that he was to be banished from this lovely spot, but he had no idea where he was to go. The poor young couple were in despair, and only parted with the last ray of sunshine, and in hopes of meeting next morning. Alas! next day was dark and gloomy, and it was only late in the afternoon that the sun broke through the clouds for a few minutes.

Fairer-than-a-Fairy eagerly ran to the window, but in her haste she upset the basin, and spilt all the water with which she had carefully filled it overnight. No other water was at hand except that in the two bottles. It was the only chance of seeing her lover before they were separated, and she did not hesitate to break the bottle and pour their contents into the basin, when the Rainbow appeared at once. Their farewells were full of tenderness; the Prince made the most ardent and sincere protestations, and promised to neglect nothing which might help to deliver his dear Fairer-than-a-Fairy from her captivity, and implored her to consent to their marriage as soon as they should both be free. The Princess, on her side, vowed to have no other husband, and declared herself willing to brave death itself in order to rejoin him.

They were not allowed much time for their adieus; the Rainbow vanished, and the Princess, resolved to run all risks, started off at once, taking nothing with her but her dog, her cat, a sprig of myrtle, and the stone which the wife of Locrinos gave her.

When Lagree became aware of her prisoner’s flight she was furious, and set off at full speed in pursuit. She overtook her just as the poor girl, overcome by fatigue, had lain down to rest in a cave which the stone had formed itself into to shelter her. The little dog who was watching her mistress promptly flew at Lagree and bit her so severely that she stumbled against a corner of the cave and broke off her only tooth. Before she had recovered from the pain and rage this caused her, the Princess had time to escape, and was some way on her road. Fear gave her strength for some time, but at last she could go no further, and sank down to rest. As she did so, the sprig of myrtle she carried touched the ground, and immediately a green and shady bower sprang up round her, in which she hoped to sleep in peace.

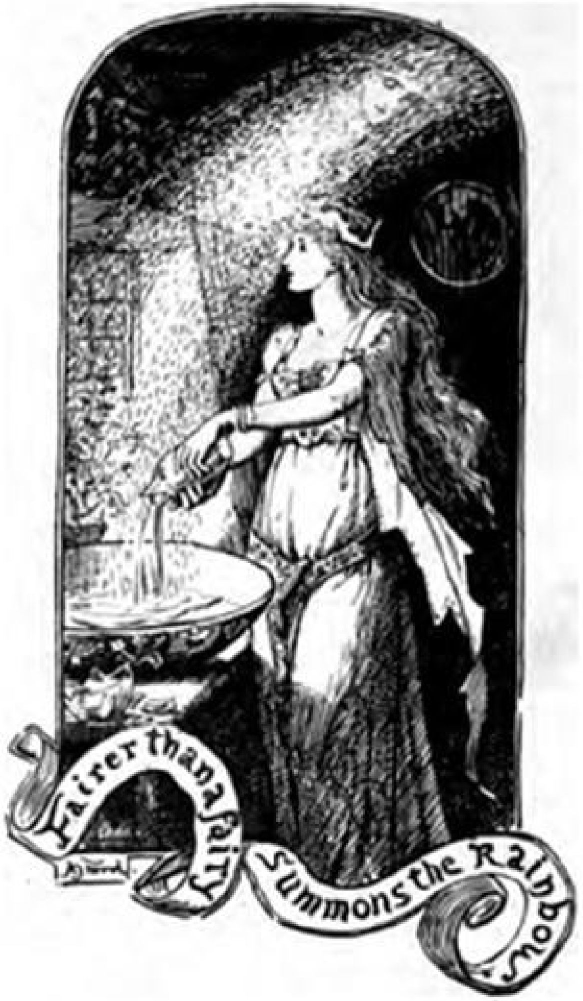
Fairer than a Fairy summons the Rainbow.

But Lagree had not given up her pursuit, and arrived just as Fairer-than-a-Fairy had fallen fast asleep. This time she made sure of catching her victim, but the cat spied her out, and, springing from one of the boughs of the arbour she flew at Lagree’s face and tore out her only eye, thus delivering the Princess for ever from her persecutor.

One might have thought that all would now be well, but no sooner had Lagree been put to flight than our heroine was overwhelmed with hunger and thirst. She felt as though she should certainly expire, and it was with some difficulty that she dragged herself as far as a pretty little green and white house, which stood at no great distance. Here she was received by a beautiful lady dressed in green and white to match the house, which apparently belonged to her, and of which she seemed the only inhabitant.

She greeted the fainting Princess most kindly, gave her an excellent supper, and after a long night’s rest in a delightful bed told her that after many troubles she should finally attain her desire.

As the green and white lady took leave of the Princess she gave her a nut, desiring her only to open it in the most urgent need.

After a long and tiring journey Fairer-than-a-Fairy was once more received in a house, and by a lady exactly like the one she had quitted. Here again she received a present with the same injunctions, but instead of a nut this lady gave her a golden pomegranate. The mournful Princess had to continue her weary way, and after many troubles and hardships she again found rest and shelter in a third house exactly similar to the two others.

These houses belonged to three sisters, all endowed with fairy gifts, and all so alike in mind and person that they wished their houses and garments to be equally alike. Their occupation consisted in helping those in misfortune, and they were as gentle and benevolent as Lagree had been cruel and spiteful.

The third Fairy comforted the poor traveller, begged her not to lose heart, and assured her that her troubles should be rewarded. She accompanied her advice by the gift of a crystal smelling-bottle, with strict orders only to open it in case of urgent need. Fairer-than-a-Fairy thanked her warmly, and resumed her way cheered by pleasant thoughts.

After a time her road led through a wood, full of soft airs and sweet odours, and before she had gone a hundred yards she saw a wonderful silver Castle suspended by strong silver chains to four of the largest trees. It was so perfectly hung that a gentle breeze rocked it sufficiently to send you pleasantly to sleep.

Fairer-than-a-Fairy felt a strong desire to enter this Castle, but besides being hung a little above the ground there seemed to be neither doors nor windows. She had no doubt (though really I cannot think why) that the moment had come in which to use the nut which had been given her. She opened it, and out came a diminutive hall porter at whose belt hung a tiny chain, at the end of which was a golden key half as long as the smallest pin you ever saw.

The Princess climbed up one of the silver chains, holding in her hand the little porter who, in spite of his minute size, opened a secret door with his golden key and let her in. She entered a magnificent room which appeared to occupy the entire Castle, and which was lighted by gold and jewelled stars in the ceiling. In the midst of this room stood a couch, draped with curtains of all the colours of the rainbow, and suspended by golden cords so that it swayed with the Castle in a manner which rocked its occupant delightfully to sleep.

On this elegant couch lay Prince Rainbow, looking more beautiful than ever, and sunk in profound slumber, in which he had been held ever since his disappearance.

Fairer-than-a-Fairy, who now saw him for the first time in his real shape, hardly dared to gaze at him, fearing lest his appearance might not be in keeping with the voice and language which had won her heart. At the same time she could not help feeling rather hurt at the apparent indifference with which she was received.

She related all the dangers and difficulties she had gone through, and though she repeated the story twenty times in a loud clear voice, the Prince slept on and took no heed. She then had recourse to the golden pomegranate, and on opening it found that all the seeds were as many little violins which flew up in the vaulted roof and at once began playing melodiously.

The Prince was not completely roused, but he opened his eyes a little and looked all the handsomer.

Impatient at not being recognised, Fairer-than-a-Fairy now drew out her third present, and on opening the crystal scent-bottle a little syren flew out, who silenced the violins and then sang close to the Prince's ear the story of all his lady love had suffered in her search for him. She added some gentle reproaches to her tale, but before she had got far he was wide awake, and transported with joy threw himself at the Princess's feet. At the same moment the walls of the room expanded and opened out, revealing a golden throne covered with jewels. A magnificent Court now began to assemble, and at the same time several elegant carriages filled with ladies in magnificent dresses drove up. In the first and most splendid of these carriages sat Prince Rainbow's mother. She fondly embraced her son, after which she informed him that his father had been dead for some years, that the anger of the Fairies was at length appeased, and that he might return in peace to reign over his people, who were longing for his presence.

The Court received the new King with joyful acclamations which would have delighted him at any other time, but all his thoughts were full of Fairer-than-a-Fairy. He was just about to present her to his mother and the Court, feeling sure that her charms would win all hearts, when the three green and white sisters appeared.

They declared the secret of Fairer-than-a-Fairy's royal birth, and the Queen taking the two lovers in her carriage set off with them for the capital of the kingdom.

Here they were received with tumultuous joy. The wedding was celebrated without delay, and succeeding years diminished neither the virtues, beauty, nor the mutual affection of King Rainbow and his Queen, Fairer-than-a-Fairy.

THE THREE BROTHERS

There was once upon a time a witch, who in the shape of a hawk used every night to break the windows of a certain village church. In the same village there lived three brothers, who were all determined to kill the mischievous hawk. But in vain did the two eldest mount guard in the church with their guns; as soon as the bird appeared high above their heads, sleep overpowered them, and they only awoke to hear the windows crashing in.

Then the youngest brother took his turn of guarding the windows, and to prevent his being overcome by sleep he placed a lot of thorns under his chin, so that if he felt drowsy and nodded his head, they would prick him and keep him awake.

The moon was already risen, and it was as light as day, when suddenly he heard a fearful noise, and at the same time a terrible desire to sleep overpowered him.

His eyelids closed, and his head sank on his shoulders, but the thorns ran into him and were so painful that he awoke at once. He saw the hawk swooping down upon the church, and in a moment he had seized his gun and shot at the bird. The hawk fell heavily under a big stone, severely wounded in its right wing. The youth ran to look at it, and saw that a huge abyss had opened below the stone. He went at once to fetch his brothers, and with their help dragged a lot of pine-wood and ropes to the spot. They fastened some of the burning pine-wood to the end of the rope, and let it slowly down to the bottom of the abyss. At first it was quite dark, and the flaming torch only lit up dirty grey stone walls. But the youngest brother determined to explore the abyss, and letting himself down by the rope he soon reached the bottom. Here he found a lovely meadow full of green trees and exquisite flowers.

In the middle of the meadow stood a huge stone castle, with an iron gate leading to it, which was wide open. Everything in the castle seemed to be made of copper, and the only inhabitant he could discover was a lovely girl, who was combing her golden hair; and he noticed that whenever one of her hairs fell on the ground it rang out like pure metal. The youth looked at her more closely, and saw that her skin was smooth and fair, her blue eyes bright and sparkling, and her hair as golden as the sun. He fell in love with her on the spot, and kneeling at her feet, he implored her to become his wife.

The lovely girl accepted his proposal gladly; but at the same time she warned him that she could never come up to the world above till her mother, the old witch, was dead. And she went on to tell him that the only way in which the old creature could be killed was with the sword that hung up in the castle; but the sword was so heavy that no one could lift it.

Then the youth went into a room in the castle where everything was made of silver, and here he found another beautiful girl, the sister of his bride. She was combing her silver hair, and every hair that fell on the ground rang out like pure metal. The second girl handed him the sword, but though he tried with all his strength he could not lift it. At last a third sister came to him and gave him a drop of something to drink, which she said would give him the needful strength. He drank one drop, but still he could not lift the sword; then he drank a second, and the sword began to move; but only after he had drunk a third drop was he able to swing the sword over his head.

Then he hid himself in the castle and awaited the old witch's arrival. At last as it was beginning to grow dark she appeared. She swooped down upon a big apple-tree, and after shaking some golden apples from it, she pounced down upon the earth. As soon as her feet touched the ground she became transformed from a hawk into a woman. This was the moment the youth was waiting for, and he swung his mighty sword in the air with all his strength and the witch's head fell off, and her blood spurted up on the walls.

Without fear of any further danger, he packed up all the treasures of the castle into great chests, and gave his brothers a signal to pull them up out of the abyss. First the treasures were attached to the rope and then the three lovely girls. And now everything was up above and only he himself remained below. But as he was a little suspicious of his brothers, he fastened a heavy stone on to the rope and let them pull it up. At first they heaved with a will, but when the stone was half way up they let it drop suddenly, and it fell to the bottom broken into a hundred pieces.

'So that's what would have happened to my bones had I trusted myself to them,' said the youth sadly; and he began to cry bitterly, not because of the treasures, but because of the lovely girl with her swan-like neck and golden hair.

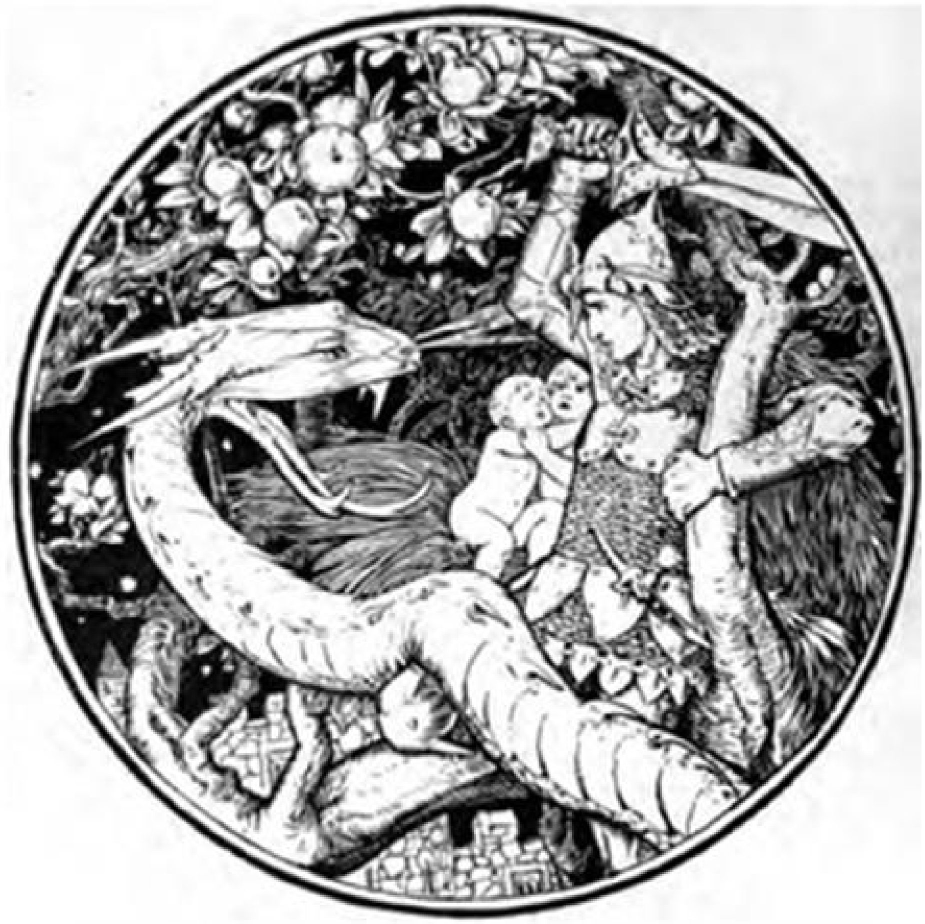

‘Then the youth swung his mighty sword in the air, and with one blow cut off the serpent's head’

For a long time he wandered sadly all through the beautiful underworld, and one day he met a magician who asked him the cause of his tears. The youth told him all that had befallen him, and the magician said:

‘Do not grieve, young man! If you will guard the children who are hidden in the golden apple-tree, I will bring you at once up to the earth. Another magician who lives in this land always eats my children up. It is in vain that I have hidden them under the earth and locked them into the castle. Now I have hidden them in the apple-tree; hide yourself there too, and at midnight you will see my enemy.’

The youth climbed up the tree, and picked some of the beautiful golden apples, which he ate for his supper.

At midnight the wind began to rise, and a rustling sound was heard at the foot of the tree. The youth looked down and beheld a long thick serpent beginning to crawl up the tree. It wound itself round the stem and gradually got higher and higher. It stretched its huge head, in which the eyes glittered fiercely, among the branches, searching for the nest in which the little children lay. They trembled with terror when they saw the hideous creature, and hid themselves beneath the leaves.

Then the youth swung his mighty sword in the air, and with one blow cut off the serpent’s head. He cut up the rest of the body into little bits and strewed them to the four winds.

The father of the rescued children was so delighted over the death of his enemy that he told the youth to get on his back, and in this way he carried him up to the world above.

With what joy did he hurry now to his brothers’ house! He burst into a room where they were all assembled, but no one knew who he was. Only his bride, who was serving as cook to her sisters, recognised her lover at once.

His brothers, who had quite believed he was dead, yielded him up his treasures at once, and flew into the woods in terror. But the good youth forgave them all they had done, and divided his treasures with them. Then he built himself a big castle with golden windows, and there he lived happily with his golden-haired wife till the end of their lives.

THE BOY AND THE WOLVES, OR THE BROKEN PROMISE

Once upon a time an Indian hunter built himself a house in the middle of a great forest, far away from all his tribe; for his heart was gentle and kind, and he was weary of the treachery and cruel deeds of those who had been his friends. So he left them, and took his wife and three children, and they journeyed on until they found a spot near to a clear stream, where they began to cut down trees, and to make ready their wigwam. For many years they lived peacefully and happily in this sheltered place, never leaving it except to hunt the wild animals, which served them both for food and clothes. At last, however, the strong man felt sick, and before long he knew he must die.

So he gathered his family round him, and said his last words to them. ‘You, my wife, the companion of my days, will follow me ere many moons have waned to the island of the blest. But for you, O my children, whose lives are but newly begun, the wickedness, unkindness, and ingratitude from which I fled are before you. Yet I shall go hence in peace, my children, if you will promise always to love each other, and never to forsake your youngest brother.’

‘Never!’ they replied, holding out their hands. And the hunter died content.

Scarcely eight moons had passed when, just as he had said, the wife went forth, and followed her husband; but before leaving her children she bade the two elder ones think of their promise never to forsake the younger, for he was a child, and weak. And while the snow lay thick upon the ground, they tended him and cherished him; but when the earth showed green again, the heart of the young man stirred within him, and he longed to see the wigwams of the village where his father’s youth was spent.

Therefore he opened all his heart to his sister, who answered: ‘My brother, I understand your longing for our fellow-men, whom here we cannot see. But remember our father’s words. Shall we not seek our own pleasures, and forget the little one?’

But he would not listen, and, making no reply, he took his bow and arrows and left the hut. The snows fell and melted, yet he never returned; and at last the heart of the girl grew cold and hard, and her little boy became a burden in her eyes, till one day she spoke thus to him: ‘See, there is food for many days to come. Stay here within the shelter of the hut. I go to seek our brother, and when I have found him I shall return hither.'

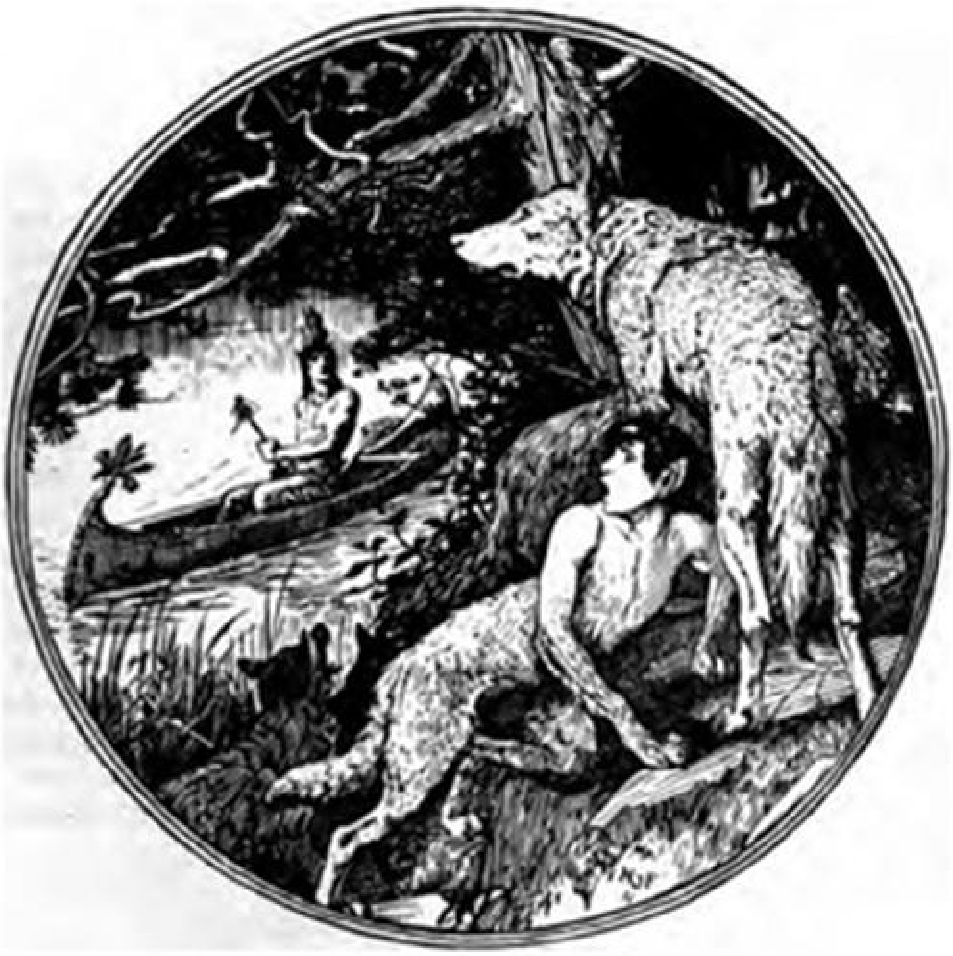

'My brother, my brother, I am becoming a wolf!'

But when, after hard journeying, she reached the village where her brother dwelt, and saw that he had a wife and was happy, and when she, too, was sought by a young brave, then she also forgot the boy alone in the forest, and thought only of her husband.

Now as soon as the little boy had eaten all the food which his sister had left him, he went out into the woods, and gathered berries and dug up roots, and while the sun shone he was contented and had his fill. But when the snows began and the wind howled, then his stomach felt empty and his limbs cold, and he hid in trees all the night, and only crept out to eat what the wolves had left behind. And by-and-by, having no other friends, he sought their company, and sat by while they devoured their prey, and they grew to know him, and gave him food.

And without them he would have died in the snow.

But at last the snows melted, and the ice upon the great lake, and as the wolves went down to the shore, the boy went after them. And it happened one day that his big brother was fishing in his canoe near the shore, and he heard the voice of a child singing in the Indian tone —

‘My brother, my brother!
I am becoming a wolf,
I am becoming a wolf!’

And when he had so sung he howled as wolves howl. Then the heart of the elder sunk, and he hastened towards him, crying, ‘Brother, little brother, come to me;’ but he, being half a wolf, only continued his song. And the louder the elder called him, ‘Brother, little brother, come to me,’ the swifter he fled after his brothers the wolves, and the heavier grew his skin, till, with a long howl, he vanished into the depths of the forest.

So, with shame and anguish in his soul, the elder brother went back to his village, and, with his sister, mourned the little boy and the broken promise till the end of his life.

THE GLASS AXE

There was once upon a time a King and Queen who had everything they could possibly wish for in this world except a child. At last, after twelve years, the Queen gave birth to a son; but she did not live long to enjoy her happiness, for on the following day she died. But before her death she called her husband to her and said, ‘Never let the child put his feet on the ground, for as soon as he does so he will fall into the power of a wicked Fairy, who will do him much harm.’ And these were the last words the poor Queen spoke.

The boy throve and grew big, and when he was too heavy for his nurse to carry, a chair was made for him on little wheels, in which he could wander through the palace gardens without help; at other times he was carried about on a litter, and he was always carefully watched and guarded for fear he should at any time put his feet to the ground.

But as this sort of life was bad for his health, the doctors ordered him horse exercise, and he soon became a first-rate rider, and used to go out for long excursions on horseback, accompanied always by his father’s stud-groom and a numerous retinue.

Every day he rode through the neighbouring fields and woods, and always returned home in the evening safe and well. In this way many years passed, and the Prince grew to manhood, and hardly anyone remembered the Queen’s warning, though precautions were still taken, more from use and wont than for any other reason.

One day the Prince and his suite went out for a ride in a wood where his father sometimes held a hunt. Their way led through a stream whose banks were overgrown with thick brushwood. Just as the horsemen were about to ford the river, a hare, startled by the sound of the horses’ hoofs, started up from the grass and ran towards the thicket. The young Prince pursued the little creature, and had almost overtaken it, when the girth of his saddle suddenly broke in two and he fell heavily to the ground. No sooner had his foot touched the earth than he disappeared before the eyes of the horrified courtiers.

They sought for him far and near, but all in vain, and they were forced to recognise the power of the evil Fairy, against which the Queen had warned them on her death-bed. The old King was much grieved when they brought him the news of his son’s disappearance, but as he could do nothing to free him from his fate, he gave himself up to an old age of grief and loneliness, cherishing at the same time the hope that some lucky chance might one day deliver the youth out of the hands of his enemy.

Hardly had the Prince touched the ground than he felt himself violently seized by an unseen power, and hurried away he knew not whither. A whole new world stretched out before him, quite unlike the one he had left. A splendid castle surrounded by a huge lake was the abode of the Fairy, and the only approach to it was over a bridge of clouds. On the other side of the lake high mountains rose up, and dark woods stretched along the banks; over all hung a thick mist, and deep silence reigned everywhere.

No sooner had the Fairy reached her own domain than she made herself visible, and turning to the Prince she told him that unless he obeyed all her commands down to the minutest detail he would be severely punished. Then she gave him an axe made of glass, and bade him cross the bridge of clouds and go into the wood beyond and cut down all the trees there before sunset. At the same time she cautioned him with many angry words against speaking to a black girl he would most likely meet in the wood.

The Prince listened to her words meekly, and when she had finished took up the glass axe and set out for the forest. At every step he seemed to sink into the clouds, but fear gave wings to his feet, and he crossed the lake in safety and set to work at once.

But no sooner had he struck the first blow with his axe than it broke into a thousand pieces against the tree. The poor youth was so terrified he did not know what to do, for he was in mortal dread of the punishment the wicked old Fairy would inflict on him. He wandered to and fro in the wood, not knowing where he was going, and at last, worn out by fatigue and misery, he sank on the ground and fell fast asleep.

He did not know how long he had slept when a sudden sound awoke him, and opening his eyes he saw a black girl standing beside him. Mindful of the Fairy’s warning he did not dare to address her, but she on her part greeted him in the most friendly manner, and asked him at once if he were under the power of the wicked Fairy. The Prince nodded his head silently in answer.

Then the black girl told him that she too was in the power of the Fairy, who had doomed her to wander about in her present guise until some youth should take pity on her and bear her in safety to the other side of the river which they saw in the distance, and on the other side of which the Fairy’s domain and power ended.

The girl’s words so inspired the Prince with confidence that he told her all his tale of woe, and ended up by asking her advice as to how he was to escape the punishment the Fairy would be sure to inflict on him when she discovered that he had not cut down the trees in the wood and that he had broken her axe.

‘You must know,’ answered the black girl, ‘that the Fairy in whose power we both are is my own mother, but you must not betray this secret, for it would cost me my life. If you will only promise to try and free me I will stand by you, and will accomplish for you all the tasks which my mother sets you.’

The Prince promised joyfully all she asked; then having once more warned him not to betray her confidence, she handed him a draught to drink which very soon sunk his senses in a deep slumber.

His astonishment was great when he awoke to find the glass axe whole and unbroken at his side, and all the trees of the wood lying felled around him!

He made all haste across the bridge of clouds, and told the Fairy that her commands were obeyed. She was much amazed when she heard that all the wood was cut down, and saw the axe unbroken in his hand, and since she could not believe that he had done all this by himself, she questioned him narrowly if he had seen or spoken to the black girl. But the Prince lied manfully, and swore he had never looked up from his work for a moment. Seeing she could get nothing more out of him, she gave him a little bread and water, and showing him to a small dark cupboard she told him he might sleep there.

Morning had hardly dawned when the Fairy awoke the Prince, and giving him the glass axe again she told him to cut up all the wood he had felled the day before, and to put it in bundles ready for firewood; at the same time she warned him once more against approaching or speaking a word to the black girl if he met her in the wood.

Although his task was no easier than that of the day before, the youth set out much more cheerfully, because he knew he could count on the help of the black girl. With quicker and lighter step he crossed the bridge of clouds, and hardly had he reached the other side than his friend stood before him and greeted him cheerfully. When she heard what the Fairy demanded this time, she answered smilingly, ‘Never fear,’ and handed him another draught, which very soon caused the Prince to sink into a deep sleep.

When he awoke everything was done. All the trees of the wood were cut up into firewood and arranged in bundles ready for use.

He returned to the castle as quickly as he could, and told the Fairy that her commands were obeyed. She was even more amazed than she had been before, and asked him again if he had either seen or spoken to the black girl; but the Prince knew better than to betray his word, and once more lied freely.

On the following day the Fairy set him a third task to do, even harder than the other two. She told him he must build a castle on the other side of the lake, made of nothing but gold, silver, and precious stones, and unless he could accomplish this within an hour, the most frightful doom awaited him.

The Prince heard her words without anxiety, so entirely did he rely on the help of his black friend. Full of hope he hurried across the bridge, and recognised at once the spot where the castle was to stand, for spades, hammers, axes, and every other building implement lay scattered on the ground ready for the workman’s hand, but of gold, silver, and precious stones there was not a sign. But before the Prince had time to feel despondent the black girl beckoned to him in the distance from behind a rock, where she had hidden herself for fear her mother should catch sight of her. Full of joy the youth hurried towards her, and begged her aid and counsel in the new piece of work he had been given to do.

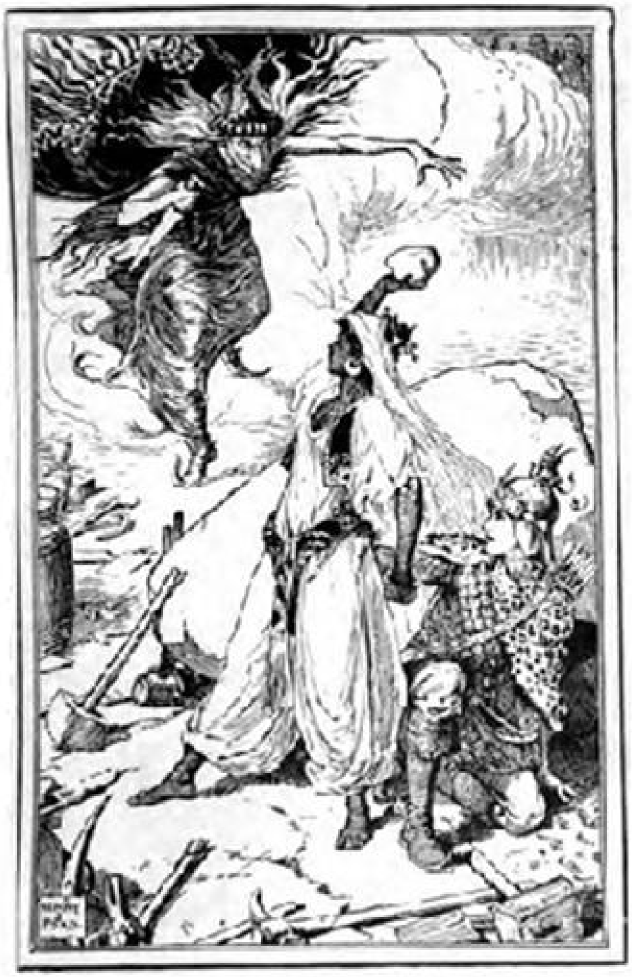

THE BLACK GIRL STOPS THE WITCH WITH A BIT OF THE ROCK

But this time the Fairy had watched the Prince’s movements from her window, and she saw him hiding himself behind the rock with her daughter. She uttered a piercing shriek so that the mountains re-echoed with the sound of it, and the terrified pair had hardly dared to look out from their hiding-place when the enraged woman, with her dress and hair flying in the wind, hurried over the bridge of clouds. The Prince at once gave himself up for lost, but the girl told him to be of good courage and to follow her as quickly as he could. But before they left their shelter she broke off a little bit of the rock, spoke some magic words over it, and threw it in the direction her mother was coming from. In a moment a glittering palace arose before the eyes of the Fairy which blinded her with its dazzling splendour, and with its many doors and passages prevented her for some time from finding her way out of it.

In the meantime the black girl hurried on with the Prince, hastening to reach the river, where once on the other side they would for ever be out of the wicked Fairy's power. But before they had accomplished half the way they heard again the rustle of her garments and her muttered curses pursuing them closely.

The Prince was terrified; he dared not look back, and he felt his strength giving way. But before he had time to despair the girl uttered some more magic words, and immediately she herself was changed into a pond, and the Prince into a duck swimming on its surface.

When the Fairy saw this her rage knew no bounds, and she used all her magic wits to make the pond disappear; she caused a hill of sand to arise at her feet, meaning it to dry up the water at once. But the sand hill only drove the pond a little farther away, and its waters seemed to increase instead of diminishing. When the old woman saw that the powers of her magic were of so little avail, she had recourse to cunning. She threw a lot of gold nuts into the pond, hoping in this way to catch the duck, but all her efforts were fruitless, for the little creature refused to let itself be caught.

Then a new idea struck the wicked old woman, and hiding herself behind the rock which had sheltered the fugitives, she waited behind it, watching carefully for the moment when the Prince and her daughter should resume their natural forms and continue their journey.

She had not to wait long, for as soon as the girl thought her mother was safely out of the way, she changed herself and the Prince once more into their human shape, and set out cheerfully for the river.

But they had not gone many steps when the wicked Fairy hurried after them, a drawn dagger in her hand, and was close upon them, when suddenly, instead of the Prince and her daughter, she found herself in front of a great stone church, whose entrance was carefully guarded by a huge monk.

Breathless with rage and passion, she tried to plunge her dagger into the monk's heart, but it fell shattered in pieces at her feet. In her desperation she determined to pull down the church, and thus to destroy her two victims for ever. She stamped three times on the ground, and the earth trembled, and both the church and the monk began to shake. As soon as the Fairy saw this she retreated to some distance from the building, so as not to be hurt herself by its fall. But once more her scheme was doomed to failure, for hardly had she gone a yard from the church than both it and the monk disappeared, and she found herself in a wood black as night, and full of wolves and bears and wild animals of all sorts and descriptions.

Then her wrath gave place to terror, for she feared every moment to be torn in pieces by the beasts who one and all seemed to defy her power. She thought it wisest to make her way as best she could out of the forest, and then to pursue the fugitives once more and accomplish their destruction either by force or cunning.

In the meantime the Prince and the black girl had again assumed their natural forms, and were hurrying on as fast as they could to reach the river. But when they got there they found that there was no way in which they could cross it, and the girl's magic art seemed no longer to have any power. Then turning to the Prince she said, 'The hour for my deliverance has not yet come, but as you promised to do all you could to free me, you must do exactly as I bid you now. Take this bow and arrow and kill every beast you see with them, and be sure you spare no living creature.'

With these words she disappeared, and hardly had she done so than a huge wild boar started out of the thicket near and made straight for the Prince. But the youth did not lose his presence of mind, and drawing his bow he pierced the beast with his arrow right through the skull. The creature fell heavily on the ground, and out of its side sprang a little hare, which ran like the wind along the river bank. The Prince drew his bow once more, and the hare lay dead at his feet; but at the same moment a dove rose up in the air, and circled round the Prince's head in the most confiding manner. But mindful of the black girl's commands, he dared not spare the little creature's life, and taking another arrow from his quiver he laid it as dead as the boar and the hare. But when he went to look at the body of the bird he found instead of the dove a round white egg lying on the ground.

While he was gazing on it and wondering what it could mean, he heard the sweeping of wings above him, and looking up he saw a huge vulture with open claws swooping down upon him. In a moment he seized the egg and flung it at the bird with all his might, and lo and behold! instead of the ugly monster the most beautiful girl he had ever seen stood before the astonished eyes of the Prince.

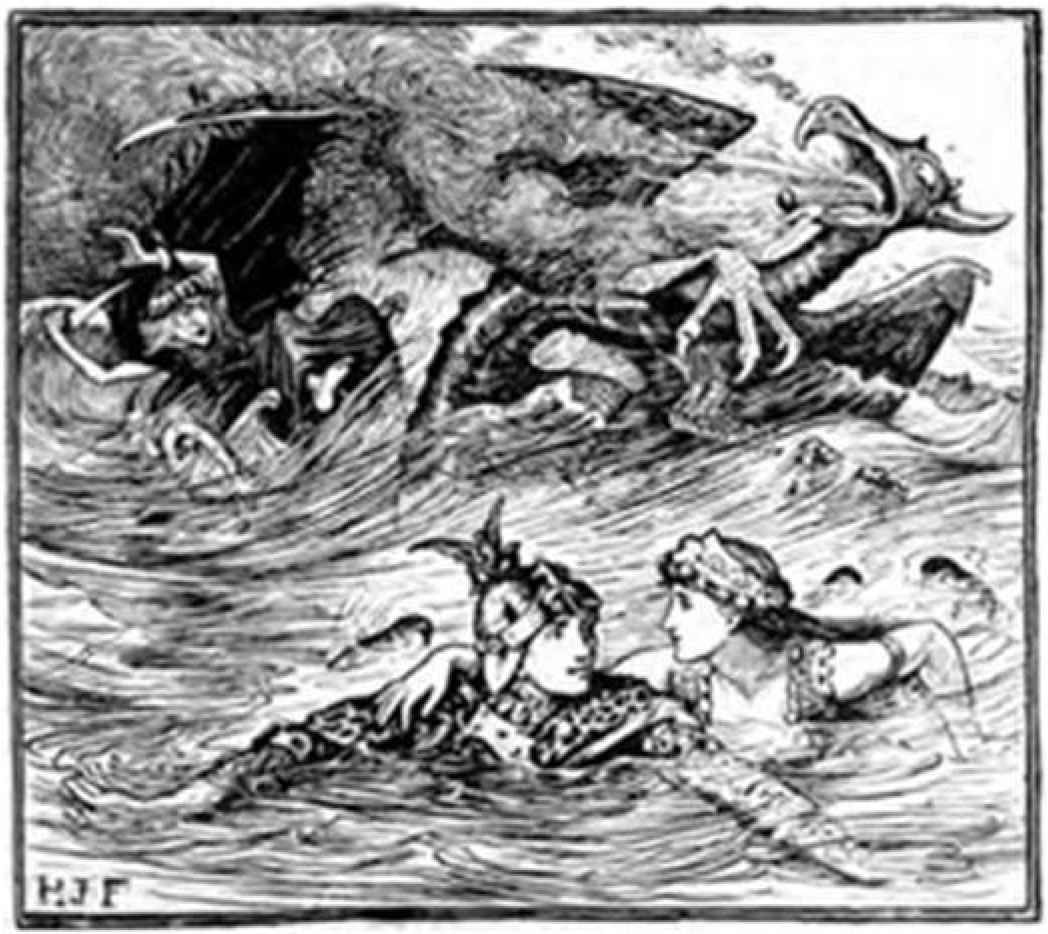

'But the waters seized her chariot and sunk it in the lowest depths'

But while all this was going on the wicked old Fairy had managed to make her way out of the wood, and was now using the last resource in her power to overtake her daughter and the Prince. As soon as she was in the open again she mounted her chariot, which was drawn by a fiery dragon, and flew through the air in it. But just as she got to the river she saw the two lovers in each other's arms swimming through the water as easily as two fishes.

Quick as lightning, and forgetful of every danger, she flew down upon them. But the waters seized her chariot and sunk it in the lowest depths, and the waves bore the wicked old woman down the stream till she was caught in some thorn bushes, where she made a good meal for all the little fishes that were swimming about.

And so at last the Prince and his lovely Bride were free. They hurried as quickly as they could to the old King, who received them with joy and gladness. On the following day a most gorgeous wedding feast was held, and as far as we know the Prince and his Bride lived happily for ever afterwards.

THE DEAD WIFE

Once upon a time there were a man and his wife who lived in the forest, very far from the rest of the tribe. Very often they spent the day in hunting together, but after a while the wife found that she had so many things to do that she was obliged to stay at home; so he went alone, though he found that when his wife was not with him he never had any luck. One day, when he was away hunting, the woman fell ill, and in a few days she died. Her husband grieved bitterly, and buried her in the house where she had passed her life; but as the time went on he felt so lonely without her that he made a wooden doll about her height and size for company, and dressed it in her clothes. He seated it in front of the fire, and tried to think he had his wife back again. The next day he went out to hunt, and when he came home the first thing he did was to go up to the doll and brush off some of the ashes from the fire which had fallen on its face. But he was very busy now, for he had to cook and mend, besides getting food, for there was no one to help him. And so a whole year passed away.

At the end of that time he came back from hunting one night and found some wood by the door and a fire within. The next night there was not only wood and fire, but a piece of meat in the kettle, nearly ready for eating. He searched all about to see who could have done this, but could find no one. The next time he went to hunt he took care not to go far, and came in quite early. And while he was still a long way off he saw a woman going into the house with wood on her shoulders. So he made haste, and opened the door quickly, and instead of the wooden doll, his wife sat in front of the fire.

Then she spoke to him and said, ‘The Great Spirit felt sorry for you, because you would not be comforted, so he let me come back to you, but you must not stretch out your hand to touch me till we have seen the rest of our people. If you do, I shall die.’

So the man listened to her words, and the woman dwelt there, and brought the wood and kindled the fire, till one day her husband said to her, ‘It is now two years since you died. Let us now go back to our tribe. Then you will be well, and I can touch you.’

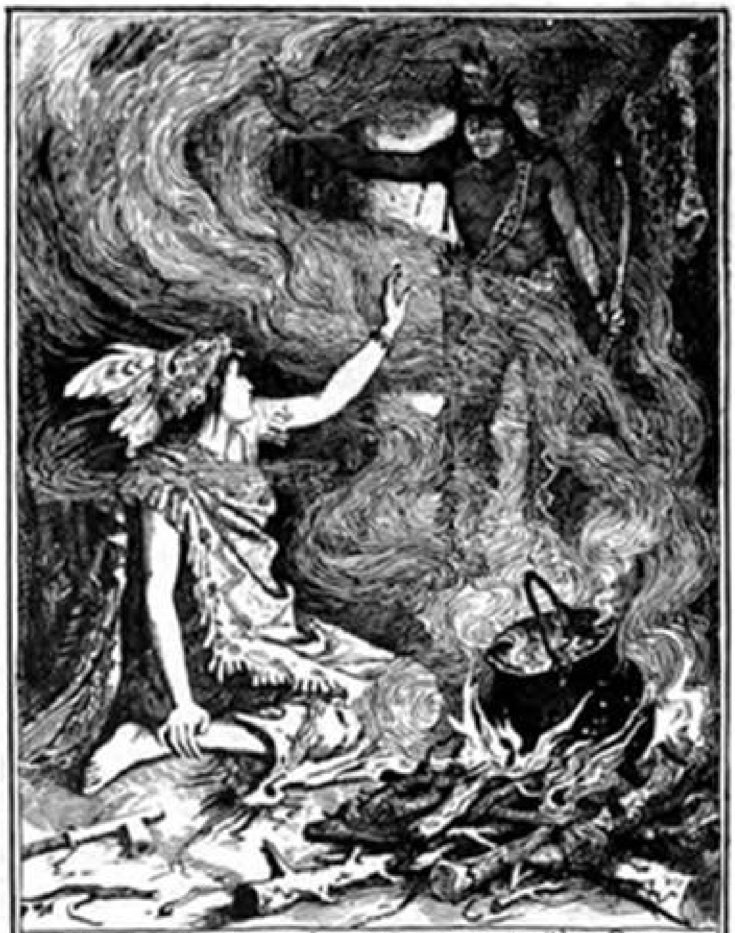

The Indian finds his wife sitting by the fire.

And with that he prepared food for the journey, a string of deer’s flesh for her to carry, and one for himself; and so they started. Now the camp of the tribe was distant six days’ journey, and when they were yet one day’s journey off it began to snow, and they felt weary and longed for rest. Therefore they made a fire, cooked some food, and spread out their skins to sleep.

Then the heart of the man was greatly stirred, and he stretched out his arms to his wife, but she waved her hands and said, ‘We have seen no one yet; it is too soon.’

But he would not listen to her, and caught her to him, and behold! he was clasping the wooden doll. And when he saw it was the doll he pushed it from him in his misery and rushed away to the camp, and told them all his story. And some doubted, and they went back with him to the place where he and his wife had stopped to rest, and there lay the doll, and besides, they saw in the snow the steps of two people, and the foot of one was like the foot of the doll. And the man grieved sore all the days of his life.

IN THE LAND OF SOULS

Far away, in North America, where the Red Indians dwell, there lived a long time ago a beautiful maiden, who was lovelier than any other girl in the whole tribe. Many of the young braves sought her in marriage, but she would listen to one only — a handsome chief, who had taken her fancy some years before. So they were to be married, and great rejoicings were made, and the two looked forward to a long life of happiness together, when the very night before the wedding feast a sudden illness seized the girl, and, without a word to her friends who were weeping round her, she passed silently away.

The heart of her lover had been set upon her, and the thought of her remained with him night and day. He put aside his bow, and went neither to fight nor to hunt, but from sunrise to sunset he sat by the place where she was laid, thinking of his happiness that was buried there. At last, after many days, a light seemed to come to him out of the darkness. He remembered having heard from the old, old people of the tribe, that there was a path that led to the Land of Souls — that if you sought carefully you could find it.

So the next morning he got up early, and put some food in his pouch and slung an extra skin over his shoulders, for he knew not how long his journey would take, nor what sort of country he would have to go through. Only one thing he knew, that if the path was there, he would find it. At first he was puzzled, as there seemed no reason he should go in one direction more than another. Then all at once he thought he had heard one of the old men say that the Land of Souls lay to the south, and so, filled with new hope and courage, he set his face southwards. For many, many miles the country looked the same as it did round his own home. The forests, the hills, and the rivers all seemed exactly like the ones he had left. The only thing that was different was the snow, which had lain thick upon the hills and trees when he started, but grew less and less the farther he went south, till it disappeared altogether. Soon the trees put forth their buds, and flowers sprang up under his feet, and instead of thick clouds there was blue sky over his head, and everywhere the birds were singing. Then he knew that he was in the right road.

The thought that he should soon behold his lost bride made his heart beat for joy, and he sped along lightly and swiftly. Now his way led through a dark wood, and then over some steep cliffs, and on the top of these he found a hut or wigwam. An old man clothed in skins, and holding a staff in his hand, stood in the doorway; and he said to the young chief who was beginning to tell his story, ‘I was waiting for you, wherefore you have come I know. It is but a short while since she whom you seek was here. Rest in my hut, as she also rested, and I will tell you what you ask, and whither you should go.’

On hearing these words, the young man entered the hut, but his heart was too eager within him to suffer him to rest, and when he arose, the old man rose too, and stood with him at the door. ‘Look,’ he said, ‘at the water which lies far out yonder, and the plains which stretch beyond. That is the Land of Souls, but no man enters it without leaving his body behind him. So, lay down your body here; your bow and arrows, your skin and your dog. They shall be kept for you safely.’

Then he turned away, and the young chief, light as air, seemed hardly to touch the ground; and as he flew along the scents grew sweeter and the flowers more beautiful, while the animals rubbed their noses against him, instead of hiding as he approached, and birds circled round him, and fishes lifted up their heads and looked as he went by. Very soon he noticed with wonder, that neither rocks nor trees barred his path. He passed through them without knowing it, for indeed, they were not rocks and trees at all, but only the souls of them; for this was the Land of Shadows.

So he went on with winged feet till he came to the shores of a great lake, with a lovely island in the middle of it; while on the bank of the lake was a canoe of glittering stone, and in the canoe were two shining paddles.

The chief jumped straight into the canoe, and seizing the paddles pushed off from the shore, when to his joy and wonder he saw following him in another canoe exactly like his own the maiden for whose sake he had made this long journey. But they could not touch each other, for between them rolled great waves, which looked as if they would sink the boats, yet never did. And the young man and the maiden shrank with fear, for down in the depths of the water they saw the bones of those who had died before, and in the waves themselves men and women were struggling, and but few passed over. Only the children had no fear, and reached the other side in safety. Still, though the chief and the young girl quailed in terror at these horrible sights and sounds, no harm came to them, for their lives had been free from evil, and the Master of Life had said that no evil should happen unto them. So they reached unhurt the shore of the Happy Island, and wandered through the flowery fields and by the banks of rushing streams, and they knew not hunger nor thirst; neither cold nor heat. The air fed them and the sun warmed them, and they forgot the dead, for they saw no graves, and the young man’s thoughts turned not to wars, neither to the hunting of animals. And gladly would these two have walked thus for ever, but in the murmur of the wind he heard the Master of Life saying to him, ‘Return whither you came, for I have work for you to do, and your people need you, and for many years you shall rule over them. At the gate my messenger awaits you, and you shall take again your body which you left behind, and he will show you what you are to do. Listen to him, and have patience, and in time to come you shall rejoin her whom you must now leave, for she is accepted, and will remain ever young and beautiful, as when I called her hence from the Land of Snows.’

THE WHITE DUCK

Once upon a time a great and powerful King married a lovely Princess. No couple were ever so happy; but before their honeymoon was over they were forced to part, for the King had to go on a warlike expedition to a far country, and leave his young wife alone at home. Bitter were the tears she shed, while her husband sought in vain to soothe her with words of comfort and counsel, warning her, above all things, never to leave the castle, to hold no intercourse with strangers, to beware of evil counsellors, and especially to be on her guard against strange women. And the Queen promised faithfully to obey her royal lord and master in these four matters.

So when the King set out on his expedition she shut herself up with her ladies in her own apartments, and spent her time in spinning and weaving, and in thinking of her royal husband. Often she was very sad and lonely, and it happened that one day while she was seated at the window, letting salt tears drop on her work, an old woman, a kind, homely-looking old body, stepped up to the window, and, leaning upon her crutch, addressed the Queen in friendly, flattering tones, saying: ‘Why are you sad and cast down, fair Queen? You should not mope all day in your rooms, but should come out into the green garden, and hear the birds sing with joy among the trees, and see the butterflies fluttering above the flowers, and hear the bees and insects hum, and watch the sunbeams chase the dew-drops through the rose-leaves and in the lily-cups. All the brightness outside would help to drive away your cares, O Queen.’

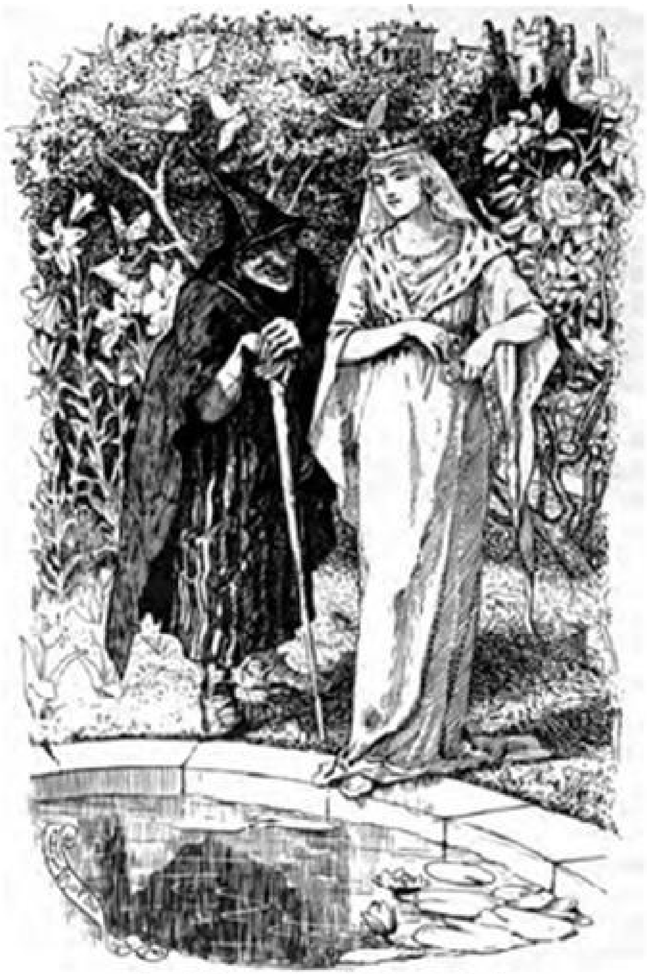

The witch persuades the Queen to bathe

For long the Queen resisted her coaxing words, remembering the promise she had given the King, her husband; but at last she thought to herself: After all, what harm would it do if I were to go into the garden for a short time and enjoy myself among the trees and flowers, and the singing birds and fluttering butterflies and humming insects, and look at the dew-drops hiding from the sunbeams in the hearts of the roses and lilies, and wander about in the sunshine, instead of remaining all day in this room? For she had no idea that the kind-looking old woman leaning on her crutch was in reality a wicked witch, who envied the Queen her good fortune, and was determined to ruin her. And so, in all ignorance, the Queen followed her out into the garden and listened to her smooth, flattering words. Now, in the middle of the garden there was a pond of water, clear as crystal, and the old woman said to the Queen: 'The day is so warm, and the sun's rays so scorching, that the water in the pond looks very cool and inviting. Would you not like to bathe in it, fair Queen?'

'No, I think not,' answered the Queen; but the next moment she regretted her words, and thought to herself: Why shouldn't I bathe in that cool, fresh water?

No harm could come of it. And, so saying, she slipped off her robes and stepped into the water. But scarcely had her tender feet touched the cool ripples when she felt a great shove on her shoulders, and the wicked witch had pushed her into the deep water, exclaiming: ‘Swim henceforth, White Duck!’

And the witch herself assumed the form of the Queen, and decked herself out in the royal robes, and sat among the Court ladies, awaiting the King’s return. And suddenly the tramp of horses’ hoofs was heard, and the barking of dogs, and the witch hastened forward to meet the royal carriages, and, throwing her arms round the King’s neck, kissed him. And in his great joy the King did not know that the woman he held in his arms was not his own dear wife, but a wicked witch.

In the meantime, outside the palace walls, the poor White Duck swam up and down the pond; and near it laid three eggs, out of which there came one morning two little fluffy ducklings and a little ugly drake. And the White Duck brought the little creatures up, and they paddled after her in the pond, and caught gold-fish, and hopped upon the bank and waddled about, ruffling their feathers and saying ‘Quack, quack’ as they strutted about on the green banks of the pond. But their mother used to warn them not to stray too far, telling them that a wicked witch lived in the castle beyond the garden, adding, ‘She has ruined me, and she will do her best to ruin you.’ But the young ones did not listen to their mother, and, playing about the garden one day, they strayed close up to the castle windows. The witch at once recognised them by their smell, and ground her teeth with anger; but she hid her feelings, and, pretending to be very kind, she called them to her and joked with them, and led them into a beautiful room, where she gave them food to eat, and showed them a soft cushion on which they might sleep. Then she left them and went down into the palace kitchens, where she told the servants to sharpen the knives, and to make a great fire ready, and hang a large kettleful of water over it.

In the meantime the two little ducklings had fallen asleep, and the little drake lay between them, covered up by their wings, to be kept warm under their feathers. But the little drake could not go to sleep, and as he lay there wide awake in the night he heard the witch come to the door and say: ‘Little ones, are you asleep?’

And the little drake answered for the other two: ‘We cannot sleep, we wake and weep,

Sharp is the knife, to take our life;
The fire is hot, now boils the pot,
And so we wake, and lie and quake.’

‘They are not asleep yet,’ muttered the witch to herself; and she walked up and down in the passage, and then came back to the door, and said: ‘Little ones, are you asleep?’

And again the little drake answered for his sisters: ‘We cannot sleep, we wake and weep,
Sharp is the knife, to take our life;
The fire is hot, now boils the pot,
And so we wake, and lie and quake.’

‘Just the same answer,’ muttered the witch; ‘I think I’ll go in and see.’ So she opened the door gently, and seeing the two little ducklings sound asleep, she there and then killed them.

The next morning the White Duck wandered round the pond in a distracted manner, looking for her little ones; she called and she searched, but could find no trace of them. And in her heart she had a foreboding that evil had befallen them, and she fluttered up out of the water and flew to the palace. And there, laid out on the marble floor of the court, dead and stone cold, were her three children. The White Duck threw herself upon them, and, covering up their little bodies with her wings, she cried:

‘Quack, quack — my little loves!
Quack, quack — my turtle-doves!
I brought you up with grief and pain,
And now before my eyes you’re slain.
I gave you always of the best;
I kept you warm in my soft nest.
I loved and watched you day and night —
You were my joy, my one delight.’

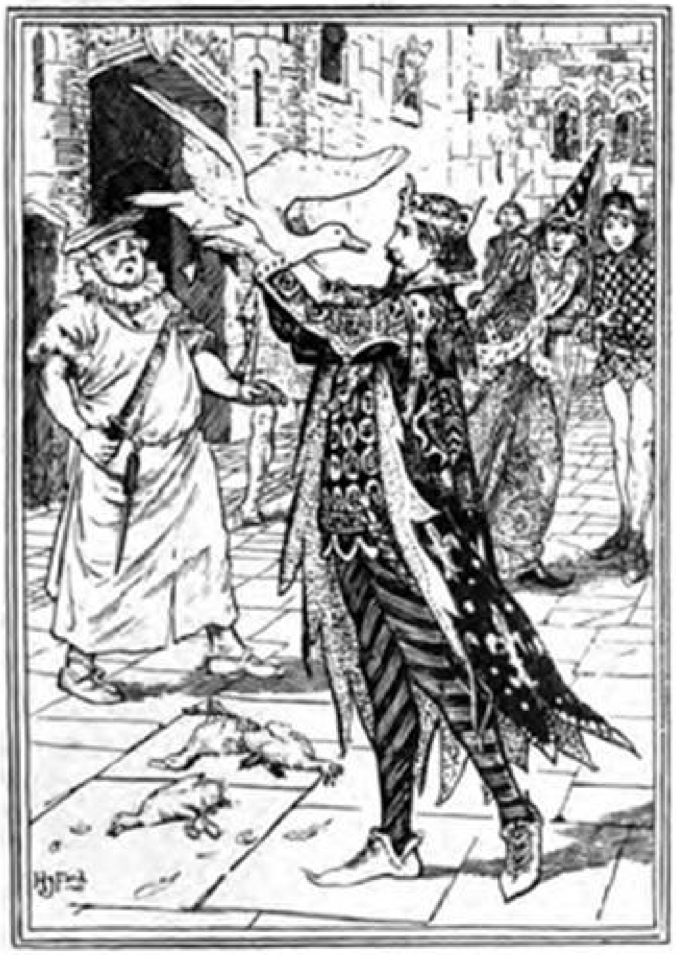

The King catches the White Duck

The King heard the sad complaint of the White Duck, and called to the witch: ‘Wife, what a wonder is this? Listen to that White Duck.’

But the witch answered, ‘My dear husband, what do you mean? There is nothing wonderful in a duck’s quacking. Here, servants! Chase that duck out of the courtyard.’ But though the servants chased and chevied, they could not get rid of the duck; for she circled round and round, and always came back to the spot where her children lay, crying: ‘Quack, quack — my little loves!
Quack, quack — my turtle-doves!
The wicked witch your lives did take —
The wicked witch, the cunning snake.
First she stole my King away,
Then my children did she slay.
Changed me, from a happy wife,
To a duck for all my life.
Would I were the Queen again;

Would that you had ne’er been slain.’

And as the King heard her words he began to suspect that he had been deceived, and he called out to the servants, ‘Catch that duck, and bring it here.’ But, though they ran to and fro, the duck always fled past them, and would not let herself be caught. So the King himself stepped down amongst them, and instantly the duck fluttered down into his hands. And as he stroked her wings she was changed into a beautiful woman, and he recognised his dear wife. And she told him that a bottle would be found in her nest in the garden, containing some drops from the spring of healing. And it was brought to her; and the ducklings and little drake were sprinkled with the water, and from the little dead bodies three lovely children arose. And the King and Queen were overjoyed when they saw their children, and they all lived happily together in the beautiful palace. But the wicked witch was taken by the King’s command, and she came to no good end.

THE WITCH AND HER SERVANTS

A long time ago there lived a King who had three sons; the eldest was called Szabo, the second Warza, and the youngest Iwanich.

One beautiful spring morning the King was walking through his gardens with these three sons, gazing with admiration at the various fruit-trees, some of which were a mass of blossom, whilst others were bowed to the ground laden with rich fruit. During their wanderings they came unperceived on a piece of waste land where three splendid trees grew. The King looked on them for a moment, and then, shaking his head sadly, he passed on in silence.

The sons, who could not understand why he did this, asked him the reason of his dejection, and the King told them as follows:

‘These three trees, which I cannot see without sorrow, were planted by me on this spot when I was a youth of twenty. A celebrated magician, who had given the seed to my father, promised him that they would grow into the three finest trees the world had ever seen. My father did not live to see his words come true; but on his death-bed he bade me transplant them here, and to look after them with the greatest care, which I accordingly did. At last, after the lapse of five long years, I noticed some blossoms on the branches, and a few days later the most exquisite fruit my eyes had ever seen.

‘I gave my head-gardener the strictest orders to watch the trees carefully, for the magician had warned my father that if one unripe fruit were plucked from the tree, all the rest would become rotten at once. When it was quite ripe the fruit would become a golden yellow.

‘Every day I gazed on the lovely fruit, which became gradually more and more tempting-looking, and it was all I could do not to break the magician’s commands.

‘One night I dreamt that the fruit was perfectly ripe; I ate some of it, and it was more delicious than anything I had ever tasted in real life. As soon as I awoke I sent for the gardener and asked him if the fruit on the three trees had not ripened in the night to perfection.

‘But instead of replying, the gardener threw himself at my feet and swore that he was innocent. He said that he had watched by the trees all night, but in spite of it, and as if by magic, the beautiful trees had been robbed of all their fruit.

‘Grieved as I was over the theft, I did not punish the gardener, of whose fidelity I was well assured, but I determined to pluck off all the fruit in the following year before it was ripe, as I had not much belief in the magician’s warning.

‘I carried out my intention, and had all the fruit picked off the tree, but when I tasted one of the apples it was bitter and unpleasant, and the next morning the rest of the fruit had all rotted away.

‘After this I had the beautiful fruit of these trees carefully guarded by my most faithful servants; but every year, on this very night, the fruit was plucked and stolen by an invisible hand, and next morning not a single apple remained on the trees. For some time past I have given up even having the trees watched.’

When the King had finished his story, Szabo, his eldest son, said to him: ‘Forgive me, father, if I say I think you are mistaken. I am sure there are many men in your kingdom who could protect these trees from the cunning arts of a thieving magician; I myself, who as your eldest son claim the first right to do so, will mount guard over the fruit this very night.’

The King consented, and as soon as evening drew on Szabo climbed up on to one of the trees, determined to protect the fruit even if it cost him his life. So he kept watch half the night; but a little after midnight he was overcome by an irresistible drowsiness, and fell fast asleep. He did not awake till it was bright daylight, and all the fruit on the trees had vanished.

The following year Warza, the second brother, tried his luck, but with the same result. Then it came to the turn of the third and youngest son.

Iwanich was not the least discouraged by the failure of his elder brothers, though they were both much older and stronger than he was, and when night came climbed up the tree as they had done. The moon had risen, and with her soft light lit up the whole neighbourhood, so that the observant Prince could distinguish the smallest object distinctly.

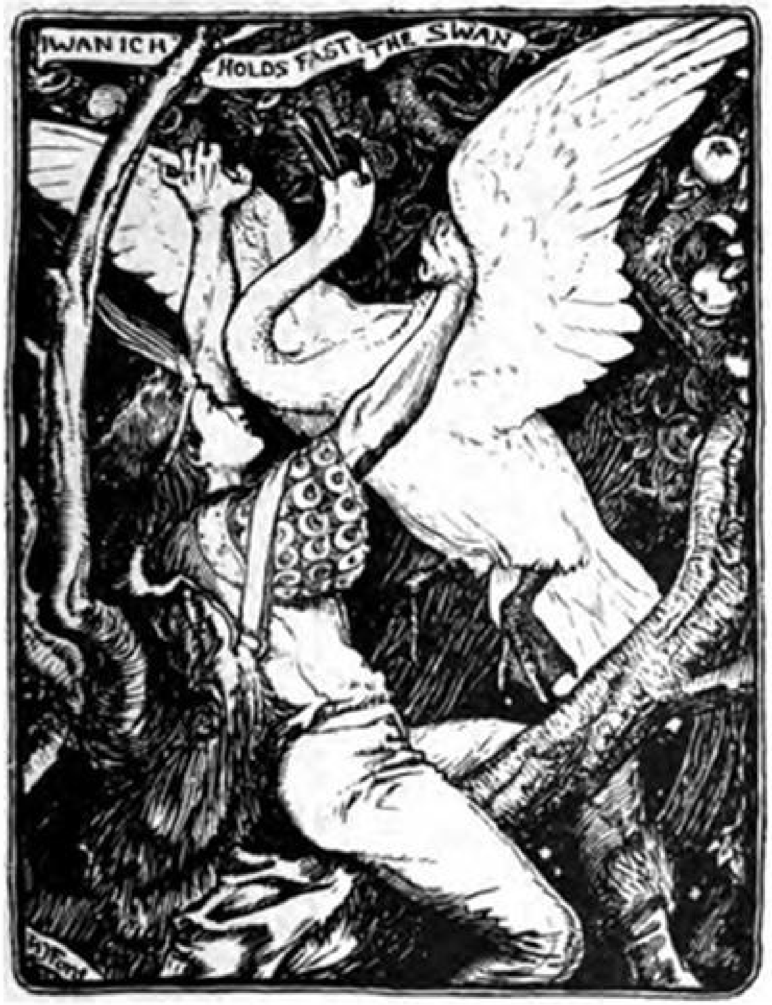
IWANICH HOLDS FAST THE SWAN

At midnight a gentle west wind shook the tree, and at the same moment a snow-white swan-like bird sank down gently on his breast. The Prince hastily seized the bird’s wings in his hands, when, lo! to his astonishment he found he was holding in his arms not a bird but the most beautiful girl he had ever seen.

‘You need not fear Militza,’ said the beautiful girl, looking at the Prince with friendly eyes. ‘An evil magician has not robbed you of your fruit, but he stole the seed from my mother, and thereby caused her death. When she was dying she bade me take the fruit, which you have no right to possess, from the trees every year as soon as it was ripe. This I would have done to-night too, if you had not seized me with such force, and so broken the spell I was under.’

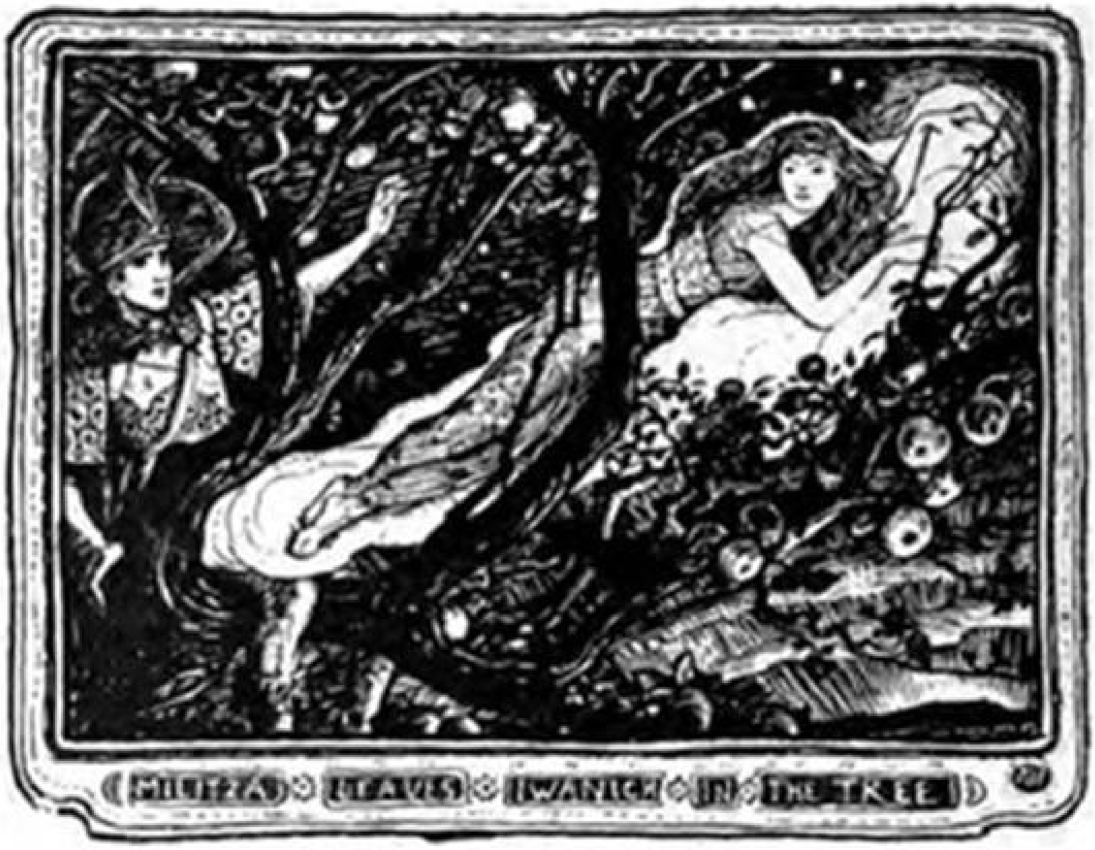
MILITZA LEAVES IWANICH IN THE TREE

Iwanich, who had been prepared to meet a terrible magician and not a lovely girl, fell desperately in love with her. They spent the rest of the night in pleasant conversation, and when Militza wished to go away he begged her not to leave him.

‘I would gladly stay with you longer,’ said Militza, ‘but a wicked witch once cut off a lock of my hair when I was asleep, which has put me in her power, and if morning were still to find me here she would do me some harm, and you, too, perhaps.’

Having said these words, she drew a sparkling diamond ring from her finger, which she handed to the Prince, saying: ‘Keep this ring in memory of Militza, and think of her sometimes if you never see her again. But if your love is really true, come and find me in my own kingdom. I may not show you the way there, but this ring will guide you.

‘If you have love and courage enough to undertake this journey, whenever you come to a cross-road always look at this diamond before you settle which way you are going to take. If it sparkles as brightly as ever go straight on, but if its lustre is dimmed choose another path.’

Then Militza bent over the Prince and kissed him on his forehead, and before he had time to say a word she vanished through the branches of the tree in a little white cloud.

Morning broke, and the Prince, still full of the wonderful apparition, left his perch and returned to the palace like one in a dream, without even knowing if the fruit had been taken or not; for his whole mind was absorbed by thoughts of Militza and how he was to find her.

As soon as the head-gardener saw the Prince going towards the palace he ran to the trees, and when he saw them laden with ripe fruit he hastened to tell the King the joyful news. The King was beside himself for joy, and hurried at once to the garden and made the gardener pick him some of the fruit. He tasted it, and found the apple quite as luscious as it had been in his dream. He went at once to his son Iwanich, and after embracing him tenderly and heaping praises on him, he asked him how he had succeeded in protecting the costly fruit from the power of the magician.

This question placed Iwanich in a dilemma. But as he did not want the real story to be known, he said that about midnight a huge wasp had flown through the branches, and buzzed incessantly round him. He had warded it off with his sword, and at dawn, when he was becoming quite worn out, the wasp had vanished as suddenly as it had appeared.

The King, who never doubted the truth of this tale, bade his son go to rest at once and recover from the fatigues of the night; but he himself went and ordered many feasts to be held in honour of the preservation of the wonderful fruit.

The whole capital was in a stir, and everyone shared in the King’s joy; the Prince alone took no part in the festivities.

While the King was at a banquet, Iwanich took some purses of gold, and mounting the quickest horse in the royal stable, he sped off like the wind without a single soul being any the wiser.

It was only on the next day that they missed him; the King was very distressed at his disappearance, and sent search-parties all over the kingdom to look for him, but in vain; and after six months they gave him up as dead, and in another six months they had forgotten all about him. But in the meantime the Prince, with the help of his ring, had had a most successful journey, and no evil had befallen him.

At the end of three months he came to the entrance of a huge forest, which looked as if it had never been trodden by human foot before, and which seemed to stretch out indefinitely. The Prince was about to enter the wood by a little path he had discovered, when he heard a voice shouting to him: ‘Hold, youth! Whither are you going?’

Iwanich turned round, and saw a tall, gaunt-looking man, clad in miserable rags, leaning on a crooked staff and seated at the foot of an oak tree, which was so much the same colour as himself that it was little wonder the Prince had ridden past the tree without noticing him.

‘Where else should I be going,’ he said, ‘than through the wood?’

‘Through the wood?’ said the old man in amazement. ‘It’s easily seen that you have heard nothing of this forest, that you rush so blindly to meet your doom. Well, listen to me before you ride any further; let me tell you that this wood hides in its depths a countless number of the fiercest tigers, hyenas, wolves, bears, and snakes, and all sorts of other monsters. If I were to cut you and your horse up into tiny morsels and throw them to the beasts, there wouldn’t be one bit for each hundred of them. Take my advice, therefore, and if you wish to save your life follow some other path.’

The Prince was rather taken aback by the old man’s words, and considered for a minute what he should do; then looking at his ring, and perceiving that it sparkled as brightly as ever, he called out: ‘If this wood held even more terrible things than it does, I cannot help myself, for I must go through it.’

Here he spurred his horse and rode on; but the old beggar screamed so loudly after him that the Prince turned round and rode back to the oak tree.

‘I am really sorry for you,’ said the beggar, ‘but if you are quite determined to brave the dangers of the forest, let me at least give you a piece of advice which will help you against these monsters.’

‘Take this bagful of bread-crumbs and this live hare. I will make you a present of them both, as I am anxious to save your life; but you must leave your horse behind you, for it would stumble over the fallen trees or get entangled in the briers and thorns. When you have gone about a hundred yards into the wood the wild beasts will surround you. Then you must instantly seize your bag, and scatter the bread-crumbs among them. They will rush to eat them up greedily, and when you have scattered the last crumb you must lose no time in throwing the hare to them; as soon as the hare feels itself on the ground it will run away as quickly as possible, and the wild beasts will turn to pursue it. In this way you will be able to get through the wood unhurt.’

Iwanich thanked the old man for his counsel, dismounted from his horse, and, taking the bag and the hare in his arms, he entered the forest. He had hardly lost sight of his gaunt grey friend when he heard growls and snarls in the thicket close to him, and before he had time to think he found himself surrounded by the most dreadful-looking creatures. On one side he saw the glittering eye of a cruel tiger, on the other the gleaming teeth of a great she-wolf; here a huge bear growled fiercely, and there a horrible snake coiled itself in the grass at his feet.

But Iwanich did not forget the old man’s advice, and quickly put his hand into the bag and took out as many bread-crumbs as he could hold in his hand at a time. He threw them to the beasts, but soon the bag grew lighter and lighter, and the Prince began to feel a little frightened. And now the last crumb was gone, and the hungry beasts thronged round him, greedy for fresh prey. Then he seized the hare and threw it to them.

No sooner did the little creature feel itself on the ground than it lay back its ears and flew through the wood like an arrow from a bow, closely pursued by the wild beasts, and the Prince was left alone. He looked at his ring, and when he saw that it sparkled as brightly as ever he went straight on through the forest.

He hadn't gone very far when he saw a most extraordinary looking man coming towards him. He was not more than three feet high, his legs were quite crooked, and all his body was covered with prickles like a hedgehog. Two lions walked with him, fastened to his side by the two ends of his long beard.

He stopped the Prince and asked him in a harsh voice: 'Are you the man who has just fed my body-guard?'

Iwanich was so startled that he could hardly reply, but the little man continued: 'I am most grateful to you for your kindness; what can I give you as a reward?'

'All I ask,' replied Iwanich, 'is, that I should be allowed to go through this wood in safety.'

'Most certainly,' answered the little man; 'and for greater security I will give you one of my lions as a protector. But when you leave this wood and come near a palace which does not belong to my domain, let the lion go, in order that he may not fall into the hands of an enemy and be killed.'

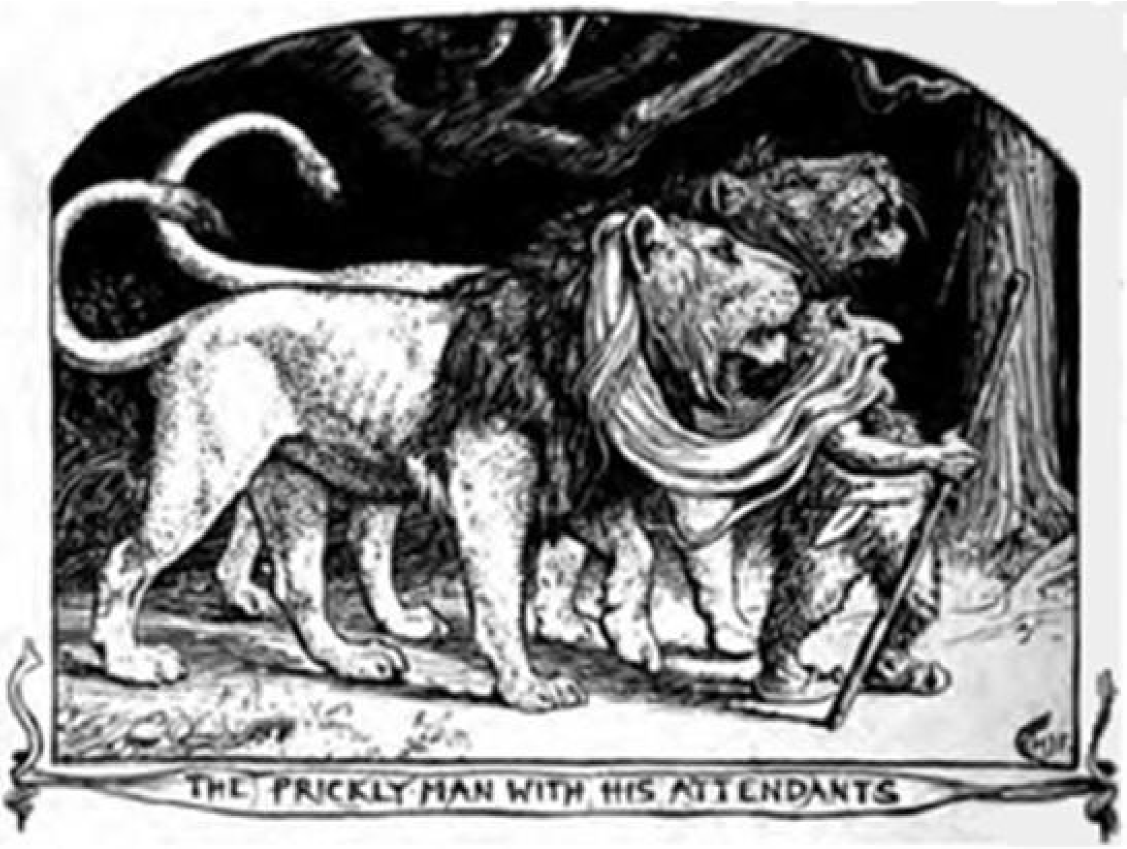

THE PRICKLY MAN WITH HIS ATTENDANTS

With these words he loosened the lion from his beard and bade the beast guard the youth carefully.

With this new protector Iwanich wandered on through the forest, and though he came upon a great many more wolves, hyenas, leopards, and other wild beasts, they always kept at a respectful distance when they saw what sort of an escort the Prince had with him.

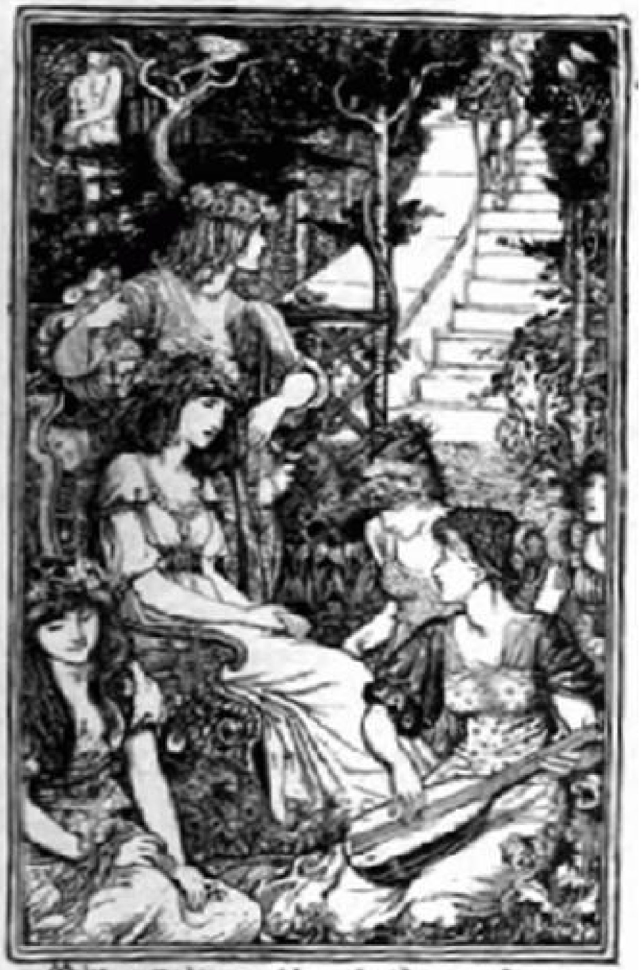

Militza & her maidens in the garden

Iwanich hurried through the wood as quickly as his legs would carry him, but, nevertheless, hour after hour, went by and not a trace of a green field or a human habitation met his eyes. At length, towards evening, the mass of trees grew more transparent, and through the interlaced branches a wide plain was visible.

At the exit of the wood the lion stood still, and the Prince took leave of him, having first thanked him warmly for his kind protection. It had become quite dark, and Iwanich was forced to wait for daylight before continuing his journey.

He made himself a bed of grass and leaves, lit a fire of dry branches, and slept soundly till the next morning.

Then he got up and walked towards a beautiful white palace which he saw gleaming in the distance. In about an hour he reached the building, and opening the door he walked in.

After wandering through many marble halls, he came to a huge staircase made of porphyry, leading down to a lovely garden.

The Prince burst into a shout of joy when he suddenly perceived Militza in the centre of a group of girls who were weaving wreaths of flowers with which to deck their mistress.

As soon as Militza saw the Prince she ran up to him and embraced him tenderly; and after he had told her all his adventures, they went into the palace, where a sumptuous meal awaited them. Then the Princess called her court together, and introduced Iwanich to them as her future husband.

Preparations were at once made for the wedding, which was held soon after with great pomp and magnificence.

Three months of great happiness followed, when Militza received one day an invitation to visit her mother’s sister.

Although the Princess was very unhappy at leaving her husband, she did not like to refuse the invitation, and, promising to return in seven days at the latest, she took a tender farewell of the Prince, and said: ‘Before I go I will hand you over all the keys of the castle. Go everywhere and do anything you like; only one thing I beg and beseech you, do not open the little iron door in the north tower, which is closed with seven locks and seven bolts; for if you do, we shall both suffer for it.’

Iwanich promised what she asked, and Militza departed, repeating her promise to return in seven days.

When the Prince found himself alone he began to be tormented by pangs of curiosity as to what the room in the tower contained. For two days he resisted the temptation to go and look, but on the third he could stand it no longer, and taking a torch in his hand he hurried to the tower, and unfastened one lock after the other of the little iron door until it burst open.

What an unexpected sight met his gaze! The Prince perceived a small room black with smoke, lit up feebly by a fire from which issued long blue flames. Over the fire hung a huge cauldron full of boiling pitch, and fastened into the cauldron by iron chains stood a wretched man screaming with agony.

Iwanich was much horrified at the sight before him, and asked the man what terrible crime he had committed to be punished in this dreadful fashion.

‘I will tell you everything,’ said the man in the cauldron; ‘but first relieve my torments a little, I implore you.’

‘And how can I do that?’ asked the Prince.

‘With a little water,’ replied the man; ‘only sprinkle a few drops over me and I shall feel better.’

The Prince, moved by pity, without thinking what he was doing, ran to the courtyard of the castle, and filled a jug with water, which he poured over the man in the cauldron.

In a moment a most fearful crash was heard, as if all the pillars of the palace were giving way, and the palace itself, with towers and doors, windows and the cauldron, whirled round the bewildered Prince’s head. This continued for a few minutes, and then everything vanished into thin air, and Iwanich found himself suddenly alone upon a desolate heath covered with rocks and stones.

The Prince, who now realised what his heedlessness had done, cursed too late his spirit of curiosity. In his despair he wandered on over the heath, never looking where he put his feet, and full of sorrowful thoughts. At last he saw a light in the distance, which came from a miserable-looking little hut.

The owner of it was none other than the kind-hearted gaunt grey beggar who had given the Prince the bag of bread-crumbs and the hare. Without recognising Iwanich, he opened the door when he knocked and gave him shelter for the night.

On the following morning the Prince asked his host if he could get him any work to do, as he was quite unknown in the neighbourhood, and had not enough money to take him home.

‘My son,’ replied the old man, ‘all this country round here is uninhabited; I myself have to wander to distant villages for my living, and even then I do not very often find enough to satisfy my hunger. But if you would like to take service with the old witch Corva, go straight up the little stream which flows below my hut for about three hours, and you will come to a sand-hill on the left-hand side; that is where she lives.’

Iwanich thanked the gaunt grey beggar for his information, and went on his way.

After walking for about three hours the Prince came upon a dreary-looking grey stone wall; this was the back of the building and did not attract him; but when he came upon the front of the house he found it even less inviting, for the old witch had surrounded her dwelling with a fence of spikes, on every one of which a man’s skull was stuck. In this horrible enclosure stood a small black house, which had only two grated windows, all covered with cobwebs, and a battered iron door.

The Prince knocked, and a rasping woman’s voice told him to enter.

Iwanich opened the door, and found himself in a smoke-begrimed kitchen, in the presence of a hideous old woman who was warming her skinny hands at a fire. The Prince offered to become her servant, and the old hag told him she was badly in want of one, and he seemed to be just the person to suit her.

When Iwanich asked what his work, and how much his wages would be, the witch bade him follow her, and led the way through a narrow damp passage into a vault, which served as a stable. Here he perceived two pitch-black horses in a stall.

‘You see before you,’ said the old woman, ‘a mare and her foal; you have nothing to do but to lead them out to the fields every day, and to see that neither of them runs away from you. If you look after them both for a whole year I will give you anything you like to ask; but if, on the other hand, you let either of the animals escape you, your last hour is come, and your head shall be stuck on the last spike of my fence. The other spikes, as you see, are already adorned, and the skulls are all those of different servants I have had who have failed to do what I demanded.’

Iwanich, who thought he could not be much worse off than he was already, agreed to the witch’s proposal.

At daybreak next morning he drove his horses to the field, and brought them back in the evening without their ever having attempted to break away from him. The witch stood at her door and received him kindly, and set a good meal before him.

So it continued for some time, and all went well with the Prince. Early every morning he led the horses out to the fields, and brought them home safe and sound in the evening.

One day, while he was watching the horses, he came to the banks of a river, and saw a big fish, which through some mischance had been cast on the land, struggling hard to get back into the water.

Iwanich, who felt sorry for the poor creature, seized it in his arms and flung it into the stream. But no sooner did the fish find itself in the water again, than, to the Prince’s amazement, it swam up to the bank and said:

‘My kind benefactor, how can I reward you for your goodness?’

‘I desire nothing,’ answered the Prince. ‘I am quite content to have been able to be of some service to you.’

‘You must do me the favour,’ replied the fish, ‘to take a scale from my body, and keep it carefully. If you should ever need my help, throw it into the river, and I will come to your aid at once.’

Iwanich bowed, loosened a scale from the body of the grateful beast, put it carefully away, and returned home.

A short time after this, when he was going early one morning to the usual grazing place with his horses, he noticed a flock of birds assembled together making a great noise and flying wildly backwards and forwards.

Full of curiosity, Iwanich hurried up to the spot, and saw that a large number of ravens had attacked an eagle, and although the eagle was big and powerful and was making a brave fight, it was overpowered at last by numbers, and had to give in.

But the Prince, who was sorry for the poor bird, seized the branch of a tree and hit out at the ravens with it; terrified at this unexpected onslaught they flew away, leaving many of their number dead or wounded on the battlefield.

As soon as the eagle saw itself free from its tormentors it plucked a feather from its wing, and, handing it to the Prince, said: ‘Here, my kind benefactor, take this feather as a proof of my gratitude; should you ever be in need of my help blow this feather into the air, and I will help you as much as is in my power.’

Iwanich thanked the bird, and placing the feather beside the scale he drove the horses home.

Another day he had wandered farther than usual, and came close to a farmyard; the place pleased the Prince, and as there was plenty of good grass for the horses he determined to spend the day there. Just as he was sitting down under a tree he heard a cry close to him, and saw a fox which had been caught in a trap placed there by the farmer.

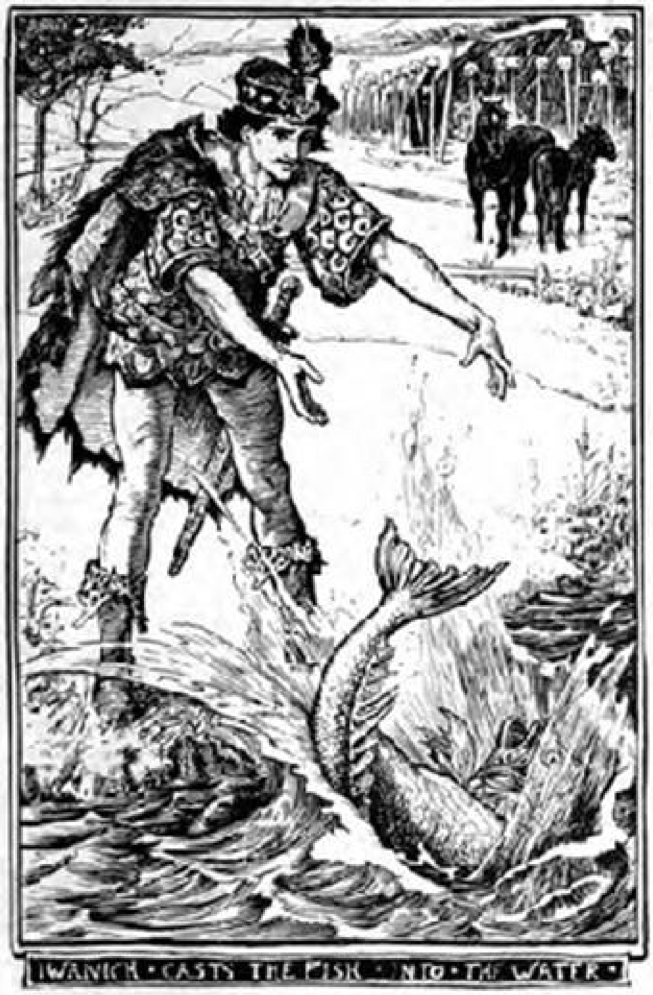

IWANICH • CASTS THE FISH • INTO THE WATER •

In vain did the poor beast try to free itself; then the good-natured Prince came once more to the rescue, and let the fox out of the trap.

The fox thanked him heartily, tore two hairs out of his bushy tail, and said: ‘Should you ever stand in need of my help throw these two hairs into the fire, and in a moment I shall be at your side ready to obey you.’

Iwanich put the fox’s hairs with the scale and the feather, and as it was getting dark he hastened home with his horses.

In the meantime his service was drawing near to an end, and in three more days the year was up, and he would be able to get his reward and leave the witch.

On the first evening of these last three days, when he came home and was eating his supper, he noticed the old woman stealing into the stables.

The Prince followed her secretly to see what she was going to do. He crouched down in the doorway and heard the wicked witch telling the horses to wait next morning till Iwanich was asleep, and then to go and hide themselves in the river, and to stay there till she told them to return; and if they didn’t do as she told them the old woman threatened to beat them till they bled.

When Iwanich heard all this he went back to his room, determined that nothing should induce him to fall asleep next day. On the following morning he led the mare and foal to the fields as usual, but bound a cord round them both which he kept in his hand.

But after a few hours, by the magic arts of the old witch, he was overpowered by sleep, and the mare and foal escaped and did as they had been told to do. The Prince did not awake till late in the evening; and when he did, he found, to his horror, that the horses had disappeared. Filled with despair, he cursed the moment when he had entered the service of the cruel witch, and already he saw his head sticking up on the sharp spike beside the others.

Then he suddenly remembered the fish's scale, which, with the eagle's feather and the fox's hairs, he always carried about with him. He drew the scale from his pocket, and hurrying to the river he threw it in. In a minute the grateful fish swam towards the bank on which Iwanich was standing, and said: 'What do you command, my friend and benefactor?'

The Prince replied: 'I had to look after a mare and foal, and they have run away from me and have hidden themselves in the river; if you wish to save my life drive them back to the land.'

'Wait a moment,' answered the fish, 'and I and my friends will soon drive them out of the water.' With these words the creature disappeared into the depths of the stream.

Almost immediately a rushing hissing sound was heard in the waters, the waves dashed against the banks, the foam was tossed into the air, and the two horses leapt suddenly on to the dry land, trembling and shaking with fear.

Iwanich sprang at once on to the mare's back, seized the foal by its bridle, and hastened home in the highest spirits.

When the witch saw the Prince bringing the horses home she could hardly conceal her wrath, and as soon as she had placed Iwanich's supper before him she stole away again to the stables. The Prince followed her, and heard her scolding the beasts harshly for not having hidden themselves better. She bade them wait next morning till Iwanich was asleep and then to hide themselves in the clouds, and to remain there till she called. If they did not do as she told them she would beat them till they bled.

The next morning, after Iwanich had led his horses to the fields, he fell once more into a magic sleep. The horses at once ran away and hid themselves in the clouds, which hung down from the mountains in soft billowy masses.

When the Prince awoke and found that both the mare and the foal had disappeared, he bethought him at once of the eagle, and taking the feather out of his pocket he blew it into the air.

In a moment the bird swooped down beside him and asked: ‘What do you wish me to do?’

‘My mare and foal,’ replied the Prince, ‘have run away from me, and have hidden themselves in the clouds; if you wish to save my life, restore both animals to me.’

‘Wait a minute,’ answered the eagle; ‘with the help of my friends I will soon drive them back to you.’

With these words the bird flew up into the air and disappeared among the clouds.

Almost directly Iwanich saw his two horses being driven towards him by a host of eagles of all sizes. He caught the mare and foal, and having thanked the eagle he drove them cheerfully home again.

The old witch was more disgusted than ever when she saw him appearing, and having set his supper before him she stole into the stables, and Iwanich heard her abusing the horses for not having hidden themselves better in the clouds. Then she bade them hide themselves next morning, as soon as Iwanich was asleep, in the King’s hen-house, which stood on a lonely part of the heath, and to remain there till she called. If they failed to do as she told them she would certainly beat them this time till they bled.

On the following morning the Prince drove his horses as usual to the fields. After he had been overpowered by sleep, as on the former days, the mare and foal ran away and hid themselves in the royal hen-house.

When the Prince awoke and found the horses gone he determined to appeal to the fox; so, lighting a fire, he threw the two hairs into it, and in a few moments the fox stood beside him and asked: ‘In what way can I serve you?’

‘I wish to know,’ replied Iwanich, ‘where the King’s hen-house is.’

‘Hardly an hour’s walk from here,’ answered the fox, and offered to show the Prince the way to it.

While they were walking along the fox asked him what he wanted to do at the royal hen-house. The Prince told him of the misfortune that had befallen him, and of the necessity of recovering the mare and foal.

‘That is no easy matter,’ replied the fox. ‘But wait a moment. I have an idea. Stand at the door of the hen-house, and wait there for your horses. In the meantime I will slip in among the hens through a hole in the wall and give them a good chase, so that the noise they make will arouse the royal henwives, and they will come to see what is the matter. When they see the horses they will at once imagine them to be the cause of the disturbance, and will drive them out. Then you must lay hands on the mare and foal and catch them.

All turned out exactly as the sly fox had foreseen. The Prince swung himself on the mare, seized the foal by its bridle, and hurried home.

While he was riding over the heath in the highest of spirits the mare suddenly said to her rider: ‘You are the first person who has ever succeeded in outwitting the old witch Corva, and now you may ask what reward you like for your service. If you promise never to betray me I will give you a piece of advice which you will do well to follow.’

The Prince promised never to betray her confidence, and the mare continued: ‘Ask nothing else as a reward than my foal, for it has not its like in the world, and is not to be bought for love or money; for it can go from one end of the earth to another in a few minutes. Of course the cunning Corva will do her best to dissuade you from taking the foal, and will tell you that it is both idle and sickly; but do not believe her, and stick to your point.’

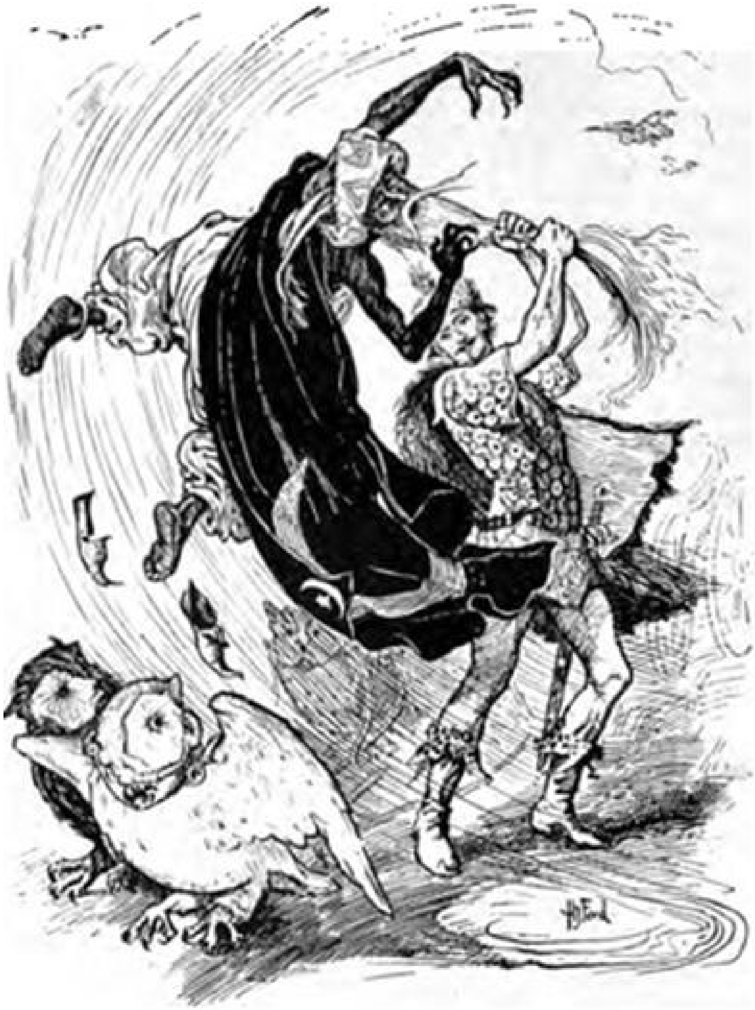

Iwanich longed to possess such an animal, and promised the mare to follow her advice.

This time Corva received him in the most friendly manner, and set a sumptuous repast before him. As soon as he had finished she asked him what reward he demanded for his year’s service.

‘Nothing more nor less,’ replied the Prince, ‘than the foal of your mare.’

The witch pretended to be much astonished at his request, and said that he deserved something much better than the foal, for the beast was lazy and nervous, blind in one eye, and, in short, was quite worthless.

But the Prince knew what he wanted, and when the old witch saw that he had made up his mind to have the foal, she said, ‘I am obliged to keep my promise and to hand you over the foal; and as I know who you are and what you want, I will tell you in what way the animal will be useful to you. The man in the cauldron of boiling pitch, whom you set free, is a mighty magician; through your curiosity and thoughtlessness Militza came into his power, and he has transported her and her castle and belongings into a distant country.

‘You are the only person who can kill him; and in consequence he fears you to such an extent that he has set spies to watch you, and they report your movements to him daily.

‘When you have reached him, beware of speaking a single word to him, or you will fall into the power of his friends. Seize him at once by the beard and dash him to the ground.’

Iwanich thanked the old witch, mounted his foal, put spurs to its sides, and they flew like lightning through the air.

Already it was growing dark, when Iwanich perceived some figures in the distance; they soon came up to them, and then the Prince saw that it was the magician and his friends who were driving through the air in a carriage drawn by owls.

When the magician found himself face to face with Iwanich, without hope of escape, he turned to him with false friendliness and said: ‘Thrice my kind benefactor!’

But the Prince, without saying a word, seized him at once by his beard and dashed him to the ground. At the same moment the foal sprang on the top of the magician and kicked and stamped on him with his hoofs till he died.

Then Iwanich found himself once more in the palace of his bride, and Militza herself flew into his arms.

From this time forward they lived in undisturbed peace and happiness till the end of their lives.

THE MAGIC RING

Once upon a time there lived an old couple who had one son called Martin. Now when the old man's time had come, he stretched himself out on his bed and died. Though all his life long he had toiled and moiled, he only left his widow and son two hundred florins. The old woman determined to put by the money for a rainy day; but alas! the rainy day was close at hand, for their meal was all consumed, and who is prepared to face starvation with two hundred florins at their disposal? So the old woman counted out a hundred of her florins, and giving them to Martin, told him to go into the town and lay in a store of meal for a year.

So Martin started off for the town. When he reached the meat-market he found the whole place in turmoil, and a great noise of angry voices and barking of dogs. Mixing in the crowd, he noticed a stag-hound which the butchers had caught and tied to a post, and which was being flogged in a merciless manner. Overcome with pity, Martin spoke to the butchers, saying:

'Friends, why are you beating the poor dog so cruelly?'

'We have every right to beat him,' they replied; 'he has just devoured a newly-killed pig.'

'Leave off beating him,' said Martin, 'and sell him to me instead.'

'If you choose to buy him,' answered the butchers derisively; 'but for such a treasure we won't take a penny less than a hundred florins.'

'A hundred!' exclaimed Martin. 'Well, so be it, if you will not take less;' and, taking the money out of his pocket, he handed it over in exchange for the dog, whose name was Schurka.

When Martin got home, his mother met him with the question:

'Well, what have you bought?'

'Schurka, the dog,' replied Martin, pointing to his new possession. Whereupon his mother became very angry, and abused him roundly. He ought to be ashamed of himself, when there was scarcely a handful of meal in the house, to have spent the money on a useless brute like that. On the following day she sent him back to the town, saying, 'Here, take our last hundred florins, and buy provisions with them. I have just emptied the last grains of meal out of the chest, and baked a bannock; but it won't last over to-morrow.'

Just as Martin was entering the town he met a rough-looking peasant who was dragging a cat after him by a string which was fastened round the poor beast’s neck.

‘Stop,’ cried Martin; ‘where are you dragging that poor cat?’

‘I mean to drown him,’ was the answer.

‘What harm has the poor beast done?’ said Martin.

‘It has just killed a goose,’ replied the peasant.

‘Don’t drown him, sell him to me instead,’ begged Martin.

‘Not for a hundred florins,’ was the answer.

‘Surely for a hundred florins you’ll sell it?’ said Martin. ‘See! here is the money;’ and, so saying, he handed him the hundred florins, which the peasant pocketed, and Martin took possession of the cat, which was called Waska.

When he reached his home his mother greeted him with the question:

‘Well, what have you brought back?’

‘I have brought this cat, Waska,’ answered Martin.

‘And what besides?’

‘I had no money over to buy anything else with,’ replied Martin.

‘You useless ne’er-do-weel!’ exclaimed his mother in a great passion. ‘Leave the house at once, and go and beg your bread among strangers;’ and as Martin did not dare to contradict her, he called Schurka and Waska and started off with them to the nearest village in search of work. On the way he met a rich peasant, who asked him where he was going.

‘I want to get work as a day labourer,’ he answered.

‘Come along with me, then. But I must tell you I engage my labourers without wages. If you serve me faithfully for a year, I promise you it shall be for your advantage.’

So Martin consented, and for a year he worked diligently, and served his master faithfully, not sparing himself in any way. When the day of reckoning had come the peasant led him into a barn, and pointing to two full sacks, said: ‘Take whichever of these you choose.’

Martin examined the contents of the sacks, and seeing that one was full of silver and the other of sand, he said to himself:

‘There must be some trick about this; I had better take the sand.’ And throwing the sack over his shoulders he started out into the world, in search of fresh work. On and on he walked, and at last he reached a great gloomy wood. In the middle of the wood he came upon a meadow, where a fire was burning, and in the midst of the fire, surrounded by flames, was a lovely damsel, more beautiful than anything that Martin had ever seen, and when she saw him she called to him:

‘Martin, if you would win happiness, save my life. Extinguish the flames with the sand that you earned in payment of your faithful service.'

'Truly,' thought Martin to himself, 'it would be more sensible to save a fellow-being's life with this sand than to drag it about on one's back, seeing what a weight it is.' And forthwith he lowered the sack from his shoulders and emptied its contents on the flames, and instantly the fire was extinguished; but at the same moment lo! and behold the lovely damsel turned into a Serpent, and, darting upon him, coiled itself round his neck, and whispered lovingly in his ear:

'Do not be afraid of me, Martin; I love you, and will go with you through the world. But first you must follow me boldly into my Father's Kingdom, underneath the earth; and when we get there, remember this — he will offer you gold and silver, and dazzling gems, but do not touch them. Ask him, instead, for the ring which he wears on his little finger, for in that ring lies a magic power; you have only to throw it from one hand to the other, and at once twelve young men will appear, who will do your bidding, no matter how difficult, in a single night.'

So they started on their way, and after much wandering they reached a spot where a great rock rose straight up in the middle of the road. Instantly the Serpent uncoiled itself from his neck, and, as it touched the damp earth, it resumed the shape of the lovely damsel. Pointing to the rock, she showed him an opening just big enough for a man to wriggle through. Passing into it, they entered a long underground passage, which led out on to a wide field, above which spread a blue sky. In the middle of the field stood a magnificent castle, built out of porphyry, with a roof of gold and with glittering battlements. And his beautiful guide told him that this was the palace in which her father lived and reigned over his kingdom in the Under-world.

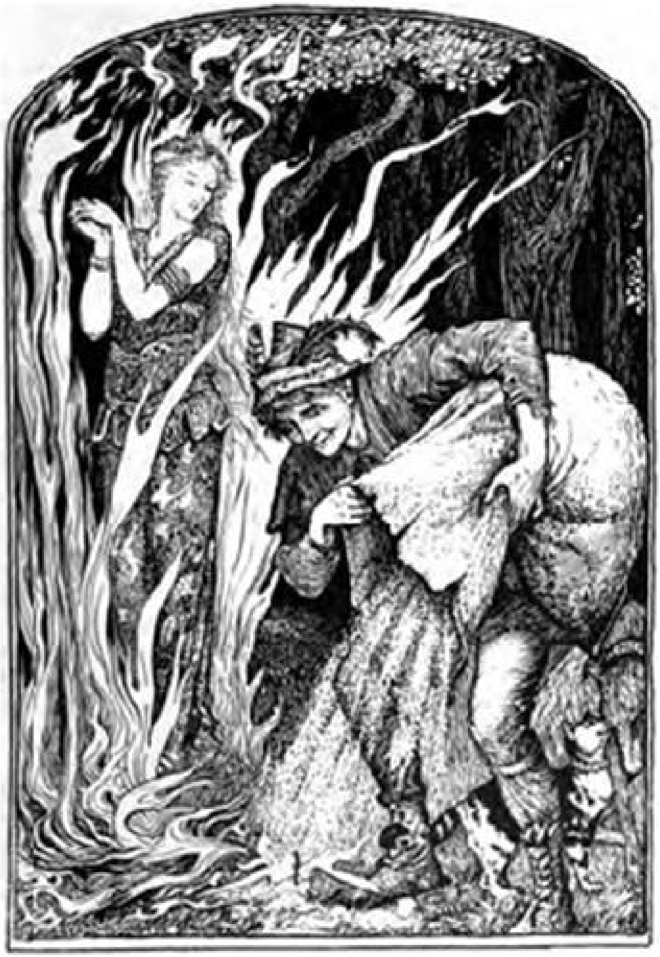

Martin extinguishes the flames

Together they entered the palace, and were received by the King with great kindness. Turning to his daughter, he said:

‘My child, I had almost given up the hope of ever seeing you again. Where have you been all these years?’

‘My father,’ she replied, ‘I owe my life to this youth, who saved me from a terrible death.’

Upon which the King turned to Martin with a gracious smile, saying: ‘I will reward your courage by granting you whatever your heart desires. Take as much gold, silver, and precious stones as you choose.’

‘I thank you, mighty King, for your gracious offer,’ answered Martin, ‘but I do not covet either gold, silver, or precious stones; yet if you will grant me a favour, give me, I beg, the ring from off the little finger of your royal hand. Every time my eye falls on it I shall think of your gracious Majesty, and when I marry I shall present it to my bride.’

So the King took the ring from his finger and gave it to Martin, saying: ‘Take it, good youth; but with it I make one condition — you are never to confide to anyone that this is a magic ring. If you do, you will straightway bring misfortune on yourself.'

Martin took the ring, and, having thanked the King, he set out on the same road by which he had come down into the Under-world. When he had regained the upper air he started for his old home, and having found his mother still living in the old house where he had left her, they settled down together very happily. So uneventful was their life that it almost seemed as if it would go on in this way always, without let or hindrance. But one day it suddenly came into his mind that he would like to get married, and, moreover, that he would choose a very grand wife — a King's daughter, in short. But as he did not trust himself as a wooer, he determined to send his old mother on the mission.

'You must go to the King,' he said to her, 'and demand the hand of his lovely daughter in marriage for me.'

'What are you thinking of, my son?' answered the old woman, aghast at the idea. 'Why cannot you marry someone in your own rank? That would be far more fitting than to send a poor old woman like me a-wooing to the King's Court for the hand of a Princess. Why, it is as much as our heads are worth. Neither my life nor yours would be worth anything if I went on such a fool's errand.'

'Never fear, little mother,' answered Martin. 'Trust me; all will be well. But see that you do not come back without an answer of some kind.'

And so, obedient to her son's behest, the old woman hobbled off to the palace, and, without being hindered, reached the courtyard, and began to mount the flight of steps leading to the royal presence chamber. At the head of the landing rows of courtiers were collected in magnificent attire, who stared at the queer old figure, and called to her, and explained to her, with every kind of sign, that it was strictly forbidden to mount those steps. But their stern words and forbidding gestures made no impression whatever on the old woman, and she resolutely continued to climb the stairs, bent on carrying out her son's orders. Upon this some of the courtiers seized her by the arms, and held her back by sheer force, at which she set up such a yell that the King himself heard it, and stepped out on to the balcony to see what was the matter. When he beheld the old woman flinging her arms wildly about, and heard her scream that she would not leave the place till she had laid her case before the King, he ordered that she should be brought into his presence. And forthwith she was conducted into the golden presence chamber, where, leaning back amongst cushions of royal purple, the King sat, surrounded by his counsellors and courtiers. Courtesying low, the old woman stood silent before him. 'Well, my good old dame, what can I do for you?' asked the King.

‘I have come,’ replied Martin’s mother— ‘and your Majesty must not be angry with me — I have come a-wooing.’

‘Is the woman out of her mind?’ said the King, with an angry frown.

But Martin’s mother answered boldly: ‘If the King will only listen patiently to me, and give me a straightforward answer, he will see that I am not out of my mind. You, O King, have a lovely daughter to give in marriage. I have a son — a wooer — as clever a youth and as good a son-in-law as you will find in your whole kingdom. There is nothing that he cannot do. Now tell me, O King, plump and plain, will you give your daughter to my son as wife?’ The King listened to the end of the old woman’s strange request, but every moment his face grew blacker, and his features sterner; till all at once he thought to himself, ‘Is it worth while that I, the King, should be angry with this poor old fool?’ And all the courtiers and counsellors were amazed when they saw the hard lines round his mouth and the frown on his brow grow smooth, and heard the mild but mocking tones in which he answered the old woman, saying:

‘If your son is as wonderfully clever as you say, and if there is nothing in the world that he cannot do, let him build a magnificent castle, just opposite my palace windows, in four and twenty hours. The palace must be joined together by a bridge of pure crystal. On each side of the bridge there must be growing trees, having golden and silver apples, and with birds of Paradise among the branches. At the right of the bridge there must be a church, with five golden cupolas; in this church your son shall be wedded to my daughter, and we will keep the wedding festivities in the new castle. But if he fails to execute this my royal command, then, as a just but mild monarch, I shall give orders that you and he are taken, and first dipped in tar and then in feathers, and you shall be executed in the market-place for the entertainment of my courtiers.’

And a smile played round the King’s lips as he finished speaking, and his courtiers and counsellors shook with laughter when they thought of the old woman’s folly, and praised the King’s wise device, and said to each other, ‘What a joke it will be when we see the pair of them tarred and feathered! The son is just as able to grow a beard on the palm of his hand as to execute such a task in twenty-four hours.’

Now the poor old woman was mortally afraid and, in a trembling voice she asked:

‘Is that really your royal will, O King? Must I take this order to my poor son?’

‘Yes, old dame; such is my command. If your son carries out my order, he shall be rewarded with my daughter; but if he fails, away to the tar-barrel and the stake with you both!’

On her way home the poor old woman shed bitter tears, and when she saw Martin she told him what the King had said, and sobbed out:

‘Didn’t I tell you, my son, that you should marry someone of your own rank? It would have been better for us this day if you had. As I told you, my going to Court has been as much as our lives are worth, and now we will both be tarred and feathered, and burnt in the public market-place. It is terrible!’ and she moaned and cried.

‘Never fear, little mother,’ answered Martin; ‘trust me, and you will see all will be well. You may go to sleep with a quiet mind.’

And, stepping to the front of the hut, Martin threw his ring from the palm of one hand into the other, upon which twelve youths instantly appeared, and demanded what he wanted them to do. Then he told them the King’s commands, and they answered that by next morning all should be accomplished exactly as the King had ordered.

Next morning when the King awoke, and looked out of his window, to his amazement he beheld a magnificent castle, just opposite his own palace, and joined to it a bridge of pure crystal.

At each side of the bridge trees were growing, from whose branches hung golden and silver apples, among which birds of Paradise perched. At the right, gleaming in the sun, were the five golden cupolas of a splendid church, whose bells rang out, as if they would summon people from all corners of the earth to come and behold the wonder. Now, though the King would much rather have seen his future son-in-law tarred, feathered, and burnt at the stake, he remembered his royal oath, and had to make the best of a bad business. So he took heart of grace, and made Martin a Duke, and gave his daughter a rich dowry, and prepared the grandest wedding-feast that had ever been seen, so that to this day the old people in the country still talk of it.

After the wedding Martin and his royal bride went to dwell in the magnificent new palace, and here Martin lived in the greatest comfort and luxury, such luxury as he had never imagined. But though he was as happy as the day was long, and as merry as a grig, the King’s daughter fretted all day, thinking of the indignity that had been done her in making her marry Martin, the poor widow’s son, instead of a rich young Prince from a foreign country. So unhappy was she that she spent all her time wondering how she should get rid of her undesirable husband. And first she determined to learn the secret of his power, and, with flattering, caressing words, she tried to coax him to tell her how he was so clever that there was nothing in the world that he could not do. At first he would tell her nothing; but once, when he was in a yielding mood, she approached him with a winning smile on her lovely face, and, speaking flattering words to him, she gave him a potion to drink, with a sweet, strong taste. And when he had drunk it Martin’s lips were unsealed, and he told her that all his power lay in the magic ring that he wore on his finger, and he described to her how to use it, and, still speaking, he fell into a deep sleep. And when she saw that the potion had worked, and that he was sound asleep, the Princess took the magic ring from his finger, and, going into the courtyard, she threw it from the palm of one hand into the other. On the instant the twelve youths appeared, and asked her what she commanded them to do. Then she told them that by the next morning they were to do away with the castle, and the bridge, and the church, and put in their stead the humble hut in which Martin used to live with his mother, and that while he slept her husband was to be carried to his old lowly room; and that they were to bear her away to the utmost ends of the earth, where an old King lived who would make her welcome in his palace, and surround her with the state that befitted a royal Princess.

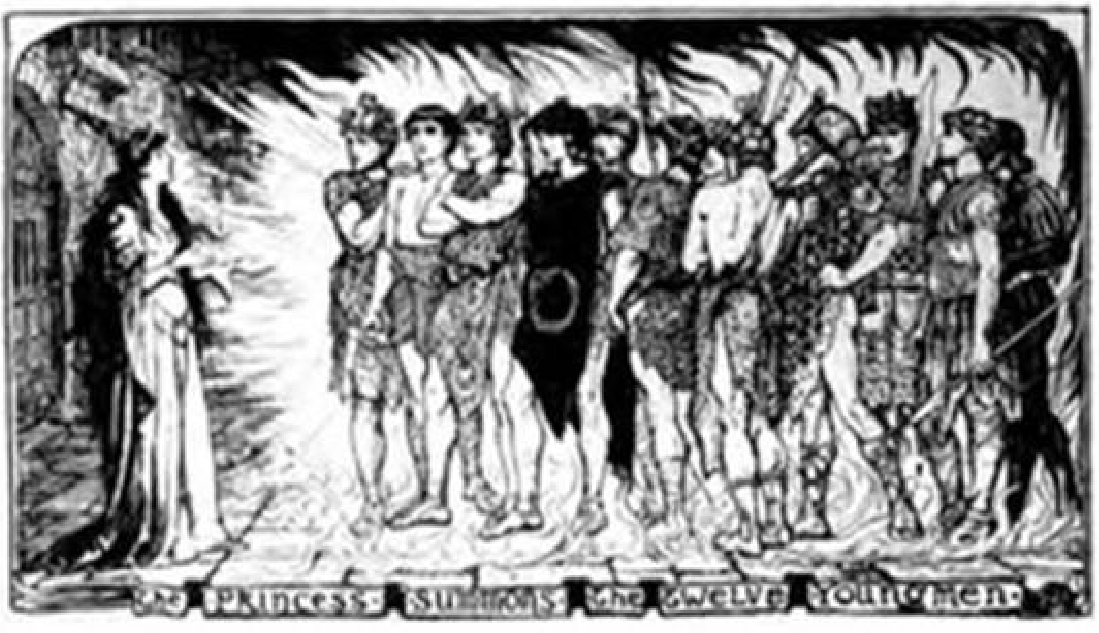
The Princess summons the twelve young men

‘You shall be obeyed,’ answered the twelve youths at the same moment. And lo and behold! the following morning, when the King awoke and looked out of his window he beheld to his amazement that the palace, bridge, church, and trees had all vanished, and there was nothing in their place but a bare, miserable-looking hut.

Immediately the King sent for his son-in-law, and commanded him to explain what had happened. But Martin looked at his royal father-in-law, and answered never a word. Then the King was very angry, and, calling a council together, he charged Martin with having been guilty of witchcraft, and of having deceived the King, and having made away with the Princess; and he was condemned to imprisonment in a high stone tower, with neither meat nor drink, till he should die of starvation.

Then, in the hour of his dire necessity, his old friends Schurka (the dog) and Waska (the cat) remembered how Martin had once saved them from a cruel death; and they took counsel together as to how they should help him. And Schurka growled, and was of opinion that he would like to tear everyone in pieces; but Waska purred meditatively, and scratched the back of her ear with a velvet paw, and remained lost in thought. At the end of a few minutes she had made up her mind, and, turning to Schurka, said: ‘Let us go together into the town, and the moment we meet a baker you must make a rush between his legs and upset the tray from off his head; I will lay hold of the rolls, and will carry them off to our master.’ No sooner said than done. Together the two faithful creatures trotted off into the town, and very soon they met a baker bearing a tray on his head, and looking round on all sides, while he cried:

‘Fresh rolls, sweet cake,
Fancy bread of every kind.
Come and buy, come and take,
Sure you’ll find it to your mind.’

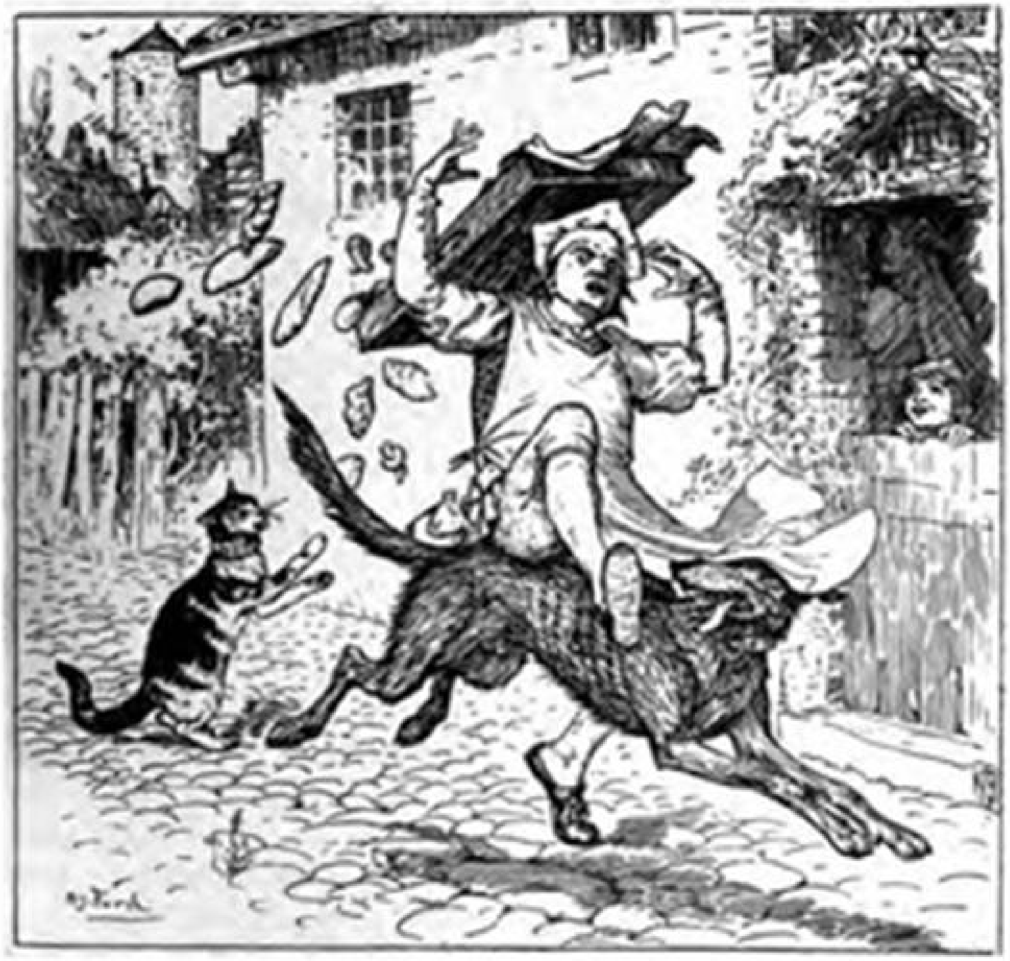

Schurka upsets the baker

At that moment Schurka made a rush between his legs — the baker stumbled, the tray was upset, the rolls fell to the ground, and, while the man angrily pursued Schurka, Waska managed to drag the rolls out of sight behind a bush. And when a moment later Schurka joined her, they set off at full tilt to the stone tower where Martin was a prisoner, taking the rolls with them. Waska, being very agile, climbed up by the outside to the grated window, and called in an anxious voice:

‘Are you alive, master?’

‘Scarcely alive — almost starved to death,’ answered Martin in a weak voice. ‘I little thought it would come to this, that I should die of hunger.’

‘Never fear, dear master. Schurka and I will look after you,’ said Waska. And in another moment she had climbed down and brought him back a roll, and then another, and another, till she had brought him the whole tray-load. Upon which she said: ‘Dear master, Schurka and I are going off to a distant kingdom at the utmost ends of the earth to fetch you back your magic ring. You must be careful that the rolls last till our return.’

And Waska took leave of her beloved master, and set off with Schurka on their journey. On and on they travelled, looking always to right and left for traces of the Princess, following up every track, making inquiries of every cat and dog they met, listening to the talk of every wayfarer they passed; and at last they heard that the kingdom at the utmost ends of the earth where the twelve youths had borne the Princess was not very far off. And at last one day they reached that distant kingdom, and, going at once to the palace, they began to make friends with all the dogs and cats in the place, and to question them about the Princess and the magic ring; but no one could tell them much about either. Now one day it chanced that Waska had gone down to the palace cellar to hunt for mice and rats, and seeing an especially fat, well-fed mouse, she pounced upon it, buried her claws in its soft fur, and was just going to gobble it up, when she was stopped by the pleading tones of the little creature, saying, ‘If you will only spare my life I may be of great service to you. I will do everything in my power for you; for I am the King of the Mice, and if I perish the whole race will die out.’

‘So be it,’ said Waska. ‘I will spare your life; but in return you must do something for me. In this castle there lives a Princess, the wicked wife of my dear master. She has stolen away his magic ring. You must get it away from her at whatever cost; do you hear? Till you have done this I won’t take my claws out of your fur.’

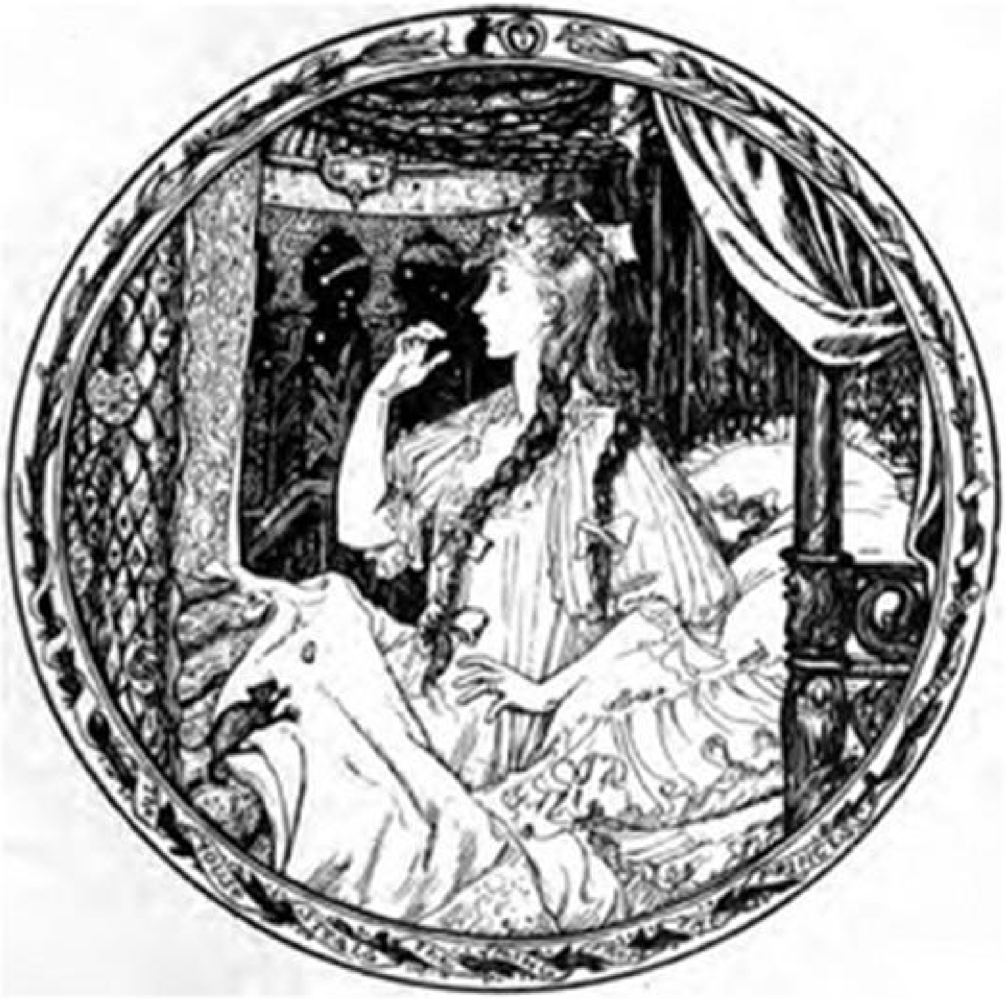

‘Good!’ replied the mouse; ‘I will do what you ask.’ And, so saying, he summoned all the mice in his kingdom together. A countless number of mice, small and big, brown and grey, assembled, and formed a circle round their king, who was a prisoner under Waska’s claws. Turning to them he said: ‘Dear and faithful subjects, who ever among you will steal the magic ring from the strange Princess will release me from a cruel death; and I shall honour him above all the other mice in the kingdom.’

Instantly a tiny mouse stepped forward and said: ‘I often creep about the Princess’s bedroom at night, and I have noticed that she has a ring which she treasures as the apple of her eye. All day she wears it on her finger, and at night she keeps it in her mouth. I will undertake, sire, to steal away the ring for you.’

And the tiny mouse tripped away into the bedroom of the Princess, and waited for nightfall; then, when the Princess had fallen asleep, it crept up on to her bed, and gnawed a hole in the pillow, through which it dragged one by one little down feathers, and threw them under the Princess’s nose. And the fluff flew into the Princess’s nose, and into her mouth, and starting up she sneezed and coughed, and the ring fell out of her mouth on to the coverlet. In a flash the tiny mouse had seized it, and brought it to Waska as a ransom for the King of the Mice. Thereupon Waska and Schurka started off, and travelled night and day till they reached the stone tower where Martin was imprisoned; and the cat climbed up the window, and called out to him:

‘Martin, dear master, are you still alive?’

‘Ah! Waska, my faithful little cat, is that you?’ replied a weak voice. ‘I am dying of hunger. For three days I have not tasted food.’

‘Be of good heart, dear master,’ replied Waska; ‘from this day forth you will know nothing but happiness and prosperity. If this were a moment to trouble you with riddles, I would make you guess what Schurka and I have brought you back. Only think, we have got you your ring!’

At these words Martin’s joy knew no bounds, and he stroked her fondly, and she rubbed up against him and purred happily, while below Schurka bounded in the air, and barked joyfully. Then Martin took the ring, and threw it from one hand into the other, and instantly the twelve youths appeared and asked what they were to do.

‘Fetch me first something to eat and drink, as quickly as possible; and after that bring musicians hither, and let us have music all day long.’

Now when the people in the town and palace heard music coming from the tower they were filled with amazement, and came to the King with the news that witchcraft must be going on in Martin’s Tower, for, instead of dying of starvation, he was seemingly making merry to the sound of music, and to the clatter of plates, and glass, and knives and forks; and the music was so enchantingly sweet that all the passers-by stood still to listen to it. On this the King sent at once a messenger to the Starvation Tower, and he was so astonished with what he saw that he remained rooted to the spot. Then the King sent his chief counsellors, and they too were transfixed with wonder. At last the King came himself, and he likewise was spellbound by the beauty of the music.

Then Martin summoned the twelve youths, spoke to them, saying, ‘Build up my castle again, and join it to the King’s Palace with a crystal bridge; do not forget the trees with the golden and silver apples, and with the birds of Paradise in the branches; and put back the church with the five cupolas, and let the bells ring out, summoning the people from the four corners of the kingdom. And one thing more: bring back my faithless wife, and lead her into the women’s chamber.’

And it was all done as he commanded, and, leaving the Starvation Tower, he took the King, his father-in-law, by the arm, and led him into the new palace, where the Princess sat in fear and trembling, awaiting her death. And Martin spoke to the King, saying, ‘King and royal father, I have suffered much at the hands of your daughter. What punishment shall be dealt to her?’

Then the mild King answered: ‘Beloved Prince and son-in-law, if you love me, let your anger be turned to grace — forgive my daughter, and restore her to your heart and favour.’

And Martin’s heart was softened and he forgave his wife, and they lived happily together ever after. And his old mother came and lived with him, and he never parted with Schurka and Waska; and I need hardly tell you that he never again let the ring out of his possession.

THE FLOWER QUEEN’S DAUGHTER

A young Prince was riding one day through a meadow that stretched for miles in front of him, when he came to a deep open ditch. He was turning aside to avoid it, when he heard the sound of someone crying in the ditch. He dismounted from his horse, and stepped along in the direction the sound came from. To his astonishment he found an old woman, who begged him to help her out of the ditch. The Prince bent down and lifted her out of her living grave, asking her at the same time how she had managed to get there.

‘My son,’ answered the old woman, ‘I am a very poor woman, and soon after midnight I set out for the neighbouring town in order to sell my eggs in the market on the following morning; but I lost my way in the dark, and fell into this deep ditch, where I might have remained for ever but for your kindness.’

Then the Prince said to her, ‘You can hardly walk; I will put you on my horse and lead you home. Where do you live?’

‘Over there, at the edge of the forest in the little hut you see in the distance,’ replied the old woman.

The Prince lifted her on to his horse, and soon they reached the hut, where the old woman got down, and turning to the Prince said, ‘Just wait a moment, and I will give you something.’ And she disappeared into her hut, but returned very soon and said, ‘You are a mighty Prince, but at the same time you have a kind heart, which deserves to be rewarded. Would you like to have the most beautiful woman in the world for your wife?’

‘Most certainly I would,’ replied the Prince.

So the old woman continued, ‘The most beautiful woman in the whole world is the daughter of the Queen of the Flowers, who has been captured by a dragon. If you wish to marry her, you must first set her free, and this I will help you to do. I will give you this little bell: if you ring it once, the King of the Eagles will appear; if you ring it twice, the King of the Foxes will come to you; and if you ring it three times, you will see the King of the Fishes by your side. These will help you if you are in any difficulty. Now farewell, and heaven prosper your undertaking.’ She handed him the little bell, and there disappeared hut and all, as though the earth had swallowed her up.

Then it dawned on the Prince that he had been speaking to a good fairy, and putting the little bell carefully in his pocket, he rode home and told his father that he meant to set the daughter of the Flower Queen free, and intended setting out on the following day into the wide world in search of the maid.

So the next morning the Prince mounted his fine horse and left his home. He had roamed round the world for a whole year, and his horse had died of exhaustion, while he himself had suffered much from want and misery, but still he had come on no trace of her he was in search of. At last one day he came to a hut, in front of which sat a very old man. The Prince asked him, ‘Do you not know where the Dragon lives who keeps the daughter of the Flower Queen prisoner?’

‘No, I do not,’ answered the old man. ‘But if you go straight along this road for a year, you will reach a hut where my father lives, and possibly he may be able to tell you.’

The Prince thanked him for his information, and continued his journey for a whole year along the same road, and at the end of it came to the little hut, where he found a very old man. He asked him the same question, and the old man answered, ‘No, I do not know where the Dragon lives. But go straight along this road for another year, and you will come to a hut in which my father lives. I know he can tell you.’

And so the Prince wandered on for another year, always on the same road, and at last reached the hut where he found the third old man. He put the same question to him as he had put to his son and grandson; but this time the old man answered, ‘The Dragon lives up there on the mountain, and he has just begun his year of sleep. For one whole year he is always awake, and the next he sleeps. But if you wish to see the Flower Queen’s daughter go up the second mountain: the Dragon’s old mother lives there, and she has a ball every night, to which the Flower Queen’s daughter goes regularly.’

So the Prince went up the second mountain, where he found a castle all made of gold with diamond windows. He opened the big gate leading into the courtyard, and was just going to walk in, when seven dragons rushed on him and asked him what he wanted?

The Prince replied, ‘I have heard so much of the beauty and kindness of the Dragon’s Mother, and would like to enter her service.’

This flattering speech pleased the dragons, and the eldest of them said, ‘Well, you may come with me, and I will take you to the Mother Dragon.’

They entered the castle and walked through twelve splendid halls, all made of gold and diamonds. In the twelfth room they found the Mother Dragon seated on a diamond throne. She was the ugliest woman under the sun, and, added to it all, she had three heads. Her appearance was a great shock to the Prince, and so was her voice, which was like the croaking of many ravens. She asked him, ‘Why have you come here?’

The Prince answered at once, ‘I have heard so much of your beauty and kindness, that I would very much like to enter your service.’

‘Very well,’ said the Mother Dragon; ‘but if you wish to enter my service, you must first lead my mare out to the meadow and look after her for three days; but if you don’t bring her home safely every evening, we will eat you up.’

The Prince undertook the task and led the mare out to the meadow. But no sooner had they reached the grass than she vanished. The Prince sought for her in vain, and at last in despair sat down on a big stone and contemplated his sad fate. As he sat thus lost in thought, he noticed an eagle flying over his head. Then he suddenly bethought him of his little bell, and taking it out of his pocket he rang it once. In a moment he heard a rustling sound in the air beside him, and the King of the Eagles sank at his feet.

‘I know what you want of me,’ the bird said. ‘You are looking for the Mother Dragon’s mare who is galloping about among the clouds. I will summon all the eagles of the air together, and order them to catch the mare and bring her to you.’ And with these words the King of the Eagles flew away. Towards evening the Prince heard a mighty rushing sound in the air, and when he looked up he saw thousands of eagles driving the mare before them. They sank at his feet on to the ground and gave the mare over to him. Then the Prince rode home to the old Mother Dragon, who was full of wonder when she saw him, and said, ‘You have succeeded to-day in looking after my mare, and as a reward you shall come to my ball to-night.’ She gave him at the same time a cloak made of copper, and led him to a big room where several young he-dragons and she-dragons were dancing together. Here, too, was the Flower Queen’s beautiful daughter. Her dress was woven out of the most lovely flowers in the world, and her complexion was like lilies and roses. As the Prince was dancing with her he managed to whisper in her ear, ‘I have come to set you free!’

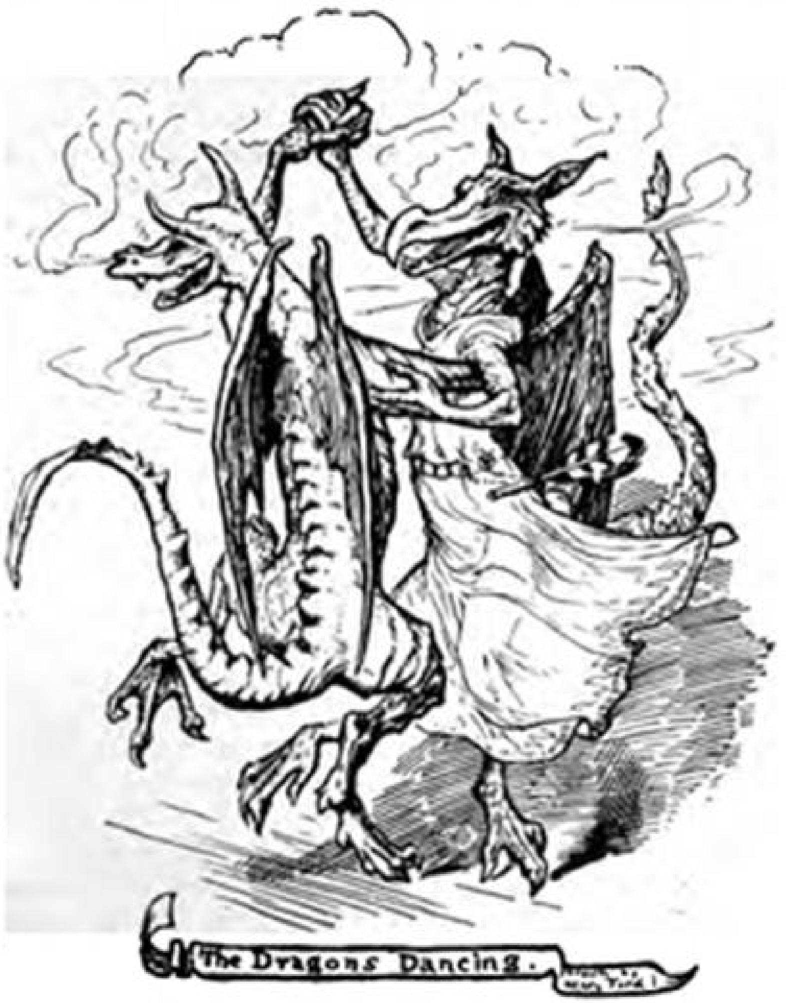

The Dragons Dancing.

Then the beautiful girl said to him, ‘If you succeed in bringing the mare back safely the third day, ask the Mother Dragon to give you a foal of the mare as a reward.’

The ball came to an end at midnight, and early next morning the Prince again led the Mother Dragon’s mare out into the meadow. But again she vanished before his eyes. Then he took out his little bell and rang it twice.

In a moment the King of the Foxes stood before him and said: ‘I know already what you want, and will summon all the foxes of the world together to find the mare who has hidden herself in a hill.’

With these words the King of the Foxes disappeared, and in the evening many thousand foxes brought the mare to the Prince.

Then he rode home to the Mother Dragon, from whom he received this time a cloak made of silver, and again she led him to the ball-room.

The Flower Queen’s daughter was delighted to see him safe and sound, and when they were dancing together she whispered in his ear: ‘If you succeed again to-morrow, wait for me with the foal in the meadow. After the ball we will fly away together.’

On the third day the Prince led the mare to the meadow again; but once more she vanished before his eyes. Then the Prince took out his little bell and rang it three times.

In a moment the King of the Fishes appeared, and said to him: ‘I know quite well what you want me to do, and I will summon all the fishes of the sea together, and tell them to bring you back the mare, who is hiding herself in a river.’

Towards evening the mare was returned to him, and when he led her home to the Mother Dragon she said to him:

‘You are a brave youth, and I will make you my body-servant. But what shall I give you as a reward to begin with?’

The Prince begged for a foal of the mare, which the Mother Dragon at once gave him, and over and above, a cloak made of gold, for she had fallen in love with him because he had praised her beauty.

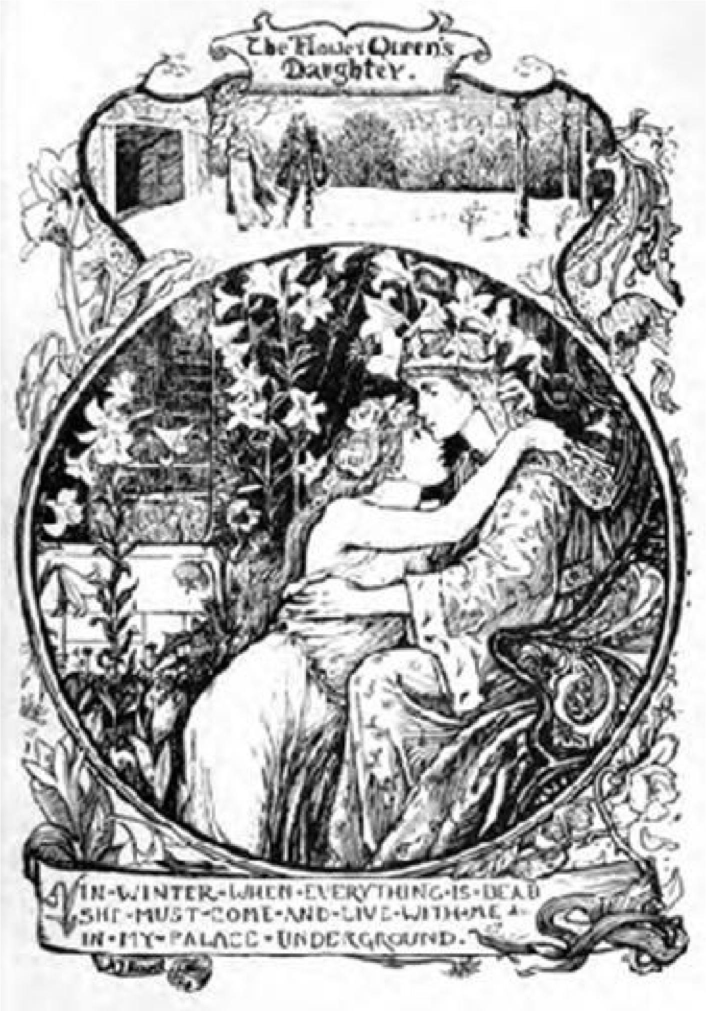
The Flower Queen's Daughter.
In winter when everything is dead she must come and live with me in my palace underground.

So in the evening he appeared at the ball in his golden cloak; but before the entertainment was over he slipped away, and went straight to the stables, where he mounted his foal and rode out into the meadow to wait for the Flower Queen's daughter. Towards midnight the beautiful girl appeared, and placing her in front of him on his horse, the Prince and she flew like the wind till they reached the Flower Queen's dwelling. But the dragons had noticed their flight, and woke their brother out of his year's sleep. He flew into a terrible rage when he heard what had happened, and determined to lay siege to the Flower Queen's palace; but the Queen caused a forest of flowers as high as the sky to grow up round her dwelling, through which no one could force a way.

When the Flower Queen heard that her daughter wanted to marry the Prince, she said to him: 'I will give my consent to your marriage gladly, but my daughter can only stay with you in summer. In winter, when everything is dead and the ground covered with snow, she must come and live with me in my palace underground.' The Prince consented to this, and led his beautiful bride home, where the wedding was held with great pomp and magnificence. The young couple lived happily together till winter came, when the Flower Queen’s daughter departed and went home to her mother. In summer she returned to her husband, and their life of joy and happiness began again, and lasted till the approach of winter, when the Flower Queen’s daughter went back again to her mother. This coming and going continued all her life long, and in spite of it they always lived happily together.

THE FLYING SHIP

Once upon a time there lived an old couple who had three sons; the two elder were clever, but the third was a regular dunce. The clever sons were very fond of their mother, gave her good clothes, and always spoke pleasantly to her; but the youngest was always getting in her way, and she had no patience with him. Now, one day it was announced in the village that the King had issued a decree, offering his daughter, the Princess, in marriage to whoever should build a ship that could fly. Immediately the two elder brothers determined to try their luck, and asked their parents' blessing. So the old mother smartened up their clothes, and gave them a store of provisions for their journey, not forgetting to add a bottle of brandy. When they had gone the poor Simpleton began to tease his mother to smarten him up and let him start off.

'What would become of a dolt like you?' she answered. 'Why, you would be eaten up by wolves.'

But the foolish youth kept repeating, 'I will go, I will go, I will go!'

Seeing that she could do nothing with him, the mother gave him a crust of bread and a bottle of water, and took no further heed of him.

So the Simpleton set off on his way. When he had gone a short distance he met a little old manikin. They greeted one another, and the manikin asked him where he was going.

'I am off to the King's Court,' he answered. 'He has promised to give his daughter to whoever can make a flying ship.'

'And can you make such a ship?'

'Not I.'

'Then why in the world are you going?'

'Can't tell,' replied the Simpleton.

'Well, if that is the case,' said the manikin, 'sit down beside me; we can rest for a little and have something to eat. Give me what you have got in your satchel.'

Now, the poor Simpleton was ashamed to show what was in it. However, he thought it best not to make a fuss, so he opened the satchel, and could scarcely believe his own eyes, for, instead of the hard crust, he saw two beautiful fresh rolls and some cold meat. He shared them with the manikin, who licked his lips and said:

‘Now, go into that wood, and stop in front of the first tree, bow three times, and then strike the tree with your axe, fall on your knees on the ground, with your face on the earth, and remain there till you are raised up. You will then find a ship at your side, step into it and fly to the King’s Palace. If you meet anyone on the way, take him with you.’

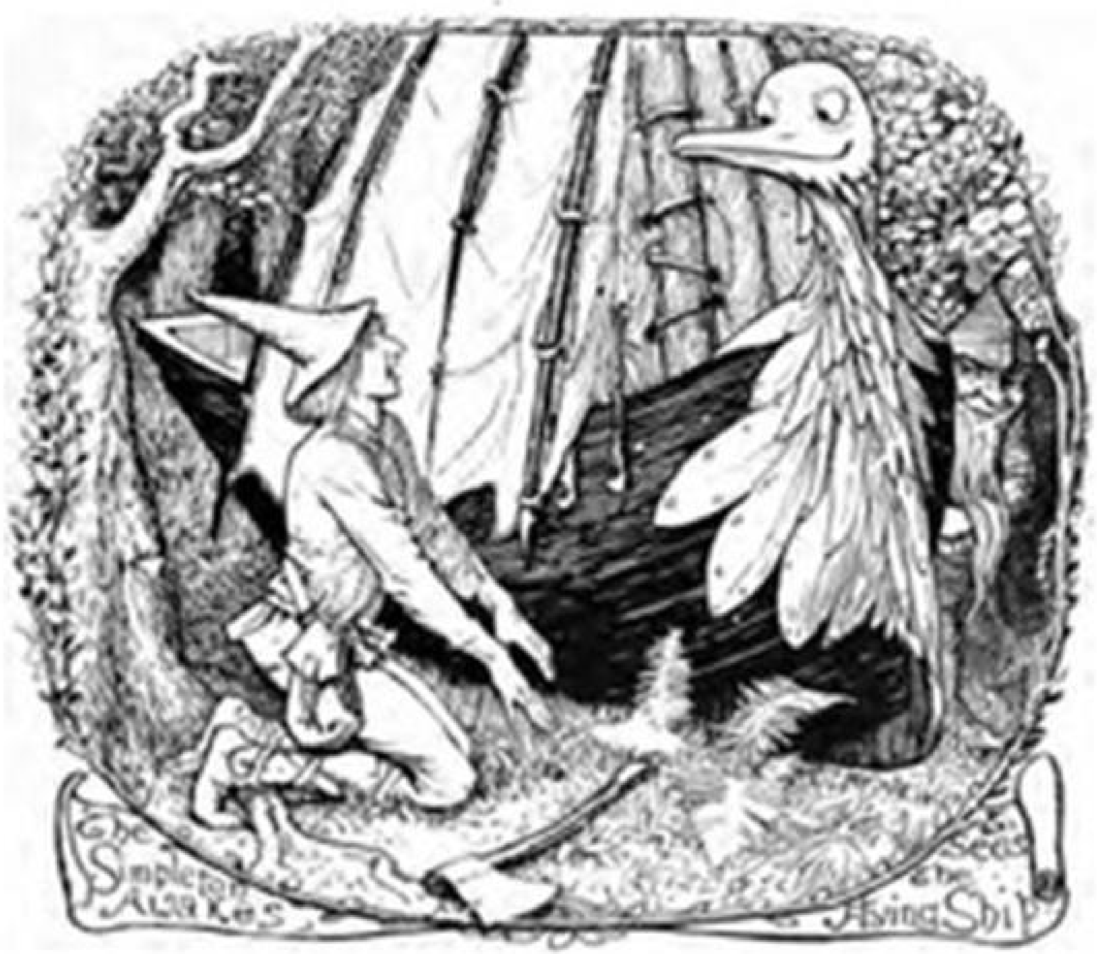

The Simpleton thanked the manikin very kindly, bade him farewell, and went into the road. When he got to the first tree he stopped in front of it, did everything just as he had been told, and, kneeling on the ground with his face to the earth, fell asleep. After a little time he was aroused; he awoke and, rubbing his eyes, saw a ready-made ship at his side, and at once got into it. And the ship rose and rose, and in another minute was flying through the air, when the Simpleton, who was on the look-out, cast his eyes down to the earth and saw a man beneath him on the road, who was kneeling with his ear upon the damp ground.

‘Hallo!’ he called out, ‘what are you doing down there?’

‘I am listening to what is going on in the world,’ replied the man.

‘Come with me in my ship,’ said the Simpleton.

So the man was only too glad, and got in beside him; and the ship flew, and flew, and flew through the air, till again from his outlook the Simpleton saw a man on the road below, who was hopping on one leg, while his other leg was tied up behind his ear. So he hailed him, calling out:

‘Hallo! what are you doing, hopping on one leg?’

‘I can’t help it,’ replied the man. ‘I walk so fast that unless I tied up one leg I should be at the end of the earth in a bound.’

‘Come with us on my ship,’ he answered; and the man made no objections, but joined them; and the ship flew on, and on, and on, till suddenly the Simpleton, looking down on the road below, beheld a man aiming with a gun into the distance.

‘Hallo!’ he shouted to him, ‘what are you aiming at? As far as eye can see, there is no bird in sight.’

‘What would be the good of my taking a near shot?’ replied the man; ‘I can hit beast or bird at a hundred miles’ distance. That is the kind of shot I enjoy.’

‘Come into the ship with us,’ answered the Simpleton; and the man was only too glad to join them, and he got in; and the ship flew on, farther and farther, till again the Simpleton from his outlook saw a man on the road below, carrying on his back a basket full of bread. And he waved to him, calling out:

‘Hallo! where are you going?’

‘To fetch bread for my breakfast.’

‘Bread? Why, you have got a whole basket-load of it on your back.’

‘That’s nothing,’ answered the man; ‘I should finish that in one mouthful.’

‘Come along with us in my ship, then.’

And so the glutton joined the party, and the ship mounted again into the air, and flew up and onward, till the Simpleton from his outlook saw a man walking by the shore of a great lake, and evidently looking for something.

‘Hallo!’ he cried to him, ‘what are you seeking?’

‘I want water to drink, I’m so thirsty,’ replied the man.

‘Well, there’s a whole lake in front of you; why don’t you drink some of that?’

‘Do you call that enough?’ answered the other. ‘Why, I should drink it up in one gulp.’

‘Well, come with us in the ship.’

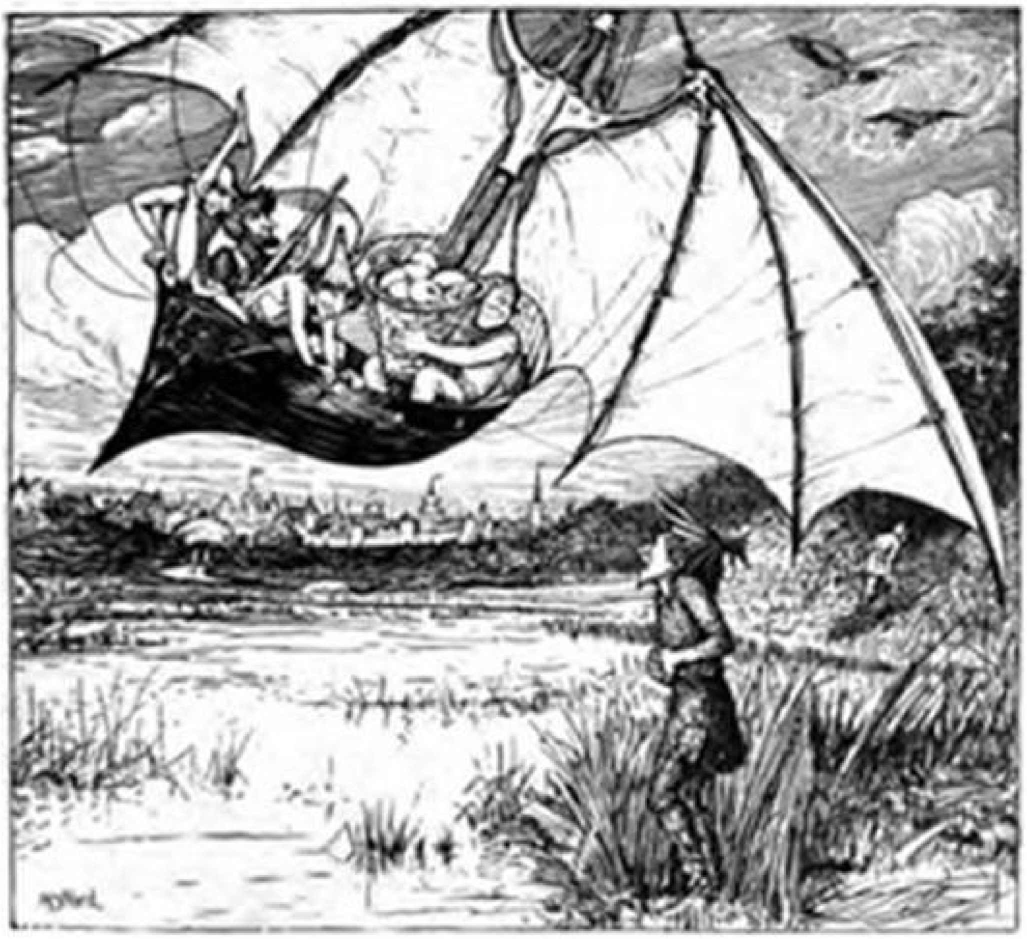

The comrades in the flying ship meet the drinker

And so the mighty drinker was added to the company; and the ship flew farther, and even farther, till again the Simpleton looked out, and this time he saw a man dragging a bundle of wood, walking through the forest beneath them.

‘Hallo!’ he shouted to him, ‘why are you carrying wood through a forest?’

‘This is not common wood,’ answered the other.

‘What sort of wood is it, then?’ said the Simpleton.

‘If you throw it upon the ground,’ said the man, ‘it will be changed into an army of soldiers.’

‘Come into the ship with us, then.’

And so he too joined them; and away the ship flew on, and on, and on, and once more the Simpleton looked out, and this time he saw a man carrying straw upon his back.

‘Hallo! Where are you carrying that straw to?’

‘To the village,’ said the man.

‘Do you mean to say there is no straw in the village?’

‘Ah! but this is quite a peculiar straw. If you strew it about even in the hottest summer the air at once becomes cold, and snow falls, and the people freeze.’

Then the Simpleton asked him also to join them.

At last the ship, with its strange crew, arrived at the King’s Court. The King was having his dinner, but he at once despatched one of his courtiers to find out what the huge, strange new bird could be that had come flying through the air. The courtier peeped into the ship, and, seeing what it was, instantly went back to the King and told him that it was a flying ship, and that it was manned by a few peasants.

Then the King remembered his royal oath; but he made up his mind that he would never consent to let the Princess marry a poor peasant. So he thought and thought, and then said to himself:

‘I will give him some impossible tasks to perform; that will be the best way of getting rid of him.’ And he there and then decided to despatch one of his courtiers to the Simpleton, with the command that he was to fetch the King the healing water from the world’s end before he had finished his dinner.

But while the King was still instructing the courtier exactly what he was to say, the first man of the ship’s company, the one with the miraculous power of hearing, had overheard the King’s words, and hastily reported them to the poor Simpleton.

‘Alas, alas!’ he cried; ‘what am I to do now? It would take me quite a year, possibly my whole life, to find the water.’

‘Never fear,’ said his fleet-footed comrade, ‘I will fetch what the King wants.’

Just then the courtier arrived, bearing the King’s command.

‘Tell his Majesty,’ said the Simpleton, ‘that his orders shall be obeyed;’ and forthwith the swift runner unbound the foot that was strung up behind his ear and started off, and in less than no time had reached the world’s end and drawn the healing water from the well.

‘Dear me,’ he thought to himself, ‘that’s rather tiring! I’ll just rest for a few minutes; it will be some little time yet before the King has got to dessert.’ So he threw himself down on the grass, and, as the sun was very dazzling, he closed his eyes, and in a few seconds had fallen sound asleep.

In the meantime all the ship’s crew were anxiously awaiting him; the King’s dinner would soon be finished, and their comrade had not yet returned. So the man with the marvellous quick hearing lay down, and, putting his ear to the ground, listened.

‘That’s a nice sort of fellow!’ he suddenly exclaimed. ‘He’s lying on the ground, snoring hard!’

At this the marksman seized his gun, took aim, and fired in the direction of the world’s end, in order to awaken the sluggard. And a moment later the swift runner reappeared, and, stepping on board the ship, handed the healing water to the Simpleton. So while the King was still sitting at table finishing his dinner news was brought to him that his orders had been obeyed to the letter.

What was to be done now? The King determined to think of a still more impossible task. So he told another courtier to go to the Simpleton with the command that he and his comrades were instantly to eat up twelve oxen and twelve tons of bread. Once more the sharp-eared comrade overheard the King’s words while he was still talking to the courtier, and reported them to the Simpleton.

‘Alas, alas!’ he sighed; ‘what in the world shall I do? Why, it would take us a year, possibly our whole lives, to eat up twelve oxen and twelve tons of bread.’

‘Never fear,’ said the glutton. ‘It will scarcely be enough for me, I’m so hungry.’

So when the courtier arrived with the royal message he was told to take back word to the King that his orders should be obeyed. Then twelve roasted oxen and twelve tons of bread were brought alongside of the ship, and at one sitting the glutton had devoured it all.

‘I call that a small meal,’ he said. ‘I wish they’d brought me some more.’

Next, the King ordered that forty casks of wine, containing forty gallons each, were to be drunk up on the spot by the Simpleton and his party. When these words were overheard by the sharp-eared comrade and repeated to the Simpleton, he was in despair.

‘Alas, alas!’ he exclaimed; ‘what is to be done? It would take us a year, possibly our whole lives, to drink so much.’

‘Never fear,’ said his thirsty comrade. ‘I’ll drink it all up at a gulp, see if I don’t.’ And sure enough, when the forty casks of wine containing forty gallons each were brought alongside of the ship, they disappeared down the thirsty comrade’s throat in no time; and when they were empty he remarked:

‘Why, I’m still thirsty. I should have been glad of two more casks.’

Then the King took counsel with himself and sent an order to the Simpleton that he was to have a bath, in a bath-room at the royal palace, and after that the betrothal should take place. Now the bath-room was built of iron, and the King gave orders that it was to be heated to such a pitch that it would suffocate the Simpleton. And so when the poor silly youth entered the room, he discovered that the iron walls were red hot. But, fortunately, his comrade with the straw on his back had entered behind him, and when the door was shut upon them he scattered the straw about, and suddenly the red-hot walls cooled down, and it became so very cold that the Simpleton could scarcely bear to take a bath, and all the water in the room froze. So the Simpleton climbed up upon the stove, and, wrapping himself up in the bath blankets, lay there the whole night. And in the morning when they opened the door there he lay sound and safe, singing cheerfully to himself.

Now when this strange tale was told to the King he became quite sad, not knowing what he should do to get rid of so undesirable a son-in-law, when suddenly a brilliant idea occurred to him.

‘Tell the rascal to raise me an army, now at this instant!’ he exclaimed to one of his courtiers. ‘Inform him at once of this, my royal will.’ And to himself he added, ‘I think I shall do for him this time.’

As on former occasions, the quick-eared comrade had overheard the King’s command and repeated it to the Simpleton.

‘Alas, alas!’ he groaned; ‘now I am quite done for.’

‘Not at all,’ replied one of his comrades (the one who had dragged the bundle of wood through the forest). ‘Have you quite forgotten me?’

In the meantime the courtier, who had run all the way from the palace, reached the ship panting and breathless, and delivered the King’s message.

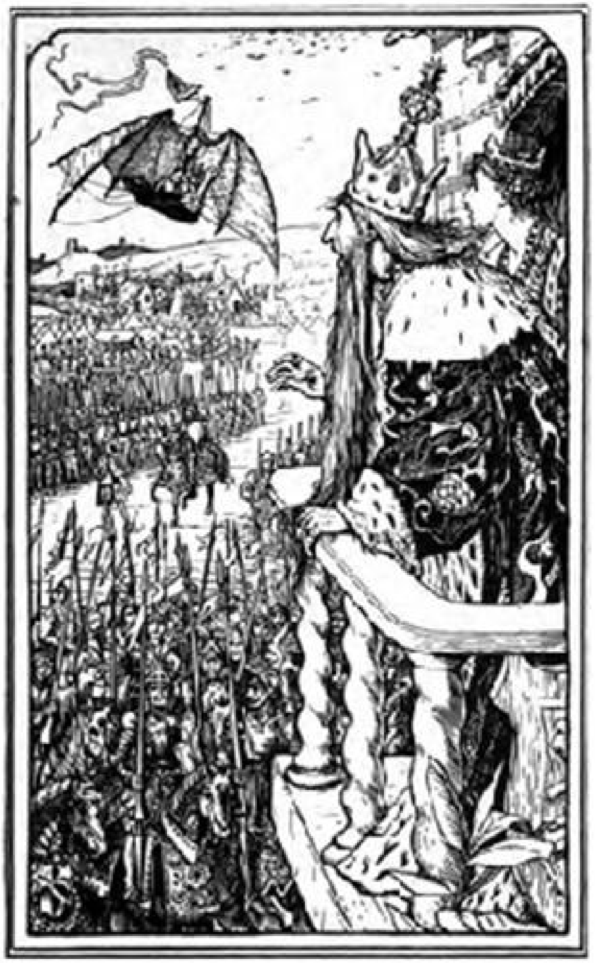

SIMPLETON'S ARMY APPEARS BEFORE THE KING

‘Good!’ remarked the Simpleton. ‘I will raise an army for the King,’ and he drew himself up. ‘But if, after that, the King refuses to accept me as his son-in-law, I will wage war against him, and carry the Princess off by force.’

During the night the Simpleton and his comrade went together into a big field, not forgetting to take the bundle of wood with them, which the man spread out in all directions — and in a moment a mighty army stood upon the spot, regiment on regiment of foot and horse soldiers; the bugles sounded and the drums beat, the chargers neighed, and their riders put their lances in rest, and the soldiers presented arms.

In the morning when the King awoke he was startled by these warlike sounds, the bugles and the drums, and the clatter of the horses, and the shouts of the soldiers. And, stepping to the window, he saw the lances gleam in the sunlight and the armour and weapons glitter. And the proud monarch said to himself, ‘I am powerless in comparison with this man.’ So he sent him royal robes and costly jewels, and commanded him to come to the palace to be married to the Princess. And his son-in-law put on the royal robes, and he looked so grand and stately that it was impossible to recognise the poor Simpleton, so changed was he; and the Princess fell in love with him as soon as ever she saw him.

Never before had so grand a wedding been seen, and there was so much food and wine that even the glutton and the thirsty comrade had enough to eat and drink.

THE SNOW-DAUGHTER AND THE FIRE-SON

There was once upon a time a man and his wife, and they had no children, which was a great grief to them. One winter's day, when the sun was shining brightly, the couple were standing outside their cottage, and the woman was looking at all the little icicles which hung from the roof. She sighed, and turning to her husband said, 'I wish I had as many children as there are icicles hanging there.' 'Nothing would please me more either,' replied her husband. Then a tiny icicle detached itself from the roof, and dropped into the woman's mouth, who swallowed it with a smile, and said, 'Perhaps I shall give birth to a snow child now!' Her husband laughed at his wife's strange idea, and they went back into the house.

But after a short time the woman gave birth to a little girl, who was as white as snow and as cold as ice. If they brought the child anywhere near the fire, it screamed loudly till they put it back into some cool place. The little maid throve wonderfully, and in a few months she could run about and speak. But she was not altogether easy to bring up, and gave her parents much trouble and anxiety, for all summer she insisted on spending in the cellar, and in the winter she would sleep outside in the snow, and the colder it was the happier she seemed to be. Her father and mother called her simply 'Our Snow-daughter,' and this name stuck to her all her life.

One day her parents sat by the fire, talking over the extraordinary behaviour of their daughter, who was disporting herself in the snowstorm that raged outside. The woman sighed deeply and said, 'I wish I had given birth to a Fire-son!' As she said these words, a spark from the big wood fire flew into the woman's lap, and she said with a laugh, 'Now perhaps I shall give birth to a Fire-son!' The man laughed at his wife's words, and thought it was a good joke. But he ceased to think it a joke when his wife shortly afterwards gave birth to a boy, who screamed lustily till he was put quite close to the fire, and who nearly yelled himself into a fit if the Snow-daughter came anywhere near him. The Snow-daughter herself avoided him as much as she could, and always crept into a corner as far away from him as possible. The parents called the boy simply 'Our Fire-son,' a name which stuck to him all his life. They had a great deal of trouble and worry with him too; but he throve and grew very quickly, and before he was a year old he could run about and talk. He was as red as fire, and as hot to touch, and he always sat on the hearth quite close to the fire, and complained of the cold; if his sister were in the room he almost crept into the flames, while the girl on her part always complained of the great heat if her brother were anywhere near. In summer the boy always lay out in the sun, while the girl hid herself in the cellar: so it happened that the brother and sister came very little into contact with each other — in fact, they carefully avoided it.

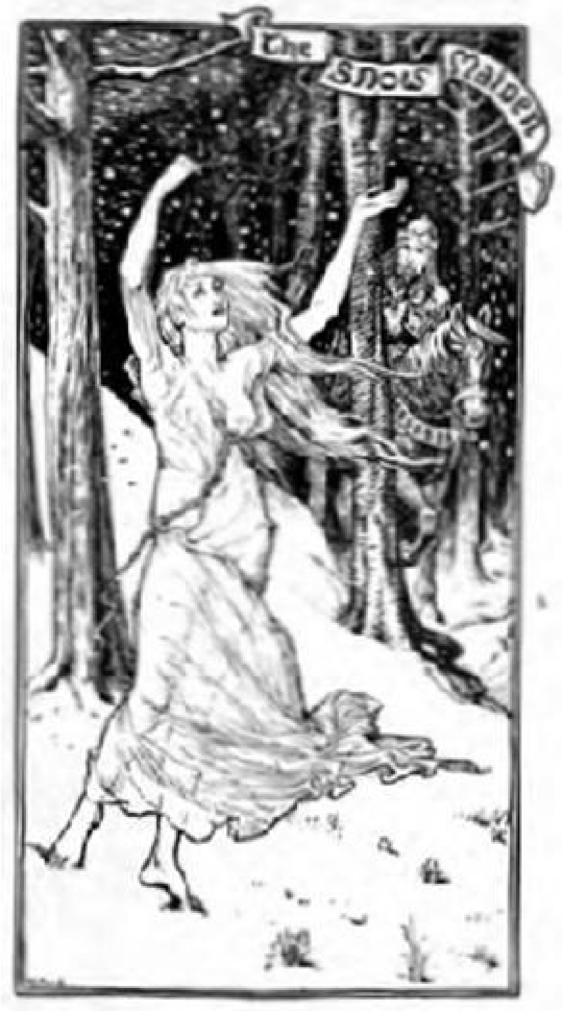

Just as the girl grew up into a beautiful woman, her father and mother both died one after the other. Then the Fire-son, who had grown up in the meantime into a fine, strong young man, said to his sister, ‘I am going out into the world, for what is the use of remaining on here?’

‘I shall go with you,’ she answered, ‘for, except you, I have no one in the world, and I have a feeling that if we set out together we shall be lucky.’

The Fire-son said, ‘I love you with all my heart, but at the same time I always freeze if you are near me, and you nearly die of heat if I approach you! How shall we travel about together without being odious the one to the other?'

'Don't worry about that,' replied the girl, 'for I've thought it all over, and have settled on a plan which will make us each able to bear with the other! See, I have had a fur cloak made for each of us, and if we put them on I shall not feel the heat so much nor you the cold.' So they put on the fur cloaks, and set out cheerfully on their way, and for the first time in their lives quite happy in each other's company.

For a long time the Fire-son and the Snow-daughter wandered through the world, and when at the beginning of winter they came to a big wood they determined to stay there till spring. The Fire-son built himself a hut where he always kept up a huge fire, while his sister with very few clothes on stayed outside night and day. Now it happened one day that the King of the land held a hunt in this wood, and saw the Snow-daughter wandering about in the open air. He wondered very much who the beautiful girl clad in such garments could be, and he stopped and spoke to her. He soon learnt that she could not stand heat, and that her brother could not endure cold. The King was so charmed by the Snow-daughter, that he asked her to be his wife. The girl consented, and the wedding was held with much state. The King had a huge house of ice made for his wife underground, so that even in summer it did not melt. But for his brother-in-law he had a house built with huge ovens all round it, that were kept heated all day and night. The Fire-son was delighted, but the perpetual heat in which he lived made his body so hot, that it was dangerous to go too close to him.

One day the King gave a great feast, and asked his brother-in-law among the other guests. The Fire-son did not appear till everyone had assembled, and when he did, everyone fled outside to the open air, so intense was the heat he gave forth. Then the King was very angry and said, 'If I had known what a lot of trouble you would have been, I would never have taken you into my house.' Then the Fire-son replied with a laugh, 'Don't be angry, dear brother! I love heat and my sister loves cold — come here and let me embrace you, and then I'll go home at once.' And before the King had time to reply, the Fire-son seized him in a tight embrace. The King screamed aloud in agony, and when his wife, the Snow-daughter, who had taken refuge from her brother in the next room, hurried to him, the King lay dead on the ground burnt to a cinder. When the Snow-daughter saw this she turned on her brother and flew at him. Then a fight began, the like of which had never been seen on earth. When the people, attracted by the noise, hurried to the spot, they saw the Snow-daughter melting into water and the Fire-son burn to a cinder. And so ended the unhappy brother and sister.

THE STORY OF KING FROST

There was once upon a time a peasant-woman who had a daughter and a step-daughter. The daughter had her own way in everything, and whatever she did was right in her mother's eyes; but the poor step-daughter had a hard time. Let her do what she would, she was always blamed, and got small thanks for all the trouble she took; nothing was right, everything wrong; and yet, if the truth were known, the girl was worth her weight in gold — she was so unselfish and good-hearted. But her step-mother did not like her, and the poor girl's days were spent in weeping; for it was impossible to live peacefully with the woman. The wicked shrew was determined to get rid of the girl by fair means or foul, and kept saying to her father: 'Send her away, old man; send her away — anywhere so that my eyes shan't be plagued any longer by the sight of her, or my ears tormented by the sound of her voice. Send her out into the fields, and let the cutting frost do for her.'

In vain did the poor old father weep and implore her pity; she was firm, and he dared not gainsay her. So he placed his daughter in a sledge, not even daring to give her a horse-cloth to keep herself warm with, and drove her out on to the bare, open fields, where he kissed her and left her, driving home as fast as he could, that he might not witness her miserable death.

Deserted by her father, the poor girl sat down under a fir-tree at the edge of the forest and began to weep silently. Suddenly she heard a faint sound: it was King Frost springing from tree to tree, and cracking his fingers as he went. At length he reached the fir-tree beneath which she was sitting, and with a crisp crackling sound he alighted beside her, and looked at her lovely face.

'Well, maiden,' he snapped out, 'do you know who I am? I am King Frost, king of the red-noses.'

'All hail to you, great King!' answered the girl, in a gentle, trembling voice. 'Have you come to take me?'

'Are you warm, maiden?' he replied.

'Quite warm, King Frost,' she answered, though she shivered as she spoke.

Then King Frost stooped down, and bent over the girl, and the crackling sound grew louder, and the air seemed to be full of knives and darts; and again he asked: 'Maiden, are you warm? Are you warm, you beautiful girl?'

And though her breath was almost frozen on her lips, she whispered gently, ‘Quite warm, King Frost.’

Then King Frost gnashed his teeth, and cracked his fingers, and his eyes sparkled, and the crackling, crisp sound was louder than ever, and for the last time he asked her: ‘Maiden, are you still warm? Are you still warm, little love?’

And the poor girl was so stiff and numb that she could just gasp, ‘Still warm, O King!’

Now her gentle, courteous words and her uncomplaining ways touched King Frost, and he had pity on her, and he wrapped her up in furs, and covered her with blankets, and he fetched a great box, in which were beautiful jewels and a rich robe embroidered in gold and silver. And she put it on, and looked more lovely than ever, and King Frost stepped with her into his sledge, with six white horses.

In the meantime the wicked step-mother was waiting at home for news of the girl’s death, and preparing pancakes for the funeral feast. And she said to her husband: ‘Old man, you had better go out into the fields and find your daughter’s body and bury her.’ Just as the old man was leaving the house the little dog under the table began to bark, saying: ‘*Your* daughter shall live to be your delight; *Her* daughter shall die this very night.’

‘Hold your tongue, you foolish beast!’ scolded the woman. ‘There’s a pancake for you, but you must say: “*Her* daughter shall have much silver and gold; *His* daughter is frozen quite stiff and cold.”’

But the doggie ate up the pancake and barked, saying: ‘His daughter shall wear a crown on her head; Her daughter shall die unwooed, unwed.’

Then the old woman tried to coax the doggie with more pancakes and to terrify it with blows, but he barked on, always repeating the same words. And suddenly the door creaked and flew open, and a great heavy chest was pushed in, and behind it came the step-daughter, radiant and beautiful, in a dress all glittering with silver and gold. For a moment the step-mother’s eyes were dazzled. Then she called to her husband: ‘Old man, yoke the horses at once into the sledge, and take my daughter to the same field and leave her on the same spot exactly;’ and so the old man took the girl and left her beneath the same tree where he had parted from his daughter. In a few minutes King Frost came past, and, looking at the girl, he said:

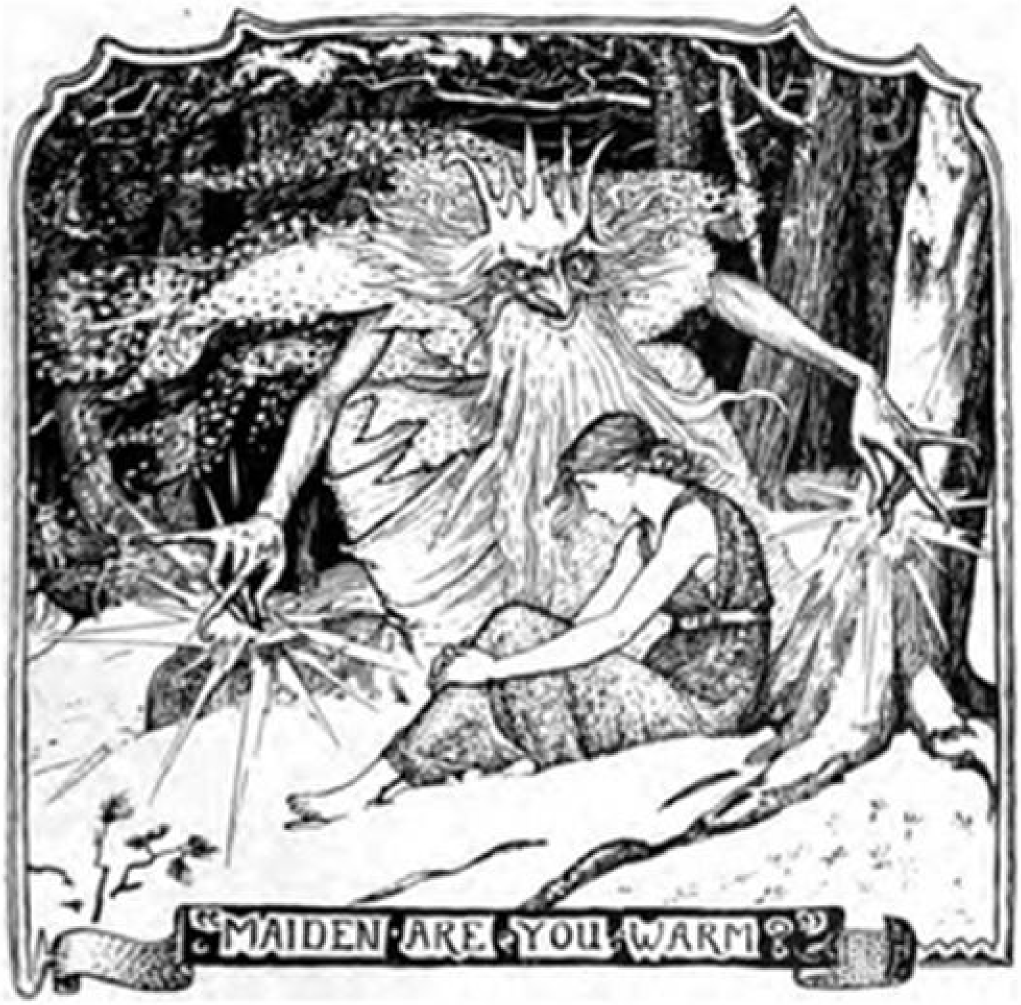
"MAIDEN ARE YOU WARM?"

'Are you warm, maiden?'

'What a blind old fool you must be to ask such a question!' she answered angrily. 'Can't you see that my hands and feet are nearly frozen?'

Then King Frost sprang to and fro in front of her, questioning her, and getting only rude, rough words in reply, till at last he got very angry, and cracked his fingers, and gnashed his teeth, and froze her to death.

But in the hut her mother was waiting for her return, and as she grew impatient she said to her husband: 'Get out the horses, old man, to go and fetch her home; but see that you are careful not to upset the sledge and lose the chest.'

But the doggie beneath the table began to bark, saying: 'Your daughter is frozen quite stiff and cold, And shall never have a chest full of gold.'

'Don't tell such wicked lies!' scolded the woman. 'There's a cake for you; now say: "*Her* daughter shall marry a mighty King."'

At that moment the door flew open, and she rushed out to meet her daughter, and as she took her frozen body in her arms she too was chilled to death.

THE DEATH OF THE SUN-HERO

Many, many thousand years ago there lived a mighty King whom heaven had blessed with a clever and beautiful son. When he was only ten years old the boy was cleverer than all the King’s counsellors put together, and when he was twenty he was the greatest hero in the whole kingdom. His father could not make enough of his son, and always had him clothed in golden garments which shone and sparkled like the sun; and his mother gave him a white horse, which never slept, and which flew like the wind. All the people in the land loved him dearly, and called him the Sun-Hero, for they did not think his like existed under the sun. Now it happened one night that both his parents had the same extraordinary dream. They dreamt that a girl all dressed in red had come to them and said: ‘If you wish that your son should really become the Sun-Hero in deed and not only in name, let him go out into the world and search for the Tree of the Sun, and when he has found it, let him pluck a golden apple from it and bring it home.’

When the King and Queen had each related their dreams to the other, they were much amazed that they should both have dreamt exactly the same about their son, and the King said to his wife, ‘This is clearly a sign from heaven that we should send our son out into the world in order that he may come home the great Sun-Hero, as the Red Girl said, not only in name but in deed.’

The Queen consented with many tears, and the King at once bade his son set forth in search of the Tree of the Sun, from which he was to pluck a golden apple. The Prince was delighted at the prospect, and set out on his travels that very day.

For a long time he wandered all through the world, and it was not till the ninety-ninth day after he started that he found an old man who was able to tell him where the Tree of the Sun grew. He followed his directions, and rode on his way, and after another ninety-nine days he arrived at a golden castle, which stood in the middle of a vast wilderness. He knocked at the door, which was opened noiselessly and by invisible hands. Finding no one about, the Prince rode on, and came to a great meadow, where the Sun-Tree grew. When he reached the tree he put out his hand to pick a golden apple; but all of a sudden the tree grew higher, so that he could not reach its fruit. Then he heard some one behind him laughing. Turning round, he saw the girl in red walking towards him, who addressed him in these words:

‘Do you really imagine, brave son of the earth, that you can pluck an apple so easily from the Tree of the Sun? Before you can do that, you have a difficult task before you. You must guard the tree for nine days and nine nights from the ravages of two wild black wolves, who will try to harm it. Do you think you can undertake this?’

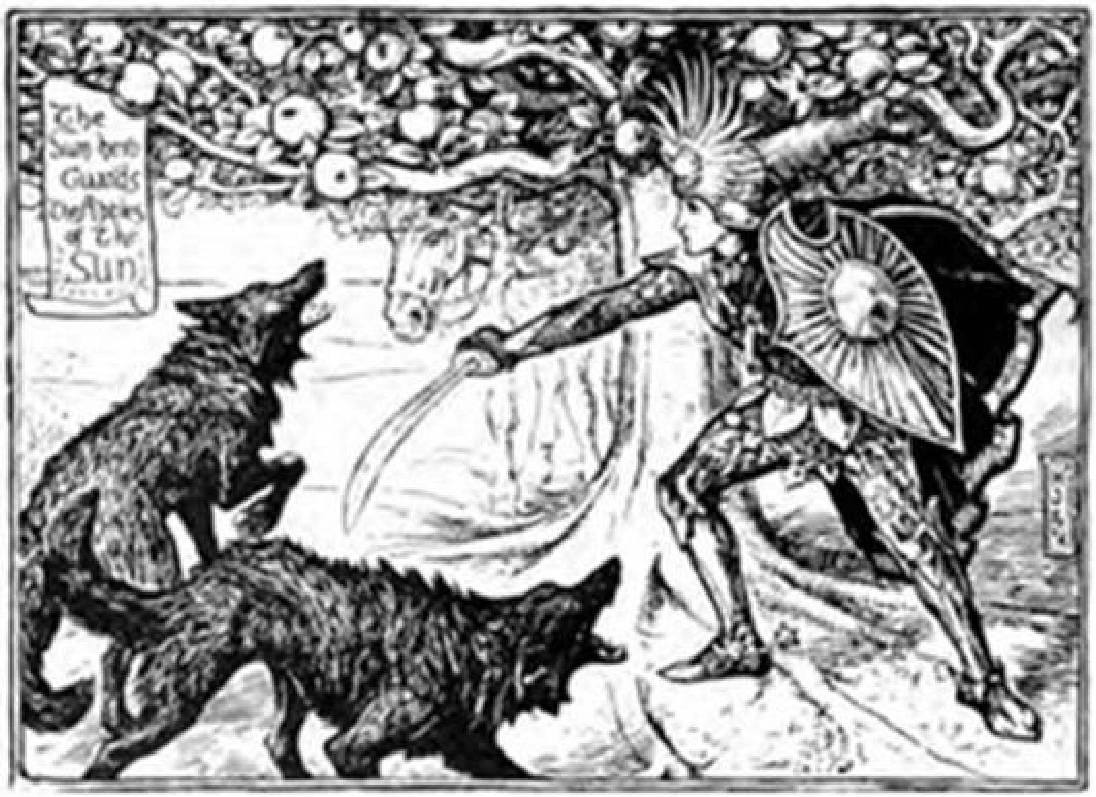
The Sun hero Guards the Apples of the Sun

‘Yes,’ answered the Sun-Hero, ‘I will guard the Tree of the Sun nine days and nine nights.’

Then the girl continued: ‘Remember, though, if you do not succeed the Sun will kill you. Now begin your watch.’

With these words the Red Girl went back into the golden castle. She had hardly left him when the two black wolves appeared: but the Sun-Hero beat them off with his sword, and they retired, only, however, to reappear in a very short time. The Sun-Hero chased them away once more, but he had hardly sat down to rest when the two black wolves were on the scene again. This went on for seven days and nights, when the white horse, who had never done such a thing before, turned to the Sun-Hero and said in a human voice: ‘Listen to what I am going to say. A Fairy gave me to your mother in order that I might be of service to you; so let me tell you, that if you go to sleep and let the wolves harm the tree, the Sun will surely kill you. The Fairy, foreseeing this, put everyone in the world under a spell, which prevents their obeying the Sun’s command to take your life. But all the same, she has forgotten one person, who will certainly kill you if you fall asleep and let the wolves damage the tree. So watch and keep the wolves away.’

Then the Sun-Hero strove with all his might and kept the black wolves at bay, and conquered his desire to sleep; but on the eighth night his strength failed him, and he fell fast asleep. When he awoke a woman in black stood beside him, who said: ‘You have fulfilled your task very badly, for you have let the two black wolves damage the Tree of the Sun. I am the mother of the Sun, and I command you to ride away from here at once, and I pronounce sentence of death upon you, for you proudly let yourself be called the Sun-Hero without having done anything to deserve the name.’

The youth mounted his horse sadly, and rode home. The people all thronged round him on his return, anxious to hear his adventures, but he told them nothing, and only to his mother did he confide what had befallen him. But the old Queen laughed, and said to her son: ‘Don’t worry, my child; you see, the Fairy has protected you so far, and the Sun has found no one to kill you. So cheer up and be happy.’

After a time the Prince forgot all about his adventure, and married a beautiful Princess, with whom he lived very happily for some time. But one day when he was out hunting he felt very thirsty, and coming to a stream he stooped down to drink from it, and this caused his death, for a crab came swimming up, and with its claws tore out his tongue. He was carried home in a dying condition, and as he lay on his death-bed the black woman appeared and said: ‘So the Sun has, after all, found someone, who was not under the Fairy’s spell, who has caused your death. And a similar fate will overtake everyone under the Sun who wrongfully assumes a title to which he has no right.’

THE WITCH

Once upon a time there was a peasant whose wife died, leaving him with two children — twins — a boy and a girl. For some years the poor man lived on alone with the children, caring for them as best he could; but everything in the house seemed to go wrong without a woman to look after it, and at last he made up his mind to marry again, feeling that a wife would bring peace and order to his household and take care of his motherless children. So he married, and in the following years several children were born to him; but peace and order did not come to the household. For the step-mother was very cruel to the twins, and beat them, and half-starved them, and constantly drove them out of the house; for her one idea was to get them out of the way. All day she thought of nothing but how she should get rid of them; and at last an evil idea came into her head, and she determined to send them out into the great gloomy wood where a wicked witch lived. And so one morning she spoke to them, saying:

‘You have been such good children that I am going to send you to visit my granny, who lives in a dear little hut in the wood. You will have to wait upon her and serve her, but you will be well rewarded, for she will give you the best of everything.’

So the children left the house together; and the little sister, who was very wise for her years, said to the brother:

‘We will first go and see our own dear grandmother, and tell her where our step-mother is sending us.’

And when the grandmother heard where they were going, she cried and said:

‘You poor motherless children! How I pity you; and yet I can do nothing to help you! Your step-mother is not sending you to her granny, but to a wicked witch who lives in that great gloomy wood. Now listen to me, children. You must be civil and kind to everyone, and never say a cross word to anyone, and never touch a crumb belonging to anyone else. Who knows if, after all, help may not be sent to you?’

And she gave her grandchildren a bottle of milk and a piece of ham and a loaf of bread, and they set out for the great gloomy wood. When they reached it they saw in front of them, in the thickest of the trees, a queer little hut, and when they looked into it, there lay the witch, with her head on the threshold of the door, with one foot in one corner and the other in the other corner, and her knees cocked up, almost touching the ceiling.

'Who's there?' she snarled, in an awful voice, when she saw the children.

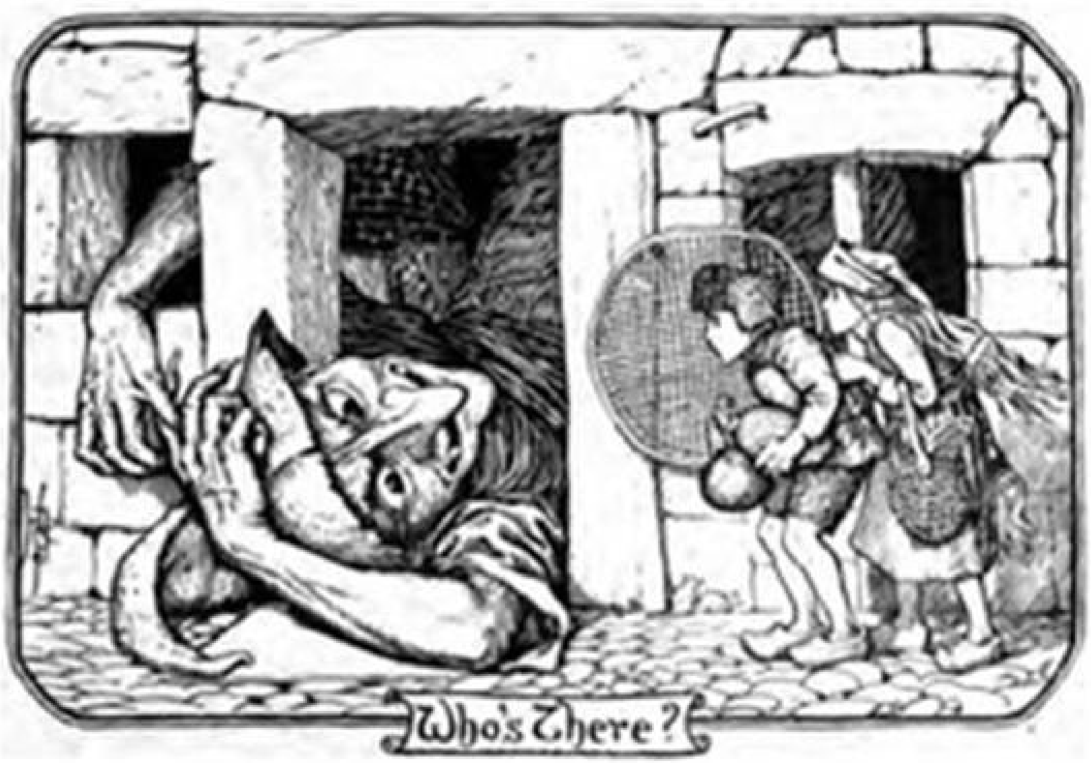

Who's There?

And they answered civilly, though they were so terrified that they hid behind one another, and said:

'Good-morning, granny; our step-mother has sent us to wait upon you, and serve you.'

'See that you do it well, then,' growled the witch. 'If I am pleased with you, I'll reward you; but if I am not, I'll put you in a pan and fry you in the oven — that's what I'll do with you, my pretty dears! You have been gently reared, but you'll find my work hard enough. See if you don't.'

And, so saying, she set the girl down to spin yarn, and she gave the boy a sieve in which to carry water from the well, and she herself went out into the wood. Now, as the girl was sitting at her distaff, weeping bitterly because she could not spin, she heard the sound of hundreds of little feet, and from every hole and corner in the hut mice came pattering along the floor, squeaking and saying:

'Little girl, why are your eyes so red?
If you want help, then give us some bread.'

And the girl gave them the bread that her grandmother had given her. Then the mice told her that the witch had a cat, and the cat was very fond of ham; if she would give the cat her ham, it would show her the way out of the wood, and in the meantime they would spin the yarn for her. So the girl set out to look for the cat, and, as she was hunting about, she met her brother, in great trouble because he could not carry water from the well in a sieve, as it came pouring out as fast as he put it in. And as she was trying to comfort him they heard a rustling of wings, and a flight of wrens alighted on the ground beside them. And the wrens said:

‘Give us some crumbs, then you need not grieve.
For you’ll find that water will stay in the sieve.’

Then the twins crumbled their bread on the ground, and the wrens pecked it, and chirruped and chirped. And when they had eaten the last crumb they told the boy to fill up the holes of the sieve with clay, and then to draw water from the well. So he did what they said, and carried the sieve full of water into the hut without spilling a drop. When they entered the hut the cat was curled up on the floor. So they stroked her, and fed her with ham, and said to her:

‘Pussy, grey pussy, tell us how we are to get away from the witch?’

Then the cat thanked them for the ham, and gave them a pocket-handkerchief and a comb, and told them that when the witch pursued them, as she certainly would, all they had to do was to throw the handkerchief on the ground and run as fast as they could. As soon as the handkerchief touched the ground a deep, broad river would spring up, which would hinder the witch’s progress. If she managed to get across it, they must throw the comb behind them and run for their lives, for where the comb fell a dense forest would start up, which would delay the witch so long that they would be able to get safely away.

The cat had scarcely finished speaking when the witch returned to see if the children had fulfilled their tasks.

‘Well, you have done well enough for to-day,’ she grumbled; ‘but to-morrow you’ll have something more difficult to do, and if you don’t do it well, you pampered brats, straight into the oven you go.’

Half-dead with fright, and trembling in every limb, the poor children lay down to sleep on a heap of straw in the corner of the hut; but they dared not close their eyes, and scarcely ventured to breathe. In the morning the witch gave the girl two pieces of linen to weave before night, and the boy a pile of wood to cut into chips. Then the witch left them to their tasks, and went out into the wood. As soon as she had gone out of sight the children took the comb and the handkerchief, and, taking one another by the hand, they started and ran, and ran, and ran. And first they met the watch-dog, who was going to leap on them and tear them to pieces; but they threw the remains of their bread to him, and he ate them and wagged his tail. Then they were hindered by the birch-trees, whose branches almost put their eyes out. But the little sister tied the twigs together with a piece of ribbon, and they got past safely, and, after running through the wood, came out on to the open fields.

In the meantime in the hut the cat was busy weaving the linen and tangling the threads as it wove. And the witch returned to see how the children were getting on; and she crept up to the window, and whispered:

‘Are you weaving, my little dear?’

‘Yes, granny, I am weaving,’ answered the cat.

When the witch saw that the children had escaped her, she was furious, and, hitting the cat with a porringer, she said: ‘Why did you let the children leave the hut? Why did you not scratch their eyes out?’

But the cat curled up its tail and put its back up, and answered: ‘I have served you all these years and you never even threw me a bone, but the dear children gave me their own piece of ham.’

Then the witch was furious with the watch-dog and with the birch-trees, because they had let the children pass. But the dog answered:

‘I have served you all these years and you never gave me so much as a hard crust, but the dear children gave me their own loaf of bread.’

And the birch rustled its leaves, and said: ‘I have served you longer than I can say, and you never tied a bit of twine even round my branches; and the dear children bound them up with their brightest ribbons.’

So the witch saw there was no help to be got from her old servants, and that the best thing she could do was to mount on her broom and set off in pursuit of the children. And as the children ran they heard the sound of the broom sweeping the ground close behind them, so instantly they threw the handkerchief down over their shoulder, and in a moment a deep, broad river flowed behind them.

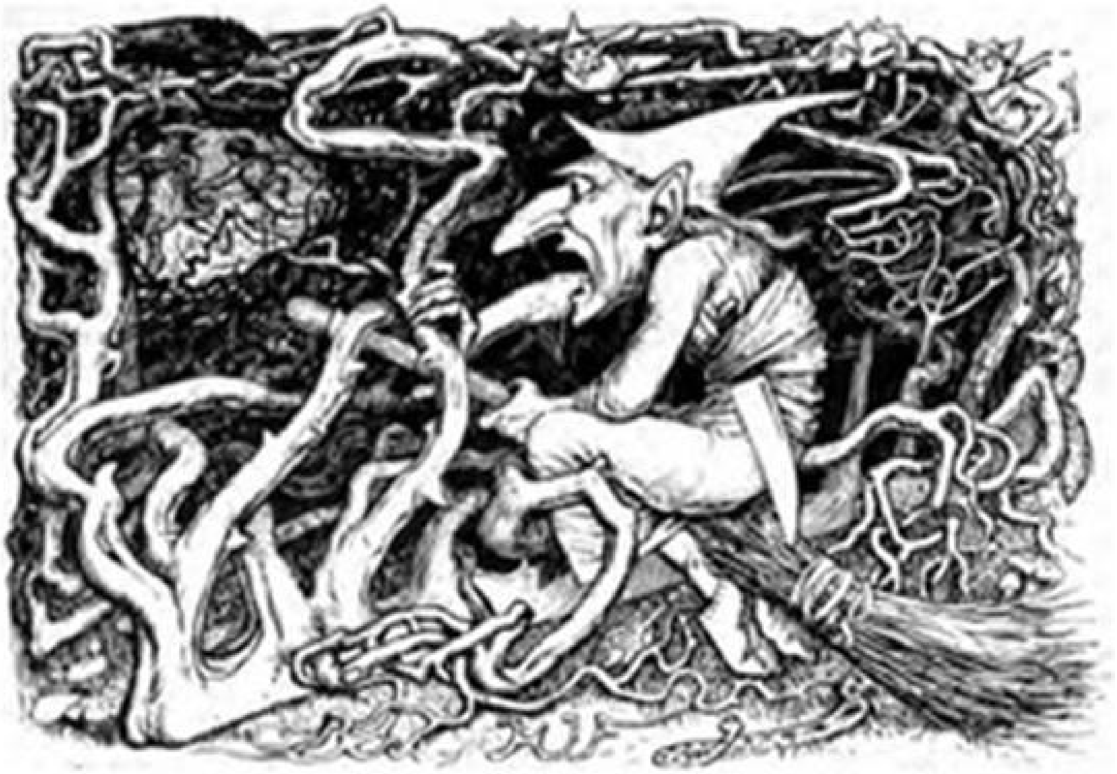

The comb grows into a forest

When the witch came up to it, it took her a long time before she found a place which she could ford over on her broom-stick; but at last she got across, and continued the chase faster than before. And as the children ran they heard a sound, and the little sister put her ear to the ground, and heard the broom sweeping the earth close behind them; so, quick as thought, she threw the comb down on the ground, and in an instant, as the cat had said, a dense forest sprung up, in which the roots and branches were so closely intertwined, that it was impossible to force a way through it. So when the witch came up to it on her broom she found that there was nothing for it but to turn round and go back to her hut.

But the twins ran straight on till they reached their own home. Then they told their father all that they had suffered, and he was so angry with their step-mother that he drove her out of the house, and never let her return; but he and the children lived happily together; and he took care of them himself, and never let a stranger come near them.

THE HAZEL-NUT CHILD

There was once upon a time a couple who had no children, and they prayed Heaven every day to send them a child, though it were no bigger than a hazel-nut. At last Heaven heard their prayer and sent them a child exactly the size of a hazel-nut, and it never grew an inch. The parents were very devoted to the little creature, and nursed and tended it carefully. Their tiny son too was as clever as he could be, and so sharp and sensible that all the neighbours marvelled over the wise things he said and did.

When the Hazel-nut child was fifteen years old, and was sitting one day in an egg-shell on the table beside his mother, she turned to him and said, ‘You are now fifteen years old, and nothing can be done with you. What do you intend to be?’

‘A messenger,’ answered the Hazel-nut child.

Then his mother burst out laughing and said, ‘What an idea! You a messenger! Why, your little feet would take an hour to go the distance an ordinary person could do in a minute!’

But the Hazel-nut child replied, ‘Nevertheless I mean to be a messenger! Just send me a message and you’ll see that I shall be back in next to no time.’

So his mother said, ‘Very well, go to your aunt in the neighbouring village, and fetch me a comb.’ The Hazel-nut child jumped quickly out of the egg-shell and ran out into the street. Here he found a man on horseback who was just setting out for the neighbouring village. He crept up the horse’s leg, sat down under the saddle, and then began to pinch the horse and to prick it with a pin. The horse plunged and reared and then set off at a hard gallop, which it continued in spite of its rider’s efforts to stop it. When they reached the village, the Hazel-nut child left off pricking the horse, and the poor tired creature pursued its way at a snail’s pace. The Hazel-nut child took advantage of this, and crept down the horse’s leg; then he ran to his aunt and asked her for a comb. On the way home he met another rider, and did the return journey in exactly the same way. When he handed his mother the comb that his aunt had given him, she was much amazed and asked him, ‘But how did you manage to get back so quickly?’

‘Ah! mother,’ he replied, ‘you see I was quite right when I said I knew a messenger was the profession for me.’

His father too possessed a horse which he often used to take out into the fields to graze. One day he took the Hazel-nut child with him. At midday the father turned to his small son and said, ‘Stay here and look after the horse. I must go home and give your mother a message, but I shall be back soon.’

When his father had gone, a robber passed by and saw the horse grazing without any one watching it, for of course he could not see the Hazel-nut child hidden in the grass. So he mounted the horse and rode away. But the Hazel-nut child, who was the most active little creature, climbed up the horse’s tail and began to bite it on the back, enraging the creature to such an extent that it paid no attention to the direction the robber tried to make it go in, but galloped straight home. The father was much astonished when he saw a stranger riding his horse, but the Hazel-nut child climbed down quickly and told him all that had happened, and his father had the robber arrested at once and put into prison.

One autumn when the Hazel-nut child was twenty years old he said to his parents: Farewell, my dear father and mother. I am going to set out into the world, and as soon as I have become rich I will return home to you.’

The parents laughed at the little man’s words, but did not believe him for a moment. In the evening the Hazel-nut child crept on to the roof, where some storks had built their nest. The storks were fast asleep, and he climbed on to the back of the father-stork and bound a silk cord round the joint of one of its wings, then he crept among its soft downy feathers and fell asleep.

The next morning the storks flew towards the south, for winter was approaching. The Hazel-nut child flew through the air on the stork’s back, and when he wanted to rest he bound his silk cord on to the joint of the bird’s other wing, so that it could not fly any farther. In this way he reached the country of the black people, where the storks took up their abode close to the capital. When the people saw the Hazel-nut child they were much astonished, and took him with the stork to the King of the country. The King was delighted with the little creature and kept him always beside him, and he soon grew so fond of the little man that he gave him a diamond four times as big as himself. The Hazel-nut child fastened the diamond firmly under the stork’s neck with a ribbon, and when he saw that the other storks were getting ready for their northern flight, he untied the silk cord from his stork’s wings, and away they went, getting nearer home every minute. At length the Hazel-nut child came to his native village; then he undid the ribbon from the stork’s neck and the diamond fell to the ground; he covered it first with sand and stones, and then ran to get his parents, so that they might carry the treasure home, for he himself was not able to lift the great diamond.

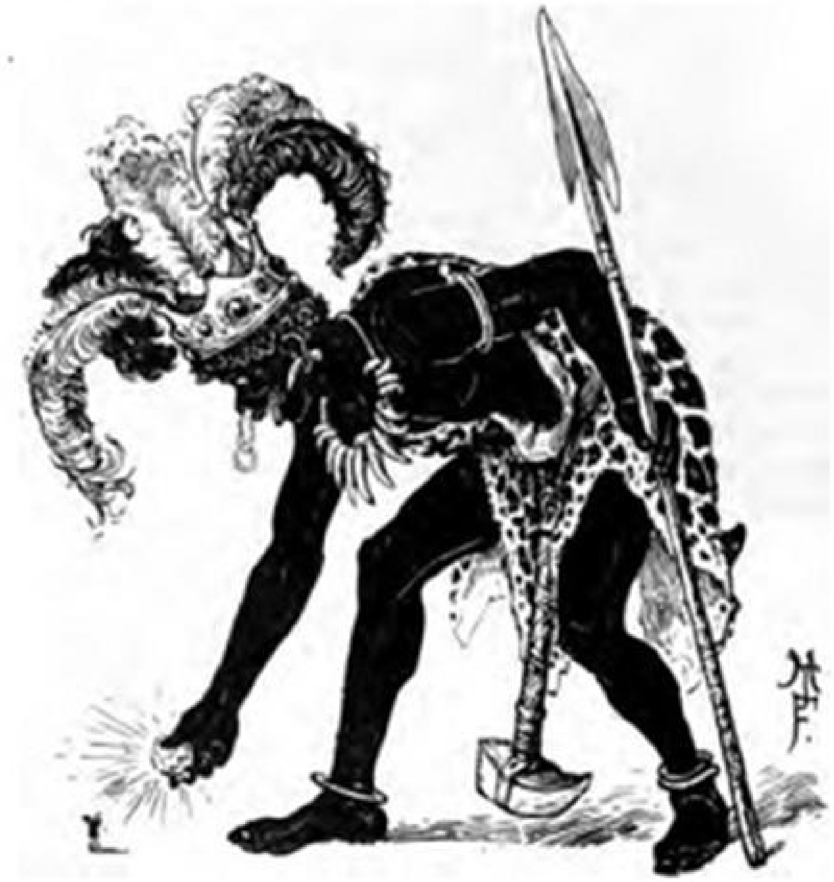

The Black King's Gift.

So the Hazel-nut child and his parents lived in happiness and prosperity after this till they died.

THE STORY OF BIG KLAUS AND LITTLE KLAUS

In a certain village there lived two people who had both the same name. Both were called Klaus, but one owned four horses and the other only one. In order to distinguish the one from the other, the one who had four horses was called Big Klaus, and the one who had only one horse, Little Klaus. Now you shall hear what befell them both, for this is a true story.

The whole week through Little Klaus had to plough for Big Klaus, and lend him his one horse; then Big Klaus lent him his four horses, but only once a week, and that was on Sunday. Hurrah! how loudly Little Klaus cracked his whip over all the five horses! for they were indeed as good as his on this one day. The sun shone brightly, and all the bells in the church-towers were pealing; the people were dressed in their best clothes, and were going to church, with their hymn-books under their arms, to hear the minister preach. They saw Little Klaus ploughing with the five horses; but he was so happy that he kept on cracking his whip, and calling out ‘Gee-up, my five horses!’

‘You mustn’t say that,’ said Big Klaus. ‘Only one horse is yours.’

But as soon as someone else was going by Little Klaus forgot that he must not say it, and called out ‘Gee-up, my five horses!’

‘Now you had better stop that,’ said Big Klaus, ‘for if you say it once more I will give your horse such a crack on the head that it will drop down dead on the spot!’

‘I really won’t say it again!’ said Little Klaus. But as soon as more people passed by, and nodded him good-morning, he became so happy in thinking how well it looked to have five horses ploughing his field that, cracking his whip, he called out ‘Gee-up, my five horses!’

‘I’ll see to your horses!’ said Big Klaus; and, seizing an iron bar, he struck Little Klaus’ one horse such a blow on the head that it fell down and died on the spot.

‘Alas! Now I have no horse!’ said Little Klaus, beginning to cry. Then he flayed the skin off his horse, dried it, and put it in a sack, which he threw over his shoulder, and went into the town to sell it. He had a long way to go, and had to pass through a great dark forest. A dreadful storm came on, in which he lost his way, and before he could get on to the right road night came on, and it was impossible to reach the town that evening.

Right in front of him was a large farm-house. The window-shutters were closed, but the light came through the chinks. ‘I should very much like to be allowed to spend the night there,’ thought Little Klaus; and he went and knocked at the door. The farmer’s wife opened it, but when she heard what he wanted she told him to go away; her husband was not at home, and she took in no strangers.

‘Well, I must lie down outside,’ said Little Klaus; and the farmer’s wife shut the door in his face. Close by stood a large hay-stack, and between it and the house a little out-house, covered with a flat thatched roof.

‘I can lie down there,’ thought Little Klaus, looking at the roof; ‘it will make a splendid bed, if only the stork won’t fly down and bite my legs.’ For a live stork was standing on the roof, where it had its nest. So Little Klaus crept up into the out-house, where he lay down, and made himself comfortable for the night. The wooden shutters over the windows were not shut at the top, and he could just see into the room.

There stood a large table, spread with wine and roast meat and a beautiful fish. The farmer’s wife and the sexton sat at the table, but there was no one else. She was filling up his glass, while he stuck his fork into the fish which was his favourite dish.

‘If one could only get some of that!’ thought Little Klaus, stretching his head towards the window. Ah, what delicious cakes he saw standing there! It *was* a feast!

Then he heard someone riding along the road towards the house. It was the farmer coming home. He was a very worthy man; but he had one great peculiarity — namely, that he could not bear to see a sexton. If he saw one he was made quite mad. That was why the sexton had gone to say good-day to the farmer’s wife when he knew that her husband was not at home, and the good woman therefore put in front of him the best food she had. But when they heard the farmer coming they were frightened, and the farmer’s wife begged the sexton to creep into a great empty chest. He did so, as he knew the poor man could not bear to see a sexton. The wife hastily hid all the beautiful food and the wine in her oven; for if her husband had seen it, he would have been sure to ask what it all meant.

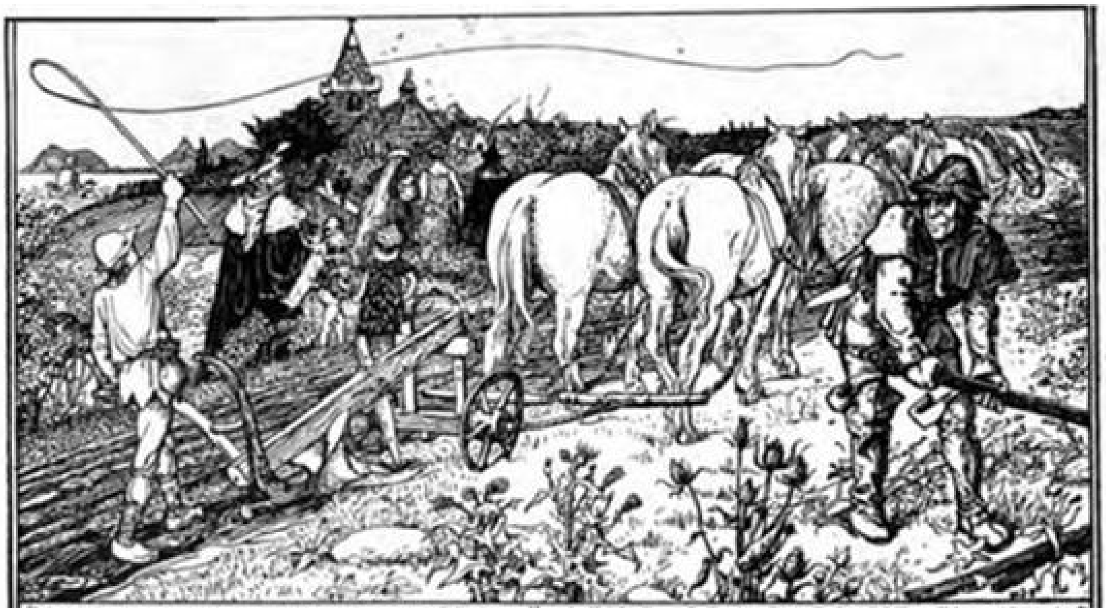

"GEE·UP·MY·FIVE·HORSES!" "I'LL·SEE·TO·YOUR·HORSES·"

'Oh, dear! oh, dear!' groaned Little Klaus up in the shed, when he saw the good food disappearing.

'Is anybody up there?' asked the farmer, catching sight of Little Klaus. 'Why are you lying there? Come with me into the house.'

Then Little Klaus told him how he had lost his way, and begged to be allowed to spend the night there.

'Yes, certainly,' said the farmer; 'but we must first have something to eat!'

The wife received them both very kindly, spread a long table, and gave them a large plate of porridge. The farmer was hungry, and ate with a good appetite; but Little Klaus could not help thinking of the delicious dishes of fish and roast meats and cakes which he knew were in the oven. Under the table at his feet he had laid the sack with the horse-skin in it, for, as we know, he was going to the town to sell it. The porridge did not taste good to him, so he trod upon his sack, and the dry skin in the sack squeaked loudly.

'Hush!' said Little Klaus to his sack, at the same time treading on it again so that it squeaked even louder than before.

'Hullo! what have you got in your sack?' asked the farmer.

'Oh, it is a wizard!' said Little Klaus. 'He says we should not eat porridge, for he has conjured the whole oven full of roast meats and fish and cakes.'

'Goodness me!' said the farmer; and opening the oven he saw all the delicious, tempting dishes his wife had hidden there, but which he now believed the wizard in the sack had conjured up for them. The wife could say nothing, but she put the food at once on the table, and they ate the fish, the roast meat, and the cakes. Little Klaus now trod again on his sack, so that the skin squeaked.

'What does he say now?' asked the farmer.

'He says,' replied Little Klaus, 'that he has also conjured up for us three bottles of wine; they are standing in the corner by the oven!'

The wife had to fetch the wine which she had hidden, and the farmer drank and grew very merry. He would very much like to have had such a wizard as Little Klaus had in the sack.

'Can he conjure up the Devil?' asked the farmer. 'I should like to see him very much, for I feel just now in very good spirits!'

'Yes,' said Little Klaus; 'my wizard can do everything that I ask. Isn't that true?' he asked, treading on the sack so that it squeaked. 'Do you hear? He says "Yes;" but that the Devil looks so ugly that we should not like to see him.'

'Oh! I'm not at all afraid. What does he look like?'

'He will show himself in the shape of a sexton!'

'I say!' said the farmer, 'he must be ugly! You must know that I can't bear to look at a sexton! But it doesn't matter. I know that it is the Devil, and I sha'n't mind! I feel up to it now. But he must not come too near me!'

'I must ask my wizard,' said Little Klaus, treading on the sack and putting his ear to it.

'What does he say?'

'He says you can open the chest in the corner there, and you will see the Devil squatting inside it; but you must hold the lid so that he shall not escape.'

'Will you help me to hold him?' begged the farmer, going towards the chest where his wife had hidden the real sexton, who was sitting inside in a terrible fright. The farmer opened the lid a little way, and saw him inside.

'Ugh!' he shrieked, springing back. 'Yes, now I have seen him; he looked just like our sexton. Oh, it was horrid!'

So he had to drink again, and they drank till far on into the night.

'You *must* sell me the wizard,' said the farmer. 'Ask anything you like! I will pay you down a bushelful of money on the spot.'

'No, I really can't,' said Little Klaus. 'Just think how many things I can get from this wizard!'

'Ah! I should like to have him so much!' said the farmer, begging very hard.

'Well!' said Little Klaus at last, 'as you have been so good as to give me shelter to-night, I will sell him. You shall have the wizard for a bushel of money, but I must have full measure.'

'That you shall,' said the farmer. 'But you must take the chest with you. I won't keep it another hour in the house. Who knows that *he* isn't in there still?'

Little Klaus gave the farmer his sack with the dry skin, and got instead a good bushelful of money. The farmer also gave him a wheelbarrow to carry away his money and the chest. 'Farewell,' said Little Klaus; and away he went with his money and the big chest, wherein sat the sexton.

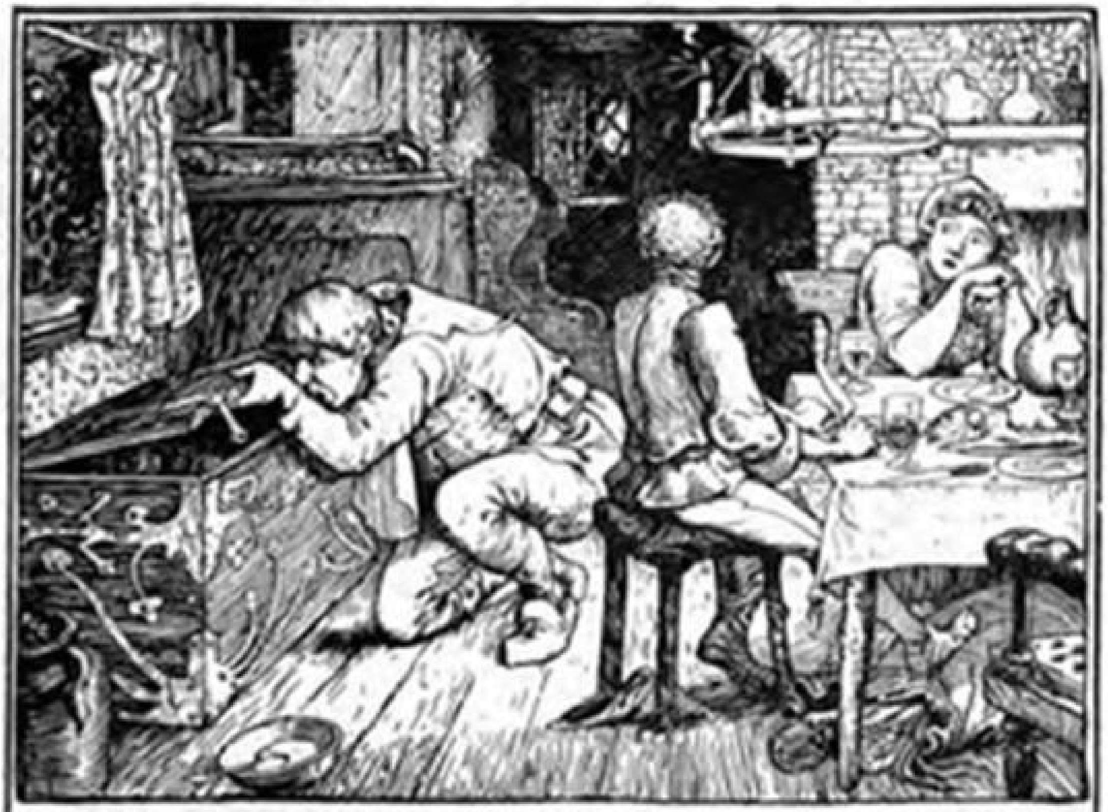

THE·FARMER·THINKS·HE·SEES·THE·DEVIL ·IN·THE CHEST

On the other side of the wood was a large deep river. The water flowed so rapidly that you could scarcely swim against the stream. A great new bridge had been built over it, on the middle of which Little Klaus stopped, and said aloud so that the sexton might hear:

'Now, what am I to do with this stupid chest? It is as heavy as if it were filled with stones! I shall only be tired, dragging it along; I will throw it into the river. If it swims home to me, well and good; and if it doesn't, it's no matter.'

Then he took the chest with one hand and lifted it up a little, as if he were going to throw it into the water.

'No, don't do that!' called out the sexton in the chest. 'Let me get out first!'

‘Oh, oh!’ said Little Klaus, pretending that he was afraid. ‘He is still in there! I must throw him quickly into the water to drown him!’

‘Oh! no, no!’ cried the sexton. ‘I will give you a whole bushelful of money if you will let me go!’

‘Ah, that’s quite another thing!’ said Little Klaus, opening the chest. The sexton crept out very quickly, pushed the empty chest into the water and went to his house, where he gave Little Klaus a bushel of money. One he had had already from the farmer, and now he had his wheelbarrow full of money.

‘Well, I have got a good price for the horse!’ said he to himself when he shook all his money out in a heap in his room. ‘This will put Big Klaus in a rage when he hears how rich I have become through my one horse; but I won’t tell him just yet!’

So he sent a boy to Big Klaus to borrow a bushel measure from him.

‘Now what can he want with it?’ thought Big Klaus; and he smeared some tar at the bottom, so that of whatever was measured a little should remain in it. And this is just what happened; for when he got his measure back, three new silver five-shilling pieces were sticking to it.

‘What does this mean?’ said Big Klaus, and he ran off at once to Little Klaus.

‘Where did you get so much money from?’

‘Oh, that was from my horse-skin. I sold it yesterday evening.’

‘That’s certainly a good price!’ said Big Klaus; and running home in great haste, he took an axe, knocked all his four horses on the head, skinned them, and went into the town.

‘Skins! skins! Who will buy skins?’ he cried through the streets.

All the shoemakers and tanners came running to ask him what he wanted for them. ‘A bushel of money for each,’ said Big Klaus.

‘Are you mad?’ they all exclaimed. ‘Do you think we have money by the bushel?’

‘Skins! skins! Who will buy skins?’ he cried again, and to all who asked him what they cost, he answered, ‘A bushel of money.’

‘He is making game of us,’ they said; and the shoemakers seized their yard measures and the tanners their leathern aprons and they gave Big Klaus a good beating. ‘Skins! skins!’ they cried mockingly; yes, we will tan *your* skin for you! Out of the town with him!’ they shouted; and Big Klaus had to hurry off as quickly as he could, if he wanted to save his life.

‘Aha!’ said he when he came home, ‘Little Klaus shall pay dearly for this. I will kill him!’

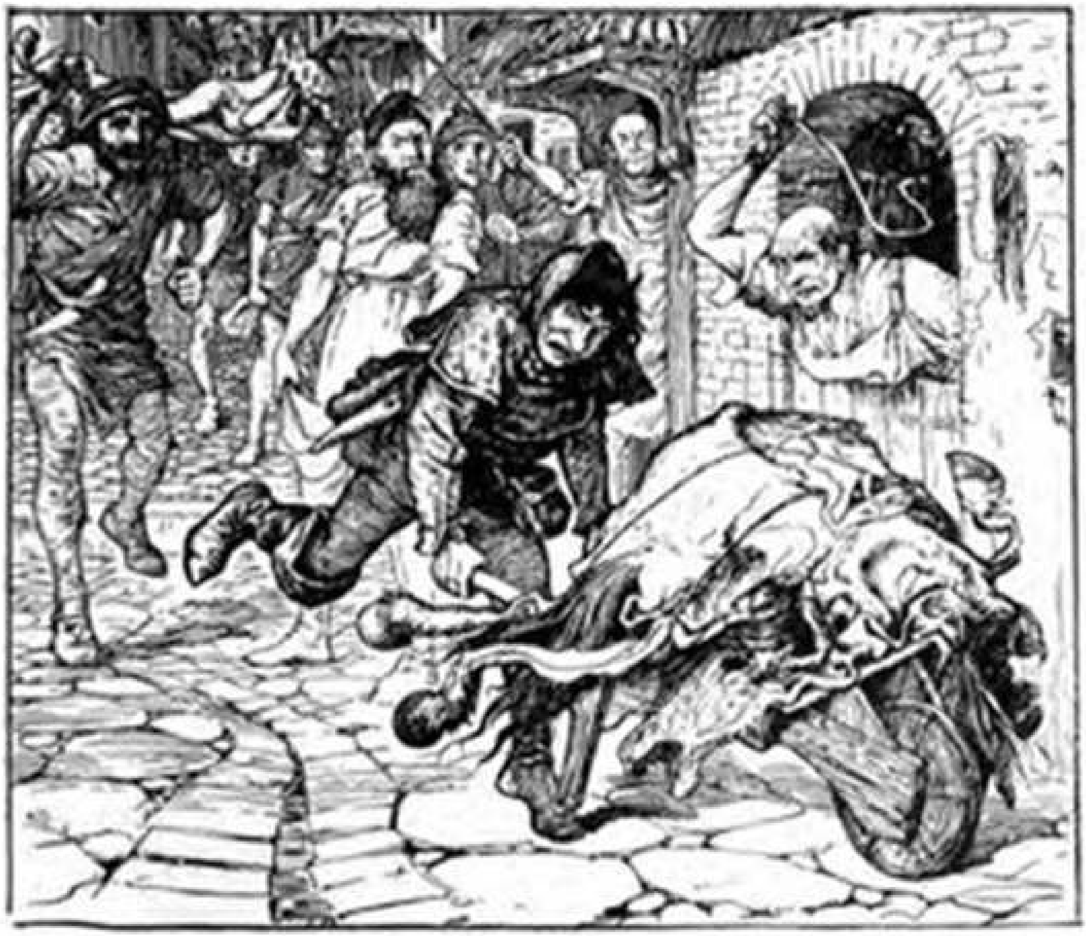

The shoemakers and tanners drive Big Klaus out of the town

Little Klaus' grandmother had just died. Though she had been very unkind to him, he was very much distressed, and he took the dead woman and laid her in his warm bed to try if he could not bring her back to life. There she lay the whole night, while he sat in the corner and slept on a chair, which he had often done before. And in the night as he sat there the door opened, and Big Klaus came in with his axe. He knew quite well where Little Klaus's bed stood, and going up to it he struck the grandmother on the head just where he thought Little Klaus would be. 'There!' said he. 'Now you won't get the best of me again!' And he went home.

'What a very wicked man!' thought Little Klaus. 'He was going to kill me! It was a good thing for my grandmother that she was dead already, or else he would have killed her!'

Then he dressed his grandmother in her Sunday clothes, borrowed a horse from his neighbour, harnessed the cart to it, sat his grandmother on the back seat so that she could not fall out when he drove, and away they went. When the sun rose they were in front of a large inn. Little Klaus got down, and went in to get something to drink. The host was very rich. He was a very worthy but hot-tempered man.

‘Good morning!’ said he to Little Klaus. ‘You are early on the road.’

‘Yes,’ said Little Klaus. ‘I am going to the town with my grandmother. She is sitting outside in the cart; I cannot bring her in. Will you not give her a glass of mead? But you will have to speak loud, for she is very hard of hearing.’

‘Oh yes, certainly I will!’ said the host; and, pouring out a large glass of mead, he took it out to the dead grandmother, who was sitting upright in the cart.

‘Here is a glass of mead from your son,’ said the host. But the dead woman did not answer a word, and sat still. ‘Don’t you hear?’ cried the host as loud as he could. ‘Here is a glass of mead from your son!’

Then he shouted the same thing again, and yet again, but she never moved in her place; and at last he grew angry, threw the glass in her face, so that she fell back into the cart, for she was not tied in her place.

‘Hullo!’ cried Little Klaus, running out of the door, and seizing the host by the throat. ‘You have killed my grandmother! Look! there is a great hole in her forehead!’

‘Oh, what a misfortune!’ cried the host, wringing his hands. ‘It all comes from my hot temper! Dear Little Klaus! I will give you a bushel of money, and will bury your grandmother as if she were my own; only don’t tell about it, or I shall have my head cut off, and that would be very uncomfortable.’

So Little Klaus got a bushel of money, and the host buried his grandmother as if she had been his own.

Now when Little Klaus again reached home with so much money he sent his boy to Big Klaus to borrow his bushel measure.

‘What’s this?’ said Big Klaus. ‘Didn’t I kill him? I must see to this myself!’

So he went himself to Little Klaus with the measure.

‘Well, now, where did you get all this money?’ asked he, opening his eyes at the heap.

‘You killed my grandmother — not me,’ said Little Klaus. ‘I sold her, and got a bushel of money for her.’

‘That is indeed a good price!’ said Big Klaus; and, hurrying home, he took an axe and killed his grandmother, laid her in the cart, and drove off to the apothecary’s, and asked whether he wanted to buy a dead body.

‘Who is it, and how did you get it?’ asked the apothecary.

‘It is my grandmother,’ said Big Klaus. ‘I killed her in order to get a bushel of money.’

‘You are mad!’ said the apothecary. ‘Don’t mention such things, or you will lose your head!’ And he began to tell him what a dreadful thing he had done, and what a wicked man he was, and that he ought to be punished; till Big Klaus was so frightened that he jumped into the cart and drove home as hard as he could. The apothecary and all the people thought he must be mad, so they let him go.

‘You shall pay for this!’ said Big Klaus as he drove home. ‘You shall pay for this dearly, Little Klaus!’

So as soon as he got home he took the largest sack he could find, and went to Little Klaus and said: ‘You have fooled me again! First I killed my horses, then my grandmother! It is all your fault; but you sha’n’t do it again!’ And he seized Little Klaus, pushed him in the sack, threw it over his shoulder, crying out ‘Now I am going to drown you!’

He had to go a long way before he came to the river, and Little Klaus was not very light. The road passed by the church; the organ was sounding, and the people were singing most beautifully. Big Klaus put down the sack with Little Klaus in it by the church-door, and thought that he might as well go in and hear a psalm before going on farther. Little Klaus could not get out, and everybody was in church; so he went in.

‘Oh, dear! oh, dear!’ groaned Little Klaus in the sack, twisting and turning himself. But he could not undo the string.

There came by an old, old shepherd, with snow-white hair and a long staff in his hand. He was driving a herd of cows and oxen, These pushed against the sack so that it was overturned.

‘Alas!’ moaned Little Klaus, ‘I am so young and yet I must die!’

‘And I, poor man,’ said the cattle-driver, ‘I am so old and yet I cannot die!’

‘Open the sack,’ called out Little Klaus; ‘creep in here instead of me, and you will die in a moment!’

‘I will gladly do that,’ said the cattle-driver; and he opened the sack, and Little Klaus struggled out at once.

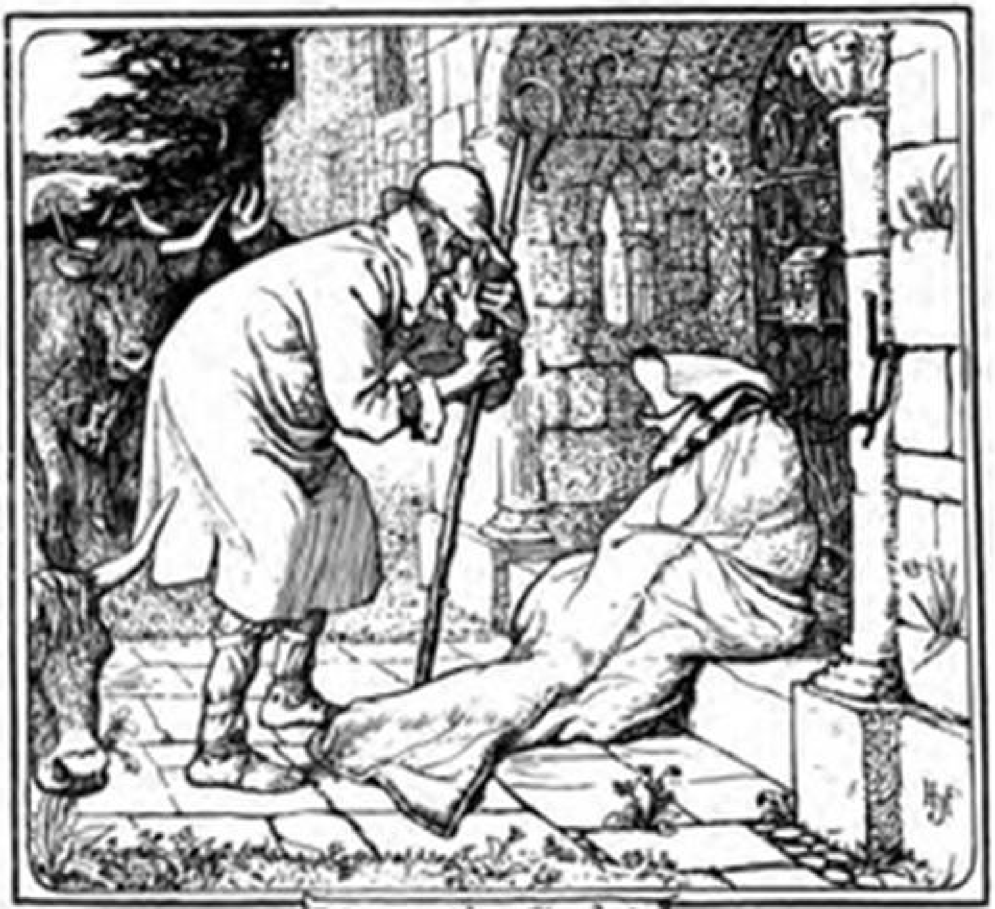

"Open the Sack"
said Little Klaus.

'You will take care of the cattle, won't you?' asked the old man, creeping into the sack, which Little Klaus fastened up and then went on with the cows and oxen. Soon after Big Klaus came out of the church, and taking up the sack on his shoulders it seemed to him as if it had become lighter; for the old cattle-driver was not half as heavy as Little Klaus.

'How easy he is to carry now! That must be because I heard part of the service.'

So he went to the river, which was deep and broad, threw in the sack with the old driver, and called after it, for he thought Little Klaus was inside:

'Down you go! You won't mock me any more now!'

Then he went home; but when he came to the cross-roads, there he met Little Klaus, who was driving his cattle.

'What's this?' said Big Klaus. 'Haven't I drowned you?'

'Yes,' replied Little Klaus; 'you threw me into the river a good half-hour ago!'

'But how did you get those splendid cattle?' asked Big Klaus.

‘They are sea-cattle!’ said Little Klaus. ‘I will tell you the whole story, and I thank you for having drowned me, because now I am on dry land and really rich! How frightened I was when I was in the sack! How the wind whistled in my ears as you threw me from the bridge into the cold water! I sank at once to the bottom; but I did not hurt myself, for underneath was growing the most beautiful soft grass. I fell on this, and immediately the sack opened; the loveliest maiden in snow-white garments, with a green garland round her wet hair, took me by the hand, and said, “Are you Little Klaus? Here are some cattle for you to begin with, and a mile farther down the road there is another herd, which I will give you as a present!” Now I saw that the river was a great high-road for the sea-people. Along it they travel underneath from the sea to the land till the river ends. It was so beautiful, full of flowers and fresh grass; the fishes which were swimming in the water shot past my ears as the birds do here in the air. What lovely people there were, and what fine cattle were grazing in the ditches and dykes!’

‘But why did you come up to us again?’ asked Big Klaus. ‘I should not have done so, if it is so beautiful down below!’

‘Oh!’ said Little Klaus, ‘that was just so politic of me. You heard what I told you, that the sea-maiden said to me a mile farther along the road — and by the road she meant the river, for she can go by no other way — there was another herd of cattle waiting for me. But I know what windings the river makes, now here, now there, so that it is a long way round. Therefore it makes it much shorter if one comes on the land and drives across the field to the river. Thus I have spared myself quite half a mile, and have come much quicker to my sea-cattle!’

‘Oh, you’re a lucky fellow!’ said Big Klaus. ‘Do you think I should also get some cattle if I went to the bottom of the river?’

‘Oh, yes! I think so,’ said Little Klaus. ‘But I can’t carry you in a sack to the river; you are too heavy for me! If you like to go there yourself and then creep into the sack, I will throw you in with the greatest of pleasure.’

‘Thank you,’ said Big Klaus; ‘but if I don’t get any sea-cattle when I come there, you will have a good hiding, mind!’

‘Oh, no! Don’t be so hard on me!’ Then they went to the river. When the cattle, which were thirsty, caught sight of the water, they ran as quickly as they could to drink.

‘Look how they are running!’ said Little Klaus. ‘They want to go to the bottom again!’

‘Yes; but help me first,’ said Big Klaus, ‘or else you shall have a beating!’

And so he crept into the large sack, which was lying on the back of one of the oxen. ‘Put a stone in, for I am afraid I may not reach the bottom,’ said Big Klaus.

‘It goes all right!’ said Little Klaus; but still he laid a big stone in the sack, fastened it up tight, and then pushed it in. Plump! there was Big Klaus in the water, and he sank like lead to the bottom.

‘I doubt if he will find any cattle!’ said Little Klaus as he drove his own home.

PRINCE RING

Once upon a time there was a King and his Queen in their kingdom. They had one daughter, who was called Ingiborg, and one son, whose name was Ring. He was less fond of adventures than men of rank usually were in those days, and was not famous for strength or feats of arms. When he was twelve years old, one fine winter day he rode into the forest along with his men to enjoy himself. They went on a long way, until they caught sight of a hind with a gold ring on its horns. The Prince was eager to catch it, if possible, so they gave chase and rode on without stopping until all the horses began to founder beneath them. At last the Prince's horse gave way too, and then there came over them a darkness so black that they could no longer see the hind. By this time they were far away from any house, and thought it was high time to be making their way home again, but they found they had got lost now. At first they all kept together, but soon each began to think that he knew the right way best; so they separated, and all went in different directions.

The Prince, too, had got lost like the rest, and wandered on for a time until he came to a little clearing in the forest not far from the sea, where he saw a woman sitting on a chair and a big barrel standing beside her. The Prince went up to her and saluted her politely, and she received him very graciously. He looked down into the barrel then, and saw lying at the bottom an unusually beautiful gold ring, which pleased him so much that he could not take his eyes off it. The woman saw this, and said that he might have it if he would take the trouble to get it; for which the Prince thanked her, and said it was at least worth trying. So he leaned over into the barrel, which did not seem very deep, and thought he would easily reach the ring; but the more he stretched down after it the deeper grew the barrel. As he was thus bending down into it the woman suddenly rose up and pushed him in head first, saying that now he could take up his quarters there. Then she fixed the top on the barrel and threw it out into the sea.

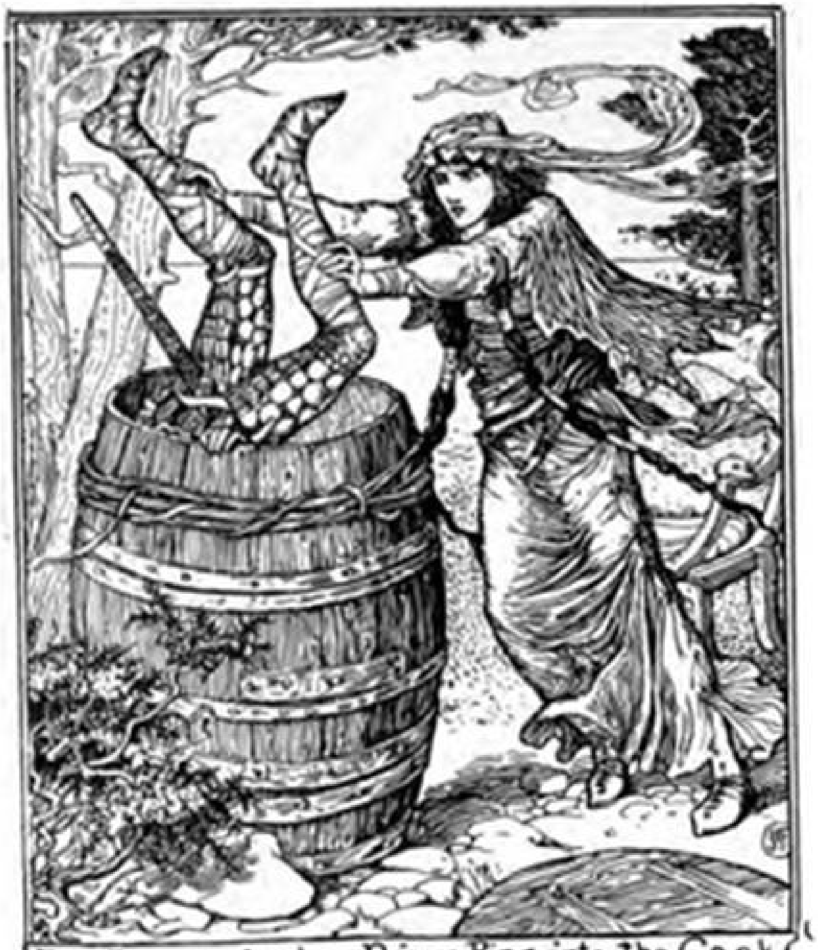

The Woman pushes Prince Ring into the Cask

The Prince thought himself in a bad plight now, as he felt the barrel floating out from the land and tossing about on the waves. How many days he spent thus he could not tell, but at last he felt that the barrel was knocking against rocks, at which he was a little cheered, thinking it was probably land and not merely a reef in the sea. Being something of a swimmer, he at last made up his mind to kick the bottom out of the barrel, and having done so he was able to get on shore, for the rocks by the sea were smooth and level; but overhead there were high cliffs. It seemed difficult to get up these, but he went along the foot of them for a little, till at last he tried to climb up, which at last he did.

Having got to the top, he looked round about him and saw that he was on an island, which was covered with forest, with apples growing, and altogether pleasant as far as the land was concerned. After he had been there several days, he one day heard a great noise in the forest, which made him terribly afraid, so that he ran to hide himself among the trees. Then he saw a Giant approaching, dragging a sledge loaded with wood, and making straight for him, so that he could see nothing for it but to lie down just where he was. When the Giant came across him, he stood still and looked at the Prince for a little; then he took him up in his arms and carried him home to his house, and was exceedingly kind to him. He gave him to his wife, saying he had found this child in the wood, and she could have it to help her in the house. The old woman was greatly pleased, and began to fondle the Prince with the utmost delight. He stayed there with them, and was very willing and obedient to them in everything, while they grew kinder to him every day.

One day the Giant took him round and showed him all his rooms except the parlour; this made the Prince curious to have a look into it, thinking there must be some very rare treasure there. So one day, when the Giant had gone into the forest, he tried to get into the parlour, and managed to get the door open halfway. Then he saw that some living creature moved inside and ran along the floor towards him and said something, which made him so frightened that he sprang back from the door and shut it again. As soon as the fright began to pass off he tried it again, for he thought it would be interesting to hear what it said; but things went just as before with him. He then got angry with himself, and, summoning up all his courage, tried it a third time, and opened the door of the room and stood firm. Then he saw that it was a big Dog, which spoke to him and said:

‘Choose me, Prince Ring.’

The Prince went away rather afraid, thinking with himself that it was no great treasure after all; but all the same what it had said to him stuck in his mind.

It is not said how long the Prince stayed with the Giant, but one day the latter came to him and said he would now take him over to the mainland out of the island, for he himself had no long time to live. He also thanked him for his good service, and told him to choose some one of his possessions, for he would get whatever he wanted. Ring thanked him heartily, and said there was no need to pay him for his services, they were so little worth; but if he did wish to give him anything he would choose what was in the parlour. The Giant was taken by surprise, and said:

‘There, you chose my old woman’s right hand; but I must not break my word.’

Upon this he went to get the Dog, which came running with signs of great delight; but the Prince was so much afraid of it that it was all he could do to keep from showing his alarm.

After this the Giant accompanied him down to the sea, where he saw a stone boat which was just big enough to hold the two of them and the Dog. On reaching the mainland the Giant took a friendly farewell of Ring, and told him he might take possession of all that was in the island after he and his wife died, which would happen within two weeks from that time. The Prince thanked him for this and for all his other kindnesses, and the Giant returned home, while Ring went up some distance from the sea; but he did not know what land he had come to, and was afraid to speak to the Dog. After he had walked on in silence for a time the Dog spoke to him and said:

'You don't seem to have much curiosity, seeing you never ask my name.'

The Prince then forced himself to ask, 'What is your name?'

'You had best call me Snati-Snati,' said the Dog. 'Now we are coming to a King's seat, and you must ask the King to keep us all winter, and to give you a little room for both of us.'

The Prince now began to be less afraid of the Dog. They came to the King and asked him to keep them all the winter, to which he agreed. When the King's men saw the Dog they began to laugh at it, and make as if they would tease it; but when the Prince saw this he advised them not to do it, or they might have the worst of it. They replied that they didn't care a bit what he thought.

After Ring had been with the King for some days the latter began to think there was a great deal in him, and esteemed him more than the others. The King, however, had a counsellor called Red, who became very jealous when he saw how much the King esteemed Ring; and one day he talked to him, and said he could not understand why he had so good an opinion of this stranger, who had not yet shown himself superior to other men in anything. The King replied that it was only a short time since he had come there. Red then asked him to send them both to cut down wood next morning, and see which of them could do most work. Snati-Snati heard this and told it to Ring, advising him to ask the King for two axes, so that he might have one in reserve if the first one got broken. Next morning the King asked Ring and Red to go and cut down trees for him, and both agreed. Ring got the two axes, and each went his own way; but when the Prince had got out into the wood Snati took one of the axes and began to hew along with him. In the evening the King came to look over their day's work, as Red had proposed, and found that Ring's wood-heap was more than twice as big.

'I suspected,' said the King, 'that Ring was not quite useless; never have I seen such a day's work.'

Ring was now in far greater esteem with the King than before, and Red was all the more discontented. One day he came to the King and said, 'If Ring is such a mighty man, I think you might ask him to kill the wild oxen in the wood here, and flay them the same day, and bring you the horns and the hides in the evening.'

'Don't you think that a desperate errand?' said the King, 'seeing they are so dangerous, and no one has ever yet ventured to go against them?'

Red answered that he had only one life to lose, and it would be interesting to see how brave he was; besides, the King would have good reason to ennoble him if he overcame them. The King at last allowed himself, though rather unwillingly, to be won over by Red's persistency, and one day asked Ring to go and kill the oxen that were in the wood for him, and bring their horns and hides to him in the evening. Not knowing how dangerous the oxen were, Ring was quite ready, and went off at once, to the great delight of Red, who was now sure of his death.

As soon as Ring came in sight of the oxen they came bellowing to meet him; one of them was tremendously big, the other rather less. Ring grew terribly afraid.

'How do you like them?' asked Snati.

'Not well at all,' said the Prince.

'We can do nothing else,' said Snati, 'than attack them, if it is to go well; you will go against the little one, and I shall take the other.'

With this Snati leapt at the big one, and was not long in bringing him down. Meanwhile the Prince went against the other with fear and trembling, and by the time Snati came to help him the ox had nearly got him under, but Snati was not slow in helping his master to kill it.

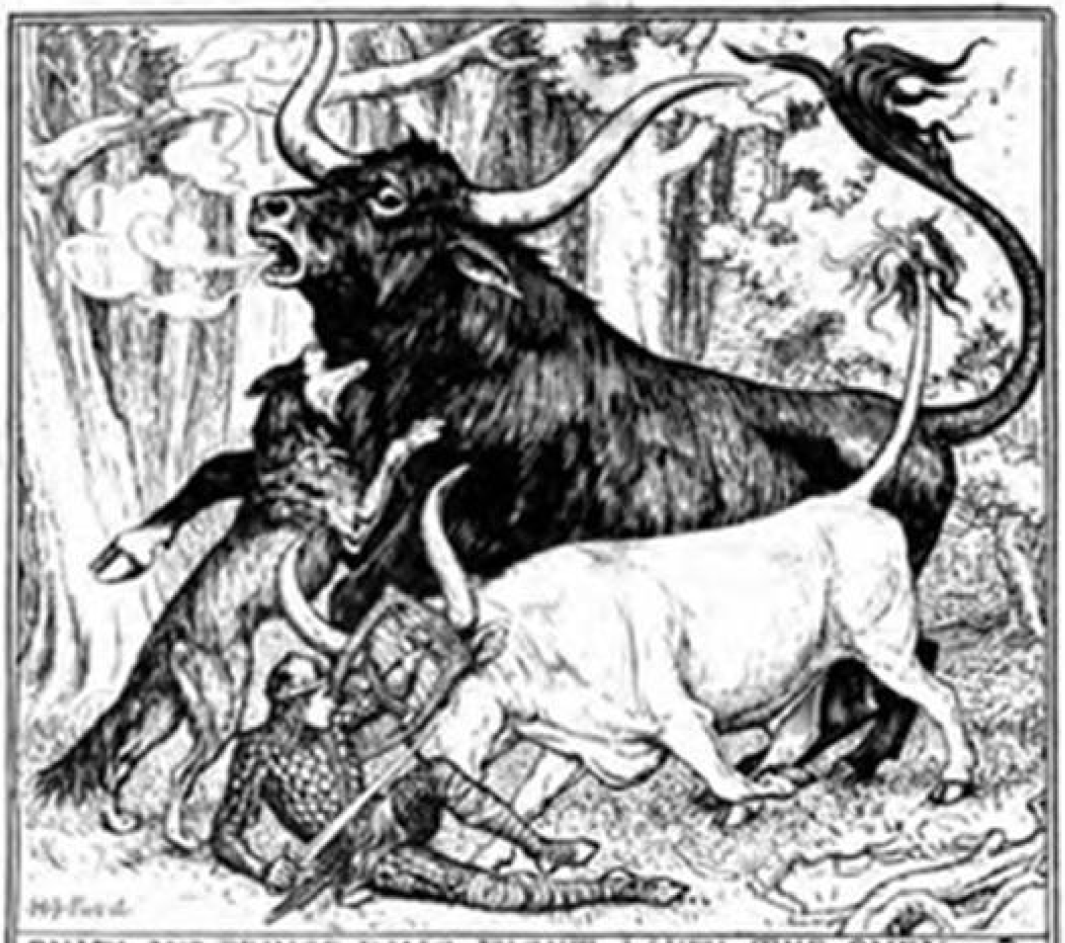

SNATI·AND·PRINCE·RING·FIGHT·WITH·THE·OXEN·

Each of them then began to flay their own ox, but Ring was only half through by the time Snati had finished his. In the evening, after they had finished this task, the Prince thought himself unfit to carry all the horns and both the hides, so Snati told him to lay them all on his back until they got to the Palace gate. The Prince agreed, and laid everything on the Dog except the skin of the smaller ox, which he staggered along with himself. At the Palace gate he left everything lying, went before the King, and asked him to come that length with him, and there handed over to him the hides and horns of the oxen. The King was greatly surprised at his valour, and said he knew no one like him, and thanked him heartily for what he had done.

After this the King set Ring next to himself, and all esteemed him highly, and held him to be a great hero; nor could Red any longer say anything against him, though he grew still more determined to destroy him. One day a good idea came into his head. He came to the King and said he had something to say to him.

‘What is that?’ said the King.

Red said that he had just remembered the gold cloak, gold chess-board, and bright gold piece that the King had lost about a year before.

‘Don’t remind me of them!’ said the King.

Red, however, went on to say that, since Ring was such a mighty man that he could do everything, it had occurred to him to advise the King to ask him to search for these treasures, and come back with them before Christmas; in return the King should promise him his daughter.

The King replied that he thought it altogether unbecoming to propose such a thing to Ring, seeing that he could not tell him where the things were; but Red pretended not to hear the King’s excuses, and went on talking about it until the King gave in to him. One day, a month or so before Christmas, the King spoke to Ring, saying that he wished to ask a great favour of him.

‘What is that?’ said Ring.

‘It is this,’ said the King: ‘that you find for me my gold cloak, my gold chess-board, and my bright gold piece, that were stolen from me about a year ago. If you can bring them to me before Christmas I will give you my daughter in marriage.’

‘Where am I to look for them, then?’ said Ring.

‘That you must find out for yourself,’ said the King; ‘I don’t know.’

Ring now left the King, and was very silent, for he saw he was in a great difficulty: but, on the other hand, he thought it was excellent to have such a chance of winning the King’s daughter. Snati noticed that his master was at a loss, and said to him that he should not disregard what the King had asked him to do; but he would have to act upon his advice, otherwise he would get into great difficulties. The Prince assented to this, and began to prepare for the journey.

After he had taken leave of the King, and was setting out on the search, Snati said to him, ‘Now you must first of all go about the neighbourhood, and gather as much salt as ever you can.’ The Prince did so, and gathered so much salt that he could hardly carry it; but Snati said, ‘Throw it on my back,’ which he accordingly did, and the Dog then ran on before the Prince, until they came to the foot of a steep cliff.

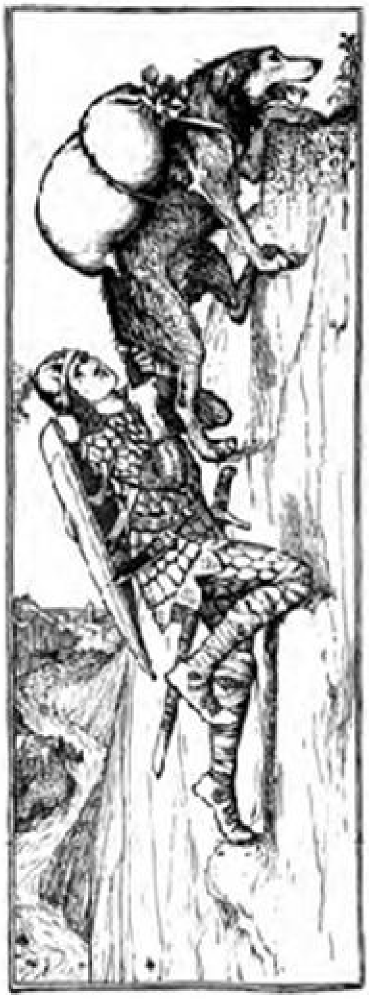

‘We must go up here,’ said Snati.

‘I don’t think that will be child’s play,’ said the Prince.

‘Hold fast by my tail,’ said Snati; and in this way he pulled Ring up on the lowest shelf of the rock. The Prince began to get giddy, but up went Snati on to the second shelf. Ring was nearly swooning by this time, but Snati made a third effort and reached the top of the cliff, where the Prince fell down in a faint. After a little, however, he recovered again, and they went a short distance along a level plain, until they came to a cave. This was on Christmas Eve. They went up above the cave, and found a window in it, through which they looked, and saw four trolls lying asleep beside the fire, over which a large porridge-pot was hanging.

‘Now you must empty all the salt into the porridge-pot,’ said Snati.

Ring did so, and soon the trolls wakened up. The old hag, who was the most frightful of them all, went first to taste the porridge.

‘How comes this?’ she said; ‘the porridge is salt! I got the milk by witchcraft yesterday out of four kingdoms, and now it is salt!'

All the others then came to taste the porridge, and thought it nice, but after they had finished it the old hag grew so thirsty that she could stand it no longer, and asked her daughter to go out and bring her some water from the river that ran near by.

'I won't go,' said she, 'unless you lend me your bright gold piece.'

'Though I should die you shan't have that,' said the hag.

'Die, then,' said the girl.

'Well, then, take it, you brat,' said the old hag, 'and be off with you, and make haste with the water.'

The girl took the gold and ran out with it, and it was so bright that it shone all over the plain. As soon as she came to the river she lay down to take a drink of the water, but meanwhile the two of them had got down off the roof and thrust her, head first, into the river.

The old hag began now to long for the water, and said that the girl would be running about with the gold piece all over the plain, so she asked her son to go and get her a drop of water.

'I won't go,' said he, 'unless I get the gold cloak.'

'Though I should die you shan't have that,' said the hag.

'Die, then,' said the son.

'Well, then, take it,' said the old hag, 'and be off with you, but you must make haste with the water.'

He put on the cloak, and when he came outside it shone so bright that he could see to go with it. On reaching the river he went to take a drink like his sister, but at that moment Ring and Snati sprang upon him, took the cloak from him, and threw him into the river.

The old hag could stand the thirst no longer, and asked her husband to go for a drink for her; the brats, she said, were of course running about and playing themselves, just as she had expected they would, little wretches that they were.

'I won't go,' said the old troll, 'unless you lend me the gold chess-board.'

'Though I should die you shan't have that,' said the hag.

'I think you may just as well do that,' said he, 'since you won't grant me such a little favour.'

'Take it, then, you utter disgrace!' said the old hag, 'since you are just like these two brats.'

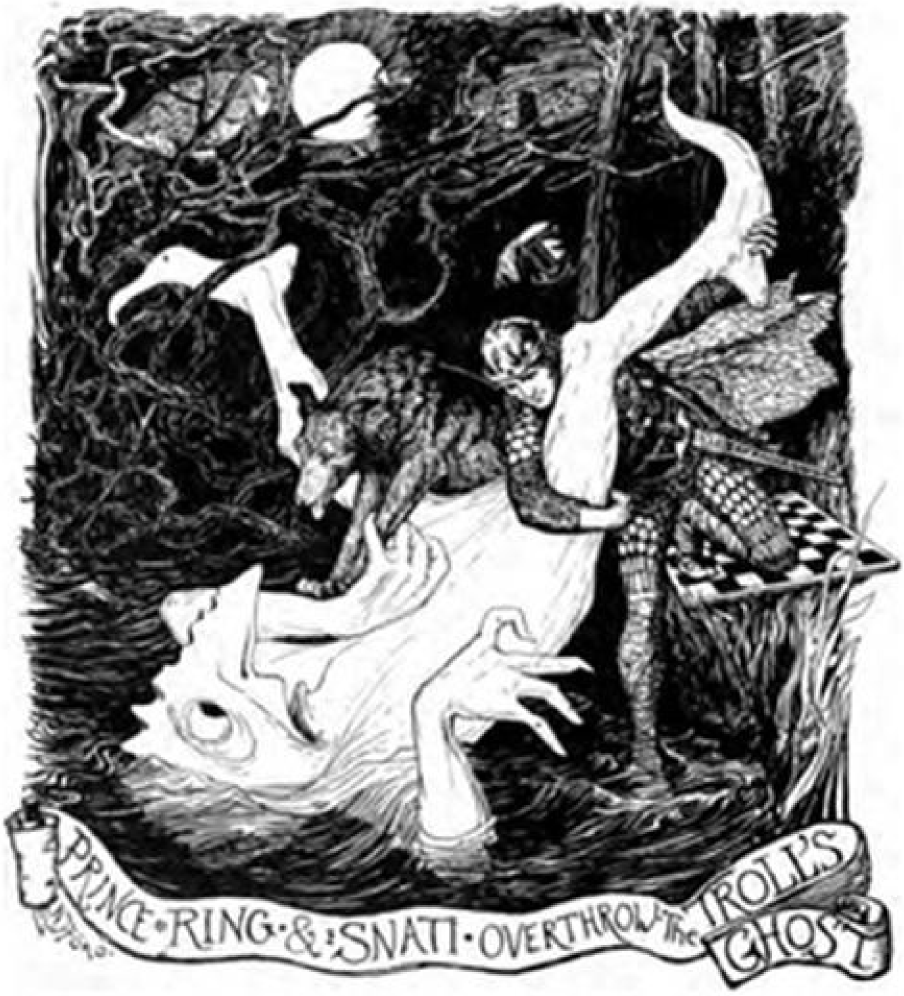

The old troll now went out with the gold chess-board, and down to the river, and was about to take a drink, when Ring and Snati came upon him, took the chess-board from him, and threw him into the river. Before they had got back again, however, and up on top of the cave, they saw the poor old fellow's ghost come marching up from the river. Snati immediately sprang upon him, and Ring assisted in the attack, and after a hard struggle they mastered him a second time. When they got back again to the window, they saw that the old hag was moving towards the door.

'Now we must go in at once,' said Snati, 'and try to master her there, for if she once gets out we shall have no chance with her. She is the worst witch that ever lived, and no iron can cut her. One of us must pour boiling porridge out of the pot on her, and the other punch her with red-hot iron.'

In they went then, and no sooner did the hag see them than she said, 'So you have come, Prince Ring; you must have seen to my husband and children.'

Snati saw that she was about to attack them, and sprang at her with a red-hot iron from the fire, while Ring kept pouring boiling porridge on her without stopping, and in this way they at last got her killed. Then they burned the old troll and her to ashes, and explored the cave, where they found plenty of gold and treasures. The most valuable of these they carried with them as far as the cliff, and left them there. Then they hastened home to the King with his three treasures, where they arrived late on Christmas night, and Ring handed them over to him.

The King was beside himself with joy, and was astonished at how clever a man Ring was in all kinds of feats, so that he esteemed him still more highly than before, and betrothed his daughter to him; and the feast for this was to last all through Christmastide. Ring thanked the King courteously for this and all his other kindnesses, and as soon as he had finished eating and drinking in the hall went off to sleep in his own room. Snati, however, asked permission to sleep in the Prince's bed for that night, while the Prince should sleep where the Dog usually lay. Ring said he was welcome to do so, and that he deserved more from him than that came to. So Snati went up into the Prince's bed, but after a time he came back, and told Ring he could go there himself now, but to take care not to meddle with anything that was in the bed.

Now the story comes back to Red, who came into the hall and showed the King his right arm wanting the hand, and said that now he could see what kind of a man his intended son-in-law was, for he had done this to him without any cause whatever. The King became very angry, and said he would soon find out the truth about it, and if Ring had cut off his hand without good cause he should be hanged; but if it was otherwise, then Red should die. So the King sent for Ring and asked him for what reason he had done this. Snati, however, had just told Ring what had happened during the night, and in reply he asked the King to go with him and he would show him something. The King went with him to his sleeping-room, and saw lying on the bed a man's hand holding a sword.

'This hand,' said Ring, 'came over the partition during the night, and was about to run me through in my bed, if I had not defended myself.'

The King answered that in that case he could not blame him for protecting his own life, and that Red was well worthy of death. So Red was hanged, and Ring married the King's daughter.

The first night that they went to bed together Snati asked Ring to allow him to lie at their feet, and this Ring allowed him to do. During the night he heard a howling and outcry beside them, struck a light in a hurry and saw an ugly dog's skin lying near him, and a beautiful Prince in the bed. Ring instantly took the skin and burned it, and then shook the Prince, who was lying unconscious, until he woke up. The bridegroom then asked his name; he replied that he was called Ring, and was a King's son. In his youth he had lost his mother, and in her place his father had married a witch, who had laid a spell on him that he should turn into a dog, and never be released from the spell unless a Prince of the same name as himself allowed him to sleep at his feet the first night after his marriage. He added further, ‘As soon as she knew that you were my namesake she tried to get you destroyed, so that you might not free me from the spell. She was the hind that you and your companions chased; she was the woman that you found in the clearing with the barrel, and the old hag that we just now killed in the cave.’

After the feasting was over the two namesakes, along with other men, went to the cliff and brought all the treasure home to the Palace. Then they went to the island and removed all that was valuable from it. Ring gave to his namesake, whom he had freed from the spell, his sister Ingiborg and his father’s kingdom to look after, but he himself stayed with his father-in-law the King, and had half the kingdom while he lived and the whole of it after his death.

THE SWINEHERD

There was once a poor Prince. He possessed a kingdom which, though small, was yet large enough for him to marry on, and married he wished to be.

Now it was certainly a little audacious of him to venture to say to the Emperor's daughter, 'Will you marry me?' But he did venture to say so, for his name was known far and wide. There were hundreds of princesses who would gladly have said 'Yes,' but would she say the same?

Well, we shall see.

On the grave of the Prince's father grew a rose-tree, a very beautiful rose-tree. It only bloomed every five years, and then bore but a single rose, but oh, such a rose! Its scent was so sweet that when you smelt it you forgot all your cares and troubles. And he had also a nightingale which could sing as if all the beautiful melodies in the world were shut up in its little throat. This rose and this nightingale the Princess was to have, and so they were both put into silver caskets and sent to her.

The Emperor had them brought to him in the great hall, where the Princess was playing 'Here comes a duke a-riding' with her ladies-in-waiting. And when she caught sight of the big caskets which contained the presents, she clapped her hands for joy.

'If only it were a little pussy-cat!' she said. But the rose-tree with the beautiful rose came out.

'But how prettily it is made!' said all the ladies-in-waiting.

'It is more than pretty,' said the Emperor, 'it is charming!'

But the Princess felt it, and then she almost began to cry.

'Ugh! Papa,' she said, 'it is not artificial, it is *real*!'

'Ugh!' said all the ladies-in-waiting, 'it is real!'

'Let us see first what is in the other casket before we begin to be angry,' thought the Emperor, and there came out the nightingale. It sang so beautifully that one could scarcely utter a cross word against it.

'*Superbe! charmant!*' said the ladies-in-waiting, for they all chattered French, each one worse than the other.

'How much the bird reminds me of the musical snuff-box of the late Empress!' said an old courtier. 'Ah, yes, it is the same tone, the same execution!'

'Yes,' said the Emperor; and then he wept like a little child.

‘I hope that this, at least, is not real?’ asked the Princess.

‘Yes, it is a real bird,’ said those who had brought it.

‘Then let the bird fly away,’ said the Princess; and she would not on any account allow the Prince to come.

But he was nothing daunted. He painted his face brown and black, drew his cap well over his face, and knocked at the door. ‘Good-day, Emperor,’ he said. ‘Can I get a place here as servant in the castle?’

‘Yes,’ said the Emperor, ‘but there are so many who ask for a place that I don’t know whether there will be one for you; but, still, I will think of you. Stay, it has just occurred to me that I want someone to look after the swine, for I have so very many of them.’

And the Prince got the situation of Imperial Swineherd. He had a wretched little room close to the pigsties; here he had to stay, but the whole day he sat working, and when evening was come he had made a pretty little pot. All round it were little bells, and when the pot boiled they jingled most beautifully and played the old tune — ‘Where is Augustus dear?

Alas! he’s not here, here, here!’

But the most wonderful thing was, that when one held one’s finger in the steam of the pot, then at once one could smell what dinner was ready in any fireplace in the town. That was indeed something quite different from the rose.

Now the Princess came walking past with all her ladies-in-waiting, and when she heard the tune she stood still and her face beamed with joy, for she also could play ‘Where is Augustus dear?’

It was the only tune she knew, but that she could play with one finger.

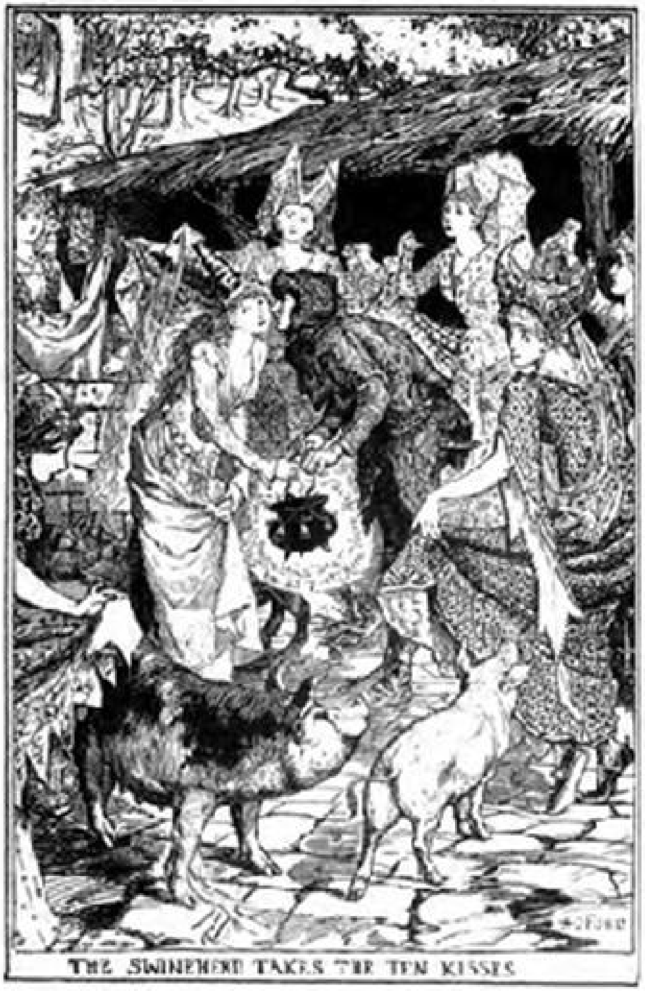

THE SWINEHERD TAKES THE TEN KISSES

‘Why, that is what I play!’ she said. ‘He must be a most accomplished Swineherd! Listen! Go down and ask him what the instrument costs.’

And one of the ladies-in-waiting had to go down; but she put on wooden clogs. ‘What will you take for the pot?’ asked the lady-in-waiting.

‘I will have ten kisses from the Princess,’ answered the Swineherd.

‘Heaven forbid!’ said the lady-in-waiting.

‘Yes, I will sell it for nothing less,’ replied the Swineherd.

‘Well, what does he say?’ asked the Princess.

‘I really hardly like to tell you,’ answered the lady-in-waiting.

‘Oh, then you can whisper it to me.’

‘He is disobliging!’ said the Princess, and went away. But she had only gone a few steps when the bells rang out so prettily — ‘Where is Augustus dear?

Alas! he’s not here, here, here.’

‘Listen!’ said the Princess. ‘Ask him whether he will take ten kisses from my ladies-in-waiting.’

‘No, thank you,’ said the Swineherd. ‘Ten kisses from the Princess, or else I keep my pot.’

‘That is very tiresome!’ said the Princess. ‘But you must put yourselves in front of me, so that no one can see.’

And the ladies-in-waiting placed themselves in front and then spread out their dresses; so the Swineherd got his ten kisses, and she got the pot.

What happiness that was! The whole night and the whole day the pot was made to boil; there was not a fire-place in the whole town where they did not know what was being cooked, whether it was at the chancellor’s or at the shoemaker’s.

The ladies-in-waiting danced and clapped their hands.

‘We know who is going to have soup and pancakes; we know who is going to have porridge and sausages — isn’t it interesting?’

‘Yes, very interesting!’ said the first lady-in-waiting.

‘But don’t say anything about it, for I am the Emperor’s daughter.’

‘Oh, no, of course we won’t!’ said everyone.

The Swineherd — that is to say, the Prince (though they did not know he was anything but a true Swineherd) — let no day pass without making something, and one day he made a rattle which, when it was turned round, played all the waltzes, galops, and polkas which had ever been known since the world began.

‘But that is *superbe!*’ said the Princess as she passed by. ‘I have never heard a more beautiful composition. Listen! Go down and ask him what this instrument costs; but I won’t kiss him again.’

‘He wants a hundred kisses from the Princess,’ said the lady-in-waiting who had gone down to ask him.

‘I believe he is mad!’ said the Princess, and then she went on; but she had only gone a few steps when she stopped.

‘One ought to encourage art,’ she said. ‘I am the Emperor’s daughter! Tell him he shall have, as before, ten kisses; the rest he can take from my ladies-in-waiting.’

‘But we don’t at all like being kissed by him,’ said the ladies-in-waiting.

‘That’s nonsense,’ said the Princess; ‘and if I can kiss him, you can too. Besides, remember that I give you board and lodging.’

So the ladies-in-waiting had to go down to him again.

‘A hundred kisses from the Princess,’ said he, ‘or each keeps his own.’

‘Put yourselves in front of us,’ she said then; and so all the ladies-in-waiting put themselves in front, and he began to kiss the Princess.

‘What can that commotion be by the pigsties?’ asked the Emperor, who was standing on the balcony. He rubbed his eyes and put on his spectacles. ‘Why those are the ladies-in-waiting playing their games; I must go down to them.’

So he took off his shoes, which were shoes though he had trodden them down into slippers. What a hurry he was in, to be sure!

As soon as he came into the yard he walked very softly, and the ladies-in-waiting were so busy counting the kisses and seeing fair play that they never noticed the Emperor. He stood on tip-toe.

‘What is that?’ he said, when he saw the kissing; and then he threw one of his slippers at their heads just as the Swineherd was taking his eighty-sixth kiss.

‘Be off with you!’ said the Emperor, for he was very angry. And the Princess and the Swineherd were driven out of the empire.

Then she stood still and wept; the Swineherd was scolding, and the rain was streaming down.

‘Alas, what an unhappy creature I am!’ sobbed the Princess. ‘If only I had taken the beautiful Prince! Alas, how unfortunate I am!’

And the Swineherd went behind a tree, washed the black and brown off his face, threw away his old clothes, and then stepped forward in his splendid dress, looking so beautiful that the Princess was obliged to courtesy.

‘I now come to this. I despise you!’ he said. ‘You would have nothing to do with a noble Prince; you did not understand the rose or the nightingale, but you could kiss the Swineherd for the sake of a toy. This is what you get for it!’ And he went into his kingdom and shut the door in her face, and she had to stay outside singing — ‘Where’s my Augustus dear?

Alas! he’s not here, here, here!’

HOW TO TELL A TRUE PRINCESS

There was once upon a time a Prince who wanted to marry a Princess, but she must be a true Princess. So he travelled through the whole world to find one, but there was always something against each. There were plenty of Princesses, but he could not find out if they were true Princesses. In every case there was some little defect, which showed the genuine article was not yet found. So he came home again in very low spirits, for he had wanted very much to have a true Princess. One night there was a dreadful storm; it thundered and lightened and the rain streamed down in torrents. It was fearful! There was a knocking heard at the Palace gate, and the old King went to open it.

There stood a Princess outside the gate; but oh, in what a sad plight she was from the rain and the storm! The water was running down from her hair and her dress into the points of her shoes and out at the heels again. And yet she said she was a true Princess!

‘Well, we shall soon find that!’ thought the old Queen. But she said nothing, and went into the sleeping-room, took off all the bed-clothes, and laid a pea on the bottom of the bed. Then she put twenty mattresses on top of the pea, and twenty eider-down quilts on the top of the mattresses. And this was the bed in which the Princess was to sleep.

The next morning she was asked how she had slept.

‘Oh, very badly!’ said the Princess. ‘I scarcely closed my eyes all night! I am sure I don’t know what was in the bed. I laid on something so hard that my whole body is black and blue. It is dreadful!’

Now they perceived that she was a true Princess, because she had felt the pea through the twenty mattresses and the twenty eider-down quilts.

No one but a true Princess could be so sensitive.

So the Prince married her, for now he knew that at last he had got hold of a true Princess. And the pea was put into the Royal Museum, where it is still to be seen if no one has stolen it. Now this is a true story.

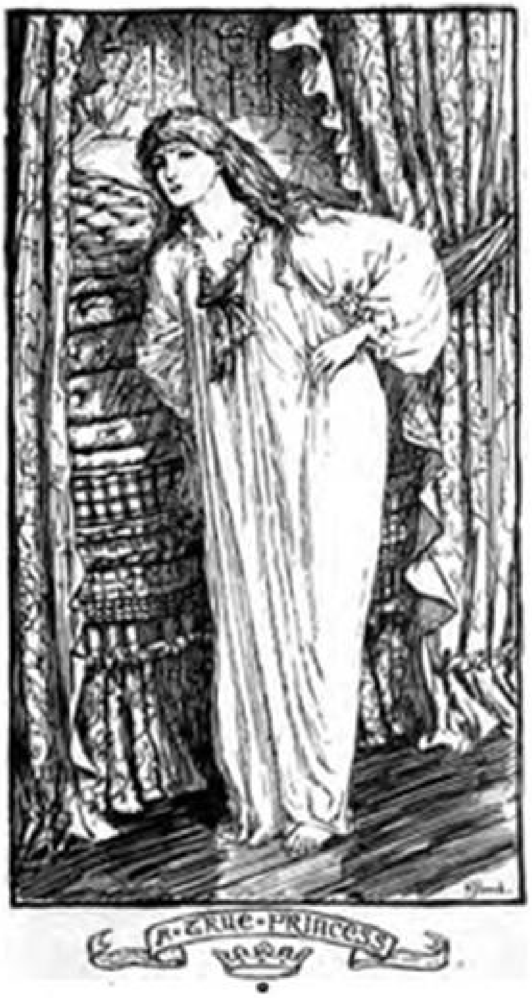
A True Princess

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

There were once a Scotsman and an Englishman and an Irishman serving in the army together, who took it into their heads to run away on the first opportunity they could get. The chance came and they took it. They went on travelling for two days through a great forest, without food or drink, and without coming across a single house, and every night they had to climb up into the trees through fear of the wild beasts that were in the wood. On the second morning the Scotsman saw from the top of his tree a great castle far away. He said to himself that he would certainly die if he stayed in the forest without anything to eat but the roots of grass, which would not keep him alive very long. As soon, then, as he got down out of the tree he set off towards the castle, without so much as telling his companions that he had seen it at all; perhaps the hunger and want they had suffered had changed their nature so much that the one did not care what became of the other if he could save himself. He travelled on most of the day, so that it was quite late when he reached the castle, and to his great disappointment found nothing but closed doors and no smoke rising from the chimneys. He thought there was nothing for it but to die after all, and had lain down beside the wall, when he heard a window being opened high above him. At this he looked up, and saw the most beautiful woman he had ever set eyes on.

‘Oh, it is Fortune that has sent you to me,’ he said.

‘It is indeed,’ said she. ‘What are you in need of, or what has sent you here?’

‘Necessity,’ said he. ‘I am dying for want of food and drink.’

‘Come inside, then,’ she said; ‘there is plenty of both here.’

Accordingly he went in to where she was, and she opened a large room for him, where he saw a number of men lying asleep. She then set food before him, and after that showed him to the room where the others were. He lay down on one of the beds and fell sound asleep. And now we must go back to the two that he left behind him in the wood.

When nightfall and the time of the wild beasts came upon these, the Englishman happened to climb up into the very same tree on which the Scotsman was when he got a sight of the castle; and as soon as the day began to dawn and the Englishman looked to the four quarters of heaven, what did he see but the castle too! Off he went without saying a word to the Irishman, and everything happened to him just as it had done to the Scotsman.

The poor Irishman was now left all alone, and did not know where the others had gone to, so he just stayed where he was, very sad and miserable. When night came he climbed up into the same tree as the Englishman had been on the night before. As soon as day came he also saw the castle, and set out towards it; but when he reached it he could see no signs of fire or living being about it. Before long, however, he heard the window opened above his head, looked up, and beheld the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. He asked if she would give him food and drink, and she answered kindly and heartily that she would, if he would only come inside. This he did very willingly, and she set before him food and drink that he had never seen the like of before. In the room there was a bed, with diamond rings hanging at every loop of the curtains, and everything that was in the room besides astonished him so much that he actually forgot that he was hungry. When she saw that he was not eating at all, she asked him what he wanted yet, to which he replied that he would neither eat nor drink until he knew who she was, or where she came from, or who had put her there.

'I shall tell you that,' said she. 'I am an enchanted Princess, and my father has promised that the man who releases me from the spell shall have the third of his kingdom while he is alive, and the whole of it after he is dead, and marry me as well. If ever I saw a man who looked likely to do this, you are the one. I have been here for sixteen years now, and no one who ever came to the castle has asked me who I was, except yourself. Every other man that has come, so long as I have been here, lies asleep in the big room down there.'

'Tell me, then,' said the Irishman, 'what is the spell that has been laid on you, and how you can be freed from it.'

'There is a little room there,' said the Princess, 'and if I could get a man to stay in it from ten o'clock till midnight for three nights on end I should be freed from the spell.'

'I am the man for you, then,' said he; 'I will take on hand to do it.'

Thereupon she brought him a pipe and tobacco, and he went into the room; but before long he heard a hammering and knocking on the outside of the door, and was told to open it.

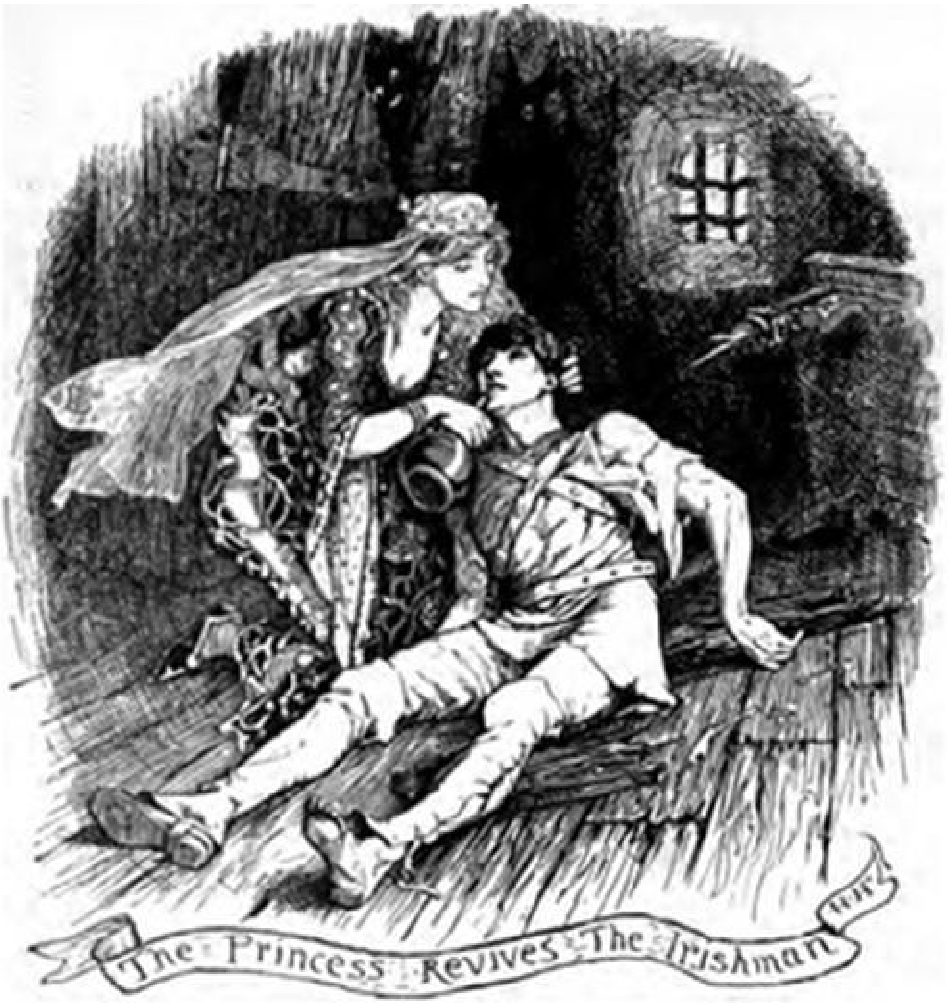
The Princess Revives The Irishman

‘I won’t,’ he said.

The next moment the door came flying in, and those outside along with it. They knocked him down, and kicked him, and knelt on his body till it came to midnight; but as soon as the cock crew they all disappeared. The Irishman was little more than alive by this time. As soon as daylight appeared the Princess came, and found him lying full length on the floor, unable to speak a word. She took a bottle, rubbed him from head to foot with something from it, and thereupon he was as sound as ever; but after what he had got that night he was very unwilling to try it a second time. The Princess, however, entreated him to stay, saying that the next night would not be so bad, and in the end he gave in and stayed.

When it was getting near midnight he heard them ordering him to open the door, and there were three of them for every one that there had been the previous evening. He did not make the slightest movement to go out to them or to open the door, but before long they broke it up, and were in on top of him. They laid hold of him, and kept throwing him between them up to the ceiling, or jumping above him, until the cock crew, when they all disappeared. When day came the Princess went to the room to see if he was still alive, and taking the bottle put it to his nostrils, which soon brought him to himself. The first thing he said then was that he was a fool to go on getting himself killed for anyone he ever saw, and was determined to be off and stay there no longer. When the Princess learned his intention she entreated him to stay, reminding him that another night would free her from the spell. ‘Besides,’ she said, ‘if there is a single spark of life in you when the day comes, the stuff that is in this bottle will make you as sound as ever you were.’

With all this the Irishman decided to stay; but that night there were three at him for every one that was there the two nights before, and it looked very unlikely that he would be alive in the morning after all that he got. When morning dawned, and the Princess came to see if he was still alive, she found him lying on the floor as if dead. She tried to see if there was breath in him, but could not quite make it out. Then she put her hand on his pulse, and found a faint movement in it. Accordingly she poured what was in the bottle on him, and before long he rose up on his feet, and was as well as ever he was. So that business was finished, and the Princess was freed from the spell.

The Princess then told the Irishman that she must go away for the present, but would return for him in a few days in a carriage drawn by four grey horses. He told her to ‘be aisy,’ and not speak like that to him. ‘I have paid dear for you for the last three nights,’ he said, ‘if I have to part with you now;’ but in the twinkling of an eye she had disappeared. He did not know what to do with himself when he saw that she was gone, but before she went she had given him a little rod, with which he could, when he pleased, waken the men who had been sleeping there, some of them for sixteen years.

After being thus left alone, he went in and stretched himself on three chairs that were in the room, when what does he see coming in at the door but a little fair-haired lad.

‘Where did you come from, my lad?’ said the Irishman.

‘I came to make ready your food for you,’ said he.

‘Who told you to do that?’ said the Irishman.

‘My mistress,’ answered the lad— ‘the Princess that was under the spell and is now free.’

By this the Irishman knew that she had sent the lad to wait on him. The lad also told him that his mistress wished him to be ready next morning at nine o’clock, when she would come for him with the carriage, as she had promised. He was greatly pleased at this, and next morning, when the time was drawing near, went out into the garden; but the little fair-haired lad took a big pin out of his pocket, and stuck it into the back of the Irishman’s coat without his noticing it, whereupon he fell sound asleep.

Before long the Princess came with the carriage and four horses, and asked the lad whether his master was awake. He said that he wasn’t. ‘It is bad for him,’ said she, ‘when the night is not long enough for him to sleep. Tell him that if he doesn’t meet me at this time to-morrow it is not likely that he will ever see me again all his life.’

As soon as she was gone the fair-haired lad took the pin out of his master’s coat, who instantly awoke. The first word he said to the lad was, ‘Have you seen her?’

‘Yes,’ said he, ‘and she bade me tell you that if you don’t meet her at nine o’clock to-morrow you will never see her again.’

He was very sorry when he heard this, and could not understand why the sleep should have fallen upon him just when she was coming. He decided, however, to go early to bed that night, in order to rise in time next morning, and so he did. When it was getting near nine o’clock he went out to the garden to wait till she came, and the fair-haired lad along with him; but as soon as the lad got the chance he stuck the pin into his master’s coat again and he fell asleep as before. Precisely at nine o’clock came the Princess in the carriage with four horses, and asked the lad if his master had got up yet; but he said ‘No, he was asleep, just as he was the day before.’ ‘Dear! dear!’ said the Princess, ‘I am sorry for him. Was the sleep he had last night not enough for him? Tell him that he will never see me here again; and here is a sword that you will give him in my name, and my blessing along with it.’

With this she went off, and as soon as she had gone the lad took the pin out of his master’s coat. He awoke instantly, and the first word he said was, ‘Have you seen her?’ The lad said that he had, and there was the sword she had left for him. The Irishman was ready to kill the lad out of sheer vexation, but when he gave a glance over his shoulder not a trace of the fair-haired lad was left.

Being thus left all alone, he thought of going into the room where all the men were lying asleep, and there among the rest he found his two comrades who had deserted along with him. Then he remembered what the Princess had told him — that he had only to touch them with the rod she had given him and they would all awake; and the first he touched were his own comrades. They started to their feet at once, and he gave them as much silver and gold as they could carry when they went away. There was plenty to do before he got all the others wakened, for the two doors of the castle were crowded with them all the day long.

The loss of the Princess, however, kept rankling in his mind day and night, till finally he thought he would go about the world to see if he could find anyone to give him news of her. So he took the best horse in the stable and set out. Three years he spent travelling through forests and wildernesses, but could find no one able to tell him anything of the Princess. At last he fell into so great despair that he thought he would put an end to his own life, and for this purpose laid hold of the sword that she had given him by the hands of the fair-haired lad; but on drawing it from its sheath he noticed that there was some writing on one side of the blade. He looked at this, and read there, ‘You will find me in the Blue Mountains.’ This made him take heart again, and he gave up the idea of killing himself, thinking that he would go on in hope of meeting some one who could tell him where the Blue Mountains were. After he had gone a long way without thinking where he was going, he saw at last a light far away, and made straight for it. On reaching it he found it came from a little house, and as soon as the man inside heard the noise of the horse’s feet he came out to see who was there. Seeing a stranger on horseback, he asked what brought him there and where he was going.

‘I have lived here,’ said he, ‘for three hundred years, and all that time I have not seen a single human being but yourself.’

‘I have been going about for the last three years,’ said the Irishman, ‘to see if I could find anyone who can tell me where the Blue Mountains are.’

‘Come in,’ said the old man, ‘and stay with me all night. I have a book which contains the history of the world, which I shall go through to-night, and if there is such a place as the Blue Mountains in it we shall find it out.’

The Irishman stayed there all night, and as soon as morning came rose to go. The old man said he had not gone to sleep all night for going through the book, but there was not a word about the Blue Mountains in it. ‘But I’ll tell you what,’ he said, ‘if there is such a place on earth at all, I have a brother who lives nine hundred miles from here, and he is sure to know where they are, if anyone in this world does.’ The Irishman answered that he could never go these nine hundred miles, for his horse was giving in already. ‘That doesn’t matter,’ said the old man; ‘I can do better than that. I have only to blow my whistle and you will be at my brother’s house before nightfall.’

So he blew the whistle, and the Irishman did not know where on earth he was until he found himself at the other old man’s door, who also told him that it was three hundred years since he had seen anyone, and asked him where he was going.

‘I am going to see if I can find anyone that can tell me where the Blue Mountains are,’ he said.

‘If you will stay with me to-night,’ said the old man, ‘I have a book of the history of the world, and I shall know where they are before daylight, if there is such a place in it at all.’

He stayed there all night, but there was not a word in the book about the Blue Mountains. Seeing that he was rather cast down, the old man told him that he had a brother nine hundred miles away, and that if information could be got about them from anyone it would be from him; ‘and I will enable you,’ he said, ‘to reach the place where he lives before night.’ So he blew his whistle, and the Irishman landed at the brother’s house before nightfall. When the old man saw him he said he had not seen a single man for three hundred years, and was very much surprised to see anyone come to him now.

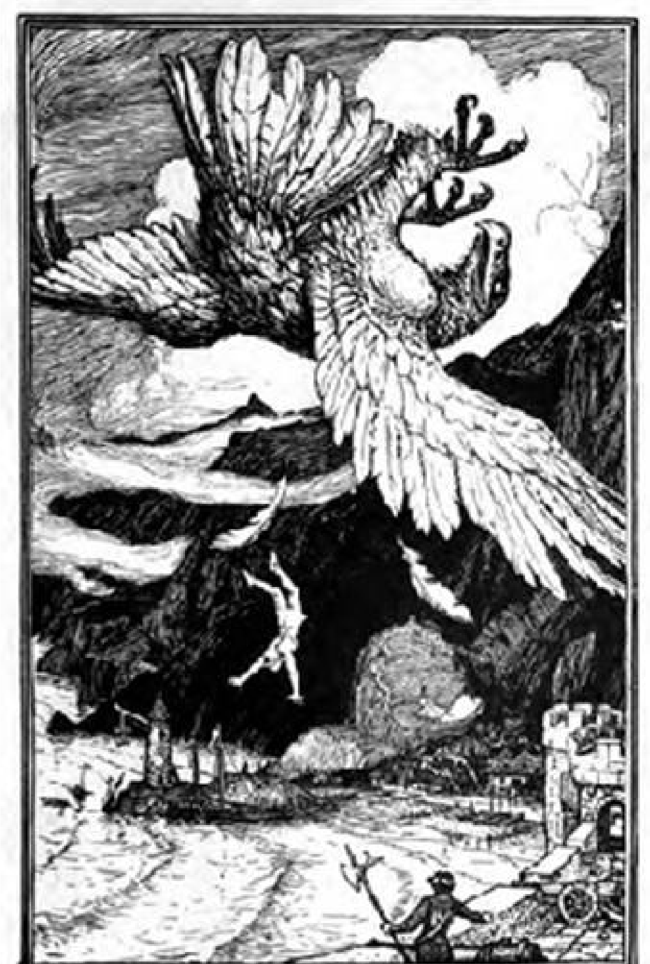

The Irishman arrives at the Blue Mountains

‘Where are you going to?’ he said.

‘I am going about asking for the Blue Mountains,’ said the Irishman.

‘The Blue Mountains?’ said the old man.

‘Yes,’ said the Irishman.

‘I never heard the name before; but if they do exist I shall find them out. I am master of all the birds in the world, and have only to blow my whistle and every one will come to me. I shall then ask each of them to tell where it came from, and if there is any way of finding out the Blue Mountains that is it.’

So he blew his whistle, and when he blew it then all the birds of the world began to gather. The old man questioned each of them as to where they had come from, but there was not one of them that had come from the Blue Mountains. After he had run over them all, however, he missed a big Eagle that was wanting, and wondered that it had not come. Soon afterwards he saw something big coming towards him, darkening the sky. It kept coming nearer and growing bigger, and what was this after all but the Eagle? When she arrived the old man scolded her, and asked what had kept her so long behind.

‘I couldn’t help it,’ she said; ‘I had more than twenty times further to come than any bird that has come here to-day.’

‘Where have you come from, then?’ said the old man.

‘From the Blue Mountains,’ said she.

‘Indeed!’ said the old man; ‘and what are they doing there?’

‘They are making ready this very day,’ said the Eagle, ‘for the marriage of the daughter of the King of the Blue Mountains. For three years now she has refused to marry anyone whatsoever, until she should give up all hope of the coming of the man who released her from the spell. Now she can wait no longer, for three years is the time that she agreed with her father to remain without marrying.’

The Irishman knew that it was for himself she had been waiting so long, but he was unable to make any better of it, for he had no hope of reaching the Blue Mountains all his life. The old man noticed how sad he grew, and asked the Eagle what she would take for carrying this man on her back to the Blue Mountains.

‘I must have threescore cattle killed,’ said she, ‘and cut up into quarters, and every time I look over my shoulder he must throw one of them into my mouth.’

As soon as the Irishman and the old man heard her demand they went out hunting, and before evening they had killed threescore cattle. They made quarters of them, as the Eagle told them, and then the old man asked her to lie down, till they would get it all heaped up on her back. First of all, though, they had to get a ladder of fourteen steps, to enable them to get on to the Eagle’s back, and there they piled up the meat as well as they could. Then the old man told the Irishman to mount, and to remember to throw a quarter of beef to her every time she looked round. He went up, and the old man gave the Eagle the word to be off, which she instantly obeyed; and every time she turned her head the Irishman threw a quarter of beef into her mouth.

As they came near the borders of the kingdom of the Blue Mountains, however, the beef was done, and, when the Eagle looked over her shoulder, what was the Irishman at but throwing the stone between her tail and her neck! At this she turned a complete somersault, and threw the Irishman off into the sea, where he fell into the bay that was right in front of the King’s Palace. Fortunately the points of his toes just touched the bottom, and he managed to get ashore.

When he went up into the town all the streets were gleaming with light, and the wedding of the Princess was just about to begin. He went into the first house he came to, and this happened to be the house of the King’s hen-wife. He asked the old woman what was causing all the noise and light in the town.

‘The Princess,’ said she, ‘is going to be married to-night against her will, for she has been expecting every day that the man who freed her from the spell would come.’

‘There is a guinea for you,’ said he; ‘go and bring her here.’

The old woman went, and soon returned along with the Princess. She and the Irishman recognised each other, and were married, and had a great wedding that lasted for a year and a day.

THE TINDER-BOX

A Soldier came marching along the high road — left, right! left, right! He had his knapsack on his back and a sword by his side, for he had been to the wars and was now returning home.

An old Witch met him on the road. She was very ugly to look at: her under-lip hung down to her breast.

‘Good evening, Soldier!’ she said. ‘What a fine sword and knapsack you have! You are something like a soldier! You ought to have as much money as you would like to carry!’

‘Thank you, old Witch,’ said the Soldier.

‘Do you see that great tree there?’ said the Witch, pointing to a tree beside them. ‘It is hollow within. You must climb up to the top, and then you will see a hole through which you can let yourself down into the tree. I will tie a rope round your waist, so that I may be able to pull you up again when you call.’

‘What shall I do down there?’ asked the Soldier.

‘Get money!’ answered the Witch. ‘Listen! When you reach the bottom of the tree you will find yourself in a large hall; it is light there, for there are more than three hundred lamps burning. Then you will see three doors, which you can open — the keys are in the locks. If you go into the first room, you will see a great chest in the middle of the floor with a dog sitting upon it; he has eyes as large as saucers, but you needn’t trouble about him. I will give you my blue-check apron, which you must spread out on the floor, and then go back quickly and fetch the dog and set him upon it; open the chest and take as much money as you like. It is copper there. If you would rather have silver, you must go into the next room, where there is a dog with eyes as large as mill-wheels. But don’t take any notice of him; just set him upon my apron, and help yourself to the money. If you prefer gold, you can get that too, if you go into the third room, and as much as you like to carry. But the dog that guards the chest there has eyes as large as the Round Tower at Copenhagen! He is a savage dog, I can tell you; but you needn’t be afraid of him either. Only, put him on my apron and he won’t touch you, and you can take out of the chest as much gold as you like!’

‘Come, this is not bad!’ said the Soldier. ‘But what am I to give you, old Witch; for surely you are not going to do this for nothing?’

‘Yes, I am!’ replied the Witch. ‘Not a single farthing will I take! For me you shall bring nothing but an old tinder-box which my grandmother forgot last time she was down there.’

‘Well, tie the rope round my waist!’ said the Soldier.

‘Here it is,’ said the Witch, ‘and here is my blue-check apron.’

Then the Soldier climbed up the tree, let himself down through the hole, and found himself standing, as the Witch had said, underground in the large hall, where the three hundred lamps were burning.

Well, he opened the first door. Ugh! there sat the dog with eyes as big as saucers glaring at him.

‘You are a fine fellow!’ said the Soldier, and put him on the Witch’s apron, took as much copper as his pockets could hold; then he shut the chest, put the dog on it again, and went into the second room. Sure enough there sat the dog with eyes as large as mill-wheels.

‘You had better not look at me so hard!’ said the Soldier. ‘Your eyes will come out of their sockets!’

And then he set the dog on the apron. When he saw all the silver in the chest, he threw away the copper he had taken, and filled his pockets and knapsack with nothing but silver.

Then he went into the third room. Horrors! the dog there had two eyes, each as large as the Round Tower at Copenhagen, spinning round in his head like wheels.

‘Good evening!’ said the Soldier and saluted, for he had never seen a dog like this before. But when he had examined him more closely, he thought to himself: ‘Now then, I’ve had enough of this!’ and put him down on the floor, and opened the chest. Heavens! what a heap of gold there was! With all that he could buy up the whole town, and all the sugar pigs, all the tin soldiers, whips and rocking-horses in the whole world. Now he threw away all the silver with which he had filled his pockets and knapsack, and filled them with gold instead — yes, all his pockets, his knapsack, cap and boots even, so that he could hardly walk. Now he was rich indeed. He put the dog back upon the chest, shut the door, and then called up through the tree:

‘Now pull me up again, old Witch!’

‘Have you got the tinder-box also?’ asked the Witch.

‘Botheration!’ said the Soldier, ‘I had clean forgotten it!’ And then he went back and fetched it.

The Witch pulled him up, and there he stood again on the high road, with pockets, knapsack, cap and boots filled with gold.

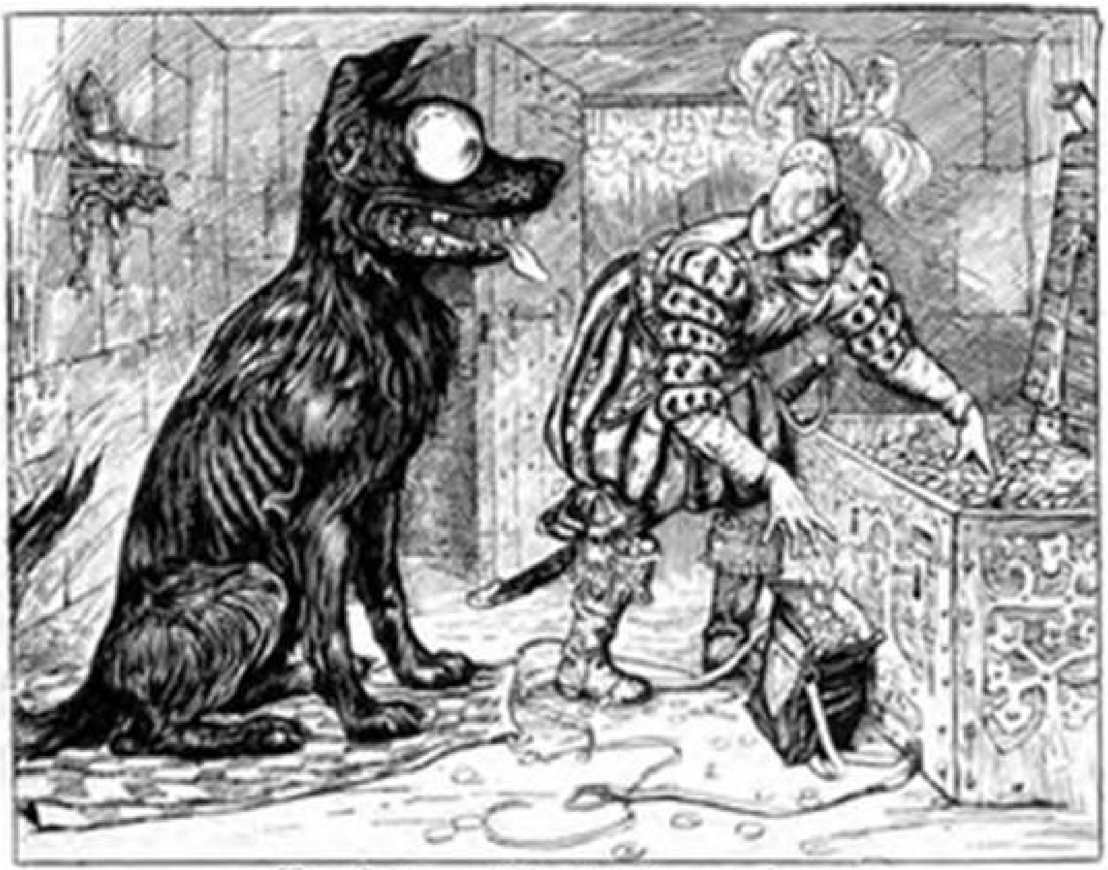

The Soldier fills his Knapsack with Money

‘What do you want to do with the tinder-box?’ asked the Soldier.

‘That doesn’t matter to you,’ replied the Witch. ‘You have got your money, give me my tinder-box.’

‘We’ll see!’ said the Soldier. ‘Tell me at once what you want to do with it, or I will draw my sword, and cut off your head!’

‘No!’ screamed the Witch.

The Soldier immediately cut off her head. That was the end of her! But he tied up all his gold in her apron, slung it like a bundle over his shoulder, put the tinder-box in his pocket, and set out towards the town.

It was a splendid town! He turned into the finest inn, ordered the best chamber and his favourite dinner; for now that he had so much money he was really rich.

It certainly occurred to the servant who had to clean his boots that they were astonishingly old boots for such a rich lord. But that was because he had not yet bought new ones; next day he appeared in respectable boots and fine clothes. Now, instead of a common soldier he had become a noble lord, and the people told him about all the grand doings of the town and the King, and what a beautiful Princess his daughter was.

‘How can one get to see her?’ asked the Soldier.

‘She is never to be seen at all!’ they told him; ‘she lives in a great copper castle, surrounded by many walls and towers! No one except the King may go in or out, for it is prophesied that she will marry a common soldier, and the King cannot submit to that.’

‘I should very much like to see her,’ thought the Soldier; but he could not get permission.

Now he lived very gaily, went to the theatre, drove in the King’s garden, and gave the poor a great deal of money, which was very nice of him; he had experienced in former times how hard it is not to have a farthing in the world. Now he was rich, wore fine clothes, and made many friends, who all said that he was an excellent man, a real nobleman. And the Soldier liked that. But as he was always spending money, and never made any more, at last the day came when he had nothing left but two shillings, and he had to leave the beautiful rooms in which he had been living, and go into a little attic under the roof, and clean his own boots, and mend them with a darning-needle. None of his friends came to visit him there, for there were too many stairs to climb.

It was a dark evening, and he could not even buy a light. But all at once it flashed across him that there was a little end of tinder in the tinder-box, which he had taken from the hollow tree into which the Witch had helped him down. He found the box with the tinder in it; but just as he was kindling a light, and had struck a spark out of the tinder-box, the door burst open, and the dog with eyes as large as saucers, which he had seen down in the tree, stood before him and said:

‘What does my lord command?’

‘What’s the meaning of this?’ exclaimed the Soldier. ‘This is a pretty kind of tinder-box, if I can get whatever I want like this. Get me money!’ he cried to the dog, and hey, presto! he was off and back again, holding a great purse full of money in his mouth.

Now the Soldier knew what a capital tinder-box this was. If he rubbed once, the dog that sat on the chest of copper appeared; if he rubbed twice, there came the dog that watched over the silver chest; and if he rubbed three times, the one that guarded the gold appeared. Now, the Soldier went down again to his beautiful rooms, and appeared once more in splendid clothes. All his friends immediately recognised him again, and paid him great court.

One day he thought to himself: ‘It is very strange that no one can get to see the Princess. They all say she is very pretty, but what’s the use of that if she has to sit for ever in the great copper castle with all the towers? Can I not manage to see her somehow? Where is my tinder-box?’ and so he struck a spark, and, presto! there came the dog with eyes as large as saucers.

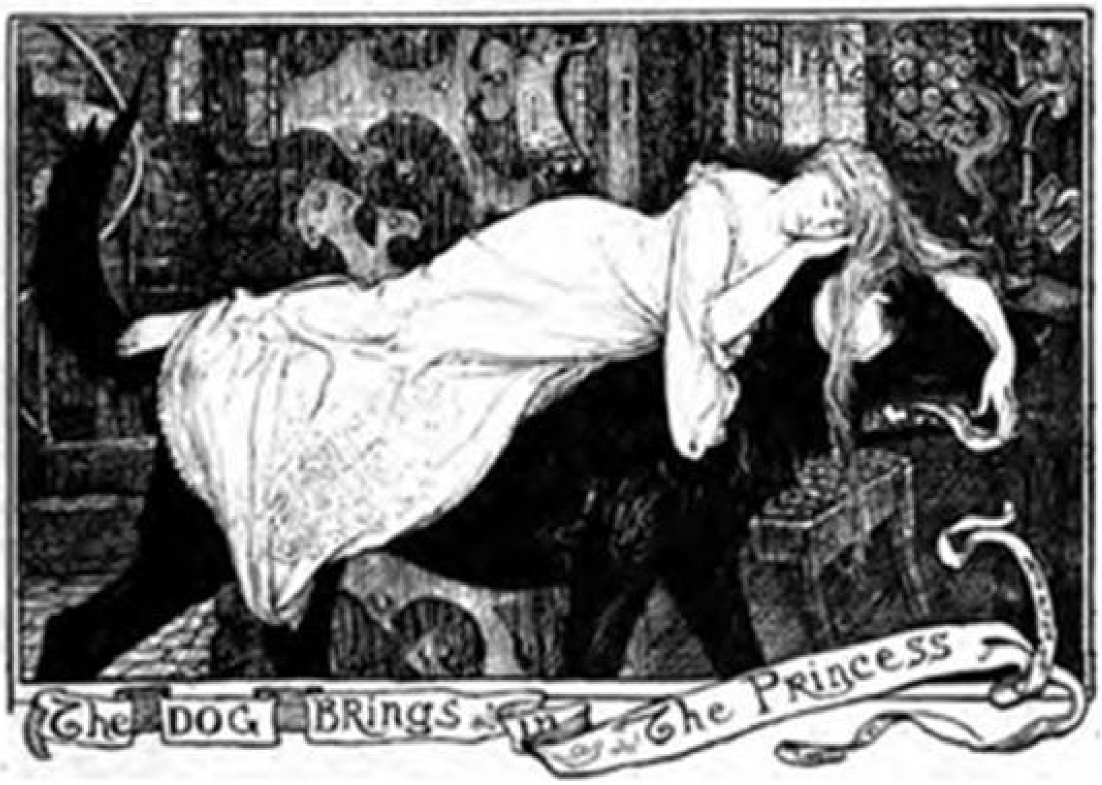
The DOG BRings in The PRincess

‘It is the middle of the night, I know,’ said the Soldier; ‘but I should very much like to see the Princess for a moment.’

The dog was already outside the door, and before the Soldier could look round, in he came with the Princess. She was lying asleep on the dog’s back, and was so beautiful that anyone could see she was a real Princess. The Soldier really could not refrain from kissing her — he was such a thorough Soldier. Then the dog ran back with the Princess. But when it was morning, and the King and Queen were drinking tea, the Princess said that the night before she had had such a strange dream about a dog and a Soldier: she had ridden on the dog’s back, and the Soldier had kissed her.

‘That is certainly a fine story,’ said the Queen. But the next night one of the ladies-in-waiting was to watch at the Princess’s bed, to see if it was only a dream, or if it had actually happened.

The Soldier had an overpowering longing to see the Princess again, and so the dog came in the middle of the night and fetched her, running as fast as he could. But the lady-in-waiting slipped on indiarubber shoes and followed them. When she saw them disappear into a large house, she thought to herself: ‘Now I know where it is;’ and made a great cross on the door with a piece of chalk. Then she went home and lay down, and the dog came back also, with the Princess. But when he saw that a cross had been made on the door of the house where the Soldier lived, he took a piece of chalk also, and made crosses on all the doors in the town; and that was very clever, for now the lady-in-waiting could not find the right house, as there were crosses on all the doors.

Early next morning the King, Queen, ladies-in-waiting, and officers came out to see where the Princess had been.

‘There it is!’ said the King, when he saw the first door with a cross on it.

‘No, there it is, my dear!’ said the Queen, when she likewise saw a door with a cross.

‘But here is one, and there is another!’ they all exclaimed; wherever they looked there was a cross on the door. Then they realised that the sign would not help them at all.

But the Queen was an extremely clever woman, who could do a great deal more than just drive in a coach. She took her great golden scissors, cut up a piece of silk, and made a pretty little bag of it. This she filled with the finest buckwheat grains, and tied it round the Princess’ neck; this done, she cut a little hole in the bag, so that the grains would strew the whole road wherever the Princess went.

In the night the dog came again, took the Princess on his back and ran away with her to the Soldier, who was very much in love with her, and would have liked to have been a Prince, so that he might have had her for his wife.

The dog did not notice how the grains were strewn right from the castle to the Soldier’s window, where he ran up the wall with the Princess.

In the morning the King and the Queen saw plainly where their daughter had been, and they took the Soldier and put him into prison.

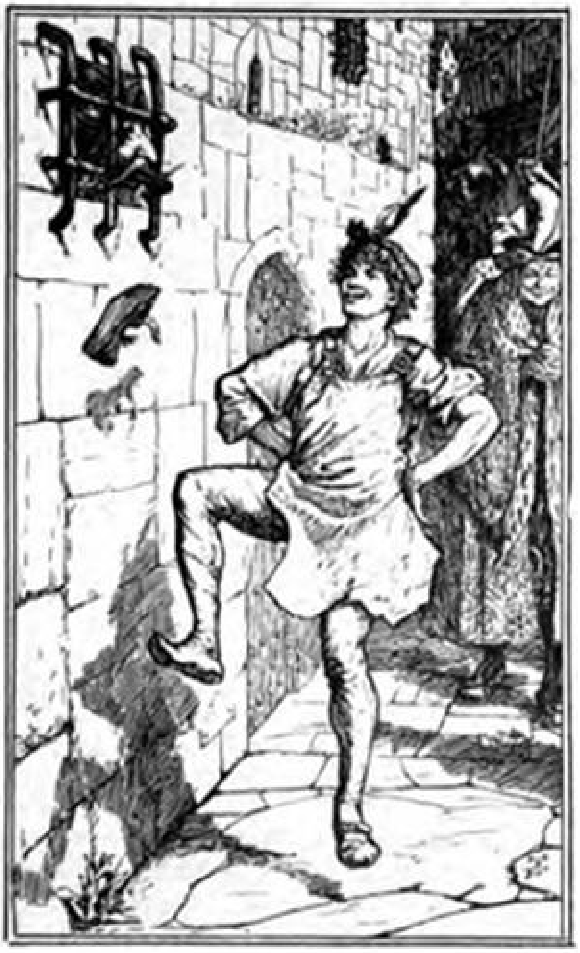

‘He was skipping along so merrily’

There he sat. Oh, how dark and dull it was there! And they told him: ‘To-morrow you are to be hanged.’ Hearing that did not exactly cheer him, and he had left his tinder-box in the inn.

Next morning he could see through the iron grating in front of his little window how the people were hurrying out of the town to see him hanged. He heard the drums and saw the soldiers marching; all the people were running to and fro. Just below his window was a shoemaker’s apprentice, with leather apron and shoes; he was skipping along so merrily that one of his shoes flew off and fell against the wall, just where the Soldier was sitting peeping through the iron grating.

‘Oh, shoemaker’s boy, you needn’t be in such a hurry!’ said the Soldier to him. ‘There’s nothing going on till I arrive. But if you will run back to the house where I lived, and fetch me my tinder-box, I will give you four shillings. But you must put your best foot foremost.’

The shoemaker’s boy was very willing to earn four shillings, and fetched the tinder-box, gave it to the Soldier, and — yes — now you shall hear.

Outside the town a great scaffold had been erected, and all round were standing the soldiers, and hundreds of thousands of people. The King and Queen were sitting on a magnificent throne opposite the judges and the whole council.

The Soldier was already standing on the top of the ladder; but when they wanted to put the rope round his neck, he said that the fulfilment of one innocent request was always granted to a poor criminal before he underwent his punishment. He would so much like to smoke a small pipe of tobacco; it would be his last pipe in this world.

The King could not refuse him this, and so he took out his tinder-box, and rubbed it once, twice, three times. And lo, and behold! there stood all three dogs — the one with eyes as large as saucers, the second with eyes as large as mill-wheels, and the third with eyes each as large as the Round Tower of Copenhagen.

‘Help me now, so that I may not be hanged!’ cried the Soldier. And thereupon the dogs fell upon the judges and the whole council, seized some by the legs, others by the nose, and threw them so high into the air that they fell and were smashed into pieces.

‘I won’t stand this!’ said the King; but the largest dog seized him too, and the Queen as well, and threw them up after the others. This frightened the soldiers, and all the people cried: ‘Good Soldier, you shall be our King, and marry the beautiful Princess!’

Then they put the Soldier into the King’s coach, and the three dogs danced in front, crying ‘Hurrah!’ And the boys whistled and the soldiers presented arms.

The Princess came out of the copper castle, and became Queen; and that pleased her very much.

The wedding festivities lasted for eight days, and the dogs sat at table and made eyes at everyone.

THE WITCH IN THE STONE BOAT

There were once a King and a Queen, and they had a son called Sigurd, who was very strong and active, and good-looking. When the King came to be bowed down with the weight of years he spoke to his son, and said that now it was time for him to look out for a fitting match for himself, for he did not know how long he might last now, and he would like to see him married before he died.

Sigurd was not averse to this, and asked his father where he thought it best to look for a wife. The King answered that in a certain country there was a King who had a beautiful daughter, and he thought it would be most desirable if Sigurd could get her. So the two parted, and Sigurd prepared for the journey, and went to where his father had directed him.

He came to the King and asked his daughter’s hand, which he readily granted him, but only on the condition that he should remain there as long as he could, for the King himself was not strong and not very able to govern his kingdom. Sigurd accepted this condition, but added that he would have to get leave to go home again to his own country when he heard news of his father’s death. After that Sigurd married the Princess, and helped his father-in-law to govern the kingdom. He and the Princess loved each other dearly, and after a year a son came to them, who was two years old when word came to Sigurd that his father was dead. Sigurd now prepared to return home with his wife and child, and went on board ship to go by sea.

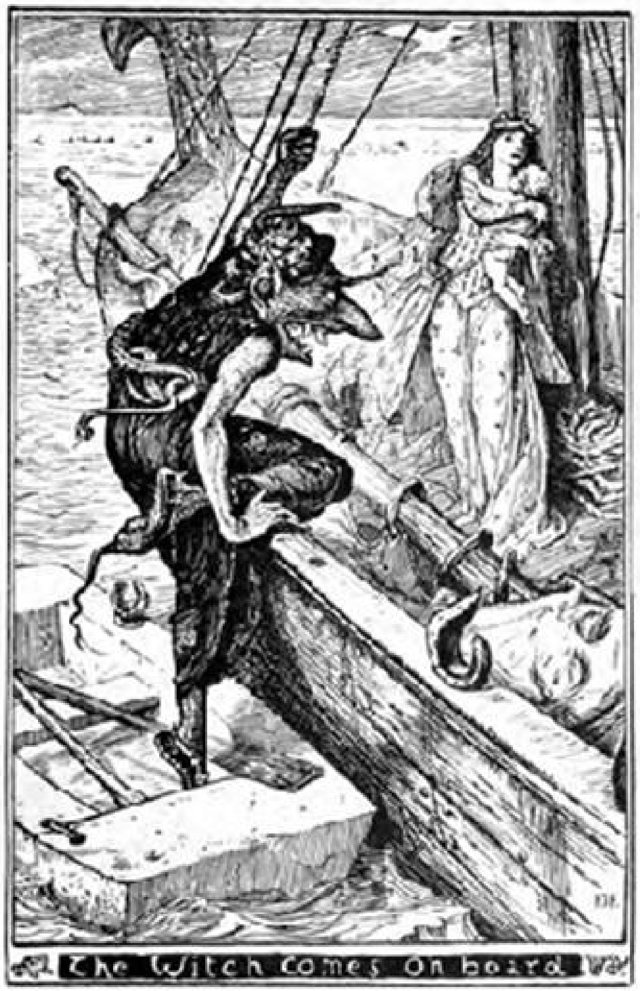

The Witch comes on board

They had sailed for several days, when the breeze suddenly fell, and there came a dead calm, at a time when they needed only one day’s voyage to reach home. Sigurd and his Queen were one day on deck, when most of the others on the ship had fallen asleep. There they sat and talked for a while, and had their little son along with them. After a time Sigurd became so heavy with sleep that he could no longer keep awake, so he went below and lay down, leaving the Queen alone on the deck, playing with her son.

A good while after Sigurd had gone below the Queen saw something black on the sea, which seemed to be coming nearer. As it approached she could make out that it was a boat, and could see the figure of someone sitting in it and rowing it. At last the boat came alongside the ship, and now the Queen saw that it was a stone boat, out of which there came up on board the ship a fearfully ugly Witch. The Queen was more frightened than words can describe, and could neither speak a word nor move from the place so as to awaken the King or the sailors. The Witch came right up to the Queen, took the child from her and laid it on the deck; then she took the Queen, and stripped her of all her fine clothes, which she proceeded to put on herself, and looked then like a human being. Last of all she took the Queen, put her into the boat, and said —

‘This spell I lay upon you, that you slacken not your course until you come to my brother in the Under-world.’

The Queen sat stunned and motionless, but the boat at once shot away from the ship with her, and before long she was out of sight.

When the boat could no longer be seen the child began to cry, and though the Witch tried to quiet it she could not manage it; so she went below to where the King was sleeping with the child on her arm, and awakened him, scolding him for leaving them alone on deck, while he and all the crew were asleep. It was great carelessness of him, she said, to leave no one to watch the ship with her.

Sigurd was greatly surprised to hear his Queen scold him so much, for she had never said an angry word to him before; but he thought it was quite excusable in this case, and tried to quiet the child along with her, but it was no use. Then he went and wakened the sailors, and bade them hoist the sails, for a breeze had sprung up and was blowing straight towards the harbour.

They soon reached the land which Sigurd was to rule over, and found all the people sorrowful for the old King’s death, but they became glad when they got Sigurd back to the Court, and made him King over them.

The King’s son, however, hardly ever stopped crying from the time he had been taken from his mother on the deck of the ship, although he had always been such a good child before, so that at last the King had to get a nurse for him — one of the maids of the Court. As soon as the child got into her charge he stopped crying, and behaved well as before.

After the sea-voyage it seemed to the King that the Queen had altered very much in many ways, and not for the better. He thought her much more haughty and stubborn and difficult to deal with than she used to be. Before long others began to notice this as well as the King. In the Court there were two young fellows, one of eighteen years old, the other of nineteen, who were very fond of playing chess, and often sat long inside playing at it. Their room was next the Queen’s, and often during the day they heard the Queen talking.

One day they paid more attention than usual when they heard her talk, and put their ears close to a crack in the wall between the rooms, and heard the Queen say quite plainly, ‘When I yawn a little, then I am a nice little maiden; when I yawn half-way, then I am half a troll; and when I yawn fully, then I am a troll altogether.’

As she said this she yawned tremendously, and in a moment had put on the appearance of a fearfully ugly troll. Then there came up through the floor of the room a three-headed Giant with a trough full of meat, who saluted her as his sister and set down the trough before her. She began to eat out of it, and never stopped till she had finished it. The young fellows saw all this going on, but did not hear the two of them say anything to each other. They were astonished though at how greedily the Queen devoured the meat, and how much she ate of it, and were no longer surprised that she took so little when she sat at table with the King. As soon as she had finished it the Giant disappeared with the trough by the same way as he had come, and the Queen returned to her human shape.

Now we must go back to the King’s son after he had been put in charge of the nurse. One evening, after she had lit a candle and was holding the child, several planks sprang up in the floor of the room, and out at the opening came a beautiful woman dressed in white, with an iron belt round her waist, to which was fastened an iron chain that went down into the ground. The woman came up to the nurse, took the child from her, and pressed it to her breast; then she gave it back to the nurse and returned by the same way as she had come, and the floor closed over her again. Although the woman had not spoken a single word to her, the nurse was very much frightened, but told no one about it.

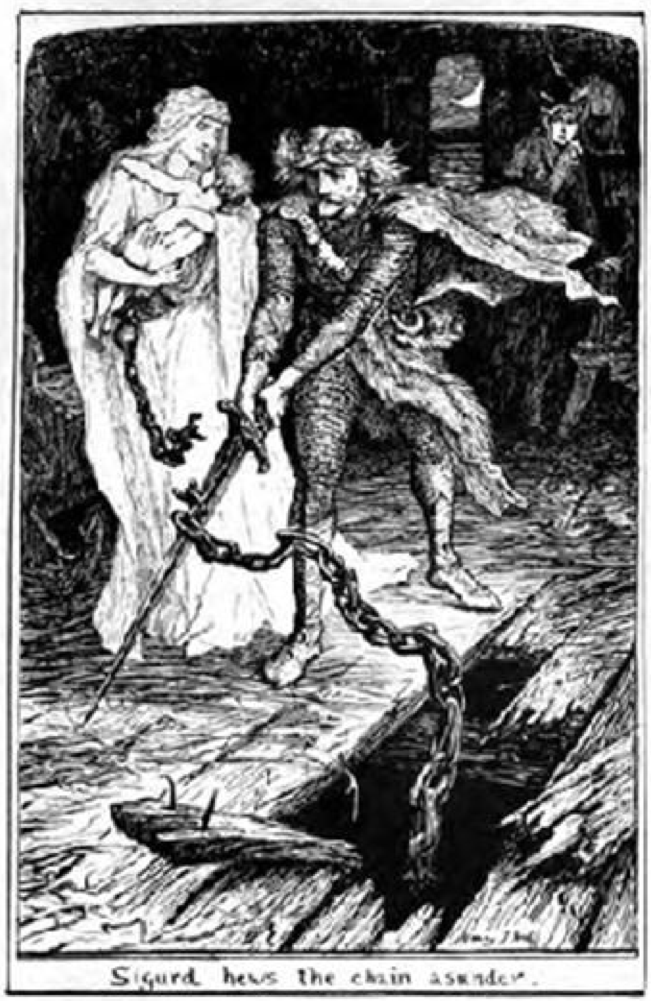

Sigurd hews the chain asunder.

Next evening the same thing happened again, just as before, but as the woman was going away she said in a sad tone, ‘Two are gone, and one only is left,’ and then disappeared as before. The nurse was still more frightened when she heard the woman say this, and thought that perhaps some danger was hanging over the child, though she had no ill-opinion of the unknown woman, who, indeed, had behaved towards the child as if it were her own. The most mysterious thing was the woman saying ‘and only one is left;’ but the nurse guessed that this must mean that only one day was left, since she had come for two days already.

At last the nurse made up her mind to go to the King, and told him the whole story, and asked him to be present in person next day about the time when the woman usually came. The King promised to do so, and came to the nurse’s room a little before the time, and sat down on a chair with his drawn sword in his hand. Soon after the planks in the floor sprang up as before, and the woman came up, dressed in white, with the iron belt and chain. The King saw at once that it was his own Queen, and immediately hewed asunder the iron chain that was fastened to the belt. This was followed by such noises and crashings down in the earth that all the King’s Palace shook, so that no one expected anything else than to see every bit of it shaken to pieces. At last, however, the noises and shaking stopped, and they began to come to themselves again.

The King and Queen embraced each other, and she told him the whole story — how the Witch came to the ship when they were all asleep and sent her off in the boat. After she had gone so far that she could not see the ship, she sailed on through darkness until she landed beside a three-headed Giant. The Giant wished her to marry him, but she refused; whereupon he shut her up by herself, and told her she would never get free until she consented. After a time she began to plan how to get her freedom, and at last told him that she would consent if he would allow her to visit her son on earth three days on end. This he agreed to, but put on her this iron belt and chain, the other end of which he fastened round his own waist, and the great noises that were heard when the King cut the chain must have been caused by the Giant’s falling down the underground passage when the chain gave way so suddenly. The Giant’s dwelling, indeed, was right under the Palace, and the terrible shakings must have been caused by him in his death-throes.

The King now understood how the Queen he had had for some time past had been so ill-tempered. He at once had a sack drawn over her head and made her be stoned to death, and after that torn in pieces by untamed horses. The two young fellows also told now what they had heard and seen in the Queen’s room, for before this they had been afraid to say anything about it, on account of the Queen’s power.

The real Queen was now restored to all her dignity, and was beloved by all. The nurse was married to a nobleman, and the King and Queen gave her splendid presents.

THUMBELINA

There was once a woman who wanted to have quite a tiny, little child, but she did not know where to get one from. So one day she went to an old Witch and said to her: ‘I should so much like to have a tiny, little child; can you tell me where I can get one?’

‘Oh, we have just got one ready!’ said the Witch. ‘Here is a barley-corn for you, but it’s not the kind the farmer sows in his field, or feeds the cocks and hens with, I can tell you. Put it in a flower-pot, and then you will see something happen.’

‘Oh, thank you!’ said the woman, and gave the Witch a shilling, for that was what it cost. Then she went home and planted the barley-corn; immediately there grew out of it a large and beautiful flower, which looked like a tulip, but the petals were tightly closed as if it were still only a bud.

‘What a beautiful flower!’ exclaimed the woman, and she kissed the red and yellow petals; but as she kissed them the flower burst open. It was a real tulip, such as one can see any day; but in the middle of the blossom, on the green velvety petals, sat a little girl, quite tiny, trim, and pretty. She was scarcely half a thumb in height; so they called her Thumbelina. An elegant polished walnut-shell served Thumbelina as a cradle, the blue petals of a violet were her mattress, and a rose-leaf her coverlid. There she lay at night, but in the day-time she used to play about on the table; here the woman had put a bowl, surrounded by a ring of flowers, with their stalks in water, in the middle of which floated a great tulip petal, and on this Thumbelina sat, and sailed from one side of the bowl to the other, rowing herself with two white horse-hairs for oars. It was such a pretty sight! She could sing, too, with a voice more soft and sweet than had ever been heard before.

One night, when she was lying in her pretty little bed, an old toad crept in through a broken pane in the window. She was very ugly, clumsy, and clammy; she hopped on to the table where Thumbelina lay asleep under the red rose-leaf.

‘This would make a beautiful wife for my son,’ said the toad, taking up the walnut-shell, with Thumbelina inside, and hopping with it through the window into the garden.

There flowed a great wide stream, with slippery and marshy banks; here the toad lived with her son. Ugh! how ugly and clammy he was, just like his mother!

‘Croak, croak, croak!’ was all he could say when he saw the pretty little girl in the walnut-shell.

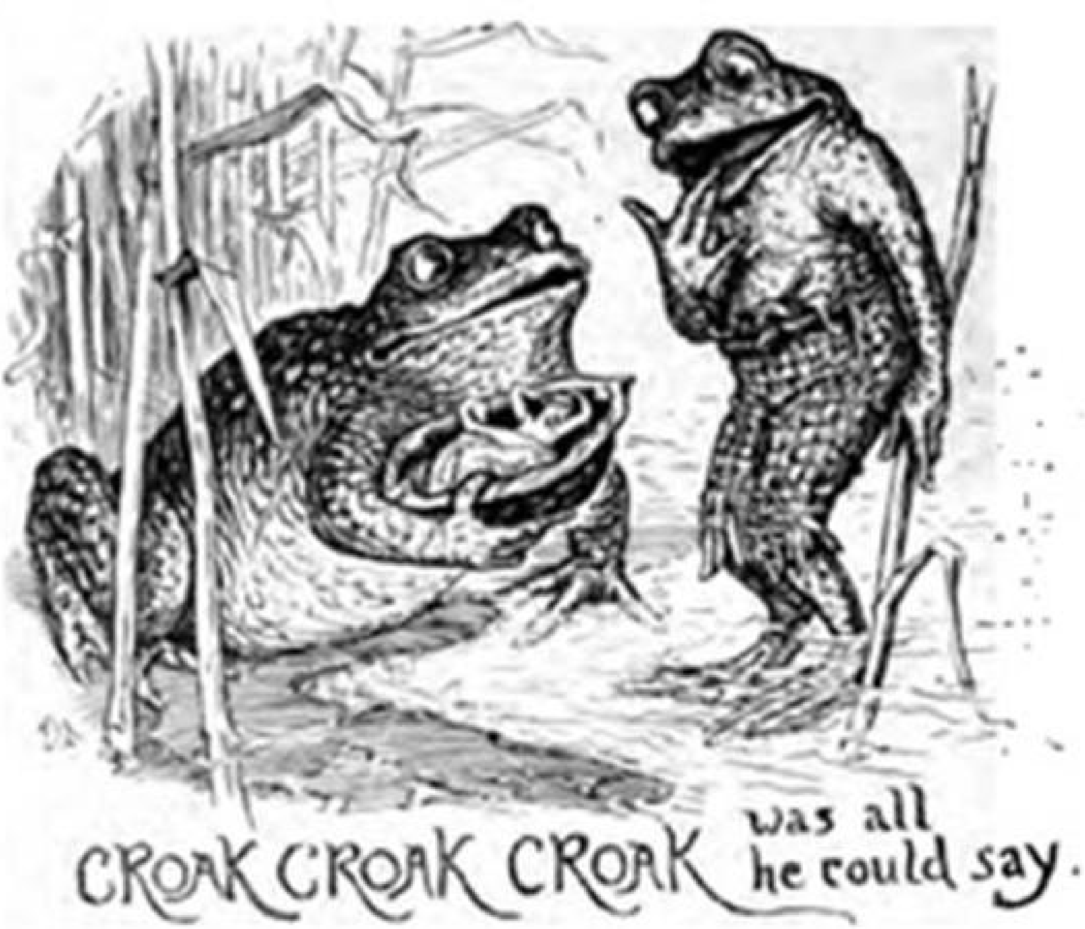
CROAK CROAK CROAK was all he could say.

‘Don’t talk so loud, or you’ll wake her,’ said the old toad. ‘She might escape us even now; she is as light as a feather. We will put her at once on a broad water-lily leaf in the stream. That will be quite an island for her; she is so small and light. She can’t run away from us there, whilst we are preparing the guest-chamber under the marsh where she shall live.’

Outside in the brook grew many water-lilies, with broad green leaves, which looked as if they were swimming about on the water. The leaf farthest away was the largest, and to this the old toad swam with Thumbelina in her walnut-shell.

The tiny Thumbelina woke up very early in the morning, and when she saw where she was she began to cry bitterly; for on every side of the great green leaf was water, and she could not get to the land.

The old toad was down under the marsh, decorating her room with rushes and yellow marigold leaves, to make it very grand for her new daughter-in-law; then she swam out with her ugly son to the leaf where Thumbelina lay. She wanted to fetch the pretty cradle to put it into her room before Thumbelina herself came there. The old toad bowed low in the water before her, and said: ‘Here is my son; you shall marry him, and live in great magnificence down under the marsh.’

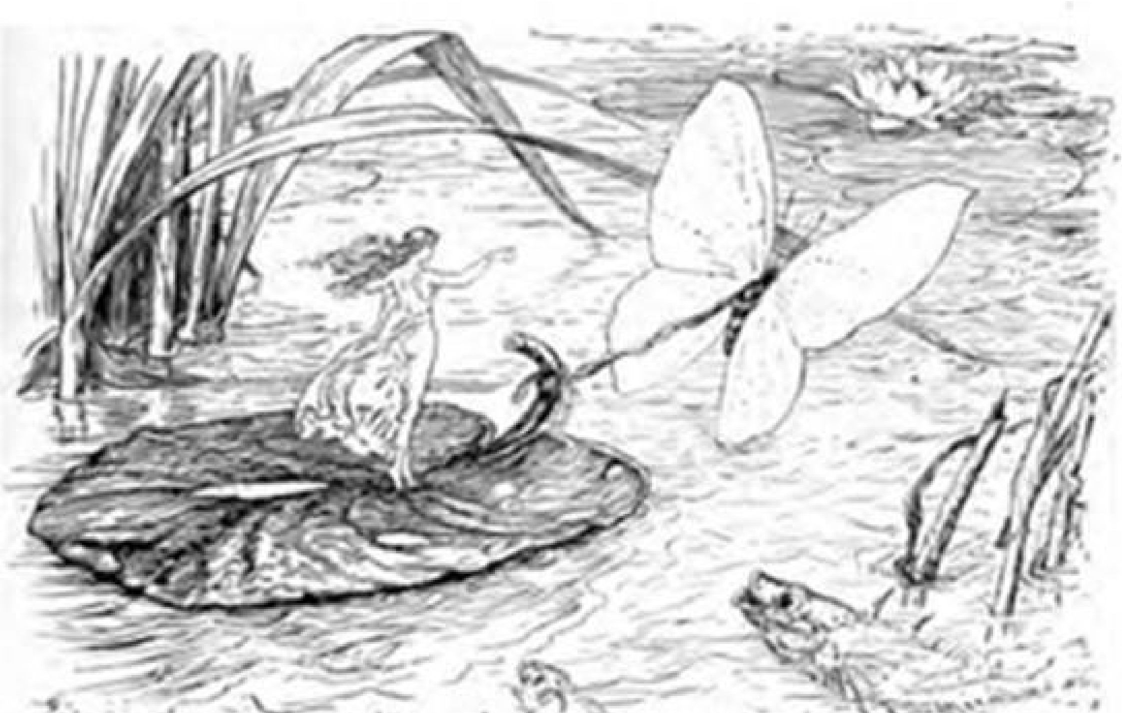

Thumbelina rides on the water lily-leaf

‘Croak, croak, croak!’ was all that the son could say. Then they took the neat little cradle and swam away with it; but Thumbelina sat alone on the great green leaf and wept, for she did not want to live with the clammy toad, or marry her ugly son. The little fishes swimming about under the water had seen the toad quite plainly, and heard what she had said; so they put up their heads to see the little girl. When they saw her, they thought her so pretty that they were very sorry she should go down with the ugly toad to live. No; that must not happen. They assembled in the water round the green stalk which supported the leaf on which she was sitting and nibbled the stem in two. Away floated the leaf down the stream, bearing Thumbelina far beyond the reach of the toad.

On she sailed past several towns, and the little birds sitting in the bushes saw her, and sang, ‘What a pretty little girl!’ The leaf floated farther and farther away; thus Thumbelina left her native land.

A beautiful little white butterfly fluttered above her, and at last settled on the leaf. Thumbelina pleased him, and she, too, was delighted, for now the toads could not reach her, and it was so beautiful where she was travelling; the sun shone on the water and made it sparkle like the brightest silver. She took off her sash, and tied one end round the butterfly; the other end she fastened to the leaf, so that now it glided along with her faster than ever.

A great cockchafer came flying past; he caught sight of Thumbelina, and in a moment had put his arms round her slender waist, and had flown off with her to a tree. The green leaf floated away down the stream, and the butterfly with it, for he was fastened to the leaf and could not get loose from it. Oh, dear! how terrified poor little Thumbelina was when the cockchafer flew off with her to the tree! But she was especially distressed on the beautiful white butterfly's account, as she had tied him fast, so that if he could not get away he must starve to death. But the cockchafer did not trouble himself about that; he sat down with her on a large green leaf, gave her the honey out of the flowers to eat, and told her that she was very pretty, although she wasn't in the least like a cockchafer. Later on, all the other cockchafers who lived in the same tree came to pay calls; they examined Thumbelina closely, and remarked, 'Why, she has only two legs! How very miserable!'

'She has no feelers!' cried another.

'How ugly she is!' said all the lady chafers — and yet Thumbelina was really very pretty.

The cockchafer who had stolen her knew this very well; but when he heard all the ladies saying she was ugly, he began to think so too, and would not keep her; she might go wherever she liked. So he flew down from the tree with her and put her on a daisy. There she sat and wept, because she was so ugly that the cockchafer would have nothing to do with her; and yet she was the most beautiful creature imaginable, so soft and delicate, like the loveliest rose-leaf.

The whole summer poor little Thumbelina lived alone in the great wood. She plaited a bed for herself of blades of grass, and hung it up under a clover-leaf, so that she was protected from the rain; she gathered honey from the flowers for food, and drank the dew on the leaves every morning. Thus the summer and autumn passed, but then came winter — the long, cold winter. All the birds who had sung so sweetly about her had flown away; the trees shed their leaves, the flowers died; the great clover-leaf under which she had lived curled up, and nothing remained of it but the withered stalk. She was terribly cold, for her clothes were ragged, and she herself was so small and thin. Poor little Thumbelina! she would surely be frozen to death. It began to snow, and every snow-flake that fell on her was to her as a whole shovelful thrown on one of us, for we are so big, and she was only an inch high. She wrapt herself round in a dead leaf, but it was torn in the middle and gave her no warmth; she was trembling with cold.

Just outside the wood where she was now living lay a great cornfield. But the corn had been gone a long time; only the dry, bare stubble was left standing in the frozen ground. This made a forest for her to wander about in. All at once she came across the door of a field-mouse, who had a little hole under a corn-stalk. There the mouse lived warm and snug, with a store-room full of corn, a splendid kitchen and dining-room. Poor little Thumbelina went up to the door and begged for a little piece of barley, for she had not had anything to eat for the last two days.

‘Poor little creature!’ said the field-mouse, for she was a kind-hearted old thing at the bottom. ‘Come into my warm room and have some dinner with me.’

As Thumbelina pleased her, she said: ‘As far as I am concerned you may spend the winter with me; but you must keep my room clean and tidy, and tell me stories, for I like that very much.’

And Thumbelina did all that the kind old field-mouse asked, and did it remarkably well too.

‘Now I am expecting a visitor,’ said the field-mouse; ‘my neighbour comes to call on me once a week. He is in better circumstances than I am, has great, big rooms, and wears a fine black-velvet coat. If you could only marry him, you would be well provided for. But he is blind. You must tell him all the prettiest stories you know.’

But Thumbelina did not trouble her head about him, for he was only a mole. He came and paid them a visit in his black-velvet coat.

‘He is so rich and so accomplished,’ the field-mouse told her. ‘His house is twenty times larger than mine; he possesses great knowledge, but he cannot bear the sun and the beautiful flowers, and speaks slightingly of them, for he has never seen them.’

Thumbelina had to sing to him, so she sang ‘Lady-bird, lady-bird, fly away home!’ and other songs so prettily that the mole fell in love with her; but he did not say anything, he was a very cautious man. A short time before he had dug a long passage through the ground from his own house to that of his neighbour; in this he gave the field-mouse and Thumbelina permission to walk as often as they liked. But he begged them not to be afraid of the dead bird that lay in the passage: it was a real bird with beak and feathers, and must have died a little time ago, and now laid buried just where he had made his tunnel. The mole took a piece of rotten wood in his mouth, for that glows like fire in the dark, and went in front, lighting them through the long dark passage. When they came to the place where the dead bird lay, the mole put his broad nose against the ceiling and pushed a hole through, so that the daylight could shine down. In the middle of the path lay a dead swallow, his pretty wings pressed close to his sides, his claws and head drawn under his feathers; the poor bird had evidently died of cold. Thumbelina was very sorry, for she was very fond of all little birds; they had sung and twittered so beautifully to her all through the summer. But the mole kicked him with his bandy legs and said:

‘Now he can’t sing any more! It must be very miserable to be a little bird! I’m thankful that none of my little children are; birds always starve in winter.’

‘Yes, you speak like a sensible man,’ said the field-mouse. ‘What has a bird, in spite of all his singing, in the winter-time? He must starve and freeze, and that must be very pleasant for him, I must say!’

Thumbelina did not say anything; but when the other two had passed on she bent down to the bird, brushed aside the feathers from his head, and kissed his closed eyes gently. ‘Perhaps it was he that sang to me so prettily in the summer,’ she thought. ‘How much pleasure he did give me, dear little bird!’

The mole closed up the hole again which let in the light, and then escorted the ladies home. But Thumbelina could not sleep that night; so she got out of bed, and plaited a great big blanket of straw, and carried it off, and spread it over the dead bird, and piled upon it thistle-down as soft as cotton-wool, which she had found in the field-mouse’s room, so that the poor little thing should lie warmly buried.

‘Farewell, pretty little bird!’ she said. ‘Farewell, and thank you for your beautiful songs in the summer, when the trees were green, and the sun shone down warmly on us!’ Then she laid her head against the bird’s heart. But the bird was not dead: he had been frozen, but now that she had warmed him, he was coming to life again.

In autumn the swallows fly away to foreign lands; but there are some who are late in starting, and then they get so cold that they drop down as if dead, and the snow comes and covers them over.

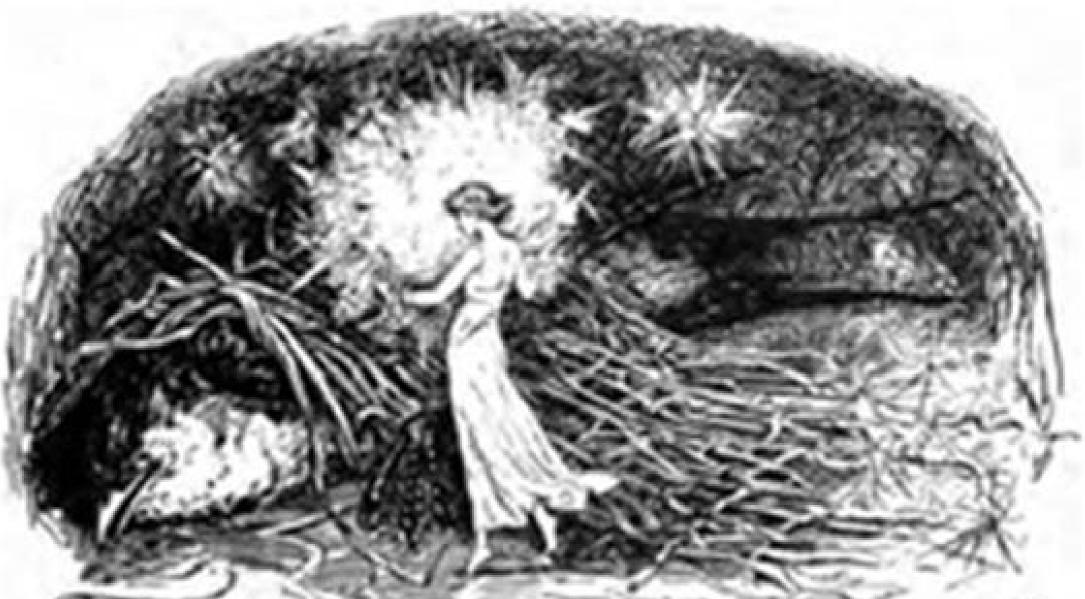

Thumbelina brings thistledown for the Swallow

Thumbelina trembled, she was so frightened; for the bird was very large in comparison with herself — only an inch high. But she took courage, piled up the down more closely over the poor swallow, fetched her own coverlid and laid it over his head.

Next night she crept out again to him. There he was alive, but very weak; he could only open his eyes for a moment and look at Thumbelina, who was standing in front of him with a piece of rotten wood in her hand, for she had no other lantern.

‘Thank you, pretty little child!’ said the swallow to her. ‘I am so beautifully warm! Soon I shall regain my strength, and then I shall be able to fly out again into the warm sunshine.’

‘Oh!’ she said, ‘it is very cold outside; it is snowing and freezing! stay in your warm bed; I will take care of you!’

Then she brought him water in a petal, which he drank, after which he related to her how he had torn one of his wings on a bramble, so that he could not fly as fast as the other swallows, who had flown far away to warmer lands. So at last he had dropped down exhausted, and then he could remember no more. The whole winter he remained down there, and Thumbelina looked after him and nursed him tenderly. Neither the mole nor the field-mouse learnt anything of this, for they could not bear the poor swallow.

When the spring came, and the sun warmed the earth again, the swallow said farewell to Thumbelina, who opened the hole in the roof for him which the mole had made. The sun shone brightly down upon her, and the swallow asked her if she would go with him; she could sit upon his back. Thumbelina wanted very much to fly far away into the green wood, but she knew that the old field-mouse would be sad if she ran away. ‘No, I mustn’t come!’ she said.

‘Farewell, dear good little girl!’ said the swallow, and flew off into the sunshine. Thumbelina gazed after him with the tears standing in her eyes, for she was very fond of the swallow.

‘Tweet, tweet!’ sang the bird, and flew into the green wood. Thumbelina was very unhappy. She was not allowed to go out into the warm sunshine. The corn which had been sowed in the field over the field-mouse’s home grew up high into the air, and made a thick forest for the poor little girl, who was only an inch high.

‘Now you are to be a bride, Thumbelina!’ said the field-mouse, ‘for our neighbour has proposed for you! What a piece of fortune for a poor child like you! Now you must set to work at your linen for your dowry, for nothing must be lacking if you are to become the wife of our neighbour, the mole!’

Thumbelina had to spin all day long, and every evening the mole visited her, and told her that when the summer was over the sun would not shine so hot; now it was burning the earth as hard as a stone. Yes, when the summer had passed, they would keep the wedding.

But she was not at all pleased about it, for she did not like the stupid mole. Every morning when the sun was rising, and every evening when it was setting, she would steal out of the house-door, and when the breeze parted the ears of corn so that she could see the blue sky through them, she thought how bright and beautiful it must be outside, and longed to see her dear swallow again. But he never came; no doubt he had flown away far into the great green wood.

By the autumn Thumbelina had finished the dowry.

‘In four weeks you will be married!’ said the field-mouse; ‘don’t be obstinate, or I shall bite you with my sharp white teeth! You will get a fine husband! The King himself has not such a velvet coat. His store-room and cellar are full, and you should be thankful for that.’

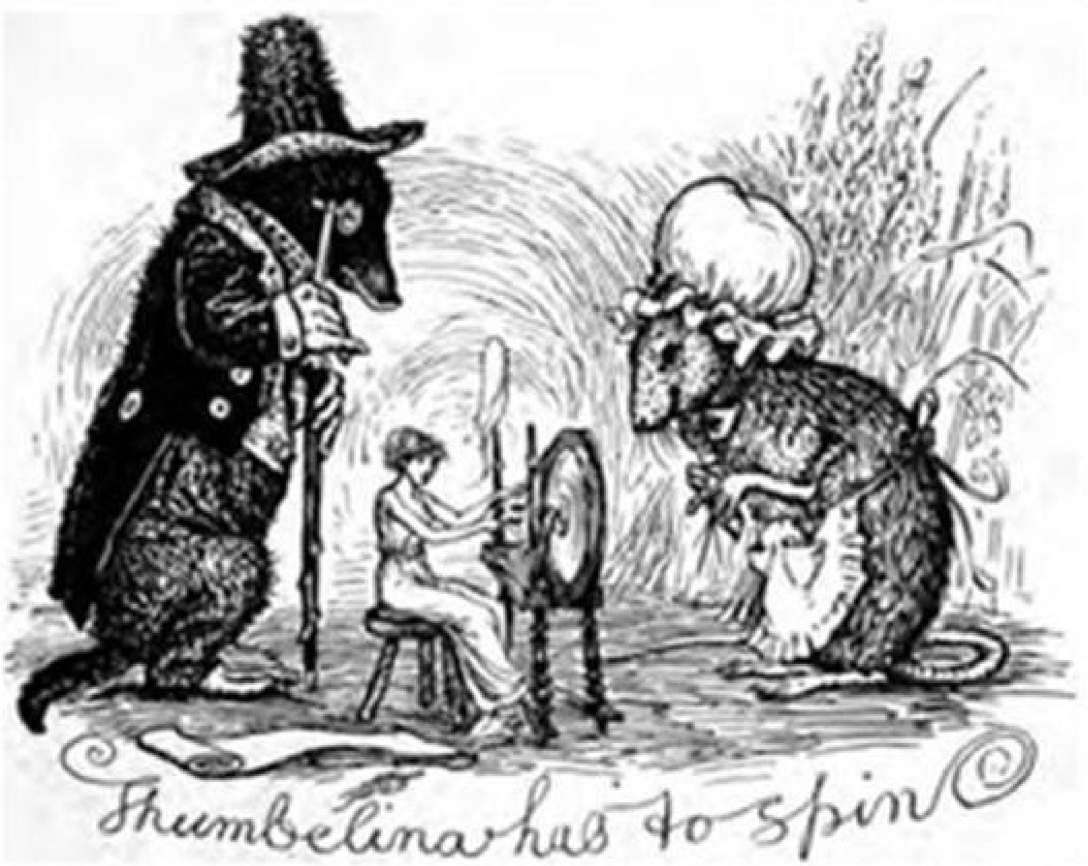

Well, the wedding-day arrived. The mole had come to fetch Thumbelina to live with him deep down under the ground, never to come out into the warm sun again, for that was what he didn't like. The poor little girl was very sad; for now she must say good-bye to the beautiful sun.

'Farewell, bright sun!' she cried, stretching out her arms towards it, and taking another step outside the house; for now the corn had been reaped, and only the dry stubble was left standing. 'Farewell, farewell!' she said, and put her arms round a little red flower that grew there. 'Give my love to the dear swallow when you see him!'

'Tweet, tweet!' sounded in her ear all at once. She looked up. There was the swallow flying past! As soon as he saw Thumbelina, he was very glad. She told him how unwilling she was to marry the ugly mole, as then she had to live underground where the sun never shone, and she could not help bursting into tears.

'The cold winter is coming now,' said the swallow. 'I must fly away to warmer lands: will you come with me? You can sit on my back, and we will fly far away from the ugly mole and his dark house, over the mountains, to the warm countries where the sun shines more brightly than here, where it is always summer, and there are always beautiful flowers. Do come with me, dear little

Thumbelina, who saved my life when I lay frozen in the dark tunnel!’

‘Yes, I will go with you,’ said Thumbelina, and got on the swallow’s back, with her feet on one of his outstretched wings. Up he flew into the air, over woods and seas, over the great mountains where the snow is always lying. And if she was cold she crept under his warm feathers, only keeping her little head out to admire all the beautiful things in the world beneath. At last they came to warm lands; there the sun was brighter, the sky seemed twice as high, and in the hedges hung the finest green and purple grapes; in the woods grew oranges and lemons: the air was scented with myrtle and mint, and on the roads were pretty little children running about and playing with great gorgeous butterflies. But the swallow flew on farther, and it became more and more beautiful. Under the most splendid green trees beside a blue lake stood a glittering white marble castle. Vines hung about the high pillars; there were many swallows’ nests, and in one of these lived the swallow who was carrying Thumbelina.

‘Here is my house!’ said he. ‘But it won’t do for you to live with me; I am not tidy enough to please you. Find a home for yourself in one of the lovely flowers that grow down there; now I will set you down, and you can do whatever you like.’

‘That will be splendid!’ said she, clapping her little hands.

There lay a great white marble column which had fallen to the ground and broken into three pieces, but between these grew the most beautiful white flowers. The swallow flew down with Thumbelina, and set her upon one of the broad leaves. But there, to her astonishment, she found a tiny little man sitting in the middle of the flower, as white and transparent as if he were made of glass; he had the prettiest golden crown on his head, and the most beautiful wings on his shoulders; he himself was no bigger than Thumbelina. He was the spirit of the flower. In each blossom there dwelt a tiny man or woman; but this one was the King over the others.

‘How handsome he is!’ whispered Thumbelina to the swallow.

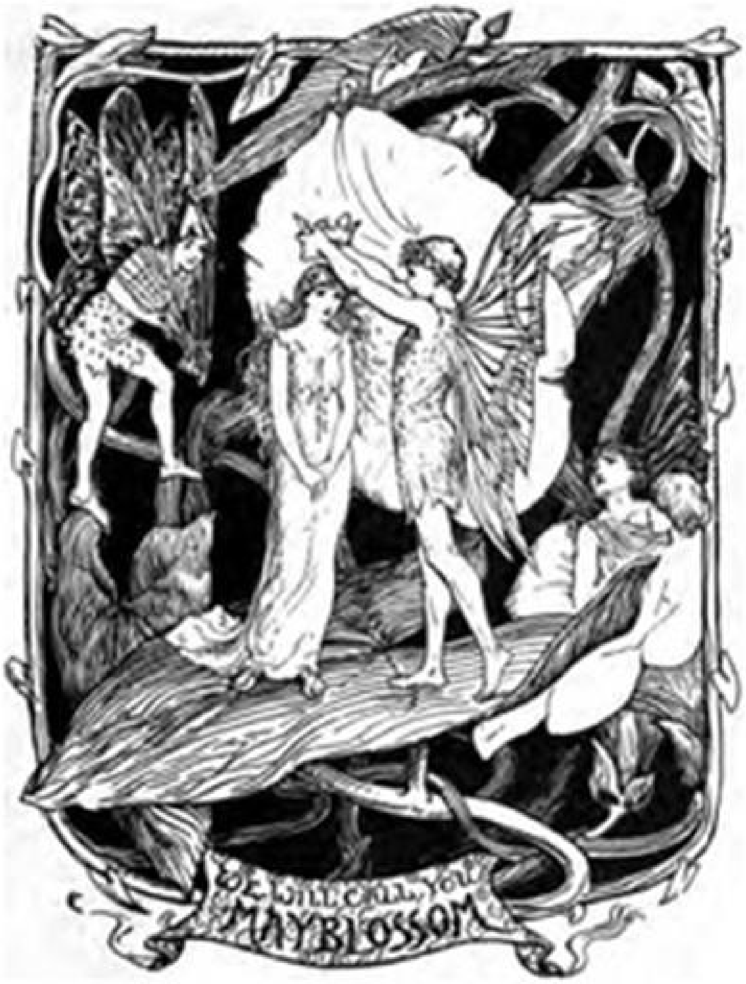

The little Prince was very much frightened at the swallow, for in comparison with one so tiny as himself he seemed a giant. But when he saw Thumbelina, he was delighted, for she was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. So he took his golden crown from off his head and put it on hers, asking her her name, and if she would be his wife, and then she would be Queen of all the flowers. Yes! he was a different kind of husband to the son of the toad and the mole with the black-velvet coat. So she said 'Yes' to the noble Prince. And out of each flower came a lady and gentleman, each so tiny and pretty that it was a pleasure to see them. Each brought Thumbelina a present, but the best of all was a beautiful pair of wings which were fastened on to her back, and now she too could fly from flower to flower. They all wished her joy, and the swallow sat above in his nest and sang the wedding march, and that he did as well as he could; but he was sad, because he was very fond of Thumbelina and did not want to be separated from her.

'You shall not be called Thumbelina!' said the spirit of the flower to her; 'that is an ugly name, and you are much too pretty for that. We will call you May

Blossom.’

‘Farewell, farewell!’ said the little swallow with a heavy heart, and flew away to farther lands, far, far away, right back to Denmark. There he had a little nest above a window, where his wife lived, who can tell fairy-stories. ‘Tweet, tweet!’ he sang to her. And that is the way we learnt the whole story.

THE NIGHTINGALE

In China, as I daresay you know, the Emperor is a Chinaman, and all his courtiers are also Chinamen. The story I am going to tell you happened many years ago, but it is worth while for you to listen to it, before it is forgotten.

The Emperor’s Palace was the most splendid in the world, all made of priceless porcelain, but so brittle and delicate that you had to take great care how you touched it. In the garden were the most beautiful flowers, and on the loveliest of them were tied silver bells which tinkled, so that if you passed you could not help looking at the flowers. Everything in the Emperor’s garden was admirably arranged with a view to effect; and the garden was so large that even the gardener himself did not know where it ended. If you ever got beyond it, you came to a stately forest with great trees and deep lakes in it. The forest sloped down to the sea, which was a clear blue. Large ships could sail under the boughs of the trees, and in these trees there lived a Nightingale. She sang so beautifully that even the poor fisherman who had so much to do stood and listened when he came at night to cast his nets. ‘How beautiful it is!’ he said; but he had to attend to his work, and forgot about the bird. But when she sang the next night and the fisherman came there again, he said the same thing, ‘How beautiful it is!’

From all the countries round came travellers to the Emperor’s town, who were astonished at the Palace and the garden. But when they heard the Nightingale they all said, ‘This is the finest thing after all!’

The travellers told all about it when they went home, and learned scholars wrote many books upon the town, the Palace, and the garden. But they did not forget the Nightingale; she was praised the most, and all the poets composed splendid verses on the Nightingale in the forest by the deep sea.

The books were circulated throughout the world, and some of them reached the Emperor. He sat in his golden chair, and read and read. He nodded his head every moment, for he liked reading the brilliant accounts of the town, the Palace, and the garden. ‘But the Nightingale is better than all,’ he saw written.

‘What is that?’ said the Emperor. ‘I don’t know anything about the Nightingale! Is there such a bird in my empire, and so near as in my garden? I have never heard it! Fancy reading for the first time about it in a book!’

And he called his First Lord to him. He was so proud that if anyone of lower rank than his own ventured to speak to him or ask him anything, he would say nothing but ‘P!’ and that does not mean anything.

‘Here is a most remarkable bird which is called a Nightingale!’ said the Emperor. ‘They say it is the most glorious thing in my kingdom. Why has no one ever said anything to me about it?’

‘I have never before heard it mentioned!’ said the First Lord. ‘I will look for it and find it!’

But where was it to be found? The First Lord ran up and down stairs, through the halls and corridors; but none of those he met had ever heard of the Nightingale. And the First Lord ran again to the Emperor, and told him that it must be an invention on the part of those who had written the books.

‘Your Imperial Majesty cannot really believe all that is written! There are some inventions called the Black Art!’

‘But the book in which I read this,’ said the Emperor, ‘is sent me by His Great Majesty the Emperor of Japan; so it cannot be untrue, and I will hear the Nightingale! She must be here this evening! She has my gracious permission to appear, and if she does not, the whole Court shall be trampled under foot after supper!’

‘Tsing pe!’ said the First Lord; and he ran up and down stairs, through the halls and corridors, and half the Court ran with him, for they did not want to be trampled under foot. Everyone was asking after the wonderful Nightingale which all the world knew of, except those at Court.

At last they met a poor little girl in the kitchen, who said, ‘Oh! I know the Nightingale well. How she sings! I have permission to carry the scraps over from the Court meals to my poor sick mother, and when I am going home at night, tired and weary, and rest for a little in the wood, then I hear the Nightingale singing! It brings tears to my eyes, and I feel as if my mother were kissing me!’

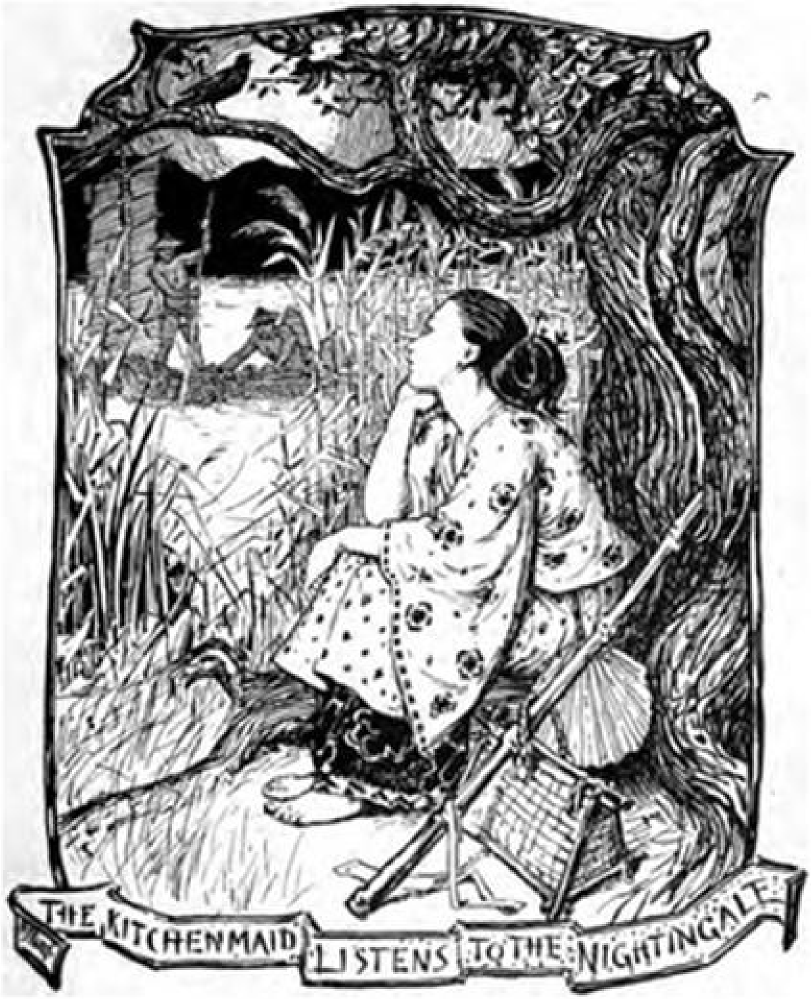
THE KITCHENMAID LISTENS TO THE NIGHTINGALE

‘Little kitchenmaid!’ said the First Lord, ‘I will give you a place in the kitchen, and you shall have leave to see the Emperor at dinner, if you can lead us to the Nightingale, for she is invited to come to Court this evening.’

And so they all went into the wood where the Nightingale was wont to sing, and half the Court went too.

When they were on the way there they heard a cow mooing.

‘Oh!’ said the Courtiers, ‘now we have found her! What a wonderful power for such a small beast to have! I am sure we have heard her before!’

‘No; that is a cow mooing!’ said the little kitchenmaid. ‘We are still a long way off!’

Then the frogs began to croak in the marsh. ‘Splendid!’ said the Chinese chaplain. ‘Now we hear her; it sounds like a little church-bell!’

‘No, no; those are frogs!’ said the little kitchenmaid. ‘But I think we shall soon hear her now!’

Then the Nightingale began to sing.

‘There she is!’ cried the little girl. ‘Listen! She is sitting there!’ And she pointed to a little dark-grey bird up in the branches.

‘Is it possible!’ said the First Lord. ‘I should never have thought it! How ordinary she looks! She must surely have lost her feathers because she sees so many distinguished men round her!’

‘Little Nightingale,’ called out the little kitchenmaid, ‘our Gracious Emperor wants you to sing before him!’

‘With the greatest of pleasure!’ said the Nightingale; and she sang so gloriously that it was a pleasure to listen.

‘It sounds like glass bells!’ said the First Lord. ‘And look how her little throat works! It is wonderful that we have never heard her before! She will be a great success at Court.’

‘Shall I sing once more for the Emperor?’ asked the Nightingale, thinking that the Emperor was there.

‘My esteemed little Nightingale,’ said the First Lord, ‘I have the great pleasure to invite you to Court this evening, where His Gracious Imperial Highness will be enchanted with your charming song!’

‘It sounds best in the green wood,’ said the Nightingale; but still, she came gladly when she heard that the Emperor wished it. At the Palace everything was splendidly prepared. The porcelain walls and floors glittered in the light of many thousand gold lamps; the most gorgeous flowers which tinkled out well were placed in the corridors. There was such a hurrying and draught that all the bells jingled so much that one could not hear oneself speak. In the centre of the great hall where the Emperor sat was a golden perch, on which the Nightingale sat. The whole Court was there, and the little kitchenmaid was allowed to stand behind the door, now that she was a Court-cook. Everyone was dressed in his best, and everyone was looking towards the little grey bird to whom the Emperor nodded.

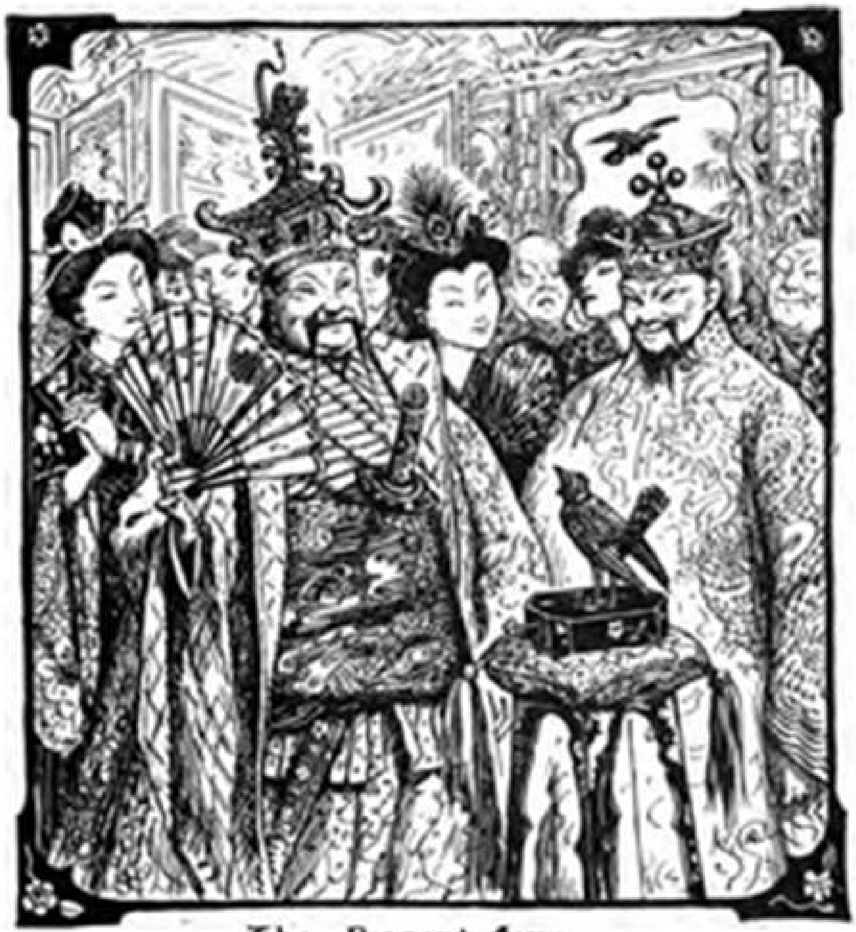

The Present from
the Emperor of Japan

The Nightingale sang so gloriously that the tears came into the Emperor’s eyes and ran down his cheeks. Then the Nightingale sang even more beautifully; it went straight to all hearts. The Emperor was so delighted that he said she should wear his gold slipper round her neck. But the Nightingale thanked him, and said she had had enough reward already. ‘I have seen tears in the Emperor’s eyes — that is a great reward. An Emperor’s tears have such power!’ Then she sang again with her gloriously sweet voice.

‘That is the most charming coquetry I have ever seen!’ said all the ladies round. And they all took to holding water in their mouths that they might gurgle whenever anyone spoke to them. Then they thought themselves nightingales. Yes, the lackeys and chambermaids announced that they were pleased; which means a great deal, for they are the most difficult people of all to satisfy. In short, the Nightingale was a real success.

She had to stay at Court now; she had her own cage, and permission to walk out twice in the day and once at night.

She was given twelve servants, who each held a silken string which was fastened round her leg. There was little pleasure in flying about like this.

The whole town was talking about the wonderful bird, and when two people met each other one would say ‘Nightin,’ and the other ‘Gale,’ and then they would both sigh and understand one another. Yes, and eleven grocer’s children were called after her, but not one of them could sing a note.

One day the Emperor received a large parcel on which was written ‘The Nightingale.’

‘Here is another new book about our famous bird!’ said the Emperor.

But it was not a book, but a little mechanical toy, which lay in a box — an artificial nightingale which was like the real one, only that it was set all over with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. When it was wound up, it could sing the piece the real bird sang, and moved its tail up and down, and glittered with silver and gold. Round its neck was a little collar on which was written, ‘The Nightingale of the Emperor of Japan is nothing compared to that of the Emperor of China.’

‘This is magnificent!’ they all said, and the man who had brought the clockwork bird received on the spot the title of ‘Bringer of the Imperial First Nightingale.’

‘Now they must sing together; what a duet we shall have!’

And so they sang together, but their voices did not blend, for the real Nightingale sang in her way and the clockwork bird sang waltzes.

‘It is not its fault!’ said the bandmaster; ‘it keeps very good time and is quite after my style!’

Then the artificial bird had to sing alone. It gave just as much pleasure as the real one, and then it was so much prettier to look at; it sparkled like bracelets and necklaces. Three-and-thirty times it sang the same piece without being tired. People would like to have heard it again, but the Emperor thought that the living Nightingale should sing now — but where was she? No one had noticed that she had flown out of the open window away to her green woods.

‘What *shall* we do!’ said the Emperor.

And all the Court scolded, and said that the Nightingale was very ungrateful. ‘But we have still the best bird!’ they said and the artificial bird had to sing again, and that was the thirty-fourth time they had heard the same piece. But they did not yet know it by heart; it was much too difficult. And the bandmaster praised the bird tremendously; yes, he assured them it was better than a real nightingale, not only because of its beautiful plumage and diamonds, but inside as well. ‘For see, my Lords and Ladies and your Imperial Majesty, with the real Nightingale one can never tell what will come out, but all is known about the artificial bird! You can explain it, you can open it and show people where the waltzes lie, how they go, and how one follows the other!'

'That's just what we think!' said everyone; and the bandmaster received permission to show the bird to the people the next Sunday. They should hear it sing, commanded the Emperor. And they heard it, and they were as pleased as if they had been intoxicated with tea, after the Chinese fashion, and they all said 'Oh!' and held up their forefingers and nodded time. But the poor fishermen who had heard the real Nightingale said: 'This one sings well enough, the tunes glide out; but there is something wanting — I don't know what!'

The real Nightingale was banished from the kingdom.

The artificial bird was put on silken cushions by the Emperor's bed, all the presents which it received, gold and precious stones, lay round it, and it was given the title of Imperial Night-singer, First from the left. For the Emperor counted that side as the more distinguished, being the side on which the heart is; the Emperor's heart is also on the left.

And the bandmaster wrote a work of twenty-five volumes about the artificial bird. It was so learned, long, and so full of the hardest Chinese words that everyone said they had read it and understood it; for once they had been very stupid about a book, and had been trampled under foot in consequence. So a whole year passed. The Emperor, the Court, and all the Chinese knew every note of the artificial bird's song by heart. But they liked it all the better for this; they could even sing with it, and they did. The street boys sang 'Tra-la-la-la-la,' and the Emperor sang too sometimes. It was indeed delightful.

But one evening, when the artificial bird was singing its best, and the Emperor lay in bed listening to it, something in the bird went crack. Something snapped! Whir-r-r! all the wheels ran down and then the music ceased. The Emperor sprang up, and had his physician summoned, but what could *he* do! Then the clockmaker came, and, after a great deal of talking and examining, he put the bird somewhat in order, but he said that it must be very seldom used as the works were nearly worn out, and it was impossible to put in new ones. Here was a calamity! Only once a year was the artificial bird allowed to sing, and even that was almost too much for it. But then the bandmaster made a little speech full of hard words, saying that it was just as good as before. And so, of course, it *was* just as good as before. So five years passed, and then a great sorrow came to the nation. The Chinese look upon their Emperor as everything, and now he was ill, and not likely to live it was said.

Already a new Emperor had been chosen, and the people stood outside in the street and asked the First Lord how the old Emperor was. 'P!' said he, and shook his head.

Cold and pale lay the Emperor in his splendid great bed; the whole Court believed him dead, and one after the other left him to pay their respects to the new Emperor. Everywhere in the halls and corridors cloth was laid down so that no footstep could be heard, and everything was still — very, very still. And nothing came to break the silence.

The Emperor longed for something to come and relieve the monotony of this deathlike stillness. If only someone would speak to him! If only someone would sing to him. Music would carry his thoughts away, and would break the spell lying on him. The moon was streaming in at the open window; but that, too, was silent, quite silent.

‘Music! music!’ cried the Emperor. ‘You little bright golden bird, sing! do sing! I gave you gold and jewels; I have hung my gold slipper round your neck with my own hand — sing! do sing!’ But the bird was silent. There was no one to wind it up, and so it could not sing. And all was silent, so terribly silent!

All at once there came in at the window the most glorious burst of song. It was the little living Nightingale, who, sitting outside on a bough, had heard the need of her Emperor and had come to sing to him of comfort and hope. And as she sang the blood flowed quicker and quicker in the Emperor’s weak limbs, and life began to return.

‘Thank you, thank you!’ said the Emperor. ‘You divine little bird! I know you. I chased you from my kingdom, and you have given me life again! How can I reward you?’

‘You have done that already!’ said the Nightingale. ‘I brought tears to your eyes the first time I sang. I shall never forget that. They are jewels that rejoice a singer’s heart. But now sleep and get strong again; I will sing you a lullaby.’ And the Emperor fell into a deep, calm sleep as she sang.

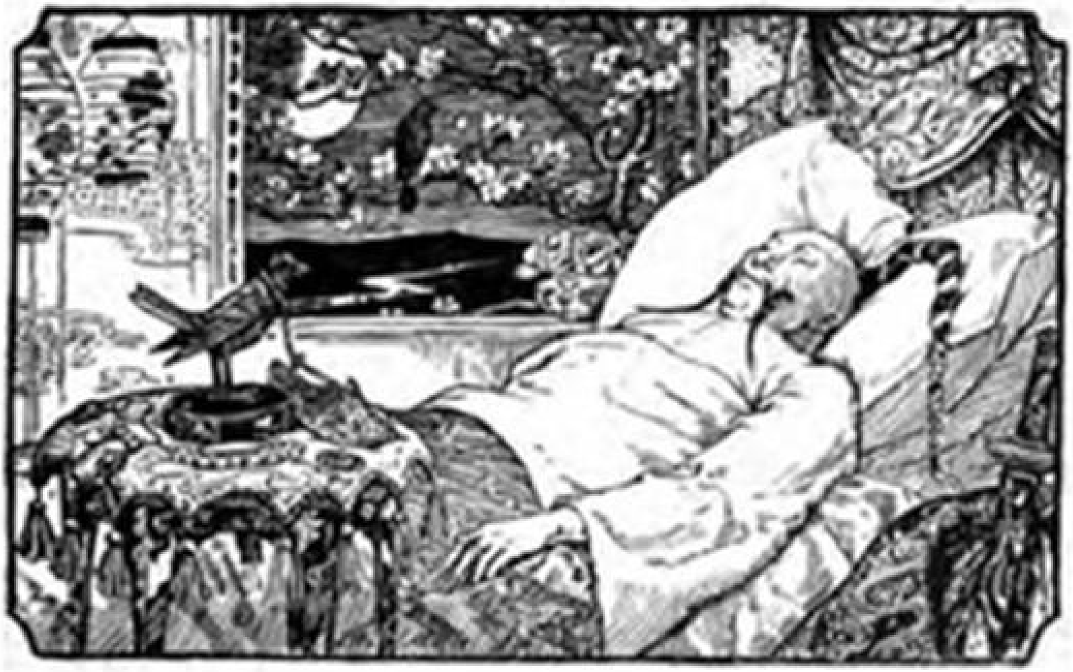

The true Nightingale sings to the Emperor

The sun was shining through the window when he awoke, strong and well. None of his servants had come back yet, for they thought he was dead. But the Nightingale sat and sang to him.

'You must always stay with me!' said the Emperor. 'You shall sing whenever you like, and I will break the artificial bird into a thousand pieces.'

'Don't do that!' said the Nightingale. 'He did his work as long as he could. Keep him as you have done! I cannot build my nest in the Palace and live here; but let me come whenever I like. I will sit in the evening on the bough outside the window, and I will sing you something that will make you feel happy and grateful. I will sing of joy, and of sorrow; I will sing of the evil and the good which lies hidden from you. The little singing-bird flies all around, to the poor fisherman's hut, to the farmer's cottage, to all those who are far away from you and your Court. I love your heart more than your crown, though that has about it a brightness as of something holy. Now I will sing to you again; but you must promise me one thing — —'

'Anything!' said the Emperor, standing up in his Imperial robes, which he had himself put on, and fastening on his sword richly embossed with gold.

'One thing I beg of you! Don't tell anyone that you have a little bird who tells you everything. It will be much better not to!' Then the Nightingale flew away.

The servants came in to look at their dead Emperor.

The Emperor said, 'Good-morning!'

HERMOD AND HADVOR

Once upon a time there were a King and a Queen who had an only daughter, called Hadvor, who was fair and beautiful, and being an only child, was heir to the kingdom. The King and Queen had also a foster son, named Hermod, who was just about the same age as Hadvor, and was good-looking, as well as clever at most things. Hermod and Hadvor often played together while they were children, and liked each other so much that while they were still young they secretly plighted their troth to each other.

As time went on the Queen fell sick, and suspecting that it was her last illness, sent for the King to come to her. When he came she told him that she had no long time to live, and therefore wished to ask one thing of him, which was, that if he married another wife he should promise to take no other one than the Queen of Hetland the Good. The King gave the promise, and thereafter the Queen died.

Time went past, and the King, growing tired of living alone, fitted out his ship and sailed out to sea. As he sailed there came upon him so thick a mist that he altogether lost his bearings, but after long trouble he found land. There he laid his ship to, and went on shore all alone. After walking for some time he came to a forest, into which he went a little way and stopped. Then he heard sweet music from a harp, and went in the direction of the sound until he came to a clearing, and there he saw three women, one of whom sat on a golden chair, and was beautifully and grandly dressed; she held a harp in her hands, and was very sorrowful. The second was also finely dressed, but younger in appearance, and also sat on a chair, but it was not so grand as the first one’s. The third stood beside them, and was very pretty to look at; she had a green cloak over her other clothes, and it was easy to see that she was maid to the other two.

After the King had looked at them for a little he went forward and saluted them. The one that sat on the golden chair asked him who he was and where he was going; and he told her all the story — how he was a king, and had lost his queen, and was now on his way to Hetland the Good, to ask the Queen of that country in marriage. She answered that fortune had contrived this wonderfully, for pirates had plundered Hetland and killed the King, and she had fled from the land in terror, and had come hither after great trouble, and she was the very person he was looking for, and the others were her daughter and maid. The King immediately asked her hand; she gladly received his proposal and accepted him at once. Thereafter they all set out, and made their way to the ship; and after that nothing is told of their voyage until the King reached his own country. There he made a great feast, and celebrated his marriage with this woman; and after that things are quiet for a time.

Hermod and Hadvor took but little notice of the Queen and her daughter, but, on the other hand, Hadvor and the Queen’s maid, whose name was Olof, were very friendly, and Olof came often to visit Hadvor in her castle. Before long the King went out to war, and no sooner was he away than the Queen came to talk with Hermod, and said that she wanted him to marry her daughter. Hermod told her straight and plain that he would not do so, at which the Queen grew terribly angry, and said that in that case neither should he have Hadvor, for she would now lay this spell on him, that he should go to a desert island and there be a lion by day and a man by night. He should also think always of Hadvor, which would cause him all the more sorrow, and from this spell he should never be freed until Hadvor burned the lion’s skin, and that would not happen very soon.

As soon as the Queen had finished her speech Hermod replied that he also laid a spell on her, and that was, that as soon as he was freed from her enchantments she should become a rat and her daughter a mouse, and fight with each other in the hall until he killed them with his sword.

After this Hermod disappeared, and no one knew what had become of him; the Queen caused search to be made for him, but he could nowhere be found. One time, when Olof was in the castle beside Hadvor, she asked the Princess if she knew where Hermod had gone to. At this Hadvor became very sad, and said that she did not.

‘I shall tell you then,’ said Olof, ‘for I know all about it.

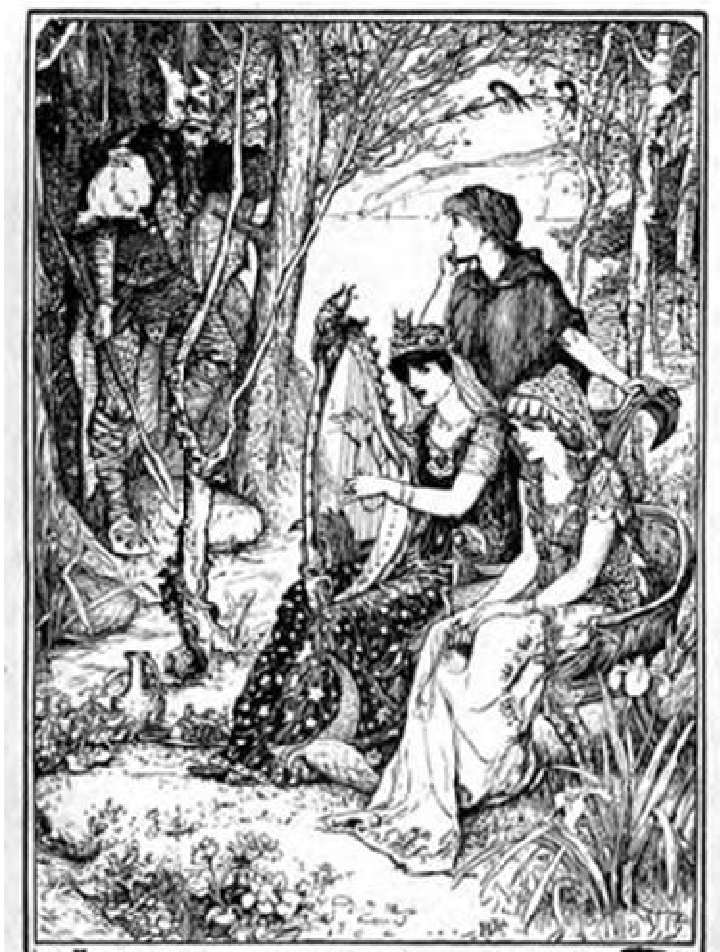

The King finds the Queen of Hetland

Hermod has disappeared through the wicked devices of the Queen, for she is a witch, and so is her daughter, though they have put on these beautiful forms. Because Hermod would not fall in with the Queen’s plans, and marry her daughter, she has laid a spell on him, to go on an island and be a lion by day and a man by night, and never be freed from this until you burn the lion’s skin. Besides,’ said Olof, ‘she has looked out a match for you; she has a brother in the Under-world, a three-headed Giant, whom she means to turn into a beautiful prince and get him married to you. This is no new thing for the Queen; she took me away from my parents’ house and compelled me to serve her; but she has never done me any harm, for the green cloak I wear protects me against all mischief.’

Hadvor now became still sadder than before at the thought of the marriage destined for her, and entreated Olof to think of some plan to save her.

‘I think,’ said Olof, ‘that your wooer will come up through the floor of the castle to you, and so you must be prepared when you hear the noise of his coming and the floor begins to open, and have at hand blazing pitch, and pour plenty of it into the opening. That will prove too much for him.’

About this time the King came home from his expedition, and thought it a great blow that no one knew what had become of Hermod; but the Queen consoled him as best she could, and after a time the King thought less about his disappearance.

Hadvor remained in her castle, and had made preparations to receive her wooer when he came. One night, not long after, a loud noise and rumbling was heard under the castle. Hadvor at once guessed what it was, and told her maids to be ready to help her. The noise and thundering grew louder and louder, until the floor began to open, whereupon Hadvor made them take the caldron of pitch and pour plenty of it into the opening. With that the noises grew fainter and fainter, till at last they ceased altogether.

Next morning the Queen rose early, and went out to the Palace gate, and there she found her brother the Giant lying dead. She went up to him and said, ‘I pronounce this spell, that you become a beautiful prince, and that Hadvor shall be unable to say anything against the charges that I shall bring against her.’

The body of the dead Giant now became that of a beautiful prince, and the Queen went in again.

‘I don’t think,’ said she to the King, ‘that your daughter is as good as she is said to be. My brother came and asked her hand, and she has had him put to death. I have just found his dead body lying at the Palace gate.’

The King went along with the Queen to see the body, and thought it all very strange; so beautiful a youth, he said, would have been a worthy match for Hadvor, and he would readily have agreed to their marriage. The Queen asked leave to decide what Hadvor’s punishment should be, which the King was very willing to allow, so as to escape from punishing his own daughter. The Queen’s decision was that the King should make a big grave-mound for her brother, and put Hadvor into it beside him.

Olof knew all the plans of the Queen, and went to tell the Princess what had been done, whereupon Hadvor earnestly entreated her to tell her what to do.

‘First and foremost,’ said Olof, ‘you must get a wide cloak to wear over your other clothes, when you are put into the mound. The Giant’s ghost will walk after you are both left together in there, and he will have two dogs along with him. He will ask you to cut pieces out of his legs to give to the dogs, but that you must not promise to do unless he tells you where Hermod has gone to, and tells you how to find him. He will then let you stand on his shoulders, so as to get out of the mound; but he means to cheat you all the same, and will catch you by the cloak to pull you back again; but you must take care to have the cloak loose on your shoulders, so that he will only get hold of that.’

The mound was all ready now, and the Giant laid in it, and into it Hadvor also had to go without being allowed to make any defence. After they were both left there everything happened just as Olof had said. The prince became a Giant again, and asked Hadvor to cut the pieces out of his legs for the dogs; but she refused until he told her that Hermod was in a desert island, which she could not reach unless she took the skin off the soles of his feet and made shoes out of that; with these shoes she could travel both on land and sea. This Hadvor now did, and the Giant then let her get up on his shoulders to get out of the mound. As she sprang out he caught hold of her cloak; but she had taken care to let it lie loose on her shoulders, and so escaped.

She now made her way down to the sea, to where she knew there was the shortest distance over to the island in which Hermod was. This strait she easily crossed, for the shoes kept her up. On reaching the island she found a sandy beach all along by the sea, and high cliffs above. Nor could she see any way to get up these, and so, being both sad at heart and tired with the long journey, she lay down and fell asleep. As she slept she dreamed that a tall woman came to her and said, ‘I know that you are Princess Hadvor, and are searching for Hermod. He is on this island; but it will be hard for you to get to him if you have no one to help you, for you cannot climb the cliffs by your own strength. I have therefore let down a rope, by which you will be able to climb up; and as the island is so large that you might not find Hermod’s dwelling-place so easily, I lay down this clew beside you. You need only hold the end of the thread, and the clew will run on before and show you the way. I also lay this belt beside you, to put on when you awaken; it will keep you from growing faint with hunger.’

The woman now disappeared, and Hadvor woke, and saw that all her dream had been true. The rope hung down from the cliff, and the clew and belt lay beside her. The belt she put on, the rope enabled her to climb up the cliff, and the clew led her on till she came to the mouth of a cave, which was not very big. She went into the cave, and saw there a low couch, under which she crept and lay down.

When evening came she heard the noise of footsteps outside, and became aware that the lion had come to the mouth of the cave, and shook itself there, after which she heard a man coming towards the couch. She was sure this was Hermod, because she heard him speaking to himself about his own condition, and calling to mind Hadvor and other things in the old days. Hadvor made no sign, but waited till he had fallen asleep, and then crept out and burned the lion’s skin, which he had left outside. Then she went back into the cave and wakened Hermod, and they had a most joyful meeting.

In the morning they talked over their plans, and were most at a loss to know how to get out of the island. Hadvor told Hermod her dream, and said she suspected there was some one in the island who would be able to help them. Hermod said he knew of a Witch there, who was very ready to help anyone, and that the only plan was to go to her. So they went to the Witch's cave, and found her there with her fifteen young sons, and asked her to help them to get to the mainland.

'There are other things easier than that,' said she, 'for the Giant that was buried will be waiting for you, and will attack you on the way, as he has turned himself into a big whale. I shall lend you a boat, however, and if you meet the whale and think your lives are in danger, then you can name me by name.'

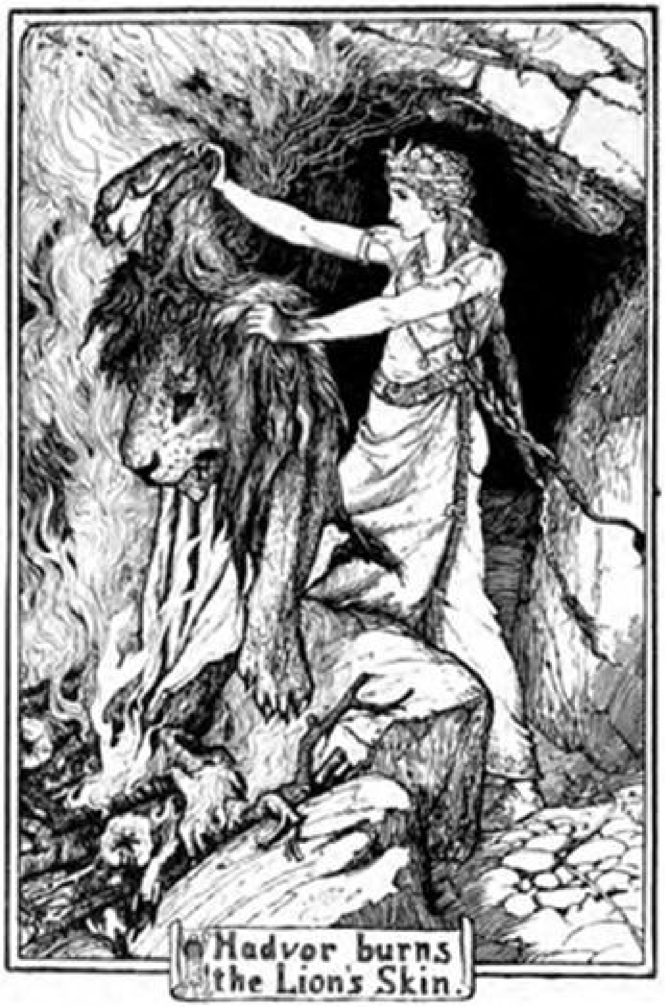

Hadvor burns the Lion's Skin.

They thanked her greatly for her help and advice, and set out from the island, but on the way they saw a huge fish coming towards them, with great splashing and dashing of waves. They were sure of what it was, and thought they had as good reason as ever they would have to call on the Witch, and so they did. The next minute they saw coming after them another huge whale, followed by fifteen smaller ones. All of these swam past the boat and went on to meet the whale. There was a fierce battle then, and the sea became so stormy that it was not very easy to keep the boat from being filled by the waves. After this fight had gone on for some time, they saw that the sea was dyed with blood; the big whale and the fifteen smaller ones disappeared, and they got to land safe and sound.

Now the story goes back to the King's hall, where strange things had happened in the meantime. The Queen and her daughter had disappeared, but a rat and a mouse were always fighting with each other there. Ever so many people had tried to drive them away, but no one could manage it. Thus some time went on, while the King was almost beside himself with sorrow and care for the loss of his Queen, and because these monsters destroyed all mirth in the hall.

One evening, however, while they all sat dull and down-hearted, in came Hermod with a sword by his side, and saluted the King, who received him with the greatest joy, as if he had come back from the dead. Before Hermod sat down, however, he went to where the rat and the mouse were fighting, and cut them in two with his sword. All were astonished then by seeing two witches lying dead on the floor of the hall.

Hermod now told the whole story to the King, who was very glad to be rid of such vile creatures. Next he asked for the hand of Hadvor, which the King readily gave him, and being now an old man, gave the kingdom to him as well; and so Hermod became King.

Olof married a good-looking nobleman, and that is the end of the story.

THE STEADFAST TIN-SOLDIER

There were once upon a time five-and-twenty tin-soldiers — all brothers, as they were made out of the same old tin spoon. Their uniform was red and blue, and they shouldered their guns and looked straight in front of them. The first words that they heard in this world, when the lid of the box in which they lay was taken off, were: ‘Hurrah, tin-soldiers!’ This was exclaimed by a little boy, clapping his hands; they had been given to him because it was his birthday, and now he began setting them out on the table. Each soldier was exactly like the other in shape, except just one, who had been made last when the tin had run short; but there he stood as firmly on his one leg as the others did on two, and he is the one that became famous.

There were many other playthings on the table on which they were being set out, but the nicest of all was a pretty little castle made of cardboard, with windows through which you could see into the rooms. In front of the castle stood some little trees surrounding a tiny mirror which looked like a lake. Wax swans were floating about and reflecting themselves in it. That was all very pretty; but the most beautiful thing was a little lady, who stood in the open doorway. She was cut out of paper, but she had on a dress of the finest muslin, with a scarf of narrow blue ribbon round her shoulders, fastened in the middle with a glittering rose made of gold paper, which was as large as her head. The little lady was stretching out both her arms, for she was a Dancer, and was lifting up one leg so high in the air that the Tin-soldier couldn’t find it anywhere, and thought that she, too, had only one leg.

‘That’s the wife for me!’ he thought; ‘but she is so grand, and lives in a castle, whilst I have only a box with four-and-twenty others. This is no place for her! But I must make her acquaintance.’ Then he stretched himself out behind a snuff-box that lay on the table; from thence he could watch the dainty little lady, who continued to stand on one leg without losing her balance.

When the night came all the other tin-soldiers went into their box, and the people of the house went to bed. Then the toys began to play at visiting, dancing, and fighting. The tin-soldiers rattled in their box, for they wanted to be out too, but they could not raise the lid. The nut-crackers played at leap-frog, and the slate-pencil ran about the slate; there was such a noise that the canary woke up and began to talk to them, in poetry too! The only two who did not stir from their places were the Tin-soldier and the little Dancer. She remained on tip-toe, with both arms outstretched; he stood steadfastly on his one leg, never moving his eyes from her face.

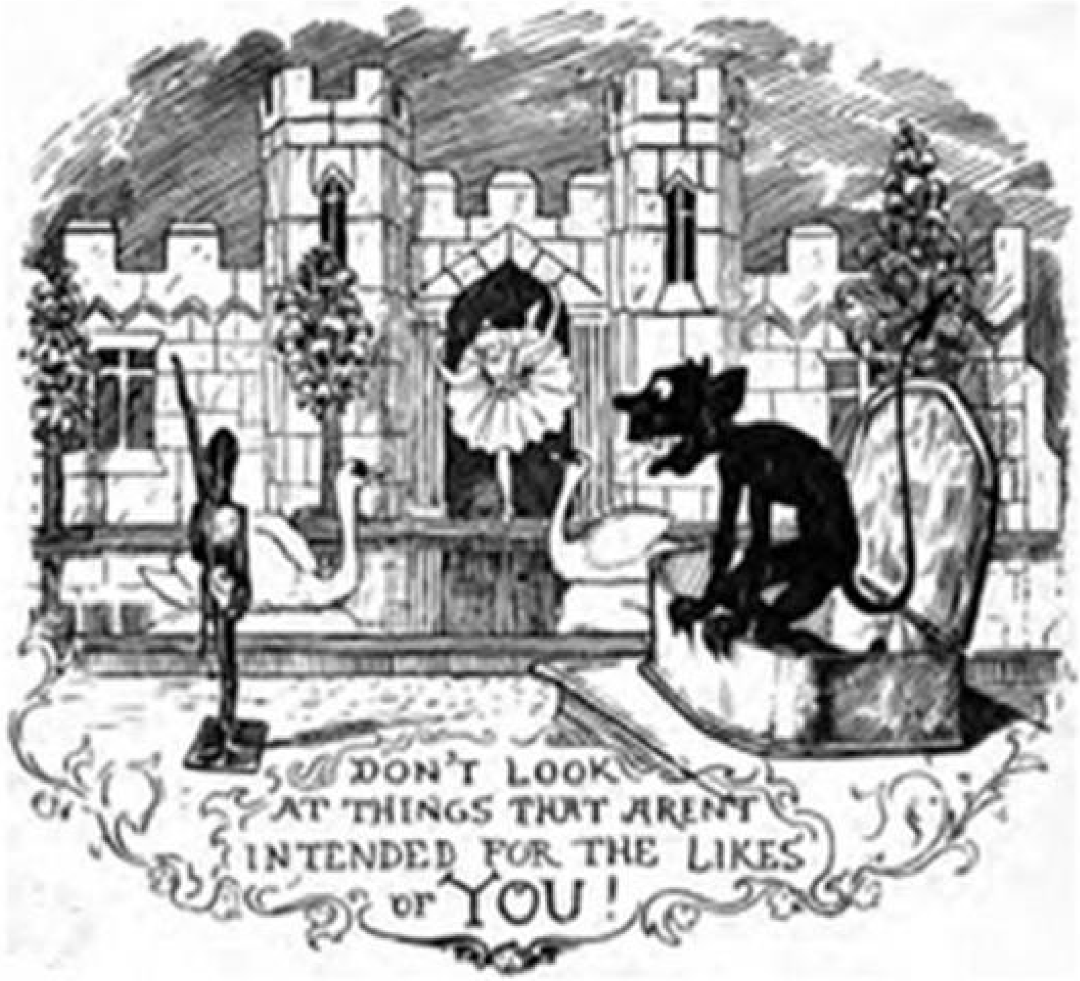
DON'T LOOK AT THINGS THAT AREN'T INTENDED FOR THE LIKES OF YOU!

The clock struck twelve, and crack! off flew the lid of the snuff-box; but there was no snuff inside, only a little black imp — that was the beauty of it.

‘Hullo, Tin-soldier!’ said the imp. ‘Don’t look at things that aren’t intended for the likes of you!’

But the Tin-soldier took no notice, and seemed not to hear.

‘Very well, wait till to-morrow!’ said the imp.

When it was morning, and the children had got up, the Tin-soldier was put in the window; and whether it was the wind or the little black imp, I don’t know, but all at once the window flew open and out fell the little Tin-soldier, head over heels, from the third-storey window! That was a terrible fall, I can tell you! He landed on his head with his leg in the air, his gun being wedged between two paving-stones.

The nursery-maid and the little boy came down at once to look for him, but, though they were so near him that they almost trod on him, they did not notice him. If the Tin-soldier had only called out ‘Here I am!’ they must have found him; but he did not think it fitting for him to cry out, because he had on his uniform.

Soon it began to drizzle; then the drops came faster, and there was a regular down-pour. When it was over, two little street boys came along.

‘Just look!’ cried one. ‘Here is a Tin-soldier! He shall sail up and down in a boat!’

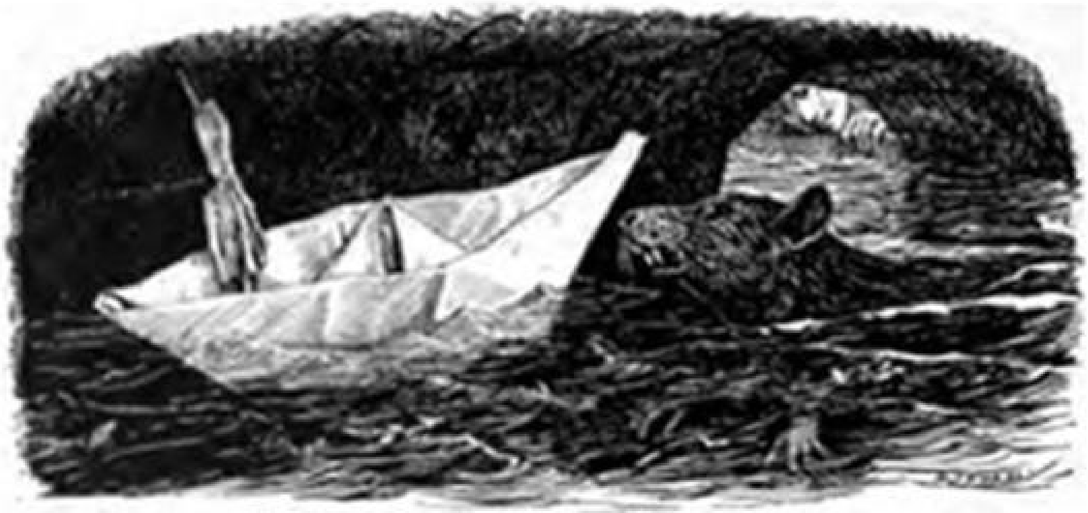

·DOWN · THE · DRAIN·

So they made a little boat out of newspaper, put the Tin-soldier in it, and made him sail up and down the gutter; both the boys ran along beside him, clapping their hands. What great waves there were in the gutter, and what a swift current! The paper-boat tossed up and down, and in the middle of the stream it went so quick that the Tin-soldier trembled; but he remained steadfast, showed no emotion, looked straight in front of him, shouldering his gun. All at once the boat passed under a long tunnel that was as dark as his box had been.

‘Where can I be coming now?’ he wondered. ‘Oh, dear! This is the black imp’s fault! Ah, if only the little lady were sitting beside me in the boat, it might be twice as dark for all I should care!’

Suddenly there came along a great water-rat that lived in the tunnel.

'Have you a passport?' asked the rat. 'Out with your passport!'

But the Tin-soldier was silent, and grasped his gun more firmly.

The boat sped on, and the rat behind it. Ugh! how he showed his teeth, as he cried to the chips of wood and straw: 'Hold him, hold him! he has not paid the toll! He has not shown his passport!'

But the current became swifter and stronger. The Tin-soldier could already see daylight where the tunnel ended; but in his ears there sounded a roaring enough to frighten any brave man. Only think! at the end of the tunnel the gutter discharged itself into a great canal; that would be just as dangerous for him as it would be for us to go down a waterfall.

Now he was so near to it that he could not hold on any longer. On went the boat, the poor Tin-soldier keeping himself as stiff as he could: no one should say of him afterwards that he had flinched. The boat whirled three, four times round, and became filled to the brim with water: it began to sink! The Tin-soldier was standing up to his neck in water, and deeper and deeper sank the boat, and softer and softer grew the paper; now the water was over his head. He was thinking of the pretty little Dancer, whose face he should never see again, and there sounded in his ears, over and over again:

'Forward, forward, soldier bold!
Death's before thee, grim and cold!'

The paper came in two, and the soldier fell — but at that moment he was swallowed by a great fish.

Oh! how dark it was inside, even darker than in the tunnel, and it was really very close quarters! But there the steadfast little Tin-soldier lay full length, shouldering his gun.

Up and down swam the fish, then he made the most dreadful contortions, and became suddenly quite still. Then it was as if a flash of lightning had passed through him; the daylight streamed in, and a voice exclaimed, 'Why, here is the little Tin-soldier!' The fish had been caught, taken to market, sold, and brought into the kitchen, where the cook had cut it open with a great knife. She took up the soldier between her finger and thumb, and carried him into the room, where everyone wanted to see the hero who had been found inside a fish; but the Tin-soldier was not at all proud. They put him on the table, and — no, but what strange things do happen in this world! — the Tin-soldier was in the same room in which he had been before! He saw the same children, and the same toys on the table; and there was the same grand castle with the pretty little Dancer. She was still standing on one leg with the other high in the air; she too was steadfast.

That touched the Tin-soldier, he was nearly going to shed tin-tears; but that would not have been fitting for a soldier. He looked at her, but she said nothing.

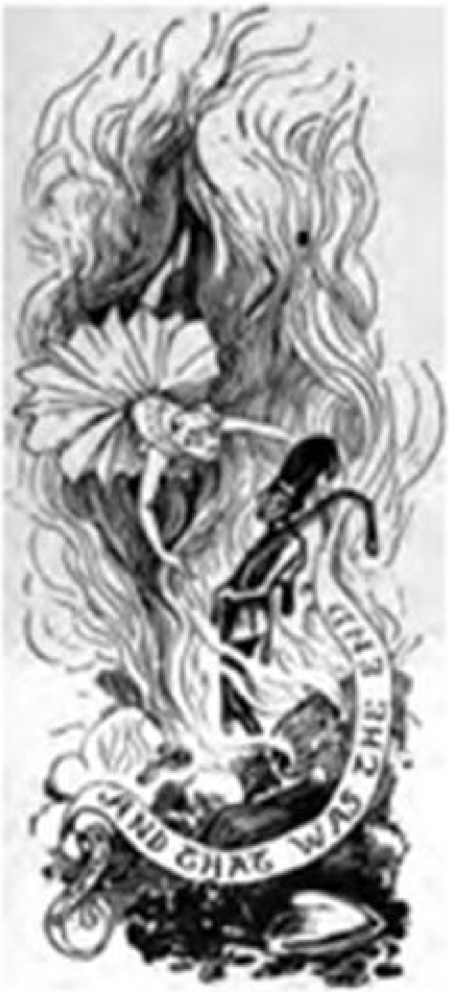
AND THAT WAS THE END

All at once one of the little boys took up the Tin-soldier, and threw him into the stove, giving no reasons; but doubtless the little black imp in the snuff-box was at the bottom of this too.

There the Tin-soldier lay, and felt a heat that was truly terrible; but whether he was suffering from actual fire, or from the ardour of his passion, he did not know. All his colour had disappeared; whether this had happened on his travels or whether it was the result of trouble, who can say? He looked at the little lady, she looked at him, and he felt that he was melting; but he remained steadfast, with his gun at his shoulder. Suddenly a door opened, the draught caught up the little Dancer, and off she flew like a sylph to the Tin-soldier in the stove, burst into flames — and that was the end of her! Then the Tin-soldier melted down into a little lump, and when next morning the maid was taking out the ashes, she found him in the shape of a heart. There was nothing left of the little Dancer but her gilt rose, burnt as black as a cinder.

BLOCKHEAD HANS

Far away in the country lay an old manor-house where lived an old squire who had two sons. They thought themselves so clever, that if they had known only half of what they did know, it would have been quite enough. They both wanted to marry the King’s daughter, for she had proclaimed that she would have for her husband the man who knew best how to choose his words.

Both prepared for the wooing a whole week, which was the longest time allowed them; but, after all, it was quite long enough, for they both had preparatory knowledge, and everyone knows how useful that is. One knew the whole Latin dictionary and also three years’ issue of the daily paper of the town off by heart, so that he could repeat it all backwards or forwards as you pleased. The other had worked at the laws of corporation, and knew by heart what every member of the corporation ought to know, so that he thought he could quite well speak on State matters and give his opinion. He understood, besides this, how to embroider braces with roses and other flowers, and scrolls, for he was very ready with his fingers.

‘I shall win the king’s daughter!’ they both cried.

Their old father gave each of them a fine horse; the one who knew the dictionary and the daily paper by heart had a black horse, while the other who was so clever at corporation law had a milk-white one. Then they oiled the corners of their mouths so that they might be able to speak more fluently. All the servants stood in the courtyard and saw them mount their steeds, and here by chance came the third brother; for the squire had three sons, but nobody counted him with his brothers, for he was not so learned as they were, and he was generally called ‘Blockhead-Hans.’

‘Oh, oh!’ said Blockhead-Hans. ‘Where are you off to? You are in your Sunday-best clothes!’

‘We are going to Court, to woo the Princess! Don’t you know what is known throughout all the country side?’ And they told him all about it.

‘Hurrah! I’ll go too!’ cried Blockhead-Hans; and the brothers laughed at him and rode off.

‘Dear father!’ cried Blockhead-Hans, ‘I must have a horse too. What a desire for marriage has seized me! If she will have me, she *will* have me, and if she won’t have me, I will have her.’

‘Stop that nonsense!’ said the old man. ‘I will not give you a horse. *You* can’t speak; *you* don’t know how to choose your words. Your brothers! Ah! they are very different lads!’

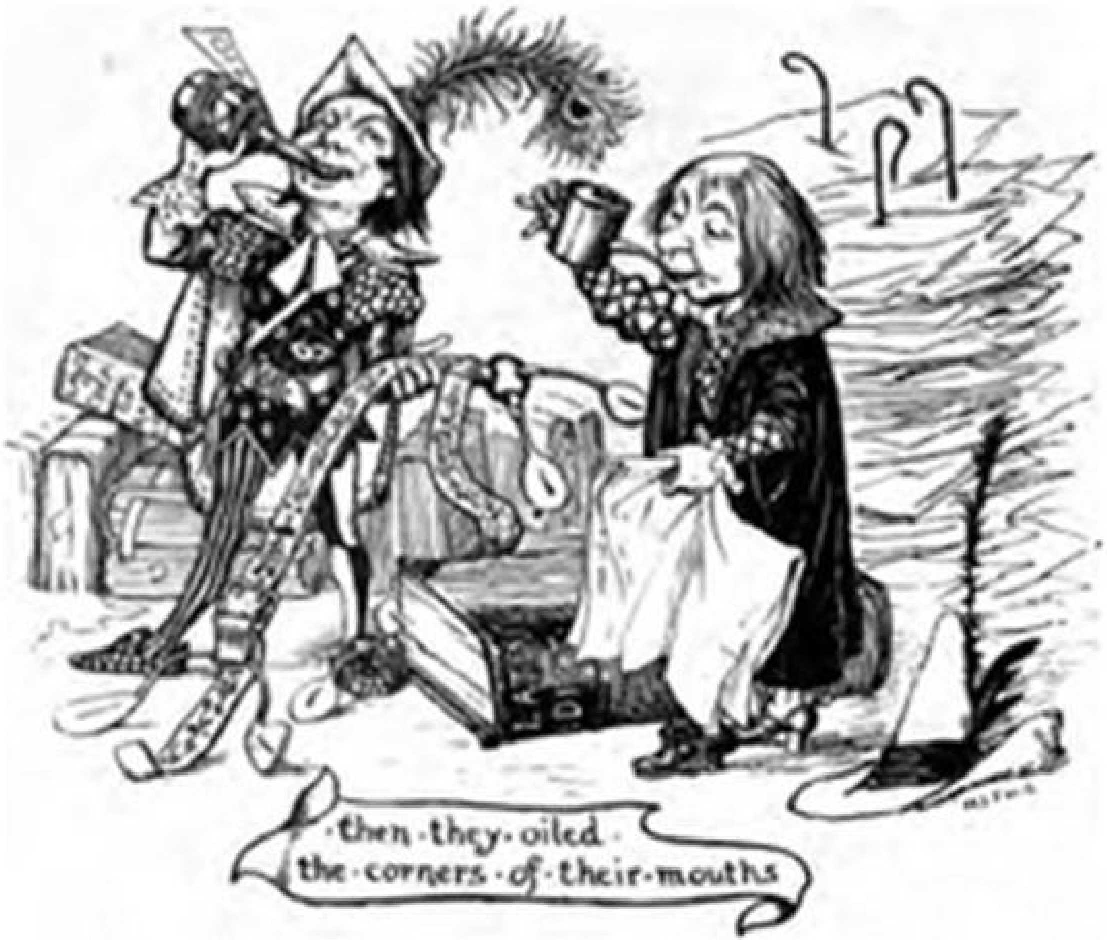

‘Well,’ said Blockhead-Hans, ‘if I can’t have a horse, I will take the goat which is mine; he can carry me!’

And he did so. He sat astride on the goat, struck his heels into its side, and went rattling down the high-road like a hurricane.

Hoppetty hop! what a ride! ‘Here I come!’ shouted Blockhead-Hans, singing so that the echoes were roused far and near. But his brothers were riding slowly in front. They were not speaking, but they were thinking over all the good things they were going to say, for everything had to be thought out.

‘Hullo!’ bawled Blockhead-Hans, ‘here I am! Just look what I found on the road!’ — and he showed them a dead crow which he had picked up.

‘Blockhead!’ said his brothers, ‘what are you going to do with it?’

‘With the crow? I shall give it to the Princess!’

‘Do so, certainly!’ they said, laughing loudly and riding on.

‘Slap! bang! here I am again! Look what I have just found! You don’t find such things every day on the road!’

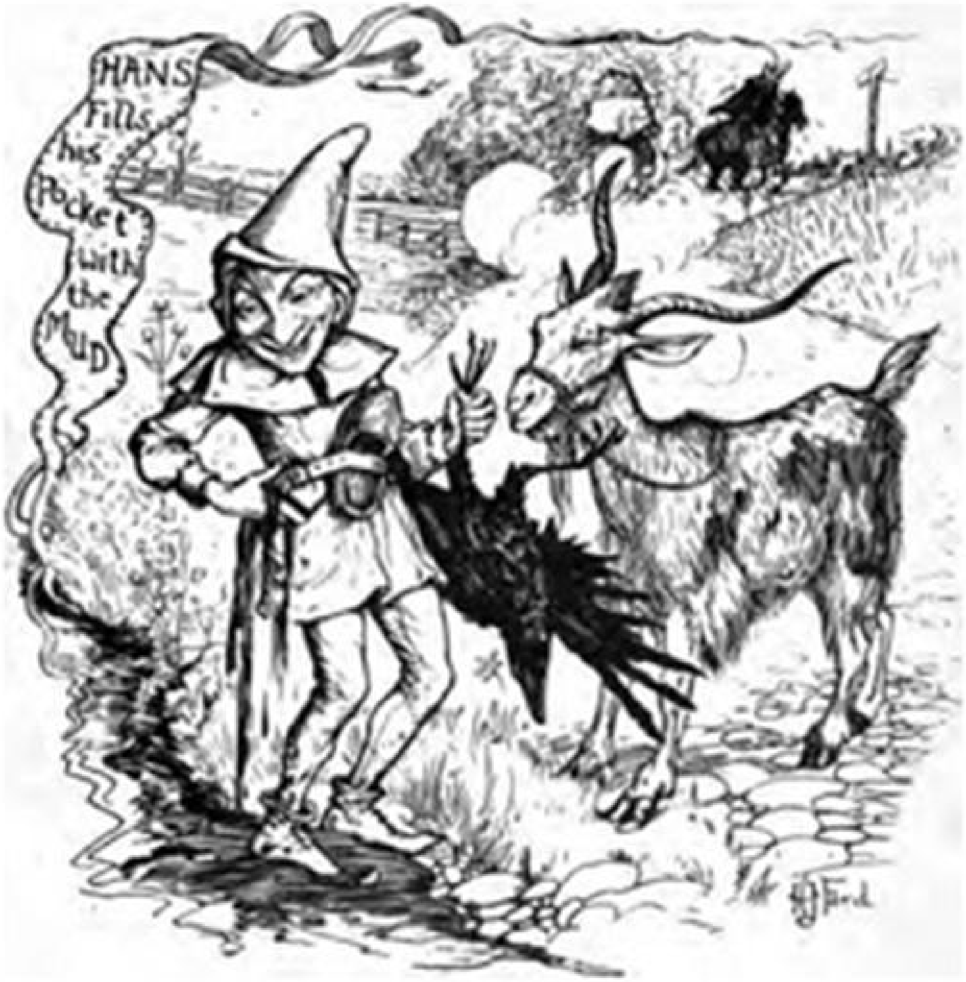

And the brothers turned round to see what in the world he could have found.

‘Blockhead!’ said they, ‘that is an old wooden shoe without the top! Are you going to send that, too, to the Princess?’

‘Of course I shall!’ returned Blockhead-Hans; and the brothers laughed and rode on a good way.

‘Slap! bang! here I am!’ cried Blockhead-Hans; better and better — it is really famous!’

‘What have you found now?’ asked the brothers. ‘Oh,’ said Blockhead-Hans, ‘it is really too good! How pleased the Princess will be!’

‘Why!’ said the brothers,’this is pure mud, straight from the ditch.’

‘Of course it is!’ said Blockhead-Hans, ‘and it is the best kind! Look how it runs through one’s fingers!’ and, so saying, he filled his pocket with the mud.

But the brothers rode on so fast that dust and sparks flew all around, and they reached the gate of the town a good hour before Blockhead-Hans. Here came the suitors numbered according to their arrival, and they were ranged in rows, six in each row, and they were so tightly packed that they could not move their arms. This was a very good thing, for otherwise they would have torn each other in pieces, merely because the one was in front of the other.

All the country people were standing round the King’s throne, and were crowded together in thick masses almost out of the windows to see the Princess receive the suitors; and as each one came into the room all his fine phrases went out like a candle!

‘It doesn’t matter!’ said the Princess. ‘Away! out with him!’

At last she came to the row in which the brother who knew the dictionary by heart was, but he did not know it any longer; he had quite forgotten it in the rank and file. And the floor creaked, and the ceiling was all made of glass mirrors, so that he saw himself standing on his head, and by each window were standing three reporters and an editor; and each of them was writing down what was said, to publish it in the paper that came out and was sold at the street corners for a penny. It was fearful, and they had made up the fire so hot that it was grilling.

‘It is hot in here, isn’t it!’ said the suitor.

‘Of course it is!’ My father is roasting young chickens to-day!’ said the Princess.

‘Ahem!’ There he stood like an idiot. He was not prepared for such a speech; he did not know what to say, although he wanted to say something witty. ‘Ahem!’

‘It doesn’t matter!’ said the Princess. ‘Take him out!’ and out he had to go.

Now the other brother entered.

‘How hot it is!’ he said.

‘Of course! We are roasting young chickens to-day!’ remarked the Princess.

‘How do you — um!’ he said, and the reporters wrote down. ‘How do you — um.’

‘It doesn’t matter!’ said the Princess. ‘Take him out!’

Now Blockhead-Hans came in; he rode his goat right into the hall.

‘I say! How roasting hot it is here!’ said he.

‘Of course! I am roasting young chickens to-day!’ said the Princess.

‘That’s good!’ replied Blockhead-Hans; ‘then can I roast a crow with them?’

‘With the greatest of pleasure!’ said the Princess; ‘but have you anything you can roast them in? for I have neither pot nor saucepan.’

The Reporters giggled & each dropped a blot of ink on the floor
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That was neatly done! said the Princess

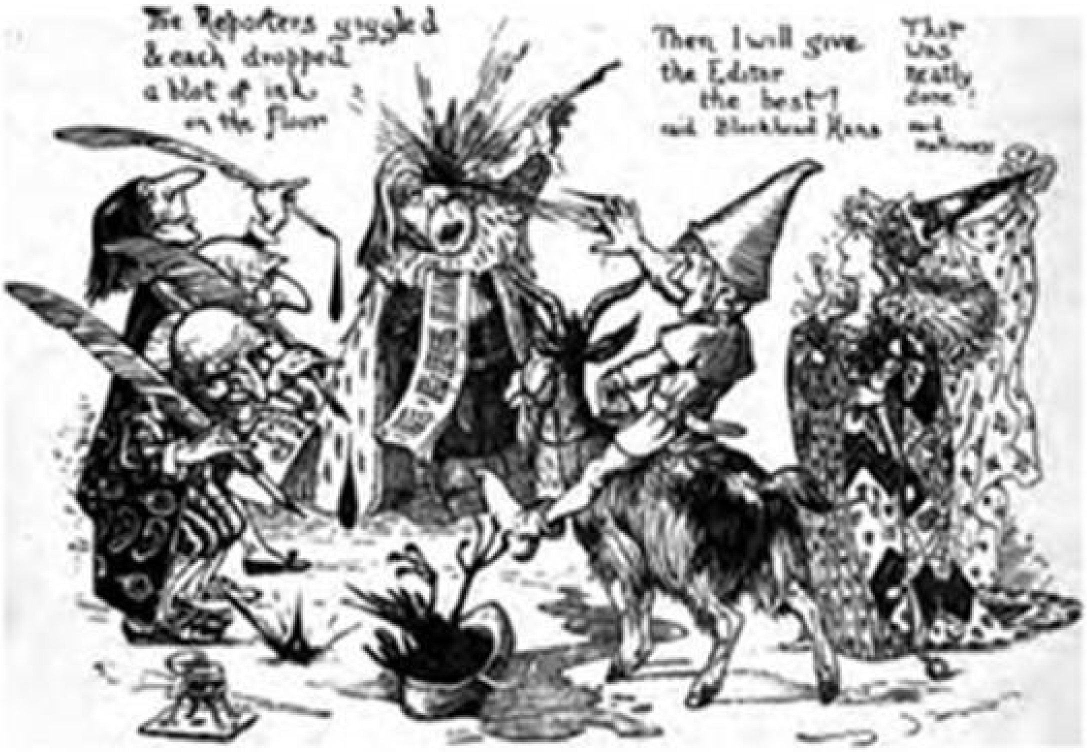
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‘Oh, rather!’ said Blockhead-Hans. ‘Here is a cooking implement with tin rings,’ and he drew out the old wooden shoe, and laid the crow in it.

‘That is quite a meal!’ said the Princess; ‘but where shall we get the soup from?’

‘I’ve got that in my pocket!’ said Blockhead-Hans. ‘I have so much that I can quite well throw some away!’ and he poured some mud out of his pocket.

‘I like you!’ said the Princess. ‘You can answer, and you can speak, and I will marry you; but do you know that every word which we are saying and have said has been taken down and will be in the paper to-morrow? By each window do you see there are standing three reporters and an old editor, and this old editor is the worst, for he doesn’t understand anything!’ but she only said this to tease Blockhead-Hans. And the reporters giggled, and each dropped a blot of ink on the floor.

‘Ah! are those the great people?’ said Blockhead-Hans. ‘Then I will give the editor the best!’ So saying, he turned his pockets inside out, and threw the mud right in his face.

‘That was neatly done!’ said the Princess. ‘I couldn’t have done it; but I will soon learn how to!’

Blockhead-Hans became King, got a wife and a crown, and sat on the throne; and this we have still damp from the newspaper of the editor and the reporters — and they are not to be believed for a moment.

A STORY ABOUT A DARNING-NEEDLE

There was once a Darning-needle who thought herself so fine that she believed she was an embroidery-needle. ‘Take great care to hold me tight!’ said the Darning-needle to the Fingers who were holding her. ‘Don’t let me fall! If I once fall on the ground I shall never be found again, I am so fine!’

‘It is all right!’ said the Fingers, seizing her round the waist.

‘Look, I am coming with my train!’ said the Darning-needle as she drew a long thread after her; but there was no knot at the end of the thread.

The Fingers were using the needle on the cook’s shoe. The upper leather was unstitched and had to be sewn together.

‘This is common work!’ said the Darning-needle. ‘I shall never get through it. I am breaking! I am breaking!’ And in fact she did break. ‘Didn’t I tell you so!’ said the Darning-needle. ‘I am too fine!’

‘Now she is good for nothing!’ said the Fingers; but they had to hold her tight while the cook dropped some sealing-wax on the needle and stack it in the front of her dress.

‘Now I am a breast-pin!’ said the Darning-needle. ‘I always knew I should be promoted. When one is something, one will become something!’ And she laughed to herself; you can never see when a Darning-needle is laughing. Then she sat up as proudly as if she were in a State coach, and looked all round her.

‘May I be allowed to ask if you are gold?’ she said to her neighbour, the Pin. ‘You have a very nice appearance, and a peculiar head; but it is too small! You must take pains to make it grow, for it is not everyone who has a head of sealing-wax.’ And so saying the Darning-needle raised herself up so proudly that she fell out of the dress, right into the sink which the cook was rinsing out.

‘Now I am off on my travels!’ said the Darning-needle. ‘I do hope I sha’n’t get lost!’ She did indeed get lost.

‘I am too fine for this world!’ said she as she lay in the gutter; ‘but I know who I am, and that is always a little satisfaction!’

‘And the Darning-needle kept her proud bearing and did not lose her good-temper.

All kinds of things swam over her — shavings, bits of straw, and scraps of old newspapers.

‘Just look how they sail along!’ said the Darning-needle. ‘They don’t know what is underneath them! Here I am sticking fast! There goes a shaving thinking of nothing in the world but of itself, a mere chip! There goes a straw — well, how it does twist and twirl, to be sure! Don’t think so much about yourself, or you will be knocked against a stone. There floats a bit of newspaper. What is written on it is long ago forgotten, and yet how proud it is! I am sitting patient and quiet. I know who I am, and that is enough for me!’

One day something thick lay near her which glittered so brightly that the Darning-needle thought it must be a diamond. But it was a bit of bottle-glass, and because it sparkled the Darning-needle spoke to it, and gave herself out as a breast-pin.

‘No doubt you are a diamond?’

‘Yes, something of that kind!’ And each believed that the other was something very costly; and they both said how very proud the world must be of them.

‘I have come from a lady’s work-box,’ said Darning-needle, ‘and this lady was a cook; she had five fingers on each hand; anything so proud as these fingers I have never seen! And yet they were only there to take me out of the work-box and to put me back again!’

‘Were they of noble birth, then?’ asked the bit of bottle-glass.

‘Of noble birth!’ said the Darning-needle; ‘no indeed, but proud! They were five brothers, all called “Fingers.” They held themselves proudly one against the other, although they were of different sizes. The outside one, the Thumb, was short and fat; he was outside the rank, and had only one bend in his back, and could only make one bow; but he said that if he were cut off from a man that he was no longer any use as a soldier. Dip-into-everything, the second finger, dipped into sweet things as well as sour things, pointed to the sun and the moon, and guided the pen when they wrote. Longman, the third, looked at the others over his shoulder. Goldband, the fourth, had a gold sash round his waist; and little Playman did nothing at all, and was the more proud. There was too much ostentation, and so I came away.’

‘And now we are sitting and shining here!’ said the bit of bottle-glass.

At that moment more water came into the gutter; it streamed over the edges and washed the bit of bottle-glass away.

‘Ah! now he has been promoted!’ said the Darning-needle. ‘I remain here; I am too fine. But that is my pride, which is a sign of respectability!’ And she sat there very proudly, thinking lofty thoughts.

‘I really believe I must have been born a sunbeam, I am so fine! It seems to me as if the sunbeams were always looking under the water for me. Ah, I am so fine that my own mother cannot find me! If I had my old eye which broke off, I believe I could weep; but I can’t — it is not fine to weep!’

One day two street-urchins were playing and wading in the gutter, picking up old nails, pennies, and such things. It was rather dirty work, but it was a great delight to them.

‘Oh, oh!’ cried out one, as he pricked himself with the Darning-needle; ‘he is a fine fellow though!’

‘I am not a fellow; I am a young lady!’ said the Darning-needle; but no one heard. The sealing-wax had gone, and she had become quite black; but black makes one look very slim, and so she thought she was even finer than before.

‘Here comes an egg-shell sailing along!’ said the boys, and they stuck the Darning-needle into the egg-shell.

‘The walls white and I black — what a pretty contrast it makes!’ said the Darning-needle. ‘Now I can be seen to advantage! If only I am not sea-sick! I should give myself up for lost!’

But she was not sea-sick, and did not give herself up.

‘It is a good thing to be steeled against sea-sickness; here one has indeed an advantage over man! Now my qualms are over. The finer one is the more one can bear.’

‘Crack!’ said the egg-shell as a wagon-wheel went over it.

‘Oh! how it presses!’ said the Darning-needle. ‘I shall indeed be sea-sick now. I am breaking!’ But she did not break, although the wagon-wheel went over her; she lay there at full length, and there she may lie.

THE PINK FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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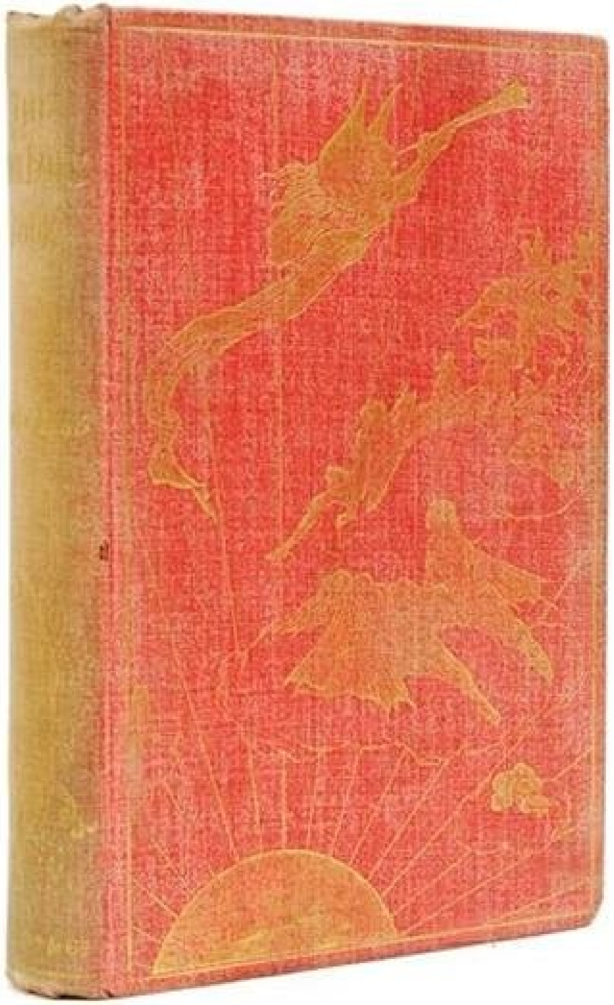

The first edition

THE PINK FAIRY BOOK

PREFACE

All people in the world tell nursery tales to their children. The Japanese tell them, the Chinese, the Red Indians by their camp fires, the Eskimo in their dark dirty winter huts. The Kaffirs of South Africa tell them, and the modern Greeks, just as the old Egyptians did, when Moses had not been many years rescued out of the bulrushes. The Germans, French, Spanish, Italians, Danes, Highlanders tell them also, and the stories are apt to be like each other everywhere. A child who has read the Blue and Red and Yellow Fairy Books will find some old friends with new faces in the Pink Fairy Book, if he examines and compares. But the Japanese tales will probably be new to the young student; the Tanuki is a creature whose acquaintance he may not have made before. He may remark that

Andersen wants to ‘point a moral,’ as well as to ‘adorn a tale; ‘ that he is trying to make fun of the follies of mankind, as they exist in civilised countries. The Danish story of ‘The Princess in the Chest’ need not be read to a very nervous child, as it rather borders on a ghost story. It has been altered, and is really much more horrid in the language of the Danes, who, as history tells us, were not a nervous or timid people. I am quite sure that this story is not true. The other Danish and Swedish stories are not alarming. They are translated by Mr. W. A. Craigie. Those from the Sicilian (through the German) are translated, like the African tales (through the French) and the Catalan tales, and the Japanese stories (the latter through the German), and an old French story, by Mrs. Lang. Miss Alma Alleyne did the stories from Andersen, out of the German. Mr. Ford, as usual, has drawn the monsters and mermaids, the princes and giants, and the beautiful princesses, who, the Editor thinks, are, if possible, prettier than ever. Here, then, are fancies brought from all quarters: we see that black, white, and yellow peoples are fond of just the same kinds of adventures. Courage, youth, beauty, kindness, have many trials, but they always win the battle; while witches, giants, unfriendly cruel people, are on the losing hand. So it ought to be, and so, on the whole, it is and will be; and that is all the moral of fairy tales. We cannot all be young, alas! and pretty, and strong; but nothing prevents us from being kind, and no kind man, woman, or beast or bird, ever comes to anything but good in these oldest fables of the world. So far all the tales are true, and no further.

The Cat’s Elopement

Once upon a time there lived a cat of marvellous beauty, with a skin as soft and shining as silk, and wise green eyes, that could see even in the dark. His name was Gon, and he belonged to a music teacher, who was so fond and proud of him that he would not have parted with him for anything in the world.

Now not far from the music master’s house there dwelt a lady who possessed a most lovely little pussy cat called Koma. She was such a little dear altogether, and blinked her eyes so daintily, and ate her supper so tidily, and when she had finished she licked her pink nose so delicately with her little tongue, that her mistress was never tired of saying, ‘Koma, Koma, what should I do without you?’

Well, it happened one day that these two, when out for an evening stroll, met under a cherry tree, and in one moment fell madly in love with each other. Gon had long felt that it was time for him to find a wife, for all the ladies in the neighbourhood paid him so much attention that it made him quite shy; but he was not easy to please, and did not care about any of them. Now, before he had time to think, Cupid had entangled him in his net, and he was filled with love towards Koma. She fully returned his passion, but, like a woman, she saw the difficulties in the way, and consulted sadly with Gon as to the means of overcoming them. Gon entreated his master to set matters right by buying Koma, but her mistress would not part from her. Then the music master was asked to sell Gon to the lady, but he declined to listen to any such suggestion, so everything remained as before.

At length the love of the couple grew to such a pitch that they determined to please themselves, and to seek their fortunes together. So one moonlight night they stole away, and ventured out into an unknown world. All day long they marched bravely on through the sunshine, till they had left their homes far behind them, and towards evening they found themselves in a large park. The wanderers by this time were very hot and tired, and the grass looked very soft and inviting, and the trees cast cool deep shadows, when suddenly an ogre appeared in this Paradise, in the shape of a big, big dog! He came springing towards them showing all his teeth, and Koma shrieked, and rushed up a cherry tree. Gon, however, stood his ground boldly, and prepared to give battle, for he felt that Koma’s eyes were upon him, and that he must not run away. But, alas!

his courage would have availed him nothing had his enemy once touched him, for he was large and powerful, and very fierce. From her perch in the tree Koma saw it all, and screamed with all her might, hoping that some one would hear, and come to help. Luckily a servant of the princess to whom the park belonged was walking by, and he drove off the dog, and picking up the trembling Gon in his arms, carried him to his mistress.

So poor little Koma was left alone, while Gon was borne away full of trouble, not in the least knowing what to do. Even the attention paid him by the princess, who was delighted with his beauty and pretty ways, did not console him, but there was no use in fighting against fate, and he could only wait and see what would turn up.

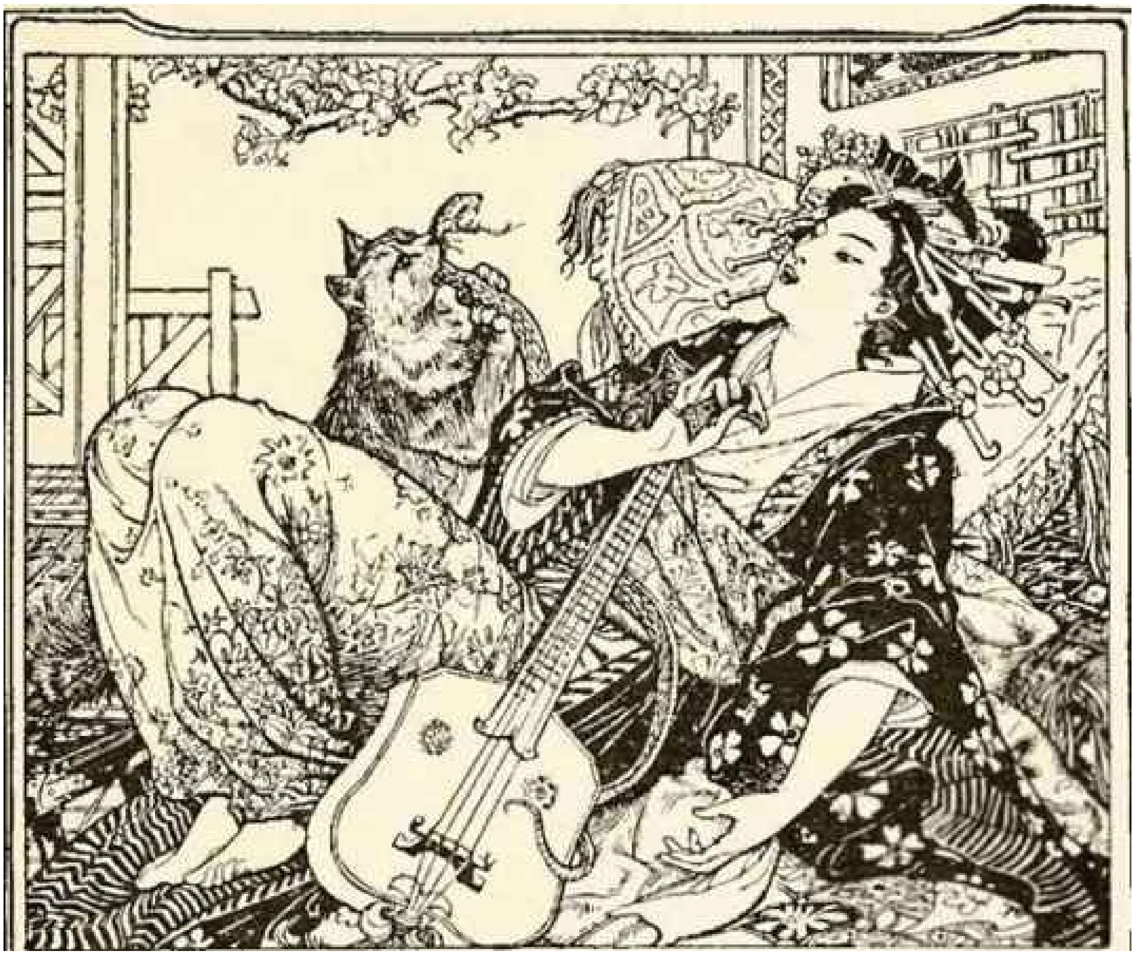

The princess, Gon’s new mistress, was so good and kind that everybody loved her, and she would have led a happy life, had it not been for a serpent who had fallen in love with her, and was constantly annoying her by his presence. Her servants had orders to drive him away as often as he appeared; but as they were careless, and the serpent very sly, it sometimes happened that he was able to slip past them, and to frighten the princess by appearing before her. One day she was seated in her room, playing on her favourite musical instrument, when she felt something gliding up her sash, and saw her enemy making his way to kiss her cheek. She shrieked and threw herself backwards, and Gon, who had been curled up on a stool at her feet, understood her terror, and with one bound seized the snake by his neck. He gave him one bite and one shake, and flung him on the ground, where he lay, never to worry the princess any more. Then she took Gon in her arms, and praised and caressed him, and saw that he had the nicest bits to eat, and the softest mats to lie on; and he would have had nothing in the world to wish for if only he could have seen Koma again.

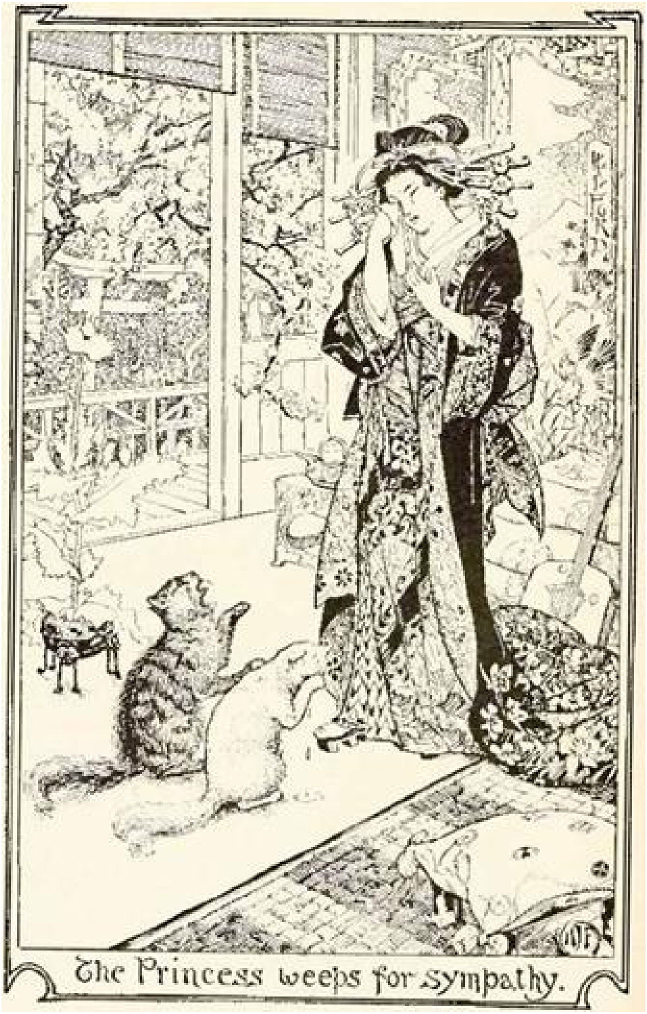

The Princess weeps for sympathy.

Time passed on, and one morning Gon lay before the house door, basking in the sun. He looked lazily at the world stretched out before him, and saw in the distance a big ruffian of a cat teasing and ill-treating quite a little one. He jumped up, full of rage, and chased away the big cat, and then he turned to comfort the little one, when his heart nearly burst with joy to find that it was Koma. At first Koma did not know him again, he had grown so large and stately; but when it dawned upon her who it was, her happiness knew no bounds. And they rubbed their heads and their noses again and again, while their purring might have been heard a mile off.

Paw in paw they appeared before the princess, and told her the story of their life and its sorrows. The princess wept for sympathy, and promised that they should never more be parted, but should live with her to the end of their days. By-and-bye the princess herself got married, and brought a prince to dwell in the palace in the park. And she told him all about her two cats, and how brave Gon had been, and how he had delivered her from her enemy the serpent.

And when the prince heard, he swore they should never leave them, but should go with the princess wherever she went. So it all fell out as the princess wished; and Gon and Koma had many children, and so had the princess, and they all played together, and were friends to the end of their lives.

How the Dragon Was Tricked

From Griechtsche und Albanesische Marchen, von J. G. von Hahn. (Leipzig: Engelmann. 1864.)

Once upon a time there lived a man who had two sons but they did not get on at all well together, for the younger was much handsomer than his elder brother who was very jealous of him. When they grew older, things became worse and worse, and at last one day as they were walking through a wood the elder youth seized hold of the other, tied him to a tree, and went on his way hoping that the boy might starve to death.

However, it happened that an old and humpbacked shepherd passed the tree with his flock, and seeing the prisoner, he stopped and said to him, ‘Tell me, my son why are you tied to that tree?’

‘Because I was so crooked,’ answered the young man; ‘but it has quite cured me, and now my back is as straight as can be.’

‘I wish you would bind me to a tree,’ exclaimed the shepherd, ‘so that my back would get straight.’

‘With all the pleasure in life,’ replied the youth. ‘If you will loosen these cords I will tie you up with them as firmly as I can.’

This was soon done, and then the young man drove off the sheep, leaving their real shepherd to repent of his folly; and before he had gone very far he met with a horse boy and a driver of oxen, and he persuaded them to turn with him and to seek for adventures.

By these and many other tricks he soon became so celebrated that his fame reached the king’s ears, and his majesty was filled with curiosity to see the man who had managed to outwit everybody. So he commanded his guards to capture the young man and bring him before him.

And when the young man stood before the king, the king spoke to him and said, ‘By your tricks and the pranks that you have played on other people, you have, in the eye of the law, forfeited your life. But on one condition I will spare you, and that is, if you will bring me the flying horse that belongs to the great dragon. Fail in this, and you shall be hewn in a thousand pieces.’

‘If that is all,’ said the youth, ‘you shall soon have it.’

So he went out and made his way straight to the stable where the flying horse was tethered. He stretched his hand cautiously out to seize the bridle, when the horse suddenly began to neigh as loud as he could. Now the room in which the dragon slept was just above the stable, and at the sound of the neighing he woke and cried to the horse, ‘What is the matter, my treasure? is anything hurting you?’ After waiting a little while the young man tried again to loose the horse, but a second time it neighed so loudly that the dragon woke up in a hurry and called out to know why the horse was making such a noise. But when the same thing happened the third time, the dragon lost his temper, and went down into the stable and took a whip and gave the horse a good beating. This offended the horse and made him angry, and when the young man stretched out his hand to untie his head, he made no further fuss, but suffered himself to be led quietly away. Once clear of the stable the young man sprang on his back and galloped off, calling over his shoulder, ‘Hi! dragon! dragon! if anyone asks you what has become of your horse, you can say that I have got him!’

But the king said, ‘The flying horse is all very well, but I want something more. You must bring me the covering with the little bells that lies on the bed of the dragon, or I will have you hewn into a thousand pieces.’

‘Is that all?’ answered the youth. ‘That is easily done.’

And when night came he went away to the dragon’s house and climbed up on to the roof. Then he opened a little window in the roof and let down the chain from which the kettle usually hung, and tried to hook the bed covering and to draw it up. But the little bells all began to ring, and the dragon woke and said to his wife, ‘Wife, you have pulled off all the bed-clothes!’ and drew the covering towards him, pulling, as he did so, the young man into the room. Then the dragon flung himself on the youth and bound him fast with cords saying as he tied the last knot, ‘To-morrow when I go to church you must stay at home and kill him and cook him, and when I get back we will eat him together.’

So the following morning the dragoness took hold of the young man and reached down from the shelf a sharp knife with which to kill him. But as she untied the cords the better to get hold of him, the prisoner caught her by the legs, threw her to the ground, seized her and speedily cut her throat, just as she had been about to do for him, and put her body in the oven. Then he snatched up the covering and carried it to the king.

The king was seated on his throne when the youth appeared before him and spread out the covering with a deep bow. ‘That is not enough,’ said his majesty; ‘you must bring me the dragon himself, or I will have you hewn into a thousand pieces.’

‘It shall be done,’ answered the youth; ‘but you must give me two years to manage it, for my beard must grow so that he may not know me.’

‘So be it,’ said the king.

And the first thing the young man did when his beard was grown was to take the road to the dragon’s house and on the way he met a beggar, whom he persuaded to change clothes with him, and in the beggar’s garments he went fearlessly forth to the dragon.

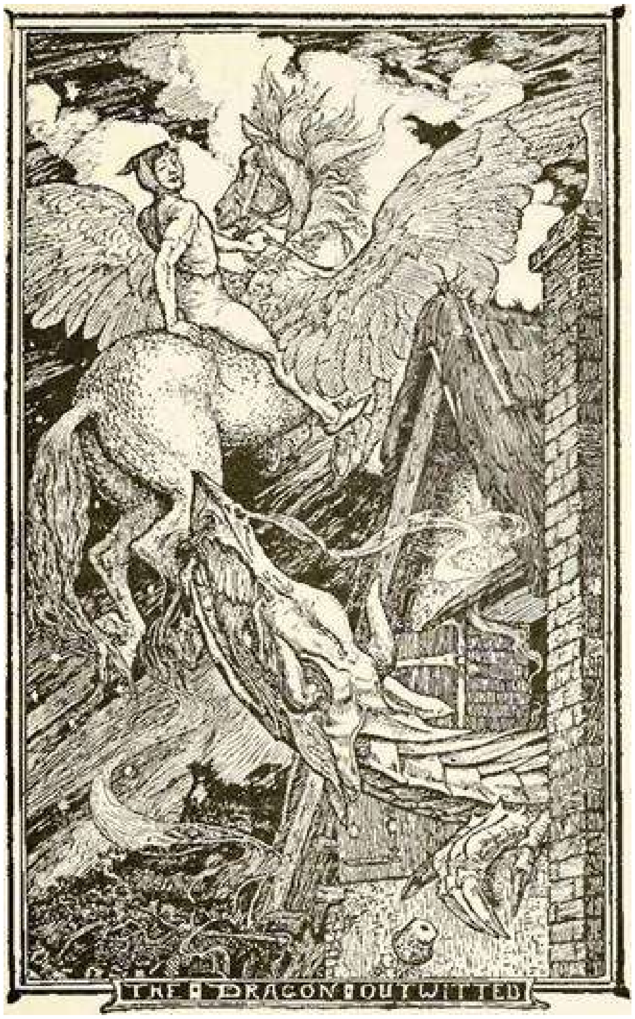

THE DRAGON OUTWITTED

He found his enemy before his house, very busy making a box, and addressed him politely, ‘Good morning, your worship. Have you a morsel of bread?’

‘You must wait,’ replied the dragon, ‘till I have finished my box, and then I will see if I can find one.’

‘What will you do with the box when it is made?’ inquired the beggar.

‘It is for the young man who killed my wife, and stole my flying horse and my bed covering,’ said the dragon.

‘He deserves nothing better,’ answered the beggar, ‘for it was an ill deed. Still that box is too small for him, for he is a big man.’

‘You are wrong,’ said the dragon. ‘The box is large enough even for me.’

‘Well, the rogue is nearly as tall as you,’ replied the beggar, ‘and, of course, if you can get in, he can. But I am sure you would find it a tight fit.’

‘No, there is plenty of room,’ said the dragon, tucking himself carefully inside.

But no sooner was he well in, than the young man clapped on the lid and called out, ‘Now press hard, just to see if he will be able to get out.’

The dragon pressed as hard as he could, but the lid never moved.

‘It is all right,’ he cried; ‘now you can open it.’

But instead of opening it, the young man drove in long nails to make it tighter still; then he took the box on his back and brought it to the king. And when the king heard that the dragon was inside, he was so excited that he would not wait one moment, but broke the lock and lifted the lid just a little way to make sure he was really there. He was very careful not to leave enough space for the dragon to jump out, but unluckily there was just room for his great mouth, and with one snap the king vanished down his wide red jaws. Then the young man married the king’s daughter and ruled over the land, but what he did with the dragon nobody knows.

The Goblin and the Grocer

Translated from the German of Hans Andersen.

There was once a hard-working student who lived in an attic, and he had nothing in the world of his own. There was also a hard-working grocer who lived on the first floor, and he had the whole house for his own.

The Goblin belonged to him, for every Christmas Eve there was waiting for him at the grocer's a dish of jam with a large lump of butter in the middle.

The grocer could afford this, so the Goblin stayed in the grocer's shop; and this teaches us a good deal. One evening the student came in by the back door to buy a candle and some cheese; he had no one to send, so he came himself.

He got what he wanted, paid for it, and nodded a good evening to the grocer and his wife (she was a woman who could do more than nod; she could talk).

When the student had said good night he suddenly stood still, reading the sheet of paper in which the cheese had been wrapped.

It was a leaf torn out of an old book — a book of poetry

'There's more of that over there!' said the grocer 'I gave an old woman some coffee for the book. If you like to give me twopence you can have the rest.'

'Yes,' said the student, 'give me the book instead of the cheese. I can eat my bread without cheese. It would be a shame to leave the book to be torn up. You are a clever and practical man, but about poetry you understand as much as that old tub over there!'

And that sounded rude as far as the tub was concerned, but the grocer laughed, and so did the student. It was only said in fun.

But the Goblin was angry that anyone should dare to say such a thing to a grocer who owned the house and sold the best butter.

When it was night and the shop was shut, and everyone was in bed except the student, the Goblin went upstairs and took the grocer's wife's tongue. She did not use it when she was asleep, and on whatever object in the room he put it that thing began to speak, and spoke out its thoughts and feelings just as well as the lady to whom it belonged. But only one thing at a time could use it, and that was a good thing, or they would have all spoken together.

The Goblin laid the tongue on the tub in which were the old newspapers.

'Is it true,' he asked, ' that you know nothing about poetry?'

'Certainly not!' answered the tub. 'Poetry is something that is in the papers, and that is frequently cut out. I have a great deal more in me than the student has, and yet I am only a small tub in the grocer’s shop.’

And the Goblin put the tongue on the coffee-mill, and how it began to grind! He put it on the butter-cask, and on the till, and all were of the same opinion as the waste-paper tub. and one must believe the majority.

‘Now I will tell the student!’ and with these words he crept softly up the stairs to the attic where the student lived.

There was a light burning, and the Goblin peeped through the key-hole and saw that he was reading the torn book that he had bought in the shop.

But how bright it was! Out of the book shot a streak of light which grew into a large tree and spread its branches far above the student. Every leaf was alive, and every flower was a beautiful girl’s head, some with dark and shining eyes, others with wonderful blue ones. Every fruit was a glittering star, and there was a marvellous music in the student’s room. The little Goblin had never even dreamt of such a splendid sight, much less seen it.

He stood on tiptoe gazing and gazing, till the candle in the attic was put out; the student had blown it out and had gone to bed, but the Goblin remained standing outside listening to the music, which very softly and sweetly was now singing the student a lullaby.

‘I have never seen anything like this!’ said the Goblin. ‘I never expected this! I must stay with the student.’

The little fellow thought it over, for he was a sensible Goblin. Then he sighed, ‘The student has no jam!’

And on that he went down to the grocer again. And it was a good thing that he did go back, for the tub had nearly worn out the tongue. It had read everything that was inside it, on the one side, and was just going to turn itself round and read from the other side when the Goblin came in and returned the tongue to its owner.

But the whole shop, from the till down to the shavings, from that night changed their opinion of the tub, and they looked up to it, and had such faith in it that they were under the impression that when the grocer read the art and drama critiques out of the paper in the evenings, it all came from the tub.

But the Goblin could no longer sit quietly listening to the wisdom and intellect downstairs. No, as soon as the light shone in the evening from the attic it seemed to him as though its beams were strong ropes dragging him up, and he had to go and peep through the key-hole. There he felt the sort of feeling we have looking at the great rolling sea in a storm, and he burst into tears. He could not himself say why he wept, but in spite of his tears he felt quite happy. How beautiful it must be to sit under that tree with the student, but that he could not do; he had to content himself with the key-hole and be happy there!

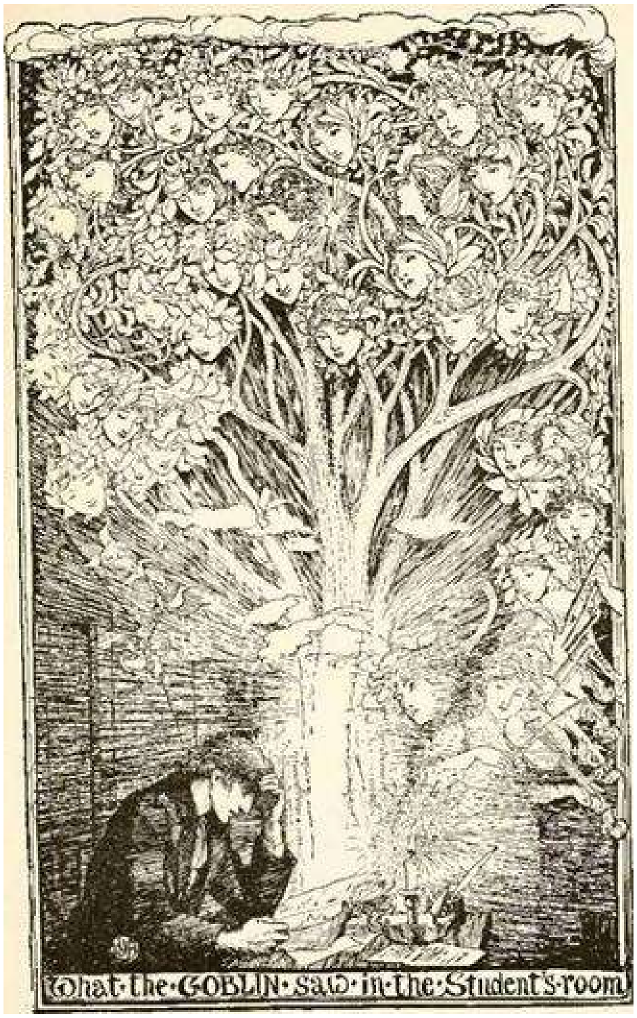

What the GOBLIN saw in the Student's room

There he stood out on the cold landing, the autumn wind blowing through the cracks of the floor. It was cold — very cold, but he first found it out when the light in the attic was put out and the music in the wood died away. Ah! then it froze him, and he crept down again into his warm corner; there it was comfortable and cosy.

When Christmas came, and with it the jam with the large lump of butter, ah! then the grocer was first with him.

But in the middle of the night the Goblin awoke, hearing a great noise and knocking against the shutters — people hammering from outside. The watchman was blowing his horn: a great fire had broken out; the whole town was in flames.

Was it in the house? or was it at a neighbour's? Where was it?

The alarm increased. The grocer's wife was so terrified that she took her gold earrings out of her ears and put them in her pocket in order to save something. The grocer seized his account books. and the maid her black silk dress.

Everyone wanted to save his most valuable possession; so did the Goblin, and in a few leaps he was up the stairs and in the student's room. He was standing quietly by the open window looking at the fire that was burning in the neighbour’s house just opposite. The Goblin seized the book lying on the table, put it in his red cap, and clasped it with both hands. The best treasure in the house was saved, and he climbed out on to the roof with it — on to the chimney. There he sat, lighted up by the flames from the burning house opposite, both hands holding tightly on his red cap, in which lay the treasure; and now he knew what his heart really valued most — to whom he really belonged. But when the fire was put out, and the Goblin thought it over — then —

‘I will divide myself between the two,’ he said. ‘I cannot quite give up the grocer, because of the jam!’

And it is just the same with us. We also cannot quite give up the grocer — because of the jam.

The House in the Wood

From the German of Grimm.

A poor woodcutter lived with his wife and three daughters in a little hut on the borders of a great forest.

One morning as he was going to his work, he said to his wife, ‘Let our eldest daughter bring me my lunch into the wood; and so that she shall not lose her way, I will take a bag of millet with me, and sprinkle the seed on the path.’

When the sun had risen high over the forest, the girl set out with a basin of soup. But the field and wood sparrows, the larks and finches, blackbirds and green finches had picked up the millet long ago, and the girl could not find her way.

She went on and on, till the sun set and night came on. The trees rustled in the darkness, the owls hooted, and she began to be very much frightened. Then she saw in tile distance a light that twinkled between the trees. ‘There must be people living yonder,’ she thought, ‘who will take me in for the night,’ and she began walking towards it.

Not long afterwards she came to a house with lights in the windows.

She knocked at the door, and a gruff voice called, ‘Come in!’

The girl stepped into the dark entrance, and tapped at the door of the room.

‘Just walk in,’ cried the voice, and when she opened the door there sat an old gray-haired man at the table. His face was resting on his hands, and his white beard flowed over the table almost down to the ground.

By the stove lay three beasts, a hen, a cock, and a brindled cow. The girl told the old man her story, and asked for a night’s lodging.

The man said:

Pretty cock,
Pretty hen,
And you, pretty brindled cow,
What do you say now?

‘Duks,’ answered the beasts; and that must have meant, ‘We are quite willing,’ for the old man went on, ‘Here is abundance; go into the back kitchen and cook us a supper.’

The girl found plenty of everything in the kitchen, and cooked a good meal, but she did not think of the beasts.

She placed the full dishes on the table, sat down opposite the gray-haired man, and ate till her hunger was appeased.

When she was satisfied, she said, ‘But now I am so tired, where is a bed in which I can sleep? ‘

The beasts answered:

You have eaten with him,
You have drunk with him,
Of us you have not thought,
Sleep then as you ought!

Then the old man said, ‘Go upstairs, and there you will find a bedroom; shake the bed, and put clean sheets on, and go to sleep.’

The maiden went upstairs, and when she had made the bed, she lay down.

After some time the gray-haired man came, looked at her by the light of his candle, and shook his head. And when he saw that she was sound asleep, he opened a trapdoor and let her fall into the cellar.

The woodcutter came home late in the evening, and reproached his wife for leaving him all day without food.

‘No, I did not,’ she answered; ‘the girl went off with your dinner. She must have lost her way, but will no doubt come back to-morrow.’

But at daybreak the woodcutter started off into the wood, and this time asked his second daughter to bring his food.

‘I will take a bag of lentils,’ said he; ‘they are larger than millet, and the girl will see them better and be sure to find her way.’

At midday the maiden took the food, but the lentils had all gone; as on the previous day, the wood birds had eaten them all.

The maiden wandered about the wood till nightfall, when she came in the same way to the old man’s house, and asked for food and a night’s lodging.

The man with the white hair again asked the beasts: *Pretty cock,*
Pretty hen,
And you, pretty brindled cow,
What do you say now?

The beasts answered, ‘Duks,’ and everything happened as on the former day.

The girl cooked a good meal, ate and drank with the old man, and did not trouble herself about the animals.

And when she asked for a bed, they replied:

You have eaten with him
You have drunk with him,
Of us you have not thought,

Now sleep as you ought!

And when she was asleep, the old man shook his head over her, and let her fall into the cellar.

On the third morning the woodcutter said to his wife, ‘Send our youngest child to-day with my dinner. She is always good and obedient, and will keep to the right path, and not wander away like her sisters, idle drones!’

But the mother said, ‘Must I lose my dearest child too?’

‘Do not fear,’ he answered; ‘she is too clever and intelligent to lose her way. I will take plenty of peas with me and strew them along; they are even larger than lentils, and will show her the way.’

But when the maiden started off with the basket on her arm, the wood pigeons had eaten up the peas, and she did not know which way to go. She was much distressed, and thought constantly of her poor hungry father and her anxious mother. At last, when it grew dark, she saw the little light, and came to the house in the wood. She asked prettily if she might stay there for the night, and the man with the white beard asked his beasts again: *Pretty cock,*

Pretty hen,
And you, pretty brindled cow,
What do you say now?

‘Duks,’ they said. Then the maiden stepped up to the stove where the animals were lying, and stroked the cock and the hen, and scratched the brindled cow between its horns.

And when at the bidding of the old man she had prepared a good supper, and the dishes were standing on the table, she said, ‘Shall I have plenty while the good beasts have nothing? There is food to spare outside; I will attend to them first.’

Then she went out and fetched barley and strewed it before the cock and hen, and brought the cow an armful of sweet-smelling hay.

‘Eat that, dear beasts,’ she said,’ and when you are thirsty you shall have a good drink.’

Then she fetched a bowl of water, and the cock and hen flew on to the edge, put their beaks in, and then held up their heads as birds do when they drink, and the brindled cow also drank her fill. When the beasts were satisfied, the maiden sat down beside the old man at the table and ate what was left for her. Soon the cock and hen began to tuck their heads under their wings, and the brindled cow blinked its eyes, so the maiden said, ‘Shall we not go to rest now?’

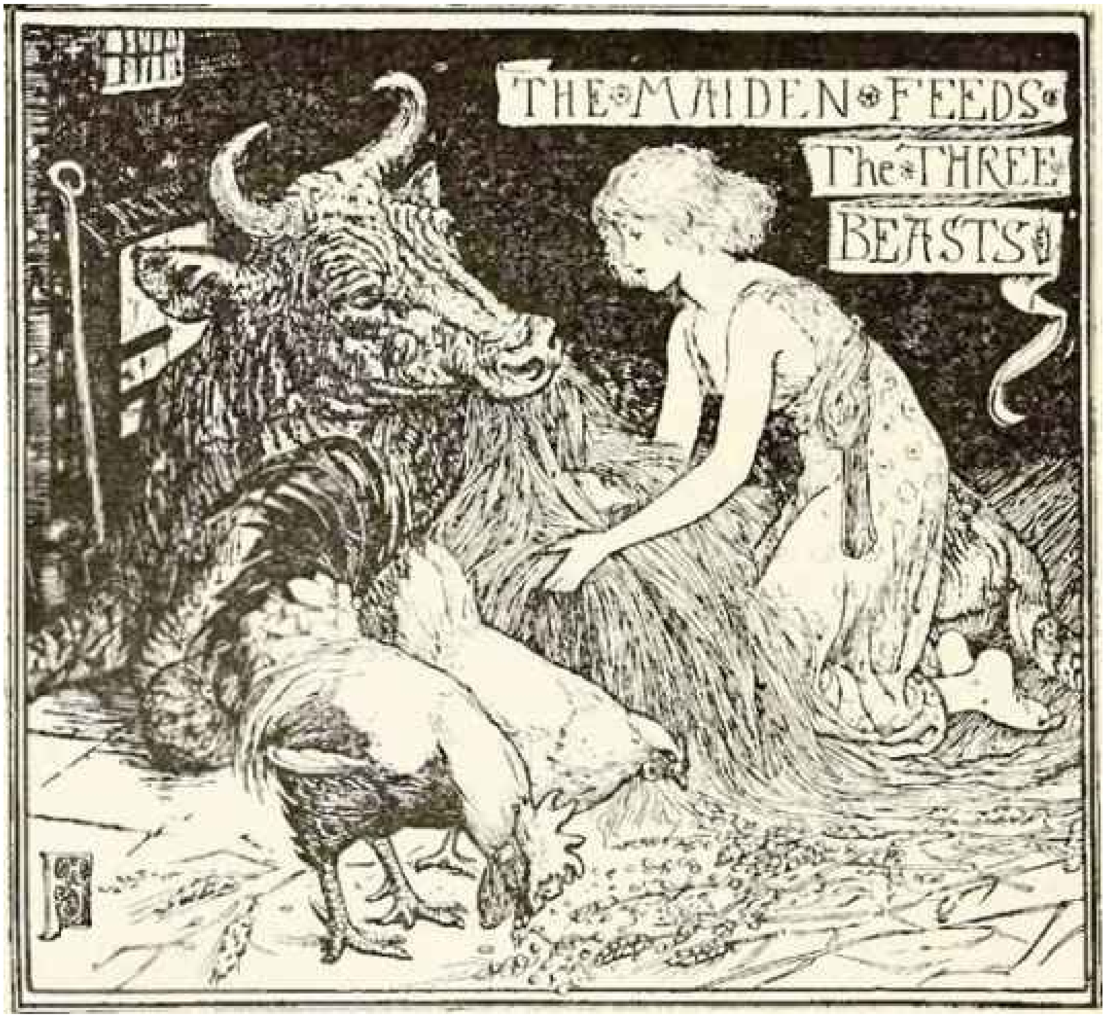
THE MAIDEN FEEDS The THREE BEASTS

Pretty cock,
Pretty hen,
And you, pretty brindled cow,
What do you say now?

The animals said, ‘Duks:

You have eaten with us,
You have drunk with us,
You have tended us right,
So we wish you good night.’

The maiden therefore went upstairs, made the bed and put on clean sheets and fell asleep. She slept peacefully till midnight, when there was such a noise in the house that she awoke. Everything trembled and shook; the animals sprang up and dashed themselves in terror against the wall; the beams swayed as if they would be torn from their foundations, it seemed as if the stairs were tumbling down, and then the roof fell in with a crash. Then all became still, and as no harm came to the maiden she lay down again and fell asleep. But when she awoke again in broad daylight, what a sight met her eyes! She was lying in a splendid room furnished with royal splendour; the walls were covered with golden flowers on a green ground; the bed was of ivory and the counterpane of velvet, and on a stool near by lay a pair of slippers studded with pearls. The maiden thought she must be dreaming, but in came three servants richly dressed, who asked what were her commands. ‘Go,’ said the maiden, ‘I will get up at once and cook the old man’s supper for him, and then I will feed the pretty cock and hen and the brindled cow.’

But the door opened and in came a handsome young man, who said, ‘I am a king’s son, and was condemned by a wicked witch to live as an old man in this wood with no company but that of my three servants, who were transformed into a cock, a hen, and a brindled cow. The spell could only be broken by the arrival of a maiden who should show herself kind not only to men but to beasts. You are that maiden, and last night at midnight we were freed, and this poor house was again transformed into my royal palace.

As they stood there the king’s son told his three servants to go and fetch the maiden’s parents to be present at the wedding feast.

‘But where are my two sisters?’ asked the maid.

‘I shut them up in the cellar, but in the morning they shall be led forth into the forest and shall serve a charcoal burner until they have improved, and will never again suffer poor animals to go hungry.’

Uraschimataro and the Turtle

From the Japanische Marchen und Sagen, von David Brauns (Leipzig: Wilhelm Friedrich).

There was once a worthy old couple who lived on the coast, and supported themselves by fishing. They had only one child, a son, who was their pride and joy, and for his sake they were ready to work hard all day long, and never felt tired or discontented with their lot. This son's name was Uraschimataro, which means in Japanese, 'Son of the island,' and he was a fine well-grown youth and a good fisherman, minding neither wind nor weather. Not the bravest sailor in the whole village dared venture so far out to sea as Uraschimataro, and many a time the neighbours used to shake their heads and say to his parents, 'If your son goes on being so rash, one day he will try his luck once too often, and the waves will end by swallowing him up.' But Uraschimataro paid no heed to these remarks, and as he was really very clever in managing a boat, the old people were very seldom anxious about him.

One beautiful bright morning, as he was hauling his well-filled nets into the boat, he saw lying among the fishes a tiny little turtle. He was delighted with his prize, and threw it into a wooden vessel to keep till he got home, when suddenly the turtle found its voice, and tremblingly begged for its life. 'After all,' it said, 'what good can I do you? I am so young and small, and I would so gladly live a little longer. Be merciful and set me free, and I shall know how to prove my gratitude.'

Now Uraschimataro was very good-natured, and besides, he could never bear to say no, so he picked up the turtle, and put it back into the sea.

Years flew by, and every morning Uraschimataro sailed his boat into the deep sea. But one day as he was making for a little bay between some rocks, there arose a fierce whirlwind, which shattered his boat to pieces, and she was sucked under by the waves. Uraschimataro himself very nearly shared the same fate. But he was a powerful swimmer, and struggled hard to reach the shore. Then he saw a large turtle coming towards him, and above the howling of the storm he heard what it said: 'I am the turtle whose life you once saved. I will now pay my debt and show my gratitude. The land is still far distant, and without my help you would never get there. Climb on my back, and I will take you where you will.' Uraschimataro did not wait to be asked twice, and thankfully accepted his friend's help. But scarcely was he seated firmly on the shell, when the turtle proposed that they should not return to the shore at once, but go under the sea, and look at some of the wonders that lay hidden there.

Uraschimataro agreed willingly, and in another moment they were deep, deep down, with fathoms of blue water above their heads. Oh, how quickly they darted through the still, warm sea! The young man held tight, and marvelled where they were going and how long they were to travel, but for three days they rushed on, till at last the turtle stopped before a splendid palace, shining with gold and silver, crystal and precious stones, and decked here and there with branches of pale pink coral and glittering pearls. But if Uraschimataro was astonished at the beauty of the outside, he was struck dumb at the sight of the hall within, which was lighted by the blaze of fish scales.

‘Where have you brought me?’ he asked his guide in a low voice.

‘To the palace of Ringu, the house of the sea god, whose subjects we all are,’ answered the turtle. ‘I am the first waiting maid of his daughter, the lovely princess Otohime, whom you will shortly see.’

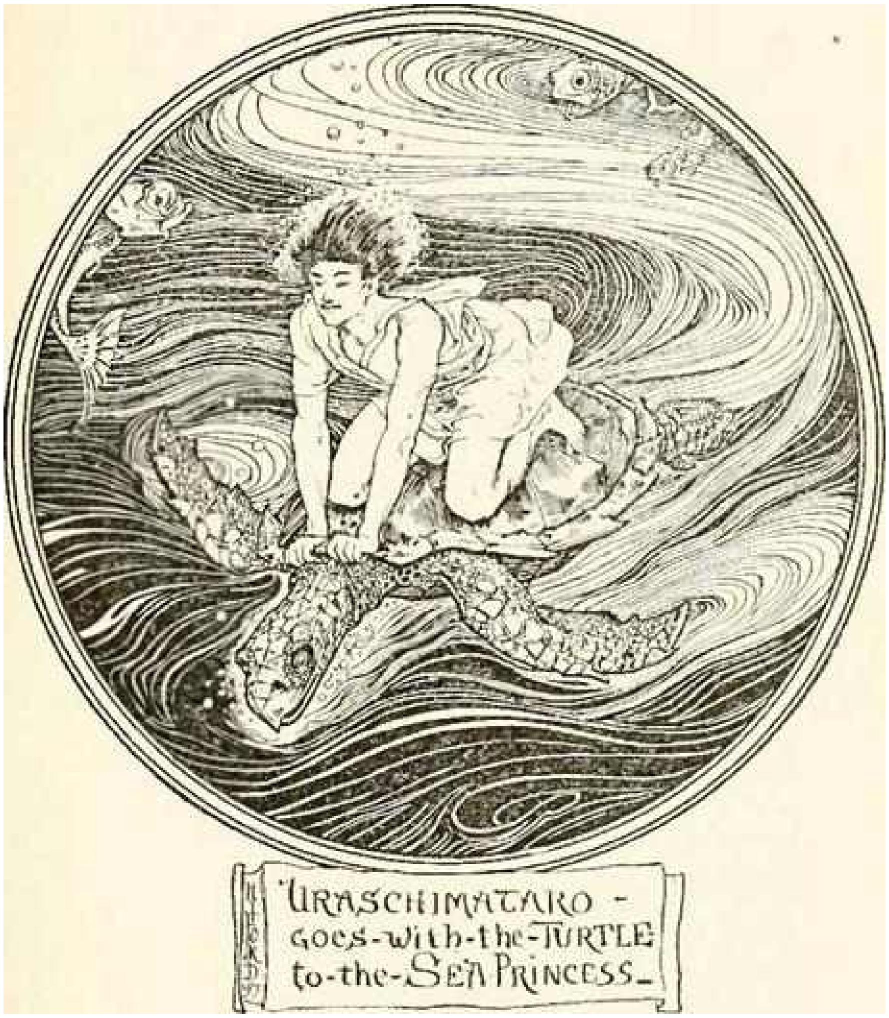

Uraschimataro was still so puzzled with the adventures that had befallen him, that he waited in a dazed condition for what would happen next. But the turtle, who had talked so much of him to the princess that she had expressed a wish to see him, went at once to make known his arrival. And directly the princess beheld him her heart was set on him, and she begged him to stay with her, and in return promised that he should never grow old, neither should his beauty fade. ‘Is not that reward enough?’ she asked, smiling, looking all the while as fair as the sun itself. And Uraschimataro said ‘Yes,’ and so he stayed there. For how long? That he only knew later.

His life passed by, and each hour seemed happier than the last, when one day there rushed over him a terrible longing to see his parents. He fought against it hard, knowing how it would grieve the princess, but it grew on him stronger and stronger, till at length he became so sad that the princess inquired what was wrong. Then he told her of the longing he had to visit his old home, and that he must see his parents once more. The princess was almost frozen with horror, and implored him to stay with her, or something dreadful would be sure to happen.

‘You will never come back, and we shall meet again no more,’ she moaned bitterly. But Uraschimataro stood firm and repeated, ‘Only this once will I leave you, and then will I return to your side for ever.’ Sadly the princess shook her head, but she answered slowly, ‘One way there is to bring you safely back, but I fear you will never agree to the conditions of the bargain.’

‘I will do anything that will bring me back to you,’ exclaimed Uraschimataro, looking at her tenderly, but the princess was silent: she knew too well that when he left her she would see his face no more. Then she took from a shelf a tiny golden box, and gave it to Uraschimataro, praying him to keep it carefully, and above all things never to open it. ‘If you can do this,’ she said as she bade him farewell, ‘your friend the turtle will meet you at the shore, and will carry you back to me.’

Uraschimataro thanked her from his heart, and swore solemnly to do her bidding. He hid the box safely in his garments, seated himself on the back of the turtle, and vanished in the ocean path, waving his hand to the princess. Three days and three nights they swam through the sea, and at length Uraschimataro arrived at the beach which lay before his old home. The turtle bade him farewell, and was gone in a moment.

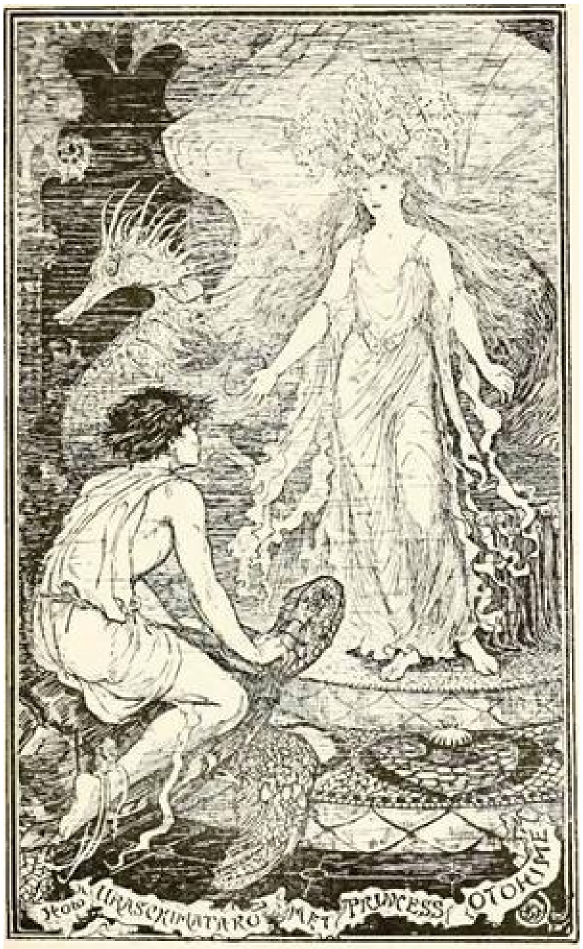
How Uraschimataro met Princess Otokime

Uraschimataro drew near to the village with quick and joyful steps. He saw the smoke curling through the roof, and the thatch where green plants had thickly sprouted. He heard the children shouting and calling, and from a window that he passed came the twang of the koto, and everything seemed to cry a welcome for his return. Yet suddenly he felt a pang at his heart as he wandered down the street. After all, everything was changed. Neither men nor houses were those he once knew. Quickly he saw his old home; yes, it was still there, but it had a strange look. Anxiously he knocked at the door, and asked the woman who opened it after his parents. But she did not know their names, and could give him no news of them.

Still more disturbed, he rushed to the burying ground, the only place that could tell him what he wished to know. Here at any rate he would find out what it all meant. And he was right. In a moment he stood before the grave of his parents, and the date written on the stone was almost exactly the date when they had lost their son, and he had forsaken them for the Daughter of the Sea. And so he found that since he had deft his home, three hundred years had passed by.

Shuddering with horror at his discovery he turned back into the village street, hoping to meet some one who could tell him of the days of old. But when the man spoke, he knew he was not dreaming, though he felt as if he had lost his senses.

In despair he bethought him of the box which was the gift of the princess. Perhaps after all this dreadful thing was not true. He might be the victim of some enchanter’s spell, and in his hand lay the counter-charm. Almost unconsciously he opened it, and a purple vapour came pouring out. He held the empty box in his hand, and as he looked he saw that the fresh hand of youth had grown suddenly shrivelled, like the hand of an old, old man. He ran to the brook, which flowed in a clear stream down from the mountain. and saw himself reflected as in a mirror.

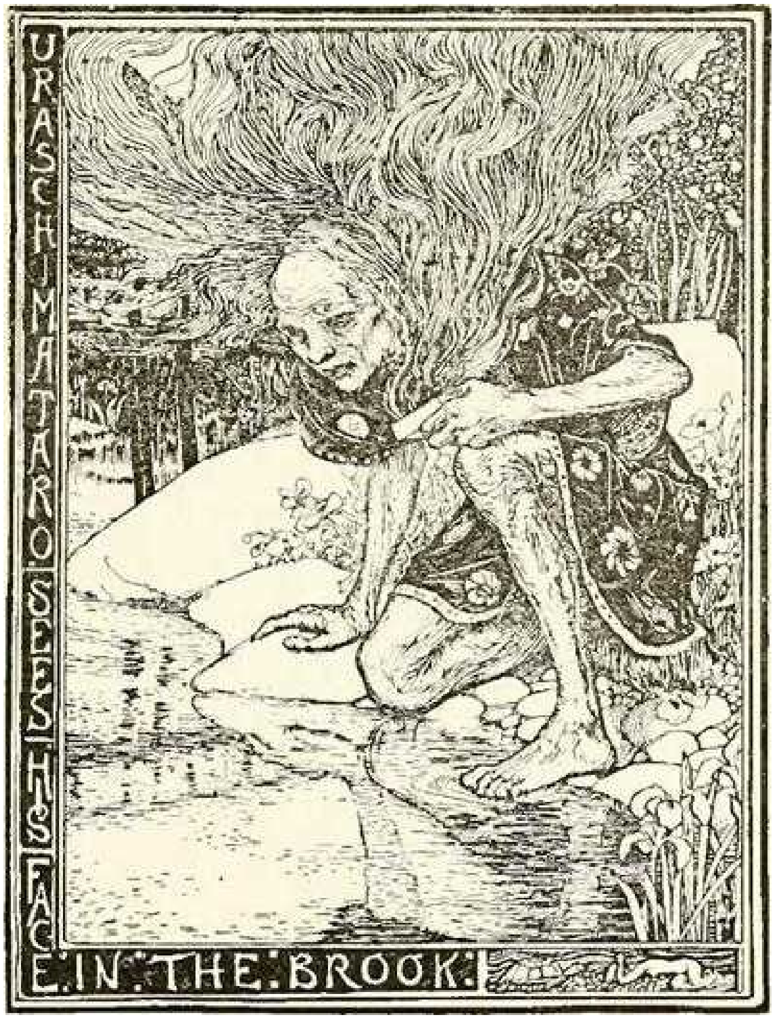
URASCHIMATARO SEES HIS FACE IN THE BROOK

It was the face of a mummy which looked back at him. Wounded to death, he crept back through the village, and no man knew the old, old man to be the strong handsome youth who had run down the street an hour before. So he toiled wearily back, till he reached the shore, and here he sat sadly on a rock, and called loudly on the turtle. But she never came back any more, but instead, death came soon, and set him free. But before that happened, the people who saw him sitting lonely on the shore had heard his story, and when their children were restless they used to tell them of the good son who from love to his parents had given up for their sakes the splendour and wonders of the palace in the sea, and the most beautiful woman in the world besides.

The Slaying of the Tanuki

From the Japanische Murchen und Sagen.

Near a big river, and between two high mountains, a man and his wife lived in a cottage a long, long time ago. A dense forest lay all round the cottage, and there was hardly a path or a tree in the whole wood that was not familiar to the peasant from his boyhood. In one of his wanderings he had made friends with a hare, and many an hour the two passed together, when the man was resting by the roadside, eating his dinner.

Now this strange friendship was observed by the Tanuki, a wicked, quarrelsome beast, who hated the peasant, and was never tired of doing him an ill turn. Again and again he had crept to the hut, and finding some choice morsel put away for the little hare, had either eaten it if he thought it nice, or trampled it to pieces so that no one else should get it, and at last the peasant lost patience, and made up his mind he would have the Tanuki's blood.

So for many days the man lay hidden, waiting for the Tanuki to come by, and when one morning he marched up the road thinking of nothing but the dinner he was going to steal, the peasant threw himself upon him and bound his four legs tightly, so that he could not move. Then he dragged his enemy joyfully to the house, feeling that at length he had got the better of the mischievous beast which had done him so many ill turns. 'He shall pay for them with his skin,' he said to his wife. 'We will first kill him, and then cook him.' So saying, he hanged the Tanuki, head downwards, to a beam, and went out to gather wood for a fire.

Meanwhile the old woman was standing at the mortar pounding the rise that was to serve them for the week with a pestle that made her arms ache with its weight. Suddenly she heard something whining and weeping in the corner, and, stopping her work, she looked round to see what it was. That was all that the rascal wanted, and he put on directly his most humble air, and begged the woman in his softest voice to loosen his bonds, which her hurting him sorely. She was filled with pity for him, but did not dare to set him free, as she knew that her husband would be very angry. The Tanuki, however, did not despair, and seeing that her heart was softened, began his prayers anew. 'He only asked to have his bonds taken from him,' he said. 'He would give his word not to attempt to escape, and if he was once set free he could soon pound her rice for her.' 'Then you can have a little rest,' he went on, 'for rice pounding is very tiring work, and not at all fit for weak women.' These last words melted the good woman completely, and she unfastened the bonds that held him. Poor foolish creature! In one moment the Tanuki had seized her, stripped off all her clothes, and popped her in the mortar. In a few minutes more she was pounded as fine as the rice; and not content with that, the Tanuki placed a pot on the hearth and made ready to cook the peasant a dinner from the flesh of his own wife!

When everything was complete he looked out of the door, and saw the old man coming from the forest carrying a large bundle of wood. Quick as lightning the Tanuki not only put on the woman’s clothes, but, as he was a magician, assumed her form as well. Then he took the wood, kindled the fire, and very soon set a large dinner before the old man, who was very hungry, and had forgotten for the moment all about his enemy. But when the Tanuki saw that he had eaten his fill and would be thinking about his prisoner, he hastily shook off the clothes behind a door and took his own shape. Then he said to the peasant, ‘You are a nice sort of person to seize animals and to talk of killing them! You are caught in your own net. It is your own wife that you have eaten, and if you want to find her bones you have only to look under the floor.’ With these words he turned and made for the forest.

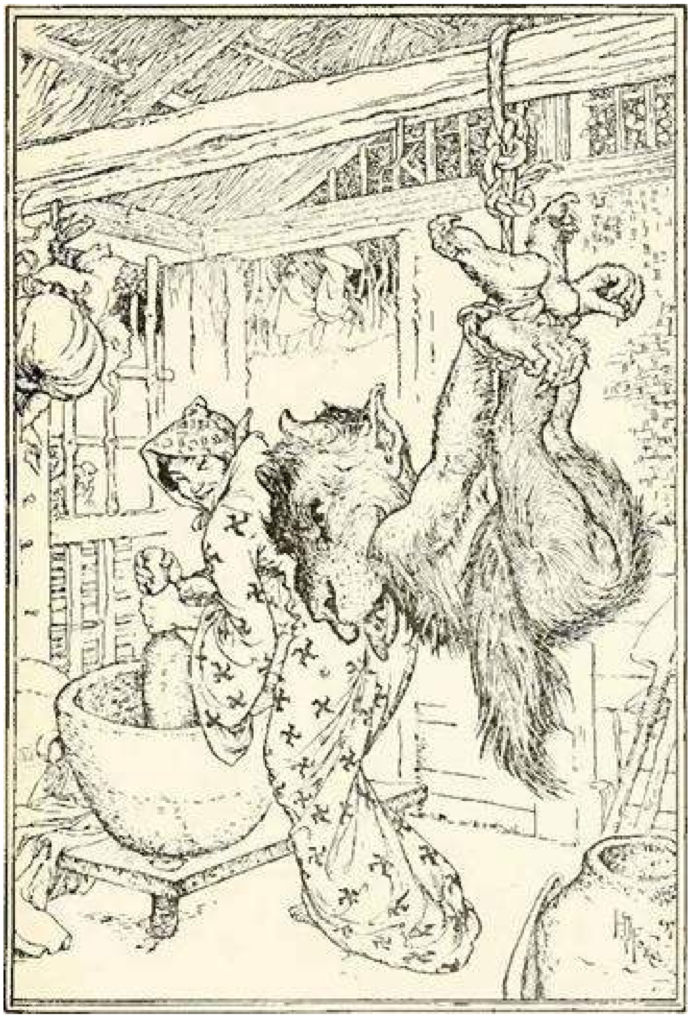

The old peasant grew cold with horror as he listened, and seemed frozen to the place where he stood. When he had recovered himself a little, he collected the bones of his dead wife, buried them in the garden, and swore over the grave to be avenged on the Tanuki. After everything was done he sat himself down in his lonely cottage and wept bitterly, and the bitterest thought of all was that he would never be able to forget that he had eaten his own wife.

While he was thus weeping and wailing his friend the hare passed by, and, hearing the noise, pricked up his ears and soon recognised the old man’s voice. He wondered what had happened, and put his head in at the door and asked if anything was the matter. With tears and groans the peasant told him the whole dreadful story, and the hare, filled with anger and compassion, comforted him as best he could, and promised to help him in his revenge. ‘The false knave shall not go unpunished,’ said he.

So the first thing he did was to search the house for materials to make an ointment, which he sprinkled plentifully with pepper and then put in his pocket. Next he took a hatchet, bade farewell to the old man, and departed to the forest.

He bent his steps to the dwelling of the Tanuki and knocked at the door. The Tanuki, who had no cause to suspect the hare, was greatly pleased to see him, for he noticed the hatchet at once, and began to lay plots how to get hold of it.

To do this he thought he had better offer to accompany the hare, which was exactly what the hare wished and expected, for he knew all the Tanuki's cunning, and understood his little ways. So he accepted the rascal's company with joy, and made himself very pleasant as they strolled along. When they were wandering in this manner through the forest the hare carelessly raised his hatchet in passing, and cut down some thick boughs that were hanging over the path, but at length, after cutting down a good big tree, which cost him many hard blows, he declared that it was too heavy for him to carry home, and he must just leave it where it was. This delighted the greedy Tanuki, who said that they would be no weight for him, so they collected the large branches, which the hare bound tightly on his back. Then he trotted gaily to the house, the hare following after with his lighter bundle.

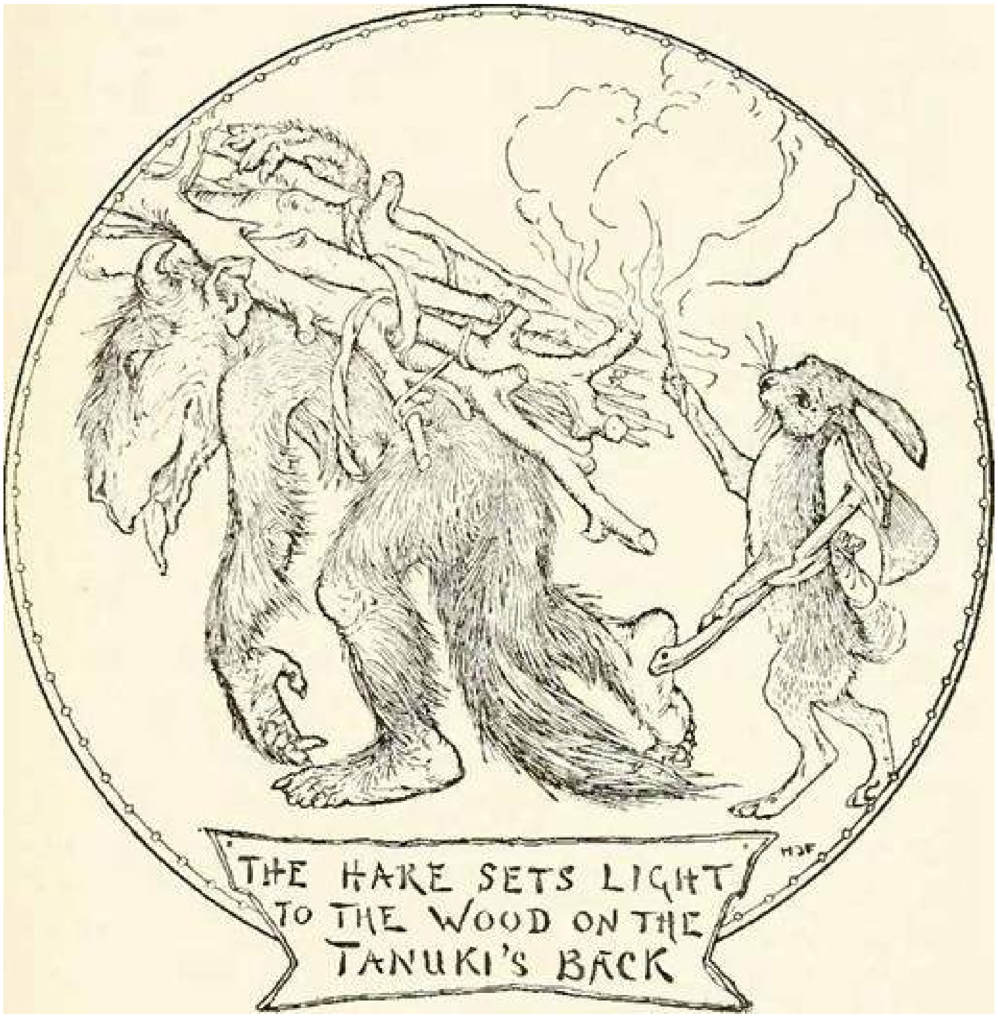
THE HARE SETS LIGHT TO THE WOOD ON THE TANUKI'S BACK
HJF

By this time the hare had decided what he would do, and as soon as they arrived, he quietly set on fire the wood on the back of the Tanuki. The Tanuki, who was busy with something else, observed nothing, and only called out to ask what was the meaning of the crackling that he heard. ‘It is just the rattle of the stones which are rolling down the side of the mountain,’ the hare said; and the Tanuki was content, and made no further remarks, never noticing that the noise really sprang from the burning boughs on his back, until his fur was in flames, and it was almost too late to put it out. Shrieking with pain, he let fall the burning wood from his back, and stamped and howled with agony. But the hare comforted him, and told him that he always carried with him an excellent plaster in case of need, which would bring him instant relief, and taking out his ointment he spread it on a leaf of bamboo, and laid it on the wound. No sooner did it touch him than the Tanuki leapt yelling into the air, and the hare laughed, and ran to tell his friend the peasant what a trick he had played on their enemy. But the old man shook his head sadly, for he knew that the villain was only crushed for the moment, and that he would shortly be revenging himself upon them. No, the only way every to get any peace and quiet was to render the Tanuki harmless for ever. Long did the old man and the hare puzzle together how this was to be done, and at last they decided that they would make two boats, a small one of wood and a large one of clay. Then they fell to work at once, and when the boats were ready and properly painted, the hare went to the Tanuki, who was still very ill, and invited him to a great fish-catching. The Tanuki was still feeling angry with the hare about the trick he had played him, but he was weak and very hungry, so he gladly accepted the proposal, and accompanied the hare to the bank of the river, where the two boats were moored, rocked by the waves. They both looked exactly alike, and the Tanuki only saw that one was bigger than the other, and would hold more fish, so he sprang into the large one, while the hare climbed into the one which was made of wood. They loosened their moorings, and made for the middle of the stream, and when they were at some distance from the bank, the hare took his oar, and struck such a heavy blow at the other boat, that it broke in two. The Tanuki fell straight into the water, and was held there by the hare till he was quite dead. Then he put the body in his boat and rowed to land, and told the old man that his enemy was dead at last. And the old man rejoiced that his wife was avenged, and he took the hare into his house, and they lived together all their days in peace and quietness upon the mountain.

The Flying Trunk

Translated from the German of Hans Andersen.

There was once a merchant who was so rich that he could have paved the whole street, and perhaps even a little side-street besides, with silver. But he did not do that; he knew another way of spending his money. If he spent a shilling he got back a florin-such an excellent merchant he was till he died.

Now his son inherited all this money. He lived very merrily; he went every night to the theatre, made paper kites out of five-pound notes, and played ducks and drakes with sovereigns instead of stones. In this way the money was likely to come soon to an end, and so it did.

At last he had nothing left but four shillings, and he had no clothes except a pair of slippers and an old dressing-gown.

His friends did not trouble themselves any more about him; they would not even walk down the street with him.

But one of them who was rather good-natured sent him an old trunk with the message, ‘Pack up!” That was all very well, but he had nothing to pack up, so he got into the trunk himself.

It was an enchanted trunk, for as soon as the lock was pressed it could fly. He pressed it, and away he flew in it up the chimney, high into the clouds, further and further away. But whenever the bottom gave a little creak he was in terror lest the trunk should go to pieces, for then he would have turned a dreadful somersault-just think of it!

In this way he arrived at the land of the Turks. He hid the trunk in a wood under some dry leaves, and then walked into the town. He could do that quite well, for all the Turks were dressed just as he was-in a dressing-gown and slippers.

He met a nurse with a little child.

‘Halloa! you Turkish nurse,’ said he, ‘what is that great castle there close to the town? The one with the windows so high up?’

‘The sultan’s daughter lives there,’ she replied. ‘It is prophesied that she will be very unlucky in her husband, and so no one is allowed to see her except when the sultan and sultana are by.’

‘Thank you,’ said the merchant’s son, and he went into the wood, sat himself in his trunk, flew on to the roof, and crept through the window into the princess’s room.

She was lying on the sofa asleep, and was so beautiful that the young merchant had to kiss her. Then she woke up and was very much frightened, but he said he was a Turkish god who had come through the air to see her, and that pleased her very much.

They sat close to each other, and he told her a story about her eyes. They were beautiful dark lakes in which her thoughts swam about like mermaids. And her forehead was a snowy mountain, grand and shining. These were lovely stories.

Then he asked the princess to marry him, and she said yes at once.

‘But you must come here on Saturday,’ she said, ‘for then the sultan and the sultana are coming to tea with me. They will be indeed proud that I receive the god of the Turks. But mind you have a really good story ready, for my parents like them immensely. My mother likes something rather moral and high-flown, and my father likes something merry to make him laugh.’

‘Yes, I shall only bring a fairy story for my dowry,’ said he, and so they parted. But the princess gave him a sabre set with gold pieces which he could use.

Then he flew away, bought himself a new dressing-gown, and sat down in the wood and began to make up a story, for it had to be ready by Saturday, and that was no easy matter.

When he had it ready it was Saturday.

The sultan, the sultana, and the whole court were at tea with the princess.

He was most graciously received.

‘Will you tell us a story?’ said the sultana; ‘one that is thoughtful and instructive?’

‘But something that we can laugh at,’ said the sultan.

‘Oh, certainly,’ he replied, and began: ‘Now, listen attentively. There was once a box of matches which lay between a tinder-box and an old iron pot, and they told the story of their youth.

‘“We used to be on the green fir-boughs. Every morning and evening we had diamond-tea, which was the dew, and the whole day long we had sunshine, and the little birds used to tell us stories. We were very rich, because the other trees only dressed in summer, but we had green dresses in summer and in winter. Then the woodcutter came, and our family was split up. We have now the task of making light for the lowest people. That is why we grand people are in the kitchen.”

‘“My fate was quite different,” said the iron pot, near which the matches lay.

‘“Since I came into the world I have been many times scoured, and have cooked much. My only pleasure is to have a good chat with my companions when I am lying nice and clean in my place after dinner.”

'"Now you are talking too fast," spluttered the fire.

'"Yes, let us decide who is the grandest!" said the matches.

'"No, I don't like talking about myself," said the pot.

'"Let us arrange an evening's entertainment. I will tell the story of my life.

'"On the Baltic by the Danish shore-"

'What a beautiful beginning!" said all the plates. "That's a story that will please us all."

'And the end was just as good as the beginning. All the plates clattered for joy.

'"Now I will dance," said the tongs, and she danced. Oh! how high she could kick!

'The old chair-cover in the corner split when he saw her.

'The urn would have sung but she said she had a cold; she could not sing unless she boiled.

'In the window was an old quill pen. There was nothing remarkable about her except that she had been dipped too deeply into the ink. But she was very proud of that.

'"If the urn will not sing," said she, "outside the door hangs a nightingale in a cage who will sing."

'"I don't think it's proper," said the kettle, "that such a foreign bird should be heard."

'"Oh, let us have some acting," said everyone. "Do let us!"

'Suddenly the door opened and the maid came in. Everyone was quite quiet. There was not a sound. But each pot knew what he might have done, and how grand he was.

'The maid took the matches and lit the fire with them. How they spluttered and flamed, to be sure! "Now everyone can see," they thought, "that we are the grandest! How we sparkle! What a light-"

'But here they were burnt out.'

'That was a delightful story!' said the sultana. 'I quite feel myself in the kitchen with the matches. Yes, now you shall marry our daughter.'

'Yes, indeed,' said the sultan, 'you shall marry our daughter on Monday.' And they treated the young man as one of the family.

The wedding was arranged, and the night before the whole town was illuminated.

Biscuits and gingerbreads were thrown among the people, the street boys stood on tiptoe crying hurrahs and whistling through their fingers. It was all splendid.

'Now I must also give them a treat,' thought the merchant's son. And so he bought rockets, crackers, and all the kinds of fireworks you can think of, put them in his trunk, and flew up with them into the air.

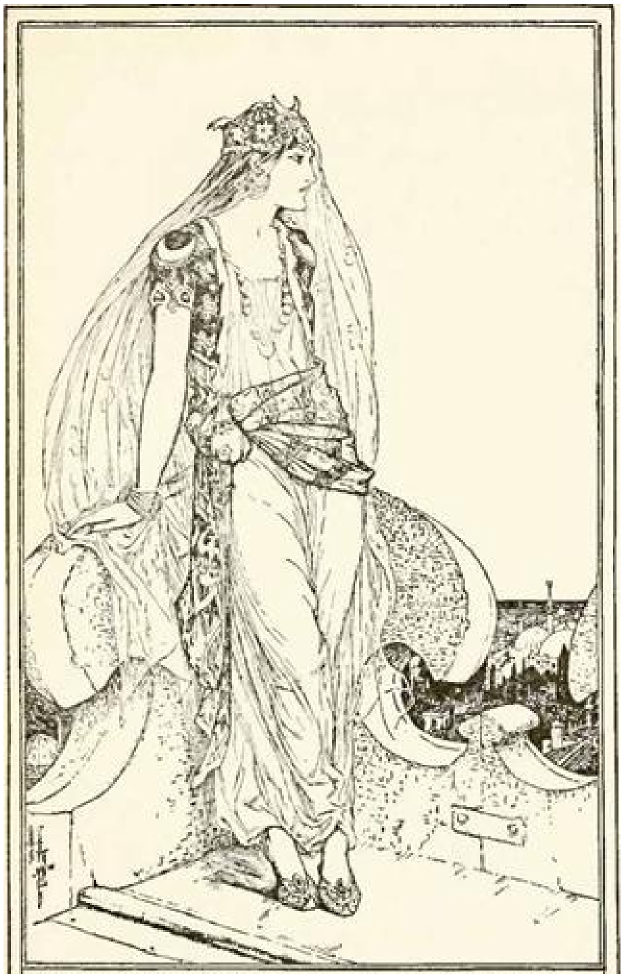

THE PRINCESS WAITED ALL DAY ON THE ROOF.

Whirr-r-r, how they fizzed and blazed!

All the Turks jumped so high that their slippers flew above their heads; such a splendid glitter they had never seen before.

Now they could quite well understand that it was the god of the Turks himself who was to marry the princess.

As soon as the young merchant came down again into the wood with his trunk he thought, ‘Now I will just go into the town to see how the show has taken.’

And it was quite natural that he should want to do this.

Oh! what stories the people had to tell!

Each one whom he asked had seen it differently, but they had all found it beautiful.

‘I saw the Turkish god himself,’ said one. ‘He had eyes like glittering stars, and a beard like foaming water.’

‘He flew away in a cloak of fire,’ said another. They were splendid things that he heard, and the next day was to be his wedding day.

Then he went back into the wood to sit in his trunk; but what had become of it? The trunk had been burnt. A spark of the fireworks had set it alight, and the trunk was in ashes. He could no longer fly, and could never reach his bride.

She stood the whole day long on the roof and waited; perhaps she is waiting there still.

But he wandered through the world and told stories; though they are not so merry as the one he told about the matches.

The Snow-man

Translated from the German of Hans Andersen.

‘How astonishingly cold it is! My body is cracking all over!’ said the Snow-man. ‘The wind is really cutting one’s very life out! And how that fiery thing up there glares!’ He meant the sun, which was just setting. ‘It sha’n’t make me blink, though, and I shall keep quite cool and collected.’

Instead of eyes he had two large three-cornered pieces of slate in his head; his mouth consisted of an old rake, so that he had teeth as well.

He was born amidst the shouts and laughter of the boys, and greeted by the jingling bells and cracking whips of the sledges.

The sun went down, the full moon rose, large, round, clear and beautiful, in the dark blue sky.

‘There it is again on the other side!’ said the Snow-man, by which he meant the sun was appearing again. ‘I have become quite accustomed to its glaring. I hope it will hang there and shine, so that I may be able to see myself. I wish I knew, though, how one ought to see about changing one’s position. I should very much like to move about. If I only could, I would glide up and down the ice there, as I saw the boys doing; but somehow or other, I don’t know how to run.’

‘Bow-wow!’ barked the old yard-dog; he was rather hoarse and couldn’t bark very well. His hoarseness came on when he was a house-dog and used to lie in front of the stove. ‘The sun will soon teach you to run! I saw that last winter with your predecessor, and farther back still with his predecessors! They have all run away!’

‘I don’t understand you, my friend,’ said the Snow-man. ‘That thing up there is to teach me to run?’ He meant the moon. ‘Well, it certainly did run just now, for I saw it quite plainly over there, and now here it is on this side.’

‘You know nothing at all about it,’ said the yard-dog. ‘Why, you have only just been made. The thing you see there is the moon; the other thing you saw going down the other side was the sun. He will come up again tomorrow morning, and will soon teach you how to run away down the gutter. The weather is going to change; I feel it already by the pain in my left hind-leg; the weather is certainly going to change.’

‘I can’t understand him,’ said the Snow-man; ‘but I have an idea that he is speaking of something unpleasant. That thing that glares so, and then disappears, the sun, as he calls it, is not my friend. I know that by instinct.’

‘Bow-wow!’ barked the yard-dog, and walked three times round himself, and then crept into his kennel to sleep. The weather really did change. Towards morning a dense damp fog lay over the whole neighbourhood; later on came an icy wind, which sent the frost packing. But when the sun rose, it was a glorious sight. The trees and shrubs were covered with rime, and looked like a wood of coral, and every branch was thick with long white blossoms. The most delicate twigs, which are lost among the foliage in summer-time, came now into prominence, and it was like a spider’s web of glistening white. The lady-birches waved in the wind; and when the sun shone, everything glittered and sparkled as if it were sprinkled with diamond dust, and great diamonds were lying on the snowy carpet.

‘Isn’t it wonderful?’ exclaimed a girl who was walking with a young man in the garden. They stopped near the Snow-man, and looked at the glistening trees. ‘Summer cannot show a more beautiful sight,’ she said, with her eyes shining.

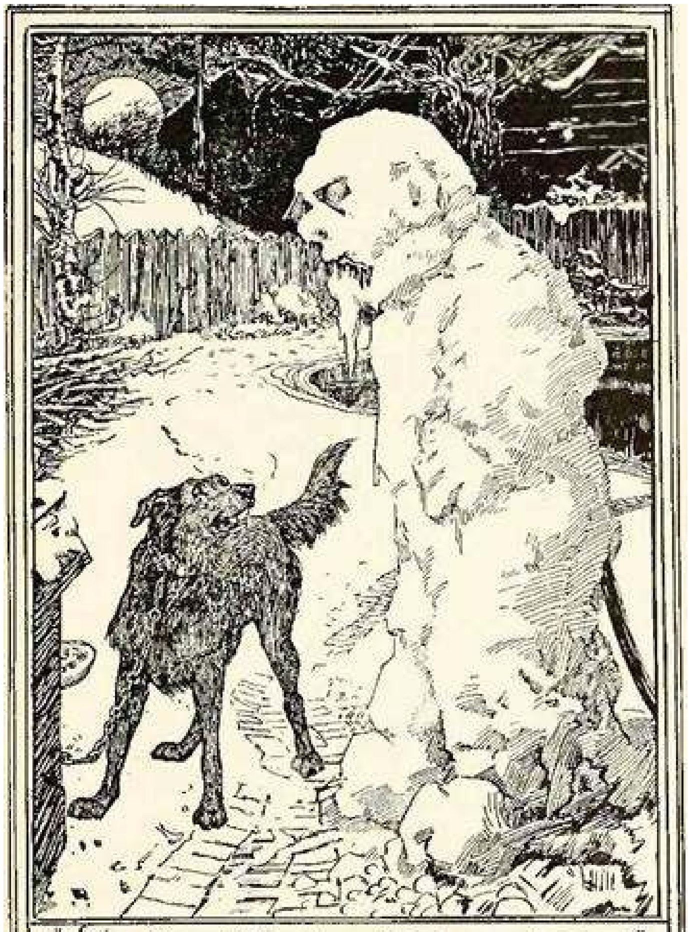

"The Sun will soon teach you to run" said the Yard-dog.

‘And one can’t get a fellow like this in summer either,’ said the young man, pointing to the Snow-man. ‘He’s a beauty!’

The girl laughed, and nodded to the Snow-man, and then they both danced away over the snow.

‘Who were those two?’ asked the Snow-man of the yard-dog. ‘You have been in this yard longer than I have. Do you know who they are?’

‘Do I know them indeed?’ answered the yard-dog. ‘She has often stroked me, and he has given me bones. I don’t bite either of them!’

‘But what are they?’ asked the Snow-man.

‘Lovers!’ replied the yard-dog. ‘They will go into one kennel and gnaw the same bone!’

‘Are they the same kind of beings that we are?’ asked the Snow-man.

‘They are our masters,’ answered the yard-dog. ‘Really people who have only been in the world one day know very little.’ That’s the conclusion I have come to. Now I have age and wisdom; I know everyone in the house, and I can remember a time when I was not lying here in a cold kennel. Bow-wow!’

‘The cold is splendid,’ said the Snow-man. ‘Tell me some more. But don’t rattle your chain so, it makes me crack!’

‘Bow-wow!’ barked the yard-dog. ‘They used to say I was a pretty little fellow; then I lay in a velvet-covered chair in my master’s house. My mistress used to nurse me, and kiss and fondle me, and call me her dear, sweet little Alice! But by-and-by I grew too big, and I was given to the housekeeper, and I went into the kitchen. You can see into it from where you are standing; you can look at the room in which I was master, for so I was when I was with the housekeeper. Of course it was a smaller place than upstairs, but it was more comfortable, for I wasn’t chased about and teased by the children as I had been before. My food was just as good, or even better. I had my own pillow, and there was a stove there, which at this time of year is the most beautiful thing in the world. I used to creep right under that stove. Ah me! I often dream of that stove still! Bow-wow!’

‘Is a stove so beautiful?’ asked the Snow-man. ‘Is it anything like me?’

‘It is just the opposite of you! It is coal-black, and has a long neck with a brass pipe. It eats firewood, so that fire spouts out of its mouth. One has to keep close beside it-quite underneath is the nicest of all. You can see it through the window from where you are standing.’

And the Snow-man looked in that direction, and saw a smooth polished object with a brass pipe. The flicker from the fire reached him across the snow. The Snow-man felt wonderfully happy, and a feeling came over him which he could not express; but all those who are not snow-men know about it.

‘Why did you leave her?’ asked the Snow-man. He had a feeling that such a being must be a lady. ‘How could you leave such a place?’

‘I had to!’ said the yard-dog. ‘They turned me out of doors, and chained me up here. I had bitten the youngest boy in the leg, because he took away the bone I was gnawing; a bone for a bone, I thought! But they were very angry, and from that time I have been chained here, and I have lost my voice. Don’t you hear how hoarse I am? Bow-wow! I can’t speak like other dogs. Bow-wow! That was the end of happiness!’

The Snow-man, however, was not listening to him any more; he was looking into the room where the housekeeper lived, where the stove stood on its four iron legs, and seemed to be just the same size as the Snow-man.

‘How something is cracking inside me!’ he said. ‘Shall I never be able to get in there? It is certainly a very innocent wish, and our innocent wishes ought to be fulfilled. I must get there, and lean against the stove, if I have to break the window first!’

‘You will never get inside there!’ said the yard-dog; ‘and if you were to reach the stove you would disappear. Bow-wow!’

‘I’m as good as gone already!’ answered the Snow-man. ‘I believe I’m breaking up!’

The whole day the Snow-man looked through the window; towards dusk the room grew still more inviting; the stove gave out a mild light, not at all like the moon or even the sun; no, as only a stove can shine, when it has something to feed upon. When the door of the room was open, it flared up-this was one of its peculiarities; it flickered quite red upon the Snow-man’s white face.

‘I can’t stand it any longer!’ he said. ‘How beautiful it looks with its tongue stretched out like that!’

It was a long night, but the Snow-man did not find it so; there he stood, wrapt in his pleasant thoughts, and they froze, so that he cracked.

Next morning the panes of the kitchen window were covered with ice, and the most beautiful ice-flowers that even a snow-man could desire, only they blotted out the stove. The window would not open; he couldn’t see the stove which he thought was such a lovely lady. There was a cracking and cracking inside him and all around; there was just such a frost as a snow-man would delight in. But this Snow-man was different: how could he feel happy?

‘Yours is a bad illness for a Snow-man!’ said the yard-dog. ‘I also suffered from it, but I have got over it. Bow-wow!’ he barked. ‘The weather is going to change!’ he added.

The weather did change. There came a thaw.

When this set in the Snow-man set off. He did not say anything, and he did not complain, and those are bad signs.

One morning he broke up altogether. And lo! where he had stood there remained a broomstick standing upright, round which the boys had built him!

‘Ah! now I understand why he loved the stove,’ said the yard-dog. ‘That is the raker they use to clean out the stove! The Snow-man had a stove-raker in his body! That’s what was the matter with him! And now it’s all over with him! Bow-wow!’

And before long it was all over with the winter too! ‘Bow-wow!’ barked the hoarse yard-dog.

But the young girl sang:

Woods, your bright green garments don!
Willows, your woolly gloves put on!
Lark and cuckoo, daily sing — February has brought the spring!
My heart joins in your song so sweet;
Come out, dear sun, the world to greet!

And no one thought of the Snow-man.

The Shirt-collar

Translated from the German of Hans Andersen.

There was once a fine gentleman whose entire worldly possessions consisted of a boot-jack and a hair-brush; but he had the most beautiful shirt-collar in the world, and it is about this that we are going to hear a story.

The shirt-collar was so old that he began to think about marrying; and it happened one day that he and a garter came into the wash-tub together.

‘Hulloa!’ said the shirt-collar, ‘never before have I seen anything so slim and delicate, so elegant and pretty! May I be permitted to ask your name?’

‘I shan’t tell you,’ said the garter.

‘Where is the place of your abode?’ asked the shirt-collar.

But the garter was of a bashful disposition, and did not think it proper to answer.

‘Perhaps you are a girdle?’ said the shirt-collar, ‘an under girdle? for I see that you are for use as well as for ornament, my pretty miss!’

‘You ought not to speak to me!’ said the garter’ ‘I’m sure I haven’t given you any encouragement!’

‘When anyone is as beautiful as you,’ said the shirt-collar, ‘is not that encouragement enough?’

‘Go away, don’t come so close!’ said the garter. ‘You seem to be a gentleman!’

‘So I am, and a very fine one too!’ said the shirt-collar; ‘I possess a boot-jack and a hair-brush!’

That was not true; it was his master who owned these things; but he was a terrible boaster.

‘Don’t come so close,’ said the garter. ‘I’m not accustomed to such treatment!’

‘What affectation!’ said the shirt-collar. And then they were taken out of the wash-tub, starched, and hung on a chair in the sun to dry, and then laid on the ironing-board. Then came the glowing iron.

‘Mistress widow!’ said the shirt-collar, ‘dear mistress widow! I am becoming another man, all my creases are coming out; you are burning a hole in me! Ugh! Stop, I implore you!’

‘You rag!’ said the iron, travelling proudly over the shirt-collar, for it thought it was a steam engine and ought to be at the station drawing trucks.

‘Rag!’ it said.

The shirt-collar was rather frayed out at the edge, so the scissors came to cut off the threads.

‘Oh!’ said the shirt-collar, ‘you must be a dancer! How high you can kick! That is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen! No man can imitate you!’

‘I know that!’ said the scissors.

‘You ought to be a duchess!’ said the shirt-collar. ‘My worldly possessions consist of a fine gentleman, a boot-jack, and a hair-brush. If only I had a duchy!’

‘What! He wants to marry me?’ said the scissors, and she was so angry that she gave the collar a sharp snip, so that it had to be cast aside as good for nothing.

‘Well, I shall have to propose to the hair-brush!’ thought the shirt-collar. ‘It is really wonderful what fine hair you have, madam! Have you never thought of marrying?’

‘Yes, that I have!’ answered the hair-brush; ‘I’m engaged to the boot-jack!’

‘Engaged!’ exclaimed the shirt-collar. And now there was no one he could marry, so he took to despising matrimony.

Time passed, and the shirt-collar came in a rag-bag to the paper-mill. There was a large assortment of rags, the fine ones in one heap, and the coarse ones in another, as they should be. They had all much to tell, but no one more than the shirt-collar, for he was a hopeless braggart.

‘I have had a terrible number of love affairs!’ he said. ‘They give me no peace. I was such a fine gentleman, so stiff with starch! I had a boot-jack and a hair-brush, which I never used! You should just have seen me then! Never shall I forget my first love! She was a girdle, so delicate and soft and pretty! She threw herself into a wash-tub for my sake! Then there was a widow, who glowed with love for me. But I left her alone, till she became black. Then there was the dancer, who inflicted the wound which has caused me to be here now; she was very violent! My own hair-brush was in love with me, and lost all her hair in consequence. Yes, I have experienced much in that line; but I grieve most of all for the garter,-I mean, the girdle, who threw herself into a wash-tub. I have much on my conscience; it is high time for me to become white paper!’

And so he did! he became white paper, the very paper on which this story is printed. And that was because he had boasted so terribly about things which were not true. We should take this to heart, so that it may not happen to us, for we cannot indeed tell if we may not some day come to the rag-bag, and be made into white paper, on which will be printed our whole history, even the most secret parts, so that we too go about the world relating it, like the shirt-collar.

The Princess in the Chest

Translated from the Danish.

There were once a king and a queen who lived in a beautiful castle, and had a large, and fair, and rich, and happy land to rule over. From the very first they loved each other greatly, and lived very happily together, but they had no heir.

They had been married for seven years, but had neither son nor daughter, and that was a great grief to both of them. More than once it happened that when the king was in a bad temper, he let it out on the poor queen, and said that here they were now, getting old, and neither they nor the kingdom had an heir, and it was all her fault. This was hard to listen to, and she went and cried and vexed herself.

Finally, the king said to her one day, ‘This can’t be borne any longer. I go about childless, and it’s your fault. I am going on a journey and shall be away for a year. If you have a child when I come back again, all will be well, and I shall love you beyond all measure, and never more say an angry word to you. But if the nest is just as empty when I come home, then I must part with you.’

After the king had set out on his journey, the queen went about in her loneliness, and sorrowed and vexed herself more than ever. At last her maid said to her one day, ‘I think that some help could be found, if your majesty would seek it.’ Then she told about a wise old woman in that country, who had helped many in troubles of the same kind, and could no doubt help the queen as well, if she would send for her. The queen did so, and the wise woman came, and to her she confided her sorrow, that she, was childless, and the king and his kingdom had no heir.

The wise woman knew help for this. ‘Out in the king’s garden,’ said she, ‘under the great oak that stands on the left hand, just as one goes out from the castle, is a little bush, rather brown than green, with hairy leaves and long spikes. On that bush there are just at this moment three buds. If your majesty goes out there alone, fasting, before sunrise, and takes the middle one of the three buds, and eats it, then in six months you will bring a princess into the world. As soon as she is born, she must have a nurse, whom I shall provide, and this nurse must live with the child in a secluded part of the palace; no other person must visit the child; neither the king nor the queen must see it until it is fourteen years old, for that would cause great sorrow and misfortune.’

The queen rewarded the old woman richly, and next morning, before the sun rose, she was down in the garden, found at once the little bush with the three buds, plucked the middle one and ate it. It was sweet to taste, but afterwards was as bitter as gall. Six months after this, she brought into the world a little girl. There was a nurse in readiness, whom the wise woman had provided, and preparations were made for her living with the child, quite alone, in a secluded wing of the castle, looking out on the pleasure-park. The queen did as the wise woman had told her; she gave up the child immediately, and the nurse took it and lived with it there.

When the king came home and heard that a daughter had been born to him, he was of course very pleased and happy, and wanted to see her at once.

The queen had then to tell him this much of the story, that it had been foretold that it would cause great sorrow and misfortune if either he or she got a sight of the child until it had completed its fourteenth year.

This was a long time to wait. The king longed so much to get a sight of his daughter, and the queen no less than he, but she knew that it was not like other children, for it could speak immediately after it was born, and was as wise as older folk. This the nurse had told her, for with her the queen had a talk now and again, but there was no one who had ever seen the princess. The queen had also seen what the wise woman could do, so she insisted strongly that her warning should be obeyed. The king often lost his patience, and was determined to see his daughter, but the queen always put him off the idea, and so things went on, until the very day before the princess completed her fourteenth year.

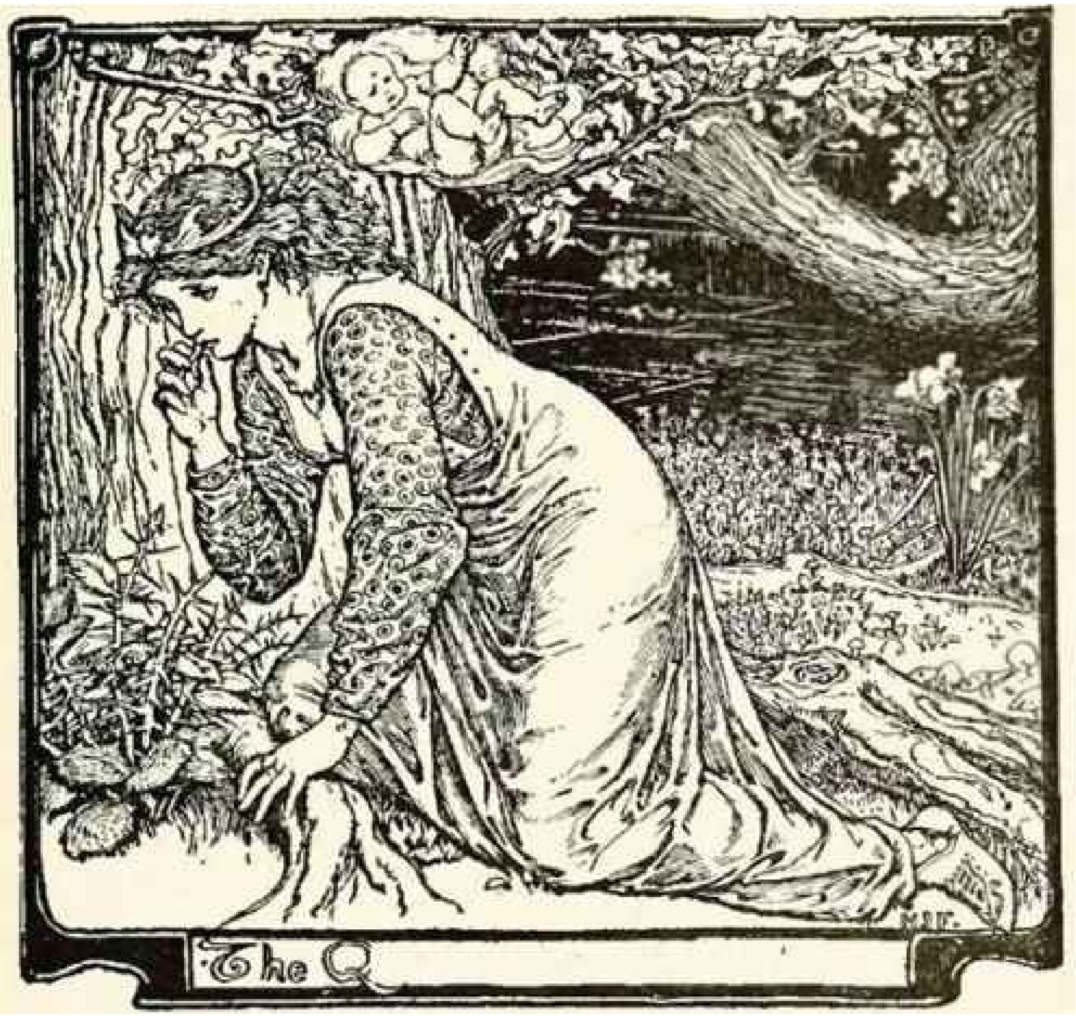

The king and the queen were out in the garden then, and the king said, ‘Now I can’t and I won’t wait any longer. I must see my daughter at once. A few hours, more or less, can’t make any difference.’

The queen begged him to have patience till the morning. When they had waited so long, they could surely wait a single day more. But the king was quite unreasonable. ‘No nonsense,’ said he; ‘she is just as much mine as yours, and I will see her,’ and with that he went straight up to her room.

He burst the door open, and pushed aside the nurse, who tried to stop him, and there he saw his daughter. She was the loveliest young princess, red and white, like milk and blood, with clear blue eyes and golden hair, but right in the middle of her forehead there was a little tuft of brown hair.

The princess went to meet her father, fell on his neck and kissed him, but with that she said, ‘O father, father! what have you done now? to-morrow I must die, and you must choose one of three things: either the land must be smitten with the black pestilence, or you must have a long and bloody war, or you must as soon as I am dead, lay me in a plain wooden chest, and set it in the church, and for a whole year place a sentinel beside it every night.’

The king was frightened indeed, and thought she was raving, but in order to please her, he said, ‘Well, of these three things I shall choose the last; if you die, I shall lay you at once in a plain wooden chest, and have it set in the church, and every night I shall place a sentinel beside it. But you shall not die, even if you are ill now.’

He immediately summoned all the best doctors in the country, and they came with all their prescriptions and their medicine bottles, but next day the princess was stiff and cold in death. All the doctors could certify to that and they all put their names to this and appended their seals, and then they had done all they could.

The king kept his promise. The princess’s body was lain the same day in a plain wooden chest, and set in the chapel of the castle, and on that night and every night after it, a sentinel was posted in the church, to keep watch over the chest.

The first morning when they came to let the sentinel out, there was no sentinel there. They thought he had just got frightened and run away, and next evening a new one was posted in the church. In the morning he was also gone. So it went every night. When they came in the morning to let the sentinel out, there was no one there, and it was impossible to discover which way he had gone if he had run away. And what should they run away for, every one of them, so that nothing more was over heard or seen of them, from the hour that they were set on guard beside the princess’s chest?

It became now a general belief that the princess’s ghost walked, and ate up all those who were to guard her chest, and very soon there was no one left who would be placed on this duty, and the king’s soldiers deserted the service, before their turn came to be her bodyguard. The king then promised a large reward to the soldier who would volunteer for the post. This did for some time, as there were found a few reckless fellows, who wished to earn this good payment. But they never got it, for in the morning, they too had disappeared like the rest.

So it had gone on for something like a whole year; every night a sentinel had been placed beside the chest, either by compulsion or of his own free will, but not a single one of the sentinels was to be seen, either on the following day or any time thereafter. And so it had also gone with one, on the night before a certain day, when a merry young smith came wandering to the town where the king’s castle stood. It was the capital of the country, and people of every king came to it to get work. This smith, whose name was Christian, had come for that same purpose. There was no work for him in the place he belonged to, and he wanted now to seek a place in the capital.

There he entered an inn where he sat down in the public room, and got something to eat. Some under-officers were sitting there, who were out to try to get some one enlisted to stand sentry. They had to go in this way, day after day, and hitherto they had always succeeded in finding one or other reckless fellow. But on this day they had, as yet, found no one. It was too well known how all the sentinels disappeared, who were set on that post, and all that they had got hold of had refused with thanks. These sat down beside Christian, and ordered drinks, and drank along with him. Now Christian was a merry fellow who liked good company; he could both drink and sing, and talk and boast as well, when he got a little drop in his head. He told these under-officers that he was one of that kind of folk who never are afraid of anything. Then he was just the kind of man they liked, said they, and he might easily earn a good penny, before he was a day older, for the king paid a hundred dollars to anyone who would stand as sentinel in the church all night, beside his daughter’s chest.

Christian was not afraid of that he wasn’t afraid of anything, so they drank another bottle of wine on this, and Christian went with them up to the colonel, where he was put into uniform with musket, and all the rest, and was then shut up in the church, to stand as sentinel that night.

It was eight o’clock when he took up his post, and for the first hour he was quite proud of his courage; during the second hour he was well pleased with the large reward that he would get, but in the third hour, when it was getting near eleven, the effects of the wine passed off, and he began to get uncomfortable, for he had heard about this post; that no one had ever escapeed alive from it, so far as was known. But neither did anyone know what had become of all the sentinels. The thought of this ran in his head so much, after the wine was out of it, that he searched about everywhere for a way of escape, and finally, at eleven o’clock, he found a little postern in the steeple which was not locked, and out at this he crept, intending to run away.

At the same moment as he put his foot outside the church door, he saw standing before him a little man, who said, ‘Good evening, Christian, where are you going?’

With that he felt as if he were rooted to the spot and could not move.

‘Nowhere,’ said he.

‘Oh, yes,’ said the little man, ‘You were just about to run away, but you have taken upon you to stand sentinel in the church to-night, and there you must stay.’

Christian said, very humbly, that he dared not, and therefore wanted to get away, and begged to be let go.

‘No,’ said the little one, ‘you must remain at your post, but I shall give you a piece of good advice; you shall go up into the pulpit, and remain standing there.

You need never mind what you see or hear, it will not be able to do you any harm, if you remain in your place until you hear the lid of the chest slam down again behind the dead; then all danger is past, and you can go about the church, wherever you please.'

The little man then pushed him in at the door again, and locked it after him. Christian made haste to get up into the pulpit, and stood there, without noticing anything, until the clock struck twelve. Then the lid of the princess's chest sprang up, and out of it there came something like the princess, dressed as you see in the picture. It shrieked and howled, 'Sentry, where are you? Sentry, where are you? If you don't come, you shall get the most cruel death anyone had ever got.'

It went all round the church, and when it finally caught sight of the smith, up in the pulpit, it came rushing thither and mounted the steps. But it could not get up the whole way, and for all that it stretched and strained, it could not touch Christian, who meanwhile stood and trembled up in the pulpit. When the clock struck one, the appearance had to go back into the chest again, and Christian heard the lid slam after it. After this there was dead silence in the church. He lay down where he was and fell asleep, and did not awake before it was bright daylight, and he heard steps outside, and the noise of the key being put into the lock. Then he came down from the pulpit, and stood with his musket in front of the princess's chest.

It was the colonel himself who came with the patrol, and he was not a little surprised when he found the recruit safe and sound. He wanted to have a report, but Christian would give him none, so he took him straight up to the king, and announced for the first time that here was the sentinel who had stood guard in the church over-night. The king immediately got out of bed, and laid the hundred dollars for him on the table, and then wanted to question him. 'Have you seen anything?' said he. 'Have you seen my daughter?' 'I have stood at my post,' said the young smith, 'and that is quite enough; I undertook nothing more.' He was not sure whether he dared tell what he had seen and heard, and besides he was also a little conceited because he had done what no other man had been able to do, or had had courage for. The king professed to be quite satisfied, and asked him whether he would engage himself to stand on guard again the following night. 'No, thank you,' said Christian, 'I will have no more of that!'

'As you please,' said the king, 'you have behaved like a brave fellow, and now you shall have your breakfast. You must be needing something to strengthen you after that turn.'

The king had breakfast laid for him, and sat down at the table with him in person; he kept constantly filling his glass for him and praising him, and drinking his health. Christian needed no pressing, but did full justice both to the food and drink, and not least to the latter. Finally he grew bold, and said that if the king would give him two hundred dollars for it, he was his man to stand sentry next night as well.

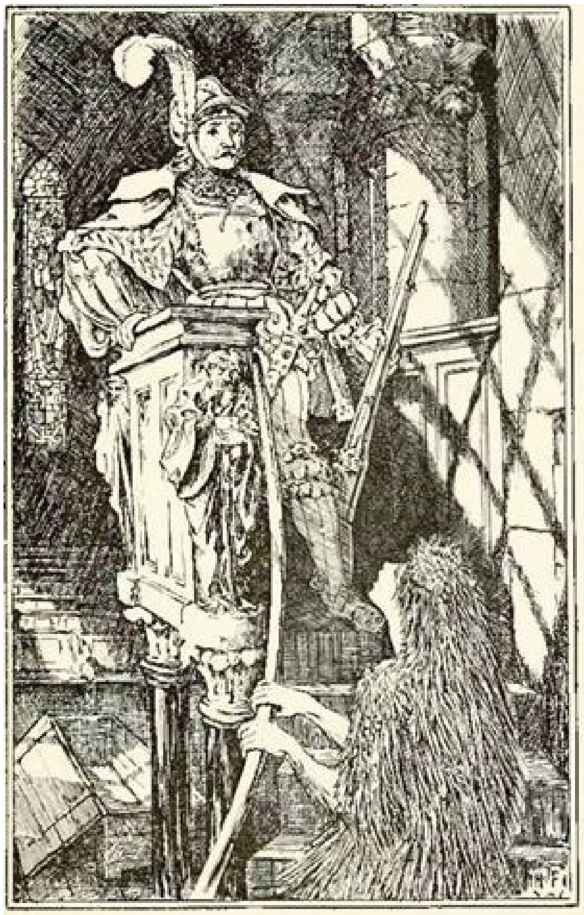

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When this was arranged, Christian bade him ‘Good-day,’ and went down among the guards, and then out into the town along with other soldiers and under-officers. He had his pocket full of money, and treated them, and drank with them and boasted and made game of the good-for-nothings who were afraid to stand on guard, because they were frightened that the dead princess would eat them. See whether she had eaten him! So the day passed in mirth and glee, but when eight o’clock came, Christian was again shut up in the church, all alone.

Before he had been there two hours, he got tired of it, and thought only of getting away. He found a little door behind the altar which was not locked, and at ten o’clock he slipped out at it, and took to his heels and made for the beach.

He had got half-way thither, when all at once the same little man stood in front of him and said, ‘Good evening, Christian, where are you going?’ ‘I’ve leave to go where I please,’ said the smith, but at the same time he noticed that he could not move a foot. ‘No, you have undertaken to keep guard to-night as well,’ said the little man, ‘and you must attend to that.’ He then took hold of him, and however unwilling he was, Christian had to go with him right back to the same little door that he had crept out at. When they got there, the little man said to him, ‘Go in front of the altar now, and take in your hand the book that is lying there. There you shall stay till you hear the lid of the chest slam down over the dead. In that way you will come to no harm.’

With that the little man shoved him in at the door, and locked it. Christian then immediately went in front of the altar, and took the book in his hand, and stood thus until the clock struck twelve, and the appearance sprang out of the chest. ‘Sentry, where are you? Sentry, where are you?’ it shrieked, and then rushed to the pulpit, and right up into it. But there was no one there that night. Then it howled and shrieked again,

My father has set no sentry in,
War and Pest this night begin.

At the same moment, it noticed the smith standing in front of the altar, and came rushing towards him. ‘Are you there?’ it screamed; ‘now I’ll catch you.’ But it could not come up over the step in front of the altar, and there it continued to howl, and scream, and threaten, until the clock struck one, when it had to go into the chest again, and Christian heard the lid slam above it. That night, however, it had not the same appearance as on the previous one; it was less ugly.

When all was quiet in the church, the smith lay down before the altar and slept calmly till the following morning, when the colonel came to fetch him. He was taken up to the king again, and things went on as the day before. He got his money, but would give no explanation whether he had seen the king’s daughter, and he would not take the post again, he said. But after he had got a good breakfast, and tasted well of the king’s wines, he undertook to go on guard again the third night, but he would not do it for less than the half of the kingdom, he said, for it was a dangerous post, and the king had to agree, and promise him this.

The remainder of the day went like the previous one. He played the boastful soldier, and the merry smith, and he had comrades and boon-companions in plenty. At eight o’clock he had to put on his uniform again, and was shut up in the church. He had not been there for an hour before he had come to his senses, and thought, ‘It’s best to stop now, while the game is going well.’ The third night, he was sure, would be the worst; he had been drunk when he promised it, and the half of the kingdom, the king could never have been in earnest about that! So he decided to leave, without waiting so long as on the previous nights. In that way he would escape the little man who had watched him before. All the doors and posterns were locked, but he finally though of creeping up to a window, and opening that, and as the clock struck nine, he crept out there. It was fairly high in the wall, but he got to the ground with no bones broken, and started to run. He got down to the shore without meeting anyone, and there he got into a boat, and pushed off from land. He laughed immensely to himself at the thought of how cleverly he had managed and how he had cheated the little man. Just then he heard a voice from the shore, ‘Good evening, Christian, where are you going?’ He gave no answer. ‘To-night your legs will be too short,’ he thought, and pulled at the oars. But he then felt something lay hold of the boat, and drag it straight in to shore, for all that he sat and struggled with the oars.

The man then laid hold of him, and said, ‘You must remain at your post, as you have promised,’ and whether he liked it or not, Christian had just to go back with him the whole way to the church.

He could never get in at that window again, Christian said; it was far too high up.

‘You must go in there, and you shall go in there,’ said the little man, and with that he lifted him up on to the window-sill. Then he said to him: ‘Notice well now what you have to do. This evening you must stretch yourself out on the left-hand side of her chest. The lid opens to the right, and she comes out to the left. When she has got out of the chest and passed over you, you must get into it and lie there, and that in a hurry, without her seeing you. There you must remain lying until day dawns, and whether she threatens you or entreats you, you must not come out of it, or give her any answer. Then she has no power over you, and both you and she are freed.’

The smith then had to go in at the window, just as he came out, and went and laid himself all his length on the left side of the princess’s chest, close up to it, and there he lay stiff as a rock until the clock struck twelve. Then the lid sprang up to the right, and the princess came out, straight over him, and rushed round the church, howling and shrieking ‘Sentry, where are you? Sentry, where are you?’ She went towards the altar, and right up to it, but there was no one there; then she screamed again,

My father has set no sentry in,
War and Pest will now begin.

Then she went round the whole church, both up and down, sighing and weeping,

My father has set no sentry in,

War and Pest will now begin.

Then she went away again, and at the same moment the clock in the tower struck one.

Then the smith heard in the church a soft music, which grew louder and louder, and soon filled the whole building. He heard also a multitude of footsteps, as if the church was being filled with people. He heard the priest go through the service in front of the altar, and there was singing more beautiful than he had ever heard before. Then he also heard the priest offer up a prayer of thanksgiving because the land had been freed from war and pestilence, and from all misfortune, and the king's daughter delivered from the evil one. Many voices joined in, and a hymn of praise was sung; then he heard the priest again, and heard his own name and that of the princess, and thought that he was being wedded to her. The church was packed full, but he could see nothing. Then he heard again the many footsteps as ol' folk leaving the church, while the music sounded fainter and fainter, until it altogether died away. When it was silent, the light of day began to break in through the windows.

The smith sprang up out of the chest and fell on his knees and thanked God. The church was empty, but up in front of the altar lay the princess, white and red, like a human being, but sobbing and crying, and shaking with cold in her white shroud. The smith took his sentry coat and wrapped it round her; then she dried her tears, and took his hand and thanked him, and said that he had now freed her from all the sorcery that had been in her from her birth, and which had come over her again when her father broke the command against seeing her until she had completed her fourteenth year.

She said further, that if he who had delivered her would take her in marriage, she would be his. If not, she would go into a nunnery, and he could marry no other as long as she lived, for he was wedded to her with the service of the dead, which he had heard.

She was now the most beautiful young princess that anyone could wish to see, and he was now lord of half the kingdom, which had been promised him for standing on guard the third nigh. So they agreed that they would have each other, and love each other all their days.

With the first sunbeam the watch came and opened the church, and not only was the colonel there, but the king in person, come to see what had happened to the sentinel. He found them both sitting hand in hand on the step in front of the altar, and immediately knew his daughter again, and took her in his arms, thanking God and her deliverer. He made no objections to what they had arranged, and so Christian the smith held his wedding with the princess, and got half the kingdom at once, and the whole of it when the king died.

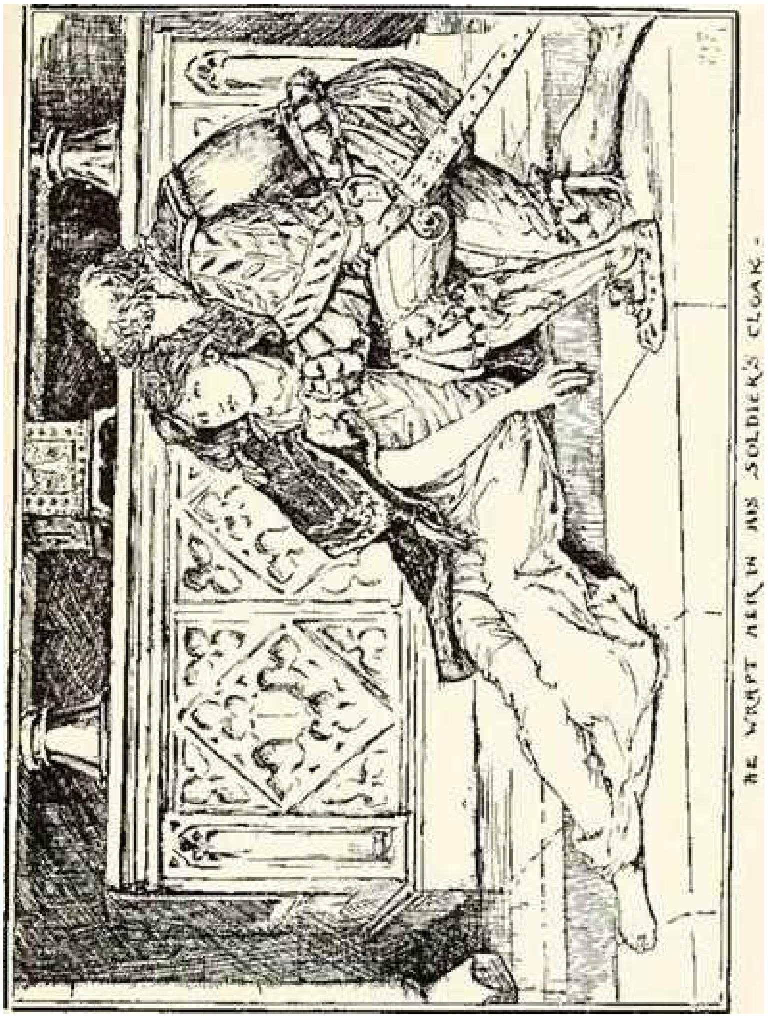
HE WRAPT HER IN HIS SOLDIER'S CLOAK.

As for the other sentries, with so many doors and windows open, no doubt they had run away, and gone into the Prussian service. And as for what Christian said he saw, he had been drinking more wine than was good for him.

The Three Brothers

Translated from the German of the Brothers Grimm.

There was once a man who had three sons, and no other possessions beyond the house in which he lived. Now the father loved his three sons equally, so that he could not make up his mind which of them should have the house after his death, because he did not wish to favour any one more than the others. And he did not want to sell the house, because it had belonged to his family for generations; otherwise he could have divided the money equally amongst them. At last an idea struck him, and he said to his sons: ‘You must all go out into the world, and look about you, and each learn a trade, and then, when you return, whoever can produce the best masterpiece shall have the house.’

The sons were quite satisfied. The eldest wished to be a blacksmith, the second a barber, and the third a fencing-master. They appointed a time when they were to return home, and then they all set out.

It so happened that each found a good master, where he learnt all that was necessary for his trade in the best possible way. The blacksmith had to shoe the king’s horses, and thought to himself, ‘Without doubt the house will be yours!’ The barber shaved the best men in the kingdom, and he, too, made sure that the house would be his. The fencing-master received many a blow, but he set his teeth, and would not allow himself to be troubled by them, for he thought to himself, ‘If you are afraid of a blow you will never get the house.’

When the appointed time had come the three brothers met once more, and they sat down and discussed the best opportunity of showing off their skill. Just then a hare came running across the field towards them. ‘Look!’ said the barber, ‘here comes something in the nick of time!’ seized basin and soap, made a lather whilst the hare was approaching, and then, as it ran at full tilt, shaved its moustaches, without cutting it or injuring a single hair on its body.

‘I like that very much indeed,’ said the father. ‘Unless the others exert themselves to the utmost, the house will be yours.’

Soon after they saw a man driving a carriage furiously towards them. ‘Now, father, you shall see what I can do!’ said the blacksmith, and he sprang after the carriage, tore off the four shoes of the horse as it was going at the top of its speed, and shod it with four new ones without checking its pace.

‘You are a clever fellow!’ said the father, ‘and know your trade as well as your brother. I really don’t know to which of you I shall give the house.’

Then the third son said, ‘Father, let me also show you something;’ and, as it was beginning to rain, he drew his sword and swung it in cross cuts above his head, so that not a drop fell on him, and the rain fell heavier and heavier, till at last it was coming down like a waterspout, but he swung his sword faster and faster, and kept as dry as if he were under cover.

When the father saw this he was astonished, and said, ‘You have produced the greatest masterpiece: the house is yours.’

Both the other brothers were quite satisfied, and praised him too, and as they were so fond of each other they all three remained at home and plied their trades: and as they were so experienced and skilful they earned a great deal of money. So they lived happily together till they were quite old, and when one was taken ill and died the two others were so deeply grieved that they were also taken ill and died too. And so, because they had all been so clever, and so fond of each other, they were all laid in one grave.

The Snow-queen

Translated from the German of Hans Andersen by Miss Alma Alleyne.

There was once a dreadfully wicked hobgoblin. One day he was in capital spirits because he had made a looking-glass which reflected everything that was good and beautiful in such a way that it dwindled almost to nothing, but anything that was bad and ugly stood out very clearly and looked much worse. The most beautiful landscapes looked like boiled spinach, and the best people looked repulsive or seemed to stand on their heads with no bodies; their faces were so changed that they could not be recognised, and if anyone had a freckle you might be sure it would be spread over the nose and mouth.

That was the best part of it, said the hobgoblin.

But one day the looking-glass was dropped, and it broke into a million-billion and more pieces.

And now came the greatest misfortune of all, for each of the pieces was hardly as large as a grain of sand and they flew about all over the world, and if anyone had a bit in his eye there it stayed, and then he would see everything awry, or else could only see the bad sides of a case. For every tiny splinter of the glass possessed the same power that the whole glass had.

Some people got a splinter in their hearts, and that was dreadful, for then it began to turn into a lump of ice.

The hobgoblin laughed till his sides ached, but still the tiny bits of glass flew about.

And now we will hear all about it.

In a large town, where there were so many people and houses that there was not room enough for everybody to have gardens, lived two poor children. They were not brother and sister, but they loved each other just as much as if they were. Their parents lived opposite one another in two attics, and out on the leads they had put two boxes filled with flowers. There were sweet peas in it, and two rose trees, which grow beautifully, and in summer the two children were allowed to take their little chairs and sit out under the roses. Then they had splendid games.

In the winter they could not do this, but then they put hot pennies against the frozen window-panes, and made round holes to look at each other through.

His name was Kay, and hers was Gerda.

Outside it was snowing fast.

‘Those are the white bees swarming,’ said the old grandmother.

‘Have they also a queen bee?’ asked the little boy, for he knew that the real bees have one.

‘To be sure,’ said the grandmother. ‘She flies wherever they swarm the thickest. She is larger than any of them, and never stays upon the earth, but flies again up into the black clouds. Often at midnight she flies through the streets, and peeps in at all the windows, and then they freeze in such pretty patterns and look like flowers.’

‘Yes, we have seen that,’ said both children; they knew that it was true.

‘Can the Snow-queen come in here?’ asked the little girl.

‘Just let her!’ cried the boy, ‘I would put her on the stove, and melt her!’

But the grandmother stroked his hair, and told some more stories.

In the evening, when little Kay was going to bed, he jumped on the chair by the window, and looked through the little hole. A few snowflakes were falling outside, and one of the, the largest, lay on the edge of one of the window-boxes. The snowflake grew larger and larger till it took the form of a maiden, dressed in finest white gauze.

She was so beautiful and dainty, but all of ice, hard bright ice.

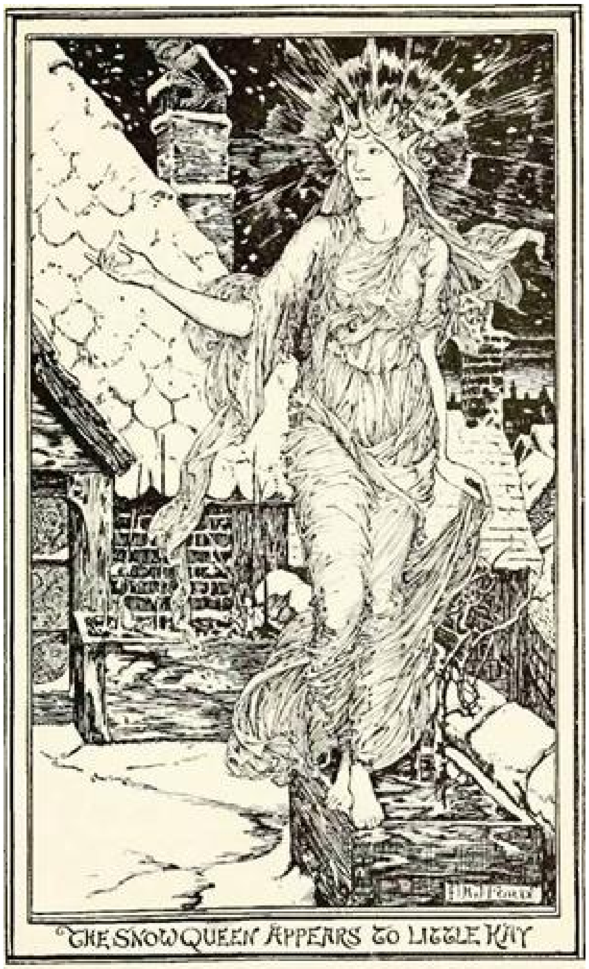

THE SNOW QUEEN APPEARS TO LITTLE KAY

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Still she was alive; her eyes glittered like two clear stars, but there was no rest or peace in them. She nodded at the window, and beckoned with her hand. The little boy was frightened, and sprang down from the chair. It seemed as if a great white bird had flown past the window.

The next day there was a harder frost than before.

Then came the spring, then the summer, when the roses grew and smelt more beautifully than ever.

Kay and Gerda were looking at one of their picture-books — the clock in the great church-tower had just struck five, when Kay exclaimed, ‘Oh! something has stung my heart, and I’ve got something in my eye!’

The little girl threw her arms round his neck; he winked hard with both his eyes; no, she could see nothing in them.

‘I think it is gone now,’ said he; but it had not gone. It was one of the tiny splinters of the glass of the magic mirror which we have heard about, that turned everything great and good reflected in it small and ugly. And poor Kay had also a splinter in his heart, and it began to change into a lump of ice. It did not hurt him at all, but the splinter was there all the same.

‘Why are you crying?’ he asked; ‘it makes you look so ugly! There’s nothing the matter with me. Just look! that rose is all slug-eaten, and this one is stunted! What ugly roses they are!’

And he began to pull them to pieces.

‘Kay, what are you doing?’ cried the little girl.

And when he saw how frightened she was, he pulled off another rose, and ran in at his window away from dear little Gerda.

When she came later on with the picture book, he said that it was only fit for babies, and when his grandmother told them stories, he was always interrupting with, ‘But—’ and then he would get behind her and put on her spectacles, and speak just as she did. This he did very well, and everybody laughed. Very soon he could imitate the way all the people in the street walked and talked.

His games were now quite different. On a winter’s day he would take a burning glass and hold it out on his blue coat and let the snowflakes fall on it.

‘Look in the glass, Gerda! Just see how regular they are! They are much more interesting than real flowers. Each is perfect; they are all made according to rule. If only they did not melt!’

One morning Kay came out with his warm gloves on, and his little sledge hung over his shoulder. He shouted to Gerda, ‘I am going to the market-place to play with the other boys,’ and away he went.

In the market-place the boldest boys used often to fasten their sledges to the carts of the farmers, and then they got a good ride.

When they were in the middle of their games there drove into the square a large sledge, all white, and in it sat a figure dressed in a rough white fur pelisse with a white fur cap on.

The sledge drove twice round the square, and Kay fastened his little sledge behind it and drove off. It went quicker and quicker into the next street. The driver turned round, and nodded to Kay ina friendly way as if they had known each other before. Every time that Kay tried to unfasten his sledge the driver nodded again, and Kay sat still once more. Then they drove out of the town, and the snow began to fall so thickly that the little boy could not see his hand before him, and on and on they went. He quickly unfastened the cord to get loose from the big sledge, but it was of no use; his little sledge hung on fast, and it went on like the wind.

Then he cried out, but nobody heard him. He was dreadfully frightened.

The snowflakes grew larger and larger till they looked like great white birds. All at once they flew aside, the large sledge stood still, and the figure who was driving stood up. The fur cloak and cap were all of snow. It was a lady, tall and slim, and glittering. It was the Snow-queen.

‘We have come at a good rate,’ she said; ‘but you are almost frozen. Creep in under my cloak.’

And she set him close to her in the sledge and drew the cloak over him. He felt as though he were sinking into a snow-drift.

‘Are you cold now?’ she asked, and kissed his forehead. The kiss was cold as ice and reached down to his heart, which was already half a lump of ice.

‘My sledge! Don’t forget my sledge!’ He thought of that first, and it was fastened to one of the great white birds who flew behind with the sledge on its back.

The Snow-queen kissed Kay again, and then he forgot all about little Gerda, his grandmother, and everybody at home.

‘Now I must not kiss you any more,’ she said, ‘or else I should kiss you to death.’

Then away they flew over forests and lakes, over sea and land. Round them whistled the cold wind, the wolves howled, and the snow hissed; over them flew the black shrieking crows. But high up the moon shone large and bright, and thus Kay passed the long winter night. In the day he slept at the Snow-queen’s feet.

But what happened to little Gerda when Kay did not come back?

What had become of him? Nobody knew. The other boys told how they had seen him fasten his sledge on to a large one which had driven out of the town gate.

Gerda cried a great deal. The winter was long and dark to her.

Then the spring came with warm sunshine. ‘I will go and look for Kay,’ said Gerda.

So she went down to the river and got into a little boat that was there. Presently the stream began to carry it away.

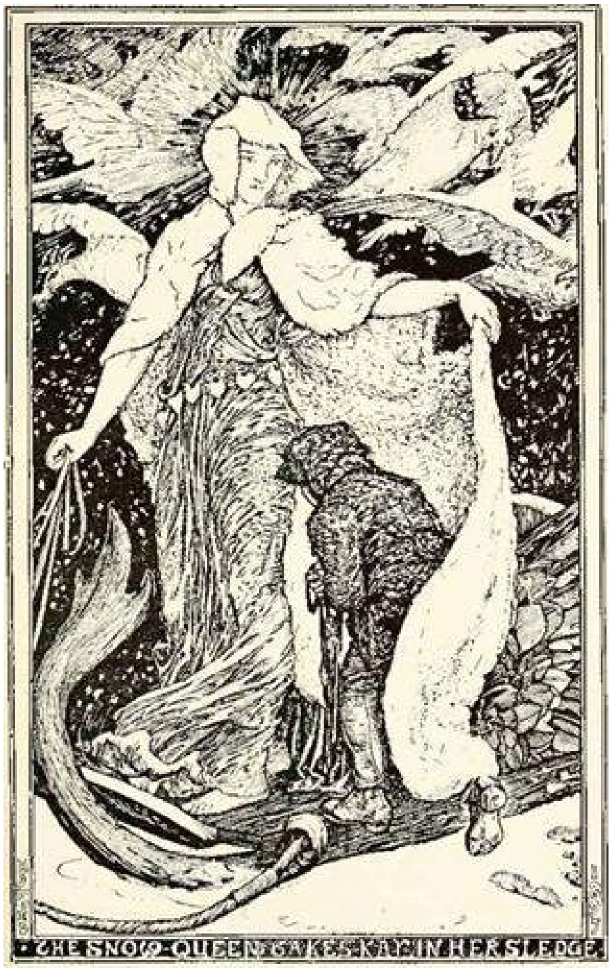

THE SNOW QUEEN TAKES KAY IN HER SLEDGE.

‘Perhaps the river will take me to Kay,’ thought Gerda. She glided down, past trees and fields, till she came to a large cherry garden, in which stood a little house with strange red and blue windows and a straw roof. Before the door stood two wooden soldiers, who were shouldering arms.

Gerda called to them, but they naturally did not answer. The river carried the boat on to the land.

Gerda called out still louder, and there came out of the house a very old woman. She leant upon a crutch, and she wore a large sun-hat which was painted with the most beautiful flowers.

‘You poor little girl!’ said the old woman.

And then she stepped into the water, brought the boat in close with her crutch, and lifted little Gerda out.

‘And now come and tell me who you are, and how you came here,’ she said.

Then Gerda told her everything, and asked her if she had seen Kay. But she said he had not passed that way yet, but he would soon come.

She told Gerda not to be sad, and that she should stay with her and take of the cherry trees and flowers, which were better than any picture-bok, as they could each tell a story.

She then took Gerda's hand and led her into the little house and shut the door.

The windows were very high, and the panes were red, blue, and yellow, so that the light came through in curious colours. On the table were the most delicious cherries, and the old woman let Gerda eat as many as she liked, while she combed her hair with a gold comb as she ate.

The beautiful sunny hair rippled and shone round the dear little face, which was so soft and sweet. 'I have always longed to have a dear little girl just like you, and you shall see how happy we will be together.'

And as she combed Gerda's hair, Gerda thought less and less about Kay, for the old woman was a witch, but not a wicked witch, for she only enchanted now and then to amuse herself, and she did want to keep little Gerda very much.

So she went into the garden and waved her stick over all the rose bushes and blossoms and all; they sank down into the black earth, and no one could see where they had been.

The old woman was afraid that if Gerda saw the roses she would begin to think about her own, and then would remember Kay and run away.

Then she led Gerda out into the garden. How glorious it was, and what lovely scents filled the air! All the flowers you can think of blossomed there all the year round.

Gerda jumped for joy and played there till the sun set behind the tall cherry trees, and then she slept in a beautiful bed with red silk pillows filled with violets, and she slept soundly and dreamed as a queen does on her wedding day.

The next day she played again with the flowers in the warm sunshine, and so many days passed by. Gerda knew every flower, but although there were so many, it seemed to her as if one were not there, though she could not remember which.

She was looking one day at the old woman's sun-hat which had hte painted flowers on it, and there she saw a rose.

The witch had forgotten to make that vanish when she had made the other roses disappear under the earth. it was so difficult to think of everything.

'Why, there are no roses here!' cried Gerda,, and she hunted amongst all the flowers, but not one was to be found. Then she sat down and cried, but her tears fell just on the spot where a rose bush had sunk, and when her warm tears watered the earth, the bush came up in full bloom just as it had been before. Gerda kissed the roses and thought of the lovely roses at home, and with them came the thought of little Kay.

'Oh, what have I been doing!' said the little girl. 'I wanted to look for Kay.'

She ran to the end of the garden. The gate was shut, but she pushed against the rusty lock so that it came open.

She ran out with her little bare feet. No one came after her. At last she could not run any longer, and she sat down on a large stone. When she looked round she saw that the summer was over; it was late autumn. It had not changed in the beautiful garden, where were sunshine and flowers all the year round.

‘Oh, dear, how late I have made myself!’ said Gerda. ‘It’s autumn already! I cannot rest!’ And she sprang up to run on.

Oh, how tired and sore her little feet grew, and it became colder and colder.

She had to rest again, and there on the snow in front of her was a large crow.

It had been looking at her for some time, and it nodded its head and said, ‘Caw! caw! good day.’ Then it asked the little girl why she was alone in the world. She told the crow her story, and asked if he had seen Kay.

The crow nodded very thoughtfully and said, ‘It might be! It might be!’

‘What! Do you think you have?’ cried the little girl, and she almost squeezed the crow to death as she kissed him.

‘Gently, gently!’ said the crow. ‘I think — I know I think — it might be little Kay, but now he has forgotten you for the princess!’

‘Does he live with a princess?’ asked Gerda.

‘Yes, listen,’ said the crow.

Then he told her all he knew.

‘In the kingdom in which we are now sitting lives a princess who is dreadfully clever. She has read all the newspapers in the world and has forgotten them again. She is as clever as that. The other day she came to the throne, and that is not so pleasant as people think. Then she began to say, “Why should I not marry?” But she wanted a husband who could answer when he was spoken to, not one who would stand up stiffly and look respectable — that would be too dull.

‘When she told all the Court ladies, they were delighted. You can believe every word I say,’ said the crow, ‘I have a tame sweetheart in the palace, and she tells me everything.’

Of course his sweetheart was a crow.

‘The newspapers came out next morning with a border of hearts round it, and the princess’s monogram on it, and inside you could read that every good-looking young man might come into the palace and speak to the princess, and whoever should speak loud enough to be heard would be well fed and looked after, and the one who spoke best should become the princess’s husband. Indeed,’ said the crow, ‘you can quite believe me. It is as true as that I am sitting here.

‘Young men came in streams, and there was such a crowding and a mixing together! But nothing came of it on the first nor on the second day. They could all speak quite well when they were in the street, but as soon as they came inside the palace door, and saw the guards in silver, and upstairs the footmen in gold, and the great hall all lighted up, then their wits left them! And when they stood in front of the throne where the princess was sitting, then they could not think of anything to say except to repeat the last word she had spoken, and she did not much care to hear that again. It seemed as if they were walking in their sleep until they came out into the street again, when they could speak once more. There was a row stretching from the gate of the town up to the castle.

‘They were hungry and thirsty, but in the palace they did not even get a glass of water.

‘A few of the cleverest had brought some slices of bread and butter with them, but they did not share them with their neighbour, for they thought, “If he looks hungry, the princess will not take him!”’

‘But what about Kay?’ asked Gerda. ‘When did he come? Was he in the crowd?’

‘Wait a bit; we are coming to him! On the third day a little figure came without horse or carriage and walked jauntily up to the palace. His eyes shone as yours do; he had lovely curling hair, but quite poor clothes.’

‘That was Kay!’ cried Gerda with delight. ‘Oh, then I have found him!’ and she clapped her hands.

‘He had a little bundle on his back,’ said the crow.

‘No, it must have been his skates, for he went away with his skates!’

‘Very likely,’ said the crow, ‘I did not see for certain. But I know this from my sweetheart, that when he came to the palace door and saw the royal guards in silver, and on the stairs the footmen in gold, he was not the least bit put out. He nodded to them, saying, “It must be rather dull standing on the stairs; I would rather go inside!”

‘The halls blazed with lights; councillors and ambassadors were walking about in noiseless shoes carrying gold dishes. It was enough to make one nervous! His boots creaked dreadfully loud, but he was not frightened.’

‘That must be Kay!’ said Gerda. ‘I know he had new boots on; I have heard them creaking in his grandmother’s room!’

‘They did creak, certainly!’ said the crow. ‘And, not one bit afraid, up he went to the princess, who was sitting on a large pearl as round as a spinning wheel. All the ladies-in-waiting were standing round, each with their attendants, and the lords-in-waiting with their attendants. The nearer they stood to the door the prouder they were.’

‘It must have been dreadful!’ said little Gerda. ‘And Kay did win the princess?’

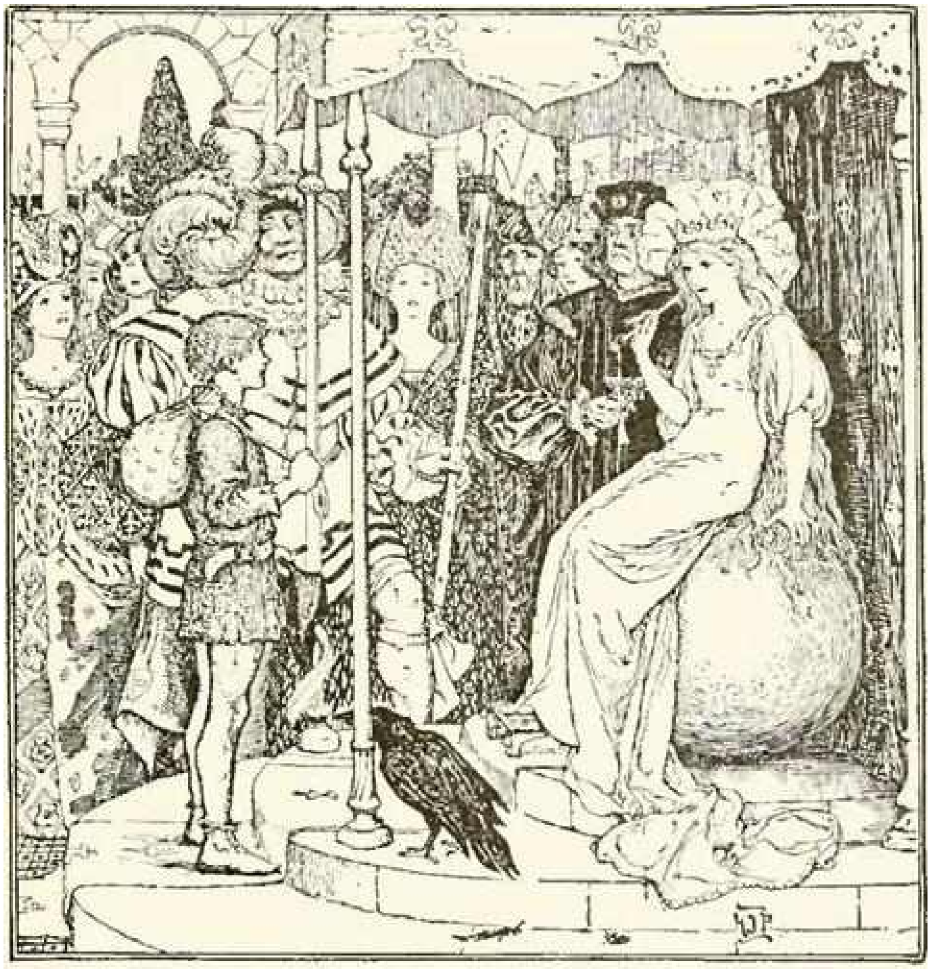

‘HE HAD NOT COME TO WOO’ HE SAID ·

‘I heard from my tame sweetheart that he was merry and quick-witted; he had not come to woo, he said, but to listen to the princess’s wisdom. And the end of it was that they fell in love with each other.’

‘Oh, yes; that was Kay!’ said Gerda. ‘He was so clever; he could do sums with fractions. Oh, do lead me to the palace!’

‘That’s easily said!’ answered the crow, ‘but how are we to manage that? I must talk it over with my tame sweetheart. She may be able to advise us, for I must tell you that a little girl like you could never get permission to enter it.’

‘Yes, I will get it!’ said Gerda. ‘When Kay hears that I am there he will come out at once and fetch me!’

‘Wait for me by the railings,’ said the crow, and he nodded his head and flew away.

It was late in the evening when he came back.

‘Caw, caw!’ he said, ‘I am to give you her love, and here is a little roll for you. She took it out of the kitchen; there’s plenty there, and you must be hungry. You cannot come into the palace. The guards in silver and the footmen in gold would not allow it. But don’t cry! You shall get in all right. My sweetheart knows a little back-stairs which leads to the sleeping-room, and she knows where to find the key.’

They went into the garden, and when the lights in the palace were put out one after the other, the crow led Gerda to a back-door.

Oh, how Gerda’s heart beat with anxiety and longing! It seemed as if she were going to do something wrong, but she only wanted to know if it were little Kay. Yes, it must be he! She remembered so well his clever eyes, his curly hair. She could see him smiling as he did when they were at home under the rose trees! He would be so pleased to see her, and to hear how they all were at home.

Now they were on the stairs; a little lamp was burning, and on the landing stood the tame crow. She put her head on one side and looked at Gerda, who bowed as her grandmother had taught her.

‘My betrothed has told me many nice things about you, my dear young lady,’ she said. ‘Will you take the lamp while I go in front? We go this way so as to meet no one.’

Through beautiful rooms they came to the sleeping-room. In the middle of it, hung on a thick rod of gold, were two beds, shaped like lilies, one all white, in which lay the princess, and the other red, in which Gerda hoped to find Kay. She pushed aside the curtain, and saw a brown neck. Oh, it was Kay! She called his name out loud, holding the lamp towards him.

He woke up, turned his head and — it was not Kay!

It was only his neck that was like Kay’s, but he was young and handsome. The princess sat up in her lily-bed and asked who was there.

Then Gerda cried, and told her story and all that the crows had done.

‘You poor child!’ said the prince and princess, and they praised the crows, and said that they were not angry with them, but that they must not do it again. Now they should have a reward.

‘Would you like to fly away free?’ said the princess, ‘or will you have a permanent place as court crows with what you can get in the kitchen?’

And both crows bowed and asked for a permanent appointment, for they thought of their old age.

And they put Gerda to bed, and she folded her hands, thinking, as she fell asleep, ‘How good people and animals are to me!’

The next day she was dressed from head to foot in silk and satin. They wanted her to stay on in the palace, but she begged for a little carriage and a horse, and a pair of shoes so that she might go out again into the world to look for Kay.

They gave her a muff as well as some shoes; she was warmly dressed, and when she was ready, there in front of the door stood a coach of pure gold, with a coachman, footmen and postilions with gold crowns on.

The prince and princess helped her into the carriage and wished her good luck.

The wild crow who was now married drove with her for the first three miles; the other crow could not come because she had a bad headache.

‘Good-bye, good-bye!’ called the prince and princess; and little Gerda cried, and the crow cried.

When he said good-bye, he flew on to a tree and waved with his black wings as long as the carriage, which shone like the sun, was in sight.

They came at last to a dark wood, but the coach lit it up like a torch. When the robbers saw it, they rushed out, exclaiming, ‘Gold! gold!’

They seized the horses, killed the coachman, footmen and postilions, and dragged Gerda out of the carriage.

‘She is plump and tender! I will eat her!’ said the old robber-queen, and she drew her long knife, which glittered horribly.

‘You shall not kill her!’ cried her little daughter. ‘She shall play with me. She shall give me her muff and her beautiful dress, and she shall sleep in my bed.’

The little robber-girl was as big as Gerda, but was stronger, broader, with dark hair and black eyes. She threw her arms round Gerda and said, ‘They shall not kill you, so long as you are not naughty. Aren’t you a princess?’

‘No,’ said Gerda, and she told all that had happened to her, and how dearly she loved little Kay.

The robber-girl looked at her very seriously, and nodded her head, saying, ‘They shall not kill you, even if you are naughty, for then I will kill you myself!’

And she dried Gerda’s eyes, and stuck both her hands in the beautiful warm muff.

The little robber-girl took Gerda to a corner of the robbers’ camp where she slept.

All round were more than a hundred wood-pigeons which seemed to be asleep, but they moved a little when the two girls came up.

There was also, near by, a reindeer which the robber-girl teased by tickling it with her long sharp knife.

Gerda lay awake for some time.

‘Coo, coo!’ said the wood-pigeons. ‘We have seen little Kay. A white bird carried his sledge; he was sitting in the Snow-queen’s carriage which drove over the forest when our little ones were in the nest. She breathed on them, and all except we two died. Coo, coo!’

‘What are you saying over there?’ cried Gerda. ‘Where was the Snow-queen going to? Do you know at all?’

‘She was probably travelling to Lapland, where there is always ice and snow. Ask the reindeer.’

‘There is capital ice and snow there!’ said the reindeer. ‘One can jump about there in the great sparkling valleys. There the Snow-queen has her summer palace, but her best palace is up by the North Pole, on the island called Spitzbergen.’

‘O Kay, my little Kay!’ sobbed Gerda.

‘You must lie still,’ said the little robber-girl, ‘or else I shall stick my knife into you!’

In the morning Gerda told her all that the wood-pigeons had said. She nodded. ‘Do you know where Lapland is?’ she asked the reindeer.

‘Who should know better than I?’ said the beast, and his eyes sparkled. ‘I was born and bred there on the snow-fields.’

‘Listen!’ said the robber-girl to Gerda; ‘you see that all the robbers have gone; only my mother is left, and she will fall asleep in the afternoon — then I will do something for you!’

When her mother had fallen asleep, the robber-girl went up to the reindeer and said, ‘I am going to set you free so that you can run to Lapland. But you must go quickly and carry this little girl to the Snow-queen’s palace, where her playfellow is. You must have heard all that she told about it, for she spoke loud enough!’

The reindeer sprang high for joy. The robber-girl lifted little Gerda up, and had the foresight to tie her on firmly, and even gave her a little pillow for a saddle. ‘You must have your fur boots,’ she said, ‘for it will be cold; but I shall keep your muff, for it is so cosy! But, so that you may not freeze, here are my mother’s great fur gloves; they will come up to your elbows. Creep into them!’

And Gerda cried for joy.

‘Don’t make such faces!’ said the little robber-girl. ‘You must look very happy. And here are two loaves and a sausage; now you won’t be hungry!’

They were tied to the reindeer, the little robber-girl opened the door, made all the big dogs come away, cut through the halter with her sharp knife, and said to the reindeer, ‘Run now! But take great care of the little girl.’

And Gerda stretched out her hands with the large fur gloves towards the little robber-girl and said, ‘Good-bye!’

Then the reindeer flew over the ground, through the great forest, as fast as he could.

The wolves howled, the ravens screamed, the sky seemed on fire.

‘Those are my dear old northern lights,’ said the reindeer; ‘see how they shine!’

And then he ran faster still, day and night.

The loaves were eaten, and the sausage also, and then they came to Lapland.

They stopped by a wretched little house; the roof almost touched the ground, and the door was so low that you had to creep in and out.

There was no one in the house except an old Lapland woman who was cooking fish over an oil-lamp. The reindeer told Gerda’s whole history, but first he told his own, for that seemed to him much more important, and Gerda was so cold that she could not speak.

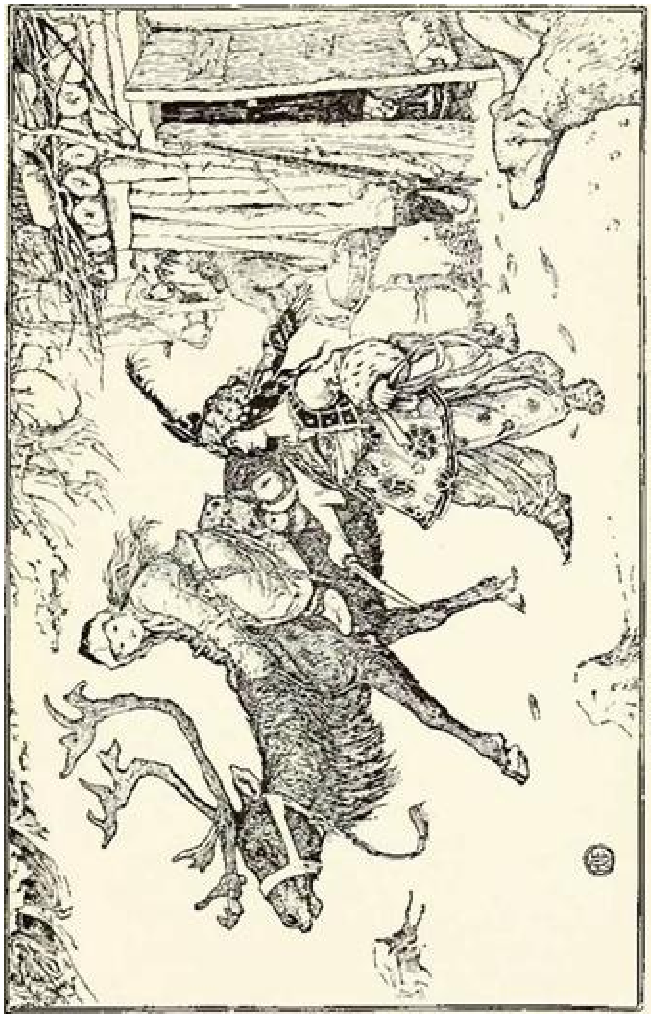

The Robber-girl sends Gerda off on the Reindeer

‘Ah, you poor creatures!’ said the Lapland woman; ‘you have still further to go! You must go over a hundred miles into Finland, for there the Snow-queen lives, and every night she burns Bengal lights. I will write some words on a dried stock-fish, for I have no paper, and you must give it to the Finland woman, for she can give you better advice than I can.’

And when Gerda was warmed and had had something to eat and drink, the Lapland woman wrote on a dried stock-fish, and begged Gerda to take care of it, tied Gerda securely on the reindeer’s back, and away they went again.

The whole night was ablaze with northern lights, and then they came to Finland and knocked at the Finland woman’s chimney, for door she had none.

Inside it was so hot that the Finland woman wore very few clothes; she loosened Gerda’s clothes and drew off her fur gloves and boots. She laid a piece of ice on the reindeer’s head, and then read what was written on the stock-fish. She read it over three times till she knew it by heart, and then put the fish in the saucepan, for she never wasted anything.

Then the reindeer told his story, and afterwards little Gerda’s and the Finland woman blinked her eyes but said nothing.

‘You are very clever,’ said the reindeer. ‘I know. Cannot you give the little girl a drink so that she may have the strength of twelve men and overcome the Snow-queen?’

‘The strength of twelve men!’ said the Finland woman; ‘that would not help much. Little Kay is with the Snow-queen and he likes everything there very much and thinks it the best place in the world. But that is because he has a splinter of glass in his heart and a bit in his eye. If these do not come out, he will never be free, and the Snow-queen will keep her power over him.’

‘But cannot you give little Gerda something so that she can have power over her?’

‘I can give her no greater power than she has already; don’t you see how great it is? Don’t you see how men and beasts must help her when she wanders into the wide world with her bare feet? She is powerful already, because she is a dear little innocent child. If she cannot by herself conquer the Snow-queen and take away the glass splinters from little Kay, we cannot help her! The Snow-queen’s garden begins two miles from here. You can carry the little maiden so far; put her down by the large bush with red berries growing in the snow. Then you must come back here as fast as you can.’

Then the Finland woman lifted little Gerda on the reindeer and away he sped.

‘Oh, I have left my gloves and boots behind!’ cried Gerda. She missed them in the piercing cold, but the reindeer did not dare to stop. On he ran till he came to the bush with red berries. Then he set Gerda down and kissed her mouth, and great big tears ran down his cheeks, and then he ran back. There stood poor Gerda, without shoes or gloves in the middle of the bitter cold of Finland.

She ran on as fast as she could. A regiment of gigantic snowflakes came against her, but they melted when they touched her, and she went on with fresh courage.

And now we must see what Kay was doing. He was not thinking of Gerda, and never dreamt that she was standing outside the palace.

The walls of the palace were built of driven snow, and the doors and windows of piercing winds. There were more than a hundred halls in it all of frozen snow. The largest was several miles long; the bright Northern lights lit them up, and very large and empty and cold and glittering they were! In the middle of the great hall was a frozen lake which had cracked in a thousand pieces; each piece was exactly like the other. Here the Snow-queen used to sit when she was at home.

Little Kay was almost blue and black with cold, but he did not feel it, for she had kissed away his feelings and his heart was a lump of ice.

He was pulling about some sharp, flat pieces of ice, and trying to fit one into the other. He thought each was most beautiful, but that was because of the splinter of glass in his eye. He fitted them into a great many shapes, but he wanted to make them spell the word 'Love.' The Snow-queen had said, 'If you can spell out that word you shalt be your own master. I will give you the whole world and a new pair of skates.'

But he could not do it.

'Now I must fly to warmer countries,' said the Snow-queen. 'I must go and powder my black kettles!' (This was what she called Mount Etna and Mount Vesuvius.) 'It does the lemons and grapes good.'

And off she flew, and Kay sat alone in the great hall trying to do his puzzle.

He sat so still that you would have thought he was frozen.

Then it happened that little Gerda stepped into the hall. The biting cold winds became quiet as if they had fallen asleep when she appeared in the great, empty, freezing hall.

She caught sight of Kay; she recognised him, and ran and put her arms round his neck, crying, 'Kay! dear little Kay! I have found you at last!'

But he sat quite still and cold. Then Gerda wept hot tears which fell on his neck and thawed his heart and swept away the bit of the looking-glass. He looked at her and then he burst into tears. He cried so much that the glass splinter swam out of his eye; then he knew her, and cried out, 'Gerda! dear little Gerda! Where have you been so long? and where have I been?'

And he looked round him.

'How cold it is here! How wide and empty!' and he threw himself on Gerda, and she laughed and wept for joy. It was such a happy time that the pieces of ice even danced round them for joy, and when they were tired and lay down again they formed themselves into the letters that the Snow-queen had said he must spell in order to become his own master and have the whole world and a new pair of skates.

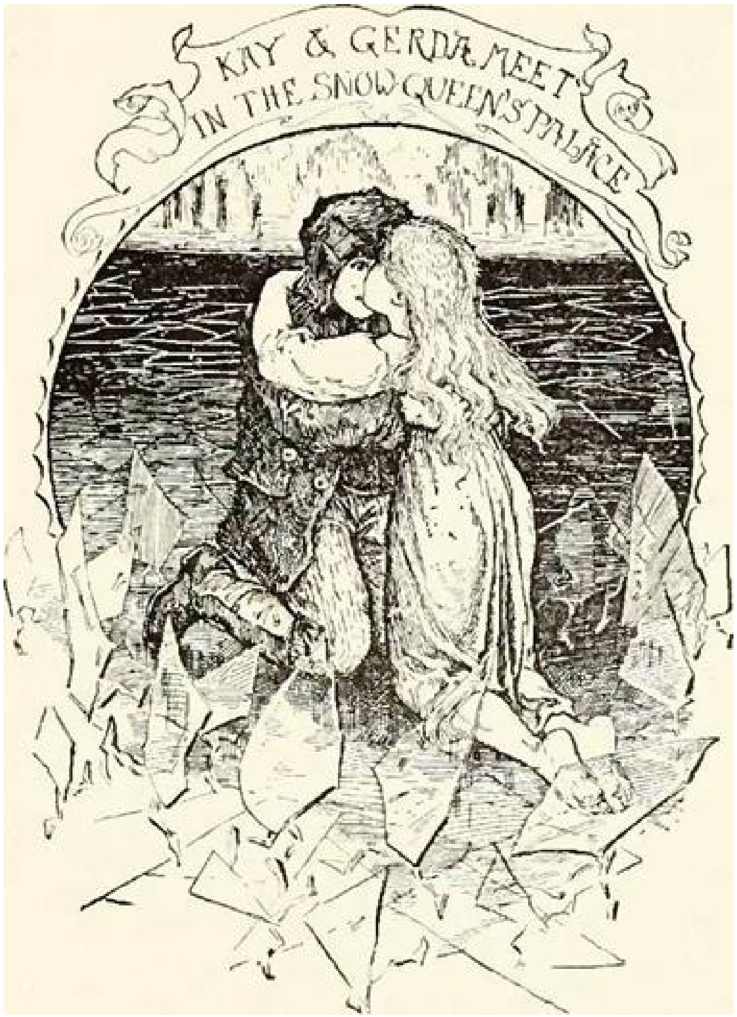
KAY & GERDA MEET
IN THE SNOW QUEEN'S PALACE

And Gerda kissed his cheeks and they grew rosy; she kissed his eyes and they sparkled like hers; she kissed his hands and feet and he became warm and glowing. The Snow-queen might come home now; his release — the word ‘Love’ — stood written in sparkling ice.

They took each other’s hands and wandered out of the great palace; they talked about the grandmother and the roses on the leads, wherever they came the winds hushed and the sun came out. When they reached the bush with red berries there stood the reindeer waiting for them.

He carried Kay and Gerda first to the Finland woman, who warmed them in her hot room and gave them advice for their journey home.

Then they went to the Lapland woman, who gave them new clothes and mended their sleigh. The reindeer ran with them until they came to the green fields fresh with the spring green. Here he said good-bye.

They came to the forest, which was bursting into bud, and out of it came a splendid horse which Gerda knew; it was the one which had drawn the gold coach ridden by a young girl with a red cap on and pistols in her belt. It was the little robber girl who was tired of being at home and wanted to go out into the world. She and Gerda knew each other at once.

‘You are a nice fellow!’ she said to Kay. ‘I should like to know if you deserve to be run all over the world!’

But Gerda patted her cheeks and asked after the prince and princess.

‘They are travelling about,’ said the robber girl.

‘And the crow?’ asked Gerda.

‘Oh, the crow is dead!’ answered the robber-girl. ‘His tame sweetheart is a widow and hops about with a bit of black crape round her leg. She makes a great fuss, but that’s all nonsense. But tell me what happened to you, and how you caught him.’

And Kay and Gerda told her all.

‘Dear, dear!’ said the robber-girl, shook both their hands, and promised that if she came to their town she would come and see them. Then she rode on.

But Gerda and Kay went home hand in hand. There they found the grandmother and everything just as it had been, but when they went through the doorway they found they were grown-up.

There were the roses on the leads; it was summer, warm, glorious summer.

The Fir-tree

Translated from the German of Hans Christian Andersen.

There was once a pretty little fir-tree in a wood. It was in a capital position, for it could get sun, and there was enough air, and all around grew many tall companions, both pines and firs. It did not heed the warm sun and the fresh air, or notice the little peasant children who ran about chattering when they came out to gather wild strawberries and raspberries. Often they found a whole basketful and strung strawberries on a straw; they would sit down by the little fir-tree and say, ‘What a pretty little one this is!’ The tree did not like that at all.

By the next year it had grown a whole ring taller, and the year after that another ring more, for you can always tell a fir-tree’s age from its rings.

‘Oh! if I were only a great tree like the others!’ sighed the little fir-tree, ‘then I could stretch out my branches far and wide and look out into the great world! The birds would build their nests in my branches, and when the wind blew I would bow to it politely just like the others!’ It took no pleasure in the sunshine, nor in the birds, nor in the rose-coloured clouds that sailed over it at dawn and at sunset. Then the winter came, and the snow lay white and sparkling all around, and a hare would come and spring right over the little fir-tree, which annoyed it very much. But when two more winters had passed the fir-tree was so tall that the hare had to run round it. ‘Ah! to grow and grow, and become great and old! that is the only pleasure in life,’ thought the tree. In the autumn the woodcutters used to come and hew some of the tallest trees; this happened every year, and the young fir-tree would shiver as the magnificent trees fell crashing and crackling to the ground, their branches hewn off, and the great trunks left bare, so that they were almost unrecognisable. But then they were laid on waggons and dragged out of the wood by horses. ‘Where are they going? What will happen to them?’

In spring, when the swallows and storks came, the fir-tree asked them, ‘Do you know where they were taken? Have you met them?’

The swallows knew nothing of them, but the stork nodded his head thoughtfully, saying, ‘I think I know. I met many new ships as I flew from Egypt; there were splendid masts on the ships. I’ll wager those were they! They had the scent of fir-trees. Ah! those are grand, grand!’

‘Oh! if I were only big enough to sail away over the sea too! What sort of thing is the sea? what does it look like?’

‘Oh! it would take much too long to tell you all that,’ said the stork, and off he went.

‘Rejoice in your youth,’ said the sunbeams, ‘rejoice in the sweet growing time, in the young life within you.’

And the wind kissed it and the dew wept tears over it, but the fir-tree did not understand.

Towards Christmas-time quite little trees were cut down, some not as big as the young fir-tree, or just the same age, and now it had no peace or rest for longing to be away. These little trees, which were chosen for their beauty, kept all their branches; they were put in carts and drawn out of the wood by horses.

‘Whither are those going?’ asked the fir-tree; ‘they are no bigger than I, and one there was much smaller even! Why do they keep their branches? Where are they taken to?’

‘We know! we know!’ twittered the sparrows. ‘Down there in the city we have peeped in at the windows, we know where they go! They attain to the greatest splendour and magnificence you can imagine! We have looked in at the windows and seen them planted in the middle of the warm room and adorned with the most beautiful things-golden apples, sweet-meats, toys and hundreds of candles.’

‘And then?’ asked the fir-tree, trembling in every limb with eagerness, ‘and then? what happens then?’

‘Oh, we haven’t seen anything more than that. That was simply matchless!’

‘Am I too destined to the same brilliant career?’ wondered the fir-tree excitedly. ‘That is even better than sailing over the sea! I am sick with longing. If it were only Christmas! Now I am tall and grown-up like those which were taken away last year. Ah, if I were only in the cart! If I were only in the warm room with all the splendour and magnificence! And then? Then comes something better, something still more beautiful, else why should they dress us up? There must be something greater, something grander to come — but what? Oh! I am pining away! I really don’t know what’s the matter with me!’

‘Rejoice in us,’ said the air and sunshine, ‘rejoice in your fresh youth in the free air!’

But it took no notice, and just grew and grew; there it stood fresh and green in winter and summer, and all who saw it said, ‘What a beautiful tree!’ And at Christmas-time it was the first to be cut down. The axe went deep into the pith; the tree fell to the ground with a groan; it felt bruised and faint. It could not think of happiness, it was sad at leaving its home, the spot where it had sprung up; it knew, too, that it would never see again its dear old companions, or the little shrubs and flowers, perhaps not even the birds. Altogether the parting was not pleasant.

When the tree came to itself again it was packed in a yard with other trees, and a man was saying, ‘This is a splendid one, we shall only want this.’

Then came two footmen in livery and carried the fir-tree to a large and beautiful room. There were pictures hanging on the walls, and near the Dutch stove stood great Chinese vases with lions on their lids; there were armchairs, silk-covered sofas, big tables laden with picture-books and toys, worth hundreds of pounds-at least, so the children said. The fir-tree was placed in a great tub filled with sand, but no one could see that it was a tub, for it was all hung with greenery and stood on a gay carpet. How the tree trembled! What was coming now? On its branches they hung little nets cut out of coloured paper, each full of sugarplums; gilt apples and nuts hung down as if they were growing, over a hundred red, blue, and white tapers were fastened among the branches. Dolls as life-like as human beings — the fir-tree had never seen any before were suspended among the green, and right up at the top was fixed a gold tinsel star; it was gorgeous, quite unusually gorgeous!

‘To-night,’ they all said, ‘to-night it will be lighted!’

‘Ah!’ thought the tree, ‘if it were only evening! Then the tapers would soon be lighted. What will happen then? I wonder whether the trees will come from the wood to see me, or if the sparrows will fly against the window panes? Am I to stand here decked out thus through winter and summer?’

It was not a bad guess, but the fir-tree had real bark-ache from sheer longing, and bark-ache in trees is just as bad as head-ache in human beings.

Now the tapers were lighted. What a glitter! What splendour! The tree quivered in all its branches so much, that one of the candles caught the green, and singed it. ‘Take care!’ cried the young ladies, and they extinguished it.

Now the tree did not even dare to quiver. It was really terrible! It was so afraid of losing any of its ornaments, and it was quite bewildered by all the radiance.

And then the folding doors were opened, and a crowd of children rushed in, as though they wanted to knock down the whole tree, whilst the older people followed soberly. The children stood quite silent, but only for a moment, and then they shouted again, and danced round the tree, and snatched off one present after another.

‘What are they doing?’ thought the tree. ‘What is going to happen?’ And the tapers burnt low on the branches, and were put out one by one, and then the children were given permission to plunder the tree. They rushed at it so that all its boughs creaked; if it had not been fastened by the gold star at the top to the ceiling, it would have been overthrown.

The children danced about with their splendid toys, and no one looked at the tree, except the old nurse, who came and peeped amongst the boughs, just to see if a fig or an apple had been forgotten.

‘A story! a story!’ cried the children, and dragged a little stout man to the tree; he sat down beneath it, saying, ‘Here we are in the greenwood, and the tree will be delighted to listen! But I am only going to tell one story. Shall it be Henny Penny or Humpty Dumpty who fell downstairs, and yet gained great honour and married a princess?’

‘Henny Penny!’ cried some; ‘Humpty Dumpty!’ cried others; there was a perfect babel of voices! Only the fir-tree kept silent, and thought, ‘Am I not to be in it? Am I to have nothing to do with it?’

But it had already been in it, and played out its part. And the man told them about Humpty Dumpty who fell downstairs and married a princess. The children clapped their hands and cried, ‘Another! another!’ They wanted the story of Henny Penny also, but they only got Humpty Dumpty. The fir-tree stood quite astonished and thoughtful; the birds in the wood had never related anything like that. ‘Humpty Dumpty fell downstairs and yet married a princess! yes, that is the way of the world!’ thought the tree, and was sure it must be true, because such a nice man had told the story. ‘Well, who knows? Perhaps I shall fall downstairs and marry a princess.’ And it rejoiced to think that next day it would be decked out again with candles, toys, glittering ornaments, and fruits. ‘To-morrow I shall quiver again with excitement. I shall enjoy to the full all my splendour. To-morrow I shall hear Humpty Dumpty again, and perhaps Henny Penny too.’ And the tree stood silent and lost in thought all through the night.

Next morning the servants came in. ‘Now the dressing up will begin again,’ thought the tree. But they dragged it out of the room, and up the stairs to the lumber-room, and put it in a dark corner, where no ray of light could penetrate. ‘What does this mean?’ thought the tree. ‘What am I to do here? What is there for me to hear?’ And it leant against the wall, and thought and thought. And there was time enough for that, for days and nights went by, and no one came; at last when some one did come, it was only to put some great boxes into the corner. Now the tree was quite covered; it seemed as if it had been quite forgotten.

‘Now it is winter out-doors,’ thought the fir-tree. ‘The ground is hard and covered with snow, they can’t plant me yet, and that is why I am staying here under cover till the spring comes. How thoughtful they are! Only I wish it were not so terribly dark and lonely here; not even a little hare! It was so nice out in the wood, when the snow lay all around, and the hare leapt past me; yes, even when he leapt over me: but I didn’t like it then. It’s so dreadfully lonely up here.’

‘Squeak, squeak!’ said a little mouse, stealing out, followed by a second. They sniffed at the fir-tree, and then crept between its boughs. ‘It’s frightfully cold,’ said the little mice. ‘How nice it is to be here! Don’t you think so too, you old fir-tree?’

‘I’m not at all old,’ said the tree; ‘there are many much older than I am.’

‘Where do you come from?’ asked the mice, ‘and what do you know?’ They were extremely inquisitive. ‘Do tell us about the most beautiful place in the world. Is that where you come from? Have you been in the storeroom, where cheeses lie on the shelves, and hams hang from the ceiling, where one dances on tallow candles, and where one goes in thin and comes out fat?’

‘I know nothing about that,’ said the tree. ‘But I know the wood, where the sun shines, and the birds sing.’ And then it told them all about its young days, and the little mice had never heard anything like that before, and they listened with all their ears, and said: ‘Oh, how much you have seen! How lucky you have been!’

‘I?’ said the fir-tree, and then it thought over what it had told them. ‘Yes, on the whole those were very happy times.’ But then it went on to tell them about Christmas Eve, when it had been adorned with sweet-meats and tapers.

‘Oh!’ said the little mice, ‘how lucky you have been, you old fir-tree!’

‘I’m not at all old’ said the tree. ‘I only came from the wood this winter. I am only a little backward, perhaps, in my growth.’

‘How beautifully you tell stories!’ said the little mice. And next evening they came with four others, who wanted to hear the tree’s story, and it told still more, for it remembered everything so clearly and thought: ‘Those were happy times! But they may come again. Humpty dumpty fell downstairs, and yet he married a princess; perhaps I shall also marry a princess!’ And then it thought of a pretty little birch-tree that grew out in the wood, and seemed to the fir-tree a real princess, and a very beautiful one too.

‘Who is Humpty Dumpty?’ asked the little mice.

And then the tree told the whole story; it could remember every single word, and the little mice were ready to leap on to the topmost branch out of sheer joy! Next night many more mice came, and on Sunday even two rats; but they did not care about the story, and that troubled the little mice, for now they thought less of it too.

‘Is that the only story you know?’ asked the rats.

‘The only one,’ answered the tree. ‘I heard that on my happiest evening, but I did not realise then how happy I was.’

‘That’s a very poor story. Don’t you know one about bacon or tallow candles? a storeroom story?’

‘No,’ said the tree.

‘Then we are much obliged to you,’ said the rats, and they went back to their friends.

At last the little mice went off also, and the tree said, sighing: ‘Really it was very pleasant when the lively little mice sat round and listened whilst I told them stories. But now that’s over too. But now I will think of the time when I shall be brought out again, to keep up my spirits.’

But when did that happen? Well, it was one morning when they came to tidy up the lumber-room; they threw it really rather roughly on the floor, but a servant dragged it off at once downstairs, where there was daylight once more.

‘Now life begins again!’ thought the tree. It felt the fresh air, the first rays of the sun, and there it was out in the yard! Everything passed so quickly; the tree quite forgot to notice itself, there was so much to look at all around. The yard opened on a garden full of flowers; the roses were so fresh and sweet, hanging over a little trellis, the lime-trees were in blossom, and the swallows flew about, saying: ‘Quirre-virre-vil, my husband has come home;’ but it was not the fir-tree they meant.

‘Now I shall live,’ thought the tree joyfully, stretching out its branches wide; but, alas! they were all withered and yellow; and it was lying in a corner among weeds and nettles. The golden star was still on its highest bough, and it glittered in the bright sunlight. In the yard some of the merry children were playing, who had danced so gaily round the tree at Christmas. One of the little ones ran up, and tore off the gold star.

‘Look what was left on the ugly old fir-tree!’ he cried, and stamped on the boughs so that they cracked under his feet.

And the tree looked at all the splendour and freshness of the flowers in the garden, and then looked at itself, and wished that it had been left lying in the dark corner of the lumber-room; it thought of its fresh youth in the wood, of the merry Christmas Eve, and of the little mice who had listened so happily to the story of Humpty Dumpty.

‘Too late! Too late!’ thought the old tree. ‘If only I had enjoyed myself whilst I could. Now all is over and gone.’

And a servant came and cut the tree into small pieces, there was quite a bundle of them; they flickered brightly under the great copper in the brew-house; the tree sighed deeply, and each sigh was like a pistol-shot; so the children who were playing there ran up, and sat in front of the fire, gazing at it, and crying, ‘Piff! puff! bang!’ But for each report, which was really a sigh, the tree was thinking of a summer’s day in the wood, or of a winter’s night out there, when the stars were shining; it thought of Christmas Eve, and of Humpty Dumpty, which was the only story it had heard, or could tell, and then the tree had burnt away.

The children played on in the garden, and the youngest had the golden star on his breast, which the tree had worn on the happiest evening of its life; and now that was past — and the tree had passed away — and the story too, all ended and done with.

And that’s the way with all stories!

Here our Danish author ends. This is what people call sentiment, and I hope you enjoy it!

Hans, the Mermaid’s Son

Translated from the Danish.

In a village there once lived a smith called Basmus, who was in a very poor way. He was still a young man, and a strong handsome fellow to boot, but he had many little children and there was little to be earned by his trade. He was, however, a diligent and hard-working man, and when he had no work in the smithy he was out at sea fishing, or gathering wreckage on the shore.

It happened one time that he had gone out to fish in good weather, all alone in a little boat, but he did not come home that day, nor the following one, so that all believed he had perished out at sea. On the third day, however, Basmus came to shore again and had his boat full of fish, so big and fat that no one had ever seen their like. There was nothing the matter with him, and he complained neither of hunger or thirst. He had got into a fog, he said, and could not find land again. What he did not tell, however, was where he had been all the time; that only came out six years later, when people got to know that he had been caught by a mermaid out on the deep sea, and had been her guest during the three days that he was missing. From that time forth he went out no more to fish; nor, indeed, did he require to do so, for whenever he went down to the shore it never failed that some wreckage was washed up, and in it all kinds of valuable things. In those days everyone took what they found and got leave to keep it, so that the smith grew more prosperous day by day.

When seven years had passed since the smith went out to sea, it happened one morning, as he stood in the smithy, mending a plough, that a handsome young lad came in to him and said, ‘Good-day, father; my mother the mermaid sends her greetings, and says that she has had me for six years now, and you can keep me for as long.’

Rasmus & the Mermaid

He was a strange enough boy to be six years old, for he looked as if he were eighteen, and was even bigger and stronger than lads commonly are at that age.

‘Will you have a bite of bread?’ said the smith.

‘Oh, yes,’ said Hans, for that was his name.

The smith then told his wife to cut a piece of bread for him. She did so, and the boy swallowed it at one mouthful and went out again to the smithy to his father.

‘Have you got all you can eat?’ said the smith.

‘No,’ said Hans, ‘that was just a little bit.’

The smith went into the house and took a whole loaf, which he cut into two slices and put butter and cheese between them, and this he gave to Hans. In a while the boy came out to the smithy again.

‘Well, have you got as much as you can eat?’ said the smith.

‘No, not nearly,’ said Hans; ‘I must try to find a better place than this, for I can see that I shall never get my fill here.’

Hans wished to set off at once, as soon as his father would make a staff for him of such a kind as he wanted.

‘It must be of iron,’ said he, ‘and one that can hold out.’

The smith brought him an iron rod as thick as an ordinary staff, but Hans took it and twisted it round his finger, so that wouldn’t do. Then the smith came dragging one as thick as a waggon-pole, but Hans bent it over his knee and broke it like a straw. The smith then had to collect all the iron he had, and Hans held it while his father forged for him a staff, which was heavier than the anvil. When Hans had got this he said, ‘Many thanks, father; now I have got my inheritance.’ With this he set off into the country, and the smith was very pleased to be rid of that son, before he ate him out of house and home.

Hans first arrived at a large estate, and it so happened that the squire himself was standing outside the farmyard.

‘Where are you going?’ said the squire.

‘I am looking for a place,’ said Hans, ‘where they have need of strong fellows, and can give them plenty to eat.’

‘Well,’ said the squire, ‘I generally have twenty-four men at this time of the year, but I have only twelve just now, so I can easily take you on.’

‘Very well,’ said Hans, ‘I shall easily do twelve men’s work, but then I must also have as much to eat as the twelve would.’

All this was agreed to, and the squire took Hans into the kitchen, and told the servant girls that the new man was to have as much food as the other twelve. It was arranged that he should have a pot to himself, and he could then use the ladle to take his food with.

It was in the evening that Hans arrived there, so he did nothing more that day than eat his supper — a big pot of buck-wheat porridge, which he cleaned to the bottom and was then so far satisfied that he said he could sleep on that, so he went off to bed. He slept both well and long, and all the rest were up and at their work while he was still sleeping soundly. The squire was also on foot, for he was curious to see how the new man would behave who was both to eat and work for twelve.

But as yet there was no Hans to be seen, and the sun was already high in the heavens, so the squire himself went and called on him.

‘Get up, Hans,’ he cried; ‘you are sleeping too long.’

Hans woke up and rubbed his eyes. ‘Yes, that’s true,’ he said, ‘I must get up and have my breakfast.’

So he rose and dressed himself, and went into the kitchen, where he got his pot of porridge; he swallowed all of this, and then asked what work he was to have.

He was to thresh that day, said the squire; the other twelve men were already busy at it. There were twelve threshing-floors, and the twelve men were at work on six of them — two on each. Hans must thresh by himself all that was lying upon the other six floors. He went out to the barn and got hold of a flail. Then he looked to see how the others did it and did the same, but at hte first stroke he smashed the flail in pieces. There were several flails hanging there, and Hans took the one after the other, but they all went the same way, every one flying in splinters at the first stroke. He then looked round for something else to work with, and found a pair of strong beams lying near. Next he caught sight of a horse-hide nailed up on the barn-door. With the beams he made a flail, using the skin to tie them together. The one beam he used as a handle, and the other to strike with, and now that was all right. But the barn was too low, there was no room to swing the flail, and the floors were too small. Hans, however, found a remedy for this — he simply lifted the whole roof off the barn, and set it down in the field beside. He then emptied down all the corn that he could lay his hands on and threshed away. He went through one lot after another, and it was ll the same to him what he got hold of, so before midday he had threshed all the squire's grain, his rye and wheat and barley and oats, all mixed through each other. When he was finished with this, he lifted the roof up on the barn again, like setting a lid on a box, and went in and told the squire that the job was done.

The squire opened his eyes at this announcement; and came out to see if it was really true. It was true, sure enough, but he was scarcely delighted with the mixed grain that he got from all his crops. However, when he saw the flail that Hans had used, and learned how he had made room for himself to swing it, he was so afraid of the strong fellow, that he dared not say anything, except that it was a good thing he had got it threshed; but it had still to be cleaned.

'What does that mean?' asked Hans.

It was explained to him that the corn and the chaff had to be separated; as yet both were lying in one heap, right up to the roof. Hans began to take up a little and sift it in his hands, but he soon saw that this would never do. He soon thought of a plan, however; he opened both barn-doors, and then lay down at one end and blew, so that all the chaff flew out and lay like a sand-bank at the other end of the barn, and the grain was as clean as it could be. Then he reported to the squire that that job also was done. The squire said that that was well; there was nothing more for him to do that day. Off went Hans to the kitchen, and got as much as he could eat; then he went and took a midday nap which lasted till supper-time.

Meanwhile the squire was quite miserable, and made his moan to his wife, saying that she must help him to find some means to getting rid of this strong fellow, for he durst not give him his leave. She sent for the steward, and it was arranged that next day all the men should go to the forest for fire-wood, and that they should make a bargain among them, that the one who came home last with his load should be hanged. They thought they could easily manage that it would be Hans who would lose his life, for the others would be early on the road, while Hans would certainly oversleep himself. In the evening, therefore, the men sat and talked together, saying that next morning they must set out early to the forest, and as they had a hard day's work and a long journey before them, they would, for their amusement, make a compact, that whichever of them came home last with his load should lose his life on the gallows. So Hans had no objections to make.

Long before the sun was up next morning, all the twelve men were on foot. They took all the best horses and carts, and drove off to the forest. Hans, however, lay and slept on, and the squire said, 'Just let him lie.'

At last, Hans thought it was time to have his breakfast, so he got up and put on his clothes. He took plenty of time to his breakfast, and then went out to get his horse and cart ready. The others had taken everything that was any good, so that he had a difficulty in scraping together four wheels of different sizes and fixing them to an old cart, and he could find no other horses than a pair of old hacks. He did not know where it lay, but he followed the track of the other carts, and in that way came to it all right. On coming to the gate leading into the forest, he was unfortunate enough to break it in pieces, so he took a huge stone that was lying on the field, seven ells long, and seven ells broad, and set this in the gap, then he went on and joined the others. These laughed at him heartily, for they had laboured as hard as they could since daybreak, and had helped each other to fell trees and put them on the carts, so that all of these were now loaded except one.

Hans got hold of a woodman's axe and proceeded to fell a tree, but he destroyed the edge and broke the shaft at the first blow. He therefore laid down the axe, put his arms round the tree, and pulled it up by the roots. This he threw upon his cart, and then another and another, and thus he went on while all the others forgot their work, and stood with open mouths, gazing at this strange woodcraft. All at once they began to hurry; the last cart was loaded, and they whipped up their horses, so as to be the first to arrive home.

When Hans had finished his work, he again put his old hacks into the cart, but they could not move it from the spot. He was annoyed at this, and took them out again, twisted a rope round the cart, and all the trees, lifted the whole affair on his back, and set off home, leading the horses behind him by the rein. When he reached the gate, he found the whole row of carts standing there, unable to get any further for the stone which lay in the gap.

‘What!’ said Hans, ‘can twelve men not move that stone?’ With that he lifted it and threw it out of hte way, and went on with his burden on his back, and the horses behind him, and arrived at the farm long before any of the others. The squire was walking about there, looking and looking, for he was very curious to know what had happened. Finally, he caught sight of Hans coming along in this fashion, and was so frightened that he did not know what to do, but he shut the gate and put on the bar. When Hans reached the gate of the courtyard, he laid down the trees and hammered at it, but no one came to open it. He then took the trees and tossed them over the barn into the yard, and the cart after them, so that every wheel flew off in a different direction.

When the squire saw this, he thought to himself, ‘The horses will come the same way if I don’t open the door,’ so he did this.

‘Good day, master,’ said Hans, and put the horses into the stable, and went into the kitchen, to get something to eat. At length the other men came home with their loads. When they came in, Hans said to them, ‘Do you remember the bargain we made last night? Which of you is it that’s going to be hanged?’ ‘Oh,’ said they, ‘that was only a joke; it didn’t mean anything.’ ‘Oh well, it doesn’t matter, ‘said Hans, and there was no more about it.

The squire, however, and his wife and the steward, had much to say to each other about the terrible man they had got, and all were agreed that they must get rid of him in some way or other. The steward said that he would manage this all right. Next morning they were to clean the well, and they would use of that opportunity. They would get him down into the well, and then have a big mill-stone ready to throw down on top of him — that would settle him. After that they could just fill in the well, and then escape being at any expense for his funeral. Both the squire and his wife thought this a splendid idea, and went about rejoicing at the thought that now they would get rid of Hans.

But Hans was hard to kill, as we shall see. He slept long next morning, as he always did, and finally, as he would not waken by himself, the squire had to go and call him. ‘Get up, Hans, you are sleeping too long,’ he cried. Hans woke up and rubbed his eyes. ‘That’s so,’ said he, ‘I shall rise and have my breakfast.’ He got up then and dressed himself, while the breakfast stood waiting for him. When he had finished the whole of this, he asked what he was to do that day. He was told to help the other men to clean out the well. That was all right, and he went out and found the other men waiting for him. To these he said that they could choose whichever task they liked — either to go down into the well and fill the buckets while he pulled them up, or pull them up, and he alone would go down to the bottom of the well. They answered that they would rather stay above-ground, as there would be no room for so many of them down in the well.

Hans therefore went down alone, and began to clean out the well, but the men had arranged how they were to act, and immediately each of them seized a stone from a heap of huge blocks, and threw them down above him, thinking to kill him with these. Hans, however, gave no more heed to this than to shout up to them, to keep the hens away from the well, for they were scraping gravel down on the top of him.

They then saw that they could not kill him with little stones, but they had still the big one left. The whole twelve of them set to work with poles and rollers and rolled the big mill-stone to the brink of the well. It was with the greatest difficulty that they got it thrown down there, and now they had no doubt that he had got all that he wanted. But the stone happened to fall so luckily that his head went right through the hole in the middle of the mill-stone, so that it sat round his neck like a priest's collar. At this, Hans would stay down no longer. He came out of the well, with the mill-stone round his neck, ad went straight to the squire and complained that the other men were trying to make a fool of him. He would not be their priest, he said; he had too little learning for that. Saying this, he bent down his head and shook the stone off, so that it crushed one of the squire's big toes.

The squire went limping in to his wife, and the steward was sent for. He was told that he must devise some plan for getting rid of this terrible person. The scheme he had devised before had been of no use, and now good counsel was scarce.

'Oh, no' said the steward, 'there are good enough ways yet. The squire can send him this evening to fish in Devilmoss Lake: he will never escape alive from there, for no one can go there by night for Old Eric.'

That was a grand idea, both the squire and his wife thought, and so he limped out again to Hans, and said that he would punish his men for having tried to make a fool of him. Meanwhile, Hans could do a little job where he would be free from these rascals. He should go out on the lake and fish there that night, and would then be free from all work on the following day.

'All right,' said Hans; 'I am well content with that, but I must have something with me to eat — a baking of bread, a cask of butter, a barrel of ale, and a keg of brandy. I can't do with less than that.'

The squire said that he could easily get all that, so Hans got all of these tied up together, hung them over his shoulder on his good staff, and tramped away to Devilmoss Lake.

There he got into the boat, rowed out upon the lake, and got everything ready to fish. As he now lay out there in the middle of the lake, and it was pretty late in the evening, he thought he would have something to eat first, before starting to work. Just as he was at his busiest with this, Old Eric rose out of the lake, caught him by the cuff of the neck, whipped him out of the boat, and dragged him down to the bottom. It was a lucky thing that Hans had his walking-stick with him that day, and had just time to catch hold of it when he felt Old Eric's claws in his neck, so when they got down to the bottom he said, 'Stop now, just wait a little; here is solid ground.' With that he caught Old Eric by the back of the neck with one hand, and hammered away on his back with the staff, till he beat him out as flat as a pancake. Old Eric then began to lament and howl, begging him just to let him go, and he would never come back to the lake again.

'No, my good fellow,' said Hans, 'you won't get off until you promise to bring all the fish in the lake up to the squire's courtyard, before to-morrow morning.'

Old Eric eagerly promised this, if Hans would only let him go; so Hans rowed ashore, ate up the rest of his provisions, and went home to bed.

Next morning, when the squire rose and opened his front door, the fish came tumbling into the porch, and the whole yard was crammed full of them. He ran in again to his wife, for he could never devise anything himself, and said to her, 'What shall we do with him now? Old Eric hasn't taken him. I am certain that all the fish are out of the lake, for the yard is just filled with them.'

'Yes, that's a bad business,' said she; 'you must see if you can't get him sent to Purgatory, to demand tribute.' The squire therefore made his way to the men's quarters, to speak to Hans, and it took him all his time to push his way along the walls, under the eaves, on account of the fish that filled the yard. He thanked Hans for having fished so well, and said that now he had an errand for him, which he could only give to a trusty servant, and that was to journey to Purgatory, and demand three years tribute, which, he said, was owing to him from that quarter.

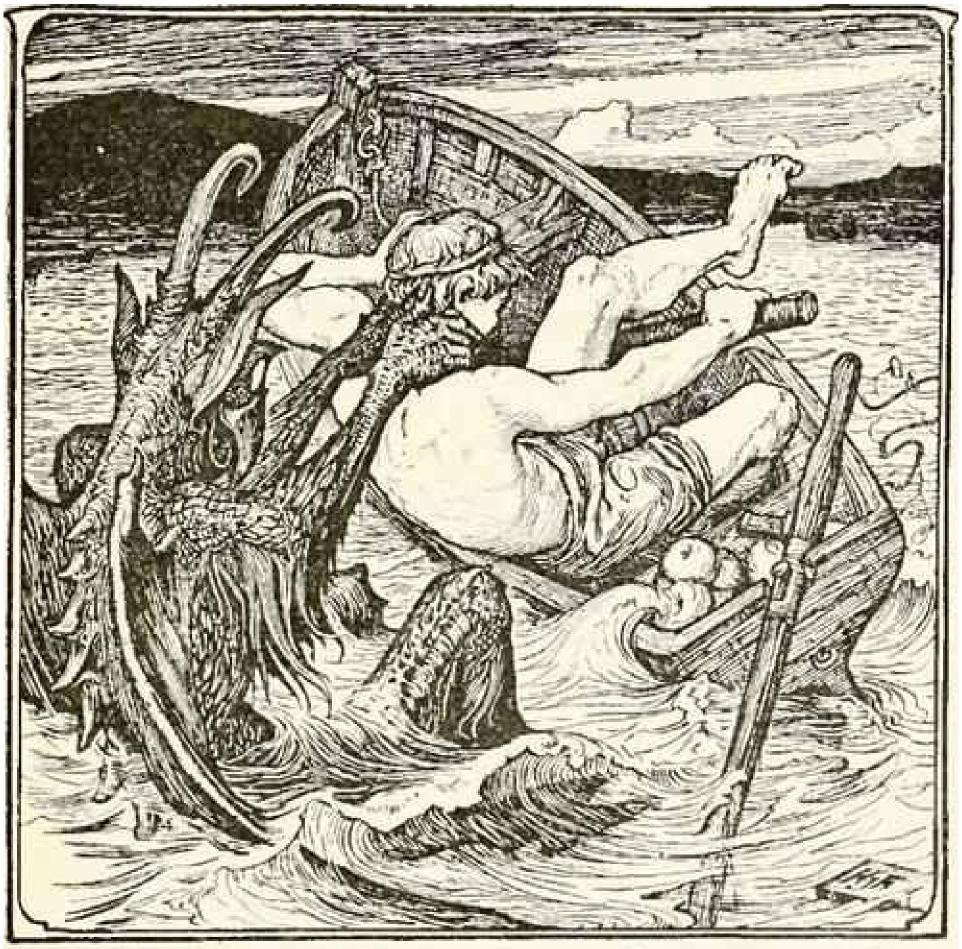

OLD ERIC CATCHES HANS

‘Willingly,’ said Hans; ‘but what road do I go, to get there?’

The squire stood, and did not know what to say, and had first to go in to his wife to ask her.

‘Oh, what a fool you are!’ said she, ‘can’t you direct him straight forward, south through the wood? Whether he gets there or not, we shall be quit of him.’

Out goes the squire again to Hans.

‘The way lies straight forward, south through the wood,’ said he.

Hans then must have his provisions for the journey; two bakings of bread, two casks of butter, two barrels of ale, and two kegs of brandy. He tied all these up together, and got them on his shoulder hanging on his good walking-stick, and off he tramped southward.

After he had got through the wood, there was more than one road, and he was in doubt which of them was the right one, so he sat down and opened up his bundle of provisions. He found he had left his knife at home, but by good chance, there was a plough lying close at hand, so he took the coulter of this to cut the bread with. As he sat there and took his bite, a man came riding past him.

‘Where are you from?’ said Hans.

‘From Purgatory,’ said the man.

‘Then stop and wait a little,’ said Hans; but the man was in a hurry, and would not stop, so Hans ran after him and caught the horse by the tail. This brought it down on its hind legs, and the man went flying over its head into a ditch. ‘Just wait a little,’ said Hans; ‘I am going the same way.’ He got his provisions tied up again, and laid them on the horse’s back; then he took hold of the reins and said to the man, ‘We two can go along together on foot.’

As they went on their way Hans told the stranger both about the errand he had on hand and the fun he had had with Old Eric. The other said but little but he was well acquainted with the way, and it was no long time before they arrived at the gate. There both horse and rider disappeared, and Hans was left alone outside. ‘They will come and let me in presently,’ he thought to himself; but no one came. He hammered at the gate; still no one appeared. Then he got tired of waiting, and smashed at the gate with his staff until he knocked it in pieces and got inside. A whole troop of little demons came down upon him and asked what he wanted. His master’s compliments, said Hans, and he wanted three years’ tribute. At this they howled at him, and were about to lay hold of him and drag him off; but when they had got some raps from his walking-stick they let go again, howled still louder than before, and ran in to Old Eric, who was still in bed, after his adventure in the lake. They told him that a messenger had come from the squire at Devilmoss to demand three years’ tribute. He had knocked the gate to pieces and bruised their arms and legs with his iron staff.

‘Give him three years’! give him ten!’ shouted Old Eric, ‘only don’t let him come near me.’

So all the little demons came dragging so much silver and gold that it was something awful. Hans filled his bundle with gold and silver coins, put it on his neck, and tramped back to his master, who was scared beyond all measure at seeing him again.

But Hans was also tired of service now. Of all the gold and silver he brought with him he let the squire keep one half, and he was glad enough, both for the money and at getting rid of Hans. The other half he took home to his father the smith in Furreby. To him also he said, ‘Farewell;’ he was now tired of living on shore among mortal men, and preferred to go home again to his mother. Since that time no one has ever seen Hans, the Mermaid’s son.

Peter Bull

From the Danish.

There once lived in Denmark a peasant and his wife who owned a very good farm, but had no children. They often lamented to each other that they had no one of their own to inherit all the wealth that they possessed. They continued to prosper, and became rich people, but there was no heir to it all.

One year it happened that they owned a pretty little bull-calf, which they called Peter. It was the prettiest little creature they had ever seen — so beautiful and so wise that it understood everything that was said to it, and so gentle and so full of play that both the man and his wife came to be as fond of it as if it had been their own child.

One day the man said to his wife, ‘I wonder, now, whether our parish clerk could teach Peter to talk; in that case we could not do better than adopt him as our son, and let him inherit all that we possess.’

‘Well, I don’t know,’ said his wife, ‘our clerk is tremendously learned, and knows much more than his Paternoster, and I could almost believe that he might be able to teach Peter to talk, for Peter has a wonderfully good head too. You might at least ask him about it.’

Off went the man to the clerk, and asked him whether he thought he could teach a bull-calf that they had to speak, for they wished so much to have it as their heir.

The clerk was no fool; he looked round about to see that no one could overhear them, and said, ‘Oh, yes, I can easily do that, but you must not speak to anyone about it. It must be done in all secrecy, and the priest must not know of it, otherwise I shall get into trouble, as it is forbidden. It will also cost you something, as some very expensive books are required.’

That did not matter at all, the man said; they would not care so very much what it cost. The clerk could have a hundred dollars to begin with to buy the books. He also promised to tell no one about it, and to bring the calf round in the evening.

He gave the clerk the hundred dollars on the spot, and in the evening took the calf round to him, and the clerk promised to do his best with it. In a week’s time he came back to the clerk to hear about the calf and see how it was thriving. The clerk, however, said that he could not get a sight of it, for then Peter would long after him and forget all that he had already learned. He was getting on well with his learning, but another hundred dollars were needed, as they must have more books. The peasant had the money with him, so he gave it to the clerk, and went home again with high hopes.

In another week the man came again to learn what progress Peter had made now.

‘He is getting on very well,’ said the clerk.

‘I suppose he can’t say anything yet?’ said the man.

‘Oh, yes,’ said the clerk, ‘he can say “Moo” now.’

‘Do you think he will get on with his learning?’ asked the peasant.

‘Oh, yes,’ said the clerk, ‘but I shall want another hundred dollars for books. Peter can’t learn well out of the ones that he has got.’

‘Well, well,’ said the man, ‘what must be spent shall be spent.’

So he gave the clerk the third hundred dollars for books, and a cask of good old ale for Peter. The clerk drank the ale himself, and gave the calf milk, which he thought would be better for it.

Some weeks passed, during which the peasant did not come round to ask after the calf, being frightened lest it should cost him another hundred dollars, for he had begun to squirm a bit at having to part with so much money. Meanwhile the clerk decided that the calf was as fat as it could be, so he killed it. After he had got all the beef out of the way he went inside, put on his black clothes, and made his way to the peasant’s house.

As soon as he had said ‘Good-day’ he asked, ‘Has Peter come home here?’

‘No, indeed, he hasn’t,’ said the man; ‘surely he hasn’t run away?’

‘I hope,’ said the clerk, ‘that he would not behave so contemptibly after all the trouble I have had to teach him, and all that I have spent upon him. I have had to spend at least a hundred dollars of my own money to buy books for him before I got him so far on. He could say anything he liked now, so he said to-day that he longed to see his parents again. I was willing to give him that pleasure, but I was afraid that he wouldn’t be able to find the way here by himself, so I made myself ready to go with him. When we had got outside the house I remembered that I had left my stick inside, and went in again to get it. When I came out again Peter had gone off on his own account. I thought he would be here, and if he isn’t I don’t know where he is.’

The peasant and his wife began to lament bitterly that Peter had run away in this fashion just when they were to have so much joy of him, and after they had spent so much on his education. The worst of it was that now they had no heir after all. The clerk comforted them as best he could; he also was greatly distressed that Peter should have behaved in such a way just when he should have gained honour from his pupil. Perhaps he had only gone astray, and he would advertise him at church next Sunday, and find out where anyone had seen him. Then he bade them ‘Good-bye,’ and went home nad dined on a good fat veal roast.

Now it so happened that the clerk took in a newspaper, and one day he chanced to read in its columns of a new merchant who had settled in a town at some distance, and whose name was ‘Peter Bull.’ He put the newspaper in his pocket, and went round to the sorrowing couple who had lost their heir. He read the paragraph to them, and added, ‘I wonder, now, whether that could be your bull-calf Peter?’

‘Yes, of course it is,’ said the man; ‘who else would it be?’

His wife then spoke up and said, ‘You must set out, good man, and see about him, for it is him, I am perfectly certain. Take a good sum of money with you, too; for who knows but what he may want some cash now that he has turned a merchant!’

Next day the man got a bag of money on his back and a sandwich in his pocket, and his pipe in his mouth, and set out for the town where the new merchant lived. It was no short way, and he travelled for many days before he finally arrived there. He reached it one morning, just at daybreak, found out the right place, and asked if the merchant was at home. Yes, he was, said the people, but he was not up yet.

‘That doesn’t matter,’ said the peasant, ‘for I am his father. Just show me up to his bedroom.’

He was shown up to the room, and as soon as he entered it, ad caught sight of the merchant, he recognised him at once. He had the same broad forehead, the same thick neck, and same red hair, but in other respects he was now like a human being. The peasant rushed straight up to him and took a firm hold of him. ‘O Peter,’ said he, ‘what a sorrow you have caused us, both myself and your mother, by running off like this just as we had got you well educated! Get up, now, so that I can see you properly, and have a talk with you.’

The merchant thought that it was a lunatic who had made his way in to him, and thought it best to take things quietly.

‘All right,’ said he, ‘I shall do so at once.’ He got out of bed and made haste to dress himself.

‘Ay,’ said the peasant, ‘now I can see how clever our clerk is. He has done well by you, for now you look just like a human being. If one didn’t know it, one would never think that it was you we got from the red cow; will you come home with me now?’

‘No,’ said the merchant, ‘I can’t find time just now. I have a big business to look after.’

‘You could have the farm at once, you know,’ said the peasant, ‘and we old people would retire. But if you would rather stay in business, of course you may do so. Are you in want of anything?’

‘Oh, yes,’ said the merchant; ‘I want nothing so much as money. A merchant has always a use for that.’

‘I can well believe that,’ said the peasant, ‘for you had nothing at all to start with. I have brought some with me for that very end.’ With that he emptied his bag of money out upon the table, so that it was all covered with bright dollars.

When the merchant saw what kind of man he had before him he began to speak him fair, and invited him to stay with him for some days, so that they might have some more talk together.

‘Very well,’ said the peasant, ‘but you must call me “Father.”’

‘I have neither father nor mother alive,’ said Peter Bull.

‘I know that,’ said the man; ‘your real father was sold at Hamburg last Michaelmas, and your real mother died while calving in spring; but my wife and I have adopted you as our own, and you are our only heir, so you must call me “Father.”’

Peter Bull was quite willing to do so, and it was settled that he should keep the money, while the peasant made his will and left to him all that he had, before he went home to his wife, and told her the whole story.

She was delighted to hear that it was true enough about Peter Bull — that he was no other than their own bull-calf.

‘You must go at once and tell the clerk,’ said she, ‘and pay him the hundred dollars of his own money that he spent upon our son. He has earned them well, and more besides, for all the joy he has given us in having such a son and heir.’

The man agreed with this, and thanked the clerk for all he had done, and gave him two hundred dollars. Then he sold the farm, and removed with his wife to the town where their dear son and heir was living. To him they gave all their wealth, and lived with him till their dying day.

The Bird ‘Grip’

Translated from the Swedish.

It happened once that a king, who had a great kingdom and three sons, became blind, and no human skill or art could restore to him his sight. At last there came to the palace an old woman, who told him that in the whole world there was only one thing that could give him back his sight, and that was to get the bird Grip; his song would open the King’s eyes.

When the king’s eldest son heard this he offered to bring the bird Grip, which was kept in a cage by a king in another country, and carefully guarded as his greatest treasure. The blind king was greatly rejoiced at his son’s resolve, fitted him out in the best way he could, and let him go. When the prince had ridden some distance he came to an inn, in which there were many guests, all of whom were merry, and drank and sang and played at dice. This joyous life pleased the prince so well that he stayed in the inn, took part in the playing and drinking, and forgot both his blind father and the bird Grip.

Meanwhile the king waited with both hope and anxiety for his son’s return, but as time went on and nothing was heard of him, the second prince asked leave to go in search of his brother, as well as to bring the bird Grip. The king granted his request, and fitted him out in the finest fashion. But when the prince came to the inn and found his brother among his merry companions, he also remained there and forgot both the bird Grip and his blind father.

When the king noticed that neither of his sons returned, although a long time had passed since the second one set out, he was greatly distressed, for not only had he lost all hope of getting back his sight, but he had also lost his two eldest sons. The youngest now came to him, and offered to go in search of his brothers and to bring the bird Grip; he was quite certain that he would succeed in this. The king was unwilling to risk his third son on such an errand, but he begged so long that his father had at last to consent. This prince also was fitted out in the finest manner, like his brothers, and so rode away.

He also turned into the same inn as his brothers, and when these saw him they assailed him with many entreaties to remain with them and share their merry life. But he answered that now, when he had found them, his next task was to get the bird Grip, for which his blind father was longing, and so he had not a single hour to spare with them in the inn. He then said farewell to his brothers, and rode on to find another inn in which to pass the night. When he had ridden a long way, and it began to grow dark, he came to a house which lay deep in the forest. Here he was received in a very friendly manner by the host, who put his horse into the stable, and led the prince himself into the guest-chamber, where he ordered a maid-servant to lay the cloth and set down the supper. It was now dark, and while the girl was laying the cloth and setting down the dishes, and the prince had begun to appease his hunger, he heard the most piteous shrieks and cries from the next room. He sprang up from the table and asked the girl what those cries were, and whether he had fallen into a den of robbers. The girl answered that these shrieks were heard every night, but it was no living being who uttered them; it was a dead man, who life the host had taken because he could not pay for the meals he had had in the inn. The host further refused to bury the dead man, as he had left nothing to pay the expenses of the funeral, and every night he went and scourged the dead body of his victim.

When she had said this she lifted the cover off one of the dishes, and the prince saw that there lay on it a knife and an axe. He understood then that the host meant to ask him by this what kind of death he preferred to die, unless he was willing to ransom his life with his money. He then summoned the host, gave him a large sum for his own life, and paid the dead man's debt as well, besides paying him for burying the body, which the murderer now promised to attend to.

The prince, however, felt that his life was not safe in this murderer's den, and asked the maid to help him to escape that night. She replied that the attempt to do so might cost her her own life, as the key of the stable in which the prince's horse stood lay under the host's pillow; but, as she herself was a prisoner there, she would help him to escape if he would take her along with him. He promised to do so, and they succeeded in getting away from the inn, and rode on until they came to another far away from it, where the prince got a good place for the girl before proceeding on his journey.

As he now rode all alone through a forest there met him a fox, who greeted him in a friendly fashion, and asked him where he was going, and on what errand he was bent. The prince answered that his errand was too important to be confided to everyone that he met.

'You are right in that,' said the fox, 'for it relates to the bird Grip, which you want to take and bring home to your blind father; I could help you in this, but in that case you must follow my counsel.'

The prince thought that this was a good offer, especially as the fox was ready to go with him and show him the way to the castle, where the bird Grip sat in his cage, and so he promised to obey the fox's instructions. When they had traversed the forest together they saw the castle at some distance. Then the fox gave the prince three grains of gold, one of which he was to throw into the guard-room, another into the room where the bird Grip sat, and the third into its cage. He could then take the bird, but he must beware of stroking it; otherwise it would go ill with him.

The prince took the grains of gold, and promised to follow the fox's directions faithfully. When he came to the guard-room of the castle he threw one of the grains in there, and the guards at once fell asleep. The same thing happened with those who kept watch in the room beside the bird Grip, and when he threw the third grain into its cage the bird also fell asleep. When the prince got the beautiful bird into his hand he could not resist the temptation to stroke it, whereupon it awoke and began to scream. At this the whole castle woke up, and the prince was taken prisoner.

As he now sat in his prison, and bitterly lamented that his own disobedience had brought himself into trouble, and deprived his father of the chance of recovering his sight, the fox suddenly stood in front of him. The prince was very pleased to see it again, and received with great meekness all its reproaches, as well as promised to be more obedient in the future, if the fox would only help him out of his fix. The fox said that he had come to assist him, but he could do no more than advise the prince, when he was brought up for trial, to answer 'yes' to all the judge's questions, and everything would go well. The prince faithfully followed his instructions, so that when the judge asked him whether he had meant to steal the bird Grip he said 'Yes,' and when the judge asked him if he was a master-thief he again answered 'Yes.'

When the king heard that he admitted being a master-thief, he said that he would forgive him the attempt to steal the bird if he would go to the next kingdom and carry off the world's most beautiful princess, and bring her to him. To this also the prince said 'Yes.'

When he left the castle he met the fox, who went along with him to the next kingdom, and when they came near the castle there, gave him three grains of gold — one to throw into the guard-room, another into the princess's chamber, and the third into her bed. At the same time he strictly warned him not to kiss the princess. The prince went into the castle, and did with the grains of gold as the fox had told him, so that sleep fell upon everyone there; but when he had taken the princess into his arms he forgot the fox's warning, at the sight of her beauty, and kissed her. Then both she and all the others in the castle woke; the prince was taken prisoner, and put into a strong dungeon.

Here the fox again came to him and reproached him with his disobedience, but promised to help him out of this trouble also if he would answer 'yes' to everything they asked him at his trial. The prince willingly agreed to this, and admitted to the judge that he had meant to steal the princess, and that he was a master-thief.

When the king learned this he said he would forgive his offence if he would go to the next kingdom and steal the horse with the four golden shoes. To this also the prince said ‘Yes.’

When he had gone a little way from the castle he met the fox, and they continued on their journey together. When they reached the end of it the prince for the third time received three grains of gold from the fox, with directions to throw one into the guard-chamber, another into the stable, and the third into the horse’s stall. But the fox told him that above the horse’s stall hung a beautiful golden saddle, which he must not touch, if he did not want to bring himself into new troubles worse than those he had escaped from, for then the fox could help him no longer.

The prince promised to be firm this time. He threw the grains of gold in the proper places, and untied the horse, but with that he caught sight of the golden saddle, and thought that none but it could suit so beautiful a horse, especially as it had golden shoes. But just as he stretched out his hand to take it he received from some invisible being so hard a blow on the arm that it was made quite numb. This recalled to him his promise and his danger, so he led out the horse without looking at the golden saddle again.

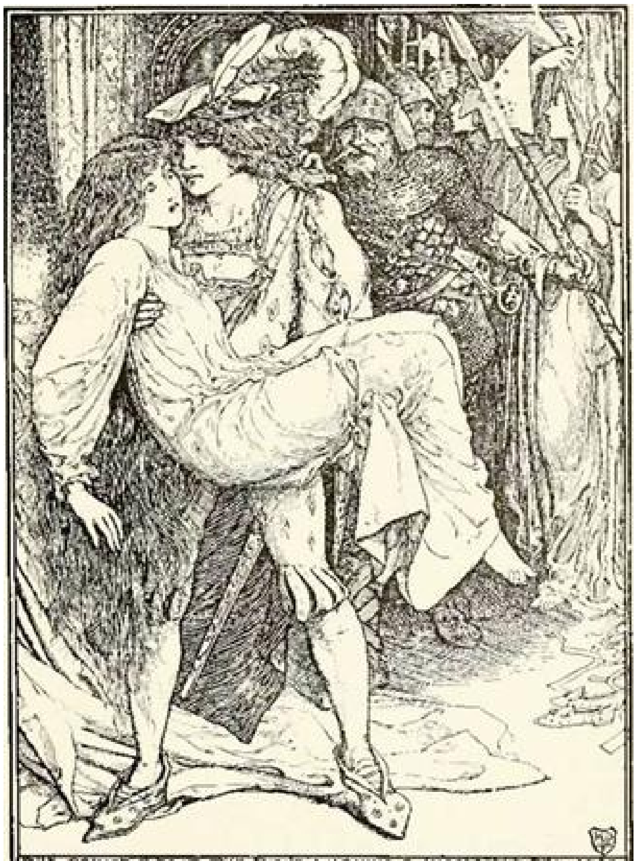

THE · PRINCE · FORGOT · THE · FOX'S · WARNING & KISSED · THE · PRINCESS
THEN · BOTH · SHE · AND · ALL · THE · OTHERS · IN · THE · CASTLE · AWOKE ·

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The fox was waiting for him outside the castle, and the prince confessed to him that he had very nearly given way to temptation this time as well. ‘I know that,’ said the fox, ‘for it was I who struck you over the arm.’

As they now went on together the prince said that he could not forget the beautiful princess, and asked the fox whether he did not think that she ought to ride home to his father’s palace on this horse with the golden shoes. The fox agreed that this would be excellent; if the prince would now go and carry her off he would give him three grains of gold for that purpose. The prince was quite ready, and promised to keep better command of himself this time, and not kiss her.

He got the grains of gold and entered the castle, where he carried off the princess, set her on the beautiful horse, and held on his way. When they came near to the castle where the bird Grip sat in his cage he again asked the fox for three grains of gold. These he got, and with them he was successful in carrying off the bird.

He was now full of joy, for his blind father would now recover his sight, while he himself owned the world’s most beautiful princess and the horse with the golden shoes.

The prince and princess travelled on together with mirth and happiness, and the fox followed them until they came to the forest where the prince first met with him.

‘Here our ways part,’ said the fox. ‘You have now got all that your heart desired, and you will have a prosperous journey to your father’s palace if only you do not ransom anyone’s life with money.’

The prince thanked the fox for all his help, promised to give heed to his warning, said farewell to him, and rode on, with the princess by his side and the bird Grip on his wrist.

They soon arrived at the inn where the two eldest brothers had stayed, forgetting their errand. But now no merry song or noise of mirth was heard from it. When the prince came nearer he saw two gallows erected, and when he entered the inn along with the princess he saw that all the rooms were hung with black, and that everything inside foreboded sorrow and death. He asked the reason of this, and was told that two princes were to be hanged that day for debt; they had spent all their money in feasting and playing, and were now deeply in debt to the host, and as no one could be found to ransom their lives they were about to be hanged according to the law.

The prince knew that it was his two brothers who had thus forfeited their lives and it cut him to the heart to think that two princes should suffer such a shameful death; and, as he had sufficient money with him, he paid their debts, and so ransomed their lives.

At first the brothers were grateful for their liberty, but when they saw the youngest brother’s treasures they became jealous of his good fortune, and planned how to bring him to destruction, and then take the bird Grip, the princess, and the horse with the golden shoes, and convey them to their blind father. After they had agreed on how to carry out their treachery they enticed the prince to a den of lions and threw him down among them. Then they set the princess on horseback, took the bird Grip, and rode homeward. The princess wept bitterly, but they told her that it would cost her her life if she did not say that the two brothers had won all the treasures.

When they arrived at their father’s palace there was great rejoicing, and everyone praised the two princes for their courage and bravery.

When the king inquired after the youngest brother they answered that he had led such a life in the inn that he had been hanged for debt. The king sorrowed bitterly over this, because the youngest prince was his dearest son, and the joy over the treasures soon died away, for the bird Grip would not sing so that the king might recover his sight, the princess wept night and day, and no one dared to venture so close to the horse as to have a look at his golden shoes.

Now when the youngest prince was thrown down into the lions' den he found the fox sitting there, and the lions, instead of tearing him to pieces, showed him the greatest friendliness. Nor was the fox angry with him for having forgot his last warning. He only said that sons who could so forget their old father and disgrace their royal birth as those had done would not hesitate to betray their brother either. Then he took the prince up out of the lion's den and gave him directions what to do now so as to come by his rights again.

The prince thanked the fox with all his heart for his true friendship, but the fox answered that if he had been of any use to him he would now for his own part ask a service of him. The prince replied that he would do him any service that was in his power.

'I have only one thing to ask of you,' said the fox, 'and that is, that you should cut off my head with your sword.'

The prince was astonished, and said that he could not bring himself to cut the had off his truest friend, and to this he stuck in spite of all the fox's declarations that it was the greatest service he could do him. At this the fox became very sorrowful, and declared that the prince's refusal to grant his request now compelled him to do a deed which he was very unwilling to do — if the prince would not cut off his head, then he must kill the prince himself. Then at last the prince drew his good sword and cut off the fox's head, and the next moment a youth stood before him.

'Thanks,' said he, 'for this service, which has freed me from a spell that not even death itself could loosen. I am the dead man who lay unburied in the robber's inn, where you ransomed me and gave me honourable burial, and therefore I have helped you in your journey.'

With this they parted and the prince, disguising himself as a horse-shoer, went up to his father's palace and offered his services there.

The king's men told him that a horse-shoer was indeed wanted at the palace, but he must be one who could lift up the feet of the horse with the golden shoes, and such a one they had not yet been able to find. The prince asked to see the horse, and as soon as he entered the stable the steed began to neigh in a friendly fashion, and stood as quiet and still as a lamb while the prince lifted up his hoofs, one after the other, and showed the king's men the famous golden shoes.

After this the king's men began to talk about the bird Grip, and how strange it was that he would not sing, however well he was attended to. The horse-shoer then said that he knew the bird very well; he had seen it when it sat in its cage in another king's palace, and if it did not sing now it must be because it did not have all that it wanted. He himself knew so much about the bird's ways that if he only got to see it he could tell at once what it lacked.

The king's men now took counsel whether they ought to take the stranger in before the king, for in his chamber sat the bird Grip along with the weeping princess. It was decided to risk doing so, and the horse-shoer was led into the king's chamber, where he had no sooner called the bird by its name than it began to sing and the princess to smile. Then the darkness cleared away from the king's eyes, and the more the bird sang the more clearly did he see, till at last in the strange horse-shoer he recognised his youngest son. Then the princess told the king how treacherously his eldest sons had acted, and he had them banished from his kingdom; but the youngest prince married the princess, and got the horse with the golden shoes and half the kingdom from his father, who kept for himself so long as he lived the bird Grip, which now sang with all its heart to the king and all his court.

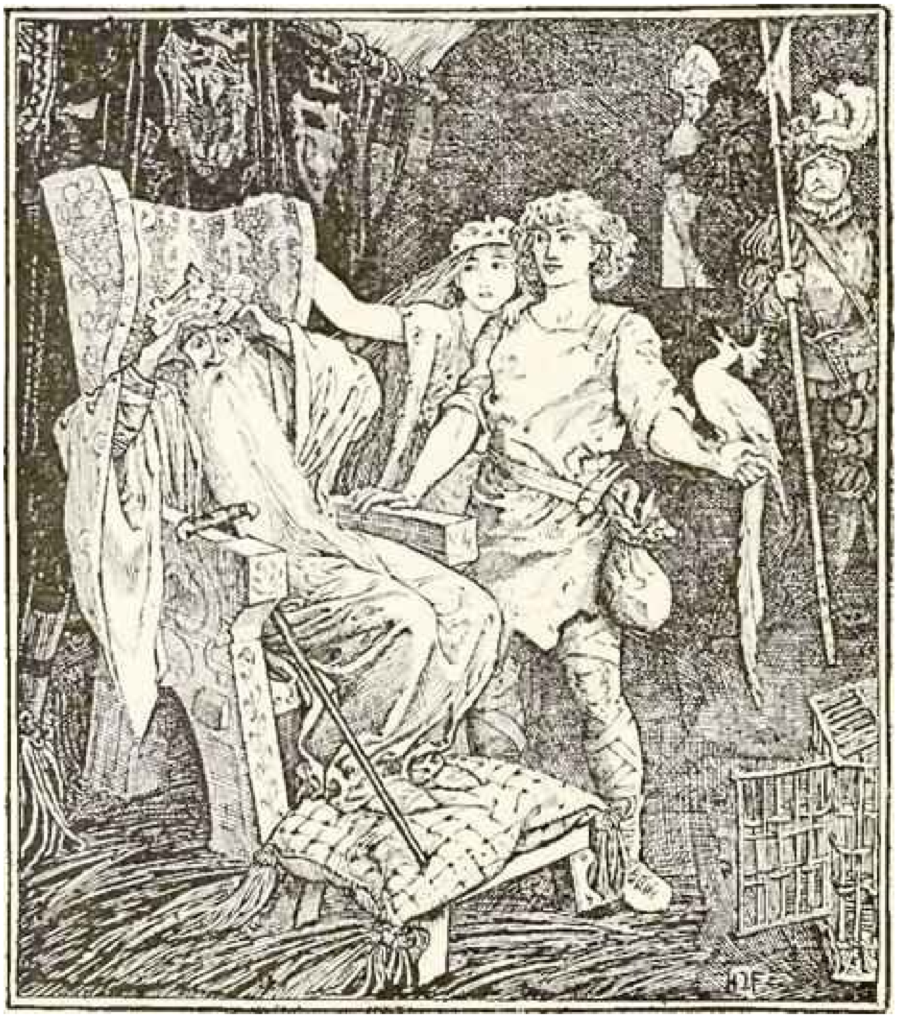

Snowflake

Slavonic story. Contes Populaires Slaves, traduits par Louis Leger. Paris: Leroux, Editeur.

Once upon a time there lived a peasant called Ivan, and he had a wife whose name was Marie. They would have been quite happy except for one thing: they had no children to play with, and as they were now old people they did not find that watching the children of their neighbours at all made up to them for having one of their own.

One winter, which nobody living will ever forget, the snow lay so deep that it came up to the knees of even the tallest man. When it had all fallen, and the sun was shining again, the children ran out into the street to play, and the old man and his wife sat at their window and gazed at them. The children first made a sort of little terrace, and stamped it hard and firm, and then they began to make a snow woman. Ivan and Marie watched them, the while thinking about many things.

Suddenly Ivan's face brightened, and, looking at his wife, he said, 'Wife, why shouldn't we make a snow woman too?'

'Why not?' replied Marie, who happened to be in a very good temper; 'it might amuse us a little. But there is no use making a woman. Let us make a little snow child, and pretend it is a living one.'

'Yes, let us do that,' said Ivan, and he took down his cap and went into the garden with his old wife.

Then the two set to work with all their might to make a doll out of the snow. They shaped a little body and two little hands and two little feet. On top of all they placed a ball of snow, out of which the head was to be.

'What in the world are you doing?' asked a passer-by.

'Can't you guess?' returned Ivan.

'Making a snow-child,' replied Marie.

They had finished the nose and the chin. Two holes were left for the eyes, and Ivan carefully shaped out the mouth. No sooner had he done so than he felt a warm breath upon his cheek. He started back in surprise and looked — and behold! the eyes of the child met his, and its lips, which were as red as raspberries, smiled at him!

'What is it?' cried Ivan, crossing himself. 'Am I mad, or is the thing bewitched?'

The snow-child bent its head as if it had been really alive. It moved its little arms and its little legs in the snow that lay about it just as the living children did theirs.

‘Ah! Ivan, Ivan,’ exclaimed Marie, trembling with joy, ‘heaven has sent us a child at last!’ And she threw herself upon Snowflake (for that was the snow-child’s name) and covered her with kisses. And the loose snow fell away from Snowflake as an egg shell does from an egg, and it was a little girl whom Marie held in her arms.

‘Oh! my darling Snowflake!’ cried the old woman, and led her into the cottage.

And Snowflake grew fast; each hour as well as each day made a difference, and every day she became more and more beautiful. The old couple hardly knew how to contain themselves for joy, and thought of nothing else. The cottage was always full of village children, for they amused Snowflake, and there was nothing in the world they would not have done to amuse her. She was their doll, and they were continually inventing new dresses for her, and teaching her songs or playing with her. Nobody knew how clever she was! She noticed everything, and could learn a lesson in a moment. Anyone would have taken her for thirteen at least! And, besides all that, she was so good and obedient; and so pretty, too! Her skin was as white as snow, her eyes as blue as forget-me-nots, and her hair was long and golden. Only her cheeks had no colour in them, but were as fair as her forehead.

So the winter went on, till at last the spring sun mounted higher in the heavens and began to warm the earth. The grass grew green in the fields, and high in the air the larks were heard singing. The village girls met and danced in a ring, singing, ‘Beautiful spring, how came you here? How came you here? Did you come on a plough, or was it a harrow?’ Only Snowflake sat quite still by the window of the cottage.

‘What is the matter, dear child?’ asked Marie. ‘Why are you so sad? Are you ill? or have they treated you unkindly?’

‘No,’ replied Snowflake, ‘it is nothing, mother; no one has hurt me; I am well.’

The spring sun had chased away the last snow from its hiding place under the hedges; the fields were full of flowers; nightingales sang in the trees, and all the world was gay. But the gayer grew the birds and the flowers the sadder became Snowflake. She hid herself from her playmates, and curled herself up where the shadows were deepest, like a lily amongst its leaves. Her only pleasure was to lie amid the green willows near some sparkling stream. At the dawn and at twilight only she seemed happy. When a great storm broke, and the earth was white with hail, she became bright and joyous as the Snowflake of old; but when the clouds passed, and the hail melted beneath the sun, Snowflake would burst into tears and weep as a sister would weep over her brother.

The spring passed, and it was the eve of St. John, or Midsummer Day. This was the greatest holiday of the year, when the young girls met in the woods to dance and play. They went to fetch Snowflake, and said to Marie: ‘Let her come and dance with us.’

But Marie was afraid; she could not tell why, only she could not bear the child to go. Snowflake did not wish to go either, but they had no excuse ready. So Marie kissed the girl and said: ‘Go, my Snowflake, and be happy with your friends, and you, dear children, be careful of her. You know she is the light of my eyes to me.’

‘Oh, we will take care of her,’ cried the girls gaily, and they ran off to the woods. There they wore wreaths, gathered nosegays, and sang songs some sad, some merry. And whatever they did Snowflake did too.

When the sun set they lit a fire of dry grass, and placed themselves in a row, Snowflake being the last of all. ‘Now, watch us,’ they said, ‘and run just as we do.’

And they all began to sing and to jump one after another across the fire.

Suddenly, close behind them, they heard a sigh, then a groan. ‘Ah!’ They turned hastily and looked at each other. There was nothing. They looked again. Where was Snowflake? She has hidden herself for fun, they thought, and searched for her everywhere. ‘Snowflake! Snowflake!’ But there was no answer. ‘Where can she be? Oh, she must have gone home.’ They returned to the village, but there was no Snowflake.

For days after that they sought her high and low. They examined every bush and every hedge, but there was no Snowflake. And long after everyone else had given up hope Ivan and Marie would wander through the woods crying ‘Snowflake, my dove, come back, come back!’ And sometimes they thought they heard a call, but it was never the voice of Snowflake.

And what had become of her? Had a fierce wild beast seized her and dragged her into his lair in the forest? Had some bird carried her off across the wide blue sea?

No, no beast had touched her, no bird had borne her away. With the first breath of flame that swept over her when she ran with her friends Snowflake had melted away, and a little soft haze floating upwards was all that remained of her.

I Know What I Have Learned

From the Danish.

There was once a man who had three daughters, and they were all married to trolls, who lived underground. One day the man thought that he would pay them a visit, and his wife gave him some dry bread to eat by the way. After he had walked some distance he grew both tired and hungry, so he sat down on the east side of a mound and began to eat his dry bread. The mound then opened, and his youngest daughter came out of it, and said, ‘Why, father! why are you not coming in to see me?’

‘Oh,’ said he, ‘if I had known that you lived here, and had seen any entrance, I would have come in.’

Then he entered the mound along with her.

The troll came home soon after this, and his wife told him that her father was come, and asked him to go and buy some beef to make broth with.

‘We can get it easier than that!’ said the troll.

He fixed an iron spike into one of the beams of the roof, and ran his head against this till he had knocked several large pieces off his head. He was just as well as ever after doing this, and they got their broth without further trouble.

The troll then gave the old man a sackful of money, and laden with this he betook himself homewards. When he came near his home he remembered that he had a cow about to calve, so he laid down the money on the ground, ran home as fast as he could, and asked his wife whether the cow had calved yet.

‘What kind of a hurry is this to come home in?’ said she. ‘No, the cow has not calved yet.’

‘Then you must come out and help me in with a sackful of money,’ said the man.

‘A sackful of money?’ cried his wife.

‘Yes, a sackful of money,’ said he. ‘Is that so very wonderful?’

His wife did not believe very much what he told her, but she humoured him, and went out with him.

When they came to the spot where he had left it there was no money there; a thief had come along and stolen it. His wife then grew angry and scolded him heartily.

‘Well, well!’ said he, ‘hang the money! I know what I have learned.’

‘What have you learned?’ said she.

‘Ah! I know that,’ said the man.

After some time had passed the man had a mind to visit his second eldest daughter. His wife again gave him some dry bread to eat, and when he grew tired and hungry he sat down on the east side of a mound and began to eat it. As he sat there his daughter came up out of the mound, and invited him to come inside, which he did very willingly.

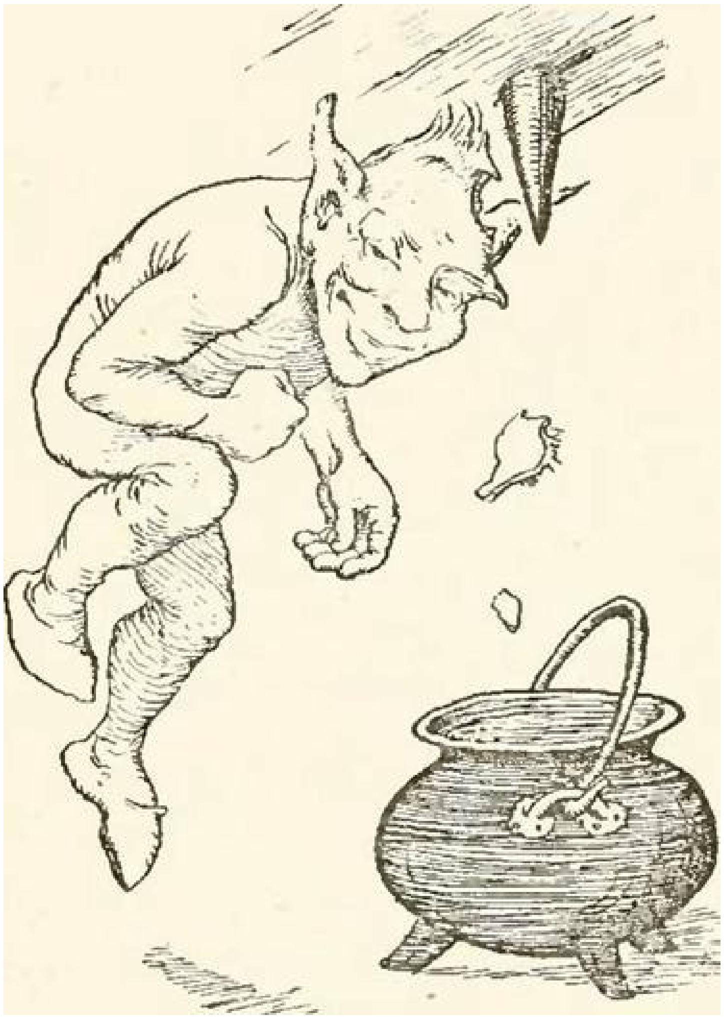

Soon after this the troll came home. It was dark by that time, and his wife bade him go and buy some candles.

‘Oh, we shall soon get a light,’ said the troll. With that he dipped his fingers into the fire, and they then gave light without being burned in the least.

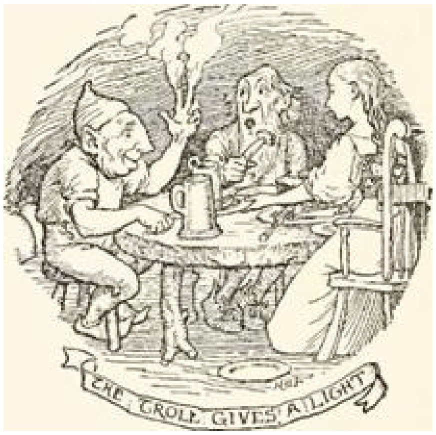
THE TROLL GIVES A LIGHT

The old man got two sacks of money here, and plodded away homewards with these. When he was very nearly home he again thought of the cow that was with calf, so he laid down the money, ran home, and asked his wife whether the cow had calved yet.

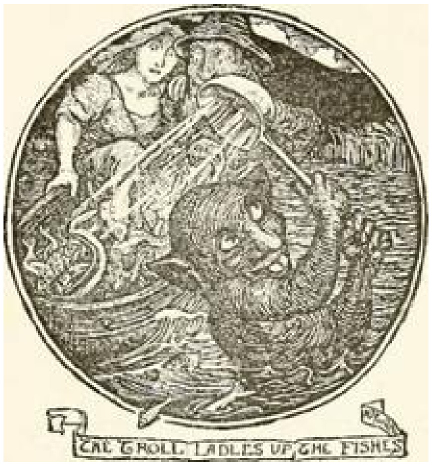
THE TROLL LADLES UP THE FISHES

‘Whatever is the matter with you?’ said she. ‘You come hurrying as if the whole house was about to fall. You may set your mind at rest: the cow has not calved yet.’

The man now asked her to come and help him home with the two sacks of money. She did not believe him very much, but he continued to assure her that it was quite true, till at last she gave in and went with him. When they came to the spot there had again been a thief there and taken the money. It was no wonder that the woman was angry about this, but the man only said, ‘Ah, if you only knew what I have learned.’

A third time the man set out — to visit his eldest daughter. When he came to a mound he sat down on the east side of it and ate the dry bread which his wife had given him to take with him. The daughter then came out of the mound and invited her father to come inside.

In a little the troll came home, and his wife asked him to go and buy some fish.

‘We can get them much more easily than that,’ said the troll. ‘Give me your dough trough and your ladle.’

They seated themselves in the trough, and rowed out on the lake which was beside the mound. When they had got out a little way the troll said to his wife, ‘Are my eyes green?’

‘No, not yet,’ said she.

He rowed on a little further and asked again, ‘Are my eyes not green yet?’

‘Yes,’ said his wife, ‘they are green now.’

Then the troll sprang into the water and ladled up so many fish that in a short time the trough could hold no more. They then rowed home again, and had a good meal off the fish.

The old man now got three sacks full of money, and set off home with them. When he was almost home the cow again came into his head, and he laid down the money. This time, however, he took his wooden shoes and laid them above the money, thinking that no one would take it after that. Then he ran home and asked his wife whether the cow had calved. It had not, and she scolded him again for behaving in this way, but in the end he persuaded her to go with him to help him with the three sacks of money.

When they came to the spot they found only the wooden shoes, for a thief had come along in the meantime and taken all the money. The woman was very angry, and broke out upon her husband; but he took it all very quietly, and only said, ‘Hang the money! I know what I have learned.’

‘What have you learned I should like to know?’ said his wife.

‘You will see that yet,’ said the man.

One day his wife took a fancy for broth, and said to him, ‘Oh, go to the village, and buy a piece of beef to make broth.’

‘There’s no need of that,’ said he; ‘we can get it an easier way.’ With that he drove a spike into a beam, and ran his head against it, and in consequence had to lie in bed for a long time afterwards.

After he had recovered from this his wife asked him one day to go and buy candles, as they had none.

‘No,’ he said, ‘there’s no need for that;’ and he stuck his hand into the fire. This also made him take to bed for a good while.

When he had got better again his wife one day wanted fish, and asked him to go and buy some. The man, however, wished again to show what he had learned, so he asked her to come along with him and bring her dough trough and a ladle. They both seated themselves in this, and rowed upon the lake. When they had got out a little way the man said, ‘Are my eyes green?’

‘No,’ said his wife; ‘why should they be?’

They rowed a little further out, and he asked again, ‘Are my eyes not green yet?’

‘What nonsense is this?’ said she; ‘why should they be green?’

‘Oh, my dear,’ said he, ‘can’t you just say that they are green?’

‘Very well,’ said she, ‘they are green.’

As soon as he heard this he sprang out into the water with the ladle for the fishes, but he just got leave to stay there with them!

The Cunning Shoemaker

Sicilianische Mahrchen.

Once upon a time there lived a shoemaker who could get no work to do, and was so poor that he and his wife nearly died of hunger. At last he said to her, ‘It is no use waiting on here — I can find nothing; so I shall go down to Mascalucia, and perhaps there I shall be more lucky.’

So down he went to Mascalucia, and walked through the streets crying, ‘Who wants some shoes?’ And very soon a window was pushed up, and a woman’s head was thrust out of it.

‘Here are a pair for you to patch,’ she said. And he sat down on her doorstep and set about patching them.

‘How much do I owe you?’ she asked when they were done.

‘A shilling.’

‘Here is eighteen pence, and good luck to you.’ And he went his way. He turned into the next street and set up his cry again, and it was not long before another window was pushed up and another head appeared.

‘Here are some shoes for you to patch.’

And the shoemaker sat down on the doorstep and patched them.

‘How much do I owe you?’ asked the woman when the shoes were finished.

‘A florin.’

‘Here is a crown piece, and good luck to you.’ And she shut the window.

‘Well,’ thought the shoemaker, ‘I have done finely. But I will not go back to my wife just yet, as, if I only go on at this rate, I shall soon have enough money to buy a donkey.’

Having made up his mind what was best to do, he stayed in the town a few days longer till he had four gold pieces safe in his purse. Then he went to the market and for two of them he bought a good strong donkey, and, mounting on its back, he rode home to Catania. But as he entered a thick wood he saw in the distance a band of robbers who were coming quickly towards him.

‘I am lost,’ thought he; ‘they are sure to take from me all the money that I have earned, and I shall be as poor as ever I was. What can I do?’ However, being a clever little man and full of spirit, he did not lose heart, but, taking five florins, he fastened them out of sight under the donkey’s thick mane. Then he rode on.

Directly the robber came up to him they seized him exactly as he had foretold and took away all his money.

‘Oh, dear friends!’ he cried, wringing his hands, ‘I am only a poor shoemaker, and have nothing but this donkey left in the world.’

As he spoke the donkey gave himself a shake, and down fell the five florins.

‘Where did that come from?’ asked the robbers.

‘Ah,’ replied the shoemaker, ‘you have guessed my secret. The donkey is a golden donkey, and supplies me with all my money.’

‘Sell him to us,’ said the robbers. ‘We will give you any price you like.’

The shoemaker at first declared that nothing would induce him to sell him, but at last he agreed to hand him over to the robbers for fifty gold pieces. ‘But listen to what I tell you,’ said he. ‘You must each take it in turn to own him for a night and a day, or else you will all be fighting over the money.’

With these words they parted, the robbers driving the donkey to their cave in the forest and the shoemaker returning home, very pleased with the success of his trick. He just stopped on the way to pick up a good dinner, and the next day spent most of his gains in buying a small vineyard.

Meanwhile the robbers had arrived at the cave where they lived, and the captain, calling them all round him, announced that it as his right to have the donkey for the first night. His companions agreed, and then he told his wife to put a mattress in the stable. She asked if he had gone out of his mind, but he answered crossly, ‘What is that to you? Do as you are bid, and to-morrow I will bring you some treasures.’

Very early the captain awoke and searched the stable, but could find nothing, and guessed that Master Joseph had been making fun of them. ‘Well,’ he said to himself, ‘if I have been taken in, the others shall not come off any better.’

So, when one of his men arrived and asked him eagerly how much money he had got, he answered gaily, ‘Oh, comrade, if you only knew! But I shall say nothing about it till everyone has had his turn!’

One after another they all took the donkey, but no money was forthcoming for anybody. At length, when all the band had been tricked, they held a council, and resolved to march to the shoemaker’s house and punish him well for his cunning. Just as before, the shoemaker saw them a long way off, and began to think how he could outwit them again. When he had hit upon a plan he called his wife, and said to her, ‘Take a bladder and fill it with blood, and bind it round your neck. When the robbers come and demand the money they gave me for the donkey I shall shout to you and tell you to get it quickly. You must argue with me, and decline to obey me, and then I shall plunge my knife into the bladder, and you must fall to the ground as if you were dead. There you must lie till I play on my guitar; then get up and begin to dance.’

The wife made haste to do as she was bid, and there was no time to lose, for the robbers were drawing very near the house. They entered with a great noise, and overwhelmed the shoemaker with reproaches for having deceived them about the donkey.

‘The poor beast must have lost its power owing to the change of masters,’ said he; ‘but we will not quarrel about it. You shall have back the fifty gold pieces that you gave for him. ‘Aite,’ he cried to his wife, ‘go quickly to the chest upstairs, and bring down the money for these gentlemen.’

‘Wait a little,’ answered she; ‘I must first bake this fish. It will be spoilt if I leave it now.’

‘Go this instant, as you are bid,’ shouted the shoemaker, stamping as if he was in a great passion; but, as she did not stir, he drew his knife, and stabbed her in the neck. The blood spurted out freely, and she fell to the ground as if she was dead.

‘What have you done?’ asked the robbers, looking at him in dismay. ‘The poor woman was doing nothing.’

‘Perhaps I was hasty, but it is easily set right,’ replied the shoemaker, taking down his guitar and beginning to play. Hardly had he struck the first notes than his wife sat up; then got on her feet and danced.

The robbers stared with open mouths, and at last they said, ‘Master Joseph, you may keep the fifty gold pieces. But tell us what you will take for your guitar, for you must sell it to us?’

‘Oh, that is impossible!’ replied the shoemaker, ‘for every time I have a quarrel with my wife I just strike her dead, and so give vent to my anger. This has become such a habit with me that I don’t think I could break myself of it; and, of course, if I got rid of the guitar I could never bring her back to life again.’

However, the robbers would not listen to him, and at last he consented to take forty gold pieces for the guitar.

Then they all returned to their cave in the forest, delighted with their new purchase, and longing for a chance of trying its powers. But the captain declared that the first trial belonged to him, and after that the others might have their turn.

That evening he called to his wife and said, ‘What have you got for supper?’

‘Macaroni,’ answered she.

‘Why have you not boiled a fish?’ he cried, and stabber in the neck so that she fell dead. The captain, who was not in the least angry, seized the guitar and began to play; but, let him play as loud as he would, the dead woman never stirred. ‘Oh, lying shoemaker! Oh, abominable knave! Twice has he got the better of me. But I will pay him out!’

So he raged and swore, but it did him no good. The fact remained that he had killed his wife and could not bring her back again.

The next morning came one of the robbers to fetch the guitar, and to hear what had happened.

‘Well, how have you got on?’

‘Oh, splendidly! I stabbed my wife, and then began to play, and now she is as well as ever.’

‘Did you really? Then this evening I will try for myself.’

Of course the same thing happened over again, till all the wives had been killed secretly, and when there were no more left they whispered to each other the dreadful tale, and swore to be avenged on the shoemaker.

The band lost no time in setting out for his house, and, as before, the shoemaker saw them coming from afar. He called to his wife, who was washing in the kitchen: ‘Listen, Aita: when the robbers come and ask for me say I have gone to the vineyard. Then tell the dog to call me, and chase him from the house.’

When he had given these directions he ran out of the back door and hid behind a barrel. A few minutes later the robbers arrived, and called loudly for the shoemaker.

‘Alas! good gentlemen, he is up in the vineyard, but I will send the dog after him at once. Here! now quickly to the vineyard, and tell your master some gentlemen are here who wish to speak to him. Go as fast as you can.’ And she opened the door and let the dog out.

‘You can really trust the dog to call your husband?’ asked the robbers.

‘Dear me, yes! He understands everything, and will always carry any message I give him.’

By-and-bye the shoemaker came in and said, ‘Good morning, gentlemen; the dog tells me you wish to speak to me.’

‘Yes, we do,’ replied the robber; ‘we have come to speak to you about that guitar. It is your fault that we have murdered all our wives; and, though we played as you told us, none of them ever came back to life.’

‘You could not have played properly,’ said the shoemaker. ‘It was your own fault.’

‘Well, we will forget all about it,’ answered the robbers, ‘if you will only sell us your dog.’

‘Oh, that is impossible! I should never get on without him.’

But the robbers offered him forty gold pieces, and at last he agreed to let them have the dog.

So they departed, taking the dog with them, and when they got back to their cave the captain declared that it was his right to have the first trial.

He then called his daughter, and said to her, ‘I am going to the inn; if anybody wants me, loose the dog, and send him to call me.’

About an hour after some one arrived on business, and the girl untied the dog and said, ‘Go to the inn and call my father!’ The dog bounded off, but ran straight to the shoemaker.

When the robber got home and found no dog he thought ‘He must have gone back to his old master,’ and, though night had already fallen, he went off after him.

‘Master Joseph, is the dog here?’ asked he.

‘Ah! yes, the poor beast is so fond of me! You must give him time to get accustomed to new ways.’

So the captain brought the dog back, and the following morning handed him over to another of the band, just saying that the animal really could do what the shoemaker had said.

The second robber carefully kept his own counsel, and fetched the dog secretly back from the shoemaker, and so on through the whole band. At length, when everybody had suffered, they met and told the whole story, and next day they all marched off in fury to the man who had made game of them. After reproaching him with having deceived them, they tied him up in a sack, and told him they were going to throw him into the sea. The shoemaker lay quite still, and let them do as they would.

They went on till they came to a church, and the robbers said, ‘The sun is hot and the sack is heavy; let us leave it here and go in and rest.’ So they put the sack down by the roadside, and went into the church.

Now, on a hill near by there was a swineherd looking after a great herd of pigs and whistling merrily.

When Master Joseph heard him he cried out as loud as he could, ‘I won’t; I won’t, I say.’

‘What won’t you do?’ asked the swineherd.

‘Oh,’ replied the shoemaker. ‘They want me to marry the king’s daughter, and I won’t do it.’

‘How lucky you are!’ sighed the swineherd. ‘Now, if it were only me!’

‘Oh, if that’s all!’ replied the cunning shoemaker, ‘get you into this sack, and let me out.’

Then the swineherd opened the sack and took the place of the shoemaker, who went gaily off, driving the pigs before him.

When the robbers were rested they came out of the church, took up the sack, and carried it to the sea, where they threw it in, and it sank directly. As they came back they met the shoemaker, and stared at him with open mouths.

‘Oh, if you only knew how many pigs live in the sea,’ he cried. ‘And the deeper you go the more there are. I have just brought up these, and mean to return for some more.’

‘There are still some left there?’

‘Oh, more than I could count,’ replied the shoemaker. ‘I will show you what you must do.’ Then he led the robbers back to the shore. ‘Now,’ said he, ‘you must each of you tie a stone to your necks, so that you may be sure to go deep enough, for I found the pigs that you saw very deep down indeed.’

Then the robbers all tied stones round their necks, and jumped in, and were drowned, and Master Joseph drove his pigs home, and was a rich man to the end of his days.

The King Who Would Have a Beautiful Wife

Sicilianische Mahrchen.

Fifty years ago there lived a king who was very anxious to get married; but, as he was quite determined that his wife should be as beautiful as the sun, the thing was not so easy as it seemed, for no maiden came up to his standard. Then he commanded a trusty servant to search through the length and breadth of the land till he found a girl fair enough to be queen, and if he had the good luck to discover one he was to bring her back with him.

The servant set out at once on his journey, and sought high and low-in castles and cottages; but though pretty maidens were plentiful as blackberries, he felt sure that none of them would please the king.

One day he had wandered far and wide, and was feeling very tired and thirsty. By the roadside stood a tiny little house, and here he knocked and asked for a cup of water. Now in this house dwelt two sisters, and one was eighty and the other ninety years old. They were very poor, and earned their living by spinning. This had kept their hands very soft and white, like the hands of a girl, and when the water was passed through the lattice, and the servant saw the small, delicate fingers, he said to himself: ‘A maiden must indeed be lovely if she has a hand like that.’ And he made haste back, and told the king.

‘Go back at once,’ said his majesty, ‘and try to get a sight of her.’

The faithful servant departed on his errand without losing any time, and again he knocked at the door of the little house and begged for some water. As before, the old woman did not open the door, but passed the water through the lattice.

‘Do you live here alone?’ asked the man.

‘No,’ replied she, ‘my sister lives with me. We are poor girls, and have to work for our bread.’

‘How old are you?’

‘I am fifteen, and she is twenty.’

Then the servant went back to the king, and told him all he knew. And his majesty answered: ‘I will have the fifteen-year-old one. Go and bring her here.’

The servant returned a third time to the little house and knocked at the door. In reply to his knock the lattice window was pushed open, and a voice inquired what it was he wanted.

‘The king has desired me to bring back the youngest of you to become his queen,’ he replied.

‘Tell his majesty I am ready to do his bidding, but since my birth no ray of light has fallen upon my face. If it should ever do so I shall instantly grow black. Therefore beg, I pray you, his most gracious majesty to send this evening a shut carriage, and I will return in it to the castle.

When the king heard this he ordered his great golden carriage to be prepared, and in it to be placed some magnificent robes; and the old woman wrapped herself in a thick veil, and was driven to the castle.

The king was eagerly awaiting her, and when she arrived he begged her politely to raise her veil and let him see her face.

But she answered: ‘Here the tapers are too bright and the light too strong. Would you have me turn black under your very eyes?’

And the king believed her words, and the marriage took place without the veil being once lifted. Afterwards, when they were alone, he raised the corner, and knew for the first time that he had wedded a wrinkled old woman. And, in a furious burst of anger, he dashed open the window and flung her out. But, luckily for her, her clothes caught on a nail in the wall, and kept her hanging between heaven and earth.

While she was thus suspended, expecting every moment to be dashed to the ground, four fairies happened to pass by.

‘Look, sisters,’ cried one, ‘surely that is the old woman that the king sent for. Shall we wish that her clothes may give way, and that she should be dashed to the ground?’

‘Oh no! no!’ exclaimed another. ‘Let us wish her something good. I myself will wish her youth.’

‘And I beauty.’

‘And I wisdom.’

‘And I a tender heart.’

So spake the fairies, and went their way, leaving the most beautiful maiden in the world behind them.

The next morning when the king looked from his window he saw this lovely creature hanging on the nail. ‘Ah! what have I done? Surely I must have been blind last night!’

And he ordered long ladders to be brought and the maiden to be rescued. Then he fell on his knees before her, and prayed her to forgive him, and a great feast was made in her honour.

Some days after came the ninety-year-old sister to the palace and asked for the queen.

‘Who is that hideous old witch?’ said the king.

‘Oh, an old neighbour of mine, who is half silly,’ she replied.

But the old woman looked at her steadily, and knew her again, and said: ‘How have you managed to grow so young and beautiful? I should like to be young and beautiful too.’

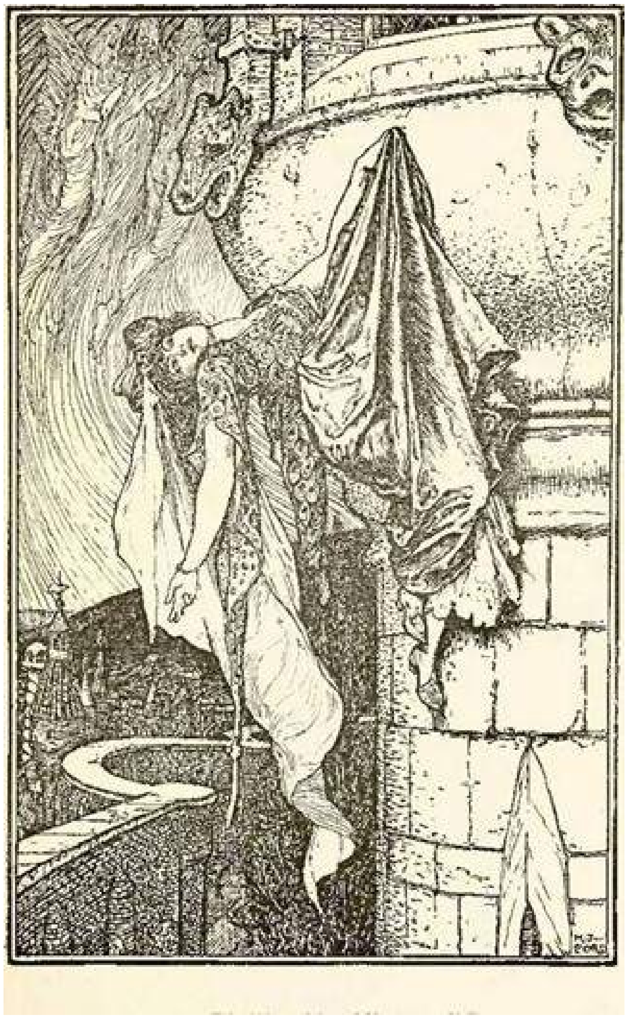

This question she repeated the whole day long, till at length the queen lost patience and said: ‘I had my old head cut off, and this new head grew in its place.’

Then the old woman went to a barber, and spoke to him, saying, ‘I will give you all you ask if you will only cut off my head, so that I may become young and lovely.’

‘But, my good woman, if I do that you will die!’

But the old woman would listen to nothing; and at last the barber took out his knife and struck the first blow at her neck.

‘Ah!’ she shrieked as she felt the pain.

‘Il faut souffrir pour etre belle,’ said the barber, who had been in France.

And at the second blow her head rolled off, and the old woman was dead for good and all.

Catherine and Her Destiny

Sicilianische Mahrchen von Laura Gonzenbach. Leipzig, Engelmann, 1870.

Long ago there lived a rich merchant who, besides possessing more treasures than any king in the world, had in his great hall three chairs, one of silver, one of gold, and one of diamonds. But his greatest treasure of all was his only daughter, who was called Catherine.

One day Catherine was sitting in her own room when suddenly the door flew open, and in came a tall and beautiful woman holding in her hands a little wheel.

‘Catherine,’ she said, going up to the girl, ‘which would you rather have-a happy youth or a happy old age?’

Catherine was so taken by surprise that she did not know what to answer, and the lady repeated again, ‘Which would you rather have-a happy youth or a happy old age?’

Then Catherine thought to herself, ‘If I say a happy youth, then I shall have to suffer all the rest of my life. No, I would bear trouble now, and have something better to look forward to.’ So she looked up and replied, ‘Give me a happy old age.’

‘So be it,’ said the lady, and turned her wheel as she spoke, vanishing the next moment as suddenly as she had come.

Now this beautiful lady was the Destiny of poor Catherine.

Only a few days after this the merchant heard the news that all his finest ships, laden with the richest merchandise, had been sunk in a storm, and he was left a beggar. The shock was too much for him. He took to his bed, and in a short time he was dead of his disappointment.

So poor Catherine was left alone in the world without a penny or a creature to help her. But she was a brave girl and full of spirit, and soon made up her mind that the best thing she could do was to go to the nearest town and become a servant. She lost no time in getting herself ready, and did not take long over her journey; and as she was passing down the chief street of the town a noble lady saw her out of the window, and, struck by her sad face, said to her: ‘Where are you going all alone, my pretty girl?’

‘Ah, my lady, I am very poor, and must go to service to earn my bread.’

‘I will take you into my service,’ said she; and Catherine served her well.

Some time after her mistress said to Catherine, ‘I am obliged to go out for a long while, and must lock the house door, so that no thieves shall get in.’

So she went away, and Catherine took her work and sat down at the window. Suddenly the door burst open, and in came her Destiny.

‘Oh! so here you are, Catherine! Did you really think I was going to leave you in peace?’ And as she spoke she walked to the linen press where Catherine’s mistress kept all her finest sheets and underclothes, tore everything in pieces, and flung them on the floor. Poor Catherine wrung her hands and wept, for she thought to herself, ‘When my lady comes back and sees all this ruin she will think it is my fault,’ and starting up, she fled through the open door. Then Destiny took all the pieces and made them whole again, and put them back in the press, and when everything was tidy she too left the house.

When the mistress reached home she called Catherine, but no Catherine was there. ‘Can she have robbed me?’ thought the old lady, and looked hastily round the house; but nothing was missing. She wondered why Catherine should have disappeared like this, but she heard no more of her, and in a few days she filled her place.

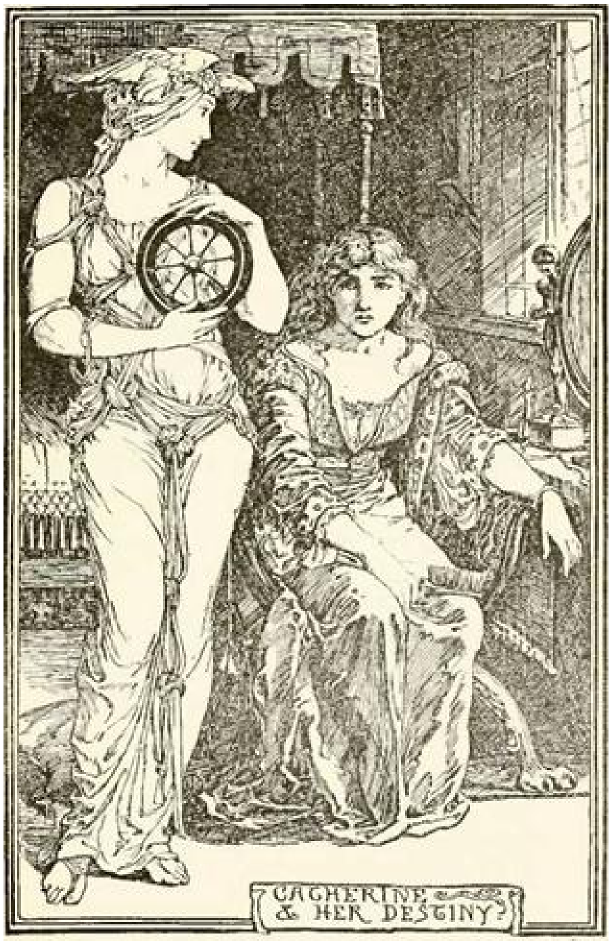

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Meanwhile Catherine wandered on and on, without knowing very well where she was going, till at last she came to another town. Just as before, a noble lady happened to see her passing her window, and called out to her, ‘Where are you going all alone, my pretty girl?’

And Catherine answered, ‘Ah, my lady, I am very poor, and must go to service to earn my bread.’

‘I will take you into my service,’ said the lady; and Catherine served her well, and hoped she might now be left in peace. But, exactly as before, one day that Catherine was left in the house alone her Destiny came again and spoke to her with hard words: ‘What! are you here now?’ And in a passion she tore up everything she saw, till in sheer misery poor Catherine rushed out of the house. And so it befell for seven years, and directly Catherine found a fresh place her Destiny came and forced her to leave it.

After seven years, however, Destiny seemed to get tired of persecuting her, and a time of peace set in for Catherine. When she had been chased away from her last house by Destiny’s wicked pranks she had taken service with another lady, who told her that it would be part of her daily work to walk to a mountain that overshadowed the town, and, climbing up to the top, she was to lay on the ground some loaves of freshly baked bread, and cry with a loud voice, ‘O Destiny, my mistress,’ three times. Then her lady’s Destiny would come and take away the offering. ‘That will I gladly do,’ said Catherine.

So the years went by, and Catherine was still there, and every day she climbed the mountain with her basket of bread on her arm. She was happier than she had been, but sometimes, when no one saw her, she would weep as she thought over her old life, and how different it was to the one she was now leading. One day her lady saw her, and said, ‘Catherine, what is it? Why are you always weeping?’ And then Catherine told her story.

‘I have got an idea,’ exclaimed the lady. ‘To-morrow, when you take the bread to the mountain, you shall pray my Destiny to speak to yours, and entreat her to leave you in peace. Perhaps something may come of it!’

At these words Catherine dried her eyes, and next morning, when she climbed the mountain, she told all she had suffered, and cried, ‘O Destiny, my mistress, pray, I entreat you, of my Destiny that she may leave me in peace.’

And Destiny answered, ‘Oh, my poor girl, know you not your Destiny lies buried under seven coverlids, and can hear nothing? But if you will come to-morrow I will bring her with me.’

And after Catherine had gone her way her lady’s Destiny went to find her sister, and said to her, ‘Dear sister, has not Catherine suffered enough? It is surely time for her good days to begin?’

And the sister answered, ‘To-morrow you shall bring her to me, and I will give her something that may help her out of her need.’

The next morning Catherine set out earlier than usual for the mountain, and her lady’s Destiny took the girl by the hand and led her to her sister, who lay under the seven coverlids. And her Destiny held out to Catherine a ball of silk, saying, ‘Keep this — it may be useful some day;’ then pulled the coverings over her head again.

But Catherine walked sadly down the hill, and went straight to her lady and showed her the silken ball, which was the end of all her high hopes.

‘What shall I do with it?’ she asked. ‘It is not worth sixpence, and it is no good to me!’

‘Take care of it,’ replied her mistress. ‘Who can tell how useful it may be?’

A little while after this grand preparations were made for the king’s marriage, and all the tailors in the town were busy embroidering fine clothes. The wedding garment was so beautiful nothing like it had ever been seen before, but when it was almost finished the tailor found that he had no more silk. The colour was very rare, and none could be found like it, and the king made a proclamation that if anyone happened to possess any they should bring it to the court, and he would give them a large sum.

‘Catherine!’ exclaimed the lady, who had been to the tailors and seen the wedding garment, ‘your ball of silk is exactly the right colour. Bring it to the king, and you can ask what you like for it.’

Then Catherine put on her best clothes and went to the court, and looked more beautiful than any woman there.

‘May it please your majesty,’ she said, ‘I have brought you a ball of silk of the colour you asked for, as no one else has any in the town.’

‘Your majesty,’ asked one of the courtiers, ‘shall I give the maiden its weight in gold?’

The king agreed, and a pair of scales were brought; and a handful of gold was placed in one scale and the silken ball in the other. But lo! let the king lay in the scales as many gold pieces as he would, the silk was always heavier still. Then the king took some larger scales, and heaped up all his treasures on one side, but the silk on the other outweighed them all. At last there was only one thing left that had not been put in, and that was his golden crown. And he took it from his head and set it on top of all, and at last the scale moved and the ball had founds its balance.

‘Where got you this silk?’ asked the king.

‘It was given me, royal majesty, by my mistress,’ replied Catherine.

‘That is not true,’ said the king, ‘and if you do not tell me the truth I will have your head cut off this instant.’

So Catherine told him the whole story, and how she had once been as rich as he.

Now there lived at the court a wise woman, and she said to Catherine, ‘You have suffered much, my poor girl, but at length your luck has turned, and I know by the weighing of the scales through the crown that you will die a queen.’

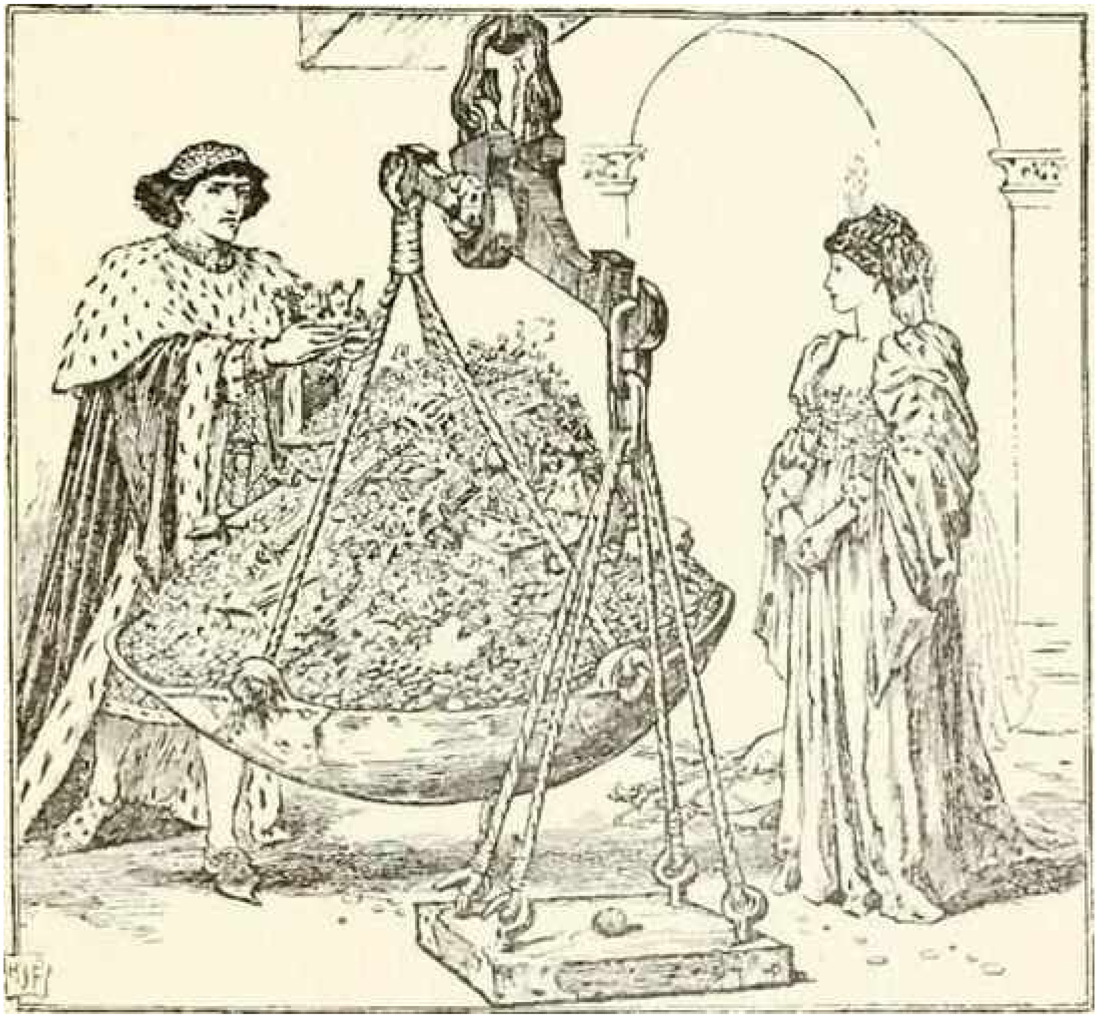

‘So she shall,’ cried the king, who overheard these words; ‘she shall die my queen, for she is more beautiful than all the ladies of the court, and I will marry no one else.’

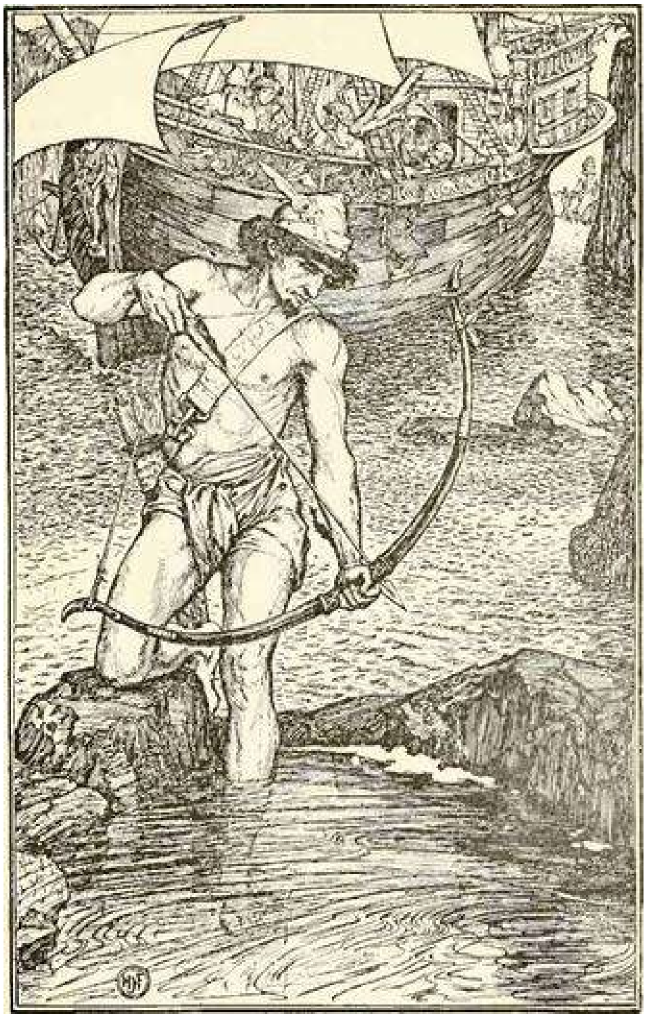

And so it fell out. The king sent back the bride he had promised to wed to her own country, and the same Catherine was queen at the marriage feast instead, and lived happy and contented to the end of her life.

How the Hermit Helped to Win the King’s Daughter

Sicilianische Mahrchen

Long ago there lived a very rich man who had three sons. When he felt himself to be dying he divided his property between them, making them share alike, both in money and lands. Soon after he died the king set forth a proclamation through the whole country that whoever could build a ship that should float both on land and sea should have his daughter to wife.

The eldest brother, when he heard it, said to the other, ‘I think I will spend some of my money in trying to build that ship, as I should like to have the king for my father-in-law.’ So he called together all the shipbuilders in the land, and gave them orders to begin the ship without delay. And trees were cut down, and great preparations made, and in a few days everybody knew what it was all for; and there was a crowd of old people pressing round the gates of the yard, where the young man spent the most of his day.

‘Ah, master, give us work,’ they said, ‘so that we may earn our bread.’

But he only gave them hard words, and spoke roughly to them. ‘You are old, and have lost your strength; of what use are you?’ And he drove them away. Then came some boys and prayed him, “master, give us work,’ but he answered them, ‘Of what use can you be, weaklings as you are! Get you gone!’ And if any presented themselves that were not skilled workmen he would have none of them.

At last there knocked at the gate a little old man with a long white beard, and said, ‘Will you give me work, so that I may earn my bread?’ But he was only driven away like the rest.

The ship took a long while to build, and cost a great deal of money, and when it was launched a sudden squall rose, and it fell to pieces, and with it all the young man’s hopes of winning the princess. By this time he had not a penny left, so he went back to his two brothers and told his tale. And the second brother said to himself as he listened, ‘Certainly he has managed very badly, but I should like to see if I can’t do better, and win the princess for my own self.’ So he called together all the shipbuilders throughout the country, and gave them orders to build a ship which should float on the land as well as on the sea. But his heart was no softer than his brother’s, and every man that was not a skilled workman was chased away with hard words. Last came the white-bearded man, but he fared no better than the rest.

When the ship was finished the launch took place, and everything seemed going smoothly when a gale sprang up, and the vessel was dashed to pieces on the rocks. The young man had spent his whole fortune on it, and now it was all swallowed up, was forced to beg shelter from his youngest brother. When he told his story the youngest said to himself, ‘I am not rich enough to support us all three. I had better take my turn, and if I manage to win the princess there will be her fortune as well as my own for us to live on.’ So he called together all the shipbuilders in the kingdom, and gave orders that a new ship should be built. Then all the old people came and asked for work, and he answered cheerfully, ‘Oh, yes, there is plenty for everybody;’ and when the boys begged to be allowed to help he found something that they could do. And when the old man with the long white beard stood before him, praying that he might earn his bread, he replied, ‘Oh, father, I could not suffer you to work, but you shall be overseer, and look after the rest.’

Now the old man was a holy hermit, and when he saw how kind-hearted the youth was he determined to do all he could for him to gain the wish of his heart.

By-and-bye, when the ship was finished, the hermit said to his young friend, ‘Now you can go and claim the king’s daughter, for hte ship will float both by land and sea.’

‘Oh, good father,’ cried the young man, ‘you will not forsake me? Stay with me, I pray you, and lead me to the king!’

‘If you wish it, I will,’ said the hermit, ‘on condition that you will give me half of anything you get.’

‘Oh, if that is all,’ answered he, ‘it is easily promised!’ And they set out together on the ship.

After they had gone some distance they saw a man standing in a thick fog, which he was trying to put into a sack.

‘Oh, good father,’ exclaimed the youth, ‘what can he be doing?’

‘Ask him,’ said the old man.

‘What are you doing, my fine fellow?’

‘I am putting the fog into my sack. That is my business.’

‘Ask him if he will come with us,’ whispered the hermit.

And the man answered: ‘If you will give me enough to eat and drink I will gladly stay with you.’

So they took him on their ship, and the youth said, as they started off again, ‘Good father, before we were two, and now we are three!’

After they had travelled a little further they met a man who had torn up half the forest, and was carrying all the trees on his shoulders.

‘Good father,’ exclaimed the youth, ‘only look! What can he have done that for?'

'Ask him why he has torn up all those trees.'

And the man replied, 'Why, I've merely been gathering a handful of brushwood.'

'Beg him to come with us,' whispered the hermit.

And the strong man answered: 'Willingly, as long as you give me enough to eat and drink.' And he came on the ship.

And the youth said to the hermit, 'Good father, before we were three, and now we are four.'

The ship travelled on again, and some miles further on they saw a man drinking out of a stream till he had nearly drunk it dry.

'Good father,' said the youth, 'just look at that man! Did you ever see anybody drink like that?'

'Ask him why he does it,' answered the hermit.

'Why, there is nothing very odd in taking a mouthful of water!' replied the man, standing up.

'Beg him to come with us.' And the youth did so.

'With pleasure, as long as you give me enough to eat and drink.'

And the youth whispered to the hermit, 'Good father, before we were four, and now we are five.'

A little way along they noticed another man in the middle of a stream, who was shooting into the water.

'Good father,' said the youth, 'what can he be shooting at?'

'Ask him,' answered the hermit.

'Hush, hush!' cried the man; 'now you have frightened it away. In the Underworld sits a quail on a tree, and I wanted to shoot it. That is my business. I hit everything I aim at.'

'Ask him if he will come with us.'

And the man replied, 'With all my heart, as long as I get enough to eat and drink.'

So they took him into the ship, and the young man whispered, 'Good father, before we were five, and now we are six.'

Off they went again, and before they had gone far they met a man striding towards them whose steps were so long that while one foot was on the north of the island the other was right down in the south.

'Good father, look at him! What long steps he takes!'

'Ask him why he does it,' replied the hermit.

'Oh, I am only going out for a little walk,' answered he.

'Ask him if he will come with us.'

‘Gladly, if you will give me as much as I want to eat and drink,’ said he, climbing up into the ship.

And the young man whispered, ‘Good father, before we were six, and now we are seven.’ But the hermit knew what he was about, and why he gathered these strange people into the ship.

After many days, at last they reached the town where lived the king and his daughter. They stopped the vessel right in front of the palace, and the young man went in and bowed low before the king.

‘O Majesty, I have done your bidding, and now is the ship built that can travel over land and sea. Give me my reward, and let me have your daughter to wife.’

But the king said to himself, ‘What! am I to wed my daughter to a man of whom I know nothing. Not even whether he be rich or poor — a knight or a beggar.’

And aloud he spake: It is not enough that you have managed to build the ship. You must find a runner who shall take this letter to the ruler of the Underworld, and bring me the answer back in an hour.’

‘That is not in the bond,’ answered the young man.

‘Well, do as you like,’ replied the king, ‘only you will not get my daughter.’

The young man went out, sorely troubled, to tell his old friend what had happened.

‘Silly boy!’ cried the hermit, ‘Accept his terms at once. And send off the long-legged man with the letter. He will take it in no time at all.’

So the youth’s heard leapt for joy, and he returned to the king. ‘Majesty, I accept your terms. HEre is the messenger who will do what you wish.’

The king had no choice but to give the man the letter, and he strode off, making short work of the distance that lay between the palace and the Underworld. He soon found the ruler, who looked at the letter, and said to him, ‘Wait a little while i write the answer;’ but the man was soo tired with his quick walk that he went sound asleep and forgot all about his errand.

All this time the youth was anxiously counting the minutes till he could get back, and stood with his eyes fixed on the road down which his messenger must come.

‘What can be keeping him,’ he said to the hermit when the hour was nearly up. Then the hermit sent for the man who could hit everything he aimed at, and said to him, ‘Just see why the messenger stays so long.’

‘Oh, he is sound asleep in the palace of the Underworld. However, I can wake him.’

Then he drew his bow, and shot an arrow straight into the man’s knee. The messenger awoke with such a start, and when he saw that the hour had almost run out he snatched up the answer and rushed back with such speed that the clock had not yet struck when he entered the palace.

Now the young man thought he was sure of his bride, but the king said, “Still you have not done enough. Before I give you my daughter you must find a man who can drink half the contents of my cellar in one day.’

‘That is not in the bond,’ complained the poor youth.

‘Well, do as you like, only you will not get my daughter.’

The young man went sadly out, and asked the hermit what he was to do.

‘Silly boy!’ said he. ‘Why, tell the man to do it who drinks up everything.’

So they sent for the man and said, ‘Do you think you are able to drink half the royal cellar in one day?’

‘Dear me, yes, and as much more as you want,’ answered he. ‘I am never satisfied.’

The king was not pleased at the young man agreeing so readily, but he had no choice, and ordered the servant to be taken downstairs. Oh, how he enjoyed himself! All day long he drank, and drank, and drank, till instead of half the cellar, he had drunk the whole, and there was not a cask but what stood empty. And when the king saw this he said to the youth, ‘You have conquered, and I can no longer withhold my daughter. But, as her dowry, I shall only give so much as one man can carry away.’

‘But,’ answered he, ‘let a man be ever so strong, he cannot carry more than a hundredweight, and what is that for a king’s daughter?’

‘Well, do as you like; I have said my say. It is your affair — not mine.’

The young man was puzzled, and did not know what to reply, for, though he would gladly have married the princess without a sixpence, he had spent all his money in building the ship, and knew he could not give her all she wanted. So he went to the hermit and said to him, ‘The king will only give for her dowry as much as a man can carry. I have no money of my own left, and my brothers have none either.’

‘Silly boy! Why, you have only got to fetch the man who carried half the forest on his shoulders.’

And the youth was glad, and called the strong man, and told him what he must do. ‘Take everything you can, till you are bent double. Never mind if you leave the palace bare.’

The strong man promised, and nobly kept his word. He piled all he could see on his back — chairs, tables, wardrobes, chests of gold and silver — till there was nothing left to pile. At last he took the king’s crown, and put it on the top. He carried his burden to the ship and stowed his treasures away, and the youth followed, leading the king’s daughter. But the king was left raging in his empty palace, and he called together his army, and got ready his ships of war, in order that he might go after the vessel and bring back what had been taken away.

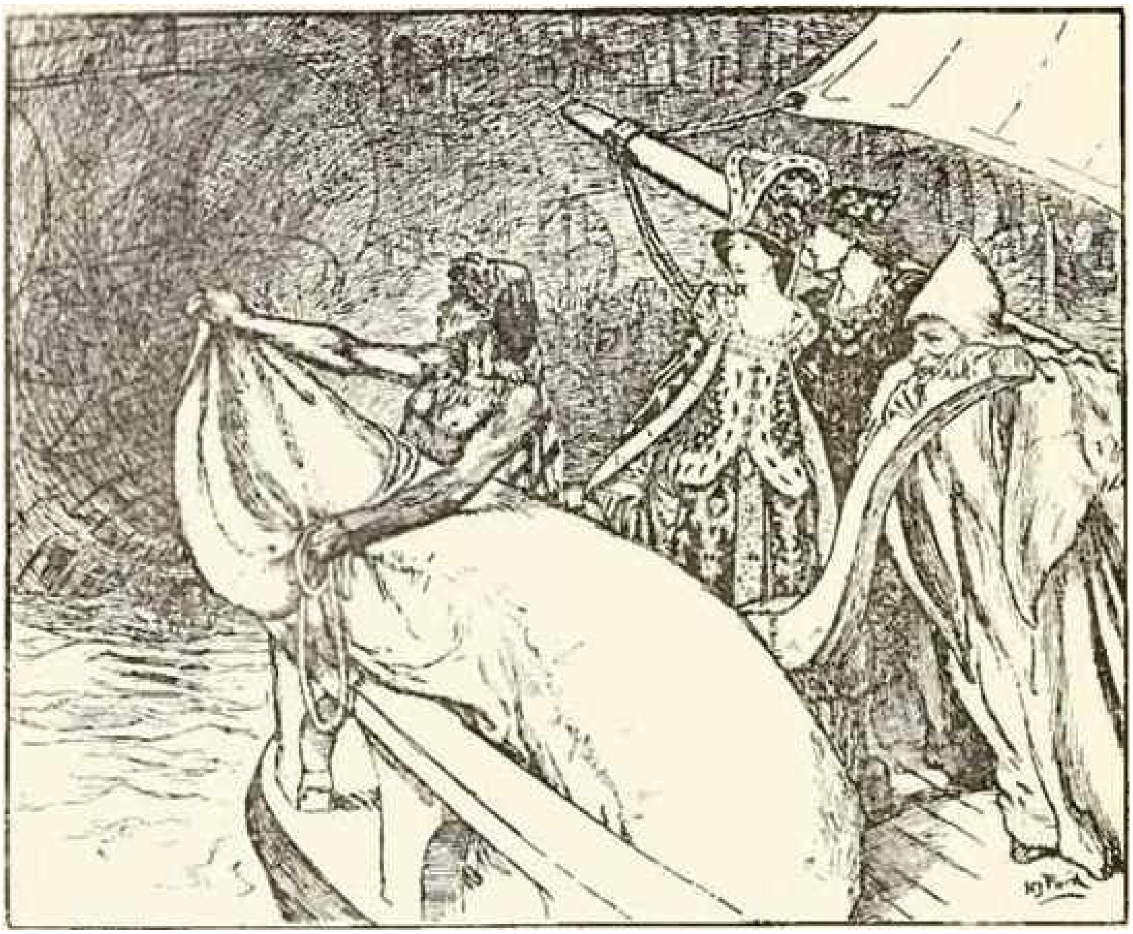

And the king's ships sailed very fast, and soon caught up the little vessel, and the sailors all shouted for joy. Then the hermit looked out and saw how near they were, and he said to the youth, 'Do you see that?'

The youth shrieked and cried, 'Ah, good father, it is a fleet of ships, and they are chasing us, and in a few moments they will be upon us.'

But the hermit bade him call the man who had the fog in his sack, and the sack was opened and the fog flew out, and hung right round the king's ships, so that they could see nothing. So they sailed back to the palace, and told the king what strange things had happened. Meanwhile the young man's vessel reached home in safety.

'Well, here you are once more' said the hermit; 'and now you can fulfil the promise you made me to give me the half of all you had.'

'That will I do with all my heart,' answered the youth, and began to divide all his treasures, putting part on one side for himself and setting aside the other for his friend. ‘Good father, it is finished,’ said he at length; ‘there is nothing more left to divide.’

‘Nothing more left!’ cried the hermit. ‘Why, you have forgotten the best thing of all!’

‘What can that be?’ asked he. ‘We have divided everything.’

‘And the king’s daughter?’ said the hermit.

Then the young man’s heart stood still, for he loved her dearly. But he answered, ‘It is well; I have sworn, and I will keep my word,’ and drew his sword to cut her in pieces. When the hermit saw that he held his honour dearer than his wife he lifted his hand and cried, ‘Hold! she is yours, and all the treasures too. I gave you my help because you had pity on those that were in need. And when you are in need yourself, call upon me, and I will come to you.’

As he spoke he softly touched their heads and vanished.

The next day the wedding took place, and the two brothers came to the house, and they all lived happily together, but they never forgot the holy man who had been such a good friend.

The Water of Life

Cuentos Populars Catalans, per lo Dr. D. Francisco de S. Maspous y Labros. Barcelona, 1885.

Three brothers and one sister lived together in a small cottage, and they loved one another dearly. One day the eldest brother, who had never done anything but amuse himself from sunrise to sunset, said to the rest, ‘Let us all work hard, and perhaps we shall grow rich, and be able to build ourselves a palace.’

And his brothers and sister answered joyfully, ‘Yes, we will all work!’

So they fell to working with all their might, till at last they became rich, and were able to build themselves a beautiful palace; and everyone came from miles round to see its wonders, and to say how splendid it was. No one thought of finding any faults, till at length an old woman, who had been walking through the rooms with a crowd of people, suddenly exclaimed, ‘Yes, it is a splendid palace, but there is still something it needs!’

‘And what may that be?’

‘A church.’

When they heard this the brothers set to work again to earn some more money, and when they had got enough they set about building a church, which should be as large and beautiful as the palace itself.

And after the church was finished greater numbers of people than ever flocked to see the palace and the church and vast gardens and magnificent halls.

But one day, as the brothers were as usual doing the honours to their guests, an old man turned to them and said, ‘Yes, it is all most beautiful, but there is still something it needs!’

‘And what may that be?’

‘A pitcher of the water of life, a branch of the tree the smell of whose flowers gives eternal beauty, and the talking bird.’

‘And where am I to find all those?’

‘Go to the mountain that is far off yonder, and you will find what you seek.’

After the old man had bowed politely and taken farewell of them the eldest brother said to the rest, ‘I will go in search of the water of life, and the talking bird, and the tree of beauty.’

‘But suppose some evil thing befalls you?’ asked his sister. ‘How shall we know?’

‘You are right,’ he replied; ‘ I had not thought of that!’

Then they followed the old man, and said to him, ‘My eldest brother wishes to seek for the water of life, and the tree of beauty, and the talking bird, that you tell him are needful to make our palace perfect. But how shall we know if any evil thing befall him?’

So the old man took them a knife, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Keep this carefully, and as long as the blade is bright all is well; but if the blade is bloody, then know that evil has befallen him.’

The brothers thanked him, and departed, and went straight to the palace, where they found the young man making ready to set out for the mountain where the treasures he longed for lay hid.

And he walked, and he walked, and he walked, till he had gone a great way, and there he met a giant.

‘Can you tell me how much further I have still to go before I reach that mountain yonder?’

‘And why do you wish to go there?’

‘I am seeking the water of life, the talking bird, and a branch of the tree of beauty.’

‘Many have passed by seeking those treasures, but none have ever come back; and you will never come back either, unless you mark my words. Follow this path, and when you reach the mountain you will find it covered with stones. Do not stop to look at them, but keep on your way. As you go you will hear scoffs and laughs behind you; it will be the stones that mock. Do not heed them; above all, do not turn round. If you do you will become as one of them. Walk straight on till you get to the top, and then take all you wish for.’

The young man thanked him for his counsel, and walked, and walked, and walked, till he reached the mountain. And as he climbed he heard behind him scoffs and jeers, but he kept his ears steadily closed to them. At last the noise grew so loud that he lost patience, and he stooped to pick up a stone to hurl into the midst of the clamour, when suddenly his arm seemed to stiffen, and the next moment he was a stone himself!

That day his sister, who thought her brother’s steps were long in returning, took out the knife and found the blade was red as blood. Then she cried out to her brothers that something terrible had come to pass.

‘I will go and find him,’ said the second. And he went.

And he walked, and he walked, and he walked, till he met the giant, and asked him if he had seen a young man travelling towards the mountain.

And the giant answered, ‘Yes, I have seen him pass, but I have not seen him come back. The spell must have worked upon him.’

‘Then what can I do to disenchant him, and find the water of life, the talking bird, and a branch of the tree of beauty?'

'Follow this path, and when you reach the mountain you will find it covered with stones. Do not stop to look at them, but climb steadily on. Above all, heed not the laughs and scoffs that will arise on all sides, and never turn round. And when you reach the top you can then take all you desire.'

The young man thanked him for his counsel, and set out for the mountain. But no sooner did he reach it than loud jests and gibes broke out on every side, and almost deafened him. For some time he let them rail, and pushed boldly on, till he had passed the place which his brother had gained; then suddenly he thought that among the scoffing sounds he heard his brother's voice. He stopped and looked back; and another stone was added to the number.

Meanwhile the sister left at home was counting the days when her two brothers should return to her. The time seemed long, and it would be hard to say how often she took out the knife and looked at its polished blade to make sure that this one at least was still safe. The blade was always bright and clear; each time she looked she had the happiness of knowing that all was well, till one evening, tired and anxious, as she frequently was at the end of the day, she took it from its drawer, and behold! the blade was red with blood. Her cry of horror brought her youngest brother to her, and, unable to speak, she held out the knife!

'I will go,' he said.

So he walked, and he walked, and he walked, until he met the giant, and he asked, 'Have two young men, making for yonder mountain, passed this way?'

And the giant answered, 'Yes, they have passed by, but they never came back, and by this I know that the spell has fallen upon them.'

'Then what must I do to free them, and to get the water of life, and the talking bird, and the branch of the tree of beauty?'

'Go to the mountain, which you will find so thickly covered with stones that you will hardly be able to place your feet, and walk straight forward, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, and paying no heed to the laughs and scoffs which will follow you, till you reach the top, and then you may take all that you desire.'

The young man thanked the giant for his counsel, and set forth to the mountain. And when he began to climb there burst forth all around him a storm of scoffs and jeers; but he thought of the giant's words, and looked neither to the right hand nor to the left, till the mountain top lay straight before him. A moment now and he would have gained it, when, through the groans and yells, he heard his brothers' voices. He turned, and there was one stone the more.

And all this while his sister was pacing up and down the palace, hardly letting the knife out of her hand, and dreading what she knew she would see, and what she did see. The blade grew red before her eyes, and she said, ‘Now it is my turn.’

So she walked, and she walked, and she walked till she came to the giant, and prayed him to tell her if he had seen three young men pass that way seeking the distant mountain.

‘I have seen them pass, but they have never returned, and by this I know that the spell has fallen upon them.’

‘And what must I do to set them free, and to find the water of life, and the talking bird, and a branch of the tree of beauty?’

‘You must go to that mountain, which is so full of stones that your feet will hardly find a place to tread, and as you climb you will hear a noise as if all the stones in the world were mocking you; but pay no heed to anything you may hear, and, once you gain the top, you have gained everything.’

The girl thanked him for his counsel, and set out for the mountain; and scarcely had she gone a few steps upwards when cries and screams broke forth around her, and she felt as if each stone she trod on was a living thing. But she remembered the words of the giant, and knew not what had befallen her brothers, and kept her face steadily towards the mountain top, which grew nearer and nearer every moment. But as she mounted the clamour increased sevenfold: high above them all rang the voices of her three brothers. But the girl took no heed, and at last her feet stood upon the top.

Then she looked round, and saw, lying in a hollow, the pool of the water of life. And she took the brazen pitcher that she had brought with her, and filled it to the brim. By the side of the pool stood the tree of beauty, with the talking bird on one of its boughs; and she caught the bird, and placed it in a cage, and broke off one of the branches.

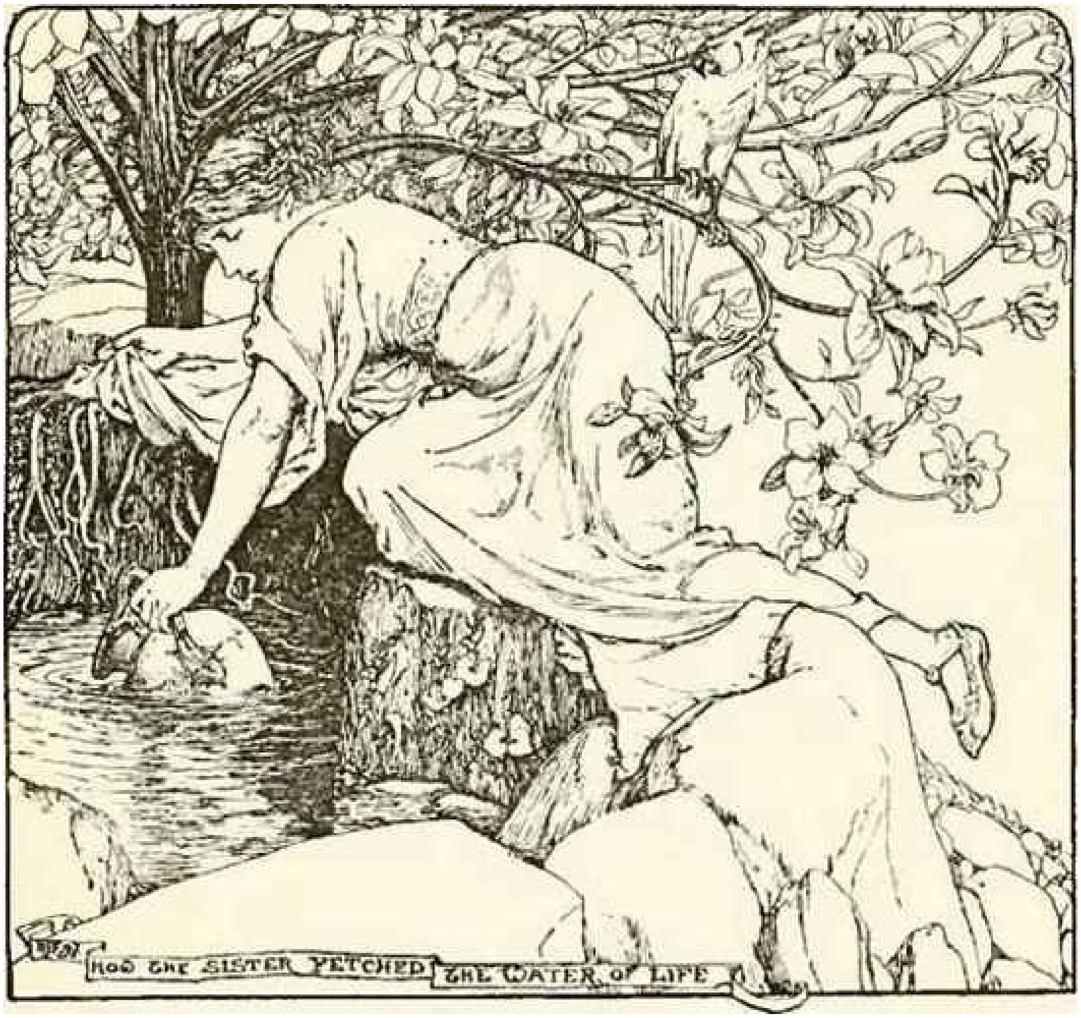

HOW THE SISTER FETCHED THE WATER OF LIFE

After that she turned, and went joyfully down the hill again, carrying her treasures, but her long climb had tired her out, and the brazen pitcher was very heavy, and as she walked a few drops of the water spilt on the stones, and as it touched them they changed into young men and maidens, crowding about her to give thanks for their deliverance.

So she learnt by this how the evil spell might be broken, and she carefully sprinkled every stone till there was not one left — only a great company of youths and girls who followed her down the mountain.

When they arrived at the palace she did not lose a moment in planting the branch of the tree of beauty and watering it with the water of life. And the branch shot up into a tree, and was heavy with flowers, and the talking bird nestled in its branches.

Now the fame of these wonders was noised abroad, and the people flocked in great numbers to see the three marvels, and the maiden who had won them; and among the sightseers came the king’s son, who would not go till everything was shown him, and till he had heard how it had all happened. And the prince admired the strangeness and beauty of the treasures in the palace, but more than all he admired the beauty and courage of the maiden who had brought them there. So he went home and told his parents, and gained their consent to wed her for his wife.

Then the marriage was celebrated in the church adjoining the palace. Then the bridegroom took her to his own home, where they lived happy for ever after.

The Wounded Lion

Cuentos Populars Catalans.

There was once a girl so poor that she had nothing to live on, and wandered about the world asking for charity. One day she arrived at a thatched cottage, and inquired if they could give her any work. The farmer said he wanted a cowherd, as his own had left him, and if the girl liked the place she might take it. So she became a cowherd.

One morning she was driving her cows through the meadows when she heard near by a loud groan that almost sounded human. She hastened to the spot from which the noise came, and found it proceeded from a lion who lay stretched upon the ground.

You can guess how frightened she was! But the lion seemed in such pain that she was sorry for him, and drew nearer and nearer till she saw he had a large thorn in one foot. She pulled out the thorn and bound up the place, and the lion was grateful, and licked her hand by way of thanks with his big rough tongue.

When the girl had finished she went back to find the cows, but they had gone, and though she hunted everywhere she never found them; and she had to return home and confess to her master, who scolded her bitterly, and afterwards beat her. Then he said, ‘Now you will have to look after the asses.’

So every day she had to take the asses to the woods to feed, until one morning, exactly a year after she had found the lion, she heard a groan which sounded quite human. She went straight to the place from which the noise came, and, to her great surprise, beheld the same lion stretched on the ground with a deep wound across his face.

This time she was not afraid at all, and ran towards him, washing the wound and laying soothing herbs upon it; and when she had bound it up the lion thanked her in the same manner as before.

After that she returned to her flock, but they were nowhere to be seen. She searched here and she searched there, but they had vanished completely!

Then she had to go home and confess to her master, who first scolded her and afterwards beat her. ‘Now go,’ he ended, ‘and look after the pigs!’

So the next day she took out the pigs, and found them such good feeding grounds that they grew fatter every day.

Another year passed by, and one morning when the maiden was out with her pigs she heard a groan which sounded quite human. She ran to see what it was, and found her old friend the lion, wounded through and through, fast dying under a tree.

She fell on her knees before him and washed his wounds one by one, and laid healing herbs upon them. And the lion licked her hands and thanked her, and asked if she would not stay and sit by him. But the girl said she had her pigs to watch, and she must go and see after them.

So she ran to the place where she had left them, but they had vanished as if the earth had swallowed them up. She whistled and called, but only the birds answered her.

Then she sank down on the ground and wept bitterly, not daring to return home until some hours had passed away.

And when she had had her cry out she got up and searched all up and down the wood. But it was no use; there was not a sign of the pigs.

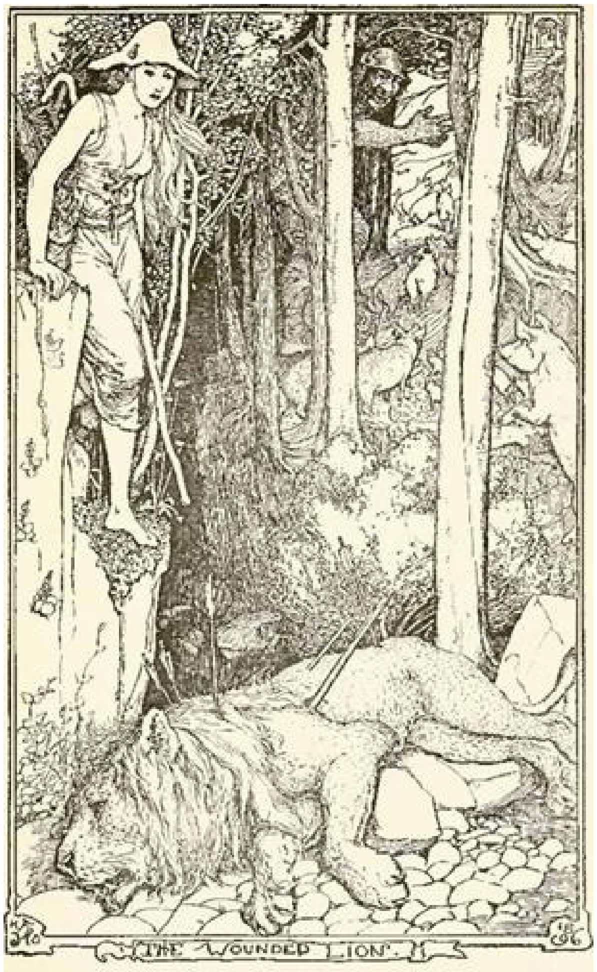

THE WOUNDED LION.

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At last she thought that perhaps if she climbed a tree she might see further. But no sooner was she seated on the highest branch than something happened which put the pigs quite out of her head. This was a handsome young man who was coming down the path; and when he had almost reached the tree he pulled aside a rock and disappeared behind it.

The maiden rubbed her eyes and wondered if she had been dreaming. Next she thought, ‘I will not stir from here till I see him come out, and discover who he is.’ Accordingly she waited, and at dawn the next morning the rock moved to one side and a lion came out.

When he had gone quite out of sight the girl climbed down from the tree and went to the rock, which she pushed aside, and entered the opening before her. The path led to a beautiful house. She went in, swept and dusted the furniture, and put everything tidy. Then she ate a very good dinner, which was on a shelf in the corner, and once more clambered up to the top of her tree.

As the sun set she saw the same young man walking gaily down the path, and, as before, he pushed aside the rock and disappeared behind it.

Next morning out came the lion. He looked sharply about him on all sides, but saw no one, and then vanished into the forest.

The maiden then came down from the tree and did exactly as she had done the day before. Thus three days went by, and every day she went and tidied up the palace. At length, when the girl found she was no nearer to discovering the secret, she resolved to ask him, and in the evening when she caught sight of him coming through the wood she came down from the tree and begged him to tell her his name.

The young man looked very pleased to see her, and said he thought it must be she who had secretly kept his house for so many days. And he added that he was a prince enchanted by a powerful giant, but was only allowed to take his own shape at night, for all day he was forced to appear as the lion whom she had so often helped; and, more than this, it was the giant who had stolen the oxen and the asses and the pigs in revenge for her kindness.

And the girl asked him, ‘What can I do to disenchant you?’

But he said he was afraid it was very difficult, because the only way was to get a lock of hair from the head of a king’s daughter, to spin it, and to make from it a cloak for the giant, who lived up on the top of a high mountain.

‘Very well,’ answered the girl, ‘I will go to the city, and knock at the door of the king’s palace, and ask the princess to take me as a servant.’

So they parted, and when she arrived at the city she walked about the streets crying, ‘Who will hire me for a servant? Who will hire me for a servant?’ But, though many people liked her looks, for she was clean and neat, the maiden would listen to none, and still continued crying, ‘Who will hire me for a servant?

Who will hire me for a servant?'

At last there came the waiting-maid of the princess.

'What can you do?' she said; and the girl was forced to confess that she could do very little.

'Then you will have to do scullion's work, and wash up dishes,' said she; and they went straight back to the palace.

Then the maiden dressed her hair afresh, and made herself look very neat and smart, and everyone admired and praised her, till by-and-bye it came to the ears of the princess. And she sent for the girl, and when she saw her, and how beautifully she had dressed her hair, the princess told her she was to come and comb out hers.

Now the hair of the princess was very thick and long, and shone like the sun. And the girl combed it and combed it till it was brighter than ever. And the princess was pleased, and bade her come every day and comb her hair, till at length the girl took courage, and begged leave to cut off one of the long, thick locks.

The princess, who was very proud of her hair, did not like the idea of parting with any of it, so she said no. But the girl could not give up hope, and each day she entreated to be allowed to cut off just one tress. At length the princess lost patience, and exclaimed, 'You may have it, then, on condition that you shall find the handsomest prince in the world to be my bridegroom!'

And the girl answered that she would, and cut off the lock, and wove it into a coat that glittered like silk, and brought it to the young man, who told her to carry it straight to the giant. But that she must be careful to cry out a long way off what she had with her, or else he would spring upon her and run her through with his sword.

So the maiden departed and climbed up the mountain, but before she reached the top the giant heard her footsteps, and rushed out breathing fire and flame, having a sword in one hand and a club in the other. But she cried loudly that she had brought him the coat, and then he grew quiet, and invited her to come into his house.

He tried on the coat, but it was too short, and he threw it off, and declared it was no use. And the girl picked it up sadly, and returned quite in despair to the king's palace.

The next morning, when she was combing the princess's hair, she begged leave to cut off another lock. At first the princess said no, but the girl begged so hard that at length she gave in on condition that she should find her a prince as bridegroom.

The maiden told her that she had already found him, and spun the lock into shining stuff, and fastened it on to the end of the coat. And when it was finished she carried it to the giant.

This time it fitted him, and he was quite pleased, and asked her what he could give her in return. And she said that the only reward he could give her was to take the spell off the lion and bring him back to his own shape.

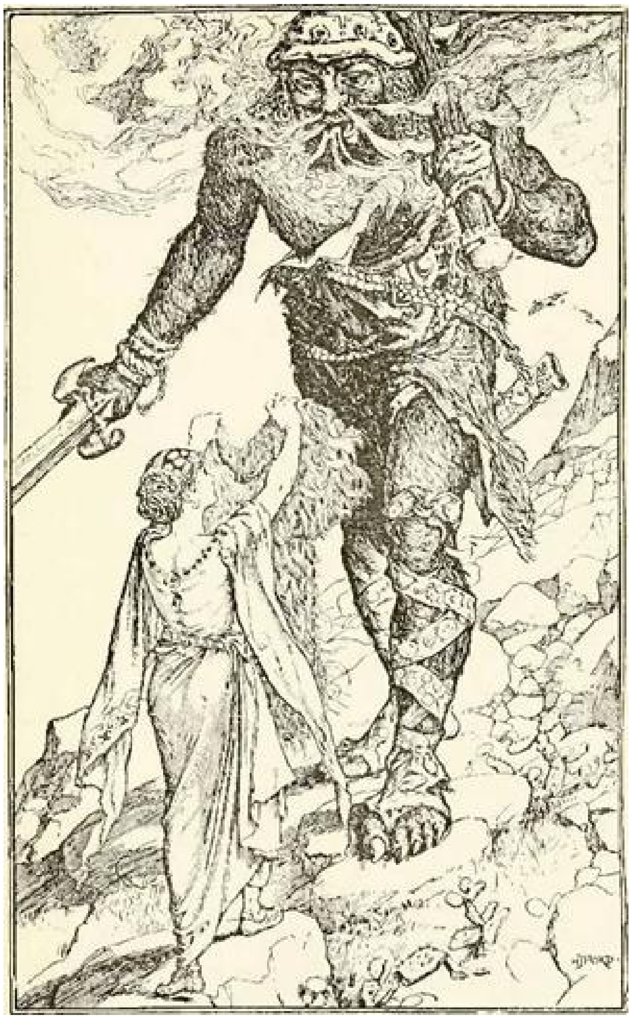

For a long time the giant would not hear of it, but in the end he gave in, and told her exactly how it must all be done. She was to kill the lion herself and cut him up very small; then she must burn him, and cast his ashes into the water, and out of the water the prince would come free from enchantment for ever.

But the maiden went away weeping, lest the giant should have deceived her, and that after she had killed the lion she would find she had also slain the prince.

Weeping she came down the mountain, and weeping she joined the prince, who was awaiting her at the bottom; and when he had heard her story he comforted her, and bade her be of good courage, and to do the bidding of the giant.

And the maiden believed what the prince told her; and in the morning when he put on his lion's form she took a knife and slew him, and cut him up very small, and burnt him, and cast his ashes into the water, and out of the water came the prince, beautiful as the day, and as glad to look upon as the sun himself.

Then the young man thanked the maiden for all she had done for him, and said she should be his wife and none other. But the maiden only wept sore, and answered that that she could never be, for she had given her promise to the princess when she cut off her hair that the prince should wed her and her only.

But the prince replied, 'If it is the princess, we must go quickly. Come with me.'

So they went together to the king's palace. And when the king and queen and princess saw the young man a great joy filled their hearts, for they knew him for the eldest son, who had long ago been enchanted by a giant and lost to them.

And he asked his parents' consent that he might marry the girl who had saved him, and a great feast was made, and the maiden became a princess, and in due time a queen, and she richly deserved all the honours showered upon her.

The Man Without a Heart

Once upon a time there were seven brothers, who were orphans, and had no sister. Therefore they were obliged to do all their own housework. This they did not like at all; so after much deliberation they decided to get married. There were, unfortunately, no young girls to be found in the place where they lived; but the elder brothers agreed to go out into the world and seek for brides, promising to bring back a very pretty wife for the youngest also if he would meanwhile stay at home and take care of the house. He consented willingly, and the six young men set off in good spirits.

On their way they came to a small cottage standing quite by itself in a wood; and before the door stood an old, old man, who accosted the brothers saying, ‘Hullo, you young fellows! Whither away so fast and cheerily?’

‘We are going to find bonny brides for ourselves, and one for our youngest brother at home,’ they replied.

‘Oh! dear youths,’ said the old man, ‘I am terribly lonely here; pray bring a bride for me also; only remember, she must be young and pretty.’

‘What does a shrivelled old grey thing like that want with a pretty young bride?’ thought the brothers, and went on their way.

Presently they came to a town where were seven sisters, as young and as lovely as anyone could wish. Each brother chose one, and the youngest they kept for their brother at home. Then the whole party set out on the return journey, and again their path led through the wood and past the old man’s cottage.

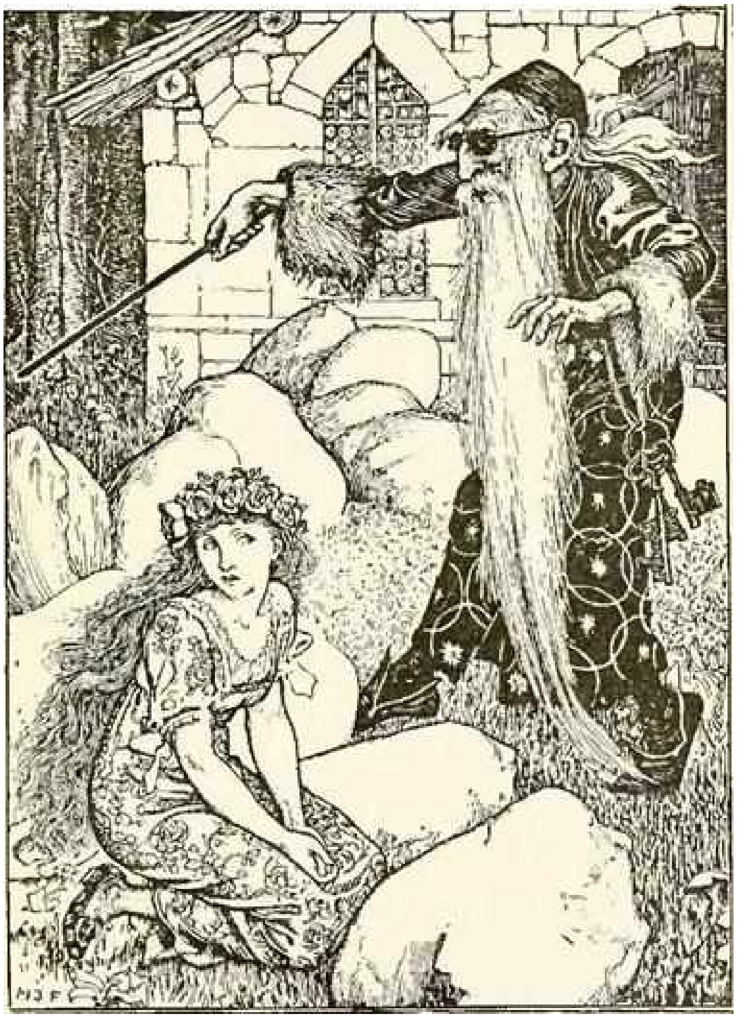

There he stood before the door, and cried: ‘Oh! you fine fellows, what a charming bride you have brought me!’

‘She is not for you, said the young men. ‘She is for our youngest brother, as we promised.’

‘What!’ said the old man, ‘promised! I’ll make you eat your promises!’ And with that he took his magic wand, and, murmuring a charm, he touched both brothers and brides, and immediately they were turned into grey stones.

Only the youngest sister he had not bewitched. He took her into the cottage, and from that time she was obliged to keep house for him. She was not very unhappy, but one thought troubled her. What if the old man should die and leave her here alone in the solitary cottage deep in the heart of the wood! She would be as ‘terribly lonely’ as he had formerly been.

One day she told him of her fear.

‘Don’t be anxious,’ he said. ‘You need neither fear my death nor desire it, for I have no heart in my breast! However, if I should die, you will find my wand above the door, and with it you can set free your sisters and their lovers. Then you will surely have company enough.'

'Where in all the world do you keep your heart, if not in your breast?' asked the girl.

'Do you want to know everything?' her husband said. 'Well, if you must know, my heart is in the bed-cover.'

When the old man had gone out about his business his bride passed her time in embroidering beautiful flowers on the bed quilt to make his heart happy. The old man was much amused. He laughed, and said to her: 'You are a good child, but I was only joking. My heart is really in — in—'

'Now where is it, dear husband?'

'It is in the doorway,' he replied.

Next day, while he was out, the girl decorated the door with gay feathers and fresh flowers, and hung garlands upon it. And on his return the old fellow asked what it all meant.

'I did it to show my love for your heart,' said the girl.

And again the old man smiled, saying, 'You are a dear child, but my heart is not in the doorway.'

Then the poor young bride was very vexed, and said, 'Ah, my dear! you really have a heart somewhere, so you may die and leave me all alone.'

The old man did his best to comfort her by repeating all he had said before, but she begged him afresh to tell her truly where his heart was and at last he told her.

'Far, far from here,' said he, 'in a lonely spot, stands a great church, as old as old can be. Its doors are of iron, and round it runs a deep moat, spanned by no bridge. Within that church is a bird which flies up and down; it never eats, and never drinks, and never dies. No one can catch it, and while that bird lives so shall I, for in it is my heart.'

It made the little bride quite sad to think she could do nothing to show her love for the old man's heart. She used to think about it as she sat all alone during the long days, for her husband was almost always out.

One day a young traveller came past the house, and seeing such a pretty girl he wished her 'Good day.'

She returned his greeting, and as he drew near she asked him whence he came and where he was going.

'Alas!' sighed the youth, 'I am very sorrowful. I had six brothers, who went away to find brides for themselves and one for me; but they have never come home, so now I am going to look for them.'

'Oh, good friend,' said the girl, 'you need go no farther. Come, sit down, eat and drink, and afterwards I'll tell you all about it.'

She gave him food, and when he had finished his meal she told him how his brothers had come to the town where she lived with her sisters, how they had each chosen a bride, and, taking herself with them, had started for home. She wept as she told how the others were turned to stone, and how she was kept as the old man's bride. She left out nothing, even telling him the story of her husband's heart.

When the young man heard this he said: 'I shall go in search of the bird. It may be that God will help me to find and catch it.'

'Yes, do go,' she said; 'it will be a good deed, for then you can set your brothers and my sisters free.' Then she hid the young man, for it was now late, and her husband would soon be home.

Next morning, when the old man had gone out, she prepared a supply of provisions for her guest, and sent him off on his travels, wishing him good luck and success.

He walked on and on till he thought it must be time for breakfast; so he opened his knapsack, and was delighted to find such a store of good things. 'What a feast!' he exclaimed; 'will anyone come and share it?'

'Moo-oo,' sounded close behind him, and looking round he saw a great red ox, which said, 'I have much pleasure in accepting your kind invitation.'

'I'm delighted to see you. Pray help yourself. All I have is at your service,' said the hospitable youth. And the ox lay down comfortably, licking his lips, and made a hearty meal.

'Many thanks to you,' said the animal as it rose up. 'When you are in danger or necessity call me, even if only by a thought,' and it disappeared among the bushes.

The young man packed up all the food that was left, and wandered on till the shortening shadows and his own hunger warned him that it was midday. he laid the cloth on the ground and spread out his provisions, saying at the same time: 'Dinner is ready, and anyone who wishes to share it is welcome.'

Then there was a great rustling in the undergrowth, and out ran a wild boar, grunting, 'Umph, umph, umph; someone said dinner was ready. Was it you? and did you mean me to come?'

'By all means. Help yourself to what I have,' said the young traveller. And the two enjoyed their meal together.

Afterwards the boar got up, saying, 'Thank you; when in need you be you must quickly call for me,' and he rolled off.

For a long time the youth walked on. By evening he was miles away. He felt hungry again, and, having still some provisions left, thought he had better make ready his supper. When it was all spread out he cried as before, 'Anyone who cares to share my meal is welcome.’

He heard a sound overhead like the flapping of wings, and a shadow was cast upon the ground. Then a huge griffin appeared, saying: ‘I heard someone giving an invitation to eat; is there anything for me?’

‘Why not?’ said the youth. ‘Come down and take all you want. There won’t be much left after this.’

So the griffin alighted and ate his fill, saying, as he flew away, ‘Call me if you need me.’

‘What a hurry he was in!’ the youth said to himself. ‘He might have been able to direct me to the church, for I shall never find it alone.’

He gathered up his things, and started to walk a little farther before resting. He had not gone far when all of a sudden he saw the church!

He soon came to it, or rather to the wide and deep moat which surrounded it without a single bridge by which to cross.

It was too late to attempt anything now; and, besides, the poor youth was very tired, so he lay down on the ground and fell fast asleep.

Next morning, when he awoke, he began to wish himself over the moat; and the thought occurred to him that if only the red ox were there, and thirsty enough to drink up all the water in the moat, he might walk across it dry shod.

Scarcely had the thought crossed his brain before the ox appeared and began to drink up the water.

The grateful youth hastened across as soon as the moat was dry, but found it impossible to penetrate the thick walls and strong iron doors of the church.

‘I believe that big boar would be of more use here than I am,’ he thought, and lo! at the wish the wild boar came and began to push hard against the wall. He managed to loosen one stone with his tusks, and, having made a beginning, stone after stone was poked out till he had made quite a large hole, big enough to let a man go through.

The young man quickly entered the church, and saw a bird flying about, but he could not catch it.

‘Oh!’ he exclaimed, ‘if only the griffin were here, he would soon catch it.’

At these words the griffin appeared, and, seizing the bird, gave it to the youth, who carried it off carefully, while the griffin flew away.

The young man hurried home as fast as possible, and reached the cottage before evening. He told his story to the little bride, who, after giving him some food and drink, hid him with his bird beneath the bed.

Presently the old man came home, and complained of feeling ill. Nothing, he said, would go well with him any more: his ‘heart bird’ was caught.

The youth under the bed heard this, and thought, ‘This old fellow has done me no particular harm, but then he has bewitched my brothers and their brides, and has kept my bride for himself, and that is certainly bad enough.'

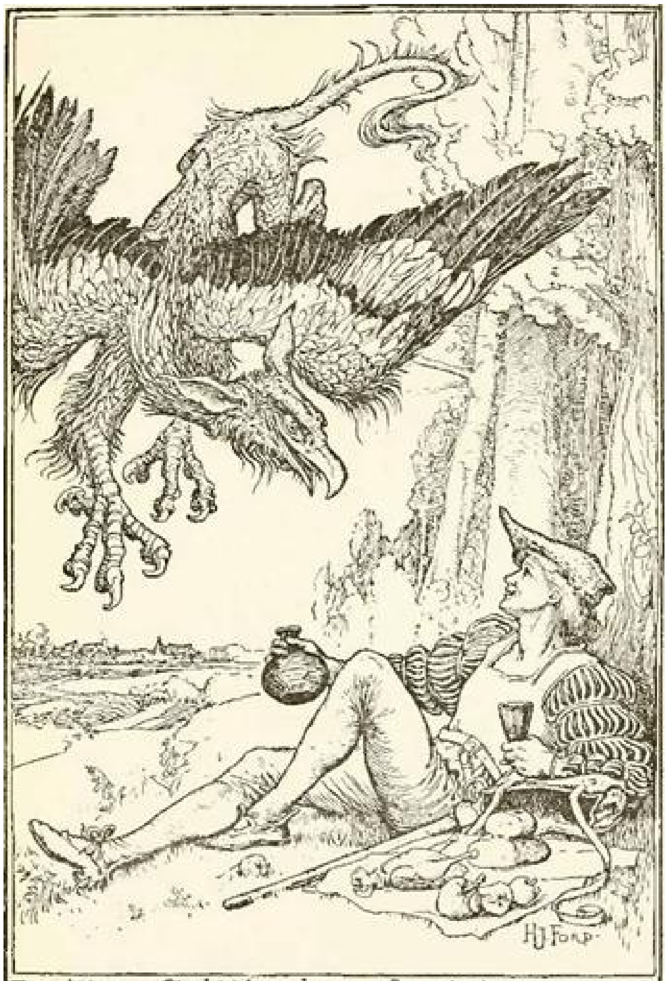

The Griffin is made Welcome

So he pinched the bird, and the old man cried, 'Ah! I feel death gripping me! Child, I am dying!'

With these words he fell fainting from his chair, and as the youth, before he knew what he was doing, had squeezed the bird to death, the old man died also.

Out crept the young man from under the bed, and the girl took the magic wand (which she found where the old man had told her), and, touching the twelve grey stones, transformed them at once into the six brothers and their brides.

Then there was great joy, and kissing and embracing. And there lay the old man, quite dead, and no magic wand could restore him to life, even had they wished it.

After that they all went away and were married, and lived many years happily together.

The Two Brothers

Sicilianische Malirchen. L. Gonzenbach.

Long ago there lived two brothers, both of them very handsome, and both so very poor that they seldom had anything to eat but the fish which they caught. One day they had been out in their boat since sunrise without a single bite, and were just thinking of putting up their lines and going home to bed when they felt a little feeble tug, and, drawing in hastily, they found a tiny fish at the end of the hook.

‘What a wretched little creature!’ cried one brother. ‘However, it is better than nothing, and I will bake him with bread crumbs and have him for supper.’

‘Oh, do not kill me yet!’ begged the fish; ‘I will bring you good luck — indeed I will!’

‘You silly thing!’ said the young man; ‘I’ve caught you, and I shall eat you.’

But his brother was sorry for the fish, and put in a word for him.

‘Let the poor little fellow live. He would hardly make one bite, and, after all, how do we know we are not throwing away our luck! Put him back into the sea. It will be much better.’

‘If you will let me live,’ said the fish, ‘you will find on the sands to-morrow morning two beautiful horses splendidly saddled and bridled, and on them you can go through the world as knights seeking adventures.’

‘Oh dear, what nonsense!’ exclaimed the elder; ‘and, besides, what proof have we that you are speaking the truth?’

But again the younger brother interposed: ‘Oh, do let him live! You know if he is lying to us we can always catch him again. It is quite worth while trying.’

At last the young man gave in, and threw the fish back into the sea; and both brothers went supperless to bed, and wondered what fortune the next day would bring.

At the first streaks of dawn they were both up, and in a very few minutes were running down to the shore. And there, just as the fish had said, stood two magnificent horses, saddled and bridled, and on their backs lay suits of armour and under-dresses, two swords, and two purses of gold.

‘There!’ said the younger brother. ‘Are you not thankful you did not eat that fish? He has brought us good luck, and there is no knowing how great we may become! Now, we will each seek our own adventures. If you will take one road I will go the other.’

‘Very well,’ replied the elder; ‘but how shall we let each other know if we are both living?’

‘Do you see this fig-tree?’ said the younger. ‘Well, whenever we want news of each other we have only to come here and make a slit with our swords in the back. If milk flows, it is a sign that we are well and prosperous; but if, instead of milk, there is blood, then we are either dead or in great danger.’

Then the two brothers put on their armour, buckled their swords, and pocketed their purees; and, after taking a tender farewell of each other, they mounted their horses and went their various ways.

The elder brother rode straight on till he reached the borders of a strange kingdom. He crossed the frontier, and soon found himself on the banks of a river; and before him, in the middle of the stream, a beautiful girl sat chained to a rock and weeping bitterly. For in this river dwelt a serpent with seven heads, who threatened to lay waste the whole land by breathing fire and flame from his nostrils unless the king sent him every morning a man for his breakfast. This had gone on so long that now there were no men left, and he had been obliged to send his own daughter instead, and the poor girl was waiting till the monster got hungry and felt inclined to eat her.

When the young man saw the maiden weeping bitterly he said to her, ‘What is the matter, my poor girl?’

‘Oh!’ she answered, ‘I am chained here till a horrible serpent with seven heads comes to eat me. Oh, sir, do not linger here, or he will eat you too.’

‘I shall stay,’ replied the young man, ‘for I mean to set you free.’

‘That is impossible. You do not know what a fearful monster the serpent is; you can do nothing against him.’

‘That is my affair, beautiful captive,’ answered he; ‘only tell me, which way will the serpent come?’

‘Well, if you are resolved to free me, listen to my advice. Stand a little on one side, and then, when the serpent rises to the surface, I will say to him, “O serpent, to-day you can eat two people. But you had better begin first with the young man, for I am chained and cannot run away.” When he hears this most likely he will attack you.’

So the young man stood carefully on one side, and by-and-bye he heard a great rushing in the water; and a horrible monster came up to the surface and looked out for the rock where the king’s daughter was chained, for it was getting late and he was hungry.

But she cried out, ‘O serpent, to-day you can eat two people. And you had better begin with the young man, for I am chained and cannot run away.’

Then the serpent made a rush at the youth with wide open jaws to swallow him at one gulp, but the young man leaped aside and drew his sword, and fought till he had cut off all the seven heads. And when the great serpent lay dead at his feet he loosed the bonds of the king's daughter, and she flung herself into his arms and said, 'You have saved me from that monster, and now you shall be my husband, for my father has made a proclamation that whoever could slay the serpent should have his daughter to wife.'

But he answered, 'I cannot become your husband yet, for I have still far to travel. But wait for me seven years and seven months. Then, if I do not return, you are free to marry whom you will. And in case you should have forgotten, I will take these seven tongues with me so that when I bring them forth you may know that I am really he who slew the serpent.'

So saying he cut out the seven tongues, and the princess gave him a thick cloth to wrap them in; and he mounted his horse and rode away.

Not long after he had gone there arrived at the river a slave who had been sent by the king to learn the fate of his beloved daughter. And when the slave saw the princess standing free and safe before him, with the body of the monster lying at her feet, a wicked plan came into his head, and he said, 'Unless you promise to tell your father it was I who slew the serpent, I will kill you and bury you in this place, and no one will ever know what befell.'

What could the poor girl do? This time there was no knight to come to her aid. So she promised to do as the slave wished, and he took up the seven heads and brought the princess to her father.

Oh, how enchanted the king was to see her again, and the whole town shared his joy!

And the slave was called upon to tell how he had slain the monster, and when he had ended the king declared that he should have the princess to wife.

But she flung herself at her father's feet, and prayed him to delay. 'You have passed your royal word, and cannot go back from it Yet grant me this grace, and let seven years and seven months go by before you wed me. When they are over, then I will marry the slave.' And the king listened to her, and seven years and seven months she looked for her bridegroom, and wept for him night and day.

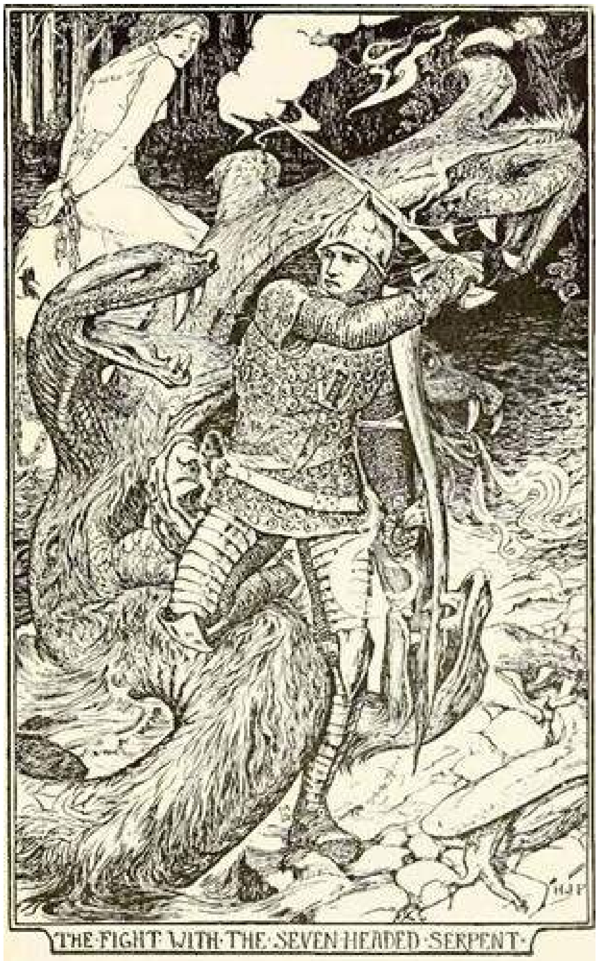

THE·FIGHT·WITH·THE·SEVEN·HEADED·SERPENT·

All this time the young man was riding through the world, and when the seven years and seven months were over he came back to the town where the princess lived — only a few days before the wedding. And he stood before the king, and said to him: ‘Give me your daughter, O king, for I slew the seven-headed serpent. And as a sign that my words are true, look on these seven tongues, which I cut from his seven heads, and on this embroidered cloth, which was given me by your daughter.’

Then the princess lifted up her voice and said, ‘Yes, dear father, he has spoken the truth, and it is he who is my real bridegroom. Yet pardon the slave, for he was sorely tempted.’

But the king answered, ‘Such treachery can no man pardon. Quick, away with him, and off with his head!’

So the false slave was put to death, that none might follow in his footsteps, and the wedding feast was held, and the hearts of all rejoiced that the true bridegroom had come at last.

These two lived happy and contentedly for a long while, when one evening, as the young man was looking from the window, he saw on a mountain that lay out beyond the town a great bright light.

‘What can it be?’ he said to his wife.

‘Ah! do not look at it,’ she answered, ‘for it comes from the house of a wicked witch whom no man can manage to kill.’ But the princess had better have kept silence, for her words made her husband’s heart burn within him, and he longed to try his strength against the witch’s cunning. And all day long the feeling grew stronger, till the next morning he mounted his horse, and in spite of his wife’s tears, he rode off to the mountain.

The distance was greater than he thought, and it was dark before he reached the foot of the mountain; indeed, he could not have found the road at all had it not been for the bright light, which shone like the moon on his path. At length he came to the door of a fine castle, which had a blaze streaming from every window. He mounted a flight of steps and entered a hall where a hideous old woman was sitting on a golden chair.

She scowled at the young man and said, ‘With a single one of the hairs of my head I can turn you into stone.’

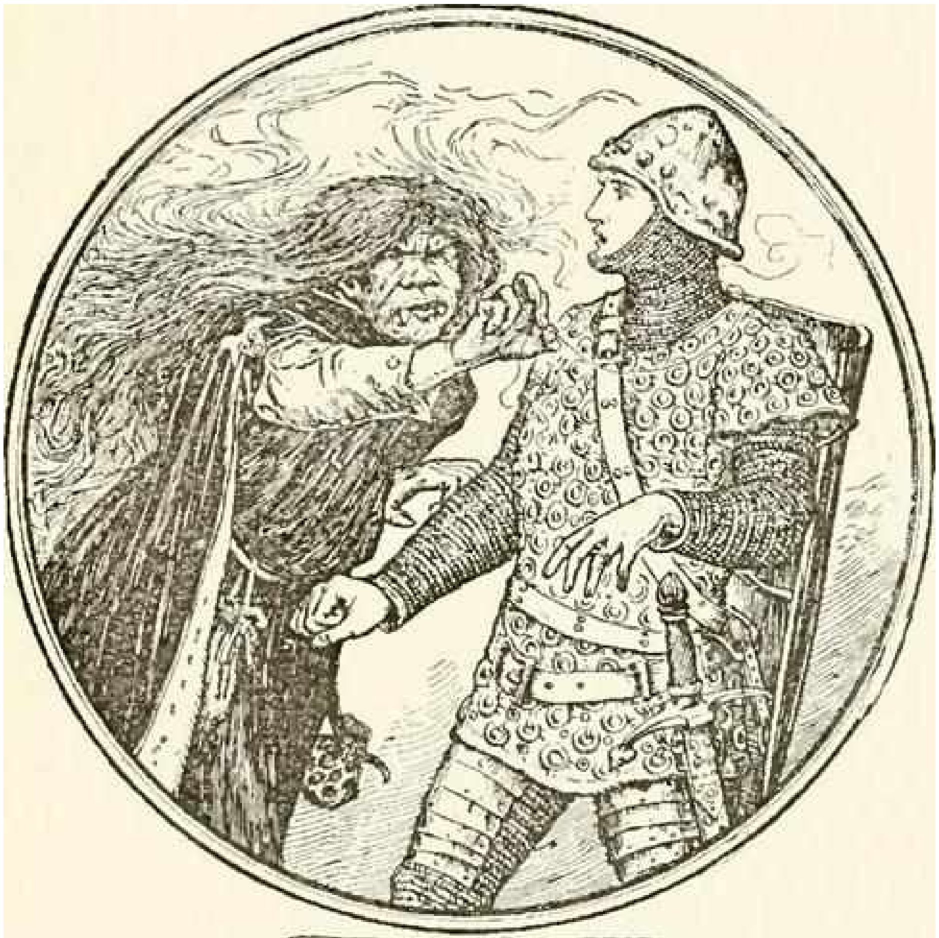

The Witch casts a Spell on the Elder Brother.

‘Oh, what nonsense!’ cried he. ‘Be quiet, old woman. What could you do with one hair?’ But the witch pulled out a hair and laid it on his shoulder, and his limbs grew cold and heavy, and he could not stir.

Now at this very moment the younger brother was thinking of him, and wondering how he had got on during all the years since they had parted. ‘I will go to the fig-tree,’ he said to himself, ‘to see whether he is alive or dead.’ So he rode through the forest till he came where the fig-tree stood, and cut a slit in the bark, and waited. In a moment a little gurgling noise was heard, and out came a stream of blood, running fast. ‘Ah, woe is me!’ he cried bitterly. ‘My brother is dead or dying! Shall I ever reach him in time to save his life?’ Then, leaping on his horse, he shouted, ‘Now, my steed, fly like the wind!’ and they rode right through the world, till one day they came to the town where the young man and his wife lived. Here the princess had been sitting every day since the morning that her husband had left her, weeping bitter tears, and listening for his footsteps. And when she saw his brother ride under the balcony she mistook him for her own husband, for they were so alike that no man might tell the difference, and her heart bounded, and, leaning down, she called to him, ‘At last! at last! how long have I waited for thee!’ When the younger brother heard these words he said to himself, ‘So it was here that my brother lived, and this beautiful woman is my sister-in-law,’ but he kept silence, and let her believe he was indeed her husband. Full of joy, the princess led him to the old king, who welcomed him as his own son, and ordered a feast to be made for him. And the princess was beside herself with gladness, but when she would have put her arms round him and kissed him he held up his hand to stop her, saying, ‘Touch me not,’ at which she marvelled greatly.

In this manner several days went by. And one evening, as the young man leaned from the balcony, he saw a bright light shining on the mountain.

‘What can that be?’ he said to the princess.

‘Oh, come away,’ she cried; ‘has not that light already proved your bane? Do you wish to fight a second time with that old witch?’

He marked her words, though she knew it not, and they taught him where his brother was, and what had befallen him. So before sunrise he stole out early, saddled his horse, and rode off to the mountain. But the way was further than he thought, and on the road he met a little old man who asked him whither he was going.

Then the young man told him his story, and added. ‘Somehow or other I must free my brother, who has fallen into the power of an old witch.’

‘I will tell you what you must do,’ said the old man. ‘The witch’s power lies in her hair; so when you see her spring on her and seize her by the hair, and then she cannot harm you. Be very careful never to let her hair go, bid her lead you to your brother, and force her to bring him back to life. For she has an ointment that will heal all wounds, and even wake the dead. And when your brother stands safe and well before you, then cut off her head, for she is a wicked woman.’

The young man was grateful for these words, and promised to obey them. Then he rode on, and soon reached the castle. He walked boldly up the steps and entered the hall, where the hideous old witch came to meet him. She grinned horribly at him, and cried out, ‘With one hair of my head I can change you into stone.’

‘Can you, indeed?’ said the young man, seizing her by the hair. ‘You old wretch! tell me what you have done with my brother, or I will cut your head off this very instant.’ Now the witch’s strength was all gone from her, and she had to obey.

‘I will take you to your brother,’ she said, hoping to get the better of him by cunning, ‘but leave me alone. You hold me so tight that I cannot walk.’

‘You must manage somehow,’ he answered, and held her tighter than ever.

She led him into a large hall filled with stone statues, which once had been men, and, pointing out one, she said, ‘There is your brother.’

The young man looked at them all and shook his head. ‘My brother is not here. Take me to him, or it will be the worse for you.’ But she tried to put him off with other statues, though it was no good, and it was not until they had reached the last hall of all that he saw his brother lying on the ground.

‘That is my brother,’ said he. ‘Now give me the ointment that will restore him to life.’

Very unwillingly the old witch opened a cupboard close by filled with bottles and jars, and took down one and held it out to the young man. But he was on the watch for trickery, and examined it carefully, and saw that it had no power to heal. This happened many times, till at length she found it was no use, and gave him the one he wanted. And when he had it safe he made her stoop down and smear it over his brother’s face, taking care all the while never to loose her hair, and when the dead man opened his eyes the youth drew his sword and cut off her head with a single blow. Then the elder brother got up and stretched himself, and said, ‘Oh, how long I have slept! And where am I?’

‘The old witch had enchanted you, but now she is dead and you are free. We will wake up the other knights that she laid under her spells, and then we will go.’

This they did, and, after sharing amongst them the jewels and gold they found in the castle, each man went his way. The two brothers remained together, the elder tightly grasping the ointment which had brought him back to life.

They had much to tell each other as they rode along, and at last the younger man exclaimed, ‘O fool, to leave such a beautiful wife to go and fight a witch! She took me for her husband, and I did not say her nay.’

When the elder brother heard this a great rage filled his heart, and, without saying one word, he drew his sword and slew his brother, and his body rolled in the dust. Then he rode on till he reached his home, where his wife was still sitting, weeping bitterly. When she saw him she sprang up with a cry, and threw herself into his arms. ‘Oh, how long have I waited for thee! Never, never must you leave me any more!’

When the old king heard the news he welcomed him as a son, and made ready a feast, and all the court sat down. And in the evening, when the young man was alone with his wife, she said to him, ‘Why would you not let me touch you when you came back, but always thrust me away when I tried to put my arms round you or kiss you?’

Then the young man understood how true his brother had been to him, and he sat down and wept and wrung his hands because of the wicked murder that he had done. Suddenly he sprang to his feet, for he remembered the ointment which lay hidden in his garments, and he rushed to the place where his brother still lay. He fell on his knees beside the body, and, taking out the salve, he rubbed it over the neck where the wound was gaping wide, and the skin healed and the sinews grew strong, and the dead man sat up and looked round him. And the two brothers embraced each other, and the elder asked forgiveness for his wicked blow; and they went back to the palace together, and were never parted any more.

Master and Pupil

From the Danish.

There was once a man who had a son who was very clever at reading, and took great delight in it. He went out into the world to seek service somewhere, and as he was walking between some mounds he met a man, who asked him where he was going.

‘I am going about seeking for service,’ said the boy.

‘Will you serve me?’ asked the man.

‘Oh, yes; just as readily you as anyone else,’ said the boy.

‘But can you read?’ asked the man.

‘As well as the priest,’ said the boy.

Then I can’t have you,’ said the man. ‘In fact, I was just wanting a boy who couldn’t read. His only work would be to dust my old books.’

The man then went on his way, and left the boy looking after him.

‘It was a pity I didn’t get that place,’ thought he ‘That was just the very thing for me.’

Making up his mind to get the situation if possible, he hid himself behind one of the mounds, and turned his jacket outside in, so that the man would not know him again so easily. Then he ran along behind the mounds, and met the man at the other end of them.

‘Where are you going, my little boy?’ said the man, who did not notice that it was the same one he had met before.

‘I am going about seeking for service?’ said the boy.

‘Will you serve me?’ asked the man.

‘Oh, yes; just as readily you as anyone else,’ said the boy.

‘But can you read?’ said the man.

‘No, I don’t know a single letter,’ said the boy.

The man then took him into his service, and all the work he had to do was to dust his master’s books. But as he did this he had plenty of time to read them as well, and he read away at them until at last he was just as wise as his master — who was a great wizard — and could perform all kinds of magic. Among other feats, he could change himself into the shape of any animal, or any other thing that he pleased.

When he had learned all this he did not think it worth while staying there any longer, so he ran away home to his parents again. Soon after this there was a market in the next village, and the boy told his mother that he had learned how to change himself into the shape of any animal he chose.

‘Now,’ said he, ‘I shall change myself to a horse, and father can take me to market and sell me. I shall come home again all right.’

His mother was frightened at the idea, but the boy told her that she need not be alarmed; all would be well. So he changed himself to a horse, such a fine horse, too, that his father got a high price for it at the market; but after the bargain was made, and the money paid, the boy changed again to his own shape, when no one was looking, and went home.

The story spread all over the country about the fine horse that had been sold and then had disappeared, and at last the news came to the ears of the wizard.

‘Aha!’ said he, ‘this is that boy of mine, who befooled me and ran away; but I shall have him yet.’

The next time that there was a market the boy again changed himself to a horse, and was taken thither by his father. The horse soon found a purchaser, and while the two were inside drinking the luck-penny the wizard came along and saw the horse. He knew at once that it was not an ordinary one, so he also went inside, and offered the purchaser far more than he had paid for it, so the latter sold it to him.

The first thing the wizard now did was to lead the horse away to a smith to get a red-hot nail driven into its mouth, because after that it could not change its shape again. When the horse saw this it changed itself to a dove, and flew up into the air. The wizard at once changed himself into a hawk, and flew up after it. The dove now turned into a gold ring, and fell into a girl’s lap. The hawk now turned into a man, and offered the girl a great sum of money for the gold ring, but she would not part with it, seeing that it had fallen down to her, as it were, from Heaven. However, the wizard kept on offering her more and more for it, until at last the gold ring grew frightened, and changed itself into a grain of barley, which fell on the ground. The man then turned into a hen, and began to search for the grain of barley, but this again changed itself to a pole-cat, and took off the hen’s head with a single snap.

The wizard was now dead, the pole-cat put on human shape, and the youth afterwards married the girl, and from that time forward let all his magic arts alone.

The Golden Lion

Sicilianische Mahrchen. L. Gonzenbach.

There was once a rich merchant who had three sons, and when they were grown up the eldest said to him, ‘Father, I wish to travel and see the world. I pray you let me.’

So the father ordered a beautiful ship to be fitted up, and the young man sailed away in it. After some weeks the vessel cast anchor before a large town, and the merchant’s son went on shore.

The first thing he saw was a large notice written on a board saying that if any man could find the king’s daughter within eight days he should have her to wife, but that if he tried and failed his head must be the forfeit.

‘Well,’ thought the youth as he read this proclamation, ‘that ought not to be a very difficult matter;’ and he asked an audience of the king, and told him that he wished to seek for the princess.

‘Certainly,’ replied the king. ‘You have the whole palace to search in; but remember, if you fail it will cost you your head.’

So saying, he commanded the doors to be thrown open, and food and drink to be set before the young man, who, after he had eaten, began to look for the princess. But though he visited every corner and chest and cupboard, she was not in any of them, and after eight days he gave it up and his head was cut off.

All this time his father and brothers had had no news of him, and were very anxious. At last the second son could bear it no longer, and said, ‘Dear father, give me, I pray you, a large ship and some money, and let me go and seek for my brother.’

So another ship was fitted out, and the young man sailed away, and was blown by the wind into the same harbour where his brother had landed.

Now when he saw the first ship lying at anchor his heart beat high, and he said to himself, ‘My brother cannot surely be far off,’ and he ordered a boat and was put on shore.

As he jumped on to the pier his eye caught the notice about the princess, and he thought, ‘He has undertaken to find her, and has certainly lost his head. I must try myself, and seek him as well as her. It cannot be such a very difficult matter.’ But he fared no better than his brother, and in eight days his head was cut off.

So now there was only the youngest at home, and when the other two never came he also begged for a ship that he might go in search of his lost brothers.

And when the vessel started a high wind arose, and blew him straight to the harbour where the notice was set.

‘Oho!’ said he, as he read, ‘whoever can find the king’s daughter shall have her to wife. It is quite clear now what has befallen my brothers. But in spite of that I think I must try my luck,’ and he took the road to the castle.

On the way he met an old woman, who stopped and begged.

‘Leave me in peace, old woman,’ replied he.

‘Oh, do not send me away empty,’ she said. ‘You are such a handsome young man you will surely not refuse an old woman a few pence.’

‘I tell you, old woman, leave me alone.’

‘You are in some trouble?’ she asked. ‘Tell me what it is, and perhaps I can help you.’

Then he told her how he had set his heart on finding the king’s daughter.

‘I can easily manage that for you as long as you have enough money.’

‘Oh, as to that, I have plenty,’ answered he.

‘Well, you must take it to a goldsmith and get him to make it into a golden lion, with eyes of crystal; and inside it must have something that will enable it to play tunes. When it is ready bring it to me.’

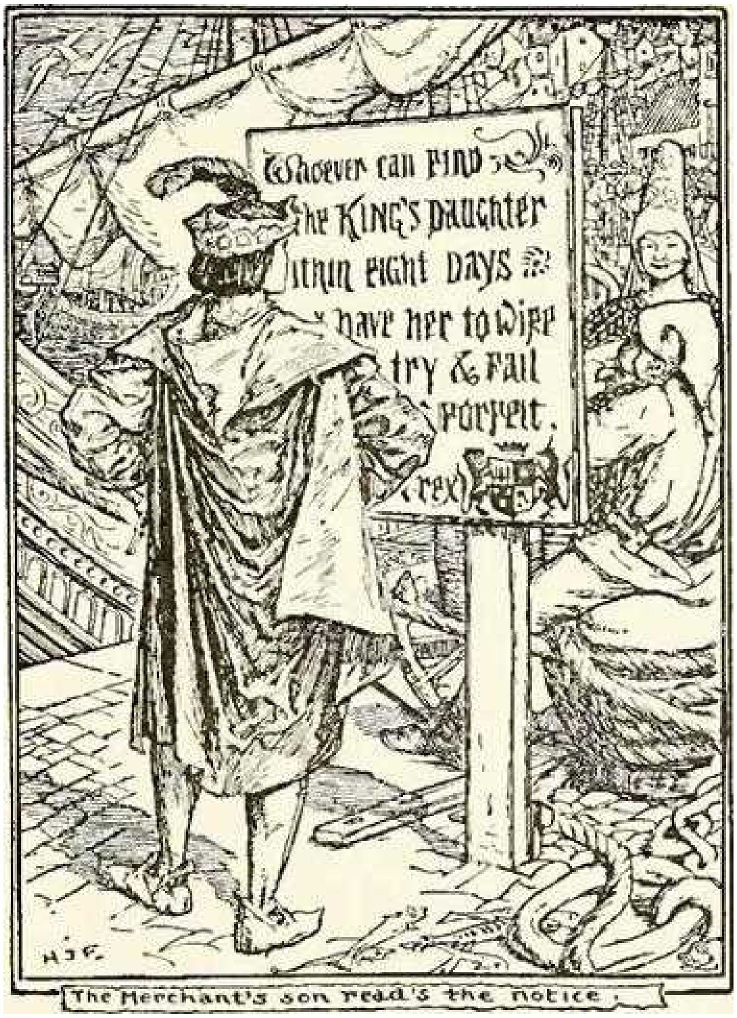

The Merchant's son read's the notice.

The young man did as he was bid, and when the lion was made the old woman hid the youth in it, and brought it to the king, who was so delighted with it that he wanted to buy it. But she replied, ‘It does not belong to me, and my master will not part from it at any price.’

‘At any rate, leave it with me for a few days,’ said he; ‘I should like to show it to my daughter.’

‘Yes, I can do that,’ answered the old woman; ‘but to-morrow I must have it back again. And she went away.

The king watched her till she was quite out of sight, so as to make sure that she was not spying upon him; then he took the golden lion into his room and lifted some loose boards from the floor. Below the floor there was a staircase, which he went down till he reached a door at the foot. This he unlocked, and found himself in a narrow passage closed by another door, which he also opened. The young man, hidden in the golden lion, kept count of everything, and marked that there were in all seven doors. After they had all been unlocked the king entered a lovely hall, where the princess was amusing herself with eleven friends. All twelve girls wore the same clothes, and were as like each other as two peas.

‘What bad luck!’ thought the youth. ‘Even supposing that I managed to find my way here again, I don’t see how I could ever tell which was the princess.’

And he stared hard at the princess as she clapped her hands with joy and ran up to them, crying, ‘ Oh, do let us keep that delicious beast for to-night; it will make such a nice plaything.’

The king did not stay long, and when he left he handed over the lion to the maidens, who amused themselves with it for some time, till they got sleepy, and thought it was time to go to bed. But the princess took the lion into her own room and laid it on the floor.

She was just beginning to doze when she heard a voice quite close to her, which made her jump. ‘O lovely princess, if you only knew what I have gone through to find you!’ The princess jumped out of bed screaming, ‘The lion! the lion!’ but her friends thought it was a nightmare, and did not trouble themselves to get up.

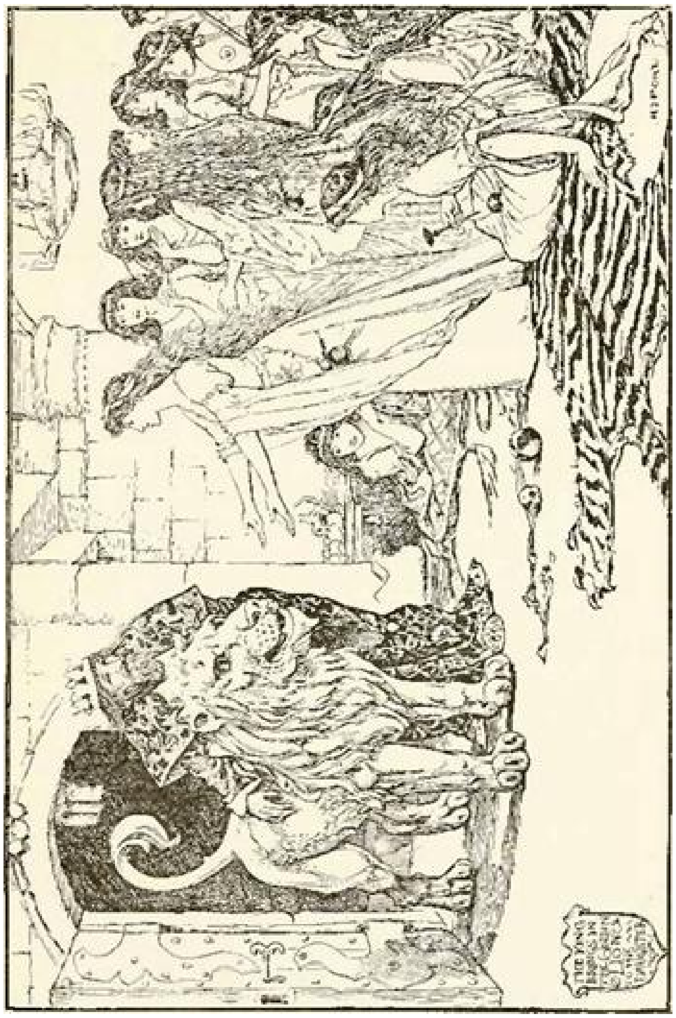

‘O lovely úprincess!’ continued the voice, ‘fear nothing! I am the son of a rich merchant, and desire above all things to have you for my wife. And in order to get to you I have hidden myself in this golden lion.’

‘What use is that?’ she asked. ‘For if you cannot pick me out from among my companions you will still lose your head.’

‘I look to you to help me,’ he said. ‘I have done so much for you that you might do this one thing for me.’

‘Then listen to me. On the eighth day I will tie a white sash round my waist, and by that you will know me.’

The next morning the king came very early to fetch the lion, as the old woman was already at the palace asking for it. When they were safe from view she let the young man out, and he returned to the king and told him that he wished to find the princess.

‘Very good,’ said the king, who by this time was almost tired of repeating the same words; ‘but if you fail your head will be the forfeit.’

So the youth remained quietly in the castle, eating and looking at all the beautiful things around him, and every now and then pretending to be searching busily in all the closets and corners. On the eighth day he entered the room where the king was sitting. ‘Take up the floor in this place,’ he said. The king gave a cry, but stopped himself, and asked, ‘What do you want the floor up for? There is nothing there.’

But as all his courtiers were watching him he did not like to make any more objections, and ordered the floor to be taken up, as the young man desired. The youth then want straight down the staircase till he reached the door; then he turned and demanded that the key should be brought. So the king was forced to unlock the door, and the next and the next and the next, till all seven were open, and they entered into the hall where the twelve maidens were standing all in a row, so like that none might tell them apart. But as he looked one of them silently drew a white sash from her pocket and slipped it round her waist, and the young man sprang to her and said, ‘This is the princess, and I claim her for my wife.’ And the king owned himself beaten, and commanded that the wedding feast should be held.

After eight days the bridal pair said farewell to the king, and set sail for the youth’s own country, taking with them a whole shipload of treasures as the princess’s dowry. But they did not forget the old woman who had brought about all their happiness, and they gave her enough money to make her comfortable to the end of her days.

The Sprig of Rosemary

Cuentos Populars Catalans, per lo Dr. D. Francisco de S. Maspons y Labros (Barcelona: Libreria de Don Alvar Verdaguer 1885).

Once upon a time there lived a man with one daughter and he made her work hard all the day. One morning when she had finished everything he had set her to do, he told her to go out into the woods and get some dry leaves and sticks to kindle a fire.

The girl went out, and soon collected a large bundle, and then she plucked at a sprig of sweet-smelling rosemary for herself. But the harder she pulled the firmer seemed the plant, and at last, determined not to be beaten, she gave one great tug, and the rosemary remained in her hands.

Then she heard a voice close to her saying, ‘Well?’ and turning she saw before her a handsome young man, who asked why she had come to steal his firewood.

The girl, who felt much confused, only managed to stammer out as an excuse that her father had sent her.

‘Very well,’ replied the young man; ‘then come with me.’

So he took her through the opening made by the torn-up root, and they travelled till they reached a beautiful palace, splendidly furnished, but only lighted from the top. And when they had entered he told her that he was a great lord, and that never had he seen a maiden so beautiful as she, and that if she would give him her heart they would be married and live happy for ever after.

And the maiden said ‘yes, she would,’ and so they were married.

The next day the old dame who looked after the house handed her all the keys, but pointed her out one that she would do well never to use, for if she did the whole palace would fall to the ground, and the grass would grow over it, and the damsel herself would be remembered no more.

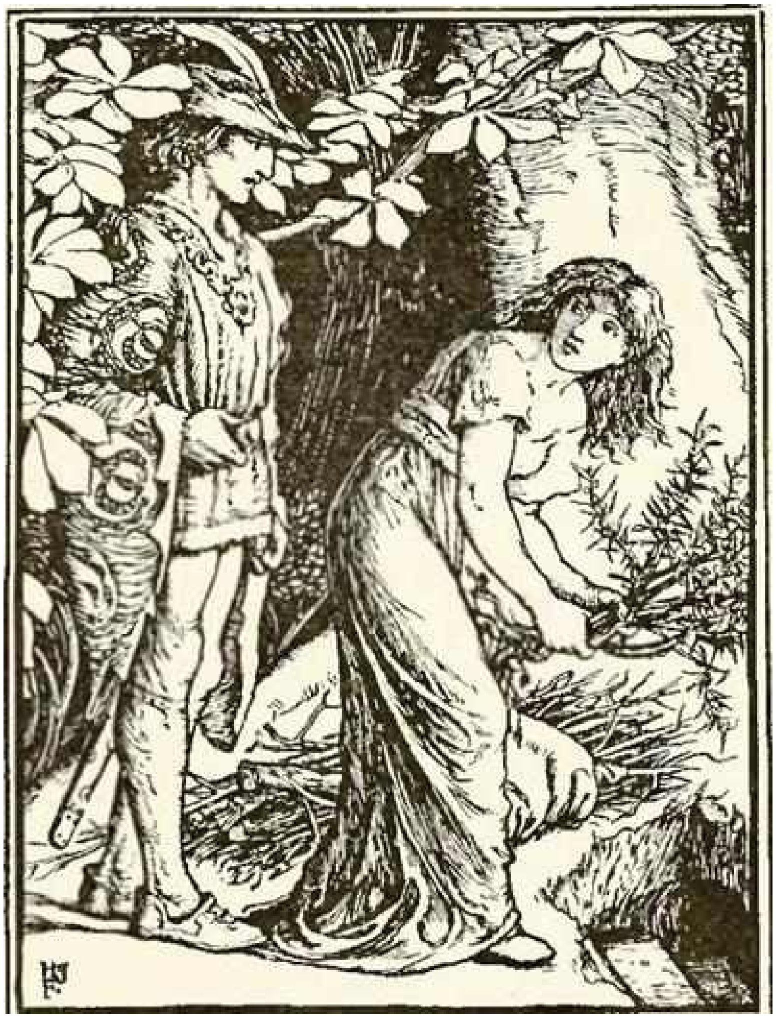

The bride promised to be careful, but in a little while, when there was nothing left for her to do, she began to wonder what could be in the chest, which was opened by the key. As everybody knows, if we once begin to think we soon begin to do, and it was not very long before the key was no longer in the maiden’s hand but in the lock of the chest. But the lock was stiff and resisted all her efforts, and in the end she had to break it. And what was inside after all? Why, nothing but a serpent’s skin, which her husband, who was, unknown to her, a magician, put on when he was at work; and at the sight of it the girl was turning away in disgust, when the earth shook violently under her feet, the palace vanished as if it had never been, and the bride found herself in the middle of a field, not knowing where she was or whither to go. She burst into a flood of bitter tears, partly at her own folly, but more for the loss of her husband, whom she dearly loved. Then, breaking a sprig of rosemary off a bush hard by, she resolved, cost what it might, to seek him through the world till she found him. So she walked and she walked and she walked, till she arrived at a house built of straw. And she knocked at the door, and asked if they wanted a servant. The mistress said she did, and if the girl was willing she might stay. But day by day the poor maiden grew more and more sad, till at last her mistress begged her to say what was the matter. Then she told her story — how she was going through the world seeking after her husband.

And her mistress answered her, ‘Where he is, none can tell better than the Sun, the Moon, and the Wind, for they go everywhere!’

On hearing these words the damsel set forth once more, and walked till she reached the Golden Castle, where lived the Sun. And she knocked boldly at the door, saying, ‘All hail, O Sun! I have come to ask if, of your charity, you will help me in my need. By my own fault have I fallen into these straits, and I am weary, for I seek my husband through the wide world.’

‘Indeed!’ spoke the Sun. ‘Do you, rich as you are, need help? But though you live in a palace without windows, the Sun enters everywhere, and he knows you.’

Then the bride told him the whole story. and did not hide her own ill-doing. And the Sun listened, and was sorry for her; and though he could not tell her where to go, he gave her a nut, and bid her open it in a time of great distress. The damsel thanked him with all her heart, and departed, and walked and walked and walked, till she came to another castle, and knocked at the door which was opened by an old woman.

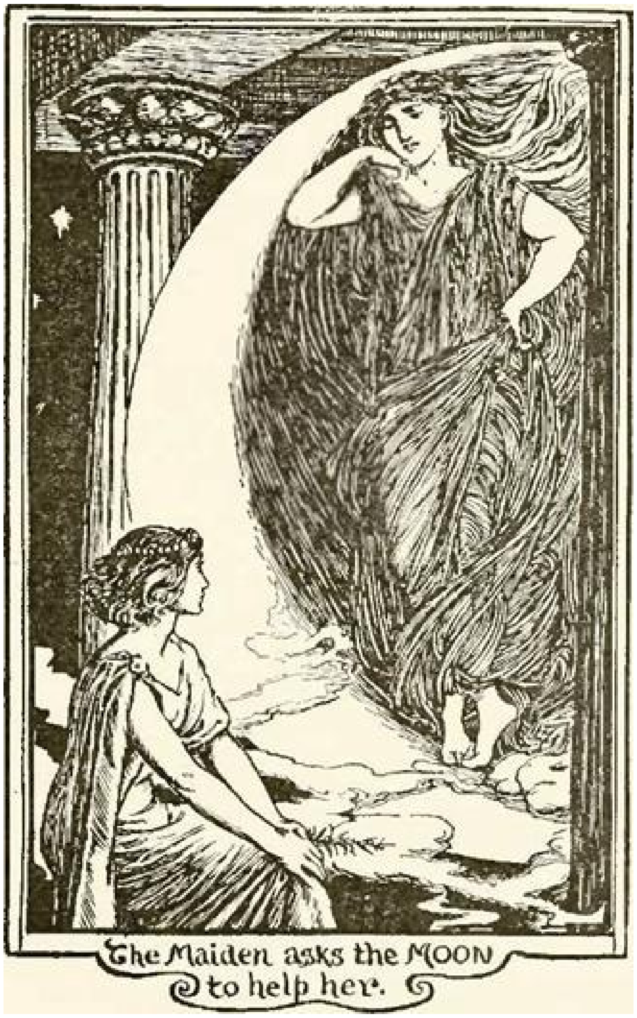

The Maiden asks the MOON to help her.

‘All hail!’ said the girl. ‘I have come, of your charity, to ask your help!’

‘It is my mistress, the Moon, you seek. I will tell her of your prayer.’

So the Moon came out, and when she saw the maiden she knew her again, for she had watched her sleeping both in the cottage and in the palace. And she spake to her and said:

‘Do you, rich as you are, need help?’

Then the girl told her the whole story, and the Moon listened, and was sorry for her; and though she could not tell her where to find her husband, she gave her an almond, and told her to crack it when she was in great need. So the damsel thanked her, and departed, and walked and walked and walked till she came to another castle. And she knocked at the door, and said:

‘All hail! I have come to ask if, of your charity, you will help me in my need.’

‘It is my lord, the Wind, that you want,’ answered the old woman who opened it. ‘I will tell him of your prayer.’

And the Wind looked on her and knew her again, for he had seen her in the cottage and in the palace, and he spake to her and said:

‘Do you, rich as you are, want help?’

And she told him the whole story. And the Wind listened, and was sorry for her, and he gave her a walnut that she was to eat in time of need. But the girl did not go as the Wind expected. She was tired and sad, and knew not where to turn, so she began to weep bitterly. The Wind wept too for company, and said:

‘Don’t be frightened; I will go and see if I can find out something.’

And the Wind departed with a great noise and fuss, and in the twinkling of an eye he was back again, beaming with delight.

‘From what one person and another have let fall,’ he exclaimed, ‘I have contrived to learn that he is in the palace of the king, who keeps him hidden lest anyone should see him; and that to-morrow he is to marry the princess, who, ugly creature that she is, has not been able to find any man to wed her.’

Who can tell the despair which seized the poor maiden when she heard this news! As soon as she could speak she implored the Wind to do all he could to get the wedding put off for two or three days, for it would take her all that time to reach the palace of the king.

The Wind gladly promised to do what he could, and as he travelled much faster than the maiden he soon arrived at the palace, where he found five tailors working night and day at the wedding clothes of the princess.

Down came the Wind right in the middle of their lace and satin and trimmings of pearl! Away they all went whiz! through the open windows, right up into the tops of the trees, across the river, among the dancing ears of corn! After them ran the tailors, catching, jumping, climbing, but all to no purpose! The lace was torn, the satin stained, the pearls knocked off! There was nothing for it but to go to the shops to buy fresh, and to begin all over again! It was plainly quite impossible that the wedding clothes could be ready next day.

However, the king was much too anxious to see his daughter married to listen to any excuses, and he declared that a dress must be put together somehow for the bride to wear. But when he went to look at the princess, she was such a figure that he agreed that it would be unfitting for her position to be seen in such a gown, and he ordered the ceremony and the banquet to be postponed for a few hours, so that the tailors might take the dress to pieces and make it fit.

But by this time the maiden had arrived footsore and weary at the castle, and as soon as she reached the door she cracked her nut and drew out of it the most beautiful mantle in the world. Then she rang the bell, and asked:

‘Is not the princess to be married to-day?’

‘Yes, she is.’

‘Ask her if she would like to buy this mantle.’

And when the princess saw the mantle she was delighted, for her wedding mantle had been spoilt with all the other things, and it was too late to make another. So she told the maiden to ask what price she would, and it should be given her.

The maiden fixed a large sum, many pieces of gold, but the princess had set her heart on the mantle, and gave it readily.

Now the maiden hid her gold in the pocket of her dress, and turned away from the castle. The moment she was out of sight she broke her almond, and drew from it the most magnificent petticoats that ever were seen. Then she went back to the castle, and asked if the princess wished to buy any petticoats. No sooner did the princess cast her eyes on the petticoats than she declared they were even more beautiful than the mantle, and that she would give the maiden whatever price she wanted for them. And the maiden named many pieces of gold, which the princess paid her gladly, so pleased was she with her new possessions.

Then the girl went down the steps where none could watch her and cracked her walnut, and out came the most splendid court dress that any dressmaker had ever invented; and, carrying it carefully in her arms, she knocked at the door, and asked if the princess wished to buy a court dress.

When the message was delivered the princess sprang to her feet with delight, for she had been thinking that after all it was not much use to have a lovely mantle and elegant petticoats if she had no dress, and she knew the tailors would never be ready in time. So she sent at once to say she would buy the dress, and what sum did the maiden want for it.

This time the maiden answered that the price of the dress was the permission to see the bridegroom.

The princess was not at all pleased when she heard the maiden’s reply, but, as she could not do without the dress, she was forced to give in, and contented herself with thinking that after all it did not matter much.

So the maiden was led to the rooms which had been given to her husband. And when she came near she touched him with the sprig of rosemary that she carried; and his memory came back, and he knew her, and kissed her, and declared that she was his true wife, and that he loved her and no other.

Then they went back to the maiden’s home, and grew to be very old, and lived happy all the days of their life.

The White Dove

From the Danish.

A king had two sons. They were a pair of reckless fellows, who always had something foolish to do. One day they rowed out alone on the sea in a little boat. It was beautiful weather when they set out, but as soon as they had got some distance from the shore there arose a terrific storm. The oars went overboard at once, and the little boat was tossed about on the rolling billows like a nut-shell. The princes had to hold fast by the seats to keep from being thrown out of the boat.

In the midst of all this they met a wonderful vessel — it was a dough-trough, in which there sat an old woman. She called to them, and said that they could still get to shore alive if they would promise her the son that was next to come to their mother the queen.

‘We can’t do that,’ shouted the princes; ‘he doesn’t belong to us so we can’t give him away.’

‘Then you can rot at the bottom of the sea, both of you,’ said the old woman; ‘and perhaps it may be the case that your mother would rather keep the two sons she has than the one she hasn’t got yet.’

Then she rowed away in her dough-trough, while the storm howled still louder than before, and the water dashed over their boat until it was almost sinking. Then the princes thought that there was something in what the old woman had said about their mother, and being, of course, eager to save their lives, they shouted to her, and promised that she should have their brother if she would deliver them from this danger. As soon as they had done so the storm ceased and the waves fell. The boat drove ashore below their father’s castle, and both princes were received with open arms by their father and mother, who had suffered great anxiety for them.

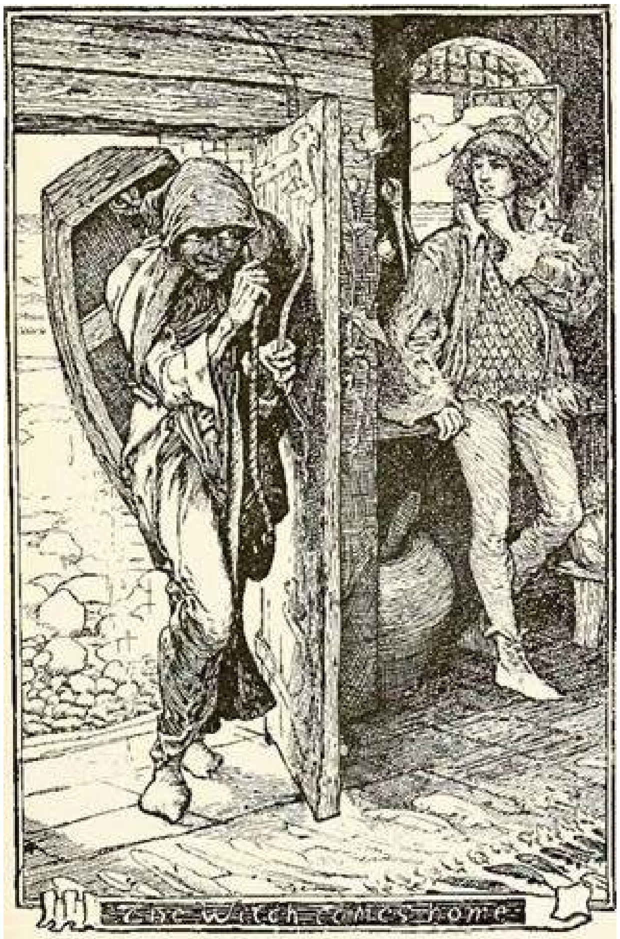

The two brothers said nothing about what they had promised, neither at that time nor later on when the queen’s third son came, a beautiful boy, whom she loved more than anything else in the world. He was brought up and educated in his father’s house until he was full grown, and still his brothers had never seen or heard anything about the witch to whom they had promised him before he was born.

It happened one evening that there arose a raging storm, with mist and darkness. It howled and roared around the king’s palace, and in the midst of it there came a loud knock on the door of the hall where the youngest prince was. He went to the door and found there an old woman with a dough-trough on her back, who said to him that he must go with her at once; his brothers had promised him to her if she would save their lives.

‘Yes,’ said he; ‘if you saved my brothers’ lives, and they promised me to you, then I will go with you.’

They therefore went down to the beach together, where he had to take his seat in the trough, along with the witch, who sailed away with him, over the sea, home to her dwelling.

The prince was now in the witch's power, and in her service. The first thing she set him to was to pick feathers. 'The heap of feathers that you see here,' said she, 'you must get finished before I come home in the evening, otherwise you shall be set to harder work.' He started to the feathers, and picked and picked until there was only a single feather left that had not passed through his hands. But then there came a whirlwind and sent all the feathers flying, and swept them along the floor into a heap, where they lay as if they were trampled together. He had now to begin all his work over again, but by this time it only wanted an hour of evening, when the witch was to be expected home, and he easily saw that it was impossible for him to be finished by that time.

Then he heard something tapping at the window pane, and a thin voice said, 'Let me in, and I will help you.' It was a white dove, which sat outside the window, and was pecking at it with its beak. He opened the window, and the dove came in and set to work at once, and picked all the feathers out of the heap with its beak. Before the hour was past the feathers were all nicely arranged: the dove flew out at the window, and at, the same moment the witch came in at the door.

'Well, well,' said she, 'it was more than I would have expected of you to get all the feathers put in order so nicely. However, such a prince might be expected to have neat fingers.'

Next morning the witch said to the prince, 'To-day you shall have some easy work to do. Outside the door I have some firewood lying; you must split that for me into little bits that I can kindle the fire with. That will soon be done, but you must be finished before I come home.'

The prince got a little axe and set to work at once. He split and clove away, and thought that he was getting on fast; but the day wore on until it was long past midday, and he was still very far from having finished. He thought, in fact, that the pile of wood rather grew bigger than smaller, in spite of what he took off it; so he let his hands fall by his side, and dried the sweat from his forehead, and was ill at ease, for he knew that it would be bad for him if he was not finished with the work before the witch came home.

Then the white dove came flying and settled down on the pile of wood, and cooed and said, 'Shall I help you?'

'Yes,' said the prince, 'many thanks for your help yesterday, and for what you offer to-day.' Thereupon the little dove seized one piece of wood after another and split it with its beak. The prince could not take away the wood as quickly as the dove could split it, and in a short time it was all cleft into little sticks.

The dove then flew up on his shoulder and sat there and the prince thanked it, and stroked and caressed its white feathers, and kissed its little red beak. With that it was a dove no longer, but a beautiful young maiden, who stood by his side. She told him then that she was a princess whom the witch had stolen, and had changed to this shape, but with his kiss she had got her human form again; and if he would be faithful to her, and take her to wife, she could free them both from the witch's power.

The prince was quite captivated by the beautiful princess, and was quite willing to do anything whatsoever to get her for himself.

She then said to him, 'When the witch comes home you must ask her to grant you a wish, when you have accomplished so well all that she has demanded of you. When she agrees to this you must ask her straight out for the princess that she has flying about as a white dove. But just now you must take a red silk thread and tie it round my little finger, so that you may be able to recognise me again, into whatever shape she turns me.'

The prince made haste to get the silk thread tied round her little white finger; at the same moment the princess became a dove again and flew away, and immediately after that the old witch came home with her dough-trough on he back.

'Well,' said she, 'I must say that you are clever at your work, and it is something, too, that such princely hands are not accustomed to.'

'Since you are so well pleased with my work, said the prince, 'you will, no doubt, be willing to give me a little pleasure too, and give me something that I have taken a fancy to.'

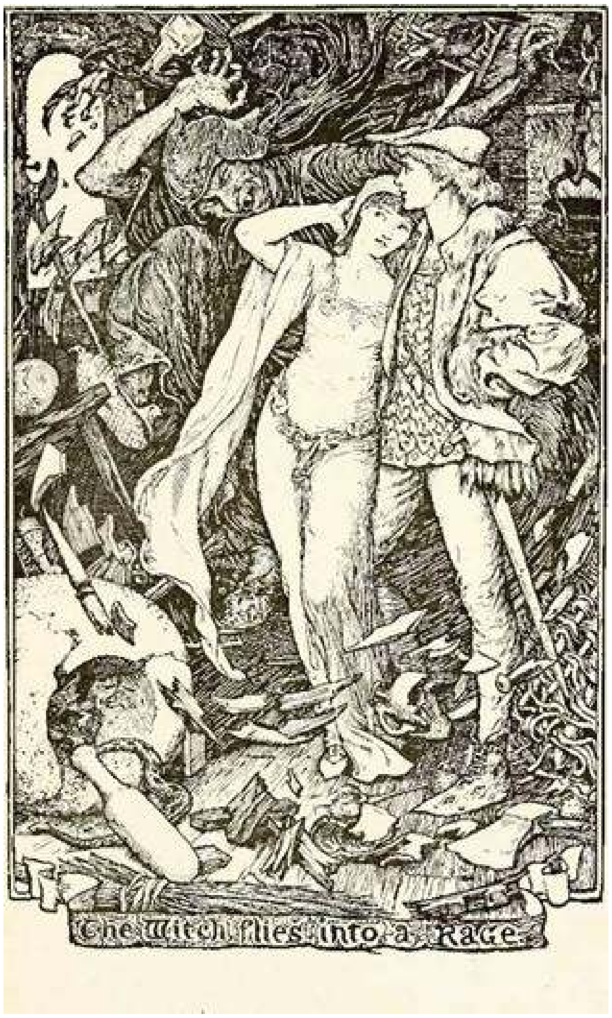

The Witch flies into a Rage.

‘Oh yes, indeed,’ said the old woman; ‘what is it that you want?’

‘I want the princess here who is in the shape of a white dove,’ said the prince.

‘What nonsense!’ said the witch. ‘Why should you imagine that there are princesses here flying about in the shape of white doves? But if you will have a princess, you can get one such as we have them.’ She then came to him, dragging a shaggy little grey ass with long ears. ‘Will you have this?’ said she; ‘you can’t get any other princess!’

The prince used his eyes and saw the red silk thread on one of the ass’s hoofs, so he said, ‘Yes, just let me have it.’

‘What will you do with it?’ asked the witch.

‘I will ride on it,’ said the prince; but with that the witch dragged it away again, and came back with an old, wrinkled, toothless hag, whose hands trembled with age. ‘You can have no other princess,’ said she. ‘Will you have her?’

‘Yes, I will,’ said the prince, for he saw the red silk thread on the old woman’s finger.

At this the witch became so furious that she danced about and knocked everything to pieces that she could lay her hands upon, so that the splinters flew about the ears of the prince and princess, who now stood there in her own beautiful shape.

Then their marriage had to be celebrated, for the witch had to stick to what she had promised, and he must get the princess whatever might happen afterwards.

The princess now said to him, ‘At the marriage feast you may eat what you please, but you must not drink anything whatever, for if you do that you will forget me.’

This, however, the prince forgot on the wedding day, and stretched out his hand and took a cup of wine; but the princess was keeping watch over him, and gave him a push with her elbow, so that the wine flew over the table-cloth.

Then the witch got up and laid about her among the plates and dishes, so that the pieces flew about their ears, just as she had done when she was cheated the first time.

They were then taken to the bridal chamber, and the door was shut. Then the princess said, ‘Now the witch has kept her promise, but she will do no more if she can help it, so we must fly immediately. I shall lay two pieces of wood in the bed to answer for us when the witch speaks to us. You can take the flower-pot and the glass of water that stands in the window, and we must slip out by that and get away.’

No sooner said than done. They hurried off out into the dark night, the princess leading, because she knew the way, having spied it out while she flew about as a dove.

At midnight the witch came to the door of the room and called in to them, and the two pieces of wood answered her, so that she believed they were there, and went away again. Before daybreak she was at the door again and called to them, and again the pieces of wood answered for them. She thus thought that she had them, and when the sun rose the bridal night was past: she had then kept her promise, and could vent her anger and revenge on both of them. With the first sunbeam she broke into the room, but there she found no prince and no princess — nothing but the two pieces of firewood, which lay in the bed, and stared, and spoke not a word. These she threw on the floor, so that they were splintered into a thousand pieces, and off she hastened after the fugitives.

With the first sunbeam the princess said to the prince, ‘Look round; do you see anything behind us?’

‘Yes, I see a dark cloud, far away,’ said he.

‘Then throw the flower-pot over your head,’ said she. When this was done there was a large thick forest behind them.

When the witch came to the forest she could not get through it until she went home and brought her axe to cut a path.

A little after this the princess said again to the prince, ‘Look round; do you see anything behind us?’

‘Yes,’ said the prince, ‘the big black cloud is there again.’

‘Then throw the glass of water over your head,’ said she.

When he had done this there was a great lake behind them, and this the witch could not cross until she ran home again and brought her dough-trough.

Meanwhile the fugitives had reached the castle which was the prince’s home. They climbed over the garden wall, ran across the garden, and crept in at an open window. By this time the witch was just at their heels, but the princess stood in the window and blew upon the witch; hundreds of white doves flew out of her mouth, fluttered and flapped around the witch’s head until she grew so angry that she turned into flint, and there she stands to this day, in the shape of a large flint stone, outside the window.

Within the castle there was great rejoicing over the prince and his bride. His two elder brothers came and knelt before him and confessed what they had done, and said that he alone should inherit the kingdom, and they would always be his faithful subjects.

The Troll’s Daughter

From the Danish.

There was once a lad who went to look for a place. As he went along he met a man, who asked him where he was going. He told him his errand, and the stranger said, ‘Then you can serve me; I am just in want of a lad like you, and I will give you good wages — a bushel of money the first year, two the second year, and three the third year, for you must serve me three years, and obey me in everything, however strange it seems to you. You need not be afraid of taking service with me, for there is no danger in it if you only know how to obey.’

The bargain was made, and the lad went home with the man to whom he had engaged himself. It was a strange place indeed, for he lived in a bank in the middle of the wild forest, and the lad saw there no other person than his master. The latter was a great troll, and had marvellous power over both men and beasts.

Next day the lad had to begin his service. The first thing that the troll set him to was to feed all the wild animals from the forest. These the troll had tied up, and there were both wolves and bears, deer and hares, which the troll had gathered in the stalls and folds in his stable down beneath the ground, and that stable was a mile long. The boy, however, accomplished all this work on that day, and the troll praised him and said that it was very well done.

Next morning the troll said to him, ‘To-day the animals are not to be fed; they don’t get the like of that every day. You shall have leave to play about for a little, until they are to be fed again.’

Then the troll said some words to him which he did not understand, and with that the lad turned into a hare, and ran out into the wood. He got plenty to run for, too, for all the hunters aimed at him, and tried to shoot him, and the dogs barked and ran after him wherever they got wind of him. He was the only animal that was left in the wood now, for the troll had tied up all the others, and every hunter in the whole country was eager to knock him over. But in this they met with no success; there was no dog that could overtake him, and no marksman that could hit him. They shot and shot at him, and he ran and ran. It was an unquiet life, but in the long run he got used to it, when he saw that there was no danger in it, and it even amused him to befool all the hunters and dogs that were so eager after him.

Thus a whole year passed, and when it was over the troll called him home, for he was now in his power like all the other animals. The troll then said some words to him which he did not understand, and the hare immediately became a human being again. ‘Well, how do you like to serve me?’ said the troll, ‘and how do you like being a hare?’

The lad replied that he liked it very well; he had never been able to go over the ground so quickly before. The troll then showed him the bushel of money that he had already earned, and the lad was well pleased to serve him for another year.

The first day of the second year the boy had the same work to do as on the previous one — namely, to feed all the wild animals in the troll’s stable. When he had done this the troll again said some words to him, and with that he became a raven, and flew high up into the air. This was delightful, the lad thought; he could go even faster now than when he was a hare, and the dogs could not come after him here. This was a great delight to him, but he soon found out that he was not to be left quite at peace, for all the marksmen and hunters who saw him aimed at him and fired away, for they had no other birds to shoot at than himself, as the troll had tied up all the others.

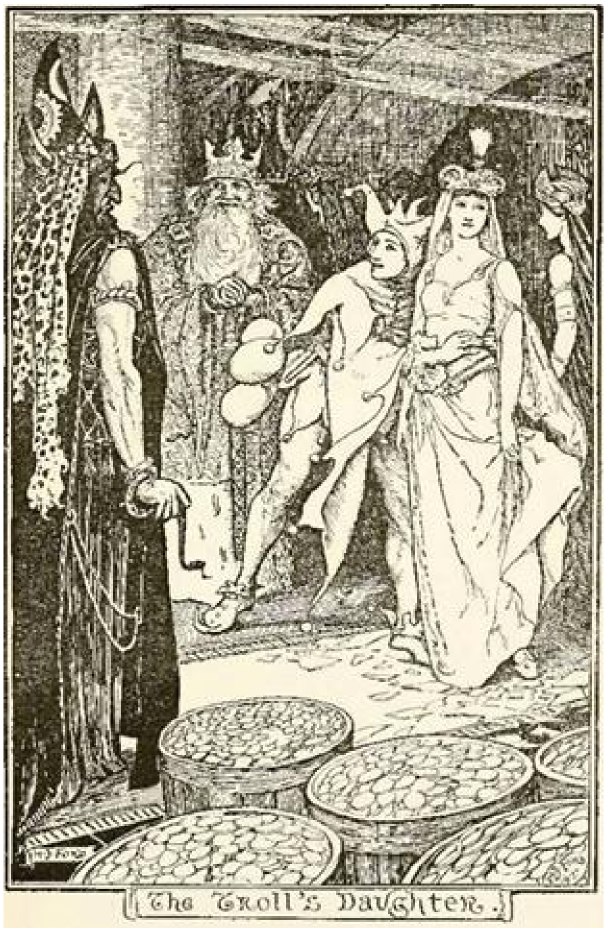

The Troll's Daughter.

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This, however, he also got used to, when he saw that they could never hit him, and in this way he flew about all that year, until the troll called him home again, said some strange words to him, and gave him his human shape again. ‘Well, how did you like being a raven?’ said the troll.

‘I liked it very well,’ said the lad, ‘for never in all my days have I been able to rise so high.’ The troll then showed him the two bushels of money which he had earned that year, and the lad was well content to remain in his service for another year.

Next day he got his old task of feeding all the wild beasts. When this was done the troll again said some words to him, and at these he turned into a fish, and sprang into the river. He swam up and he swam down, and thought it was pleasant to let himself drive with the stream. In this way he came right out into the sea, and swam further and further out. At last he came to a glass palace, which stood at the bottom of the sea. He could see into all the rooms and halls, where everything was very grand; all the furniture was of white ivory, inlaid with gold and pearl. There were soft rugs and cushions of all the colours of the rainbow, and beautiful carpets that looked like the finest moss, and flowers and trees with curiously crooked branches, both green and yellow, white and red, and there were also little fountains which sprang up from the most beautiful snail-shells, and fell into bright mussel-shells, and at the same time made a most delightful music, which filled the whole palace.

The most beautiful thing of all, however, was a young girl who went about there, all alone. She went about from one room to another, but did not seem to be happy with all the grandeur she had about her. She walked in solitude and melancholy, and never even thought of looking at her own image in the polished glass walls that were on every side of her, although she was the prettiest creature anyone could wish to see. The lad thought so too while he swam round the palace and peeped in from every side.

‘Here, indeed, it would be better to be a man than such a poor dumb fish as I am now,’ said he to himself; ‘if I could only remember the words that the troll says when he changes my shape, then perhaps I could help myself to become a man again.’ He swam and he pondered and he thought over this until he remembered the sound of what the troll said, and then he tried to say it himself. In a moment he stood in human form at the bottom of the sea.

He made haste then to enter the glass palace, and went up to the young girl and spoke to her.

At first he nearly frightened the life out of her, but he talked to her so kindly and explained how he had come down there that she soon recovered from her alarm, and was very pleased to have some company to relieve the terrible solitude that she lived in. Time passed so quickly for both of them that the youth (for now he was quite a young man, and no more a lad) forgot altogether how long he had been there.

One day the girl said to him that now it was close on the time when he must become a fish again — the troll would soon call him home, and he would have to go, but before that he must put on the shape of the fish, otherwise he could not pass through the sea alive. Before this, while he was staying down there, she had told him that she was a daughter of the same troll whom the youth served, and he had shut her up there to keep her away from everyone. She had now devised a plan by which they could perhaps succeed in getting to see each other again, and spending the rest of their lives together. But there was much to attend to, and he must give careful heed to all that she told him.

She told him then that all the kings in the country round about were in debt to her father the troll, and the king of a certain kingdom, the name of which she told him, was the first who had to pay, and if he could not do so at the time appointed he would lose his head. ‘And he cannot pay,’ said she; ‘I know that for certain. Now you must, first of all, give up your service with my father; the three years are past, and you are at liberty to go. You will go off with your six bushels of money, to the kingdom that I have told you of, and there enter the service of the king. When the time comes near for his debt becoming due you will be able to notice by his manner that he is ill at ease. You shall then say to him that you know well enough what it is that is weighing upon him — that it is the debt which he owes to the troll and cannot pay, but that you can lend him the money. The amount is six bushels — just what you have. You shall, however, only lend them to him on condition that you may accompany him when he goes to make the payment, and that you then have permission to run before him as a fool. When you arrive at the troll's abode, you must perform all kinds of foolish tricks, and see that you break a whole lot of his windows, and do all other damage that you can. My father will then get very angry, and as the king must answer for what his fool does he will sentence him, even although he has paid his debt, either to answer three questions or to lose his life. The first question my father will ask will be, "Where is my daughter?" Then you shall step forward and answer "She is at the bottom of the sea." He will then ask you whether you can recognise her, and to this you will answer "Yes." Then he will bring forward a whole troop of women, and cause them to pass before you, in order that you may pick out the one that you take for his daughter. You will not be able to recognise me at all, and therefore I will catch hold of you as I go past, so that you can notice it, and you must then make haste to catch me and hold me fast. You have then answered his first question. His next question will be, "Where is my heart?" You shall then step forward again and answer, "It is in a fish." "Do you know that fish?" he will say, and you will again answer "Yes." He will then cause all kinds of fish to come before you, and you shall choose between them. I shall take good care to keep by your side, and when the right fish comes I will give you a little push, and with that you will seize the fish and cut it up. Then all will be over with the troll; he will ask no more questions, and we shall be free to wed.'

When the youth had got all these directions as to what he had to do when he got ashore again the next thing was to remember the words which the troll said when he changed him from a human being to an animal; but these he had forgotten, and the girl did not know them either. He went about all day in despair, and thought and thought, but he could not remember what they sounded like. During the night he could not sleep, until towards morning he fell into a slumber, and all at once it flashed upon him what the troll used to say. He made haste to repeat the words, and at the same moment he became a fish again and slipped out into the sea. Immediately after this he was called upon, and swam through the sea up the river to where the troll stood on the bank and restored him to human shape with the same words as before.

‘Well, how do you like to be a fish?’ asked the troll.

It was what he had liked best of all, said the youth, and that was no lie, as everybody can guess.

The troll then showed him the three bushels of money which he had earned during the past year; they stood beside the other three, and all the six now belonged to him.

‘Perhaps you will serve me for another year yet,’ said the troll, ‘and you will get six bushels of money for it; that makes twelve in all, and that is a pretty penny.’

‘No,’ said the youth; he thought he had done enough, and was anxious to go to some other place to serve, and learn other people’s ways; but he would, perhaps, come back to the troll some other time.

The troll said that he would always be welcome; he had served him faithfully for the three years they had agreed upon, and he could make no objections to his leaving now.

The youth then got his six bushels of money, and with these he betook himself straight to the kingdom which his sweetheart had told him of. He got his money buried in a lonely spot close to the king’s palace, and then went in there and asked to be taken into service. He obtained his request, and was taken on as stableman, to tend the king’s horses.

Some time passed, and he noticed how the king always went about sorrowing and grieving, and was never glad or happy. One day the king came into the stable, where there was no one present except the youth, who said straight out to him that, with his majesty’s permission, he wished to ask him why he was so sorrowful.

‘It’s of no use speaking about that,’ said the king; ‘you cannot help me, at any rate.’

‘You don’t know about that,’ said the youth; ‘ I know well enough what it is that lies so heavy on your mind, and I know also of a plan to get the money paid.’

This was quite another case, and the king had more talk with the stableman, who said that he could easily lend the king the six bushels of money, but would only do it on condition that he should be allowed to accompany the king when he went to pay the debt, and that he should then be dressed like the king’s court fool, and run before him. He would cause some trouble, for which the king would be severely spoken to, but he would answer for it that no harm would befall him.

The king gladly agreed to all that the youth proposed, and it was now high time for them to set out.

When they came to the troll's dwelling it was no longer in the bank, but on the top of this there stood a large castle which the youth had never seen before. The troll could, in fact, make it visible or invisible, just as he pleased, and, knowing as much as he did of the troll's magic arts, the youth was not at all surprised at this.

When they came near to this castle, which looked as if it was of pure glass, the youth ran on in front as the king's fool. Heran sometimes facing forwards, sometimes backwards, stood sometimes on his head, and sometimes on his feet, and he dashed in pieces so many of the troll's big glass windows and doors that it was something awful to see, and overturned everything he could, and made a fearful disturbance.

The troll came rushing out, and was so angry and furious, and abused the king with all his might for bringing such a wretched fool with him, as he was sure that he could not pay the least bit of all the damage that had been done when he could not even pay off his old debt.

The fool, however, spoke up, and said that he could do so quite easily, and the king then came forward with the six bushels of money which the youth had lent him. They were measured and found to be correct. This the troll had not reckoned on, but he could make no objection against it. The old debt was honestly paid, and the king got his bond back again.

But there still remained all the damage that had been done that day, and the king had nothing with which to pay for this. The troll, therefore, sentenced the king, either to answer three questions that he would put to him, or have his head taken off, as was agreed on in the old bond.

There was nothing else to be done than to try to answer the troll's riddles. The fool then stationed himself just by the king's side while the troll came forward with his questions. He first asked, 'Where is my daughter?'

The fool spoke up and said, 'She is at the bottom of the sea.'

'How do you know that?' said the troll.

'The little fish saw it,' said the fool.

'Would you know her?' said the troll.

'Yes, bring her forward,' said the fool.

The troll made a whole crowd of women go past them, one after the other, but all these were nothing but shadows and deceptions. Amongst the very last was the troll's real daughter, who pinched the fool as she went past him to make him aware of her presence. He thereupon caught her round the waist and held her fast, and the troll had to admit that his first riddle was solved.

Then the troll asked again: ‘Where is my heart?’

‘It is in a fish,’ said the fool.

‘Would you know that fish?’ said the troll.

‘Yes, bring it forward,’ said the fool.

Then all the fishes came swimming past them, and meanwhile the troll’s daughter stood just by the youth’s side. When at last the right fish came swimming along she gave him a nudge, and he seized it at once, drove his knife into it, and split it up, took the heart out of it, and cut it through the middle.

At the same moment the troll fell dead and turned into pieces of flint. With that a,ll the bonds that the troll had bound were broken; all the wild beasts and birds which he had caught and hid under the ground were free now, and dispersed themselves in the woods and in the air.

The youth and his sweetheart entered the castle, which was now theirs, and held their wedding; and all the kings roundabout, who had been in the troll’s debt, and were now out of it, came to the wedding, and saluted the youth as their emperor, and he ruled over them all, and kept peace between them, and lived in his castle with his beautiful empress in great joy and magnificence. And if they have not died since they are living there to this day.

Esben and the Witch

From the Danish.

There was once a man who had twelve sons: the eleven eldest were both big and strong, but the twelfth, whose name was Esben, was only a little fellow. The eleven eldest went out with their father to field and forest, but Esben preferred to stay at home with his mother, and so he was never reckoned at all by the rest, but was a sort of outcast among them.

When the eleven had grown up to be men they decided to go out into the world to try their fortune, and they plagued their father to give them what they required for the journey. The father was not much in favour of this, for he was now old and weak, and could not well spare them from helping him with his work, but in the long run he had to give in. Each one of the eleven got a fine white horse and money for the journey, and so they said farewell to their father and their home, and rode away.

As for Esben, no one had ever thought about him; his brothers had not even said farewell to him.

After the eleven were gone Esben went to his father and said, ‘Father, give me also a horse and money; I should also like to see round about me in the world.’

‘You are a little fool,’ said his father. ‘If I could have let you go, and kept your eleven brothers at home, it would have been better for me in my old age.’

‘Well, you will soon be rid of me at any rate,’ said Esben.

As he could get no other horse, he went into the forest, broke off a branch, stripped the bark off it, so that it became still whiter than his brothers’ horses, and, mounted on this. rode off after his eleven brothers.

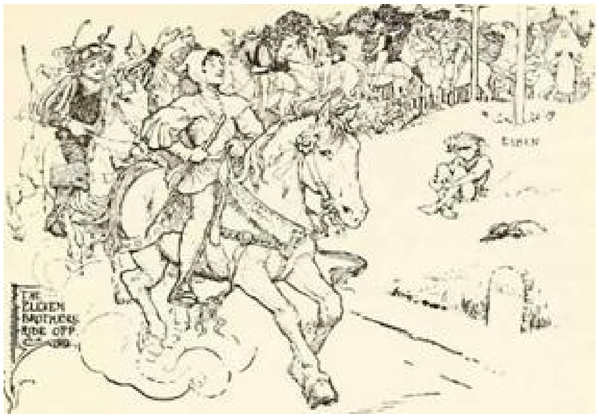
ESBEN
THE ELEVEN BROTHERS RIDE OFF

The brothers rode on the whole day, and towards evening they came to a great forest, which they entered. Far within the wood they came to a little house, and knocked at the door. There came an old, ugly, bearded hag, and opened it, and they asked her whether all of them could get quarters for the night.

‘Yes,’ said the old, bearded hag, ‘you shall all have quarters for the night, and, in addition, each of you shall have one of my daughters.’

The eleven brothers thought that they had come to very hospitable people. They were well attended to, and when they went to bed, each of them got one of the hag’s daughters.

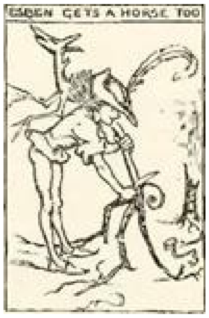
ESBEN GETS A HORSE TOO

Esben had been coming along behind them, and had followed the same way, and had also found the same house in the forest. He slipped into this, without either the witch or her daughters noticing him, and hid himself under one of the beds. A little before midnight he crept quietly out and wakened his brothers. He told these to change night-caps with the witch’s daughters. The brothers saw no reason for this, but, to get rid of Esben’s persistence, they made the exchange, and slept soundly again.

When midnight came Esben heard the old witch come creeping along. She had a broad-bladed axe in her hand, and went over all the eleven beds. It was so dark that she could not see a hand’s breadth before her, but she felt her way, and hacked the heads off all the sleepers who had the men’s night-caps on — and these were her own daughters. As soon as she had gone her way Esben wakened his brothers, and they hastily took their horses and rode off from the witch’s house, glad that they had escaped so well. They quite forgot to thank Esben for what he had done for them.

When they had ridden onwards for some time they reached a king’s palace, and inquired there whether they could be taken into service. Quite easily, they were told, if they would be stablemen, otherwise the king had no use for them. They were quite ready for this, and got the task of looking after all the king’s horses.

Long after them came Esben riding on his stick, and he also wanted to get a place in the palace, but no one had any use for him, and he was told that he could just go back the way he had come. However, he stayed there and occupied himself as best he could. He got his food, but nothing more, and by night he lay just where he could.

At this time there was in the palace a knight who was called Sir Red. He was very well liked by the king, but hated by everyone else, for he was wicked both in will and deed. This Sir Red became angry with the eleven brothers, because they would not always stand at attention for him, so he determined to avenge himself on them.

One day, therefore, he went to the king, and said that the eleven brothers who had come to the palace a little while ago, and served as stablemen, could do a great deal more than they pretended. One day he had heard them say that if they liked they could get for the king a wonderful dove which had a feather of gold and a feather of silver time about. But they would not procure it unless they were threatened with death.

The king then had the eleven brothers called before him, and said to them, ‘You have said that you can get me a dove which has feathers of gold and silver time about.’

All the eleven assured him that they had never said anything of the kind, and they did not believe that such a dove existed in the whole world.

‘Take your own mind of it,’ said the king; ‘but if you don’t get that dove within three days you shall lose your heads, the whole lot of you.’

With that the king let them go, and there was great grief among them; some wept and others lamented.

At that moment Esben came along, and, seeing their sorrowful looks, said to them, ‘Hello, what’s the matter with you?’

‘What good would it do to tell you, you little fool? You can’t help us.’

‘Oh, you don’t know that,’ answered Esben. ‘I have helped you before.’

In the end they told him how unreasonable the king was, and how he had ordered them to get for him a dove with feathers of gold and silver time about.

‘Give me a bag of peas’ said Esben, ‘and I shall see what I can do for you.’

Esben got his bag of peas; then he took his white stick, and said,

Fly quick, my little stick, Carry me across the stream.

Straightway the stick carried him across the river and straight into the old witch’s courtyard. Esben had noticed that she had such a dove; so when he arrived in the courtyard he shook the peas out of the bag, and the dove came fluttering down to pick them up. Esben caught it at once, put it into the bag, and hurried off before the witch caught sight of him; but the next moment she came running, and shouted after him, ‘ I Hey is that you, Esben.?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘Is it you that has taken my dove?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘Was it you that made me kill my eleven daughters?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘Are you coming back again?’

‘That may be,’ said Esben.

‘Then you’ll catch it,’ shouted the witch.

The stick carried Esben with the dove back to the king’s palace, and his brothers were greatly delighted. The king thanked them many times for the dove, and gave them in return both silver and gold. At this Sir Red became still more embittered, and again thought of how to avenge himself on the brothers.

One day he went to the king and told him that the dove was by no means the best thing that the brothers could get for him; for one day he had heard them talking quietly among themselves, and they had said that they could procure a boar whose bristles were of gold and silver time about.

The king again summoned the brothers before him, and asked whether it was true that they had said that they could get for him a boar whose bristles were of gold and silver time about.

‘No,’ said the brothers; they had never said nor thought such a thing, and they did not believe that there was such a boar in the whole world.

‘You must get me that boar within three days,’ said the king, ‘or it will cost you your heads.’

With that they had to go. This was still worse than before, they thought. Where could they get such a marvellous boar? They all went about hanging their heads; but when only one day remained of the three Esben came along. When he saw his brothers’ sorrowful looks he cried, ‘Hallo, what’s the matter now?’

‘Oh, what’s the use of telling you?’ said his brothers. ‘You can’t help us, at any rate.’

‘Ah, you don’t know that,’ said Esben; ‘I’ve helped you before.’

In the end they told him how Sir Red had stirred up the king against them, so that he had ordered them to get for him a boar with bristles of gold and silver time about.

‘That’s all right,’ said Esben; ‘give me a sack of malt, and it is not quite impossible that I may be able to help you.’

Esben got his sack of malt; then he took his little white stick, set himself upon it, and said,

Fly quick, my little stick, Carry me across the stream.

Off went the stick with him, and very soon he was again in the witch’s courtyard. There he emptied out the malt, and next moment came the boar, which had every second bristle of gold and of silver. Esben at once put it into his sack and hurried off before the witch should catch sight of him; but the next moment she came running, and shouted after him, ‘Hey! is that you, Esben?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘Is it you that has taken my pretty boar?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘It was also you that took my dove?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘And it was you that made me kill my eleven daughters?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘Are you coming back again?’

‘That may be,’ said Esben.

‘Then you’ll catch it,’ said the witch.

Esben was soon back at the palace with the boar, and his brothers scarcely knew which leg to stand on, so rejoiced were they that they were safe again. Not one of them, however, ever thought of thanking Esben for what he had done for them.

The king was still more rejoiced over the boar than he had been over the dove, and did not know what to give the brothers for it. At this Sir Red was again possessed with anger and envy, and again he went about and planned how to get the brothers into trouble.

One day he went again to the king and said, ‘These eleven brothers have now procured the dove and the boar, but they can do much more than that; I know they have said that if they liked they could get for the king a lamp that can shine over seven kingdoms.’

‘If they have said that,’ said the king, ‘they shall also be made to bring it to me. That would be a glorious lamp for me.’

Again the king sent a message to the brothers to come up to the palace. They went accordingly, although very unwillingly, for they suspected that Sir Red had fallen on some new plan to bring them into trouble.

As soon as they came before the king he said to them,

‘You brothers have said that you could, if you liked, get for me a lamp that can shine over seven kingdoms. That lamp must be mine within three days, or it will cost you your lives.’

The brothers assured him that they had never said so, and they were sure that no such lamp existed, but their words were of no avail.

‘The lamp!’ said the king, ‘or it will cost you your heads.’

The brothers were now in greater despair than ever. They did not know what to do, for such a lamp no one had ever heard of. But just as things looked their worst along came Esben.

‘Something wrong again?’ said he. ‘What’s the matter with you now?’

‘Oh, it’s no use telling you,’ said they. ‘You can’t help us, at any rate.’

‘Oh, you might at least tell me,’ said Esben; ‘I have helped you before.’

In the end they told him that the king had ordered them to bring him a lamp which could shine over seven kingdoms, but such a lamp no one had ever heard tell of.

‘Give me a bushel of salt,’ said Esben, ‘and we shall see how matters go.’

He got his bushel of salt, and then mounted his little white stick, and said,

Fly quick, my little stick, Carry me across the stream.

With that both he and his bushel of salt were over beside the witch’s courtyard. But now matters were less easy, for he could not get inside the yard, as it was evening and the gate was locked. Finally he hit upon a plan; he got up on the roof and crept down the chimney.

He searched all round for the lamp, but could find it nowhere, for the witch always had it safely guarded, as it was one of her most precious treasures. When he became tired of searching for it he crept into the baking-oven, intending to lie down there and sleep till morning; but just at that moment he heard the witch calling from her bed to one of her daughters, and telling her to make some porridge for her. She had grown hungry, and had taken such a fancy to some porridge. The daughter got out of bed, kindled the fire, and put on a pot with water in it.

‘You mustn’t put any salt in the porridge, though,’ cried the witch.

‘No, neither will I,’ said the daughter; but while she was away getting the meal Esben slipped out of the oven and emptied the whole bushel of salt into the pot. The daughter came back then and put in the meal, and after it had boiled a little she took it in to her mother. The witch took a spoonful and tasted it.

‘Uh!’ said she; ‘didn’t I tell you not to put any salt in it, and it’s just as salt as the sea.’

So the daughter had to go and make new porridge, and her mother warned her strictly not to put any salt in it. But now there was no water in the house, so she asked her mother to give her the lamp, so that she could go to the well for more.

‘There you have it, then,’ said the witch; ‘but take good care of it.’

The daughter took the lamp which shone over seven kingdoms, and went out to the well for water, while Esben slipped out after her. When she was going to draw the water from the well she set the lamp down on a stone beside her. Esben watched his chance, seized the lamp, and gave her a push from behind, so that she plumped head first into the well. Then he made off with the lamp. But the witch got out of her bed and ran after him, crying:

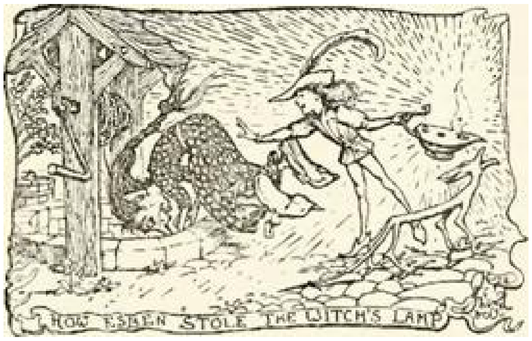
HOW ESBEN STOLE THE WITCH'S LAMP

‘Hey! is that you again, Esben?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘Was it you that took my dove?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘Was it also you that took my boar?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘And it was you that made me kill my eleven daughters?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘And now you have taken my lamp, and drowned my twelfth daughter in the well?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘Are you coming back again?’

‘That may be,’ said Esben.

‘Then you’ll catch it,’ said the witch.

It was only a minute before the stick had again landed Esben at the king’s palace, and the brothers were then freed from their distress. The king gave them many fine presents, but Esben did not get even so much as thanks from them.

Never had Sir Red been so eaten up with envy as he was now, and he racked his brain day and night to find something quite impossible to demand from the brothers.

One day he went to the king and told him that the lamp the brothers had procured was good enough, but they could still get for him something that was far better. The king asked what that was.

‘It is,’ said Sir Red, ‘the most beautiful coverlet that any mortal ever heard tell of. It also has the property that, when anyone touches it, it sounds so that it can be heard over eight kingdoms.’

‘That must be a splendid coverlet,’ said the king, and he at once sent for the brothers.

‘You have said that you know of a coverlet, the most beautiful in the whole world, and which sounds over eight kingdoms when anyone touches it. You shall procure it for me, or else lose your lives,’ said he.

The brothers answered him that they had never said a word about such a coverlet, did not believe it existed, and that it was quite impossible for them to procure it. But the king would not hear a word; he drove them away, telling them that if they did not get it very soon it would cost them their heads.

Things looked very black again for the brothers, for they were sure there was no escape for them. The youngest of them, indeed, asked where Esben was, but the others said that that little fool could scarcely keep himself in clothes, and it was not to be expected that he could help them. Not one of them thought it worth while to look for Esben, but he soon came along of himself.

‘Well, what’s the matter now?’ said he.

‘Oh, what’s the use of telling you?’ said the brothers. ‘You can’t help us, at any rate.’

‘Ah! who knows that?’ said Esben. ‘I have helped you before.’

In the end the brothers told him about the coverlet which, when one touched it, sounded so that it could be heard over eight kingdoms. Esben thought that this was the worst errand that he had had yet, but he could not do worse than fail, and so he would make the attempt.

He again took his little white stick, set himself on it, and said,

Fly quick, my little stick, Carry me across the stream.

Next moment he was across the river and beside the witch’s house. It was evening, and the door was locked, but he knew the way down the chimney. When he had got into the house, however, the worst yet remained to do, for the coverlet was on the bed in which the witch lay and slept. He slipped into the room without either she or her daughter wakening; but as soon as he touched the coverlet to take it it sounded so that it could be heard over eight kingdoms. The witch awoke, sprang out of bed, and caught hold of Esben. He struggled with her, but could not free himself, and the witch called to her daughter, ‘Come and help me; we shall put him into the little dark room to be fattened. Ho, ho! now I have him!’

Esben was now put into a little dark hole, where he neither saw sun nor moon, and there he was fed on sweet milk and nut-kernels. The daughter had enough to do cracking nuts for him, and at the end of fourteen days she had only one tooth left in her mouth; she had broken all the rest with the nuts. In this time however, she had taken a liking to Esben, and would willingly have set him free, but could not.

When some time had passed the witch told her daughter to go and cut a finger off Esben, so that she could see whether he was nearly fat enough yet. The daughter went and told Esben, and asked him what she should do. Esben told her to take an iron nail and wrap a piece of skin round it: she could then give her mother this to bite at.

The daughter did so, but when the witch bit it she cried, ‘Uh! no, no! This is nothing but skin and bone; he must be fattened much longer yet.’

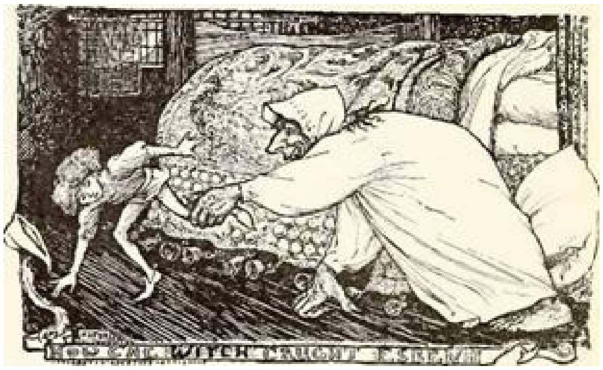
HOW THE WITCH CAUGHT ESBEN

So Esben was fed for a while longer on sweet milk and nut-kernels, until one day the witch thought that now he must surely be fat enough, and told her daughter again to go and cut a finger off him. By this time Esben was tired of staying in the dark hole, so he told her to go and cut a teat off a cow, and give it to the witch to bite at. This the daughter did, and the witch cried, ‘Ah! now he is fat — so fat that one can scarcely feel the bone in him. Now he shall be killed.’

Now this was just the very time that the witch had to go to Troms Church, where all the witches gather once every year, so she had no time to deal with Esben herself. She therefore told her daughter to heat up the big oven while she was away, take Esben out of his prison, and roast him in there before she came back. The daughter promised all this, and the witch went off on her journey.

The daughter then made the oven as hot as could be, and took Esben out of his prison in order to roast him. She brought the oven spade, and told Esben to seat himself on it, so that she could shoot him into the oven. Esben accordingly took his seat on it, but when she had got him to the mouth of the oven he spread his legs out wide, so that she could not get him pushed in.

‘You mustn’t sit like that,’ said she.

‘How then?’ said Esben.

‘You must cross your legs,’ said the daughter; but Esben could not understand what she meant by this.

‘Get out of the way,’ said she, ‘and I will show you how to place yourself.’

She seated herself on the oven spade, but no sooner had she done so than Esben laid hold of it, shot her into the oven, and fastened the door of it. Then he ran and seized the coverlet, but as soon as he did so it sounded so that it could be heard over eight kingdoms, and the witch, who was at Troms Church, came flying home, and shouted, ‘Hey! is that you again, Esben?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘It was you that made me kill my eleven daughters?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘And took my dove?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘And my beautiful boar?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘And drowned my twelfth daughter in the well, and took my lamp?’

‘Ye — e — s!’

‘And now you have roasted my thirteenth and last daughter in the oven, and taken my coverlet?’

‘YeÄeÄs!’

‘Are you coming back again?’

‘No, never again,’ said Esben.

At this the witch became so furious that she sprang into numberless pieces of flint, and from this come all the flint stones that one finds about the country.

Esben had found again his little stick, which the witch had taken from him, so he said,

Fly quick, my little stick, Carry me across the stream.

Next moment he was back at the king’s palace. Here things were in a bad way, for the king had thrown all the eleven brothers into prison, and they were to be executed very shortly because they had not brought him the coverlet. Esben now went up to the king and gave him the coverlet, with which the king was greatly delighted. When he touched it it could be heard over eight kingdoms, and all the other kings sat and were angry because they had not one like it.

Esben also told how everything had happened, and how Sir Red had done the brothers all the ill he could devise because he was envious of them. The brothers were at once set at liberty, while Sir Red, for his wickedness, was hanged on the highest tree that could be found, and so he got the reward he deserved.

Much was made of Esben and his brothers, and these now thanked him for all that he had done for them. The twelve of them received as much gold and silver as they could carry, and betook themselves home to their old father. When he saw again his twelve sons, whom he had never expected to see more, he was so glad that he wept for joy. The brothers told him how much Esben had done, and how he had saved their lives, and from that time forward he was no longer the butt of the rest at home.

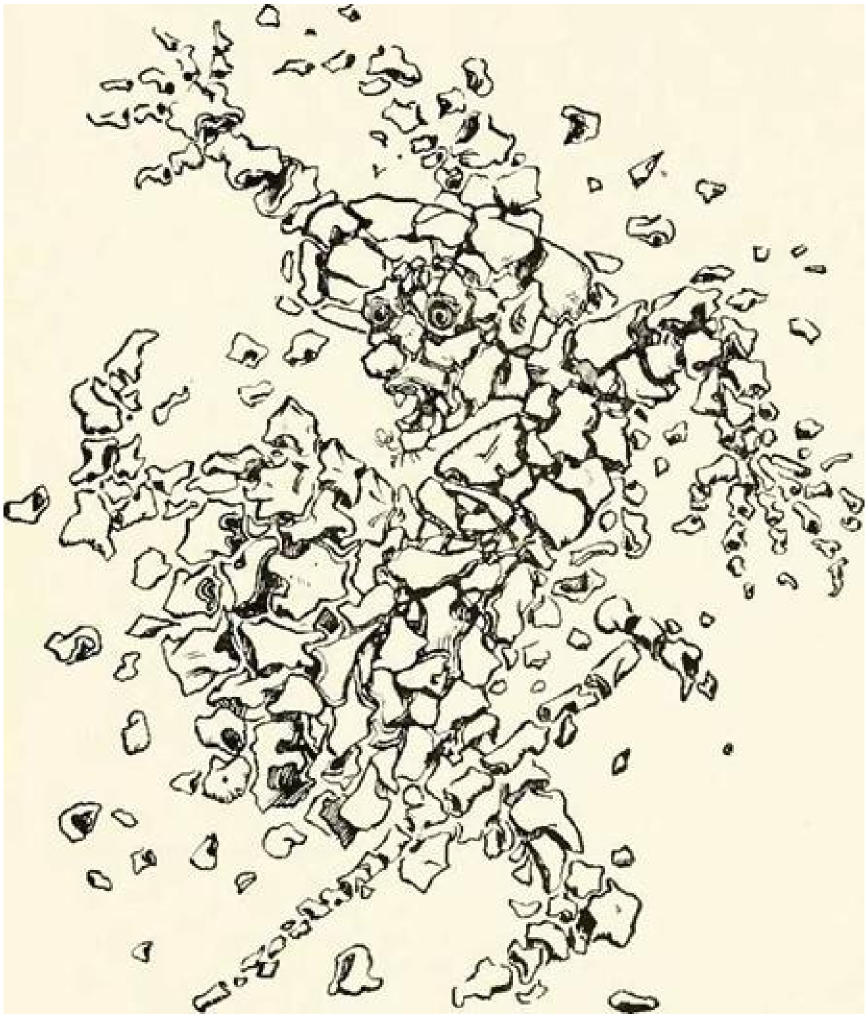

Princess Minon-minette

Bibliotheque des Fees et aes Genies

Once upon a time there lived a young king whose name was Souci, and he had been brought up, ever since he was a baby, by the fairy Inconstancy. Now the fairy Girouette had a kind heart, but she was a very trying person to live with, for she never knew her own mind for two minutes together, and as she was the sole ruler at Court till the prince grew up everything was always at sixes and sevens. At first she determined to follow the old custom of keeping the young king ignorant of the duties he would have to perform some day; then, quite suddenly, she resigned the reins of government into his hands; but, unluckily, it was too late to train him properly for the post. However, the fairy did not think of that, but, carried away by her new ideas, she hastily formed a Council, and named as Prime Minister the excellent 'Ditto,' so called because he had never been known to contradict anybody.

Young Prince Souci had a handsome face, and at the bottom a good deal of common sense; but he had never been taught good manners, and was shy and awkward; and had, besides, never learned how to use his brains.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the Council did not get through much work. Indeed, the affairs of the country fell into such disorder that at last the people broke out into open rebellion, and it was only the courage of the king, who continued to play the flute while swords and spears were flashing before the palace gate, that prevented civil war from being declared.

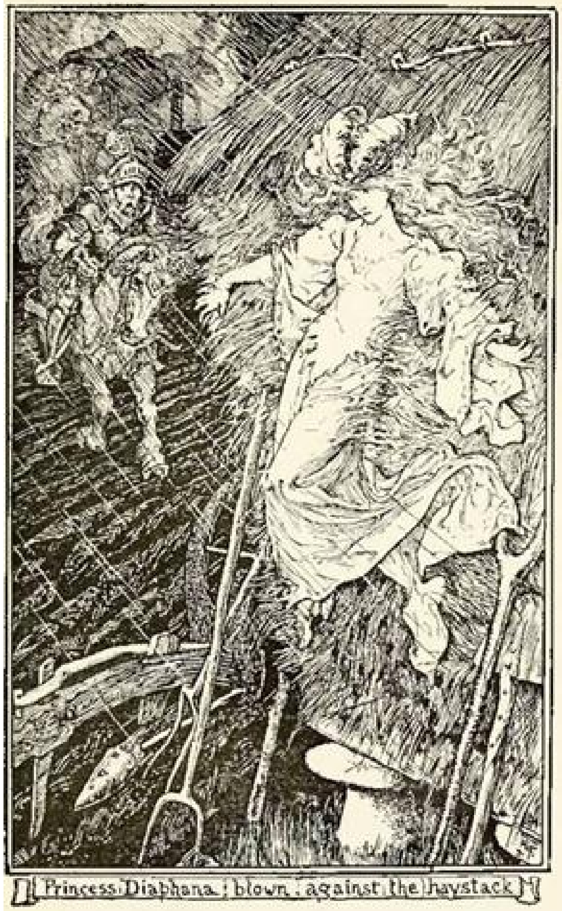

Princess Diaphana blown against the haystack

No sooner was the revolt put down than the Council turned their attention to the question of the young king's marriage. Various princesses were proposed to him, and the fairy, who was anxious to get the affair over before she left the Court for ever, gave it as her opinion that the Princess Diaphana would make the most suitable wife. Accordingly envoys were sent to bring back an exact report of the princess's looks and ways, and they returned saying that she was tall and well made, but so very light that the equerries who accompanied her in her walks had to be always watching her, lest she should suddenly be blown away. This had happened so often that her subjects lived in terror of losing her altogether, and tried everything they could think of to keep her to the ground. They even suggested that she should carry weights in her pockets, or have them tied to her ankles; but this idea was given up, as the princess found it so uncomfortable. At length it was decided that she was never to go out in a wind, and in order to make matters surer still the equerries each held the end of a string which was fastened to her waist.

The Council talked over this report for some days, and then the king made up his mind that he would judge for himself, and pretend to be his own ambassador. This plan was by no means new, but it had often succeeded, and, anyhow, they could think of nothing better.

Such a splendid embassy had never before been seen in any country. The kingdom was left in the charge of the Prime Minister, who answered 'Ditto' to everything; but the choice was better than it seemed, for the worthy man was much beloved by the people, as he agreed with all they said, and they left him feeling very pleased with themselves and their own wisdom.

When the king arrived at Diaphana's Court he found a magnificent reception awaiting him, for, though they pretended not to know who he was, secrets like this are never hidden. Now the young king had a great dislike to long ceremonies, so he proposed that his second interview with the princess should take place in the garden. The princess made some difficulties, but, as the weather was lovely and very still, she at last consented to the king's wishes. But no sooner had they finished their first bows and curtseys than a slight breeze sprung up, and began to sway the princess, whose equerries had retired out of respect. The king went forward to steady her, but the wind that he caused only drove her further away from him. He rushed after her exclaiming, 'O princess! are you really running away from me?'

'Good gracious, no!' she replied. 'Run a little quicker and you will be able to stop me, and I shall be for ever grateful. That is what comes of talking in a garden,' she added in disgust; 'as if one wasn't much better in a room that was tightly closed all round.'

The king ran as fast as he could, but the wind ran faster still, and in a moment the princess was whirled to the bottom of the garden, which was bounded by a ditch. She cleared it like a bird, and the king, who was obliged to stop short at the edge, saw the lovely Diaphana flying over the plain, sometimes driven to the right, sometimes to the left, till at last she vanished out of sight.

By this time the whole court were running over the plain, some on foot and some on horseback, all hurrying to the help of their princess, who really was in some danger, for the wind was rising to the force of a gale. The king looked on for a little, and then returned with his attendants to the palace, reflecting all the while on the extreme lightness of his proposed bride and the absurdity of having a wife that rose in the air better than any kite. He thought on the whole that it would be wiser not to wait longer, but to depart at once, and he started on horseback at the very moment when the princess had been found by her followers, wet to the skin, and blown against a rick. Souci met the carriage which was bringing her home, and stopped to congratulate her on her escape, and to advise her to put on dry clothes. Then he continued his journey.

It took a good while for the king to get home again, and he was rather cross at having had so much trouble for nothing. Besides which, his courtiers made fun at his adventure, and he did not like being laughed at, though of course they did not dare to do it before his face. And the end of it was that very soon he started on his travels again, only allowing one equerry to accompany him, and even this attendant he managed to lose the moment he had left his own kingdom behind him.

Now it was the custom in those days for princes and princesses to be brought up by fairies, who loved them as their own children, and did not mind what inconvenience they put other people to for their sakes, for all the world as if they had been real mothers. The fairy Aveline, who lived in a country that touched at one point the kingdom of King Souci, had under her care the lovely Princess Minon-Minette, and had made up her mind to marry her to the young king, who, in spite of his awkward manners, which could be improved, was really very much nicer than most of the young men she was likely to meet.

So Aveline made her preparations accordingly, and began by arranging that the equerry should lose himself in the forest, after which she took away the king's sword and his horse while he lay asleep under a tree. Her reason for this was that she felt persuaded that, finding himself suddenly alone and robbed of everything, the king would hide his real birth, and would have to fall back on his powers of pleasing, like other men, which would be much better for him.

When the king awoke and found that the tree to which he had tied his horse had its lowest branch broken, and that nothing living was in sight, he was much dismayed, and sought high and low for his lost treasure, but all in vain. After a time he began to get hungry, so he decided that he had better try to find his way out of the forest, and perhaps he might have a chance of getting something to eat. He had only gone a few steps when he met Aveline, who had taken the shape of an old woman with a heavy bundle of faggots on her back. She staggered along the path and almost fell at his feet, and Souci, afraid that she might have hurt herself, picked her up and set her on her feet again before passing on his way. But he was not to be let off so easy.

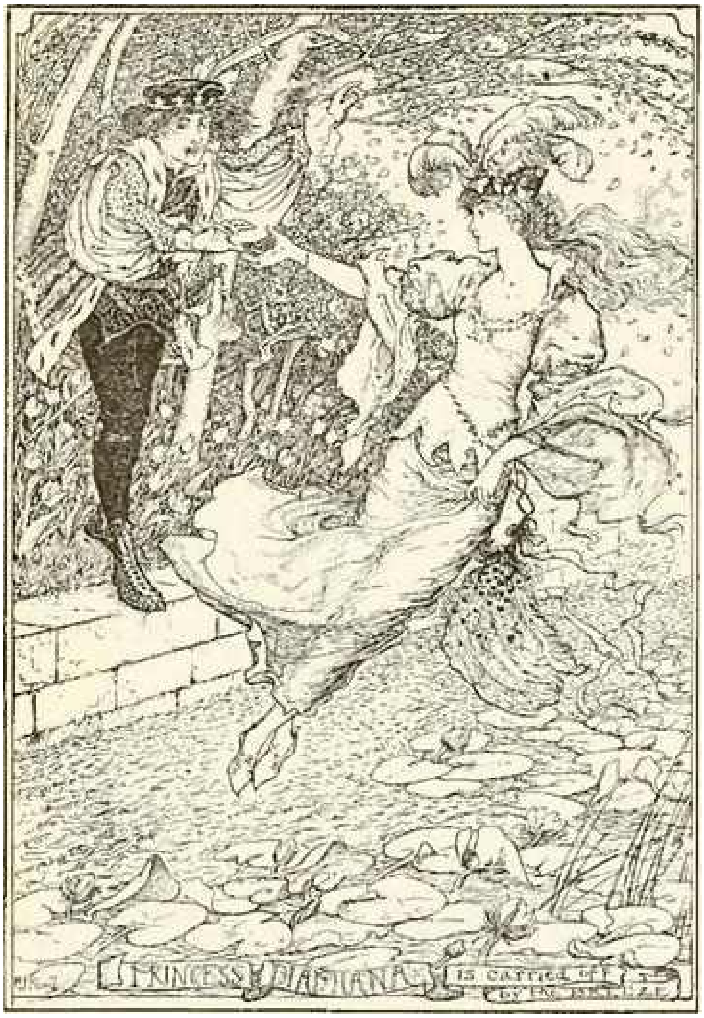

‘What about my bundle?’ cried the old woman. ‘Where is your politeness? Really, you seem to have been very nicely brought up! What have they taught you?’

‘Taught me? Nothing,’ replied he.

‘I can well believe it!’ she said. ‘You don’t know even how to pick up a bundle. Oh, you can come near; I am cleverer than you, and know how to pick up a bundle very well.’

The king blushed at her words, which he felt had a great deal of truth in them, and took up the bundle meekly.

Aveline, delighted at the success of her first experiment, hobbled along after him, chattering all the while, as old women do.

‘I wish,’ she said, ‘that all kings had done as much once in their lives. Then they would know what a lot of trouble it takes to get wood for their fires.’

Souci felt this to be true, and was sorry for the old woman.

‘Where are we going to?’ asked he.

‘To the castle of the White Demon; and if you are in want of work I will find you something to do.'

'But I can't do anything,' he said, 'except carry a bundle, and I shan't earn much by that.'

'Oh, you are learning,' replied the old woman, 'and it isn't bad for a first lesson.' But the king was paying very little attention to her, for he was rather cross and very tired. Indeed, he felt that he really could not carry the bundle any further, and was about to lay it down when up came a young maiden more beautiful than the day, and covered with precious stones. She ran to them, exclaiming to the old woman,

'Oh, you poor thing! I was just coming after you to see if I could help you.'

'Here is a young man,' replied the old woman, 'who will be quite ready to give you up the bundle. You see he does not look as if he enjoyed carrying it.'

'Will you let me take it, sir?' she asked.

But the king felt ashamed of himself, and held on to it tightly, while the presence of the princess put him in a better temper.

So they all travelled together till they arrived at a very ordinary-looking house, which Aveline pointed out as the castle of the White Demon, and told the king that he might put down his bundle in the courtyard. The young man was terribly afraid of being recognised by someone in this strange position, and would have turned on his heel and gone away had it not been for the thought of Minon-Minette. Still, he felt very awkward and lonely, for both the princess and the old woman had entered the castle without taking the slightest notice of the young man, who remained where he was for some time, not quite knowing what he had better do. At length a servant arrived and led him up into a beautiful room filled with people, who were either playing on musical instruments or talking in a lively manner, which astonished the king, who stood silently listening, and not at all pleased at the want of attention paid him.

Matters went on this way for some time. Every day the king fell more and more in love with Minon-Minette, and every day the princess seemed more and more taken up with other people. At last, in despair, the prince sought out the old woman, to try to get some advice from her as to his conduct, or, anyway, to have the pleasure of talking about Minon-Minette.

He found her spinning in an underground chamber, but quite ready to tell him all he wanted to know. In answer to his questions he learned that in order to win the hand of the princess it was not enough to be born a prince, for she would marry nobody who had not proved himself faithful, and had, besides, all those talents and accomplishments which help to make people happy.

For a moment Souci was very much cast down on hearing this, but then he plucked up. 'Tell me what I must do in order to win the heart of the princess, and no matter how hard it is I will do it. And show me how I can repay you for your kindness, and you shall have anything I can give you. Shall I bring in your bundle of faggots every day?'

'It is enough that you should have made the offer,' replied the old woman; and she added, holding out a skein of thread, 'Take this; one day you will be thankful for it, and when it becomes useless your difficulties will be past.'

'Is it the skein of my life?' he asked.

'It is the skein of your love's ill-luck,' she said.

And he took it and went away.

Now the fairy Girouette, who had brought up Souci, had an old friend called Grimace, the protectress of Prince Fluet. Grimace often talked over the young prince's affairs with Girouette, and, when she decided that he was old enough to govern his own kingdom, consulted Girouette as to a suitable wife. Girouette, who never stopped to think or to make inquiries, drew such a delightful picture of Minon-Minette that Grimace determined to spare no pains to bring about the marriage, and accordingly Fluet was presented at court. But though the young man was pleasant and handsome, the princess thought him rather womanish in some ways, and displayed her opinion so openly as to draw upon herself and Aveline the anger of the fairy, who declared that Minon-Minette should never know happiness till she had found a bridge without an arch and a bird without feathers. So saying, she also went away.

Before the king set out afresh on his travels Aveline had restored to him his horse and his sword, and though these were but small consolation for the absence of the princess, they were better than nothing, for he felt that somehow they might be the means of leading him back to her.

After crossing several deserts the king arrived at length in a country that seemed inhabited, but the instant he stepped over the border he was seized and flung into chains, and dragged at once to the capital. He asked his guards why he was treated like this, but the only answer he got was that he was in the territory of the Iron King, for in those days countries had no names of their own, but were called after their rulers.

The young man was led into the presence of the Iron King, who was seated on a black throne in a hall also hung with black, as a token of mourning for all the relations whom he had put to death.

'What are you doing in my country?' he cried fiercely.

'I came here by accident,' replied Souci, 'and if I ever escape from your clutches I will take warning by you and treat my subjects differently.'

'Do you dare to insult me in my own court?' cried the king. 'Away with him to Little Ease!'

Now Little Ease was an iron cage hung by four thick chains in the middle of a great vaulted hall, and the prisoner inside could neither sit, nor stand, nor lie; and, besides that, he was made to suffer by turns unbearable heat and cold, while a hundred heavy bolts kept everything safe. Girouette, whose business it was to see after Souci, had forgotten his existence in the excitement of some new idea, and he would not have been alive long to trouble anybody if Aveline had not come to the rescue and whispered in his ear, ‘And the skein of thread?’ He took it up obediently, though he did not see how it would help him but he tied it round one of the iron bars of his cage, which seemed the only thing he could do, and gave a pull. To his surprise the bar gave way at once, and he found he could break it into a thousand pieces. After this it did not take him long to get out of his cage, or to treat the closely barred windows of the hall in the same manner. But even after he had done all this freedom appeared as far from him as ever, for between him and the open country was a high wall, and so smooth that not even a monkey could climb it. Then Souci’s heart died within him. He saw nothing for it but to submit to some horrible death, but he determined that the Iron King should not profit more than he could help, and flung his precious thread into the air, saying, as he did so, ‘O fairy, my misfortunes are greater than your power. I am grateful for your goodwill, but take back your gift!’ The fairy had pity on his youth and want of faith, and took care that one end of the thread remained in his hand. He suddenly felt a jerk, and saw that the thread must have caught on something, and this thought filled him with the daring that is born of despair. ‘Better,’ he said to himself, ‘trust to a thread than to the mercies of a king;’ and, gliding down, he found himself safe on the other side of the wall. Then he rolled up the thread and put it carefully into his pocket, breathing silent thanks to the fairy.

Now Minon-Minette had been kept informed by Aveline of the prince’s adventures, and when she heard of the way in which he had been treated by the Iron King she became furious, and began to prepare for war. She made her plans with all the secrecy she could, but when great armies are collected people are apt to suspect a storm is brewing, and of course it is very difficult to keep anything hidden from fairy godmothers. Anyway, Grimace soon heard of it, and as she had never forgiven Minon-Minette for refusing Prince Fluet, she felt that here was her chance of revenge.

Up to this time Aveline had been able to put a stop to many of Grimace’s spiteful tricks, and to keep guard over Minon-Minette, but she had no power over anything that happened at a distance; and when the princess declared her intention of putting herself at the head of her army, and began to train herself to bear fatigue by hunting daily, the fairy entreated her to be careful never to cross the borders of her dominions without Aveline to protect her. The princess at once gave her promise, and all went well for some days. Unluckily one morning, as Minon-Minette was cantering slowly on her beautiful white horse, thinking a great deal about Souci and not at all of the boundaries of her kingdom (of which, indeed, she was very ignorant), she suddenly found herself in front of a house made entirely of dead leaves, which somehow brought all sorts of unpleasant things into her head. She remembered Aveline's warning, and tried to turn her horse, but it stood as still as if it had been marble. Then the princess felt that she was slowly, and against her will, being dragged to the ground. She shrieked, and clung tightly to the saddle, but it was all in vain; she longed to fly, but something outside herself proved too strong for her, and she was forced to take the path that led to the House of Dead Leaves.

Scarcely had her feet touched the threshold than Grimace appeared. 'So here you are at last, Minon-Minette! I have been watching for you a long time, and my trap was ready for you from the beginning. Come here, my darling! I will teach you to make war on my friends! Things won't turn out exactly as you fancied. What you have got to do now is to go on your knees to the king and crave his pardon, and before he consents to a peace you will have to implore him to grant you the favour of becoming his wife. Meanwhile you will have to be my servant.'

From that day the poor princess was put to the hardest and dirtiest work, and each morning something more disagreeable seemed to await her. Besides which, she had no food but a little black bread, and no bed but a little straw. Out of pure spite she was sent in the heat of the day to look after the geese, and would most likely have got a sunstroke if she had not happened to pick up in the fields a large fan, with which she sheltered her face. To be sure, a fan seems rather an odd possession for a goose girl, but the princess did not think of that, and she forgot all her troubles when, on opening the fan to use it as a parasol, out tumbled a letter from her lover. Then she felt sure that the fairy had not forgotten her, and took heart.

When Grimace saw that Minon-Minette still managed to look as white as snow, instead of being burnt as brown as a berry, she wondered what could have happened, and began to watch her closely. The following day, when the sun was at its highest and hottest, she noticed her draw a fan from the folds of her dress and hold it before her eyes. The fairy, in a rage, tried to snatch it from her, but the princess would not let it go. 'Give me that fan at once!' cried Grimace.

'Never while I live!' answered the princess, and, not knowing where it would be safest, placed it under her feet. In an instant she felt herself rising from the ground, with the fan always beneath her, and while Grimace was too much blinded by her fury to notice what was going on the princess was quickly soaring out of her reach.

All this time Souci had been wandering through the world with his precious thread carefully fastened round him, seeking every possible and impossible place where his beloved princess might chance to be. But though he sometimes found traces of her, or even messages scratched on a rock, or cut in the bark of a tree, she herself was nowhere to be found. ‘If she is not on the earth,’ said Souci to himself, ‘perhaps she is hiding somewhere in the air. It is there that I shall find her.’ So, by the help of his thread, he tried to mount upwards, but he could go such a little way, and hurt himself dreadfully when he tumbled back to earth again. Still he did not give up, and after many days of efforts and tumbles he found to his great joy that he could go a little higher and stay up a little longer than he had done at first, and by-and-bye he was able to live in the air altogether. But alas! the world of the air seemed as empty of her as the world below, and Souci was beginning to despair, and to think that he must go and search the world that lay in the sea. He was floating sadly along, not paying any heed to where he was going, when he saw in the distance a beautiful, bright sort of bird coming towards him. His heart beat fast — he did not know why — and as they both drew near the voice of the princess exclaimed, ‘Behold the bird without feathers and the bridge without an arch!’

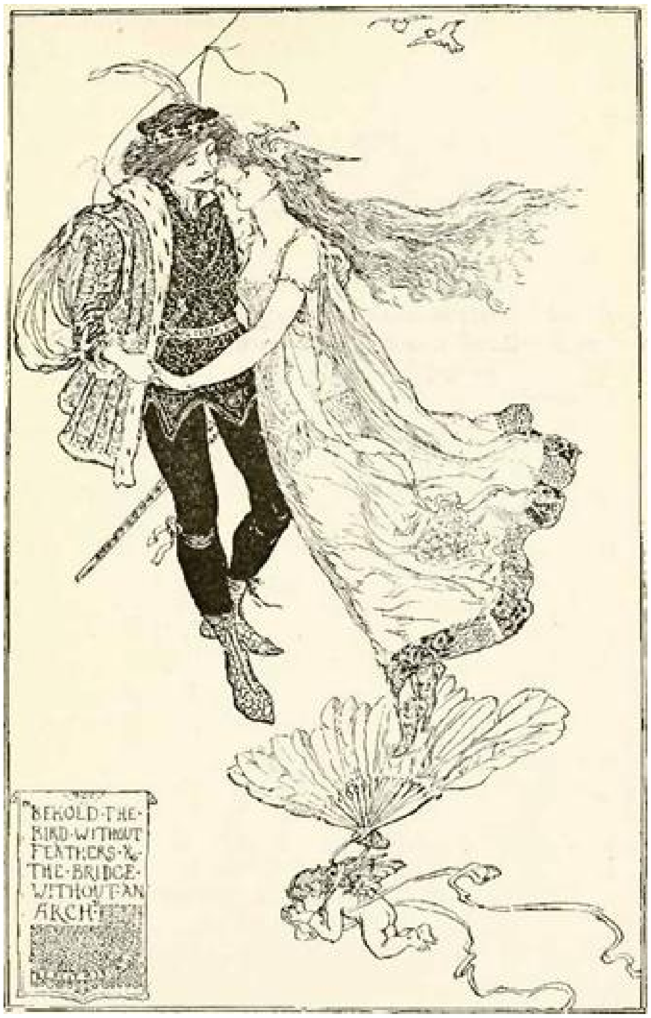
BEHOLD·THE·BIRD·WITHOUT FEATHERS·&·THE·BRIDGE·WITHOUT·AN ARCH·

So their first meeting took place in the air, but it was none the less happy for that; and the fan grew big enough to hold the king as well as Aveline, who had hastened to give them some good advice. She guided the fan above the spot where the two armies lay encamped before each other ready to give battle. The fight was long and bloody, but in the end the Iron King was obliged to give way and surrender to the princess, who set him to keep King Souci’s sheep, first making him swear a solemn oath that he would treat them kindly.

Then the marriage took place, in the presence of Girouette, whom they had the greatest trouble to find, and who was much astonished to discover how much business had been got through in her absence.

Maiden Bright-eye

From the Danish

Once, upon a time there was a man and his wife who had two children, a boy and a girl. The wife died, and the man married again. His new wife had an only daughter, who was both ugly and untidy, whereas her stepdaughter was a beautiful girl, and was known as Maiden Bright-eye. Her stepmother was very cruel to her on this account; she had always to do the hardest work, and got very little to eat, and no attention paid to her; but to her own daughter she was all that was good. She was spared from all the hardest of the housework, and had always the prettiest clothes to wear.

Maiden Bright-eye had also to watch the sheep, but of course it would never do to let her go idle and enjoy herself too much at this work, so she had to pull heather while she was out on the moors with them. Her stepmother gave her pancakes to take with her for her dinner, but she had mixed the flour with ashes, and made them just as bad as she could.

The little girl came out on the moor and began to pull heather on the side of a little mound, but next minute a little fellow with a red cap on his head popped up out of the mound and said:

‘Who’s that pulling the roof off my house?’

‘Oh, it’s me, a poor little girl,’ said she; ‘my mother sent me out here, and told me to pull heather. If you will be good to me I will give you a bit of my dinner.’

The little fellow was quite willing, and she gave him the biggest share of her pancakes. They were not particularly good, but when one is hungry anything tastes well. After he had got them all eaten he said to her:

‘Now, I shall give you three wishes, for you are a very nice little girl; but I will choose the wishes for you. You are beautiful, and much more beautiful shall you be; yes, so lovely that there will not be your like in the world. The next wish shall be that every time you open your mouth a gold coin shall fall out of it, and your voice shall be like the most beautiful music. The third wish shall be that you may be married to the young king, and become the queen of the country. At the same time I shall give you a cap, which you must carefully keep, for it can save you, if you ever are in danger of your life, if you just put it on your head.

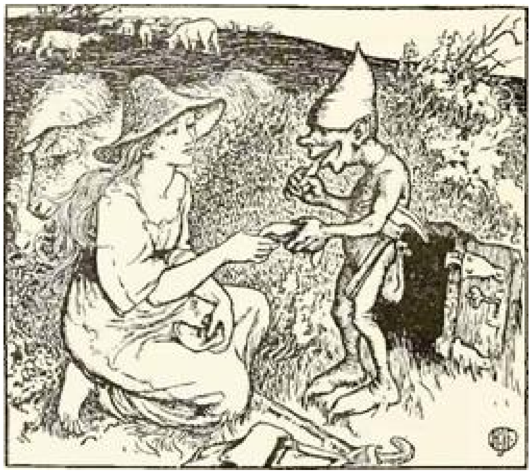

Maiden Bright-eye thanked the little bergman ever so often, and drove home her sheep in the evening. By that time she had grown so beautiful that her people could scarcely recognise her. Her stepmother asked her how it had come about that she had grown so beautiful. She told the whole story — for she always told the truth — that a little man had come to her out on the moor and had given her all this beauty. She did not tell, however, that she had given him a share of her dinner.

The stepmother thought to herself, ‘If one can become so beautiful by going out there, my own daughter shall also be sent, for she can well stand being made a little prettier.’

Next morning she baked for her the finest cakes, and dressed her prettily to go out with the sheep. But she was afraid to go away there without having a stick to defend herself with if anything should come near her.

She was not very much inclined for pulling the heather, as she never was in the habit of doing any work, but she was only a minute or so at it when up came the same little fellow with the red cap, and said:

‘Who’s that pulling the roof off my house?’

‘What’s that to you?’ said she.

‘Well, if you will give me a bit of your dinner I won’t do you any mischief,’ said he.

‘I will give you something else in place of my dinner,’ said she. ‘I can easily eat it myself; but if you will have something you can have a whack of my stick,’ and with that she raised it in the air and struck the bergman over the head with it.

‘What a wicked little girl you are!’ said he; ‘but you shall be none the better of this. I shall give you three wishes, and choose them for you. First, I shall say, “Ugly are you, but you shall become so ugly that there will not be an uglier one on earth.” Next I shall wish that every time you open your mouth a big toad may fall out of it, and your voice shall be like the roaring of a bull. In the third place I shall wish for you a violent death.’

The girl went home in the evening, and when her mother saw her she was as vexed as she could be, and with good reason, too; but it was still worse when she saw the toads fall out of her mouth and heard her voice.

Now we must hear something about the stepson. He had gone out into the world to look about him, and took service in the king’s palace. About this time he got permission to go home and see his sister, and when he saw how lovely and beautiful she was, he was so pleased and delighted that when he came back to the king’s palace everyone there wanted to know what he was always so happy about. He told them that it was because he had such a lovely sister at home.

At last it came to the ears of the king what the brother said about his sister, and, besides that, the report of her beauty spread far and wide, so that the youth was summoned before the king, who asked him if everything was true that was told about the girl. He said it was quite true, for he had seen her beauty with his own eyes, and had heard with his own ears how sweetly she could sing and what a lovely voice she had.

The king then took a great desire for her, and ordered her brother to go home and bring her back with him, for he trusted no one better to accomplish that errand. He got a ship, and everything else that he required, and sailed home for his sister. As soon as the stepmother heard what his errand was she at once said to herself, ‘This will never come about if I can do anything to hinder it. She must not be allowed to come to such honour.’

She then got a dress made for her own daughter, like the finest robe for a queen, and she had a mask prepared and put upon her face, so that she looked quite pretty, and gave her strict orders not to take it off until the king had promised to wed her.

The brother now set sail with his two sisters, for the stepmother pretended that the ugly one wanted to see the other a bit on her way. But when they got out to sea, and Maiden Bright-eye came up on deck, the sister did as her mother had instructed her — she gave her a push and made her fall into the water. When the brother learned what had happened he was greatly distressed, and did not know what to do. He could not bring himself to tell the truth about what had happened, nor did he expect that the king would believe it. In the long run he decided to hold on his way, and let things go as they liked. What he had expected happened — the king received his sister and wedded her at once, but repented it after the first night, as he could scarcely put down his foot in the morning for all the toads that were about the room, and when he saw her real face he was so enraged against the brother that he had him thrown into a pit full of serpents. He was so angry, not merely because he had been deceived, but because he could not get rid of the ugly wretch that was now tied to him for life.

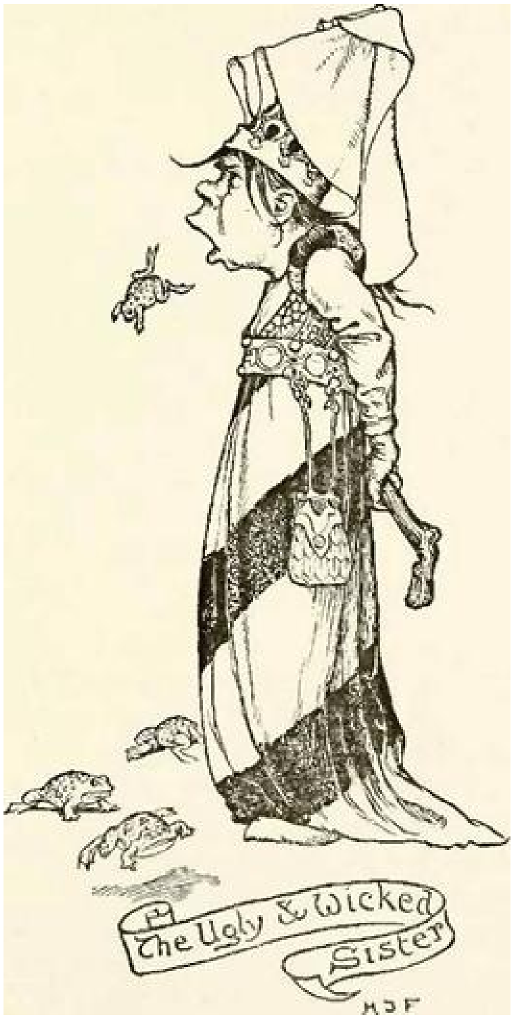

Now we shall hear a little about Maiden Bright-eye When she fell into the water she was fortunate enough to get the bergman's cap put on her head, for now she was in danger of her life, and she was at once transformed into a duck. The duck swam away after the ship, and came to the king's palace on the next evening. There it waddled up the drain, and so into the kitchen, where her little dog lay on the hearth-stone; it could not bear to stay in the fine chambers along with the ugly sister, and had taken refuge down here. The duck hopped up till it could talk to the dog.

'Good evening,' it said.

'Thanks, Maiden Bright-eye,' said the dog.

'Where is my brother?'

'He is in the serpent-pit.'

‘Where is my wicked sister?’

‘She is with the noble king.’

‘Alas! alas! I am here this evening, and shall be for two evenings yet, and then I shall never come again.’

When it had said this the duck waddled off again. Several of the servant girls heard the conversation, and were greatly surprised at it, and thought that it would be worth while to catch the bird next evening and see into the matter a little more closely. They had heard it say that it would come again.

Next evening it appeared as it had said, and a great many were present to see it. It came waddling in by the drain, and went up to the dog, which was lying on the hearth-stone.

‘Good evening,’ it said.

‘Thanks, Maiden Bright-eye,’ said the dog.

‘Where is my brother?’

‘He is in the serpent-pit.’

‘Where is my wicked sister?’

‘She is with the noble king.’

‘Alas! alas! I am here this evening, and shall be for one evening yet, and then I shall never come again.’

After this it slipped out, and no one could get hold of it. But the king’s cook thought to himself, ‘I shall see if I can’t get hold of you to-morrow evening.’

On the third evening the duck again came waddling in by the drain, and up to the dog on the hearth-stone.

‘Good evening,’ it said.

‘Thanks, Maiden Bright-eye,’ said the dog.

‘Where is my brother?’

‘He is in the serpent-pit.’

‘Where is my wicked sister?’

‘She is with the noble king.’

‘Alas! alas! now I shall never come again.’

With this it slipped out again, but in the meantime the cook had posted himself at the outer end of the drain with a net, which he threw over it as it came out. In this way he caught it, and came in to the others with the most beautiful duck they had ever seen — with so many golden feathers on it that everyone marvelled. No one, however, knew what was to be done with it; but after what they had heard they knew that there was something uncommon about it, so they took good care of it.

At this time the brother in the serpent-pit dreamed that his right sister had come swimming to the king’s palace in the shape of a duck, and that she could not regain her own form until her beak was cut off. He got this dream told to some one, so that the king at last came to hear of it, and had him taken up out of the pit and brought before him. The king then asked him if he could produce to him his sister as beautiful as he had formerly described her. The brother said he could if they would bring him the duck and a knife.

Both of them were brought to him, and he said, ‘I wonder how you would look if I were to cut the point off your beak.’

With this he cut a piece off the beak, and there came a voice which said, ‘Oh, oh, you cut my little finger!’

Next moment Maiden Bright-eye stood there, as lovely and beautiful as he had seen her when he was home. This was his sister now, he said; and the whole story now came out of how the other had behaved to her. The wicked sister was put into a barrel with spikes round it which was dragged off by six wild horses, and so she came to her end.:But the king was delighted with Maiden Bright-eye, and immediately made her his queen, while her brother became his prime minister.

The Merry Wives

From the Danish

There lay three houses in a row, in one of which there lived a tailor, in another a carpenter, and in the third a smith. All three were married, and their wives were very good friends. They often talked about how stupid their husbands were, but they could never agree as to which of them had the most stupid one; each one stuck up for her own husband, and maintained that it was he.

The three wives went to church together every Sunday, and had a regular good gossip on the way, and when they were coming home from church they always turned into the tavern which lay by the wayside and drank half a pint together. This was at the time when half a pint of brandy cost threepence, so that was just a penny from each of them.

But the brandy went up in price, and the taverner said that he must have fourpence for the half-pint.

They were greatly annoyed at this, for there were only the three of them to share it, and none of them was willing to pay the extra penny.

As they went home from the church that day they decided to wager with each other as to whose husband was the most stupid, and the one who, on the following Sunday, should be judged to have played her husband the greatest trick should thereafter go free from paying, and each of the two others would give twopence for their Sunday’s half-pint.

Next day the tailor’s wife said to her husband, ‘I have some girls coming to-day to help to card my wool there is a great deal to do, and we must be very busy. I am so annoyed that our watchdog is dead, for in the evening the young fellows will come about to get fun with the girls, and they will get nothing done. If we had only had a fierce watchdog he would have kept them away.’

‘Yes,’ said the man, ‘that would have been a good thing.’

‘Listen, good man,’ said the wife, ‘you must just be the watchdog yourself, and scare the fellows away from the house.’

The husband was not very sure about this, although otherwise he was always ready to give in to her.

‘Oh yes, you will see it will work all right,’ said the wife.

And so towards evening she got the tailor dressed up in a shaggy fur coat, tied a black woollen cloth round his head, and chained him up beside the dog’s kennel.’

There he stood and barked and growled at everyone that moved in his neighbourhood. The neighbour wives knew all about this, and were greatly amused at it.

On the day after this the carpenter had been out at work, and came home quite merry; but as soon as he entered the house his wife clapped her hands together and cried, ‘My dear, what makes you look like that? You are ill.’

The carpenter knew nothing about being ill; he only thought that he wanted something to eat, so he sat down at the table and began his dinner.

His wife sat straight in front of him, with her hands folded, and shook her head, and looked at him with an anxious air.

‘You are getting worse, my dear,’ she said; ‘you are quite pale now; you have a serious illness about you; I can see it by your looks.’

The husband now began to grow anxious, and thought that perhaps he was not quite well.

‘No, indeed,’ said she; ‘it’s high time that you were in bed.’

She then got him to lie down, and piled above him all the bedclothes she could find, and gave him various medicines, while he grew worse and worse.

‘You will never get over it,’ said she; ‘I am afraid you are going to die.’

‘Do you think so?’ said the carpenter; ‘I can well believe it, for I am indeed very poorly.’

In a little while she said again, ‘Ah, now I must part with you. Here comes Death. Now I must close your eyes.’ And she did so.

The carpenter believed everything that his wife said, and so he believed now that he was dead, and lay still and let her do as she pleased.

She got her neighbours summoned, and they helped to lay him in the coffin — it was one of those he himself had made; but his wife had bored holes in it to let him get some air. She made a soft bed under him, and put a coverlet over him, and she folded his hands over his breast; but instead of a flower or a psalm-book, she gave him a pint-bottle of brandy in his hands. After he had lain for a little he took a little pull at this, and then another and another, and he thought this did him good, and soon he was sleeping sweetly, and dreaming that he was in heaven.

Meanwhile word had gone round the village that the carpenter was dead, and was to be buried next day.

It was now the turn of the smith’s wife. Her husband was lying sleeping off the effects of a drinking bout, so she pulled off all his clothes and made him black as coal from head to foot, and then let him sleep till far on in the day.

The funeral party had already met at the carpenter’s, and marched oft towards the church with the coffin, when the smith’s wife came rushing in to her husband.

‘Gracious, man,’ said she, ‘you are lying there yet? You are sleeping too long. You know you are going to the funeral.’

The smith was quite confused; he knew nothing about any funeral.

‘It’s our neighbour the carpenter,’ said his wife, ‘who is to be buried to-day. They are already half-way to church with him.’

‘All right,’ said the smith, ‘make haste to help me on with my black clothes.’

‘What nonsense!’ said his wife, ‘you have them on already. Be off with you now.’

The smith looked down at his person and saw that he was a good deal blacker than he usually was, so he caught up his hat and ran out after the funeral. This was already close to the church, and the smith wanted to take part in carrying the coffin, like a good neighbour. So he ran with all his might, and shouted after them, ‘Hey! wait a little; let me get a hold of him!’

The people turned round and saw the black figure coming, and thought it was the devil himself, who wanted to get hold of the carpenter, so they threw down the coffin and took to their heels.

The lid sprang off the coffin with the shock, and the carpenter woke up and looked out. He remembered the whole affair; he knew that he was dead and was going to be buried, and recognising the smith, he said to him, in a low voice, ‘My good neighbour, if I hadn’t been dead already, I should have laughed myself to death now to see you coming like this to my funeral.’

From that time forth the carpenter’s wife drank free of expense every Sunday, for the others had to admit that she had fooled her husband the best.

King Lindorm

From the Swedish.

There once lived a king and a queen who ruled over a very great kingdom. They had large revenues, and lived happily with each other; but, as the years went past, the king's heart became heavy, because the queen had no children. She also sorrowed greatly over it, because, although the king said nothing to her about this trouble, yet she could see that it vexed him that they had no heir to the kingdom; and she wished every day that she might have one.

One day a poor old woman came to the castle and asked to speak with the queen. The royal servants answered that they could not let such a poor beggar-woman go in to their royal mistress. They offered her a penny, and told her to go away. Then the woman desired them to tell the queen that there stood at the palace gate one who would help her secret sorrow. This message was taken to the queen, who gave orders to bring the old woman to her. This was done, and the old woman said to her:

'I know your secret sorrow, O queen, and am come to help you in it. You wish to have a son; you shall have two if you follow my instructions.'

The queen was greatly surprised that the old woman knew her secret wish so well, and promised to follow her advice.

'You must have a bath set in your room, O queen,' said she, 'and filled with running water. When you have bathed in this you will find. under the bath two red onions. These you must carefully peel and eat, and in time your wish will be fulfilled.'

The queen did as the poor woman told her; and after she had bathed she found the two onions under the bath. They were both alike in size and appearance. When she saw these she knew that the woman had been something more than she seemed to be, and in her delight she ate up one of the onions, skin and all. When she had done so she remembered that the woman had told her to peel them carefully before she ate them. It was now too late for the one of them, but she peeled the other and then ate it too.

In due time it happened as the woman had said; but the first that the queen gave birth to was a hideous lindorm, or serpent. No one saw this but her waiting-woman, who threw it out of the window into the forest beside the castle. The next that came into the world was the most beautiful little prince, and he was shown to the king and queen, who knew nothing about his brother the lindorm.

There was now joy in all the palace and over the whole country on account of the beautiful prince; but no one knew that the queen’s first-born was a lindorm, and lay in the wild forest. Time passed with the king, the queen, and the young prince in all happiness and prosperity, until he was twenty years of his age. Then his parents said to him that he should journey to another kingdom and seek for himself a bride, for they were beginning to grow old, and would fain see their son married. before they were laid in their grave. The prince obeyed, had his horses harnessed to his gilded chariot, and set out to woo his bride. But when he came to the first cross-ways there lay a huge and terrible lindorm right across the road, so that his horses had to come to a standstill.

‘Where are you driving to? ‘ asked the lindorm with a hideous voice.

‘That does not concern you,’ said the prince. ‘I am the prince, and can drive where I please.’

‘Turn back,’ said the lindorm. ‘I know your errand, but you shall get no bride until I have got a mate and slept by her side.’

The prince turned home again, and told the king and the queen what he had met at the cross-roads; but they thought that he should try again on the following day, and see whether he could not get past it, so that he might seek a bride in another kingdom.

The prince did so, but got no further than the first cross-roads; there lay the lindorm again, who stopped him in the same way as before.

The same thing happened on the third day when the prince tried to get past: the lindorm said, with a threatening voice, that before the prince could get a bride he himself must find a mate.

When the king and queen heard this for the third time they could think of no better plan than to invite the lindorm to the palace, and they should find him a mate. They thought that a lindorm would be quite well satisfied with anyone that they might give him, and so they would get some slave-woman to marry the monster. The lindorm came to the palace and received a bride of this kind, but in the morning she lay torn in pieces. So it happened every time that the king and queen compelled any woman to be his bride.

The report of this soon spread over all the country. Now it happened that there was a man who had married a second time, and his wife heard of the lindorm with great delight. Her husband had a daughter by his first wife who was more beautiful than all other maidens, and so gentle and good that she won the heart of all who knew her. His second wife, however, had also a grown-up daughter, who by herself would have been ugly and disagreeable enough, but beside her good and beautiful stepsister seemed still more ugly and wicked, so that all turned from her with loathing.

The stepmother had long been annoyed that her husband’s daughter was so much more beautiful than her own, and in her heart she conceived a bitter hatred for her stepdaughter. When she now heard that there was in the king’s palace a lindorm which tore in pieces all the women that were married to him, and demanded a beautiful maiden for his bride, she went to the king, and said that her stepdaughter wished to wed the lindorm, so that the country’s only prince might travel and seek a bride. At this the king was greatly delighted, and gave orders that the young girl should be brought to the palace.

When the messengers came to fetch her she was terribly frightened, for she knew that it was her wicked stepmother who in this way was aiming at her life. She begged that she might be allowed to spend another night in her father’s house. This was granted her, and she went to her mother’s grave. There she lamented her hard fate in being given over to the lindorm, and earnestly prayed her mother for counsel. How long she lay there by the grave and wept one cannot tell, but sure it is that she fell asleep and slept until the sun rose. Then she rose up from the grave, quite happy at heart, and began to search about in the fields. There she found three nuts, which she carefully put away in her pocket.

‘When I come into very great danger I must break one of these,’ she said to herself. Then she went home, and set out quite willingly with the king’s messengers.

When these arrived at the palace with the beautiful young maiden everyone pitied her fate; but she herself was of good courage, and asked the queen for another bridal chamber than the one the lindorm had had before. She got this, and then she requested them to put a pot full of strong lye on the fire and lay down three new scrubbing brushes. The queen gave orders that everything should be done as she desired; and then the maiden dressed herself in seven clean snow-white shirts, and held her wedding with the lindorm.

When they were left alone in the bridal chamber the lindorm, in a threatening voice, ordered her to undress herself.

‘Undress yourself first!’ said she.

‘None of the others bade me do that,’ said he in surprise.

‘But I bid you,’ said she.

Then the lindorm began to writhe, and groan, and breathe heavily; and after a little he had cast his outer skin, which lay on the floor, hideous to behold. Then his bride took off one of her snow-white shirts, and cast it on the lindorm’s skin. Again he ordered her to undress, and again she commanded him to do so first. He had to obey, and with groaning and pain cast off one skin after another, and for each skin the maiden threw off one of her shirts, until there lay on the floor seven lindorm skins and six snow-white shirts; the seventh she still had on. The lindorm now lay before her as a formless, slimy mass, which she with all her might began to scrub with the lye and new scrubbing brushes.

When she had nearly worn out the last of these there stood before her the loveliest youth in the world. He thanked her for having saved him from his enchantment, and told her that he was the king and queen’s eldest son, and heir to the kingdom. Then he asked her whether she would keep the promise she had made to the lindorm, to share everything with him. To this she was well content to answer ‘Yes.’

Each time that the lindorm had held his wedding one of the king’s retainers was sent next morning to open the door of the bridal chamber and see whether the bride was alive. This next morning also he peeped in at the door, but what he saw there surprised him so much that he shut the door in a hurry, and hastened to the king and queen, who were waiting for his report. He told them of the wonderful sight he had seen. On the floor lay seven lindorm skins and six snow-white shirts, and beside these three worn-out scrubbing brushes, while in the bed a beautiful youth was lying asleep beside the fair young maiden.

The king and queen marvelled greatly what this could mean; but just then the old woman who was spoken of in the beginning of the story was again brought in to the queen. She reminded her how she had not followed her instructions, but had eaten the first onion with all its skins, on which account her first-born had been a lindorm. The waiting-woman was then summoned, and admitted that she had thrown it out through the window into the forest. The king and queen now sent for their eldest son and his young bride. They took them both in their arms, and asked him to tell about his sorrowful lot during the twenty years he had lived in the forest as a hideous lindorm. This he did, and then his parents had it proclaimed over the whole country that he was their eldest son, and along with his spouse should inherit the country and kingdom after them.

Prince Lindorm and his beautiful wife now lived in joy and prosperity for a time in the palace; and when his father was laid in the grave, not long after this, he obtained the whole kingdom. Soon afterwards his mother also departed from this world.

Now it happened that an enemy declared war against the young king; and, as he foresaw that it would be three years at the least before he could return to his country and his queen, he ordered all his servants who remained at home to guard her most carefully. That they might be able to write to each other in confidence, he had two seal rings made, one for himself and one for his young queen, and issued an order that no one, under pain of death, was to open any letter that was sealed with one of these. Then he took farewell of his queen, and marched out to war.

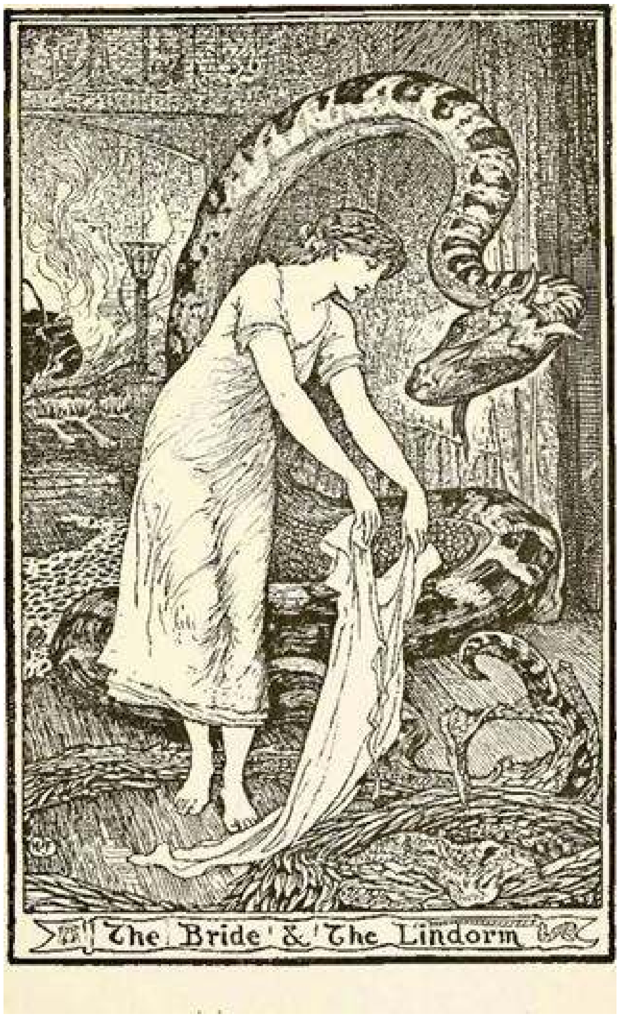

The Bride & The Lindorm

The queen’s wicked stepmother had heard with great grief that her beautiful stepdaughter had prospered so well that she had not only preserved her life, but had even become queen of the country. She now plotted continually how she might destroy her good fortune. While King Lindorm was away at the war the wicked woman came to the queen, and spoke fair to her, saying that she had always foreseen that her stepdaughter was destined to be something great in the world, and that she had on this account secured that she should be the enchanted prince’s bride. The queen, who did not imagine that any person could be so deceitful, bade her stepmother welcome, and kept her beside her.

Soon after this the queen had two children, the prettiest boys that anyone could see. When she had written a letter to the king to tell him of this her stepmother asked leave to comb her hair for her, as her own mother used to do. The queen gave her permission, and the stepmother combed her hair until she fell asleep. Then she took the seal ring off her neck, and exchanged the letter for another, in which she had written that the queen had given birth to two whelps.

When the king received. this letter he was greatly distressed, but he remembered how he himself had lived for twenty years as a lindorm, and had been freed from the spell by his young queen. He therefore wrote back to his most trusted retainer that the queen and her two whelps should be taken care of while he was away.

The stepmother, however, took this letter as well, and wrote a new one, in which the king ordered that the queen and the two little princes should be burnt at the stake. This she also sealed with the queen's seal, which was in all respects like the king's.

The retainer was greatly shocked and grieved at the king's orders, for which he could discover no reason; but, as he had not the heart to destroy three innocent beings, he had a great fire kindled, and in this he burned a sheep and two lambs, so as to make people believe that he had carried out the king's commands. The stepmother had made these known to the people, adding that the queen was a wicked sorceress.

The faithful servant, however, told the queen that it was the king's command that during the years he was absent in the war she should keep herself concealed in the castle, so that no one but himself should see her and the little princes.

The queen obeyed, and no one knew but that both she and her children had been burned. But when the time came near for King Lindorm to return home from the war the old retainer grew frightened because he had not obeyed his orders. He therefore went to the queen, and told her everything, at the same time showing her the king's letter containing the command to burn her and the princes. He then begged her to leave the palace before the king returned.

The queen now took her two little sons, and wandered out into the wild forest. They walked all day without ending a human habitation, and became very tired. The queen then caught sight of a man who carried some venison. He seemed very poor and wretched, but the queen was glad to see a human being, and asked him whether he knew where she and her little children could get a house over their heads for the night.

The man answered that he had a little hut in the forest, and that she could rest there; but he also said that he was one who lived entirely apart from men, and owned no more than the hut, a horse, and a dog, and supported himself by hunting.

The queen followed him to the hut and rested there overnight with her children, and when she awoke in the morning the man had already gone out hunting. The queen then began to put the room in order and prepare food, so that when the man came home he found everything neat and tidy, and this seemed to give him some pleasure. He spoke but little, however, and all that he said about himself was that his name was Peter.

Later in the day he rode out into the forest, and the queen thought that he looked very unhappy. While he was away she looked about her in the hut a little more closely, and found a tub full of shirts stained with blood, lying among water. She was surprised at this, but thought that the man would get the blood on his shirt when he was carrying home venison. She washed the shirts, and hung them up to dry, and said nothing to Peter about the matter.

After some time had passed she noticed that every day he came riding home from the forest he took off a blood-stained shirt and put on a clean one. She then saw that it was something else than the blood of the deer that stained his shirts, so one day she took courage and asked him about it.

At first he refused to tell her, but she then related to him her own story, and how she had succeeded in delivering the lindorm. He then told her that he had formerly lived a wild life, and had finally entered into a written contract * with the Evil Spirit. Before this contract had expired he had repented and turned from his evil ways, and withdrawn himself to this solitude. The Evil One had then lost all power to take him, but so long as he had the contract he could compel him to meet him in the forest each day at a certain time, where the evil spirits then scourged him till he bled.

Next day, when the time came for the man to ride into the forest, the queen asked him to stay at home and look after the princes, and she would go to meet the evil spirits in his place. The man was amazed, and said that this would not only cost her her life, but would also bring upon him a greater misfortune than the one he was already under. She bade him be of good courage, looked to see that she had the three nuts which she had found beside her mother’s grave, mounted her horse, and rode out into the forest. When she had ridden for some time the evil spirits came forth and said, ‘Here comes Peter’s horse and Peter’s hound; but Peter himself is not with them.’

Then at a distance she heard a terrible voice demanding to know what she wanted.

‘I have come to get Peter’s contract,’ said she.

At this there arose a terrible uproar among the evil spirits, and the worst voice among them all said, ‘Ride home and tell Peter that when he comes to-morrow he shall get twice as many strokes as usual.’

The queen then took one of her nuts and cracked it, and turned her horse about. At this sparks of fire flew out of all the trees, and the evil spirits howled as if they were being scourged back to their abode.

Next day at the same time the queen again rode out into the forest; but on this occasion the spirits did not dare to come so near her. They would not, however, give up the contract, but threatened both her and the man. Then she cracked her second nut, and all the forest behind her seemed to be in fire and flames, and the evil spirits howled even worse than on the previous day; but the contract they would not give up.

The queen had only one nut left now, but even that she was ready to give up in order to deliver the man. This time she cracked the nut as soon as she came near the place where the spirits appeared, and what then happened to them she could not see, but amid wild screams and howls the contract was handed to her at the end of a long branch. The queen rode happy home to the hut, and happier still was the man, who had been sitting there in great anxiety, for now he was freed from all the power of the evil spirits.

Meanwhile King Lindorm had come home from the war, and the first question he asked when he entered the palace was about the queen and the whelps. The attendants were surprised: they knew of no whelps. The queen had had two beautiful princes; but the king had sent orders that all these were to be burned.

The king grew pale with sorrow and anger, and ordered them to summon his trusted retainer, to whom he had sent the instructions that the queen and the whelps were to be carefully looked after. The retainer, however, showed him the letter in which there was written that the queen and her children were to be burned, and everyone then understood that some great treachery had been enacted.

When the king's trusted retainer saw his master's deep sorrow he confessed to him that he had spared the lives of the queen and the princes, and had only burned a sheep and two lambs, and had kept the queen and her children hidden in the palace for three years, but had sent her out into the wild forest just when the king was expected home. When the king heard this his sorrow was lessened, and he said that he would wander out into the forest and search for his wife and children. If he found them he would return to his palace; but if he did not find them he would never see it again, and in that case the faithful retainer who had saved the lives of the queen and the princes should be king in his stead.

The king then went forth alone into the wild forest, and wandered there the whole day without seeing a single human being. So it went with him the second day also, but on the third day he came by roundabout ways to the little hut. He went in there, and asked for leave to rest himself for a little on the bench. The queen and the princes were there, but she was poorly clad and so sorrowful that the king did not recognise her, neither did he think for a moment that the two children, who were dressed only in rough skins, were his own sons.

He lay down on the bench, and, tired as he was, he soon fell asleep. The bench was a narrow one, and as he slept his arm fell down and hung by the side of it.

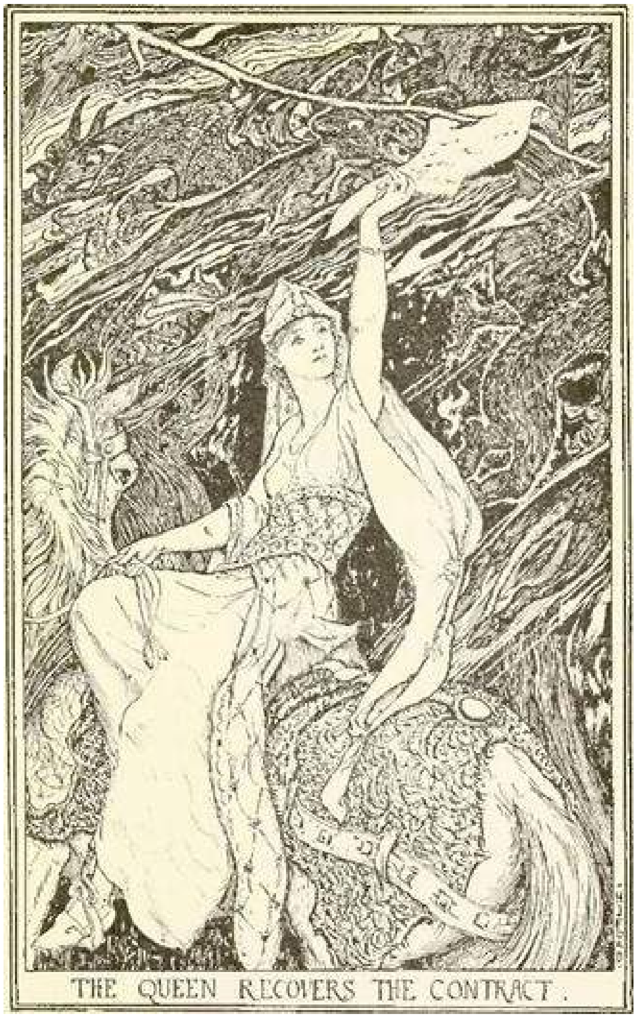

THE QUEEN RECOVERS THE CONTRACT.

‘My son, go and lift your father’s arm up on the bench,’ said the queen to one of the princes, for she easily knew the king again, although she was afraid to make herself known to him. The boy went and took the king’s arm, but, being only a child, he did not lift it up very gently on to the bench.

The king woke at this, thinking at first that he had fallen into a den of robbers, but he decided to keep quiet and pretend that he was asleep until he should find out what kind of folk were in the house. He lay still for a little, and, as no one moved in the room, he again let his arm glide down off the bench. Then he heard a woman’s voice say, ‘My son, go you and lift your father’s arm up on the bench, but don’t do it so roughly as your brother did.’ Then he felt a pair of little hands softly clasping his arm; he opened his eyes, and saw his queen and her children.

He sprang up and caught all three in his arms, and afterwards took them, along with the man and his horse and his hound, back to the palace with great joy. The most unbounded rejoicing reigned there then, as well as over the whole kingdom, but the wicked stepmother was burned.

King Lindorm lived long and happily with his queen, and there are some who say that if they are not dead now they are still living to this day.

The Jackal, the Dove, and the Panther

Contes populaires des Bassoutos. Recueillis et traduits par E. Jacottet. Paris: Leroux, Editeur.

There was once a dove who built a nice soft nest as a home for her three little ones. She was very proud of their beauty, and perhaps talked about them to her neighbours more than she need have done, till at last everybody for miles round knew where the three prettiest baby doves in the whole country-side were to be found.

One day a jackal who was prowling about in search of a dinner came by chance to the foot of the rock where the dove's nest was hidden away, and he suddenly bethought himself that if he could get nothing better he might manage to make a mouthful of one of the young doves. So he shouted as loud as he could, 'Ohe, ohe, mother dove.'

And the dove replied, trembling with fear, 'What do you want, sir?'

'One of your children,' said he; 'and if you don't throw it to me I will eat up you and the others as well.'

Now, the dove was nearly driven distracted at the jackal's words; but, in order to save the lives of the other two, she did at last throw the little one out of the nest. The jackal ate it up, and went home to sleep.

Meanwhile the mother dove sat on the edge of her nest, crying bitterly, when a heron, who was flying slowly past the rock, was filled with pity for her, and stopped to ask, 'What is the matter, you poor dove?'

And the dove answered, 'A jackal came by, and asked me to give him one of my little ones, and said that if I refused he would jump on my nest and eat us all up.'

But the heron replied, 'You should not have believed him. He could never have jumped so high. He only deceived you because he wanted something for supper.' And with these words the heron flew off.

He had hardly got out of sight when again the jackal came creeping slowly round the foot of the rock. And when he saw the dove he cried out a second time, 'Ohe, ohe, mother dove! give me one of your little ones, or I will jump on your nest and eat you all up.'

This time the dove knew better, and she answered boldly, 'Indeed, I shall do nothing of the sort,' though her heart beat wildly with fear when she saw the jackal preparing for a spring.

However, he only cut himself against the rock, and thought he had better stick to threats, so he started again with his old cry, ‘Mother dove, mother dove! be quick and give me one of your little ones, or I will eat you all up.’

But the mother dove only answered as before, ‘Indeed, I shall do nothing of the sort, for I know we are safely out of your reach.’

The jackal felt it was quite hopeless to get what he wanted, and asked, ‘Tell me, mother dove, how have you suddenly become so wise?’

‘It was the heron who told me,’ replied she.

‘And which way did he go?’ said the jackal.

‘Down there among the reeds. You can see him if you look,’ said the dove.

Then the jackal nodded good-bye, and went quickly after the heron. He soon came up to the great bird, who was standing on a stone on the edge of the river watching for a nice fat fish. ‘Tell me, heron,’ said he, ‘when the wind blows from that quarter, to which side do you turn?’

‘And which side do you turn to?’ asked the heron.

The jackal answered, ‘I always turn to this side.’

‘Then that is the side I turn to,’ remarked the heron.

‘And when the rain comes from that quarter, which side do you turn to?’

And the heron replied, ‘And which side do you turn to?’

‘Oh, I always turn to this side,’ said the jackal.

‘Then that is the side I turn to,’ said the heron.

‘And when the rain comes straight down, what do you do?’

‘What do you do yourself?’ asked the heron.

‘I do this,’ answered the jackal. ‘I cover my head with my paws.’

‘Then that is what I do,’ said the heron. ‘I cover my head with my wings,’ and as he spoke he lifted his large wings and spread them completely over his head.

With one bound the jackal had seized him by the neck, and began to shake him.

‘Oh, have pity, have pity!’ cried the heron. ‘I never did you any harm.’

‘You told the dove how to get the better of me, and I am going to eat you for it.’

‘But if you will let me go,’ entreated the heron, ‘I will show you the place where the panther has her lair.’

‘Then you had better be quick about it,’ said the jackal, holding tight on to the heron until he had pointed out the panther’s den. ‘Now you may go, my friend, for there is plenty of food here for me.’

So the jackal came up to the panther, and asked politely, ‘Panther, would you like me to look after your children while you are out hunting?’

‘I should be very much obliged,’ said the panther; ‘but be sure you take care of them. They always cry all the time that I am away.’

So saying she trotted off, and the jackal marched into the cave, where he found ten little panthers, and instantly ate one up. By-and-bye the panther returned from hunting, and said to him, ‘Jackal, bring out my little ones for their supper.’

The jackal fetched them out one by one till he had brought out nine, and he took the last one and brought it out again, so the whole ten seemed to be there, and the panther was quite satisfied.

Next day she went again to the chase, and the jackal ate up another little panther, so now there were only eight. In the evening, when she came back, the panther said, ‘Jackal, bring out my little ones!’

And the jackal brought out first one and then another, and the last one he brought out three times, so that the whole ten seemed to be there.

The following day the same thing happened, and the next and the next and the next, till at length there was not even one left, and the rest of the day the jackal busied himself with digging a large hole at the back of the den.

That night, when the panther returned from hunting, she said to him as usual, ‘Jackal, bring out my little ones.’

But the jackal replied: ‘Bring out your little ones, indeed! Why, you know as well as I do that you have eaten them all up.’

Of course the panther had not the least idea what the jackal meant by this, and only repeated, ‘Jackal, bring out my children.’ As she got no answer she entered the cave, but found no jackal, for he had crawled through the hole he had made and escaped. And, what was worse, she did not find the little ones either.

Now the panther was not going to let the jackal get off like that, and set off at a trot to catch him. The jackal, however, had got a good start, and he reached a place where a swarm of bees deposited their honey in the cleft of a rock. Then he stood still and waited till the panther came up to him: ‘Jackal, where are my little ones?’ she asked.

And the jackal answered: ‘They are up there. It is where I keep school.’

The panther looked about, and then inquired, ‘But where? I see nothing of them.’

‘Come a little this way,’ said the jackal, ‘and you will hear how beautifully they sing.’

So the panther drew near the cleft of the rock.

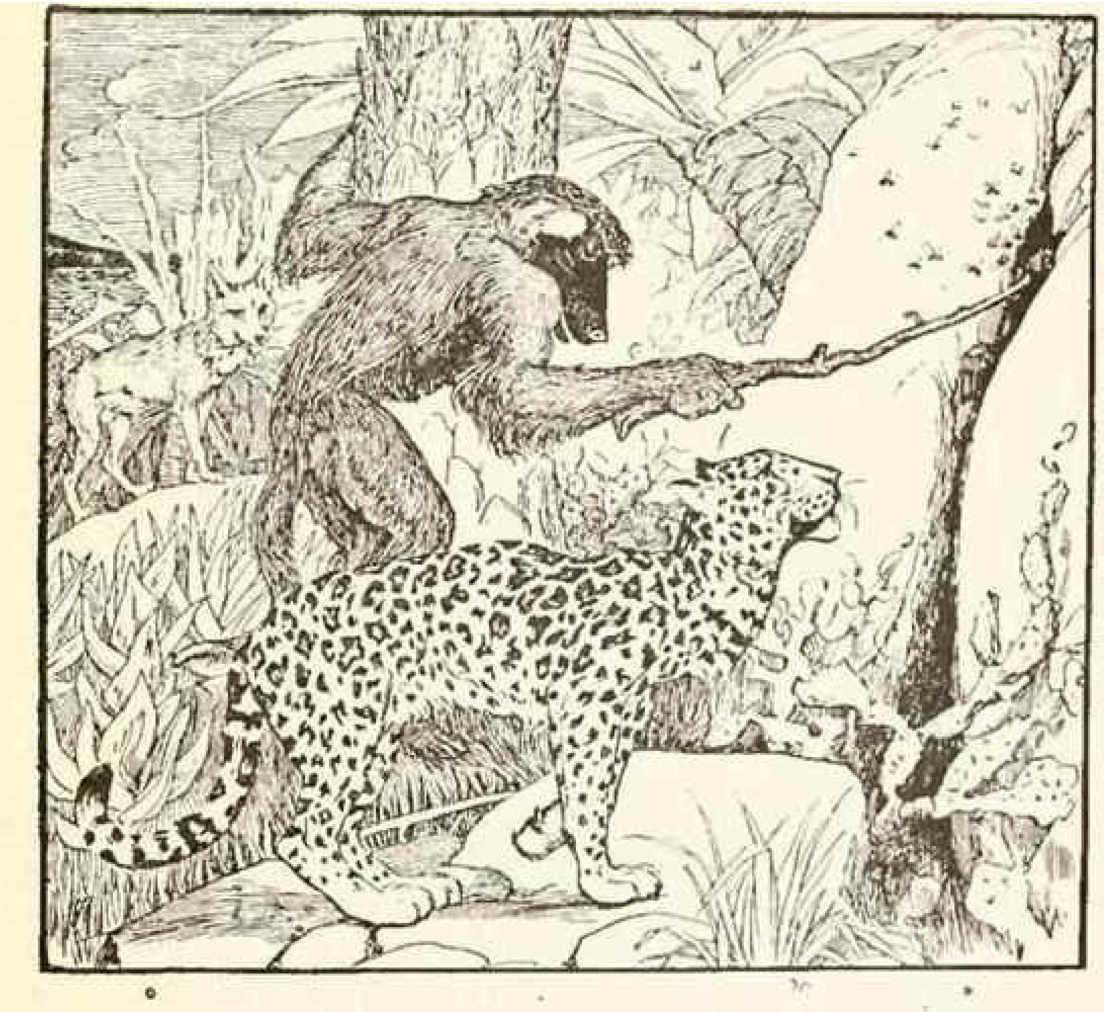

‘Don’t you hear them?’ said the jackal; ‘they are in there,’ and slipped away while the panther was listening to the song of the children.

She was still standing in the same place when a baboon went by. ‘What are you doing there, panther?’

‘I am listening to my children singing. It is here that the jackal keeps his school.’

Then the baboon seized a stick, and poked it in the cleft of the rock, exclaiming, ‘Well, then, I should like to see your children!’

The bees flew out in a huge swarm, and made furiously for the panther, whom they attacked on all sides, while the baboon soon climbed up out of the way, crying, as he perched himself on the branch of a tree, ‘I wish you joy of your children!’ while from afar the jackal’s voice was heard exclaiming: ‘Sting, her well! don’t let her go!’

The panther galloped away as if she was mad, and flung herself into the nearest lake, but every time she raised her head, the bees stung her afresh so at last the poor beast was drowned altogether.

The Little Hare

Contes populaires des Bassoutos. Recueillis et traduits par E. Jacottet. Paris: Leroux, Editeur.

A long, long way off, in a land where water is very scarce, there lived a man and his wife and several children. One day the wife said to her husband, ‘I am pining to have the liver of a nyamatsane for my dinner. If you love me as much as you say you do, you will go out and hunt for a nyamatsane, and will kill it and get its liver. If not, I shall know that your love is not worth having.’

‘Bake some bread,’ was all her husband answered, ‘then take the crust and put it in this little bag.’

The wife did as she was told, and when she had finished she said to her husband, ‘The bag is all ready and quite full.’

‘Very well,’ said he, ‘and now good-bye; I am going after the nyamatsane.’

But the nyamatsane was not so easy to find as the woman had hoped. The husband walked on and on and on without ever seeing one, and every now and then he felt so hungry that he was obliged to eat one of the crusts of bread out of his bag. At last, when he was ready to drop from fatigue, he found himself on the edge of a great marsh, which bordered on one side the country of the nyamatsanes. But there were no more nyamatsanes here than anywhere else. They had all gone on a hunting expedition, as their larder was empty, and the only person left at home was their grandmother, who was so feeble she never went out of the house. Our friend looked on this as a great piece of luck, and made haste to kill her before the others returned, and to take out her liver, after which he dressed himself in her skin as well as he could. He had scarcely done this when he heard the noise of the nyamatsanes coming back to their grandmother, for they were very fond of her, and never stayed away from her longer than they could help. They rushed clattering into the hut, exclaiming, ‘We smell human flesh! Some man is here,’ and began to look about for him; but they only saw their old grandmother, who answered, in a trembling voice, ‘No, my children, no! What should any man be doing here?’ The nyamatsanes paid no attention to her, and began to open all the cupboards, and peep under all the beds, crying out all the while, ‘A man is here! a man is here!’ but they could find nobody, and at length, tired out with their long day’s hunting, they curled themselves up and fell asleep.

Next morning they woke up quite refreshed, and made ready to start on another expedition; but as they did not feel happy about their grandmother they said to her, ‘Grandmother, won’t you come to-day and feed with us?’ And they led their grandmother outside, and all of them began hungrily to eat pebbles. Our friend pretended to do the same, but in reality he slipped the stones into his pouch, and swallowed the crusts of bread instead. However, as the nyamatsanes did not see this they had no idea that he was not really their grandmother. When they had eaten a great many pebbles they thought they had done enough for that day, and all went home together and curled themselves up to sleep. Next morning when they woke they said, ‘Let us go and amuse ourselves by jumping over the ditch,’ and every time they cleared it with a bound. Then they begged their grandmother to jump over it too, end with a tremendous effort she managed to spring right over to the other side. After this they had no doubt at all of its being their true grandmother, and went off to their hunting, leaving our friend at home in the hut.

As soon as they had gone out of sight our hero made haste to take the liver from the place where he had hid it, threw off the skin of the old nyamatsane, and ran away as hard as he could, only stopping to pick up a very brilliant and polished little stone, which he put in his bag by the side of the liver.

Towards evening the nyamatsanes came back to the hut full of anxiety to know how their grandmother had got on during their absence. The first thing they saw on entering the door was her skin lying on the floor, and then they knew that they had been deceived, and they said to each other, ‘So we were right, after all, and it was human flesh we smelt.’ Then they stooped down to find traces of the man’s footsteps, and when they had got them instantly set out in hot pursuit.

Meanwhile our friend had journeyed many miles, and was beginning to feel quite safe and comfortable, when, happening to look round, he saw in the distance a thick cloud of dust moving rapidly. His heart stood still within him, and he said to himself, ‘I am lost. It is the nyamatsanes, and they will tear me in pieces,’ and indeed the cloud of dust was drawing near with amazing quickness, and the nyamatsanes almost felt as if they were already devouring him. Then as a last hope the man took the little stone that he had picked up out of his bag and flung it on the ground. The moment it touched the soil it became a huge rock, whose steep sides were smooth as glass, and on the top of it our hero hastily seated himself. It was in vain that the nyamatsanes tried to climb up and reach him; they slid down again much faster than they had gone up; and by sunset they were quite worn out, and fell asleep at the foot of the rock.

No sooner had the nyamatsanes tumbled off to sleep than the man stole softly down and fled away as fast as his legs would carry him, and by the time his enemies were awake he was a very long way off. They sprang quickly to their feet and began to sniff the soil round the rock, in order to discover traces of his footsteps, and they galloped after him with terrific speed. The chase continued for several days and nights; several times the nyamatsanes almost reached him, and each time he was saved by his little pebble.

Between his fright and his hurry he was almost dead of exhaustion when he reached his own village, where the nyamatsanes could not follow him, because of their enemies the dogs, which swarmed over all the roads. So they returned home.

Then our friend staggered into his own hut and called to his wife: ‘Ichou! how tired I am! Quick, give me something to drink. Then go and get fuel and light a fire.’

So she did what she was bid, and then her husband took the nyamatsane’s liver from his pouch and said to her, ‘There, I have brought you what you wanted, and now you know that I love you truly.’

And the wife answered, ‘It is well. Now go and take out the children, so that I may remain alone in the hut,’ and as she spoke she lifted down an old stone pot and put on the liver to cook. Her husband watched her for a moment, and then said, ‘Be sure you eat it all yourself. Do not give a scrap to any of the children, but eat every morsel up.’ So the woman took the liver and ate it all herself.

Directly the last mouthful had disappeared she was seized with such violent thirst that she caught up a great pot full of water and drank it at a single draught. Then, having no more in the house, she ran in next door and said, ‘Neighbour, give me, I pray you, something to drink.’ The neighbour gave her a large vessel quite full, and the woman drank it off at a single draught, and held it out for more.

But the neighbour pushed her away, saying, ‘No, I shall have none left for my children.’

So the woman went into another house, and drank all the water she could find; but the more she drank the more thirsty she became. She wandered in this manner through the whole village till she had drunk every water-pot dry. Then she rushed off to the nearest spring, and swallowed that, and when she had finished all the springs and wells about she drank up first the river and then a lake. But by this time she had drunk so much that she could not rise from the ground.

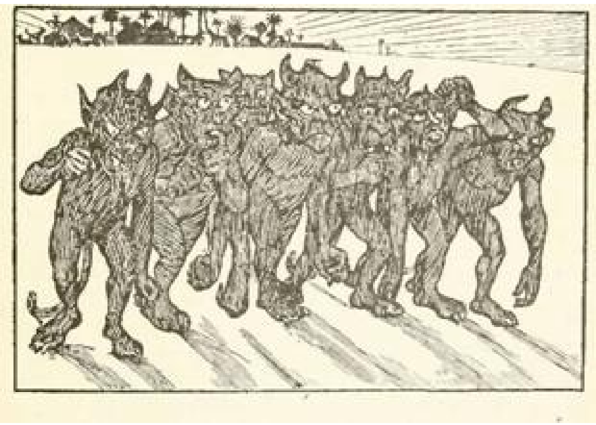

In the evening, when it was time for the animals to have their drink before going to bed, they found the lake quite dry, and they had to make up their minds to be thirsty till the water flowed again and the streams were full. Even then, for some time, the lake was very dirty, and the lion, as king of the beasts, commanded that no one should drink till it was quite clear again.

But the little hare, who was fond of having his own way, and was very thirsty besides, stole quietly off when all the rest were asleep in their dens, and crept down to the margin of the lake and drank his fill. Then he smeared the dirty water all over the rabbit’s face and paws, so that it might look as if it were he who had been disobeying Big Lion’s orders.

The next day, as soon as it was light, Big Lion marched straight for the lake, and all the other beasts followed him. He saw at once that the water had been troubled again, and was very angry.

‘Who has been drinking my water?’ said he; and the little hare gave a jump, and, pointing to the rabbit, he answered, ‘Look there! it must be he! Why, there is mud all over his face and paws!’

The rabbit, frightened out of his wits, tried to deny the fact, exclaiming, ‘Oh, no, indeed I never did;’ but Big Lion would not listen, and commanded them to cane him with a birch rod.

Now the little hare was very much pleased with his cleverness in causing the rabbit to be beaten instead of himself, and went about boasting of it. At last one of the other animals overheard him, and called out, ‘Little hare, little hare! what is that you are saying?’

But the little hare hastily replied, ‘I only asked you to pass me my stick.’

An hour or two later, thinking that no one was near him, he said to himself again, ‘It was really I who drank up the water, but I made them think it was the rabbit.’

But one of the beasts whose ears were longer than the rest caught the words, and went to tell Big Lion about it. Do you hear what the little hare is saying?’

So Big Lion sent for the little hare, and asked him what he meant by talking like that.

The little hare saw that there was no use trying to hide it, so he answered pertly, ‘It was I who drank the water, but I made them think it was the rabbit.’ Then he turned and ran as fast as he could, with all the other beasts pursuing him.

They were almost up to him when he dashed into a very narrow cleft in the rock, much too small for them to follow; but in his hurry he had left one of his long ears sticking out, which they just managed to seize. But pull as hard as they might they could not drag him out of the hole, and at last they gave it up and left him, with his ear very much torn and scratched.

When the last tail was out of sight the little hare crept cautiously out, and the first person he met was the rabbit. He had plenty of impudence, so he put a bold face on the matter, and said, ‘Well, my good rabbit, you see I have had a beating as well as you.’

But the rabbit was still sore and sulky, and he did not care to talk, so he answered, coldly, ‘You have treated me very badly. It was really you who drank that water, and you accused me of having done it.’

‘Oh, my good rabbit, never mind that! I’ve got such a wonderful secret to tell you! Do you know what to do so as to escape death?’

‘No, I don’t.’

‘Well, we must begin by digging a hole.’

So they dug a hole, and then the little hare said, ‘The next thing is to make a fire in the hole,’ and they set to work to collect wood, and lit quite a large fire.

When it was burning brightly the little hare said to the rabbit, ‘Rabbit, my friend, throw me into the fire, and when you hear my fur crackling, and I call “Itchi, Itchi,” then be quick and pull me out.’

The rabbit did as he was told, and threw the little hare into the fire; but no sooner did the little hare begin to feel the heat of the flames than he took some green bay leaves he had plucked for the purpose and held them in the middle of the fire, where they crackled and made a great noise. Then he called loudly ‘Itchi, Itchi! Rabbit, my friend, be quick, be quick! Don’t you hear how my skin is crackling?’

And the rabbit came in a great hurry and pulled him out.

Then the little hare said, ‘Now it is your turn!’ and he threw the rabbit in the fire. The moment the rabbit felt the flames he cried out ‘Itchi, Itchi, I am burning; pull me out quick, my friend!’

But the little hare only laughed, and said, ‘No, you may stay there! It is your own fault. Why were you such a fool as to let yourself be thrown in? Didn’t you know that fire burns?' And in a very few minutes nothing was left of the rabbit but a few bones.

When the fire was quite out the little hare went and picked up one of these bones, and made a flute out of it, and sang this song:

Pii, pii, O flute that I love, Pii, pii, rabbits are but little boys. Pii, pii, he would have burned me if he could; Pii, pii, but I burned him, and he crackled finely.

When he got tired of going through the world singing this the little hare went back to his friends and entered the service of Big Lion. One day he said to his master, 'Grandfather, shall I show you a splendid way to kill game?'

'What is it?' asked Big Lion.

'We must dig a ditch, and then you must lie in it and pretend to be dead.'

Big Lion did as he was told, and when he had lain down the little hare got up on a wall blew a trumpet and shouted —

Pii, pii, all you animals come and see, Big Lion is dead, and now peace will be.

Directly they heard this they all came running. The little hare received them and said, 'Pass on, this way to the lion.' So they all entered into the Animal Kingdom. Last of all came the monkey with her baby on her back. She approached the ditch, and took a blade of grass and tickled Big Lion's nose, and his nostrils moved in spite of his efforts to keep them still. Then the monkey cried, 'Come, my baby, climb on my back and let us go. What sort of a dead body is it that can still feel when it is tickled?' And she and her baby went away in a fright. Then the little hare said to the other beasts, 'Now, shut the gate of the Animal Kingdom.' And it was shut, and great stones were rolled against it. When everything was tight closed the little hare turned to Big Lion and said 'Now!' and Big Lion bounded out of the ditch and tore the other animals in pieces.

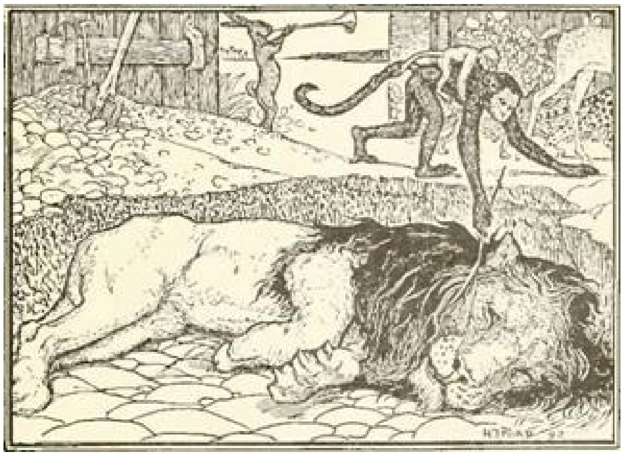

But Big Lion kept all the choice bits for himself, and only gave away the little scraps that he did not care about eating; and the little hare grew very angry, and determined to have his revenge. He had long ago found out that Big Lion was very easily taken in; so he laid his plans accordingly. He said to him, as if the idea had just come into his head, ‘Grandfather, let us build a hut,’ and Big Lion consented. And when they had driven the stakes into the ground, and had made the walls of the hut, the little hare told Big Lion to climb upon the top while he stayed inside. When he was ready he called out, ‘Now, grandfather, begin,’ and Big Lion passed his rod through the reeds with which the roofs are always covered in that country. The little hare took it and cried, ‘Now it is my turn to pierce them,’ and as he spoke he passed the rod back through the reeds and gave Big Lion’s tail a sharp poke.

‘What is pricking me so?’ asked Big Lion.

‘Oh, just a little branch sticking out. I am going to break it,’ answered the little hare; but of course he had done it on purpose, as he wanted to fix Big Lion’s tail so firmly to the hut that he would not be able to move. In a little while he gave another prick, and Big Lion called again, ‘What is pricking me so?’

This time the little hare said to himself, ‘He will find out what I am at. I must try some other plan. ‘So he called out, ‘Grandfather, you had better put your tongue here, so that the branches shall not touch you.’ Big Lion did as he was bid, and the little hare tied it tightly to the stakes of the wall. Then he went outside and shouted, ‘Grandfather, you can come down now,’ and Big Lion tried, but he could not move an inch.

Then the little hare began quietly to eat Big Lion’s dinner right before his eyes, and paying no attention at all to his growls of rage. When he had quite done he climbed up on the hut, and, blowing his flute, he chanted ‘Pii, pii, fall rain and hail,’ and directly the sky was full of clouds, the thunder roared, and huge hailstones whitened the roof of the hut. The little hare, who had taken refuge within, called out again, ‘Big Lion, be quick and come down and dine with me.’ But there was no answer, not even a growl, for the hailstones had killed Big Lion.

The little hare enjoyed himself vastly for some time, living comfortably in the hut, with plenty of food to eat and no trouble at all in getting it. But one day a great wind arose, and flung down the Big Lion’s half-dried skin from the roof of the hut. The little hare bounded with terror at the noise, for he thought Big Lion must have come to life again; but on discovering what had happened he set about cleaning the skin, and propped the mouth open with sticks so that he could get through. So, dressed in Big Lion’s skin, the little hare started on his travels.

The first visit he paid was to the hyaenas, who trembled at the sight of him, and whispered to each other, ‘How shall we escape from this terrible beast?’ Meanwhile the little hare did not trouble himself about them, but just asked where the king of the hyaenas lived, and made himself quite at home there. Every morning each hyaena thought to himself, ‘To-day he is certain to eat me;’ but several days went by, and they were all still alive. At length, one evening, the little hare, looking round for something to amuse him, noticed a great pot full of boiling water, so he strolled up to one of the hyaenas and said, ‘Go and get in.’ The hyaena dared not disobey, and in a few minutes was scalded to death. Then the little hare went the round of the village, saying to every hyaena he met, ‘Go and get into the boiling water,’ so that in a little while there was hardly a male left in the village.

One day all the hyaenas that remained alive went out very early into the fields, leaving only one little daughter at home. The little hare, thinking he was all alone, came into the enclosure, and, wishing to feel what it was like to be a hare again, threw off Big Lion’s skin, and began to jump and dance, singing —

I am just the little hare, the little hare, the little hare; I am just the little hare who killed the great hyaenas.

The little hyaena gazed at him in surprise, saying to herself, ‘What! was it really this tiny beast who put to death all our best people?’ when suddenly a gust of wind rustled the reeds that surrounded the enclosure, and the little hare, in a fright, hastily sprang back into Big Lion’s skin.

When the hyaenas returned to their homes the little hyaena said to her father: ‘Father, our tribe has very nearly been swept away, and all this has been the work of a tiny creature dressed in the lion’s skin.’

But her father answered, ‘Oh, my dear child, you don’t know what you are talking about.’

She replied, ‘Yes, father, it is quite true. I saw it with my own eyes.’

The father did not know what to think, and told one of his friends, who said, ‘To-morrow we had better keep watch ourselves.’

And the next day they hid themselves and waited till the little hare came out of the royal hut. He walked gaily towards the enclosure, threw off, Big Lion’s skin, and sang and danced as before —

I am just the little hare, the little hare, the little hare, I am just the little hare, who killed the great hyaenas.

That night the two hyaenas told all the rest, saying, ‘Do you know that we have allowed ourselves to be trampled on by a wretched creature with nothing of the lion about him but his skin?’

When supper was being cooked that evening, before they all went to bed, the little hare, looking fierce and terrible in Big Lion’s skin, said as usual to one of the hyaenas ‘Go and get into the boiling water.’ But the hyaena never stirred. There was silence for a moment; then a hyaena took a stone, and flung it with all his force against the lion’s skin. The little hare jumped out through the mouth with a single spring, and fled away like lightning, all the hyaenas in full pursuit uttering great cries. As he turned a corner the little hare cut off both his ears, so that they should not know him, and pretended to be working at a grindstone which lay there.

The hyaenas soon came up to him and said, ‘Tell me, friend, have you seen the little hare go by?’

‘No, I have seen no one.’

‘Where can he be?’ said the hyaenas one to another. ‘Of course, this creature is quite different, and not at all like the little hare.’ Then they went on their way, but, finding no traces of the little hare, they returned sadly to their village, saying, ‘To think we should have allowed ourselves to be swept away by a wretched creature like that!’

The Sparrow with the Slit Tongue

From the Japanische Marchen und Sagen.

A long long time ago, an old couple dwelt in the very heart of a high mountain. They lived together in peace and harmony, although they were very different in character, the man being good-natured and honest, and the wife being greedy and quarrelsome when anyone came her way that she could possibly quarrel with.

One day the old man was sitting in front of his cottage, as he was very fond of doing, when he saw flying towards him a little sparrow, followed by a big black raven. The poor little thing was very much frightened and cried out as it flew, and the great bird came behind it terribly fast, flapping its wings and craning its beak, for it was hungry and wanted some dinner. But as they drew near the old man, he jumped up, and beat back the raven, which mounted, with hoarse screams of disappointment, into the sky, and the little bird, freed from its enemy, nestled into the old man’s hand, and he carried it into the house. He stroked its feathers, and told it not to be afraid, for it was quite safe; but as he still felt its heart beating, he put it into a cage, where it soon plucked up courage to twitter and hop about. The old man was fond of all creatures, and every morning he used to open the cage door, and the sparrow flew happily about until it caught sight of a cat or a rat or some other fierce beast, when it would instantly return to the cage, knowing that there no harm could come to it.

The woman, who was always on the look-out for something to grumble at, grew very jealous of her husband’s affection for the bird, and would gladly have done it some harm had she dared. At last, one morning her opportunity came. Her husband had gone to the town some miles away down the mountain, and would not be back for several hours, but before he left he did not forget to open the door of the cage. The sparrow hopped about as usual, twittering happily, and thinking no evil, and all the while the woman’s brow became blacker and blacker, and at length her fury broke out. She threw her broom at the bird, who was perched on a bracket high up on the wall. The broom missed the bird, but knocked down and broke the vase on the bracket, which did not soothe the angry woman. Then she chased it from place to place, and at last had it safe between her fingers, almost as frightened as on the day that it had made its first entrance into the hut.

By this time the woman was more furious than ever. If she had dared, she would have killed the sparrow then and there, but as it was she only ventured to slit its tongue. The bird struggled and piped, but there was no one to hear it, and then, crying out loud with the pain, it flew from the house and was lost in the depths of the forest.

By-and-bye the old man came back, and at once began to ask for his pet. His wife, who was still in a very bad temper, told him the whole story, and scolded him roundly for being so silly as to make such a fuss over a bird. But the old man, who was much troubled, declared she was a bad, hard-hearted woman, to have behaved so to a poor harmless bird; then he left the house, and went into the forest to seek for his pet. He walked many hours, whistling and calling for it, but it never came, and he went sadly home, resolved to be out with the dawn and never to rest till he had brought the wanderer back. Day after day he searched and called; and evening after evening he returned in despair. At length he gave up hope, and made up his mind that he should see his little friend no more.

One hot summer morning, the old man was walking slowly under the cool shadows of the big trees, and without thinking where he was going, he entered a bamboo thicket. As the bamboos became thinner, he found himself opposite to a beautiful garden, in the centre of which stood a tiny spick-and-span little house, and out of the house came a lovely maiden, who unlatched the gate and invited him in the most hospitable way to enter and rest. ‘Oh, my dear old friend,’ she exclaimed, ‘how glad I am you have found me at last! I am your little sparrow, whose life you saved, and whom you took such care of.’

The old man seized her hands eagerly, but no time was given him to ask any questions, for the maiden drew him into the house, and set food before him, and waited on him herself.

While he was eating, the damsel and her maids took their lutes, and sang and danced to him, and altogether the hours passed so swiftly that the old man never saw that darkness had come, or remembered the scolding he would get from his wife for returning home so late.

Thus, in dancing and singing, and talking over the days when the maiden was a sparrow hopping in and out of her cage, the night passed away, and when the first rays of sun broke through the hedge of bamboo, the old man started up, thanked his hostess for her friendly welcome, and prepared to say farewell. ‘I am not going to let you depart like that,’ said she; ‘I have a present for you, which you must take as a sign of my gratitude.’ And as she spoke, her servants brought in two chests, one of them very small, the other large and heavy. ‘Now choose which of them you will carry with you.’ So the old man chose the small chest, and hid it under his cloak, and set out on his homeward way.

But as he drew near the house his heart sank a little, for he knew what a fury his wife would be in, and how she would abuse him for his absence. And it was even worse than he expected. However, long experience had taught him to let her storm and say nothing, so he lit his pipe and waited till she was tired out. The woman was still raging, and did not seem likely to stop, when her husband, who by this time had forgotten all about her, drew out the chest from under his cloak, and opened it. Oh, what a blaze met his eyes! gold and precious stones were heaped up to the very lid, and lay dancing in he sunlight. At the sight of these wonders even the scolding tongue ceased, and the woman approached, and took the stones in her hand, setting greedily aside those that were the largest and most costly. Then her voice softened, and she begged him quite politely to tell her where he had spent his evening, and how he had come by these wonderful riches. So he told her the whole story, and she listened with amazement, till he came to the choice which had been given him between the two chests. At this her tongue broke loose again, as she abused him for his folly in taking the little one, and she never rested till her husband had described the exact way which led to the sparrow-princess’s house. When she had got it into her head, she put on her best clothes and set out at once. But in her blind haste she often missed the path, and she wandered for several hours before she at length reached the little house. She walked boldly up to the door and entered the room as if the whole place belonged to her, and quite frightened the poor girl, who was startled at the sight of her old enemy. However, she concealed her feelings as well as she could, and bade the intruder welcome, placing before her food and wine, hoping that when she had eaten and drunk she might take her leave. But nothing of the sort.

‘You will not let me go without a little present?’ said the greedy wife, as she saw no signs of one being offered her. ‘Of course not,’ replied the girl, and at her orders two chests were brought in, as they had been before. The old woman instantly seized the bigger, and staggering under the weight of it, disappeared into the forest, hardly waiting even to say good-bye.

It was a long way to her own house, and the chest seemed to grow heavier at every step. Sometimes she felt as if it would be impossible for her to get on at all, but her greed gave her strength, and at last she arrived at her own door. She sank down on the threshold, overcome with weariness, but in a moment was on her feet again, fumbling with the lock of the chest. But by this time night had come, and there was no light in the house, and the woman was in too much hurry to get to her treasures, to go and look for one. At length, however, the lock gave way, and the lid flew open, when, O horror! instead of gold and jewels, she saw before her serpents with glittering eyes and forky tongues. And they twined themselves about her and darted poison into her veins, and she died, and no man regretted her.

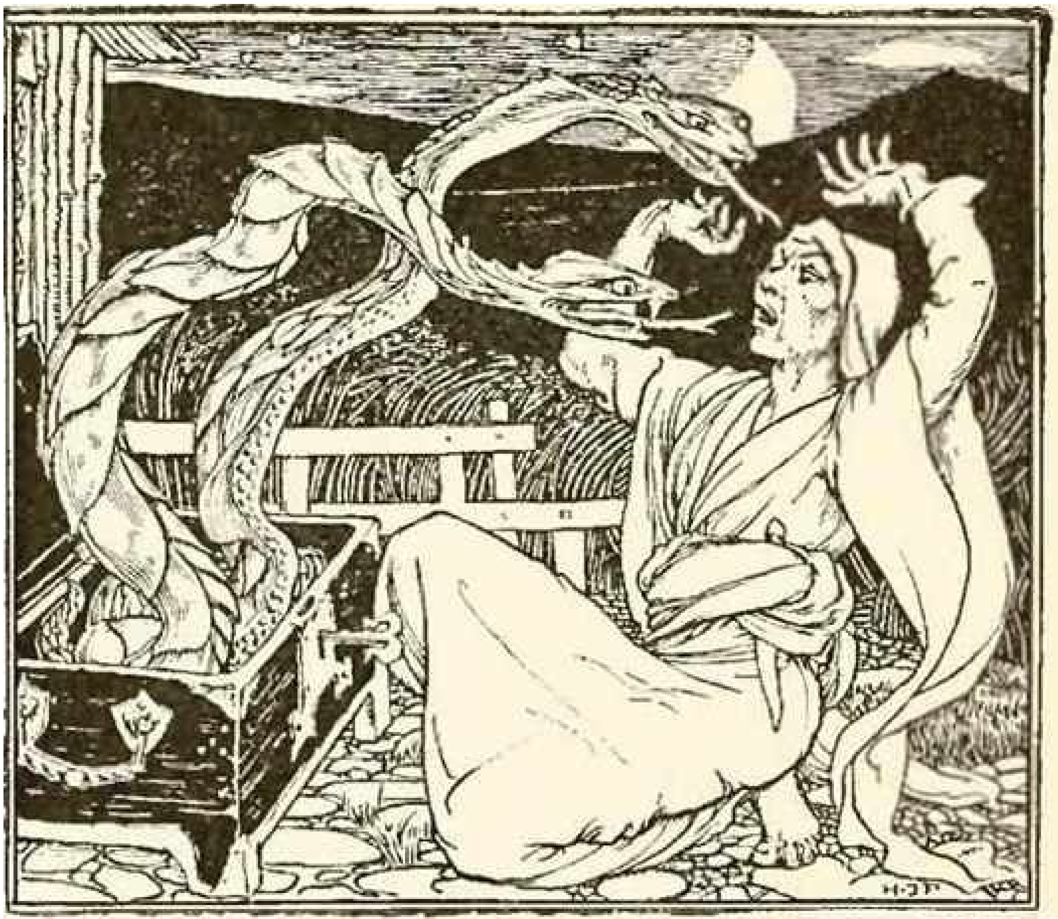

The OLD WOMAN OPENS THE BOX

The Story of Ciccu

From Sicilianische Mahrchen.

Once upon a time there lived a man who had three sons. The eldest was called Peppe, the second Alfin, and the youngest Ciccu. They were all very poor, and at last things got so bad that they really had not enough to eat. So the father called his sons, and said to them, ‘ My dear boys, I am too old to work any more, and there is nothing left for me but to beg in the streets.’

‘No, no!’ exclaimed his sons; ‘that you shall never do. Rather, if it must be, would we do it ourselves. But we have thought of a better plan than that.’

‘What is it?’ asked the father.

‘Well, we will take you in the forest, where you shall cut wood, and then we will bind it up in bundles and sell it in the town.’ So their father let them do as they said, and they all made their way into the forest; and as the old man was weak from lack of food his sons took it in turns to carry him on their backs. Then they built a little hut where they might take shelter, and set to work. Every morning early the father cut his sticks, and the sons bound them in bundles, and carried them to the town, bringing back the food the old man so much needed.

Some months passed in this way, and then the father suddenly fell ill, and knew that the time had come when he must die. He bade his sons fetch a lawyer, so that he might make his will, and when the man arrived he explained his wishes.

‘I have,’ said he, ‘a little house in the village, and over it grows a fig-tree. The house I leave to my sons, who are to live in it together; the fig-tree I divide as follows. To my son Peppe I leave the branches. To my son Alfin I leave the trunk. To my son Ciccu I leave the fruit. Besides the house and tree, I have an old coverlet, which I leave to my eldest son. And an old purse, which I leave to my second son. And a horn, which I leave to my youngest son. And now farewell.’

Thus speaking, he laid himself down, and died quietly. The brothers wept bitterly for their father, whom they loved, and when they had buried him they began to talk over their future lives. ‘What shall we do now?’ said they. ‘Shall we live in the wood, or go back to the village?’ And they made up their minds to stay where they were and continue to earn their living by selling firewood.

One very hot evening, after they had been working hard all day, they fell asleep under a tree in front of the hut. And as they slept there came by three fairies, who stopped to look at them.

‘What fine fellows!’ said one. ‘Let us give them a present.’

‘Yes, what shall it be?’ asked another.

‘This youth has a coverlet over him,’ said the first fairy. ‘When he wraps it round him, and wishes himself in any place, he will find himself there in an instant.’

Then said the second fairy: ‘This youth has a purse in his hand. I will promise that it shall always give him as much gold as he asks for.’

Last came the turn of the third fairy. ‘This one has a horn slung round him. When he blows at the small end the seas shall be covered with ships. And if he blows at the wide end they shall all be sunk in the waves.’ So they vanished, without knowing that Ciccu had been awake and heard all they said.

The next day, when they were all cutting wood, he said to his brothers, ‘That old coverlet and the purse are no use to you; I wish you would give them to me. I have a fancy for them, for the sake of old times.’ Now Peppe and Alfin were very fond of Ciccu, and never refused him anything, so they let him have the coverlet and the purse without a word. When he had got them safely Ciccu went on, ‘Dear brothers, I am tired of the forest. I want to live in the town, and work at some trade.’

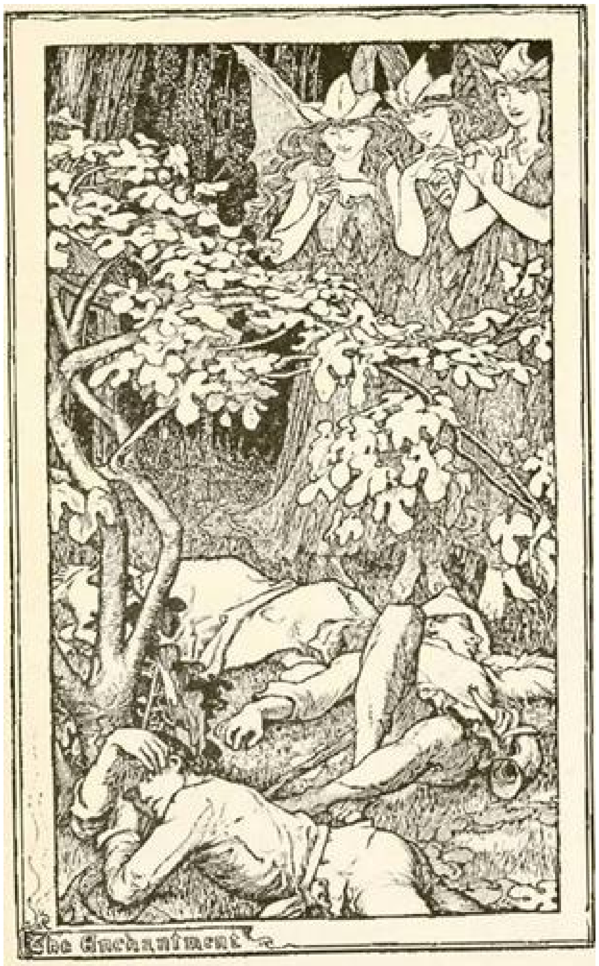
The Enchantment

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‘O Ciccu! stay with us,’ they cried. ‘We are very happy here; and who knows how we shall get on elsewhere?’

‘We can always try,’ answered Ciccu; ‘and if times are bad we can come back here and take up wood-cutting.’ So saying he picked up his bundle of sticks, and his brothers did the same.

But when they reached the town they found that the market was overstocked with firewood, and they did not sell enough to buy themselves a dinner, far less to get any food to carry home. They were wondering sadly what they should do when Ciccu said, ‘Come with me to the inn and let us have something to eat.’ They were so hungry by this time that they did not care much whether they paid for it or not, so they followed Ciccu, who gave his orders to the host. ‘Bring us three dishes, the nicest that you have, and a good bottle of wine.’

‘Ciccu! Ciccu!’ whispered his brothers, horrified at this extravagance, ‘are you mad? How do you ever mean to pay for it?’

‘Let me alone,’ replied Ciccu; ‘I know what I am about.’ And when they had finished their dinner Ciccu told the others to go on, and he would wait to pay the bill.

The brothers hurried on, without needing to be told twice, ‘for,’ thought they, ‘he has no money, and of course there will be a row.’

When they were out of sight Ciccu asked the landlord how much he owed, and then said to his purse, ‘Dear purse, give me, I pray you, six florins,’ and instantly six florins were in the purse. Then he paid the bill and joined his brothers.

‘How did you manage?’ they asked.

‘Never you mind,’ answered he. ‘I have paid every penny,’ and no more would he say. But the other two were very uneasy, for they felt sure something must be wrong, and the sooner they parted company with Ciccu the better. Ciccu understood what they were thinking, and, drawing forty gold pieces from his pocket, he held out twenty to each, saying, ‘Take these and turn them to good account. I am going away to seek my own fortune.’ Then he embraced them, and struck down another road.

He wandered on for many days, till at length he came to the town where the king had his court. The first thing Ciccu did was to order himself some fine clothes, and then buy a grand house, just opposite the palace.

Next he locked his door, and ordered a shower of gold to cover the staircase, and when this was done, the door was flung wide open, and everyone came and peeped at the shining golden stairs. Lastly the rumour of these wonders reached the ears of the king, who left his palace to behold these splendours with his own eyes. And Ciccu received him with all respect, and showed him over the house.

When the king went home he told such stories of what he had seen that his wife and daughter declared that they must go and see them too. So the king sent to ask Ciccu’s leave, and Ciccu answered that if the queen and the princess would be pleased to do him such great honour he would show them anything they wished. Now the princess was as beautiful as the sun, and when Ciccu looked upon her his heart went out to her, and he longed to have her to wife. The princess saw what was passing in his mind, and how she could make use of it to satisfy her curiosity as to the golden stairs; so she praised him and flattered him, and put cunning questions, till at length Ciccu’s head was quite turned, and he told her the whole story of the fairies and their gifts. Then she begged him to lend her the purse for a few days, so that she could have one made like it, and so great was the love he had for her that he gave it to her at once.

The princess returned to the palace, taking with her the purse, which she had not the smallest intention of ever restoring to Ciccu. Very soon Ciccu had spent all the money he had by him, and could get no more without the help of his purse. Of course, he went at once to the king’s daughter, and asked her if she had done with it, but she put him off with some excuse, and told him to come back next day. The next day it was the same thing, and the next, till a great rage filled Ciccu's heart instead of the love that had been there. And when night came he took in his hand a thick stick, wrapped himself in the coverlet, and wished himself in the chamber of the princess. The princess was asleep, but Ciccu seized her arm and pulled her out of bed, and beat her till she gave back the purse. Then he took up the coverlet, and wished he was safe in his own house.

No sooner had he gone than the princess hastened to her father and complained of her sufferings. Then the king rose up in a fury, and commanded Ciccu to be brought before him. 'You richly deserve death,' said he, 'but I will allow you to live if you will instantly hand over to me the coverlet, the purse, and the horn.'

What could Ciccu do? Life was sweet, and he was in the power of the king; so he gave up silently his ill-gotten goods, and was as poor as when he was a boy.

While he was wondering how he was to live it suddenly came into his mind that this was the season for the figs to ripen, and he said to himself, 'I will go and see if the tree has borne well.' So he set off home, where his brothers still lived, and found them living very uncomfortably, for they had spent all their money, and did not know how to make any more. However, he was pleased to see that the fig-tree looked in splendid condition, and was full of fruit. He ran and fetched a basket, and was just feeling the figs, to make sure which of them were ripe, when his brother Peppe called to him, 'Stop! The figs of course are yours, but the branches they grow on are mine, and I forbid you to touch them.'

Ciccu did not answer, but set a ladder against the tree, so that he could reach the topmost branches, and had his foot already on the first rung when he heard the voice of his brother Alfin: 'Stop! the trunk belongs to me, and I forbid you to touch it!'

Then they began to quarrel violently, and there seemed no chance that they would ever cease, till one of them said, 'Let us go before a judge.' The others agreed, and when they had found a man whom they could trust Ciccu told him the whole story.

'This is my verdict,' said the judge. 'The figs in truth belong to you, but you cannot pluck them without touching both the trunk and the branches. Therefore you must give your first basketful to your brother Peppe, as the price of his leave to put your ladder against the tree; and the second basketful to your brother Alfin, for leave to shake his boughs. The rest you can keep for yourself.'

And the brothers were contented, and returned home, saying one to the other, 'We will each of us send a basket of figs to the king. Perhaps he will give us something in return, and if he does we will divide it faithfully between us.' So the best figs were carefully packed in a basket, and Peppe set out with it to the castle.

On the road he met a little old man who stopped and said to him, ‘What have you got there, my fine fellow?’

‘What is that to you?’ was the answer; ‘mind your own business.’ But the old man only repeated his question, and Peppe, to get rid of him, exclaimed in anger, ‘Dirt.’

‘Good,’ replied the old man; ‘dirt you have said, and dirt let it be.’

Peppe only tossed his head and went on his way till he got to the castle, where he knocked at the door. ‘I have a basket of lovely figs for the king,’ he said to the servant who opened it, ‘if his majesty will be graciously pleased to accept them with my humble duty.’

The king loved figs, and ordered Peppe to be admitted to his presence, and a silver dish to be brought on which to put the figs. When Peppe uncovered his basket sure enough a layer of beautiful purple figs met the king’s eyes, but underneath there was nothing but dirt. ‘How dare you play me such a trick?’ shrieked the king in a rage. ‘Take him away, and give him fifty lashes.’ This was done, and Peppe returned home, sore and angry, but determined to say nothing about his adventure. And when his brothers asked him what had happened he only answered, ‘When we have all three been I will tell you.’

A few days after this more figs were ready for plucking, and Alfin in his turn set out for the palace. He had not gone far down the road before he met the old man, who asked him what he had in his basket.

‘Horns,’ answered Alfin, shortly.

‘Good,’ replied the old man; ‘horns you have said, and horns let it be.’

When Alfin reached the castle he knocked at the door and said to the servant: ‘Here is a basket of lovely figs, if his majesty will be good enough to accept them with my humble duty.’

The king commanded that Alfin should be admitted to his presence, and a silver dish to be brought on which to lay the figs. When the basket was uncovered some beautiful purple figs lay on the top, but underneath there was nothing but horns. Then the king was beside himself with passion, and screamed out, ‘Is this a plot to mock me? Take him away, and give him a hundred and fifty lashes!’ So Alfin went sadly home, but would not tell anything about his adventures, only saying grimly, ‘Now it is Ciccu’s turn.’

Ciccu had to wait a little before he gathered the last figs on the tree, and these were not nearly so good as the first set. However, he plucked them, as they had agreed, and set out for the king’s palace. The old man was still on the road, and he came up and said to Ciccu, ‘What have you got in that basket?’

‘Figs for the king,’ answered he.

‘Let me have a peep,’ and Ciccu lifted the lid. ‘Oh, do give me one, I am so fond of figs,’ begged the little man.

‘I am afraid if I do that the hole will show,’ replied Ciccu, but as he was very good-natured he gave him one. The old man ate it greedily and kept the stalk in his hand, and then asked for another and another and another till he had eaten half the basketful. ‘But there are not enough left to take to the king,’ murmured Ciccu.

‘Don’t be anxious,’ said the old man, throwing the stalks back into the basket; ‘just go on and carry the basket to the castle, and it will bring you luck.’

Ciccu did not much like it; however he went on his way, and with a trembling heart rang the castle bell. ‘Here are some lovely figs for the king,’ said he, ‘if his majesty will graciously accept them with my humble duty.’

When the king was told that there was another man with a basket of figs he cried out, ‘Oh, have him in, have him in! I suppose it is a wager!’ But Ciccu uncovered the basket, and there lay a pile of beautiful ripe figs. And the king was delighted, and emptied them himself on the silver dish, and gave five florins to Ciccu, and offered besides to take him into his service. Ciccu accepted gratefully, but said he must first return home and give the five florins to his brothers.

When he got home Peppe spoke: ‘Now we will see what we each have got from the king. I myself received from him fifty lashes.’

‘And I a hundred and fifty,’ added Alfin.

‘And I five florins and some sweets, which you can divide between you, for the king has taken me into his service.’ Then Ciccu went back to the Court and served the king, and the king loved him.

The other two brothers heard that Ciccu had become quite an important person, and they grew envious, and thought how they could put him to shame. At last they came to the king and said to him, ‘O king! your palace is beautiful indeed, but to be worthy of you it lacks one thing — the sword of the Maneater.’

‘How can I get it?’ asked the king.

‘Oh, Ciccu can get it for you; ask him.’

So the king sent for Ciccu and said to him, ‘Ciccu, you must at any price manage to get the sword of the Maneater.’

Ciccu was very much surprised at this sudden command, and he walked thoughtfully away to the stables and began to stroke his favourite horse, saying to himself, ‘Ah, my pet, we must bid each other good-bye, for the king has sent me away to get the sword of the Maneater.’ Now this horse was not like other horses, for it was a talking horse, and knew a great deal about many things, so it answered, ‘Fear nothing, and do as I tell you. Beg the king to give you fifty gold pieces and leave to ride me, and the rest will be easy.’ Ciccu believed what the horse said, and prayed the king to grant him what he asked. Then the two friends set out, but the horse chose what roads he pleased, and directed Ciccu in everything.

It took them many days’ hard riding before they reached the country where the Maneater lived, and then the horse told Ciccu to stop a group of old women who were coming chattering through the wood, and offer them each a shilling if they would collect a number of mosquitos and tie them up in a bag. When the bag was full Ciccu put it on his shoulder and stole into the house of the Maneater (who had gone to look for his dinner) and let them all out in his bedroom. He himself hid carefully under the bed and waited. The Maneater came in late, very tired with his long walk, and flung himself on the bed, placing his sword with its shining blade by his side. Scarcely had he lain down than the mosquitos began to buzz about and bite him, and he rolled from side to side trying to catch them, which he never could do, though they always seemed to be close to his nose. He was so busy over the mosquitos that he did not hear Ciccu steal softly out, or see him catch up the sword. But the horse heard and stood ready at the door, and as Ciccu came flying down the stairs and jumped on his back he sped away like the wind, and never stopped till they arrived at the king’s palace.

The king had suffered much pain in his absence, thinking that if the Maneater ate Ciccu, it would be all his fault. And he was so overjoyed to have him safe that he almost forgot the sword which he had sent him to bring. But the two brothers did not love Ciccu any better because he had succeeded when they hoped he would have failed, and one day they spoke to the king. ‘It is all very well for Ciccu to have got possession of the sword, but it would have been far more to your majesty’s honour if he had captured the Maneater himself.’ The king thought upon these words, and at last he said to Ciccu, ‘Ciccu, I shall never rest until you bring me back the Maneater himself. You may have any help you like, but somehow or other you must manage to do it.’ Ciccu felt very much cast, down at these words, and went to the stable to ask advice of his friend the horse. ‘Fear nothing,’ said the horse; ‘just say you want me and fifty pieces of gold.’ Ciccu did as he was bid, and the two set out together.

When they reached the country of the Maneater, Ciccu made all the church bells toll and a proclamation to be made. ‘Ciccu, the servant of the king, is dead.’ The Maneater soon heard what everyone was saying, and was glad in his heart, for he thought, ‘Well, it is good news that the thief who stole my sword is dead.’ But Ciccu bought an axe and a saw, and cut down a pine tree in the nearest wood, and began to hew it into planks.

‘What are you doing in my wood?’ asked the Maneater, coming up.

‘Noble lord,’ answered Ciccu, ‘I am making a coffin for the body of Ciccu, who is dead.’

‘Don’t be in a hurry,’ answered the Maneater, who of course did not know whom he was talking to, ‘and perhaps I can help you;’ and they set to work sawing and fitting, and very soon the coffin was finished.

Then Ciccu scratched his ear thoughtfully, and cried, ‘Idiot that I am! I never took any measures. How am I to know if it is big enough? But now I come to think of it, Ciccu was about your size. I wonder if you would be so good as just to put yourself in the coffin, and see if there is enough room.’

‘Oh, delighted!’ said the Maneater, and laid himself at full length in the coffin. Ciccu clapped on the lid, put a strong cord round it, tied it fast on his horse, and rode back to the king. And when the king saw that he really had brought back the Maneater, he commanded a huge iron chest to be brought, and locked the coffin up inside.

Just about this time the queen died, and soon after the king thought he should like to marry again. He sought everywhere, but he could not hear of any princess that took his fancy. Then the two envious brothers came to him and said, ‘O king! there is but one woman that is worthy of being your wife, and that is she who is the fairest in the whole world.’

‘But where can I find her?’ asked the king

‘Oh, Ciccu will know, and he will bring her to you.’

Now the king had got so used to depending on Ciccu, that he really believed he could do everything. So he sent for him and said, ‘Ciccu, unless within eight days you bring me the fairest in the whole world, I will have you hewn into a thousand pieces.’ This mission seemed to Ciccu a hundred times worse than either of the others, and with tears in his eyes he took his way to the stables.

‘Cheer up,’ laughed the horse; ‘tell the king you must have some bread and honey, and a purse of gold, and leave the rest to me.’

Ciccu did as he was bid, and they started at a gallop.

After they had ridden some way, they saw a swarm of bees lying on the ground, so hungry and weak that they were unable to fly. ‘Get down, and give the poor things some honey,’ said the horse, and Ciccu dismounted. By-and-bye they came to a stream, on the bank of which was a fish, flapping feebly about in its efforts to reach the water. ‘Jump down, and throw the fish into the water; he will be useful to us,’ and Ciccu did so. Farther along the hillside they saw an eagle whose leg was caught in a snare. ‘Go and free that eagle from the snare; he will be useful to us; ‘ and in a moment the eagle was soaring up into the sky.

At length they came to the castle where the fairest in the world lived with her parents. Then said the horse, ‘You must get down and sit upon that stone, for I must enter the castle alone. Directly you see me come tearing by with the princess on my back, jump up behind, and hold her tight, so that she does not escape you. If you fail to do this, we are both lost.' Ciccu seated himself on the stone, and the horse went on to the courtyard of the castle, where he began to trot round in a graceful and elegant manner. Soon a crowd collected first to watch him and then to pat him, and the king and queen and princess came with the rest. The eyes of the fairest in the world brightened as she looked, and she sprang on the horse's saddle, crying, 'Oh, I really must ride him a little!' But the horse made one bound forward, and the princess was forced to hold tight by his mane, lest she should fall off. And as they dashed past the stone where Ciccu was waiting for them, he swung himself up and held her round the waist. As he put his arms round her waist, the fairest in the world unwound the veil from her head and cast it to the ground, and then she drew a ring from her finger and flung it into the stream. But she said nothing, and they rode on fast, fast.

The king of Ciccu's country was watching for them from the top of a tower, and when he saw in the distance a cloud of dust, he ran down to the steps so as to be ready to receive them. Bowing low before the fairest in the world, he spoke: 'Noble lady, will you do me the honour to become my wife?'

But she answered, 'That can only be when Ciccu brings me the veil that I let fall on my way here.'

And the king turned to Ciccu and said, 'Ciccu, if you do not find the veil at once, you shall lose your head.'

Ciccu, who by this time had hoped for a little peace, felt his heart sink at this fresh errand, and he went into the stable to complain to the faithful horse.

'It will be all right,' answered the horse when he had heard his tale; 'just take enough food for the day for both of us, and then get on my back.'

They rode back all the way they had come till they reached the place where they had found the eagle caught in the snare; then the horse bade Ciccu to call three times on the king of the birds, and when he replied, to beg him to fetch the veil which the fairest in the world had let fall.

'Wait a moment,' answered a voice that seemed to come from somewhere very high up indeed. 'An eagle is playing with it just now, but he will be here with it in an instant;' and a few minutes after there was a sound of wings, and an eagle came fluttering towards them with the veil in his beak. And Ciccu saw it was the very same eagle that he had freed from the snare. So he took the veil and rode back to the king.

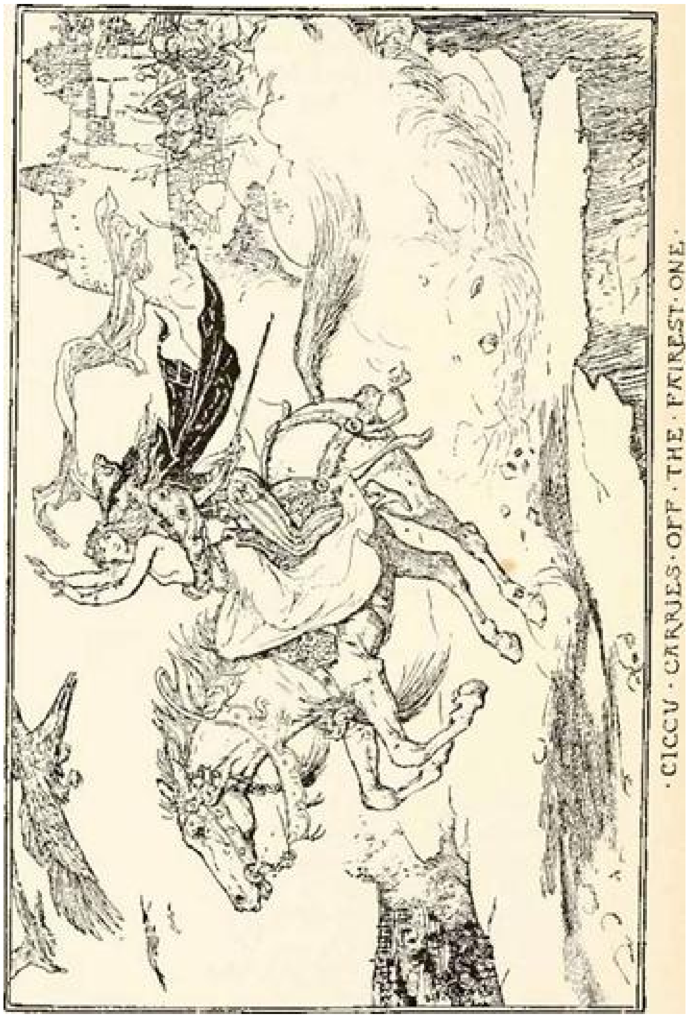

·CICCU·CARRIES·OFF·THE·FAIREST·ONE·

Now the king was enchanted to see him so soon, and took the veil from Ciccu and flung it over the princess, crying, ‘Here is the veil you asked for, so I claim you for my wife.’

‘Not so fast,’ answered she. ‘I can never be your wife till Ciccu puts on my finger the ring I threw into the stream. Ciccu, who was standing by expecting something of the sort, bowed his head when he heard her words, and went straight to the horse.

‘Mount at once,’ said the horse; ‘this time it is very simple,’ and he carried Ciccu to the banks of the little stream. ‘Now, call three times on the emperor of the fishes, and beg him to restore you the ring that the princess dropped.

Ciccu did as the horse told him, and a voice was heard in answer that seemed to come from a very long way off.

‘What is your will?’ it asked; and Ciccu replied that he had been commanded to bring back the ring that the princess had flung away, as she rode past.

‘A fish is playing with it just now,’ replied the voice; ‘however, you shall have it without delay.’

And sure enough, very soon a little fish was seen rising to the surface with the lost ring in his mouth. And Ciccu knew him to be the fish that he had saved from death, and he took the ring and rode back with it to the king.

‘That is not enough,’ exclaimed the princess when she saw the ring; ‘before we can be man and wife, the oven must be heated for three days and three nights, and Ciccu must jump in.’ And the king forgot how Ciccu had served him, and desired him to do as the princess had said.

This time Ciccu felt that no escape was possible, and he went to the horse and laid his hand on his neck. ‘Now it is indeed good-bye, and there is no help to be got even from you,’ and he told him what fate awaited him.

But the horse said, ‘Oh, never lose heart, but jump on my back, and make me go till the foam flies in flecks all about me. Then get down, and scrape off the foam with a knife. This you must rub all over you, and when you are quite covered, you may suffer yourself to be cast into the oven, for the fire will not hurt you, nor anything else.’ And Ciccu did exactly as the horse bade him, and went back to the king, and before the eyes of the fairest in the world he sprang into the oven.

And when the fairest in the world saw what he had done, love entered into her heart, and she said to the king, ‘One thing more: before I can be your wife, you must jump into the oven as Ciccu has done.’

‘Willingly,’ replied the king, stooping over the oven. But on the brink he paused a moment and called to Ciccu, ‘Tell me, Ciccu, how did you manage to prevent the fire burning you?’

Now Ciccu could not forgive his master, whom he had served so faithfully, for sending him to his death without a thought, so he answered, ‘I rubbed myself over with fat, and I am not even singed.’

When he heard these words, the king, whose head was full of the princess, never stopped to inquire if they could be true, and smeared himself over with fat, and sprang into the oven. And in a moment the fire caught him, and he was burned up.

Then the fairest in the world held out her hand to Ciccu and smiled, saying, ‘Now we will be man and wife.’ So Ciccu married the fairest in the world, and became king of the country.

Don Giovanni De La Fortuna

Sicilianische Mahrchen

There was once a man whose name was Don Giovanni de la Fortuna, and he lived in a beautiful house that his father had built, and spent a great deal of money. Indeed, he spent so much that very soon there was none left, and Don Giovanni, instead of being a rich man with everything he could wish for, was forced to put on the dress of a pilgrim, and to wander from place to place begging his bread.

One day he was walking down a broad road when he was stopped by a handsome man he had never seen before, who, little as Don Giovanni knew it, was the devil himself.

‘Would you like to be rich,’ asked the devil, ‘and to lead a pleasant life?’

‘Yes, of course I should,’ replied the Don.

‘Well, here is a purse; take it and say to it, “Dear purse, give me some money,” and you will get as much as you can want But the charm will only work if you promise to remain three years, three months, and three days without washing and without combing and without shaving your beard or changing your clothes. If you do all this faithfully, when the time is up you shall keep the purse for yourself, and I will let you off any other conditions.’

Now Don Giovanni was a man who never troubled his head about the future. He did not once think how very uncomfortable he should be all those three years, but only that he should be able, by means of the purse, to have all sorts of things he had been obliged to do without; so he joyfully put the purse in his pocket and went on his way. He soon began to ask for money for the mere pleasure of it, and there was always as much as he needed. For a little while he even forgot to notice how dirty he was getting, but this did not last long, for his hair became matted with dirt and hung over his eyes, and his pilgrim’s dress was a mass of horrible rags and tatters.

He was in this state when, one morning, he happened to be passing a fine palace; and, as the sun was shining bright and warm, he sat down on the steps and tried to shake off some of the dust which he had picked up on the road. But in a few minutes a maid saw him, and said to her master, ‘I pray you, sir, to drive away that beggar who is sitting on the steps, or he will fill the whole house with his dirt.’

So the master went out and called from some distance off, for he was really afraid to go near the man, ‘You filthy beggar, leave my house at once!’

‘You need not be so rude,’ said Don Giovanni; ‘I am not a beggar, and if I chose I could force you and your wife to leave your house.’

‘What is that you can do?’ laughed the gentleman.

‘Will you sell me your house?’ asked Don Giovanni. ‘I will buy it from you on the spot.’

‘Oh, the dirty creature is quite mad!’ thought the gentleman. ‘I shall just accept his offer for a joke.’ And aloud he said: ‘ All right; follow me, and we will go to a lawyer and get him to make a contract.’ And Don Giovanni followed him, and an agreement was drawn up by which the house was to be sold at once, and a large sum of money paid down in eight days. Then the Don went to an inn, where he hired two rooms, and, standing in one of them, said to his purse, ‘ Dear purse, fill this room with gold;’ and when the eight days were up it was so full you could not have put in another sovereign.

When the owner of the house came to take away his money Don Giovanni led him into the room and said: ‘There, just pocket what you want.’ The gentleman stared with open mouth at the astonishing sight; but he had given his word to sell the house, so he took his money, as he was told, and went away with his wife to look for some place to live in. And Don Giovanni left the inn and dwelt in the beautiful rooms, where his rags and dirt looked sadly out of place. And every day these got worse and worse.

By-and-bye the fame of his riches reached the ears of the king, and, as he himself was always in need of money, he sent for Don Giovanni, as he wished to borrow a large sum. Don Giovanni readily agreed to lend him what he wanted, and sent next day a huge waggon laden with sacks of gold.

‘Who can he be?’ thought the king to himself. ‘Why, he is much richer than I!’

The king took as much as he had need of; then ordered the rest to be returned to Don Giovanni, who refused to receive it, saying, ‘Tell his majesty I am much hurt at his proposal. I shall certainly not take back that handful of gold, and, if he declines to accept it, keep it yourself.’

The servant departed and delivered the message, and the king wondered more than ever how anyone could be so rich. At last he spoke to the queen: ‘Dear wife, this man has done me a great service, and has, besides, behaved like a gentleman in not allowing me to send back the money. I wish to give him the hand of our eldest daughter.’

The queen was quite pleased at this idea, and again messenger was sent to Don Giovanni, offering him the hand of the eldest princess.

‘His majesty is too good,’ he replied. ‘I can only humbly accept the honour.’

The messenger took back this answer, but a second time returned with the request that Don Giovanni would present them with his picture, so that they might know what sort of a person to expect. But when it came, and the princess saw the horrible figure, she screamed out, ‘What! marry this dirty beggar? Never, never!’

‘Ah, child,’ answered the king, ‘how could I ever guess that the rich Don Giovanni would ever look like that? But I have passed my royal word, and I cannot break it, so there is no help for you.’

‘No, father; you may cut off my head, if you choose, but marry that horrible beggar — I never will!’

And the queen took her part, and reproached her husband bitterly for wishing his daughter to marry a creature like that.

Then the youngest daughter spoke: ‘Dear father, do not look so sad. As you have given your word, I will marry Don Giovanni.’ The king fell on her neck, and thanked her and kissed her, but the queen and the elder girl had nothing for her but laughs and jeers.

So it was settled, and then the king bade one of his lords go to Don Giovanni and ask him when the wedding day was to be, so that the princess might make ready.

‘Let it be in two months,’ answered Don Giovanni, for the time was nearly up that the devil had fixed, and he wanted a whole month to himself to wash off the dirt of the past three years.

The very minute that the compact with the devil had come to an end his beard was shaved, his hair was cut, and his rags were burned, and day and night he lay in a bath of clear warm water. At length he felt he was clean again, and he put on splendid clothes, and hired a beautiful ship, and arrived in state at the king’s palace.

The whole of the royal family came down to the ship to receive him, and the whole way the queen and the elder princess teased the sister about the dirty husband she was going to have. But when they saw how handsome he really was their hearts were filled with envy and anger, so that their eyes were blinded, and they fell over into the sea and were drowned. And the youngest daughter rejoiced in the good luck that had come to her, and they had a splendid wedding when the days of mourning for her mother and sister were ended.

Soon after the old king died, and Don Giovanni became king. And he was rich and happy to the end of his days, for he loved his wife, and his purse always gave him money.

THE GREY FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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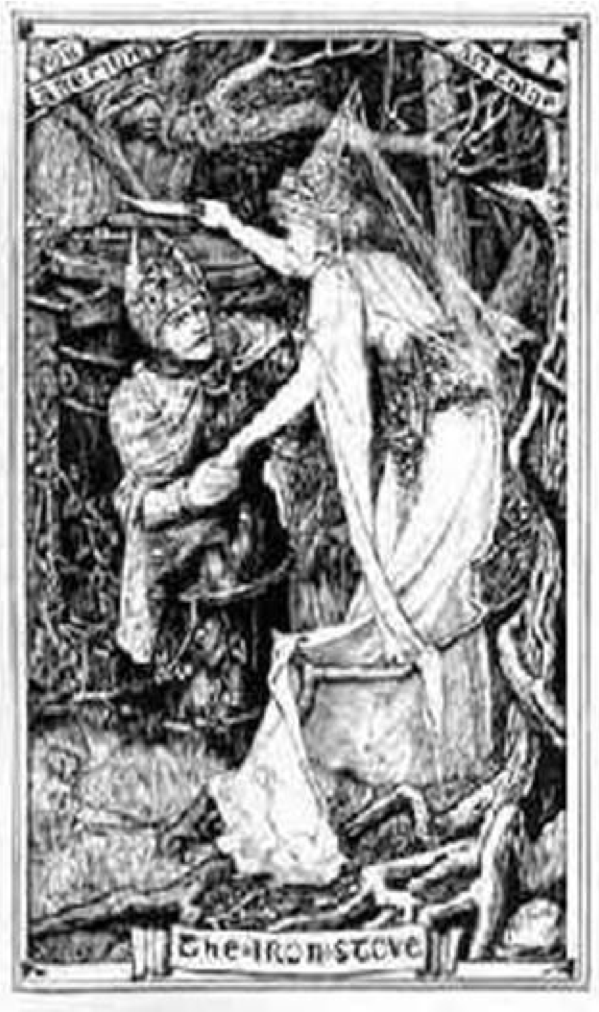
The Iron Stove

The first edition

THE GREY FAIRY BOOK

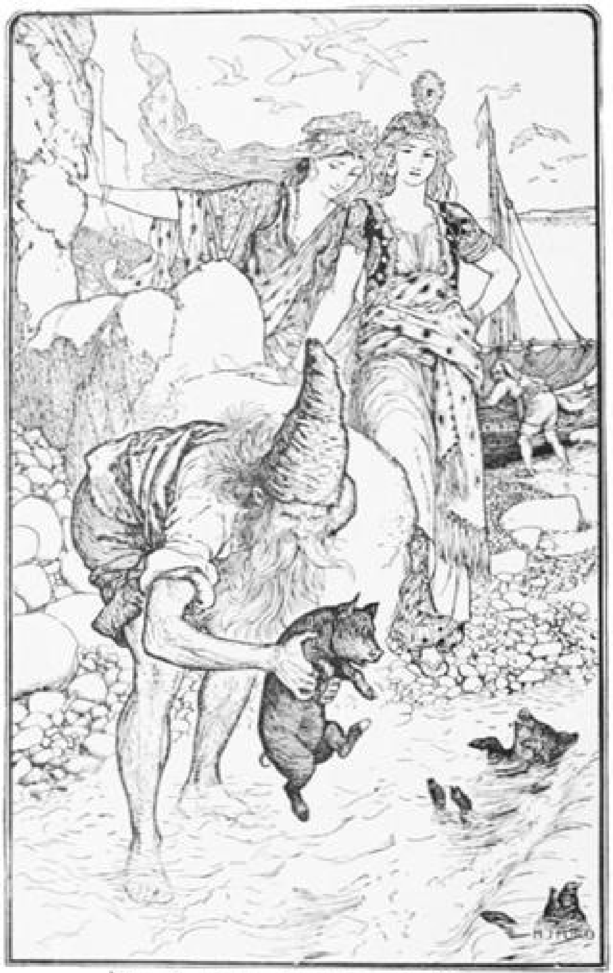

The Dervish drowning the Pigs

PREFACE

The tales in the Grey Fairy Book are derived from many countries — Lithuania, various parts of Africa, Germany, France, Greece, and other regions of the world. They have been translated and adapted by Mrs. Dent, Mrs. Lang, Miss Eleanor Sellar, Miss Blackley, and Miss Lang. ‘The Three Sons of Hali’ is from the last century ‘Cabinet des Fées,’ a very large collection. The French author may have had some Oriental original before him in parts; at all events he copied the Eastern method of putting tale within tale, like the Eastern balls of carved ivory. The stories, as usual, illustrate the method of popular fiction. A certain number of incidents are shaken into many varying combinations, like the fragments of coloured glass in the kaleidoscope. Probably the possible combinations, like possible musical combinations, are not unlimited in number, but children may be less sensitive in the matter of fairies than Mr. John Stuart Mill was as regards music.

The Goblin Pony

DONKEY SKIN

There was once upon a time a king who was so much beloved by his subjects that he thought himself the happiest monarch in the whole world, and he had everything his heart could desire. His palace was filled with the rarest of curiosities, and his garden with the sweetest flowers, while the marble stalls of his stables stood a row of milk-white Arabs, with big brown eyes.

Strangers who had heard of the marvels which the king had collected, and made long journeys to see them, were, however, surprised to find the most splendid stall of all occupied by a donkey, with particularly large and drooping ears. It was a very fine donkey; but still, as far as they could tell, nothing so very remarkable as to account for the care with which it was lodged; and they went away wondering, for they could not know that every night, when it was asleep, bushels of gold pieces tumbled out of its ears, which were picked up each morning by the attendants.

After many years of prosperity a sudden blow fell upon the king in the death of his wife, whom he loved dearly. But before she died, the queen, who had always thought first of his happiness, gathered all her strength, and said to him:

‘Promise me one thing: you must marry again, I know, for the good of your people, as well as of yourself. But do not set about it in a hurry. Wait until you have found a woman more beautiful and better formed than myself.’

‘Oh, do not speak to me of marrying,’ sobbed the king; ‘rather let me die with you!’ But the queen only smiled faintly, and turned over on her pillow and died.

For some months the king’s grief was great; then gradually he began to forget a little, and, besides, his counsellors were always urging him to seek another wife. At first he refused to listen to them, but by-and-by he allowed himself to be persuaded to think of it, only stipulating that the bride should be more beautiful and attractive than the late queen, according to the promise he had made her.

Overjoyed at having obtained what they wanted, the counsellors sent envoys far and wide to get portraits of all the most famous beauties of every country. The artists were very busy and did their best, but, alas! nobody could even pretend that any of the ladies could compare for a moment with the late queen.

At length, one day, when he had turned away discouraged from a fresh collection of pictures, the king’s eyes fell on his adopted daughter, who had lived in the palace since she was a baby, and he saw that, if a woman existed on the whole earth more lovely than the queen, this was she! He at once made known what his wishes were, but the young girl, who was not at all ambitious, and had not the faintest desire to marry him, was filled with dismay, and begged for time to think about it. That night, when everyone was asleep, she started in a little car drawn by a big sheep, and went to consult her fairy godmother.

‘I know what you have come to tell me,’ said the fairy, when the maiden stepped out of the car; ‘and if you don’t wish to marry him, I will show you how to avoid it. Ask him to give you a dress that exactly matches the sky. It will be impossible for him to get one, so you will be quite safe.’ The girl thanked the fairy and returned home again.

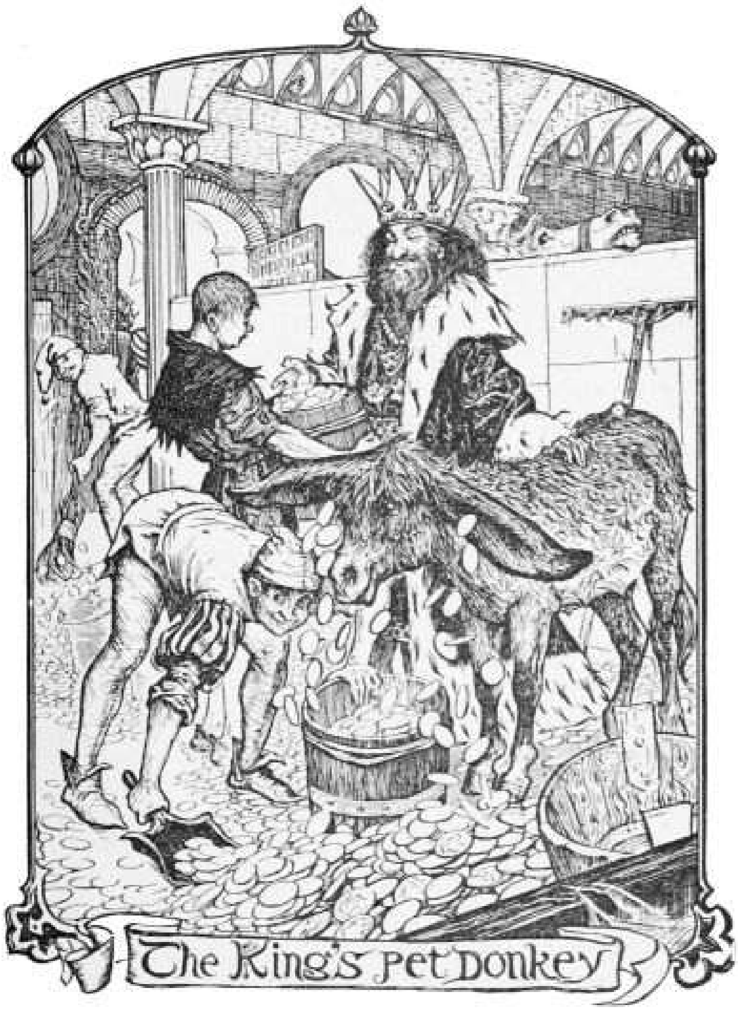

The King's pet Donkey

The next morning, when her father (as she had always called him) came to see her, she told him that she could give him no answer until he had presented her with a dress the colour of the sky. The king, overjoyed at this answer, sent for all the choicest weavers and dressmakers in the kingdom, and commanded them to make a robe the colour of the sky without an instant’s delay, or he would cut off their heads at once. Dreadfully frightened at this threat, they all began to dye and cut and sew, and in two days they brought back the dress, which looked as if it had been cut straight out of the heavens! The poor girl was thunderstruck, and did not know what to do; so in the night she harnessed her sheep again, and went in search of her godmother.

‘The king is cleverer than I thought,’ said the fairy; ‘but tell him you must have a dress of moonbeams.’

And the next day, when the king summoned her into his presence, the girl told him what she wanted.

‘Madam, I can refuse you nothing,’ said he; and he ordered the dress to be ready in twenty-four hours, or every man should be hanged.

They set to work with all their might, and by dawn next day, the dress of moonbeams was laid across her bed. The girl, though she could not help admiring its beauty, began to cry, till the fairy, who heard her, came to her help.

‘Well, I could not have believed it of him!’ said she; ‘but ask for a dress of sunshine, and I shall be surprised indeed if he manages that!’

The goddaughter did not feel much faith in the fairy after her two previous failures; but not knowing what else to do, she told her father what she was bid.

The king made no difficulties about it, and even gave his finest rubies and diamonds to ornament the dress, which was so dazzling, when finished, that it could not be looked at save through smoked glasses!

When the princess saw it, she pretended that the sight hurt her eyes, and retired to her room, where she found the fairy awaiting her, very much ashamed of herself.

‘There is only one thing to be done now,’ cried she; ‘you must demand the skin of the ass he sets such store by. It is from that donkey he obtains all his vast riches, and I am sure he will never give it to you.’

The princess was not so certain; however, she went to the king, and told him she could never marry him till he had given her the ass’s skin.

The king was both astonished and grieved at this new request, but did not hesitate an instant. The ass was sacrificed, and the skin laid at the feet of the princess.

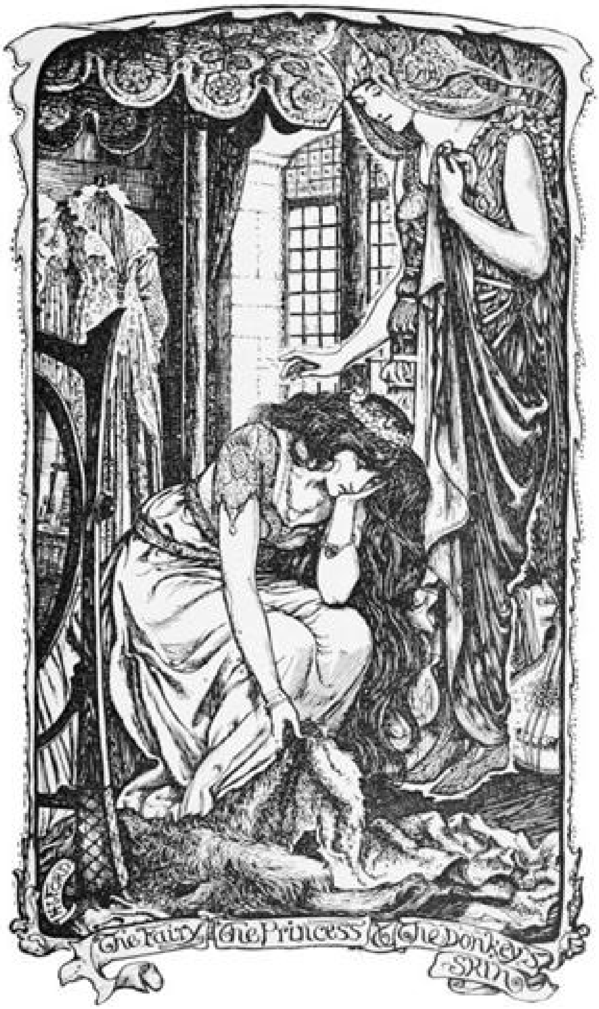
The Fairy, The Princess & The Donkey's Skin

The poor girl, seeing no escape from the fate she dreaded, wept afresh, and tore her hair; when, suddenly, the fairy stood before her.

‘Take heart,’ she said, ‘all will now go well! Wrap yourself in this skin, and leave the palace and go as far as you can. I will look after you. Your dresses and your jewels shall follow you underground, and if you strike the earth whenever you need anything, you will have it at once. But go quickly: you have no time to lose.’

So the princess clothed herself in the ass’s skin, and slipped from the palace without being seen by anyone.

Directly she was missed there was a great hue and cry, and every corner, possible and impossible, was searched. Then the king sent out parties along all the roads, but the fairy threw her invisible mantle over the girl when they approached, and none of them could see her.

The princess walked on a long, long way, trying to find some one who would take her in, and let her work for them; but though the cottagers, whose houses she passed, gave her food from charity, the ass’s skin was so dirty they would not allow her to enter their houses. For her flight had been so hurried she had had no time to clean it.

Tired and disheartened at her ill-fortune, she was wandering, one day, past the gate of a farmyard, situated just outside the walls of a large town, when she heard a voice calling to her. She turned and saw the farmer's wife standing among her turkeys, and making signs to her to come in.

'I want a girl to wash the dishes and feed the turkeys, and clean out the pig-sty,' said the woman, 'and, to judge by your dirty clothes, you would not be too fine for the work.'

The girl accepted her offer with joy, and she was at once set to work in a corner of the kitchen, where all the farm servants came and made fun of her, and the ass's skin in which she was wrapped. But by-and-by they got so used to the sight of it that it ceased to amuse them, and she worked so hard and so well, that her mistress grew quite fond of her. And she was so clever at keeping sheep and herding turkeys that you would have thought she had done nothing else during her whole life!

One day she was sitting on the banks of a stream bewailing her wretched lot, when she suddenly caught sight of herself in the water. Her hair and part of her face was quite concealed by the ass's head, which was drawn right over like a hood, and the filthy matted skin covered her whole body. It was the first time she had seen herself as other people saw her, and she was filled with shame at the spectacle. Then she threw off her disguise and jumped into the water, plunging in again and again, till she shone like ivory. When it was time to go back to the farm, she was forced to put on the skin which disguised her, and now seemed more dirty than ever; but, as she did so, she comforted herself with the thought that to-morrow was a holiday, and that she would be able for a few hours to forget that she was a farm girl, and be a princess once more.

So, at break of day, she stamped on the ground, as the fairy had told her, and instantly the dress like the sky lay across her tiny bed. Her room was so small that there was no place for the train of her dress to spread itself out, but she pinned it up carefully when she combed her beautiful hair and piled it up on the top of her head, as she had always worn it. When she had done, she was so pleased with herself that she determined never to let a chance pass of putting on her splendid clothes, even if she had to wear them in the fields, with no one to admire her but the sheep and turkeys.

Now the farm was a royal farm, and, one holiday, when 'Donkey Skin' (as they had nicknamed the princess) had locked the door of her room and clothed herself in her dress of sunshine, the king's son rode through the gate, and asked if he might come and rest himself a little after hunting. Some food and milk were set before him in the garden, and when he felt rested he got up, and began to explore the house, which was famous throughout the whole kingdom for its age and beauty. He opened one door after the other, admiring the old rooms, when he came to a handle that would not turn. He stooped and peeped through the keyhole to see what was inside, and was greatly astonished at beholding a beautiful girl, clad in a dress so dazzling that he could hardly look at it.

The dark gallery seemed darker than ever as he turned away, but he went back to the kitchen and inquired who slept in the room at the end of the passage. The scullery maid, they told him, whom everybody laughed at, and called ‘Donkey Skin;’ and though he perceived there was some strange mystery about this, he saw quite clearly there was nothing to be gained by asking any more questions. So he rode back to the palace, his head filled with the vision he had seen through the keyhole.

All night long he tossed about, and awoke the next morning in a high fever. The queen, who had no other child, and lived in a state of perpetual anxiety about this one, at once gave him up for lost, and indeed his sudden illness puzzled the greatest doctors, who tried the usual remedies in vain. At last they told the queen that some secret sorrow must be at the bottom of all this, and she threw herself on her knees beside her son’s bed, and implored him to confide his trouble to her. If it was ambition to be king, his father would gladly resign the cares of the crown, and suffer him to reign in his stead; or, if it was love, everything should be sacrificed to get for him the wife he desired, even if she were daughter of a king with whom the country was at war at present!

‘Madam,’ replied the prince, whose weakness would hardly allow him to speak, ‘do not think me so unnatural as to wish to deprive my father of his crown. As long as he lives I shall remain the most faithful of his subjects! And as to the princesses you speak of, I have seen none that I should care for as a wife, though I would always obey your wishes, whatever it might cost me.’

‘Ah! my son,’ cried she, ‘we will do anything in the world to save your life — and ours too, for if you die, we shall die also.’

‘Well, then,’ replied the prince, ‘I will tell you the only thing that will cure me — a cake made by the hand of “Donkey Skin.”’

‘Donkey Skin?’ exclaimed the queen, who thought her son had gone mad; ‘and who or what is that?’

‘Madam,’ answered one of the attendants present, who had been with the prince at the farm, ‘“Donkey Skin” is, next to the wolf, the most disgusting creature on the face of the earth. She is a girl who wears a black, greasy skin, and lives at your farmer’s as hen-wife.’

‘Never mind,’ said the queen; ‘my son seems to have eaten some of her pastry.

It is the whim of a sick man, no doubt; but send at once and let her bake a cake.'

The attendant bowed and ordered a page to ride with the message.

Now it is by no means certain that 'Donkey Skin' had not caught a glimpse of the prince, either when his eyes looked through the keyhole, or else from her little window, which was over the road. But whether she had actually seen him or only heard him spoken of, directly she received the queen's command, she flung off the dirty skin, washed herself from head to foot, and put on a skirt and bodice of shining silver. Then, locking herself into her room, she took the richest cream, the finest flour, and the freshest eggs on the farm, and set about making her cake.

As she was stirring the mixture in the saucepan a ring that she sometimes wore in secret slipped from her finger and fell into the dough. Perhaps 'Donkey Skin' saw it, or perhaps she did not; but, any way, she went on stirring, and soon the cake was ready to be put in the oven. When it was nice and brown she took off her dress and put on her dirty skin, and gave the cake to the page, asking at the same time for news of the prince. But the page turned his head aside, and would not even condescend to answer.

The page rode like the wind, and as soon as he arrived at the palace he snatched up a silver tray and hastened to present the cake to the prince. The sick man began to eat it so fast that the doctors thought he would choke; and, indeed, he very nearly did, for the ring was in one of the bits which he broke off, though he managed to extract it from his mouth without anyone seeing him.

The moment the prince was left alone he drew the ring from under his pillow and kissed it a thousand times. Then he set his mind to find how he was to see the owner — for even he did not dare to confess that he had only beheld 'Donkey Skin' through a keyhole, lest they should laugh at this sudden passion. All this worry brought back the fever, which the arrival of the cake had diminished for the time; and the doctors, not knowing what else to say, informed the queen that her son was simply dying of love. The queen, stricken with horror, rushed into the king's presence with the news, and together they hastened to their son's bedside.

'My boy, my dear boy!' cried the king, 'who is it you want to marry? We will give her to you for a bride, even if she is the humblest of our slaves. What is there in the whole world that we would not do for you?'

The prince, moved to tears at these words, drew the ring, which was an emerald of the purest water, from under his pillow.

'Ah, dear father and mother, let this be a proof that she whom I love is no peasant girl. The finger which that ring fits has never been thickened by hard work. But be her condition what it may, I will marry no other.'

The king and queen examined the tiny ring very closely, and agreed, with their son, that the wearer could be no mere farm girl. Then the king went out and ordered heralds and trumpeters to go through the town, summoning every maiden to the palace. And she whom the ring fitted would some day be queen.

First came all the princesses, then all the duchesses' daughters, and so on, in proper order. But not one of them could slip the ring over the tip of her finger, to the great joy of the prince, whom excitement was fast curing. At last, when the high-born damsels had failed, the shopgirls and chambermaids took their turn; but with no better fortune.

'Call in the scullions and shepherdesses,' commanded the prince; but the sight of their fat, red fingers satisfied everybody.

'There is not a woman left, your Highness,' said the chamberlain; but the prince waved him aside.

'Have you sent for "Donkey Skin," who made me the cake?' asked he, and the courtiers began to laugh, and replied that they would not have dared to introduce so dirty a creature into the palace.

'Let some one go for her at once,' ordered the king. 'I commanded the presence of every maiden, high or low, and I meant it.'

The princess had heard the trumpets and the proclamations, and knew quite well that her ring was at the bottom of it all. She too, had fallen in love with the prince in the brief glimpse she had had of him, and trembled with fear lest someone else's finger might be as small as her own. When, therefore, the messenger from the palace rode up to the gate, she was nearly beside herself with delight. Hoping all the time for such a summons, she had dressed herself with great care, putting on the garment of moonlight, whose skirt was scattered over with emeralds. But when they began calling to her to come down, she hastily covered herself with her donkey-skin and announced she was ready to present herself before his Highness. She was taken straight into the hall, where the prince was awaiting her, but at the sight of the donkey-skin his heart sank. Had he been mistaken after all?

'Are you the girl,' he said, turning his eyes away as he spoke, 'are you the girl who has a room in the furthest corner of the inner court of the farmhouse?'

'Yes, my lord, I am,' answered she.

'Hold out your hand then,' continued the prince, feeling that he must keep his word, whatever the cost, and, to the astonishment of every one present, a little hand, white and delicate, came from beneath the black and dirty skin. The ring slipped on with the utmost ease, and, as it did so, the skin fell to the ground, disclosing a figure of such beauty that the prince, weak as he was, fell on his knees before her, while the king and queen joined their prayers to his. Indeed, their welcome was so warm, and their caresses so bewildering, that the princess hardly knew how to find words to reply, when the ceiling of the hall opened, and the fairy godmother appeared, seated in a car made entirely of white lilac. In a few words she explained the history of the princess, and how she came to be there, and, without losing a moment, preparations of the most magnificent kind were made for the wedding.

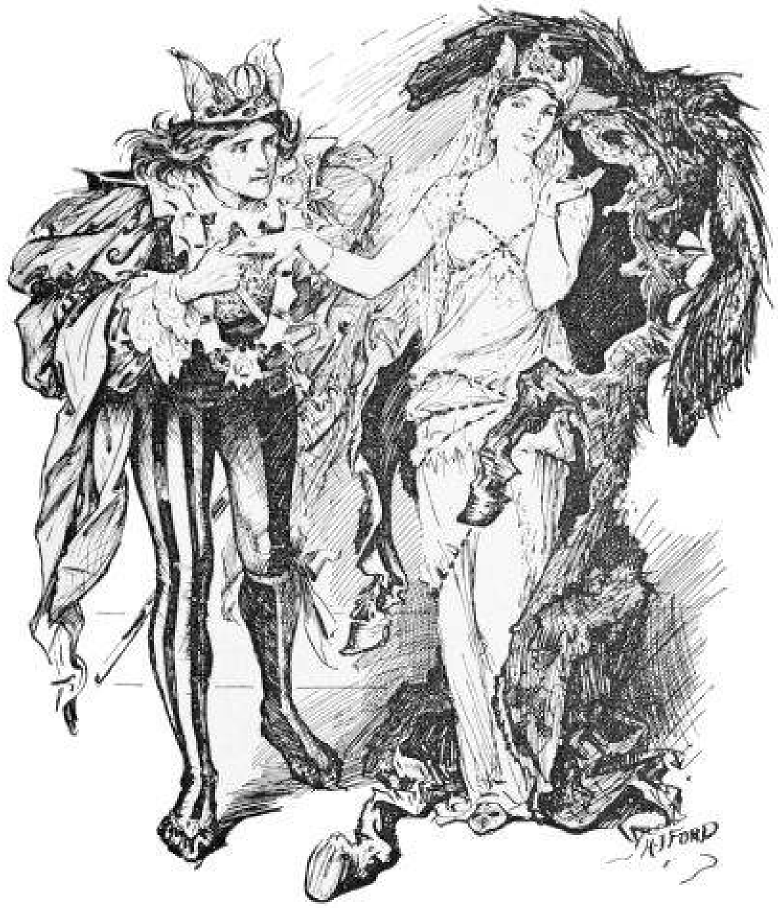

The Donkey-skin falls off

The kings of every country in the earth were invited, including, of course, the princess’s adopted father (who by this time had married a widow), and not one refused.

But what a strange assembly it was! Each monarch travelled in the way he thought most impressive; and some came borne in litters, others had carriages of every shape and kind, while the rest were mounted on elephants, tigers, and even upon eagles. So splendid a wedding had never been seen before; and when it was over the king announced that it was to be followed by a coronation, for he and the queen were tired of reigning, and the young couple must take their place. The rejoicings lasted for three whole months, then the new sovereigns settled down to govern their kingdom, and made themselves so much beloved by their subjects, that when they died, a hundred years later, each man mourned them as his own father and mother.

THE GOBLIN PONY

‘Don’t stir from the fireplace to-night,’ said old Peggy, ‘for the wind is blowing so violently that the house shakes; besides, this is Hallow-e’en, when the witches are abroad, and the goblins, who are their servants, are wandering about in all sorts of disguises, doing harm to the children of men.’

‘Why should I stay here?’ said the eldest of the young people. ‘No, I must go and see what the daughter of old Jacob, the rope-maker, is doing. She wouldn’t close her blue eyes all night if I didn’t visit her father before the moon had gone down.’

‘I must go and catch lobsters and crabs,’ said the second, ‘and not all the witches and goblins in the world shall hinder me.’

So they all determined to go on their business or pleasure, and scorned the wise advice of old Peggy. Only the youngest child hesitated a minute, when she said to him, ‘You stay here, my little Richard, and I will tell you beautiful stories.’

But he wanted to pick a bunch of wild thyme and some blackberries by moonlight, and ran out after the others. When they got outside the house they said: ‘The old woman talks of wind and storm, but never was the weather finer or the sky more clear; see how majestically the moon stalks through the transparent clouds!’

Then all of a sudden they noticed a little black pony close beside them.

‘Oh, ho!’ they said, ‘that is old Valentine’s pony; it must have escaped from its stable, and is going down to drink at the horse-pond.’

‘My pretty little pony,’ said the eldest, patting the creature with his hand, ‘you mustn’t run too far; I’ll take you to the pond myself.’

With these words he jumped on the pony’s back and was quickly followed by his second brother, then by the third, and so on, till at last they were all astride the little beast, down to the small Richard, who didn’t like to be left behind.

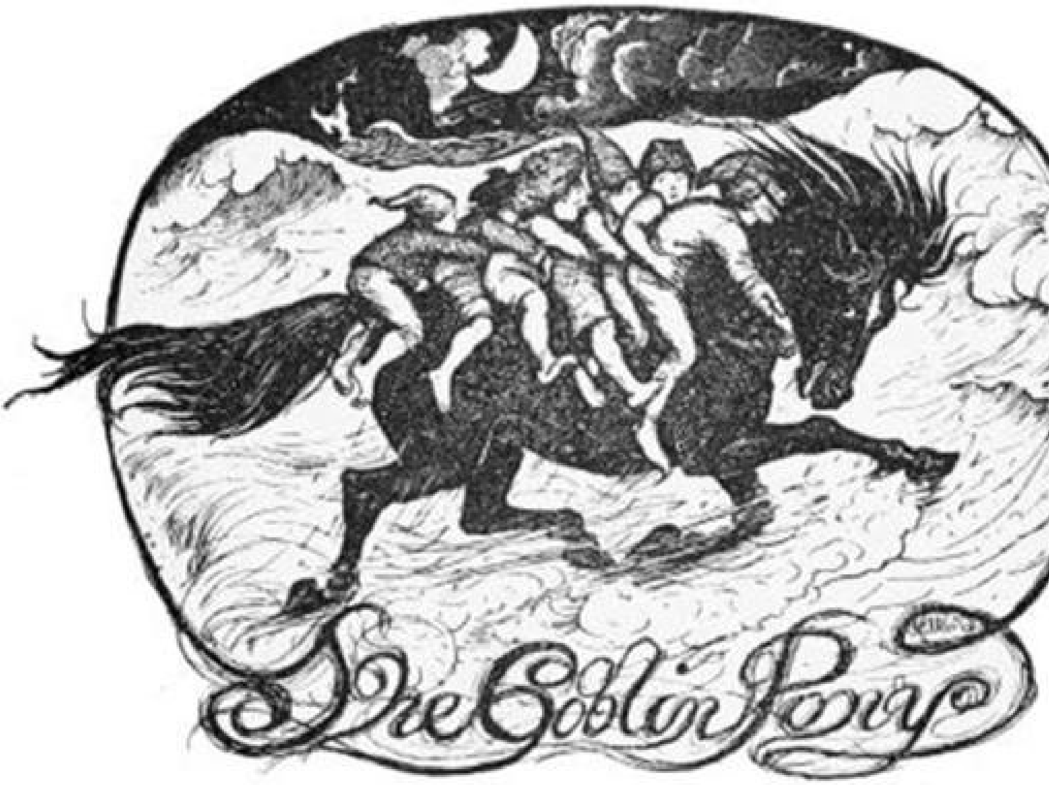

On the way to the pond they met several of their companions, and they invited them all to mount the pony, which they did, and the little creature did not seem to mind the extra weight, but trotted merrily along.

The quicker it trotted the more the young people enjoyed the fun; they dug their heels into the pony’s sides and called out, ‘Gallop, little horse, you have never had such brave riders on your back before!’

In the meantime the wind had risen again, and the waves began to howl; but the pony did not seem to mind the noise, and instead of going to the pond, cantered gaily towards the sea-shore.

Richard began to regret his thyme and blackberries, and the eldest brother seized the pony by the mane and tried to make it turn round, for he remembered the blue eyes of Jacob the rope-maker’s daughter. But he tugged and pulled in vain, for the pony galloped straight on into the sea, till the waves met its forefeet. As soon as it felt the water it neighed lustily and capered about with glee, advancing quickly into the foaming billows. When the waves had covered the children’s legs they repented their careless behaviour, and cried out: ‘The cursed little black pony is bewitched. If we had only listened to old Peggy’s advice we shouldn’t have been lost.’

The further the pony advanced, the higher rose the sea; at last the waves covered the children’s heads and they were all drowned.

Towards morning old Peggy went out, for she was anxious about the fate of her grandchildren. She sought them high and low, but could not find them anywhere. She asked all the neighbours if they had seen the children, but no one knew anything about them, except that the eldest had not been with the blue-eyed daughter of Jacob the rope-maker.

As she was going home, bowed with grief, she saw a little black pony coming towards her, springing and curveting in every direction. When it got quite near her it neighed loudly, and galloped past her so quickly that in a moment it was out of her sight.

AN IMPOSSIBLE ENCHANTMENT

There once lived a king who was much loved by his people, and he, too, loved them warmly. He led a very happy life, but he had the greatest dislike to the idea of marrying, nor had he ever felt the slightest wish to fall in love. His subjects begged him to marry, and at last he promised to try to do so. But as, so far, he had never cared for any woman he had seen, he made up his mind to travel in hopes of meeting some lady he could love.

So he arranged all the affairs of state in an orderly manner, and set out, attended by only one equerry, who, though not very clever, had most excellent good sense. These people indeed generally make the best fellow-travellers.

The king explored several countries, doing all he could to fall in love, but in vain; and at the end of two years' journeys he turned his face towards home, with as free a heart as when he set out.

As he was riding along through a forest he suddenly heard the most awful miawing and shrieking of cats you can imagine. The noise drew nearer, and nearer, and at last they saw a hundred huge Spanish cats rush through the trees close to them. They were so closely packed together that you could easily have covered them with a large cloak, and all were following the same track. They were closely pursued by two enormous apes, dressed in purple suits, with the prettiest and best made boots you ever saw.

The apes were mounted on superb mastiffs, and spurred them on in hot haste, blowing shrill blasts on little toy trumpets all the time.

The king and his equerry stood still to watch this strange hunt, which was followed by twenty or more little dwarfs, some mounted on wolves, and leading relays, and others with cats in leash. The dwarfs were all dressed in purple silk liveries like the apes.

A moment later a beautiful young woman mounted on a tiger came in sight. She passed close to the king, riding at full speed, without taking any notice of him; but he was at once enchanted by her, and his heart was gone in a moment.

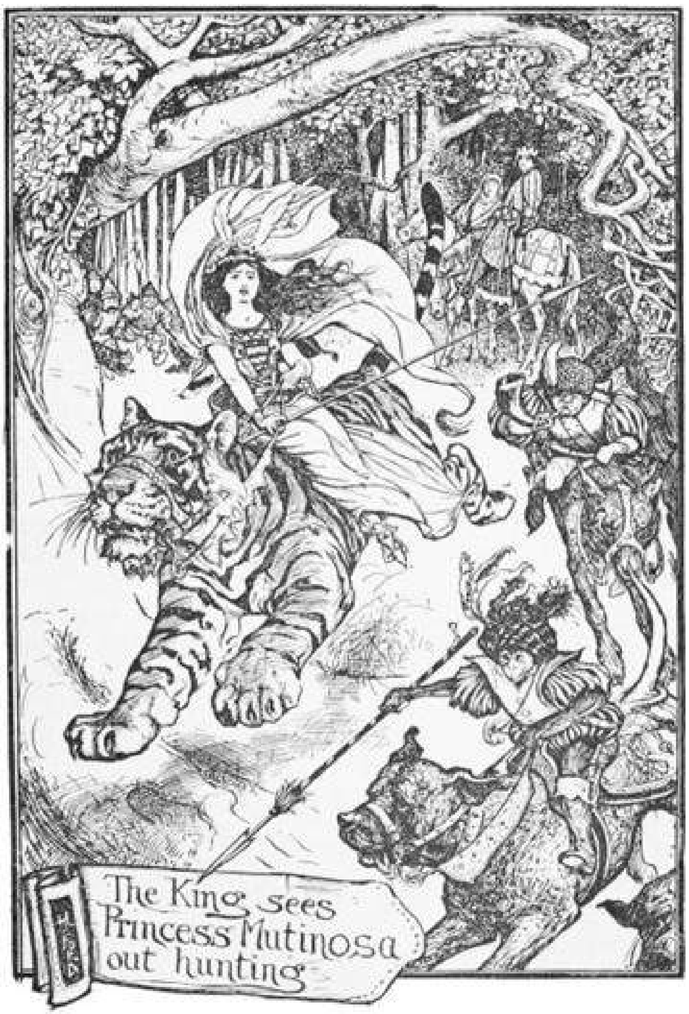
The King sees Princess Mutinosa out hunting

To his great joy he saw that one of the dwarfs had fallen behind the rest, and at once began to question him.

The dwarf told him that the lady he had just seen was the Princess Mutinosa, the daughter of the king in whose country they were at that moment. He added that the princess was very fond of hunting, and that she was now in pursuit of rabbits.

The king then asked the way to the court, and having been told it, hurried off, and reached the capital in a couple of hours.

As soon as he arrived, he presented himself to the king and queen, and on mentioning his own name and that of his country, was received with open arms. Not long after, the princess returned, and hearing that the hunt had been very successful, the king complimented her on it, but she would not answer a word.

Her silence rather surprised him, but he was still more astonished when he found that she never spoke once all through supper-time. Sometimes she seemed about to speak, but whenever this was the case her father or mother at once took up the conversation. However, this silence did not cool the king's affection, and when he retired to his rooms at night he confided his feelings to his faithful equerry. But the equerry was by no means delighted at his king’s love affair, and took no pains to hide his disappointment.

‘But why are you vexed?’ asked the king. ‘Surely the princess is beautiful enough to please anyone?’

‘She is certainly very handsome,’ replied the equerry, ‘but to be really happy in love something more than beauty is required. To tell the truth, sire,’ he added, ‘her expression seems to me hard.’

‘That is pride and dignity,’ said the king, ‘and nothing can be more becoming.’

‘Pride or hardness, as you will,’ said the equerry; ‘but to my mind the choice of so many fierce creatures for her amusements seems to tell of a fierce nature, and I also think there is something suspicious in the care taken to prevent her speaking.’

The equerry’s remarks were full of good sense; but as opposition is only apt to increase love in the hearts of men, and especially of kings who hate being contradicted, this king begged, the very next day, for the hand of the Princess Mutinosa. It was granted him on two conditions.

The first was that the wedding should take place the very next day; and the second, that he should not speak to the princess till she was his wife; to all of which the king agreed, in spite of his equerry’s objections, so that the first word he heard his bride utter was the ‘Yes’ she spoke at their marriage.

Once married, however, she no longer placed any check on herself, and her ladies-in-waiting came in for plenty of rude speeches — even the king did not escape scolding; but as he was a good-tempered man, and very much in love, he bore it patiently. A few days after the wedding the newly married pair set out for their kingdom without leaving many regrets behind.

The good equerry’s fears proved only too true, as the king found out to his cost. The young queen made herself most disagreeable to all her court, her spite and bad temper knew no bounds, and before the end of a month she was known far and wide as a regular vixen.

One day, when riding out, she met a poor old woman walking along the road, who made a curtsy and was going on, when the queen had her stopped, and cried: ‘You are a very impertinent person; don’t you know that I am the queen? And how dare you not make me a deeper curtsy?’

‘Madam,’ said the old woman, ‘I have never learnt how to measure curtsies; but I had no wish to fail in proper respect.’

‘What!’ screamed the queen; ‘she dares to answer! Tie her to my horse’s tail and I’ll just carry her at once to the best dancing-master in the town to learn how to curtsy.’

The old woman shrieked for mercy, but the queen would not listen, and only mocked when she said she was protected by the fairies. At last the poor old thing submitted to be tied up, but when the queen urged her horse on he never stirred. In vain she spurred him, he seemed turned to bronze. At the same moment the cord with which the old woman was tied changed into wreaths of flowers, and she herself into a tall and stately lady.

Looking disdainfully at the queen, she said, ‘Bad woman, unworthy of your crown; I wished to judge for myself whether all I heard of you was true. I have now no doubt of it, and you shall see whether the fairies are to be laughed at.’

So saying the fairy Placida (that was her name) blew a little gold whistle, and a chariot appeared drawn by six splendid ostriches. In it was seated the fairy queen, escorted by a dozen other fairies mounted on dragons.

All having dismounted, Placida told her adventures, and the fairy queen approved all she had done, and proposed turning Mutinosa into bronze like her horse. Placida, however, who was very kind and gentle, begged for a milder sentence, and at last it was settled that Mutinosa should become her slave for life unless she should have a child to take her place.

The king was told of his wife’s fate and submitted to it, which, as he could do nothing to help it, was the only course open to him.

The fairies then all dispersed, Placida taking her slave with her, and on reaching her palace she said: ‘You ought by rights to be scullion, but as you have been delicately brought up the change might be too great for you. I shall therefore only order you to sweep my rooms carefully, and to wash and comb my little dog.’

Mutinosa felt there was no use in disobeying, so she did as she was bid and said nothing.

After some time she gave birth to a most lovely little girl, and when she was well again the fairy gave her a good lecture on her past life, made her promise to behave better in future, and sent her back to the king, her husband.

Placida now gave herself up entirely to the little princess who was left in her charge. She anxiously thought over which of the fairies she would invite to be godmothers, so as to secure the best gift, for her adopted child.

At last she decided on two very kindly and cheerful fairies, and asked them to the christening feast. Directly it was over the baby was brought to them in a lovely crystal cradle hung with red silk curtains embroidered with gold.

The little thing smiled so sweetly at the fairies that they decided to do all they could for her. They began by naming her Graziella, and then Placida said: ‘You know, dear sisters, that the commonest form of spite or punishment amongst us consists of changing beauty to ugliness, cleverness to stupidity, and oftener still to change a person’s form altogether. Now, as we can only each bestow one gift, I think the best plan will be for one of you to give her beauty, the other good understanding, whilst I will undertake that she shall never be changed into any other form.’

The two godmothers quite agreed, and as soon as the little princess had received their gifts, they went home, and Placida gave herself up to the child’s education. She succeeded so well with it, and little Graziella grew so lovely, that when she was still quite a child her fame was spread abroad only too much, and one day Placida was surprised by a visit from the Fairy Queen, who was attended by a very grave and severe-looking fairy.

The queen began at once: ‘I have been much surprised by your behaviour to Mutinosa; she had insulted our whole race, and deserved punishment. You might forgive your own wrongs if you chose, but not those of others. You treated her very gently whilst she was with you, and I come now to avenge our wrongs on her daughter. You have ensured her being lovely and clever, and not subject to change of form, but I shall place her in an enchanted prison, which she shall never leave till she finds herself in the arms of a lover whom she herself loves. It will be my care to prevent anything of the kind happening.’

The enchanted prison was a large high tower in the midst of the sea, built of shells of all shapes and colours. The lower floor was like a great bathroom, where the water was let in or off at will. The first floor contained the princess’s apartments, beautifully furnished. On the second was a library, a large wardrobe-room filled with beautiful clothes and every kind of linen, a music room, a pantry with bins full of the best wines, and a store-room with all manner of preserves, bonbons, pastry and cakes, all of which remained as fresh as if just out of the oven.

The top of the tower was laid out like a garden, with beds of the loveliest flowers, fine fruit trees, and shady arbours and shrubs, where many birds sang amongst the branches.

The fairies escorted Graziella and her governess, Bonnetta, to the tower, and then mounted a dolphin which was waiting for them. At a little distance from the tower the queen waved her wand and summoned two thousand great fierce sharks, whom she ordered to keep close guard, and not to let a soul enter the tower.

The good governess took such pains with Graziella’s education that when she was nearly grown up she was not only most accomplished, but a very sweet, good girl.

One day, as the princess was standing on a balcony, she saw the most extraordinary figure rise out of the sea. She quickly called Bonnetta to ask her what it could be. It looked like some kind of man, with a bluish face and long sea-green hair. He was swimming towards the tower, but the sharks took no notice of him.

‘It must be a merman,’ said Bonnetta.

‘A *man*, do you say?’ cried Graziella; ‘let us hurry down to the door and see him nearer.’

When they stood in the doorway the merman stopped to look at the princess and made many signs of admiration. His voice was very hoarse and husky, but when he found that he was not understood he took to signs. He carried a little basket made of osiers and filled with rare shells, which he presented to the princess.

She took it with signs of thanks; but as it was getting dusk she retired, and the merman plunged back into the sea.

When they were alone, Graziella said to her governess: ‘What a dreadful-looking creature that was! Why do those odious sharks let him come near the tower? I suppose all men are not like him?’

‘No, indeed,’ replied Bonnetta. ‘I suppose the sharks look on him as a sort of relation, and so did not attack him.’

A few days later the two ladies heard a strange sort of music, and looking out of the window, there was the merman, his head crowned with water plants, and blowing a great sea-shell with all his might.

They went down to the tower door, and Graziella politely accepted some coral and other marine curiosities he had brought her. After this he used to come every evening, and blow his shell, or dive and play antics under the princess’s window. She contented herself with bowing to him from the balcony, but she would not go down to the door in spite of all his signs.

Some days later he came with a person of his own kind, but of another sex. Her hair was dressed with great taste, and she had a lovely voice. This new arrival induced the ladies to go down to the door. They were surprised to find that, after trying various languages, she at last spoke to them in their own, and paid Graziella a very pretty compliment on her beauty.

The mermaid noticed that the lower floor was full of water. ‘Why,’ cried she, ‘that is just the place for us, for we can’t live quite out of water.’ So saying, she and her brother swam in and took up a position in the bathroom, the princess and her governess seating themselves on the steps which ran round the room.

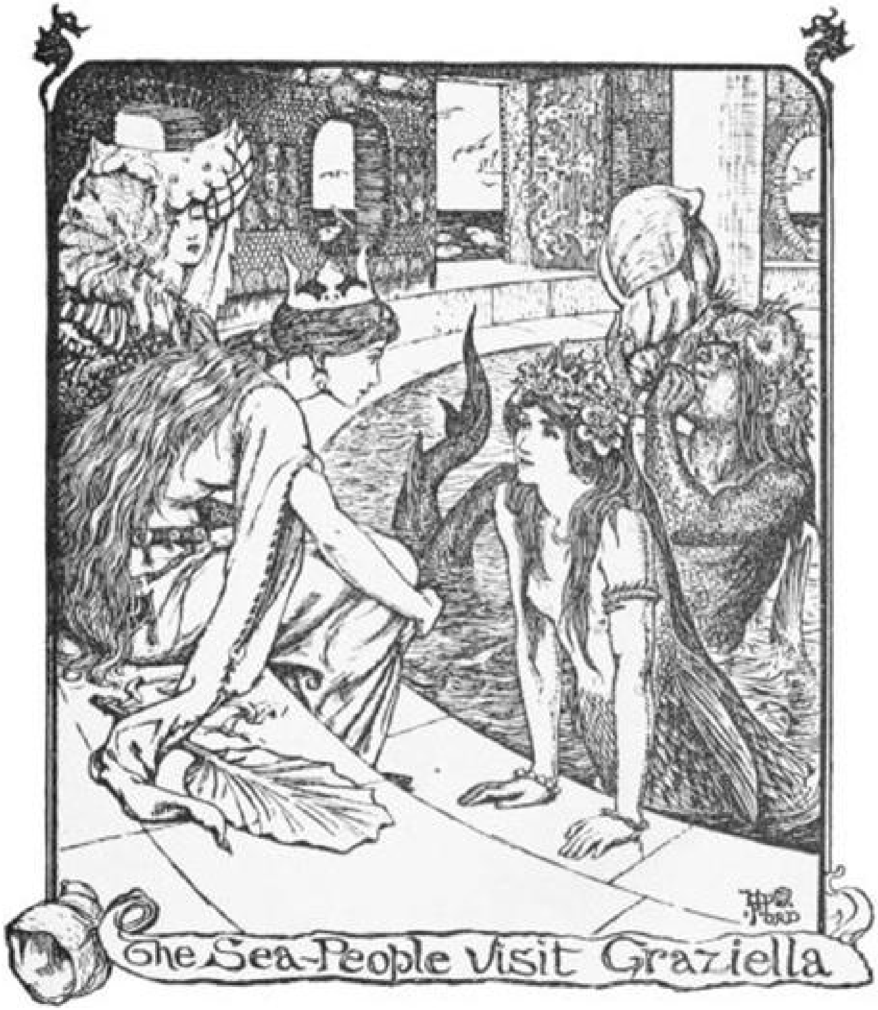

The Sea-People visit Graziella

‘No doubt, madam,’ said the mermaid, ‘you have given up living on land so as to escape from crowds of lovers; but I fear that even here you cannot avoid them, for my brother is already dying of love for you, and I am sure that once you are seen in our city he will have many rivals.’

She then went on to explain how grieved her brother was not to be able to make himself understood, adding: ‘I interpret for him, having been taught several languages by a fairy.’

‘Oh, then, you have fairies, too?’ asked Graziella, with a sigh.

‘Yes, we have,’ replied the mermaid; ‘but if I am not mistaken you have suffered from the fairies on earth.’

The princess, on this, told her entire history to the mermaid, who assured her how sorry she felt for her, but begged her not to lose courage; adding, as she took her leave: ‘Perhaps, some day, you may find a way out of your difficulties.’

The princess was delighted with this visit and with the hopes the mermaid held out. It was something to meet some one fresh to talk to.

‘We will make acquaintance with several of these people,’ she said to her governess, ‘and I dare say they are not all as hideous as the first one we saw. Anyhow, we shan’t be so dreadfully lonely.’

‘Dear me,’ said Bonnetta, ‘how hopeful young people are to be sure! As for me I feel afraid of these folk. But what do you think of the lover you have captivated?’

‘Oh, I could never love him,’ cried the princess; ‘I can’t bear him. But, perhaps, as his sister says they are related to the fairy Marina, they may be of some use to us.’

The mermaid often returned, and each time she talked of her brother’s love, and each time Graziella talked of her longing to escape from her prison, till at length the mermaid promised to bring the fairy Marina to see her, in hopes she might suggest something.

Next day the fairy came with the mermaid, and the princess received her with delight. After a little talk she begged Graziella to show her the inside of the tower and let her see the garden on the top, for with the help of crutches she could manage to move about, and being a fairy could live out of water for a long time, provided she wetted her forehead now and then.

Graziella gladly consented, and Bonnetta stayed below with the mermaid.

When they were in the garden the fairy said: ‘Let us lose no time, but tell me how I can be of use to you.’ Graziella then told all her story and Marina replied: ‘My dear princess, I can do nothing for you as regards dry land, for my power does not reach beyond my own element. I can only say that if you will honour my cousin by accepting his hand, you could then come and live amongst us. I could teach you in a moment to swim and dive with the best of us. I can harden your skin without spoiling its colour. My cousin is one of the best matches in the sea, and I will bestow so many gifts on him that you will be quite happy.’

The fairy talked so well and so long that the princess was rather impressed, and promised to think the matter over.

Just as they were going to leave the garden they saw a ship sailing nearer the tower than any other had done before. On the deck lay a young man under a splendid awning, gazing at the tower through a spy-glass; but before they could see anything clearly the ship moved away, and the two ladies parted, the fairy promising to return shortly.

As soon as she was gone Graziella told her governess what she had said. Bonnetta was not at all pleased at the turn matters were taking, for she did not fancy being turned into a mermaid in her old age. She thought the matter well over, and this was what she did. She was a very clever artist, and next morning she began to paint a picture of a handsome young man, with beautiful curly hair, a fine complexion, and lovely blue eyes. When it was finished she showed it to

Graziella, hoping it would show her the difference there was between a fine young man and her marine suitor.

The princess was much struck by the picture, and asked anxiously whether there could be any man so good-looking in the world. Bonnetta assured her that there were plenty of them; indeed, many far handsomer.

‘I can hardly believe that,’ cried the princess; ‘but, alas! if there are, I don’t suppose I shall ever see them or they me, so what is the use? Oh, dear, how unhappy I am!’

She spent the rest of the day gazing at the picture, which certainly had the effect of spoiling all the merman’s hopes or prospects.

After some days, the fairy Marina came back to hear what was decided; but Graziella hardly paid any attention to her, and showed such dislike to the idea of the proposed marriage that the fairy went off in a regular huff.

Without knowing it, the princess had made another conquest. On board the ship which had sailed so near was the handsomest prince in the world. He had heard of the enchanted tower, and determined to get as near it as he could. He had strong glasses on board, and whilst looking through them he saw the princess quite clearly, and fell desperately in love with her at once. He wanted to steer straight for the tower and to row off to it in a small boat, but his entire crew fell at his feet and begged him not to run such a risk. The captain, too, urged him not to attempt it. ‘You will only lead us all to certain death,’ he said. ‘Pray anchor nearer land, and I will then seek a kind fairy I know, who has always been most obliging to me, and who will, I am sure, try to help your Highness.’

The prince rather unwillingly listened to reason. He landed at the nearest point, and sent off the captain in all haste to beg the fairy’s advice and help. Meantime he had a tent pitched on the shore, and spent all his time gazing at the tower and looking for the princess through his spy-glass.

After a few days the captain came back, bringing the fairy with him. The prince was delighted to see her, and paid her great attention. ‘I have heard about this matter,’ she said; ‘and, to lose no time, I am going to send off a trusty pigeon to test the enchantment. If there is any weak spot he is sure to find it out and get in. I shall bid him bring a flower back as a sign of success, and if he does so I quite hope to get you in too.’

‘But,’ asked the prince, ‘could I not send a line by the pigeon to tell the princess of my love?’

‘Certainly,’ replied the fairy, ‘it would be a very good plan.’

So the prince wrote as follows: —

‘Lovely Princess, — I adore you, and beg you to accept my heart, and to believe there is nothing I will not do to end your misfortunes. — Blondel.’

This note was tied round the pigeon’s neck, and he flew off with it at once. He flew fast till he got near the tower, when a fierce wind blew so hard against him that he could not get on. But he was not to be beaten, but flew carefully round the top of the tower till he came to one spot which, by some mistake, had not been enchanted like the rest. He quickly slipped into the arbour and waited for the princess.

Before long Graziella appeared alone, and the pigeon at once fluttered to meet her, and seemed so tame that she stopped to caress the pretty creature. As she did so she saw it had a pink ribbon round its neck, and tied to the ribbon was a letter. She read it over several times and then wrote this answer: —

‘You say you love me; but I cannot promise to love you without seeing you. Send me your portrait by this faithful messenger. If I return it to you, you must give up hope; but if I keep it you will know that to help me will be to help yourself. — Graziella.’

Before flying back the pigeon remembered about the flower, so, seeing one in the princess’s dress, he stole it and flew away.

The prince was wild with joy at the pigeon’s return with the note. After an hour’s rest the trusty little bird was sent back again, carrying a miniature of the prince, which by good luck he had with him.

On reaching the tower the pigeon found the princess in the garden. She hastened to untie the ribbon, and on opening the miniature case what was her surprise and delight to find it very like the picture her governess had painted for her. She hastened to send the pigeon back, and you can fancy the prince’s joy when he found she had kept his portrait.

‘Now,’ said the fairy, ‘let us lose no more time. I can only make you happy by changing you into a bird, but I will take care to give you back your proper shape at the right time.’

The prince was eager to start, so the fairy, touching him with her wand, turned him into the loveliest humming-bird you ever saw, at the same time letting him keep the power of speech. The pigeon was told to show him the way.

Graziella was much surprised to see a perfectly strange bird, and still more so when it flew to her saying, ‘Good-morning, sweet princess.’

She was delighted with the pretty creature, and let him perch on her finger, when he said, ‘Kiss, kiss, little birdie,’ which she gladly did, petting and stroking him at the same time.

After a time the princess, who had been up very early, grew tired, and as the sun was hot she went to lie down on a mossy bank in the shade of the arbour. She held the pretty bird near her breast, and was just falling asleep, when the fairy contrived to restore the prince to his own shape, so that as Graziella opened her eyes she found herself in the arms of a lover whom she loved in return!

At the same moment her enchantment came to an end. The tower began to rock and to split. Bonnetta hurried up to the top so that she might at least perish with her dear princess. Just as she reached the garden, the kind fairy who had helped the prince arrived with the fairy Placida, in a car of Venetian glass drawn by six eagles.

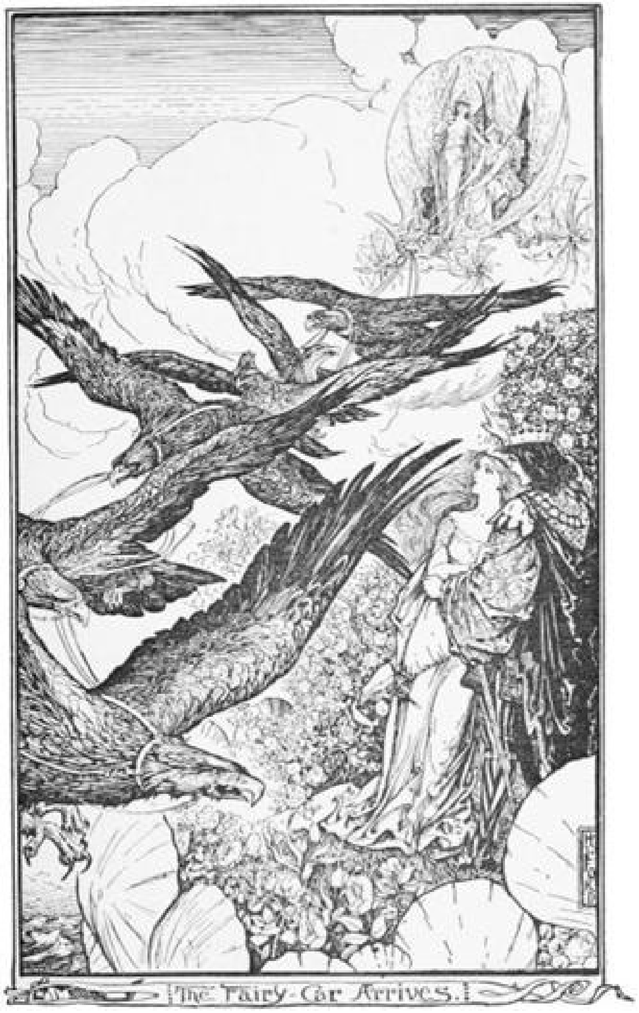

The Fairy-Car Arrives.

‘Come away quickly,’ they cried, ‘the tower is about to sink!’ The prince, princess, and Bonnetta lost no time in stepping into the car, which rose in the air just as, with a terrible crash, the tower sank into the depths of the sea, for the fairy Marina and the mermen had destroyed its foundations to avenge themselves on Graziella. Luckily their wicked plans were defeated, and the good fairies took their way to the kingdom of Graziella’s parents.

They found that Queen Mutinosa had died some years ago, but her kind husband lived on peaceably, ruling his country well and happily. He received his daughter with great delight, and there were universal rejoicings at the return of the lovely princess.

The wedding took place the very next day, and, for many days after, balls, dinners, tournaments, concerts and all sorts of amusements went on all day and all night.

All the fairies were carefully invited, and they came in great state, and promised the young couple their protection and all sorts of good gifts. Prince Blondel and Princess Graziella lived to a good old age, beloved by every one, and loving each other more and more as time went on.

THE STORY OF DSCHEMIL AND DSCHEMILA

There was once a man whose name was Dschemil, and he had a cousin who was called Dschemila. They had been betrothed by their parents when they were children, and now Dschemil thought that the time had come for them to be married, and he went two or three days' journey, to the nearest big town, to buy furniture for the new house.

While he was away, Dschemila and her friends set off to the neighbouring woods to pick up sticks, and as she gathered them she found an iron mortar lying on the ground. She placed it on her bundle of sticks, but the mortar would not stay still, and whenever she raised the bundle to put it on her shoulders it slipped off sideways. At length she saw the only way to carry the mortar was to tie it in the very middle of her bundle, and had just unfastened her sticks, when she heard her companions' voices.

'Dschemila, what are you doing? it is almost dark, and if you mean to come with us you must be quick!'

But Dschemila only replied, 'You had better go back without me, for I am not going to leave my mortar behind, if I stay here till midnight.'

'Do as you like,' said the girls, and started on their walk home.

The night soon fell, and at the last ray of light the mortar suddenly became an ogre, who threw Dschemila on his back, and carried her off into a desert place, distant a whole month's journey from her native town. Here he shut her into a castle, and told her not to fear, as her life was safe. Then he went back to his wife, leaving Dschemila weeping over the fate that she had brought upon herself.

Meanwhile the other girls had reached home, and Dschemila's mother came out to look for her daughter.

'What have you done with her?' she asked anxiously.

'We had to leave her in the wood,' they replied, 'for she had picked up an iron mortar, and could not manage to carry it.'

So the old woman set off at once for the forest, calling to her daughter as she hurried along.

'Do go home,' cried the townspeople, as they heard her; 'we will go and look for your daughter; you are only a woman, and it is a task that needs strong men.'

But she answered, 'Yes, go; but I will go with you! Perhaps it will be only her corpse that we shall find after all. She has most likely been stung by asps, or eaten by wild beasts.'

The men, seeing her heart was bent on it, said no more, but told one of the girls she must come with them, and show them the place where they had left Dschemila. They found the bundle of wood lying where she had dropped it, but the maiden was nowhere to be seen.

‘Dschemila! Dschemila!’ cried they; but nobody answered.

‘If we make a fire, perhaps she will see it,’ said one of the men. And they lit a fire, and then went, one this way, and one that, through the forest, to look for her, whispering to each other that if she had been killed by a lion they would be sure to find some trace of it; or if she had fallen asleep, the sound of their voices would wake her; or if a snake had bitten her, they would at least come on her corpse.

All night they searched, and when morning broke and they knew no more than before what had become of the maiden, they grew weary, and said to the mother: ‘It is no use. Let us go home, nothing has happened to your daughter, except that she has run away with a man.’

‘Yes, I will come,’ answered she, ‘but I must first look in the river. Perhaps some one has thrown her in there.’ But the maiden was not in the river.

For four days the father and mother waited and watched for their child to come back; then they gave up hope, and said to each other: ‘What is to be done? What are we to say to the man to whom Dschemila is betrothed? Let us kill a goat, and bury its head in the grave, and when the man returns we must tell him Dschemila is dead.’

Very soon the bridegroom came back, bringing with him carpets and soft cushions for the house of his bride. And as he entered the town Dschemila’s father met him, saying, ‘Greeting to you. She is dead.’

At these words the young man broke into loud cries, and it was some time before he could speak. Then he turned to one of the crowd who had gathered round him, and asked: ‘Where have they buried her?’

‘Come to the churchyard with me,’ answered he; and the young man went with him, carrying with him some of the beautiful things he had brought. These he laid on the grass and then began to weep afresh. All day he stayed, and at nightfall he gathered up his stuffs and carried them to his own house. But when the day dawned he took them in his arms and returned to the grave, where he remained as long as it was light, playing softly on his flute. And this he did daily for six months.

One morning, a man who was wandering through the desert, having lost his way, came upon a lonely castle. The sun was very hot, and the man was very tired, so he said to himself, ‘I will rest a little in the shadow of this castle.’ He stretched himself out comfortably, and was almost asleep, when he heard a voice calling to him softly: ‘Are you a ghost,’ it said, ‘or a man?’

He looked up, and saw a girl leaning out of a window, and he answered:

‘I am a man, and a better one, too, than your father or your grandfather.’

‘May all good luck be with you,’ said she; ‘but what has brought you into this land of ogres and horrors?’

‘Does an ogre really live in this castle?’ asked he.

‘Certainly he does,’ replied the girl, ‘and as night is not far off he will be here soon. So, dear friend, depart quickly, lest he return and snap you up for supper.’

‘But I am so thirsty!’ said the man. ‘Be kind, and give me some drink, or else I shall die! Surely, even in this desert there must be some spring?’

‘Well, I have noticed that whenever the ogre brings back water he always comes from that side; so if you follow the same direction perhaps you may find some.’

The man jumped up at once and was about to start, when the maiden spoke again:

‘Tell me, where you are going?’

‘Why do you want to know?’

‘I have an errand for you; but tell me first whether you go east or west.’

‘I travel to Damascus.’

‘Then do this for me. As you pass through our village, ask for a man called Dschemil, and say to him: “Dschemila greets you, from the castle, which lies far away, and is rocked by the wind. In my grave lies only a goat. So take heart.”’

And the man promised, and went his way, till he came to a spring of water. And he drank a great draught and then lay on the bank and slept quietly. When he woke he said to himself, ‘The maiden did a good deed when she told me where to find water. A few hours more, and I should have been dead. So I will do her bidding, and seek out her native town and the man for whom the message was given.’

For a whole month he travelled, till at last he reached the town where Dschemil dwelt, and as luck would have it, there was the young man sitting before his door with his beard unshaven and his shaggy hair hanging over his eyes.

‘Welcome, stranger,’ said Dschemil, as the man stopped. ‘Where have you come from?’

‘I come from the west, and go towards the east,’ he answered.

‘Well, stop with us awhile, and rest and eat!’ said Dschemil. And the man entered; and food was set before him, and he sat down with the father of the maiden and her brothers, and Dschemil. Only Dschemil himself was absent, squatting on the threshold.

‘Why do you not eat too?’ asked the stranger. But one of the young men whispered hastily: ‘Leave him alone. Take no notice! It is only at night that he ever eats.’

So the stranger went on silently with his food. Suddenly one of Dschemil’s brothers called out and said: ‘Dschemil, bring us some water!’ And the stranger remembered his message and said: ‘Is there a man here named “Dschemil”? I lost my way in the desert, and came to a castle, and a maiden looked out of the window and — —’

‘Be quiet,’ they cried, fearing that Dschemil might hear. But Dschemil had heard, and came forward and said: ‘What did you see? Tell me truly, or I will cut off your head this instant!’

‘My lord,’ replied the stranger, ‘as I was wandering, hot and tired, through the desert, I saw near me a great castle, and I said aloud, “I will rest a little in its shadow.” And a maiden looked out of a window and said, “Are you a ghost or a man?” And I answered. “I am a man, and a better one, too, than your father or your grandfather.” And I was thirsty and asked for water, but she had none to give me, and I felt like to die. Then she told me that the ogre, in whose castle she dwelt, brought in water always from the same side, and that if I too went that way most likely I should come to it. But before I started she begged me to go to her native town, and if I met a man called Dschemil I was to say to him, “Dschemila greets you, from the castle which lies far away, and is rocked by the wind. In my grave lies only a goat. So take heart.”’

Then Dschemil turned to his family and said:

‘Is this true? and is Dschemila not dead at all, but simply stolen from her home?’

‘No, no,’ replied they, ‘his story is a pack of lies. Dschemila is really dead. Everybody knows it.’

‘That I shall see for myself,’ said Dschemil, and, snatching up a spade, hastened off to the grave where the goat’s head lay buried.

And they answered, ‘Then hear what really happened. When you were away, she went with the other maidens to the forest to gather wood. And there she found an iron mortar, which she wished to bring home; but she could not carry it, neither would she leave it. So the maidens returned without her, and as night was come, we all set out to look for her, but found nothing. And we said, “The bridegroom will be here to-morrow, and when he learns that she is lost, he will set out to seek her, and we shall lose him too. Let us kill a goat, and bury it in her grave, and tell him she is dead.” Now you know, so do as you will. Only, if you go to seek her, take with you this man with whom she has spoken that he may show you the way.’

‘Yes; that is the best plan,’ replied Dschemil; ‘so give me food, and hand me my sword, and we will set out directly.’

But the stranger answered: ‘I am not going to waste a whole month in leading you to the castle! If it were only a day or two’s journey I would not mind; but a month — no!’

‘Come with me then for three days,’ said Dschemil, ‘and put me in the right road, and I will reward you richly.’

‘Very well,’ replied the stranger, ‘so let it be.’

For three days they travelled from sunrise to sunset, then the stranger said: ‘Dschemil?’

‘Yes,’ replied he.

‘Go straight on till you reach a spring, then go on a little farther, and soon you will see the castle standing before you.’

‘So I will,’ said Dschemil.

‘Farewell, then,’ said the stranger, and turned back the way he had come.

It was six and twenty days before Dschemil caught sight of a green spot rising out of the sandy desert, and knew that the spring was near at last. He hastened his steps, and soon was kneeling by its side, drinking thirstily of the bubbling water. Then he lay down on the cool grass, and began to think. ‘If the man was right, the castle must be somewhere about. I had better sleep here to-night, and to-morrow I shall be able to see where it is.’ So he slept long and peacefully. When he awoke the sun was high, and he jumped up and washed his face and hands in the spring, before going on his journey. He had not walked far, when the castle suddenly appeared before him, though a moment before not a trace of it could be seen. ‘How am I to get in?’ he thought. ‘I dare not knock, lest the ogre should hear me. Perhaps it would be best for me to climb up the wall, and wait to see what will happen.’ So he did, and after sitting on the top for about an hour, a window above him opened, and a voice said: ‘Dschemil!’ He looked up, and at the sight of Dschemila, whom he had so long believed to be dead, he began to weep.

‘Dear cousin,’ she whispered, ‘what has brought you here?’

‘My grief at losing you.’

‘Oh! go away at once. If the ogre comes back he will kill you.’

‘I swear by your head, queen of my heart, that I have not found you only to lose you again! If I must die, well, I must!’

‘Oh, what can I do for you?’

‘Anything you like!’

‘If I let you down a cord, can you make it fast under your arms, and climb up?’

‘Of course I can,’ said he.

So Dschemila lowered the cord, and Dschemil tied it round him, and climbed up to her window. Then they embraced each other tenderly, and burst into tears of joy.

‘But what shall I do when the ogre returns?’ asked she.

‘Trust to me,’ he said.

Now there was a chest in the room, where Dschemila kept her clothes. And she made Dschemil get into it, and lie at the bottom, and told him to keep very still.

He was only hidden just in time, for the lid was hardly closed when the ogre’s heavy tread was heard on the stairs. He flung open the door, bringing men’s flesh for himself and lamb’s flesh for the maiden. ‘I smell the smell of a man!’ he thundered. ‘What is he doing here?’

‘How could any one have come to this desert place?’ asked the girl, and burst into tears.

‘Do not cry,’ said the ogre; ‘perhaps a raven has dropped some scraps from his claws.’

‘Ah, yes, I was forgetting,’ answered she. ‘One did drop some bones about.’

‘Well, burn them to powder,’ replied the ogre, ‘so that I may swallow it.’

So the maiden took some bones and burned them, and gave them to the ogre, saying, ‘Here is the powder, swallow it.’

And when he had swallowed the powder the ogre stretched himself out and went to sleep.

In a little while the man’s flesh, which the maiden was cooking for the ogre’s supper, called out and said: ‘Hist! Hist!
A man lies in the kist!’

And the lamb’s flesh answered:

‘He is your brother,
And cousin of the other.’

The ogre moved sleepily, and asked, ‘What did the meat say, Dschemila?’

‘Only that I must be sure to add salt.’

‘Well, add salt.’

‘Yes, I have done so,’ said she.

The ogre was soon sound asleep again, when the man’s flesh called out a second time:

‘Hist! Hist!
A man lies in the kist!’

And the lamb’s flesh answered:

‘He is your brother,
And cousin of the other.’

‘What did it say, Dschemila?’ asked the ogre.

‘Only that I must add pepper.’

‘Well, add pepper.’

‘Yes, I have done so,’ said she.

The ogre had had a long day’s hunting, and could not keep himself awake. In a moment his eyes were tight shut, and then the man’s flesh called out for the third time: ‘Hist! Hist!
A man lies in the kist.’

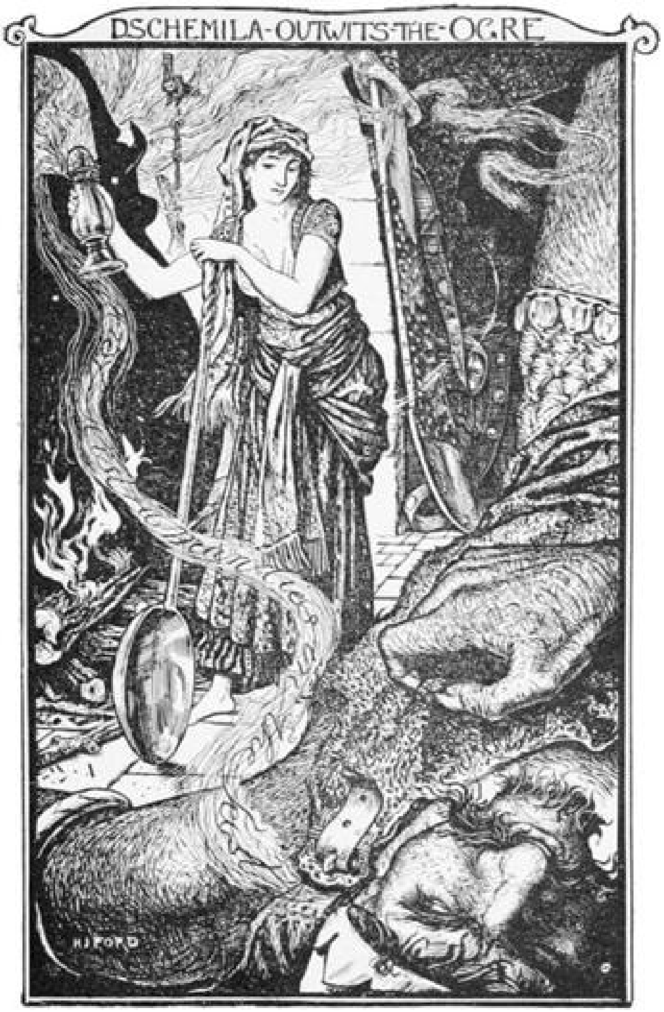

And the lamb’s flesh answered:

‘He is your brother,
And cousin of the other.’

‘What did it say, Dschemila?’ asked the ogre.

‘Only that it was ready, and that I had better take it off the fire.’

‘Then if it is ready, bring it to me, and I will eat it.’

So she brought it to him, and while he was eating she supped of the lamb’s flesh herself, and managed to put some aside for her cousin.

When the ogre had finished, and had washed his hands, he said to Dschemila: ‘Make my bed, for I am tired.’

So she made his bed, and put a nice soft pillow for his head, and tucked him up.

‘Father,’ she said suddenly.

‘Well, what is it?’

‘Dear father, if you are really asleep, why are your eyes always open?’

‘Why do you ask that, Dschemila? Do you want to deal treacherously with me?’

‘No, of course not, father. How could I, and what would be the use of it?’

‘Well, why do you want to know?’

‘Because last night I woke up and saw the whole place shining in a red light, which frightened me.’

‘That happens when I am fast asleep.’

‘And what is the good of the pin you always keep here so carefully?’

‘If I throw that pin in front of me, it turns into an iron mountain.’

‘And this darning needle?’

‘That becomes a sea.’

‘And this hatchet?’

‘That becomes a thorn hedge, which no one can pass through. But why do you ask all these questions? I am sure you have something in your head.’

‘Oh, I just wanted to know; and how could anyone find me out here?’ and she began to cry.

‘Oh, don’t cry, I was only in fun,’ said the ogre.

He was soon asleep again, and a yellow light shone through the castle.

‘Come quick!’ called Dschemil from the chest; ‘we must fly now while the ogre is asleep.’

‘Not yet,’ she said, ‘there is a yellow light shining. I don’t think he is asleep.’

So they waited for an hour. Then Dschemil whispered again: ‘Wake up! There is no time to lose!’

‘Let me see if he is asleep,’ said she, and she peeped in, and saw a red light shining. Then she stole back to her cousin, and asked, ‘But how are we to get out?’

‘Get the rope, and I will let you down.’

So she fetched the rope, the hatchet, and the pin and the needles, and said, ‘Take them, and put them in the pocket of your cloak, and be sure not to lose them.’

Dschemil put them carefully in his pocket, and tied the rope round her, and let her down over the wall.

‘Are you safe?’ he asked.

‘Yes, quite.’

‘Then untie the rope, so that I may draw it up.’

And Dschemila did as she was told, and in a few minutes he stood beside her.

Now all this time the ogre was asleep, and had heard nothing. Then his dog came to him and said, ‘O, sleeper, are you having pleasant dreams? Dschemila has forsaken you and run away.’

The ogre got out of bed, gave the dog a kick, then went back again, and slept till morning.

When it grew light, he rose, and called, ‘Dschemila! Dschemila!’ but he only heard the echo of his own voice! Then he dressed himself quickly; buckled on his sword and whistled to his dog, and followed the road which he knew the fugitives must have taken.

‘Cousin,’ said Dschemila suddenly, and turning round as she spoke.

‘What is it?’ answered he.

‘The ogre is coming after us. I saw him.’

‘But where is he? I don’t see him.’

‘Over there. He only looks about as tall as a needle.’

Then they both began to run as fast as they could, while the ogre and his dog kept drawing always nearer. A few more steps, and he would have been by their side, when Dschemila threw the darning needle behind her. In a moment it became an iron mountain between them and their enemy.

‘We will break it down, my dog and I,’ cried the ogre in a rage, and they dashed at the mountain till they had forced a path through, and came ever nearer and nearer.

‘Cousin!’ said Dschemila suddenly.

‘What is it?’

‘The ogre is coming after us with his dog.’

‘You go on in front then,’ answered he; and they both ran on as fast as they could, while the ogre and the dog drew always nearer and nearer.

‘They are close upon us!’ cried the maiden, glancing behind, ‘you must throw the pin.’

So Dschemil took the pin from his cloak and threw it behind him, and a dense thicket of thorns sprang up round them, which the ogre and his dog could not pass through.

‘I will get through it somehow, if I burrow underground,’ cried he, and very soon he and the dog were on the other side.

‘Cousin,’ said Dschemila, ‘they are close to us now.’

‘Go on in front, and fear nothing,’ replied Dschemil.

So she ran on a little way, and then stopped.

‘He is only a few yards away now,’ she said, and Dschemil flung the hatchet on the ground, and it turned into a lake.

‘I will drink, and my dog shall drink, till it is dry,’ shrieked the ogre, and the dog drank so much that it burst and died. But the ogre did not stop for that, and soon the whole lake was nearly dry. Then he exclaimed, ‘Dschemila, let your head become a donkey’s head, and your hair fur!’

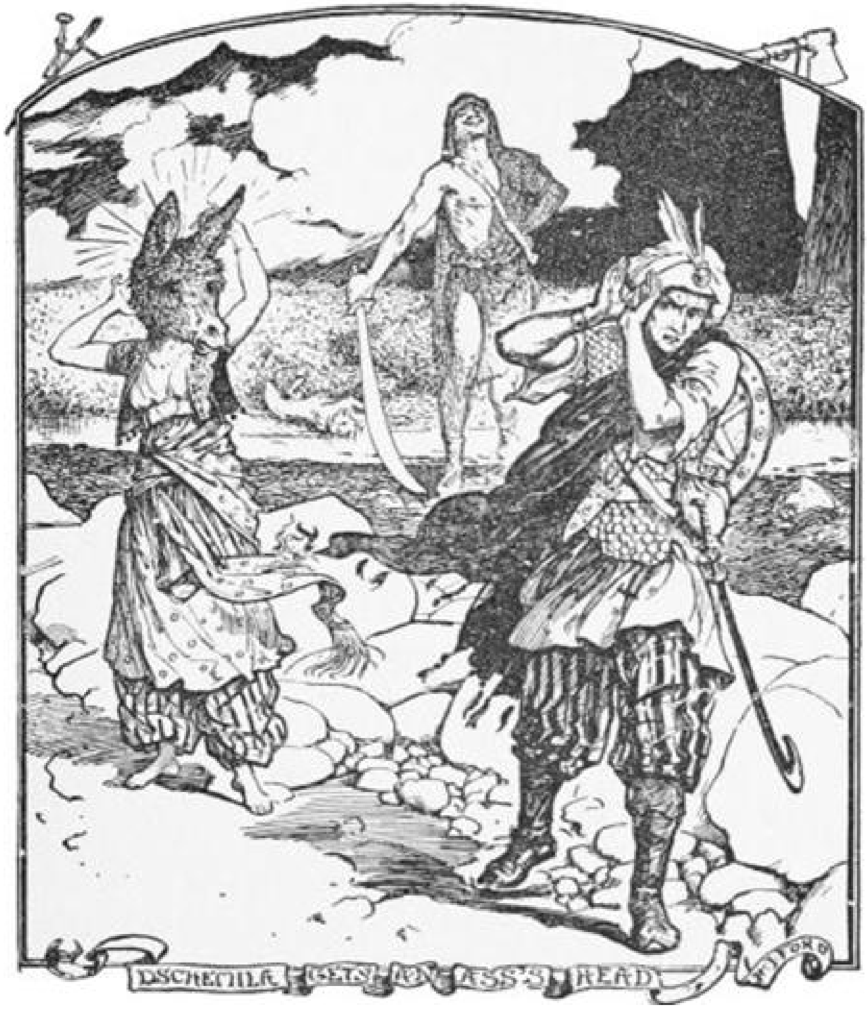
DSCHEMILA GETS AN ASS'S HEAD

But when it was done, Dschemil looked at her in horror, and said, ‘She is really a donkey, and not a woman at all!’

And he left her, and went home.

For two days poor Dschemila wandered about alone, weeping bitterly. When her cousin drew near his native town, he began to think over his conduct, and to feel ashamed of himself.

‘Perhaps by this time she has changed back to her proper shape,’ he said to himself, ‘I will go and see!’

So he made all the haste he could, and at last he saw her seated on a rock, trying to keep off the wolves, who longed to have her for dinner. He drove them off and said, ‘Get up, dear cousin, you have had a narrow escape.’

Dschemila stood up and answered, ‘Bravo, my friend. You persuaded me to fly with you, and then left me helplessly to my fate.’

‘Shall I tell you the truth?’ asked he.

‘Tell it.’

‘I thought you were a witch, and I was afraid of you.’

‘Did you not see me before my transformation? and did you not watch it happen under your very eyes, when the ogre bewitched me?’

‘What shall I do?’ said Dschemil. ‘If I take you into the town, everyone will laugh, and say, “Is that a new kind of toy you have got? It has hands like a woman, feet like a woman, the body of a woman; but its head is the head of an ass, and its hair is fur.”’

‘Well, what do you mean to do with me?’ asked Dschemila. ‘Better take me home to my mother by night, and tell no one anything about it.’

‘So I will,’ said he.

They waited where they were till it was nearly dark, then Dschemil brought his cousin home.

‘Is that Dschemil?’ asked the mother when he knocked softly.

‘Yes, it is.’

‘And have you found her?’

‘Yes, and I have brought her to you.’

‘Oh, where is she? let me see her!’ cried the mother.

‘Here, behind me,’ answered Dschemil.

But when the poor woman caught sight of her daughter, she shrieked, and exclaimed, ‘Are you making fun of me? When did I ever give birth to an ass?’

‘Hush!’ said Dschemil, ‘it is not necessary to let the whole world know! And if you look at her body, you will see two scars on it.’

‘Mother,’ sobbed Dschemila, ‘do you really not know your own daughter?’

‘Yes, of course I know her.’

‘What are her two scars then?’

‘On her thigh is a scar from the bite of a dog, and on her breast is the mark of a burn, where she pulled a lamp over her when she was little.’

‘Then look at me, and see if I am not your daughter,’ said Dschemila, throwing off her clothes and showing her two scars.

And at the sight her mother embraced her, weeping.

‘Dear daughter,’ she cried, ‘what evil fate has befallen you?’

‘It was the ogre who carried me off first, and then bewitched me,’ answered Dschemila.

‘But what is to be done with you?’ asked her mother.

‘Hide me away, and tell no one anything about me. And you, dear cousin, say nothing to the neighbours, and if they should put questions, you can make answer that I have not yet been found.’

‘So I will,’ replied he.

Then he and her mother took her upstairs and hid her in a cupboard, where she stayed for a whole month, only going out to walk when all the world was asleep.

Meanwhile Dschemil had returned to his own home, where his father and mother, his brothers and neighbours, greeted him joyfully.

‘When did you come back?’ said they, ‘and have you found Dschemila?’

‘No, I searched the whole world after her, and could hear nothing of her.’

‘Did you part company with the man who started with you?’

‘Yes; after three days he got so weak and useless he could not go on. It must be a month by now since he reached home again. I went on and visited every castle, and looked in every house. But there were no signs of her; and so I gave it up.’

And they answered him: ‘We told you before that it was no good. An ogre or an ogress must have snapped her up, and how can you expect to find her?’

‘I loved her too much to be still,’ he said.

But his friends did not understand, and soon they spoke to him again about it.

‘We will seek for a wife for you. There are plenty of girls prettier than Dschemila.’

‘I dare say; but I don’t want them.’

‘But what will you do with all the cushions and carpets, and beautiful things you bought for your house?’

‘They can stay in the chests.’

‘But the moths will eat them! For a few weeks, it is of no consequence, but after a year or two they will be quite useless.’

‘And if they have to lie there ten years I will have Dschemila, and her only, for my wife. For a month, or even two months, I will rest here quietly. Then I will go and seek her afresh.’

‘Oh, you are quite mad! Is she the only maiden in the world? There are plenty of others better worth having than she is.’

‘If there are I have not seen them! And why do you make all this fuss? Every man knows his own business best.’

‘Why, it is you who are making all the fuss yourself — —’

But Dschemil turned and went into the house, for he did not want to quarrel.

Three months later a Jew, who was travelling across the desert, came to the castle, and laid himself down under the wall to rest.

In the evening the ogre saw him there and said to him, ‘Jew, what are you doing here? Have you anything to sell?’

‘I have only some clothes,’ answered the Jew, who was in mortal terror of the ogre.

‘Oh, don’t be afraid of me,’ said the ogre, laughing. ‘I shall not eat you. Indeed, I mean to go a bit of the way with you myself.’

‘I am ready, gracious sir,’ replied the Jew, rising to his feet.

‘Well, go straight on till you reach a town, and in that town you will find a maiden called Dschemila and a young man called Dschemil. Take this mirror and this comb with you, and say to Dschemila, “Your father, the ogre, greets you, and begs you to look at your face in this mirror, and it will appear as it was before, and to comb your hair with this comb, and it will be as formerly.” If you do not carry out my orders, I will eat you the next time we meet.’

‘Oh, I will obey you punctually,’ cried the Jew.

After thirty days the Jew entered the gate of the town, and sat down in the first street he came to, hungry, thirsty, and very tired.

Quite by chance, Dschemil happened to pass by, and seeing a man sitting there, full in the glare of the sun, he stopped, and said, ‘Get up at once, Jew; you will have a sunstroke if you sit in such a place.’

‘Ah, good sir,’ replied the Jew, ‘for a whole month I have been travelling, and I am too tired to move.’

‘Which way did you come?’ asked Dschemil.

‘From out there,’ answered the Jew, pointing behind him.

‘And you have been travelling for a month, you say? Well, did you see anything remarkable?’

‘Yes, good sir; I saw a castle, and lay down to rest under its shadow. And an ogre woke me, and told me to come to this town, where I should find a young man called Dschemil, and a girl called Dschemila.’

‘My name is Dschemil. What does the ogre want with me?’

‘He gave me some presents for Dschemila. How can I see her?’

‘Come with me, and you shall give them into her own hands.’

So the two went together to the house of Dschemil’s uncle, and Dschemil led the Jew into his aunt’s room.

‘Aunt!’ he cried, ‘this Jew who is with me has come from the ogre, and has brought with him, as presents, a mirror and a comb which the ogre has sent her.’

‘But it may be only some wicked trick on the part of the ogre,’ said she.

‘Oh, I don’t think so,’ answered the young man, ‘give her the things.’

Then the maiden was called, and she came out of her hiding place, and went up to the Jew, saying, ‘Where have you come from, Jew?’

‘From your father the ogre.’

‘And what errand did he send you on?’

‘He told me I was to give you this mirror and this comb, and to say “Look in this mirror, and comb your hair with this comb, and both will become as they were formerly.”’

And Dschemila took the mirror and looked into it, and combed her hair with the comb, and she had no longer an ass’s head, but the face of a beautiful maiden.

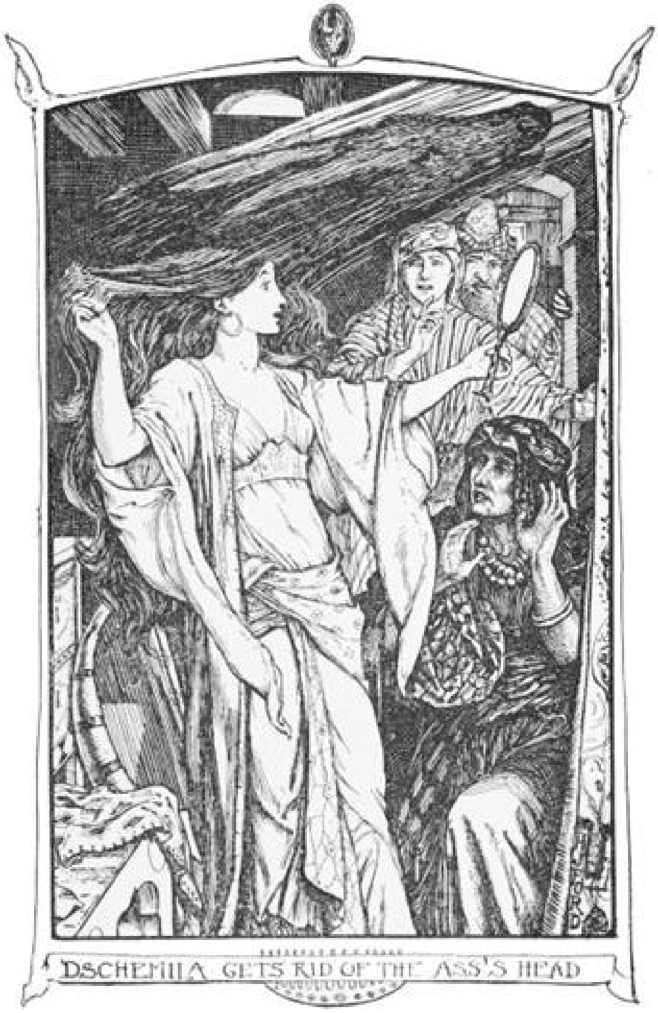

DSCHEMILA GETS RID OF THE ASS'S HEAD

Great was the joy of both mother and cousin at this wonderful sight, and the news that Dschemila had returned soon spread, and the neighbours came flocking in with greetings.

‘When did you come back?’

‘My cousin brought me.’

‘Why, he told us he could not find you!’

‘Oh, I did that on purpose,’ answered Dschemil. ‘I did not want everyone to know.’

Then he turned to his father and his mother, his brothers and his sisters-in-law, and said, ‘We must set to work at once, for the wedding will be to-day.’

A beautiful litter was prepared to carry the bride to her new home, but she shrank back, saying, ‘I am afraid, lest the ogre should carry me off again.’

‘How can the ogre get at you when we are all here?’ they said. ‘There are two thousand of us all told, and every man has his sword.’

‘He will manage it somehow,’ answered Dschemila, ‘he is a powerful king!’

‘She is right,’ said an old man. ‘Take away the litter, and let her go on foot if she is afraid.’

‘But it is absurd!’ exclaimed the rest; ‘how can the ogre get hold of her?’

‘I will not go,’ said Dschemila again. ‘You do not know that monster; I do.’

And while they were disputing the bridegroom arrived.

‘Let her alone. She shall stay in her father’s house. After all, I can live here, and the wedding feast shall be made ready.’

And so they were married at last, and died without having had a single quarrel.

JANNI AND THE DRAKEN

Once there was a man who shunned the world, and lived in the wilderness. He owned nothing but a flock of sheep, whose milk and wool he sold, and so procured himself bread to eat; he also carried wooden spoons, and sold them. He had a wife and one little girl, and after a long time his wife had another child. The evening it was born the man went to the nearest village to fetch a nurse, and on the way he met a monk who begged him for a night's lodging. This the man willingly granted, and took him home with him. There being no one far nor near to baptize the child, the man asked the monk to do him this service, and the child was given the name of Janni.

In the course of time Janni's parents died, and he and his sister were left alone in the world; soon affairs went badly with them, so they determined to wander away to seek their fortune. In packing up, the sister found a knife which the monk had left for his godson, and this she gave to her brother.

Then they went on their way, taking with them the three sheep which were all that remained of their flocks. After wandering for three days they met a man with three dogs who proposed that they should exchange animals, he taking the sheep, and they the dogs. The brother and sister were quite pleased at this arrangement, and after the exchange was made they separated, and went their different ways.

Janni and his sister in course of time came to a great castle, in which dwelt forty Draken, who, when they heard that Janni had come, fled forty fathoms underground.

So Janni found the castle deserted, and abode there with his sister, and every day went out to hunt with the weapons the Draken had left in the castle.

One day, when he was away hunting, one of the Draken came up to get provisions, not knowing that there was anyone in the castle. When he saw Janni's sister he was terrified, but she told him not to be afraid, and by-and-by they fell in love with each other, for every time that Janni went to hunt the sister called the Drakos up. Thus they went on making love to each other till at length, unknown to Janni, they got married. Then, when it was too late, the sister repented, and was afraid of Janni's wrath when he found it out.

One day the Drakos came to her, and said: 'You must pretend to be ill, and when Janni asks what ails you, and what you want, you must answer: "Cherries," and when he inquires where these are to be found, you must say: "There are some in a garden a day's journey from here." Then your brother will go there, and will never come back, for there dwell three of my brothers who will look after him well.'

Then the sister did as the Drakos advised, and next day Janni set out to fetch the cherries, taking his three dogs with him. When he came to the garden where the cherries grew he jumped off his horse, drank some water from the spring, which rose there, and fell directly into a deep sleep. The Draken came round about to eat him, but the dogs flung themselves on them and tore them in pieces, and scratched a grave in the ground with their paws, and buried the Draken so that Janni might not see their dead bodies. When Janni awoke, and saw his dogs all covered with blood, he believed that they had caught, somewhere, a wild beast, and was angry because they had left none of it for him. But he plucked the cherries, and took them back to his sister.

When the Drakos heard that Janni had come back, he fled for fear forty fathoms underground. And the sister ate the cherries and declared herself well again.

The next day, when Janni was gone to hunt, the Drakos came out, and advised the sister that she should pretend to be ill again, and when her brother asked her what she would like, she should answer 'Quinces,' and when he inquired where these were to be found, she should say: 'In a garden distant about two days' journey.' Then would Janni certainly be destroyed, for there dwelt six brothers of the Drakos, each of whom had two heads.

The sister did as she was advised, and next day Janni again set off, taking his three dogs with him. When he came to the garden he dismounted, sat down to rest a little, and fell fast asleep. First there came three Draken round about to eat him, and when these three had been worried by the dogs, there came three others who were worried in like manner. Then the dogs again dug a grave and buried the dead Draken, that their master might not see them. When Janni awoke and beheld the dogs all covered with blood, he thought, as before, that they had killed a wild beast, and was again angry with them for leaving him nothing. But he took the quinces and brought them back to his sister, who, when she had eaten them, declared herself better. The Drakos, when he heard that Janni had come back, fled for fear forty fathoms deeper underground.

Next day, when Janni was hunting, the Drakos went to the sister and advised that she should again pretend to be ill, and should beg for some pears, which grew in a garden three days' journey from the castle. From this quest Janni would certainly never return, for there dwelt nine brothers of the Drakos, each of whom had three heads.

The sister did as she was told, and next day Janni, taking his three dogs with him, went to get the pears. When he came to the garden he laid himself down to rest, and soon fell asleep.

Then first came three Draken to eat him, and when the dogs had worried these, six others came and fought the dogs a long time. The noise of this combat awoke Janni, and he slew the Draken, and knew at last why the dogs were covered with blood.

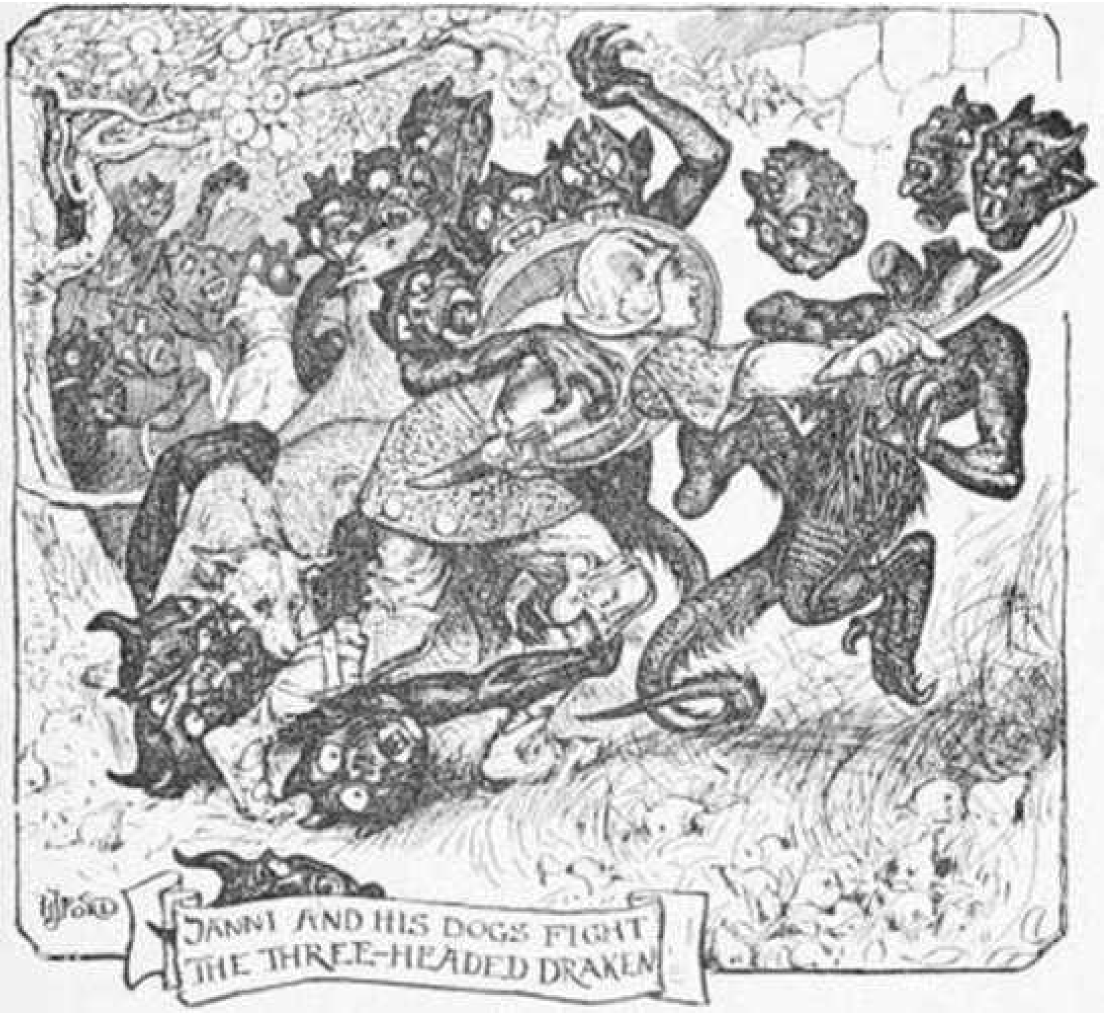

JANNI AND HIS DOGS FIGHT THE THREE-HEADED DRAKEN

After that he freed all whom the Draken held prisoners, amongst others, a king’s daughter. Out of gratitude she would have taken him for her husband; but he put her off, saying: ‘For the kindness that I have been able to do to you, you shall receive in this castle all the blind and lame who pass this way.’ The princess promised him to do so, and on his departure gave him a ring.

So Janni plucked the pears and took them to his sister, who, when she had eaten them, declared she felt better. When, however, the Drakos heard that Janni had come back yet a third time safe and sound, he fled for fright forty fathoms deeper underground; and, next day, when Janni was away hunting, he crept out and said to the sister: ‘Now are we indeed both lost, unless you find out from him wherein his strength lies, and then between us we will contrive to do away with him.’

When, therefore, Janni had come back from hunting, and sat at evening with his sister by the fire, she begged him to tell her wherein lay his strength, and he answered: ‘It lies in my two fingers; if these are bound together then all my strength disappears.’

‘That I will not believe,’ said the sister, ‘unless I see it for myself.’

Then he let her tie his fingers together with a thread, and immediately he became powerless. Then the sister called up the Drakos, who, when he had come forth, tore out Janni’s eyes, gave them to his dogs to eat, and threw him into a dry well.

Now it happened that some travellers, going to draw water from this well, heard Janni groaning at the bottom. They came near, and asked him where he was, and he begged them to draw him up from the well, for he was a poor unfortunate man.

The travellers let a rope down and drew him up to daylight. It was not till then that he first became aware that he was blind, and he begged the travellers to lead him to the country of the king whose daughter he had freed, and they would be well repaid for their trouble.

When they had brought him there he sent to beg the princess to come to him; but she did not recognise him till he had shown her the ring she had given him.

Then she remembered him, and took him with her into the castle.

When she learnt what had befallen him she called together all the sorceresses in the country in order that they should tell her where the eyes were. At last she found one who declared that she knew where they were, and that she could restore them. This sorceress then went straight to the castle where dwelt the sister and the Drakos, and gave something to the dogs to eat which caused the eyes to reappear. She took them with her and put them back in Janni’s head, so that he saw as well as before.

Then he returned to the castle of the Drakos, whom he slew as well as his sister; and, taking his dogs with him, went back to the princess and they were immediately married.

THE PARTNERSHIP OF THE THIEF AND THE LIAR.

There was once upon a time a thief, who, being out of a job, was wandering by himself up and down the seashore. As he walked he passed a man who was standing still, looking at the waves.

‘I wonder,’ said the thief, addressing the stranger, ‘if you have ever seen a stone swimming?’

‘Most certainly I have,’ replied the other man, ‘and, what is more, I saw the same stone jump out of the water and fly through the air.’

‘This is capital,’ replied the thief. ‘You and I must go into partnership. We shall certainly make our fortunes. Let us start together for the palace of the king of the neighbouring country. When we get there, I will go into his presence alone, and will tell him the most startling thing I can invent. Then you must follow and back up my lie.’

Having agreed to do this, they set out on their travels. After several days’ journeying, they reached the town where the king’s palace was, and here they parted for a few hours, while the thief sought an interview with the king, and begged his majesty to give him a glass of beer.

‘That is impossible,’ said the king, ‘as this year there has been a failure of all the crops, and of the hops and the vines; so we have neither wine nor beer in the whole kingdom.’

‘How extraordinary!’ answered the thief. ‘I have just come from a country where the crops were so fine that I saw twelve barrels of beer made out of one branch of hops.’

‘I bet you three hundred florins that is not true,’ answered the king.

‘And I bet you three hundred florins it is true,’ replied the thief.

Then each staked his three hundred florins, and the king said he would decide the question by sending a servant into that country to see if it was true.

So the servant set out on horseback, and on the way he met a man, and he asked him whence he came. And the man told him that he came from the self-same country to which the servant was at that moment bound.

‘If that is the case,’ said the servant, ‘you can tell me how high the hops grow in your country, and how many barrels of beer can be brewed from one branch?’

‘I can’t tell you that,’ answered the man, ‘but I happened to be present when the hops were being gathered in, and I saw that it took three men with axes three days to cut down one branch.’

Then the servant thought that he might save himself a long journey; so he gave the man ten florins, and told him he must repeat to the king what he had just told him. And when they got back to the palace, they came together into the king’s presence.

And the king asked him: ‘Well, is it true about the hops?’

‘Yes, sire, it is,’ answered the servant; ‘and here is a man I have brought with me from the country to confirm the tale.’

So the king paid the thief the three hundred florins; and the partners once more set out together in search of adventures. As they journeyed, the thief said to his comrade: ‘I will now go to another king, and will tell him something still more startling; and you must follow and back up my lie, and we shall get some money out of him; just see if we don’t.’

When they reached the next kingdom, the thief presented himself to the king, and requested him to give him a cauliflower. And the king answered: ‘Owing to a blight among the vegetables we have no cauliflower.’

‘That is strange,’ answered the thief. ‘I have just come from a country where it grows so well that one head of cauliflower filled twelve water-tubs.’

‘I don’t believe it,’ answered the king.

‘I bet you six hundred florins it is true,’ replied the thief.

‘And I bet you six hundred florins it is not true,’ answered the king. And he sent for a servant, and ordered him to start at once for the country whence the thief had come, to find out if his story of the cauliflower was true. On his journey the servant met with a man. Stopping his horse he asked him where he came from, and the man replied that he came from the country to which the other was travelling.

‘If that is the case,’ said the servant, ‘you can tell me to what size cauliflower grows in your country? Is it so large that one head fills twelve water-tubs?’

‘I have not seen that,’ answered the man. ‘But I saw twelve waggons, drawn by twelve horses, carrying one head of cauliflower to the market.’

And the servant answered: ‘Here are ten florins for you, my man, for you have saved me a long journey. Come with me now, and tell the king what you have just told me.’

‘All right,’ said the man, and they went together to the palace; and when the king asked the servant if he had found out the truth about the cauliflower, the servant replied: ‘Sire, all that you heard was perfectly true; here is a man from the country who will tell you so.’

So the king had to pay the thief the six hundred florins. And the two partners set out once more on their travels, with their nine hundred florins. When they reached the country of the neighbouring king, the thief entered the royal presence, and began conversation by asking if his majesty knew that in an adjacent kingdom there was a town with a church steeple on which a bird had alighted, and that the steeple was so high, and the bird’s beak so long, that it had pecked the stars till some of them fell out of the sky.

‘I don’t believe it,’ said the king.

‘Nevertheless I am prepared to bet twelve hundred florins that it is true,’ answered the thief.

‘And I bet twelve hundred florins that it is a lie,’ replied the king. And he straightway sent a servant into the neighbouring country to find out the truth.

As he rode, the servant met a man coming in the opposite direction. So he hailed him and asked him where he came from. And the man replied that he came out of the very town to which the man was bound. Then the servant asked him if the story they had heard about the bird with the long beak was true.

‘I don’t know about that,’ answered the man, ‘as I have never seen the bird; but I once saw twelve men shoving all their might and main with brooms to push a monster egg into a cellar.’

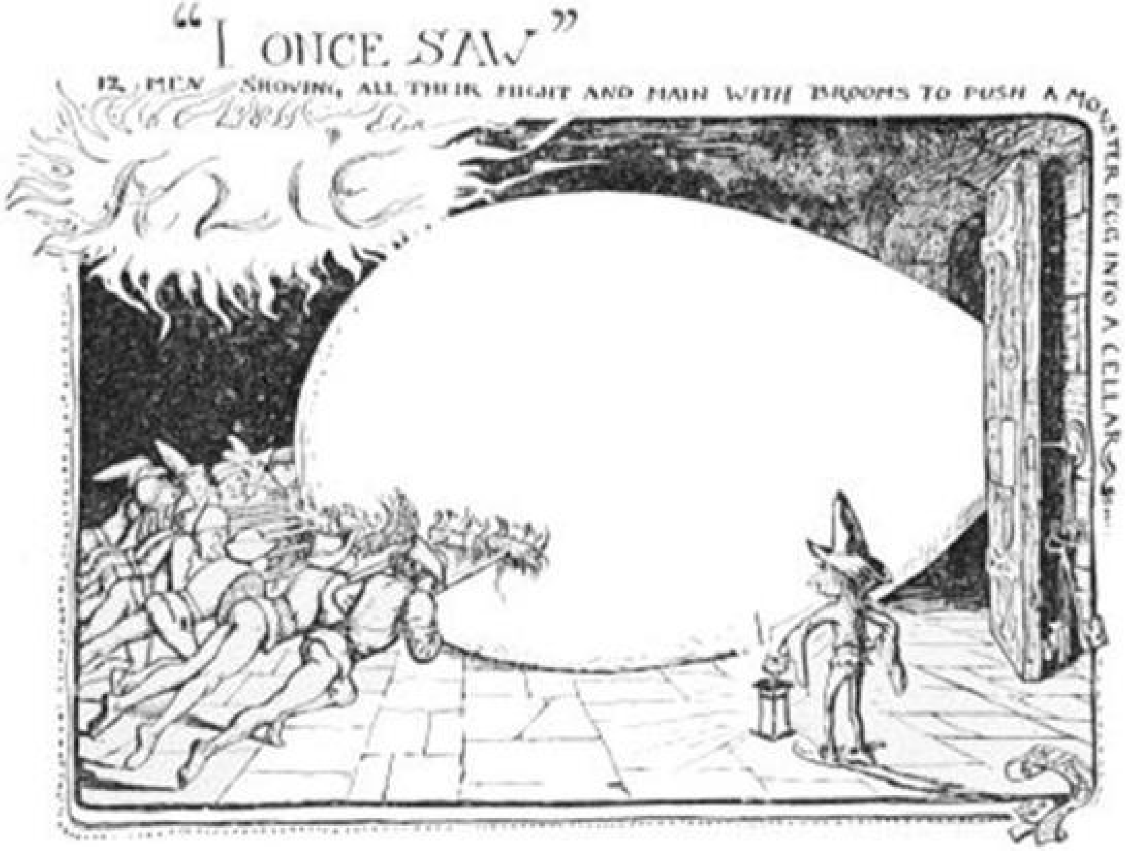
“I ONCE SAW”
12 MEN SHOVING, ALL THEIR MIGHT AND MAIN WITH BROOMS TO PUSH A MONSTER EGG INTO A CELLAR
A LIE

‘That is capital,’ answered the servant, presenting the man with ten florins. ‘Come and tell your tale to the king, and you will save me a long journey.’

So, when the story was repeated to the king, there was nothing for him to do but to pay the thief the twelve hundred florins.

Then the two partners set out again with their ill-gotten gains, which they proceeded to divide into two equal shares; but the thief kept back three of the florins that belonged to the liar’s half of the booty. Shortly afterwards they each married, and settled down in homes of their own with their wives. One day the liar discovered that he had been done out of three florins by his partner, so he went to his house and demanded them from him.

‘Come next Saturday, and I will give them to you,’ answered the thief. But as he had no intention of giving the liar the money, when Saturday morning came he stretched himself out stiff and stark upon the bed, and told his wife she was to say he was dead. So the wife rubbed her eyes with an onion, and when the liar appeared at the door, she met him in tears, and told him that as her husband was dead he could not be paid the three florins.

But the liar, who knew his partner’s tricks, instantly suspected the truth, and said: ‘As he has not paid me, I will pay him out with three good lashes of my riding whip.’

At these words the thief sprang to his feet, and, appearing at the door, promised his partner that if he would return the following Saturday he would pay him. So the liar went away satisfied with this promise.

But when Saturday morning came the thief got up early and hid himself under a truss of hay in the hay-loft.

When the liar appeared to demand his three florins, the wife met him with tears in her eyes, and told him that her husband was dead.

‘Where have you buried him?’ asked the liar.

‘In the hay-loft,’ answered the wife.

‘Then I will go there, and take away some hay in payment of his debt,’ said the liar. And proceeding to the hay-loft, he began to toss about the hay with a pitch-fork, prodding it into the trusses of hay, till, in terror of his life, the thief crept out and promised his partner to pay him the three florins on the following Saturday.

When the day came he got up at sunrise, and going down into the crypt of a neighbouring chapel, stretched himself out quite still and stiff in an old stone coffin. But the liar, who was quite as clever as his partner, very soon bethought him of the crypt, and set out for the chapel, confident that he would shortly discover the hiding-place of his friend. He had just entered the crypt, and his eyes were not yet accustomed to the darkness, when he heard the sound of whispering at the grated windows. Listening intently, he overheard the plotting of a band of robbers, who had brought their treasure to the crypt, meaning to hide it there, while they set out on fresh adventures. All the time they were speaking they were removing the bars from the window, and in another minute they would all have entered the crypt, and discovered the liar. Quick as thought he wound his mantle round him and placed himself, standing stiff and erect, in a niche in the wall, so that in the dim light he looked just like an old stone statue. As soon as the robbers entered the crypt, they set about the work of dividing their treasure. Now, there were twelve robbers, but by mistake the chief of the band divided the gold into thirteen heaps. When he saw his mistake he said they had not time to count it all over again, but that the thirteenth heap should belong to whoever among them could strike off the head of the old stone statue in the niche with one stroke. With these words he took up an axe, and approached the niche where the liar was standing. But, just as he had waved the axe over his head ready to strike, a voice was heard from the stone coffin saying, in sepulchral tones: ‘Clear out of this, or the dead will arise from their coffins, and the statues will descend from the walls, and you will be driven out more dead than alive.’ And with a bound the thief jumped out of his coffin and the liar from his niche, and the robbers were so terrified that they ran helter-skelter out of the crypt, leaving all their gold behind them, and vowing that they would never put foot inside the haunted place again. So the partners divided the gold between them, and carried it to their homes; and history tells us no more about them.

FORTUNATUS AND HIS PURSE

Once upon a time there lived in the city of Famagosta, in the island of Cyprus, a rich man called Theodorus. He ought to have been the happiest person in the whole world, as he had all he could wish for, and a wife and little son whom he loved dearly; but unluckily, after a short time he always grew tired of everything, and had to seek new pleasures. When people are made like this the end is generally the same, and before Fortunatus (for that was the boy's name) was ten years old, his father had spent all his money and had not a farthing left.

But though Theodorus had been so foolish he was not quite without sense, and set about getting work at once. His wife, too, instead of reproaching him sent away the servants and sold their fine horses, and did all the work of the house herself, even washing the clothes of her husband and child.

Thus time passed till Fortunatus was sixteen. One day when they were sitting at supper, the boy said to Theodorus, 'Father, why do you look so sad? Tell me what is wrong, and perhaps I can help you.'

'Ah, my son, I have reason enough to be sad; but for me you would now have been enjoying every kind of pleasure, instead of being buried in this tiny house.'

'Oh, do not let that trouble you,' replied Fortunatus, 'it is time I made some money for myself. To be sure I have never been taught any trade. Still there must be something I can do. I will go and walk on the seashore and think about it.'

Very soon — sooner than he expected — a chance came, and Fortunatus, like a wise boy, seized on it at once. The post offered him was that of page to the Earl of Flanders, and as the Earl's daughter was just going to be married, splendid festivities were held in her honour, and at some of the tilting matches Fortunatus was lucky enough to win the prize. These prizes, together with presents from the lords and ladies of the court, who liked him for his pleasant ways, made Fortunatus feel quite a rich man.

But though his head was not turned by the notice taken of him, it excited the envy of some of the other pages about the Court, and one of them, called Robert, invented a plot to move Fortunatus out of his way. So he told the young man that the Earl had taken a dislike to him and meant to kill him; Fortunatus believed the story, and packing up his fine clothes and money, slipped away before dawn.

He went to a great many big towns and lived well, and as he was generous and not wiser than most youths of his age, he very soon found himself penniless. Like his father, he then began to think of work, and tramped half over Brittany in search of it. Nobody seemed to want him, and he wandered about from one place to another, till he found himself in a dense wood, without any paths, and not much light. Here he spent two whole days, with nothing to eat and very little water to drink, going first in one direction and then in another, but never being able to find his way out. During the first night he slept soundly, and was too tired to fear either man or beast, but when darkness came on for the second time, and growls were heard in the distance, he grew frightened and looked about for a high tree out of reach of his enemies. Hardly had he settled himself comfortably in one of the forked branches, when a lion walked up to a spring that burst from a rock close to the tree, and crouching down drank greedily. This was bad enough, but after all, lions do not climb trees, and as long as Fortunatus stayed up on his perch, he was quite safe. But no sooner was the lion out of sight, than his place was taken by a bear, and bears, as Fortunatus knew very well, *are* tree-climbers. His heart beat fast, and not without reason, for as the bear turned away he looked up and saw Fortunatus!

Now in those days every young man carried a sword slung to his belt, and it was a fashion that came in very handily for Fortunatus. He drew his sword, and when the bear got within a yard of him he made a fierce lunge forward. The bear, wild with pain, tried to spring, but the bough he was standing on broke with his weight, and he fell heavily to the ground. Then Fortunatus descended from his tree (first taking good care to see no other wild animals were in sight) and killed him with a single blow. He was just thinking he would light a fire and make a hearty dinner off bear's flesh, which is not at all bad eating, when he beheld a beautiful lady standing by his side leaning on a wheel, and her eyes hidden by a bandage.

'I am Dame Fortune,' she said, 'and I have a gift for you. Shall it be wisdom, strength, long life, riches, health, or beauty? Think well, and tell me what you will have.'

But Fortunatus, who had proved the truth of the proverb that 'It's ill thinking on an empty stomach,' answered quickly, 'Good lady, let me have riches in such plenty that I may never again be as hungry as I am now.'

And the lady held out a purse and told him he had only to put his hand into it, and he and his children would always find ten pieces of gold. But when they were dead it would be a magic purse no longer.

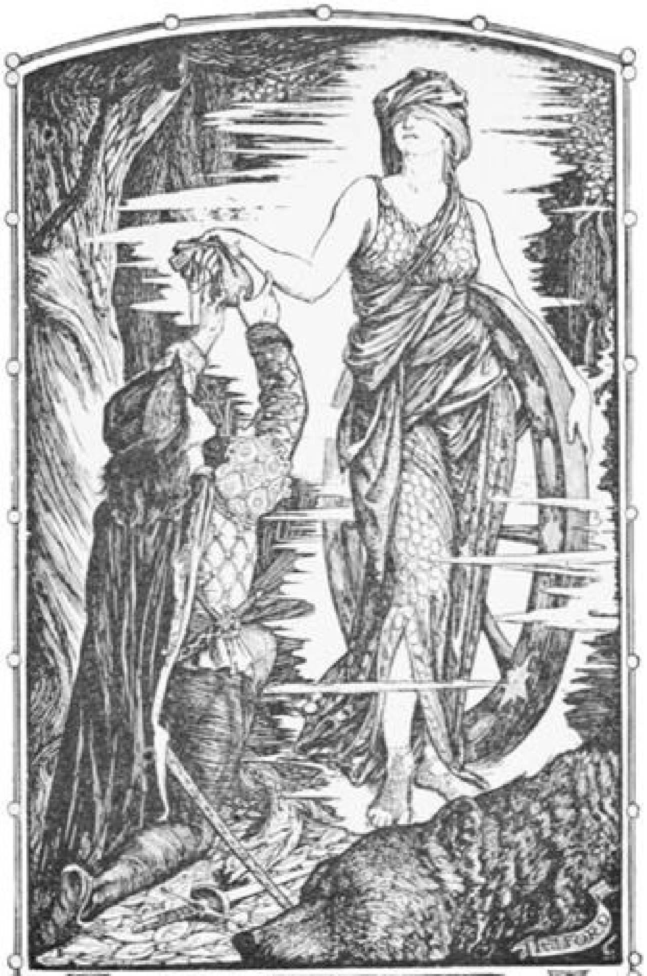
THE GIFT OF FORTUNA

At this news Fortunatus was beside himself with joy, and could hardly find words to thank the lady. But she told him that the best thing he could do was to find his way out of the wood, and before bidding him farewell pointed out which path he should take. He walked along it as fast as his weakness would let him, until a welcome light at a little distance showed him that a house was near. It turned out to be an inn, but before entering Fortunatus thought he had better make sure of the truth of what the lady had told him, and took out the purse and looked inside. Sure enough there were the ten pieces of gold, shining brightly. Then Fortunatus walked boldly up to the inn, and ordered them to get ready a good supper at once, as he was very hungry, and to bring him the best wine in the house. And he seemed to care so little what he spent that everybody thought he was a great lord, and vied with each other who should run quickest when he called.

After a night passed in a soft bed, Fortunatus felt so much better that he asked the landlord if he could find him some men-servants, and tell him where any good horses were to be got. The next thing was to provide himself with smart clothes, and then to take a big house where he could give great feasts to the nobles and beautiful ladies who lived in palaces round about.

In this manner a whole year soon slipped away, and Fortunatus was so busy amusing himself that he never once remembered his parents whom he had left behind in Cyprus. But though he was thoughtless, he was not bad-hearted. As soon as their existence crossed his mind, he set about making preparations to visit them, and as he was not fond of being alone he looked round for some one older and wiser than himself to travel with him. It was not long before he had the good luck to come across an old man who had left his wife and children in a far country many years before, when he went out into the world to seek the fortune which he never found. He agreed to accompany Fortunatus back to Cyprus, but only on condition he should first be allowed to return for a few weeks to his own home before venturing to set sail for an island so strange and distant. Fortunatus agreed to his proposal, and as he was always fond of anything new, said that he would go with him.

The journey was long, and they had to cross many large rivers, and climb over high mountains, and find their way through thick woods, before they reached at length the old man’s castle. His wife and children had almost given up hopes of seeing him again, and crowded eagerly round him. Indeed, it did not take Fortunatus five minutes to fall in love with the youngest daughter, the most beautiful creature in the whole world, whose name was Cassandra.

‘Give her to me for my wife,’ he said to the old man, ‘and let us all go together to Famagosta.’

So a ship was bought big enough to hold Fortunatus, the old man and his wife, and their ten children — five of them sons and five daughters. And the day before they sailed the wedding was celebrated with magnificent rejoicings, and everybody thought that Fortunatus must certainly be a prince in disguise. But when they reached Cyprus, he learned to his sorrow that both his father and mother were dead, and for some time he shut himself up in his house and would see nobody, full of shame at having forgotten them all these years. Then he begged that the old man and his wife would remain with him, and take the place of his parents.

For twelve years Fortunatus and Cassandra and their two little boys lived happily in Famagosta. They had a beautiful house and everything they could possibly want, and when Cassandra’s sisters married the purse provided them each with a fortune. But at last Fortunatus grew tired of staying at home, and thought he should like to go out and see the world again. Cassandra shed many tears at first when he told her of his wishes, and he had a great deal of trouble to persuade her to give her consent. But on his promising to return at the end of two years she agreed to let him go. Before he went away he showed her three chests of gold, which stood in a room with an iron door, and walls twelve feet thick. ‘If anything should happen to me,’ he said, ‘and I should never come back, keep one of the chests for yourself, and give the others to our two sons.’ Then he embraced them all and took ship for Alexandria.

The wind was fair and in a few days they entered the harbour, where Fortunatus was informed by a man whom he met on landing, that if he wished to be well received in the town, he must begin by making a handsome present to the Sultan. ‘That is easily done,’ said Fortunatus, and went into a goldsmith’s shop, where he bought a large gold cup, which cost five thousand pounds. This gift so pleased the Sultan that he ordered a hundred casks of spices to be given to Fortunatus; Fortunatus put them on board his ship, and commanded the captain to return to Cyprus and deliver them to his wife, Cassandra. He next obtained an audience of the Sultan, and begged permission to travel through the country, which the Sultan readily gave him, adding some letters to the rulers of other lands which Fortunatus might wish to visit.

Filled with delight at feeling himself free to roam through the world once more, Fortunatus set out on his journey without losing a day. From court to court he went, astonishing everyone by the magnificence of his dress and the splendour of his presents. At length he grew as tired of wandering as he had been of staying at home, and returned to Alexandria, where he found the same ship that had brought him from Cyprus lying in the harbour. Of course the first thing he did was to pay his respects to the Sultan, who was eager to hear about his adventures.

When Fortunatus had told them all, the Sultan observed: ‘Well, you have seen many wonderful things, but I have something to show you more wonderful still;’ and he led him into a room where precious stones lay heaped against the walls. Fortunatus’ eyes were quite dazzled, but the Sultan went on without pausing and opened a door at the farther end. As far as Fortunatus could see, the cupboard was quite bare, except for a little red cap, such as soldiers wear in Turkey.

‘Look at this,’ said the Sultan.

‘But there is nothing very valuable about it,’ answered Fortunatus. ‘I’ve seen a dozen better caps than that, this very day.’

‘Ah,’ said the Sultan, ‘you do not know what you are talking about. Whoever puts this cap on his head and wishes himself in any place, will find himself there in a moment.’

‘But who made it?’ asked Fortunatus.

‘That I cannot tell you,’ replied the Sultan.

‘Is it very heavy to wear?’ asked Fortunatus.

‘No, quite light,’ replied the Sultan, ‘just feel it.’

Fortunatus took the cap and put it on his head, and then, without thinking, wished himself back in the ship that was starting for Famagosta. In a second he was standing at the prow, while the anchor was being weighed, and while the Sultan was repenting of his folly in allowing Fortunatus to try on the cap, the vessel was making fast for Cyprus.

When it arrived, Fortunatus found his wife and children well, but the two old people were dead and buried. His sons had grown tall and strong, but unlike their father had no wish to see the world, and found their chief pleasure in hunting and tilting. In the main, Fortunatus was content to stay quietly at home, and if a restless fit did seize upon him, he was able to go away for a few hours without being missed, thanks to the cap, which he never sent back to the Sultan.

By-and-by he grew old, and feeling that he had not many days to live, he sent for his two sons, and showing them the purse and cap, he said to them: ‘Never part with these precious possessions. They are worth more than all the gold and lands I leave behind me. But never tell their secret, even to your wife or dearest friend. That purse has served me well for forty years, and no one knows whence I got my riches.’ Then he died and was buried by his wife Cassandra, and he was mourned in Famagosta for many years.

THE GOAT-FACED GIRL

There was once upon a time a peasant called Masaniello who had twelve daughters. They were exactly like the steps of a staircase, for there was just a year between each sister. It was all the poor man could do to bring up such a large family, and in order to provide food for them he used to dig in the fields all day long. In spite of his hard work he only just succeeded in keeping the wolf from the door, and the poor little girls often went hungry to bed.

One day, when Masaniello was working at the foot of a high mountain, he came upon the mouth of a cave which was so dark and gloomy that even the sun seemed afraid to enter it. Suddenly a huge green lizard appeared from the inside and stood before Masaniello, who nearly went out of his mind with terror, for the beast was as big as a crocodile and quite as fierce looking.

But the lizard sat down beside him in the most friendly manner, and said: ‘Don’t be afraid, my good man, I am not going to hurt you; on the contrary, I am most anxious to help you.’

When the peasant heard these words he knelt before the lizard and said: ‘Dear lady, for I know not what to call you, I am in your power; but I beg of you to be merciful, for I have twelve wretched little daughters at home who are dependent on me.’

‘That’s the very reason why I have come to you,’ replied the lizard. ‘Bring me your youngest daughter to-morrow morning. I promise to bring her up as if she were my own child, and to look upon her as the apple of my eye.’

When Masaniello heard her words he was very unhappy, because he felt sure, from the lizard’s wanting one of his daughters, the youngest and tenderest too, that the poor little girl would only serve as dessert for the terrible creature’s supper. At the same time he said to himself, ‘If I refuse her request, she will certainly eat me up on the spot. If I give her what she asks she does indeed take part of myself, but if I refuse she will take the whole of me. What am I to do, and how in the world am I to get out of the difficulty?’

As he kept muttering to himself the lizard said, ‘Make up your mind to do as I tell you at once. I desire to have your youngest daughter, and if you won’t comply with my wish, I can only say it will be the worse for you.’

Seeing that there was nothing else to be done, Masaniello set off for his home, and arrived there looking so white and wretched that his wife asked him at once: ‘What has happened to you, my dear husband? Have you quarrelled with anyone, or has the poor donkey fallen down?’

‘Neither the one nor the other,’ answered her husband, ‘but something far worse than either. A terrible lizard has nearly frightened me out of my senses, for she threatened that if I did not give her our youngest daughter, she would make me repent it. My head is going round like a mill-wheel, and I don’t know what to do. I am indeed between the Devil and the Deep Sea. You know how dearly I love Renzolla, and yet, if I fail to bring her to the lizard to-morrow morning, I must say farewell to life. Do advise me what to do.’

When his wife had heard all he had to say, she said to him: ‘How do you know, my dear husband, that the lizard is really our enemy? May she not be a friend in disguise? And your meeting with her may be the beginning of better things and the end of all our misery. Therefore go and take the child to her, for my heart tells me that you will never repent doing so.’

Masaniello was much comforted by her words, and next morning as soon as it was light he took his little daughter by the hand and led her to the cave.

The lizard, who was awaiting the peasant’s arrival, came forward to meet him, and taking the girl by the hand, she gave the father a sack full of gold, and said: ‘Go and marry your other daughters, and give them dowries with this gold, and be of good cheer, for Renzolla will have both father and mother in me; it is a great piece of luck for her that she has fallen into my hands.’

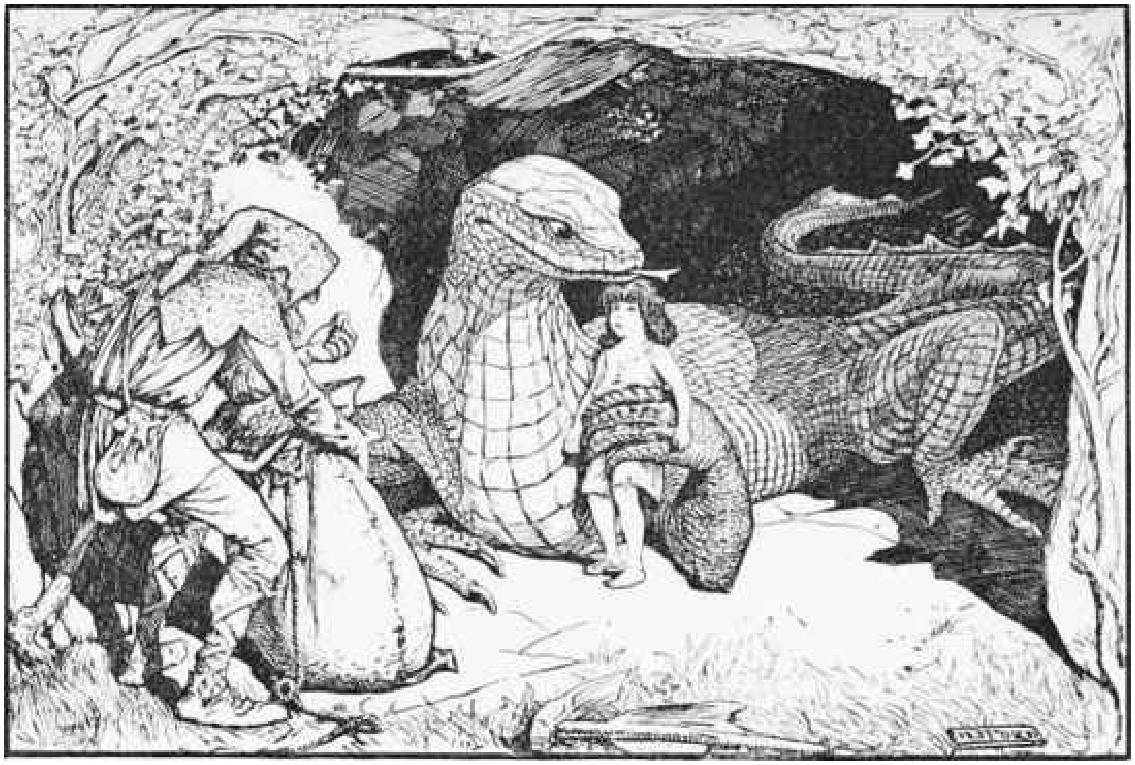

The Lizard takes charge of Renzolla

Masaniello, quite overcome with gratitude, thanked the lizard, and returned home to his wife.

As soon as it was known how rich the peasant had become, suitors for the hands of his daughters were not wanting, and very soon he married them all off; and even then there was enough gold left to keep himself and his wife in comfort and plenty all their days.

As soon as the lizard was left alone with Renzolla, she changed the cave into a beautiful palace, and led the girl inside. Here she brought her up like a little princess, and the child wanted for nothing. She gave her sumptuous food to eat, beautiful clothes to wear, and a thousand servants to wait on her.

Now, it happened, one day, that the king of the country was hunting in a wood close to the palace, and was overtaken by the dark. Seeing a light shining in the palace he sent one of his servants to ask if he could get a night's lodging there.

When the page knocked at the door the lizard changed herself into a beautiful woman, and opened it herself. When she heard the king's request she sent him a message to say that she would be delighted to see him, and give him all he wanted.

The king, on hearing this kind invitation, instantly betook himself to the palace, where he was received in the most hospitable manner. A hundred pages with torches came to meet him, a hundred more waited on him at table, and another hundred waved big fans in the air to keep the flies from him. Renzolla herself poured out the wine for him, and, so gracefully did she do it, that his Majesty could not take his eyes off her.

When the meal was finished and the table cleared, the king retired to sleep, and Renzolla drew the shoes from his feet, at the same time drawing his heart from his breast. So desperately had he fallen in love with her, that he called the fairy to him, and asked her for Renzolla's hand in marriage. As the kind fairy had only the girl's welfare at heart, she willingly gave her consent, and not her consent only, but a wedding portion of seven thousand golden guineas.

The king, full of delight over his good fortune, prepared to take his departure, accompanied by Renzolla, who never so much as thanked the fairy for all she had done for her. When the fairy saw such a base want of gratitude she determined to punish the girl, and, cursing her, she turned her face into a goat's head. In a moment Renzolla's pretty mouth stretched out into a snout, with a beard a yard long at the end of it, her cheeks sank in, and her shining plaits of hair changed into two sharp horns. When the king turned round and saw her he thought he must have taken leave of his senses. He burst into tears, and cried out: ‘Where is the hair that bound me so tightly, where are the eyes that pierced through my heart, and where are the lips I kissed? Am I to be tied to a goat all my life? No, no! nothing will induce me to become the laughing-stock of my subjects for the sake of a goat-faced girl!’

When they reached his own country he shut Renzolla up in a little turret chamber of his palace, with a waiting-maid, and gave each of them ten bundles of flax to spin, telling them that their task must be finished by the end of the week.

The maid, obedient to the king’s commands, set at once to work and combed out the flax, wound it round the spindle, and sat spinning at her wheel so diligently that her work was quite done by Saturday evening. But Renzolla, who had been spoilt and petted in the fairy’s house, and was quite unaware of the change that had taken place in her appearance, threw the flax out of the window and said: ‘What is the king thinking of that he should give me this work to do? If he wants shirts he can buy them. It isn’t even as if he had picked me out of the gutter, for he ought to remember that I brought him seven thousand golden guineas as my wedding portion, and that I am his wife and not his slave. He must be mad to treat me like this.’

All the same, when Saturday evening came, and she saw that the waiting-maid had finished her task, she took fright lest she should be punished for her idleness. So she hurried off to the palace of the fairy, and confided all her woes to her. The fairy embraced her tenderly, and gave her a sack full of spun flax, in order that she might show it to the king, and let him see what a good worker she was. Renzolla took the sack without one word of thanks, and returned to the palace, leaving the kind fairy very indignant over her want of gratitude.

When the king saw the flax all spun, he gave Renzolla and the waiting-maid each a little dog, and told them to look after the animals and train them carefully.

The waiting-maid brought hers up with the greatest possible care, and treated it almost as if it were her son. But Renzolla said: ‘I don’t know what to think. Have I come among a lot of lunatics? Does the king imagine that I am going to comb and feed a dog with my own hands?’ With these words she opened the window and threw the poor little beast out, and he fell on the ground as dead as a stone.

When a few months had passed the king sent a message to say he would like to see how the dogs were getting on. Renzolla, who felt very uncomfortable in her mind at this request, hurried off once more to the fairy. This time she found an old man at the door of the fairy’s palace, who said to her: ‘Who are you, and what do you want?’

When Renzolla heard his question she answered angrily: ‘Don’t you know me, old Goat-beard? And how dare you address me in such a way?'

'The pot can't call the kettle black,' answered the old man, 'for it is not I, but you who have a goat's head. Just wait a moment, you ungrateful wretch, and I will show you to what a pass your want of gratitude has brought you.'

With these words he hurried away, and returned with a mirror, which he held up before Renzolla. At the sight of her ugly, hairy face, the girl nearly fainted with horror, and she broke into loud sobs at seeing her countenance so changed.

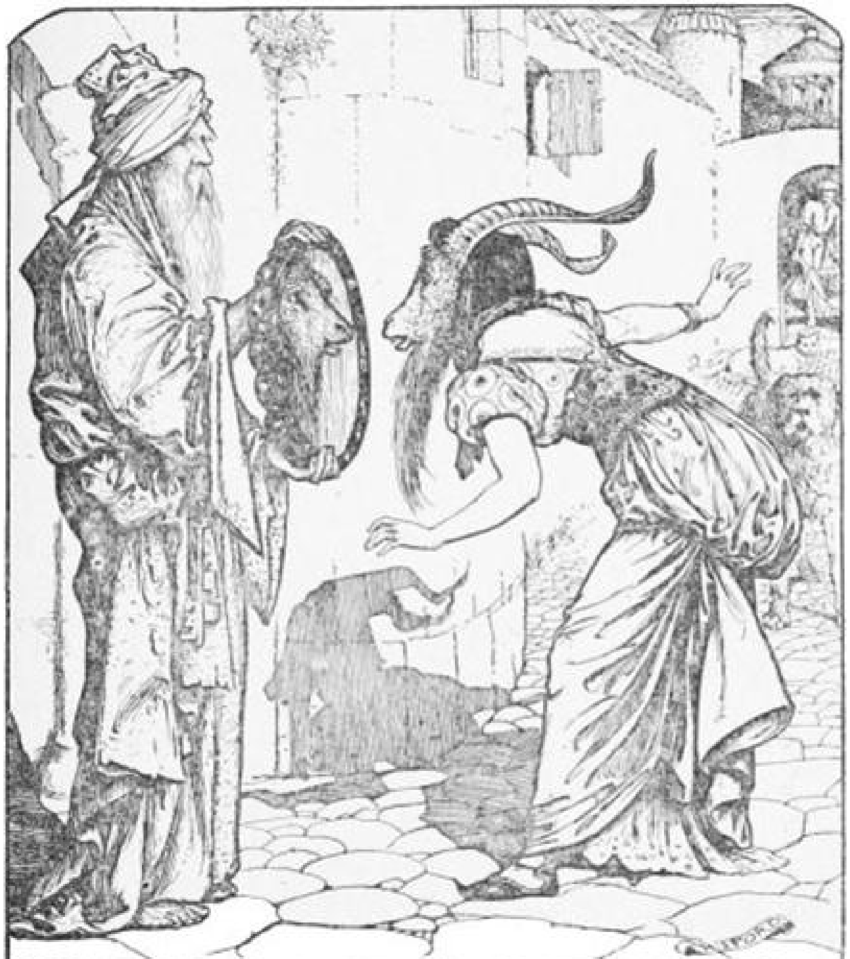

RENZOLLA SEES HER FACE IN THE MIRROR

Then the old man said: 'You must remember, Renzolla, that you are a peasant's daughter, and that the fairy turned you into a queen; but you were ungrateful, and never as much as thanked her for all she had done for you. Therefore she has determined to punish you. But if you wish to lose your long white beard, throw yourself at the fairy's feet and implore her to forgive you. She has a tender heart, and will, perhaps, take pity on you.'

Renzolla, who was really sorry for her conduct, took the old man's advice, and the fairy not only gave her back her former face, but she dressed her in a gold embroidered dress, presented her with a beautiful carriage, and brought her back, accompanied by a host of servants, to her husband. When the king saw her looking as beautiful as ever, he fell in love with her once more, and bitterly repented having caused her so much suffering.

So Renzolla lived happily ever afterwards, for she loved her husband, honoured the fairy, and was grateful to the old man for having told her the truth.

WHAT CAME OF PICKING FLOWERS

There was once a woman who had three daughters whom she loved very much. One day the eldest was walking in a water-meadow, when she saw a pink growing in the stream. She stooped to pick the flower, but her hand had scarcely touched it, when she vanished altogether. The next morning the second sister went out into the meadow, to see if she could find any traces of the lost girl, and as a branch of lovely roses lay trailing across her path, she bent down to move it away, and in so doing, could not resist plucking one of the roses. In a moment she too had disappeared. Wondering what could have become of her two sisters, the youngest followed in their footsteps, and fell a victim to a branch of delicious white jessamine. So the old woman was left without any daughters at all.

She wept, and wept, and wept, all day and all night, and went on weeping so long, that her son, who had been a little boy when his sisters disappeared, grew up to be a tall youth. Then one night he asked his mother to tell him what was the matter.

When he had heard the whole story, he said, ‘Give me your blessing, mother, and I will go and search the world till I find them.’

So he set forth, and after he had travelled several miles without any adventures, he came upon three big boys fighting in the road. He stopped and inquired what they were fighting about, and one of them answered:

‘My lord! our father left to us, when he died, a pair of boots, a key, and a cap. Whoever puts on the boots and wishes himself in any place, will find himself there. The key will open every door in the world, and with the cap on your head no one can see you. Now our eldest brother wants to have all three things for himself, and we wish to draw lots for them.’

‘Oh, that is easily settled,’ said the youth. ‘I will throw this stone as far as I can, and the one who picks it up first, shall have the three things.’ So he took the stone and flung it, and while the three brothers were running after it, he drew hastily on the boots, and said, ‘Boots, take me to the place where I shall find my eldest sister.’

The next moment the young man was standing on a steep mountain before the gates of a strong castle guarded by bolts and bars and iron chains. The key, which he had not forgotten to put in his pocket, opened the doors one by one, and he walked through a number of halls and corridors, till he met a beautiful and richly-dressed young lady who started back in surprise at the sight of him, and exclaimed, ‘Oh, sir, how did you contrive to get in here?’ The young man replied that he was her brother, and told her by what means he had been able to pass through the doors. In return, she told him how happy she was, except for one thing, and that was, her husband lay under a spell, and could never break it till there should be put to death a man who could not die.

They talked together for a long time, and then the lady said he had better leave her as she expected her husband back at any moment, and he might not like him to be there; but the young man assured her she need not be afraid, as he had with him a cap which would make him invisible. They were still deep in conversation when the door suddenly opened, and a bird flew in, but he saw nothing unusual, for, at the first noise, the youth had put on his cap. The lady jumped up and brought a large golden basin, into which the bird flew, reappearing directly after as a handsome man. Turning to his wife, he cried, ‘I am sure someone is in the room!’ She got frightened, and declared that she was quite alone, but her husband persisted, and in the end she had to confess the truth.

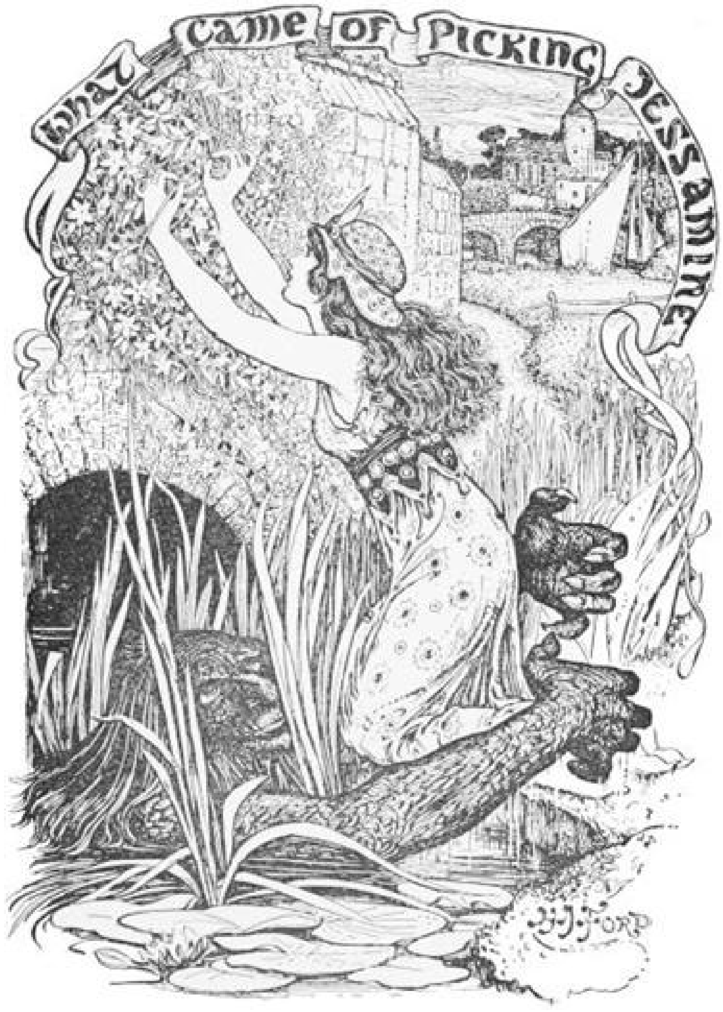
What came of picking Jessamine
H. J. Ford

‘But if he is really your brother, why did you hide him?’ asked he. ‘I believe you are telling me a lie, and if he comes back I shall kill him!’

At this the youth took off his cap, and came forward. Then the husband saw that he was indeed so like his wife that he doubted her word no longer, and embraced his brother-in-law with delight. Drawing a feather from his bird’s skin, he said, ‘If you are in danger and cry, “Come and help me, King of the Birds,” everything will go well with you.’

The young man thanked him and went away, and after he had left the castle he told the boots that they must take him to the place where his second sister was living. As before, he found himself at the gates of a huge castle, and within was his second sister, very happy with her husband, who loved her dearly, but longing for the moment when he should be set free from the spell that kept him half his life a fish. When he arrived and had been introduced by his wife to her brother, he welcomed him warmly, and gave him a fish-scale, saying, ‘If you are in danger, call to me, “Come and help me, King of the Fishes,” and everything will go well with you.’

The young man thanked him and took his leave, and when he was outside the gates he told the boots to take him to the place where his youngest sister lived. The boots carried him to a dark cavern, with steps of iron leading up to it. Inside she sat, weeping and sobbing, and as she had done nothing else the whole time she had been there, the poor girl had grown very thin. When she saw a man standing before her, she sprang to her feet and exclaimed, ‘Oh, whoever you are, save me and take me from this horrible place!’ Then he told her who he was, and how he had seen her sisters, whose happiness was spoilt by the spell under which both their husbands lay, and she, in turn, related her story. She had been carried off in the water-meadow by a horrible monster, who wanted to make her marry him by force, and had kept her a prisoner all these years because she would not submit to his will. Every day he came to beg her to consent to his wishes, and to remind her that there was no hope of her being set free, as he was the most constant man in the world, and besides that he could never die. At these words the youth remembered his two enchanted brothers-in-law, and he advised his sister to promise to marry the old man, if he would tell her why he could never die. Suddenly everything began to tremble, as if it was shaken by a whirlwind, and the old man entered, and flinging himself at the feet of the girl, he said: ‘Are you still determined never to marry me? If so you will have to sit there weeping till the end of the world, for I shall always be faithful to my wish to marry you!’ ‘Well, I will marry you,’ she said, ‘if you will tell me why it is that you can never die.’

Then the old man burst into peals of laughter. ‘Ah, ah, ah! You are thinking how you would be able to kill me? Well, to do that, you would have to find an iron casket which lies at the bottom of the sea, and has a white dove inside, and then you would have to find the egg which the dove laid, and bring it here, and dash it against my head.’ And he laughed again in his certainty that no one had ever got down to the bottom of the sea, and that if they did, they would never find the casket, or be able to open it. When he could speak once more, he said, ‘Now you will be obliged to marry me, as you know my secret.’ But she begged so hard that the wedding might be put off for three days, that he consented, and went away rejoicing at his victory. When he had disappeared, the brother took off the cap which had kept him invisible all this time, and told his sister not to lose heart as he hoped in three days she would be free. Then he drew on his boots, and wished himself at the seashore, and there he was directly. Drawing out the fish-scale, he cried, ‘Come and help me, King of the Fishes!’ and his brother-in-law swam up, and asked what he could do. The young man related the story, and when he had finished his listener summoned all the fishes to his presence. The last to arrive was a little sardine, who apologised for being so late, but said she had hurt herself by knocking her head against an iron casket that lay in the bottom of the sea. The king ordered several of the largest and strongest of his subjects to take the little sardine as a guide, and bring him the iron casket. They soon returned with the box placed across their backs and laid it down before him. Then the youth produced the key and said, ‘Key, open that box!’ and the key opened it, and though they were all crowding round, ready to catch it, the white dove within flew away.

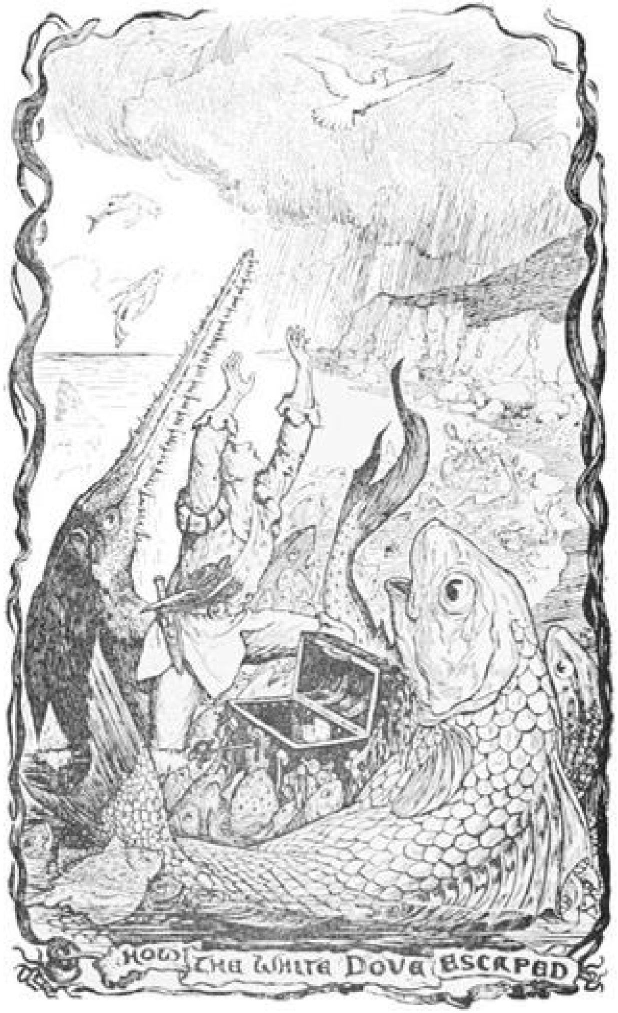

HOW THE WHITE DOVE ESCAPED

It was useless to go after it, and for a moment the young man’s heart sank. The next minute, however, he remembered that he had still his feather, and drew it out crying, ‘Come to me, King of the Birds!’ and a rushing noise was heard, and the King of the Birds perched on his shoulder, and asked what he could do to help him. His brother-in-law told him the whole story, and when he had finished the King of the Birds commanded all his subjects to hasten to his presence. In an instant the air was dark with birds of all sizes, and at the very last came the white dove, apologising for being so late by saying that an old friend had arrived at his nest, and he had been obliged to give him some dinner. The King of the Birds ordered some of them to show the young man the white dove's nest, and when they reached it, there lay the egg which was to break the spell and set them all free. When it was safely in his pocket, he told the boots to carry him straight to the cavern where his youngest sister sat awaiting him.

Now it was already far on into the third day, which the old man had fixed for the wedding, and when the youth reached the cavern with his cap on his head, he found the monster there, urging the girl to keep her word and let the marriage take place at once. At a sign from her brother she sat down and invited the old monster to lay his head on her lap. He did so with delight, and her brother standing behind her back passed her the egg unseen. She took it, and dashed it straight at the horrible head, and the monster started, and with a groan that people took for the rumblings of an earthquake, he turned over and died.

As the breath went out of his body the husbands of the two eldest daughters resumed their proper shapes, and, sending for their mother-in-law, whose sorrow was so unexpectedly turned into joy, they had a great feast, and the youngest sister was rich to the end of her days with the treasures she found in the cave, collected by the monster.

THE STORY OF BENSURDATU

There was once a king and a queen who had three wonderfully beautiful daughters, and their one thought, from morning till night, was how they could make the girls happy.

One day the princesses said to the king, ‘Dear father, we want so much to have a picnic, and eat our dinner in the country.’

‘Very well, dear children, let us have a picnic by all means,’ answered he, and gave orders that everything should be got ready.

When luncheon was prepared it was put into a cart, and the royal family stepped into a carriage and drove right away into the country. After a few miles they reached a house and garden belonging to the king, and close by was their favourite place for lunch. The drive had made them very hungry, and they ate with a hearty appetite, till almost all the food had disappeared.

When they had quite done, they said to their parents: ‘Now we should like to wander about the garden a little, but when you want to go home, just call to us.’ And they ran off, laughing, down a green glade, which led to the garden.

But no sooner had they stepped across the fence, than a dark cloud came down and covered them, and prevented them seeing whither they were going.

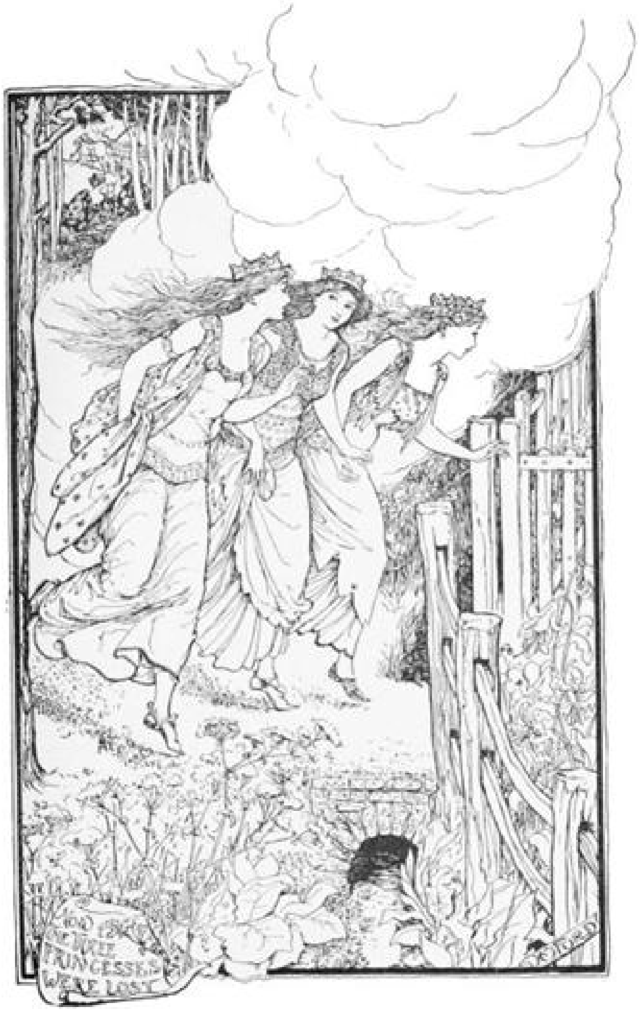
HOW THE THREE PRINCESSES WERE LOST

Meanwhile the king and queen sat lazily among the heather, and an hour or two slipped away. The sun was dropping towards the horizon, and they began to think it was time to go home. So they called to their daughters and called again, but no one answered them.

Frightened at the silence, they searched every corner of the garden, the house, and the neighbouring wood, but no trace of the girls was to be found anywhere. The earth seemed to have swallowed them up. The poor parents were in despair. The queen wept all the way home, and for many days after, and the king issued a proclamation that whoever should bring back his lost daughters should have one of them to wife, and should, after his death, reign in his stead.

Now two young generals were at that time living at the court, and when they heard the king’s declaration, they said one to the other: ‘Let us go in search of them; perhaps we shall be the lucky persons.’

And they set out, each mounted on a strong horse, taking with them a change of raiment and some money.

But though they inquired at every village they rode through, they could hear nothing of the princesses, and by-and-by their money was all spent, and they were forced to sell their horses, or give up the search. Even this money only lasted a little while longer, and nothing but their clothes lay between them and starvation. They sold the spare garments that were bound on their saddles, and went in the coats they stood up in to the inn, to beg for some food, as they were really starving. When, however, they had to pay for what they had eaten and drank, they said to the host: ‘We have no money, and naught but the clothes we stand up in. Take these, and give us instead some old rags, and let us stay here and serve you.’ And the innkeeper was content with the bargain, and the generals remained, and were his servants.

All this time the king and queen remained in their palace hungering for their children, but not a word was heard of either of them or of the generals who had gone to seek for them.

Now there was living in the palace a faithful servant of the king’s called Bensurdatu, who had served him for many years, and when Bensurdatu saw how grieved the king was, he lifted up his voice and said to him: ‘Your majesty, let me go and seek your daughters.’

‘No, no, Bensurdatu,’ replied the king. ‘Three daughters have I lost, and two generals, and shall I lose you also?’

But Bensurdatu said again: ‘Let me now go, your majesty; trust me, and I will bring you back your daughters.’

Then the king gave way, and Bensurdatu set forth, and rode on till he came to the inn, where he dismounted and asked for food. It was brought by the two generals, whom he knew at once in spite of their miserable clothes, and, much astonished, asked them how in the world they came there.

They told him all their adventures, and he sent for the innkeeper, and said to him: ‘Give them back their garments, and I will pay everything that they owe you.’

And the innkeeper did as he was bid, and when the two generals were dressed in their proper clothes, they declared they would join Bensurdatu, and with him seek for the king’s daughters.

The three companions rode on for many miles, and at length they came to a wild place, without sign of a human being. It was getting dark, and fearing to be lost on this desolate spot they pushed on their horses, and at last saw a light in the window of a tiny hut.

‘Who comes there?’ asked a voice, as they knocked at the door.

‘Oh! have pity on us, and give us a night’s shelter,’ replied Bensurdatu; ‘we are three tired travellers who have lost our way.’

Then the door was opened by a very old woman, who stood back, and beckoned them to enter. ‘Whence do you come, and whither do you go?’ said she.

‘Ah, good woman, we have a heavy task before us,’ answered Bensurdatu, ‘we are bound to carry the king’s daughters back to the palace!’

‘Oh, unhappy creatures,’ cried she, ‘you know not what you are doing! The king’s daughters were covered by a thick cloud, and no one knows where they may now be.’

‘Oh, tell us, if you know, my good woman,’ entreated Bensurdatu, ‘for with them lies all our happiness.’

‘Even if I were to tell you,’ answered she, ‘you could not rescue them. To do that you would have to go to the very bottom of a deep river, and though certainly you would find the king’s daughters there, yet the two eldest are guarded by two giants, and the youngest is watched by a serpent with seven heads.’

The two generals, who stood by listening, were filled with terror at her words, and wished to return immediately; but Bensurdatu stood firm, and said: ‘Now we have got so far we must carry the thing through. Tell us where the river is, so that we may get there as soon as possible.’ And the old woman told them, and gave them some cheese, wine, and bread, so that they should not set forth starving; and when they had eaten and drunk they laid themselves down to sleep.

The sun had only just risen above the hills next morning before they all woke, and, taking leave of the wise woman who had helped them, they rode on till they came to the river.

‘I am the eldest,’ said one of the generals, ‘and it is my right to go down first.’

So the others fastened a cord round him, and gave him a little bell, and let him down into the water. But scarcely had the river closed above his head when such dreadful rushing sounds and peals of thunder came crashing round about him that he lost all his courage, and rang his bell, if perchance it might be heard amidst all this clamour. Great was his relief when the rope began slowly to pull him upwards.

Then the other general plunged in; but he fared no better than the first, and was soon on dry ground again.

‘Well, you are a brave pair!’ said Bensurdatu, as he tied the rope round his own waist; ‘let us see what will happen to me.’ And when he heard the thunder and clamour round about him he thought to himself, ‘Oh, make as much noise as you like, it won’t hurt me!’ When his feet touched the bottom he found himself in a large, brilliantly lighted hall, and in the middle sat the eldest princess, and in front of her lay a huge giant, fast asleep. Directly she saw Bensurdatu she nodded to him, and asked with her eyes how he had come there.

For answer he drew his sword, and was about to cut off the giant’s head, when she stopped him quickly, and made signs to hide himself, as the giant was just beginning to wake. ‘I smell the flesh of a man!’ murmured he, stretching his great arms.

‘Why, how in the world could any man get down here?’ replied she; ‘you had better go to sleep again.’

So he turned over and went to sleep. Then the princess signed to Bensurdatu, who drew his sword and cut off the giant’s head with such a blow that it flew into the corner. And the heart of the princess leapt within her, and she placed a golden crown on the head of Bensurdatu, and called him her deliverer.

‘Now show me where your sisters are,’ he said, ‘that I may free them also.’

So the princess opened a door, and led him into another hall, wherein sat her next sister, guarded by a giant who was fast asleep. When the second princess saw them, she made a sign to them to hide themselves, for the giant was showing symptoms of waking.

‘I smell man’s flesh!’ murmured he, sleepily.

‘Now, how could any man get down here?’ asked she; ‘go to sleep again.’ And as soon as he closed his eyes, Bensurdatu stole out from his corner, and struck such a blow at his head that it flew far, far away. The princess could not find words to thank Bensurdatu for what he had done, and she too placed in his hand a golden crown.

‘Now show me where your youngest sister is,’ said he, ‘that I may free her also.’

‘Ah! that I fear you will never be able to do,’ sighed they, ‘for she is in the power of a serpent with seven heads.’

‘Take me to him,’ replied Bensurdatu. ‘It will be a splendid fight.’

Then the princess opened a door, and Bensurdatu passed through, and found himself in a hall that was even larger than the other two. And there stood the youngest sister, chained fast to the wall, and before her was stretched a serpent with seven heads, horrible to see. As Bensurdatu came forward it twisted all its seven heads in his direction, and then made a quick dart to snatch him within its grasp. But Bensurdatu drew his sword and laid about him, till the seven heads were rolling on the floor. Flinging down his sword he rushed to the princess and broke her chains, and she wept for joy, and embraced him, and took the golden crown from off her head, and placed it in his hand.

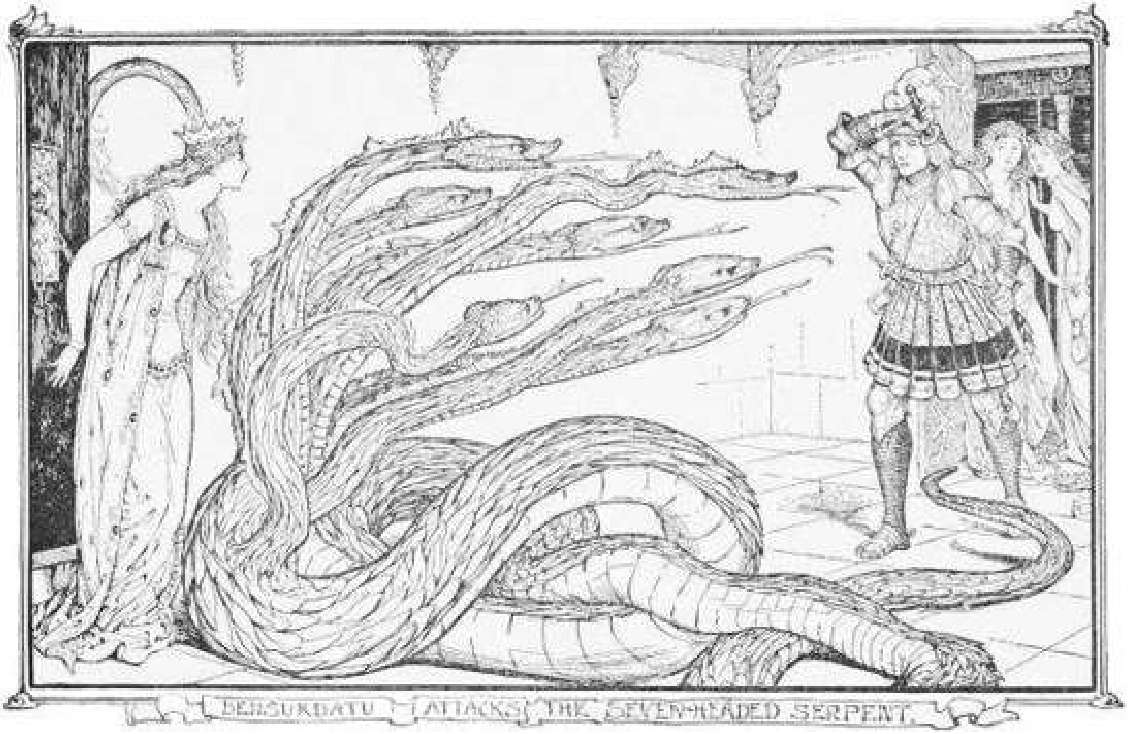

BENSURDATU ATTACKS THE SEVEN-HEADED SERPENT

‘Now we must go back to the upper world,’ said Bensurdatu, and led her to the bottom of the river. The other princesses were waiting there, and he tied the rope round the eldest, and rung his bell. And the generals above heard, and drew her gently up. They then unfastened the cord and threw it back into the river, and in a few moments the second princess stood beside her sister.

So now there were left only Bensurdatu and the youngest princess. ‘Dear Bensurdatu,’ said she, ‘do me a kindness, and let them draw you up before me. I dread the treachery of the generals.’

‘No, no,’ replied Bensurdatu, ‘I certainly will not leave you down here. There is nothing to fear from my comrades.’

‘If it is your wish I will go up then; but first I swear that if you do not follow to marry me, I shall stay single for the rest of my life.’ Then he bound the rope round her, and the generals drew her up.

But instead of lowering the rope again into the river, envy at the courage and success of Bensurdatu so filled the hearts of the two generals, that they turned away and left him to perish. And, more than that, they threatened the princesses, and forced them to promise to tell their parents that it was the two generals who had set them free. ‘And if they should ask you about Bensurdatu, you must say you have never seen him,’ they added; and the princesses, fearing for their lives, promised everything, and they rode back to court together.

The king and queen were beside themselves with joy when they saw their dear children once more. But when the generals had told their story, and the dangers they had run, the king declared that they had gained their reward, and that the two eldest princesses should become their wives.

And now we must see what poor Bensurdatu was doing.

He waited patiently a long, long time, but when the rope never came back he knew he had been wrong, and that his comrades had betrayed him. ‘Ah, now I shall never reach the world again,’ murmured he; but being a brave man, and knowing that moaning his fate would profit him nothing, he rose and began to search through the three halls, where, perhaps, he might find something to help him. In the last one stood a dish, covered with food, which reminded him that he was hungry, and he sat down and ate and drank.

Months passed away, when, one morning, as he was walking through the halls, he noticed a purse hanging on the wall, which had never been there before. He took it down to examine it, and nearly let it fall with surprise when a voice came from the purse saying: ‘What commands have you?’

‘Oh, take me out of this horrible place, and up into the world again;’ and in a moment he was, standing by the river bank, with the purse tightly grasped in his hand.

‘Now let me have the most beautiful ship that ever was built, all manned and ready for sea.’ And there was the ship, with a flag floating from its mast on which were the words, ‘King with the three crowns.’ Then Bensurdatu climbed on board, and sailed away to the city where the three princesses dwelt; and when he reached the harbour he blew trumpets and beat drums, so that every one ran to the doors and windows. And the king heard too, and saw the beautiful vessel, and said to himself: ‘That must indeed be a mighty monarch, for he has three crowns while I have only one.’ So he hastened to greet the stranger, and invited him to his castle, for, thought he, ‘this will be a fine husband for my youngest daughter.’ Now, the youngest princess had never married, and had turned a deaf ear to all her wooers.

Such a long time had passed since Bensurdatu had left the palace, that the king never guessed for a moment that the splendidly clad stranger before him was the man whom he had so deeply mourned as dead. ‘Noble lord,’ said he, ‘let us feast and make merry together, and then, if it seem good to you, do me the honour to take my youngest daughter to wife.’

And Bensurdatu was glad, and they all sat down to a great feast, and there were great rejoicings. But only the youngest daughter was sad, for her thoughts were with Bensurdatu. After they arose from the table the king said to her, ‘Dear child, this mighty lord does you the honour to ask your hand in marriage.’

‘Oh, father,’ answered she, ‘spare me, I pray you, for I desire to remain single.’

Then Bensurdatu turned to her, and said: ‘And if I were Bensurdatu, would you give the same answer to me?’

And as she stood silently gazing at him, he added: ‘Yes, I am Bensurdatu; and this is my story.’

The king and queen had their hearts stirred within them at the tale of his adventures, and when he had ended the king stretched out his hand, and said: ‘Dear Bensurdatu, my youngest daughter shall indeed be your wife; and when I die my crown shall be yours. As for the men who have betrayed you, they shall leave the country and you shall see them no more.’

And the wedding feast was ordered, and rejoicings were held for three days over the marriage of Bensurdatu and the youngest princess.

THE MAGICIAN’S HORSE

Once upon a time, there was a king who had three sons. Now it happened that one day the three princes went out hunting in a large forest at some distance from their father’s palace, and the youngest prince lost his way, so his brothers had to return home without him.

For four days the prince wandered through the glades of the forest, sleeping on moss beneath the stars at night, and by day living on roots and wild berries. At last, on the morning of the fifth day, he came to a large open space in the middle of the forest, and here stood a stately palace; but neither within nor without was there a trace of human life. The prince entered the open door and wandered through the deserted rooms without seeing a living soul. At last he came on a great hall, and in the centre of the hall was a table spread with dainty dishes and choice wines. The prince sat down, and satisfied his hunger and thirst, and immediately afterwards the table disappeared from his sight. This struck the prince as very strange; but though he continued his search through all the rooms, upstairs and down, he could find no one to speak to. At last, just as it was beginning to get dark, he heard steps in the distance and he saw an old man coming towards him up the stairs.

‘What are you doing wandering about my castle?’ asked the old man.

To whom the prince replied: ‘I lost my way hunting in the forest. If you will take me into your service, I should like to stay with you, and will serve you faithfully.’

‘Very well,’ said the old man. ‘You may enter my service. You will have to keep the stove always lit, you will have to fetch the wood for it from the forest, and you will have the charge of the black horse in the stables. I will pay you a florin a day, and at meal times you will always find the table in the hall spread with food and wine, and you can eat and drink as much as you require.’

The prince was satisfied, and he entered the old man’s service, and promised to see that there was always wood on the stove, so that the fire should never die out. Now, though he did not know it, his new master was a magician, and the flame of the stove was a magic fire, and if it had gone out the magician would have lost a great part of his power.

One day the prince forgot, and let the fire burn so low that it very nearly burnt out. Just as the flame was flickering the old man stormed into the room.

‘What do you mean by letting the fire burn so low?’ he growled. ‘I have only arrived in the nick of time.’ And while the prince hastily threw a log on the stove and blew on the ashes to kindle the glow, his master gave him a severe box on the ear, and warned him that if ever it happened again it would fare badly with him.

One day the prince was sitting disconsolate in the stables when, to his surprise, the black horse spoke to him.

‘Come into my stall,’ it said, ‘I have something to say to you. Fetch my bridle and saddle from that cupboard and put them on me. Take the bottle that is beside them; it contains an ointment which will make your hair shine like pure gold; then put all the wood you can gather together on to the stove, till it is piled quite high up.’

So the prince did what the horse told him; he saddled and bridled the horse, he put the ointment on his hair till it shone like gold, and he made such a big fire in the stove that the flames sprang up and set fire to the roof, and in a few minutes the palace was burning like a huge bonfire.

Then he hurried back to the stables, and the horse said to him: ‘There is one thing more you must do. In the cupboad you will find a looking-glass, a brush and a riding-whip. Bring them with you, mount on my back, and ride as hard as you can, for now the house is burning merrily.’

The prince did as the horse bade him. Scarcely had he got into the saddle than the horse was off and away, galloping at such a pace that, in a short time, the forest and all the country belonging to the magician lay far behind them.

In the meantime the magician returned to his palace, which he found in smouldering ruins. In vain he called for his servant. At last he went to look for him in the stables, and when he discovered that the black horse had disappeared too, he at once suspected that they had gone together; so he mounted a roan horse that was in the next stall, and set out in pursuit.

As the prince rode, the quick ears of his horse heard the sound of pursuing feet.

‘Look behind you,’ he said, ‘and see if the old man is following.’ And the prince turned in his saddle and saw a cloud like smoke or dust in the distance.

‘We must hurry,’ said the horse.

After they had galloped for some time, the horse said again: ‘Look behind, and see if he is still at some distance.’

‘He is quite close,’ answered the prince.

‘Then throw the looking-glass on the ground,’ said the horse. So the prince threw it; and when the magician came up, the roan horse stepped on the mirror, and crash! his foot went through the glass, and he stumbled and fell, cutting his feet so badly that there was nothing for the old man to do but to go slowly back with him to the stables, and put new shoes on his feet. Then they started once more in pursuit of the prince, for the magician set great value on the horse, and was determined not to lose it.

In the meanwhile the prince had gone a great distance; but the quick ears of the black horse detected the sound of following feet from afar.

‘Dismount,’ he said to the prince; ‘put your ear to the ground, and tell me if you do not hear a sound.’

So the prince dismounted and listened. ‘I seem to hear the earth tremble,’ he said; ‘I think he cannot be very far off.’

‘Mount me at once,’ answered the horse, ‘and I will gallop as fast as I can.’ And he set off so fast that the earth seemed to fly from under his hoofs.

‘Look back once more,’ he said, after a short time, ‘and see if he is in sight.’

‘I see a cloud and a flame,’ answered the prince; ‘but a long way off.’

‘We must make haste,’ said the horse. And shortly after he said: ‘Look back again; he can’t be far off now.’

The prince turned in his saddle, and exclaimed: ‘He is close behind us, in a minute the flame from his horse’s nostrils will reach us.’

‘Then throw the brush on the ground,’ said the horse.

And the prince threw it, and in an instant the brush was changed into such a thick wood that even a bird could not have got through it, and when the old man got up to it the roan horse came suddenly to a stand-still, not able to advance a step into the thick tangle. So there was nothing for the magician to do but to retrace his steps, to fetch an axe, with which he cut himself a way through the wood. But it took him some time, during which the prince and the black horse got on well ahead.

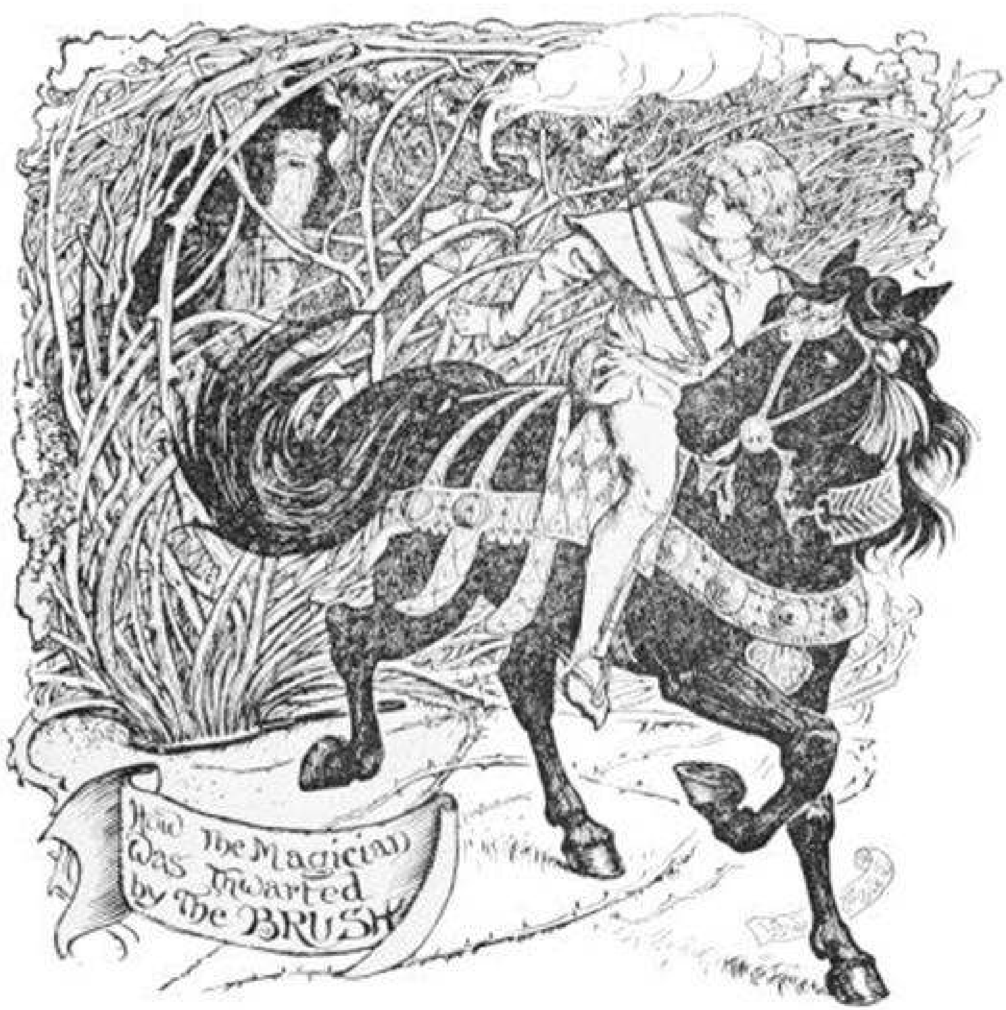
How The Magician Was Thwarted by The BRUSH

But once more they heard the sound of pursuing feet. ‘Look back,’ said the black horse, ‘and see if he is following.’

‘Yes,’ answered the prince, ‘this time I hear him distinctly.’

‘Let us hurry on,’ said the horse. And a little later he said: ‘Look back now, and see if he is in sight.’

‘Yes,’ said the prince, turning round, ‘I see the flame; he is close behind us.’

‘Then you must throw down the whip,’ answered the horse. And in the twinkling of an eye the whip was changed into a broad river. When the old man got up to it he urged the roan horse into the water, but as the water mounted higher and higher, the magic flame which gave the magician all his power grew smaller and smaller, till, with a fizz, it went out, and the old man and the roan horse sank in the river and disappeared. When the prince looked round they were no longer to be seen.

‘Now,’ said the horse, ‘you may dismount; there is nothing more to fear, for the magician is dead. Beside that brook you will find a willow wand. Gather it, and strike the earth with it, and it will open and you will see a door at your feet.’

When the prince had struck the earth with the wand a door appeared, and opened into a large vaulted stone hall.

‘Lead me into that hall,’ said the horse, ‘I will stay there; but you must go through the fields till you reach a garden, in the midst of which is a king’s palace. When you get there you must ask to be taken into the king’s service. Good-bye, and don’t forget me.’

So they parted; but first the horse made the prince promise not to let anyone in the palace see his golden hair. So he bound a scarf round it, like a turban, and the prince set out through the fields, till he reached a beautiful garden, and beyond the garden he saw the walls and towers of a stately palace. At the garden gate he met the gardener, who asked him what he wanted.

‘I want to take service with the king,’ replied the prince.

‘Well, you may stay and work under me in the garden,’ said the man; for as the prince was dressed like a poor man, he could not tell that he was a king’s son. ‘I need someone to weed the ground and to sweep the dead leaves from the paths. You shall have a florin a day, a horse to help you to cart the leaves away, and food and drink.’

So the prince consented, and set about his work. But when his food was given to him he only ate half of it; the rest he carried to the vaulted hall beside the brook, and gave to the black horse. And this he did every day, and the horse thanked him for his faithful friendship.

One evening, as they were together, after his work in the garden was over, the horse said to him: ‘To-morrow a large company of princes and great lords are coming to your king’s palace. They are coming from far and near, as wooers for the three princesses. They will all stand in a row in the courtyard of the palace, and the three princesses will come out, and each will carry a diamond apple in her hand, which she will throw into the air. At whose-soever feet the apple falls he will be the bridegroom of that princess. You must be close by in the garden at your work. The apple of the youngest princess, who is much the most beautiful of the sisters, will roll past the wooers and stop in front of you. Pick it up at once and put it in your pocket.’

The next day, when the wooers were all assembled in the courtyard of the castle, everything happened just as the horse had said. The princesses threw the apples into the air, and the diamond apple of the youngest princess rolled past all the wooers, out on to the garden, and stopped at the feet of the young gardener, who was busy sweeping the leaves away. In a moment he had stooped down, picked up the apple and put it in his pocket. As he stooped the scarf round his head slipped a little to one side, and the princess caught sight of his golden hair, and loved him from that moment.

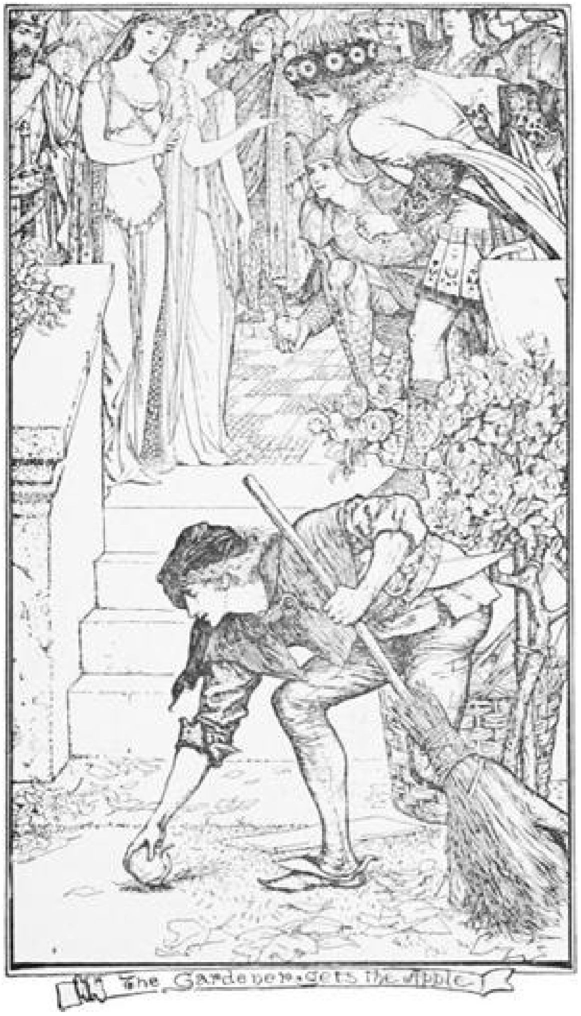

The Gardener Gets the Apple

But the king was very sad, for his youngest daughter was the one he loved best. But there was no help for it; and the next day a threefold wedding was celebrated at the palace, and after the wedding the youngest princess returned with her husband to the small hut in the garden where he lived.

Some time after this the people of a neighbouring country went to war with the king, and he set out to battle, accompanied by the husbands of his two eldest daughters mounted on stately steeds. But the husband of the youngest daughter had nothing but the old broken-down horse which helped him in his garden work; and the king, who was ashamed of this son-in-law, refused to give him any other.

So as he was determined not to be left behind, he went into the garden, mounted the sorry nag, and set out. But scarcely had he ridden a few yards before the horse stumbled and fell. So he dismounted and went down to the brook, to where the black horse lived in the vaulted hall. And the horse said to him: ‘Saddle and bridle me, and then go into the next room and you will find a suit of armour and a sword. Put them on, and we will ride forth together to battle.’

And the prince did as he was told; and when he had mounted the horse his armour glittered in the sun, and he looked so brave and handsome, that no one would have recognised him as the gardener who swept away the dead leaves from the paths. The horse bore him away at a great pace, and when they reached the battle-field they saw that the king was losing the day, so many of his warriors had been slain. But when the warrior on his black charger and in glittering armour appeared on the scene, hewing right and left with his sword, the enemy were dismayed and fled in all directions, leaving the king master of the field. Then the king and his two sons-in-law, when they saw their deliverer, shouted, and all that was left of the army joined in the cry: ‘A god has come to our rescue!’ And they would have surrounded him, but his black horse rose in the air and bore him out of their sight.

Soon after this, part of the country rose in rebellion against the king, and once more he and his two sons-in-law had to fare forth to battle. And the son-in-law who was disguised as a gardener wanted to fight too. So he came to the king and said: ‘Dear father, let me ride with you to fight your enemies.’

‘I don’t want a blockhead like you to fight for me,’ answered the king. ‘Besides, I haven’t got a horse fit for you. But see, there is a carter on the road carting hay, you may take his horse.’

So the prince took the carter’s horse, but the poor beast was old and tired, and after it had gone a few yards it stumbled and fell. So the prince returned sadly to the garden and watched the king ride forth at the head of the army accompanied by his two sons-in-law. When they were out of sight the prince betook himself to the vaulted chamber by the brook-side, and having taken counsel of the faithful black horse, he put on the glittering suit of armour, and was borne on the back of the horse through the air, to where the battle was being fought. And once more he routed the king’s enemies, hacking to right and left with his sword. And again they all cried: ‘A god has come to our rescue!’ But when they tried to detain him the black horse rose in the air and bore him out of their sight.

When the king and his sons-in-law returned home they could talk of nothing but the hero who had fought for them, and all wondered who he could be.

Shortly afterwards the king of a neighbouring country declared war, and once more the king and his sons-in-law and his subjects had to prepare themselves for battle, and once more the prince begged to ride with them, but the king said he had no horse to spare for him. ‘But,’ he added, ‘you may take the horse of the woodman who brings the wood from the forest, it is good enough for you.’

So the prince took the woodman’s horse, but it was so old and useless that it could not carry him beyond the castle gates. So he betook himself once more to the vaulted hall, where the black horse had prepared a still more magnificent suit of armour for him than the one he had worn on the previous occasions, and when he had put it on, and mounted on the back of the horse, he bore him straight to the battle-field, and once more he scattered the king’s enemies, fighting single-handed in their ranks, and they fled in all directions. But it happened that one of the enemy struck with his sword and wounded the prince in the leg. And the king took his own pocket-handkerchief, with his name and crown embroidered on it, and bound it round the wounded leg. And the king would fain have compelled him to mount in a litter and be carried straight to the palace, and two of his knights were to lead the black charger to the royal stables. But the prince put his hand on the mane of his faithful horse, and managed to pull himself up into the saddle, and the horse mounted into the air with him. Then they all shouted and cried: ‘The warrior who has fought for us is a god! He must be a god.’

And throughout all the kingdom nothing else was spoken about, and all the people said: ‘Who can the hero be who has fought for us in so many battles? He cannot be a man, he must be a god.’

And the king said: ‘If only I could see him once more, and if it turned out that after all he was a man and not a god, I would reward him with half my kingdom.’

Now when the prince reached his home — the gardener’s hut where he lived with his wife — he was weary, and he lay down on his bed and slept. And his wife noticed the handkerchief bound round his wounded leg, and she wondered what it could be. Then she looked at it more closely and saw in the corner that it was embroidered with her father’s name and the royal crown. So she ran straight to the palace and told her father. And he and his two sons-in-law followed her back to her house, and there the gardener lay asleep on his bed. And the scarf that he always wore bound round his head had slipped off, and his golden hair gleamed on the pillow. And they all recognised that this was the hero who had fought and won so many battles for them.

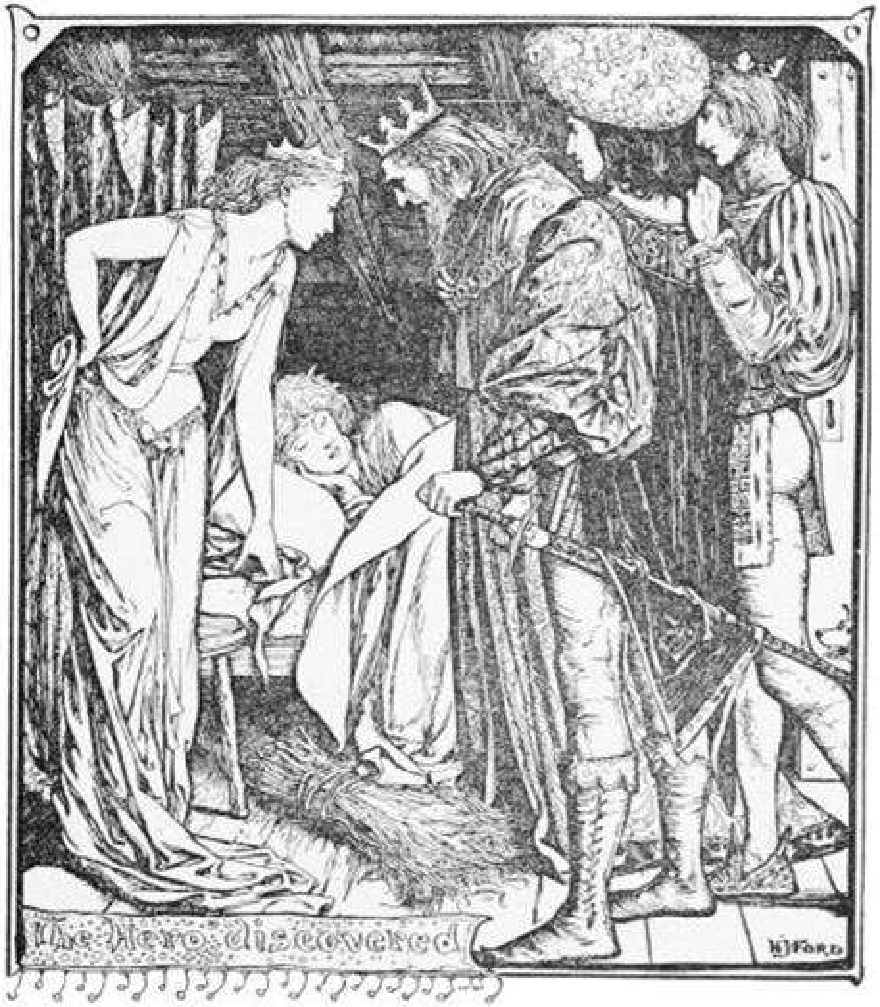
The Hero discovered
H J FORD

Then there was great rejoicing throughout the land, and the king rewarded his son-in-law with half of his kingdom, and he and his wife reigned happily over it.

THE LITTLE GRAY MAN

A nun, a countryman, and a blacksmith were once wandering through the world together. One day they lost their way in a thick, dark forest, and were thankful when they saw, in the distance, the walls of a house, where they hoped they might obtain refuge for the night. When they got close to the house they found that it was an old deserted castle, fast falling into ruins, but with some of the rooms in it still habitable. As they were homeless they determined to take up their abode in the castle, and they arranged that one of them should always stay at home and keep house, while the other two went out into the world to seek their fortunes.

The lot of remaining at home fell first to the nun, and when the countryman and the blacksmith had gone out into the wood, she set to work, tidied up the house, and prepared all the food for the day. As her companions did not come home for their mid-day meal, she ate up her own portion and put the rest in the oven to keep warm. Just as she was sitting down to sew, the door opened and a little gray man came in, and, standing before her, said: ‘Oh! how cold I am!’

The nun was very sorry for him, and said at once: ‘Sit down by the fire and warm yourself.’

The little man did as he was told, and soon called out: ‘Oh! how hungry I am!’

The nun answered: ‘There is food in the oven, help yourself.’

The little man did not need to be told twice, for he set to work and ate up everything with the greatest possible despatch. When the nun saw this she was very angry, and scolded the dwarf because he had left nothing for her companions.

The little man resented her words, and flew into such a passion that he seized the nun, beat her, and threw her first against one wall and then against the other. When he had nearly killed her he left her lying on the floor, and hastily walked out of the house.

In the evening the countryman and the blacksmith returned home, and when they found, on demanding their dinner, that there was nothing left for them, they reproached the nun bitterly, and refused to believe her when she tried to tell them what had happened.

The next day the countryman asked to be left in charge of the house, and promised that, if he remained at home, no one should go hungry to bed. So the other two went out into the forest, and the countryman having prepared the food for the day, ate up his own portion, and put the rest in the oven. Just as he had finished clearing away, the door opened and the little gray man walked in, and this time he had two heads. He shook and trembled as before, and exclaimed: ‘Oh! how cold I am!’

The countryman, who was frightened out of his wits, begged him to draw near the fire and warm himself.

Soon after the dwarf looked greedily round, and said: ‘Oh! how hungry I am!’

‘There is food in the oven, so you can eat,’ replied the countryman.

Then the little man fell to with both his heads, and soon finished the last morsel.

When the countryman scolded him for this proceeding he treated him exactly as he had done the nun, and left the poor fellow more dead than alive.

Now when the blacksmith came home with the nun in the evening, and found nothing for supper, he flew into a passion; and swore that he would stay at home the following day, and that no one should go supperless to bed.

When day dawned the countryman and the nun set out into the wood, and the blacksmith prepared all the food for the day as the others had done. Again the gray dwarf entered the house without knocking, and this time he had three heads. When he complained of cold, the blacksmith told him to sit near the fire; and when he said he was hungry, the blacksmith put some food on a plate and gave it to him. The dwarf made short work of what was provided for him, and then, looking greedily round with his six eyes, he demanded more. When the blacksmith refused to give him another morsel, he flew into a terrible rage, and proceeded to treat him in the same way as he had treated his companions.

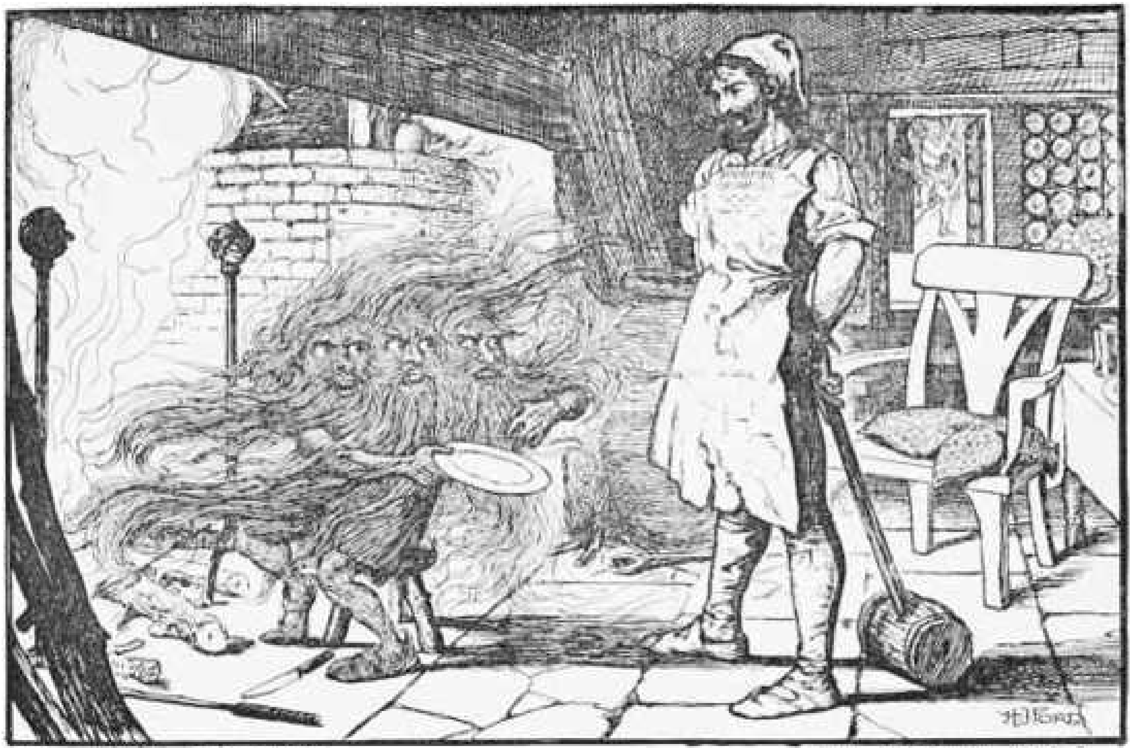

THE LITTLE GRAY MAN "HE DEMANDED MORE"

But the blacksmith was a match for him, for he seized a huge hammer and struck off two of the dwarf’s heads with it. The little man yelled with pain and rage, and hastily fled from the house. The blacksmith ran after him, and pursued him for a long way; but at last they came to an iron door, and through it the little creature vanished. The door shut behind him, and the blacksmith had to give up the pursuit and return home. He found that the nun and the countryman had come back in the meantime, and they were much delighted when he placed some food before them, and showed them the two heads he had struck off with his hammer. The three companions determined there and then to free themselves from the power of the gray dwarf, and the very next day they set to work to find him.

They had to walk a long way, and to search for many hours, before they found the iron door through which the dwarf had disappeared; and when they had found it they had the greatest difficulty in opening it. When at last they succeeded in forcing the lock, they entered a large hall, in which sat a young and lovely girl, working at a table. The moment she saw the nun, the blacksmith, and the countryman, she fell at their feet, thanking them with tears in her eyes for having set her free. She told them that she was a king’s daughter, who had been shut up in the castle by a mighty magician. The day before, just about noon, she had suddenly felt the magic power over her disappear, and ever since that moment she had eagerly awaited the arrival of her deliverers. She went on to say that there was yet another princess shut up in the castle, who had also fallen under the might of the magician.

They wandered through many halls and rooms till at last they found the second princess, who was quite as grateful as the first, and thanked the three companions most warmly for having set her free.

Then the princesses told their rescuers that a great treasure lay hidden in the cellars of the castle, but that it was carefully guarded by a fierce and terrible dog.

Nothing daunted, they all went down below at once, and found the fierce animal mounting guard over the treasure as the princesses had said. But one blow from the blacksmith’s hammer soon made an end of the monster, and they found themselves in a vaulted chamber full of gold and silver and precious stones. Beside the treasure stood a young and handsome man, who advanced to meet them, and thanked the nun, the blacksmith, and the countryman, for having freed him from the magic spell he was under. He told them that he was a king’s son, who had been banished to this castle by a wicked magician, and that he had been changed into the three-headed dwarf. When he had lost two of his heads the magic power over the two princesses had been removed, and when the blacksmith had killed the horrible dog, then he too had been set free.

To show his gratitude he begged the three companions to divide the treasure between them, which they did; but there was so much of it that it took a very long time.

The princesses, too, were so grateful to their rescuers, that one married the blacksmith, and the other the countryman.

Then the prince claimed the nun as his bride, and they all lived happily together till they died.

HERR LAZARUS AND THE DRAKEN

Once upon a time there was a cobbler called Lazarus, who was very fond of honey. One day, as he ate some while he sat at work, the flies collected in such numbers that with one blow he killed forty. Then he went and ordered a sword to be made for him, on which he had written these words: ‘With one blow I have slain forty.’ When the sword was ready he took it and went out into the world, and when he was two days’ journey from home he came to a spring, by which he laid himself down and slept.

Now in that country there dwelt Draken, one of whom came to the spring to draw water; there he found Lazarus sleeping, and read what was written on his sword. Then he went back to his people and told them what he had seen, and they all advised him to make fellowship with this powerful stranger. So the Draken returned to the spring, awoke Lazarus, and said that if it was agreeable to him they should make fellowship together.

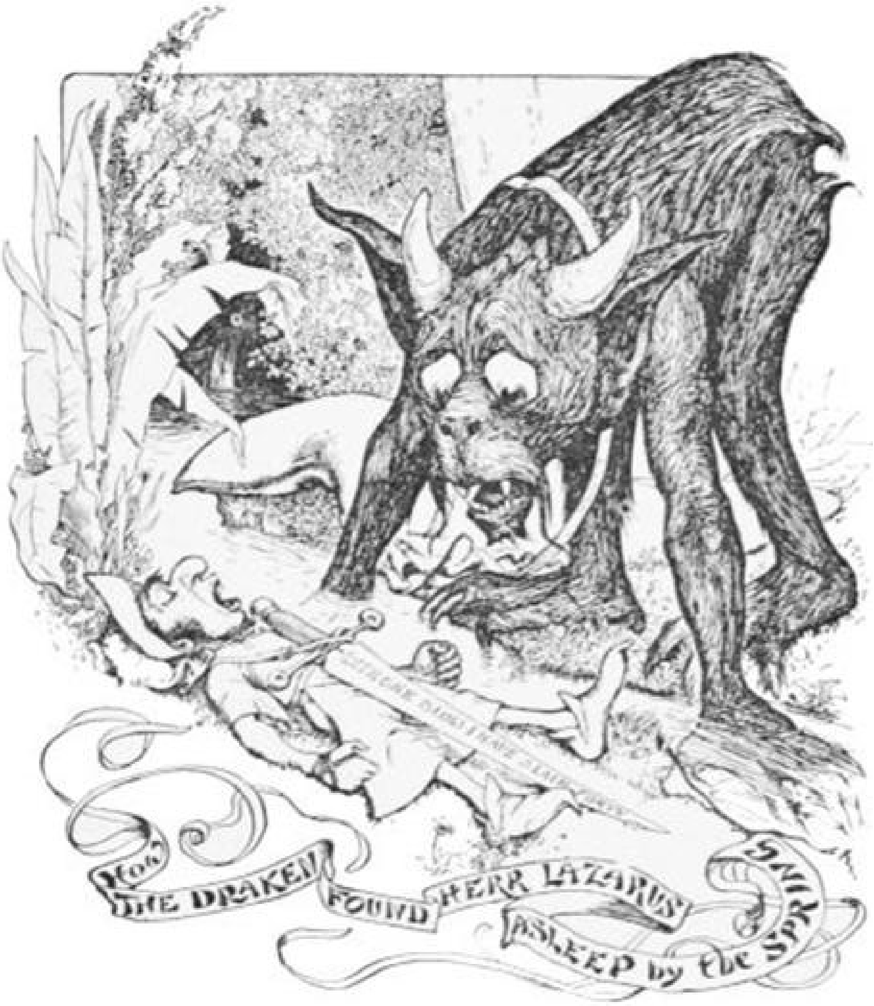
How the Draken found Herr Lazarus asleep by the spring

Lazarus answered that he was willing, and after a priest had blessed the fellowship, they returned together to the other Draken, and Lazarus dwelt among them. After some days they told him that it was their custom to take it in turns to bring wood and water, and as he was now of their company, he must take his turn. They went first for water and wood, but at last it came to be Lazarus's turn to go for water. The Draken had a great leathern bag, holding two hundred measures of water. This Lazarus could only, with great difficulty, drag empty to the spring, and because he could not carry it back full, he did not fill it at all, but, instead, he dug up the ground all round the spring.

As Lazarus remained so long away, the Draken sent one of their number to see what had become of him, and when this one came to the spring, Lazarus said to him: 'We will no more plague ourselves by carrying water every day. I will bring the entire spring home at once, and so we shall be freed from this burden.'

But the Draken called out: 'On no account, Herr Lazarus, else we shall all die of thirst; rather will we carry the water ourselves in turns, and you alone shall be exempt.'

Next it comes to be Lazarus's turn to bring the wood. Now the Draken, when they fetched the wood, always took an entire tree on their shoulder, and so carried it home. Because Lazarus could not imitate them in this, he went to the forest, tied all the trees together with a thick rope, and remained in the forest till evening. Again the Draken sent one of them after him to see what had become of him, and when this one asked what he was about, Lazarus answered: 'I will bring the entire forest home at once, so that after that we may have rest.'

But the Draken called out: 'By no means, Herr Lazarus, else we shall all die of cold; rather will we go ourselves to bring wood, and let you be free.' And then the Draken tore up one tree, threw it over his shoulder, and so carried it home.

When they had lived together some time, the Draken became weary of Lazarus, and agreed among themselves to kill him; each Draken, in the night while Lazarus slept, should strike him a blow with a hatchet. But Lazarus heard of this scheme, and when the evening came, he took a log of wood, covered it with his cloak, laid it in the place where he usually slept, and then hid himself. In the night the Draken came, and each one hit the log a blow with his hatchet, till it flew in pieces.

Then they believed their object was gained, and they lay down again.

Thereupon Lazarus took the log, threw it away, and laid himself down in its stead. Towards dawn, he began to groan, and when the Draken heard that, they asked what ailed him, to which he made answer: 'The gnats have stung me horribly.'

This terrified the Draken, for they believed that Lazarus took their blows for gnat-stings, and they determined at any price to get rid of him. Next morning, therefore, they asked him if he had not wife or child, and said that if he would like to go and visit them they would give him a bag of gold to take away with him. He agreed willingly to this, but asked further that one of the Draken should go with him to carry the bag of gold. They consented, and one was sent with him.

When they had come to within a short distance of Lazarus's house, he said to the Draken: 'Stop here, in the meantime, for I must go on in front and tie up my children, lest they eat you.'

So he went and tied his children with strong ropes, and said to them: 'As soon as the Draken comes in sight, call out as loud as you can, "Drakenflesh! Drakenflesh!"'

So, when the Draken appeared, the children cried out; 'Drakenflesh! Drakenflesh!' and this so terrified the Draken that he let the bag fall and fled.

On the road he met a fox, which asked him why he seemed so frightened. He answered that he was afraid of the children of Herr Lazarus, who had been within a hair-breadth of eating him up.

But the fox laughed, and said: ‘What! you were afraid of the children of Herr Lazarus? He had two fowls, one of which I ate yesterday, the other I will go and fetch now — If you do not believe me, come and see for yourself; but you must first tie yourself on to my tail.’

The Draken then tied himself on to the fox’s tail, and went back thus with it to Lazarus’s house, in order to see what it would arrange. There stood Lazarus with his gun raised ready to fire, who, when he saw the fox coming along with the Draken, called out to the fox: ‘Did I not tell you to bring me all the Draken, and you bring me only one?’

When the Draken heard that he made off to the right-about at once, and ran so fast that the fox was dashed in pieces against the stones.

When Lazarus had got quit of the Draken he built himself, with their gold, a magnificent house, in which he spent the rest of his days in great enjoyment.

THE STORY OF THE QUEEN OF THE FLOWERY ISLES

There once lived a queen who ruled over the Flowery Isles, whose husband, to her extreme grief, died a few years after their marriage. On being left a widow she devoted herself almost entirely to the education of the two charming princesses, her only children. The elder of them was so lovely that as she grew up her mother greatly feared she would excite the jealousy of the Queen of all the Isles, who prided herself on being the most beautiful woman in the world, and insisted on all rivals bowing before her charms.

In order the better to gratify her vanity she had urged the king, her husband, to make war on all the surrounding islands, and as his greatest wish was to please her, the only conditions he imposed on any newly-conquered country was that each princess of every royal house should attend his court as soon as she was fifteen years old, and do homage to the transcendent beauty of his queen.

The Queen of the Flowery Isles, well aware of this law, was fully determined to present her daughter to the proud queen as soon as her fifteenth birthday was past.

The queen herself had heard a rumour of the young princess’s great beauty, and awaited her visit with some anxiety, which soon developed into jealousy, for when the interview took place it was impossible not to be dazzled by such radiant charms, and she was obliged to admit that she had never beheld anyone so exquisitely lovely.

Of course she thought in her own mind ‘excepting myself!’ for nothing could have made her believe it possible that anyone could eclipse her.

But the outspoken admiration of the entire court soon undeceived her, and made her so angry that she pretended illness and retired to her own rooms, so as to avoid witnessing the princess’s triumph. She also sent word to the Queen of the Flowery Isles that she was sorry not to be well enough to see her again, and advised her to return to her own states with the princess, her daughter.

This message was entrusted to one of the great ladies of the court, who was an old friend of the Queen of the Flowery Isles, and who advised her not to wait to take a formal leave but to go home as fast as she could.

The Queen was not slow to take the hint, and lost no time in obeying it. Being well aware of the magic powers of the incensed queen, she warned her daughter that she was threatened by some great danger if she left the palace for any reason whatever during the next six months.

The princess promised obedience, and no pains were spared to make the time pass pleasantly for her.

The six months were nearly at an end, and on the very last day a splendid fête was to take place in a lovely meadow quite near the palace. The princess, who had been able to watch all the preparations from her window, implored her mother to let her go as far as the meadow; and the queen, thinking all risks must be over, consented, and promised to take her there herself.

The whole court was delighted to see their much-loved princess at liberty, and everyone set off in high glee to join in the fête.

The princess, overjoyed at being once more in the open air, was walking a little in advance of her party when suddenly the earth opened under her feet and closed again after swallowing her up!

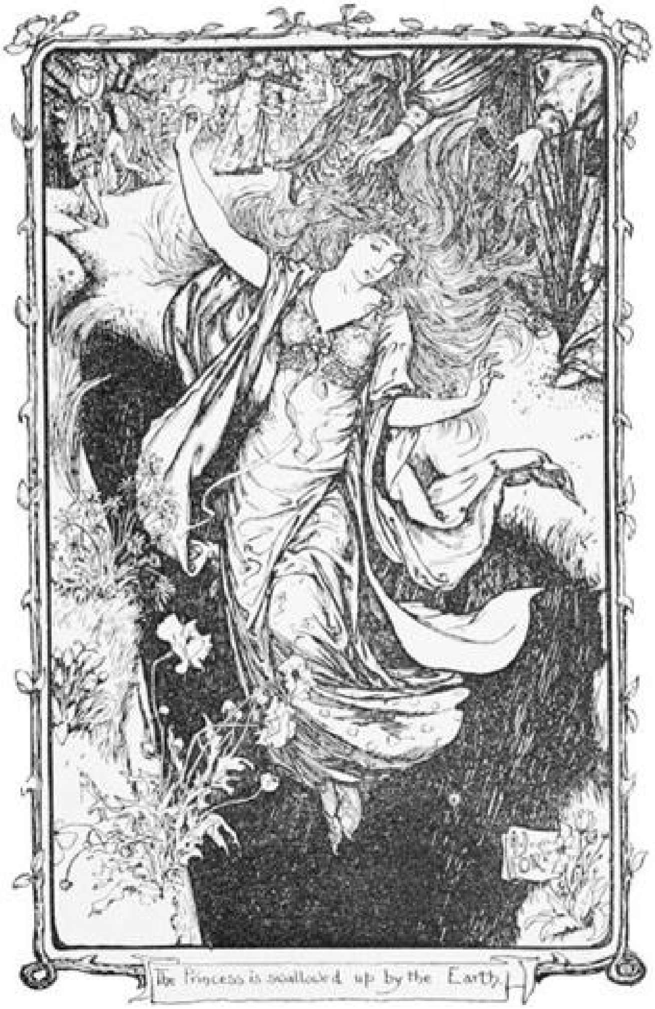

The Princess is swallowed up by the Earth

The queen fainted away with terror, and the younger princess burst into floods of tears and could hardly be dragged away from the fatal spot, whilst the court was overwhelmed with horror at so great a calamity.

Orders were given to bore the earth to a great depth, but in vain; not a trace of the vanished princess was to be found.

She sank right through the earth and found herself in a desert place with nothing but rocks and trees and no sign of any human being. The only living creature she saw was a very pretty little dog, who ran up to her and at once began to caress her. She took him in her arms, and after playing with him for a little put him down again, when he started off in front of her, looking round from time to time as though begging her to follow.

She let him lead her on, and presently reached a little hill, from which she saw a valley full of lovely fruit trees, bearing flowers and fruit together. The ground was also covered with fruit and flowers, and in the middle of the valley rose a fountain surrounded by a velvety lawn.

The princess hastened to this charming spot, and sitting down on the grass began to think over the misfortune which had befallen her, and burst into tears as she reflected on her sad condition.

The fruit and clear fresh water would, she knew, prevent her from dying of hunger or thirst, but how could she escape if any wild beast appeared and tried to devour her?

At length, having thought over every possible evil which could happen, the princess tried to distract her mind by playing with the little dog. She spent the whole day near the fountain, but as night drew on she wondered what she should do, when she noticed that the little dog was pulling at her dress.

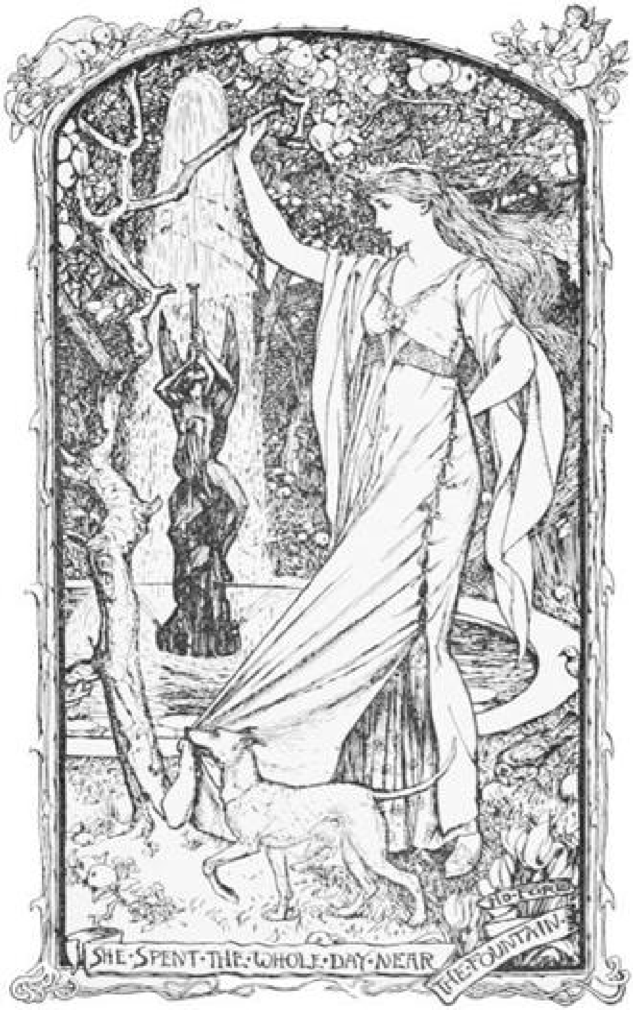

SHE·SPENT·THE·WHOLE·DAY·NEAR THE·FOUNTAIN·

She paid no heed to him at first, but as he continued to pull her dress and then run a few steps in one particular direction, she at last decided to follow him; he stopped before a rock with a large opening in the centre, which he evidently wished her to enter.

The princess did so and discovered a large and beautiful cave lit up by the brilliancy of the stones with which it was lined, with a little couch covered with soft moss in one corner. She lay down on it and the dog at once nestled at her feet. Tired out with all she had gone through she soon fell asleep.

Next morning she was awakened very early by the songs of many birds. The little dog woke up too, and sprang round her in his most caressing manner. She got up and went outside, the dog as before running on in front and turning back constantly to take her dress and draw her on.

She let him have his way and he soon led her back to the beautiful garden where she had spent part of the day before. Here she ate some fruit, drank some water of the fountain, and felt as if she had made an excellent meal. She walked about amongst the flowers, played with her little dog, and at night returned to sleep in the cave.

In this way the princess passed several months, and as her first terrors died away she gradually became more resigned to her fate. The little dog, too, was a great comfort, and her constant companion.

One day she noticed that he seemed very sad and did not even caress her as usual. Fearing he might be ill she carried him to a spot where she had seen him eat some particular herbs, hoping they might do him good, but he would not touch them. He spent all the night, too, sighing and groaning as if in great pain.

At last the princess fell asleep, and when she awoke her first thought was for her little pet, but not finding him at her feet as usual, she ran out of the cave to look for him. As she stepped out of the cave she caught sight of an old man, who hurried away so fast that she had barely time to see him before he disappeared.

This was a fresh surprise and almost as great a shock as the loss of her little dog, who had been so faithful to her ever since the first day she had seen him. She wondered if he had strayed away or if the old man had stolen him.

Tormented by all kinds of thoughts and fears she wandered on, when suddenly she felt herself wrapped in a thick cloud and carried through the air. She made no resistance and before very long found herself, to her great surprise, in an avenue leading to the palace in which she had been born. No sign of the cloud anywhere.

As the princess approached the palace she perceived that everyone was dressed in black, and she was filled with fear as to the cause of this mourning. She hastened on and was soon recognised and welcomed with shouts of joy. Her sister hearing the cheers ran out and embraced the wanderer, with tears of happiness, telling her that the shock of her disappearance had been so terrible that their mother had only survived it a few days. Since then the younger princess had worn the crown, which she now resigned to her sister to whom it by right belonged.

But the elder wished to refuse it, and would only accept the crown on condition that her sister should share in all the power.

The first acts of the new queen were to do honour to the memory of her dear mother and to shower every mark of generous affection on her sister. Then, being still very grieved at the loss of her little dog, she had a careful search made for him in every country, and when nothing could be heard of him she was so grieved that she offered half her kingdom to whoever should restore him to her.

Many gentlemen of the court, tempted by the thought of such a reward, set off in all directions in search of the dog; but all returned empty-handed to the queen, who, in despair, announced that since life was unbearable without her little dog, she would give her hand in marriage to the man who brought him back.

The prospect of such a prize quickly turned the court into a desert, nearly every courtier starting on the quest. Whilst they were away the queen was informed one day that a very ill-looking man wished to speak with her. She desired him to be shown into a room where she was sitting with her sister.

On entering her presence he said that he was prepared to give the queen her little dog if she on her side was ready to keep her word.

The princess was the first to speak. She said that the queen had no right to marry without the consent of the nation, and that on so important an occasion the general council must be summoned. The queen could not say anything against this statement; but she ordered an apartment in the palace to be given to the man, and desired the council to meet on the following day.

Next day, accordingly, the council assembled in great state, and by the princess's advice it was decided to offer the man a large sum of money for the dog, and should he refuse it, to banish him from the kingdom without seeing the queen again. The man refused the price offered and left the hall.

The princess informed the queen of what had passed, and the queen approved of all, but added that as she was her own mistress she had made up her mind to abdicate her throne, and to wander through the world till she had found her little dog.

The princess was much alarmed by such a resolution, and implored the queen to change her mind. Whilst they were discussing the subject, one of the chamberlains appeared to inform the queen that the bay was covered with ships. The two sisters ran to the balcony, and saw a large fleet in full sail for the port.

In a little time they came to the conclusion that the ships must come from a friendly nation, as every vessel was decked with gay flags, streamers, and pennons, and the way was led by a small ship flying a great white flag of peace.

The queen sent a special messenger to the harbour, and was soon informed that the fleet belonged to the Prince of the Emerald Isles, who begged leave to land in her kingdom, and to present his humble respects to her. The queen at once sent some of the court dignitaries to receive the prince and bid him welcome.

She awaited him seated on her throne, but rose on his appearance, and went a few steps to meet him; then begged him to be seated, and for about an hour kept him in close conversation.

The prince was then conducted to a splendid suite of apartments, and the next day he asked for a private audience. He was admitted to the queen's own sitting-room, where she was sitting alone with her sister.

After the first greetings the prince informed the queen that he had some very strange things to tell her, which she only would know to be true.

‘Madam,’ said he, ‘I am a neighbour of the Queen of all the Isles; and a small isthmus connects part of my states with hers. One day, when hunting a stag, I had the misfortune to meet her, and not recognising her, I did not stop to salute her with all proper ceremony. You, Madam, know better than anyone how revengeful she is, and that she is also a mistress of magic. I learnt both facts to my cost. The ground opened under my feet, and I soon found myself in a far distant region transformed into a little dog, under which shape I had the honour to meet your Majesty. After six months, the queen’s vengeance not being yet satisfied, she further changed me into a hideous old man, and in this form I was so afraid of being unpleasant in your eyes, Madam, that I hid myself in the depths of the woods, where I spent three months more. At the end of that time I was so fortunate as to meet a benevolent fairy who delivered me from the proud queen’s power, and told me all your adventures and where to find you. I now come to offer you a heart which has been entirely yours, Madam, since first we met in the desert.’

A few days later a herald was sent through the kingdom to proclaim the joyful news of the marriage of the Queen of the Flowery Isles with the young prince. They lived happily for many years, and ruled their people well.

As for the bad queen, whose vanity and jealousy had caused so much mischief, the Fairies took all her power away for a punishment.

UDEA AND HER SEVEN BROTHERS

Once upon a time there was a man and his wife who had seven boys. The children lived in the open air and grew big and strong, and the six eldest spent part of every day hunting wild beasts. The youngest did not care so much about sport, and he often stayed with his mother.

One morning, however, as the whole seven were going out for a long expedition, they said to their aunt, ‘Dear aunt, if a baby sister comes into the world to-day, wave a white handkerchief, and we will return immediately; but if it is only a boy, just brandish a sickle, and we will go on with what we are doing.’

Now the baby when it arrived really proved to be a girl, but as the aunt could not bear the boys, she thought it was a good opportunity to get rid of them. So she waved the sickle. And when the seven brothers saw the sign they said, ‘Now we have nothing to go back for,’ and plunged deeper into the desert.

The little girl soon grew to be a big girl, and she was called by all her friends (though she did not know it) ‘Udea, who had driven her seven brothers into strange lands.’

One day, when she had been quarrelling with her playmates, the oldest among them said to her, ‘It is a pity you were born, as ever since, your brothers have been obliged to roam about the world.’

Udea did not answer, but went home to her mother and asked her, ‘Have I really got brothers?’

‘Yes,’ replied her mother, ‘seven of them. But they went away the day you were born, and I have never heard of them since.’

Then the girl said, ‘I will go and look for them till I find them.’

‘My dear child,’ answered her mother, ‘it is fifteen years since they left, and no man has seen them. How will you know which way to go?’

‘Oh, I will follow them, north and south, east and west, and though I may travel far, yet some day I will find them.’

Then her mother said no more, but gave her a camel and some food, and a negro and his wife to take care of her, and she fastened a cowrie shell round the camel’s neck for a charm, and bade her daughter go in peace.

During the first day the party journeyed on without any adventures, but the second morning the negro said to the girl, ‘Get down, and let the negress ride instead of you.’

‘Mother,’ cried Udea.

‘What is it?’ asked her mother.

‘Barka wants me to dismount from my camel.’

‘Leave her alone, Barka,’ commanded the mother, and Barka did not dare to persist.

But on the following day he said again to Udea, ‘Get down, and let the negress ride instead of you,’ and though Udea called to her mother she was too far away, and the mother never heard her. Then the negro seized her roughly and threw her on the ground, and said to his wife, ‘Climb up,’ and the negress climbed up, while the girl walked by the side. She had meant to ride all the way on her camel as her feet were bare and the stones cut them till the blood came. But she had to walk on till night, when they halted, and the next morning it was the same thing again. Weary and bleeding the poor girl began to cry, and implored the negro to let her ride, if only for a little. But he took no notice, except to bid her walk a little faster.

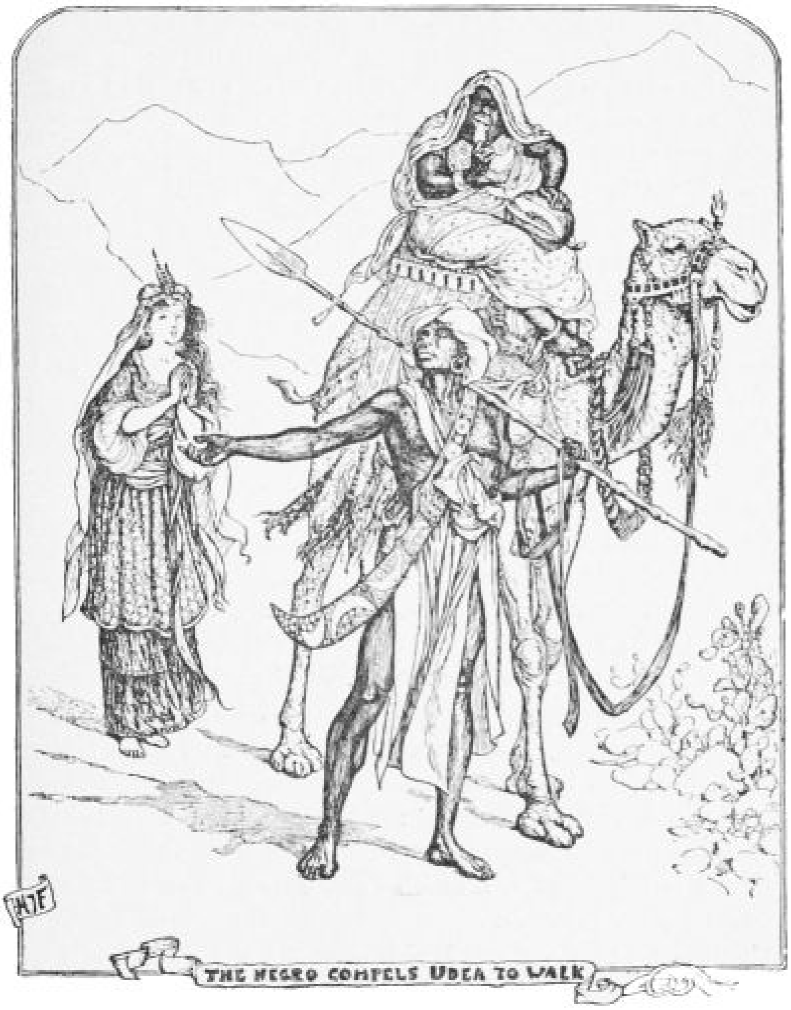

THE NEGRO COMPELS UDEA TO WALK

By-and-by they passed a caravan, and the negro stopped and asked the leader if they had come across seven young men, who were thought to be hunting somewhere about. And the man answered, ‘Go straight on, and by mid-day you will reach the castle where they live.’

When he heard this, the black melted some pitch in the sun, and smeared the girl with it, till she looked as much a negro as he did. Next he bade his wife get down from the camel, and told Udea to mount, which she was thankful to do. So they arrived at her brothers’ castle.

Leaving the camel kneeling at the entrance for Udea to dismount, the negro knocked loudly at the door, which was opened by the youngest brother, all the others being away hunting. He did not of course recognise Udea, but he knew the negro and his wife, and welcomed them gladly, adding, ‘But who does the other negress belong to?’

‘Oh, that is your sister!’ said they.

‘My sister! but she is coal black!’

‘That may be, but she is your sister for all that.’

The young man asked no more questions, but took them into the castle, and he himself waited outside till his brothers came home.

As soon as they were alone, the negro whispered to Udea, ‘If you dare to tell your brothers that I made you walk, or that I smeared you with pitch, I will kill you.’

‘Oh, I will be sure to say nothing,’ replied the girl, trembling, and at that moment the six elder brothers appeared in sight.

‘I have some good news for you,’ said the youngest, hastening to meet them; ‘our sister is here!’

‘Nonsense,’ they answered. ‘We have no sister; you know the child that was born was a boy.’

‘But that was not true,’ replied he, ‘and here she is with the negro and his wife. Only — she too is black,’ he added softly, but his brothers did not hear him, and pushed past joyfully.

‘How are you, good old Barka?’ they said to the negro; ‘and how comes it that we never knew that we had a sister till now?’ and they greeted Udea warmly, while she shed tears of relief and gladness.

The next morning they all agreed that they would not go out hunting. And the eldest brother took Udea on his knee, and she combed his hair and talked to him of their home till the tears ran down his cheeks and dropped on her bare arm. And where the tears fell a white mark was made. Then the brother took a cloth and rubbed the place, and he saw that she was not black at all.

‘Tell me, who painted you over like this?’ cried he.

‘I am afraid to tell you,’ sobbed the girl, ‘the negro will kill me.’

‘Afraid! and with seven brothers!’

‘Well, I will tell you then,’ she answered. ‘The negro forced me to dismount from the camel and let his wife ride instead. And the stones cut my feet till they bled and I had to bind them. And after that, when we heard your castle was near by, he took pitch and smeared my body with it.’

Then the brother rushed in wrath from the room, and seizing his sword, cut off first the negro’s head and then his wife’s. He next brought in some warm water, and washed his sister all over, till her skin was white and shining again.

‘Ah, now we see that you are our sister!’ they all said. ‘What fools the negro must have thought us, to believe for an instant that we could have a sister who was black!’ And all that day and the next they remained in the castle.

But on the third morning they said to their sister: ‘Dear sister, you must lock yourself into this castle, with only the cat for company. And be very careful never to eat anything which she does not eat too. You must be sure to give her a bit of everything. In seven days we shall be back again.’

‘All right,’ she answered, and locked herself into the castle with the cat.

On the eighth day the brothers came home. ‘How are you?’ they asked. ‘You have not been anxious?’

‘No, why should I be anxious? The gates were fast locked, and in the castle are seven doors, and the seventh is of iron. What is there to frighten me?’

‘No one will try to hurt *us*,’ said the brothers, ‘for they fear us greatly. But for yourself, we implore you to do nothing without consulting the cat, who has grown up in the house, and take care never to neglect her advice.’

‘All right,’ replied Udea, ‘and whatever I eat she shall have half.’

‘Capital! and if ever you are in danger the cat will come and tell us — only elves and pigeons, which fly round your window, know where to find us.’

‘This is the first I have heard of the pigeons,’ said Udea. ‘Why did you not speak of them before?’

‘We always leave them food and water for seven days,’ replied the brothers.

‘Ah,’ sighed the girl, ‘if I had only known, I would have given them fresh food and fresh water; for after seven days anything becomes bad. Would it not be better if I fed them every day?’

‘Much better,’ said they, ‘and we shall feel any kindnesses you do towards the cat or the pigeons exactly as if they were shown to ourselves.’

‘Set your minds at ease,’ answered the girl, ‘I will treat them as if they were my brothers.’

That night the brothers slept in the castle, but after breakfast next morning they buckled on their weapons and mounted their horses, and rode off to their hunting grounds, calling out to their sister, ‘Mind you let nobody in till we come back.’

‘Very well,’ cried she, and kept the doors carefully locked for seven days and on the eighth the brothers returned as before. Then, after spending one evening with her, they departed as soon as they had done breakfast.

Directly they were out of sight Udea began to clean the house, and among the dust she found a bean which she ate.

‘What are you eating?’ asked the cat.

‘Nothing,’ said she.

‘Open your mouth, and let me see,’ The girl did as she was told, and then the cat said ‘Why did you not give me half?’

‘I forgot,’ answered she, ‘but there are plenty of beans about, you can have as many as you like.’

‘No, that won’t do. I want half of that particular bean.’

‘But how can I give it you? I tell you I have eaten it. I can roast you a hundred others.’

‘No, I want half of that one.’

‘Oh! do as you like, only go away!’ cried she.

So the cat ran straight to the kitchen fire, and spit on it and put it out, and when Udea came to cook the supper she had nothing to light it with. ‘Why did you put the fire out?’ asked she.

‘Just to show you how nicely you would be able to cook the supper. Didn’t you tell me to do what I liked?’

The girl left the kitchen and climbed up on the roof of the castle and looked out. Far, far away, so far that she could hardly see it, was the glow of a fire. ‘I will go and fetch a burning coal from there and light my fire,’ thought she, and opened the door of the castle. When she reached the place where the fire was kindled, a hideous man-eater was crouching over it.

‘Peace be with you, grandfather,’ said she.

‘The same to you,’ replied the man-eater. ‘What brings you here, Udea?’

‘I came to ask for a lump of burning coal, to light my fire with.’

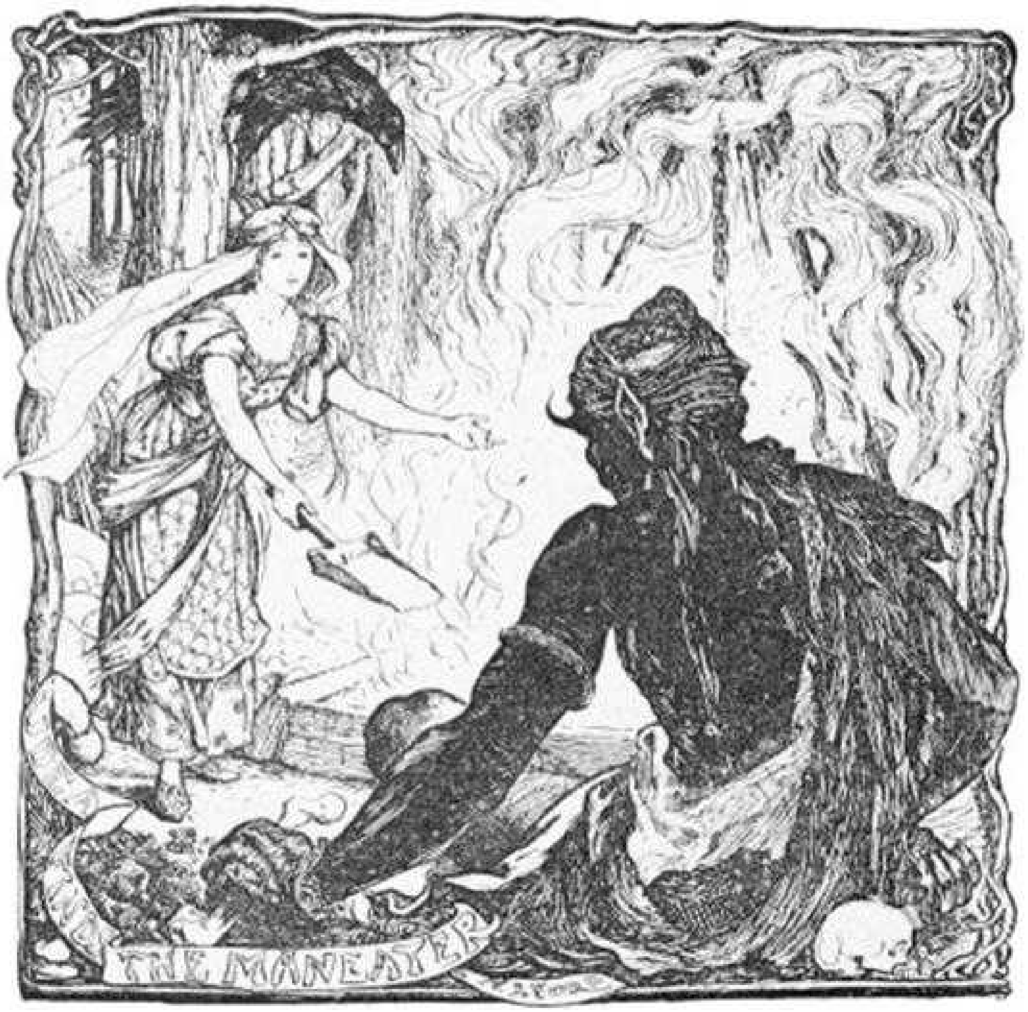

‘Do you want a big lump or a little lump?’

‘Why, what difference does it make?’ said she.

‘If you have a big lump you must give me a strip of your skin from your ear to your thumb, and if you have a little lump, you must give me a strip from your ear to your little finger.’

Udea, who thought that one sounded as bad as the other, said she would take the big lump, and when the man-eater had cut the skin, she went home again. And as she hastened on a raven beheld the blood on the ground, and plastered it with earth, and stayed by her till she reached the castle. And as she entered the door he flew past, and she shrieked from fright, for up to that moment she had not seen him. In her terror she called after him, ‘May you get the same start as you have given me!’

‘Why should you wish me harm,’ asked the raven, pausing in his flight, ‘when I have done you a service?’

‘What service have you done me?’ said she.

‘Oh, you shall soon see,’ replied the raven, and with his bill he scraped away all the earth he had smeared over the blood and then flew away.

In the night the man-eater got up, and followed the blood till he came to Udea’s castle. He entered through the gate which she had left open, and went on till he reached the inside of the house. But here he was stopped by the seven doors, six of wood and one of iron, and all fast locked. And he called through them ‘Oh Udea, what did you see your grandfather doing?’

‘I saw him spread silk under him, and silk over him, and lay himself down in a four-post bed.’

When he heard that, the man-eater broke in one door, and laughed and went away.

And the second night he came back, and asked her again what she had seen her grandfather doing, and she answered him as before, and he broke in another door, and laughed and went away, and so each night till he reached the seventh door. Then the maiden wrote a letter to her brothers, and bound it round the neck of a pigeon, and said to it, ‘Oh, thou pigeon that servedst my father and my grandfather, carry this letter to my brothers, and come back at once.’ And the pigeon flew away.

It flew and it flew and it flew till it found the brothers. The eldest unfastened the letter from the pigeon’s neck, and read what his sister had written: ‘I am in a great strait, my brothers. If you do not rescue me to-night, to-morrow I shall be no longer living, for the man-eater has broken open six doors, and only the iron door is left. So haste, haste, post haste.’

‘Quick, quick! my brothers,’ cried he.

‘What is the matter?’ asked they.

‘If we cannot reach our sister to-night, to-morrow she will be the prey of the man-eater.’

And without more words they sprang on their horses, and rode like the wind.

The gate of the castle was thrown down, and they entered the court and called loudly to their sister. But the poor girl was so ill with fear and anxiety that she could not even speak. Then the brothers dismounted and passed through the six open doors, till they stood before the iron one, which was still shut. ‘Udea, open!’ they cried, ‘it is only your brothers!’ And she arose and unlocked the door, and throwing herself on the neck of the eldest burst into tears.

‘Tell us what has happened,’ he said, ‘and how the man-eater traced you here.’

‘It is all the cat’s fault,’ replied Udea. ‘She put out my fire so that I could not cook. All about a bean! I ate one and forgot to give her any of it.’

‘But we told you so particularly,’ said the eldest brother, ‘never to eat anything without sharing it with the cat.’

‘Yes, but I tell you I forgot,’ answered Udea.

‘Does the man-eater come here every night?’ asked the brothers.

‘Every night,’ said Udea, ‘and he breaks one door in and then goes away.’

Then all the brothers cried together, ‘We will dig a great hole, and fill it with burning wood, and spread a covering over the top; and when the man-eater arrives we will push him into it.’ So they all set to work, and prepared the great hole, and set fire to the wood, till it was reduced to a mass of glowing charcoal. And when the man-eater came, and called as usual, ‘Udea, what did you see your grandfather doing?’ she answered, ‘I saw him pull off the ass’s skin and devour the ass, and he fell in the fire, and the fire burned him up.’

Then the man-eater was filled with rage, and he flung himself upon the iron door and burst it in. On the other side stood Udea’s seven brothers, who said, ‘Come, rest yourself a little on this mat.’ And the man-eater sat down, and he fell right into the burning pit which was under the mat, and they heaped on more wood, till nothing was left of him, not even a bone. Only one of his finger-nails was blown away, and fell into an upper chamber where Udea was standing, and stuck under one of the nails of her own fingers. And she sank lifeless to the earth.

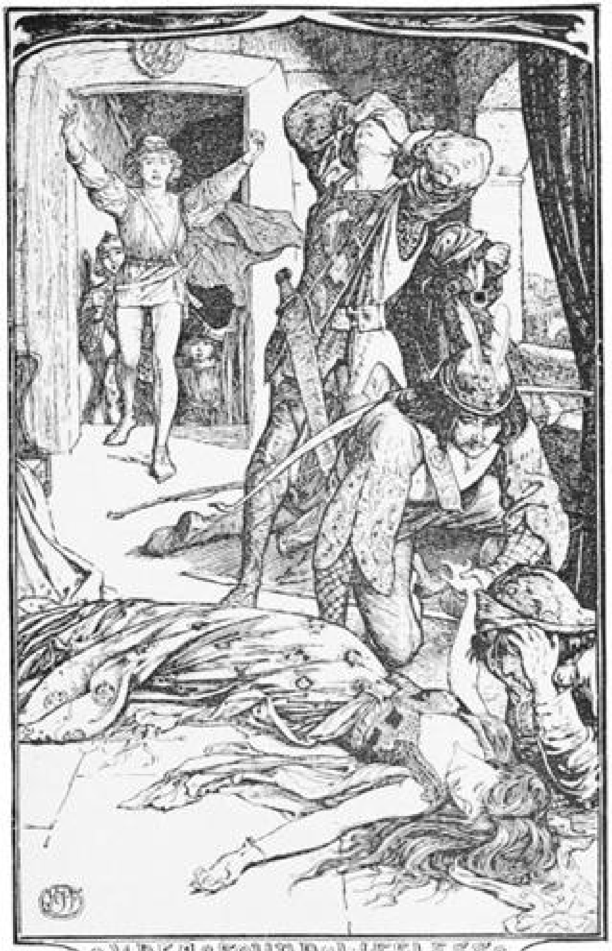

UDEA FOUND LIFELESS BY HER SEVEN BROTHERS

Meanwhile her brothers sat below waiting for her and wondering why she did not come. ‘What can have happened to her!’ exclaimed the eldest brother. ‘Perhaps she has fallen into the fire, too.’ So one of the others ran upstairs and found his sister stretched on the floor. ‘Udea! Udea!’ he cried, but she did not move or reply. Then he saw that she was dead, and rushed down to his brothers in the courtyard and called out, ‘Come quickly, our sister is dead!’ In a moment they were all beside her and knew that it was true, and they made a bier and laid her on it, and placed her across a camel, and said to the camel, ‘Take her to her mother, but be careful not to halt by the way, and let no man capture you, and see you kneel down before no man, save him who shall say “string” to you. But to him who says “string,” then kneel.’

‘Riemen.’

So the camel started, and when it had accomplished half its journey it met three men, who ran after it in order to catch it; but they could not. Then they cried ‘Stop!’ but the camel only went the faster. The three men panted behind till one said to the others, ‘Wait a minute! The string of my sandal is broken!’ The camel caught the word ‘string’ and knelt down at once, and the men came up and found a dead girl lying on a bier, with a ring on her finger. And as one of the young men took hold of her hand to pull off the ring, he knocked out the man-eater’s finger-nail, which had stuck there, and the maiden sat up and said, ‘Let him live who gave me life, and slay him who slew me!’ And when the camel heard the maiden speak, it turned and carried her back to her brothers.

Now the brothers were still seated in the court bewailing their sister, and their eyes were dim with weeping so that they could hardly see. And when the camel stood before them they said, ‘Perhaps it has brought back our sister!’ and rose to give it a beating. But the camel knelt down and the girl dismounted, and they flung themselves on her neck and wept more than ever for gladness.

‘Tell me,’ said the eldest, as soon as he could speak, ‘how it all came about, and what killed you.’

‘I was waiting in the upper chamber,’ said she, ‘and a nail of the man-eater’s stuck under my nail, and I fell dead upon the ground. That is all I know.’

‘But who pulled out the nail?’ asked he.

‘A man took hold of my hand and tried to pull off my ring, and the nail jumped out and I was alive again. And when the camel heard me say “Let him live who gave me life, slay him who slew me!” it turned and brought me back to the castle. That is my story.’

She was silent and the eldest brother spoke. ‘Will you listen to what I have to say, my brothers?’

And they replied, ‘How should we not hear you? Are you not our father as well as our brother?’

‘Then this is my advice. Let us take our sister back to our father and mother, that we may see them once more before they die.’

And the young men agreed, and they mounted their horses and placed their sister in a litter on the camel. So they set out.

At the end of five days’ journey they reached the old home where their father and mother dwelt alone. And the heart of their father rejoiced, and he said to them, ‘Dear sons, why did you go away and leave your mother and me to weep for you night and day?’

‘Dear father,’ answered the son, ‘let us rest a little now, and then I will tell you everything from the beginning.’

‘All right,’ replied the father, and waited patiently for three days.

And on the morning of the fourth day the eldest brother said, ‘Dear father, would you like to hear our adventures?’

‘Certainly I should!’

‘Well, it was our aunt who was the cause of our leaving home, for we agreed that if the baby was a sister she should wave a white handkerchief, and if it was a brother, she should brandish a sickle, for then there would be nothing to come back for, and we might wander far away. Now our aunt could not bear us, and hated us to live in the same house with her, so she brandished the sickle, and we went away. That is all our story.’

And that is all this story.

THE WHITE WOLF

Once upon a time there was a king who had three daughters; they were all beautiful, but the youngest was the fairest of the three. Now it happened that one day their father had to set out for a tour in a distant part of his kingdom. Before he left, his youngest daughter made him promise to bring her back a wreath of wild flowers. When the king was ready to return to his palace, he bethought himself that he would like to take home presents to each of his three daughters; so he went into a jeweller’s shop, and bought a beautiful necklace for the eldest princess; then he went to a rich merchant’s and bought a dress embroidered in gold and silver thread for the second princess, but in none of the flower shops nor in the market could he find the wreath of wild flowers that his youngest daughter had set her heart on. So he had to set out on his homeward way without it. Now his journey led him through a thick forest. While he was still about four miles distant from his palace, he noticed a white wolf squatting on the roadside, and, behold! on the head of the wolf, there was a wreath of wild flowers.

Then the king called to the coachman, and ordered him to get down from his seat and fetch him the wreath from the wolf’s head. But the wolf heard the order and said: ‘My lord and king, I will let you have the wreath, but I must have something in return.’

‘What do you want?’ answered the king. ‘I will gladly give you rich treasure in exchange for it.’

‘I do not want rich treasure,’ replied the wolf. ‘Only promise to give me the first thing that meets you on your way to your castle. In three days I shall come and fetch it.’

And the king thought to himself: ‘I am still a good long way from home, I am sure to meet a wild animal or a bird on the road, it will be quite safe to promise.’ So he consented, and carried the wreath away with him. But all along the road he met no living creature till he turned into the palace gates, where his youngest daughter was waiting to welcome him home.

That evening the king was very sad, remembering his promise; and when he told the queen what had happened, she too shed bitter tears. And the youngest princess asked them why they both looked so sad, and why they wept. Then her father told her what a price he would have to pay for the wreath of wild flowers he had brought home to her, for in three days a white wolf would come and claim her and carry her away, and they would never see her again. But the queen thought and thought, and at last she hit upon a plan.

There was in the palace a servant maid the same age and the same height as the princess, and the queen dressed her up in a beautiful dress belonging to her daughter, and determined to give her to the white wolf, who would never know the difference.

On the third day the wolf strode into the palace yard and up the great stairs, to the room where the king and queen were seated.

‘I have come to claim your promise,’ he said. ‘Give me your youngest daughter.’

Then they led the servant maid up to him, and he said to her: ‘You must mount on my back, and I will take you to my castle.’ And with these words he swung her on to his back and left the palace.

When they reached the place where he had met the king and given him the wreath of wild flowers, he stopped, and told her to dismount that they might rest a little.

So they sat down by the roadside.

‘I wonder,’ said the wolf, ‘what your father would do if this forest belonged to him?’

And the girl answered: ‘My father is a poor man, so he would cut down the trees, and saw them into planks, and he would sell the planks, and we should never be poor again; but would always have enough to eat.’

Then the wolf knew that he had not got the real princess, and he swung the servant-maid on to his back and carried her to the castle. And he strode angrily into the king’s chamber, and spoke.

‘Give me the real princess at once. If you deceive me again I will cause such a storm to burst over your palace that the walls will fall in, and you will all be buried in the ruins.’

Then the king and the queen wept, but they saw there was no escape. So they sent for their youngest daughter, and the king said to her: ‘Dearest child, you must go with the white wolf, for I promised you to him, and I must keep my word.’

So the princess got ready to leave her home; but first she went to her room to fetch her wreath of wild flowers, which she took with her. Then the white wolf swung her on his back and bore her away. But when they came to the place where he had rested with the servant-maid, he told her to dismount that they might rest for a little at the roadside. Then he turned to her and said: ‘I wonder what your father would do if this forest belonged to him?’

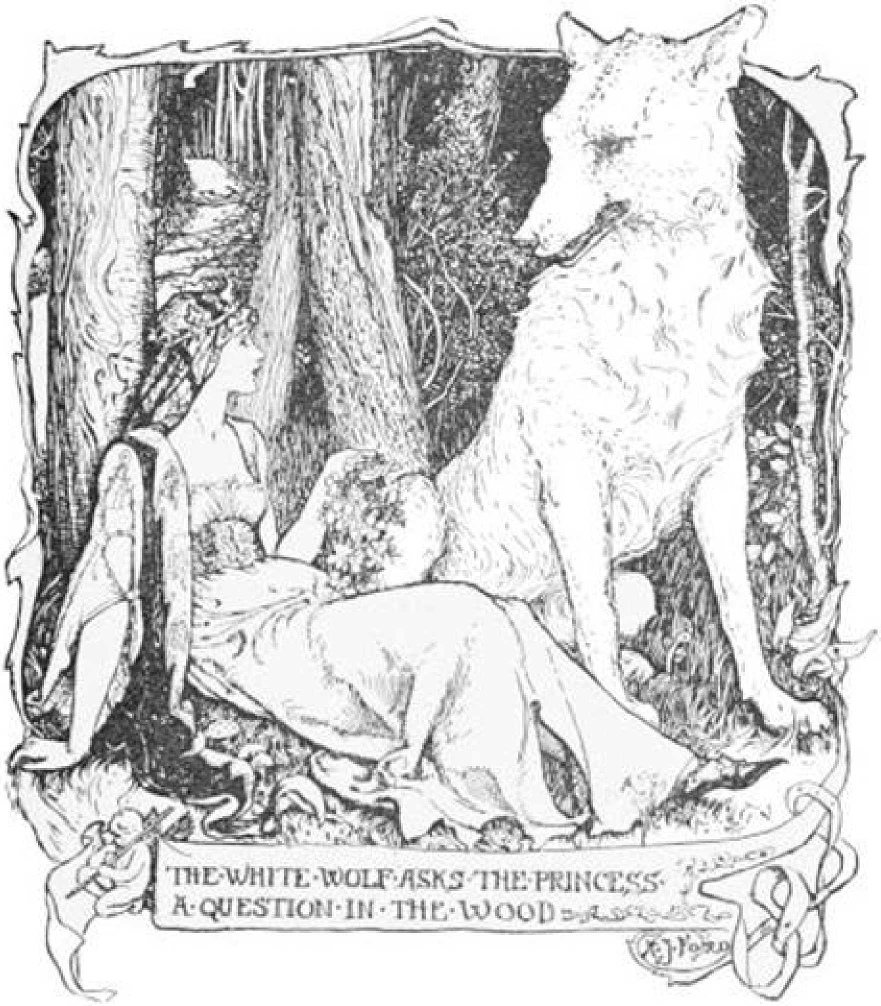

THE·WHITE·WOLF·ASKS·THE·PRINCESS· A·QUESTION·IN·THE·WOOD

And the princess answered: ‘My father would cut down the trees and turn it into a beautiful park and gardens, and he and his courtiers would come and wander among the glades in the summer time.’

‘This is the real princess,’ said the wolf to himself. But aloud he said: ‘Mount once more on my back, and I will bear you to my castle.’

And when she was seated on his back he set out through the woods, and he ran, and ran, and ran, till at last he stopped in front of a stately courtyard, with massive gates.

‘This is a beautiful castle,’ said the princess, as the gates swung back and she stepped inside. ‘If only I were not so far away from my father and my mother!’

But the wolf answered: ‘At the end of a year we will pay a visit to your father and mother.’

And at these words the white furry skin slipped from his back, and the princess saw that he was not a wolf at all, but a beautiful youth, tall and stately; and he gave her his hand, and led her up the castle stairs.

One day, at the end of half a year, he came into her room and said: ‘My dear one, you must get ready for a wedding. Your eldest sister is going to be married, and I will take you to your father's palace. When the wedding is over, I shall come and fetch you home. I will whistle outside the gate, and when you hear me, pay no heed to what your father or mother say, leave your dancing and feasting, and come to me at once; for if I have to leave without you, you will never find your way back alone through the forests.'

When the princess was ready to start, she found that he had put on his white fur skin, and was changed back into the wolf; and he swung her on to his back, and set out with her to her father's palace, where he left her, while he himself returned home alone. But, in the evening, he went back to fetch her, and, standing outside the palace gate, he gave a long, loud whistle. In the midst of her dancing the princess heard the sound, and at once she went to him, and he swung her on his back and bore her away to his castle.

Again, at the end of half a year, the prince came into her room, as the white wolf, and said: 'Dear heart, you must prepare for the wedding of your second sister. I will take you to your father's palace to-day, and we will remain there together till to-morrow morning.'

So they went together to the wedding. In the evening, when the two were alone together, he dropped his fur skin, and, ceasing to be a wolf, became a prince again. Now they did not know that the princess's mother was hidden in the room. When she saw the white skin lying on the floor, she crept out of the room, and sent a servant to fetch the skin and to burn it in the kitchen fire. The moment the flames touched the skin there was a fearful clap of thunder heard, and the prince disappeared out of the palace gate in a whirlwind, and returned to his palace alone.

But the princess was heart-broken, and spent the night weeping bitterly. Next morning she set out to find her way back to the castle, but she wandered through the woods and forests, and she could find no path or track to guide her. For fourteen days she roamed in the forest, sleeping under the trees, and living upon wild berries and roots, and at last she reached a little house. She opened the door and went in, and found the wind seated in the room all by himself, and she spoke to the wind and said: 'Wind, have you seen the white wolf?'

And the wind answered: 'All day and all night I have been blowing round the world, and I have only just come home; but I have not seen him.'

But he gave her a pair of shoes, in which, he told her, she would be able to walk a hundred miles with every step, Then she walked through the air till she reached a star, and she said: 'Tell me, star, have you seen the white wolf?'

And the star answered: 'I have been shining all night, and I have not seen him.'

But the star gave her a pair of shoes, and told her that if she put them on she would be able to walk two hundred miles at a stride. So she drew them on, and she walked to the moon, and she said: ‘Dear moon, have you not seen the white wolf?’

But the moon answered, ‘All night long I have been sailing through the heavens, and I have only just come home; but I did not see him.’

But he gave her a pair of shoes, in which she would be able to cover four hundred miles with every stride. So she went to the sun, and said: ‘Dear sun, have you seen the white wolf?’

And the sun answered, ‘Yes, I have seen him, and he has chosen another bride, for he thought you had left him, and would never return, and he is preparing for the wedding. But I will help you. Here are a pair of shoes. If you put these on you will be able to walk on glass or ice, and to climb the steepest places. And here is a spinning-wheel, with which you will be able to spin moss into silk. When you leave me you will reach a glass mountain. Put on the shoes that I have given you and with them you will be able to climb it quite easily. At the summit you will find the palace of the white wolf.’

Then the princess set out, and before long she reached the glass mountain, and at the summit she found the white wolf’s palace, as the sun had said.

But no one recognised her, as she had disguised herself as an old woman, and had wound a shawl round her head. Great preparations were going on in the palace for the wedding, which was to take place next day. Then the princess, still disguised as an old woman, took out her spinning-wheel, and began to spin moss into silk. And as she spun the new bride passed by, and seeing the moss turn into silk, she said to the old woman: ‘Little mother, I wish you would give me that spinning-wheel.’

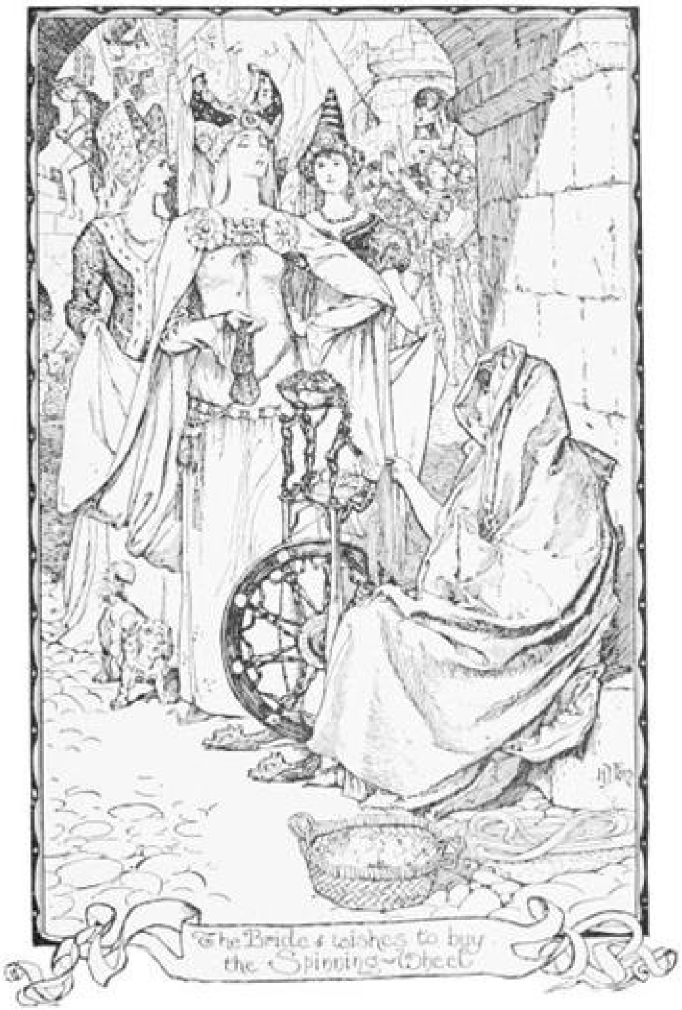

The Bride wishes to buy the Spinning-Wheel

And the princess answered, ‘I will give it to you if you will allow me to sleep to-night on the mat outside the prince’s door.’

And the bride replied, ‘Yes, you may sleep on the mat outside the door.’

So the princess gave her the spinning-wheel. And that night, winding the shawl all round her, so that no one could recognise her, she lay down on the mat outside the white wolf’s door. And when everyone in the palace was asleep she began to tell the whole of her story. She told how she had been one of three sisters, and that she had been the youngest and the fairest of the three, and that her father had betrothed her to a white wolf. And she told how she had gone first to the wedding of one sister, and then with her husband to the wedding of the other sister, and how her mother had ordered the servant to throw the white fur skin into the kitchen fire. And then she told of her wanderings through the forest; and of how she had sought the white wolf weeping; and how the wind and star and moon and sun had befriended her, and had helped her to reach his palace. And when the white wolf heard all the story, he knew that it was his first wife, who had sought him, and had found him, after such great dangers and difficulties.

But he said nothing, for he waited till the next day, when many guests — kings and princes from far countries — were coming to his wedding. Then, when all the guests were assembled in the banqueting hall, he spoke to them and said: ‘Hearken to me, ye kings and princes, for I have something to tell you. I had lost the key of my treasure casket, so I ordered a new one to be made; but I have since found the old one. Now, which of these keys is the better?’

Then all the kings and royal guests answered: ‘Certainly the old key is better than the new one.’

‘Then,’ said the wolf, ‘if that is so, my former bride is better than my new one.’

And he sent for the new bride, and he gave her in marriage to one of the princes who was present, and then he turned to his guests, and said: ‘And here is my former bride’ — and the beautiful princess was led into the room and seated beside him on his throne. ‘I thought she had forgotten me, and that she would never return. But she has sought me everywhere, and now we are together once more we shall never part again.’

MOHAMMED WITH THE MAGIC FINGER

Once upon a time, there lived a woman who had a son and a daughter. One morning she said to them: ‘I have heard of a town where there is no such thing as death: let us go and dwell there.’ So she broke up her house, and went away with her son and daughter.

When she reached the city, the first thing she did was to look about and see if there was any churchyard, and when she found none, she exclaimed, ‘This is a delightful spot. We will stay here for ever.’

By-and-by, her son grew to be a man, and he took for a wife a girl who had been born in the town. But after a little while he grew restless, and went away on his travels, leaving his mother, his wife, and his sister behind him.

He had not been gone many weeks when one evening his mother said, ‘I am not well, my head aches dreadfully.’

‘What did you say?’ inquired her daughter-in-law.

‘My head feels ready to split,’ replied the old woman.

The daughter-in-law asked no more questions, but left the house, and went in haste to some butchers in the next street.

‘I have got a woman to sell; what will you give me for her?’ said she.

The butchers answered that they must see the woman first, and they all returned together.

Then the butchers took the woman and told her they must kill her.

‘But why?’ she asked.

‘Because,’ they said, ‘it is always our custom that when persons are ill and complain of their head they should be killed at once. It is a much better way than leaving them to die a natural death.’

‘Very well,’ replied the woman. ‘But leave, I pray you, my lungs and my liver untouched, till my son comes back. Then give both to him.’

But the men took them out at once, and gave them to the daughter-in-law, saying: ‘Put away these things till your husband returns.’ And the daughter-in-law took them, and hid them in a secret place.

When the old woman’s daughter, who had been in the woods, heard that her mother had been killed while she was out, she was filled with fright, and ran away as fast as she could. At last she reached a lonely spot far from the town, where she thought she was safe, and sat down on a stone, and wept bitterly. As she was sitting, sobbing, a man passed by.

‘What is the matter, little girl? Answer me! I will be your friend.’

‘Ah, sir, they have killed my mother; my brother is far away, and I have nobody.’

‘Will you come with me?’ asked the man.

‘Thankfully,’ said she, and he led her down, down, under the earth, till they reached a great city. Then he married her, and in course of time she had a son. And the baby was known throughout the city as ‘Mohammed with the magic finger,’ because, whenever he stuck out his little finger, he was able to see anything that was happening for as far as two days’ distance.

By-and-by, as the boy was growing bigger, his uncle returned from his long journey, and went straight to his wife.

‘Where are my mother and sister?’ he asked; but his wife answered; ‘Have something to eat first, and then I will tell you.’

But he replied: ‘How can I eat till I know what has become of them?’

Then she fetched, from the upper chamber, a box full of money, which she laid before him, saying, ‘That is the price of your mother. She sold well.’

‘What do you mean?’ he gasped.

‘Oh, your mother complained one day that her head was aching, so I got in two butchers and they agreed to take her. However, I have got her lungs and liver hidden, till you came back, in a safe place.’

‘And my sister?’

‘Well, while the people were chopping up your mother she ran away, and I heard no more of her.’

‘Give me my mother’s liver and lungs,’ said the young man. And she gave them to him. Then he put them in his pocket, and went away, saying: ‘I can stay no longer in this horrible town. I go to seek my sister.’

Now, one day, the little boy stretched out his finger and said to his mother, ‘My uncle is coming!’

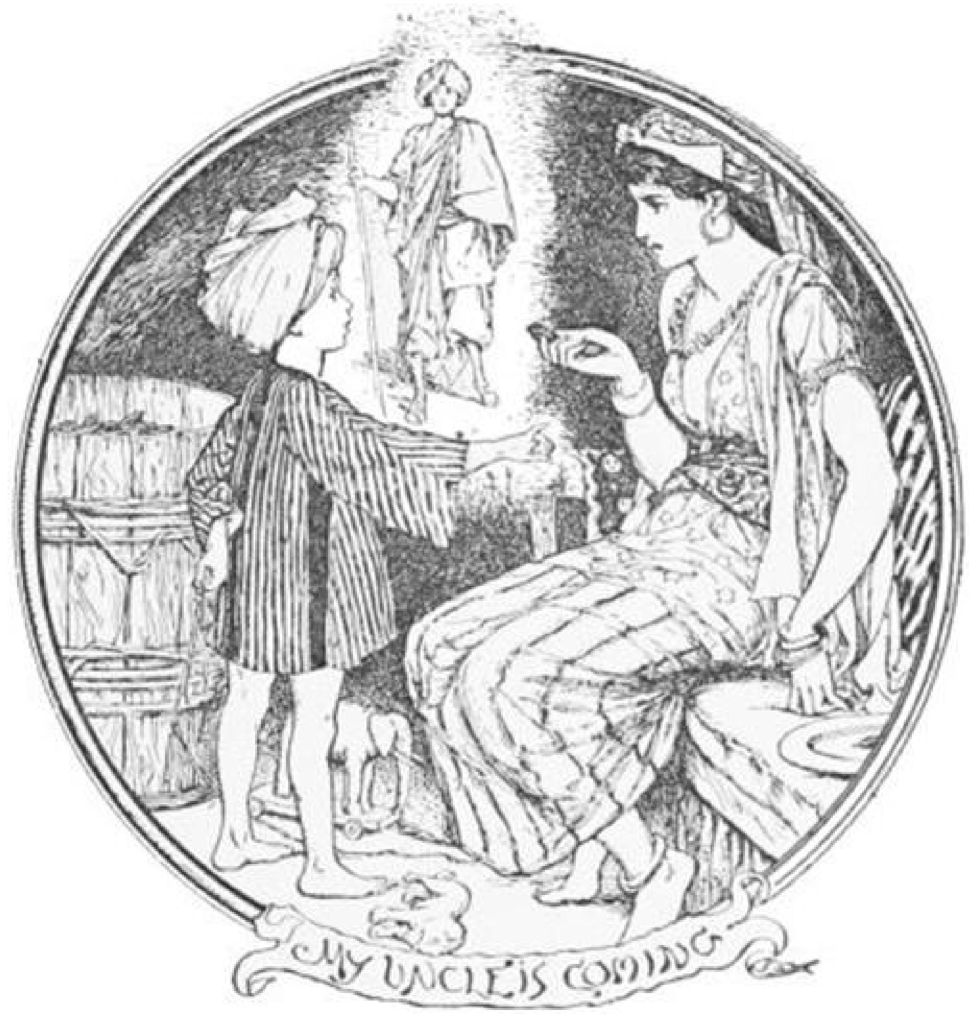

MY UNCLE IS COMING

‘Where is he?’ she asked.

‘He is still two days’ journey off: looking for us; but he will soon be here.’ And in two days, as the boy had foretold, the uncle had found the hole in the earth, and arrived at the gate of the city. All his money was spent, and not knowing where his sister lived, he began to beg of all the people he saw.

‘Here comes my uncle,’ called out the little boy.

‘Where?’ asked his mother.

‘Here at the house door;’ and the woman ran out and embraced him, and wept over him. When they could both speak, he said: ‘My sister, were you by when they killed my mother?’

‘I was absent when they slew her,’ replied she, ‘and as I could do nothing, I ran away. But you, my brother, how did you get here?’

‘By chance,’ he said, ‘after I had wandered far; but I did not know I should find you!’

‘My little boy told me you were coming,’ she explained, ‘when you were yet two days distant; he alone of all men has that great gift.’

But she did not tell him that her husband could change himself into a serpent, a dog, or a monster, whenever he pleased. He was a very rich man, and possessed large herds of camels, goats, sheep, cattle, horses and asses; all the best of their kind. And the next morning, the sister said: ‘Dear brother, go and watch our sheep, and when you are thirsty, drink their milk!’

‘Very well,’ answered he, and he went.

Soon after, she said again, ‘Dear brother, go and watch our goats.’

‘But why? I like tending sheep better!’

‘Oh, it is much nicer to be a goatherd,’ she said; so he took the goats out.

When he was gone, she said to her husband, ‘You must kill my brother, for I cannot have him living here with me.’

‘But, my dear, why should I? He has done me no harm.’

‘I wish you to kill him,’ she answered, ‘or if not I will leave.’

‘Oh, all right, then,’ said he; ‘to-morrow I will change myself into a serpent, and hide myself in the date barrel; and when he comes to fetch dates I will sting him in the hand.’

‘That will do very well,’ said she.

When the sun was up next day, she called to her brother, ‘Go and mind the goats.’

‘Yes, of course,’ he replied; but the little boy called out: ‘Uncle, I want to come with you.’

‘Delighted,’ said the uncle, and they started together.

After they had got out of sight of the house the boy said to him, ‘Dear uncle, my father is going to kill you. He has changed himself into a serpent, and has hidden himself in the date barrel. My mother has told him to do it.’

‘And what am I to do?’ asked the uncle.

‘I will tell you. When we bring the goats back to the house, and my mother says to you, “I am sure you must be hungry: get a few dates out of the cask,” just say to me, “I am not feeling very well, Mohammed, you go and get them for me.”’

So when they reached the house the sister came out to meet them, saying, ‘Dear brother, you must certainly be hungry: go and get a few dates.’

But he answered, ‘I am not feeling very well. Mohammed, you go and get them for me.’

‘Of course I will,’ replied the little boy, and ran at once to the cask.

‘No, no,’ his mother called after him; ‘come here directly! Let your uncle fetch them himself!’

But the boy would not listen, and crying out to her, ‘I would rather get them,’ thrust his hand into the date cask.

Instead of the fruit, it struck against something cold and slimy, and he whispered softly, ‘Keep still; it is I, your son!’

Then he picked up his dates and went away to his uncle.

‘Here they are, dear uncle; eat as many as you want.’

And his uncle ate them.

When he saw that the uncle did not mean to come near the cask, the serpent crawled out and regained his proper shape.

‘I am thankful I did not kill him,’ he said to his wife; ‘for, after all, he is my brother-in-law, and it would have been a great sin!’

‘Either you kill him or I leave you,’ said she.

‘Well, well!’ sighed the man, ‘to-morrow I will do it.’

The woman let that night go by without doing anything further, but at daybreak she said to her brother, ‘Get up, brother; it is time to take the goats to pasture!’

‘All right,’ cried he.

‘I will come with you, uncle,’ called out the little boy.

‘Yes, come along,’ replied he.

But the mother ran up, saying, ‘The child must not go out in this cold or he will be ill;’ to which he only answered, ‘Nonsense! I am going, so it is no use your talking! I *am* going! I am! I am!’

‘Then go!’ she said.

And so they started, driving the goats in front of them.

When they reached the pasture the boy said to his uncle: ‘Dear uncle, this night my father means to kill you. While we are away he will creep into your room and hide in the straw. Directly we get home my mother will say to you, “Take that straw and give it to the sheep,” and, if you do, he will bite you.’

‘Then what am I to do?’ asked the man.

‘Oh, do not be afraid, dear uncle! I will kill my father myself.’

‘All right,’ replied the uncle.

As they drove back the goats towards the house, the sister cried: ‘Be quick, dear brother, go and get me some straw for the sheep.’

‘Let me go,’ said the boy.

‘You are not big enough; your uncle will get it,’ replied she.

‘We will both get it,’ answered the boy; ‘come, uncle, let us go and fetch that straw!’

‘All right,’ replied the uncle, and they went to the door of the room.

‘It seems very dark,’ said the boy; ‘I must go and get a light;’ and when he came back with one, he set fire to the straw, and the serpent was burnt.

Then the mother broke into sobs and tears. ‘Oh, you wretched boy! What have you done? Your father was in that straw, and you have killed him!'

'Now, how was I to know that my father was lying in that straw, instead of in the kitchen?' said the boy.

But his mother only wept the more, and sobbed out, 'From this day you have no father. You must do without him as best you can!'

'Why did you marry a serpent?' asked the boy. 'I thought he was a man! How did he learn those odd tricks?'

As the sun rose, she woke her brother, and said, 'Go and take the goats to pasture!'

'I will come too,' said the little boy.

'Go then!' said his mother, and they went together.

On the way the boy began: 'Dear uncle, this night my mother means to kill both of us, by poisoning us with the bones of the serpent, which she will grind to powder and sprinkle in our food.'

'And what are we to do?' asked the uncle.

'I will kill *her*, dear uncle. I do not want either a father or a mother like that!'

When they came home in the evening they saw the woman preparing supper, and secretly scattering the powdered bones of the serpent on one side of the dish. On the other, where she meant to eat herself, there was no poison.

And the boy whispered to his uncle, 'Dear uncle, be sure you eat from the same side of the dish as I do!'

'All right,' said the uncle.

So they all three sat down to the table, but before they helped themselves the boy said, 'I am thirsty, mother; will you get me some milk?'

'Very well,' said she, 'but you had better begin your supper.'

And when she came back with the milk they were both eating busily.

'Sit down and have something too,' said the boy, and she sat down and helped herself from the dish, but at the very first moment she sank dead upon the ground.

'She has got what she meant for us,' observed the boy; 'and now we will sell all the sheep and cattle.'

So the sheep and cattle were sold, and the uncle and nephew took the money and went to see the world.

For ten days they travelled through the desert, and then they came to a place where the road parted in two.

'Uncle!' said the boy.

'Well, what is it?' replied he.

'You see these two roads? You must take one, and I the other; for the time has come when we must part.'

But the uncle cried, ‘No, no, my boy, we will keep together always.’

‘Alas! that cannot be,’ said the boy; ‘so tell me which way you will go.’

‘I will go to the west,’ said the uncle.

‘One word before I leave you,’ continued the boy. ‘Beware of any man who has red hair and blue eyes. Take no service under him.’

‘All right,’ replied the uncle, and they parted.

For three days the man wandered on without any food, till he was very hungry. Then, when he was almost fainting, a stranger met him and said, ‘Will you work for me?’

‘By contract?’ asked the man.

‘Yes, by contract,’ replied the stranger, ‘and whichever of us breaks it, shall have a strip of skin taken from his body.’

‘All right,’ replied the man; ‘what shall I have to do?’

‘Every day you must take the sheep out to pasture, and carry my old mother on your shoulders, taking great care her feet shall never touch the ground. And, besides that, you must catch, every evening, seven singing birds for my seven sons.’

‘That is easily done,’ said the man.

Then they went back together, and the stranger said, ‘Here are your sheep: and now stoop down, and let my mother climb on your back.’

‘Very good,’ answered Mohammed’s uncle.

The new shepherd did as he was told, and returned in the evening with the old woman on his back, and the seven singing birds in his pocket, which he gave to the seven boys, when they came to meet him. So the days passed, each one exactly like the other.

At last, one night, he began to weep, and cried: ‘Oh, what have I done, that I should have to perform such hateful tasks?’

And his nephew Mohammed saw him from afar, and thought to himself, ‘My uncle is in trouble — I must go and help him;’ and the next morning he went to his master and said: ‘Dear master, I must go to my uncle, and I wish to send him here instead of myself, while I serve under his master. And that you may know it is he and no other man, I will give him my staff, and put my mantle on him.’

‘All right,’ said the master.

Mohammed set out on his journey, and in two days he arrived at the place where his uncle was standing with the old woman on his back, trying to catch the birds as they flew past. And Mohammed touched him on the arm, and spoke: ‘Dear uncle, did I not warn you never to take service under any blue-eyed red-haired man?’

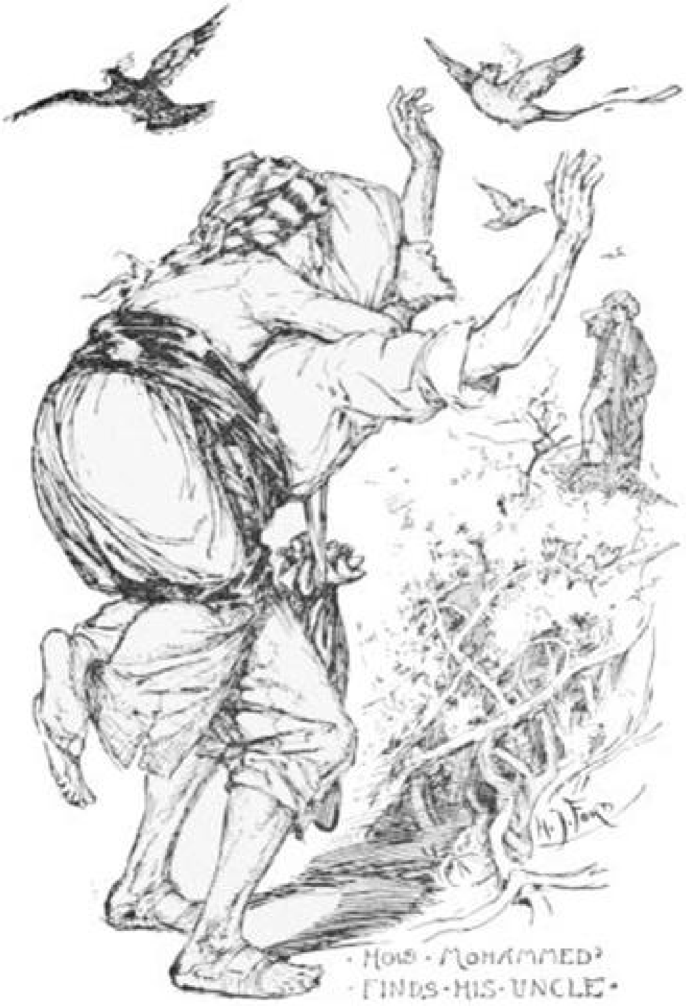

· HOW · MOHAMMED · FINDS · HIS · UNCLE ·

‘But what could I do?’ asked the uncle. ‘I was hungry, and he passed, and we signed a contract.’

‘Give the contract to me!’ said the young man.

‘Here it is,’ replied the uncle, holding it out.

‘Now,’ continued Mohammed, ‘let the old woman get down from your back.’

‘Oh no, I mustn’t do that!’ cried he.

But the nephew paid no attention, and went on talking: ‘Do not worry yourself about the future. I see my way out of it all. And, first, you must take my stick and my mantle and leave this place. After two days’ journey, straight before you, you will come to some tents which are inhabited by shepherds. Go in there, and wait.’

‘All right!’ answered the uncle.

Then Mohammed with the Magic Finger picked up a stick and struck the old woman with it, saying, ‘Get down, and look after the sheep; I want to go to sleep.’

‘Oh, certainly!’ replied she.

So Mohammed lay down comfortably under a tree and slept till evening. Towards sunset he woke up and said to the old woman: ‘Where are the singing birds which you have got to catch?’

‘You never told me anything about that,’ replied she.

‘Oh, didn’t I?’ he answered. ‘Well, it is part of your business, and if you don’t do it, I shall just kill you.’

‘Of course I will catch them!’ cried she in a hurry, and ran about the bushes after the birds, till thorns pierced her foot, and she shrieked from pain and exclaimed, ‘Oh dear, how unlucky I am! and how abominably this man is treating me!’ However, at last she managed to catch the seven birds, and brought them to Mohammed, saying, ‘Here they are!’

‘Then now we will go back to the house,’ said he.

When they had gone some way he turned to her sharply:

‘Be quick and drive the sheep home, for I do not know where their fold is.’ And she drove them before her. By-and-by the young man spoke: ‘Look here, old hag; if you say anything to your son about my having struck you, or about my not being the old shepherd, I’ll kill you!’

‘Oh, no, of course I won’t say anything!’

When they got back, the son said to his mother: ‘That is a good shepherd I’ve got, isn’t he?’

‘Oh, a splendid shepherd!’ answered she. ‘Why, look how fat the sheep are, and how much milk they give!’

‘Yes, indeed!’ replied the son, as he rose to get supper for his mother and the shepherd.

In the time of Mohammed’s uncle, the shepherd had had nothing to eat but the scraps left by the old woman; but the new shepherd was not going to be content with that.

‘You will not touch the food till I have had as much as I want,’ whispered he.

‘Very good!’ replied she. And when he had had enough, he said:

‘Now, eat!’ But she wept, and cried: ‘That was not written in your contract. You were only to have what I left!’

‘If you say a word more, I will kill you!’ said he.

The next day he took the old woman on his back, and drove the sheep in front of him till he was some distance from the house, when he let her fall, and said: ‘Quick! go and mind the sheep!’

Then he took a ram, and killed it. He lit a fire and broiled some of its flesh, and called to the old woman: ‘Come and eat with me!’ and she came. But instead of letting her eat quietly, he took a large lump of the meat and rammed it down her throat with his crook, so that she died. And when he saw she was dead, he said: ‘That is what you have got for tormenting my uncle!’ and left her lying where she was, while he went after the singing birds. It took him a long time to catch them; but at length he had the whole seven hidden in the pockets of his tunic, and then he threw the old woman’s body into some bushes, and drove the sheep before him, back to their fold. And when they drew near the house the seven boys came to meet him, and he gave a bird to each.

‘Why are you weeping?’ asked the boys, as they took their birds.

‘Because your grandmother is dead!’ And they ran and told their father. Then the man came up and said to Mohammed: ‘What was the matter? How did she die?’

And Mohammed answered: ‘I was tending the sheep when she said to me, “Kill me that ram; I am hungry!” So I killed it, and gave her the meat. But she had no teeth, and it choked her.’

‘But why did you kill the ram, instead of one of the sheep?’ asked the man.

‘What was I to do?’ said Mohammed. ‘I had to obey orders!’

‘Well, I must see to her burial!’ said the man; and the next morning Mohammed drove out the sheep as usual, thinking to himself, ‘Thank goodness I’ve got rid of the old woman! Now for the boys!’

All day long he looked after the sheep, and towards evening he began to dig some little holes in the ground, out of which he took six scorpions. These he put in his pockets, together with one bird which he caught. After this he drove his flock home.

When he approached the house the boys came out to meet him as before, saying: ‘Give me my bird!’ and he put a scorpion into the hand of each, and it stung him, and he died. But to the youngest only he gave a bird.

As soon as he saw the boys lying dead on the ground, Mohammed lifted up his voice and cried loudly: ‘Help, help! the children are dead!’

And the people came running fast, saying: ‘What has happened? How have they died?’

And Mohammed answered: ‘It was your own fault! The boys had been accustomed to birds, and in this bitter cold their fingers grew stiff, and could hold nothing, so that the birds flew away, and their spirits flew with them. Only the youngest, who managed to keep tight hold of his bird, is still alive.’

And the father groaned, and said, ‘I have borne enough! Bring no more birds, lest I lose the youngest also!’

‘All right,’ said Mohammed.

As he was driving the sheep out to grass he said to his master: ‘Out there is a splendid pasture, and I will keep the sheep there for two or, perhaps, three days, so do not be surprised at our absence.’

‘Very good!’ said the man; and Mohammed started. For two days he drove them on and on, till he reached his uncle, and said to him, ‘Dear uncle, take these sheep and look after them. I have killed the old woman and the boys, and the flock I have brought to you!’

Then Mohammed returned to his master; and on the way he took a stone and beat his own head with it till it bled, and bound his hands tight, and began to scream. The master came running and asked, ‘What is the matter?’

And Mohammed answered: ‘While the sheep were grazing, robbers came and drove them away, and because I tried to prevent them, they struck me on the head and bound my hands. See how bloody I am!’

‘What shall we do?’ said the master; ‘are the animals far off?’

‘So far that you are not likely ever to see them again,’ replied Mohammed. ‘This is the fourth day since the robbers came down. How should you be able to overtake them?’

‘Then go and herd the cows!’ said the man.

‘All right!’ replied Mohammed, and for two days he went. But on the third day he drove the cows to his uncle, first cutting off their tails. Only one cow he left behind him.

‘Take these cows, dear uncle,’ said he. ‘I am going to teach that man a lesson.’

‘Well, I suppose you know your own business best,’ said the uncle. ‘And certainly he almost worried me to death.’

So Mohammed returned to his master, carrying the cows’ tails tied up in a bundle on his back. When he came to the sea-shore, he stuck all the tails in the sand, and went and buried the one cow, whose tail he had not cut off, up to her neck, leaving the tail projecting. After he had got everything ready, he began to shriek and scream as before, till his master and all the other servants came running to see what was the matter.

‘What in the world has happened?’ they cried.

‘The sea has swallowed up the cows,’ said Mohammed, ‘and nothing remains but their tails. But if you are quick and pull hard, perhaps you may get them out again!’

The master ordered each man instantly to take hold of a tail, but at the first pull they nearly tumbled backwards, and the tails were left in their hands.

‘Stop,’ cried Mohammed, ‘you are doing it all wrong. You have just pulled off their tails, and the cows have sunk to the bottom of the sea.’

‘See if you can do it any better,’ said they; and Mohammed ran to the cow which he had buried in the rough grass, and took hold of her tail and dragged the animal out at once.

‘There! that is the way to do it!’ said he, ‘I told you you knew nothing about it!’

The men slunk away, much ashamed of themselves; but the master came up to Mohammed. ‘Get you gone!’ he said, ‘there is nothing more for you to do! You have killed my mother, you have slain my children, you have stolen my sheep, you have drowned my cows; I have now no work to give you.’

‘First give me the strip of your skin which belongs to me of right, as you have broken your contract!’

‘That a judge shall decide,’ said the master; ‘we will go before him.’

‘Yes, we will,’ replied Mohammed. And they went before the judge.

‘What is your case?’ asked the judge of the master.

‘My lord,’ said the man, bowing low, ‘my shepherd here has robbed me of everything. He has killed my children and my old mother; he has stolen my sheep, he has drowned my cows in the sea.’

The shepherd answered: ‘He must pay me what he owes me, and then I will go.’

‘Yes, that is the law,’ said the judge.

‘Very well,’ returned the master, ‘let him reckon up how long he has been in my service.’

‘That won’t do,’ replied Mohammed, ‘I want my strip of skin, as we agreed in the contract.’

Seeing there was no help for it, the master cut a bit of skin, and gave it to Mohammed, who went off at once to his uncle.

‘Now we are rich, dear uncle,’ cried he, ‘we will sell our cows and sheep and go to a new country. This one is no longer the place for us.’

The sheep were soon sold, and the two comrades started on their travels. That night they reached some Bedouin tents, where they had supper with the Arabs. Before they lay down to sleep, Mohammed called the owner of the tent aside. ‘Your greyhound will eat my strip of leather,’ he said to the Arab.

‘No; do not fear.’

‘But supposing he does?’

‘Well, then, I will give him to you in exchange,’ replied the Arab.

Mohammed waited till everyone was fast asleep, then he rose softly, and tearing the bit of skin in pieces, threw it down before the greyhound, setting up wild shrieks as he did so.

‘Oh, master, said I not well that your dog would eat my thong?’

‘Be quiet, don’t make such a noise, and you shall have the dog.’

So Mohammed put a leash round his neck, and led him away.

In the evening they arrived at the tents of some more Bedouin, and asked for shelter. After supper Mohammed said to the owner of the tent, ‘Your ram will kill my greyhound.’

‘Oh, no, he won’t.’

‘And supposing he does?’

‘Then you can take him in exchange.’

So in the night Mohammed killed the greyhound, and laid his body across the horns of the ram. Then he set up shrieks and yells, till he roused the Arab, who said ‘Take the ram and go away.’

Mohammed did not need to be told twice, and at sunset he reached another Bedouin encampment. He was received kindly, as usual, and after supper he said to his host: ‘Your daughter will kill my ram.’

‘Be silent, she will do nothing of the sort; my daughter does not need to steal meat, she has some every day.’

‘Very well, I will go to sleep; but if anything happens to my ram I will call out.’

‘If my daughter touches anything belonging to my guest I will kill her,’ said the Arab, and went to his bed.

When everybody was asleep, Mohammed got up, killed the ram, and took out his liver, which he broiled on the fire. He placed a piece of it in the girl’s hands, and laid some more on her night-dress while she slept and knew nothing about it. After this he began to cry out loudly.

‘What is the matter? be silent at once!’ called the Arab.

‘How can I be silent, when my ram, which I loved like a child, has been slain by your daughter?’

‘But my daughter is asleep,’ said the Arab.

‘Well, go and see if she has not some of the flesh about her.’

‘If she has, you may take her in exchange for the ram;’ and as they found the flesh exactly as Mohammed had foretold, the Arab gave his daughter a good beating, and then told her to get out of sight, for she was now the property of this stranger.

They wandered in the desert till, at nightfall, they came to a Bedouin encampment, where they were hospitably bidden to enter. Before lying down to sleep, Mohammed said to the owner of the tent: ‘Your mare will kill my wife.’

‘Certainly not.’

‘And if she does?’

‘Then you shall take the mare in exchange.’

When everyone was asleep, Mohammed said softly to his wife: ‘Maiden, I have got such a clever plan! I am going to bring in the mare and put it at your feet, and I will cut you, just a few little flesh wounds, so that you may be covered with blood, and everybody will suppose you to be dead. But remember that you must not make a sound, or we shall both be lost.'

This was done, and then Mohammed wept and wailed louder than ever.

The Arab hastened to the spot and cried, 'Oh, cease making that terrible noise! Take the mare and go; but carry off the dead girl with you. She can lie quite easily across the mare's back.'

Then Mohammed and his uncle picked up the girl, and, placing her on the mare's back, led it away, being very careful to walk one on each side, so that she might not slip down and hurt herself. After the Arab tents could be seen no longer, the girl sat up on the saddle and looked about her, and as they were all hungry they tied up the mare, and took out some dates to eat. When they had finished, Mohammed said to his uncle: 'Dear uncle, the maiden shall be your wife; I give her to you. But the money we got from the sheep and cows we will divide between us. You shall have two-thirds and I will have one. For you will have a wife, but I never mean to marry. And now, go in peace, for never more will you see me. The bond of bread and salt is at an end between us.'

So they wept, and fell on each other's necks, and asked forgiveness for any wrongs in the past. Then they parted and went their ways.

BOBINO

Once on a time there was a rich merchant, who had an only son called Bobino. Now, as the boy was clever, and had a great desire for knowledge, his father sent him to be under a master, from whom he thought he would learn to speak all sorts of foreign languages. After some years with this master, Bobino returned to his home.

One evening, as he and his father were walking in the garden, the sparrows in the trees above their heads began such a twittering, that they found it impossible to hear each other speak. This annoyed the merchant very much, so, to soothe him, Bobino said: ‘Would you like me to explain to you what the sparrows are saying to each other?’

The merchant looked at his son in astonishment, and answered: ‘What can you mean? How can you explain what the sparrows say? Do you consider yourself a soothsayer or a magician?’

‘I am neither a soothsayer nor a magician,’ answered Bobino; ‘but my master taught me the language of all the animals.’

‘Alas! for my good money!’ exclaimed the merchant. ‘The master has certainly mistaken my intention. Of course I meant you to learn the languages that human beings talk, and not the language of animals.’

‘Have patience,’ answered the son. ‘My master thought it best to begin with the language of animals, and later to learn the languages of human beings.’

On their way into the house the dog ran to meet them, barking furiously.

‘What can be the matter with the beast?’ said the merchant. ‘Why should he bark at me like that, when he knows me quite well?’

‘Shall I explain to you what he is saying?’ said Bobino.

‘Leave me in peace, and don’t trouble me with your nonsense,’ said the merchant quite crossly. ‘How my money has been wasted!’

A little later, as they sat down to supper, some frogs in a neighbouring pond set up such a croaking as had never been heard. The noise so irritated the merchant that he quite lost his temper and exclaimed: ‘This only was wanting to add the last drop to my discomfort and disappointment.’

‘Shall I explain to you?’ began Bobino.

‘Will you hold your tongue with your explanations?’ shouted the merchant. ‘Go to bed, and don’t let me see your face again!’

So Bobino went to bed and slept soundly. But his father, who could not get over his disappointment at the waste of his money, was so angry, that he sent for two servants, and gave them orders, which they were to carry out on the following day.

Next morning one of the servants awakened Bobino early, and made him get into a carriage that was waiting for him. The servant placed himself on the seat beside him, while the other servant rode alongside the carriage as an escort. Bobino could not understand what they were going to do with him, or where he was being taken; but he noticed that the servant beside him looked very sad, and his eyes were all swollen with crying.

Curious to know the reason he said to him: ‘Why are you so sad? and where are you taking me?’

But the servant would say nothing. At last, moved by Bobino’s entreaties, he said: ‘My poor boy, I am taking you to your death, and, what is worse, I am doing so by the order of your father.’

‘But why,’ exclaimed Bobino, ‘does he want me to die? What evil have I done him, or what fault have I committed that he should wish to bring about my death?’

‘You have done him no evil,’ answered the servant, ‘neither have you committed any fault; but he is half mad with anger because, in all these years of study, you have learnt nothing but the language of animals. He expected something quite different from you, that is why he is determined you shall die.’

‘If that is the case, kill me at once,’ said Bobino. ‘What is the use of waiting, if it must be done?’

‘I have not the heart to do it,’ answered the servant. ‘I would rather think of some way of saving your life, and at the same time of protecting ourselves from your father’s anger. By good luck the dog has followed us. We will kill it, and cut out the heart and take it back to your father. He will believe it is yours, and you, in the meantime, will have made your escape.’

When they had reached the thickest part of the wood, Bobino got out of the carriage, and having said good-bye to the servants set out on his wanderings.

On and on he walked, till at last, late in the evening, he came to a house where some herdsmen lived. He knocked at the door and begged for shelter for the night. The herdsmen, seeing how gentle a youth he seemed, made him welcome, and bade him sit down and share their supper.

While they were eating it, the dog in the courtyard began to bark. Bobino walked to the window, listened attentively for a minute, and then turning to the herdsmen said: ‘Send your wives and daughters at once to bed, and arm yourselves as best you can, because at midnight a band of robbers will attack this house.’

The herdsmen were quite taken aback, and thought that the youth must have taken leave of his senses.

‘How can you know,’ they said, ‘that a band of robbers mean to attack us? Who told you so?’

‘I know it from the dog’s barking,’ answered Bobino. ‘I understand his language, and if I had not been here, the poor beast would have wasted his breath to no purpose. You had better follow my advice, if you wish to save your lives and property.’

The herdsmen were more and more astonished, but they decided to do as Bobino advised. They sent their wives and daughters upstairs, then, having armed themselves, they took up their position behind a hedge, waiting for midnight.

Just as the clock struck twelve they heard the sound of approaching footsteps, and a band of robbers cautiously advanced towards the house. But the herdsmen were on the lookout; they sprang on the robbers from behind the hedge, and with blows from their cudgels soon put them to flight.

You may believe how grateful they were to Bobino, to whose timely warning they owed their safety. They begged him to stay and make his home with them; but as he wanted to see more of the world, he thanked them warmly for their hospitality, and set out once more on his wanderings. All day he walked, and in the evening he came to a peasant’s house. While he was wondering whether he should knock and demand shelter for the night, he heard a great croaking of frogs in a ditch behind the house. Stepping to the back he saw a very strange sight. Four frogs were throwing a small bottle about from one to the other, making a great croaking as they did so. Bobino listened for a few minutes, and then knocked at the door of the house. It was opened by the peasant, who asked him to come in and have some supper.

When the meal was over, his host told him that they were in great trouble, as his eldest daughter was so ill, that they feared she could not recover. A great doctor, who had been passing that way some time before, had promised to send her some medicine that would have cured her, but the servant to whom he had entrusted the medicine had let it drop on the way back, and now there seemed no hope for the girl.

Then Bobino told the father of the small bottle he had seen the frogs play with, and that he knew that was the medicine which the doctor had sent to the girl. The peasant asked him how he could be sure of this, and Bobino explained to him that he understood the language of animals, and had heard what the frogs said as they tossed the bottle about. So the peasant fetched the bottle from the ditch, and gave the medicine to his daughter. In the morning she was much better, and the grateful father did not know how to thank Bobino enough. But Bobino would accept nothing from him, and having said good-bye, set out once more on his wanderings.

One day, soon after this, he came upon two men resting under a tree in the heat of the day. Being tired he stretched himself on the ground at no great distance from them, and soon they all three began to talk to one another. In the course of conversation, Bobino asked the two men where they were going; and they replied that they were on their way to a neighbouring town, where, that day, a new ruler was to be chosen by the people.

While they were still talking, some sparrows settled on the tree under which they were lying. Bobino was silent, and appeared to be listening attentively. At the end of a few minutes he said to his companions, ‘Do you know what those sparrows are saying? They are saying that to-day one of us will be chosen ruler of that town.’

The men said nothing, but looked at each other. A few minutes later, seeing that Bobino had fallen asleep, they stole away, and made with all haste for the town, where the election of a new ruler was to take place.

A great crowd was assembled in the market-place, waiting for the hour when an eagle should be let loose from a cage, for it had been settled that on whosesoever house the eagle alighted, the owner of that house should become ruler of the town. At last the hour arrived; the eagle was set free, and all eyes were strained to see where it would alight. But circling over the heads of the crowd, it flew straight in the direction of a young man, who was at that moment entering the town. This was none other than Bobino, who had awakened soon after his companions had left him, and had followed in their footsteps. All the people shouted and proclaimed that he was their future ruler, and he was conducted by a great crowd to the Governor’s house, which was for the future to be his home. And here he lived happily, and ruled wisely over the people.

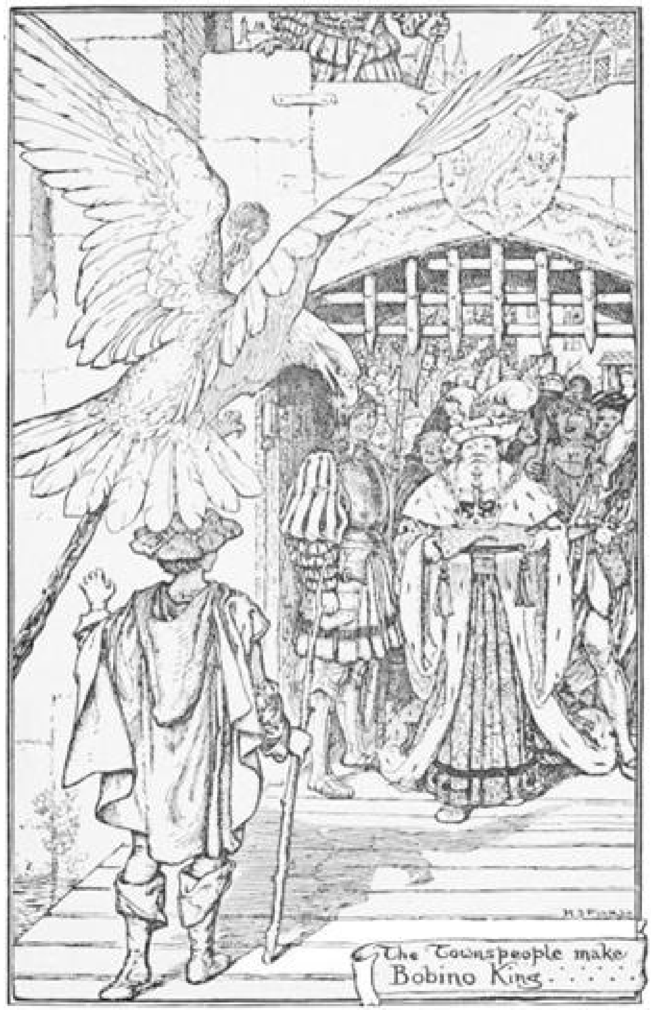

The Townspeople make Bobino King

THE DOG AND THE SPARROW

There was once upon a time a sheep-dog whose master was so unkind that he starved the poor beast, and ill-treated him in the cruellest manner. At last the dog determined to stand this ill-usage no longer, and, one day, he ran away from home. As he was trotting along the road he met a sparrow, who stopped him and said: ‘Brother, why do you look so sad?’

The dog answered: ‘I am sad because I am hungry, and have nothing to eat.’

‘If that’s all, dear brother,’ said the sparrow, ‘come to the town with me, and I’ll soon get food for you.’

So they went together to the town, and when they came to a butcher’s shop, the sparrow said to the dog: ‘You stand still and I’ll peck down a piece of meat for you.’

First she looked all round to see that no one was watching her, and then she set to work to peck at a piece of meat that lay on the edge of a shelf, till at last it fell down. The dog seized it ravenously, and ran with it to a dark corner where he gobbled it up in a very few minutes.

When he had finished it, the sparrow said: ‘Now come with me to another shop, and I will get you a second piece, so that your hunger may be satisfied.’ When the dog had finished the second piece of meat, the sparrow asked him: ‘Brother, have you had enough now?’

‘Yes,’ replied the dog, ‘I’ve had quite enough meat but I haven’t had any bread yet.’

The sparrow said: ‘You shall have as much bread as you like, only come with me.’ Then she led him to a baker’s shop, and pecked so long at two rolls on a shelf that at last they fell down, and the dog ate them up.

But still his hunger was not appeased; so the sparrow took him to another baker’s shop, and got some more rolls for him. Then she asked him: ‘Well, brother, are you satisfied?’

‘Yes,’ he replied; ‘and now let us go for a little walk outside the town.’

So the two went for a stroll into the country; but the day was very hot, and after they had gone a short distance the dog said: ‘I am very tired, and would like to go to sleep.’

‘Sleep, then,’ said the sparrow, ‘and I will keep watch meantime on the branch of a tree.’

So the dog lay down in the middle of the road, and was soon fast asleep.

While he was sleeping a carter passed by, driving a waggon drawn by three horses, and laden with two barrels of wine. The sparrow noticed that the man was not going out of his way to avoid the dog, but was driving right in the middle of the road where the poor animal lay; so she called out: ‘Carter, take care what you are about, or I shall make you suffer for it.’

But the carter merely laughed at her words, and, cracking his whip, he drove his waggon right over the dog, so that the heavy wheels killed him.

Then the sparrow called out: ‘You have caused my brother’s death, and your cruelty will cost you your waggon and horses.’

‘Waggon and horses, indeed,’ said the carter; ‘I’d like to know how you could rob me of them!’

The sparrow said nothing, but crept under the cover of the waggon and pecked so long at the bunghole of one of the barrels that at last she got the cork away, and all the wine ran out without the carter’s noticing it.

But at last he turned round and saw that the bottom of the cart was wet, and when he examined it, he found that one of the barrels was quite empty, ‘Oh! what an unlucky fellow I am!’ he exclaimed.

‘You’ll have worse luck still,’ said the sparrow, as she perched on the head of one of the horses and pecked out its eyes.

When the carter saw what had happened, he seized an axe and tried to hit the sparrow with it, but the little bird flew up into the air, and the carter only hit the blind horse on the head, so that it fell down dead. ‘Oh! what an unlucky fellow I am!’ he exclaimed again.

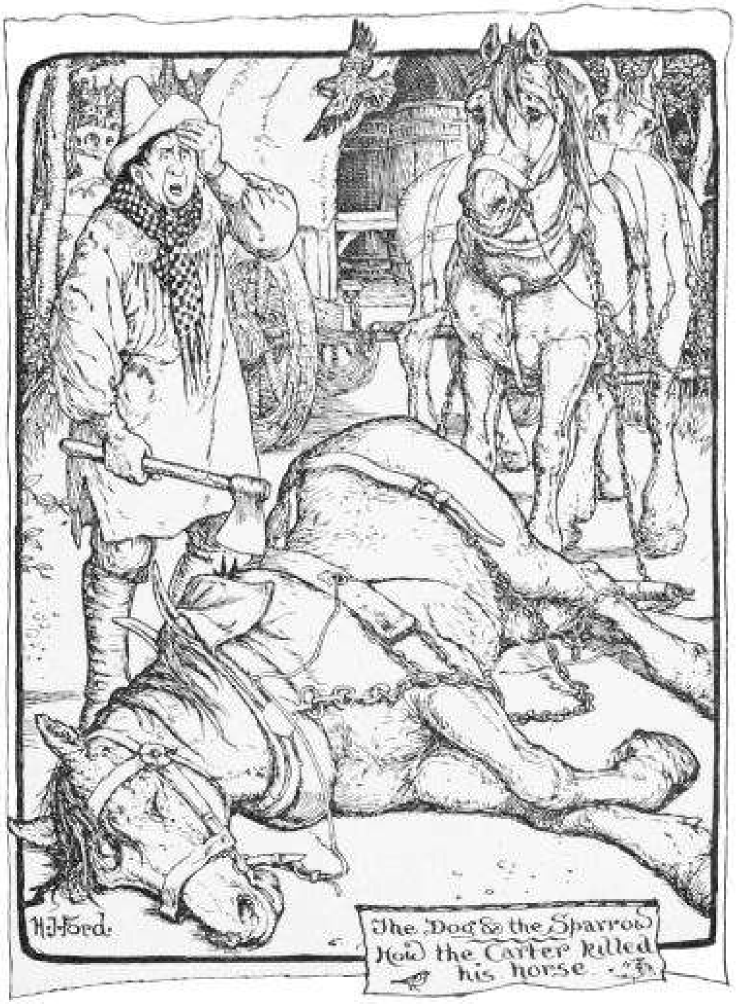
H.J.Ford.
The Dog & the Sparrow
How the Carter killed his horse

‘You’ll have worse luck yet,’ said the sparrow; and when the carter drove on with his two horses she crept under the covering again, and pecked away at the cork of the second barrel till she got it away, and all the wine poured out on to the road.

When the carter perceived this fresh disaster he called out once more: ‘Oh! what an unlucky fellow I am!’

But the sparrow answered: ‘Your bad luck is not over yet,’ and flying on to the head of the second horse she pecked out its eyes.

The carter jumped out of the waggon and seized his axe, with which he meant to kill the sparrow; but the little bird flew high into the air, and the blow fell on the poor blind horse instead, and killed it on the spot. Then the carter exclaimed: ‘Oh! what an unlucky fellow I am!’

‘You’ve not got to the end of your bad luck yet,’ sang the sparrow; and, perching on the head of the third horse, she pecked out its eyes.

The carter, blind with rage, let his axe fly at the bird; but once more she escaped the blow, which fell on the only remaining horse, and killed it. And again the carter called out: ‘Oh! what an unlucky fellow I am!’

‘You’ll have worse luck yet,’ said the sparrow, ‘for now I mean to make your home desolate.’

The carter had to leave his waggon on the road, and he went home in a towering passion. As soon as he saw his wife, he called out: ‘Oh! what bad luck I have had! all my wine is spilt, and my horses are all three dead.’

‘My dear husband,’ replied his wife, ‘your bad luck pursues you, for a wicked little sparrow has assembled all the other birds in the world, and they are in our barn eating everything up.’

The carter went out to the barn where he kept his corn and found it was just as his wife had said. Thousands and thousands of birds were eating up the grain, and in the middle of them sat the little sparrow. When he saw his old enemy, the carter cried out: ‘Oh! what an unlucky fellow I am!’

‘Not unlucky enough yet,’ answered the sparrow, ‘for, mark my words, carter, your cruel conduct will cost you your life;’ and with these words she flew into the air.

The carter was much depressed by the loss of all his worldly goods, and sat down at the fire plotting vengeance on the sparrow, while the little bird sat on the window ledge and sang in mocking tones: ‘Yes, carter, your cruel conduct will cost you your life.’

Then the carter seized his axe and threw it at the sparrow, but he only broke the window panes, and did not do the bird a bit of harm. She hopped in through the broken window and, perching on the mantelpiece, she called out: ‘Yes, carter, it will cost you your life.’

The carter, quite beside himself with rage, flew at the sparrow again with his axe, but the little creature always eluded his blows, and he only succeeded in destroying all his furniture. At last, however, he managed to catch the bird in his hands. Then his wife called out: ‘Shall I wring her neck?’

‘Certainly not,’ replied her husband, ‘that would be far too easy a death for her; she must die in a far crueller fashion than that. I will eat her alive;’ and he suited the action to his words. But the sparrow fluttered and struggled inside him till she got up into the man’s mouth, and then she popped out her head and said: ‘Yes, carter, it will cost you your life.’

The carter handed his wife the axe, and said: ‘Wife, kill the bird in my mouth dead.’

The woman struck with all her might, but she missed the bird and hit the carter right on the top of his head, so that he fell down dead. But the sparrow escaped out of his mouth and flew away into the air.

THE STORY OF THE THREE SONS OF HALI

Till his eighteenth birthday the young Neangir lived happily in a village about forty miles from Constantinople, believing that Mohammed and Zinebi his wife, who had brought him up, were his real parents.

Neangir was quite content with his lot, though he was neither rich nor great, and unlike most young men of his age had no desire to leave his home. He was therefore completely taken by surprise when one day Mohammed told him with many sighs that the time had now come for him to go to Constantinople, and fix on a profession for himself. The choice would be left to him, but he would probably prefer either to be a soldier or one of the doctors learned in the law, who explain the Koran to the ignorant people. ‘You know the holy book nearly by heart,’ ended the old man, ‘so that in a very short time you would be fitted to teach others. But write to us and tell us how you pass your life, and we, on our side, will promise never to forget you.’

So saying, Mohammed gave Neangir four piastres to start him in the great city, and obtained leave for him to join a caravan which was about to set off for Constantinople.

The journey took some days, as caravans go very slowly, but at last the walls and towers of the capital appeared in the distance. When the caravan halted the travellers went their different ways, and Neangir was left, feeling very strange and rather lonely. He had plenty of courage and made friends very easily; still, not only was it the first time he had left the village where he had been brought up, but no one had ever spoken to him of Constantinople, and he did not so much as know the name of a single street or of a creature who lived in it.

Wondering what he was to do next, Neangir stood still for a moment to look about him, when suddenly a pleasant-looking man came up, and bowing politely, asked if the youth would do him the honour of staying in his house till he had made some plans for himself. Neangir, not seeing anything else he could do, accepted the stranger’s offer and followed him home.

They entered a large room, where a girl of about twelve years old was laying three places at the table.

‘Zelida,’ said the stranger, ‘was I not quite right when I told you that I should bring back a friend to sup with us?’

‘My father,’ replied the girl, ‘you are always right in what you say, and what is better still, you never mislead others.’ As she spoke, an old slave placed on the table a dish called pillau, made of rice and meat, which is a great favourite among people in the East, and setting down glasses of sherbet before each person, left the room quietly.

During the meal the host talked a great deal upon all sorts of subjects; but Neangir did nothing but look at Zelida, as far as he could without being positively rude.

The girl blushed and grew uncomfortable, and at last turned to her father. ‘The stranger’s eyes never wander from me,’ she said in a low and hesitating voice. ‘If Hassan should hear of it, jealousy will make him mad.’

‘No, no,’ replied the father, ‘you are certainly not for this young man. Did I not tell you before that I intend him for your sister Argentine. I will at once take measures to fix his heart upon her,’ and he rose and opened a cupboard, from which he took some fruits and a jug of wine, which he put on the table, together with a small silver and mother-of-pearl box.

‘Taste this wine,’ he said to the young man, pouring some into a glass.

‘Give me a little, too,’ cried Zelida.

‘Certainly not,’ answered her father, ‘you and Hassan both had as much as was good for you the other day.’

‘Then drink some yourself,’ replied she, ‘or this young man will think we mean to poison him.’

‘Well, if you wish, I will do so,’ said the father; ‘this elixir is not dangerous at my age, as it is at yours.’

When Neangir had emptied his glass, his host opened the mother-of-pearl box and held it out to him. Neangir was beside himself with delight at the picture of a young maiden more beautiful than anything he had ever dreamed of. He stood speechless before it, while his breast swelled with a feeling quite new to him.

His two companions watched him with amusement, until at last Neangir roused himself. ‘Explain to me, I pray you,’ he said, ‘the meaning of these mysteries. Why did you ask me here? Why did you force me to drink this dangerous liquid which has set fire to my blood? Why have you shown me this picture which has almost deprived me of reason?’

‘I will answer some of your questions,’ replied his host,’ but all, I may not. The picture that you hold in your hand is that of Zelida’s sister. It has filled your heart with love for her; therefore, go and seek her. When you find her, you will find yourself.’

‘But where *shall* I find her?’ cried Neangir, kissing the charming miniature on which his eyes were fixed.

‘I am unable to tell you more,’ replied his host cautiously.

‘But I can,’ interrupted Zelida eagerly. ‘To-morrow you must go to the Jewish bazaar, and buy a watch from the second shop on the right hand. And at midnight — —’

But what was to happen at midnight, Neangir did not hear, for Zelida’s father hastily laid his hand over her mouth, crying: ‘Oh, be silent, child! Would you draw down on you by imprudence the fate of your unhappy sisters?’ Hardly had he uttered the words, when a thick black vapour rose about him, proceeding from the precious bottle, which his rapid movement had overturned. The old slave rushed in and shrieked loudly, while Neangir, upset by this strange adventure, left the house.

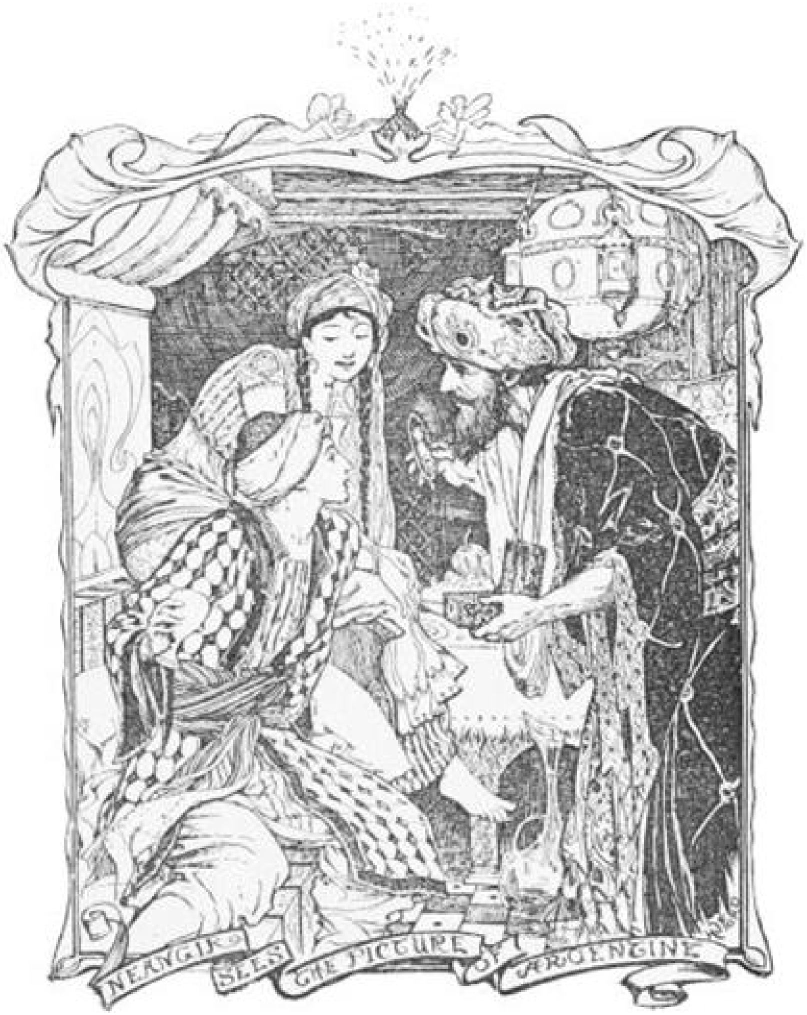
NEANGIR SEES THE PICTURE OF ARGENTINE

He passed the rest of the night on the steps of a mosque, and with the first streaks of dawn he took his picture out of the folds of his turban. Then, remembering Zelida’s words, he inquired the way to the bazaar, and went straight to the shop she had described.

In answer to Neangir’s request to be shown some watches, the merchant produced several and pointed out the one which he considered the best. The price was three gold pieces, which Neangir readily agreed to give him; but the man made a difficulty about handing over the watch unless he knew where his customer lived.

‘That is more than I know myself,’ replied Neangir. ‘I only arrived in the town yesterday and cannot find the way to the house where I went first.’

‘Well,’ said the merchant, ‘come with me, and I will take you to a good Mussulman, where you will have everything you desire at a small charge.’

Neangir consented, and the two walked together through several streets till they reached the house recommended by the Jewish merchant. By his advice the young man paid in advance the last gold piece that remained to him for his food and lodging.

As soon as Neangir had dined he shut himself up in his room, and thrusting his hand into the folds of his turban, drew out his beloved portrait. As he did so, he touched a sealed letter which had apparently been hidden there without his knowledge, and seeing it was written by his foster-mother, Zinebi, he tore it eagerly open. Judge of his surprise when he read these words:

‘My dearest Child, — This letter, which you will some day find in your turban, is to inform you that you are not really our son. We believe your father to have been a great lord in some distant land, and inside this packet is a letter from him, threatening to be avenged on us if you are not restored to him at once. We shall always love you, but do not seek us or even write to us. It will be useless.’

In the same wrapper was a roll of paper with a few words as follows, traced in a hand unknown to Neangir:

‘Traitors, you are no doubt in league with those magicians who have stolen the two daughters of the unfortunate Siroco, and have taken from them the talisman given them by their father. You have kept my son from me, but I have found out your hiding-place and swear by the Holy Prophet to punish your crime. The stroke of my scimitar is swifter than the lightning.’

The unhappy Neangir on reading these two letters — of which he understood absolutely nothing — felt sadder and more lonely than ever. It soon dawned on him that he must be the son of the man who had written to Mohammed and his wife, but he did not know where to look for him, and indeed thought much more about the people who had brought him up and whom he was never to see again.

To shake off these gloomy feelings, so as to be able to make some plans for the future, Neangir left the house and walked briskly about the city till darkness had fallen. He then retraced his steps and was just crossing the threshold when he saw something at his feet sparkling in the moonlight. He picked it up, and discovered it to be a gold watch shining with precious stones. He gazed up and down the street to see if there was anyone about to whom it might belong, but there was not a creature visible. So he put it in his sash, by the side of a silver watch which he had bought from the Jew that morning.

The possession of this piece of good fortune cheered Neangir up a little, ‘for,’ thought he, ‘I can sell these jewels for at least a thousand sequins, and that will certainly last me till I have found my father.’ And consoled by this reflection he laid both watches beside him and prepared to sleep.

In the middle of the night he awoke suddenly and heard a soft voice speaking, which seemed to come from one of the watches.

‘Aurora, my sister,’ it whispered gently. ‘Did they remember to wind you up at midnight?’

‘No, dear Argentine,’ was the reply. ‘And you?’

‘They forgot me, too,’ answered the first voice, ‘and it is now one o’clock, so that we shall not be able to leave our prison till to-morrow — if we are not forgotten again — then.’

‘We have nothing now to do here,’ said Aurora. ‘We must resign ourselves to our fate — let us go.’

Filled with astonishment Neangir sat up in bed, and beheld by the light of the moon the two watches slide to the ground and roll out of the room past the cats’ quarters. He rushed towards the door and on to the staircase, but the watches slipped downstairs without his seeing them, and into the street. He tried to unlock the door and follow them, but the key refused to turn, so he gave up the chase and went back to bed.

The next day all his sorrows returned with tenfold force. He felt himself lonelier and poorer than ever, and in a fit of despair he thrust his turban on his head, stuck his sword in his belt, and left the house determined to seek an explanation from the merchant who had sold him the silver watch.

When Neangir reached the bazaar he found the man he sought was absent from his shop, and his place filled by another Jew.

‘It is my brother you want,’ said he; ‘we keep the shop in turn, and in turn go into the city to do our business.’

‘Ah! *what* business?’ cried Neangir in a fury. ‘You are the brother of a scoundrel who sold me yesterday a watch that ran away in the night. But I will find it somehow, or else you shall pay for it, as you are his brother!’

‘What is that you say?’ asked the Jew, around whom a crowd had rapidly gathered. ‘A watch that ran away. If it had been a cask of wine, your story might be true, but a watch —— ! That is hardly possible!’

‘The Cadi shall say whether it is possible or not,’ replied Neangir, who at that moment perceived the other Jew enter the bazaar. Darting up, he seized him by the arm and dragged him to the Cadi's house; but not before the man whom he had found in the shop contrived to whisper to his brother, in a tone loud enough for Neangir to hear, 'Confess nothing, or we shall both be lost.'

When the Cadi was informed of what had taken place he ordered the crowd to be dispersed by blows, after the Turkish manner, and then asked Neangir to state his complaint. After hearing the young man's story, which seemed to him most extraordinary, he turned to question the Jewish merchant, who instead of answering raised his eyes to heaven and fell down in a dead faint.

The judge took no notice of the swooning man, but told Neangir that his tale was so singular he really could not believe it, and that he should have the merchant carried back to his own house. This so enraged Neangir that he forgot the respect due to the Cadi, and exclaimed at the top of his voice, 'Recover this fellow from his fainting fit, and force him to confess the truth,' giving the Jew as he spoke a blow with his sword which caused him to utter a piercing scream.

'You see for yourself,' said the Jew to the Cadi, 'that this young man is out of his mind. I forgive him his blow, but do not, I pray you, leave me in his power.'

At that moment the Bassa chanced to pass the Cadi's house, and hearing a great noise, entered to inquire the cause. When the matter was explained, he looked attentively at Neangir, and asked him gently how all these marvels could possibly have happened.

'My lord,' replied Neangir, 'I swear I have spoken the truth, and perhaps you will believe me when I tell you that I myself have been the victim of spells wrought by people of this kind, who should be rooted out from the earth. For three years I was changed into a three-legged pot, and only returned to man's shape when one day a turban was laid upon my lid.'

At these words the Bassa rent his robe for joy, and embracing Neangir, he cried, 'Oh, my son, my son, have I found you at last? Do you not come from the house of Mohammed and Zinebi?'

'Yes, my lord,' replied Neangir, 'it was they who took care of me during my misfortune, and taught me by their example to be less worthy of belonging to you.'

'Blessed be the Prophet,' said the Bassa, 'who has restored one of my sons to me, at the time I least expected it! You know,' he continued, addressing the Cadi, 'that during the first years of my marriage I had three sons by the beautiful Zambac. When he was three years old a holy dervish gave the eldest a string of the finest coral, saying "Keep this treasure carefully, and be faithful to the Prophet, and you will be happy." To the second, who now stands before you, he presented a copper plate on which the name of Mahomet was engraved in seven languages, telling him never to part from his turban, which was the sign of a true believer, and he would taste the greatest of all joys; while on the right arm of the third the dervish clasped a bracelet with the prayer that his right hand should be pure and the left spotless, so that he might never know sorrow.

‘My eldest son neglected the counsel of the dervish and terrible troubles fell on him, as also on the youngest. To preserve the second from similar misfortunes I brought him up in a lonely place, under the care of a faithful servant named Gouloucou, while I was fighting the enemies of our Holy Faith. On my return from the wars I hastened to embrace my son, but both he and Gouloucou had vanished, and it is only a few months since that I learned that the boy was living with a man called Mohammed, whom I suspected of having stolen him. Tell me, my son, how it came about that you fell into his hands.’

‘My lord,’ replied Neangir, ‘I can remember little of the early years of my life, save that I dwelt in a castle by the seashore with an old servant. I must have been about twelve years old when one day as we were out walking we met a man whose face was like that of this Jew, coming dancing towards us. Suddenly I felt myself growing faint. I tried to raise my hands to my head, but they had become stiff and hard. In a word, I had been changed into a copper pot, and my arms formed the handle. What happened to my companion I know not, but I was conscious that some one had picked me up, and was carrying me quickly away.

‘After some days, or so it seemed to me, I was placed on the ground near a thick hedge, and when I heard my captor snoring beside me I resolved to make my escape. So I pushed my way among the thorns as well as I could, and walked on steadily for about an hour.

‘You cannot imagine, my lord, how awkward it is to walk with three legs, especially when your knees are as stiff as mine were. At length after much difficulty I reached a market-garden, and hid myself deep down among the cabbages, where I passed a quiet night.

‘The next morning, at sunrise, I felt some one stooping over me and examining me closely. “What have you got there, Zinebi?” said the voice of a man a little way off.

‘“The most beautiful pot in the whole world,” answered the woman beside me, “and who would have dreamed of finding it among my cabbages!”

‘Mohammed lifted me from the ground and looked at me with admiration. That pleased me, for every one likes to be admired, even if he is only a pot! And I was taken into the house and filled with water, and put on the fire to boil.

‘For three years I led a quiet and useful life, being scrubbed bright every day by Zinebi, then a young and beautiful woman.

‘One morning Zinebi set me on the fire, with a fine fillet of beef inside me to cook, for dinner. Being afraid that some of the steam would escape through the lid, and that the taste of her stew would be spoilt, she looked about for something to put over the cover, but could see nothing handy but her husband’s turban. She tied it firmly round the lid, and then left the room. For the first time during three years I began to feel the fire burning the soles of my feet, and moved away a little — doing this with a great deal more ease than I had felt when making my escape to Mohammed’s garden. I was somehow aware, too, that I was growing taller; in fact in a few minutes I was a man again.

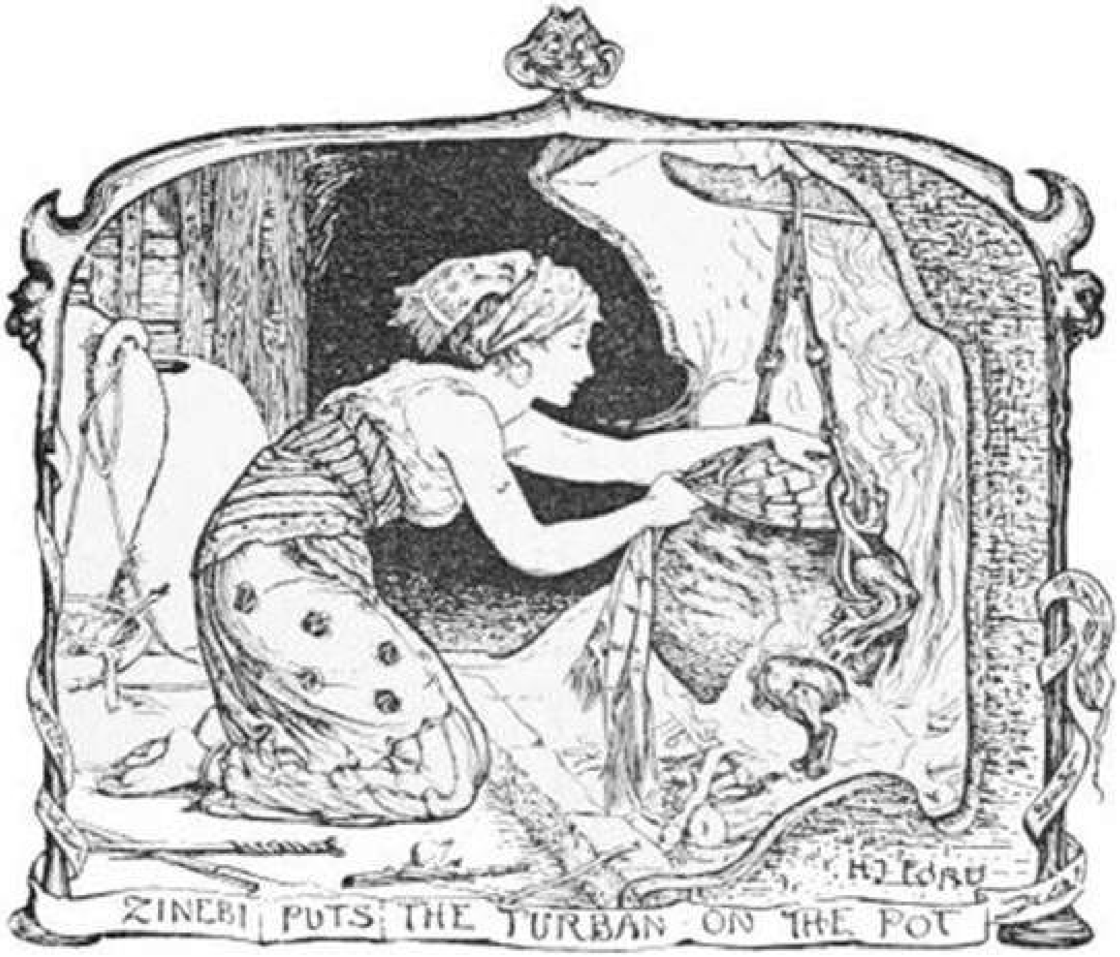

ZINEBI PUTS THE TURBAN ON THE POT

‘After the third hour of prayer Mohammed and Zinebi both returned, and you can guess their surprise at finding a young man in the kitchen instead of a copper pot! I told them my story, which at first they refused to believe, but in the end I succeeded in persuading them that I was speaking the truth. For two years more I lived with them, and was treated like their own son, till the day when they sent me to this city to seek my fortune. And now, my lords, here are the two letters which I found in my turban. Perhaps they may be another proof in favour of my story.’

Whilst Neangir was speaking, the blood from the Jew’s wound had gradually ceased to flow; and at this moment there appeared in the doorway a lovely Jewess, about twenty-two years old, her hair and her dress all disordered, as if she had been flying from some great danger. In one hand she held two crutches of white wood, and was followed by two men. The first man Neangir knew to be the brother of the Jew he had struck with his sword, while in the second the young man thought he recognised the person who was standing by when he was changed into a pot. Both of these men had a wide linen band round their thighs and held stout sticks.

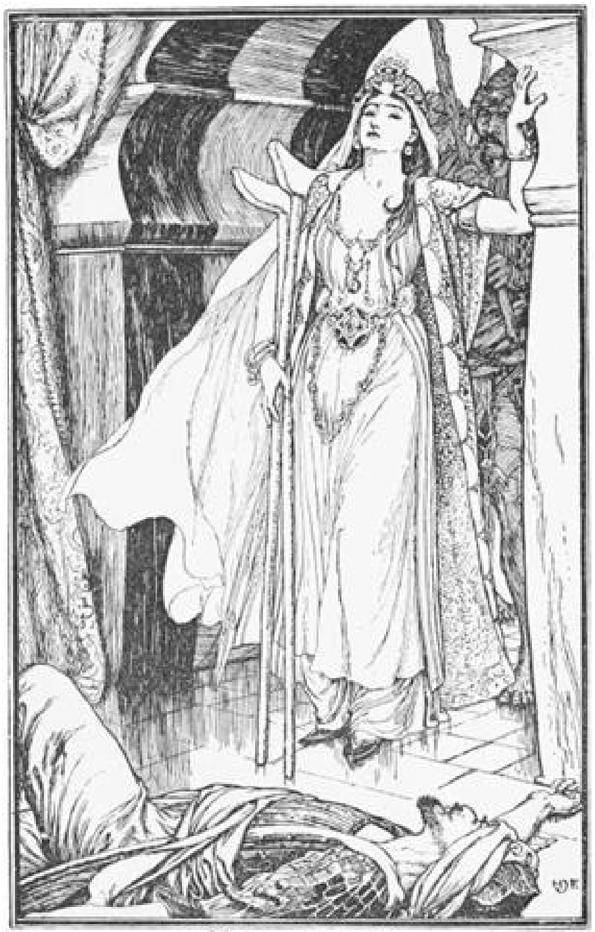

THERE APPEARED IN THE DOORWAY A LOVELY JEWESS

The Jewess approached the wounded man and laid the two crutches near him; then, fixing her eyes on him, she burst into tears.

‘Unhappy Izouf,’ she murmured, ‘why do you suffer yourself to be led into such dangerous adventures? Look at the consequences, not only to yourself, but to your two brothers,’ turning as she spoke to the men who had come in with her, and who had sunk down on the mat at the feet of the Jew.

The Bassa and his companions were struck both with the beauty of the Jewess and also with her words, and begged her to give them an explanation.

‘My lords,’ she said, ‘my name is Sumi, and I am the daughter of Moïzes, one of our most famous rabbis. I am the victim of my love for Izaf,’ pointing to the man who had entered last, ‘and in spite of his ingratitude, I cannot tear him from my heart. Cruel enemy of my life,’ she continued, turning to Izaf, ‘tell these gentlemen your story and that of your brothers, and try to gain your pardon by repentance.’

‘We all three were born at the same time,’ said the Jew, obeying the command of Sumi at a sign from the Cadi, ‘and are the sons of the famous Nathan Ben-Sadi, who gave us the names of Izif, Izouf, and Izaf. From our earliest years we were taught the secrets of magic, and as we were all born under the same stars we shared the same happiness and the same troubles.

‘Our mother died before I can remember, and when we were fifteen our father was seized with a dangerous illness which no spells could cure. Feeling death draw near, he called us to his bedside and took leave of us in these words:

‘“My sons, I have no riches to bequeath to you; my only wealth was those secrets of magic which you know. Some stones you already have, engraved with mystic signs, and long ago I taught you how to make others. But you still lack the most precious of all talismans — the three rings belonging to the daughters of Siroco. Try to get possession of them, but take heed on beholding these young girls that you do not fall under the power of their beauty. Their religion is different from yours, and further, they are the betrothed brides of the sons of the Bassa of the Sea. And to preserve you from a love which can bring you nothing but sorrow, I counsel you in time of peril to seek out the daughter of Moïzes the Rabbi, who cherishes a hidden passion for Izaf, and possesses the Book of Spells, which her father himself wrote with the sacred ink that was used for the Talmud.” So saying, our father fell back on his cushions and died, leaving us burning with desire for the three rings of the daughters of Siroco.

‘No sooner were our sad duties finished than we began to make inquiries where these young ladies were to be found, and we learned after much trouble that Siroco, their father, had fought in many wars, and that his daughters, whose beauty was famous throughout all the land, were named Aurora, Argentine, and Zelida.’

At the second of these names, both the Bassa and his son gave a start of surprise, but they said nothing, and Izaf went on with his story.

‘The first thing to be done was to put on a disguise, and it was in the dress of foreign merchants that we at length approached the young ladies, taking care to carry with us a collection of fine stones which we had hired for the occasion. But alas! it was to no purpose that Nathan Ben-Sadi had warned us to close our hearts against their charms! The peerless Aurora was clothed in a garment of golden hue, studded all over with flashing jewels; the fair-haired Argentine wore a dress of silver, and the young Zelida, loveliest of them all, the costume of a Persian lady.

‘Among other curiosities that we had brought with us, was a flask containing an elixir which had the quality of exciting love in the breasts of any man or woman who drank of it. This had been given me by the fair Sumi, who had used it herself and was full of wrath because I refused to drink it likewise, and so return her passion. I showed this liquid to the three maidens who were engaged in examining the precious stones, and choosing those that pleased them best; and I was in the act of pouring some in a crystal cup, when Zelida’s eyes fell on a paper wrapped round the flask containing these words: “Beware lest you drink this water with any other man than him who will one day be your husband.” “Ah, traitor!” she exclaimed, “what snare have you laid for me?” and glancing where her finger pointed I recognised the writing of Sumi.

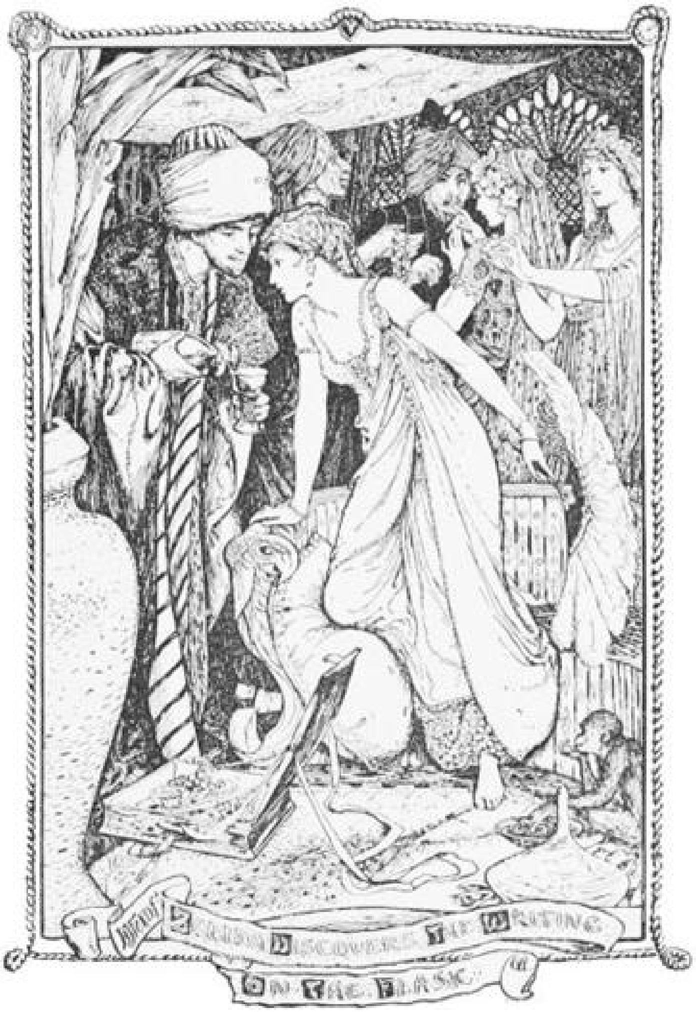
Zelida Discovers the Writing on the Flask

‘By this time my two brothers had already got possession of the rings of Aurora and Argentine in exchange for some merchandise which they coveted, and no sooner had the magic circles left their hands than the two sisters vanished completely, and in their place nothing was to be seen but a watch of gold and one of silver. At this instant the old slave whom we had bribed to let us enter the house, rushed into the room announcing the return of Zelida’s father. My brothers, trembling with fright, hid the watches in their turbans, and while the slave was attending to Zelida, who had sunk fainting to the ground, we managed to make our escape.

‘Fearing to be traced by the enraged Siroco, we did not dare to go back to the house where we lodged, but took refuge with Sumi.

‘“Unhappy wretches!” cried she, “is it thus that you have followed the counsels of your father? This very morning I consulted my magic books, and saw you in the act of abandoning your hearts to the fatal passion which will one day be your ruin. No, do not think I will tamely bear this insult! It was I who wrote the letter which stopped Zelida in the act of drinking the elixir of love! As for you,” she went on, turning to my brothers, “you do not yet know what those two watches will cost you! But you can learn it now, and the knowledge of the truth will only serve to render your lives still more miserable.”

‘As she spoke she held out the sacred book written by Moïzes, and pointed to the following lines:

‘“If at midnight the watches are wound with the key of gold and the key of silver, they will resume their proper shapes during the first hour of the day. They will always remain under the care of a woman, and will come back to her wherever they may be. And the woman appointed to guard them is the daughter of Moïzes.”

‘My brothers were full of rage when they saw themselves outwitted, but there was no help for it. The watches were delivered up to Sumi and they went their way, while I remained behind curious to see what would happen.

‘As night wore on Sumi wound up both watches, and when midnight struck Aurora and her sister made their appearance. They knew nothing of what had occurred and supposed they had just awakened from sleep, but when Sumi’s story made them understand their terrible fate, they both sobbed with despair and were only consoled when Sumi promised never to forsake them. Then one o’clock sounded, and they became watches again.

‘All night long I was a prey to vague fears, and I felt as if something unseen was pushing me on — in what direction I did not know. At dawn I rose and went out, meeting Izif in the street suffering from the same dread as myself. We agreed that Constantinople was no place for us any longer, and calling to Izouf to accompany us, we left the city together, but soon determined to travel separately, so that we might not be so easily recognised by the spies of Siroco.

‘A few days later I found myself at the door of an old castle near the sea, before which a tall slave was pacing to and fro. The gift of one or two worthless jewels loosened his tongue, and he informed me that he was in the service of the son of the Bassa of the Sea, at that time making war in distant countries. The youth, he told me, had been destined from his boyhood to marry the daughter of Siroco, whose sisters were to be the brides of his brothers, and went on to speak of the talisman that his charge possessed. But I could think of nothing but the beautiful Zelida, and my passion, which I thought I had conquered, awoke in full force.

‘In order to remove this dangerous rival from my path, I resolved to kidnap him, and to this end I began to act a madman, and to sing and dance loudly, crying to the slave to fetch the boy and let him see my tricks. He consented, and both were so diverted with my antics that they laughed till the tears ran down their cheeks, and even tried to imitate me. Then I declared I felt thirsty and begged the slave to fetch me some water, and while he was absent I advised the youth to take off his turban, so as to cool his head. He complied gladly, and in the twinkling of an eye was changed into a pot. A cry from the slave warned me that I had no time to lose if I would save my life, so I snatched up the pot and fled with it like the wind.

‘You have heard, my lords, what became of the pot, so I will only say now that when I awoke it had disappeared; but I was partly consoled for its loss by finding my two brothers fast asleep not far from me. “How did you get here?” I inquired, “and what has happened to you since we parted?”

‘“Alas!” replied Izouf, “we were passing a wayside inn from which came sounds of songs and laughter, and fools that we were — we entered and sat down. Circassian girls of great beauty were dancing for the amusement of several men, who not only received us politely, but placed us near the two loveliest maidens. Our happiness was complete, and time flew unknown to us, when one of the Circassians leaned forward and said to her sister, ‘Their brother danced, and they must dance too.’ What they meant by these words I know not, but perhaps you can tell us?”

‘“I understand quite well,” I replied. “They were thinking of the day that I stole the son of the Bassa, and had danced before him.”

‘“Perhaps you are right,” continued Izouf, “for the two ladies took our hands and danced with us till we were quite exhausted, and when at last we sat down a second time to table we drank more wine than was good for us. Indeed, our heads grew so confused, that when the men jumped up and threatened to kill us, we could make no resistance and suffered ourselves to be robbed of everything we had about us, including the most precious possession of all, the two talismans of the daughters of Siroco.” ‘Not knowing what else to do, we all three returned to Constantinople to ask the advice of Sumi, and found that she was already aware of our misfortunes, having read about them in the book of Moïzes. The kind-hearted creature wept bitterly at our story, but, being poor herself, could give us little help. At last I proposed that every morning we should sell the silver watch into which Argentine was changed, as it would return to Sumi every evening unless it was wound up with the silver key — which was not at all likely. Sumi consented, but only on the condition that we would never sell the watch without ascertaining the house where it was to be found, so that she might also take Aurora thither, and thus Argentine would not be alone if by any chance she was wound up at the mystic hour. For some weeks now we have lived by this means, and the two daughters of Siroco have never failed to return to Sumi each night. Yesterday Izouf sold the silver watch to this young man, and in the evening placed the gold watch on the steps by order of Sumi, just before his customer entered the house; from which both watches came back early this morning.’

‘If I had only known!’ cried Neangir. ‘If I had had more presence of mind, I should have seen the lovely Argentine, and if her portrait is so fair, what must the original be!’

‘It was not your fault,’ replied the Cadi, ‘you are no magician; and who could guess that the watch must be wound at such an hour? But I shall give orders that the merchant is to hand it over to you, and this evening you will certainly not forget.’

‘It is impossible to let you have it to-day,’ answered Izouf, ‘for it is already sold.’

‘If that is so,’ said the Cadi, ‘you must return the three gold pieces which the young man paid.’

The Jew, delighted to get off so easily, put his hand in his pocket, when Neangir stopped him.

‘No, no,’ he exclaimed, ‘it is not money I want, but the adorable Argentine; without her everything is valueless.’

‘My dear Cadi,’ said the Bassa, ‘he is right. The treasure that my son has lost is absolutely priceless.’

‘My lord,’ replied the Cadi, ‘your wisdom is greater than mine. Give judgment I pray you in the matter.’

So the Bassa desired them all to accompany him to his house, and commanded his slaves not to lose sight of the three Jewish brothers.

When they arrived at the door of his dwelling, he noticed two women sitting on a bench close by, thickly veiled and beautifully dressed. Their wide satin trousers were embroidered in silver, and their muslin robes were of the finest texture. In the hand of one was a bag of pink silk tied with green ribbons, containing something that seemed to move.

At the approach of the Bassa both ladies rose, and came towards him. Then the one who held the bag addressed him saying, ‘Noble lord, buy, I pray you, this bag, without asking to see what it contains.’

‘How much do you want for it?’ asked the Bassa.

‘Three hundred sequins,’ replied the unknown.

At these words the Bassa laughed contemptuously, and passed on without speaking.

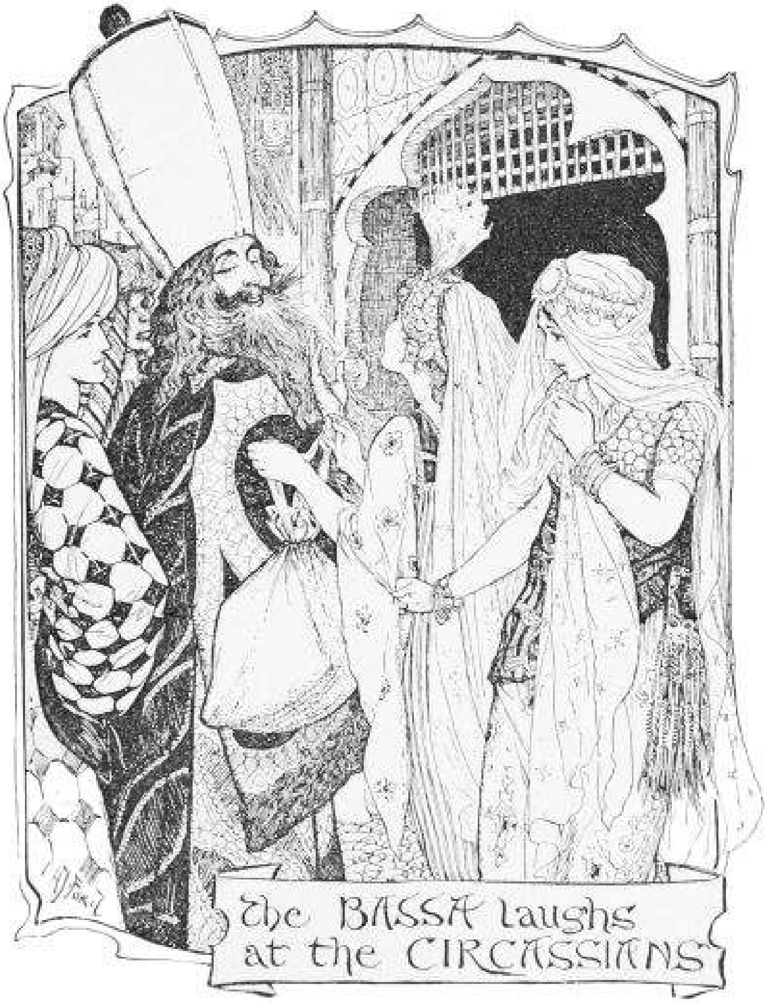

The BASSA laughs at the CIRCASSIANS

‘You will not repent of your bargain,’ went on the woman. ‘Perhaps if we come back to-morrow you will be glad to give us the four hundred sequins we shall then ask. And the next day the price will be five hundred.’

‘Come away,’ said her companion, taking hold of her sleeve. ‘Do not let us stay here any longer. It may cry, and then our secret will be discovered.’ And so saying, the two young women disappeared.

The Jews were left in the front hall under the care of the slaves, and Neangir and Sumi followed the Bassa inside the house, which was magnificently furnished. At one end of a large, brilliantly-lighted room a lady of about thirty-five years old reclined on a couch, still beautiful in spite of the sad expression of her face.

‘Incomparable Zambac,’ said the Bassa, going up to her, ‘give me your thanks, for here is the lost son for whom you have shed so many tears,’ but before his mother could clasp him in her arms Neangir had flung himself at her feet.

‘Let the whole house rejoice with me,’ continued the Bassa, ‘and let my two sons Ibrahim and Hassan be told, that they may embrace their brother.’

‘Alas! my lord!’ said Zambac, ‘do you forget that this is the hour when Hassan weeps on his hand, and Ibrahim gathers up his coral beads?’

‘Let the command of the prophet be obeyed,’ replied the Bassa; ‘then we will wait till the evening.’

‘Forgive me, noble lord,’ interrupted Sumi, ‘but what is this mystery? With the help of the Book of Spells perhaps I may be of some use in the matter.’

‘Sumi,’ answered the Bassa, ‘I owe you already the happiness of my life; come with me then, and the sight of my unhappy sons will tell you of our trouble better than any words of mine.’

The Bassa rose from his divan and drew aside the hangings leading to a large hall, closely followed by Neangir and Sumi. There they saw two young men, one about seventeen, and the other nineteen years of age. The younger was seated before a table, his forehead resting on his right hand, which he was watering with his tears. He raised his head for a moment when his father entered, and Neangir and Sumi both saw that this hand was of ebony.

The other young man was occupied busily in collecting coral beads which were scattered all over the floor of the room, and as he picked them up he placed them on the same table where his brother was sitting. He had already gathered together ninety-eight beads, and thought they were all there, when they suddenly rolled off the table and he had to begin his work over again.

‘Do you see,’ whispered the Bassa, ‘for three hours daily one collects these coral beads, and for the same space of time the other laments over his hand which has become black, and I am wholly ignorant what is the cause of either misfortune.’

‘Do not let us stay here,’ said Sumi, ‘our presence must add to their grief. But permit me to fetch the Book of Spells, which I feel sure will tell us not only the cause of their malady but also its cure.’

The Bassa readily agreed to Sumi’s proposal, but Neangir objected strongly. ‘If Sumi leaves us,’ he said to his father, ‘I shall not see my beloved Argentine when she returns to-night with the fair Aurora. And life is an eternity till I behold her.’

‘Be comforted,’ replied Sumi. ‘I will be back before sunset; and I leave you my adored Izaf as a pledge.’

Scarcely had the Jewess left Neangir, when the old female slave entered the hall where the three Jews still remained carefully guarded, followed by a man whose splendid dress prevented Neangir from recognising at first as the person in whose house he had dined two days before. But the woman he knew at once to be the nurse of Zelida.

He started eagerly forward, but before he had time to speak the slave turned to the soldier she was conducting. ‘My lord,’ she said, ‘those are the men; I have tracked them from the house of the Cadi to this palace. They are the same; I am not mistaken, strike and avenge yourself.’

As he listened the face of the stranger grew scarlet with anger. He drew his sword and in another moment would have rushed on the Jews, when Neangir and the slaves of the Bassa seized hold of him.

‘What are you doing?’ cried Neangir. ‘How dare you attack those whom the Bassa has taken under his protection?’

‘Ah, my son,’ replied the soldier, ‘The Bassa would withdraw his protection if he knew that these wretches have robbed me of all I have dearest in the world. He knows them as little as he knows you.’

‘But he knows me very well,’ replied Neangir, ‘for he has recognised me as his son. Come with me now, into his presence.’

The stranger bowed and passed through the curtain held back by Neangir, whose surprise was great at seeing his father spring forward and clasp the soldier in his arms.

‘What! is it you, my dear Siroco?’ cried he. ‘I believed you had been slain in that awful battle when the followers of the Prophet were put to flight. But why do your eyes kindle with the flames they shot forth on that fearful day? Calm yourself and tell me what I can do to help you. See, I have found my son, let that be a good omen for your happiness also.’

‘I did not guess,’ answered Siroco, ‘that the son you have so long mourned had come back to you. Some days since the Prophet appeared to me in a dream, floating in a circle of light, and he said to me, “Go to-morrow at sunset to the Galata Gate, and there you will find a young man whom you must bring home with you. He is the second son of your old friend the Bassa of the Sea, and that you may make no mistake, put your fingers in his turban and you will feel the plate on which my name is engraved in seven different languages.”

‘I did as I was bid,’ went on Siroco, ‘and so charmed was I with his face and manner that I caused him to fall in love with Argentine, whose portrait I gave him. But at the moment when I was rejoicing in the happiness before me, and looking forward to the pleasure of restoring you your son, some drops of the elixir of love were spilt on the table, and caused a thick vapour to arise, which hid everything. When it had cleared away he was gone. This morning my old slave informed me that she had discovered the traitors who had stolen my daughters from me, and I hastened hither to avenge them. But I place myself in your hands, and will follow your counsel.’

‘Fate will favour us, I am sure,’ said the Bassa, ‘for this very night I expect to secure both the silver and the gold watch. So send at once and pray Zelida to join us.'

A rustling of silken stuffs drew their eyes to the door, and Ibrahim and Hassan, whose daily penance had by this time been performed, entered to embrace their brother. Neangir and Hassan, who had also drunk of the elixir of love, could think of nothing but the beautiful ladies who had captured their hearts, while the spirits of Ibrahim had been cheered by the news that the daughter of Moïzes hoped to find in the Book of Spells some charm to deliver him from collecting the magic beads.

It was some hours later that Sumi returned, bringing with her the sacred book.

'See,' she said, beckoning to Hassan, 'your destiny is written here.' And Hassan stooped and read these words in Hebrew: 'His right hand has become black as ebony from touching the fat of an impure animal, and will remain so till the last of its race is drowned in the sea.'

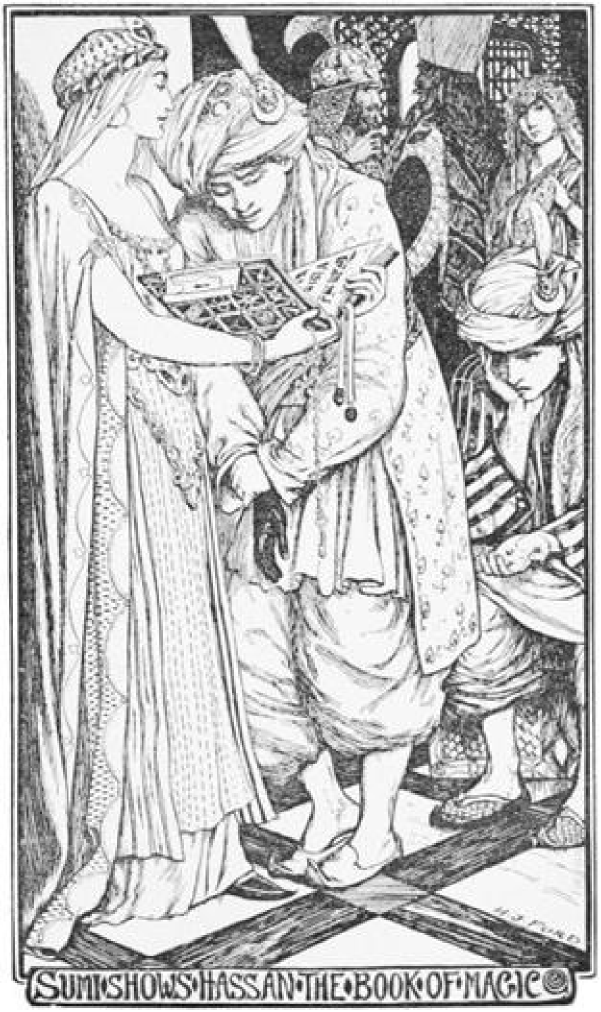

SUMI SHOWS HASSAN THE BOOK OF MAGIC

‘Alas!’ sighed the unfortunate youth. ‘It now comes back to my memory. One day the slave of Zambac was making a cake. She warned me not to touch, as the cake was mixed with lard, but I did not heed her, and in an instant my hand became the ebony that it now is.’

‘Holy dervish!’ exclaimed the Bassa, ‘how true were your words! My son has neglected the advice you gave him on presenting him the bracelet, and he has been severely punished. But tell me, O wise Sumi, where I can find the last of the accursed race who has brought this doom on my son?’

‘It is written here,’ replied Sumi, turning over some leaves. ‘The little black pig is in the pink bag carried by the two Circassians.’

When he read this the Bassa sank on his cushions in despair.

‘Ah,’ he said, ‘that is the bag that was offered me this morning for three hundred sequins. Those must be the women who caused Izif and Izouf to dance, and took from them the two talismans of the daughters of Siroco. They only can break the spell that has been cast on us. Let them be found and I will gladly give them the half of my possessions. Idiot that I was to send them away!’

While the Bassa was bewailing his folly, Ibrahim in his turn had opened the book, and blushed deeply as he read the words: ‘The chaplet of beads has been defiled by the game of “Odd and Even.” Its owner has tried to cheat by concealing one of the numbers. Let the faithless Moslem seek for ever the missing bead.’

‘O heaven,’ cried Ibrahim, ‘that unhappy day rises up before me. I had cut the thread of the chaplet, while playing with Aurora. Holding the ninety-nine beads in my hand she guessed “Odd,” and in order that she might lose I let one bead fall from my hand. Since then I have sought it daily, but it never has been found.’

‘Holy dervish!’ cried the Bassa, ‘how true were your words! From the time that the sacred chaplet was no longer complete, my son has borne the penalty. But may not the Book of Spells teach us how to deliver Ibrahim also?’

‘Listen,’ said Sumi, ‘this is what I find: “The coral bead lies in the fifth fold of the dress of yellow brocade.”’

‘Ah, what good fortune!’ exclaimed the Bassa, ‘we shall shortly see the beautiful Aurora, and Ibrahim shall at once search in the fifth fold of her yellow brocade. For it is she no doubt of whom the book speaks.’

As the Jewess closed the Book of Moïzes, Zelida appeared, accompanied by a whole train of slaves and her old nurse. At her entrance Hassan, beside himself with joy, flung himself on his knees and kissed her hand.

‘My lord,’ he said to the Bassa, ‘pardon me these transports. No elixir of love was needed to inflame my heart! Let the marriage rite make us speedily one.'

'My son, are you mad?' asked the Bassa. 'As long as the misfortunes of your brothers last, shall you alone be happy. And whoever heard of a bridegroom with a black hand? Wait yet a little longer, till the black pig is drowned in the sea.'

'Yes! dear Hassan,' said Zelida, 'our happiness will be increased tenfold when my sisters have regained their proper shapes. And here is the elixir which I have brought with me, so that their joy may equal ours.' And she held out the flask to the Bassa, who had it closed in his presence.

Zambac was filled with joy at the sight of Zelida, and embraced her with delight. Then she led the way into the garden, and invited all her friends to seat themselves under the thick overhanging branches of a splendid jessamine tree. No sooner, however, were they comfortably settled, than they were astonished to hear a man's voice, speaking angrily on the other side of the wall.

'Ungrateful girls!' it said, 'is this the way you treat me? Let me hide myself for ever! This cave is no longer dark enough or deep enough for me.'

A burst of laughter was the only answer, and the voice continued, 'What have I done to earn such contempt? Was this what you promised me when I managed to get for you the talismans of beauty? Is this the reward I have a right to expect when I have bestowed on you the little black pig, who is certain to bring you good luck?'

At these words the curiosity of the listeners passed all bounds, and the Bassa commanded his slaves instantly to tear down the wall. It was done, but the man was nowhere to be seen, and there were only two girls of extraordinary beauty, who seemed quite at their ease, and came dancing gaily on to the terrace. With them was an old slave in whom the Bassa recognised Gouloucou, the former guardian of Neangir.

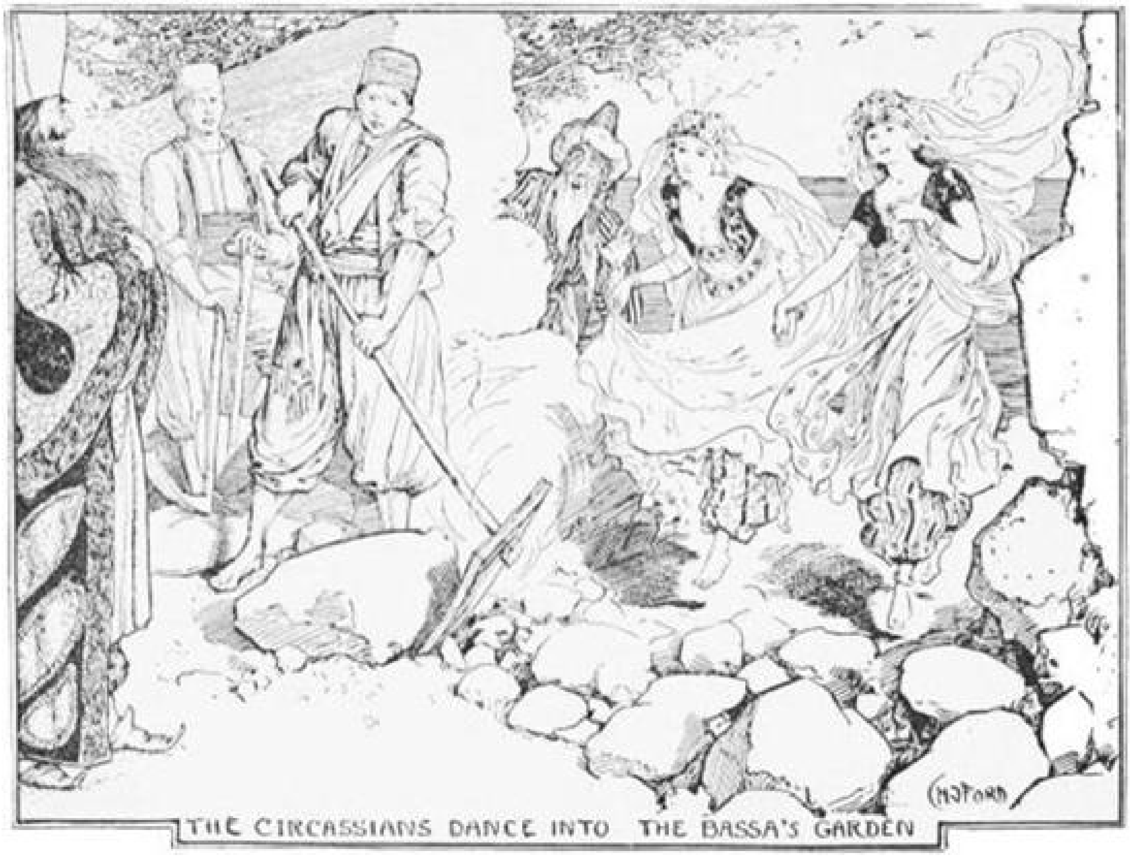

THE CIRCASSIANS DANCE INTO THE BASSA'S GARDEN

Gouloucou shrank with fear when he saw the Bassa, as he expected nothing less than death at his hands for allowing Neangir to be snatched away. But the Bassa made him signs of forgiveness, and asked him how he had escaped death when he had thrown himself from the cliff. Gouloucou explained that he had been picked up by a dervish who had cured his wounds, and had then given him as slave to the two young ladies now before the company, and in their service he had remained ever since.

‘But,’ said the Bassa, ‘where is the little black pig of which the voice spoke just now?’

‘My lord,’ answered one of the ladies, ‘when at your command the wall was thrown down, the man whom you heard speaking was so frightened at the noise that he caught up the pig and ran away.’

‘Let him be pursued instantly,’ cried the Bassa; but the ladies smiled.

‘Do not be alarmed, my lord,’ said one, ‘he is sure to return. Only give orders that the entrance to the cave shall be guarded, so that when he is once in he shall not get out again.’

By this time night was falling and they all went back to the palace, where coffee and fruits were served in a splendid gallery, near the women’s apartments. The Bassa then ordered the three Jews to be brought before him, so that he might see whether these were the two damsels who had forced them to dance at the inn, but to his great vexation it was found that when their guards had gone to knock down the wall the Jews had escaped.

At this news the Jewess Sumi turned pale, but glancing at the Book of Spells her face brightened, and she said half aloud, ‘There is no cause for disquiet; they will capture the dervish,’ while Hassan lamented loudly that as soon as fortune appeared on one side she fled on the other!

On hearing this reflection one of the Bassa’s pages broke into a laugh. ‘This fortune comes to us dancing, my lord,’ said he, ‘and the other leaves us on crutches. Do not be afraid. She will not go very far.’

The Bassa, shocked at his impertinent interference, desired him to leave the room and not to come back till he was sent for.

‘My lord shall be obeyed,’ said the page, ‘but when I return, it shall be in such good company that you will welcome me gladly.’ So saying, he went out.

When they were alone, Neangir turned to the fair strangers and implored their help. ‘My brothers and myself,’ he cried, ‘are filled with love for three peerless maidens, two of whom are under a cruel spell. If their fate happened to be in your hands, would you not do all in your power to restore them to happiness and liberty?’

But the young man’s appeal only stirred the two ladies to anger. ‘What,’ exclaimed one, ‘are the sorrows of lovers to us? Fate has deprived us of our lovers, and if it depends on us the whole world shall suffer as much as we do!’

This unexpected reply was heard with amazement by all present, and the Bassa entreated the speaker to tell them her story. Having obtained permission of her sister, she began:

THE STORY OF THE FAIR CIRCASSIANS

‘We were born in Circassia of poor people, and my sister’s name is Tezila and mine Dely. Having nothing but our beauty to help us in life, we were carefully trained in all the accomplishments that give pleasure. We were both quick to learn, and from our childhood could play all sorts of instruments, could sing, and above all could dance. We were, besides, lively and merry, as in spite of our misfortunes we are to this day.

‘We were easily pleased and quite content with our lives at home, when one morning the officials who had been sent to find wives for the Sultan saw us, and were struck with our beauty. We had always expected something of the sort, and were resigned to our lot, when we chanced to see two young men enter our house. The elder, who was about twenty years of age, had black hair and very bright eyes. The other could not have been more than fifteen, and was so fair that he might easily have passed for a girl.

‘They knocked at the door with a timid air and begged our parents to give them shelter, as they had lost their way. After some hesitation their request was granted, and they were invited into the room in which we were. And if our parents’ hearts were touched by their beauty, our own were not any harder, so that our departure for the palace, which had been arranged for the next day, suddenly became intolerable to us.

‘Night came, and I awoke from my sleep to find the younger of the two strangers sitting at my bedside and felt him take my hand.

‘“Fear nothing, lovely Dely,” he whispered, “from one who never knew love till he saw you. My name,” he went on, “is Prince Delicate, and I am the son of the King of the Isle of Black Marble. My friend, who travels with me, is one of the richest nobles of my country, and the secrets which he knows are the envy of the Sultan himself. And we left our native country because my father wished me to marry a lady of great beauty, but with one eye a trifle smaller than the other.”

‘My vanity was flattered at so speedy a conquest, and I was charmed with the way the young man had declared his passion. I turned my eyes slowly on him, and the look I gave him caused him almost to lose his senses. He fell fainting forward, and I was unable to move till Tezila, who had hastily put on a dress, ran to my assistance together with Thelamis, the young noble of whom the Prince had spoken.

‘As soon as we were all ourselves again we began to bewail our fate, and the journey that we were to take that very day to Constantinople. But we felt a little comforted when Thelamis assured us that he and the prince would follow in our steps, and would somehow contrive to speak to us. Then they kissed our hands, and left the house by a side-way.

‘A few moments later our parents came to tell us that the escort had arrived, and having taken farewell of them we mounted the camels, and took our seats in a kind of box that was fixed to the side of the animal. These boxes were large enough for us to sleep in comfortably, and as there was a window in the upper part, we were able to see the country through which we passed.

‘For several days we journeyed on, feeling sad and anxious as to what might become of us, when one day as I was looking out of the window of our room, I heard my name called, and beheld a beautifully dressed girl jumping out of the box on the other side of our camel. One glance told me that it was the prince, and my heart bounded with joy. It was, he said, Thelamis’s idea to disguise him like this, and that he himself had assumed the character of a slave-dealer who was taking this peerless maiden as a present to the Sultan. Thelamis had also persuaded the officer in charge of the caravan to let him hire the vacant box, so it was easy for the prince to scramble out of his own window and approach ours.

‘This ingenious trick enchanted us, but our agreeable conversation was soon interrupted by the attendants, who perceived that the camel was walking in a crooked manner and came to find out what was wrong. Luckily they were slow in their movements, and the prince had just time to get back to his own box and restore the balance, before the trick was discovered.

‘But neither the prince nor his friend had any intention of allowing us to enter the Sultan’s palace, though it was difficult to know how we were to escape, and what was to become of us when once we *had* escaped. At length, one day as we were drawing near Constantinople, we learned from the prince that Thelamis had made acquaintance with a holy dervish whom he had met on the road, and had informed him that we were his sisters, who were being sold as slaves against his will. The good man was interested in the story, and readily agreed to find us shelter if we could manage to elude the watchfulness of our guards. The risk was great, but it was our only chance.

‘That night, when the whole caravan was fast asleep, we raised the upper part of our boxes and by the help of Thelamis climbed silently out. We next went back some distance along the way we had come, then, striking into another road, reached at last the retreat prepared for us by the dervish. Here we found food and rest, and I need not say what happiness it was to be free once more.

‘The dervish soon became a slave to our beauty, and the day after our escape he proposed that we should allow him to conduct us to an inn situated at a short distance, where we should find two Jews, owners of precious talismans which did not really belong to them. “Try,” said the dervish, “by some means to get possession of them.”

‘The inn, though not on the direct road to Constantinople, was a favourite one with merchants, owing to the excellence of the food, and on our arrival we discovered at least six or eight other people who had stopped for refreshment. They greeted us politely, and we sat down to table together.

‘In a short time the two men described by the dervish entered the room, and at a sign from him my sister made room at her side for one, while I did the same for the other.

‘Now the dervish had happened to mention that “their brother had danced.” At the moment we paid no attention to this remark, but it came back to our minds now, and we determined that they should dance also. To accomplish this we used all our arts and very soon bent them to our wills, so that they could refuse us nothing. At the end of the day we remained possessors of the talismans and had left them to their fate, while the Prince and Thelamis fell more in love with us than ever, and declared that we were more lovely than any women in the world.

‘The sun had set before we quitted the inn, and we had made no plans as to where we should go next, so we readily consented to the prince’s proposal that we should embark without delay for the Isle of Black Marble. What a place it was! Rocks blacker than jet towered above its shores and shed thick darkness over the country. Our sailors had not been there before and were nearly as frightened as ourselves, but thanks to Thelamis, who undertook to be our pilot, we landed safely on the beach.

‘When we had left the coast behind us, with its walls of jet, we entered a lovely country where the fields were greener, the streams clearer, and the sun brighter than anywhere else. The people crowded round to welcome their prince, whom they loved dearly, but they told him that the king was still full of rage at his son’s refusal to marry his cousin the Princess Okimpare, and also at his flight. Indeed, they all begged him not to visit the capital, as his life would hardly be safe. So, much as I should have enjoyed seeing the home of my beloved prince, I implored him to listen to this wise advice and to let us all go to Thelamis’s palace in the middle of a vast forest.

‘To my sister and myself, who had been brought up in a cottage, this house of Thelamis’s seemed like fairyland. It was built of pink marble, so highly polished that the flowers and streams surrounding it were reflected as in a mirror. One set of rooms was furnished especially for me in yellow silk and silver, to suit my black hair. Fresh dresses were provided for us every day, and we had slaves to wait on us. Ah, why could not this happiness have lasted for ever!

‘The peace of our lives was troubled by Thelamis’s jealousy of my sister, as he could not endure to see her on friendly terms with the prince, though knowing full well that his heart was mine. Every day we had scenes of tender reproaches and of explanations, but Tezila’s tears never failed to bring Thelamis to his knees, with prayers for forgiveness.

‘We had been living in this way for some months when one day the news came that the king had fallen dangerously ill. I begged the prince to hurry at once to the court, both to see his father and also to show himself to the senators and nobles, but as his love for me was greater than his desire of a crown, he hesitated as if foreseeing all that afterwards happened. At last Tezila spoke to him so seriously in Thelamis’s presence, that he determined to go, but promised that he would return before night.

‘Night came but no prince, and Tezila, who had been the cause of his departure, showed such signs of uneasiness that Thelamis’s jealousy was at once awakened. As for me, I cannot tell what I suffered. Not being able to sleep I rose from my bed and wandered into the forest, along the road which he had taken so many hours before. Suddenly I heard in the distance the sound of a horse’s hoofs, and in a few moments the prince had flung himself down and was by my side. “Ah, how I adore you!” he exclaimed, “Thelamis’s love will never equal mine.” The words were hardly out of his mouth when I heard a slight noise behind, and before we could turn round both our heads were rolling in front of us, while the voice of Thelamis cried:

‘“Perjured wretches, answer me; and you, faithless Tezila, tell me why you have betrayed me like this?”

‘Then I understood what had happened, and that in his rage, he had mistaken me for my sister.

‘“Alas,” replied my head in weak tones, “I am not Tezila, but Dely, whose life you have destroyed, as well as that of your friend.” At this Thelamis paused and seemed to reflect for an instant.

‘“Be not frightened,” he said more quietly, “I can make you whole again,” and laying a magic powder on our tongues he placed our heads on our necks. In the twinkling of an eye our heads were joined to our bodies without leaving so much as a scar; only that, blinded with rage as he still was, Thelamis had placed my head on the prince’s body, and his on mine!

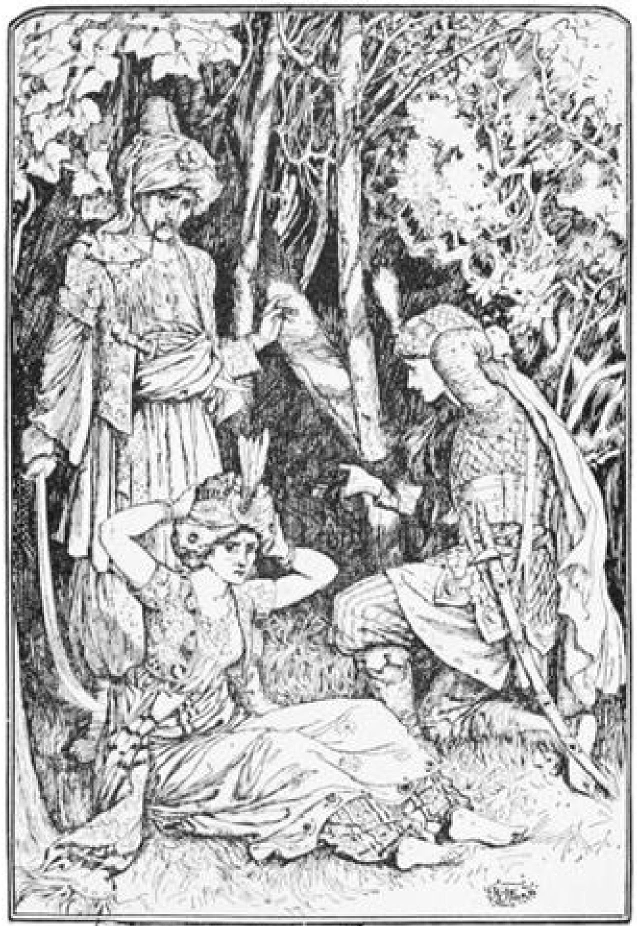

THE WRONG HEADS ON THE WRONG BODIES

‘I cannot describe to you how odd we both felt at this strange transformation. We both instinctively put up our hands — he to feel his hair, which was, of course, dressed like a woman, and I to raise the turban which pressed heavily on my forehead. But we did not know what had happened to us, for the night was still dark.

‘At this point Tezila appeared, followed by a troop of slaves bearing flowers. It was only by the light of their torches that we understood what had occurred. Indeed the first thought of both of us was that we must have changed clothes.

‘Now in spite of what we may say, we all prefer our own bodies to those of anybody else, so notwithstanding our love for each other, at first we could not help feeling a little cross with Thelamis. However, so deep was the prince’s passion for me, that very soon he began to congratulate himself on the change. “My happiness is perfect,” he said, “my heart, beautiful Dely, has always been yours, and now I have your head also.”

‘But though the prince made the best of it, Thelamis was much ashamed of his stupidity. “I have,” he said hesitatingly, “two other pastilles which have the same magic properties as those I used before. Let me cut off your heads again, and that will put matters straight.” The proposal sounded tempting, but was a little risky, and after consulting together we decided to let things remain as they were. “Do not blame me then,” continued Thelamis, “if you will not accept my offer. But take the two pastilles, and if it ever happens that you are decapitated a second time, make use of them in the way I have shown you, and each will get back his own head.” So saying he presented us with the pastilles, and we all returned to the castle.

‘However, the troubles caused by the unfortunate exchange were only just beginning. My head, without thinking what it was doing, led the prince’s body to my apartments. But my women, only looking at the dress, declared I had mistaken the corridor, and called some slaves to conduct me to his Highness’s rooms. This was bad enough, but when — as it was still night — my servants began to undress me, I nearly fainted from surprise and confusion, and no doubt the Prince’s head was suffering in the same manner at the other end of the castle!

‘By the next morning — you will easily guess that we slept but little — we had grown partly accustomed to our strange situation, and when we looked in the mirror, the prince had become brown-skinned and black-haired, while my head was covered with his curly golden locks. And after that first day, every one in the palace had become so accustomed to the change that they thought no more about it.

‘Some weeks after this, we heard that the king of the Isle of Black Marble was dead. The prince’s head, which once was mine, was full of ambitious desires, and he longed to ride straight to the capital and proclaim himself king. But then came the question as to whether the nobles would recognise the prince with a girl’s body, and indeed, when we came to think of it, which was prince and which was girl?

‘At last, after much argument, my head carried the day and we set out; but only to find that the king had declared the Princess Okimpare his successor. The greater part of the senators and nobles openly professed that they would much have preferred the rightful heir, but as they could not recognise him either in the Prince or me, they chose to consider us as impostors and threw us into prison.

‘A few days later Tezila and Thelamis, who had followed us to the capital, came to tell us that the new queen had accused us of high treason, and had herself been present at our trial — which was conducted without us. They had been in mortal terror as to what would be our sentence, but by a piece of extraordinary luck we had been condemned to be beheaded.

‘I told my sister that I did not see exactly where the luck came in, but Thelamis interrupted me rudely:

'"What!" he cried, "of course I shall make use of the pastilles, and — —" but here the officers arrived to lead us to the great square where the execution was to take place — for Okimpare was determined there should be no delay.

'The square was crowded with people of all ages and all ranks, and in the middle a platform had been erected on which was the scaffold, with the executioner, in a black mask, standing by. At a sign from him I mounted first, and in a moment my head was rolling at his feet. With a bound my sister and Thelamis were beside me, and like lightning Thelamis seized the sabre from the heads-man, and cut off the head of the prince. And before the multitude had recovered from their astonishment at these strange proceedings, our bodies were joined to our right heads, and the pastilles placed on our tongues. Then Thelamis led the prince to the edge of the platform and presented him to the people, saying "Behold your lawful king."

'Shouts of joy rent the air at the sound of Thelamis's words, and the noise reached Okimpare in the palace. Smitten with despair at the news, she fell down unconscious on her balcony, and was lifted up by the slaves and taken back to her own house.

'Meanwhile our happiness was all turned to sorrow. I had rushed up to the prince to embrace him fondly, when he suddenly grew pale and staggered.

'"I die faithful to you," he murmured, turning his eyes towards me, "and I die a king!" and leaning his head on my shoulder he expired quietly, for one of the arteries in his neck had been cut through.

'Not knowing what I did I staggered towards the sabre which was lying near me, with the intention of following my beloved prince as speedily as possible. And when Thelamis seized my hand (but only just in time), in my madness I turned the sabre upon him, and he fell struck through the heart at my feet.'

The whole company were listening to the story with breathless attention, when it became plain that Dely could go no further, while Tezila had flung herself on a heap of cushions and hidden her face. Zambac ordered her women to give them all the attention possible, and desired they should be carried into her own rooms.

When the two sisters were in this condition, Ibrahim, who was a very prudent young man, suggested to his parents that as the two Circassians were both unconscious, it would be an excellent opportunity to search them and see if the talismans belonging to the daughters of Siroco were concealed about their persons. But the Bassa, shocked at the notion of treating his guests in so inhospitable a manner, refused to do anything of the kind, adding that the next day he hoped to persuade them to give the talismans up of their own free will.

By this time it was nearly midnight and Neangir, who was standing near the Jewess Sumi, drew out the portrait of Argentine, and heard with delight that she was even more beautiful than her picture. Every one was waiting on tiptoe for the appearance of the two watches, who were expected when the clock struck twelve to come in search of Sumi, and that there might be no delay the Bassa ordered all the doors to be flung wide open. It was done, and there entered not the longed-for watches, but the page who had been sent away in disgrace.

Then the Bassa arose in wrath. ‘Azemi,’ he said, ‘did I not order you to stand no more in my presence?’

‘My lord,’ replied Azemi, modestly, ‘I was hidden outside the door, listening to the tale of the two Circassians. And as I know you are fond of stories, give me also leave to tell you one. I promise you it shall not be long.’

‘Speak on,’ replied the Bassa, ‘but take heed what you say.’

‘My lord,’ began Azemi, ‘this morning I was walking in the town when I noticed a man going in the same direction followed by a slave. He entered a baker’s shop, where he bought some bread which he gave to the slave to carry. I watched him and saw that he purchased many other kinds of provisions at other places, and when the slave could carry no more his master commanded him to return home and have supper ready at midnight.

‘When left alone the man went up the street, and turning into a jeweller’s shop, brought out a watch that as far as I could see was made of silver. He walked on a few steps, then stooped and picked up a gold watch which lay at his feet. At this point I ran up and told him that if he did not give me half its price I would report him to the Cadi; he agreed, and conducting me to his house produced four hundred sequins, which he said was my share, and having got what I wanted I went away.

‘As it was the hour for attending on my lord I returned home and accompanied you to the Cadi, where I heard the story of the three Jews and learned the importance of the two watches I had left at the stranger’s. I hastened to his house, but he had gone out, and I could only find the slave, whom I told that I was the bearer of important news for his master. Believing me to be one of his friends, he begged me to wait, and showed me into a room where I saw the two watches lying on the table. I put them in my pocket, leaving the four hundred sequins in place of the gold watch and three gold pieces which I knew to be the price of the other. As you know the watches never remain with the person who buys them, this man may think himself very lucky to get back his money. I have wound them both up, and at this instant Aurora and Argentine are locked safely into my own room.’

Everybody was so delighted to hear this news that Azemi was nearly stifled with their embraces, and Neangir could hardly be prevented from running to break in the door, though he did not even know where the page slept.

But the page begged to have the honour of fetching the ladies himself, and soon returned leading them by the hand.

For some minutes all was a happy confusion, and Ibrahim took advantage of it to fall on his knees before Aurora, and search in the fifth fold of her dress for the missing coral bead. The Book of Spells had told the truth; there it was, and as the chaplet was now complete the young man's days of seeking were over.

In the midst of the general rejoicing Hassan alone bore a gloomy face.

'Alas!' he said, 'everyone is happy but the miserable being you see before you. I have lost the only consolation in my grief, which was to feel that I had a brother in misfortune!'

'Be comforted,' replied the Bassa; 'sooner or later the dervish who stole the pink bag is sure to be found.'

Supper was then served, and after they had all eaten of rare fruits which seemed to them the most delicious in the whole world, the Bassa ordered the flask containing the elixir of love to be brought and the young people to drink of it. Then their eyes shone with a new fire, and they swore to be true to each other till death.

This ceremony was scarcely over when the clock struck one, and in an instant Aurora and Argentine had vanished, and in the place where they stood lay two watches. Silence fell upon all the company — they had forgotten the enchantment; then the voice of Azemi was heard asking if he might be allowed to take charge of the watches till the next day, pledging his head to end their enchantment. With the consent of Sumi, this was granted, and the Bassa gave Azemi a purse containing a thousand sequins, as a reward for the services he had already rendered to them. After this everybody went to his own apartment.

Azemi had never possessed so much money before, and never closed his eyes for joy the whole night long. Very early he got up and went into the garden, thinking how he could break the enchantment of the daughters of Siroco. Suddenly the soft tones of a woman fell on his ear, and peeping through the bushes he saw Tezila, who was arranging flowers in her sister's hair. The rustling of the leaves caused Dely to start; she jumped up as if to fly, but Azemi implored her to remain and begged her to tell him what happened to them after the death of their lovers, and how they had come to find the dervish.

'The punishment decreed to us by the Queen Okimpare,' answered Dely, 'was that we were to dance and sing in the midst of our sorrow, at a great fête which was to be held that very day for all her people. This cruel command nearly turned our brains, and we swore a solemn oath to make all lovers as wretched as we were ourselves. In this design we succeeded so well that in a short time the ladies of the capital came in a body to Okimpare, and prayed her to banish us from the kingdom, before their lives were made miserable for ever. She consented, and commanded us to be placed on board a ship, with our slave Gouloucou.

'On the shore we saw an old man who was busily engaged in drowning some little black pigs, talking to them all the while, as if they could understand him.

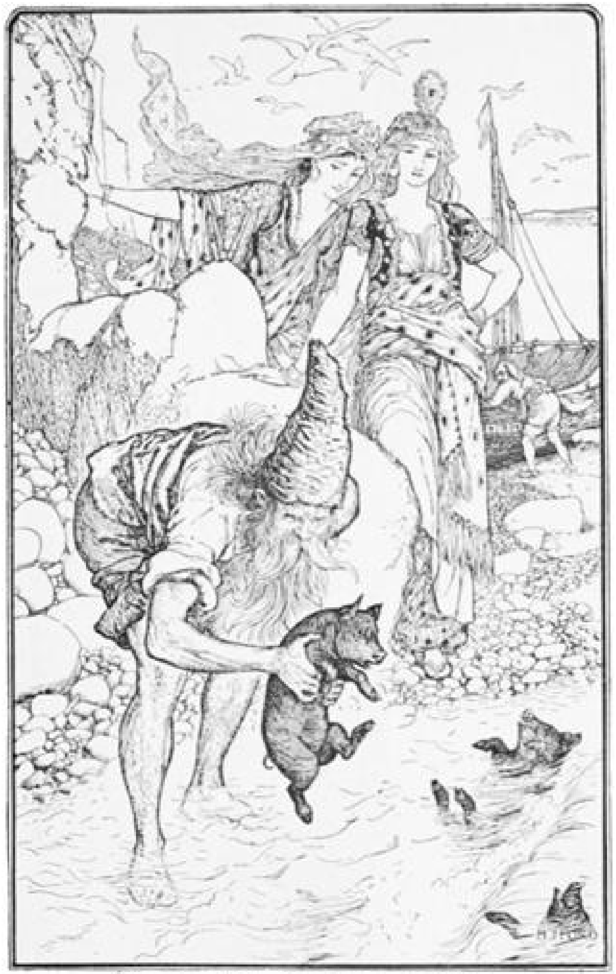

The Dervish drowning the Pigs

'"Accursed race," said he, "it is you who have caused all the misfortunes of him to whom I gave the magic bracelet. Perish all of you!"

'We drew near from curiosity, and recognised in him the dervish who had sheltered us on our first escape from the caravan.

'When the old man discovered who we were he was beside himself with pleasure, and offered us a refuge in the cave where he lived. We gladly accepted his offer, and to the cave we all went, taking with us the last little pig, which he gave us as a present.

'"The Bassa of the Sea," he added, "will pay you anything you like to ask for it."

'Without asking why it was so precious I took the pig and placed it in my work bag, where it has been ever since. Only yesterday we offered it to the Bassa, who laughed at us, and this so enraged us against the dervish that we cut off his beard when he was asleep, and now he dare not show himself.'

'Ah,' exclaimed the page, 'it is not fitting that such beauty should waste itself in making other people miserable. Forget the unhappy past and think only of the future. And accept, I pray you, this watch, to mark the brighter hours in store.' So saying he laid the watch upon her knee. Then he turned to Tezila. 'And you, fair maiden, permit me to offer you this other watch. True it is only of silver, but it is all I have left to give. And I feel quite sure that you must have somewhere a silver seal, that will be exactly the thing to go with it.'

'Why, so you have,' cried Dely; 'fasten your silver seal to your watch, and I will hang my gold one on to mine.'

The seals were produced, and, as Azemi had guessed, they were the talismans which the two Circassians had taken from Izif and Izouf, mounted in gold and silver. As quick as lightning the watches slid from the hands of Tezila and her sister, and Aurora and Argentine stood before them, each with her talisman on her finger.

At first they seemed rather confused themselves at the change which had taken place, and the sunlight which they had not seen for so long, but when gradually they understood that their enchantment had come to an end, they could find no words to express their happiness.

The Circassians could with difficulty be comforted for the loss of the talismans, but Aurora and Argentine entreated them to dry their tears, as their father, Siroco, who was governor of Alexandria, would not fail to reward them in any manner they wished. This promise was soon confirmed by Siroco himself, who came into the garden with the Bassa and his two sons, and was speedily joined by the ladies of the family. Only Hassan was absent. It was the hour in which he was condemned to bewail his ebony hand.

To the surprise of all a noise was at this moment heard in a corner of the terrace, and Hassan himself appeared surrounded by slaves, clapping his hands and shouting with joy. 'I was weeping as usual,' cried he, 'when all at once the tears refused to come to my eyes, and on looking down at my hand I saw that its blackness had vanished. And now, lovely Zelida, nothing prevents me any longer from offering you the hand, when the heart has been yours always.'

But though Hassan never thought of asking or caring what had caused his cure, the others were by no means so indifferent. It was quite clear that the little black pig must be dead — but how, and when? To this the slaves answered that they had seen that morning a man pursued by three others, and that he had taken refuge in the cavern which they had been left to guard. Then, in obedience to orders, they had rolled a stone over the entrance.

Piercing shrieks interrupted their story, and a man, whom the Circassians saw to be the old dervish, rushed round the corner of the terrace with the three Jews behind him. When the fugitive beheld so many people collected together, he turned down another path, but the slaves captured all four and brought them before their master.

What was the surprise of the Bassa when he beheld in the old dervish the man who had given the chaplet, the copper plate, and the bracelet to his three sons. ‘Fear nothing, holy father,’ he said, ‘you are safe with me. But tell us, how came you here?’

‘My lord,’ explained the dervish, ‘when my beard was cut off during my sleep by the two Circassians, I was ashamed to appear before the eyes of men, and fled, bearing with me the pink silk bag. In the night these three men fell in with me, and we passed some time in conversation, but at dawn, when it was light enough to see each other’s faces, one of them exclaimed that I was the dervish travelling with the two Circassians who had stolen the talismans from the Jews. I jumped up and tried to fly to my cave, but they were too quick for me, and just as we reached your garden they snatched the bag which contained the little black pig and flung it into the sea. By this act, which delivers your son, I would pray you to forgive them for any wrongs they may have done you — nay more, that you will recompense them for it.’

The Bassa granted the holy man’s request, and seeing that the two Jews had fallen victims to the charms of the Circassian ladies, gave his consent to their union, which was fixed to take place at the same time as that of Izaf with the wise Sumi. The Cadi was sent for, and the Jews exchanged the hats of their race for the turbans of the followers of the Prophet. Then, after so many misfortunes, the Bassa’s three sons entreated their father to delay their happiness no longer, and the six marriages were performed by the Cadi at the hour of noon.

THE JACKAL AND THE SPRING

Once upon a time all the streams and rivers ran so dry that the animals did not know how to get water. After a very long search, which had been quite in vain, they found a tiny spring, which only wanted to be dug deeper so as to yield plenty of water. So the beasts said to each other, ‘Let us dig a well, and then we shall not fear to die of thirst;’ and they all consented except the jackal, who hated work of any kind, and generally got somebody to do it for him.

When they had finished their well, they held a council as to who should be made the guardian of the well, so that the jackal might not come near it, for, they said, ‘he would not work, therefore he shall not drink.’

After some talk it was decided that the rabbit should be left in charge; then all the other beasts went back to their homes.

When they were out of sight the jackal arrived. ‘Good morning! Good morning, rabbit!’ and the rabbit politely said, ‘Good morning!’ Then the jackal unfastened the little bag that hung at his side, and pulled out of it a piece of honeycomb which he began to eat, and turning to the rabbit he remarked:

‘As you see, rabbit, I am not thirsty in the least, and this is nicer than any water.’

‘Give me a bit,’ asked the rabbit. So the jackal handed him a very little morsel.

‘Oh, how good it is!’ cried the rabbit; ‘give me a little more, dear friend!’

But the jackal answered, ‘If you really want me to give you some more, you must have your paws tied behind you, and lie on your back, so that I can pour it into your mouth.’

The rabbit did as he was bid, and when he was tied tight and popped on his back, the jackal ran to the spring and drank as much as he wanted. When he had quite finished he returned to his den.

In the evening the animals all came back, and when they saw the rabbit lying with his paws tied, they said to him: ‘Rabbit, how did you let yourself be taken in like this?’

‘It was all the fault of the jackal,’ replied the rabbit; ‘he tied me up like this, and told me he would give me something nice to eat. It was all a trick just to get at our water.’

‘Rabbit, you are no better than an idiot to have let the jackal drink our water when he would not help to find it. Who shall be our next watchman? We must have somebody a little sharper than you!’ and the little hare called out, ‘I will be the watchman.’

The following morning the animals all went their various ways, leaving the little hare to guard the spring. When they were out of sight the jackal came back. ‘Good morning! good morning, little hare,’ and the little hare politely said, ‘Good morning.’

‘Can you give me a pinch of snuff?’ said the jackal.

‘I am so sorry, but I have none,’ answered the little hare.

The jackal then came and sat down by the little hare, and unfastened his little bag, pulling out of it a piece of honeycomb. He licked his lips and exclaimed, ‘Oh, little hare, if you only knew how good it is!’

‘What is it?’ asked the little hare.

‘It is something that moistens my throat so deliciously,’ answered the jackal, ‘that after I have eaten it I don’t feel thirsty any more, while I am sure that all you other beasts are for ever wanting water.’

‘Give me a bit, dear friend,’ asked the little hare.

‘Not so fast,’ replied the jackal. ‘If you really wish to enjoy what you are eating, you must have your paws tied behind you, and lie on your back, so that I can pour it into your mouth.’

‘You can tie them, only be quick,’ said the little hare, and when he was tied tight and popped on his back, the jackal went quietly down to the well, and drank as much as he wanted. When he had quite finished he returned to his den.

In the evening the animals all came back; and when they saw the little hare with his paws tied, they said to him: ‘Little hare, how did you let yourself be taken in like this? Didn’t you boast you were very sharp? You undertook to guard our water; now show us how much is left for us to drink!’

‘It is all the fault of the jackal,’ replied the little hare, ‘He told me he would give me something nice to eat if I would just let him tie my hands behind my back.’

Then the animals said, ‘Who can we trust to mount guard now?’ And the panther answered, ‘Let it be the tortoise.’

The following morning the animals all went their various ways, leaving the tortoise to guard the spring. When they were out of sight the jackal came back. ‘Good morning, tortoise; good morning.’

But the tortoise took no notice.

‘Good morning, tortoise; good morning.’ But still the tortoise pretended not to hear.

Then the jackal said to himself, ‘Well, to-day I have only got to manage a bigger idiot than before. I shall just kick him on one side, and then go and have a drink.’ So he went up to the tortoise and said to him in a soft voice, ‘Tortoise!

tortoise!’ but the tortoise took no notice. Then the jackal kicked him out of the way, and went to the well and began to drink, but scarcely had he touched the water, than the tortoise seized him by the leg. The jackal shrieked out: ‘Oh, you will break my leg!’ but the tortoise only held on the tighter. The jackal then took his bag and tried to make the tortoise smell the honeycomb he had inside; but the tortoise turned away his head and smelt nothing. At last the jackal said to the tortoise, ‘I should like to give you my bag and everything in it,’ but the only answer the tortoise made was to grasp the jackal’s leg tighter still.

So matters stood when the other animals came back. The moment he saw them, the jackal gave a violent tug, and managed to free his leg, and then took to his heels as fast as he could. And the animals all said to the tortoise:

‘Well done, tortoise, you have proved your courage; now we can drink from our well in peace, as you have got the better of that thieving jackal!’

THE BEAR

Once on a time there was a king who had an only daughter. He was so proud and so fond of her, that he was in constant terror that something would happen to her if she went outside the palace, and thus, owing to his great love for her, he forced her to lead the life of a prisoner, shut up within her own rooms.

The princess did not like this at all, and one day she complained about it very bitterly to her nurse. Now, the nurse was a witch, though the king did not know it. For some time she listened and tried to soothe the princess; but when she saw that she would not be comforted, she said to her: ‘Your father loves you very dearly, as you know. Whatever you were to ask from him he would give you. The one thing he will not grant you is permission to leave the palace. Now, do as I tell you. Go to your father and ask him to give you a wooden wheel-barrow, and a bear’s skin. When you have got them bring them to me, and I will touch them with my magic wand. The wheel-barrow will then move of itself, and will take you at full speed wherever you want to go, and the bear’s skin will make such a covering for you, that no one will recognise you.’

So the princess did as the witch advised her. The king, when he heard her strange request, was greatly astonished, and asked her what she meant to do with a wheel-barrow and a bear’s skin. And the princess answered, ‘You never let me leave the house — at least you might grant me this request.’ So the king granted it, and the princess went back to her nurse, taking the barrow and the bear’s skin with her.

As soon as the witch saw them, she touched them with her magic wand, and in a moment the barrow began to move about in all directions. The princess next put on the bear’s skin, which so completely changed her appearance, that no one could have known that she was a girl and not a bear. In this strange attire she seated herself on the barrow, and in a few minutes she found herself far away from the palace, and moving rapidly through a great forest. Here she stopped the barrow with a sign that the witch had shown her, and hid herself and it in a thick grove of flowering shrubs.

Now it happened that the prince of that country was hunting with his dogs in the forest. Suddenly he caught sight of the bear hiding among the shrubs, and calling his dogs, hounded them on to attack it. But the girl, seeing what peril she was in, cried, ‘Call off your dogs, or they will kill me. What harm have I ever done to you?’ At these words, coming from a bear, the prince was so startled that for a moment he stood stock-still, then he said quite gently, ‘Will you come with me? I will take you to my home.’

‘I will come gladly,’ replied the bear; and seating herself on the barrow it at once began to move in the direction of the prince’s palace. You may imagine the surprise of the prince’s mother when she saw her son return accompanied by a bear, who at once set about doing the house-work better than any servant that the queen had ever seen.

Now it happened that there were great festivities going on in the palace of a neighbouring prince, and at dinner, one day, the prince said to his mother: ‘This evening there is to be a great ball, to which I must go.’

And his mother answered, ‘Go and dance, and enjoy yourself.’

Suddenly a voice came from under the table, where the bear had rolled itself, as was its wont: ‘Let me come to the ball; I, too, would like to dance.’

But the only answer the prince made was to give the bear a kick, and to drive it out of the room.

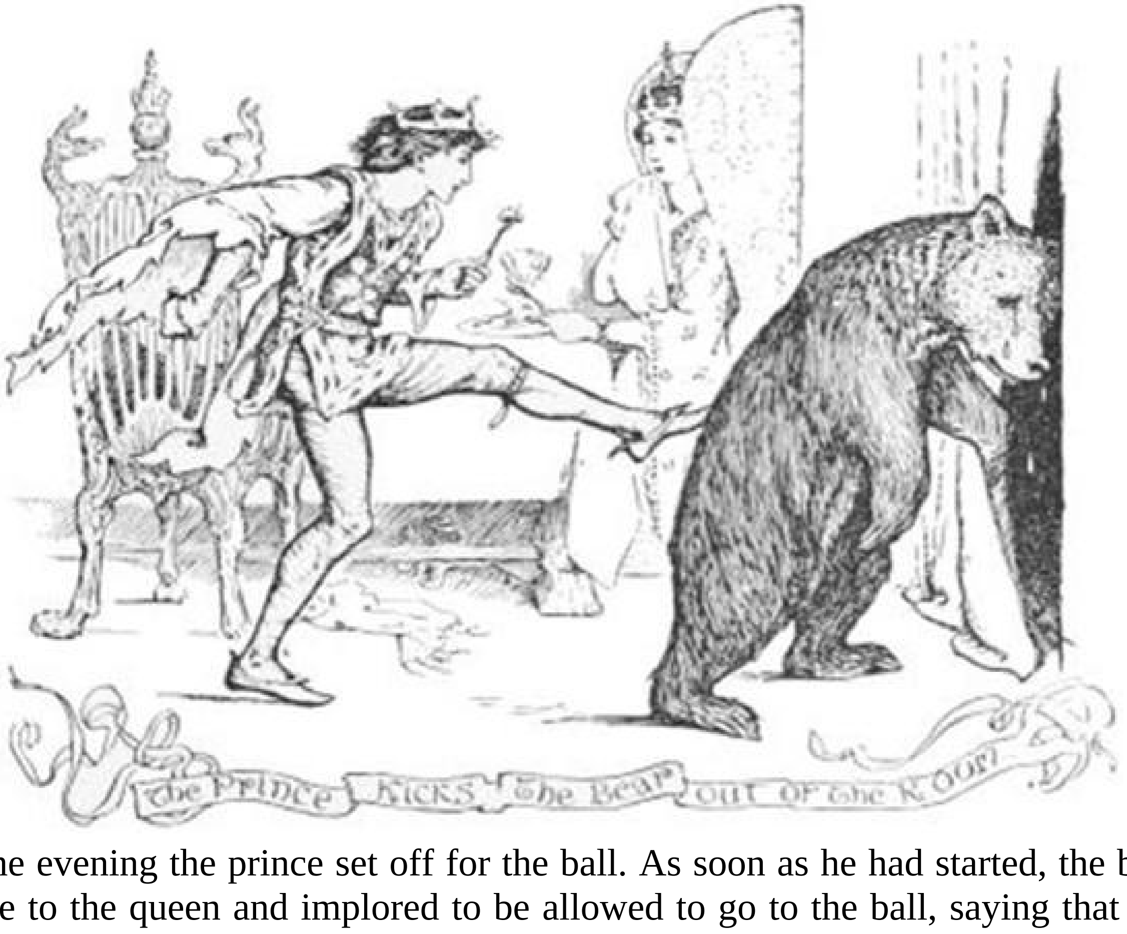
The Prince Kicks The Bear out of the Room

In the evening the prince set off for the ball. As soon as he had started, the bear came to the queen and implored to be allowed to go to the ball, saying that she would hide herself so well that no one would know she was there. The kind-hearted queen could not refuse her.

Then the bear ran to her barrow, threw off her bear's skin, and touched it with the magic wand that the witch had given her. In a moment the skin was changed into an exquisite ball dress woven out of moon-beams, and the wheel-barrow was changed into a carriage drawn by two prancing steeds. Stepping into the carriage the princess drove to the grand entrance of the palace. When she entered the ball-room, in her wondrous dress of moon-beams, she looked so lovely, so different from all the other guests, that everyone wondered who she was, and no one could tell where she had come from.

From the moment he saw her, the prince fell desperately in love with her, and all the evening he would dance with no one else but the beautiful stranger.

When the ball was over, the princess drove away in her carriage at full speed, for she wished to get home in time to change her ball dress into the bear's skin, and the carriage into the wheel-barrow, before anyone discovered who she was.

The prince, putting spurs into his horse, rode after her, for he was determined not to let her out of his sight. But suddenly a thick mist arose and hid her from him. When he reached his home he could talk to his mother of nothing else but the beautiful stranger with whom he had danced so often, and with whom he was so much in love. And the bear beneath the table smiled to itself, and muttered: 'I am the beautiful stranger; oh, how I have taken you in!'

The next evening there was a second ball, and, as you may believe, the prince was determined not to miss it, for he thought he would once more see the lovely girl, and dance with her and talk to her, and make her talk to him, for at the first ball she had never opened her lips.

And, sure enough, as the music struck up the first dance, the beautiful stranger entered the room, looking even more radiant than the night before, for this time her dress was woven out of the rays of the sun. All evening the prince danced with her, but she never spoke a word.

When the ball was over he tried once more to follow her carriage, that he might know whence she came, but suddenly a great waterspout fell from the sky, and the blinding sheets of rain hid her from his sight.

When he reached his home he told his mother that he had again seen the lovely girl, and that this time she had been even more beautiful than the night before. And again the bear smiled beneath the table, and muttered: 'I have taken him in a second time, and he has no idea that I am the beautiful girl with whom he is so much in love.'

On the next evening, the prince returned to the palace for the third ball. And the princess went too, and this time she had changed her bear's skin into a dress woven out of the starlight, studded all over with gems, and she looked so dazzling and so beautiful, that everyone wondered at her, and said that no one so beautiful had ever been seen before. And the prince danced with her, and, though he could not induce her to speak, he succeeded in slipping a ring on her finger.

When the ball was over, he followed her carriage, and rode at such a pace that for long he kept it in sight. Then suddenly a terrible wind arose between him and the carriage, and he could not overtake it.

When he reached his home he said to his mother, ‘I do not know what is to become of me; I think I shall go mad, I am so much in love with that girl, and I have no means of finding out who she is. I danced with her and I gave her a ring, and yet I do not know her name, nor where I am to find her.’

Then the bear laughed beneath the table and muttered to itself.

And the prince continued: ‘I am tired to death. Order some soup to be made for me, but I don’t want that bear to meddle with it. Every time I speak of my love the brute mutters and laughs, and seems to mock at me. I hate the sight of the creature!’

When the soup was ready, the bear brought it to the prince; but before handing it to him, she dropped into the plate the ring the prince had given her the night before at the ball. The prince began to eat his soup very slowly and languidly, for he was sad at heart, and all his thoughts were busy, wondering how and where he could see the lovely stranger again. Suddenly he noticed the ring at the bottom of the plate. In a moment he recognised it, and was dumb with surprise.

Then he saw the bear standing beside him, looking at him with gentle, beseeching eyes, and something in the eyes of the bear made him say: ‘Take off that skin, some mystery is hidden beneath it.’

And the bear’s skin dropped off, and the beautiful girl stood before him, in the dress woven out of the starlight, and he saw that she was the stranger with whom he had fallen so deeply in love. And now she appeared to him a thousand times more beautiful than ever, and he led her to his mother. And the princess told them her story, and how she had been kept shut up by her father in his palace, and how she had wearied of her imprisonment. And the prince’s mother loved her, and rejoiced that her son should have so good and beautiful a wife.

So they were married, and lived happily for many years, and reigned wisely over their kingdom.

THE SUNCHILD

Once there was a woman who had no children, and this made her very unhappy. So she spoke one day to the Sunball, saying: ‘Dear Sunball, send me only a little girl now, and when she is twelve years old you may take her back again.’

So soon after this the Sunball sent her a little girl, whom the woman called Letiko, and watched over with great care till she was twelve years old. Soon after that, while Letiko was away one day gathering herbs, the Sunball came to her, and said: ‘Letiko, when you go home, tell your mother that she must bethink herself of what she promised me.’

Then Letiko went straight home, and said to her mother: ‘While I was gathering herbs a fine tall gentleman came to me and charged me to tell you that you should remember what you promised him.’

When the woman heard that she was sore afraid, and immediately shut all the doors and windows of the house, stopped up all the chinks and holes, and kept Letiko hidden away, that the Sunball should not come and take her away. But she forgot to close up the keyhole, and through it the Sunball sent a ray into the house, which took hold of the little girl and carried her away to him.

One day, the Sunball having sent her to the straw shed to fetch straw, the girl sat down on the piles of straw and bemoaned herself, saving: ‘As sighs this straw under my feet so sighs my heart after my mother.’

And this caused her to be so long away that the Sunball asked her, when she came back: ‘Eh, Letiko, where have you been so long?’

She answered: ‘My slippers are too big, and I could not go faster.’

Then the Sunball made the slippers shorter.

Another time he sent her to fetch water, and when she came to the spring, she sat down and lamented, saying: ‘As flows the water even so flows my heart with longing for my mother.’

Thus she again remained so long away that the Sunball asked her: ‘Eh, Letiko, why have you remained so long away?’

And she answered: ‘My petticoat is too long and hinders me in walking.’

Then the Sunball cut her petticoat to make it shorter.

Another time the Sunball sent her to bring him a pair of sandals, and as the girl carried these in her hand she began to lament, saying: ‘As creaks the leather so creaks my heart after my little mother.’

When she came home the Sunball asked her again: ‘Eh, Letiko, why do you come home so late?’

‘My red hood is too wide, and falls over my eyes, therefore I could not go fast.’

Then he made the hood narrower.

At last, however, the Sunball became aware how sad Letiko was. He sent her a second time to bring straw, and, slipping in after her, he heard how she lamented for her mother. Then he went home, called two foxes to him, and said: ‘Will you take Letiko home?’

‘Yes, why not?’

‘But what will you eat and drink if you should become hungry and thirsty by the way?’

‘We will eat her flesh and drink her blood.’

When the Sunball heard that, he said: ‘You are not suited for this affair.’

Then he sent them away, and called two hares to him, and said: ‘Will you take Letiko home to her mother?’

‘Yes, why not?’

‘What will you eat and drink if you should become hungry and thirsty by the way?’

‘We will eat grass and drink from streamlets.’

‘Then take her, and bring her home.’

Then the hares set out, taking Letiko with them, and because it was a long way to her home they became hungry by the way. Then they said to the little girl: ‘Climb this tree, dear Letiko, and remain there till we have finished eating.’

So Letiko climbed the tree, and the hares went grazing.

It was not very long, however, before a lamia came under the tree and called out: ‘Letiko, Letiko, come down and see what beautiful shoes I have on.’

‘Oh! my shoes are much finer than yours.’

‘Come down. I am in a hurry, for my house is not yet swept.’

‘Go home and sweep it then, and come back when you are ready.’

Then the lamia went away and swept her house, and when she was ready she came back and called out: ‘Letiko, Letiko, come down and see what a beautiful apron I have.’

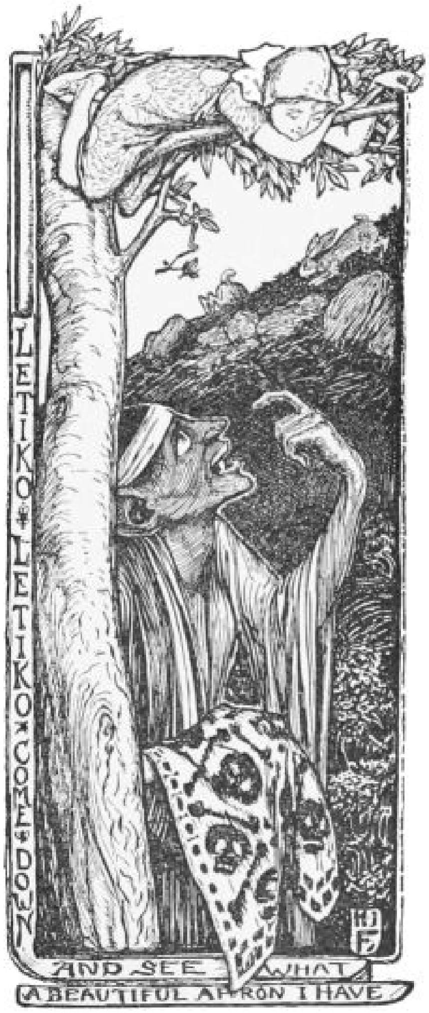

‘Oh! my apron is much finer than yours.’

‘If you will not come down I will cut down the tree and eat you.’

‘Do so, and then eat me.’

Then the lamia hewed with all her strength at the tree, but could not cut it down. And when she saw that, she called out: ‘Letiko, Letiko, come down, for I must feed my children.’

‘Go home then and feed them, and come back when you are ready.’

When the lamia was gone away, Letiko called out: ‘Little hares! little hares!’

Then said one hare to the other: ‘Listen, Letiko is calling;’ and they both ran back to her as fast as they could go. Then Letiko came down from the tree, and they went on their way.

The lamia ran as fast as she could after them, to catch them up, and when she came to a field where people were working she asked them: ‘Have you seen any one pass this way?’

They answered: ‘We are planting beans.’

‘Oh! I did not ask about that; but if any one had passed this way.’

But the people only answered the louder: ‘Are you deaf? It is beans, beans, beans we are planting.’

When Letiko had nearly reached her home the dog knew her, and called out, ‘Bow wow! see here comes Letiko!’

And the mother said, ‘Hush! thou beast of ill-omen! wilt thou make me burst with misery?’

Next the cat on the roof saw her, and called out ‘Miaouw! miaouw! see here comes Letiko!’

And the mother said, ‘Keep silence! thou beast of ill-omen! wilt thou make me burst with misery?’

Then the cock spied, and called out: ‘Cock-a-doodle-do! see here comes Letiko!’

And the mother said again: ‘Be quiet! thou bird of ill-omen! wilt thou make me burst with misery?’

The nearer Letiko and the two hares came to the house the nearer also came the lamia, and when the hare was about to slip in by the house door she caught it by its little tail and tore it out.

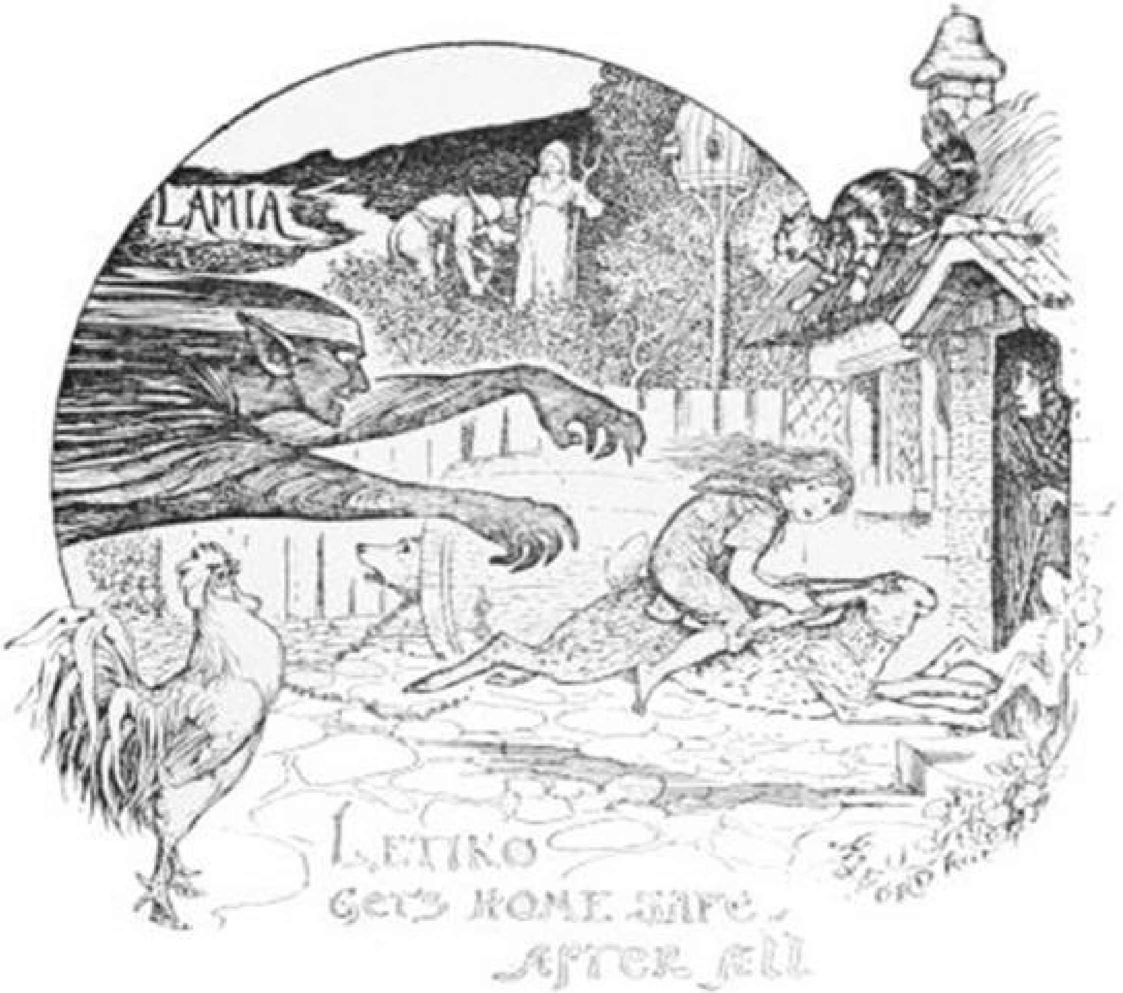
LAMIA
LETIKO
GETS HOME SAFE
AFTER ALL
H J FORD

When the hare came in the mother stood up and said to it: ‘Welcome, dear little hare; because you have brought me back Letiko I will silver your little tail.’

And she did so; and lived ever after with her daughter in happiness and content.

THE DAUGHTER OF BUK ETTEMSUCH

Once upon a time there lived a man who had seven daughters. For a long time they dwelt quite happily at home together, then one morning the father called them all before him and said:

‘Your mother and I are going on a journey, and as we do not know how long we may be away, you will find enough provisions in the house to last you three years. But see you do not open the door to any one till we come home again.’

‘Very well, dear father,’ replied the girls.

For two years they never left the house or unlocked the door; but one day, when they had washed their clothes, and were spreading them out on the roof to dry, the girls looked down into the street where people were walking to and fro, and across to the market, with its stalls of fresh meat, vegetable, and other nice things.

‘Come here,’ cried one. ‘It makes me quite hungry! Why should not we have our share? Let one of us go to the market, and buy meat and vegetables.’

‘Oh, we mustn’t do that!’ said the youngest. ‘You know our father forbade us to open the door till he came home again.’

Then the eldest sister sprang at her and struck her, the second spit at her, the third abused her, the fourth pushed her, the fifth flung her to the ground, and the sixth tore her clothes. Then they left her lying on the floor, and went out with a basket.

In about an hour they came back with the basket full of meat and vegetables, which they put in a pot, and set on the fire, quite forgetting that the house door stood wide open. The youngest sister, however, took no part in all this, and when dinner was ready and the table laid, she stole softly out to the entrance hall, and hid herself behind a great cask which stood in one corner.

Now, while the other sisters were enjoying their feast, a witch passed by, and catching sight of the open door, she walked in. She went up to the eldest girl, and said: ‘Where shall I begin on you, you fat bolster?’

‘You must begin,’ answered she ‘with the hand which struck my little sister.’

So the witch gobbled her up, and when the last scrap had disappeared, she came to the second and asked: ‘Where shall I begin on you, my fat bolster?’

And the second answered, ‘You must begin on my mouth, which spat on my sister.’

And so on to the rest; and very soon the whole six had disappeared. And as the witch was eating the last mouthful of the last sister, the youngest, who had been crouching, frozen with horror, behind the barrel, ran out through the open door into the street. Without looking behind her, she hastened on and on, as fast as her feet would carry her, till she saw an ogre’s castle standing in front of her. In a corner near the door she spied a large pot, and she crept softly up to it and pulled the cover over it, and went to sleep.

By-and-by the ogre came home. ‘Fee, Fo, Fum,’ cried he, ‘I smell the smell of a man. What ill fate has brought him here?’ And he looked through all the rooms, and found nobody. ‘Where are you?’ he called. ‘Do not be afraid, I will do you no harm.’

But the girl was still silent.

‘Come out, I tell you,’ repeated the ogre. ‘Your life is quite safe. If you are an old man, you shall be my father. If you are a boy, you shall be my son. If your years are as many as mine, you shall be my brother. If you are an old woman, you shall be my mother. If you are a young one, you shall be my daughter. If you are middle-aged, you shall be my wife. So come out, and fear nothing.’

Then the maiden came out of her hiding-place, and stood before him.

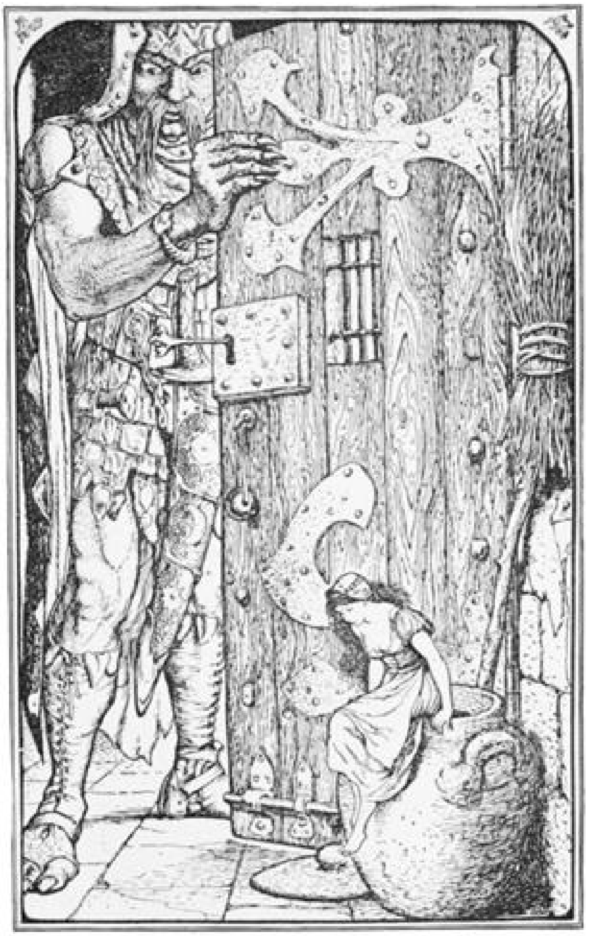

The Maiden creeps out of the Pot.

‘Fear nothing,’ said the ogre again; and when he went away to hunt he left her to look after the house. In the evening he returned, bringing with him hares, partridges, and gazelles, for the girl’s supper; for himself he only cared for the flesh of men, which she cooked for him. He also gave into her charge the keys of six rooms, but the key of the seventh he kept himself.

And time passed on, and the girl and the ogre still lived together.

She called him ‘Father,’ and he called her ‘Daughter,’ and never once did he speak roughly to her.

One day the maiden said to him, ‘Father, give me the key of the upper chamber.’

‘No, my daughter,’ replied the ogre. ‘There is nothing there that is any use to you.’

‘But I want the key,’ she repeated again.

However the ogre took no notice, and pretended not to hear. The girl began to cry, and said to herself: ‘To-night, when he thinks I am asleep, I will watch and see where he hides it’; and after she and the ogre had supped, she bade him good-night, and left the room. In a few minutes she stole quietly back, and watched from behind a curtain. In a little while she saw the ogre take the key from his pocket, and hide it in a hole in the ground before he went to bed. And when all was still she took out the key, and went back to the house.

The next morning the ogre awoke with the first ray of light, and the first thing he did was to look for the key. It was gone, and he guessed at once what had become of it.

But instead of getting into a great rage, as most ogres would have done, he said to himself, ‘If I wake the maiden up I shall only frighten her. For to-day she shall keep the key, and when I return to-night it will be time enough to take it from her.’ So he went off to hunt.

The moment he was safe out of the way, the girl ran upstairs and opened the door of the room, which was quite bare. The one window was closed, and she threw back the lattice and looked out. Beneath lay a garden which belonged to the Prince, and in the garden was an ox, who was drawing up water from the well all by himself — for there was nobody to be seen anywhere. The ox raised his head at the noise the girl made in opening the lattice, and said to her, ‘Good morning, O daughter of Buk Ettemsuch! Your father is feeding you up till you are nice and fat, and then he will put you on a spit and cook you.’

These words so frightened the maiden that she burst into tears and ran out of the room. All day she wept, and when the ogre came home at night, no supper was ready for him.

‘What are you crying for?’ said he. ‘Where is my supper, and is it you who have opened the upper chamber?’

‘Yes, I opened it,’ answered she.

‘And what did the ox say to you?’

‘He said, “Good morning, O daughter of Buk Ettemsuch. Your father is feeding you up till you are nice and fat, and then he will put you on a spit and cook you.”’

‘Well, to-morrow you can go to the window and say, “My father is feeding me up till I am nice and fat, but he does not mean to eat me. If I had one of your eyes I would use it for a mirror, and look at myself before and behind; and your girths should be loosened, and you should be blind — seven days and seven nights.”’

‘All right,’ replied the girl, and the next morning, when the ox spoke to her, she answered him as she had been told, and he fell down straight upon the ground, and lay there seven days and seven nights. But the flowers in the garden withered, for there was no one to water them.

When the prince came into his garden he found nothing but yellow stalks; in the midst of them the ox was lying. With a blow from his sword he killed the animal, and, turning to his attendants, he said, ‘Go and fetch another ox!’ And they brought in a great beast, and he drew the water out of the well, and the flowers revived, and the grass grew green again. Then the prince called his attendants and went away.

The next morning the girl heard the noise of the water-wheel, and she opened the lattice and looked out of the window.

‘Good morning, O daughter of Buk Ettemsuch!’ said the new ox. ‘Your father is feeding you up till you are nice and fat, and then he will put you on a spit and cook you.’

And the maiden answered: ‘My father is feeding me up till I am nice and fat, but he does not mean to eat me. If I had one of your eyes I would use it for a mirror, and look at myself before and behind; and your girths should be loosened, and you should be blind — seven days and seven nights.’

Directly she uttered these words the ox fell to the ground and lay there, seven days and seven nights. Then he arose and began to draw the water from the well. He had only turned the wheel once or twice, when the prince took it into his head to visit his garden and see how the new ox was getting on. When he entered the ox was working busily; but in spite of that the flowers and grass were dried up. And the prince drew his sword, and rushed at the ox to slay him, as he had done the other. But the ox fell on his knees and said:

‘My lord, only spare my life, and let me tell you how it happened.’

‘How what happened?’ asked the prince.

‘My lord, a girl looked out of that window and spoke a few words to me, and I fell to the ground. For seven days and seven nights I lay there, unable to move. But, O my lord, it is not given to us twice to behold beauty such as hers.’

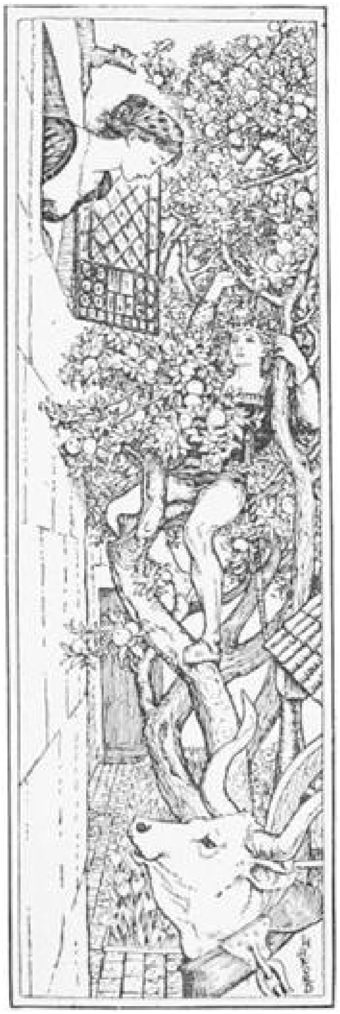

‘It is a lie,’ said the prince. ‘An ogre dwells there. Is it likely that he keeps a maiden in his upper chamber?’

‘Why not?’ replied the ox. ‘But if you come here at dawn to-morrow, and hide behind that tree, you will see for yourself.’

‘So I will,’ said the prince; ‘and if I find that you have not spoken truth, I will kill you.’

The prince left the garden, and the ox went on with his work. Next morning the prince came early to the garden, and found the ox busy with the water-wheel.

‘Has the girl appeared yet?’ he asked.

‘Not yet; but she will not be long. Hide yourself in the branches of that tree, and you will soon see her.’

The prince did as he was told, and scarcely was he seated when the maiden threw open the lattice.

‘Good morning, O daughter of Buk Ettemsuch!’ said the ox. ‘Your father is feeding you up till you are nice and fat, and then he will put you on a spit and cook you.’

‘My father is feeding me up till I am nice and fat, but he does not mean to eat me. If I had one of your eyes I would use it for a mirror, and look at myself before and behind; and your girths should be loosened, and you should be blind — seven days and seven nights.’ And hardly had she spoken when the ox fell on the ground, and the maiden shut the lattice and went away. But the prince knew that what the ox had said was true, and that she had not her equal in the whole world. And he came down from the tree, his heart burning with love.

‘Why has the ogre not eaten her?’ thought he. ‘This night I will invite him to supper in my palace and question him about the maiden, and find out if she is his wife.’

So the prince ordered a great ox to be slain and roasted whole, and two huge tanks to be made, one filled with water and the other with wine. And towards evening he called his attendants and went to the ogre’s house to wait in the courtyard till he came back from hunting. The ogre was surprised to see so many people assembled in front of his house; but he bowed politely and said, ‘Good morning, dear neighbours! To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit? I have not offended you, I hope?’

‘Oh, certainly not!’ answered the prince.

‘Then,’ continued the ogre, ‘what has brought you to my house to-day for the first time?’

‘We should like to have supper with you,’ said the prince.

‘Well, supper is ready, and you are welcome,’ replied the ogre, leading the way into the house, for he had had a good day, and there was plenty of game in the bag over his shoulder.

A table was quickly prepared, and the prince had already taken his place, when he suddenly exclaimed, ‘After all, Buk Ettemsuch, suppose you come to supper with me?’

‘Where?’ asked the ogre.

‘In my house. I know it is all ready.’

‘But it is so far off — why not stay here?’

‘Oh, I will come another day; but this evening I must be your host.’

So the ogre accompanied the prince and his attendants back to the palace. After a while the prince turned to the ogre and said:

‘It is as a wooer that I appear before you. I seek a wife from an honourable family.’

‘But I have no daughter,’ replied the ogre.

‘Oh, yes you have, I saw her at the window.’

‘Well, you can marry her if you wish,’ said he.

So the prince’s heart was glad as he and his attendants rode back with the ogre to his house. And as they parted, the prince said to his guest, ‘You will not forget the bargain we have made?’

‘I am not a young man, and never break my promises,’ said the ogre, and went in and shut the door.

Upstairs he found the maiden, waiting till he returned to have her supper, for she did not like eating by herself.

‘I have had my supper,’ said the ogre, ‘for I have been spending the evening with the prince.’

‘Where did you meet him?’ asked the girl.

‘Oh, we are neighbours, and grew up together, and to-night I promised that you should be his wife.’

‘I don’t want to be any man’s wife,’ answered she; but this was only pretence, for her heart too was glad.

Next morning early came the prince, bringing with him bridal gifts, and splendid wedding garments, to carry the maiden back to his palace.

But before he let her go the ogre called her to him, and said, ‘Be careful, girl, never to speak to the prince; and when he speaks to you, you must be dumb, unless he swears “by the head of Buk Ettemsuch.” Then you may speak.’

‘Very well,’ answered the girl.

They set out; and when they reached the palace, the prince led his bride to the room he had prepared for her, and said ‘Speak to me, my wife,’ but she was silent; and by-and-by he left her, thinking that perhaps she was shy. The next day the same thing happened, and the next.

At last he said, ‘Well, if you won’t speak, I shall go and get another wife who will.’ And he did.

Now when the new wife was brought to the palace the daughter of Buk Ettemsuch rose, and spoke to the ladies who had come to attend on the second bride. ‘Go and sit down. I will make ready the feast.’ And the ladies sat down as they were told, and waited.

The maiden sat down too, and called out, ‘Come here, firewood,’ and the firewood came. ‘Come here, fire,’ and the fire came and kindled the wood. ‘Come here, pot.’ ‘Come here, oil;’ and the pot and the oil came. ‘Get into the pot, oil!’ said she, and the oil did it. When the oil was boiling, the maiden dipped all her fingers in it, and they became ten fried fishes. ‘Come here, oven,’ she cried next, and the oven came. ‘Fire, heat the oven.’ And the fire heated it. When it was hot enough, the maiden jumped in, just as she was, with her beautiful silver and gold dress, and all her jewels. In a minute or two she had turned into a snow-white loaf, that made your mouth water.

Said the loaf to the ladies, ‘You can eat now; do not stand so far off;’ but they only stared at each other, speechless with surprise.

'What are you staring at?' asked the new bride.

'At all these wonders,' replied the ladies.

'Do you call *these* wonders?' said she scornfully; 'I can do that too,' and she jumped straight into the oven, and was burnt up in a moment.

Then they ran to the prince and said: 'Come quickly, your wife is dead!'

'Bury her, then!' returned he. 'But why did she do it? I am sure I said nothing to make her throw herself into the oven.'

Accordingly the burnt woman was buried, but the prince would not go to the funeral as all his thoughts were still with the wife who would not speak to him. The next night he said to her, 'Dear wife, are you afraid that something dreadful will happen if you speak to me? If you still persist in being dumb, I shall be forced to get another wife.' The poor girl longed to speak, but dread of the ogre kept her silent, and the prince did as he had said, and brought a fresh bride into the palace. And when she and her ladies were seated in state, the maiden planted a sharp stake in the ground, and sat herself down comfortably on it, and began to spin.

'What are you staring at so?' said the new bride to her ladies. 'Do you think that is anything wonderful? Why, I can do as much myself!'

'I am sure you can't,' said they, much too surprised to be polite.

Then the maid sprang off the stake and left the room, and instantly the new wife took her place. But the sharp stake ran through, and she was dead in a moment. So they sent to the prince and said, 'Come quickly, and bury your wife.'

'Bury her yourselves,' he answered. 'What did she do it for? It was not by my orders that she impaled herself on the stake.'

So they buried her; and in the evening the prince came to the daughter of Buk Ettemsuch, and said to her, 'Speak to me, or I shall have to take another wife.' But she was afraid to speak to him.

The following day the prince hid himself in the room and watched. And soon the maiden woke, and said to the pitcher and to the water-jug, 'Quick! go down to the spring and bring me some water; I am thirsty.'

And they went. But as they were filling themselves at the spring, the water-jug knocked against the pitcher and broke off its spout. And the pitcher burst into tears, and ran to the maiden, and said: 'Mistress, beat the water-jug, for he has broken my spout!'

'By the head of Buk Ettemsuch, I implore you not to beat me!'

'Ah,' she replied, 'if only my husband had sworn by that oath, I could have spoken to him from the beginning, and he need never have taken another wife.

But now he will never say it, and he will have to go on marrying fresh ones.’

And the prince, from his hiding-place, heard her words, and he jumped up and ran to her and said, ‘By the head of Buk Ettemsuch, speak to me.’

So she spoke to him, and they lived happily to the end of their days, because the girl kept the promise she had made to the ogre.

LAUGHING EYE AND WEEPING EYE, OR THE LIMPING FOX

(SERVIAN STORY)

Once upon a time there lived a man whose right eye always smiled, and whose left eye always cried; and this man had three sons, two of them very clever, and the third very stupid. Now these three sons were very curious about the peculiarity of their father's eyes, and as they could not puzzle out the reason for themselves, they determined to ask their father why he did not have eyes like other people.

So the eldest of the three went one day into his father's room and put the question straight out; but, instead of answering, the man flew into a fearful rage, and sprang at him with a knife. The young fellow ran away in a terrible fright, and took refuge with his brothers, who were awaiting anxiously the result of the interview.

'You had better go yourselves,' was all the reply they got, 'and see if you will fare any better.'

Upon hearing this, the second son entered his father's room, only to be treated in the same manner as his brother; and back he came telling the youngest, the fool of the family, that it was his turn to try his luck.

Then the youngest son marched boldly up to his father and said to him, 'My brothers would not let me know what answer you had given to their question. But now, do tell me why your right eye always laughs and your left eye always weeps.'

As before, the father grew purple with fury, and rushed forwards with his knife. But the simpleton did not stir a step; he knew that he had really nothing to fear from his father.

'Ah, now I see who is my true son,' exclaimed the old man; 'the others are mere cowards. And as you have shown me that you are brave, I will satisfy your curiosity. My right eye laughs because I am glad to have a son like you; my left eye weeps because a precious treasure has been stolen from me. I had in my garden a vine that yielded a tun of wine every hour — someone has managed to steal it, so I weep its loss.'

The simpleton returned to his brothers and told them of their father's loss, and they all made up their minds to set out at once in search of the vine. They travelled together till they came to some cross roads, and there they parted, the two elder ones taking one road, and the simpleton the other.

‘Thank goodness we have got rid of that idiot,’ exclaimed the two elder. ‘Now let us have some breakfast.’ And they sat down by the roadside and began to eat.

They had only half finished, when a lame fox came out of a wood and begged them to give him something to eat. But they jumped up and chased him off with their sticks, and the poor fox limped away on his three pads. As he ran he reached the spot where the youngest son was getting out the food he had brought with him, and the fox asked him for a crust of bread. The simpleton had not very much for himself, but he gladly gave half of his meal to the hungry fox.

‘Where are you going, brother?’ said the fox, when he had finished his share of the bread; and the young man told him the story of his father and the wonderful vine.

‘Dear me, how lucky!’ said the fox. ‘I know what has become of it. Follow me!’ So they went on till they came to the gate of a large garden.

‘You will find here the vine that you are seeking, but it will not be at all easy to get it. You must listen carefully to what I am going to say. Before you reach the vine you will have to pass twelve outposts, each consisting of two guards. If you see these guards looking straight at you, go on without fear, for they are asleep. But if their eyes are shut then beware, for they are wide awake. If you once get to the vine, you will find two shovels, one of wood and the other of iron. Be sure not to take the iron one; it will make a noise and rouse the guards, and then you are lost.’

The young man got safely through the garden without any adventures till he came to the vine which yielded a tun of wine an hour. But he thought he should find it impossible to dig the hard earth with only a wooden shovel, so picked up the iron one instead. The noise it made soon awakened the guards. They seized the poor simpleton and carried him to their master.

‘Why do you try to steal my vine?’ demanded he; ‘and how did you manage to get past the guards?’

‘The vine is not yours; it belongs to my father, and if you will not give it to me now, I will return and get it somehow.’

‘You shall have the vine if you will bring me in exchange an apple off the golden apple-tree that flowers every twenty-four hours, and bears fruit of gold.’ So saying, he gave orders that the simpleton should be released, and this done, the youth hurried off to consult the fox.

‘Now you see,’ observed the fox, ‘this comes of not following my advice. However, I will help you to get the golden apple. It grows in a garden that you will easily recognise from my description. Near the apple-tree are two poles, one of gold, the other of wood. Take the wooden pole, and you will be able to reach the apple.’

Master Simpleton listened carefully to all that was told him, and after crossing the garden, and escaping as before from the men who were watching it, soon arrived at the apple-tree. But he was so dazzled by the sight of the beautiful golden fruit, that he quite forgot all that the fox had said. He seized the golden pole, and struck the branch a sounding blow. The guards at once awoke, and conducted him to their master. Then the simpleton had to tell his story.

‘I will give you the golden apple,’ said the owner of the garden, ‘if you will bring me in exchange a horse which can go round the world in four-and-twenty hours.’ And the young man departed, and went to find the fox.

This time the fox was really angry, and no wonder.

‘If you had listened to me, you would have been home with your father by this time. However I am willing to help you once more. Go into the forest, and you will find the horse with two halters round his neck. One is of gold, the other of hemp. Lead him by the hempen halter, or else the horse will begin to neigh, and will waken the guards. Then all is over with you.’

So Master Simpleton searched till he found the horse, and was struck dumb at its beauty.

‘What!’ he said to himself, ‘put the hempen halter on an animal like that? Not I, indeed!’

Then the horse neighed loudly; the guards seized our young friend and conducted him before their master.

‘I will give you the golden horse,’ said he, ‘if you will bring me in exchange a golden maiden who has never yet seen either sun or moon.’

‘But if I am to bring you the golden maiden you must lend me first the golden steed with which to seek for her.’

‘Ah,’ replied the owner of the golden horse, ‘but who will undertake that you will ever come back?’

‘I swear on the head of my father,’ answered the young man, ‘that I will bring back either the maiden or the horse.’ And he went away to consult the fox.

Now, the fox who was always patient and charitable to other people’s faults, led him to the entrance of a deep grotto, where stood a maiden all of gold, and beautiful as the day. He placed her on his horse and prepared to mount.

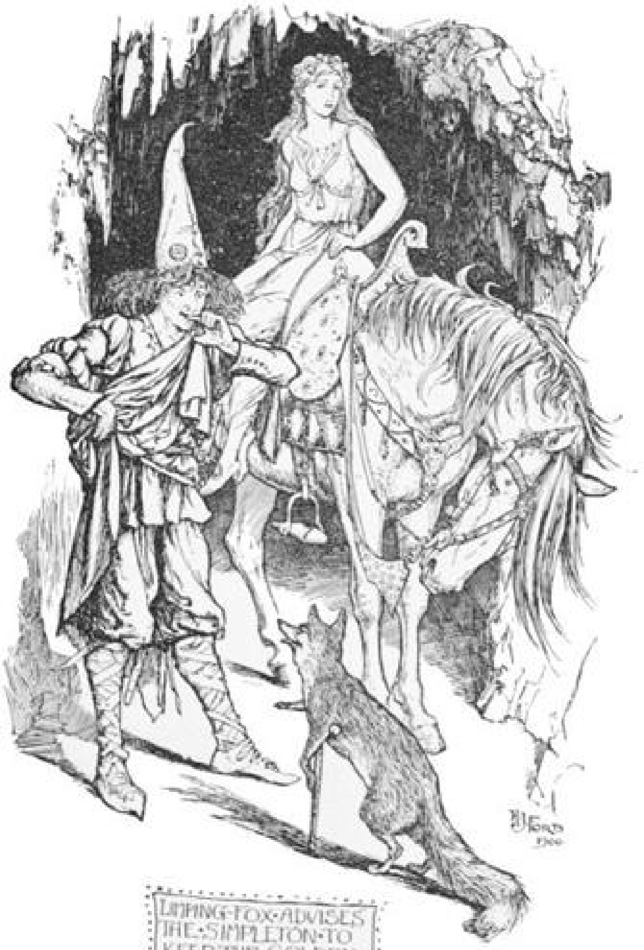

LIMPING·FOX·ADVISES THE·SIMPLETON·TO KEEP·THE·GOLDEN GIRL·HIMSELF·

‘Are you not sorry,’ said the fox, ‘to give such a lovely maiden in exchange for a horse? Yet you are bound to do it, for you have sworn by the head of your father. But perhaps I could manage to take her place.’ So saying, the fox transformed himself into another golden maiden, so like the first that hardly anyone could tell the difference between them.

The simpleton took her straight to the owner of the horse, who was enchanted with her.

And the young man got back his father’s vine and married the *real* golden maiden into the bargain.

THE UNLOOKED-FOR PRINCE

(POLISH STORY)

A long time ago there lived a king and queen who had no children, although they both wished very much for a little son. They tried not to let each other see how unhappy they were, and pretended to take pleasure in hunting and hawking and all sorts of other sports; but at length the king could bear it no longer, and declared that he must go and visit the furthest corners of his kingdom, and that it would be many months before he should return to his capital.

By that time he hoped he would have so many things to think about that he would have forgotten to trouble about the little son who never came.

The country the king reigned over was very large, and full of high, stony mountains and sandy deserts, so that it was not at all easy to go from one place to another. One day the king had wandered out alone, meaning to go only a little distance, but everything looked so alike he could not make out the path by which he had come. He walked on and on for hours, the sun beating hotly on his head, and his legs trembling under him, and he might have died of thirst if he had not suddenly stumbled on a little well, which looked as if it had been newly dug. On the surface floated a silver cup with a golden handle, but as it bobbed about whenever the king tried to seize it, he was too thirsty to wait any longer and knelt down and drank his fill.

When he had finished he began to rise from his knees, but somehow his beard seemed to have stuck fast in the water, and with all his efforts he could not pull it out. After two or three jerks to his head, which only hurt him without doing any good, he called out angrily, ‘Let go at once! Who is holding me?’

‘It is I, the King Kostieï,’ said a voice from the well, and looking up through the water was a little man with green eyes and a big head. ‘You have drunk from my spring, and I shall not let you go until you promise to give me the most precious thing your palace contains, which was not there when you left it.’

Now the only thing that the king much cared for in his palace was the queen herself, and as she was weeping bitterly on a pile of cushions in the great hall when he had ridden away, he knew that Kostieï’s words could not apply to her. So he cheerfully gave the promise asked for by the ugly little man, and in the twinkling of an eye, man, spring, and cup had disappeared, and the king was left kneeling on the dry sand, wondering if it was all a dream. But as he felt much stronger and better he made up his mind that this strange adventure must really have happened, and he sprang on his horse and rode off with a light heart to look for his companions.

In a few weeks they began to set out on their return home, which they reached one hot day, eight months after they had all left. The king was greatly beloved by his people, and crowds lined the roads, shouting and waving their hats as the procession passed along. On the steps of the palace stood the queen, with a splendid golden cushion in her arms, and on the cushion the most beautiful boy that ever was seen, wrapped about in a cloud of lace. In a moment Kostieï's words rushed into the king's mind, and he began to weep bitterly, to the surprise of everybody, who had expected him nearly to die of joy at the sight of his son. But try as he would and work as hard as he might he could never forget his promise, and every time he let the baby out of his sight he thought that he had seen it for the last time.

However, years passed on and the prince grew first into a big boy, and then into a fine young man. Kostieï made no sign, and gradually even the anxious king thought less and less about him, and in the end forgot him altogether.

There was no family in the whole kingdom happier than the king and queen and prince, until one day when the youth met a little old man as he was hunting in a lonely part of the woods.

'How are you, my unlooked-for Prince?' he said. 'You kept them waiting a good long time!'

'And who are you?' asked the prince.

'You will know soon enough. When you go home give my compliments to your father and tell him that I wish he would square accounts with me. If he neglects to pay his debts he will bitterly repent it.'

So saying the old man disappeared, and the prince returned to the palace and told his father what had happened.

The king turned pale and explained to his son the terrible story.

'Do not grieve over it, father,' answered the prince. 'It is nothing so dreadful after all! I will find some way to force Kostieï to give up his rights over me. But if I do not come back in a year's time, you must give up all hopes of ever seeing me.'

Then the prince began to prepare for his journey. His father gave him a complete suit of steel armour, a sword, and a horse, while his mother hung round his neck a cross of gold. So, kissing him tenderly, with many tears they let him go.

He rode steadily on for three days, and at sunset on the fourth day he found himself on the seashore. On the sand before him lay twelve white dresses, dazzling as the snow, yet as far as his eyes could reach there was no one in sight to whom they could belong. Curious to see what would happen, he took up one of the garments, and leaving his horse loose, to wander about the adjoining fields, he hid himself among some willows and waited. In a few minutes a flock of geese which had been paddling about in the sea approached the shore, and put on the dresses, struck the sand with their feet and were transformed in the twinkling of an eye into eleven beautiful young girls, who flew away as fast as they could. The twelfth and youngest remained in the water, stretching out her long white neck and looking about her anxiously. Suddenly, among the willows, she perceived the king's son, and called out to him with a human voice:

'Oh Prince, give me back my dress, and I shall be for ever grateful to you.'

The Prince hastened to lay the dress on the sand, and walked away. When the maiden had thrown off the goose-skin and quickly put on her proper clothes, she came towards him and he saw that none had ever seen or told of such beauty as hers. She blushed and held out her hand, saying to him in a soft voice:

'I thank you, noble Prince, for having granted my request. I am the youngest daughter of Kostieï the immortal, who has twelve daughters and rules over the kingdoms under the earth. Long time my father has waited for you, and great is his anger. But trouble not yourself and fear nothing, only do as I bid you. When you see the King Kostieï, fall straightway upon your knees and heed neither his threats nor his cry, but draw near to him boldly. That which will happen after, you will know in time. Now let us go.'

At these words she struck the ground with her foot and a gulf opened, down which they went right into the heart of the earth. In a short time they reached Kostieï's palace, which gives light, with a light brighter than the sun, to the dark kingdoms below. And the prince, as he had been bidden, entered boldly into the hall.

Kostieï, with a shining crown upon his head, sat in the centre upon a golden throne. His green eyes glittered like glass, his hands were as the claws of a crab. When he caught sight of the prince he uttered piercing yells, which shook the walls of the palace. The prince took no notice, but continued his advance on his knees towards the throne. When he had almost reached it, the king broke out into a laugh and said:

'It has been very lucky for you that you have been able to make me laugh. Stay with us in our underground empire, only first you will have to do three things. To-night it is late. Go to sleep; to-morrow I will tell you.'

Early the following morning the prince received a message that Kostieï was ready to see him. He got up and dressed, and hastened to the presence chamber, where the little king was seated on his throne. When the prince appeared, bowing low before him, Kostieï began:

‘Now, Prince, this is what you have to do. By to-night you must build me a marble palace, with windows of crystal and a roof of gold. It is to stand in the middle of a great park, full of streams and lakes. If you are able to build it you shall be my friend. If not, off with your head.’

The prince listened in silence to this startling speech, and then returning to his room set himself to think about the certain death that awaited him. He was quite absorbed in these thoughts, when suddenly a bee flew against the window and tapped, saying, ‘Let me come in.’ He rose and opened the window, and there stood before him the youngest princess.

‘What are you dreaming about, Prince?’

‘I was dreaming of your father, who has planned my death.’

‘Fear nothing. You may sleep in peace, and to-morrow morning when you awake you will find the palace all ready.’

What she said, she did. The next morning when the prince left his room he saw before him a palace more beautiful than his fancy had ever pictured. Kostieï for his part could hardly believe his eyes, and pondered deeply how it had got there.

‘Well, this time you have certainly won; but you are not going to be let off so easily. To-morrow all my twelve daughters shall stand in a row before you, and if you cannot tell me which of them is the youngest, off goes your head.’

‘What! Not recognise the youngest princess!’ said the Prince to himself, as he entered his room, ‘a likely story!’

‘It is such a difficult matter that you will never be able to do it without my help,’ replied the bee, who was buzzing about the ceiling. ‘We are all so exactly alike, that even our father scarcely knows the difference between us.’

‘Then what must I do?’

‘This. The youngest is she who will have a ladybird on her eyelid. Be very careful. Now good-bye.’

Next morning King Kostieï again sent for the prince. The young princesses were all drawn up in a row, dressed precisely in the same manner, and with their eyes all cast down. As the prince looked at them, he was amazed at their likeness. Twice he walked along the line, without being able to detect the sign agreed upon. The third time his heart beat fast at the sight of a tiny speck upon the eyelid of one of the girls.

‘This one is the youngest,’ he said.

‘How in the world did you guess?’ cried Kostieï in a fury. ‘There is some jugglery about it! But you are not going to escape me so easily. In three hours you shall come here and give me another proof of your cleverness. I shall set alight a handful of straw, and before it is burnt up you will have turned it into a pair of boots. If not, off goes your head.'

So the prince returned sadly into his room, but the bee was there before him.

'Why do you look so melancholy, my handsome Prince?'

'How can I help looking melancholy when your father has ordered me to make him a pair of boots? Does he take me for a shoemaker?'

'What do you think of doing?'

'Not of making boots, at any rate! I am not afraid of death. One can only die once after all.'

'No, Prince, you shall not die. I will try to save you. And we will fly together or die together.'

As she spoke she spat upon the ground, and then drawing the prince after her out of the room, she locked the door behind her and threw away the key. Holding each other tight by the hand, they made their way up into the sunlight, and found themselves by the side of the same sea, while the prince's horse was still quietly feeding in the neighbouring meadow. The moment he saw his master, the horse whinnied and galloped towards him. Without losing an instant the prince sprang into the saddle, swung the princess behind him, and away they went like an arrow from a bow.

When the hour arrived which Kostieï had fixed for the prince's last trial, and there were no signs of him, the king sent to his room to ask why he delayed so long. The servants, finding the door locked, knocked loudly and received for answer, 'In one moment.' It was the spittle, which was imitating the voice of the prince.

The answer was taken back to Kostieï. He waited; still no prince. He sent the servants back again, and the same voice replied, 'Immediately.'

'He is making fun of me!' shrieked Kostieï in a rage. 'Break in the door, and bring him to me!'

The servants hurried to do his bidding. The door was broken open. Nobody inside; but just the spittle in fits of laughter! Kostieï was beside himself with rage, and commanded his guards to ride after the fugitives. If the guards returned without the fugitives, their heads should pay for it.

By this time the prince and princess had got a good start, and were feeling quite happy, when suddenly they heard the sound of a gallop far behind them. The prince sprang from the saddle, and laid his ear to the ground.

'They are pursuing us,' he said.

'Then there is no time to be lost,' answered the princess; and as she spoke she changed herself into a river, the prince into a bridge, the horse into a crow, and divided the wide road beyond the bridge into three little ones. When the soldiers came up to the bridge, they paused uncertainly. How were they to know which of the three roads the fugitives had taken? They gave it up in despair and returned in trembling to Kostieï.

‘Idiots!’ he exclaimed, in a passion. ‘They *were* the bridge and the river, of course! Do you mean to say you never thought of that? Go back at once!’ and off they galloped like lightning.

But time had been lost, and the prince and princess were far on their way.

‘I hear a horse,’ cried the princess.

The prince jumped down and laid his ear to the ground.

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘they are not far off now.’

In an instant prince, princess, and horse had all disappeared, and instead was a dense forest, crossed and recrossed by countless paths. Kostieï’s soldiers dashed hastily into the forest, believing they saw before them the flying horse with its double burden. They seemed close upon them, when suddenly horse, wood, everything disappeared, and they found themselves at the place where they started. There was nothing for it but to return to Kostieï, and tell him of this fresh disaster.

‘A horse! a horse!’ cried the king. ‘I will go after them myself. *This* time they shall *not* escape.’ And he galloped off, foaming with anger.

‘I think I hear someone pursuing us,’ said the princess.

‘Yes, so do I.’

‘And this time it is Kostieï himself. But his power only reaches as far as the first church, and he can go no farther. Give me your golden cross.’ So the prince unfastened the cross which was his mother’s gift, and the princess hastily changed herself into a church, the prince into a priest, and the horse into a belfry.

It was hardly done when Kostieï came up.

‘Greeting, monk. Have you seen some travellers on horseback pass this way?’

‘Yes, the prince and Kostieï’s daughter have just gone by. They have entered the church, and told me to give you their greetings if I met you.’

Then Kostieï knew that he had been hopelessly beaten, and the prince and princess continued their journey without any more adventures.

THE SIMPLETON

There lived, once upon a time, a man who was as rich as he could be; but as no happiness in this world is ever quite complete, he had an only son who was such a simpleton that he could barely add two and two together. At last his father determined to put up with his stupidity no longer, and giving him a purse full of gold, he sent him off to seek his fortune in foreign lands, mindful of the adage:

How much a fool that’s sent to roam
Excels a fool that stays at home.

Moscione, for this was the youth’s name, mounted a horse, and set out for Venice, hoping to find a ship there that would take him to Cairo. After he had ridden for some time he saw a man standing at the foot of a poplar tree, and said to him: ‘What’s your name, my friend; where do you come from, and what can you do?’

The man replied, ‘My name is Quick-as-Thought, I come from Fleet-town, and I can run like lightning.’

‘I should like to see you,’ returned Moscione.

‘Just wait a minute, then,’ said Quick-as-Thought, ‘and I will soon show you that I am speaking the truth.’

The words were hardly out of his mouth when a young doe ran right across the field they were standing in.

Quick-as-Thought let her run on a short distance, in order to give her a start, and then pursued her so quickly and so lightly that you could not have tracked his footsteps if the field had been strewn with flour. In a very few springs he had overtaken the doe, and had so impressed Moscione with his fleetness of foot that he begged Quick-as-Thought to go with him, promising at the same time to reward him handsomely.

Quick-as-Thought agreed to his proposal, and they continued on their journey together. They had hardly gone a mile when they met a young man, and Moscione stopped and asked him: ‘What’s your name, my friend; where do you come from, and what can you do?’

The man thus addressed answered promptly, ‘I am called Hare’s-ear, I come from Curiosity Valley, and if I lay my ear on the ground, without moving from the spot, I can hear everything that goes on in the world, the plots and intrigues of court and cottage, and all the plans of mice and men.’

‘If that’s the case,’ replied Moscione, ‘Just tell me what’s going on in my own home at present.’

The youth laid his ear to the ground and at once reported: ‘An old man is saying to his wife, “Heaven be praised that we have got rid of Moscione, for perhaps, when he has been out in the world a little, he may gain some common sense, and return home less of a fool than when he set out.”’

‘Enough, enough,’ cried Moscione. ‘You speak the truth, and I believe you. Come with us, and your fortune’s made.’

The young man consented; and after they had gone about ten miles, they met a third man, to whom Moscione said: ‘What’s your name, my brave fellow; where were you born, and what can you do?’

The man replied, ‘I am called Hit-the-Point, I come from the city of Perfect-aim, and I draw my bow so exactly that I can shoot a pea off a stone.’

‘I should like to see you do it, if you’ve no objection,’ said Moscione.

The man at once placed a pea on a stone, and, drawing his bow, he shot it in the middle with the greatest possible ease.

When Moscione saw that he had spoken the truth, he immediately asked Hit-the-Point to join his party.

After they had all travelled together for some days, they came upon a number of people who were digging a trench in the blazing sun.

Moscione felt so sorry for them, that he said: ‘My dear friends, how can you endure working so hard in heat that would cook an egg in a minute?’

But one of the workmen answered: ‘We are as fresh as daisies, for we have a young man among us who blows on our backs like the west wind.’

‘Let me see him,’ said Moscione.

The youth was called, and Moscione asked him: ‘What’s your name; where do you come from, and what can you do?’

He answered: ‘I am called Blow-Blast, I come from Wind-town, and with my mouth I can make any winds you please. If you wish a west wind I can raise it for you in a second, but if you prefer a north wind I can blow these houses down before your eyes.’

‘Seeing is believing,’ returned the cautious Moscione.

Blow-Blast at once began to convince him of the truth of his assertion. First he blew so softly that it seemed like the gentle breeze at evening, and then he turned round and raised such a mighty storm, that he blew down a whole row of oak trees.

When Moscione saw this he was delighted, and begged Blow-Blast to join his company. And as they went on their way they met another man, whom Moscione addressed as usual: ‘What’s your name; where do you come from, and what can you do?'

'I am called Strong-Back; I come from Power-borough, and I possess such strength that I can take a mountain on my back, and it seems a feather to me.'

'If that's the case,' said Moscione, 'you are a clever fellow; but I should like some proof of your strength.'

Then Strong-Back loaded himself with great boulders of rock and trunks of trees, so that a hundred waggons could not have taken away all that he carried on his back.

When Moscione saw this he prevailed on Strong-Back to join his troop, and they all continued their journey till they came to a country called Flower Vale. Here there reigned a king whose only daughter ran as quickly as the wind, and so lightly that she could run over a field of young oats without bending a single blade. The king had given out a proclamation that anyone who could beat the princess in a race should have her for a wife, but that all who failed in the competition should lose their head.

As soon as Moscione heard of the Royal Proclamation, he hastened to the king and challenged the princess to race with him. But on the morning appointed for the trial he sent word to the king that he was not feeling well, and that as he could not run himself he would supply someone to take his place.

'It's just the same to me,' said Canetella, the princess; 'let anyone come forward that likes, I am quite prepared to meet him.'

At the time appointed for the race the whole place was crowded with people anxious to see the contest, and, punctual to the moment, Quick-as-Thought, and Canetella dressed in a short skirt and very lightly shod, appeared at the starting-point.

Then a silver trumpet sounded, and the two rivals started on their race, looking for all the world like a greyhound chasing a hare.

But Quick-as-Thought, true to his name, outran the princess, and when the goal was reached the people all clapped their hands and shouted, 'Long live the stranger!'

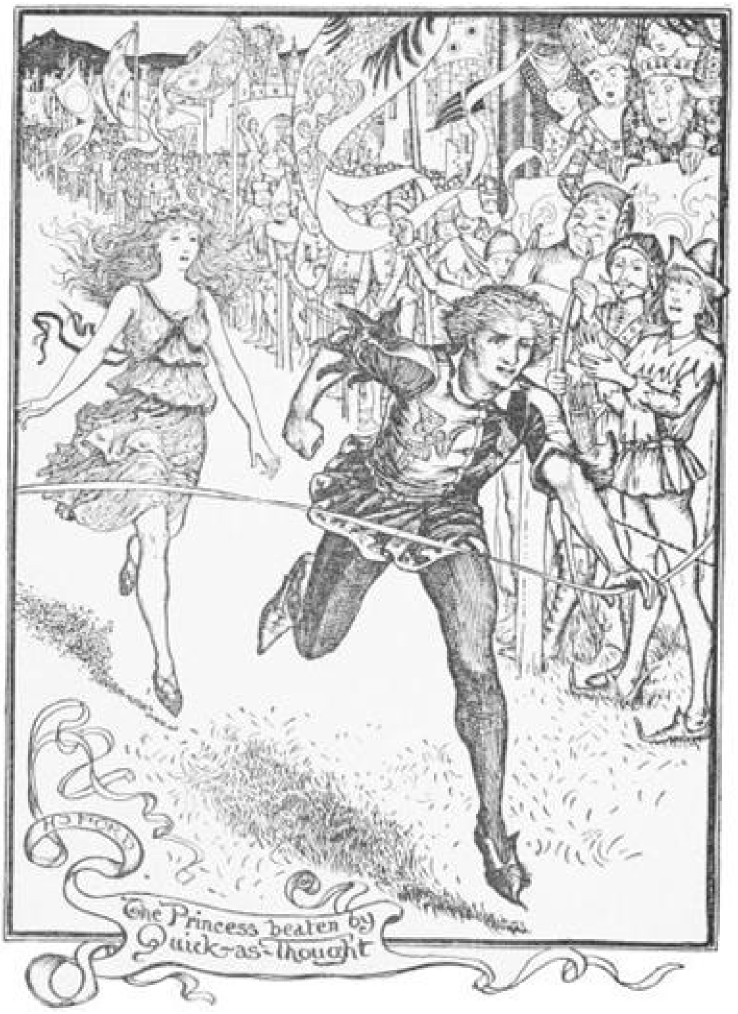

The Princess beaten by Quick-as-Thought

Canetella was much depressed by her defeat; but, as the race had to be run a second time, she determined she would not be beaten again. Accordingly she went home and sent Quick-as-Thought a magic ring, which prevented the person who wore it, not only from running, but even from walking, and begged that he would wear it for her sake.

Early next morning the crowd assembled on the race-course, and Canetella and Quick-as-Thought began their trial afresh. The princess ran as quickly as ever, but poor Quick-as-Thought was like an overloaded donkey, and could not go a step.

Then Hit-the-Point, who had heard all about the princess's deception from Hare's-ear, when he saw the danger his friend was in, seized his bow and arrow and shot the stone out of the ring Quick-as-Thought was wearing. In a moment the youth's legs became free again, and in five bounds he had overtaken Canetella and won the race.

The king was much disgusted when he saw that he must acknowledge Moscione as his future son-in-law, and summoned the wise men of his court to ask if there was no way out of the difficulty. The council at once decided that Canetella was far too dainty a morsel for the mouth of such a travelling tinker, and advised the king to offer Moscione a present of gold, which no doubt a beggar like him would prefer to all the wives in the world.

The king was delighted at this suggestion, and calling Moscione before him, he asked him what sum of money he would take instead of his promised bride.

Moscione first consulted with his friends, and then answered: ‘I demand as much gold and precious stones as my followers can carry away.’

The king thought he was being let off very easily, and produced coffers of gold, sacks of silver, and chests of precious stones; but the more Strong-Back was loaded with the treasure the straighter he stood.

At last the treasury was quite exhausted, and the king had to send his courtiers to his subjects to collect all the gold and silver they possessed. But nothing was of any avail, and Strong-Back only asked for more.

When the king’s counsellors saw the unexpected result of their advice, they said it would be more than foolish to let some strolling thieves take so much treasure out of the country, and urged the king to send a troop of soldiers after them, to recover the gold and precious stones.

So the king sent a body of armed men on foot and horse, to take back the treasure Strong-Back was carrying away with him.

But Hare’s-ear, who had heard what the counsellors had advised the king, told his companions just as the dust of their pursuers was visible on the horizon.

No sooner had Blow-Blast taken in their danger than he raised such a mighty wind that all the king’s army was blown down like so many nine-pins, and as they were quite unable to get up again, Moscione and his companions proceeded on their way without further let or hindrance.

As soon as they reached his home, Moscione divided his spoil with his companions, at which they were much delighted. He, himself, stayed with his father, who was obliged at last to acknowledge that his son was not quite such a fool as he looked.

THE STREET MUSICIANS

A man once possessed a donkey which had served him faithfully for many years, but at last the poor beast grew old and feeble, and every day his work became more of a burden. As he was no longer of any use, his master made up his mind to shoot him; but when the donkey learnt the fate that was in store for him, he determined not to die, but to run away to the nearest town and there to become a street musician.

When he had trotted along for some distance he came upon a greyhound lying on the road, and panting for dear life. ‘Well, brother,’ said the donkey, ‘what’s the matter with you? You look rather tired.’

‘So I am,’ replied the dog, ‘but because I am getting old and am growing weaker every day, and cannot go out hunting any longer, my master wanted to poison me; and, as life is still sweet, I have taken leave of him. But how I am to earn my own livelihood I haven’t a notion.’

‘Well,’ said the donkey, ‘I am on my way to the nearest big town, where I mean to become a street musician. Why don’t you take up music as a profession and come along with me? I’ll play the flute and you can play the kettle-drum.’

The greyhound was quite pleased at the idea, and the two set off together. When they had gone a short distance they met a cat with a face as long as three rainy days. ‘Now, what has happened to upset your happiness, friend puss?’ inquired the donkey.

‘It’s impossible to look cheerful when one feels depressed,’ answered the cat. ‘I am well up in years now, and have lost most of my teeth; consequently I prefer sitting in front of the fire to catching mice, and so my old mistress wanted to drown me. I have no wish to die yet, so I ran away from her; but good advice is expensive, and I don’t know where I am to go to, or what I am to do.’

‘Come to the nearest big town with us,’ said the donkey, ‘and try your fortune as a street musician. I know what sweet music you make at night, so you are sure to be a success.’

The cat was delighted with the donkey’s proposal, and they all continued their journey together. In a short time they came to the courtyard of an inn, where they found a cock crowing lustily. ‘What in the world is the matter with you?’ asked the donkey. ‘The noise you are making is enough to break the drums of our ears.’

‘I am only prophesying good weather,’ said the cock; ‘for to-morrow is a feast day, and just because it is a holiday and a number of people are expected at the inn, the landlady has given orders for my neck to be wrung to-night, so that I may be made into soup for to-morrow’s dinner.’

‘I’ll tell you what, redcap,’ said the donkey; ‘you had much better come with us to the nearest town. You have got a good voice, and could join a street band we are getting up.’ The cock was much pleased with the idea, and the party proceeded on their way.

But the nearest big town was a long way off, and it took them more than a day to reach it. In the evening they came to a wood, and they made up their minds to go no further, but to spend the night there. The donkey and the greyhound lay down under a big tree, and the cat and the cock got up into the branches, the cock flying right up to the topmost twig, where he thought he would be safe from all danger. Before he went to sleep he looked round the four points of the compass, and saw a little spark burning in the distance. He called out to his companions that he was sure there must be a house not far off, for he could see a light shining.

When he heard this, the donkey said at once: ‘Then we must get up, and go and look for the house, for this is very poor shelter.’ And the greyhound added: ‘Yes; I feel I’d be all the better for a few bones and a scrap or two of meat.’

So they set out for the spot where the light was to be seen shining faintly in the distance, but the nearer they approached it the brighter it grew, till at last they came to a brilliantly lighted house. The donkey being the biggest of the party, went to the window and looked in.

‘Well, greyhead, what do you see?’ asked the cock.

‘I see a well-covered table,’ replied the donkey, ‘with excellent food and drink, and several robbers are sitting round it, enjoying themselves highly.’

‘I wish we were doing the same,’ said the cock.

‘So do I,’ answered the donkey. ‘Can’t we think of some plan for turning out the robbers, and taking possession of the house ourselves?’

So they consulted together what they were to do, and at last they arranged that the donkey should stand at the window with his fore-feet on the sill, that the greyhound should get on his back, the cat on the dog’s shoulder, and the cock on the cat’s head. When they had grouped themselves in this way, at a given signal, they all began their different forms of music. The donkey brayed, the greyhound barked, the cat miawed, and the cock crew. Then they all scrambled through the window into the room, breaking the glass into a thousand pieces as they did so.

The robbers were all startled by the dreadful noise, and thinking that some evil spirits at the least were entering the house, they rushed out into the wood, their hair standing on end with terror. The four companions, delighted with the success of their trick, sat down at the table, and ate and drank all the food and wine that the robbers had left behind them.

When they had finished their meal they put out the lights, and each animal chose a suitable sleeping-place. The donkey lay down in the courtyard outside the house, the dog behind the door, the cat in front of the fire, and the cock flew up on to a high shelf, and, as they were all tired after their long day, they soon went to sleep.

Shortly after midnight, when the robbers saw that no light was burning in the house and that all seemed quiet, the captain of the band said: ‘We were fools to let ourselves be so easily frightened away;’ and, turning to one of his men, he ordered him to go and see if all was safe.

The man found everything in silence and darkness, and going into the kitchen he thought he had better strike a light. He took a match, and mistaking the fiery eyes of the cat for two glowing coals, he tried to light his match with them. But the cat didn’t see the joke, and sprang at his face, spitting and scratching him in the most vigorous manner. The man was terrified out of his life, and tried to run out by the back door; but he stumbled over the greyhound, which bit him in the leg. Yelling with pain he ran across the courtyard only to receive a kick from the donkey’s hind leg as he passed him. In the meantime the cock had been roused from his slumbers, and feeling very cheerful he called out, from the shelf where he was perched, ‘Kikeriki!’

Then the robber hastened back to his captain and said: ‘Sir, there is a dreadful witch in the house, who spat at me and scratched my face with her long fingers; and before the door there stands a man with a long knife, who cut my leg severely. In the courtyard outside lies a black monster, who fell upon me with a huge wooden club; and that is not all, for, sitting on the roof, is a judge, who called out: “Bring the rascal to me.” So I fled for dear life.’

After this the robbers dared not venture into the house again, and they abandoned it for ever. But the four street musicians were so delighted with their lodgings that they determined to take up their abode in the robbers’ house, and, for all I know to the contrary, they may be living there to this day.

THE TWIN BROTHERS

Once there was a fisherman who had plenty of money but no children. One day an old woman came to his wife and said: ‘What use is all your prosperity to you when you have no children?’

‘It is God’s will,’ answered the fisherman’s wife.

‘Nay, my child, it is not God’s will, but the fault of your husband; for if he would but catch the little gold-fish you would surely have children. To-night, when he comes home, tell him he must go back and catch the little fish. He must then cut it in six pieces — one of these you must eat, and your husband the second, and soon after you will have two children. The third piece you must give to the dog, and she will have two puppies. The fourth piece give to the mare, and she will have two foals. The fifth piece bury on the right of the house door, and the sixth on the left, and two cypress trees will spring up there.’

When the fisherman came home at evening his wife told him all that the old woman had advised, and he promised to bring home the little gold-fish. Next morning, therefore, he went very early to the water, and caught the little fish. Then they did as the old woman had ordered, and in due time the fisherman’s wife had two sons, so like each other that no one could tell the difference. The dog had two puppies exactly alike, the mare had two foals, and on each side of the front door there sprang up two cypress trees precisely similar.

When the two boys were grown up, they were not content to remain at home, though they had wealth in plenty; but they wished to go out into the world, and make a name for themselves. Their father would not allow them both to go at once, as they were the only children he had. He said: ‘First one shall travel, and when he is come back then the other may go.’

So the one took his horse and his dog, and went, saying to his brother: ‘So long as the cypress trees are green, that is a sign that I am alive and well; but if one begins to wither, then make haste and come to me.’ So he went forth into the world.

One day he stopped at the house of an old woman, and as at evening he sat before the door, he perceived in front of him a castle standing on a hill. He asked the old woman to whom it belonged, and her answer was: ‘My son, it is the castle of the Fairest in the Land!’

‘And I am come here to woo her!’

‘That, my son, many have sought to do, and have lost their lives in the attempt; for she has cut off their heads and stuck them on the post you see standing there.’

‘And the same will she do to me, or else I shall be victor, for to-morrow I go there to court her.’

Then he took his zither and played upon it so beautifully that no one in all that land had ever heard the like, and the princess herself came to the window to listen.

The next morning the Fairest in the Land sent for the old woman and asked her, ‘Who is it that lives with you, and plays the zither so well?’

‘It is a stranger, princess, who arrived yesterday evening,’ answered the old woman.

And the princess then commanded that the stranger should be brought to her.

When he appeared before the princess she questioned him about his home and his family, and about this and that; and confessed at length that his zither-playing gave her great pleasure, and that she would take him for her husband. The stranger replied that it was with that intent he had come.

The princess then said: ‘You must now go to my father, and tell him you desire to have me to wife, and when he has put the three problems before you, then come back and tell me.’

The stranger then went straight to the king, and told him that he wished to wed his daughter.

And the king answered: ‘I shall be well pleased, provided you can do what I impose upon you; if not you will lose your head. Now, listen; out there on the ground, there lies a thick log, which measures more than two fathoms; if you can cleave it in two with one stroke of your sword, I will give you my daughter to wife. If you fail, then it will cost you your head.’

Then the stranger withdrew, and returned to the house of the old woman sore distressed, for he could believe nothing but that next day he must atone to the king with his head. And so full was he of the idea of how to set about cleaving the log that he forgot even his zither.

In the evening came the princess to the window to listen to his playing, and behold all was still. Then she called to him: ‘Why are you so cast down this evening, that you do not play on your zither?’

And he told her his trouble.

But she laughed at it, and called to him: ‘And you grieve over that? Bring quickly your zither, and play something for my amusement, and early to-morrow come to me.’

Then the stranger took his zither and played the whole evening for the amusement of the princess.

Next morning she took a hair from her locks and gave it to him, saying: ‘Take this hair, and wind it round your sword, then you will be able to cleave the log in two.’

Then the stranger went forth, and with one blow cleft the log in two.

But the king said: ‘I will impose another task upon you, before you can wed my daughter.’

‘Speak on,’ said the stranger.

‘Listen, then,’ answered the king; ‘you must mount a horse and ride three miles at full gallop, holding in each hand a goblet full of water. If you spill no drop then I shall give you my daughter to wife, but should you not succeed then I will take your life.’

Then the stranger returned to the house of the old woman, and again he was so troubled as to forget his zither.

In the evening the princess came to the window as before to listen to the music, but again all was still; and she called to him: ‘What is the matter that you do not play on your zither?’

Then he related all that the king had ordered him to do, and the princess answered: ‘Do not let yourself be disturbed, only play now, and come to me to-morrow morning.’

Then next morning he went to her, and she gave him her ring, saying: ‘Throw this ring into the water and it will immediately freeze, so that you will not spill any.’

The stranger did as the princess bade him, and carried the water all the way.

Then the king said: ‘Now I will give you a third task, and this shall be the last. I have a negro who will fight with you to-morrow, and if you are the conqueror you shall wed my daughter.’

The stranger returned, full of joy, to the house of the old woman, and that evening was so merry that the princess called to him: ‘You seem very cheerful this evening; what has my father told you that makes you so glad?’

He answered: ‘Your father has told me that to-morrow I must fight with his negro. He is only another man like myself, and I hope to subdue him, and to gain the contest.’

But the princess answered: ‘This is the hardest of all. I myself am the black man, for I swallow a drink that changes me into a negro of unconquerable strength. Go to-morrow morning to the market, buy twelve buffalo hides and wrap them round your horse; fasten this cloth round you, and when I am let loose upon you to-morrow show it to me, that I may hold myself back and may not kill you. Then when you fight me you must try to hit my horse between the eyes, for when you have killed it you have conquered me.’

Next morning, therefore, he went to the market and bought the twelve buffalo hides which he wrapped round his horse. Then he began to fight with the black man, and when the combat had already lasted a long time, and eleven hides were torn, then the stranger hit the negro’s horse between the eyes, so that it fell dead, and the black man was defeated.

Then said the king: ‘Because you have solved the three problems I take you for my son-in-law.’

But the stranger answered: ‘I have some business to conclude first; in fourteen days I will return and bring the bride home.’

So he arose and went into another country, where he came to a great town, and alighted at the house of an old woman. When he had had supper he begged of her some water to drink, but she answered: ‘My son, I have no water; a giant has taken possession of the spring, and only lets us draw from it once a year, when we bring him a maiden. He eats her up, and then he lets us draw water; just now it is the lot of the king’s daughter, and to-morrow she will be led forth.’

The next day accordingly the princess was led forth to the spring, and bound there with a golden chain. After that all the people went away and she was left alone.

When they had gone the stranger went to the maiden and asked her what ailed her that she lamented so much, and she answered that the reason was because the giant would come and eat her up. And the stranger promised that he would set her free if she would take him for her husband, and the princess joyfully consented.

When the giant appeared the stranger set his dog at him, and it took him by the throat and throttled him till he died; so the princess was set free.

Now when the king heard of it he gladly consented to the marriage, and the wedding took place with great rejoicings. The young bridegroom abode in the palace one hundred and one weeks. Then he began to find it too dull, and he desired to go out hunting. The king would fain have prevented it, but in this he could not succeed. Then he begged his son-in-law at least to take sufficient escort with him, but this, too, the young man evaded, and took only his horse and his dog.

He had ridden already a long way, when he saw in the distance a hut, and rode straight towards it in order to get some water to drink. There he found an old woman from whom he begged the water. She answered that first he should allow her to beat his dog with her little wand, that it might not bite her while she fetched the water. The hunter consented; and as soon as she had touched the dog with her wand it immediately turned to stone. Thereupon she touched the hunter and also his horse, and both turned to stone. As soon as that had happened, the cypress trees in front of his father’s house began to wither. And when the other brother saw this, he immediately set out in search of his twin. He came first to the town where his brother had slain the giant, and there fate led him to the same old woman where his brother had lodged. When she saw him she took him for his twin brother, and said to him: ‘Do not take it amiss of me, my son, that I did not come to wish you joy on your marriage with the king’s daughter.’

The stranger perceived what mistake she had made, but only said: ‘That does not matter, old woman,’ and rode on, without further speech, to the king’s palace, where the king and the princess both took him for his twin brother, and called out: ‘Why have you tarried so long away? We thought something evil had befallen you.’

When night came and he slept with the princess, who still believed him to be her husband, he laid his sword between them, and when morning came he rose early and went out to hunt. Fate led him by the same way which his brother had taken, and from a distance he saw him and knew that he was turned to stone. Then he entered the hut and ordered the old woman to disenchant his brother. But she answered: ‘Let me first touch your dog with my wand, and then I will free your brother.’

He ordered the dog, however, to take hold of her, and bite her up to the knee, till she cried out: ‘Tell your dog to let me go and I will set your brother free!’

But he only answered: ‘Tell me the magic words that I may disenchant him myself;’ and as she would not he ordered his dog to bite her up to the hip.

Then the old woman cried out: ‘I have two wands, with the green one I turn to stone, and with the red one I bring to life again.’

So the hunter took the red wand and disenchanted his brother, also his brother’s horse, and his dog, and ordered his own dog to eat the old woman up altogether.

While the brothers went on their way back to the castle of the king, the one brother related to the other how the cypress tree had all at once dried up and withered, how he had immediately set out in search of his twin, and how he had come to the castle of his father-in-law, and had claimed the princess as his wife. But the other brother became furious on hearing this, and smote him over the forehead till he died, and returned alone to the house of his father-in-law.

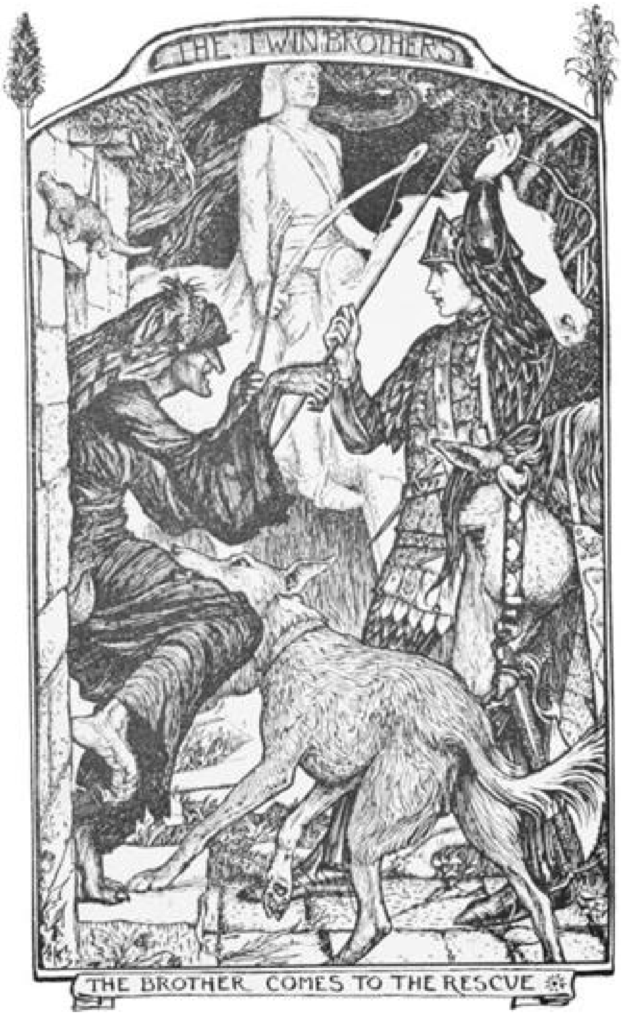

THE BROTHER COMES TO THE RESCUE

When night came and he was in bed the princess asked him: ‘What was the matter with you last night, that you never spoke a word to me?’

Then he cried out: ‘That was not me, but my brother, and I have slain him, because he told me by the way that he had claimed you for his wife!’

‘Do you know the place where you slew him?’ asked the princess, ‘and can you find the body?’

‘I know the place exactly.’

‘Then to-morrow we shall ride thither,’ said the princess.

Next morning accordingly they set out together, and when they had come to the place, the princess drew forth a small bottle that she had brought with her, and sprinkled the body with some drops of the water so that immediately he became alive again.

When he stood up, his brother said to him: ‘Forgive me, dear brother, that I slew you in my anger.’ Then they embraced and went together to the Fairest in the Land, whom the unmarried brother took to wife.

Then the brothers brought their parents to live with them, and all dwelt together in joy and happiness.

CANNETELLA

There was once upon a time a king who reigned over a country called ‘Bello Puojo.’ He was very rich and powerful, and had everything in the world he could desire except a child. But at last, after he had been married for many years, and was quite an old man, his wife Renzolla presented him with a fine daughter, whom they called Cannetella.

She grew up into a beautiful girl, and was as tall and straight as a young fir-tree. When she was eighteen years old her father called her to him and said: ‘You are of an age now, my daughter, to marry and settle down; but as I love you more than anything else in the world, and desire nothing but your happiness, I am determined to leave the choice of a husband to yourself. Choose a man after your own heart, and you are sure to satisfy me.’ Cannetella thanked her father very much for his kindness and consideration, but told him that she had not the slightest wish to marry, and was quite determined to remain single.

The king, who felt himself growing old and feeble, and longed to see an heir to the throne before he died, was very unhappy at her words, and begged her earnestly not to disappoint him.

When Cannetella saw that the king had set his heart on her marriage, she said: ‘Very well, dear father, I will marry to please you, for I do not wish to appear ungrateful for all your love and kindness; but you must find me a husband handsomer, cleverer, and more charming than anyone else in the world.’

The king was overjoyed by her words, and from early in the morning till late at night he sat at the window and looked carefully at all the passers-by, in the hopes of finding a son-in-law among them.

One day, seeing a very good-looking man crossing the street, the king called his daughter and said: ‘Come quickly, dear Cannetella, and look at this man, for I think he might suit you as a husband.’

They called the young man into the palace, and set a sumptuous feast before him, with every sort of delicacy you can imagine. In the middle of the meal the youth let an almond fall out of his mouth, which, however, he picked up again very quickly and hid under the table-cloth.

When the feast was over the stranger went away’, and the king asked Cannetella: ‘Well, what did you think of the youth?’

‘I think he was a clumsy wretch,’ replied Cannetella. ‘Fancy a-man of his age letting an almond fall out of his mouth!’

When the king heard her answer he returned to his watch at the window, and shortly afterwards a very handsome young man passed by. The king instantly called his daughter to come and see what she thought of the new comer.

‘Call him in,’ said Cannetella, ‘that we may see him close.’

Another splendid feast was prepared, and when the stranger had eaten and drunk as much as he was able, and had taken his departure, the king asked Cannetella how she liked him.

‘Not at all,’ replied his daughter; ‘what could you do with a man who requires at least two servants to help him on with his cloak, because he is too awkward to put it on properly himself?’

‘If that’s all you have against him,’ said the king, ‘I see how the land lies. You are determined not to have a husband at all; but marry someone you shall, for I do not mean my name and house to die out.’

‘Well, then, my dear parent,’ said Cannetella, ‘I must tell you at once that you had better not count upon me, for I never mean to marry unless I can find a man with a gold head and gold teeth.’

The king was very angry at finding his daughter so obstinate; but as he always gave the girl her own way in everything, he issued a proclamation to the effect that any man with a gold head and gold teeth might come forward and claim the princess as his bride, and the kingdom of Bello Puojo as a wedding gift.

Now the king had a deadly enemy called Scioravante, who was a very powerful magician. No sooner had this man heard of the proclamation than he summoned his attendant spirits and commanded them to gild his head and teeth. The spirits said, at first, that the task was beyond their powers, and suggested that a pair of golden horns attached to his forehead would both be easier to make and more comfortable to wear; but Scioravante would allow no compromise, and insisted on having a head and teeth made of the finest gold. When it was fixed on his shoulders he went for a stroll in front of the palace. And the king, seeing the very man he was in search of, called his daughter, and said: ‘Just look out of the window, and you will find exactly what you want.’

Then, as Scioravante was hurrying past, the king shouted out to him: ‘Just stop a minute, brother, and don’t be in such desperate haste. If you will step in here you shall have my daughter for a wife, and I will send attendants with her, and as many horses and servants as you wish.’

‘A thousand thanks,’ returned Scioravante; ‘I shall be delighted to marry your daughter, but it is quite unnecessary to send anyone to accompany her. Give me a horse and I will carry off the princess in front of my saddle, and will bring her to my own kingdom, where there is no lack of courtiers or servants, or, indeed, of anything your daughter can desire.’

At first the king was very much against Cannetella's departing in this fashion; but finally Scioravante got his way, and placing the princess before him on his horse, he set out for his own country.

Towards evening he dismounted, and entering a stable he placed Cannetella in the same stall as his horse, and said to her: 'Now listen to what I have to say. I am going to my home now, and that is a seven years' journey from here; you must wait for me in this stable, and never move from the spot, or let yourself be seen by a living soul. If you disobey my commands, it will be the worse for you.'

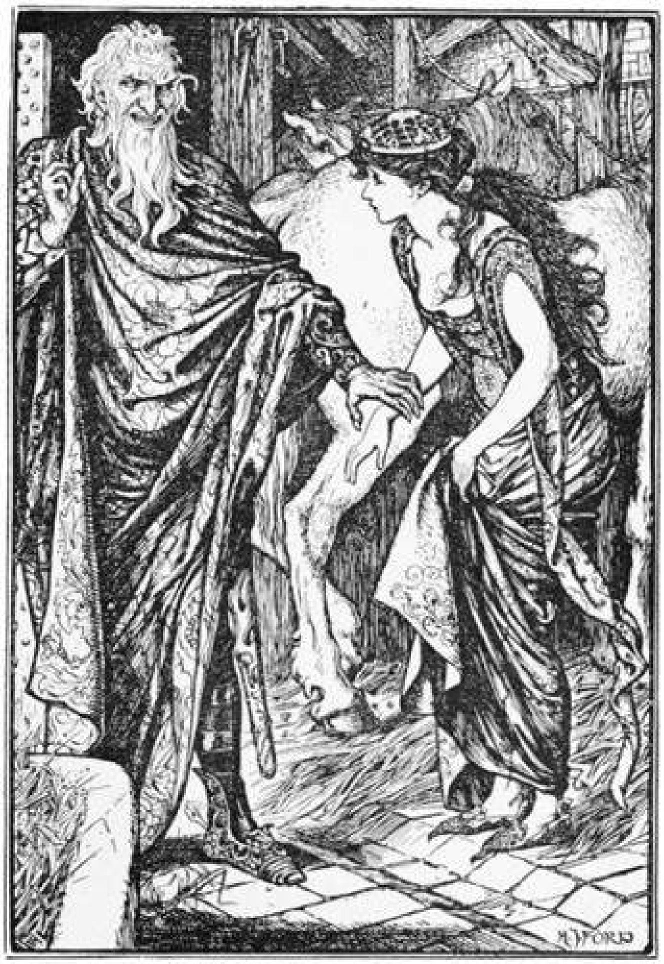

SCIORAVANTE LEAVES CANNETELLA IN THE STABLE

The princess answered meekly: 'Sir I am your servant, and will do exactly as you bid me; but I should like to know what I am to live on till you come back?'

'You can take what the horses leave,' was Scioravante's reply.

When the magician had left her Cannetella felt very miserable, and bitterly cursed the day she was born. She spent all her time weeping and bemoaning the cruel fate that had driven her from a palace into a stable, from soft, down cushions to a bed of straw, and from the dainties of her father's table to the food that the horses left.

She led this wretched life for a few months, and during that time she never saw who fed and watered the horses, for it was all done by invisible hands.

One day, when she was more than usually unhappy, she perceived a little crack in the wall, through which she could see a beautiful garden, with all manner of delicious fruits and flowers growing in it. The sight and smell of such delicacies were too much for poor Cannetella, and she said to herself, 'I will slip quietly out, and pick a few oranges and grapes, and I don't care what happens. Who is there to tell my husband what I do? and even if he should hear of my disobedience, he cannot make my life more miserable than it is already.'

So she slipped out and refreshed her poor, starved body with the fruit she plucked in the garden.

But a short time afterwards her husband returned unexpectedly, and one of the horses instantly told him that Cannetella had gone into the garden, in his absence, and had stolen some oranges and grapes.

Scioravante was furious when he heard this, and seizing a huge knife from his pocket he threatened to kill his wife for her disobedience. But Cannetella threw herself at his feet and implored him to spare her life, saying that hunger drove even the wolf from the wood. At last she succeeded in so far softening her husband's heart that he said, 'I will forgive you this time, and spare your life; but if you disobey me again, and I hear, on my return, that you have as much as moved out of the stall, I will certainly kill you. So, beware; for I am going away once more, and shall be absent for seven years.'

With these words he took his departure, and Cannetella burst into a flood of tears, and, wringing her hands, she moaned: 'Why was I ever born to such a hard fate? Oh! father, how miserable you have made your poor daughter! But, why should I blame my father? for I have only myself to thank for all my sufferings. I got the cursed head of gold, and it has brought all this misery on me. I am indeed punished for not doing as my father wished!'

When a year had gone by, it chanced, one day, that the king's cooper passed the stables where Cannetella was kept prisoner. She recognised the man, and called him to come in. At first he did not know the poor princess, and could not make out who it was that called him by name. But when he heard Cannetella's tale of woe, he hid her in a big empty barrel he had with him, partly because he was sorry for the poor girl, and, even more, because he wished to gain the king's favour. Then he slung the barrel on the mule's back, and in this way the princess was carried to her own home. They arrived at the palace about four o'clock in the morning, and the cooper knocked loudly at the door. When the servants came in haste and saw only the cooper standing at the gate, they were very indignant, and scolded him soundly for coming at such an hour and waking them all out of their sleep.

The king hearing the noise and the cause of it, sent for the cooper, for he felt certain the man must have some important business, to have come and disturbed the whole palace at such an early hour.

The cooper asked permission to unload his mule, and Cannetella crept out of the barrel. At first the king refused to believe that it was really his daughter, for she had changed so terribly in a few years, and had grown so thin and pale, that it was pitiful to see her. At last the princess showed her father a mole she had on her right arm, and then he saw that the poor girl was indeed his long-lost Cannetella. He kissed her a thousand times, and instantly had the choicest food and drink set before her.

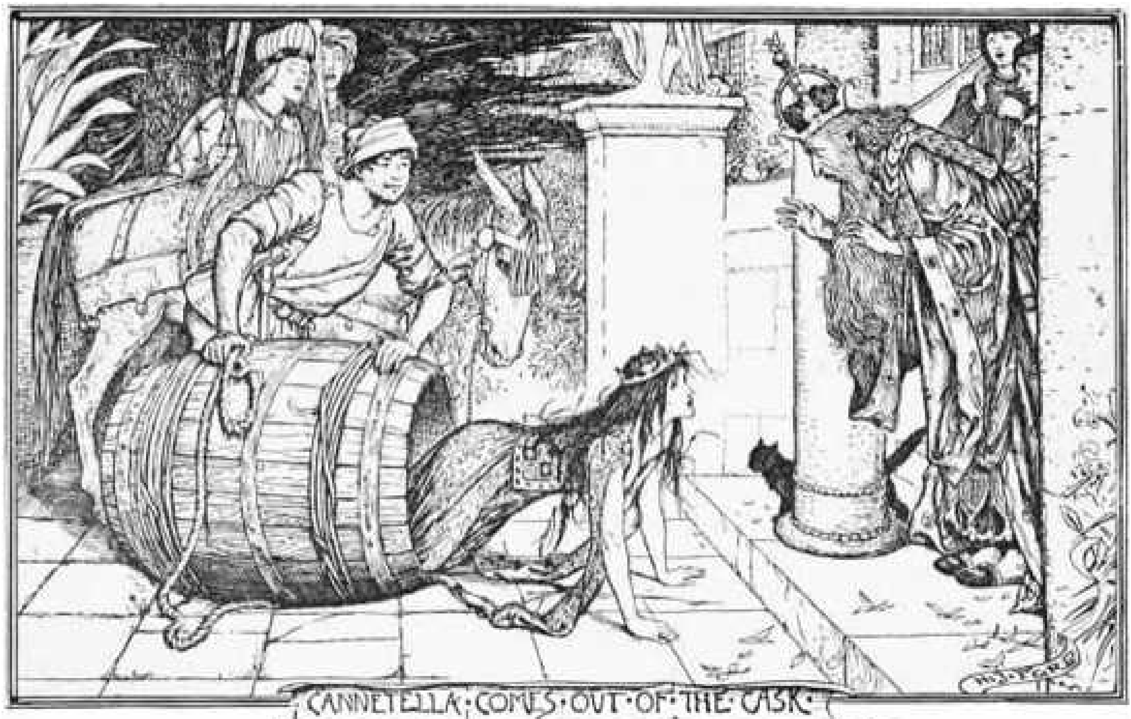

CANNETELLA · COMES · OUT · OF · THE · CASK ·

After she had satisfied her hunger, the king said to her: ‘Who would have thought, my dear daughter, to have found you in such a state? What, may I ask, has brought you to this pass?’

Cannetella replied: ‘That wicked man with the gold head and teeth treated me worse than a dog, and many a time, since I left you, have I longed to die. But I couldn’t tell you all that I have suffered, for you would never believe me. It is enough that I am once more with you, and I shall never leave you again, for I would rather be a slave in your house than queen in any other.'

In the meantime Scioravante had returned to the stables, and one of the horses told him that Cannetella had been taken away by a cooper in a barrel.

When the wicked magician heard this he was beside himself with rage, and, hastening to the kingdom of Bello Puojo, he went straight to an old woman who lived exactly opposite the royal palace, and said to her: 'If you will let me see the king's daughter', I will give you whatever reward you like to ask for.'

The woman demanded a hundred ducats of gold, and Scioravante counted them out of his purse and gave them to her without a murmur. Then the old woman led him to the roof of the house, where he could see Cannetella combing out her long hair in a room in the top story of the palace.

The princess happened to look out of the window, and when she saw her husband gazing at her, she got such a fright that she flew downstairs to the king, and said: 'My lord and father, unless you shut me up instantly in a room with seven iron doors, I am lost.'

'If that's all' said the king, 'it shall be done at once.' And he gave orders for the doors to be closed on the spot.

When Scioravante saw this he returned to the old woman, and said: 'I will give you whatever you like if you will go into the palace, hide under the princess's bed, and slip this little piece of paper beneath her pillow, saying, as you do so: "May everyone in the palace, except the princess, fall into a sound sleep."'

The old woman demanded another hundred golden ducats, and then proceeded to carry out the magician's wishes. No sooner had she slipped the piece of paper under Cannetella's pillow, than all the people in the palace fell fast asleep, and only the princess remained awake.

Then Scioravante hurried to the seven doors and opened them one after the other. Cannetella screamed with terror when she saw her husband, but no one came to her help, for all in the palace lay as if they were dead. The magician seized her in the bed on which she lay, and was going to carry her off with him, when the little piece of paper which the old woman had placed under her pillow fell on the floor.

In an instant all the people in the palace woke up, and as Cannetella was still screaming for help, they rushed to her rescue. They seized Scioravante and put him to death; so he was caught in the trap which he had laid for the princess — and, as is so often the case in this world, the biter himself was bit.

THE OGRE

There lived, once upon a time, in the land of Marigliano, a poor woman called Masella, who had six pretty daughters, all as upright as young fir-trees, and an only son called Antonio, who was so simple as to be almost an idiot. Hardly a day passed without his mother saying to him; ‘What are you doing, you useless creature? If you weren’t too stupid to look after yourself, I would order you to leave the house and never to let me see your face again.’

Every day the youth committed some fresh piece of folly, till at last Masella, losing all patience, gave him a good beating, which so startled Antonio that he took to his heels and never stopped running till it was dark and the stars were shining in the heavens. He wandered on for some time, not knowing where to go, and at last he came to a cave, at the mouth of which sat an ogre, uglier than anything you can conceive.

He had a huge head and wrinkled brow — eyebrows that met, squinting eyes, a flat broad nose, and a great gash of a mouth from which two huge tusks stuck out. His skin was hairy, his arms enormous, his legs like sword blades, and his feet as flat as ducks’. In short, he was the most hideous and laughable object in the world.

But Antonio, who, with all his faults, was no coward, and was moreover a very civil-spoken lad, took off his hat, and said: ‘Good-day, sir; I hope you are pretty well. Could you kindly tell me how far it is from here to the place where I wish to go?’

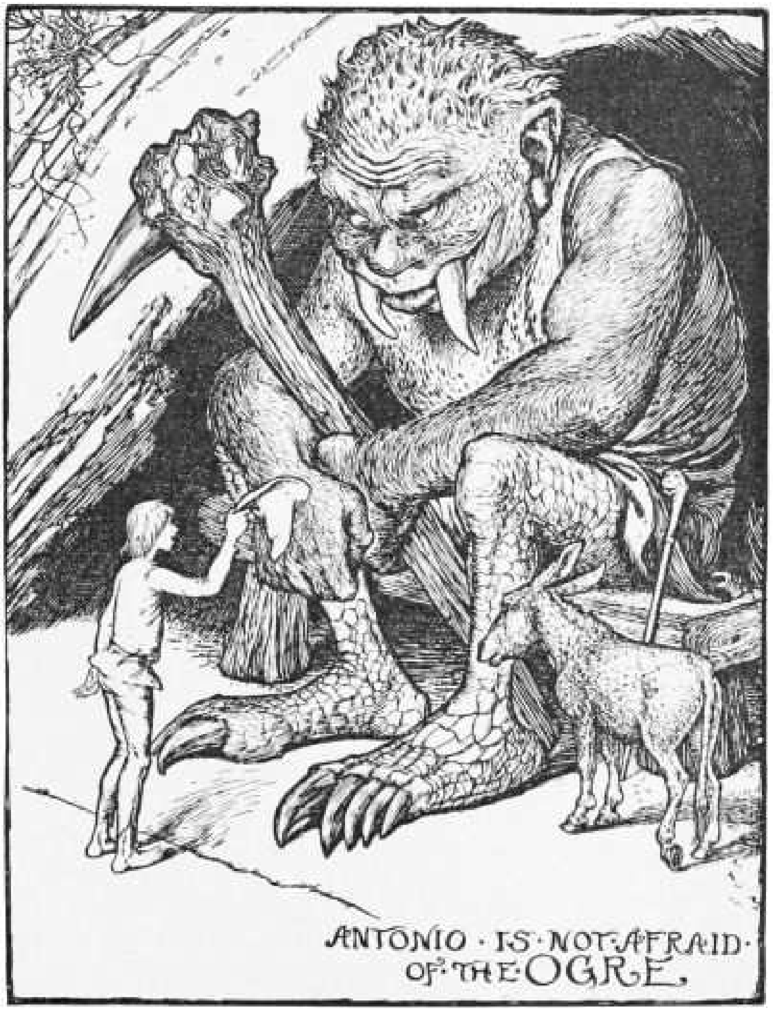
ANTONIO · IS · NOT · AFRAID · OF · THE · OGRE.

When the ogre heard this extraordinary question he burst out laughing, and as he liked the youth’s polite manners he said to him: ‘Will you enter my service?’

‘What wages do you give?’ replied Antonio.

‘If you serve me faithfully,’ returned the ogre, ‘I’ll be bound you’ll get enough wages to satisfy you.’

So the bargain was struck, and Antonio agreed to become the ogre’s servant. He was very well treated, in every way, and he had little or no work to do, with the result that in a few days he became as fat as a quail, as round as a barrel, as red as a lobster, and as impudent as a bantam-cock.

But, after two years, the lad got weary of this idle life, and longed desperately to visit his home again. The ogre, who could see into his heart and knew how unhappy he was, said to him one day: ‘My dear Antonio, I know how much you long to see your mother and sisters again, and because I love you as the apple of my eye, I am willing to allow you to go home for a visit. Therefore, take this donkey, so that you may not have to go on foot; but see that you never say “Bricklebrit” to him, for if you do you’ll be sure to regret it.’

Antonio took the beast without as much as saying thank you, and jumping on its back he rode away in great haste; but he hadn't gone two hundred yards when he dismounted and called out 'Bricklebrit.'

No sooner had he pronounced the word than the donkey opened its mouth and poured forth rubies, emeralds, diamonds and pearls, as big as walnuts.

Antonio gazed in amazement at the sight of such wealth, and joyfully filling a huge sack with the precious stones, he mounted the donkey again and rode on till he came to an inn. Here he got down, and going straight to the landlord, he said to him: 'My good man, I must ask you to stable this donkey for me. Be sure you give the poor beast plenty of oats and hay, but beware of saying the word "Bricklebrit" to him, for if you do I can promise you will regret it. Take this heavy sack, too, and put it carefully away for me.'

The landlord, who was no fool, on receiving this strange warning, and seeing the precious stones sparkling through the canvas of the sack, was most anxious to see what would happen if he used the forbidden word. So he gave Antonio an excellent dinner, with a bottle of fine old wine, and prepared a comfortable bed for him. As soon as he saw the poor simpleton close his eyes and had heard his lusty snores, he hurried to the stables and said to the donkey 'Bricklebrit,' and the animal as usual poured out any number of precious stones.

When the landlord saw all these treasures he longed to get possession of so valuable an animal, and determined to steal the donkey from his foolish guest. As soon as it was light next morning Antonio awoke, and having rubbed his eyes and stretched himself about a hundred times he called the landlord and said to him: 'Come here, my friend, and produce your bill, for short reckonings make long friends.'

When Antonio had paid his account he went to the stables and took out his donkey, as he thought, and fastening a sack of gravel, which the landlord had substituted for his precious stones, on the creature's back, he set out for his home.

No sooner had he arrived there than he called out: 'Mother, come quickly, and bring table-cloths and sheets with you, and spread them out on the ground, and you will soon see what wonderful treasures I have brought you.'

His mother hurried into the house, and opening the linen-chest where she kept her daughters' wedding outfits, she took out table-cloths and sheets made of the finest linen, and spread them flat and smooth on the ground. Antonio placed the donkey on them, and called out 'Bricklebrit.' But this time he met with no success, for the donkey took no more notice of the magic word than he would have done if a lyre had been twanged in his ear. Two, three, and four times did Antonio pronounce 'Bricklebrit,' but all in vain, and he might as well have spoken to the wind.

Disgusted and furious with the poor creature, he seized a thick stick and began to beat it so hard that he nearly broke every bone in its body. The miserable donkey was so distracted at such treatment that, far from pouring out precious stones, it only tore and dirtied all the fine linen.

When poor Masella saw her table-cloths and sheets being destroyed, and that instead of becoming rich she had only been made a fool of, she seized another stick and belaboured Antonio so unmercifully with it, that he fled before her, and never stopped till he reached the ogre’s cave.

When his master saw the lad returning in such a sorry plight, he understood at once what had happened to him, and making no bones about the matter, he told Antonio what a fool he had been to allow himself to be so imposed upon by the landlord, and to let a worthless animal be palmed off on him instead of his magic donkey.

Antonio listened humbly to the ogre’s words, and vowed solemnly that he would never act so foolishly again. And so a year passed, and once more Antonio was overcome by a fit of home-sickness, and felt a great longing to see his own people again.

Now the ogre, although he was so hideous to look upon, had a very kind heart, and when he saw how restless and unhappy Antonio was, he at once gave him leave to go home on a visit. At parting he gave him a beautiful table-cloth, and said: ‘Give this to your mother; but see that you don’t lose it as you lost the donkey, and till you are safely in your own house beware of saying “Table-cloth, open,” and “Table-cloth, shut.” If you do, the misfortune be on your own head, for I have given you fair warning.’

Antonio set out on his journey, but hardly had he got out of sight of the cave than he laid the table-cloth on the ground and said, ‘Table-cloth, open.’ In an instant the table-cloth unfolded itself and disclosed a whole mass of precious stones and other treasures.

When Antonio perceived this he said, ‘Table-cloth, shut,’ and continued his journey. He came to the same inn again, and calling the landlord to him, he told him to put the table-cloth carefully away, and whatever he did not to say ‘Table-cloth, open,’ or ‘Table-cloth, shut,’ to it.

The landlord, who was a regular rogue, answered, ‘Just leave it to me, I will look after it as if it were my own.’

After he had given Antonio plenty to eat and drink, and had provided him with a comfortable bed, he went straight to the table-cloth and said, ‘Table-cloth, open.’ It opened at once, and displayed such costly treasures that the landlord made up his mind on the spot to steal it.

When Antonio awoke next morning, the host handed him over a table-cloth exactly like his own, and carrying it carefully over his arm, the foolish youth went straight to his mother's house, and said: 'Now we shall be rich beyond the dreams of avarice, and need never go about in rags again, or lack the best of food.'

With these words he spread the table-cloth on the ground and said, 'Table-cloth, open.'

But he might repeat the injunction as often as he pleased, it was only waste of breath, for nothing happened. When Antonio saw this he turned to his mother and said: 'That old scoundrel of a landlord has done me once more; but he will live to repent it, for if I ever enter his inn again, I will make him suffer for the loss of my donkey and the other treasures he has robbed me of.'

Masella was in such a rage over her fresh disappointment that she could not restrain her impatience, and, turning on Antonio, she abused him soundly, and told him to get out of her sight at once, for she would never acknowledge him as a son of hers again. The poor boy was very depressed by her words, and slunk back to his master like a dog with his tail between his legs. When the ogre saw him, he guessed at once what had happened. He gave Antonio a good scolding, and said, 'I don't know what prevents me smashing your head in, you useless ne'er-do-well! You blurt everything out, and your long tongue never ceases wagging for a moment. If you had remained silent in the inn this misfortune would never have overtaken you, so you have only yourself to blame for your present suffering.'

Antonio listened to his master's words in silence, looking for all the world like a whipped dog. When he had been three more years in the ogre's service he had another bad fit of home-sickness, and longed very much to see his mother and sisters again.

So he asked for permission to go home on a visit, and it was at once granted to him. Before he set out on his journey the ogre presented him with a beautifully carved stick and said, 'Take this stick as a remembrance of me; but beware of saying, "Rise up, Stick," and "Lie down, Stick," for if you do, I can only say I wouldn't be in your shoes for something.'

Antonio took the stick and said, 'Don't be in the least alarmed, I'm not such a fool as you think, and know better than most people what two and two make.'

'I'm glad to hear it,' replied the ogre, 'but words are women, deeds are men. You have heard what I said, and forewarned is forearmed.'

This time Antonio thanked his master warmly for all his kindness, and started on his homeward journey in great spirits; but he had not gone half a mile when he said 'Rise up, Stick.'

The words were hardly out of his mouth when the stick rose and began to rain down blows on poor Antonio’s back with such lightning-like rapidity that he had hardly strength to call out, ‘Lie down, Stick’; but as soon as he uttered the words the stick lay down, and ceased beating his back black and blue.

Although he had learnt a lesson at some cost to himself, Antonio was full of joy, for he saw a way now of revenging himself on the wicked landlord. Once more he arrived at the inn, and was received in the most friendly and hospitable manner by his host. Antonio greeted him cordially, and said: ‘My friend, will you kindly take care of this stick for me? But, whatever you do, don’t say “Rise up, Stick.” If you do, you will be sorry for it, and you needn’t expect any sympathy from me.’

The landlord, thinking he was coming in for a third piece of good fortune, gave Antonio an excellent supper; and after he had seen him comfortably to bed, he ran to the stick, and calling to his wife to come and see the fun, he lost no time in pronouncing the words ‘Rise up, Stick.’

The moment he spoke the stick jumped up and beat the landlord so unmercifully that he and his wife ran screaming to Antonio, and, waking him up, pleaded for mercy.

When Antonio saw how successful his trick had been he said: ‘I refuse to help you, unless you give me all that you have stolen from me, otherwise you will be beaten to death.’

The landlord, who felt himself at death’s door already, cried out: ‘Take back your property, only release me from this terrible stick;’ and with these words he ordered the donkey, the table-cloth, and other treasures to be restored to their rightful owner.

As soon as Antonio had recovered his belongings he said ‘Stick, lie down,’ and it stopped beating the landlord at once.

Then he took his donkey and table-cloth and arrived safely at his home with them. This time the magic words had the desired effect, and the donkey and table-cloth provided the family with treasures untold. Antonio very soon married off his sister, made his mother rich for life, and they all lived happily for ever after.

A FAIRY’S BLUNDER

Once upon a time there lived a fairy whose name was Dindonette. She was the best creature in the world, with the kindest heart; but she had not much sense, and was always doing things, to benefit people, which generally ended in causing pain and distress to everybody concerned. No one knew this better than the inhabitants of an island far off in the midst of the sea, which, according to the laws of fairyland, she had taken under her special protection, thinking day and night of what she could do to make the isle the pleasantest place in the whole world, as it was the most beautiful.

Now what happened was this:

As the fairy went about, unseen, from house to house, she heard everywhere children longing for the time when they would be ‘grown-up,’ and able, they thought, to do as they liked; and old people talking about the past, and sighing to be young again.

‘Is there no way of satisfying these poor things?’ she thought. And then one night an idea occurred to her. ‘Oh, yes, of course! It has been tried before; but I will manage better than the rest, with their old Fountain of Youth, which, after all, only made people young again. I will enchant the spring that bubbles up in the middle of the orchard, and the children that drink of it shall at once become grown men and women, and the old people return to the days of their childhood.’

And without stopping to consult one single other fairy, who might have given her good advice, off rushed Dindonette, to cast her spell over the fountain.

It was the only spring of fresh water in the island, and at dawn was crowded with people of all ages, come to drink at its source. Delighted at her plan for making them all happy, the fairy hid herself behind a thicket of roses, and peeped out whenever footsteps came that way. It was not long before she had ample proof of the success of her enchantments. Almost before her eyes the children put on the size and strength of adults, while the old men and women instantly became helpless, tiny babies. Indeed, so pleased was she with the result of her work, that she could no longer remain hidden, and went about telling everybody what she had done, and enjoying their gratitude and thanks.

But after the first outburst of delight at their wishes being granted, people began to be a little frightened at the rapid effects of the magic water. It was delicious to feel yourself at the height of your power and beauty, but you would wish to keep so always! Now this was exactly what the fairy had been in too much of a hurry to arrange, and no sooner had the children become grown up, and the men and women become babies, than they all rushed on to old age at an appalling rate! The fairy only found out her mistake when it was too late to set it right.

When the inhabitants of the island saw what had befallen them, they were filled with despair, and did everything they could think of to escape from such a dreadful fate. They dug wells in their places, so that they should no longer need to drink from the magic spring; but the sandy soil yielded no water, and the rainy season was already past. They stored up the dew that fell, and the juice of fruits and of herbs, but all this was as a drop in the ocean of their wants. Some threw themselves into the sea, trusting that the current might carry them to other shores — they had no boats — and a few, still more impatient, put themselves to death on the spot. The rest submitted blindly to their destiny.

Perhaps the worst part of the enchantment was, that the change from one age to another was so rapid that the person had no time to prepare himself for it. It would not have mattered so much if the man who stood up in the assembly of the nation, to give his advice as to peace or war, had looked like a baby, as long as he spoke with the knowledge and sense of a full-grown man. But, alas! with the outward form of an infant, he had taken on its helplessness and foolishness, and there was no one who could train him to better things. The end of it all was, that before a month had passed the population had died out, and the fairy Dindonette, ashamed and grieved at the effects of her folly, had left the island for ever.

Many centuries after, the fairy Selnozoura, who had fallen into bad health, was ordered by her doctors to make the tour of the world twice a week for change of air, and in one of these journeys she found herself at Fountain Island. Selnozoura never made these trips alone, but always took with her two children, of whom she was very fond — Cornichon, a boy of fourteen, bought in his childhood at a slave-market, and Toupette, a few months younger, who had been entrusted to the care of the fairy by her guardian, the genius Kristopo. Cornichon and Toupette were intended by Selnozoura to become husband and wife, as soon as they were old enough. Meanwhile, they travelled with her in a little vessel, whose speed through the air was just a thousand nine hundred and fifty times greater than that of the swiftest of our ships.

Struck with the beauty of the island, Selnozoura ran the vessel to ground, and leaving it in the care of the dragon which lived in the hold during the voyage, stepped on shore with her two companions. Surprised at the sight of a large town whose streets and houses were absolutely desolate, the fairy resolved to put her magic arts in practice to find out the cause. While she was thus engaged, Cornichon and Toupette wandered away by themselves, and by-and-by arrived at the fountain, whose bubbling waters looked cool and delicious on such a hot day. Scarcely had they each drunk a deep draught, when the fairy, who by this time had discovered all she wished to know, hastened to the spot.

‘Oh, beware! beware!’ she cried, the moment she saw them. ‘If you drink that deadly poison you will be ruined for ever!’

‘Poison?’ answered Toupette. ‘It is the most refreshing water I have ever tasted, and Cornichon will say so too!’

‘Unhappy children, then I am too late! Why did you leave me? Listen, and I will tell you what has befallen the wretched inhabitants of this island, and what will befall you too. The power of fairies is great,’ she added, when she had finished her story, ‘but they cannot destroy the work of another fairy. Very shortly you will pass into the weakness and silliness of extreme old age, and all I can do for you is to make it as easy to you as possible, and to preserve you from the death that others have suffered, from having no one to look after them. But the charm is working already! Cornichon is taller and more manly than he was an hour ago, and Toupette no longer looks like a little girl.’

It was true; but this fact did not seem to render the young people as miserable as it did Selnozoura.

‘Do not pity us,’ said Cornichon. ‘If we are fated to grow old so soon, let us no longer delay our marriage. What matter if we anticipate our decay, if we only anticipate our happiness too?’

The fairy felt that Cornichon had reason on his side, and seeing by a glance at Toupette’s face that there was no opposition to be feared from her, she answered, ‘Let it be so, then. But not in this dreadful place. We will return at once to Bagota, and the festivities shall be the most brilliant ever seen.’

They all returned to the vessel, and in a few hours the four thousand five hundred miles that lay between the island and Bagota were passed. Everyone was surprised to see the change which the short absence had made in the young people, but as the fairy had promised absolute silence about the adventure, they were none the wiser, and busied themselves in preparing their dresses for the marriage, which was fixed for the next night.

Early on the following morning the genius Kristopo arrived at the Court, on one of the visits he was in the habit of paying his ward from time to time. Like the rest, he was astonished at the sudden improvement in the child. He had always been fond of her, and in a moment he fell violently in love. Hastily demanding an audience of the fairy, he laid his proposals before her, never doubting that she would give her consent to so brilliant a match. But Selnozoura refused to listen, and even hinted that in his own interest Kristopo had better turn his thoughts elsewhere. The genius pretended to agree, but, instead, he went straight to Toupette's room, and flew away with her through the window, at the very instant that the bridegroom was awaiting her below.

When the fairy discovered what had happened, she was furious, and sent messenger after messenger to the genius in his palace at Ratibouf, commanding him to restore Toupette without delay, and threatening to make war in case of refusal.

Kristopo gave no direct answer to the fairy's envoys, but kept Toupette closely guarded in a tower, where the poor girl used all her powers of persuasion to induce him to put off their marriage. All would, however, have been quite in vain if, in the course of a few days, sorrow, joined to the spell of the magic water, had not altered her appearance so completely that Kristopo was quite alarmed, and declared that she needed amusement and fresh air, and that, as his presence seemed to distress her, she should be left her own mistress. But one thing he declined to do, and that was to send her back to Bagota.

In the meantime both sides had been busily collecting armies, and Kristopo had given the command of his to a famous general, while Selnozoura had placed Cornichon at the head of her forces. But before war was actually declared, Toupette's parents, who had been summoned by the genius, arrived at Ratibouf. They had never seen their daughter since they parted from her as a baby, but from time to time travellers to Bagota had brought back accounts of her beauty. What was their amazement, therefore, at finding, instead of a lovely girl, a middle-aged woman, handsome indeed, but quite faded — looking, in fact, older than themselves. Kristopo, hardly less astonished than they were at the sudden change, thought that it was a joke on the part of one of his courtiers, who had hidden Toupette away, and put this elderly lady in her place. Bursting with rage, he sent instantly for all the servants and guards of the town, and inquired who had the insolence to play him such a trick, and what had become of their prisoner. They replied that since Toupette had been in their charge she had never left her rooms unveiled, and that during her walks in the surrounding gardens, her food had been brought in and placed on her table; as she preferred to eat alone no one had ever seen her face, or knew what she was like.

The servants were clearly speaking the truth, and Kristopo was obliged to believe them. 'But,' thought he, 'if they have not had a hand in this, it must be the work of the fairy,' and in his anger he ordered the army to be ready to march.

On her side, Selnozoura of course knew what the genius had to expect, but was deeply offended when she heard of the base trick which she was believed to have invented. Her first desire was to give battle to Kristopo at once, but with great difficulty her ministers induced her to pause, and to send an ambassador to Kristopo to try to arrange matters.

So the Prince Zeprady departed for the court of Ratibouf, and on his way he met Cornichon, who was encamped with his army just outside the gates of Bagota. The Prince showed him the fairy’s written order that for the present peace must still be kept, and Cornichon, filled with longing to see Toupette once more, begged to be allowed to accompany Zeprady on his mission to Ratibouf.

By this time the genius’s passion for Toupette, which had caused all these troubles, had died out, and he willingly accepted the terms of peace offered by Zeprady, though he informed the prince that he still believed the fairy to be guilty of the dreadful change in the girl. To this the prince only replied that on that point he had a witness who could prove, better than anyone else, if it was Toupette or not, and desired that Cornichon should be sent for.

When Toupette was told that she was to see her old lover again, her heart leapt with joy; but soon the recollection came to her of all that had happened, and she remembered that Cornichon would be changed as well as she. The moment of their meeting was not all happiness, especially on the part of Toupette, who could not forget her lost beauty, and the genius, who was present, was at last convinced that he had not been deceived, and went out to sign the treaty of peace, followed by his attendants.

‘Ah, Toupette: my dear Toupette!’ cried Cornichon, as soon as they were left alone; ‘now that we are once more united, let our past troubles be forgotten.’

‘Our *past* troubles!’ answered she, ‘and what do you call our lost beauty and the dreadful future before us? You are looking fifty years older than when I saw you last, and I know too well that fate has treated me no better!’

‘Ah, do not say that,’ replied Cornichon, clasping her hand, ‘You are different, it is true; but every age has its graces, and surely no woman of sixty was ever handsomer than you! If your eyes had been as bright as of yore they would have matched badly with your faded skin. The wrinkles which I notice on your forehead explain the increased fulness of your cheeks, and your throat in withering is elegant in decay. Thus the harmony shown by your features, even as they grow old, is the best proof of their former beauty.

‘Oh, monster,’ cried Toupette, bursting into tears, ‘is that all the comfort you can give me?’

‘But, Toupette,’ answered Cornichon; ‘you used to declare that you did not care for beauty, as long as you had my heart.’

‘Yes, I know,’ said she, ‘but how can you go on caring for a person who is as old and plain as I?’

‘Toupette, Toupette,’ replied Cornichon, ‘you are only talking nonsense. My heart is as much yours as ever it was, and nothing in the world can make any difference.’

At this point of the conversation the Prince Zeprady entered the room, with the news that the genius, full of regret for his behaviour, had given Cornichon full permission to depart for Bagota as soon as he liked, and to take Toupette with him; adding that, though he begged they would excuse his taking leave of them before they went, he hoped, before long, to visit them at Bagota.

Neither of the lovers slept that night — Cornichon from joy at returning home, Toupette from dread of the blow to her vanity which awaited her at Bagota. It was hopeless for Cornichon to try to console her during the journey with the reasons he had given the day before. She only grew worse and worse, and when they reached the palace went straight to her old apartments, entreating the fairy to allow both herself and Cornichon to remain concealed, and to see no one.

For some time after their arrival the fairy was taken up with the preparations for the rejoicings which were to celebrate the peace, and with the reception of the genius, who was determined to do all in his power to regain Selnozoura's lost friendship. Cornichon and Toupette were therefore left entirely to themselves, and though this was only what they wanted, still, they began to feel a little neglected.

At length, one morning, they saw from the windows that the fairy and the genius were approaching, in state, with all their courtiers in attendance. Toupette instantly hid herself in the darkest corner of the room, but Cornichon, forgetting that he was now no longer a boy of fourteen, ran to meet them. In so doing he tripped and fell, bruising one of his eyes severely. At the sight of her lover lying helpless on the floor, Toupette hastened to his side; but her feeble legs gave way under her, and she fell almost on top of him, knocking out three of her loosened teeth against his forehead. The fairy, who entered the room at this moment, burst into tears, and listened in silence to the genius, who hinted that by-and-by everything would be put right.

'At the last assembly of the fairies,' he said, 'when the doings of each fairy were examined and discussed, a proposal was made to lessen, as far as possible, the mischief caused by Dindonette by enchanting the fountain. And it was decided that, as she had meant nothing but kindness, she should have the power of undoing one half of the spell. Of course she might always have destroyed the fatal fountain, which would have been best of all; but this she never thought of. Yet, in spite of this, her heart is so good, that I am sure that the moment she hears that she is wanted she will fly to help. Only, before she comes, it is for you, Madam, to make up your mind which of the two shall regain their former strength and beauty.'

At these words the fairy's soul sank. Both Cornichon and Toupette were equally dear to her, and how could she favour one at the cost of the other? As to the courtiers, none of the men were able to understand why she hesitated a second to declare for Toupette; while the ladies were equally strong on the side of Cornichon.

But, however undecided the fairy might be, it was quite different with Cornichon and Toupette.

‘Ah, my love,’ exclaimed Cornichon, ‘at length I shall be able to give you the best proof of my devotion by showing you how I value the beauties of your mind above those of your body! While the most charming women of the court will fall victims to my youth and strength, I shall think of nothing but how to lay them at your feet, and pay heart-felt homage to your age and wrinkles.’

‘Not so fast,’ interrupted Toupette, ‘I don’t see why you should have it all. Why do you heap such humiliations upon me? But I will trust to the justice of the fairy, who will not treat me so.’

Then she entered her own rooms, and refused to leave them, in spite of the prayers of Cornichon, who begged her to let him explain.

No one at the court thought or spoke of any other subject during the few days before the arrival of Dindonette, whom everybody expected to set things right in a moment. But, alas! she had no idea herself what was best to be done, and always adopted the opinion of the person she was talking to. At length a thought struck her, which seemed the only way of satisfying both parties, and she asked the fairy to call together all the court and the people to hear her decision.

‘Happy is he,’ she began, ‘who can repair the evil he has caused, but happier he who has never caused any.’

As nobody contradicted this remark, she continued:

‘To me it is only allowed to undo one half of the mischief I have wrought. I could restore you your youth,’ she said to Cornichon, ‘or your beauty,’ turning to Toupette. ‘I will do both; and I will do neither.’

A murmur of curiosity arose from the crowd, while Cornichon and Toupette trembled with astonishment.

‘No,’ went on Dindonette, ‘never should I have the cruelty to leave one of you to decay, while the other enjoys the glory of youth. And as I cannot restore you both at once to what you were, one half of each of your bodies shall become young again, while the other half goes on its way to decay. I will leave it to you to choose which half it shall be — if I shall draw a line round the waist, or a line straight down the middle of the body.’

She looked about her proudly, expecting applause for her clever idea. But Cornichon and Toupette were shaking with rage and disappointment, and everyone else broke into shouts of laughter. In pity for the unhappy lovers, Selnozoura came forward.

‘Do you not think,’ she said, ‘that instead of what you propose, it would be better to let them take it in turns to enjoy their former youth and beauty for a fixed time? I am sure you could easily manage that.’

‘What an excellent notion!’ cried Dindonette. ‘Oh, yes, of course that is best! Which of you shall I touch first?’

‘Touch her,’ replied Cornichon, who was always ready to give way to Toupette. ‘I know her heart too well to fear any change.’

So the fairy bent forward and touched her with her magic ring, and in one instant the old woman was a girl again. The whole court wept with joy at the sight, and Toupette ran up to Cornichon, who had fallen down in his surprise, promising to pay him long visits, and tell him of all her balls and water parties.

The two fairies went to their own apartments, where the genius followed them to take his leave.

‘Oh, dear!’ suddenly cried Dindonette, breaking in to the farewell speech of the genius. ‘I quite forgot to fix the time when Cornichon should in his turn grow young. How stupid of me! And now I fear it is too late, for I ought to have declared it before I touched Toupette with the ring. Oh, dear! oh, dear! why did nobody warn me?’

‘You were so quick,’ replied Selnozoura, who had long been aware of the mischief the fairy had again done, ‘and we can only wait now till Cornichon shall have reached the utmost limits of his decay, when he will drink of the water, and become a baby once more, so that Toupette will have to spend her life as a nurse, a wife, and a caretaker.’

After the anxiety of mind and the weakness of body to which for so long Toupette had been a prey, it seemed as if she could not amuse herself enough, and it was seldom indeed that she found time to visit poor Cornichon, though she did not cease to be fond of him, or to be kind to him. Still, she was perfectly happy without him, and this the poor man did not fail to see, almost blind and deaf from age though he was.

But it was left to Kristopo to undo at last the work of Dindonette, and give Cornichon back the youth he had lost, and this the genius did all the more gladly, as he discovered, quite by accident, that Cornichon was in fact his son. It was on this plea that he attended the great yearly meeting of the fairies, and prayed that, in consideration of his services to so many of the members, this one boon might be granted him. Such a request had never before been heard in fairyland, and was objected to by some of the older fairies; but both Kristopo and Selnozoura were held in such high honour that the murmurs of disgust were set aside, and the latest victim to the enchanted fountain was pronounced to be free of the spell. All that the genius asked in return was that he might accompany the fairy back to Bagota, and be present when his son assumed his proper shape.

They made up their minds they would just tell Toupette that they had found a husband for her, and give her a pleasant surprise at her wedding, which was fixed for the following night. She heard the news with astonishment, and many pangs for the grief which Cornichon would certainly feel at his place being taken by another; but she did not dream of disobeying the fairy, and spent the whole day wondering who the bridegroom could be.

At the appointed hour, a large crowd assembled at the fairy’s palace, which was decorated with the sweetest flowers, known only to fairyland. Toupette had taken her place, but where was the bridegroom?

‘Fetch Cornichon!’ said the fairy to her chamberlain.

But Toupette interposed: ‘Oh, Madam, spare him, I entreat you, this bitter pain, and let him remain hidden and in peace.’

‘It is necessary that he should be here,’ answered the fairy, ‘and he will not regret it.’

And, as she spoke, Cornichon was led in, smiling with the foolishness of extreme old age at the sight of the gay crowd.

‘Bring him here,’ commanded the fairy, waving her hand towards Toupette, who started back from surprise and horror.

Selnozoura then took the hand of the poor old man, and the genius came forward and touched him three times with his ring, when Cornichon was transformed into a handsome young man.

‘May you live long,’ the genius said, ‘to enjoy happiness with your wife, and to love your father.’

And that was the end of the mischief wrought by the fairy Dindonette!

LONG, BROAD, AND QUICKEYE

(BOHEMIAN STORY)

Once upon a time there lived a king who had an only son whom he loved dearly. Now one day the king sent for his son and said to him:

‘My dearest child, my hair is grey and I am old, and soon I shall feel no more the warmth of the sun, or look upon the trees and flowers. But before I die I should like to see you with a good wife; therefore marry, my son, as speedily as possible.’

‘My father,’ replied the prince, ‘now and always, I ask nothing better than to do your bidding, but I know of no daughter-in-law that I could give you.’

On hearing these words the old king drew from his pocket a key of gold, and gave it to his son, saying:

‘Go up the staircase, right up to the top of the tower. Look carefully round you, and then come and tell me which you like best of all that you see.’

So the young man went up. He had never before been in the tower, and had no idea what it might contain.

The staircase wound round and round and round, till the prince was almost giddy, and every now and then he caught sight of a large room that opened out from the side. But he had been told to go to the top, and to the top he went. Then he found himself in a hall, which had an iron door at one end. This door he unlocked with his golden key, and he passed through into a vast chamber which had a roof of blue sprinkled with golden stars, and a carpet of green silk soft as turf. Twelve windows framed in gold let in the light of the sun, and on every window was painted the figure of a young girl, each more beautiful than the last. While the prince gazed at them in surprise, not knowing which he liked best, the girls began to lift their eyes and smile at him. He waited, expecting them to speak, but no sound came.

Suddenly he noticed that one of the windows was covered by a curtain of white silk.

He lifted it, and saw before him the image of a maiden beautiful as the day and sad as the tomb, clothed in a white robe, having a girdle of silver and a crown of pearls. The prince stood and gazed at her, as if he had been turned into stone, but as he looked the sadness which was on her face seemed to pass into his heart, and he cried out:

‘This one shall be my wife. This one and no other.’

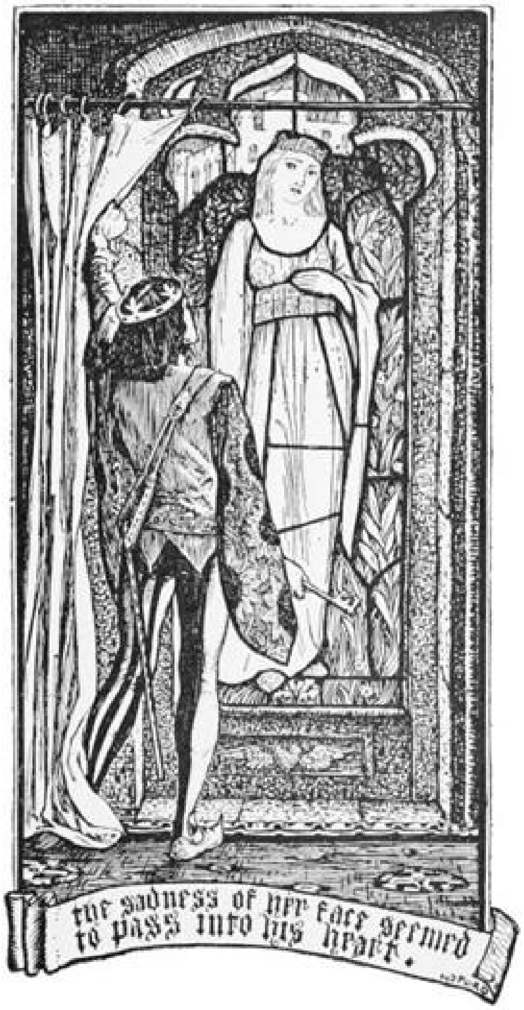
the sadness of her face seemed to pass into his heart.

As he said the words the young girl blushed and hung her head, and all the other figures vanished.

The young prince went quickly back to his father, and told him all he had seen and which wife he had chosen. The old man listened to him full of sorrow, and then he spoke:

‘You have done ill, my son, to search out that which was hidden, and you are running to meet a great danger. This young girl has fallen into the power of a wicked sorcerer, who lives in an iron castle. Many young men have tried to deliver her, and none have ever come back. But what is done is done! You have given your word, and it cannot be broken. Go, dare your fate, and return to me safe and sound.’

So the prince embraced his father, mounted his horse, and set forth to seek his bride. He rode on gaily for several hours, till he found himself in a wood where he had never been before, and soon lost his way among its winding paths and deep valleys. He tried in vain to see where he was: the thick trees shut out the sun, and he could not tell which was north and which was south, so that he might know what direction to make for. He felt in despair, and had quite given up all hope of getting out of this horrible place, when he heard a voice calling to him.

‘Hey! hey! stop a minute!’

The prince turned round and saw behind him a very tall man, running as fast as his legs would carry him.

‘Wait for me,’ he panted, ‘and take me into your service. If you do, you will never be sorry.’

‘Who are you?’ asked the prince, ‘and what can you do?’

‘Long is my name, and I can lengthen my body at will. Do you see that nest up there on the top of that pine-tree? Well, I can get it for you without taking the trouble of climbing the tree,’ and Long stretched himself up and up and up, till he was very soon as tall as the pine itself. He put the nest in his pocket, and before you could wink your eyelid he had made himself small again, and stood before the prince.

‘Yes; you know your business,’ said he, ‘but birds’ nests are no use to me. I am too old for them. Now if you were only able to get me out of this wood, you would indeed be good for something.’

‘Oh, there’s no difficulty about that,’ replied Long, and he stretched himself up and up and up till he was three times as tall as the tallest tree in the forest. Then he looked all round and said, ‘We must go in this direction in order to get out of the wood,’ and shortening himself again, he took the prince’s horse by the bridle, and led him along. Very soon they got clear of the forest, and saw before them a wide plain ending in a pile of high rocks, covered here and there with trees, and very much like the fortifications of a town.

As they left the wood behind Long turned to the prince and said, ‘My lord, here comes my comrade. You should take him into your service too, as you will find him a great help.’

‘Well, call him then, so that I can see what sort of a man he is.’

‘He is a little too far off for that,’ replied Long. ‘He would hardly hear my voice, and he couldn’t be here for some time yet, as he has so much to carry. I think I had better go and bring him myself,’ and this time he stretched himself to such a height that his head was lost in the clouds. He made two or three strides, took his friend on his back, and set him down before the prince. The new-comer was a very fat man, and as round as a barrel.

‘Who are you?’ asked the prince, ‘and what can you do?’

‘Your worship, Broad is my name, and I can make myself as wide as I please.’

‘Let me see how you manage it.’

‘Run, my lord, as fast as you can, and hide yourself in the wood,’ cried Broad, and he began to swell himself out.

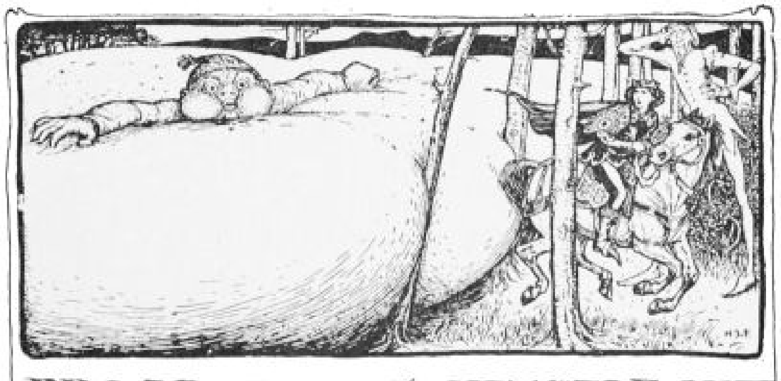

BROAD PUFFS HIMSELF OUT

The prince did not understand why he should run to the wood, but when he saw Long flying towards it, he thought he had better follow his example. He was only just in time, for Broad had so suddenly inflated himself that he very nearly knocked over the prince and his horse too. He covered all the space for acres round. You would have thought he was a mountain!

At length Broad ceased to expand, drew a deep breath that made the whole forest tremble, and shrank into his usual size.

‘You have made me run away,’ said the prince. ‘But it is not every day one meets with a man of your sort. I will take you into my service.’

So the three companions continued their journey, and when they were drawing near the rocks they met a man whose eyes were covered by a bandage.

‘Your excellency,’ said Long, ‘this is our third comrade. You will do well to take him into your service, and, I assure you, you will find him worth his salt.’

‘Who are you?’ asked the prince. ‘And why are your eyes bandaged? You can never see your way!’

‘It is just the contrary, my lord! It is because I see only too well that I am forced to bandage my eyes. Even so I see as well as people who have no bandage. When I take it off my eyes pierce through everything. Everything I look at catches fire, or, if it cannot catch fire, it falls into a thousand pieces. They call me Quickeye.’

And so saying he took off his bandage and turned towards the rock. As he fixed his eyes upon it a crack was heard, and in a few moments it was nothing but a heap of sand. In the sand something might be detected glittering brightly. Quickeye picked it up and brought it to the prince. It turned out to be a lump of pure gold.

‘You are a wonderful creature,’ said the prince, ‘and I should be a fool not to take you into my service. But since your eyes are so good, tell me if I am very far from the Iron Castle, and what is happening there just now.’

‘If you were travelling alone,’ replied Quickeye, ‘it would take you at least a year to get to it; but as we are with you, we shall arrive there to-night. Just now they are preparing supper.'

'There is a princess in the castle. Do you see her?'

'A wizard keeps her in a high tower, guarded by iron bars.'

'Ah, help me to deliver her!' cried the prince.

And they promised they would.

Then they all set out through the grey rocks, by the breach made by the eyes of Quickeye, and passed over great mountains and through deep woods. And every time they met with any obstacle the three friends contrived somehow to put it aside. As the sun was setting, the prince beheld the towers of the Iron Castle, and before it sank beneath the horizon he was crossing the iron bridge which led to the gates. He was only just in time, for no sooner had the sun disappeared altogether, than the bridge drew itself up and the gates shut themselves.

There was no turning back now!

The prince put up his horse in the stable, where everything looked as if a guest was expected, and then the whole party marched straight up to the castle. In the court, in the stables, and all over the great halls, they saw a number of men richly dressed, but every one turned into stone. They crossed an endless set of rooms, all opening into each other, till they reached the dining-hall. It was brilliantly lighted; the table was covered with wine and fruit, and was laid for four. They waited a few minutes expecting some one to come, but as nobody did, they sat down and began to eat and drink, for they were very hungry.

When they had done their supper they looked about for some place to sleep. But suddenly the door burst open, and the wizard entered the hall. He was old and hump-backed, with a bald head and a grey beard that fell to his knees. He wore a black robe, and instead of a belt three iron circlets clasped his waist. He led by the hand a lady of wonderful beauty, dressed in white, with a girdle of silver and a crown of pearls, but her face was pale and sad as death itself.

The prince knew her in an instant, and moved eagerly forward; but the wizard gave him no time to speak, and said:

'I know why you are here. Very good; you may have her if for three nights following you can prevent her making her escape. If you fail in this, you and your servants will all be turned into stone, like those who have come before you.' And offering the princess a chair, he left the hall.

The prince could not take his eyes from the princess, she was so lovely! He began to talk to her, but she neither answered nor smiled, and sat as if she were made of marble. He seated himself by her, and determined not to close his eyes that night, for fear she should escape him. And in order that she should be doubly guarded, Long stretched himself like a strap all round the room, Broad took his stand by the door and puffed himself out, so that not even a mouse could slip by, and Quickeye leant against a pillar which stood in the middle of the floor and supported the roof. But in half a second they were all sound asleep, and they slept sound the whole night long.

In the morning, at the first peep of dawn, the prince awoke with a start. But the princess was gone. He aroused his servants and implored them to tell him what he must do.

‘Calm yourself, my lord,’ said Quickeye. ‘I have found her already. A hundred miles from here there is a forest. In the middle of the forest, an old oak, and on the top of the oak, an acorn. This acorn is the princess. If Long will take me on his shoulders, we shall soon bring her back.’ And sure enough, in less time than it takes to walk round the cottage, they had returned from the forest, and Long presented the acorn to the prince.

‘Now, your excellency, throw it on the ground.’

The prince obeyed, and was enchanted to see the princess appear at his side. But when the sun peeped for the first time over the mountains, the door burst open as before, and the wizard entered with a loud laugh. Suddenly he caught sight of the princess; his face darkened, he uttered a low growl, and one of the iron circlets gave way with a crash. He seized the young girl by the hand and bore her away with him.

All that day the prince wandered about the castle, studying the curious treasures it contained, but everything looked as if life had suddenly come to a standstill. In one place he saw a prince who had been turned into stone in the act of brandishing a sword round which his two hands were clasped. In another, the same doom had fallen upon a knight in the act of running away. In a third, a serving man was standing eternally trying to convey a piece of beef to his mouth, and all around them were others, still preserving for evermore the attitudes they were in when the wizard had commanded ‘From henceforth be turned into marble.’ In the castle, and round the castle, all was dismal and desolate. Trees there were, but without leaves; fields there were, but no grass grew on them. There was one river, but it never flowed and no fish lived in it. No flowers blossomed, and no birds sang.

Three times during the day food appeared, as if by magic, for the prince and his servants. And it was not until supper was ended that the wizard appeared, as on the previous evening, and delivered the princess into the care of the prince.

All four determined that this time they would keep awake at any cost. But it was no use. Off they went as they had done before, and when the prince awoke the next morning the room was again empty.

With a pang of shame, he rushed to find Quickeye. ‘Awake! Awake! Quickeye! Do you know what has become of the princess?’

Quickeye rubbed his eyes and answered: ‘Yes, I see her. Two hundred miles from here there is a mountain. In this mountain is a rock. In the rock, a precious stone. This stone is the princess. Long shall take me there, and we will be back before you can turn round.’

So Long took him on his shoulders and they set out. At every stride they covered twenty miles, and as they drew near Quickeye fixed his burning eyes on the mountain; in an instant it split into a thousand pieces, and in one of these sparkled the precious stone. They picked it up and brought it to the prince, who flung it hastily down, and as the stone touched the floor the princess stood before him. When the wizard came, his eyes shot forth flames of fury. Cric-crac was heard, and another of his iron bands broke and fell. He seized the princess by the hand and led her off, growling louder than ever.

All that day things went on exactly as they had done the day before. After supper the wizard brought back the princess, and looking him straight in the eyes he said, ‘We shall see which of us two will gain the prize after all!’

That night they struggled their very hardest to keep awake, and even walked about instead of sitting down. But it was quite useless. One after another they had to give in, and for the third time the princess slipped through their fingers.

When morning came, it was as usual the prince who awoke the first, and as usual, the princess being gone, he rushed to Quickeye.

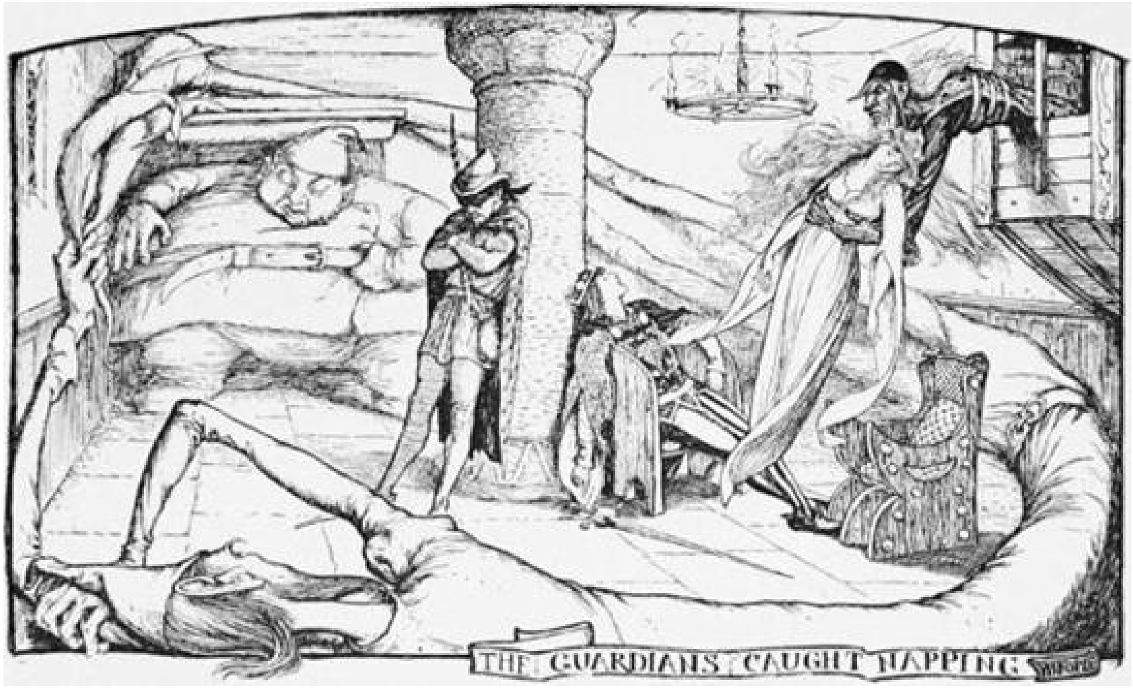

‘Get up, get up, Quickeye, and tell me where is the princess?’

Quickeye looked about for some time without answering. ‘Oh, my lord, she is far, very far. Three hundred miles away there lies a black sea. In the middle of this sea there is a little shell, and in the middle of the shell is fixed a gold ring. That gold ring is the princess. But do not vex your soul; we will get her. Only to-day, Long must take Broad with him. He will be wanted badly.’

So Long took Quickeye on one shoulder, and Broad on the other, and they set out. At each stride they left thirty miles behind them. When they reached the black sea, Quickeye showed them the spot where they must seek the shell. But though Long stretched down his hand as far as it would go, he could not find the shell, for it lay at the bottom of the sea.

‘Wait a moment, comrades, it will be all right. I will help you,’ said Broad.

Then he swelled himself out so that you would have thought the world could hardly have held him, and stooping down he drank. He drank so much at every mouthful, that only a minute or so passed before the water had sunk enough for Long to put his hand to the bottom. He soon found the shell, and pulled the ring out. But time had been lost, and Long had a double burden to carry. The dawn was breaking fast before they got back to the castle, where the prince was waiting for them in an agony of fear.

Soon the first rays of the sun were seen peeping over the tops of the mountains. The door burst open, and finding the prince standing alone the wizard broke into peals of wicked laughter. But as he laughed a loud crash was heard, the window fell into a thousand pieces, a gold ring glittered in the air, and the princess stood before the enchanter. For Quickeye, who was watching from afar, had told Long of the terrible danger now threatening the prince, and Long, summoning all his strength for one gigantic effort, had thrown the ring right through the window.

The wizard shrieked and howled with rage, till the whole castle trembled to its foundations. Then a crash was heard, the third band split in two, and a crow flew out of the window.

Then the princess at length broke the enchanted silence, and blushing like a rose, gave the prince her thanks for her unlooked-for deliverance.

But it was not only the princess who was restored to life by the flight of the wicked black crow. The marble figures became men once more, and took up their occupations just as they had left them off. The horses neighed in the stables, the flowers blossomed in the garden, the birds flew in the air, the fish darted in the water. Everywhere you looked, all was life, all was joy!

And the knights who had been turned into stone came in a body to offer their homage to the prince who had set them free.

‘Do not thank me,’ he said, ‘for I have done nothing. Without my faithful servants, Long, Broad, and Quickeye, I should even have been as one of you.’

With these words he bade them farewell, and departed with the princess and his faithful companions for the kingdom of his father.

The old king, who had long since given up all hope, wept for joy at the sight of his son, and insisted that the wedding should take place as soon as possible.

All the knights who had been enchanted in the Iron Castle were invited to the ceremony, and after it had taken place, Long, Broad, and Quickeye took leave of the young couple, saying that they were going to look for more work.

The prince offered them all their hearts could desire if they would only remain with him, but they replied that an idle life would not please them, and that they could never be happy unless they were busy, so they went away to seek their fortunes, and for all I know are seeking still.

PRUNELLA

There was once upon a time a woman who had an only daughter. When the child was about seven years old she used to pass every day, on her way to school, an orchard where there was a wild plum tree, with delicious ripe plums hanging from the branches. Each morning the child would pick one, and put it into her pocket to eat at school. For this reason she was called Prunella. Now, the orchard belonged to a witch. One day the witch noticed the child gathering a plum, as she passed along the road. Prunella did it quite innocently, not knowing that she was doing wrong in taking the fruit that hung close to the roadside. But the witch was furious, and next day hid herself behind the hedge, and when Prunella came past, and put out her hand to pluck the fruit, she jumped out and seized her by the arm.

‘Ah! you little thief!’ she exclaimed. ‘I have caught you at last. Now you will have to pay for your misdeeds.’

The poor child, half dead with fright, implored the old woman to forgive her, assuring her that she did not know she had done wrong, and promising never to do it again. But the witch had no pity, and she dragged Prunella into her house, where she kept her till the time should come when she could have her revenge.

As the years passed Prunella grew up into a very beautiful girl. Now her beauty and goodness, instead of softening the witch’s heart, aroused her hatred and jealousy.

One day she called Prunella to her, and said: ‘Take this basket, go to the well, and bring it back to me filled with water. If you don’t I will kill you.’

The girl took the basket, went and let it down into the well again and again. But her work was lost labour. Each time, as she drew up the basket, the water streamed out of it. At last, in despair, she gave it up, and leaning against the well she began to cry bitterly, when suddenly she heard a voice at her side saying ‘Prunella, why are you crying?’

Turning round she beheld a handsome youth, who looked kindly at her, as if he were sorry for her trouble.

‘Who are you,’ she asked, ‘and how do you know my name?’

‘I am the son of the witch,’ he replied, ‘and my name is Bensiabel. I know that she is determined that you shall die, but I promise you that she shall not carry out her wicked plan. Will you give me a kiss, if I fill your basket?’

‘No,’ said Prunella, ‘I will not give you a kiss, because you are the son of a witch.’

‘Very well,’ replied the youth sadly. ‘Give me your basket and I will fill it for you.’ And he dipped it into the well, and the water stayed in it. Then the girl returned to the house, carrying the basket filled with water. When the witch saw it, she became white with rage, and exclaimed ‘Bensiabel must have helped you.’ And Prunella looked down, and said nothing.

‘Well, we shall see who will win in the end,’ said the witch, in a great rage.

The following day she called the girl to her and said: ‘Take this sack of wheat. I am going out for a little; by the time I return I shall expect you to have made it into bread. If you have not done it I will kill you.’ Having said this she left the room, closing and locking the door behind her.

Poor Prunella did not know what to do. It was impossible for her to grind the wheat, prepare the dough, and bake the bread, all in the short time that the witch would be away. At first she set to work bravely, but when she saw how hopeless her task was, she threw herself on a chair, and began to weep bitterly. She was roused from her despair by hearing Bensiabel’s voice at her side saying: ‘Prunella, Prunella, do not weep like that. If you will give me a kiss I will make the bread, and you will be saved.’

‘I will not kiss the son of a witch,’ replied Prunella.

But Bensiabel took the wheat from her, and ground it, and made the dough, and when the witch returned the bread was ready baked in the oven.

Turning to the girl, with fury in her voice, she said: ‘Bensiabel must have been here and helped you;’ and Prunella looked down, and said nothing.

‘We shall see who will win in the end,’ said the witch, and her eyes blazed with anger.

Next day she called the girl to her and said: ‘Go to my sister, who lives across the mountains. She will give you a casket, which you must bring back to me.’ This she said knowing that her sister, who was a still more cruel and wicked witch than herself, would never allow the girl to return, but would imprison her and starve her to death. But Prunella did not suspect anything, and set out quite cheerfully. On the way she met Bensiabel.

‘Where are you going, Prunella?’ he asked.

‘I am going to the sister of my mistress, from whom I am to fetch a casket.’

‘Oh poor, poor girl!’ said Bensiabel. ‘You are being sent straight to your death. Give me a kiss, and I will save you.’

But again Prunella answered as before, ‘I will not kiss the son of a witch.’

‘Nevertheless, I will save your life,’ said Bensiabel, ‘for I love you better than myself. Take this flagon of oil, this loaf of bread, this piece of rope, and this broom. When you reach the witch’s house, oil the hinges of the door with the contents of the flagon, and throw the loaf of bread to the great fierce mastiff, who will come to meet you. When you have passed the dog, you will see in the courtyard a miserable woman trying in vain to let down a bucket into the well with her plaited hair. You must give her the rope. In the kitchen you will find a still more miserable woman trying to clean the hearth with her tongue; to her you must give the broom. You will see the casket on the top of a cupboard, take it as quickly as you can, and leave the house without a moment's delay. If you do all this exactly as I have told you, you will not be killed.'

So Prunella, having listened carefully to his instructions, did just what he had told her. She reached the house, oiled the hinges of the door, threw the loaf to the dog, gave the poor woman at the well the rope, and the woman in the kitchen the broom, caught up the casket from the top of the cupboard, and fled with it out of the house. But the witch heard her as she ran away, and rushing to the window called out to the woman in the kitchen: 'Kill that thief, I tell you!'

But the woman replied: 'I will not kill her, for she has given me a broom, whereas you forced me to clean the hearth with my tongue.'

Then the witch called out in fury to the woman at the well; 'Take the girl, I tell you, and fling her into the water, and drown her!'

But the woman answered; 'No, I will not drown her, for she gave me this rope, whereas you forced me to use my hair to let down the bucket to draw water.'

Then the witch shouted to the dog to seize the girl and hold her fast; but the dog answered; 'No, I will not seize her, for she gave me a loaf of bread, whereas you let me starve with hunger.'

The witch was so angry that she nearly choked, as she called out; 'Door, bang upon her, and keep her a prisoner.'

But the door answered; 'I won't, for she has oiled my hinges, so that they move quite easily, whereas you left them all rough and rusty.'

And so Prunella escaped, and, with the casket under her arm, reached the house of her mistress who, as you may believe, was as angry as she was surprised to see the girl standing before her, looking more beautiful than ever. Her eyes flashed, as in furious tones she asked her, 'Did you meet Bensiabel?'

But Prunella looked down, and said nothing.

'We shall see,' said the witch, 'who will win in the end. Listen, there are three cocks in the hen-house; one is yellow, one black, and the third is white. If one of them crows during the night you must tell me which one it is. Woe to you if you make a mistake. I will gobble you up in one mouthful.'

Now Bensiabel was in the room next to the one where Prunella slept. At midnight she awoke hearing a cock crow.

'Which one was that?' shouted the witch.

Then, trembling, Prunella knocked on the wall and whispered: ‘Bensiabel, Bensiabel, tell me, which cock crowed?’

‘Will you give me a kiss if I tell you?’ he whispered back through the wall.

But she answered ‘No.’

Then he whispered back to her; ‘Nevertheless, I will tell you. It was the yellow cock that crowed.’

The witch, who had noticed the delay in Prunella’s answer, approached her door calling angrily: ‘Answer at once, or I will kill you.’

So Prunella answered: ‘It was the yellow cock that crowed.’

And the witch stamped her foot and gnashed her teeth.

Soon after another cock crowed. ‘Tell me now which one it is,’ called the witch. And, prompted by Bensiabel, Prunella answered: ‘That is the black cock.’

A few minutes after the crowing was heard again, and the voice of the witch demanding ‘Which one was that?’

And again Prunella implored Bensiabel to help her. But this time he hesitated, for he hoped that Prunella might forget that he was a witch’s son, and promise to give him a kiss. And as he hesitated he heard an agonised cry from the girl: ‘Bensiabel, Bensiabel, save me! The witch is coming, she is close to me, I hear the gnashing of her teeth!’

With a bound Bensiabel opened his door and flung himself against the witch. He pulled her back with such force that she stumbled, and falling headlong, dropped down dead at the foot of the stairs.

Then, at last, Prunella was touched by Bensiabel’s goodness and kindness to her, and she became his wife, and they lived happily ever after.

THE VIOLET FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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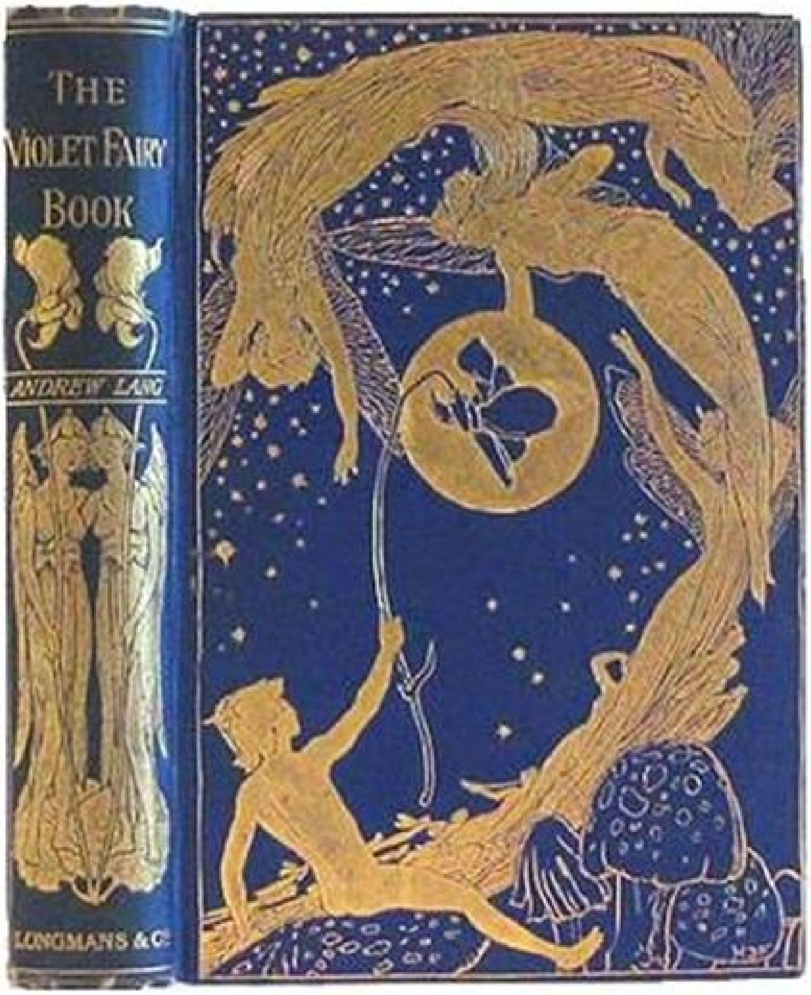
THE
VIOLET FAIRY
BOOK
ANDREW LANG
LONGMANS & Co

The first edition

TO VIOLET MYERS

IS DEDICATED
THE VIOLET FAIRY BOOK

THE VIOLET FAIRY BOOK

The Emperor meets the three Sisters

PREFACE

LIGHT
ALONG
the Hedge
PEAS

The Editor takes this opportunity to repeat what he has often said before, that he is not the author of the stories in the Fairy Books; that he did not invent them ‘out of his own head.’ He is accustomed to being asked, by ladies, ‘Have you written anything else except the Fairy Books?’ He is then obliged to explain that he has NOT written the Fairy Books, but, save these, has written almost everything else, except hymns, sermons, and dramatic works.

The stories in this Violet Fairy Book, as in all the others of the series, have been translated out of the popular traditional tales in a number of different languages. These stories are as old as anything that men have invented. They are narrated by naked savage women to naked savage children. They have been inherited by our earliest civilised ancestors, who really believed that beasts and trees and stones can talk if they choose, and behave kindly or unkindly. The stories are full of the oldest ideas of ages when science did not exist, and magic took the place of science. Anybody who has the curiosity to read the ‘Legendary Australian Tales,’ which Mrs. Langloh Parker has collected from the lips of the Australian savages, will find that these tales are closely akin to our own. Who were the first authors of them nobody knows — probably the first men and women. Eve may have told these tales to amuse Cain and Abel. As people grew more civilised and had kings and queens, princes and princesses, these exalted persons generally were chosen as heroes and heroines. But originally the characters were just ‘a man,’ and ‘a woman,’ and ‘a boy,’ and ‘a girl,’ with crowds of beasts, birds, and fishes, all behaving like human beings. When the nobles and other people became rich and educated, they forgot the old stories, but the country people did not, and handed them down, with changes at pleasure, from generation to generation. Then learned men collected and printed the country people’s stories, and these we have translated, to amuse children. Their tastes remain like the tastes of their naked ancestors, thousands of years ago, and they seem to like fairy tales better than history, poetry, geography, or arithmetic, just as grown-up people like novels better than anything else.

This is the whole truth of the matter. I have said so before, and I say so again. But nothing will prevent children from thinking that I invented the stories, or some ladies from being of the same opinion. But who really invented the stories nobody knows; it is all so long ago, long before reading and writing were invented. The first of the stories actually written down, were written in Egyptian hieroglyphs, or on Babylonian cakes of clay, three or four thousand years before our time.

Of the stories in this book, Miss Blackley translated ‘Dwarf Long Nose,’ ‘The Wonderful Beggars,’ ‘The Lute Player,’ ‘Two in a Sack,’ and ‘The Fish that swam in the Air.’ Mr. W. A. Craigie translated from the Scandinavian, ‘Jasper who herded the Hares.’ Mrs. Lang did the rest.

Some of the most interesting are from the Roumanion, and three were previously published in the late Dr. Steere’s ‘Swahili Tales.’ By the permission of his representatives these three African stories have here been abridged and simplified for children.

A TALE OF THE TONTLAWALD

Long, long ago there stood in the midst of a country covered with lakes a vast stretch of moorland called the Tontlawald, on which no man ever dared set foot. From time to time a few bold spirits had been drawn by curiosity to its borders, and on their return had reported that they had caught a glimpse of a ruined house in a grove of thick trees, and round about it were a crowd of beings resembling men, swarming over the grass like bees. The men were as dirty and ragged as gipsies, and there were besides a quantity of old women and half-naked children.

One night a peasant who was returning home from a feast wandered a little farther into the Tontlawald, and came back with the same story. A countless number of women and children were gathered round a huge fire, and some were seated on the ground, while others danced strange dances on the smooth grass. One old crone had a broad iron ladle in her hand, with which every now and then she stirred the fire, but the moment she touched the glowing ashes the children rushed away, shrieking like night owls, and it was a long while before they ventured to steal back. And besides all this there had once or twice been seen a little old man with a long beard creeping out of the forest, carrying a sack bigger than himself. The women and children ran by his side, weeping and trying to drag the sack from off his back, but he shook them off, and went on his way. There was also a tale of a magnificent black cat as large as a foal, but men could not believe all the wonders told by the peasant, and it was difficult to make out what was true and what was false in his story. However, the fact remained that strange things did happen there, and the King of Sweden, to whom this part of the country belonged, more than once gave orders to cut down the haunted wood, but there was no one with courage enough to obey his commands. At length one man, bolder than the rest, struck his axe into a tree, but his blow was followed by a stream of blood and shrieks as of a human creature in pain. The terrified woodcutter fled as fast as his legs would carry him, and after that neither orders nor threats would drive anybody to the enchanted moor.

A few miles from the Tontlawald was a large village, where dwelt a peasant who had recently married a young wife. As not uncommonly happens in such cases, she turned the whole house upside down, and the two quarrelled and fought all day long.

By his first wife the peasant had a daughter called Elsa, a good quiet girl, who only wanted to live in peace, but this her stepmother would not allow. She beat and cuffed the poor child from morning till night, but as the stepmother had the whip-hand of her husband there was no remedy.

For two years Elsa suffered all this ill-treatment, when one day she went out with the other village children to pluck strawberries. Carelessly they wandered on, till at last they reached the edge of the Tontlawald, where the finest strawberries grew, making the grass red with their colour. The children flung themselves down on the ground, and, after eating as many as they wanted, began to pile up their baskets, when suddenly a cry arose from one of the older boys:

‘Run, run as fast as you can! We are in the Tontlawald!’

Quicker than lightning they sprang to their feet, and rushed madly away, all except Elsa, who had strayed farther than the rest, and had found a bed of the finest strawberries right under the trees. Like the others, she heard the boy’s cry, but could not make up her mind to leave the strawberries.

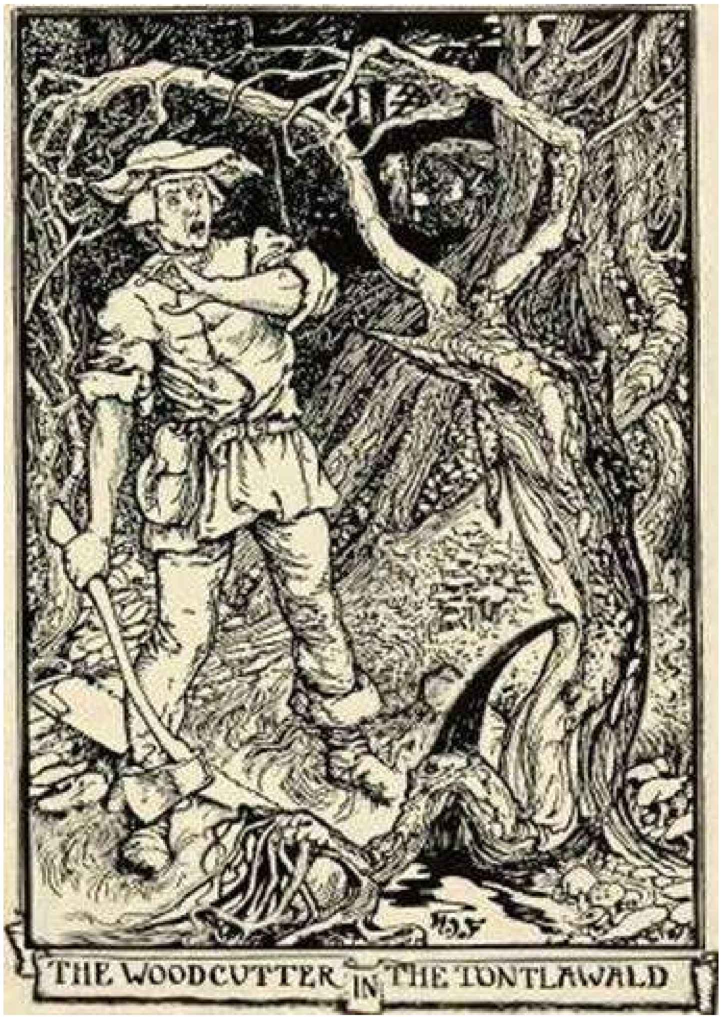

THE WOODCUTTER IN THE TONTLAWALD

‘After all, what does it matter?’ thought she. ‘The dwellers in the Tontlawald cannot be worse than my stepmother'; and looking up she saw a little black dog with a silver bell on its neck come barking towards her, followed by a maiden clad all in silk.

'Be quiet,' said she; then turning to Elsa she added: 'I am so glad you did not run away with the other children. Stay here with me and be my friend, and we will play delightful games together, and every day we will go and gather strawberries. Nobody will dare to beat you if I tell them not. Come, let us go to my mother'; and taking Elsa's hand she led her deeper into the wood, the little black dog jumping up beside them and barking with pleasure.

Oh! what wonders and splendours unfolded themselves before Elsa's astonished eyes! She thought she really must be in Heaven. Fruit trees and bushes loaded with fruit stood before them, while birds gayer than the brightest butterfly sat in their branches and filled the air with their song. And the birds were not shy, but let the girls take them in their hands, and stroke their gold and silver feathers. In the centre of the garden was the dwelling-house, shining with glass and precious stones, and in the doorway sat a woman in rich garments, who turned to Elsa's companion and asked:

'What sort of a guest are you bringing to me?'

'I found her alone in the wood,' replied her daughter, 'and brought her back with me for a companion. You will let her stay?'

The mother laughed, but said nothing, only she looked Elsa up and down sharply. Then she told the girl to come near, and stroked her cheeks and spoke kindly to her, asking if her parents were alive, and if she really would like to stay with them. Elsa stooped and kissed her hand, then, kneeling down, buried her face in the woman's lap, and sobbed out:

'My mother has lain for many years under the ground. My father is still alive, but I am nothing to him, and my stepmother beats me all the day long. I can do nothing right, so let me, I pray you, stay with you. I will look after the flocks or do any work you tell me; I will obey your lightest word; only do not, I entreat you, send me back to her. She will half kill me for not having come back with the other children.'

And the woman smiled and answered, 'Well, we will see what we can do with you,' and, rising, went into the house.

Then the daughter said to Elsa, 'Fear nothing, my mother will be your friend. I saw by the way she looked that she would grant your request when she had thought over it,' and, telling Elsa to wait, she entered the house to seek her mother. Elsa meanwhile was tossed about between hope and fear, and felt as if the girl would never come.

At last Elsa saw her crossing the grass with a box in her hand.

‘My mother says we may play together to-day, as she wants to make up her mind what to do about you. But I hope you will stay here always, as I can’t bear you to go away. Have you ever been on the sea?’

‘The sea?’ asked Elsa, staring; ‘what is that? I’ve never heard of such a thing!’

‘Oh, I’ll soon show you,’ answered the girl, taking the lid from the box, and at the very bottom lay a scrap of a cloak, a mussel shell, and two fish scales. Two drops of water were glistening on the cloak, and these the girl shook on the ground. In an instant the garden and lawn and everything else had vanished utterly, as if the earth had opened and swallowed them up, and as far as the eye could reach you could see nothing but water, which seemed at last to touch heaven itself. Only under their feet was a tiny dry spot. Then the girl placed the mussel shell on the water and took the fish scales in her hand. The mussel shell grew bigger and bigger, and turned into a pretty little boat, which would have held a dozen children. The girls stepped in, Elsa very cautiously, for which she was much laughed at by her friend, who used the fish scales for a rudder. The waves rocked the girls softly, as if they were lying in a cradle, and they floated on till they met other boats filled with men, singing and making merry.

‘We must sing you a song in return,’ said the girl, but as Elsa did not know any songs, she had to sing by herself. Elsa could not understand any of the men’s songs, but one word, she noticed, came over and over again, and that was ‘Kisika.’ Elsa asked what it meant, and the girl replied that it was her name.

It was all so pleasant that they might have stayed there for ever had not a voice cried out to them, ‘Children, it is time for you to come home!’

So Kisika took the little box out of her pocket, with the piece of cloth lying in it, and dipped the cloth in the water, and lo! they were standing close to a splendid house in the middle of the garden. Everything round them was dry and firm, and there was no water anywhere. The mussel shell and the fish scales were put back in the box, and the girls went in.

They entered a large hall, where four and twenty richly dressed women were sitting round a table, looking as if they were about to attend a wedding. At the head of the table sat the lady of the house in a golden chair.

Elsa did not know which way to look, for everything that met her eyes was more beautiful than she could have dreamed possible. But she sat down with the rest, and ate some delicious fruit, and thought she must be in heaven. The guests talked softly, but their speech was strange to Elsa, and she understood nothing of what was said. Then the hostess turned round and whispered something to a maid behind her chair, and the maid left the hall, and when she came back she brought a little old man with her, who had a beard longer than himself. He bowed low to the lady and then stood quietly near the door.

‘Do you see this girl?’ said the lady of the house, pointing to Elsa. ‘I wish to adopt her for my daughter. Make me a copy of her, which we can send to her native village instead of herself.’

The old man looked Elsa all up and down, as if he was taking her measure, bowed again to the lady, and left the hall. After dinner the lady said kindly to Elsa, ‘Kisika has begged me to let you stay with her, and you have told her you would like to live here. Is that so?’

At these words Elsa fell on her knees, and kissed the lady’s hands and feet in gratitude for her escape from her cruel stepmother; but her hostess raised her from the ground and patted her head, saying, ‘All will go well as long as you are a good, obedient child, and I will take care of you and see that you want for nothing till you are grown up and can look after yourself. My waiting-maid, who teaches Kisika all sorts of fine handiwork, shall teach you too.’

Not long after the old man came back with a mould full of clay on his shoulders, and a little covered basket in his left hand. He put down his mould and his basket on the ground, took up a handful of clay, and made a doll as large as life. When it was finished he bored a hole in the doll’s breast and put a bit of bread inside; then, drawing a snake out of the basket, forced it to enter the hollow body.

‘Now,’ he said to the lady, ‘all we want is a drop of the maiden’s blood.’

When she heard this Elsa grew white with horror, for she thought she was selling her soul to the evil one.

‘Do not be afraid!’ the lady hastened to say; ‘we do not want your blood for any bad purpose, but rather to give you freedom and happiness.’

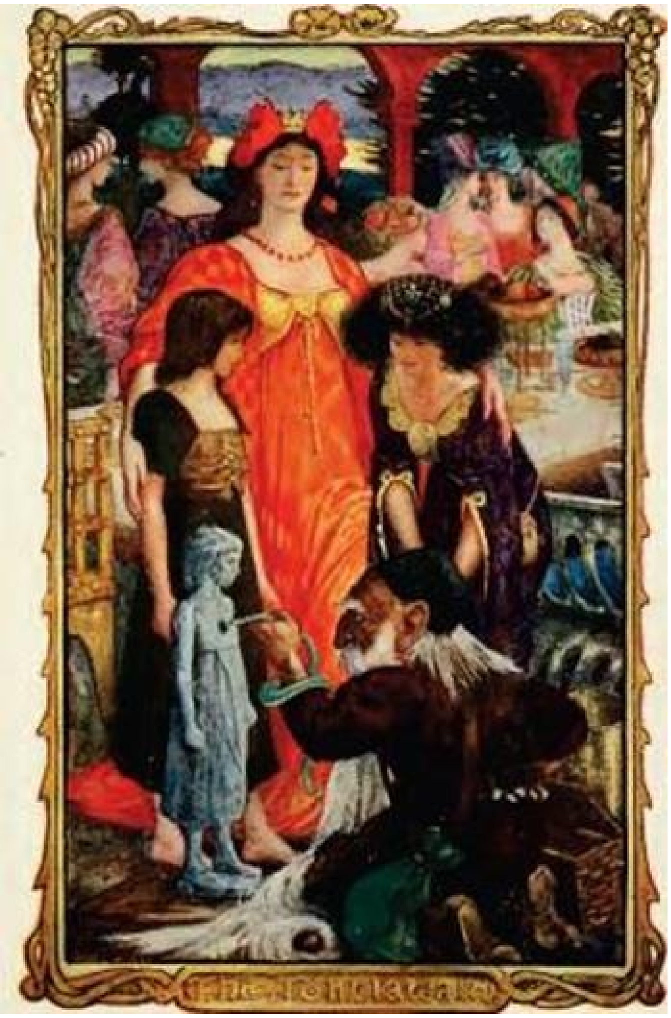

Then she took a tiny golden needle, pricked Elsa in the arm, and gave the needle to the old man, who stuck it into the heart of the doll. When this was done he placed the figure in the basket, promising that the next day they should all see what a beautiful piece of work he had finished.

When Elsa awoke the next morning in her silken bed, with its soft white pillows, she saw a beautiful dress lying over the back of a chair, ready for her to put on. A maid came in to comb out her long hair, and brought the finest linen for her use; but nothing gave Elsa so much joy as the little pair of embroidered shoes that she held in her hand, for the girl had hitherto been forced to run about barefoot by her cruel stepmother. In her excitement she never gave a thought to the rough clothes she had worn the day before, which had disappeared as if by magic during the night. Who could have taken them? Well, she was to know that by-and-by. But WE can guess that the doll had been dressed in them, which was to go back to the village in her stead. By the time the sun rose the doll had attained her full size, and no one could have told one girl from the other. Elsa started back when she met herself as she looked only yesterday.

‘You must not be frightened,’ said the lady, when she noticed her terror; ‘this clay figure can do you no harm. It is for your stepmother, that she may beat it instead of you. Let her flog it as hard as she will, it can never feel any pain. And if the wicked woman does not come one day to a better mind your double will be able at last to give her the punishment she deserves.’

From this moment Elsa’s life was that of the ordinary happy child, who has been rocked to sleep in her babyhood in a lovely golden cradle. She had no cares or troubles of any sort, and every day her tasks became easier, and the years that had gone before seemed more and more like a bad dream. But the happier she grew the deeper was her wonder at everything around her, and the more firmly she was persuaded that some great unknown power must be at the bottom of it all.

In the courtyard stood a huge granite block about twenty steps from the house, and when meal times came round the old man with the long beard went to the block, drew out a small silver staff, and struck the stone with it three times, so that the sound could be heard a long way off. At the third blow, out sprang a large golden cock, and stood upon the stone. Whenever he crowed and flapped his wings the rock opened and something came out of it. First a long table covered with dishes ready laid for the number of persons who would be seated round it, and this flew into the house all by itself.

When the cock crowed for the second time, a number of chairs appeared, and flew after the table; then wine, apples, and other fruit, all without trouble to anybody. After everybody had had enough, the old man struck the rock again. The golden cock crowed afresh, and back went dishes, table, chairs, and plates into the middle of the block.

When, however, it came to the turn of the thirteenth dish, which nobody ever wanted to eat, a huge black cat ran up, and stood on the rock close to the cock, while the dish was on his other side.

There they all remained, till they were joined by the old man.

He picked up the dish in one hand, tucked the cat under his arm, told the cock to get on his shoulder, and all four vanished into the rock. And this wonderful stone contained not only food, but clothes and everything you could possibly want in the house.

At first a language was often spoken at meals which was strange to Elsa, but by the help of the lady and her daughter she began slowly to understand it, though it was years before she was able to speak it herself.

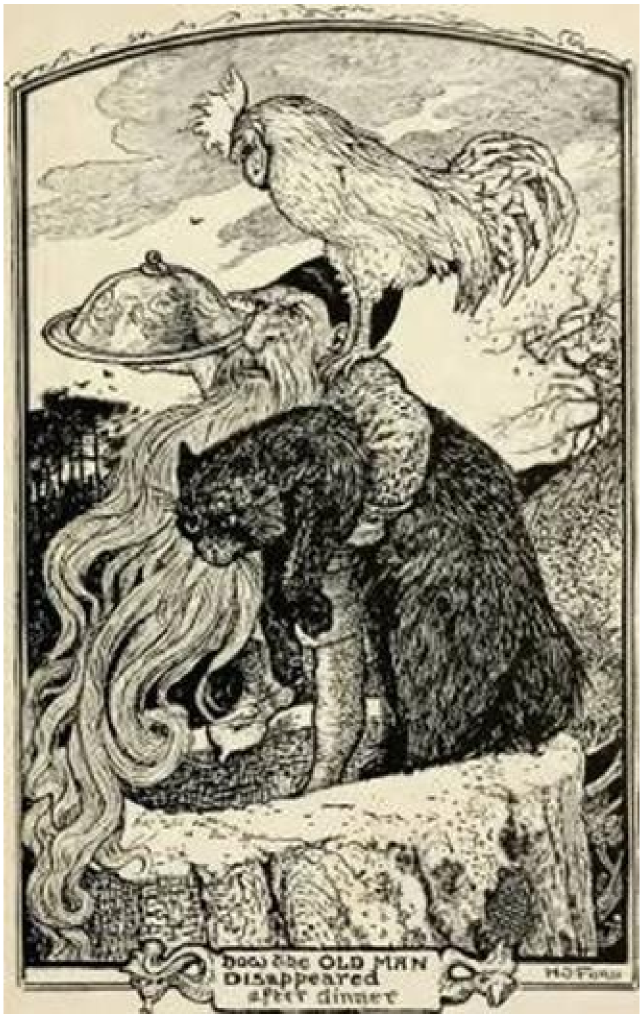

How the OLD MAN Disappeared after dinner

One day she asked Kisika why the thirteenth dish came daily to the table and was sent daily away untouched, but Kisika knew no more about it than she did. The girl must, however, have told her mother what Elsa had said, for a few days later she spoke to Elsa seriously:

‘Do not worry yourself with useless wondering. You wish to know why we never eat of the thirteenth dish? That, dear child, is the dish of hidden blessings, and we cannot taste of it without bringing our happy life here to an end. And the world would be a great deal better if men, in their greed, did not seek to snatch every thing for themselves, instead of leaving something as a thankoffering to the giver of the blessings. Greed is man’s worst fault.’

The years passed like the wind for Elsa, and she grew into a lovely woman, with a knowledge of many things that she would never have learned in her native village; but Kisika was still the same young girl that she had been on the day of her first meeting with Elsa. Each morning they both worked for an hour at reading and writing, as they had always done, and Elsa was anxious to learn all she could, but Kisika much preferred childish games to anything else. If the humour seized her, she would fling aside her tasks, take her treasure box, and go off to play in the sea, where no harm ever came to her.

‘What a pity,’ she would often say to Elsa, ‘that you have grown so big, you cannot play with me any more.’

Nine years slipped away in this manner, when one day the lady called Elsa into her room. Elsa was surprised at the summons, for it was unusual, and her heart sank, for she feared some evil threatened her. As she crossed the threshold, she saw that the lady’s cheeks were flushed, and her eyes full of tears, which she dried hastily, as if she would conceal them from the girl. ‘Dearest child,’ she began, ‘the time has come when we must part.’

‘Part?’ cried Elsa, burying her head in the lady’s lap. ‘No, dear lady, that can never be till death parts us. You once opened your arms to me; you cannot thrust me away now.’

‘Ah, be quiet, child,’ replied the lady; ‘you do not know what I would do to make you happy. Now you are a woman, and I have no right to keep you here. You must return to the world of men, where joy awaits you.’

‘Dear lady,’ entreated Elsa again. ‘Do not, I beseech you, send me from you. I want no other happiness but to live and die beside you. Make me your waiting maid, or set me to any work you choose, but do not cast me forth into the world. It would have been better if you had left me with my stepmother, than first to have brought me to heaven and then send me back to a worse place.’

‘Do not talk like that, dear child,’ replied the lady; ‘you do not know all that must be done to secure your happiness, however much it costs me. But it has to be. You are only a common mortal, who will have to die one day, and you cannot stay here any longer. Though we have the bodies of men, we are not men at all, though it is not easy for you to understand why. Some day or other you will find a husband who has been made expressly for you, and will live happily with him till death separates you. It will be very hard for me to part from you, but it has to be, and you must make up your mind to it.’ Then she drew her golden comb gently through Elsa’s hair, and bade her go to bed; but little sleep had the poor girl! Life seemed to stretch before her like a dark starless night.

Now let us look back a moment, and see what had been going on in Elsa’s native village all these years, and how her double had fared. It is a well-known fact that a bad woman seldom becomes better as she grows older, and Elsa’s stepmother was no exception to the rule; but as the figure that had taken the girl’s place could feel no pain, the blows that were showered on her night and day made no difference. If the father ever tried to come to his daughter’s help, his wife turned upon him, and things were rather worse than before.

One day the stepmother had given the girl a frightful beating, and then threatened to kill her outright. Mad with rage, she seized the figure by the throat with both hands, when out came a black snake from her mouth and stung the woman's tongue, and she fell dead without a sound. At night, when the husband came home, he found his wife lying dead upon the ground, her body all swollen and disfigured, but the girl was nowhere to be seen. His screams brought the neighbours from their cottages, but they were unable to explain how it had all come about. It was true, they said, that about mid-day they had heard a great noise, but as that was a matter of daily occurrence they did not think much of it. The rest of the day all was still, but no one had seen anything of the daughter. The body of the dead woman was then prepared for burial, and her tired husband went to bed, rejoicing in his heart that he had been delivered from the firebrand who had made his home unpleasant. On the table he saw a slice of bread lying, and, being hungry, he ate it before going to sleep.

In the morning he too was found dead, and as swollen as his wife, for the bread had been placed in the body of the figure by the old man who made it. A few days later he was placed in the grave beside his wife, but nothing more was ever heard of their daughter.

All night long after her talk with the lady Elsa had wept and wailed her hard fate in being cast out from her home which she loved.

Next morning, when she got up, the lady placed a gold seal ring on her finger, strung a little golden box on a ribbon, and placed it round her neck; then she called the old man, and, forcing back her tears, took leave of Elsa. The girl tried to speak, but before she could sob out her thanks the old man had touched her softly on the head three times with his silver staff. In an instant Elsa knew that she was turning into a bird: wings sprang from beneath her arms; her feet were the feet of eagles, with long claws; her nose curved itself into a sharp beak, and feathers covered her body. Then she soared high in the air, and floated up towards the clouds, as if she had really been hatched an eagle.

For several days she flew steadily south, resting from time to time when her wings grew tired, for hunger she never felt. And so it happened that one day she was flying over a dense forest, and below hounds were barking fiercely, because, not having wings themselves, she was out of their reach. Suddenly a sharp pain quivered through her body, and she fell to the ground, pierced by an arrow.

When Elsa recovered her senses, she found herself lying under a bush in her own proper form. What had befallen her, and how she got there, lay behind her like a bad dream.

As she was wondering what she should do next the king's son came riding by, and, seeing Elsa, sprang from his horse, and took her by the hand, sawing, 'Ah! it was a happy chance that brought me here this morning. Every night, for half a year, have I dreamed, dear lady, that I should one day find you in this wood. And although I have passed through it hundreds of times in vain, I have never given up hope. To-day I was going in search of a large eagle that I had shot, and instead of the eagle I have found — you.’ Then he took Elsa on his horse, and rode with her to the town, where the old king received her graciously.

A few days later the wedding took place, and as Elsa was arranging the veil upon her hair fifty carts arrived laden with beautiful things which the lady of the Tontlawald had sent to Elsa. And after the king’s death Elsa became queen, and when she was old she told this story. But that was the last that was ever heard of the Tontlawald.

(From Ehstnische Marchen.)

THE FINEST LIAR IN THE WORLD

At the edge of a wood there lived an old man who had only one son, and one day he called the boy to him and said he wanted some corn ground, but the youth must be sure never to enter any mill where the miller was beardless.

The boy took the corn and set out, and before he had gone very far he saw a large mill in front of him, with a beardless man standing in the doorway.

‘Good greeting, beardless one!’ cried he.

‘Good greeting, sonny,’ replied the man.

‘Could I grind something here?’

‘Yes, certainly! I will finish what I am doing and then you can grind as long as you like.’

But suddenly the boy remembered what his father had told him, and bade farewell to the man, and went further down the river, till he came to another mill, not knowing that as soon as his back was turned the beardless man had picked up a bag of corn and run hastily to the same mill before him. When the boy reached the second mill, and saw a second beardless man sitting there, he did not stop, and walked on till he came to a third mill. But this time also the beardless man had been too clever for him, and had arrived first by another road. When it happened a fourth time the boy grew cross, and said to himself, ‘It is no good going on; there seems to be a beardless man in every mill’; and he took his sack from his back, and made up his mind to grind his corn where he was.

The beardless man finished grinding his own corn, and when he had done he said to the boy, who was beginning to grind his, ‘Suppose, sonny, we make a cake of what you have there.’

Now the boy had been rather uneasy when he recollected his father’s words, but he thought to himself, ‘What is done cannot be undone,’ and answered, ‘Very well, so let it be.’

Then the beardless one got up, threw the flour into the tub, and made a hole in the middle, telling the boy to fetch some water from the river in his two hands, to mix the cake. When the cake was ready for baking they put it on the fire, and covered it with hot ashes, till it was cooked through. Then they leaned it up against the wall, for it was too big to go into a cupboard, and the beardless one said to the boy:

‘Look here, sonny: if we share this cake we shall neither of us have enough. Let us see who can tell the biggest lie, and the one who lies the best shall have the whole cake.’

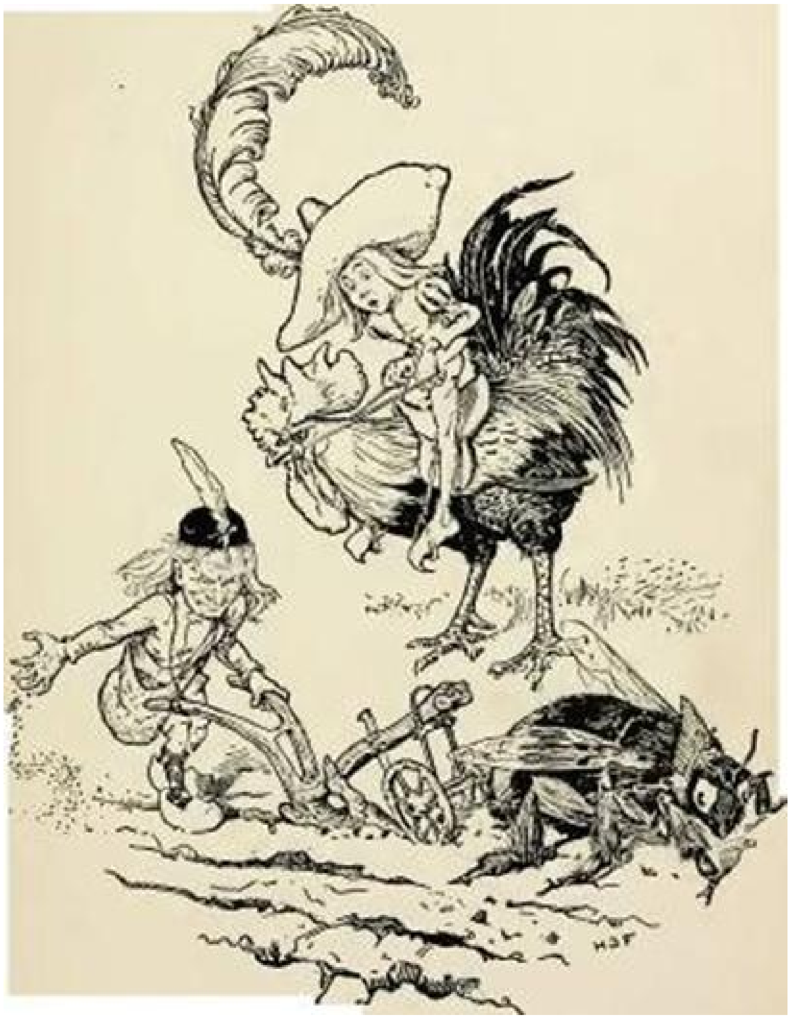

The boy, not knowing what else to do, answered, ‘All right; you begin.’

So the beardless one began to lie with all his might, and when he was tired of inventing new lies the boy said to him, ‘My good fellow, if THAT is all you can do it is not much! Listen to me, and I will tell you a true story.

‘In my youth, when I was an old man, we had a quantity of beehives. Every morning when I got up I counted them over, and it was quite easy to number the bees, but I never could reckon the hives properly. One day, as I was counting the bees, I discovered that my best bee was missing, and without losing a moment I saddled a cock and went out to look for him. I traced him as far as the shore, and knew that he had crossed the sea, and that I must follow. When I had reached the other side I found a man had harnessed my bee to a plough, and with his help was sowing millet seed.

‘“That is my bee!” I shouted. “Where did you get him from?”’ “Brother,” replied the man, “if he is yours, take him.” And he not only gave me back my bee, but a sack of millet seed into the bargain, because he had made use of my bee. Then I put the bag on my shoulders, took the saddle from the cock, and placed it on the back of the bee, which I mounted, leading the cock by a string, so that he should have a rest. As we were flying home over the sea one of the strings that held the bag of millet broke in two, and the sack dropped straight into the ocean. It was quite lost, of course, and there was no use thinking about it, and by the time we were safe back again night had come. I then got down from my bee, and let him loose, that he might get his supper, gave the cock some hay, and went to sleep myself. But when I awoke with the sun what a scene met my eyes! During the night wolves had come and had eaten my bee. And honey lay ankle-deep in the valley and knee-deep on the hills. Then I began to consider how I could best collect some, to take home with me.

‘Now it happened that I had with me a small hatchet, and this I took to the wood, hoping to meet some animal which I could kill, whose skin I might turn into a bag. As I entered the forest I saw two roe-deer hopping on one foot, so I slew them with a single blow, and made three bags from their skins, all of which I filled with honey and placed on the back of the cock. At length I reached home, where I was told that my father had just been born, and that I must go at once to fetch some holy water to sprinkle him with. As I went I turned over in my mind if there was no way for me to get back my millet seed, which had dropped into the sea, and when I arrived at the place with the holy water I saw the seed had fallen on fruitful soil, and was growing before my eyes. And more than that, it was even cut by an invisible hand, and made into a cake.

‘So I took the cake as well as the holy water, and was flying back with them over the sea, when there fell a great rain, and the sea was swollen, and swept away my millet cake. Ah, how vexed I was at its loss when I was safe on earth again.

‘Suddenly I remembered that my hair was very long. If I stood it touched the ground, although if I was sitting it only reached my ears. I seized a knife and cut off a large lock, which I plaited together, and when night came tied it into a knot, and prepared to use it for a pillow. But what was I to do for a fire? A tinder box I had, but no wood. Then it occurred to me that I had stuck a needle in my clothes, so I took the needle and split it in pieces, and lit it, then laid myself down by the fire and went to sleep. But ill-luck still pursued me. While I was sleeping a spark from the fire lighted on the hair, which was burnt up in a moment. In despair I threw myself on the ground, and instantly sank in it as far as my waist. I struggled to get out, but only fell in further; so I ran to the house, seized a spade, dug myself out, and took home the holy water. On the way I noticed that the ripe fields were full of reapers, and suddenly the air became so frightfully hot that the men dropped down in a faint. Then I called to them, “Why don’t you bring out our mare, which is as tall as two days, and as broad as half a day, and make a shade for yourselves?” My father heard what I said and jumped quickly on the mare, and the reapers worked with a will in the shadow, while I snatched up a wooden pail to bring them some water to drink. When I got to the well everything was frozen hard, so in order to draw some water I had to take off my head and break the ice with it. As I drew near them, carrying the water, the reapers all cried out, “Why, what has become of your head?” I put up my hand and discovered that I really had no head, and that I must have left it in the well. I ran back to look for it, but found that meanwhile a fox which was passing by had pulled my head out of the water, and was tearing at my brains. I stole cautiously up to him, and gave him such a kick that he uttered a loud scream, and let fall a parchment on which was written, “The cake is mine, and the beardless one goes empty-handed.”’

With these words the boy rose, took the cake, and went home, while the beardless one remained behind to swallow his disappointment.

(Volksmarchen der Serben.)

THE STORY OF THREE WONDERFUL BEGGARS

There once lived a merchant whose name was Mark, and whom people called ‘Mark the Rich.’ He was a very hard-hearted man, for he could not bear poor people, and if he caught sight of a beggar anywhere near his house, he would order the servants to drive him away, or would set the dogs at him.

One day three very poor old men came begging to the door, and just as he was going to let the fierce dogs loose on them, his little daughter, Anastasia, crept close up to him and said:

‘Dear daddy, let the poor old men sleep here to-night, do — to please me.’

Her father could not bear to refuse her, and the three beggars were allowed to sleep in a loft, and at night, when everyone in the house was fast asleep, little Anastasia got up, climbed up to the loft, and peeped in.

The three old men stood in the middle of the loft, leaning on their sticks, with their long grey beards flowing down over their hands, and were talking together in low voices.

‘What news is there?’ asked the eldest.

‘In the next village the peasant Ivan has just had his seventh son. What shall we name him, and what fortune shall we give him?’ said the second.

The third whispered, ‘Call him Vassili, and give him all the property of the hard-hearted man in whose loft we stand, and who wanted to drive us from his door.’

After a little more talk the three made themselves ready and crept softly away.

Anastasia, who had heard every word, ran straight to her father, and told him all.

Mark was very much surprised; he thought, and thought, and in the morning he drove to the next village to try and find out if such a child really had been born. He went first to the priest, and asked him about the children in his parish.

‘Yesterday,’ said the priest, ‘a boy was born in the poorest house in the village. I named the unlucky little thing “Vassili.” He is the seventh son, and the eldest is only seven years old, and they hardly have a mouthful amongst them all. Who can be got to stand godfather to such a little beggar boy?’

The merchant’s heart beat fast, and his mind was full of bad thoughts about that poor little baby. He would be godfather himself, he said, and he ordered a fine christening feast; so the child was brought and christened, and Mark was very friendly to its father. After the ceremony was over he took Ivan aside and said:

‘Look here, my friend, you are a poor man. How can you afford to bring up the boy? Give him to me and I’ll make something of him, and I’ll give you a present of a thousand crowns. Is that a bargain?’

Ivan scratched his head, and thought, and thought, and then he agreed. Mark counted out the money, wrapped the baby up in a fox skin, laid it in the sledge beside him, and drove back towards home. When he had driven some miles he drew up, carried the child to the edge of a steep precipice and threw it over, muttering, ‘There, now try to take my property!’

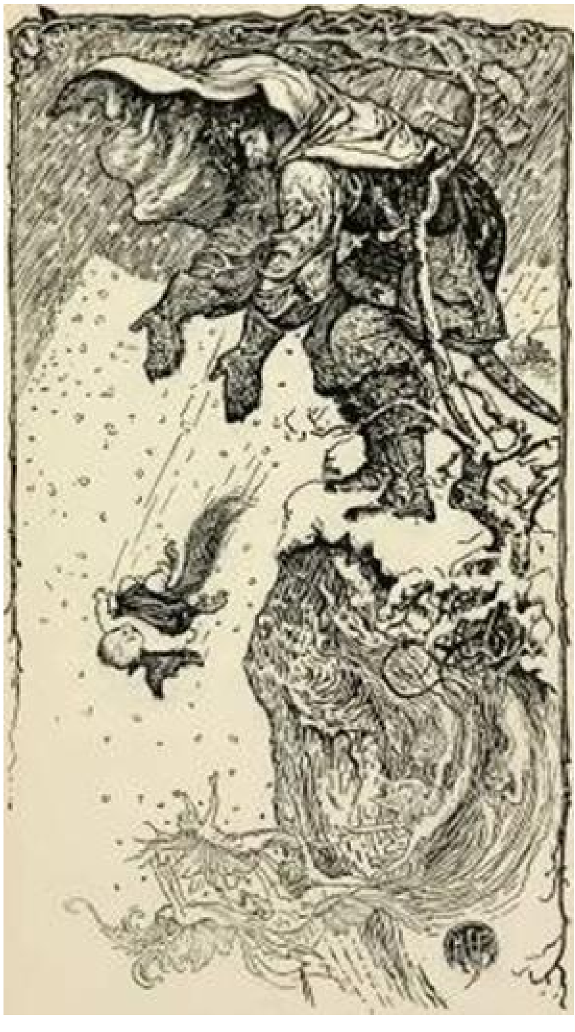

Very soon after this some foreign merchants travelled along that same road on the way to see Mark and to pay the twelve thousand crowns which they owed him.

As they were passing near the precipice they heard a sound of crying, and on looking over they saw a little green meadow wedged in between two great heaps of snow, and on the meadow lay a baby amongst the flowers.

The merchants picked up the child, wrapped it up carefully, and drove on. When they saw Mark they told him what a strange thing they had found. Mark guessed at once that the child must be his godson, asked to see him, and said:

‘That’s a nice little fellow; I should like to keep him. If you will make him over to me, I will let you off your debt.’

The merchants were very pleased to make so good a bargain, left the child with Mark, and drove off.

At night Mark took the child, put it in a barrel, fastened the lid tight down, and threw it into the sea. The barrel floated away to a great distance, and at last it floated close up to a monastery. The monks were just spreading out their nets to dry on the shore, when they heard the sound of crying. It seemed to come from the barrel which was bobbing about near the water’s edge. They drew it to land and opened it, and there was a little child! When the abbot heard the news, he decided to bring up the boy, and named him ‘Vassili.’

The boy lived on with the monks, and grew up to be a clever, gentle, and handsome young man. No one could read, write, or sing better than he, and he did everything so well that the abbot made him wardrobe keeper.

Now, it happened about this time that the merchant, Mark, came to the monastery in the course of a journey. The monks were very polite to him and showed him their house and church and all they had. When he went into the church the choir was singing, and one voice was so clear and beautiful, that he asked who it belonged to. Then the abbot told him of the wonderful way in which Vassili had come to them, and Mark saw clearly that this must be his godson whom he had twice tried to kill.

He said to the abbot: ‘I can’t tell you how much I enjoy that young man’s singing. If he could only come to me I would make him overseer of all my business. As you say, he is so good and clever. Do spare him to me. I will make his fortune, and will present your monastery with twenty thousand crowns.’

The abbot hesitated a good deal, but he consulted all the other monks, and at last they decided that they ought not to stand in the way of Vassili’s good fortune.

Then Mark wrote a letter to his wife and gave it to Vassili to take to her, and this was what was in the letter: ‘When the bearer of this arrives, take him into the soap factory, and when you pass near the great boiler, push him in. If you don’t obey my orders I shall be very angry, for this young man is a bad fellow who is sure to ruin us all if he lives.’

Vassili had a good voyage, and on landing set off on foot for Mark’s home.

On the way he met three beggars, who asked him: ‘Where are you going, Vassili?’

‘I am going to the house of Mark the Merchant, and have a letter for his wife,’ replied Vassili.

‘Show us the letter.’

Vassili handed them the letter. They blew on it and gave it back to him, saying: ‘Now go and give the letter to Mark’s wife. You will not be forsaken.’

Vassili reached the house and gave the letter. When the mistress read it she could hardly believe her eyes and called for her daughter. In the letter was written, quite plainly: ‘When you receive this letter, get ready for a wedding, and let the bearer be married next day to my daughter, Anastasia. If you don’t obey my orders I shall be very angry.’

Anastasia saw the bearer of the letter and he pleased her very much. They dressed Vassili in fine clothes and next day he was married to Anastasia.

In due time, Mark returned from his travels. His wife, daughter, and son-in-law all went out to meet him. When Mark saw Vassili he flew into a terrible rage with his wife. ‘How dared you marry my daughter without my consent?’ he asked.

‘I only carried out your orders,’ said she. ‘Here is your letter.’

Mark read it. It certainly was his handwriting, but by no means his wishes.

‘Well,’ thought he, ‘you’ve escaped me three times, but I think I shall get the better of you now.’ And he waited a month and was very kind and pleasant to his daughter and her husband.

At the end of that time he said to Vassili one day, ‘I want you to go for me to my friend the Serpent King, in his beautiful country at the world’s end. Twelve years ago he built a castle on some land of mine. I want you to ask for the rent for those twelve years and also to find out from him what has become of my twelve ships which sailed for his country three years ago.’

Vassili dared not disobey. He said good-bye to his young wife, who cried bitterly at parting, hung a bag of biscuits over his shoulders, and set out.

I really cannot tell you whether the journey was long or short. As he tramped along he suddenly heard a voice saying: ‘Vassili! where are you going?’

Vassili looked about him, and, seeing no one, called out: ‘Who spoke to me?’

‘I did; this old wide-spreading oak. Tell me where you are going.’

‘I am going to the Serpent King to receive twelve years’ rent from him.’

‘When the time comes, remember me and ask the king: “Rotten to the roots, half dead but still green, stands the old oak. Is it to stand much longer on the earth?”’

Vassili went on further. He came to a river and got into the ferryboat. The old ferryman asked: ‘Are you going far, my friend?’

‘I am going to the Serpent King.’

‘Then think of me and say to the king: “For thirty years the ferryman has rowed to and fro. Will the tired old man have to row much longer?”’

‘Very well,’ said Vassili; ‘I’ll ask him.’

And he walked on. In time he came to a narrow strait of the sea and across it lay a great whale over whose back people walked and drove as if it had been a bridge or a road. As he stepped on it the whale said, ‘Do tell me where you are going.’

‘I am going to the Serpent King.’

And the whale begged: ‘Think of me and say to the king: “The poor whale has been lying three years across the strait, and men and horses have nearly trampled his back into his ribs. Is he to lie there much longer?”’

‘I will remember,’ said Vassili, and he went on.

He walked, and walked, and walked, till he came to a great green meadow. In the meadow stood a large and splendid castle. Its white marble walls sparkled in the light, the roof was covered with mother o’ pearl, which shone like a rainbow, and the sun glowed like fire on the crystal windows. Vassili walked in, and went from one room to another astonished at all the splendour he saw.

When he reached the last room of all, he found a beautiful girl sitting on a bed.

As soon as she saw him she said: ‘Oh, Vassili, what brings you to this accursed place?’

Vassili told her why he had come, and all he had seen and heard on the way.

The girl said: ‘You have not been sent here to collect rents, but for your own destruction, and that the serpent may devour you.’

She had not time to say more, when the whole castle shook, and a rustling, hissing, groaning sound was heard. The girl quickly pushed Vassili into a chest under the bed, locked it and whispered: ‘Listen to what the serpent and I talk about.’

Then she rose up to receive the Serpent King.

The monster rushed into the room, and threw itself panting on the bed, crying: ‘I’ve flown half over the world. I’m tired, VERY tired, and want to sleep — scratch my head.’

The beautiful girl sat down near him, stroking his hideous head, and said in a sweet coaxing voice: ‘You know everything in the world. After you left, I had such a wonderful dream. Will you tell me what it means?’

‘Out with it then, quick! What was it?’

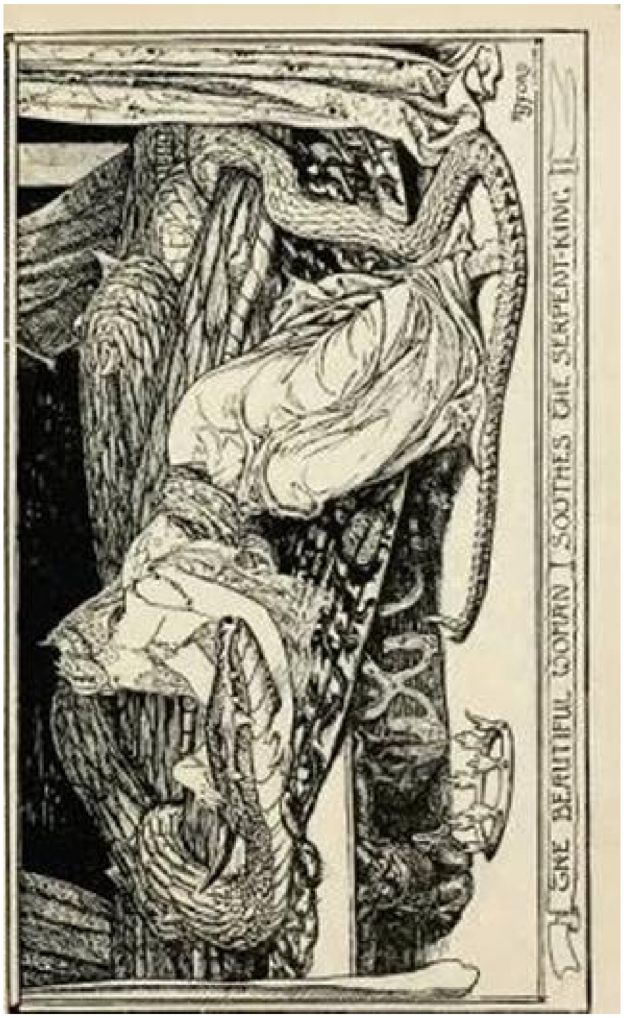
THE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN SOOTHES THE SERPENT-KING

‘I dreamt I was walking on a wide road, and an oak tree said to me: “Ask the king this: Rotten at the roots, half dead, and yet green stands the old oak. Is it to stand much longer on the earth?”’

‘It must stand till some one comes and pushes it down with his foot. Then it will fall, and under its roots will be found more gold and silver than even Mark the Rich has got.’

‘Then I dreamt I came to a river, and the old ferryman said to me: “For thirty year’s the ferryman has rowed to and fro. Will the tired old man have to row much longer?”’

‘That depends on himself. If some one gets into the boat to be ferried across, the old man has only to push the boat off, and go his way without looking back. The man in the boat will then have to take his place.’

‘And at last I dreamt that I was walking over a bridge made of a whale’s back, and the living bridge spoke to me and said: “Here have I been stretched out these three years, and men and horses have trampled my back down into my ribs. Must I lie here much longer?”’

‘He will have to lie there till he has thrown up the twelve ships of Mark the Rich which he swallowed. Then he may plunge back into the sea and heal his back.’

And the Serpent King closed his eyes, turned round on his other side, and began to snore so loud that the windows rattled.

In all haste the lovely girl helped Vassili out of the chest, and showed him part of his way back. He thanked her very politely, and hurried off.

When he reached the strait the whale asked: ‘Have you thought of me?’

‘Yes, as soon as I am on the other side I will tell you what you want to know.’

When he was on the other side Vassili said to the whale: ‘Throw up those twelve ships of Mark’s which you swallowed three years ago.’

The great fish heaved itself up and threw up all the twelve ships and their crews. Then he shook himself for joy, and plunged into the sea.

Vassili went on further till he reached the ferry, where the old man asked: ‘Did you think of me?’

‘Yes, and as soon as you have ferried me across I will tell you what you want to know.’

When they had crossed over, Vassili said: ‘Let the next man who comes stay in the boat, but do you step on shore, push the boat off, and you will be free, and the other man must take your place.

Then Vassili went on further still, and soon came to the old oak tree, pushed it with his foot, and it fell over. There, at the roots, was more gold and silver than even Mark the Rich had.

And now the twelve ships which the whale had thrown up came sailing along and anchored close by. On the deck of the first ship stood the three beggars whom Vassili had met formerly, and they said: ‘Heaven has blessed you, Vassili.’ Then they vanished away and he never saw them again.

The sailors carried all the gold and silver into the ship, and then they set sail for home with Vassili on board.

Mark was more furious than ever. He had his horses harnessed and drove off himself to see the Serpent King and to complain of the way in which he had been betrayed. When he reached the river he sprang into the ferryboat. The ferryman, however, did not get in but pushed the boat off....

Vassili led a good and happy life with his dear wife, and his kind mother-in-law lived with them. He helped the poor and fed and clothed the hungry and naked and all Mark’s riches became his.

For many years Mark has been ferrying people across the river. His face is wrinkled, his hair and beard are snow white, and his eyes are dim; but still he rows on.

(From the Serbian.)

SCHIPPEITARO

It was the custom in old times that as soon as a Japanese boy reached manhood he should leave his home and roam through the land in search of adventures. Sometimes he would meet with a young man bent on the same business as himself, and then they would fight in a friendly manner, merely to prove which was the stronger, but on other occasions the enemy would turn out to be a robber, who had become the terror of the neighbourhood, and then the battle was in deadly earnest.

One day a youth started off from his native village, resolved never to come back till he had done some great deed that would make his name famous. But adventures did not seem very plentiful just then, and he wandered about for a long time without meeting either with fierce giants or distressed damsels. At last he saw in the distance a wild mountain, half covered with a dense forest, and thinking that this promised well at once took the road that led to it. The difficulties he met with — huge rocks to be climbed, deep rivers to be crossed, and thorny tracts to be avoided — only served to make his heart beat quicker, for he was really brave all through, and not merely when he could not help himself, like a great many people. But in spite of all his efforts he could not find his way out of the forest, and he began to think he should have to pass the night there. Once more he strained his eyes to see if there was no place in which he could take shelter, and this time he caught sight of a small chapel in a little clearing. He hastened quickly towards it, and curling himself up in a warm corner soon fell asleep.

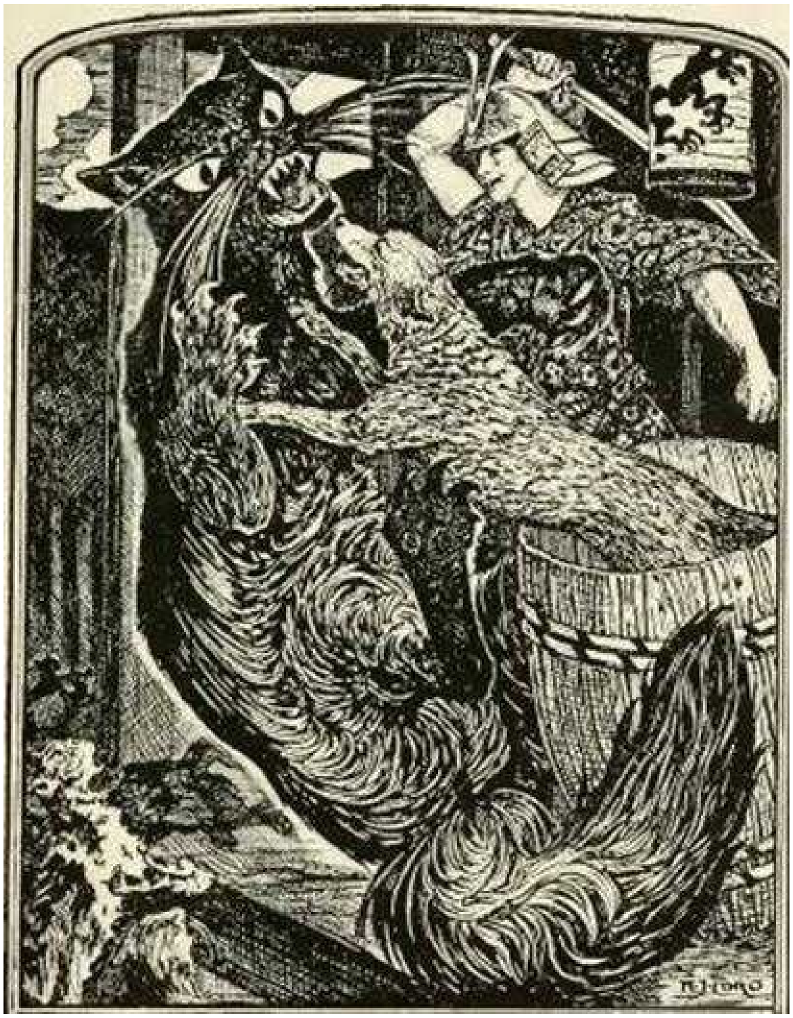

Not a sound was heard through the whole forest for some hours, but at midnight there suddenly arose such a clamour that the young man, tired as he was, started broad awake in an instant. Peeping cautiously between the wooden pillars of the chapel, he saw a troop of hideous cats, dancing furiously, making the night horrible with their yells. The full moon lighted up the weird scene, and the young warrior gazed with astonishment, taking great care to keep still, lest he should be discovered. After some time he thought that in the midst of all their shrieks he could make out the words, ‘Do not tell Schippeitaro! Keep it hidden and secret! Do not tell Schippeitaro!’ Then, the midnight hour having passed, they all vanished, and the youth was left alone. Exhausted by all that had been going on round him, he flung himself on the ground and slept till the sun rose.

The moment he woke he felt very hungry, and began to think how he could get something to eat. So he got up and walked on, and before he had gone very far was lucky enough to find a little side-path, where he could trace men’s footsteps. He followed the track, and by-and-by came on some scattered huts, beyond which lay a village. Delighted at this discovery, he was about to hasten to the village when he heard a woman’s voice weeping and lamenting, and calling on the men to take pity on her and help her. The sound of her distress made him forget he was hungry, and he strode into the hut to find out for himself what was wrong. But the men whom he asked only shook their heads and told him it was not a matter in which he could give any help, for all this sorrow was caused by the Spirit of the Mountain, to whom every year they were bound to furnish a maiden for him to eat.

‘To-morrow night,’ said they, ‘the horrible creature will come for his dinner, and the cries you have heard were uttered by the girl before you, upon whom the lot has fallen.’

And when the young man asked if the girl was carried off straight from her home, they answered no, but that a large cask was set in the forest chapel, and into this she was fastened.

As he listened to this story, the young man was filled with a great longing to rescue the maiden from her dreadful fate. The mention of the chapel set him thinking of the scene of the previous night, and he went over all the details again in his mind. ‘Who is Schippeitaro?’ he suddenly asked; ‘can any of you tell me?’

‘Schippeitaro is the great dog that belongs to the overseer of our prince,’ said they; ‘and he lives not far away.’ And they began to laugh at the question, which seemed to them so odd and useless.

The young man did not laugh with them, but instead left the hut and went straight to the owner of the dog, whom he begged to lend him the animal just for one night. Schippeitaro’s master was not at all willing to give him in charge to a man of whom he knew nothing, but in the end he consented, and the youth led the dog away, promising faithfully to return him next day to his master. He next hurried to the hut where the maiden lived, and entreated her parents to shut her up safely in a closet, after which he took Schippeitaro to the cask, and fastened him into it. In the evening he knew that the cask would be placed in the chapel, so he hid himself there and waited.

At midnight, when the full moon appeared above the top of the mountain, the cats again filled the chapel and shrieked and yelled and danced as before. But this time they had in their midst a huge black cat who seemed to be their king, and whom the young man guessed to be the Spirit of the Mountain. The monster looked eagerly about him, and his eyes sparkled with joy when he saw the cask. He bounded high into the air with delight and uttered cries of pleasure; then he drew near and undid the bolts.

But instead of fastening his teeth in the neck of a beautiful maiden, Schippeitaro’s teeth were fastened in HIM, and the youth ran up and cut off his head with his sword. The other cats were so astonished at the turn things had taken that they forgot to run away, and the young man and Schippeitaro between them killed several more before they thought of escaping.

At sunrise the brave dog was taken back to his master, and from that time the mountain girls were safe, and every year a feast was held in memory of the young warrior and the dog Schippeitaro.

(Japanische Marchen.)

THE THREE PRINCES AND THEIR BEASTS (LITHUANIAN FAIRY TALE)

Once on a time there were three princes, who had a step-sister. One day they all set out hunting together. When they had gone some way through a thick wood they came on a great grey wolf with three cubs. Just as they were going to shoot, the wolf spoke and said, ‘Do not shoot me, and I will give each of you one of my young ones. It will be a faithful friend to you.’

So the princes went on their way, and a little wolf followed each of them.

Soon after they came on a lioness with three cubs. And she too begged them not to shoot her, and she would give each of them a cub. And so it happened with a fox, a hare, a boar, and a bear, till each prince had quite a following of young beasts padding along behind him.

Towards evening they came to a clearing in the wood, where three birches grew at the crossing of three roads. The eldest prince took an arrow, and shot it into the trunk of one of the birch trees. Turning to his brothers he said:

‘Let each of us mark one of these trees before we part on different ways. When any one of us comes back to this place, he must walk round the trees of the other two, and if he sees blood flowing from the mark in the tree he will know that that brother is dead, but if milk flows he will know that his brother is alive.’

So each of the princes did as the eldest brother had said, and when the three birches were marked by their arrows they turned to their step-sister and asked her with which of them she meant to live.

‘With the eldest,’ she answered. Then the brothers separated from each other, and each of them set out down a different road, followed by their beasts. And the step-sister went with the eldest prince.

After they had gone a little way along the road they came into a forest, and in one of the deepest glades they suddenly found themselves opposite a castle in which there lived a band of robbers. The prince walked up to the door and knocked. The moment it was opened the beasts rushed in, and each seized on a robber, killed him, and dragged the body down to the cellar. Now, one of the robbers was not really killed, only badly wounded, but he lay quite still and pretended to be dead like the others. Then the prince and his step-sister entered the castle and took up their abode in it.

The next morning the prince went out hunting. Before leaving he told his stepsister that she might go into every room in the house except into the cave where the dead robbers lay. But as soon as his back was turned she forgot what he had said, and having wandered through all the other rooms she went down to the cellar and opened the door. As soon as she looked in the robber who had only pretended to be dead sat up and said to her:

‘Don’t be afraid. Do what I tell you, and I will be your friend.

If you marry me you will be much happier with me than with your brother. But you must first go into the sitting-room and look in the cupboard. There you will find three bottles. In one of them there is a healing ointment which you must put on my chin to heal the wound; then if I drink the contents of the second bottle it will make me well, and the third bottle will make me stronger than I ever was before. Then, when your brother comes back from the wood with his beasts you must go to him and say, “Brother, you are very strong. If I were to fasten your thumbs behind your back with a stout silk cord, could you wrench yourself free?” And when you see that he cannot do it, call me.’

When the brother came home, the step-sister did as the robber had told her, and fastened her brother’s thumbs behind his back. But with one wrench he set himself free, and said to her, ‘Sister, that cord is not strong enough for me.’

The next day he went back to the wood with his beasts, and the robber told her that she must take a much stouter cord to bind his thumbs with. But again he freed himself, though not so easily as the first time, and he said to his sister:

‘Even that cord is not strong enough.’

The third day, on his return from the wood he consented to have his strength tested for the last time. So she took a very strong cord of silk, which she had prepared by the robber’s advice, and this time, though the prince pulled and tugged with all his might, he could not break the cord. So he called to her and said: ‘Sister, this time the cord is so strong I cannot break it. Come and unfasten it for me.’

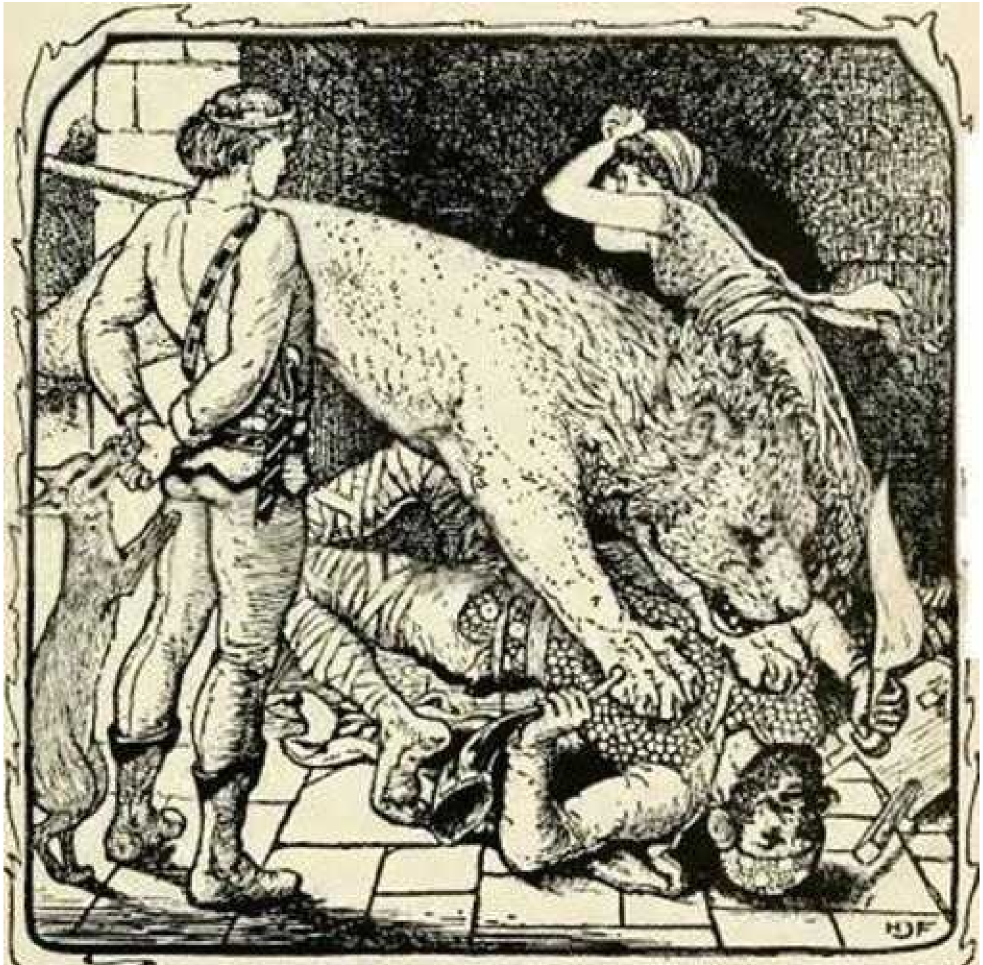

THE LION & THE FOX COME TO THE RESCUE

But instead of coming she called to the robber, who rushed into the room brandishing a knife, with which he prepared to attack the prince.

But the prince spoke and said:

‘Have patience for one minute. I would like before I die to blow three blasts on my hunting horn — one in this room, one on the stairs, and one in the courtyard.’

So the robber consented, and the prince blew the horn. At the first blast, the fox, which was asleep in the cage in the courtyard, awoke, and knew that his master needed help. So he awoke the wolf by flicking him across the eyes with his brush. Then they awoke the lion, who sprang against the door of the cage with might and main, so that it fell in splinters on the ground, and the beasts were free. Rushing through the court to their master’s aid, the fox gnawed the cord in two that bound the prince’s thumbs behind his back, and the lion flung himself on the robber, and when he had killed him and torn him in pieces each of the beasts carried off a bone.

Then the prince turned to the step-sister and said:

‘I will not kill you, but I will leave you here to repent.’ And he fastened her with a chain to the wall, and put a great bowl in front of her and said, ‘I will not see you again till you have filled this bowl with your tears.’

So saying, he called his beasts, and set out on his travels. When he had gone a little way he came to an inn. Everyone in the inn seemed so sad that he asked them what was the matter.

‘Ah,’ replied they, ‘to-day our king’s daughter is to die. She is to be handed over to a dreadful nine-headed dragon.’

Then the prince said: ‘Why should she die? I am very strong, I will save her.’

And he set out to the sea-shore, where the dragon was to meet the princess. And as he waited with his beasts round him a great procession came along, accompanying the unfortunate princess: and when the shore was reached all the people left her, and returned sadly to their houses. But the prince remained, and soon he saw a movement in the water a long way off. As it came nearer, he knew what it was, for skimming swiftly along the waters came a monster dragon with nine heads. Then the prince took counsel with his beasts, and as the dragon approached the shore the fox drew his brush through the water and blinded the dragon by scattering the salt water in his eyes, while the bear and the lion threw up more water with their paws, so that the monster was bewildered and could see nothing. Then the prince rushed forward with his sword and killed the dragon, and the beasts tore the body in pieces.

Then the princess turned to the prince and thanked him for delivering her from the dragon, and she said to him:

‘Step into this carriage with me, and we will drive back to my father’s palace.’ And she gave him a ring and half of her handkerchief. But on the way back the coachman and footman spoke to one another and said:

‘Why should we drive this stranger back to the palace? Let us kill him, and then we can say to the king that we slew the dragon and saved the princess, and one of us shall marry her.’

So they killed the prince, and left him dead on the roadside. And the faithful beasts came round the dead body and wept, and wondered what they should do. Then suddenly the wolf had an idea, and he started off into the wood, where he found an ox, which he straightway killed. Then he called the fox, and told him to mount guard over the dead ox, and if a bird came past and tried to peck at the flesh he was to catch it and bring it to the lion. Soon after a crow flew past, and began to peck at the dead ox. In a moment the fox had caught it and brought it to the lion. Then the lion said to the crow:

‘We will not kill you if you will promise to fly to the town where there are three wells of healing and to bring back water from them in your beak to make this dead man alive.’

So the crow flew away, and she filled her beak at the well of healing, the well of strength, and the well of swiftness, and she flew back to the dead prince and dropped the water from her beak upon his lips, and he was healed, and could sit up and walk.

Then he set out for the town, accompanied by his faithful beasts.

And when they reached the king’s palace they found that preparations for a great feast were being made, for the princess was to marry the coachman.

So the prince walked into the palace, and went straight up to the coachman and said: ‘What token have you got that you killed the dragon and won the hand of the princess? I have her token here — this ring and half her handkerchief.’

And when the king saw these tokens he knew that the prince was speaking the truth. So the coachman was bound in chains and thrown into prison, and the prince was married to the princess and rewarded with half the kingdom.

One day, soon after his marriage, the prince was walking through the woods in the evening, followed by his faithful beasts. Darkness came on, and he lost his way, and wandered about among the trees looking for the path that would lead him back to the palace. As he walked he saw the light of a fire, and making his way to it he found an old woman raking sticks and dried leaves together, and burning them in a glade of the wood.

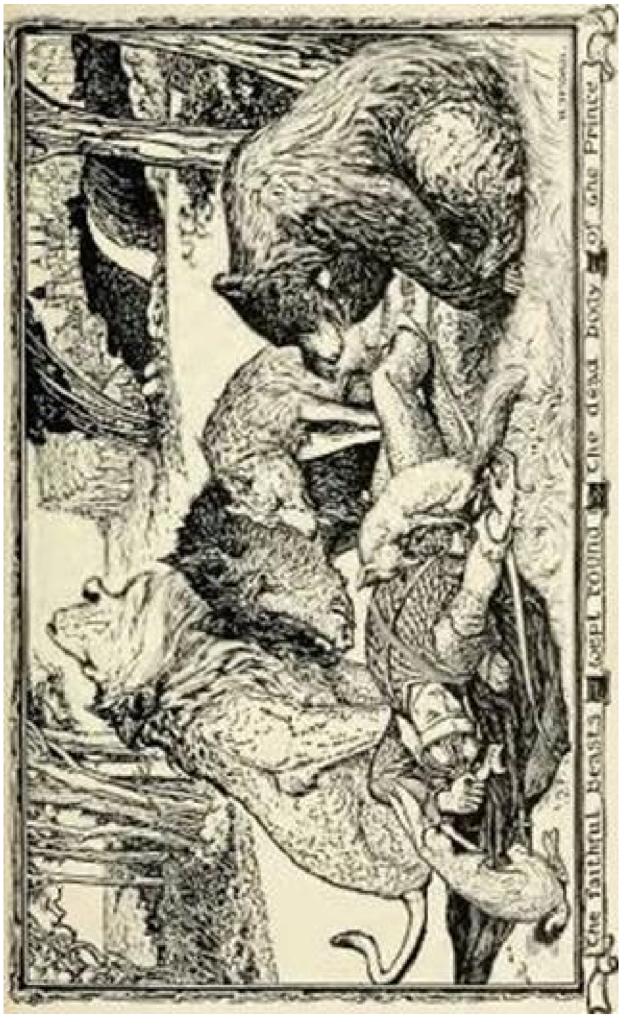

The faithful beasts wept round the dead body of the Prince

As he was very tired, and the night was very dark, the prince determined not to wander further. So he asked the old woman if he might spend the night beside her fire.

‘Of course you may,’ she answered. ‘But I am afraid of your beasts. Let me hit them with my rod, and then I shall not be afraid of them.’

‘Very well,’ said the prince, ‘I don’t mind’; and she stretched out her rod and hit the beasts, and in one moment they were turned into stone, and so was the prince.

Now soon after this the prince’s youngest brother came to the cross-roads with the three birches, where the brothers had parted from each other when they set out on their wanderings. Remembering what they had agreed to do, he walked round the two trees, and when he saw that blood oozed from the cut in the eldest prince’s tree he knew that his brother must be dead. So he set out, followed by his beasts, and came to the town over which his brother had ruled, and where the princess he had married lived. And when he came into the town all the people were in great sorrow because their prince had disappeared.

But when they saw his youngest brother, and the beasts following him, they thought it was their own prince, and they rejoiced greatly, and told him how they had sought him everywhere. Then they led him to the king, and he too thought that it was his son-in-law. But the princess knew that he was not her husband, and she begged him to go out into the woods with his beasts, and to look for his brother till he found him.

So the youngest prince set out to look for his brother, and he too lost his way in the wood and night overtook him. Then he came to the clearing among the trees, where the fire was burning and where the old woman was raking sticks and leaves into the flames. And he asked her if he might spend the night beside her fire, as it was too late and too dark to go back to the town.

And she answered: ‘Certainly you may. But I am afraid of your beasts. May I give them a stroke with my rod, then I shall not be afraid of them.’

And he said she might, for he did not know that she was a witch. So she stretched out her rod, and in a moment the beasts and their master were turned into stone.

It happened soon after that the second brother returned from his wanderings and came to the cross-roads where the three birches grew. As he went round the trees he saw that blood poured from the cuts in the bark of two of the trees. Then he wept and said:

‘Alas! both my brothers are dead.’ And he too set out towards the town in which his brother had ruled, and his faithful beasts followed him. When he entered the town, all the people thought it was their own prince come back to them, and they gathered round him, as they had gathered round his youngest brother, and asked him where he had been and why he had not returned. And they led him to the king’s palace, but the princess knew that he was not her husband. So when they were alone together she besought him to go and seek for his brother and bring him home. Calling his beasts round him, he set out and wandered through the woods. And he put his ear down to the earth, to listen if he could hear the sound of his brother’s beasts. And it seemed to him as if he heard a faint sound far off, but he did not know from what direction it came. So he blew on his hunting horn and listened again. And again he heard the sound, and this time it seemed to come from the direction of a fire burning in the wood. So he went towards the fire, and there the old woman was raking sticks and leaves into the embers. And he asked her if he might spend the night beside her fire. But she told him she was afraid of his beasts, and he must first allow her to give each of them a stroke with her rod.

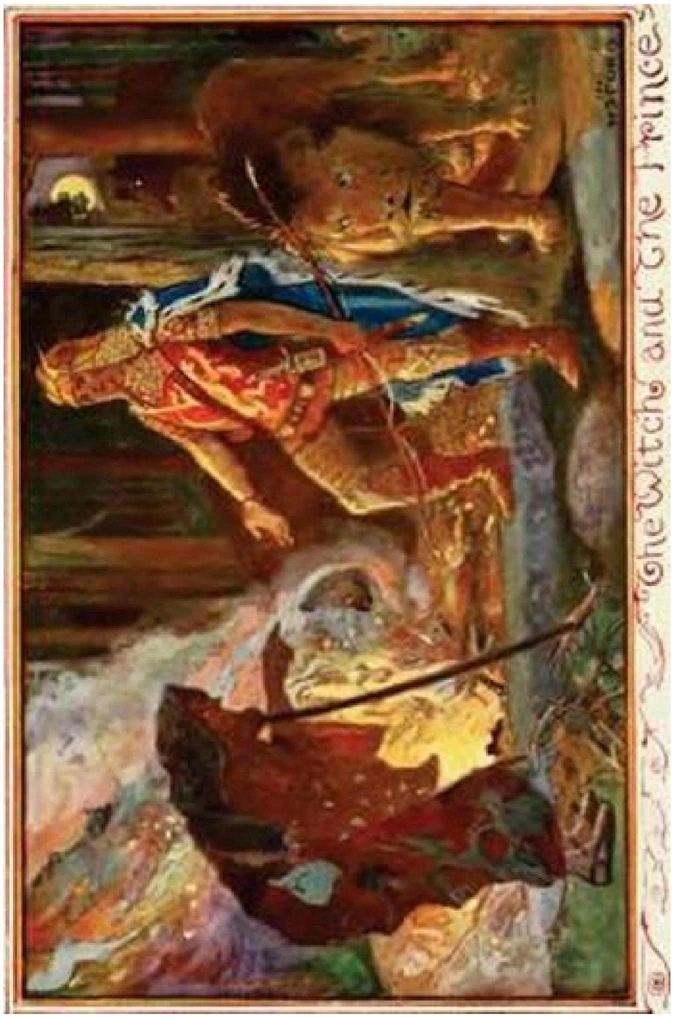
The Witch and The Princes

But he answered her:

‘Certainly not. I am their master, and no one shall strike them but I myself. Give me the rod’; and he touched the fox with it, and in a moment it was turned into stone. Then he knew that the old woman was a witch, and he turned to her and said:

‘Unless you restore my brothers and their beasts back to life at once, my lion will tear you in pieces.’

Then the witch was terrified, and taking a young oak tree she burnt it into white ashes, and sprinkled the ashes on the stones that stood around. And in a moment the two princes stood before their brother, and their beasts stood round them.

Then the three princes set off together to the town. And the king did not know which was his son-in-law, but the princess knew which was her husband, and there were great rejoicings throughout the land.

THE GOAT’S EARS OF THE EMPEROR TROJAN

Once upon a time there lived an emperor whose name was Trojan, and he had ears like a goat. Every morning, when he was shaved, he asked if the man saw anything odd about him, and as each fresh barber always replied that the emperor had goat’s ears, he was at once ordered to be put to death.

Now after this state of things had lasted a good while, there was hardly a barber left in the town that could shave the emperor, and it came to be the turn of the Master of the Company of Barbers to go up to the palace. But, unluckily, at the very moment that he should have set out, the master fell suddenly ill, and told one of his apprentices that he must go in his stead.

When the youth was taken to the emperor’s bedroom, he was asked why he had come and not his master. The young man replied that the master was ill, and there was no one but himself who could be trusted with the honour. The emperor was satisfied with the answer, and sat down, and let a sheet of fine linen be put round him. Directly the young barber began his work, he, like the rest, remarked the goat’s ears of the emperor, but when he had finished and the emperor asked his usual question as to whether the youth had noticed anything odd about him, the young man replied calmly, ‘No, nothing at all.’ This pleased the emperor so much that he gave him twelve ducats, and said, ‘Henceforth you shall come every day to shave me.’

So when the apprentice returned home, and the master inquired how he had got on with the emperor, the young man answered, ‘Oh, very well, and he says I am to shave him every day, and he has given me these twelve ducats’; but he said nothing about the goat’s ears of the emperor.

From this time the apprentice went regularly up to the palace, receiving each morning twelve ducats in payment. But after a while, his secret, which he had carefully kept, burnt within him, and he longed to tell it to somebody. His master saw there was something on his mind, and asked what it was. The youth replied that he had been tormenting himself for some months, and should never feel easy until some one shared his secret.

‘Well, trust me,’ said the master, ‘I will keep it to myself; or, if you do not like to do that, confess it to your pastor, or go into some field outside the town and dig a hole, and, after you have dug it, kneel down and whisper your secret three times into the hole. Then put back the earth and come away.’

The apprentice thought that this seemed the best plan, and that very afternoon went to a meadow outside the town, dug a deep hole, then knelt and whispered to it three times over, ‘The Emperor Trojan has goat’s ears.’ And as he said so a great burden seemed to roll off him, and he shovelled the earth carefully back and ran lightly home.

Weeks passed away, and there sprang up in the hole an elder tree which had three stems, all as straight as poplars. Some shepherds, tending their flocks near by, noticed the tree growing there, and one of them cut down a stem to make flutes of; but, directly he began to play, the flute would do nothing but sing: ‘The Emperor Trojan has goat’s ears.’ Of course, it was not long before the whole town knew of this wonderful flute and what it said; and, at last, the news reached the emperor in his palace. He instantly sent for the apprentice and said to him:

‘What have you been saying about me to all my people?’

The culprit tried to defend himself by saying that he had never told anyone what he had noticed; but the emperor, instead of listening, only drew his sword from its sheath, which so frightened the poor fellow that he confessed exactly what he had done, and how he had whispered the truth three times to the earth, and how in that very place an elder tree had sprung up, and flutes had been cut from it, which would only repeat the words he had said. Then the emperor commanded his coach to be made ready, and he took the youth with him, and they drove to the spot, for he wished to see for himself whether the young man’s confession was true; but when they reached the place only one stem was left. So the emperor desired his attendants to cut him a flute from the remaining stem, and, when it was ready, he ordered his chamberlain to play on it. But no tune could the chamberlain play, though he was the best flute player about the court — nothing came but the words, ‘The Emperor Trojan has goat’s ears.’ Then the emperor knew that even the earth gave up its secrets, and he granted the young man his life, but he never allowed him to be his barber any more.

(Volksmarchen der Serben.)

THE NINE PEA-HENS AND THE GOLDEN APPLES

Once upon a time there stood before the palace of an emperor a golden apple tree, which blossomed and bore fruit each night. But every morning the fruit was gone, and the boughs were bare of blossom, without anyone being able to discover who was the thief.

At last the emperor said to his eldest son, ‘If only I could prevent those robbers from stealing my fruit, how happy I should be!’

And his son replied, ‘I will sit up to-night and watch the tree, and I shall soon see who it is!’

So directly it grew dark the young man went and hid himself near the apple tree to begin his watch, but the apples had scarcely begun to ripen before he fell asleep, and when he awoke at sunrise the apples were gone. He felt very much ashamed of himself, and went with lagging feet to tell his father!

Of course, though the eldest son had failed, the second made sure that he would do better, and set out gaily at nightfall to watch the apple tree. But no sooner had he lain himself down than his eyes grew heavy, and when the sunbeams roused him from his slumbers there was not an apple left on the tree.

Next came the turn of the youngest son, who made himself a comfortable bed under the apple tree, and prepared himself to sleep. Towards midnight he awoke, and sat up to look at the tree. And behold! the apples were beginning to ripen, and lit up the whole palace with their brightness. At the same moment nine golden pea-hens flew swiftly through the air, and while eight alighted upon the boughs laden with fruit, the ninth fluttered to the ground where the prince lay, and instantly was changed into a beautiful maiden, more beautiful far than any lady in the emperor’s court. The prince at once fell in love with her, and they talked together for some time, till the maiden said her sisters had finished plucking the apples, and now they must all go home again. The prince, however, begged her so hard to leave him a little of the fruit that the maiden gave him two apples, one for himself and one for his father. Then she changed herself back into a pea-hen, and the whole nine flew away.

As soon as the sun rose the prince entered the palace, and held out the apple to his father, who was rejoiced to see it, and praised his youngest son heartily for his cleverness. That evening the prince returned to the apple tree, and everything passed as before, and so it happened for several nights. At length the other brothers grew angry at seeing that he never came back without bringing two golden apples with him, and they went to consult an old witch, who promised to spy after him, and discover how he managed to get the apples. So, when the evening came, the old woman hid herself under the tree and waited for the prince. Before long he arrived and laid down on his bed, and was soon fast asleep. Towards midnight there was a rush of wings, and the eight pea-hens settled on the tree, while the ninth became a maiden, and ran to greet the prince. Then the witch stretched out her hand, and cut off a lock of the maiden's hair, and in an instant the girl sprang up, a pea-hen once more, spread her wings and flew away, while her sisters, who were busily stripping the boughs, flew after her.

When he had recovered from his surprise at the unexpected disappearance of the maiden, the prince exclaimed, 'What can be the matter?' and, looking about him, discovered the old witch hidden under the bed. He dragged her out, and in his fury called his guards, and ordered them to put her to death as fast as possible. But that did no good as far as the pea-hens went. They never came back any more, though the prince returned to the tree every night, and wept his heart out for his lost love. This went on for some time, till the prince could bear it no longer, and made up his mind he would search the world through for her. In vain his father tried to persuade him that his task was hopeless, and that other girls were to be found as beautiful as this one. The prince would listen to nothing, and, accompanied by only one servant, set out on his quest.

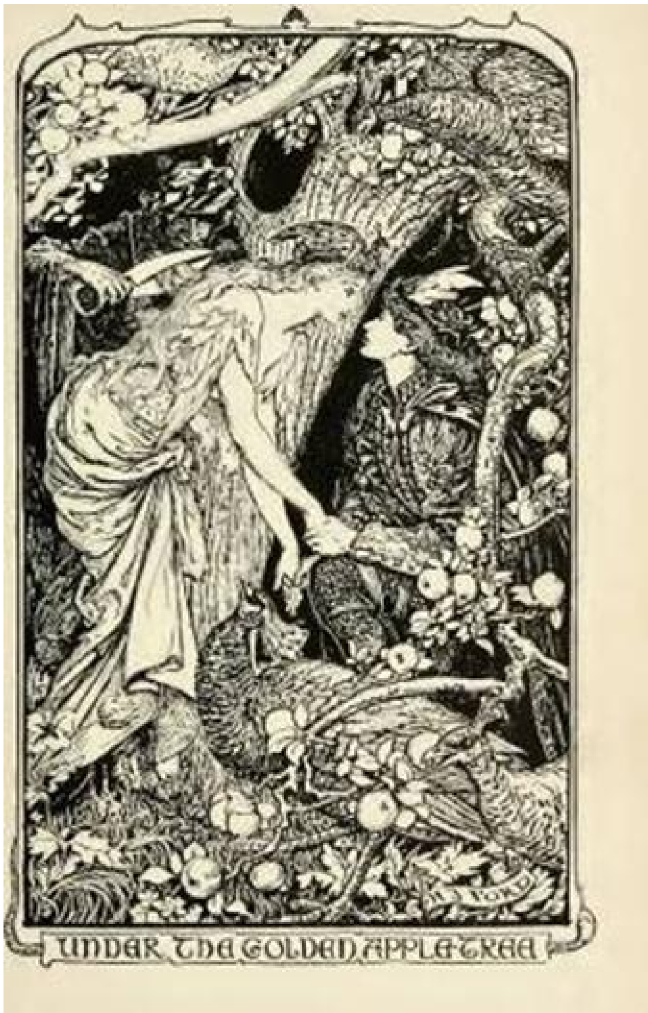

UNDER THE GOLDEN APPLE-TREE

After travelling for many days, he arrived at length before a large gate, and through the bars he could see the streets of a town, and even the palace. The prince tried to pass in, but the way was barred by the keeper of the gate, who wanted to know who he was, why he was there, and how he had learnt the way, and he was not allowed to enter unless the empress herself came and gave him leave. A message was sent to her, and when she stood at the gate the prince thought he had lost his wits, for there was the maiden he had left his home to seek. And she hastened to him, and took his hand, and drew him into the palace. In a few days they were married, and the prince forgot his father and his brothers, and made up his mind that he would live and die in the castle.

One morning the empress told him that she was going to take a walk by herself, and that she would leave the keys of twelve cellars to his care. ‘If you wish to enter the first eleven cellars,’ said she, ‘you can; but beware of even unlocking the door of the twelfth, or it will be the worse for you.’

The prince, who was left alone in the castle, soon got tired of being by himself, and began to look about for something to amuse him.

‘What CAN there be in that twelfth cellar,’ he thought to himself, ‘which I must not see?’ And he went downstairs and unlocked the doors, one after the other. When he got to the twelfth he paused, but his curiosity was too much for him, and in another instant the key was turned and the cellar lay open before him. It was empty, save for a large cask, bound with iron hoops, and out of the cask a voice was saying entreatingly, ‘For goodness’ sake, brother, fetch me some water; I am dying of thirst!’

The prince, who was very tender-hearted, brought some water at once, and pushed it through a hole in the barrel; and as he did so one of the iron hoops burst.

He was turning away, when a voice cried the second time, ‘Brother, for pity’s sake fetch me some water; I’m dying of thirst!’

So the prince went back, and brought some more water, and again a hoop sprang.

And for the third time the voice still called for water; and when water was given it the last hoop was rent, the cask fell in pieces, and out flew a dragon, who snatched up the empress just as she was returning from her walk, and carried her off. Some servants who saw what had happened came rushing to the prince, and the poor young man went nearly mad when he heard the result of his own folly, and could only cry out that he would follow the dragon to the ends of the earth, until he got his wife again.

For months and months he wandered about, first in this direction and then in that, without finding any traces of the dragon or his captive. At last he came to a stream, and as he stopped for a moment to look at it he noticed a little fish lying on the bank, beating its tail convulsively, in a vain effort to get back into the water.

‘Oh, for pity’s sake, my brother,’ shrieked the little creature, ‘help me, and put me back into the river, and I will repay you some day. Take one of my scales, and when you are in danger twist it in your fingers, and I will come!’

The prince picked up the fish and threw it into the water; then he took off one of its scales, as he had been told, and put it in his pocket, carefully wrapped in a cloth. Then he went on his way till, some miles further down the road, he found a fox caught in a trap.

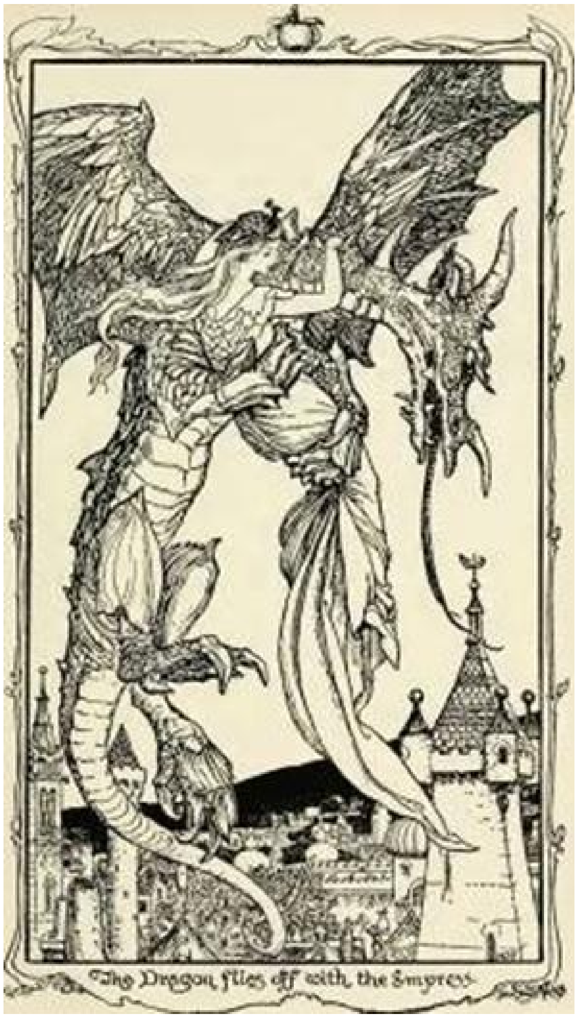
The Dragon flies off with the Empress

‘Oh! be a brother to me!’ called the fox, ‘and free me from this trap, and I will help you when you are in need. Pull out one of my hairs, and when you are in danger twist it in your fingers, and I will come.’

So the prince unfastened the trap, pulled out one of the fox’s hairs, and continued his journey. And as he was going over the mountain he passed a wolf entangled in a snare, who begged to be set at liberty.

‘Only deliver me from death,’ he said, ‘and you will never be sorry for it. Take a lock of my fur, and when you need me twist it in your fingers.’ And the prince undid the snare and let the wolf go.

For a long time he walked on, without having any more adventures, till at length he met a man travelling on the same road.

‘Oh, brother!’ asked the prince, ‘tell me, if you can, where the dragon-emperor lives?’

The man told him where he would find the palace, and how long it would take him to get there, and the prince thanked him, and followed his directions, till that same evening he reached the town where the dragon-emperor lived. When he entered the palace, to his great joy he found his wife sitting alone in a vast hall, and they began hastily to invent plans for her escape.

There was no time to waste, as the dragon might return directly, so they took two horses out of the stable, and rode away at lightning speed. Hardly were they out of sight of the palace than the dragon came home and found that his prisoner had flown. He sent at once for his talking horse, and said to him:

‘Give me your advice; what shall I do — have my supper as usual, or set out in pursuit of them?’

‘Eat your supper with a free mind first,’ answered the horse, ‘and follow them afterwards.’

So the dragon ate till it was past mid-day, and when he could eat no more he mounted his horse and set out after the fugitives. In a short time he had come up with them, and as he snatched the empress out of her saddle he said to the prince:

‘This time I will forgive you, because you brought me the water when I was in the cask; but beware how you return here, or you will pay for it with your life.’

Half mad with grief, the prince rode sadly on a little further, hardly knowing what he was doing. Then he could bear it no longer and turned back to the palace, in spite of the dragon’s threats. Again the empress was sitting alone, and once more they began to think of a scheme by which they could escape the dragon’s power.

‘Ask the dragon when he comes home,’ said the prince, ‘where he got that wonderful horse from, and then you can tell me, and I will try to find another like it.’

Then, fearing to meet his enemy, he stole out of the castle.

Soon after the dragon came home, and the empress sat down near him, and began to coax and flatter him into a good humour, and at last she said:

‘But tell me about that wonderful horse you were riding yesterday. There cannot be another like it in the whole world. Where did you get it from?’

And he answered:

‘The way I got it is a way which no one else can take. On the top of a high mountain dwells an old woman, who has in her stables twelve horses, each one more beautiful than the other. And in one corner is a thin, wretched-looking animal whom no one would glance at a second time, but he is in reality the best of the lot. He is twin brother to my own horse, and can fly as high as the clouds themselves. But no one can ever get this horse without first serving the old woman for three whole days. And besides the horses she has a foal and its mother, and the man who serves her must look after them for three whole days, and if he does not let them run away he will in the end get the choice of any horse as a present from the old woman. But if he fails to keep the foal and its mother safe on any one of the three nights his head will pay.’

The next day the prince watched till the dragon left the house, and then he crept in to the empress, who told him all she had learnt from her gaoler. The prince at once determined to seek the old woman on the top of the mountain, and lost no time in setting out. It was a long and steep climb, but at last he found her, and with a low bow he began:

‘Good greeting to you, little mother!’

‘Good greeting to you, my son! What are you doing here?’

‘I wish to become your servant,’ answered he.

‘So you shall,’ said the old woman. ‘If you can take care of my mare for three days I will give you a horse for wages, but if you let her stray you will lose your head’; and as she spoke she led him into a courtyard surrounded with palings, and on every post a man’s head was stuck. One post only was empty, and as they passed it cried out:

‘Woman, give me the head I am waiting for!’

The old woman made no answer, but turned to the prince and said:

‘Look! all those men took service with me, on the same conditions as you, but not one was able to guard the mare!’

But the prince did not waver, and declared he would abide by his words.

When evening came he led the mare out of the stable and mounted her, and the colt ran behind. He managed to keep his seat for a long time, in spite of all her efforts to throw him, but at length he grew so weary that he fell fast asleep, and when he woke he found himself sitting on a log, with the halter in his hands. He jumped up in terror, but the mare was nowhere to be seen, and he started with a beating heart in search of her. He had gone some way without a single trace to guide him, when he came to a little river. The sight of the water brought back to his mind the fish whom he had saved from death, and he hastily drew the scale from his pocket. It had hardly touched his fingers when the fish appeared in the stream beside him.

‘What is it, my brother?’ asked the fish anxiously.

‘The old woman’s mare strayed last night, and I don’t know where to look for her.’

‘Oh, I can tell you that: she has changed herself into a big fish, and her foal into a little one. But strike the water with the halter and say, “Come here, O mare of the mountain witch!” and she will come.’

The prince did as he was bid, and the mare and her foal stood before him. Then he put the halter round her neck, and rode her home, the foal always trotting behind them. The old woman was at the door to receive them, and gave the prince some food while she led the mare back to the stable.

‘You should have gone among the fishes,’ cried the old woman, striking the animal with a stick.

‘I did go among the fishes,’ replied the mare; ‘but they are no friends of mine, for they betrayed me at once.’

‘Well, go among the foxes this time,’ said she, and returned to the house, not knowing that the prince had overheard her.

So when it began to grow dark the prince mounted the mare for the second time and rode into the meadows, and the foal trotted behind its mother. Again he managed to stick on till midnight: then a sleep overtook him that he could not battle against, and when he woke up he found himself, as before, sitting on the log, with the halter in his hands. He gave a shriek of dismay, and sprang up in search of the wanderers. As he went he suddenly remembered the words that the old woman had said to the mare, and he drew out the fox hair and twisted it in his fingers.

‘What is it, my brother?’ asked the fox, who instantly appeared before him.

‘The old witch’s mare has run away from me, and I do not know where to look for her.’

‘She is with us,’ replied the fox, ‘and has changed herself into a big fox, and her foal into a little one, but strike the ground with a halter and say, “Come here, O mare of the mountain witch!”’

The prince did so, and in a moment the fox became a mare and stood before him, with the little foal at her heels. He mounted and rode back, and the old woman placed food on the table, and led the mare back to the stable.

‘You should have gone to the foxes, as I told you,’ said she, striking the mare with a stick.

‘I did go to the foxes,’ replied the mare, ‘but they are no friends of mine and betrayed me.’

‘Well, this time you had better go to the wolves,’ said she, not knowing that the prince had heard all she had been saying.

The third night the prince mounted the mare and rode her out to the meadows, with the foal trotting after. He tried hard to keep awake, but it was of no use, and in the morning there he was again on the log, grasping the halter. He started to his feet, and then stopped, for he remembered what the old woman had said, and pulled out the wolf’s grey lock.

‘What is it, my brother?’ asked the wolf as it stood before him.

‘The old witch’s mare has run away from me,’ replied the prince, ‘and I don’t know where to find her.’

‘Oh, she is with us,’ answered the wolf, ‘and she has changed herself into a she-wolf, and the foal into a cub; but strike the earth here with the halter, and cry, “Come to me, O mare of the mountain witch.”’

The prince did as he was bid, and as the hair touched his fingers the wolf changed back into a mare, with the foal beside her. And when he had mounted and ridden her home the old woman was on the steps to receive them, and she set some food before the prince, but led the mare back to her stable.

‘You should have gone among the wolves,’ said she, striking her with a stick.

‘So I did,’ replied the mare, ‘but they are no friends of mine and betrayed me.’

The old woman made no answer, and left the stable, but the prince was at the door waiting for her.

‘I have served you well,’ said he, ‘and now for my reward.’

‘What I promised that will I perform,’ answered she. ‘Choose one of these twelve horses; you can have which you like.’

‘Give me, instead, that half-starved creature in the corner,’ asked the prince. ‘I prefer him to all those beautiful animals.’

‘You can’t really mean what you say?’ replied the woman.

‘Yes, I do,’ said the prince, and the old woman was forced to let him have his way. So he took leave of her, and put the halter round his horse’s neck and led him into the forest, where he rubbed him down till his skin was shining like gold. Then he mounted, and they flew straight through the air to the dragon’s palace. The empress had been looking for him night and day, and stole out to meet him, and he swung her on to his saddle, and the horse flew off again.

Not long after the dragon came home, and when he found the empress was missing he said to his horse, ‘What shall we do? Shall we eat and drink, or shall we follow the runaways?’ and the horse replied, ‘Whether you eat or don’t eat, drink or don’t drink, follow them or stay at home, matters nothing now, for you can never, never catch them.’

But the dragon made no reply to the horse’s words, but sprang on his back and set off in chase of the fugitives. And when they saw him coming they were frightened, and urged the prince’s horse faster and faster, till he said, ‘Fear nothing; no harm can happen to us,’ and their hearts grew calm, for they trusted his wisdom.

Soon the dragon’s horse was heard panting behind, and he cried out, ‘Oh, my brother, do not go so fast! I shall sink to the earth if I try to keep up with you.’

And the prince’s horse answered, ‘Why do you serve a monster like that? Kick him off, and let him break in pieces on the ground, and come and join us.’

And the dragon’s horse plunged and reared, and the dragon fell on a rock, which broke him in pieces. Then the empress mounted his horse, and rode back with her husband to her kingdom, over which they ruled for many years.

(Volksmarchen der Serben.)

THE LUTE PLAYER

Once upon a time there was a king and queen who lived happily and comfortably together. They were very fond of each other and had nothing to worry them, but at last the king grew restless. He longed to go out into the world, to try his strength in battle against some enemy and to win all kinds of honour and glory.

So he called his army together and gave orders to start for a distant country where a heathen king ruled who ill-treated or tormented everyone he could lay his hands on. The king then gave his parting orders and wise advice to his ministers, took a tender leave of his wife, and set off with his army across the seas.

I cannot say whether the voyage was short or long; but at last he reached the country of the heathen king and marched on, defeating all who came in his way. But this did not last long, for in time he came to a mountain pass, where a large army was waiting for him, who put his soldiers to flight, and took the king himself prisoner.

He was carried off to the prison where the heathen king kept his captives, and now our poor friend had a very bad time indeed. All night long the prisoners were chained up, and in the morning they were yoked together like oxen and had to plough the land till it grew dark.

This state of things went on for three years before the king found any means of sending news of himself to his dear queen, but at last he contrived to send this letter: ‘Sell all our castles and palaces, and put all our treasures in pawn and come and deliver me out of this horrible prison.’

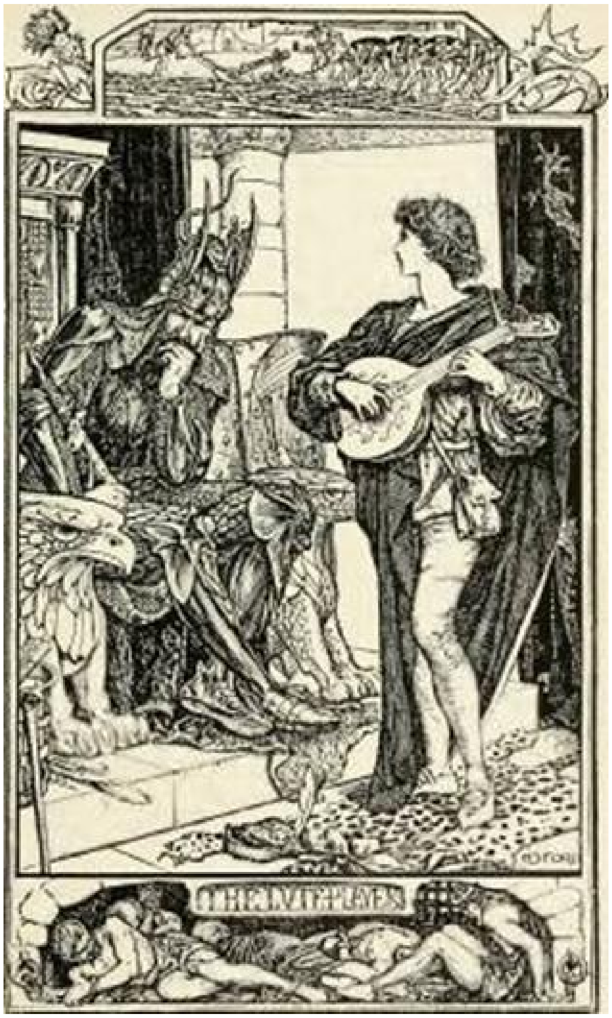

The queen received the letter, read it, and wept bitterly as she said to herself, ‘How can I deliver my dearest husband? If I go myself and the heathen king sees me he will just take me to be one of his wives. If I were to send one of the ministers! — but I hardly know if I can depend on them.’

She thought, and thought, and at last an idea came into her head.

She cut off all her beautiful long brown hair and dressed herself in boy’s clothes. Then she took her lute and, without saying anything to anyone, she went forth into the wide world.

She travelled through many lands and saw many cities, and went through many hardships before she got to the town where the heathen king lived. When she got there she walked all round the palace and at the back she saw the prison. Then she went into the great court in front of the palace, and taking her lute in her hand, she began to play so beautifully that one felt as though one could never hear enough.

After she had played for some time she began to sing, and her voice was sweeter than the lark’s: *‘I come from my own country far*

Into this foreign land,
Of all I own I take alone
My sweet lute in my hand.

'Oh! who will thank me for my song,
Reward my simple lay?
Like lover's sighs it still shall rise
To greet thee day by day.

'I sing of blooming flowers
Made sweet by sun and rain;
Of all the bliss of love's first kiss,
And parting's cruel pain.

'Of the sad captive's longing
Within his prison wall,
Of hearts that sigh when none are nigh
To answer to their call.

'My song begs for your pity,
And gifts from out your store,
And as I play my gentle lay
I linger near your door.

'And if you hear my singing
Within your palace, sire,
Oh! give, I pray, this happy day,
To me my heart's desire.'

No sooner had the heathen king heard this touching song sung by such a lovely voice, than he had the singer brought before him.

'Welcome, O lute player,' said he. 'Where do you come from?'

'My country, sire, is far away across many seas. For years I have been wandering about the world and gaining my living by my music.'

'Stay here then a few days, and when you wish to leave I will give you what you ask for in your song — your heart's desire.'

So the lute player stayed on in the palace and sang and played almost all day long to the king, who could never tire of listening and almost forgot to eat or drink or to torment people.

He cared for nothing but the music, and nodded his head as he declared, ‘That’s something like playing and singing. It makes me feel as if some gentle hand had lifted every care and sorrow from me.’

After three days the lute player came to take leave of the king.

‘Well,’ said the king, ‘what do you desire as your reward?’

‘Sire, give me one of your prisoners. You have so many in your prison, and I should be glad of a companion on my journeys. When I hear his happy voice as I travel along I shall think of you and thank you.’

‘Come along then,’ said the king, ‘choose whom you will.’ And he took the lute player through the prison himself.

The queen walked about amongst the prisoners, and at length she picked out her husband and took him with her on her journey. They were long on their way, but he never found out who she was, and she led him nearer and nearer to his own country.

When they reached the frontier the prisoner said: ‘Let me go now, kind lad; I am no common prisoner, but the king of this country. Let me go free and ask what you will as your reward.’

‘Do not speak of reward,’ answered the lute player. ‘Go in peace.’

‘Then come with me, dear boy, and be my guest.’

‘When the proper time comes I shall be at your palace,’ was the reply, and so they parted.

The queen took a short way home, got there before the king and changed her dress.

An hour later all the people in the palace were running to and fro and crying out: ‘Our king has come back! Our king has returned to us.’

The king greeted every one very kindly, but he would not so much as look at the queen.

Then he called all his council and ministers together and said to them: ‘See what sort of a wife I have. Here she is falling on my neck, but when I was pining in prison and sent her word of it she did nothing to help me.’

And his council answered with one voice, ‘Sire, when news was brought from you the queen disappeared and no one knew where she went. She only returned to-day.’

Then the king was very angry and cried, ‘Judge my faithless wife!

Never would you have seen your king again, if a young lute player had not delivered him. I shall remember him with love and gratitude as long as I live.’

Whilst the king was sitting with his council, the queen found time to disguise herself. She took her lute, and slipping into the court in front of the palace she sang, clear and sweet: *‘I sing the captive’s longing*

Within his prison wall,

Of hearts that sigh when none are nigh
To answer to their call.

‘My song begs for your pity,
And gifts from out your store,
And as I play my gentle lay
I linger near your door.

‘And if you hear my singing
Within your palace, sire,
Oh! give, I pray, this happy day,
To me my heart’s desire.’

As soon as the king heard this song he ran out to meet the lute player, took him by the hand and led him into the palace.

‘Here,’ he cried, ‘is the boy who released me from my prison. And now, my true friend, I will indeed give you your heart’s desire.’

‘I am sure you will not be less generous than the heathen king was, sire. I ask of you what I asked and obtained from him. But this time I don’t mean to give up what I get. I want YOU — yourself!’

And as she spoke she threw off her long cloak and everyone saw it was the queen.

Who can tell how happy the king was? In the joy of his heart he gave a great feast to the whole world, and the whole world came and rejoiced with him for a whole week.

I was there too, and ate and drank many good things. I sha’n’t forget that feast as long as I live.

(From the Russian.)

THE GRATEFUL PRINCE

Once upon a time the king of the Goldland lost himself in a forest, and try as he would he could not find the way out. As he was wandering down one path which had looked at first more hopeful than the rest he saw a man coming towards him.

‘What are you doing here, friend?’ asked the stranger; ‘darkness is falling fast, and soon the wild beasts will come from their lairs to seek for food.’

‘I have lost myself,’ answered the king, ‘and am trying to get home.’

‘Then promise me that you will give me the first thing that comes out of your house, and I will show you the way,’ said the stranger.

The king did not answer directly, but after awhile he spoke: ‘Why should I give away my BEST sporting dog. I can surely find my way out of the forest as well as this man.’

So the stranger left him, but the king followed path after path for three whole days, with no better success than before. He was almost in despair, when the stranger suddenly appeared, blocking up his way.

‘Promise you will give me the first thing that comes out of your house to meet you?’

But still the king was stiff-necked and would promise nothing.

For some days longer he wandered up and down the forest, trying first one path, then another, but his courage at last gave way, and he sank wearily on the ground under a tree, feeling sure his last hour had come. Then for the third time the stranger stood before the king, and said:

‘Why are you such a fool? What can a dog be to you, that you should give your life for him like this? Just promise me the reward I want, and I will guide you out of the forest.’

‘Well, my life is worth more than a thousand dogs,’ answered the king, ‘the welfare of my kingdom depends on me. I accept your terms, so take me to my palace.’ Scarcely had he uttered the words than he found himself at the edge of the wood, with the palace in the dim distance. He made all the haste he could, and just as he reached the great gates out came the nurse with the royal baby, who stretched out his arms to his father. The king shrank back, and ordered the nurse to take the baby away at once.

Then his great boarhound bounded up to him, but his caresses were only answered by a violent push.

When the king’s anger was spent, and he was able to think what was best to be done, he exchanged his baby, a beautiful boy, for the daughter of a peasant, and the prince lived roughly as the son of poor people, while the little girl slept in a golden cradle, under silken sheets. At the end of a year, the stranger arrived to claim his property, and took away the little girl, believing her to be the true child of the king. The king was so delighted with the success of his plan that he ordered a great feast to be got ready, and gave splendid presents to the foster parents of his son, so that he might lack nothing. But he did not dare to bring back the baby, lest the trick should be found out. The peasants were quite contented with this arrangement, which gave them food and money in abundance.

By-and-by the boy grew big and tall, and seemed to lead a happy life in the house of his foster parents. But a shadow hung over him which really poisoned most of his pleasure, and that was the thought of the poor innocent girl who had suffered in his stead, for his foster father had told him in secret, that he was the king's son. And the prince determined that when he grew old enough he would travel all over the world, and never rest till he had set her free. To become king at the cost of a maiden's life was too heavy a price to pay. So one day he put on the dress of a farm servant, threw a sack of peas on his back, and marched straight into the forest where eighteen years before his father had lost himself. After he had walked some way he began to cry loudly: 'Oh, how unlucky I am! Where can I be? Is there no one to show me the way out of the wood?'

Then appeared a strange man with a long grey beard, with a leather bag hanging from his girdle. He nodded cheerfully to the prince, and said: 'I know this place well, and can lead you out of it, if you will promise me a good reward.'

'What can a beggar such as I promise you?' answered the prince. 'I have nothing to give you save my life; even the coat on my back belongs to my master, whom I serve for my keep and my clothes.'

The stranger looked at the sack of peas, and said, 'But you must possess something; you are carrying this sack, which seems to be very heavy.'

'It is full of peas,' was the reply. 'My old aunt died last night, without leaving money enough to buy peas to give the watchers, as is the custom throughout the country. I have borrowed these peas from my master, and thought to take a short cut across the forest; but I have lost myself, as you see.'

'Then you are an orphan?' asked the stranger. 'Why should you not enter my service? I want a sharp fellow in the house, and you please me.'

'Why not, indeed, if we can strike a bargain?' said the other. 'I was born a peasant, and strange bread is always bitter, so it is the same to me whom I serve! What wages will you give me?'

‘Every day fresh food, meat twice a week, butter and vegetables, your summer and winter clothes, and a portion of land for your own use.’

‘I shall be satisfied with that,’ said the youth. ‘Somebody else will have to bury my aunt. I will go with you!’

Now this bargain seemed to please the old fellow so much that he spun round like a top, and sang so loud that the whole wood rang with his voice. Then he set out with his companion, and chattered so fast that he never noticed that his new servant kept dropping peas out of the sack. At night they slept under a fig tree, and when the sun rose started on their way. About noon they came to a large stone, and here the old fellow stopped, looked carefully round, gave a sharp whistle, and stamped three times on the ground with his left foot. Suddenly there appeared under the stone a secret door, which led to what looked like the mouth of a cave. The old fellow seized the youth by the arm, and said roughly, ‘Follow me!’

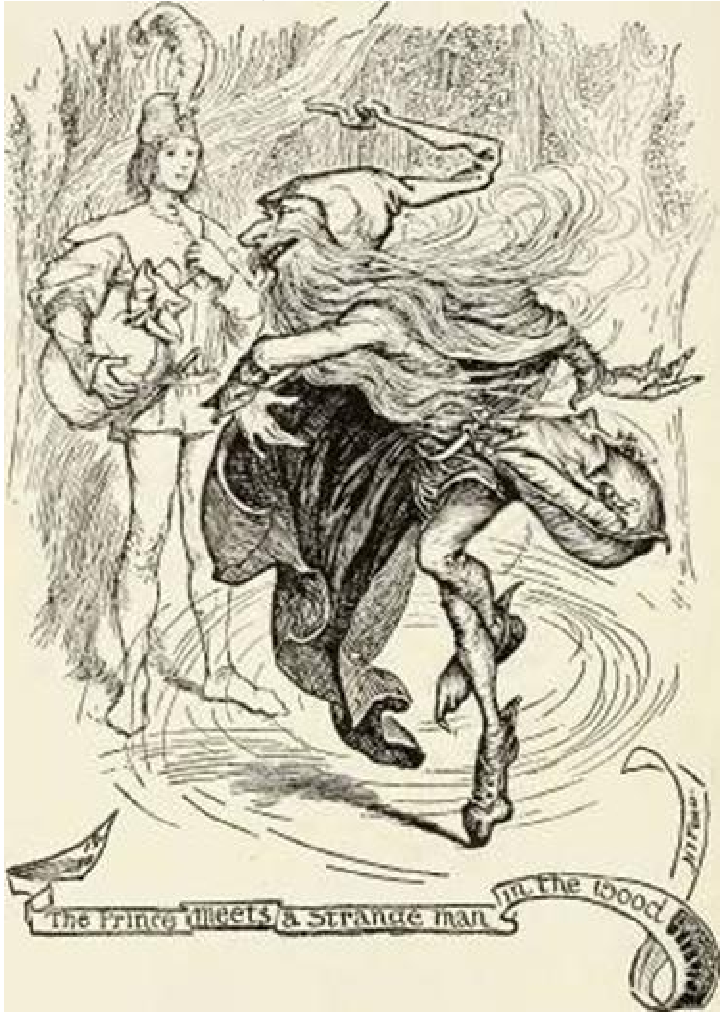
The Prince meets a Strange man in the wood
H.J. Ford

Thick darkness surrounded them, yet it seemed to the prince as if their path led into still deeper depths. After a long while he thought he saw a glimmer of light, but the light was neither that of the sun nor of the moon. He looked eagerly at it, but found it was only a kind of pale cloud, which was all the light this strange underworld could boast. Earth and water, trees and plants, birds and beasts, each was different from those he had seen before; but what most struck terror into his heart was the absolute stillness that reigned everywhere. Not a rustle or a sound could be heard. Here and there he noticed a bird sitting on a branch, with head erect and swelling throat, but his ear caught nothing. The dogs opened their mouths as if to bark, the toiling oxen seemed about to bellow, but neither bark nor bellow reached the prince. The water flowed noiselessly over the pebbles, the wind bowed the tops of the trees, flies and chafers darted about, without breaking the silence. The old greybeard uttered no word, and when his companion tried to ask him the meaning of it all he felt that his voice died in his throat.

How long this fearful stillness lasted I do not know, but the prince gradually felt his heart turning to ice, his hair stood up like bristles, and a cold chill was creeping down his spine, when at last — oh, ecstasy! — a faint noise broke on his straining ears, and this life of shadows suddenly became real. It sounded as if a troop of horses were ploughing their way over a moor.

Then the greybeard opened his mouth, and said: ‘The kettle is boiling; we are expected at home.’

They walked on a little further, till the prince thought he heard the grinding of a saw-mill, as if dozens of saws were working together, but his guide observed, ‘The grandmother is sleeping soundly; listen how she snores.’

When they had climbed a hill which lay before them the prince saw in the distance the house of his master, but it was so surrounded with buildings of all kinds that the place looked more like a village or even a small town. They reached it at last, and found an empty kennel standing in front of the gate. ‘Creep inside this,’ said the master, ‘and wait while I go in and see my grandmother. Like all very old people, she is very obstinate, and cannot bear fresh faces about her.’

The prince crept tremblingly into the kennel, and began to regret the daring which had brought him into this scrape.

By-and-by the master came back, and called him from his hiding-place. Something had put out his temper, for with a frown he said, ‘Watch carefully our ways in the house, and beware of making any mistake, or it will go ill with you. Keep your eyes and ears open, and your mouth shut, obey without questions. Be grateful if you will, but never speak unless you are spoken to.’

When the prince stepped over the threshold he caught sight of a maiden of wonderful beauty, with brown eyes and fair curly hair. ‘Well!’ the young man said to himself, ‘if the old fellow has many daughters like that I should not mind being his son-in-law. This one is just what I admire’; and he watched her lay the table, bring in the food, and take her seat by the fire as if she had never noticed that a strange man was present. Then she took out a needle and thread, and began to darn her stockings. The master sat at table alone, and invited neither his new servant nor the maid to eat with him. Neither was the old grandmother anywhere to be seen. His appetite was tremendous: he soon cleared all the dishes, and ate enough to satisfy a dozen men. When at last he could eat no more he said to the girl, ‘Now you can pick up the pieces, and take what is left in the iron pot for your own dinner, but give the bones to the dog.’

The prince did not at all like the idea of dining off scraps, which he helped the girl to pick up, but, after all, he found that there was plenty to eat, and that the food was very good. During the meal he stole many glances at the maiden, and would even have spoken to her, but she gave him no encouragement. Every time he opened his mouth for the purpose she looked at him sternly, as if to say, ‘Silence,’ so he could only let his eyes speak for him. Besides, the master was stretched on a bench by the oven after his huge meal, and would have heard everything.

After supper that night, the old man said to the prince, ‘For two days you may rest from the fatigues of the journey, and look about the house. But the day after to-morrow you must come with me, and I will point out the work you have to do. The maid will show you where you are to sleep.’

The prince thought, from this, he had leave to speak, but his master turned on him with a face of thunder and exclaimed:

‘You dog of a servant! If you disobey the laws of the house you will soon find yourself a head shorter! Hold your tongue, and leave me in peace.’

The girl made a sign to him to follow her, and, throwing open a door, nodded to him to go in. He would have lingered a moment, for he thought she looked sad, but dared not do so, for fear of the old man’s anger.

‘It is impossible that she can be his daughter!’ he said to himself, ‘for she has a kind heart. I am quite sure she must be the same girl who was brought here instead of me, so I am bound to risk my head in this mad adventure.’ He got into bed, but it was long before he fell asleep, and even then his dreams gave him no rest. He seemed to be surrounded by dangers, and it was only the power of the maiden who helped him through it all.

When he woke his first thoughts were for the girl, whom he found hard at work. He drew water from the well and carried it to the house for her, kindled the fire under the iron pot, and, in fact, did everything that came into his head that could be of any use to her. In the afternoon he went out, in order to learn something of his new home, and wondered greatly not to come across the old grandmother. In his rambles he came to the farmyard, where a beautiful white horse had a stall to itself; in another was a black cow with two white-faced calves, while the clucking of geese, ducks, and hens reached him from a distance.

Breakfast, dinner, and supper were as savoury as before, and the prince would have been quite content with his quarters had it not been for the difficulty of keeping silence in the presence of the maiden. On the evening of the second day he went, as he had been told, to receive his orders for the following morning.

‘I am going to set you something very easy to do to-morrow,’ said the old man when his servant entered. ‘Take this scythe and cut as much grass as the white horse will want for its day’s feed, and clean out its stall. If I come back and find the manger empty it will go ill with you. So beware!’

The prince left the room, rejoicing in his heart, and saying to himself, ‘Well, I shall soon get through that! If I have never yet handled either the plough or the scythe, at least I have often watched the country people work them, and know how easy it is.’

He was just going to open his door, when the maiden glided softly past and whispered in his ear: ‘What task has he set you?’

‘For to-morrow,’ answered the prince, ‘it is really nothing at all! Just to cut hay for the horse, and to clean out his stall!’

‘Oh, luckless being!’ sighed the girl; ‘how will you ever get through with it. The white horse, who is our master’s grandmother, is always hungry: it takes twenty men always mowing to keep it in food for one day, and another twenty to clean out its stall. How, then, do you expect to do it all by yourself? But listen to me, and do what I tell you. It is your only chance. When you have filled the manger as full as it will hold you must weave a strong plait of the rushes which grow among the meadow hay, and cut a thick peg of stout wood, and be sure that the horse sees what you are doing. Then it will ask you what it is for, and you will say, ‘With this plait I intend to bind up your mouth so that you cannot eat any more, and with this peg I am going to keep you still in one spot, so that you cannot scatter your corn and water all over the place!’ After these words the maiden went away as softly as she had come.

Early the next morning he set to work. His scythe danced through the grass much more easily than he had hoped, and soon he had enough to fill the manger. He put it in the crib, and returned with a second supply, when to his horror he found the crib empty.

Then he knew that without the maiden’s advice he would certainly have been lost, and began to put it into practice. He took out the rushes which had somehow got mixed up with the hay, and plaited them quickly.

‘My son, what are you doing?’ asked the horse wonderingly.

‘Oh, nothing!’ replied he. ‘Just weaving a chin strap to bind your jaws together, in case you might wish to eat any more!’

The white horse sighed deeply when it heard this, and made up its mind to be content with what it had eaten.

The youth next began to clean out the stall, and the horse knew it had found a master; and by mid-day there was still fodder in the manger, and the place was as clean as a new pin. He had barely finished when in walked the old man, who stood astonished at the door.

‘Is it really you who have been clever enough to do that?’ he asked. ‘Or has some one else given you a hint?’

‘Oh, I have had no help,’ replied the prince, ‘except what my poor weak head could give me.’

The old man frowned, and went away, and the prince rejoiced that everything had turned out so well.

In the evening his master said, ‘To-morrow I have no special task to set you, but as the girl has a great deal to do in the house you must milk the black cow for her. But take care you milk her dry, or it may be the worse for you.’

‘Well,’ thought the prince as he went away, ‘unless there is some trick behind, this does not sound very hard. I have never milked a cow before, but I have good strong fingers.’

He was very sleepy, and was just going toward his room, when the maiden came to him and asked: ‘What is your task to-morrow?’

‘I am to help you,’ he answered, ‘and have nothing to do all day, except to milk the black cow dry.’

‘Oh, you are unlucky,’ cried she. ‘If you were to try from morning till night you couldn’t do it. There is only one way of escaping the danger, and that is, when you go to milk her, take with you a pan of burning coals and a pair of tongs. Place the pan on the floor of the stall, and the tongs on the fire, and blow with all your might, till the coals burn brightly. The black cow will ask you what is the meaning of all this, and you must answer what I will whisper to you.’ And she stood on tip-toe and whispered something in his ear, and then went away.

The dawn had scarcely reddened the sky when the prince jumped out of bed, and, with the pan of coals in one hand and the milk pail in the other, went straight to the cow’s stall, and began to do exactly as the maiden had told him the evening before.

The black cow watched him with surprise for some time, and then said: ‘What are you doing, sonny?’

‘Oh, nothing,’ answered he; ‘I am only heating a pair of tongs in case you may not feel inclined to give as much milk as I want.’

The cow sighed deeply, and looked at the milkman with fear, but he took no notice, and milked briskly into the pail, till the cow ran dry.

Just at that moment the old man entered the stable, and sat down to milk the cow himself, but not a drop of milk could he get. ‘Have you really managed it all yourself, or did somebody help you?’

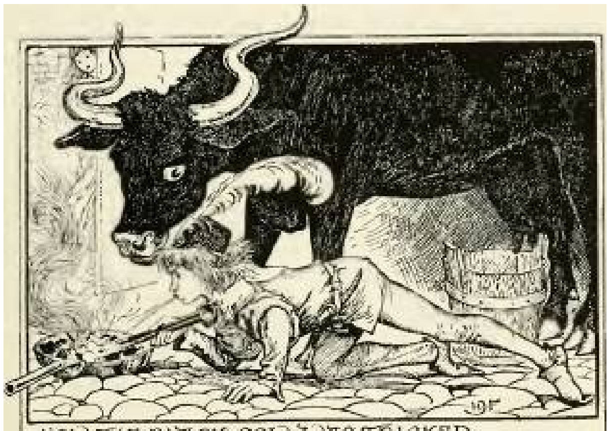

HOW THE BLACK COW WAS TRICKED

‘I have nobody to help me,’ answered the prince, ‘but my own poor head.’ The old man got up from his seat and went away.

That night, when the prince went to his master to hear what his next day’s work was to be, the old man said: ‘I have a little hay-stack out in the meadow which must be brought in to dry. To-morrow you will have to stack it all in the shed, and, as you value your life, be careful not to leave the smallest strand behind.’ The prince was overjoyed to hear he had nothing worse to do.

‘To carry a little hay-rick requires no great skill,’ thought he, ‘and it will give me no trouble, for the horse will have to draw it in. I am certainly not going to spare the old grandmother.’

By-and-by the maiden stole up to ask what task he had for the next day.

The young man laughed, and said: ‘It appears that I have got to learn all kinds of farmer’s work. To-morrow I have to carry a hay-rick, and leave not a stalk in the meadow, and that is my whole day’s work!’

‘Oh, you unlucky creature!’ cried she; ‘and how do you think you are to do it. If you had all the men in the world to help you, you could not clear off this one little hay-rick in a week. The instant you have thrown down the hay at the top, it will take root again from below. But listen to what I say. You must steal out at daybreak to-morrow and bring out the white horse and some good strong ropes. Then get on the hay-stack, put the ropes round it, and harness the horse to the ropes. When you are ready, climb up the hay-stack and begin to count one, two, three.

The horse will ask you what you are counting, and you must be sure to answer what I whisper to you.'

So the maiden whispered something in his ear, and left the room. And the prince knew nothing better to do than to get into bed.

He slept soundly, and it was still almost dark when he got up and proceeded to carry out the instructions given him by the girl. First he chose some stout ropes, and then he led the horse out of the stable and rode it to the hay-stack, which was made up of fifty cartloads, so that it could hardly be called 'a little one.' The prince did all that the maiden had told him, and when at last he was seated on top of the rick, and had counted up to twenty, he heard the horse ask in amazement: 'What are you counting up there, my son?'

'Oh, nothing,' said he, 'I was just amusing myself with counting the packs of wolves in the forest, but there are really so many of them that I don't think I should ever be done.'

The word 'wolf' was hardly out of his mouth than the white horse was off like the wind, so that in the twinkling of an eye it had reached the shed, dragging the hay-stack behind it. The master was dumb with surprise as he came in after breakfast and found his man's day's work quite done.

'Was it really you who were so clever?' asked he. 'Or did some one give you good advice?'

'Oh, I have only myself to take counsel with,' said the prince, and the old man went away, shaking his head.

Late in the evening the prince went to his master to learn what he was to do next day.

'To-morrow,' said the old man, 'you must bring the white-headed calf to the meadow, and, as you value your life, take care it does not escape from you.'

The prince answered nothing, but thought, 'Well, most peasants of nineteen have got a whole herd to look after, so surely I can manage one.' And he went towards his room, where the maiden met him.

'To morrow I have got an idiot's work,' said he; 'nothing but to take the white-headed calf to the meadow.'

'Oh, you unlucky being!' sighed she. 'Do you know that this calf is so swift that in a single day he can run three times round the world? Take heed to what I tell you. Bind one end of this silk thread to the left fore-leg of the calf, and the other end to the little toe of your left foot, so that the calf will never be able to leave your side, whether you walk, stand, or lie.’ After this the prince went to bed and slept soundly.

The next morning he did exactly what the maiden had told him, and led the calf with the silken thread to the meadow, where it stuck to his side like a faithful dog.

By sunset, it was back again in its stall, and then came the master and said, with a frown, ‘Were you really so clever yourself, or did somebody tell you what to do?’

‘Oh, I have only my own poor head,’ answered the prince, and the old man went away growling, ‘I don’t believe a word of it! I am sure you have found some clever friend!’

In the evening he called the prince and said: ‘To-morrow I have no work for you, but when I wake you must come before my bed, and give me your hand in greeting.’

The young man wondered at this strange freak, and went laughing in search of the maiden.

‘Ah, it is no laughing matter,’ sighed she. ‘He means to eat you, and there is only one way in which I can help you. You must heat an iron shovel red hot, and hold it out to him instead of your hand.’

So next morning he wakened very early, and had heated the shovel before the old man was awake. At length he heard him calling, ‘You lazy fellow, where are you? Come and wish me good morning.’

But when the prince entered with the red-hot shovel his master only said, ‘I am very ill to-day, and too weak even to touch your hand. You must return this evening, when I may be better.’

The prince loitered about all day, and in the evening went back to the old man’s room. He was received in the most; friendly manner, and, to his surprise, his master exclaimed, ‘I am very well satisfied with you. Come to me at dawn and bring the maiden with you. I know you have long loved each other, and I wish to make you man and wife.’

The young man nearly jumped into the air for joy, but, remembering the rules of the house, he managed to keep still. When he told the maiden, he saw to his astonishment that she had become as white as a sheet, and she was quite dumb.

‘The old man has found out who was your counsellor,’ she said when she could speak, ‘and he means to destroy us both.’ We must escape somehow, or else we shall be lost. Take an axe, and cut off the head of the calf with one blow. With a second, split its head in two, and in its brain you will see a bright red ball. Bring that to me. Meanwhile, I will do what is needful here.

And the prince thought to himself, ‘Better kill the calf than be killed ourselves. If we can once escape, we will go back home. The peas which I strewed about must have sprouted, so that we shall not miss the way.'

Then he went into the stall, and with one blow of the axe killed the calf, and with the second split its brain. In an instant the place was filled with light, as the red ball fell from the brain of the calf. The prince picked it up, and, wrapping it round with a thick cloth, hid it in his bosom. Mercifully, the cow slept through it all, or by her cries she would have awakened the master.

He looked round, and at the door stood the maiden, holding a little bundle in her arms.

'Where is the ball?' she asked.

'Here,' answered he.

'We must lose no time in escaping,' she went on, and uncovered a tiny bit of the shining ball, to light them on their way.

As the prince had expected the peas had taken root, and grown into a little hedge, so that they were sure they would not lose the path. As they fled, the girl told him that she had overheard a conversation between the old man and his grandmother, saying that she was a king's daughter, whom the old fellow had obtained by cunning from her parents. The prince, who knew all about the affair, was silent, though he was glad from his heart that it had fallen to his lot to set her free. So they went on till the day began to dawn.

The old man slept very late that morning, and rubbed his eyes till he was properly awake. Then he remembered that very soon the couple were to present themselves before him. After waiting and waiting till quite a long time had passed, he said to himself, with a grin, 'Well, they are not in much hurry to be married,' and waited again.

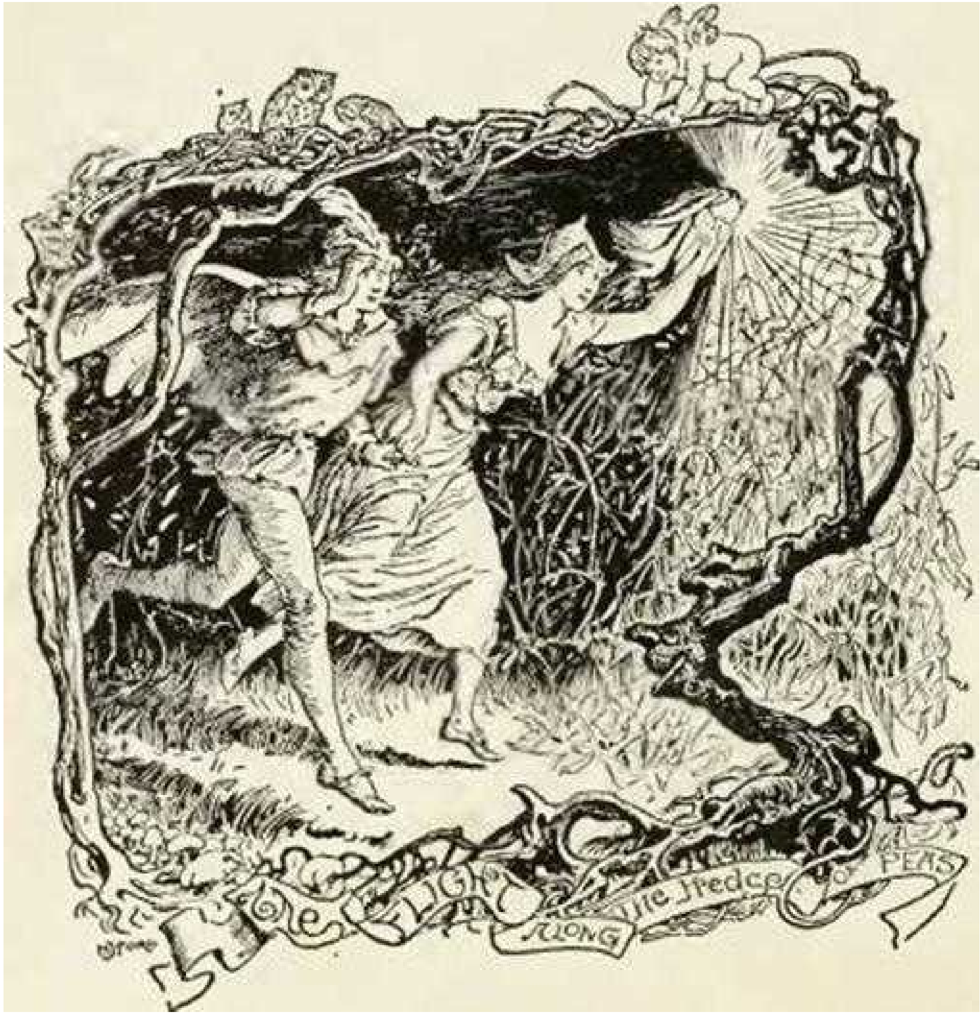

At last he grew a little uneasy, and cried loudly, ‘Man and maid! what has become of you?’ After repeating this many times, he became quite frightened, but, call as he would, neither man nor maid appeared. At last he jumped angrily out of bed to go in search of the culprits, but only found an empty house, and beds that had never been slept in.

Then he went straight to the stable, where the sight of the dead calf told him all. Swearing loudly, he opened the door of the third stall quickly, and cried to his goblin servants to go and chase the fugitives. ‘Bring them to me, however you may find them, for have them I must!’ he said. So spake the old man, and the servants fled like the wind.

The runaways were crossing a great plain, when the maiden stopped. ‘Something has happened!’ she said. ‘The ball moves in my hand, and I’m sure we are being followed!’ and behind them they saw a black cloud flying before the wind. Then the maiden turned the ball thrice in her hand, and cried,

‘Listen to me, my ball, my ball.

Be quick and change me into a brook,
And my lover into a little fish.'

And in an instant there was a brook with a fish swimming in it. The goblins arrived just after, but, seeing nobody, waited for a little, then hurried home, leaving the brook and the fish undisturbed. When they were quite out of sight, the brook and the fish returned to their usual shapes and proceeded on their journey.

When the goblins, tired and with empty hands, returned, their master inquired what they had seen, and if nothing strange had befallen them.

'Nothing,' said they; 'the plain was quite empty, save for a brook and a fish swimming in it.'

'Idiots!' roared the master; 'of course it was they!' And dashing open the door of the fifth stall, he told the goblins inside that they must go and drink up the brook, and catch the fish. And the goblins jumped up, and flew like the wind.

The young pair had almost reached the edge of the wood, when the maiden stopped again. 'Something has happened,' said she. 'The ball is moving in my hand,' and looking round she beheld a cloud flying towards them, large and blacker than the first, and striped with red. 'Those are our pursuers,' cried she, and turning the ball three times in her hand she spoke to it thus:

'Listen to me, my ball, my ball.
Be quick and change us both.
Me into a wild rose bush,
And him into a rose on my stem.'

And in the twinkling of an eye it was done. Only just in time too, for the goblins were close at hand, and looked round eagerly for the stream and the fish. But neither stream nor fish was to be seen; nothing but a rose bush. So they went sorrowing home, and when they were out of sight the rose bush and rose returned to their proper shapes and walked all the faster for the little rest they had had.

'Well, did you find them?' asked the old man when his goblins came back.

'No,' replied the leader of the goblins, 'we found neither brook nor fish in the desert.'

'And did you find nothing else at all?'

'Oh, nothing but a rose tree on the edge of a wood, with a rose hanging on it.'

'Idiots!' cried he. 'Why, that was they.' And he threw open the door of the seventh stall, where his mightiest goblins were locked in. 'Bring them to me, however you find them, dead or alive!' thundered he, 'for I will have them! Tear up the rose tree and the roots too, and don't leave anything behind, however strange it may be!'

The fugitives were resting in the shade of a wood, and were refreshing themselves with food and drink. Suddenly the maiden looked up. ‘Something has happened,’ said she. ‘The ball has nearly jumped out of my bosom! Some one is certainly following us, and the danger is near, but the trees hide our enemies from us.’

As she spoke she took the ball in her hand, and said:

‘Listen to me, my ball, my ball.
Be quick and change me into a breeze,
And make my lover into a midge.’

An instant, and the girl was dissolved into thin air, while the prince darted about like a midge. The next moment a crowd of goblins rushed up, and looked about in search of something strange, for neither a rose bush nor anything else was to be seen. But they had hardly turned their backs to go home empty-handed when the prince and the maiden stood on the earth again.

‘We must make all the haste we can,’ said she, ‘before the old man himself comes to seek us, for he will know us under any disguise.’

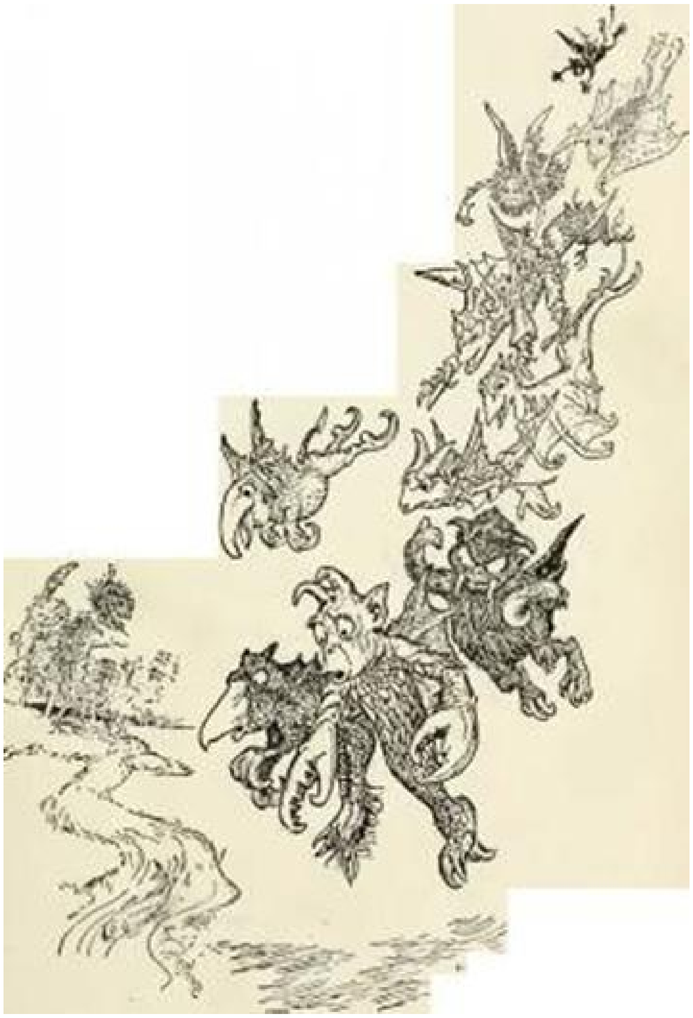

They ran on till they reached such a dark part of the forest that, if it had not been for the light shed by the ball, they could not have made their way at all. Worn out and breathless, they came at length to a large stone, and here the ball began to move restlessly. The maiden, seeing this, exclaimed:

‘Listen to me, my ball, my ball.
Roll the stone quickly to one side,
That we may find a door.’

And in a moment the stone had rolled away, and they had passed through the door to the world again.

‘Now we are safe,’ cried she. ‘Here the old wizard has no more power over us, and we can guard ourselves from his spells. But, my friend, we have to part! You will return to your parents, and I must go in search of mine.’

‘No! no!’ exclaimed the prince. ‘I will never part from you. You must come with me and be my wife. We have gone through many troubles together, and now we will share our joys. The maiden resisted his words for some time, but at last she went with him.

In the forest they met a woodcutter, who told them that in the palace, as well as in all the land, there had been great sorrow over the loss of the prince, and many years had now passed away during which they had found no traces of him. So, by the help of the magic ball, the maiden managed that he should put on the same clothes that he had been wearing at the time he had vanished, so that his father might know him more quickly. She herself stayed behind in a peasant's hut, so that father and son might meet alone.

But the father was no longer there, for the loss of his son had killed him; and on his deathbed he confessed to his people how he had contrived that the old wizard should carry away a peasant's child instead of the prince, wherefore this punishment had fallen upon him.

The prince wept bitterly when he heard this news, for he had loved his father well, and for three days he ate and drank nothing. But on the fourth day he stood in the presence of his people as their new king, and, calling his councillors, he told them all the strange things that had befallen him, and how the maiden had borne him safe through all.

And the councillors cried with one voice, 'Let her be your wife, and our liege lady.'

And that is the end of the story.

(Ehstnische Marchen.)

THE CHILD WHO CAME FROM AN EGG

Once upon a time there lived a queen whose heart was sore because she had no children. She was sad enough when her husband was at home with her, but when he was away she would see nobody, but sat and wept all day long.

Now it happened that a war broke out with the king of a neighbouring country, and the queen was left in the palace alone.

She was so unhappy that she felt as if the walls would stifle her, so she wandered out into the garden, and threw herself down on a grassy bank, under the shade of a lime tree. She had been there for some time, when a rustle among the leaves caused her to look up, and she saw an old woman limping on her crutches towards the stream that flowed through the grounds.

When she had quenched her thirst, she came straight up to the queen, and said to her: ‘Do not take it evil, noble lady, that I dare to speak to you, and do not be afraid of me, for it may be that I shall bring you good luck.’

The queen looked at her doubtfully, and answered: ‘You do not seem as if you had been very lucky yourself, or to have much good fortune to spare for anyone else.’

‘Under rough bark lies smooth wood and sweet kernel,’ replied the old woman. ‘Let me see your hand, that I may read the future.’

The queen held out her hand, and the old woman examined its lines closely. Then she said, ‘Your heart is heavy with two sorrows, one old and one new. The new sorrow is for your husband, who is fighting far away from you; but, believe me, he is well, and will soon bring you joyful news. But your other sorrow is much older than this. Your happiness is spoilt because you have no children.’ At these words the queen became scarlet, and tried to draw away her hand, but the old woman said:

‘Have a little patience, for there are some things I want to see more clearly.’

‘But who are you?’ asked the queen, ‘for you seem to be able to read my heart.’

‘Never mind my name,’ answered she, ‘but rejoice that it is permitted to me to show you a way to lessen your grief. You must, however, promise to do exactly what I tell you, if any good is to come of it.’

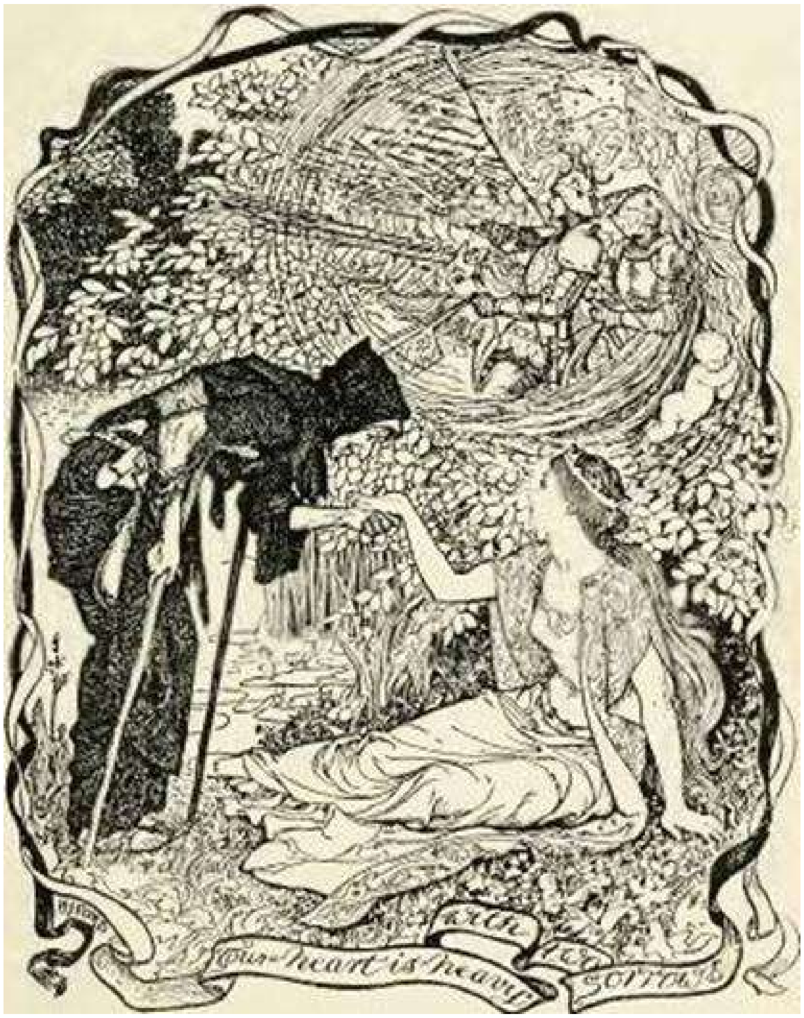
Your heart is heavy with sorrow

‘Oh, I will obey you exactly,’ cried the queen, ‘and if you can help me you shall have in return anything you ask for.’

The old woman stood thinking for a little: then she drew something from the folds of her dress, and, undoing a number of wrappings, brought out a tiny basket made of birch-bark. She held it out to the queen, saying, ‘In the basket you will find a bird’s egg. This you must be careful to keep in a warm place for three months, when it will turn into a doll. Lay the doll in a basket lined with soft wool, and leave it alone, for it will not need any food, and by-and-by you will find it has grown to be the size of a baby. Then you will have a baby of your own, and you must put it by the side of the other child, and bring your husband to see his son and daughter. The boy you will bring up yourself, but you must entrust the little girl to a nurse. When the time comes to have them christened you will invite me to be godmother to the princess, and this is how you must send the invitation. Hidden in the cradle, you will find a goose’s wing: throw this out of the window, and I will be with you directly; but be sure you tell no one of all the things that have befallen you.’

The queen was about to reply, but the old woman was already limping away, and before she had gone two steps she had turned into a young girl, who moved so quickly that she seemed rather to fly than to walk. The queen, watching this transformation, could hardly believe her eyes, and would have taken it all for a dream, had it not been for the basket which she held in her hand. Feeling a different being from the poor sad woman who had wandered into the garden so short a time before, she hastened to her room, and felt carefully in the basket for the egg. There it was, a tiny thing of soft blue with little green spots, and she took it out and kept it in her bosom, which was the warmest place she could think of.

A fortnight after the old woman had paid her visit, the king came home, having conquered his enemies. At this proof that the old woman had spoken truth, the queen's heart bounded, for she now had fresh hopes that the rest of the prophecy might be fulfilled.

She cherished the basket and the egg as her chiefest treasures, and had a golden case made for the basket, so that when the time came to lay the egg in it, it might not risk any harm.

Three months passed, and, as the old woman had bidden her, the queen took the egg from her bosom, and laid it snugly amidst the warm woollen folds. The next morning she went to look at it, and the first thing she saw was the broken eggshell, and a little doll lying among the pieces. Then she felt happy at last, and leaving the doll in peace to grow, waited, as she had been told, for a baby of her own to lay beside it.

In course of time, this came also, and the queen took the little girl out of the basket, and placed it with her son in a golden cradle which glittered with precious stones. Next she sent for the king, who nearly went mad with joy at the sight of the children.

Soon there came a day when the whole court was ordered to be present at the christening of the royal babies, and when all was ready the queen softly opened the window a little, and let the goose wing fly out. The guests were coming thick and fast, when suddenly there drove up a splendid coach drawn by six cream-coloured horses, and out of it stepped a young lady dressed in garments that shone like the sun. Her face could not be seen, for a veil covered her head, but as she came up to the place where the queen was standing with the babies she drew the veil aside, and everyone was dazzled with her beauty. She took the little girl in her arms, and holding it up before the assembled company announced that henceforward it would be known by the name of Dotterine — a name which no one understood but the queen, who knew that the baby had come from the yolk of an egg. The boy was called Willem.

After the feast was over and the guests were going away, the godmother laid the baby in the cradle, and said to the queen, ‘Whenever the baby goes to sleep, be sure you lay the basket beside her, and leave the eggshells in it. As long as you do that, no evil can come to her; so guard this treasure as the apple of your eye, and teach your daughter to do so likewise.’ Then, kissing the baby three times, she mounted her coach and drove away.

The children throve well, and Dotterine’s nurse loved her as if she were the baby’s real mother. Every day the little girl seemed to grow prettier, and people used to say she would soon be as beautiful as her godmother, but no one knew, except the nurse, that at night, when the child slept, a strange and lovely lady bent over her. At length she told the queen what she had seen, but they determined to keep it as a secret between themselves.

The twins were by this time nearly two years old, when the queen was taken suddenly ill. All the best doctors in the country were sent for, but it was no use, for there is no cure for death. The queen knew she was dying, and sent for Dotterine and her nurse, who had now become her lady-in-waiting. To her, as her most faithful servant, she gave the lucky basket in charge, and besought her to treasure it carefully. ‘When my daughter,’ said the queen, ‘is ten years old, you are to hand it over to her, but warn her solemnly that her whole future happiness depends on the way she guards it. About my son, I have no fears. He is the heir of the kingdom, and his father will look after him.’ The lady-in-waiting promised to carry out the queen’s directions, and above all to keep the affair a secret. And that same morning the queen died.

After some years the king married again, but he did not love his second wife as he had done his first, and had only married her for reasons of ambition. She hated her step-children, and the king, seeing this, kept them out of the way, under the care of Dotterine’s old nurse. But if they ever strayed across the path of the queen, she would kick them out of her sight like dogs.

On Dotterine’s tenth birthday her nurse handed her over the cradle, and repeated to her her mother’s dying words; but the child was too young to understand the value of such a gift, and at first thought little about it.

Two more years slipped by, when one day during the king’s absence the stepmother found Dotterine sitting under a lime tree. She fell as usual into a passion, and beat the child so badly that Dotterine went staggering to her own room. Her nurse was not there, but suddenly, as she stood weeping, her eyes fell upon the golden case in which lay the precious basket. She thought it might contain something to amuse her, and looked eagerly inside, but nothing was there save a handful of wool and two empty eggshells. Very much disappointed, she lifted the wool, and there lay the goose’s wing. ‘What old rubbish,’ said the child to herself, and, turning, threw the wing out of the open window.

In a moment a beautiful lady stood beside her. ‘Do not be afraid,’ said the lady, stroking Dotterine’s head. ‘I am your godmother, and have come to pay you a visit. Your red eyes tell me that you are unhappy. I know that your stepmother is very unkind to you, but be brave and patient, and better days will come. She will have no power over you when you are grown up, and no one else can hurt you either, if only you are careful never to part from your basket, or to lose the eggshells that are in it. Make a silken case for the little basket, and hide it away in your dress night and day and you will be safe from your stepmother and anyone that tries to harm you. But if you should happen to find yourself in any difficulty, and cannot tell what to do, take the goose’s wing from the basket, and throw it out of the window, and in a moment I will come to help you. Now come into the garden, that I may talk to you under the lime trees, where no one can hear us.’

They had so much to say to each other, that the sun was already setting when the godmother had ended all the good advice she wished to give the child, and saw it was time for her to be going. ‘Hand me the basket,’ said she, ‘for you must have some supper. I cannot let you go hungry to bed.’

Then, bending over the basket, she whispered some magic words, and instantly a table covered with fruits and cakes stood on the ground before them. When they had finished eating, the godmother led the child back, and on the way taught her the words she must say to the basket when she wanted it to give her something.

In a few years more, Dotterine was a grown-up young lady, and those who saw her thought that the world did not contain so lovely a girl.

About this time a terrible war broke out, and the king and his army were beaten back and back, till at length they had to retire into the town, and make ready for a siege. It lasted so long that food began to fail, and even in the palace there was not enough to eat.

So one morning Dotterine, who had had neither supper nor breakfast, and was feeling very hungry, let her wing fly away. She was so weak and miserable, that directly her godmother appeared she burst into tears, and could not speak for some time.

‘Do not cry so, dear child,’ said the godmother. ‘I will carry you away from all this, but the others I must leave to take their chance.’ Then, bidding Dotterine follow her, she passed through the gates of the town, and through the army outside, and nobody stopped them, or seemed to see them.

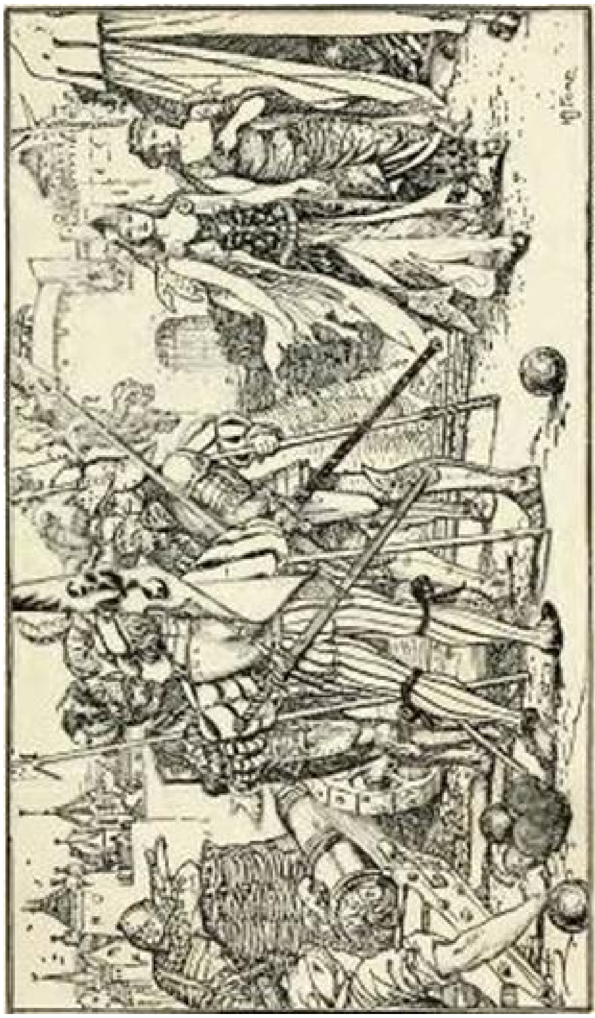

THE FAIRY AND DOTTERINE
PASS UNSEEN THROUGH
THE CAMP OF THE ENEMY

The next day the town surrendered, and the king and all his courtiers were taken prisoners, but in the confusion his son managed to make his escape. The queen had already met her death from a spear carelessly thrown.

As soon as Dotterine and her godmother were clear of the enemy, Dotterine took off her own clothes, and put on those of a peasant, and in order to disguise her better her godmother changed her face completely. ‘When better times come,’ her protectress said cheerfully, ‘and you want to look like yourself again, you have only to whisper the words I have taught you into the basket, and say you would like to have your own face once more, and it will be all right in a moment. But you will have to endure a little longer yet.’ Then, warning her once more to take care of the basket, the lady bade the girl farewell.

For many days Dotterine wandered from one place to another without finding shelter, and though the food which she got from the basket prevented her from starving, she was glad enough to take service in a peasant’s house till brighter days dawned. At first the work she had to do seemed very difficult, but either she was wonderfully quick in learning, or else the basket may have secretly helped her. Anyhow at the end of three days she could do everything as well as if she had cleaned pots and swept rooms all her life.

One morning Dotterine was busy scouring a wooden tub, when a noble lady happened to pass through the village. The girl’s bright face as she stood in the front of the door with her tub attracted the lady, and she stopped and called the girl to come and speak to her.

‘Would you not like to come and enter my service?’ she asked.

‘Very much,’ replied Dotterine, ‘if my present mistress will allow me.’

‘Oh, I will settle that,’ answered the lady; and so she did, and the same day they set out for the lady’s house, Dotterine sitting beside the coachman.

Six months went by, and then came the joyful news that the king’s son had collected an army and had defeated the usurper who had taken his father’s place, but at the same moment Dotterine learned that the old king had died in captivity. The girl wept bitterly for his loss, but in secrecy, as she had told her mistress nothing about her past life.

At the end of a year of mourning, the young king let it be known that he intended to marry, and commanded all the maidens in the kingdom to come to a feast, so that he might choose a wife from among them. For weeks all the mothers and all the daughters in the land were busy preparing beautiful dresses and trying new ways of putting up their hair, and the three lovely daughters of Dotterine’s mistress were as much excited as the rest. The girl was clever with her fingers, and was occupied all day with getting ready their smart clothes, but at night when she went to bed she always dreamed that her godmother bent over her and said, ‘Dress your young ladies for the feast, and when they have started follow them yourself. Nobody will be so fine as you.’

When the great day came, Dotterine could hardly contain herself, and when she had dressed her young mistresses and seen them depart with their mother she flung herself on her bed, and burst into tears. Then she seemed to hear a voice whisper to her, ‘Look in your basket, and you will find in it everything that you need.’

Dotterine did not want to be told twice! Up she jumped, seized her basket, and repeated the magic words, and behold! there lay a dress on the bed, shining as a star. She put it on with fingers that trembled with joy, and, looking in the glass, was struck dumb at her own beauty. She went downstairs, and in front of the door stood a fine carriage, into which she stepped and was driven away like the wind.

The king’s palace was a long way off, yet it seemed only a few minutes before Dotterine drew up at the great gates. She was just going to alight, when she suddenly remembered she had left her basket behind her. What was she to do? Go back and fetch it, lest some ill-fortune should befall her, or enter the palace and trust to chance that nothing evil would happen? But before she could decide, a little swallow flew up with the basket in its beak, and the girl was happy again.

The feast was already at its height, and the hall was brilliant with youth and beauty, when the door was flung wide and Dotterine entered, making all the other maidens look pale and dim beside her. Their hopes faded as they gazed, but their mothers whispered together, saying, ‘Surely this is our lost princess!’

The young king did not know her again, but he never left her side nor took his eyes from her. And at midnight a strange thing happened. A thick cloud suddenly filled the hall, so that for a moment all was dark. Then the mist suddenly grew bright, and Dotterine’s godmother was seen standing there.

‘This,’ she said, turning to the king, ‘is the girl whom you have always believed to be your sister, and who vanished during the siege. She is not your sister at all, but the daughter of the king of a neighbouring country, who was given to your mother to bring up, to save her from the hands of a wizard.’

Then she vanished, and was never seen again, nor the wonder-working basket either; but now that Dotterine’s troubles were over she could get on without them, and she and the young king lived happily together till the end of their days.

(Ehstnische Marchen.)

STAN BOLOVAN

Once upon a time what happened did happen, and if it had not happened this story would never have been told.

On the outskirts of a village just where the oxen were turned out to pasture, and the pigs roamed about burrowing with their noses among the roots of the trees, there stood a small house. In the house lived a man who had a wife, and the wife was sad all day long.

‘Dear wife, what is wrong with you that you hang your head like a drooping rosebud?’ asked her husband one morning. ‘You have everything you want; why cannot you be merry like other women?’

‘Leave me alone, and do not seek to know the reason,’ replied she, bursting into tears, and the man thought that it was no time to question her, and went away to his work.

He could not, however, forget all about it, and a few days after he inquired again the reason of her sadness, but only got the same reply. At length he felt he could bear it no longer, and tried a third time, and then his wife turned and answered him.

‘Good gracious!’ cried she, ‘why cannot you let things be as they are? If I were to tell you, you would become just as wretched as myself. If you would only believe, it is far better for you to know nothing.’

But no man yet was ever content with such an answer. The more you beg him not to inquire, the greater is his curiosity to learn the whole.

‘Well, if you MUST know,’ said the wife at last, ‘I will tell you. There is no luck in this house — no luck at all!’

‘Is not your cow the best milker in all the village? Are not your trees as full of fruit as your hives are full of bees? Has anyone cornfields like ours? Really you talk nonsense when you say things like that!’

‘Yes, all that you say is true, but we have no children.’

Then Stan understood, and when a man once understands and has his eyes opened it is no longer well with him. From that day the little house in the outskirts contained an unhappy man as well as an unhappy woman. And at the sight of her husband’s misery the woman became more wretched than ever.

And so matters went on for some time.

Some weeks had passed, and Stan thought he would consult a wise man who lived a day’s journey from his own house. The wise man was sitting before his door when he came up, and Stan fell on his knees before him. ‘Give me children, my lord, give me children.’

‘Take care what you are asking,’ replied the wise man. ‘Will not children be a burden to you? Are you rich enough to feed and clothe them?’

‘Only give them to me, my lord, and I will manage somehow!’ and at a sign from the wise man Stan went his way.

He reached home that evening tired and dusty, but with hope in his heart. As he drew near his house a sound of voices struck upon his ear, and he looked up to see the whole place full of children. Children in the garden, children in the yard, children looking out of every window — it seemed to the man as if all the children in the world must be gathered there. And none was bigger than the other, but each was smaller than the other, and every one was more noisy and more impudent and more daring than the rest, and Stan gazed and grew cold with horror as he realised that they all belonged to him.

‘Good gracious! how many there are! how many!’ he muttered to himself.

‘Oh, but not one too many,’ smiled his wife, coming up with a crowd more children clinging to her skirts.

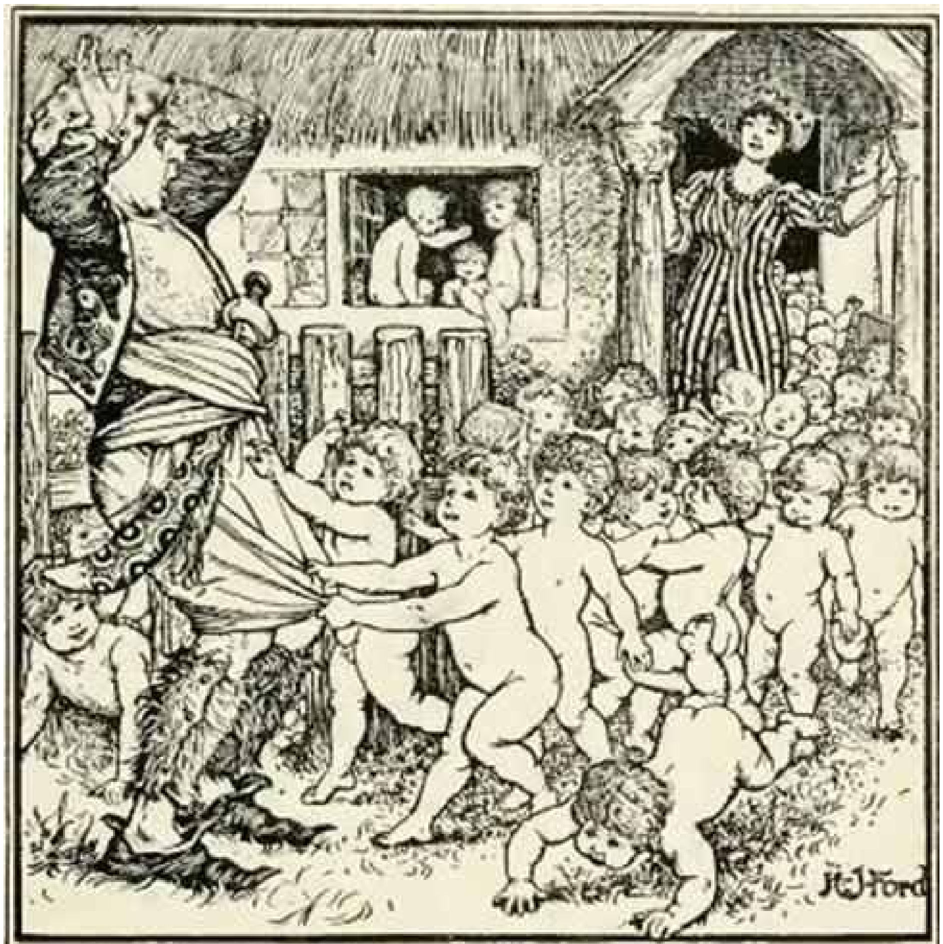

STAN BOLOVAN MEETS HIS FAMILY

But even she found that it was not so easy to look after a hundred children, and when a few days had passed and they had eaten up all the food there was in the house, they began to cry, ‘Father! I am hungry — I am hungry,’ till Stan scratched his head and wondered what he was to do next. It was not that he thought there were too many children, for his life had seemed more full of joy since they appeared, but now it came to the point he did not know how he was to feed them. The cow had ceased to give milk, and it was too early for the fruit trees to ripen.

‘Do you know, old woman!’ said he one day to his wife, ‘I must go out into the world and try to bring back food somehow, though I cannot tell where it is to come from.’

To the hungry man any road is long, and then there was always the thought that he had to satisfy a hundred greedy children as well as himself.

Stan wandered, and wandered, and wandered, till he reached to the end of the world, where that which is, is mingled with that which is not, and there he saw, a little way off, a sheepfold, with seven sheep in it. In the shadow of some trees lay the rest of the flock.

Stan crept up, hoping that he might manage to decoy some of them away quietly, and drive them home for food for his family, but he soon found this could not be. For at midnight he heard a rushing noise, and through the air flew a dragon, who drove apart a ram, a sheep, and a lamb, and three fine cattle that were lying down close by. And besides these he took the milk of seventy-seven sheep, and carried it home to his old mother, that she might bathe in it and grow young again. And this happened every night.

The shepherd bewailed himself in vain: the dragon only laughed, and Stan saw that this was not the place to get food for his family.

But though he quite understood that it was almost hopeless to fight against such a powerful monster, yet the thought of the hungry children at home clung to him like a burr, and would not be shaken off, and at last he said to the shepherd, ‘What will you give me if I rid you of the dragon?’

‘One of every three rams, one of every three sheep, one of every three lambs,’ answered the herd.

‘It is a bargain,’ replied Stan, though at the moment he did not know how, supposing he DID come off the victor, he would ever be able to drive so large a flock home.

However, that matter could be settled later. At present night was not far off, and he must consider how best to fight with the dragon.

Just at midnight, a horrible feeling that was new and strange to him came over Stan — a feeling that he could not put into words even to himself, but which almost forced him to give up the battle and take the shortest road home again. He half turned; then he remembered the children, and turned back.

‘You or I,’ said Stan to himself, and took up his position on the edge of the flock.

‘Stop!’ he suddenly cried, as the air was filled with a rushing noise, and the dragon came dashing past.

‘Dear me!’ exclaimed the dragon, looking round. ‘Who are you, and where do you come from?’

‘I am Stan Bolovan, who eats rocks all night, and in the day feeds on the flowers of the mountain; and if you meddle with those sheep I will carve a cross on your back.’

When the dragon heard these words he stood quite still in the middle of the road, for he knew he had met with his match.

‘But you will have to fight me first,’ he said in a trembling voice, for when you faced him properly he was not brave at all.

‘I fight you?’ replied Stan, ‘why I could slay you with one breath!’ Then, stooping to pick up a large cheese which lay at his feet, he added, ‘Go and get a stone like this out of the river, so that we may lose no time in seeing who is the best man.’

The dragon did as Stan bade him, and brought back a stone out of the brook.

‘Can you get buttermilk out of your stone?’ asked Stan.

The dragon picked up his stone with one hand, and squeezed it till it fell into powder, but no buttermilk flowed from it. ‘Of course I can’t!’ he said, half angrily.

‘Well, if you can’t, I can,’ answered Stan, and he pressed the cheese till buttermilk flowed through his fingers.

When the dragon saw that, he thought it was time he made the best of his way home again, but Stan stood in his path.

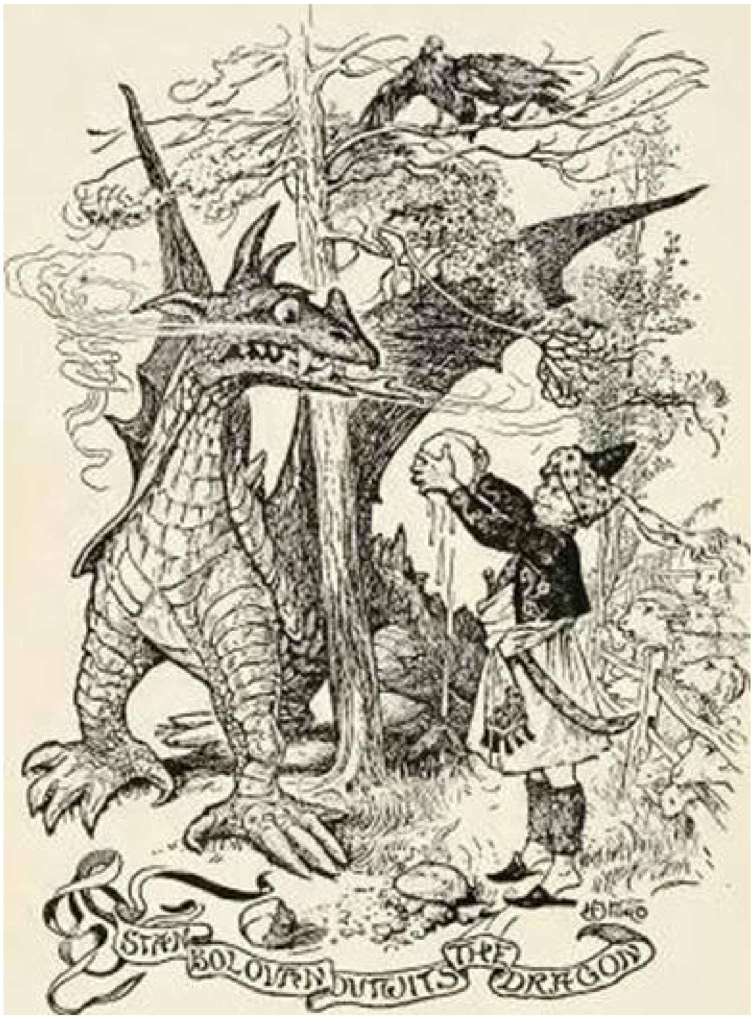
STAN BOLOVAN OUTWITS THE DRAGON

‘We have still some accounts to settle,’ said he, ‘about what you have been doing here,’ and the poor dragon was too frightened to stir, lest Stan should slay him at one breath and bury him among the flowers in the mountain pastures.

‘Listen to me,’ he said at last. ‘I see you are a very useful person, and my mother has need of a fellow like you. Suppose you enter her service for three days, which are as long as one of your years, and she will pay you each day seven sacks full of ducats.’

Three times seven sacks full of ducats! The offer was very tempting, and Stan could not resist it. He did not waste words, but nodded to the dragon, and they started along the road.

It was a long, long way, but when they came to the end they found the dragon’s mother, who was as old as time itself, expecting them. Stan saw her eyes shining like lamps from afar, and when they entered the house they beheld a huge kettle standing on the fire, filled with milk. When the old mother found that her son had arrived empty-handed she grew very angry, and fire and flame darted from her nostrils, but before she could speak the dragon turned to Stan.

‘Stay here,’ said he, ‘and wait for me; I am going to explain things to my mother.’

Stan was already repenting bitterly that he had ever come to such a place, but, since he was there, there was nothing for it but to take everything quietly, and not show that he was afraid.

‘Listen, mother,’ said the dragon as soon as they were alone, ‘I have brought this man in order to get rid of him. He is a terrific fellow who eats rocks, and can press buttermilk out of a stone,’ and he told her all that had happened the night before.

‘Oh, just leave him to me!’ she said. ‘I have never yet let a man slip through my fingers.’ So Stan had to stay and do the old mother service.

The next day she told him that he and her son should try which was the strongest, and she took down a huge club, bound seven times with iron.

The dragon picked it up as if it had been a feather, and, after whirling it round his head, flung it lightly three miles away, telling Stan to beat that if he could.

They walked to the spot where the club lay. Stan stooped and felt it; then a great fear came over him, for he knew that he and all his children together would never lift that club from the ground.

‘What are you doing?’ asked the dragon.

‘I was thinking what a beautiful club it was, and what a pity it is that it should cause your death.’

‘How do you mean — my death?’ asked the dragon.

‘Only that I am afraid that if I throw it you will never see another dawn. You don’t know how strong I am!’

‘Oh, never mind that be quick and throw.’

‘If you are really in earnest, let us go and feast for three days: that will at any rate give you three extra days of life.’

Stan spoke so calmly that this time the dragon began to get a little frightened, though he did not quite believe that things would be as bad as Stan said.

They returned to the house, took all the food that could be found in the old mother’s larder, and carried it back to the place where the club was lying. Then Stan seated himself on the sack of provisions, and remained quietly watching the setting moon.

‘What are you doing?’ asked the dragon.

‘Waiting till the moon gets out of my way.’

‘What do you mean? I don’t understand.’

‘Don’t you see that the moon is exactly in my way? But of course, if you like, I will throw the club into the moon.’

At these words the dragon grew uncomfortable for the second time.

He prized the club, which had been left him by his grandfather, very highly, and had no desire that it should be lost in the moon.

‘I’ll tell you what,’ he said, after thinking a little. ‘Don’t throw the club at all. I will throw it a second time, and that will do just as well.’

‘No, certainly not!’ replied Stan. ‘Just wait till the moon sets.’

But the dragon, in dread lest Stan should fulfil his threats, tried what bribes could do, and in the end had to promise Stan seven sacks of ducats before he was suffered to throw back the club himself.

‘Oh, dear me, that is indeed a strong man,’ said the dragon, turning to his mother. ‘Would you believe that I have had the greatest difficulty in preventing him from throwing the club into the moon?’

Then the old woman grew uncomfortable too! Only to think of it! It was no joke to throw things into the moon! So no more was heard of the club, and the next day they had all something else to think about.

‘Go and fetch me water!’ said the mother, when the morning broke, and gave them twelve buffalo skins with the order to keep filling them till night.

They set out at once for the brook, and in the twinkling of an eye the dragon had filled the whole twelve, carried them into the house, and brought them back to Stan. Stan was tired: he could scarcely lift the buckets when they were empty, and he shuddered to think of what would happen when they were full. But he only took an old knife out of his pocket and began to scratch up the earth near the brook.

‘What are you doing there? How are you going to carry the water into the house?’ asked the dragon.

‘How? Dear me, that is easy enough! I shall just take the brook!’

At these words the dragon’s jaw dropped. This was the last thing that had ever entered his head, for the brook had been as it was since the days of his grandfather.

‘I’ll tell you what!’ he said. ‘Let me carry your skins for you.’

‘Most certainly not,’ answered Stan, going on with his digging, and the dragon, in dread lest he should fulfil his threat, tried what bribes would do, and in the end had again to promise seven sacks of ducats before Stan would agree to leave the brook alone and let him carry the water into the house.

On the third day the old mother sent Stan into the forest for wood, and, as usual, the dragon went with him.

Before you could count three he had pulled up more trees than Stan could have cut down in a lifetime, and had arranged them neatly in rows. When the dragon had finished, Stan began to look about him, and, choosing the biggest of the trees, he climbed up it, and, breaking off a long rope of wild vine, bound the top of the tree to the one next it. And so he did to a whole line of trees.

‘What are you doing there?’ asked the dragon.

‘You can see for yourself,’ answered Stan, going quietly on with his work.

‘Why are you tying the trees together?’

‘Not to give myself unnecessary work; when I pull up one, all the others will come up too.’

‘But how will you carry them home?’

‘Dear me! don’t you understand that I am going to take the whole forest back with me?’ said Stan, tying two other trees as he spoke.

‘I’ll tell you what,’ cried the dragon, trembling with fear at the thought of such a thing; ‘let me carry the wood for you, and you shall have seven times seven sacks full of ducats.’

‘You are a good fellow, and I agree to your proposal,’ answered Stan, and the dragon carried the wood.

Now the three days’ service which were to be reckoned as a year were over, and the only thing that disturbed Stan was, how to get all those ducats back to his home!

In the evening the dragon and his mother had a long talk, but Stan heard every word through a crack in the ceiling.

‘Woe be to us, mother,’ said the dragon; ‘this man will soon get us into his power. Give him his money, and let us be rid of him.’

But the old mother was fond of money, and did not like this.

‘Listen to me,’ said she; ‘you must murder him this very night.’

‘I am afraid,’ answered he.

‘There is nothing to fear,’ replied the old mother. ‘When he is asleep take the club, and hit him on the head with it. It is easily done.’

And so it would have been, had not Stan heard all about it. And when the dragon and his mother had put out their lights, he took the pigs’ trough and filled it with earth, and placed it in his bed, and covered it with clothes. Then he hid himself underneath, and began to snore loudly.

Very soon the dragon stole softly into the room, and gave a tremendous blow on the spot where Stan’s head should have been. Stan groaned loudly from under the bed, and the dragon went away as softly as he had come. Directly he had closed the door, Stan lifted out the pigs’ trough, and lay down himself, after making everything clean and tidy, but he was wise enough not to shut his eyes that night.

The next morning he came into the room when the dragon and his mother were having their breakfast.

‘Good morning,’ said he.

‘Good morning. How did you sleep?’

‘Oh, very well, but I dreamed that a flea had bitten me, and I seem to feel it still.’

The dragon and his mother looked at each other. ‘Do you hear that?’ whispered he. ‘He talks of a flea. I broke my club on his head.’

This time the mother grew as frightened as her son. There was nothing to be done with a man like this, and she made all haste to fill the sacks with ducats, so as to get rid of Stan as soon as possible. But on his side Stan was trembling like an aspen, as he could not lift even one sack from the ground. So he stood still and looked at them.

‘What are you standing there for?’ asked the dragon.

‘Oh, I was standing here because it has just occurred to me that I should like to stay in your service for another year. I am ashamed that when I get home they should see I have brought back so little. I know that they will cry out, “Just look at Stan Bolovan, who in one year has grown as weak as a dragon.”’

Here a shriek of dismay was heard both from the dragon and his mother, who declared they would give him seven or even seven times seven the number of sacks if he would only go away.

‘I’ll tell you what!’ said Stan at last. ‘I see you don’t want me to stay, and I should be very sorry to make myself disagreeable. I will go at once, but only on condition that you shall carry the money home yourself, so that I may not be put to shame before my friends.’

The words were hardly out of his mouth before the dragon had snatched up the sacks and piled them on his back. Then he and Stan set forth.

The way, though really not far, was yet too long for Stan, but at length he heard his children's voices, and stopped short. He did not wish the dragon to know where he lived, lest some day he should come to take back his treasure. Was there nothing he could say to get rid of the monster? Suddenly an idea came into Stan's head, and he turned round.

'I hardly know what to do,' said he. 'I have a hundred children, and I am afraid they may do you harm, as they are always ready for a fight. However, I will do my best to protect you.'

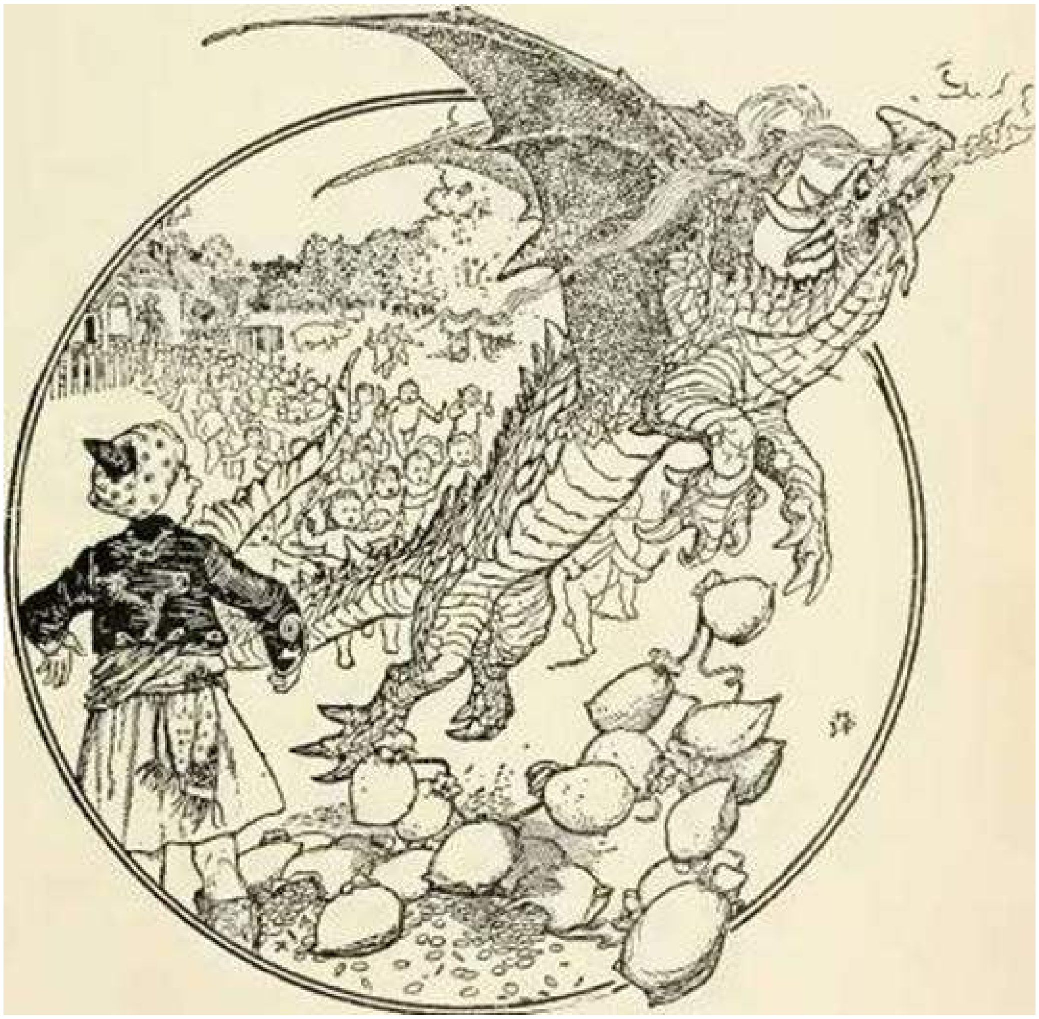

A hundred children! That was indeed no joke! The dragon let fall the sacks from terror, and then picked them up again. But the children, who had had nothing to eat since their father had left them, came rushing towards him, waving knives in their right hands and forks in their left, and crying, 'Give us dragon's flesh; we will have dragon's flesh.'

At this dreadful sight the dragon waited no longer: he flung down his sacks where he stood and took flight as fast as he could, so terrified at the fate that awaited him that from that day he has never dared to show his face in the world again.

(Adapted from Rumanische Marchen.)

THE TWO FROGS

Once upon a time in the country of Japan there lived two frogs, one of whom made his home in a ditch near the town of Osaka, on the sea coast, while the other dwelt in a clear little stream which ran through the city of Kioto. At such a great distance apart, they had never even heard of each other; but, funnily enough, the idea came into both their heads at once that they should like to see a little of the world, and the frog who lived at Kioto wanted to visit Osaka, and the frog who lived at Osaka wished to go to Kioto, where the great Mikado had his palace.

So one fine morning in the spring they both set out along the road that led from Kioto to Osaka, one from one end and the other from the other. The journey was more tiring than they expected, for they did not know much about travelling, and half way between the two towns there arose a mountain which had to be climbed. It took them a long time and a great many hops to reach the top, but there they were at last, and what was the surprise of each to see another frog before him! They looked at each other for a moment without speaking, and then fell into conversation, explaining the cause of their meeting so far from their homes. It was delightful to find that they both felt the same wish — to learn a little more of their native country — and as there was no sort of hurry they stretched themselves out in a cool, damp place, and agreed that they would have a good rest before they parted to go their ways.

‘What a pity we are not bigger,’ said the Osaka frog; ‘for then we could see both towns from here, and tell if it is worth our while going on.’

‘Oh, that is easily managed,’ returned the Kioto frog. ‘We have only got to stand up on our hind legs, and hold on to each other, and then we can each look at the town he is travelling to.’

This idea pleased the Osaka frog so much that he at once jumped up and put his front paws on the shoulders of his friend, who had risen also. There they both stood, stretching themselves as high as they could, and holding each other tightly, so that they might not fall down. The Kioto frog turned his nose towards Osaka, and the Osaka frog turned his nose towards Kioto; but the foolish things forgot that when they stood up their great eyes lay in the backs of their heads, and that though their noses might point to the places to which they wanted to go their eyes beheld the places from which they had come.

‘Dear me!’ cried the Osaka frog, ‘Kioto is exactly like Osaka. It is certainly not worth such a long journey. I shall go home!’

‘If I had had any idea that Osaka was only a copy of Kioto I should never have travelled all this way,’ exclaimed the frog from Kioto, and as he spoke he took his hands from his friend’s shoulders, and they both fell down on the grass. Then they took a polite farewell of each other, and set off for home again, and to the end of their lives they believed that Osaka and Kioto, which are as different to look at as two towns can be, were as like as two peas.

(Japanische Marchen.)

THE STORY OF A GAZELLE

Once upon a time there lived a man who wasted all his money, and grew so poor that his only food was a few grains of corn, which he scratched like a fowl from out of a dust-heap.

One day he was scratching as usual among a dust-heap in the street, hoping to find something for breakfast, when his eye fell upon a small silver coin, called an eighth, which he greedily snatched up. ‘Now I can have a proper meal,’ he thought, and after drinking some water at a well he lay down and slept so long that it was sunrise before he woke again. Then he jumped up and returned to the dust-heap. ‘For who knows,’ he said to himself, ‘whether I may not have some good luck again.’

As he was walking down the road, he saw a man coming towards him, carrying a cage made of twigs. ‘Hi! you fellow!’ called he, ‘what have you got inside there?’

‘Gazelles,’ replied the man.

‘Bring them here, for I should like to see them.’

As he spoke, some men who were standing by began to laugh, saying to the man with the cage: ‘You had better take care how you bargain with him, for he has nothing at all except what he picks up from a dust-heap, and if he can’t feed himself, will he be able to feed a gazelle?’

But the man with the cage made answer: ‘Since I started from my home in the country, fifty people at the least have called me to show them my gazelles, and was there one among them who cared to buy? It is the custom for a trader in merchandise to be summoned hither and thither, and who knows where one may find a buyer?’ And he took up his cage and went towards the scratcher of dust-heaps, and the men went with him.

‘What do you ask for your gazelles?’ said the beggar. ‘Will you let me have one for an eighth?’

And the man with the cage took out a gazelle, and held it out, saying, ‘Take this one, master!’

And the beggar took it and carried it to the dust-heap, where he scratched carefully till he found a few grains of corn, which he divided with his gazelle. This he did night and morning, till five days went by.

Then, as he slept, the gazelle woke him, saying, ‘Master.’

And the man answered, ‘How is it that I see a wonder?’

‘What wonder?’ asked the gazelle.

‘Why, that you, a gazelle, should be able to speak, for, from the beginning, my father and mother and all the people that are in the world have never told me of a talking gazelle.’

‘Never mind that,’ said the gazelle, ‘but listen to what I say! First, I took you for my master. Second, you gave for me all you had in the world. I cannot run away from you, but give me, I pray you, leave to go every morning and seek food for myself, and every evening I will come back to you. What you find in the dust-heaps is not enough for both of us.’

‘Go, then,’ answered the master; and the gazelle went.

When the sun had set, the gazelle came back, and the poor man was very glad, and they lay down and slept side by side.

In the morning it said to him, ‘I am going away to feed.’

And the man replied, ‘Go, my son,’ but he felt very lonely without his gazelle, and set out sooner than usual for the dust-heap where he generally found most corn. And glad he was when the evening came, and he could return home. He lay on the grass chewing tobacco, when the gazelle trotted up.

‘Good evening, my master; how have you fared all day? I have been resting in the shade in a place where there is sweet grass when I am hungry, and fresh water when I am thirsty, and a soft breeze to fan me in the heat. It is far away in the forest, and no one knows of it but me, and to-morrow I shall go again.’

So for five days the gazelle set off at daybreak for this cool spot, but on the fifth day it came to a place where the grass was bitter, and it did not like it, and scratched, hoping to tear away the bad blades. But, instead, it saw something lying in the earth, which turned out to be a diamond, very large and bright. ‘Oh, ho!’ said the gazelle to itself, ‘perhaps now I can do something for my master who bought me with all the money he had; but I must be careful or they will say he has stolen it. I had better take it myself to some great rich man, and see what it will do for me.’

Directly the gazelle had come to this conclusion, it picked up the diamond in its mouth, and went on and on and on through the forest, but found no place where a rich man was likely to dwell. For two more days it ran, from dawn to dark, till at last early one morning it caught sight of a large town, which gave it fresh courage.

The people were standing about the streets doing their marketing, when the gazelle bounded past, the diamond flashing as it ran. They called after it, but it took no notice till it reached the palace, where the sultan was sitting, enjoying the cool air. And the gazelle galloped up to him, and laid the diamond at his feet.

The sultan looked first at the diamond and next at the gazelle; then he ordered his attendants to bring cushions and a carpet, that the gazelle might rest itself after its long journey. And he likewise ordered milk to be brought, and rice, that it might eat and drink and be refreshed.

And when the gazelle was rested, the sultan said to it: ‘Give me the news you have come with.’

And the gazelle answered: ‘I am come with this diamond, which is a pledge from my master the Sultan Darai. He has heard you have a daughter, and sends you this small token, and begs you will give her to him to wife.’

And the sultan said: ‘I am content. The wife is his wife, the family is his family, the slave is his slave. Let him come to me empty-handed, I am content.’

When the sultan had ended, the gazelle rose, and said: ‘Master, farewell; I go back to our town, and in eight days, or it may be in eleven days, we shall arrive as your guests.’

And the sultan answered: ‘So let it be.’

All this time the poor man far away had been mourning and weeping for his gazelle, which he thought had run away from him for ever.

And when it came in at the door he rushed to embrace it with such joy that he would not allow it a chance to speak.

‘Be still, master, and don’t cry,’ said the gazelle at last; ‘let us sleep now, and in the morning, when I go, follow me.’

With the first ray of dawn they got up and went into the forest, and on the fifth day, as they were resting near a stream, the gazelle gave its master a sound beating, and then bade him stay where he was till it returned. And the gazelle ran off, and about ten o’clock it came near the sultan’s palace, where the road was all lined with soldiers who were there to do honour to Sultan Darai. And directly they caught sight of the gazelle in the distance one of the soldiers ran on and said, ‘Sultan Darai is coming: I have seen the gazelle.’

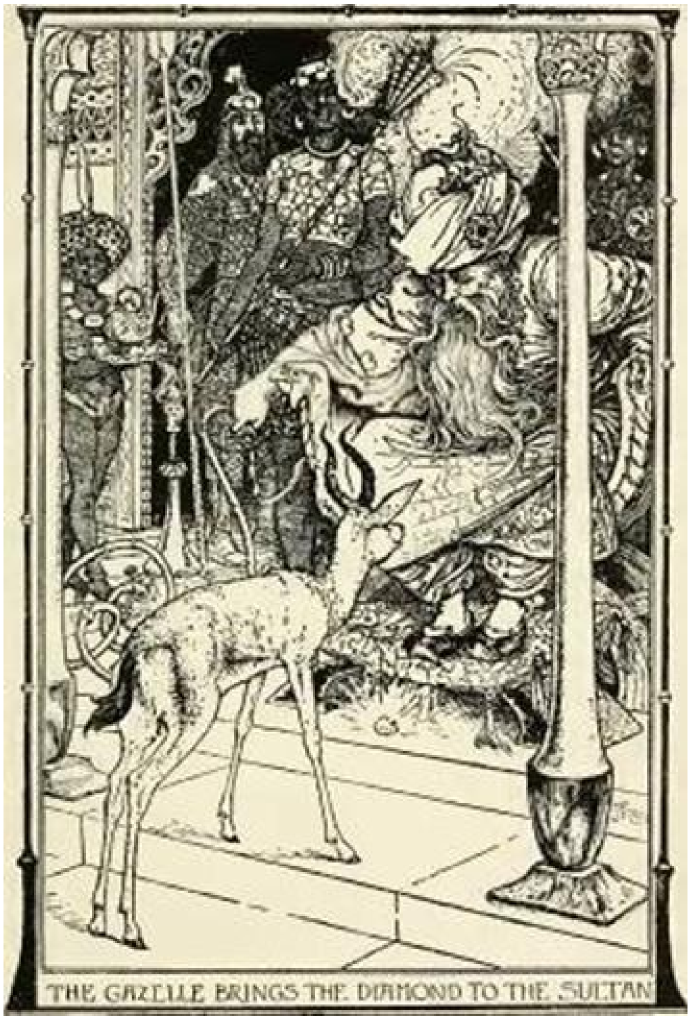

THE GAZELLE BRINGS THE DIAMOND TO THE SULTAN

Then the sultan rose up, and called his whole court to follow him, and went out to meet the gazelle, who, bounding up to him, gave him greeting. The sultan answered politely, and inquired where it had left its master, whom it had promised to bring back.

‘Alas!’ replied the gazelle, ‘he is lying in the forest, for on our way here we were met by robbers, who, after beating and robbing him, took away all his clothes. And he is now hiding under a bush, lest a passing stranger might see him.’

The sultan, on hearing what had happened to his future son-in-law, turned his horse and rode to the palace, and bade a groom to harness the best horse in the stable and order a woman slave to bring a bag of clothes, such as a man might want, out of the chest; and he chose out a tunic and a turban and a sash for the waist, and fetched himself a gold-hilted sword, and a dagger and a pair of sandals, and a stick of sweet-smelling wood.

‘Now,’ said he to the gazelle, ‘take these things with the soldiers to the sultan, that he may be able to come.’

And the gazelle answered: ‘Can I take those soldiers to go and put my master to shame as he lies there naked? I am enough by myself, my lord.’

‘How will you be enough,’ asked the sultan, ‘to manage this horse and all these clothes?’

‘Oh, that is easily done,’ replied the gazelle. ‘Fasten the horse to my neck and tie the clothes to the back of the horse, and be sure they are fixed firmly, as I shall go faster than he does.’

Everything was carried out as the gazelle had ordered, and when all was ready it said to the sultan: ‘Farewell, my lord, I am going.’

‘Farewell, gazelle,’ answered the sultan; ‘when shall we see you again?’

‘To-morrow about five,’ replied the gazelle, and, giving a tug to the horse’s rein, they set off at a gallop.

The sultan watched them till they were out of sight: then he said to his attendants, ‘That gazelle comes from gentle hands, from the house of a sultan, and that is what makes it so different from other gazelles.’ And in the eyes of the sultan the gazelle became a person of consequence.

Meanwhile the gazelle ran on till it came to the place where its master was seated, and his heart laughed when he saw the gazelle.

And the gazelle said to him, ‘Get up, my master, and bathe in the stream!’ and when the man had bathed it said again, ‘Now rub yourself well with earth, and rub your teeth well with sand to make them bright and shining.’ And when this was done it said, ‘The sun has gone down behind the hills; it is time for us to go’: so it went and brought the clothes from the back of the horse, and the man put them on and was well pleased.

‘Master!’ said the gazelle when the man was ready, ‘be sure that where we are going you keep silence, except for giving greetings and asking for news. Leave all the talking to me. I have provided you with a wife, and have made her presents of clothes and turbans and rare and precious things, so it is needless for you to speak.’

‘Very good, I will be silent,’ replied the man as he mounted the horse. ‘You have given all this; it is you who are the master, and I who am the slave, and I will obey you in all things.’

‘So they went their way, and they went and went till the gazelle saw in the distance the palace of the sultan. Then it said, ‘Master, that is the house we are going to, and you are not a poor man any longer: even your name is new.’

‘What IS my name, eh, my father?’ asked the man.

‘Sultan Darai,’ said the gazelle.

Very soon some soldiers came to meet them, while others ran off to tell the sultan of their approach. And the sultan set off at once, and the viziers and the emirs, and the judges, and the rich men of the city, all followed him.

Directly the gazelle saw them coming, it said to its master: ‘Your father-in-law is coming to meet you; that is he in the middle, wearing a mantle of sky-blue. Get off your horse and go to greet him.’

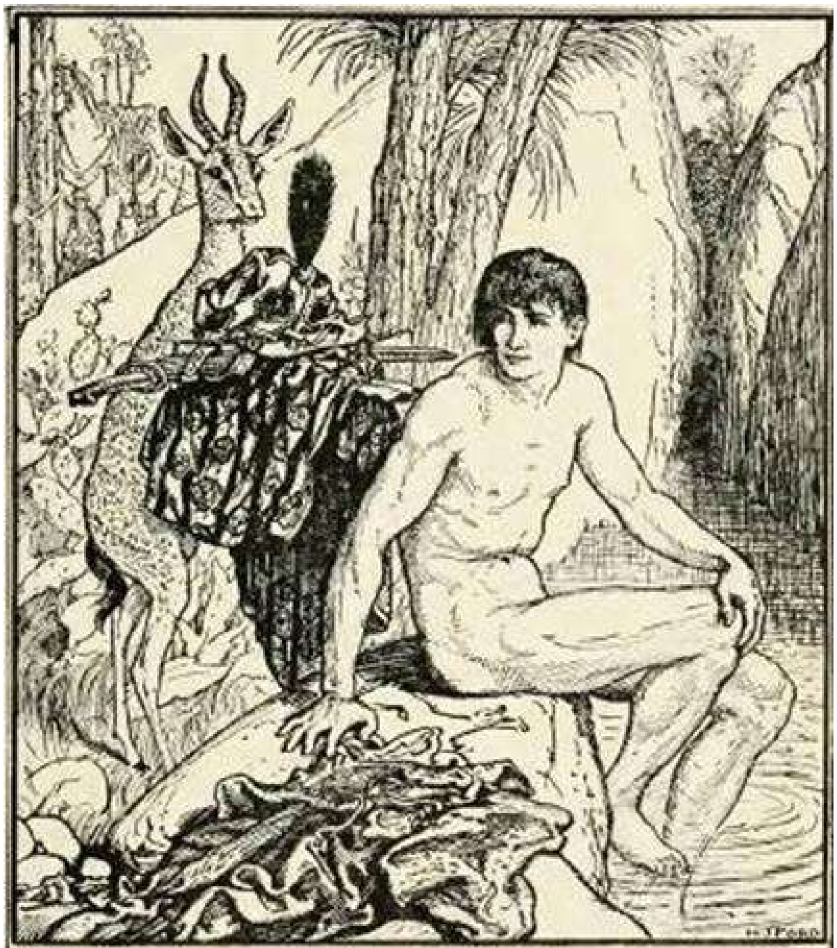

THE·GAZELLE·BRINGS·CLOTHES·TO·HIS·MASTER

And Sultan Darai leapt from his horse, and so did the other sultan, and they gave their hands to one another and kissed each other, and went together into the palace.

The next morning the gazelle went to the rooms of the sultan, and said to him: ‘My lord, we want you to marry us our wife, for the soul of Sultan Darai is eager.’

‘The wife is ready, so call the priest,’ answered he, and when the ceremony was over a cannon was fired and music was played, and within the palace there was feasting.

‘Master,’ said the gazelle the following morning, ‘I am setting out on a journey, and I shall not be back for seven days, and perhaps not then. But be careful not to leave the house till I come.’

And the master answered, ‘I will not leave the house.’

And it went to the sultan of the country and said to him: ‘My lord, Sultan Darai has sent me to his town to get the house in order. It will take me seven days, and if I am not back in seven days he will not leave the palace till I return.’

‘Very good,’ said the sultan.

And it went and it went through the forest and wilderness, till it arrived at a town full of fine houses. At the end of the chief road was a great house, beautiful exceedingly, built of sapphire and turquoise and marbles. ‘That,’ thought the gazelle, ‘is the house for my master, and I will call up my courage and go and look at the people who are in it, if any people there are. For in this town have I as yet seen no people. If I die, I die, and if I live, I live. Here can I think of no plan, so if anything is to kill me, it will kill me.’

Then it knocked twice at the door, and cried ‘Open,’ but no one answered. And it cried again, and a voice replied:

‘Who are you that are crying “Open”?’

And the gazelle said, ‘It is I, great mistress, your grandchild.’

‘If you are my grandchild,’ returned the voice, ‘go back whence you came. Don’t come and die here, and bring me to my death as well.’

‘Open, mistress, I entreat, I have something to say to you.’

‘Grandchild,’ replied she, ‘I fear to put your life in danger, and my own too.’

‘Oh, mistress, my life will not be lost, nor yours either; open, I pray you.’ So she opened the door.

‘What is the news where you come from, my grandson,’ asked she.

‘Great lady, where I come from it is well, and with you it is well.’

‘Ah, my son, here it is not well at all. If you seek a way to die, or if you have not yet seen death, then is to-day the day for you to know what dying is.’

‘If I am to know it, I shall know it,’ replied the gazelle; ‘but tell me, who is the lord of this house?’

And she said: ‘Ah, father! in this house is much wealth, and much people, and much food, and many horses. And the lord of it all is an exceeding great and wonderful snake.’

‘Oh!’ cried the gazelle when he heard this; ‘tell me how I can get at the snake to kill him?’

‘My son,’ returned the old woman, ‘do not say words like these; you risk both our lives. He has put me here all by myself, and I have to cook his food. When the great snake is coming there springs up a wind, and blows the dust about, and this goes on till the great snake glides into the courtyard and calls for his dinner, which must always be ready for him in those big pots. He eats till he has had enough, and then drinks a whole tankful of water. After that he goes away. Every second day he comes, when the sun is over the house. And he has seven heads. How then can you be a match for him, my son?'

'Mind your own business, mother,' answered the gazelle, 'and don't mind other people's! Has this snake a sword?'

'He has a sword, and a sharp one too. It cuts like a dash of lightning.'

'Give it to me, mother!' said the gazelle, and she unhooked the sword from the wall, as she was bidden. 'You must be quick,' she said, 'for he may be here at any moment. Hark! is not that the wind rising? He has come!'

They were silent, but the old woman peeped from behind a curtain, and saw the snake busy at the pots which she had placed ready for him in the courtyard. And after he had done eating and drinking he came to the door:

'You old body!' he cried; 'what smell is that I smell inside that is not the smell of every day?'

'Oh, master!' answered she, 'I am alone, as I always am! But to-day, after many days, I have sprinkled fresh scent all over me, and it is that which you smell. What else could it be, master?'

All this time the gazelle had been standing close to the door, holding the sword in one of its front paws. And as the snake put one of his heads through the hole that he had made so as to get in and out comfortably, it cut it of so clean that the snake really did not feel it. The second blow was not quite so straight, for the snake said to himself, 'Who is that who is trying to scratch me?' and stretched out his third head to see; but no sooner was the neck through the hole than the head went rolling to join the rest.

When six of his heads were gone the snake lashed his tail with such fury that the gazelle and the old woman could not see each other for the dust he made. And the gazelle said to him, 'You have climbed all sorts of trees, but this you can't climb,' and as the seventh head came darting through it went rolling to join the rest.

Then the sword fell rattling on the ground, for the gazelle had fainted.

The old woman shrieked with delight when she saw her enemy was dead, and ran to bring water to the gazelle, and fanned it, and put it where the wind could blow on it, till it grew better and gave a sneeze. And the heart of the old woman was glad, and she gave it more water, till by-and-by the gazelle got up.

'Show me this house,' it said, 'from beginning to end, from top to bottom, from inside to out.'

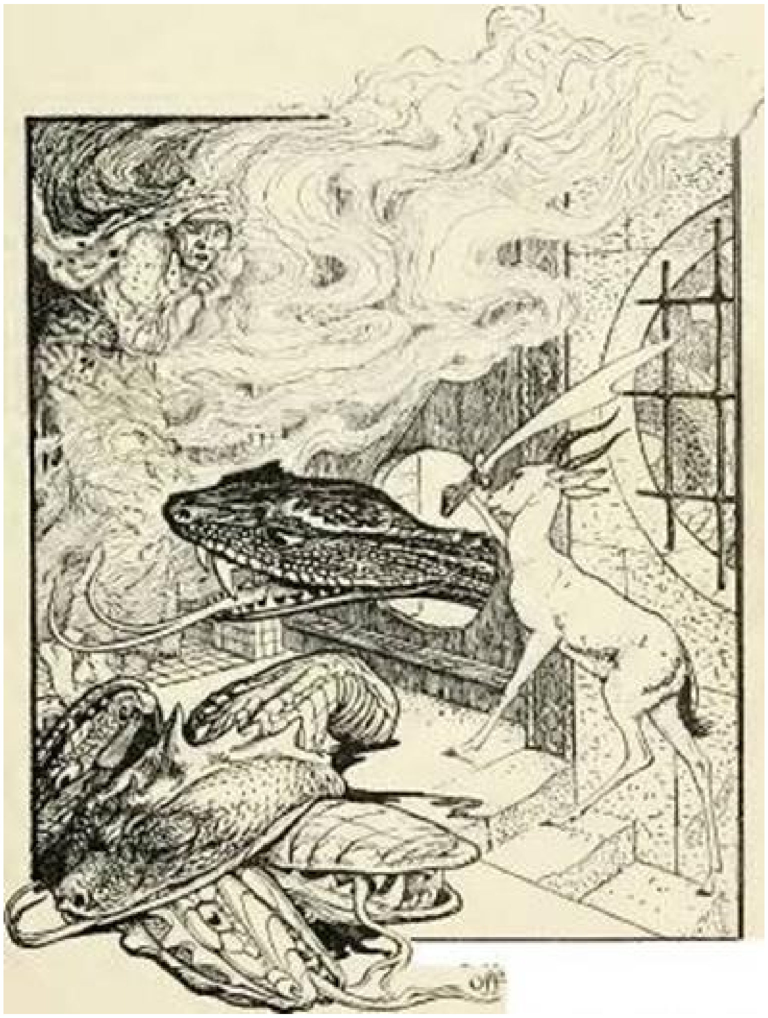

So she arose and showed the gazelle rooms full of gold and precious things, and other rooms full of slaves. ‘They are all yours, goods and slaves,’ said she.

But the gazelle answered, ‘You must keep them safe till I call my master.’

For two days it lay and rested in the house, and fed on milk and rice, and on the third day it bade the old woman farewell and started back to its master.

And when he heard that the gazelle was at the door he felt like a man who has found the time when all prayers are granted, and he rose and kissed it, saying: ‘My father, you have been a long time; you have left sorrow with me. I cannot eat, I cannot drink, I cannot laugh; my heart felt no smile at anything, because of thinking of you.’

And the gazelle answered: ‘I am well, and where I come from it is well, and I wish that after four days you would take your wife and go home.’

And he said: ‘It is for you to speak. Where you go, I will follow.’

‘Then I shall go to your father-in-law and tell him this news.’

‘Go, my son.’

So the gazelle went to the father-in-law and said: ‘I am sent by my master to come and tell you that after four days he will go away with his wife to his own home.’

‘Must he really go so quickly? We have not yet sat much together, I and Sultan Darai, nor have we yet talked much together, nor have we yet ridden out together, nor have we eaten together; yet it is fourteen days since he came.’

But the gazelle replied: ‘My lord, you cannot help it, for he wishes to go home, and nothing will stop him.’

‘Very good,’ said the sultan, and he called all the people who were in the town, and commanded that the day his daughter left the palace ladies and guards were to attend her on her way.

And at the end of four days a great company of ladies and slaves and horses went forth to escort the wife of Sultan Darai to her new home. They rode all day, and when the sun sank behind the hills they rested, and ate of the food the gazelle gave them, and lay down to sleep. And they journeyed on for many days, and they all, nobles and slaves, loved the gazelle with a great love — more than they loved the Sultan Darai.

At last one day signs of houses appeared, far, far off. And those who saw cried out, ‘Gazelle!’

And it answered, ‘Ah, my mistresses, that is the house of Sultan Darai.’

At this news the women rejoiced much, and the slaves rejoiced much, and in the space of two hours they came to the gates, and the gazelle bade them all stay behind, and it went on to the house with Sultan Darai.

When the old woman saw them coming through the courtyard she jumped and shouted for joy, and as the gazelle drew near she seized it in her arms, and kissed it. The gazelle did not like this, and said to her: ‘Old woman, leave me alone; the one to be carried is my master, and the one to be kissed is my master.’

And she answered, ‘Forgive me, my son. I did not know this was our master,’ and she threw open all the doors so that the master might see everything that the rooms and storehouses contained. Sultan Darai looked about him, and at length he said:

‘Unfasten those horses that are tied up, and let loose those people that are bound. And let some sweep, and some spread the beds, and some cook, and some draw water, and some come out and receive the mistress.’

And when the sultana and her ladies and her slaves entered the house, and saw the rich stuffs it was hung with, and the beautiful rice that was prepared for them to eat, they cried: ‘Ah, you gazelle, we have seen great houses, we have seen people, we have heard of things. But this house, and you, such as you are, we have never seen or heard of.’

After a few days, the ladies said they wished to go home again. The gazelle begged them hard to stay, but finding they would not, it brought many gifts, and gave some to the ladies and some to their slaves. And they all thought the gazelle greater a thousand times than its master, Sultan Darai.

The gazelle and its master remained in the house many weeks, and one day it said to the old woman, ‘I came with my master to this place, and I have done many things for my master, good things, and till to-day he has never asked me: “Well, my gazelle, how did you get this house? Who is the owner of it? And this town, were there no people in it?” All good things I have done for the master, and he has not one day done me any good thing. But people say, “If you want to do any one good, don’t do him good only, do him evil also, and there will be peace between you.” So, mother, I have done: I want to see the favours I have done to my master, that he may do me the like.’

‘Good,’ replied the old woman, and they went to bed.

In the morning, when light came, the gazelle was sick in its stomach and feverish, and its legs ached. And it said ‘Mother!’

And she answered, ‘Here, my son?’

And it said, ‘Go and tell my master upstairs the gazelle is very ill.’

‘Very good, my son; and if he should ask me what is the matter, what am I to say?’

‘Tell him all my body aches badly; I have no single part without pain.’

The old woman went upstairs, and she found the mistress and master sitting on a couch of marble spread with soft cushions, and they asked her, ‘Well, old woman, what do you want?’

‘To tell the master the gazelle is ill,’ said she.

‘What is the matter?’ asked the wife.

‘All its body pains; there is no part without pain.’

‘Well, what can I do? Make some gruel of red millet, and give to it.’

But his wife stared and said: ‘Oh, master, do you tell her to make the gazelle gruel out of red millet, which a horse would not eat? Eh, master, that is not well.’

But he answered, ‘Oh, you are mad! Rice is only kept for people.’

‘Eh, master, this is not like a gazelle. It is the apple of your eye. If sand got into that, it would trouble you.’

‘My wife, your tongue is long,’ and he left the room.

The old woman saw she had spoken vainly, and went back weeping to the gazelle. And when the gazelle saw her it said, ‘Mother, what is it, and why do you cry? If it be good, give me the answer; and if it be bad, give me the answer.’

But still the old woman would not speak, and the gazelle prayed her to let it know the words of the master. At last she said: ‘I went upstairs and found the mistress and the master sitting on a couch, and he asked me what I wanted, and I told him that you, his slave, were ill. And his wife asked what was the matter, and I told her that there was not a part of your body without pain. And the master told me to take some red millet and make you gruel, but the mistress said, ‘Eh, master, the gazelle is the apple of your eye; you have no child, this gazelle is like your child; so this gazelle is not one to be done evil to. This is a gazelle in form, but not a gazelle in heart; he is in all things better than a gentleman, be he who he may.’

And he answered her, ‘Silly chatterer, your words are many. I know its price; I bought it for an eighth. What loss will it be to me?’

The gazelle kept silence for a few moments. Then it said, ‘The elders said, “One that does good like a mother,” and I have done him good, and I have got this that the elders said. But go up again to the master, and tell him the gazelle is very ill, and it has not drunk the gruel of red millet.’

So the old woman returned, and found the master and the mistress drinking coffee. And when he heard what the gazelle had said, he cried: ‘Hold your peace, old woman, and stay your feet and close your eyes, and stop your ears with wax; and if the gazelle bids you come to me, say your legs are bent, and you cannot walk; and if it begs you to listen, say your ears are stopped with wax; and if it wishes to talk, reply that your tongue has got a hook in it.’

The heart of the old woman wept as she heard such words, because she saw that when the gazelle first came to that town it was ready to sell its life to buy wealth for its master. Then it happened to get both life and wealth, but now it had no honour with its master.

And tears sprung likewise to the eyes of the sultan’s wife, and she said, ‘I am sorry for you, my husband, that you should deal so wickedly with that gazelle’; but he only answered, ‘Old woman, pay no heed to the talk of the mistress: tell it to perish out of the way. I cannot sleep, I cannot eat, I cannot drink, for the worry of that gazelle. Shall a creature that I bought for an eighth trouble me from morning till night? Not so, old woman!’

The old woman went downstairs, and there lay the gazelle, blood flowing from its nostrils. And she took it in her arms and said, ‘My son, the good you did is lost; there remains only patience.’

And it said, ‘Mother, I shall die, for my soul is full of anger and bitterness. My face is ashamed, that I should have done good to my master, and that he should repay me with evil.’ It paused for a moment, and then went on, ‘Mother, of the goods that are in this house, what do I eat? I might have every day half a basinful, and would my master be any the poorer? But did not the elders say, “He that does good like a mother!”’

And it said, ‘Go and tell my master that the gazelle is nearer death than life.’

So she went, and spoke as the gazelle had bidden her; but he answered, ‘I have told you to trouble me no more.’

But his wife’s heart was sore, and she said to him: ‘Ah, master, what has the gazelle done to you? How has he failed you? The things you do to him are not good, and you will draw on yourself the hatred of the people. For this gazelle is loved by all, by small and great, by women and men. Ah, my husband! I thought you had great wisdom, and you have not even a little!’

But he answered, ‘You are mad, my wife.’

The old woman stayed no longer, and went back to the gazelle, followed secretly by the mistress, who called a maidservant and bade her take some milk and rice and cook it for the gazelle.

‘Take also this cloth,’ she said, ‘to cover it with, and this pillow for its head. And if the gazelle wants more, let it ask me, and not its master. And if it will, I will send it in a litter to my father, and he will nurse it till it is well.’

And the maidservant did as her mistress bade her, and said what her mistress had told her to say, but the gazelle made no answer, but turned over on its side and died quietly.

When the news spread abroad, there was much weeping among the people, and Sultan Darai arose in wrath, and cried, ‘You weep for that gazelle as if you wept for me! And, after all, what is it but a gazelle, that I bought for an eighth?’

But his wife answered, ‘Master, we looked upon that gazelle as we looked upon you. It was the gazelle who came to ask me of my father, it was the gazelle who brought me from my father, and I was given in charge to the gazelle by my father.’

And when the people heard her they lifted up their voices and spoke:

‘We never saw you, we saw the gazelle. It was the gazelle who met with trouble here, it was the gazelle who met with rest here.

So, then, when such an one departs from this world we weep for ourselves, we do not weep for the gazelle.’

And they said furthermore:

‘The gazelle did you much good, and if anyone says he could have done more for you he is a liar! Therefore, to us who have done you no good, what treatment will you give? The gazelle has died from bitterness of soul, and you ordered your slaves to throw it into the well. Ah! leave us alone that we may weep.’

But Sultan Darai would not heed their words, and the dead gazelle was thrown into the well.

When the mistress heard of it, she sent three slaves, mounted on donkeys, with a letter to her father the sultan, and when the sultan had read the letter he bowed his head and wept, like a man who had lost his mother. And he commanded horses to be saddled, and called the governor and the judges and all the rich men, and said:

‘Come now with me; let us go and bury it.’

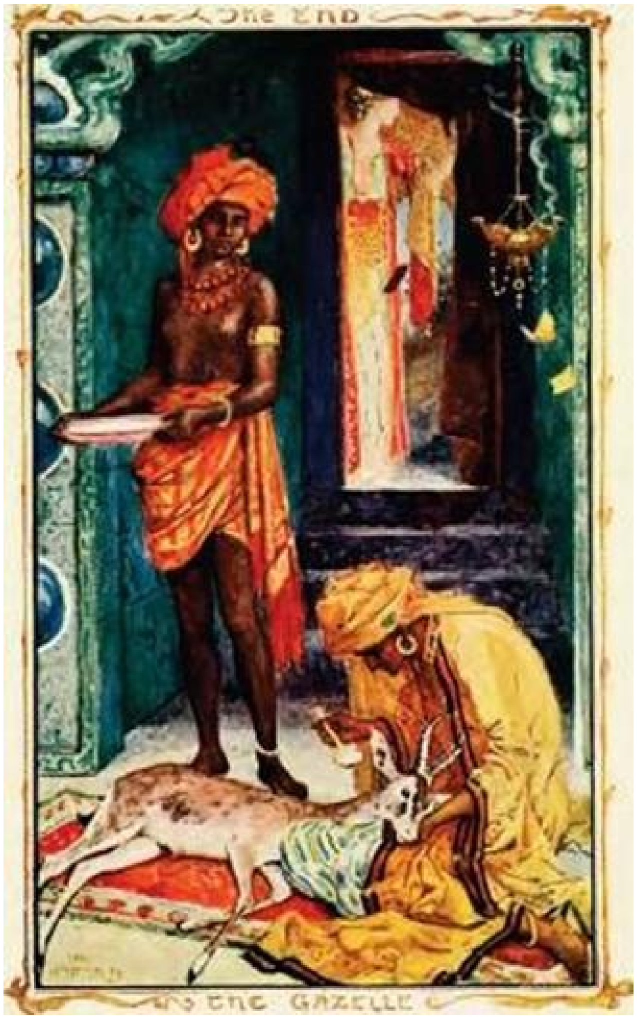

Night and day they travelled, till the sultan came to the well where the gazelle had been thrown. And it was a large well, built round a rock, with room for many people; and the sultan entered, and the judges and the rich men followed him. And when he saw the gazelle lying there he wept afresh, and took it in his arms and carried it away.

When the three slaves went and told their mistress what the sultan had done, and how all the people were weeping, she answered:

‘I too have eaten no food, neither have I drunk water, since the day the gazelle died. I have not spoken, and I have not laughed.’

The sultan took the gazelle and buried it, and ordered the people to wear mourning for it, so there was great mourning throughout the city.

Now after the days of mourning were at an end, the wife was sleeping at her husband’s side, and in her sleep she dreamed that she was once more in her father’s house, and when she woke up it was no dream.

And the man dreamed that he was on the dust-heap, scratching. And when he woke, behold! that also was no dream, but the truth.

(Swahili Tales.)

HOW A FISH SWAM IN THE AIR AND A HARE IN THE WATER.

Once upon a time an old man and his wife lived together in a little village. They might have been happy if only the old woman had had the sense to hold her tongue at proper times. But anything which might happen indoors, or any bit of news which her husband might bring in when he had been anywhere, had to be told at once to the whole village, and these tales were repeated and altered till it often happened that much mischief was made, and the old man's back paid for it.

One day, he drove to the forest. When he reached the edge of it he got out of his cart and walked beside it. Suddenly he stepped on such a soft spot that his foot sank in the earth.

'What can this be?' thought he. 'I'll dig a bit and see.'

So he dug and dug, and at last he came on a little pot full of gold and silver.

'Oh, what luck! Now, if only I knew how I could take this treasure home with me —— but I can never hope to hide it from my wife, and once she knows of it she'll tell all the world, and then I shall get into trouble.'

He sat down and thought over the matter a long time, and at last he made a plan. He covered up the pot again with earth and twigs, and drove on into the town, where he bought a live pike and a live hare in the market.

Then he drove back to the forest and hung the pike up at the very top of a tree, and tied up the hare in a fishing net and fastened it on the edge of a little stream, not troubling himself to think how unpleasant such a wet spot was likely to be to the hare.

Then he got into his cart and trotted merrily home.

'Wife!' cried he, the moment he got indoors. 'You can't think what a piece of good luck has come our way.'

'What, what, dear husband? Do tell me all about it at once.'

'No, no, you'll just go off and tell everyone.'

'No, indeed! How can you think such things! For shame! If you like I will swear never to — —'

'Oh, well! if you are really in earnest then, listen.'

And he whispered in her ear: 'I've found a pot full of gold and silver in the forest! Hush! — —'

'And why didn't you bring it back?'

'Because we'll drive there together and bring it carefully back between us.'

So the man and his wife drove to the forest.

As they were driving along the man said:

‘What strange things one hears, wife! I was told only the other day that fish will now live and thrive in the tree tops and that some wild animals spend their time in the water. Well! well! times are certainly changed.’

‘Why, you must be crazy, husband! Dear, dear, what nonsense people do talk sometimes.’

‘Nonsense, indeed! Why, just look. Bless my soul, if there isn’t a fish, a real pike I do believe, up in that tree.’

‘Gracious!’ cried his wife. ‘How did a pike get there? It IS a pike — you needn’t attempt to say it’s not. Can people have said true — —’

But the man only shook his head and shrugged his shoulders and opened his mouth and gaped as if he really could not believe his own eyes.

‘What are you standing staring at there, stupid?’ said his wife. ‘Climb up the tree quick and catch the pike, and we’ll cook it for dinner.’

The man climbed up the tree and brought down the pike, and they drove on.

When they got near the stream he drew up.

‘What are you staring at again?’ asked his wife impatiently. ‘Drive on, can’t you?’

‘Why, I seem to see something moving in that net I set. I must just go and see what it is.’

He ran to it, and when he had looked in it he called to his wife:

‘Just look! Here is actually a four-footed creature caught in the net. I do believe it’s a hare.’

‘Good heavens!’ cried his wife. ‘How did the hare get into your net? It IS a hare, so you needn’t say it isn’t. After all, people must have said the truth — —’

But her husband only shook his head and shrugged his shoulders as if he could not believe his own eyes.

‘Now what are you standing there for, stupid?’ cried his wife. ‘Take up the hare. A nice fat hare is a dinner for a feast day.’

The old man caught up the hare, and they drove on to the place where the treasure was buried. They swept the twigs away, dug up the earth, took out the pot, and drove home again with it.

And now the old couple had plenty of money and were cheery and comfortable. But the wife was very foolish. Every day she asked a lot of people to dinner and feasted them, till her husband grew quite impatient. He tried to reason with her, but she would not listen.

‘You’ve got no right to lecture me!’ said she. ‘We found the treasure together, and together we will spend it.’

Her husband took patience, but at length he said to her: ‘You may do as you please, but I sha’n’t give you another penny.’

The old woman was very angry. ‘Oh, what a good-for-nothing fellow to want to spend all the money himself! But just wait a bit and see what I shall do.’

Off she went to the governor to complain of her husband.

‘Oh, my lord, protect me from my husband! Ever since he found the treasure there is no bearing him. He only eats and drinks, and won’t work, and he keeps all the money to himself.’

The governor took pity on the woman, and ordered his chief secretary to look into the matter.

The secretary called the elders of the village together, and went with them to the man’s house.

‘The governor,’ said he, ‘desires you to give all that treasure you found into my care.’

The man shrugged his shoulders and said: ‘What treasure? I know nothing about a treasure.’

‘How? You know nothing? Why your wife has complained of you. Don’t attempt to tell lies. If you don’t hand over all the money at once you will be tried for daring to raise treasure without giving due notice to the governor about it.’

‘Pardon me, your excellency, but what sort of treasure was it supposed to have been? My wife must have dreamt of it, and you gentlemen have listened to her nonsense.’

‘Nonsense, indeed,’ broke in his wife. ‘A kettle full of gold and silver, do you call that nonsense?’

‘You are not in your right mind, dear wife. Sir, I beg your pardon. Ask her how it all happened, and if she convinces you I’ll pay for it with my life.’

‘This is how it all happened, Mr. Secretary,’ cried the wife. ‘We were driving through the forest, and we saw a pike up in the top of a tree — —’

‘What, a PIKE?’ shouted the secretary. ‘Do you think you may joke with me, pray?’

‘Indeed, I’m not joking, Mr. Secretary! I’m speaking the bare truth.’

‘Now you see, gentlemen,’ said her husband, ‘how far you can trust her, when she chatters like this.’

‘Chatter, indeed? I!! Perhaps you have forgotten, too, how we found a live hare in the river?’

Everyone roared with laughter; even the secretary smiled and stroked his beard, and the man said: ‘Come, come, wife, everyone is laughing at you. You see for yourself, gentlemen, how far you can believe her.’

‘Yes, indeed,’ said the village elders, ‘it is certainly the first time we have heard that hares thrive in the water or fish among the tree tops.’

The secretary could make nothing of it all, and drove back to the town. The old woman was so laughed at that she had to hold her tongue and obey her husband ever after, and the man bought wares with part of the treasure and moved into the town, where he opened a shop, and prospered, and spent the rest of his days in peace.

TWO IN A SACK

What a life that poor man led with his wife, to be sure! Not a day passed without her scolding him and calling him names, and indeed sometimes she would take the broom from behind the stove and beat him with it. He had no peace or comfort at all, and really hardly knew how to bear it.

One day, when his wife had been particularly unkind and had beaten him black and blue, he strolled slowly into the fields, and as he could not endure to be idle he spread out his nets.

What kind of bird do you think he caught in his net? He caught a crane, and the crane said, ‘Let me go free, and I’ll show myself grateful.’

The man answered, ‘No, my dear fellow. I shall take you home, and then perhaps my wife won’t scold me so much.’

Said the crane: ‘You had better come with me to my house,’ and so they went to the crane’s house.

When they got there, what do you think the crane took from the wall? He took down a sack, and he said: ‘Two out of a sack!’

Instantly two pretty lads sprang out of the sack. They brought in oak tables, which they spread with silken covers, and placed all sorts of delicious dishes and refreshing drinks on them. The man had never seen anything so beautiful in his life, and he was delighted.

Then the crane said to him, ‘Now take this sack to your wife.’

The man thanked him warmly, took the sack, and set out.

His home was a good long way off, and as it was growing dark, and he was feeling tired, he stopped to rest at his cousin’s house by the way.

The cousin had three daughters, who laid out a tempting supper, but the man would eat nothing, and said to his cousin, ‘Your supper is bad.’

‘Oh, make the best of it,’ said she, but the man only said: ‘Clear away!’ and taking out his sack he cried, as the crane had taught him: ‘Two out of the sack!’

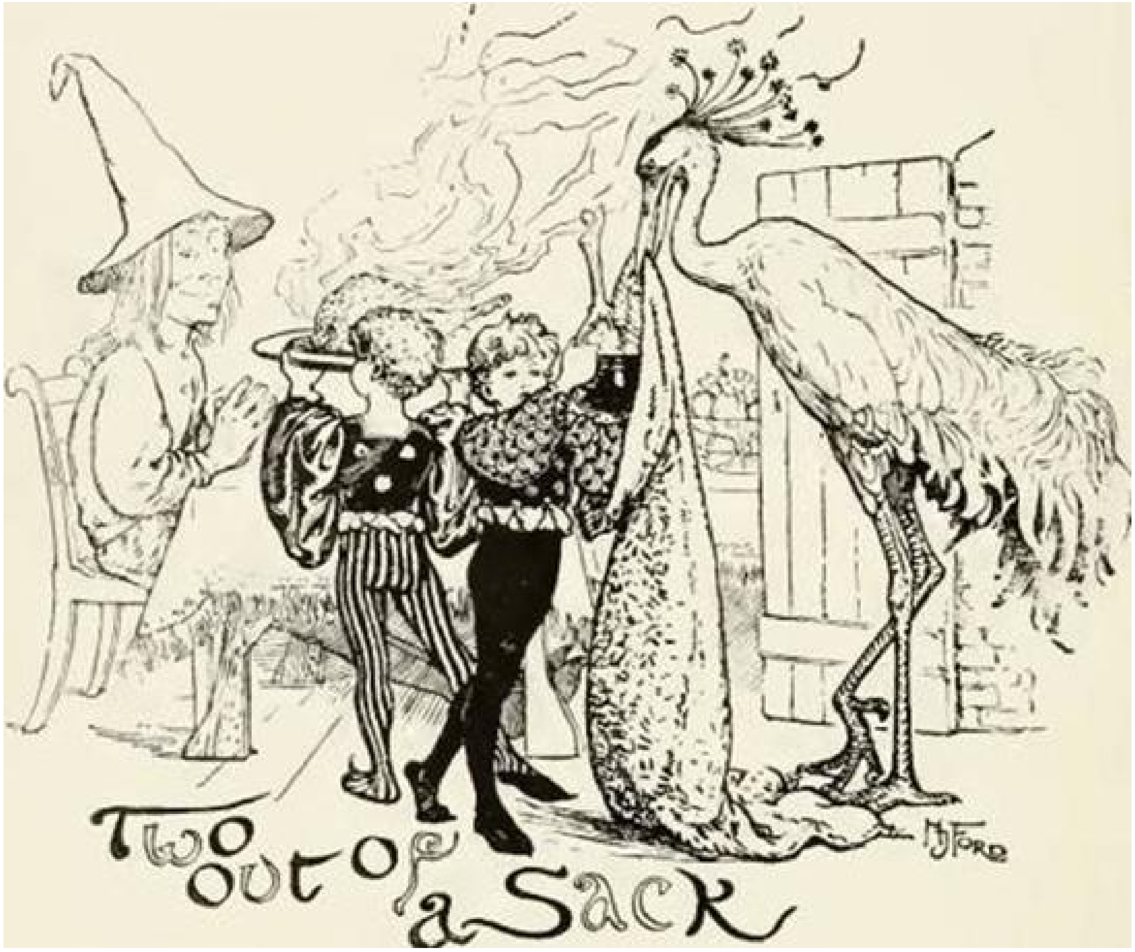
Two out of a Sack
HJFord

And out came the two pretty boys, who quickly brought in the oak tables, spread the silken covers, and laid out all sorts of delicious dishes and refreshing drinks.

Never in their lives had the cousin and her daughters seen such a supper, and they were delighted and astonished at it. But the cousin quietly made up her mind to steal the sack, so she called to her daughters: ‘Go quickly and heat the bathroom: I am sure our dear guest would like to have a bath before he goes to bed.’

When the man was safe in the bathroom she told her daughters to make a sack exactly like his, as quickly as possible. Then she changed the two sacks, and hid the man’s sack away.

The man enjoyed his bath, slept soundly, and set off early next morning, taking what he believed to be the sack the crane had given him.

All the way home he felt in such good spirits that he sang and whistled as he walked through the wood, and never noticed how the birds were twittering and laughing at him.

As soon as he saw his house he began to shout from a distance, ‘Hallo! old woman! Come out and meet me!’

His wife screamed back: ‘You come here, and I’ll give you a good thrashing with the poker!’

The man walked into the house, hung his sack on a nail, and said, as the crane had taught him: ‘Two out of the sack!’

But not a soul came out of the sack.

Then he said again, exactly as the crane had taught him: ‘Two out of the sack!’

His wife, hearing him chattering goodness knows what, took up her wet broom and swept the ground all about him.

The man took flight and rushed oft into the field, and there he found the crane marching proudly about, and to him he told his tale.

‘Come back to my house,’ said the crane, and so they went to the crane’s house, and as soon as they got there, what did the crane take down from the wall? Why, he took down a sack, and he said: ‘Two out of the sack!’

And instantly two pretty lads sprang out of the sack, brought in oak tables, on which they laid silken covers, and spread all sorts of delicious dishes and refreshing drinks on them.

‘Take this sack,’ said the crane.

The man thanked him heartily, took the sack, and went. He had a long way to walk, and as he presently got hungry, he said to the sack, as the crane had taught him: ‘Two out of the sack!’

And instantly two rough men with thick sticks crept out of the bag and began to beat him well, crying as they did so: *‘Don’t boast to your cousins of what you have got,*
One — two —
Or you’ll find you will catch it uncommonly hot,
One — two—’

And they beat on till the man panted out: ‘Two into the sack.’

The words were hardly out of his mouth, when the two crept back into the sack.

Then the man shouldered the sack, and went off straight to his cousin’s house. He hung the sack up on a nail, and said: ‘Please have the bathroom heated, cousin.’

The cousin heated the bathroom, and the man went into it, but he neither washed nor rubbed himself, he just sat there and waited.

Meantime his cousin felt hungry, so she called her daughters, and all four sat down to table. Then the mother said: ‘Two out of the sack.’

Instantly two rough men crept out of the sack, and began to beat the cousin as they cried: *‘Greedy pack! Thievish pack!*

One — two —
Give the peasant back his sack!
One — two—'

And they went on beating till the woman called to her eldest daughter: 'Go and fetch your cousin from the bathroom. Tell him these two ruffians are beating me black and blue.'

'I've not finished rubbing myself yet,' said the peasant.

And the two ruffians kept on beating as they sang: *'Greedy pack! Thievish pack!*
One — two — *Give the peasant back his sack!*

One — two—'

Then the woman sent her second daughter and said: 'Quick, quick, get him to come to me.'

'I'm just washing my head,' said the man.

Then she sent the youngest girl, and he said: 'I've not done drying myself.'

At last the woman could hold out no longer, and sent him the sack she had stolen.

NOW he had quite finished his bath, and as he left the bathroom he cried: 'Two into the sack.'

And the two crept back at once into the sack.

Then the man took both sacks, the good and the bad one, and went away home.

When he was near the house he shouted: 'Hallo, old woman, come and meet me!'

His wife only screamed out:

'You broomstick, come here! Your back shall pay for this.'

The man went into the cottage, hung his sack on a nail, and said, as the crane had taught him: 'Two out of the sack.'

Instantly two pretty lads sprang out of the sack, brought in oak tables, laid silken covers on them, and spread them with all sorts of delicious dishes and refreshing drinks.

The woman ate and drank, and praised her husband.

'Well, now, old man, I won't beat you any more,' said she.

When they had done eating, the man carried off the good sack, and put it away in his store-room, but hung the bad sack up on the nail. Then he lounged up and down in the yard.

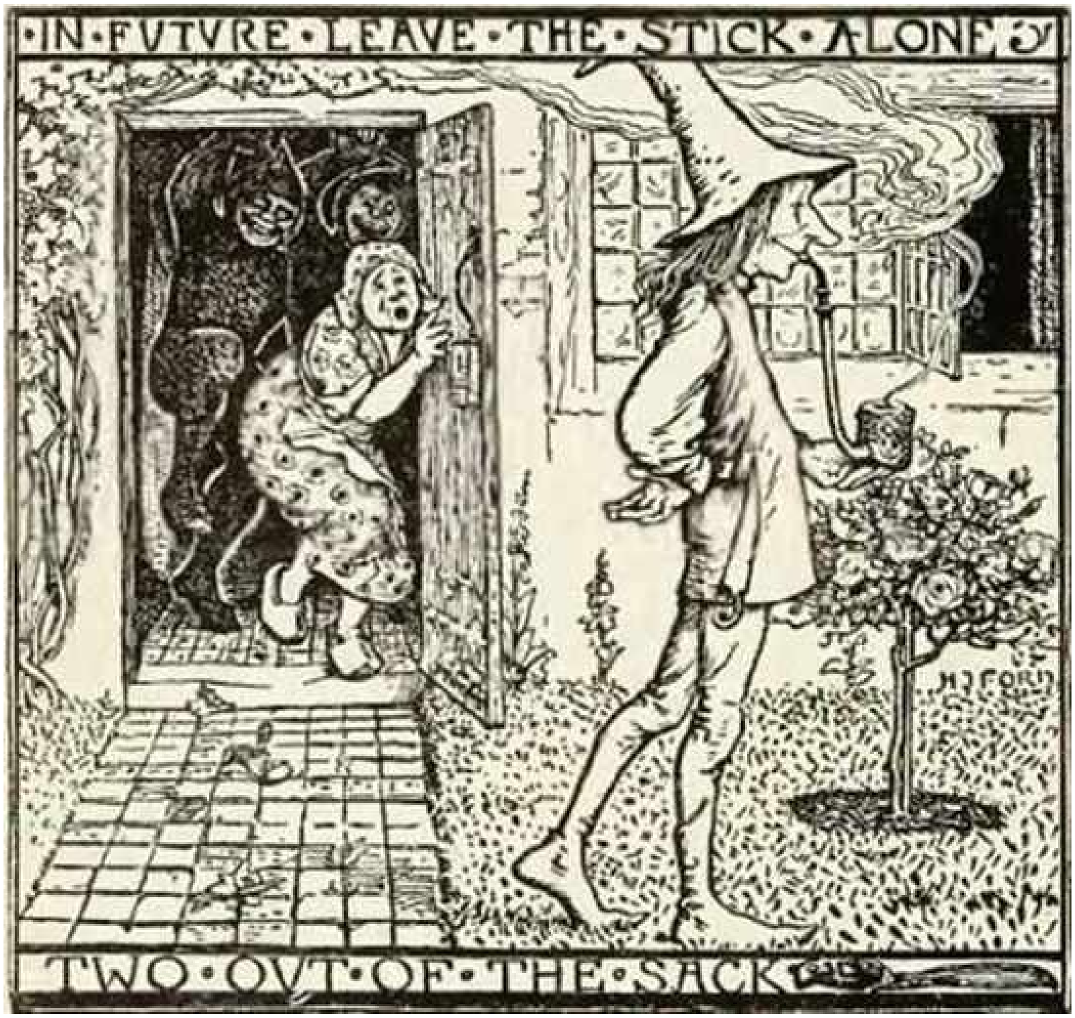

Meantime his wife became thirsty. She looked with longing eyes at the sack, and at last she said, as her husband had done: ‘Two out of the sack.’

And at once the two rogues with their big sticks crept out of the sack, and began to belabour her as they sang: *‘Would you beat your husband true?*

Don’t cry so!
  Now we’ll beat you black and blue!
    Oh! Oh!’

The woman screamed out: ‘Old man, old man! Come here, quick! Here are two ruffians pommelling me fit to break my bones.’

Her husband only strolled up and down and laughed, as he said: ‘Yes, they’ll beat you well, old lady.’

And the two thumped away and sang again: *‘Blows will hurt, remember, crone,*

We mean you well, we mean you well;
  In future leave the stick alone,

For how it hurts, you now can tell,
One — two—’

At last her husband took pity on her, and cried: ‘Two into the sack.’

He had hardly said the words before they were back in the sack again.

From this time the man and his wife lived so happily together that it was a pleasure to see them, and so the story has an end.

(From Russiche Marchen.)

THE ENVIOUS NEIGHBOUR

Long, long ago an old couple lived in a village, and, as they had no children to love and care for, they gave all their affection to a little dog. He was a pretty little creature, and instead of growing spoilt and disagreeable at not getting everything he wanted, as even children will do sometimes, the dog was grateful to them for their kindness, and never left their side, whether they were in the house or out of it.

One day the old man was working in his garden, with his dog, as usual, close by. The morning was hot, and at last he put down his spade and wiped his wet forehead, noticing, as he did so, that the animal was snuffling and scratching at a spot a little way off. There was nothing very strange in this, as all dogs are fond of scratching, and he went on quietly with his digging, when the dog ran up to his master, barking loudly, and back again to the place where he had been scratching. This he did several times, till the old man wondered what could be the matter, and, picking up the spade, followed where the dog led him. The dog was so delighted at his success that he jumped round, barking loudly, till the noise brought the old woman out of the house.

Curious to know if the dog had really found anything, the husband began to dig, and very soon the spade struck against something. He stooped down and pulled out a large box, filled quite full with shining gold pieces. The box was so heavy that the old woman had to help to carry it home, and you may guess what a supper the dog had that night! Now that he had made them rich, they gave him every day all that a dog likes best to eat, and the cushions on which he lay were fit for a prince.

The story of the dog and his treasure soon became known, and a neighbour whose garden was next the old people’s grew so envious of their good luck that he could neither eat nor sleep. As the dog had discovered a treasure once, this foolish man thought he must be able to discover one always, and begged the old couple to lend him their pet for a little while, so that he might be made rich also.

‘How can you ask such a thing?’ answered the old man indignantly.

‘You know how much we love him, and that he is never out of our sight for five minutes.’

But the envious neighbour would not heed his words, and came daily with the same request, till at last the old people, who could not bear to say no to anyone, promised to lend the dog, just for a night or two. No sooner did the man get hold of the dog than he turned him into the garden, but the dog did nothing but race about, and the man was forced to wait with what patience he could.

The next morning the man opened the house door, and the dog bounded joyfully into the garden, and, running up to the foot of a tree, began to scratch wildly. The man called loudly to his wife to bring a spade, and followed the dog, as he longed to catch the first glimpse of the expected treasure. But when he had dug up the ground, what did he find? Why, nothing but a parcel of old bones, which smelt so badly that he could not stay there a moment longer. And his heart was filled with rage against the dog who had played him this trick, and he seized a pickaxe and killed it on the spot, before he knew what he was doing. When he remembered that he would have to go with his story to the old man and his wife he was rather frightened, but there was nothing to be gained by putting it off, so he pulled a very long face and went to his neighbour’s garden.

‘Your dog,’ said he, pretending to weep, ‘has suddenly fallen down dead, though I took every care of him, and gave him everything he could wish for. And I thought I had better come straight and tell you.’

Weeping bitterly, the old man went to fetch the body of his favourite, and brought it home and buried it under the fig-tree where he had found the treasure. From morning till night he and his wife mourned over their loss, and nothing could comfort them.

At length, one night when he was asleep, he dreamt that the dog appeared to him and told him to cut down the fig-tree over his grave, and out of its wood to make a mortar. But when the old man woke and thought of his dream he did not feel at all inclined to cut down the tree, which bore well every year, and consulted his wife about it. The woman did not hesitate a moment, and said that after what had happened before, the dog’s advice must certainly be obeyed, so the tree was felled, and a beautiful mortar made from it. And when the season came for the rice crop to be gathered the mortar was taken down from its shelf, and the grains placed in it for pounding, when, lo and behold! in a twinkling of an eye, they all turned into gold pieces. At the sight of all this gold the hearts of the old people were glad, and once more they blessed their faithful dog.

But it was not long before this story also came to the ears of their envious neighbour, and he lost no time in going to the old people and asking if they happened to have a mortar which they could lend him. The old man did not at all like parting with his precious treasure, but he never could say no, so the neighbour went off with the mortar under his arm.

The moment he got into his own house he took a great handful of rice, and began to shell off the husks, with the help of his wife. But, instead of the gold pieces for which they looked, the rice turned into berries with such a horrible smell that they were obliged to run away, after smashing the mortar in a rage and setting fire to the bits.

The old people next door were naturally very much put out when they learned the fate of their mortar, and were not at all comforted by the explanations and excuses made by their neighbour. But that night the dog again appeared in a dream to his master, and told him that he must go and collect the ashes of the burnt mortar and bring them home. Then, when he heard that the Daimio, or great lord to whom this part of the country belonged, was expected at the capital, he was to carry the ashes to the high road, through which the procession would have to pass. And as soon as it was in sight he was to climb up all the cherry-trees and sprinkle the ashes on them, and they would soon blossom as they had never blossomed before.

This time the old man did not wait to consult his wife as to whether he was to do what his dog had told him, but directly he got up he went to his neighbour's house and collected the ashes of the burnt mortar. He put them carefully in a china vase, and carried it to the high road, Sitting down on a seat till the Daimio should pass. The cherry-trees were bare, for it was the season when small pots of them were sold to rich people, who kept them in hot places, so that they might blossom early and decorate their rooms. As to the trees in the open air, no one would ever think of looking for the tiniest bud for more than a month yet. The old man had not been waiting very long before he saw a cloud of dust in the far distance, and knew that it must be the procession of the Daimio. On they came, every man dressed in his finest clothes, and the crowd that was lining the road bowed their faces to the ground as they went by. Only the old man did not bow himself, and the great lord saw this, and bade one of his courtiers, in anger, go and inquire why he had disobeyed the ancient customs. But before the messenger could reach him the old man had climbed the nearest tree and scattered his ashes far and wide, and in an instant the white flowers had flashed into life, and the heart of the Daimio rejoiced, and he gave rich presents to the old man, whom he sent for to his castle.

We may be sure that in a very little while the envious neighbour had heard this also, and his bosom was filled with hate. He hastened to the place where he had burned the mortar, collected a few of the ashes which the old man had left behind, and took them to the road, hoping that his luck might be as good as the old man's, or perhaps even better. His heart beat with pleasure when he caught the first glimpses of the Daimio's train, and he held himself ready for the right moment. As the Daimio drew near he flung a great handful of ashes over the trees, but no buds or flowers followed the action: instead, the ashes were all blown back into the eyes of the Daimio and his warriors, till they cried out from pain. Then the prince ordered the evil-doer to be seized and bound and thrown into prison, where he was kept for many months. By the time he was set free everybody in his native village had found out his wickedness, and they would not let him live there any longer; and as he would not leave off his evil ways he soon went from bad to worse, and came to a miserable end.

(Japanische Marchen.)

THE FAIRY OF THE DAWN

Once upon a time what should happen DID happen; and if it had not happened this tale would never have been told.

There was once an emperor, very great and mighty, and he ruled over an empire so large that no one knew where it began and where it ended. But if nobody could tell the exact extent of his sovereignty everybody was aware that the emperor’s right eye laughed, while his left eye wept. One or two men of valour had the courage to go and ask him the reason of this strange fact, but he only laughed and said nothing; and the reason of the deadly enmity between his two eyes was a secret only known to the monarch himself.

And all the while the emperor’s sons were growing up. And such sons! All three like the morning stars in the sky!

Florea, the eldest, was so tall and broad-shouldered that no man in the kingdom could approach him.

Costan, the second, was quite different. Small of stature, and slightly built, he had a strong arm and stronger wrist.

Petru, the third and youngest, was tall and thin, more like a girl than a boy. He spoke very little, but laughed and sang, sang and laughed, from morning till night. He was very seldom serious, but then he had a way when he was thinking of stroking his hair over his forehead, which made him look old enough to sit in his father’s council!

‘You are grown up, Florea,’ said Petru one day to his eldest brother; ‘do go and ask father why one eye laughs and the other weeps.’

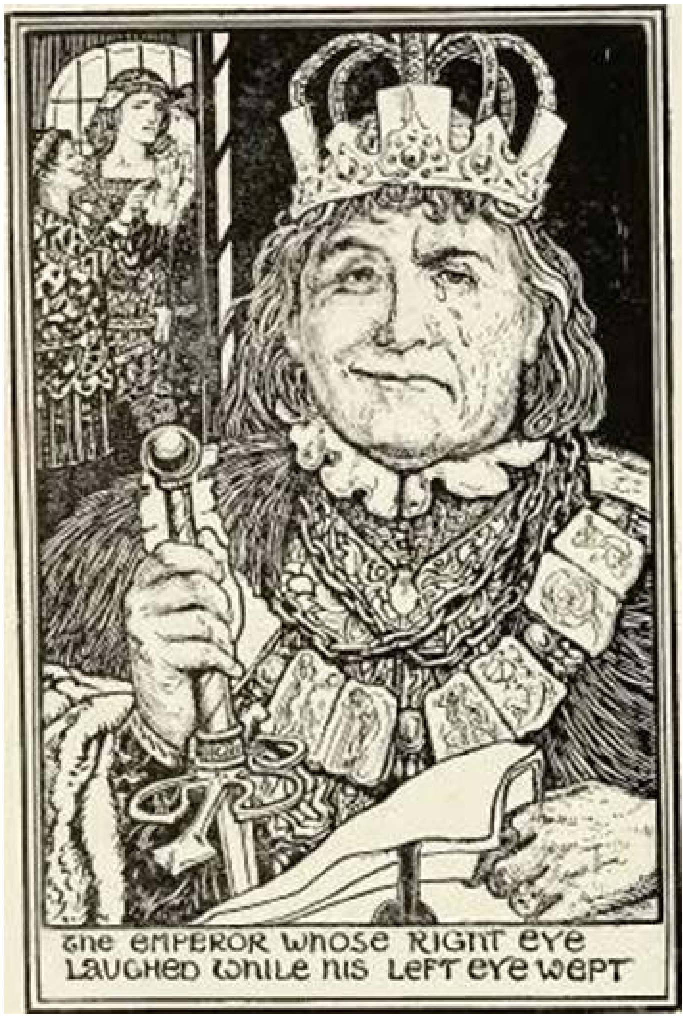

THE EMPEROR WHOSE RIGHT EYE LAUGHED WHILE HIS LEFT EYE WEPT

But Florea would not go. He had learnt by experience that this question always put the emperor in a rage.

Petru next went to Costan, but did not succeed any better with him.

‘Well, well, as everyone else is afraid, I suppose I must do it myself,’ observed Petru at length. No sooner said than done; the boy went straight to his father and put his question.

‘May you go blind!’ exclaimed the emperor in wrath; ‘what business is it of yours?’ and boxed Petru’s ears soundly.

Petru returned to his brothers, and told them what had befallen him; but not long after it struck him that his father’s left eye seemed to weep less, and the right to laugh more.

‘I wonder if it has anything to do with my question,’ thought he.

‘I’ll try again! After all, what do two boxes on the ear matter?’

So he put his question for the second time, and had the same answer; but the left eye only wept now and then, while the right eye looked ten years younger.

‘It really MUST be true,’ thought Petru. ‘Now I know what I have to do. I shall have to go on putting that question, and getting boxes on the ear, till both eyes laugh together.’

No sooner said than done. Petru never, never forswore himself.

‘Petru, my dear boy,’ cried the emperor, both his eyes laughing together, ‘I see you have got this on the brain. Well, I will let you into the secret. My right eye laughs when I look at my three sons, and see how strong and handsome you all are, and the other eye weeps because I fear that after I die you will not be able to keep the empire together, and to protect it from its enemies. But if you can bring me water from the spring of the Fairy of the Dawn, to bathe my eyes, then they will laugh for evermore; for I shall know that my sons are brave enough to overcome any foe.’

Thus spoke the emperor, and Petru picked up his hat and went to find his brothers.

The three young men took counsel together, and talked the subject well over, as brothers should do. And the end of it was that Florea, as the eldest, went to the stables, chose the best and handsomest horse they contained, saddled him, and took leave of the court.

‘I am starting at once,’ said he to his brothers, ‘and if after a year, a month, a week, and a day I have not returned with the water from the spring of the Fairy of the Dawn, you, Costan, had better come after me.’ So saying he disappeared round a corner of the palace.

For three days and three nights he never drew rein. Like a spirit the horse flew over mountains and valleys till he came to the borders of the empire. Here was a deep, deep trench that girdled it the whole way round, and there was only a single bridge by which the trench could be crossed. Florea made instantly for the bridge, and there pulled up to look around him once more, to take leave of his native land Then he turned, but before him was standing a dragon — oh! SUCH a dragon! — a dragon with three heads and three horrible faces, all with their mouths wide open, one jaw reaching to heaven and the other to earth.

At this awful sight Florea did not wait to give battle. He put spurs to his horse and dashed off, WHERE he neither knew nor cared.

The dragon heaved a sigh and vanished without leaving a trace behind him.

A week went by. Florea did not return home. Two passed; and nothing was heard of him. After a month Costan began to haunt the stables and to look out a horse for himself. And the moment the year, the month, the week, and the day were over Costan mounted his horse and took leave of his youngest brother.

‘If I fail, then you come,’ said he, and followed the path that Florea had taken.

The dragon on the bridge was more fearful and his three heads more terrible than before, and the young hero rode away still faster than his brother had done.

Nothing more was heard either of him or Florea; and Petru remained alone.

‘I must go after my brothers,’ said Petru one day to his father.

‘Go, then,’ said his father, ‘and may you have better luck than they’; and he bade farewell to Petru, who rode straight to the borders of the kingdom.

The dragon on the bridge was yet more dreadful than the one Florea and Costan had seen, for this one had seven heads instead of only three.

Petru stopped for a moment when he caught sight of this terrible creature. Then he found his voice.

‘Get out of the way!’ cried he. ‘Get out of the way!’ he repeated again, as the dragon did not move. ‘Get out of the way!’ and with this last summons he drew his sword and rushed upon him. In an instant the heavens seemed to darken round him and he was surrounded by fire — fire to right of him, fire to left of him, fire to front of him, fire to rear of him; nothing but fire whichever way he looked, for the dragon’s seven heads were vomiting flame.

The horse neighed and reared at the horrible sight, and Petru could not use the sword he had in readiness.

‘Be quiet! this won’t do!’ he said, dismounting hastily, but holding the bridle firmly in his left hand and grasping his sword in his right.

But even so he got on no better, for he could see nothing but fire and smoke.

‘There is no help for it; I must go back and get a better horse,’ said he, and mounted again and rode homewards.

At the gate of the palace his nurse, old Birscha, was waiting for him eagerly.

‘Ah, Petru, my son, I knew you would have to come back,’ she cried. ‘You did not set about the matter properly.’

‘How ought I to have set about it?’ asked Petru, half angrily, half sadly.

‘Look here, my boy,’ replied old Birscha. ‘You can never reach the spring of the Fairy of the Dawn unless you ride the horse which your father, the emperor, rode in his youth. Go and ask where it is to be found, and then mount it and be off with you.’

Petru thanked her heartily for her advice, and went at once to make inquiries about the horse.

‘By the light of my eyes!’ exclaimed the emperor when Petru had put his question. ‘Who has told you anything about that? It must have been that old witch of a Birscha? Have you lost your wits? Fifty years have passed since I was young, and who knows where the bones of my horse may be rotting, or whether a scrap of his reins still lie in his stall? I have forgotten all about him long ago.’

Petru turned away in anger, and went back to his old nurse.

‘Do not be cast down,’ she said with a smile; ‘if that is how the affair stands all will go well. Go and fetch the scrap of the reins; I shall soon know what must be done.’

The place was full of saddles, bridles, and bits of leather. Petru picked out the oldest, and blackest, and most decayed pair of reins, and brought them to the old woman, who murmured something over them and sprinkled them with incense, and held them out to the young man.

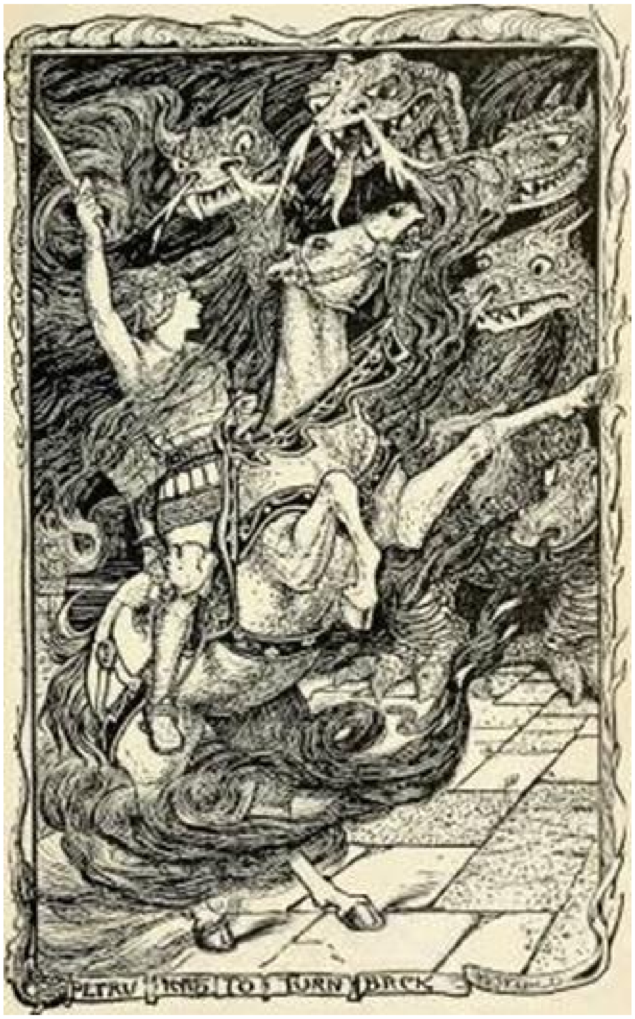
PETRU HAS TO TURN BACK

‘Take the reins,’ said she, ‘and strike them violently against the pillars of the house.’

Petru did what he was told, and scarcely had the reins touched the pillars when something happened — HOW I have no idea — that made Petru stare with surprise. A horse stood before him — a horse whose equal in beauty the world had never seen; with a saddle on him of gold and precious stones, and with such a dazzling bridle you hardly dared to look at it, lest you should lose your sight. A splendid horse, a splendid saddle, and a splendid bridle, all ready for the splendid young prince!

‘Jump on the back of the brown horse,’ said the old woman, and she turned round and went into the house.

The moment Petru was seated on the horse he felt his arm three times as strong as before, and even his heart felt braver.

‘Sit firmly in the saddle, my lord, for we have a long way to go and no time to waste,’ said the brown horse, and Petru soon saw that they were riding as no man and horse had ever ridden before.

On the bridge stood a dragon, but not the same one as he had tried to fight with, for this dragon had twelve heads, each more hideous and shooting forth more terrible flames than the other. But, horrible though he was, he had met his match. Petru showed no fear, but rolled up his sleeves, that his arms might be free.

‘Get out of the way!’ he said when he had done, but the dragon’s heads only breathed forth more flames and smoke. Petru wasted no more words, but drew his sword and prepared to throw himself on the bridge.

‘Stop a moment; be careful, my lord,’ put in the horse, ‘and be sure you do what I tell you. Dig your spurs in my body up to the rowel, draw your sword, and keep yourself ready, for we shall have to leap over both bridge and dragon. When you see that we are right above the dragon cut off his biggest head, wipe the blood off the sword, and put it back clean in the sheath before we touch earth again.’

So Petru dug in his spurs, drew his sword, cut of the head, wiped the blood, and put the sword back in the sheath before the horse’s hoofs touched the ground again.

And in this fashion they passed the bridge.

‘But we have got to go further still,’ said Petru, after he had taken a farewell glance at his native land.

‘Yes, forwards,’ answered the horse; ‘but you must tell me, my lord, at what speed you wish to go. Like the wind? Like thought? Like desire? or like a curse?’

Petru looked about him, up at the heavens and down again to the earth. A desert lay spread out before him, whose aspect made his hair stand on end.

‘We will ride at different speeds,’ said he, ‘not so fast as to grow tired nor so slow as to waste time.’

And so they rode, one day like the wind, the next like thought, the third and fourth like desire and like a curse, till they reached the borders of the desert.

‘Now walk, so that I may look about, and see what I have never seen before,’ said Petru, rubbing his eyes like one who wakes from sleep, or like him who beholds something so strange that it seems as if... Before Petru lay a wood made of copper, with copper trees and copper leaves, with bushes and flowers of copper also.

Petru stood and stared as a man does when he sees something that he has never seen, and of which he has never heard.

Then he rode right into the wood. On each side of the way the rows of flowers began to praise Petru, and to try and persuade him to pick some of them and make himself a wreath.

‘Take me, for I am lovely, and can give strength to whoever plucks me,’ said one.

‘No, take me, for whoever wears me in his hat will be loved by the most beautiful woman in the world,’ pleaded the second; and then one after another bestirred itself, each more charming than the last, all promising, in soft sweet voices, wonderful things to Petru, if only he would pick them.

Petru was not deaf to their persuasion, and was just stooping to pick one when the horse sprang to one side.

‘Why don’t you stay still?’ asked Petru roughly.

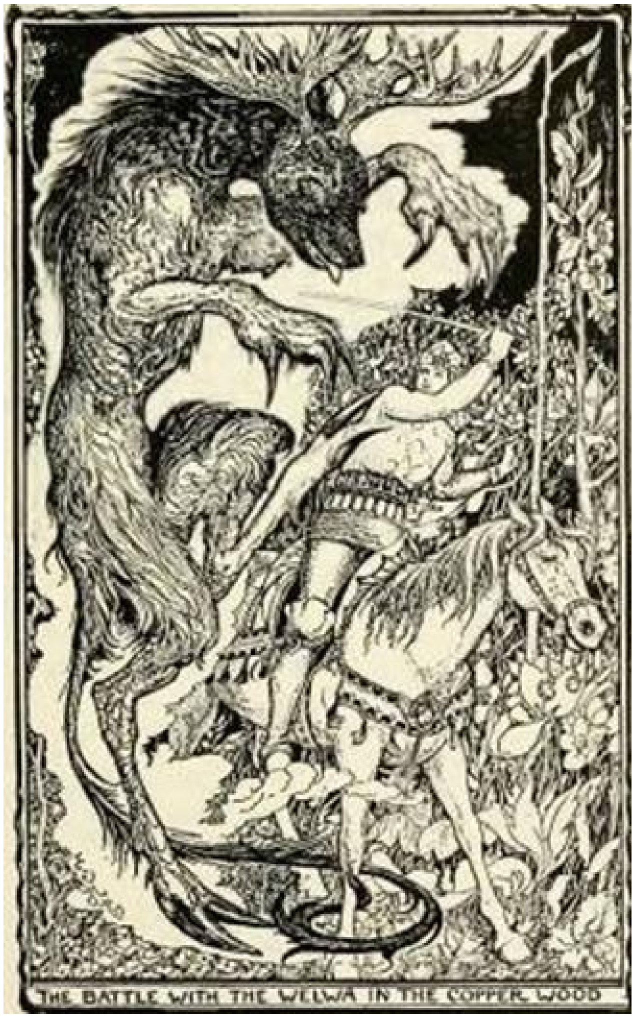

THE BATTLE WITH THE WELWA IN THE COPPER WOOD

‘Do not pick the flowers; it will bring you bad luck; answered the horse.

‘Why should it do that?’

‘These flowers are under a curse. Whoever plucks them must fight the Welwa(1) of the woods.’

(1) A goblin.

‘What kind of a goblin is the Welwa?’

‘Oh, do leave me in peace! But listen. Look at the flowers as much as you like, but pick none,’ and the horse walked on slowly.

Petru knew by experience that he would do well to attend to the horse’s advice, so he made a great effort and tore his mind away from the flowers.

But in vain! If a man is fated to be unlucky, unlucky he will be, whatever he may do!

The flowers went on beseeching him, and his heart grew ever weaker and weaker.

‘What must come will come,’ said Petru at length; ‘at any rate I shall see the Welwa of the woods, what she is like, and which way I had best fight her. If she is ordained to be the cause of my death, well, then it will be so; but if not I shall conquer her though she were twelve hundred Welwas,' and once more he stooped down to gather the flowers.

'You have done very wrong,' said the horse sadly. 'But it can't be helped now. Get yourself ready for battle, for here is the Welwa!'

Hardly had he done speaking, scarcely had Petru twisted his wreath, when a soft breeze arose on all sides at once. Out of the breeze came a storm wind, and the storm wind swelled and swelled till everything around was blotted out in darkness, and darkness covered them as with a thick cloak, while the earth swayed and shook under their feet.

'Are you afraid?' asked the horse, shaking his mane.

'Not yet,' replied Petru stoutly, though cold shivers were running down his back. 'What must come will come, whatever it is.'

'Don't be afraid,' said the horse. 'I will help you. Take the bridle from my neck, and try to catch the Welwa with it.'

The words were hardly spoken, and Petru had no time even to unbuckle the bridle, when the Welwa herself stood before him; and Petru could not bear to look at her, so horrible was she.

She had not exactly a head, yet neither was she without one. She did not fly through the air, but neither did she walk upon the earth. She had a mane like a horse, horns like a deer, a face like a bear, eyes like a polecat; while her body had something of each. And that was the Welwa.

Petru planted himself firmly in his stirrups, and began to lay about him with his sword, but could feel nothing.

A day and a night went by, and the fight was still undecided, but at last the Welwa began to pant for breath.

'Let us wait a little and rest,' gasped she.

Petru stopped and lowered his sword.

'You must not stop an instant,' said the horse, and Petru gathered up all his strength, and laid about him harder than ever.

The Welwa gave a neigh like a horse and a howl like a wolf, and threw herself afresh on Petru. For another day and night the battle raged more furiously than before. And Petru grew so exhausted he could scarcely move his arm.

'Let us wait a little and rest,' cried the Welwa for the second time, 'for I see you are as weary as I am.'

'You must not stop an instant,' said the horse.

And Petru went on fighting, though he barely had strength to move his arm. But the Welwa had ceased to throw herself upon him, and began to deliver her blows cautiously, as if she had no longer power to strike.

And on the third day they were still fighting, but as the morning sky began to redden Petru somehow managed — how I cannot tell — to throw the bridle over the head of the tired Welwa. In a moment, from the Welwa sprang a horse — the most beautiful horse in the world.

‘Sweet be your life, for you have delivered me from my enchantment,’ said he, and began to rub his nose against his brother’s. And he told Petru all his story, and how he had been bewitched for many years.

So Petru tied the Welwa to his own horse and rode on. Where did he ride? That I cannot tell you, but he rode on fast till he got out of the copper wood.

‘Stay still, and let me look about, and see what I never have seen before,’ said Petru again to his horse. For in front of him stretched a forest that was far more wonderful, as it was made of glistening trees and shining flowers. It was the silver wood.

As before, the flowers began to beg the young man to gather them.

‘Do not pluck them,’ warned the Welwa, trotting beside him, ‘for my brother is seven times stronger than I’; but though Petru knew by experience what this meant, it was no use, and after a moment’s hesitation he began to gather the flowers, and to twist himself a wreath.

Then the storm wind howled louder, the earth trembled more violently, and the night grew darker, than the first time, and the Welwa of the silver wood came rushing on with seven times the speed of the other. For three days and three nights they fought, but at last Petru cast the bridle over the head of the second Welwa.

‘Sweet be your life, for you have delivered me from enchantment,’ said the second Welwa, and they all journeyed on as before.

But soon they came to a gold wood more lovely far than the other two, and again Petru’s companions pleaded with him to ride through it quickly, and to leave the flowers alone. But Petru turned a deaf ear to all they said, and before he had woven his golden crown he felt that something terrible, that he could not see, was coming near him right out of the earth. He drew his sword and made himself ready for the fight. ‘I will die!’ cried he, ‘or he shall have my bridle over his head.’

He had hardly said the words when a thick fog wrapped itself around him, and so thick was it that he could not see his own hand, or hear the sound of his voice. For a day and a night he fought with his sword, without ever once seeing his enemy, then suddenly the fog began to lighten. By dawn of the second day it had vanished altogether, and the sun shone brightly in the heavens. It seemed to Petru that he had been born again.

And the Welwa? She had vanished.

‘You had better take breath now you can, for the fight will have to begin all over again,’ said the horse.

‘What was it?’ asked Petru.

‘It was the Welwa,’ replied the horse, ‘changed into a fog ‘Listen! She is coming!’

And Petru had hardly drawn a long breath when he felt something approaching from the side, though what he could not tell. A river, yet not a river, for it seemed not to flow over the earth, but to go where it liked, and to leave no trace of its passage.

‘Woe be to me!’ cried Petru, frightened at last.

‘Beware, and never stand still,’ called the brown horse, and more he could not say, for the water was choking him.

The battle began anew. For a day and a night Petru fought on, without knowing at whom or what he struck. At dawn on the second, he felt that both his feet were lame.

‘Now I am done for,’ thought he, and his blows fell thicker and harder in his desperation. And the sun came out and the water disappeared, without his knowing how or when.

‘Take breath,’ said the horse, ‘for you have no time to lose. The Welwa will return in a moment.’

Petru made no reply, only wondered how, exhausted as he was, he should ever be able to carry on the fight. But he settled himself in his saddle, grasped his sword, and waited.

And then something came to him — WHAT I cannot tell you. Perhaps, in his dreams, a man may see a creature which has what it has not got, and has not got what it has. At least, that was what the Welwa seemed like to Petru. She flew with her feet, and walked with her wings; her head was in her back, and her tail was on top of her body; her eyes were in her neck, and her neck in her forehead, and how to describe her further I do not know.

Petru felt for a moment as if he was wrapped in a garment of fear; then he shook himself and took heart, and fought as he had never yet fought before.

As the day wore on, his strength began to fail, and when darkness fell he could hardly keep his eyes open. By midnight he knew he was no longer on his horse, but standing on the ground, though he could not have told how he got there. When the grey light of morning came, he was past standing on his feet, but fought now upon his knees.

‘Make one more struggle; it is nearly over now,’ said the horse, seeing that Petru’s strength was waning fast.

Petru wiped the sweat from his brow with his gauntlet, and with a desperate effort rose to his feet.

‘Strike the Welwa on the mouth with the bridle,’ said the horse, and Petru did it.

The Welwa uttered a neigh so loud that Petru thought he would be deaf for life, and then, though she too was nearly spent, flung herself upon her enemy; but Petru was on the watch and threw the bridle over her head, as she rushed on, so that when the day broke there were three horses trotting beside him.

‘May your wife be the most beautiful of women,’ said the Welwa, ‘for you have delivered me from my enchantment.’ So the four horses galloped fast, and by nightfall they were at the borders of the golden forest.

Then Petru began to think of the crowns that he wore, and what they had cost him.

‘After all, what do I want with so many? I will keep the best,’ he said to himself; and taking off first the copper crown and then the silver, he threw them away.

‘Stay!’ cried the horse, ‘do not throw them away! Perhaps we shall find them of use. Get down and pick them up.’ So Petru got down and picked them up, and they all went on.

In the evening, when the sun is getting low, and all the midges are beginning to bite, Peter saw a wide heath stretching before him.

At the same instant the horse stood still of itself.

‘What is the matter?’ asked Petru.

‘I am afraid that something evil will happen to us,’ answered the horse.

‘But why should it?’

‘We are going to enter the kingdom of the goddess Mittwoch,(2) and the further we ride into it the colder we shall get. But all along the road there are huge fires, and I dread lest you should stop and warm yourself at them.’

(2) In German ‘Mittwoch,’ the feminine form of Mercury.

‘And why should I not warm myself?’

‘Something fearful will happen to you if you do,’ replied the horse sadly.

‘Well, forward!’ cried Petru lightly, ‘and if I have to bear cold, I must bear it!’

With every step they went into the kingdom of Mittwoch, the air grew colder and more icy, till even the marrow in their bones was frozen. But Petru was no coward; the fight he had gone through had strengthened his powers of endurance, and he stood the test bravely.

Along the road on each side were great fires, with men standing by them, who spoke pleasantly to Petru as he went by, and invited him to join them. The breath froze in his mouth, but he took no notice, only bade his horse ride on the faster.

How long Petru may have waged battle silently with the cold one cannot tell, for everybody knows that the kingdom of Mittwoch is not to be crossed in a day, but he struggled on, though the frozen rocks burst around, and though his teeth chattered, and even his eyelids were frozen.

At length they reached the dwelling of Mittwoch herself, and, jumping from his horse, Petru threw the reins over his horse's neck and entered the hut.

'Good-day, little mother!' said he.

'Very well, thank you, my frozen friend!'

Petru laughed, and waited for her to speak.

'You have borne yourself bravely,' went on the goddess, tapping him on the shoulder. 'Now you shall have your reward,' and she opened an iron chest, out of which she took a little box.

'Look!' said she; 'this little box has been lying here for ages, waiting for the man who could win his way through the Ice Kingdom. Take it, and treasure it, for some day it may help you.

If you open it, it will tell you anything you want, and give you news of your fatherland.'

Petru thanked her gratefully for her gift, mounted his horse, and rode away.

When he was some distance from the hut, he opened the casket.

'What are your commands?' asked a voice inside.

'Give me news of my father,' he replied, rather nervously.

'He is sitting in council with his nobles,' answered the casket.

'Is he well?'

'Not particularly, for he is furiously angry.'

'What has angered him?'

'Your brothers Costan and Florea,' replied the casket. 'It seems to me they are trying to rule him and the kingdom as well, and the old man says they are not fit to do it.'

'Push on, good horse, for we have no time to lose!' cried Petru; then he shut up the box, and put it in his pocket.

They rushed on as fast as ghosts, as whirlwinds, as vampires when they hunt at midnight, and how long they rode no man can tell, for the way is far.

'Stop! I have some advice to give you,' said the horse at last.

'What is it?' asked Petru.

'You have known what it is to suffer cold; you will have to endure heat, such as you have never dreamed of. Be as brave now as you were then. Let no one tempt you to try to cool yourself, or evil will befall you.'

'Forwards!' answered Petru. 'Do not worry yourself. If I have escaped without being frozen, there is no chance of my melting.'

'Why not? This is a heat that will melt the marrow in your bones — a heat that is only to be felt in the kingdom of the Goddess of Thunder.'(3)

(3) In the German 'Donnerstag' — the day of the Thunder God, *i.e.* Jupiter.

And it WAS hot. The very iron of the horse's shoes began to melt, but Petru gave no heed. The sweat ran down his face, but he dried it with his gauntlet. What heat could be he never knew before, and on the way, not a stone's throw from the road, lay the most delicious valleys, full of shady trees and bubbling streams. When Petru looked at them his heart burned within him, and his mouth grew parched. And standing among the flowers were lovely maidens who called to him in soft voices, till he had to shut his eyes against their spells.

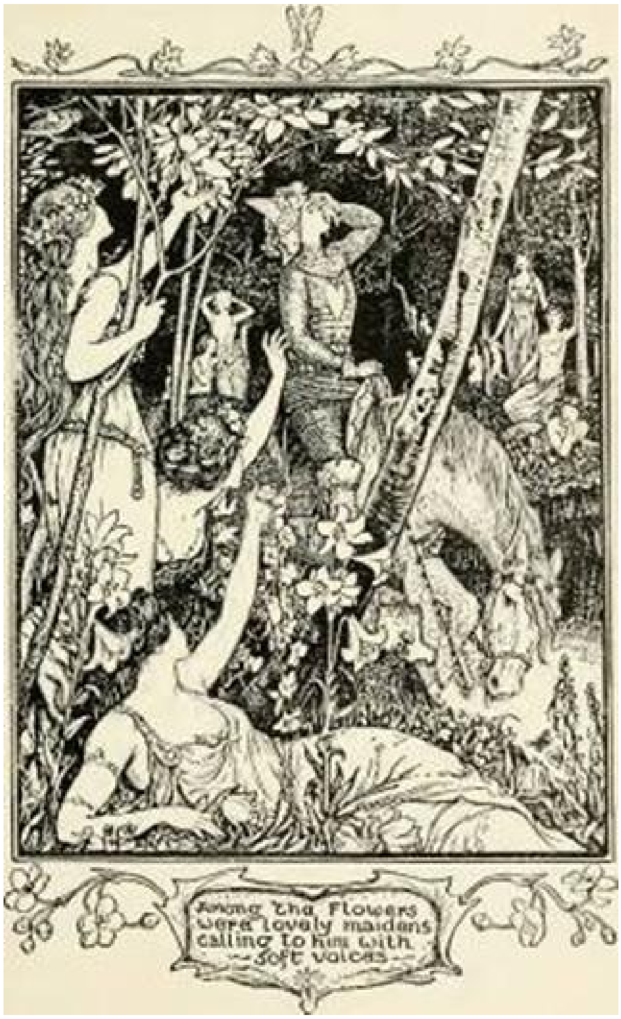
Among the Flowers were lovely maidens calling to him with soft voices

'Come, my hero, come and rest; the heat will kill you,' said they.

Petru shook his head and said nothing, for he had lost the power of speech.

Long he rode in this awful state, how long none can tell. Suddenly the heat seemed to become less, and, in the distance, he saw a little hut on a hill. This was the dwelling of the Goddess of Thunder, and when he drew rein at her door the goddess herself came out to meet him.

She welcomed him, and kindly invited him in, and bade him tell her all his adventures. So Petru told her all that had happened to him, and why he was there, and then took farewell of her, as he had no time to lose. ‘For,’ he said, ‘who knows how far the Fairy of the Dawn may yet be?’

‘Stay for one moment, for I have a word of advice to give you. You are about to enter the kingdom of Venus;(4) go and tell her, as a message from me, that I hope she will not tempt you to delay. On your way back, come to me again, and I will give you something that may be of use to you.’

(4) ‘Vineri’ is Friday, and also ‘Venus.’

So Petru mounted his horse, and had hardly ridden three steps when he found himself in a new country. Here it was neither hot nor cold, but the air was warm and soft like spring, though the way ran through a heath covered with sand and thistles.

‘What can that be?’ asked Petru, when he saw a long, long way off, at the very end of the heath, something resembling a house.

‘That is the house of the goddess Venus,’ replied the horse, ‘and if we ride hard we may reach it before dark’; and he darted off like an arrow, so that as twilight fell they found themselves nearing the house. Petru’s heart leaped at the sight, for all the way along he had been followed by a crowd of shadowy figures who danced about him from right to left, and from back to front, and Petru, though a brave man, felt now and then a thrill of fear.

‘They won’t hurt you,’ said the horse; ‘they are just the daughters of the whirlwind amusing themselves while they are waiting for the ogre of the moon.’

Then he stopped in front of the house, and Petru jumped off and went to the door.

‘Do not be in such a hurry,’ cried the horse. ‘There are several things I must tell you first. You cannot enter the house of the goddess Venus like that. She is always watched and guarded by the whirlwind.’

‘What am I to do then?’

‘Take the copper wreath, and go with it to that little hill over there. When you reach it, say to yourself, “Were there ever such lovely maidens! such angels! such fairy souls!” Then hold the wreath high in the air and cry, “Oh! if I knew whether any one would accept this wreath from me... if I knew! if I knew!” and throw the wreath from you!’

‘And why should I do all this?’ said Petru.

‘Ask no questions, but go and do it,’ replied the horse. And Petru did.

Scarcely had he flung away the copper wreath than the whirlwind flung himself upon it, and tore it in pieces.

Then Petru turned once more to the horse.

‘Stop!’ cried the horse again. ‘I have other things to tell you.

Take the silver wreath and knock at the windows of the goddess Venus. When she says, “Who is there?” answer that you have come on foot and lost your way on the heath. She will then tell you to go your way back again; but take care not to stir from the spot. Instead, be sure you say to her, “No, indeed I shall do nothing of the sort, as from my childhood I have heard stories of the beauty of the goddess Venus, and it was not for nothing that I had shoes made of leather with soles of steel, and have travelled for nine years and nine months, and have won in battle the silver wreath, which I hope you may allow me to give you, and have done and suffered everything to be where I now am.” This is what you must say. What happens after is your affair.’

Petru asked no more, but went towards the house.

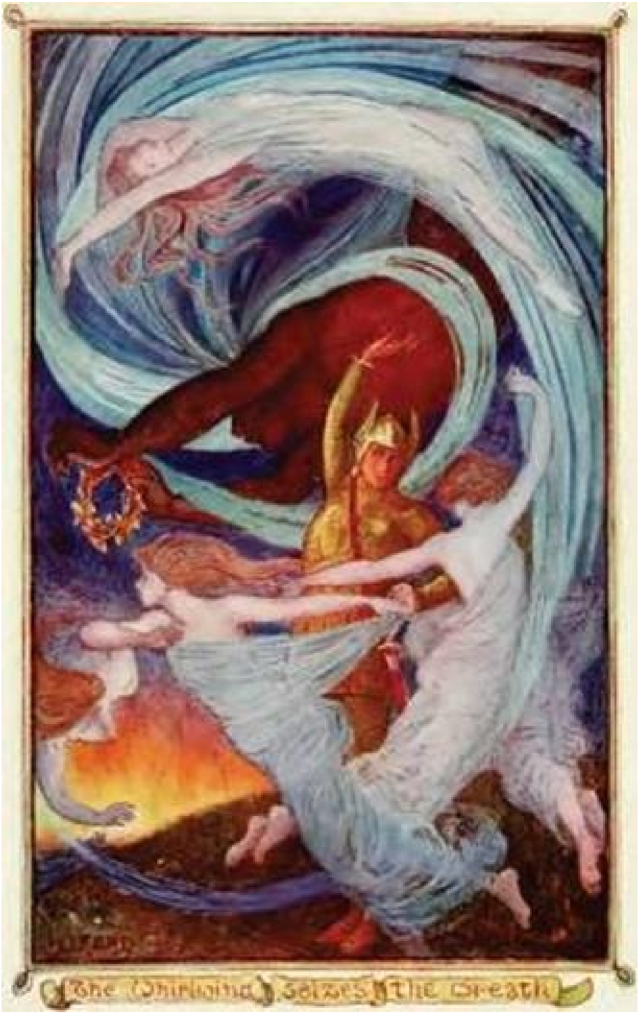

The Whirlwind Seizes the Wreath

By this time it was pitch dark, and there was only the ray of light that streamed through the windows to guide him, and at the sound of his footsteps two dogs began to bark loudly.

‘Which of those dogs is barking? Is he tired of life?’ asked the goddess Venus.

‘It is I, O goddess!’ replied Petru, rather timidly. ‘I have lost my way on the heath, and do not know where I am to sleep this night.’

‘Where did you leave your horse?’ asked the goddess sharply.

Petru did not answer. He was not sure if he was to lie, or whether he had better tell the truth.

‘Go away, my son, there is no place for you here,’ replied she, drawing back from the window.

Then Petru repeated hastily what the horse had told him to say, and no sooner had he done so than the goddess opened the window, and in gentle tones she asked him:

‘Let me see this wreath, my son,’ and Petru held it out to her.

‘Come into the house,’ went on the goddess; ‘do not fear the dogs, they always know my will.’ And so they did, for as the young man passed they wagged their tails to him.

‘Good evening,’ said Petru as he entered the house, and, seating himself near the fire, listened comfortably to whatever the goddess might choose to talk about, which was for the most part the wickedness of men, with whom she was evidently very angry. But Petru agreed with her in everything, as he had been taught was only polite.

But was anybody ever so old as she! I do not know why Petru devoured her so with his eyes, unless it was to count the wrinkles on her face; but if so he would have had to live seven lives, and each life seven times the length of an ordinary one, before he could have reckoned them up.

But Venus was joyful in her heart when she saw Petru’s eyes fixed upon her.

‘Nothing was that is, and the world was not a world when I was born,’ said she. ‘When I grew up and the world came into being, everyone thought I was the most beautiful girl that ever was seen, though many hated me for it. But every hundred years there came a wrinkle on my face. And now I am old.’ Then she went on to tell Petru that she was the daughter of an emperor, and their nearest neighbour was the Fairy of the Dawn, with whom she had a violent quarrel, and with that she broke out into loud abuse of her.

Petru did not know what to do. He listened in silence for the most part, but now and then he would say, ‘Yes, yes, you must have been badly treated,’ just for politeness’ sake; what more could he do?

‘I will give you a task to perform, for you are brave, and will carry it through,’ continued Venus, when she had talked a long time, and both of them were getting sleepy. ‘Close to the Fairy’s house is a well, and whoever drinks from it will blossom again like a rose. Bring me a flagon of it, and I will do anything to prove my gratitude. It is not easy! no one knows that better than I do! The kingdom is guarded on every side by wild beasts and horrible dragons; but I will tell you more about that, and I also have something to give you.’ Then she rose and lifted the lid of an iron-bound chest, and took out of it a very tiny flute.

‘Do you see this?’ she asked. ‘An old man gave it to me when I was young: whoever listens to this flute goes to sleep, and nothing can wake him. Take it and play on it as long as you remain in the kingdom of the Fairy of the Dawn, and you will be safe.

At this, Petru told her that he had another task to fulfil at the well of the Fairy of the Dawn, and Venus was still better pleased when she heard his tale.

So Petru bade her good-night, put the flute in its case, and laid himself down in the lowest chamber to sleep.

Before the dawn he was awake again, and his first care was to give to each of his horses as much corn as he could eat, and then to lead them to the well to water. Then he dressed himself and made ready to start.

‘Stop,’ cried Venus from her window, ‘I have still a piece of advice to give you. Leave one of your horses here, and only take three. Ride slowly till you get to the fairy’s kingdom, then dismount and go on foot. When you return, see that all your three horses remain on the road, while you walk. But above all beware never to look the Fairy of the Dawn in the face, for she has eyes that will bewitch you, and glances that will befool you.

She is hideous, more hideous than anything you can imagine, with owl’s eyes, foxy face, and cat’s claws. Do you hear? do you hear? Be sure you never look at her.’

Petru thanked her, and managed to get off at last.

Far, far away, where the heavens touch the earth, where the stars kiss the flowers, a soft red light was seen, such as the sky sometimes has in spring, only lovelier, more wonderful.

That light was behind the palace of the Fairy of the Dawn, and it took Petru two days and nights through flowery meadows to reach it. And besides, it was neither hot nor cold, bright nor dark, but something of them all, and Petru did not find the way a step too long.

After some time Petru saw something white rise up out of the red of the sky, and when he drew nearer he saw it was a castle, and so splendid that his eyes were dazzled when they looked at it. He did not know there was such a beautiful castle in the world.

But no time was to be lost, so he shook himself, jumped down from his horse, and, leaving him on the dewy grass, began to play on his flute as he walked along.

He had hardly gone many steps when he stumbled over a huge giant, who had been lulled to sleep by the music. This was one of the guards of the castle! As he lay there on his back, he seemed so big that in spite of Petru’s haste he stopped to measure him.

The further went Petru, the more strange and terrible were the sights he saw — lions, tigers, dragons with seven heads, all stretched out in the sun fast asleep. It is needless to say what the dragons were like, for nowadays everyone knows, and dragons are not things to joke about. Petru ran through them like the wind. Was it haste or fear that spurred him on?

At last he came to a river, but let nobody think for a moment that this river was like other rivers? Instead of water, there flowed milk, and the bottom was of precious stones and pearls, instead of sand and pebbles. And it ran neither fast nor slow, but both fast and slow together. And the river flowed round the castle, and on its banks slept lions with iron teeth and claws; and beyond were gardens such as only the Fairy of the Dawn can have, and on the flowers slept a fairy! All this saw Petru from the other side.

But how was he to get over? To be sure there was a bridge, but, even if it had not been guarded by sleeping lions, it was plainly not meant for man to walk on. Who could tell what it was made of? It looked like soft little woolly clouds!

So he stood thinking what was to be done, for get across he must.

After a while, he determined to take the risk, and strode back to the sleeping giant. ‘Wake up, my brave man!’ he cried, giving him a shake.

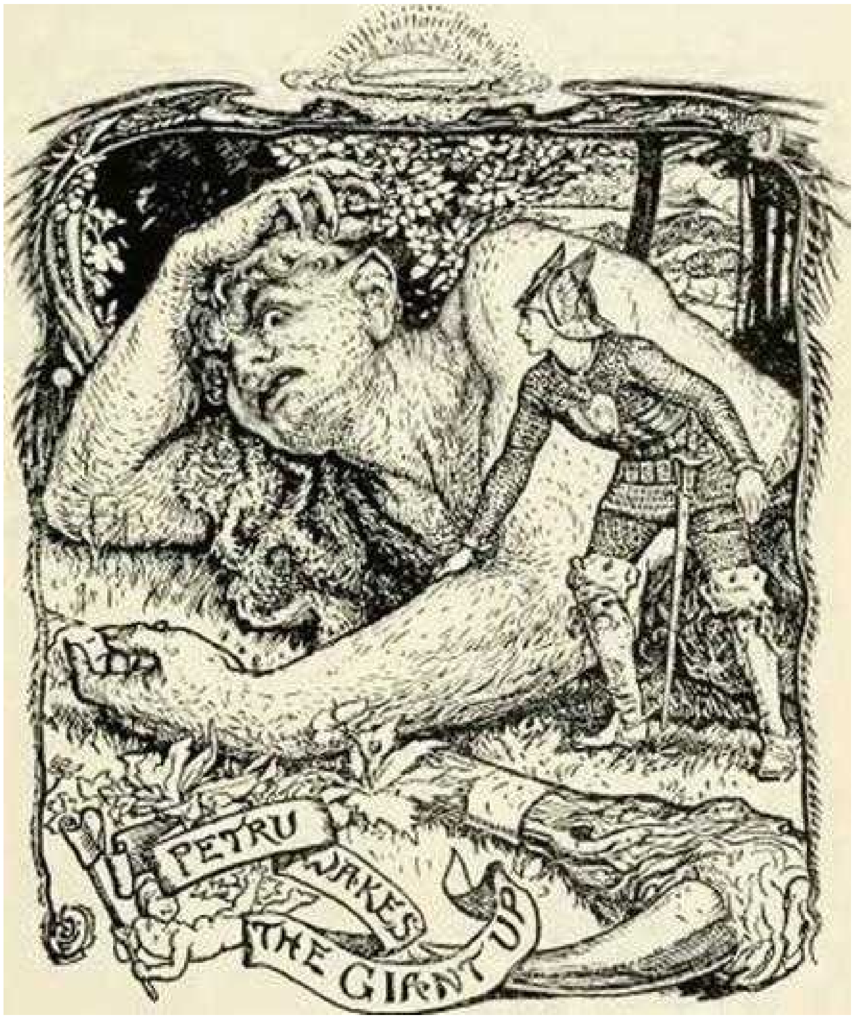
PETRU WAKES THE GIANT UP

The giant woke and stretched out his hand to pick up Petru, just as we should catch a fly. But Petru played on his flute, and the giant fell back again. Petru tried this three times, and when he was satisfied that the giant was really in his power he took out a handkerchief, bound the two little fingers of the giant together, drew his sword, and cried for the fourth time, ‘Wake up, my brave man.’

When the giant saw the trick which had been played on him he said to Petru. ‘Do you call this a fair fight? Fight according to rules, if you really are a hero!’

‘I will by-and-by, but first I want to ask you a question! Will you swear that you will carry me over the river if I fight honourably with you?’ And the giant swore.

When his hands were freed, the giant flung himself upon Petru, hoping to crush him by his weight. But he had met his match. It was not yesterday, nor the day before, that Petru had fought his first battle, and he bore himself bravely.

For three days and three nights the battle raged, and sometimes one had the upper hand, and sometimes the other, till at length they both lay struggling on the ground, but Petru was on top, with the point of his sword at the giant’s throat.

‘Let me go! let me go!’ shrieked he. ‘I own that I am beaten!’

‘Will you take me over the river?’ asked Petru.

‘I will,’ gasped the giant.

‘What shall I do to you if you break your word?’

‘Kill me, any way you like! But let me live now.’

‘Very well,’ said Petru, and he bound the giant’s left hand to his right foot, tied one handkerchief round his mouth to prevent him crying out, and another round his eyes, and led him to the river.

Once they had reached the bank he stretched one leg over to the other side, and, catching up Petru in the palm of his hand, set him down on the further shore.

‘That is all right,’ said Petru. Then he played a few notes on his flute, and the giant went to sleep again. Even the fairies who had been bathing a little lower down heard the music and fell asleep among the flowers on the bank. Petru saw them as he passed, and thought, ‘If they are so beautiful, why should the Fairy of the Dawn be so ugly?’ But he dared not linger, and pushed on.

And now he was in the wonderful gardens, which seemed more wonderful still than they had done from afar. But Petru could see no faded flowers, nor any birds, as he hastened through them to the castle. No one was there to bar his way, for all were asleep. Even the leaves had ceased to move.

He passed through the courtyard, and entered the castle itself.

What he beheld there need not be told, for all the world knows that the palace of the Fairy of the Dawn is no ordinary place. Gold and precious stones were as common as wood with us, and the stables where the horses of the sun were kept were more splendid than the palace of the greatest emperor in the world.

Petru went up the stairs and walked quickly through eight-and-forty rooms, hung with silken stuffs, and all empty. In the forty-ninth he found the Fairy of the Dawn herself.

In the middle of this room, which was as large as a church, Petru saw the celebrated well that he had come so far to seek. It was a well just like other wells, and it seemed strange that the Fairy of the Dawn should have it in her own chamber; yet anyone could tell it had been there for hundreds of years. And by the well slept the Fairy of the Dawn — the Fairy of the Dawn — herself!

And as Petru looked at her the magic flute dropped by his side, and he held his breath.

Near the well was a table, on which stood bread made with does' milk, and a flagon of wine. It was the bread of strength and the wine of youth, and Petru longed for them. He looked once at the bread and once at the wine, and then at the Fairy of the Dawn, still sleeping on her silken cushions.

As he looked a mist came over his senses. The fairy opened her eyes slowly and looked at Petru, who lost his head still further; but he just managed to remember his flute, and a few notes of it sent the Fairy to sleep again, and he kissed her thrice. Then he stooped and laid his golden wreath upon her forehead, ate a piece of the bread and drank a cupful of the wine of youth, and this he did three times over. Then he filled a flask with water from the well, and vanished swiftly.

As he passed through the garden it seemed quite different from what it was before. The flowers were lovelier, the streams ran quicker, the sunbeams shone brighter, and the fairies seemed gayer. And all this had been caused by the three kisses Petru had given the Fairy of the Dawn.

He passed everything safely by, and was soon seated in his saddle again. Faster than the wind, faster than thought, faster than longing, faster than hatred rode Petru. At length he dismounted, and, leaving his horses at the roadside, went on foot to the house of Venus.

The goddess Venus knew that he was coming, and went to meet him, bearing with her white bread and red wine.

'Welcome back, my prince,' said she.

'Good day, and many thanks,' replied the young man, holding out the flask containing the magic water. She received it with joy, and after a short rest Petru set forth, for he had no time to lose.

He stopped a few minutes, as he had promised, with the Goddess of Thunder, and was taking a hasty farewell of her, when she called him back.

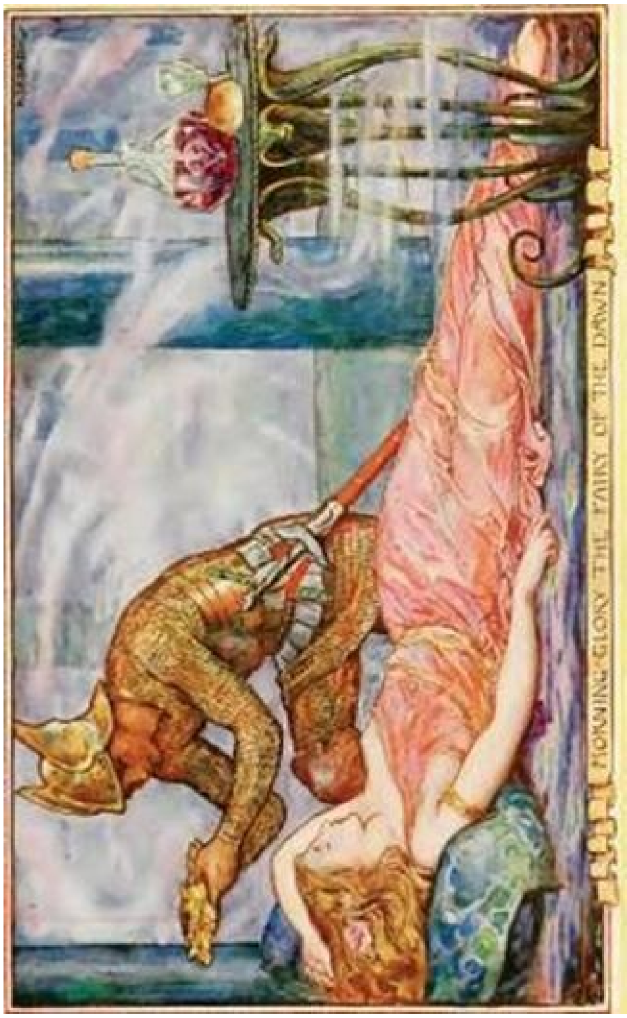
MORNING-GLORY THE FAIRY OF THE DAWN

‘Stay, I have a warning to give you,’ said she. ‘Beware of your life; make friends with no man; do not ride fast, or let the water go out of your hand; believe no one, and flee flattering tongues. Go, and take care, for the way is long, the world is bad, and you hold something very precious. But I will give you this cloth to help you. It is not much to look at, but it is enchanted, and whoever carries it will never be struck by lightning, pierced by a lance, or smitten with a sword, and the arrows will glance off his body.’

Petru thanked her and rode off, and, taking out his treasure box, inquired how matters were going at home. Not well, it said. The emperor was blind altogether now, and Florea and Costan had besought him to give the government of the kingdom into their hands; but he would not, saying that he did not mean to resign the government till he had washed his eyes from the well of the Fairy of the Dawn. Then the brothers had gone to consult old Birscha, who told them that Petru was already on his way home bearing the water. They had set out to meet him, and would try to take the magic water from him, and then claim as their reward the government of the emperor.

‘You are lying!’ cried Petru angrily, throwing the box on the ground, where it broke into a thousand pieces.

It was not long before he began to catch glimpses of his native land, and he drew rein near a bridge, the better to look at it. He was still gazing, when he heard a sound in the distance as if some one was calling hit by his name.

‘You, Petru!’ it said.

‘On! on!’ cried the horse; ‘it will fare ill with you if you stop.’

‘No, let us stop, and see who and what it is!’ answered Petru, turning his horse round, and coming face to face with his two brothers. He had forgotten the warning given him by the Goddess of Thunder, and when Costan and Florea drew near with soft and flattering words he jumped straight off his horse, and rushed to embrace them. He had a thousand questions to ask, and a thousand things to tell. But his brown horse stood sadly hanging his head.

‘Petru, my dear brother,’ at length said Florea, ‘would it not be better if we carried the water for you? Some one might try to take it from you on the road, while no one would suspect us.’

‘So it would,’ added Costan. ‘Florea speaks well.’ But Petru shook his head, and told them what the Goddess of Thunder had said, and about the cloth she had given him. And both brothers understood there was only one way in which they could kill him.

At a stone’s throw from where they stood ran a rushing stream, with clear deep pools.

‘Don’t you feel thirsty, Costan?’ asked Florea, winking at him.

‘Yes,’ replied Costan, understanding directly what was wanted. ‘Come, Petru, let us drink now we have the chance, and then we will set out on our way home. It is a good thing you have us with you, to protect you from harm.’

The horse neighed, and Petru knew what it meant, and did not go with his brothers.

No, he went home to his father, and cured his blindness; and as for his brothers, they never returned again.

(From Rumanische Marchen.)

THE ENCHANTED KNIFE

Once upon a time there lived a young man who vowed that he would never marry any girl who had not royal blood in her veins. One day he plucked up all his courage and went to the palace to ask the emperor for his daughter. The emperor was not much pleased at the thought of such a match for his only child, but being very polite, he only said:

‘Very well, my son, if you can win the princess you shall have her, and the conditions are these. In eight days you must manage to tame and bring to me three horses that have never felt a master. The first is pure white, the second a foxy-red with a black head, the third coal black with a white head and feet. And besides that, you must also bring as a present to the empress, my wife, as much gold as the three horses can carry.’

The young man listened in dismay to these words, but with an effort he thanked the emperor for his kindness and left the palace, wondering how he was to fulfil the task allotted to him. Luckily for him, the emperor’s daughter had overheard everything her father had said, and peeping through a curtain had seen the youth, and thought him handsomer than anyone she had ever beheld.

So returning hastily to her own room, she wrote him a letter which she gave to a trusty servant to deliver, begging her wooer to come to her rooms early the next day, and to undertake nothing without her advice, if he ever wished her to be his wife.

That night, when her father was asleep, she crept softly into his chamber and took out an enchanted knife from the chest where he kept his treasures, and hid it carefully in a safe place before she went to bed.

The sun had hardly risen the following morning when the princess’s nurse brought the young man to her apartments. Neither spoke for some minutes, but stood holding each other’s hands for joy, till at last they both cried out that nothing but death should part them. Then the maiden said:

‘Take my horse, and ride straight through the wood towards the sunset till you come to a hill with three peaks. When you get there, turn first to the right and then to the left, and you will find yourself in a sun meadow, where many horses are feeding. Out of these you must pick out the three described to you by my father. If they prove shy, and refuse to let you get near them, draw out your knife, and let the sun shine on it so that the whole meadow is lit up by its rays, and the horses will then approach you of their own accord, and will let you lead them away. When you have them safely, look about till you see a cypress tree, whose roots are of brass, whose boughs are of silver, and whose leaves are of gold. Go to it, and cut away the roots with your knife, and you will come to countless bags of gold. Load the horses with all they can carry, and return to my father, and tell him that you have done your task, and can claim me for your wife.'

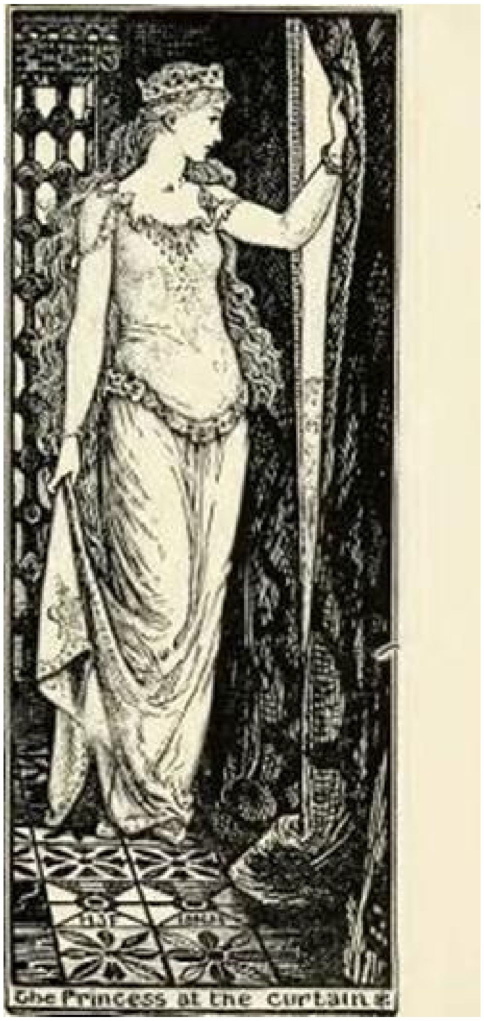

The Princess at the curtain

The princess had finished all she had to say, and now it depended on the young man to do his part. He hid the knife in the folds of his girdle, mounted his horse, and rode off in search of the meadow. This he found without much difficulty, but the horses were all so shy that they galloped away directly he approached them. Then he drew his knife, and held it up towards the sun, and directly there shone such a glory that the whole meadow was bathed in it. From all sides the horses rushed pressing round, and each one that passed him fell on its knees to do him honour.

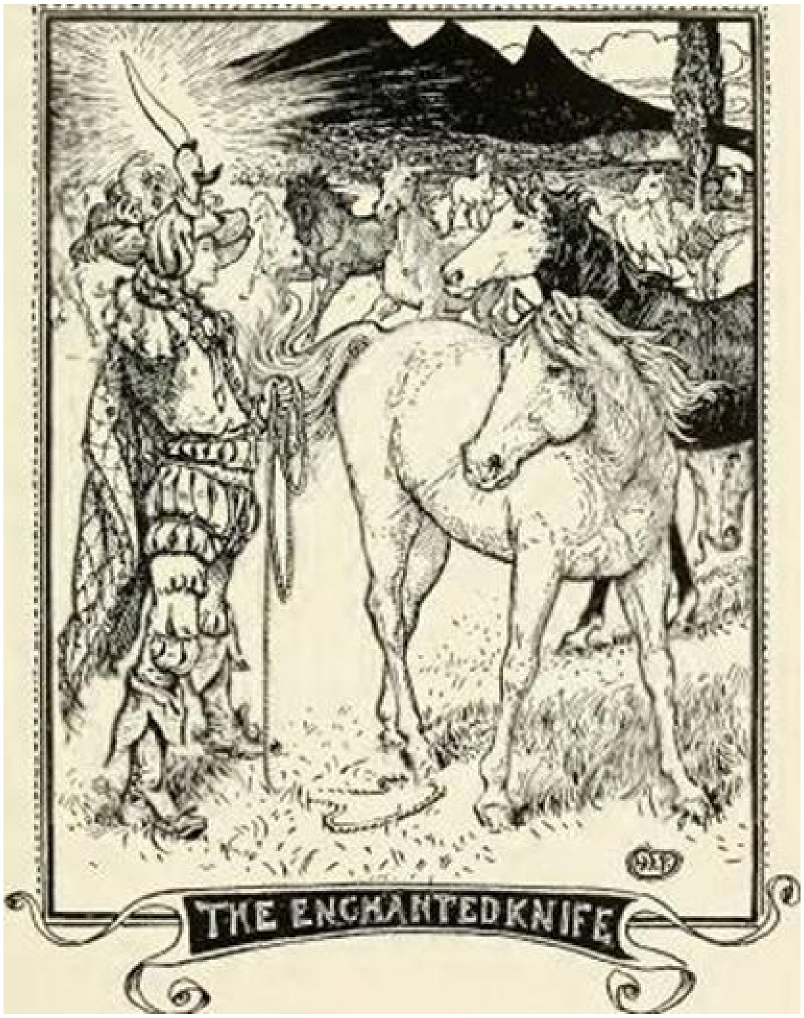

But he only chose from them all the three that the emperor had described. These he secured by a silken rope to his own horse, and then looked about for the cypress tree. It was standing by itself in one corner, and in a moment he was beside it, tearing away the earth with his knife. Deeper and deeper he dug, till far down, below the roots of brass, his knife struck upon the buried treasure, which lay heaped up in bags all around. With a great effort he lifted them from their hiding place, and laid them one by one on his horses’ backs, and when they could carry no more he led them back to the emperor. And when the emperor saw him, he wondered, but never guessed how it was the young man had been too clever for him, till the betrothal ceremony was over. Then he asked his newly made son-in-law what dowry he would require with his bride. To which the bridegroom made answer, ‘Noble emperor! all I desire is that I may have your daughter for my wife, and enjoy for ever the use of your enchanted knife.’

(Volksmarchen der Serben.)

JESPER WHO HERDED THE HARES

There was once a king who ruled over a kingdom somewhere between sunrise and sunset. It was as small as kingdoms usually were in old times, and when the king went up to the roof of his palace and took a look round he could see to the ends of it in every direction. But as it was all his own, he was very proud of it, and often wondered how it would get along without him. He had only one child, and that was a daughter, so he foresaw that she must be provided with a husband who would be fit to be king after him. Where to find one rich enough and clever enough to be a suitable match for the princess was what troubled him, and often kept him awake at night.

At last he devised a plan. He made a proclamation over all his kingdom (and asked his nearest neighbours to publish it in theirs as well) that whoever could bring him a dozen of the finest pearls the king had ever seen, and could perform certain tasks that would be set him, should have his daughter in marriage and in due time succeed to the throne. The pearls, he thought, could only be brought by a very wealthy man, and the tasks would require unusual talents to accomplish them.

There were plenty who tried to fulfil the terms which the king proposed. Rich merchants and foreign princes presented themselves one after the other, so that some days the number of them was quite annoying; but, though they could all produce magnificent pearls, not one of them could perform even the simplest of the tasks set them. Some turned up, too, who were mere adventurers, and tried to deceive the old king with imitation pearls; but he was not to be taken in so easily, and they were soon sent about their business. At the end of several weeks the stream of suitors began to fall off, and still there was no prospect of a suitable son-in-law.

Now it so happened that in a little corner of the king’s dominions, beside the sea, there lived a poor fisher, who had three sons, and their names were Peter, Paul, and Jesper. Peter and Paul were grown men, while Jesper was just coming to manhood.

The two elder brothers were much bigger and stronger than the youngest, but Jesper was far the cleverest of the three, though neither Peter nor Paul would admit this. It was a fact, however, as we shall see in the course of our story.

One day the fisherman went out fishing, and among his catch for the day he brought home three dozen oysters. When these were opened, every shell was found to contain a large and beautiful pearl. Hereupon the three brothers, at one and the same moment, fell upon the idea of offering themselves as suitors for the princess. After some discussion, it was agreed that the pearls should be divided by lot, and that each should have his chance in the order of his age: of course, if the oldest was successful the other two would be saved the trouble of trying.

Next morning Peter put his pearls in a little basket, and set off for the king's palace. He had not gone far on his way when he came upon the King of the Ants and the King of the Beetles, who, with their armies behind them, were facing each other and preparing for battle.

'Come and help me,' said the King of the Ants; 'the beetles are too big for us. I may help you some day in return.'

'I have no time to waste on other people's affairs,' said Peter; 'just fight away as best you can;' and with that he walked off and left them.

A little further on the way he met an old woman.

'Good morning, young man,' said she; 'you are early astir. What have you got in your basket?'

'Cinders,' said Peter promptly, and walked on, adding to himself, 'Take that for being so inquisitive.'

'Very well, cinders be it,' the old woman called after him, but he pretended not to hear her.

Very soon he reached the palace, and was at once brought before the king. When he took the cover off the basket, the king and all his courtiers said with one voice that these were the finest pearls they had ever seen, and they could not take their eyes off them. But then a strange thing happened: the pearls began to lose their whiteness and grew quite dim in colour; then they grew blacker and blacker till at last they were just like so many cinders. Peter was so amazed that he could say nothing for himself, but the king said quite enough for both, and Peter was glad to get away home again as fast as his legs would carry him. To his father and brothers, however, he gave no account of his attempt, except that it had been a failure.

Next day Paul set out to try his luck. He soon came upon the King of the Ants and the King of the Beetles, who with their armies had encamped on the field of battle all night, and were ready to begin the fight again.

'Come and help me,' said the King of the Ants; 'we got the worst of it yesterday. I may help you some day in return.'

'I don't care though you get the worst of it to-day too,' said Paul. 'I have more important business on hand than mixing myself up in your quarrels.'

So he walked on, and presently the same old woman met him. 'Good morning,' said she; 'what have YOU got in your basket?'

‘Cinders,’ said Paul, who was quite as insolent as his brother, and quite as anxious to teach other people good manners.

‘Very well, cinders be it,’ the old woman shouted after him, but Paul neither looked back nor answered her. He thought more of what she said, however, after his pearls also turned to cinders before the eyes of king and court: then he lost no time in getting home again, and was very sulky when asked how he had succeeded.

The third day came, and with it came Jesper’s turn to try his fortune. He got up and had his breakfast, while Peter and Paul lay in bed and made rude remarks, telling him that he would come back quicker than he went, for if they had failed it could not be supposed that he would succeed. Jesper made no reply, but put his pearls in the little basket and walked off.

The King of the Ants and the King of the Beetles were again marshalling their hosts, but the ants were greatly reduced in numbers, and had little hope of holding out that day.

‘Come and help us,’ said their king to Jesper, ‘or we shall be completely defeated. I may help you some day in return.’

Now Jesper had always heard the ants spoken of as clever and industrious little creatures, while he never heard anyone say a good word for the beetles, so he agreed to give the wished-for help. At the first charge he made, the ranks of the beetles broke and fled in dismay, and those escaped best that were nearest a hole, and could get into it before Jesper’s boots came down upon them. In a few minutes the ants had the field all to themselves; and their king made quite an eloquent speech to Jesper, thanking him for the service he had done them, and promising to assist him in any difficulty.

‘Just call on me when you want me,’ he said, ‘where-ever you are. I’m never far away from anywhere, and if I can possibly help you, I shall not fail to do it.’

Jesper was inclined to laugh at this, but he kept a grave face, said he would remember the offer, and walked on. At a turn of the road he suddenly came upon the old woman. ‘Good morning,’ said she; ‘what have YOU got in your basket?’

‘Pearls,’ said Jesper; ‘I’m going to the palace to win the princess with them.’ And in case she might not believe him, he lifted the cover and let her see them.

‘Beautiful,’ said the old woman; ‘very beautiful indeed; but they will go a very little way towards winning the princess, unless you can also perform the tasks that are set you. However,’ she said, ‘I see you have brought something with you to eat. Won’t you give that to me: you are sure to get a good dinner at the palace.’

‘Yes, of course,’ said Jesper, ‘I hadn’t thought of that’; and he handed over the whole of his lunch to the old woman.

He had already taken a few steps on the way again, when the old woman called him back.

‘Here,’ she said; ‘take this whistle in return for your lunch. It isn’t much to look at, but if you blow it, anything that you have lost or that has been taken from you will find its way back to you in a moment.’

Jesper thanked her for the whistle, though he did not see of what use it was to be to him just then, and held on his way to the palace.

When Jesper presented his pearls to the king there were exclamations of wonder and delight from everyone who saw them. It was not pleasant, however, to discover that Jesper was a mere fisher-lad; that wasn’t the kind of son-in-law that the king had expected, and he said so to the queen.

‘Never mind,’ said she, ‘you can easily set him such tasks as he will never be able to perform: we shall soon get rid of him.’

‘Yes, of course,’ said the king; ‘really I forget things nowadays, with all the bustle we have had of late.’

That day Jesper dined with the king and queen and their nobles, and at night was put into a bedroom grander than anything of the kind he had ever seen. It was all so new to him that he could not sleep a wink, especially as he was always wondering what kind of tasks would be set him to do, and whether he would be able to perform them. In spite of the softness of the bed, he was very glad when morning came at last.

After breakfast was over, the king said to Jesper, ‘Just come with me, and I’ll show you what you must do first.’ He led him out to the barn, and there in the middle of the floor was a large pile of grain. ‘Here,’ said the king, ‘you have a mixed heap of wheat, barley, oats, and rye, a sackful of each. By an hour before sunset you must have these sorted out into four heaps, and if a single grain is found to be in a wrong heap you have no further chance of marrying my daughter. I shall lock the door, so that no one can get in to assist you, and I shall return at the appointed time to see how you have succeeded.’

The king walked off, and Jesper looked in despair at the task before him. Then he sat down and tried what he could do at it, but it was soon very clear that single-handed he could never hope to accomplish it in the time. Assistance was out of the question — unless, he suddenly thought — unless the King of the Ants could help. On him he began to call, and before many minutes had passed that royal personage made his appearance. Jesper explained the trouble he was in.

‘Is that all?’ said the ant; ‘we shall soon put that to rights.’ He gave the royal signal, and in a minute or two a stream of ants came pouring into the barn, who under the king’s orders set to work to separate the grain into the proper heaps.

Jesper watched them for a while, but through the continual movement of the little creatures, and his not having slept during the previous night, he soon fell sound asleep. When he woke again, the king had just come into the barn, and was amazed to find that not only was the task accomplished, but that Jesper had found time to take a nap as well.

‘Wonderful,’ said he; ‘I couldn’t have believed it possible. However, the hardest is yet to come, as you will see to-morrow.’

Jesper thought so too when the next day’s task was set before him. The king’s gamekeepers had caught a hundred live hares, which were to be let loose in a large meadow, and there Jesper must herd them all day, and bring them safely home in the evening: if even one were missing, he must give up all thought of marrying the princess. Before he had quite grasped the fact that this was an impossible task, the keepers had opened the sacks in which the hares were brought to the field, and, with a whisk of the short tail and a flap of the long ears, each one of the hundred flew in a different direction.

‘Now,’ said the king, ‘as he walked away, ‘let’s see what your cleverness can do here.’

Jesper stared round him in bewilderment, and having nothing better to do with his hands, thrust them into his pockets, as he was in the habit of doing. Here he found something which turned out to be the whistle given to him by the old woman. He remembered what she had said about the virtues of the whistle, but was rather doubtful whether its powers would extend to a hundred hares, each of which had gone in a different direction and might be several miles distant by this time. However, he blew the whistle, and in a few minutes the hares came bounding through the hedge on all the four sides of the field, and before long were all sitting round him in a circle. After that, Jesper allowed them to run about as they pleased, so long as they stayed in the field.

The king had told one of the keepers to hang about for a little and see what became of Jesper, not doubting, however, that as soon as he saw the coast clear he would use his legs to the best advantage, and never show face at the palace again. It was therefore with great surprise and annoyance that he now learned of the mysterious return of the hares and the likelihood of Jesper carrying out his task with success.

‘One of them must be got out of his hands by hook or crook,’ said he. ‘I’ll go and see the queen about it; she’s good at devising plans.’

A little later, a girl in a shabby dress came into the field and walked up to Jesper.

‘Do give me one of those hares,’ she said; ‘we have just got visitors who are going to stay to dinner, and there’s nothing we can give them to eat.’

‘I can’t,’ said Jesper. ‘For one thing, they’re not mine; for another, a great deal depends on my having them all here in the evening.’

But the girl (and she was a very pretty girl, though so shabbily dressed) begged so hard for one of them that at last he said:

‘Very well; give me a kiss and you shall have one of them.’

He could see that she didn’t quite care for this, but she consented to the bargain, and gave him the kiss, and went away with a hare in her apron. Scarcely had she got outside the field, however, when Jesper blew his whistle, and immediately the hare wriggled out of its prison like an eel, and went back to its master at the top of its speed.

Not long after this the hare-herd had another visit. This time it was a stout old woman in the dress of a peasant, who also was after a hare to provide a dinner for unexpected visitors. Jesper again refused, but the old lady was so pressing, and would take no refusal, that at last he said:

‘Very well, you shall have a hare, and pay nothing for it either, if you will only walk round me on tiptoe, look up to the sky, and cackle like a hen.’

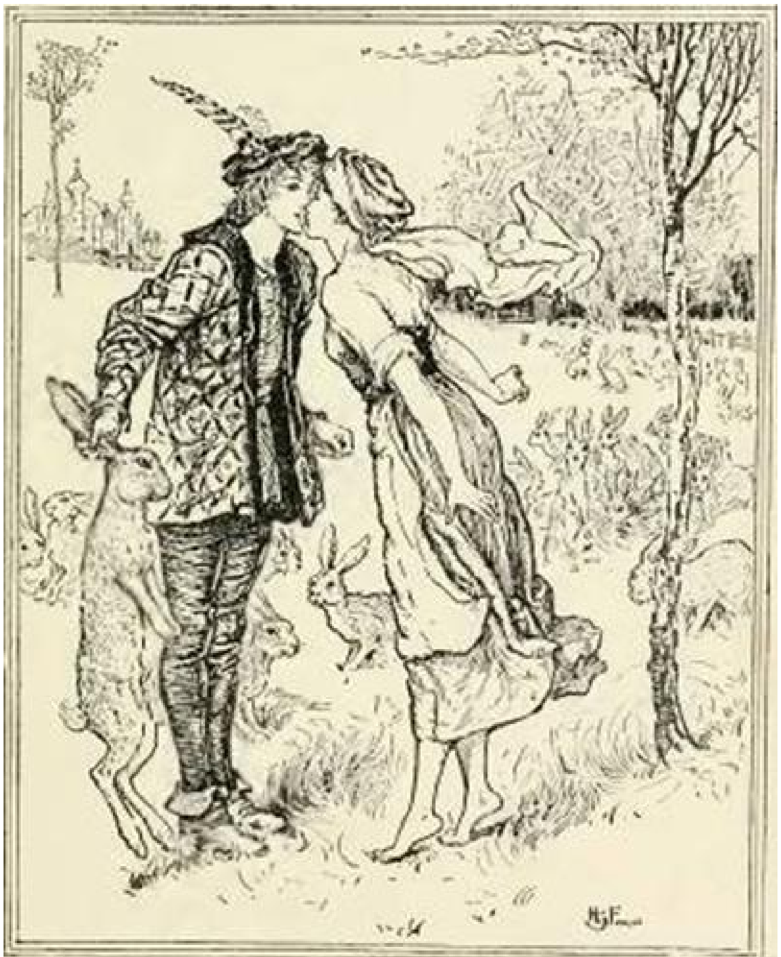

A hare for a kiss

‘Fie,’ said she; ‘what a ridiculous thing to ask anyone to do; just think what the neighbours would say if they saw me. They would think I had taken leave of my senses.’

‘Just as you like,’ said Jesper; ‘you know best whether you want the hare or not.’

There was no help for it, and a pretty figure the old lady made in carrying out her task; the cackling wasn’t very well done, but Jesper said it would do, and gave her the hare. As soon as she had left the field, the whistle was sounded again, and back came long-legs-and-ears at a marvellous speed.

The next to appear on the same errand was a fat old fellow in the dress of a groom: it was the royal livery he wore, and he plainly thought a good deal of himself.

‘Young man,’ said he, ‘I want one of those hares; name your price, but I MUST have one of them.’

‘All right,’ said Jesper; ‘you can have one at an easy rate. Just stand on your head, whack your heels together, and cry “Hurrah,” and the hare is yours.’

‘Eh, what!’ said the old fellow; ‘ME stand on my head, what an idea!’

‘Oh, very well,’ said Jesper, ‘you needn’t unless you like, you know; but then you won’t get the hare.’

It went very much against the grain, one could see, but after some efforts the old fellow had his head on the grass and his heels in the air; the whacking and the ‘Hurrah’ were rather feeble, but Jesper was not very exacting, and the hare was handed over. Of course, it wasn’t long in coming back again, like the others.

Evening came, and home came Jesper with the hundred hares behind him. Great was the wonder over all the palace, and the king and queen seemed very much put out, but it was noticed that the princess actually smiled to Jesper.

‘Well, well,’ said the king; ‘you have done that very well indeed. If you are as successful with a little task which I shall give you to-morrow we shall consider the matter settled, and you shall marry the princess.’

Next day it was announced that the task would be performed in the great hall of the palace, and everyone was invited to come and witness it. The king and queen sat on their thrones, with the princess beside them, and the lords and ladies were all round the hall. At a sign from the king, two servants carried in a large empty tub, which they set down in the open space before the throne, and Jesper was told to stand beside it.

‘Now,’ said the king, ‘you must tell us as many undoubted truths as will fill that tub, or you can’t have the princess.’

‘But how are we to know when the tub is full?’ said Jesper.

‘Don’t you trouble about that,’ said the king; ‘that’s my part of the business.’

This seemed to everybody present rather unfair, but no one liked to be the first to say so, and Jesper had to put the best face he could on the matter, and begin his story.

‘Yesterday,’ he said, ‘when I was herding the hares, there came to me a girl, in a shabby dress, and begged me to give her one of them. She got the hare, but she had to give me a kiss for it; AND THAT GIRL WAS THE PRINCESS. Isn’t that true?’ said he, looking at her.

The princess blushed and looked very uncomfortable, but had to admit that it was true.

‘That hasn’t filled much of the tub,’ said the king. ‘Go on again.’

‘After that,’ said Jesper, ‘a stout old woman, in a peasant’s dress, came and begged for a hare. Before she got it, she had to walk round me on tiptoe, turn up her eyes, and cackle like a hen; AND THAT OLD WOMAN WAS THE QUEEN. Isn’t that true, now?’

The queen turned very red and hot, but couldn’t deny it.

‘H-m,’ said the king; ‘that is something, but the tub isn’t full yet.’ To the queen he whispered, ‘I didn’t think you would be such a fool.’

‘What did YOU do?’ she whispered in return.

‘Do you suppose I would do anything for HIM?’ said the king, and then hurriedly ordered Jesper to go on.

‘In the next place,’ said Jesper, ‘there came a fat old fellow on the same errand. He was very proud and dignified, but in order to get the hare he actually stood on his head, whacked his heels together, and cried “Hurrah”; and that old fellow was the — —’

‘Stop, stop,’ shouted the king; ‘you needn’t say another word; the tub is full.’ Then all the court applauded, and the king and queen accepted Jesper as their son-in-law, and the princess was very well pleased, for by this time she had quite fallen in love with him, because he was so handsome and so clever. When the old king got time to think over it, he was quite convinced that his kingdom would be safe in Jesper’s hands if he looked after the people as well as he herded the hares.

(Scandinavian.)

THE UNDERGROUND WORKERS

On a bitter night somewhere between Christmas and the New Year, a man set out to walk to the neighbouring village. It was not many miles off, but the snow was so thick that there were no roads, or walls, or hedges left to guide him, and very soon he lost his way altogether, and was glad to get shelter from the wind behind a thick juniper tree. Here he resolved to spend the night, thinking that when the sun rose he would be able to see his path again.

So he tucked his legs snugly under him like a hedgehog, rolled himself up in his sheepskin, and went to sleep. How long he slept, I cannot tell you, but after awhile he became aware that some one was gently shaking him, while a stranger whispered, ‘My good man, get up! If you lie there any more, you will be buried in the snow, and no one will ever know what became of you.’

The sleeper slowly raised his head from his furs, and opened his heavy eyes. Near him stood a long thin man, holding in his hand a young fir tree taller than himself. ‘Come with me,’ said the man, ‘a little way off we have made a large fire, and you will rest far better there than out upon this moor.’ The sleeper did not wait to be asked twice, but rose at once and followed the stranger. The snow was falling so fast that he could not see three steps in front of him, till the stranger waved his staff, when the drifts parted before them. Very soon they reached a wood, and saw the friendly glow of a fire.

‘What is your name?’ asked the stranger, suddenly turning round.

‘I am called Hans, the son of Long Hans,’ said the peasant.

In front of the fire three men were sitting clothed in white, just as if it was summer, and for about thirty feet all round winter had been banished. The moss was dry and the plants green, while the grass seemed all alive with the hum of bees and cockchafers. But above the noise the son of Long Hans could hear the whistling of the wind and the crackling of the branches as they fell beneath the weight of the snow.

‘Well! you son of Long Hans, isn’t this more comfortable than your juniper bush?’ laughed the stranger, and for answer Hans replied he could not thank his friend enough for having brought him here, and, throwing off his sheepskin, rolled it up as a pillow. Then, after a hot drink which warmed both their hearts, they lay down on the ground. The stranger talked for a little to the other men in a language Hans did not understand, and after listening for a short time he once more fell asleep.

When he awoke, neither wood nor fire was to be seen, and he did not know where he was. He rubbed his eyes, and began to recall the events of the night, thinking he must have been dreaming; but for all that, he could not make out how he came to be in this place.

Suddenly a loud noise struck on his ear, and he felt the earth tremble beneath his feet. Hans listened for a moment, then resolved to go towards the place where the sound came from, hoping he might come across some human being. He found himself at length at the mouth of a rocky cave in which a fire seemed burning. He entered, and saw a huge forge, and a crowd of men in front of it, blowing bellows and wielding hammers, and to each anvil were seven men, and a set of more comical smiths could not be found if you searched all the world through! Their heads were bigger than their little bodies, and their hammers twice the size of themselves, but the strongest men on earth could not have handled their iron clubs more stoutly or given lustier blows.

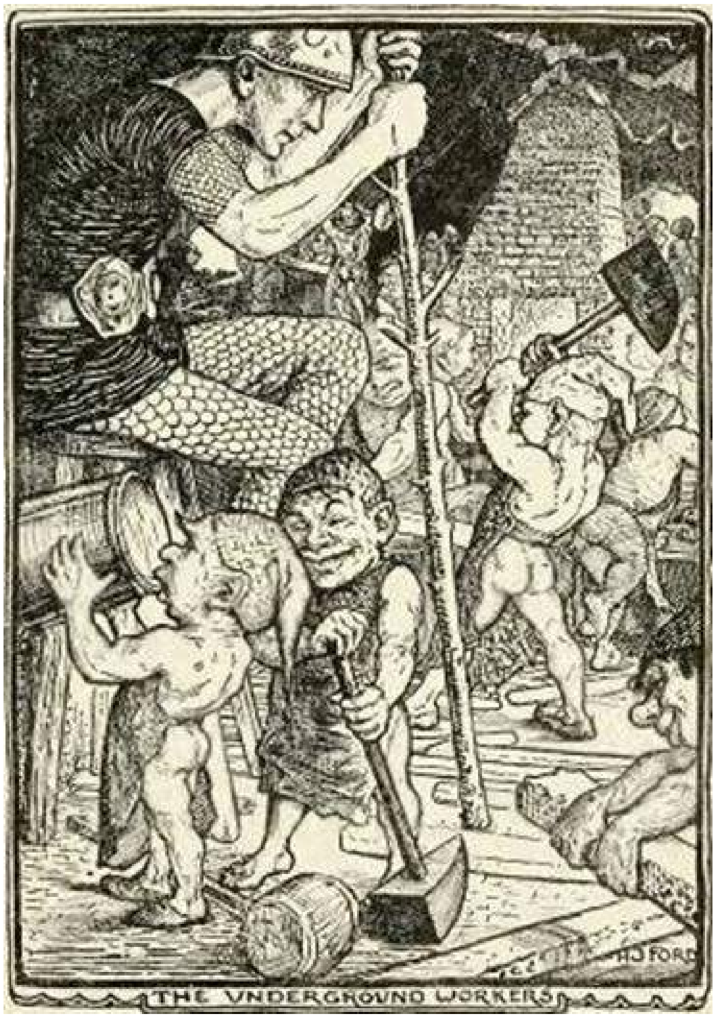

THE UNDERGROUND WORKERS

The little blacksmiths were clad in leather aprons, which covered them from their necks to their feet in front, and left their backs naked. On a high stool against the wall sat the man with the pinewood staff, watching sharply the way the little fellows did their work, and near him stood a large can, from which every now and then the workers would come and take a drink. The master no longer wore the white garments of the day before, but a black jerkin, held in its place by a leathern girdle with huge clasps.

From time to time he would give his workmen a sign with his staff, for it was useless to speak amid such a noise.

If any of them had noticed that there was a stranger present they took no heed of him, but went on with what they were doing. After some hours' hard labour came the time for rest, and they all flung their hammers to the ground and trooped out of the cave.

Then the master got down from his seat and said to Hans:

'I saw you come in, but the work was pressing, and I could not stop to speak to you. To-day you must be my guest, and I will show you something of the way in which I live. Wait here for a moment, while I lay aside these dirty clothes.' With these words he unlocked a door in the cave, and bade Hans pass in before him.

Oh, what riches and treasures met Hans' astonished eyes! Gold and silver bars lay piled on the floor, and glittered so that you could not look at them! Hans thought he would count them for fun, and had already reached the five hundred and seventieth when his host returned and cried, laughing:

'Do not try to count them, it would take too long; choose some of the bars from the heap, as I should like to make you a present of them.'

Hans did not wait to be asked twice, and stooped to pick up a bar of gold, but though he put forth all his strength he could not even move it with both hands, still less lift it off the ground.

'Why, you have no more power than a flea,' laughed the host; 'you will have to content yourself with feasting your eyes upon them!'

So he bade Hans follow him through other rooms, till they entered one bigger than a church, filled, like the rest, with gold and silver. Hans wondered to see these vast riches, which might have bought all the kingdoms of the world, and lay buried, useless, he thought, to anyone.

'What is the reason,' he asked of his guide, 'that you gather up these treasures here, where they can do good to nobody? If they fell into the hands of men, everyone would be rich, and none need work or suffer hunger.'

'And it is exactly for that reason,' answered he, 'that I must keep these riches out of their way. The whole world would sink to idleness if men were not forced to earn their daily bread. It is only through work and care that man can ever hope to be good for anything.'

Hans stared at these words, and at last he begged that his host would tell him what use it was to anybody that this gold and silver should lie mouldering there, and the owner of it be continually trying to increase his treasure, which already overflowed his store rooms.

'I am not really a man,' replied his guide, 'though I have the outward form of one, but one of those beings to whom is given the care of the world. It is my task and that of my workmen to prepare under the earth the gold and silver, a small portion of which finds its way every year to the upper world, but only just enough to help them carry on their business. To none comes wealth without trouble: we must first dig out the gold and mix the grains with earth, clay, and sand. Then, after long and hard seeking, it will be found in this state, by those who have good luck or much patience. But, my friend, the hour of dinner is at hand. If you wish to remain in this place, and feast your eyes on this gold, then stay till I call you.'

In his absence Hans wandered from one treasure chamber to another, sometimes trying to break off a little lump of gold, but never able to do it. After awhile his host came back, but so changed that Hans could not believe it was really he. His silken clothes were of the brightest flame colour, richly trimmed with gold fringes and lace; a golden girdle was round his waist, while his head was encircled with a crown of gold, and precious stones twinkled about him like stars in a winter's night, and in place of his wooden stick he held a finely worked golden staff.

The lord of all this treasure locked the doors and put the keys in his pocket, then led Hans into another room, where dinner was laid for them. Table and seats were all of silver, while the dishes and plates were of solid gold. Directly they sat down, a dozen little servants appeared to wait on them, which they did so cleverly and so quickly that Hans could hardly believe they had no wings. As they did not reach as high as the table, they were often obliged to jump and hop right on to the top to get at the dishes. Everything was new to Hans, and though he was rather bewildered he enjoyed himself very much, especially when the man with the golden crown began to tell him many things he had never heard of before.

'Between Christmas and the New Year,' said he, 'I often amuse myself by wandering about the earth watching the doings of men and learning something about them. But as far as I have seen and heard I cannot speak well of them. The greater part of them are always quarrelling and complaining of each other's faults, while nobody thinks of his own.’

Hans tried to deny the truth of these words, but he could not do it, and sat silent, hardly listening to what his friend was saying. Then he went to sleep in his chair, and knew nothing of what was happening.

Wonderful dreams came to him during his sleep, where the bars of gold continually hovered before his eyes. He felt stronger than he had ever felt during his waking moments, and lifted two bars quite easily on to his back. He did this so often that at length his strength seemed exhausted, and he sank almost breathless on the ground. Then he heard the sound of cheerful voices, and the song of the blacksmiths as they blew their bellows — he even felt as if he saw the sparks flashing before his eyes. Stretching himself, he awoke slowly, and here he was in the green forest, and instead of the glow of the fire in the underworld the sun was streaming on him, and he sat up wondering why he felt so strange.

At length his memory came back to him, and as he called to mind all the wonderful things he had seen he tried in vain to make them agree with those that happen every day. After thinking it over till he was nearly mad, he tried at last to believe that one night between Christmas and the New Year he had met a stranger in the forest, and had slept all night in his company before a big fire; the next day they had dined together, and had drunk a great deal more than was good for them — in short, he had spent two whole days revelling with another man. But here, with the full tide of summer around him, he could hardly accept his own explanation, and felt that he must have been the plaything or sport of some magician.

Near him, in the full sunlight, were the traces of a dead fire, and when he drew close to it he saw that what he had taken for ashes was really fine silver dust, and that the half burnt firewood was made of gold.

Oh, how lucky Hans thought himself; but where should he get a sack to carry his treasure home before anyone else found it? But necessity is the mother of invention: Hans threw off his fur coat, gathered up the silver ashes so carefully in it that none remained behind, laid the gold sticks on top, and tied up the bag thus made with his girdle, so that nothing should fall out. The load was not, in point of fact, very heavy, although it seemed so to his imagination, and he moved slowly along till he found a safe hiding-place for it.

In this way Hans suddenly became rich — rich enough to buy a property of his own. But being a prudent man, he finally decided that it would be best for him to leave his old neighbourhood and look for a home in a distant part of the country, where nobody knew anything about him. It did not take him long to find what he wanted, and after he had paid for it there was plenty of money left over.

When he was settled, he married a pretty girl who lived near by, and had some children, to whom on his death-bed he told the story of the lord of the underworld, and how he had made Hans rich.

(Ehstnische Marchen.)

THE HISTORY OF DWARF LONG NOSE

It is a great mistake to think that fairies, witches, magicians, and such people lived only in Eastern countries and in such times as those of the Caliph Haroun Al-Raschid. Fairies and their like belong to every country and every age, and no doubt we should see plenty of them now — if we only knew how.

In a large town in Germany there lived, some couple of hundred years ago, a cobbler and his wife. They were poor and hard-working. The man sat all day in a little stall at the street corner and mended any shoes that were brought him. His wife sold the fruit and vegetables they grew in their garden in the Market Place, and as she was always neat and clean and her goods were temptingly spread out she had plenty of customers.

The couple had one boy called Jem. A handsome, pleasant-faced boy of twelve, and tall for his age. He used to sit by his mother in the market and would carry home what people bought from her, for which they often gave him a pretty flower, or a slice of cake, or even some small coin.

One day Jem and his mother sat as usual in the Market Place with plenty of nice herbs and vegetables spread out on the board, and in some smaller baskets early pears, apples, and apricots. Jem cried his wares at the top of his voice:

‘This way, gentlemen! See these lovely cabbages and these fresh herbs! Early apples, ladies; early pears and apricots, and all cheap. Come, buy, buy!’

As he cried an old woman came across the Market Place. She looked very torn and ragged, and had a small sharp face, all wrinkled, with red eyes, and a thin hooked nose which nearly met her chin. She leant on a tall stick and limped and shuffled and stumbled along as if she were going to fall on her nose at any moment.

In this fashion she came along till she got to the stall where Jem and his mother were, and there she stopped.

‘Are you Hannah the herb seller?’ she asked in a croaky voice as her head shook to and fro.

‘Yes, I am,’ was the answer. ‘Can I serve you?’

‘We’ll see; we’ll see! Let me look at those herbs. I wonder if you’ve got what I want,’ said the old woman as she thrust a pair of hideous brown hands into the herb basket, and began turning over all the neatly packed herbs with her skinny fingers, often holding them up to her nose and sniffing at them.

The cobbler’s wife felt much disgusted at seeing her wares treated like this, but she dared not speak. When the old hag had turned over the whole basket she muttered, ‘Bad stuff, bad stuff; much better fifty years ago — all bad.’

This made Jem very angry

‘You are a very rude old woman,’ he cried out. ‘First you mess all our nice herbs about with your horrid brown fingers and sniff at them with your long nose till no one else will care to buy them, and then you say it’s all bad stuff, though the duke’s cook himself buys all his herbs from us.’

The old woman looked sharply at the saucy boy, laughed unpleasantly, and said:

‘So you don’t like my long nose, sonny? Well, you shall have one yourself, right down to your chin.’

As she spoke she shuffled towards the hamper of cabbages, took up one after another, squeezed them hard, and threw them back, muttering again, ‘Bad stuff, bad stuff.’

‘Don’t waggle your head in that horrid way,’ begged Jem anxiously. ‘Your neck is as thin as a cabbage-stalk, and it might easily break and your head fall into the basket, and then who would buy anything?’

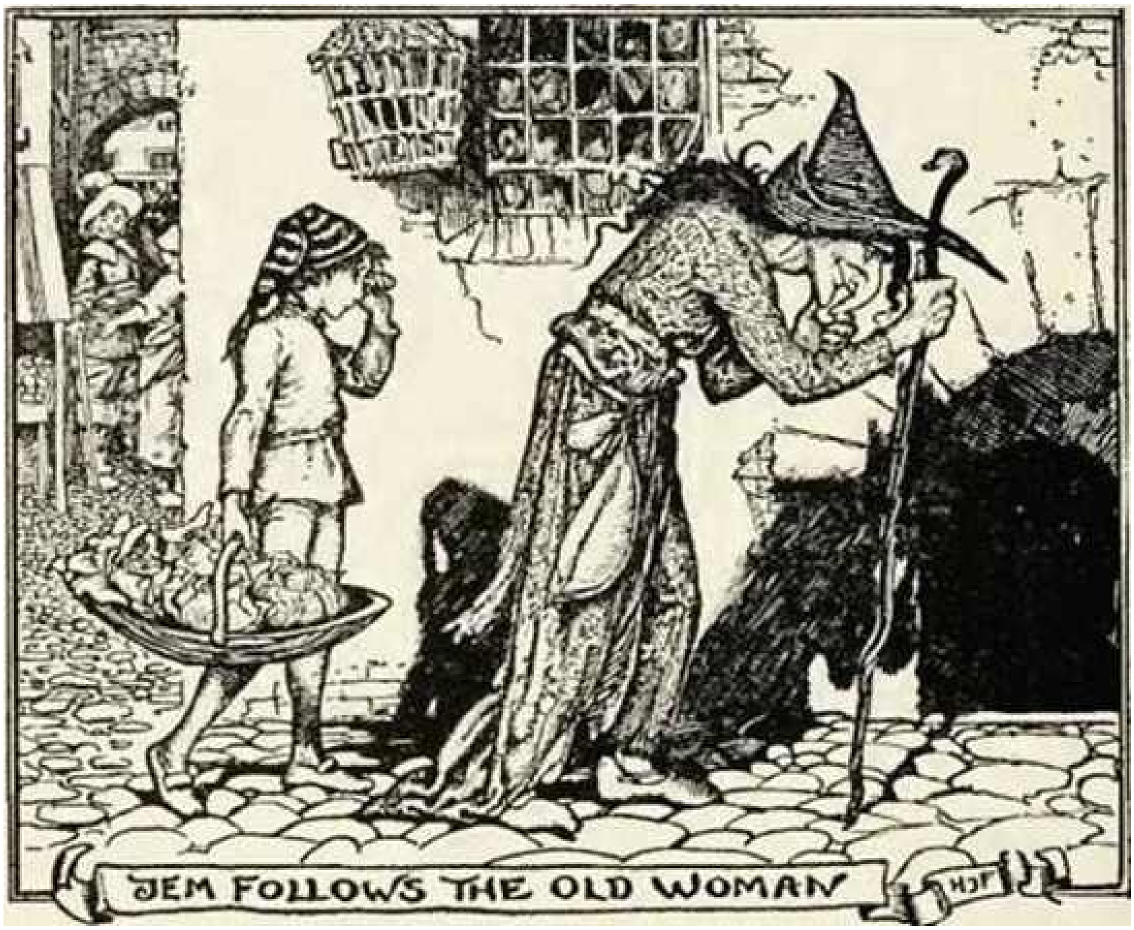

JEM FOLLOWS THE OLD WOMAN

‘Don’t you like thin necks?’ laughed the old woman. ‘Then you sha’n’t have any, but a head stuck close between your shoulders so that it may be quite sure not to fall off.'

'Don't talk such nonsense to the child,' said the mother at last.

'If you wish to buy, please make haste, as you are keeping other customers away.'

'Very well, I will do as you ask,' said the old woman, with an angry look. 'I will buy these six cabbages, but, as you see, I can only walk with my stick and can carry nothing. Let your boy carry them home for me and I'll pay him for his trouble.'

The little fellow didn't like this, and began to cry, for he was afraid of the old woman, but his mother ordered him to go, for she thought it wrong not to help such a weakly old creature; so, still crying, he gathered the cabbages into a basket and followed the old woman across the Market Place.

It took her more than half an hour to get to a distant part of the little town, but at last she stopped in front of a small tumble-down house. She drew a rusty old hook from her pocket and stuck it into a little hole in the door, which suddenly flew open. How surprised Jem was when they went in! The house was splendidly furnished, the walls and ceiling of marble, the furniture of ebony inlaid with gold and precious stones, the floor of such smooth slippery glass that the little fellow tumbled down more than once.

The old woman took out a silver whistle and blew it till the sound rang through the house. Immediately a lot of guinea pigs came running down the stairs, but Jem thought it rather odd that they all walked on their hind legs, wore nutshells for shoes, and men's clothes, whilst even their hats were put on in the newest fashion.

'Where are my slippers, lazy crew?' cried the old woman, and hit about with her stick. 'How long am I to stand waiting here?'

They rushed upstairs again and returned with a pair of cocoa nuts lined with leather, which she put on her feet. Now all limping and shuffling was at an end. She threw away her stick and walked briskly across the glass floor, drawing little Jem after her. At last she paused in a room which looked almost like a kitchen, it was so full of pots and pans, but the tables were of mahogany and the sofas and chairs covered with the richest stuffs.

'Sit down,' said the old woman pleasantly, and she pushed Jem into a corner of a sofa and put a table close in front of him. 'Sit down, you've had a long walk and a heavy load to carry, and I must give you something for your trouble. Wait a bit, and I'll give you some nice soup, which you'll remember as long as you live.'

So saying, she whistled again. First came in guinea pigs in men’s clothing. They had tied on large kitchen aprons, and in their belts were stuck carving knives and sauce ladles and such things. After them hopped in a number of squirrels. They too walked on their hind legs, wore full Turkish trousers, and little green velvet caps on their heads. They seemed to be the scullions, for they clambered up the walls and brought down pots and pans, eggs, flour, butter, and herbs, which they carried to the stove. Here the old woman was bustling about, and Jem could see that she was cooking something very special for him. At last the broth began to bubble and boil, and she drew off the saucepan and poured its contents into a silver bowl, which she set before Jem.

‘There, my boy,’ said she, ‘eat this soup and then you’ll have everything which pleased you so much about me. And you shall be a clever cook too, but the real herb — no, the REAL herb you’ll never find. Why had your mother not got it in her basket?’

The child could not think what she was talking about, but he quite understood the soup, which tasted most delicious. His mother had often given him nice things, but nothing had ever seemed so good as this. The smell of the herbs and spices rose from the bowl, and the soup tasted both sweet and sharp at the same time, and was very strong. As he was finishing it the guinea pigs lit some Arabian incense, which gradually filled the room with clouds of blue vapour. They grew thicker and thicker and the scent nearly overpowered the boy. He reminded himself that he must get back to his mother, but whenever he tried to rouse himself to go he sank back again drowsily, and at last he fell sound asleep in the corner of the sofa.

Strange dreams came to him. He thought the old woman took off all his clothes and wrapped him up in a squirrel skin, and that he went about with the other squirrels and guinea pigs, who were all very pleasant and well mannered, and waited on the old woman.

First he learned to clean her cocoa-nut shoes with oil and to rub them up. Then he learnt to catch the little sun moths and rub them through the finest sieves, and the flour from them he made into soft bread for the toothless old woman.

In this way he passed from one kind of service to another, spending a year in each, till in the fourth year he was promoted to the kitchen. Here he worked his way up from under-scullion to head-pastrycook, and reached the greatest perfection. He could make all the most difficult dishes, and two hundred different kinds of patties, soup flavoured with every sort of herb — he had learnt it all, and learnt it well and quickly.

When he had lived seven years with the old woman she ordered him one day, as she was going out, to kill and pluck a chicken, stuff it with herbs, and have it very nicely roasted by the time she got back. He did this quite according to rule. He wrung the chicken’s neck, plunged it into boiling water, carefully plucked out all the feathers, and rubbed the skin nice and smooth. Then he went to fetch the herbs to stuff it with. In the store-room he noticed a half-opened cupboard which he did not remember having seen before. He peeped in and saw a lot of baskets from which came a strong and pleasant smell. He opened one and found a very uncommon herb in it. The stems and leaves were a bluish green, and above them was a little flower of a deep bright red, edged with yellow. He gazed at the flower, smelt it, and found it gave the same strong strange perfume which came from the soup the old woman had made him. But the smell was so sharp that he began to sneeze again and again, and at last — he woke up!

There he lay on the old woman’s sofa and stared about him in surprise. ‘Well, what odd dreams one does have to be sure!’ he said to himself. ‘Why, I could have sworn I had been a squirrel, a companion of guinea pigs and such creatures, and had become a great cook, too. How mother will laugh when I tell her! But won’t she scold me, though, for sleeping away here in a strange house, instead of helping her at market!’

He jumped up and prepared to go: all his limbs still seemed quite stiff with his long sleep, especially his neck, for he could not move his head easily, and he laughed at his own stupidity at being still so drowsy that he kept knocking his nose against the wall or cupboards. The squirrels and guinea pigs ran whimpering after him, as though they would like to go too, and he begged them to come when he reached the door, but they all turned and ran quickly back into the house again.

The part of the town was out of the way, and Jem did not know the many narrow streets in it and was puzzled by their windings and by the crowd of people, who seemed excited about some show. From what he heard, he fancied they were going to see a dwarf, for he heard them call out: ‘Just look at the ugly dwarf!’ ‘What a long nose he has, and see how his head is stuck in between his shoulders, and only look at his ugly brown hands!’ If he had not been in such a hurry to get back to his mother, he would have gone too, for he loved shows with giants and dwarfs and the like.

He was quite puzzled when he reached the market-place. There sat his mother, with a good deal of fruit still in her baskets, so he felt he could not have slept so very long, but it struck him that she was sad, for she did not call to the passers-by, but sat with her head resting on her hand, and as he came nearer he thought she looked paler than usual.

He hesitated what to do, but at last he slipped behind her, laid a hand on her arm, and said: ‘Mammy, what’s the matter? Are you angry with me?’

She turned round quickly and jumped up with a cry of horror.

‘What do you want, you hideous dwarf?’ she cried; ‘get away; I can’t bear such tricks.’

‘But, mother dear, what’s the matter with you?’ repeated Jem, quite frightened. ‘You can’t be well. Why do you want to drive your son away?’

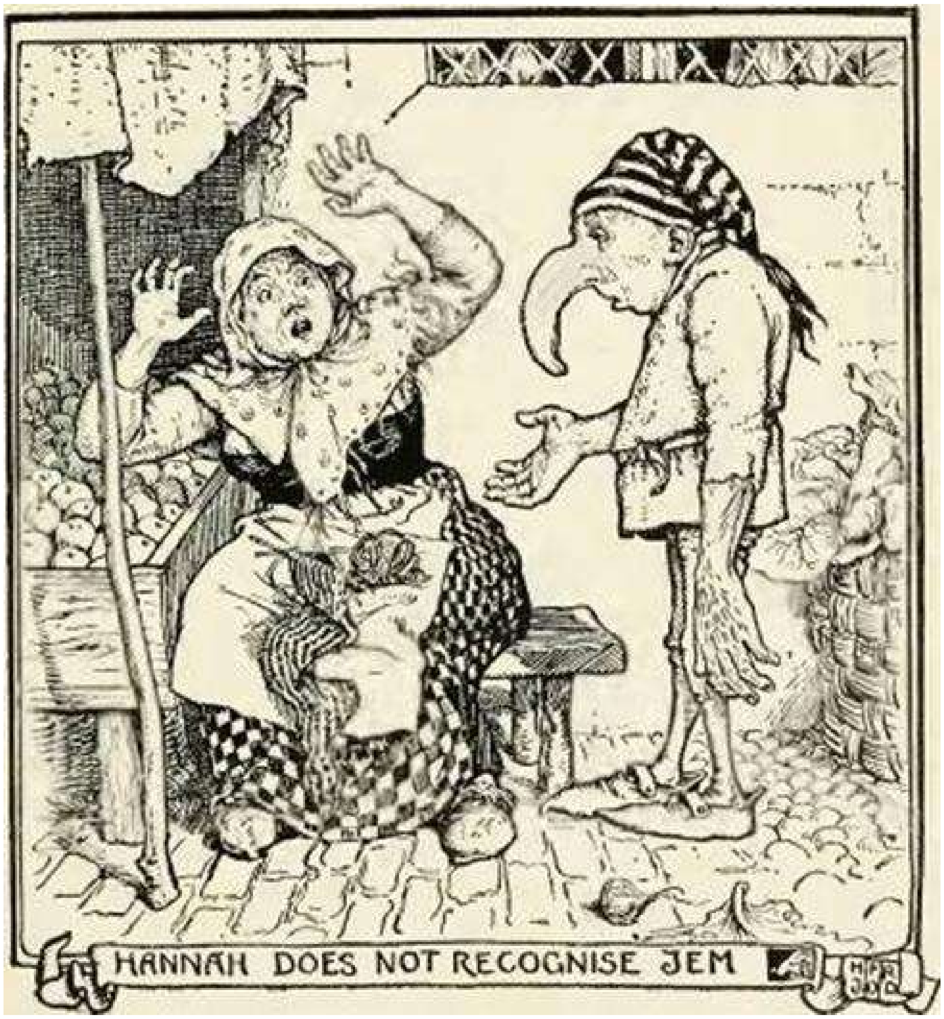

HANNAH DOES NOT RECOGNISE JEM

‘I have said already, get away,’ replied Hannah, quite angrily. ‘You won’t get anything out of me by your games, you monstrosity.’

‘Oh dear, oh dear! she must be wandering in her mind,’ murmured the lad to himself. ‘How can I manage to get her home? Dearest mother, do look at me close. Can’t you see I am your own son Jem?’

‘Well, did you ever hear such impudence?’ asked Hannah, turning to a neighbour. ‘Just see that frightful dwarf — would you believe that he wants me to think he is my son Jem?’

Then all the market women came round and talked all together and scolded as hard as they could, and said what a shame it was to make game of Mrs. Hannah, who had never got over the loss of her beautiful boy, who had been stolen from her seven years ago, and they threatened to fall upon Jem and scratch him well if he did not go away at once.

Poor Jem did not know what to make of it all. He was sure he had gone to market with his mother only that morning, had helped to set out the stall, had gone to the old woman's house, where he had some soup and a little nap, and now, when he came back, they were all talking of seven years. And they called him a horrid dwarf! Why, what had happened to him? When he found that his mother would really have nothing to do with him he turned away with tears in his eyes, and went sadly down the street towards his father's stall.

'Now I'll see whether he will know me,' thought he. 'I'll stand by the door and talk to him.'

When he got to the stall he stood in the doorway and looked in. The cobbler was so busy at work that he did not see him for some time, but, happening to look up, he caught sight of his visitor, and letting shoes, thread, and everything fall to the ground, he cried with horror: 'Good heavens! what is that?'

'Good evening, master,' said the boy, as he stepped in. 'How do you do?'

'Very ill, little sir, replied the father, to Jem's surprise, for he did not seem to know him. 'Business does not go well. I am all alone, and am getting old, and a workman is costly.'

'But haven't you a son who could learn your trade by degrees?' asked Jem.

'I had one: he was called Jem, and would have been a tall sturdy lad of twenty by this time, and able to help me well. Why, when he was only twelve he was quite sharp and quick, and had learnt many little things, and a good-looking boy too, and pleasant, so that customers were taken by him. Well, well! so goes the world!'

'But where is your son?' asked Jem, with a trembling voice.

'Heaven only knows!' replied the man; 'seven years ago he was stolen from the market-place, and we have heard no more of him.'

'SEVEN YEARS AGO!' cried Jem, with horror.

'Yes, indeed, seven years ago, though it seems but yesterday that my wife came back howling and crying, and saying the child had not come back all day. I always thought and said that something of the kind would happen. Jem was a beautiful boy, and everyone made much of him, and my wife was so proud of him, and liked him to carry the vegetables and things to grand folks' houses, where he was petted and made much of. But I used to say, "Take care — the town is large, there are plenty of bad people in it — keep a sharp eye on Jem." And so it happened; for one day an old woman came and bought a lot of things

— more than she could carry; so my wife, being a kindly soul, lent her the boy, and — we have never seen him since.’

‘And that was seven years ago, you say?’

‘Yes, seven years: we had him cried — we went from house to house. Many knew the pretty boy, and were fond of him, but it was all in vain. No one seemed to know the old woman who bought the vegetables either; only one old woman, who is ninety years old, said it might have been the fairy Herbaline, who came into the town once in every fifty years to buy things.’

As his father spoke, things grew clearer to Jem’s mind, and he saw now that he had not been dreaming, but had really served the old woman seven years in the shape of a squirrel. As he thought it over rage filled his heart. Seven years of his youth had been stolen from him, and what had he got in return? To learn to rub up cocoa nuts, and to polish glass floors, and to be taught cooking by guinea pigs! He stood there thinking, till at last his father asked him:

‘Is there anything I can do for you, young gentleman? Shall I make you a pair of slippers, or perhaps’ with a smile— ‘a case for your nose?’

‘What have you to do with my nose?’ asked Jem. ‘And why should I want a case for it?’

‘Well, everyone to his taste,’ replied the cobbler; ‘but I must say if I had such a nose I would have a nice red leather cover made for it. Here is a nice piece; and think what a protection it would be to you. As it is, you must be constantly knocking up against things.’

The lad was dumb with fright. He felt his nose. It was thick, and quite two hands long. So, then, the old woman had changed his shape, and that was why his own mother did not know him, and called him a horrid dwarf!

‘Master,’ said he, ‘have you got a glass that I could see myself in?’

‘Young gentleman,’ was the answer, ‘your appearance is hardly one to be vain of, and there is no need to waste your time looking in a glass. Besides, I have none here, and if you must have one you had better ask Urban the barber, who lives over the way, to lend you his. Good morning.’

So saying, he gently pushed Jem into the street, shut the door, and went back to his work.

Jem stepped across to the barber, whom he had known in old days.

‘Good morning, Urban,’ said he; ‘may I look at myself in your glass for a moment?’

‘With pleasure,’ said the barber, laughing, and all the people in his shop fell to laughing also. ‘You are a pretty youth, with your swan-like neck and white hands and small nose. No wonder you are rather vain; but look as long as you like at yourself.’

So spoke the barber, and a titter ran round the room. Meantime Jem had stepped up to the mirror, and stood gazing sadly at his reflection. Tears came to his eyes.

‘No wonder you did not know your child again, dear mother,’ thought he; ‘he wasn’t like this when you were so proud of his looks.’

His eyes had grown quite small, like pigs’ eyes, his nose was huge and hung down over his mouth and chin, his throat seemed to have disappeared altogether, and his head was fixed stiffly between his shoulders. He was no taller than he had been seven years ago, when he was not much more than twelve years old, but he made up in breadth, and his back and chest had grown into lumps like two great sacks. His legs were small and spindly, but his arms were as large as those of a well-grown man, with large brown hands, and long skinny fingers.

Then he remembered the morning when he had first seen the old woman, and her threats to him, and without saying a word he left the barber’s shop.

He determined to go again to his mother, and found her still in the market-place. He begged her to listen quietly to him, and he reminded her of the day when he went away with the old woman, and of many things in his childhood, and told her how the fairy had bewitched him, and he had served her seven years. Hannah did not know what to think — the story was so strange; and it seemed impossible to think her pretty boy and this hideous dwarf were the same. At last she decided to go and talk to her husband about it. She gathered up her baskets, told Jem to follow her, and went straight to the cobbler’s stall.

‘Look here,’ said she, ‘this creature says he is our lost son. He has been telling me how he was stolen seven years ago, and bewitched by a fairy.’

‘Indeed!’ interrupted the cobbler angrily. ‘Did he tell you this? Wait a minute, you rascal! Why I told him all about it myself only an hour ago, and then he goes off to humbug you. So you were bewitched, my son were you? Wait a bit, and I’ll bewitch you!’

So saying, he caught up a bundle of straps, and hit out at Jem so hard that he ran off crying.

The poor little dwarf roamed about all the rest of the day without food or drink, and at night was glad to lie down and sleep on the steps of a church. He woke next morning with the first rays of light, and began to think what he could do to earn a living. Suddenly he remembered that he was an excellent cook, and he determined to look out for a place.

As soon as it was quite daylight he set out for the palace, for he knew that the grand duke who reigned over the country was fond of good things.

When he reached the palace all the servants crowded about him, and made fun of him, and at last their shouts and laughter grew so loud that the head steward rushed out, crying, ‘For goodness sake, be quiet, can’t you. Don’t you know his highness is still asleep?’

Some of the servants ran off at once, and others pointed out Jem.

Indeed, the steward found it hard to keep himself from laughing at the comic sight, but he ordered the servants off and led the dwarf into his own room.

When he heard him ask for a place as cook, he said: ‘You make some mistake, my lad. I think you want to be the grand duke’s dwarf, don’t you?’

‘No, sir,’ replied Jem. ‘I am an experienced cook, and if you will kindly take me to the head cook he may find me of some use.’

‘Well, as you will; but believe me, you would have an easier place as the grand ducal dwarf.’

So saying, the head steward led him to the head cook’s room.

‘Sir,’ asked Jem, as he bowed till his nose nearly touched the floor, ‘do you want an experienced cook?’

The head cook looked him over from head to foot, and burst out laughing.

‘You a cook! Do you suppose our cooking stoves are so low that you can look into any saucepan on them? Oh, my dear little fellow, whoever sent you to me wanted to make fun of you.’

But the dwarf was not to be put off.

‘What matters an extra egg or two, or a little butter or flour and spice more or less, in such a house as this?’ said he. ‘Name any dish you wish to have cooked, and give me the materials I ask for, and you shall see.’

He said much more, and at last persuaded the head cook to give him a trial.

They went into the kitchen — a huge place with at least twenty fireplaces, always alight. A little stream of clear water ran through the room, and live fish were kept at one end of it. Everything in the kitchen was of the best and most beautiful kind, and swarms of cooks and scullions were busy preparing dishes.

When the head cook came in with Jem everyone stood quite still.

‘What has his highness ordered for luncheon?’ asked the head cook.

‘Sir, his highness has graciously ordered a Danish soup and red Hamburg dumplings.’

‘Good,’ said the head cook. ‘Have you heard, and do you feel equal to making these dishes? Not that you will be able to make the dumplings, for they are a secret receipt.’

‘Is that all!’ said Jem, who had often made both dishes. ‘Nothing easier. Let me have some eggs, a piece of wild boar, and such and such roots and herbs for the soup; and as for the dumplings,’ he added in a low voice to the head cook, ‘I shall want four different kinds of meat, some wine, a duck’s marrow, some ginger, and a herb called heal-well.’

‘Why,’ cried the astonished cook, ‘where did you learn cooking? Yes, those are the exact materials, but we never used the herb heal-well, which, I am sure, must be an improvement.’

And now Jem was allowed to try his hand. He could not nearly reach up to the kitchen range, but by putting a wide plank on two chairs he managed very well. All the cooks stood round to look on, and could not help admiring the quick, clever way in which he set to work. At last, when all was ready, Jem ordered the two dishes to be put on the fire till he gave the word. Then he began to count: ‘One, two, three,’ till he got to five hundred when he cried, ‘Now!’ The saucepans were taken off, and he invited the head cook to taste.

The first cook took a golden spoon, washed and wiped it, and handed it to the head cook, who solemnly approached, tasted the dishes, and smacked his lips over them. ‘First rate, indeed!’ he exclaimed. ‘You certainly are a master of the art, little fellow, and the herb heal-well gives a particular relish.’

As he was speaking, the duke’s valet came to say that his highness was ready for luncheon, and it was served at once in silver dishes. The head cook took Jem to his own room, but had hardly had time to question him before he was ordered to go at once to the grand duke. He hurried on his best clothes and followed the messenger.

The grand duke was looking much pleased. He had emptied the dishes, and was wiping his mouth as the head cook came in. ‘Who cooked my luncheon to-day?’ asked he. ‘I must say your dumplings are always very good; but I don’t think I ever tasted anything so delicious as they were to-day. Who made them?’

‘It is a strange story, your highness,’ said the cook, and told him the whole matter, which surprised the duke so much that he sent for the dwarf and asked him many questions. Of course, Jem could not say he had been turned into a squirrel, but he said he was without parents and had been taught cooking by an old woman.

‘If you will stay with me,’ said the grand duke, ‘you shall have fifty ducats a year, besides a new coat and a couple of pairs of trousers. You must undertake to cook my luncheon yourself and to direct what I shall have for dinner, and you shall be called assistant head cook.’

Jem bowed to the ground, and promised to obey his new master in all things.

He lost no time in setting to work, and everyone rejoiced at having him in the kitchen, for the duke was not a patient man, and had been known to throw plates and dishes at his cooks and servants if the things served were not quite to his taste. Now all was changed. He never even grumbled at anything, had five meals instead of three, thought everything delicious, and grew fatter daily.

And so Jem lived on for two years, much respected and considered, and only saddened when he thought of his parents. One day passed much like another till the following incident happened.

Dwarf Long Nose — as he was always called — made a practice of doing his marketing as much as possible himself, and whenever time allowed went to the market to buy his poultry and fruit. One morning he was in the goose market, looking for some nice fat geese. No one thought of laughing at his appearance now; he was known as the duke’s special body cook, and every goose-woman felt honoured if his nose turned her way.

He noticed one woman sitting apart with a number of geese, but not crying or praising them like the rest. He went up to her, felt and weighed her geese, and, finding them very good, bought three and the cage to put them in, hoisted them on his broad shoulders, and set off on his way back.

As he went, it struck him that two of the geese were gobbling and screaming as geese do, but the third sat quite still, only heaving a deep sigh now and then, like a human being. ‘That goose is ill,’ said he; ‘I must make haste to kill and dress her.’

But the goose answered him quite distinctly:

‘Squeeze too tight
And I’ll bite,
If my neck a twist you gave
I’d bring you to an early grave.’

Quite frightened, the dwarf set down the cage, and the goose gazed at him with sad wise-looking eyes and sighed again.

‘Good gracious!’ said Long Nose. ‘So you can speak, Mistress Goose. I never should have thought it! Well, don’t be anxious. I know better than to hurt so rare a bird. But I could bet you were not always in this plumage — wasn’t I a squirrel myself for a time?’

‘You are right,’ said the goose, ‘in supposing I was not born in this horrid shape. Ah! no one ever thought that Mimi, the daughter of the great Weatherbold, would be killed for the ducal table.’

‘Be quite easy, Mistress Mimi,’ comforted Jem. ‘As sure as I’m an honest man and assistant head cook to his highness, no one shall harm you. I will make a hutch for you in my own rooms, and you shall be well fed, and I’ll come and talk to you as much as I can. I’ll tell all the other cooks that I am fattening up a goose on very special food for the grand duke, and at the first good opportunity I will set you free.’

The goose thanked him with tears in her eyes, and the dwarf kept his word. He killed the other two geese for dinner, but built a little shed for Mimi in one of his rooms, under the pretence of fattening her under his own eye. He spent all his spare time talking to her and comforting her, and fed her on all the daintiest dishes. They confided their histories to each other, and Jem learnt that the goose was the daughter of the wizard Weatherbold, who lived on the island of Gothland. He fell out with an old fairy, who got the better of him by cunning and treachery, and to revenge herself turned his daughter into a goose and carried her off to this distant place. When Long Nose told her his story she said:

‘I know a little of these matters, and what you say shows me that you are under a herb enchantment — that is to say, that if you can find the herb whose smell woke you up the spell would be broken.’

This was but small comfort for Jem, for how and where was he to find the herb?

About this time the grand duke had a visit from a neighbouring prince, a friend of his. He sent for Long Nose and said to him:

‘Now is the time to show what you can really do. This prince who is staying with me has better dinners than any one except myself, and is a great judge of cooking. As long as he is here you must take care that my table shall be served in a manner to surprise him constantly. At the same time, on pain of my displeasure, take care that no dish shall appear twice. Get everything you wish and spare nothing. If you want to melt down gold and precious stones, do so. I would rather be a poor man than have to blush before him.’

The dwarf bowed and answered:

‘Your highness shall be obeyed. I will do all in my power to please you and the prince.’

From this time the little cook was hardly seen except in the kitchen, where, surrounded by his helpers, he gave orders, baked, stewed, flavoured and dished up all manner of dishes.

The prince had been a fortnight with the grand duke, and enjoyed himself mightily. They ate five times a day, and the duke had every reason to be content with the dwarf’s talents, for he saw how pleased his guest looked. On the fifteenth day the duke sent for the dwarf and presented him to the prince.

‘You are a wonderful cook,’ said the prince, ‘and you certainly know what is good. All the time I have been here you have never repeated a dish, and all were excellent. But tell me why you have never served the queen of all dishes, a Suzeraine Pasty?’

The dwarf felt frightened, for he had never heard of this Queen of Pasties before. But he did not lose his presence of mind, and replied:

‘I have waited, hoping that your highness’ visit here would last some time, for I proposed to celebrate the last day of your stay with this truly royal dish.’

‘Indeed,’ laughed the grand duke; ‘then I suppose you would have waited for the day of my death to treat me to it, for you have never sent it up to me yet. However, you will have to invent some other farewell dish, for the pasty must be on my table to-morrow.’

‘As your highness pleases,’ said the dwarf, and took leave.

But it did not please HIM at all. The moment of disgrace seemed at hand, for he had no idea how to make this pasty. He went to his rooms very sad. As he sat there lost in thought the goose Mimi, who was left free to walk about, came up to him and asked what was the matter? When she heard she said:

‘Cheer up, my friend. I know the dish quite well: we often had it at home, and I can guess pretty well how it was made.’ Then she told him what to put in, adding: ‘I think that will be all right, and if some trifle is left out perhaps they won’t find it out.’

Sure enough, next day a magnificent pasty all wreathed round with flowers was placed on the table. Jem himself put on his best clothes and went into the dining hall. As he entered the head carver was in the act of cutting up the pie and helping the duke and his guests. The grand duke took a large mouthful and threw up his eyes as he swallowed it.

‘Oh! oh! this may well be called the Queen of Pasties, and at the same time my dwarf must be called the king of cooks. Don’t you think so, dear friend?’

The prince took several small pieces, tasted and examined carefully, and then said with a mysterious and sarcastic smile:

‘The dish is very nicely made, but the Suzeraine is not quite complete — as I expected.’

The grand duke flew into a rage.

‘Dog of a cook,’ he shouted; ‘how dare you serve me so? I’ve a good mind to chop off your great head as a punishment.’

‘For mercy’s sake, don’t, your highness! I made the pasty according to the best rules; nothing has been left out. Ask the prince what else I should have put in.’

The prince laughed. ‘I was sure you could not make this dish as well as my cook, friend Long Nose. Know, then, that a herb is wanting called Relish, which is not known in this country, but which gives the pasty its peculiar flavour, and without which your master will never taste it to perfection.’

The grand duke was more furious than ever.

‘But I WILL taste it to perfection,’ he roared. ‘Either the pasty must be made properly to-morrow or this rascal’s head shall come off. Go, scoundrel, I give you twenty-four hours respite.’

The poor dwarf hurried back to his room, and poured out his grief to the goose.

‘Oh, is that all,’ said she, ‘then I can help you, for my father taught me to know all plants and herbs. Luckily this is a new moon just now, for the herb only springs up at such times. But tell me, are there chestnut trees near the palace?’

‘Oh, yes!’ cried Long Nose, much relieved; ‘near the lake — only a couple of hundred yards from the palace — is a large clump of them. But why do you ask?’

‘Because the herb only grows near the roots of chestnut trees,’ replied Mimi; ‘so let us lose no time in finding it. Take me under your arm and put me down out of doors, and I’ll hunt for it.’

He did as she bade, and as soon as they were in the garden put her on the ground, when she waddled off as fast as she could towards the lake, Jem hurrying after her with an anxious heart, for he knew that his life depended on her success. The goose hunted everywhere, but in vain. She searched under each chestnut tree, turning every blade of grass with her bill — nothing to be seen, and evening was drawing on!

Suddenly the dwarf noticed a big old tree standing alone on the other side of the lake. ‘Look,’ cried he, ‘let us try our luck there.’

The goose fluttered and skipped in front, and he ran after as fast as his little legs could carry him. The tree cast a wide shadow, and it was almost dark beneath it, but suddenly the goose stood still, flapped her wings with joy, and plucked something, which she held out to her astonished friend, saying: ‘There it is, and there is more growing here, so you will have no lack of it.’

The dwarf stood gazing at the plant. It gave out a strong sweet scent, which reminded him of the day of his enchantment. The stems and leaves were a bluish green, and it bore a dark, bright red flower with a yellow edge.

‘What a wonder!’ cried Long Nose. ‘I do believe this is the very herb which changed me from a squirrel into my present miserable form. Shall I try an experiment?’

‘Not yet,’ said the goose. ‘Take a good handful of the herb with you, and let us go to your rooms. We will collect all your money and clothes together, and then we will test the powers of the herb.’

So they went back to Jem’s rooms, and here he gathered together some fifty ducats he had saved, his clothes and shoes, and tied them all up in a bundle. Then he plunged his face into the bunch of herbs, and drew in their perfume.

As he did so, all his limbs began to crack and stretch; he felt his head rising above his shoulders; he glanced down at his nose, and saw it grow smaller and smaller; his chest and back grew flat, and his legs grew long.

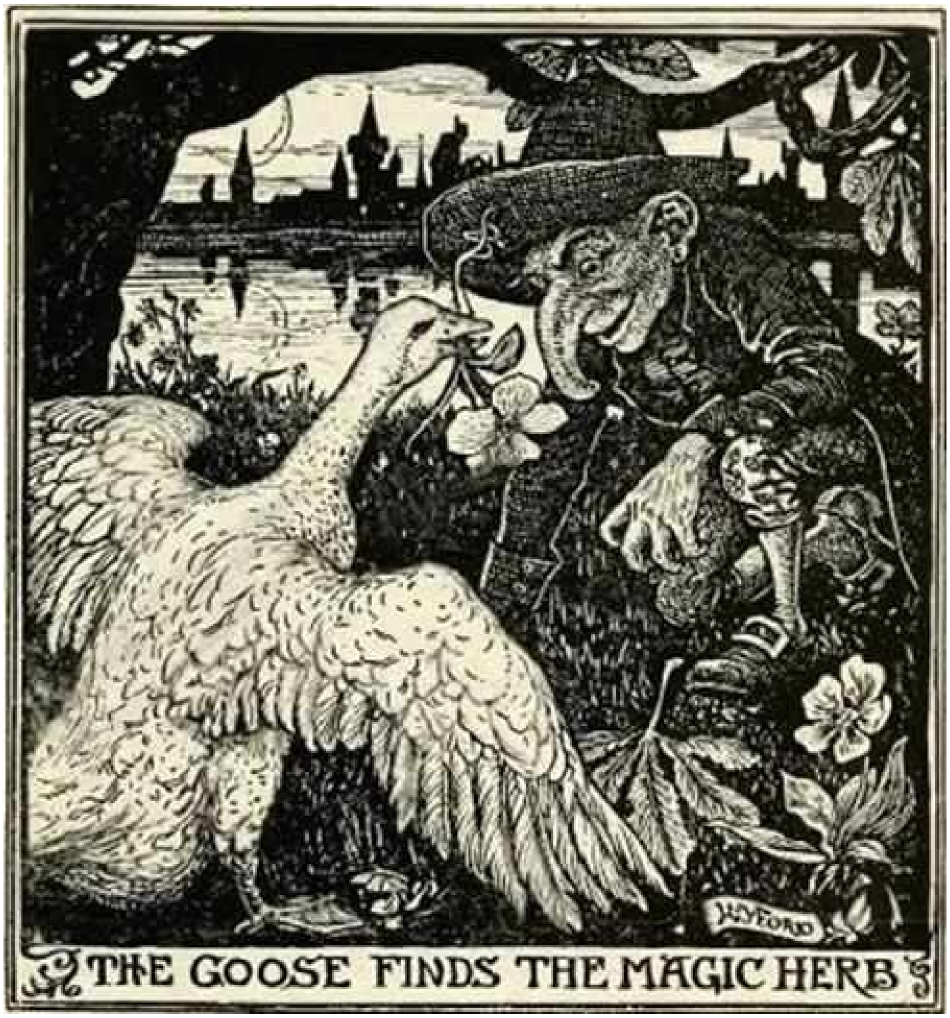

THE GOOSE FINDS THE MAGIC HERB

The goose looked on in amazement. ‘Oh, how big and how beautiful you are!’ she cried. ‘Thank heaven, you are quite changed.’

Jem folded his hands in thanks, as his heart swelled with gratitude. But his joy did not make him forget all he owed to his friend Mimi.

‘I owe you my life and my release,’ he said, ‘for without you I should never have regained my natural shape, and, indeed, would soon have been beheaded. I will now take you back to your father, who will certainly know how to disenchant you.’

The goose accepted his offer with joy, and they managed to slip out of the palace unnoticed by anyone.

They got through the journey without accident, and the wizard soon released his daughter, and loaded Jem with thanks and valuable presents. He lost no time in hastening back to his native town, and his parents were very ready to recognise the handsome, well-made young man as their long-lost son. With the money given him by the wizard he opened a shop, which prospered well, and he lived long and happily.

I must not forget to mention that much disturbance was caused in the palace by Jem’s sudden disappearance, for when the grand duke sent orders next day to behead the dwarf, if he had not found the necessary herbs, the dwarf was not to be found. The prince hinted that the duke had allowed his cook to escape, and had therefore broken his word. The matter ended in a great war between the two princes, which was known in history as the ‘Herb War.’ After many battles and much loss of life, a peace was at last concluded, and this peace became known as the ‘Pasty Peace,’ because at the banquet given in its honour the prince’s cook dished up the Queen of Pasties — the Suzeraine — and the grand duke declared it to be quite excellent.

THE NUNDA, EATER OF PEOPLE

Once upon a time there lived a sultan who loved his garden dearly, and planted it with trees and flowers and fruits from all parts of the world. He went to see them three times every day: first at seven o’clock, when he got up, then at three, and lastly at half-past five. There was no plant and no vegetable which escaped his eye, but he lingered longest of all before his one date tree.

Now the sultan had seven sons. Six of them he was proud of, for they were strong and manly, but the youngest he disliked, for he spent all his time among the women of the house. The sultan had talked to him, and he paid no heed; and he had beaten him, and he paid no heed; and he had tied him up, and he paid no heed, till at last his father grew tired of trying to make him change his ways, and let him alone.

Time passed, and one day the sultan, to his great joy, saw signs of fruit on his date tree. And he told his vizir, ‘My date tree is bearing;’ and he told the officers, ‘My date tree is bearing;’ and he told the judges, ‘My date tree is bearing;’ and he told all the rich men of the town.

He waited patiently for some days till the dates were nearly ripe, and then he called his six sons, and said: ‘One of you must watch the date tree till the dates are ripe, for if it is not watched the slaves will steal them, and I shall not have any for another year.’

And the eldest son answered, ‘I will go, father,’ and he went.

The first thing the youth did was to summon his slaves, and bid them beat drums all night under the date tree, for he feared to fall asleep. So the slaves beat the drums, and the young man danced till four o’clock, and then it grew so cold he could dance no longer, and one of the slaves said to him: ‘It is getting light; the tree is safe; lie down, master, and go to sleep.’

So he lay down and slept, and his slaves slept likewise.

A few minutes went by, and a bird flew down from a neighbouring thicket, and ate all the dates, without leaving a single one. And when the tree was stripped bare, the bird went as it had come. Soon after, one of the slaves woke up and looked for the dates, but there were no dates to see. Then he ran to the young man and shook him, saying:

‘Your father set you to watch the tree, and you have not watched, and the dates have all been eaten by a bird.’

The lad jumped up and ran to the tree to see for himself, but there was not a date anywhere. And he cried aloud, ‘What am I to say to my father? Shall I tell him that the dates have been stolen, or that a great rain fell and a great storm blew? But he will send me to gather them up and bring them to him, and there are none to bring! Shall I tell him that Bedouins drove me away, and when I returned there were no dates? And he will answer, “You had slaves, did they not fight with the Bedouins?” It is the truth that will be best, and that will I tell him.’

Then he went straight to his father, and found him sitting in his verandah with his five sons round him; and the lad bowed his head.

‘Give me the news from the garden,’ said the sultan.

And the youth answered, ‘The dates have all been eaten by some bird: there is not one left.’

The sultan was silent for a moment: then he asked, ‘Where were you when the bird came?’

The lad answered: ‘I watched the date tree till the cocks were crowing and it was getting light; then I lay down for a little, and I slept. When I woke a slave was standing over me, and he said, “There is not one date left on the tree!” And I went to the date tree, and saw it was true; and that is what I have to tell you.’

And the sultan replied, ‘A son like you is only good for eating and sleeping. I have no use for you. Go your way, and when my date tree bears again, I will send another son; perhaps he will watch better.’

So he waited many months, till the tree was covered with more dates than any tree had ever borne before. When they were near ripening he sent one of his sons to the garden: saying, ‘My son, I am longing to taste those dates: go and watch over them, for to-day’s sun will bring them to perfection.’

And the lad answered: ‘My father, I am going now, and to-morrow, when the sun has passed the hour of seven, bid a slave come and gather the dates.’

‘Good,’ said the sultan.

The youth went to the tree, and lay down and slept. And about midnight he arose to look at the tree, and the dates were all there — beautiful dates, swinging in bunches.

‘Ah, my father will have a feast, indeed,’ thought he. ‘What a fool my brother was not to take more heed! Now he is in disgrace, and we know him no more. Well, I will watch till the bird comes. I should like to see what manner of bird it is.’

And he sat and read till the cocks crew and it grew light, and the dates were still on the tree.

‘Oh my father will have his dates; they are all safe now,’ he thought to himself. ‘I will make myself comfortable against this tree,’ and he leaned against the trunk, and sleep came on him, and the bird flew down and ate all the dates.

When the sun rose, the head-man came and looked for the dates, and there were no dates. And he woke the young man, and said to him, ‘Look at the tree.’

And the young man looked, and there were no dates. And his ears were stopped, and his legs trembled, and his tongue grew heavy at the thought of the sultan. His slave became frightened as he looked at him, and asked, ‘My master, what is it?’

He answered, ‘I have no pain anywhere, but I am ill everywhere. My whole body is well, and my whole body is sick I fear my father, for did I not say to him, “To-morrow at seven you shall taste the dates”? And he will drive me away, as he drove away my brother! I will go away myself, before he sends me.’

Then he got up and took a road that led straight past the palace, but he had not walked many steps before he met a man carrying a large silver dish, covered with a white cloth to cover the dates.

And the young man said, ‘The dates are not ripe yet; you must return to-morrow.’

And the slave went with him to the palace, where the sultan was sitting with his four sons.

‘Good greeting, master!’ said the youth.

And the sultan answered, ‘Have you seen the man I sent?’

‘I have, master; but the dates are not yet ripe.’

But the sultan did not believe his words, and said; ‘This second year I have eaten no dates, because of my sons. Go your ways, you are my son no longer!’

And the sultan looked at the four sons that were left him, and promised rich gifts to whichever of them would bring him the dates from the tree. But year by year passed, and he never got them. One son tried to keep himself awake with playing cards; another mounted a horse and rode round and round the tree, while the two others, whom their father as a last hope sent together, lit bonfires. But whatever they did, the result was always the same. Towards dawn they fell asleep, and the bird ate the dates on the tree.

The sixth year had come, and the dates on the tree were thicker than ever. And the head-man went to the palace and told the sultan what he had seen. But the sultan only shook his head, and said sadly, ‘What is that to me? I have had seven sons, yet for five years a bird has devoured my dates; and this year it will be the same as ever.’

Now the youngest son was sitting in the kitchen, as was his custom, when he heard his father say those words. And he rose up, and went to his father, and knelt before him. ‘Father, this year you shall eat dates,’ cried he. ‘And on the tree are five great bunches, and each bunch I will give to a separate nation, for the nations in the town are five. This time, I will watch the date tree myself.’ But his father and his mother laughed heartily, and thought his words idle talk.

One day, news was brought to the sultan that the dates were ripe, and he ordered one of his men to go and watch the tree. His son, who happened to be standing by, heard the order, and he said:

‘How is it that you have bidden a man to watch the tree, when I, your son, am left?’

And his father answered, ‘Ah, six were of no use, and where they failed, will you succeed?’

But the boy replied: ‘Have patience to-day, and let me go, and to-morrow you shall see whether I bring you dates or not.’

‘Let the child go, Master,’ said his wife; ‘perhaps we shall eat the dates — or perhaps we shall not — but let him go.’

And the sultan answered: ‘I do not refuse to let him go, but my heart distrusts him. His brothers all promised fair, and what did they do?’

But the boy entreated, saying, ‘Father, if you and I and mother be alive to-morrow, you shall eat the dates.’

‘Go then,’ said his father.

When the boy reached the garden, he told the slaves to leave him, and to return home themselves and sleep. When he was alone, he laid himself down and slept fast till one o’clock, when he arose, and sat opposite the date tree. Then he took some Indian corn out of one fold of his dress, and some sandy grit out of another.

And he chewed the corn till he felt he was growing sleepy, and then he put some grit into his mouth, and that kept him awake till the bird came.

It looked about at first without seeing him, and whispering to itself, ‘There is no one here,’ fluttered lightly on to the tree and stretched out his beak for the dates. Then the boy stole softly up, and caught it by the wing.

The bird turned and flew quickly away, but the boy never let go, not even when they soared high into the air.

‘Son of Adam,’ the bird said when the tops of the mountains looked small below them, ‘if you fall, you will be dead long before you reach the ground, so go your way, and let me go mine.’

But the boy answered, ‘Wherever you go, I will go with you. You cannot get rid of me.’

‘I did not eat your dates,’ persisted the bird, ‘and the day is dawning. Leave me to go my way.’

But again the boy answered him: ‘My six brothers are hateful to my father because you came and stole the dates, and to-day my father shall see you, and my brothers shall see you, and all the people of the town, great and small, shall see you. And my father’s heart will rejoice.’

‘Well, if you will not leave me, I will throw you off,’ said the bird.

So it flew up higher still — so high that the earth shone like one of the other stars.

‘How much of you will be left if you fall from here?’ asked the bird.

‘If I die, I die,’ said the boy, ‘but I will not leave you.’

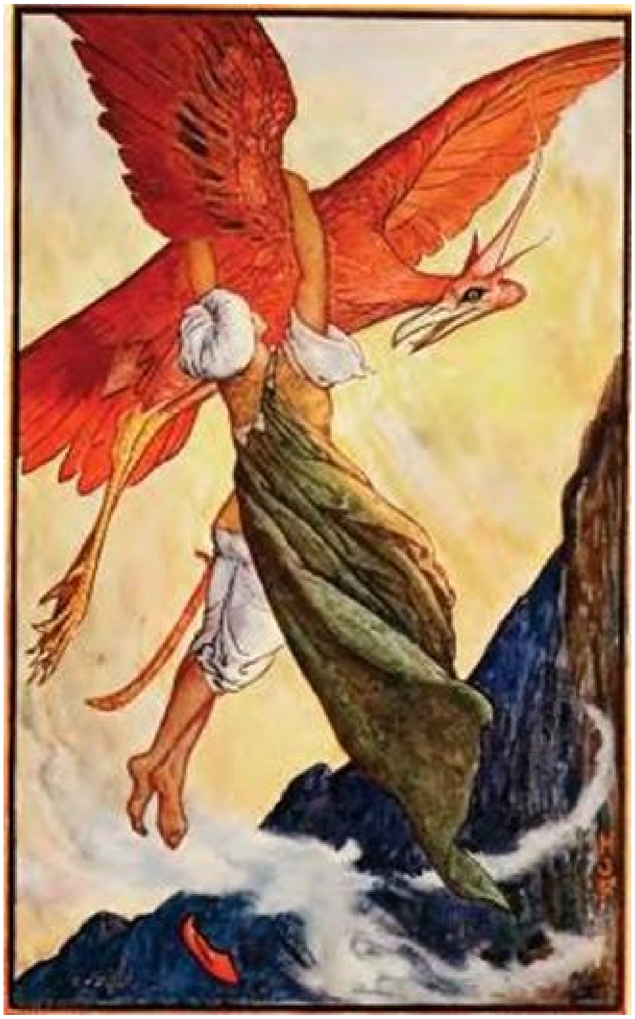

And the bird saw it was no use talking, and went down to the earth again.

‘Here you are at home, so let me go my way,’ it begged once more; ‘or at least make a covenant with me.’

‘What covenant?’ said the boy.

‘Save me from the sun,’ replied the bird, ‘and I will save you from rain.’

‘How can you do that, and how can I tell if I can trust you?’

‘Pull a feather from my tail, and put it in the fire, and if you want me I will come to you, wherever I am.’

And the boy answered, ‘Well, I agree; go your way.’

‘Farewell, my friend. When you call me, if it is from the depths of the sea, I will come.’

The lad watched the bird out of sight; then he went straight to the date tree. And when he saw the dates his heart was glad, and his body felt stronger and his eyes brighter than before. And he laughed out loud with joy, and said to himself, ‘This is MY luck, mine, Sit-in-the-kitchen! Farewell, date tree, I am going to lie down. What ate you will eat you no more.’

The sun was high in the sky before the head-man, whose business it was, came to look at the date tree, expecting to find it stripped of all its fruit, but when he saw the dates so thick that they almost hid the leaves he ran back to his house, and beat a big drum till everybody came running, and even the little children wanted to know what had happened.

‘What is it? What is it, head-man?’ cried they.

‘Ah, it is not a son that the master has, but a lion! This day Sit-in-the-kitchen has uncovered his face before his father!’

‘But how, head-man?’

‘To day the people may eat the dates.’

‘Is it true, head-man?’

‘Oh yes, it is true, but let him sleep till each man has brought forth a present. He who has fowls, let him take fowls; he who has a goat, let him take a goat; he who has rice, let him take rice.’ And the people did as he had said.

Then they took the drum, and went to the tree where the boy lay sleeping.

And they picked him up, and carried him away, with horns and clarionets and drums, with clappings of hands and shrieks of joy, straight to his father’s house.

When his father heard the noise and saw the baskets made of green leaves, brimming over with dates, and his son borne high on the necks of slaves, his heart leaped, and he said to himself ‘To-day at last I shall eat dates.’ And he called his wife to see what her son had done, and ordered his soldiers to take the boy and bring him to his father.

‘What news, my son?’ said he.

‘News? I have no news, except that if you will open your mouth you shall see what dates taste like.’ And he plucked a date, and put it into his father’s mouth.

‘Ah! You are indeed my son,’ cried the sultan. ‘You do not take after those fools, those good-for-nothings. But, tell me, what did you do with the bird, for it was you, and you only who watched for it?’

‘Yes, it was I who watched for it and who saw it. And it will not come again, neither for its life, nor for your life, nor for the lives of your children.’

‘Oh, once I had six sons, and now I have only one. It is you, whom I called a fool, who have given me the dates: as for the others, I want none of them.'

But his wife rose up and went to him, and said, 'Master, do not, I pray you, reject them,' and she entreated long, till the sultan granted her prayer, for she loved the six elder ones more than her last one.

So they all lived quietly at home, till the sultan's cat went and caught a calf. And the owner of the calf went and told the sultan, but he answered, 'The cat is mine, and the calf mine,' and the man dared not complain further.

Two days after, the cat caught a cow, and the sultan was told, 'Master, the cat has caught a cow,' but he only said, 'It was my cow and my cat.'

And the cat waited a few days, and then it caught a donkey, and they told the sultan, 'Master, the cat has caught a donkey,' and he said, 'My cat and my donkey.' Next it was a horse, and after that a camel, and when the sultan was told he said, 'You don't like this cat, and want me to kill it. And I shall not kill it. Let it eat the camel: let it even eat a man.'

And it waited till the next day, and caught some one's child. And the sultan was told, 'The cat has caught a child.' And he said, 'The cat is mine and the child mine.' Then it caught a grown-up man.

After that the cat left the town and took up its abode in a thicket near the road. So if any one passed, going for water, it devoured him. If it saw a cow going to feed, it devoured him. If it saw a goat, it devoured him. Whatever went along that road the cat caught and ate.

Then the people went to the sultan in a body, and told him of all the misdeeds of that cat. But he answered as before, 'The cat is mine and the people are mine.' And no man dared kill the cat, which grew bolder and bolder, and at last came into the town to look for its prey.

One day, the sultan said to his six sons, 'I am going into the country, to see how the wheat is growing, and you shall come with me.' They went on merrily along the road, till they came to a thicket, when out sprang the cat, and killed three of the sons.

'The cat! The cat!' shrieked the soldiers who were with him. And this time the sultan said:

'Seek for it and kill it. It is no longer a cat, but a demon!'

And the soldiers answered him, 'Did we not tell you, master, what the cat was doing, and did you not say, "My cat and my people"?'

And he answered: 'True, I said it.'

Now the youngest son had not gone with the rest, but had stayed at home with his mother; and when he heard that his brothers had been killed by the cat he said, 'Let me go, that it may slay me also.' His mother entreated him not to leave her, but he would not listen, and he took his sword and a spear and some rice cakes, and went after the cat, which by this time had run of to a great distance.

The lad spent many days hunting the cat, which now bore the name of ‘The Nunda, eater of people,’ but though he killed many wild animals he saw no trace of the enemy he was hunting for. There was no beast, however fierce, that he was afraid of, till at last his father and mother begged him to give up the chase after the Nunda.

But he answered: ‘What I have said, I cannot take back. If I am to die, then I die, but every day I must go and seek for the Nunda.’

And again his father offered him what he would, even the crown itself, but the boy would hear nothing, and went on his way.

Many times his slaves came and told him, ‘We have seen footprints, and to-day we shall behold the Nunda.’ But the footprints never turned out to be those of the Nunda. They wandered far through deserts and through forests, and at length came to the foot of a great hill. And something in the boy’s soul whispered that here was the end of all their seeking, and to-day they would find the Nunda.

But before they began to climb the mountain the boy ordered his slaves to cook some rice, and they rubbed the stick to make a fire, and when the fire was kindled they cooked the rice and ate it. Then they began their climb.

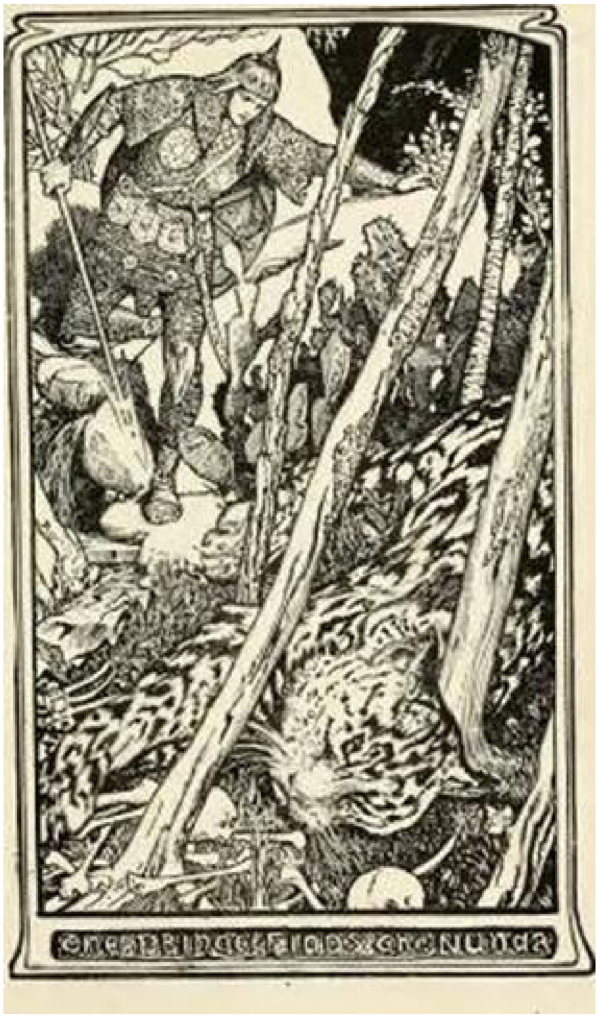
The Prince finds the Nunda

Suddenly, when they had almost reached the top, a slave who was on in front cried:

‘Master! Master!’ And the boy pushed on to where the slave stood, and the slave said:

‘Cast your eyes down to the foot of the mountain.’ And the boy looked, and his soul told him it was the Nunda.

And he crept down with his spear in his hand, and then he stopped and gazed below him.

‘This MUST be the real Nunda,’ thought he. ‘My mother told me its ears were small, and this one’s are small. She told me it was broad and not long, and this is broad and not long. She told me it had spots like a civet-cat, and this has spots like a civet-cat.’

Then he left the Nunda lying asleep at the foot of the mountain, and went back to his slaves.

‘We will feast to-day,’ he said; ‘make cakes of batter, and bring water,’ and they ate and drank. And when they had finished he bade them hide the rest of the food in the thicket, that if they slew the Nunda they might return and eat and sleep before going back to the town. And the slaves did as he bade them.

It was now afternoon, and the lad said: ‘It is time we went after the Nunda.’ And they went till they reached the bottom and came to a great forest which lay between them and the Nunda.

Here the lad stopped, and ordered every slave that wore two cloths to cast one away and tuck up the other between his legs. ‘For,’ said he, ‘the wood is not a little one. Perhaps we may be caught by the thorns, or perhaps we may have to run before the Nunda, and the cloth might bind our legs, and cause us to fall before it.’

And they answered, ‘Good, master,’ and did as he bade them. Then they crawled on their hands and knees to where the Nunda lay asleep.

Noiselessly they crept along till they were quite close to it; then, at a sign from the boy, they threw their spears. The Nunda did not stir: the spears had done their work, but a great fear seized them all, and they ran away and climbed the mountain.

The sun was setting when they reached the top, and glad they were to take out the fruit and the cakes and the water which they had hidden away, and sit down and rest themselves. And after they had eaten and were filled, they lay down and slept till morning.

When the dawn broke they rose up and cooked more rice, and drank more water. After that they walked all round the back of the mountain to the place where they had left the Nunda, and they saw it stretched out where they had found it, stiff and dead. And they took it up and carried it back to the town, singing as they went, ‘He has killed the Nunda, the eater of people.’

And when his father heard the news, and that his son was come, and was bringing the Nunda with him, he felt that the man did not dwell on the earth whose joy was greater than his. And the people bowed down to the boy and gave him presents, and loved him, because he had delivered them from the bondage of fear, and had slain the Nunda.

(Adapted from Swahili Tales.)

THE STORY OF HASSEBU

Once upon a time there lived a poor woman who had only one child, and he was a little boy called Hassebu. When he ceased to be a baby, and his mother thought it was time for him to learn to read, she sent him to school. And, after he had done with school, he was put into a shop to learn how to make clothes, and did not learn; and he was put to do silversmith’s work, and did not learn; and whatsoever he was taught, he did not learn it. His mother never wished him to do anything he did not like, so she said: ‘Well, stay at home, my son.’ And he stayed at home, eating and sleeping.

One day the boy said to his mother: ‘What was my father’s business?’

‘He was a very learned doctor,’ answered she.

‘Where, then, are his books?’ asked Hassebu.

‘Many days have passed, and I have thought nothing of them. But look inside and see if they are there.’ So Hassebu looked, and saw they were eaten by insects, all but one book, which he took away and read.

He was sitting at home one morning poring over the medicine book, when some neighbours came by and said to his mother: ‘Give us this boy, that we may go together to cut wood.’ For wood-cutting was their trade, and they loaded several donkeys with the wood, and sold it in the town.

And his mother answered, ‘Very well; to-morrow I will buy him a donkey, and you can all go together.’

So the donkey was bought, and the neighbours came, and they worked hard all day, and in the evening they brought the wood back into the town, and sold it for a good sum of money. And for six days they went and did the like, but on the seventh it rained, and the wood-cutters ran and hid in the rocks, all but Hassebu, who did not mind wetting, and stayed where he was.

While he was sitting in the place where the wood-cutters had left him, he took up a stone that lay near him, and idly dropped it on the ground. It rang with a hollow sound, and he called to his companions, and said, ‘Come here and listen; the ground seems hollow!’

‘Knock again!’ cried they. And he knocked and listened.

‘Let us dig,’ said the boy. And they dug, and found a large pit like a well, filled with honey up to the brim.

‘This is better than firewood,’ said they; ‘it will bring us more money. And as you have found it, Hassebu, it is you who must go inside and dip out the honey and give to us, and we will take it to the town and sell it, and will divide the money with you.'

The following day each man brought every bowl and vessel he could find at home, and Hassebu filled them all with honey. And this he did every day for three months.

At the end of that time the honey was very nearly finished, and there was only a little left, quite at the bottom, and that was very deep down, so deep that it seemed as if it must be right in the middle of the earth. Seeing this, the men said to Hassebu, 'We will put a rope under your arms, and let you down, so that you may scrape up all the honey that is left, and when you have done we will lower the rope again, and you shall make it fast, and we will draw you up.'

'Very well,' answered the boy, and he went down, and he scraped and scraped till there was not so much honey left as would cover the point of a needle. 'Now I am ready!' he cried; but they consulted together and said, 'Let us leave him there inside the pit, and take his share of the money, and we will tell his mother, "Your son was caught by a lion and carried off into the forest, and we tried to follow him, but could not."'

Then they arose and went into the town and told his mother as they had agreed, and she wept much and made her mourning for many months. And when the men were dividing the money, one said, 'Let us send a little to our friend's mother,' and they sent some to her; and every day one took her rice, and one oil; one took her meat, and one took her cloth, every day.

It did not take long for Hassebu to find out that his companions had left him to die in the pit, but he had a brave heart, and hoped that he might be able to find a way out for himself. So he at once began to explore the pit and found it ran back a long way underground. And by night he slept, and by day he took a little of the honey he had gathered and ate it; and so many days passed by.

One morning, while he was sitting on a rock having his breakfast, a large scorpion dropped down at his feet, and he took a stone and killed it, fearing it would sting him. Then suddenly the thought darted into his head, 'This scorpion must have come from somewhere! Perhaps there is a hole. I will go and look for it,' and he felt all round the walls of the pit till he found a very little hole in the roof of the pit, with a tiny glimmer of light at the far end of it. Then his heart felt glad, and he took out his knife and dug and dug, till the little hole became a big one, and he could wriggle himself through. And when he had got outside, he saw a large open space in front of him, and a path leading out of it.

He went along the path, on and on, till he reached a large house, with a golden door standing open. Inside was a great hall, and in the middle of the hall a throne set with precious stones and a sofa spread with the softest cushions. And he went in and lay down on it, and fell fast asleep, for he had wandered far.

By-and-by there was a sound of people coming through the courtyard, and the measured tramp of soldiers. This was the King of the Snakes coming in state to his palace.

They entered the hall, but all stopped in surprise at finding a man lying on the king's own bed. The soldiers wished to kill him at once, but the king said, 'Leave him alone, put me on a chair,' and the soldiers who were carrying him knelt on the floor, and he slid from their shoulders on to a chair. When he was comfortably seated, he turned to his soldiers, and bade them wake the stranger gently. And they woke him, and he sat up and saw many snakes all round him, and one of them very beautiful, decked in royal robes.

'Who are you?' asked Hassebu.

'I am the King of the Snakes,' was the reply, 'and this is my palace. And will you tell me who you are, and where you come from?'

'My name is Hassebu, but whence I come I know not, nor whither I go.'

'Then stay for a little with me,' said the king, and he bade his soldiers bring water from the spring and fruits from the forest, and to set them before the guest.

For some days Hassebu rested and feasted in the palace of the King of the Snakes, and then he began to long for his mother and his own country. So he said to the King of the Snakes, 'Send me home, I pray.'

But the King of the Snakes answered, 'When you go home, you will do me evil!'

'I will do you no evil,' replied Hassebu; 'send me home, I pray.'

But the king said, 'I know it. If I send you home, you will come back, and kill me. I dare not do it.' But Hassebu begged so hard that at last the king said, 'Swear that when you get home you will not go to bathe where many people are gathered.' And Hassebu swore, and the king ordered his soldiers to take Hassebu in sight of his native city. Then he went straight to his mother's house, and the heart of his mother was glad.

Now the Sultan of the city was very ill, and all the wise men said that the only thing to cure him was the flesh of the King of the Snakes, and that the only man who could get it was a man with a strange mark on his chest. So the Vizir had set people to watch at the public baths, to see if such a man came there.

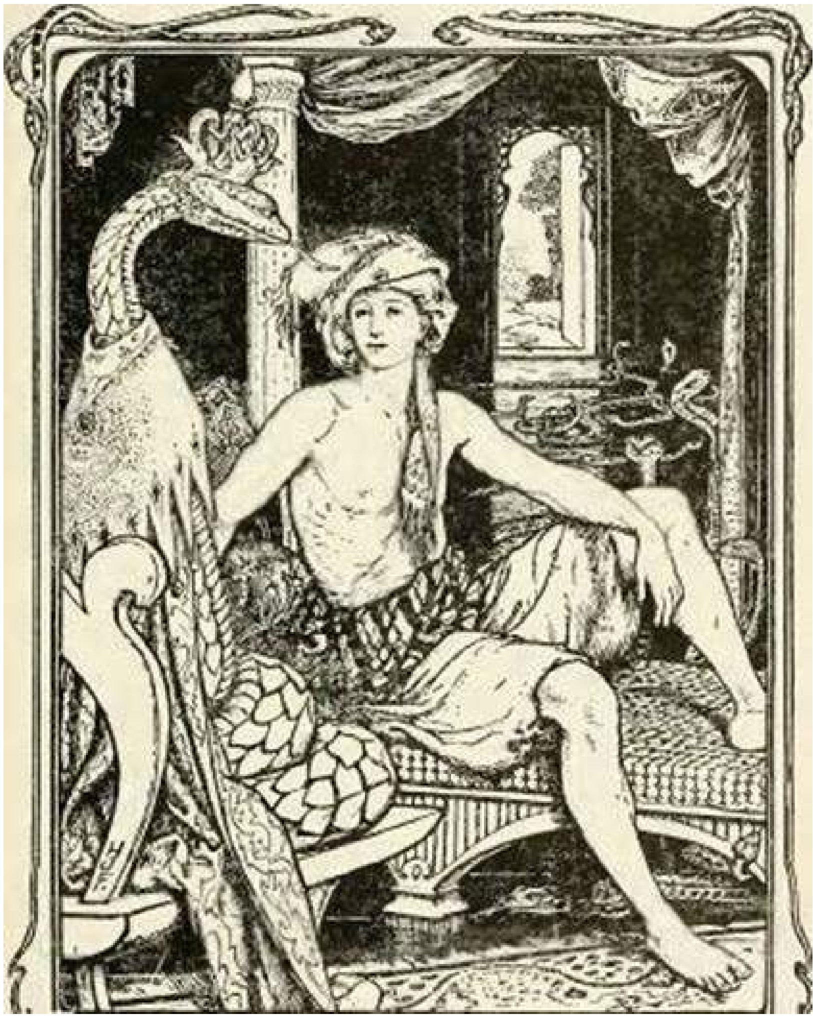

For three days Hassebu remembered his promise to the King of the Snakes, and did not go near the baths; then came a morning so hot he could hardly breathe, and he forgot all about it.

The moment he had slipped off his robe he was taken before the Vizir, who said to him, ‘Lead us to the place where the King of the Snakes lives.’

‘I do not know it!’ answered he, but the Vizir did not believe him, and had him bound and beaten till his back was all torn.

Then Hassebu cried, ‘Loose me, that I may take you.’

They went together a long, long way, till they reached the palace of the King of the Snakes.

And Hassebu said to the King: ‘It was not I: look at my back and you will see how they drove me to it.’

‘Who has beaten you like this?’ asked the King.

‘It was the Vizir,’ replied Hassebu.

‘Then I am already dead,’ said the King sadly, ‘but you must carry me there yourself.’

So Hassebu carried him. And on the way the King said, ‘When I arrive, I shall be killed, and my flesh will be cooked. But take some of the water that I am boiled in, and put it in a bottle and lay it on one side. The Vizir will tell you to drink it, but be careful not to do so. Then take some more of the water, and drink it, and you will become a great physician, and the third supply you will give to the Sultan. And when the Vizir comes to you and asks, “Did you drink what I gave you?” you must answer, “I did, and this is for you,” and he will drink it and die! and your soul will rest.’

And they went their way into the town, and all happened as the King of the Snakes had said.

And the Sultan loved Hassebu, who became a great physician, and cured many sick people. But he was always sorry for the poor King of the Snakes.

(Adapted from Swahili Tales,)

THE MAIDEN WITH THE WOODEN HELMET

In a little village in the country of Japan there lived long, long ago a man and his wife. For many years they were happy and prosperous, but bad times came, and at last nothing was left them but their daughter, who was as beautiful as the morning. The neighbours were very kind, and would have done anything they could to help their poor friends, but the old couple felt that since everything had changed they would rather go elsewhere, so one day they set off to bury themselves in the country, taking their daughter with them.

Now the mother and daughter had plenty to do in keeping the house clean and looking after the garden, but the man would sit for hours together gazing straight in front of him, and thinking of the riches that once were his. Each day he grew more and more wretched, till at length he took to his bed and never got up again.

His wife and daughter wept bitterly for his loss, and it was many months before they could take pleasure in anything. Then one morning the mother suddenly looked at the girl, and found that she had grown still more lovely than before. Once her heart would have been glad at the sight, but now that they two were alone in the world she feared some harm might come of it. So, like a good mother, she tried to teach her daughter all she knew, and to bring her up to be always busy, so that she would never have time to think about herself. And the girl was a good girl, and listened to all her mother’s lessons, and so the years passed away.

At last one wet spring the mother caught cold, and though in the beginning she did not pay much attention to it, she gradually grew more and more ill, and knew that she had not long to live. Then she called her daughter and told her that very soon she would be alone in the world; that she must take care of herself, as there would be no one to take care of her. And because it was more difficult for beautiful women to pass unheeded than for others, she bade her fetch a wooden helmet out of the next room, and put it on her head, and pull it low down over her brows, so that nearly the whole of her face should lie in its shadow. The girl did as she was bid, and her beauty was so hidden beneath the wooden cap, which covered up all her hair, that she might have gone through any crowd, and no one would have looked twice at her. And when she saw this the heart of the mother was at rest, and she lay back in her bed and died.

The girl wept for many days, but by-and-by she felt that, being alone in the world, she must go and get work, for she had only herself to depend upon. There was none to be got by staying where she was, so she made her clothes into a bundle, and walked over the hills till she reached the house of the man who owned the fields in that part of the country. And she took service with him and laboured for him early and late, and every night when she went to bed she was at peace, for she had not forgotten one thing that she had promised her mother; and, however hot the sun might be, she always kept the wooden helmet on her head, and the people gave her the nickname of Hatschihime.

In spite, however, of all her care the fame of her beauty spread abroad: many of the impudent young men that are always to be found in the world stole softly up behind her while she was at work, and tried to lift off the wooden helmet. But the girl would have nothing to say to them, and only bade them be off; then they began to talk to her, but she never answered them, and went on with what she was doing, though her wages were low and food not very plentiful. Still she could manage to live, and that was enough.

One day her master happened to pass through the field where she was working, and was struck by her industry and stopped to watch her. After a while he put one or two questions to her, and then led her into his house, and told her that henceforward her only duty should be to tend his sick wife. From this time the girl felt as if all her troubles were ended, but the worst of them was yet to come.

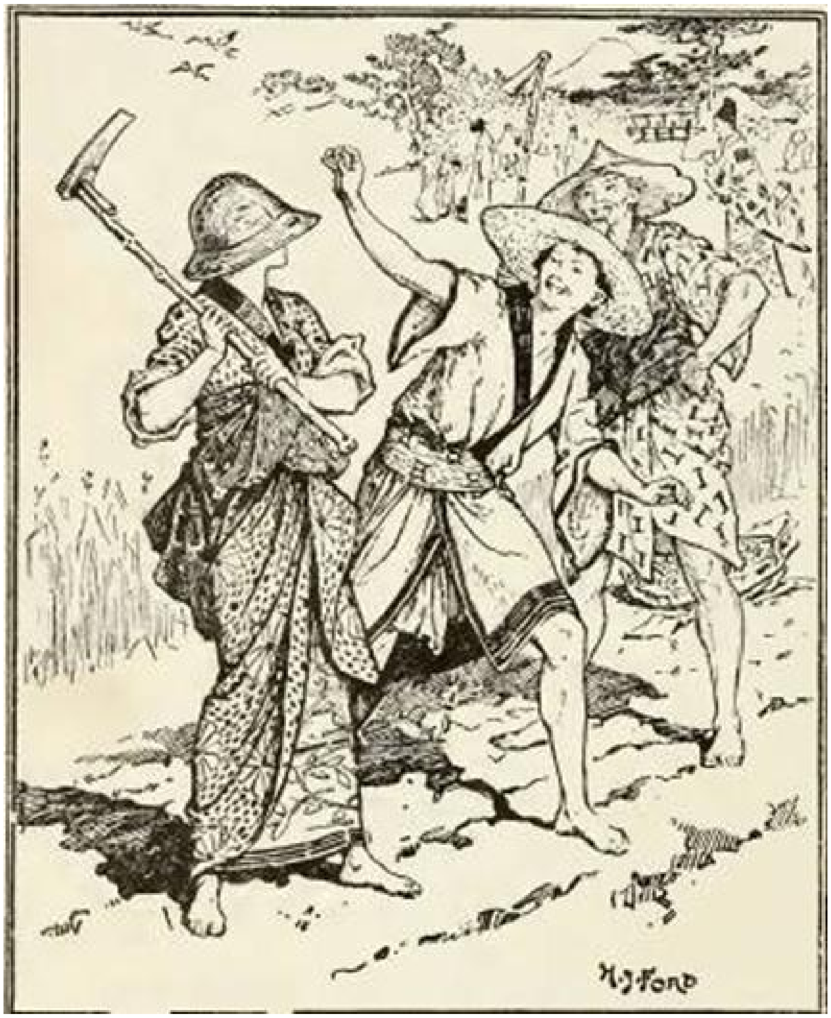

Not very long after Hatschihime had become maid to the sick woman, the eldest son of the house returned home from Kioto, where he had been studying all sorts of things. He was tired of the splendours of the town and its pleasures, and was glad enough to be back in the green country, among the peach-blossoms and sweet flowers. Strolling about in the early morning, he caught sight of the girl with the odd wooden helmet on her head, and immediately he went to his mother to ask who she was, and where she came from, and why she wore that strange thing over her face.

His mother answered that it was a whim, and nobody could persuade her to lay it aside; whereat the young man laughed, but kept his thoughts to himself.

One hot day, however, he happened to be going towards home when he caught sight of his mother’s waiting maid kneeling by a little stream that flowed through the garden, splashing some water over her face. The helmet was pushed on one side, and as the youth stood watching from behind a tree he had a glimpse of the girl’s great beauty; and he determined that no one else should be his wife. But when he told his family of his resolve to marry her they were very angry, and made up all sorts of wicked stories about her. However, they might have spared themselves the trouble, as he knew it was only idle talk. ‘I have merely to remain firm,’ thought he, ‘and they will have to give in.’ It was such a good match for the girl that it never occurred to anyone that she would refuse the young man, but so it was. It would not be right, she felt, to make a quarrel in the house, and though in secret she wept bitterly, for a long while, nothing would make her change her mind. At length one night her mother appeared to her in a dream, and bade her marry the young man. So the next time he asked her — as he did nearly every day — to his surprise and joy she consented. The parents then saw they had better make the best of a bad business, and set about making the grand preparations suitable to the occasion. Of course the neighbours said a great many ill-natured things about the wooden helmet, but the bridegroom was too happy to care, and only laughed at them.

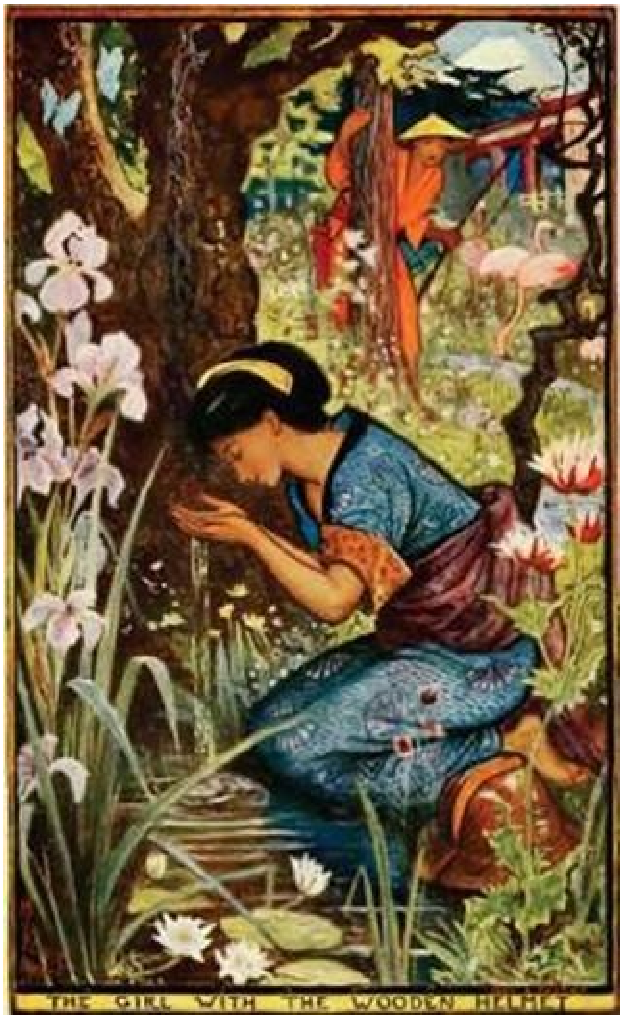

THE GIRL WITH THE WOODEN HELMET

When everything was ready for the feast, and the bride was dressed in the most beautiful embroidered dress to be found in Japan, the maids took hold of the helmet to lift it off her head, so that they might do her hair in the latest fashion. But the helmet would not come, and the harder they pulled, the faster it seemed to be, till the poor girl yelled with pain. Hearing her cries the bridegroom ran in and soothed her, and declared that she should be married in the helmet, as she could not be married without. Then the ceremonies began, and the bridal pair sat together, and the cup of wine was brought them, out of which they had to drink. And when they had drunk it all, and the cup was empty, a wonderful thing happened. The helmet suddenly burst with a loud noise, and fell in pieces on the ground; and as they all turned to look they found the floor covered with precious stones which had fallen out of it. But the guests were less astonished at the brilliancy of the diamonds than at the beauty of the bride, which was beyond anything they had ever seen or heard of. The night was passed in singing and dancing, and then the bride and bridegroom went to their own house, where they lived till they died, and had many children, who were famous throughout Japan for their goodness and beauty.

(Japanische Marchen.)

THE MONKEY AND THE JELLY-FISH

Children must often have wondered why jelly-fishes have no shells, like so many of the creatures that are washed up every day on the beach. In old times this was not so; the jelly-fish had as hard a shell as any of them, but he lost it through his own fault, as may be seen in this story.

The sea-queen Otohime, whom you read of in the story of Uraschimatoro, grew suddenly very ill. The swiftest messengers were sent hurrying to fetch the best doctors from every country under the sea, but it was all of no use; the queen grew rapidly worse instead of better. Everyone had almost given up hope, when one day a doctor arrived who was cleverer than the rest, and said that the only thing that would cure her was the liver of an ape. Now apes do not dwell under the sea, so a council of the wisest heads in the nation was called to consider the question how a liver could be obtained. At length it was decided that the turtle, whose prudence was well known, should swim to land and contrive to catch a living ape and bring him safely to the ocean kingdom.

It was easy enough for the council to entrust this mission to the turtle, but not at all so easy for him to fulfil it. However he swam to a part of the coast that was covered with tall trees, where he thought the apes were likely to be; for he was old, and had seen many things. It was some time before he caught sight of any monkeys, and he often grew tired with watching for them, so that one hot day he fell fast asleep, in spite of all his efforts to keep awake. By-and-by some apes, who had been peeping at him from the tops of the trees, where they had been carefully hidden from the turtle’s eyes, stole noiselessly down, and stood round staring at him, for they had never seen a turtle before, and did not know what to make of it. At last one young monkey, bolder than the rest, stooped down and stroked the shining shell that the strange new creature wore on its back. The movement, gentle though it was, woke the turtle. With one sweep he seized the monkey’s hand in his mouth, and held it tight, in spite of every effort to pull it away. The other apes, seeing that the turtle was not to be trifled with, ran off, leaving their young brother to his fate.

Then the turtle said to the monkey, ‘If you will be quiet, and do what I tell you, I won’t hurt you. But you must get on my back and come with me.’

The monkey, seeing there was no help for it, did as he was bid; indeed he could not have resisted, as his hand was still in the turtle’s mouth.

Delighted at having secured his prize, the turtle hastened back to the shore and plunged quickly into the water. He swam faster than he had ever done before, and soon reached the royal palace. Shouts of joy broke forth from the attendants when he was seen approaching, and some of them ran to tell the queen that the monkey was there, and that before long she would be as well as ever she was. In fact, so great was their relief that they gave the monkey such a kind welcome, and were so anxious to make him happy and comfortable, that he soon forgot all the fears that had beset him as to his fate, and was generally quite at his ease, though every now and then a fit of home-sickness would come over him, and he would hide himself in some dark corner till it had passed away.

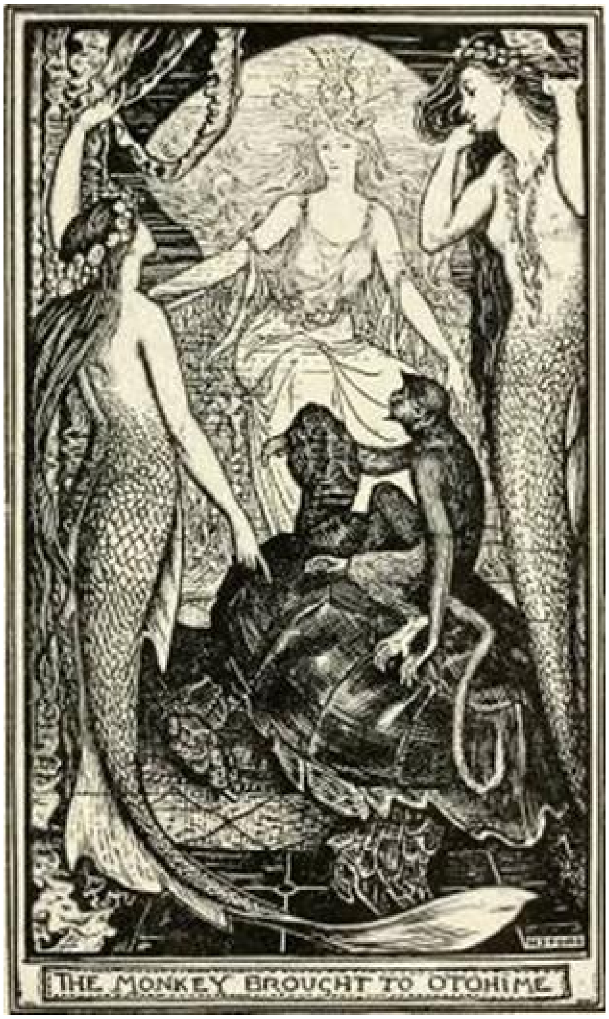

THE MONKEY BROUGHT TO OTOHIME

It was during one of these attacks of sadness that a jelly-fish happened to swim by. At that time jelly-fishes had shells. At the sight of the gay and lively monkey crouching under a tall rock, with his eyes closed and his head bent, the jelly-fish was filled with pity, and stopped, saying, ‘Ah, poor fellow, no wonder you weep; a few days more, and they will come and kill you and give your liver to the queen to eat.’

The monkey shrank back horrified at these words and asked the jelly-fish what crime he had committed that deserved death.

‘Oh, none at all,’ replied the jelly-fish, ‘but your liver is the only thing that will cure our queen, and how can we get at it without killing you? You had better submit to your fate, and make no noise about it, for though I pity you from my heart there is no way of helping you.’ Then he went away, leaving the ape cold with horror.

At first he felt as if his liver was already being taken from his body, but soon he began to wonder if there was no means of escaping this terrible death, and at length he invented a plan which he thought would do. For a few days he pretended to be gay and happy as before, but when the sun went in, and rain fell in torrents, he wept and howled from dawn to dark, till the turtle, who was his head keeper, heard him, and came to see what was the matter. Then the monkey told him that before he left home he had hung his liver out on a bush to dry, and if it was always going to rain like this it would become quite useless. And the rogue made such a fuss and moaning that he would have melted a heart of stone, and nothing would content him but that somebody should carry him back to land and let him fetch his liver again.

The queen’s councillors were not the wisest of people, and they decided between them that the turtle should take the monkey back to his native land and allow him to get his liver off the bush, but desired the turtle not to lose sight of his charge for a single moment. The monkey knew this, but trusted to his power of beguiling the turtle when the time came, and mounted on his back with feelings of joy, which he was, however, careful to conceal. They set out, and in a few hours were wandering about the forest where the ape had first been caught, and when the monkey saw his family peering out from the tree tops, he swung himself up by the nearest branch, just managing to save his hind leg from being seized by the turtle. He told them all the dreadful things that had happened to him, and gave a war cry which brought the rest of the tribe from the neighbouring hills. At a word from him they rushed in a body to the unfortunate turtle, threw him on his back, and tore off the shield that covered his body. Then with mocking words they hunted him to the shore, and into the sea, which he was only too thankful to reach alive. Faint and exhausted he entered the queen’s palace for the cold of the water struck upon his naked body, and made him feel ill and miserable. But wretched though he was, he had to appear before the queen’s advisers and tell them all that had befallen him, and how he had suffered the monkey to escape. But, as sometimes happens, the turtle was allowed to go scot-free, and had his shell given back to him, and all the punishment fell on the poor jelly-fish, who was condemned by the queen to go shieldless for ever after.

(Japanische Marchen.)

THE HEADLESS DWARFS

There was once a minister who spent his whole time in trying to find a servant who would undertake to ring the church bells at midnight, in addition to all his other duties.

Of course it was not everyone who cared to get up in the middle of the night, when he had been working hard all day; still, a good many had agreed to do it. But the strange thing was that no sooner had the servant set forth to perform his task than he disappeared, as if the earth had swallowed him up. No bells were rung, and no ringer ever came back. The minister did his best to keep the matter secret, but it leaked out for all that, and the end of it was that no one would enter his service. Indeed, there were even those who whispered that the minister himself had murdered the missing men!

It was to no purpose that Sunday after Sunday the minister gave out from his pulpit that double wages would be paid to anyone that would fulfil the sacred duty of ringing the bells of the church. No one took the slightest notice of any offer he might make, and the poor man was in despair, when one day, as he was standing at his house door, a youth known in the village as Clever Hans came up to him. ‘I am tired of living with a miser who will not give me enough to eat and drink,’ said he, ‘and I am ready to do all you want.’ ‘Very good, my son,’ replied the minister, ‘you shall have the chance of proving your courage this very night. To-morrow we will settle what your wages are to be.’

Hans was quite content with this proposal, and went straight into the kitchen to begin his work, not knowing that his new master was quite as stingy as his old one. In the hope that his presence might be a restraint upon them, the minister used to sit at the table during his servants’ meals, and would exhort them to drink much and often, thinking that they would not be able to eat as well, and beef was dearer than beer. But in Hans he had met his match, and the minister soon found to his cost that in his case at any rate a full cup did not mean an empty plate.

About an hour before midnight, Hans entered the church and locked the door behind him, but what was his surprise when, in place of the darkness and silence he expected, he found the church brilliantly lighted, and a crowd of people sitting round a table playing cards. Hans felt no fear at this strange sight, or was prudent enough to hide it if he did, and, going up to the table, sat down amongst the players. One of them looked up and asked, ‘My friend, what are you doing here?' and Hans gazed at him for a moment, then laughed and answered, 'Well, if anybody has a right to put that question, it is I! And if *I* do not put it, it will certainly be wiser for you not to do so!'

Then he picked up some cards, and played with the unknown men as if he had known them all his life. The luck was on his side, and soon the money of the other gamblers found its way from their pockets into his. On the stroke of midnight the cock crew, and in an instant lights, table, cards, and people all had vanished, and Hans was left alone.

He groped about for some time, till he found the staircase in the tower, and then began to feel his way up the steps.

On the first landing a glimmer of light came through a slit in the wall, and he saw a tiny man sitting there, without a head. 'Ho! ho! my little fellow, what are you doing there?' asked Hans, and, without waiting for an answer, gave him a kick which sent him flying down the stairs. Then he climbed higher still, and finding as he went dumb watchers sitting on every landing, treated them as he had done the first.

At last he reached the top, and as he paused for a moment to look round him he saw another headless man cowering in the very bell itself, waiting till Hans should seize the bell-pull in order to strike him a blow with the clapper, which would soon have made an end of him.

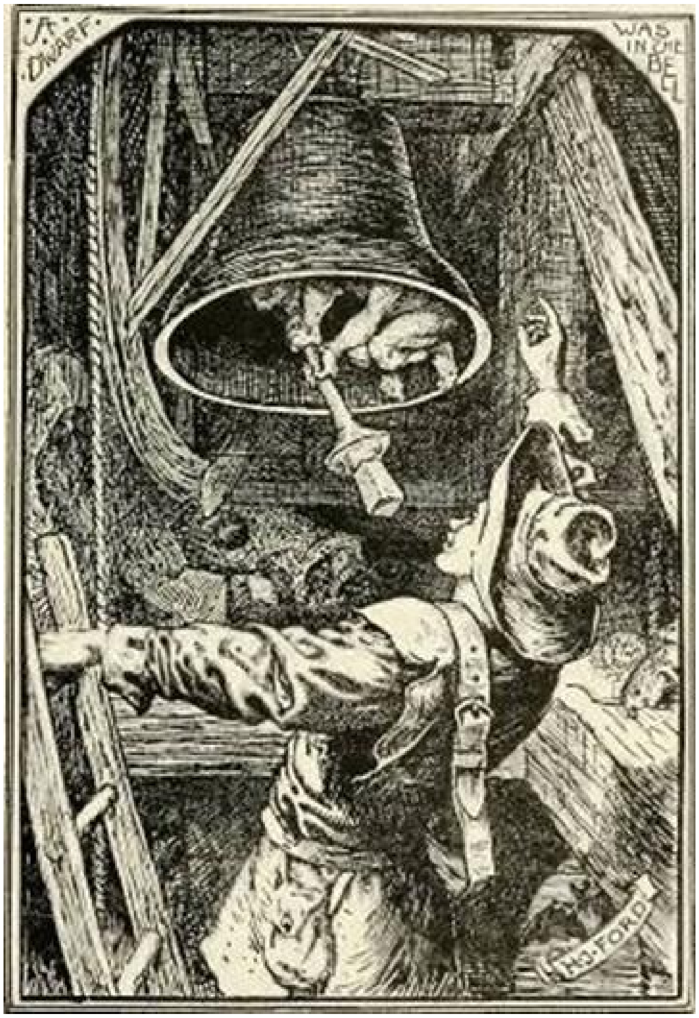
A DWARF WAS IN THE BELL
H.J. FORD

‘Stop, my little friend!’ cried Hans. ‘That is not part of the bargain! Perhaps you saw how your comrades walked down stairs, and you are going after them. But as you are in the highest place you shall make a more dignified exit, and follow them through the window!’

With these words he began to climb the ladder, in order to take the little man from the bell and carry out his threat.

At this the dwarf cried out imploringly, ‘Oh, brother! spare my life, and I promise that neither I nor my comrades will ever trouble you any more. I am small and weak, but who knows whether some day I shall not be able to reward you.’

‘You wretched little shrimp,’ replied Hans, ‘a great deal of good your gratitude is likely to do me! But as I happen to be feeling in a cheerful mood to-night I will let you have your life. But take care how you come across me again, or you may not escape so easily!’

The headless man thanked him humbly, slid hastily down the bell rope, and ran down the steps of the tower as if he had left a fire behind him. Then Hans began to ring lustily.

When the minister heard the sound of the midnight bells he wondered greatly, but rejoiced that he had at last found some one to whom he could trust this duty. Hans rang the bells for some time, then went to the hay-loft, and fell fast asleep.

Now it was the custom of the minister to get up very early, and to go round to make sure that the men were all at their work. This morning everyone was in his place except Hans, and no one knew anything about him. Nine o'clock came, and no Hans, but when eleven struck the minister began to fear that he had vanished like the ringers who had gone before him. When, however, the servants all gathered round the table for dinner, Hans at last made his appearance stretching himself and yawning.

'Where have you been all this time?' asked the minister.

'Asleep,' said Hans.

'Asleep!' exclaimed the minister in astonishment. 'You don't mean to tell me that you can go on sleeping till mid-day?'

'That is exactly what I do mean,' replied Hans. 'If one works in the night one must sleep in the day, just as if one works in the day one sleeps in the night. If you can find somebody else to ring the bells at midnight I am ready to begin work at dawn; but if you want me to ring them I must go on sleeping till noon at the very earliest.'

The minister tried to argue the point with him, but at length the following agreement was come to. Hans was to give up the ringing, and was to work like the rest from sunrise to sunset, with the exception of an hour after breakfast and an hour after dinner, when he might go to sleep. 'But, of course,' added the minister carelessly, 'it may happen now and then, especially in winter, when the days are short, that you will have to work a little longer, to get something finished.'

'Not at all!' answered Hans. 'Unless I were to leave off work earlier in summer, I will not do a stroke more than I have promised, and that is from dawn to dark; so you know what you have to expect.'

A few weeks later the minister was asked to attend a christening in the neighbouring town. He bade Hans come with him, but, as the town was only a few hours' ride from where he lived, the minister was much surprised to see Hans come forth laden with a bag containing food.

'What are you taking that for?' asked the minister. 'We shall be there before dark.'

'Who knows?' replied Hans. 'Many things may happen to delay our journey, and I need not remind you of our contract that the moment the sun sets I cease to be your servant. If we don't reach the town while it is still daylight I shall leave you to shift for yourself.’

The minister thought he was joking, and made no further remark. But when they had left the village behind them, and had ridden a few miles, they found that snow had fallen during the night, and had been blown by the wind into drifts. This hindered their progress, and by the time they had entered the thick wood which lay between them and their destination the sun was already touching the tops of the trees. The horses ploughed their way slowly through the deep soft snow and as they went Hans kept turning to look at the sun, which lay at their backs.

‘Is there anything behind you?’ asked the minister. ‘Or what is it you are always turning round for?’

‘I turn round because I have no eyes in the back of my neck,’ said Hans.

‘Cease talking nonsense,’ replied the minister, ‘and give all your mind to getting us to the town before nightfall.’

Hans did not answer, but rode on steadily, though every now and then he cast a glance over his shoulder.

When they arrived in the middle of the wood the sun sank altogether. Then Hans reined up his horse, took his knapsack, and jumped out of the sledge.

‘What are you doing? Are you mad?’ asked the minister, but Hans answered quietly, ‘The sun is set and my work is over, and I am going to camp here for the night.’

In vain the master prayed and threatened, and promised Hans a large reward if he would only drive him on. The young man was not to be moved.

‘Are you not ashamed to urge me to break my word?’ said he. ‘If you want to reach the town to-night you must go alone. The hour of my freedom has struck, and I cannot go with you.’

‘My good Hans,’ entreated the minister, ‘I really ought not to leave you here. Consider what danger you would be in! Yonder, as you see, a gallows is set up, and two evil-doers are hanging on it. You could not possibly sleep with such ghastly neighbours.’

‘Why not?’ asked Hans. ‘Those gallows birds hang high in the air, and my camp will be on the ground; we shall have nothing to do with each other.’ As he spoke, he turned his back on the minister, and went his way.

There was no help for it, and the minister had to push on by himself, if he expected to arrive in time for the christening. His friends were much surprised to see him drive up without a coachman, and thought some accident had happened. But when he told them of his conversation with Hans they did not know which was the most foolish, master or man.

It would have mattered little to Hans had he known what they were saying or thinking of him. He satisfied his hunger with the food he had in his knapsack, lit his pipe, pitched his tent under the boughs of a tree, wrapped himself in his furs, and went sound asleep. After some hours, he was awakened by a sudden noise, and sat up and looked about him. The moon was shining brightly above his head, and close by stood two headless dwarfs, talking angrily. At the sight of Hans the little dwarfs cried out:

‘It is he! It is he!’ and one of them stepping nearer exclaimed, ‘Ah, my old friend! it is a lucky chance that has brought us here. My bones still ache from my fall down the steps of the tower. I dare say you have not forgotten that night! Now it is the turn of your bones. Hi! comrades, make haste! make haste!’

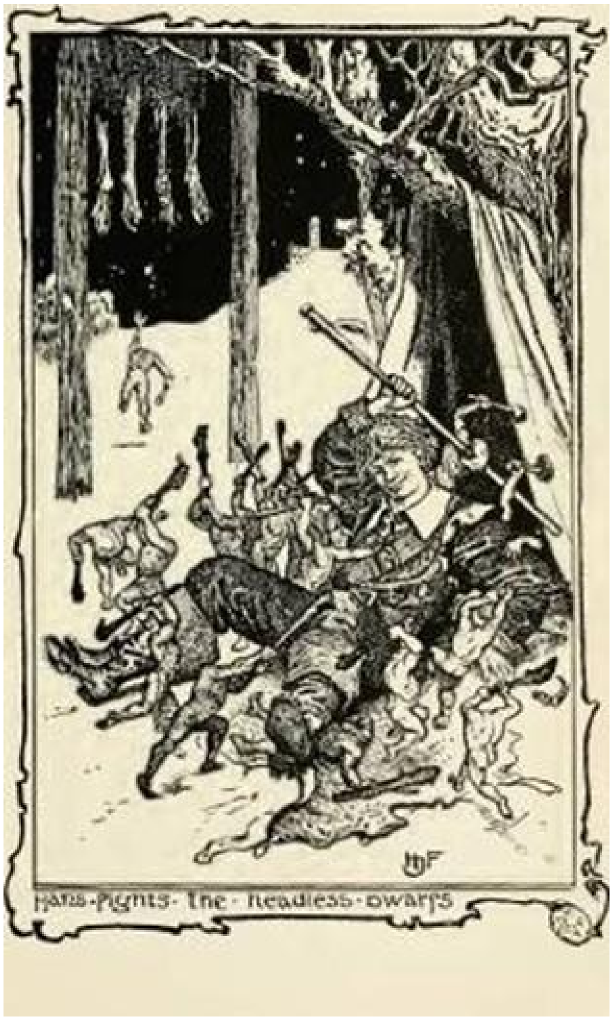

Like a swarm of midges, a host of tiny headless creatures seemed to spring straight out of the ground, and every one was armed with a club. Although they were so small, yet there were such numbers of them and they struck so hard that even a strong man could do nothing against them. Hans thought his last hour was come, when just as the fight was at the hottest another little dwarf arrived on the scene.

‘Hold, comrades!’ he shouted, turning to the attacking party. ‘This man once did me a service, and I am his debtor. When I was in his power he granted me my life. And even if he did throw you downstairs, well, a warm bath soon cured your bruises, so you must just forgive him and go quietly home.’

The headless dwarfs listened to his words and disappeared as suddenly as they had come. As soon as Hans recovered himself a little he looked at his rescuer, and saw he was the dwarf he had found seated in the church bell.

‘Ah!’ said the dwarf, seating himself quietly under the tree. ‘You laughed at me when I told you that some day I might do you a good turn. Now you see I was right, and perhaps you will learn for the future not to despise any creature, however small.’

‘I thank you from my heart,’ answered Hans. ‘My bones are still sore from their blows, and had it not been for you I should indeed have fared badly.’

‘I have almost paid my debt,’ went on the little man, ‘but as you have suffered already, I will do more, and give you a piece of information. You need not remain any longer in the service of that stingy minister, but when you get home to-morrow go at once to the north corner of the church, and there you will find a large stone built into the wall, but not cemented like the rest. The day after to-morrow the moon is full, and at midnight you must go to the spot and get the stone out of the wall with a pickaxe. Under the stone lies a great treasure, which has been hidden there in time of war. Besides church plate, you will find bags of money, which have been lying in this place for over a hundred years, and no one knows to whom it all belongs. A third of this money you must give to the poor, but the rest you may keep for yourself.’ As he finished, the cocks in the village crowed, and the little man was nowhere to be seen. Hans found that his limbs no longer pained him, and lay for some time thinking of the hidden treasure. Towards morning he fell asleep.

The sun was high in the heavens when his master returned from the town.

‘Hans,’ said he, ‘what a fool you were not to come with me yesterday! I was well feasted and entertained, and I have money in my pocket into the bargain,’ he went on, rattling some coins while he spoke, to make Hans understand how much he had lost.

‘Ah, sir,’ replied Hans calmly, ‘in order to have gained so much money you must have lain awake all night, but I have earned a hundred times that amount while I was sleeping soundly.’

‘How did you manage that?’ asked the minister eagerly, but Hans answered, ‘It is only fools who boast of their farthings; wise men take care to hide their crowns.’

They drove home, and Hans neglected none of his duties, but put up the horses and gave them their food before going to the church corner, where he found the loose stone, exactly in the place described by the dwarf. Then he returned to his work.

The first night of the full moon, when the whole village was asleep, he stole out, armed with a pickaxe, and with much difficulty succeeded in dislodging the stone from its place. Sure enough, there was the hole, and in the hole lay the treasure, exactly as the little man had said.

The following Sunday he handed over the third part to the village poor, and informed the minister that he wished to break his bond of service. As, however, he did not claim any wages, the minister made no objections, but allowed him to do as he wished. So Hans went his way, bought himself a large house, and married a young wife, and lived happily and prosperously to the end of his days.

(Ehstnische Marchen.)

THE YOUNG MAN WHO WOULD HAVE HIS EYES OPENED

Once upon a time there lived a youth who was never happy unless he was prying into something that other people knew nothing about. After he had learned to understand the language of birds and beasts, he discovered accidentally that a great deal took place under cover of night which mortal eyes never saw. From that moment he felt he could not rest till these hidden secrets were laid bare to him, and he spent his whole time wandering from one wizard to another, begging them to open his eyes, but found none to help him. At length he reached an old magician called Mana, whose learning was greater than that of the rest, and who could tell him all he wanted to know. But when the old man had listened attentively to him, he said, warningly:

‘My son, do not follow after empty knowledge, which will not bring you happiness, but rather evil. Much is hidden from the eyes of men, because did they know everything their hearts would no longer be at peace. Knowledge kills joy, therefore think well what you are doing, or some day you will repent. But if you will not take my advice, then truly I can show you the secrets of the night. Only you will need more than a man’s courage to bear the sight.’

He stopped and looked at the young man, who nodded his head, and then the wizard continued, ‘To-morrow night you must go to the place where, once in seven years, the serpent-king gives a great feast to his whole court. In front of him stands a golden bowl filled with goats’ milk, and if you can manage to dip a piece of bread in this milk, and eat it before you are obliged to fly, you will understand all the secrets of the night that are hidden from other men. It is lucky for you that the serpent-king’s feast happens to fall this year, otherwise you would have had long to wait for it. But take care to be quick and bold, or it will be the worse for you.’

The young man thanked the wizard for his counsel, and went his way firmly resolved to carry out his purpose, even if he paid for it with his life; and when night came he set out for a wide, lonely moor, where the serpent-king held his feast. With sharpened eyes, he looked eagerly all round him, but could see nothing but a multitude of small hillocks, that lay motionless under the moonlight. He crouched behind a bush for some time, till he felt that midnight could not be far off, when suddenly there arose in the middle of the moor a brilliant glow, as if a star was shining over one of the hillocks. At the same moment all the hillocks began to writhe and to crawl, and from each one came hundreds of serpents and made straight for the glow, where they knew they should find their king. When they reached the hillock where he dwelt, which was higher and broader than the rest, and had a bright light hanging over the top, they coiled themselves up and waited. The whirr and confusion from all the serpent-houses were so great that the youth did not dare to advance one step, but remained where he was, watching intently all that went on; but at last he began to take courage, and moved on softly step by step.

What he saw was creepier than creepy, and surpassed all he had ever dreamt of. Thousands of snakes, big and little and of every colour, were gathered together in one great cluster round a huge serpent, whose body was as thick as a beam, and which had on its head a golden crown, from which the light sprang. Their hissings and darting tongues so terrified the young man that his heart sank, and he felt he should never have courage to push on to certain death, when suddenly he caught sight of the golden bowl in front of the serpent-king, and knew that if he lost this chance it would never come back. So, with his hair standing on end and his blood frozen in his veins, he crept forwards. Oh! what a noise and a whirr rose afresh among the serpents. Thousands of heads were reared, and tongues were stretched out to sting the intruder to death, but happily for him their bodies were so closely entwined one in the other that they could not disentangle themselves quickly. Like lightning he seized a bit of bread, dipped it in the bowl, and put it in his mouth, then dashed away as if fire was pursuing him. On he flew as if a whole army of foes were at his heels, and he seemed to hear the noise of their approach growing nearer and nearer. At length his breath failed him, and he threw himself almost senseless on the turf. While he lay there dreadful dreams haunted him. He thought that the serpent-king with the fiery crown had twined himself round him, and was crushing out his life. With a loud shriek he sprang up to do battle with his enemy, when he saw that it was rays of the sun which had wakened him. He rubbed his eyes and looked all round, but nothing could he see of the foes of the past night, and the moor where he had run into such danger must be at least a mile away. But it was no dream that he had run hard and far, or that he had drunk of the magic goats’ milk. And when he felt his limbs, and found them whole, his joy was great that he had come through such perils with a sound skin.

After the fatigues and terrors of the night, he lay still till mid-day, but he made up his mind he would go that very evening into the forest to try what the goats’ milk could really do for him, and if he would now be able to understand all that had been a mystery to him. And once in the forest his doubts were set at rest, for he saw what no mortal eyes had ever seen before. Beneath the trees were golden pavilions, with flags of silver all brightly lighted up. He was still wondering why the pavilions were there, when a noise was heard among the trees, as if the wind had suddenly got up, and on all sides beautiful maidens stepped from the trees into the bright light of the moon. These were the wood-nymphs, daughters of the earth-mother, who came every night to hold their dances, in the forest. The young man, watching from his hiding place, wished he had a hundred eyes in his head, for two were not nearly enough for the sight before him, the dances lasting till the first streaks of dawn. Then a silvery veil seemed to be drawn over the ladies, and they vanished from sight. But the young man remained where he was till the sun was high in the heavens, and then went home.

He felt that day to be endless, and counted the minutes till night should come, and he might return to the forest. But when at last he got there he found neither pavilions nor nymphs, and though he went back many nights after he never saw them again. Still, he thought about them night and day, and ceased to care about anything else in the world, and was sick to the end of his life with longing for that beautiful vision. And that was the way he learned that the wizard had spoken truly when he said, ‘Blindness is man’s highest good.’

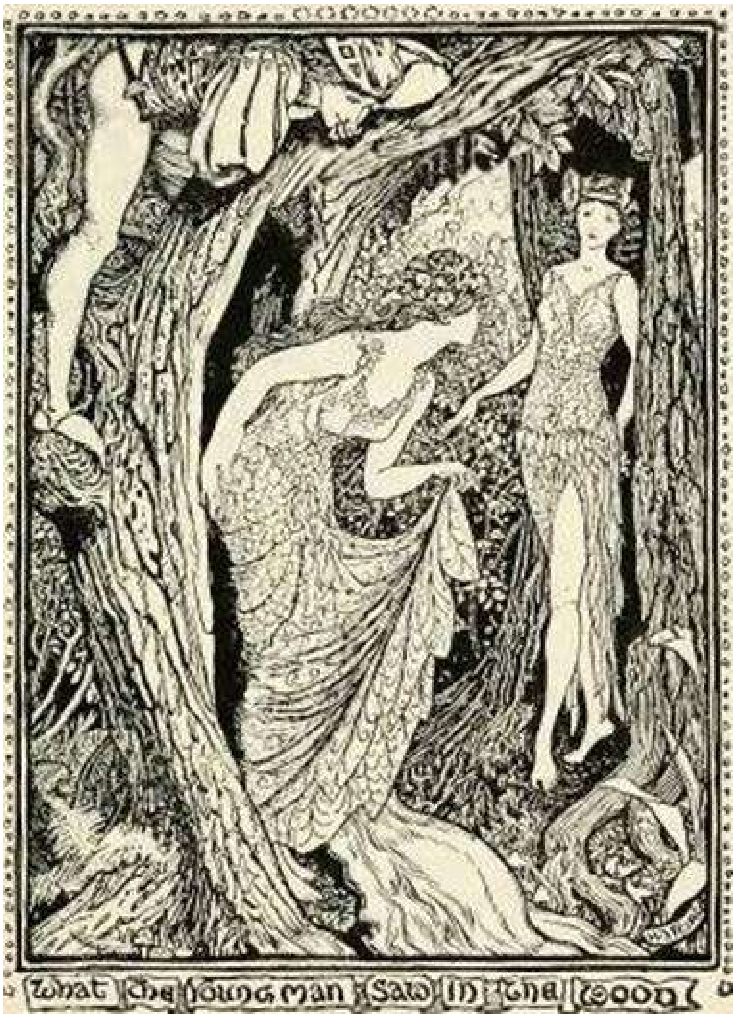

What the young man saw in the wood

(Ehstnische Marchen.)

THE BOYS WITH THE GOLDEN STARS

Once upon a time what happened did happen: and if it had not happened, you would never have heard this story.

Well, once upon a time there lived an emperor who had half a world all to himself to rule over, and in this world dwelt an old herd and his wife and their three daughters, Anna, Stana, and Laptitza.

Anna, the eldest, was so beautiful that when she took the sheep to pasture they forgot to eat as long as she was walking with them. Stana, the second, was so beautiful that when she was driving the flock the wolves protected the sheep. But Laptitza, the youngest, with a skin as white as the foam on the milk, and with hair as soft as the finest lamb's wool, was as beautiful as both her sisters put together — as beautiful as she alone could be.

One summer day, when the rays of the sun were pouring down on the earth, the three sisters went to the wood on the outskirts of the mountain to pick strawberries. As they were looking about to find where the largest berries grew they heard the tramp of horses approaching, so loud that you would have thought a whole army was riding by. But it was only the emperor going to hunt with his friends and attendants.

They were all fine handsome young men, who sat their horses as if they were part of them, but the finest and handsomest of all was the young emperor himself.

As they drew near the three sisters, and marked their beauty, they checked their horses and rode slowly by.

'Listen, sisters!' said Anna, as they passed on. 'If one of those young men should make me his wife, I would bake him a loaf of bread which should keep him young and brave for ever.'

'And if I,' said Stana, 'should be the one chosen, I would weave my husband a shirt which will keep him unscathed when he fights with dragons; when he goes through water he will never even be wet; or if through fire, it will not scorch him.'

'And I,' said Laptitza, 'will give the man who chooses me two boys, twins, each with a golden star on his forehead, as bright as those in the sky.'

And though they spoke low the young men heard, and turned their horses' heads.

'I take you at your word, and mine shall you be, most lovely of empresses!'

cried the emperor, and swung Laptitza and her strawberries on the horse before him.

'And I will have you,' 'And I you,' exclaimed two of his friends, and they all rode back to the palace together.

The following morning the marriage ceremony took place, and for three days and three nights there was nothing but feasting over the whole kingdom. And when the rejoicings were over the news was in everybody's mouth that Anna had sent for corn, and had made the loaf of which she had spoken at the strawberry beds. And then more days and nights passed, and this rumour was succeeded by another one — that Stana had procured some flax, and had dried it, and combed it, and spun it into linen, and sewed it herself into the shirt of which she had spoken over the strawberry beds.

Now the emperor had a stepmother, and she had a daughter by her first husband, who lived with her in the palace. The girl's mother had always believed that her daughter would be empress, and not the 'Milkwhite Maiden,' the child of a mere shepherd. So she hated the girl with all her heart, and only bided her time to do her ill.

But she could do nothing as long as the emperor remained with his wife night and day, and she began to wonder what she could do to get him away from her.

At last, when everything else had failed, she managed to make her brother, who was king of the neighbouring country, declare war against the emperor, and besiege some of the frontier towns with a large army. This time her scheme was successful. The young emperor sprang up in wrath the moment he heard the news, and vowed that nothing, not even his wife, should hinder his giving them battle. And hastily assembling whatever soldiers happened to be at hand he set off at once to meet the enemy. The other king had not reckoned on the swiftness of his movements, and was not ready to receive him. The emperor fell on him when he was off his guard, and routed his army completely. Then when victory was won, and the terms of peace hastily drawn up, he rode home as fast as his horse would carry him, and reached the palace on the third day.

But early that morning, when the stars were growing pale in the sky, two little boys with golden hair and stars on their foreheads were born to Laptitza. And the stepmother, who was watching, took them away, and dug a hole in the corner of the palace, under the windows of the emperor, and put them in it, while in their stead she placed two little puppies.

The emperor came into the palace, and when they told him the news he went straight to Laptitza's room. No words were needed; he saw with his own eyes that Laptitza had not kept the promise she had made at the strawberry beds, and, though it nearly broke his heart, he must give orders for her punishment.

So he went out sadly and told his guards that the empress was to be buried in the earth up to her neck, so that everyone might know what would happen to those who dared to deceive the emperor.

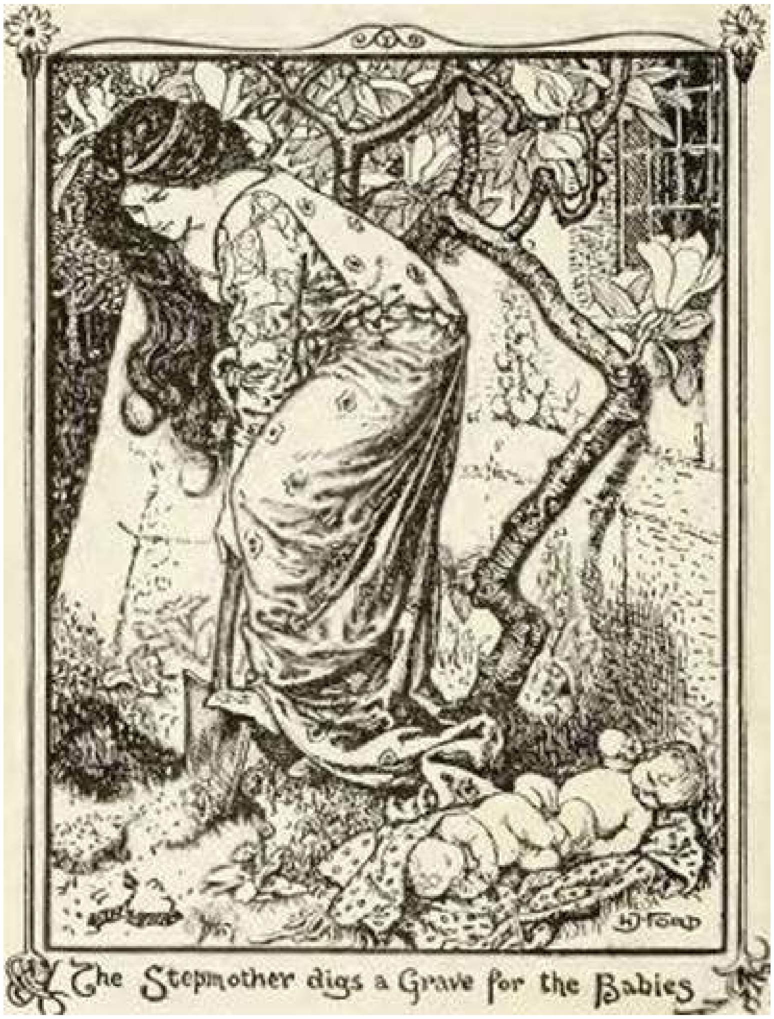

The Stepmother digs a Grave for the Babies

Not many days after, the stepmother’s wish was fulfilled. The emperor took her daughter to wife, and again the rejoicings lasted for three days and three nights.

Let us now see what happened to the two little boys.

The poor little babies had found no rest even in their graves. In the place where they had been buried there sprang up two beautiful young aspens, and the stepmother, who hated the sight of the trees, which reminded her of her crime, gave orders that they should be uprooted. But the emperor heard of it, and forbade the trees to be touched, saying, ‘Let them alone; I like to see them there! They are the finest aspens I have ever beheld!’

And the aspens grew as no aspens had ever grown before. In each day they added a year’s growth, and each night they added a year’s growth, and at dawn, when the stars faded out of the sky, they grew three years' growth in the twinkling of an eye, and their boughs swept across the palace windows. And when the wind moved them softly, the emperor would sit and listen to them all the day long.

The stepmother knew what it all meant, and her mind never ceased from trying to invent some way of destroying the trees. It was not an easy thing, but a woman's will can press milk out of a stone, and her cunning will overcome heroes. What craft will not do soft words may attain, and if these do not succeed there still remains the resource of tears.

One morning the empress sat on the edge of her husband's bed, and began to coax him with all sorts of pretty ways.

It was some time before the bait took, but at length — even emperors are only men!

'Well, well,' he said at last, 'have your way and cut down the trees; but out of one they shall make a bed for me, and out of the other, one for you!'

And with this the empress was forced to be content. The aspens were cut down next morning, and before night the new bed had been placed in the emperor's room.

Now when the emperor lay down in it he seemed as if he had grown a hundred times heavier than usual, yet he felt a kind of calm that was quite new to him. But the empress felt as if she was lying on thorns and nettles, and could not close her eyes.

When the emperor was fast asleep, the bed began to crack loudly, and to the empress each crack had a meaning. She felt as if she were listening to a language which no one but herself could understand.

'Is it too heavy for you, little brother?' asked one of the beds.

'Oh, no, it is not heavy at all,' answered the bed in which the emperor was sleeping. 'I feel nothing but joy now that my beloved father rests over me.'

'It is very heavy for me!' said the other bed, 'for on me lies an evil soul.'

And so they talked on till the morning, the empress listening all the while.

By daybreak the empress had determined how to get rid of the beds. She would have two others made exactly like them, and when the emperor had gone hunting they should be placed in his room. This was done and the aspen beds were burnt in a large fire, till only a little heap of ashes was left.

Yet while they were burning the empress seemed to hear the same words, which she alone could understand.

Then she stooped and gathered up the ashes, and scattered them to the four winds, so that they might blow over fresh lands and fresh seas, and nothing remain of them.

But she had not seen that where the fire burnt brightest two sparks flew up, and, after floating in the air for a few moments, fell down into the great river that flows through the heart of the country. Here the sparks had turned into two little fishes with golden scales, and one was so exactly like the other that everyone could tell at the first glance that they must be twins. Early one morning the emperor's fishermen went down to the river to get some fish for their master's breakfast, and cast their nets into the stream. As the last star twinkled out of the sky they drew them in, and among the multitude of fishes lay two with scales of gold, such as no man had ever looked on.

They all gathered round and wondered, and after some talk they decided that they would take the little fishes alive as they were, and give them as a present to the emperor.

'Do not take us there, for that is whence we came, and yonder lies our destruction,' said one of the fishes.

'But what are we to do with you?' asked the fisherman.

'Go and collect all the dew that lies on the leaves, and let us swim in it. Then lay us in the sun, and do not come near us till the sun's rays shall have dried off the dew,' answered the other fish.

The fisherman did as they told him — gathered the dew from the leaves and let them swim in it, then put them to lie in the sun till the dew should be all dried up.

And when he came back, what do you think he saw? Why, two boys, two beautiful young princes, with hair as golden as the stars on their foreheads, and each so like the other, that at the first glance every one would have known them for twins.

The boys grew fast. In every day they grew a year's growth, and in every night another year's growth, but at dawn, when the stars were fading, they grew three years' growth in the twinkling of an eye. And they grew in other things besides height, too. Thrice in age, and thrice in wisdom, and thrice in knowledge. And when three days and three nights had passed they were twelve years in age, twenty-four in strength, and thirty-six in wisdom.

'Now take us to our father,' said they. So the fisherman gave them each a lambskin cap which half covered their faces, and completely hid their golden hair and the stars on their foreheads, and led them to the court.

By the time they arrived there it was midday, and the fisherman and his charges went up to an official who was standing about. 'We wish to speak with the emperor,' said one of the boys.

'You must wait until he has finished his dinner,' replied the porter.

'No, while he is eating it,' said the second boy, stepping across the threshold.

The attendants all ran forward to thrust such impudent youngsters outside the palace, but the boys slipped through their fingers like quicksilver, and entered a large hall, where the emperor was dining, surrounded by his whole court.

‘We desire to enter,’ said one of the princes sharply to a servant who stood near the door.

‘That is quite impossible,’ replied the servant.

‘Is it? let us see!’ said the second prince, pushing the servants to right and left.

But the servants were many, and the princes only two. There was the noise of a struggle, which reached the emperor’s ears.

‘What is the matter?’ asked he angrily.

The princes stopped at the sound of their father’s voice.

‘Two boys who want to force their way in,’ replied one of the servants, approaching the emperor.

‘To FORCE their way in? Who dares to use force in my palace? What boys are they?’ said the emperor all in one breath.

‘We know not, O mighty emperor,’ answered the servant, ‘but they must surely be akin to you, for they have the strength of lions, and have scattered the guards at the gate. And they are as proud as they are strong, for they will not take their caps from their heads.’

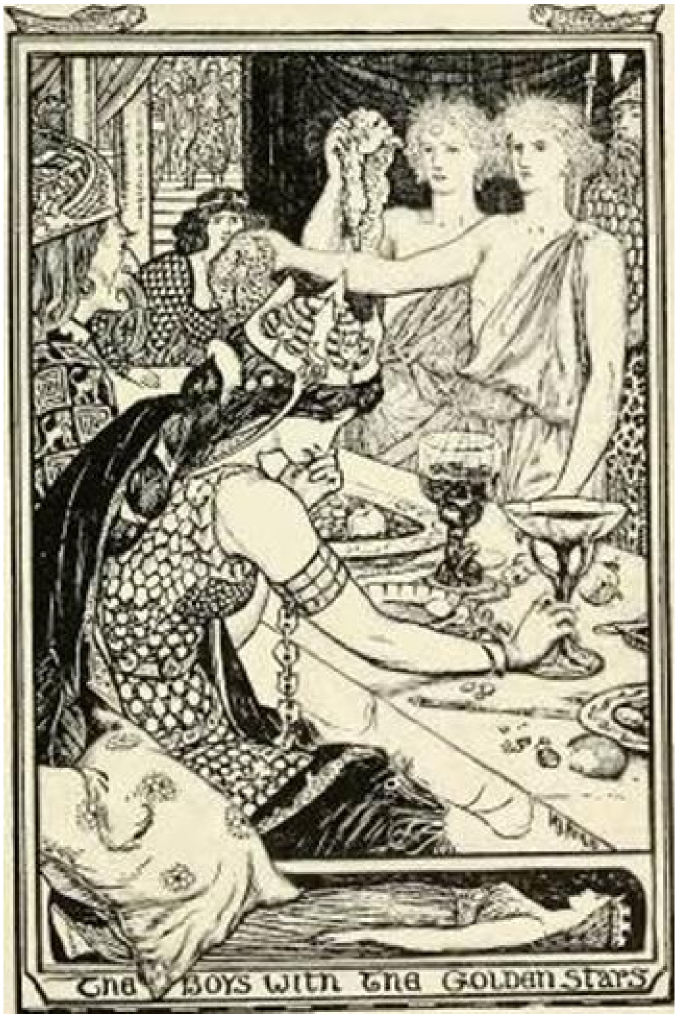
The Boys with the Golden Stars

The emperor, as he listened, grew red with anger.

‘Thrust them out,’ cried he. ‘Set the dogs after them.’

‘Leave us alone, and we will go quietly,’ said the princes, and stepped backwards, weeping silently at the harsh words. They had almost reached the gates when a servant ran up to them.

‘The emperor commands you to return,’ panted he: ‘the empress wishes to see you.’

The princes thought a moment: then they went back the way they had come, and walked straight up to the emperor, their caps still on their heads.

He sat at the top of a long table covered with flowers and filled with guests. And beside him sat the empress, supported by twelve cushions. When the princes entered one of the cushions fell down, and there remained only eleven.

‘Take off your caps,’ said one of the courtiers.

‘A covered head is among men a sign of honour. We wish to seem what we are.’

‘Never mind,’ said the emperor, whose anger had dropped before the silvery tones of the boy’s voice. ‘Stay as you are, but tell me WHO you are! Where do you come from, and what do you want?’

‘We are twins, two shoots from one stem, which has been broken, and half lies in the ground and half sits at the head of this table. We have travelled a long way, we have spoken in the rustle of the wind, have whispered in the wood, we have sung in the waters, but now we wish to tell you a story which you know without knowing it, in the speech of men.’

And a second cushion fell down.

‘Let them take their silliness home,’ said the empress.

‘Oh, no, let them go on,’ said the emperor. ‘You wished to see them, but I wish to hear them. Go on, boys, sing me the story.’

The empress was silent, but the princes began to sing the story of their lives.

‘There was once an emperor,’ began they, and the third cushion fell down.

When they reached the warlike expedition of the emperor three of the cushions fell down at once.

And when the tale was finished there were no more cushions under the empress, but the moment that they lifted their caps, and showed their golden hair and the golden stars, the eyes of the emperor and of all his guests were bent on them, and they could hardly bear the power of so many glances.

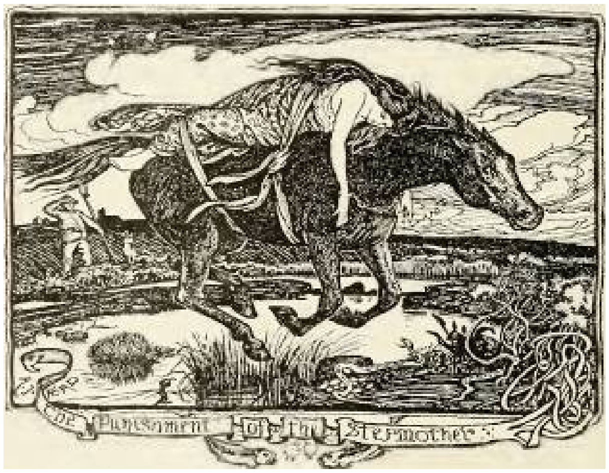
The Punishment of the Stepmother

And there happened in the end what should have happened in the beginning. Laptitza sat next her husband at the top of the table. The stepmother’s daughter became the meanest sewing maid in the palace, the stepmother was tied to a wild horse, and every one knew and has never forgotten that whoever has a mind turned to wickedness is sure to end badly.

(Rumanische Marchen.)

THE FROG

Once upon a time there was a woman who had three sons. Though they were peasants they were well off, for the soil on which they lived was fruitful, and yielded rich crops. One day they all three told their mother they meant to get married. To which their mother replied: ‘Do as you like, but see that you choose good housewives, who will look carefully after your affairs; and, to make certain of this, take with you these three skeins of flax, and give it to them to spin. Whoever spins the best will be my favourite daughter-in-law.’

Now the two eldest sons had already chosen their wives; so they took the flax from their mother, and carried it off with them, to have it spun as she had said. But the youngest son was puzzled what to do with his skein, as he knew no girl (never having spoken to any) to whom he could give it to be spun. He wandered hither and thither, asking the girls that he met if they would undertake the task for him, but at the sight of the flax they laughed in his face and mocked at him. Then in despair he left their villages, and went out into the country, and, seating himself on the bank of a pond began to cry bitterly.

Suddenly there was a noise close beside him, and a frog jumped out of the water on to the bank and asked him why he was crying. The youth told her of his trouble, and how his brothers would bring home linen spun for them by their promised wives, but that no one would spin his thread.

Then the frog answered: ‘Do not weep on that account; give me the thread, and I will spin it for you.’ And, having said this, she took it out of his hand, and flopped back into the water, and the youth went back, not knowing what would happen next.

In a short time the two elder brothers came home, and their mother asked to see the linen which had been woven out of the skeins of flax she had given them. They all three left the room; and in a few minutes the two eldest returned, bringing with them the linen that had been spun by their chosen wives. But the youngest brother was greatly troubled, for he had nothing to show for the skein of flax that had been given to him. Sadly he betook himself to the pond, and sitting down on the bank, began to weep.

Flop! and the frog appeared out of the water close beside him.

‘Take this,’ she said; ‘here is the linen that I have spun for you.’

You may imagine how delighted the youth was. She put the linen into his hands, and he took it straight back to his mother, who was so pleased with it that she declared she had never seen linen so beautifully spun, and that it was far finer and whiter than the webs that the two elder brothers had brought home.

Then she turned to her sons and said: ‘But this is not enough, my sons, I must have another proof as to what sort of wives you have chosen. In the house there are three puppies. Each of you take one, and give it to the woman whom you mean to bring home as your wife. She must train it and bring it up. Whichever dog turns out the best, its mistress will be my favourite daughter-in-law.’

So the young men set out on their different ways, each taking a puppy with him. The youngest, not knowing where to go, returned to the pond, sat down once more on the bank, and began to weep.

Flop! and close beside him, he saw the frog. ‘Why are you weeping?’ she said. Then he told her his difficulty, and that he did not know to whom he should take the puppy.

‘Give it to me,’ she said, ‘and I will bring it up for you.’ And, seeing that the youth hesitated, she took the little creature out of his arms, and disappeared with it into the pond.

The weeks and months passed, till one day the mother said she would like to see how the dogs had been trained by her future daughters-in-law. The two eldest sons departed, and returned shortly, leading with them two great mastiffs, who growled so fiercely, and looked so savage, that the mere sight of them made the mother tremble with fear.

The youngest son, as was his custom, went to the pond, and called on the frog to come to his rescue.

In a minute she was at his side, bringing with her the most lovely little dog, which she put into his arms. It sat up and begged with its paws, and went through the prettiest tricks, and was almost human in the way it understood and did what it was told.

In high spirits the youth carried it off to his mother. As soon as she saw it, she exclaimed: ‘This is the most beautiful little dog I have ever seen. You are indeed fortunate, my son; you have won a pearl of a wife.’

Then, turning to the others, she said: ‘Here are three shirts; take them to your chosen wives. Whoever sews the best will be my favourite daughter-in-law.’

So the young men set out once more; and again, this time, the work of the frog was much the best and the neatest.

This time the mother said: ‘Now that I am content with the tests I gave, I want you to go and fetch home your brides, and I will prepare the wedding-feast.’

You may imagine what the youngest brother felt on hearing these words. Whence was he to fetch a bride? Would the frog be able to help him in this new difficulty? With bowed head, and feeling very sad, he sat down on the edge of the pond.

Flop! and once more the faithful frog was beside him.

‘What is troubling you so much?’ she asked him, and then the youth told her everything.

‘Will you take me for a wife?’ she asked.

‘What should I do with you as a wife,’ he replied, wondering at her strange proposal.

‘Once more, will you have me or will you not?’ she said.

‘I will neither have you, nor will I refuse you,’ said he.

At this the frog disappeared; and the next minute the youth beheld a lovely little chariot, drawn by two tiny ponies, standing on the road. The frog was holding the carriage door open for him to step in.

‘Come with me,’ she said. And he got up and followed her into the chariot.

As they drove along the road they met three witches; the first of them was blind, the second was hunchbacked, and the third had a large thorn in her throat. When the three witches beheld the chariot, with the frog seated pompously among the cushions, they broke into such fits of laughter that the eyelids of the blind one burst open, and she recovered her sight; the hunchback rolled about on the ground in merriment till her back became straight, and in a roar of laughter the thorn fell out of the throat of the third witch. Their first thought was to reward the frog, who had unconsciously been the means of curing them of their misfortunes.

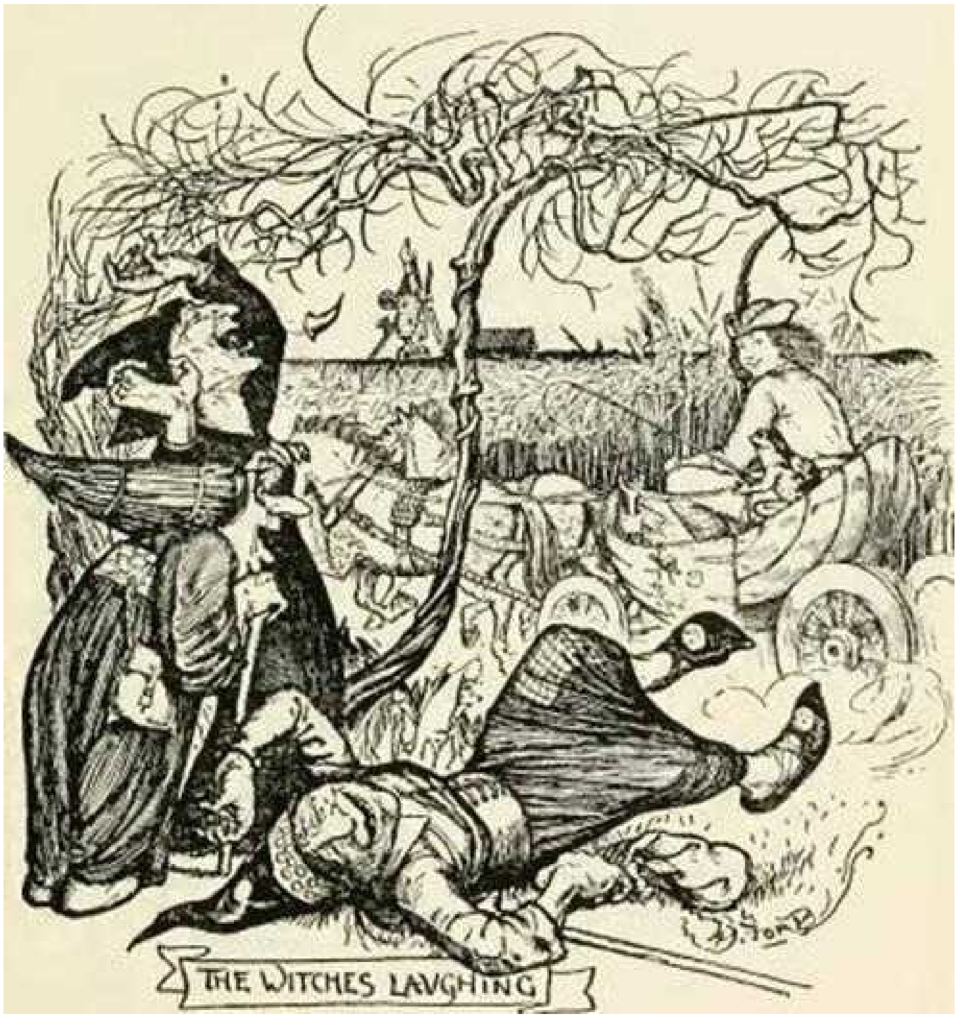

THE WITCHES LAUGHING

The first witch waved her magic wand over the frog, and changed her into the loveliest girl that had ever been seen. The second witch waved the wand over the tiny chariot and ponies, and they were turned into a beautiful large carriage with prancing horses, and a coachman on the seat. The third witch gave the girl a magic purse, filled with money. Having done this, the witches disappeared, and the youth with his lovely bride drove to his mother’s home. Great was the delight of the mother at her youngest son’s good fortune. A beautiful house was built for them; she was the favourite daughter-in-law; everything went well with them, and they lived happily ever after.

(From the Italian.)

THE PRINCESS WHO WAS HIDDEN UNDERGROUND

Once there was a king who had great riches, which, when he died, he divided among his three sons. The two eldest of these lived in rioting and feasting, and thus wasted and squandered their father's wealth till nothing remained, and they found themselves in want and misery. The youngest of the three sons, on the contrary, made good use of his portion. He married a wife and soon they had a most beautiful daughter, for whom, when she was grown up, he caused a great palace to be built underground, and then killed the architect who had built it. Next he shut up his daughter inside, and then sent heralds all over the world to make known that he who should find the king's daughter should have her to wife. If he were not capable of finding her then he must die.

Many young men sought to discover her, but all perished in the attempt.

After many had met their death thus, there came a young man, beautiful to behold, and as clever as he was beautiful, who had a great desire to attempt the enterprise. First he went to a herdsman, and begged him to hide him in a sheepskin, which had a golden fleece, and in this disguise to take him to the king. The shepherd let himself be persuaded so to do, took a skin having a golden fleece, sewed the young man in it, putting in also food and drink, and so brought him before the king.

When the latter saw the golden lamb, he asked the herd: 'Will you sell me this lamb?'

But the herd answered: 'No, oh king; I will not sell it; but if you find pleasure therein, I will be willing to oblige you, and I will lend it to you, free of charge, for three days, after that you must give it back to me.'

This the king agreed to do, and he arose and took the lamb to his daughter. When he had led it into her palace, and through many rooms, he came to a shut door. Then he called 'Open, Sartara Martara of the earth!' and the door opened of itself. After that they went through many more rooms, and came to another closed door. Again the king called out: 'Open, Sartara Martara of the earth!' and this door opened like the other, and they came into the apartment where the princess dwelt, the floor, walls, and roof of which were all of silver.

When the king had embraced the princess, he gave her the lamb, to her great joy. She stroked it, caressed it, and played with it.

After a while the lamb got loose, which, when the princess saw, she said: 'See, father, the lamb is free.’

But the king answered: ‘It is only a lamb, why should it not be free?’

Then he left the lamb with the princess, and went his way.

In the night, however, the young man threw off the skin. When the princess saw how beautiful he was, she fell in love with him, and asked him: ‘Why did you come here disguised in a sheepskin like that?’

Then he answered: ‘When I saw how many people sought you, and could not find you, and lost their lives in so doing, I invented this trick, and so I am come safely to you.’

The princess exclaimed: ‘You have done well so to do; but you must know that your wager is not yet won, for my father will change me and my maidens into ducks, and will ask you, “Which of these ducks is the princess?” Then I will turn my head back, and with my bill will clean my wings, so that you may know me.’

When they had spent three days together, chatting and caressing one another, the herd came back to the king, and demanded his lamb. Then the king went to his daughter to bring it away, which troubled the princess very much, for she said they had played so nicely together.

But the king said: ‘I cannot leave it with you, my daughter, for it is only lent to me.’ So he took it away with him, and gave it back to the shepherd.

Then the young man threw the skin from off him, and went to the king, saying: ‘Sire, I am persuaded I can find your daughter.’

When the king saw how handsome he was, he said: ‘My lad, I have pity on your youth. This enterprise has already cost the lives of many, and will certainly be your death as well.’

But the young man answered, ‘I accept your conditions, oh king; I will either find her or lose my head.’

Thereupon he went before the king, who followed after him, till they came to the great door. Then the young man said to the king: ‘Speak the words that it may open.’

And the king answered: ‘What are the words? Shall I say something like this: “Shut; shut; shut”?’

‘No,’ said he; ‘say “Open, Sartara Martara of the earth.”’

When the king had so said, the door opened of itself, and they went in, while the king gnawed his moustache in anger. Then they came to the second door, where the same thing happened as at the first, and they went in and found the princess.

Then spoke the king and said: ‘Yes, truly, you have found the princess. Now I will turn her as well as all her maidens into ducks, and if you can guess which of these ducks is my daughter, then you shall have her to wife.’

And immediately the king changed all the maidens into ducks, and he drove them before the young man, and said: ‘Now show me which is my daughter.’

Then the princess, according to their understanding, began to clean her wings with her bill, and the lad said: ‘She who cleans her wings is the princess.’

Now the king could do nothing more but give her to the young man to wife, and they lived together in great joy and happiness.

(From the German.)

THE GIRL WHO PRETENDED TO BE A BOY

Once upon a time there lived an emperor who was a great conqueror, and reigned over more countries than anyone in the world. And whenever he subdued a fresh kingdom, he only granted peace on condition that the king should deliver him one of his sons for ten years' service.

Now on the borders of his kingdom lay a country whose emperor was as brave as his neighbour, and as long as he was young he was the victor in every war. But as years passed away, his head grew weary of making plans of campaign, and his people wanted to stay at home and till their fields, and at last he too felt that he must do homage to the other emperor.

One thing, however, held him back from this step which day by day he saw more clearly was the only one possible. His new overlord would demand the service of one of his sons. And the old emperor had no son; only three daughters.

Look on which side he would, nothing but ruin seemed to lie before him, and he became so gloomy, that his daughters were frightened, and did everything they could think of to cheer him up, but all to no purpose.

At length one day when they were at dinner, the eldest of the three summoned up all her courage and said to her father:

'What secret grief is troubling you? Are your subjects discontented? or have we given you cause for displeasure? To smooth away your wrinkles, we would gladly shed our blood, for our lives are bound up in yours; and this you know.'

'My daughter,' answered the emperor, 'what you say is true. Never have you given me one moment's pain. Yet now you cannot help me. Ah! why is not one of you a boy!'

'I don't understand,' she answered in surprise. 'Tell us what is wrong: and though we are not boys, we are not quite useless!'

'But what can you do, my dear children? Spin, sew, and weave — that is all your learning. Only a warrior can deliver me now, a young giant who is strong to wield the battle-axe: whose sword deals deadly blows.'

'But WHY do you need a son so much at present? Tell us all about it! It will not make matters worse if we know!'

'Listen then, my daughters, and learn the reason of my sorrow. You have heard that as long as I was young no man ever brought an army against me without it costing him dear. But the years have chilled my blood and drunk my strength. And now the deer can roam the forest, my arrows will never pierce his heart; strange soldiers will set fire to my houses and water their horses at my wells, and my arm cannot hinder them. No, my day is past, and the time has come when I too must bow my head under the yoke of my foe! But who is to give him the ten years' service that is part of the price which the vanquished must pay?'

'*I* will,' cried the eldest girl, springing to her feet. But her father only shook his head sadly.

'Never will I bring shame upon you,' urged the girl. 'Let me go. Am I not a princess, and the daughter of an emperor?'

'Go then!' he said.

The brave girl's heart almost stopped beating from joy, as she set about her preparations. She was not still for a single moment, but danced about the house, turning chests and wardrobes upside down. She set aside enough things for a whole year — dresses embroidered with gold and precious stones, and a great store of provisions. And she chose the most spirited horse in the stable, with eyes of flame, and a coat of shining silver.

When her father saw her mounted and curvetting about the court, he gave her much wise advice, as to how she was to behave like the young man she appeared to be, and also how to behave as the girl she really was. Then he gave her his blessing, and she touched her horse with the spur.

The silver armour of herself and her steed dazzled the eyes of the people as she darted past. She was soon out of sight, and if after a few miles she had not pulled up to allow her escort to join her, the rest of the journey would have been performed alone.

But though none of his daughters were aware of the fact, the old emperor was a magician, and had laid his plans accordingly. He managed, unseen, to overtake his daughter, and throw a bridge of copper over a stream which she would have to cross. Then, changing himself into a wolf, he lay down under one of the arches, and waited.

He had chosen his time well, and in about half an hour the sound of a horse's hoofs was heard. His feet were almost on the bridge, when a big grey wolf with grinning teeth appeared before the princess. With a deep growl that froze the blood, he drew himself up, and prepared to spring.

The appearance of the wolf was so sudden and so unexpected, that the girl was almost paralysed, and never even dreamt of flight, till the horse leaped violently to one side. Then she turned him round, and urging him to his fullest speed, never drew rein till she saw the gates of the palace rising before her.

The old emperor, who had got back long since, came to the door to meet her, and touching her shining armour, he said, 'Did I not tell you, my child, that flies do not make honey?’

The days passed on, and one morning the second princess implored her father to allow her to try the adventure in which her sister had made such a failure. He listened unwillingly, feeling sure it was no use, but she begged so hard that in the end he consented, and having chosen her arms, she rode away.

But though, unlike her sister, she was quite prepared for the appearance of the wolf when she reached the copper bridge, she showed no greater courage, and galloped home as fast as her horse could carry her. On the steps of the castle her father was standing, and as still trembling with fright she knelt at his feet, he said gently, ‘Did I not tell you, my child, that every bird is not caught in a net?’

The three girls stayed quietly in the palace for a little while, embroidering, spinning, weaving, and tending their birds and flowers, when early one morning, the youngest princess entered the door of the emperor’s private apartments. ‘My father, it is my turn now. Perhaps I shall get the better of that wolf!’

‘What, do you think you are braver than your sisters, vain little one? You who have hardly left your long clothes behind you!’ but she did not mind being laughed at, and answered,

‘For your sake, father, I would cut the devil himself into small bits, or even become a devil myself. I think I shall succeed, but if I fail, I shall come home without more shame than my sisters.’

Still the emperor hesitated, but the girl petted and coaxed him till at last he said,

‘Well, well, if you must go, you must. It remains to be seen what I shall get by it, except perhaps a good laugh when I see you come back with your head bent and your eyes on the ground.’

‘He laughs best who laughs last,’ said the princess.

Happy at having got her way, the princess decided that the first thing to be done was to find some old white-haired boyard, whose advice she could trust, and then to be very careful in choosing her horse. So she went straight to the stables where the most beautiful horses in the empire were feeding in the stalls, but none of them seemed quite what she wanted. Almost in despair she reached the last box of all, which was occupied by her father’s ancient war-horse, old and worn like himself, stretched sadly out on the straw.

The girl’s eyes filled with tears, and she stood gazing at him. The horse lifted his head, gave a little neigh, and said softly, ‘You look gentle and pitiful, but I know it is your love for your father which makes you tender to me. Ah, what a warrior he was, and what good times we shared together! But now I too have grown old, and my master has forgotten me, and there is no reason to care whether my coat is dull or shining. Yet, it is not too late, and if I were properly tended, in a week I could vie with any horse in the stables!'

'And how should you be tended?' asked the girl.

'I must be rubbed down morning and evening with rain water, my barley must be boiled in milk, because of my bad teeth, and my feet must be washed in oil.'

'I should like to try the treatment, as you might help me in carrying out my scheme.'

'Try it then, mistress, and I promise you will never repent.'

So in a week's time the horse woke up one morning with a sudden shiver through all his limbs; and when it had passed away, he found his skin shining like a mirror, his body as fat as a water melon, his movement light as a chamois.

Then looking at the princess who had come early to the stable, he said joyfully,

'May success await on the steps of my master's daughter, for she has given me back my life. Tell me what I can do for you, princess, and I will do it.'

'I want to go to the emperor who is our overlord, and I have no one to advise me. Which of all the white-headed boyards shall I choose as counsellor?'

'If you have me, you need no one else: I will serve you as I served your father, if you will only listen to what I say.'

'I will listen to everything. Can you start in three days?'

'This moment, if you like,' said the horse.

The preparations of the emperor's youngest daughter were much fewer and simpler than those of her sisters. They only consisted of some boy's clothes, a small quantity of linen and food, and a little money in case of necessity. Then she bade farewell to her father, and rode away.

A day's journey from the palace, she reached the copper bridge, but before they came in sight of it, the horse, who was a magician, had warned her of the means her father would take to prove her courage.

Still in spite of his warning she trembled all over when a huge wolf, as thin as if he had fasted for a month, with claws like saws, and mouth as wide as an oven, bounded howling towards her. For a moment her heart failed her, but the next, touching the horse lightly with her spur, she drew her sword from its sheath, ready to separate the wolf's head from its body at a single blow.

The beast saw the sword, and shrank back, which was the best thing it could do, as now the girl's blood was up, and the light of battle in her eyes. Then without looking round, she rode across the bridge.

The emperor, proud of this first victory, took a short cut, and waited for her at the end of another day's journey, close to a river, over which he threw a bridge of silver. And this time he took the shape of a lion.

But the horse guessed this new danger and told the princess how to escape it.

But it is one thing to receive advice when we feel safe and comfortable, and quite another to be able to carry it out when some awful peril is threatening us. And if the wolf had made the girl quake with terror, it seemed like a lamb beside this dreadful lion.

At the sound of his roar the very trees quivered and his claws were so large that every one of them looked like a cutlass.

The breath of the princess came and went, and her feet rattled in the stirrups. Suddenly the remembrance flashed across her of the wolf whom she had put to flight, and waving her sword, she rushed so violently on the lion that he had barely time to spring on one side, so as to avoid the blow. Then, like a flash, she crossed this bridge also.

Now during her whole life, the princess had been so carefully brought up, that she had never left the gardens of the palace, so that the sight of the hills and valleys and tinkling streams, and the song of the larks and blackbirds, made her almost beside herself with wonder and delight. She longed to get down and bathe her face in the clear pools, and pick the brilliant flowers, but the horse said ‘No,’ and quickened his pace, neither turning to the right or the left.

‘Warriors,’ he told her, ‘only rest when they have won the victory. You have still another battle to fight, and it is the hardest of all.’

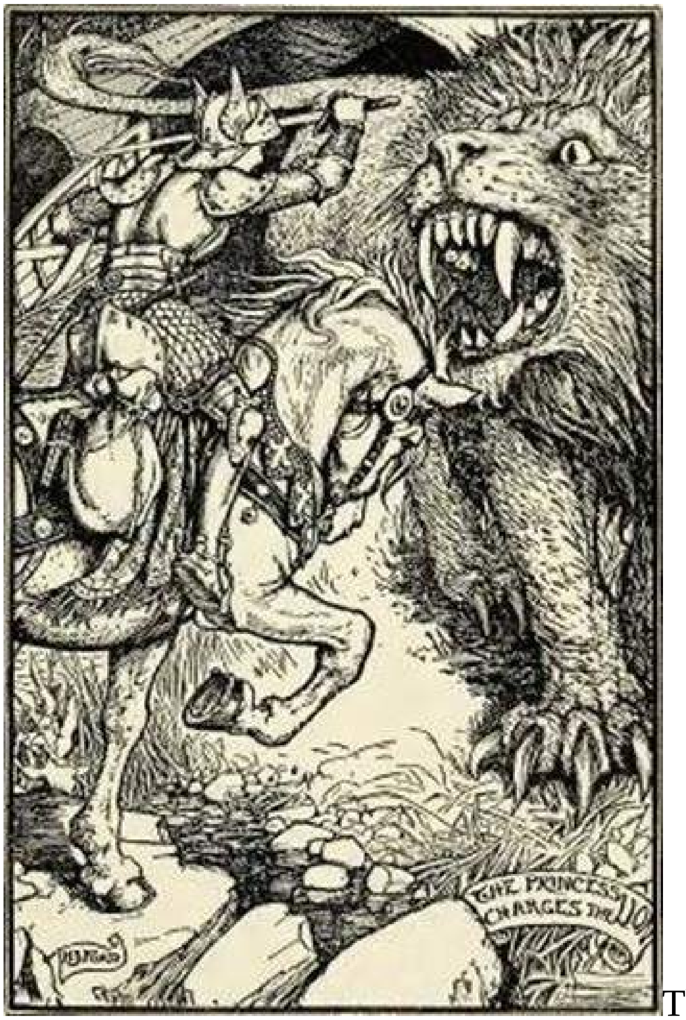
THE PRINCESS CHARGES THE LION
H.J.FORD

This time it was neither a wolf nor a lion that was waiting for her at the end of the third day’s journey, but a dragon with twelve heads, and a golden bridge behind it.

The princess rode up without seeing anything to frighten her, when a sudden puff of smoke and flame from beneath her feet, caused her to look down, and there was the horrible creature twisted and writhing, its twelve heads reared up as if to seize her between them.

The bridle fell from her hand: and the sword which she had just grasped slid back into its sheath, but the horse bade her fear nothing, and with a mighty effort she sat upright and spurred straight on the dragon.

The fight lasted an hour and the dragon pressed her hard. But in the end, by a well-directed side blow, she cut off one of the heads, and with a roar that seemed to rend the heavens in two, the dragon fell back on the ground, and rose as a man before her.

Although the horse had informed the princess the dragon was really her own father, the girl had hardly believed him, and stared in amazement at the transformation. But he flung his arms round her and pressed her to his heart saying, ‘Now I see that you are as brave as the bravest, and as wise as the wisest. You have chosen the right horse, for without his help you would have returned with a bent head and downcast eyes. You have filled me with the hope that you may carry out the task you have undertaken, but be careful to forget none of my counsels, and above all to listen to those of your horse.’

When he had done speaking, the princess knelt down to receive his blessing, and they went their different ways.

The princess rode on and on, till at last she came to the mountains which hold up the roof of the world. There she met two Genii who had been fighting fiercely for two years, without one having got the least advantage over the other. Seeing what they took to be a young man seeking adventures, one of the combatants called out, ‘Fet-Fruners! deliver me from my enemy, and I will give you the horn that can be heard the distance of a three days’ journey;’ while the other cried, ‘Fet-Fruners! help me to conquer this pagan thief, and you shall have my horse, Sunlight.’

Before answering, the princess consulted her own horse as to which offer she should accept, and he advised her to side with the genius who was master of Sunlight, his own younger brother, and still more active than himself.

So the girl at once attacked the other genius, and soon clove his skull; then the one who was left victor begged her to come back with him to his house and he would hand her over Sunlight, as he had promised.

The mother of the genius was rejoiced to see her son return safe and sound, and prepared her best room for the princess, who, after so much fatigue, needed rest badly. But the girl declared that she must first make her horse comfortable in his stable; but this was really only an excuse, as she wanted to ask his advice on several matters.

But the old woman had suspected from the very first that the boy who had come to the rescue of her son was a girl in disguise, and told the genius that she was exactly the wife he needed. The genius scoffed, and inquired what female hand could ever wield a sabre like that; but, in spite of his sneers, his mother persisted, and as a proof of what she said, laid at night on each of their pillows a handful of magic flowers, that fade at the touch of man, but remain eternally fresh in the fingers of a woman.

It was very clever of her, but unluckily the horse had warned the princess what to expect, and when the house was silent, she stole very softly to the genius’s room, and exchanged his faded flowers for those she held. Then she crept back to her own bed and fell fast asleep.

At break of day, the old woman ran to see her son, and found, as she knew she would, a bunch of dead flowers in his hand. She next passed on to the bedside of the princess, who still lay asleep grasping the withered flowers. But she did not believe any the more that her guest was a man, and so she told her son. So they put their heads together and laid another trap for her.

After breakfast the genius gave his arm to his guest, and asked her to come with him into the garden. For some time they walked about looking at the flowers, the genius all the while pressing her to pick any she fancied. But the princess, suspecting a trap, inquired roughly why they were wasting the precious hours in the garden, when, as men, they should be in the stables looking after their horses. Then the genius told his mother that she was quite wrong, and his deliverer was certainly a man. But the old woman was not convinced for all that.

She would try once more she said, and her son must lead his visitor into the armoury, where hung every kind of weapon used all over the world — some plain and bare, others ornamented with precious stones — and beg her to make choice of one of them. The princess looked at them closely, and felt the edges and points of their blades, then she hung at her belt an old sword with a curved blade, that would have done credit to an ancient warrior. After this she informed the genius that she would start early next day and take Sunlight with her.

And there was nothing for the mother to do but to submit, though she still stuck to her own opinion.

The princess mounted Sunlight, and touched him with her spur, when the old horse, who was galloping at her side, suddenly said:

‘Up to this time, mistress, you have obeyed my counsels and all has gone well. Listen to me once more, and do what I tell you. I am old, and — now that there is someone to take my place, I will confess it — I am afraid that my strength is not equal to the task that lies before me. Give me leave, therefore, to return home, and do you continue your journey under the care of my brother. Put your faith in him as you put it in me, and you will never repent. Wisdom has come early to Sunlight.’

‘Yes, my old comrade, you have served me well; and it is only through your help that up to now I have been victorious. So grieved though I am to say farewell, I will obey you yet once more, and will listen to your brother as I would to yourself. Only, I must have a proof that he loves me as well as you do.’

‘How should I not love you?’ answered Sunlight; ‘how should I not be proud to serve a warrior such as you? Trust me, mistress, and you shall never regret the absence of my brother. I know there will be difficulties in our path, but we will face them together.’

Then, with tears in her eyes, the princess took leave of her old horse, who galloped back to her father.

She had ridden only a few miles further, when she saw a golden curl lying on the road before her. Checking her horse, she asked whether it would be better to take it or let it lie.

‘If you take it,’ said Sunlight, ‘you will repent, and if you don’t, you will repent too: so take it.’ On this the girl dismounted, and picking up the curl, wound it round her neck for safety.

They passed by hills, they passed by mountains, they passed through valleys, leaving behind them thick forests, and fields covered with flowers; and at length they reached the court of the overlord.

He was sitting on his throne, surrounded by the sons of the other emperors, who served him as pages. These youths came forward to greet their new companion, and wondered why they felt so attracted towards him.

However, there was no time for talking and concealing her fright.

The princess was led straight up to the throne, and explained, in a low voice, the reason of her coming. The emperor received her kindly, and declared himself fortunate at finding a vassal so brave and so charming, and begged the princess to remain in attendance on his person.

She was, however, very careful in her behaviour towards the other pages, whose way of life did not please her. One day, however, she had been amusing herself by making sweetmeats, when two of the young princes looked in to pay her a visit. She offered them some of the food which was already on the table, and they thought it so delicious that they even licked their fingers so as not to lose a morsel. Of course they did not keep the news of their discovery to themselves, but told all their companions that they had just been enjoying the best supper they had had since they were born. And from that moment the princess was left no peace, till she had promised to cook them all a dinner.

Now it happened that, on the very day fixed, all the cooks in the palace became intoxicated, and there was no one to make up the fire.

When the pages heard of this shocking state of things, they went to their companion and implored her to come to the rescue.

The princess was fond of cooking, and was, besides, very good-natured; so she put on an apron and went down to the kitchen without delay. When the dinner was placed before the emperor he found it so nice that he ate much more than was good for him. The next morning, as soon as he woke, he sent for his head cook, and told him to send up the same dishes as before. The cook, seized with fright at this command, which he knew he could not fulfil, fell on his knees, and confessed the truth.

The emperor was so astonished that he forgot to scold, and while he was thinking over the matter, some of his pages came in and said that their new companion had been heard to boast that he knew where Iliane was to be found — the celebrated Iliane of the song which begins:

‘Golden Hair
The fields are green,’

and that to their certain knowledge he had a curl of her hair in his possession.

When he heard that, the emperor desired the page to be brought before him, and, as soon as the princess obeyed his summons, he said to her abruptly:

‘Fet-Fruners, you have hidden from me the fact that you knew the golden-haired Iliane! Why did you do this? for I have treated you more kindly than all my other pages.’

Then, after making the princess show him the golden curl which she wore round her neck, he added: ‘Listen to me; unless by some means or other you bring me the owner of this lock, I will have your head cut off in the place where you stand. Now go!’

In vain the poor girl tried to explain how the lock of hair came into her possession; the emperor would listen to nothing, and, bowing low, she left his presence and went to consult Sunlight what she was to do.

At his first words she brightened up. ‘Do not be afraid, mistress; only last night my brother appeared to me in a dream and told me that a genius had carried off Iliane, whose hair you picked up on the road. But Iliane declares that, before she marries her captor, he must bring her, as a present, the whole stud of mares which belong to her. The genius, half crazy with love, thinks of nothing night and day but how this can be done, and meanwhile she is quite safe in the island swamps of the sea. Go back to the emperor and ask him for twenty ships filled with precious merchandise. The rest you shall know by-and-by.’

On hearing this advice, the princess went at once into the emperor’s presence.

‘May a long life be yours, O Sovereign all mighty!’ said she. ‘I have come to tell you that I can do as you command if you will give me twenty ships, and load them with the most precious wares in your kingdom.’

‘You shall have all that I possess if you will bring me the golden-haired Iliane,’ said the emperor.

The ships were soon ready, and the princess entered the largest and finest, with Sunlight at her side. Then the sails were spread and the voyage began.

For seven weeks the wind blew them straight towards the west, and early one morning they caught sight of the island swamps of the sea.

They cast anchor in a little bay, and the princess made haste to disembark with Sunlight, but, before leaving the ship, she tied to her belt a pair of tiny gold slippers, adorned with precious stones. Then mounting Sunlight, she rode about till she came to several palaces, built on hinges, so that they could always turn towards the sun.

The most splendid of these was guarded by three slaves, whose greedy eyes were caught by the glistening gold of the slippers. They hastened up to the owner of these treasures, and inquired who he was. ‘A merchant,’ replied the princess, ‘who had somehow missed his road, and lost himself among the island swamps of the sea.’

Not knowing if it was proper to receive him or not, the slaves returned to their mistress and told her all they had seen, but not before she had caught sight of the merchant from the roof of her palace. Luckily her gaoler was away, always trying to catch the stud of mares, so for the moment she was free and alone.

The slaves told their tale so well that their mistress insisted on going down to the shore and seeing the beautiful slippers for herself. They were even lovelier than she expected, and when the merchant besought her to come on board, and inspect some that he thought were finer still, her curiosity was too great to refuse, and she went.

Once on board ship, she was so busy turning over all the precious things stored there, that she never knew that the sails were spread, and that they were flying along with the wind behind them; and when she did know, she rejoiced in her heart, though she pretended to weep and lament at being carried captive a second time. Thus they arrived at the court of the emperor.

They were just about to land, when the mother of the genius stood before them. She had learnt that Iliane had fled from her prison in company with a merchant, and, as her son was absent, had come herself in pursuit. Striding over the blue waters, hopping from wave to wave, one foot reaching to heaven, and the other planted in the foam, she was close at their heels, breathing fire and flame, when they stepped on shore from the ship. One glance told Iliane who the horrible old woman was, and she whispered hastily to her companion. Without saying a word, the princess swung her into Sunlight’s saddle, and leaping up behind her, they were off like a flash.

It was not till they drew near the town that the princess stooped and asked Sunlight what they should do. ‘Put your hand into my left ear,’ said he, ‘and take out a sharp stone, which you must throw behind you.’

The princess did as she was told, and a huge mountain sprang up behind them. The mother of the genius began to climb up it, and though they galloped quickly, she was quicker still.

They heard her coming, faster, faster; and again the princess stooped to ask what was to be done now. ‘Put your hand into my right ear,’ said the horse, ‘and throw the brush you will find there behind you.’ The princess did so, and a great forest sprang up behind them, and, so thick were its leaves, that even a wren could not get through. But the old woman seized hold of the branches and flung herself like a monkey from one to the others, and always she drew nearer — always, always — till their hair was singed by the flames of her mouth.

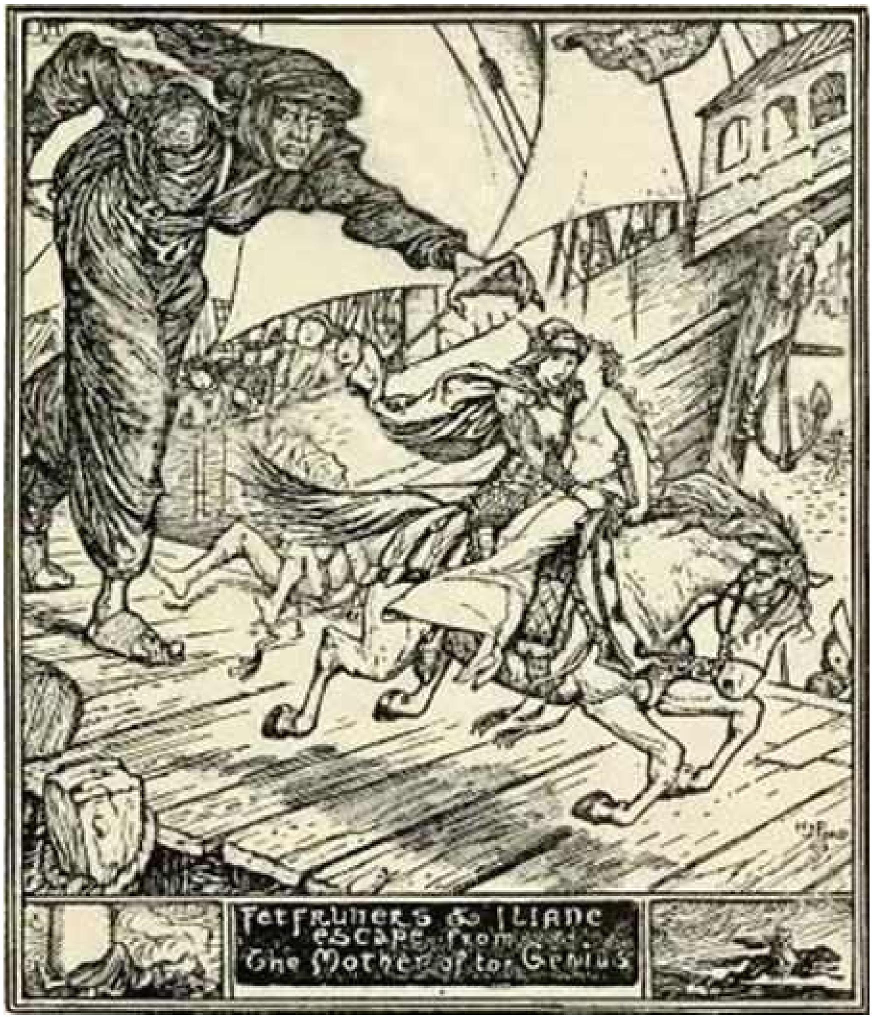

Then, in despair, the princess again bent down and asked if there was nothing more to be done, and Sunlight replied ‘Quick, quick, take off the betrothal ring on the finger of Iliane and throw it behind you.’

This time there sprang up a great tower of stone, smooth as ivory, hard as steel, which reached up to heaven itself. And the mother of the genius gave a howl of rage, knowing that she could neither climb it nor get through it. But she was not beaten yet, and gathering herself together, she made a prodigious leap, which landed her on the top of the tower, right in the middle of Iliane’s ring which lay there, and held her tight. Only her claws could be seen grasping the battlements.

All that could be done the old witch did; but the fire that poured from her mouth never reached the fugitives, though it laid waste the country a hundred miles round the tower, like the flames of a volcano. Then, with one last effort to free herself, her hands gave way, and, falling down to the bottom of the tower, she was broken in pieces.

When the flying princess saw what had happened she rode back to the spot, as Sunlight counselled her, and placed her finger on the top of the tower, which was gradually shrinking into the earth. In an instant the tower had vanished as if it had never been, and in its place was the finger of the princess with a ring round it.

The emperor received Iliane with all the respect that was due to her, and fell in love at first sight besides.

But this did not seem to please Iliane, whose face was sad as she walked about the palace or gardens, wondering how it was that, while other girls did as they liked, she was always in the power of someone whom she hated.

So when the emperor asked her to share his throne Iliane answered:

‘Noble Sovereign, I may not think of marriage till my stud of horses has been brought me, with their trappings all complete.’

When he heard this, the emperor once more sent for Fet-Fruners, and said:

‘Fet-Fruners, fetch me instantly the stud of mares, with their trappings all complete. If not, your head shall pay the forfeit.’

‘Mighty Emperor, I kiss your hands! I have but just returned from doing your bidding, and, behold, you send me on another mission, and stake my head on its fulfilment, when your court is full of valiant young men, pining to win their spurs. They say you are a just man; then why not entrust this quest to one of them? Where am I to seek these mares that I am to bring you?’

‘How do I know? They may be anywhere in heaven or earth; but, wherever they are, you will have to find them.’

The princess bowed and went to consult Sunlight. He listened while she told her tale, and then said:

‘Fetch quickly nine buffalo skins; smear them well with tar, and lay them on my back. Do not fear; you will succeed in this also; but, in the end, the emperor’s desires will be his undoing.’

The buffalo skins were soon got, and the princess started off with Sunlight. The way was long and difficult, but at length they reached the place where the mares were grazing. Here the genius who had carried off Iliane was wandering about, trying to discover how to capture them, all the while believing that Iliane was safe in the palace where he had left her.

As soon as she caught sight of him, the princess went up and told him that Iliane had escaped, and that his mother, in her efforts to recapture her, had died of rage. At this news a blind fury took possession of the genius, and he rushed madly upon the princess, who awaited his onslaught with perfect calmness. As he came on, with his sabre lifted high in the air, Sunlight bounded right over his head, so that the sword fell harmless. And when in her turn the princess prepared to strike, the horse sank upon his knees, so that the blade pierced the genius's thigh.

The fight was so fierce that it seemed as if the earth would give way under them, and for twenty miles round the beasts in the forests fled to their caves for shelter. At last, when her strength was almost gone, the genius lowered his sword for an instant. The princess saw her chance, and, with one swoop of her arm, severed her enemy's head from his body. Still trembling from the long struggle, she turned away, and went to the meadow where the stud were feeding.

By the advice of Sunlight, she took care not to let them see her, and climbed a thick tree, where she could see and hear without being seen herself. Then he neighed, and the mares came galloping up, eager to see the new comer — all but one horse, who did not like strangers, and thought they were very well as they were. As Sunlight stood his ground, well pleased with the attention paid him, this sulky creature suddenly advanced to the charge, and bit so violently that had it not been for the nine buffalo skins Sunlight's last moment would have come. When the fight was ended, the buffalo skins were in ribbons, and the beaten animal writhing with pain on the grass.

Nothing now remained to be done but to drive the whole stud to the emperor's court. So the princess came down from the tree and mounted Sunlight, while the stud followed meekly after, the wounded horse bringing up the rear. On reaching the palace, she drove them into a yard, and went to inform the emperor of her arrival.

The news was told at once to Iliane, who ran down directly and called them to her one by one, each mare by its name. And at the first sight of her the wounded animal shook itself quickly, and in a moment its wounds were healed, and there was not even a mark on its glossy skin.

By this time the emperor, on hearing where she was, joined her in the yard, and at her request ordered the mares to be milked, so that both he and she might bathe in the milk and keep young for ever. But they would suffer no one to come near them, and the princess was commanded to perform this service also.

At this, the heart of the girl swelled within her. The hardest tasks were always given to her, and long before the two years were up, she would be worn out and useless. But while these thoughts passed through her mind, a fearful rain fell, such as no man remembered before, and rose till the mares were standing up to their knees in water. Then as suddenly it stopped, and, behold! the water was ice, which held the animals firmly in its grasp. And the princess's heart grew light again, and she sat down gaily to milk them, as if she had done it every morning of her life.

The love of the emperor for Iliane waxed greater day by day, but she paid no heed to him, and always had an excuse ready to put off their marriage. At length, when she had come to the end of everything she could think of, she said to him one day: 'Grant me, Sire, just one request more, and then I will really marry you; for you have waited patiently this long time.'

'My beautiful dove,' replied the emperor, 'both I and all I possess are yours, so ask your will, and you shall have it.'

'Get me, then,' she said, 'a flask of the holy water that is kept in a little church beyond the river Jordan, and I will be your wife.'

Then the emperor ordered Fet-Fruners to ride without delay to the river Jordan, and to bring back, at whatever cost, the holy water for Iliane.

'This, my mistress,' said Sunlight, when she was saddling him, 'is the last and most difficult of your tasks. But fear nothing, for the hour of the emperor has struck.'

So they started; and the horse, who was not a wizard for nothing, told the princess exactly where she was to look for the holy water.

'It stands,' he said, 'on the altar of a little church, and is guarded by a troop of nuns. They never sleep, night or day, but every now and then a hermit comes to visit them, and from him they learn certain things it is needful for them to know. When this happens, only one of the nuns remains on guard at a time, and if we are lucky enough to hit upon this moment, we may get hold of the vase at once; if not, we shall have to wait the arrival of the hermit, however long it may be; for there is no other means of obtaining the holy water.'

They came in sight of the church beyond the Jordan, and, to their great joy, beheld the hermit just arriving at the door. They could hear him calling the nuns around him, and saw them settle themselves under a tree, with the hermit in their midst — all but one, who remained on guard, as was the custom.

The hermit had a great deal to say, and the day was very hot, so the nun, tired of sitting by herself, lay down right across the threshold, and fell sound asleep.

Then Sunlight told the princess what she was to do, and the girl stepped softly over the sleeping nun, and crept like a cat along the dark aisle, feeling the wall with her fingers, lest she should fall over something and ruin it all by a noise. But she reached the altar in safety, and found the vase of holy water standing on it. This she thrust into her dress, and went back with the same care as she came.

With a bound she was in the saddle, and seizing the reins bade Sunlight take her home as fast as his legs could carry him.

The sound of the flying hoofs aroused the nun, who understood instantly that the precious treasure was stolen, and her shrieks were so loud and piercing that all the rest came flying to see what was the matter. The hermit followed at their heels, but seeing it was impossible to overtake the thief, he fell on his knees and called his most deadly curse down on her head, praying that if the thief was a man, he might become a woman; and if she was a woman, that she might become a man. In either case he thought that the punishment would be severe.

But punishments are things about which people do not always agree, and when the princess suddenly felt she was really the man she had pretended to be, she was delighted, and if the hermit had only been within reach she would have thanked him from her heart.

By the time she reached the emperor’s court, Fet-Fruners looked a young man all over in the eyes of everyone; and even the mother of the genius would now have had her doubts set at rest. He drew forth the vase from his tunic and held it up to the emperor, saying: ‘Mighty Sovereign, all hail! I have fulfilled this task also, and I hope it is the last you have for me; let another now take his turn.’

‘I am content, Fet-Fruners,’ replied the emperor, ‘and when I am dead it is you who will sit upon my throne; for I have yet no son to come after me. But if one is given me, and my dearest wish is accomplished, then you shall be his right hand, and guide him with your counsels.’

But though the emperor was satisfied, Iliane was not, and she determined to revenge herself on the emperor for the dangers which he had caused Fet-Fruners to run. And as for the vase of holy water, she thought that, in common politeness, her suitor ought to have fetched it himself, which he could have done without any risk at all.

So she ordered the great bath to be filled with the milk of her mares, and begged the emperor to clothe himself in white robes, and enter the bath with her, an invitation he accepted with joy. Then, when both were standing with the milk reaching to their necks, she sent for the horse which had fought Sunlight, and made a secret sign to him. The horse understood what he was to do, and from one nostril he breathed fresh air over Iliane, and from the other, he snorted a burning wind which shrivelled up the emperor where he stood, leaving only a little heap of ashes.

His strange death, which no one could explain, made a great sensation throughout the country, and the funeral his people gave him was the most splendid ever known. When it was over, Iliane summoned Fet-Fruners before her, and addressed him thus:

‘Fet-Fruners! it is you who brought me and have saved my life, and obeyed my wishes. It is you who gave me back my stud; you who killed the genius, and the old witch his mother; you who brought me the holy water. And you, and none other, shall be my husband.’

‘Yes, I will marry you,’ said the young man, with a voice almost as soft as when he was a princess. ‘But know that in OUR house, it will be the cock who sings and not the hen!’

(From Sept Contes Roumains, Jules Brun and Leo Bachelin.)

THE STORY OF HALFMAN

In a certain town there lived a judge who was married but had no children. One day he was standing lost in thought before his house, when an old man passed by.

‘What is the matter, sir, said he, ‘you look troubled?’

‘Oh, leave me alone, my good man!’

‘But what is it?’ persisted the other.

‘Well, I am successful in my profession and a person of importance, but I care nothing for it all, as I have no children.’

Then the old man said, ‘Here are twelve apples. If your wife eats them, she will have twelve sons.’

The judge thanked him joyfully as he took the apples, and went to seek his wife. ‘Eat these apples at once,’ he cried, ‘and you will have twelve sons.’

So she sat down and ate eleven of them, but just as she was in the middle of the twelfth her sister came in, and she gave her the half that was left.

The eleven sons came into the world, strong and handsome boys; but when the twelfth was born, there was only half of him.

By-and-by they all grew into men, and one day they told their father it was high time he found wives for them. ‘I have a brother,’ he answered, ‘who lives away in the East, and he has twelve daughters; go and marry them.’ So the twelve sons saddled their horses and rode for twelve days, till they met an old woman.

‘Good greeting to you, young men!’ said she, ‘we have waited long for you, your uncle and I. The girls have become women, and are sought, in marriage by many, but I knew you would come one day, and I have kept them for you. Follow me into my house.’

And the twelve brothers followed her gladly, and their father’s brother stood at the door, and gave them meat and drink. But at night, when every one was asleep, Halfman crept softly to his brothers, and said to them, ‘Listen, all of you! This man is no uncle of ours, but an ogre.’

‘Nonsense; of course he is our uncle,’ answered they.

‘Well, this very night you will see!’ said Halfman. And he did not go to bed, but hid himself and watched.

Now in a little while he saw the wife of the ogre steal into the room on tiptoe and spread a red cloth over the brothers and then go and cover her daughters with a white cloth. After that she lay down and was soon snoring loudly. When Halfman was quite sure she was sound asleep, he took the red cloth from his brothers and put it on the girls, and laid their white cloth over his brothers. Next he drew their scarlet caps from their heads and exchanged them for the veils which the ogre's daughters were wearing. This was hardly done when he heard steps coming along the floor, so he hid himself quickly in the folds of a curtain. There was only half of him!

The ogress came slowly and gently along, stretching out her hands before her, so that she might not fall against anything unawares, for she had only a tiny lantern slung at her waist, which did not give much light. And when she reached the place where the sisters were lying, she stooped down and held a corner of the cloth up to the lantern. Yes! it certainly was red! Still, to make sure that there was no mistake, she passed her hands lightly over their heads, and felt the caps that covered them. Then she was quite certain the brothers lay sleeping before her, and began to kill them one by one. And Halfman whispered to his brothers, 'Get up and run for your lives, as the ogress is killing her daughters.' The brothers needed no second bidding, and in a moment were out of the house.

By this time the ogress had slain all her daughters but one, who awoke suddenly and saw what had happened. 'Mother, what are you doing?' cried she. 'Do you know that you have killed my sisters?'

'Oh, woe is me!' wailed the ogress. 'Halfman has outwitted me after all!' And she turned to wreak vengeance on him, but he and his brothers were far away.

They rode all day till they got to the town where their real uncle lived, and inquired the way to his house.

'Why have you been so long in coming?' asked he, when they had found him.

'Oh, dear uncle, we were very nearly not coming at all!' replied they. 'We fell in with an ogress who took us home and would have killed us if it had not been for Halfman. He knew what was in her mind and saved us, and here we are. Now give us each a daughter to wife, and let us return whence we came.'

'Take them!' said the uncle; 'the eldest for the eldest, the second for the second, and so on to the youngest.'

But the wife of Halfman was the prettiest of them all, and the other brothers were jealous and said to each other: 'What, is he who is only half a man to get the best? Let us put him to death and give his wife to our eldest brother!' And they waited for a chance.

After they had all ridden, in company with their brides, for some distance, they arrived at a brook, and one of them asked, 'Now, who will go and fetch water from the brook?'

'Halfman is the youngest,' said the elder brother, 'he must go.'

So Halfman got down and filled a skin with water, and they drew it up by a rope and drank. When they had done drinking, Halfman, who was standing in the middle of the stream, called out: ‘Throw me the rope and draw me up, for I cannot get out alone.’ And the brothers threw him a rope to draw him up the steep bank; but when he was half-way up they cut the rope, and he fell back into the stream. Then the brothers rode away as fast as they could, with his bride.

Halfman sank down under the water from the force of the fall, but before he touched the bottom a fish came and said to him, ‘Fear nothing, Halfman; I will help you.’ And the fish guided him to a shallow place, so that he scrambled out. On the way it said to him, ‘Do you understand what your brothers, whom you saved from death, have done to you?’

‘Yes; but what am I to do?’ asked Halfman.

‘Take one of my scales,’ said the fish, ‘and when you find yourself in danger, throw it in the fire. Then I will appear before you.’

‘Thank you,’ said Halfman, and went his way, while the fish swam back to its home.

The country was strange to Halfman, and he wandered about without knowing where he was going, till he suddenly found the ogress standing before him. ‘Ah, Halfman, have I got you at last? You killed my daughters and helped your brothers to escape. What do you think I shall do with you?’

‘Whatever you like!’ said Halfman.

‘Come into my house, then,’ said the ogress, and he followed her.

‘Look here!’ she called to her husband, ‘I have got hold of Halfman. I am going to roast him, so be quick and make up the fire!’

So the ogre brought wood, and heaped it up till the flames roared up the chimney. Then he turned to his wife and said: ‘It is all ready, let us put him on!’

‘What is the hurry, my good ogre?’ asked Halfman. ‘You have me in your power, and I cannot escape. I am so thin now, I shall hardly make one mouthful. Better fatten me up; you will enjoy me much more.’

‘That is a very sensible remark,’ replied the ogre; ‘but what fattens you quickest?’

‘Butter, meat, and red wine,’ answered Halfman.

‘Very good; we will lock you into this room, and here you shall stay till you are ready for eating.’

So Halfman was locked into the room, and the ogre and his wife brought him his food. At the end of three months he said to his gaolers: ‘Now I have got quite fat; take me out, and kill me.’

‘Get out, then!’ said the ogre.

‘But,’ went on Halfman, ‘you and your wife had better go to invite your friends to the feast, and your daughter can stay in the house and look after me!'

'Yes, that is a good idea,' answered they.

'You had better bring the wood in here,' continued Halfman, 'and I will split it up small, so that there may be no delay in cooking me.'

So the ogress gave Halfman a pile of wood and an axe, and then set out with her husband, leaving Halfman and her daughter busy in the house.

After he had chopped for a little while he called to the girl, 'Come and help me, or else I shan't have it all ready when your mother gets back.'

'All right,' said she, and held a billet of wood for him to chop.

But he raised his axe and cut off her head, and ran away like the wind. By-and-by the ogre and his wife returned and found their daughter lying without her head, and they began to cry and sob, saying, 'This is Halfman's work, why did we listen to him?' But Halfman was far away.

When he escaped from the house he ran on straight before him for some time, looking for a safe shelter, as he knew that the ogre's legs were much longer than his, and that it was his only chance. At last he saw an iron tower which he climbed up. Soon the ogre appeared, looking right and left lest his prey should be sheltering behind a rock or tree, but he did not know Halfman was so near till he heard his voice calling, 'Come up! come up! you will find me here!'

'But how can I come up?' said the ogre, 'I see no door, and I could not possibly climb that tower.'

'Oh, there is no door,' replied Halfman.

'Then how did you climb up?'

'A fish carried me on his back.'

'And what am I to do?'

'You must go and fetch all your relations, and tell them to bring plenty of sticks; then you must light a fire, and let it burn till the tower becomes red hot. After that you can easily throw it down.'

'Very good,' said the ogre, and he went round to every relation he had, and told them to collect wood and bring it to the tower where Halfman was. The men did as they were ordered, and soon the tower was glowing like coral, but when they flung themselves against it to overthrow it, they caught themselves on fire and were burnt to death. And overhead sat Halfman, laughing heartily. But the ogre's wife was still alive, for she had taken no part in kindling the fire.

'Oh,' she shrieked with rage, 'you have killed my daughters and my husband, and all the men belonging to me; how can I get at you to avenge myself?'

'Oh, that is easy enough,' said Halfman. 'I will let down a rope, and if you tie it tightly round you, I will draw it up.'

'All right,' returned the ogress, fastening the rope which Halfman let down.

‘Now pull me up.’

‘Are you sure it is secure?’

‘Yes, quite sure.’

‘Don’t be afraid.’

‘Oh, I am not afraid at all!’

So Halfman slowly drew her up, and when she was near the top he let go the rope, and she fell down and broke her neck. Then Halfman heaved a great sigh and said, ‘That was hard work; the rope has hurt my hands badly, but now I am rid of her for ever.’

So Halfman came down from the tower, and went on, till he got to a desert place, and as he was very tired, he lay down to sleep. While it was still dark, an ogress passed by, and she woke him and said, ‘Halfman, to-morrow your brother is to marry your wife.’

‘Oh, how can I stop it?’ asked he. ‘Will you help me?’

‘Yes, I will,’ replied the ogress.

‘Thank you, thank you!’ cried Halfman, kissing her on the forehead. ‘My wife is dearer to me than anything else in the world, and it is not my brother’s fault that I am not dead long ago.’

‘Very well, I will rid you of him,’ said the ogress, ‘but only on one condition. If a boy is born to you, you must give him to me!’

‘Oh, anything,’ answered Halfman, ‘as long as you deliver me from my brother, and get me my wife.’

‘Mount on my back, then, and in a quarter of an hour we shall be there.’

The ogress was as good as her word, and in a few minutes they arrived at the outskirts of the town where Halfman and his brothers lived. Here she left him, while she went into the town itself, and found the wedding guests just leaving the brother’s house. Unnoticed by anyone, the ogress crept into a curtain, changing herself into a scorpion, and when the brother was going to get into bed, she stung him behind the ear, so that he fell dead where he stood. Then she returned to Halfman and told him to go and claim his bride. He jumped up hastily from his seat, and took the road to his father’s house. As he drew near he heard sounds of weeping and lamentations, and he said to a man he met: ‘What is the matter?’

‘The judge’s eldest son was married yesterday, and died suddenly before night.’

‘Well,’ thought Halfman, ‘my conscience is clear anyway, for it is quite plain he coveted my wife, and that is why he tried to drown me.’ He went at once to his father’s room, and found him sitting in tears on the floor. ‘Dear father,’ said Halfman, ‘are you not glad to see me? You weep for my brother, but I am your son too, and he stole my bride from me and tried to drown me in the brook. If he is dead, I at least am alive.'

'No, no, he was better than you!' moaned the father.

'Why, dear father?'

'He told me you had behaved very ill,' said he.

'Well, call my brothers,' answered Halfman, 'as I have a story to tell them.' So the father called them all into his presence. Then Halfman began: 'After we were twelve days' journey from home, we met an ogress, who gave us greeting and said, "Why have you been so long coming? The daughters of your uncle have waited for you in vain," and she bade us follow her to the house, saying, "Now there need be no more delay; you can marry your cousins as soon as you please, and take them with you to your own home." But I warned my brothers that the man was not our uncle, but an ogre.

'When we lay down to sleep, she spread a red cloth over us, and covered her daughters with a white one; but I changed the cloths, and when the ogress came back in the middle of the night, and looked at the cloths, she mistook her own daughters for my brothers, and killed them one by one, all but the youngest. Then I woke my brothers, and we all stole softly from the house, and we rode like the wind to our real uncle.

'And when he saw us, he bade us welcome, and married us to his twelve daughters, the eldest to the eldest, and so on to me, whose bride was the youngest of all and also the prettiest. And my brothers were filled with envy, and left me to drown in a brook, but I was saved by a fish who showed me how to get out. Now, you are a judge! Who did well, and who did evil — I or my brothers?'

'Is this story true?' said the father, turning to his sons.

'It is true, my father,' answered they. 'It is even as Halfman has said, and the girl belongs to him.'

Then the judge embraced Halfman and said to him: 'You have done well, my son. Take your bride, and may you both live long and happily together!'

At the end of the year Halfman's wife had a son, and not long after she came one day hastily into the room, and found her husband weeping. 'What is the matter?' she asked.

'The matter?' said he.

'Yes, why are you weeping?'

'Because,' replied Halfman, 'the baby is not really ours, but belongs to an ogress.'

'Are you mad?' cried the wife. 'What do you mean by talking like that?'

'I promised,' said Halfman, 'when she undertook to kill my brother and to give you to me, that the first son we had should be hers.’

‘And will she take him from us now?’ said the poor woman.

‘No, not quite yet,’ replied Halfman; ‘when he is bigger.’

‘And is she to have all our children?’ asked she.

‘No, only this one,’ returned Halfman.

Day by day the boy grew bigger, and one day as he was playing in the street with the other children, the ogress came by. ‘Go to your father,’ she said, ‘and repeat this speech to him: “I want my forfeit; when am I to have it?”’

‘All right,’ replied the child, but when he went home forgot all about it. The next day the ogress came again, and asked the boy what answer the father had given. ‘I forgot all about it,’ said he.

‘Well, put this ring on your finger, and then you won’t forget.’

‘Very well,’ replied the boy, and went home.

The next morning, as he was at breakfast, his mother said to him, ‘Child, where did you get that ring?’

‘A woman gave it to me yesterday, and she told me, father, to tell you that she wanted her forfeit, and when was she to have it?’

Then his father burst into tears and said, ‘If she comes again you must say to her that your parents bid her take her forfeit at once, and depart.’

At this they both began to weep afresh, and his mother kissed him, and put on his new clothes and said, ‘If the woman bids you to follow her, you must go,’ but the boy did not heed her grief, he was so pleased with his new clothes. And when he went out, he said to his play-fellows, ‘Look how smart I am; I am going away with my aunt to foreign lands.’

At that moment the ogress came up and asked him, ‘Did you give my message to your father and mother?’

‘Yes, dear aunt, I did.’

‘And what did they say?’

‘Take it away at once!’

So she took him.

But when dinner-time came, and the boy did not return, his father and mother knew that he would never come back, and they sat down and wept all day. At last Halfman rose up and said to his wife, ‘Be comforted; we will wait a year, and then I will go to the ogress and see the boy, and how he is cared for.’

‘Yes, that will be the best,’ said she.

The year passed away, then Halfman saddled his horse, and rode to the place where the ogress had found him sleeping. She was not there, but not knowing what to do next, he got off his horse and waited. About midnight she suddenly stood before him.

‘Halfman, why did you come here?’ said she.

‘I have a question I want to ask you.’

‘Well, ask it; but I know quite well what it is. Your wife wishes you to ask whether I shall carry off your second son as I did the first.’

‘Yes, that is it,’ replied Halfman. Then he seized her hand and said, ‘Oh, let me see my son, and how he looks, and what he is doing.’

The ogress was silent, but stuck her staff hard in the earth, and the earth opened, and the boy appeared and said, ‘Dear father, have you come too?’ And his father clasped him in his arms, and began to cry. But the boy struggled to be free, saying ‘Dear father, put me down. I have got a new mother, who is better than the old one; and a new father, who is better than you.’

Then his father sat him down and said, ‘Go in peace, my boy, but listen first to me. Tell your father the ogre and your mother the ogress, that never more shall they have any children of mine.’

‘All right,’ replied the boy, and called ‘Mother!’

‘What is it?’

‘You are never to take away any more of my father and mother’s children!’

‘Now that I have got you, I don’t want any more,’ answered she.

Then the boy turned to his father and said, ‘Go in peace, dear father, and give my mother greeting and tell her not to be anxious any more, for she can keep all her children.’

And Halfman mounted his horse and rode home, and told his wife all he had seen, and the message sent by Mohammed — Mohammed the son of Halfman, the son of the judge.

(Marchen und Gedichte aus der Stadt Tripolis. Hans von Stumme.)

THE PRINCE WHO WANTED TO SEE THE WORLD

There was once a king who had only one son, and this young man tormented his father from morning till night to allow him to travel in far countries. For a long time the king refused to give him leave; but at last, wearied out, he granted permission, and ordered his treasurer to produce a large sum of money for the prince's expenses. The youth was overjoyed at the thought that he was really going to see the world, and after tenderly embracing his father he set forth.

He rode on for some weeks without meeting with any adventures; but one night when he was resting at an inn, he came across another traveller, with whom he fell into conversation, in the course of which the stranger inquired if he never played cards. The young man replied that he was very fond of doing so. Cards were brought, and in a very short time the prince had lost every penny he possessed to his new acquaintance. When there was absolutely nothing left at the bottom of the bag, the stranger proposed that they should have just one more game, and that if the prince won he should have the money restored to him, but in case he lost, should remain in the inn for three years, and besides that should be his servant for another three. The prince agreed to those terms, played, and lost; so the stranger took rooms for him, and furnished him with bread and water every day for three years.

The prince lamented his lot, but it was no use; and at the end of three years he was released and had to go to the house of the stranger, who was really the king of a neighbouring country, and be his servant. Before he had gone very far he met a woman carrying a child, which was crying from hunger. The prince took it from her, and fed it with his last crust of bread and last drop of water, and then gave it back to its mother. The woman thanked him gratefully, and said:

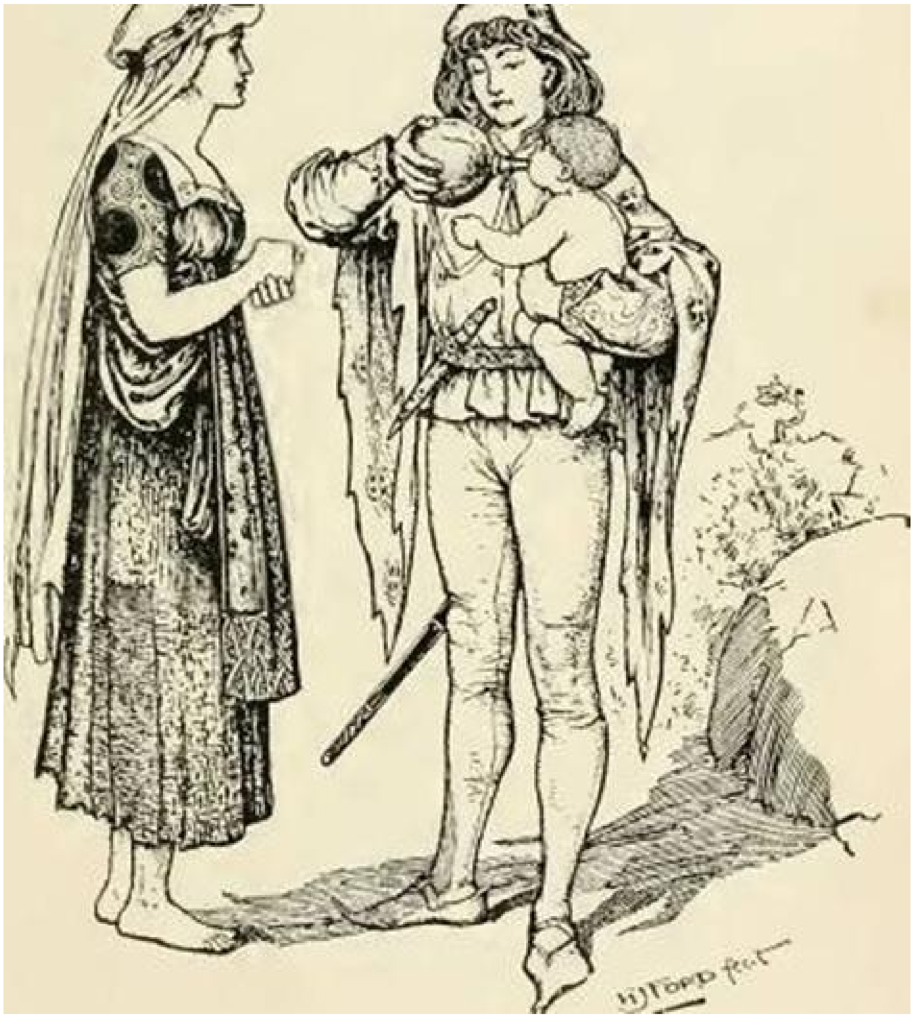

‘Listen, my lord. You must walk straight on till you notice a very strong scent, which comes from a garden by the side of the road. Go in and hide yourself close to a tank, where three doves will come to bathe. As the last one flies past you, catch hold of its robe of feathers, and refuse to give it back till the dove has promised you three things.’

The young man did as he was told, and everything happened as the woman had said. He took the robe of feathers from the dove, who gave him in exchange for it a ring, a collar, and one of its own plumes, saying: ‘When you are in any trouble, cry “Come to my aid, O dove!” I am the daughter of the king you are going to serve, who hates your father and made you gamble in order to cause your ruin.’

Thus the prince went on his way, and in course of time he arrived at the king’s palace. As soon as his master knew he was there, the young man was sent for into his presence, and three bags were handed to him with these words:

‘Take this wheat, this millet, and this barley, and sow them at once, so that I may have loaves of them all to-morrow.’

The prince stood speechless at this command, but the king did not condescend to give any further explanation, and when he was dismissed the young man flew to the room which had been set aside for him, and pulling out his feather, he cried: ‘Dove, dove! be quick and come.’

‘What is it?’ said the dove, flying in through the open window, and the prince told her of the task before him, and of his despair at being unable to accomplish it. ‘Fear nothing; it will be all right,’ replied the dove, as she flew away again.

The next morning when the prince awoke he saw the three loaves standing beside his bed. He jumped up and dressed, and he was scarcely ready when a page arrived with the message that he was to go at once into the king’s chamber. Taking the loaves in his arm he followed the boy, and, bowing low, laid them down before the king. The monarch looked at the loaves for a moment without speaking, then he said:

‘Good. The man who can do this can also find the ring which my eldest daughter dropped into the sea.’

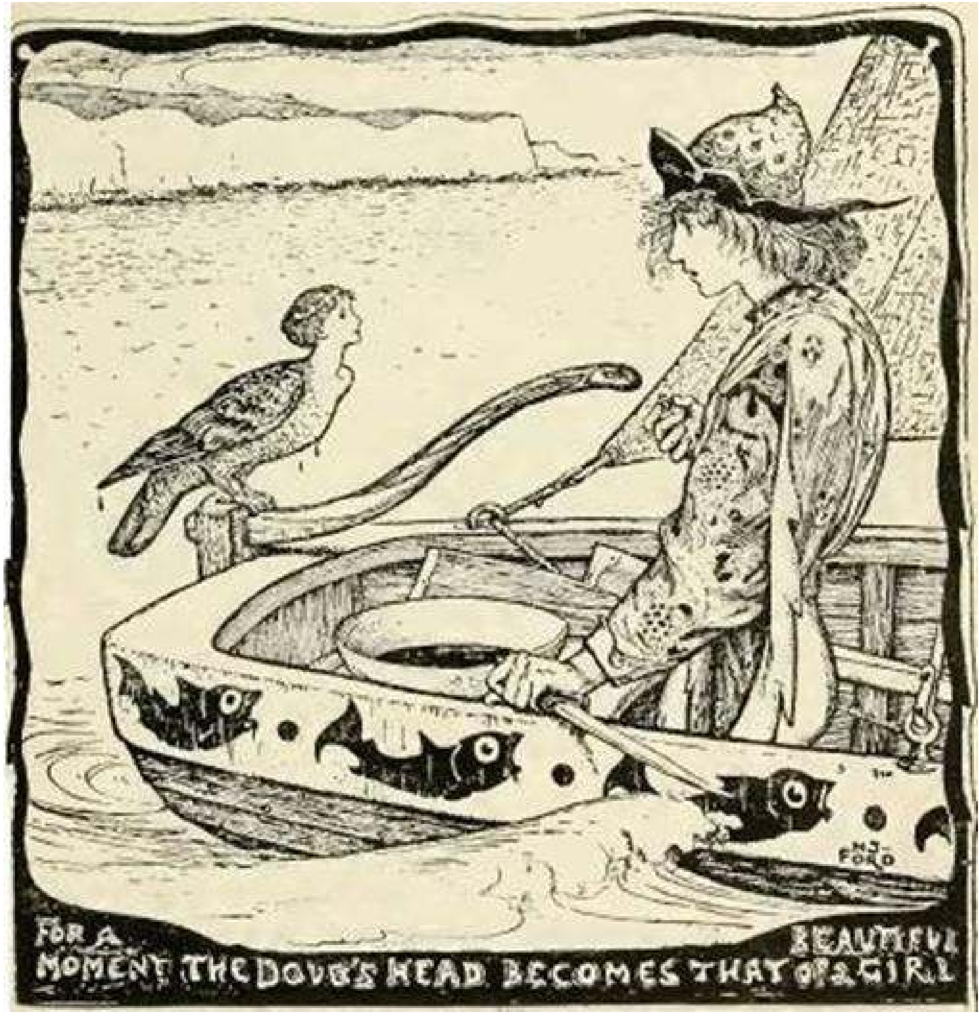
FOR A MOMENT THE DOVE'S HEAD BECOMES THAT OF A BEAUTIFUL GIRL
H.J. FORD

The prince hastened back to his room and summoned the dove, and when she heard this new command she said: ‘Now listen. To-morrow take a knife and a basin and go down to the shore and get into a boat you will find there.’

The young man did not know what he was to do when he was in the boat or where he was to go, but as the dove had come to his rescue before, he was ready to obey her blindly.

When he reached the boat he found the dove perched on one of the masts, and at a signal from her he put to sea; the wind was behind them and they soon lost sight of land. The dove then spoke for the first time and said, ‘Take that knife and cut off my head, but be careful that not a single drop of blood falls to the ground. Afterwards you must throw it into the sea.’

Wondering at this strange order, the prince picked up his knife and severed the dove’s head from her body at one stroke. A little while after a dove rose from the water with a ring in its beak, and laying it in the prince’s hand, dabbled itself with the blood that was in the basin, when its head became that of a beautiful girl. Another moment and it had vanished completely, and the prince took the ring and made his way back to the palace.

The king stared with surprise at the sight of the ring, but he thought of another way of getting rid of the young man which was surer even than the other two.

‘This evening you will mount my colt and ride him to the field, and break him in properly.’

The prince received this command as silently as he had received the rest, but no sooner was he in his room than he called for the dove, who said: ‘Attend to me. My father longs to see you dead, and thinks he will kill you by this means. He himself is the colt, my mother is the saddle, my two sisters are the stirrups, and I am the bridle. Do not forget to take a good club, to help you in dealing with such a crew.’

So the prince mounted the colt, and gave him such a beating that when he came to the palace to announce that the animal was now so meek that it could be ridden by the smallest child, he found the king so bruised that he had to be wrapped in cloths dipped in vinegar, the mother was too stiff to move, and several of the daughters’ ribs were broken. The youngest, however, was quite unharmed. That night she came to the prince and whispered to him:

‘Now that they are all in too much pain to move, we had better seize our chance and run away. Go to the stable and saddle the leanest horse you can find there.’ But the prince was foolish enough to choose the fattest: and when they had started and the princess saw what he had done, she was very sorry, for though this horse ran like the wind, the other flashed like thought. However, it was dangerous to go back, and they rode on as fast as the horse would go.

In the night the king sent for his youngest daughter, and as she did not come he sent again; but she did not come any the more for that. The queen, who was a witch, discovered that her daughter had gone off with the prince, and told her husband he must leave his bed and go after them. The king got slowly up, groaning with pain, and dragged himself to the stables, where he saw the lean horse still in his stall.

Leaping on his back he shook the reins, and his daughter, who knew what to expect and had her eyes open, saw the horse start forward, and in the twinkling of an eye changed her own steed into a cell, the prince into a hermit, and herself into a nun.

When the king reached the chapel, he pulled up his horse and asked if a girl and a young man had passed that way. The hermit raised his eyes, which were bent on the ground, and said that he had not seen a living creature. The king, much disgusted at this news, and not knowing what to do, returned home and told his wife that, though he had ridden for miles, he had come across nothing but a hermit and a nun in a cell.

'Why those were the runaways, of course,' she cried, flying into a passion, 'and if you had only brought a scrap of the nun's dress, or a bit of stone from the wall, I should have had them in my power.'

At these words the king hastened back to the stable, and brought out the lean horse who travelled quicker than thought. But his daughter saw him coming, and changed her horse into a plot of ground, herself into a rose-tree covered with roses, and the prince into a gardener. As the king rode up, the gardener looked up from the tree which he was trimming and asked if anything was the matter. 'Have you seen a young man and a girl go by?' said the king, and the gardener shook his head and replied that no one had passed that way since he had been working there. So the king turned his steps homewards and told his wife.

'Idiot!' cried she, 'if you had only brought me one of the roses, or a handful of earth, I should have had them in my power. But there is no time to waste. I shall have to go with you myself.'

The girl saw them from afar, and a great fear fell on her, for she knew her mother's skill in magic of all kinds. However, she determined to fight to the end, and changed the horse into a deep pool, herself into an eel, and the prince into a turtle. But it was no use. Her mother recognised them all, and, pulling up, asked her daughter if she did not repent and would not like to come home again. The eel wagged 'No' with her tail, and the queen told her husband to put a drop of water from the pool into a bottle, because it was only by that means that she could seize hold of her daughter. The king did as he was bid, and was just in the act of drawing the bottle out of the water after he had filled it, when the turtle knocked against and spilt it all. The king then filled it a second time, but again the turtle was too quick for him.

The queen saw that she was beaten, and called down a curse on her daughter that the prince should forget all about her. After having relieved her feelings in this manner, she and the king went back to the palace.

The others resumed their proper shapes and continued their journey, but the princess was so silent that at last the prince asked her what was the matter. 'It is because I know you will soon forget all about me,' said she, and though he laughed at her and told her it was impossible, she did not cease to believe it.

They rode on and on and on, till they reached the end of the world, where the prince lived, and leaving the girl in an inn he went himself to the palace to ask leave of his father to present her to him as his bride; but in his joy at seeing his family once more he forgot all about her, and even listened when the king spoke of arranging a marriage for him.

When the poor girl heard this she wept bitterly, and cried out, 'Come to me, my sisters, for I need you badly!'

In a moment they stood beside her, and the elder one said, 'Do not be sad, all will go well,' and they told the innkeeper that if any of the king's servants wanted any birds for their master they were to be sent up to them, as they had three doves for sale.

And so it fell out, and as the doves were very beautiful the servant bought them for the king, who admired them so much that he called his son to look at them. The prince was much pleased with the doves and was coaxing them to come to him, when one fluttered on to the top of the window and said, 'If you could only hear us speak, you would admire us still more.'

And another perched on a table and added, 'Talk away, it might help him to remember!'

And the third flew on his shoulder and whispered to him, 'Put on this ring, prince, and see if it fits you.'

And it did. Then they hung a collar round his neck, and held a feather on which was written the name of the dove. And at last his memory came back to him, and he declared he would marry the princess and nobody else. So the next day the wedding took place, and they lived happy till they died.

(From the Portuguese.)

VIRGILIUS THE SORCERER

Long, long ago there was born to a Roman knight and his wife Maja a little boy called Virgilius. While he was still quite little, his father died, and the kinsmen, instead of being a help and protection to the child and his mother, robbed them of their lands and money, and the widow, fearing that they might take the boy’s life also, sent him away to Spain, that he might study in the great University of Toledo.

Virgilius was fond of books, and pored over them all day long. But one afternoon, when the boys were given a holiday, he took a long walk, and found himself in a place where he had never been before. In front of him was a cave, and, as no boy ever sees a cave without entering it, he went in. The cave was so deep that it seemed to Virgilius as if it must run far into the heart of the mountain, and he thought he would like to see if it came out anywhere on the other side. For some time he walked on in pitch darkness, but he went steadily on, and by-and-by a glimmer of light shot across the floor, and he heard a voice calling, ‘Virgilius! Virgilius!’

‘Who calls?’ he asked, stopping and looking round.

‘Virgilius!’ answered the voice, ‘do you mark upon the ground where you are standing a slide or bolt?’

‘I do,’ replied Virgilius.

‘Then,’ said the voice, ‘draw back that bolt, and set me free.’

‘But who are you?’ asked Virgilius, who never did anything in a hurry.

‘I am an evil spirit,’ said the voice, ‘shut up here till Doomsday, unless a man sets me free. If you will let me out I will give you some magic books, which will make you wiser than any other man.’

Now Virgilius loved wisdom, and was tempted by these promises, but again his prudence came to his aid, and he demanded that the books should be handed over to him first, and that he should be told how to use them. The evil spirit, unable to help itself, did as Virgilius bade him, and then the bolt was drawn back. Underneath was a small hole, and out of this the evil spirit gradually wriggled himself; but it took some time, for when at last he stood upon the ground he proved to be about three times as large as Virgilius himself, and coal black besides.

‘Why, you can’t have been as big as that when you were in the hole!’ cried Virgilius.

‘But I was!’ replied the spirit.

‘I don’t believe it!’ answered Virgilius.

‘Well, I’ll just get in and show you,’ said the spirit, and after turning and twisting, and curling himself up, then he lay neatly packed into the hole. Then Virgilius drew the bolt, and, picking the books up under his arm, he left the cave.

For the next few weeks Virgilius hardly ate or slept, so busy was he in learning the magic the books contained. But at the end of that time a messenger from his mother arrived in Toledo, begging him to come at once to Rome, as she had been ill, and could look after their affairs no longer.

Though sorry to leave Toledo, where he was much thought of as showing promise of great learning, Virgilius would willingly have set out at once, but there were many things he had first to see to. So he entrusted to the messenger four pack-horses laden with precious things, and a white palfrey on which she was to ride out every day. Then he set about his own preparations, and, followed by a large train of scholars, he at length started for Rome, from which he had been absent twelve years.

His mother welcomed him back with tears in her eyes, and his poor kinsmen pressed round him, but the rich ones kept away, for they feared that they would no longer be able to rob their kinsman as they had done for many years past. Of course, Virgilius paid no attention to this behaviour, though he noticed they looked with envy on the rich presents he bestowed on the poorer relations and on anyone who had been kind to his mother.

Soon after this had happened the season of tax-gathering came round, and everyone who owned land was bound to present himself before the emperor. Like the rest, Virgilius went to court, and demanded justice from the emperor against the men who had robbed him. But as these were kinsmen to the emperor he gained nothing, as the emperor told him he would think over the matter for the next four years, and then give judgment. This reply naturally did not satisfy Virgilius, and, turning on his heel, he went back to his own home, and, gathering in his harvest, he stored it up in his various houses.

When the enemies of Virgilius heard of this, they assembled together and laid siege to his castle. But Virgilius was a match for them. Coming forth from the castle so as to meet them face to face, he cast a spell over them of such power that they could not move, and then bade them defiance. After which he lifted the spell, and the invading army slunk back to Rome, and reported what Virgilius had said to the emperor.

Now the emperor was accustomed to have his lightest word obeyed, almost before it was uttered, and he hardly knew how to believe his ears. But he got together another army, and marched straight off to the castle. But directly they took up their position Virgilius girded them about with a great river, so that they could neither move hand nor foot, then, hailing the emperor, he offered him peace, and asked for his friendship. The emperor, however, was too angry to listen to anything, so Virgilius, whose patience was exhausted, feasted his own followers in the presence of the starving host, who could not stir hand or foot.

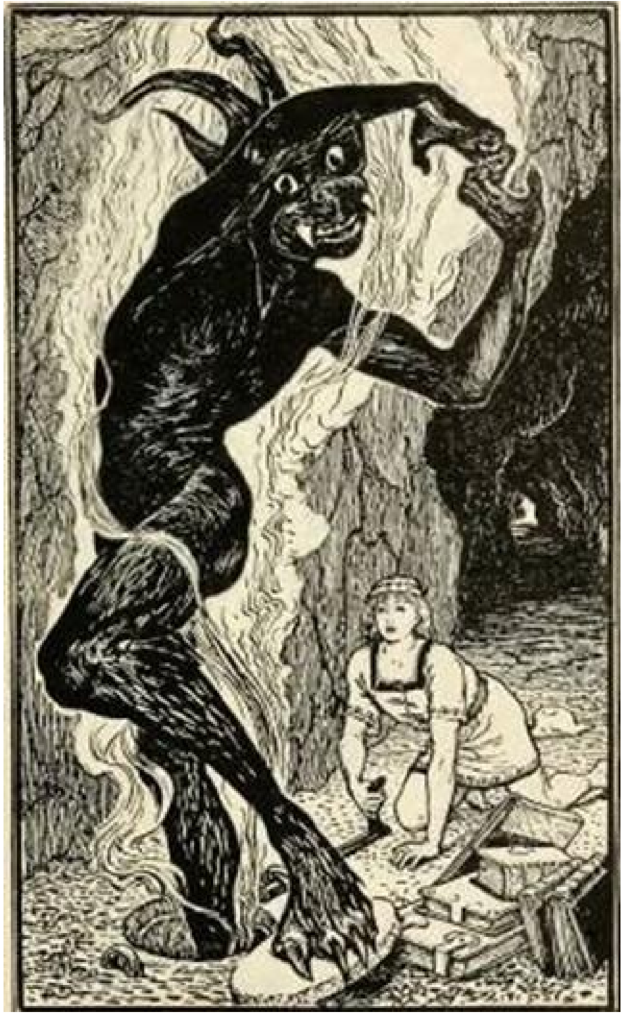

Things seemed getting desperate, when a magician arrived in the camp and offered to sell his services to the emperor. His proposals were gladly accepted, and in a moment the whole of the garrison sank down as if they were dead, and Virgilius himself had much ado to keep awake. He did not know how to fight the magician, but with a great effort struggled to open his Black Book, which told him what spells to use. In an instant all his foes seemed turned to stone, and where each man was there he stayed. Some were half way up the ladders, some had one foot over the wall, but wherever they might chance to be there every man remained, even the emperor and his sorcerer. All day they stayed there like flies upon the wall, but during the night Virgilius stole softly to the emperor, and offered him his freedom, as long as he would do him justice. The emperor, who by this time was thoroughly frightened, said he would agree to anything Virgilius desired. So Virgilius took off his spells, and, after feasting the army and bestowing on every man a gift, bade them return to Rome. And more than that, he built a square tower for the emperor, and in each corner all that was said in that quarter of the city might be heard, while if you stood in the centre every whisper throughout Rome would reach your ears.

Having settled his affairs with the emperor and his enemies, Virgilius had time to think of other things, and his first act was to fall in love! The lady's name was Febilla, and her family was noble, and her face fairer than any in Rome, but she only mocked Virgilius, and was always playing tricks upon him. To this end, she bade him one day come to visit her in the tower where she lived, promising to let down a basket to draw him up as far as the roof. Virgilius was enchanted at this quite unexpected favour, and stepped with glee into the basket. It was drawn up very slowly, and by-and-by came altogether to a standstill, while from above rang the voice of Febilla crying, 'Rogue of a sorcerer, there shalt thou hang!' And there he hung over the market-place, which was soon thronged with people, who made fun of him till he was mad with rage. At last the emperor, hearing of his plight, commanded Febilla to release him, and Virgilius went home vowing vengeance.

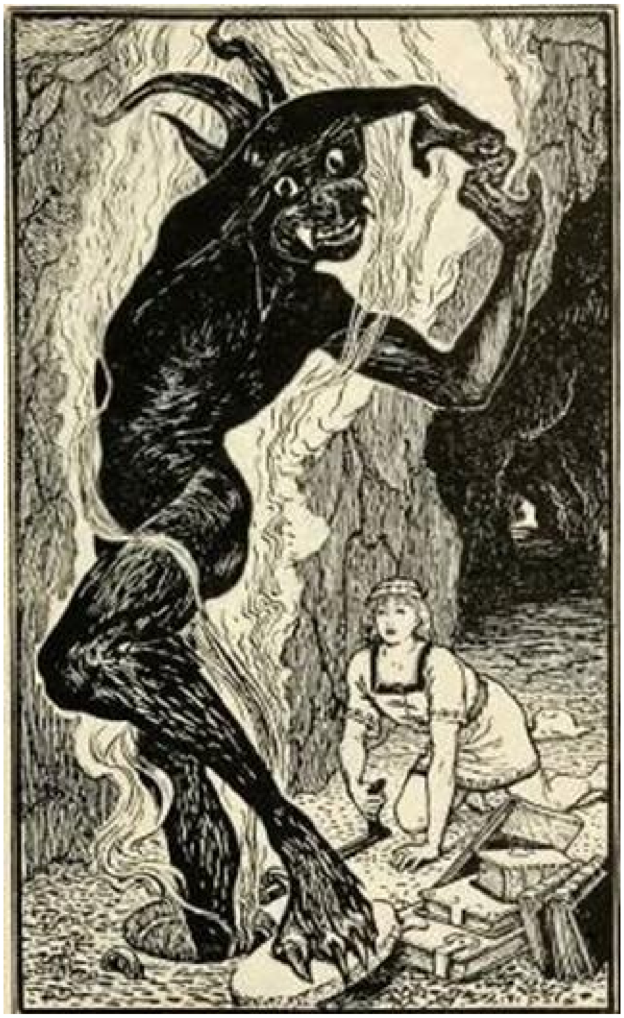

The next morning every fire in Rome went out, and as there were no matches in those days this was a very serious matter. The emperor, guessing that this was the work of Virgilius, besought him to break the spell. Then Virgilius ordered a scaffold to be erected in the market-place, and Febilla to be brought clothed in a single white garment. And further, he bade every one to snatch fire from the maiden, and to suffer no neighbour to kindle it. And when the maiden appeared, clad in her white smock, flames of fire curled about her, and the Romans brought some torches, and some straw, and some shavings, and fires were kindled in Rome again.

For three days she stood there, till every hearth in Rome was alight, and then she was suffered to go where she would.

But the emperor was wroth at the vengeance of Virgilius, and threw him into prison, vowing that he should be put to death. And when everything was ready he was led out to the Viminal Hill, where he was to die.

He went quietly with his guards, but the day was hot, and on reaching his place of execution he begged for some water. A pail was brought, and he, crying

‘Emperor, all hail! seek for me in Sicily,’ jumped headlong into the pail, and vanished from their sight.

For some time we hear no more of Virgilius, or how he made his peace with the emperor, but the next event in his history was his being sent for to the palace to give the emperor advice how to guard Rome from foes within as well as foes without. Virgilius spent many days in deep thought, and at length invented a plan which was known to all as the ‘Preservation of Rome.’

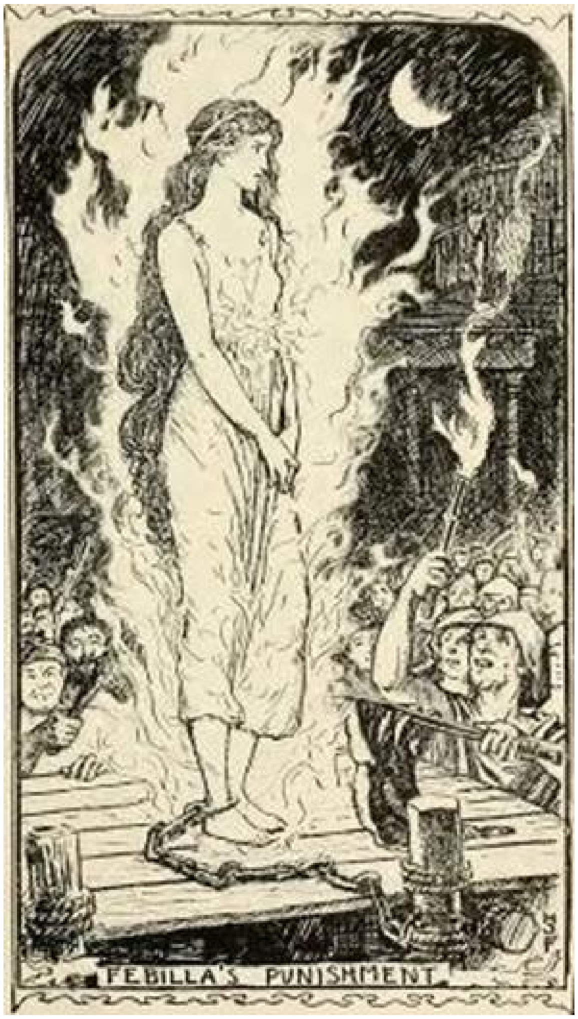
FEBILLA'S PUNISHMENT

On the roof of the Capitol, which was the most famous public building in the city, he set up statues representing the gods worshipped by every nation subject to Rome, and in the middle stood the god of Rome herself. Each of the conquered gods held in its hand a bell, and if there was even a thought of treason in any of the countries its god turned its back upon the god of Rome and rang its bell furiously, and the senators came hurrying to see who was rebelling against the majesty of the empire. Then they made ready their armies, and marched against the foe.

Now there was a country which had long felt bitter jealousy of Rome, and was anxious for some way of bringing about its destruction. So the people chose three men who could be trusted, and, loading them with money, sent them to Rome, bidding them to pretend that they were diviners of dreams. No sooner had the messengers reached the city than they stole out at night and buried a pot of gold far down in the earth, and let down another into the bed of the Tiber, just where a bridge spans the river.

Next day they went to the senate house, where the laws were made, and, bowing low, they said, ‘Oh, noble lords, last night we dreamed that beneath the foot of a hill there lies buried a pot of gold. Have we your leave to dig for it?’ And leave having been given, the messengers took workmen and dug up the gold and made merry with it.

A few days later the diviners again appeared before the senate, and said, ‘Oh, noble lords, grant us leave to seek out another treasure, which has been revealed to us in a dream as lying under the bridge over the river.’

And the senators gave leave, and the messengers hired boats and men, and let down ropes with hooks, and at length drew up the pot of gold, some of which they gave as presents to the senators.

A week or two passed by, and once more they appeared in the senate house.

‘O, noble lords!’ said they, ‘last night in a vision we beheld twelve casks of gold lying under the foundation stone of the Capitol, on which stands the statue of the Preservation of Rome. Now, seeing that by your goodness we have been greatly enriched by our former dreams, we wish, in gratitude, to bestow this third treasure on you for your own profit; so give us workers, and we will begin to dig without delay.’

And receiving permission they began to dig, and when the messengers had almost undermined the Capitol they stole away as secretly as they had come.

And next morning the stone gave way, and the sacred statue fell on its face and was broken. And the senators knew that their greed had been their ruin.

From that day things went from bad to worse, and every morning crowds presented themselves before the emperor, complaining of the robberies, murders, and other crimes that were committed nightly in the streets.

The emperor, desiring nothing so much as the safety of his subjects, took counsel with Virgilius how this violence could be put down.

Virgilius thought hard for a long time, and then he spoke:

‘Great prince,’ said he, ‘cause a copper horse and rider to be made, and stationed in front of the Capitol. Then make a proclamation that at ten o’clock a bell will toll, and every man is to enter his house, and not leave it again.’

The emperor did as Virgilius advised, but thieves and murderers laughed at the horse, and went about their misdeeds as usual.

But at the last stroke of the bell the horse set off at full gallop through the streets of Rome, and by daylight men counted over two hundred corpses that it had trodden down. The rest of the thieves — and there were still many remaining — instead of being frightened into honesty, as Virgilius had hoped, prepared rope ladders with hooks to them, and when they heard the sound of the horse’s hoofs they stuck their ladders into the walls, and climbed up above the reach of the horse and its rider.

Then the emperor commanded two copper dogs to be made that would run after the horse, and when the thieves, hanging from the walls, mocked and jeered at Virgilius and the emperor, the dogs leaped high after them and pulled them to the ground, and bit them to death.

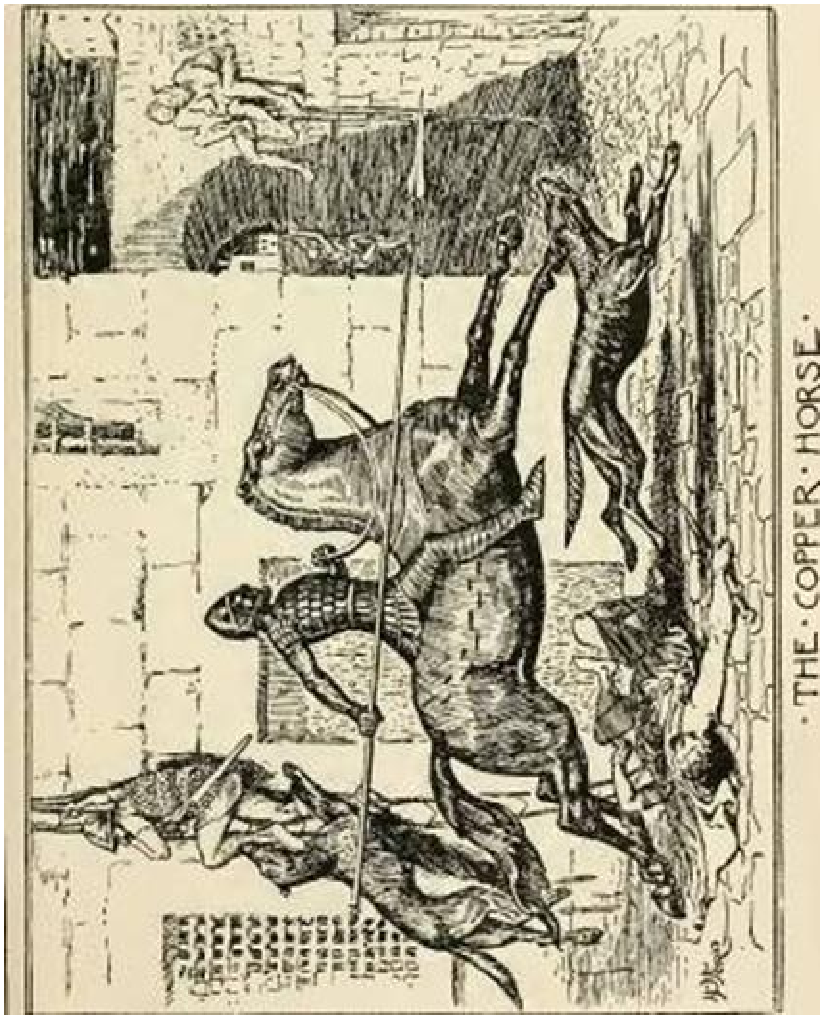

Thus did Virgilius restore peace and order to the city.

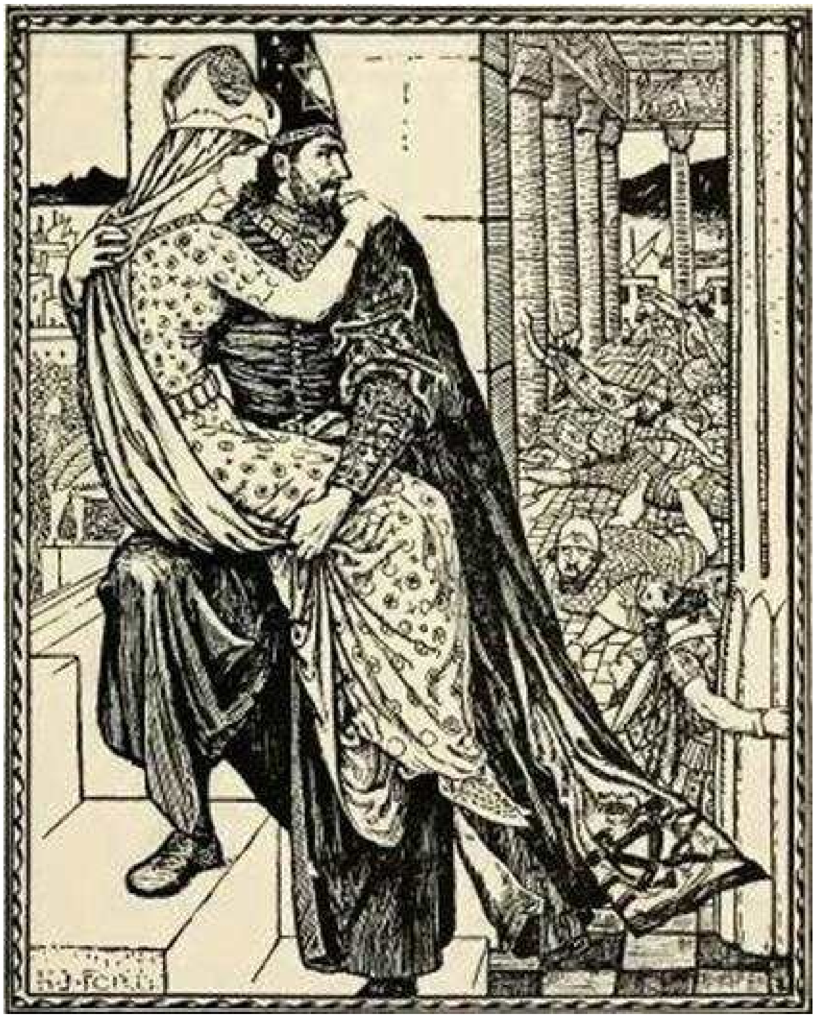

Now about this time there came to be noised abroad the fame of the daughter of the sultan who ruled over the province of Babylon, and indeed she was said to be the most beautiful princess in the world. Virgilius, like the rest, listened to the stories that were told of her, and fell so violently in love with all he heard that he built a bridge in the air, which stretched all the way between Rome and Babylon. He then passed over it to visit the princess, who, though somewhat surprised to see him, gave him welcome, and after some conversation became in her turn anxious to see the distant country where this stranger lived, and he promised that he would carry her there himself, without wetting the soles of his feet.

The princess spent some days in the palace of Virgilius, looking at wonders of which she had never dreamed, though she declined to accept the presents he longed to heap on her. The hours passed as if they were minutes, till the princess said that she could be no longer absent from her father. Then Virgilius conducted her himself over the airy bridge, and laid her gently down on her own bed, where she was found next morning by her father.

She told him all that had happened to her, and he pretended to be very much interested, and begged that the next time Virgilius came he might be introduced to him.

Soon after, the sultan received a message from his daughter that the stranger was there, and he commanded that a feast should be made ready, and, sending for the princess delivered into her hands a cup, which he said she was to present to Virgilius herself, in order to do him honour.

When they were all seated at the feast the princess rose and presented the cup to Virgilius, who directly he had drunk fell into a deep sleep.

Then the sultan ordered his guards to bind him, and left him there till the following day.

Directly the sultan was up he summoned his lords and nobles into his great hall, and commanded that the cords which bound Virgilius should be taken off, and the prisoner brought before him. The moment he appeared the sultan’s passion broke forth, and he accused his captive of the crime of conveying the princess into distant lands without his leave.

Virgilius replied that if he had taken her away he had also brought her back, when he might have kept her, and that if they would set him free to return to his own land he would come hither no more.

‘Not so!’ cried the sultan, ‘but a shameful death you shall die!’ And the princess fell on her knees, and begged she might die with him.

‘You are out in your reckoning, Sir Sultan!’ said Virgilius, whose patience was at an end, and he cast a spell over the sultan and his lords, so that they believed that the great river of Babylon was flowing through the hall, and that they must swim for their lives. So, leaving them to plunge and leap like frogs and fishes, Virgilius took the princess in his arms, and carried her over the airy bridge back to Rome.

Now Virgilius did not think that either his palace, or even Rome itself, was good enough to contain such a pearl as the princess, so he built her a city whose foundations stood upon eggs, buried far away down in the depths of the sea. And in the city was a square tower, and on the roof of the tower was a rod of iron, and across the rod he laid a bottle, and on the bottle he placed an egg, and from the egg there hung chained an apple, which hangs there to this day. And when the egg shakes the city quakes, and when the egg shall be broken the city shall be destroyed. And the city Virgilius filled full of wonders, such as never were seen before, and he called its name Naples.

(Adapted from ‘Virgilius the Sorcerer.’)

MOGARZEA AND HIS SON

There was once a little boy, whose father and mother, when they were dying, left him to the care of a guardian. But the guardian whom they chose turned out to be a wicked man, and spent all the money, so the boy determined to go away and strike out a path for himself.

So one day he set off, and walked and walked through woods and meadows till when evening came he was very tired, and did not know where to sleep. He climbed a hill and looked about him to see if there was no light shining from a window. At first all seemed dark, but at length he noticed a tiny spark far, far off, and, plucking up his spirits, he at once went in search of it.

The night was nearly half over before he reached the spark, which turned out to be a big fire, and by the fire a man was sleeping who was so tall he might have been a giant. The boy hesitated for a moment what he should do; then he crept close up to the man, and lay down by his legs.

When the man awoke in the morning he was much surprised to find the boy nestling up close to him.

'Dear me! where do you come from?' said he.

'I am your son, born in the night,' replied the boy.

'If that is true,' said the man, 'you shall take care of my sheep, and I will give you food. But take care you never cross the border of my land, or you will repent it.' Then he pointed out where the border of his land lay, and bade the boy begin his work at once.

The young shepherd led his flock out to the richest meadows and stayed with them till evening, when he brought them back, and helped the man to milk them. When this was done, they both sat down to supper, and while they were eating the boy asked the big man: 'What is your name, father?'

'Mogarzea,' answered he.

'I wonder you are not tired of living by yourself in this lonely place.'

'There is no reason you should wonder! Don't you know that there was never a bear yet who danced of his own free will?'

'Yes, that is true,' replied the boy. 'But why is it you are always so sad? Tell me your history, father.'

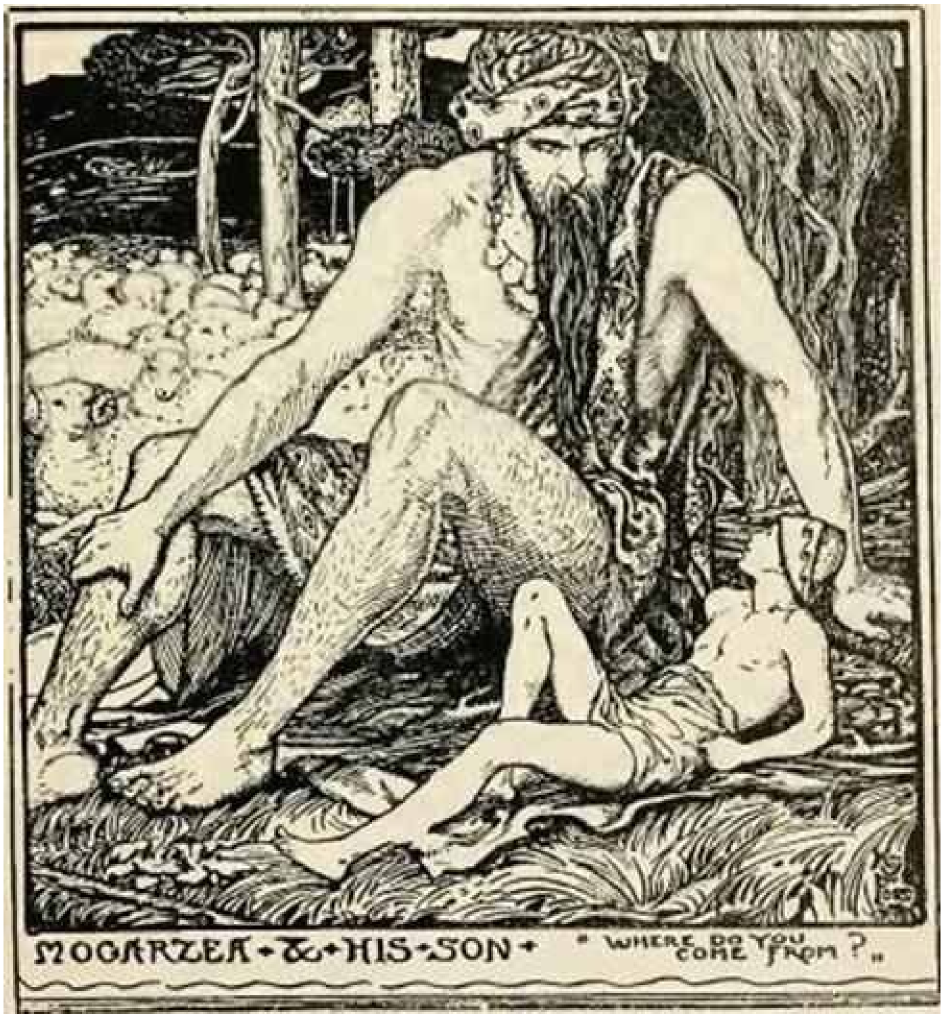
MOGARZEA & HIS SON
"WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?"

'What is the use of my telling you things that would only make you sad too?'

'Oh, never mind that! I should like to hear. Are you not my father, and am I not your son?'

'Well, if you really want to know my story, this is it: As I told you, my name is Mogarzea, and my father is an emperor. I was on my way to the Sweet Milk Lake, which lies not far from here, to marry one of the three fairies who have made the lake their home. But on the road three wicked elves fell on me, and robbed me of my soul, so that ever since I have stayed in this spot watching my sheep without wishing for anything different, without having felt one moment's joy, or ever once being able to laugh. And the horrible elves are so ill-natured that if anyone sets one foot on their land he is instantly punished. That is why I warn you to be careful, lest you should share my fate.'

'All right, I will take great care. Do let me go, father,' said the boy, as they stretched themselves out to sleep.

At sunrise the boy got up and led his sheep out to feed, and for some reason he did not feel tempted to cross into the grassy meadows belonging to the elves, but let his flock pick up what pasture they could on Mogarzea’s dry ground.

On the third day he was sitting under the shadow of a tree, playing on his flute — and there was nobody in the world who could play a flute better — when one of his sheep strayed across the fence into the flowery fields of the elves, and another and another followed it. But the boy was so absorbed in his flute that he noticed nothing till half the flock were on the other side.

He jumped up, still playing on his flute, and went after the sheep, meaning to drive them back to their own side of the border, when suddenly he saw before him three beautiful maidens who stopped in front of him, and began to dance. The boy understood what he must do, and played with all his might, but the maidens danced on till evening.

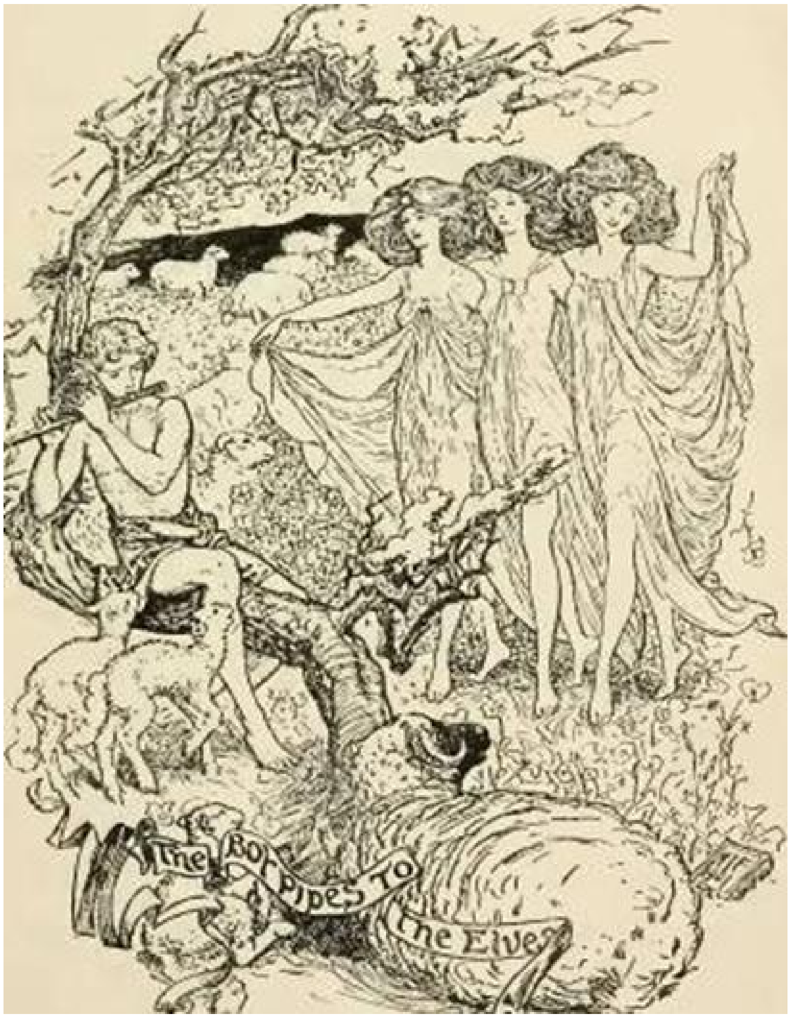
The Boy Pipes to the Elves

‘Now let me go,’ he cried at last, ‘for poor Mogarzea must be dying of hunger. I will come and play for you to-morrow.’

‘Well, you may go!’ they said, ‘but remember that even if you break your promise you will not escape us.’

So they both agreed that the next day he should come straight there with the sheep, and play to them till the sun went down. This being settled, they each returned home.

Mogarzea was surprised to find that his sheep gave so much more milk than usual, but as the boy declared he had never crossed the border the big man did not trouble his head further, and ate his supper heartily.

With the earliest gleams of light, the boy was off with his sheep to the elfin meadow, and at the first notes of his flute the maidens appeared before him and danced and danced and danced till evening came. Then the boy let the flute slip through his fingers, and trod on it, as if by accident.

If you had heard the noise he made, and how he wrung his hands and wept and cried that he had lost his only companion, you would have been sorry for him. The hearts of the elves were quite melted, and they did all they could to comfort him.

‘I shall never find another flute like that, moaned he. ‘I have never heard one whose tone was as sweet as mine! It was cut from the centre of a seven-year-old cherry tree!’

‘There is a cherry tree in our garden that is exactly seven years old,’ said they. ‘Come with us, and you shall make yourself another flute.’

So they all went to the cherry tree, and when they were standing round it the youth explained that if he tried to cut it down with an axe he might very likely split open the heart of the tree, which was needed for the flute. In order to prevent this, he would make a little cut in the bark, just large enough for them to put their fingers in, and with this help he could manage to tear the tree in two, so that the heart should run no risk of damage. The elves did as he told them without a thought; then he quickly drew out the axe, which had been sticking into the cleft, and behold! all their fingers were imprisoned tight in the tree.

It was in vain that they shrieked with pain and tried to free themselves. They could do nothing, and the young man remained cold as marble to all their entreaties.

Then he demanded of them Mogarzea’s soul.

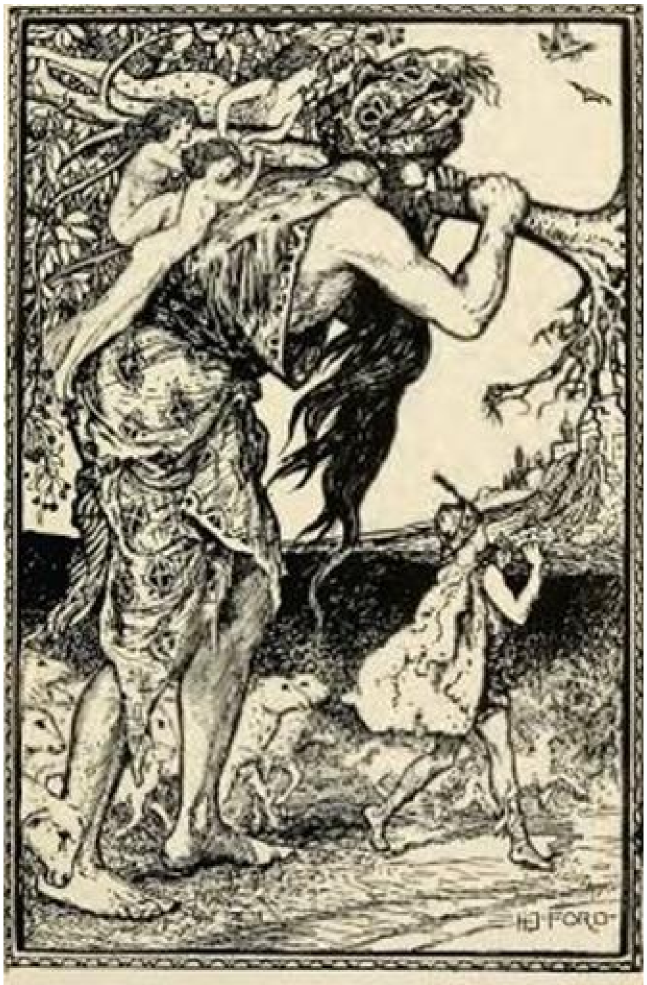

MOGARZEA & HIS SON RETURN HOME

‘Oh, well, if you must have it, it is in a bottle on the window sill,’ said they, hoping that they might obtain their freedom at once. But they were mistaken.

‘You have made so many men suffer,’ answered he sternly, ‘that it is but just you should suffer yourselves, but to-morrow I will let you go.’ And he turned towards home, taking his sheep and the soul of Mogarzea with him.

Mogarzea was waiting at the door, and as the boy drew near he began scolding him for being so late. But at the first word of explanation the man became beside himself with joy, and he sprang so high into the air that the false soul which the elves had given him flew out of his mouth, and his own, which had been shut tightly into the flask of water, took its place.

When his excitement had somewhat calmed down, he cried to the boy, ‘Whether you are really my son matters nothing to me; tell me, how can I repay you for what you have done for me?’

‘By showing me where the Milk Lake is, and how I can get one of the three fairies who lives there to wife, and by letting me remain your son for ever.’

The night was passed by Mogarzea and his son in songs and feasting, for both were too happy to sleep, and when day dawned they set out together to free the elves from the tree. When they reached the place of their imprisonment, Mogarzea took the cherry tree and all the elves with it on his back, and carried them off to his father’s kingdom, where everyone rejoiced to see him home again. But all he did was to point to the boy who had saved him, and had followed him with his flock.

For three days the boy stayed in the palace, receiving the thanks and praises of the whole court. Then he said to Mogarzea:

‘The time has come for me to go hence, but tell me, I pray you, how to find the Sweet Milk Lake, and I will return, and will bring my wife back with me.’

Mogarzea tried in vain to make him stay, but, finding it was useless, he told him all he knew, for he himself had never seen the lake.

For three summer days the boy and his flute journeyed on, till one evening he reached the lake, which lay in the kingdom of a powerful fairy. The next morning had scarcely dawned when the youth went down to the shore, and began to play on his flute, and the first notes had hardly sounded when he saw a beautiful fairy standing before him, with hair and robes that shone like gold. He gazed at her in wonder, when suddenly she began to dance. Her movements were so graceful that he forgot to play, and as soon as the notes of his flute ceased she vanished from his sight. The next day the same thing happened, but on the third he took courage, and drew a little nearer, playing on his flute all the while. Suddenly he sprang forward, seized her in his arms and kissed her, and plucked a rose from her hair.

The fairy gave a cry, and begged him to give her back her rose, but he would not. He only stuck the rose in his hat, and turned a deaf ear to all her prayers.

At last she saw that her entreaties were vain, and agreed to marry him, as he wished. And they went together to the palace, where Mogarzea was still waiting for him, and the marriage was celebrated by the emperor himself. But every May they returned to the Milk Lake, they and their children, and bathed in its waters.

(Olumanische Marchen.)

THE CRIMSON FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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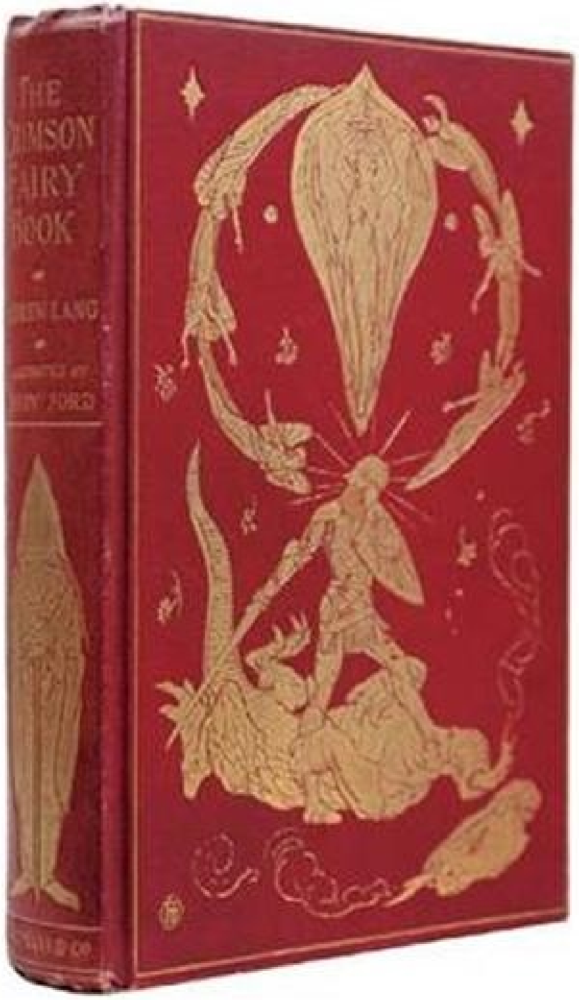
THE CRIMSON FAIRY BOOK
ANDREW LANG
ILLUSTRATED BY
H. J. FORD
LONGMANS & Co

The first edition

THE CRIMSON FAIRY BOOK

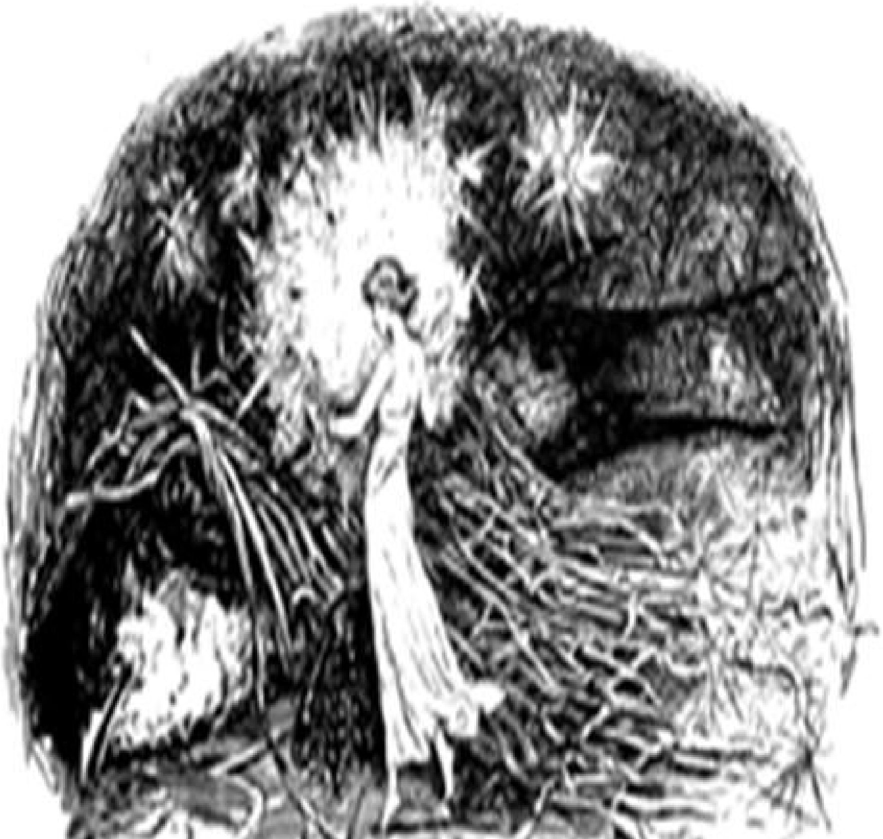

Thumbelina brings thistledown for the Swallow

PREFACE

Each Fairy Book demands a preface from the Editor, and these introductions are inevitably both monotonous and unavailing. A sense of literary honesty compels the Editor to keep repeating that he is the Editor, and not the author of the Fairy Tales, just as a distinguished man of science is only the Editor, not the Author of Nature. Like nature, popular tales are too vast to be the creation of a single modern mind. The Editor’s business is to hunt for collections of these stories told by peasant or savage grandmothers in many climes, from New Caledonia to Zululand; from the frozen snows of the Polar regions to Greece, or Spain, or Italy, or far Lochaber. When the tales are found they are adapted to the needs of British children by various hands, the Editor doing little beyond guarding the interests of propriety, and toning down to mild reproofs the tortures inflicted on wicked stepmothers, and other naughty characters.

These explanations have frequently been offered already; but, as far as ladies and children are concerned, to no purpose. They still ask the Editor how he can invent so many stories — more than Shakespeare, Dumas, and Charles Dickens could have invented in a century. And the Editor still avers, in Prefaces, that he did not invent one of the stories; that nobody knows, as a rule, who invented them, or where, or when. It is only plain that, perhaps a hundred thousand years ago, some savage grandmother told a tale to a savage granddaughter; that the granddaughter told it in her turn; that various tellers made changes to suit their taste, adding or omitting features and incidents; that, as the world grew civilised, other alterations were made, and that, at last, Homer composed the ‘Odyssey,’ and somebody else composed the Story of Jason and the Fleece of Gold, and the enchantress Medea, out of a set of wandering popular tales, which are still told among Samoyeds and Samoans, Hindoos and Japanese.

All this has been known to the wise and learned for centuries, and especially since the brothers Grimm wrote in the early years of the Nineteenth Century. But children remain unaware of the facts, and so do their dear mothers; whence the Editor infers that they do not read his prefaces, and are not members of the Folk Lore Society, or students of Herr Kohler and M. Cosquin, and M. Henri Guidoz and Professor Child, and Mr. Max Muller. Though these explanations are not attended to by the Editor’s customers, he makes them once more, for the relief of his conscience. Many tales in this book are translated, or adapted, from those told by mothers and nurses in Hungary; others are familiar to Russian nurseries; the Servians are responsible for some; a rather peculiarly fanciful set of stories are adapted from the Roumanians; others are from the Baltic shores; others from sunny Sicily; a few are from Finland, and Iceland, and Japan, and Tunis, and Portugal. No doubt many children will like to look out these places on the map, and study their mountains, rivers, soil, products, and fiscal policies, in the geography books. The peoples who tell the stories differ in colour; language, religion, and almost everything else; but they all love a nursery tale. The stories have mainly been adapted or translated by Mrs. Lang, a few by Miss Lang and Miss Blackley.

Lovely Ilonka

There was once a king’s son who told his father that he wished to marry.

‘No, no!’ said the king; ‘you must not be in such a hurry. Wait till you have done some great deed. My father did not let me marry till I had won the golden sword you see me wear.’

The prince was much disappointed, but he never dreamed of disobeying his father, and he began to think with all his might what he could do. It was no use staying at home, so one day he wandered out into the world to try his luck, and as he walked along he came to a little hut in which he found an old woman crouching over the fire.

‘Good evening, mother. I see you have lived long in this world; do you know anything about the three bulrushes?’

‘Yes, indeed, I’ve lived long and been much about in the world, but I have never seen or heard anything of what you ask. Still, if you will wait till to-morrow I may be able to tell you something.’

Well, he waited till the morning, and quite early the old woman appeared and took out a little pipe and blew in it, and in a moment all the crows in the world were flying about her. Not one was missing. Then she asked if they knew anything about the three bulrushes, but not one of them did.

The prince went on his way, and a little further on he found another hut in which lived an old man. On being questioned the old man said he knew nothing, but begged the prince to stay overnight, and the next morning the old man called all the ravens together, but they too had nothing to tell.

The prince bade him farewell and set out. He wandered so far that he crossed seven kingdoms, and at last, one evening, he came to a little house in which was an old woman.

‘Good evening, dear mother,’ said he politely.

‘Good evening to you, my dear son,’ answered the old woman. ‘It is lucky for you that you spoke to me or you would have met with a horrible death. But may I ask where are you going?’

‘I am seeking the three bulrushes. Do you know anything about them?’

‘I don’t know anything myself, but wait till to-morrow. Perhaps I can tell you then.’ So the next morning she blew on her pipe, and lo! and behold every magpie in the world flew up. That is to say, all the magpies except one who had broken a leg and a wing. The old woman sent after it at once, and when she questioned the magpies the crippled one was the only one who knew where the three bulrushes were.

Then the prince started off with the lame magpie. They went on and on till they reached a great stone wall, many, many feet high.

‘Now, prince,’ said the magpie, ‘the three bulrushes are behind that wall.’

The prince wasted no time. He set his horse at the wall and leaped over it. Then he looked about for the three bulrushes, pulled them up and set off with them on his way home. As he rode along one of the bulrushes happened to knock against something. It split open and, only think! out sprang a lovely girl, who said: ‘My heart’s love, you are mine and I am yours; do give me a glass of water.’

But how could the prince give it her when there was no water at hand? So the lovely maiden flew away. He split the second bulrush as an experiment and just the same thing happened.

How careful he was of the third bulrush! He waited till he came to a well, and there he split it open, and out sprang a maiden seven times lovelier than either of the others, and she too said: ‘My heart’s love, I am yours and you are mine; do give me a glass of water.’

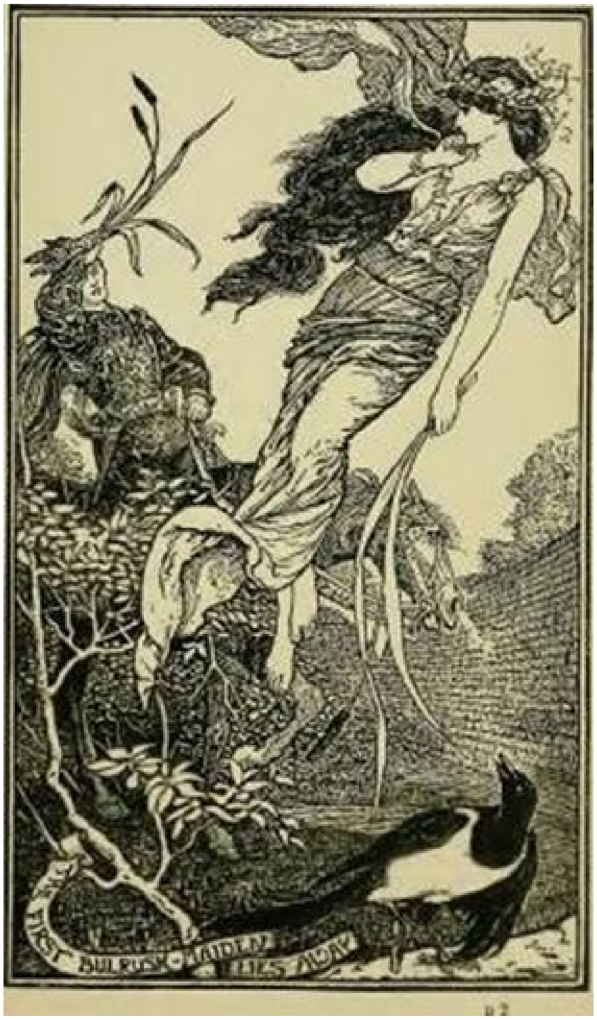
FIRST BULRUSH · MAIDEN FLIES AWAY

This time the water was ready and the girl did not fly away, but she and the prince promised to love each other always. Then they set out for home.

They soon reached the prince’s country, and as he wished to bring his promised bride back in a fine coach he went on to the town to fetch one. In the field where the well was, the king’s swineherds and cowherds were feeding their droves, and the prince left Ilonka (for that was her name) in their care.

Unluckily the chief swineherd had an ugly old daughter, and whilst the prince was away he dressed her up in fine clothes, and threw Ilonka into the well.

The prince returned before long, bringing with him his father and mother and a great train of courtiers to escort Ilonka home. But how they all stared when they saw the swineherd’s ugly daughter! However, there was nothing for it but to take her home; and, two days later, the prince married her, and his father gave up the crown to him.

But he had no peace! He knew very well he had been cheated, though he could not think how. Once he desired to have some water brought him from the well into which Ilonka had been thrown. The coachman went for it and, in the bucket he pulled up, a pretty little duck was swimming. He looked wonderingly at it, and all of a sudden it disappeared and he found a dirty looking girl standing near him. The girl returned with him and managed to get a place as housemaid in the palace.

Of course she was very busy all day long, but whenever she had a little spare time she sat down to spin. Her distaff turned of itself and her spindle span by itself and the flax wound itself off; and however much she might use there was always plenty left.

When the queen — or, rather, the swineherd’s daughter — heard of this, she very much wished to have the distaff, but the girl flatly refused to give it to her. However, at last she consented on condition that she might sleep one night in the king’s room. The queen was very angry, and scolded her well; but as she longed to have the distaff she consented, though she gave the king a sleeping draught at supper.

Then the girl went to the king’s room looking seven times lovelier than ever. She bent over the sleeper and said: ‘My heart’s love, I am yours and you are mine. Speak to me but once; I am your Ilonka.’ But the king was so sound asleep he neither heard nor spoke, and Ilonka left the room, sadly thinking he was ashamed to own her.

Soon after the queen again sent to say that she wanted to buy the spindle. The girl agreed to let her have it on the same conditions as before; but this time, also, the queen took care to give the king a sleeping draught. And once more Ilonka went to the king’s room and spoke to him; whisper as sweetly as she might she could get no answer.

Now some of the king’s servants had taken note of the matter, and warned their master not to eat and drink anything that the queen offered him, as for two nights running she had given him a sleeping draught. The queen had no idea that her doings had been discovered; and when, a few days later, she wanted the flax, and had to pay the same price for it, she felt no fears at all.

At supper that night the queen offered the king all sorts of nice things to eat and drink, but he declared he was not hungry, and went early to bed.

The queen repented bitterly her promise to the girl, but it was too late to recall it; for Ilonka had already entered the king’s room, where he lay anxiously waiting for something, he knew not what. All of a sudden he saw a lovely maiden who bent over him and said: ‘My dearest love, I am yours and you are mine. Speak to me, for I am your Ilonka.’

At these words the king’s heart bounded within him. He sprang up and embraced and kissed her, and she told him all her adventures since the moment he had left her. And when he heard all that Ilonka had suffered, and how he had been deceived, he vowed he would be revenged; so he gave orders that the swineherd, his wife and daughter should all be hanged; and so they were.

The next day the king was married, with great rejoicings, to the fair Ilonka; and if they are not yet dead — why, they are still living.

Lucky Luck

Once upon a time there was a king who had an only son. When the lad was about eighteen years old his father had to go to fight in a war against a neighbouring country, and the king led his troops in person. He bade his son act as Regent in his absence, but ordered him on no account to marry till his return.

Time went by. The prince ruled the country and never even thought of marrying. But when he reached his twenty-fifth birthday he began to think that it might be rather nice to have a wife, and he thought so much that at last he got quite eager about it. He remembered, however, what his father had said, and waited some time longer, till at last it was ten years since the king went out to war. Then the prince called his courtiers about him and set off with a great retinue to seek a bride. He hardly knew which way to go, so he wandered about for twenty days, when, suddenly, he found himself in his father's camp.

The king was delighted to see his son, and had a great many questions to ask and answer; but when he heard that instead of quietly waiting for him at home the prince was starting off to seek a wife he was very angry, and said: 'You may go where you please but I will not leave any of my people with you.'

Only one faithful servant stayed with the prince and refused to part from him. They journeyed over hill and dale till they came to a place called Goldtown. The King of Goldtown had a lovely daughter, and the prince, who soon heard about her beauty, could not rest till he saw her.

He was very kindly received, for he was extremely good-looking and had charming manners, so he lost no time in asking for her hand and her parents gave her to him with joy. The wedding took place at once, and the feasting and rejoicings went on for a whole month. At the end of the month they set off for home, but as the journey was a long one they spent the first evening at an inn. Everyone in the house slept, and only the faithful servant kept watch. About midnight he heard three crows, who had flown to the roof, talking together.

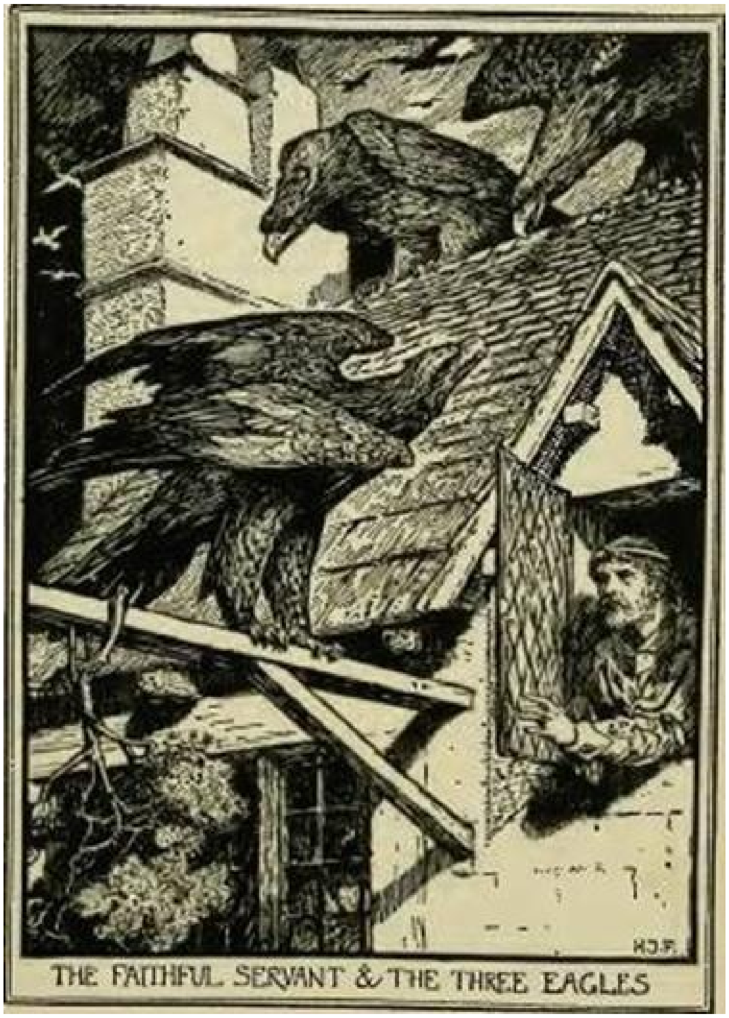

THE FAITHFUL SERVANT & THE THREE EAGLES

‘That’s a handsome couple which arrived here tonight. It seems quite a pity they should lose their lives so soon.’

‘Truly,’ said the second crow; ‘for to-morrow, when midday strikes, the bridge over the Gold Stream will break just as they are driving over it. But, listen! whoever overhears and tells what we have said will be turned to stone up to his knees.’

The crows had hardly done speaking when away they flew. And close upon them followed three pigeons.

‘Even if the prince and princess get safe over the bridge they will perish,’ said they; ‘for the king is going to send a carriage to meet them which looks as new as paint. But when they are seated in it a raging wind will rise and whirl the carriage away into the clouds. Then it will fall suddenly to earth, and they will be killed. But anyone who hears and betrays what we have said will be turned to stone up to his waist.’

With that the pigeons flew off and three eagles took their places, and this is what they said:

‘If the young couple does manage to escape the dangers of the bridge and the carriage, the king means to send them each a splendid gold embroidered robe. When they put these on they will be burnt up at once. But whoever hears and repeats this will turn to stone from head to foot.’

Early next morning the travellers got up and breakfasted. They began to tell each other their dreams. At last the servant said:

‘Gracious prince, I dreamt that if your Royal Highness would grant all I asked we should get home safe and sound; but if you did not we should certainly be lost. My dreams never deceive me, so I entreat you to follow my advice during the rest of the journey.’

‘Don’t make such a fuss about a dream,’ said the prince; ‘dreams are but clouds. Still, to prevent your being anxious I will promise to do as you wish.’

With that they set out on their journey.

At midday they reached the Gold Stream. When they got to the bridge the servant said: ‘Let us leave the carriage here, my prince, and walk a little way. The town is not far off and we can easily get another carriage there, for the wheels of this one are bad and will not hold out much longer.’

The prince looked well at the carriage. He did not think it looked so unsafe as his servant said; but he had given his word and he held to it.

They got down and loaded the horses with the luggage. The prince and his bride walked over the bridge, but the servant said he would ride the horses through the stream so as to water and bathe them.

They reached the other side without harm, and bought a new carriage in the town, which was quite near, and set off once more on their travels; but they had not gone far when they met a messenger from the king who said to the prince: ‘His Majesty has sent your Royal Highness this beautiful carriage so that you may make a fitting entry into your own country and amongst your own people.’

The prince was so delighted that he could not speak. But the servant said: ‘My lord, let me examine this carriage first and then you can get in if I find it is all right; otherwise we had better stay in our own.’

The prince made no objections, and after looking the carriage well over the servant said: ‘It is as bad as it is smart’; and with that he knocked it all to pieces, and they went on in the one that they had bought.

At last they reached the frontier; there another messenger was waiting for them, who said that the king had sent two splendid robes for the prince and his bride, and begged that they would wear them for their state entry. But the servant implored the prince to have nothing to do with them, and never gave him any peace till he had obtained leave to destroy the robes.

The old king was furious when he found that all his arts had failed; that his son still lived and that he would have to give up the crown to him now he was married, for that was the law of the land. He longed to know how the prince had escaped, and said: ‘My dear son, I do indeed rejoice to have you safely back, but I cannot imagine why the beautiful carriage and the splendid robes I sent did not please you; why you had them destroyed.’

‘Indeed, sire,’ said the prince, ‘I was myself much annoyed at their destruction; but my servant had begged to direct everything on the journey and I had promised him that he should do so. He declared that we could not possibly get home safely unless I did as he told me.’

The old king fell into a tremendous rage. He called his Council together and condemned the servant to death.

The gallows was put up in the square in front of the palace. The servant was led out and his sentence read to him.

The rope was being placed round his neck, when he begged to be allowed a few last words. ‘On our journey home,’ he said, ‘we spent the first night at an inn. I did not sleep but kept watch all night.’ And then he went on to tell what the crows had said, and as he spoke he turned to stone up to his knees. The prince called to him to say no more as he had proved his innocence. But the servant paid no heed to him, and by the time his story was done he had turned to stone from head to foot.

Oh! how grieved the prince was to lose his faithful servant! And what pained him most was the thought that he was lost through his very faithfulness, and he determined to travel all over the world and never rest till he found some means of restoring him to life.

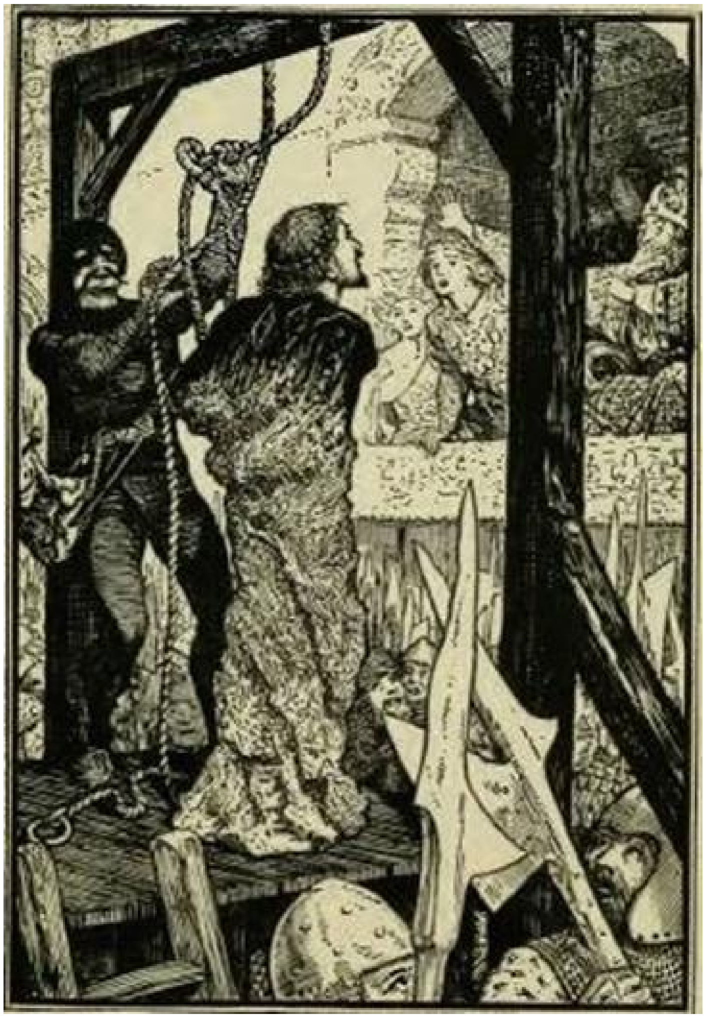

Now there lived at Court an old woman who had been the prince’s nurse. To her he confided all his plans, and left his wife, the princess, in her care. ‘You have a long way before you, my son,’ said the old woman; ‘you must never return till you have met with Lucky Luck. If he cannot help you no one on earth can.’

So the prince set off to try to find Lucky Luck. He walked and walked till he got beyond his own country, and he wandered through a wood for three days but did not meet a living being in it. At the end of the third day he came to a river near which stood a large mill. Here he spent the night. When he was leaving next morning the miller asked him: ‘My gracious lord, where are you going all alone?’

And the prince told him.

‘Then I beg your Highness to ask Lucky Luck this question: Why is it that though I have an excellent mill, with all its machinery complete, and get plenty of grain to grind, I am so poor that I hardly know how to live from one day to another?’

The prince promised to inquire, and went on his way. He wandered about for three days more, and at the end of the third day saw a little town. It was quite late when he reached it, but he could discover no light anywhere, and walked almost right through it without finding a house where he could turn in. But far away at the end of the town he saw a light in a window. He went straight to it and in the house were three girls playing a game together. The prince asked for a night's lodging and they took him in, gave him some supper and got a room ready for him, where he slept.

Next morning when he was leaving they asked where he was going and he told them his story. 'Gracious prince,' said the maidens, 'do ask Lucky Luck how it happens that here we are over thirty years old and no lover has come to woo us, though we are good, pretty, and very industrious.'

The prince promised to inquire, and went on his way.

Then he came to a great forest and wandered about in it from morning to night and from night to morning before he got near the other end. Here he found a pretty stream which was different from other streams as, instead of flowing, it stood still and began to talk: 'Sir prince, tell me what brings you into these wilds? I must have been flowing here a hundred years and more and no one has ever yet come by.'

'I will tell you,' answered the prince, 'if you will divide yourself so that I may walk through.'

The stream parted at once, and the prince walked through without wetting his feet; and directly he got to the other side he told his story as he had promised.

'Oh, do ask Lucky Luck,' cried the brook, 'why, though I am such a clear, bright, rapid stream I never have a fish or any other living creature in my waters.'

The prince said he would do so, and continued his journey.

When he got quite clear of the forest he walked on through a lovely valley till he reached a little house thatched with rushes, and he went in to rest for he was very tired.

Everything in the house was beautifully clean and tidy, and a cheerful honest-looking old woman was sitting by the fire.

'Good-morning, mother,' said the prince.

'May Luck be with you, my son. What brings you into these parts?'

'I am looking for Lucky Luck,' replied the prince.

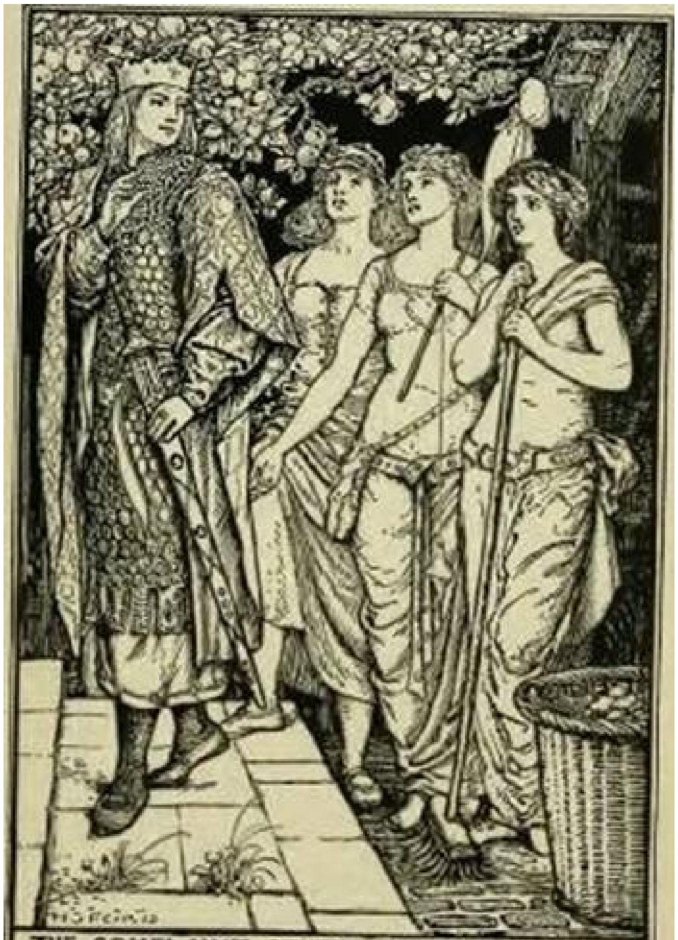

THE COMPLAINT OF THE THREE MAIDENS

‘Then you have come to the right place, my son, for I am his mother. He is not at home just now, he is out digging in the vineyard. Do you go too. Here are two spades. When you find him begin to dig, but don’t speak a word to him. It is now eleven o’clock. When he sits down to eat his dinner sit beside him and eat with him. After dinner he will question you, and then tell him all your troubles freely. He will answer whatever you may ask.’

THE SHIP ARRIVES

With that she showed him the way, and the prince went and did just as she had told him. After dinner they lay down to rest.

All of a sudden Lucky Luck began to speak and said: ‘Tell me, what sort of man are you, for since you came here you have not spoken a word?’

‘I am not dumb,’ replied the young man, ‘but I am that unhappy prince whose faithful servant has been turned to stone, and I want to know how to help him.’

‘And you do well, for he deserves everything. Go back, and when you get home your wife will just have had a little boy. Take three drops of blood from the child’s little finger, rub them on your servant’s wrists with a blade of grass and he will return to life.’

‘I have another thing to ask,’ said the prince, when he had thanked him. ‘In the forest near here is a fine stream but not a fish or other living creature in it. Why is this?’

‘Because no one has ever been drowned in the stream. But take care, in crossing, to get as near the other side as you can before you say so, or you may be the first victim yourself.’

‘Another question, please, before I go. On my way here I lodged one night in the house of three maidens. All were well-mannered, hard-working, and pretty, and yet none has had a wooer. Why was this?’

‘Because they always throw out their sweepings in the face of the sun.’

‘And why is it that a miller, who has a large mill with all the best machinery and gets plenty of corn to grind is so poor that he can hardly live from day to day?’

‘Because the miller keeps everything for himself, and does not give to those who need it.’

The prince wrote down the answers to his questions, took a friendly leave of Lucky Luck, and set off for home.

When he reached the stream it asked if he brought it any good news. ‘When I get across I will tell you,’ said he. So the stream parted; he walked through and on to the highest part of the bank. He stopped and shouted out:

‘Listen, oh stream! Lucky Luck says you will never have any living creature in your waters until someone is drowned in you.’

The words were hardly out of his mouth when the stream swelled and overflowed till it reached the rock up which he had climbed, and dashed so far up it that the spray flew over him. But he clung on tight, and after failing to reach him three times the stream returned to its proper course. Then the prince climbed down, dried himself in the sun, and set out on his march home.

He spent the night once more at the mill and gave the miller his answer, and by-and-by he told the three sisters not to throw out all their sweepings in the face of the sun.

The prince had hardly arrived at home when some thieves tried to ford the stream with a fine horse they had stolen. When they were half-way across, the stream rose so suddenly that it swept them all away. From that time it became the best fishing stream in the country-side.

The miller, too, began to give alms and became a very good man, and in time grew so rich that he hardly knew how much he had.

And the three sisters, now that they no longer insulted the sun, had each a wooer within a week.

When the prince got home he found that his wife had just got a fine little boy. He did not lose a moment in pricking the baby’s finger till the blood ran, and he brushed it on the wrists of the stone figure, which shuddered all over and split with a loud noise in seven parts and there was the faithful servant alive and well.

When the old king saw this he foamed with rage, stared wildly about, flung himself on the ground and died.

The servant stayed on with his royal master and served him faithfully all the rest of his life; and, if neither of them is dead, he is serving him still.

The Hairy Man

Somewhere or other, but I don’t know where, there lived a king who owned two remarkably fine fields of rape, but every night two of the rape heaps were burnt down in one of the fields. The king was extremely angry at this, and sent out soldiers to catch whoever had set fire to the ricks; but it was all of no use — not a soul could they see. Then he offered nine hundred crowns to anyone who caught the evil-doer, and at the same time ordered that whoever did not keep proper watch over the fields should be killed; but though there were a great many people, none seemed able to protect the fields.

The king had already put ninety-nine people to death, when a little swineherd came to him who had two dogs; one was called ‘Psst,’ and the other ‘Hush’; and the boy told the king that he would watch over the ricks.

When it grew dark he climbed up on the top of the fourth rick, from where he could see the whole field. About eleven o’clock he thought he saw someone going to a rick and putting a light to it. ‘Just you wait,’ thought he, and called out to his dogs: ‘Hi! Psst, Hush, catch him!’ But Psst and Hush had not waited for orders, and in five minutes the man was caught.

Next morning he was brought bound before the king, who was so pleased with the boy that he gave him a thousand crowns at once. The prisoner was all covered with hair, almost like an animal; and altogether he was so curious to look at that the king locked him up in a strong room and sent out letters of invitation to all the other kings and princes asking them to come and see this wonder.

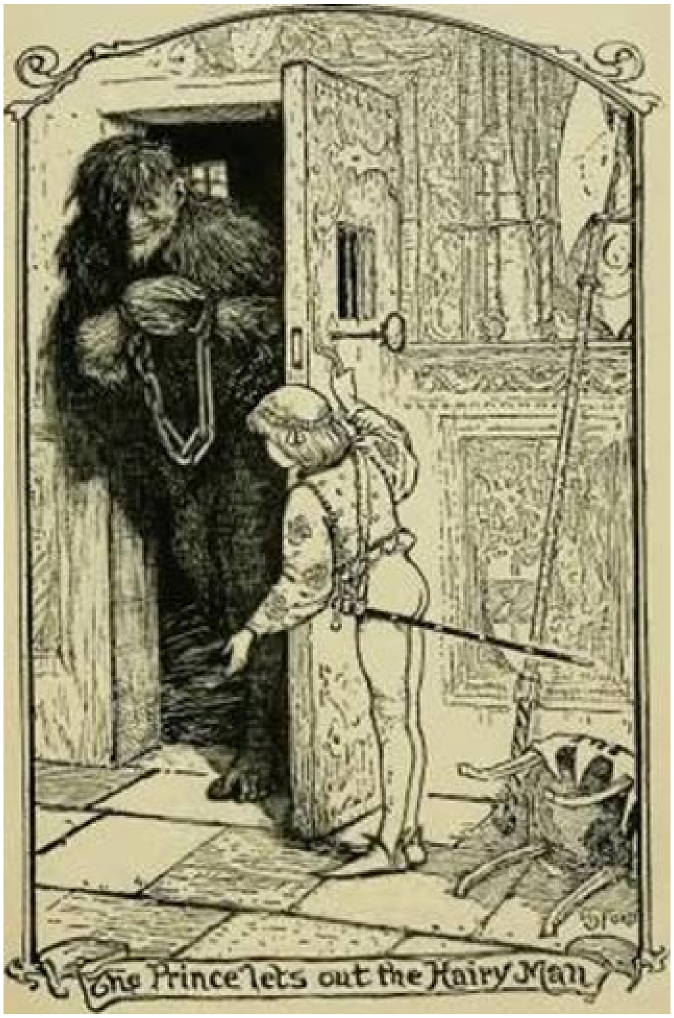
The Prince lets out the Hairy Man

That was all very well; but the king had a little boy of ten years old who went to look at the hairy man also, and the man begged so hard to be set free that the boy took pity on him. He stole the key of the strong room from his mother and opened the door. Then he took the key back, but the hairy man escaped and went off into the world.

Then the kings and princes began to arrive one after another, and all were most anxious to see the hairy man; but he was gone! The king nearly burst with rage and with the shame he felt. He questioned his wife sharply, and told her that if she could not find and bring back the hairy man he would put her in a hut made of rushes and burn her there. The queen declared she had had nothing to do with the matter; if her son had happened to take the key it had not been with her knowledge.

So they fetched the little prince and asked him all sorts of questions, and at last he owned that he had let the hairy man out. The king ordered his servants to take the boy into the forest and to kill him there, and to bring back part of his liver and lungs.

There was grief all over the palace when the king’s command was known, for he was a great favourite. But there was no help for it, and they took the boy out into the forest. But the man was sorry for him, and shot a dog and carried pieces of his lungs and liver to the king, who was satisfied, and did not trouble himself any more.

The prince wandered about in the forest and lived as best he could for five years. One day he came upon a poor little cottage in which was an old man. They began to talk, and the prince told his story and sad fate. Then they recognised each other, for the old fellow was no other than the hairy man whom the prince had set free, and who had lived ever since in the forest.

The prince stayed here for two years; then he wished to go further. The old man begged him hard to stay, but he would not, so his hairy friend gave him a golden apple out of which came a horse with a golden mane, and a golden staff with which to guide the horse. The old man also gave him a silver apple out of which came the most beautiful hussars and a silver staff; and a copper apple from which he could draw as many foot soldiers as ever he wished, and a copper staff. He made the prince swear solemnly to take the greatest care of these presents, and then he let him go.

The boy wandered on and on till he came to a large town. Here he took service in the king’s palace, and as no one troubled themselves about him he lived quietly on.

One day news was brought to the king that he must go out to war. He was horribly frightened for he had a very small army, but he had to go all the same.

When they had all left, the prince said to the housekeeper:

‘Give me leave to go to the next village — I owe a small bill there, and I want to go and pay it’; and as there was nothing to be done in the palace the housekeeper gave him leave.

When he got beyond the town he took out his golden apple, and when the horse sprang out he swung himself into the saddle. Then he took the silver and the copper apples, and with all these fine soldiers he joined the king’s army.

The king saw them approach with fear in his heart, for he did not know if it might not be an enemy; but the prince rode up, and bowed low before him. ‘I bring your Majesty reinforcements,’ said he.

The king was delighted, and all dread of his enemy at once disappeared. The princesses were there too, and they were very friendly with the prince and begged him to get into their carriage so as to talk to them. But he declined, and remained on horseback, as he did not know at what moment the battle might begin; and whilst they were all talking together the youngest princess, who was also the loveliest, took off her ring, and her sister tore her handkerchief in two pieces, and they gave these gifts to the prince.

Suddenly the enemy came in sight. The king asked whether his army or the prince's should lead the way; but the prince set off first and with his hussars he fought so bravely that only two of the enemy were left alive, and these two were only spared to act as messengers.

The king was overjoyed and so were his daughters at this brilliant victory. As they drove home they begged the prince to join them, but he would not come, and galloped off with his hussars.

When he got near the town he packed his soldiers and his fine horse all carefully into the apple again, and then strolled into the town. On his return to the palace he was well scolded by the housekeeper for staying away so long.

Well, the whole matter might have ended there; but it so happened that the younger princess had fallen in love with the prince, as he had with her. And as he had no jewels with him, he gave her the copper apple and staff.

One day, as the princesses were talking with their father, the younger one asked him whether it might not have been their servant who had helped him so much. The king was quite angry at the idea; but, to satisfy her, he ordered the servant's room to be searched. And there, to everyone's surprise, they found the golden ring and the half of the handkerchief. When these were brought to the king he sent for the prince at once and asked if it had been he who had come to their rescue.

'Yes, your Majesty, it was I,' answered the prince.

'But where did you get your army?'

'If you wish to see it, I can show it you outside the city walls.'

And so he did; but first he asked for the copper apple from the younger princess, and when all the soldiers were drawn up there were such numbers that there was barely room for them.

The king gave him his daughter and kingdom as a reward for his aid, and when he heard that the prince was himself a king's son his joy knew no bounds. The prince packed all his soldiers carefully up once more, and they went back into the town.

Not long after there was a grand wedding; perhaps they may all be alive still, but I don't know.

To Your Good Health!

Long, long ago there lived a king who was such a mighty monarch that whenever he sneezed every one in the whole country had to say ‘To your good health!’ Every one said it except the shepherd with the staring eyes, and he would not say it.

The king heard of this and was very angry, and sent for the shepherd to appear before him.

The shepherd came and stood before the throne, where the king sat looking very grand and powerful. But however grand or powerful he might be the shepherd did not feel a bit afraid of him.

‘Say at once, “To my good health!”’ cried the king.

‘To my good health!’ replied the shepherd.

‘To mine — to mine, you rascal, you vagabond!’ stormed the king.

‘To mine, to mine, your Majesty,’ was the answer.

‘But to mine — to my own,’ roared the king, and beat on his breast in a rage.

‘Well, yes; to mine, of course, to my own,’ cried the shepherd, and gently tapped his breast.

The king was beside himself with fury and did not know what to do, when the Lord Chamberlain interfered: ‘Say at once — say this very moment: “To your health, your Majesty”; for if you don’t say it you’ll lose your life, whispered he.

‘No, I won’t say it till I get the princess for my wife,’ was the shepherd’s answer. Now the princess was sitting on a little throne beside the king, her father, and she looked as sweet and lovely as a little golden dove. When she heard what the shepherd said she could not help laughing, for there is no denying the fact that this young shepherd with the staring eyes pleased her very much; indeed he pleased her better than any king’s son she had yet seen.

But the king was not as pleasant as his daughter, and he gave orders to throw the shepherd into the white bear’s pit.

The guards led him away and thrust him into the pit with the white bear, who had had nothing to eat for two days and was very hungry. The door of the pit was hardly closed when the bear rushed at the shepherd; but when it saw his eyes it was so frightened that it was ready to eat itself. It shrank away into a corner and gazed at him from there, and, in spite of being so famished, did not dare to touch him, but sucked its own paws from sheer hunger. The shepherd felt that if he once removed his eyes off the beast he was a dead man, and in order to keep himself awake he made songs and sang them, and so the night went by.

Next morning the Lord Chamberlain came to see the shepherd’s bones, and was amazed to find him alive and well. He led him to the king, who fell into a furious passion, and said: ‘Well, you have learned what it is to be very near death, and now will you say “To my good health”?’

But the shepherd answered: ‘I am not afraid of ten deaths! I will only say it if I may have the princess for my wife.’

‘Then go to your death,’ cried the king; and ordered him to be thrown into the den with the wild boars. The wild boars had not been fed for a week, and when the shepherd was thrust into their don they rushed at him to tear him to pieces. But the shepherd took a little flute out of the sleeve of his jacket and began to play a merry tune, on which the wild boars first of all shrank shyly away, and then got up on their hind legs and danced gaily. The shepherd would have given anything to be able to laugh, they looked so funny; but he dared not stop playing, for he knew well enough that the moment he stopped they would fall upon him and tear him to pieces. His eyes were of no use to him here, for he could not have stared ten wild boars in the face at once; so he kept on playing, and the wild boars danced very slowly, as if in a minuet, then by degrees he played faster and faster till they could hardly twist and turn quickly enough, and ended by all falling over each other in a heap, quite exhausted and out of breath.

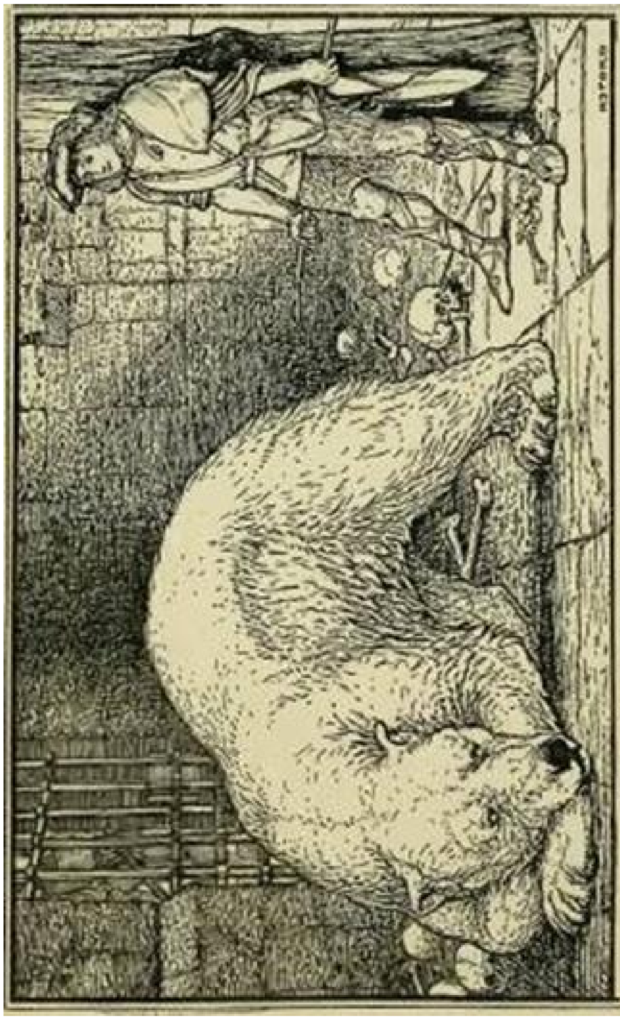

STARING-EYES IN THE WHITE BEAR'S PIT

Then the shepherd ventured to laugh at last; and he laughed so long and so loud that when the Lord Chamberlain came early in the morning, expecting to find only his bones, the tears were still running down his cheeks from laughter.

As soon as the king was dressed the shepherd was again brought before him; but he was more angry than ever to think the wild boars had not torn the man to bits, and he said: ‘Well, you have learned what it feels to be near ten deaths, now say “To my good health!”’

But the shepherd broke in with, ‘I do not fear a hundred deaths, and I will only say it if I may have the princess for my wife.’

‘Then go to a hundred deaths!’ roared the king, and ordered the shepherd to be thrown down the deep vault of scythes.

The guards dragged him away to a dark dungeon, in the middle of which was a deep well with sharp scythes all round it. At the bottom of the well was a little light by which one could see if anyone was thrown in whether he had fallen to the bottom.

When the shepherd was dragged to the dungeons he begged the guards to leave him alone a little while that he might look down into the pit of scythes; perhaps he might after all make up his mind to say ‘To your good health’ to the king. So the guards left him alone and he stuck up his long stick near the well, hung his cloak round the stick and put his hat on the top. He also hung his knapsack up inside the cloak so that it might seem to have some body within it. When this was done he called out to the guards and said that he had considered the matter but after all he could not make up his mind to say what the king wished. The guards came in, threw the hat and cloak, knapsack and stick all down the well together, watched to see how they put out the light at the bottom and came away, thinking that now there really was an end of the shepherd. But he had hidden in a dark corner and was laughing to himself all the time.

Quite early next morning came the Lord Chamberlain, carrying a lamp and he nearly fell backwards with surprise when he saw the shepherd alive and well. He brought him to the king, whose fury was greater than ever, but who cried: ‘Well, now you have been near a hundred deaths; will you say: “To your good health”?’

But the shepherd only gave the same answer:

‘I won’t say it till the princess is my wife.’

‘Perhaps after all you may do it for less,’ said the king, who saw that there was no chance of making away with the shepherd; and he ordered the state coach to be got ready, then he made the shepherd get in with him and sit beside him, and ordered the coachman to drive to the silver wood. When they reached it he said: ‘Do you see this silver wood? Well, if you will say, “To your good health,” I will give it to you.’

The shepherd turned hot and cold by turns, but he still persisted:

‘I will not say it till the princess is my wife.’

The king was much vexed; he drove further on till they came to a splendid castle, all of gold, and then he said: ‘Do you see this golden castle? Well, I will give you that too, the silver wood and the golden castle, if only you will say that one thing to me: “To your good health.”’

The shepherd gaped and wondered and was quite dazzled, but he still said:

‘No; I will not say it till I have the princess for my wife.’

This time the king was overwhelmed with grief, and gave orders to drive on to the diamond pond, and there he tried once more.

‘Do you see this diamond pond? I will give you that too, the silver wood and the golden castle and the diamond pond. You shall have them all — all — if you will but say: “To your good health!”’

The shepherd had to shut his staring eyes tight not to be dazzled with the brilliant pond, but still he said: ‘No, no; I will not say it till I have the princess for my wife.’

Then the king saw that all his efforts were useless, and that he might as well give in, so he said:

'Well, well, it's all the same to me — I will give you my daughter to wife; but, then, you really and truly must say to me: "To your good health."'

'Of course I'll say it; why should I not say it? It stands to reason that I shall say it then.'

At this the king was more delighted than anyone could have believed. He made it known all through the country that there were to be great rejoicings, as the princess was going to be married. And everyone rejoiced to think that the princess, who had refused so many royal suitors, should have ended by falling in love with the staring-eyed shepherd.

There was such a wedding as had never been seen. Everyone ate and drank and danced. Even the sick were feasted, and quite tiny new-born children had presents given them.

But the greatest merry-making was in the king's palace; there the best bands played and the best food was cooked; a crowd of people sat down to table, and all was fun and merry-making.

And when the groomsman, according to custom, brought in the great boar's head on a big dish and placed it before the king so that he might carve it and give everyone a share, the savoury smell was so strong that the king began to sneeze with all his might.

'To your very good health,' cried the shepherd before anyone else, and the king was so delighted that he did not regret having given him his daughter.

In time, when the old king died, the shepherd succeeded him. He made a very good king and never expected his people to wish him well against their wills; but, all the same, everyone did wish him well, for they all loved him.

The Story of the Seven Simons

Far, far away, beyond all sorts of countries, seas and rivers, there stood a splendid city where lived King Archidej, who was as good as he was rich and handsome. His great army was made up of men ready to obey his slightest wish; he owned forty times forty cities, and in each city he had ten palaces with silver doors, golden roofs, and crystal windows. His council consisted of the twelve wisest men in the country, whose long beards flowed down over their breasts, each of whom was as learned as a whole college. This council always told the king the exact truth.

Now the king had everything to make him happy, but he did not enjoy anything because he could not find a bride to his mind.

One day, as he sat in his palace looking out to sea, a great ship sailed into the harbour and several merchants came on shore. Said the king to himself: ‘These people have travelled far and beheld many lands. I will ask them if they have seen any princess who is as clever and as handsome as I am.’

So he ordered the merchants to be brought before him, and when they came he said: ‘You have travelled much and visited many wonders. I wish to ask you a question, and I beg you to answer truthfully.

‘Have you anywhere seen or heard of the daughter of an emperor, king, or a prince, who is as clever and as handsome as I am, and who would be worthy to be my wife and the queen of my country?’

The merchants considered for some time. At last the eldest of them said: ‘I have heard that across many seas, in the Island of Busan, there is a mighty king, whose daughter, the Princess Helena, is so lovely that she can certainly not be plainer than your Majesty, and so clever that the wisest greybeard cannot guess her riddles.’

‘Is the island far off, and which is the way to it?’

‘It is not near,’ was the answer. ‘The journey would take ten years, and we do not know the way. And even if we did, what use would that be? The princess is no bride for you.’

‘How dare you say so?’ cried the king angrily.

‘Your Majesty must pardon us; but just think for a moment. Should you send an envoy to the island he will take ten years to get there and ten more to return — twenty years in all. Will not the princess have grown old in that time and have lost all her beauty?’

The king reflected gravely. Then he thanked the merchants, gave them leave to trade in his country without paying any duties, and dismissed them.

After they were gone the king remained deep in thought. He felt puzzled and anxious; so he decided to ride into the country to distract his mind, and sent for his huntsmen and falconers. The huntsmen blew their horns, the falconers took their hawks on their wrists, and off they all set out across country till they came to a green hedge. On the other side of the hedge stretched a great field of maize as far as the eye could reach, and the yellow ears swayed to and fro in the gentle breeze like a rippling sea of gold.

The king drew rein and admired the field. ‘Upon my word,’ said he, ‘whoever dug and planted it must be good workmen. If all the fields in my kingdom were as well cared for as this, there would be more bread than my people could eat.’ And he wished to know to whom the field belonged.

Off rushed all his followers at once to do his bidding, and found a nice, tidy farmhouse, in front of which sat seven peasants, lunching on rye bread and drinking water. They wore red shirts bound with gold braid, and were so much alike that one could hardly tell one from another.

The messengers asked: ‘Who owns this field of golden maize?’ And the seven brothers answered: ‘The field is ours.’

‘And who are you?’

‘We are King Archidej’s labourers.’

These answers were repeated to the king, who ordered the brothers to be brought before him at once. On being asked who they were, the eldest said, bowing low:

‘We, King Archidej, are your labourers, children of one father and mother, and we all have the same name, for each of us is called Simon. Our father taught us to be true to our king, and to till the ground, and to be kind to our neighbours. He also taught each of us a different trade which he thought might be useful to us, and he bade us not neglect our mother earth, which would be sure amply to repay our labour.’

The king was pleased with the honest peasant, and said: ‘You have done well, good people, in planting your field, and now you have a golden harvest. But I should like each of you to tell me what special trades your father taught you.’

‘My trade, O king!’ said the first Simon, ‘is not an easy one. If you will give me some workmen and materials I will build you a great white pillar that shall reach far above the clouds.’

‘Very good,’ replied the king. ‘And you, Simon the second, what is your trade?’

‘Mine, your Majesty, needs no great cleverness. When my brother has built the pillar I can mount it, and from the top, far above the clouds, I can see what is happening: in every country under the sun.’

‘Good,’ said the king; ‘and Simon the third?’

‘My work is very simple, sire. You have many ships built by learned men, with all sorts of new and clever improvements. If you wish it I will build you quite a simple boat — one, two, three, and it’s done! But my plain little home-made ship is not grand enough for a king. Where other ships take a year, mine makes the voyage in a day, and where they would require ten years mine will do the distance in a week.’

‘Good,’ said the king again; ‘and what has Simon the fourth learnt?’

‘My trade, O king, is really of no importance. Should my brother build you a ship, then let me embark in it. If we should be pursued by an enemy I can seize our boat by the prow and sink it to the bottom of the sea. When the enemy has sailed off, I can draw it up to the top again.’

‘That is very clever of you,’ answered the king; ‘and what does Simon the fifth do?’

‘My work, your Majesty, is mere smith’s work. Order me to build a smithy and I will make you a cross-bow, but from which neither the eagle in the sky nor the wild beast in the forest is safe. The bolt hits whatever the eye sees.’

‘That sounds very useful,’ said the king. ‘And now, Simon the sixth, tell me your trade.’

‘Sire, it is so simple I am almost ashamed to mention it. If my brother hits any creature I catch it quicker than any dog can. If it falls into the water I pick it up out of the greatest depths, and if it is in a dark forest I can find it even at midnight.’

The king was much pleased with the trades and talk of the six brothers, and said: ‘Thank you, good people; your father did well to teach you all these things. Now follow me to the town, as I want to see what you can do. I need such people as you about me; but when harvest time comes I will send you home with royal presents.’

The brothers bowed and said: ‘As the king wills.’ Suddenly the king remembered that he had not questioned the seventh Simon, so he turned to him and said: ‘Why are you silent? What is your handicraft?’

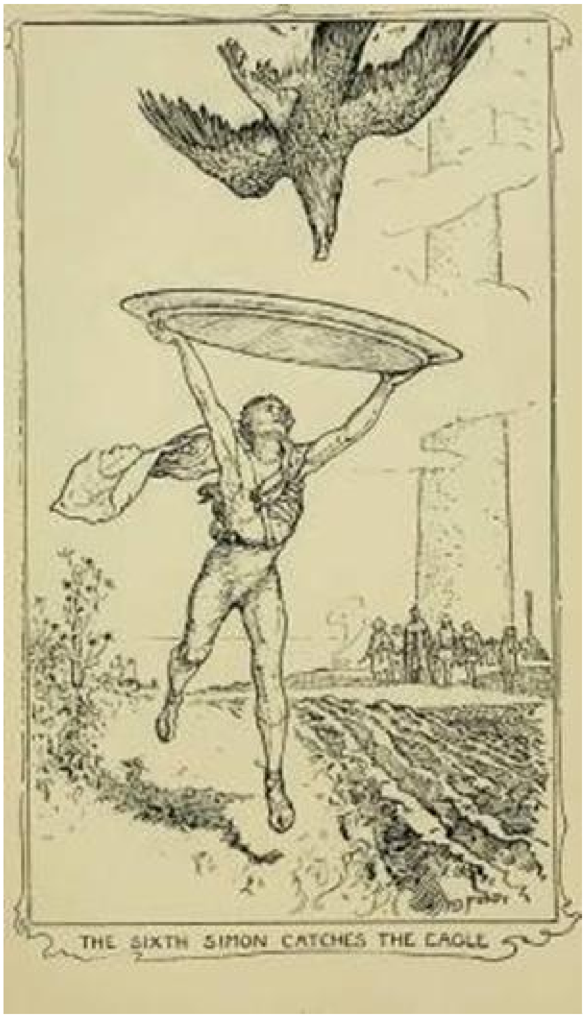

THE SIXTH SIMON CATCHES THE EAGLE

And the seventh Simon answered: ‘I have no handicraft, O king; I have learnt nothing. I could not manage it. And if I do know how to do anything it is not what might properly be called a real trade — it is rather a sort of performance; but it is one which no one — not the king himself — must watch me doing, and I doubt whether this performance of mine would please your Majesty.’

‘Come, come,’ cried the king; ‘I will have no excuses, what is this trade?’

‘First, sire, give me your royal word that you will not kill me when I have told you. Then you shall hear.’

‘So be it, then; I give you my royal word.’

Then the seventh Simon stepped back a little, cleared his throat, and said: ‘My trade, King Archidej, is of such a kind that the man who follows it in your kingdom generally loses his life and has no hopes of pardon. There is only one thing I can do really well, and that is — to steal, and to hide the smallest scrap of anything I have stolen. Not the deepest vault, even if its lock were enchanted, could prevent my stealing anything out of it that I wished to have.’

When the king heard this he fell into a passion. ‘I will not pardon you, you rascal,’ he cried; ‘I will shut you up in my deepest dungeon on bread and water till you have forgotten such a trade. Indeed, it would be better to put you to death at once, and I’ve a good mind to do so.’

‘Don’t kill me, O king! I am really not as bad as you think. Why, had I chosen, I could have robbed the royal treasury, have bribed your judges to let me off, and built a white marble palace with what was left. But though I know how to steal I don’t do it. You yourself asked me my trade. If you kill me you will break your royal word.’

‘Very well,’ said the king, ‘I will not kill you. I pardon you. But from this hour you shall be shut up in a dark dungeon. Here, guards! away with him to the prison. But you six Simons follow me and be assured of my royal favour.’

So the six Simons followed the king. The seventh Simon was seized by the guards, who put him in chains and threw him in prison with only bread and water for food. Next day the king gave the first Simon carpenters, masons, smiths and labourers, with great stores of iron, mortar, and the like, and Simon began to build. And he built his great white pillar far, far up into the clouds, as high as the nearest stars; but the other stars were higher still.

Then the second Simon climbed up the pillar and saw and heard all that was going on through the whole world. When he came down he had all sorts of wonderful things to tell. How one king was marching in battle against another, and which was likely to be the victor. How, in another place, great rejoicings were going on, while in a third people were dying of famine. In fact there was not the smallest event going on over the earth that was hidden from him.

Next the third Simon began. He stretched out his arms, once, twice, thrice, and the wonder-ship was ready. At a sign from the king it was launched, and floated proudly and safely like a bird on the waves. Instead of ropes it had wires for rigging, and musicians played on them with fiddle bows and made lovely music. As the ship swam about, the fourth Simon seized the prow with his strong hand, and in a moment it was gone — sunk to the bottom of the sea. An hour passed, and then the ship floated again, drawn up by Simon’s left hand, while in his right he brought a gigantic fish from the depth of the ocean for the royal table.

Whilst this was going on the fifth Simon had built his forge and hammered out his iron, and when the king returned from the harbour the magic cross-bow was made.

His Majesty went out into an open field at once, looked up into the sky and saw, far, far away, an eagle flying up towards the sun and looking like a little speck.

‘Now,’ said the king, ‘if you can shoot that bird I will reward you.’

Simon only smiled; he lifted his cross-bow, took aim, fired, and the eagle fell. As it was falling the sixth Simon ran with a dish, caught the bird before it fell to earth and brought it to the king.

‘Many thanks, my brave lads,’ said the king; ‘I see that each of you is indeed a master of his trade. You shall be richly rewarded. But now rest and have your dinner.’

The six Simons bowed and went to dinner. But they had hardly begun before a messenger came to say that the king wanted to see them. They obeyed at once and found him surrounded by all his court and men of state.

‘Listen, my good fellows,’ cried the king, as soon as he saw them. ‘Hear what my wise counsellors have thought of. As you, Simon the second, can see the whole world from the top of the great pillar, I want you to climb up and to see and hear. For I am told that, far away, across many seas, is the great kingdom of the Island of Busan, and that the daughter of the king is the beautiful Princess Helena.’

Off ran the second Simon and clambered quickly up the pillar. He gazed around, listened on all sides, and then slid down to report to the king.

‘Sire, I have obeyed your orders. Far away I saw the Island of Busan. The king is a mighty monarch, but full of pride, harsh and cruel. He sits on his throne and declares that no prince or king on earth is good enough for his lovely daughter, that he will give her to none, and that if any king asks for her hand he will declare war against him and destroy his kingdom.’

‘Has the king of Busan a great army?’ asked King Archidej; ‘is his country far off?’

‘As far as I could judge,’ replied Simon, ‘it would take you nearly ten years in fair weather to sail there. But if the weather were stormy we might say twelve. I saw the army being reviewed. It is not so very large — a hundred thousand men at arms and a hundred thousand knights. Besides these, he has a strong bodyguard and a good many cross-bowmen. Altogether you may say another hundred thousand, and there is a picked body of heroes who reserve themselves for great occasions requiring particular courage.’

The king sat for some time lost in thought. At last he said to the nobles and courtiers standing round: ‘I am determined to marry the Princess Helena, but how shall I do it?’

The nobles, courtiers and counsellors said nothing, but tried to hide behind each other. Then the third Simon said:

‘Pardon me, your Majesty, if I offer my advice. You wish to go to the Island of Busan? What can be easier? In my ship you will get there in a week instead of in ten years. But ask your council to advise you what to do when you arrive — in one word, whether you will win the princess peacefully or by war?’

But the wise men were as silent as ever.

The king frowned, and was about to say something sharp, when the Court Fool pushed his way to the front and said: ‘Dear me, what are all you clever people so puzzled about? The matter is quite clear. As it seems it will not take long to reach the island why not send the seventh Simon? He will steal the fair maiden fast enough, and then the king, her father, may consider how he is going to bring his army over here — it will take him ten years to do it! — no less! What do you think of my plan?’

‘What do I think? Why, that your idea is capital, and you shall be rewarded for it. Come, guards, hurry as fast as you can and bring the seventh Simon before me.’

Not many minutes later, Simon the seventh stood before the king, who explained to him what he wished done, and also that to steal for the benefit of his king and country was by no means a wrong thing, though it was very wrong to steal for his own advantage.

The youngest Simon, who looked very pale and hungry, only nodded his head.

‘Come,’ said the king, ‘tell me truly. Do you think you could steal the Princess Helena?’

‘Why should I not steal her, sire? The thing is easy enough. Let my brother’s ship be laden with rich stuffs, brocades, Persian carpets, pearls and jewels. Send me in the ship. Give me my four middle brothers as companions, and keep the two others as hostages.’

When the king heard these words his heart became filled with longing, and he ordered all to be done as Simon wished. Every one ran about to do his bidding; and in next to no time the wonder-ship was laden and ready to start.

The five Simons took leave of the king, went on board, and had no sooner set sail than they were almost out of sight. The ship cut through the waters like a falcon through the air, and just a week after starting sighted the Island of Busan. The coast appeared to be strongly guarded, and from afar the watchman on a high tower called out: ‘Halt and anchor! Who are you? Where do you come from, and what do you want?’

The seventh Simon answered from the ship: ‘We are peaceful people. We come from the country of the great and good King Archidej, and we bring foreign wares — rich brocades, carpets, and costly jewels, which we wish to show to your king and the princess. We desire to trade — to sell, to buy, and to exchange.’

The brothers launched a small boat, took some of their valuable goods with them, rowed to shore and went up to the palace. The princess sat in a rose-red room, and when she saw the brothers coming near she called her nurse and other women, and told them to inquire who and what these people were, and what they wanted.

The seventh Simon answered the nurse: ‘We come from the country of the wise and good King Archidej,’ said he, ‘and we have brought all sorts of goods for sale. We trust the king of this country may condescend to welcome us, and to let his servants take charge of our wares. If he considers them worthy to adorn his followers we shall be content.’

This speech was repeated to the princess, who ordered the brothers to be brought to the red-room at once. They bowed respectfully to her and displayed some splendid velvets and brocades, and opened cases of pearls and precious stones. Such beautiful things had never been seen in the island, and the nurse and waiting women stood bewildered by all the magnificence. They whispered together that they had never beheld anything like it. The princess too saw and wondered, and her eyes could not weary of looking at the lovely things, or her fingers of stroking the rich soft stuffs, and of holding up the sparkling jewels to the light.

‘Fairest of princesses,’ said Simon. ‘Be pleased to order your waiting-maids to accept the silks and velvets, and let your women trim their head-dresses with the jewels; these are no special treasures. But permit me to say that they are as nothing to the many coloured tapestries, the gorgeous stones and ropes of pearls in our ship. We did not like to bring more with us, not knowing what your royal taste might be; but if it seems good to you to honour our ship with a visit, you might condescend to choose such things as were pleasing in your eyes.’

This polite speech pleased the princess very much. She went to the king and said: ‘Dear father, some merchants have arrived with the most splendid wares. Pray allow me to go to their ship and choose out what I like.’

The king thought and thought, frowned hard and rubbed his ear. At last he gave consent, and ordered out his royal yacht, with 100 cross-bows, 100 knights, and 1,000 soldiers, to escort the Princess Helena.

Off sailed the yacht with the princess and her escort. The brothers Simon came on board to conduct the princess to their ship, and, led by the brothers and followed by her nurse and other women, she crossed the crystal plank from one vessel to another.

The seventh Simon spread out his goods, and had so many curious and interesting tales to tell about them, that the princess forgot everything else in looking and listening, so that she did not know that the fourth Simon had seized the prow of the ship, and that all of a sudden it had vanished from sight, and was racing along in the depths of the sea.

The crew of the royal yacht shouted aloud, the knights stood still with terror, the soldiers were struck dumb and hung their heads. There was nothing to be done but to sail back and tell the king of his loss.

How he wept and stormed! ‘Oh, light of my eyes,’ he sobbed; ‘I am indeed punished for my pride. I thought no one good enough to be your husband, and now you are lost in the depths of the sea, and have left me alone! As for all of you who saw this thing — away with you! Let them be put in irons and lock them up in prison, whilst I think how I can best put them to death!’

Whilst the King of Busan was raging and lamenting in this fashion, Simon’s ship was swimming like any fish under the sea, and when the island was well out of sight he brought it up to the surface again. At that moment the princess recollected herself. ‘Nurse,’ said she, ‘we have been gazing at these wonders only too long. I hope my father won’t be vexed at our delay.’

She tore herself away and stepped on deck. Neither the yacht nor the island was in sight! Helena wrung her hands and beat her breast. Then she changed herself into a white swan and flew off. But the fifth Simon seized his bow and shot the swan, and the sixth Simon did not let it fall into the water but caught it in the ship, and the swan turned into a silver fish, but Simon lost no time and caught the fish, when, quick as thought, the fish turned into a black mouse and ran about the ship. It darted towards a hole, but before it could reach it Simon sprang upon it more swiftly than any cat, and then the little mouse turned once more into the beautiful Princess Helena.

Early one morning King Archidej sat thoughtfully at his window gazing out to sea. His heart was sad and he would neither eat nor drink. His thoughts were full of the Princess Helena, who was as lovely as a dream. Is that a white gull he sees flying towards the shore, or is it a sail? No, it is no gull, it is the wonder-ship flying along with billowing sails. Its flags wave, the fiddlers play on the wire rigging, the anchor is thrown out and the crystal plank laid from the ship to the pier. The lovely Helena steps across the plank. She shines like the sun, and the stars of heaven seem to sparkle in her eyes.

Up sprang King Archidej in haste: ‘Hurry, hurry,’ he cried. ‘Let us hasten to meet her! Let the bugles sound and the joy bells be rung!’

And the whole Court swarmed with courtiers and servants. Golden carpets were laid down and the great gates thrown open to welcome the princess.

King Archidej went out himself, took her by the hand and led her into the royal apartments.

‘Madam,’ said he, ‘the fame of your beauty had reached me, but I had not dared to expect such loveliness. Still I will not keep you here against your will. If you wish it, the wonder-ship shall take you back to your father and your own country; but if you will consent to stay here, then reign over me and my country as our queen.’

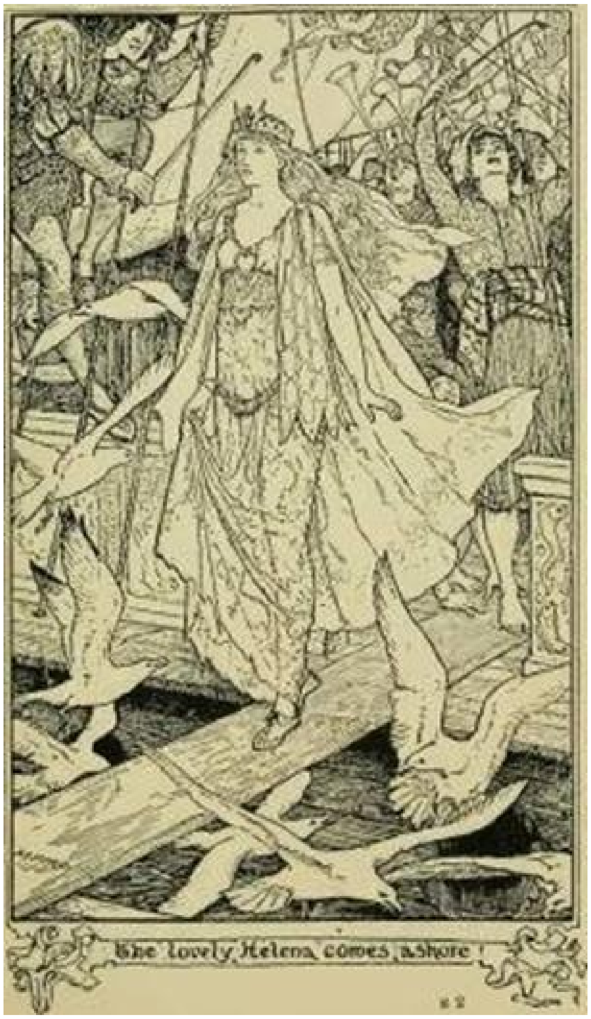
The lovely Helena comes ashore

What more is there to tell? It is not hard to guess that the princess listened to the king’s wooing, and their betrothal took place with great pomp and rejoicings.

The brothers Simon were sent again to the Island of Busan with a letter to the king from his daughter to invite him to their wedding. And the wonder-ship arrived at the Island of Busan just as all the knights and soldiers who had escorted the princess were being led out to execution.

Then the seventh Simon cried out from the ship: ‘Stop! stop! I bring a letter from the Princess Helena!’

The King of Busan read the letter over and over again, and ordered the knights and soldiers to be set free. He entertained King Archidej’s ambassadors hospitably, and sent his blessing to his daughter, but he could not be brought to attend the wedding.

When the wonder-ship got home King Archidej and Princess Helena were enchanted with the news it brought.

The king sent for the seven Simons. ‘A thousand thanks to you, my brave fellows,’ he cried. ‘Take what gold, silver, and precious stones you will out of my treasury. Tell me if there is anything else you wish for and I will give it you, my good friends. Do you wish to be made nobles, or to govern towns? Only speak.’

Then the eldest Simon bowed and said: ‘We are plain folk, your Majesty, and understand simple things best. What figures should we cut as nobles or governors? Nor do we desire gold. We have our fields which give us food, and as much money as we need. If you wish to reward us then grant that our land may be free of taxes, and of your goodness pardon the seventh Simon. He is not the first who has been a thief by trade and he will certainly not be the last.’

‘So be it,’ said the king; ‘your land shall be free of all taxes, and Simon the seventh is pardoned.’

Then the king gave each brother a goblet of wine and invited them to the wedding feast. And what a feast that was!

The Language of Beasts

Once upon a time a man had a shepherd who served him many years faithfully and honestly. One day, whilst herding his flock, this shepherd heard a hissing sound, coming out of the forest near by, which he could not account for. So he went into the wood in the direction of the noise to try to discover the cause. When he approached the place he found that the dry grass and leaves were on fire, and on a tree, surrounded by flames, a snake was coiled, hissing with terror.

The shepherd stood wondering how the poor snake could escape, for the wind was blowing the flames that way, and soon that tree would be burning like the rest. Suddenly the snake cried: ‘O shepherd! for the love of heaven save me from this fire!’

Then the shepherd stretched his staff out over the flames and the snake wound itself round the staff and up to his hand, and from his hand it crept up his arm, and twined itself about his neck. The shepherd trembled with fright, expecting every instant to be stung to death, and said: ‘What an unlucky man I am! Did I rescue you only to be destroyed myself?’ But the snake answered: ‘Have no fear; only carry me home to my father who is the King of the Snakes.’ The shepherd, however, was much too frightened to listen, and said that he could not go away and leave his flock alone; but the snake said: ‘You need not be afraid to leave your flock, no evil shall befall them; but make all the haste you can.’

So he set off through the wood carrying the snake, and after a time he came to a great gateway, made entirely of snakes intertwined one with another. The shepherd stood still with surprise, but the snake round his neck whistled, and immediately all the arch unwound itself.

‘When we are come to my father’s house,’ said his own snake to him, ‘he will reward you with anything you like to ask — silver, gold, jewels, or whatever on this earth is most precious; but take none of all these things, ask rather to understand the language of beasts. He will refuse it to you a long time, but in the end he will grant it to you.’

Soon after that they arrived at the house of the King of the Snakes, who burst into tears of joy at the sight of his daughter, as he had given her up for dead. ‘Where have you been all this time?’ he asked, directly he could speak, and she told him that she had been caught in a forest fire, and had been rescued from the flames by the shepherd. The King of the Snakes, then turning to the shepherd, said to him: ‘What reward will you choose for saving my child?’

‘Make me to know the language of beasts,’ answered the shepherd, ‘that is all I desire.’

The king replied: ‘Such knowledge would be of no benefit to you, for if I granted it to you and you told any one of it, you would immediately die; ask me rather for whatever else you would most like to possess, and it shall be yours.’

But the shepherd answered him: ‘Sir, if you wish to reward me for saving your daughter, grant me, I pray you, to know the language of beasts. I desire nothing else’; and he turned as if to depart.

Then the king called him back, saying: ‘If nothing else will satisfy you, open your mouth.’ The man obeyed, and the king spat into it, and said: ‘Now spit into my mouth.’ The shepherd did as he was told, then the King of the Snakes spat again into the shepherd’s mouth. When they had spat into each other’s mouths three times, the king said:

‘Now you know the language of beasts, go in peace; but, if you value your life, beware lest you tell any one of it, else you will immediately die.’

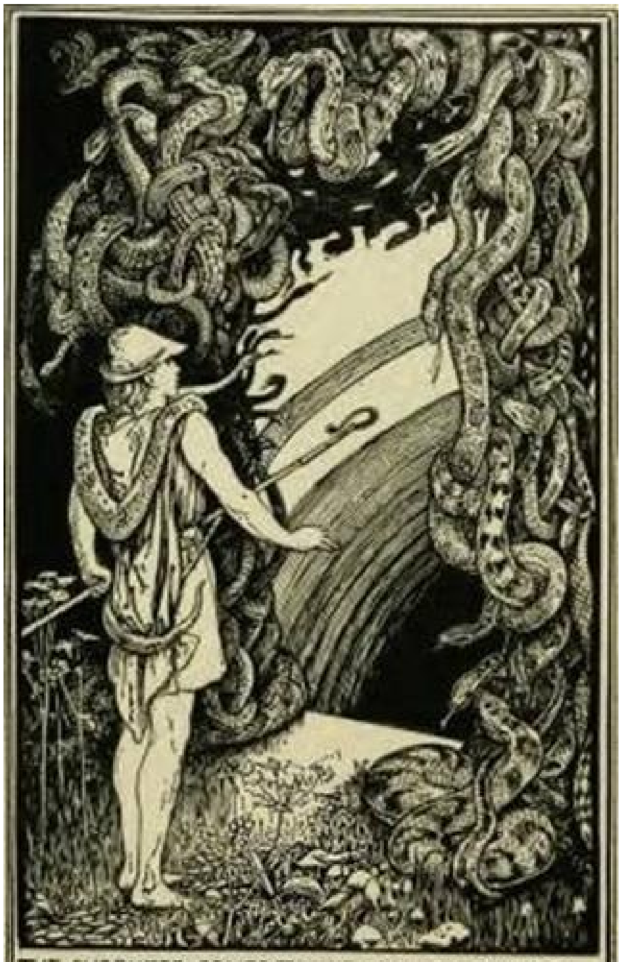

THE SHEPHERD COMES TO THE ARCH OF SNAKES

So the shepherd set out for home, and on his way through the wood he heard and understood all that was said by the birds, and by every living creature. When he got back to his sheep he found the flock grazing peacefully, and as he was very tired he laid himself down by them to rest a little. Hardly had he done so when two ravens flew down and perched on a tree near by, and began to talk to each other in their own language: ‘If that shepherd only knew that there is a vault full of gold and silver beneath where that lamb is lying, what would he not do?’ When the shepherd heard these words he went straight to his master and told him, and the master at once took a waggon, and broke open the door of the vault, and they carried off the treasure. But instead of keeping it for himself, the master, who was an honourable man, gave it all up to the shepherd, saying: ‘Take it, it is yours. The gods have given it to you.’ So the shepherd took the treasure and built himself a house. He married a wife, and they lived in great peace and happiness, and he was acknowledged to be the richest man, not only of his native village, but of all the country-side. He had flocks of sheep, and cattle, and horses without end, as well as beautiful clothes and jewels.

One day, just before Christmas, he said to his wife: ‘Prepare everything for a great feast, to-morrow we will take things with us to the farm that the shepherds there may make merry.’ The wife obeyed, and all was prepared as he desired. Next day they both went to the farm, and in the evening the master said to the shepherds: ‘Now come, all of you, eat, drink, and make merry. I will watch the flocks myself to-night in your stead.’ Then he went out to spend the night with the flocks.

When midnight struck the wolves howled and the dogs barked, and the wolves spoke in their own tongue, saying:

‘Shall we come in and work havoc, and you too shall eat flesh?’ And the dogs answered in their tongue: ‘Come in, and for once we shall have enough to eat.’

Now amongst the dogs there was one so old that he had only two teeth left in his head, and he spoke to the wolves, saying: ‘So long as I have my two teeth still in my head, I will let no harm be done to my master.’

All this the master heard and understood, and as soon as morning dawned he ordered all the dogs to be killed excepting the old dog. The farm servants wondered at this order, and exclaimed: ‘But surely, sir, that would be a pity?’

The master answered: ‘Do as I bid you’; and made ready to return home with his wife, and they mounted their horses, her steed being a mare. As they went on their way, it happened that the husband rode on ahead, while the wife was a little way behind. The husband’s horse, seeing this, neighed, and said to the mare: ‘Come along, make haste; why are you so slow?’ And the mare answered: ‘It is very easy for you, you carry only your master, who is a thin man, but I carry my mistress, who is so fat that she weights as much as three.’ When the husband heard that he looked back and laughed, which the wife perceiving, she urged on the mare till she caught up with her husband, and asked him why he laughed. ‘For nothing at all,’ he answered; ‘just because it came into my head.’ She would not be satisfied with this answer, and urged him more and more to tell her why he had laughed. But he controlled himself and said: ‘Let me be, wife; what ails you? I do not know myself why I laughed.’ But the more he put her off, the more she tormented him to tell her the cause of his laughter. At length he said to her: ‘Know, then, that if I tell it you I shall immediately and surely die.’ But even this did not quiet her; she only besought him the more to tell her.

Meanwhile they had reached home, and before getting down from his horse the man called for a coffin to be brought; and when it was there he placed it in front of the house, and said to his wife:

‘See, I will lay myself down in this coffin, and will then tell you why I laughed, for as soon as I have told you I shall surely die.’ So he lay down in the coffin, and while he took a last look around him, his old dog came out from the farm and sat down by him, and whined. When the master saw this, he called to his wife: ‘Bring a piece of bread to give to the dog.’ The wife brought some bread and threw it to the dog, but he would not look at it. Then the farm cock came and pecked at the bread; but the dog said to it: ‘Wretched glutton, you can eat like that when you see that your master is dying?’ The cock answered: ‘Let him die, if he is so stupid. I have a hundred wives, which I call together when I find a grain of corn, and as soon as they are there I swallow it myself; should one of them dare to be angry, I would give her a lesson with my beak. He has only one wife, and he cannot keep her in order.’

As soon as the man understood this, he got up out of the coffin, seized a stick, and called his wife into the room, saying: ‘Come, and I will tell you what you so much want to know’; and then he began to beat her with the stick, saying with each blow: ‘It is that, wife, it is that!’ And in this way he taught her never again to ask why he had laughed.

The Boy Who Could Keep A Secret

Once upon a time there lived a poor widow who had one little boy. At first sight you would not have thought that he was different from a thousand other little boys; but then you noticed that by his side hung the scabbard of a sword, and as the boy grew bigger the scabbard grew bigger too. The sword which belonged to the scabbard was found by the little boy sticking out of the ground in the garden, and every day he pulled it up to see if it would go into the scabbard. But though it was plainly becoming longer and longer, it was some time before the two would fit.

However, there came a day at last when it slipped in quite easily. The child was so delighted that he could hardly believe his eyes, so he tried it seven times, and each time it slipped in more easily than before. But pleased though the boy was, he determined not to tell anyone about it, particularly not his mother, who never could keep anything from her neighbours.

Still, in spite of his resolutions, he could not hide altogether that something had happened, and when he went in to breakfast his mother asked him what was the matter.

‘Oh, mother, I had such a nice dream last night,’ said he; ‘but I can’t tell it to anybody.’

‘You can tell it to me,’ she answered. ‘It must have been a nice dream, or you wouldn’t look so happy.’

‘No, mother; I can’t tell it to anybody,’ returned the boy, ‘till it comes true.’

‘I want to know what it was, and know it I will,’ cried she, ‘and I will beat you till you tell me.’

But it was no use, neither words nor blows would get the secret out of the boy; and when her arm was quite tired and she had to leave off, the child, sore and aching, ran into the garden and knelt weeping beside his little sword. It was working round and round in its hole all by itself, and if anyone except the boy had tried to catch hold of it, he would have been badly cut. But the moment he stretched out his hand it stopped and slid quietly into the scabbard.

For a long time the child sat sobbing, and the noise was heard by the king as he was driving by. ‘Go and see who it is that is crying so,’ said he to one of his servants, and the man went. In a few minutes he returned saying: ‘Your Majesty, it is a little boy who is kneeling there sobbing because his mother has beaten him.’

‘Bring him to me at once,’ commanded the monarch, ‘and tell him that it is the king who sends for him, and that he has never cried in all his life and cannot bear anyone else to do so.’ On receiving this message the boy dried his tears and went with the servant to the royal carriage. ‘Will you be my son?’ asked the king.

‘Yes, if my mother will let me,’ answered the boy. And the king bade the servant go back to the mother and say that if she would give her boy to him, he should live in the palace and marry his prettiest daughter as soon as he was a man.

The widow’s anger now turned into joy, and she came running to the splendid coach and kissed the king’s hand. ‘I hope you will be more obedient to his Majesty than you were to me,’ she said; and the boy shrank away half-frightened. But when she had gone back to her cottage, he asked the king if he might fetch something that he had left in the garden, and when he was given permission, he pulled up his little sword, which he slid into the scabbard.

Then he climbed into the coach and was driven away.

After they had gone some distance the king said: ‘Why were you crying so bitterly in the garden just now?’

‘Because my mother had been beating me,’ replied the boy.

‘And what did she do that for?’ asked the king again.

‘Because I would not tell her my dream.’

‘And why wouldn’t you tell it to her?’

‘Because I will never tell it to anyone till it comes true,’ answered the boy.

‘And won’t you tell it to me either?’ asked the king in surprise.

‘No, not even to you, your Majesty,’ replied he.

‘Oh, I am sure you will when we get home,’ said the king smiling, and he talked to him about other things till they came to the palace.

‘I have brought you such a nice present,’ he said to his daughters, and as the boy was very pretty they were delighted to have him and gave him all their best toys.

‘You must not spoil him,’ observed the king one day, when he had been watching them playing together. He has a secret which he won’t tell to anyone.’

‘He will tell me,’ answered the eldest princess; but the boy only shook his head.

‘He will tell me,’ said the second girl.

‘Not I,’ replied the boy.

‘He will tell me,’ cried the youngest, who was the prettiest too.

‘I will tell nobody till it comes true,’ said the boy, as he had said before; ‘and I will beat anybody who asks me.’

The king was very sorry when he heard this, for he loved the boy dearly; but he thought it would never do to keep anyone near him who would not do as he was bid. So he commanded his servants to take him away and not to let him enter the palace again until he had come to his right senses.

The sword clanked loudly as the boy was led away, but the child said nothing, though he was very unhappy at being treated so badly when he had done nothing. However, the servants were very kind to him, and their children brought him fruit and all sorts of nice things, and he soon grew merry again, and lived amongst them for many years till his seventeenth birthday.

Meanwhile the two eldest princesses had become women, and had married two powerful kings who ruled over great countries across the sea. The youngest one was old enough to be married too, but she was very particular, and turned up her nose at all the young princes who had sought her hand.

One day she was sitting in the palace feeling rather dull and lonely, and suddenly she began to wonder what the servants were doing, and whether it was not more amusing down in their quarters. The king was at his council and the queen was ill in bed, so there was no one to stop the princess, and she hastily ran across the gardens to the houses where the servants lived. Outside she noticed a youth who was handsomer than any prince she had ever seen, and in a moment she knew him to be the little boy she had once played with.

‘Tell me your secret and I will marry you,’ she said to him; but the boy only gave her the beating he had promised her long ago, when she asked him the same question. The girl was very angry, besides being hurt, and ran home to complain to her father.

‘If he had a thousand souls, I would kill them all,’ swore the king.

That very day a gallows was built outside the town, and all the people crowded round to see the execution of the young man who had dared to beat the king’s daughter. The prisoner, with his hands tied behind his back, was brought out by the hangman, and amidst dead silence his sentence was being read by the judge when suddenly the sword clanked against his side. Instantly a great noise was heard and a golden coach rumbled over the stones, with a white flag waving out of the window. It stopped underneath the gallows, and from it stepped the king of the Magyars, who begged that the life of the boy might be spared.

‘Sir, he has beaten my daughter, who only asked him to tell her his secret. I cannot pardon that,’ answered the princess’s father.

‘Give him to me, I’m sure he will tell me the secret; or, if not, I have a daughter who is like the Morning Star, and he is sure to tell it to her.’

The sword clanked for the third time, and the king said angrily: ‘Well, if you want him so much you can have him; only never let me see his face again.’ And he made a sign to the hangman. The bandage was removed from the young man’s eyes, and the cords from his wrists, and he took his seat in the golden coach beside the king of the Magyars. Then the coachman whipped up his horses, and they set out for Buda.

The king talked very pleasantly for a few miles, and when he thought that his new companion was quite at ease with him, he asked him what was the secret which had brought him into such trouble. ‘That I cannot tell you,’ answered the youth, ‘until it comes true.’

‘You will tell my daughter,’ said the king, smiling.

‘I will tell nobody,’ replied the youth, and as he spoke the sword clanked loudly. The king said no more, but trusted to his daughter’s beauty to get the secret from him.

The journey to Buda was long, and it was several days before they arrived there. The beautiful princess happened to be picking roses in the garden, when her father’s coach drove up.

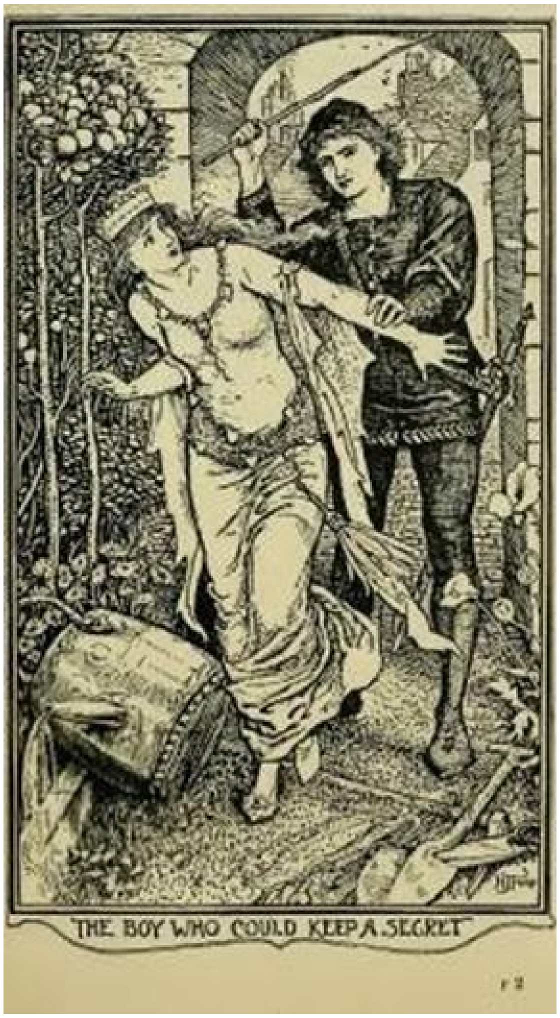

THE BOY WHO COULD KEEP A SECRET

F 2

‘Oh, what a handsome youth! Have you brought him from fairyland?’ cried she, when they all stood upon the marble steps in front of the castle.

‘I have brought him from the gallows,’ answered the king; rather vexed at his daughter’s words, as never before had she consented to speak to any man.

‘I don’t care where you brought him from,’ said the spoilt girl. ‘I will marry him and nobody else, and we will live together till we die.’

‘You will tell another tale,’ replied the king, ‘when you ask him his secret. After all he is no better than a servant.’

‘That is nothing to me,’ said the princess, ‘for I love him. He will tell his secret to me, and will find a place in the middle of my heart.’

But the king shook his head, and gave orders that the lad was to be lodged in the summer-house.

One day, about a week later, the princess put on her finest dress, and went to pay him a visit. She looked so beautiful that, at the sight of her, the book dropped from his hand, and he stood up speechless. ‘Tell me,’ she said, coaxingly, ‘what is this wonderful secret? Just whisper it in my ear, and I will give you a kiss.’

‘My angel,’ he answered, ‘be wise, and ask no questions, if you wish to get safely back to your father’s palace; I have kept my secret all these years, and do not mean to tell it now.’

However, the girl would not listen, and went on pressing him, till at last he slapped her face so hard that her nose bled. She shrieked with pain and rage, and ran screaming back to the palace, where her father was waiting to hear if she had succeeded. ‘I will starve you to death, you son of a dragon,’ cried he, when he saw her dress streaming with blood; and he ordered all the masons and bricklayers in the town to come before him.

‘Build me a tower as fast as you can,’ he said, ‘and see that there is room for a stool and a small table, and for nothing else. The men set to work, and in two hours the tower was built, and they proceeded to the palace to inform the king that his commands were fulfilled. On the way they met the princess, who began to talk to one of the masons, and when the rest were out of hearing she asked if he could manage to make a hole in the tower, which nobody could see, large enough for a bottle of wine and some food to pass through.

‘To be sure I can,’ said the mason, turning back, and in a few minutes the hole was bored.

At sunset a large crowd assembled to watch the youth being led to the tower, and after his misdeeds had been proclaimed he was solemnly walled up. But every morning the princess passed him in food through the hole, and every third day the king sent his secretary to climb up a ladder and look down through a little window to see if he was dead. But the secretary always brought back the report that he was fat and rosy.

‘There is some magic about this,’ said the king.

This state of affairs lasted some time, till one day a messenger arrived from the Sultan bearing a letter for the king, and also three canes. ‘My master bids me say,’ said the messenger, bowing low, ‘that if you cannot tell him which of these three canes grows nearest the root, which in the middle, and which at the top, he will declare war against you.

The king was very much frightened when he heard this, and though he took the canes and examined them closely, he could see no difference between them. He looked so sad that his daughter noticed it, and inquired the reason.

‘Alas! my daughter,’ he answered, ‘how can I help being sad? The Sultan has sent me three canes, and says that if I cannot tell him which of them grows near the root, which in the middle, and which at the top, he will make war upon me. And you know that his army is far greater than mine.’

‘Oh, do not despair, my father,’ said she. ‘We shall be sure to find out the answer’; and she ran away to the tower, and told the young man what had occurred.

‘Go to bed as usual,’ replied he, ‘and when you wake, tell your father that you have dreamed that the canes must be placed in warm water. After a little while one will sink to the bottom; that is the one that grows nearest the root. The one which neither sinks nor comes to the surface is the cane that is cut from the middle; and the one that floats is from the top.’

So, the next morning, the princess told her father of her dream, and by her advice he cut notches in each of the canes when he took them out of the water, so that he might make no mistake when he handed them back to the messenger. The Sultan could not imagine how he had found out, but he did not declare war.

The following year the Sultan again wanted to pick a quarrel with the king of the Magyars, so he sent another messenger to him with three foals, begging him to say which of the animals was born in the morning, which at noon, and which in the evening. If an answer was not ready in three days, war would be declared at once. The king’s heart sank when he read the letter. He could not expect his daughter to be lucky enough to dream rightly a second time, and as a plague had been raging through the country, and had carried off many of his soldiers, his army was even weaker than before. At this thought his face became so gloomy that his daughter noticed it, and inquired what was the matter.

‘I have had another letter from the Sultan,’ replied the king, ‘and he says that if I cannot tell him which of three foals was born in the morning, which at noon, and which in the evening, he will declare war at once.'

'Oh, don't be cast down,' said she, 'something is sure to happen'; and she ran down to the tower to consult the youth.

'Go home, idol of my heart, and when night comes, pretend to scream out in your sleep, so that your father hears you. Then tell him that you have dreamt that he was just being carried off by the Turks because he could not answer the question about the foals, when the lad whom he had shut up in the tower ran up and told them which was foaled in the morning, which at noon, and which in the evening.'

So the princess did exactly as the youth had bidden her; and no sooner had she spoken than the king ordered the tower to be pulled down, and the prisoner brought before him.

'I did not think that you could have lived so long without food,' said he, 'and as you have had plenty of time to repent your wicked conduct, I will grant you pardon, on condition that you help me in a sore strait. Read this letter from the Sultan; you will see that if I fail to answer his question about the foals, a dreadful war will be the result.'

The youth took the letter and read it through. 'Yes, I can help you,' replied he; 'but first you must bring me three troughs, all exactly alike. Into one you must put oats, into another wheat, and into the third barley. The foal which eats the oats is that which was foaled in the morning; the foal which eats the wheat is that which was foaled at noon; and the foal which eats the barley is that which was foaled at night.' The king followed the youth's directions, and, marking the foals, sent them back to Turkey, and there was no war that year.

Now the Sultan was very angry that both his plots to get possession of Hungary had been such total failures, and he sent for his aunt, who was a witch, to consult her as to what he should do next.

'It is not the king who has answered your questions,' observed the aunt, when he had told his story. 'He is far too stupid ever to have done that! The person who has found out the puzzle is the son of a poor woman, who, if he lives, will become King of Hungary. Therefore, if you want the crown yourself, you must get him here and kill him.'

After this conversation another letter was written to the Court of Hungary, saying that if the youth, now in the palace, was not sent to Turkey within three days, a large army would cross the border. The king's heart was sorrowful as he read, for he was grateful to the lad for what he had done to help him; but the boy only laughed, and bade the king fear nothing, but to search the town instantly for two youths just like each other, and he would paint himself a mask that was just like them. And the sword at his side clanked loudly.

After a long search twin brothers were found, so exactly resembling each other that even their own mother could not tell the difference. The youth painted a mask that was the precise copy of them, and when he had put it on, no one would have known one boy from the other. They set out at once for the Sultan’s palace, and when they reached it, they were taken straight into his presence. He made a sign for them to come near; they all bowed low in greeting. He asked them about their journey; they answered his questions all together, and in the same words. If one sat down to supper, the others sat down at the same instant. When one got up, the others got up too, as if there had been only one body between them. The Sultan could not detect any difference between them, and he told his aunt that he would not be so cruel as to kill all three.

‘Well, you will see a difference to-morrow,’ replied the witch, ‘for one will have a cut on his sleeve. That is the youth you must kill.’ And one hour before midnight, when witches are invisible, she glided into the room where all three lads were sleeping in the same bed. She took out a pair of scissors and cut a small piece out of the boy’s coat-sleeve which was hanging on the wall, and then crept silently from the room. But in the morning the youth saw the slit, and he marked the sleeves of his two companions in the same way, and all three went down to breakfast with the Sultan. The old witch was standing in the window and pretended not to see them; but all witches have eyes in the backs of their heads, and she knew at once that not one sleeve but three were cut, and they were all as alike as before. After breakfast, the Sultan, who was getting tired of the whole affair and wanted to be alone to invent some other plan, told them they might return home. So, bowing low with one accord, they went.

The princess welcomed the boy back joyfully, but the poor youth was not allowed to rest long in peace, for one day a fresh letter arrived from the Sultan, saying that he had discovered that the young man was a very dangerous person, and that he must be sent to Turkey at once, and alone. The girl burst into tears when the boy told her what was in the letter which her father had bade her to carry to him. ‘Do not weep, love of my heart,’ said the boy, ‘all will be well. I will start at sunrise to-morrow.’

So next morning at sunrise the youth set forth, and in a few days he reached the Sultan’s palace. The old witch was waiting for him at the gate, and whispered as he passed: ‘This is the last time you will ever enter it.’ But the sword clanked, and the lad did not even look at her. As he crossed the threshold fifteen armed Turks barred his way, with the Sultan at their head. Instantly the sword darted forth and cut off the heads of everyone but the Sultan, and then went quietly back to its scabbard. The witch, who was looking on, saw that as long as the youth had possession of the sword, all her schemes would be in vain, and tried to steal the sword in the night, but it only jumped out of its scabbard and sliced off her nose, which was of iron. And in the morning, when the Sultan brought a great army to capture the lad and deprive him of his sword, they were all cut to pieces, while he remained without a scratch.

Meanwhile the princess was in despair because the days slipped by, and the young man did not return, and she never rested until her father let her lead some troops against the Sultan. She rode proudly before them, dressed in uniform; but they had not left the town more than a mile behind them, when they met the lad and his little sword. When he told them what he had done they shouted for joy, and carried him back in triumph to the palace; and the king declared that as the youth had shown himself worthy to become his son-in-law, he should marry the princess and succeed to the throne at once, as he himself was getting old, and the cares of government were too much for him. But the young man said he must first go and see his mother, and the king sent him in state, with a troop of soldiers as his bodyguard.

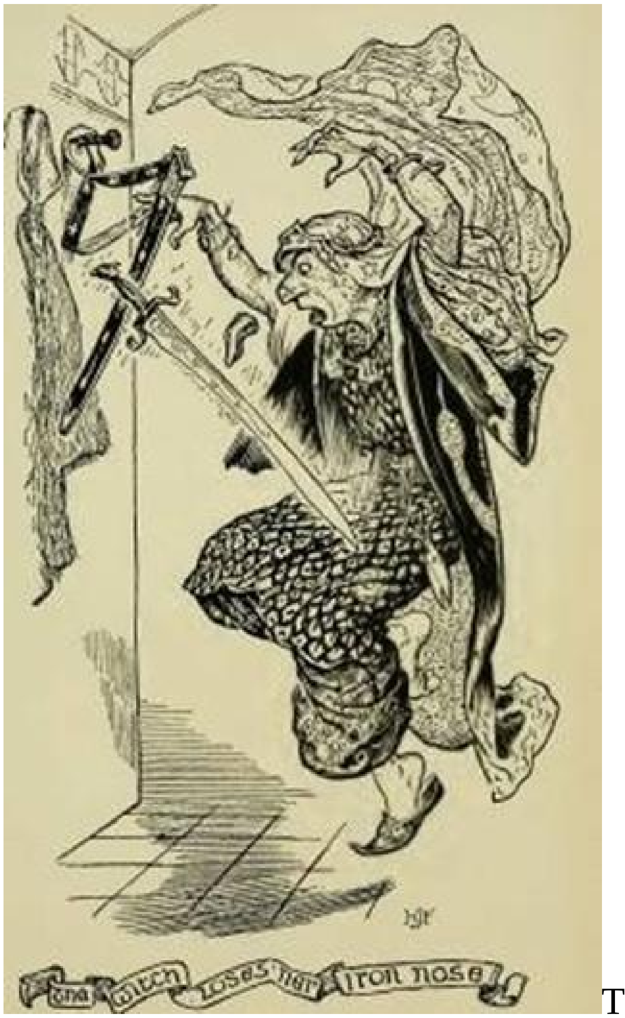
The witch loses her iron nose

The old woman was quite frightened at seeing such an array draw up before her little house, and still more surprised when a handsome young man, whom she did not know, dismounted and kissed her hand, saying: ‘Now, dear mother, you shall hear my secret at last! I dreamed that I should become King of Hungary, and my dream has come true. When I was a child, and you begged me to tell you, I had to keep silence, or the Magyar king would have killed me. And if you had not beaten me nothing would have happened that has happened, and I should not now be King of Hungary.’

The Prince And The Dragon

Once upon a time there lived an emperor who had three sons. They were all fine young men, and fond of hunting, and scarcely a day passed without one or other of them going out to look for game.

One morning the eldest of the three princes mounted his horse and set out for a neighbouring forest, where wild animals of all sorts were to be found. He had not long left the castle, when a hare sprang out of a thicket and dashed across the road in front. The young man gave chase at once, and pursued it over hill and dale, till at last the hare took refuge in a mill which was standing by the side of a river. The prince followed and entered the mill, but stopped in terror by the door, for, instead of a hare, before him stood a dragon, breathing fire and flame. At this fearful sight the prince turned to fly, but a fiery tongue coiled round his waist, and drew him into the dragon’s mouth, and he was seen no more.

A week passed away, and when the prince never came back everyone in the town began to grow uneasy. At last his next brother told the emperor that he likewise would go out to hunt, and that perhaps he would find some clue as to his brother’s disappearance. But hardly had the castle gates closed on the prince than the hare sprang out of the bushes as before, and led the huntsman up hill and down dale, till they reached the mill. Into this the hare flew with the prince at his heels, when, lo! instead of the hare, there stood a dragon breathing fire and flame; and out shot a fiery tongue which coiled round the prince’s waist, and lifted him straight into the dragon’s mouth, and he was seen no more.

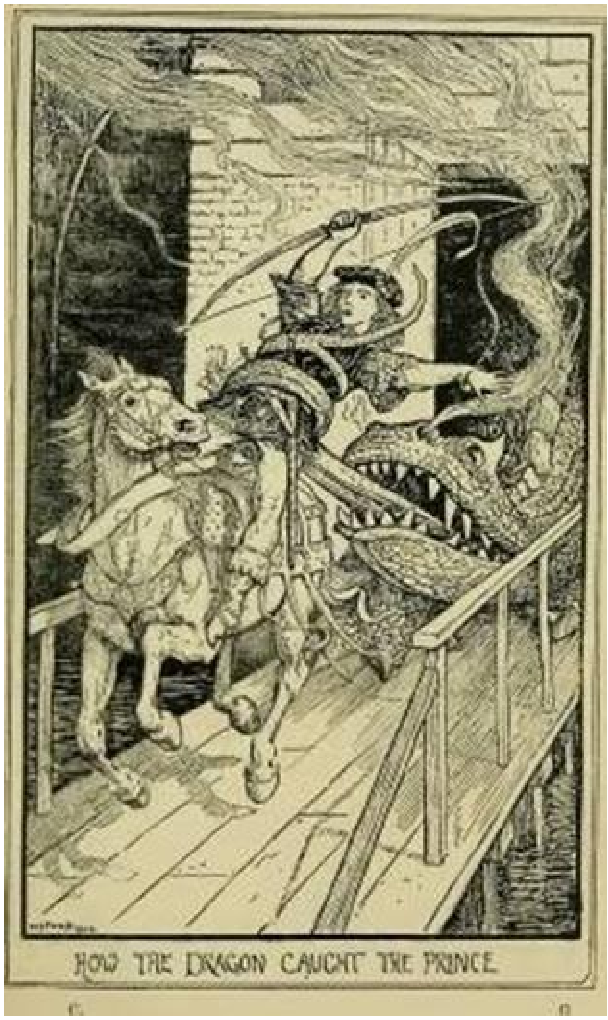

HOW THE DRAGON CAUGHT THE PRINCE

Days went by, and the emperor waited and waited for the sons who never came, and could not sleep at night for wondering where they were and what had become of them. His youngest son wished to go in search of his brothers, but for long the emperor refused to listen to him, lest he should lose him also. But the prince prayed so hard for leave to make the search, and promised so often that he would be very cautious and careful, that at length the emperor gave him permission, and ordered the best horse in the stables to be saddled for him.

Full of hope the young prince started on his way, but no sooner was he outside the city walls than a hare sprang out of the bushes and ran before him, till they reached the mill. As before, the animal dashed in through the open door, but this time he was not followed by the prince. Wiser than his brothers, the young man turned away, saying to himself: ‘There are as good hares in the forest as any that have come out of it, and when I have caught them, I can come back and look for you.’

For many hours he rode up and down the mountain, but saw nothing, and at last, tired of waiting, he went back to the mill. Here he found an old woman sitting, whom he greeted pleasantly.

‘Good morning to you, little mother,’ he said; and the old woman answered: ‘Good morning, my son.’

‘Tell me, little mother,’ went on the prince, ‘where shall I find my hare?’

‘My son,’ replied the old woman, ‘that was no hare, but a dragon who has led many men hither, and then has eaten them all.’ At these words the prince’s heart grew heavy, and he cried, ‘Then my brothers must have come here, and have been eaten by the dragon!’

‘You have guessed right,’ answered the old woman; ‘and I can give you no better counsel than to go home at once, before the same fate overtakes you.’

‘Will you not come with me out of this dreadful place?’ said the young man.

‘He took me prisoner, too,’ answered she, ‘and I cannot shake off his chains.’

‘Then listen to me,’ cried the prince. ‘When the dragon comes back, ask him where he always goes when he leaves here, and what makes him so strong; and when you have coaxed the secret from him, tell me the next time I come.’

So the prince went home, and the old woman remained in the mill, and as soon as the dragon returned she said to him:

‘Where have you been all this time — you must have travelled far?’

‘Yes, little mother, I have indeed travelled far.’ answered he. Then the old woman began to flatter him, and to praise his cleverness; and when she thought she had got him into a good temper, she said: ‘I have wondered so often where you get your strength from; I do wish you would tell me. I would stoop and kiss the place out of pure love!’ The dragon laughed at this, and answered:

‘In the hearthstone yonder lies the secret of my strength.’

Then the old woman jumped up and kissed the hearth; whereat the dragon laughed the more, and said:

‘You foolish creature! I was only jesting. It is not in the hearthstone, but in that tall tree that lies the secret of my strength.’ Then the old woman jumped up again and put her arms round the tree, and kissed it heartily. Loudly laughed the dragon when he saw what she was doing.

‘Old fool,’ he cried, as soon as he could speak, ‘did you really believe that my strength came from that tree?’

‘Where is it then?’ asked the old woman, rather crossly, for she did not like being made fun of.

‘My strength,’ replied the dragon, ‘lies far away; so far that you could never reach it. Far, far from here is a kingdom, and by its capital city is a lake, and in the lake is a dragon, and inside the dragon is a wild boar, and inside the wild boar is a pigeon, and inside the pigeon a sparrow, and inside the sparrow is my strength.’ And when the old woman heard this, she thought it was no use flattering him any longer, for never, never, could she take his strength from him.

The following morning, when the dragon had left the mill, the prince came back, and the old woman told him all that the creature had said. He listened in silence, and then returned to the castle, where he put on a suit of shepherd’s clothes, and taking a staff in his hand, he went forth to seek a place as tender of sheep.

For some time he wandered from village to village and from town to town, till he came at length to a large city in a distant kingdom, surrounded on three sides by a great lake, which happened to be the very lake in which the dragon lived. As was his custom, he stopped everybody whom he met in the streets that looked likely to want a shepherd and begged them to engage him, but they all seemed to have shepherds of their own, or else not to need any. The prince was beginning to lose heart, when a man who had overheard his question turned round and said that he had better go and ask the emperor, as he was in search of some one to see after his flocks.

‘Will you take care of my sheep?’ said the emperor, when the young man knelt before him.

‘Most willingly, your Majesty,’ answered the young man, and he listened obediently while the emperor told him what he was to do.

‘Outside the city walls,’ went on the emperor, ‘you will find a large lake, and by its banks lie the richest meadows in my kingdom. When you are leading out your flocks to pasture, they will all run straight to these meadows, and none that have gone there have ever been known to come back. Take heed, therefore, my son, not to suffer your sheep to go where they will, but drive them to any spot that you think best.’

With a low bow the prince thanked the emperor for his warning, and promised to do his best to keep the sheep safe. Then he left the palace and went to the market-place, where he bought two greyhounds, a hawk, and a set of pipes; after that he took the sheep out to pasture. The instant the animals caught sight of the lake lying before them, they trotted off as fast as their legs would go to the green meadows lying round it. The prince did not try to stop them; he only placed his hawk on the branch of a tree, laid his pipes on the grass, and bade the greyhounds sit still; then, rolling up his sleeves and trousers, he waded into the water crying as he did so: ‘Dragon! dragon! if you are not a coward, come out and fight with me!’ And a voice answered from the depths of the lake:

‘I am waiting for you, O prince’; and the next minute the dragon reared himself out of the water, huge and horrible to see. The prince sprang upon him and they grappled with each other and fought together till the sun was high, and it was noonday. Then the dragon gasped:

‘O prince, let me dip my burning head once into the lake, and I will hurl you up to the top of the sky.’ But the prince answered, ‘Oh, ho! my good dragon, do not crow too soon! If the emperor’s daughter were only here, and would kiss me on the forehead, I would throw you up higher still!’ And suddenly the dragon’s hold loosened, and he fell back into the lake.

As soon as it was evening, the prince washed away all signs of the fight, took his hawk upon his shoulder, and his pipes under his arm, and with his greyhounds in front and his flock following after him he set out for the city. As they all passed through the streets the people stared in wonder, for never before had any flock returned from the lake.

The next morning he rose early, and led his sheep down the road to the lake. This time, however, the emperor sent two men on horseback to ride behind him, with orders to watch the prince all day long. The horsemen kept the prince and his sheep in sight, without being seen themselves. As soon as they beheld the sheep running towards the meadows, they turned aside up a steep hill, which overhung the lake. When the shepherd reached the place he laid, as before, his pipes on the grass and bade the greyhounds sit beside them, while the hawk he perched on the branch of the tree. Then he rolled up his trousers and his sleeves, and waded into the water crying:

‘Dragon! dragon! if you are not a coward, come out and fight with me!’ And the dragon answered:

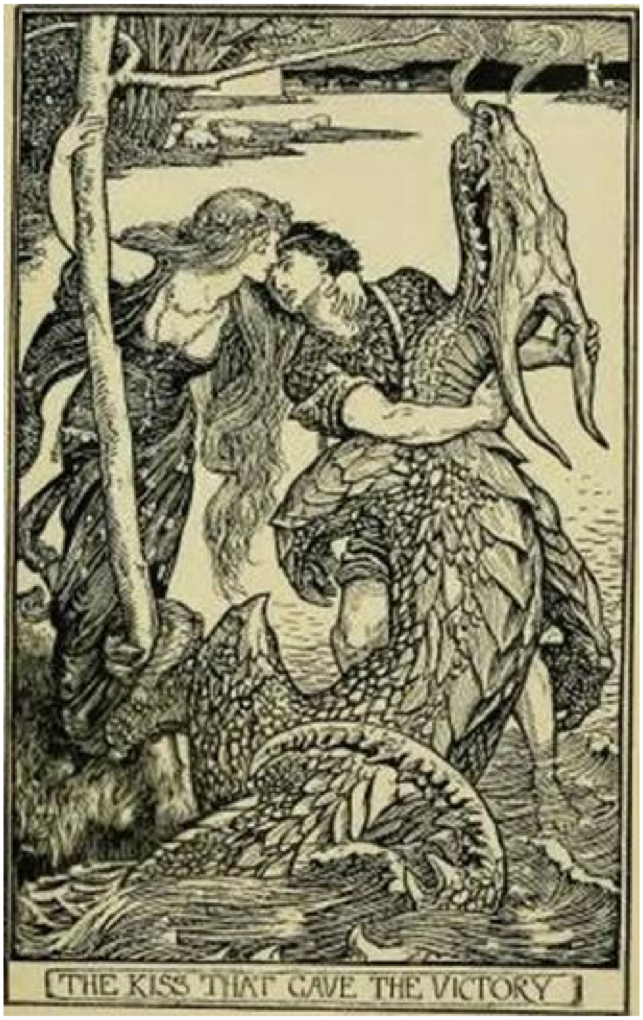

THE KISS THAT GAVE THE VICTORY

‘I am waiting for you, O prince,’ and the next minute he reared himself out of the water, huge and horrible to see. Again they clasped each other tight round the body and fought till it was noon, and when the sun was at its hottest, the dragon gasped:

‘O prince, let me dip my burning head once in the lake, and I will hurl you up to the top of the sky.’ But the prince answered:

‘Oh, ho! my good dragon, do not crow too soon! If the emperor’s daughter were only here, and would kiss me on the forehead, I would throw you up higher still!’ And suddenly the dragon’s hold loosened, and he fell back into the lake.

As soon as it was evening the prince again collected his sheep, and playing on his pipes he marched before them into the city. When he passed through the gates all the people came out of their houses to stare in wonder, for never before had any flock returned from the lake.

Meanwhile the two horsemen had ridden quickly back, and told the emperor all that they had seen and heard. The emperor listened eagerly to their tale, then called his daughter to him and repeated it to her.

‘To-morrow,’ he said, when he had finished, ‘you shall go with the shepherd to the lake, and then you shall kiss him on the forehead as he wishes.’

But when the princess heard these words, she burst into tears, and sobbed out:

‘Will you really send me, your only child, to that dreadful place, from which most likely I shall never come back?’

‘Fear nothing, my little daughter, all will be well. Many shepherds have gone to that lake and none have ever returned; but this one has in these two days fought twice with the dragon and has escaped without a wound. So I hope to-morrow he will kill the dragon altogether, and deliver this land from the monster who has slain so many of our bravest men.’

Scarcely had the sun begun to peep over the hills next morning, when the princess stood by the shepherd’s side, ready to go to the lake. The shepherd was brimming over with joy, but the princess only wept bitterly. ‘Dry your tears, I implore you,’ said he. ‘If you will just do what I ask you, and when the time comes, run and kiss my forehead, you have nothing to fear.’

Merrily the shepherd blew on his pipes as he marched at the head of his flock, only stopping every now and then to say to the weeping girl at his side:

‘Do not cry so, Heart of Gold; trust me and fear nothing.’ And so they reached the lake.

In an instant the sheep were scattered all over the meadows, and the prince placed his hawk on the tree, and his pipes on the grass, while he bade his greyhounds lie beside them. Then he rolled up his trousers and his sleeves, and waded into the water, calling:

‘Dragon! dragon! if you are not a coward, come forth, and let us have one more fight together.’ And the dragon answered: ‘I am waiting for you, O prince’; and the next minute he reared himself out of the water, huge and horrible to see. Swiftly he drew near to the bank, and the prince sprang to meet him, and they grasped each other round the body and fought till it was noon. And when the sun was at its hottest, the dragon cried:

‘O prince, let me dip my burning head in the lake, and I will hurl you to the top of the sky.’ But the prince answered:

‘Oh, ho! my good dragon, do not crow too soon! If the emperor’s daughter were only here, and she would kiss my forehead, I would throw you higher still.’

Hardly had he spoken, when the princess, who had been listening, ran up and kissed him on the forehead. Then the prince swung the dragon straight up into the clouds, and when he touched the earth again, he broke into a thousand pieces. Out of the pieces there sprang a wild boar and galloped away, but the prince called his hounds to give chase, and they caught the boar and tore it to bits. Out of the pieces there sprang a hare, and in a moment the greyhounds were after it, and they caught it and killed it; and out of the hare there came a pigeon. Quickly the prince let loose his hawk, which soared straight into the air, then swooped upon the bird and brought it to his master. The prince cut open its body and found the sparrow inside, as the old woman had said.

‘Now,’ cried the prince, holding the sparrow in his hand, ‘now you shall tell me where I can find my brothers.’

‘Do not hurt me,’ answered the sparrow, ‘and I will tell you with all my heart.’ Behind your father’s castle stands a mill, and in the mill are three slender twigs. Cut off these twigs and strike their roots with them, and the iron door of a cellar will open. In the cellar you will find as many people, young and old, women and children, as would fill a kingdom, and among them are your brothers.’

By this time twilight had fallen, so the prince washed himself in the lake, took the hawk on his shoulder and the pipes under his arm, and with his greyhounds before him and his flock behind him, marched gaily into the town, the princess following them all, still trembling with fright. And so they passed through the streets, thronged with a wondering crowd, till they reached the castle.

Unknown to anyone, the emperor had stolen out on horseback, and had hidden himself on the hill, where he could see all that happened. When all was over, and the power of the dragon was broken for ever, he rode quickly back to the castle, and was ready to receive the prince with open arms, and to promise him his daughter to wife. The wedding took place with great splendour, and for a whole week the town was hung with coloured lamps, and tables were spread in the hall of the castle for all who chose to come and eat. And when the feast was over, the prince told the emperor and the people who he really was, and at this everyone rejoiced still more, and preparations were made for the prince and princess to return to their own kingdom, for the prince was impatient to set free his brothers.

The first thing he did when he reached his native country was to hasten to the mill, where he found the three twigs as the sparrow had told him. The moment that he struck the root the iron door flew open, and from the cellar a countless multitude of men and women streamed forth. He bade them go one by one wheresoever they would, while he himself waited by the door till his brothers passed through. How delighted they were to meet again, and to hear all that the prince had done to deliver them from their enchantment. And they went home with him and served him all the days of their lives, for they said that he only who had proved himself brave and faithful was fit to be king.

Little Wildrose

Once upon a time the things in this story happened, and if they had not happened then the story would never have been told. But that was the time when wolves and lambs lay peacefully together in one stall, and shepherds dined on grassy banks with kings and queens.

Once upon a time, then, my dear good children, there lived a man. Now this man was really a hundred years old, if not fully twenty years more. And his wife was very old too — how old I do not know; but some said she was as old as the goddess Venus herself. They had been very happy all these years, but they would have been happier still if they had had any children; but old though they were they had never made up their minds to do without them, and often they would sit over the fire and talk of how they would have brought up their children if only some had come to their house.

One day the old man seemed sadder and more thoughtful than was common with him, and at last he said to his wife: ‘Listen to me, old woman!’

‘What do you want?’ asked she.

‘Get me some money out of the chest, for I am going a long journey — all through the world — to see if I cannot find a child, for my heart aches to think that after I am dead my house will fall into the hands of a stranger. And this let me tell you: that if I never find a child I shall not come home again.’

Then the old man took a bag and filled it with food and money, and throwing it over his shoulders, bade his wife farewell.

For long he wandered, and wandered, and wandered, but no child did he see; and one morning his wanderings led him to a forest which was so thick with trees that no light could pass through the branches. The old man stopped when he saw this dreadful place, and at first was afraid to go in; but he remembered that, after all, as the proverb says: ‘It is the unexpected that happens,’ and perhaps in the midst of this black spot he might find the child he was seeking. So summoning up all his courage he plunged boldly in.

How long he might have been walking there he never could have told you, when at last he reached the mouth of a cave where the darkness seemed a hundred times darker than the wood itself. Again he paused, but he felt as if something was driving him to enter, and with a beating heart he stepped in.

For some minutes the silence and darkness so appalled him that he stood where he was, not daring to advance one step. Then he made a great effort and went on a few paces, and suddenly, far before him, he saw the glimmer of a light. This put new heart into him, and he directed his steps straight towards the faint rays, till he could see, sitting by it, an old hermit, with a long white beard.

The hermit either did not hear the approach of his visitor, or pretended not to do so, for he took no notice, and continued to read his book. After waiting patiently for a little while, the old man fell on his knees, and said: ‘Good morning, holy father!’ But he might as well have spoken to the rock. ‘Good morning, holy father,’ he said again, a little louder than before, and this time the hermit made a sign to him to come nearer. ‘My son,’ whispered he, in a voice that echoed through the cavern, ‘what brings you to this dark and dismal place? Hundreds of years have passed since my eyes have rested on the face of a man, and I did not think to look on one again.’.

‘My misery has brought me here,’ replied the old man; ‘I have no child, and all our lives my wife and I have longed for one. So I left my home, and went out into the world, hoping that somewhere I might find what I was seeking.’

Then the hermit picked up an apple from the ground, and gave it to him, saying: ‘Eat half of this apple, and give the rest to your wife, and cease wandering through the world.’

The old man stooped and kissed the feet of the hermit for sheer joy, and left the cave. He made his way through the forest as fast as the darkness would let him, and at length arrived in flowery fields, which dazzled him with their brightness. Suddenly he was seized with a desperate thirst, and a burning in his throat. He looked for a stream but none was to be seen, and his tongue grew more parched every moment. At length his eyes fell on the apple, which all this while he had been holding in his hand, and in his thirst he forgot what the hermit had told him, and instead of eating merely his own half, he ate up the old woman’s also; after that he went to sleep.

When he woke up he saw something strange lying on a bank a little way off, amidst long trails of pink roses. The old man got up, rubbed his eyes, and went to see what it was, when, to his surprise and joy, it proved to be a little girl about two years old, with a skin as pink and white as the roses above her. He took her gently in his arms, but she did not seem at all frightened, and only jumped and crowed with delight; and the old man wrapped his cloak round her, and set off for home as fast as his legs would carry him.

When they were close to the cottage where they lived he laid the child in a pail that was standing near the door, and ran into the house, crying: ‘Come quickly, wife, quickly, for I have brought you a daughter, with hair of gold and eyes like stars!’

At this wonderful news the old woman flew downstairs, almost tumbling down ill her eagerness to see the treasure; but when her husband led her to the pail it was perfectly empty! The old man was nearly beside himself with horror, while his wife sat down and sobbed with grief and disappointment. There was not a spot round about which they did not search, thinking that somehow the child might have got out of the pail and hidden itself for fun; but the little girl was not there, and there was no sign of her.

‘Where can she be?’ moaned the old man, in despair. ‘Oh, why did I ever leave her, even for a moment? Have the fairies taken her, or has some wild beast carried her off?’ And they began their search all over again; but neither fairies nor wild beasts did they meet with, and with sore hearts they gave it up at last and turned sadly into the hut.

And what had become of the baby? Well, finding herself left alone in a strange place she began to cry with fright, and an eagle hovering near, heard her, and went to see what the sound came from. When he beheld the fat pink and white creature he thought of his hungry little ones at home, and swooping down he caught her up in his claws and was soon flying with her over the tops of the trees. In a few minutes he reached the one in which he had built his nest, and laying little Wildrose (for so the old man had called her) among his downy young eaglets, he flew away. The eaglets naturally were rather surprised at this strange animal, so suddenly popped down in their midst, but instead of beginning to eat her, as their father expected, they nestled up close to her and spread out their tiny wings to shield her from the sun.

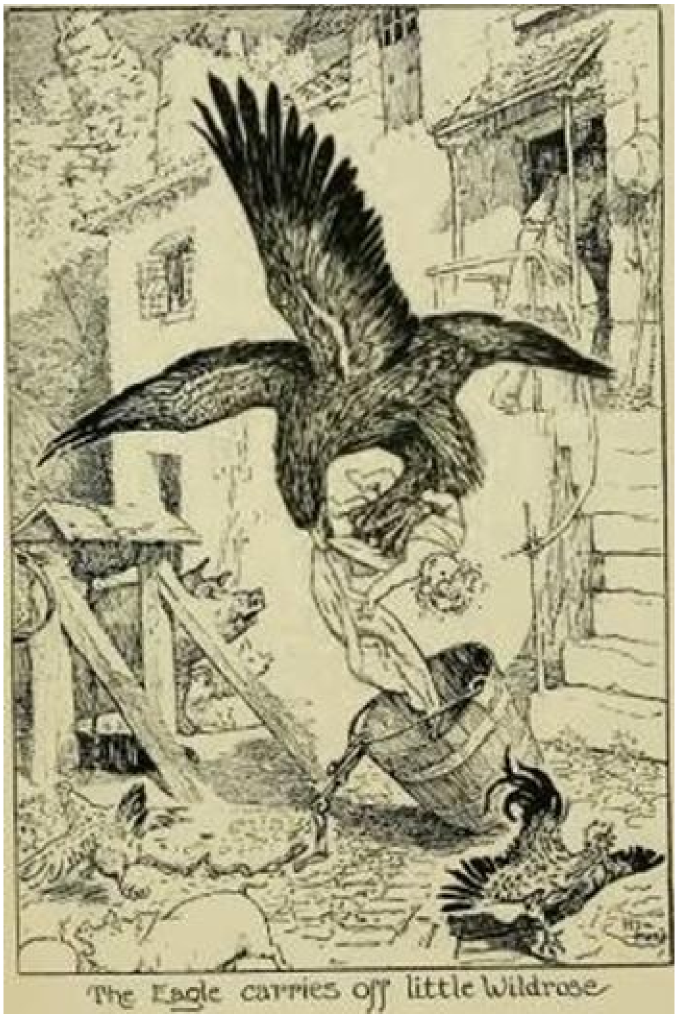

The Eagle carries off little Wildrose

Now, in the depths of the forest where the eagle had built his nest, there ran a stream whose waters were poisonous, and on the banks of this stream dwelt a horrible lindworm with seven heads.

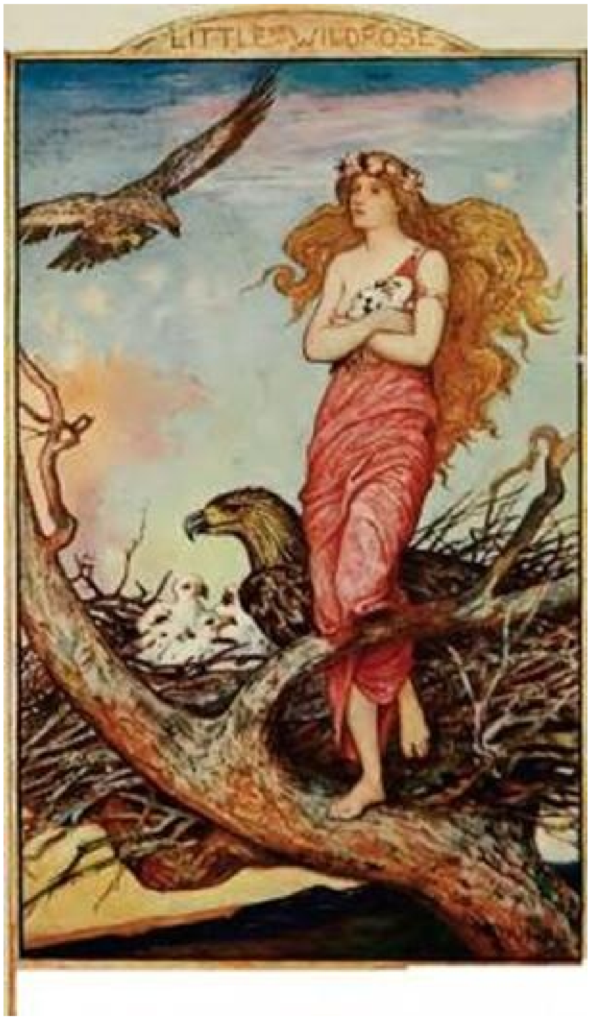

The lindworm had often watched the eagle flying about the top of the tree, carrying food to his young ones and, accordingly, he watched carefully for the moment when the eaglets began to try their wings and to fly away from the nest. Of course, if the eagle himself was there to protect them even the lindworm, big and strong as he was, knew that he could do nothing; but when he was absent, any little eaglets who ventured too near the ground would be sure to disappear down the monster's throat. Their brothers, who had been left behind as too young and weak to see the world, knew nothing of all this, but supposed their turn would soon come to see the world also. And in a few days their eyes, too, opened and their wings flapped impatiently, and they longed to fly away above the waving treetops to mountain and the bright sun beyond. But that very midnight the lindworm, who was hungry and could not wait for his supper, came out of the brook with a rushing noise, and made straight for the tree. Two eyes of flame came creeping nearer, nearer, and two fiery tongues were stretching themselves out closer, closer, to the little birds who were trembling and shuddering in the farthest corner of the nest. But just as the tongues had almost reached them, the lindworm gave a fearful cry, and turned and fell backwards. Then came the sound of battle from the ground below, and the tree shook, though there was no wind, and roars and snarls mixed together, till the eaglets felt more frightened than ever, and thought their last hour had come. Only Wildrose was undisturbed, and slept sweetly through it all.

In the morning the eagle returned and saw traces of a fight below the tree, and here and there a handful of yellow mane lying about, and here and there a hard scaly substance; when he saw that he rejoiced greatly, and hastened to the nest.

‘Who has slain the lindworm?’ he asked of his children; there were so many that he did not at first miss the two which the lindworm had eaten. But the eaglets answered that they could not tell, only that they had been in danger of their lives, and at the last moment they had been delivered. Then the sunbeam had struggled through the thick branches and caught Wildrose’s golden hair as she lay curled up in the corner, and the eagle wondered, as he looked, whether the little girl had brought him luck, and it was her magic which had killed his enemy.

‘Children,’ he said, ‘I brought her here for your dinner, and you have not touched her; what is the meaning of this?’ But the eaglets did not answer, and Wildrose opened her eyes, and seemed seven times lovelier than before.

From that day Wildrose lived like a little princess. The eagle flew about the wood and collected the softest, greenest moss he could find to make her a bed, and then he picked with his beak all the brightest and prettiest flowers in the fields or on the mountains to decorate it. So cleverly did he manage it that there was not a fairy in the whole of the forest who would not have been pleased to sleep there, rocked to and fro by the breeze on the treetops. And when the little ones were able to fly from their nest he taught them where to look for the fruits and berries which she loved.

So the time passed by, and with each year Wildrose grew taller and more beautiful, and she lived happily in her nest and never wanted to go out of it, only standing at the edge in the sunset, and looking upon the beautiful world. For company she had all the birds in the forest, who came and talked to her, and for playthings the strange flowers which they brought her from far, and the butterflies which danced with her. And so the days slipped away, and she was fourteen years old.

One morning the emperor’s son went out to hunt, and he had not ridden far, before a deer started from under a grove of trees, and ran before him. The prince instantly gave chase, and where the stag led he followed, till at length he found himself in the depths of the forest, where no man before had trod.

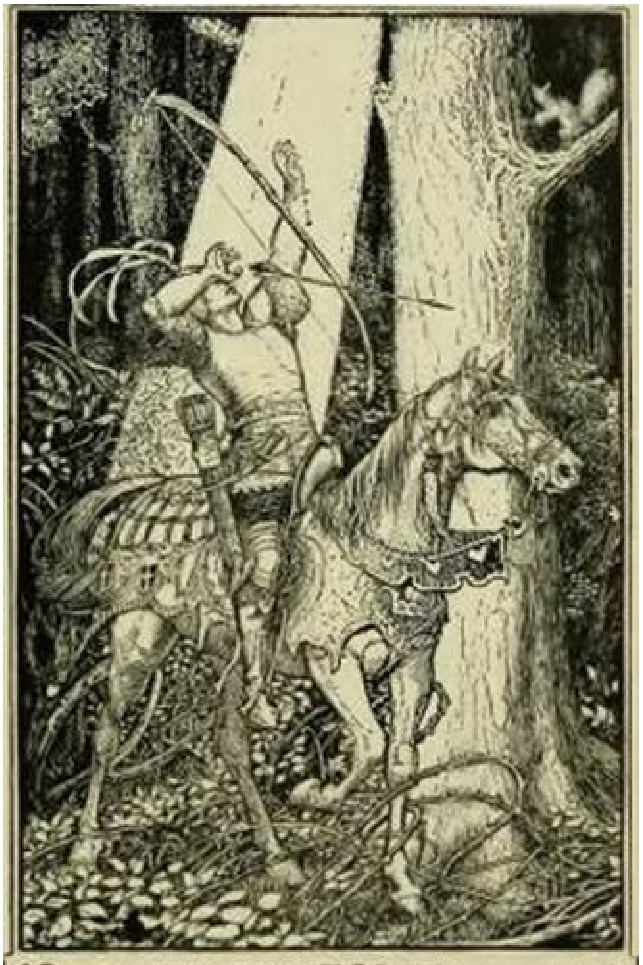

THE RAY OF LIGHT

The trees were so thick and the wood so dark, that he paused for a moment and listened, straining his ears to catch some sound to break a silence which almost frightened him. But nothing came, not even the baying of a hound or the note of a horn. He stood still, and wondered if he should go on, when, on looking up, a stream of light seemed to flow from the top of a tall tree. In its rays he could see the nest with the young eaglets, who were watching him over the side. The prince fitted an arrow into his bow and took his aim, but, before he could let fly, another ray of light dazzled him; so brilliant was it, that his bow dropped, and he covered his face with his hands. When at last he ventured to peep, Wildrose, with her golden hair flowing round her, was looking at him. This was the first time she had seen a man.

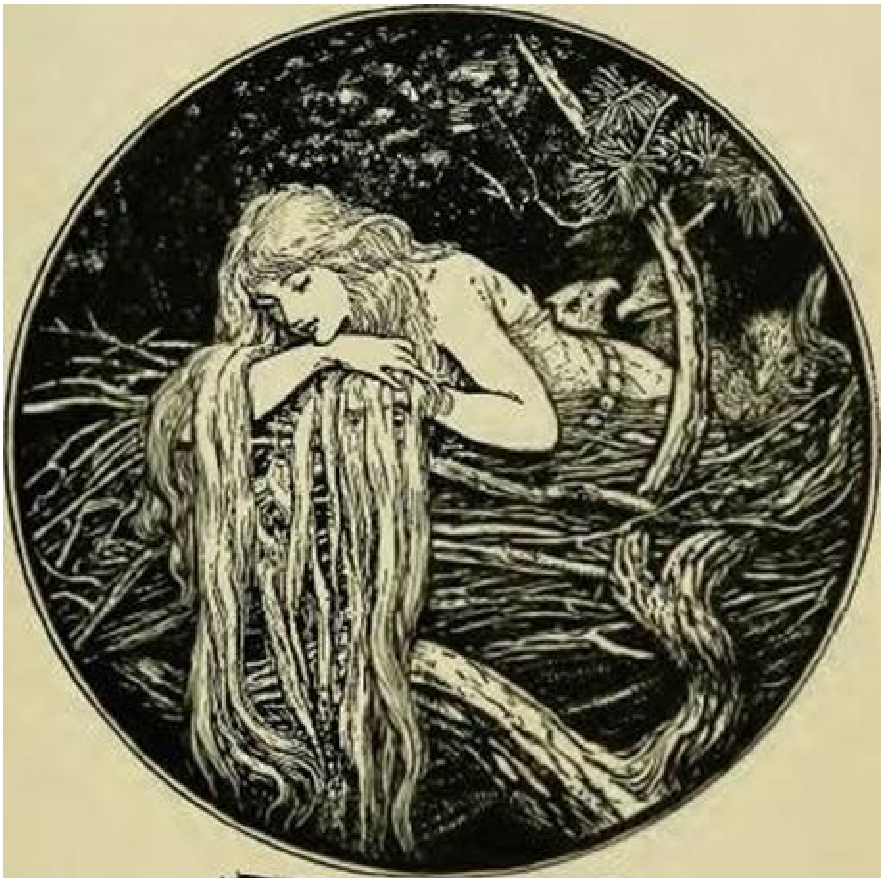

LITTLE WILDROSE PEEPS DOWN FROM THE EAGLE'S NEST

'Tell me how I can reach you?' cried he; but Wildrose smiled and shook her head, and sat down quietly.

The prince saw that it was no use, and turned and made his way out of the forest. But he might as well have stayed there, for any good he was to his father, so full was his heart of longing for Wildrose. Twice he returned to the forest in the hopes of finding her, but this time fortune failed him, and he went home as sad as ever.

At length the emperor, who could not think what had caused this change, sent for his son and asked him what was the matter. Then the prince confessed that the image of Wildrose filled his soul, and that he would never be happy without her. At first the emperor felt rather distressed. He doubted whether a girl from a tree top would make a good empress; but he loved his son so much that he promised to do all he could to find her. So the next morning heralds were sent forth throughout the whole land to inquire if anyone knew where a maiden could be found who lived in a forest on the top of a tree, and to promise great riches and a place at court to any person who should find her. But nobody knew. All the girls in the kingdom had their homes on the ground, and laughed at the notion of being brought up in a tree. ‘A nice kind of empress she would make,’ they said, as the emperor had done, tossing their heads with disdain; for, having read many books, they guessed what she was wanted for.

The heralds were almost in despair, when an old woman stepped out of the crowd and came and spoke to them. She was not only very old, but she was very ugly, with a hump on her back and a bald head, and when the heralds saw her they broke into rude laughter. ‘I can show you the maiden who lives in the treetop,’ she said, but they only laughed the more loudly.

‘Get away, old witch!’ they cried, ‘you will bring us bad luck’; but the old woman stood firm, and declared that she alone knew where to find the maiden.

‘Go with her,’ said the eldest of the heralds at last. ‘The emperor’s orders are clear, that whoever knew anything of the maiden was to come at once to court. Put her in the coach and take her with us.’

So in this fashion the old woman was brought to court.

‘You have declared that you can bring hither the maiden from the wood?’ said the emperor, who was seated on his throne.

‘Yes, your Majesty, and I will keep my word,’ said she.

‘Then bring her at once,’ said the emperor.

‘Give me first a kettle and a tripod,’ asked the old w omen, and the emperor ordered them to be brought instantly. The old woman picked them up, and tucking them under her arm went on her way, keeping at a little distance behind the royal huntsmen, who in their turn followed the prince.

Oh, what a noise that old woman made as she walked along! She chattered to herself so fast and clattered her kettle so loudly that you would have thought that a whole campful of gipsies must be coming round the next corner. But when they reached the forest, she bade them all wait outside, and entered the dark wood by herself.

She stopped underneath the tree where the maiden dwelt and, gathering some dry sticks, kindled a fire. Next, she placed the tripod over it, and the kettle on top. But something was the matter with the kettle. As fast as the old woman put it where it was to stand, that kettle was sure to roll off, falling to the ground with a crash.

It really seemed bewitched, and no one knows what might have happened if Wildrose, who had been all the time peeping out of her nest, had not lost patience at the old woman’s stupidity, and cried out: ‘The tripod won’t stand on that hill, you must move it!’

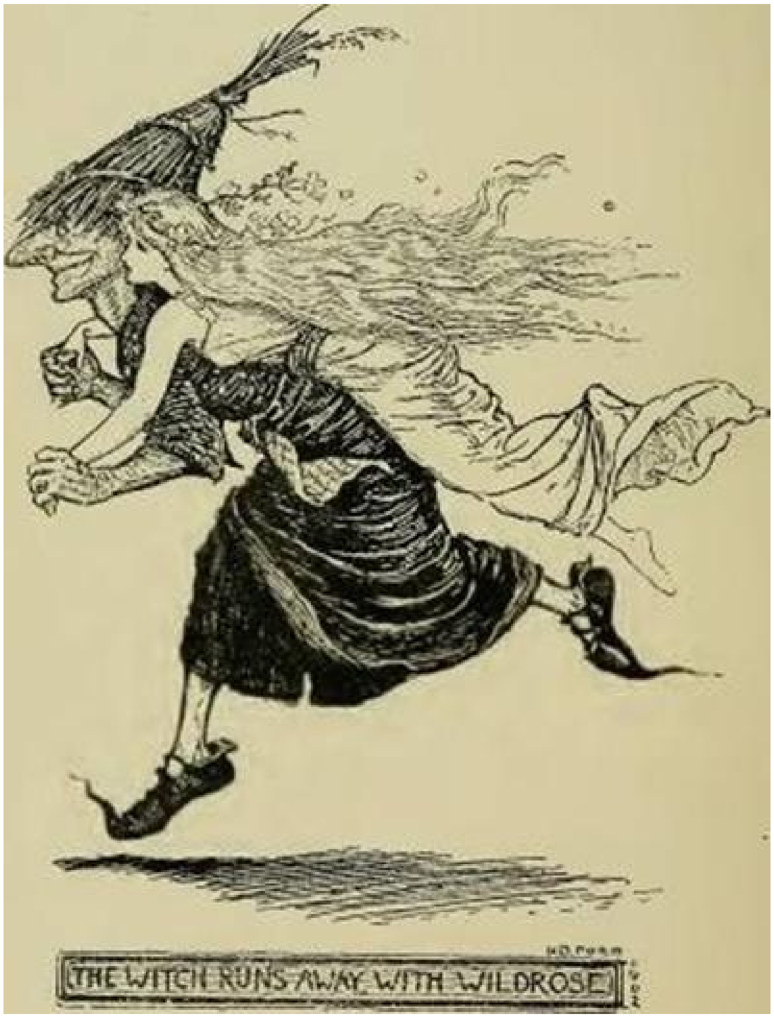
THE WITCH RUNS AWAY WITH WILDROSE

‘But where am I to move it to, my child?’ asked the old woman, looking up to the nest, and at the same moment trying to steady the kettle with one hand and the tripod with the other.

‘Didn’t I tell you that it was no good doing that,’ said Wildrose, more impatiently than before. ‘Make a fire near a tree and hang the kettle from one of the branches.’

The old woman took the kettle and hung it on a little twig, which broke at once, and the kettle fell to the ground.

‘If you would only show me how to do it, perhaps I should understand,’ said she.

Quick as thought, the maiden slid down the smooth trunk of the tree, and stood beside the stupid old woman, to teach her how things ought to be done. But in an instant the old woman had caught up the girl and swung her over her shoulders, and was running as fast as she could go to the edge of the forest, where she had left the prince. When he saw them coming he rushed eagerly to meet them, and he took the maiden in his arms and kissed her tenderly before them all. Then a golden dress was put on her, and pearls were twined in her hair, and she took her seat in the emperor’s carriage which was drawn by six of the whitest horses in the world, and they carried her, without stopping to draw breath, to the gates of the palace. And in three days the wedding was celebrated, and the wedding feast was held, and everyone who saw the bride declared that if anybody wanted a perfect wife they must go to seek her on top of a tree.

Tiidu The Piper

Once upon a time there lived a poor man who had more children than bread to feed them with. However, they were strong and willing, and soon learned to make themselves of use to their father and mother, and when they were old enough they went out to service, and everyone was very glad to get them for servants, for they worked hard and were always cheerful. Out of all the ten or eleven, there was only one who gave his parents any trouble, and this was a big lazy boy whose name was Tiidu. Neither scoldings nor beatings nor kind words had any effect on him, and the older he grew the idler he got. He spent his winters crouching close to a warm stove, and his summers asleep under a shady tree; and if he was not doing either of these things he was playing tunes on his flute.

One day he was sitting under a bush playing so sweetly that you might easily have mistaken the notes for those of a bird, when an old man passed by. ‘What trade do you wish to follow, my son?’ he asked in a friendly voice, stopping as he did so in front of the youth.

‘If I were only a rich man, and had no need to work,’ replied the boy, ‘I should not follow any. I could not bear to be anybody’s servant, as all my brothers and sisters are.’

The old man laughed as he heard this answer, and said: ‘But I do not exactly see where your riches are to come from if you do not work for them. Sleeping cats catch no mice. He who wishes to become rich must use either his hands or his head, and be ready to toil night and day, or else—’

But here the youth broke in rudely:

‘Be silent, old man! I have been told all that a hundred times over; and it runs off me like water off a duck’s back. No one will ever make a worker out of me.’

‘You have one gift,’ replied the old man, taking no notice of this speech, ‘and if you would only go about and play the pipes, you would easily earn, not only your daily bread, but a little money into the bargain. Listen to me; get yourself a set of pipes, and learn to play on them as well as you do on your flute, and wherever there are men to hear you, I promise you will never lack money.’

‘But where am I to get the pipes from?’ asked the youth.

‘Blow on your flute for a few days,’ replied the old man, ‘and you will soon be able to buy your pipes. By-and-by I will come back again and see if you have taken my advice, and whether you are likely to grow rich.’ And so saying he went his way.

Tiidu stayed where he was a little longer, thinking of all the old man had told him, and the more he thought the surer he felt that the old man was right. He determined to try whether his plan would really bring luck; but as he did not like being laughed at he resolved not to tell anyone a word about it. So next morning he left home — and never came back! His parents did not take his loss much to heart, but were rather glad that their useless son had for once shown a little spirit, and they hoped that time and hardship might cure Tiidu of his idle folly.

For some weeks Tiidu wandered from one village to another, and proved for himself the truth of the old man's promise. The people he met were all friendly and kind, and enjoyed his flute-playing, giving him his food in return, and even a few pence. These pence the youth hoarded carefully till he had collected enough to buy a beautiful pair of pipes. Then he felt himself indeed on the high road to riches. Nowhere could pipes be found as fine as his, or played in so masterly a manner. Tiidu's pipes set everybody's legs dancing. Wherever there was a marriage, a christening, or a feast of any kind, Tiidu must be there, or the evening would be a failure. In a few years he had become so noted a piper that people would travel far and wide to hear him.

One day he was invited to a christening where many rich men from the neighbouring town were present, and all agreed that never in all their lives had they heard such playing as his. They crowded round him, and praised him, and pressed him to come to their homes, declaring that it was a shame not to give their friends the chance of hearing such music. Of course all this delighted Tiidu, who accepted gladly, and left their houses laden with money and presents of every kind; one great lord clothed him in a magnificent dress, a second hung a chain of pearls round his neck, while a third handed him a set of new pipes encrusted in silver. As for the ladies, the girls twisted silken scarves round his plumed hat, and their mothers knitted him gloves of all colours, to keep out the cold. Any other man in Tiidu's place would have been contented and happy in this life; but his craving for riches gave him no rest, and only goaded him day by day to fresh exertions, so that even his own mother would not have known him for the lazy boy who was always lying asleep in one place or the other.

Now Tiidu saw quite clearly that he could only hope to become rich by means of his pipes, and set about thinking if there was nothing he could do to make the money flow in faster. At length he remembered having heard some stories of a kingdom in the Kungla country, where musicians of all sorts were welcomed and highly paid; but where it was, or how it was reached, he could not recollect, however hard he thought. In despair, he wandered along the coast, hoping to see some ship or sailing boat that would take him where he wished to go, and at length he reached the town of Narva, where several merchantmen were lying at anchor. To his great joy, he found that one of them was sailing for Kungla in a few days, and he hastily went on board, and asked for the captain. But the cost of the passage was more than the prudent Tiidu cared to pay, and though he played his best on his pipes, the captain refused to lower his price, and Tiidu was just thinking of returning on shore when his usual luck flew to his aid. A young sailor, who had heard him play, came secretly to him, and offered to hide him on board, in the absence of the captain. So the next night, as soon as it was dark, Tiidu stepped softly on deck, and was hidden by his friend down in the hold in a corner between two casks. Unseen by the rest of the crew the sailor managed to bring him food and drink, and when they were well out of sight of land he proceeded to carry out a plan he had invented to deliver Tiidu from his cramped quarters. At midnight, while he was keeping watch and everyone else was sleeping, the man bade his friend Tiidu follow him on deck, where he tied a rope round Tiidu's body, fastening the other end carefully to one of the ship's ropes. 'Now,' he said, 'I will throw you into the sea, and you must shout for help; and when you see the sailors coming untie the rope from your waist, and tell them that you have swum after the ship all the way from shore.'

At first Tiidu did not much like this scheme, for the sea ran high, but he was a good swimmer, and the sailor assured him that there was no danger. As soon as he was in the water, his friend hastened to rouse his mates, declaring that he was sure that there was a man in the sea, following the ship. They all came on deck, and what was their surprise when they recognised the person who had bargained about a passage the previous day with the captain.

'Are you a ghost, or a dying man?' they asked him trembling, as they stooped over the side of the ship.

'I shall soon indeed be a dead man if you do not help me,' answered Tiidu, 'for my strength is going fast.'

Then the captain seized a rope and flung it out to him, and Tiidu held it between his teeth, while, unseen by the sailors; he loosed the one tied round his waist.

'Where have you come from?' said the captain, when Tiidu was brought up on board the ship.

'I have followed you from the harbour,' answered he, 'and have been often in sore dread lest my strength should fail me. I hoped that by swimming after the ship I might at last reach Kungla, as I had no money to pay my passage.' The captain's heart melted at these words, and he said kindly: 'You may be thankful that you were not drowned. I will land you at Kungla free of payment, as you are so anxious to get there. So he gave him dry clothes to wear, and a berth to sleep in, and Tiidu and his friend secretly made merry over their cunning trick.

For the rest of the voyage the ship's crew treated Tiidu as something higher than themselves, seeing that in all their lives they had never met with any man that could swim for as many hours as he had done. This pleased Tiidu very much, though he knew that he had really done nothing to deserve it, and in return he delighted them by tunes on his pipes. When, after some days, they cast anchor at Kungla, the story of his wonderful swim brought him many friends, for everybody wished to hear him tell the tale himself. This might have been all very well, had not Tiidu lived in dread that some day he would be asked to give proof of his marvellous swimming powers, and then everything would be found out. Meanwhile he was dazzled with the splendour around him, and more than ever he longed for part of the riches, about which the owners seemed to care so little.

He wandered through the streets for many days, seeking some one who wanted a servant; but though more than one person would have been glad to engage him, they seemed to Tiidu not the sort of people to help him to get rich quickly. At last, when he had almost made up his mind that he must accept the next place offered him, he happened to knock at the door of a rich merchant who was in need of a scullion, and gladly agreed to do the cook's bidding, and it was in this merchant's house that he first learned how great were the riches of the land of Kungla. All the vessels which in other countries are made of iron, copper, brass, or tin, in Kungla were made of silver, or even of gold. The food was cooked in silver saucepans, the bread baked in a silver oven, while the dishes and their covers were all of gold. Even the very pigs' troughs were of silver too. But the sight of these things only made Tiidu more covetous than before. 'What is the use of all this wealth that I have constantly before my eyes,' thought he, 'if none of it is mine? I shall never grow rich by what I earn as a scullion, even though I am paid as much in a month as I should get elsewhere in a year.'

By this time he had been in his place for two years, and had put by quite a large sum of money. His passion of saving had increased to such a pitch that it was only by his master's orders that he ever bought any new clothes, 'For,' said the merchant, 'I will not have dirty people in my house.' So with a heavy heart Tiidu spent some of his next month's wages on a cheap coat.

One day the merchant held a great feast in honour of the christening of his youngest child, and he gave each of his servants a handsome garment for the occasion. The following Sunday, Tiidu, who liked fine clothes when he did not have to pay for them, put on his new coat, and went for a walk to some beautiful pleasure gardens, which were always full of people on a sunny day. He sat down under a shady tree, and watched the passers-by, but after a little he began to feel rather lonely, for he knew nobody and nobody knew him. Suddenly his eyes fell on the figure of an old man, which seemed familiar to him, though he could not tell when or where he had seen it. He watched the figure for some time, till at length the old man left the crowded paths, and threw himself on the soft grass under a lime tree, which stood at some distance from where Tiidu was sitting. Then the young man walked slowly past, in order that he might look at him more closely, and as he did so the old man smiled, and held out his hand.

‘What have you done with your pipes?’ asked he; and then in a moment Tiidu knew him. Taking his arm he drew him into a quiet place and told him all that had happened since they had last met. The old man shook his head as he listened, and when Tiidu had finished his tale, he said: ‘A fool you are, and a fool you will always be! Was there ever such a piece of folly as to exchange your pipes for a scullion’s ladle? You could have made as much by the pipes in a day as your wages would have come to in half a year. Go home and fetch your pipes, and play them here, and you will soon see if I have spoken the truth.’

Tiidu did not like this advice — he was afraid that the people would laugh at him; and, besides, it was long since he had touched his pipes — but the old man persisted, and at last Tiidu did as he was told.

‘Sit down on the bank by me,’ said the old man, when he came back, ‘and begin to play, and in a little while the people will flock round you.’ Tiidu obeyed, at first without much heart; but somehow the tone of the pipes was sweeter than he had remembered, and as he played, the crowd ceased to walk and chatter, and stood still and silent round him. When he had played for some time he took off his hat and passed it round, and dollars, and small silver coins, and even gold pieces, came tumbling in. Tiidu played a couple more tunes by way of thanks, then turned to go home, hearing on all sides murmurs of ‘What a wonderful piper! Come back, we pray you, next Sunday to give us another treat.’

‘What did I tell you?’ said the old man, as they passed through the garden gate. ‘Was it not pleasanter to play for a couple of hours on the pipes than to be stirring sauces all day long? For the second time I have shown you the path to follow; try to learn wisdom, and take the bull by the horns, lest your luck should slip from you! I can be your guide no longer, therefore listen to what I say, and obey me. Go every Sunday afternoon to those gardens; and sit under the lime tree and play to the people, and bring a felt hat with a deep crown, and lay it on the ground at your feet, so that everyone can throw some money into it. If you are invited to play at a feast, accept willingly, but beware of asking a fixed price; say you will take whatever they may feel inclined to give. You will get far more money in the end. Perhaps, some day, our paths may cross, and then I shall see how far you have followed my advice. Till then, farewell’; and the old man went his way.

As before, his words came true, though Tiidu could not at once do his bidding, as he had first to fulfil his appointed time of service. Meanwhile he ordered some fine clothes, in which he played every Sunday in the gardens, and when he counted his gains in the evening they were always more than on the Sunday before. At length he was free to do as he liked, and he had more invitations to play than he could manage to accept, and at night, when the citizens used to go and drink in the inn, the landlord always begged Tiidu to come and play to them. Thus he grew so rich that very soon he had his silver pipes covered with gold, so that they glistened in the light of the sun or the fire. In all Kungla there was no prouder man than Tiidu.

In a few years he had saved such a large sum of money that he was considered a rich man even in Kungla, where everybody was rich. And then he had leisure to remember that he had once had a home, and a family, and that he should like to see them both again, and show them how well he could play. This time he would not need to hide in the ship’s hold, but could hire the best cabin if he wished to, or even have a vessel all to himself. So he packed all his treasures in large chests, and sent them on board the first ship that was sailing to his native land, and followed them with a light heart. The wind at starting was fair, but it soon freshened, and in the night rose to a gale. For two days they ran before it, and hoped that by keeping well out to sea they might be able to weather the storm, when, suddenly, the ship struck on a rock, and began to fill. Orders were given to lower the boats, and Tiidu with three sailors got into one of them, but before they could push away from the ship a huge wave overturned it, and all four were flung into the water. Luckily for Tiidu an oar was floating near him, and with its help he was able to keep on the surface of the water; and when the sun rose, and the mist cleared away, he saw that he was not far from shore. By hard swimming, for the sea still ran high, he managed to reach it, and pulled himself out of the water, more dead than alive. Then he flung himself down on the ground and fell fast asleep.

When he awoke he got up to explore the island, and see if there were any men upon it; but though he found streams and fruit trees in abundance, there was no trace either of man or beast. Then, tired with his wanderings he sat down and began to think.

For perhaps the first time in his life his thoughts did not instantly turn to money. It was not on his lost treasures that his mind dwelt, but on his conduct to his parents: his laziness and disobedience as a boy; his forgetfulness of them as a man. ‘If wild animals were to come and tear me to pieces,’ he said to himself bitterly, ‘it would be only what I deserve! My gains are all at the bottom of the sea — well! lightly won, lightly lost — but it is odd that I feel I should not care for that if only my pipes were left me.’ Then he rose and walked a little further, till he saw a tree with great red apples shining amidst the leaves, and he pulled some down, and ate them greedily. After that he stretched himself out on the soft moss and went to sleep.

In the morning he ran to the nearest stream to wash himself, but to his horror, when he caught sight of his face, he saw his nose had grown the colour of an apple, and reached nearly to his waist. He started back thinking he was dreaming, and put up his hand; but, alas! the dreadful thing was true. ‘Oh, why does not some wild beast devour me?’ he cried to himself; ‘never, never, can I go again amongst my fellow-men! If only the sea had swallowed me up, how much happier it had been for me!’ And he hid his head in his hands and wept. His grief was so violent, that it exhausted him, and growing hungry he looked about for something to eat. Just above him was a bough of ripe, brown nuts, end he picked them and ate a handful. To his surprise, as he was eating them, he felt his nose grow shorter and shorter, and after a while he ventured to feel it with his hand, and even to look in the stream again! Yes, there was no mistake, it was as short as before, or perhaps a little shorter. In his joy at this discovery Tiidu did a very bold thing. He took one of the apples out of his pocket, and cautiously bit a piece out of it. In an instant his nose was as long as his chin, and in a deadly fear lest it should stretch further, he hastily swallowed a nut, and awaited the result with terror. Supposing that the shrinking of his nose had only been an accident before! Supposing that that nut and no other was able to cause its shrinking! In that case he had, by his own folly, in not letting well alone, ruined his life completely. But, no! he had guessed rightly, for in no more time than his nose had taken to grow long did it take to return to its proper size. ‘This may make my fortune,’ he said joyfully to himself; and he gathered some of the apples, which he put into one pocket, and a good supply of nuts which he put into the other. Next day he wove a basket out of some rushes, so that if he ever left the island he might be able to carry his treasures about.

That night he dreamed that his friend the old man appeared to him and said: ‘Because you did not mourn for your lost treasure, but only for your pipes, I will give you a new set to replace them.’ And, behold! in the morning when he got up a set of pipes was lying in the basket. With what joy did he seize them and begin one of his favourite tunes; and as he played hope sprang up in his heart, and he looked out to sea, to try to detect the sign of a sail. Yes! there it was, making straight for the island; and Tiidu, holding his pipes in his hand, dashed down to the shore.

The sailors knew the island to be uninhabited, and were much surprised to see a man standing on the beach, waving his arms in welcome to them. A boat was put off, and two sailors rowed to the shore to discover how he came there, and if he wished to be taken away. Tiidu told them the story of his shipwreck, and the captain promised that he should come on board, and sail with them back to Kungla; and thankful indeed was Tiidu to accept the offer, and to show his gratitude by playing on his pipes whenever he was asked to do so.

They had a quick voyage, and it was not long before Tiidu found himself again in the streets of the capital of Kungla, playing as he went along. The people had heard no music like his since he went away, and they crowded round him, and in their joy gave him whatever money they had in their pockets. His first care was to buy himself some new clothes, which he sadly needed, taking care, however, that they should be made after a foreign fashion. When they were ready, he set out one day with a small basket of his famous apples, and went up to the palace. He did not have to wait long before one of the royal servants passed by and bought all the apples, begging as he did so that the merchant should return and bring some more. This Tiidu promised, and hastened away as if he had a mad bull behind him, so afraid was he that the man should begin to eat an apple at once.

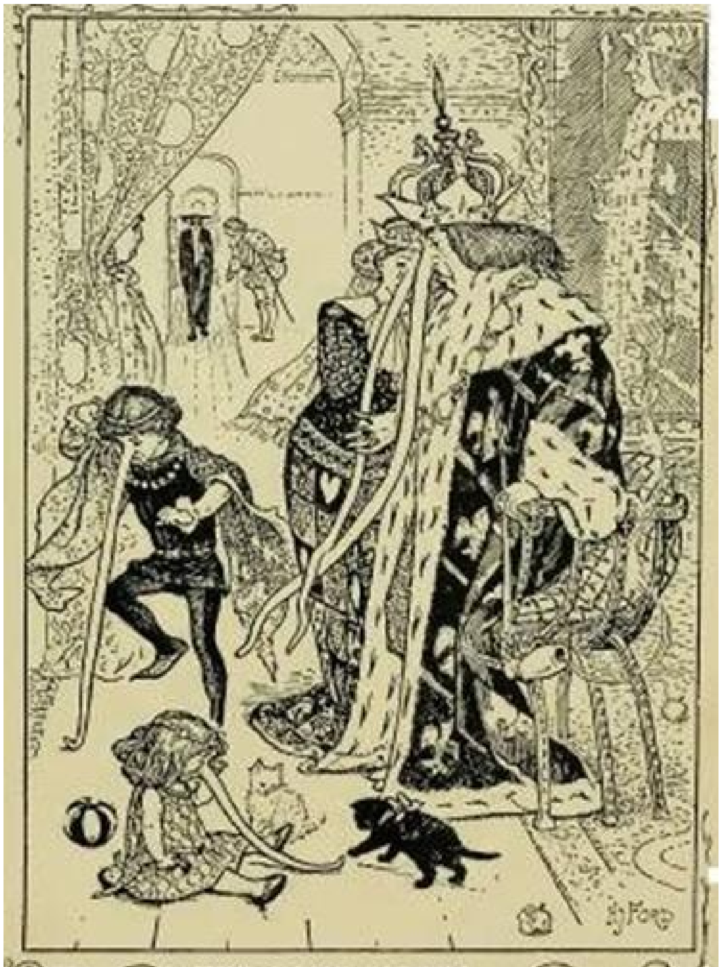

THE LONG NOSES

It is needless to say that for some days he took no more apples back to the palace, but kept well away on the other side of the town, wearing other clothes, and disguised by a long black beard, so that even his own mother would not have known him.

The morning after his visit to the castle the whole city was in an uproar about the dreadful misfortune that had happened to the Royal Family, for not only the king but his wife and children, had eaten of the stranger’s apples, and all, so said the rumour, were very ill. The most famous doctors and the greatest magicians were hastily summoned to the palace, but they shook their heads and came away again; never had they met with such a disease in all the course of their experience. By-and-bye a story went round the town, started no one knew how, that the malady was in some way connected with the nose; and men rubbed their own anxiously, to be sure that nothing catching was in the air.

Matters had been in this state for more than a week when it reached the ears of the king that a man was living in an inn on the other side of the town who declared himself able to cure all manner of diseases. Instantly the royal carriage was commanded to drive with all speed and bring back this magician, offering him riches untold if he could restore their noses to their former length. Tiidu had expected this summons, and had sat up all night changing his appearance, and so well had he succeeded that not a trace remained either of the piper or of the apple seller. He stepped into the carriage, and was driven post haste to the king, who was feverishly counting every moment, for both his nose and the queen’s were by this time more than a yard long, and they did not know where they would stop.

Now Tiidu thought it would not look well to cure the royal family by giving them the raw nuts; he felt that it might arouse suspicion. So he had carefully pounded them into a powder, and divided the powder up into small doses, which were to be put on the tongue and swallowed at once. He gave one of these to the king and another to the queen, and told them that before taking them they were to get into bed in a dark room and not to move for some hours, after which they might be sure that they would come out cured.

The king’s joy was so great at this news that he would gladly have given Tiidu half of his kingdom; but the piper was no longer so greedy of money as he once was, before he had been shipwrecked on the island. If he could get enough to buy a small estate and live comfortably on it for the rest of his life, that was all he now cared for. However, the king ordered his treasure to pay him three times as much as he asked, and with this Tiidu went down to the harbour and engaged a small ship to carry him back to his native country. The wind was fair, and in ten days the coast, which he had almost forgotten, stood clear before him. In a few hours he was standing in his old home, where his father, three sisters, and two brothers gave him a hearty welcome. His mother and his other brothers had died some years before.

When the meeting was over, he began to make inquiries about a small estate that was for sale near the town, and after he had bought it the next thing was to find a wife to share it with him. This did not take long either; and people who were at the wedding feast declared that the best part of the whole day was the hour when Tiidu played to them on the pipes before they bade each other farewell and returned to their homes.

Paperarelloo

Once upon a time there lived a king and a queen who had one son. The king loved the boy very much, but the queen, who was a wicked woman, hated the sight of him; and this was the more unlucky for, when he was twelve years old, his father died, and he was left alone in the world.

Now the queen was very angry because the people, who knew how bad she was, seated her son on the throne instead of herself, and she never rested till she had formed a plan to get him out of the way. Fortunately, however, the young king was wise and prudent, and knew her too well to trust her.

One day, when his mourning was over, he gave orders that everything should be made ready for a grand hunt. The queen pretended to be greatly delighted that he was going to amuse himself once more, and declared that she would accompany him. ‘No, mother, I cannot let you come,’ he answered; ‘the ground is rough, and you are not strong.’ But he might as well have spoken to the winds: when the horn was sounded at daybreak the queen was there with the rest.

All that day they rode, for game was plentiful, but towards evening the mother and son found themselves alone in a part of the country that was strange to them. They wandered on for some time, without knowing where they were going, till they met with a man whom they begged to give them shelter. ‘Come with me,’ said the man gladly, for he was an ogre, and fed on human flesh; and the king and his mother went with him, and he led them to his house. When they got there they found to what a dreadful place they had come, and, falling on their knees, they offered him great sums of money, if he would only spare their lives. The ogre’s heart was moved at the sight of the queen’s beauty, and he promised that he would do her no harm; but he stabbed the boy at once, and binding his body on a horse, turned him loose in the forest.

The ogre had happened to choose a horse which he had bought only the day before, and he did not know it was a magician, or he would not have been so foolish as to fix upon it on this occasion. The horse no sooner had been driven off with the prince’s body on its back than it galloped straight to the home of the fairies, and knocked at the door with its hoof. The fairies heard the knock, but were afraid to open till they had peeped from an upper window to see that it was no giant or ogre who could do them harm. ‘Oh, look, sister!’ cried the first to reach the window, ‘it is a horse that has knocked, and on its back there is bound a dead boy, the most beautiful boy in all the world!’ Then the fairies ran to open the door, and let in the horse and unbound the ropes which fastened the young king on its back. And they gathered round to admire his beauty, and whispered one to the other: ‘We will make him alive again, and will keep him for our brother.’ And so they did, and for many years they all lived together as brothers and sisters.

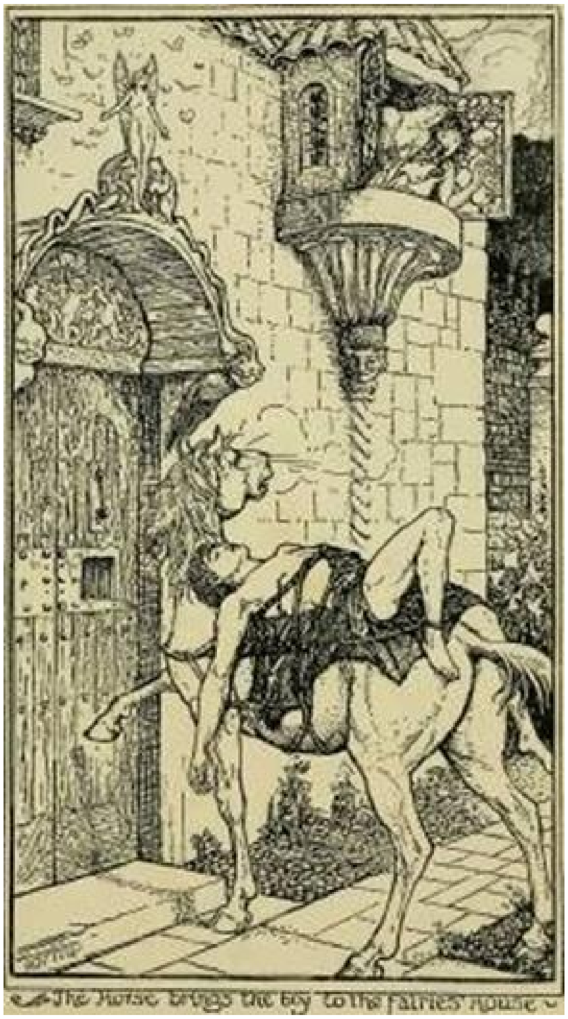

The Horse brings the boy to the fairies' house

By-and-by the boy grew into a man, as boys will, and then the oldest of the fairies said to her sisters: ‘Now I will marry him, and he shall be really your brother.’ So the young king married the fairy, and they lived happily together in the castle; but though he loved his wife he still longed to see the world.

At length this longing grew so strong on him that he could bear it no more; and, calling the fairies together, he said to them: ‘Dear wife and sisters, I must leave you for a time, and go out and see the world. But I shall think of you often, and one day I shall come back to you.’

The fairies wept and begged him to stay, but he would not listen, and at last the eldest, who was his wife, said to him: ‘If you really will abandon us, take this lock of my hair with you; you will find it useful in time of need.’ So she cut off a long curl, and handed it to him.

The prince mounted his horse, and rode on all day without stopping once. Towards evening he found himself in a desert, and, look where he would, there was no such thing as a house or a man to be seen. ‘What am I to do now?’ he thought. ‘If I go to sleep here wild beasts will come and eat me! Yet both I and my horse are worn out, and can go no further.’ Then suddenly he remembered the fairy’s gift, and taking out the curl he said to it: ‘I want a castle here, and servants, and dinner, and everything to make me comfortable tonight; and besides that, I must have a stable and fodder for my horse.’ And in a moment the castle was before him just as he had wished.

In this way he travelled through many countries, till at last he came to a land that was ruled over by a great king. Leaving his horse outside the walls, he clad himself in the dress of a poor man, and went up to the palace. The queen, who was looking out of the window, saw him approaching, and filled with pity sent a servant to ask who he was and what he wanted. ‘I am a stranger here,’ answered the young king, ‘and very poor. I have come to beg for some work.’ ‘We have everybody we want,’ said the queen, when the servant told her the young man’s reply. ‘We have a gate-keeper, and a hall porter, and servants of all sorts in the palace; the only person we have not got is a goose-boy. Tell him that he can be our goose-boy if he likes.’ The youth answered that he was quite content to be goose-boy; and that was how he got his nickname of Paperarello. And in order that no one should guess that he was any better than a goose-boy should be, he rubbed his face and his rags over with mud, and made himself altogether such a disgusting object that every one crossed over to the other side of the road when he was seen coming.

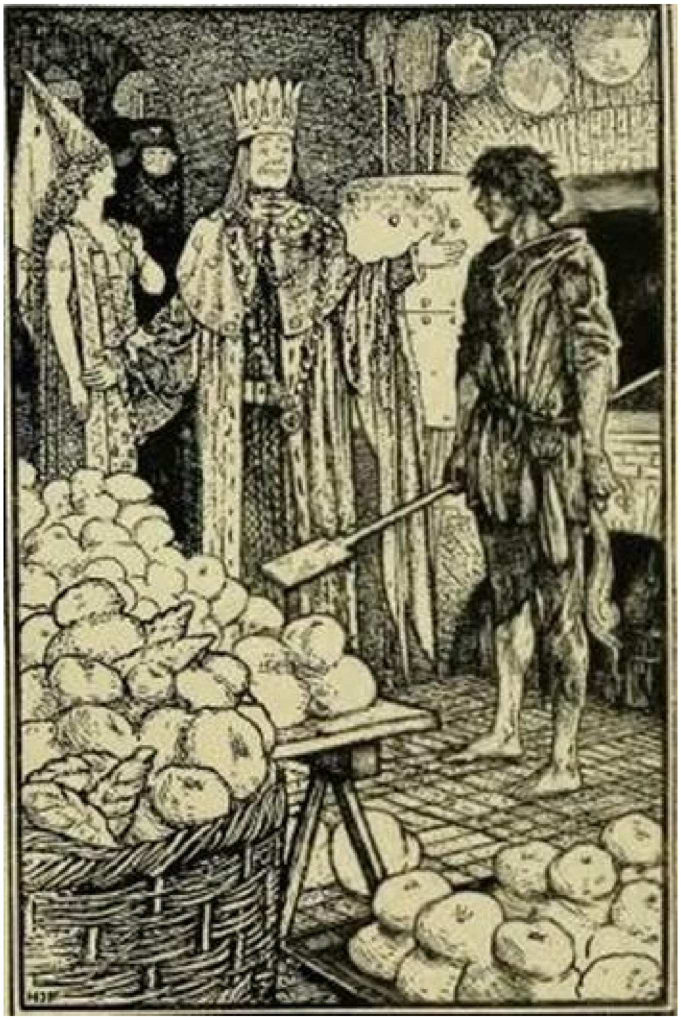

‘Do go and wash yourself, Paperarello!’ said the queen sometimes, for he did his work so well that she took an interest in him. ‘Oh, I should not feel comfortable if I was clean, your Majesty,’ answered he, and went whistling after his geese.

It happened one day that, owing to some accident to the great flour mills which supplied the city, there was no bread to be had, and the king’s army had to do without. When the king heard of it, he sent for the cook, and told him that by the next morning he must have all the bread that the oven, heated seven times over, could bake. ‘But, your Majesty, it is not possible,’ cried the poor man in despair. ‘The mills have only just begun working, and the flour will not be ground till evening, and how can I heat the oven seven times in one night?’ ‘That is your affair,’ answered the King, who, when he took anything into his head, would listen to nothing. ‘If you succeed in baking the bread you shall have my daughter to wife, but if you fail your head will pay for it.’

Now Paperarello, who was passing through the hall where the king was giving his orders, heard these words, and said: ‘Your Majesty, have no fears; I will bake your bread.’ ‘Very well,’ answered the king; ‘but if you fail, you will pay for it with your head!’ and signed that both should leave his presence.

The cook was still trembling with the thought of what he had escaped, but to his surprise Paperarello did not seem disturbed at all, and when night came he went to sleep as usual. ‘Paperarello,’ cried the other servants, when they saw him quietly taking off his clothes, ‘you cannot go to bed; you will need every moment of the night for your work. Remember, the king is not to be played with!’

‘I really must have some sleep first,’ replied Paperarello, stretching himself and yawning; and he flung himself on his bed, and was fast asleep in a moment. In an hour’s time, the servants came and shook him by the shoulder. ‘Paperarello, are you mad?’ said they. ‘Get up, or you will lose your head.’ ‘Oh, do let me sleep a little more, answered he. And this was all he would say, though the servants returned to wake him many times in the night.

At last the dawn broke, and the servants rushed to his room, crying: ‘Paperarello! Paperarello! get up, the king is coming. You have baked no bread, and of a surety he will have your head.’

‘Oh, don’t scream so,’ replied Paperarello, jumping out of bed as he spoke; and taking the lock of hair in his hand, he went into the kitchen. And, behold! there stood the bread piled high — four, five, six ovens full, and the seventh still waiting to be taken out of the oven. The servants stood and stared in surprise, and the king said: ‘Well done, Paperarello, you have won my daughter.’ And he thought to himself: ‘This fellow must really be a magician.’

But when the princess heard what was in store for her she wept bitterly, and declared that never, never would she marry that dirty Paperarello! However, the king paid no heed to her tears and prayers, and before many days were over the wedding was celebrated with great splendour, though the bridegroom had not taken the trouble to wash himself, and was as dirty as before.

When night came he went as usual to sleep among his geese, and the princess went to the king and said: ‘Father, I entreat you to have that horrible Paperarello put to death.’ ‘No, no!’ replied her father, ‘he is a great magician, and before I put him to death, I must first find out the secret of his power, and then — we shall see.’

Soon after this a war broke out, and everybody about the palace was very busy polishing up armour and sharpening swords, for the king and his sons were to ride at the head of the army. Then Paperarello left his geese, and came and told the king that he wished to go to fight also. The king gave him leave, and told him that he might go to the stable and take any horse he liked from the stables. So Paperarello examined the horses carefully, but instead of picking out one of the splendid well-groomed creatures, whose skin shone like satin, he chose a poor lame thing, put a saddle on it, and rode after the other men-at-arms who were attending the king. In a short time he stopped, and said to them: ‘My horse can go no further; you must go on to the war without me, and I will stay here, and make some little clay soldiers, and will play at a battle.’ The men laughed at him for being so childish, and rode on after their master.

Scarcely were they out of sight than Paperarello took out his curl, and wished himself the best armour, the sharpest sword, and the swiftest horse in the world, and the next minute was riding as fast as he could to the field of battle. The fight had already begun, and the enemy was getting the best of it, when Paperarello rode up, and in a moment the fortunes of the day had changed. Right and left this strange knight laid about him, and his sword pierced the stoutest breast-plate, and the strongest shield. He was indeed ‘a host in himself,’ and his foes fled before him thinking he was only the first of a troop of such warriors, whom no one could withstand. When the battle was over, the king sent for him to thank him for his timely help, and to ask what reward he should give him. ‘Nothing but your little finger, your Majesty,’ was his answer; and the king cut off his little finger and gave it to Paperarello, who bowed and hid it in his surcoat. Then he left the field, and when the soldiers rode back they found him still sitting in the road making whole rows of little clay dolls.

The next day the king went out to fight another battle, and again Paperarello appeared, mounted on his lame horse. As on the day before, he halted on the road, and sat down to make his clay soldiers; then a second time he wished himself armour, sword, and a horse, all sharper and better than those he had previously had, and galloped after the rest. He was only just in time: the enemy had almost beaten the king’s army back, and men whispered to each other that if the strange knight did not soon come to their aid, they would be all dead men. Suddenly someone cried: ‘Hold on a little longer, I see him in the distance; and his armour shines brighter, and his horse runs swifter, than yesterday.’ Then they took fresh heart and fought desperately on till the knight came up, and threw himself into the thick of the battle. As before, the enemy gave way before him, and in a few minutes the victory remained with the king.

The first thing that the victor did was to send for the knight to thank him for his timely help, and to ask what gift he could bestow on him in token of gratitude. ‘Your Majesty’s ear,’ answered the knight; and as the king could not go back from his word, he cut it off and gave it to him. Paperarello bowed, fastened the ear inside his surcoat and rode away. In the evening, when they all returned from the battle, there he was, sitting in the road, making clay dolls.

On the third day the same thing happened, and this time he asked for the king’s nose as the reward of his aid. Now, to lose one’s nose, is worse even than losing one’s ear or one’s finger, and the king hesitated as to whether he should comply. However, he had always prided himself on being an honourable man, so he cut off his nose, and handed it to Paperarello. Paperarello bowed, put the nose in his surcoat, and rode away. In the evening, when the king returned from the battle, he found Paperarello sitting in the road making clay dolls. And Paperarello got up and said to him: ‘Do you know who I am? I am your dirty goose-boy, yet you have given me your finger, and your ear, and your nose.’

That night, when the king sat at dinner, Paperarello came in, and laying down the ear, and the nose, and the finger on the table, turned and said to the nobles and courtiers who were waiting on the king: ‘I am the invincible knight, who rode three times to your help, and I also am a king’s son, and no goose-boy as you all think.’ And he went away and washed himself, and dressed himself in fine clothes and entered the hall again, looking so handsome that the proud princess fell in love with him on the spot. But Paperarello took no notice of her, and said to the king: ‘It was kind of you to offer me your daughter in marriage, and for that I thank you; but I have a wife at home whom I love better, and it is to her that I am going. But as a token of farewell, I wish that your ear, and nose, and finger may be restored to their proper places.’ So saying, he bade them all goodbye, and went back to his home and his fairy bride, with whom he lived happily till the end of his life.

The Gifts Of The Magician

Once upon a time there was an old man who lived in a little hut in the middle of a forest. His wife was dead, and he had only one son, whom he loved dearly. Near their hut was a group of birch trees, in which some black-game had made their nests, and the youth had often begged his father's permission to shoot the birds, but the old man always strictly forbade him to do anything of the kind.

One day, however, when the father had gone to a little distance to collect some sticks for the fire, the boy fetched his bow, and shot at a bird that was just flying towards its nest. But he had not taken proper aim, and the bird was only wounded, and fluttered along the ground. The boy ran to catch it, but though he ran very fast, and the bird seemed to flutter along very slowly, he never could quite come up with it; it was always just a little in advance. But so absorbed was he in the chase that he did not notice for some time that he was now deep in the forest, in a place where he had never been before. Then he felt it would be foolish to go any further, and he turned to find his way home.

He thought it would be easy enough to follow the path along which he had come, but somehow it was always branching off in unexpected directions. He looked about for a house where he might stop and ask his way, but there was not a sign of one anywhere, and he was afraid to stand still, for it was cold, and there were many stories of wolves being seen in that part of the forest. Night fell, and he was beginning to start at every sound, when suddenly a magician came running towards him, with a pack of wolves snapping at his heels. Then all the boy's courage returned to him. He took his bow, and aiming an arrow at the largest wolf, shot him through the heart, and a few more arrows soon put the rest to flight. The magician was full of gratitude to his deliverer, and promised him a reward for his help if the youth would go back with him to his house.

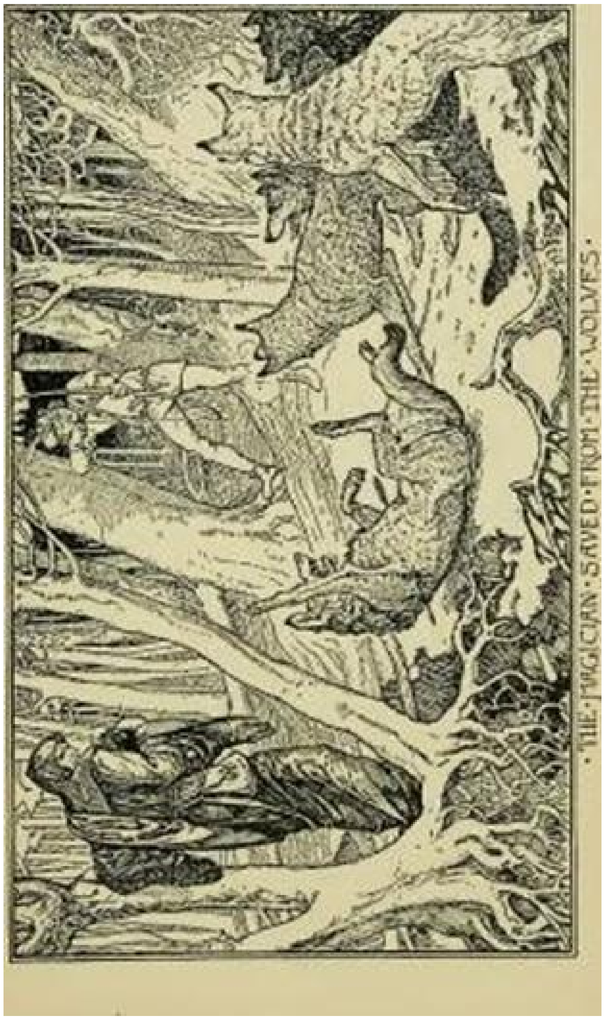

·THE·MAGICIAN·SAVED·FROM·THE·WOLVES·

‘Indeed there is nothing that would be more welcome to me than a night’s lodging,’ answered the boy; ‘I have been wandering all day in the forest, and did not know how to get home again.

‘Come with me, you must be hungry as well as tired,’ said the magician, and led the way to his house, where the guest flung himself on a bed, and went fast asleep. But his host returned to the forest to get some food, for the larder was empty.

While he was absent the housekeeper went to the boy’s room and tried to wake him. She stamped on the floor, and shook him and called to him, telling him that he was in great danger, and must take flight at once. But nothing would rouse him, and if he did ever open his eyes he shut them again directly.

Soon after, the magician came back from the forest, and told the housekeeper to bring them something to eat. The meal was quickly ready, and the magician called to the boy to come down and eat it, but he could not be wakened, and they had to sit down to supper without him. By-and-by the magician went out into the wood again for some more hunting, and on his return he tried afresh to waken the youth. But finding it quite impossible, he went back for the third time to the forest.

While he was absent the boy woke up and dressed himself. Then he came downstairs and began to talk to the housekeeper. The girl had heard how he had saved her master’s life, so she said nothing more about his running away, but instead told him that if the magician offered him the choice of a reward, he was to ask for the horse which stood in the third stall of the stable.

By-and-by the old man came back and they all sat down to dinner. When they had finished the magician said: ‘Now, my son, tell me what you will have as the reward of your courage?’

‘Give me the horse that stands in the third stall of your stable,’ answered the youth. ‘For I have a long way to go before I get home, and my feet will not carry me so far.’

‘Ah! my son,’ replied the magician, ‘it is the best horse in my stable that you want! Will not anything else please you as well?’

But the youth declared that it was the horse, and the horse only, that he desired, and in the end the old man gave way. And besides the horse, the magician gave him a zither, a fiddle, and a flute, saying: ‘If you are in danger, touch the zither; and if no one comes to your aid, then play on the fiddle; but if that brings no help, blow on the flute.’

The youth thanked the magician, and fastening his treasures about him mounted the horse and rode off. He had already gone some miles when, to his great surprise, the horse spoke, and said: ‘It is no use your returning home just now, your father will only beat you. Let us visit a few towns first, and something lucky will be sure to happen to us.’

This advice pleased the boy, for he felt himself almost a man by this time, and thought it was high time he saw the world. When they entered the capital of the country everyone stopped to admire the beauty of the horse. Even the king heard of it, and came to see the splendid creature with his own eyes. Indeed, he wanted directly to buy it, and told the youth he would give any price he liked. The young man hesitated for a moment, but before he could speak, the horse contrived to whisper to him:

‘Do not sell me, but ask the king to take me to his stable, and feed me there; then his other horses will become just as beautiful as I.’

The king was delighted when he was told what the horse had said, and took the animal at once to the stables, and placed it in his own particular stall. Sure enough, the horse had scarcely eaten a mouthful of corn out of the manger, when the rest of the horses seemed to have undergone a transformation. Some of them were old favourites which the king had ridden in many wars, and they bore the signs of age and of service. But now they arched their heads, and pawed the ground with their slender legs as they had been wont to do in days long gone by. The king's heart beat with delight, but the old groom who had had the care of them stood crossly by, and eyed the owner of this wonderful creature with hate and envy. Not a day passed without his bringing some story against the youth to his master, but the king understood all about the matter and paid no attention. At last the groom declared that the young man had boasted that he could find the king's war horse which had strayed into the forest several years ago, and had not been heard of since. Now the king had never ceased to mourn for his horse, so this time he listened to the tale which the groom had invented, and sent for the youth. 'Find me my horse in three days,' said he, 'or it will be the worse for you.'

The youth was thunderstruck at this command, but he only bowed, and went off at once to the stable.

'Do not worry yourself,' answered his own horse. 'Ask the king to give you a hundred oxen, and to let them be killed and cut into small pieces. Then we will start on our journey, and ride till we reach a certain river. There a horse will come up to you, but take no notice of him. Soon another will appear, and this also you must leave alone, but when the third horse shows itself, throw my bridle over it.'

Everything happened just as the horse had said, and the third horse was safely bridled. Then the other horse spoke again: 'The magician's raven will try to eat us as we ride away, but throw it some of the oxen's flesh, and then I will gallop like the wind, and carry you safe out of the dragon's clutches.'

So the young man did as he was told, and brought the horse back to the king.

The old stableman was very jealous, when he heard of it, and wondered what he could do to injure the youth in the eyes of his royal master. At last he hit upon a plan, and told the king that the young man had boasted that he could bring home the king's wife, who had vanished many months before, without leaving a trace behind her. Then the king bade the young man come into his presence, and desired him to fetch the queen home again, as he had boasted he could do. And if he failed, his head would pay the penalty.

The poor youth's heart stood still as he listened. Find the queen? But how was he to do that, when nobody in the palace had been able to do so! Slowly he walked to the stable, and laying his head on his horse's shoulder, he said: 'The king has ordered me to bring his wife home again, and how can I do that when she disappeared so long ago, and no one can tell me anything about her?'

'Cheer up!' answered the horse, 'we will manage to find her. You have only got to ride me back to the same river that we went to yesterday, and I will plunge into it and take my proper shape again. For I am the king’s wife, who was turned into a horse by the magician from whom you saved me.’

Joyfully the young man sprang into the saddle and rode away to the banks of the river. Then he threw himself off, and waited while the horse plunged in. The moment it dipped its head into the water its black skin vanished, and the most beautiful woman in the world was floating on the water. She came smiling towards the youth, and held out her hand, and he took it and led her back to the palace. Great was the king’s surprise and happiness when he beheld his lost wife stand before him, and in gratitude to her rescuer he loaded him with gifts.

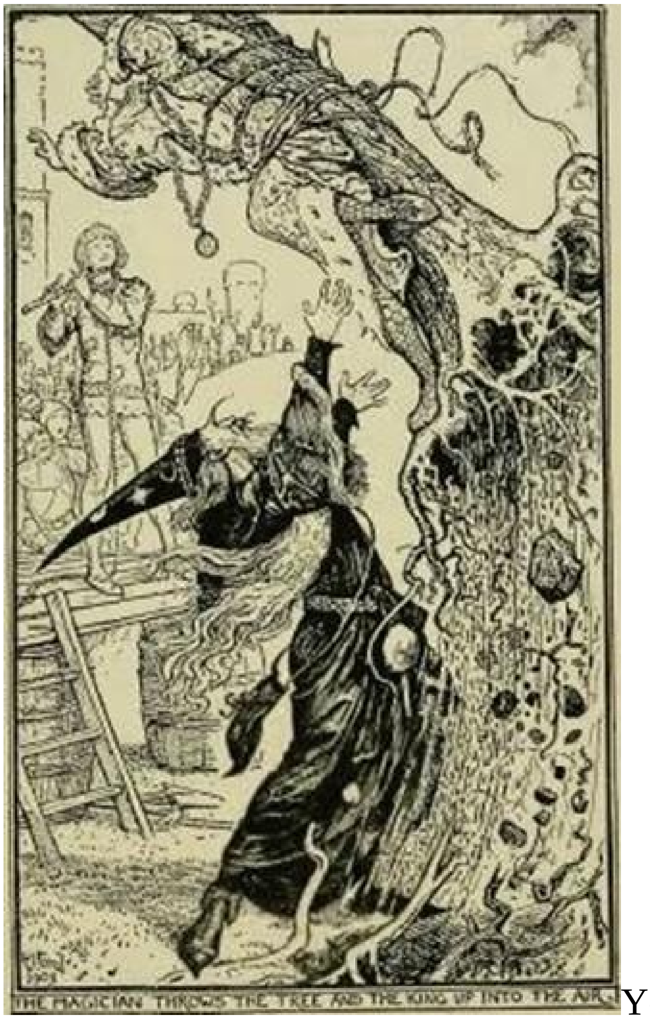

THE MAGICIAN THROWS THE TREE AND THE KING UP INTO THE AIR

You would have thought that after this the poor youth would have been left in peace; but no, his enemy the stableman hated him as much as ever, and laid a new plot for his undoing. This time he presented himself before the king and told him that the youth was so puffed up with what he had done that he had declared he would seize the king’s throne for himself.

At this news the king waxed so furious that he ordered a gallows to be erected at once, and the young man to be hanged without a trial. He was not even allowed to speak in his own defence, but on the very steps of the gallows he sent a message to the king and begged, as a last favour, that he might play a tune on his zither. Leave was given him, and taking the instrument from under his cloak he touched the strings. Scarcely had the first notes sounded than the hangman and his helper began to dance, and the louder grew the music the higher they capered, till at last they cried for mercy. But the youth paid no heed, and the tunes rang out more merrily than before, and by the time the sun set they both sank on the ground exhausted, and declared that the hanging must be put off till to-morrow.

The story of the zither soon spread through the town, and on the following morning the king and his whole court and a large crowd of people were gathered at the foot of the gallows to see the youth hanged. Once more he asked a favour — permission to play on his fiddle, and this the king was graciously pleased to grant. But with the first notes, the leg of every man in the crowd was lifted high, and they danced to the sound of the music the whole day till darkness fell, and there was no light to hang the musician by.

The third day came, and the youth asked leave to play on his flute. ‘No, no,’ said the king, ‘you made me dance all day yesterday, and if I do it again it will certainly be my death. You shall play no more tunes. Quick! the rope round his neck.’

At these words the young man looked so sorrowful that the courtiers said to the king: ‘He is very young to die. Let him play a tune if it will make him happy.’ So, very unwillingly, the king gave him leave; but first he had himself bound to a big fir tree, for fear that he should be made to dance.

When he was made fast, the young man began to blow softly on his flute, and bound though he was, the king’s body moved to the sound, up and down the fir tree till his clothes were in tatters, and the skin nearly rubbed off his back. But the youth had no pity, and went on blowing, till suddenly the old magician appeared and asked: ‘What danger are you in, my son, that you have sent for me?’

‘They want to hang me,’ answered the young man; ‘the gallows are all ready and the hangman is only waiting for me to stop playing.’

‘Oh, I will put that right,’ said the magician; and taking the gallows, he tore it up and flung it into the air, and no one knows where it came down. ‘Who has ordered you to be hanged?’ asked he.

The young man pointed to the king, who was still bound to the fir; and without wasting words the magician took hold of the tree also, and with a mighty heave both fir and man went spinning through the air, and vanished in the clouds after the gallows.

Then the youth was declared to be free, and the people elected him for their king; and the stable helper drowned himself from envy, for, after all, if it had not been for him the young man would have remained poor all the days of his life.

The Strong Prince

Once upon a time there lived a king who was so fond of wine that he could not go to sleep unless he knew he had a great flaskful tied to his bed-post. All day long he drank till he was too stupid to attend to his business, and everything in the kingdom went to rack and ruin. But one day an accident happened to him, and he was struck on the head by a falling bough, so that he fell from his horse and lay dead upon the ground.

His wife and son mourned his loss bitterly, for, in spite of his faults, he had always been kind to them. So they abandoned the crown and forsook their country, not knowing or caring where they went.

At length they wandered into a forest, and being very tired, sat down under a tree to eat some bread that they had brought with them. When they had finished the queen said: ‘My son, I am thirsty; fetch me some water.’

The prince got up at once and went to a brook which he heard gurgling near at hand. He stooped and filled his hat with the water, which he brought to his mother; then he turned and followed the stream up to its source in a rock, where it bubbled out clear and fresh and cold. He knelt down to take a draught from the deep pool below the rock, when he saw the reflection of a sword hanging from the branch of a tree over his head. The young man drew back with a start; but in a moment he climbed the tree, cutting the rope which held the sword, and carried the weapon to his mother.

The queen was greatly surprised at the sight of anything so splendid in such a lonely place, and took it in her hands to examine it closely. It was of curious workmanship, wrought with gold, and on its handle was written: ‘The man who can buckle on this sword will become stronger than other men.’ The queen’s heart swelled with joy as she read these words, and she bade her son lose no time in testing their truth. So he fastened it round his waist, and instantly a glow of strength seemed to run through his veins. He took hold of a thick oak tree and rooted it up as easily as if it had been a weed.

This discovery put new life into the queen and her son, and they continued their walk through the forest. But night was drawing on, and the darkness grew so thick that it seemed as if it could be cut with a knife. They did not want to sleep in the wood, for they were afraid of wolves and other wild beasts, so they groped their way along, hand in hand, till the prince tripped over something which lay across the path. He could not see what it was, but stooped down and tried to lift it. The thing was very heavy, and he thought his back would break under the strain. At last with a great heave he moved it out of the road, and as it fell he knew it was a huge rock. Behind the rock was a cave which it was quite clear was the home of some robbers, though not one of the band was there.

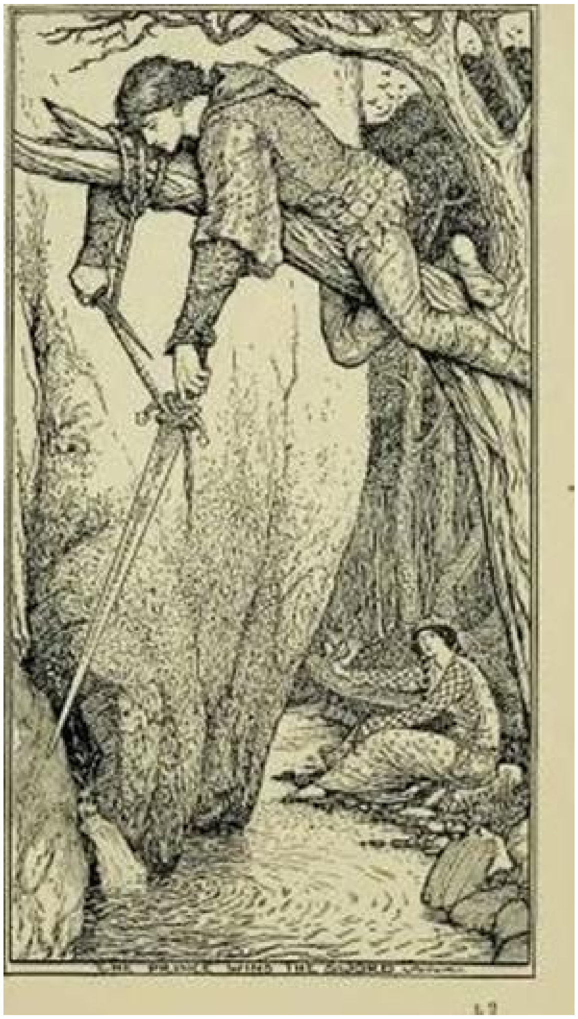
THE PRINCE WINS THE SWORD

Hastily putting out the fire which burned brightly at the back, and bidding his mother come in and keep very still, the prince began to pace up and down, listening for the return of the robbers. But he was very sleepy, and in spite of all his efforts he felt he could not keep awake much longer, when he heard the sound of the robbers returning, shouting and singing as they marched along. Soon the singing ceased, and straining his ears he heard them discussing anxiously what had become of their cave, and why they could not see the fire as usual. ‘This must be the place,’ said a voice, which the prince took to be that of the captain. ‘Yes, I feel the ditch before the entrance. Someone forgot to pile up the fire before we left and it has burnt itself out! But it is all right. Let every man jump across, and as he does so cry out “Hop! I am here.” I will go last. Now begin.’

The man who stood nearest jumped across, but he had no time to give the call which the captain had ordered, for with one swift, silent stroke of the prince’s sword, his head rolled into a corner. Then the young man cried instead, ‘Hop! I am here.’

The second man, hearing the signal, leapt the ditch in confidence, and was met by the same fate, and in a few minutes eleven of the robbers lay dead, and there remained only the captain.

Now the captain had wound round his neck the shawl of his lost wife, and the stroke of the prince’s sword fell harmless. Being very cunning, however, he made no resistance, and rolled over as if he were as dead as the other men. Still, the prince was no fool, and wondered if indeed he was as dead as he seemed to be; but the captain lay so stiff and stark, that at last he was taken in.

The prince next dragged the headless bodies into a chamber in the cave, and locked the door. Then he and his mother ransacked the place for some food, and when they had eaten it they lay down and slept in peace.

With the dawn they were both awake again, and found that, instead of the cave which they had come to the night before, they now were in a splendid castle, full of beautiful rooms. The prince went round all these and carefully locked them up, bidding his mother take care of the keys while he was hunting.

Unfortunately, the queen, like all women, could not bear to think that there was anything which she did not know. So the moment that her son had turned his back, she opened the doors of all the rooms, and peeped in, till she came to the one where the robbers lay. But if the sight of the blood on the ground turned her faint, the sight of the robber captain walking up and down was a greater shock still. She quickly turned the key in the lock, and ran back to the chamber she had slept in.

Soon after her son came in, bringing with him a large bear, which he had killed for supper. As there was enough food to last them for many days, the prince did not hunt the next morning, but, instead, began to explore the castle. He found that a secret way led from it into the forest; and following the path, he reached another castle larger and more splendid than the one belonging to the robbers. He knocked at the door with his fist, and said that he wanted to enter; but the giant, to whom the castle belonged, only answered: ‘I know who you are. I have nothing to do with robbers.’

‘I am no robber,’ answered the prince. ‘I am the son of a king, and I have killed all the band. If you do not open to me at once I will break in the door, and your head shall go to join the others.’

He waited a little, but the door remained shut as tightly as before. Then he just put his shoulder to it, and immediately the wood began to crack. When the giant found that it was no use keeping it shut, he opened it, saying: ‘I see you are a brave youth. Let there be peace between us.’

And the prince was glad to make peace, for he had caught a glimpse of the giant’s beautiful daughter, and from that day he often sought the giant’s house.

Now the queen led a dull life all alone in the castle, and to amuse herself she paid visits to the robber captain, who flattered her till at last she agreed to marry him. But as she was much afraid of her son, she told the robber that the next time the prince went to bathe in the river, he was to steal the sword from its place above the bed, for without it the young man would have no power to punish him for his boldness.

The robber captain thought this good counsel, and the next morning, when the young man went to bathe, he unhooked the sword from its nail and buckled it round his waist. On his return to the castle, the prince found the robber waiting for him on the steps, waving the sword above his head, and knowing that some horrible fate was in store, fell on his knees and begged for mercy. But he might as well have tried to squeeze blood out of a stone. The robber, indeed, granted him his life, but took out both his eyes, which he thrust into the prince’s hand, saying brutally:

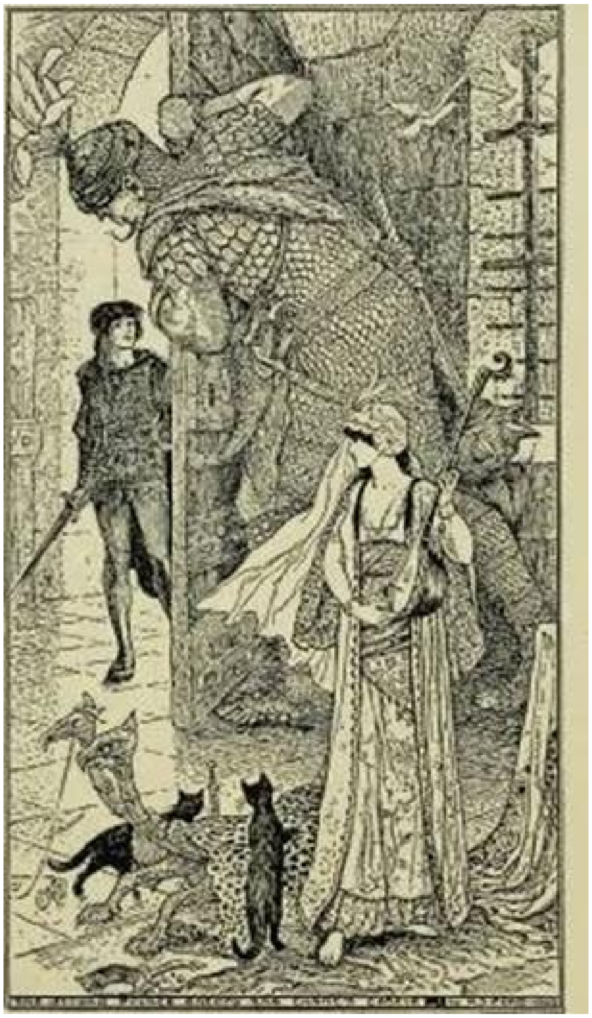

‘Here, you had better keep them! You may find them useful!’

Weeping, the blind youth felt his way to the giant’s house, and told him all the story.

The giant was full of pity for the poor young man, but inquired anxiously what he had done with the eyes. The prince drew them out of his pocket, and silently handed them to the giant, who washed them well, and then put them back in the prince’s head. For three days he lay in utter darkness; then the light began to come back, till soon he saw as well as ever.

But though he could not rejoice enough over the recovery of his eyes, he bewailed bitterly the loss of his sword, and that it should have fallen to the lot of his bitter enemy.

‘Never mind, my friend,’ said the giant, ‘I will get it back for you.’ And he sent for the monkey who was his head servant.

‘Tell the fox and the squirrel that they are to go with you, and fetch me back the prince’s sword,’ ordered he.

The three servants set out at once, one seated on the back of the others, the ape, who disliked walking, being generally on top. Directly they came to the window of the robber captain’s room, the monkey sprang from the backs of the fox and the squirrel, and climbed in. The room was empty, and the sword hanging from a nail. He took it down, and buckling it round his waist, as he had seen the prince do, swung himself down again, and mounting on the backs of his two companions, hastened to his master. The giant bade him give the sword to the prince, who girded himself with it, and returned with all speed to the castle.

‘Come out, you rascal! come out, you villain!’ cried he, ‘and answer to me for the wrong you have done. I will show you who is the master in this house!’

The noise he made brought the robber into the room. He glanced up to where the sword usually hung, but it was gone; and instinctively he looked at the prince’s hand, where he saw it gleaming brightly. In his turn he fell on his knees to beg for mercy, but it was too late. As he had done to the prince, so the prince did to him, and, blinded, he was thrust forth, and fell down a deep hole, where he is to this day. His mother the prince sent back to her father, and never would see her again. After this he returned to the giant, and said to him:

‘My friend, add one more kindness to those you have already heaped on me. Give me your daughter as my wife.’

So they were married, and the wedding feast was so splendid that there was not a kingdom in the world that did not hear of it. And the prince never went back to his father’s throne, but lived peacefully with his wife in the forest, where, if they are not dead, they are living still.

The Treasure Seeker

Once, long ago, in a little town that lay in the midst of high hills and wild forests, a party of shepherds sat one night in the kitchen of the inn talking over old times, and telling of the strange things that had befallen them in their youth.

Presently up spoke the silver-haired Father Martin.

‘Comrades,’ said he, ‘you have had wonderful adventures; but I will tell you something still more astonishing that happened to myself. When I was a young lad I had no home and no one to care for me, and I wandered from village to village all over the country with my knapsack on my back; but as soon as I was old enough I took service with a shepherd in the mountains, and helped him for three years. One autumn evening as we drove the flock homeward ten sheep were missing, and the master bade me go and seek them in the forest. I took my dog with me, but he could find no trace of them, though we searched among the bushes till night fell; and then, as I did not know the country and could not find my way home in the dark, I decided to sleep under a tree. At midnight my dog became uneasy, and began to whine and creep close to me with his tail between his legs; by this I knew that something was wrong, and, looking about, I saw in the bright moonlight a figure standing beside me. It seemed to be a man with shaggy hair, and a long beard which hung down to his knees. He had a garland upon his head, and a girdle of oak-leaves about his body, and carried an uprooted fir-tree in his right hand. I shook like an aspen leaf at the sight, and my spirit quaked for fear. The strange being beckoned with his hand that I should follow him; but as I did not stir from the spot he spoke in a hoarse, grating voice: “Take courage, fainthearted shepherd. I am the Treasure Seeker of the mountain. If you will come with me you shall dig up much gold.”

‘Though I was still deadly cold with terror I plucked up my courage and said: “Get away from me, evil spirit; I do not desire your treasures.”

‘At this the spectre grinned in my face and cried mockingly:

‘“Simpleton! Do you scorn your good fortune? Well, then, remain a ragamuffin all your days.”

‘He turned as if to go away from me, then came back again and said: “Bethink yourself, bethink yourself, rogue. I will fill your knapsack — I will fill your pouch.”

‘“Away from me, monster,” I answered, “I will have nothing to do with you.”

‘When the apparition saw that I gave no heed to him he ceased to urge me, saying only: “Some day you will rue this,” and looked at me sadly. Then he cried: “Listen to what I say, and lay it well to heart, it may be of use to you when you come to your senses. A vast treasure of gold and precious stones lies in safety deep under the earth. At twilight and at high noon it is hidden, but at midnight it may be dug up. For seven hundred years have I watched over it, but now my time has come; it is common property, let him find it who can. So I thought to give it into your hand, having a kindness for you because you feed your flock upon my mountain.”

‘Thereupon the spectre told me exactly where the treasure lay, and how to find it. It might be only yesterday so well do I remember every word he spoke.

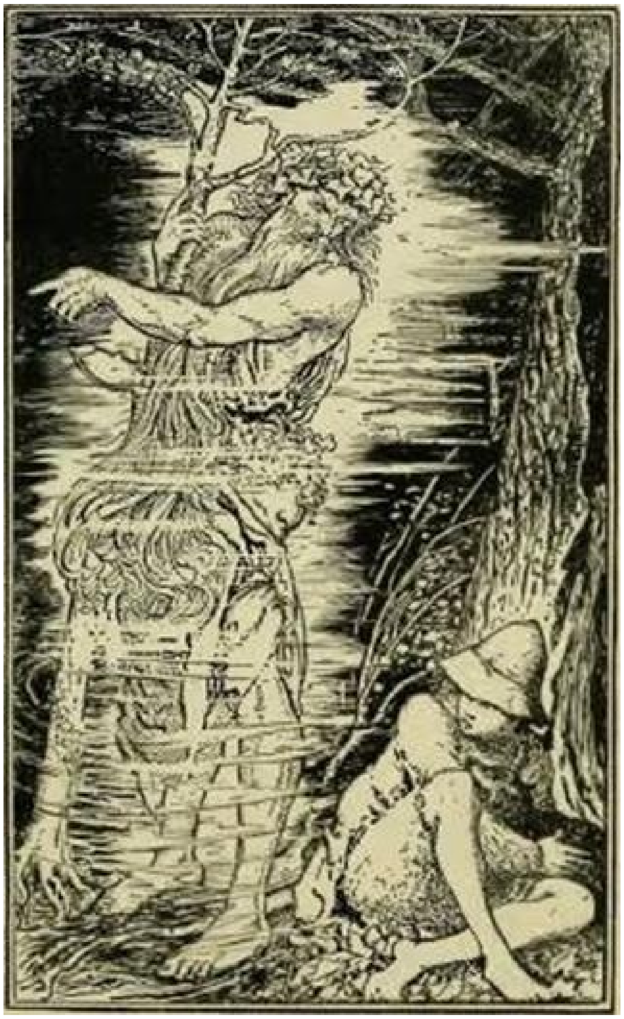

‘“Go towards the little mountains,” said he, “and ask there for the Black King’s Valley, and when you come to a tiny brook follow the stream till you reach the stone bridge beside the saw-mill. Do not cross the bridge, but keep to your right along the bank till a high rock stands before you. A bow-shot from that you will discover a little hollow like a grave.

When you find this hollow dig it out; but it will be hard work, for the earth has been pressed down into it with care. Still, work away till you find solid rock on all sides of you, and soon you will come to a square slab of stone; force it out of the wall, and you will stand at the entrance of the treasure house. Into this opening you must crawl, holding a lamp in your mouth. Keep your hands free lest you knock your nose against a stone, for the way is steep and the stones sharp. If it bruises your knees never mind; you are on the road to fortune. Do not rest till you reach a wide stairway, down which you will go till you come out into a spacious hall, in which there are three doors; two of them stand open, the third is fastened with locks and bolts of iron. Do not go through the door to the right lest you disturb the bones of the lords of the treasure. Neither must you go through the door to the left, it leads to the snake's chamber, where adders and serpents lodge; but open the fast-closed door by means of the well-known spring-root, which you must on no account forget to take with you, or all your trouble will be for naught, for no crowbar or mortal tools will help you. If you want to procure the root ask a wood-seller; it is a common thing for hunters to need, and it is not hard to find. If the door bursts open suddenly with great crackings and groanings do not be afraid, the noise is caused by the power of the magic root, and you will not be hurt. Now trim your lamp that it may not fail you, for you will be nearly blinded by the flash and glitter of the gold and precious stones on the walls and pillars of the vault; but beware how you stretch out a hand towards the jewels! In the midst of the cavern stands a copper chest, in that you will find gold and silver, enough and to spare, and you may help yourself to your heart's content. If you take as much as you can carry you will have sufficient to last your lifetime, and you may return three times; but woe betide you if you venture to come a fourth time. You would have your trouble for your pains, and would be punished for your greediness by falling down the stone steps and breaking your leg. Do not neglect each time to heap back the loose earth which concealed the entrance of the king's treasure chamber."

'As the apparition left off speaking my dog pricked up his ears and began to bark. I heard the crack of a carter's whip and the noise of wheels in the distance, and when I looked again the spectre had disappeared.'

So ended the shepherd's tale; and the landlord who was listening with the rest, said shrewdly:

'Tell us now, Father Martin, did you go to the mountain and find what the spirit promised you; or is it a fable?'

'Nay, nay,' answered the graybeard. 'I cannot tell if the spectre lied, for never a step did I go towards finding the hollow, for two reasons: — one was that my neck was too precious for me to risk it in such a snare as that; the other, that no one could ever tell me where the spring-root was to be found.’

Then Blaize, another aged shepherd, lifted up his voice.

“Tis a pity, Father Martin, that your secret has grown old with you. If you had told it forty years ago truly you would not long have been lacking the spring-root. Even though you will never climb the mountain now, I will tell you, for a joke, how it is to be found. The easiest way to get it is by the help of a black woodpecker. Look, in the spring, where she builds her nest in a hole in a tree, and when the time comes for her brood to fly off block up the entrance to the nest with a hard sod, and lurk in ambush behind the tree till the bird returns to feed her nestlings. When she perceives that she cannot get into her nest she will fly round the tree uttering cries of distress, and then dart off towards the sun-setting. When you see her do this, take a scarlet cloak, or if that be lacking to you, buy a few yards of scarlet cloth, and hurry back to the tree before the woodpecker returns with the spring-root in her beak. So soon as she touches with the root the sod that blocks the nest, it will fly violently out of the hole. Then spread the red cloth quickly under the tree, so that the woodpecker may think it is a fire, and in her terror drop the root. Some people really light a fire and strew spikenard blossoms in it; but that is a clumsy method, for if the flames do not shoot up at the right moment away will fly the woodpecker, carrying the root with her.”

The party had listened with interest to this speech, but by the time it was ended the hour was late, and they went their ways homeward, leaving only one man who had sat unheeded in a corner the whole evening through.

Master Peter Bloch had once been a prosperous innkeeper, and a master-cook; but he had gone steadily down in the world for some time, and was now quite poor.

Formerly he had been a merry fellow, fond of a joke, and in the art of cooking had no equal in the town. He could make fish-jelly, and quince fritters, and even wafer-cakes; and he gilded the ears of all his boars’ heads. Peter had looked about him for a wife early in life, but unluckily his choice fell upon a woman whose evil tongue was well known in the town. Ilse was hated by everybody, and the young folks would go miles out of their way rather than meet her, for she had some ill-word for everyone. Therefore, when Master Peter came along, and let himself be taken in by her boasted skill as a housewife, she jumped at his offer, and they were married the next day. But they had not got home before they began to quarrel. In the joy of his heart Peter had tasted freely of his own good wine, and as the bride hung upon his arm he stumbled and fell, dragging her down with him; whereupon she beat him soundly, and the neighbours said truly that things did not promise well for Master Peter’s comfort. Even when the ill-matched couple were presently blessed with children, his happiness was but short lived, the savage temper of his quarrelsome wife seemed to blight them from the first, and they died like little kids in a cold winter.

Though Master Peter had no great wealth to leave behind him, still it was sad to him to be childless; and he would bemoan himself to his friends, when he laid one baby after another in the grave, saying: ‘The lightning has been among the cherry-blossoms again, so there will be no fruit to grow ripe.’

But, by-and-by, he had a little daughter so strong and healthy that neither her mother’s temper nor her father’s spoiling could keep her from growing up tall and beautiful. Meanwhile the fortunes of the family had changed. From his youth up, Master Peter had hated trouble; when he had money he spent it freely, and fed all the hungry folk who asked him for bread. If his pockets were empty he borrowed of his neighbours, but he always took good care to prevent his scolding wife from finding out that he had done so. His motto was: ‘It will all come right in the end’; but what it did come to was ruin for Master Peter. He was at his wits’ end to know how to earn an honest living, for try as he might ill-luck seemed to pursue him, and he lost one post after another, till at last all he could do was to carry sacks of corn to the mill for his wife, who scolded him well if he was slow about it, and grudged him his portion of food.

This grieved the tender heart of his pretty daughter, who loved him dearly, and was the comfort of his life.

Peter was thinking of her as he sat in the inn kitchen and heard the shepherds talking about the buried treasure, and for her sake he resolved to go and seek for it. Before he rose from the landlord’s arm-chair his plan was made, and Master Peter went home more joyful and full of hope than he had been for many a long day; but on the way he suddenly remembered that he was not yet possessed of the magic spring-root, and he stole into the house with a heavy heart, and threw himself down upon his hard straw bed. He could neither sleep nor rest; but as soon as it was light he got up and wrote down exactly all that was to be done to find the treasure, that he might not forget anything, and when it lay clear and plain before his eyes he comforted himself with the thought that, though he must do the rough work for his wife during one more winter at least, he would not have to tread the path to the mill for the rest of his life. Soon he heard his wife’s harsh voice singing its morning song as she went about her household affairs, scolding her daughter the while. She burst open his door while he was still dressing: ‘Well, Toper!’ was her greeting, ‘have you been drinking all night, wasting money that you steal from my housekeeping? For shame, drunkard!’

Master Peter, who was well used to this sort of talk, did not disturb himself, but waited till the storm blew over, then he said calmly:

‘Do not be annoyed, dear wife. I have a good piece of business in hand which may turn out well for us.’

‘You with a good business?’ cried she, ‘you are good for nothing but talk!’

‘I am making my will,’ said he, ‘that when my hour comes my house may be in order.’

These unexpected words cut his daughter to the heart; she remembered that all night long she had dreamed of a newly dug grave, and at this thought she broke out into loud lamentations. But her mother only cried: ‘Wretch! have you not wasted goods and possessions, and now do you talk of making a will?’

And she seized him like a fury, and tried to scratch out his eyes. But by-and-by the quarrel was patched up, and everything went on as before. From that day Peter saved up every penny that his daughter Lucia gave him on the sly, and bribed the boys of his acquaintance to spy out a black woodpecker’s nest for him. He sent them into the woods and fields, but instead of looking for a nest they only played pranks on him. They led him miles over hill and vale, stock and stone, to find a raven’s brood, or a nest of squirrels in a hollow tree, and when he was angry with them they laughed in his face and ran away. This went on for some time, but at last one of the boys spied out a woodpecker in the meadow-lands among the wood-pigeons, and when he had found her nest in a half-dead alder tree, came running to Peter with the news of his discovery. Peter could hardly believe his good fortune, and went quickly to see for himself if it was really true; and when he reached the tree there certainly was a bird flying in and out as if she had a nest in it. Peter was overjoyed at this fortunate discovery, and instantly set himself to obtain a red cloak. Now in the whole town there was only one red cloak, and that belonged to a man of whom nobody ever willingly asked a favour — Master Hammerling the hangman. It cost Master Peter many struggles before he could bring himself to visit such a person, but there was no help for it, and, little as he liked it, he ended by making his request to the hangman, who was flattered that so respectable a man as Peter should borrow his robe of office, and willingly lent it to him.

Peter now had all that was necessary to secure the magic root; he stopped up the entrance to the nest, and everything fell out exactly as Blaize had foretold. As soon as the woodpecker came back with the root in her beak out rushed Master Peter from behind the tree and displayed the fiery red cloak so adroitly that the terrified bird dropped the root just where it could be easily seen. All Peter’s plans had succeeded, and he actually held in his hand the magic root — that master-key which would unlock all doors, and bring its possessor unheard-of luck. His thoughts now turned to the mountain, and he secretly made preparations for his journey. He took with him only a staff, a strong sack, and a little box which his daughter Lucia had given him.

It happened that on the very day Peter had chosen for setting out, Lucia and her mother went off early to the town, leaving him to guard the house; but in spite of that he was on the point of taking his departure when it occurred to him that it might be as well first to test the much-vaunted powers of the magic root for himself. Dame Ilse had a strong cupboard with seven locks built into the wall of her room, in which she kept all the money she had saved, and she wore the key of it always hung about her neck. Master Peter had no control at all of the money affairs of the household, so the contents of this secret hoard were quite unknown to him, and this seemed to be a good opportunity for finding out what they were. He held the magic root to the keyhole, and to his astonishment heard all the seven locks creaking and turning, the door flew suddenly wide open, and his greedy wife's store of gold pieces lay before his eyes. He stood still in sheer amazement, not knowing which to rejoice over most — this unexpected find, or the proof of the magic root's real power; but at last he remembered that it was quite time to be starting on his journey. So, filling his pockets with the gold, he carefully locked the empty cupboard again and left the house without further delay. When Dame Ilse and her daughter returned they wondered to find the house door shut, and Master Peter nowhere to be seen. They knocked and called, but nothing stirred within but the house cat, and at last the blacksmith had to be fetched to open the door. Then the house was searched from garret to cellar, but no Master Peter was to be found.

'Who knows?' cried Dame Ilse at last, 'the wretch may have been idling in some tavern since early morning.'

Then a sudden thought startled her, and she felt for her keys. Suppose they had fallen into her good-for-nothing husband's hands and he had helped himself to her treasure! But no, the keys were safe in their usual place, and the cupboard looked quite untouched. Mid-day came, then evening, then midnight, and still no Master Peter appeared, and the matter became really serious. Dame Ilse knew right well what a torment she had been to her husband, and remorse caused her the gloomiest forebodings.

'Ah! Lucia,' she cried, 'I greatly fear that your father has done himself a mischief.' And they sat till morning weeping over their own fancies.

As soon as it was light they searched every corner of the house again, and examined every nail in the wall and every beam; but, luckily, Master Peter was not hanging from any of them. After that the neighbours went out with long poles to fish in every ditch and pond, but they found nothing, and then Dame Ilse gave up the idea of ever seeing her husband again and very soon consoled herself, only wondering how the sacks of corn were to be carried to the mill in future. She decided to buy a strong ass to do the work, and having chosen one, and after some bargaining with the owner as to its price, she went to the cupboard in the wall to fetch the money. But what were her feelings when she perceived that every shelf lay empty and bare before her! For a moment she stood bewildered, then broke into such frightful ravings that Lucia ran to her in alarm; but as soon as she heard of the disappearance of the money she was heartily glad, and no longer feared that her father had come to any harm, but understood that he must have gone out into the world to seek his fortune in some new way.

About a month after this, someone knocked at Dame Ilse's door one day, and she went to see if it was a customer for meal; but in stepped a handsome young man, dressed like a duke's son, who greeted her respectfully, and asked after her pretty daughter as if he were an old friend, though she could not remember having ever set eyes upon him before.

However, she invited him to step into the house and be seated while he unfolded his business. With a great air of mystery he begged permission to speak to the fair Lucia, of whose skill in needlework he had heard so much, as he had a commission to give her. Dame Ilse had her own opinion as to what kind of commission it was likely to be — brought by a young stranger to a pretty maiden; however, as the meeting would be under her own eye, she made no objection, but called to her industrious daughter, who left off working and came obediently; but when she saw the stranger she stopped short, blushing, and casting down her eyes. He looked at her fondly, and took her hand, which she tried to draw away, crying:

'Ah! Friedlin, why are you here? I thought you were a hundred miles away. Are you come to grieve me again?'

'No, dearest girl,' answered he; 'I am come to complete your happiness and my own. Since we last met my fortune has utterly changed; I am no longer the poor vagabond that I was then. My rich uncle has died, leaving me money and goods in plenty, so that I dare to present myself to your mother as a suitor for your hand. That I love you I know well; if you can love me I am indeed a happy man.'

Lucia's pretty blue eyes had looked up shyly as he spoke, and now a smile parted her rosy lips; and she stole a glance at her mother to see what she thought about it all; but the dame stood lost in amazement to find that her daughter, whom she could have declared had never been out of her sight, was already well acquainted with the handsome stranger, and quite willing to be his bride. Before she had done staring, this hasty wooer had smoothed his way by covering the shining table with gold pieces as a wedding gift to the bride’s mother, and had filled Lucia’s apron into the bargain; after which the dame made no difficulties, and the matter was speedily settled.

While Ilse gathered up the gold and hid it away safely, the lovers whispered together, and what Friedlin told her seemed to make Lucia every moment more happy and contented.

Now a great hurry-burly began in the house, and preparations for the wedding went on apace. A few days later a heavily laden waggon drove up, and out of it came so many boxes and bales that Dame Ilse was lost in wonder at the wealth of her future son-in-law. The day for the wedding was chosen, and all their friends and neighbours were bidden to the feast. As Lucia was trying on her bridal wreath she said to her mother: ‘This wedding-garland would please me indeed if father Peter could lead me to the church. If only he could come back again! Here we are rolling in riches while he may be nibbling at hunger’s table.’ And the very idea of such a thing made her weep, while even Dame Ilse said:

‘I should not be sorry myself to see him come back — there is always something lacking in a house when the good man is away.’

But the fact was that she was growing quite tired of having no one to scold. And what do you think happened?

On the very eve of the wedding a man pushing a wheelbarrow arrived at the city gate, and paid toll upon a barrel of nails which it contained, and then made the best of his way to the bride’s dwelling and knocked at the door.

The bride herself peeped out of the window to see who it could be, and there stood father Peter! Then there was great rejoicing in the house; Lucia ran to embrace him, and even Dame Ilse held out her hand in welcome, and only said: ‘Rogue, mend your ways,’ when she remembered the empty treasure cupboard. Father Peter greeted the bridegroom, looking at him shrewdly, while the mother and daughter hastened to say all they knew in his favour, and appeared to be satisfied with him as a son-in-law. When Dame Ilse had set something to eat before her husband, she was curious to hear his adventures, and questioned him eagerly as to why he had gone away.

‘God bless my native place,’ said he. ‘I have been marching through the country, and have tried every kind of work, but now I have found a job in the iron trade; only, so far, I have put more into it than I have earned by it. This barrel of nails is my whole fortune, which I wish to give as my contribution towards the bride’s house furnishing.’

This speech roused Dame Ilse to anger, and she broke out into such shrill reproaches that the bystanders were fairly deafened, and Friedlin hastily offered Master Peter a home with Lucia and himself, promising that he should live in comfort, and be always welcome. So Lucia had her heart's desire, and father Peter led her to the church next day, and the marriage took place very happily. Soon afterwards the young people settled in a fine house which Friedlin had bought, and had a garden and meadows, a fishpond, and a hill covered with vines, and were as happy as the day was long. Father Peter also stayed quietly with them, living, as everybody believed, upon the generosity of his rich son-in law. No one suspected that his barrel of nails was the real 'Horn of Plenty,' from which all this prosperity overflowed.

Peter had made the journey to the treasure mountain successfully, without being found out by anybody. He had enjoyed himself by the way, and taken his own time, until he actually reached the little brook in the valley which it had cost him some trouble to find. Then he pressed on eagerly, and soon came to the little hollow in the wood; down he went, burrowing like a mole into the earth; the magic root did its work, and at last the treasure lay before his eyes. You may imagine how gaily Peter filled his sack with as much gold as he could carry, and how he staggered up the seventy-seven steps with a heart full of hope and delight. He did not quite trust the gnome's promises of safety, and was in such haste to find himself once more in the light of day that he looked neither to the right nor the left, and could not afterwards remember whether the walls and pillars had sparkled with jewels or not.

However, all went well — he neither saw nor heard anything alarming; the only thing that happened was that the great iron-barred door shut with a crash as soon as he was fairly outside it, and then he remembered that he had left the magic root behind him, so he could not go back for another load of treasure. But even that did not trouble Peter much; he was quite satisfied with what he had already. After he had faithfully done everything according to Father Martin's instructions, and pressed the earth well back into the hollow, he sat down to consider how he could bring his treasure back to his native place, and enjoy it there, without being forced to share it with his scolding wife, who would give him no peace if she once found out about it. At last, after much thinking, he hit upon a plan. He carried his sack to the nearest village, and there bought a wheelbarrow, a strong barrel, and a quantity of nails. Then he packed his gold into the barrel, covered it well with a layer of nails, hoisted it on to the wheelbarrow with some difficulty, and set off with it upon his homeward way. At one place upon the road he met a handsome young man who seemed by his downcast air to be in some great trouble. Father Peter, who wished everybody to be as happy as he was himself, greeted him cheerfully, and asked where he was going, to which he answered sadly:

'Into the wide world, good father, or out of it, where ever my feet may chance to carry me.’

‘Why out of it?’ said Peter. ‘What has the world been doing to you?’

‘It has done nothing to me, nor I to it,’ he replied. ‘Nevertheless there is not anything left in it for me.’

Father Peter did his best to cheer the young man up, and invited him to sup with him at the first inn they came to, thinking that perhaps hunger and poverty were causing the stranger’s trouble. But when good food was set before him he seemed to forget to eat. So Peter perceived that what ailed his guest was sorrow of heart, and asked him kindly to tell him his story.

‘Where is the good, father?’ said he. ‘You can give me neither help nor comfort.’

‘Who knows?’ answered Master Peter. ‘I might be able to do something for you. Often enough in life help comes to us from the most unexpected quarter.’

The young man, thus encouraged, began his tale.

‘I am,’ said he, ‘a crossbow-man in the service of a noble count, in whose castle I was brought up. Not long ago my master went on a journey, and brought back with him, amongst other treasures, the portrait of a fair maiden so sweet and lovely that I lost my heart at first sight of it, and could think of nothing but how I might seek her out and marry her. The count had told me her name, and where she lived, but laughed at my love, and absolutely refused to give me leave to go in search of her, so I was forced to run away from the castle by night. I soon reached the little town where the maiden dwelt; but there fresh difficulties awaited me. She lived under the care of her mother, who was so severe that she was never allowed to look out of the window, or set her foot outside the door alone, and how to make friends with her I did not know. But at last I dressed myself as an old woman, and knocked boldly at her door. The lovely maiden herself opened it, and so charmed me that I came near forgetting my disguise; but I soon recovered my wits, and begged her to work a fine table-cloth for me, for she is reported to be the best needlewoman in all the country round. Now I was free to go and see her often under the presence of seeing how the work was going oil, and one day, when her mother had gone to the town, I ventured to throw off my disguise, and tell her of my love. She was startled at first; but I persuaded her to listen to me, and I soon saw that I was not displeasing to her, though she scolded me gently for my disobedience to my master, and my deceit in disguising myself. But when I begged her to marry me, she told me sadly that her mother would scorn a penniless wooer, and implored me to go away at once, lest trouble should fall upon her.

‘Bitter as it was to me, I was forced to go when she bade me, and I have wandered about ever since, with grief gnawing at my heart; for how can a masterless man, without money or goods, ever hope to win the lovely Lucia?'

Master Peter, who had been listening attentively, pricked up his ears at the sound of his daughter's name, and very soon found out that it was indeed with her that this young man was so deeply in love.

'Your story is strange indeed,' said he. 'But where is the father of this maiden — why do you not ask him for her hand? He might well take your part, and be glad to have you for his son-in-law.'

'Alas!' said the young man, 'her father is a wandering good-for-naught, who has forsaken wife and child, and gone off — who knows where? The wife complains of him bitterly enough, and scolds my dear maiden when she takes her father's part.'

Father Peter was somewhat amused by this speech; but he liked the young man well, and saw that he was the very person he needed to enable him to enjoy his wealth in peace, without being separated from his dear daughter.

'If you will take my advice,' said he, 'I promise you that you shall marry this maiden whom you love so much, and that before you are many days older.'

'Comrade,' cried Friedlin indignantly, for he thought Peter did but jest with him, 'it is ill done to mock at an unhappy man; you had better find someone else who will let himself be taken in with your fine promises.' And up he sprang, and was going off hastily, when Master Peter caught him by the arm.

'Stay, hothead!' he cried; 'it is no jest, and I am prepared to make good my words.'

Thereupon he showed him the treasure hidden under the nails, and unfolded to him his plan, which was that Friedlin should play the part of the rich son-in-law, and keep a still tongue, that they might enjoy their wealth together in peace.

The young man was overjoyed at this sudden change in his fortunes, and did not know how to thank father Peter for his generosity. They took the road again at dawn the next morning, and soon reached a town, where Friedlin equipped himself as a gallant wooer should. Father Peter filled his pockets with gold for the wedding dowry, and agreed with him that when all was settled he should secretly send him word that Peter might send off the waggon load of house plenishings with which the rich bridegroom was to make such a stir in the little town where the bride lived. As they parted, father Peter's last commands to Friedlin were to guard well their secret, and not even to tell it to Lucia till she was his wife.

Master Peter long enjoyed the profits of his journey to the mountain, and no rumour of it ever got abroad. In his old age his prosperity was so great that he himself did not know how rich he was; but it was always supposed that the money was Friedlin's. He and his beloved wife lived in the greatest happiness and peace, and rose to great honour in the town. And to this day, when the citizens wish to describe a wealthy man, they say: ‘As rich as Peter Bloch’s son-in-law!’

The Cottager And His Cat

Once upon a time there lived an old man and his wife in a dirty, tumble-down cottage, not very far from the splendid palace where the king and queen dwelt. In spite of the wretched state of the hut, which many people declared was too bad even for a pig to live in, the old man was very rich, for he was a great miser, and lucky besides, and would often go without food all day sooner than change one of his beloved gold pieces.

But after a while he found that he had starved himself once too often. He fell ill, and had no strength to get well again, and in a few days he died, leaving his wife and one son behind him.

The night following his death, the son dreamed that an unknown man appeared to him and said: ‘Listen to me; your father is dead and your mother will soon die, and all their riches will belong to you. Half of his wealth is ill-gotten, and this you must give back to the poor from whom he squeezed it. The other half you must throw into the sea. Watch, however, as the money sinks into the water, and if anything should swim, catch it and keep it, even if it is nothing more than a bit of paper.’

Then the man vanished, and the youth awoke.

The remembrance of his dream troubled him greatly. He did not want to part with the riches that his father had left him, for he had known all his life what it was to be cold and hungry, and now he had hoped for a little comfort and pleasure. Still, he was honest and good-hearted, and if his father had come wrongfully by his wealth he felt he could never enjoy it, and at last he made up his mind to do as he had been bidden. He found out who were the people who were poorest in the village, and spent half of his money in helping them, and the other half he put in his pocket. From a rock that jutted right out into the sea he flung it in. In a moment it was out of sight, and no man could have told the spot where it had sunk, except for a tiny scrap of paper floating on the water. He stretched down carefully and managed to reach it, and on opening it found six shillings wrapped inside. This was now all the money he had in the world.

The young man stood and looked at it thoughtfully. ‘Well, I can’t do much with this,’ he said to himself; but, after all, six shillings were better than nothing, and he wrapped them up again and slipped them into his coat.

He worked in his garden for the next few weeks, and he and his mother contrived to live on the fruit and vegetables he got out of it, and then she too died suddenly. The poor fellow felt very sad when he had laid her in her grave, and with a heavy heart he wandered into the forest, not knowing where he was going. By-and-by he began to get hungry, and seeing a small hut in front of him, he knocked at the door and asked if they could give him some milk. The old woman who opened it begged him to come in, adding kindly, that if he wanted a night's lodging he might have it without its costing him anything.

Two women and three men were at supper when he entered, and silently made room for him to sit down by them. When he had eaten he began to look about him, and was surprised to see an animal sitting by the fire different from anything he had ever noticed before. It was grey in colour, and not very big; but its eyes were large and very bright, and it seemed to be singing in an odd way, quite unlike any animal in the forest. 'What is the name of that strange little creature?' asked he. And they answered, 'We call it a cat.'

'I should like to buy it — if it is not too dear,' said the young man; 'it would be company for me.' And they told him that he might have it for six shillings, if he cared to give so much. The young man took out his precious bit of paper, handed them the six shillings, and the next morning bade them farewell, with the cat lying snugly in his cloak.

For the whole day they wandered through meadows and forests, till in the evening they reached a house. The young fellow knocked at the door and asked the old man who opened it if he could rest there that night, adding that he had no money to pay for it. 'Then I must give it to you,' answered the man, and led him into a room where two women and two men were sitting at supper. One of the women was the old man's wife, the other his daughter. He placed the cat on the mantel shelf, and they all crowded round to examine this strange beast, and the cat rubbed itself against them, and held out its paw, and sang to them; and the women were delighted, and gave it everything that a cat could eat, and a great deal more besides.

After hearing the youth's story, and how he had nothing in the world left him except his cat, the old man advised him to go to the palace, which was only a few miles distant, and take counsel of the king, who was kind to everyone, and would certainly be his friend. The young man thanked him, and said he would gladly take his advice; and early next morning he set out for the royal palace.

He sent a message to the king to beg for an audience, and received a reply that he was to go into the great hall, where he would find his Majesty.

The king was at dinner with his court when the young man entered, and he signed to him to come near. The youth bowed low, and then gazed in surprise at the crowd of little black creatures who were running about the floor, and even on the table itself. Indeed, they were so bold that they snatched pieces of food from the King’s own plate, and if he drove them away, tried to bite his hands, so that he could not eat his food, and his courtiers fared no better.

‘What sort of animals are these?’ asked the youth of one of the ladies sitting near him.

‘They are called rats,’ answered the king, who had overheard the question, ‘and for years we have tried some way of putting an end to them, but it is impossible. They come into our very beds.’

At this moment something was seen flying through the air. The cat was on the table, and with two or three shakes a number of rats were lying dead round him. Then a great scuffling of feet was heard, and in a few minutes the hall was clear.

For some minutes the King and his courtiers only looked at each other in astonishment. ‘What kind of animal is that which can work magic of this sort?’ asked he. And the young man told him that it was called a cat, and that he had bought it for six shillings.

And the King answered: ‘Because of the luck you have brought me, in freeing my palace from the plague which has tormented me for many years, I will give you the choice of two things. Either you shall be my Prime Minister, or else you shall marry my daughter and reign after me. Say, which shall it be?’

‘The princess and the kingdom,’ said the young man.

And so it was.

The Prince Who Would Seek Immortality

Once upon a time, in the very middle of the middle of a large kingdom, there was a town, and in the town a palace, and in the palace a king. This king had one son whom his father thought was wiser and cleverer than any son ever was before, and indeed his father had spared no pains to make him so. He had been very careful in choosing his tutors and governors when he was a boy, and when he became a youth he sent him to travel, so that he might see the ways of other people, and find that they were often as good as his own.

It was now a year since the prince had returned home, for his father felt that it was time that his son should learn how to rule the kingdom which would one day be his. But during his long absence the prince seemed to have changed his character altogether. From being a merry and light-hearted boy, he had grown into a gloomy and thoughtful man. The king knew of nothing that could have produced such an alteration. He vexed himself about it from morning till night, till at length an explanation occurred to him — the young man was in love!

Now the prince never talked about his feelings — for the matter of that he scarcely talked at all; and the father knew that if he was to come to the bottom of the prince’s dismal face, he would have to begin. So one day, after dinner, he took his son by the arm and led him into another room, hung entirely with the pictures of beautiful maidens, each one more lovely than the other.

‘My dear boy,’ he said, ‘you are very sad; perhaps after all your wanderings it is dull for you here all alone with me. It would be much better if you would marry, and I have collected here the portraits of the most beautiful women in the world of a rank equal to your own. Choose which among them you would like for a wife, and I will send an embassy to her father to ask for her hand.’

‘Alas! your Majesty,’ answered the prince, ‘it is not love or marriage that makes me so gloomy; but the thought, which haunts me day and night, that all men, even kings, must die. Never shall I be happy again till I have found a kingdom where death is unknown. And I have determined to give myself no rest till I have discovered the Land of Immortality.

The old king heard him with dismay; things were worse than he thought. He tried to reason with his son, and told him that during all these years he had been looking forward to his return, in order to resign his throne and its cares, which pressed so heavily upon him. But it was in vain that he talked; the prince would listen to nothing, and the following morning buckled on his sword and set forth on his journey.

He had been travelling for many days, and had left his fatherland behind him, when close to the road he came upon a huge tree, and on its topmost bough an eagle was sitting shaking the branches with all his might. This seemed so strange and so unlike an eagle, that the prince stood still with surprise, and the bird saw him and flew to the ground. The moment its feet touched the ground he changed into a king.

‘Why do you look so astonished?’ he asked.

‘I was wondering why you shook the boughs so fiercely,’ answered the prince.

‘I am condemned to do this, for neither I nor any of my kindred can die till I have rooted up this great tree,’ replied the king of the eagles. ‘But it is now evening, and I need work no more to-day. Come to my house with me, and be my guest for the night.’

The prince accepted gratefully the eagle’s invitation, for he was tired and hungry. They were received at the palace by the king’s beautiful daughter, who gave orders that dinner should be laid for them at once. While they were eating, the eagle questioned his guest about his travels, and if he was wandering for pleasure’s sake, or with any special aim. Then the prince told him everything, and how he could never turn back till he had discovered the Land of Immortality.

‘Dear brother,’ said the eagle, ‘you have discovered it already, and it rejoices my heart to think that you will stay with us. Have you not just heard me say that death has no power either over myself or any of my kindred till that great tree is rooted up? It will take me six hundred years’ hard work to do that; so marry my daughter and let us all live happily together here. After all, six hundred years is an eternity!’

‘Ah, dear king,’ replied the young man, ‘your offer is very tempting! But at the end of six hundred years we should have to die, so we should be no better off! No, I must go on till I find the country where there is no death at all.’

Then the princess spoke, and tried to persuade the guest to change his mind, but he sorrowfully shook his head. At length, seeing that his resolution was firmly fixed, she took from a cabinet a little box which contained her picture, and gave it to him saying:

‘As you will not stay with us, prince, accept this box, which will sometimes recall us to your memory. If you are tired of travelling before you come to the Land of Immortality, open this box and look at my picture, and you will be borne along either on earth or in the air, quick as thought, or swift as the whirlwind.’

The prince thanked her for her gift, which he placed in his tunic, and sorrowfully bade the eagle and his daughter farewell.

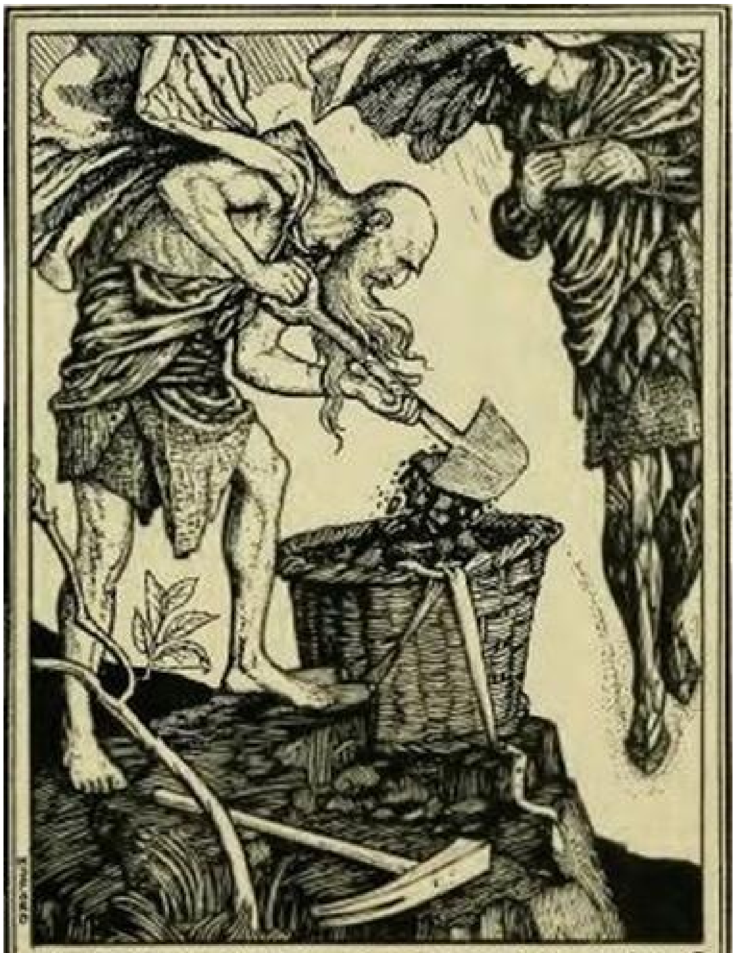

The Baldheaded Man on The Mountain

Never was any present in the world as useful as that little box, and many times did he bless the kind thought of the princess. One evening it had carried him to the top of a high mountain, where he saw a man with a bald head, busily engaged in digging up spadefuls of earth and throwing them in a basket. When the basket was full he took it away and returned with an empty one, which he likewise filled. The prince stood and watched him for a little, till the bald-headed man looked up and said to him: ‘Dear brother, what surprises you so much?’

‘I was wondering why you were filling the basket,’ replied the prince.

‘Oh!’ replied the man, ‘I am condemned to do this, for neither I nor any of my family can die till I have dug away the whole of this mountain and made it level with the plain. But, come, it is almost dark, and I shall work no longer.’ And he plucked a leaf from a tree close by, and from a rough digger he was changed into a stately bald-headed king. ‘Come home with me,’ he added; ‘you must be tired and hungry, and my daughter will have supper ready for us.’ The prince accepted gladly, and they went back to the palace, where the bald-headed king’s daughter, who was still more beautiful than the other princess, welcomed them at the door and led the way into a large hall and to a table covered with silver dishes. While they were eating, the bald-headed king asked the prince how he had happened to wander so far, and the young man told him all about it, and how he was seeking the Land of Immortality. ‘You have found it already,’ answered the king, ‘for, as I said, neither I nor my family can die till I have levelled this great mountain; and that will take full eight hundred years longer. Stay here with us and marry my daughter. Eight hundred years is surely long enough to live.’

‘Oh, certainly,’ answered the prince; ‘but, all the same, I would rather go and seek the land where there is no death at all.’

So next morning he bade them farewell, though the princess begged him to stay with all her might; and when she found that she could not persuade him she gave him as a remembrance a gold ring. This ring was still more useful than the box, because when one wished oneself at any place one was there directly, without even the trouble of flying to it through the air. The prince put it on his finger, and thanking her heartily, went his way.

He walked on for some distance, and then he recollected the ring and thought he would try if the princess had spoken truly as to its powers. ‘I wish I was at the end of the world,’ he said, shutting his eyes, and when he opened them he was standing in a street full of marble palaces. The men who passed him were tall and strong, and their clothes were magnificent. He stopped some of them and asked in all the twenty-seven languages he knew what was the name of the city, but no one answered him. Then his heart sank within him; what should he do in this strange place if nobody could understand anything? he said. Suddenly his eyes fell upon a man dressed after the fashion of his native country, and he ran up to him and spoke to him in his own tongue. ‘What city is this, my friend?’ he inquired.

‘It is the capital city of the Blue Kingdom,’ replied the man, ‘but the king himself is dead, and his daughter is now the ruler.’

With this news the prince was satisfied, and begged his countryman to show him the way to the young queen’s palace. The man led him through several streets into a large square, one side of which was occupied by a splendid building that seemed borne up on slender pillars of soft green marble. In front was a flight of steps, and on these the queen was sitting wrapped in a veil of shining silver mist, listening to the complaints of her people and dealing out justice. When the prince came up she saw directly that he was no ordinary man, and telling her chamberlain to dismiss the rest of her petitioners for that day, she signed to the prince to follow her into the palace. Luckily she had been taught his language as a child, so they had no difficulty in talking together.

The prince told all his story and how he was journeying in search of the Land of Immortality. When he had finished, the princess, who had listened attentively, rose, and taking his arm, led him to the door of another room, the floor of which was made entirely of needles, stuck so close together that there was not room for a single needle more.

‘Prince,’ she said, turning to him, ‘you see these needles? Well, know that neither I nor any of my family can die till I have worn out these needles in sewing. It will take at least a thousand years for that. Stay here, and share my throne; a thousand years is long enough to live!’

‘Certainly,’ answered he; ‘still, at the end of the thousand years I should have to die! No, I must find the land where there is no death.’

The queen did all she could to persuade him to stay, but as her words proved useless, at length she gave it up. Then she said to him: ‘As you will not stay, take this little golden rod as a remembrance of me. It has the power to become anything you wish it to be, when you are in need.’

So the prince thanked her, and putting the rod in his pocket, went his way.

Scarcely had he left the town behind him when he came to a broad river which no man might pass, for he was standing at the end of the world, and this was the river which flowed round it. Not knowing what to do next, he walked a little distance up the bank, and there, over his head, a beautiful city was floating in the air. He longed to get to it, but how? neither road nor bridge was anywhere to be seen, yet the city drew him upwards, and he felt that here at last was the country which he sought. Suddenly he remembered the golden rod which the mist-veiled queen had given him. With a beating heart he flung it to the ground, wishing with all his might that it should turn into a bridge, and fearing that, after all, this might prove beyond its power. But no, instead of the rod, there stood a golden ladder, leading straight up to the city of the air. He was about to enter the golden gates, when there sprang at him a wondrous beast, whose like he had never seen. ‘Out sword from the sheath,’ cried the prince, springing back with a cry. And the sword leapt from the scabbard and cut off some of the monster’s heads, but others grew again directly, so that the prince, pale with terror, stood where he was, calling for help, and put his sword back in the sheath again.

The queen of the city heard the noise and looked from her window to see what was happening. Summoning one of her servants, she bade him go and rescue the stranger, and bring him to her. The prince thankfully obeyed her orders, and entered her presence.

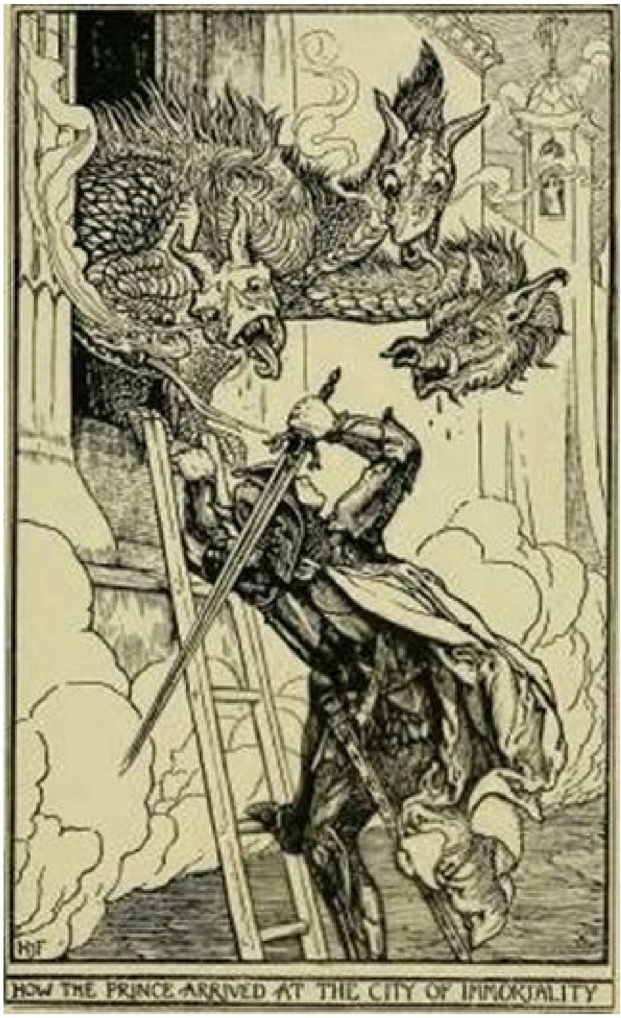

HOW THE PRINCE ARRIVED AT THE CITY OF IMMORTALITY

The moment she looked at him, the queen also felt that he was no ordinary man, and she welcomed him graciously, and asked him what had brought him to the city. In answer the prince told all his story, and how he had travelled long and far in search of the Land of Immortality.

‘You have found it,’ said she, ‘for I am queen over life and over death. Here you can dwell among the immortals.’

A thousand years had passed since the prince first entered the city, but they had flown so fast that the time seemed no more than six months. There had not been one instant of the thousand years that the prince was not happy till one night when he dreamed of his father and mother. Then the longing for his home came upon him with a rush, and in the morning he told the Queen of the Immortals that he must go and see his father and mother once more. The queen stared at him with amazement, and cried: ‘Why, prince, are you out of your senses? It is more than eight hundred years since your father and mother died! There will not even be their dust remaining.’

‘I must go all the same,’ said he.

‘Well, do not be in a hurry,’ continued the queen, understanding that he would not be prevented. ‘Wait till I make some preparations for your journey.’ So she unlocked her great treasure chest, and took out two beautiful flasks, one of gold and one of silver, which she hung round his neck. Then she showed him a little trap-door in one corner of the room, and said: ‘Fill the silver flask with this water, which is below the trap-door. It is enchanted, and whoever you sprinkle with the water will become a dead man at once, even if he had lived a thousand years. The golden flask you must fill with the water here,’ she added, pointing to a well in another corner. ‘It springs from the rock of eternity; you have only to sprinkle a few drops on a body and it will come to life again, if it had been a thousand years dead.’

The prince thanked the queen for her gifts, and, bidding her farewell, went on his journey.

He soon arrived in the town where the mist-veiled queen reigned in her palace, but the whole city had changed, and he could scarcely find his way through the streets. In the palace itself all was still, and he wandered through the rooms without meeting anyone to stop him. At last he entered the queen’s own chamber, and there she lay, with her embroidery still in her hands, fast asleep. He pulled at her dress, but she did not waken. Then a dreadful idea came over him, and he ran to the chamber where the needles had been kept, but it was quite empty. The queen had broken the last over the work she held in her hand, and with it the spell was broken too, and she lay dead.

Quick as thought the prince pulled out the golden flask, and sprinkled some drops of the water over the queen. In a moment she moved gently, and raising her head, opened her eyes.

‘Oh, my dear friend, I am so glad you wakened me; I must have slept a long while!’

‘You would have slept till eternity,’ answered the prince, ‘if I had not been here to waken you.’

At these words the queen remembered about the needles. She knew now that she had been dead, and that the prince had restored her to life. She gave him thanks from her heart for what he had done, and vowed she would repay him if she ever got a chance.

The prince took his leave, and set out for the country of the bald-headed king. As he drew near the place he saw that the whole mountain had been dug away, and that the king was lying dead on the ground, his spade and bucket beside him. But as soon as the water from the golden flask touched him he yawned and stretched himself, and slowly rose to his feet. ‘Oh, my dear friend, I am so glad to see you,’ cried he, ‘I must have slept a long while!’

‘You would have slept till eternity if I had not been here to waken you,’ answered the prince. And the king remembered the mountain, and the spell, and vowed to repay the service if he ever had a chance.

Further along the road which led to his old home the prince found the great tree torn up by its roots, and the king of the eagles sitting dead on the ground, with his wings outspread as if for flight. A flutter ran through the feathers as the drops of water fell on them, and the eagle lifted his beak from the ground and said: ‘Oh, how long I must have slept! How can I thank you for having awakened me, my dear, good friend!’

‘You would have slept till eternity if I had not been here to waken you’; answered the prince. Then the king remembered about the tree, and knew that he had been dead, and promised, if ever he had the chance, to repay what the prince had done for him.

At last he reached the capital of his father’s kingdom, but on reaching the place where the royal palace had stood, instead of the marble galleries where he used to play, there lay a great sulphur lake, its blue flames darting into the air. How was he to find his father and mother, and bring them back to life, if they were lying at the bottom of that horrible water? He turned away sadly and wandered back into the streets, hardly knowing where he was going; when a voice behind him cried: ‘Stop, prince, I have caught you at last! It is a thousand years since I first began to seek you.’ And there beside him stood the old, white-bearded, figure of Death. Swiftly he drew the ring from his finger, and the king of the eagles, the bald-headed king, and the mist-veiled queen, hastened to his rescue. In an instant they had seized upon Death and held him tight, till the prince should have time to reach the Land of Immortality. But they did not know how quickly Death could fly, and the prince had only one foot across the border, when he felt the other grasped from behind, and the voice of Death calling: ‘Halt! now you are mine.’

The Queen of the Immortals was watching from her window, and cried to Death that he had no power in her kingdom, and that he must seek his prey elsewhere.

‘Quite true,’ answered Death; ‘but his foot is in my kingdom, and that belongs to me!’

‘At any rate half of him is mine,’ replied the Queen, ‘and what good can the other half do you? Half a man is no use, either to you or to me! But this once I will allow you to cross into my kingdom, and we will decide by a wager whose he is.’

And so it was settled. Death stepped across the narrow line that surrounds the

Land of Immortality, and the queen proposed the wager which was to decide the prince's fate. 'I will throw him up into the sky,' she said, 'right to the back of the morning star, and if he falls down into this city, then he is mine. But if he should fall outside the walls, he shall belong to you.'

In the middle of the city was a great open square, and here the queen wished the wager to take place. When all was ready, she put her foot under the foot of the prince and swung him into the air. Up, up, he went, high amongst the stars, and no man's eyes could follow him. Had she thrown him up straight? the queen wondered anxiously, for, if not, he would fall outside the walls, and she would lose him for ever. The moments seemed long while she and Death stood gazing up into the air, waiting to know whose prize the prince would be. Suddenly they both caught sight of a tiny speck no bigger than a wasp, right up in the blue. Was he coming straight? No! Yes! But as he was nearing the city, a light wind sprang up, and swayed him in the direction of the wall. Another second and he would have fallen half over it, when the queen sprang forward, seized him in her arms, and flung him into the castle. Then she commanded her servants to cast Death out of the city, which they did, with such hard blows that he never dared to show his face again in the Land of Immortality.

The Stone-Cutter

Once upon a time there lived a stone-cutter, who went every day to a great rock in the side of a big mountain and cut out slabs for gravestones or for houses. He understood very well the kinds of stones wanted for the different purposes, and as he was a careful workman he had plenty of customers. For a long time he was quite happy and contented, and asked for nothing better than what he had.

Now in the mountain dwelt a spirit which now and then appeared to men, and helped them in many ways to become rich and prosperous. The stone-cutter, however, had never seen this spirit, and only shook his head, with an unbelieving air, when anyone spoke of it. But a time was coming when he learned to change his opinion.

One day the stone-cutter carried a gravestone to the house of a rich man, and saw there all sorts of beautiful things, of which he had never even dreamed. Suddenly his daily work seemed to grow harder and heavier, and he said to himself: ‘Oh, if only I were a rich man, and could sleep in a bed with silken curtains and golden tassels, how happy I should be!’

And a voice answered him: ‘Your wish is heard; a rich man you shall be!’

At the sound of the voice the stone-cutter looked round, but could see nobody. He thought it was all his fancy, and picked up his tools and went home, for he did not feel inclined to do any more work that day. But when he reached the little house where he lived, he stood still with amazement, for instead of his wooden hut was a stately palace filled with splendid furniture, and most splendid of all was the bed, in every respect like the one he had envied. He was nearly beside himself with joy, and in his new life the old one was soon forgotten.

It was now the beginning of summer, and each day the sun blazed more fiercely. One morning the heat was so great that the stone-cutter could scarcely breathe, and he determined he would stay at home till the evening. He was rather dull, for he had never learned how to amuse himself, and was peeping through the closed blinds to see what was going on in the street, when a little carriage passed by, drawn by servants dressed in blue and silver. In the carriage sat a prince, and over his head a golden umbrella was held, to protect him from the sun’s rays.

‘Oh, if I were only a prince!’ said the stone-cutter to himself, as the carriage vanished round the corner. ‘Oh, if I were only a prince, and could go in such a carriage and have a golden umbrella held over me, how happy I should be!’

And the voice of the mountain spirit answered: ‘Your wish is heard; a prince you shall be.’

And a prince he was. Before his carriage rode one company of men and another behind it; servants dressed in scarlet and gold bore him along, the coveted umbrella was held over his head, everything heart could desire was his. But yet it was not enough. He looked round still for something to wish for, and when he saw that in spite of the water he poured on his grass the rays of the sun scorched it, and that in spite of the umbrella held over his head each day his face grew browner and browner, he cried in his anger: ‘The sun is mightier than I; oh, if I were only the sun!’

And the mountain spirit answered: ‘Your wish is heard; the sun you shall be.’

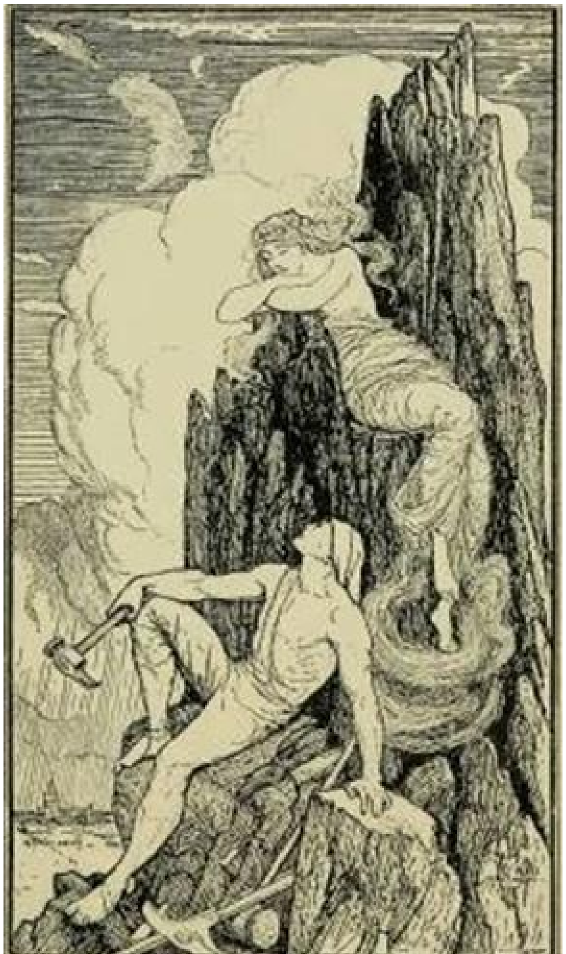

THE STONE-CUTTER BECOMES HIMSELF AGAIN

And the sun he was, and felt himself proud in his power. He shot his beams above and below, on earth and in heaven; he burnt up the grass in the fields and scorched the faces of princes as well as of poorer folk. But in a short time he began to grow tired of his might, for there seemed nothing left for him to do. Discontent once more filled his soul, and when a cloud covered his face, and hid the earth from him, he cried in his anger: ‘Does the cloud hold captive my rays, and is it mightier than I? Oh, that I were a cloud, and mightier than any!’

And the mountain spirit answered: ‘Your wish is heard; a cloud you shall be!’

And a cloud he was, and lay between the sun and the earth. He caught the sun’s beams and held them, and to his joy the earth grew green again and flowers blossomed. But that was not enough for him, and for days and weeks he poured forth rain till the rivers overflowed their banks, and the crops of rice stood in water. Towns and villages were destroyed by the power of the rain, only the great rock on the mountain side remained unmoved. The cloud was amazed at the sight, and cried in wonder: ‘Is the rock, then, mightier than I? Oh, if I were only the rock!’

And the mountain spirit answered: ‘Your wish is heard; the rock you shall be!

And the rock he was, and gloried in his power. Proudly he stood, and neither the heat of the sun nor the force of the rain could move him. ‘This is better than all!’ he said to himself. But one day he heard a strange noise at his feet, and when he looked down to see what it could be, he saw a stone-cutter driving tools into his surface. Even while he looked a trembling feeling ran all through him, and a great block broke off and fell upon the ground. Then he cried in his wrath: ‘Is a mere child of earth mightier than a rock? Oh, if I were only a man!’

And the mountain spirit answered: ‘Your wish is heard. A man once more you shall be!’

And a man he was, and in the sweat of his brow he toiled again at his trade of stone-cutting. His bed was hard and his food scanty, but he had learned to be satisfied with it, and did not long to be something or somebody else. And as he never asked for things he had not got, or desired to be greater and mightier than other people, he was happy at last, and heard the voice of the mountain spirit no longer.

The Gold-Bearded Man

Once upon a time there lived a great king who had a wife and one son whom he loved very much. The boy was still young when, one day, the king said to his wife: ‘I feel that the hour of my death draws near, and I want you to promise that you will never take another husband but will give up your life to the care of our son.’

The queen burst into tears at these words, and sobbed out that she would never, never marry again, and that her son’s welfare should be her first thought as long as she lived. Her promise comforted the troubled heart of the king, and a few days after he died, at peace with himself and with the world.

But no sooner was the breath out of his body, than the queen said to herself, ‘To promise is one thing, and to keep is quite another.’ And hardly was the last spadeful of earth flung over the coffin than she married a noble from a neighbouring country, and got him made king instead of the young prince. Her new husband was a cruel, wicked man, who treated his stepson very badly, and gave him scarcely anything to eat, and only rags to wear; and he would certainly have killed the boy but for fear of the people.

Now by the palace grounds there ran a brook, but instead of being a water-brook it was a milk-brook, and both rich and poor flocked to it daily and drew as much milk as they chose. The first thing the new king did when he was seated on the throne, was to forbid anyone to go near the brook, on pain of being seized by the watchmen. And this was purely spite, for there was plenty of milk for everybody.

For some days no one dared venture near the banks of the stream, but at length some of the watchmen noticed that early in the mornings, just at dawn, a man with a gold beard came down to the brook with a pail, which he filled up to the brim with milk, and then vanished like smoke before they could get near enough to see who he was. So they went and told the king what they had seen.

At first the king would not believe their story, but as they persisted it was quite true, he said that he would go and watch the stream that night himself. With the earliest streaks of dawn the gold-bearded man appeared, and filled his pail as before. Then in an instant he had vanished, as if the earth had swallowed him up.

The king stood staring with eyes and mouth open at the place where the man had disappeared. He had never seen him before, that was certain; but what mattered much more was how to catch him, and what should be done with him when he was caught? He would have a cage built as a prison for him, and everyone would talk of it, for in other countries thieves were put in prison, and it was long indeed since any king had used a cage. It was all very well to plan, and even to station a watchman behind every bush, but it was of no use, for the man was never caught. They would creep up to him softly on the grass, as he was stooping to fill his pail, and just as they stretched out their hands to seize him, he vanished before their eyes. Time after time this happened, till the king grew mad with rage, and offered a large reward to anyone who could tell him how to capture his enemy.

The first person that came with a scheme was an old soldier who promised the king that if he would only put some bread and bacon and a flask of wine on the bank of the stream, the gold-bearded man would be sure to eat and drink, and they could shake some powder into the wine, which would send him to sleep at once. After that there was nothing to do but to shut him in the cage.

This idea pleased the king, and he ordered bread and bacon and a flask of drugged wine to be placed on the bank of the stream, and the watchers to be redoubled. Then, full of hope, he awaited the result.

Everything turned out just as the soldier had said. Early next morning the gold-bearded man came down to the brook, ate, drank, and fell sound asleep, so that the watchers easily bound him, and carried him off to the palace. In a moment the king had him fast in the golden cage, and showed him, with ferocious joy, to the strangers who were visiting his court. The poor captive, when he awoke from his drunken sleep, tried to talk to them, but no one would listen to him, so he shut himself up altogether, and the people who came to stare took him for a dumb man of the woods. He wept and moaned to himself all day, and would hardly touch food, though, in dread that he should die and escape his tormentors, the king ordered his head cook to send him dishes from the royal table.

The gold-bearded man had been in captivity about a month, when the king was forced to make war upon a neighbouring country, and left the palace, to take command of his army. But before he went he called his stepson to him and said:

‘Listen, boy, to what I tell you. While I am away I trust the care of my prisoner to you. See that he has plenty to eat and drink, but be careful that he does not escape, or even walk about the room. If I return and find him gone, you will pay for it by a terrible death.’

The young prince was thankful that his stepfather was going to the war, and secretly hoped he might never come back. Directly he had ridden off the boy went to the room where the cage was kept, and never left it night and day. He even played his games beside it.

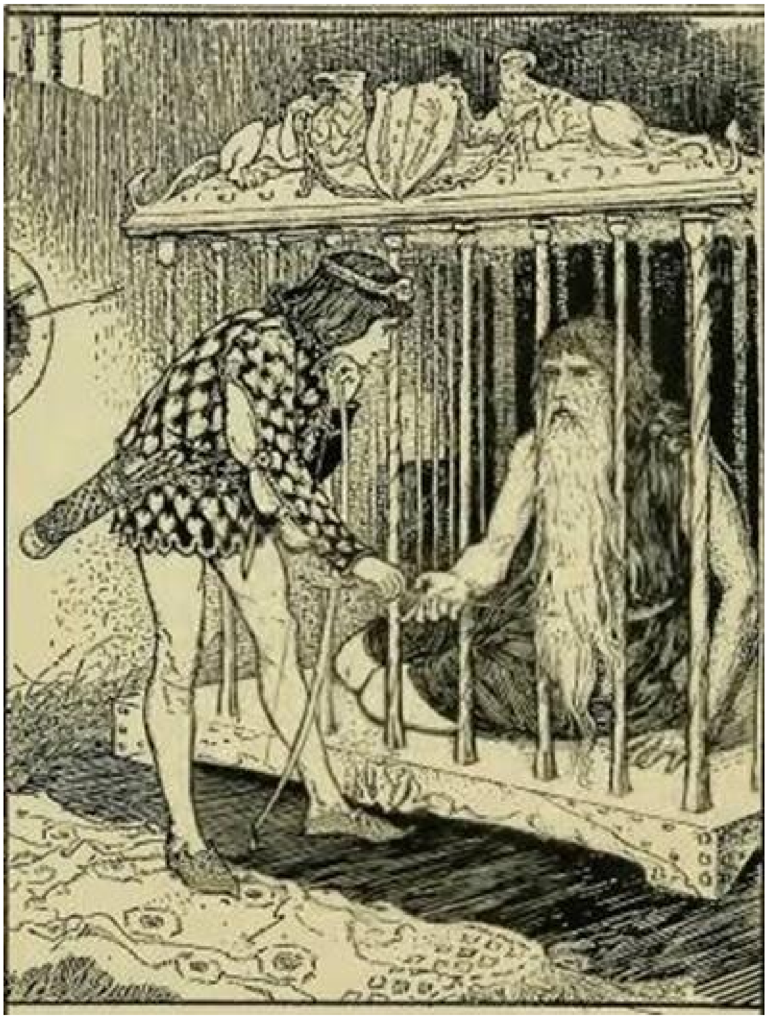

One day he was shooting at a mark with a silver bow; one of his arrows fell into the golden cage.

‘Please give me my arrow,’ said the prince, running up to him; but the gold-bearded man answered:

‘No, I shall not give it to you unless you let me out of my cage.’

‘I may not let you out,’ replied the boy, ‘for if I do my stepfather says that I shall have to die a horrible death when he returns from the war. My arrow can be of no use to you, so give it to me.’

The man handed the arrow through the bars, but when he had done so he begged harder than ever that the prince would open the door and set him free. Indeed, he prayed so earnestly that the prince’s heart was touched, for he was a tender-hearted boy who pitied the sorrows of other people. So he shot back the bolt, and the gold-bearded man stepped out into the world.

‘I will repay you a thousand fold for that good deed.’ said the man, and then he vanished. The prince began to think what he should say to the king when he came back; then he wondered whether it would be wise to wait for his stepfather’s return and run the risk of the dreadful death which had been promised him. ‘No,’ he said to himself, ‘I am afraid to stay. Perhaps the world will be kinder to me than he has been.’

Unseen he stole out when twilight fell, and for many days he wandered over mountains and through forests and valleys without knowing where he was going or what he should do. He had only the berries for food, when, one morning, he saw a wood-pigeon sitting on a bough. In an instant he had fitted an arrow to his bow, and was taking aim at the bird, thinking what a good meal he would make off him, when his weapon fell to the ground at the sound of the pigeon’s voice:

‘Do not shoot, I implore you, noble prince! I have two little sons at home, and they will die of hunger if I am not there to bring them food.’

And the young prince had pity, and unstrung his bow.

‘Oh, prince, I will repay your deed of mercy, said the grateful wood-pigeon.

‘Poor thing! how can you repay me?’ asked the prince.

‘You have forgotten,’ answered the wood-pigeon, ‘the proverb that runs, “mountain and mountain can never meet, but one living creature can always come across another.”’ The boy laughed at this speech and went his way.

By-and-by he reached the edge of a lake, and flying towards some rushes which grew near the shore he beheld a wild duck. Now, in the days that the king, his father, was alive, and he had everything to eat he could possibly wish for, the prince always had wild duck for his birthday dinner, so he quickly fitted an arrow to his bow and took a careful aim.

‘Do not shoot, I pray you, noble prince!’ cried the wild duck; ‘I have two little sons at home; they will die of hunger if I am not there to bring them food.’

And the prince had pity, and let fall his arrow and unstrung his bow.

‘Oh, prince! I will repay your deed of mercy,’ exclaimed the grateful wild duck.

‘You poor thing! how can you repay me?’ asked the prince.

‘You have forgotten,’ answered the wild duck, ‘the proverb that runs, “mountain and mountain can never meet, but one living creature can always come across another.”’ The boy laughed at this speech and went his way.

He had not wandered far from the shores of the lake, when he noticed a stork standing on one leg, and again he raised his bow and prepared to take aim.

‘Do not shoot, I pray you, noble prince,’ cried the stork; ‘I have two little sons at home; they will die of hunger if I am not there to bring them food.’

Again the prince was filled with pity, and this time also he did not shoot.

‘Oh, prince, I will repay your deed of mercy,’ cried the stork.

‘You poor stork! how can you repay me?’ asked the prince.

‘You have forgotten,’ answered the stork, ‘the proverb that runs, “mountain and mountain can never meet, but one living creature can always come across another.”’

The boy laughed at hearing these words again, and walked slowly on. He had not gone far, when he fell in with two discharged soldiers.

‘Where are you going, little brother?’ asked one.

‘I am seeking work,’ answered the prince.

‘So are we,’ replied the soldier. ‘We can all go together.’

The boy was glad of company and they went on, and on, and on, through seven kingdoms, without finding anything they were able to do. At length they reached a palace, and there was the king standing on the steps.

‘You seem to be looking for something,’ said he.

‘It is work we want,’ they all answered.

So the king told the soldiers that they might become his coachmen; but he made the boy his companion, and gave him rooms near his own. The soldiers were dreadfully angry when they heard this, for of course they did not know that the boy was really a prince; and they soon began to lay their heads together to plot his ruin.

Then they went to the king.

‘Your Majesty,’ they said, ‘we think it our duty to tell you that your new companion has boasted to us that if he were only your steward he would not lose a single grain of corn out of the storehouses. Now, if your Majesty would give orders that a sack of wheat should be mixed with one of barley, and would send for the youth, and command him to separate the grains one from another, in two hours’ time, you would soon see what his talk was worth.’

The king, who was weak, listened to what these wicked men had told him, and desired the prince to have the contents of the sack piled into two heaps by the time that he returned from his council. ‘If you succeed,’ he added, ‘you shall be my steward, but if you fail, I will put you to death on the spot.’

The unfortunate prince declared that he had never made any such boast as was reported; but it was all in vain. The king did not believe him, and turning him into an empty room, bade his servants carry in the huge sack filled with wheat and barley, and scatter them in a heap on the floor.

The prince hardly knew where to begin, and indeed if he had had a thousand people to help him, and a week to do it in, he could never have finished his task. So he flung himself on the ground in despair, and covered his face with his hands.

While he lay thus, a wood-pigeon flew in through the window.

‘Why are you weeping, noble prince?’ asked the wood-pigeon.

‘How can I help weeping at the task set me by the king. For he says, if I fail to do it, I shall die a horrible death.’

‘Oh, there is really nothing to cry about,’ answered the wood-pigeon soothingly. ‘I am the king of the wood-pigeons, whose life you spared when you were hungry. And now I will repay my debt, as I promised.’ So saying he flew out of the window, leaving the prince with some hope in his heart.

In a few minutes he returned, followed by a cloud of wood-pigeons, so dense that it seemed to fill the room. Their king showed them what they had to do, and they set to work so hard that the grain was sorted into two heaps long before the council was over. When the king came back he could not believe his eyes; but search as he might through the two heaps, he could not find any barley among the wheat, or any wheat amongst the barley. So he praised the prince for his industry and cleverness, and made him his steward at once.

This made the two soldiers more envious still, and they began to hatch another plot.

‘Your Majesty,’ they said to the king, one day, as he was standing on the steps of the palace, ‘that fellow has been boasting again, that if he had the care of your treasures not so much as a gold pin should ever be lost. Put this vain fellow to the proof, we pray you, and throw the ring from the princess’s finger into the brook, and bid him find it. We shall soon see what his talk is worth.’

And the foolish king listened to them, and ordered the prince to be brought before him.

‘My son,’ he said, ‘I have heard that you have declared that if I made you keeper of my treasures you would never lose so much as a gold pin. Now, in order to prove the truth of your words, I am going to throw the ring from the princess’s finger into the brook, and if you do not find it before I come back from council, you will have to die a horrible death.’

It was no use denying that he had said anything of the kind. The king did not believe him; in fact he paid no attention at all, and hurried off, leaving the poor boy speechless with despair in the corner. However, he soon remembered that though it was very unlikely that he should find the ring in the brook, it was impossible that he should find it by staying in the palace.

For some time the prince wandered up and down peering into the bottom of the stream, but though the water was very clear, nothing could he see of the ring. At length he gave it up in despair, and throwing himself down at the foot of the tree, he wept bitterly.

‘What is the matter, dear prince?’ said a voice just above him, and raising his head, he saw the wild duck.

‘The king of this country declares I must die a horrible death if I cannot find the princess’s ring which he has thrown into the brook,’ answered the prince.

‘Oh, you must not vex yourself about that, for I can help you,’ replied the bird. ‘I am the king of the wild ducks, whose life you spared, and now it is my turn to save yours.’ Then he flew away, and in a few minutes a great flock of wild ducks were swimming all up and down the stream looking with all their might, and long before the king came back from his council there it was, safe on the grass beside the prince.

At this sight the king was yet more astonished at the cleverness of his steward, and at once promoted him to be the keeper of his jewels.

Now you would have thought that by this time the king would have been satisfied with the prince, and would have left him alone; but people’s natures are very hard to change, and when the two envious soldiers came to him with a new falsehood, he was as ready to listen to them as before.

‘Gracious Majesty,’ said they, ‘the youth whom you have made keeper of your jewels has declared to us that a child shall be born in the palace this night, which will be able to speak every language in the world and to play every instrument of music. Is he then become a prophet, or a magician, that he should know things which have not yet come to pass?’

At these words the king became more angry than ever. He had tried to learn magic himself, but somehow or other his spells would never work, and he was furious to hear that the prince claimed a power that he did not possess. Stammering with rage, he ordered the youth to be brought before him, and vowed that unless this miracle was accomplished he would have the prince dragged at a horse’s tail until he was dead.

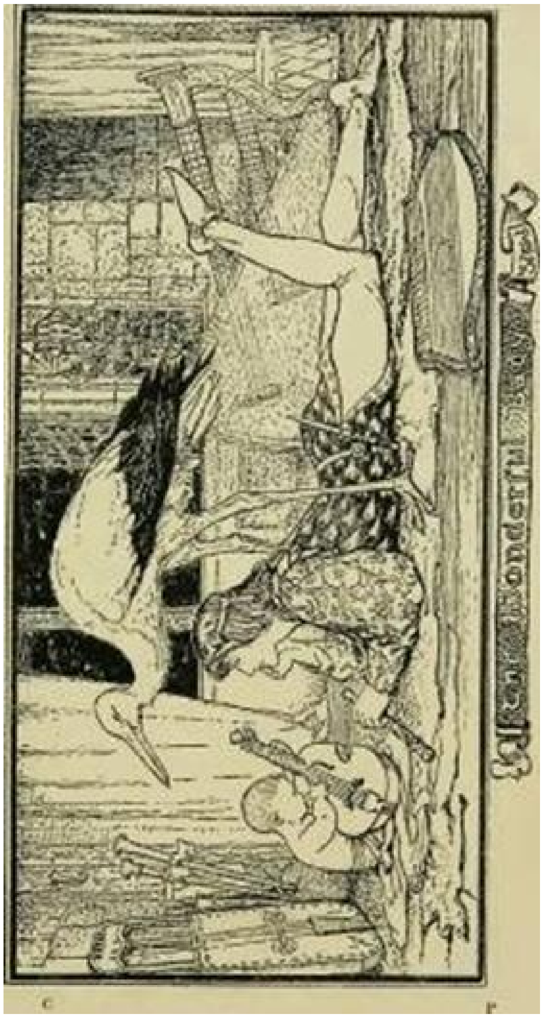

In spite of what the soldiers had said, the boy knew no more magic than the king did, and his task seemed more hopeless than before. He lay weeping in the chamber which he was forbidden to leave, when suddenly he heard a sharp tapping at the window, and, looking up, he beheld a stork.

‘What makes you so sad, prince?’ asked he.

‘Someone has told the king that I have prophesied that a child shall be born this night in the palace, who can speak all the languages in the world and play every musical instrument. I am no magician to bring these things to pass, but he says that if it does not happen he will have me dragged through the city at a horse’s tail till I die.’

‘Do not trouble yourself,’ answered the stork. ‘I will manage to find such a child, for I am the king of the storks whose life you spared, and now I can repay you for it.’

The stork flew away and soon returned carrying in his beak a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid it down near a lute. In an instant the baby stretched out its little hands and began to play a tune so beautiful that even the prince forgot his sorrows as he listened. Then he was given a flute and a zither, but he was just as well able to draw music from them; and the prince, whose courage was gradually rising, spoke to him in all the languages he knew. The baby answered him in all, and no one could have told which was his native tongue!

The next morning the king went straight to the prince's room, and saw with his own eyes the wonders that baby could do. 'If your magic can produce such a baby,' he said, 'you must be greater than any wizard that ever lived, and shall have my daughter in marriage.' And, being a king, and therefore accustomed to have everything the moment he wanted it, he commanded the ceremony to be performed without delay, and a splendid feast to be made for the bride and bridegroom. When it was over, he said to the prince:

'Now that you are really my son, tell me by what arts you were able to fulfil the tasks I set you?'

'My noble father-in-law,' answered the prince, 'I am ignorant of all spells and arts. But somehow I have always managed to escape the death which has threatened me.' And he told the king how he had been forced to run away from his stepfather, and how he had spared the three birds, and had joined the two soldiers, who had from envy done their utmost to ruin him.

The king was rejoiced in his heart that his daughter had married a prince, and not a common man, and he chased the two soldiers away with whips, and told them that if they ever dared to show their faces across the borders of his kingdom, they should die the same death he had prepared for the prince.

Tritill, Litill, And The Birds

Once upon a time there lived a princess who was so beautiful and so good that everybody loved her. Her father could hardly bear her out of his sight, and he almost died of grief when, one day, she disappeared, and though the whole kingdom was searched through and through, she could not be found in any corner of it. In despair, the king ordered a proclamation to be made that whoever could bring her back to the palace should have her for his wife. This made the young men start afresh on the search, but they were no more successful than before, and returned sorrowfully to their homes.

Now there dwelt, not far from the palace, an old man who had three sons. The two eldest were allowed by their parents to do just as they liked, but the youngest was always obliged to give way to his brothers. When they were all grown up, the eldest told his father that he was tired of leading such a quiet life, and that he meant to go away and see the world.

The old people were very unhappy at the thought that they must part with him, but they said nothing, and began to collect all that he would want for his travels, and were careful to add a pair of new boots. When everything was ready, he bade them farewell, and started merrily on his way.

For some miles his road lay through a wood, and when he left it he suddenly came out on a bare hillside. Here he sat down to rest, and pulling out his wallet prepared to eat his dinner.

He had only eaten a few mouthfuls when an old man badly dressed passed by, and seeing the food, asked if the young man could not spare him a little.

‘Not I, indeed!’ answered he; ‘why I have scarcely enough for myself. If you want food you must earn it.’ And the beggar went on.

After the young man had finished his dinner he rose and walked on for several hours, till he reached a second hill, where he threw himself down on the grass, and took some bread and milk from his wallet. While he was eating and drinking, there came by an old man, yet more wretched than the first, and begged for a few mouthfuls. But instead of food he only got hard words, and limped sadly away.

Towards evening the young man reached an open space in the wood, and by this time he thought he would like some supper. The birds saw the food, and flew round his head in numbers hoping for some crumbs, but he threw stones at them, and frightened them off. Then he began to wonder where he should sleep.

Not in the open space he was in, for that was bare and cold, and though he had walked a long way that day, and was tired, he dragged himself up, and went on seeking for a shelter.

At length he saw a deep sort of hole or cave under a great rock, and as it seemed quite empty, he went in, and lay down in a corner. About midnight he was awakened by a noise, and peeping out he beheld a terrible ogress approaching. He implored her not to hurt him, but to let him stay there for the rest of the night, to which she consented, on condition that he should spend the next day in doing any task which she might choose to set him. To this the young man willingly agreed, and turned over and went to sleep again. In the morning, the ogress bade him sweep the dust out of the cave, and to have it clean before her return in the evening, otherwise it would be the worse for him. Then she left the cave.

The young man took the spade, and began to clean the floor of the cave, but try as he would to move it the dirt still stuck to its place. He soon gave up the task, and sat sulkily in the corner, wondering what punishment the ogress would find for him, and why she had set him to do such an impossible thing.

He had not long to wait, after the ogress came home, before he knew what his punishment was to be! She just gave one look at the floor of the cave, then dealt him a blow on the head which cracked his skull, and there was an end of him.

Meanwhile his next brother grew tired of staying at home, and let his parents have no rest till they had consented that he also should be given some food and some new boots, and go out to see the world. On his road, he also met the two old beggars, who prayed for a little of his bread and milk, but this young man had never been taught to help other people, and had made it a rule through his life to keep all he had to himself. So he turned a deaf ear and finished his dinner.

By-and-by he, too, came to the cave, and was bidden by the ogress to clean the floor, but he was no more successful than his brother, and his fate was the same.

Anyone would have thought that when the old people had only one son left that at least they would have been kind to him, even if they did not love him. But for some reason they could hardly bear the sight of him, though he tried much harder to make them comfortable than his brothers had ever done. So when he asked their leave to go out into the world they gave it at once, and seemed quite glad to be rid of him. They felt it was quite generous of them to provide him with a pair of new boots and some bread and milk for his journey.

Besides the pleasure of seeing the world, the youth was very anxious to discover what had become of his brothers, and he determined to trace, as far as he could, the way that they must have gone. He followed the road that led from his father’s cottage to the hill, where he sat down to rest, saying to himself: ‘I am sure my brothers must have stopped here, and I will do the same.’

He was hungry as well as tired, and took out some of the food his parents had given him. He was just going to begin to eat when the old man appeared, and asked if he could not spare him a little. The young man at once broke off some of the bread, begging the old man to sit down beside him, and treating him as if he was an old friend. At last the stranger rose, and said to him: ‘If ever you are in trouble call me, and I will help you. My name is Tritill.’ Then he vanished, and the young man could not tell where he had gone.

However, he felt he had now rested long enough, and that he had better be going his way. At the next hill he met with the second old man, and to him also he gave food and drink. And when this old man had finished he said, like the first: ‘If you ever want help in the smallest thing call to me. My name is Litill.’

The young man walked on till he reached the open space in the wood, where he stopped for dinner. In a moment all the birds in the world seemed flying round his head, and he crumbled some of his bread for them and watched them as they darted down to pick it up. When they had cleared off every crumb the largest bird with the gayest plumage said to him: ‘If you are in trouble and need help say, “My birds, come to me!” and we will come.’ Then they flew away.

Towards evening the young man reached the cave where his brothers had met their deaths, and, like them, he thought it would be a good place to sleep in. Looking round, he saw some pieces of the dead men’s clothes and of their bones. The sight made him shiver, but he would not move away, and resolved to await the return of the ogress, for such he knew she must be.

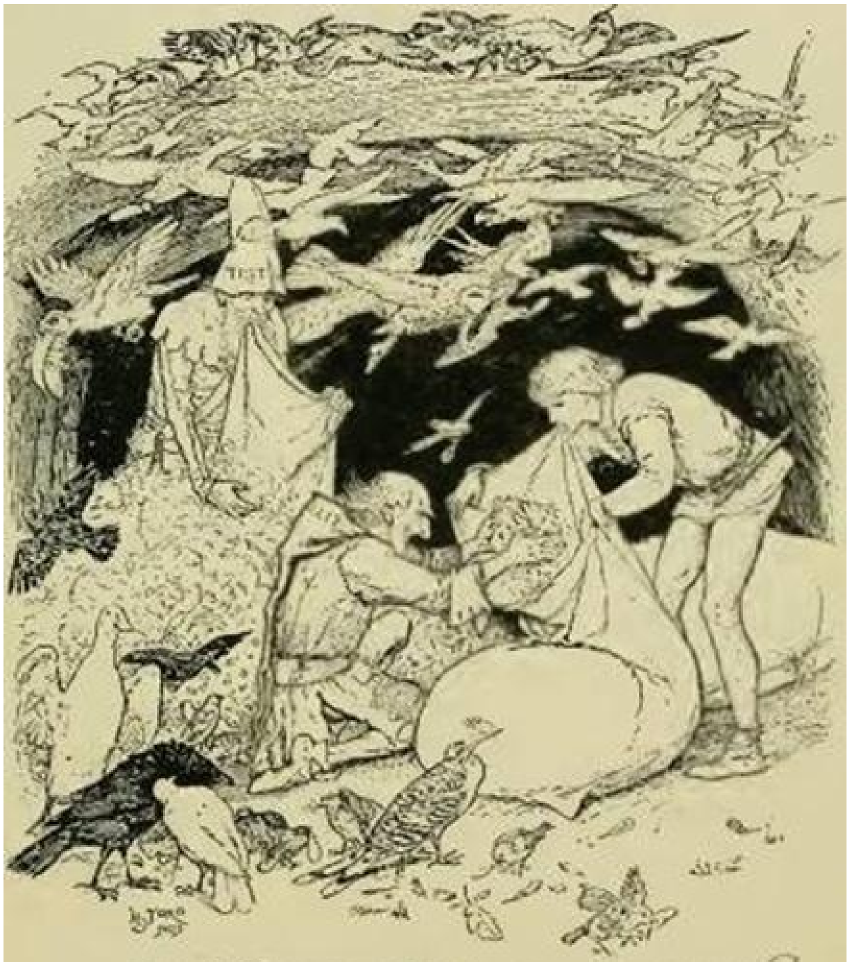

Litill, Tritill, & the Birds to the rescue

Very soon she came striding in, and he asked politely if she would give him a night’s lodging. She answered as before, that he might stay on condition that he should do any work that she might set him to next morning. So the bargain being concluded, the young man curled himself up in his corner and went to sleep.

The dirt lay thicker than ever on the floor of the cave when the young man took the spade and began his work. He could not clear it any more than his brothers had done, and at last the spade itself stuck in the earth so that he could not pull it out. The youth stared at it in despair, then the old beggar’s words flashed into his mind, and he cried: ‘Tritill, Tritill, come and help me!’

And Tritill stood beside him and asked what he wanted. The youth told him all his story, and when he had finished, the old man said: ‘Spade and shovel do your duty,’ and they danced about the cave till, in a short time, there was not a speck of dust left on the floor. As soon as it was quite clean Tritill went his way.

With a light heart the young man awaited the return of the ogress. When she came in she looked carefully round, and then said to him: ‘You did not do that quite alone. However, as the floor is clean I will leave your head on.’

The following morning the ogress told the young man that he must take all the feathers out of her pillows and spread them to dry in the sun. But if one feather was missing when she came back at night his head should pay for it.’

The young man fetched the pillows, and shook out all the feathers, and oh! what quantities of them there were! He was thinking to himself, as he spread them out carefully, how lucky it was that the sun was so bright and that there was no wind, when suddenly a breeze sprang up, and in a moment the feathers were dancing high in the air. At first the youth tried to collect them again, but he soon found that it was no use, and he cried in despair: ‘Tritill, Litill, and all my birds, come and help me!’

He had hardly said the words when there they all were; and when the birds had brought all the feathers back again, Tritill, and Litill, and he, put them away in the pillows, as the ogress had bidden him. But one little feather they kept out, and told the young man that if the ogress missed it he was to thrust it up her nose. Then they all vanished, Tritill, Litill, and the birds.

Directly the ogress returned home she flung herself with all her weight on the bed, and the whole cave quivered under her. The pillows were soft and full instead of being empty, which surprised her, but that did not content her. She got up, shook out the pillow-cases one by one, and began to count the feathers that were in each. ‘If one is missing I will have your head,’ said she, and at that the young man drew the feather from his pocket and thrust it up her nose, crying ‘If you want your feather, here it is.’

‘You did not sort those feathers alone,’ answered the ogress calmly; ‘however, this time I will let that pass.’

That night the young man slept soundly in his corner, and in the morning the ogress told him that his work that day would be to slay one of her great oxen, to cook its heart, and to make drinking cups of its horns, before she returned home ‘There are fifty oxen,’ added she, ‘and you must guess which of the herd I want killed. If you guess right, to-morrow you shall be free to go where you will, and you shall choose besides three things as a reward for your service. But if you slay the wrong ox your head shall pay for it.’

Left alone, the young man stood thinking for a little. Then he called: ‘Tritill, Litill, come to my help!’

In a moment he saw them, far away, driving the biggest ox the youth had ever seen. When they drew near, Tritill killed it, Litill took out its heart for the young man to cook, and both began quickly to turn the horns into drinking cups. The work went merrily on, and they talked gaily, and the young man told his friends of the payment promised him by the ogress if he had done her bidding. The old men warned him that he must ask her for the chest which stood at the foot of her bed, for whatever lay on the top of the bed, and for what lay under the side of the cave. The young man thanked them for their counsel, and Tritill and Litill then took leave of him, saying that for the present he would need them no more.

Scarcely had they disappeared when the ogress came back, and found everything ready just as she had ordered. Before she sat down to eat the bullock's heart she turned to the young man, and said: 'You did not do that all alone, my friend; but, nevertheless, I will keep my word, and to-morrow you shall go your way.' So they went to bed and slept till dawn.

When the sun rose the ogress awoke the young man, and called to him to choose any three things out of her house.

'I choose,' answered he, 'the chest which stands at the foot of your bed; whatever lies on the top of the bed, and whatever is under the side of the cave.'

'You did not choose those things by yourself, my friend,' said the ogress; 'but what I have promised, that will I do.'

And then she gave him his reward.

'The thing which lay on the top of the bed' turned out to be the lost princess. 'The chest which stood at the foot of the bed' proved full of gold and precious stones; and 'what was under the side of the cave' he found to be a great ship, with oars and sails that went of itself as well on land as in the water. 'You are the luckiest man that ever was born,' said the ogress as she went out of the cave as usual.

With much difficulty the youth put the heavy chest on his shoulders and carried it on board the ship, the princess walking by his side. Then he took the helm and steered the vessel back to her father's kingdom. The king's joy at receiving back his lost daughter was so great that he almost fainted, but when he recovered himself he made the young man tell him how everything had really happened. 'You have found her, and you shall marry her,' said the king; and so it was done. And this is the end of the story.

The Three Robes

Long, long ago, a king and queen reigned over a large and powerful country. What their names were nobody knows, but their son was called Sigurd, and their daughter Lineik, and these young people were famed throughout the whole kingdom for their wisdom and beauty.

There was only a year between them, and they loved each other so much that they could do nothing apart. When they began to grow up the king gave them a house of their own to live in, with servants and carriages, and everything they could possibly want.

For many years they all lived happily together, and then the queen fell ill, and knew that she would never get better.

‘Promise me two things,’ she said one day to the king; ‘one, that if you marry again, as indeed you must, you will not choose as your wife a woman from some small state or distant island, who knows nothing of the world, and will be taken up with thoughts of her grandeur. But rather seek out a princess of some great kingdom, who has been used to courts all her life, and holds them at their true worth. The other thing I have to ask is, that you will never cease to watch over our children, who will soon become your greatest joy.’

These were the queen’s last words, and a few hours later she was dead. The king was so bowed down with sorrow that he would not attend even to the business of the kingdom, and at last his Prime Minister had to tell him that the people were complaining that they had nobody to right their wrongs. ‘You must rouse yourself, sir,’ went on the minister, ‘and put aside your own sorrows for the sake of your country.’

‘You do not spare me,’ answered the king; ‘but what you say is just, and your counsel is good. I have heard that men say, likewise, that it will be for the good of my kingdom for me to marry again, though my heart will never cease to be with my lost wife. But it was her wish also; therefore, to you I entrust the duty of finding a lady fitted to share my throne; only, see that she comes neither from a small town nor a remote island.’

So an embassy was prepared, with the minister at its head, to visit the greatest courts in the world, and to choose out a suitable princess. But the vessel which carried them had not been gone many days when a thick fog came on, and the captain could see neither to the right nor to the left. For a whole month the ship drifted about in darkness, till at length the fog lifted and they beheld a cliff jutting out just in front. On one side of the cliff lay a sheltered bay, in which the vessel was soon anchored, and though they did not know where they were, at any rate they felt sure of fresh fruit and water.

The minister left the rest of his followers on board the ship, and taking a small boat rowed himself to land, in order to look about him and to find out if the island was really as deserted as it seemed.

He had not gone far, when he heard the sound of music, and, turning in its direction, he saw a woman of marvellous beauty sitting on a low stool playing on a harp, while a girl beside her sang. The minister stopped and greeted the lady politely, and she replied with friendliness, asking him why he had come to such an out-of-the way place. In answer he told her of the object of his journey.

‘I am in the same state as your master,’ replied the lady; ‘I was married to a mighty king who ruled over this land, till Vikings came and slew him and put all the people to death. But I managed to escape, and hid myself here with my daughter.’

And the daughter listened, and said softly to her mother: ‘Are you speaking the truth now?’

‘Remember your promise,’ answered the mother angrily, giving her a pinch which was unseen by the minister.

‘What is your name, madam?’ asked he, much touched by this sad story.

‘Blauvor,’ she replied ‘and my daughter is called Laufer’; and then she inquired the name of the minister, and of the king his master. After this they talked of many things, and the lady showed herself learned in all that a woman should know, and even in much that men only were commonly taught. ‘What a wife she would make for the king,’ thought the minister to himself, and before long he had begged the honour of her hand for his master. She declared at first that she was too unworthy to accept the position offered her, and that the minister would soon repent his choice; but this only made him the more eager, and in the end he gained her consent, and prevailed on her to return with him at once to his own country.

The minister then conducted the mother and daughter back to the ship; the anchor was raised, the sails spread, and a fair wind was behind them.

Now that the fog had lifted they could see as they looked back that, except just along the shore, the island was bare and deserted and not fit for men to live in; but about that nobody cared. They had a quick voyage, and in six days they reached the land, and at once set out for the capital, a messenger being sent on first by the minister to inform the king of what had happened.

When his Majesty’s eyes fell on the two beautiful women, clad in dresses of gold and silver, he forgot his sorrows and ordered preparations for the wedding to be made without delay. In his joy he never remembered to inquire in what kind of country the future queen had been found. In fact his head was so turned by the beauty of the two ladies that when the invitations were sent by his orders to all the great people in the kingdom, he did not even recollect his two children, who remained shut up in their own house!

After the marriage the king ceased to have any will of his own and did nothing without consulting his wife. She was present at all his councils, and her opinion was asked before making peace or war. But when a few months had passed the king began to have doubts as to whether the minister’s choice had really been a wise one, and he noticed that his children lived more and more in their palace and never came near their stepmother.

It always happens that if a person’s eyes are once opened they see a great deal more than they ever expected; and soon it struck the king that the members of his court had a way of disappearing one after the other without any reason. At first he had not paid much attention to the fact, but merely appointed some fresh person to the vacant place. As, however, man after man vanished without leaving any trace, he began to grow uncomfortable and to wonder if the queen could have anything to do with it.

Things were in this state when, one day, his wife said to him that it was time for him to make a progress through his kingdom and see that his governors were not cheating him of the money that was his due. ‘And you need not be anxious about going,’ she added, ‘for I will rule the country while you are away as carefully as you could yourself.’

The king had no great desire to undertake this journey, but the queen’s will was stronger than his, and he was too lazy to make a fight for it. So he said nothing and set about his preparations, ordering his finest ship to be ready to carry him round the coast. Still his heart was heavy, and he felt uneasy, though he could not have told why; and the night before he was to start he went to the children’s palace to take leave of his son and daughter.

He had not seen them for some time, and they gave him a warm welcome, for they loved him dearly and he had always been kind to them. They had much to tell him, but after a while he checked their merry talk and said:

‘If I should never come back from this journey I fear that it may not be safe for you to stay here; so directly there are no more hopes of my return go instantly and take the road eastwards till you reach a high mountain, which you must cross. Once over the mountain keep along by the side of a little bay till you come to two trees, one green and the other red, standing in a thicket, and so far back from the road that without looking for them you would never see them. Hide each in the trunk of one of the trees and there you will be safe from all your enemies.'

With these words the king bade them farewell and entered sadly into his ship. For a few days the wind was fair, and everything seemed going smoothly; then, suddenly, a gale sprang up, and a fearful storm of thunder and lightning, such as had never happened within the memory of man. In spite of the efforts of the frightened sailors the vessel was driven on the rocks, and not a man on board was saved.

That very night Prince Sigurd had a dream, in which he thought his father appeared to him in dripping clothes, and, taking the crown from his head, laid it at his son's feet, leaving the room as silently as he had entered it.

Hastily the prince awoke his sister Lineik, and they agreed that their father must be dead, and that they must lose no time in obeying his orders and putting themselves in safety. So they collected their jewels and a few clothes and left the house without being observed by anyone.

They hurried on till they arrived at the mountain without once looking back. Then Sigurd glanced round and saw that their stepmother was following them, with an expression on her face which made her uglier than the ugliest old witch. Between her and them lay a thick wood, and Sigurd stopped for a moment to set it on fire; then he and his sister hastened on more swiftly than before, till they reached the grove with the red and green trees, into which they jumped, and felt that at last they were safe.

Now, at that time there reigned over Greece a king who was very rich and powerful, although his name has somehow been forgotten. He had two children, a son and a daughter, who were more beautiful and accomplished than any Greeks had been before, and they were the pride of their father's heart.

The prince had no sooner grown out of boyhood than he prevailed on his father to make war during the summer months on a neighbouring nation, so as to give him a chance of making himself famous. In winter, however, when it was difficult to get food and horses in that wild country, the army was dispersed, and the prince returned home.

During one of these wars he had heard reports of the Princess Lineik's beauty, and he resolved to seek her out, and to ask for her hand in marriage. All this Blauvor, the queen, found out by means of her black arts, and when the prince drew near the capital she put a splendid dress on her own daughter and then went to meet her guest.

She bade him welcome to her palace, and when they had finished supper she told him of the loss of her husband, and how there was no one left to govern the kingdom but herself.

'But where is the Princess Lineik?' asked the prince when she had ended her tale.

‘Here,’ answered the queen, bringing forward the girl, whom she had hitherto kept in the background.

The prince looked at her and was rather disappointed. The maiden was pretty enough, but not much out of the common.

‘Oh, you must not wonder at her pale face and heavy eyes,’ said the queen hastily, for she saw what was passing in his mind. ‘She has never got over the loss of both father and mother.’

‘That shows a good heart,’ thought the prince; ‘and when she is happy her beauty will soon come back.’ And without any further delay he begged the queen to consent to their betrothal, for the marriage must take place in his own country.

The queen was enchanted. She had hardly expected to succeed so soon, and she at once set about her preparations. Indeed she wished to travel with the young couple, to make sure that nothing should go wrong; but here the prince was firm, that he would take no one with him but Laufer, whom he thought was Lineik.

They soon took leave of the queen, and set sail in a splendid ship; but in a short time a dense fog came on, and in the dark the captain steered out of his course, and they found themselves in a bay which was quite strange to all the crew. The prince ordered a boat to be lowered, and went on shore to look about him, and it was not long before he noticed the two beautiful trees, quite different from any that grew in Greece. Calling one of the sailors, he bade him cut them down, and carry them on board the ship. This was done, and as the sky was now clear they put out to sea, and arrived in Greece without any more adventures.

The news that the prince had brought home a bride had gone before them, and they were greeted with flowery arches and crowns of coloured lights. The king and queen met them on the steps of the palace, and conducted the girl to the women’s house, where she would have to remain until her marriage. The prince then went to his own rooms and ordered that the trees should be brought in to him.

The next morning the prince bade his attendants bring his future bride to his own apartments, and when she came he gave her silk which she was to weave into three robes — one red, one green, and one blue — and these must all be ready before the wedding. The blue one was to be done first and the green last, and this was to be the most splendid of all, ‘for I will wear it at our marriage,’ said he.

Left alone, Laufer sat and stared at the heap of shining silk before her. She did not know how to weave, and burst into tears as she thought that everything would be discovered, for Lineik’s skill in weaving was as famous as her beauty. As she sat with her face hidden and her body shaken by sobs, Sigurd in his tree heard her and was moved to pity. ‘Lineik, my sister,’ he called, softly, ‘Laufer is weeping; help her, I pray you.’

‘Have you forgotten the wrongs her mother did to us’ answered Lineik, ‘and that it is owing to her that we are banished from home?’

But she was not really unforgiving, and very soon she slid quietly out of her hiding-place, and taking the silk from Laufer’s hands began to weave it. So quick and clever was she that the blue dress was not only woven but embroidered, and Lineik was safe back in her tree before the prince returned.

‘It is the most beautiful work I have ever seen,’ said he, taking up a bit. ‘And I am sure that the red one will be still better, because the stuff is richer,’ and with a low bow he left the room.

Laufer had hoped secretly that when the prince had seen the blue dress finished he would have let her off the other two; but when she found she was expected to fulfil the whole task, her heart sank and she began to cry loudly. Again Sigurd heard her, and begged Lineik to come to her help, and Lineik, feeling sorry for her distress, wove and embroidered the second dress as she had done the first, mixing gold thread and precious stones till you could hardly see the red of the stuff. When it was done she glided into her tree just as the prince came in.

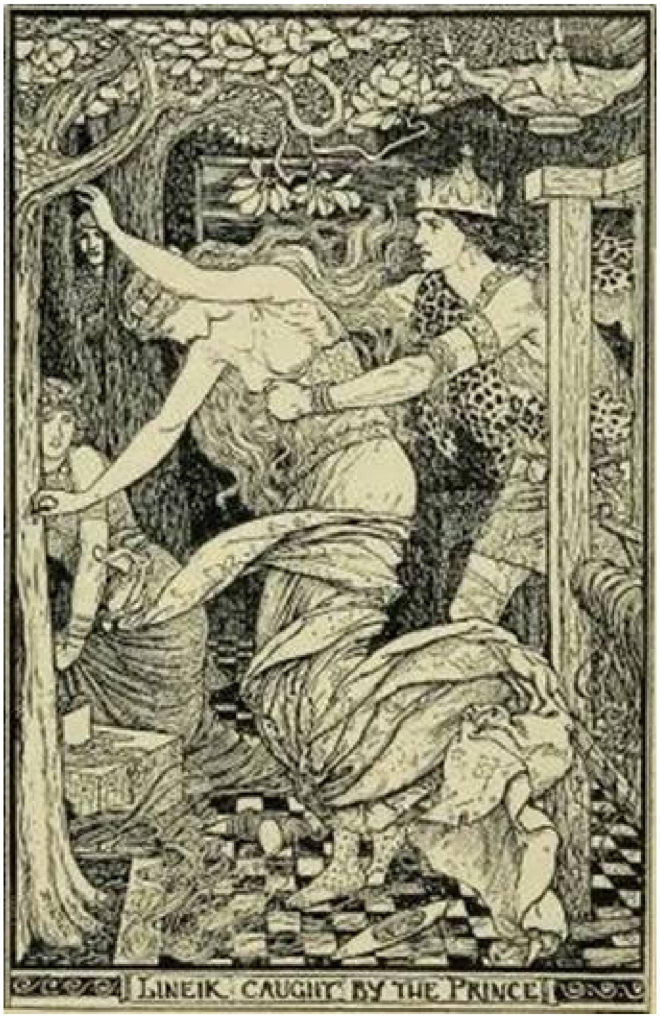

LINEIK CAUGHT BY THE PRINCE

‘You are as quick as you are clever,’ said he, admiringly. ‘This looks as if it had been embroidered by the fairies! But as the green robe must outshine the other two I will give you three days in which to finish it. After it is ready we will be married at once.’

Now, as he spoke, there rose up in Laufer’s mind all the unkind things that she and her mother had done to Lineik. Could she hope that they would be forgotten, and that Lineik would come to her rescue for the third time? And perhaps Lineik, who had not forgotten the past either, might have left her alone, to get on as best she could, had not Sigurd, her brother, implored her to help just once more. So Lineik again slid out of her tree, and, to Laufer’s great relief, set herself to work. When the shining green silk was ready she caught the sun’s rays and the moon’s beams on the point of her needle and wove them into a pattern such as no man had ever seen. But it took a long time, and on the third morning, just as she was putting the last stitches into the last flower the prince came in.

Lineik jumped up quickly, and tried to get past him back to her tree; but the folds of the silk were wrapped round her, and she would have fallen had not the prince caught her.

‘I have thought for some time that all was not quite straight here,’ said he. ‘Tell me who you are, and where you come from?’

Lineik then told her name and her story. When she had ended the prince turned angrily to Laufer, and declared that, as a punishment for her wicked lies, she deserved to die a shameful death.

But Laufer fell at his feet and begged for mercy. It was her mother’s fault, she said: ‘It was she, and not I, who passed me off as the Princess Lineik. The only lie I have ever told you was about the robes, and I do not deserve death for that.’

She was still on her knees when Prince Sigurd entered the room. He prayed the Prince of Greece to forgive Laufer, which he did, on condition that Lineik would consent to marry him. ‘Not till my stepmother is dead,’ answered she, ‘for she has brought misery to all that came near her.’ Then Laufer told them that Blauvor was not the wife of a king, but an ogress who had stolen her from a neighbouring palace and had brought her up as her daughter. And besides being an ogress she was also a witch, and by her black arts had sunk the ship in which the father of Sigurd and Lineik had set sail. It was she who had caused the disappearance of the courtiers, for which no one could account, by eating them during the night, and she hoped to get rid of all the people in the country, and then to fill the land with ogres and ogresses like herself.

So Prince Sigurd and the Prince of Greece collected an army swiftly, and marched upon the town where Blauvor had her palace. They came so suddenly that no one knew of it, and if they had, Blauvor had eaten most of the strong men; and others, fearful of something they could not tell what, had secretly left the place. Therefore she was easily captured, and the next day was beheaded in the market-place. Afterwards the two princes marched back to Greece.

Lineik had no longer any reason for putting off her wedding, and married the Prince of Greece at the same time that Sigurd married the princess. And Laufer remained with Lineik as her friend and sister, till they found a husband for her in a great nobleman; and all three couples lived happily until they died.

The Six Hungry Beasts

Once upon a time there lived a man who dwelt with his wife in a little hut, far away from any neighbours. But they did not mind being alone, and would have been quite happy, if it had not been for a marten, who came every night to their poultry yard, and carried off one of their fowls. The man laid all sorts of traps to catch the thief, but instead of capturing the foe, it happened that one day he got caught himself, and falling down, struck his head against a stone, and was killed.

Not long after the marten came by on the look out for his supper. Seeing the dead man lying there, he said to himself: ‘That is a prize, this time I have done well’; and dragging the body with great difficulty to the sledge which was waiting for him, drove off with his booty. He had not driven far when he met a squirrel, who bowed and said: ‘Good-morning, godfather! what have you got behind you?’

The marten laughed and answered: ‘Did you ever hear anything so strange? The old man that you see here set traps about his hen-house, thinking to catch me but he fell into his own trap, and broke his own neck. He is very heavy; I wish you would help me to draw the sledge.’ The squirrel did as he was asked, and the sledge moved slowly along.

By-and-by a hare came running across a field, but stopped to see what wonderful thing was coming. ‘What have you got there?’ she asked, and the marten told his story and begged the hare to help them pull.

The hare pulled her hardest, and after a while they were joined by a fox, and then by a wolf, and at length a bear was added to the company, and he was of more use than all the other five beasts put together. Besides, when the whole six had supped off the man he was not so heavy to draw.

The worst of it was that they soon began to get hungry again, and the wolf, who was the hungriest of all, said to the rest:

‘What shall we eat now, my friends, as there is no more man?’

‘I suppose we shall have to eat the smallest of us,’ replied the bear, and the marten turned round to seize the squirrel who was much smaller than any of the rest. But the squirrel ran up a tree like lightning, and the marten remembering, just in time, that he was the next in size, slipped quick as thought into a hole in the rocks.

‘What shall we eat now?’ asked the wolf again, when he had recovered from his surprise.

‘We must eat the smallest of us,’ repeated the bear, stretching out a paw towards the hare; but the hare was not a hare for nothing, and before the paw had touched her, she had darted deep into the wood.

Now that the squirrel, the marten, and the hare had all gone, the fox was the smallest of the three who were left, and the wolf and the bear explained that they were very sorry, but they would have to eat him. Michael, the fox, did not run away as the others had done, but smiled in a friendly manner, and remarked: ‘Things taste so stale in a valley; one’s appetite is so much better up on a mountain.’ The wolf and the bear agreed, and they turned out of the hollow where they had been walking, and chose a path that led up the mountain side. The fox trotted cheerfully by his two big companions, but on the way he managed to whisper to the wolf: ‘Tell me, Peter, when I am eaten, what will you have for your next dinner?’

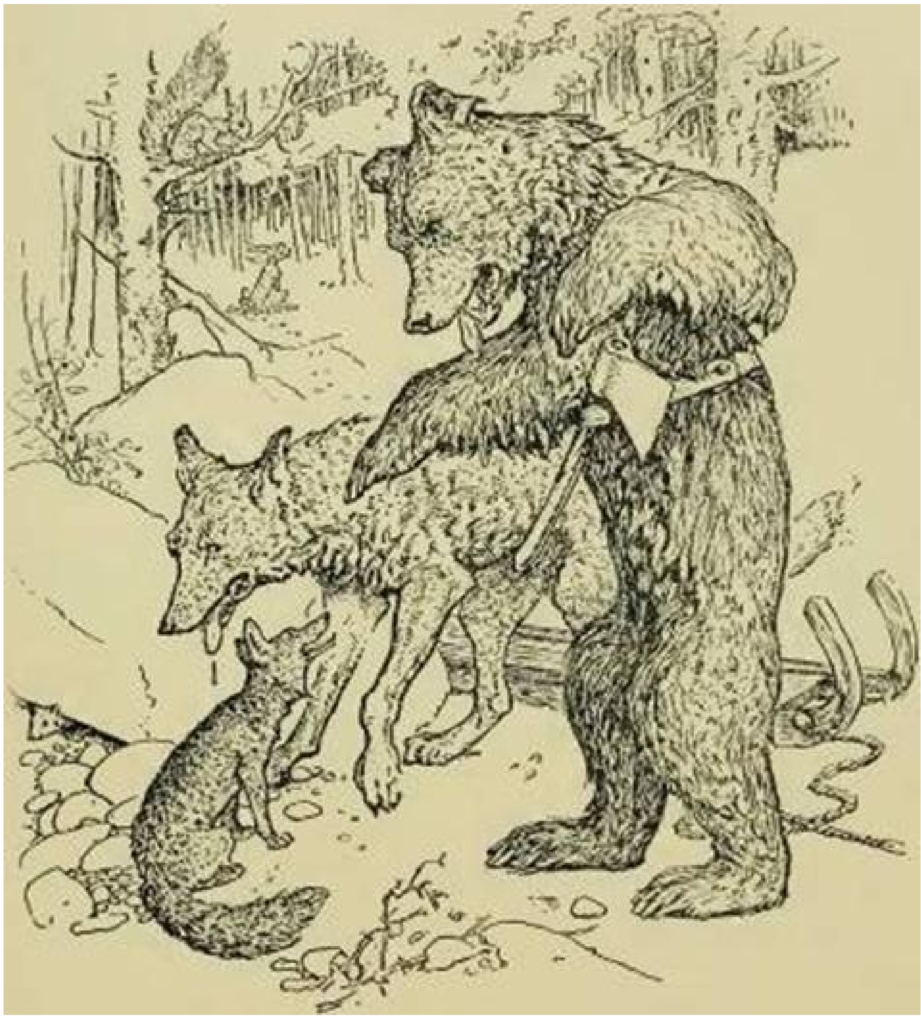

This simple question seemed to put out the wolf very much. What would they have for their next dinner, and, what was more important still, who would there be to eat it? They had made a rule always to dine off the smallest of the party, and when the fox was gone, why of course, he was smaller than the bear.

These thoughts flashed quickly through his head, and he said hastily:

‘Dear brothers, would it not be better for us to live together as comrades, and everyone to hunt for the common dinner? Is not my plan a good one?’

‘It is the best thing I have ever heard,’ answered the fox; and as they were two to one the bear had to be content, though in his heart he would much have preferred a good dinner at once to any friendship.

For a few days all went well; there was plenty of game in the forest, and even the wolf had as much to eat as he could wish. One morning the fox as usual was going his rounds when he noticed a tall, slender tree, with a magpie’s nest in one of the top branches. Now the fox was particularly fond of young magpies, and he set about making a plan by which he could have one for dinner. At last he hit upon something which he thought would do, and accordingly he sat down near the tree and began to stare hard at it.

‘What are you looking at, Michael?’ asked the magpie, who was watching him from a bough.

‘I’m looking at this tree. It has just struck me what a good tree it would be to cut my new snowshoes out of.’ But at this answer the magpie screeched loudly, and exclaimed: ‘Oh, not this tree, dear brother, I implore you! I have built my nest on it, and my young ones are not yet old enough to fly.’

‘It will not be easy to find another tree that would make such good snowshoes,’ answered the fox, cocking his head on one side, and gazing at the tree thoughtfully; ‘but I do not like to be ill-natured, so if you will give me one of your young ones I will seek my snowshoes elsewhere.’

Not knowing what to do the poor magpie had to agree, and flying back, with a heavy heart, he threw one of his young ones out of the nest. The fox seized it in his mouth and ran off in triumph, while the magpie, though deeply grieved for the loss of his little one, found some comfort in the thought that only a bird of extraordinary wisdom would have dreamed of saving the rest by the sacrifice of the one. But what do you think happened? Why, a few days later, Michael the fox might have been seen sitting under the very same tree, and a dreadful pang shot through the heart of the magpie as he peeped at him from a hole in the nest.

‘What are you looking at?’ he asked in a trembling voice.

‘At this tree. I was just thinking what good snowshoes it would make,’ answered the fox in an absent voice, as if he was not thinking of what he was saying.

‘Oh, my brother, my dear little brother, don’t do that,’ cried the magpie, hopping about in his anguish. ‘You know you promised only a few days ago that you would get your snowshoes elsewhere.’

‘So I did; but though I have searched through the whole forest, there is not a single tree that is as good as this. I am very sorry to put you out, but really it is not my fault. The only thing I can do for you is to offer to give up my snowshoes altogether if you will throw me down one of your young ones in exchange.’

And the poor magpie, in spite of his wisdom, was obliged to throw another of his little ones out of the nest; and this time he was not able to console himself with the thought that he had been much cleverer than other people.

He sat on the edge of his nest, his head drooping and his feathers all ruffled, looking the picture of misery. Indeed he was so different from the gay, jaunty magpie whom every creature in the forest knew, that a crow who was flying past, stopped to inquire what was the matter. ‘Where are the two young ones who are not in the nest?’ asked he.

‘I had to give them to the fox,’ replied the magpie in a quivering voice; ‘he has been here twice in the last week, and wanted to cut down my tree for the purpose of making snowshoes out of it, and the only way I could buy him off was by giving him two of my young ones.’

Oh, you fool,’ cried the crow, ‘the fox was only trying to frighten you. He could not have cut down the tree, for he has neither axe nor knife. Dear me, to think that you have sacrificed your young ones for nothing! Dear, dear! how could you be so very foolish!’ And the crow flew away, leaving the magpie overcome with shame and sorrow.

The next morning the fox came to his usual place in front of the tree, for he was hungry, and a nice young magpie would have suited him very well for dinner. But this time there was no cowering, timid magpie to do his bidding, but a bird with his head erect and a determined voice.

‘My good fox,’ said the magpie putting his head on one side and looking very wise— ‘my good fox, if you take my advice, you will go home as fast as you can. There is no use your talking about making snowshoes out of this tree, when you have neither knife nor axe to cut it down with!’

‘Who has been teaching you wisdom?’ asked the fox, forgetting his manners in his surprise at this new turn of affairs.

‘The crow, who paid me a visit yesterday,’ answered the magpie.

‘The crow was it?’ said the fox, ‘well, the crow had better not meet me for the future, or it may be the worse for him.’

As Michael, the cunning beast, had no desire to continue the conversation, he left the forest; but when he came to the high road he laid himself at full length on the ground, stretching himself out, just as if he was dead. Very soon he noticed, out of the corner of his eye, that the crow was flying towards him, and he kept stiller and stiffer than ever, with his tongue hanging out of his mouth. The crow, who wanted her supper very badly, hopped quickly towards him, and was stooping forward to peck at his tongue when the fox gave a snap, and caught him by the wing. The crow knew that it was of no use struggling, so he said:

‘Ah, brother, if you are really going to eat me, do it, I beg of you, in good style. Throw me first over this precipice, so that my feathers may be strewn here and there, and that all who see them may know that your cunning is greater than mine.’ This idea pleased the fox, for he had not yet forgiven the crow for depriving him of the young magpies, so he carried the crow to the edge of the precipice and threw him over, intending to go round by a path he knew and pick him up at the bottom. But no sooner had the fox let the crow go than he soared up into the air, and hovering just out of teach of his enemy’s jaws, he cried with a laugh: ‘Ah, fox! you know well how to catch, but you cannot keep.’

With his tail between his legs, the fox slunk into the forest. He did not know where to look for a dinner, as he guessed that the crow would have flown back before him, and put every one on their guard. The notion of going to bed supperless was very unpleasant to him, and he was wondering what in the world he should do, when he chanced to meet with his old friend the bear.

This poor animal had just lost his wife, and was going to get some one to mourn over her, for he felt her loss greatly. He had hardly left his comfortable cave when he had come across the wolf, who inquired where he was going. ‘I am going to find a mourner,’ answered the bear, and told his story.

‘Oh, let me mourn for you,’ cried the wolf.

‘Do you understand how to howl?’ said the bear.

‘Oh, certainly, godfather, certainly,’ replied the wolf; but the bear said he should like to have a specimen of his howling, to make sure that he knew his business. So the wolf broke forth in his song of lament: ‘Hu, hu, hu, hum, hoh,’ he shouted, and he made such a noise that the bear put up his paws to his ears, and begged him to stop.

‘You have no idea how it is done. Be off with you,’ said he angrily.

A little further down the road the hare was resting in a ditch, but when she saw the bear, she came out and spoke to him, and inquired why he looked so sad. The bear told her of the loss of his wife, and of his search after a mourner that could lament over her in the proper style. The hare instantly offered her services, but the bear took care to ask her to give him a proof of her talents, before he accepted them. ‘Pu, pu, pu, pum, poh,’ piped the hare; but this time her voice was so small that the bear could hardly hear her. ‘That is not what I want,’ he said, ‘I will bid you good morning.’

It was after this that the fox came up, and he also was struck with the bear’s altered looks, and stopped. ‘What is the matter with you, godfather?’ asked he, ‘and where are you going?’

‘I am going to find a mourner for my wife,’ answered the bear.

‘Oh, do choose me,’ cried the fox, and the bear looked at him thoughtfully.

‘Can you howl well?’ he said.

‘Yes, beautifully, just listen,’ and the fox lifted up his voice and sang weeping: ‘Lou, lou, lou! the famous spinner, the baker of good cakes, the prudent housekeeper is torn from her husband! Lou, lou, lou! she is gone! she is gone!’

‘Now at last I have found some one who knows the art of lamentation,’ exclaimed the bear, quite delighted; and he led the fox back to his cave, and bade him begin his lament over the dead wife who was lying stretched out on her bed of grey moss. But this did not suit the fox at all.

‘One cannot wail properly in this cave,’ he said, ‘it is much too damp. You had better take the body to the storehouse. It will sound much finer there.’ So the bear carried his wife’s body to the storehouse, while he himself went back to the cave to cook some pap for the mourner. From time to time he paused and listened for the sound of wailing, but he heard nothing. At last he went to the door of the storehouse, and called to the fox:

‘Why don’t you howl, godfather? What are you about?’

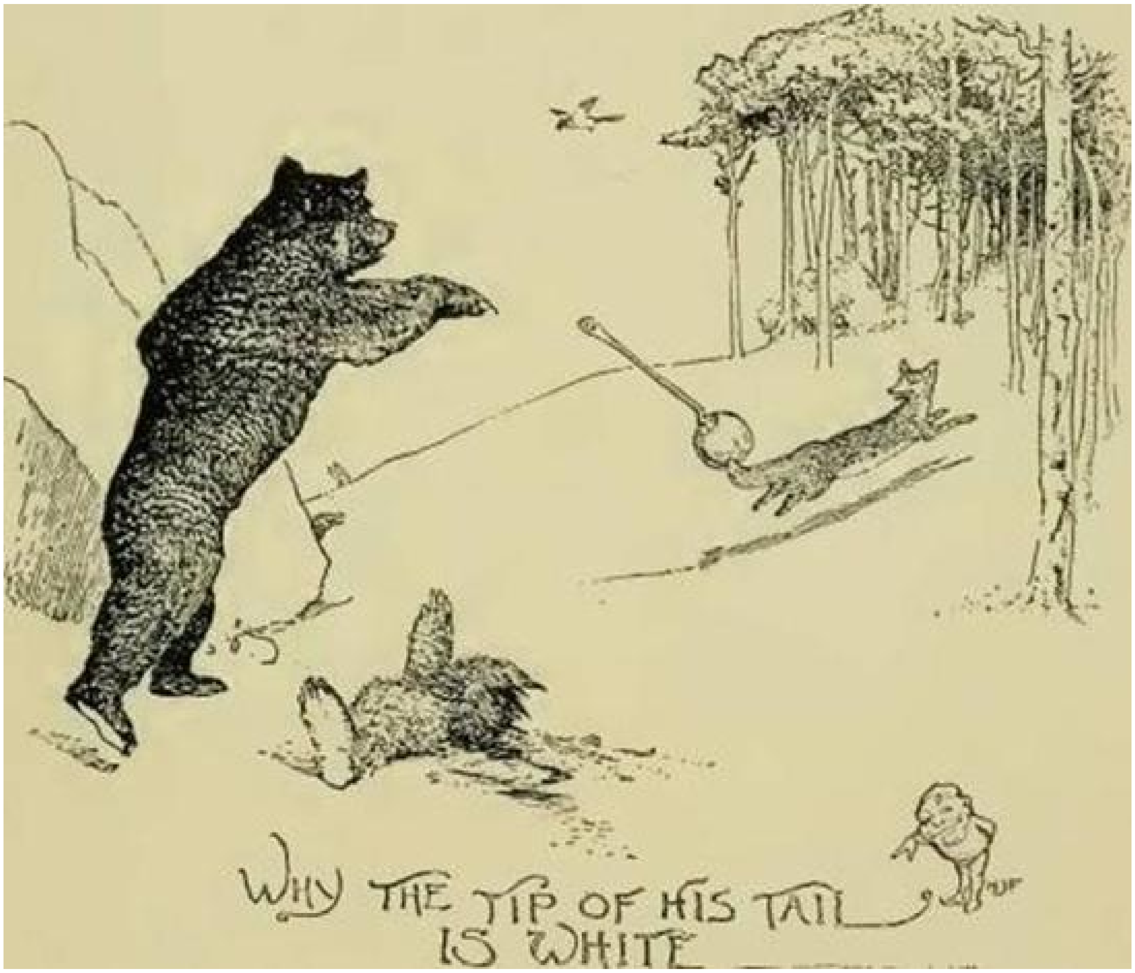

WHY THE TIP OF HIS TAIL IS WHITE

And the fox, who, instead of weeping over the dead bear, had been quietly eating her, answered:

‘There only remain now her legs and the soles of her feet. Give me five minutes more and they will be gone also!’

When the bear heard that he ran back for the kitchen ladle, to give the traitor the beating he deserved. But as he opened the door of the storehouse, Michael was ready for him, and slipping between his legs, dashed straight off into the forest. The bear, seeing that the traitor had escaped, flung the ladle after him, and it just caught the tip of his tail, and that is how there comes to be a spot of white on the tails of all foxes.

How the Beggar Boy Turned into Count Piro

Once upon a time there lived a man who had only one son, a lazy, stupid boy, who would never do anything he was told. When the father was dying, he sent for his son and told him that he would soon be left alone in the world, with no possessions but the small cottage they lived in and a pear tree which grew behind it, and that, whether he liked it or not, he would have to work, or else he would starve. Then the old man died.

But the boy did not work; instead, he idled about as before, contenting himself with eating the pears off his tree, which, unlike other pear trees before or since, bore fruit the whole year round. Indeed, the pears were so much finer than any you could get even in the autumn, that one day, in the middle of the winter, they attracted the notice of a fox who was creeping by.

'Dear me; what lovely pears!' he said to the youth. 'Do give me a basket of them. It will bring you luck!'

'Ah, little fox, but if I give you a basketful, what am I to eat?' asked the boy.

'Oh, trust me, and do what I tell you,' said the fox; 'I know it will bring you luck.' So the boy got up and picked some of the ripest pears and put them into a rush basket. The fox thanked him, and, taking the basket in his mouth, trotted off to the king's palace and made his way straight to the king.

'Your Majesty, my master sends you a few of his best pears, and begs you will graciously accept them,' he said, laying the basket at the feet of the king.

'Pears! at this season?' cried the king, peering down to look at them; 'and, pray, who is your master?'

'The Count Piro,' answered the fox.

'But how does he manage to get pears in midwinter?' asked the king.

'Oh, he has everything he wants,' replied the fox; 'he is richer even than you are, your Majesty.'

'Then what can I send him in return for his pears?' said the king.

'Nothing, your Majesty, or you would hurt his feelings,' answered the fox.

'Well, tell him how heartily I thank him, and how much I shall enjoy them.' And the fox went away.

He trotted back to the cottage with his empty basket and told his tale, but the youth did not seem as pleased to hear as the fox was to tell.

'But, my dear little fox,' said he, 'you have brought me nothing in return, and I am so hungry!'

‘Let me alone,’ replied the fox; ‘I know what I am doing. You will see, it will bring you luck.’

A few days after this the fox came back again.

‘I must have another basket of pears,’ said he.

‘Ah, little fox, what shall I eat if you take away all my pears?’ answered the youth.

‘Be quiet, it will be all right,’ said the fox; and taking a bigger basket than before, he filled it quite full of pears. Then he picked it up in his mouth, and trotted off to the palace.

‘Your Majesty, as you seemed to like the first basket of pears, I have brought you some more,’ said he, ‘with my master, the Count Piro’s humble respects.’

‘Now, surely it is not possible to grow such pears with deep snow on the ground?’ cried the king.

‘Oh, that never affects them,’ answered the fox lightly; ‘he is rich enough to do anything. But to-day he sends me to ask if you will give him your daughter in marriage?’

‘If he is so much richer than I am,’ said the king, ‘I shall be obliged to refuse. My honour would not permit me to accept his offer.’

‘Oh, your Majesty, you must not think that,’ replied the fox; ‘and do not let the question of a dowry trouble you. The Count Piro would not dream of asking anything but the hand of the princess.’

‘Is he really so rich that he can do without a dowry?’ asked the king.

‘Did I not tell your Majesty that he was richer than you?’ answered the fox reproachfully.

‘Well, beg him to come here, that we may talk together,’ said the king.

So the fox went back to the young man and said: ‘I have told the king that you are Count Piro, and have asked his daughter in marriage.’

‘Oh, little fox, what have you done?’ cried the youth in dismay; ‘when the king sees me he will order my head to be cut off.’

‘Oh, no, he won’t!’ replied the fox; ‘just do as I tell you.’ And he went off to the town, and stopped at the house of the best tailor.

‘My master, the Count Piro, begs that you will send him at once the finest coat that you have in your shop,’ said the fox, putting on his grandest air, ‘and if it fits him I will call and pay for it to-morrow! Indeed, as he is in a great hurry, perhaps it might be as well if I took it round myself.’ The tailor was not accustomed to serve counts, and he at once got out all the coats he had ready. The fox chose out a beautiful one of white and silver, bade the tailor tie it up in a parcel, and carrying the string in his teeth, he left the shop, and went to a horse-dealer’s, whom he persuaded to send his finest horse round to the cottage, saying that the king had bidden his master to the palace.

Very unwillingly the young man put on the coat and mounted the horse, and rode up to meet the king, with the fox running before him.

‘What am I to say to his Majesty, little fox?’ he asked anxiously; ‘you know that I have never spoken to a king before.’

‘Say nothing,’ answered the fox, ‘but leave the talking to me. “Good morning, your Majesty,” will be all that is necessary for you.’

By this time they had reached the palace, and the king came to the door to receive Count Piro, and led him to the great hall, where a feast was spread. The princess was already seated at the table, but was as dumb as Count Piro himself.

‘The Count speaks very little,’ the king said at last to the fox, and the fox answered: ‘He has so much to think about in the management of his property that he cannot afford to talk like ordinary people.’ The king was quite satisfied, and they finished dinner, after which Count Piro and the fox took leave.

The next morning the fox came round again.

‘Give me another basket of pears,’ he said.

‘Very well, little fox; but remember it may cost me my life,’ answered the youth.

‘Oh, leave it to me, and do as I tell you, and you will see that in the end it will bring you luck,’ answered the fox; and plucking the pears he took them up to the king.

‘My master, Count Piro, sends you these pears,’ he said, ‘and asks for an answer to his proposal.’

‘Tell the count that the wedding can take place whenever he pleases,’ answered the king, and, filled with pride, the fox trotted back to deliver his message.

‘But I can’t bring the princess here, little fox?’ cried the young man in dismay.

‘You leave everything to me,’ answered the fox; ‘have I not managed well so far?’

And up at the palace preparations were made for a grand wedding, and the youth was married to the princess.

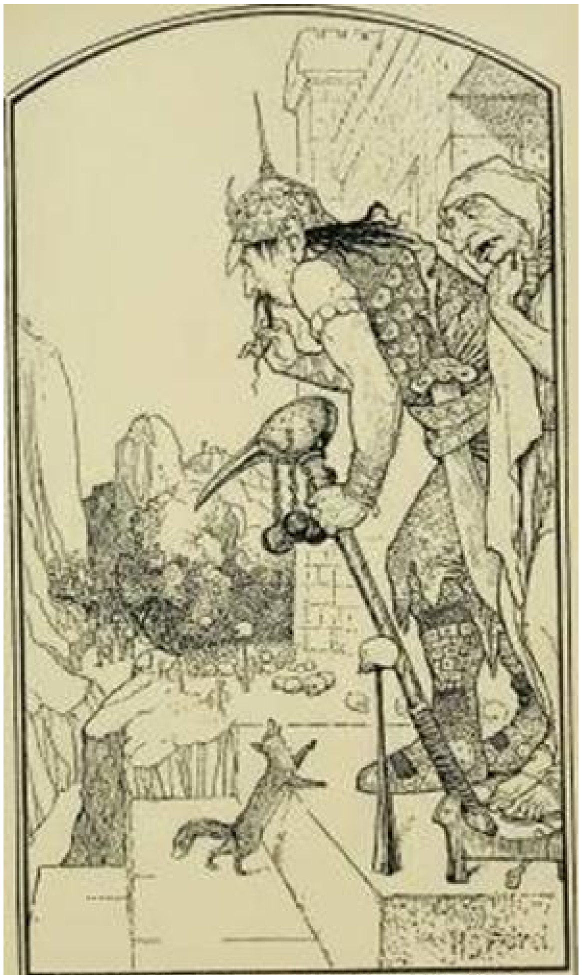

The little fox frightens the Ogre & his wife

After a week of feasting, the fox said to the king: ‘My master wishes to take his young bride home to his own castle.’

‘Very well, I will accompany them,’ replied the king; and he ordered his courtiers and attendants to get ready, and the best horses in his stable to be brought out for himself, Count Piro and the princess. So they all set out, and rode across the plain, the little fox running before them.

He stopped at the sight of a great flock of sheep, which was feeding peacefully on the rich grass. ‘To whom do these sheep belong?’ asked he of the shepherd. ‘To an ogre,’ replied the shepherd.

‘Hush,’ said the fox in a mysterious manner. ‘Do you see that crowd of armed men riding along? If you were to tell them that those sheep belonged to an ogre, they would kill them, and then the ogre would kill you! If they ask, just say the sheep belong to Count Piro; it will be better for everybody.’ And the fox ran hastily on, as he did not wish to be seen talking to the shepherd.

Very soon the king came up.

‘What beautiful sheep!’ he said, drawing up his horse. ‘I have none so fine in my pastures. Whose are they?'

'Count Piro's,' answered the shepherd, who did not know the king.

'Well, he must be a very rich man,' thought the king to himself, and rejoiced that he had such a wealthy son-in-law.

Meanwhile the fox had met with a huge herd of pigs, snuffling about the roots of some trees.

'To whom do these pigs belong?' he asked of the swineherd.

'To an ogre,' replied he.

'Hush!' whispered the fox, though nobody could hear him; 'do you see that troop of armed men riding towards us? If you tell them that the pigs belong to the ogre they will kill them, and then the ogre will kill you! If they ask, just say that the pigs belong to Count Piro; it will be better for everybody.' And he ran hastily on.

Soon after the king rode up.

'What fine pigs!' he said, reining in his horse. 'They are fatter than any I have got on my farms. Whose are they?'

'Count Piro's,' answered the swineherd, who did not know the king; and again the king felt he was lucky to have such a rich son-in-law.

This time the fox ran faster than before, and in a flowery meadow he found a troop of horses feeding. 'Whose horses are these?' he asked of the man who was watching them.

'An ogre's,' replied he.

'Hush!' whispered the fox, 'do you see that crowd of armed men coming towards us? If you tell them the horses belong to an ogre they will drive them off, and then the ogre will kill you! If they ask, just say they are Count Piro's; it will be better for everybody.' And he ran on again.

In a few minutes the king rode up.

'Oh, what lovely creatures! how I wish they were mine!' he exclaimed. 'Whose are they?'

Count Piro's,' answered the man, who did not know the king; and the king's heart leapt as he thought that if they belonged to his rich son-in-law they were as good as his.

At last the fox came to the castle of the ogre himself. He ran up the steps, with tears falling from his eyes, and crying: 'Oh, you poor, poor people, what a sad fate is yours!'

'What has happened?' asked the ogre, trembling with fright.

'Do you see that troop of horsemen who are riding along the road? They are sent by the king to kill you!'

'Oh, dear little fox, help us, we implore you!' cried the ogre and his wife.

‘Well, I will do what I can,’ answered the fox. ‘The best place is for you both to hide in the big oven, and when the soldiers have gone by I will let you out.’

The ogre and ogress scrambled into the oven as quick as thought, and the fox banged the door on them; just as he did so the king came up.

‘Do us the honour to dismount, your Majesty,’ said the fox, bowing low. ‘This is the palace of Count Piro!’

‘Why it is more splendid than my own!’ exclaimed the king, looking round on all the beautiful things that filled the hall. But why are there no servants?’

‘His Excellency the Count Piro wished the princess to choose them for herself,’ answered the fox, and the king nodded his approval. He then rode on, leaving the bridal pair in the castle. But when it was dark and all was still, the fox crept downstairs and lit the kitchen fire, and the ogre and his wife were burned to death. The next morning the fox said to Count Piro: ‘Now that you are rich and happy, you have no more need of me; but, before I go, there is one thing I must ask of you in return: when I die, promise me that you will give me a magnificent coffin, and bury me with due honours.’

‘Oh, little, little fox, don’t talk of dying,’ cried the princess, nearly weeping, for she had taken a great liking to the fox.

After some time the fox thought he would see if the Count Piro was really grateful to him for all he had done, and went back to the castle, where he lay down on the door-step, and pretended to be dead. The princess was just going out for a walk, and directly she saw him lying there, she burst into tears and fell on her knees beside him.

‘My dear little fox, you are not dead,’ she wailed; ‘you poor, poor little creature, you shall have the finest coffin in the world!’

‘A coffin for an animal?’ said Count Piro. ‘What nonsense! just take him by the leg and throw him into the ditch.’

Then the fox sprang up and cried: ‘You wretched, thankless beggar; have you forgotten that you owe all your riches to me?’

Count Piro was frightened when he heard these words, as he thought that perhaps the fox might have power to take away the castle, and leave him as poor as when he had nothing to eat but the pears off his tree. So he tried to soften the fox’s anger, saying that he had only spoken in joke, as he had known quite well that he was not really dead. For the sake of the princess, the fox let himself be softened, and he lived in the castle for many years, and played with Count Piro’s children. And when he actually did die, his coffin was made of silver, and Count Piro and his wife followed him to the grave.

The Rogue And The Herdsman

In a tiny cottage near the king’s palace there once lived an old man, his wife, and his son, a very lazy fellow, who would never do a stroke of work. He could not be got even to look after their one cow, but left her to look after herself, while he lay on a bank and went to sleep in the sun. For a long time his father bore with him, hoping that as he grew older he might gain more sense; but at last the old man’s patience was worn out, and he told his son that he should not stay at house in idleness, and must go out into the world to seek his fortune.

The young man saw that there was no help for it, and he set out with a wallet full of food over his shoulder. At length he came to a large house, at the door of which he knocked.

‘What do you want?’ asked the old man who opened it. And the youth told him how his father had turned him out of his house because he was so lazy and stupid, and he needed shelter for the night.

‘That you shall have,’ replied the man; ‘but to-morrow I shall give you some work to do, for you must know that I am the chief herdsman of the king.’

The youth made no answer to this. He felt, if he was to be made to work after all, that he might as well have stayed where he was. But as he did not see any other way of getting a bed, he went slowly in.

The herdsman’s two daughters and their mother were sitting at supper, and invited him to join them. Nothing more was said about work, and when the meal was over they all went to bed.

In the morning, when the young man was dressed, the herdsman called to him and said:

‘Now listen, and I will tell you what you have to do.’

‘What is it?’ asked the youth, sulkily.

‘Nothing less than to look after two hundred pigs,’ was the reply.

‘Oh, I am used to that,’ answered the youth.

‘Yes; but this time you will have to do it properly,’ said the herdsman; and he took the youth to the place where the pigs were feeding, and told him to drive them to the woods on the side of the mountain. This the young man did, but as soon as they reached the outskirts of the mountain they grew quite wild, and would have run away altogether, had they not luckily gone towards a narrow ravine, from which the youth easily drove them home to his father’s cottage.

‘Where do all these pigs come from, and how did you get them?’ asked the old man in surprise, when his son knocked at the door of the hut he had left only the day before.

‘They belong to the king’s chief herdsman,’ answered his son. ‘He gave them to me to look after, but I knew I could not do it, so I drove them straight to you. Now make the best of your good fortune, and kill them and hang them up at once.’

‘What are you talking about?’ cried the father, pale with horror. ‘We should certainly both be put to death if I did any such thing.’

‘No, no; do as I tell you, and I will get out of it somehow,’ replied the young man. And in the end he had his way. The pigs were killed, and laid side by side in a row. Then he cut off the tails and tied them together with a piece of cord, and swinging the bundle over his back, he returned to the place where they should have been feeding. Here there was a small swamp, which was just what he wanted, and finding a large stone, he fastened the rope to it, and sank it in the swamp, after which he arranged the tails carefully one by one, so that only their points were seen sticking out of the water. When everything was in order, he hastened home to his master with such a sorrowful face that the herdsman saw at once that something dreadful had happened.

‘Where are the pigs?’ asked he.

‘Oh, don’t speak of them!’ answered the young man; ‘I really can hardly tell you. The moment they got into the field they became quite mad, and each ran in a different direction. I ran too, hither and thither, but as fast as I caught one, another was off, till I was in despair. At last, however, I collected them all and was about to drive them back, when suddenly they rushed down the hill into the swamp, where they vanished completely, leaving only the points of their tails, which you can see for yourself.’

‘You have made up that story very well,’ replied the herdsman.

‘No, it is the real truth; come with me and I’ll prove it.’ And they went together to the spot, and there sure enough were the points of the tails sticking up out of the water. The herdsman laid hold of the nearest, and pulled at it with all his might, but it was no use, for the stone and the rope held them all fast. He called to the young man to help him, but the two did not succeed any better than the one had done.

‘Yes, your story was true after all; it is a wonderful thing,’ said the herdsman. ‘But I see it is no fault of yours, and I must put up with my loss as well as I can. Now let us return home, for it is time for supper.

Next morning the herdsman said to the young man: ‘I have got some other work for you to do. To-day you must take a hundred sheep to graze; but be careful that no harm befalls them.’

‘I will do my best,’ replied the youth. And he opened the gate of the fold, where the sheep had been all night, and drove them out into the meadow. But in a short time they grew as wild as the pigs had done, and scattered in all directions. The young man could not collect them, try as he would, and he thought to himself that this was the punishment for his laziness in refusing to look after his father’s one cow.

At last, however, the sheep seemed tired of running about, and then the youth managed to gather them together, and drove them, as before, straight to his father’s house.

‘Whose sheep are these, and what are they doing here?’ asked the old man in wonder, and his son told him. But when the tale was ended the father shook his head.

‘Give up these bad ways and take them back to your master,’ said he.

‘No, no,’ answered the youth; ‘I am not so stupid as that! We will kill them and have them for dinner.’

‘You will lose your life if you do,’ replied the father.

‘Oh, I am not sure of that!’ said the son, ‘and, anyway, I will have my will for once.’ And he killed all the sheep and laid them on the grass. But he cut off the head of the ram which always led the flock and had bells round its horns. This he took back to the place where they should have been feeding, for here he had noticed a high rock, with a patch of green grass in the middle and two or three thick bushes growing on the edge. Up this rock he climbed with great difficulty, and fastened the ram’s head to the bushes with a cord, leaving only the tips of the horns with the bells visible. As there was a soft breeze blowing, the bushes to which the head was tied moved gently, and the bells rang. When all was done to his liking he hastened quickly back to his master.

‘Where are the sheep?’ asked the herdsman as the young man ran panting up the steps.

‘Oh! don’t speak of them,’ answered he. ‘It is only by a miracle that I am here myself.’

‘Tell me at once what has happened,’ said the herdsman sternly.

The youth began to sob, and stammered out: ‘I — I hardly know how to tell you! They — they — they were so — so troublesome — that I could not manage them at all. They — ran about in — in all directions, and I — I — ran after them and nearly died of fatigue. Then I heard a — a noise, which I — I thought was the wind. But — but — it was the sheep, which, be — before my very eyes, were carried straight up — up into the air. I stood watching them as if I was turned to stone, but there kept ringing in my ears the sound of the bells on the ram which led them.’

‘That is nothing but a lie from beginning to end,’ said the herdsman.

‘No, it is as true as that there is a sun in heaven,’ answered the young man.

‘Then give me a proof of it,’ cried his master.

‘Well, come with me,’ said the youth. By this time it was evening and the dusk was falling. The young man brought the herdsman to the foot of the great rock, but it was so dark you could hardly see. Still the sound of sheep bells rang softly from above, and the herdsman knew them to be those he had hung on the horns of his ram.

‘Do you hear?’ asked the youth.

‘Yes, I hear; you have spoken the truth, and I cannot blame you for what has happened. I must bear the loss as best as I can.’

He turned and went home, followed by the young man, who felt highly pleased with his own cleverness.

‘I should not be surprised if the tasks I set you were too difficult, and that you were tired of them,’ said the herdsman next morning; ‘but to-day I have something quite easy for you to do. You must look after forty oxen, and be sure you are very careful, for one of them has gold-tipped horns and hoofs, and the king reckons it among his greatest treasures.’

The young man drove out the oxen into the meadow, and no sooner had they got there than, like the sheep and the pigs, they began to scamper in all directions, the precious bull being the wildest of all. As the youth stood watching them, not knowing what to do next, it came into his head that his father’s cow was put out to grass at no great distance; and he forthwith made such a noise that he quite frightened the oxen, who were easily persuaded to take the path he wished. When they heard the cow lowing they galloped all the faster, and soon they all arrived at his father’s house.

The old man was standing before the door of his hut when the great herd of animals dashed round a corner of the road, with his son and his own cow at their head.

‘Whose cattle are these, and why are they here?’ he asked; and his son told him the story.

‘Take them back to your master as soon as you can,’ said the old man; but the son only laughed, and said:

‘No, no; they are a present to you! They will make you fat!’

For a long while the old man refused to have anything to do with such a wicked scheme; but his son talked him over in the end, and they killed the oxen as they had killed the sheep and the pigs. Last of all they came to the king’s cherished ox.

The son had a rope ready to cast round its horns, and throw it to the ground, but the ox was stronger than the rope, and soon tore it in pieces. Then it dashed away to the wood, the youth following; over hedges and ditches they both went, till they reached the rocky pass which bordered the herdsman’s land. Here the ox, thinking itself safe, stopped to rest, and thus gave the young man a chance to come up with it. Not knowing how to catch it, he collected all the wood he could find and made a circle of fire round the ox, who by this time had fallen asleep, and did not wake till the fire had caught its head, and it was too late for it to escape. Then the young man, who had been watching, ran home to his master.

‘You have been away a long while,’ said the herdsman. ‘Where are the cattle?’

The young man gasped, and seemed as if he was unable to speak. At last he answered:

‘It is always the same story! The oxen are — gone — gone!’

‘G-g-gone?’ cried the herdsman. ‘Scoundrel, you lie!’

‘I am telling you the exact truth,’ answered the young man. ‘Directly we came to the meadow they grew so wild that I could not keep them together. Then the big ox broke away, and the others followed till they all disappeared down a deep hole into the earth. It seemed to me that I heard sounds of bellowing, and I thought I recognised the voice of the golden horned ox; but when I got to the place from which the sounds had come, I could neither see nor hear anything in the hole itself, though there were traces of a fire all round it.’

‘Wretch!’ cried the herdsman, when he had heard this story, ‘even if you did not lie before, you are lying now.’

‘No, master, I am speaking the truth. Come and see for yourself.’

‘If I find you have deceived me, you are a dead man, said the herdsman; and they went out together.

‘What do you call that?’ asked the youth. And the herdsman looked and saw the traces of a fire, which seemed to have sprung up from under the earth.

‘Wonder upon wonder,’ he exclaimed, ‘so you really did speak the truth after all! Well, I cannot reproach you, though I shall have to pay heavily to my royal master for the value of that ox. But come, let us go home! I will never set you to herd cattle again, henceforward I will give you something easier to do.’

‘I have thought of exactly the thing for you,’ said the herdsman as they walked along, ‘and it is so simple that you cannot make a mistake. Just make me ten scythes, one for every man, for I want the grass mown in one of my meadows to-morrow.’

At these words the youth’s heart sank, for he had never been trained either as a smith or a joiner. However, he dared not say no, but smiled and nodded.

Slowly and sadly he went to bed, but he could not sleep, for wondering how the scythes were to be made. All the skill and cunning he had shown before was of no use to him now, and after thinking about the scythes for many hours, there seemed only one way open to him. So, listening to make sure that all was still, he stole away to his parents, and told them the whole story. When they had heard everything, they hid him where no one could find him.

Time passed away, and the young man stayed at home doing all his parents bade him, and showing himself very different from what he had been before he went out to see the world; but one day he said to his father that he should like to marry, and have a house of his own.

'When I served the king's chief herdsman,' added he, 'I saw his daughter, and I am resolved to try if I cannot win her for my wife.'

'It will cost you your life, if you do,' answered the father, shaking his head.

'Well, I will do my best,' replied his son; 'but first give me the sword which hangs over your bed!'

The old man did not understand what good the sword would do, however he took it down, and the young man went his way.

Late in the evening he arrived at the house of the herdsman, and knocked at the door, which was opened by a little boy.

'I want to speak to your master,' said he.

'So it is you?' cried the herdsman, when he had received the message. 'Well, you can sleep here to-night if you wish.'

'I have come for something else besides a bed,' replied the young man, drawing his sword, 'and if you do not promise to give me your youngest daughter as my wife I will stab you through the heart.'

What could the poor man do but promise? And he fetched his youngest daughter, who seemed quite pleased at the proposed match, and gave the youth her hand.

Then the young man went home to his parents, and bade them get ready to welcome his bride. And when the wedding was over he told his father-in-law, the herdsman, what he had done with the sheep, and pigs, and cattle. By-and-by the story came to the king's ears, and he thought that a man who was so clever was just the man to govern the country; so he made him his minister, and after the king himself there was no one so great as he.

Eisenkopf

Once upon a time there lived an old man who had only one son, whom he loved dearly; but they were very poor, and often had scarcely enough to eat. Then the old man fell ill, and things grew worse than ever, so he called his son and said to him:

‘My dear boy, I have no longer any food to give you, and you must go into the world and get it for yourself. It does not matter what work you do, but remember if you do it well and are faithful to your master, you will always have your reward.’

So Peter put a piece of black bread in his knapsack, and strapping it on his back, took a stout stick in his hand, and set out to seek his fortune. For a long while he travelled on and on, and nobody seemed to want him; but one day he met an old man, and being a polite youth, he took off his hat and said: ‘Good morning,’ in a pleasant voice. ‘Good morning,’ answered the old man; ‘and where are you going?’

‘I am wandering through the country trying to get work,’ replied Peter.

‘Then stay with me, for I can give you plenty,’ said the old man, and Peter stayed.

His work did not seem hard, for he had only two horses and a cow to see after, and though he had been hired for a year, the year consisted of but three days, so that it was not long before he received his wages. In payment the old man gave him a nut, and offered to keep him for another year; but Peter was home-sick; and, besides, he would rather have been paid ever so small a piece of money than a nut; for, thought he, nuts grow on every tree, and I can gather as many as I like. However, he did not say this to the old man, who had been kind to him, but just bade him farewell.

The nearer Peter drew to his father’s house the more ashamed he felt at having brought back such poor wages. What could one nut do for him? Why, it would not buy even a slice of bacon. It was no use taking it home, he might as well eat it. So he sat down on a stone and cracked it with his teeth, and then took it out of his mouth to break off the shell. But who could ever guess what came out of that nut? Why, horses and oxen and sheep stepped out in such numbers that they seemed as if they would stretch to the world’s end! The sight gave Peter such a shock that he wrung his hands in dismay. What was he to do with all these creatures, where was he to put them? He stood and gazed in terror, and at this moment Eisenkopf came by.

‘What is the matter, young man?’ asked he.

‘Oh, my friend, there is plenty the matter,’ answered Peter. ‘I have gained a nut as my wages, and when I cracked it this crowd of beasts came out, and I don’t know what to do with them all!’

‘Listen to me, my son,’ said Eisenkopf. ‘If you will promise never to marry I will drive them all back into the nut again.’

In his trouble Peter would have promised far harder things than this, so he gladly gave the promise Eisenkopf asked for; and at a whistle from the stranger the animals all began crowding into the nut again, nearly tumbling over each other in their haste. When the last foot had got inside, the two halves of the shell shut close. Then Peter put it in his pocket and went on to the house.

No sooner had he reached it than he cracked his nut for the second time, and out came the horses, sheep, and oxen again. Indeed Peter thought that there were even more of them than before. The old man could not believe his eyes when he saw the multitudes of horses, oxen and sheep standing before his door.

‘How did you come by all these?’ he gasped, as soon as he could speak; and the son told him the whole story, and of the promise he had given Eisenkopf.

The next day some of the cattle were driven to market and sold, and with the money the old man was able to buy some of the fields and gardens round his house, and in a few months had grown the richest and most prosperous man in the whole village. Everything seemed to turn to gold in his hands, till one day, when he and his son were sitting in the orchard watching their herds of cattle grazing in the meadows, he suddenly said: ‘Peter, my boy, it is time that you were thinking of marrying.’

‘But, my dear father, I told you I can never marry, because of the promise I gave to Eisenkopf.’

‘Oh, one promises here and promises there, but no one ever thinks of keeping such promises. If Eisenkopf does not like your marrying, he will have to put up with it all the same! Besides, there stands in the stable a grey horse which is saddled night and day; and if Eisenkopf should show his face, you have only got to jump on the horse’s back and ride away, and nobody on earth can catch you. When all is safe you will come back again, and we shall live as happily as two fish in the sea.’

And so it all happened. The young man found a pretty, brown-skinned girl who was willing to have him for a husband, and the whole village came to the wedding feast. The music was at its gayest, and the dance at its merriest, when Eisenkopf looked in at the window.

‘Oh, ho, my brother! what is going on here? It has the air of being a wedding feast. Yet I fancied — was I mistaken? — that you had given me a promise that you never would marry.’ But Peter had not waited for the end of this speech. Scarcely had he seen Eisenkopf than he darted like the wind to the stable and flung himself on the horse’s back. In another moment he was away over the mountain, with Eisenkopf running fast behind him.

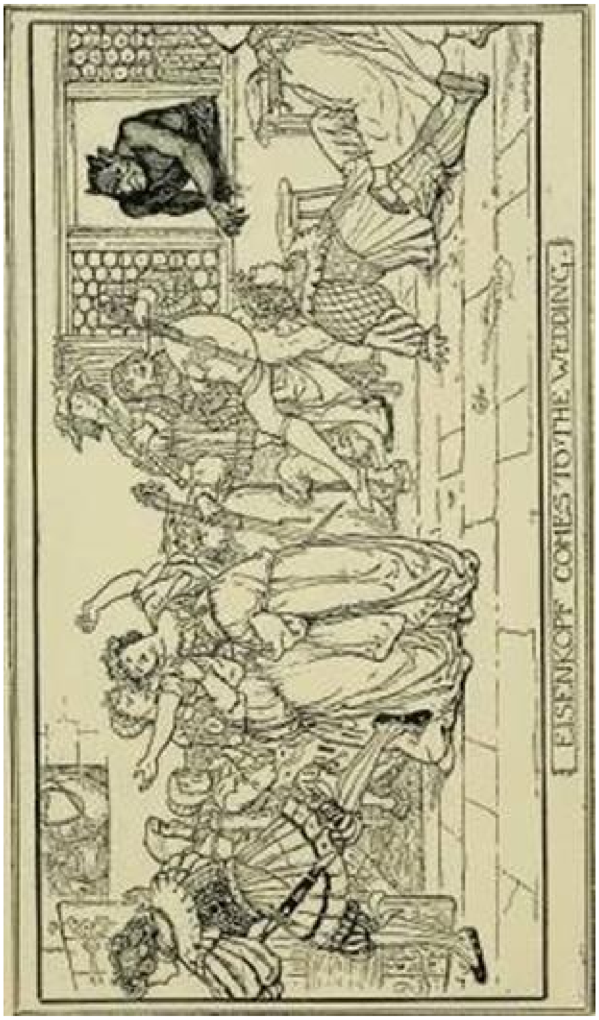

EISENKOPF COMES TO THE WEDDING.

On they went through thick forests where the sun never shone, over rivers so wide that it took a whole day to sail across them, up hills whose sides were all of glass; on they went through seven times seven countries till Peter reined in his horse before the house of an old woman.

‘Good day, mother,’ said he, jumping down and opening the door.

‘Good day, my son,’ answered she, ‘and what are you doing here, at the world’s end?’

‘I am flying for my life, mother, flying to the world which is beyond all worlds; for Eisenkopf is at my heels.’

‘Come in and rest then, and have some food, for I have a little dog who will begin to howl when Eisenkopf is still seven miles off.’

So Peter went in and warmed himself and ate and drank, till suddenly the dog began to howl.

‘Quick, my son, quick, you must go,’ cried the old woman. And the lightning itself was not quicker than Peter.

‘Stop a moment,’ cried the old woman again, just as he was mounting his horse, ‘take this napkin and this cake, and put them in your bag where you can get hold of them easily.’ Peter took them and put them into his bag, and waving his thanks for her kindness, he was off like the wind.

Round and round he rode, through seven times seven countries, through forests still thicker, and rivers still wider, and mountains still more slippery than the others he had passed, till at length he reached a house where dwelt another old woman.

‘Good day, mother,’ said he.

‘Good day, my son! What are you seeking here at the world’s end?’

‘I am flying for my life, mother, flying to the world that is beyond all worlds, for Eisenkopf is at my heels.’

‘Come in, my son, and have some food. I have a little dog who will begin to howl when Eisenkopf is still seven miles off; so lie on this bed and rest yourself in peace.’

Then she went to the kitchen and baked a number of cakes, more than Peter could have eaten in a whole month. He had not finished a quarter of them, when the dog began to howl.

‘Now, my son, you must go,’ cried the old woman ‘but first put these cakes and this napkin in your bag, where you can easily get at them.’ So Peter thanked her and was off like the wind.

On he rode, through seven times seven countries, till he came to the house of a third old woman, who welcomed him as the others had done. But when the dog howled, and Peter sprang up to go, she said, as she gave him the same gifts for his journey: ‘You have now three cakes and three napkins, for I know that my sisters have each given you one. Listen to me, and do what I tell you. Ride seven days and nights straight before you, and on the eighth morning you will see a great fire. Strike it three times with the three napkins and it will part in two. Then ride into the opening, and when you are in the middle of the opening, throw the three cakes behind your back with your left hand.’

Peter thanked her for her counsel, and was careful to do exactly all the old woman had told him. On the eighth morning he reached a fire so large that he could see nothing else on either side, but when he struck it with the napkins it parted, and stood on each hand like a wall. As he rode through the opening he threw the cakes behind him. From each cake there sprang a huge dog, and he gave them the names of World's-weight, Ironstrong, and Quick-ear. They bayed with joy at the sight of him, and as Peter turned to pat them, he beheld Eisenkopf at the edge of the fire, but the opening had closed up behind Peter, and he could not get through.

'Stop, you promise-breaker,' shrieked he; 'you have slipped through my hands once, but wait till I catch you again!'

Then he lay down by the fire and watched to see what would happen.

When Peter knew that he had nothing more to fear from Eisenkopf, he rode on slowly till he came to a small white house. Here he entered and found himself in a room where a gray-haired woman was spinning and a beautiful girl was sitting in the window combing her golden hair. 'What brings you here, my son?' asked the old woman.

'I am seeking for a place, mother,' answered Peter.

'Stay with me, then, for I need a servant,' said the old woman.

'With pleasure, mother,' replied he.

After that Peter's life was a very happy one. He sowed and ploughed all day, except now and then when he took his dogs and went to hunt. And whatever game he brought back the maiden with the golden hair knew how to dress it.

One day the old woman had gone to the town to buy some flour, and Peter and the maiden were left alone in the house. They fell into talk, and she asked him where his home was, and how he had managed to come through the fire. Peter then told her the whole story, and of his striking the flames with the three napkins as he had been told to do. The maiden listened attentively and wondered in herself whether what he said was true. So after Peter had gone out to the fields, she crept up to his room and stole the napkins and then set off as fast as she could to the fire by a path she knew of over the hill.

At the third blow she gave the flames divided, and Eisenkopf, who had been watching and hoping for a chance of this kind, ran down the opening and stood before her. At this sight the maiden was almost frightened to death, but with a great effort she recovered herself and ran home as fast as her legs would carry her, closely pursued by Eisenkopf. Panting for breath she rushed into the house and fell fainting on the floor; but Eisenkopf entered behind her, and hid himself in the kitchen under the hearth.

Not long after, Peter came in and picked up the three napkins which the maiden had dropped on the threshold. He wondered how they got there, for he knew he had left them in his room; but what was his horror when he saw the form of the fainting girl lying where she had dropped, as still and white as if she had been dead. He lifted her up and carried her to her bed, where she soon revived, but she did not tell Peter about Eisenkopf, who had been almost crushed to death under the hearth-stone by the body of World's-weight.

The next morning Peter locked up his dogs and went out into the forest alone. Eisenkopf, however, had seen him go, and followed so closely at his heels that Peter had barely time to clamber up a tall tree, where Eisenkopf could not reach him. 'Come down at once, you gallows bird,' he cried. 'Have you forgotten your promise that you never would marry?'

'Oh, I know it is all up with me,' answered Peter, 'but let me call out three times.'

'You can call a hundred times if you like,' returned Eisenkopf, 'for now I have got you in my power, and you shall pay for what you have done.'

'Ironstrong, World's-weight, Quick-ear, fly to my help!' cried Peter; and Quick-ear heard, and said to his brothers: 'Listen, our master is calling us.'

'You are dreaming, fool,' answered World's-weight; 'why he has not finished his breakfast.' And he gave Quick-ear a slap with his paw, for he was young and needed to be taught sense.

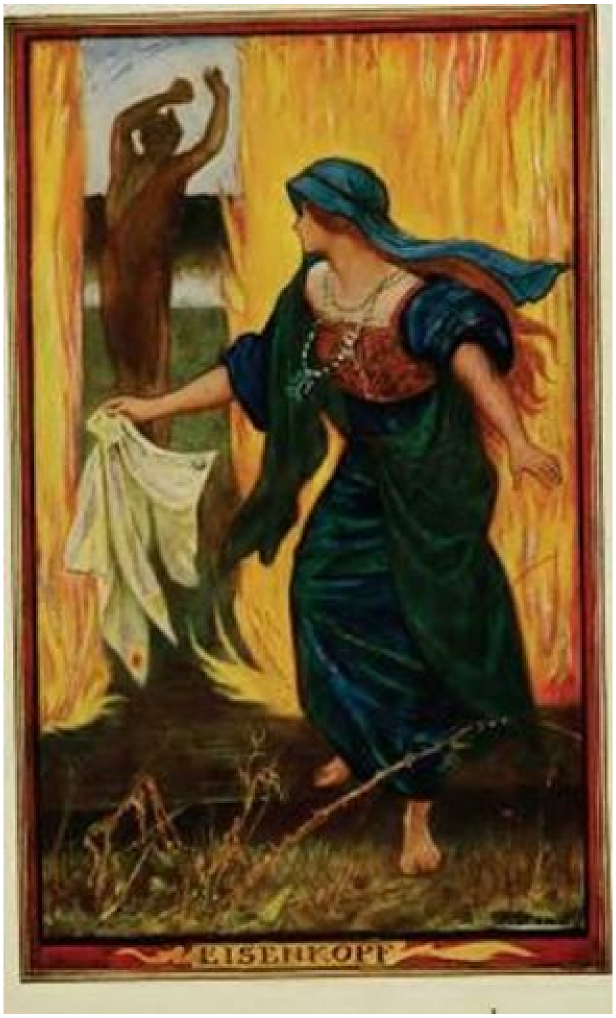

‘Ironstrong, World’s-weight, Quick-ear, fly to my help!’ cried Peter again.

This time World’s-weight heard also, and he said, ‘Ah, now our master is really calling.’

‘How silly you are!’ answered Ironstrong; ‘you know that at this hour he is always eating.’ And he gave World’s-weight a cuff, because he was old enough to know better.

Peter sat trembling on the tree dreading lest his dogs had never heard, or else that, having heard, they had refused to come. It was his last chance, so making a mighty effort he shrieked once more:

‘Ironstrong, World’s-weight, Quick-ear, fly to my help, or I am a dead man!’

And Ironstrong heard, and said: ‘Yes, he is certainly calling, we must go at once.’ And in an instant he had burst open the door, and all three were bounding away in the direction of the voice. When they reached the foot of the tree Peter just said: ‘At him!’ And in a few minutes there was nothing left of Eisenkopf.

As soon as his enemy was dead Peter got down and returned to the house, where he bade farewell to the old woman and her daughter, who gave him a beautiful ring, all set with diamonds. It was really a magic ring, but neither Peter nor the maiden knew that.

Peter's heart was heavy as he set out for home. He had ceased to love the wife whom he had left at his wedding feast, and his heart had gone out to the golden-haired girl. However, it was no use thinking of that, so he rode forward steadily.

The fire had to be passed through before he had gone very far, and when he came to it, Peter shook the napkins three times in the flames and a passage opened for trim. But then a curious thing happened; the three dogs, who had followed at his heels all the way, now became three cakes again, which Peter put into his bag with the napkins. After that he stopped at the houses of the three old women, and gave each one back her napkin and her cake.

'Where is my wife?' asked Peter, when he reached home.

'Oh, my dear son, why did you ever leave us? After you had vanished, no one knew where, your poor wife grew more and more wretched, and would neither eat nor drink. Little by little she faded away, and a month ago we laid her in her grave, to hide her sorrows under the earth.'

At this news Peter began to weep, for he had loved his wife before he went away and had seen the golden-haired maiden.

He went sorrowfully about his work for the space of half a year, when, one night, he dreamed that he moved the diamond ring given him by the maiden from his right hand and put it on the wedding finger of the left. The dream was so real that he awoke at once and changed the ring from one hand to the other. And as he did so guess what he saw? Why, the golden-haired girl standing before him. And he sprang up and kissed her, and said: 'Now you are mine for ever and ever, and when we die we will both be buried in one grave.'

And so they were.

The Death Of Abu Nowas And Of His Wife

Once upon a time there lived a man whose name was Abu Nowas, and he was a great favourite with the Sultan of the country, who had a palace in the same town where Abu Nowas dwelt.

One day Abu Nowas came weeping into the hall of the palace where the Sultan was sitting, and said to him: ‘Oh, mighty Sultan, my wife is dead.’

‘That is bad news,’ replied the Sultan; ‘I must get you another wife.’ And he bade his Grand Vizir send for the Sultana.

‘This poor Abu Nowas has lost his wife,’ said he, when she entered the hall.

‘Oh, then we must get him another,’ answered the Sultana; ‘I have a girl that will suit him exactly,’ and clapped her hands loudly. At this signal a maiden appeared and stood before her.

‘I have got a husband for you,’ said the Sultana.

‘Who is he?’ asked the girl.

‘Abu Nowas, the jester,’ replied the Sultana.

‘I will take him,’ answered the maiden; and as Abu Nowas made no objection, it was all arranged. The Sultana had the most beautiful clothes made for the bride, and the Sultan gave the bridegroom his wedding suit, and a thousand gold pieces into the bargain, and soft carpets for the house.

So Abu Nowas took his wife home, and for some time they were very happy, and spent the money freely which the Sultan had given them, never thinking what they should do for more when that was gone. But come to an end it did, and they had to sell their fine things one by one, till at length nothing was left but a cloak apiece, and one blanket to cover them. ‘We have run through our fortune,’ said Abu Nowas, ‘what are we to do now? I am afraid to go back to the Sultan, for he will command his servants to turn me from the door. But you shall return to your mistress, and throw yourself at her feet and weep, and perhaps she will help us.’

‘Oh, you had much better go,’ said the wife. ‘I shall not know what to say.’

‘Well, then, stay at home, if you like,’ answered Abu Nowas, ‘and I will ask to be admitted to the Sultan’s presence, and will tell him, with sobs, that my wife is dead, and that I have no money for her burial. When he hears that perhaps he will give us something.’

‘Yes, that is a good plan,’ said the wife; and Abu Nowas set out.

The Sultan was sitting in the hall of justice when Abu Nowas entered, his eyes streaming with tears, for he had rubbed some pepper into them. They smarted dreadfully, and he could hardly see to walk straight, and everyone wondered what was the matter with him.

‘Abu Nowas! What has happened?’ cried the Sultan.

‘Oh, noble Sultan, my wife is dead,’ wept he.

‘We must all die,’ answered the Sultan; but this was not the reply for which Abu Nowas had hoped.

‘True, O Sultan, but I have neither shroud to wrap her in, nor money to bury her with,’ went on Abu Nowas, in no wise abashed by the way the Sultan had received his news.

‘Well, give him a hundred pieces of gold,’ said the Sultan, turning to the Grand Vizir. And when the money was counted out Abu Nowas bowed low, and left the hall, his tears still flowing, but with joy in his heart.

‘Have you got anything?’ cried his wife, who was waiting for him anxiously.

‘Yes, a hundred gold pieces,’ said he, throwing down the bag, ‘but that will not last us any time. Now you must go to the Sultana, clothed in sackcloth and robes of mourning, and tell her that your husband, Abu Nowas, is dead, and you have no money for his burial. When she hears that, she will be sure to ask you what has become of the money and the fine clothes she gave us on our marriage, and you will answer, “before he died he sold everything.”’

The wife did as she was told, and wrapping herself in sackcloth went up to the Sultana’s own palace, and as she was known to have been one of Subida’s favourite attendants, she was taken without difficulty into the private apartments.

‘What is the matter?’ inquired the Sultana, at the sight of the dismal figure.

‘My husband lies dead at home, and he has spent all our money, and sold everything, and I have nothing left to bury him with,’ sobbed the wife.

Then Subida took up a purse containing two hundred gold pieces, and said: ‘Your husband served us long and faithfully. You must see that he has a fine funeral.’

The wife took the money, and, kissing the feet of the Sultana, she joyfully hastened home. They spent some happy hours planning how they should spend it, and thinking how clever they had been. ‘When the Sultan goes this evening to Subida’s palace,’ said Abu Nowas, ‘she will be sure to tell him that Abu Nowas is dead. “Not Abu Nowas, it is his wife,” he will reply, and they will quarrel over it, and all the time we shall be sitting here enjoying ourselves. Oh, if they only knew, how angry they would be!’

As Abu Nowas had foreseen, the Sultan went, in the evening after his business was over, to pay his usual visit to the Sultana.

‘Poor Abu Nowas is dead!’ said Subida when he entered the room.

‘It is not Abu Nowas, but his wife who is dead,’ answered the Sultan.

‘No; really you are quite wrong. She came to tell me herself only a couple of hours ago,’ replied Subida, ‘and as he had spent all their money, I gave her something to bury him with.’

‘You must be dreaming,’ exclaimed the Sultan. ‘Soon after midday Abu Nowas came into the hall, his eyes streaming with tears, and when I asked him the reason he answered that his wife was dead, and they had sold everything they had, and he had nothing left, not so much as would buy her a shroud, far less for her burial.’

For a long time they talked, and neither would listen to the other, till the Sultan sent for the door-keeper and bade him go instantly to the house of Abu Nowas and see if it was the man or his wife who was dead. But Abu Nowas happened to be sitting with his wife behind the latticed window, which looked on the street, and he saw the man coming, and sprang up at once. ‘There is the Sultan’s door-keeper! They have sent him here to find out the truth. Quick! throw yourself on the bed and pretend that you are dead.’ And in a moment the wife was stretched out stiffly, with a linen sheet spread across her, like a corpse.

She was only just in time, for the sheet was hardly drawn across her when the door opened and the porter came in. ‘Has anything happened?’ asked he.

‘My poor wife is dead,’ replied Abu Nowas. ‘Look! she is laid out here.’ And the porter approached the bed, which was in a corner of the room, and saw the stiff form lying underneath.

‘We must all die,’ said he, and went back to the Sultan.

‘Well, have you found out which of them is dead?’ asked the Sultan.

‘Yes, noble Sultan; it is the wife,’ replied the porter.

‘He only says that to please you,’ cried Subida in a rage; and calling to her chamberlain, she ordered him to go at once to the dwelling of Abu Nowas and see which of the two was dead. ‘And be sure you tell the truth about it,’ added she, ‘or it will be the worse for you.’

As her chamberlain drew near the house, Abu Nowas caught sight of him. ‘There is the Sultana’s chamberlain,’ he exclaimed in a fright. ‘Now it is my turn to die. Be quick and spread the sheet over me.’ And he laid himself on the bed, and held his breath when the chamberlain came in. ‘What are you weeping for?’ asked the man, finding the wife in tears.

‘My husband is dead,’ answered she, pointing to the bed; and the chamberlain drew back the sheet and beheld Abu Nowas lying stiff and motionless. Then he gently replaced the sheet and returned to the palace.

‘Well, have you found out this time?’ asked the Sultan.

‘My lord, it is the husband who is dead.’

‘But I tell you he was with me only a few hours ago,’ cried the Sultan angrily. ‘I must get to the bottom of this before I sleep! Let my golden coach be brought round at once.’

The coach was before the door in another five minutes, and the Sultan and Sultana both got in. Abu Nowas had ceased being a dead man, and was looking into the street when he saw the coach coming. ‘Quick! quick!’ he called to his wife. ‘The Sultan will be here directly, and we must both be dead to receive him.’ So they laid themselves down, and spread the sheet over them, and held their breath. At that instant the Sultan entered, followed by the Sultana and the chamberlain, and he went up to the bed and found the corpses stiff and motionless. ‘I would give a thousand gold pieces to anyone who would tell me the truth about this,’ cried he, and at the words Abu Nowas sat up. ‘Give them to me, then,’ said he, holding out his hand. ‘You cannot give them to anyone who needs them more.’

‘Oh, Abu Nowas, you impudent dog!’ exclaimed the Sultan, bursting into a laugh, in which the Sultana joined. ‘I might have known it was one of your tricks!’ But he sent Abu Nowas the gold he had promised, and let us hope that it did not fly so fast as the last had done.

Motiratika

Once upon a time, in a very hot country, a man lived with his wife in a little hut, which was surrounded by grass and flowers. They were perfectly happy together till, by-and-by, the woman fell ill and refused to take any food. The husband tried to persuade her to eat all sorts of delicious fruits that he had found in the forest, but she would have none of them, and grew so thin he feared she would die. ‘Is there nothing you would like?’ he said at last in despair.

‘Yes, I think I could eat some wild honey,’ answered she. The husband was overjoyed, for he thought this sounded easy enough to get, and he went off at once in search of it.

He came back with a wooden pan quite full, and gave it to his wife. ‘I can’t eat that,’ she said, turning away in disgust. ‘Look! there are some dead bees in it! I want honey that is quite pure.’ And the man threw the rejected honey on the grass, and started off to get some fresh. When he got back he offered it to his wife, who treated it as she had done the first bowlful. ‘That honey has got ants in it: throw it away,’ she said, and when he brought her some more, she declared it was full of earth. In his fourth journey he managed to find some that she would eat, and then she begged him to get her some water. This took him some time, but at length he came to a lake whose waters were sweetened with sugar. He filled a pannikin quite full, and carried it home to his wife, who drank it eagerly, and said that she now felt quite well. When she was up and had dressed herself, her husband lay down in her place, saying: ‘You have given me a great deal of trouble, and now it is my turn!’

‘What is the matter with you?’ asked the wife.

‘I am thirsty and want some water,’ answered he; and she took a large pot and carried it to the nearest spring, which was a good way off. ‘Here is the water,’ she said to her husband, lifting the heavy pot from her head; but he turned away in disgust.

‘You have drawn it from the pool that is full of frogs and willows; you must get me some more.’ So the woman set out again and walked still further to another lake.

‘This water tastes of rushes,’ he exclaimed, ‘go and get some fresh.’ But when she brought back a third supply he declared that it seemed made up of water-lilies, and that he must have water that was pure, and not spoilt by willows, or frogs, or rushes. So for the fourth time she put her jug on her head, and passing all the lakes she had hitherto tried, she came to another, where the water was golden like honey. She stooped down to drink, when a horrible head bobbed up on the surface.

‘How dare you steal my water?’ cried the head.

‘It is my husband who has sent me,’ she replied, trembling all over. ‘But do not kill me! You shall have my baby, if you will only let me go.’

‘How am I to know which is your baby?’ asked the Ogre.

‘Oh, that is easily managed. I will shave both sides of his head, and hang some white beads round his neck. And when you come to the hut you have only to call “Motikatika!” and he will run to meet you, and you can eat him.’

‘Very well,’ said the ogre, ‘you can go home.’ And after filling the pot she returned, and told her husband of the dreadful danger she had been in.

Now, though his mother did not know it, the baby was a magician and he had heard all that his mother had promised the ogre; and he laughed to himself as he planned how to outwit her.

The next morning she shaved his head on both sides, and hung the white beads round his neck, and said to him: ‘I am going to the fields to work, but you must stay at home. Be sure you do not go outside, or some wild beast may eat you.’

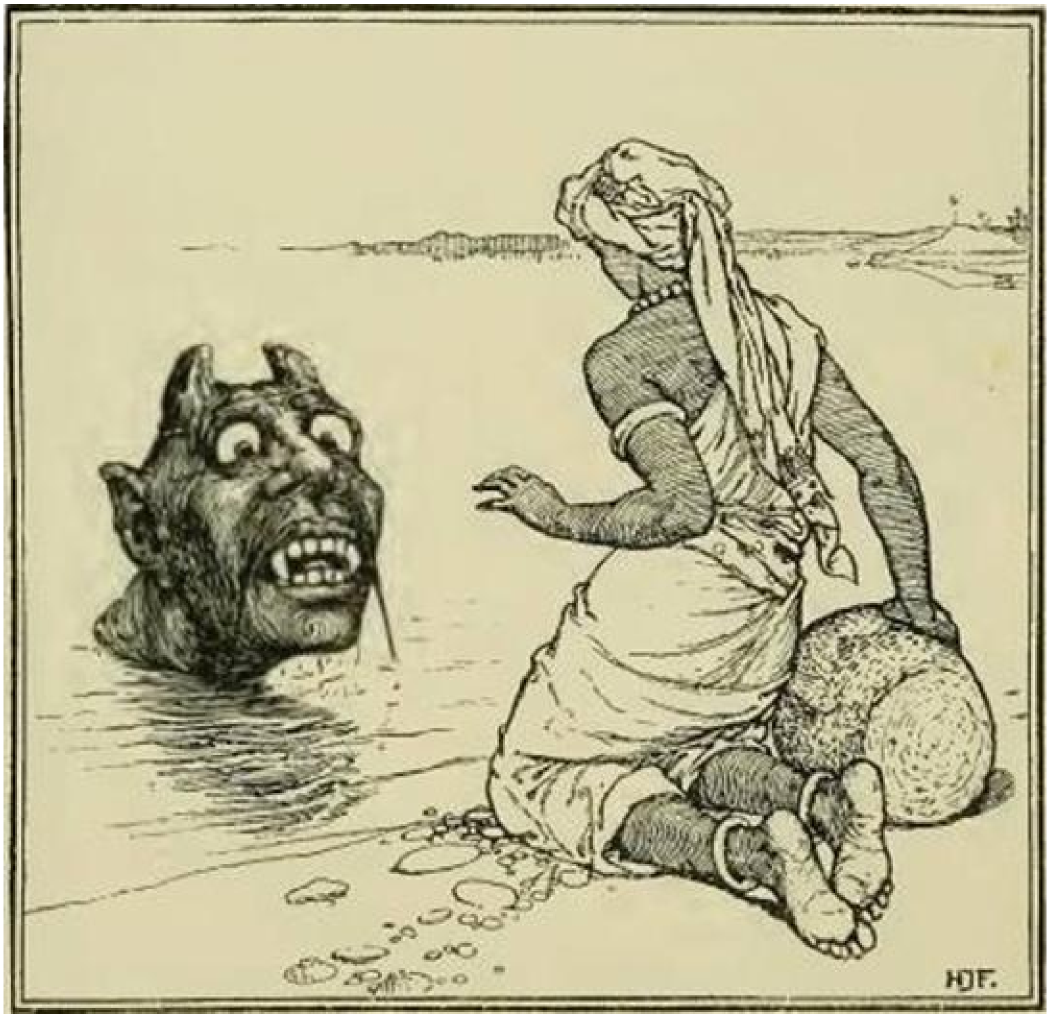

‘Very well,’ answered he.

As soon as his mother was out of sight, the baby took out some magic bones, and placed them in a row before him. ‘You are my father,’ he told one bone, ‘and you are my mother. You are the biggest,’ he said to the third, ‘so you shall be the ogre who wants to eat me; and you,’ to another, ‘are very little, therefore you shall be me. Now, then, tell me what I am to do.’

‘Collect all the babies in the village the same size as yourself,’ answered the bones; ‘shave the sides of their heads, and hang white beads round their necks, and tell them that when anybody calls “Motikatika,” they are to answer to it. And be quick for you have no time to lose.’

Motikatika went out directly, and brought back quite a crowd of babies, and shaved their heads and hung white beads round their little black necks, and just as he had finished, the ground began to shake, and the huge ogre came striding along, crying: ‘Motikatika! Motikatika!’

‘Here we are! here we are!’ answered the babies, all running to meet him.

‘It is Motikatika I want,’ said the ogre.

‘We are all Motikatika,’ they replied. And the ogre sat down in bewilderment, for he dared not eat the children of people who had done him no wrong, or a heavy punishment would befall him. The children waited for a little, wondering, and then they went away.

The ogre remained where he was, till the evening, when the woman returned from the fields.

‘I have not seen Motikatika,’ said he.

‘But why did you not call him by his name, as I told you?’ she asked.

‘I did, but all the babies in the village seemed to be named Motikatika,’ answered the ogre; ‘you cannot think the number who came running to me.’

The woman did not know what to make of it, so, to keep him in a good temper, she entered the hut and prepared a bowl of maize, which she brought him.

‘I do not want maize, I want the baby,’ grumbled he ‘and I will have him.’

‘Have patience,’ answered she; ‘I will call him, and you can eat him at once.’ And she went into the hut and cried, ‘Motikatika!’

‘I am coming, mother,’ replied he; but first he took out his bones, and, crouching down on the ground behind the hut, asked them how he should escape the ogre.

’Change yourself into a mouse,’ said the bones; and so he did, and the ogre grew tired of waiting, and told the woman she must invent some other plan.

‘To-morrow I will send him into the field to pick some beans for me, and you will find him there, and can eat him.’

‘Very well,’ replied the ogre, ‘and this time I will take care to have him,’ and he went back to his lake.

Next morning Motikatika was sent out with a basket, and told to pick some beans for dinner. On the way to the field he took out his bones and asked them what he was to do to escape from the ogre. ’Change yourself into a bird and snap off the beans,’ said the bones. And the ogre chased away the bird, not knowing that it was Motikatika.

The ogre went back to the hut and told the woman that she had deceived him again, and that he would not be put off any longer.

‘Return here this evening,’ answered she, ‘and you will find him in bed under this white coverlet. Then you can carry him away, and eat him at once.’

But the boy heard, and consulted his bones, which said: ‘Take the red coverlet from your father’s bed, and put yours on his,’ and so he did. And when the ogre came, he seized Motikatika’s father and carried him outside the hut and ate him. When his wife found out the mistake, she cried bitterly; but Motikatika said: ‘It is only just that he should be eaten, and not I; for it was he, and not I, who sent you to fetch the water.’

Niels And The Giants

On one of the great moors over in Jutland, where trees won’t grow because the soil is so sandy and the wind so strong, there once lived a man and his wife, who had a little house and some sheep, and two sons who helped them to herd them. The elder of the two was called Rasmus, and the younger Niels. Rasmus was quite content to look after sheep, as his father had done before him, but Niels had a fancy to be a hunter, and was not happy till he got hold of a gun and learned to shoot. It was only an old muzzle-loading flint-lock after all, but Niels thought it a great prize, and went about shooting at everything he could see. So much did he practice that in the long run he became a wonderful shot, and was heard of even where he had never been seen. Some people said there was very little in him beyond this, but that was an idea they found reason to change in the course of time.

The parents of Rasmus and Niels were good Catholics, and when they were getting old the mother took it into her head that she would like to go to Rome and see the Pope. The others didn’t see much use in this, but she had her way in the end: they sold all the sheep, shut up the house, and set out for Rome on foot. Niels took his gun with him.

‘What do you want with that?’ said Rasmus; ‘we have plenty to carry without it.’ But Niels could not be happy without his gun, and took it all the same.

It was in the hottest part of summer that they began their journey, so hot that they could not travel at all in the middle of the day, and they were afraid to do it by night lest they might lose their way or fall into the hands of robbers. One day, a little before sunset, they came to an inn which lay at the edge of a forest.

‘We had better stay here for the night,’ said Rasmus.

‘What an idea!’ said Niels, who was growing impatient at the slow progress they were making. ‘We can’t travel by day for the heat, and we remain where we are all night. It will be long enough before we get to Rome if we go on at this rate.’

Rasmus was unwilling to go on, but the two old people sided with Niels, who said, ‘The nights aren’t dark, and the moon will soon be up. We can ask at the inn here, and find out which way we ought to take.’

So they held on for some time, but at last they came to a small opening in the forest, and here they found that the road split in two. There was no sign-post to direct them, and the people in the inn had not told them which of the two roads to take.

‘What’s to be done now?’ said Rasmus. ‘I think we had better have stayed at the inn.’

‘There’s no harm done,’ said Niels. ‘The night is warm, and we can wait here till morning. One of us will keep watch till midnight, and then waken the other.’

Rasmus chose to take the first watch, and the others lay down to sleep. It was very quiet in the forest, and Rasmus could hear the deer and foxes and other animals moving about among the rustling leaves. After the moon rose he could see them occasionally, and when a big stag came quite close to him he got hold of Niels’ gun and shot it.

Niels was wakened by the report. ‘What’s that?’ he said.

‘I’ve just shot a stag,’ said Rasmus, highly pleased with himself.

‘That’s nothing,’ said Niels. ‘I’ve often shot a sparrow, which is a much more difficult thing to do.’

It was now close on midnight, so Niels began his watch, and Rasmus went to sleep. It began to get colder, and Niels began to walk about a little to keep himself warm. He soon found that they were not far from the edge of the forest, and when he climbed up one of the trees there he could see out over the open country beyond. At a little distance he saw a fire, and beside it there sat three giants, busy with broth and beef. They were so huge that the spoons they used were as large as spades, and their forks as big as hay-forks: with these they lifted whole bucketfuls of broth and great joints of meat out of an enormous pot which was set on the ground between them. Niels was startled and rather scared at first, but he comforted himself with the thought that the giants were a good way off, and that if they came nearer he could easily hide among the bushes. After watching them for a little, however, he began to get over his alarm, and finally slid down the tree again, resolved to get his gun and play some tricks with them.

When he had climbed back to his former position, he took good aim, and waited till one of the giants was just in the act of putting a large piece of meat into his mouth. Bang! went Niels’ gun, and the bullet struck the handle of the fork so hard that the point went into the giant’s chin, instead of his mouth.

‘None of your tricks,’ growled the giant to the one who sat next him. ‘What do you mean by hitting my fork like that, and making me prick myself?’

‘I never touched your fork,’ said the other. ‘Don’t try to get up a quarrel with me.’

‘Look at it, then,’ said the first. ‘Do you suppose I stuck it into my own chin for fun?’

The two got so angry over the matter that each offered to fight the other there and then, but the third giant acted as peace-maker, and they again fell to their eating.

While the quarrel was going on, Niels had loaded the gun again, and just as the second giant was about to put a nice tit-bit into his mouth, bang! went the gun again, and the fork flew into a dozen pieces.

This giant was even more furious than the first had been, and words were just coming to blows, when the third giant again interposed.

‘Don’t be fools,’ he said to them; ‘what’s the good of beginning to fight among ourselves, when it is so necessary for the three of us to work together and get the upper hand over the king of this country. It will be a hard enough task as it is, but it will be altogether hopeless if we don’t stick together. Sit down again, and let us finish our meal; I shall sit between you, and then neither of you can blame the other.’

Niels was too far away to hear their talk, but from their gestures he could guess what was happening, and thought it good fun.

‘Thrice is lucky,’ said he to himself; ‘I’ll have another shot yet.’

This time it was the third giant’s fork that caught the bullet, and snapped in two.

‘Well,’ said he, ‘if I were as foolish as you two, I would also fly into a rage, but I begin to see what time of day it is, and I’m going off this minute to see who it is that’s playing these tricks with us.’

So well had the giant made his observations, that though Niels climbed down the tree as fast as he could, so as to hide among the bushes, he had just got to the ground when the enemy was upon him.

‘Stay where you are,’ said the giant, ‘or I’ll put my foot on you, and there won’t be much of you left after that.’

Niels gave in, and the giant carried him back to his comrades.

‘You don’t deserve any mercy at our hands,’ said his captor ‘but as you are such a good shot you may be of great use to us, so we shall spare your life, if you will do us a service. Not far from here there stands a castle, in which the king’s daughter lives; we are at war with the king, and want to get the upper hand of him by carrying off the princess, but the castle is so well guarded that there is no getting into it. By our skill in magic we have cast sleep on every living thing in the castle, except a little black dog, and, as long as he is awake, we are no better off than before; for, as soon as we begin to climb over the wall, the little dog will hear us, and its barking will waken all the others again. Having got you, we can place you where you will be able to shoot the dog before it begins to bark, and then no one can hinder us from getting the princess into our hands. If you do that, we shall not only let you off, but reward you handsomely.’

Niels had to consent, and the giants set out for the castle at once. It was surrounded by a very high rampart, so high that even the giants could not touch the top of it. ‘How am I to get over that?’ said Niels.

‘Quite easily,’ said the third giant; ‘I’ll throw you up on it.’

‘No, thanks,’ said Niels. ‘I might fall down on the other side, or break my leg or neck, and then the little dog wouldn’t get shot after all.’

‘No fear of that,’ said the giant; ‘the rampart is quite wide on the top, and covered with long grass, so that you will come down as softly as though you fell on a feather-bed.’

Niels had to believe him, and allowed the giant to throw him up. He came down on his feet quite unhurt, but the little black dog heard the dump, and rushed out of its kennel at once. It was just opening its mouth to bark, when Niels fired, and it fell dead on the spot.

‘Go down on the inside now,’ said the giant, ‘and see if you can open the gate to us.’

Niels made his way down into the courtyard, but on his way to the outer gate he found himself at the entrance to the large hall of the castle. The door was open, and the hall was brilliantly lighted, though there was no one to be seen. Niels went in here and looked round him: on the wall there hung a huge sword without a sheath, and beneath it was a large drinking-horn, mounted with silver. Niels went closer to look at these, and saw that the horn had letters engraved on the silver rim: when he took it down and turned it round, he found that the inscription was: —

Whoever drinks the wine I hold
Can wield the sword that hangs above;
Then let him use it for the right,
And win a royal maiden’s love.

Niels took out the silver stopper of the horn, and drank some of the wine, but when he tried to take down the sword he found himself unable to move it. So he hung up the horn again, and went further in to the castle. ‘The giants can wait a little,’ he said.

Before long he came to an apartment in which a beautiful princess lay asleep in a bed, and on a table by her side there lay a gold-hemmed handkerchief. Niels tore this in two, and put one half in his pocket, leaving the other half on the table. On the floor he saw a pair of gold-embroidered slippers, and one of these he also put in his pocket. After that he went back to the hall, and took down the horn again. ‘Perhaps I have to drink all that is in it before I can move the sword,’ he thought; so he put it to his lips again and drank till it was quite empty. When he had done this, he could wield the sword with the greatest of ease, and felt himself strong enough to do anything, even to fight the giants he had left outside, who were no doubt wondering why he had not opened the gate to them before this time. To kill the giants, he thought, would be using the sword for the right; but as to winning the love of the princess, that was a thing which the son of a poor sheep-farmer need not hope for.

When Niels came to the gate of the castle, he found that there was a large door and a small one, so he opened the latter.

‘Can’t you open the big door?’ said the giants; ‘we shall hardly be able to get in at this one.’

‘The bars are too heavy for me to draw,’ said Niels; ‘if you stoop a little you can quite well come in here.’ The first giant accordingly bent down and entered in a stooping posture, but before he had time to straighten his back again Niels made a sweep with the sword, and oft went the giant’s head. To push the body aside as it fell was quite easy for Niels, so strong had the wine made him, and the second giant as he entered met the same reception. The third was slower in coming, so Niels called out to him: ‘Be quick,’ he said, ‘you are surely the oldest of the three, since you are so slow in your movements, but I can’t wait here long; I must get back to my own people as soon as possible.’ So the third also came in, and was served in the same way. It appears from the story that giants were not given fair play!

By this time day was beginning to break, and Niels thought that his folks might already be searching for him, so, instead of waiting to see what took place at the castle, he ran off to the forest as fast as he could, taking the sword with him. He found the others still asleep, so he woke them up, and they again set out on their journey. Of the night’s adventures he said not a word, and when they asked where he got the sword, he only pointed in the direction of the castle, and said, ‘Over that way.’ They thought he had found it, and asked no more questions.

When Niels left the castle, he shut the door behind him, and it closed with such a bang that the porter woke up. He could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw the three headless giants lying in a heap in the courtyard, and could not imagine what had taken place. The whole castle was soon aroused, and then everybody wondered at the affair: it was soon seen that the bodies were those of the king’s great enemies, but how they came to be there and in that condition was a perfect mystery. Then it was noticed that the drinking-horn was empty and the sword gone, while the princess reported that half of her handkerchief and one of her slippers had been taken away. How the giants had been killed seemed a little clearer now, but who had done it was as great a puzzle as before. The old knight who had charge of the castle said that in his opinion it must have been some young knight, who had immediately set off to the king to claim the hand of the princess. This sounded likely, but the messenger who was sent to the Court returned with the news that no one there knew anything about the matter.

‘We must find him, however,’ said the princess; ‘for if he is willing to marry me I cannot in honour refuse him, after what my father put on the horn.’ She took council with her father’s wisest men as to what ought to be done, and among other things they advised her to build a house beside the highway, and put over the door this inscription:— ‘Whoever will tell the story of his life, may stay here three nights for nothing.’ This was done, and many strange tales were told to the princess, but none of the travellers said a word about the three giants.

In the meantime Niels and the others tramped on towards Rome. Autumn passed, and winter was just beginning when they came to the foot of a great range of mountains, towering up to the sky. ‘Must we go over these?’ said they. ‘We shall be frozen to death or buried in the snow.’

‘Here comes a man,’ said Niels; ‘let us ask him the way to Rome.’ They did so, and were told that there was no other way.

‘And is it far yet?’ said the old people, who were beginning to be worn out by the long journey. The man held up his foot so that they could see the sole of his shoe; it was worn as thin as paper, and there was a hole in the middle of it.

‘These shoes were quite new when I left Rome,’ he said, ‘and look at them now; that will tell you whether you are far from it or not.’

This discouraged the old people so much that they gave up all thought of finishing the journey, and only wished to get back to Denmark as quickly as they could. What with the winter and bad roads they took longer to return than they had taken to go, but in the end they found themselves in sight of the forest where they had slept before.

‘What’s this?’ said Rasmus. ‘Here’s a big house built since we passed this way before.’

‘So it is,’ said Peter; ‘let’s stay all night in it.’

‘No, we can’t afford that,’ said the old people; ‘it will be too dear for the like of us.’

However, when they saw what was written above the door, they were all well pleased to get a night’s lodging for nothing. They were well received, and had so much attention given to them, that the old people were quite put out by it. After they had got time to rest themselves, the princess’s steward came to hear their story.

‘You saw what was written above the door,’ he said to the father. ‘Tell me who you are and what your history has been.’

‘Dear me, I have nothing of any importance to tell you,’ said the old man, ‘and I am sure we should never have made so bold as to trouble you at all if it hadn’t been for the youngest of our two sons here.’

‘Never mind that,’ said the steward; ‘you are very welcome if you will only tell me the story of your life.’

‘Well, well, I will,’ said he, ‘but there is nothing to tell about it. I and my wife have lived all our days on a moor in North Jutland, until this last year, when she took a fancy to go to Rome. We set out with our two sons but turned back long before we got there, and are now on our way home again. That’s all my own story, and our two sons have lived with us all their days, so there is nothing more to be told about them either.’

‘Yes there is,’ said Rasmus; ‘when we were on our way south, we slept in the wood near here one night, and I shot a stag.’

The steward was so much accustomed to hearing stories of no importance that he thought there was no use going further with this, but reported to the princess that the newcomers had nothing to tell.

‘Did you question them all?’ she said.

‘Well, no; not directly,’ said he; ‘but the father said that none of them could tell me any more than he had done.’

‘You are getting careless,’ said the princess; ‘I shall go and talk to them myself.’

Niels knew the princess again as soon as she entered the room, and was greatly alarmed, for he immediately supposed that all this was a device to discover the person who had run away with the sword, the slipper and the half of the handkerchief, and that it would fare badly with him if he were discovered. So he told his story much the same as the others did (Niels was not very particular), and thought he had escaped all further trouble, when Rasmus put in his word. ‘You’ve forgotten something, Niels,’ he said; ‘you remember you found a sword near here that night I shot the stag.’

‘Where is the sword?’ said the princess.

‘I know,’ said the steward, ‘I saw where he laid it down when they came in;’ and off he went to fetch it, while Niels wondered whether he could make his escape in the meantime. Before he had made up his mind, however, the steward was back with the sword, which the princess recognised at once.

‘Where did you get this?’ she said to Niels.

Niels was silent, and wondered what the usual penalty was for a poor sheep-farmer’s son who was so unfortunate as to deliver a princess and carry off things from her bed-room.

‘See what else he has about him,’ said the princess to the steward, and Niels had to submit to be searched: out of one pocket came a gold-embroidered slipper, and out of another the half of a gold-hemmed handkerchief.

‘That is enough,’ said the princess; ‘now we needn’t ask any more questions. Send for my father the king at once.’

‘Please let me go,’ said Niels; ‘I did you as much good as harm, at any rate.’

‘Why, who said anything about doing harm?’ said the princess. ‘You must stay here till my father comes.’

The way in which the princess smiled when she said this gave Niels some hope that things might not be bad for him after all, and he was yet more encouraged when he thought of the words engraver on the horn, though the last line still seemed too good to be true. However, the arrival of the king soon settled the matter: the princess was willing and so was Niels, and in a few days the wedding bells were ringing. Niels was made an earl by that time, and looked as handsome as any of them when dressed in all his robes. Before long the old king died, and Niels reigned after him; but whether his father and mother stayed with him, or went back to the moor in Jutland, or were sent to Rome in a carriage and four, is something that all the historians of his reign have forgotten to mention.

Shepherd Paul

Once upon a time a shepherd was taking his flock out to pasture, when he found a little baby lying in a meadow, left there by some wicked person, who thought it was too much trouble to look after it. The shepherd was fond of children, so he took the baby home with him and gave it plenty of milk, and by the time the boy was fourteen he could tear up oaks as if they were weeds. Then Paul, as the shepherd had called him, grew tired of living at home, and went out into the world to try his luck.

He walked on for many miles, seeing nothing that surprised him, but in an open space of the wood he was astonished at finding a man combing trees as another man would comb flax.

‘Good morning, friend,’ said Paul; ‘upon my word, you must be a strong man!’

The man stopped his work and laughed. ‘I am Tree Comber,’ he answered proudly; ‘and the greatest wish of my life is to wrestle with Shepherd Paul.’

‘May all your wishes be fulfilled as easily, for I am Shepherd Paul, and can wrestle with you at once,’ replied the lad; and he seized Tree Comber and flung him with such force to the ground that he sank up to his knees in the earth. However, in a moment he was up again, and catching hold of Paul, threw him so that he sank up to his waist; but then it was Paul’s turn again, and this time the man was buried up to his neck. ‘That is enough,’ cried he; ‘I see you are a smart fellow, let us become friends.’

‘Very good,’ answered Paul, and they continued their journey together.

By-and-by they reached a man who was grinding stones to powder in his hands, as if they had been nuts.

‘Good morning,’ said Paul politely; ‘upon my word, you must be a strong fellow!’

‘I am Stone Crusher,’ answered the man, and the greatest wish of my life is to wrestle with Shepherd Paul.’

‘May all your wishes be as easily fulfilled, for I am Shepherd Paul, and will wrestle with you at once,’ and the sport began. After a short time the man declared himself beaten, and begged leave to go with them; so they all three travelled together.

A little further on they came upon a man who was kneading iron as if it had been dough. ‘Good morning,’ said Paul, ‘you must be a strong fellow.’

‘I am Iron Kneader, and should like to fight Shepherd Paul,’ answered he.

‘Let us begin at once then,’ replied Paul; and on this occasion also, Paul got the better of his foe, and they all four continued their journey.

At midday they entered a forest, and Paul stopped suddenly. ‘We three will go and look for game,’ he said, ‘and you, Tree Comber, will stay behind and prepare a good supper for us.’ So Tree Comber set to work to boil and roast, and when dinner was nearly ready, a little dwarf with a pointed beard strolled up to the place. ‘What are you cooking?’ asked he, ‘give me some of it.’

‘I’ll give you some on your back, if you like,’ answered Tree Comber rudely. The dwarf took no notice, but waited patiently till the dinner was cooked, then suddenly throwing Tree Comber on the ground, he ate up the contents of the saucepan and vanished. Tree Comber felt rather ashamed of himself, and set about boiling some more vegetables, but they were still very hard when the hunters returned, and though they complained of his bad cooking, he did not tell them about the dwarf.

Next day Stone Crusher was left behind, and after him Iron Kneader, and each time the dwarf appeared, and they fared no better than Tree Comber had done. The fourth day Paul said to them: ‘My friends, there must be some reason why your cooking has always been so bad, now you shall go and hunt and I will stay behind.’ So they went off, amusing themselves by thinking what was in store for Paul.

He set to work at once, and had just got all his vegetables simmering in the pot when the dwarf appeared as before, and asked to have some of the stew. ‘Be off,’ cried Paul, snatching up the saucepan as he spoke. The dwarf tried to get hold of his collar, but Paul seized him by the beard, and tied him to a big tree so that he could not stir, and went on quietly with his cooking. The hunters came back early, longing to see how Paul had got on, and, to their surprise, dinner was quite ready for them.

‘You are great useless creatures,’ said he, ‘who couldn’t even outwit that little dwarf. When we have finished supper I will show you what I have done with him!’ But when they reached the place where Paul had left the dwarf, neither he nor the tree was to be seen, for the little fellow had pulled it up by the roots and run away, dragging it after him. The four friends followed the track of the tree and found that it ended in a deep hole. ‘He must have gone down here,’ said Paul, ‘and I will go after him. See! there is a basket that will do for me to sit in, and a cord to lower me with. But when I pull the cord again, lose no time in drawing the basket up.’

And he stepped into the basket, which was lowered by his friends.

At last it touched the ground and he jumped out and looked about him. He was in a beautiful valley, full of meadows and streams, with a splendid castle standing by. As the door was open he walked in, but a lovely maiden met him and implored him to go back, for the owner of the castle was a dragon with six heads, who had stolen her from her home and brought her down to this underground spot. But Paul refused to listen to all her entreaties, and declared that he was not afraid of the dragon, and did not care how many heads he had; and he sat down calmly to wait for him.

In a little while the dragon came in, and all the long teeth in his six heads chattered with anger at the sight of the stranger.

‘I am Shepherd Paul,’ said the young man, ‘and I have come to fight you, and as I am in a hurry we had better begin at once.’

‘Very good,’ answered the dragon. ‘I am sure of my supper, but let us have a mouthful of something first, just to give us an appetite.’

Whereupon he began to eat some huge boulders as if they had been cakes, and when he had quite finished, he offered Paul one. Paul was not fond of boulders, but he took a wooden knife and cut one in two, then he snatched up both halves in his hands and threw them with all his strength at the dragon, so that two out of the six heads were smashed in. At this the dragon, with a mighty roar, rushed upon Paul, but he sprang on one side, and with a swinging blow cut off two of the other heads. Then, seizing the monster by the neck, he dashed the remaining heads against the rock.

When the maiden heard that the dragon was dead, she thanked her deliverer with tears in her eyes, but told him that her two younger sisters were in the power of dragons still fiercer and more horrible than this one. He vowed that his sword should never rest in its sheath till they were set free, and bade the girl come with him, and show him the way.

The maiden gladly consented to go with him, but first she gave him a golden rod, and bade him strike the castle with it. He did so, and it instantly changed into a golden apple, which he put in his pocket. After that, they started on their search.

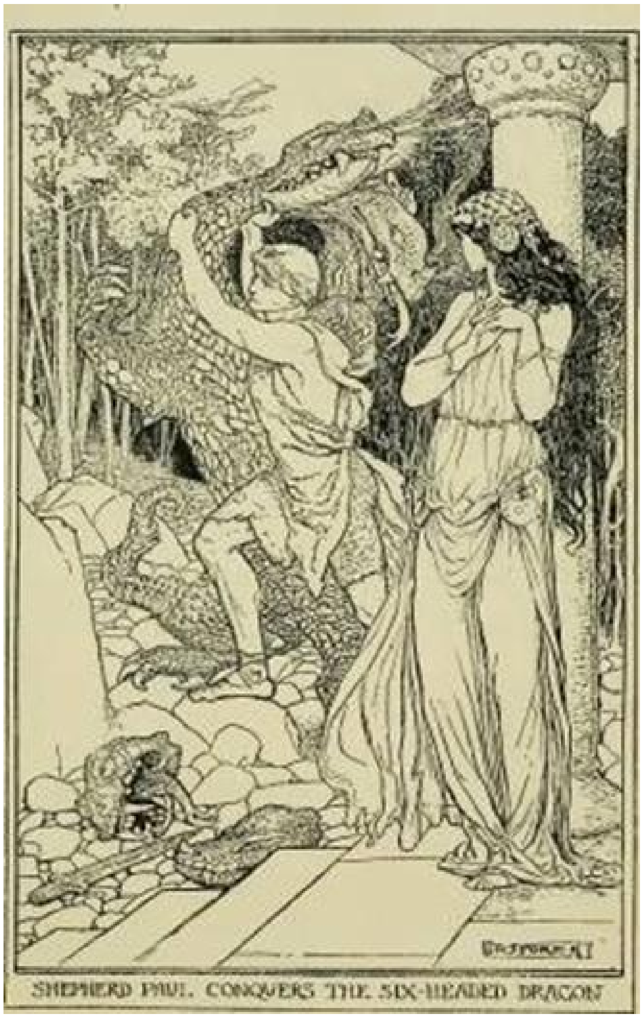

SHEPHERD PAUL. CONQUERS THE SIX-HEADED DRAGON

They had not gone far before they reached the castle where the second girl was confined by the power of the dragon with twelve heads, who had stolen her from her home. She was overjoyed at the sight of her sister and of Paul, and brought him a shirt belonging to the dragon, which made every one who wore it twice as strong as they were before. Scarcely had he put it on when the dragon came back, and the fight began. Long and hard was the struggle, but Paul’s sword and his shirt helped him, and the twelve heads lay dead upon the ground.

Then Paul changed the castle into an apple, which he put into his pocket, and set out with the two girls in search of the third castle.

It was not long before they found it, and within the walls was the third sister, who was younger and prettier than either of the other two. Her husband had eighteen heads, but when he quitted the lower regions for the surface of the earth, he left them all at home except one, which he changed for the head of a little dwarf, with a pointed beard.

The moment that Paul knew that this terrible dragon was no other than the dwarf whom he had tied to the tree, he longed more than ever to fly at his throat. But the thought of the eighteen heads warned him to be careful, and the third sister brought him a silk shirt which would make him ten times stronger than he was before.

He had scarcely put it on, when the whole castle began to shake violently, and the dragon flew up the steps into the hall.

‘Well, my friend, so we meet once more! Have you forgotten me? I am Shepherd Paul, and I have come to wrestle with you, and to free your wife from your clutches.’

‘Ah, I am glad to see you again,’ said the dragon. ‘Those were my two brothers whom you killed, and now your blood shall pay for them.’ And he went into his room to look for his shirt and to drink some magic wine, but the shirt was on Paul’s back, and as for the wine, the girl had given a cupful to Paul and then had allowed the rest to run out of the cask.

At this the dragon grew rather frightened, but in a moment had recollected his eighteen heads, and was bold again.

‘Come on,’ he cried, rearing himself up and preparing to dart all his heads at once at Paul. But Paul jumped underneath, and gave an upward cut so that six of the heads went rolling down. They were the best heads too, and very soon the other twelve lay beside them. Then Paul changed the castle into an apple, and put it in his pocket. Afterwards he and the three girls set off for the opening which led upwards to the earth.

The basket was still there, dangling from the rope, but it was only big enough to hold the three girls, so Paul sent them up, and told them to be sure and let down the basket for him. Unluckily, at the sight of the maidens’ beauty, so far beyond anything they had ever seen, the friends forgot all about Paul, and carried the girls straight away into a far country, so that they were not much better off than before. Meanwhile Paul, mad with rage at the ingratitude of the three sisters, vowed he would be revenged upon them, and set about finding some way of getting back to earth. But it was not very easy, and for months, and months, and months, he wandered about underground, and, at the end, seemed no nearer to fulfilling his purpose than he was at the beginning.

At length, one day, he happened to pass the nest of a huge griffin, who had left her young ones all alone. Just as Paul came along a cloud containing fire instead of rain burst overhead, and all the little griffins would certainly have been killed had not Paul spread his cloak over the nest and saved them. When their father returned the young ones told him what Paul had done, and he lost no time in flying after Paul, and asking how he could reward him for his goodness.

‘By carrying me up to the earth,’ answered Paul; and the griffin agreed, but first went to get some food to eat on the way, as it was a long journey.

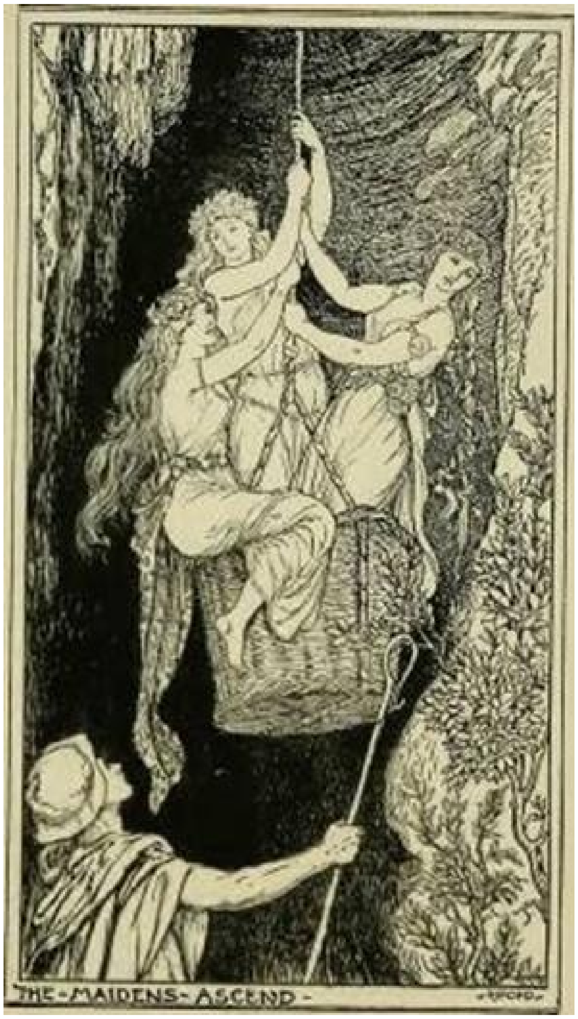

THE MAIDENS ASCEND

‘Now get on my back,’ he said to Paul, ‘and when I turn my head to the right, cut a slice off the bullock that hangs on that side, and put it in my mouth, and when I turn my head to the left, draw a cupful of wine from the cask that hangs on that side, and pour it down my throat.’

For three days and three nights Paul and the griffin flew upwards, and on the fourth morning it touched the ground just outside the city where Paul’s friends had gone to live. Then Paul thanked him and bade him farewell, and he returned home again.

At first Paul was too tired to do anything but sleep, but as soon as he was rested he started off in search of the three faithless ones, who almost died from fright at the sight of him, for they had thought he would never come back to reproach them for their wickedness.

‘You know what to expect,’ Paul said to them quietly. ‘You shall never see me again. Off with you!’ He next took the three apples out of his pocket and placed them all in the prettiest places he could find; after which he tapped them with his golden rod, and they became castles again. He gave two of the castles to the eldest sisters, and kept the other for himself and the youngest, whom he married, and there they are living still.

How The Wicked Tanuki Was Punished

The hunters had hunted the wood for so many years that no wild animal was any more to be found in it. You might walk from one end to the other without ever seeing a hare, or a deer, or a boar, or hearing the cooing of the doves in their nest. If they were not dead, they had flown elsewhere. Only three creatures remained alive, and they had hidden themselves in the thickest part of the forest, high up the mountain. These were a grey-furred, long-tailed tanuki, his wife the fox, who was one of his own family, and their little son.

The fox and the tanuki were very clever, prudent beasts, and they also were skilled in magic, and by this means had escaped the fate of their unfortunate friends. If they heard the twang of an arrow or saw the glitter of a spear, ever so far off, they lay very still, and were not to be tempted from their hiding-place, if their hunger was ever so great, or the game ever so delicious. ‘We are not so foolish as to risk our lives,’ they said to each other proudly. But at length there came a day when, in spite of their prudence, they seemed likely to die of starvation, for no more food was to be had. Something had to be done, but they did not know what.

Suddenly a bright thought struck the tanuki. ‘I have got a plan,’ he cried joyfully to his wife. ‘I will pretend to be dead, and you must change yourself into a man, and take me to the village for sale. It will be easy to find a buyer, tanukis’ skins are always wanted; then buy some food with the money and come home again. I will manage to escape somehow, so do not worry about me.’

The fox laughed with delight, and rubbed her paws together with satisfaction. ‘Well, next time I will go,’ she said, ‘and you can sell me.’ And then she changed herself into a man, and picking up the stiff body of the tanuki, set off towards the village. She found him rather heavy, but it would never have done to let him walk through the wood and risk his being seen by somebody.

As the tanaki had foretold, buyers were many, and the fox handed him over to the person who offered the largest price, and hurried to get some food with the money. The buyer took the tanuki back to his house, and throwing him into a corner went out. Directly the tanaki found he was alone, he crept cautiously through a chink of the window, thinking, as he did so, how lucky it was that he was not a fox, and was able to climb. Once outside, he hid himself in a ditch till it grew dusk, and then galloped away into the forest.

While the food lasted they were all three as happy as kings; but there soon arrived a day when the larder was as empty as ever. ‘It is my turn now to pretend to be dead,’ cried the fox. So the tanuki changed himself into a peasant, and started for the village, with his wife’s body hanging over his shoulder. A buyer was not long in coming forward, and while they were making the bargain a wicked thought darted into the tanuki’s head, that if he got rid of the fox there would be more food for him and his son. So as he put the money in his pocket he whispered softly to the buyer that the fox was not really dead, and that if he did not take care she might run away from him. The man did not need twice telling. He gave the poor fox a blow on the head, which put an end to her, and the wicked tanuki went smiling to the nearest shop.

In former times he had been very fond of his little son; but since he had betrayed his wife he seemed to have changed all in a moment, for he would not give him as much as a bite, and the poor little fellow would have starved had he not found some nuts and berries to eat, and he waited on, always hoping that his mother would come back.

At length some notion of the truth began to dawn on him; but he was careful to let the old tanuki see nothing, though in his own mind he turned over plans from morning till night, wondering how best he might avenge his mother.

One morning, as the little tanuki was sitting with his father, he remembered, with a start, that his mother had taught him all she knew of magic, and that he could work spells as well as his father, or perhaps better. ‘I am as good a wizard as you,’ he said suddenly, and a cold chill ran through the tanuki as he heard him, though he laughed, and pretended to think it a joke. But the little tanaki stuck to his point, and at last the father proposed they should have a wager.

’Change yourself into any shape you like,’ said he, ‘and I will undertake to know you. I will go and wait on the bridge which leads over the river to the village, and you shall transform yourself into anything you please, but I will know you through any disguise.’ The little tanuki agreed, and went down the road which his father had pointed out. But instead of transforming himself into a different shape, he just hid himself in a corner of the bridge, where he could see without being seen.

He had not been there long when his father arrived and took up his place near the middle of the bridge, and soon after the king came by, followed by a troop of guards and all his court.

‘Ah! he thinks that now he has changed himself into a king I shall not know him,’ thought the old tanuki, and as the king passed in his splendid carriage, borne by his servants, he jumped upon it crying: ‘I have won my wager; you cannot deceive me.’ But in reality it was he who had deceived himself. The soldiers, conceiving that their king was being attacked, seized the tanuki by the legs and flung him over into the river, and the water closed over him.

And the little tanoki saw it all, and rejoiced that his mother’s death had been avenged. Then he went back to the forest, and if he has not found it too lonely, he is probably living there still.

The Crab And The Monkey

There was once a crab who lived in a hole on the shady side of a mountain. She was a very good housewife, and so careful and industrious that there was no creature in the whole country whose hole was so neat and clean as hers, and she took great pride in it.

One day she saw lying near the mouth of her hole a handful of cooked rice which some pilgrim must have let fall when he was stopping to eat his dinner. Delighted at this discovery, she hastened to the spot, and was carrying the rice back to her hole when a monkey, who lived in some trees near by, came down to see what the crab was doing. His eyes shone at the sight of the rice, for it was his favourite food, and like the sly fellow he was, he proposed a bargain to the crab. She was to give him half the rice in exchange for the kernel of a sweet red kaki fruit which he had just eaten. He half expected that the crab would laugh in his face at this impudent proposal, but instead of doing so she only looked at him for a moment with her head on one side and then said that she would agree to the exchange. So the monkey went off with his rice, and the crab returned to her hole with the kernel.

For some time the crab saw no more of the monkey, who had gone to pay a visit on the sunny side of the mountain; but one morning he happened to pass by her hole, and found her sitting under the shadow of a beautiful kaki tree.

‘Good day,’ he said politely, ‘you have some very fine fruit there! I am very hungry, could you spare me one or two?’

‘Oh, certainly,’ replied the crab, ‘but you must forgive me if I cannot get them for you myself. I am no tree-climber.’

‘Pray do not apologise,’ answered the monkey. ‘Now that I have your permission I can get them myself quite easily.’ And the crab consented to let him go up, merely saying that he must throw her down half the fruit.

In another moment he was swinging himself from branch to branch, eating all the ripest kakis and filling his pockets with the rest, and the poor crab saw to her disgust that the few he threw down to her were either not ripe at all or else quite rotten.

‘You are a shocking rogue,’ she called in a rage; but the monkey took no notice, and went on eating as fast as he could. The crab understood that it was no use her scolding, so she resolved to try what cunning would do.

‘Sir Monkey,’ she said, ‘you are certainly a very good climber, but now that you have eaten so much, I am quite sure you would never be able to turn one of your somersaults.’ The monkey prided himself on turning better somersaults than any of his family, so he instantly went head over heels three times on the bough on which he was sitting, and all the beautiful kakis that he had in his pockets rolled to the ground. Quick as lightning the crab picked them up and carried a quantity of them into her house, but when she came up for another the monkey sprang on her, and treated her so badly that he left her for dead. When he had beaten her till his arm ached he went his way.

It was a lucky thing for the poor crab that she had some friends to come to her help or she certainly would have died then and there. The wasp flew to her, and took her back to bed and looked after her, and then he consulted with a rice-mortar and an egg which had fallen out of a nest near by, and they agreed that when the monkey returned, as he was sure to do, to steal the rest of the fruit, that they would punish him severely for the manner in which he had behaved to the crab. So the mortar climbed up to the beam over the front door, and the egg lay quite still on the ground, while the wasp set down the water-bucket in a corner. Then the crab dug itself a deep hole in the ground, so that not even the tip of her claws might be seen.

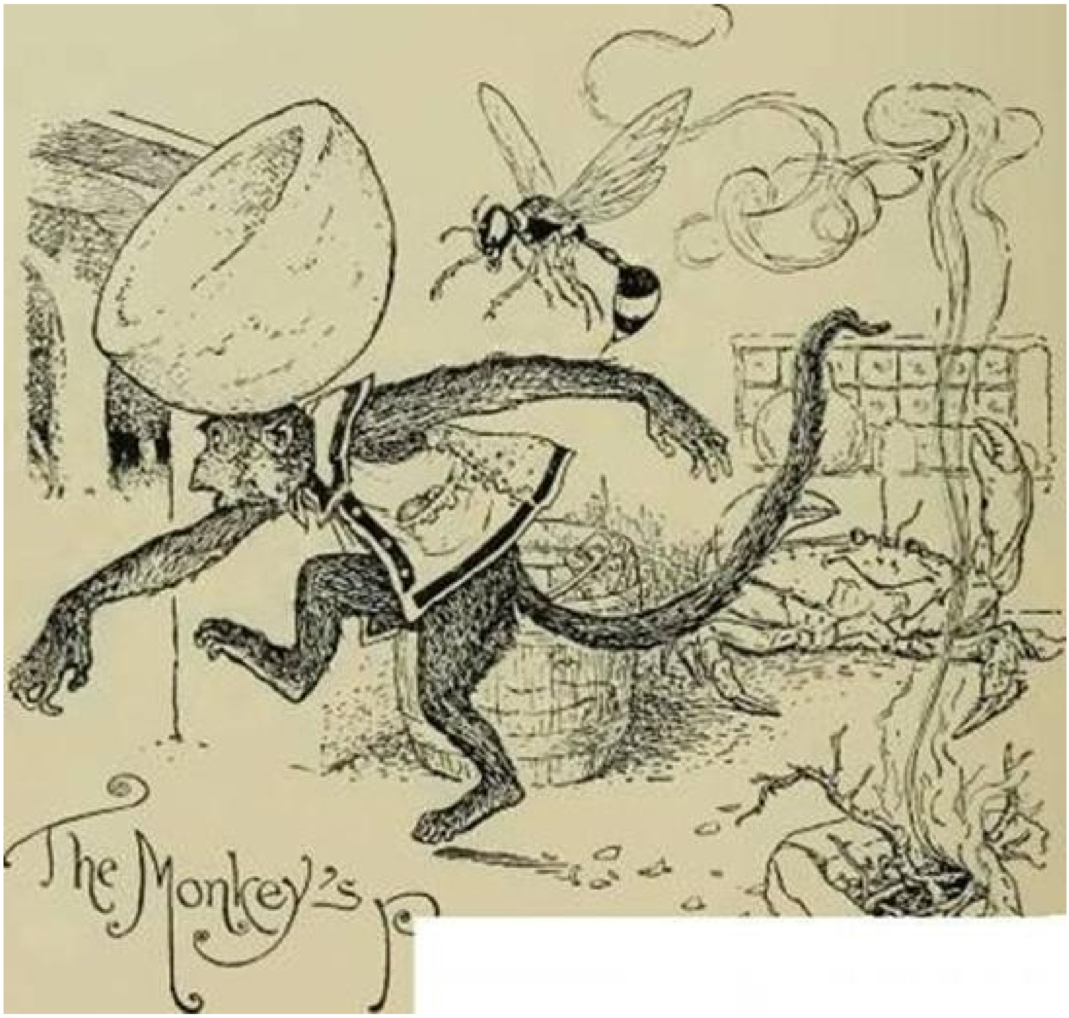

Soon after everything was ready the monkey jumped down from his tree, and creeping to the door began a long hypocritical speech, asking pardon for all he had done. He waited for an answer of some sort, but none came. He listened, but all was still; then he peeped, and saw no one; then he went in. He peered about for the crab, but in vain; however, his eyes fell on the egg, which he snatched up and set on the fire. But in a moment the egg had burst into a thousand pieces, and its sharp shell struck him in the face and scratched him horribly. Smarting with pain he ran to the bucket and stooped down to throw some water over his head. As he stretched out his hand up started the wasp and stung him on the nose. The monkey shrieked and ran to the door, but as he passed through down fell the mortar and struck him dead. ‘After that the crab lived happily for many years, and at length died in peace under her own kaki tree.

The Horse Gullfaxi And The Sword Gunnfoder

Many many years ago there lived a king and queen who had one only son, called Sigurd. When the little boy was only ten years old the queen, his mother, fell ill and died, and the king, who loved her dearly, built a splendid monument to his wife's memory, and day after day he sat by it and bewailed his sad loss.

One morning, as he sat by the grave, he noticed a richly dressed lady close to him. He asked her name and she answered that it was Ingiborg, and seemed surprised to see the king there all alone. Then he told her how he had lost his queen, and how he came daily to weep at her grave. In return, the lady informed him that she had lately lost her husband, and suggested that they might both find it a comfort if they made friends.

This pleased the king so much that he invited her to his palace, where they saw each other often; and after a time he married her.

After the wedding was over he soon regained his good spirits, and used to ride out hunting as in old days; but Sigurd, who was very fond of his stepmother, always stayed at home with her.

One evening Ingiborg said to Sigurd: 'To-morrow your father is going out hunting, and you must go with him.' But Sigurd said he would much rather stay at home, and the next day when the king rode off Sigurd refused to accompany him. The stepmother was very angry, but he would not listen, and at last she assured him that he would be sorry for his disobedience, and that in future he had better do as he was told.

After the hunting party had started she hid Sigurd under her bed, and bade him be sure to lie there till she called him.

Sigurd lay very still for a long while, and was just thinking it was no good staying there any more, when he felt the floor shake under him as if there were an earthquake, and peeping out he saw a great giantess wading along ankle deep through the ground and ploughing it up as she walked.

'Good morning, Sister Ingiborg,' cried she as she entered the room, 'is Prince Sigurd at home?'

'No,' said Ingiborg; 'he rode off to the forest with his father this morning.' And she laid the table for her sister and set food before her. After they had both done eating the giantess said: 'Thank you, sister, for your good dinner — the best lamb, the best can of beer and the best drink I have ever had; but — is not Prince Sigurd at home?'

Ingiborg again said ‘No’; and the giantess took leave of her and went away. When she was quite out of sight Ingiborg told Sigurd to come out of his hiding-place.

The king returned home at night, but his wife told him nothing of what had happened, and the next morning she again begged the prince to go out hunting with his father. Sigurd, however, replied as before, that he would much rather stay at home.

So once more the king rode off alone. This time Ingiborg hid Sigurd under the table, and scolded him well for not doing as she bade him. For some time he lay quite still, and then suddenly the floor began to shake, and a giantess came along wading half way to her knees through the ground.

As she entered the house she asked, as the first one had done: ‘Well, Sister Ingiborg, is Prince Sigurd at home?’

‘No,’ answered Ingiborg,’ he rode off hunting with his father this morning’; and going to the cupboard she laid the table for her sister. When they had finished their meal the giantess rose and said: ‘Thank you for all these nice dishes, and for the best lamb, the best can of beer and the nicest drink I have ever had; but — is Prince Sigurd really not at home?’

‘No, certainly not!’ replied Ingiborg; and with that they took leave of each other.

When she was well out of sight Sigurd crept from under the table, and his stepmother declared that it was most important that he should not stay at home next day; but he said he did not see what harm could come of it, and he did not mean to go out hunting, and the next morning, when the king prepared to start, Ingiborg implored Sigurd to accompany his father. But it was all no use, he was quite obstinate and would not listen to a word she said. ‘You will have to hide me again,’ said he, so no sooner had the king gone than Ingiborg hid Sigurd between the wall and the panelling, and by-and-by there was heard once more a sound like an earthquake, as a great giantess, wading knee deep through the ground, came in at the door.

‘Good day, Sister Ingiborg!’ she cried, in a voice like thunder; ‘is Prince Sigurd at home?’

‘Oh, no,’ answered Ingiborg, ‘he is enjoying himself out there in the forest. I expect it will be quite dark before he comes back again.’

‘That’s a lie!’ shouted the giantess. And they squabbled about it till they were tired, after which Ingiborg laid the table; and when the giantess had done eating she said: ‘Well, I must thank you for all these good things, and for the best lamb, the best can of beer and the best drink I have had for a long time; but — are you quite sure Prince Sigurd is not at home?’

‘Quite,’ said Ingiborg. ‘I’ve told you already that he rode off with his father this morning to hunt in the forest.’

At this the giantess roared out with a terrible voice: ‘If he is near enough to hear my words, I lay this spell on him: Let him be half scorched and half withered; and may he have neither rest nor peace till he finds me.’ And with these words she stalked off.

For a moment Ingiborg stood as if turned to stone, then she fetched Sigurd from his hiding-place, and, to her horror, there he was, half scorched and half withered.

‘Now you see what has happened through your own obstinacy,’ said she; ‘but we must lose no time, for your father will soon be coming home.’

Going quickly into the next room she opened a chest and took out a ball of string and three gold rings, and gave them to Sigurd, saying: ‘If you throw this ball on the ground it will roll along till it reaches some high cliffs. There you will see a giantess looking out over the rocks. She will call down to you and say: “Ah, this is just what I wanted! Here is Prince Sigurd. He shall go into the pot to-night”; but don’t be frightened by her. She will draw you up with a long boat-hook, and you must greet her from me, and give her the smallest ring as a present. This will please her, and she will ask you to wrestle with her. When you are exhausted, she will offer you a horn to drink out of, and though she does not know it, the wine will make you so strong that you will easily be able to conquer her. After that she will let you stay there all night. The same thing will happen with my two other sisters. But, above all, remember this: should my little dog come to you and lay his paws on you, with tears running down his face, then hurry home, for my life will be in danger. Now, good-bye, and don’t forget your stepmother.’

Then Ingiborg dropped the ball on the ground, and Sigurd bade her farewell.

That same evening the ball stopped rolling at the foot of some high rocks, and on glancing up, Sigurd saw the giantess looking out at the top.

‘Ah, just what I wanted!’ she cried out when she saw him; ‘here is Prince Sigurd. He shall go into the pot to-night. Come up, my friend, and wrestle with me.’

With these words she reached out a long boat hook and hauled him up the cliff. At first Sigurd was rather frightened, but he remembered what Ingiborg had said, and gave the giantess her sister’s message and the ring.

The giantess was delighted, and challenged him to wrestle with her. Sigurd was fond of all games, and began to wrestle with joy; but he was no match for the giantess, and as she noticed that he was getting faint she gave him a horn to drink out of, which was very foolish on her part, as it made Sigurd so strong that he soon overthrew her.

‘You may stay here to-night,’ said she; and he was glad of the rest.

Next morning Sigurd threw down the ball again and away it rolled for some time, till it stopped at the foot of another high rock. Then he looked up and saw another giantess, even bigger and uglier than the first one, who called out to him: ‘Ah, this is just what I wanted! Here is Prince Sigurd. He shall go into the pot to-night. Come up quickly and wrestle with me.’ And she lost no time in hauling him up.

The prince gave her his stepmother’s message and the second largest ring. The giantess was greatly pleased when she saw the ring, and at once challenged Sigurd to wrestle with her.

They struggled for a long time, till at last Sigurd grew faint; so she handed him a horn to drink from, and when he had drunk he became so strong that he threw her down with one hand.

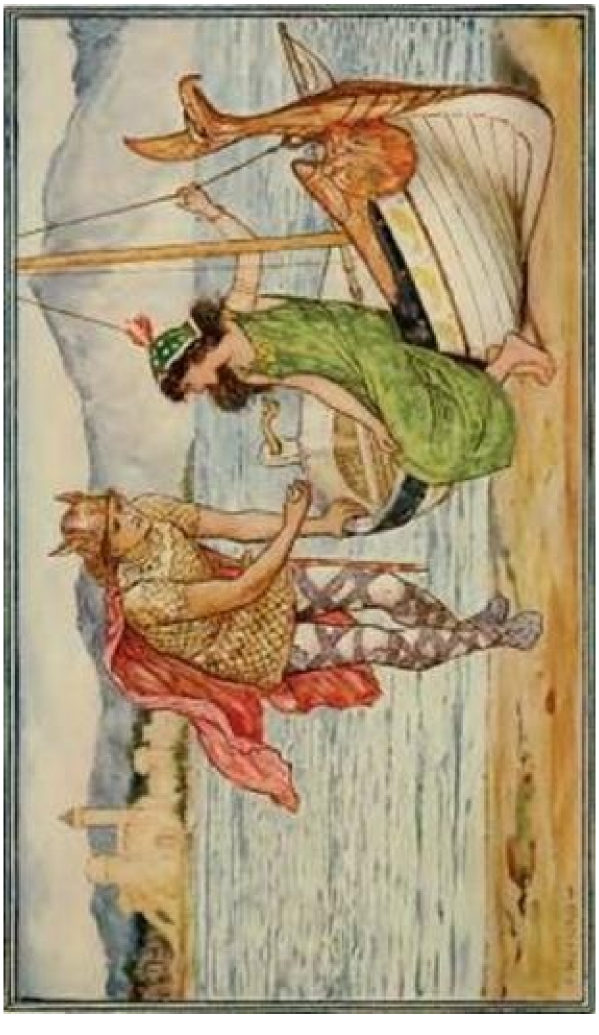

On the third morning Sigurd once more laid down his ball, and it rolled far away, till at last it stopped under a very high rock indeed, over the top of which the most hideous giantess that ever was seen looked down.

When she saw who was there she cried out: ‘Ah, this is just what I wanted! Here comes Prince Sigurd. Into the pot he goes this very night. Come up here, my friend, and wrestle with me.’ And she hauled him up just as her sisters had done.

Sigurd then gave her his stepmother’s message and the last and largest ring. The sight of the red gold delighted the giantess, and she challenged Sigurd to a wrestling match. This time the fight was fierce and long, but when at length Sigurd’s strength was failing the giantess gave him something to drink, and after he had drunk it he soon brought her to her knees. ‘You have beaten me,’ she gasped, so now, listen to me. ‘Not far from here is a lake. Go there; you will find a little girl playing with a boat. Try to make friends with her, and give her this little gold ring. You are stronger than ever you were, and I wish you good luck.’

With these words they took leave of each other, and Sigurd wandered on till he reached the lake, where he found the little girl playing with a boat, just as he had been told. He went up to her and asked what her name was.

She was called Helga, she answered, and she lived near by.

So Sigurd gave her the little gold ring, and proposed that they should have a game. The little girl was delighted, for she had no brothers or sisters, and they played together all the rest of the day.

When evening came Sigurd asked leave to go home with her, but Helga at first forbade him, as no stranger had ever managed to enter their house without being found out by her father, who was a very fierce giant.

However, Sigurd persisted, and at length she gave way; but when they came near the door she held her glove over him and Sigurd was at once transformed into a bundle of wool. Helga tucked the bundle under her arm and threw it on the bed in her room.

Almost at the same moment her father rushed in and hunted round in every corner, crying out: ‘This place smells of men. What’s that you threw on the bed, Helga?’

‘A bundle of wool,’ said she.

‘Oh, well, perhaps it was that I smelt,’ said the old man, and troubled himself no more.

The following day Helga went out to play and took the bundle of wool with her under her arm. When she reached the lake she held her glove over it again and Sigurd resumed his own shape.

They played the whole day, and Sigurd taught Helga all sorts of games she had never even heard of. As they walked home in the evening she said: ‘We shall be able to play better still to-morrow, for my father will have to go to the town, so we can stay at home.’

When they were near the house Helga again held her glove over Sigurd, and once more he was turned into a bundle of wool, and she carried him in without his being seen.

Very early next morning Helga’s father went to the town, and as soon as he was well out of the way the girl held up her glove and Sigurd was himself again. Then she took him all over the house to amuse him, and opened every room, for her father had given her the keys before he left; but when they came to the last room Sigurd noticed one key on the bunch which had not been used and asked which room it belonged to.’

Helga grew red and did not answer.

‘I suppose you don’t mind my seeing the room which it opens?’ asked Sigurd, and as he spoke he saw a heavy iron door and begged Helga to unlock it for him. But she told him she dared not do so, at least if she did open the door it must only be a very tiny chink; and Sigurd declared that would do quite well.

The door was so heavy, that it took Helga some time to open it, and Sigurd grew so impatient that he pushed it wide open and walked in. There he saw a splendid horse, all ready saddled, and just above it hung a richly ornamented sword on the handle of which was engraved these words: ‘He who rides this horse and wears this sword will find happiness.’

At the sight of the horse Sigurd was so filled with wonder that he was not able to speak, but at last he gasped out: ‘Oh, do let me mount him and ride him round the house! Just once; I promise not to ask any more.’

‘Ride him round the house!’ cried Helga, growing pale at the mere idea. ‘Ride Gullfaxi! Why father would never, never forgive me, if I let you do that.’

‘But it can’t do him any harm,’ argued Sigurd; ‘you don’t know how careful I will be. I have ridden all sorts of horses at home, and have never fallen off not once. Oh, Helga, do!’

‘Well, perhaps, if you come back directly,’ replied Helga, doubtfully; ‘but you must be very quick, or father will find out!’

But, instead of mounting Gullfaxi, as she expected, Sigurd stood still.

‘And the sword,’ he said, looking fondly up to the place where it hung. ‘My father is a king, but he has not got any sword so beautiful as that. Why, the jewels in the scabbard are more splendid than the big ruby in his crown! Has it got a name? Some swords have, you know.’

‘It is called “Gunnfjoder,” the “Battle Plume,”’ answered Helga, ‘and

“Gullfaxi” means “Golden Mane.” I don’t suppose, if you are to get on the horse at all, it would matter your taking the sword too. And if you take the sword you will have to carry the stick and the stone and the twig as well.’

‘They are easily carried,’ said Sigurd, gazing at them with scorn; ‘what wretched dried-up things! Why in the world do you keep them?’

‘Bather says that he would rather lose Gullfaxi than lose them,’ replied Helga, ‘for if the man who rides the horse is pursued he has only to throw the twig behind him and it will turn into a forest, so thick that even a bird could hardly fly through. But if his enemy happens to know magic, and can throw down the forest, the man has only to strike the stone with the stick, and hailstones as large as pigeons’ eggs will rain down from the sky and will kill every one for twenty miles round.’

Having said all this she allowed Sigurd to ride ‘just once’ round the house, taking the sword and other things with him. But when he had ridden round, instead of dismounting, he suddenly turned the horse’s head and galloped away.

Soon after this Helga’s father came home and found his daughter in tears. He asked what was the matter, and when he heard all that had happened, he rushed off as fast as he could to pursue Sigurd.

Now, as Sigurd happened to look behind him he saw the giant coming after him with great strides, and in all haste he threw the twig behind him. Immediately such a thick wood sprang up at once between him and his enemy that the giant was obliged to run home for an axe with which to cut his way through.

The next time Sigurd glanced round, the giant was so near that he almost touched Gullfaxi’s tail. In an agony of fear Sigurd turned quickly in his saddle and hit the stone with the stick. No sooner had he done this than a terrible hailstorm burst behind, and the giant was killed on the spot.

But had Sigurd struck the stone without turning round, the hail would have driven right into his face and killed him instead.

After the giant was dead Sigurd rode on towards his own home, and on the way he suddenly met his stepmother’s little dog, running to meet him, with tears pouring down its face. He galloped on as hard as he could, and on arriving found nine men-servants in the act of tying Queen Ingiborg to a post in the courtyard of the palace, where they intended to burn her.

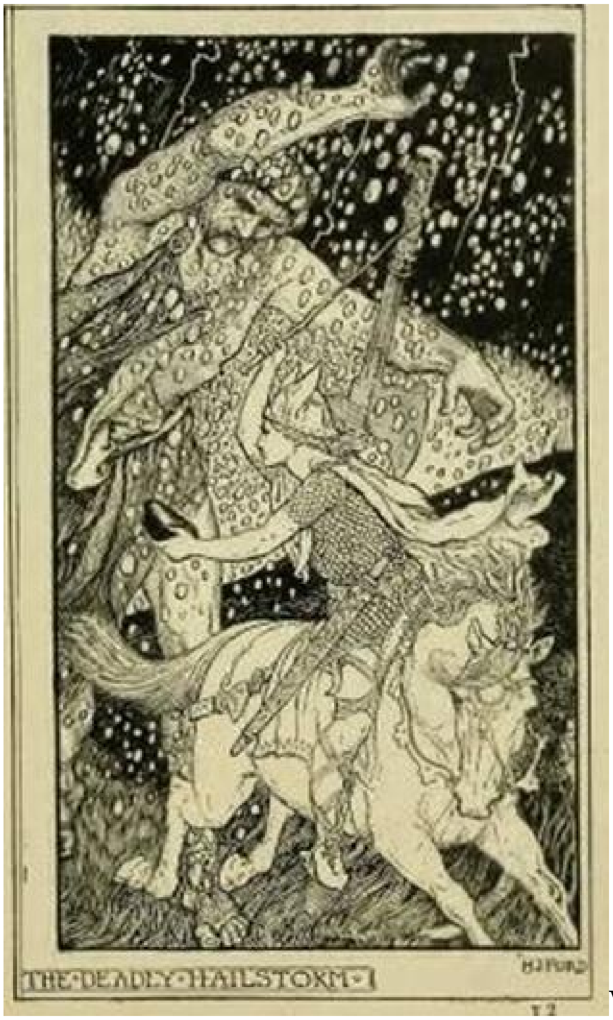
THE·DEADLY·HAILSTORM·I

Wild with anger Prince Sigurd sprang from his horse and, sword in hand, fell on the men and killed them all. Then he released his stepmother, and went in with her to see his father.

The king lay in bed sick with sorrow, and neither eating nor drinking, for he thought that his son had been killed by the queen. He could hardly believe his own eyes for joy when he saw the prince, and Sigurd told him all his adventures.

After that Prince Sigurd rode back to fetch Helga, and a great feast was made which lasted three days; and every one said no bride was ever seen so beautiful as Helga, and they lived happily for many, many years, and everybody loved them.

The Story Of The Sham Prince, Or The Ambitious Tailor

Once upon a time there lived a respectable young tailor called Labakan, who worked for a clever master in Alexandria. No one could call Labakan either stupid or lazy, for he could work extremely well and quickly — when he chose; but there was something not altogether right about him. Sometimes he would stitch away as fast as if he had a red-hot needle and a burning thread, and at other times he would sit lost in thought, and with such a queer look about him that his fellow-workmen used to say, ‘Labakan has got on his aristocratic face today.’

On Fridays he would put on his fine robe which he had bought with the money he had managed to save up, and go to the mosque. As he came back, after prayers, if he met any friend who said ‘Good-day,’ or ‘How are you, friend Labakan?’ he would wave his hand graciously or nod in a condescending way; and if his master happened to say to him, as he sometimes did, ‘Really, Labakan, you look like a prince,’ he was delighted, and would answer, ‘Have you noticed it too?’ or ‘Well, so I have long thought.’

Things went on like this for some time, and the master put up with Labakan’s absurdities because he was, on the whole, a good fellow and a clever workman.

One day, the sultan’s brother happened to be passing through Alexandria, and wanted to have one of his state robes altered, so he sent for the master tailor, who handed the robe over to Labakan as his best workman.

In the evening, when every one had left the workshop and gone home, a great longing drove Labakan back to the place where the royal robe hung. He stood a long time gazing at it, admiring the rich material and the splendid embroidery in it. At last he could hold out no longer. He felt he must try it on, and lo! and behold, it fitted as though it had been made for him.

‘Am not I as good a prince as any other?’ he asked himself, as he proudly paced up and down the room. ‘Has not the master often said that I seemed born to be a prince?’

It seemed to him that he must be the son of some unknown monarch, and at last he determined to set out at once and travel in search of his proper rank.

He felt as if the splendid robe had been sent him by some kind fairy, and he took care not to neglect such a precious gift. He collected all his savings, and, concealed by the darkness of the night, he passed through the gates of

Alexandria.

The new prince excited a good deal of curiosity where ever he went, for his splendid robe and majestic manner did not seem quite suitable to a person travelling on foot. If anyone asked questions, he only replied with an important air of mystery that he had his own reasons for not riding.

However, he soon found out that walking made him ridiculous, so at last he bought a quiet, steady old horse, which he managed to get cheap.

One day, as he was ambling along upon Murva (that was the horse's name), a horseman overtook him and asked leave to join him, so that they might both beguile the journey with pleasant talk. The newcomer was a bright, cheerful, good-looking young man, who soon plunged into conversation and asked many questions. He told Labakan that his own name was Omar, that he was a nephew of Elfi Bey, and was travelling in order to carry out a command given him by his uncle on his death bed. Labakan was not quite so open in his confidences, but hinted that he too was of noble birth and was travelling for pleasure.

The two young men took a fancy to each other and rode on together. On the second day of their journey Labakan questioned Omar as to the orders he had to carry out, and to his surprise heard this tale.

Elfi Bey, Pacha of Cairo, had brought up Omar from his earliest childhood, and the boy had never known his parents. On his deathbed Elfi Bey called Omar to him, and then told him that he was not his nephew, but the son of a great king, who, having been warned of coming dangers by his astrologers, had sent the young prince away and made a vow not to see him till his twenty-second birthday.

Elfi Bey did not tell Omar his father's name, but expressly desired him to be at a great pillar four days' journey east of Alexandria on the fourth day of the coming month, on which day he would be twenty-two years old. Here he would meet some men, to whom he was to hand a dagger which Elfi Bey gave him, and to say 'Here am I for whom you seek.'

If they answered: 'Praised be the Prophet who has preserved you,' he was to follow them, and they would take him to his father.

Labakan was greatly surprised and interested by this story, but after hearing it he could not help looking on Prince Omar with envious eyes, angry that his friend should have the position he himself longed so much for. He began to make comparisons between the prince and himself, and was obliged to confess that he was a fine-looking young man with very good manners and a pleasant expression.

At the same time, he felt sure that had he been in the prince's place any royal father might have been glad to own him.

These thoughts haunted him all day, and he dreamt them all night. He woke very early, and as he saw Omar sleeping quietly, with a happy smile on his face, a wish arose in his mind to take by force or by cunning the things which an unkind fate had denied him.

The dagger which was to act as a passport was sticking in Omar’s girdle. Labakan drew it gently out, and hesitated for a moment whether or not to plunge it into the heart of the sleeping prince. However, he shrank from the idea of murder, so he contented himself with placing the dagger in his own belt, and, saddling Omar’s swift horse for himself, was many miles away before the prince woke up to realise his losses.

For two days Labakan rode on steadily, fearing lest, after all, Omar might reach the meeting place before him. At the end of the second day he saw the great pillar at a distance. It stood on a little hill in the middle of a plain, and could be seen a very long way off. Labakan’s heart beat fast at the sight. Though he had had some time in which to think over the part he meant to play his conscience made him rather uneasy. However, the thought that he must certainly have been born to be a king supported him, and he bravely rode on.

The neighbourhood was quite bare and desert, and it was a good thing that the new prince had brought food for some time with him, as two days were still wanting till the appointed time.

Towards the middle of the next day he saw a long procession of horses and camels coming towards him. It halted at the bottom of the hill, and some splendid tents were pitched. Everything looked like the escort of some great man. Labakan made a shrewd guess that all these people had come here on his account; but he checked his impatience, knowing that only on the fourth day could his wishes be fulfilled.

The first rays of the rising sun woke the happy tailor. As he began to saddle his horse and prepare to ride to the pillar, he could not help having some remorseful thoughts of the trick he had played and the blighted hopes of the real prince. But the die was cast, and his vanity whispered that he was as fine looking a young man as the proudest king might wish his son to be, and that, moreover, what had happened had happened.

With these thoughts he summoned up all his courage sprang on his horse, and in less than a quarter of an hour was at the foot of the hill. Here he dismounted, tied the horse to a bush, and, drawing out Prince Omar’s dagger climbed up the hill.

At the foot of the pillar stood six men round a tall and stately person. His superb robe of cloth of gold was girt round him by a white cashmere shawl, and his white, richly jewelled turban showed that he was a man of wealth and high rank.

Labakan went straight up to him, and, bending low, handed him the dagger, saying: ‘Here am I whom you seek.’

‘Praised be the Prophet who has preserved you! replied the old man with tears of joy. ‘Embrace me, my dear son Omar!’

The proud tailor was deeply moved by these solemn words, and with mingled shame and joy sank into the old king’s arms.

But his happiness was not long unclouded. As he raised his head he saw a horseman who seemed trying to urge a tired or unwilling horse across the plain.

Only too soon Labakan recognised his own old horse, Murva, and the real Prince Omar, but having once told a lie he made up his mind not to own his deceit.

At last the horseman reached the foot of the hill. Here he flung himself from the saddle and hurried up to the pillar.

‘Stop!’ he cried, ‘whoever you may be, and do not let a disgraceful impostor take you in. My name is Omar, and let no one attempt to rob me of it.’

This turn of affairs threw the standers-by into great surprise. The old king in particular seemed much moved as he looked from one face to the other. At last Labakan spoke with forced calmness, ‘Most gracious lord and father, do not let yourself be deceived by this man. As far as I know, he is a half-crazy tailor’s apprentice from Alexandria, called Labakan, who really deserves more pity than anger.’

These words infuriated the prince. Foaming with rage, he tried to press towards Labakan, but the attendants threw themselves upon him and held him fast, whilst the king said, ‘Truly, my dear son, the poor fellow is quite mad. Let him be bound and placed on a dromedary. Perhaps we may be able to get some help for him.’

The prince’s first rage was over, and with tears he cried to the king, ‘My heart tells me that you are my father, and in my mother’s name I entreat you to hear me.’

‘Oh! heaven forbid!’ was the reply. ‘He is talking nonsense again. How can the poor man have got such notions into his head?’

With these words the king took Labakan’s arm to support him down the hill. They both mounted richly caparisoned horses and rode across the plain at the head of their followers.

The unlucky prince was tied hand and foot, and fastened on a dromedary, a guard riding on either side and keeping a sharp look-out on him.

The old king was Sached, Sultan of the Wachabites. For many years he had had no children, but at length the son he had so long wished for was born. But the sooth-sayers and magicians whom he consulted as to the child’s future all said that until he was twenty-two years old he stood in danger of being injured by an enemy. So, to make all safe, the sultan had confided the prince to his trusty friend Elfi Bey, and deprived himself of the happiness of seeing him for twenty-two years. All this the sultan told Labakan, and was much pleased by his appearance and dignified manner.

When they reached their own country they were received with every sign of joy, for the news of the prince’s safe return had spread like wildfire, and every town and village was decorated, whilst the inhabitants thronged to greet them with cries of joy and thankfulness. All this filled Labakan’s proud heart with rapture, whilst the unfortunate Omar followed in silent rage and despair.

At length they arrived in the capital, where the public rejoicings were grander and more brilliant than anywhere else. The queen awaited them in the great hall of the palace, surrounded by her entire court. It was getting dark, and hundreds of coloured hanging lamps were lit to turn night into day.

The brightest hung round the throne on which the queen sat, and which stood above four steps of pure gold inlaid with great amethysts. The four greatest nobles in the kingdom held a canopy of crimson silk over the queen, and the Sheik of Medina fanned her with a peacock-feather fan.

In this state she awaited her husband and her son. She, too, had not seen Omar since his birth, but so many dreams had shown her what he would look like that she felt she would know him among a thousand.

And now the sound of trumpets and drums and of shouts and cheers outside announced the long looked for moment. The doors flew open, and between rows of low-bending courtiers and servants the king approached the throne, leading his pretended son by the hand.

‘Here,’ said he, ‘is he for whom you have been longing so many years.’

But the queen interrupted him, ‘That is not my son!’ she cried. ‘That is not the face the Prophet has shown me in my dreams!’

Just as the king was about to reason with her, the door was thrown violently open, and Prince Omar rushed in, followed by his keepers, whom he had managed to get away from. He flung himself down before the throne, panting out, ‘Here will I die; kill me at once, cruel father, for I cannot bear this shame any longer.’

Everyone pressed round the unhappy man, and the guards were about to seize him, when the queen, who at first was dumb with surprise, sprang up from her throne.

‘Hold!’ cried she. ‘This and no other is the right one; this is the one whom my eyes have never yet seen, but whom my heart recognises.’

The guards had stepped back, but the king called to them in a furious voice to secure the madman.

'It is I who must judge,' he said in tones of command; 'and this matter cannot be decided by women's dreams, but by certain unmistakable signs. This one' (pointing to Labakan) 'is my son, for it was he who brought me the token from my friend Elfi — the dagger.'

'He stole it from me,' shrieked Omar; 'he betrayed my unsuspicious confidence.'

But the king would not listen to his son's voice, for he had always been accustomed to depend on his own judgment. He let the unhappy Omar be dragged from the hall, whilst he himself retired with Labakan to his own rooms, full of anger with the queen his wife, in spite of their many years of happy life together.

The queen, on her side, was plunged in grief, for she felt certain that an impostor had won her husband's heart and taken the place of her real son.

When the first shock was over she began to think how she could manage to convince the king of his mistake. Of course it would be a difficult matter, as the man who declared he was Omar had produced the dagger as a token, besides talking of all sorts of things which happened when he was a child. She called her oldest and wisest ladies about her and asked their advice, but none of them had any to give. At last one very clever old woman said: 'Did not the young man who brought the dagger call him whom your majesty believes to be your son Labakan, and say he was a crazy tailor?'

'Yes,' replied the queen; 'but what of that?'

'Might it not be,' said the old lady, 'that the impostor has called your real son by his own name? If this should be the case, I know of a capital way to find out the truth.'

And she whispered some words to the queen, who seemed much pleased, and went off at once to see the king.

Now the queen was a very wise woman, so she pretended to think she might have made a mistake, and only begged to be allowed to put a test to the two young men to prove which was the real prince.

The king, who was feeling much ashamed of the rage he had been in with his dear wife, consented at once, and she said: 'No doubt others would make them ride or shoot, or something of that sort, but every one learns these things. I wish to set them a task which requires sharp wits and clever hands, and I want them to try which of them can best make a kaftan and pair of trousers.'

The king laughed. 'No, no, that will never do. Do you suppose my son would compete with that crazy tailor as to which could make the best clothes? Oh, dear, no, that won’t do at all.’

But the queen claimed his promise, and as he was a man of his word the king gave in at last. He went to his son and begged that he would humour his mother, who had set her heart on his making a kaftan.

The worthy Labakan laughed to himself. ‘If that is all she wants,’ thought he, ‘her majesty will soon be pleased to own me.’

Two rooms were prepared, with pieces of material, scissors, needles and threads, and each young man was shut up in one of them.

The king felt rather curious as to what sort of garment his son would make, and the queen, too, was very anxious as to the result of her experiment.

On the third day they sent for the two young men and their work. Labakan came first and spread out his kaftan before the eyes of the astonished king. ‘See, father,’ he said; ‘see, my honoured mother, if this is not a masterpiece of work. I’ll bet the court tailor himself cannot do better.

The queen smiled and turned to Omar: ‘And what have you done, my son?’

Impatiently he threw the stuff and scissors down on the floor. ‘I have been taught how to manage a horse, to draw a sword, and to throw a lance some sixty paces, but I never learnt to sew, and such a thing would have been thought beneath the notice of the pupil of Elfi Bey, the ruler of Cairo.’

‘Ah, true son of your father,’ cried the queen; ‘if only I might embrace you and call you son! Forgive me, my lord and husband,’ she added, turning to the king, ‘for trying to find out the truth in this way. Do you not see yourself now which is the prince and which the tailor? Certainly this kaftan is a very fine one, but I should like to know what master taught this young man how to make clothes.’

The king sat deep in thought, looking now at his wife and now at Labakan, who was doing his best to hide his vexation at his own stupidity. At last the king said: ‘Even this trial does not satisfy me; but happily I know of a sure way to discover whether or not I have been deceived.’

He ordered his swiftest horse to be saddled, mounted, and rode off alone into a forest at some little distance. Here lived a kindly fairy called Adolzaide, who had often helped the kings of his race with her good advice, and to her he betook himself.

In the middle of the forest was a wide open space surrounded by great cedar trees, and this was supposed to be the fairy’s favourite spot. When the king reached this place he dismounted, tied his horse to the tree, and standing in the middle of the open place said: ‘If it is true that you have helped my ancestors in their time of need, do not despise their descendant, but give me counsel, for that of men has failed me.’

He had hardly finished speaking when one of the cedar trees opened, and a veiled figure all dressed in white stepped from it.

‘I know your errand, King Sached,’ she said; ‘it is an honest one, and I will give you my help. Take these two little boxes and let the two men who claim to be your son choose between them. I know that the real prince will make no mistake.’

She then handed him two little boxes made of ivory set with gold and pearls. On the lid of each (which the king vainly tried to open) was an inscription in diamonds. On one stood the words ‘Honour and Glory,’ and on the other ‘Wealth and Happiness.’

‘It would be a hard choice,’ thought the king as he rode home.

He lost no time in sending for the queen and for all his court, and when all were assembled he made a sign, and Labakan was led in. With a proud air he walked up to the throne, and kneeling down, asked:

‘What does my lord and father command?’

The king replied: ‘My son, doubts have been thrown on your claim to that name. One of these boxes contains the proofs of your birth. Choose for yourself. No doubt you will choose right.’

He then pointed to the ivory boxes, which were placed on two little tables near the throne.

Labakan rose and looked at the boxes. He thought for some minutes, and then said: ‘My honoured father, what can be better than the happiness of being your son, and what nobler than the riches of your love. I choose the box with the words “Wealth and Happiness.”’

‘We shall see presently if you have chosen the right one. For the present take a seat there beside the Pacha of Medina,’ replied the king.

Omar was next led in, looking sad and sorrowful. He threw himself down before the throne and asked what was the king’s pleasure. The king pointed out the two boxes to him, and he rose and went to the tables. He carefully read the two mottoes and said: ‘The last few days have shown me how uncertain is happiness and how easily riches vanish away. Should I lose a crown by it I make my choice of “Honour and Glory.”’

He laid his hand on the box as he spoke, but the king signed to him to wait, and ordered Labakan to come to the other table and lay his hand on the box he had chosen.

Then the king rose from his throne, and in solemn silence all present rose too, whilst he said: ‘Open the boxes, and may Allah show us the truth.’

The boxes were opened with the greatest ease. In the one Omar had chosen lay a little gold crown and sceptre on a velvet cushion. In Labakan’s box was found

— a large needle with some thread!

The king told the two young men to bring him their boxes. They did so. He took the crown in his hand, and as he held it, it grew bigger and bigger, till it was as large as a real crown. He placed it on the head of his son Omar, kissed him on the forehead, and placed him on his right hand. Then, turning to Labakan, he said: ‘There is an old proverb, “The cobbler sticks to his last.” It seems as though you were to stick to your needle. You have not deserved any mercy, but I cannot be harsh on this day. I give you your life, but I advise you to leave this country as fast as you can.’

Full of shame, the unlucky tailor could not answer. He flung himself down before Omar, and with tears in his eyes asked: ‘Can you forgive me, prince?’

‘Go in peace,’ said Omar as he raised him.

‘Oh, my true son!’ cried the king as he clasped the prince in his arms, whilst all the pachas and emirs shouted, ‘Long live Prince Omar!’

In the midst of all the noise and rejoicing Labakan slipped off with his little box under his arm. He went to the stables, saddled his old horse, Murva, and rode out of the gate towards Alexandria. Nothing but the ivory box with its diamond motto was left to show him that the last few weeks had not been a dream.

When he reached Alexandria he rode up to his old master’s door. When he entered the shop, his master came forward to ask what was his pleasure, but as soon as he saw who it was he called his workmen, and they all fell on Labakan with blows and angry words, till at last he fell, half fainting, on a heap of old clothes.

The master then scolded him soundly about the stolen robe, but in vain Labakan told him he had come to pay for it and offered three times its price. They only fell to beating him again, and at last pushed him out of the house more dead than alive.

He could do nothing but remount his horse and ride to an inn. Here he found a quiet place in which to rest his bruised and battered limbs and to think over his many misfortunes. He fell asleep fully determined to give up trying to be great, but to lead the life of an honest workman.

Next morning he set to work to fulfil his good resolutions. He sold his little box to a jeweller for a good price, bought a house and opened a workshop. Then he hung up a sign with, ‘Labakan, Tailor,’ over his door, and sat down to mend his own torn clothes with the very needle which had been in the ivory box.

After a while he was called away, and when he went back to his work he found a wonderful thing had happened! The needle was sewing away all by itself and making the neatest little stitches, such as Labakan had never been able to make even at his best.

Certainly even the smallest gift of a kind fairy is of great value, and this one had yet another advantage, for the thread never came to an end, however much the needle sewed.

Labakan soon got plenty of customers. He used to cut out the clothes, make the first stitch with the magic needle, and then leave it to do the rest. Before long the whole town went to him, for his work was both so good and so cheap. The only puzzle was how he could do so much, working all alone, and also why he worked with closed doors.

And so the promise on the ivory box of ‘Wealth and Happiness’ came true for him, and when he heard of all the brave doings of Prince Omar, who was the pride and darling of his people and the terror of his enemies, the ex-prince thought to himself, ‘After all, I am better off as a tailor, for “Honour and Glory” are apt to be very dangerous things.’

The Colony Of Cats

Long, long ago, as far back as the time when animals spoke, there lived a community of cats in a deserted house they had taken possession of not far from a large town. They had everything they could possibly desire for their comfort, they were well fed and well lodged, and if by any chance an unlucky mouse was stupid enough to venture in their way, they caught it, not to eat it, but for the pure pleasure of catching it. The old people of the town related how they had heard their parents speak of a time when the whole country was so overrun with rats and mice that there was not so much as a grain of corn nor an ear of maize to be gathered in the fields; and it might be out of gratitude to the cats who had rid the country of these plagues that their descendants were allowed to live in peace. No one knows where they got the money to pay for everything, nor who paid it, for all this happened so very long ago. But one thing is certain, they were rich enough to keep a servant; for though they lived very happily together, and did not scratch nor fight more than human beings would have done, they were not clever enough to do the housework themselves, and preferred at all events to have some one to cook their meat, which they would have scorned to eat raw. Not only were they very difficult to please about the housework, but most women quickly tired of living alone with only cats for companions, consequently they never kept a servant long; and it had become a saying in the town, when anyone found herself reduced to her last penny: ‘I will go and live with the cats,’ and so many a poor woman actually did.

Now Lizina was not happy at home, for her mother, who was a widow, was much fonder of her elder daughter; so that often the younger one fared very badly, and had not enough to eat, while the elder could have everything she desired, and if Lizina dared to complain she was certain to have a good beating.

At last the day came when she was at the end of her courage and patience, and exclaimed to her mother and sister:

‘As you hate me so much you will be glad to be rid of me, so I am going to live with the cats!’

‘Be off with you!’ cried her mother, seizing an old broom-handle from behind the door. Poor Lizina did not wait to be told twice, but ran off at once and never stopped till she reached the door of the cats’ house. Their cook had left them that very morning, with her face all scratched, the result of such a quarrel with the head of the house that he had very nearly scratched out her eyes. Lizina therefore was warmly welcomed, and she set to work at once to prepare the dinner, not without many misgivings as to the tastes of the cats, and whether she would be able to satisfy them.

Going to and fro about her work, she found herself frequently hindered by a constant succession of cats who appeared one after another in the kitchen to inspect the new servant; she had one in front of her feet, another perched on the back of her chair while she peeled the vegetables, a third sat on the table beside her, and five or six others prowled about among the pots and pans on the shelves against the wall. The air resounded with their purring, which meant that they were pleased with their new maid, but Lizina had not yet learned to understand their language, and often she did not know what they wanted her to do. However, as she was a good, kindhearted girl, she set to work to pick up the little kittens which tumbled about on the floor, she patched up quarrels, and nursed on her lap a big tabby — the oldest of the community — which had a lame paw. All these kindnesses could hardly fail to make a favourable impression on the cats, and it was even better after a while, when she had had time to grow accustomed to their strange ways. Never had the house been kept so clean, the meats so well served, nor the sick cats so well cared for. After a time they had a visit from an old cat, whom they called their father, who lived by himself in a barn at the top of the hill, and came down from time to time to inspect the little colony. He too was much taken with Lizina, and inquired, on first seeing her: ‘Are you well served by this nice, black-eyed little person?’ and the cats answered with one voice: ‘Oh, yes, Father Gatto, we have never had so good a servant!’

At each of his visits the answer was always the same; but after a time the old cat, who was very observant, noticed that the little maid had grown to look sadder and sadder. ‘What is the matter, my child has any one been unkind to you?’ he asked one day, when he found her crying in her kitchen. She burst into tears and answered between her sobs: ‘Oh, no! they are all very good to me; but I long for news from home, and I pine to see my mother and my sister.’

Old Gatto, being a sensible old cat, understood the little servant’s feelings. ‘You shall go home,’ he said, ‘and you shall not come back here unless you please. But first you must be rewarded for all your kind services to my children. Follow me down into the inner cellar, where you have never yet been, for I always keep it locked and carry the key away with me.’

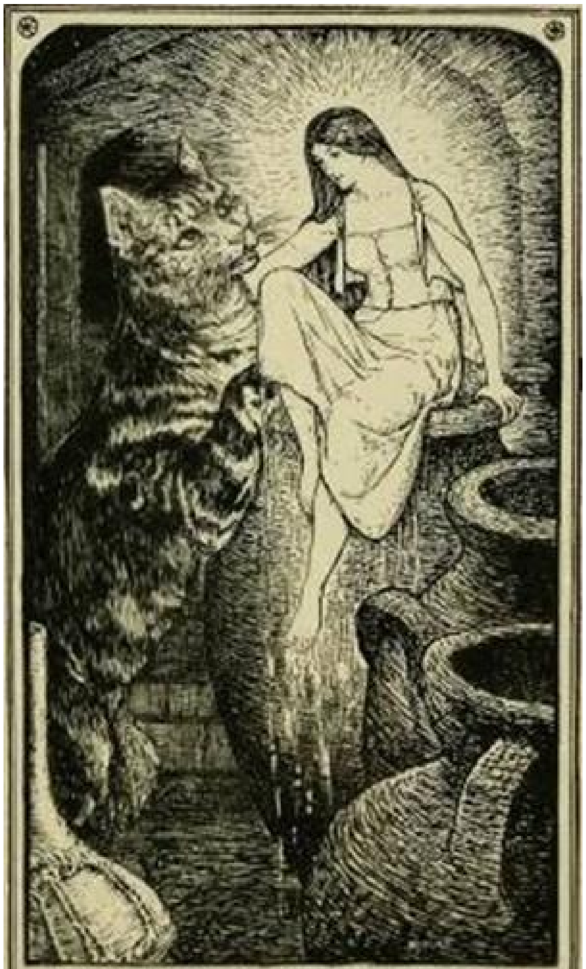

·LIZINA·COMES·OUT·OF·THE·JAR·

Lizina looked round her in astonishment as they went down into the great vaulted cellar underneath the kitchen. Before her stood the big earthenware water jars, one of which contained oil, the other a liquid shining like gold. ‘In which of these jars shall I dip you?’ asked Father Gatto, with a grin that showed all his sharp white teeth, while his moustaches stood out straight on either side of his face. The little maid looked at the two jars from under her long dark lashes: ‘In the oil jar,’ she answered timidly, thinking to herself: ‘I could not ask to be bathed in gold.’

But Father Gatto replied: ‘No, no; you have deserved something better than that.’ And seizing her in his strong paws he plunged her into the liquid gold. Wonder of wonders! when Lizina came out of the jar she shone from head to foot like the sun in the heavens on a fine summer’s day. Her pretty pink cheeks and long black hair alone kept their natural colour, otherwise she had become like a statue of pure gold. Father Gatto purred loudly with satisfaction. ‘Go home,’ he said, ‘and see your mother and sisters; but take care if you hear the cock crow to turn towards it; if on the contrary the ass brays, you must look the other way.’

The little maid, having gratefully kissed the white paw of the old cat, set off for home; but just as she got near her mother’s house the cock crowed, and quickly she turned towards it. Immediately a beautiful golden star appeared on her forehead, crowning her glossy black hair. At the same time the ass began to bray, but Lizina took care not to look over the fence into the field where the donkey was feeding. Her mother and sister, who were in front of their house, uttered cries of admiration and astonishment when they saw her, and their cries became still louder when Lizina, taking her handkerchief from her pocket, drew out also a handful of gold.

For some days the mother and her two daughters lived very happily together, for Lizina had given them everything she had brought away except her golden clothing, for that would not come off, in spite of all the efforts of her sister, who was madly jealous of her good fortune. The golden star, too, could not be removed from her forehead. But all the gold pieces she drew from her pockets had found their way to her mother and sister.

‘I will go now and see what I can get out of the pussies,’ said Peppina, the elder girl, one morning, as she took Lizina’s basket and fastened her pockets into her own skirt. ‘I should like some of the cats’ gold for myself,’ she thought, as she left her mother’s house before the sun rose.

The cat colony had not yet taken another servant, for they knew they could never get one to replace Lizina, whose loss they had not yet ceased to mourn. When they heard that Peppina was her sister, they all ran to meet her. ‘She is not the least like her,’ the kittens whispered among themselves.

‘Hush, be quiet!’ the older cats said; ‘all servants cannot be pretty.’

No, decidedly she was not at all like Lizina. Even the most reasonable and large-minded of the cats soon acknowledged that.

The very first day she shut the kitchen door in the face of the tom-cats who used to enjoy watching Lizina at her work, and a young and mischievous cat who jumped in by the open kitchen window and alighted on the table got such a blow with the rolling-pin that he squalled for an hour.

With every day that passed the household became more and more aware of its misfortune.

The work was as badly done as the servant was surly and disagreeable; in the corners of the rooms there were collected heaps of dust; spiders’ webs hung from the ceilings and in front of the window-panes; the beds were hardly ever made, and the feather beds, so beloved by the old and feeble cats, had never once been shaken since Lizina left the house. At Father Gatto’s next visit he found the whole colony in a state of uproar.

‘Caesar has one paw so badly swollen that it looks as if it were broken,’ said one. ‘Peppina kicked him with her great wooden shoes on. Hector has an abscess in his back where a wooden chair was flung at him; and Agrippina’s three little kittens have died of hunger beside their mother, because Peppina forgot them in their basket up in the attic. There is no putting up with the creature — do send her away, Father Gatto! Lizina herself would not be angry with us; she must know very well what her sister is like.’

‘Come here,’ said Father Gatto, in his most severe tones to Peppina. And he took her down into the cellar and showed her the same two great jars that he had showed Lizina. ‘In which of these shall I dip you?’ he asked; and she made haste to answer: ‘In the liquid gold,’ for she was no more modest than she was good and kind.

Father Gatto’s yellow eyes darted fire. ‘You have not deserved it,’ he uttered, in a voice like thunder, and seizing her he flung her into the jar of oil, where she was nearly suffocated. When she came to the surface screaming and struggling, the vengeful cat seized her again and rolled her in the ash-heap on the floor; then when she rose, dirty, blinded, and disgusting to behold, he thrust her from the door, saying: ‘Begone, and when you meet a braying ass be careful to turn your head towards it.’

Stumbling and raging, Peppina set off for home, thinking herself fortunate to find a stick by the wayside with which to support herself. She was within sight of her mother’s house when she heard in the meadow on the right, the voice of a donkey loudly braying. Quickly she turned her head towards it, and at the same time put her hand up to her forehead, where, waving like a plume, was a donkey’s tail. She ran home to her mother at the top of her speed, yelling with rage and despair; and it took Lizina two hours with a big basin of hot water and two cakes of soap to get rid of the layer of ashes with which Father Gatto had adorned her. As for the donkey’s tail, it was impossible to get rid of that; it was as firmly fixed on her forehead as was the golden star on Lizina’s. Their mother was furious. She first beat Lizina unmercifully with the broom, then she took her to the mouth of the well and lowered her into it, leaving her at the bottom weeping and crying for help.

Before this happened, however, the king’s son in passing the mother’s house had seen Lizina sitting sewing in the parlour, and had been dazzled by her beauty. After coming back two or three times, he at last ventured to approach the window and to whisper in the softest voice: ‘Lovely maiden, will you be my bride?’ and she had answered: ‘I will.’

Next morning, when the prince arrived to claim his bride, he found her wrapped in a large white veil. ‘It is so that maidens are received from their parents' hands,' said the mother, who hoped to make the king's son marry Peppina in place of her sister, and had fastened the donkey's tail round her head like a lock of hair under the veil. The prince was young and a little timid, so he made no objections, and seated Peppina in the carriage beside him.

Their way led past the old house inhabited by the cats, who were all at the window, for the report had got about that the prince was going to marry the most beautiful maiden in the world, on whose forehead shone a golden star, and they knew that this could only be their adored Lizina. As the carriage slowly passed in front of the old house, where cats from all parts of world seemed to be gathered a song burst from every throat:

Mew, mew, mew! Prince, look quick behind you!
In the well is fair Lizina,
And you've got nothing but Peppina.

When he heard this the coachman, who understood the cat's language better than the prince, his master, stopped his horses and asked:

'Does your highness know what the grimalkins are saying?' and the song broke forth again louder than ever.

With a turn of his hand the prince threw back the veil, and discovered the puffed-up, swollen face of Peppina, with the donkey's tail twisted round her head. 'Ah, traitress!' he exclaimed, and ordering the horses to be turned round, he drove the elder daughter, quivering with rage, to the old woman who had sought to deceive him. With his hand on the hilt of his sword he demanded Lizina in so terrific a voice that the mother hastened to the well to draw her prisoner out. Lizina's clothing and her star shone so brilliantly that when the prince led her home to the king, his father, the whole palace was lit up. Next day they were married, and lived happy ever after; and all the cats, headed by old Father Gatto, were present at the wedding.

How To Find Out A True Friend

Once upon a time there lived a king and queen who longed to have a son. As none came, one day they made a vow at the shrine of St. James that if their prayers were granted the boy should set out on a pilgrimage as soon as he had passed his eighteenth birthday. And fancy their delight when one evening the king returned home from hunting and saw a baby lying in the cradle.

All the people came crowding round to peep at it, and declared it was the most beautiful baby that ever was seen. Of course that is what they always say, but this time it happened to be true. And every day the boy grew bigger and stronger till he was twelve years old, when the king died, and he was left alone to take care of his mother.

In this way six years passed by, and his eighteenth birthday drew near. When she thought of this the queen's heart sank within her, for he was the light of her eyes' and how was she to send him forth to the unknown dangers that beset a pilgrim? So day by day she grew more and more sorrowful, and when she was alone wept bitterly.

Now the queen imagined that no one but herself knew how sad she was, but one morning her son said to her, 'Mother, why do you cry the whole day long?'

'Nothing, nothing, my son; there is only one thing in the world that troubles me.'

'What is that one thing?' asked he. 'Are you afraid your property is badly managed? Let me go and look into the matter.'

This pleased the queen, and he rode off to the plain country, where his mother owned great estates; but everything was in beautiful order, and he returned with a joyful heart, and said, 'Now, mother, you can be happy again, for your lands are better managed than anyone else's I have seen. The cattle are thriving; the fields are thick with corn, and soon they will be ripe for harvest.'

'That is good news indeed,' answered she; but it did not seem to make any difference to her, and the next morning she was weeping and wailing as loudly as ever.

'Dear mother,' said her son in despair, 'if you will not tell me what is the cause of all this misery I shall leave home and wander far through the world.'

'Ah, my son, my son,' cried the queen, 'it is the thought that I must part from you which causes me such grief; for before you were born we vowed a vow to St. James that when your eighteenth birthday was passed you should make a pilgrimage to his shrine, and very soon you will be eighteen, and I shall lose you. And for a whole year my eyes will never be gladdened by the sight of you, for the shrine is far away.’

‘Will it take no longer than that to reach it?’ said he. ‘Oh, don’t be so wretched; it is only dead people who never return. As long as I am alive you may be sure I will come back to you.’

After this manner he comforted his mother, and on his eighteenth birthday his best horse was led to the door of the palace, and he took leave of the queen in these words, ‘Dear mother, farewell, and by the help of fate I shall return to you as soon as I can.’

The queen burst into tears and wept sore; then amidst her sobs she drew three apples from her pocket and held them out, saying, ‘My son, take these apples and give heed unto my words. You will need a companion in the long journey on which you are going. If you come across a young man who pleases you beg him to accompany you, and when you get to an inn invite him to have dinner with you. After you have eaten cut one of these apples in two unequal parts, and ask him to take one. If he takes the larger bit, then part from him, for he is no true friend to you. But if he takes the smaller bit treat him as your brother, and share with him all you have.’ Then she kissed her son once more, and blessed him, and let him go.

The young man rode a long way without meeting a single creature, but at last he saw a youth in the distance about the same age as himself, and he spurred his horse till he came up with the stranger, who stopped and asked:

‘Where are you going, my fine fellow?’

‘I am making a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James, for before I was born my mother vowed that I should go forth with a thank offering on my eighteenth birthday.’

‘That is my case too,’ said the stranger, ‘and, as we must both travel in the same direction, let us bear each other company.’

The young man agreed to this proposal, but he took care not to get on terms of familiarity with the new comer until he had tried him with the apple.

By-and-by they reached an inn, and at sight of it the king’s son said, ‘I am very hungry. Let us enter and order something to eat.’ The other consented, and they were soon sitting before a good dinner.

When they had finished the king’s son drew an apple from his pocket, and cut it into a big half and a little half, and offered both to the stranger, who took the biggest bit. ‘You are no friend of mine,’ thought the king’s son, and in order to part company with him he pretended to be ill and declared himself unable to proceed on his journey.

‘Well, I can’t wait for you,’ replied the other; ‘I am in haste to push on, so farewell.’

‘Farewell,’ said the king’s son, glad in his heart to get rid of him so easily. The king’s son remained in the inn for some time, so as to let the young man have a good start; them he ordered his horse and rode after him. But he was very sociable and the way seemed long and dull by himself. ‘Oh, if I could only meet with a true friend,’ he thought, ‘so that I should have some one to speak to. I hate being alone.’

Soon after he came up with a young man, who stopped and asked him, ‘Where are you going, my fine fellow?’ The king’s son explained the object of his journey, and the young man answered, as the other had done, that he also was fulfilling the vow of his mother made at his birth.

‘Well, we can ride on together,’ said the king’s son, and the road seemed much shorter now that he had some one to talk to.

At length they reached an inn, and the king’s son exclaimed, ‘I am very hungry; let us go in and get something to eat.’

When they had finished the king’s son drew an apple out of his pocket and cut it in two; he held the big bit and the little bit out to his companion, who took the big bit at once and soon ate it up. ‘You are no friend of mine,’ thought the king’s son, and began to declare he felt so ill he could not continue his journey. When he had given the young man a good start he set off himself, but the way seemed even longer and duller than before. ‘Oh, if I could only meet with a true friend he should be as a brother to me,’ he sighed sadly; and as the thought passed through his mind, he noticed a youth going the same road as himself.

The youth came up to him and said, ‘Which way are you going, my fine fellow?’ And for the third time the king’s son explained all about his mother’s vow. Why, that is just like me,’ cried the youth.

‘Then let us ride on together,’ answered the king’s son.

Now the miles seemed to slip by, for the new comer was so lively and entertaining that the king’s son could not help hoping that he indeed might prove to be the true friend.

More quickly than he could have thought possible they reached an inn by the road-side, and turning to his companion the king’s son said, ‘I am hungry; let us go in and have something to eat.’ So they went in and ordered dinner, and when they had finished the king’s son drew out of his pocket the last apple, and cut it into two unequal parts, and held both out to the stranger. And the stranger took the little piece, and the heart of the king’s son was glad within him, for at last he had found the friend he had been looking for. ‘Good youth,’ he cried, ‘we will be brothers, and what is mine shall be thine, and what is thine shall be mine. And together we will push on to the shrine, and if one of us dies on the road the other shall carry his body there.’ And the stranger agreed to all he said, and they rode forward together.

It took them a whole year to reach the shrine, and they passed through many different lands on their way. One day they arrived tired and half-starved in a big city, and said to one another, ‘Let us stay here for a little and rest before we set forth again.’ So they hired a small house close to the royal castle, and took up their abode there.

The following morning the king of the country happened to step on to his balcony, and saw the young men in the garden, and said to himself, ‘Dear me, those are wonderfully handsome youths; but one is handsomer than the other, and to him will I give my daughter to wife;’ and indeed the king’s son excelled his friend in beauty.

In order to set about his plan the king asked both the young men to dinner, and when they arrived at the castle he received them with the utmost kindness, and sent for his daughter, who was more lovely than both the sun and moon put together. But at bed-time the king caused the other young man to be given a poisoned drink, which killed him in a few minutes, for he thought to himself, ‘If his friend dies the other will forget his pilgrimage, and will stay here and marry my daughter.’

When the king’s son awoke the next morning he inquired of the servants where his friend had gone, as he did not see him. ‘He died suddenly last night,’ said they, ‘and is to be buried immediately.’

But the king’s son sprang up, and cried, ‘If my friend is dead I can stay here no longer, and cannot linger an hour in this house.’

‘Oh, give up your journey and remain here,’ exclaimed the king, ‘and you shall have my daughter for your wife.’ ‘No,’ answered the king’s son, ‘I cannot stay; but, I pray you, grant my request, and give me a good horse, and let me go in peace, and when I have fulfilled my vow then I will return and marry your daughter.’

So the king, seeing no words would move him, ordered a horse to be brought round, and the king’s son mounted it, and took his dead friend before him on the saddle, and rode away.

Now the young man was not really dead, but only in a deep sleep.

When the king’s son reached the shrine of St. James he got down from his horse, took his friend in his arms as if he had been a child, and laid him before the altar. ‘St. James,’ he said, ‘I have fulfilled the vow my parents made for me. I have come myself to your shrine, and have brought my friend. I place him in your hands. Restore him to life, I pray, for though he be dead yet has he fulfilled his vow also.’ And, behold! while he yet prayed his friend got up and stood before him as well as ever. And both the young men gave thanks, and set their faces towards home.

When they arrived at the town where the king dwelt they entered the small house over against the castle. The news of their coming spread very soon, and the king rejoiced greatly that the handsome young prince had come back again, and commanded great feasts to be prepared, for in a few days his daughter should marry the king’s son. The young man himself could imagine no greater happiness, and when the marriage was over they spent some months at the court making merry.

At length the king’s son said, ‘My mother awaits me at home, full of care and anxiety. Here I must remain no longer, and to-morrow I will take my wife and my friend and start for home.’ And the king was content that he should do so, and gave orders to prepare for their journey.

Now in his heart the king cherished a deadly hate towards the poor young man whom he had tried to kill, but who had returned to him living, and in order to do him hurt sent him on a message to some distant spot. ‘See that you are quick,’ said he, ‘for your friend will await your return before he starts.’ The youth put spurs to his horse and departed, bidding the prince farewell, so that the king’s message might be delivered the sooner. As soon as he had started the king went to the chamber of the prince, and said to him, ‘If you do not start immediately, you will never reach the place where you must camp for the night.’

‘I cannot start without my friend,’ replied the king’s son.

‘Oh, he will be back in an hour,’ replied the king, ‘and I will give him my best horse, so that he will be sure to catch you up.’ The king’s son allowed himself to be persuaded and took leave of his father-in-law, and set out with his wife on his journey home.

Meanwhile the poor friend had been unable to get through his task in the short time appointed by the king, and when at last he returned the king said to him,

‘Your comrade is a long way off by now; you had better see if you can overtake him.’

So the young man bowed and left the king’s presence, and followed after his friend on foot, for he had no horse. Night and day he ran, till at length he reached the place where the king’s son had pitched his tent, and sank down before him, a miserable object, worn out and covered with mud and dust. But the king’s son welcomed him with joy, and tended him as he would his brother.

And at last they came home again, and the queen was waiting and watching in the palace, as she had never ceased to do since her son had rode away. She almost died of joy at seeing him again, but after a little she remembered his sick friend, and ordered a bed to be made ready and the best doctors in all the country to be sent for. When they heard of the queen’s summons they flocked from all parts, but none could cure him. After everyone had tried and failed a servant entered and informed the queen that a strange old man had just knocked at the palace gate and declared that he was able to heal the dying youth. Now this was a holy man, who had heard of the trouble the king’s son was in, and had come to help.

It happened that at this very time a little daughter was born to the king’s son, but in his distress for his friend he had hardly a thought to spare for the baby. He could not be prevailed on to leave the sick bed, and he was bending over it when the holy man entered the room. ‘Do you wish your friend to be cured?’ asked the new comer of the king’s son. ‘And what price would you pay?’

‘What price?’ answered the king’s son; ‘only tell me what I can do to heal him.’

‘Listen to me, then,’ said the old man. ‘This evening you must take your child, and open her veins, and smear the wounds of your friend with her blood. And you will see, he will get well in an instant.’

At these words the king’s son shrieked with horror, for he loved the baby dearly, but he answered, ‘I have sworn that I would treat my friend as if he were my brother, and if there is no other way my child must be sacrificed.’

As by this time evening had already fallen he took the child and opened its veins, and smeared the blood over the wounds of the sick man, and the look of death departed from him, and he grew strong and rosy once more. But the little child lay as white and still as if she had been dead. They laid her in the cradle and wept bitterly, for they thought that by the next morning she would be lost to them.

At sunrise the old man returned and asked after the sick man.

‘He is as well as ever,’ answered the king’s son.

‘And where is your baby?’

‘In the cradle yonder, and I think she is dead,’ replied the father sadly.

‘Look at her once more,’ said the holy man, and as they drew near the cradle there lay the baby smiling up at them.

‘I am St. James of Lizia,’ said the old man, ‘and I have come to help you, for I have seen that you are a true friend. From henceforward live happily, all of you, together, and if troubles should draw near you send for me, and I will aid you to get through them.’

With these words he lifted his hand in blessing and vanished.

And they obeyed him, and were happy and content, and tried to make the people of the land happy and contented too.

Clever Maria

There was once a merchant who lived close to the royal palace, and had three daughters. They were all pretty, but Maria, the youngest, was the prettiest of the three. One day the king sent for the merchant, who was a widower, to give him directions about a journey he wished the good man to take. The merchant would rather not have gone, as he did not like leaving his daughters at home, but he could not refuse to obey the king's commands, and with a heavy heart he returned home to say farewell to them. Before he left, he took three pots of basil, and gave one to each girl, saying, 'I am going a journey, but I leave these pots. You must let nobody into the house. When I come back, they will tell me what has happened.' 'Nothing will have happened,' said the girls.

The father went away, and the following day the king, accompanied by two friends, paid a visit to the three girls, who were sitting at supper. When they saw who was there, Maria said, 'Let us go and get a bottle of wine from the cellar. I will carry the key, my eldest sister can take the light, while the other brings the bottle.' But the king replied, 'Oh, do not trouble; we are not thirsty.' 'Very well, we will not go,' answered the two elder girls; but Maria merely said, 'I shall go, anyhow.' She left the room, and went to the hall where she put out the light, and putting down the key and the bottle, ran to the house of a neighbour, and knocked at the door. 'Who is there so late?' asked the old woman, thrusting her head out of the window.

'Oh, let me in,' answered Maria. 'I have quarrelled with my eldest sister, and as I do not want to fight any more, I have come to beg you to allow me to sleep with you.'

So the old woman opened the door and Maria slept in her house. The king was very angry at her for playing truant, but when she returned home the next day, she found the plants of her sisters withered away, because they had disobeyed their father. Now the window in the room of the eldest overlooked the gardens of the king, and when she saw how fine and ripe the medlars were on the trees, she longed to eat some, and begged Maria to scramble down by a rope and pick her a few, and she would draw her up again. Maria, who was good-natured, swung herself into the garden by the rope, and got the medlars, and was just making the rope fast under her arms so as to be hauled up, when her sister cried: 'Oh, there are such delicious lemons a little farther on. You might bring me one or two.' Maria turned round to pluck them, and found herself face to face with the gardener, who caught hold of her, exclaiming, ‘What are you doing here, you little thief?’ ‘Don’t call me names,’ she said, ‘or you will get the worst of it,’ giving him as she spoke such a violent push that he fell panting into the lemon bushes. Then she seized the cord and clambered up to the window.

The next day the second sister had a fancy for bananas and begged so hard, that, though Maria had declared she would never do such a thing again, at last she consented, and went down the rope into the king’s garden. This time she met the king, who said to her, ‘Ah, here you are again, cunning one! Now you shall pay for your misdeeds.’

And he began to cross-question her about what she had done. Maria denied nothing, and when she had finished, the king said again, ‘Follow me to the house, and there you shall pay the penalty.’ As he spoke, he started for the house, looking back from time to time to make sure that Maria had not run away. All of a sudden, when he glanced round, he found she had vanished completely, without leaving a trace of where she had gone. Search was made all through the town, and there was not a hole or corner which was not ransacked, but there was no sign of her anywhere. This so enraged the king that he became quite ill, and for many months his life was despaired of.

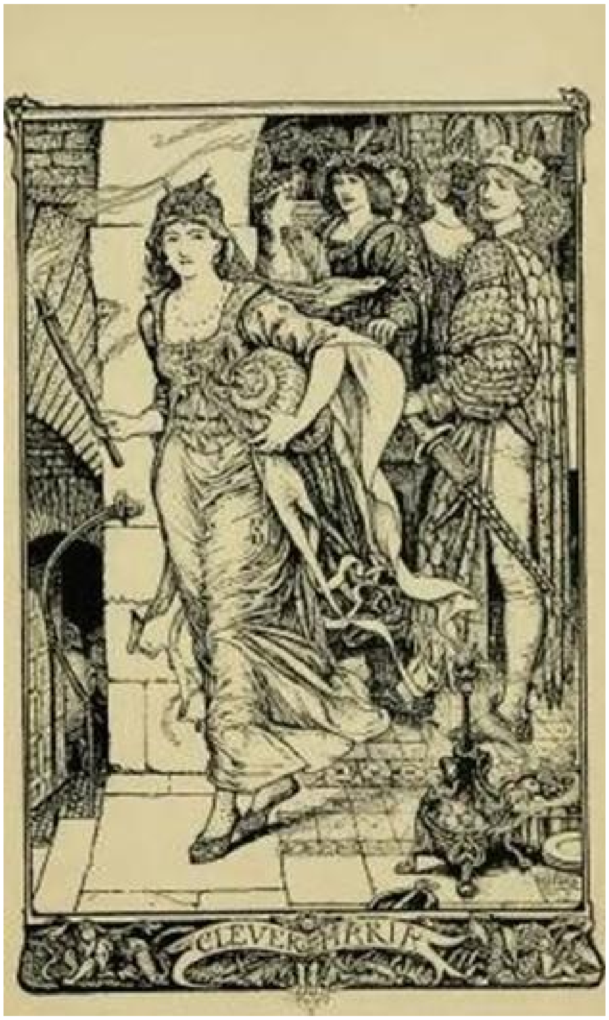

Meanwhile the two elder sisters had married the two friends of the king, and were the mothers of little daughters. Now one day Maria stole secretly to the house where her elder sister lived, and snatching up the children put them into a beautiful basket she had with her, covered with flowers inside and out, so that no one would ever guess it held two babies. Then she dressed herself as a boy, and placing the basket on her head, she walked slowly past the palace, crying as she went:

‘Who will carry these flowers to the king, who lies sick of love?’

And the king in his bed heard what she said, and ordered one of his attendants to go out and buy the basket. It was brought to his bedside, and as he raised the lid cries were heard, and peeping in he saw two little children. He was furious at this new trick which he felt had been played on him by Maria, and was still looking at them, wondering how he should pay her out, when he was told that the merchant, Maria’s father, had finished the business on which he had been sent and returned home. Then the king remembered how Maria had refused to receive his visit, and how she had stolen his fruit, and he determined to be revenged on her. So he sent a message by one of his pages that the merchant was to come to see him the next day, and bring with him a coat made of stone, or else he would be punished. Now the poor man had been very sad since he got home the evening before, for though his daughters had promised that nothing should happen while he was away, he had found the two elder ones married without asking his leave. And now there was this fresh misfortune, for how was he to make a coat of stone? He wrung his hands and declared that the king would be the ruin of him, when Maria suddenly entered. 'Do not grieve about the coat of stone, dear father; but take this bit of chalk, and go to the palace and say you have come to measure the king.' The old man did not see the use of this, but Maria had so often helped him before that he had confidence in her, so he put the chalk in his pocket and went to the palace.

'That is no good,' said the king, when the merchant had told him what he had come for.

'Well, I can't make the coat you want,' replied he.

'Then if you would save your head, hand over to me your daughter Maria.'

The merchant did not reply, but went sorrowfully back to his house, where Maria sat waiting for him.

'Oh, my dear child, why was I born? The king says that, instead of the coat, I must deliver you up to him.'

'Do not be unhappy, dear father, but get a doll made, exactly like me, with a string attached to its head, which I can pull for "Yes" and "No."'

So the old man went out at once to see about it.

The king remained patiently in his palace, feeling sure that this time Maria could not escape him; and he said to his pages, 'If a gentleman should come here with his daughter and ask to be allowed to speak with me, put the young lady in my room and see she does not leave it.'

When the door was shut on Maria, who had concealed the doll under her cloak, she hid herself under the couch, keeping fast hold of the string which was fastened to its head.

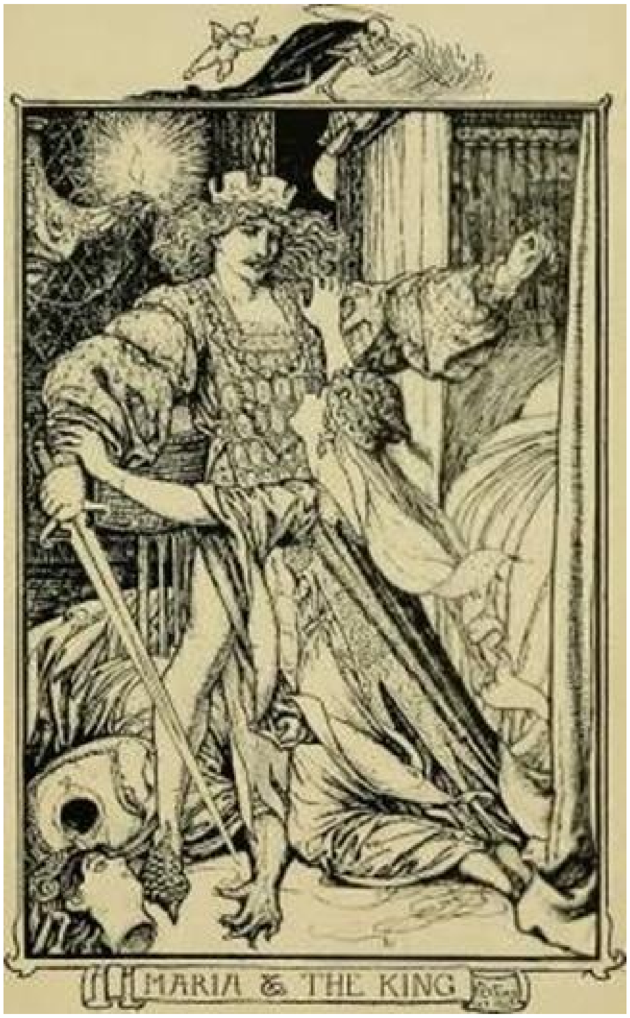

MARIA & THE KING

‘Senhora Maria, I hope you are well,’ said the king when he entered the room. The doll nodded. ‘Now we will reckon up accounts,’ continued he, and he began at the beginning, and ended up with the flower-basket, and at each fresh misdeed Maria pulled the string, so that the doll’s head nodded assent. ‘Who-so mocks at me merits death,’ declared the king when he had ended, and drawing his sword, cut off the doll’s head. It fell towards him, and as he felt the touch of a kiss, he exclaimed, ‘Ah, Maria, Maria, so sweet in death, so hard to me in life! The man who could kill you deserves to die!’ And he was about to turn his sword on himself, when the true Maria sprung out from under the bed, and flung herself into his arms. And the next day they were married and lived happily for many years.

The Magic Kettle

Right in the middle of Japan, high up among the mountains, an old man lived in his little house. He was very proud of it, and never tired of admiring the whiteness of his straw mats, and the pretty papered walls, which in warm weather always slid back, so that the smell of the trees and flowers might come in.

One day he was standing looking at the mountain opposite, when he heard a kind of rumbling noise in the room behind him. He turned round, and in the corner he beheld a rusty old iron kettle, which could not have seen the light of day for many years. How the kettle got there the old man did not know, but he took it up and looked it over carefully, and when he found that it was quite whole he cleaned the dust off it and carried it into his kitchen.

‘That was a piece of luck,’ he said, smiling to himself; ‘a good kettle costs money, and it is as well to have a second one at hand in case of need; mine is getting worn out, and the water is already beginning to come through its bottom.’

Then he took the other kettle off the fire, filled the new one with water, and put it in its place.

No sooner was the water in the kettle getting warm than a strange thing happened, and the man, who was standing by, thought he must be dreaming. First the handle of the kettle gradually changed its shape and became a head, and the spout grew into a tail, while out of the body sprang four paws, and in a few minutes the man found himself watching, not a kettle, but a tanuki! The creature jumped off the fire, and bounded about the room like a kitten, running up the walls and over the ceiling, till the old man was in an agony lest his pretty room should be spoilt. He cried to a neighbour for help, and between them they managed to catch the tanuki, and shut him up safely in a wooden chest. Then, quite exhausted, they sat down on the mats, and consulted together what they should do with this troublesome beast. At length they decided to sell him, and bade a child who was passing send them a certain tradesman called Jimmu.

When Jimmu arrived, the old man told him that he had something which he wished to get rid of, and lifted the lid of the wooden chest, where he had shut up the tanuki. But, to his surprise, no tanuki was there, nothing but the kettle he had found in the corner. It was certainly very odd, but the man remembered what had taken place on the fire, and did not want to keep the kettle any more, so after a little bargaining about the price, Jimmu went away carrying the kettle with him.

Now Jimmu had not gone very far before he felt that the kettle was getting heavier and heavier, and by the time he reached home he was so tired that he was thankful to put it down in the corner of his room, and then forgot all about it. In the middle of the night, however, he was awakened by a loud noise in the corner where the kettle stood, and raised himself up in bed to see what it was. But nothing was there except the kettle, which seemed quiet enough. He thought that he must have been dreaming, and fell asleep again, only to be roused a second time by the same disturbance. He jumped up and went to the corner, and by the light of the lamp that he always kept burning he saw that the kettle had become a tanuki, which was running round after his tail. After he grew weary of that, he ran on the balcony, where he turned several somersaults, from pure gladness of heart. The tradesman was much troubled as to what to do with the animal, and it was only towards morning that he managed to get any sleep; but when he opened his eyes again there was no tanuki, only the old kettle he had left there the night before.

As soon as he had tidied his house, Jimmu set off to tell his story to a friend next door. The man listened quietly, and did not appear so surprised as Jimmu expected, for he recollected having heard, in his youth, something about a wonder-working kettle. ‘Go and travel with it, and show it off,’ said he, ‘and you will become a rich man; but be careful first to ask the tanuki’s leave, and also to perform some magic ceremonies to prevent him from running away at the sight of the people.’

Jimmu thanked his friend for his counsel, which he followed exactly. The tanuki’s consent was obtained, a booth was built, and a notice was hung up outside it inviting the people to come and witness the most wonderful transformation that ever was seen.

They came in crowds, and the kettle was passed from hand to hand, and they were allowed to examine it all over, and even to look inside. Then Jimmu took it back, and setting it on the platform, commanded it to become a tanuki. In an instant the handle began to change into a head, and the spout into a tail, while the four paws appeared at the sides. ‘Dance,’ said Jimmu, and the tanuki did his steps, and moved first on one side and then on the other, till the people could not stand still any longer, and began to dance too. Gracefully he led the fan dance, and glided without a pause into the shadow dance and the umbrella dance, and it seemed as if he might go on dancing for ever. And so very likely he would, if Jimmu had not declared he had danced enough, and that the booth must now be closed.

Day after day the booth was so full it was hardly possible to enter it, and what the neighbour foretold had come to pass, and Jimmu was a rich man. Yet he did not feel happy. He was an honest man, and he thought that he owed some of his wealth to the man from whom he had bought the kettle. So, one morning, he put a hundred gold pieces into it, and hanging the kettle once more on his arm, he returned to the seller of it. ‘I have no right to keep it any longer,’ he added when he had ended his tale, ‘so I have brought it back to you, and inside you will find a hundred gold pieces as the price of its hire.’

The man thanked Jimmu, and said that few people would have been as honest as he. And the kettle brought them both luck, and everything went well with them till they died, which they did when they were very old, respected by everyone.

THE BROWN FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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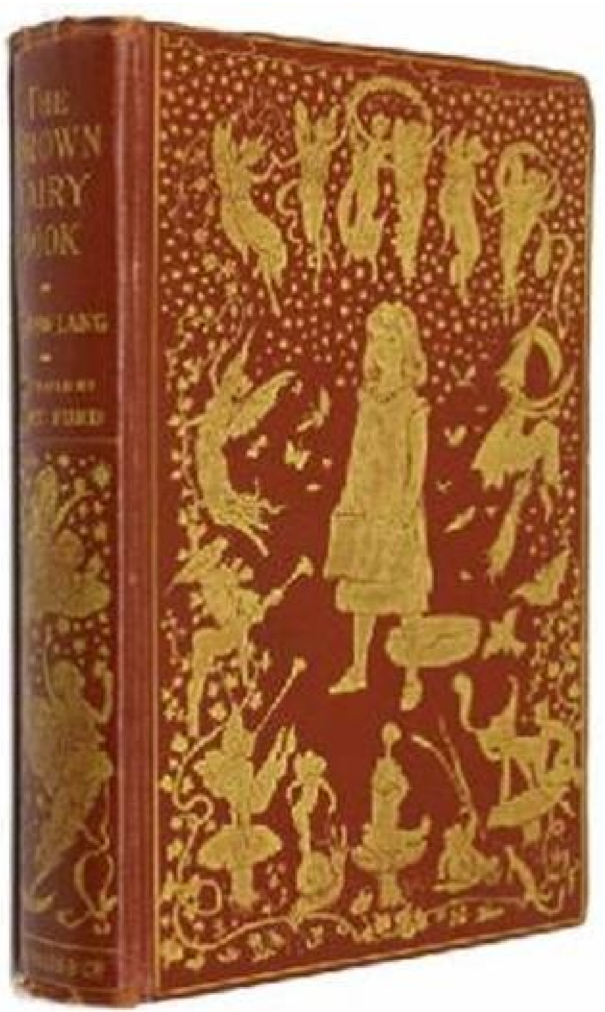
THE BROWN FAIRY BOOK
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The first edition

THE BROWN FAIRY BOOK

"You will have to make me your wife" said the Elf-maiden

DEDICATED

TO

DIANA SCOTT LANG

PREFACE

The stories in this Fairy Book come from all quarters of the world. For example, the adventures of ‘Ball-Carrier and the Bad One’ are told by Red Indian grandmothers to Red Indian children who never go to school, nor see pen and ink. ‘The Bunyip’ is known to even more uneducated little ones, running about with no clothes at all in the bush, in Australia. You may see photographs of these merry little black fellows before their troubles begin, in ‘Northern Races of Central Australia,’ by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen. They have no lessons except in tracking and catching birds, beasts, fishes, lizards, and snakes, all of which they eat. But when they grow up to be big boys and girls, they are cruelly cut about with stone knives and frightened with sham bogies— ‘all for their good’ their parents say — and I think they would rather go to school, if they had their choice, and take their chance of being birched and bullied. However, many boys might think it better fun to begin to learn hunting as soon as they can walk. Other stories, like ‘The Sacred Milk of Koumongoé,’ come from the Kaffirs in Africa, whose dear papas are not so poor as those in Australia, but have plenty of cattle and milk, and good mealies to eat, and live in houses like very big bee-hives, and wear clothes of a sort, though not very like our own. ‘Pivi and Kabo’ is a tale from the brown people in the island of New Caledonia, where a boy is never allowed to speak to or even look at his own sisters; nobody knows why, so curious are the manners of this remote island. The story shows the advantages of good manners and pleasant behaviour; and the natives do not now cook and eat each other, but live on fish, vegetables, pork, and chickens, and dwell in houses. ‘What the Rose did to the Cypress’ is a story from Persia, where the people, of course, are civilised, and much like those of whom you read in ‘The Arabian Nights.’ Then there are tales like ‘The Fox and the Lapp’ from the very north of Europe, where it is dark for half the year and daylight for the other half. The Lapps are a people not fond of soap and water, and very much given to art magic. Then there are tales from India, told to Major Campbell, who wrote them out, by Hindoos; these stories are ‘Wali Dâd the Simple-hearted,’ and ‘The King who would be Stronger than Fate,’ but was not so clever as his daughter. From Brazil, in South America, comes ‘The Tortoise and the Mischievous Monkey,’ with the adventures of other animals. Other tales are told in various parts of Europe, and in many languages; but all people, black, white, brown, red, and yellow, are like each other when they tell stories; for these are meant for children, who like the same sort of thing, whether they go to school and wear clothes, or, on the other hand, wear skins of beasts, or even nothing at all, and live on grubs and lizards and hawks and crows and serpents, like the little Australian blacks.

The tale of ‘What the Rose did to the Cypress,’ is translated out of a Persian manuscript by Mrs. Beveridge. ‘Pivi and Kabo’ is translated by the Editor from a French version; ‘Asmund and Signy’ by Miss Blackley; the Indian stories by Major Campbell, and all the rest are told by Mrs. Lang, who does not give them exactly as they are told by all sorts of outlandish natives, but makes them up in the hope white people will like them, skipping the pieces which they will not like. That is how this Fairy Book was made up for your entertainment.

WHAT THE ROSE DID TO THE CYPRESS

Once upon a time a great king of the East, named Saman-ll-pMsh, had three brave and clever sons — Tahmsp, Qams, and Alms-ruh-bakhsh. One day, when the king was sitting in his hall of audience, his eldest son, Prince Tahmsp, came before him, and after greeting his father with due respect, said: ‘O my royal father! I am tired of the town; if you will give me leave, I will take my servants to-morrow and will go into the country and hunt on the hill-skirts; and when I have taken some game I will come back, at evening-prayer time.’ His father consented, and sent with him some of his own trusted servants, and also hawks, and falcons, hunting dogs, cheetahs and leopards.

At the place where the prince intended to hunt he saw a most beautiful deer. He ordered that it should not be killed, but trapped or captured with a noose. The deer looked about for a place where he might escape from the ring of the beaters, and spied one unwatched close to the prince himself. It bounded high and leaped right over his head, got out of the ring, and tore like the eastern wind into the waste. The prince put spurs to his horse and pursued it; and was soon lost to the sight of his followers. Until the world-lighting sun stood above his head in the zenith he did not take his eyes off the deer; suddenly it disappeared behind some rising ground, and with all his search he could not find any further trace of it. He was now drenched in sweat, and he breathed with pain; and his horse’s tongue hung from its mouth with thirst. He dismounted and toiled on, with bridle on arm, praying and casting himself on the mercy of heaven. Then his horse fell and surrendered its life to God. On and on he went across the sandy waste, weeping and with burning breast, till at length a hill rose into sight. He mustered his strength and climbed to the top, and there he found a giant tree whose foot kept firm the wrinkled earth, and whose crest touched the very heaven. Its branches had put forth a glory of leaves, and there were grass and a spring underneath it, and flowers of many colours.

Gladdened by this sight, he dragged himself to the water’s edge, drank his fill, and returned thanks for his deliverance from thirst.

He looked about him and, to his amazement, saw close by a royal seat. While he was pondering what could have brought this into the merciless desert, a man drew near who was dressed like a faq+r, and had bare head and feet, but walked with the free carriage of a person of rank. His face was kind, and wise and thoughtful, and he came on and spoke to the prince.

‘O good youth! how did you come here? Who are you? Where do you come from?’

The prince told everything just as it had happened to him, and then respectfully added: ‘I have made known my own circumstances to you, and now I venture to beg you to tell me your own. Who are you? How did you come to make your dwelling in this wilderness?’

To this the faq+r replied: ‘O youth! it would be best for you to have nothing to do with me and to know nothing of my fortunes, for my story is fit neither for telling nor for hearing.’ The prince, however, pleaded so hard to be told, that at last there was nothing to be done but to let him hear.

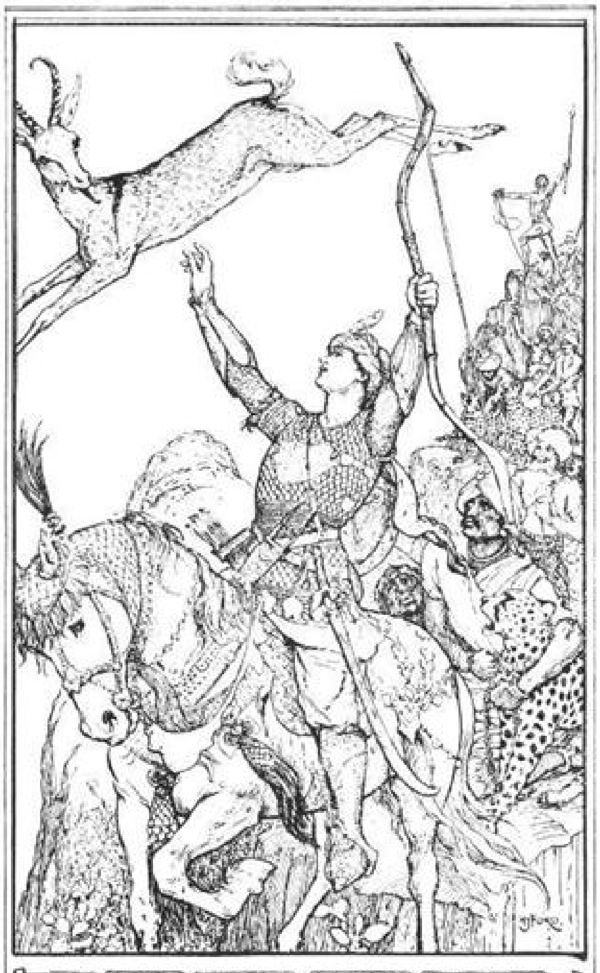

THE DEER ELUDES PRINCE TAHMASP

‘Learn and know, O young man! that I am King Janng+r of Babylon, and that once I had army and servants, family and treasure; untold wealth and belongings. The Most High God gave me seven sons who grew up well versed in all princely arts. My eldest son heard from travellers that in Turk+stn, on the Chinese frontier, there is a king named Quimks, the son of T+mks, and that he has an only child, a daughter named Mihr-afrkz, who, under all the azure heaven, is unrivalled for beauty. Princes come from all quarters to ask her hand, and on one and all she imposes a condition. She says to them: “I know a riddle; and I will marry anyone who answers it, and will bestow on him all my possessions. But if a suitor cannot answer my question I cut off his head and hang it on the battlements of the citadel.” The riddle she asks is, “What did the rose do to the cypress?”

‘Now, when my son heard this tale, he fell in love with that unseen girl, and he came to me lamenting and bewailing himself. Nothing that I could say had the slightest effect on him. I said: “Oh my son! if there must be fruit of this fancy of yours, I will lead forth a great army against King Quimks. If he will give you his daughter freely, well and good; and if not, I will ravage his kingdom and bring her away by force.” This plan did not please him; he said: “It is not right to lay a kingdom waste and to destroy a palace so that I may attain my desire. I will go alone; I will answer the riddle, and win her in this way.” At last, out of pity for him, I let him go. He reached the city of King Quimks. He was asked the riddle and could not give the true answer; and his head was cut off and hung upon the battlements. Then I mourned him in black raiment for forty days.

‘After this another and another of my sons were seized by the same desire, and in the end all my seven sons went, and all were killed. In grief for their death I have abandoned my throne, and I abide here in this desert, withholding my hand from all State business and wearing myself away in sorrow.’

Prince Tahmsp listened to this tale, and then the arrow of love for that unseen girl struck his heart also. Just at this moment of his ill-fate his people came up, and gathered round him like moths round a light. They brought him a horse, fleet as the breeze of the dawn; he set his willing foot in the stirrup of safety and rode off. As the days went by the thorn of love rankled in his heart, and he became the very example of lovers, and grew faint and feeble. At last his confidants searched his heart and lifted the veil from the face of his love, and then set the matter before his father, King Saman-ll-pMsh. ‘Your son, Prince Tahmsp, loves distractedly the Princess Mihr-afrkz, daughter of King Quimks, son of T+mks.’ Then they told the king all about her and her doings. A mist of sadness clouded the king’s mind, and he said to his son: ‘If this thing is so, I will in the first place send a courier with friendly letters to King Quimks, and will ask the hand of his daughter for you. I will send an abundance of gifts, and a string of camels laden with flashing stones and rubies of Badakhshn. In this way I will bring her and her suite, and I will give her to you to be your solace. But if King Quimks is unwilling to give her to you, I will pour a whirlwind of soldiers upon him, and I will bring to you, in this way, that most consequential of girls.' But the prince said that this plan would not be right, and that he would go himself, and would answer the riddle. Then the king's wise men said: 'This is a very weighty matter; it would be best to allow the prince to set out accompanied by some persons in whom you have confidence. Maybe he will repent and come back.' So King Saman ordered all preparations for the journey to be made, and then Prince Tahmsp took his leave and set out, accompanied by some of the courtiers, and taking with him a string of two-humped and raven-eyed camels laden with jewels, and gold, and costly stuffs.

By stage after stage, and after many days' journeying, he arrived at the city of King Quimks. What did he see? A towering citadel whose foot kept firm the wrinkled earth, and whose battlements touched the blue heaven. He saw hanging from its battlements many heads, but it had not the least effect upon him that these were heads of men of rank; he listened to no advice about laying aside his fancy, but rode up to the gate and on into the heart of the city. The place was so splendid that the eyes of the ages have never seen its like, and there, in an open square, he found a tent of crimson satin set up, and beneath it two jewelled drums with jewelled sticks. These drums were put there so that the suitors of the princess might announce their arrival by beating on them, after which some one would come and take them to the king's presence. The sight of the drums stirred the fire of Prince Tahmsp's love. He dismounted, and moved towards them; but his companions hurried after and begged him first to let them go and announce him to the king, and said that then, when they had put their possessions in a place of security, they would enter into the all-important matter of the princess. The prince, however, replied that he was there for one thing only; that his first duty was to beat the drums and announce himself as a suitor, when he would be taken, as such, to the king, who would then give him proper lodgment. So he struck upon the drums, and at once summoned an officer who took him to King Quimks.

When the king saw how very young the prince looked, and that he was still drinking of the fountain of wonder, he said: 'O youth! leave aside this fancy which my daughter has conceived in the pride of her beauty. No one can answer her riddle, and she has done to death many men who had had no pleasure in life nor tasted its charms. God forbid that your spring also should be ravaged by the autumn winds of martyrdom.' All his urgency, however, had no effect in making the prince withdraw. At length it was settled between them that three days should be given to pleasant hospitality and that then should follow what had to be said and done. Then the prince went to his own quarters and was treated as became his station.

King Quimks now sent for his daughter and for her mother, Gul-rukh, and talked to them. He said to Mihr-afrkz: ‘Listen to me, you cruel flirt! Why do you persist in this folly? Now there has come to ask your hand a prince of the east, so handsome that the very sun grows modest before the splendour of his face; he is rich, and he has brought gold and jewels, all for you, if you will marry him. A better husband you will not find.’

But all the arguments of father and mother were wasted, for her only answer was: ‘O my father! I have sworn to myself that I will not marry, even if a thousand years go by, unless someone answers my riddle, and that I will give myself to that man only who does answer it.’

The three days passed; then the riddle was asked: ‘What did the rose do to the cypress?’ The prince had an eloquent tongue, which could split a hair, and without hesitation he replied to her with a verse: ‘Only the Omnipotent has knowledge of secrets; if any man says, “I know” do not believe him.’

Then a servant fetched in the polluted, blue-eyed headsman, who asked: ‘Whose sun of life has come near its setting?’ took the prince by the arm, placed him upon the cloth of execution, and then, all merciless and stony-hearted, cut his head from his body and hung it on the battlements.

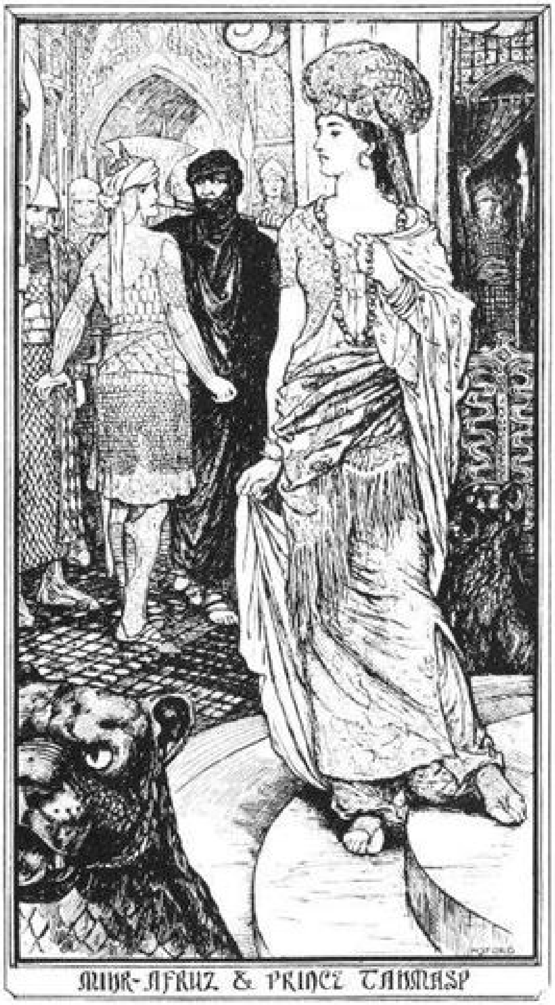

MIHR-AFRUZ & PRINCE TAHMASP

The news of the death of Prince Tahmsp plunged his father into despair and stupefaction. He mourned for him in black raiment for forty days; and then, a few days later, his second son, Prince Qams, extracted from him leave to go too; and he, also, was put to death. One son only now remained, the brave, eloquent, happy-natured Prince Alms-ruh-bakhsh. One day, when his father sat brooding over his lost children, Alms came before him and said: ‘O father mine! the daughter of King Quimks has done my two brothers to death; I wish to avenge them upon her.’ These words brought his father to tears. ‘O light of your father!’ he cried, ‘I have no one left but you, and now you ask me to let you go to your death.’

‘Dear father!’ pleaded the prince, ‘until I have lowered the pride of that beauty, and have set her here before you, I cannot settle down or indeed sit down off my feet.’

In the end he, too, got leave to go; but he went without a following and alone. Like his brothers, he made the long journey to the city of Quimks the son of T+mks; like them he saw the citadel, but he saw there the heads of Tahmsp and

Qams. He went about in the city, saw the tent and the drums, and then went out again to a village not far off. Here he found out a very old man who had a wife 120 years old, or rather more. Their lives were coming to their end, but they had never beheld face of child of their own. They were glad when the prince came to their house, and they dealt with him as with a son. He put all his belongings into their charge, and fastened his horse in their out-house. Then he asked them not to speak of him to anyone, and to keep his affairs secret. He exchanged his royal dress for another, and next morning, just as the sun looked forth from its eastern oratory, he went again into the city. He turned over in his mind without ceasing how he was to find out the meaning of the riddle, and to give them a right answer, and who could help him, and how to avenge his brothers. He wandered about the city, but heard nothing of service, for there was no one in all that land who understood the riddle of Princess Mihr-afrkz.

One day he thought he would go to her own palace and see if he could learn anything there, so he went out to her garden-house. It was a very splendid place, with a wonderful gateway, and walls like Alexander’s ramparts. Many gate-keepers were on guard, and there was no chance of passing them. His heart was full of bitterness, but he said to himself: ‘All will be well! it is here I shall get what I want.’ He went round outside the garden wall hoping to find a gap, and he made supplication in the Court of Supplications and prayed, ‘O Holder of the hand of the helpless! show me my way.’

While he prayed he bethought himself that he could get into the garden with a stream of inflowing water. He looked carefully round, fearing to be seen, stripped, slid into the stream and was carried within the great walls. There he hid himself till his loin cloth was dry. The garden was a very Eden, with running water amongst its lawns, with flowers and the lament of doves and the jug-jug of nightingales. It was a place to steal the senses from the brain, and he wandered about and saw the house, but there seemed to be no one there. In the forecourt was a royal seat of polished jasper, and in the middle of the platform was a basin of purest water that flashed like a mirror. He pleased himself with these sights for a while, and then went back to the garden and hid himself from the gardeners and passed the night. Next morning he put on the appearance of a madman and wandered about till he came to a lawn where several per+-faced girls were amusing themselves. On a throne, jewelled and overspread with silken stuffs, sat a girl the splendour of whose beauty lighted up the place, and whose ambergris and attar perfumed the whole air. ‘That must be Mihr-afrkz,’ he thought, ‘she is indeed lovely.’ Just then one of the attendants came to the water’s edge to fill a cup, and though the prince was in hiding, his face was reflected in the water. When she saw this image she was frightened, and let her cup fall into the stream, and thought, ‘Is it an angel, or a per+, or a man?’ Fear and trembling took hold of her, and she screamed as women scream. Then some of the other girls came and took her to the princess who asked: ‘What is the matter, pretty one?’

‘O princess! I went for water, and I saw an image, and I was afraid.’ So another girl went to the water and saw the same thing, and came back with the same story. The princess wished to see for herself; she rose and paced to the spot with the march of a prancing peacock. When she saw the image she said to her nurse: ‘Find out who is reflected in the water, and where he lives.’ Her words reached the prince’s ear, he lifted up his head; she saw him and beheld beauty such as she had never seen before. She lost a hundred hearts to him, and signed to her nurse to bring him to her presence. The prince let himself be persuaded to go with the nurse, but when the princess questioned him as to who he was and how he had got into her garden, he behaved like a man out of his mind — sometimes smiling, sometimes crying, and saying: ‘I am hungry,’ or words misplaced and random, civil mixed with the rude.

‘What a pity!’ said the princess, ‘he is mad!’ As she liked him she said: ‘He is my mad man; let no one hurt him.’ She took him to her house and told him not to go away, for that she would provide for all his wants. The prince thought, ‘It would be excellent if here, in her very house, I could get the answer to her riddle; but I must be silent, on pain of death.’

Now in the princess’s household there was a girl called Dil-arm; she it was who had first seen the image of the prince. She came to love him very much, and she spent day and night thinking how she could make her affection known to him. One day she escaped from the princess’s notice and went to the prince, and laid her head on his feet and said: ‘Heaven has bestowed on you beauty and charm. Tell me your secret; who are you, and how did you come here? I love you very much, and if you would like to leave this place I will go with you. I have wealth equal to the treasure of the miserly Qarkn.’ But the prince only made answer like a man distraught, and told her nothing. He said to himself, ‘God forbid that the veil should be taken in vain from my secret; that would indeed disgrace me.’ So, with streaming eyes and burning breast, Dil-arm arose and went to her house and lamented and fretted.

Now whenever the princess commanded the prince’s attendance, Dil-arm, of all the girls, paid him attention and waited on him best. The princess noticed this, and said: ‘O Dil-arm! you must take my madman into your charge and give him whatever he wants.’ This was the very thing Dil-arm had prayed for. A little later she took the prince into a private place and she made him take an oath of secrecy, and she herself took one and swore, ‘By Heaven! I will not tell your secret. Tell me all about yourself so that I may help you to get what you want.’

The prince now recognised in her words the perfume of true love, and he made compact with her. ‘O lovely girl! I want to know what the rose did to the cypress. Your mistress cuts off men’s heads because of this riddle; what is at the bottom of it, and why does she do it?’ Then Dil-arm answered: ‘If you will promise to marry me and to keep me always amongst those you favour, I will tell you all I know, and I will keep watch about the riddle.’

‘O lovely girl,’ rejoined he, ‘if I accomplish my purpose, so that I need no longer strive for it, I will keep my compact with you. When I have this woman in my power and have avenged my brothers, I will make you my solace.’

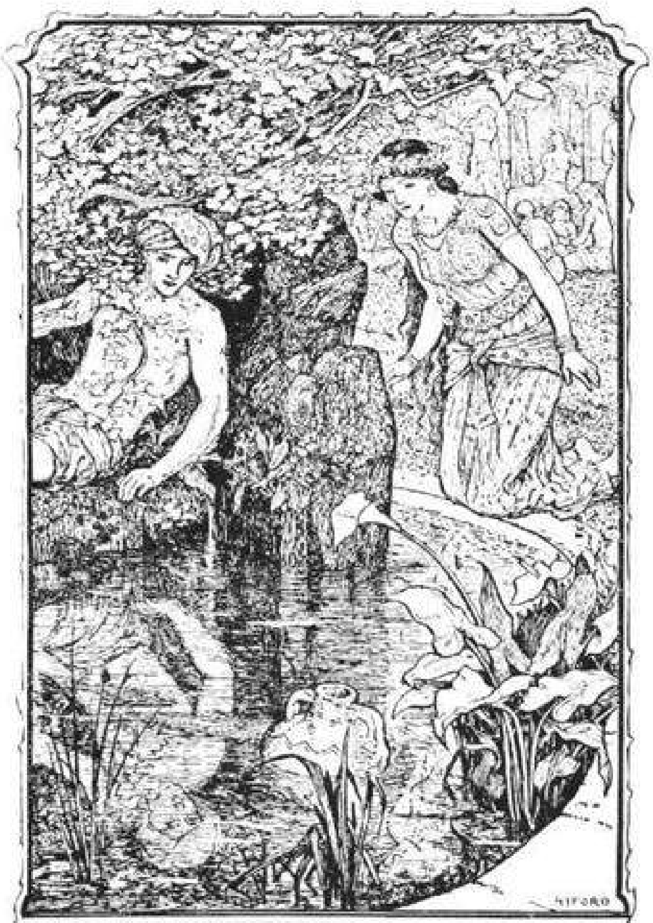

The Shadow in the Stream

‘O wealth of my life and source of my joy!’ responded Dil-arm, ‘I do not know what the rose did to the cypress; but so much I know that the person who told Mihr-afrkz about it is a negro whom she hides under her throne. He fled here from Wq of the Caucasus — it is there you must make inquiry; there is no other way of getting at the truth.’ On hearing these words, the prince said to his heart, ‘O my heart! your task will yet wear away much of your life.’

He fell into long and far thought, and Dil-arm looked at him and said: ‘O my life and my soul! do not be sad. If you would like this woman killed, I will put poison into her cup so that she will never lift her head from her drugged sleep again.’

‘O Dil-arm! such a vengeance is not manly. I shall not rest till I have gone to Wq of the Caucasus and have cleared up the matter.’ Then they repeated the agreement about their marriage, and bade one another good-bye.

The prince now went back to the village, and told the old man that he was setting out on a long journey, and begged him not to be anxious, and to keep safe the goods which had been entrusted to him.

The prince had not the least knowledge of the way to Wq of the Caucasus, and was cast down by the sense of his helplessness. He was walking along by his horse’s side when there appeared before him an old man of serene countenance, dressed in green and carrying a staff, who resembled Khizr. The prince thanked heaven, laid the hands of reverence on his breast and salaamed. The old man returned the greeting graciously, and asked: ‘How fare you? Whither are you bound? You look like a traveller.’

‘O revered saint! I am in this difficulty: I do not know the way to Wq of the Caucasus.’ The old man of good counsel looked at the young prince and said: ‘Turn back from this dangerous undertaking. Do not go; choose some other task! If you had a hundred lives you would not bring one out safe from this journey.’ But his words had no effect on the prince’s resolve. ‘What object have you,’ the old man asked, ‘in thus consuming your life?’

‘I have an important piece of business to do, and only this journey makes it possible. I must go; I pray you, in God’s name, tell me the way.’

When the saint saw that the prince was not to be moved, he said: ‘Learn and know, O youth! that Wq of Qf is in the Caucasus and is a dependency of it. In it there are jins, demons, and per+s. You must go on along this road till it forks into three; take neither the right hand nor the left, but the middle path. Follow this for a day and a night. Then you will come to a column on which is a marble slab inscribed with Cufic characters. Do what is written there; beware of disobedience.’ Then he gave his good wishes for the journey and his blessing, and the prince kissed his feet, said good-bye, and, with thanks to the Causer of Causes, took the road.

After a day and a night he saw the column rise in silent beauty to the heavens. Everything was as the wise old man had said it would be, and the prince, who was skilled in all tongues, read the following Cufic inscription: ‘O travellers! be it known to you that this column has been set up with its tablet to give true directions about these roads. If a man would pass his life in ease and pleasantness, let him take the right-hand path. If he take the left, he will have some trouble, but he will reach his goal without much delay. Woe to him who chooses the middle path! if he had a thousand lives he would not save one; it is very hazardous; it leads to the Caucasus, and is an endless road. Beware of it!’

The prince read and bared his head and lifted his hands in supplication to Him who has no needs, and prayed, ‘O Friend of the traveller! I, Thy servant, come to Thee for succour. My purpose lies in the land of Qf and my road is full of peril. Lead me by it.’ Then he took a handful of earth and cast it on his collar, and said: ‘O earth! be thou my grave; and O vest! be thou my winding-sheet!’ Then he took the middle road and went along it, day after day, with many a silent prayer, till he saw trees rise from the weary waste of sand. They grew in a garden, and he went up to the gate and found it a slab of beautifully worked marble, and that near it there lay sleeping, with his head on a stone, a negro whose face was so black that it made darkness round him. His upper lip, arched like an eyebrow, curved upwards to his nostrils and his lower hung down like a camel’s. Four millstones formed his shield, and on a box-tree close by hung his giant sword. His loin-cloth was fashioned of twelve skins of beasts, and was bound round his waist by a chain of which each link was as big as an elephant’s thigh.

The prince approached and tied up his horse near the negro’s head. Then he let fall the Bismillh from his lips, entered the garden and walked through it till he came to the private part, delighting in the great trees, the lovely verdure, and the flowery borders. In the inner garden there were very many deer. These signed to him with eye and foot to go back, for that this was enchanted ground; but he did not understand them, and thought their pretty gestures were a welcome. After a while he reached a palace which had a porch more splendid than Cæsar’s, and was built of gold and silver bricks. In its midst was a high seat, overlaid with fine carpets, and into it opened eight doors, each having opposite to it a marble basin.

Banishing care, Prince Alms walked on through the garden, when suddenly a window opened and a girl, who was lovely enough to make the moon writhe with jealousy, put out her head. She lost her heart to the good looks of the prince, and sent her nurse to fetch him so that she might learn where he came from and how he had got into her private garden where even lions and wolves did not venture. The nurse went, and was struck with amazement at the sun-like radiance of his face; she salaamed and said: ‘O youth! welcome! the lady of the garden calls you; come!’ He went with her and into a palace which was like a house in Paradise, and saw seated on the royal carpets of the throne a girl whose brilliance shamed the shining sun. He salaamed; she rose, took him by the hand and placed him near her. ‘O young man! who are you? where do you come from? How did you get into this garden?’ He told her his story from beginning to end, and Lady Lat+fa replied: ‘This is folly! It will make you a vagabond of the earth, and lead you to destruction. Come, cease such talk! No one can go to the Caucasus. Stay with me and be thankful, for here is a throne which you can share with me, and in my society you can enjoy my wealth. I will do whatever you wish; I will bring here King Quimks and his daughter, and you can deal with them as you will.’

‘O Lady Lat+fa,’ he said, ‘I have made a compact with heaven not to sit down off my feet till I have been to Wq of Qf and have cleared up this matter, and have taken Mihr-afrkz from her father, as brave men take, and have put her in prison. When I have done all this I will come back to you in state and with a great following, and I will marry you according to the law.’ Lady Lat+fa argued and urged her wishes, but in vain; the prince was not to be moved. Then she called to the cupbearers for new wine, for she thought that when his head was hot with it he might consent to stay. The pure, clear wine was brought; she filled a cup and gave to him. He said: ‘O most enchanting sweetheart! it is the rule for the host to drink first and then the guest.’ So to make him lose his head, she drained the cup; then filled it again and gave him. He drank it off, and she took a lute from one of the singers and played upon it with skill which witched away the sense of all who heard. But it was all in vain; three days passed in such festivities, and on the fourth the prince said: ‘O joy of my eyes! I beg now that you will bid me farewell, for my way is long and the fire of your love darts flame into the harvest of my heart. By heaven’s grace I may accomplish my purpose, and, if so, I will come back to you.’

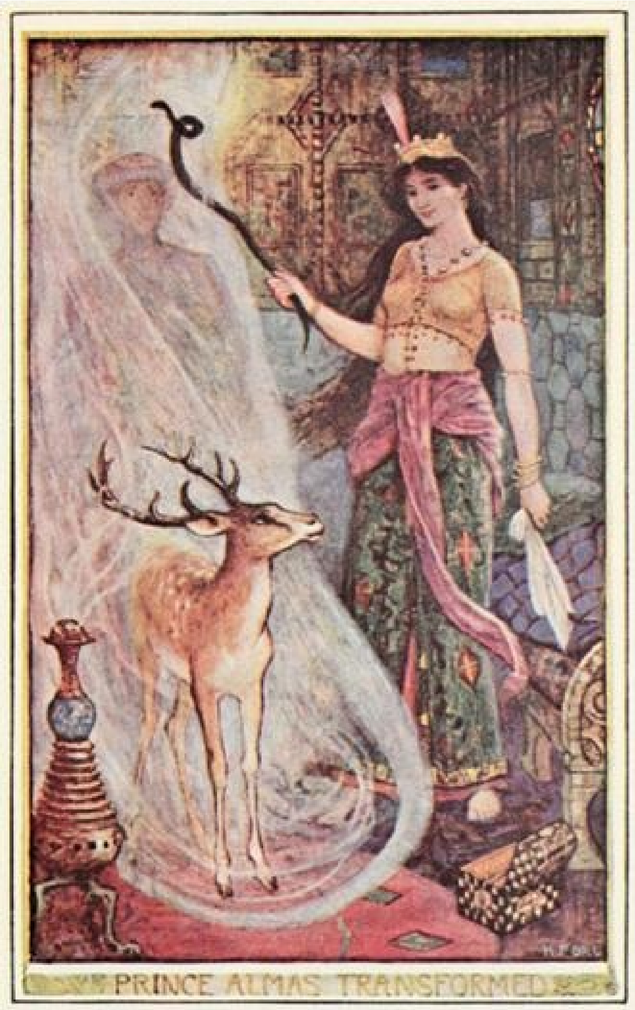

PRINCE ALMAS TRANSFORMED

Now she saw that she could not in any way change his resolve, she told her nurse to bring a certain casket which contained, she said, something exhilarating which would help the prince on his journey. The box was brought, and she divided off a portion of what was within and gave it to the prince to eat. Then, and while he was all unaware, she put forth her hand to a stick fashioned like a snake; she said some words over it and struck him so sharply on the shoulder that he cried out; then he made a pirouette and found that he was a deer.

When he knew what had been done to him he thought, ‘All the threads of affliction are gathered together; I have lost my last chance!’ He tried to escape, but the magician sent for her goldsmith, who, coming, overlaid the deer-horns with gold and jewels. The kerchief which that day she had had in her hand was then tied round its neck, and this freed it from her attentions.

The prince-deer now bounded into the garden and at once sought some way of escape. It found none, and it joined the other deer, which soon made it their leader. Now, although the prince had been transformed into the form of a deer, he kept his man’s heart and mind. He said to himself, ‘Thank heaven that the

Lady Lat+fa has changed me into this shape, for at least deer are beautiful.’ He remained for some time living as a deer amongst the rest, but at length resolved that an end to such a life must be put in some way. He looked again for some place by which he could get out of the magic garden. Following round the wall he reached a lower part; he remembered the Divine Names and flung himself over, saying, ‘Whatever happens is by the will of God.’ When he looked about he found that he was in the very same place he had jumped from; there was the palace, there the garden and the deer! Eight times he leaped over the wall and eight times found himself where he had started from; but after the ninth leap there was a change, there was a palace and there was a garden, but the deer were gone.

Presently a girl of such moon-like beauty opened a window that the prince lost to her a hundred hearts. She was delighted with the beautiful deer, and cried to her nurse: ‘Catch it! if you will I will give you this necklace, every pearl of which is worth a kingdom.’ The nurse coveted the pearls, but as she was three hundred years old she did not know how she could catch a deer. However, she went down into the garden and held out some grass, but when she went near the creature ran away. The girl watched with great excitement from the palace window, and called: ‘O nurse, if you don’t catch it, I will kill you!’ ‘I am killing myself,’ shouted back the old woman. The girl saw that nurse tottering along and went down to help, marching with the gait of a prancing peacock. When she saw the gilded horns and the kerchief she said: ‘It must be accustomed to the hand, and be some royal pet!’ The prince had it in mind that this might be another magician who could give him some other shape, but still it seemed best to allow himself to be caught. So he played about the girl and let her catch him by the neck. A leash was brought, fruits were given, and it was caressed with delight. It was taken to the palace and tied at the foot of the Lady Jam+la’s raised seat, but she ordered a longer cord to be brought so that it might be able to jump up beside her.

When the nurse went to fix the cord she saw tears falling from its eyes, and that it was dejected and sorrowful. ‘O Lady Jam+la! this is a wonderful deer, it is crying; I never saw a deer cry before.’ Jam+la darted down like a flash of lightning, and saw that it was so. It rubbed its head on her feet and then shook it so sadly that the girl cried for sympathy. She patted it and said: ‘Why are you sad, my heart? Why do you cry, my soul? Is it because I have caught you? I love you better than my own life.’ But, spite of her comforting, it cried the more. Then Jam+la said: ‘Unless I am mistaken, this is the work of my wicked sister Lat+fa, who by magic art turns servants of God into beasts of the field.’ At these words the deer uttered sounds, and laid its head on her feet. Then Jam+la was sure it was a man, and said: ‘Be comforted, I will restore you to your own shape.’ She bathed herself and ordered the deer to be bathed, put on clean raiment, called for a box which stood in an alcove, opened it and gave a portion of what was in it to the deer to eat. Then she slipped her hand under her carpet and produced a stick to which she said something. She struck the deer hard, it pirouetted and became Prince Alms.

The broidered kerchief and the jewels lay upon the ground. The prince prostrated himself in thanks to heaven and Jam+la, and said: ‘O delicious person! O Chinese Venus! how shall I excuse myself for giving you so much trouble? With what words can I thank you?’ Then she called for a clothes-wallet and chose out a royal dress of honour. Her attendants dressed him in it, and brought him again before the tender-hearted lady. She turned to him a hundred hearts, took his hand and seated him beside her, and said: ‘O youth! tell me truly who you are and where you come from, and how you fell into the power of my sister.’

Even when he was a deer the prince had much admired Jam+la; now he thought her a thousand times more lovely than before. He judged that in truth alone was safety, and so told her his whole story. Then she asked: ‘O Prince Alms-ruh-bakhsh, do you still wish so much to make this journey to Wq of Qf? What hope is there in it? The road is dangerous even near here, and this is not yet the borderland of the Caucasus. Come, give it up! It is a great risk, and to go is not wise. It would be a pity for a man like you to fall into the hands of jins and demons. Stay with me, and I will do whatever you wish.’

‘O most delicious person!’ he answered, ‘you are very generous, and the choice of my life lies in truth in your hands; but I beg one favour of you. If you love me, so do I too love you. If you really love me, do not forbid me to make this journey, but help me as far as you can. Then it may be that I shall succeed, and if I return with my purpose fulfilled I will marry you according to the law, and take you to my own country, and we will spend the rest of our lives together in pleasure and good companionship. Help me, if you can, and give me your counsel.’

‘O very stuff of my life,’ replied Jam+la, ‘I will give you things that are not in kings’ treasuries, and which will be of the greatest use to you. First, there are the bow and arrows of his Reverence the Prophet Salih. Secondly, there is the Scorpion of Solomon (on whom be peace), which is a sword such as no king has; steel and stone are one to it; if you bring it down on a rock it will not be injured, and it will cleave whatever you strike. Thirdly, there is the dagger which the sage T+mks himself made; this is most useful, and the man who wears it would not bend under seven camels’ loads. What you have to do first is to get to the home of the S+murgh, and to make friends with him. If he favours you, he will take you to Wq of Qf; if not, you will never get there, for seven seas are on the way, and they are such seas that if all the kings of the earth, and all their vaz+rs, and all their wise men considered for a thousand years, they would not be able to cross them.'

'O most delicious person! where is the S+murgh's home? How shall I get there?'

'O new fruit of life! you must just do what I tell you, and you must use your eyes and your brains, for if you don't you will find yourself at the place of the negroes, who are a bloodthirsty set; and God forbid they should lay hands on your precious person.'

Then she took the bow and quiver of arrows, the sword, and the dagger out of a box, and the prince let fall a *Bismillh*, and girt them all on. Then Jam+la of the houri-face, produced two saddle-bags of ruby-red silk, one filled with roasted fowl and little cakes, and the other with stones of price. Next she gave him a horse as swift as the breeze of the morning, and she said: 'Accept all these things from me; ride till you come to a rising ground, at no great distance from here, where there is a spring. It is called the Place of Gifts, and you must stay there one night. There you will see many wild beasts — lions, tigers, leopards, apes, and so on. Before you get there you must capture some game. On the long road beyond there dwells a lion-king, and if other beasts did not fear him they would ravage the whole country and let no one pass. The lion is a red transgressor, so when he comes rise and do him reverence; take a cloth and rub the dust and earth from his face, then set the game you have taken before him, well cleansed, and lay the hands of respect on your breast. When he wishes to eat, take your knife and cut pieces of the meat and set them before him with a bow. In this way you will enfold that lion-king in perfect friendship, and he will be most useful to you, and you will be safe from molestation by the negroes. When you go on from the Place of Gifts, be sure you do not take the right-hand road; take the left, for the other leads by the negro castle, which is known as the Place of Clashing Swords, and where there are forty negro captains each over three thousand or four thousand more. Their chief is Taram-tq. Further on than this is the home of the S+murgh.'

Having stored these things in the prince's memory, she said: 'You will see everything happen just as I have said.' Then she escorted him a little way; they parted, and she went home to mourn his absence.

Prince Alms, relying on the Causer of Causes, rode on to the Place of Gifts and dismounted at the platform. Everything happened just as Jam+la had foretold; when one or two watches of the night had passed, he saw that the open ground around him was full of such stately and splendid animals as he had never seen before. By-and-by, they made way for a wonderfully big lion, which was eighty yards from nose to tail-tip, and was a magnificent creature. The prince advanced and saluted it; it proudly drooped its head and forelocks and paced to the platform. Seventy or eighty others were with it, and now encircled it at a little distance. It laid its right paw over its left, and the prince took the kerchief Jam+la had given him for the purpose, and rubbed the dust and earth from its face; then brought forward the game he had prepared, and crossing his hands respectfully on his breast stood waiting before it. When it wished for food he cut off pieces of the meat and put them in its mouth. The serving lions also came near and the prince would have stayed his hand, but the king-lion signed to him to feed them too. This he did, laying the meat on the platform. Then the king-lion beckoned the prince to come near and said: ‘Sleep at ease; my guards will watch.’ So, surrounded by the lion-guard, he slept till dawn, when the king-lion said good-bye, and gave him a few of his own hairs and said: ‘When you are in any difficulty, burn one of these and I will be there.’ Then it went off into the jungle.

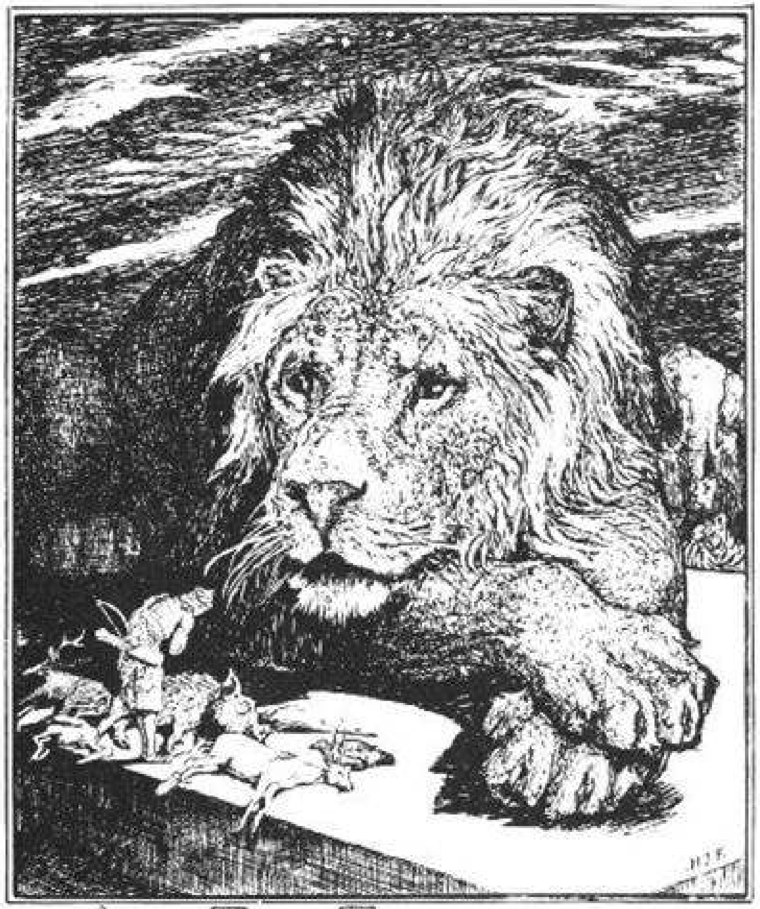

PRINCE ALMAS BRINGS GAME TO THE KING LION

Prince Alms immediately started; he rode till he came to the parting of the ways. He remembered quite well that the right-hand way was short and dangerous, but he bethought himself too that whatever was written on his forehead would happen, and took the forbidden road. By-and-by he saw a castle, and knew from what Jam+la had told him that it was the Place of Clashing Swords. He would have liked to go back by the way he had come, but courage forbade, and he said, ‘What has been preordained from eternity will happen to me,’ and went on towards the castle. He was thinking of tying his horse to a tree which grew near the gate when a negro came out and spied him. ‘Ha!’ said the wretch to himself, ‘this is good; Taram-tq has not eaten man-meat for a long time, and is craving for some. I will take this creature to him.’ He took hold of the prince’s reins, and said: ‘Dismount, man-child! Come to my master. He has wanted to eat man-meat this long time back.’ ‘What nonsense are you saying?’ said the prince, and other such words. When the negro understood that he was being abused, he cried: ‘Come along! I will put you into such a state that the birds of the air will weep for you.’ Then the prince drew the Scorpion of Solomon and struck him —

struck him on the leathern belt and shore him through so that the sword came out on the other side. He stood upright for a little while, muttered some words, put out his hand to seize the prince, then fell in two and surrendered his life.

There was water close at hand, and the prince made his ablution, and then said: ‘O my heart! a wonderful task lies upon you.’ A second negro came out of the fort, and seeing what had been done, went back and told his chief. Others wished to be doubled, and went out, and of every one the Scorpion of Solomon made two. Then Taram-tq sent for a giant negro named Chil-mq, who in the day of battle was worth three hundred, and said to him: ‘I shall thank you to fetch me that man.’

Chil-mq went out, tall as a tower, and bearing a shield of eight millstones, and as he walked he shouted: ‘Ho! blunder-head! by what right do you come to our country and kill our people? Come! make two of me.’ As the prince was despicable in his eyes, he tossed aside his club and rushed to grip him with his hands. He caught him by the collar, tucked him under his arm and set off with him to Taram-tq. But the prince drew the dagger of T+mks and thrust it upwards through the giant’s arm-pit, for its full length. This made Chil-mq drop him and try to pick up his club; but when he stooped the mighty sword shore him through at the waist.

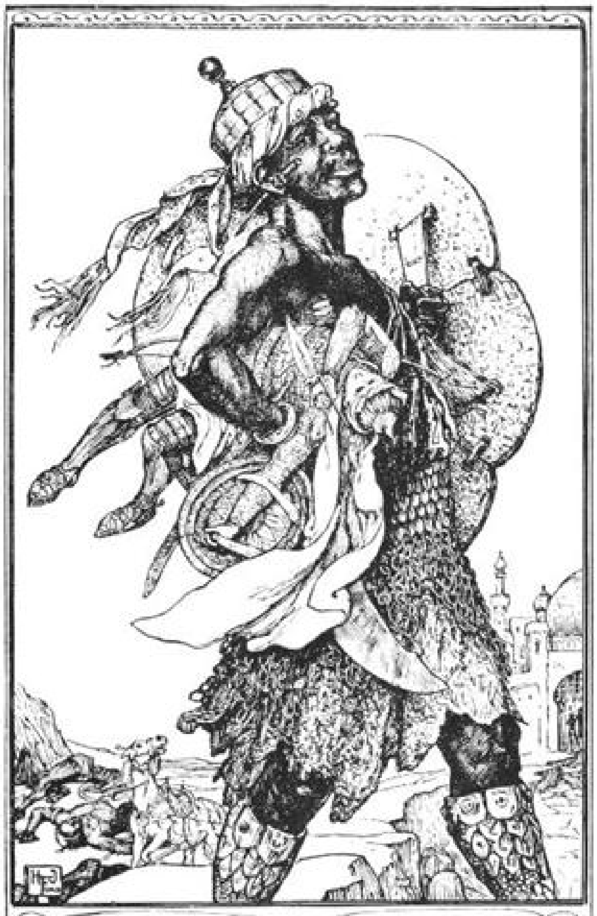

Chil-maq carries off Almas

When news of his champion’s death reached Taram-tq he put himself at the head of an army of his negroes and led them forth. Many fell before the magic sword, and the prince laboured on in spite of weakness and fatigue till he was almost worn out. In a moment of respite from attack he struck his fire-steel and burned a hair of the king-lion; and he had just succeeded in this when the negroes charged again and all but took him prisoner. Suddenly from behind the distant veil of the desert appeared an army of lions led by their king. ‘What brings these scourges of heaven here?’ cried the negroes. They came roaring up, and put fresh life into the prince. He fought on, and when he struck on a belt the wearer fell in two, and when on a head he cleft to the waist. Then the ten thousand mighty lions joined the fray and tore in pieces man and horse.

Taram-tq was left alone; he would have retired into his fort, but the prince shouted: ‘Whither away, accursed one? Are you fleeing before me?’ At these defiant words the chief shouted back, ‘Welcome, man! Come here and I will soften you to wax beneath my club.’ Then he hurled his club at the prince’s head, but it fell harmless because the prince had quickly spurred his horse forward. The chief, believing he had hit him, was looking down for him, when all at once he came up behind and cleft him to the waist and sent him straight to hell.

The king-lion greatly praised the dashing courage of Prince Alms. They went together into the Castle of Clashing Swords and found it adorned and fitted in princely fashion. In it was a daughter of Taram-tq, still a child. She sent a message to Prince Alms saying, ‘O king of the world! choose this slave to be your handmaid. Keep her with you; where you go, there she will go!’ He sent for her and she kissed his feet and received the Mussulman faith at his hands. He told her he was going a long journey on important business, and that when he came back he would take her and her possessions to his own country, but that for the present she must stay in the castle. Then he made over the fort and all that was in it to the care of the lion, saying: ‘Guard them, brother! let no one lay a hand on them.’ He said good-bye, chose a fresh horse from the chief’s stable and once again took the road.

After travelling many stages and for many days, he reached a plain of marvellous beauty and refreshment. It was carpeted with flowers — roses, tulips, and clover; it had lovely lawns, and amongst them running water. This choicest place of earth filled him with wonder. There was a tree such as he had never seen before; its branches were alike, but it bore flowers and fruit of a thousand kinds. Near it a reservoir had been fashioned of four sorts of stone — touchstone, pure stone, marble, and loadstone. In and out of it flowed water like attar. The prince felt sure this must be the place of the S+murgh; he dismounted, turned his horse loose to graze, ate some of the food Jam+la had given him, drank of the stream and lay down to sleep.

He was still dozing when he was aroused by the neighing and pawing of his horse. When he could see clearly he made out a mountain-like dragon whose heavy breast crushed the stones beneath it into putty. He remembered the Thousand Names of God and took the bow of Salih from its case and three arrows from their quiver. He bound the dagger of T+mks firmly to his waist and hung the Scorpion of Solomon round his neck. Then he set an arrow on the string and released it with such force that it went in at the monster’s eye right up to the notch. The dragon writhed on itself, and belched forth an evil vapour, and beat the ground with its head till the earth quaked. Then the prince took a second arrow and shot into its throat. It drew in its breath and would have sucked the prince into its maw, but when he was within striking distance he drew his sword and, having committed himself to God, struck a mighty blow which cut the creature’s neck down to the gullet. The foul vapour of the beast and horror at its strangeness now overcame the prince, and he fainted. When he came to himself he found that he was drenched in the gore of the dead monster. He rose and thanked God for his deliverance.

The nest of the S+murgh was in the wonderful tree above him, and in it were young birds; the parents were away searching for food. They always told the children, before they left them, not to put their heads out of the nest; but, to-day, at the noise of the fight below, they looked down and so saw the whole affair. By the time the dragon had been killed they were very hungry and set up a clamour for food. The prince therefore cut up the dragon and fed them with it, bit by bit, till they had eaten the whole. He then washed himself and lay down to rest, and he was still asleep when the S+murgh came home. As a rule, the young birds raised a clamour of welcome when their parents came near, but on this day they were so full of dragon-meat that they had no choice, they had to go to sleep.

As they flew nearer, the old birds saw the prince lying under the tree and no sign of life in the nest. They thought that the misfortune which for so many earlier years had befallen them had again happened and that their nestlings had disappeared. They had never been able to find out the murderer, and now suspected the prince. ‘He has eaten our children and sleeps after it; he must die,’ said the father-bird, and flew back to the hills and clawed up a huge stone which he meant to let fall on the prince’s head. But his mate said, ‘Let us look into the nest first for to kill an innocent person would condemn us at the Day of Resurrection.’ They flew nearer, and presently the young birds woke and cried, ‘Mother, what have you brought for us?’ and they told the whole story of the fight, and of how they were alive only by the favour of the young man under the tree, and of his cutting up the dragon and of their eating it. The mother-bird then remarked, ‘Truly, father! you were about to do a strange thing, and a terrible sin has been averted from you.’ Then the S+murgh flew off to a distance with the great stone and dropped it. It sank down to the very middle of the earth.

Coming back, the S+murgh saw that a little sunshine fell upon the prince through the leaves, and it spread its wings and shaded him till he woke. When he got up he salaamed to it, who returned his greeting with joy and gratitude, and caressed him and said: ‘O youth, tell me true! who are you, and where are you going? And how did you cross that pitiless desert where never yet foot of man had trod?’ The prince told his story from beginning to end, and finished by saying: ‘Now it is my heart’s wish that you should help me to get to Wq of the Caucasus. Perhaps, by your favour, I shall accomplish my task and avenge my brothers.’ In reply the S+murgh first blessed the deliverer of his children, and then went on: ‘What you have done no child of man has ever done before; you assuredly have a claim on all my help, for every year up till now that dragon has come here and has destroyed my nestlings, and I have never been able to find who was the murderer and to avenge myself. By God’s grace you have removed my children’s powerful foe. I regard you as a child of my own. Stay with me; I will give you everything you desire, and I will establish a city here for you, and will furnish it with every requisite; I will give you the land of the Caucasus, and will make its princes subject to you. Give up the journey to Wq, it is full of risk, and the jins there will certainly kill you.’ But nothing could move the prince, and seeing this the bird went on: ‘Well, so be it! When you wish to set forth you must go into the plain and take seven head of deer, and must make water-tight bags of their hides and keep their flesh in seven portions. Seven seas lie on our way — I will carry you over them; but if I have not food and drink we shall fall into the sea and be drowned. When I ask for it you must put food and water into my mouth. So we shall make the journey safely.’

The prince did all as he was told, then they took flight; they crossed the seven seas, and at each one the prince fed the S+murgh. When they alighted on the shore of the last sea, it said: ‘O my son! there lies your road; follow it to the city. Take thee three feathers of mine, and, if you are in a difficulty, burn one and I will be with you in the twinkling of an eye.’

The prince walked on in solitude till he reached the city. He went in and wandered about through all quarters, and through bazaars and lanes and squares, in the least knowing from whom he could ask information about the riddle of Mihr-afrkz. He spent seven days thinking it over in silence. From the first day of his coming he had made friends with a young cloth-merchant, and a great liking had sprung up between them. One day he said abruptly to his companion: ‘O dear friend! I wish you would tell me what the rose did to the cypress, and what the sense of the riddle is.’ The merchant started, and exclaimed: ‘If there were not brotherly affection between us, I would cut off your head for asking me this!’ ‘If you meant to kill me,’ retorted the prince, ‘you would still have first to tell me what I want to know.’ When the merchant saw that the prince was in deadly earnest, he said: ‘If you wish to hear the truth of the matter you must wait upon our king. There is no other way; no one else will tell you. I have a well-wisher at the Court, named Farrkkh-fl, and will introduce you to him.’ ‘That would be excellent,’ cried the prince. A meeting was arranged between Farrkkh-fl and Alms, and then the am+r took him to the king’s presence and introduced him as a stranger and traveller who had come from afar to sit in the shadow of King Sinaubar.

Now the S+murgh had given the prince a diamond weighing thirty misqls, and he offered this to the king, who at once recognised its value, and asked where it had been obtained. ‘I, your slave, once had riches and state and power; there are many such stones in my country. On my way here I was plundered at the Castle of Clashing Swords, and I saved this one thing only, hidden in my bathing-cloth.’ In return for the diamond, King Sinaubar showered gifts of much greater value, for he remembered that it was the last possession of the prince. He showed the utmost kindness and hospitality, and gave his vaz+r orders to instal the prince in the royal guest-house. He took much pleasure in his visitor’s society; they were together every day and spent the time most pleasantly. Several times the king said: ‘Ask me for something, that I may give it you.’ One day he so pressed to know what would pleasure the prince, that the latter said: ‘I have only one wish, and that I will name to you in private.’ The king at once commanded every one to withdraw, and then Prince Alms said: ‘The desire of my life is to know what the rose did to the cypress, and what meaning there is in the words.’ The king was astounded. ‘In God’s name! if anyone else had said that to me I should have cut off his head instantly.’ The prince heard this in silence, and presently so beguiled the king with pleasant talk that to kill him was impossible.

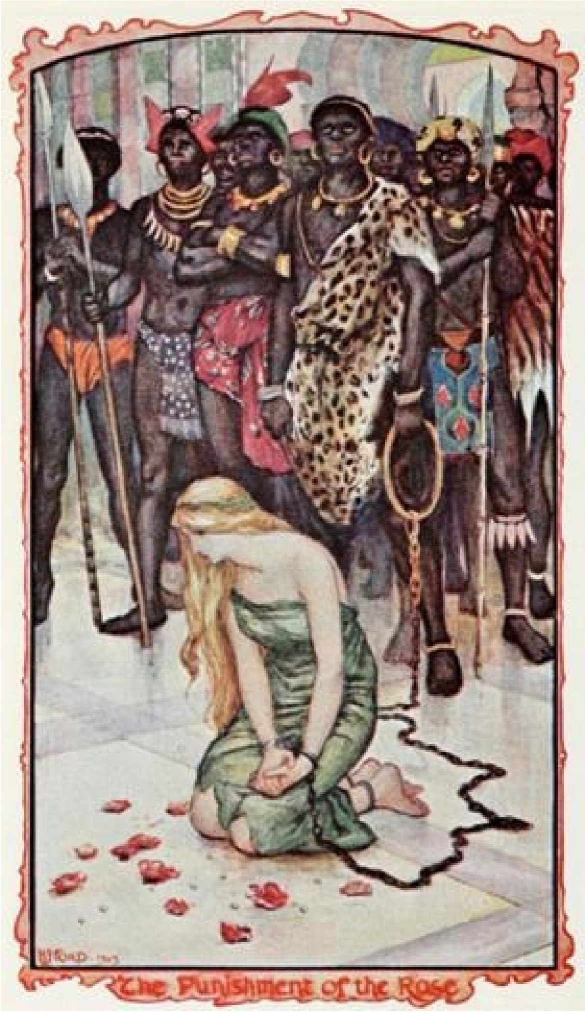

The Punishment of the Rose

Time flew by, the king again and again begged the prince to ask some gift of him, and always received this same reply: ‘I wish for your Majesty’s welfare, what more can I desire?’ One night there was a banquet, and cupbearers carried round gold and silver cups of sparkling wine, and singers with sweetest voices contended for the prize. The prince drank from the king’s own cup, and when his head was hot with wine he took a lute from one of the musicians and placed himself on the carpet-border and sang and sang till he witched away the sense of all who listened. Applause and compliments rang from every side. The king filled his cup and called the prince and gave it to him and said: ‘Name your wish! it is yours.’ The prince drained off the wine and answered: ‘O king of the world! learn and know that I have only one aim in life, and this is to know what the rose did to the cypress.’

‘Never yet,’ replied the king, ‘has any man come out from that question alive. If this is your only wish, so be it; I will tell you. But I will do this on one condition only, namely, that when you have heard you will submit yourself to death.’ To this the prince agreed, and said: ‘I set my foot firmly on this compact.’

The king then gave an order to an attendant; a costly carpet overlaid with European velvet was placed near him, and a dog was led in by a golden and jewelled chain and set upon the splendid stuffs. A band of fair girls came in and stood round it in waiting.

Then, with ill words, twelve negroes dragged in a lovely woman, fettered on hands and feet and meanly dressed, and they set her down on the bare floor. She was extraordinarily beautiful, and shamed the glorious sun. The king ordered a hundred stripes to be laid on her tender body; she sighed a long sigh. Food was called for and table-cloths were spread. Delicate meats were set before the dog, and water given it in a royal cup of Chinese crystal. When it had eaten its fill, its leavings were placed before the lovely woman and she was made to eat of them. She wept and her tears were pearls; she smiled and her lips shed roses. Pearls and flowers were gathered up and taken to the treasury.

‘Now,’ said the king, ‘you have seen these things and your purpose is fulfilled.’ ‘Truly,’ said the prince, ‘I have seen things which I have not understood; what do they mean, and what is the story of them? Tell me and kill me.’

Then said the king: ‘The woman you see there in chains is my wife; she is called Gul, the Rose, and I am Sinaubar, the Cypress. One day I was hunting and became very thirsty. After great search I discovered a well in a place so secret that neither bird nor beast nor man could find it without labour. I was alone, I took my turban for a rope and my cap for a bucket. There was a good deal of water, but when I let down my rope, something caught it, and I could not in any way draw it back. I shouted down into the well: “O! servant of God! whoever you are, why do you deal unfairly with me? I am dying of thirst, let go! in God’s name.” A cry came up in answer, “O servant of God! we have been in the well a long time; in God’s name get us out!” After trying a thousand schemes, I drew up two blind women. They said they were per+s, and that their king had blinded them in his anger and had left them in the well alone.

‘“Now,” they said, “if you will get us the cure for our blindness we will devote ourselves to your service, and will do whatever you wish.”

‘“What is the cure for your blindness?”

‘“Not far from this place,” they said, “a cow comes up from the great sea to graze; a little of her dung would cure us. We should be eternally your debtors. Do not let the cow see you, or she will assuredly kill you.”

‘With renewed strength and spirit I went to the shore. There I watched the cow come up from the sea, graze, and go back. Then I came out of my hiding, took a little of her dung and conveyed it to the per+s. They rubbed it on their eyes, and by the Divine might saw again.

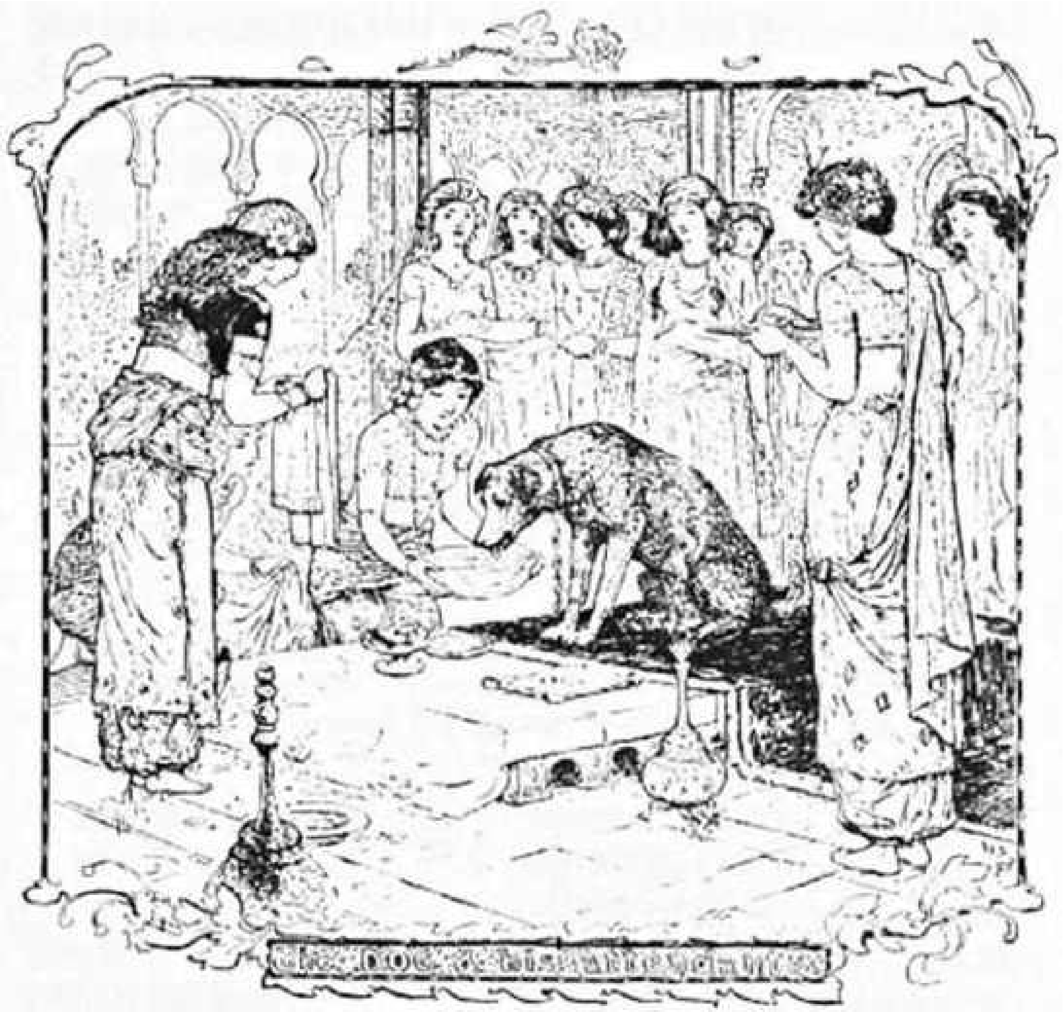

‘They thanked heaven and me, and then considered what they could do to show their gratitude to me. “Our per+-king,” they said, “has a daughter whom he keeps under his own eye and thinks the most lovely girl on earth. In good sooth, she has not her equal! Now we will get you into her house and you must win her heart, and if she has an inclination for another, you must drive it out and win her for yourself. Her mother loves her so dearly that she has no ease but in her presence, and she will give her to no one in marriage. Teach her to love you so that she cannot exist without you. But if the matter becomes known to her mother she will have you burned in the fire. Then you must beg, as a last favour, that your body may be anointed with oil so that you may burn the more quickly and be spared torture. If the per+-king allows this favour, we two will manage to be your anointers, and we will put an oil on you such that if you were a thousand years in the fire not a trace of burning would remain.”

‘In the end the two per+s took me to the girl’s house. I saw her sleeping daintily. She was most lovely, and I was so amazed at the perfection of her beauty that I stood with senses lost, and did not know if she were real or a dream. When at last I saw that she was a real girl, I returned thanks that I, the runner, had come to my goal, and that I, the seeker, had found my treasure.

‘When the per+ opened her eyes she asked in affright: “Who are you? Have you come to steal? How did you get here? Be quick! save yourself from this whirlpool of destruction, for the demons and per+s who guard me will wake and seize you.”

‘But love’s arrow had struck me deep, and the girl, too, looked kindly on me. I could not go away. For some months I remained hidden in her house. We did not dare to let her mother know of our love. Sometimes the girl was very sad and fearful lest her mother should come to know. One day her father said to her: “Sweetheart, for some time I have noticed that your beauty is not what it was. How is this? Has sickness touched you? Tell me that I may seek a cure.” Alas! there was now no way of concealing the mingled delight and anguish of our love; from secret it became known. I was put in prison and the world grew dark to my rose, bereft of her lover.

‘The per+-king ordered me to be burnt, and said: “Why have you, a man, done this perfidious thing in my house?” His demons and per+s collected ambar-wood and made a pile, and would have set me on it, when I remembered the word of life which the two per+s I had rescued had breathed into my ear, and I asked that my body might be rubbed with oil to release me the sooner from torture. This was allowed, and those two contrived to be the anointers. I was put into the fire and it was kept up for seven days and nights. By the will of the Great King it left no trace upon me. At the end of a week the per+-king ordered the ashes to be cast upon the dust-heap, and I was found alive and unharmed.

‘Per+s who had seen Gul consumed by her love for me now interceded with the king, and said: “It is clear that your daughter’s fortunes are bound up with his, for the fire has not hurt him. It is best to give him the girl, for they love one another. He is King of Wq of Qf, and you will find none better.”

‘To this the king agreed, and made formal marriage between Gul and me. You now know the price I paid for this faithless creature. O prince! remember our compact.’

‘I remember,’ said the prince; ‘but tell me what brought Queen Gul to her present pass?’

‘One night,’ continued King Sinaubar, ‘I was aroused by feeling Gul’s hands and feet, deadly cold, against my body. I asked her where she had been to get so cold, and she said she had had to go out. Next morning, when I went to my stable I saw that two of my horses, Windfoot and Tiger, were thin and worn out. I reprimanded the groom and beat him. He asked where his fault lay, and said that every night my wife took one or other of these horses and rode away, and came back only just before dawn. A flame kindled in my heart, and I asked myself where she could go and what she could do. I told the groom to be silent, and when next Gul took a horse from the stable to saddle another quickly and bring it to me. That day I did not hunt, but stayed at home to follow the matter up. I lay down as usual at night and pretended to fall asleep. When I seemed safely off, Gul got up and went to the stable as her custom was. That night it was Tiger’s turn. She rode off on him, and I took Windfoot and followed. With me went that dog you see, a faithful friend who never left me.

‘When I came to the foot of those hills which lie outside the city I saw Gul dismount and go towards a house which some negroes have built there. Over against the door was a high seat, and on it lay a giant negro, before whom she salaamed. He got up and beat her till she was marked with weals, but she uttered no complaint. I was dumfounded, for once when I had struck her with a rose-stalk she had complained and fretted for three days! Then the negro said to her: “How now, ugly one and shaven head! Why are you so late, and why are you not wearing wedding garments?” She answered him: “That person did not go to sleep quickly, and he stayed at home all day, so that I was not able to adorn myself. I came as soon as I could.” In a little while he called her to sit beside him; but this was more than I could bear. I lost control of myself and rushed upon him. He clutched my collar and we grappled in a death struggle. Suddenly she came behind me, caught my feet and threw me. While he held me on the ground, she drew out my own knife and gave it to him. I should have been killed but for that faithful dog which seized his throat and pulled him down and pinned him to the ground. Then I got up and despatched the wretch. There were four other negroes at the place; three I killed and the fourth got away, and has taken refuge beneath the throne of Mihr-afrkz, daughter of King Quimks. I took Gul back to my palace, and from that time till now I have treated her as a dog is treated, and I have cared for my dog as though it were my wife. Now you know what the rose did to the cypress; and now you must keep compact with me.’

‘I shall keep my word,’ said the prince; ‘but may a little water be taken to the roof so that I may make my last ablution?’

To this request the king consented. The prince mounted to the roof, and, getting into a corner, struck his fire-steel and burned one of the S+murgh’s feathers in the flame. Straightway it appeared, and by the majesty of its presence made the city quake. It took the prince on its back and soared away to the zenith.

After a time King Sinaubar said: ‘That young man is a long time on the roof;

go and bring him here.’ But there was no sign of the prince upon the roof; only, far away in the sky, the S+murgh was seen carrying him off. When the king heard of his escape he thanked heaven that his hands were clean of this blood.

Up and up flew the S+murgh, till earth looked like an egg resting on an ocean. At length it dropped straight down to its own place, where the kind prince was welcomed by the young birds and most hospitably entertained. He told the whole story of the rose and the cypress, and then, laden with gifts which the S+murgh had gathered from cities far and near, he set his face for the Castle of Clashing Swords. The king-lion came out to meet him; he took the negro chief’s daughter — whose name was also Gul — in lawful marriage, and then marched with her and her possessions and her attendants to the Place of Gifts. Here they halted for a night, and at dawn said good-bye to the king-lion and set out for Jam+la’s country.

When the Lady Jam+la heard that Prince Alms was near, she went out, with many a fair handmaid, to give him loving reception. Their meeting was joyful, and they went together to the garden-palace. Jam+la summoned all her notables, and in their presence her marriage with the prince was solemnised. A few days later she entrusted her affairs to her vaz+r, and made preparation to go with the prince to his own country. Before she started she restored all the men whom her sister, Lat+fa, had bewitched, to their own forms, and received their blessings, and set them forward to their homes. The wicked Lat+fa herself she left quite alone in her garden-house. When all was ready they set out with all her servants and slaves, all her treasure and goods, and journeyed at ease to the city of King Quimks.

When King Quimks heard of the approach of such a great company, he sent out his vaz+r to give the prince honourable meeting, and to ask what had procured him the favour of the visit. The prince sent back word that he had no thought of war, but he wrote: ‘Learn and know, King Quimks, that I am here to end the crimes of your insolent daughter who has tyrannously done to death many kings and kings’ sons, and has hung their heads on your citadel. I am here to give her the answer to her riddle.’ Later on he entered the city, beat boldly on the drums, and was conducted to the presence.

The king entreated him to have nothing to do with the riddle, for that no man had come out of it alive. ‘O king!’ replied the prince, ‘it is to answer it that I am here; I will not withdraw.’

Mihr-afrkz was told that one man more had staked his head on her question, and that this was one who said he knew the answer. At the request of the prince, all the officers and notables of the land were summoned to hear his reply to the princess. All assembled, and the king and his queen Gul-rukh, and the girl and the prince were there.

The prince addressed Mihr-afrkz: ‘What is the question you ask?’

‘What did the rose do to the cypress?’ she rejoined.

The prince smiled, and turned and addressed the assembly.

‘You who are experienced men and versed in affairs, did you ever know or hear and see anything of this matter?’

‘No!’ they answered, ‘no one has ever known or heard or seen aught about it; it is an empty fancy.’

‘From whom, then, did the princess hear of it? This empty fancy it is that has done many a servant of God to death!’

All saw the good sense of his words and showed their approval. Then he turned to the princess: ‘Tell us the truth, princess; who told you of this thing? I know it hair by hair, and in and out; but if I tell you what I know, who is there that can say I speak the truth? You must produce the person who can confirm my words.’

Her heart sank, for she feared that her long-kept secret was now to be noised abroad. But she said merely: ‘Explain yourself.’

‘I shall explain myself fully when you bring here the negro whom you hide beneath your throne.’

Here the king shouted in wonderment: ‘Explain yourself, young man! What negro does my daughter hide beneath her throne?’

‘That,’ said the prince, ‘you will see if you order to be brought here the negro who will be found beneath the throne of the princess.’

Messengers were forthwith despatched to the garden-house, and after awhile they returned bringing a negro whom they had discovered in a secret chamber underneath the throne of Mihr-afrkz, dressed in a dress of honour, and surrounded with luxury. The king was overwhelmed with astonishment, but the girl had taken heart again. She had had time to think that perhaps the prince had heard of the presence of the negro, and knew no more. So she said haughtily: ‘Prince! you have not answered my riddle.’

‘O most amazingly impudent person,’ cried he, ‘do you not yet repent?’

Then he turned to the people, and told them the whole story of the rose and the cypress, of King Sinaubar and Queen Gul. When he came to the killing of the negroes, he said to the one who stood before them: ‘You, too, were present.’

‘That is so; all happened as you have told it!’

There was great rejoicing in the court and all through the country over the solving of the riddle, and because now no more kings and princes would be killed. King Quimks made over his daughter to Prince Alms, but the latter refused to marry her, and took her as his captive. He then asked that the heads should be removed from the battlements and given decent burial. This was done. He received from the king everything that belonged to Mihr-afrkz; her treasure of gold and silver; her costly stuffs and carpets; her household plenishing; her horses and camels; her servants and slaves.

Then he returned to his camp and sent for Dil-arm, who came bringing her goods and chattels, her gold and her jewels. When all was ready, Prince Alms set out for home, taking with him Jam+la, and Dil-arm and Gul, daughter of Taram-tq, and the wicked Mihr-afrkz, and all the belongings of the four, packed on horses and camels, and in carts without number.

As he approached the borders of his father's country word of his coming went before him, and all the city came forth to give him welcome. King Saman-ll-pMsh — Jessamine, wearer of rubies — had so bewept the loss of his sons that he was now blind. When the prince had kissed his feet and received his blessing, he took from a casket a little collyrium of Solomon, which the S+murgh had given him, and which reveals the hidden things of earth, and rubbed it on his father's eyes. Light came, and the king saw his son.

Mihr-afrkz was brought before the king, and the prince said: 'This is the murderer of your sons; do with her as you will.' The king fancied that the prince might care for the girl's beauty, and replied: 'You have humbled her; do with her as you will.'

Upon this the prince sent for four swift and strong horses, and had the negro bound to each one of them; then each was driven to one of the four quarters, and he tore in pieces like muslin.

This frightened Mihr-afrkz horribly, for she thought the same thing might be done to herself. She cried out to the prince: 'O Prince Alms! what is hardest to get is most valued. Up till now I have been subject to no man, and no man had had my love. The many kings and kings' sons who have died at my hands have died because it was their fate to die like this. In this matter I have not sinned. That was their fate from eternity; and from the beginning it was predestined that my fate should be bound up with yours.'

The prince gave ear to the argument from preordainment, and as she was a very lovely maiden he took her too in lawful marriage. She and Jam+la set up house together, and Dil-arm and Gul set up theirs; and the prince passed the rest of his life with the four in perfect happiness, and in pleasant and sociable entertainment.

Now has been told what the rose did to the cypress.

Finished, finished, finished!

BALL-CARRIER AND THE BAD ONE

Far, far in the forest there were two little huts, and in each of them lived a man who was a famous hunter, his wife, and three or four children. Now the children were forbidden to play more than a short distance from the door, as it was known that, away on the other side of the wood near the great river, there dwelt a witch who had a magic ball that she used as a means of stealing children.

Her plan was a very simple one, and had never yet failed. When she wanted a child she just flung her ball in the direction of the child's home, and however far off it might be, the ball was sure to reach it. Then, as soon as the child saw it, the ball would begin rolling slowly back to the witch, just keeping a little ahead of the child, so that he always thought that he could catch it the next minute. But he never did, and, what was more, his parents never saw him again.

Of course you must not suppose that all the fathers and mothers who had lost children made no attempts to find them, but the forest was so large, and the witch was so cunning in knowing exactly where they were going to search, that it was very easy for her to keep out of the way. Besides, there was always the chance that the children might have been eaten by wolves, of which large herds roamed about in winter.

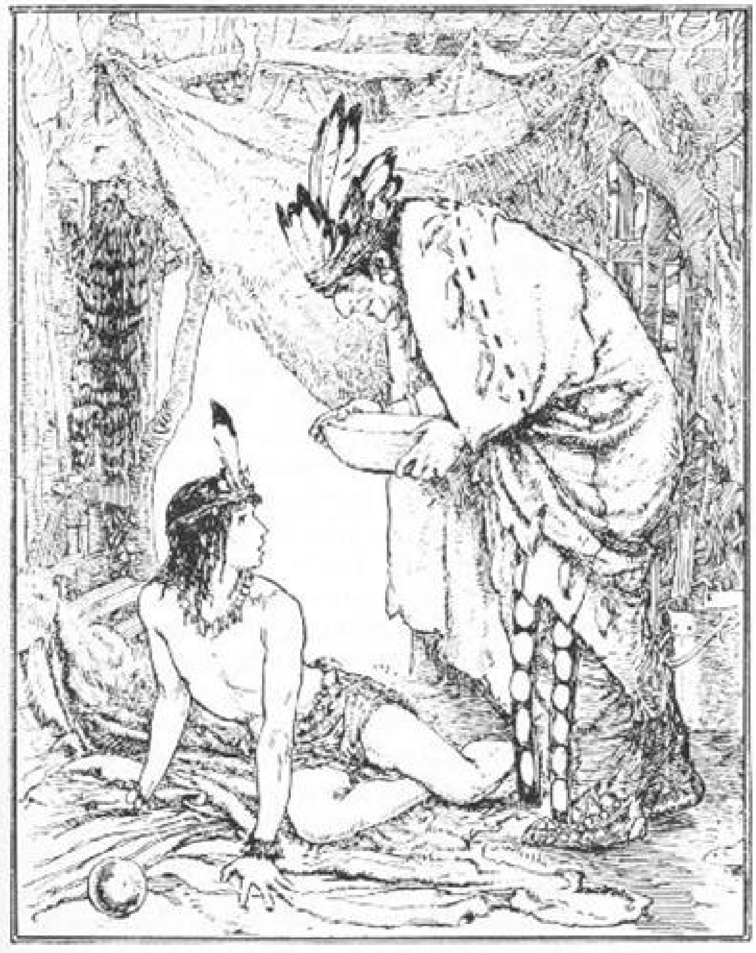

THE BOY IN THE WITCH'S HUT.

One day the old witch happened to want a little boy, so she threw her ball in the direction of the hunters’ huts. A child was standing outside, shooting at a mark with his bow and arrows, but the moment he saw the ball, which was made of glass whose blues and greens and whites, all frosted over, kept changing one into the other, he flung down his bow, and stooped to pick the ball up. But as he did so it began to roll very gently downhill. The boy could not let it roll away, when it was so close to him, so he gave chase. The ball seemed always within his grasp, yet he could never catch it; it went quicker and quicker, and the boy grew more and more excited. That time he almost touched it — no, he missed it by a hair’s breadth! Now, surely, if he gave a spring he could get in front of it! He sprang forward, tripped and fell, and found himself in the witch’s house!

‘Welcome! welcome! grandson!’ said she; ‘get up and rest yourself, for you have had a long walk, and I am sure you must be tired!’ So the boy sat down, and ate some food which she gave him in a bowl. It was quite different from anything he had tasted before, and he thought it was delicious. When he had eaten up every bit, the witch asked him if he had ever fasted.

‘No,’ replied the boy, ‘at least I have been obliged to sometimes, but never if there was any food to be had.’

‘You will have to fast if you want the spirits to make you strong and wise, and the sooner you begin the better.’

‘Very well,’ said the boy, ‘what do I do first?’

‘Lie down on those buffalo skins by the door of the hut,’ answered she; and the boy lay down, and the squirrels and little bears and the birds came and talked to him.

At the end of ten days the old woman came to him with a bowl of the same food that he had eaten before.

‘Get up, my grandson, you have fasted long enough. Have the good spirits visited you, and granted you the strength and wisdom that you desire?’

‘Some of them have come, and have given me a portion of both,’ answered the boy, ‘but many have stayed away from me.’

‘Then,’ said she, ‘you must fast ten days more.’

So the boy lay down again on the buffalo skins, and fasted for ten days, and at the end of that time he turned his face to the wall, and fasted for twenty days longer. At length the witch called to him, and said:

‘Come and eat something, my grandson.’ At the sound of her voice the boy got up and ate the food she gave him. When he had finished every scrap she spoke as before: ‘Tell me, my grandson, have not the good spirits visited you all these many days that you have fasted?’

‘Not all, grandmother,’ answered he; ‘there are still some who keep away from me and say that I have not fasted long enough.’

‘Then you must fast again,’ replied the old woman, ‘and go on fasting till you receive the gifts of *all* the good spirits. Not one must be missing.’

The boy said nothing, but lay down for the third time on the buffalo skins, and fasted for twenty days more. And at the end of that time the witch thought he was dead, his face was so white and his body so still. But when she had fed him out of the bowl he grew stronger, and soon was able to sit up.

‘You have fasted a long time,’ said she, ‘longer than anyone ever fasted before. Surely the good spirits must be satisfied *now*?’

‘Yes, grandmother,’ answered the boy, ‘they have all come, and have given me their gifts.’

This pleased the old woman so much that she brought him another basin of food, and while he was eating it she talked to him, and this is what she said: ‘Far away, on the other side of the great river, is the home of the Bad One. In his house is much gold, and what is more precious even than the gold, a little bridge, which lengthens out when the Bad One waves his hand, so that there is no river or sea that he cannot cross. Now I want that bridge and some of the gold for myself, and that is the reason that I have stolen so many boys by means of my ball. I have tried to teach them how to gain the gifts of the good spirits, but none of them would fast long enough, and at last I had to send them away to perform simple, easy little tasks. But you have been strong and faithful, and you can do this thing if you listen to what I tell you! When you reach the river tie this ball to your foot, and it will take you across — you cannot manage it in any other way. But do not be afraid; trust to the ball, and you will be quite safe!'

The boy took the ball and put it in a bag. Then he made himself a club and a bow, and some arrows which would fly further than anyone else's arrows, because of the strength the good spirits had given him. They had also bestowed on him the power of changing his shape, and had increased the quickness of his eyes and ears so that nothing escaped him. And in some way or other they made him understand that if he needed more help they would give it to him.

When all these things were ready the boy bade farewell to the witch and set out. He walked through the forest for several days without seeing anyone but his friends the squirrels and the bears and the birds, but though he stopped and spoke to them all, he was careful not to let them know where he was going.

At last, after many days, he came to the river, and beyond it he noticed a small hut standing on a hill which he guessed to be the home of the Bad One. But the stream flowed so quickly that he could not see how he was ever to cross it, and in order to test how swift the current really was, he broke a branch from a tree and threw it in. It seemed hardly to touch the water before it was carried away, and even his magic sight could not follow it. He could not help feeling frightened, but he hated giving up anything that he had once undertaken, and, fastening the ball on his right foot, he ventured on the river. To his surprise he was able to stand up; then a panic seized him, and he scrambled up the bank again. In a minute or two he plucked up courage to go a little further into the river, but again its width frightened him, and a second time he turned back. However, he felt rather ashamed of his cowardice, as it was quite clear that his ball *could* support him, and on his third trial he got safely to the other side.

Once there he replaced the ball in the bag, and looked carefully round him. The door of the Bad One's hut was open, and he saw that the ceiling was supported by great wooden beams, from which hung the bags of gold and the little bridge. He saw, too, the Bad One sitting in the midst of his treasures eating his dinner, and drinking something out of a horn. It was plain to the boy that he must invent some plan of getting the Bad One out of the way, or else he would never be able to steal the gold or the bridge.

What should he do? Give horrible shrieks as if he were in pain? But the Bad

One would not care whether he were murdered or not! Call him by his name? But the Bad One was very cunning, and would suspect some trick. He must try something better than that! Then suddenly an idea came to him, and he gave a little jump of joy. ‘Oh, how stupid of me not to think of that before!’ said he, and he wished with all his might that the Bad One should become very hungry — so hungry that he could not wait a moment for fresh food to be brought to him. And sure enough at that instant the Bad One called out to his servant, ‘You did not bring food that would satisfy a sparrow. Fetch some more at once, for I am perfectly starving.’ Then, without giving the woman time to go to the larder, he got up from his chair, and rolled, staggering from hunger, towards the kitchen.

Directly the door had closed on the Bad One the boy ran in, pulled down a bag of gold from the beam, and tucked it under his left arm. Next he unhooked the little bridge and put it under his right. He did not try to escape, as most boys of his age would have done, for the wisdom put into his mind by the good spirits taught him that before he could reach the river and make use of the bridge the Bad One would have tracked him by his footsteps and been upon him. So, making himself very small and thin, he hid himself behind a pile of buffalo skins in the corner, first tearing a slit through one of them, so that he could see what was going on.

He had hardly settled himself when the servant entered the room, and, as she did so, the last bag of gold on the beam fell to the ground — for they had begun to fall directly the boy had taken the first one. She cried to her master that someone had stolen both the bag and the bridge, and the Bad One rushed in, mad with anger, and bade her go and seek for footsteps outside, that they might find out where the thief had gone. In a few minutes she returned, saying that he must be in the house, as she could not see any footsteps leading to the river, and began to move all the furniture in the room, without discovering Ball-Carrier.

‘But he *must* be here somewhere,’ she said to herself, examining for the second time the pile of buffalo skins; and Ball-Carrier, knowing that he could not possibly escape now, hastily wished that the Bad One should be unable to eat any more food at present.

‘Ah, there is a slit in this one,’ cried the servant, shaking the skin; ‘and here he is.’ And she pulled out Ball-Carrier, looking so lean and small that he would hardly have made a mouthful for a sparrow.

‘Was it you who took my gold and bridge?’ asked the Bad One.

‘Yes,’ answered Ball-Carrier, ‘it was I who took them.’

The Bad One made a sign to the woman, who inquired where he had hidden them. He lifted his left arm where the gold was, and she picked up a knife and scraped his skin so that no gold should be left sticking to it.

‘What have you done with the bridge?’ said she. And he lifted his right arm, from which she took the bridge, while the Bad One looked on, well pleased. ‘Be sure that he does not run away,’ chuckled he. ‘Boil some water, and get him ready for cooking, while I go and invite my friends the water-demons to the feast.’

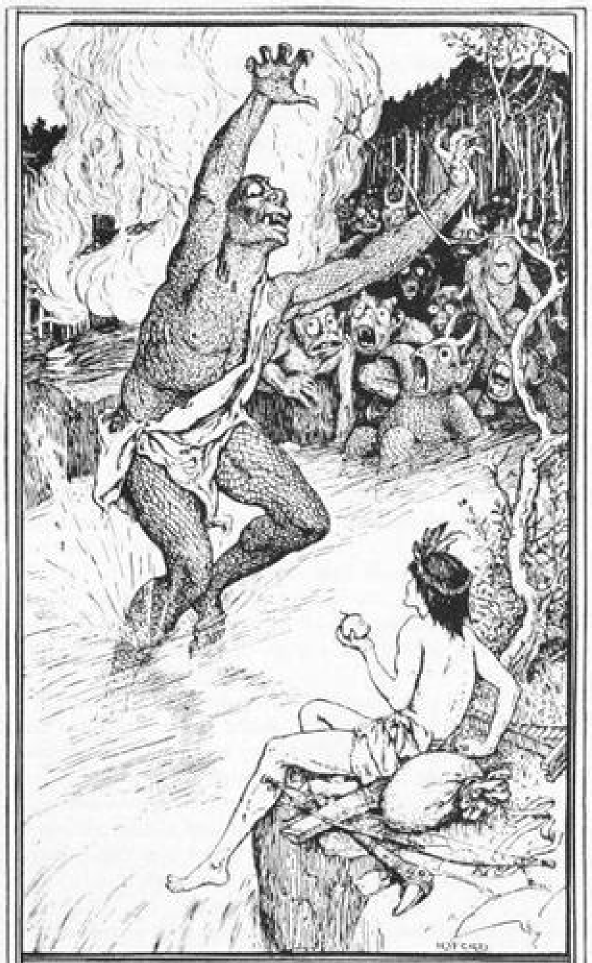

THE DEATH OF THE BAD ONE

The woman seized Ball-Carrier between her finger and thumb, and was going to carry him to the kitchen, when the boy spoke:

‘I am very lean and small now,’ he said, ‘hardly worth the trouble of cooking; but if you were to keep me two days, and gave me plenty of food, I should get big and fat. As it is, your friends the water-demons would think you meant to laugh at them, when they found that *I* was the feast.’

‘Well, perhaps you are right,’ answered the Bad One; ‘I will keep you for two days.’ And he went out to visit the water-demons.

Meanwhile the servant, whose name was Lung-Woman, led him into a little shed, and chained him up to a ring in the wall. But food was given him every hour, and at the end of two days he was as fat and big as a Christmas turkey, and could hardly move his head from one side to the other.

‘He will do now,’ said the Bad One, who came constantly to see how he was getting on. ‘I shall go and tell the water-demons that we expect them to dinner to-night. Put the kettle on the fire, but be sure on no account to taste the broth.’

Lung-Woman lost no time in obeying her orders. She built up the fire, which had got very low, filled the kettle with water, and passing a rope which hung from the ceiling through the handle, swung it over the flames. Then she brought in Ball-Carrier, who, seeing all these preparations, wished that as long as *he* was in the kettle the water might not really boil, though it would hiss and bubble, and also, that the spirits would turn the water into fat.

The kettle soon began to sing and bubble, and Ball-Carrier was lifted in. Very soon the fat which was to make the sauce rose to the surface, and Ball-Carrier, who was bobbing about from one side to the other, called out that Lung-Woman had better taste the broth, as he thought that some salt should be added to it. The servant knew quite well that her master had forbidden her to do anything of the kind, but when once the idea was put into her head, she found the smell from the kettle so delicious that she unhooked a long ladle from the wall and plunged it into the kettle.

‘You will spill it all, if you stand so far off,’ said the boy; ‘why don’t you come a little nearer?’ And as she did so he cried to the spirits to give him back his usual size and strength and to make the water scalding hot. Then he gave the kettle a kick, which upset all the boiling water upon her, and jumping over her body he seized once more the gold and the bridge, picked up his club and bow and arrows, and after setting fire to the Bad One’s hut, ran down to the river, which he crossed safely by the help of the bridge.

The hut, which was made of wood, was burned to the ground before the Bad One came back with a large crowd of water-demons. There was not a sign of anyone or anything, so he started for the river, where he saw Ball-Carrier sitting quietly on the other side. Then the Bad One knew what had happened, and after telling the water-demons that there would be no feast after all, he called to Ball-Carrier, who was eating an apple.

‘I know your name now,’ he said, ‘and as you have ruined me, and I am not rich any more, will you take me as your servant?’

‘Yes, I will, though you have tried to kill me,’ answered Ball-Carrier, throwing the bridge across the water as he spoke. But when the Bad One was in the midst of the stream, the boy wished it to become small; and the Bad One fell into the water and was drowned, and the world was rid of him.

HOW BALL-CARRIER FINISHED HIS TASK

After Ball-Carrier had managed to drown the Bad One so that he could not do any more mischief, he forgot the way to his grandmother’s house, and could not find it again, though he searched everywhere. During this time he wandered into many strange places, and had many adventures; and one day he came to a hut where a young girl lived. He was tired and hungry and begged her to let him in and rest, and he stayed a long while, and the girl became his wife. One morning he saw two children playing in front of the hut, and went out to speak to them. But as soon as they saw him they set up cries of horror and ran away. ‘They are the children of my sister who has been on a long journey,’ replied his wife, ‘and now that she knows you are my husband she wants to kill you.’

‘Oh, well, let her try,’ replied Ball-Carrier. ‘It is not the first time people have wished to do that. And here I am still, you see!’

‘Be careful,’ said the wife, ‘she is very cunning.’ But at this moment the sister-in-law came up.

‘How do you do, brother-in-law? I have heard of you so often that I am very glad to meet you. I am told that you are more powerful than any man on earth, and as I am powerful too, let us try which is the strongest.’

‘That will be delightful,’ answered he. ‘Suppose we begin with a short race, and then we will go on to other things.’

‘That will suit me very well,’ replied the woman, who was a witch. ‘And let us agree that the one who wins shall have the right to kill the other.’

‘Oh, certainly,’ said Ball-Carrier; ‘and I don’t think we shall find a flatter course than the prairie itself — no one knows how many miles it stretches. We will run to the end and back again.’

This being settled they both made ready for the race, and Ball-Carrier silently begged the good spirits to help him, and not to let him fall into the hands of this wicked witch.

‘When the sun touches the trunk of that tree we will start,’ said she, as they both stood side by side. But with the first step Ball-Carrier changed himself into a wolf and for a long way kept ahead. Then gradually he heard her creeping up behind him, and soon she was in front. So Ball-Carrier took the shape of a pigeon and flew rapidly past her, but in a little while she was in front again, and the end of the prairie was in sight. ‘A crow can fly faster than a pigeon,’ thought he, and as a crow he managed to pass her and held his ground so long that he fancied she was quite beaten. The witch began to be afraid of it too, and putting out all her strength slipped past him. Next he put on the shape of a hawk, and in this form he reached the bounds of the prairie, he and the witch turning homewards at the moment.

Bird after bird he tried, but every time the witch gained on him and took the lead. At length the goal was in sight, and Ball-Carrier knew that unless he could get ahead now he would be killed before his own door, under the eyes of his wife. His eyes had grown dim from fatigue, his wings flapped wearily and hardly bore him along, while the witch seemed as fresh as ever. What bird was there whose flight was swifter than his? Would not the good spirits tell him? Ah, of course he knew; why had he not thought of it at first and spared himself all that fatigue? And the next instant a humming bird, dressed in green and blue, flashed past the woman and entered the house. The witch came panting up, furious at having lost the race which she felt certain of winning; and Ball-Carrier, who had by this time changed back into his own shape, struck her on the head and killed her.

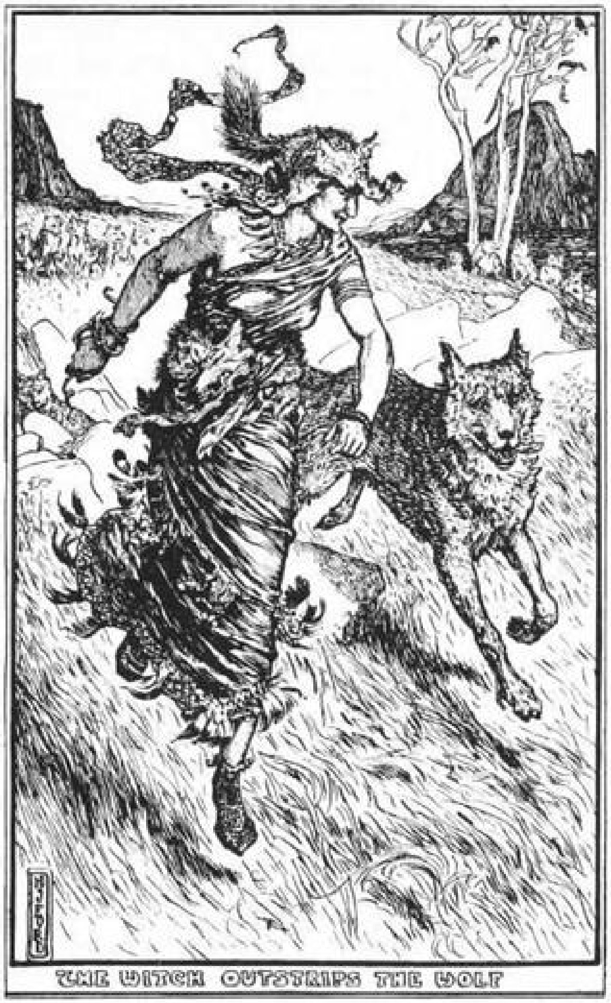

THE WITCH OUTSTRIPS THE WOLF

For a long while Ball-Carrier was content to stay quietly at home with his wife and children, for he was tired of adventures, and only did enough hunting to supply the house with food. But one day he happened to eat some poisonous berries that he had found in the forest, and grew so ill that he felt he was going to die.

‘When I am dead do not bury me in the earth,’ he said, ‘but put me over there, among that clump of trees.’ So his wife and her three children watched by him as long as he was alive, and after he was dead they took him up and laid the body on a platform of stakes which they had prepared in the grove. And as they returned weeping to the hut they caught a glimpse of the ball rolling away down the path back to the old grandmother. One of the sons sprang forward to stop it, for Ball-Carrier had often told them the tale of how it had helped him to cross the river, but it was too quick for him, and they had to content themselves with the war club and bow and arrows, which were put carefully away.

By-and-by some travellers came past, and the chief among them asked leave to marry Ball-Carrier’s daughter. The mother said she must have a little time to think over it, as her daughter was still very young; so it was settled that the man should go away for a month with his friends, and then come back to see if the girl was willing.

Now ever since Ball-Carrier’s death the family had been very poor, and often could not get enough to eat. One morning the girl, who had had no supper and no breakfast, wandered off to look for cranberries, and though she was quite near home was astonished at noticing a large hut, which certainly had not been there when last she had come that way. No one was about, so she ventured to peep in, and her surprise was increased at seeing, heaped up in one corner, a quantity of food of all sorts, while a little robin redbreast stood perched on a beam looking down upon her.

‘It is my father, I am sure,’ she cried; and the bird piped in answer.

From that day, whenever they wanted food they went to the hut, and though the robin could not speak, he would hop on their shoulders and let them feed him with the food they knew he liked best.

When the man came back he found the girl looking so much prettier and fatter than when he had left her, that he insisted that they should be married on the spot. And the mother, who did not know how to get rid of him, gave in.

The husband spent all his time in hunting, and the family had never had so much meat before; but the man, who had seen for himself how poor they were, noticed with amazement that they did not seem to care about it, or to be hungry. ‘They must get food from somewhere,’ he thought, and one morning, when he pretended to be going out to hunt, he hid in a thicket to watch. Very soon they all left the house together, and walked to the other hut, which the girl’s husband saw for the first time, as it was hid in a hollow. He followed, and noticed that each one went up to the redbreast, and shook him by the claw; and he then entered boldly and shook the bird’s claw too. The whole party afterwards sat down to dinner, after which they all returned to their own hut.

The next day the husband declared that he was very ill, and could not eat anything; but this was only a pretence so that he might get what he wanted. The family were all much distressed, and begged him to tell them what food he fancied.

‘Oh! I could not eat any food,’ he answered every time, and at each answer his voice grew fainter and fainter, till they thought he would die from weakness before their eyes.

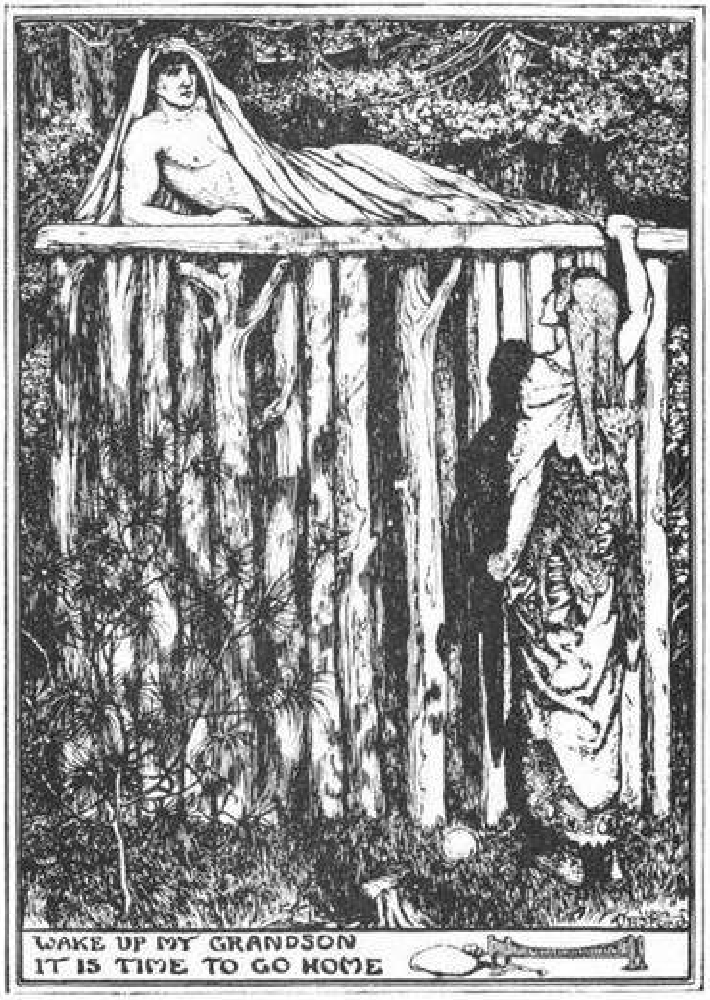

WAKE UP MY GRANDSON
IT IS TIME TO GO HOME

‘There must be *some* thing you could take, if you would only say what it is,’ implored his wife.

‘No, nothing, nothing; except, perhaps — but of course that is impossible!’

‘No, I am sure it is not,’ replied she; ‘you shall have it, I promise — only tell me what it is.’

‘I think — but I could not ask you to do such a thing. Leave me alone, and let me die quietly.’

‘You shall *not* die,’ cried the girl, who was very fond of her husband, for he did not beat her as most girls’ husbands did. ‘Whatever it is, I will manage to get it for you.’

‘Well, then, I *think*, if I had that — redbreast, nicely roasted, I could eat a little bit of his wing!’

The wife started back in horror at such a request; but the man turned his face to the wall, and took no notice, as he thought it was better to leave her to herself for a little.

Weeping and wringing her hands, the girl went down to her mother. The brothers were very angry when they heard the story, and declared that, if any one were to die, it certainly should not be the robin. But all that night the man seemed getting weaker and weaker, and at last, quite early, the wife crept out, and stealing to the hut, killed the bird, and brought him home to her husband.

Just as she was going to cook it her two brothers came in. They cried out in horror at the sight, and, rushing out of the hut, declared they would never see her any more. And the poor girl, with a heavy heart, took the body of the redbreast up to her husband.

But directly she entered the room the man told her that he felt a great deal better, and that he would rather have a piece of bear’s flesh, well boiled, than any bird, however tender. His wife felt very miserable to think that their beloved redbreast had been sacrificed for nothing, and begged him to try a little bit.

‘You felt so sure that it would do you good before,’ said she, ‘that I can’t help thinking it would quite cure you now.’ But the man only flew into a rage, and flung the bird out of the window. Then he got up and went out.

Now all this while the ball had been rolling, rolling, rolling to the old grandmother’s hut on the other side of the world, and directly it rolled into her hut she knew that her grandson must be dead. Without wasting any time she took a fox skin and tied it round her forehead, and fastened another round her waist, as witches always do when they leave their own homes. When she was ready she said to the ball: ‘Go back the way you came, and lead me to my grandson.’ And the ball started with the old woman following.

It was a long journey, even for a witch, but, like other things, it ended at last; and the old woman stood before the platform of stakes, where the body of Ball-Carrier lay.

‘Wake up, my grandson, it is time to go home,’ the witch said. And Ball-Carrier stepped down off the platform, and brought his club and bow and arrows out of the hut, and set out, for the other side of the world, behind the old woman.

When they reached the hut where Ball-Carrier had fasted so many years ago, the old woman spoke for the first time since they had started on their way.

‘My grandson, did you ever manage to get that gold from the Bad One?’

‘Yes, grandmother, I got it.’

‘Where is it?’ she asked.

‘Here, in my left arm-pit,’ answered he.

So she picked up a knife and scraped away all the gold which had stuck to his skin, and which had been sticking there ever since he first stole it. After she had finished she asked again:

‘My grandson, did you manage to get that bridge from the Bad One?’

‘Yes, grandmother, I got that too,’ answered he.

‘Where is it?’ she asked, and Ball-Carrier lifted his right arm, and pointed to his arm-pit.

‘Here is the bridge, grandmother,’ said he.

Then the witch did something that nobody in the world could have guessed that she would do. First, she took the gold and said to Ball-Carrier:

‘My grandson, this gold must be hidden in the earth, for if people think they can get it when they choose, they will become lazy and stupid. But if we take it and bury it in different parts of the world they will have to work for it if they want it, and then will only find a little at a time.’ And as she spoke, she pulled up one of the poles of the hut, and Ball-Carrier saw that underneath was a deep, deep hole, which seemed to have no bottom. Down this hole she poured all the gold, and when it was out of sight it ran about all over the world, where people that dig hard sometimes find it. And after that was done she put the pole back again.

Next she lifted down a spade from a high shelf, where it had grown quite rusty, and dug a very small hole on the opposite side of the hut — very small, but very deep.

‘Give me the bridge,’ said she, ‘for I am going to bury it here. If anyone was to get hold of it, and find that they could cross rivers and seas without any trouble, they would never discover how to cross them for themselves. I am a witch, and if I had chosen I could easily have cast my spells over the Bad One, and have made him deliver them to you the first day you came into my hut. But then you would never have fasted, and never have planned how to get what you wanted, and never have known the good spirits, and would have been fat and idle to the end of your days. And now go; in that hut, which you can just see far away, live your father and mother, who are old people now, and need a son to hunt for them. You have done what you were set to do, and I need you no more.’

Then Ball-Carrier remembered his parents and went back to them.

THE BUNYIP

Long, long ago, far, far away on the other side of the world, some young men left the camp where they lived to get some food for their wives and children. The sun was hot, but they liked heat, and as they went they ran races and tried who could hurl his spear the farthest, or was cleverest in throwing a strange weapon called a boomerang, which always returns to the thrower. They did not get on very fast at this rate, but presently they reached a flat place that in time of flood was full of water, but was now, in the height of summer, only a set of pools, each surrounded with a fringe of plants, with bulrushes standing in the inside of all. In that country the people are fond of the roots of bulrushes, which they think as good as onions, and one of the young men said that they had better collect some of the roots and carry them back to the camp. It did not take them long to weave the tops of the willows into a basket, and they were just going to wade into the water and pull up the bulrush roots when a youth suddenly called out: 'After all, why should we waste our time in doing work that is only fit for women and children? Let them come and get the roots for themselves; but we will fish for eels and anything else we can get.'

This delighted the rest of the party, and they all began to arrange their fishing lines, made from the bark of the yellow mimosa, and to search for bait for their hooks. Most of them used worms, but one, who had put a piece of raw meat for dinner into his skin wallet, cut off a little bit and baited his line with it, unseen by his companions.

For a long time they cast patiently, without receiving a single bite; the sun had grown low in the sky, and it seemed as if they would have to go home empty-handed, not even with a basket of roots to show; when the youth, who had baited his hook with raw meat, suddenly saw his line disappear under the water. Something, a very heavy fish he supposed, was pulling so hard that he could hardly keep his feet, and for a few minutes it seemed either as if he must let go or be dragged into the pool. He cried to his friends to help him, and at last, trembling with fright at what they were going to see, they managed between them to land on the bank a creature that was neither a calf nor a seal, but something of both, with a long, broad tail. They looked at each other with horror, cold shivers running down their spines; for though they had never beheld it, there was not a man amongst them who did not know what it was — the cub of the awful Bunyip!

All of a sudden the silence was broken by a low wail, answered by another from the other side of the pool, as the mother rose up from her den and came towards them, rage flashing from her horrible yellow eyes. ‘Let it go! let it go!’ whispered the young men to each other; but the captor declared that he had caught it, and was going to keep it. ‘He had promised his sweetheart,’ he said, ‘that he would bring back enough meat for her father’s house to feast on for three days, and though they could not eat the little Bunyip, her brothers and sisters should have it to play with.’ So, flinging his spear at the mother to keep her back, he threw the little Bunyip on to his shoulders, and set out for the camp, never heeding the poor mother’s cries of distress.

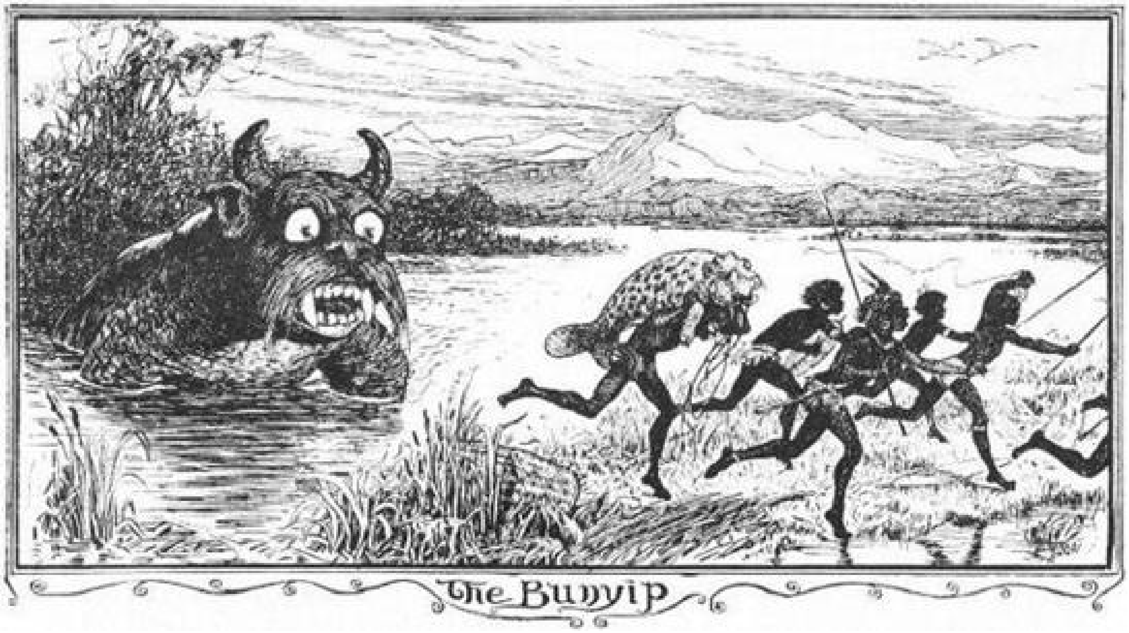

The Bunyip

By this time it was getting near sunset, and the plain was in shadow, though the tops of the mountains were still quite bright. The youths had all ceased to be afraid, when they were startled by a low rushing sound behind them, and, looking round, saw that the pool was slowly rising, and the spot where they had landed the Bunyip was quite covered. ‘What could it be?’ they asked one of another; ‘there was not a cloud in the sky, yet the water had risen higher already than they had ever known it do before.’ For an instant they stood watching as if they were frozen, then they turned and ran with all their might, the man with the Bunyip running faster than all. When he reached a high peak overlooking all the plain he stopped to take breath, and turned to see if he was safe yet. Safe! why only the tops of the trees remained above that sea of water, and these were fast disappearing. They must run fast indeed if they were to escape. So on they flew, scarcely feeling the ground as they went, till they flung themselves on the ground before the holes scooped out of the earth where they had all been born. The old men were sitting in front, the children were playing, and the women chattering together, when the little Bunyip fell into their midst, and there was scarcely a child among them who did not know that something terrible was upon them. ‘The water! the water!’ gasped one of the young men; and there it was, slowly but steadily mounting the ridge itself. Parents and children clung together, as if by that means they could drive back the advancing flood; and the youth who had caused all this terrible catastrophe, seized his sweetheart, and cried: ‘I will climb with you to the top of that tree, and there no waters can reach us.’ But, as he spoke, something cold touched him, and quickly he glanced down at his feet. Then with a shudder he saw that they were feet no longer, but bird’s claws. He looked at the girl he was clasping, and beheld a great black bird standing at his side; he turned to his friends, but a flock of great awkward flapping creatures stood in their place. He put up his hands to cover his face, but they were no more hands, only the ends of wings; and when he tried to speak, a noise such as he had never heard before seemed to come from his throat, which had suddenly become narrow and slender. Already the water had risen to his waist, and he found himself sitting easily upon it, while its surface reflected back the image of a black swan, one of many.

Never again did the swans become men; but they are still different from other swans, for in the night-time those who listen can hear them talk in a language that is certainly not swan’s language; and there are even sounds of laughing and talking, unlike any noise made by the swans whom we know.

The little Bunyip was carried home by its mother, and after that the waters sank back to their own channels. The side of the pool where she lives is always shunned by everyone, as nobody knows when she may suddenly put out her head and draw him into her mighty jaws. But people say that underneath the black waters of the pool she has a house filled with beautiful things, such as mortals who dwell on the earth have no idea of. Though how they know I cannot tell you, as nobody has ever seen it.

FATHER GRUMBLER

Once upon a time there lived a man who had nearly as many children as there were sparrows in the garden. He had to work very hard all day to get them enough to eat, and was often tired and cross, and abused everything and everybody, so that people called him ‘Father Grumbler.’

By-and-by he grew weary of always working, and on Sundays he lay a long while in bed, instead of going to church. Then after a time he found it dull to sit so many hours by himself, thinking of nothing but how to pay the rent that was owing, and as the tavern across the road looked bright and cheerful, he walked in one day and sat down with his friends. ‘It was just to chase away Care,’ he said; but when he came out, hours and hours after, Care came out with him.

Father Grumbler entered his house feeling more dismal than when he left it, for he knew that he had wasted both his time and money.

‘I will go and see the Holy Man in the cave near the well,’ he said to himself, ‘and perhaps he can tell me why all the luck is for other people, and only misfortunes happen to me.’ And he set out at once for the cave.

It was a long way off, and the road led over mountains and through valleys; but at last he reached the cave where the Holy Man dwelt, and knocked at the door.

‘Who is there?’ asked a voice from within.

‘It is I, Holy Man, Father Grumbler, you know, who has as many children as sparrows in the garden.’

‘Well, and what is it that you want?’

‘I want to know why other people have all the luck, and only misfortunes happen to me!’

The Holy Man did not answer, but went into an inner cave, from which he came out bearing something in his hand. ‘Do you see this basket?’ said he. ‘It is a magical basket, and if you are hungry you have only got to say: “Little basket, little basket, do your duty,” and you will eat the best dinner you ever had in your life. But when you have had enough, be sure you don’t forget to cry out: “That will do for to-day.” Oh! — and one thing more — you need not show it to everybody and declare that I have given it to you. Do you understand?’

Father Grumbler was always accustomed to think of himself as so unlucky that he did not know whether the Holy Man was not playing a trick upon him; but he took the basket without being polite enough to say either ‘Thank you,’ or

‘Good-morning,’ and went away. However, he only waited till he was out of sight of the cave before he stooped down and whispered: ‘Little basket, little basket, do your duty.’

Now the basket had a lid, so that he could not see what was inside, but he heard quite clearly strange noises, as if a sort of scuffling was going on. Then the lid burst open, and a quantity of delicious little white rolls came tumbling out one after the other, followed by a stream of small fishes all ready cooked. What a quantity there were to be sure! The whole road was covered with them, and the banks on each side were beginning to disappear. Father Grumbler felt quite frightened at the torrent, but at last he remembered what the Holy Man had told him, and cried at the top of his voice: ‘Enough! enough! That will do for to-day!’ And the lid of the basket closed with a snap.

Father Grumbler sighed with relief and happiness as he looked around him, and sitting down on a heap of stones, he ate till he could eat no more. Trout, salmon, turbot, soles, and a hundred other fishes whose names he did not know, lay boiled, fried, and grilled within reach of his hands. As the Holy Man had said, he had never eaten such a dinner; still, when he had done, he shook his head, and grumbled; ‘Yes, there is plenty to eat, of course, but it only makes me thirsty, and there is not a drop to drink anywhere.’

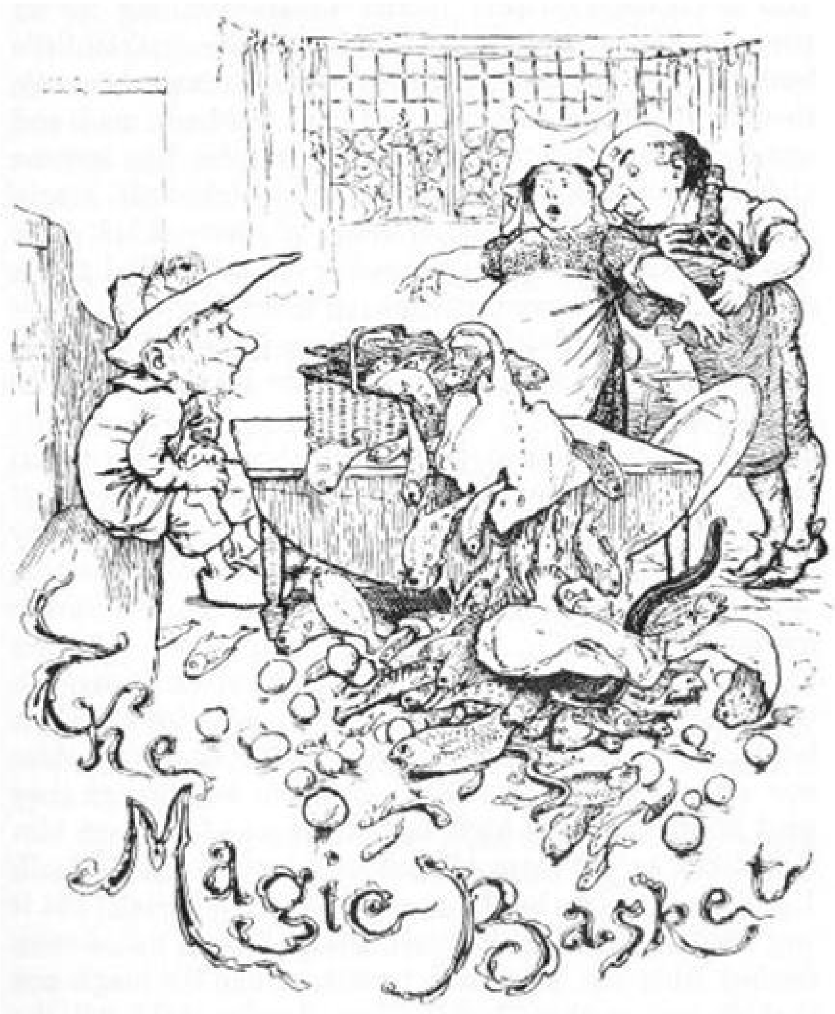

Yet, somehow, he could never tell why, he looked up and saw the tavern in front of him, which he thought was miles, and miles, and miles away.

‘Bring the best wine you have got, and two glasses, good mother,’ he said as he entered, ‘and if you are fond of fish there is enough here to feed the house. Only there is no need to chatter about it all over the place. You understand? Eh?’ And without waiting for an answer he whispered to the basket: ‘Little basket, little basket, do your duty.’ The innkeeper and his wife thought that their customer had gone suddenly mad, and watched him closely, ready to spring on him if he became violent; but both instinctively jumped backwards, nearly into the fire, as rolls and fishes of every kind came tumbling out of the basket, covering the tables and chairs and the floor, and even overflowing into the street.

‘Be quick, be quick, and pick them up,’ cried the man. ‘And if these are not enough, there are plenty more to be had for the asking.’

The innkeeper and his wife did not need telling twice. Down they went on their knees and gathered up everything they could lay hands on. But busy though they seemed, they found time to whisper to each other:

‘If we can only get hold of that basket it will make our fortune!’

So they began by inviting Father Grumbler to sit down to the table, and brought out the best wine in the cellar, hoping it might loosen his tongue. But Father Grumbler was wiser than they gave him credit for, and though they tried in all manner of ways to find out who had given him the basket, he put them off, and kept his secret to himself. Unluckily, though he did not *speak*, he did drink, and it was not long before he fell fast asleep. Then the woman fetched from her kitchen a basket, so like the magic one that no one, without looking very closely, could tell the difference, and placed it in Father Grumbler’s hand, while she hid the other carefully away.

It was dinner time when the man awoke, and, jumping up hastily, he set out for home, where he found all the children gathered round a basin of thin soup, and pushing their wooden bowls forward, hoping to have the first spoonful. Their father burst into the midst of them, bearing his basket, and crying:

‘Don’t spoil your appetites, children, with that stuff. Do you see this basket? Well, I have only got to say, “Little basket, little basket, do your duty,” and you will see what will happen. Now you shall say it instead of me, for a treat.’

The children, wondering and delighted, repeated the words, but nothing happened. Again and again they tried, but the basket was only a basket, with a few scales of fish sticking to the bottom, for the innkeeper’s wife had taken it to market the day before.

‘What is the matter with the thing?’ cried the father at last, snatching the basket from them, and turning it all over, grumbling and swearing while he did so, under the eyes of his astonished wife and children, who did not know whether to cry or to laugh.

‘It certainly smells of fish,’ he said, and then he stopped, for a sudden thought had come to him.

‘Suppose it is not mine at all; supposing —— Ah, the scoundrels!’

And without listening to his wife and children, who were frightened at his strange conduct and begged him to stay at home, he ran across to the tavern and burst open the door.

‘Can I do anything for you, Father Grumbler?’ asked the innkeeper’s wife in her softest voice.

‘I have taken the wrong basket — by mistake, of course,’ said he. ‘Here is yours, will you give me back my own?’

‘Why, what are you talking about?’ answered she. ‘You can see for yourself that there is no basket here.’

And though Father Grumbler *did* look, it was quite true that none was to be seen.

‘Come, take a glass to warm you this cold day,’ said the woman, who was anxious to keep him in a good temper, and as this was an invitation Father Grumbler never refused, he tossed it off and left the house.

He took the road that led to the Holy Man’s cave, and made such haste that it was not long before he reached it.

‘Who is there?’ said a voice in answer to his knock.

‘It is me, it is me, Holy Man. You know quite well. Father Grumbler, who has as many children as sparrows in the garden.’

‘But, my good man, it was only yesterday that I gave you a handsome present.’

‘Yes, Holy Man, and here it is. But something has happened, I don’t know what, and it won’t work any more.’

‘Well, put it down. I will go and see if I can find anything for you.’

In a few minutes the Holy Man returned with a cock under his arm.

‘Listen to me,’ he said, ‘whenever you want money, you have only to say: “Show me what you can do, cock,” and you will see some wonderful things. But, remember, it is not necessary to let all the world into the secret.’

‘Oh no, Holy Man, I am not so foolish as that.’

‘Nor to tell everybody that I gave it to you,’ went on the Holy Man. ‘I have not got these treasures by the dozen.’

And without waiting for an answer he shut the door.

As before, the distance seemed to have wonderfully shortened, and in a moment the tavern rose up in front of Father Grumbler. Without stopping to think, he went straight in, and found the innkeeper’s wife in the kitchen making a cake.

‘Where have you come from, with that fine red cock in your basket,’ asked she, for the bird was so big that the lid would not shut down properly.

‘Oh, I come from a place where they don’t keep these things by the dozen,’ he replied, sitting down in front of the table.

The woman said no more, but set before him a bottle of his favourite wine, and soon he began to wish to display his prize.

‘Show me what you can do, cock,’ cried he. And the cock stood up and flapped his wings three times, crowing ‘coquerico’ with a voice like a trumpet, and at each crow there fell from his beak golden drops, and diamonds as large as peas.

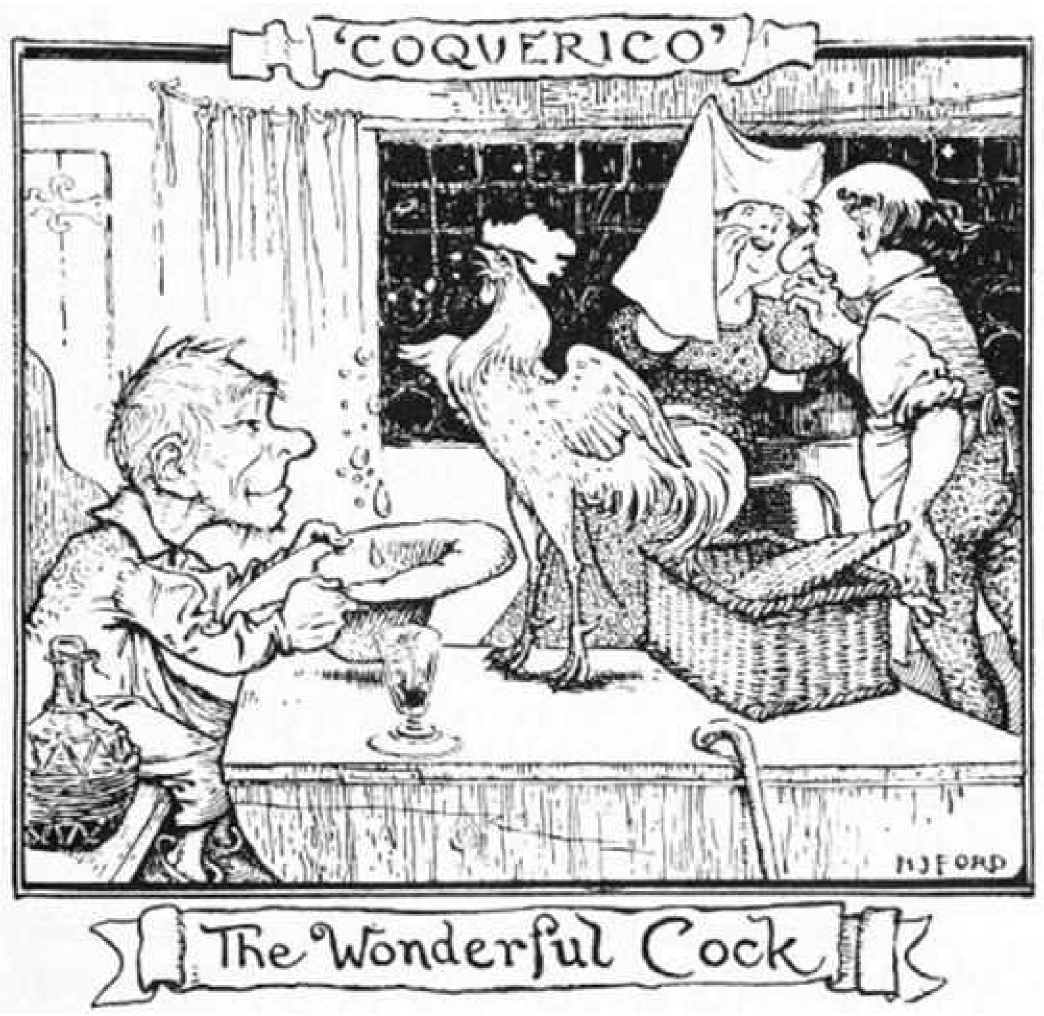

This time Father Grumbler did not invite the innkeeper’s wife to pick up his treasures, but put his own hat under the cock’s beak, so as to catch everything he let fall; and he did not see the husband and wife exchanging glances with each other which said, ‘That would be a splendid cock to put with our basket.’

‘Have another glass of wine?’ suggested the innkeeper, when they had finished admiring the beauty of the cock, for they pretended not to have seen the gold or the diamonds. And Father Grumbler, nothing loth, drank one glass after another, till his head fell forward on the table, and once more he was sound asleep. Then the woman gently coaxed the cock from the basket and carried it off to her own poultry yard, from which she brought one exactly like it, and popped it in its place.

Night was falling when the man awoke, and throwing proudly some grains of gold on the table to pay for the wine he had drunk, he tucked the cock comfortably into his basket and set out for home.

His wife and all the children were waiting for him at the door, and as soon as she caught sight of him she broke out:

‘You are a nice man to go wasting your time and your money drinking in that tavern, and leaving us to starve! Aren’t you ashamed of yourself?’

‘You don’t know what you are talking of,’ he answered. ‘Money? Why, I have gold and diamonds now, as much as I want. Do you see that cock? Well, you have only to say to him, “Show what you can do, cock,” and something splendid will happen.’

Neither wife nor children were inclined to put much faith in him after their last experience; however, they thought it was worth trying, and did as he told them. The cock flew round the room like a mad thing, and crowed till their heads nearly split with the noise; but no gold or diamonds dropped on the brick floor — not the tiniest grain of either.

Father Grumbler stared in silence for an instant, and then he began to swear so loudly that even his family, accustomed as they were to his language, wondered at him.

At last he grew a little quieter, but remained as puzzled as ever.

‘Can I have forgotten the words? But I *know* that was what he said! And I saw the diamonds with my own eyes!’ Then suddenly he seized the cock, shut it into the basket, and rushed out of the house.

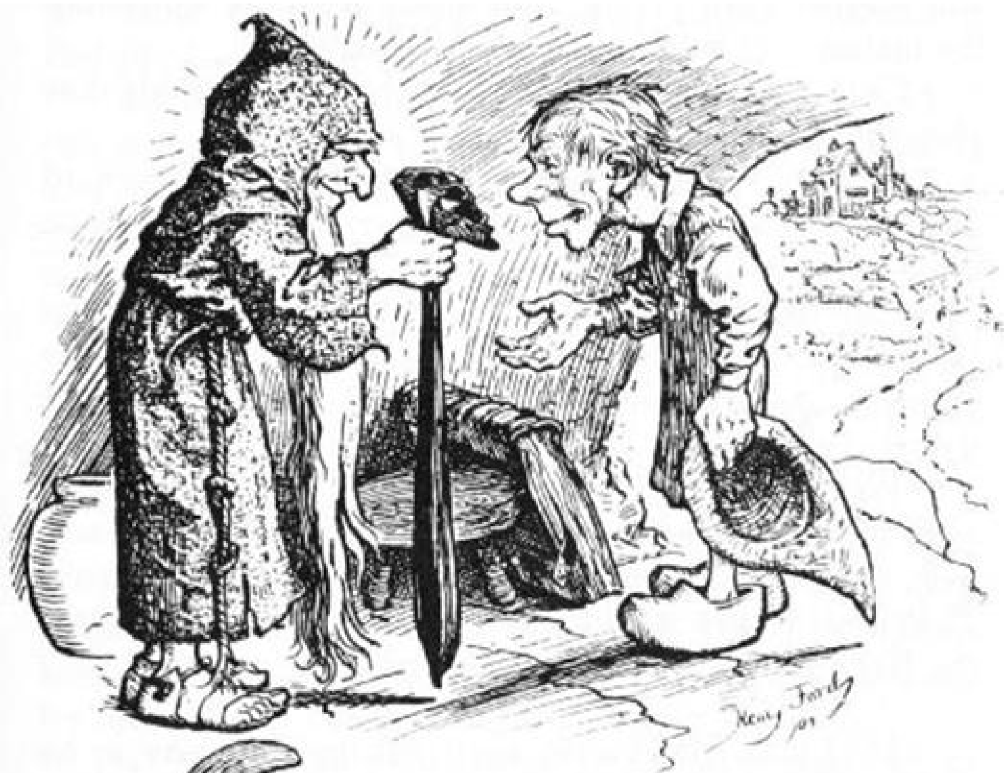

The Holy Man gives the bag to Father Grumbler

His heavy wooden shoes clattered as he ran along the road, and he made such haste that the stars were only just beginning to come out when he reached the cave of the Holy Man.

‘Who is that knocking?’ asked a voice from within.

‘It is me! It is me! Holy Man! you know! Father — —’

‘But, my good fellow, you really should give some one else a chance. This is the third time you have been — and at such an hour, too!’

‘Oh, yes, Holy Man, I know it is very late, but you will forgive me! It is your cock — there is something the matter. It is like the basket. Look!’

‘*That* my cock? *That* my basket? Somebody has played you a trick, my good man!’

‘A trick?’ repeated Father Grumbler, who began to understand what had happened. ‘Then it must have been those two — —’

‘I warned you not to show them to anybody,’ said the Holy Man. ‘You deserve —— but I will give you one more chance.’ And, turning, he unhooked something from the wall.

‘When you wish to dust your own jacket or those of your friends,’ he said, ‘you have only got to say, “Flack, flick, switch, be quick,” and you will see what happens. That is all I have to tell you.’ And, smiling to himself, the Holy Man pushed Father Grumbler out of the cave.

‘Ah, I understand now,’ muttered the good man, as he took the road home; ‘but I think I have got you two rascals!’ and he hurried on to the tavern with his basket under his arm, and the cock and the switch both inside.

‘Good evening, friends!’ he said, as he entered the inn. ‘I am very hungry, and should be glad if you would roast this cock for me as soon as possible. *This* cock and no other — mind what I say,’ he went on. ‘Oh, and another thing! You can light the fire with this basket. When you have done that I will show you something I have in my bag,’ and, as he spoke, he tried to imitate the smile that the Holy Man had given *him*.

These directions made the innkeeper’s wife very uneasy. However, she said nothing, and began to roast the cock, while her husband did his best to make the man sleepy with wine, but all in vain.

After dinner, which he did not eat without grumbling, for the cock was very tough, the man struck his hand on the table, and said: ‘Now listen to me. Go and fetch my cock and my basket, at once. Do you hear?’

‘Your cock, and your basket, Father Grumbler? But you have just — —’

‘*My* cock and *my* basket!’ interrupted he. ‘And, if you are too deaf and too stupid to understand what that means, I have got something which may help to teach you.’ And opening the bag, he cried: ‘Flack! flick! switch, be quick.’

And flack! flick! like lightning a white switch sprang out of the bag, and gave such hearty blows to the innkeeper and his wife, and to Father Grumbler into the bargain, that they all jumped as high as feathers when a mattress is shaken.

‘Stop! stop! make it stop, and you shall have back your cock and basket,’ cried the man and his wife. And Father Grumbler, who had no wish to go on, called out between his hops: ‘Stop then, can’t you? That is enough for to-day!’

But the switch paid no attention, and dealt out its blows as before, and *might* have been dealing them to this day, if the Holy Man had not heard their cries and come to the rescue. ‘Into the bag, quick!’ said he, and the switch obeyed.

‘Now go and fetch me the cock and the basket,’ and the woman went without a word, and placed them on the table.

‘You have all got what you deserved,’ continued the Holy Man, ‘and I have no pity for any of you. I shall take my treasures home, and perhaps some day I may find a man who knows how to make the best of the chances that are given him. But that will never be *you*,’ he added, turning to Father Grumbler.

THE STORY OF THE YARA

Down in the south, where the sun shines so hotly that everything and everybody sleeps all day, and even the great forests seem silent, except early in the morning and late in the evening — down in this country there once lived a young man and a maiden. The girl had been born in the town, and had scarcely ever left it; but the young man was a native of another country, and had only come to the city near the great river because he could find no work to do where he was.

A few months after his arrival, when the days were cooler, and the people did not sleep so much as usual, a great feast was held a little way out of the town, and to this feast everyone flocked from thirty miles and more. Some walked and some rode, some came in beautiful golden coaches; but all had on splendid dresses of red or blue, while wreaths of flowers rested on their hair.

It was the first time that the youth had been present on such an occasion, and he stood silently aside watching the graceful dances and the pretty games played by the young people. And as he watched, he noticed one girl, dressed in white with scarlet pomegranates in her hair, who seemed to him lovelier than all the rest.

When the feast was over, and the young man returned home, his manner was so strange that it drew the attention of all his friends.

Through his work next day the youth continued to see the girl's face, throwing the ball to her companions, or threading her way between them as she danced. At night sleep fled from him, and after tossing for hours on his bed, he would get up and plunge into a deep pool that lay a little way in the forest.

This state of things went on for some weeks, then at last chance favoured him. One evening, as he was passing near the house where she lived, he saw her standing with her back to the wall, trying to beat off with her fan the attacks of a savage dog that was leaping at her throat. Alonzo, for such was his name, sprang forward, and with one blow of his fist stretched the creature dead upon the road. He then helped the frightened and half-fainting girl into the large cool verandah where her parents were sitting, and from that hour he was a welcome guest in the house, and it was not long before he was the promised husband of Julia.

Every day, when his work was done, he used to go up to the house, half hidden among flowering plants and brilliant creepers, where humming-birds darted from bush to bush, and parrots of all colours, red and green and grey, shrieked in chorus. There he would find the maiden waiting for him, and they would spend an hour or two under the stars, which looked so large and bright that you felt as if you could almost touch them.

‘What did you do last night after you went home?’ suddenly asked the girl one evening.

‘Just the same as I always do,’ answered he. ‘It was too hot to sleep, so it was no use going to bed, and I walked straight off to the forest and bathed in one of those deep dark pools at the edge of the river. I have been there constantly for several months, but last night a strange thing happened. I was taking my last plunge, when I heard — sometimes from one side, and sometimes from another — the sound of a voice singing more sweetly than any nightingale, though I could not catch any words. I left the pool, and, dressing myself as fast as I could, I searched every bush and tree round the water, as I fancied that perhaps it was my friend who was playing a trick on me, but there was not a creature to be seen; and when I reached home I found my friend fast asleep.’

As Julia listened her face grew deadly white, and her whole body shivered as if with cold. From her childhood she had heard stories of the terrible beings that lived in the forests and were hidden under the banks of the rivers, and could only be kept off by powerful charms. Could the voice which had bewitched Alonzo have come from one of these? Perhaps, who knows, it might be the voice of the dreaded Yara herself, who sought young men on the eve of their marriage as her prey.

For a moment the girl sat choked with fear, as these thoughts rushed through her; then she said: ‘Alonzo, will you promise me something?’

‘What is that?’ asked he.

‘It is something that has to do with our future happiness.’

‘Oh! it is serious, then? Well, of course I promise. Now tell me!’

‘I want you to promise,’ she answered, lowering her voice to a whisper, ‘never to bathe in those pools again.’

‘But why not, queen of my soul; have I not gone there always, and nothing has harmed me, flower of my heart?’

‘No; but perhaps something will. If you will not promise I shall go mad with fright. Promise me.’

‘Why, what is the matter? You look so pale! Tell me why you are so frightened?’

‘Did you not hear the song?’ she asked, trembling.

‘Suppose I did, how could that hurt me? It was the loveliest song I ever heard!’

‘Yes, and after the song will come the apparition; and after that — after that — —’

‘I don’t understand. Well — after that?’

‘After that — death.’

Alonzo stared at her. Had she really gone mad? Such talk was very unlike Julia; but before he could collect his senses the girl spoke again:

‘That is the reason why I implore you never to go there again; at any rate till after we are married.’

‘And what difference will our marriage make?’

‘Oh, there will be no danger then; you can go to bathe as often as you like!’

‘But tell me why you are so afraid?’

‘Because the voice you heard — I know you will laugh, but it is quite true — it was the voice of the Yara.’

At these words Alonzo burst into a shout of laughter; but it sounded so harsh and loud that Julia shrank away shuddering. It seemed as if he could not stop himself, and the more he laughed the paler the poor girl became, murmuring to herself as she watched him:

‘Oh, heaven! you have seen her! you have seen her! what shall I do?’

Faint as was her whisper, it reached the ears of Alonzo, who, though he still could not speak for laughing, shook his head.

‘You may not know it, but it is true. Nobody who has not seen the Yara laughs like that.’ And Julia flung herself on the ground weeping bitterly.

At this sight Alonzo became suddenly grave, and kneeling by her side, gently raised her up.

‘Do not cry so, my angel,’ he said, ‘I will promise anything you please. Only let me see you smile again.’

With a great effort Julia checked her sobs, and rose to her feet.

‘Thank you,’ she answered. ‘My heart grows lighter as you say that! I know you will try to keep your word and to stay away from the forest. But — the power of the Yara is very strong, and the sound of her voice is apt to make men forget everything else in the world. Oh, I have seen it, and more than one betrothed maiden lives alone, broken-hearted. If ever you should return to the pool where you first heard the voice, promise me that you will at least take this with you.’ And opening a curiously carved box, she took out a sea-shell shot with many colours, and sang a song softly into it. ‘The moment you hear the Yara’s voice,’ said she, ‘put this to your ear, and you will hear my song instead. Perhaps — I do not know for certain — but perhaps, I may be stronger than the Yara.’

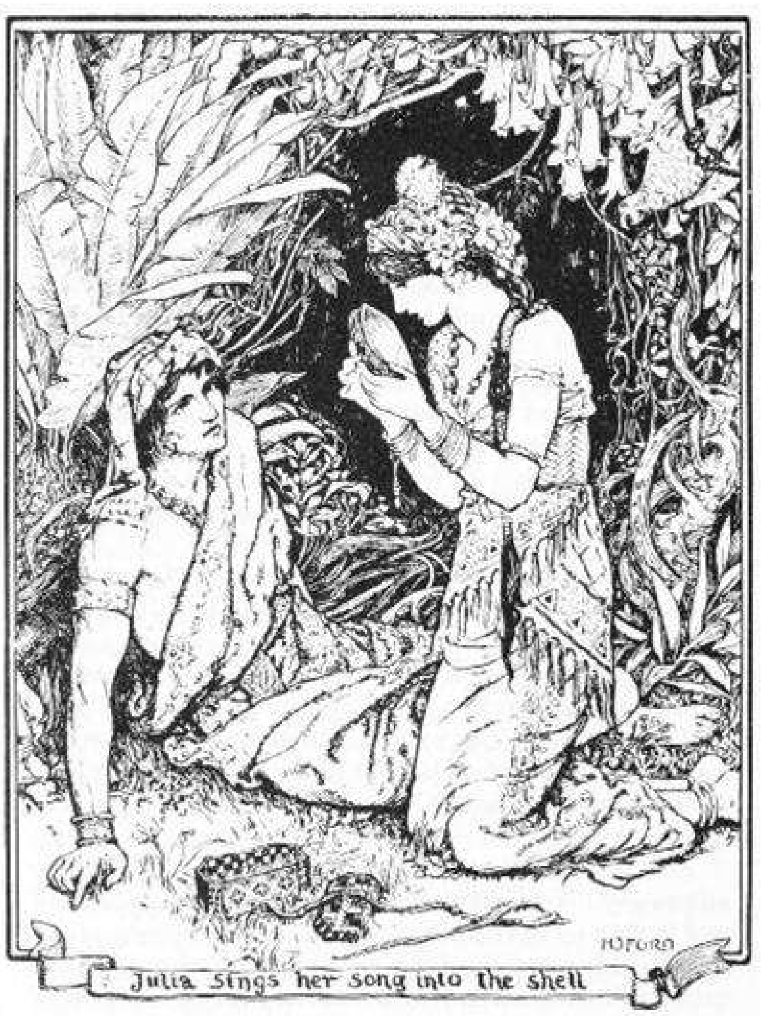

Julia sings her song into the shell

It was late that night when Alonzo returned home. The moon was shining on the distant river, which looked cool and inviting, and the trees of the forest seemed to stretch out their arms and beckon him near. But the young man steadily turned his face in the other direction, and went home to bed.

The struggle had been hard, but Alonzo had his reward next day in the joy and relief with which Julia greeted him. He assured her that having overcome the temptation once the danger was now over; but she, knowing better than he did the magic of the Yara’s face and voice, did not fail to make him repeat his promise when he went away.

For three nights Alonzo kept his word, not because he believed in the Yara, for he thought that the tales about her were all nonsense, but because he could not bear the tears with which he knew that Julia would greet him, if he confessed that he had returned to the forest. But, in spite of this, the song rang in his ears, and daily grew louder.

On the fourth night the attraction of the forest grew so strong that neither the thought of Julia nor the promises he had made her could hold him back. At eleven o’clock he plunged into the cool darkness of the trees, and took the path that led straight to the river. Yet, for the first time, he found that Julia’s warnings, though he had laughed at her at the moment, had remained in his memory, and he glanced at the bushes with a certain sense of fear which was quite new to him.

When he reached the river he paused and looked round for a moment to make sure that the strange feeling of some one watching him was fancy, and he was really alone. But the moon shone brightly on every tree, and nothing was to be seen but his own shadow; nothing was to be heard but the sound of the rippling stream.

He threw off his clothes, and was just about to dive in headlong, when something — he did not know what — suddenly caused him to look round. At the same instant the moon passed from behind a cloud, and its rays fell on a beautiful golden-haired woman standing half hidden by the ferns.

With one bound he caught up his mantle, and rushed headlong down the path he had come, fearing at each step to feel a hand laid on his shoulder. It was not till he had left the last trees behind him, and was standing in the open plain, that he dared to look round, and then he thought a figure in white was still standing there waving her arms to and fro. This was enough; he ran along the road harder than ever, and never paused till he was safe in his own room.

With the earliest rays of dawn he went back to the forest to see whether he could find any traces of the Yara, but though he searched every clump of bushes, and looked up every tree, everything was empty, and the only voices he heard were those of parrots, which are so ugly that they only drive people away.

‘I think I must be mad,’ he said to himself, ‘and have dreamt all that folly’; and going back to the city he began his daily work. But either that was harder than usual, or he must be ill, for he could not fix his mind upon it, and everybody he came across during the day inquired if anything had happened to give him that white, frightened look.

‘I must be feverish,’ he said to himself; ‘after all, it is rather dangerous to take a cold bath when one is feeling so hot.’ Yet he knew, while he said it, that he was counting the hours for night to come, that he might return to the forest.

In the evening he went as usual to the creeper-covered house. But he had better have stayed away, as his face was so pale and his manner so strange, that the poor girl saw that something terrible had occurred. Alonzo, however, refused to answer any of her questions, and all she could get was a promise to hear everything next day.

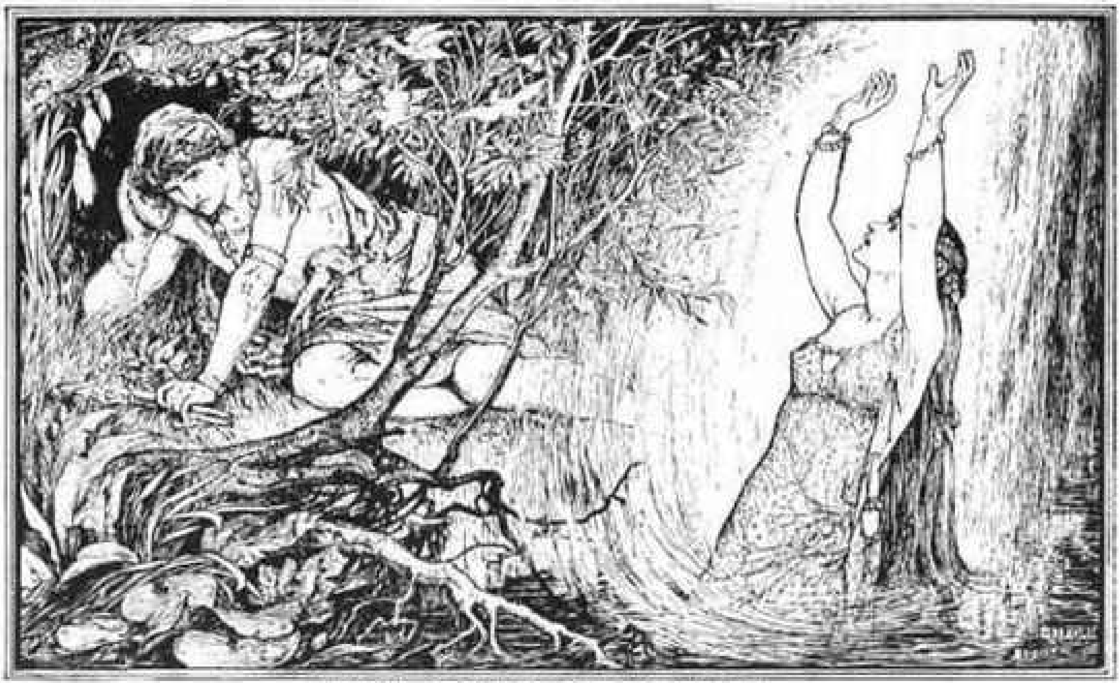

THE YARA DEFEATED

On pretence of a violent headache, he left Julia much earlier than usual and hurried quickly home. Taking down a pistol, he loaded it and put it in his belt, and a little before midnight he stole out on the tips of his toes, so as to disturb nobody. Once outside he hastened down the road which led to the forest.

He did not stop till he had reached the river pool, when, holding the pistol in his hand, he looked about him. At every little noise — the falling of a leaf, the rustle of an animal in the bushes, the cry of a night-bird — he sprang up and cocked his pistol in the direction of the sound. But though the moon still shone he saw nothing, and by and by a kind of dreamy state seemed to steal over him as he leant against a tree.

How long he remained in this condition he could not have told, but suddenly he awoke with a start, on hearing his name uttered softly.

‘Who is that?’ he cried, standing upright instantly; but only an echo answered him. Then his eyes grew fascinated with the dark waters of the pool close to his feet, and he looked at it as if he could never look away.

He gazed steadily into the depths for some minutes, when he became aware that down in the darkness was a bright spark, which got rapidly bigger and brighter. Again that feeling of awful fear took possession of him, and he tried to turn his eyes from the pool. But it was no use; something stronger than himself compelled him to keep them there.

At last the waters parted softly, and floating on the surface he saw the beautiful woman whom he had fled from only a few nights before. He turned to run, but his feet were glued to the spot.

She smiled at him and held out her arms, but as she did so there came over him the remembrance of Julia, as he had seen her a few hours earlier, and her warnings and fears for the very danger in which he now found himself.

Meanwhile the figure was always drawing nearer, nearer; but, with a violent effort, Alonzo shook off his stupor, and taking aim at her shoulder he pulled the trigger. The report awoke the sleeping echoes, and was repeated all through the forest, but the figure smiled still, and went on advancing. Again Alonzo fired, and a second time the bullet whistled through the air, and the figure advanced nearer. A moment more, and she would be at his side.

Then, his pistol being empty, he grasped the barrel with both hands, and stood ready to use it as a club should the Yara approach any closer. But now it seemed her turn to feel afraid, for she paused for an instant while he pressed forward, still holding the pistol above his head, prepared to strike.

In his excitement he had forgotten the river, and it was not till the cold water touched his feet that he stood still by instinct. The Yara saw that he was wavering, and suffering herself to sway gently backwards and forwards on the surface of the river, she began to sing. The song floated through the trees, now far and now near; no one could tell whence it came, the whole air seemed full of it. Alonzo felt his senses going and his will failing. His arms dropped heavily to his side, but in falling struck against the sea shell, which, as he had promised Julia, he had always carried in his coat.

His dimmed mind was just clear enough to remember what she had said, and with trembling fingers, that were almost powerless to grasp, he drew it out. As he did so the song grew sweeter and more tender than before, but he shut his ears to it and bent his head over the shell. Out of its depths arose the voice of Julia singing to him as she had sung when she gave him the shell, and though the notes sounded faint at first, they swelled louder and louder till the mist which had gathered about him was blown away.

Then he raised his head, feeling that he had been through strange places, where he could never wander any more; and he held himself erect and strong, and looked about him. Nothing was to be seen but the shining of the river, and the dark shadows of the trees; nothing was to be heard but the hum of the insects, as they darted through the night.

THE CUNNING HARE

In a very cold country, far across the seas, where ice and snow cover the ground for many months in the year, there lived a little hare, who, as his father and mother were both dead, was brought up by his grandmother. As he was too young, and she was too old, to work, they were very poor, and often did not have enough to eat.

One day, when the little fellow was hungrier than usual, he asked his grandmother if he might not go down to the river and catch a fish for their breakfast, as the thaw had come and the water was flowing freely again. She laughed at him for thinking that any fish would let itself be caught by a hare, especially such a young one; but as she had the rheumatism very badly, and could get no food herself, she let him go. ‘If he does not catch a fish he may find something else,’ she said to herself. So she told her grandson where to look for the net, and how he was to set it across the river; but just as he was starting, feeling himself quite a man, she called him back.

‘After all, I don’t know what is the use of your going, my boy! For even if you should catch a fish, I have no fire to cook it with.’

‘Let me catch my fish, and I will soon make you a fire,’ he answered gaily, for he was young, and knew nothing about the difficulties of fire-making.

It took him some time to haul the net through bushes and over fields, but at length he reached a pool in the river which he had often heard was swarming with fish, and here he set the net, as his grandmother had directed him.

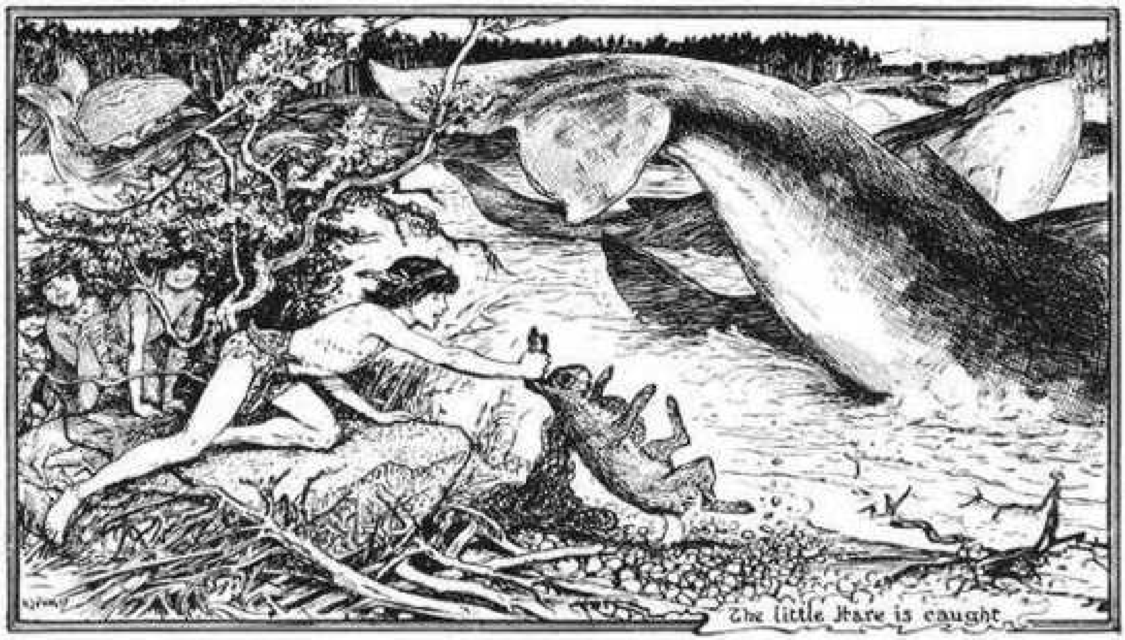

The little Hare is caught

He was so excited that he hardly slept all night, and at the very first streak of dawn he ran as fast as ever he could down to the river. His heart beat as quickly as if he had had dogs behind him, and he hardly dared to look, lest he should be disappointed. Would there be even one fish? And at this thought the pangs of hunger made him feel quite sick with fear. But he need not have been afraid; in every mesh of the net was a fine fat fish, and of course the net itself was so heavy that he could only lift one corner. He threw some of the fish back into the water, and buried some more in a hole under a stone, where he would be sure to find them. Then he rolled up the net with the rest, put it on his back and carried it home. The weight of the load caused his back to ache, and he was thankful to drop it outside their hut, while he rushed in, full of joy, to tell his grandmother. ‘Be quick and clean them!’ he said, ‘and I will go to those people’s tents on the other side of the water.’

The old woman stared at him in horror as she listened to his proposal. Other people had tried to steal fire before, and few indeed had come back with their lives; but as, contrary to all her expectations, he had managed to catch such a number of fish, she thought that perhaps there was some magic about him which she did not know of, and did not try to hinder him.

When the fish were all taken out, he fetched the net which he had laid out to dry, folded it up very small, and ran down to the river, hoping that he might find a place narrow enough for him to jump over; but he soon saw that it was too wide for even the best jumper in the world. For a few moments he stood there, wondering what was to be done, then there darted into his head some words of a spell which he had once heard a wizard use, while drinking from the river. He repeated them, as well as he could remember, and waited to see what would happen. In five minutes such a grunting and a puffing was heard, and columns of water rose into the air, though he could not tell what had made them. Then round the bend of the stream came fifteen huge whales, which he ordered to place themselves heads to tails, like stepping stones, so that he could jump from one to the other till he landed on the opposite shore. Directly he got there he told the whales that he did not need them any more, and sat down in the sand to rest.

Unluckily some children who were playing about caught sight of him, and one of them, stealing softly up behind him, laid tight hold of his ears. The hare, who had been watching the whales as they sailed down the river, gave a violent start, and struggled to get away; but the boy held on tight, and ran back home, as fast as he could go.

‘Throw it in the pot,’ said the old woman, as soon as he had told his story; ‘put it in that basket, and as soon as the water boils in the pot we will hang it over the fire!’

‘Better kill it first,’ said the old man; and the hare listened, horribly frightened, but still looking secretly to see if there was no hole through which he could escape, if he had a chance of doing so. Yes, there was one, right in the top of the tent, so, shaking himself, as if with fright, he let the end of his net unroll itself a little.

‘I wish that a spark of fire would fall on my net,’ whispered he; and the next minute a great log fell forward into the midst of the tent, causing every one to spring backwards. The sparks were scattered in every direction, and one fell on the net, making a little blaze. In an instant the hare had leaped through the hole, and was racing towards the river, with men, women, and children after him. There was no time to call back the whales, so, holding the net tight in his mouth, he wished himself across the river. Then he jumped high into the air, and landed safe on the other side, and after turning round to be sure that there was no chance of anyone pursuing him, trotted happily home to his grandmother.

‘Didn’t I tell you I would bring you fire?’ said he, holding up his net, which was now burning briskly.

‘But how did you cross the water?’ inquired the old woman.

‘Oh, I just jumped!’ said he. And his grandmother asked him no more questions, for she saw that he was wiser than she.

THE TURTLE AND HIS BRIDE

There was once a turtle who lived among a great many people of different kinds, in a large camp near a big river which was born right up amongst the snows, and flowed straight away south till it reached a sea where the water was always hot.

There were many other turtles in the camp, and this turtle was kind and pleasant to them all, but he did not care for any of them very much, and felt rather lonely.

At last he built himself a hut, and filled it with skins for seats, and made it as comfortable as any hut for miles round; and when it was quite finished he looked about among the young women to see which of them he should ask to be his wife.

It took him some time to make up his mind, for no turtle likes being hurried, but at length he found one girl who seemed prettier and more industrious than the rest, and one day he entered her home, and said: ‘Will you marry me?’

The young woman was so surprised at this question that she dropped the beaded slipper she was making, and stared at the turtle. She felt inclined to laugh — the idea was so absurd; but she was kind-hearted and polite, so she looked as grave as she could, and answered:

‘But how are you going to provide for a family? Why, when the camp moves, you will not even be able to keep up with the rest!’

‘I can keep up with the best of them,’ replied the turtle, tossing his head. But though he was very much offended he did not let the girl see it, and begged and prayed her so hard to marry him that, at last, she consented, very unwillingly.

‘You will have to wait till the spring, though,’ she said; ‘I must make a great many slippers and dresses for myself, as I shall not have much time afterwards.’

This did not please the turtle; but he knew it was no use talking, so all he answered was:

‘I shall go to war and take some captives, and I shall be away several months. And when I return I shall expect you to be ready to marry me.’

So he went back to his hut, and at once set about his preparations. The first thing he did was to call all his relations together, and ask them if they would come with him and make war on the people of a neighbouring village. The turtles, who were tired of doing nothing, agreed at once, and next day the whole tribe left the camp. The girl was standing at the door of her hut as they passed, and laughed out loud — they moved so slowly. Her lover, who was marching at the head, grew very angry at this, and cried out:

‘In four days from now you will be weeping instead of laughing, because there will be hundreds of miles between you and me.’

‘In four days,’ replied the girl — who had only promised to marry him in order to get rid of him— ‘in four days you will hardly be out of sight.’

‘Oh, I did not mean four days, but four *years*,’ answered the turtle, hastily; ‘whatever happens I shall be back by then.’

The army marched on, till one day, when they felt as if they must have got half round the earth, though they were scarcely four miles from the camp, they found a large tree lying across their path. They looked at it with dismay, and the oldest among them put their heads together to see what was to be done.

‘Can’t we manage to get past by the top?’ asked one.

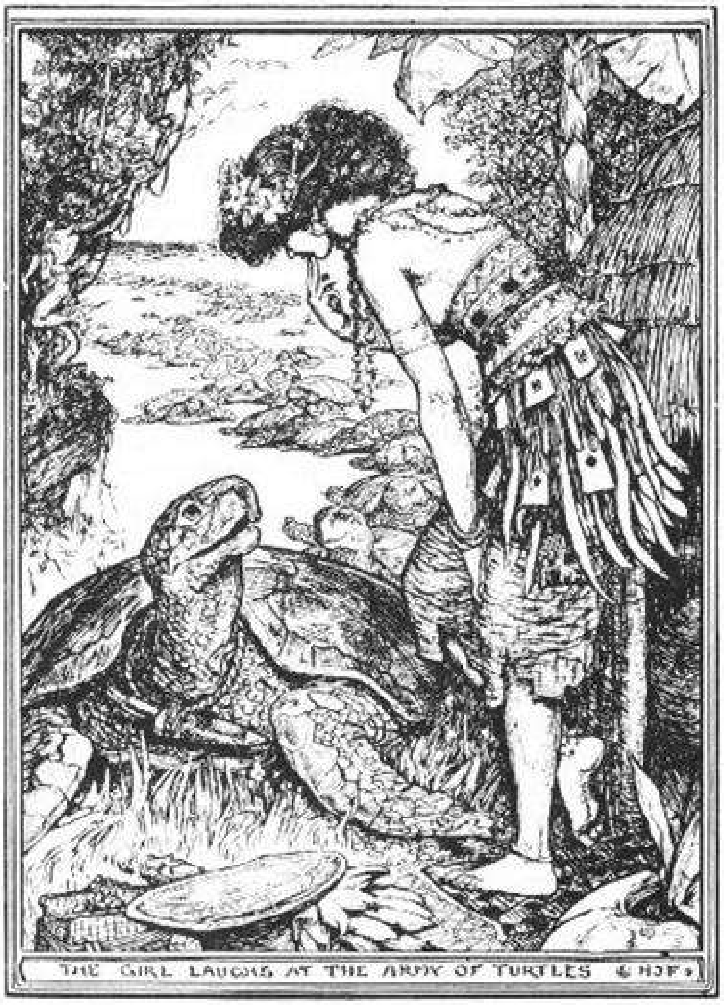

THE GIRL LAUGHS AT THE ARMY OF TURTLES

‘Why, it would take us *years*,’ exclaimed another. ‘Just look at all those tall green branches, spreading in every direction. If once we got entangled in *them*, we should never get out again!'

'Well then, let us go round by the bottom,' said a third.

'How are we to do that, when the roots have made a deep hole, and above that is a high bank?' replied a fourth. 'No; the only way *I* can think of, is to burn a large hole in the trunk.' And this they did, but the trunk was very thick, and would not burn through.

'It is no use, we must give it up,' they agreed at last. 'After all, nobody need ever know! We have been away such a long while that we might easily have had all sorts of adventures.' And so the whole company turned homewards again.

They took even longer to go back than they had to come, for they were tired and footsore with their journey. When they drew near the camp they plucked up their courage, and began to sing a war-song. At this the villagers came flocking to see what spoils the turtles had won, but, as they approached, each turtle seized some one by the wrist, exclaiming: 'You are our spoils; you are our prisoners!'

'Now that I have got you I will keep you,' said the leader, who had happened to seize his betrothed.

Everybody was naturally very angry at this behaviour, and the girl most of all, and in her secret heart she determined to have her revenge. But, just at present, the turtles were too strong, so the prisoners had to put on their smartest slippers and their brightest clothes, and dance a war dance while the turtles sang. They danced so long that it seemed as if they would never stop, till the turtle who was leading the singing suddenly broke into a loud chant:

Whoever comes here, will die, will die!

At this all the dancers grew so frightened that they burst through the ring of their captors, and ran back to the village, the turtles following — very slowly. On the way the chief turtle met a man, who said to him:

'That woman who was to have been your wife has married another man!'

'Is that true?' said the turtle. 'Then I must see him.'

But as soon as the villager was out of sight the turtle stopped, and taking a bundle containing fringes and ornaments from his back, he hung them about him, so that they rattled as he walked. When he was quite close to the hut where the woman lived, he cried out:

'Here I am to claim the woman who promised to be my wife.'

'Oh, here is the turtle,' whispered the husband hurriedly; 'what is to be done now?'

'Leave that to me; I will manage him,' replied the wife, and at that moment the turtle came in, and seized her by the wrist. 'Come with me,' he said sternly.

'You broke your promise,' answered she. 'You said you would be back soon, and it is more than a year since you went! How was I to know that you were alive?'

At her words the husband took courage, and spoke hastily:

'Yes, you promised you would go to war and bring back some prisoners, and you have not done it.'

'I *did* go, and made many prisoners,' retorted the turtle angrily, drawing out his knife. 'Look here, if she won't be *my* wife, she sha'n't be *yours*. I will cut her in two; and you shall have one half, and I the other.'

'But half a woman is no use to me,' answered the man. 'If you want her so much you had better take her.' And the turtle, followed by his relations, carried her off to his own hut.

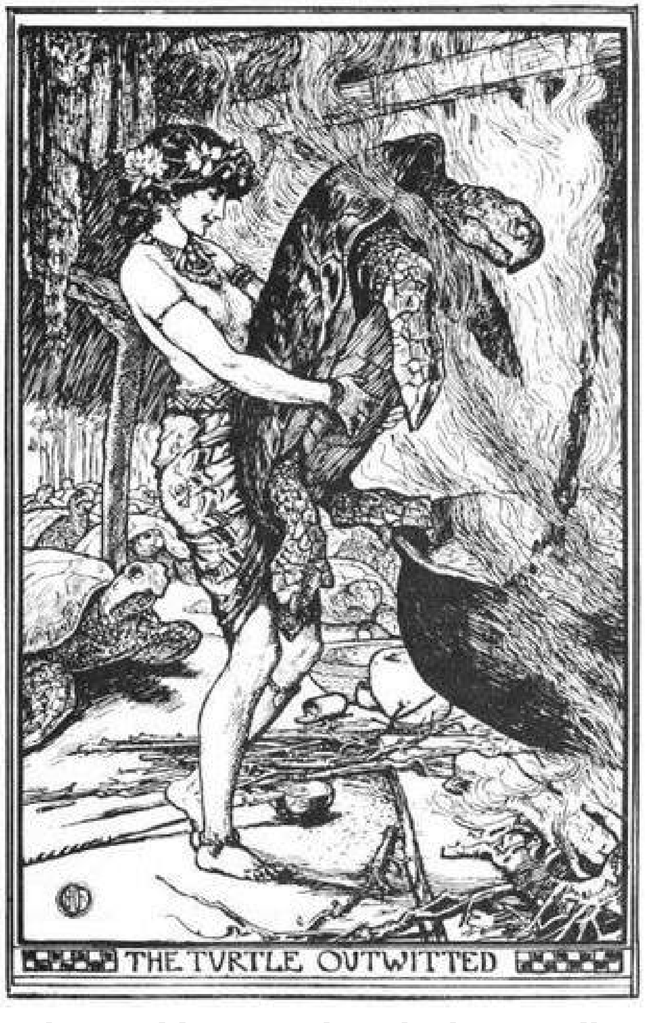

THE TVRTLE OUTWITTED

Now the woman saw she would gain nothing by being sulky, so she pretended to be very glad to have got rid of her husband; but all the while she was trying to invent a plan to deliver herself from the turtle. At length she remembered that one of her friends had a large iron pot, and when the turtle had gone to his room to put away his fringes, she ran over to her neighbour’s and brought it back. Then she filled it with water and hung it over the fire to boil. It was just beginning to bubble and hiss when the turtle entered.

‘What are you doing there?’ asked he, for he was always afraid of things that he did not understand.

‘Just warming some water,’ she answered. ‘Do you know how to swim?’

‘Yes, of course I do. What a question! But what does it matter to you?’ said the turtle, more suspicious than ever.

‘Oh, I only thought that after your long journey you might like to wash. The roads are so muddy, after the winter’s rains. I could rub your shell for you till it was bright and shining again.’

‘Well, I *am* rather muddy. If one is fighting, you know, one cannot stop to pick one’s way. I should certainly be more comfortable if my back was washed.’

The woman did not wait for him to change his mind. She caught him up by his shell and popped him straight into the pot, where he sank to the bottom, and died instantly.

The other turtles, who were standing at the door, saw their leader disappear, and felt it was their duty as soldiers to follow him; and, springing into the pot, died too. All but one young turtle, who, frightened at not seeing any of his friends come out again, went as fast as he could to a clump of bushes, and from there made his way to the river. His only thought was to get away as far as possible from that dreadful hut; so he let the river carry him where it was going itself, and at last, one day, he found himself in the warm sea, where, if he is not dead, you may meet him still.

HOW GEIRALD THE COWARD WAS PUNISHED

Once upon a time there lived a poor knight who had a great many children, and found it very hard to get enough for them to eat. One day he sent his eldest son, Rosald, a brave and honest youth, to the neighbouring town to do some business, and here Rosald met a young man named Geirald, with whom he made friends.

Now Geirald was the son of a rich man, who was proud of the boy, and had all his life allowed him to do whatever he fancied, and, luckily for the father, he was prudent and sensible, and did not waste money, as many other rich young men might have done. For some time he had set his heart on travelling into foreign countries, and after he had been talking for a little while to Rosald, he asked if his new friend would be his companion on his journey.

‘There is nothing I should like better,’ answered Rosald, shaking his head sorrowfully; ‘but my father is very poor, and he could never give me the money.’

‘Oh, if that is your only difficulty, it is all right,’ cried Geirald. ‘My father has more money than he knows what to do with, and he will give me as much as I want for both of us; only, there is one thing you must promise me, Rosald, that, supposing we have any adventures, you will let the honour and glory of them fall to me.’

‘Yes, of course, that is only fair,’ answered Rosald, who never cared about putting himself forward. ‘But I cannot go without telling my parents. I am sure they will think me lucky to get such a chance.’

As soon as the business was finished, Rosald hastened home. His parents were delighted to hear of his good fortune, and his father gave him his own sword, which was growing rusty for want of use, while his mother saw that his leather jerkin was in order.

‘Be sure you keep the promise you made to Geirald,’ said she, as she bade him good-bye, ‘and, come what may, see that you never betray him.’

Full of joy Rosald rode off, and the next day he and Geirald started off to seek adventures. To their disappointment their own land was so well governed that nothing out of the common was very likely to happen, but directly they crossed the border into another kingdom all seemed lawlessness and confusion.

They had not gone very far, when, riding across a mountain, they caught a glimpse of several armed men hiding amongst some trees in their path, and remembered suddenly some talk they had heard of a band of twelve robbers who lay in wait for rich travellers. The robbers were more like savage beasts than men, and lived somewhere at the top of the mountain in caves and holes in the ground. They were all called ‘Hankur,’ and were distinguished one from another by the name of a colour — blue, grey, red, and so on, except their chief, who was known as Hankur the Tall. All this and more rushed into the minds of the two young men as they saw the flash of their swords in the moonlight.

‘It is impossible to fight them — they are twelve to two,’ whispered Geirald, stopping his horse in the path. ‘We had much better ride back and take the lower road. It would be stupid to throw away our lives like this.’

‘Oh, we can’t turn back,’ answered Rosald, ‘we should be ashamed to look anyone in the face again! And, besides, it is a grand opportunity to show what we are made of. Let us tie up our horses here, and climb up the rocks so that we can roll stones down on them.’

‘Well, we might try that, and then we shall always have our horses,’ said Geirald. So they went up the rocks silently and carefully.

The robbers were lying all ready, expecting every moment to see their victims coming round the corner a few yards away, when a shower of huge stones fell on their heads, killing half the band. The others sprang up the rock, but as they reached the top the sword of Rosald swung round, and one man after another rolled down into the valley. At last the chief managed to spring up, and, grasping Rosald by the waist, flung away his sword, and the two fought desperately, their bodies swaying always nearer the edge. It seemed as if Rosald, being the smaller of the two, *must* fall over, when, with his left hand, he drew the robber’s sword out of its sheath and plunged it into his heart. Then he took from the dead man a beautiful ring set with a large stone, and put it on his own finger.

The fame of this wonderful deed soon spread through the country, and people would often stop Geirald’s horse, and ask leave to see the robber’s ring, which was said to have been stolen from the father of the reigning king. And Geirald showed them the ring with pride, and listened to their words of praise, and no one would ever have guessed anyone else had destroyed the robbers.

In a few days they left that kingdom and rode on to another, where they thought they would stop through the remainder of the winter, for Geirald liked to be comfortable, and did not care about travelling through ice and snow. But the king would only grant them leave to stop on condition that, before the winter was ended, they should give him some fresh proof of the courage of which he had heard so much. Rosald’s heart was glad at the king’s message, and as for Geirald, he felt that as long as Rosald was there all would go well. So they both bowed low and replied that it was the king’s place to command and theirs to obey.

‘Well, then,’ said his Majesty, ‘this is what I want you to do: In the north-east part of my kingdom there dwells a giant, who has an iron staff twenty yards long, and he is so quick in using it, that even fifty knights have no chance against him. The bravest and strongest young men of my court have fallen under the blows of that staff; but, as you overcame the twelve robbers so easily, I feel that I have reason to hope that you may be able to conquer the giant. In three days from this you will set out.'

'We will be ready, your Majesty,' answered Rosald; but Geirald remained silent.

'How can we possibly fight against a giant that has killed fifty knights?' cried Geirald, when they were outside the castle. 'The king only wants to get rid of us! He won't think about us for the next three days — that is one comfort — so we shall have plenty of time to cross the borders of the kingdom and be out of his reach.'

'We mayn't be able to kill the giant, but we certainly can't run away till we have tried,' answered Rosald. 'Besides, think how glorious it will be if we *do* manage to kill him! I know what sort of weapon I shall use. Come with me now, and I will see about it.' And, taking his friend by the arm, he led him into a shop where he bought a huge lump of solid iron, so big that they could hardly lift it between them. However, they just managed to carry it to a blacksmith's where Rosald directed that it should be beaten into a thick club, with a sharp spike at one end. When this was done to his liking he took it home under his arm.

Very early on the third morning the two young men started on their journey, and on the fourth day they reached the giant's cave before he was out of bed. Hearing the sound of footsteps, the giant got up and went to the entrance to see who was coming, and Rosald, expecting something of the sort, struck him such a blow on the forehead that he fell to the ground. Then, before he could rise to his feet again, Rosald drew out his sword and cut off his head.

'It was not so difficult after all, you see,' he said, turning to Geirald. And placing the giant's head in a leathern wallet which was slung over his back, they began their journey to the castle.

As they drew near the gates, Rosald took the head from the wallet and handed it to Geirald, whom he followed into the king's presence.

'The giant will trouble you no more,' said Geirald, holding out the head. And the king fell on his neck and kissed him, and cried joyfully that he was the bravest knight in all the world, and that a feast should be made for him and Rosald, and that the great deed should be proclaimed throughout the kingdom. And Geirald's heart swelled with pride, and he almost forgot that it was Rosald and not he, who had slain the giant.

By-and-by a whisper went round that a beautiful lady who lived in the castle would be present at the feast, with twenty-four lovely maidens, her attendants. The lady was the queen of her own country, but as her father and mother had died when she was a little girl, she had been left in the care of this king who was her uncle.

She was now old enough to govern her own kingdom, but her subjects did not like being ruled by a woman, and said that she must find a husband to help her in managing her affairs. Prince after prince had offered himself, but the young queen would have nothing to say to any of them, and at last told her ministers that if she was to have a husband at all she must choose him for herself, as she would certainly not marry any of those whom they had selected for her. The ministers replied that in that case she had better manage her kingdom alone, and the queen, who knew nothing about business, got things into such a confusion that at last she threw them up altogether, and went off to her uncle.

Now when she heard how the two young men had slain the giant, her heart was filled with admiration of their courage, and she declared that if a feast was held she would certainly be present at it.

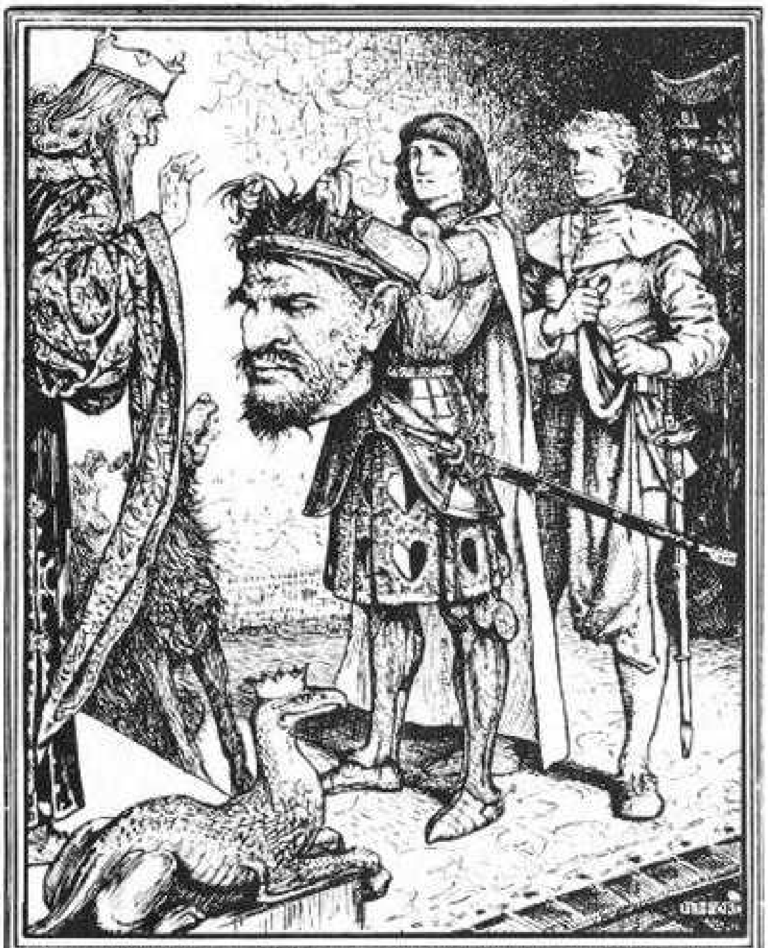

“THE GIANT WILL TROUBLE YOU NO MORE,” said Geirald

And so she was; and when the feast was over she asked the king, her guardian, if he would allow the two heroes who had killed the robbers and slain the giant to fight a tourney the next day with one of her pages. The king gladly gave his consent, and ordered the lists to be made ready, never doubting that two great champions would be eager for such a chance of adding to their fame. Little did he guess that Geirald had done all he could to persuade Rosald to steal secretly out of the castle during the night, ‘for,’ said he, ‘I don’t believe they are pages at all, but well-proved knights, and how can we, so young and untried, stand up against them?’

‘The honour will be all the higher if we gain the day,’ answered Rosald; but Geirald would listen to nothing, and only declared that he did not care about honour, and would rather be alive than have every honour in the world heaped on him. Go he would, and as Rosald had sworn to give him his company, he must come with him.

Rosald was much grieved when he heard these words, but he knew that it was useless attempting to persuade Geirald, and turned his thoughts to forming some plan to prevent this disgraceful flight. Suddenly his face brightened. ‘Let us change clothes,’ he said, ‘and *I* will do the fighting, while you shall get the glory. Nobody will ever know.’ And to this Geirald readily consented.

Whether Geirald was right or not in thinking that the so-called page was really a well-proved knight, it is certain that Rosald’s task was a very hard one. Three times they came together with a crash which made their horses reel; once Rosald knocked the helmet off his foe, and received in return such a blow that he staggered in his saddle. Shouts went up from the lookers-on, as first one and then the other seemed gaining the victory; but at length Rosald planted his spear in the armour which covered his adversary’s breast and bore him steadily backward. ‘Unhorsed! unhorsed!’ cried the people; and Rosald then himself dismounted and helped his adversary to rise.

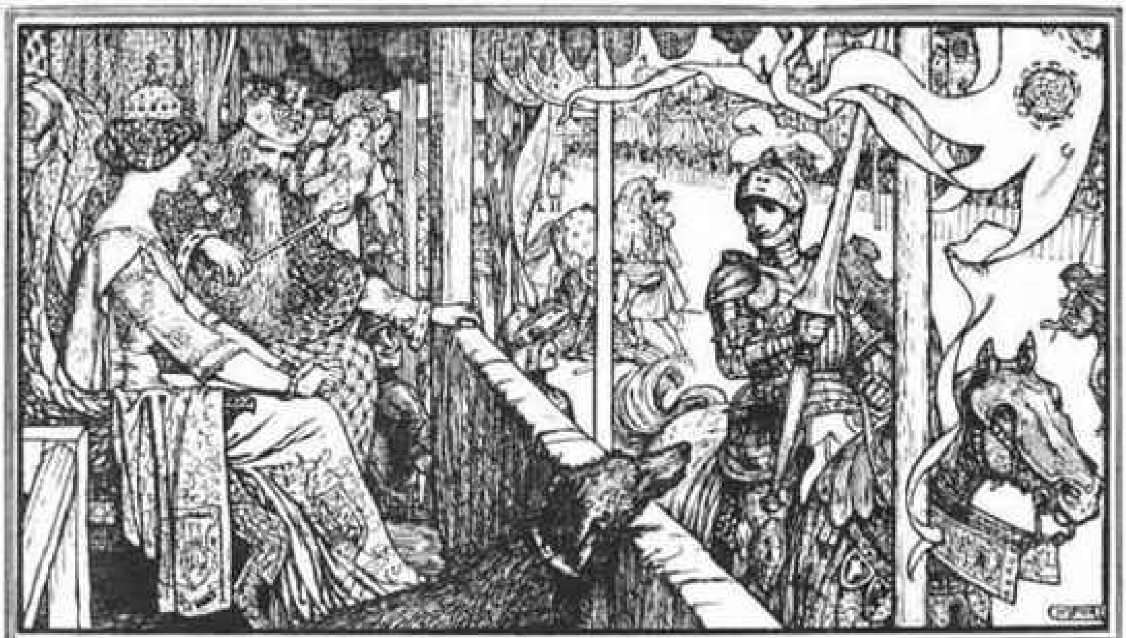

— GEIRALD CLAIMS HIS REWARD AND THE QUEEN DEMANDS ANOTHER TEST —

In the confusion that followed it was easy for Rosald to slip away and return Geirald his proper clothes. And in these, torn and dusty with the fight, Geirald answered the king’s summons to come before him.

‘You have done what I expected you to do,’ said he, ‘and now, choose your reward.’

‘Grant me, sire, the hand of the queen, your niece,’ replied the young man, bowing low, ‘and I will defend her kingdom against all her enemies.’

‘She could choose no better husband,’ said the king, ‘and if she consents I do.’ And he turned towards the queen, who had not been present during the fight, but had just slipped into a seat by his right hand. Now the queen's eyes were very sharp, and it seemed to her that the man who stood before her, tall and handsome though he might be, was different in many slight ways, and in one in particular, from the man who had fought the tourney. How there could be any trickery she could not understand, and why the real victor should be willing to give up his prize to another was still stranger; but something in her heart warned her to be careful. She answered: 'You may be satisfied, uncle, but *I* am not. One more proof I must have; let the two young men now fight against each other. The man *I* marry must be the man who killed the robbers and the giant, and overcame my page.' Geirald's face grew pale as he heard these words. He knew there was no escape for him now, though he did not doubt for one moment that Rosald would keep his compact loyally to the last. But how would it be possible that even Rosald should deceive the watchful eyes of the king and his court, and still more those of the young queen whom he felt uneasily had suspected him from the first?

The tourney was fought, and in spite of Geirald's fears Rosald managed to hang back to make attacks which were never meant to succeed, and to allow strokes which he could easily have parried to attain their end. At length, after a great show of resistance, he fell heavily to the ground. And as he fell he knew that it was not alone the glory that was his rightfully which he gave up, but the hand of the queen that was more precious still.

But Geirald did not even wait to see if he was wounded; he went straight to the wall where the royal banner waved and claimed the reward which was now his.

The crowd of watchers turned towards the queen, expecting to see her stoop and give some token to the victor. Instead, to the surprise of everyone, she merely smiled gracefully, and said that before she bestowed her hand one more test must be imposed, but this should be the last. The final tourney should be fought; Geirald and Rosald should meet singly two knights of the king's court, and he who could unhorse his foe should be master of herself and of her kingdom. The combat was fixed to take place at ten o'clock the following day.

All night long Geirald walked about his room, not daring to face the fight that lay in front of him, and trying with all his might to discover some means of escaping it. All night long he moved restlessly from door to window; and when the trumpets sounded, and the combatants rode into the field, he alone was missing. The king sent messengers to see what had become of him, and he was found, trembling with fear, hiding under his bed. After that there was no need of any further proof. The combat was declared unnecessary, and the queen pronounced herself quite satisfied, and ready to accept Rosald as her husband.

‘You forgot one thing,’ she said, when they were alone. ‘I recognised my father’s ring which Hankur the Tall had stolen, on the finger of your right hand, and I knew that it was you and not Geirald who had slain the robber band. *I* was the page who fought you, and again I saw the ring on your finger, though it was absent from his when he stood before me to claim the prize. That was why I ordered the combat between you, though your faith to your word prevented my plan being successful, and I had to try another. The man who keeps his promise at all costs to himself is the man I can trust, both for myself and for my people.’

So they were married, and returned to their own kingdom, which they ruled well and happily. And many years after a poor beggar knocked at the palace gates and asked for money, for the sake of days gone by — and this was Geirald.

HÁBOGI

Once upon a time there lived two peasants who had three daughters, and, as generally happens, the youngest was the most beautiful and the best tempered, and when her sisters wanted to go out she was always ready to stay at home and do their work.

Years passed quickly with the whole family, and one day the parents suddenly perceived that all three girls were grown up, and that very soon they would be thinking of marriage.

‘Have you decided what your husband’s name is to be?’ said the father, laughingly, to his eldest daughter, one evening when they were all sitting at the door of their cottage. ‘You know that is a very important point!’

‘Yes; I will never wed any man who is not called Sigmund,’ answered she.

‘Well, it is lucky for you that there are a great many Sigmunds in this part of the world,’ replied her father, ‘so that you can take your choice! And what do *you* say?’ he added, turning to the second.

‘Oh, *I* think that there is no name so beautiful as Sigurd,’ cried she.

‘Then you won’t be an old maid either,’ answered he. ‘There are seven Sigurds in the next village alone! And you, Helga?’

Helga, who was still the prettiest of the three, looked up. She also had her favourite name, but, just as she was going to say it, she seemed to hear a voice whisper: ‘Marry no one who is not called Hábogi.’

The girl had never heard of such a name, and did not like it, so she determined to pay no attention; but as she opened her mouth to tell her father that her husband must be called Njal, she found herself answering instead: ‘If I do marry it will be to no one except Hábogi.’

‘Who *is* Hábogi?’ asked her father and sisters; ‘We never heard of such a person.’

‘All I can tell you is that he will be my husband, if ever I have one,’ returned Helga; and that was all she would say.

Before very long the young men who lived in the neighbouring villages or on the sides of the mountains, had heard of this talk of the three girls, and Sigmunds and Sigurds in scores came to visit the little cottage. There were other young men too, who bore different names, though not one of them was called ‘Hábogi,’ and these thought that they might perhaps gain the heart of the youngest. But though there was more than one ‘Njal’ amongst them, Helga’s eyes seemed always turned another way.

At length the two elder sisters made their choice from out of the Sigurds and the Sigmunds, and it was decided that both weddings should take place at the same time. Invitations were sent out to the friends and relations, and when, on the morning of the great day, they were all assembled, a rough, coarse old peasant left the crowd and came up to the brides’ father.

‘My name is Hábogi, and Helga must be my wife,’ was all he said. And though Helga stood pale and trembling with surprise, she did not try to run away.

‘I cannot talk of such things just now,’ answered the father, who could not bear the thought of giving his favourite daughter to this horrible old man, and hoped, by putting it off, that something might happen. But the sisters, who had always been rather jealous of Helga, were secretly pleased that their bridegrooms should outshine hers.

When the feast was over, Hábogi led up a beautiful horse from a field where he had left it to graze, and bade Helga jump up on its splendid saddle, all embroidered in scarlet and gold. ‘You shall come back again,’ said he; ‘but now you must see the house that you are to live in.’ And though Helga was very unwilling to go, something inside her forced her to obey.

The old man settled her comfortably, then sprang up in front of her as easily as if he had been a boy, and, shaking the reins, they were soon out of sight.

After some miles they rode through a meadow, with grass so green that Helga’s eyes felt quite dazzled; and feeding on the grass were a quantity of large fat sheep, with the curliest and whitest wool in the world.

‘What lovely sheep! whose are they?’ cried Helga.

‘Your Hábogi’s,’ answered he, ‘all that you see belongs to him; but the finest sheep in the whole herd, which has little golden bells hanging between its horns, you shall have for yourself.’

This pleased Helga very much, for she had never had anything of her own; and she smiled quite happily as she thanked Hábogi for his present.

They soon left the sheep behind them, and entered a large field with a river running through it, where a number of beautiful grey cows were standing by a gate waiting for a milk-maid to come and milk them.

‘Oh, what lovely cows!’ cried Helga again; ‘I am sure their milk must be sweeter than any other cows’. How I should like to have some! I wonder to whom they belong?’

‘To your Hábogi,’ replied he; ‘and some day you shall have as much milk as you like, but we cannot stop now. Do you see that big grey one, with the silver bells between her horns? That is to be yours, and you can have her milked every morning the moment you wake.’

And Helga’s eyes shone, and though she did not say anything, she thought that she would learn to milk the cow herself.

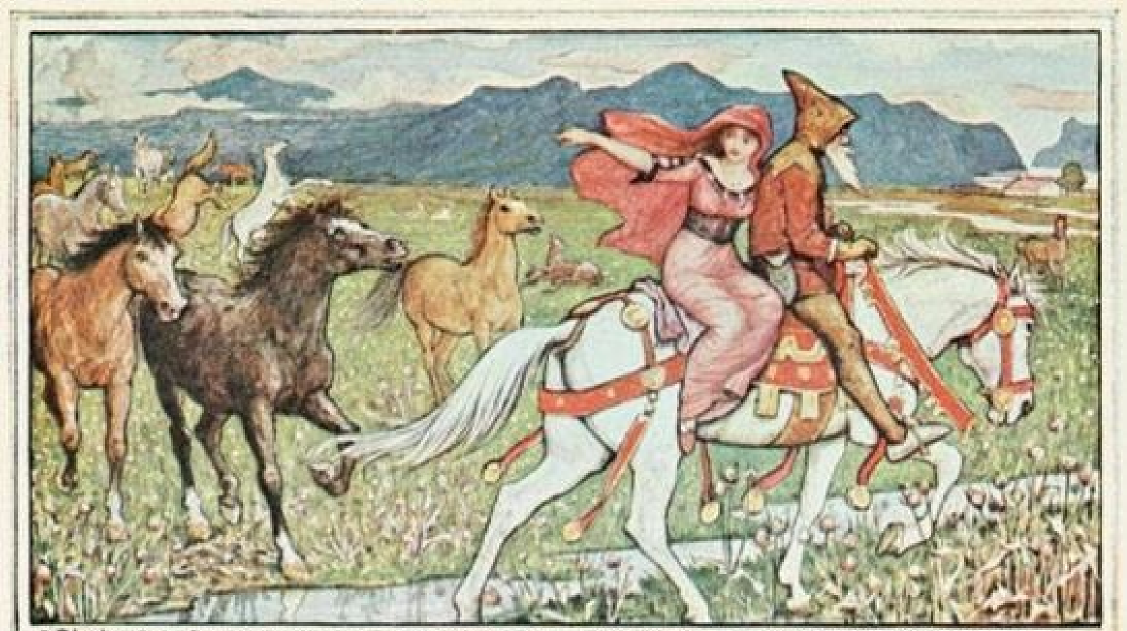

"Oh do stop for a minute" said Helga — HABOGI'S HORSES — But Habogi would not stop or listen

A mile further on they came to a wide common, with short, springy turf, where horses of all colours, with skins of satin, were kicking up their heels in play. The sight of them so delighted Helga that she nearly sprang from her saddle with a shriek of joy.

‘Whose are they? Oh! whose are they?’ she asked. ‘How happy any man must be who is the master of such lovely creatures!’

‘They are your Hábogi’s,’ replied he, ‘and the one which you think the most beautiful of all you shall have for yourself, and learn to ride him.’

At this Helga quite forgot the sheep and the cow.

‘A horse of my own!’ said she. ‘Oh, stop one moment, and let me see which I will choose. The white one? No. The chestnut? No. I think, after all, I like the coal-black one best, with the little white star on his forehead. Oh, do stop, just for a minute.’

But Hábogi would not stop or listen. ‘When you are married you will have plenty of time to choose one,’ was all he answered, and they rode on two or three miles further.

At length Hábogi drew rein before a small house, very ugly and mean-looking, and that seemed on the point of tumbling to pieces.

‘This is my house, and is to be yours,’ said Hábogi, as he jumped down and held out his arms to lift Helga from the horse. The girl's heart sank a little, as she thought that the man who possessed such wonderful sheep, and cows, and horses, might have built himself a prettier place to live in; but she did not say so. And, taking her arm, he led her up the steps.

But when she got inside, she stood quite bewildered at the beauty of all around her. None of her friends owned such things, not even the miller, who was the richest man she knew. There were carpets everywhere, thick and soft, and of deep rich colours; and the cushions were of silk, and made you sleepy even to look at them; and curious little figures in china were scattered about. Helga felt as if it would take her all her life to see everything properly, and it only seemed a second since she had entered the house, when Hábogi came up to her.

'I must begin the preparations for our wedding at once,' he said; 'but my foster-brother will take you home, as I promised. In three days he will bring you back here, with your parents and sisters, and any guests you may invite, in your company. By that time the feast will be ready.'

Helga had so much to think about, that the ride home appeared very short. Her father and mother were delighted to see her, as they did not feel sure that so ugly and cross-looking a man as Hábogi might not have played her some cruel trick. And after they had given her some supper they begged her to tell them all she had done. But Helga only told them that they should see for themselves on the third day, when they would come to her wedding.

It was very early in the morning when the party set out, and Helga's two sisters grew green with envy as they passed the flocks of sheep, and cows, and horses, and heard that the best of each was given to Helga herself; but when they caught sight of the poor little house which was to be her home their hearts grew light again.

'I should be ashamed of living in such a place,' whispered each to the other; and the eldest sister spoke of the carved stone over *her* doorway, and the second boasted of the number of rooms *she* had. But the moment they went inside they were struck dumb with rage at the splendour of everything, and their faces grew white and cold with fury when they saw the dress which Hábogi had prepared for his bride — a dress that glittered like sunbeams dancing upon ice.

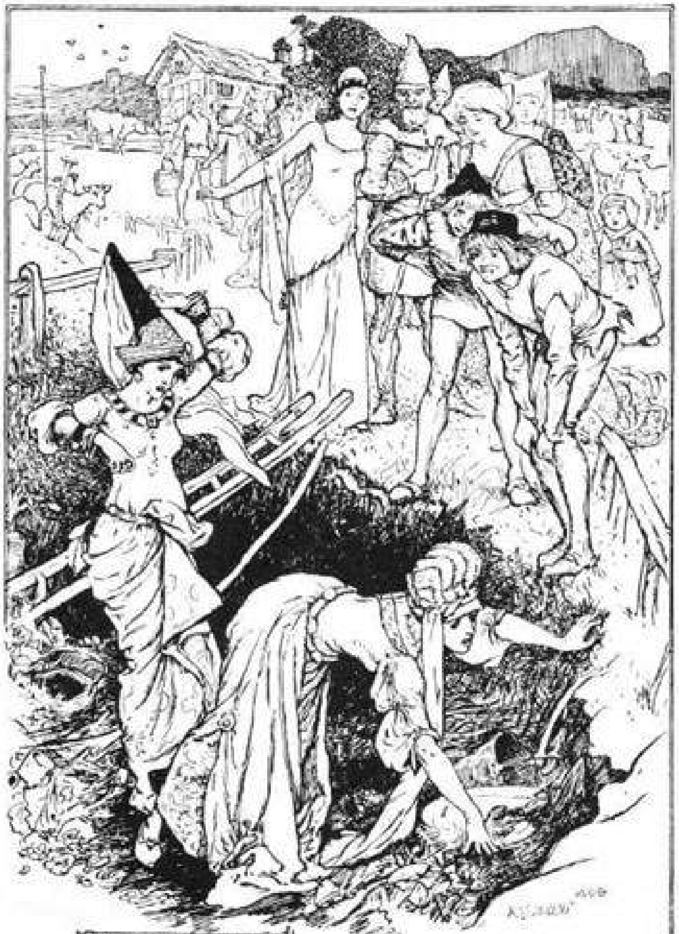

The Jealous Sisters, spell-bound in the Ashpit

‘She *shall* not look so much finer than us,’ they cried passionately to each other as soon as they were alone; and when night came they stole out of their rooms, and taking out the wedding-dress, they laid it in the ash-pit, and heaped ashes upon it. But Hábogi, who knew a little magic, and had guessed what they would do, changed the ashes into roses, and cast a spell over the sisters, so that they could not leave the spot for a whole day, and every one who passed by mocked at them.

The next morning when they all awoke the ugly little tumble-down house had disappeared, and in its place stood a splendid palace. The guests’ eyes sought in vain for the bridegroom, but could only see a handsome young man, with a coat of blue velvet and silver and a gold crown upon his head.

‘Who is that?’ they asked Helga.

‘That is my Hábogi,’ said she.

HOW THE LITTLE BROTHER SET FREE HIS BIG BROTHERS

In a small hut, right in the middle of the forest, lived a man, his wife, three sons and a daughter. For some reason, all the animals seemed to have left that part of the country, and food grew very scarce; so, one morning, after a night of snow, when the tracks of beasts might be easily seen, the three boys started off to hunt.

They kept together for some time, till they reached a place where the path they had been following split into two, and one of the brothers called his dog and went to the left, while the others took the trail to the right. These had not gone far when their dogs scented a bear, and drove him out from the thicket. The bear ran across a clearing, and the elder brother managed to place an arrow right in his head.

They both took up the bear, and carried it towards home, meeting the third at the spot where they had parted from him. When they reached home they threw the bear down on the floor of the hut saying,

‘Father, here is a bear which we killed; now we can have some dinner.’

But the father, who was in a bad temper, only said:

‘When I was a young man we used to get two bears in one day.’

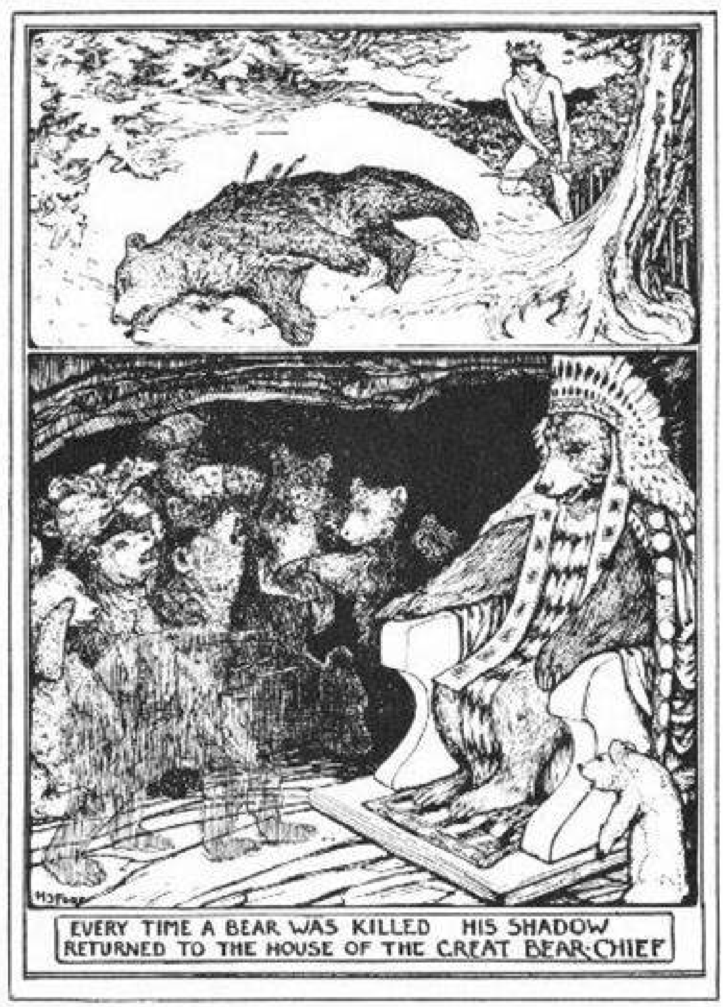

EVERY TIME A BEAR WAS KILLED HIS SHADOW RETURNED TO THE HOUSE OF THE GREAT BEAR-CHIEF

The sons were rather disappointed at hearing this, and though there was plenty of meat to last for two or three days, they started off early in the morning down the same trail that they had followed before. As they drew near the fork a bear suddenly ran out from behind a tree, and took the path on the right. The two elder boys and their dogs pursued him, and soon the second son, who was also a good shot, killed him instantly with an arrow. At the fork of the trail, on their way home, they met the youngest, who had taken the left-hand road, and had shot a bear for himself. But when they threw the two bears triumphantly on the floor of the hut their father hardly looked at them, and only said:

‘When *I* was a young man I used to get three bears in one day.’

The next day they were luckier than before, and brought back three bears, on which their father told them that *he* had always killed four. However, that did not prevent him from skinning the bears and cooking them in a way of his own, which he thought very good, and they all ate an excellent supper.

Now these bears were the servants of the great bear chief who lived in a high mountain a long way off. And every time a bear was killed his shadow returned to the house of the bear chief, with the marks of his wounds plainly to be seen by the rest.

The chief was furious at the number of bears the hunters had killed, and determined that he would find some way of destroying them. So he called another of his servants, and said to him:

‘Go to the thicket near the fork, where the boys killed your brothers, and directly they or the dogs see you return here as fast as ever you can. The mountain will open to let you in, and the hunters will follow you. Then I shall have them in my power, and be able to revenge myself.’

The servant bowed low, and started at once for the fork, where he hid himself in the bushes.

By-and-by the boys came in sight, but this time there were only two of them, as the youngest had stayed at home. The air was warm and damp, and the snow soft and slushy, and the elder brother’s bowstring hung loose, while the bow of the younger caught in a tree and snapped in half. At that moment the dogs began to bark loudly, and the bear rushed out of the thicket and set off in the direction of the mountain. Without thinking that they had nothing to defend themselves with, should the bear turn and attack them, the boys gave chase. The bear, who knew quite well that he could not be shot, sometimes slackened his pace and let the dogs get quite close; and in this way the elder son reached the mountain without observing it, while his brother, who had hurt his foot, was still far behind.

As he ran up, the mountain opened to admit the bear, and the boy, who was close on his heels, rushed in after him, and did not know where he was till he saw bears sitting on every side of him, holding a council. The animal he had been chasing sank panting in their midst, and the boy, very much frightened, stood still, letting his bow fall to the ground.

‘Why are you trying to kill all my servants?’ asked the chief. ‘Look round and see their shades, with arrows sticking in them. It was I who told the bear to-day how he was to lure you into my power. I shall take care that you shall not hurt my people any more, because you will become a bear yourself.’

At this moment the second brother came up — for the mountain had been left open on purpose to tempt him also — and cried out breathlessly: ‘Don’t you see that the bear is lying close to you? Why don’t you shoot him?’ And, without waiting for a reply, pressed forward to drive his arrow into the heart of the bear. But the elder one caught his raised arm, and whispered: ‘Be quiet! can’t you tell where you are?’ Then the boy looked up and saw the angry bears about him. On the one side were the servants of the chief, and on the other the servants of the chief’s sister, who was sorry for the two youths, and begged that their lives might be spared. The chief answered that he would not kill them, but only cast a spell over them, by which their heads and bodies should remain as they were, but their arms and legs should change into those of a bear, so that they would go on all fours for the rest of their lives. And, stooping over a spring of water, he dipped a handful of moss in it and rubbed it over the arms and legs of the boys. In an instant the transformation took place, and two creatures, neither beast nor human, stood before the chief.

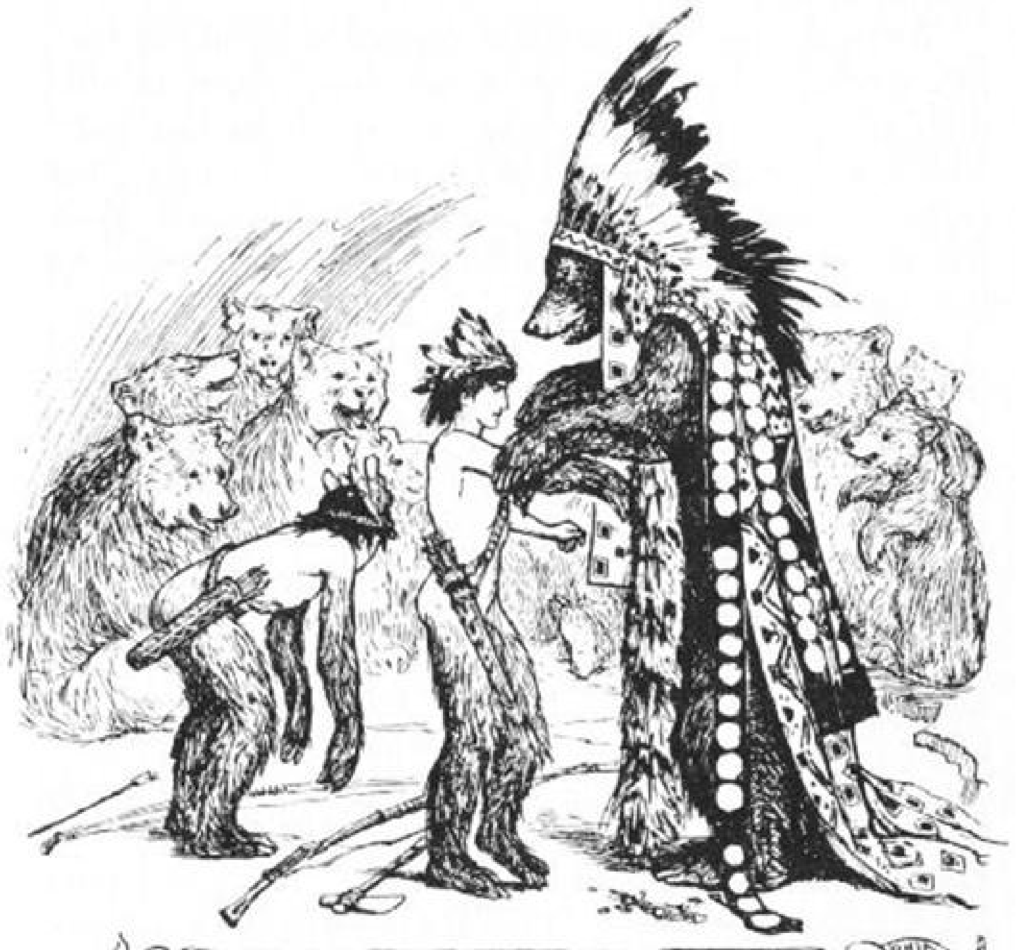

How the boys were half turned into BEARS

Now the bear chief of course knew that the boys' father would seek for his sons when they did not return home, so he sent another of his servants to the hiding-place at the fork of the trail to see what would happen. He had not waited long, when the father came in sight, stooping as he went to look for his sons' tracks in the snow. When he saw the marks of snow-shoes along the path on the right he was filled with joy, not knowing that the servant had made some fresh tracks on purpose to mislead him; and he hastened forward so fast that he fell headlong into a pit, where the bear was sitting. Before he could pick himself up the bear had quietly broken his neck, and, hiding the body under the snow, sat down to see if anyone else would pass that way.

Meanwhile the mother at home was wondering what had become of her two sons, and as the hours went on, and their father never returned, she made up her mind to go and look for him. The youngest boy begged her to let him undertake the search, but she would not hear of it, and told him he must stay at home and take care of his sister. So, slipping on her snow-shoes, she started on her way.

As no fresh snow had fallen, the trail was quite easy to find, and she walked straight on, till it led her up to the pit where the bear was waiting for her. He grasped her as she fell and broke her neck, after which he laid her in the snow beside her husband, and went back to tell the bear chief.

Hour after hour dragged heavily by in the forest hut, and at last the brother and sister felt quite sure that in some way or other all the rest of the family had perished. Day after day the boy climbed to the top of a tall tree near the house, and sat there till he was almost frozen, looking on all sides through the forest openings, hoping that he might see someone coming along. Very soon all the food in the house was eaten, and he knew he would have to go out and hunt for more. Besides, he wished to seek for his parents.

The little girl did not like being left alone in the hut, and cried bitterly; but her brother told her that there was no use sitting down quietly to starve, and that whether he found any game or not he would certainly be back before the following night. Then he cut himself some arrows, each from a different tree, and winged with the feathers of four different birds. He then made himself a bow, very light and strong, and got down his snow-shoes. All this took some time, and he could not start that day, but early next morning he called his little dog Redmouth, whom he kept in a box, and set out.

After he had followed the trail for a great distance he grew very tired, and sat upon the branch of a tree to rest. But Redmouth barked so furiously that the boy thought that perhaps his parents might have been killed under its branches, and, stepping back, shot one of his arrows at the root of the tree. Whereupon a noise like thunder shook it from top to bottom, fire broke out, and in a few minutes a little heap of ashes lay in the place where it had stood.

Not knowing quite what to make of it all, the boy continued on the trail, and went down the right-hand fork till he came to the clump of bushes where the bears used to hide.

Now, as was plain by his being able to change the shape of the two brothers, the bear chief knew a good deal of magic, and he was quite aware that the little boy was following the trail, and he sent a very small but clever bear servant to wait for him in the bushes and to try to tempt him into the mountain. But somehow his spells could not have worked properly that day, as the bear chief did not know that Redmouth had gone with his master, or he would have been more careful. For the moment the dog ran round the bushes barking loudly, the little bear servant rushed out in a fright, and set out for the mountains as fast as he could.

The dog followed the bear, and the boy followed the dog, until the mountain, the house of the great bear chief, came in sight. But along the road the snow was so wet and heavy that the boy could hardly get along, and then the thong of his snow-shoes broke, and he had to stop and mend it, so that the bear and the dog got so far ahead that he could scarcely hear the barking. When the strap was firm again the boy spoke to his snow-shoes and said:

‘Now you must go as fast as you can, or, if not, I shall lose the dog as well as the bear.’ And the snow-shoes sang in answer that they would run like the wind.

As he came along, the bear chief’s sister was looking out of the window, and took pity on this little brother, as she had on the two elder ones, and waited to see what the boy would do, when he found that the bear servant and the dog had already entered the mountain.

The little brother was certainly very much puzzled at not seeing anything of either of the animals, which had vanished suddenly out of his sight. He paused for an instant to think what he should do next, and while he did so he fancied he heard Redmouth’s voice on the opposite side of the mountain. With great difficulty he scrambled over steep rocks, and forced a path through tangled thickets; but when he reached the other side the sound appeared to start from the place from which he had come. Then he had to go all the way back again, and at the very top, where he stopped to rest, the barking was directly beneath him, and he knew in an instant where he was and what had happened.

‘Let my dog out at once, bear chief!’ cried he. ‘If you do not, I shall destroy your palace.’ But the bear chief only laughed, and said nothing. The boy was very angry at his silence, and aiming one of his arrows at the bottom of the mountain, shot straight through it.

As the arrow touched the ground a rumbling was heard, and with a roar a fire broke out which seemed to split the whole mountain into pieces. The bear chief and all his servants were burnt up in the flames, but his sister and all that belonged to her were spared because she had tried to save the two elder boys from punishment.

As soon as the fire had burnt itself out the little hunter entered what was left of the mountain, and the first thing he saw was his two brothers — half bear, half boy.

‘Oh, help us! help us!’ cried they, standing on their hind legs as they spoke, and stretching out their fore-paws to him.

‘But how am I to help you?’ asked the little brother, almost weeping. ‘I can kill people, and destroy trees and mountains, but I have no power over men.’ And the two elder brothers came up and put their paws on his shoulders, and they all three wept together.

The heart of the bear chief’s sister was moved when she saw their misery, and she came gently up behind, and whispered:

‘Little boy, gather some moss from the spring over there, and let your brothers smell it.’

With a bound all three were at the spring, and as the youngest plucked a handful of wet moss, the two others sniffed at it with all their might. Then the bear-skin fell away from them, and they stood upright once more.

‘How can we thank you? how can we thank you?’ they stammered, hardly able to speak; and fell at her feet in gratitude. But the bear’s sister only smiled, and bade them go home and look after the little girl, who had no one else to protect her.

And this the boys did, and took such good care of their sister that, as she was very small, she soon forgot that she had ever had a father and mother.

THE SACRED MILK OF KOUMONGOÉ

Far away, in a very hot country, there once lived a man and woman who had two children, a son named Koané and a daughter called Thakané.

Early in the morning and late in the evenings the parents worked hard in the fields, resting, when the sun was high, under the shade of some tree. While they were absent the little girl kept house alone, for her brother always got up before the dawn, when the air was fresh and cool, and drove out the cattle to the sweetest patches of grass he could find.

One day, when Koané had slept later than usual, his father and mother went to their work before him, and there was only Thakané to be seen busy making the bread for supper.

‘Thakané,’ he said, ‘I am thirsty. Give me a drink from the tree Koumongoé, which has the best milk in the world.’

‘Oh, Koané,’ cried his sister, ‘you know that we are forbidden to touch that tree. What would father say when he came home? For he would be sure to know.’

‘Nonsense,’ replied Koané, ‘there is so much milk in Koumongoé that he will never miss a little. If you won’t give it to me, I sha’n’t take the cattle out. They will just have to stay all day in the hut, and you know that they will starve.’ And he turned from her in a rage, and sat down in the corner.

After a while Thakané said to him: ‘It is getting hot, had you not better drive out the cattle now?’

But Koané only answered sulkily: ‘I told you I am not going to drive them out at all. If I have to do without milk, they shall do without grass.’

Thakané did not know what to do. She was afraid to disobey her parents, who would most likely beat her, yet the beasts would be sure to suffer if they were kept in, and she would perhaps be beaten for that too. So at last she took an axe and a tiny earthen bowl, she cut a very small hole in the side of Koumongoé, and out gushed enough milk to fill the bowl.

‘Here is the milk you wanted,’ said she, going up to Koané, who was still sulking in his corner.

‘What is the use of that?’ grumbled Koané; ‘why, there is not enough to drown a fly. Go and get me three times as much!’

Trembling with fright, Thakané returned to the tree, and struck it a sharp blow with the axe. In an instant there poured forth such a stream of milk that it ran like a river into the hut.

‘Koané! Koané!’ cried she, ‘come and help me to plug up the hole. There will be no milk left for our father and mother.’ But Koané could not stop it any more than Thakané, and soon the milk was flowing through the hut downhill towards their parents in the fields below.

The man saw the white stream a long way off, and guessed what had happened.

‘Wife, wife,’ he called loudly to the woman, who was working at a little distance: ‘Do you see Koumongoé running fast down the hill? That is some mischief of the children’s, I am sure. I must go home and find out what is the matter.’ And they both threw down their hoes and hurried to the side of Koumongoé.

Kneeling on the grass, the man and his wife made a cup of their hands and drank the milk from it. And no sooner had they done this, than Koumongoé flowed back again up the hill, and entered the hut.

‘Thakané,’ said the parents, severely, when they reached home panting from the heat of the sun, ‘what have you been doing? Why did Koumongoé come to us in the fields instead of staying in the garden?’

‘It was Koané’s fault,’ answered Thakané. ‘He would not take the cattle to feed until he drank some of the milk from Koumongoé. So, as I did not know what else to do, I gave it to him.’

The father listened to Thakané’s words, but made no answer. Instead, he went outside and brought in two sheepskins, which he stained red and sent for a blacksmith to forge some iron rings. The rings were then passed over Thakané’s arms and legs and neck, and the skins fastened on her before and behind. When all was ready, the man sent for his servants and said:

‘I am going to get rid of Thakané.’

‘Get rid of your only daughter?’ they answered, in surprise. ‘But why?’

‘Because she has eaten what she ought not to have eaten. She has touched the sacred tree which belongs to her mother and me alone.’ And, turning his back, he called to Thakané to follow him, and they went down the road which led to the dwelling of an ogre.

They were passing along some fields where the corn was ripening, when a rabbit suddenly sprang out at their feet, and standing on its hind legs, it sang:

Why do you give to the ogre Your child, so fair, so fair?

‘You had better ask her,’ replied the man, ‘she is old enough to give you an answer.’

Then, in her turn, Thakané sang:

I gave Koumongoé to Koané, Koumongoé to the keeper of beasts; For without

Koumongoé they could not go to the meadows: Without Koumongoé they would starve in the hut; That was why I gave him the Koumongoé of my father.

And when the rabbit heard that, he cried: ‘Wretched man! it is you whom the ogre should eat, and not your beautiful daughter.’

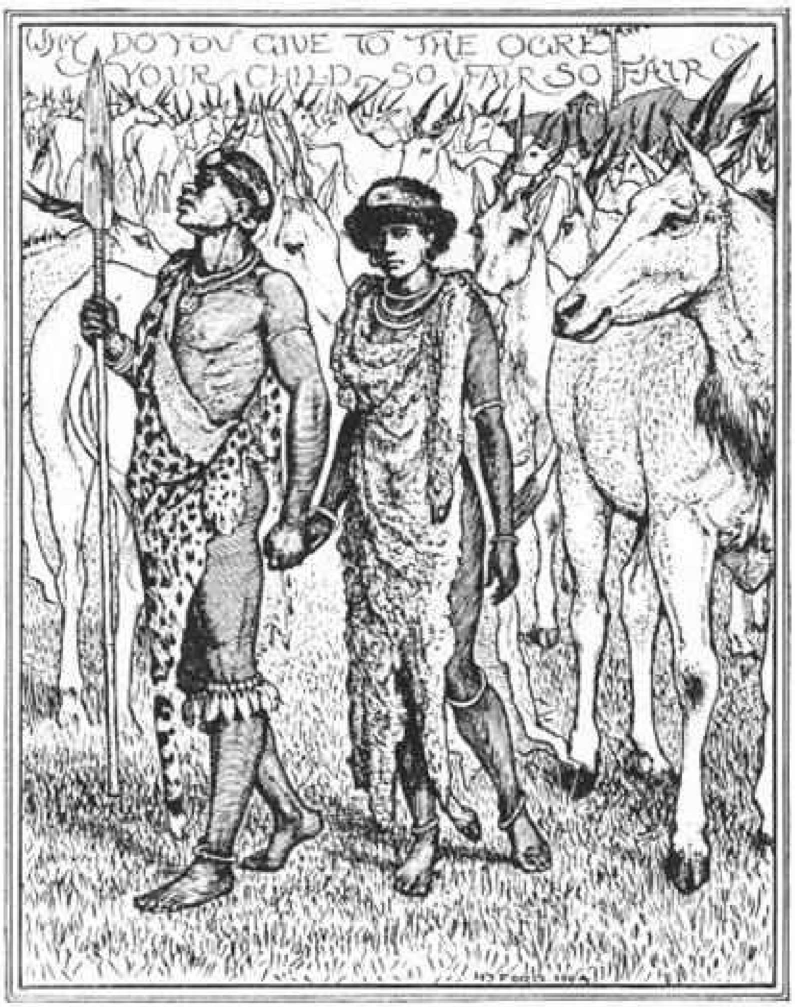
WHY DO YOU GIVE TO THE OGRE YOUR CHILD, SO FAIR SO FAIR

But the father paid no heed to what the rabbit said, and only walked on the faster, bidding Thakané to keep close behind him. By-and-by they met with a troop of great deer, called elands, and they stopped when they saw Thakané and sang:

Why do you give to the ogre Your child, so fair, so fair?

‘You had better ask her,’ replied the man, ‘she is old enough to give you an answer.’

Then, in her turn, Thakané sang:

I gave Koumongoé to Koané, Koumongoé to the keeper of beasts; For without Koumongoé they could not go to the meadows: Without Koumongoé they would starve in the hut; That was why I gave him the Koumongoé of my father.

And the elands all cried: ‘Wretched man! it is you whom the ogre should eat, and not your beautiful daughter.’

By this time it was nearly dark, and the father said they could travel no further that night, and must go to sleep where they were. Thakané was thankful indeed when she heard this, for she was very tired, and found the two skins fastened round her almost too heavy to carry. So, in spite of her dread of the ogre, she slept till dawn, when her father woke her, and told her roughly that he was ready to continue their journey.

Crossing the plain, the girl and her father passed a herd of gazelles feeding. They lifted their heads, wondering who was out so early, and when they caught sight of Thakané, they sang:

Why do you give to the ogre Your child, so fair, so fair?

‘You had better ask her,’ replied the man, ‘she is old enough to answer for herself.’

Then, in her turn, Thakané sang:

I gave Koumongoé to Koané, Koumongoé to the keeper of beasts; For without Koumongoé they could not go to the meadows: Without Koumongoé they would starve in the hut; That was why I gave him the Koumongoé of my father.

And the gazelles all cried: ‘Wretched man! it is you whom the ogre should eat, and not your beautiful daughter.’

At last they arrived at the village where the ogre lived, and they went straight to his hut. He was nowhere to be seen, but in his place was his son Masilo, who was not an ogre at all, but a very polite young man. He ordered his servants to bring a pile of skins for Thakané to sit on, but told her father he must sit on the ground. Then, catching sight of the girl’s face, which she had kept bent down, he was struck by its beauty, and put the same question that the rabbit, and the elands, and the gazelles had done.

Thakané answered him as before, and he instantly commanded that she should be taken to the hut of his mother, and placed under her care, while the man should be led to his father. Directly the ogre saw him he bade the servant throw him into the great pot which always stood ready on the fire, and in five minutes he was done to a turn. After that the servant returned to Masilo and related all that had happened.

Now Masilo had fallen in love with Thakané the moment he saw her. At first he did not know what to make of this strange feeling, for all his life he had hated women, and had refused several brides whom his parents had chosen for him. However, they were so anxious that he should marry, that they willingly accepted Thakané as their daughter-in-law, though she did not bring any marriage portion with her.

After some time a baby was born to her, and Thakané thought it was the most beautiful baby that ever was seen. But when her mother-in-law saw it was a girl, she wrung her hands and wept, saying:

‘O miserable mother! Miserable child! Alas for you! why were you not a boy!’

Thakané, in great surprise, asked the meaning of her distress; and the old woman told her that it was the custom in that country that all the girls who were born should be given to the ogre to eat.

Then Thakané clasped the baby tightly in her arms, and cried:

‘But it is not the custom in *my* country! There, when children die, they are buried in the earth. No one shall take my baby from me.’

That night, when everyone in the hut was asleep, Thakané rose, and carrying her baby on her back, went down to a place where the river spread itself out into a large lake, with tall willows all round the bank. Here, hidden from everyone, she sat down on a stone and began to think what she should do to save her child.

Suddenly she heard a rustling among the willows, and an old woman appeared before her.

‘What are you crying for, my dear?’ said she.

And Thakané answered: ‘I was crying for my baby — I cannot hide her for ever, and if the ogre sees her, he will eat her; and I would rather she was drowned than that.’

‘What you say is true,’ replied the old woman. ‘Give me your child, and let me take care of it. And if you will fix a day to meet me here I will bring the baby.’

Then Thakané dried her eyes, and gladly accepted the old woman’s offer. When she got home she told her husband she had thrown it in the river, and as he had watched her go in that direction he never thought of doubting what she said.

On the appointed day, Thakané slipped out when everybody was busy, and ran down the path that led to the lake. As soon as she got there, she crouched down among the willows, and sang softly:

Bring to me Dilah, Dilah the rejected one, Dilah, whom her father Masilo cast out!

And in a moment the old woman appeared holding the baby in her arms. Dilah had become so big and strong, that Thakané’s heart was filled with joy and gratitude, and she stayed as long as she dared, playing with her baby. At last she felt she must return to the village, lest she should be missed, and the child was handed back to the old woman, who vanished with her into the lake.

Children grow up very quickly when they live under water, and in less time than anyone could suppose, Dilah had changed from a baby to a woman. Her mother came to visit her whenever she was able, and one day, when they were sitting talking together, they were spied out by a man who had come to cut willows to weave into baskets. He was so surprised to see how like the face of the girl was to Masilo, that he left his work and returned to the village.

‘Masilo,’ he said, as he entered the hut, ‘I have just beheld your wife near the river with a girl who must be your daughter, she is so like you. We have been deceived, for we all thought she was dead.’

When he heard this, Masilo tried to look shocked because his wife had broken the law; but in his heart he was very glad.

‘But what shall we do now?’ asked he.

‘Make sure for yourself that I am speaking the truth by hiding among the bushes the first time Thakané says she is going to bathe in the river, and waiting till the girl appears.’

For some days Thakané stayed quietly at home, and her husband began to think that the man had been mistaken; but at last she said to her husband: ‘I am going to bathe in the river.’

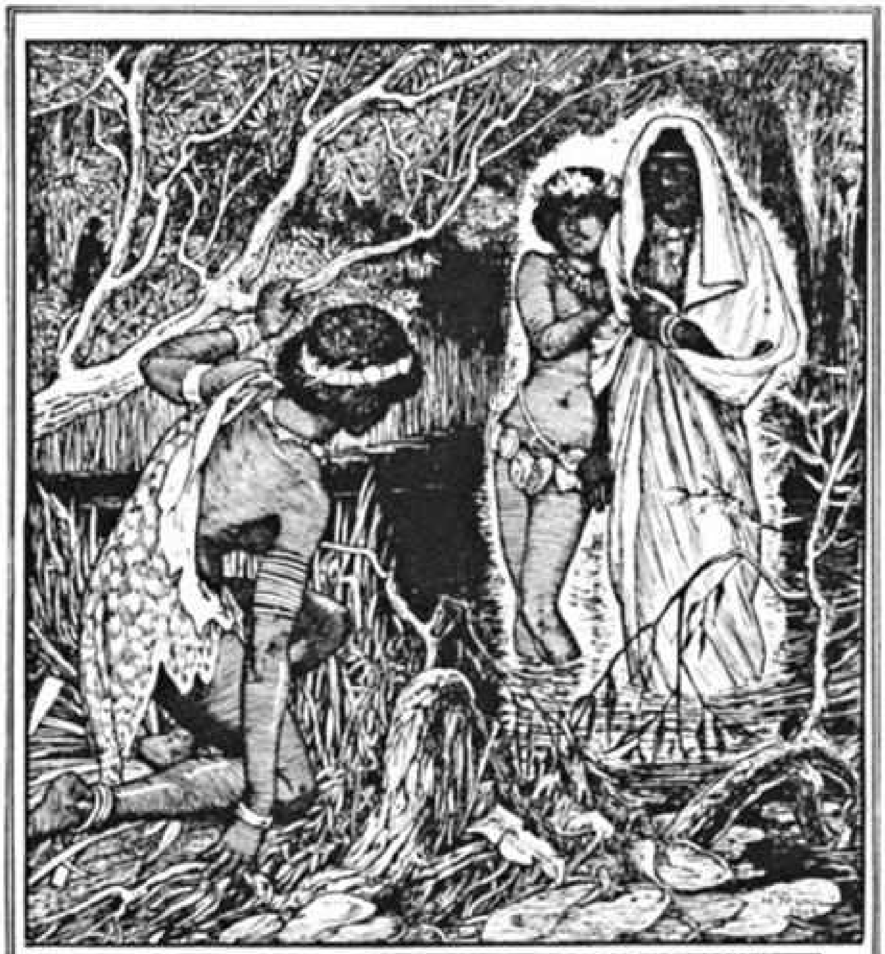

BRING TO ME DILAH DILAH THE REJECTED ONE

‘Well, you can go,’ answered he. But he ran down quickly by another path, and got there first, and hid himself in the bushes. An instant later, Thakané arrived, and standing on the bank, she sang:

Bring to me Dilah, Dilah the rejected one, Dilah, whom her father Masilo cast out!

Then the old woman came out of the water, holding the girl, now tall and slender, by the hand. And as Masilo looked, he saw that she was indeed his daughter, and he wept for joy that she was not lying dead in the bottom of the lake. The old woman, however, seemed uneasy, and said to Thakané: ‘I feel as if someone was watching us. I will not leave the girl to-day, but will take her back with me’; and sinking beneath the surface, she drew the girl after her. After they had gone, Thakané returned to the village, which Masilo had managed to reach before her.

All the rest of the day he sat in a corner weeping, and his mother who came in asked: ‘Why are you weeping so bitterly, my son?’

‘My head aches,’ he answered; ‘it aches very badly.’ And his mother passed on, and left him alone.

In the evening he said to his wife: ‘I have seen my daughter, in the place where you told me you had drowned her. Instead, she lives at the bottom of the lake, and has now grown into a young woman.’

‘I don’t know what you are talking about,’ replied Thakané. ‘I buried my child under the sand on the beach.’

Then Masilo implored her to give the child back to him; but she would not listen, and only answered: ‘If I were to give her back you would only obey the laws of your country and take her to your father, the ogre, and she would be eaten.’

But Masilo promised that he would never let his father see her, and that now she was a woman no one would try to hurt her; so Thakané’s heart melted, and she went down to the lake to consult the old woman.

‘What am I to do?’ she asked, when, after clapping her hands, the old woman appeared before her. ‘Yesterday Masilo beheld Dilah, and ever since he has entreated me to give him back his daughter.’

‘If I let her go he must pay me a thousand head of cattle in exchange,’ replied the old woman. And Thakané carried her answer back to Masilo.

‘Why, I would gladly give her two thousand!’ cried he, ‘for she has saved my daughter.’ And he bade messengers hasten to all the neighbouring villages, and tell his people to send him at once all the cattle he possessed. When they were all assembled he chose a thousand of the finest bulls and cows, and drove them down to the river, followed by a great crowd wondering what would happen.

Then Thakané stepped forward in front of the cattle and sang:

Bring to me Dilah, Dilah the rejected one, Dilah, whom her father Masilo cast out!

And Dilah came from the waters holding out her hands to Masilo and Thakané, and in her place the cattle sank into the lake, and were driven by the old woman to the great city filled with people, which lies at the bottom.

THE WICKED WOLVERINE

One day a wolverine was out walking on the hillside, when, on turning a corner, he suddenly saw a large rock.

'Was that you I heard walking about just now?' he asked, for wolverines are cautious animals, and always like to know the reasons of things.

'No, certainly not,' answered the rock; 'I don't know how to walk.'

'But I *saw* you walking,' continued the wolverine.

'I am afraid that you were not taught to speak the truth,' retorted the rock.

'You need not speak like that, for I have *seen* you walking,' replied the wolverine, 'though I am quite sure that you could never catch *me*!' and he ran a little distance and then stopped to see if the rock was pursuing him; but, to his vexation, the rock was still in the same place. Then the wolverine went up close, and struck the rock a blow with his paw, saying: 'Well, will you catch me *now*?'

'I can't walk, but I can *roll,'* answered the rock.

And the wolverine laughed and said: 'Oh, that will do just as well'; and began to run down the side of the mountain.

At first he went quite slowly, 'just to give the rock a chance,' he thought to himself; but soon he quickened his pace, for he found that the rock was almost at his heels. But the faster the wolverine ran, the faster the rock rolled, and by-and-by the little creature began to get very tired, and was sorry he had not left the rock to itself. Thinking that if he could manage to put on a spurt he would reach the forest of great trees at the bottom of the mountain, where the rock could not come, he gathered up all his strength, and instead of running he leaped over sticks and stones, but, whatever he did, the rock was always close behind him. At length he grew so weary that he could not even see where he was going, and catching his foot in a branch he tripped and fell. The rock stopped at once, but there came a shriek from the wolverine:

'Get off, get off! can't you see that you are on my legs?'

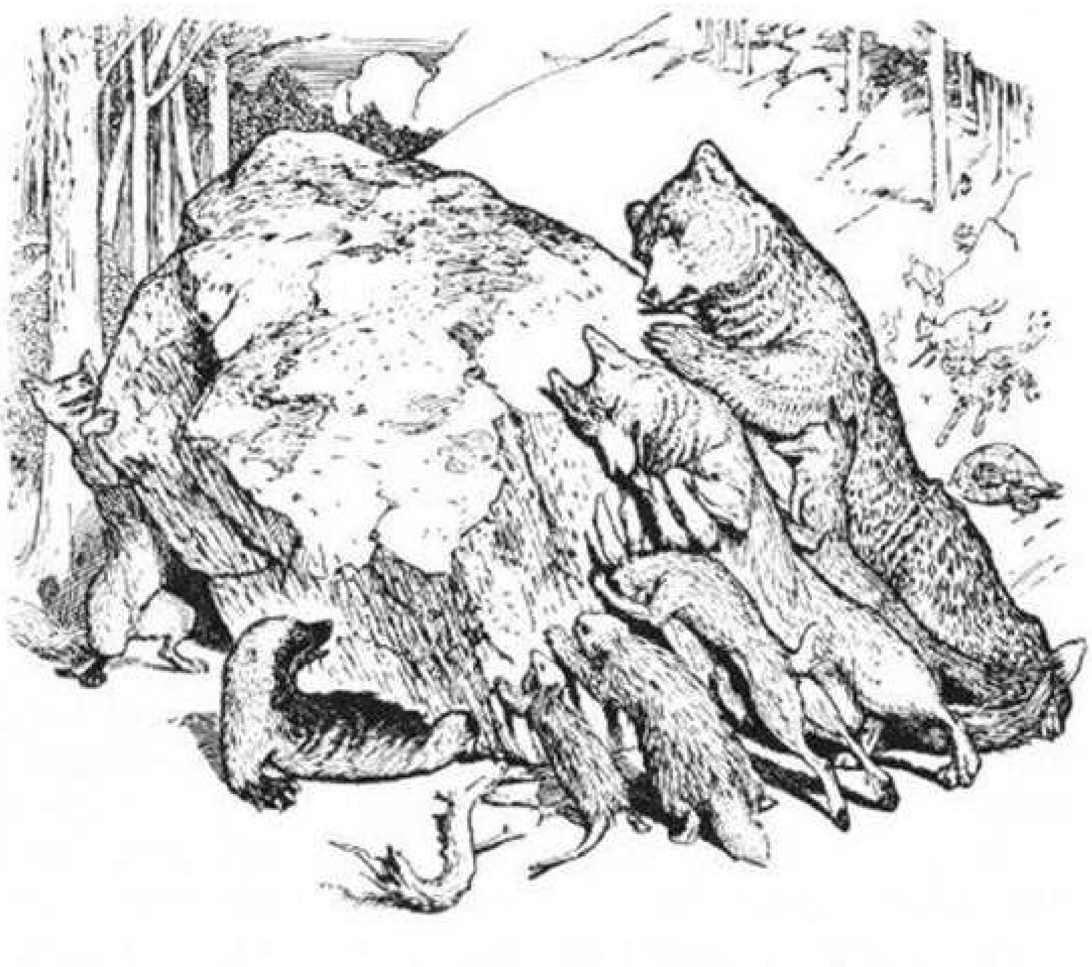

ALL THE ANIMALS TRY TO GET THE ROCK OFF WOLVERINE'S LEGS

‘Why did you not leave me alone?’ asked the rock. ‘I did not want to move — I hate moving. But you *would* have it, and I certainly sha’n’t move now till I am forced to.’

‘I will call my brothers,’ answered the wolverine. ‘There are many of them in the forest, and you will soon see that they are stronger than you.’ And he called, and called, and called, till wolves and foxes and all sorts of other creatures all came running to see what was the matter.

‘How *did* you get under that rock?’ asked they, making a ring round him; but they had to repeat their question several times before the wolverine would answer, for he, like many other persons, found it hard to confess that he had brought his troubles on himself.

‘Well, I was dull, and wanted someone to play with me,’ he said at last, in a sulky voice, ‘and I challenged the rock to catch me. Of course I thought I could run the fastest; but I tripped, and it rolled on me. It was just an accident.’

‘It serves you right for being so silly,’ said they; but they pushed and hauled at the rock for a long time without making it move an inch.

‘You are no good at all,’ cried the wolverine crossly, for it was suffering great pain, ‘and if you cannot get me free, I shall see what my friends the lightning and the thunder can do.’ And he called loudly to the lightning to come and help him as quickly as possible.

In a few minutes a dark cloud came rolling up the sky, giving out such terrific claps of thunder that the wolves and the foxes and all the other creatures ran helter-skelter in all directions. But, frightened though they were, they did not forget to beg the lightning to take off the wolverine’s coat and to free his legs, but to be careful not to hurt him. So the lightning disappeared into the cloud for a moment to gather up fresh strength, and then came rushing down, right upon the rock, which it sent flying in all directions, and took off the wolverine’s coat so neatly that, though it was torn into tiny shreds, the wolverine himself was quite unharmed.

‘That was rather clumsy of you,’ said he, standing up naked in his flesh. ‘Surely you could have split the rock without tearing my coat to bits!’ And he stooped down to pick up the pieces. It took him a long time, for there were a great many of them, but at last he had them all in his hand.

‘I’ll go to my sister the frog,’ he thought to himself, ‘and she will sew them together for me’; and he set off at once for the swamp in which his sister lived.

‘Will you sew my coat together? I had an unlucky accident, and it is quite impossible to wear,’ he said, when he found her.

‘With pleasure,’ she answered, for she had always been taught to be polite; and getting her needle and thread she began to fit the pieces. But though she was very good-natured, she was not very clever, and she got some of the bits wrong. When the wolverine, who was very particular about his clothes, came to put it on, he grew very angry.

‘What a useless creature you are!’ cried he. ‘Do you expect me to go about in such a coat as that? Why it bulges all down the back, as if I had a hump, and it is so tight across the chest that I expect it to burst every time I breathe. I knew you were stupid, but I did not think you were as stupid as that.’ And giving the poor frog a blow on her head, which knocked her straight into the water, he walked off in a rage to his younger sister the mouse.

‘I tore my coat this morning,’ he began, when he had found her sitting at the door of her house eating an apple. ‘It was all in little bits, and I took it to our sister the frog to ask her to sew it for me. But just look at the way she has done it! You will have to take it to pieces and fit them together properly, and I hope I shall not have to complain again.’ For as the wolverine was older than the mouse, he was accustomed to speak to her in this manner. However, the mouse was used to it and only answered: ‘I think you had better stay here till it is done, and if there is any alteration needed I can make it.’ So the wolverine sat down on a heap of dry ferns, and, picking up the apple, he finished it without even asking the mouse’s leave.

At last the coat was ready, and the wolverine put it on.

‘Yes, it fits very well,’ said he, ‘and you have sewn it very neatly. When I pass this way again I will bring you a handful of corn, as a reward’; and he ran off as smart as ever, leaving the mouse quite grateful behind him.

He wandered about for many days, till he reached a place where food was very scarce, and for a whole week he went without any. He was growing desperate, when he suddenly came upon a bear that was lying asleep. ‘Ah! here is food at last!’ thought he; but how was he to kill the bear, who was so much bigger than himself? It was no use to try force, he must invent some cunning plan which would get her into his power. At last, after thinking hard, he decided upon something, and going up to the bear, he exclaimed: ‘Is that you, my sister?’

The bear turned round and saw the wolverine, and murmuring to herself, so low that nobody could hear, ‘I never heard before that I had a brother,’ got up and ran quickly to a tree, up which she climbed. Now the wolverine was very angry when he saw his dinner vanishing in front of him, especially as *he* could not climb trees like the bear, so he followed, and stood at the foot of the tree, shrieking as loud as he could, ‘Come down, sister; our father has sent me to look for you! You were lost when you were a little girl and went out picking berries, and it was only the other day that we heard from a beaver where you were.’ At these words, the bear came a little way down the tree, and the wolverine, seeing this, went on:

‘Are you not fond of berries? *I* am! And I know a place where they grow so thick the ground is quite hidden. Why, look for yourself! That hillside is quite red with them!’

‘I can’t see so far,’ answered the bear, now climbing down altogether. ‘You must have wonderfully good eyes! I wish *I* had; but my sight is very short.’

‘So was mine till my father smashed a pailful of cranberries, and rubbed my eyes with them,’ replied the wolverine. ‘But if you like to go and gather some of the berries I will do just as he did, and you will soon be able to see as far as me.’

It took the bear a long while to gather the berries, for she was slow about everything, and, besides, it made her back ache to stoop. But at last she returned with a sackful, and put them down beside the wolverine. ‘That is splendid, sister!’ cried the wolverine. ‘Now lie flat on the ground with your head on this stone, while I smash them.’

The bear, who was very tired, was only too glad to do as she was bid, and stretched herself comfortably on the grass.

‘I am ready now,’ said the wolverine after a bit; ‘just at first you will find that the berries make your eyes smart, but you must be careful not to move, or the juice will run out, and then it will have to be done all over again.’

So the bear promised to lie very still; but the moment the cranberries touched her eyes she sprang up with a roar.

‘Oh, you mustn’t mind a little pain,’ said the wolverine, ‘it will soon be over, and then you will see all sorts of things you have never dreamt of.’ The bear sank down with a groan, and as her eyes were full of cranberry juice, which completely blinded her, the wolverine took up a sharp knife and stabbed her to the heart.

Then he took off the skin, and, stealing some fire from a tent, which his sharp eyes had perceived hidden behind a rock, he set about roasting the bear bit by bit. He thought the meat was the best he ever had tasted, and when dinner was done he made up his mind to try that same trick again, if ever he was hungry.

And very likely he did!

THE HUSBAND OF THE RAT'S DAUGHTER

Once upon a time there lived in Japan a rat and his wife who came of an old and noble race, and had one daughter, the loveliest girl in all the rat world. Her parents were very proud of her, and spared no pains to teach her all she ought to know. There was not another young lady in the whole town who was as clever as she was in gnawing through the hardest wood, or who could drop from such a height on to a bed, or run away so fast if anyone was heard coming. Great attention, too, was paid to her personal appearance, and her skin shone like satin, while her teeth were as white as pearls, and beautifully pointed.

Of course, with all these advantages, her parents expected her to make a brilliant marriage, and, as she grew up, they began to look round for a suitable husband.

But here a difficulty arose. The father was a rat from the tip of his nose to the end of his tail, outside as well as in, and desired that his daughter should wed among her own people. She had no lack of lovers, but her father's secret hopes rested on a fine young rat, with moustaches which almost swept the ground, whose family was still nobler and more ancient than his own. Unluckily, the mother had other views for her precious child. She was one of those people who always despise their own family and surroundings, and take pleasure in thinking that they themselves are made of finer material than the rest of the world. '*Her* daughter should never marry a mere rat,' she declared, holding her head high. 'With her beauty and talents she had a right to look for someone a little better than *that*.'

So she talked, as mothers will, to anyone that would listen to her. What the girl thought about the matter nobody knew or cared — it was not the fashion in the rat world.

Many were the quarrels which the old rat and his wife had upon the subject, and sometimes they bore on their faces certain marks which looked as if they had not kept to words only.

'Reach up to the stars is *my* motto,' cried the lady one day, when she was in a greater passion than usual. 'My daughter's beauty places her higher than anything upon earth,' she cried; 'and I am certainly not going to accept a son-in-law who is beneath her.'

'Better offer her in marriage to the sun,' answered her husband impatiently. 'As far as I know there is nothing greater than he.'

‘Well, I *was* thinking of it,’ replied the wife, ‘and as you are of the same mind, we will pay him a visit to-morrow.’

So the next morning, the two rats, having spent hours in making themselves smart, set out to see the sun, leading their daughter between them.

The journey took some time, but at length they came to the golden palace where the sun lived.

‘Noble king,’ began the mother, ‘behold our daughter! She is so beautiful that she is above everything in the whole world. Naturally, we wish for a son-in-law who, on his side, is greater than all. Therefore we have come to you.’

‘I feel very much flattered,’ replied the sun, who was so busy that he had not the least wish to marry anybody. ‘You do me great honour by your proposal. Only, in one point you are mistaken, and it would be wrong of me to take advantage of your ignorance. There *is* something greater than I am, and that is the cloud. Look!’ And as he spoke a cloud spread itself over the sun’s face, blotting out his rays.

‘Oh, well, we will speak to the cloud,’ said the mother. And turning to the cloud she repeated her proposal.

‘Indeed I am unworthy of anything so charming,’ answered the cloud; ‘but you make a mistake again in what you say. There is one thing that is even more powerful than I, and that is the wind. Ah, here he comes, you can see for yourself.’

And she *did* see, for catching up the cloud as he passed, he threw it on the other side of the sky. Then, tumbling father, mother and daughter down to the earth again, he paused for a moment beside them, his foot on an old wall.

When she had recovered her breath, the mother began her little speech once more.

‘The wall is the proper husband for your daughter,’ answered the wind, whose home consisted of a cave, which he only visited when he was not rushing about elsewhere; ‘you can see for yourself that he is greater than I, for he has power to stop me in my flight.’ And the mother, who did not trouble to conceal her wishes, turned at once to the wall.

Then something happened which was quite unexpected by everyone.

‘I won’t marry that ugly old wall, which is as old as my grandfather,’ sobbed the girl, who had not uttered one word all this time. ‘I would have married the sun, or the cloud, or the wind, because it was my duty, although I love the handsome young rat, and him only. But that horrid old wall — I would sooner die!’

And the wall, rather hurt in his feelings, declared that he had no claim to be the husband of so beautiful a girl.

‘It is quite true,’ he said, ‘that I can stop the wind who can part the clouds who can cover the sun; but there is someone who can do more than all these, and that is the rat. It is the rat who passes through me, and can reduce me to powder, simply with his teeth. If, therefore, you want a son-in-law who is greater than the whole world, seek him among the rats.’

‘Ah, what did I tell you?’ cried the father. And his wife, though for the moment angry at being beaten, soon thought that a rat son-in-law was what she had always desired.

So all three returned happily home, and the wedding was celebrated three days after.

THE MERMAID AND THE BOY

Long, long ago, there lived a king who ruled over a country by the sea. When he had been married about a year, some of his subjects, inhabiting a distant group of islands, revolted against his laws, and it became needful for him to leave his wife and go in person to settle their disputes. The queen feared that some ill would come of it, and implored him to stay at home, but he told her that nobody could do his work for him, and the next morning the sails were spread, and the king started on his voyage.

The vessel had not gone very far when she ran upon a rock, and stuck so fast in a cleft that the strength of the whole crew could not get her off again. To make matters worse, the wind was rising too, and it was quite plain that in a few hours the ship would be dashed to pieces and everybody would be drowned, when suddenly the form of a mermaid was seen dancing on the waves which threatened every moment to overwhelm them.

‘There is only one way to free yourselves,’ she said to the king, bobbing up and down in the water as she spoke, ‘and that is to give me your solemn word that you will deliver to me the first child that is born to you.’

The king hesitated at this proposal. He hoped that some day he might have children in his home, and the thought that he must yield up the heir to his crown was very bitter to him; but just then a huge wave broke with great force on the ship’s side, and his men fell on their knees and entreated him to save them.

So he promised, and this time a wave lifted the vessel clean off the rocks, and she was in the open sea once more.

The affairs of the islands took longer to settle than the king had expected, and some months passed away before he returned to his palace. In his absence a son had been born to him, and so great was his joy that he quite forgot the mermaid and the price he had paid for the safety of his ship. But as the years went on, and the baby grew into a fine big boy, the remembrance of it came back, and one day he told the queen the whole story. From that moment the happiness of both their lives was ruined. Every night they went to bed wondering if they should find his room empty in the morning, and every day they kept him by their sides, expecting him to be snatched away before their very eyes.

At last the king felt that this state of things could not continue, and he said to his wife:

‘After all, the most foolish thing in the world one can do is to keep the boy here in exactly the place in which the mermaid will seek him. Let us give him food and send him on his travels, and perhaps, if the mermaid ever *does* come to seek him, she may be content with some other child.’ And the queen agreed that his plan seemed the wisest.

So the boy was called, and his father told him the story of the voyage, as he had told his mother before him. The prince listened eagerly, and was delighted to think that he was to go away all by himself to see the world, and was not in the least frightened; for though he was now sixteen, he had scarcely been allowed to walk alone beyond the palace gardens. He began busily to make his preparations, and took off his smart velvet coat, putting on instead one of green cloth, while he refused a beautiful bag which the queen offered him to hold his food, and slung a leather knapsack over his shoulders instead, just as he had seen other travellers do. Then he bade farewell to his parents and went his way.

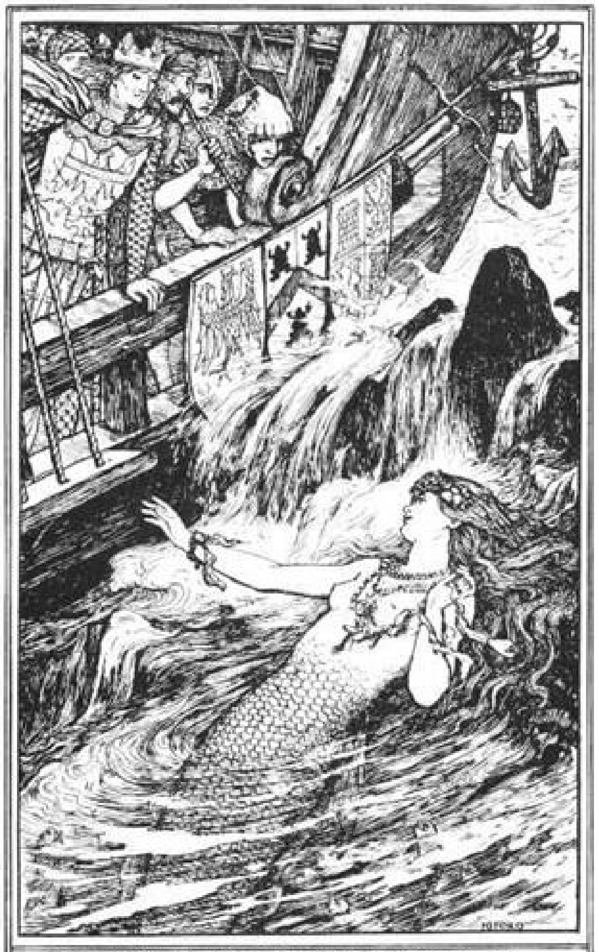

THE MERMAID ASKS FOR THE KING’S CHILD

All through the day he walked, watching with interest the strange birds and animals that darted across his path in the forest or peeped at him from behind a bush. But as evening drew on he became tired, and looked about as he walked for some place where he could sleep. At length he reached a soft mossy bank under a tree, and was just about to stretch himself out on it, when a fearful roar made him start and tremble all over. In another moment something passed swiftly through the air and a lion stood before him.

‘What are you doing here?’ asked the lion, his eyes glaring fiercely at the boy.

‘I am flying from the mermaid,’ the prince answered, in a quaking voice.

‘Give me some food then,’ said the lion, ‘it is past my supper time, and I am very hungry.’

The boy was so thankful that the lion did not want to eat *him*, that he gladly picked up his knapsack which lay on the ground, and held out some bread and a flask of wine.

‘I feel better now,’ said the lion when he had done, ‘so now I shall go to sleep on this nice soft moss, and if you like you can lie down beside me.’ So the boy and the lion slept soundly side by side, till the sun rose.

‘I must be off now,’ remarked the lion, shaking the boy as he spoke; ‘but cut off the tip of my ear, and keep it carefully, and if you are in any danger just wish yourself a lion and you will become one on the spot. One good turn deserves another, you know.’

The prince thanked him for his kindness, and did as he was bid, and the two then bade each other farewell.

‘I wonder how it feels to be a lion,’ thought the boy, after he had gone a little way; and he took out the tip of the ear from the breast of his jacket and wished with all his might. In an instant his head had swollen to several times its usual size, and his neck seemed very hot and heavy; and, somehow, his hands became paws, and his skin grew hairy and yellow. But what pleased him most was his long tail with a tuft at the end, which he lashed and switched proudly. ‘I like being a lion very much,’ he said to himself, and trotted gaily along the road.

After a while, however, he got tired of walking in this unaccustomed way — it made his back ache and his front paws felt sore. So he wished himself a boy again, and in the twinkling of an eye his tail disappeared and his head shrank, and the long thick mane became short and curly. Then he looked out for a sleeping place, and found some dry ferns, which he gathered and heaped up.

But before he had time to close his eyes there was a great noise in the trees near by, as if a big heavy body was crashing through them. The boy rose and turned his head, and saw a huge black bear coming towards him.

‘What are you doing here?’ cried the bear.

‘I am running away from the mermaid,’ answered the boy; but the bear took no interest in the mermaid, and only said: ‘I am hungry; give me something to eat.’

The knapsack was lying on the ground among the fern, but the prince picked it up, and, unfastening the strap, took out his second flask of wine and another loaf of bread. ‘We will have supper together,’ he remarked politely; but the bear, who had never been taught manners, made no reply, and ate as fast as he could. When he had quite finished, he got up and stretched himself.

‘You have got a comfortable-looking bed there,’ he observed. ‘I really think that, bad sleeper as I am, I might have a good night on it. I can manage to squeeze you in,’ he added; ‘you don’t take up a great deal of room.’ The boy was rather indignant at the bear’s cool way of talking; but as he was too tired to gather more fern, they lay down side by side, and never stirred till sunrise next morning.

‘I must go now,’ said the bear, pulling the sleepy prince on to his feet; ‘but first you shall cut off the tip of my ear, and when you are in any danger just wish yourself a bear and you will become one. One good turn deserves another, you know.’ And the boy did as he was bid, and he and the bear bade each other farewell.

‘I wonder how it feels to be a bear,’ thought he to himself when he had walked a little way; and he took out the tip from the breast of his coat and wished hard that he might become a bear. The next moment his body stretched out and thick black fur covered him all over. As before, his hands were changed into paws, but when he tried to switch his tail he found to his disgust that it would not go any distance. ‘Why it is hardly worth calling a tail!’ said he. For the rest of the day he remained a bear and continued his journey, but as evening came on the bear-skin, which had been so useful when plunging through brambles in the forest, felt rather heavy, and he wished himself a boy again. He was too much exhausted to take the trouble of cutting any fern or seeking for moss, but just threw himself down under a tree, when exactly above his head he heard a great buzzing as a bumble-bee alighted on a honeysuckle branch. ‘What are you doing here?’ asked the bee in a cross voice; ‘at your age you ought to be safe at home.’

‘I am running away from the mermaid,’ replied the boy; but the bee, like the lion and the bear, was one of those people who never listen to the answers to their questions, and only said: ‘I am hungry. Give me something to eat.’

The boy took his last loaf and flask out of his knapsack and laid them on the ground, and they had supper together. ‘Well, now I am going to sleep,’ observed the bee when the last crumb was gone, ‘but as you are not very big I can make room for you beside me,' and he curled up his wings, and tucked in his legs, and he and the prince both slept soundly till morning. Then the bee got up and carefully brushed every scrap of dust off his velvet coat and buzzed loudly in the boy's ear to waken him.

'Take a single hair from one of my wings,' said he, 'and if you are in danger just wish yourself a bee and you will become one. One good turn deserves another, so farewell, and thank you for your supper.' And the bee departed after the boy had pulled out the hair and wrapped it carefully in a leaf.

'It must feel quite different to be a bee from what it does to be a lion or bear,' thought the boy to himself when he had walked for an hour or two. 'I dare say I should get on a great deal faster,' so he pulled out his hair and wished himself a bee.

In a moment the strangest thing happened to him. All his limbs seemed to draw together, and his body to become very short and round; his head grew quite tiny, and instead of his white skin he was covered with the richest, softest velvet. Better than all, he had two lovely gauze wings which carried him the whole day without getting tired.

Late in the afternoon the boy fancied he saw a vast heap of stones a long way off, and he flew straight towards it. But when he reached the gates he saw that it was really a great town, so he wished himself back in his own shape and entered the city.

He found the palace doors wide open and went boldly into a sort of hall which was full of people, and where men and maids were gossiping together. He joined their talk and soon learned from them that the king had only one daughter who had such a hatred to men that she would never suffer one to enter her presence. Her father was in despair, and had had pictures painted of the handsomest princes of all the courts in the world, in the hope that she might fall in love with one of them; but it was no use; the princess would not even allow the pictures to be brought into her room.

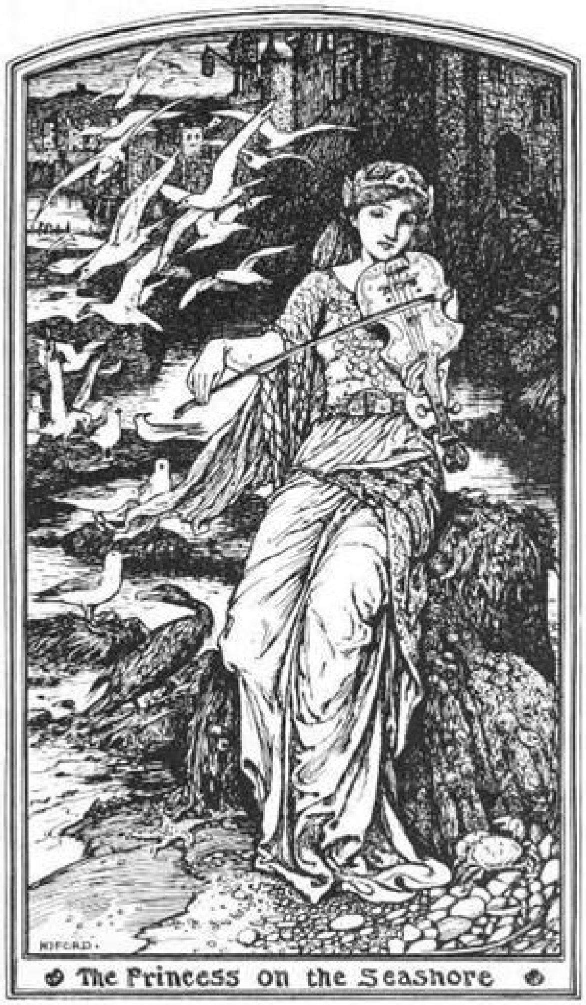

The Princess on the Seashore

‘It is late,’ remarked one of the women at last; ‘I must go to my mistress.’ And, turning to one of the lackeys, she bade him find a bed for the youth.

‘It is not necessary,’ answered the prince, ‘this bench is good enough for me. I am used to nothing better.’ And when the hall was empty he lay down for a few minutes. But as soon as everything was quiet in the palace he took out the hair and wished himself a bee, and in this shape he flew upstairs, past the guards, and through the keyhole into the princess’s chamber. Then he turned himself into a man again.

At this dreadful sight the princess, who was broad awake, began to scream loudly. ‘A man! a man!’ cried she; but when the guards rushed in there was only a bumble-bee buzzing about the room. They looked under the bed, and behind the curtains, and into the cupboards, then came to the conclusion that the princess had had a bad dream, and bowed themselves out. The door had scarcely closed on them than the bee disappeared, and a handsome youth stood in his place.

‘I *knew* a man was hidden somewhere,’ cried the princess, and screamed more loudly than before. Her shrieks brought back the guards, but though they looked in all kinds of impossible places no man was to be seen, and so they told the princess.

‘He was here a moment ago — I saw him with my own eyes,’ and the guards dared not contradict her, though they shook their heads and whispered to each other that the princess had gone mad on this subject, and saw a man in every table and chair. And they made up their minds that — let her scream as loudly as she might — they would take no notice.

Now the princess saw clearly what they were thinking, and that in future her guards would give her no help, and would perhaps, besides, tell some stories about her to the king, who would shut her up in a lonely tower and prevent her walking in the gardens among her birds and flowers. So when, for the third time, she beheld the prince standing before her, she did not scream but sat up in bed gazing at him in silent terror.

‘Do not be afraid,’ he said, ‘I shall not hurt you’; and he began to praise her gardens, of which he had heard the servants speak, and the birds and flowers which she loved, till the princess’s anger softened, and she answered him with gentle words. Indeed, they soon became so friendly that she vowed she would marry no one else, and confided to him that in three days her father would be off to the wars, leaving his sword in her room. If any man could find it and bring it to him he would receive her hand as a reward. At this point a cock crew, and the youth jumped up hastily saying: ‘Of course I shall ride with the king to the war, and if I do not return, take your violin every evening to the seashore and play on it, so that the very sea-kobolds who live at the bottom of the ocean may hear it and come to you.’

Just as the princess had foretold, in three days the king set out for the war with a large following, and among them was the young prince, who had presented himself at court as a young noble in search of adventures. They had left the city many miles behind them, when the king suddenly discovered that he had forgotten his sword, and though all his attendants instantly offered theirs, he declared that he could fight with none but his own.

‘The first man who brings it to me from my daughter’s room,’ cried he, ‘shall not only have her to wife, but after my death shall reign in my stead.’

At this the Red Knight, the young prince, and several more turned their horses to ride as fast as the wind back to the palace. But suddenly a better plan entered the prince’s head, and, letting the others pass him, he took his precious parcel from his breast and wished himself a lion. Then on he bounded, uttering such dreadful roars that the horses were frightened and grew unmanageable, and he easily outstripped them, and soon reached the gates of the palace. Here he hastily changed himself into a bee, and flew straight into the princess's room, where he became a man again. She showed him where the sword hung concealed behind a curtain, and he took it down, saying as he did so: 'Be sure not to forget what you have promised to do.'

The princess made no reply, but smiled sweetly, and slipping a golden ring from her finger she broke it in two and held half out silently to the prince, while the other half she put in her own pocket. He kissed it, and ran down the stairs bearing the sword with him. Some way off he met the Red Knight and the rest, and the Red Knight at first tried to take the sword from him by force. But as the youth proved too strong for him, he gave it up, and resolved to wait for a better opportunity.

This soon came, for the day was hot and the prince was thirsty. Perceiving a little stream that ran into the sea, he turned aside, and, unbuckling the sword, flung himself on the ground for a long drink. Unluckily, the mermaid happened at that moment to be floating on the water not very far off, and knew he was the boy who had been given her before he was born. So she floated gently in to where he was lying, she seized him by the arm, and the waves closed over them both. Hardly had they disappeared, when the Red Knight stole cautiously up, and could hardly believe his eyes when he saw the king's sword on the bank. He wondered what had become of the youth, who an hour before had guarded his treasure so fiercely; but, after all, that was no affair of his! So, fastening the sword to his belt, he carried it to the king.

The war was soon over, and the king returned to his people, who welcomed him with shouts of joy. But when the princess from her window saw that her betrothed was not among the attendants riding behind her father, her heart sank, for she knew that some evil must have befallen him, and she feared the Red Knight. She had long ago learned how clever and how wicked he was, and something whispered to her that it was *he* who would gain the credit of having carried back the sword, and would claim her as his bride, though he had never even entered her chamber. And she could do nothing; for although the king loved her, he never let her stand in the way of his plans.

The poor princess was only too right, and everything came to pass exactly as she had foreseen it. The king told her that the Red Knight had won her fairly, and that the wedding would take place next day, and there would be a great feast after it.

In those days feasts were much longer and more splendid than they are now; and it was growing dark when the princess, tired out with all she had gone through, stole up to her own room for a little quiet. But the moon was shining so brightly over the sea that it seemed to draw her towards it, and taking her violin under her arm, she crept down to the shore.

‘Listen! listen!’ said the mermaid to the prince, who was lying stretched on a bed of seaweeds at the bottom of the sea. ‘Listen! that is your old love playing, for mermaids know everything that happens upon earth.’

‘I hear nothing,’ answered the youth, who did not look happy. ‘Take me up higher, where the sounds can reach me.’

So the mermaid took him on her shoulders and bore him up midway to the surface. ‘Can you hear now?’ she asked.

‘No,’ answered the prince, ‘I hear nothing but the water rushing; I must go higher still.’

Then the mermaid carried him to the very top. ‘You must surely be able to hear *now*?’ said she.

‘Nothing but the water,’ repeated the youth. So she took him right to the land.

‘At any rate you can hear *now*?’ she said again.

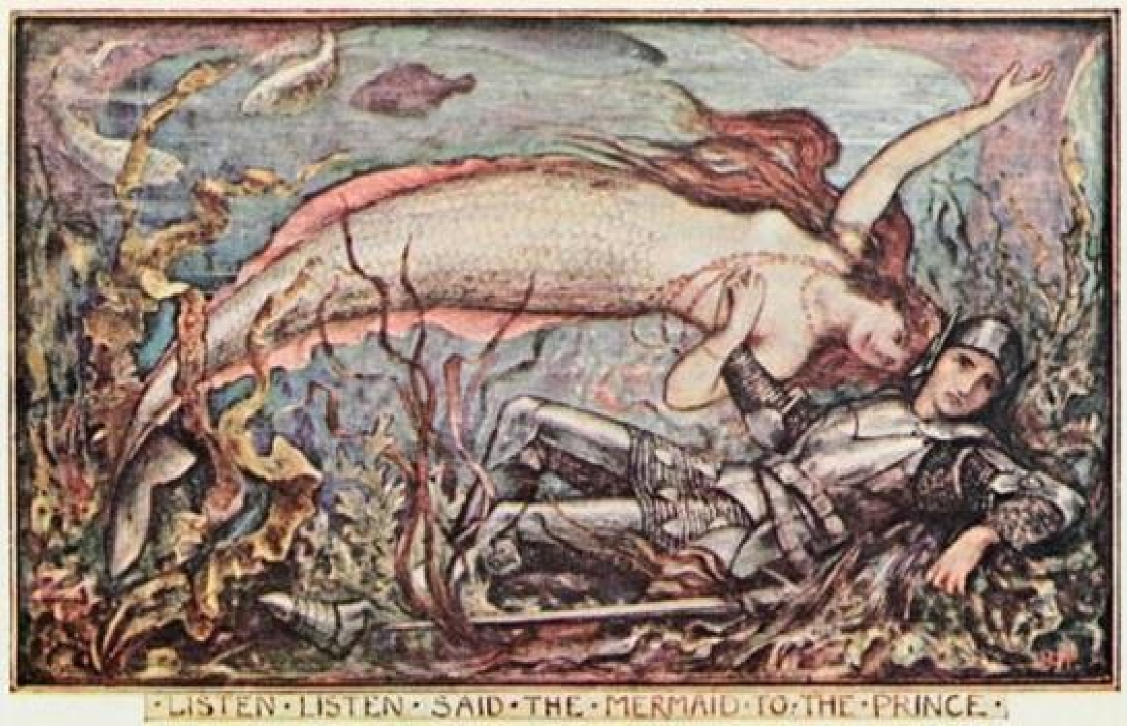

·LISTEN·LISTEN·SAID·THE·MERMAID·TO·THE·PRINCE·

‘The water is still rushing in my ears,’ answered he; ‘but wait a little, that will soon pass off.’ And as he spoke he put his hand into his breast, and seizing the hair wished himself a bee, and flew straight into the pocket of the princess. The mermaid looked in vain for him, and floated all night upon the sea; but he never came back, and never more did he gladden her eyes. But the princess felt that something strange was about her, though she knew not what, and returned quickly to the palace, where the young man at once resumed his own shape. Oh, what joy filled her heart at the sight of him! But there was no time to be lost, and she led him right into the hall, where the king and his nobles were still sitting at the feast. 'Here is a man who boasts that he can do wonderful tricks,' said she, 'better even than the Red Knight's! That cannot be true, of course; but it might be well to give this impostor a lesson. He pretends, for instance, that he can turn himself into a lion; but that I do not believe. I know that you have studied the art of magic,' she went on, turning to the Red Knight, 'so suppose you just show him how it is done, and bring shame upon him.'

Now the Red Knight had never opened a book of magic in his life; but he was accustomed to think that he could do everything better than other people without any teaching at all. So he turned and twisted himself about, and bellowed and made faces; but he did not become a lion for all that.

'Well, perhaps it *is* very difficult to change into a lion. Make yourself a bear,' said the princess. But the Red Knight found it no easier to become a bear than a lion.

'Try a bee,' suggested she. 'I have always read that anyone who can do magic at all can do that.' And the old knight buzzed and hummed, but he remained a man and not a bee.

'Now it is your turn,' said the princess to the youth. 'Let us see if you can change yourself into a lion.' And in a moment such a fierce creature stood before them, that all the guests rushed out of the hall, treading each other underfoot in their fright. The lion sprang at the Red Knight, and would have torn him in pieces had not the princess held him back, and bidden him to change himself into a man again. And in a second a man took the place of the lion.

'Now become a bear,' said she; and a bear advanced panting and stretching out his arms to the Red Knight, who shrank behind the princess.

By this time some of the guests had regained their courage, and returned as far as the door, thinking that if it was safe for the princess perhaps it was safe for them. The king, who was braver than they, and felt it needful to set them a good example besides, had never left his seat, and when at a new command of the princess the bear once more turned into a man, he was silent from astonishment, and a suspicion of the truth began to dawn on him. 'Was it *he* who fetched the sword?' asked the king.

'Yes, it was,' answered the princess; and she told him the whole story, and how she had broken her gold ring and given him half of it. And the prince took out his half of the ring, and the princess took out hers, and they fitted exactly. Next day the Red Knight was hanged, as he richly deserved, and there was a new marriage feast for the prince and princess.

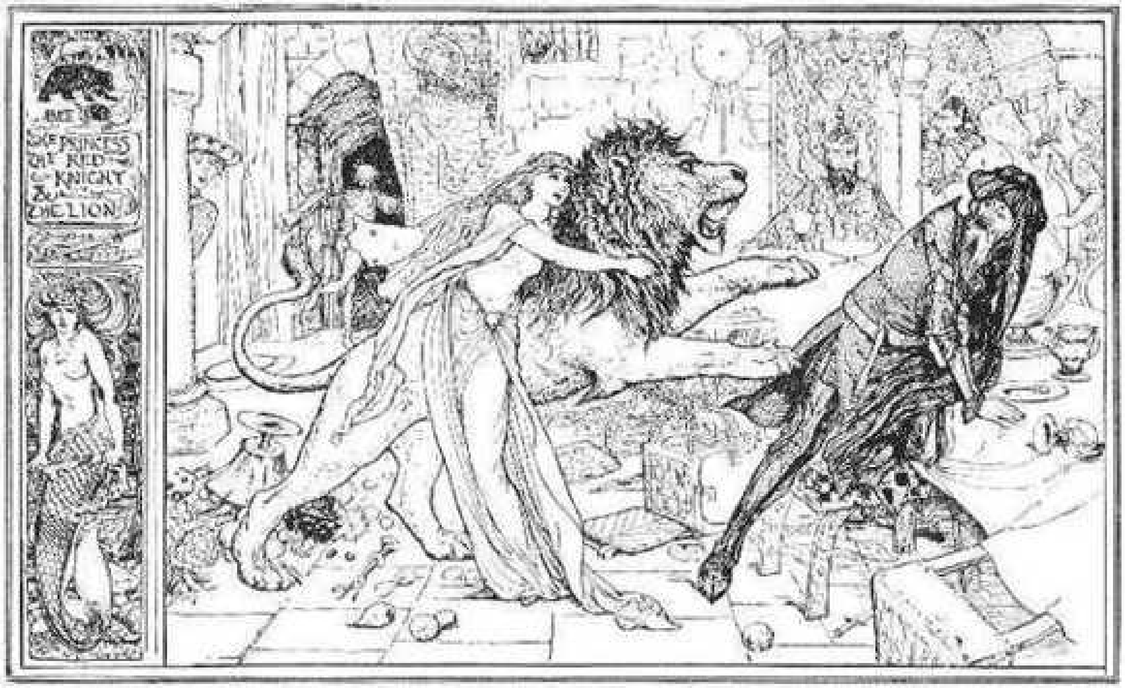
THE PRINCESS
THE RED
KNIGHT
&
THE LION

PIVI AND KABO

When birds were men, and men were birds, Pivi and Kabo lived in an island far away, called New Caledonia. Pivi was a cheery little bird that chirps at sunset; Kabo was an ugly black fowl that croaks in the darkness. One day Pivi and Kabo thought that they would make slings, and practise slinging, as the people of the island still do. So they went to a banyan tree, and stripped the bark to make strings for their slings, and next they repaired to the river bank to find stones. Kabo stood on the bank of the river, and Pivi went into the water. The game was for Kabo to sling at Pivi, and for Pivi to dodge the stones, if he could. For some time he dodged them cleverly, but at last a stone from Kabo's sling hit poor Pivi on the leg and broke it. Down went Pivi into the stream, and floated along it, till he floated into a big hollow bamboo, which a woman used for washing her sweet potatoes.

'What is that in my bamboo?' said the woman. And she blew in at one end, and blew little Pivi out at the other, like a pea from a pea-shooter.

'Oh!' cried the woman, 'what a state you are in! What have you been doing?'

'It was Kabo who broke my leg at the slinging game,' said Pivi.

'Well, I am sorry for you,' said the woman; 'will you come with me, and do what I tell you?'

'I will!' said Pivi, for the woman was very kind and pretty. She took Pivi into a shed where she kept her fruit, laid him on a bed of mats, and made him as comfortable as she could, and attended to his broken leg without cutting off the flesh round the bone, as these people usually do.

'You will be still, won't you, Pivi?' she said. 'If you hear a little noise you will pretend to be dead. It is the Black Ant who will come and creep from your feet up to your head. Say nothing, and keep quiet, won't you, Pivi?'

'Certainly, kind lady,' said Pivi, 'I will lie as still as can be.'

'Next will come the big Red Ant — you know him?'

'Yes, I know him, with his feet like a grasshopper's.'

'He will walk over your body up to your head. Then you must shake all your body. Do you understand, Pivi?'

'Yes, dear lady, I shall do just as you say.'

'Very good,' said the woman, going out and shutting the door.

Pivi lay still under his coverings, then a tiny noise was heard, and the Black Ant began to march over Pivi, who lay quite still. Then came the big Red Ant skipping along his body, and then Pivi shook himself all over. He jumped up quite well again, he ran to the river, he looked into the water and saw that he was changed from a bird into a fine young man!

'Oh, lady,' he cried, 'look at me now! I am changed into a man, and so handsome!'

'Will you obey me again?' said the woman.

'Always; whatever you command I will do it,' said Pivi, politely.

'Then climb up that cocoa-nut tree, with your legs only, not using your hands,' said the woman.

Now the natives can run up cocoa-nut trees like squirrels, some using only one hand; the girls can do that. But few can climb without using their hands at all.

'At the top of the tree you will find two cocoa-nuts. You must not throw them down, but carry them in your hands; and you must descend as you went up, using your legs only.'

'I shall try, at least,' said Pivi. And up he went, but it was very difficult, and down he came.

'Here are your cocoa-nuts,' he said, presenting them to the woman.

'Now, Pivi, put them in the shed where you lay, and when the sun sets to cool himself in the sea and rise again not so hot in the dawn you must go and take the nuts.'

All day Pivi played about in the river, as the natives do, throwing fruit and silvery showers of water at each other. When the sun set he went into the hut. But as he drew near he heard sweet voices talking and laughing within.

'What is that? People chattering in the hut! Perhaps they have taken my cocoa-nuts,' said Pivi to himself.

In he went, and there he found two pretty, laughing, teasing girls. He hunted for his cocoa-nuts, but none were there.

Down he ran to the river. 'Oh, lady, my nuts have been stolen!' he cried.

'Come with me, Pivi, and there will be nuts for you,' said the woman.

They went back to the hut, where the girls were laughing and playing.

'Nuts for you?' said the woman, 'there are two wives for you, Pivi, take them to your house.'

'Oh, good lady,' cried Pivi, 'how kind you are!'

So they were married and very happy, when in came cross old Kabo.

'Is this Pivi?' said he. 'Yes, it is — no, it isn't. It is not the same Pivi — but there is a kind of likeness. Tell me, *are* you Pivi?'

'Oh, yes!' said Pivi. 'But I am much better looking, and there are my two wives, are they not beautiful?'

'You are mocking me, Pivi! Your wives? How? Where did you get them?

You, with wives!’

Then Pivi told Kabo about the kind woman, and all the wonderful things that had happened to him.

‘Well, well!’ said Kabo, ‘but I want to be handsome too, and to have pretty young wives.’

‘But how can we manage that?’ asked Pivi.

‘Oh, we shall do all the same things over again — play at slinging, and, this time, you shall break my leg, Pivi!’

‘With all the pleasure in life,’ said Pivi, who was always ready to oblige.

So they went slinging, and Pivi broke Kabo’s leg, and Kabo fell into the river, and floated into the bamboo, and the woman blew him out, just as before. Then she picked up Kabo, and put him in the shed, and told him what to do when the Black Ant came, and what to do when the Red Ant came. But he didn’t!

When the Black Ant came, he shook himself, and behold, he had a twisted leg, and a hump back, and was as black as the ant.

Then he ran to the woman.

‘Look, what a figure I am!’ he said; but she only told him to climb the tree, as she had told Pivi.

But Kabo climbed with both hands and feet, and he threw down the nuts, instead of carrying them down, and he put them in the hut. And when he went back for them there he found two horrid old black hags, wrangling, and scolding, and scratching! So back he went to Pivi with his two beautiful wives, and Pivi was very sorry, but what could he do? Nothing, but sit and cry.

So, one day, Kabo came and asked Pivi to sail in his canoe to a place where he knew of a great big shell-fish, enough to feed on for a week. Pivi went, and deep in the clear water they saw a monstrous shell-fish, like an oyster, as big as a rock, with the shell wide open.

‘We shall catch it, and dry it, and kipper it,’ said Pivi, ‘and give a dinner to all our friends!’

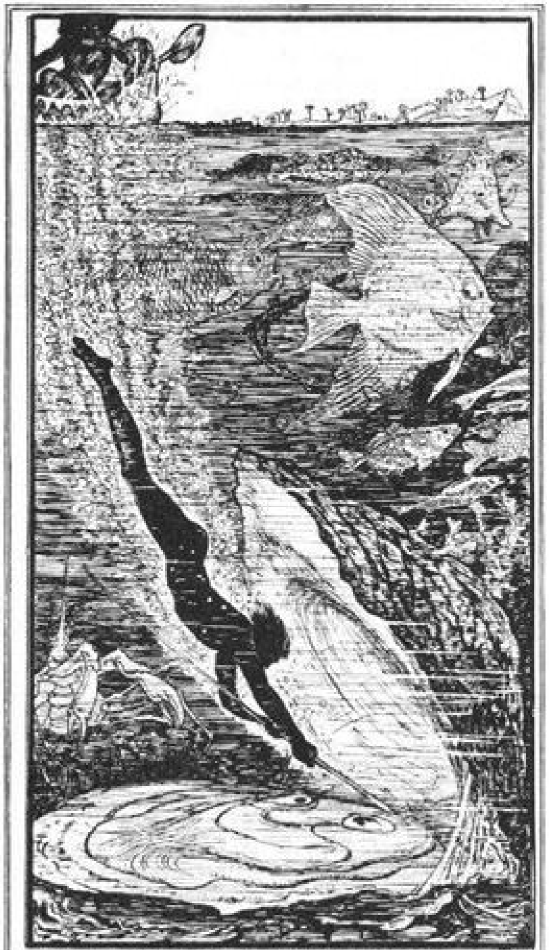

Pivi Dives For The Shellfish

‘I shall dive for it, and break it off the rock,’ said Kabo, ‘and then you must help me to drag it up into the canoe.’

There the shell-fish lay and gaped, but Kabo, though he dived in, kept well out of the way of the beast.

Up he came, puffing and blowing: ‘Oh, Pivi,’ he cried, ‘I cannot move it. Jump in and try yourself!’

Pivi dived, with his spear, and the shell-fish opened its shell wider yet, and sucked, and Pivi disappeared into its mouth, and the shell shut up with a snap!

Kabo laughed like a fiend, and then went home.

‘Where is Pivi?’ asked the two pretty girls. Kabo pretended to cry, and told how Pivi had been swallowed.

‘But dry your tears, my darlings,’ said Kabo, ‘I will be your husband, and my wives shall be your slaves. Everything is for the best, in the best of all possible worlds.’

‘No, no!’ cried the girls, ‘we love Pivi. We do not love anyone else. We shall stay at home, and weep for Pivi!’

‘Wretched idiots!’ cried Kabo; ‘Pivi was a scoundrel who broke my leg, and knocked me into the river.’

Then a little cough was heard at the door, and Kabo trembled, for he knew it was the cough of Pivi!

‘Ah, dear Pivi!’ cried Kabo, rushing to the door. ‘What joy! I was trying to console your dear wives.’

Pivi said not one word. He waved his hand, and five and twenty of his friends came trooping down the hill. They cut up Kabo into little pieces. Pivi turned round, and there was the good woman of the river.

‘Pivi,’ she said, ‘how did you get out of the living tomb into which Kabo sent you?’

‘I had my spear with me,’ said Pivi. ‘It was quite dry inside the shell, and I worked away at the fish with my spear, till he saw reason to open his shell, and out I came.’ Then the good woman laughed; and Pivi and his two wives lived happy ever afterwards.

THE ELF MAIDEN

Once upon a time two young men living in a small village fell in love with the same girl. During the winter, it was all night except for an hour or so about noon, when the darkness seemed a little less dark, and then they used to see which of them could tempt her out for a sleigh ride with the Northern Lights flashing above them, or which could persuade her to come to a dance in some neighbouring barn. But when the spring began, and the light grew longer, the hearts of the villagers leapt at the sight of the sun, and a day was fixed for the boats to be brought out, and the great nets to be spread in the bays of some islands that lay a few miles to the north. Everybody went on this expedition, and the two young men and the girl went with them.

They all sailed merrily across the sea chattering like a flock of magpies, or singing their favourite songs. And when they reached the shore, what an unpacking there was! For this was a noted fishing ground, and here they would live, in little wooden huts, till autumn and bad weather came round again.

The maiden and the two young men happened to share the same hut with some friends, and fished daily from the same boat. And as time went on, one of the youths remarked that the girl took less notice of him than she did of his companion. At first he tried to think that he was dreaming, and for a long while he kept his eyes shut very tight to what he did not want to see, but in spite of his efforts, the truth managed to wriggle through, and then the young man gave up trying to deceive himself, and set about finding some way to get the better of his rival.

The plan that he hit upon could not be carried out for some months; but the longer the young man thought of it, the more pleased he was with it, so he made no sign of his feelings, and waited patiently till the moment came. This was the very day that they were all going to leave the islands, and sail back to the mainland for the winter. In the bustle and hurry of departure, the cunning fisherman contrived that their boat should be the last to put off, and when everything was ready, and the sails about to be set, he suddenly called out:

‘Oh, dear, what shall I do! I have left my best knife behind in the hut. Run, like a good fellow, and get it for me, while I raise the anchor and loosen the tiller.’

Not thinking any harm, the youth jumped back on shore and made his way up the steep bank. At the door of the hut he stopped and looked back, then started and gazed in horror. The head of the boat stood out to sea, and he was left alone on the island.

Yes, there was no doubt of it — he was quite alone; and he had nothing to help him except the knife which his comrade had purposely dropped on the ledge of the window. For some minutes he was too stunned by the treachery of his friend to think about anything at all, but after a while he shook himself awake, and determined that he would manage to keep alive somehow, if it were only to revenge himself.

So he put the knife in his pocket and went off to a part of the island which was not so bare as the rest, and had a small grove of trees. From one of these he cut himself a bow, which he strung with a piece of cord that had been left lying about the huts.

When this was ready the young man ran down to the shore and shot one or two sea-birds, which he plucked and cooked for supper.

In this way the months slipped by, and Christmas came round again. The evening before, the youth went down to the rocks and into the copse, collecting all the drift wood the sea had washed up or the gale had blown down, and he piled it up in a great stack outside the door, so that he might not have to fetch any all the next day. As soon as his task was done, he paused and looked out towards the mainland, thinking of Christmas Eve last year, and the merry dance they had had. The night was still and cold, and by the help of the Northern Lights he could almost see across to the opposite coast, when, suddenly, he noticed a boat, which seemed steering straight for the island. At first he could hardly stand for joy, the chance of speaking to another man was so delightful; but as the boat drew near there was something, he could not tell what, that was different from the boats which he had been used to all his life, and when it touched the shore he saw that the people that filled it were beings of another world than ours. Then he hastily stepped behind the wood stack, and waited for what might happen next.

The strange folk one by one jumped on to the rocks, each bearing a load of something that they wanted. Among the women he remarked two young girls, more beautiful and better dressed than any of the rest, carrying between them two great baskets full of provisions. The young man peeped out cautiously to see what all this crowd could be doing inside the tiny hut, but in a moment he drew back again, as the girls returned, and looked about as if they wanted to find out what sort of a place the island was.

Their sharp eyes soon discovered the form of a man crouching behind the bundles of sticks, and at first they felt a little frightened, and started as if they would run away. But the youth remained so still, that they took courage and laughed gaily to each other. ‘What a strange creature, let us try what he is made of,’ said one, and she stooped down and gave him a pinch.

Now the young man had a pin sticking in the sleeve of his jacket, and the moment the girl’s hand touched him she pricked it so sharply that the blood came. The girl screamed so loudly that the people all ran out of their huts to see what was the matter. But directly they caught sight of the man they turned and fled in the other direction, and picking up the goods they had brought with them scampered as fast as they could down to the shore. In an instant, boat, people, and goods had vanished completely.

In their hurry they had, however, forgotten two things: a bundle of keys which lay on the table, and the girl whom the pin had pricked, and who now stood pale and helpless beside the wood stack.

‘You will have to make me your wife,’ she said at last, ‘for you have drawn my blood, and I belong to you.’

‘Why not? I am quite willing,’ answered he. ‘But how do you suppose we can manage to live till summer comes round again?’

‘Do not be anxious about that,’ said the girl; ‘if you will only marry me all will be well. I am very rich, and all my family are rich also.’

Then the young man gave her his promise to make her his wife, and the girl fulfilled her part of the bargain, and food was plentiful on the island all through the long winter months, though he never knew how it got there. And by-and-by it was spring once more, and time for the fisher-folk to sail from the mainland.

‘Where are we to go now?’ asked the girl, one day, when the sun seemed brighter and the wind softer than usual.

‘I do not care where I go,’ answered the young man; ‘what do you think?’

The girl replied that she would like to go somewhere right at the other end of the island, and build a house, far away from the huts of the fishing-folk. And he consented, and that very day they set off in search of a sheltered spot on the banks of a stream, so that it would be easy to get water.

In a tiny bay, on the opposite side of the island, they found the very thing, which seemed to have been made on purpose for them; and as they were tired with their long walk, they laid themselves down on a bank of moss among some birches and prepared to have a good night’s rest, so as to be fresh for work next day. But before she went to sleep the girl turned to her husband, and said: ‘If in your dreams you fancy that you hear strange noises, be sure you do not stir, or get up to see what it is.’

‘Oh, it is not likely we shall hear any noises in such a quiet place,’ answered he, and fell sound asleep.

Suddenly he was awakened by a great clatter about his ears, as if all the workmen in the world were sawing and hammering and building close to him. He was just going to spring up and go to see what it meant, when he luckily remembered his wife’s words and lay still. But the time till morning seemed very long, and with the first ray of sun they both rose, and pushed aside the branches of the birch trees. There, in the very place they had chosen, stood a beautiful house — doors and windows, and everything all complete!

‘Now you must fix on a spot for your cow-stalls,’ said the girl, when they had breakfasted off wild cherries; ‘and take care it is the proper size, neither too large nor too small.’ And the husband did as he was bid, though he wondered what use a cow-house could be, as they had no cows to put in it. But as he was a little afraid of his wife, who knew so much more than he, he asked no questions.

This night also he was awakened by the same sounds as before, and in the morning they found, near the stream, the most beautiful cow-house that ever was seen, with stalls and milk-pails and stools all complete, indeed, everything that a cow-house could possibly want, except the cows. Then the girl bade him measure out the ground for a storehouse, and this, she said, might be as large as he pleased; and when the storehouse was ready she proposed that they should set off to pay her parents a visit.

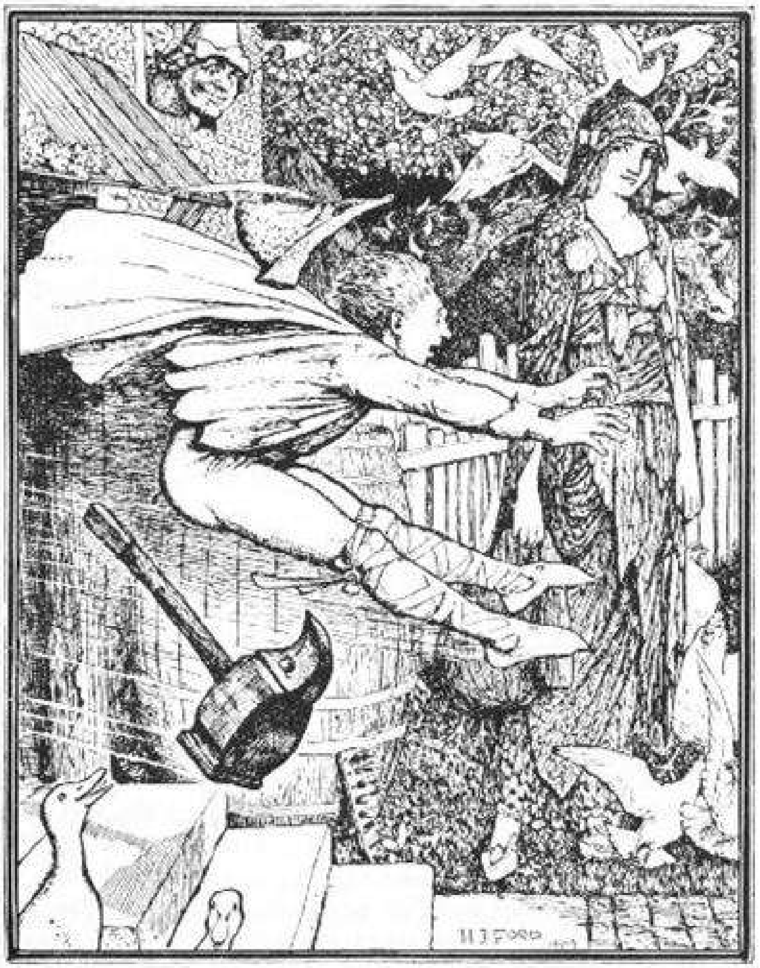

THE ELF MAIDEN'S HOUSE

The old people welcomed them heartily, and summoned their neighbours, for many miles round, to a great feast in their honour. In fact, for several weeks there was no work done on the farm at all; and at length the young man and his wife grew tired of so much play, and declared that they must return to their own home. But, before they started on the journey, the wife whispered to her husband: 'Take care to jump over the threshold as quick as you can, or it will be the worse for you.'

The young man listened to her words, and sprang over the threshold like an arrow from a bow; and it was well he did, for, no sooner was he on the other side, than his father-in-law threw a great hammer at him, which would have broken both his legs, if it had only touched them.

When they had gone some distance on the road home, the girl turned to her husband and said: 'Till you step inside the house, be sure you do not look back, whatever you may hear or see.'

And the husband promised, and for a while all was still; and he thought no more about the matter till he noticed at last that the nearer he drew to the house the louder grew the noise of the trampling of feet behind him. As he laid his hand upon the door he thought he was safe, and turned to look. There, sure enough, was a vast herd of cattle, which had been sent after him by his father-in-law when he found that his daughter had been cleverer than he. Half of the herd were already through the fence and cropping the grass on the banks of the stream, but half still remained outside and faded into nothing, even as he watched them.

However, enough cattle were left to make the young man rich, and he and his wife lived happily together, except that every now and then the girl vanished from his sight, and never told him where she had been. For a long time he kept silence about it; but one day, when he had been complaining of her absence, she said to him: ‘Dear husband, I am bound to go, even against my will, and there is only one way to stop me. Drive a nail into the threshold, and then I can never pass in or out.’

And so he did.

HOW SOME WILD ANIMALS BECAME TAME ONES

Once upon a time there lived a miller who was so rich that, when he was going to be married, he asked to the feast not only his own friends but also the wild animals who dwelt in the hills and woods round about. The chief of the bears, the wolves, the foxes, the horses, the cows, the goats, the sheep, and the reindeer, all received invitations; and as they were not accustomed to weddings they were greatly pleased and flattered, and sent back messages in the politest language that they would certainly be there.

The first to start on the morning of the wedding-day was the bear, who always liked to be punctual; and, besides, he had a long way to go, and his hair, being so thick and rough, needed a good brushing before it was fit to be seen at a party. However, he took care to awaken very early, and set off down the road with a light heart. Before he had walked very far he met a boy who came whistling along, hitting at the tops of the flowers with a stick.

‘Where are you going?’ said he, looking at the bear in surprise, for he was an old acquaintance, and not generally so smart.

‘Oh, just to the miller’s marriage,’ answered the bear carelessly. ‘Of course, I would much rather stay at home, but the miller was so anxious I should be there that I really could not refuse.’

‘Don’t go, don’t go!’ cried the boy. ‘If you do you will never come back! You have got the most beautiful skin in the world — just the kind that everyone is wanting, and they will be sure to kill you and strip you of it.’

‘I had not thought of that,’ said the bear, whose face turned white, only nobody could see it. ‘If you are certain that they would be so wicked — but perhaps you are jealous because nobody has invited *you*?’

‘Oh, nonsense!’ replied the boy angrily, ‘do as you see. It is your skin, and not mine; *I* don’t care what becomes of it!’ And he walked quickly on with his head in the air.

The bear waited until he was out of sight, and then followed him slowly, for he felt in his heart that the boy’s advice was good, though he was too proud to say so.

The boy soon grew tired of walking along the road, and turned off into the woods, where there were bushes he could jump and streams he could wade; but he had not gone far before he met the wolf.

‘Where are you going?’ asked he, for it was not the first time he had seen him.

‘Oh, just to the miller’s marriage,’ answered the wolf, as the bear had done before him. ‘It is rather tiresome, of course — weddings are always so stupid; but still one must be good-natured!’

‘Don’t go!’ said the boy again. ‘Your skin is so thick and warm, and winter is not far off now. They will kill you, and strip it from you.’

The wolf’s jaw dropped in astonishment and terror. ‘Do you *really* think that would happen?’ he gasped.

‘Yes, to be sure, I do,’ answered the boy. ‘But it is your affair, not mine. So good-morning,’ and on he went. The wolf stood still for a few minutes, for he was trembling all over, and then crept quietly back to his cave.

Next the boy met the fox, whose lovely coat of silvery grey was shining in the sun.

‘You look very fine!’ said the boy, stopping to admire him, ‘are you going to the miller’s wedding too?’

‘Yes,’ answered the fox; ‘it is a long journey to take for such a thing as that, but you know what the miller’s friends are like — so dull and heavy! It is only kind to go and amuse them a little.’

‘You poor fellow,’ said the boy pityingly. ‘Take my advice and stay at home. If you once enter the miller’s gate his dogs will tear you in pieces.’

‘Ah, well, such things *have* occurred, I know,’ replied the fox gravely. And without saying any more he trotted off the way he had come.

His tail had scarcely disappeared, when a great noise of crashing branches was heard, and up bounded the horse, his black skin glistening like satin.

‘Good-morning,’ he called to the boy as he galloped past, ‘I can’t wait to talk to you now. I have promised the miller to be present at his wedding-feast, and they won’t sit down till I come.’

‘Stop! stop!’ cried the boy after him, and there was something in his voice that made the horse pull up. ‘What is the matter?’ asked he.

‘You don’t know what you are doing,’ said the boy. ‘If once you go there you will never gallop through these woods any more. You are stronger than many men, but they will catch you and put ropes round you, and you will have to work and to serve them all the days of your life.’

The horse threw back his head at these words, and laughed scornfully.

‘Yes, I am stronger than many men,’ answered he, ‘and all the ropes in the world would not hold me. Let them bind me as fast as they will, I can always break loose, and return to the forest and freedom.’

And with this proud speech he gave a whisk of his long tail, and galloped away faster than before.

But when he reached the miller’s house everything happened as the boy had said. While he was looking at the guests and thinking how much handsomer and stronger he was than any of them, a rope was suddenly flung over his head, and he was thrown down and a bit thrust between his teeth. Then, in spite of his struggles, he was dragged to a stable, and shut up for several days without any food, till his spirit was broken and his coat had lost its gloss. After that he was harnessed to a plough, and had plenty of time to remember all he had lost through not listening to the counsel of the boy.

When the horse had turned a deaf ear to his words the boy wandered idly along, sometimes gathering wild strawberries from a bank, and sometimes plucking wild cherries from a tree, till he reached a clearing in the middle of the forest. Crossing this open space was a beautiful milk-white cow with a wreath of flowers round her neck.

‘Good-morning,’ she said pleasantly, as she came up to the place where the boy was standing.

‘Good-morning,’ he returned. ‘Where are you going in such a hurry?’

‘To the miller’s wedding; I am rather late already, for the wreath took such a long time to make, so I can’t stop.’

‘Don’t go,’ said the boy earnestly; ‘when once they have tasted your milk they will never let you leave them, and you will have to serve them all the days of your life.’

‘Oh, nonsense; what do *you* know about it?’ answered the cow, who always thought she was wiser than other people. ‘Why, I can run twice as fast as any of them! I should like to see anybody try to keep me against my will.’ And, without even a polite bow, she went on her way, feeling very much offended.

But everything turned out just as the boy had said. The company had all heard of the fame of the cow’s milk, and persuaded her to give them some, and then her doom was sealed. A crowd gathered round her, and held her horns so that she could not use them, and, like the horse, she was shut in the stable, and only let out in the mornings, when a long rope was tied round her head, and she was fastened to a stake in a grassy meadow.

And so it happened to the goat and to the sheep.

Last of all came the reindeer, looking as he always did, as if some serious business was on hand.

‘Where are you going?’ asked the boy, who by this time was tired of wild cherries, and was thinking of his dinner.

‘I am invited to the wedding,’ answered the reindeer, ‘and the miller has begged me on no account to fail him.’

‘O fool!’ cried the boy, ‘have you no sense at all? Don’t you know that when you get there they will hold you fast, for neither beast nor bird is as strong or as swift as you?’

‘That is exactly why I am quite safe,’ replied the reindeer. ‘I am so strong that no one can bind me, and so swift that not even an arrow can catch me. So, good-bye for the present, you will soon see me back.’

But none of the animals that went to the miller’s wedding ever came back. And because they were self-willed and conceited, and would not listen to good advice, they and their children have been the servants of men to this very day.

FORTUNE AND THE WOOD-CUTTER

Several hundreds of years ago there lived in a forest a wood-cutter and his wife and children. He was very poor, having only his axe to depend upon, and two mules to carry the wood he cut to the neighbouring town; but he worked hard, and was always out of bed by five o'clock, summer and winter.

This went on for twenty years, and though his sons were now grown up, and went with their father to the forest, everything seemed to go against them, and they remained as poor as ever. In the end the wood-cutter lost heart, and said to himself:

'What is the good of working like this if I never am a penny the richer at the end? I shall go to the forest no more! And perhaps, if I take to my bed, and do not run after Fortune, one day she may come to me.'

So the next morning he did not get up, and when six o'clock struck, his wife, who had been cleaning the house, went to see what was the matter.

'Are you ill?' she asked wonderingly, surprised at not finding him dressed. 'The cock has crowed ever so often. It is high time for you to get up.'

'Why should I get up?' asked the man, without moving.

'Why? to go to the forest, of course.'

'Yes; and when I have toiled all day I hardly earn enough to give us one meal.'

'But what can we do, my poor husband?' said she. 'It is just a trick of Fortune's, who would never smile upon us.'

'Well, I have had my fill of Fortune's tricks,' cried he. 'If she wants me she can find me here. But I have done with the wood for ever.'

'My dear husband, grief has driven you mad! Do you think Fortune will come to anybody who does not go after her? Dress yourself, and saddle the mules, and begin your work. Do you know that there is not a morsel of bread in the house?'

'I don't care if there isn't, and I am not going to the forest. It is no use your talking; nothing will make me change my mind.'

The distracted wife begged and implored in vain; her husband persisted in staying in bed, and at last, in despair, she left him and went back to her work.

An hour or two later a man from the nearest village knocked at the door, and when she opened it, he said to her: 'Good-morning, mother. I have got a job to do, and I want to know if your husband will lend me your mules, as I see he is not using them, and can lend me a hand himself?'

‘He is upstairs; you had better ask him,’ answered the woman. And the man went up, and repeated his request.

‘I am sorry, neighbour, but I have sworn not to leave my bed, and nothing will make me break my vow.’

‘Well, then, will you lend me your two mules? I will pay you something for them.’

‘Certainly, neighbour. Take them and welcome.’

So the man left the house, and leading the mules from the stable, placed two sacks on their back, and drove them to a field where he had found a hidden treasure. He filled the sacks with the money, though he knew perfectly well that it belonged to the sultan, and was driving them quietly home again, when he saw two soldiers coming along the road. Now the man was aware that if he was caught he would be condemned to death, so he fled back into the forest. The mules, left to themselves, took the path that led to their master’s stable.

The wood-cutter’s wife was looking out of the window when the mules drew up before the door, so heavily laden that they almost sank under their burdens. She lost no time in calling her husband, who was still lying in bed.

‘Quick, quick! get up as fast as you can. Our two mules have returned with sacks on their backs, so heavily laden with something or other that the poor beasts can hardly stand up.’

‘Wife, I have told you a dozen times already that I am not going to get up. Why can’t you leave me in peace?’

As she found she could get no help from her husband the woman took a large knife and cut the cords which bound the sacks on to the animals’ backs. They fell at once to the ground, and out poured a rain of gold pieces, till the little courtyard shone like the sun.

‘A treasure!’ gasped the woman, as soon as she could speak from surprise. ‘A treasure!’ And she ran off to tell her husband.

‘Get up! get up!’ she cried. ‘You were quite right not to go to the forest, and to await Fortune in your bed; she has come at last! Our mules have returned home laden with all the gold in the world, and it is now lying in the court. No one in the whole country can be as rich as we are!’

In an instant the wood-cutter was on his feet, and running to the court, where he paused, dazzled by the glitter of the coins which lay around him.

‘You see, my dear wife, that I was right,’ he said at last. ‘Fortune is so capricious, you can never count on her. Run after her, and she is sure to fly from you; stay still, and she is sure to come.’

THE ENCHANTED HEAD

Once upon a time an old woman lived in a small cottage near the sea with her two daughters. They were very poor, and the girls seldom left the house, as they worked all day long making veils for the ladies to wear over their faces, and every morning, when the veils were finished, the mother took them over the bridge and sold them in the city. Then she bought the food that they needed for the day, and returned home to do her share of veil-making.

One morning the old woman rose even earlier than usual, and set off for the city with her wares. She was just crossing the bridge when, suddenly, she knocked up against a human head, which she had never seen there before. The woman started back in horror; but what was her surprise when the head spoke, exactly as if it had a body joined on to it.

‘Take me with you, good mother!’ it said imploringly; ‘take me with you back to your house.’

At the sound of these words the poor woman nearly went mad with terror. Have that horrible thing always at home? Never! never! And she turned and ran back as fast as she could, not knowing that the head was jumping, dancing, and rolling after her. But when she reached her own door it bounded in before her, and stopped in front of the fire, begging and praying to be allowed to stay.

All that day there was no food in the house, for the veils had not been sold, and they had no money to buy anything with. So they all sat silent at their work, inwardly cursing the head which was the cause of their misfortunes.

When evening came, and there was no sign of supper, the head spoke, for the first time that day:

‘Good mother, does no one ever eat here? During all the hours I have spent in your house not a creature has touched anything.’

‘No,’ answered the old woman, ‘we are not eating anything.’

‘And why not, good mother?’

‘Because we have no money to buy any food.’

‘Is it your custom never to eat?’

‘No, for every morning I go into the city to sell my veils, and with the few shillings I get for them I buy all we want. To-day I did not cross the bridge, so of course I had nothing for food.’

‘Then *I* am the cause of your having gone hungry all day?’ asked the head.

‘Yes, you are,’ answered the old woman.

‘Well, then, I will give you money and plenty of it, if you will only do as I tell you. In an hour, as the clock strikes twelve, you must be on the bridge at the place where you met me. When you get there call out “Ahmed,” three times, as loud as you can. Then a negro will appear, and you must say to him: “The head, your master, desires you to open the trunk, and to give me the green purse which you will find in it.”’

‘Very well, my lord,’ said the old woman, ‘I will set off at once for the bridge.’ And wrapping her veil round her she went out.

Midnight was striking as she reached the spot where she had met the head so many hours before.

‘Ahmed! Ahmed! Ahmed!’ cried she, and immediately a huge negro, as tall as a giant, stood on the bridge before her.

‘What do you want?’ asked he.

‘The head, your master, desires you to open the trunk, and to give me the green purse which you will find in it.’

‘I will be back in a moment, good mother,’ said he. And three minutes later he placed a purse full of sequins in the old woman’s hand.

No one can imagine the joy of the whole family at the sight of all this wealth. The tiny, tumble-down cottage was rebuilt, the girls had new dresses, and their mother ceased selling veils. It was such a new thing to them to have money to spend, that they were not as careful as they might have been, and by-and-by there was not a single coin left in the purse. When this happened their hearts sank within them, and their faces fell.

‘Have you spent your fortune?’ asked the head from its corner, when it saw how sad they looked. ‘Well, then, go at midnight, good mother, to the bridge, and call out “Mahomet!” three times, as loud as you can. A negro will appear in answer, and you must tell him to open the trunk, and to give you the red purse which he will find there.’

The old woman did not need twice telling, but set off at once for the bridge.

‘Mahomet! Mahomet! Mahomet!’ cried she, with all her might; and in an instant a negro, still larger than the last, stood before her.

‘What do you want?’ asked he.

‘The head, your master, bids you open the trunk, and to give me the red purse which you will find in it.’

‘Very well, good mother, I will do so,’ answered the negro, and, the moment after he had vanished, he reappeared with the purse in his hand.

This time the money seemed so endless that the old woman built herself a new house, and filled it with the most beautiful things that were to be found in the shops. Her daughters were always wrapped in veils that looked as if they were woven out of sunbeams, and their dresses shone with precious stones. The neighbours wondered where all this sudden wealth had sprung from, but nobody knew about the head.

‘Good mother,’ said the head, one day, ‘this morning you are to go to the city and ask the sultan to give me his daughter for my bride.’

‘Do what?’ asked the old woman in amazement. ‘How can I tell the sultan that a head without a body wishes to become his son-in-law? They will think that I am mad, and I shall be hooted from the palace and stoned by the children.’

‘Do as I bid you,’ replied the head; ‘it is my will.’

The old woman was afraid to say anything more, and, putting on her richest clothes, started for the palace. The sultan granted her an audience at once, and, in a trembling voice, she made her request.

‘Are you mad, old woman?’ said the sultan, staring at her.

‘The wooer is powerful, O Sultan, and nothing is impossible to him.’

‘Is that true?’

‘It is, O Sultan; I swear it,’ answered she.

‘Then let him show his power by doing three things, and I will give him my daughter.’

‘Command, O gracious prince,’ said she.

‘Do you see that hill in front of the palace?’ asked the sultan.

‘I see it,’ answered she.

‘Well, in forty days the man who has sent you must make that hill vanish, and plant a beautiful garden in its place. That is the first thing. Now go, and tell him what I say.’

So the old woman returned and told the head the sultan’s first condition.

‘It is well,’ he replied; and said no more about it.

For thirty-nine days the head remained in its favourite corner. The old woman thought that the task set before him was beyond his powers, and that no more would be heard about the sultan’s daughter. But on the thirty-ninth evening after her visit to the palace, the head suddenly spoke.

‘Good mother,’ he said, ‘you must go to-night to the bridge, and when you are there cry “Ali! Ali! Ali!” as loud as you can. A negro will appear before you, and you will tell him that he is to level the hill, and to make, in its place, the most beautiful garden that ever was seen.’

‘I will go at once,’ answered she.

It did not take her long to reach the bridge which led to the city, and she took up her position on the spot where she had first seen the head, and called loudly ‘Ali! Ali! Ali.’ In an instant a negro appeared before her, of such a huge size that the old woman was half frightened; but his voice was mild and gentle as he said:

‘What is it that you want?’

‘Your master bids you level the hill that stands in front of the sultan’s palace and in its place to make the most beautiful garden in the world.’

‘Tell my master he shall be obeyed,’ replied Ali; ‘it shall be done this moment.’ And the old woman went home and gave Ali’s message to the head.

Meanwhile the sultan was in his palace waiting till the fortieth day should dawn, and wondering that not one spadeful of earth should have been dug out of the hill.

‘If that old woman has been playing me a trick,’ thought he, ‘I will hang her! And I will put up a gallows to-morrow on the hill itself.’

But when to-morrow came there was no hill, and when the sultan opened his eyes he could not imagine why the room was so much lighter than usual, and what was the reason of the sweet smell of flowers that filled the air.

‘Can there be a fire?’ he said to himself; ‘the sun never came in at this window before. I must get up and see.’ So he rose and looked out, and underneath him flowers from every part of the world were blooming, and creepers of every colour hung in chains from tree to tree.

Then he remembered. ‘Certainly that old woman’s son is a clever magician!’ cried he; ‘I never met anyone as clever as that. What shall I give him to do next? Let me think. Ah! I know.’ And he sent for the old woman, who by the orders of the head, was waiting below.

‘Your son has carried out my wishes very nicely,’ he said. ‘The garden is larger and better than that of any other king. But when I walk across it I shall need some place to rest on the other side. In forty days he must build me a palace, in which every room shall be filled with different furniture from a different country, and each more magnificent than any room that ever was seen.’ And having said this he turned round and went away.

‘Oh! he will never be able to do that,’ thought she; ‘it is much more difficult than the hill.’ And she walked home slowly, with her head bent.

‘Well, what am I to do next?’ asked the head cheerfully. And the old woman told her story.

‘Dear me! is that all? why it is child’s play,’ answered the head; and troubled no more about the palace for thirty-nine days. Then he told the old woman to go to the bridge and call for Hassan.

‘What do you want, old woman?’ asked Hassan, when he appeared, for he was not as polite as the others had been.

‘Your master commands you to build the most magnificent palace that ever was seen,’ replied she; ‘and you are to place it on the borders of the new garden.’

‘He shall be obeyed,’ answered Hassan. And when the sultan woke he saw, in the distance, a palace built of soft blue marble, resting on slender pillars of pure gold.

‘That old woman’s son is certainly all-powerful,’ cried he; ‘what shall I bid him do now?’ And after thinking some time he sent for the old woman, who was expecting the summons.

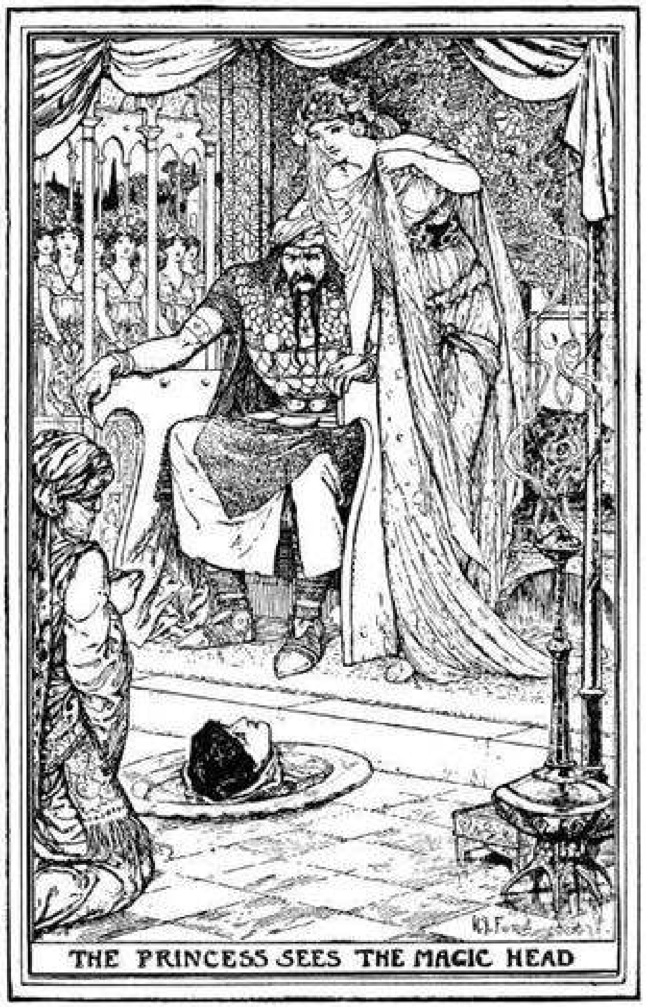

THE PRINCESS SEES THE MAGIC HEAD

‘The garden is wonderful, and the palace the finest in the world,’ said he, ‘so fine, that my servants would cut but a sorry figure in it. Let your son fill it with forty slaves whose beauty shall be unequalled, all exactly like each other, and of the same height.’

This time the king thought he had invented something totally impossible, and was quite pleased with himself for his cleverness.

Thirty-nine days passed, and at midnight on the night of the last the old woman was standing on the bridge.

‘Bekir! Bekir! Bekir!’ cried she. And a negro appeared, and inquired what she wanted.

‘The head, your master, bids you find forty slaves of unequalled beauty, and of the same height, and place them in the sultan’s palace on the other side of the garden.’

And when, on the morning of the fortieth day, the sultan went to the blue palace, and was received by the forty slaves, he nearly lost his wits from surprise.

‘I will assuredly give my daughter to the old woman’s son,’ thought he. ‘If I were to search all the world through I could never find a more powerful son-in-law.’

And when the old woman entered his presence he informed her that he was ready to fulfil his promise, and she was to bid her son appear at the palace without delay.

This command did not at all please the old woman, though, of course, she made no objections to the sultan.

‘All has gone well so far,’ she grumbled, when she told her story to the head, ‘but what do you suppose the sultan will say, when he sees his daughter’s husband?’

‘Never mind what he says! Put me on a silver dish and carry me to the palace.’

So it was done, though the old woman’s heart beat as she laid down the dish with the head upon it.

At the sight before him the king flew into a violent rage.

‘I will never marry my daughter to such a monster,’ he cried. But the princess placed her hand gently on his arm.

‘You have given your word, my father, and you cannot break it,’ said she.

‘But, my child, it is impossible for you to marry such a being,’ exclaimed the sultan.

‘Yes, I will marry him. He has a beautiful head, and I love him already.’

So the marriage was celebrated, and great feasts were held in the palace, though the people wept tears to think of the sad fate of their beloved princess. But when the merry-making was done, and the young couple were alone, the head suddenly disappeared, or, rather, a body was added to it, and one of the handsomest young men that ever was seen stood before the princess.

‘A wicked fairy enchanted me at my birth,’ he said, ‘and for the rest of the world I must always be a head only. But for you, and you only, I am a man like other men.’

‘And that is all I care about,’ said the princess.

THE SISTER OF THE SUN

A long time ago there lived a young prince whose favourite playfellow was the son of the gardener who lived in the grounds of the palace. The king would have preferred his choosing a friend from the pages who were brought up at court; but the prince would have nothing to say to them, and as he was a spoilt child, and allowed his way in all things, and the gardener's boy was quiet and well-behaved, he was suffered to be in the palace, morning, noon, and night.

The game the children loved the best was a match at archery, for the king had given them two bows exactly alike, and they would spend whole days in trying to see which could shoot the highest. This is always very dangerous, and it was a great wonder they did not put their eyes out; but somehow or other they managed to escape.

One morning, when the prince had done his lessons, he ran out to call his friend, and they both hurried off to the lawn which was their usual playground. They took their bows out of the little hut where their toys were kept, and began to see which could shoot the highest. At last they happened to let fly their arrows both together, and when they fell to earth again the tail feather of a golden hen was found sticking in one. Now the question began to arise whose was the lucky arrow, for they were both alike, and look as closely as you would you could see no difference between them. The prince declared that the arrow was his, and the gardener's boy was quite sure it was *his* — and on this occasion he was perfectly right; but, as they could not decide the matter, they went straight to the king.

When the king had heard the story, he decided that the feather belonged to his son; but the other boy would not listen to this and claimed the feather for himself. At length the king's patience gave way, and he said angrily:

'Very well; if you are so sure that the feather is yours, yours it shall be; only you will have to seek till you find a golden hen with a feather missing from her tail. And if you fail to find her your head will be the forfeit.'

The boy had need of all his courage to listen silently to the king's words. He had no idea where the golden hen might be, or even, if he discovered that, how he was to get to her. But there was nothing for it but to do the king's bidding, and he felt that the sooner he left the palace the better. So he went home and put some food into a bag, and then set forth, hoping that some accident might show him which path to take.

After walking for several hours he met a fox, who seemed inclined to be friendly, and the boy was so glad to have anyone to talk to that he sat down and entered into conversation.

‘Where are you going?’ asked the fox.

‘I have got to find a golden hen who has lost a feather out of her tail,’ answered the boy; ‘but I don’t know where she lives or how I shall catch her!’

‘Oh, I can show you the way!’ said the fox, who was really very good-natured. ‘Far towards the east, in that direction, lives a beautiful maiden who is called “The Sister of the Sun.” She has three golden hens in her house. Perhaps the feather belongs to one of them.’

The boy was delighted at this news, and they walked on all day together, the fox in front, and the boy behind. When evening came they lay down to sleep, and put the knapsack under their heads for a pillow.

Suddenly, about midnight, the fox gave a low whine, and drew nearer to his bedfellow. ‘Cousin,’ he whispered very low, ‘there is someone coming who will take the knapsack away from me. Look over there!’ And the boy, peeping through the bushes, saw a man.

‘Oh, I don’t think he will rob us!’ said the boy; and when the man drew near, he told them his story, which so much interested the stranger that he asked leave to travel with them, as he might be of some use. So when the sun rose they set out again, the fox in front as before, the man and boy following.

After some hours they reached the castle of the Sister of the Sun, who kept the golden hens among her treasures. They halted before the gate and took counsel as to which of them should go in and see the lady herself.

‘I think it would be best for me to enter and steal the hens,’ said the fox; but this did not please the boy at all.

‘No, it is my business, so it is right that I should go,’ answered he.

‘You will find it a very difficult matter to get hold of the hens,’ replied the fox.

‘Oh, nothing is likely to happen to me,’ returned the boy.

‘Well, go then,’ said the fox, ‘but be careful not to make any mistake. Steal only the hen which has the feather missing from her tail, and leave the others alone.’

The man listened, but did not interfere, and the boy entered the court of the palace.

He soon spied the three hens strutting proudly about, though they were really anxiously wondering if there were not some grains lying on the ground that they might be glad to eat. And as the last one passed by him, he saw she had one feather missing from her tail.

At this sight the youth darted forward and seized the hen by the neck so that she could not struggle. Then, tucking her comfortably under his arm, he made straight for the gate. Unluckily, just as he was about to go through it he looked back and caught a glimpse of wonderful splendours from an open door of the palace. ‘After all, there is no hurry,’ he said to himself; ‘I may as well see something now I *am* here,’ and turned back, forgetting all about the hen, which escaped from under his arm, and ran to join her sisters.

He was so much fascinated by the sight of all the beautiful things which peeped through the door that he scarcely noticed that he had lost the prize he had won; and he did not remember there was such a thing as a hen in the world when he beheld the Sister of the Sun sleeping on a bed before him.

For some time he stood staring; then he came to himself with a start, and feeling that he had no business there, softly stole away, and was fortunate enough to recapture the hen, which he took with him to the gate. On the threshold he stopped again. ‘Why should I not look at the Sister of the Sun?’ he thought to himself; ‘she is asleep, and will never know.’ And he turned back for the second time and entered the chamber, while the hen wriggled herself free as before. When he had gazed his fill he went out into the courtyard and picked up his hen who was seeking for corn.

As he drew near the gate he paused. ‘Why did I not give her a kiss?’ he said to himself; ‘I shall never kiss any woman so beautiful.’ And he wrung his hands with regret, so that the hen fell to the ground and ran away.

‘But I can do it still!’ he cried with delight, and he rushed back to the chamber and kissed the sleeping maiden on the forehead. But, alas! when he came out again he found that the hen had grown so shy that she would not let him come near her. And, worse than that, her sisters began to cluck so loud that the Sister of the Sun was awakened by the noise. She jumped up in haste from her bed, and going to the door she said to the boy:

‘You shall never, never, have my hen till you bring me back my sister who was carried off by a giant to his castle, which is a long way off.’

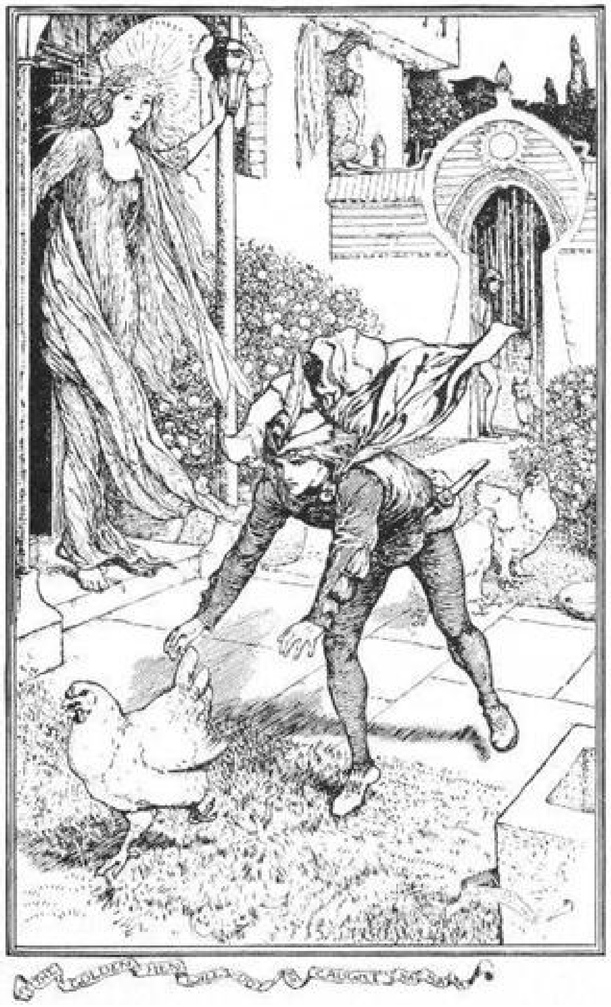

Slowly and sadly the youth left the palace and told his story to his friends, who were waiting outside the gate, how he had actually held the hen three times in his arms and had lost her.

‘I knew that we should not get off so easily,’ said the fox, shaking his head; ‘but there is no more time to waste. Let us set off at once in search of the sister. Luckily, I know the way.’

They walked on for many days, till at length the fox, who, as usual, was going first, stopped suddenly.

‘The giant’s castle is not far now,’ he said, ‘but when we reach it you two must remain outside while I go and fetch the princess. Directly I bring her out you must both catch hold of her tight, and get away as fast as you can; while I return to the castle and talk to the giants — for there are many of them — so that they may not notice the escape of the princess.’

A few minutes later they arrived at the castle, and the fox, who had often been there before, slipped in without difficulty. There were several giants, both young and old, in the hall, and they were all dancing round the princess. As soon as they saw the fox they cried out: ‘Come and dance too, old fox; it is a long time since we have seen you.’

So the fox stood up, and did his steps with the best of them; but after a while he stopped and said:

‘I know a charming new dance that I should like to show you; but it can only be done by two people. If the princess will honour me for a few minutes, you will soon see how it is done.’

‘Ah, that is delightful; we want something new,’ answered they, and placed the princess between the outstretched arms of the fox. In one instant he had knocked over the great stand of lights that lighted the hall, and in the darkness had borne the princess to the gate. His comrades seized hold of her, as they had been bidden, and the fox was back again in the hall before anyone had missed him. He found the giants busy trying to kindle a fire and get some light; but after a bit someone cried out:

‘Where is the princess?’

‘Here, in my arms,’ replied the fox. ‘Don’t be afraid; she is quite safe.’ And he waited until he thought that his comrades had gained a good start, and put at least five or six mountains between themselves and the giants. Then he sprang through the door, calling, as he went: ‘The maiden is here; take her if you can!’

At these words the giants understood that their prize had escaped, and they ran after the fox as fast as their great legs could carry them, thinking that they should soon come up with the fox, who they supposed had the princess on his back. The fox, on his side, was far too clever to choose the same path that his friends had taken, but wound in and out of the forest, till at last even *he* was tired out, and fell fast asleep under a tree. Indeed, he was so exhausted with his day’s work that he never heard the approach of the giants, and their hands were already stretched out to seize his tail when his eyes opened, and with a tremendous bound he was once more beyond their reach. All the rest of the night the fox ran and ran; but when bright red spread over the east, he stopped and waited till the giants were close upon him. Then he turned, and said quietly: ‘Look, there is the Sister of the Sun!’

The giants raised their eyes all at once, and were instantly turned into pillars of stone. The fox then made each pillar a low bow, and set off to join his friends.

He knew a great many short cuts across the hills, so it was not long before he came up with them, and all four travelled night and day till they reached the castle of the Sister of the Sun. What joy and feasting there was throughout the palace at the sight of the princess whom they had mourned as dead! and they could not make enough of the boy who had gone through such dangers in order to rescue her. The golden hen was given to him at once, and, more than that, the

Sister of the Sun told him that, in a little time, when he was a few years older, she would herself pay a visit to his home and become his wife. The boy could hardly believe his ears when he heard what was in store for him, for this was the most beautiful princess in all the world; and however thick the darkness might be, it fled away at once from the light of a star on her forehead.

So the boy set forth on his journey home, with his friends for company; his heart full of gladness when he thought of the promise of the princess. But, one by one, his comrades dropped off at the places where they had first met him, and he was quite alone when he reached his native town and the gates of the palace. With the golden hen under his arm he presented himself before the king, and told his adventures, and how he was going to have for a wife a princess so wonderful and unlike all other princesses, that the star on her forehead could turn night into day. The king listened silently, and when the boy had done, he said quietly: ‘If I find that your story is not true I will have you thrown into a cask of pitch.’

‘It is true — every word of it,’ answered the boy; and went on to tell that the day and even the hour were fixed when his bride was to come and seek him.

But as the time drew near, and nothing was heard of the princess, the youth became anxious and uneasy, especially when it came to his ears that the great cask was being filled with pitch, and that sticks were laid underneath to make a fire to boil it with. All day long the boy stood at the window, looking over the sea by which the princess must travel; but there were no signs of her, not even the tiniest white sail. And, as he stood, soldiers came and laid hands on him, and led him up to the cask, where a big fire was blazing, and the horrid black pitch boiling and bubbling over the sides. He looked and shuddered, but there was no escape; so he shut his eyes to avoid seeing.

The word was given for him to mount the steps which led to the top of the cask, when, suddenly, some men were seen running with all their might, crying as they went that a large ship with its sails spread was making straight for the city. No one knew what the ship was, or whence it came; but the king declared that he would not have the boy burned before its arrival, there would always be time enough for that.

At length the vessel was safe in port, and a whisper went through the watching crowd that on board was the Sister of the Sun, who had come to marry the young peasant, as she had promised. In a few moments more she had landed, and desired to be shown the way to the cottage which her bridegroom had so often described to her; and whither he had been led back by the king’s order at the first sign of the ship.

‘Don’t you know me?’ asked the Sister of the Sun, bending over him where he lay, almost driven out of his senses with terror.

‘No, no; I don’t know you,’ answered the youth, without raising his eyes.

‘Kiss me,’ said the Sister of the Sun; and the youth obeyed her, but still without looking up.

‘Don’t you know me *now*?’ asked she.

‘No, I don’t know you — I don’t know you,’ he replied, with the manner of a man whom fear had driven mad.

At this the Sister of the Sun grew rather frightened, and beginning at the beginning, she told him the story of his meeting with her, and how she had come a long way in order to marry him. And just as she had finished in walked the king, to see if what the boy had said was really true. But hardly had he opened the door of the cottage when he was almost blinded by the light that filled it; and he remembered what he had been told about the star on the forehead of the princess. He staggered back as if he had been struck, then a curious feeling took hold of him, which he had never felt before, and falling on his knees before the Sister of the Sun he implored her to give up all thought of the peasant boy, and to share his throne. But she only laughed, and said she had a finer throne of her own, if she wanted to sit on it, and that she was free to please herself, and would have no husband but the boy whom she would never have seen except for the king himself.

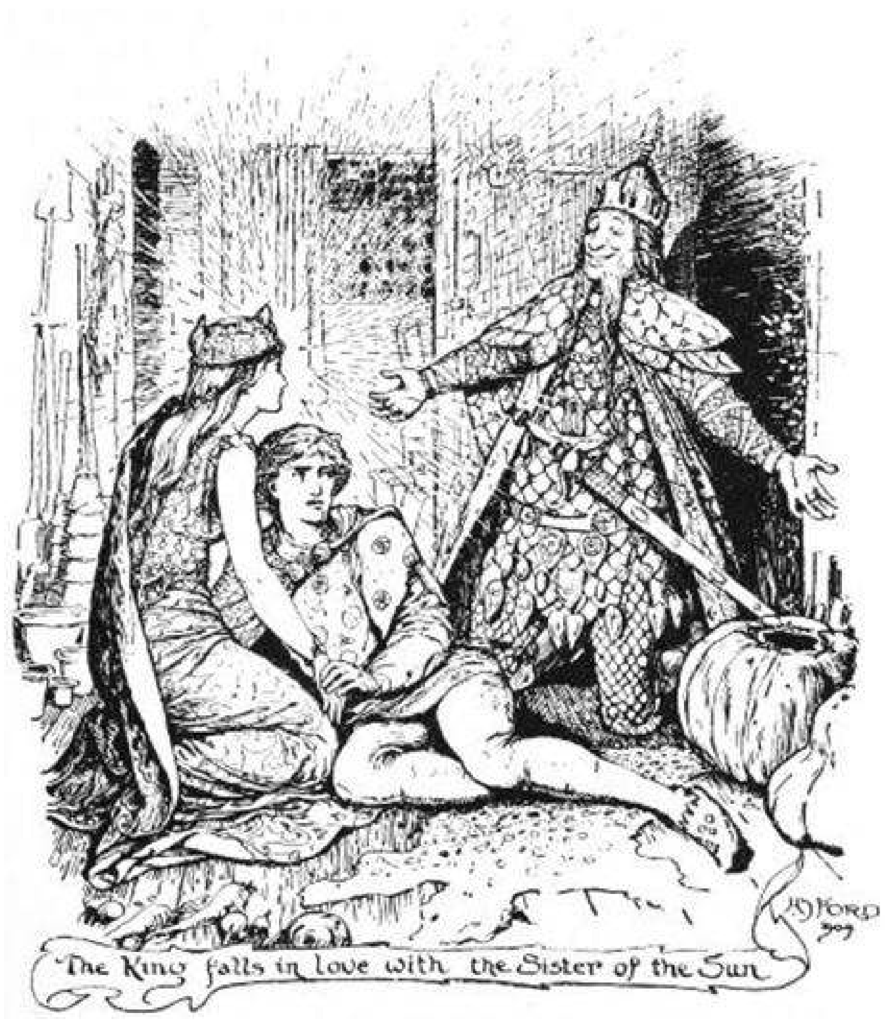

The King falls in love with the Sister of the Sun

‘I shall marry him to-morrow,’ ended she; and ordered the preparations to be set on foot at once.

When the next day came, however, the bridegroom’s father informed the princess that, by the law of the land, the marriage must take place in the presence of the king; but he hoped his majesty would not long delay his arrival. An hour or two passed, and everyone was waiting and watching, when at last the sound of trumpets was heard and a grand procession was seen marching up the street. A chair covered with velvet had been made ready for the king, and he took his seat upon it, and, looking round upon the assembled company, he said:

‘I have no wish to forbid this marriage; but, before I can allow it to be celebrated, the bridegroom must prove himself worthy of such a bride by fulfilling three tasks. And the first is that in a single day he must cut down every tree in an entire forest.’

The youth stood aghast at the king’s words. He had never cut down a tree in his life, and had not the least idea how to begin. And as for a whole forest —— ! But the princess saw what was passing in his mind, and whispered to him:

‘Don’t be afraid. In my ship you will find an axe, which you must carry off to the forest. When you have cut down one tree with it just say: “So let the forest fall,” and in an instant all the trees will be on the ground. But pick up three chips of the tree you have felled, and put them in your pocket.’

And the young man did exactly as he was bid, and soon returned with the three chips safe in his coat.

The following morning the princess declared that she had been thinking about the matter, and that, as she was not a subject of the king, she saw no reason why she should be bound by his laws; and she meant to be married that very day. But the bridegroom’s father told her that it was all very well for her to talk like that, but it was quite different for his son, who would pay with his head for any disobedience to the king’s commands. However, in consideration of what the youth had done the day before, he hoped his majesty’s heart might be softened, especially as he had sent a message that they might expect him at once. With this the bridal pair had to be content, and be as patient as they could till the king’s arrival.

He did not keep them long, but they saw by his face that nothing good awaited them.

‘The marriage cannot take place,’ he said shortly, ‘till the youth has joined to their roots all the trees he cut down yesterday.’

This sounded much more difficult than what he had done before, and he turned in despair to the Sister of the Sun.

‘It is all right,’ she whispered encouragingly. ‘Take this water and sprinkle it on one of the fallen trees, and say to it: “So let all the trees of the forest stand upright,” and in a moment they will be erect again.’

And the young man did what he was told, and left the forest looking exactly as it had done before.

Now, surely, thought the princess, there was no longer any need to put off the wedding; and she gave orders that all should be ready for the following day. But again the old man interfered, and declared that without the king’s permission no marriage could take place. For the third time his majesty was sent for, and for the third time he proclaimed that he could not give his consent until the bridegroom should have slain a serpent which dwelt in a broad river that flowed at the back of the castle. Everyone knew stories of this terrible serpent, though no one had actually seen it; but from time to time a child strayed from home and never came back, and then mothers would forbid the other children to go near the river, which had juicy fruits and lovely flowers growing along its banks.

So no wonder the youth trembled and turned pale when he heard what lay before him.

‘You will succeed in this also,’ whispered the Sister of the Sun, pressing his hand, ‘for in my ship is a magic sword which will cut through everything. Go down to the river and unfasten a boat which lies moored there, and throw the chips into the water. When the serpent rears up its body you will cut off its three heads with one blow of your sword. Then take the tip of each tongue and go with it to-morrow morning into the king’s kitchen. If the king himself should enter, just say to him: “Here are three gifts I offer you in return for the services you demanded of me!” and throw the tips of the serpent’s tongues at him, and hasten to the ship as fast as your legs will carry you. But be sure you take great care never to look behind you.’

The young man did exactly what the princess had told him. The three chips which he flung into the river became a boat, and, as he steered across the stream, the serpent put up its head and hissed loudly. The youth had his sword ready, and in another second the three heads were bobbing on the water. Guiding his boat till he was beside them, he stooped down and snipped off the ends of the tongues, and then rowed back to the other bank. Next morning he carried them into the royal kitchen, and when the king entered, as was his custom, to see what he was going to have for dinner, the bridegroom flung them in his face, saying: ‘Here is a gift for you in return for the services you asked of me.’ And, opening the kitchen door, he fled to the ship. Unluckily he missed the way, and in his excitement ran backwards and forwards, without knowing whither he was going. At last, in despair, he looked round, and saw to his amazement that both the city and palace had vanished completely. Then he turned his eyes in the other direction and, far, far away, he caught sight of the ship with her sails spread, and a fair wind behind her.

This dreadful spectacle seemed to take away his senses, and all day long he wandered about, without knowing where he was going, till, in the evening, he noticed some smoke from a little hut of turf near by. He went straight up to it and cried: ‘O mother, let me come in for pity’s sake!’ The old woman who lived in the hut beckoned to him to enter, and hardly was he inside when he cried again: ‘O mother, can you tell me anything of the Sister of the Sun?’

But the old woman only shook her head. ‘No, I know nothing of her,’ said she.

The young man turned to leave the hut, but the old woman stopped him, and, giving him a letter, begged him to carry it to her next eldest sister, saying: ‘If you should get tired on the way, take out the letter and rustle the paper.’

This advice surprised the young man a good deal, as he did not see how it could help him; but he did not answer, and went down the road without knowing where he was going. At length he grew so tired he could walk no more; then he remembered what the old woman had said. After he had rustled the leaves only once all fatigue disappeared, and he strode gaily over the grass till he came to another little turf hut.

‘Let me in, I pray you, dear mother,’ cried he. And the door opened in front of him. ‘Your sister has sent you this letter,’ he said, and added quickly: ‘O mother! can you tell me anything of the Sister of the Sun?’

‘No, I know nothing of her,’ answered she. But as he turned hopelessly away, she stopped him.

‘If you happen to pass my eldest sister’s house, will you give her this letter?’ said she. ‘And if you should get tired on the road, just take it out of your pocket and rustle the paper.’

So the young man put the letter in his pocket, and walked all day over the hills till he reached a little turf hut, exactly like the other two.

‘Let me in, I pray you, dear mother,’ cried he. And as he entered he added: ‘Here is a letter from your sister, and — can you tell me anything of the Sister of the Sun?’

‘Yes, I can,’ answered the old woman. ‘She lives in the castle on the Banka. Her father lost a battle only a few days ago because you had stolen his sword from him, and the Sister of the Sun herself is almost dead of grief. But, when you see her, stick a pin into the palm of her hand, and suck the drops of blood that flow. Then she will grow calmer, and will know you again. Only, beware; for before you reach the castle on the Banka fearful things will happen.’

He thanked the old woman with tears of gladness for the good news she had given him, and continued his journey. But he had not gone very far when, at a turn of the road, he met with two brothers, who were quarrelling over a piece of cloth.

‘My good men, what are you fighting about?’ said he. ‘That cloth does not look worth much!’

‘Oh, it is ragged enough,’ answered they, ‘but it was left us by our father, and if any man wraps it round him no one can see him; and we each want it for our own.’

‘Let me put it round me for a moment,’ said the youth, ‘and then I will tell you whose it ought to be!’

The brothers were pleased with this idea, and gave him the stuff; but the moment he had thrown it over his shoulder he disappeared as completely as if he had never been there at all.

Meanwhile the young man walked briskly along, till he came up with two other men, who were disputing over a table-cloth.

‘What is the matter?’ asked he, stopping in front of them.

‘If this cloth is spread on a table,’ answered they, ‘the table is instantly covered with the most delicious food; and we each want to have it.'

'Let me try the table-cloth,' said the youth, 'and I will tell you whose it ought to be.'

The two men were quite pleased with this idea, and handed him the cloth. He then hastily threw the first piece of stuff round his shoulders and vanished from sight, leaving the two men grieving over their own folly.

The young man had not walked far before he saw two more men standing by the road-side, both grasping the same stout staff, and sometimes one seemed on the point of getting it, and sometimes the other.

'What are you quarrelling about? You could cut a dozen sticks from the wood each just as good as that!' said the young man. And as he spoke the fighters both stopped and looked at him.

'Ah! you may think so,' said one, 'but a blow from one end of this stick will kill a man, while a touch from the other end will bring him back to life. You won't easily find another stick like that!'

'No; that is true,' answered the young man. 'Let me just look at it, and I will tell you whose it ought to be.'

The men were pleased with the idea, and handed him the staff.

'It is very curious, certainly,' said he; 'but which end is it that restores people to life? After all, anyone can be killed by a blow from a stick if it is only hard enough!' But when he was shown the end he threw the stuff over his shoulders and vanished.

At last he saw another set of men, who were struggling for the possession of a pair of shoes.

'Why can't you leave that pair of old shoes alone?' said he. 'Why, you could not walk a yard in them!'

'Yes, they are old enough,' answered they; 'but whoever puts them on and wishes himself at a particular place, gets there without going.'

'That sounds very clever,' said the youth. 'Let me try them, and then I shall be able to tell you whose they ought to be.'

The idea pleased the men, and they handed him the shoes; but the moment they were on his feet he cried:

'I wish to be in the castle on the Banka!' And before he knew it, he was there, and found the Sister of the Sun dying of grief. He knelt down by her side, and pulling out a pin he stuck it into the palm of her hand, so that a drop of blood gushed out. This he sucked, as he had been told to do by the old woman, and immediately the princess came to herself, and flung her arms round his neck. Then she told him all her story, and what had happened since the ship had sailed away without him. 'But the worst misfortune of all,' she added, 'was a battle which my father lost because you had vanished with his magic sword; and out of his whole army hardly one man was left.’

‘Show me the battle-field,’ said he. And she took him to a wild heath, where the dead were lying as they fell, waiting for burial. One by one he touched them with the end of his staff, till at length they all stood before him. Throughout the kingdom there was nothing but joy; and *this* time the wedding was *really* celebrated. And the bridal pair lived happily in the castle on the Banka till they died.

THE PRINCE AND THE THREE FATES

Once upon a time a little boy was born to a king who ruled over a great country through which ran a wide river. The king was nearly beside himself with joy, for he had always longed for a son to inherit his crown, and he sent messages to beg all the most powerful fairies to come and see this wonderful baby. In an hour or two, so many were gathered round the cradle, that the child seemed in danger of being smothered; but the king, who was watching the fairies eagerly, was disturbed to see them looking grave. ‘Is there anything the matter?’ he asked anxiously.

The fairies looked at him, and all shook their heads at once.

‘He is a beautiful boy, and it is a great pity; but what *is* to happen *will* happen,’ said they. ‘It is written in the books of fate that he must die, either by a crocodile, or a serpent, or by a dog. If we could save him we would; but that is beyond our power.’

And so saying they vanished.

For a time the king stood where he was, horror-stricken at what he had heard; but, being of a hopeful nature, he began at once to invent plans to save the prince from the dreadful doom that awaited him. He instantly sent for his master builder, and bade him construct a strong castle on the top of a mountain, which should be fitted with the most precious things from the king’s own palace, and every kind of toy a child could wish to play with. And, besides, he gave the strictest orders that a guard should walk round the castle night and day.

For four or five years the baby lived in the castle alone with his nurses, taking his airings on the broad terraces, which were surrounded by walls, with a moat beneath them, and only a drawbridge to connect them with the outer world.

One day, when the prince was old enough to run quite fast by himself, he looked from the terrace across the moat, and saw a little soft fluffy ball of a dog jumping and playing on the other side. Now, of course, all dogs had been kept from him for fear that the fairies’ prophecy should come true, and he had never even beheld one before. So he turned to the page who was walking behind him, and said:

‘What is that funny little thing which is running so fast over there?’

‘That is a dog, prince,’ answered the page.

‘Well, bring me one like it, and we will see which can run the faster.’ And he watched the dog till it had disappeared round the corner.

The page was much puzzled to know what to do. He had strict orders to refuse the prince nothing; yet he remembered the prophecy, and felt that this was a serious matter. At last he thought he had better tell the king the whole story, and let him decide the question.

‘Oh, get him a dog if he wants one,’ said the king, ‘he will only cry his heart out if he does not have it.’ So a puppy was found, exactly like the other; they might have been twins, and perhaps they were.

Years went by, and the boy and the dog played together till the boy grew tall and strong. The time came at last when he sent a message to his father, saying:

‘Why do you keep me shut up here, doing nothing? I know all about the prophecy that was made at my birth, but I would far rather be killed at once than live an idle, useless life here. So give me arms, and let me go, I pray you; me and my dog too.’

And again the king listened to his wishes, and he and his dog were carried in a ship to the other side of the river, which was so broad here it might almost have been the sea. A black horse was waiting for him, tied to a tree, and he mounted and rode away wherever his fancy took him, the dog always at his heels. Never was any prince so happy as he, and he rode and rode till at length he came to a king’s palace.

The king who lived in it did not care about looking after his country, and seeing that his people lived cheerful and contented lives. He spent his whole time in making riddles, and inventing plans which he had much better have let alone. At the period when the young prince reached the kingdom he had just completed a wonderful house for his only child, a daughter. It had seventy windows, each seventy feet from the ground, and he had sent the royal herald round the borders of the neighbouring kingdoms to proclaim that whoever could climb up the walls to the window of the princess should win her for his wife.

The fame of the princess’s beauty had spread far and wide, and there was no lack of princes who wished to try their fortune. Very funny the palace must have looked each morning, with the dabs of different colour on the white marble as the princes were climbing up the walls. But though some managed to get further than others, nobody was anywhere near the top.

They had already been spending several days in this manner when the young prince arrived, and as he was pleasant to look upon, and civil to talk to, they welcomed him to the house which had been given to them, and saw that his bath was properly perfumed after his long journey. ‘Where do you come from?’ they said at last. ‘And whose son are you?’

But the young prince had reasons for keeping his own secret, and he answered:

‘My father was master of the horse to the king of my country, and after my mother died he married another wife. At first all went well, but as soon as she had babies of her own she hated me, and I fled, lest she should do me harm.’

The hearts of the other young men were touched as soon as they heard this story, and they did everything they could think of to make him forget his past sorrows.

‘What are you doing here?’ said the youth, one day.

‘We spend our whole time climbing up the walls of the palace, trying to reach the windows of the princess,’ answered the young men; ‘but, as yet, no one has reached within ten feet of them.’

‘Oh, let me try too,’ cried the prince; ‘but to-morrow I will wait and see what you do before I begin.’

So the next day he stood where he could watch the young men go up, and he noted the places on the wall that seemed most difficult, and made up his mind that when his turn came he would go up some other way.

Day after day he was to be seen watching the wooers, till, one morning, he felt that he knew the plan of the walls by heart, and took his place by the side of the others. Thanks to what he had learned from the failure of the rest, he managed to grasp one little rough projection after another, till at last, to the envy of his friends, he stood on the sill of the princess’s window. Looking up from below, they saw a white hand stretched forth to draw him in.

Then one of the young men ran straight to the king’s palace, and said: ‘The wall has been climbed, and the prize is won!’

‘By whom?’ cried the king, starting up from his throne; ‘which of the princes may I claim as my son-in-law?’

‘The youth who succeeded in climbing to the princess’s window is not a prince at all,’ answered the young man. ‘He is the son of the master of the horse to the great king who dwells across the river, and he fled from his own country to escape from the hatred of his stepmother.’

At this news the king was very angry, for it had never entered his head that anyone *but* a prince would seek to woo his daughter.

‘Let him go back to the land whence he came,’ he shouted in wrath; ‘does he expect me to give my daughter to an exile?’ And he began to smash the drinking vessels in his fury; indeed, he quite frightened the young man, who ran hastily home to his friends, and told the youth what the king had said.

Now the princess, who was leaning from her window, heard his words and bade the messenger go back to the king her father and tell him that she had sworn a vow never to eat or drink again if the youth was taken from her. The king was more angry than ever when he received this message, and ordered his guards to go at once to the palace and put the successful wooer to death; but the princess threw herself between him and his murderers.

‘Lay a finger on him, and I shall be dead before sunset,’ said she; and as they saw that she meant it, they left the palace, and carried the tale to her father.

By this time the king’s anger was dying away, and he began to consider what his people would think of him if he broke the promise he had publicly given. So he ordered the princess to be brought before him, and the young man also, and when they entered the throne room he was so pleased with the noble air of the victor that his wrath quite melted away, and he ran to him and embraced him.

‘Tell me who you are?’ he asked, when he had recovered himself a little, ‘for I will never believe that you have not royal blood in your veins.’

But the prince still had his reasons for being silent, and only told the same story. However, the king had taken such a fancy to the youth that he said no more, and the marriage took place the following day, and great herds of cattle and a large estate were given to the young couple.

After a little while the prince said to his wife: ‘My life is in the hands of three creatures — a crocodile, a serpent, and a dog.’

‘Ah, how rash you are!’ cried the princess, throwing her arms round his neck. ‘If you know that, how can you have that horrid beast about you? I will give orders to have him killed at once.’

But the prince would not listen to her.

‘Kill my dear little dog, who has been my playfellow since he was a puppy?’ exclaimed he. ‘Oh, never would I allow that.’ And all that the princess could get from him was that he would always wear a sword, and have somebody with him when he left the palace.

When the prince and princess had been married a few months, the prince heard that his stepmother was dead, and his father was old and ill, and longing to have his eldest son by his side again. The young man could not remain deaf to such a message, and he took a tender farewell of his wife, and set out on his journey home. It was a long way, and he was forced to rest often on the road, and so it happened that, one night, when he was sleeping in a city on the banks of the great river, a huge crocodile came silently up and made its way along a passage to the prince’s room. Fortunately one of his guards woke up as it was trying to steal past them, and shut the crocodile up in a large hall, where a giant watched over it, never leaving the spot except during the night, when the crocodile slept. And this went on for more than a month.

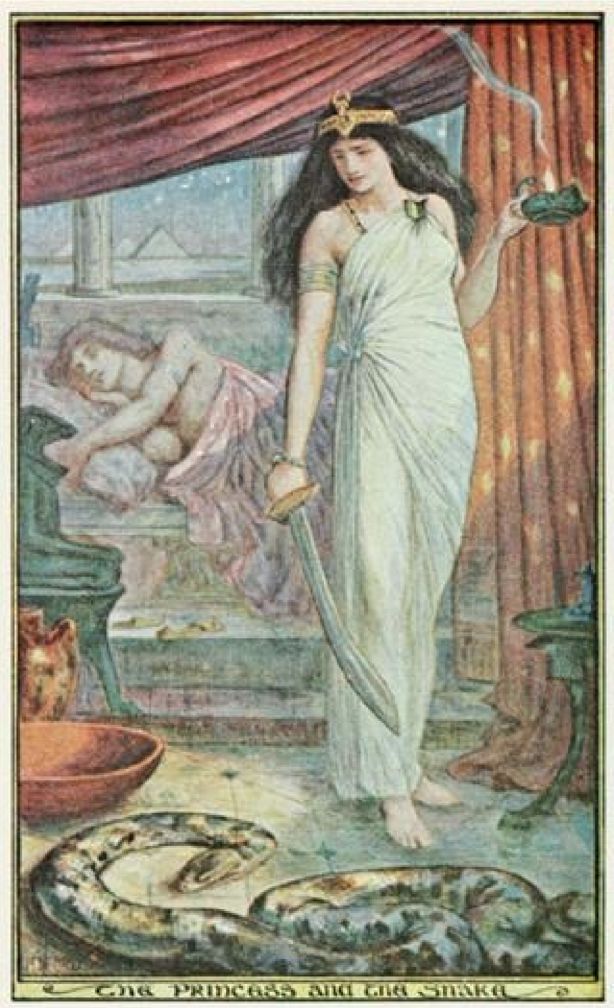
The Princess and the Snake

Now, when the prince found that he was not likely to leave his father’s kingdom again, he sent for his wife, and bade the messenger tell her that he would await her coming in the town on the banks of the great river. This was the reason why he delayed his journey so long, and narrowly escaped being eaten by the crocodile. During the weeks that followed the prince amused himself as best he could, though he counted the minutes to the arrival of the princess, and when she did come, he at once prepared to start for the court. That very night, however, while he was asleep, the princess noticed something strange in one of the corners of the room. It was a dark patch, and seemed, as she looked, to grow longer and longer, and to be moving slowly towards the cushions on which the prince was lying. She shrank in terror, but, slight as was the noise, the thing heard it, and raised its head to listen. Then she saw it was the long flat head of a serpent, and the recollection of the prophecy rushed into her mind. Without waking her husband, she glided out of bed, and taking up a heavy bowl of milk which stood on a table, laid it on the floor in the path of the serpent — for she knew that no serpent in the world can resist milk. She held her breath as the snake drew near, and watched it throw up its head again as if it was smelling something nice, while its forky tongue darted out greedily. At length its eyes fell upon the milk, and in an instant it was lapping it so fast that it was a wonder the creature did not choke, for it never took its head from the bowl as long as a drop was left in it. After that it dropped on the ground and slept heavily. This was what the princess had been waiting for, and, catching up her husband's sword, she severed the snake's head from its body.

The morning after this adventure the prince and princess set out for the king's palace, but found, when they reached it, that he was already dead. They gave him a magnificent burial, and then the prince had to examine the new laws which had been made in his absence, and do a great deal of business besides, till he grew quite ill from fatigue, and was obliged to go away to one of his palaces on the banks of the river, in order to rest. Here he soon got better, and began to hunt, and to shoot wild duck with his bow; and wherever he went, his dog, now grown very old, went with him.

One morning the prince and his dog were out as usual, and in chasing their game they drew near the bank of the river. The prince was running at full speed after his dog when he almost fell over something that looked like a log of wood, which was lying in his path. To his surprise a voice spoke to him, and he saw that the thing which he had taken for a branch was really a crocodile.

'You cannot escape from me,' it was saying, when he had gathered his senses again. 'I am your fate, and wherever you go, and whatever you do, you will always find me before you. There is only one means of shaking off my power. If you can dig a pit in the dry sand which will remain full of water, my spell will be broken. If not death will come to you speedily. I give you this one chance. Now go.'

The young man walked sadly away, and when he reached the palace he shut himself into his room, and for the rest of the day refused to see anyone, not even his wife. At sunset, however, as no sound could be heard through the door, the princess grew quite frightened, and made such a noise that the prince was forced to draw back the bolt and let her come in. 'How pale you look,' she cried, 'has anything hurt you? Tell me, I pray you, what is the matter, for perhaps I can help!'

So the prince told her the whole story, and of the impossible task given him by the crocodile.

'How can a sand hole remain full of water?' asked he. 'Of course it will all run through. The crocodile called it a "chance"; but he might as well have dragged me into the river at once. He said truly that I cannot escape him.'

'Oh, if *that* is all,' cried the princess, 'I can set you free myself, for my fairy godmother taught me to know the use of plants and in the desert not far from here there grows a little four-leaved herb which will keep the water in the pit for a whole year. I will go in search of it at dawn, and you can begin to dig the hole as soon as you like.'

To comfort her husband, the princess had spoken lightly and gaily; but she knew very well she had no light task before her. Still, she was full of courage and energy, and determined that, one way or another, her husband should be saved.

It was still starlight when she left the palace on a snow-white donkey, and rode away from the river straight to the west. For some time she could see nothing before her but a flat waste of sand, which became hotter and hotter as the sun rose higher and higher. Then a dreadful thirst seized her and the donkey, but there was no stream to quench it, and if there had been she would hardly have had time to stop, for she still had far to go, and must be back before evening, or else the crocodile might declare that the prince had not fulfilled his conditions. So she spoke cheering words to her donkey, who brayed in reply, and the two pushed steadily on.

Oh! how glad they both were when they caught sight of a tall rock in the distance. They forgot that they were thirsty, and that the sun was hot; and the ground seemed to fly under their feet, till the donkey stopped of its own accord in the cool shadow. But though the donkey might rest the princess could not, for the plant, as she knew, grew on the very top of the rock, and a wide chasm ran round the foot of it. Luckily she had brought a rope with her, and making a noose at one end, she flung it across with all her might. The first time it slid back slowly into the ditch, and she had to draw it up, and throw it again, but at length the noose caught on something, the princess could not see what, and had to trust her whole weight to this little bridge, which might snap and let her fall deep down among the rocks. And in that case her death was as certain as that of the prince.

But nothing so dreadful happened. The princess got safely to the other side, and then became the worst part of her task. As fast as she put her foot on a ledge of the rock the stone broke away from under her, and left her in the same place as before. Meanwhile the hours were passing, and it was nearly noon.

The heart of the poor princess was filled with despair, but she would not give up the struggle. She looked round till she saw a small stone above her which seemed rather stronger than the rest, and by only poising her foot lightly on those that lay between, she managed by a great effort to reach it. In this way, with torn and bleeding hands, she gained the top; but here such a violent wind was blowing that she was almost blinded with dust, and was obliged to throw herself on the ground, and feel about after the precious herb.

For a few terrible moments she thought that the rock was bare, and that her journey had been to no purpose. Feel where she would, there was nothing but grit and stones, when, suddenly, her fingers touched something soft in a crevice. It was a plant, that was clear; but was it the right one? See she could not, for the wind was blowing more fiercely than ever, so she lay where she was and counted the leaves. One, two, three — yes! yes! there were four! And plucking a leaf she held it safe in her hand while she turned, almost stunned by the wind, to go down the rock.

When once she was safely over the side all became still in a moment, and she slid down the rock so fast that it was only a wonder that she did not land in the chasm. However, by good luck, she stopped quite close to her rope bridge and was soon across it. The donkey brayed joyfully at the sight of her, and set off home at his best speed, never seeming to know that the earth under his feet was nearly as hot as the sun above him.

On the bank of the great river he halted, and the princess rushed up to where the prince was standing by the pit he had digged in the dry sand, with a huge water pot beside it. A little way off the crocodile lay blinking in the sun, with his sharp teeth and whity-yellow jaws wide open.

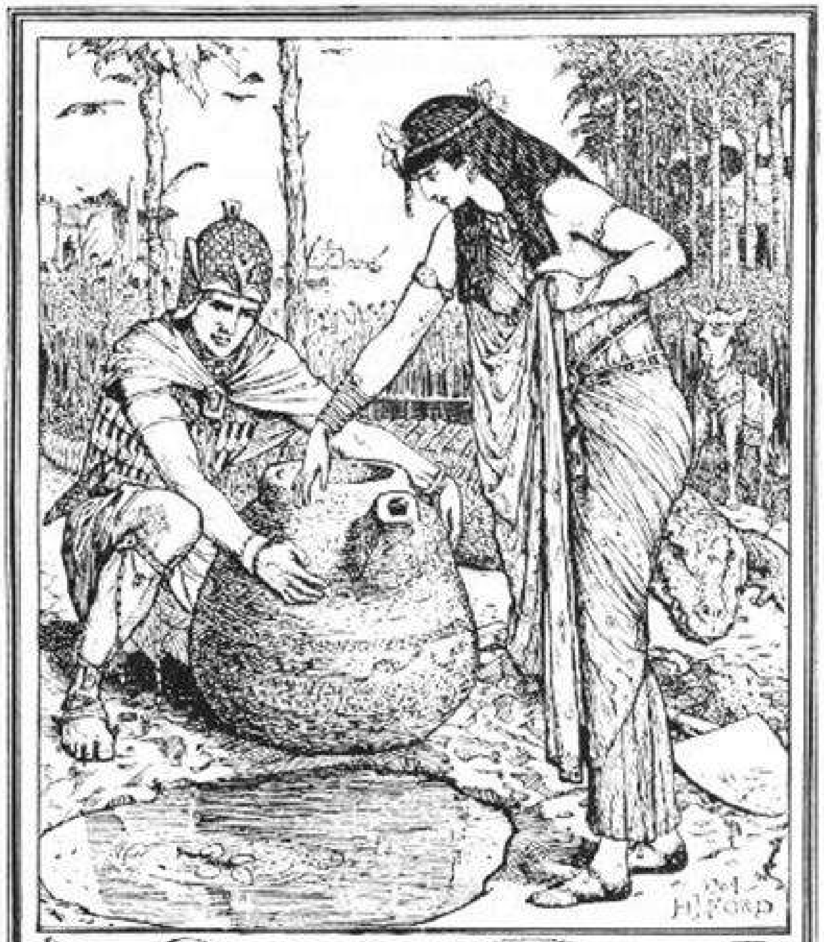

THE POOL IN THE SAND

At a signal from the princess the prince poured the water in the hole, and the moment it reached the brim the princess flung in the four-leaved plant. Would the charm work, or would the water trickle away slowly through the sand, and the prince fall a victim to that horrible monster? For half an hour they stood with their eyes rooted to the spot, but the hole remained as full as at the beginning, with the little green leaf floating on the top. Then the prince turned with a shout of triumph, and the crocodile sulkily plunged into the river.

The prince had escaped for ever the second of his three fates!

He stood there looking after the crocodile, and rejoicing that he was free, when he was startled by a wild duck which flew past them, seeking shelter among the rushes that bordered the edge of the stream. In another instant his dog dashed by in hot pursuit, and knocked heavily against his master’s legs. The prince staggered, lost his balance and fell backwards into the river, where the mud and the rushes caught him and held him fast. He shrieked for help to his wife, who came running; and luckily brought her rope with her. The poor old dog was drowned, but the prince was pulled to shore. ‘My wife,’ he said, ‘has been stronger than my fate.’

THE FOX AND THE LAPP

Once upon a time a fox lay peeping out of his hole, watching the road that ran by at a little distance, and hoping to see something that might amuse him, for he was feeling very dull and rather cross. For a long while he watched in vain; everything seemed asleep, and not even a bird stirred overhead. The fox grew crosser than ever, and he was just turning away in disgust from his place when he heard the sound of feet coming over the snow. He crouched eagerly down at the edge of the road and said to himself: ‘I wonder what would happen if I were to pretend to be dead! This is a man driving a reindeer sledge, I know the tinkling of the harness. And at any rate I shall have an adventure, and that is always something!’

So he stretched himself out by the side of the road, carefully choosing a spot where the driver could not help seeing him, yet where the reindeer would not tread on him; and all fell out just as he had expected. The sledge-driver pulled up sharply, as his eyes lighted on the beautiful animal lying stiffly beside him, and jumping out he threw the fox into the bottom of the sledge, where the goods he was carrying were bound tightly together by ropes. The fox did not move a muscle though his bones were sore from the fall, and the driver got back to his seat again and drove on merrily.

But before they had gone very far, the fox, who was near the edge, contrived to slip over, and when the Laplander saw him stretched out on the snow he pulled up his reindeer and put the fox into one of the other sledges that was fastened behind, for it was market-day at the nearest town, and the man had much to sell.

They drove on a little further, when some noise in the forest made the man turn his head, just in time to see the fox fall with a heavy thump on to the frozen snow. ‘That beast is bewitched!’ he said to himself, and then he threw the fox into the last sledge of all, which had a cargo of fishes. This was exactly what the cunning creature wanted, and he wriggled gently to the front and bit the cord which tied the sledge to the one before it so that it remained standing in the middle of the road.

Now there were so many sledges that the Lapp did not notice for a long while that one was missing; indeed, he would have entered the town without knowing if snow had not suddenly begun to fall. Then he got down to secure more firmly the cloths that kept his goods dry, and going to the end of the long row, discovered that the sledge containing the fish and the fox was missing. He quickly unharnessed one of his reindeer and rode back along the way he had come, to find the sledge standing safe in the middle of the road; but as the fox had bitten off the cord close to the noose there was no means of moving it away.

The fox meanwhile was enjoying himself mightily. As soon as he had loosened the sledge, he had taken his favourite fish from among the piles neatly arranged for sale, and had trotted off to the forest with it in his mouth. By-and-by he met a bear, who stopped and said: ‘Where did you find that fish, Mr. Fox?’

‘Oh, not far off,’ answered he; ‘I just stuck my tail in the stream close by the place where the elves dwell, and the fish hung on to it of itself.’

‘Dear me,’ snarled the bear, who was hungry and not in a good temper, ‘if the fish hung on to your tail, I suppose he will hang on to mine.’

‘Yes, certainly, grandfather,’ replied the fox, ‘if you have patience to suffer what I suffered.’

‘Of course I can,’ replied the bear, ‘what nonsense you talk! Show me the way.’

So the fox led him to the bank of a stream, which, being in a warm place, had only lightly frozen in places, and was at this moment glittering in the spring sunshine.

‘The elves bathe here,’ he said, ‘and if you put in your tail the fish will catch hold of it. But it is no use being in a hurry, or you will spoil everything.’

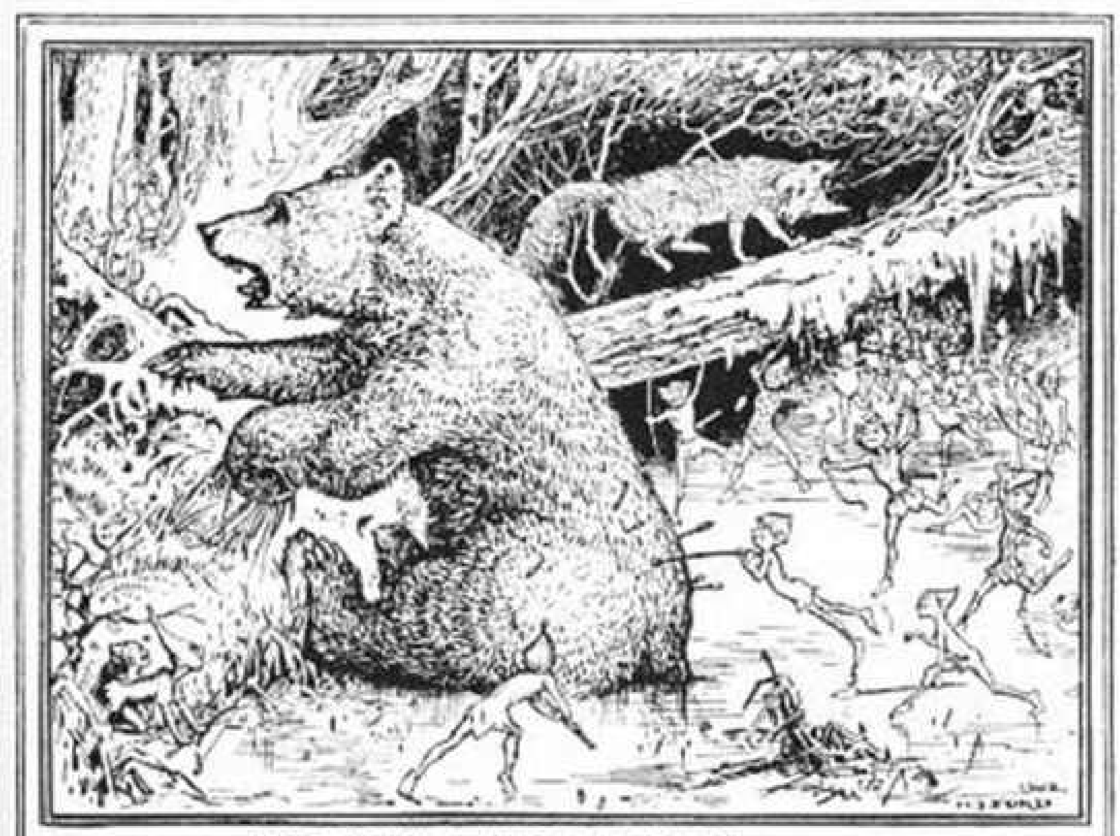

THE ELVES AND THE BEAR

Then he trotted off, but only went out of sight of the bear, who stood still on the bank with his tail deep in the water. Soon the sun set and it grew very cold and the ice formed rapidly, and the bear's tail was fixed as tight as if a vice had held it; and when the fox saw that everything had happened just as he had planned it, he called out loudly: 'Be quick, good people, and come with your bows and spears. A bear has been fishing in your brook!'

And in a moment the whole place was full of little creatures each one with a tiny bow and a spear hardly big enough for a baby; but both arrows and spears could sting, as the bear knew very well, and in his fright he gave such a tug to his tail that it broke short off, and he rolled away into the forest as fast as his legs could carry him. At this sight the fox held his sides for laughing, and then scampered away in another direction. By-and-by he came to a fir tree, and crept into a hole under the root. After that he did something very strange.

Taking one of his hind feet between his two front paws, he said softly:

'What would you do, my foot, if someone was to betray me?'

'I would run so quickly that he should not catch you.'

'What would you do, mine ear, if someone was to betray me?'

'I would listen so hard that I should hear all his plans.'

‘What would you do, my nose, if someone was to betray me?’

‘I would smell so sharply that I should know from afar that he was coming.’

‘What would you do, my tail, if someone was to betray me?’

‘I would steer you so straight a course that you would soon be beyond his reach. Let us be off; I feel as if danger was near.’

But the fox was comfortable where he was, and did not hurry himself to take his tail’s advice. And before very long he found he was too late, for the bear had come round by another path, and guessing where his enemy was began to scratch at the roots of the tree. The fox made himself as small as he could, but a scrap of his tail peeped out, and the bear seized it and held it tight. Then the fox dug his claws into the ground, but he was not strong enough to pull against the bear, and slowly he was dragged forth and his body flung over the bear’s neck. In this manner they set out down the road, the fox’s tail being always in the bear’s mouth.

After they had gone some way, they passed a tree-stump, on which a bright coloured woodpecker was tapping.

‘Ah! those were better times when I used to paint all the birds such gay colours,’ sighed the fox.

‘What are you saying, old fellow?’ asked the bear.

‘I? Oh, I was saying nothing,’ answered the fox drearily. ‘Just carry me to your cave and eat me up as quick as you can.’

The bear was silent, and thought of his supper; and the two continued their journey till they reached another tree with a woodpecker tapping on it.

‘Ah! those were better times when I used to paint all the birds such gay colours,’ said the fox again to himself.

‘Couldn’t you paint me too?’ asked the bear suddenly.

But the fox shook his head; for he was always acting, even if no one was there to see him do it.

‘You bear pain so badly,’ he replied, in a thoughtful voice, ‘and you are impatient besides, and could never put up with all that is necessary. Why, you would first have to dig a pit, and then twist ropes of willow, and drive in posts and fill the hole with pitch, and, last of all, set it on fire. Oh, no; you would never be able to do all that.’

‘It does not matter a straw how hard the work is,’ answered the bear eagerly, ‘I will do it every bit.’ And as he spoke he began tearing up the earth so fast that soon a deep pit was ready, deep enough to hold him.

‘That is all right,’ said the fox at last, ‘I see I was mistaken in you. Now sit here, and I will bind you.’ So the bear sat down on the edge of the pit, and the fox sprang on his back, which he crossed with the willow ropes, and then set fire to the pitch. It burnt up in an instant, and caught the bands of willow and the bear’s rough hair; but he did not stir, for he thought that the fox was rubbing the bright colours into his skin, and that he would soon be as beautiful as a whole meadow of flowers. But when the fire grew hotter still he moved uneasily from one foot to the other, saying, imploringly: ‘It is getting rather warm, old man.’ But all the answer he got was: ‘I thought you would never be able to suffer pain like those little birds.’

The bear did not like being told that he was not as brave as a bird, so he set his teeth and resolved to endure anything sooner than speak again; but by this time the last willow band had burned through, and with a push the fox sent his victim tumbling into the grass, and ran off to hide himself in the forest. After a while he stole cautiously and found, as he expected, nothing left but a few charred bones. These he picked up and put in a bag, which he slung over his back.

By-and-by he met a Lapp driving his team of reindeer along the road, and as he drew near, the fox rattled the bones gaily.

‘That sounds like silver or gold,’ thought the man to himself. And he said politely to the fox:

‘Good-day, friend! What have you got in your bag that makes such a strange sound?’

‘All the wealth my father left me,’ answered the fox. ‘Do you feel inclined to bargain?’

‘Well, I don’t mind,’ replied the Lapp, who was a prudent man, and did not wish the fox to think him too eager; ‘but show me first what money you have got.’

‘Ah, but I can’t do that,’ answered the fox, ‘my bag is sealed up. But if you will give me those three reindeer, you shall take it as it is, with all its contents.’

The Lapp did not quite like it, but the fox spoke with such an air that his doubts melted away. He nodded, and stretched out his hand; the fox put the bag into it, and unharnessed the reindeer he had chosen.

‘Oh, I forgot!’ he exclaimed, turning round, as he was about to drive them in the opposite direction, ‘you must be sure not to open the bag until you have gone at least five miles, right on the other side of those hills out there. If you do, you will find that all the gold and silver has changed into a parcel of charred bones.’ Then he whipped up his reindeer, and was soon out of sight.

For some time the Lapp was satisfied with hearing the bones rattle, and thinking to himself what a good bargain he had made, and of all the things he would buy with the money. But, after a bit, this amusement ceased to content him, and besides, what was the use of planning when you did not know for certain how rich you were? Perhaps there might be a great deal of silver and only a little gold in the bag; or a great deal of gold, and only a little silver. Who could tell? He would not, of course, take the money out to count it, for that might bring him bad luck. But there could be no harm in just one peep! So he slowly broke the seal, and untied the strings, and, behold, a heap of burnt bones lay before him! In a minute he knew he had been tricked, and flinging the bag to the ground in a rage, he ran after the fox as fast as his snow-shoes would carry him.

Now the fox had guessed exactly what would happen, and was on the look out. Directly he saw the little speck coming towards him, he wished that the man's snow-shoes might break, and that very instant the Lapp's shoes snapped in two. The Lapp did not know that this was the fox's work, but he had to stop and fetch one of his other reindeer, which he mounted, and set off again in pursuit of his enemy. The fox soon heard him coming, and this time he wished that the reindeer might fall and break its leg. And so it did; and the man felt it was a hopeless chase, and that he was no match for the fox.

So the fox drove on in peace till he reached the cave where all his stores were kept, and then he began to wonder whom he could get to help him kill his reindeer, for though he could steal reindeer he was too small to kill them. 'After all, it will be quite easy,' thought he, and he bade a squirrel, who was watching him on a tree close by, take a message to all the robber beasts of the forest, and in less than half an hour a great crashing of branches was heard, and bears, wolves, snakes, mice, frogs, and other creatures came pressing up to the cave.

When they heard why they had been summoned, they declared themselves ready each one to do his part. The bear took his crossbow from his neck and shot the reindeer in the chin; and, from that day to this, every reindeer has a mark in that same spot, which is always known as the bear's arrow. The wolf shot him in the thigh, and the sign of his arrow still remains; and so with the mouse and the viper and all the rest, even the frog; and at the last the reindeer all died. And the fox did nothing, but looked on.

'I really must go down to the brook and wash myself,' said he (though he was perfectly clean), and he went under the bank and hid himself behind a stone. From there he set up the most frightful shrieks, so that the animals fled away in all directions. Only the mouse and the ermine remained where they were, for they thought that they were much too small to be noticed.

The fox continued his shrieks till he felt sure that the animals must have got to a safe distance; then he crawled out of his hiding-place and went to the bodies of the reindeer, which he now had all to himself. He gathered a bundle of sticks for a fire, and was just preparing to cook a steak, when his enemy, the Lapp, came up, panting with haste and excitement.

'What are you doing there?' cried he; 'why did you palm off those bones on me? And why, when you had got the reindeer, did you kill them?'

'Dear brother,' answered the fox with a sob, 'do not blame me for this misfortune. It is my comrades who have slain them in spite of my prayers.'

The man made no reply, for the white fur of the ermine, who was crouching with the mouse behind some stones, had just caught his eye. He hastily seized the iron hook which hung over the fire and flung it at the little creature; but the ermine was too quick for him, and the hook only touched the top of its tail, and that has remained black to this day. As for the mouse, the Lapp threw a half-burnt stick after him, and though it was not hot enough to hurt him, his beautiful white skin was smeared all over with it, and all the washing in the world would not make him clean again. And the man would have been wiser if he had let the ermine and the mouse alone, for when he turned round again he found he was alone.

Directly the fox noticed that his enemy's attention had wandered from himself he watched his chance, and stole softly away till he had reached a clump of thick bushes, when he ran as fast as he could, till he reached a river, where a man was mending his boat.

'Oh, I wish, I do wish, I had a boat to mend too!' he cried, sitting up on his hind-legs and looking into the man's face.

'Stop your silly chatter!' answered the man crossly, 'or I will give you a bath in the river.'

'Oh, I wish, I do wish, I had a boat to mend,' cried the fox again, as if he had not heard. And the man grew angry and seized him by the tail, and threw him far out in the stream close to the edge of an island; which was just what the fox wanted. He easily scrambled up, and, sitting on the top, he called: 'Hasten, hasten, O fishes, and carry me to the other side!' And the fishes left the stones where they had been sleeping, and the pools where they had been feeding, and hurried to see who could get to the island first.

'I have won,' shouted the pike. 'Jump on my back, dear fox, and you will find yourself in a trice on the opposite shore.'

'No, thank you,' answered the fox, 'your back is much too weak for me. I should break it.'

'Try mine,' said the eel, who had wriggled to the front.

'No, thank you,' replied the fox again, 'I should slip over your head and be drowned.'

'You won't slip on *my* back,' said the perch, coming forward.

'No; but you are really *too* rough,' returned the fox.

'Well, you can have no fault to find with *me*,' put in the trout.

'Good gracious! are *you* here?' exclaimed the fox. 'But I'm afraid to trust myself to you either.’

At this moment a fine salmon swam slowly up.

‘Ah, yes, you are the person I want,’ said the fox; ‘but come near, so that I may get on your back, without wetting my feet.’

So the salmon swam close under the island, and when he was touching it the fox seized him in his claws and drew him out of the water, and put him on a spit, while he kindled a fire to cook him by. When everything was ready, and the water in the pot was getting hot, he popped him in, and waited till he thought the salmon was nearly boiled. But as he stooped down the water gave a sudden fizzle, and splashed into the fox’s eyes, blinding him. He started backwards with a cry of pain, and sat still for some minutes, rocking himself to and fro. When he was a little better he rose and walked down a road till he met a grouse, who stopped and asked what was the matter.

‘Have you a pair of eyes anywhere about you?’ asked the fox politely.

‘No, I am afraid I haven’t,’ answered the grouse, and passed on.

A little while after the fox heard the buzzing of an early bee, whom a gleam of sun had tempted out.

‘Do you happen to have an extra pair of eyes anywhere?’ asked the fox.

‘I am sorry to say I have only those I am using,’ replied the bee. And the fox went on till he nearly fell over an asp who was gliding across the road.

‘I should be *so* glad if you would tell me where I could get a pair of eyes,’ said the fox. ‘I suppose you don’t happen to have any you could lend me?’

‘Well, if you only want them for a short time, perhaps I could manage,’ answered the asp; ‘but I can’t do without them for long.’

‘Oh, it is only for a very short time that I need them,’ said the fox; ‘I have a pair of my own just behind that hill, and when I find them I will bring yours back to you. Perhaps you will keep these till then.’ So he took the eyes out of his own head and popped them into the head of the asp, and put the asp’s eyes in their place. As he was running off he cried over his shoulder: ‘As long as the world lasts the asps’ eyes will go down in the heads of foxes from generation to generation.’

And so it has been; and if you look at the eyes of an asp you will see that they are all burnt; and though thousands of years have gone by since the fox was going about playing tricks upon everybody he met, the asp still bears the traces of the day when the sly creature cooked the salmon.

KISA THE CAT

Once upon a time there lived a queen who had a beautiful cat, the colour of smoke, with china-blue eyes, which she was very fond of. The cat was constantly with her, and ran after her wherever she went, and even sat up proudly by her side when she drove out in her fine glass coach.

‘Oh, pussy,’ said the queen one day, ‘you are happier than I am! For you have a dear little kitten just like yourself, and I have nobody to play with but you.’

‘Don’t cry,’ answered the cat, laying her paw on her mistress’s arm. ‘Crying never does any good. I will see what can be done.’

The cat was as good as her word. As soon as she returned from her drive she trotted off to the forest to consult a fairy who dwelt there, and very soon after the queen had a little girl, who seemed made out of snow and sunbeams. The queen was delighted, and soon the baby began to take notice of the kitten as she jumped about the room, and would not go to sleep at all unless the kitten lay curled up beside her.

Two or three months went by, and though the baby was still a baby, the kitten was fast becoming a cat, and one evening when, as usual, the nurse came to look for her, to put her in the baby’s cot, she was nowhere to be found. What a hunt there was for that kitten, to be sure! The servants, each anxious to find her, as the queen was certain to reward the lucky man, searched in the most impossible places. Boxes were opened that would hardly have held the kitten’s paw; books were taken from bookshelves, lest the kitten should have got behind them, drawers were pulled out, for perhaps the kitten might have got shut in. But it was all no use. The kitten had plainly run away, and nobody could tell if it would ever choose to come back.

Years passed away, and one day, when the princess was playing ball in the garden, she happened to throw her ball farther than usual, and it fell into a clump of rose-bushes. The princess of course ran after it at once, and she was stooping down to feel if it was hidden in the long grass, when she heard a voice calling her: ‘Ingibjörg! Ingibjörg!’ it said, ‘have you forgotten me? I am Kisa, your sister!’

‘But I never *had* a sister,’ answered Ingibjörg, very much puzzled; for she knew nothing of what had taken place so long ago.

‘Don’t you remember how I always slept in your cot beside you, and how you cried till I came? But girls have no memories at all! Why, I could find my way straight up to that cot this moment, if I was once inside the palace.'

'Why did you go away then?' asked the princess. But before Kisa could answer, Ingibjörg's attendants arrived breathless on the scene, and were so horrified at the sight of a strange cat, that Kisa plunged into the bushes and went back to the forest.

The princess was very much vexed with her ladies-in-waiting for frightening away her old playfellow, and told the queen who came to her room every evening to bid her good-night.

'Yes, it is quite true what Kisa said,' answered the queen; 'I should have liked to see her again. Perhaps, some day, she will return, and then you must bring her to me.'

Next morning it was very hot, and the princess declared that she must go and play in the forest, where it was always cool, under the big shady trees. As usual, her attendants let her do anything she pleased, and, sitting down on a mossy bank where a little stream tinkled by, soon fell sound asleep. The princess saw with delight that they would pay no heed to her, and wandered on and on, expecting every moment to see some fairies dancing round a ring, or some little brown elves peeping at her from behind a tree. But, alas! she met none of these; instead, a horrible giant came out of his cave and ordered her to follow him. The princess felt much afraid, as he was so big and ugly, and began to be sorry that she had not stayed within reach of help; but as there was no use in disobeying the giant, she walked meekly behind.

They went a long way, and Ingibjörg grew very tired, and at length began to cry.

'I don't like girls who make horrid noises,' said the giant, turning round. 'But if you *want* to cry, I will give you something to cry for.' And drawing an axe from his belt, he cut off both her feet, which he picked up and put in his pocket. Then he went away.

Poor Ingibjörg lay on the grass in terrible pain, and wondering if she should stay there till she died, as no one would know where to look for her. How long it was since she had set out in the morning she could not tell — it seemed years to her, of course; but the sun was still high in the heavens when she heard the sound of wheels, and then, with a great effort, for her throat was parched with fright and pain, she gave a shout.

'I am coming!' was the answer; and in another moment a cart made its way through the trees, driven by Kisa, who used her tail as a whip to urge the horse to go faster. Directly Kisa saw Ingibjörg lying there, she jumped quickly down, and lifting the girl carefully in her two front paws, laid her upon some soft hay, and drove back to her own little hut.

In the corner of the room was a pile of cushions, and these Kisa arranged as a bed. Ingibjörg, who by this time was nearly fainting from all she had gone through, drank greedily some milk, and then sank back on the cushions while Kisa fetched some dried herbs from a cupboard, soaked them in warm water and tied them on the bleeding legs. The pain vanished at once, and Ingibjörg looked up and smiled at Kisa.

‘You will go to sleep now,’ said the cat, ‘and you will not mind if I leave you for a little while. I will lock the door, and no one can hurt you.’ But before she had finished the princess was asleep. Then Kisa got into the cart, which was standing at the door, and catching up the reins, drove straight to the giant’s cave.

Leaving her cart behind some trees, Kisa crept gently up to the open door, and, crouching down, listened to what the giant was telling his wife, who was at supper with him.

‘The first day that I can spare I shall just go back and kill her,’ he said; ‘it would never do for people in the forest to know that a mere girl can defy me!’ And he and his wife were so busy calling Ingibjörg all sorts of names for her bad behaviour, that they never noticed Kisa stealing into a dark corner, and upsetting a whole bag of salt into the great pot before the fire.

‘Dear me, how thirsty I am!’ cried the giant by-and-by.

‘So am I,’ answered his wife. ‘I do wish I had not taken that last spoonful of broth; I am sure something was wrong with it.’

‘If I don’t get some water I shall die,’ went on the giant. And rushing out of the cave, followed by his wife, he ran down the path which led to the river.

Then Kisa entered the hut, and lost no time in searching every hole till she came upon some grass, under which Ingibjörg’s feet were hidden, and putting them in her cart, drove back again to her own hut.

Ingibjörg was thankful to see her, for she had lain, too frightened to sleep, trembling at every noise.

‘Oh, is it you?’ she cried joyfully, as Kisa turned the key. And the cat came in, holding up the two neat little feet in their silver slippers.

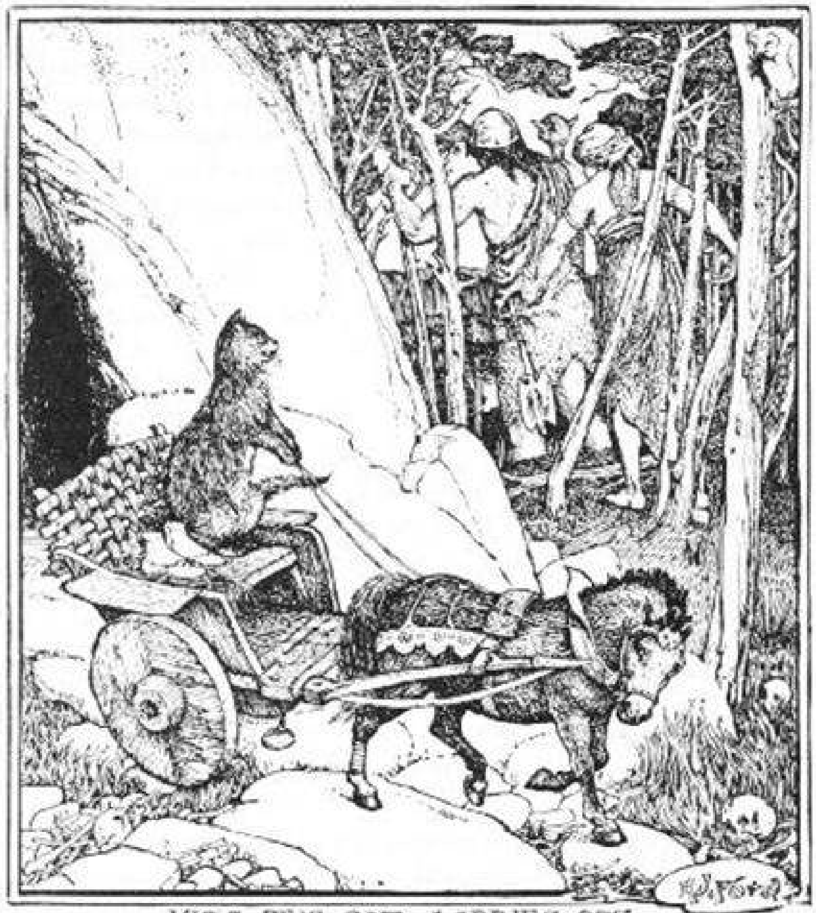

KISA THE CAT CARRIES OFF
INGIBJORG'S FEET
FROM THE GIANT'S CAVE

‘In two minutes they shall be as tight as ever they were!’ said Kisa. And taking some strings of the magic grass which the giant had carelessly heaped on them, she bound the feet on to the legs above.

‘Of course you won’t be able to walk for some time; you must not expect *that*,’ she continued. ‘But if you are very good, perhaps, in about a week, I may carry you home again.’

And so she did; and when the cat drove the cart up to the palace gate, lashing the horse furiously with her tail, and the king and queen saw their lost daughter sitting beside her, they declared that no reward could be too great for the person who had brought her out of the giant’s hands.

‘We will talk about that by-and-by,’ said the cat, as she made her best bow, and turned her horse’s head.

The princess was very unhappy when Kisa left her without even bidding her farewell. She would neither eat nor drink, nor take any notice of all the beautiful dresses her parents bought for her.

‘She will die, unless we can make her laugh,’ one whispered to the other. ‘Is there anything in the world that we have left untried?’

‘Nothing, except marriage,’ answered the king. And he invited all the handsomest young men he could think of to the palace, and bade the princess choose a husband from among them.

It took her some time to decide which she admired the most, but at last she fixed upon a young prince, whose eyes were like the pools in the forest, and his hair of bright gold. The king and the queen were greatly pleased, as the young man was the son of a neighbouring king, and they gave orders that a splendid feast should be got ready.

When the marriage was over, Kisa suddenly stood before them, and Ingibjörg rushed forward and clasped her in her arms.

‘I have come to claim my reward,’ said the cat. ‘Let me sleep for this night at the foot of your bed.’

‘Is that *all*?’ asked Ingibjörg, much disappointed.

‘It is enough,’ answered the cat. And when the morning dawned, it was no cat that lay upon the bed, but a beautiful princess.

‘My mother and I were both enchanted by a spiteful fairy,’ said she, ‘and we could not free ourselves till we had done some kindly deed that had never been wrought before. My mother died without ever finding a chance of doing anything new, but I took advantage of the evil act of the giant to make you as whole as ever.’

Then they were all more delighted than before, and the princess lived in the court until she, too, married, and went away to govern one of her own.

THE LION AND THE CAT

Far away on the other side of the world there lived, long ago, a lion and his younger brother, the wild cat, who were so fond of each other that they shared the same hut. The lion was much the bigger and stronger of the two — indeed, he was much bigger and stronger than any of the beasts that dwelt in the forest; and, besides, he could jump farther and run faster than all the rest. If strength and swiftness could gain him a dinner he was sure never to be without one, but when it came to cunning, both the grizzly bear and the serpent could get the better of him, and he was forced to call in the help of the wild cat.

Now the young wild cat had a lovely golden ball, so beautiful that you could hardly look at it except through a piece of smoked glass, and he kept it hidden in the thick fur muff that went round his neck. A very large old animal, since dead, had given it to him when he was hardly more than a baby, and had told him never to part with it, for as long as he kept it no harm could ever come near him.

In general the wild cat did not need to use his ball, for the lion was fond of hunting, and could kill all the food that they needed; but now and then his life would have been in danger had it not been for the golden ball.

One day the two brothers started to hunt at daybreak, but as the cat could not run nearly as fast as the lion, he had quite a long start. At least he *thought* it was a long one, but in a very few bounds and springs the lion reached his side.

‘There is a bear sitting on that tree,’ he whispered softly. ‘He is only waiting for us to pass, to drop down on my back.’

‘Ah, you are so big that he does not see I am behind you,’ answered the wild cat. And, touching the ball, he just said: ‘Bear, die!’ And the bear tumbled dead out of the tree, and rolled over just in front of them.

For some time they trotted on without any adventures, till just as they were about to cross a strip of long grass on the edge of the forest, the lion’s quick ears detected a faint rustling noise.

‘That is a snake,’ he cried, stopping short, for he was much more afraid of snakes than of bears.

‘Oh, it is all right,’ answered the cat. ‘Snake, die!’ And the snake died, and the two brothers skinned it. They then folded the skin up into a very small parcel, and the cat tucked it into his mane, for snakes’ skins can do all sorts of wonderful things, if you are lucky enough to have one of them.

All this time they had had no dinner, for the snake’s flesh was not nice, and the lion did not like eating bear — perhaps because he never felt sure that the bear was *really* dead, and would not jump up alive when his enemy went near him. Most people are afraid of *some* thing, and bears and serpents were the only creatures that caused the lion's heart to tremble. So the two brothers set off again and soon reached the side of a hill where some fine deer were grazing.

'Kill one of those deer for your own dinner,' said the boy-brother, 'but catch me another alive. I want him.'

The lion at once sprang towards them with a loud roar, but the deer bounded away, and they were all three soon lost to sight. The cat waited for a long while, but finding that the lion did not return, went back to the house where they lived.

It was quite dark when the lion came home, where his brother was sitting curled up in one corner.

'Did you catch the deer for me?' asked the boy-brother, springing up.

'Well, no,' replied the man-brother. 'The fact is, that I did not get up to them till we had run half way across the world and left the wind far behind us. Think what a trouble it would have been to drag it here! So — I just ate them both.'

The cat said nothing, but he did not feel that he loved his big brother. He had thought a great deal about that deer, and had meant to get on his back to ride him as a horse, and go to see all the wonderful places the lion talked to him about when he was in a good temper. The more he thought of it the more sulky he grew, and in the morning, when the lion said that it was time for them to start to hunt, the cat told him that he might kill the bear and snake by himself, as *he* had a headache, and would rather stay at home. The little fellow knew quite well that the lion would not dare to go out without him and his ball for fear of meeting a bear or a snake.

The quarrel went on, and for many days neither of the brothers spoke to each other, and what made them still more cross was, that they could get very little to eat, and we know that people are often cross when they are hungry. At last it occurred to the lion that if he could only steal the magic ball he could kill bears and snakes for himself, and then the cat might be as sulky as he liked for anything that it would matter. But how was the stealing to be done? The cat had the ball hung round his neck day and night, and he was such a light sleeper that it was useless to think of taking it while he slept. No! the only thing was to get him to lend it of his own accord, and after some days the lion (who was not at all clever) hit upon a plan that he thought would do.

'Dear me, how dull it is here!' said the lion one afternoon, when the rain was pouring down in such torrents that, however sharp your eyes or your nose might be, you could not spy a single bird or beast among the bushes. 'Dear me, how dull, how dreadfully dull I am. Couldn't we have a game of catch with that golden ball of yours?’

‘I don’t care about playing catch, it does not amuse me,’ answered the cat, who was as cross as ever; for no cat, even to this day, ever forgets an injury done to him.

‘Well, then, lend me the ball for a little, and I will play by myself,’ replied the lion, stretching out a paw as he spoke.

‘You can’t play in the rain, and if you did, you would only lose it in the bushes,’ said the cat.

‘Oh, no, I won’t; I will play in here. Don’t be so ill-natured.’ And with a very bad grace the cat untied the string and threw the golden ball into the lion’s lap, and composed himself to sleep again.

For a long while the lion tossed it up and down gaily, feeling that, however sound asleep the boy-brother might *look*, he was sure to have one eye open; but gradually he began to edge closer to the opening, and at last gave such a toss that the ball went up high into the air, and he could not see what became of it.

‘Oh, how stupid of me!’ he cried, as the cat sprang up angrily, ‘let us go at once and search for it. It can’t really have fallen very far.’ But though they searched that day and the next, and the next after that, they never found it, because it never came down.

After the loss of his ball the cat refused to live with the lion any longer, but wandered away to the north, always hoping he might meet with his ball again. But months passed, and years passed, and though he travelled over hundreds of miles, he never saw any traces of it.

At length, when he was getting quite old, he came to a place unlike any that he had ever seen before, where a big river rolled right to the foot of some high mountains. The ground all about the river bank was damp and marshy, and as no cat likes to wet its feet, this one climbed a tree that rose high above the water, and thought sadly of his lost ball, which would have helped him out of this horrible place. Suddenly he saw a beautiful ball, for all the world like his own, dangling from a branch of the tree he was on. He longed to get at it; but was the branch strong enough to bear his weight? It was no use, after all he had done, getting drowned in the water. However, it could do no harm, if he was to go a little way; he could always manage to get back somehow.

So he stretched himself at full length upon the branch, and wriggled his body cautiously along. To his delight it seemed thick and stout. Another movement, and, by stretching out his paw, he would be able to draw the string towards him, when the branch gave a loud crack, and the cat made haste to wriggle himself back the way he had come.

But when cats make up their minds to do anything they generally *do* it; and this cat began to look about to see if there was really no way of getting at his ball. Yes! there was, and it was much surer than the other, though rather more difficult. Above the bough where the ball hung was another bough much thicker, which he knew could not break with his weight; and by holding on tight to this with all his four paws he could just manage to touch the ball with his tail. He would thus be able to whisk the ball to and fro till, by-and-by, the string would become quite loose, and it would fall to the ground. It might take some time, but the lion's little brother was patient, like most cats.

Well, it all happened just as the cat intended it should, and when the ball dropped on the ground the cat ran down the tree like lightning, and, picking it up, tucked it away in the snake's skin round his neck. Then he began jumping along the shore of the Big Water from one place to another, trying to find a boat, or even a log of wood, that would take him across. But there was nothing; only, on the other side, he saw two girls cooking, and though he shouted to them at the top of his voice, they were too far off to hear what he said. And, what was worse, the ball suddenly fell out of its snake's skin bag right into the river.

Now, it is not at all an uncommon thing for balls to tumble into rivers, but in that case they generally either fall to the bottom and stay there, or else bob about on the top of the water close to where they first touched it. But this ball, instead of doing either of these things, went straight across to the other side, and there one of the girls saw it when she stooped to dip some water into her pail.

'Oh! what a lovely ball!' cried she, and tried to catch it in her pail; but the ball always kept bobbing just out of her reach.

'Come and help me!' she called to her sister, and after a long while they had the ball safe inside the pail. They were delighted with their new toy, and one or the other held it in her hand till bedtime came, and then it was a long time before they could make up their minds where it would be safest for the night. At last they locked it in a cupboard in one corner of their room, and as there was no hole anywhere the ball could not possibly get out. After that they went to sleep.

In the morning the first thing they both did was to run to the cupboard and unlock it, but when the door opened they started back, for, instead of the ball, there stood a handsome young man.

'Ladies,' he said, 'how can I thank you for what you have done for me? Long, long ago, I was enchanted by a wicked fairy, and condemned to keep the shape of a ball till I should meet with two maidens, who would take me to their own home. But where was I to meet them? For hundreds of years I have lived in the depths of the forest, where nothing but wild beasts ever came, and it was only when the lion threw me into the sky that I was able to fall to earth near this river. Where there is a river, sooner or later people will come; so, hanging myself on a tree, I watched and waited. For a moment I lost heart when I fell once more into the hands of my old master the wild cat, but my hopes rose again as I saw he was making for the river bank opposite where you were standing. That was my chance, and I took it. And now, ladies, I have only to say that, if ever I can do anything to help you, go to the top of that high mountain and knock three times at the iron door at the north side, and I will come to you.'

So, with a low bow, he vanished from before them, leaving the maidens weeping at having lost in one moment both the ball and the prince.

WHICH WAS THE FOOLISHEST?

In a little village that stood on a wide plain, where you could see the sun from the moment he rose to the moment he set, there lived two couples side by side. The men, who worked under the same master, were quite good friends, but the wives were always quarrelling, and the subject they quarrelled most about was — which of the two had the stupidest husband.

Unlike most women — who think that anything that belongs to them must be better than what belongs to anyone else — each thought her own husband the more foolish of the two.

‘You should just see what he does!’ one said to her neighbour. ‘He puts on the baby’s frock upside down, and, one day, I found him trying to feed her with boiling soup, and her mouth was scalded for days after. Then he picks up stones in the road and sows them instead of potatoes, and one day he wanted to go into the garden from the top window, because he declared it was a shorter way than through the door.’

‘That is bad enough, of course,’ answered the other; ‘but it is really *nothing* to what I have to endure every day from *my* husband. If, when I am busy, I ask him to go and feed the poultry, he is certain to give them some poisonous stuff instead of their proper food, and when I visit the yard next I find them all dead. Once he even took my best bonnet, when I had gone away to my sick mother, and when I came back I found he had given it to the hen to lay her eggs in. And you know yourself that, only last week, when I sent him to buy a cask of butter, he returned driving a hundred and fifty ducks which someone had induced him to take, and not one of them would lay.’

‘Yes, I am afraid he *is* trying,’ replied the first; ‘but let us put them to the proof, and see which of them is the most foolish.’

So, about the time that she expected her husband home from work, she got out her spinning-wheel, and sat busily turning it, taking care not even to look up from her work when the man came in. For some minutes he stood with his mouth open watching her, and as she still remained silent, he said at last:

‘Have you gone mad, wife, that you sit spinning without anything on the wheel?’

‘*You* may think that there is nothing on it,’ answered she, ‘but I can assure you that there is a large skein of wool, so fine that nobody can see it, which will be woven into a coat for you.’

‘Dear me!’ he replied, ‘what a clever wife I have got! If you had not told me I should never have known that there was any wool on the wheel at all. But now I really do seem to see something.’

The woman smiled and was silent, and after spinning busily for an hour more, she got up from her stool, and began to weave as fast as she could. At last she got up, and said to her husband: ‘I am too tired to finish it to-night, so I shall go to bed, and to-morrow I shall only have the cutting and stitching to do.’

So the next morning she got up early, and after she had cleaned her house, and fed her chickens, and put everything in its place again, she bent over the kitchen table, and the sound of her big scissors might be heard snip! snap! as far as the garden. Her husband could not see anything to snip at; but then he was so stupid that was not surprising!

After the cutting came the sewing. The woman patted and pinned and fixed and joined, and then, turning to the man, she said:

‘Now it is ready for you to try on.’ And she made him take off his coat, and stand up in front of her, and once more she patted and pinned and fixed and joined, and was very careful in smoothing out every wrinkle.

‘It does not feel very warm,’ observed the man at last, when he had borne all this patiently for a long time.

‘That is because it is so fine,’ answered she; ‘you do not want it to be as thick as the rough clothes you wear every day.’

He *did*, but was ashamed to say so, and only answered: ‘Well, I am sure it must be beautiful since you say so, and I shall be smarter than anyone in the whole village. “What a splendid coat!” they will exclaim when they see me. But it is not everybody who has a wife as clever as mine.’

Meanwhile the other wife was not idle. As soon as her husband entered she looked at him with such a look of terror that the poor man was quite frightened.

‘Why do you stare at me so? Is there anything the matter?’ asked he.

‘Oh! go to bed at once,’ she cried; ‘you must be very ill indeed to look like that!’

The man was rather surprised at first, as he felt particularly well that evening; but the moment his wife spoke he became quite certain that he had something dreadful the matter with him, and grew quite pale.

‘I dare say it would be the best place for me,’ he answered, trembling; and he suffered his wife to take him upstairs, and to help him off with his clothes.

‘If you sleep well during the night there *may* be a chance for you,’ said she, shaking her head, as she tucked him up warmly; ‘but if not — —’ And of course the poor man never closed an eye till the sun rose.

‘How do you feel this morning?’ asked the woman, coming in on tip-toe when her house-work was finished.

'Oh, bad; very bad indeed,' answered he; 'I have not slept for a moment. Can you think of nothing to make me better?'

'I will try everything that is possible,' said the wife, who did not in the least wish her husband to die, but was determined to show that he was more foolish than the other man. 'I will get some dried herbs and make you a drink, but I am very much afraid that it is too late. Why did you not tell me before?'

'I thought perhaps the pain would go off in a day or two; and, besides, I did not want to make you unhappy,' answered the man, who was by this time quite sure he had been suffering tortures, and had borne them like a hero. 'Of course, if I had had any idea how ill I really was, I should have spoken at once.'

'Well, well, I will see what can be done,' said the wife, 'but talking is not good for you. Lie still, and keep yourself warm.'

All that day the man lay in bed, and whenever his wife entered the room and asked him, with a shake of the head, how he felt, he always replied that he was getting worse. At last, in the evening, she burst into tears, and when he inquired what was the matter, she sobbed out:

'Oh, my poor, poor husband, are you really dead? I must go to-morrow and order your coffin.'

Now, when the man heard this, a cold shiver ran through his body, and all at once he knew that he was as well as he had ever been in his life.

'Oh, no, no!' he cried, 'I feel quite recovered! Indeed, I think I shall go out to work.'

'You will do no such thing,' replied his wife. 'Just keep quite quiet, for before the sun rises you will be a dead man.'

The man was very frightened at her words, and lay absolutely still while the undertaker came and measured him for his coffin; and his wife gave orders to the gravedigger about his grave. That evening the coffin was sent home, and in the morning at nine o'clock the woman put him on a long flannel garment, and called to the undertaker's men to fasten down the lid and carry him to the grave, where all their friends were waiting them. Just as the body was being placed in the ground the other woman's husband came running up, dressed, as far as anyone could see, in no clothes at all. Everybody burst into shouts of laughter at the sight of him, and the men laid down the coffin and laughed too, till their sides nearly split. The dead man was so astonished at this behaviour, that he peeped out of a little window in the side of the coffin, and cried out:

'I should laugh as loudly as any of you, if I were not a dead man.'

When they heard the voice coming from the coffin the other people suddenly stopped laughing, and stood as if they had been turned into stone. Then they rushed with one accord to the coffin, and lifted the lid so that the man could step out amongst them.

‘Were you really not dead after all?’ asked they. ‘And if not, why did you let yourself be buried?’

At this the wives both confessed that they had each wished to prove that her husband was stupider than the other. But the villagers declared that they could not decide which was the most foolish — the man who allowed himself to be persuaded that he was wearing fine clothes when he was dressed in nothing, or the man who let himself be buried when he was alive and well.

So the women quarrelled just as much as they did before, and no one ever knew whose husband was the most foolish.

ASMUND AND SIGNY

Long, long ago, in the days when fairies, witches, giants, and ogres still visited the earth, there lived a king who reigned over a great and beautiful country. He was married to a wife whom he dearly loved, and had two most promising children — a son called Asmund, and a daughter who was named Signy.

The king and queen were very anxious to bring their children up well, and the young prince and princess were taught everything likely to make them clever and accomplished. They lived at home in their father's palace, and he spared no pains to make their lives happy.

Prince Asmund dearly loved all outdoor sports and an open-air life, and from his earliest childhood he had longed to live entirely in the forest close by. After many arguments and entreaties he succeeded in persuading the king to give him two great oak trees for his very own.

'Now,' said he to his sister, 'I will have the trees hollowed out, and then I will make rooms in them and furnish them so that I shall be able to live out in the forest.'

'Oh, Asmund!' exclaimed Signy, 'what a delightful idea! Do let me come too, and live in one of your trees. I will bring all my pretty things and ornaments, and the trees are so near home we shall be quite safe in them.'

Asmund, who was extremely fond of his sister, readily consented, and they had a very happy time together, carrying over all their pet treasures, and Signy's jewels and other ornaments, and arranging them in the pretty little rooms inside the trees.

Unfortunately sadder days were to come. A war with another country broke out, and the king had to lead his army against their enemy. During his absence the queen fell ill, and after lingering for some time she died, to the great grief of her children. They made up their minds to live altogether for a time in their trees, and for this purpose they had provisions enough stored up inside to last them a year.

Now, I must tell you, in another country a long way off, there reigned a king who had an only son named Ring. Prince Ring had heard so much about the beauty and goodness of Princess Signy that he determined to marry her if possible. So he begged his father to let him have a ship for the voyage, set sail with a favourable wind, and after a time landed in the country where Signy lived.

The prince lost no time in setting out for the royal palace, and on his way there he met such a wonderfully lovely woman that he felt he had never seen such beauty before in all his life. He stopped her and at once asked who she was.

‘I am Signy, the king’s daughter,’ was the reply.

Then the prince inquired why she was wandering about all by herself, and she told him that since her mother’s death she was so sad that whilst her father was away she preferred being alone.

Ring was quite deceived by her, and never guessed that she was not Princess Signy at all, but a strong, gigantic, wicked witch bent on deceiving him under a beautiful shape. He confided to her that he had travelled all the way from his own country for her sake, having fallen in love with the accounts he had heard of her beauty, and he then and there asked her to be his wife.

The witch listened to all he said and, much pleased, ended by accepting his offer; but she begged him to return to his ship for a little while as she wished to go some way further into the forest, promising to join him later on.

Prince Ring did as she wished and went back to his ship to wait, whilst she walked on into the forest till she reached the two oak trees.

Here she resumed her own gigantic shape, tore up the trees by their roots, threw one of them over her back and clasped the other to her breast, carried them down to the shore and waded out with them to the ship.

She took care not to be noticed as she reached the ship, and directly she got on board she once more changed to her former lovely appearance and told the prince that her luggage was now all on board, and that they need wait for nothing more.

The prince gave orders to set sail at once, and after a fine voyage landed in his own country, where his parents and his only sister received him with the greatest joy and affection.

The false Signy was also very kindly welcomed. A beautiful house was got ready for her, and Prince Ring had the two oaks planted in the garden just in front of her windows so that she might have the pleasure of seeing them constantly. He often went to visit the witch, whom he believed to be Princess Signy, and one day he asked: ‘Don’t you think we might be married before long?’

‘Yes,’ said she, quite pleased, ‘I am quite ready to marry you whenever you like.’

‘Then,’ replied Ring, ‘let us decide on this day fortnight. And see, I have brought you some stuff to make your wedding-dress of.’ So saying he gave her a large piece of the most beautiful brocade, all woven over with gold threads, and embroidered with pearls and other jewels.

The prince had hardly left her before the witch resumed her proper shape and tore about the room, raging and storming and flinging the beautiful silk on the floor.

‘What was *she* to do with such things?’ she roared. ‘*She* did not know how to sew or make clothes, and she was sure to die of starvation into the bargain if her brother Ironhead did not come soon and bring her some raw meat and bones, for she really could eat nothing else.’

As she was raving and roaring in this frantic manner part of the floor suddenly opened and a huge giant rose up carrying a great chest in his arms. The witch was enchanted at this sight, and eagerly helped her brother to set down and open the chest, which was full of the ghastly food she had been longing for. The horrid pair set to and greedily devoured it all, and when the chest was quite empty the giant put it on his shoulder and disappeared as he had come, without leaving any trace of his visit.

But his sister did not keep quiet for long, and tore and pulled at the rich brocade as if she wanted to destroy it, stamping about and shouting angrily.

Now, all this time Prince Asmund and his sister sat in their trees just outside the window and saw all that was going on.

‘Dear Signy,’ said Asmund, ‘do try to get hold of that piece of brocade and make the clothes yourself, for really we shall have no rest day or night with such a noise.’

‘I will try,’ said Signy; ‘it won’t be an easy matter, but it’s worth while taking some trouble to have a little peace.’

So she watched for an opportunity and managed to carry off the brocade the first time the witch left her room. Then she set to work, cutting out and sewing as best she could, and by the end of six days she had turned it into an elegant robe with a long train and a mantle. When it was finished she climbed to the top of her tree and contrived to throw the clothes on to a table through the open window.

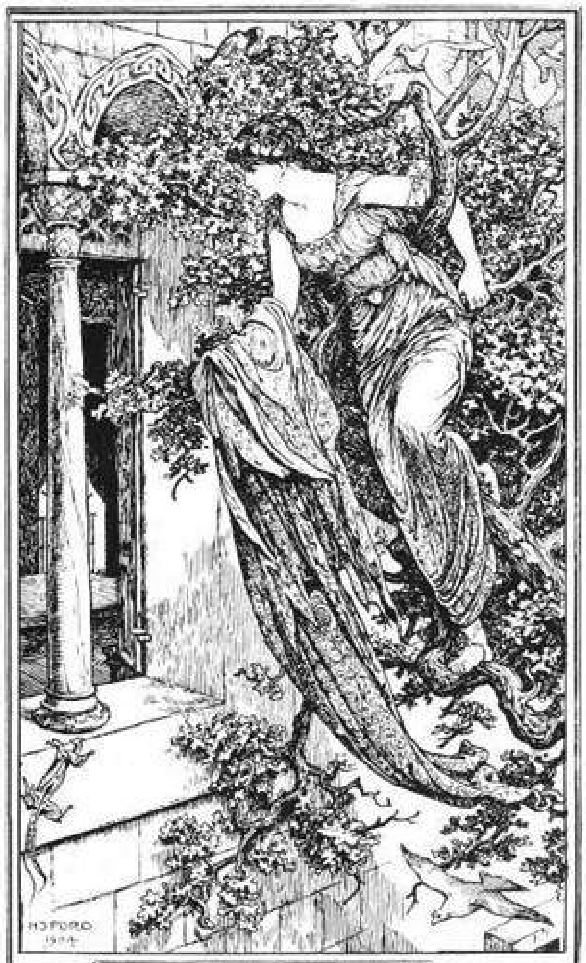

SIGNY AT THE WINDOW

How delighted the witch was when she found the clothes all finished! The next time Prince Ring came to see her she gave them to him, and he paid her many compliments on her skilful work, after which he took leave of her in the most friendly manner. But he had scarcely left the house when the witch began to rage as furiously as ever, and never stopped till her brother Ironhead appeared.

When Asmund saw all these wild doings from his tree he felt he could no longer keep silence. He went to Prince Ring and said: ‘Do come with me and see the strange things that are happening in the new princess’s room.’

The prince was not a little surprised, but he consented to hide himself with Asmund behind the panelling of the room, from where they could see all that went on through a little slit. The witch was raving and roaring as usual, and said to her brother:

‘Once I am married to the king’s son I shall be better off than now. I shall take care to have all that pack of courtiers put to death, and then I shall send for all my relations to come and live here instead. I fancy the giants will enjoy themselves very much with me and my husband.’

When Prince Ring heard this he fell into such a rage that he ordered the house to be set on fire, and it was burnt to the ground, with the witch and her brother in it.

Asmund then told the prince about the two oak trees and took him to see them. The prince was quite astonished at them and at all their contents, but still more so at the extreme beauty of Signy. He fell in love with her at once, and entreated her to marry him, which, after a time, she consented to do. Asmund, on his side, asked for the hand of Prince Ring's sister, which was gladly granted him, and the double wedding was celebrated with great rejoicings.

After this Prince Asmund and his bride returned to his country to live with the king his father. The two couples often met, and lived happily for many, many years. And that is the end of the story.

RÜBEZAHL

Over all the vast under-world the mountain Gnome Rübezahl was lord; and busy enough the care of his dominions kept him. There were the endless treasure chambers to be gone through, and the hosts of gnomes to be kept to their tasks. Some built strong barriers to hold back the fiery rivers in the earth's heart, and some had scalding vapours to change dull stones to precious metal, or were hard at work filling every cranny of the rocks with diamonds and rubies; for Rübezahl loved all pretty things. Sometimes the fancy would take him to leave those gloomy regions, and come out upon the green earth for a while, and bask in the sunshine and hear the birds sing. And as gnomes live many hundreds of years he saw strange things. For, the first time he came up, the great hills were covered with thick forests, in which wild animals roamed, and Rübezahl watched the fierce fights between bear and bison, or chased the grey wolves, or amused himself by rolling great rocks down into the desolate valleys, to hear the thunder of their fall echoing among the hills. But the next time he ventured above ground, what was his surprise to find everything changed! The dark woods were hewn down, and in their place appeared blossoming orchards surrounding cosy-looking thatched cottages; from every chimney the blue smoke curled peacefully into the air, sheep and oxen fed in the flowery meadows, while from the shade of the hedges came the music of the shepherd's pipe. The strangeness and pleasantness of the sight so delighted the gnome that he never thought of resenting the intrusion of these unexpected guests, who, without saying 'by your leave' or 'with your leave,' had made themselves so very much at home upon his hills; nor did he wish to interfere with their doings, but left them in quiet possession of their homes, as a good householder leaves in peace the swallows who have built their nests under his eaves. He was indeed greatly minded to make friends with this being called 'man,' so, taking the form of an old field labourer, he entered the service of a farmer. Under his care all the crops flourished exceedingly, but the master proved to be wasteful and ungrateful, and Rübezahl soon left him, and went to be shepherd to his next neighbour. He tended the flock so diligently, and knew so well where to lead the sheep to the sweetest pastures, and where among the hills to look for any who strayed away, that they too prospered under his care, and not one was lost or torn by wolves; but this new master was a hard man, and begrudged him his well-earned wages. So he ran away and went to serve the judge. Here he upheld the law with might and main, and was a terror to thieves and evildoers; but the judge was a bad man, who took bribes, and despised the law. Rübezahl would not be the tool of an unjust man, and so he told his master, who thereupon ordered him to be thrown into prison. Of course that did not trouble the gnome at all, he simply got out through the keyhole, and went away down to his underground palace, very much disappointed by his first experience of mankind. But, as time went on, he forgot the disagreeable things that had happened to him, and thought he would take another look at the upper world.

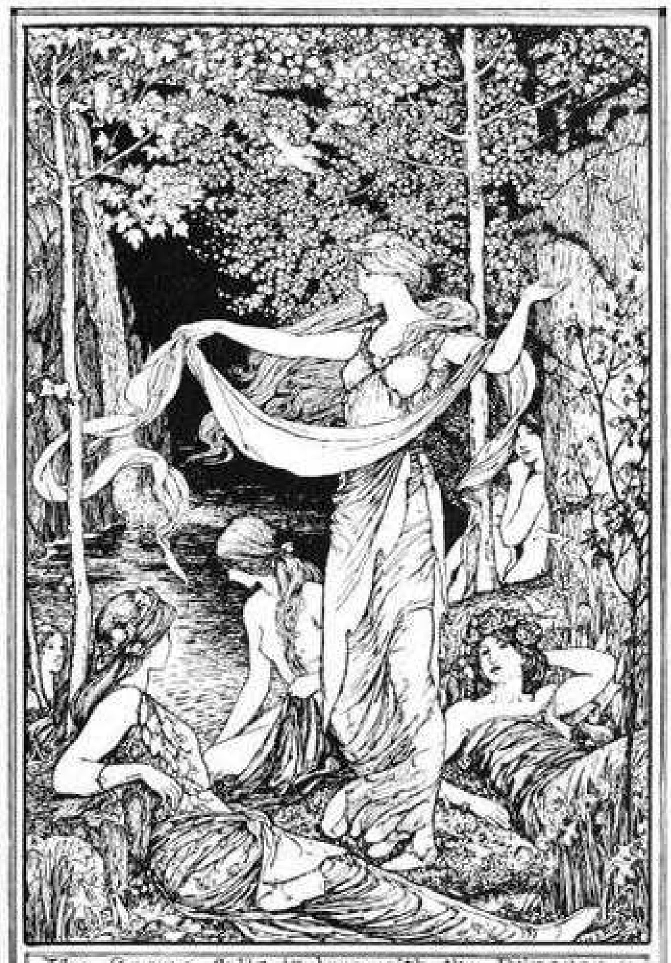

The Gnome falls in love with the Princess

So he stole into the valley, keeping himself carefully hidden in copse or hedgerow, and very soon met with an adventure; for, peeping through a screen of leaves, he saw before him a green lawn where stood a charming maiden, fresh as the spring, and beautiful to look upon. Around her upon the grass lay her young companions, as if they had thrown themselves down to rest after some merry game. Beyond them flowed a little brook, into which a waterfall leapt from a high rock, filling the air with its pleasant sound, and making a coolness even in the sultry noontide. The sight of the maiden so pleased the gnome that, for the first time, he wished himself a mortal; and, longing for a better view of the gay company, he changed himself into a raven and perched upon an oak-tree which overhung the brook. But he soon found that this was not at all a good plan. He could only see with a raven's eyes, and feel as a raven feels; and a nest of field-mice at the foot of the tree interested him far more than the sport of the maidens. When he understood this he flew down again in a great hurry into the thicket, and took the form of a handsome young man — that was the best way — and he fell in love with the girl then and there. The fair maiden was the daughter of the king of the country, and she often wandered in the forest with her play fellows gathering the wild flowers and fruits, till the midday heat drove the merry band to the shady lawn by the brook to rest, or to bathe in the cool waters. On this particular morning the fancy took them to wander off again into the wood. This was Master Rübezahl's opportunity. Stepping out of his hiding-place he stood in the midst of the little lawn, weaving his magic spells, till slowly all about him changed, and when the maidens returned at noon to their favourite resting-place they stood lost in amazement, and almost fancied that they must be dreaming. The red rocks had become white marble and alabaster; the stream that murmured and struggled before in its rocky bed, flowed in silence now in its smooth channel, from which a clear fountain leapt, to fall again in showers of diamond drops, now on this side now on that, as the wandering breeze scattered it.

Daisies and forget-me-nots fringed its brink, while tall hedges of roses and jasmine ringed it round, making the sweetest and daintiest bower imaginable. To the right and left of the waterfall opened out a wonderful grotto, its walls and arches glittering with many-coloured rock-crystals, while in every niche were spread out strange fruits and sweetmeats, the very sight of which made the princess long to taste them. She hesitated a while, however, scarcely able to believe her eyes, and not knowing if she should enter the enchanted spot or fly from it. But at length curiosity prevailed, and she and her companions explored to their heart's content, and tasted and examined everything, running hither and thither in high glee, and calling merrily to each other.

At last, when they were quite weary, the princess cried out suddenly that nothing would content her but to bathe in the marble pool, which certainly did look very inviting; and they all went gaily to this new amusement. The princess was ready first, but scarcely had she slipped over the rim of the pool when down — down — down she sank, and vanished in its depths before her frightened playmates could seize her by so much as a lock of her floating golden hair!

Loudly did they weep and wail, running about the brink of the pool, which looked so shallow and so clear, but which had swallowed up their princess before their eyes. They even sprang into the water and tried to dive after her, but in vain; they only floated like corks in the enchanted pool, and could not keep under water for a second.

They saw at last that there was nothing for it but to carry to the king the sad tidings of his beloved daughter’s disappearance. And what great weeping and lamentation there was in the palace when the dreadful news was told! The king tore his robes, dashed his golden crown from his head, and hid his face in his purple mantle for grief and anguish at the loss of the princess. After the first outburst of wailing, however, he took heart and hurried off to see for himself the scene of this strange adventure, thinking, as people will in sorrow, that there might be some mistake after all. But when he reached the spot, behold, all was changed again! The glittering grotto described to him by the maidens had completely vanished, and so had the marble bath, the bower of jasmine; instead, all was a tangle of flowers, as it had been of old. The king was so much perplexed that he threatened the princess’s playfellows with all sorts of punishments if they would not confess something about her disappearance; but as they only repeated the same story he presently put down the whole affair to the work of some sprite or goblin, and tried to console himself for his loss by ordering a grand hunt; for kings cannot bear to be troubled about anything long.

Meanwhile the princess was not at all unhappy in the palace of her elfish lover.

When the water-nymphs, who were hiding in readiness, had caught her and dragged her out of the sight of her terrified maidens, she herself had not had time to be frightened. They swam with her quickly by strange underground ways to a palace so splendid that her father’s seemed but a poor cottage in comparison with it, and when she recovered from her astonishment she found herself seated upon a couch, wrapped in a wonderful robe of satin fastened with a silken girdle, while beside her knelt a young man who whispered the sweetest speeches imaginable in her ear. The gnome, for he it was, told her all about himself and his great underground kingdom, and presently led her through the many rooms and halls of the palace, and showed her the rare and wonderful things displayed in them till she was fairly dazzled at the sight of so much splendour. On three sides of the castle lay a lovely garden with masses of gay, sweet flowers, and velvet lawns all cool and shady, which pleased the eye of the princess. The fruit trees were hung with golden and rosy apples, and nightingales sang in every bush, as the gnome and the princess wandered in the leafy alleys, sometimes gazing at the moon, sometimes pausing to gather the rarest flowers for her adornment. And all the time he was thinking to himself that never, during the hundreds of years he had lived, had he seen so charming a maiden. But the princess felt no such happiness; in spite of all the magic delights around her she was sad, though she tried to seem content for fear of displeasing the gnome. However, he soon perceived her melancholy, and in a thousand ways strove to dispel the cloud, but in vain. At last he said to himself: ‘Men are sociable creatures, like bees or ants. Doubtless this lovely mortal is pining for company. Who is there I can find for her to talk to?’

Thereupon he hastened into the nearest field and dug up a dozen or so of different roots — carrots, turnips, and radishes — and laying them carefully in an elegant basket brought them to the princess, who sat pensive in the shade of the rose-bower.

‘Loveliest daughter of earth,’ said the gnome, ‘banish all sorrow; no more shall you be lonely in my dwelling. In this basket is all you need to make this spot delightful to you. Take this little many-coloured wand, and with a touch give to each root the form you desire to see.’

With this he left her, and the princess, without an instant’s delay, opened the basket, and touching a turnip, cried eagerly: ‘Brunhilda, my dear Brunhilda! come to me quickly!’ And sure enough there was Brunhilda, joyfully hugging and kissing her beloved princess, and chattering as gaily as in the old days.

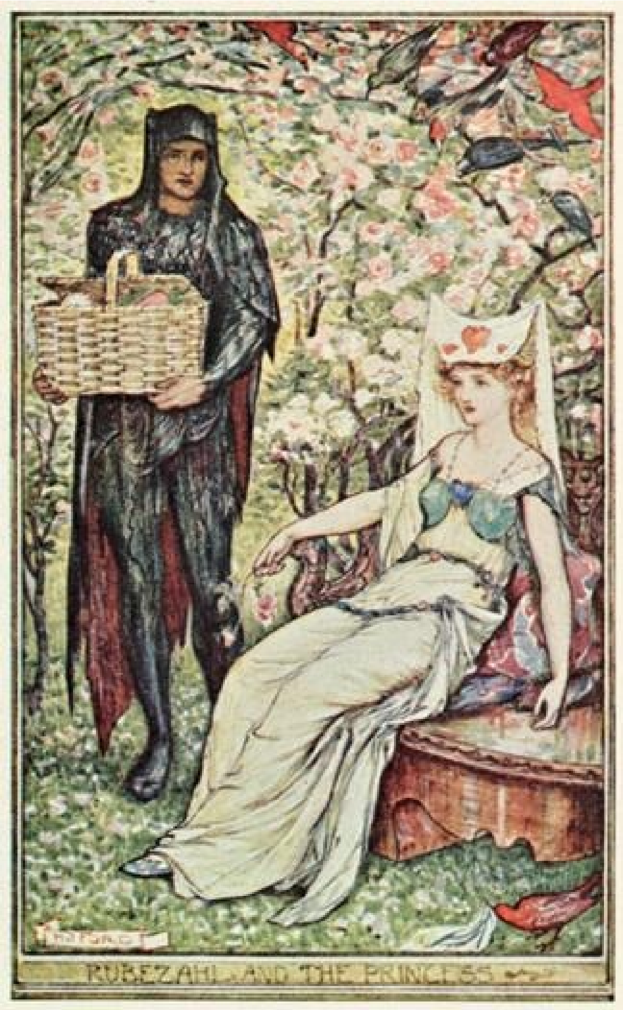

RUBEZAHL AND THE PRINCESS

This sudden appearance was so delightful that the princess could hardly believe her own eyes, and was quite beside herself with the joy of having her dear playfellow with her once more. Hand in hand they wandered about the enchanted garden, and gathered the golden apples from the trees, and when they were tired of this amusement the princess led her friend through all the wonderful rooms of the palace, until at last they came to the one in which were kept all the marvellous dresses and ornaments the gnome had given to his hoped-for bride. There they found so much to amuse them that the hours passed like minutes. Veils, girdles, and necklaces were tried on and admired, the imitation Brunhilda knew so well how to behave herself, and showed so much taste that nobody would ever have suspected that she was nothing but a turnip after all. The gnome, who had secretly been keeping an eye upon them, was very pleased with himself for having so well understood the heart of a woman; and the princess seemed to him even more charming than before. She did not forget to touch the rest of the roots with her magic wand, and soon had all her maidens about her, and even, as she had two tiny radishes to spare, her favourite cat, and her little dog whose name was Beni.

And now all went cheerfully in the castle. The princess gave to each of the maidens her task, and never was mistress better served. For a whole week she enjoyed the delight of her pleasant company undisturbed. They all sang, they danced, they played from morning to night; only the princess noticed that day by day the fresh young faces of her maidens grew pale and wan, and the mirror in the great marble hall showed her that she alone still kept her rosy bloom, while Brunhilda and the rest faded visibly. They assured her that all was well with them; but, nevertheless, they continued to waste away, and day by day it became harder to them to take part in the games of the princess, till at last, one fine morning, when the princess started from bed and hastened out to join her gay playfellows, she shuddered and started back at the sight of a group of shrivelled crones, with bent backs and trembling limbs, who supported their tottering steps with staves and crutches, and coughed dismally. A little nearer to the hearth lay the once frolicsome Beni, with all four feet stretched stiffly out, while the sleek cat seemed too weak to raise his head from his velvet cushion.

The horrified princess fled to the door to escape from the sight of this mournful company, and called loudly for the gnome, who appeared at once, humbly anxious to do her bidding.

‘Malicious Sprite,’ she cried, ‘why do you begrudge me my playmates — the greatest delight of my lonely hours? Isn’t this solitary life in such a desert bad enough without your turning the castle into a hospital for the aged? Give my maidens back their youth and health this very minute, or I will never love you!’

‘Sweetest and fairest of damsels,’ cried the gnome, ‘do not be angry; everything that is in my power I will do — but do not ask the impossible. So long as the sap was fresh in the roots the magic staff could keep them in the forms you desired, but as the sap dried up they withered away. But never trouble yourself about that, dearest one, a basket of fresh turnips will soon set matters right, and you can speedily call up again every form you wish to see. The great green patch in the garden will provide you with a more lively company.’

So saying the gnome took himself off. And the princess with her magic wand touched the wrinkled old women, and left them the withered roots they really were, to be thrown upon the rubbish heap; and with light feet skipped off across to the meadow to take possession of the freshly filled basket. But to her surprise she could not find it anywhere. Up and down the garden she searched, spying into every corner, but not a sign of it was to be found. By the trellis of grape vines she met the gnome, who was so much embarrassed at the sight of her that she became aware of his confusion while he was still quite a long way off.

‘You are trying to tease me,’ she cried, as soon as she saw him. ‘Where have you hidden the basket? I have been looking for it at least an hour.'

'Dear queen of my heart,' answered he, 'I pray you to forgive my carelessness. I promised more than I could perform. I have sought all over the land for the roots you desire; but they are gathered in, and lie drying in musty cellars, and the fields are bare and desolate, for below in the valley winter reigns, only here in your presence spring is held fast, and wherever your foot is set the gay flowers bloom. Have patience for a little, and then without fail you shall have your puppets to play with.'

Almost before the gnome had finished, the disappointed princess turned away, and marched off to her own apartments, without deigning to answer him.

The gnome, however, set off above ground as speedily as possible, and disguising himself as a farmer, bought an ass in the nearest market-town, and brought it back loaded with sacks of turnip, carrot, and radish seed. With this he sowed a great field, and sent a vast army of his goblins to watch and tend it, and to bring up the fiery rivers from the heart of the earth near enough to warm and encourage the sprouting seeds. Thus fostered they grew and flourished marvellously, and promised a goodly crop.

The princess wandered about the field day by day, no other plants or fruits in all her wonderful garden pleased her as much as these roots; but still her eyes were full of discontent. And, best of all, she loved to while away the hours in a shady fir-wood, seated upon the bank of a little stream, into which she would cast the flowers she had gathered and watch them float away.

The gnome tried hard by every means in his power to please the princess and win her love, but little did he guess the real reason of his lack of success. He imagined that she was too young and inexperienced to care for him; but that was a mistake, for the truth was that another image already filled her heart. The young Prince Ratibor, whose lands joined her father's, had won the heart of the princess; and the lovers had been looking forward to the coming of their wedding-day when the bride's mysterious disappearance took place. The sad news drove Ratibor distracted, and as the days went on, and nothing could be heard of the princess, he forsook his castle and the society of men, and spent his days in the wild forests, roaming about and crying her name aloud to the trees and rocks. Meanwhile, the maiden, in her gorgeous prison, sighed in secret over her grief, not wishing to arouse the gnome's suspicions. In her own mind she was wondering if by any means she might escape from her captivity, and at last she hit upon a plan.

By this time spring once more reigned in the valley, and the gnome sent the fires back to their places in the deeps of the earth, for the roots which they had kept warm through all the cruel winter had now come to their full size. Day by day the princess pulled up some of them, and made experiments with them, conjuring up now this longed-for person, and now that, just for the pleasure of seeing them as they appeared; but she really had another purpose in view.

One day she changed a tiny turnip into a bee, and sent him off to bring her some news of her lover.

‘Fly, dear little bee, towards the east,’ said she, ‘to my beloved Ratibor, and softly hum into his ear that I love him only, but that I am a captive in the gnome’s palace under the mountains. Do not forget a single word of my greeting, and bring me back a message from my beloved.’

So the bee spread his shining wings and flew away to do as he was bidden; but before he was out of sight a greedy swallow made a snatch at him, and to the great grief of the princess her messenger was eaten up then and there.

After that, by the power of the wonderful wand she summoned a cricket, and taught him this greeting:

‘Hop, little cricket, to Ratibor, and chirp in his ear that I love him only, but that I am held captive by the gnome in his palace under the mountains.’

So the cricket hopped off gaily, determined to do his best to deliver his message; but, alas! a long-legged stork who was prancing along the same road caught him in her cruel beak, and before he could say a word he had disappeared down her throat.

These two unlucky ventures did not prevent the princess from trying once more.

This time she changed the turnip into a magpie.

‘Flutter from tree to tree, chattering bird,’ said she, ‘till you come to Ratibor, my love. Tell him that I am a captive, and bid him come with horses and men, the third day from this, to the hill that rises from the Thorny Valley.’

The magpie listened, hopped awhile from branch to branch, and then darted away, the princess watching him anxiously as far as she could see.

Now Prince Ratibor was still spending his life in wandering about the woods, and not even the beauty of the spring could soothe his grief.

One day, as he sat in the shade of an oak tree, dreaming of his lost princess, and sometimes crying her name aloud, he seemed to hear another voice reply to his, and, starting up, he gazed around him, but he could see no one, and he had just made up his mind that he must be mistaken, when the same voice called again, and, looking up sharply, he saw a magpie which hopped to and fro among the twigs. Then Ratibor heard with surprise that the bird was indeed calling him by name.

‘Poor chatterpie,’ said he; ‘who taught you to say that name, which belongs to an unlucky mortal who wishes the earth would open and swallow up him and his memory for ever?’

Thereupon he caught up a great stone, and would have hurled it at the magpie, if it had not at that moment uttered the name of the princess.

This was so unexpected that the prince’s arm fell helplessly to his side at the sound, and he stood motionless.

But the magpie in the tree, who, like all the rest of his family, was not happy unless he could be for ever chattering, began to repeat the message the princess had taught him; and as soon as he understood it, Prince Ratibor’s heart was filled with joy. All his gloom and misery vanished in a moment, and he anxiously questioned the welcome messenger as to the fate of the princess.

But the magpie knew no more than the lesson he had learnt, so he soon fluttered away; while the prince hurried back to his castle to gather together a troop of horsemen, full of courage for whatever might befall.

The princess meanwhile was craftily pursuing her plan of escape. She left off treating the gnome with coldness and indifference; indeed, there was a look in her eyes which encouraged him to hope that she might some day return his love, and the idea pleased him mightily. The next day, as soon as the sun rose, she made her appearance decked as a bride, in the wonderful robes and jewels which the fond gnome had prepared for her. Her golden hair was braided and crowned with myrtle blossoms, and her flowing veil sparkled with gems. In these magnificent garments she went to meet the gnome upon the great terrace.

‘Loveliest of maidens,’ he stammered, bowing low before her, ‘let me gaze into your dear eyes, and read in them that you will no longer refuse my love, but will make me the happiest being the sun shines upon.’

So saying he would have drawn aside her veil; but the princess only held it more closely about her.

‘Your constancy has overcome me,’ she said; ‘I can no longer oppose your wishes. But believe my words, and suffer this veil still to hide my blushes and tears.’

‘Why tears, beloved one?’ cried the gnome anxiously; ‘every tear of yours falls upon my heart like a drop of molten gold. Greatly as I desire your love, I do not ask a sacrifice.’

‘Ah!’ cried the false princess, ‘why do you misunderstand my tears? My heart answers to your tenderness, and yet I am fearful. A wife cannot always charm, and though *you* will never alter, the beauty of mortals is as a flower that fades. How can I be sure that you will always be as loving and charming as you are now?’

‘Ask some proof, sweetheart,’ said he. ‘Put my obedience and my patience to some test by which you can judge of my unalterable love.’

‘Be it so,’ answered the crafty maiden. ‘Then give me just one proof of your goodness. Go! count the turnips in yonder meadow. My wedding feast must not lack guests. They shall provide me with bride-maidens too. But beware lest you deceive me, and do not miss a single one. That shall be the test of your truth towards me.’

Unwilling as the gnome was to lose sight of his beautiful bride for a moment, he obeyed her commands without delay, and hurried off to begin his task. He skipped along among the turnips as nimbly as a grasshopper, and had soon counted them all; but, to be quite certain that he had made no mistake, he thought he would just run over them again. This time, to his great annoyance, the number was different; so he reckoned them for the third time, but now the number was not the same as either of the previous ones! And this was hardly to be wondered at, as his mind was full of the princess’s pretty looks and words.

As for the maiden, no sooner was her deluded lover fairly out of sight than she began to prepare for flight. She had a fine fresh turnip hidden close at hand, which she changed into a spirited horse, all saddled and bridled, and, springing upon its back, she galloped away over hill and dale till she reached the Thorny Valley, and flung herself into the arms of her beloved Prince Ratibor.

Meanwhile the toiling gnome went through his task over and over again till his back ached and his head swam, and he could no longer put two and two together; but as he felt tolerably certain of the exact number of turnips in the field, big and little together, he hurried back eager to prove to his beloved one what a delightful and submissive husband he would be. He felt very well satisfied with himself as he crossed the mossy lawn to the place where he had left her; but, alas! she was no longer there.

He searched every thicket and path, he looked behind every tree, and gazed into every pond, but without success; then he hastened into the palace and rushed from room to room, peering into every hole and corner and calling her by name; but only echo answered in the marble halls — there was neither voice nor footstep.

Then he began to perceive that something was amiss, and, throwing off the mortal form that encumbered him, he flew out of the palace, and soared high into the air, and saw the fugitive princess in the far distance just as the swift horse carried her across the boundary of his dominions.

Furiously did the enraged gnome fling two great clouds together, and hurl a thunderbolt after the flying maiden, splintering the rocky barriers which had stood a thousand years. But his fury was vain, the thunderclouds melted away into a soft mist, and the gnome, after flying about for a while in despair, bewailing to the four winds his unhappy fate, went sorrowfully back to the palace, and stole once more through every room, with many sighs and lamentations. He passed through the gardens which for him had lost their charm, and the sight of the princess’s footprints on the golden sand of the pathway renewed his grief. All was lonely, empty, sorrowful; and the forsaken gnome resolved that he would have no more dealings with such false creatures as he had found men to be.

Thereupon he stamped three times upon the earth, and the magic palace, with all its treasures, vanished away into the nothingness out of which he had called it; and the gnome fled once more to the depths of his underground kingdom.

While all this was happening, Prince Ratibor was hurrying away with his prize to a place of safety. With great pomp and triumph he restored the lovely princess to her father, and was then and there married to her, and took her back with him to his own castle.

But long after she was dead, and her children too, the villagers would tell the tale of her imprisonment underground, as they sat carving wood in the winter nights.

STORY OF THE KING WHO WOULD BE STRONGER THAN FATE

Once upon a time, far away in the east country, there lived a king who loved hunting so much that, when once there was a deer in sight, he was careless of his own safety. Indeed, he often became quite separated from his nobles and attendants, and in fact was particularly fond of lonely adventures. Another of his favourite amusements was to give out that he was not well, and could not be seen; and then, with the knowledge only of his faithful Grand Wazeer, to disguise himself as a pedlar, load a donkey with cheap wares, and travel about. In this way he found out what the common people said about him, and how his judges and governors fulfilled their duties.

One day his queen presented him with a baby daughter as beautiful as the dawn, and the king himself was so happy and delighted that, for a whole week, he forgot to hunt, and spent the time in public and private rejoicing.

Not long afterwards, however, he went out after some deer which were to be found in a far corner of his forests. In the course of the beat his dogs disturbed a beautiful snow-white stag, and directly he saw it the king determined that he would have it at any cost. So he put the spurs to his horse, and followed it as hard as he could gallop. Of course all his attendants followed at the best speed that they could manage; but the king was so splendidly mounted, and the stag was so swift, that, at the end of an hour, the king found that only his favourite hound and himself were in the chase; all the rest were far, far behind and out of sight.

Nothing daunted, however, he went on and on, till he perceived that he was entering a valley with great rocky mountains on all sides, and that his horse was getting very tired and trembled at every stride. Worse than all evening was already drawing on, and the sun would soon set. In vain had he sent arrow after arrow at the beautiful stag. Every shot fell short, or went wide of the mark; and at last, just as darkness was setting in, he lost sight altogether of the beast. By this time his horse could hardly move from fatigue, his hound staggered panting along beside him, he was far away amongst mountains where he had never been before, and had quite missed his way, and not a human creature or dwelling was in sight.

All this was very discouraging, but the king would not have minded if he had not lost that beautiful stag. That troubled him a good deal, but he never worried over what he could not help, so he got down from his horse, slipped his arm through the bridle, and led the animal along the rough path in hopes of discovering some shepherd’s hut, or, at least, a cave or shelter under some rock, where he might pass the night.

Presently he heard the sound of rushing water, and made towards it. He toiled over a steep rocky shoulder of a hill, and there, just below him, was a stream dashing down a precipitous glen, and, almost beneath his feet, twinkling and flickering from the level of the torrent, was a dim light as of a lamp. Towards this light the king with his horse and hound made his way, sliding and stumbling down a steep, stony path. At the bottom the king found a narrow grassy ledge by the brink of the stream, across which the light from a rude lantern in the mouth of a cave shed a broad beam of uncertain light. At the edge of the stream sat an old hermit with a long white beard, who neither spoke nor moved as the king approached, but sat throwing into the stream dry leaves which lay scattered about the ground near him.

‘Peace be upon you,’ said the king, giving the usual country salutation.

‘And upon you peace,’ answered the hermit; but still he never looked up, nor stopped what he was doing.

For a minute or two the king stood watching him. He noticed that the hermit threw two leaves in at a time, and watched them attentively. Sometimes both were carried rapidly down by the stream; sometimes only one leaf was carried off, and the other, after whirling slowly round and round on the edge of the current, would come circling back on an eddy to the hermit’s feet. At other times both leaves were held in the backward eddy, and failed to reach the main current of the noisy stream.

‘What are you doing?’ asked the king at last, and the hermit replied that he was reading the fates of men; every one’s fate, he said, was settled from the beginning, and, whatever it were, there was no escape from it. The king laughed.

‘I care little,’ he said, ‘what my fate may be; but I should be curious to know the fate of my little daughter.’

‘I cannot say,’ answered the hermit.

‘Do you not know, then?’ demanded the king.

‘I might know,’ returned the hermit, ‘but it is not always wisdom to know much.’

But the king was not content with this reply, and began to press the old man to say what he knew, which for a long time he would not do. At last, however, the king urged him so greatly that he said:

‘The king’s daughter will marry the son of a poor slave-girl called Puruna, who belongs to the king of the land of the north. There is no escaping from

Fate.’

The king was wild with anger at hearing these words, but he was also very tired; so he only laughed, and answered that he hoped there would be a way out of *that* fate anyhow. Then he asked if the hermit could shelter him and his beasts for the night, and the hermit said ‘Yes’; so, very soon the king had watered and tethered his horse, and, after a supper of bread and parched peas, lay down in the cave, with the hound at his feet, and tried to go to sleep. But instead of sleeping he only lay awake and thought of the hermit’s prophecy; and the more he thought of it the angrier he felt, until he gnashed his teeth and declared that it should never, never come true.

Morning came, and the king got up, pale and sulky, and, after learning from the hermit which path to take, was soon mounted and found his way home without much difficulty. Directly he reached his palace he wrote a letter to the king of the land of the north, begging him, as a favour, to sell him his slave girl Puruna and her son, and saying that, if he consented, he would send a messenger to receive them at the river which divided the kingdoms.

For five days he awaited the reply, and hardly slept or ate, but was as cross as could be all the time. On the fifth day his messenger returned with a letter to say that the king of the land of the north would not sell, but he would give, the king the slave girl and her son. The king was overjoyed. He sent for his Grand Wazeer and told him that he was going on one of his lonely expeditions, and that the Wazeer must invent some excuse to account for his absence. Next he disguised himself as an ordinary messenger, mounted a swift camel, and sped away to the place where the slave girl was to be handed over to him. When he got there he gave the messengers who brought her a letter of thanks and a handsome present for their master and rewards for themselves; and then without delay he took the poor woman and her tiny boy-baby up on to his camel and rode off to a wild desert.

After riding for a day and a night, almost without stopping, he came to a great cave where he made the woman dismount, and, taking her and the baby into the cave, he drew his sword and with one blow chopped her head off. But although his anger made him cruel enough for anything so dreadful, the king felt that he could not turn his great sword on the helpless baby, who he was sure must soon die in this solitary place without its mother; so he left it in the cave where it was, and, mounting his camel, rode home as fast as he could.

Now, in a small village in his kingdom there lived an old widow who had no children or relations of any kind. She made her living mostly by selling the milk of a flock of goats; but she was very, very poor, and not very strong, and often used to wonder how she would live if she got too weak or ill to attend to her goats. Every morning she drove the goats out into the desert to graze on the shrubs and bushes which grew there, and every evening they came home of themselves to be milked and to be shut up safely for the night.

One evening the old woman was astonished to find that her very best nanny-goat returned without a drop of milk. She thought that some naughty boy or girl was playing a trick upon her and had caught the goat on its way home and stolen all the milk. But when evening after evening the goat remained almost dry she determined to find out who the thief was. So the next day she followed the goats at a distance and watched them while they grazed. At length, in the afternoon, the old woman noticed this particular nanny-goat stealing off by herself away from the herd and she at once went after her. On and on the goat walked for some way, and then disappeared into a cave in the rocks. The old woman followed the goat into the cave and then, what should she see but the animal giving her milk to a little boy-baby, whilst on the ground near by lay the sad remains of the baby's dead mother! Wondering and frightened, the old woman thought at last that this little baby might be a son to her in her old age, and that he would grow up and in time to come be her comfort and support. So she carried home the baby to her hut, and next day she took a spade to the cave and dug a grave where she buried the poor mother.

Years passed by, and the baby grew up into a fine handsome lad, as daring as he was beautiful, and as industrious as he was brave. One day, when the boy, whom the old woman had named Nur Mahomed, was about seventeen years old, he was coming from his day's work in the fields, when he saw a strange donkey eating the cabbages in the garden which surrounded their little cottage. Seizing a big stick, he began to beat the intruder and to drive him out of his garden. A neighbour passing by called out to him— 'Hi! I say! why are you beating the pedlar's donkey like that?'

'The pedlar should keep him from eating my cabbages,' said Nur Mahomed; 'if he comes this evening here again I'll cut off his tail for him!'

Whereupon he went off indoors, whistling cheerfully. It happened that this neighbour was one of those people who make mischief by talking too much; so, meeting the pedlar in the 'serai,' or inn, that evening, he told him what had occurred, and added: 'Yes; and the young spitfire said that if beating the donkey would not do, he would beat you also, and cut your nose off for a thief!'

A few days later, the pedlar having moved on, two men appeared in the village inquiring who it was who had threatened to ill-treat and to murder an innocent pedlar. They declared that the pedlar, in fear of his life, had complained to the king; and that they had been sent to bring the lawless person who had said these things before the king himself. Of course they soon found out about the donkey eating Nur Mahomed's cabbages, and about the young man's hot words; but although the lad assured them that he had never said anything about murdering anyone, they replied they were ordered to arrest him, and bring him to take his trial before the king. So, in spite of his protests, and the wails of his mother, he was carried off, and in due time brought before the king. Of course Nur Mahomed never guessed that the supposed pedlar happened to have been the king himself, although nobody knew it.

But as he was very angry at what he had been told, he declared that he was going to make an example of this young man, and intended to teach him that even poor travelling pedlars could get justice in *his* country, and be protected from such lawlessness. However, just as he was going to pronounce some very heavy sentence, there was a stir in the court, and up came Nur Mahomed's old mother, weeping and lamenting, and begging to be heard. The king ordered her to speak, and she began to plead for the boy, declaring how good he was, and how he was the support of her old age, and if he were put in prison she would die. The king asked her who she was. She replied that she was his mother.

'His mother?' said the king; 'you are too old, surely, to have so young a son!'

Then the old woman, in her fright and distress, confessed the whole story of how she found the baby, and how she rescued and brought him up, and ended by beseeching the king for mercy.

It is easy to guess how, as the story came out, the king looked blacker and blacker, and more and more grim, until at last he was half fainting with rage and astonishment. This, then, was the baby he had left to die, after cruelly murdering his mother! Surely fate might have spared him this! He wished he had sufficient excuse to put the boy to death, for the old hermit's prophecy came back to him as strongly as ever; and yet the young man had done nothing bad enough to deserve such a punishment. Everyone would call him a tyrant if he were to give such an order — in fact, he dared not try it!

At length he collected himself enough to say:— 'If this young man will enlist in my army I will let him off. We have need of such as him, and a little discipline will do him good.' Still the old woman pleaded that she could not live without her son, and was nearly as terrified at the idea of his becoming a soldier as she was at the thought of his being put in prison. But at length the king — determined to get the youth into his clutches — pacified her by promising her a pension large enough to keep her in comfort; and Nur Mahomed, to his own great delight, was duly enrolled in the king's army.

As a soldier Nur Mahomed seemed to be in luck. He was rather surprised, but much pleased, to find that he was always one of those chosen when any difficult or dangerous enterprise was afoot; and, although he had the narrowest escapes on some occasions, still, the very desperateness of the situations in which he found himself gave him special chances of displaying his courage. And as he was also modest and generous, he became a favourite with his officers and his comrades.

Thus it was not very surprising that, before very long, he became enrolled amongst the picked men of the king's bodyguard. The fact is, that the king had hoped to have got him killed in some fight or another; but, seeing that, on the contrary, he throve on hard knocks, he was now determined to try more direct and desperate methods.

One day, soon after Nur Mahomed had entered the bodyguard, he was selected to be one of the soldiers told off to escort the king through the city. The procession was marching on quite smoothly, when a man, armed with a dagger, rushed out of an alley straight towards the king. Nur Mahomed, who was the nearest of the guards, threw himself in the way, and received the stab that had been apparently intended for the king. Luckily the blow was a hurried one, and the dagger glanced on his breastbone, so that, although he received a severe wound, his youth and strength quickly got the better of it. The king was, of course, obliged to take some notice of this brave deed, and as a reward made him one of his own attendants.

After this the strange adventures the young man passed through were endless. Officers of the bodyguard were often sent on all sorts of secret and difficult errands, and such errands had a curious way of becoming necessary when Nur Mahomed was on duty. Once, while he was taking a journey, a foot-bridge gave way under him; once he was attacked by armed robbers; a rock rolled down upon him in a mountain pass; a heavy stone coping fell from a roof at his feet in a narrow city alley. Altogether, Nur Mahomed began to think that, somewhere or other, he had made an enemy; but he was light-hearted, and the thought did not much trouble him. He escaped somehow every time, and felt amused rather than anxious about the next adventure.

It was the custom of that city that the officer for the day of the palace guards should receive all his food direct from the king's kitchen. One day, when Nur Mahomed's turn came to be on duty, he was just sitting down to a delicious stew that had been sent in from the palace, when one of those gaunt, hungry dogs, which, in eastern countries, run about the streets, poked his nose in at the open guard-room door, and looked at Nur Mahomed with mouth watering and nostrils working. The kind-hearted young man picked out a lump of meat, went to the door, and threw it outside to him. The dog pounced upon it, and gulped it down greedily, and was just turning to go, when it staggered, fell, rolled over, and died. Nur Mahomed, who had been lazily watching him, stood still for a moment, then he came back whistling softly. He gathered up the rest of his dinner and carefully wrapped it up to carry away and bury somewhere; and then he sent back the empty plates.

How furious the king was when, at the next morning's durbar, Nur Mahomed appeared before him fresh, alert, and smiling as usual. He was determined, however, to try once more, and bidding the young man come into his presence that evening, gave orders that he was to carry a secret despatch to the governor of a distant province. 'Make your preparations at once,' added he, 'and be ready to start in the morning. I myself will deliver you the papers at the last moment.'

Now this province was four or five days' journey from the palace, and the governor of it was the most faithful servant the king had. He could be silent as the grave, and prided himself on his obedience. Whilst he was an old and tried servant of the king's, his wife had been almost a mother to the young princess ever since the queen had died some years before. It happened that, a little before this time, the princess had been sent away for her health to another remote province; and whilst she was there her old friend, the governor's wife, had begged her to come and stay with them as soon as she could.

The princess accepted gladly, and was actually staying in the governor's house at the very time when the king made up his mind to send Nur Mahomed there with the mysterious despatch.

According to orders Nur Mahomed presented himself early the next morning at the king's private apartments. His best horse was saddled, food placed in his saddle-bag, and with some money tied up in his waistband, he was ready to start. The king handed over to him a sealed packet, desiring him to give it himself only into the hands of the governor, and to no one else. Nur Mahomed hid it carefully in his turban, swung himself into the saddle, and five minutes later rode out of the city gates, and set out on his long journey.

The weather was very hot; but Nur Mahomed thought that the sooner his precious letter was delivered the better; so that, by dint of riding most of each night and resting only in the hottest part of the day, he found himself, by noon on the third day, approaching the town which was his final destination.

Not a soul was to be seen anywhere; and Nur Mahomed, stiff, dry, thirsty, and tired, looked longingly over the wall into the gardens, and marked the fountains, the green grass, the shady apricot orchards, and giant mulberry trees, and wished he were there.

At length he reached the castle gates, and was at once admitted, as he was in the uniform of the king's bodyguard. The governor was resting, the soldier said, and could not see him until the evening. So Nur Mahomed handed over his horse to an attendant, and wandered down into the lovely gardens he had seen from the road, and sat down in the shade to rest himself. He flung himself on his back and watched the birds twittering and chattering in the trees above him. Through the branches he could see great patches of sky where the kites wheeled and circled incessantly, with shrill whistling cries. Bees buzzed over the flowers with a soothing sound, and in a few minutes Nur Mahomed was fast asleep.

Every day, through the heat of the afternoon, the governor, and his wife also, used to lie down for two or three hours in their own rooms, and so, for the matter of that, did most people in the palace. But the princess, like many other girls, was restless, and preferred to wander about the garden, rather than rest on a pile of soft cushions. What a torment her stout old attendants and servants sometimes thought her when she insisted on staying awake, and making them chatter or do something, when they could hardly keep their eyes open! Sometimes, however, the princess would pretend to go to sleep, and then, after all her women had gladly followed her example, she would get up and go out by herself, her veil hanging loosely about her. If she was discovered her old hostess scolded her severely; but the princess only laughed, and did the same thing next time.

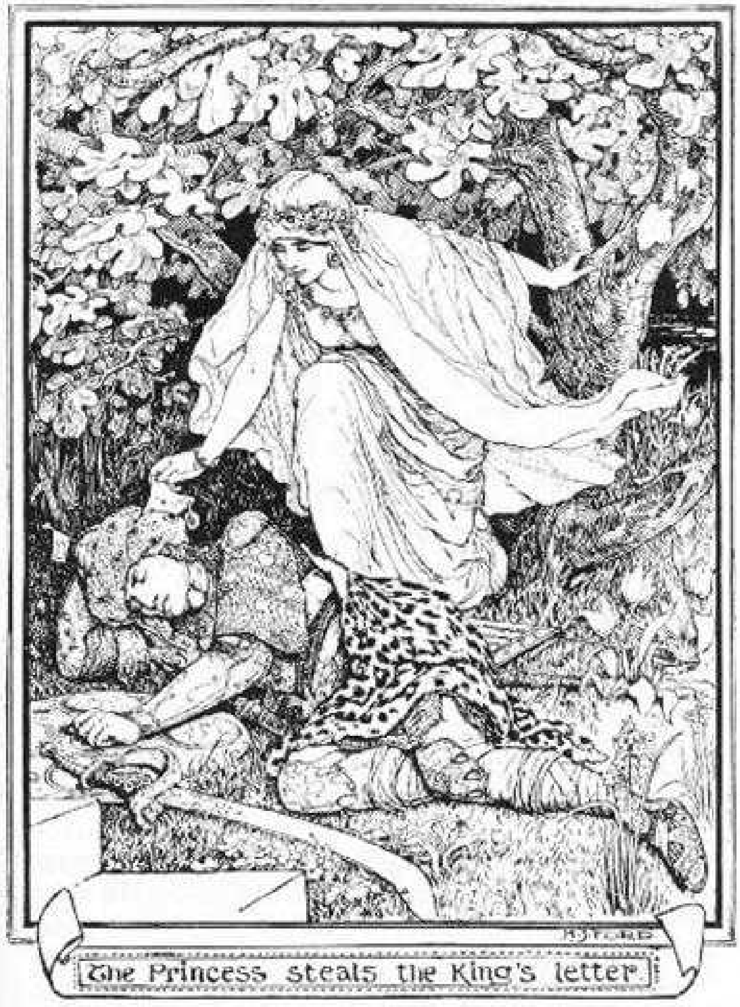

The Princess steals the King's letter

This very afternoon the princess had left all her women asleep, and, after trying in vain to amuse herself indoors, she had slipped out into the great garden, and rambled about in all her favourite nooks and corners, feeling quite safe as there was not a creature to be seen. Suddenly, on turning a corner, she stopped in surprise, for before her lay a man fast asleep! In her hurry she had almost tripped over him. But there he was, a young man, tanned and dusty with travel, in the uniform of an officer of the king's guard. One of the few faults of this lovely princess was a devouring curiosity, and she lived such an idle life that she had plenty of time to be curious. Out of one of the folds of this young man's turban there peeped the corner of a letter! She wondered what the letter was — whom it was for! She drew her veil a little closer, and stole across on tip-toe and caught hold of the corner of the letter. Then she pulled it a little, and just a little more! A great big seal came into view, which she saw to be her father's, and at the sight of it she paused for a minute half ashamed of what she was doing. But the pleasure of taking a letter which was not meant for her was more than she could resist, and in another moment it was in her hand. All at once she remembered that it would be death to this poor officer if he lost the letter, and that at all hazards she must put it back again. But this was not so easy; and, moreover, the letter in her hand burnt her with longing to read it, and see what was inside. She examined the seal. It was sticky with being exposed to the hot sun, and with a very little effort it parted from the paper. The letter was open and she read it! And this was what was written:

‘Behead the messenger who brings this letter secretly and at once. Ask no questions.’

The girl grew pale. What a shame! she thought. *She* would not let a handsome young fellow like that be beheaded; but how to prevent it was not quite clear at the moment. Some plan must be invented, and she wished to lock herself in where no one could interrupt her, as might easily happen in the garden. So she crept softly to her room, and took a piece of paper and wrote upon it: ‘Marry the messenger who brings this letter to the princess openly at once. Ask no questions.’ And even contrived to work the seals off the original letter and to fix them to this, so that no one could tell, unless they examined it closely, that it had ever been opened. Then she slipped back, shaking with fear and excitement, to where the young officer still lay asleep, thrust the letter into the folds of his turban, and hurried back to her room. It was done!

Late in the afternoon Nur Mahomed woke, and, making sure that the precious despatch was still safe, went off to get ready for his audience with the governor. As soon as he was ushered into his presence he took the letter from his turban and placed it in the governor’s hands according to orders. When he had read it the governor was certainly a little astonished; but he was told in the letter to ‘ask no questions,’ and he knew how to obey orders. He sent for his wife and told her to get the princess ready to be married at once.

‘Nonsense!’ said his wife, ‘what in the world do you mean?’

‘These are the king’s commands,’ he answered; ‘go and do as I bid you. The letter says “at once,” and “ask no questions.” The marriage, therefore, must take place this evening.’

In vain did his wife urge every objection; the more she argued, the more determined was her husband. ‘I know how to obey orders,’ he said, ‘and these are as plain as the nose on my face!’ So the princess was summoned, and, somewhat to their surprise, she seemed to take the news very calmly; next Nur Mahomed was informed, and he was greatly startled, but of course he could but be delighted at the great and unexpected honour which he thought the king had done him. Then all the castle was turned upside down; and when the news spread in the town, *that* was turned upside down too. Everybody ran everywhere, and tried to do everything at once; and, in the middle of it all, the old governor went about with his hair standing on end, muttering something about ‘obeying orders.’

And so the marriage was celebrated, and there was a great feast in the castle, and another in the soldiers’ barracks, and illuminations all over the town and in the beautiful gardens. And all the people declared that such a wonderful sight had never been seen, and talked about it to the ends of their lives.

The next day the governor despatched the princess and her bridegroom to the king, with a troop of horsemen, splendidly dressed, and he sent a mounted messenger on before them, with a letter giving the account of the marriage to the king.

When the king got the governor’s letter, he grew so red in the face that everyone thought he was going to have apoplexy. They were all very anxious to know what had happened, but he rushed off and locked himself into a room, where he ramped and raved until he was tired. Then, after awhile, he began to think he had better make the best of it, especially as the old governor had been clever enough to send him back his letter, and the king was pretty sure that this was in the princess’s handwriting. He was fond of his daughter, and though she had behaved so badly, he did not wish to cut *her* head off, and he did not want people to know the truth because it would make him look foolish. In fact, the more he considered the matter, the more he felt that he would be wise to put a good face on it, and to let people suppose that he had really brought about the marriage of his own free will.

So, when the young couple arrived, the king received them with all state, and gave his son-in-law a province to govern. Nur Mahomed soon proved himself as able and honourable a governor as he was a brave soldier; and, when the old king died, he became king in his place, and reigned long and happily.

Nur Mahomed’s old mother lived for a long time in her ‘son’s’ palace, and died in peace. The princess, his wife, although she had got her husband by a trick, found that she could not trick *him*, and so she never tried, but busied herself in teaching her children and scolding her maids. As for the old hermit, no trace of him was ever discovered; but the cave is there, and the leaves lie thick in front of it unto this day.

STORY OF WALI DÂD THE SIMPLE-HEARTED

Once upon a time there lived a poor old man whose name was Wali Dâd Gunjay, or Wali Dâd the Bald. He had no relations, but lived all by himself in a little mud hut some distance from any town, and made his living by cutting grass in the jungle, and selling it as fodder for horses. He only earned by this five halfpence a day; but he was a simple old man, and needed so little out of it, that he saved up one halfpenny daily, and spent the rest upon such food and clothing as he required.

In this way he lived for many years until, one night, he thought that he would count the money he had hidden away in the great earthen pot under the floor of his hut. So he set to work, and with much trouble he pulled the bag out on to the floor, and sat gazing in astonishment at the heap of coins which tumbled out of it. What should he do with them all? he wondered. But he never thought of spending the money on himself, because he was content to pass the rest of his days as he had been doing for ever so long, and he really had no desire for any greater comfort or luxury.

At last he threw all the money into an old sack, which he pushed under his bed, and then, rolled in his ragged old blanket, he went off to sleep.

Early next morning he staggered off with his sack of money to the shop of a jeweller, whom he knew in the town, and bargained with him for a beautiful little gold bracelet. With this carefully wrapped up in his cotton waistband he went to the house of a rich friend, who was a travelling merchant, and used to wander about with his camels and merchandise through many countries. Wali Dâd was lucky enough to find him at home, so he sat down, and after a little talk he asked the merchant who was the most virtuous and beautiful lady he had ever met with. The merchant replied that the princess of Khaistân was renowned everywhere as well for the beauty of her person as for the kindness and generosity of her disposition.

‘Then,’ said Wali Dâd, ‘next time you go that way, give her this little bracelet, with the respectful compliments of one who admires virtue far more than he desires wealth.’

With that he pulled the bracelet from his waistband, and handed it to his friend. The merchant was naturally much astonished, but said nothing, and made no objection to carrying out his friend’s plan.

Time passed by, and at length the merchant arrived in the course of his travels at the capital of Khaistân. As soon as he had opportunity he presented himself at the palace, and sent in the bracelet, neatly packed in a little perfumed box provided by himself, giving at the same time the message entrusted to him by Wali Dâd.

The princess could not think who could have bestowed this present on her, but she bade her servant to tell the merchant that if he would return, after he had finished his business in the city, she would give him her reply. In a few days, therefore, the merchant came back, and received from the princess a return present in the shape of a camel-load of rich silks, besides a present of money for himself. With these he set out on his journey.

Some months later he got home again from his journeyings, and proceeded to take Wali Dâd the princess’s present. Great was the perplexity of the good man to find a camel-load of silks tumbled at his door! What was he to do with these costly things? But, presently, after much thought, he begged the merchant to consider whether he did not know of some young prince to whom such treasures might be useful.

‘Of course,’ cried the merchant, greatly amused; ‘from Delhi to Baghdad, and from Constantinople to Lucknow, I know them all; and there lives none worthier than the gallant and wealthy young prince of Nekabad.’

‘Very well, then, take the silks to him, with the blessing of an old man,’ said Wali Dâd, much relieved to be rid of them.

So, the next time that the merchant journeyed that way he carried the silks with him, and in due course arrived at Nekabad, and sought an audience of the prince. When he was shown into his presence he produced the beautiful gift of silks that Wali Dâd had sent, and begged the young man to accept them as a humble tribute to his worth and greatness. The prince was much touched by the generosity of the giver, and ordered, as a return present, twelve of the finest breed of horses for which his country was famous to be delivered over to the merchant, to whom also, before he took his leave, he gave a munificent reward for his services.

As before, the merchant at last arrived at home; and next day, he set out for Wali Dâd’s house with the twelve horses. When the old man saw them coming in the distance he said to himself: ‘Here’s luck! a troop of horses coming! They are sure to want quantities of grass, and I shall sell all I have without having to drag it to market.’ Thereupon he rushed off and cut grass as fast as he could. When he got back, with as much grass as he could possibly carry, he was greatly discomfited to find that the horses were all for himself. At first he could not think what to do with them, but, after a little, a brilliant idea struck him! He gave two to the merchant, and begged him to take the rest to the princess of Khaistân, who was clearly the fittest person to possess such beautiful animals.

The merchant departed, laughing. But, true to his old friend’s request, he took the horses with him on his next journey, and eventually presented them safely to the princess. This time the princess sent for the merchant, and questioned him about the giver. Now, the merchant was usually a most honest man, but he did not quite like to describe Wali Dâd in his true light as an old man whose income was five halfpence a day, and who had hardly clothes to cover him. So he told her that his friend had heard stories of her beauty and goodness, and had longed to lay the best he had at her feet. The princess then took her father into her confidence, and begged him to advise her what courtesy she might return to one who persisted in making her such presents.

‘Well,’ said the king, ‘you cannot refuse them; so the best thing you can do is to send this unknown friend at once a present so magnificent that he is not likely to be able to send you anything better, and so will be ashamed to send anything at all!’ Then he ordered that, in place of each of the ten horses, two mules laden with silver should be returned by her.

Thus, in a few hours, the merchant found himself in charge of a splendid caravan; and he had to hire a number of armed men to defend it on the road against the robbers, and he was glad indeed to find himself back again in Wali Dâd’s hut.

‘Well, now,’ cried Wali Dâd, as he viewed all the wealth laid at his door, ‘I can well repay that kind prince for his magnificent present of horses; but to be sure you have been put to great expense! Still, if you will accept six mules and their loads, and will take the rest straight to Nekabad, I shall thank you heartily.’

The merchant felt handsomely repaid for his trouble, and wondered greatly how the matter would turn out. So he made no difficulty about it; and as soon as he could get things ready, he set out for Nekabad with this new and princely gift.

This time the prince, too, was embarrassed, and questioned the merchant closely. The merchant felt that his credit was at stake, and whilst inwardly determining that he would not carry the joke any further, could not help describing Wali Dâd in such glowing terms that the old man would never have known himself had he heard them. The prince, like the king of Khaistân, determined that he would send in return a gift that would be truly royal, and which would perhaps prevent the unknown giver sending him anything more. So he made up a caravan of twenty splendid horses caparisoned in gold embroidered cloths, with fine morocco saddles and silver bridles and stirrups, also twenty camels of the best breed, which had the speed of race-horses, and could swing along at a trot all day without getting tired; and, lastly, twenty elephants, with magnificent silver howdahs and coverings of silk embroidered with pearls. To take care of these animals the merchant hired a little army of men; and the troop made a great show as they travelled along.

When Wali Dâd from a distance saw the cloud of dust which the caravan made, and the glitter of its appointments, he said to himself: ‘By Allah! here’s a grand crowd coming! Elephants, too! Grass will be selling well to-day!’ And with that he hurried off to the jungle and cut grass as fast as he could. As soon as he got back he found the caravan had stopped at his door, and the merchant was waiting, a little anxiously, to tell him the news and to congratulate him upon his riches.

‘Riches!’ cried Wali Dâd, ‘what has an old man like me with one foot in the grave to do with riches? That beautiful young princess, now! She’d be the one to enjoy all these fine things! Do you take for yourself two horses, two camels, and two elephants, with all their trappings, and present the rest to her.’

The merchant at first objected to these remarks, and pointed out to Wali Dâd that he was beginning to feel these embassies a little awkward. Of course he was himself richly repaid, so far as expenses went; but still he did not like going so often, and he was getting nervous. At length, however, he consented to go once more, but he promised himself never to embark on another such enterprise.

So, after a few days’ rest, the caravan started off once more for Khaistân.

The moment the king of Khaistân saw the gorgeous train of men and beasts entering his palace courtyard, he was so amazed that he hurried down in person to inquire about it, and became dumb when he heard that these also were a present from the princely Wali Dâd, and were for the princess, his daughter. He went hastily off to her apartments, and said to her: ‘I tell you what it is, my dear, this man wants to marry you; that is the meaning of all these presents! There is nothing for it but that we go and pay him a visit in person. He must be a man of immense wealth, and as he is so devoted to you, perhaps you might do worse than marry him!’

The princess agreed with all that her father said, and orders were issued for vast numbers of elephants and camels, and gorgeous tents and flags, and litters for the ladies, and horses for the men, to be prepared without delay, as the king and princess were going to pay a visit to the great and munificent prince Wali Dâd. The merchant, the king declared, was to guide the party.

The feelings of the poor merchant in this sore dilemma can hardly be imagined. Willingly would he have run away; but he was treated with so much hospitality as Wali Dâd’s representative, that he hardly got an instant’s real peace, and never any opportunity of slipping away. In fact, after a few days, despair possessed him to such a degree that he made up his mind that all that happened was fate, and that escape was impossible; but he hoped devoutly some turn of fortune would reveal to him a way out of the difficulties which he had, with the best intentions, drawn upon himself.

On the seventh day they all started, amidst thunderous salutes from the ramparts of the city, and much dust, and cheering, and blaring of trumpets.

Day after day they moved on, and every day the poor merchant felt more ill and miserable. He wondered what kind of death the king would invent for him, and went through almost as much torture, as he lay awake nearly the whole of every night thinking over the situation, as he would have suffered if the king's executioners were already setting to work upon his neck.

At last they were only one day's march from Wali Dâd's little mud home. Here a great encampment was made, and the merchant was sent on to tell Wali Dâd that the King and Princess of Khaistân had arrived and were seeking an interview. When the merchant arrived he found the poor old man eating his evening meal of onions and dry bread, and when he told him of all that had happened he had not the heart to proceed to load him with the reproaches which rose to his tongue. For Wali Dâd was overwhelmed with grief and shame for himself, for his friend, and for the name and honour of the princess; and he wept and plucked at his beard, and groaned most piteously. With tears he begged the merchant to detain them for one day by any kind of excuse he could think of, and to come in the morning to discuss what they should do.

As soon as the merchant was gone Wali Dâd made up his mind that there was only one honourable way out of the shame and distress that he had created by his foolishness, and that was — to kill himself. So, without stopping to ask any one's advice, he went off in the middle of the night to a place where the river wound along at the base of steep rocky cliffs of great height, and determined to throw himself down and put an end to his life. When he got to the place he drew back a few paces, took a little run, and at the very edge of that dreadful black gulf he stopped short! He *could* not do it!

From below, unseen in the blackness of the deep night shadows, the water roared and boiled round the jagged rocks — he could picture the place as he knew it, only ten times more pitiless and forbidding in the visionless darkness; the wind soughed through the gorge with fearsome sighs, and rustlings and whisperings, and the bushes and grasses that grew in the ledges of the cliffs seemed to him like living creatures that danced and beckoned, shadowy and indistinct. An owl laughed 'Hoo! hoo!' almost in his face, as he peered over the edge of the gulf, and the old man threw himself back in a perspiration of horror. He was afraid! He drew back shuddering, and covering his face in his hands he wept aloud.

Presently he was aware of a gentle radiance that shed itself before him. Surely morning was not already coming to hasten and reveal his disgrace! He took his hands from before his face, and saw before him two lovely beings whom his instinct told him were not mortal, but were Peris from Paradise.

‘Why do you weep, old man?’ said one, in a voice as clear and musical as that of the bulbul.

‘I weep for shame,’ replied he.

‘What do you here?’ questioned the other.

‘I came here to die,’ said Wali Dâd. And as they questioned him, he confessed all his story.

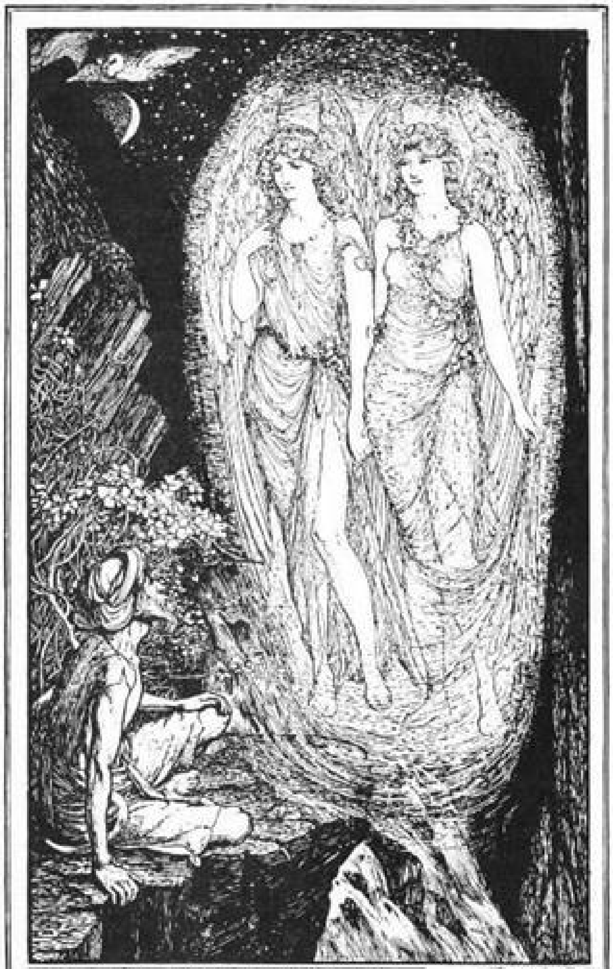

WALI DAD AND THE PERIS

Then the first stepped forward and laid a hand upon his shoulder, and Wali Dâd began to feel that something strange — what, he did not know — was happening to him. His old cotton rags of clothes were changed to beautiful linen and embroidered cloth; on his hard, bare feet were warm, soft shoes, and on his head a great jewelled turban. Round his neck there lay a heavy golden chain, and the little old bent sickle, which he cut grass with, and which hung in his waistband, had turned into a gorgeous scimetar, whose ivory hilt gleamed in the pale light like snow in moonlight. As he stood wondering, like a man in a dream, the other peri waved her hand and bade him turn and see; and, lo! before him a noble gateway stood open. And up an avenue of giant plane trees the peris led him, dumb with amazement. At the end of the avenue, on the very spot where his hut had stood, a gorgeous palace appeared, ablaze with myriads of lights. Its great porticoes and verandahs were occupied by hurrying servants, and guards paced to and fro and saluted him respectfully as he drew near, along mossy walks and through sweeping grassy lawns where fountains were playing and flowers scented the air. Wali Dâd stood stunned and helpless.

‘Fear not,’ said one of the peris; ‘go to your house, and learn that God rewards the simple-hearted.’

With these words they both disappeared and left him. He walked on, thinking still that he must be dreaming. Very soon he retired to rest in a splendid room, far grander than anything he had ever dreamed of.

When morning dawned he woke, and found that the palace, and himself, and his servants were all real, and that he was not dreaming after all!

If he was dumbfounded, the merchant, who was ushered into his presence soon after sunrise, was much more so. He told Wali Dâd that he had not slept all night, and by the first streak of daylight had started to seek out his friend. And what a search he had had! A great stretch of wild jungle country had, in the night, been changed into parks and gardens; and if it had not been for some of Wali Dâd’s new servants, who found him and brought him to the palace, he would have fled away under the impression that his trouble had sent him crazy, and that all he saw was only imagination.

Then Wali Dâd told the merchant all that had happened. By his advice he sent an invitation to the king and princess of Khaistân to come and be his guests, together with all their retinue and servants, down to the very humblest in the camp.

For three nights and days a great feast was held in honour of the royal guests. Every evening the king and his nobles were served on golden plates and from golden cups; and the smaller people on silver plates and from silver cups; and each evening each guest was requested to keep the plates and cups that they had used as a remembrance of the occasion. Never had anything so splendid been seen. Besides the great dinners, there were sports and hunting, and dances, and amusements of all sorts.

On the fourth day the king of Khaistân took his host aside, and asked him whether it was true, as he had suspected, that he wished to marry his daughter. But Wali Dâd, after thanking him very much for the compliment, said that he had never dreamed of so great an honour, and that he was far too old and ugly for so fair a lady; but he begged the king to stay with him until he could send for the Prince of Nekabad, who was a most excellent, brave, and honourable young man, and would surely be delighted to try to win the hand of the beautiful princess.

To this the king agreed, and Wali Dâd sent the merchant to Nekabad, with a number of attendants, and with such handsome presents that the prince came at once, fell head over ears in love with the princess, and married her at Wali Dâd’s palace amidst a fresh outburst of rejoicings.

And now the King of Khaistân and the Prince and Princess of Nekabad, each went back to their own country; and Wali Dâd lived to a good old age, befriending all who were in trouble, and preserving, in his prosperity, the simple-hearted and generous nature that he had when he was only Wali Dâd Gunjay, the grass cutter.

TALE OF A TORTOISE AND OF A MISCHIEVOUS MONKEY

Once upon a time there was a country where the rivers were larger, and the forests deeper, than anywhere else. Hardly any men came there, and the wild creatures had it all to themselves, and used to play all sorts of strange games with each other. The great trees, chained one to the other by thick flowering plants with bright scarlet or yellow blossoms, were famous hiding-places for the monkeys, who could wait unseen, till a puma or an elephant passed by, and then jump on their backs and go for a ride, swinging themselves up by the creepers when they had had enough. Near the rivers huge tortoises were to be found, and though to our eyes a tortoise seems a dull, slow thing, it is wonderful to think how clever they were, and how often they outwitted many of their livelier friends.

There was one tortoise in particular that always managed to get the better of everybody, and many were the tales told in the forest of his great deeds. They began when he was quite young, and tired of staying at home with his father and mother. He left them one day, and walked off in search of adventures. In a wide open space surrounded by trees he met with an elephant, who was having his supper before taking his evening bath in the river which ran close by. ‘Let us see which of us two is strongest,’ said the young tortoise, marching up to the elephant. ‘Very well,’ replied the elephant, much amused at the impertinence of the little creature; ‘when would you like the trial to be?’

‘In an hour’s time; I have some business to do first,’ answered the tortoise. And he hastened away as fast as his short legs would carry him.

In a pool of the river a whale was resting, blowing water into the air and making a lovely fountain. The tortoise, however, was too young and too busy to admire such things, and he called to the whale to stop, as he wanted to speak to him. ‘Would you like to try which of us is the stronger?’ said he. The whale looked at him, sent up another fountain, and answered: ‘Oh, yes; certainly. When do you wish to begin? I am quite ready.’

‘Then give me one of your longest bones, and I will fasten it to my leg. When I give the signal, you must pull, and we will see which can pull the hardest.’

‘Very good,’ replied the whale; and he took out one of his bones and passed it to the tortoise.

The tortoise picked up the end of the bone in his mouth and went back to the elephant. ‘I will fasten this to your leg,’ said he, ‘in the same way as it is fastened to mine, and we must both pull as hard as we can. We shall soon see which is the stronger.’ So he wound it carefully round the elephant’s leg, and tied it in a firm knot. ‘Now!’ cried he, plunging into a thick bush behind him.

The whale tugged at one end, and the elephant tugged at the other, and neither had any idea that he had not the tortoise for his foe. When the whale pulled hardest the elephant was dragged into the water; and when the elephant pulled the hardest the whale was hauled on to the land. They were very evenly matched, and the battle was a hard one.

At last they were quite tired, and the tortoise, who was watching, saw that they could play no more. So he crept from his hiding-place, and dipping himself in the river, he went to the elephant and said: ‘I see that you really are stronger than I thought. Suppose we give it up for to-day?’ Then he dried himself on some moss and went to the whale and said: ‘I see that you really are stronger than I thought. Suppose we give it up for to-day?’

The two adversaries were only too glad to be allowed to rest, and believed to the end of their days that, after all, the tortoise was stronger than either of them.

A day or two later the young tortoise was taking a stroll, when he met a fox, and stopped to speak to him. ‘Let us try,’ said he in a careless manner, ‘which of us can lie buried in the ground during seven years.’

‘I shall be delighted,’ answered the fox, ‘only I would rather that you began.’

‘It is all the same to me,’ replied the tortoise; ‘if you come round this way to-morrow you will see that I have fulfilled my part of the bargain.’

So he looked about for a suitable place, and found a convenient hole at the foot of an orange tree. He crept into it, and the next morning the fox heaped up the earth round him, and promised to feed him every day with fresh fruit. The fox so far kept his word that each morning when the sun rose he appeared to ask how the tortoise was getting on. ‘Oh, very well; but I wish you would give me some fruit,’ replied he.

‘Alas! the fruit is not ripe enough yet for you to eat,’ answered the fox, who hoped that the tortoise would die of hunger long before the seven years were over.

‘Oh dear, oh dear! I am so hungry!’ cried the tortoise.

‘I am sure you must be; but it will be all right to-morrow,’ said the fox, trotting off, not knowing that the oranges dropped down the hollow trunk, straight into the tortoise’s hole, and that he had as many as he could possibly eat.

So the seven years went by; and when the tortoise came out of his hole he was as fat as ever.

Now it was the fox’s turn, and he chose his hole, and the tortoise heaped the earth round, promising to return every day or two with a nice young bird for his dinner. ‘Well, how are you getting on?’ he would ask cheerfully when he paid his visits.

‘Oh, all right; only I wish you had brought a bird with you,’ answered the fox.

‘I have been so unlucky, I have never been able to catch one,’ replied the tortoise. ‘However, I shall be more fortunate to-morrow, I am sure.’

But not many to-morrows after, when the tortoise arrived with his usual question: ‘Well, how are you getting on?’ he received no answer, for the fox was lying in his hole quite still, dead of hunger.

By this time the tortoise was grown up, and was looked up to throughout the forest as a person to be feared for his strength and wisdom. But he was not considered a very swift runner, until an adventure with a deer added to his fame.

One day, when he was basking in the sun, a stag passed by, and stopped for a little conversation. ‘Would you care to see which of us can run fastest?’ asked the tortoise, after some talk. The stag thought the question so silly that he only shrugged his shoulders. ‘Of course, the victor would have the right to kill the other,’ went on the tortoise. ‘Oh, on that condition I agree,’ answered the deer; ‘but I am afraid you are a dead man.’

‘It is no use trying to frighten me,’ replied the tortoise. ‘But I should like three days for training; then I shall be ready to start when the sun strikes on the big tree at the edge of the great clearing.’

The first thing the tortoise did was to call his brothers and his cousins together, and he posted them carefully under ferns all along the line of the great clearing, making a sort of ladder which stretched for many miles. This done to his satisfaction, he went back to the starting place.

The stag was quite punctual, and as soon as the sun’s rays struck the trunk of the tree the stag started off, and was soon far out of the sight of the tortoise. Every now and then he would turn his head as he ran, and call out: ‘How are you getting on?’ and the tortoise who happened to be nearest at that moment would answer: ‘All right, I am close up to you.’

Full of astonishment, the stag would redouble his efforts, but it was no use. Each time he asked: ‘Are you there?’ the answer would come: ‘Yes, of course, where else should I be?’ And the stag ran, and ran, and ran, till he could run no more, and dropped down dead on the grass.

And the tortoise, when he thinks about it, laughs still.

But the tortoise was not the only creature of whose tricks stories were told in the forest. There was a famous monkey who was just as clever and more mischievous, because he was so much quicker on his feet and with his hands. It was quite impossible to catch him and give him the thrashing he so often deserved, for he just swung himself up into a tree and laughed at the angry victim who was sitting below. Sometimes, however, the inhabitants of the forest were so foolish as to provoke him, and then they got the worst of it. This was what happened to the barber, whom the monkey visited one morning, saying that he wished to be shaved. The barber bowed politely to his customer, and begging him to be seated, tied a large cloth round his neck, and rubbed his chin with soap; but instead of cutting off his beard, the barber made a snip at the end of his tail. It was only a very little bit, and the monkey started up more in rage than in pain. ‘Give me back the end of my tail,’ he roared, ‘or I will take one of your razors.’ The barber refused to give back the missing piece, so the monkey caught up a razor from the table and ran away with it, and no one in the forest could be shaved for days, as there was not another to be got for miles and miles.

As he was making his way to his own particular palm-tree, where the cocoa-nuts grew, which were so useful for pelting passers-by, he met a woman who was scaling a fish with a bit of wood, for in this side of the forest a few people lived in huts near the river.

‘That must be hard work,’ said the monkey, stopping to look; ‘try my knife — you will get on quicker.’ And he handed her the razor as he spoke. A few days later he came back and rapped at the door of the hut. ‘I have called for my razor,’ he said, when the woman appeared.

‘I have lost it,’ answered she.

‘If you don’t give it to me at once I will take your sardine,’ replied the monkey, who did not believe her. The woman protested she had not got the knife, so he took the sardine and ran off.

A little further along he saw a baker who was standing at the door, eating one of his loaves. ‘That must be rather dry,’ said the monkey, ‘try my fish’; and the man did not need twice telling. A few days later the monkey stopped again at the baker’s hut. ‘I’ve called for that fish,’ he said.

‘That fish? But I have eaten it!’ exclaimed the baker in dismay.

‘If you have eaten it I shall take this barrel of meal in exchange,’ replied the monkey; and he walked off with the barrel under his arm.

As he went he saw a woman with a group of little girls round her, teaching them how to dress hair. ‘Here is something to make cakes for the children,’ he said, putting down his barrel, which by this time he found rather heavy. The children were delighted, and ran directly to find some flat stones to bake their cakes on, and when they had made and eaten them, they thought they had never tasted anything so nice. Indeed, when they saw the monkey approaching not long after, they rushed to meet him, hoping that he was bringing them some more presents. But he took no notice of their questions, he only said to their mother:

‘I’ve called for my barrel of meal.’

‘Why, you gave it to me to make cakes of!’ cried the mother.

‘If I can’t get my barrel of meal, I shall take one of your children,’ answered the monkey. ‘I am in want of somebody who can bake me bread when I am tired of fruit, and who knows how to make cocoa-nut cakes.’

‘Oh, leave me my child, and I will find you another barrel of meal,’ wept the mother.

‘I don’t *want* another barrel, I want *that* one,’ answered the monkey sternly. And as the woman stood wringing her hands, he caught up the little girl that he thought the prettiest and took her to his home in the palm tree.

She never went back to the hut, but on the whole she was not much to be pitied, for monkeys are nearly as good as children to play with, and they taught her how to swing, and to climb, and to fly from tree to tree, and everything else they knew, which was a great deal.

Now the monkey’s tiresome tricks had made him many enemies in the forest, but no one hated him so much as the puma. The cause of their quarrel was known only to themselves, but everybody was aware of the fact, and took care to be out of the way when there was any chance of these two meeting. Often and often the puma had laid traps for the monkey, which he felt sure his foe could not escape; and the monkey would pretend that he saw nothing, and rejoice the hidden puma’s heart by seeming to walk straight into the snare, when, lo! a loud laugh would be heard, and the monkey’s grinning face would peer out of a mass of creepers and disappear before his foe could reach him.

This state of things had gone on for quite a long while, when at last there came a season such as the oldest parrot in the forest could never remember. Instead of two or three hundred inches of rain falling, which they were all accustomed to, month after month passed without a cloud, and the rivers and springs dried up, till there was only one small pool left for everyone to drink from. There was not an animal for miles round that did not grieve over this shocking condition of affairs, not one at least except the puma. His only thought for years had been how to get the monkey into his power, and this time he imagined his chance had really arrived. He would hide himself in a thicket, and when the monkey came down to drink — and come he must — the puma would spring out and seize him. Yes, on this occasion there could be no escape!

And no more there would have been if the puma had had greater patience; but in his excitement he moved a little too soon. The monkey, who was stooping to drink, heard a rustling, and turning caught the gleam of two yellow, murderous eyes. With a mighty spring he grasped a creeper which was hanging above him, and landed himself on the branch of a tree; feeling the breath of the puma on his feet as the animal bounded from his cover. Never had the monkey been so near death, and it was some time before he recovered enough courage to venture on the ground again.

Up there in the shelter of the trees, he began to turn over in his head plans for escaping the snares of the puma. And at length chance helped him. Peeping down to the earth, he saw a man coming along the path carrying on his head a large gourd filled with honey.

He waited till the man was just underneath the tree, then he hung from a bough, and caught the gourd while the man looked up wondering, for he was no tree-climber. Then the monkey rubbed the honey all over him, and a quantity of leaves from a creeper that was hanging close by; he stuck them all close together into the honey, so that he looked like a walking bush. This finished, he ran to the pool to see the result, and, quite pleased with himself, set out in search of adventures.

Soon the report went through the forest that a new animal had appeared from no one knew where, and that when somebody had asked his name, the strange creature had answered that it was Jack-in-the-Green. Thanks to this, the monkey was allowed to drink at the pool as often as he liked, for neither beast nor bird had the faintest notion who he was. And if they made any inquiries the only answer they got was that the water of which he had drunk deeply had turned his hair into leaves, so that they all knew what would happen in case they became too greedy.

By-and-by the great rains began again. The rivers and streams filled up, and there was no need for him to go back to the pool, near the home of his enemy, the puma, as there was a large number of places for him to choose from. So one night, when everything was still and silent, and even the chattering parrots were asleep on one leg, the monkey stole down softly from his perch, and washed off the honey and the leaves, and came out from his bath in his own proper skin. On his way to breakfast he met a rabbit, and stopped for a little talk.

‘I am feeling rather dull,’ he remarked; ‘I think it would do me good to hunt a while. What do you say?’

‘Oh, I am quite willing,’ answered the rabbit, proud of being spoken to by such a large creature. ‘But the question is, what shall we hunt?’

‘There is no credit in going after an elephant or a tiger,’ replied the monkey stroking his chin, ‘they are so big they could not possibly get out of your way. It shows much more skill to be able to catch a small thing that can hide itself in a moment behind a leaf. I’ll tell you what! Suppose I hunt butterflies, and you, serpents.’

The rabbit, who was young and without experience, was delighted with this idea, and they both set out on their various ways.

The monkey quietly climbed up the nearest tree, and ate fruit most of the day, but the rabbit tired himself to death poking his nose into every heap of dried leaves he saw, hoping to find a serpent among them. Luckily for himself the serpents were all away for the afternoon, at a meeting of their own, for there is nothing a serpent likes so well for dinner as a nice plump rabbit. But, as it was, the dried leaves were all empty, and the rabbit at last fell asleep where he was. Then the monkey, who had been watching him, fell down and pulled his ears, to the rage of the rabbit, who vowed vengeance.

It was not easy to catch the monkey off his guard, and the rabbit waited long before an opportunity arrived. But one day Jack-in-the-Green was sitting on a stone, wondering what he should do next, when the rabbit crept softly behind him, and gave his tail a sharp pull. The monkey gave a shriek of pain, and darted up into a tree, but when he saw that it was only the rabbit who had dared to insult him so, he chattered so fast in his anger, and looked so fierce, that the rabbit fled into the nearest hole, and stayed there for several days, trembling with fright.

Soon after this adventure the monkey went away into another part of the country, right on the outskirts of the forest, where there was a beautiful garden full of oranges hanging ripe from the trees. This garden was a favourite place for birds of all kinds, each hoping to secure an orange for dinner, and in order to frighten the birds away and keep a little fruit for himself, the master had fastened a waxen figure on one of the boughs.

Now the monkey was as fond of oranges as any of the birds, and when he saw a man standing in the tree where the largest and sweetest oranges grew, he spoke to him at once. ‘You man,’ he said rudely, ‘throw me down that big orange up there, or I will throw a stone at you.’ The wax figure took no notice of this request, so the monkey, who was easily made angry, picked up a stone, and flung it with all his force. But instead of falling to the ground again, the stone stuck to the soft wax.

At this moment a breeze shook the tree, and the orange on which the monkey had set his heart dropped from the bough. He picked it up and ate it every bit, including the rind, and it was so good he thought he should like another. So he called again to the wax figure to throw him an orange, and as the figure did not move, he hurled another stone, which stuck to the wax as the first had done. Seeing that the man was quite indifferent to stones, the monkey grew more angry still, and climbing the tree hastily, gave the figure a violent kick. But like the two stones his leg remained stuck to the wax, and he was held fast. ‘Let me go at once, or I will give you another kick,’ he cried, suiting the action to the word, and this time also his foot remained in the grasp of the man. Not knowing what he did, the monkey hit out, first with one hand and then with the other, and when he found that he was literally bound hand and foot, he became so mad with anger and terror that in his struggles he fell to the ground, dragging the figure after him. This freed his hands and feet, but besides the shock of the fall, they had tumbled into a bed of thorns, and he limped away broken and bruised, and groaning loudly; for when monkeys *are* hurt, they take pains that everybody shall know it.

It was a long time before Jack was well enough to go about again; but when he did, he had an encounter with his old enemy the puma. And this was how it came about.

One day the puma invited his friend the stag to go with him and see a comrade, who was famous for the good milk he got from his cows. The stag loved milk, and gladly accepted the invitation, and when the sun began to get a little low the two started on their walk. On the way they arrived on the banks of a river, and as there were no bridges in those days it was necessary to swim across it. The stag was not fond of swimming, and began to say that he was tired, and thought that after all it was not worth going so far to get milk, and that he would return home. But the puma easily saw through these excuses, and laughed at him.

‘The river is not deep at all,’ he said; ‘why, you will never be off your feet. Come, pluck up your courage and follow me.’

The stag was afraid of the river; still, he was much more afraid of being laughed at, and he plunged in after the puma; but in an instant the current had swept him away, and if it had not borne him by accident to a shallow place on the opposite side, where he managed to scramble up the bank, he would certainly have been drowned. As it was, he scrambled out, shaking with terror, and found the puma waiting for him. ‘You had a narrow escape that time,’ said the puma.

After resting for a few minutes, to let the stag recover from his fright, they went on their way till they came to a grove of bananas.

‘They look very good,’ observed the puma with a longing glance, ‘and I am sure you must be hungry, friend stag? Suppose you were to climb the tree and get some. You shall eat the green ones, they are the best and sweetest; and you can throw the yellow ones down to me. I dare say they will do quite well!’ The stag did as he was bid, though, not being used to climbing, it gave him a deal of trouble and sore knees, and, besides, his horns were continually getting entangled in the creepers. What was worse, when once he had tasted the bananas, he found them not at all to his liking, so he threw them all down, green and yellow alike, and let the puma take his choice. And what a dinner he made!

When he had *quite* done, they set forth once more.

The path lay through a field of maize, where several men were working. As they came up to them, the puma whispered: ‘Go on in front, friend stag, and just say “Bad luck to all workers!”’ The stag obeyed, but the men were hot and tired, and did not think this a good joke. So they set their dogs at him, and he was obliged to run away as fast as he could.

‘I hope your industry will be rewarded as it deserves,’ said the puma as he passed along; and the men were pleased, and offered him some of their maize to eat.

By-and-by the puma saw a small snake with a beautiful shining skin, lying coiled up at the foot of a tree. ‘What a lovely bracelet that would make for your daughter, friend stag!’ said he. The stag stooped and picked up the snake, which bit him, and he turned angrily to the puma. ‘Why did you not tell me it would bite?’ he asked.

‘Is it my fault if you are an idiot?’ replied the puma.

At last they reached their journey’s end, but by this time it was late, and the puma’s comrade was ready for bed, so they slung their hammocks in convenient places, and went to sleep. But in the middle of the night the puma rose softly and stole out of the door to the sheep-fold, where he killed and ate the fattest sheep he could find, and taking a bowl full of its blood, he sprinkled the sleeping stag with it. This done, he returned to bed.

In the morning the shepherd went as usual to let the sheep out of the fold, and found one of them missing. He thought directly of the puma, and ran to accuse him of having eaten the sheep. ‘I, my good man? What has put it into your head to think of such a thing? Have *I* got any blood about me? If anyone has eaten a sheep it must be my friend the stag.’ Then the shepherd went to examine the sleeping stag, and of course he saw the blood. ‘Ah! I will teach you how to steal!’ cried he, and he hit the stag such a blow on his skull that he died in a moment. The noise awakened the comrade above, and he came downstairs. The puma greeted him with joy, and begged he might have some of the famous milk as soon as possible, for he was very thirsty. A large bucket was set before the puma directly. He drank it to the last drop, and then took leave.

On his way home he met the monkey. ‘Are you fond of milk?’ asked he. ‘I know a place where you get it very nice. I will show you it if you like.’ The monkey knew that the puma was not so good-natured for nothing, but he felt quite able to take care of himself, so he said he should have much pleasure in accompanying his friend.

They soon reached the same river, and, as before, the puma remarked: ‘Friend monkey, you will find it very shallow; there is no cause for fear. Jump in, and I will follow.’

‘Do you think you have the stag to deal with?’ asked the monkey, laughing. ‘I should prefer to follow; if not I shall go no further.’ The puma understood that it was useless trying to make the monkey do as he wished, so he chose a shallow place and began to swim across. The monkey waited till the puma had got to the middle, then he gave a great spring and jumped on his back, knowing quite well that the puma would be afraid to shake him off, lest he should be swept away into deep water. So in this manner they reached the bank.

The banana grove was not far distant, and here the puma thought he would pay the monkey out for forcing him to carry him over the river. ‘Friend monkey, look what fine bananas,’ cried he. ‘You are fond of climbing; suppose you run up and throw me down a few. You can eat the green ones, which are the nicest, and I will be content with the yellow.’

‘Very well,’ answered the monkey, swinging himself up; but he ate all the yellow ones himself, and only threw down the green ones that were left. The puma was furious and cried out: ‘I will punch your head for that.’ But the monkey only answered: ‘If you are going to talk such nonsense I won’t walk with you.’ And the puma was silent.

In a few minutes more they arrived at the field where the men were reaping the maize, and the puma remarked as he had done before: ‘Friend monkey, if you wish to please these men, just say as you go by: “Bad luck to all workers.”’

‘Very well,’ replied the monkey; but, instead, he nodded and smiled, and said: ‘I hope your industry may be rewarded as it deserves.’ The men thanked him heartily, let him pass on, and the puma followed behind him.

Further along the path they saw the shining snake lying on the moss. ‘What a lovely necklace for your daughter,’ exclaimed the puma. ‘Pick it up and take it with you.’

‘You are very kind, but I will leave it for you,’ answered the monkey, and nothing more was said about the snake.

Not long after this they reached the comrade’s house, and found him just ready to go to bed. So, without stopping to talk, the guests slung their hammocks, the monkey taking care to place his so high that no one could get at him. Besides, he thought it would be more prudent not to fall asleep, so he only lay still and snored loudly. When it was quite dark and no sound was to be heard, the puma crept out to the sheep-fold, killed the sheep, and carried back a bowl full of its blood with which to sprinkle the monkey. But the monkey, who had been watching him out of the corner of his eye, waited until the puma drew near, and with a violent kick upset the bowl all over the puma himself.

When the puma saw what had happened, he turned in a great hurry to leave the house, but before he could do so, he saw the shepherd coming, and hastily lay down again.

'This is the second time I have lost a sheep,' the man said to the monkey; 'it will be the worse for the thief when I catch him, I can tell you.' The monkey did not answer, but silently pointed to the puma who was pretending to be asleep. The shepherd stooped and saw the blood, and cried out: 'Ah! so it is you, is it? then take that!' and with his stick he gave the puma such a blow on the head that he died then and there.

Then the monkey got up and went to the dairy, and drank all the milk he could find. Afterwards he returned home and married, and that is the last we heard of him.

THE KNIGHTS OF THE FISH

Once upon a time there lived an old cobbler who worked hard at his trade from morning till night, and scarcely gave himself a moment to eat. But, industrious as he was, he could hardly buy bread and cheese for himself and his wife, and they grew thinner and thinner daily.

For a long while they pretended to each other that they had no appetite, and that a few blackberries from the hedges were a great deal nicer than a good strong bowl of soup. But at length there came a day when the cobbler could bear it no longer, and he threw away his last, and borrowing a rod from a neighbour he went out to fish.

Now the cobbler was as patient about fishing as he had been about cobbling. From dawn to dark he stood on the banks of the little stream, without hooking anything better than an eel, or a few old shoes, that even he, clever though he was, felt were not worth mending. At length his patience began to give way, and as he undressed one night he said to himself: ‘Well, I will give it one more chance; and if I don’t catch a fish to-morrow, I will go and hang myself.’

He had not cast his line for ten minutes the next morning before he drew from the river the most beautiful fish he had ever seen in his life. But he nearly fell into the water from surprise, when the fish began to speak to him, in a small, squeaky voice:

‘Take me back to your hut and cook me; then cut me up, and sprinkle me over with pepper and salt. Give two of the pieces to your wife, and bury two more in the garden.’

The cobbler did not know what to make of these strange words; but he was wiser than many people, and when he did not understand, he thought it was well to obey. His children wanted to eat all the fish themselves, and begged their father to tell them what to do with the pieces he had put aside; but the cobbler only laughed, and told them it was no business of theirs. And when they were safe in bed he stole out and buried the two pieces in the garden.

By and by two babies, exactly alike, lay in a cradle, and in the garden were two tall plants, with two brilliant shields on the top.

Years passed away, and the babies were almost men. They were tired of living quietly at home, being mistaken for each other by everybody they saw, and determined to set off in different directions, to seek adventures.

So, one fine morning, the two brothers left the hut, and walked together to the place where the great road divided. There they embraced and parted, promising that if anything remarkable had happened to either, he would return to the cross roads and wait till his brother came.

The youth who took the path that ran eastwards arrived presently at a large city, where he found everybody standing at the doors, wringing their hands and weeping bitterly.

‘What is the matter?’ asked he, pausing and looking round. And a man replied, in a faltering voice, that each year a beautiful girl was chosen by lot to be offered up to a dreadful fiery dragon, who had a mother even worse than himself, and this year the lot had fallen on their peerless princess.

‘But where *is* the princess?’ said the young man once more, and again the man answered him: ‘She is standing under a tree, a mile away, waiting for the dragon.’

This time the Knight of the Fish did not stop to hear more, but ran off as fast as he could, and found the princess bathed in tears, and trembling from head to foot.

She turned as she heard the sound of his sword, and removed her handkerchief from her eyes.

‘Fly,’ she cried; ‘fly while you have yet time, before that monster sees you.’

She said it, and she meant it; yet, when he had turned his back, she felt more forsaken than before. But in reality it was not more than a few minutes before he came back, galloping furiously on a horse he had borrowed, and carrying a huge mirror across its neck.

‘I am in time, then,’ he cried, dismounting very carefully, and placing the mirror against the trunk of a tree.

‘Give me your veil,’ he said hastily to the princess. And when she had unwound it from her head he covered the mirror with it.

‘The moment the dragon comes near you, you must tear off the veil,’ cried he; ‘and be sure you hide behind the mirror. Have no fear; I shall be at hand.’

He and his horse had scarcely found shelter amongst some rocks, when the flap of the dragon’s wings could be plainly heard. He tossed his head with delight at the sight of her, and approached slowly to the place where she stood, a little in front of the mirror. Then, still looking the monster steadily in the face, she passed one hand behind her back and snatched off the veil, stepping swiftly behind the tree as she did so.

The princess had not known, when she obeyed the orders of the Knight of the Fish, what she expected to happen. Would the dragon with snaky locks be turned to stone, she wondered, like the dragon in an old story her nurse had told her; or would some fiery spark dart from the heart of the mirror, and strike him dead?

Neither of these things occurred, but, instead, the dragon stopped short with surprise and rage when he saw a monster before him as big and strong as himself. He shook his mane with rage and fury; the enemy in front did exactly the same. He lashed his tail, and rolled his red eyes, and the dragon opposite was no whit behind him. Opening his mouth to its very widest, he gave an awful roar; but the other dragon only roared back. This was too much, and with another roar which made the princess shake in her shoes, he flung himself upon his foe. In an instant the mirror lay at his feet broken into a thousand pieces, but as every piece reflected part of himself, the dragon thought that he too had been smashed into atoms.

It was the moment for which the Knight of the Fish had watched and waited, and before the dragon could find out that he was not hurt at all, the young man’s lance was down his throat, and he was rolling, dead, on the grass.

Oh! what shouts of joy rang through the great city, when the youth came riding back with the princess sitting behind him, and dragging the horrible monster by a cord. Everybody cried out that the king must give the victor the hand of the princess; and so he did, and no one had ever seen such balls and feasts and sports before. And when they were all over the young couple went to the palace prepared for them, which was so large that it was three miles round.

The first wet day after their marriage the bridegroom begged the bride to show him all the rooms in the palace, and it was so big and took so long that the sun was shining brightly again before they stepped on to the roof to see the view.

‘What castle is that out there,’ asked the knight; ‘it seems to be made of black marble?’

‘It is called the castle of Albatroz,’ answered the princess. ‘It is enchanted, and no one that has tried to enter it has ever come back.’

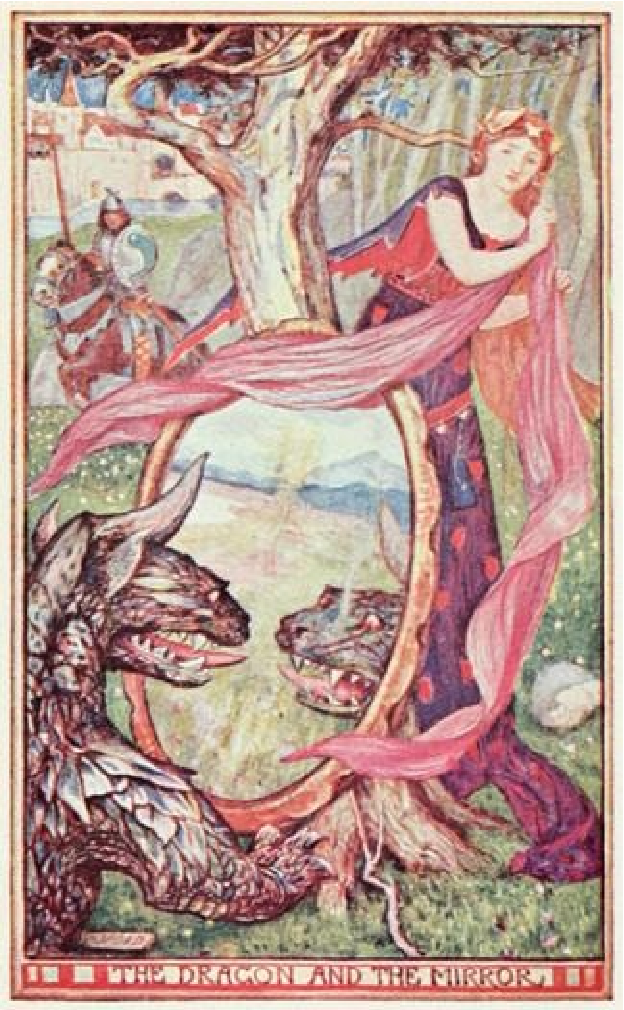

THE DRAGON AND THE MIRROR.

Her husband said nothing, and began to talk of something else; but the next morning he ordered his horse, took his spear, called his bloodhound, and set off for the castle.

It needed a brave man to approach it, for it made your hair stand on end merely to look at it; it was as dark as the night of a storm, and as silent as the grave. But the Knight of the Fish knew no fear, and had never turned his back on an enemy; so he drew out his horn, and blew a blast.

The sound awoke all the sleeping echoes in the castle, and was repeated now loudly, now softly; now near, and now far. But nobody stirred for all that.

‘Is there anyone inside?’ cried the young man in his loudest voice; ‘anyone who will give a knight hospitality? Neither governor, nor squire, not even a page?’

‘Not even a page!’ answered the echoes. But the young man did not heed them, and only struck a furious blow at the gate.

Then a small grating opened, and there appeared the tip of a huge nose, which belonged to the ugliest old woman that ever was seen.

‘What do you want?’ said she.

‘To enter,’ he answered shortly. ‘Can I rest here this night? Yes or No?’

‘No, No, No!’ repeated the echoes.

Between the fierce sun and his anger at being kept waiting, the Knight of the Fish had grown so hot that he lifted his visor, and when the old woman saw how handsome he was, she began fumbling with the lock of the gate.

‘Come in, come in,’ said she, ‘so fine a gentleman will do us no harm.’

‘Harm!’ repeated the echoes, but again the young man paid no heed.

‘Let us go in, ancient dame,’ but she interrupted him.

‘You must call me the Lady Berberisca,’ she answered, sharply; ‘and this is my castle, to which I bid you welcome. You shall live here with me and be my husband.’ But at these words the knight let his spear fall, so surprised was he.

‘I marry *you*? why you must be a hundred at least!’ cried he. ‘You are mad! All I desire is to inspect the castle and then go.’ As he spoke he heard the voices give a mocking laugh; but the old woman took no notice, and only bade the knight follow her.

Old though she was, it seemed impossible to tire her. There was no room, however small, she did not lead him into, and each room was full of curious things he had never seen before.

At length they came to a stone staircase, which was so dark that you could not see your hand if you held it up before your face.

‘I have kept my most precious treasure till the last,’ said the old woman; ‘but let me go first, for the stairs are steep, and you might easily break your leg.’ So on she went, now and then calling back to the young man in the darkness. But he did not know that she had slipped aside into a recess, till suddenly he put his foot on a trap door which gave way under him, and he fell down, down, as many good knights had done before him, and his voice joined the echoes of theirs.

‘So you would not marry me!’ chuckled the old witch. ‘Ha! ha! Ha! ha!’

Meanwhile his brother had wandered far and wide, and at last he wandered back to the same great city where the other young knight had met with so many adventures. He noticed, with amazement, that as he walked through the streets the guards drew themselves up in line, and saluted him, and the drummers played the royal march; but he was still more bewildered when several servants in livery ran up to him and told him that the princess was sure something terrible had befallen him, and had made herself ill with weeping. At last it occurred to him that once more he had been taken for his brother. ‘I had better say nothing,’ thought he; ‘perhaps I shall be able to help him after all.’

So he suffered himself to be borne in triumph to the palace, where the princess threw herself into his arms.

‘And so you did go to the castle?’ she asked.

‘Yes, of course I did,’ answered he.

‘And what did you see there?’

‘I am forbidden to tell you anything about it, until I have returned there once more,’ replied he.

‘Must you really go back to that dreadful place?’ she asked wistfully. ‘You are the only man who has ever come back from it.’

‘I must,’ was all he answered. And the princess, who was a wise woman, only said: ‘Well, go to bed now, for I am sure you must be very tired.’

But the knight shook his head. ‘I have sworn never to lie in a bed as long as my work in the castle remains standing.’ And the princess again sighed, and was silent.

Early next day the young man started for the castle, feeling sure that some terrible thing must have happened to his brother.

At the blast of his horn the long nose of the old woman appeared at the grating, but the moment she caught sight of his face, she nearly fainted from fright, as she thought it was the ghost of the youth whose bones were lying in the dungeon of the castle.

‘Lady of all the ages,’ cried the new comer, ‘did you not give hospitality to a young knight but a short time ago?’

‘A short time ago!’ wailed the voices.

‘And how have you ill-treated him?’ he went on.

‘Ill-treated him!’ answered the voices. The woman did not stop to hear more; she turned to fly; but the knight’s sword entered her body.

‘Where is my brother, cruel hag?’ asked he sternly.

‘I will tell you,’ said she; ‘but as I feel that I am going to die I shall keep that piece of news to myself, till you have brought me to life again.’

The young man laughed scornfully. ‘How do you propose that I should work that miracle?’

‘Oh, it is quite easy. Go into the garden and gather the flowers of the everlasting plant and some of dragon’s blood. Crush them together and boil them in a large tub of water, and then put me into it.’

The knight did as the old witch bade him, and, sure enough, she came out quite whole, but uglier than ever. She then told the young man what had become of his brother, and he went down into the dungeon, and brought up his body and the bodies of the other victims who lay there, and when they were all washed in the magic water their strength was restored to them.

And, besides these, he found in another cavern the bodies of the girls who had been sacrificed to the dragon, and brought them back to life also.

As to the old witch, in the end she died of rage at seeing her prey escape her; and at the moment she drew her last breath the castle of Albatroz fell into ruins with a great noise.

THE ORANGE FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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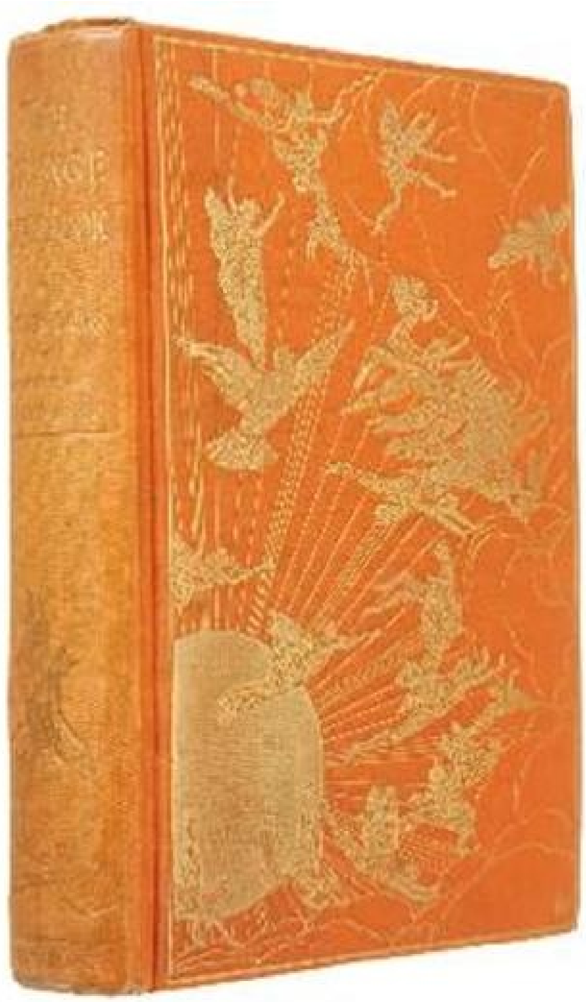

The first edition

THE ORANGE FAIRY BOOK

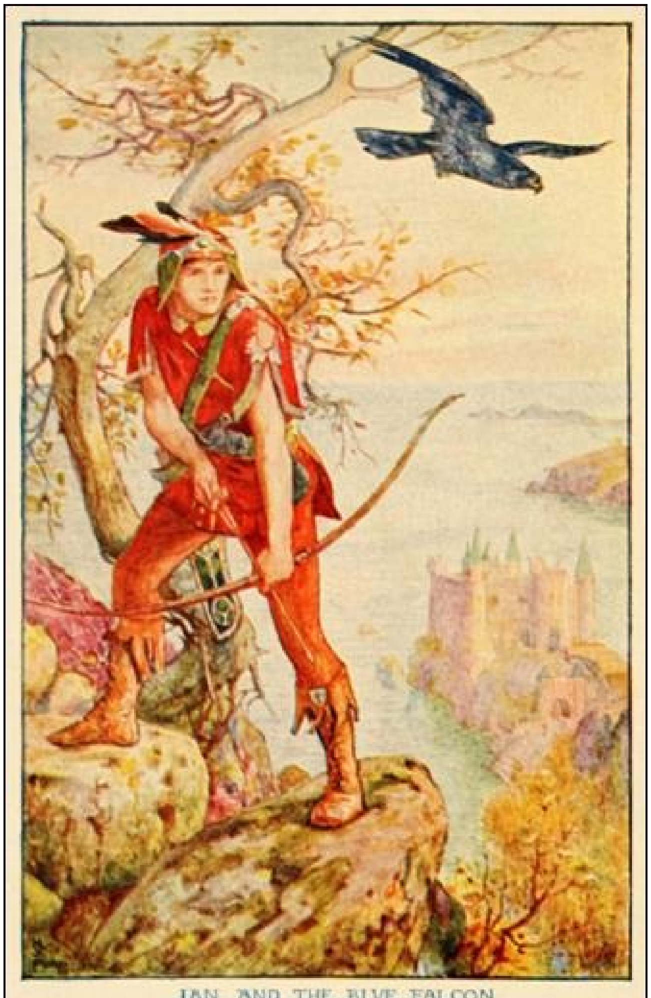

IAN AND THE BLVE FALCON

PREFACE

The children who read fairy books, or have fairy books read to them, do not read prefaces, and the parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, who give fairy books to their daughters, nieces, and *cousines*, leave prefaces unread. For whom, then, are prefaces written? When an author publishes a book 'out of his own head,' he writes the preface for his own pleasure. After reading over his book in print — to make sure that all the 'u's' are not printed as 'n's,' and all the 'n's' as 'u's' in the proper names — then the author says, mildly, in his preface, what he thinks about his own book, and what he means it to prove — if he means it to prove anything — and why it is not a better book than it is. But, perhaps, nobody reads prefaces except other authors; and critics, who hope that they will find enough in the preface to enable them to do without reading any of the book.

This appears to be the philosophy of prefaces in general, and perhaps authors might be more daring and candid than they are with advantage, and write regular criticisms of their own books in their prefaces, for nobody can be so good a critic of himself as the author — if he has a sense of humour. If he has not, the less he says in his preface the better.

These Fairy Books, however, are not written by the Editor, as he has often explained, 'out of his own head.' The stories are taken from those told by grannies to grandchildren in many countries and in many languages — French, Italian, Spanish, Catalan, Gaelic, Icelandic, Cherokee, African, Indian, Australian, Slavonic, Eskimo, and what not. The stories are not literal, or word by word translations, but have been altered in many ways to make them suitable for children. Much has been left out in places, and the narrative has been broken up into conversations, the characters telling each other how matters stand, and speaking for themselves, as children, and some older people, prefer them to do. In many tales, fairly cruel and savage deeds are done, and these have been softened down as much as possible; though it is impossible, even if it were desirable, to conceal the circumstance that popular stories were never intended to be tracts and nothing else. Though they usually take the side of courage and kindness, and the virtues in general, the old story-tellers admire successful cunning as much as Homer does in the Odyssey. At least, if the cunning hero, human or animal, is the weaker, like Odysseus, Brer Rabbit, and many others, the story-teller sees little in intellect but superior cunning, by which tiny Jack gets the better of the giants. In the fairy tales of no country are 'improper' incidents common, which is to the credit of human nature, as they were obviously composed mainly for children. It is not difficult to get rid of this element when it does occur in popular tales.

The old puzzle remains a puzzle — why do the stories of the remotest people so closely resemble each other? Of course, in the immeasurable past, they have been carried about by conquering races, and learned by conquering races from vanquished peoples. Slaves carried far from home brought their stories with them into captivity. Wanderers, travellers, shipwrecked men, merchants, and wives stolen from alien tribes have diffused the stories; gipsies and Jews have peddled them about; Roman soldiers of many different races, moved here and there about the Empire, have trafficked in them. From the remotest days men have been wanderers, and wherever they went their stories accompanied them. The slave trade might take a Greek to Persia, a Persian to Greece; an Egyptian woman to Phœnicia; a Babylonian to Egypt; a Scandinavian child might be carried with the amber from the Baltic to the Adriatic; or a Sidonian to Ophir, wherever Ophir may have been; while the Portuguese may have borne their tales to South Africa, or to Asia, and thence brought back other tales to Egypt. The stories wandered wherever the Buddhist missionaries went, and the earliest French *voyageurs* told them to the Red Indians. These facts help to account for the sameness of the stories everywhere; and the uniformity of human fancy in early societies must be the cause of many other resemblances.

In this volume there are stories from the natives of Rhodesia, collected by Mr. Fairbridge, who speaks the native language, and one is brought by Mr. Cripps from another part of Africa, Uganda. Three tales from the Punjaub were collected and translated by Major Campbell. Various savage tales, which needed a good deal of editing, are derived from the learned pages of the ‘Journal of the Anthropological Institute.’ With these exceptions, and ‘The Magic Book,’ translated by Mrs. Pedersen, from ‘Eventyr fra Jylland,’ by Mr. Ewald Tang Kristensen (Stories from Jutland), all the tales have been done, from various sources, by Mrs. Lang, who has modified, where it seemed desirable, all the narratives.

THE STORY OF THE HERO MAKÓMA

From the Senna (Oral Tradition)

Once upon a time, at the town of Senna on the banks of the Zambesi, was born a child. He was not like other children, for he was very tall and strong; over his shoulder he carried a big sack, and in his hand an iron hammer. He could also speak like a grown man, but usually he was very silent.

One day his mother said to him: ‘My child, by what name shall we know you?’

And he answered: ‘Call all the head men of Senna here to the river’s bank.’ And his mother called the head men of the town, and when they had come he led them down to a deep black pool in the river where all the fierce crocodiles lived.

‘O great men!’ he said, while they all listened, ‘which of you will leap into the pool and overcome the crocodiles?’ But no one would come forward. So he turned and sprang into the water and disappeared.

The people held their breath, for they thought: ‘Surely the boy is bewitched and throws away his life, for the crocodiles will eat him!’ Then suddenly the ground trembled, and the pool, heaving and swirling, became red with blood, and presently the boy rising to the surface swam on shore.

But he was no longer just a boy! He was stronger than any man and very tall and handsome, so that the people shouted with gladness when they saw him.

‘Now, O my people!’ he cried waving his hand, ‘you know my name — I am Makóma, “the Greater”; for have I not slain the crocodiles in the pool where none would venture?’

Then he said to his mother: ‘Rest gently, my mother, for I go to make a home for myself and become a hero.’ Then, entering his hut, he took Nu-éndo, his iron hammer, and throwing the sack over his shoulder, he went away.

Makóma crossed the Zambesi, and for many moons he wandered towards the north and west until he came to a very hilly country where, one day, he met a huge giant making mountains.

‘Greeting,’ shouted Makóma, ‘who are you?’

‘I am Chi-éswa-mapíri, who makes the mountains,’ answered the giant, ‘and who are you?’

‘I am Makóma, which signifies “greater,”’ answered he.

‘Greater than who?’ asked the giant.

‘Greater than you!’ answered Makóma.

The giant gave a roar and rushed upon him. Makóma said nothing, but swinging his great hammer, Nu-éndo, he struck the giant upon the head.

He struck him so hard a blow that the giant shrank into quite a little man, who fell upon his knees saying: ‘You are indeed greater than I, O Makóma; take me with you to be your slave!’ So Makóma picked him up and dropped him into the sack that he carried upon his back.

He was greater than ever now, for all the giant’s strength had gone into him; and he resumed his journey, carrying his burden with as little difficulty as an eagle might carry a hare.

Before long he came to a country broken up with huge stones and immense clods of earth. Looking over one of the heaps he saw a giant wrapped in dust dragging out the very earth and hurling it in handfuls on either side of him.

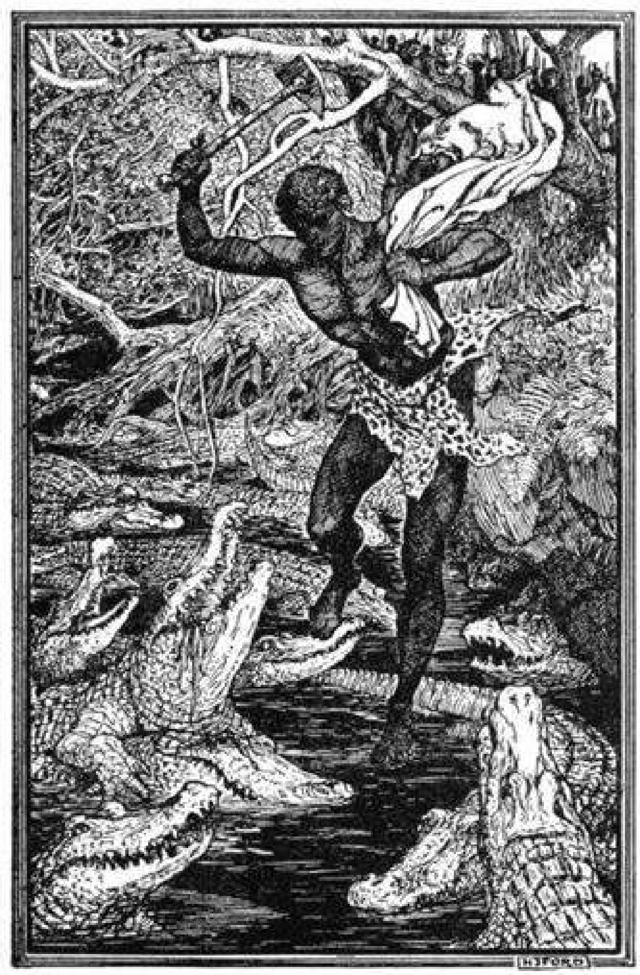

MAKOMA LEAPS INTO THE POOL OF CROCODILES

‘Who are you,’ cried Makóma, ‘that pulls up the earth in this way?’

‘I am Chi-dúbula-táka,’ said he, ‘and I am making the river-beds.’

‘Do you know who I am?’ said Makóma. ‘I am he that is called “greater”!’

‘Greater than who?’ thundered the giant.

‘Greater than you!’ answered Makóma.

With a shout, Chi-dúbula-táka seized a great clod of earth and launched it at Makóma. But the hero had his sack held over his left arm and the stones and earth fell harmlessly upon it, and, tightly gripping his iron hammer, he rushed in and struck the giant to the ground. Chi-dúbula-táka grovelled before him, all the while growing smaller and smaller; and when he had become a convenient size Makóma picked him up and put him into the sack beside Chi-éswa-mapíri.

He went on his way even greater than before, as all the river-maker’s power had become his; and at last he came to a forest of bao-babs and thorn trees. He was astonished at their size, for every one was full grown and larger than any trees he had ever seen, and close by he saw Chi-gwísa-míti, the giant who was planting the forest.

Chi-gwísa-míti was taller than either of his brothers, but Makóma was not afraid and called out to him: ‘Who are you, O Big One?’

‘I,’ said the giant, ‘am Chi-gwísa-míti, and I am planting these bao-babs and thorns as food for my children the elephants.’

‘Leave off!’ shouted the hero, ‘for I am Makóma, and would like to exchange a blow with thee!’

The giant, plucking up a monster bao-bab by the roots, struck heavily at Makóma; but the hero sprang aside, and as the weapon sank deep into the soft earth, whirled Nu-éndo the hammer round his head and felled the giant with one blow.

So terrible was the stroke that Chi-gwísa-míti shrivelled up as the other giants had done; and when he had got back his breath he begged Makóma to take him as his servant. ‘For,’ said he, ‘it is honourable to serve a man so great as thou.’

Makóma, after placing him in his sack, proceeded upon his journey, and travelling for many days he at last reached a country so barren and rocky that not a single living thing grew upon it — everywhere reigned grim desolation. And in the midst of this dead region he found a man eating fire.

‘What are you doing?’ demanded Makóma.

‘I am eating fire,’ answered the man, laughing; ‘and my name is Chi-ídea-móto, for I am the flame-spirit, and can waste and destroy what I like.’

‘You are wrong,’ said Makóma; ‘for I am Makóma, who is “greater” than you — and you cannot destroy me!’

The fire-eater laughed again, and blew a flame at Makóma. But the hero sprang behind a rock — just in time, for the ground upon which he had been standing was turned to molten glass, like an overbaked pot, by the heat of the flame-spirit's breath.

Then the hero flung his iron hammer at Chi-ídea-móto, and, striking him, it knocked him helpless; so Makóma placed him in the sack, Woro-nówu, with the other great men that he had overcome.

And now, truly, Makóma was a very great hero; for he had the strength to make hills, the industry to lead rivers over dry wastes, foresight and wisdom in planting trees, and the power of producing fire when he wished.

Wandering on he arrived one day at a great plain, well watered and full of game; and in the very middle of it, close to a large river, was a grassy spot, very pleasant to make a home upon.

Makóma was so delighted with the little meadow that he sat down under a large tree, and removing the sack from his shoulder, took out all the giants and set them before him. 'My friends,' said he, 'I have travelled far and am weary. Is not this such a place as would suit a hero for his home? Let us then go, to-morrow, to bring in timber to make a kraal.'

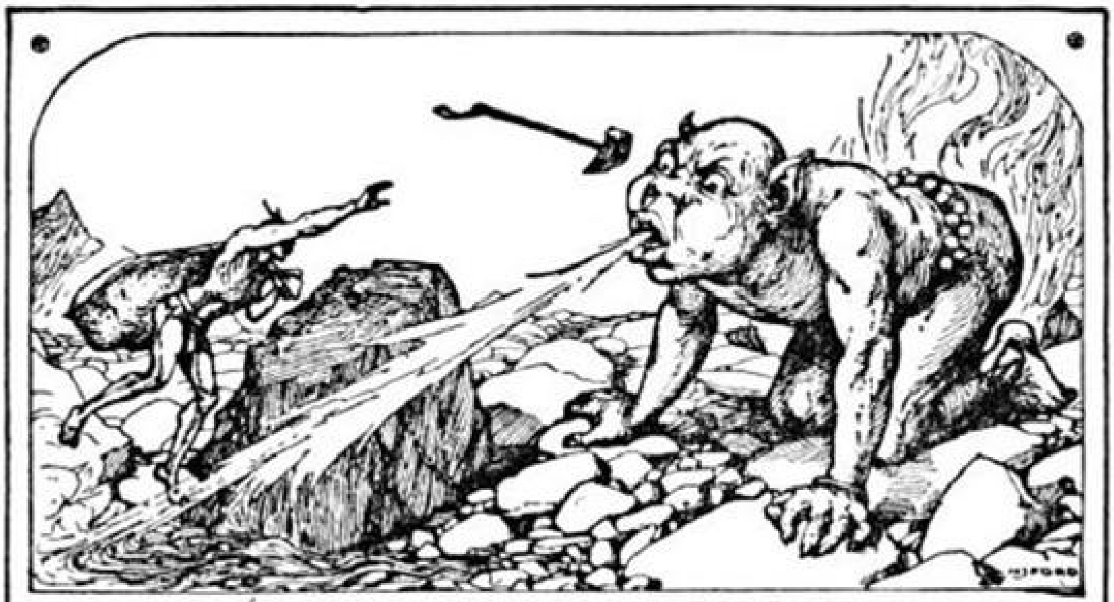

MAKÓMA throws his hammer at the FIRE-EATER

So the next day Makóma and the giants set out to get poles to build the kraal, leaving only Chi-éswa-mapíri to look after the place and cook some venison which they had killed. In the evening, when they returned, they found the giant helpless and tied to a tree by one enormous hair!

'How is it,' said Makóma, astonished, 'that we find you thus bound and helpless?'

‘O Chief,’ answered Chi-éswa-mapíri, ‘at midday a man came out of the river; he was of immense stature, and his grey moustaches were of such length that I could not see where they ended! He demanded of me “Who is thy master?” And I answered: “Makóma, the greatest of heroes.” Then the man seized me, and pulling a hair from his moustache, tied me to this tree — even as you see me.’

Makóma was very wroth, but he said nothing, and drawing his finger-nail across the hair (which was as thick and strong as palm rope) cut it, and set free the mountain-maker.

The three following days exactly the same thing happened, only each time with a different one of the party; and on the fourth day Makóma stayed in camp when the others went to cut poles, saying that he would see for himself what sort of man this was that lived in the river and whose moustaches were so long that they extended beyond men’s sight.

So when the giants had gone he swept and tidied the camp and put some venison on the fire to roast. At midday, when the sun was right overhead, he heard a rumbling noise from the river, and looking up he saw the head and shoulders of an enormous man emerging from it. And behold! right down the river-bed and up the river-bed, till they faded into the blue distance, stretched the giant’s grey moustaches!

‘Who are you?’ bellowed the giant, as soon as he was out of the water.

‘I am he that is called Makóma,’ answered the hero; ‘and, before I slay thee, tell me also what is thy name and what thou doest in the river?’

‘My name is Chin-débou Máu-giri,’ said the giant. ‘My home is in the river, for my moustache is the grey fever-mist that hangs above the water, and with which I bind all those that come unto me so that they die.’

‘You cannot bind me!’ shouted Makóma, rushing upon him and striking with his hammer. But the river giant was so slimy that the blow slid harmlessly off his green chest, and as Makóma stumbled and tried to regain his balance, the giant swung one of his long hairs around him and tripped him up.

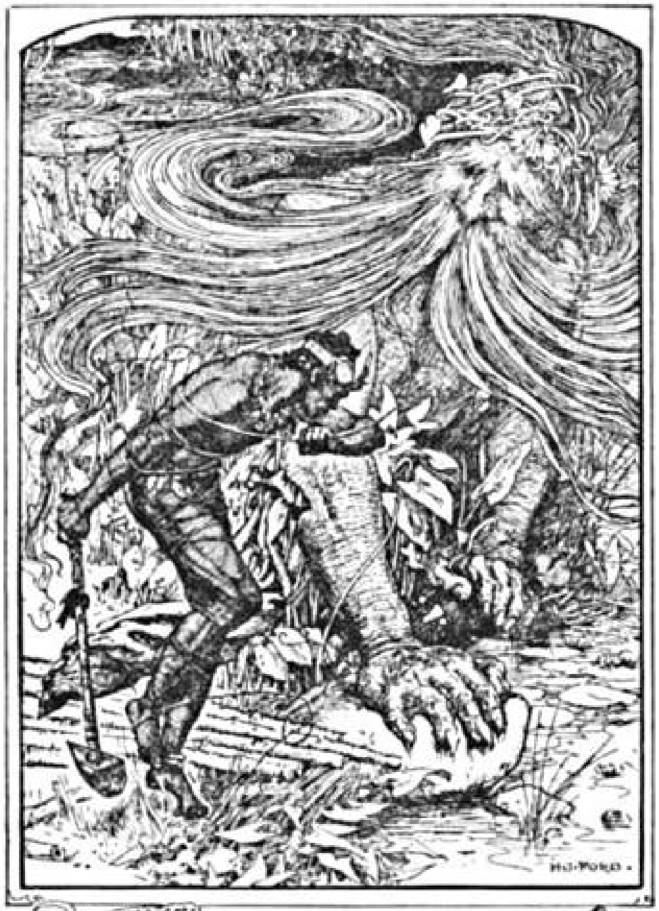

Makoma gets entangled by a hair of Chindebou Maugiri

For a moment Makóma was helpless, but remembering the power of the flame-spirit which had entered into him, he breathed a fiery breath upon the giant’s hair and cut himself free.

As Chin-débou Máu-giri leaned forward to seize him the hero flung his sack Woro-nówu over the giant’s slippery head, and gripping his iron hammer, struck him again; this time the blow alighted upon the dry sack and Chin-débou Máu-giri fell dead.

When the four giants returned at sunset with the poles they rejoiced to find that Makóma had overcome the fever-spirit, and they feasted on the roast venison till far into the night; but in the morning, when they awoke, Makóma was already warming his hands at the fire, and his face was gloomy.

‘In the darkness of the night, O my friends,’ he said presently, ‘the white spirits of my fathers came unto me and spoke, saying: “Get thee hence, Makóma, for thou shalt have no rest until thou hast found and fought with Sákatirína, who has five heads, and is very great and strong; so take leave of thy friends, for thou must go alone.”’

Then the giants were very sad, and bewailed the loss of their hero; but Makóma comforted them, and gave back to each the gifts he had taken from them. Then bidding them 'Farewell,' he went on his way.

Makóma travelled far towards the west; over rough mountains and water-logged morasses, fording deep rivers, and tramping for days across dry deserts where most men would have died, until at length he arrived at a hut standing near some large peaks, and inside the hut were two beautiful women.

'Greeting!' said the hero. 'Is this the country of Sákatirína of five heads, whom I am seeking?'

'We greet you, O Great One!' answered the women. 'We are the wives of Sákatirína; your search is at an end, for there stands he whom you seek!' And they pointed to what Makóma had thought were two tall mountain peaks. 'Those are his legs,' they said; 'his body you cannot see, for it is hidden in the clouds.'

Makóma was astonished when he beheld how tall was the giant; but, nothing daunted, he went forward until he reached one of Sákatirína's legs, which he struck heavily with Nu-éndo. Nothing happened, so he hit again and then again until, presently, he heard a tired, far-away voice saying: 'Who is it that scratches my feet?'

And Makóma shouted as loud as he could, answering: 'It is I, Makóma, who is called "Greater"!' And he listened, but there was no answer.

Then Makóma collected all the dead brushwood and trees that he could find, and making an enormous pile round the giant's legs, set a light to it.

This time the giant spoke; his voice was very terrible, for it was the rumble of thunder in the clouds. 'Who is it,' he said, 'making that fire smoulder around my feet?'

'It is I, Makóma!' shouted the hero. 'And I have come from far away to see thee, O Sákatirína, for the spirits of my fathers bade me go seek and fight with thee, lest I should grow fat, and weary of myself.'

There was silence for a while, and then the giant spoke softly: 'It is good, O Makóma!' he said. 'For I too have grown weary. There is no man so great as I, therefore I am all alone. Guard thyself!' And bending suddenly he seized the hero in his hands and dashed him upon the ground. And lo! instead of death, Makóma had found life, for he sprang to his feet mightier in strength and stature than before, and rushing in he gripped the giant by the waist and wrestled with him.

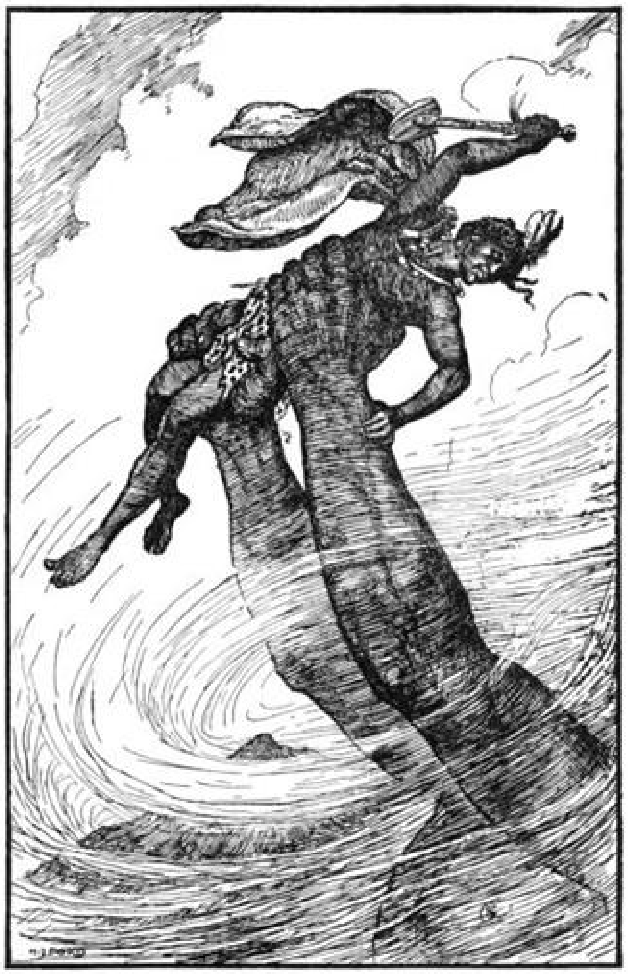

MAKOMA IN THE HANDS OF SAKATIRINA

Hour by hour they fought, and mountains rolled beneath their feet like pebbles in a flood; now Makóma would break away, and summoning up his strength, strike the giant with Nu-éndo his iron hammer, and Sákatirína would pluck up the mountains and hurl them upon the hero, but neither one could slay the other. At last, upon the second day, they grappled so strongly that they could not break away; but their strength was failing, and, just as the sun was sinking, they fell together to the ground, insensible.

In the morning when they awoke, Mulímo the Great Spirit was standing by them; and he said: ‘O Makóma and Sákatirína! Ye are heroes so great that no man may come against you. Therefore ye will leave the world and take up your home with me in the clouds.’ And as he spake the heroes became invisible to the people of the Earth, and were no more seen among them.

(*Native Rhodesian Tale.*)

THE MAGIC MIRROR

From the Senna

A long, long while ago, before ever the White Men were seen in Senna, there lived a man called Gopáni-Kúfa.

One day, as he was out hunting, he came upon a strange sight. An enormous python had caught an antelope and coiled itself around it; the antelope, striking out in despair with its horns, had pinned the python's neck to a tree, and so deeply had its horns sunk in the soft wood that neither creature could get away.

'Help!' cried the antelope, 'for I was doing no harm, yet I have been caught, and would have been eaten, had I not defended myself.'

'Help me,' said the python, 'for I am Insáto, King of all the Reptiles, and will reward you well!'

Gopáni-Kúfa considered for a moment, then stabbing the antelope with his assegai, he set the python free.

'I thank you,' said the python; 'come back here with the new moon, when I shall have eaten the antelope, and I will reward you as I promised.'

'Yes,' said the dying antelope, 'he will reward you, and lo! your reward shall be your own undoing!'

Gopáni-Kúfa went back to his kraal, and with the new moon he returned again to the spot where he had saved the python.

Insáto was lying upon the ground, still sleepy from the effects of his huge meal, and when he saw the man he thanked him again, and said: 'Come with me now to Píta, which is my own country, and I will give you what you will of all my possessions.'

Gopáni-Kúfa at first was afraid, thinking of what the antelope had said, but finally he consented and followed Insáto into the forest.

For several days they travelled, and at last they came to a hole leading deep into the earth. It was not very wide, but large enough to admit a man. 'Hold on to my tail,' said Insáto, 'and I will go down first, drawing you after me.' The man did so, and Insáto entered.

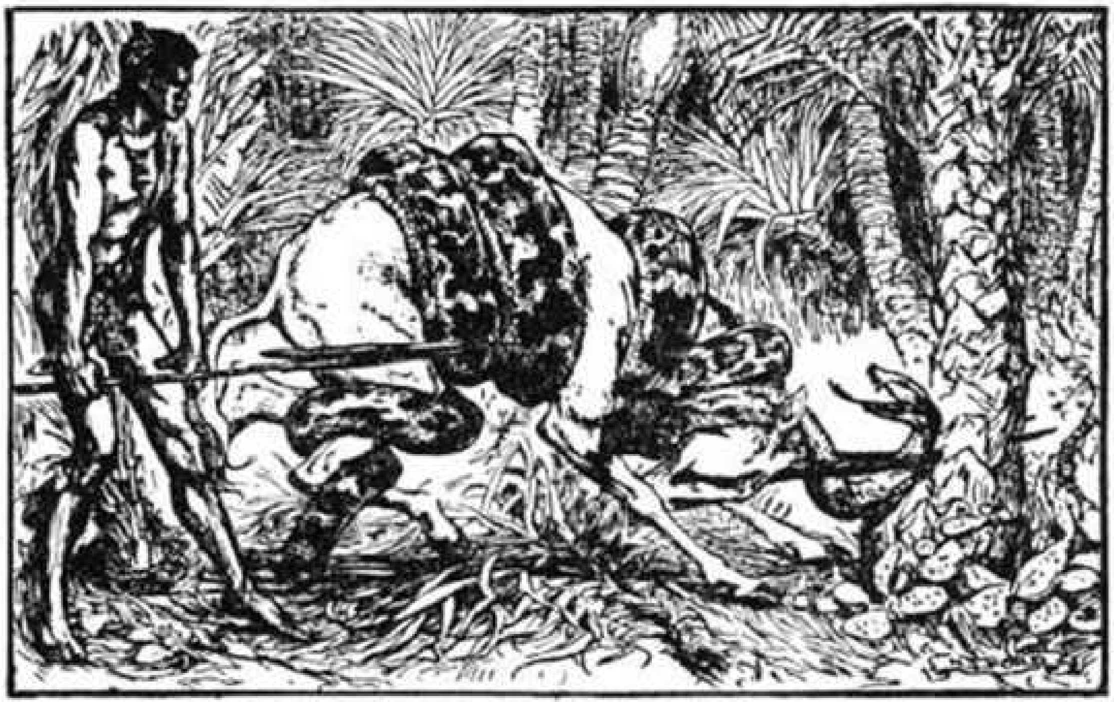

GOPANI KUFA SEES A STRANGE SIGHT

Down, down, down they went for days, all the while getting deeper and deeper into the earth, until at last the darkness ended and they dropped into a beautiful country; around them grew short green grass, on which browsed herds of cattle and sheep and goats. In the distance Gopáni-Kúfa saw a great collection of houses all square, built of stone and very tall, and their roofs were shining with gold and burnished iron.

Gopáni-Kúfa turned to Insáto, but found, in the place of the python, a man, strong and handsome, with the great snake’s skin wrapped round him for covering; and on his arms and neck were rings of pure gold.

The man smiled. ‘I am Insáto,’ said he; ‘but in my own country I take man’s shape — even as you see me — for this is Píta, the land over which I am king.’ He then took Gopáni-Kúfa by the hand and led him towards the town.

On the way they passed rivers in which men and women were bathing and fishing and boating; and farther on they came to gardens covered with heavy crops of rice and maize, and many other grains which Gopáni-Kúfa did not even know the name of. And as they passed, the people who were singing at their work in the fields, abandoned their labours and saluted Insáto with delight, bringing also palm wine and green cocoa-nuts for refreshment, as to one returned from a long journey.

‘These are my children!’ said Insáto, waving his hand towards the people. Gopáni-Kúfa was much astonished at all that he saw, but he said nothing. Presently they came to the town; everything here, too, was beautiful, and everything that a man might desire he could obtain. Even the grains of dust in the streets were of gold and silver.

Insáto conducted Gopáni-Kúfa to the palace, and showing him his rooms, and the maidens who would wait upon him, told him that they would have a great feast that night, and on the morrow he might name his choice of the riches of Píta and it should be given him. Then he went away.

Now Gopáni-Kúfa had a wasp called Zéngi-mízi. Zéngi-mízi was not an ordinary wasp, for the spirit of the father of Gopáni-Kúfa had entered it, so that it was exceedingly wise. In times of doubt Gopáni-Kúfa always consulted the wasp as to what had better be done, so on this occasion he took it out of the little rush basket in which he carried it, saying: ‘Zéngi-mízi, what gift shall I ask of Insáto to-morrow when he would know the reward he shall bestow on me for saving his life?’

‘Biz-z-z,’ hummed Zéngi-mízi, ‘ask him for Sipáo the Mirror.’ And it flew back into its basket.

Gopáni-Kúfa was astonished at this answer; but knowing that the words of Zéngi-mízi were true words, he determined to make the request. So that night they feasted, and on the morrow Insáto came to Gopáni-Kúfa and, giving him greeting joyfully, he said:

‘Now, O my friend, name your choice amongst my possessions and you shall have it!’

‘O king!’ answered Gopáni-Kúfa, ‘out of all your possessions I will have the Mirror, Sipáo.’

The king started. ‘O friend, Gopáni-Kúfa,’ he said, ‘ask anything but that! I did not think that you would request that which is most precious to me.’

‘Let me think over it again then, O king,’ said Gopáni-Kúfa, ‘and to-morrow I will let you know if I change my mind.’

But the king was still much troubled, fearing the loss of Sipáo, for the Mirror had magic powers, so that he who owned it had but to ask and his wish would be fulfilled; to it Insáto owed all that he possessed.

As soon as the king left him, Gopáni-Kúfa again took Zéngi-mízi out of his basket. ‘Zéngi-mízi,’ he said, ‘the king seems loth to grant my request for the Mirror — is there not some other thing of equal value for which I might ask?’

And the wasp answered: ‘There is nothing in the world, O Gopáni-Kúfa, which is of such value as this Mirror, for it is a Wishing Mirror, and accomplishes the desires of him who owns it. If the king hesitates, go to him the next day, and the day after, and in the end he will bestow the Mirror upon you, for you saved his life.’

And it was even so. For three days Gopáni-Kúfa returned the same answer to the king, and, at last, with tears in his eyes, Insáto gave him the Mirror, which was of polished iron, saying: ‘Take Sipáo, then, O Gopáni-Kúfa, and may thy wishes come true. Go back now to thine own country; Sipáo will show you the way.’

Gopáni-Kúfa was greatly rejoiced, and, taking farewell of the king, said to the Mirror:

‘Sipáo, Sipáo, I wish to be back upon the Earth again!’

Instantly he found himself standing upon the upper earth; but, not knowing the spot, he said again to the Mirror:

‘Sipáo, Sipáo, I want the path to my own kraal!’

And behold! right before him lay the path!

When he arrived home he found his wife and daughter mourning for him, for they thought that he had been eaten by lions; but he comforted them, saying that while following a wounded antelope he had missed his way and had wandered for a long time before he had found the path again.

That night he asked Zéngi-mízi, in whom sat the spirit of his father, what he had better ask Sipáo for next?

‘Biz-z-z,’ said the wasp, ‘would you not like to be as great a chief as Insáto?’

And Gopáni-Kúfa smiled, and took the Mirror and said to it:

‘Sipáo, Sipáo, I want a town as great as that of Insáto, the King of Píta; and I wish to be chief over it!’

Then all along the banks of the Zambesi river, which flowed near by, sprang up streets of stone buildings, and their roofs shone with gold and burnished iron like those in Píta; and in the streets men and women were walking, and young boys were driving out the sheep and cattle to pasture; and from the river came shouts and laughter from the young men and maidens who had launched their canoes and were fishing. And when the people of the new town beheld Gopáni-Kúfa they rejoiced greatly and hailed him as chief.

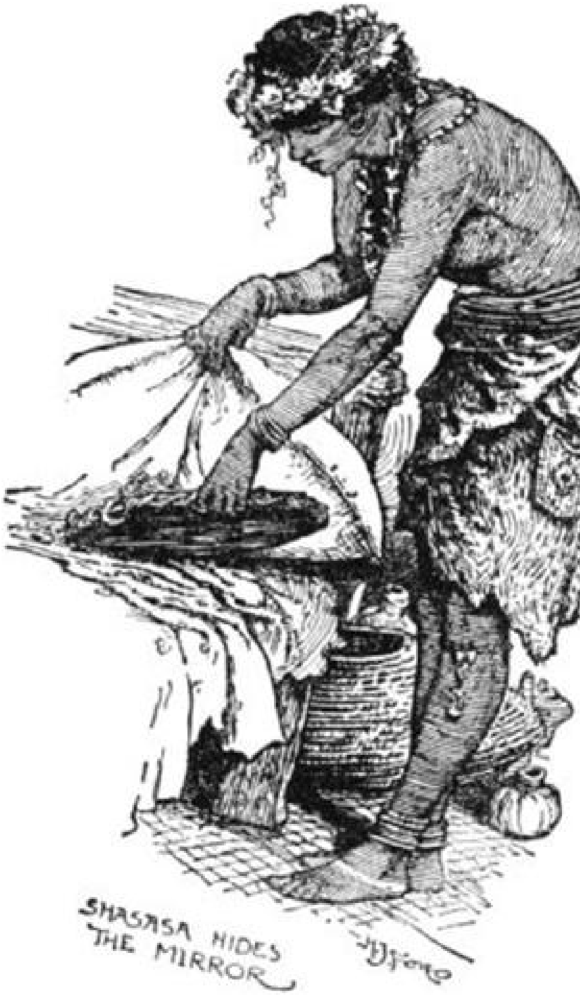

Gopáni-Kúfa was now as powerful as Insáto the King of the Reptiles had been, and he and his family moved into the palace that stood high above the other buildings right in the middle of the town. His wife was too astonished at all these wonders to ask any questions, but his daughter Shasása kept begging him to tell her how he had suddenly become so great; so at last he revealed the whole secret, and even entrusted Sipáo the Mirror to her care, saying:

‘It will be safer with you, my daughter, for you dwell apart; whereas men come to consult me on affairs of state, and the Mirror might be stolen.’

Then Shasása took the Magic Mirror and hid it beneath her pillow, and after that for many years Gopáni-Kúfa ruled his people both well and wisely, so that all men loved him, and never once did he need to ask Sipáo to grant him a wish.

Now it happened that, after many years, when the hair of Gopáni-Kúfa was turning grey with age, there came white men to that country. Up the Zambesi they came, and they fought long and fiercely with Gopáni-Kúfa; but, because of the power of the Magic Mirror, he beat them, and they fled to the sea-coast. Chief among them was one Rei, a man of much cunning, who sought to discover whence sprang Gopáni-Kúfa’s power. So one day he called to him a trusty servant named Butou, and said: ‘Go you to the town and find out for me what is the secret of its greatness.’

And Butou, dressing himself in rags, set out, and when he came to Gopáni-Kúfa’s town he asked for the chief; and the people took him into the presence of Gopáni-Kúfa. When the white man saw him he humbled himself, and said: ‘O Chief! take pity on me, for I have no home! When Rei marched against you I alone stood apart, for I knew that all the strength of the Zambesi lay in your hands, and because I would not fight against you he turned me forth into the forest to starve!’

And Gopáni-Kúfa believed the white man’s story, and he took him in and feasted him, and gave him a house.

In this way the end came. For the heart of Shasása, the daughter of Gopáni-Kúfa, went forth to Butou the traitor, and from her he learnt the secret of the Magic Mirror. One night, when all the town slept, he felt beneath her pillow and, finding the Mirror, he stole it and fled back with it to Rei, the chief of the white men.

So it befell that one day, as Gopáni-Kúfa was gazing at the river from a window of the palace, he again saw the war-canoes of the white men; and at the sight his spirit misgave him.

‘Shasása! my daughter!’ he cried wildly, ‘go fetch me the Mirror, for the white men are at hand.’

‘Woe is me, my father!’ she sobbed. ‘The Mirror is gone! For I loved Butou the traitor, and he has stolen Sipáo from me!’

Then Gopáni-Kúfa calmed himself, and drew out Zéngi-mízi from its rush basket.

‘O spirit of my father!’ he said, ‘what now shall I do?’

‘O Gopáni-Kúfa!’ hummed the wasp, ‘there is nothing now that can be done, for the words of the antelope which you slew are being fulfilled.’

‘Alas! I am an old man — I had forgotten!’ cried the chief. ‘The words of the antelope were true words — my reward shall be my own undoing — they are being fulfilled!’

Then the white men fell upon the people of Gopáni-Kúfa and slew them together with the chief and his daughter Shasása; and since then all the power of the Earth has rested in the hands of the white men, for they have in their possession Sipáo, the Magic Mirror.

STORY OF THE KING WHO WOULD SEE PARADISE

Once upon a time there was a king who, one day out hunting, came upon a fakeer in a lonely place in the mountains. The fakeer was seated on a little old bedstead reading the Koran, with his patched cloak thrown over his shoulders.

The king asked him what he was reading; and he said he was reading about Paradise, and praying that he might be worthy to enter there. Then they began to talk, and, by-and-bye, the king asked the fakeer if he could show him a glimpse of Paradise, for he found it very difficult to believe in what he could not see. The fakeer replied that he was asking a very difficult, and perhaps a very dangerous, thing; but that he would pray for him, and perhaps he might be able to do it; only he warned the king both against the dangers of his unbelief, and against the curiosity which prompted him to ask this thing. However, the king was not to be turned from his purpose, and he promised the fakeer always to provide him with food, if he, in return, would pray for him. To this the fakeer agreed, and so they parted.

Time went on, and the king always sent the old fakeer his food according to his promise; but, whenever he sent to ask him when he was going to show him Paradise, the fakeer always replied: ‘Not yet, not yet!’

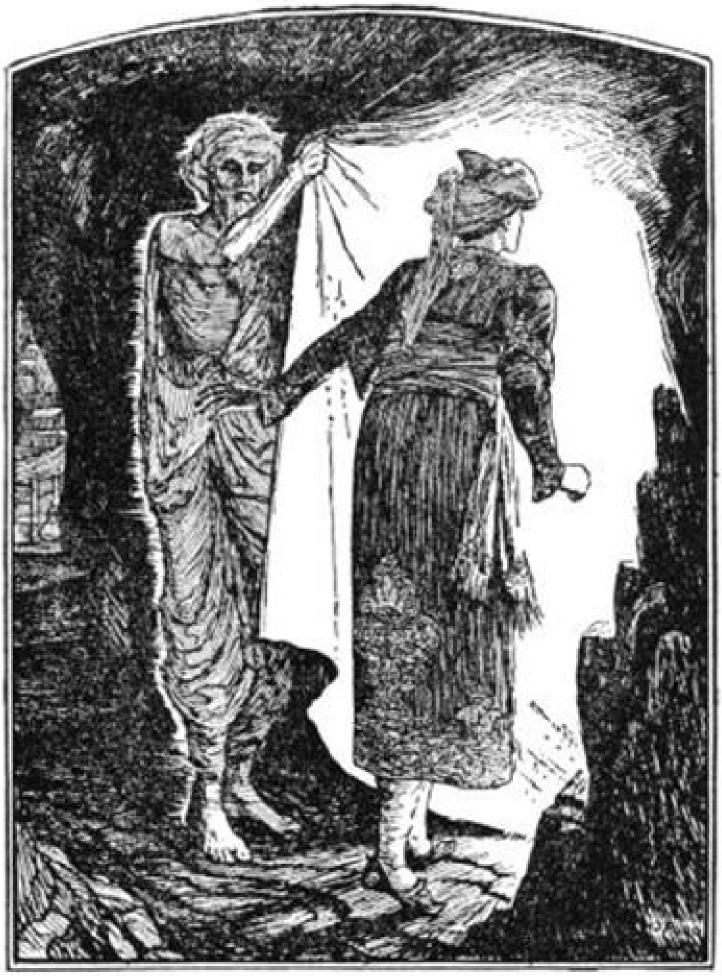

NO ONE KNOWS WHAT WAS THERE SHOWN TO THE KING

After a year or two had passed by, the king heard one day that the fakeer was very ill — indeed, he was believed to be dying. Instantly he hurried off himself, and found that it was really true, and that the fakeer was even then breathing his last. There and then the king besought him to remember his promise, and to show him a glimpse of Paradise. The dying fakeer replied that if the king would come to his funeral, and, when the grave was filled in, and everyone else was gone away, he would come and lay his hand upon the grave, he would keep his word, and show him a glimpse of Paradise. At the same time he implored the king not to do this thing, but to be content to see Paradise when God called him there. Still the king’s curiosity was so aroused that he would not give way.

Accordingly, after the fakeer was dead, and had been buried, he stayed behind when all the rest went away; and then, when he was quite alone, he stepped forward, and laid his hand upon the grave! Instantly the ground opened, and the astonished king, peeping in, saw a flight of rough steps, and, at the bottom of them, the fakeer sitting, just as he used to sit, on his rickety bedstead, reading the Koran!

At first the king was so surprised and frightened that he could only stare; but the fakeer beckoned to him to come down, so, mustering up his courage, he boldly stepped down into the grave.

The fakeer rose, and, making a sign to the king to follow, walked a few paces along a dark passage. Then he stopped, turned solemnly to his companion, and, with a movement of his hand, drew aside as it were a heavy curtain, and revealed — what? No one knows what was there shown to the king, nor did he ever tell anyone; but, when the fakeer at length dropped the curtain, and the king turned to leave the place, he had had his glimpse of Paradise! Trembling in every limb, he staggered back along the passage, and stumbled up the steps out of the tomb into the fresh air again.

The dawn was breaking. It seemed odd to the king that he had been so long in the grave. It appeared but a few minutes ago that he had descended, passed along a few steps to the place where he had peeped beyond the veil, and returned again after perhaps five minutes of that wonderful view! And what *was* it he had seen? He racked his brains to remember, but he could not call to mind a single thing! How curious everything looked too! Why, his own city, which by now he was entering, seemed changed and strange to him! The sun was already up when he turned into the palace gate and entered the public durbar hall. It was full; and there upon the throne sat another king! The poor king, all bewildered, sat down and stared about him. Presently a chamberlain came across and asked him why he sat unbidden in the king's presence. 'But *I* am the king!' he cried.

'What king?' said the chamberlain.

'The true king of this country,' said he indignantly.

Then the chamberlain went away, and spoke to the king who sat on the throne, and the old king heard words like 'mad,' 'age,' 'compassion.' Then the king on the throne called him to come forward, and, as he went, he caught sight of himself reflected in the polished steel shields of the bodyguard, and started back in horror! He was old, decrepit, dirty, and ragged! His long white beard and locks were unkempt, and straggled all over his chest and shoulders. Only one sign of royalty remained to him, and that was the signet ring upon his right hand. He dragged it off with shaking fingers and held it up to the king.

'Tell me who I am,' he cried; 'there is my signet, who once sat where you sit — even yesterday!'

The king looked at him compassionately, and examined the signet with curiosity. Then he commanded, and they brought out dusty records and archives of the kingdom, and old coins of previous reigns, and compared them faithfully. At last the king turned to the old man, and said: 'Old man, such a king as this whose signet thou hast, reigned seven hundred years ago; but he is said to have disappeared, none know whither; where got you the ring?’

Then the old man smote his breast, and cried out with a loud lamentation; for he understood that he, who was not content to wait patiently to see the Paradise of the faithful, had been judged already. And he turned and left the hall without a word, and went into the jungle, where he lived for twenty-five years a life of prayer and meditation, until at last the Angel of Death came to him, and mercifully released him, purged and purified through his punishment.

(*A Pathan story told to Major Campbell.*)

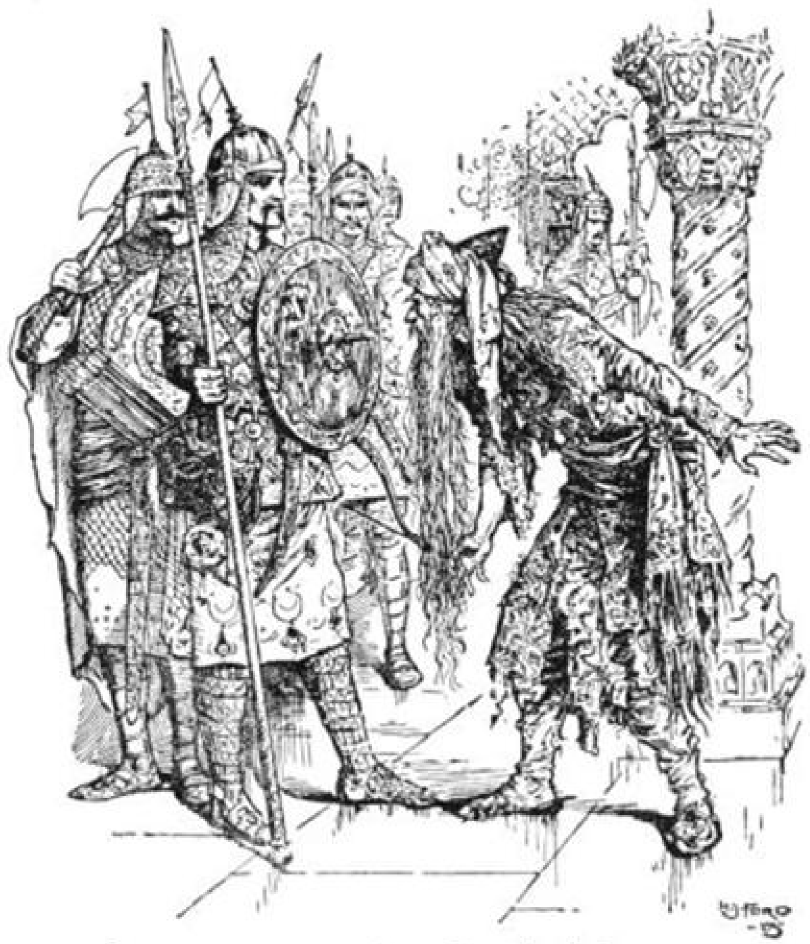

The old King sees himself reflected in the shields of the bodyguard ~

HOW ISURO THE RABBIT TRICKED GUDU

Far away in a hot country, where the forests are very thick and dark, and the rivers very swift and strong, there once lived a strange pair of friends. Now one of the friends was a big white rabbit named Isuro, and the other was a tall baboon called Gudu, and so fond were they of each other that they were seldom seen apart.

One day, when the sun was hotter even than usual, the rabbit awoke from his midday sleep, and saw Gudu the baboon standing beside him.

‘Get up,’ said Gudu; ‘I am going courting, and you must come with me. So put some food in a bag, and sling it round your neck, for we may not be able to find anything to eat for a long while.’

Then the rabbit rubbed his eyes, and gathered a store of fresh green things from under the bushes, and told Gudu that he was ready for the journey.

They went on quite happily for some distance, and at last they came to a river with rocks scattered here and there across the stream.

‘We can never jump those wide spaces if we are burdened with food,’ said Gudu, ‘we must throw it into the river, unless we wish to fall in ourselves.’ And stooping down, unseen by Isuro, who was in front of him, Gudu picked up a big stone, and threw it into the water with a loud splash.

‘It is your turn now,’ he cried to Isuro. And with a heavy sigh, the rabbit unfastened his bag of food, which fell into the river.

The road on the other side led down an avenue of trees, and before they had gone very far Gudu opened the bag that lay hidden in the thick hair about his neck, and began to eat some delicious-looking fruit.

‘Where did you get that from?’ asked Isuro enviously.

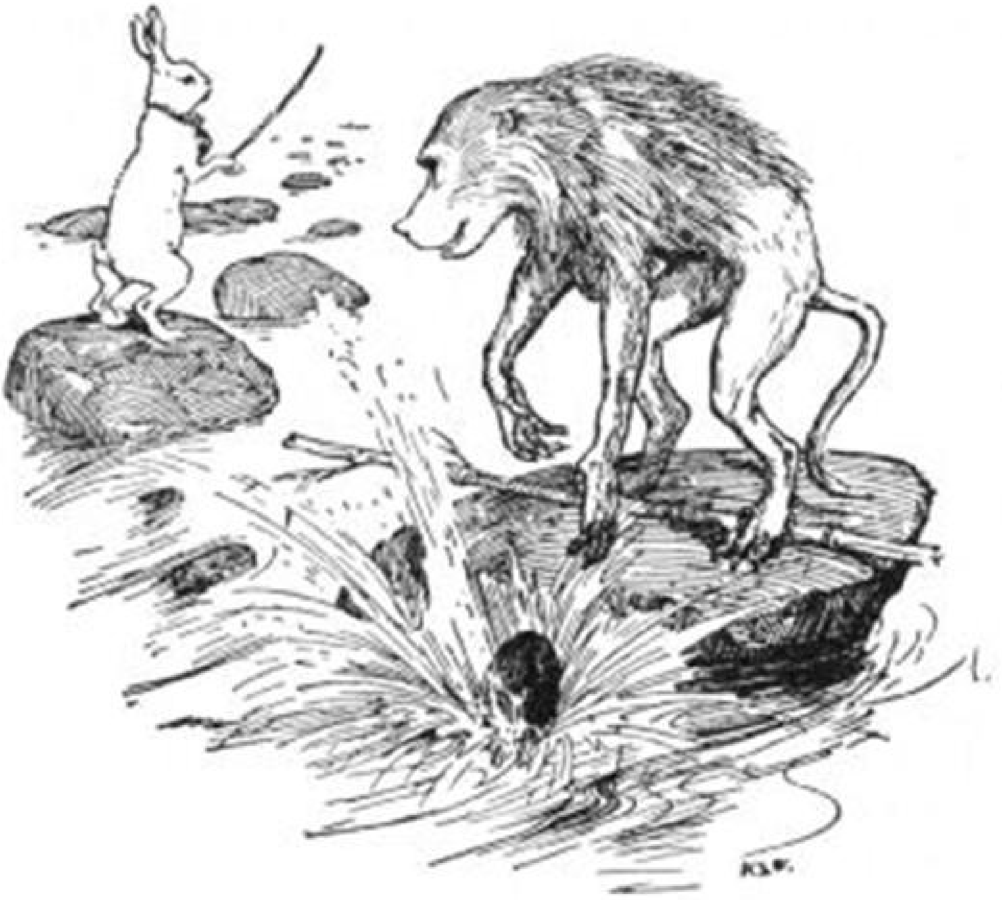

GUDU DROPS A STONE INTO THE WATER

‘Oh, I found after all that I could get across the rocks quite easily, so it seemed a pity not to keep my bag,’ answered Gudu.

‘Well, as you tricked me into throwing away mine, you ought to let me share with you,’ said Isuro. But Gudu pretended not to hear him, and strode along the path.

By-and-bye they entered a wood, and right in front of them was a tree so laden with fruit that its branches swept the ground. And some of the fruit was still green, and some yellow. The rabbit hopped forward with joy, for he was very hungry; but Gudu said to him: ‘Pluck the green fruit, you will find it much the best. I will leave it all for you, as you have had no dinner, and take the yellow for myself.’ So the rabbit took one of the green oranges and began to bite it, but its skin was so hard that he could hardly get his teeth through the rind.

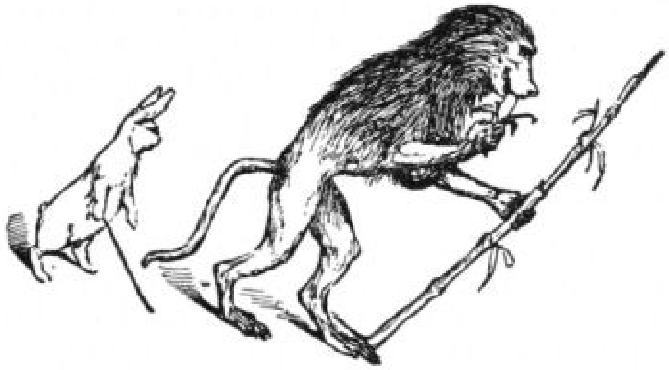

‘It does not taste at all nice,’ he cried, screwing up his face; ‘I would rather have one of the yellow ones.’

‘No! no! I really could not allow that,’ answered Gudu. ‘They would only make you ill. Be content with the green fruit.’ And as they were all he could get, Isuro was forced to put up with them.

After this had happened two or three times, Isuro at last had his eyes opened, and made up his mind that, whatever Gudu told him, he would do exactly the opposite. However, by this time they had reached the village where dwelt Gudu’s future wife, and as they entered Gudu pointed to a clump of bushes, and said to Isuro: ‘Whenever I am eating, and you hear me call out that my food has burnt me, run as fast as you can and gather some of those leaves that they may heal my mouth.’

The rabbit would have liked to ask him why he ate food that he knew would burn him, only he was afraid, and just nodded in reply; but when they had gone on a little further, he said to Gudu:

‘I have dropped my needle; wait here a moment while I go and fetch it.’

‘Be quick then,’ answered Gudu, climbing into a tree. And the rabbit hastened back to the bushes, and gathered a quantity of the leaves, which he hid among his fur, ‘for,’ thought he, ‘if I get them now I shall save myself the trouble of a walk by-and-bye.’

When he had plucked as many as he wanted he returned to Gudu, and they went on together.

The sun was almost setting by the time they reached their journey’s end, and being very tired they gladly sat down by a well. Then Gudu’s betrothed, who had been watching for him, brought out a pitcher of water — which she poured over them to wash off the dust of the road — and two portions of food. But once again the rabbit’s hopes were dashed to the ground, for Gudu said hastily:

‘The custom of the village forbids you to eat till I have finished.’ And Isuro did not know that Gudu was lying, and that he only wanted more food. So he sat hungrily looking on, waiting till his friend had had enough.

In a little while Gudu screamed loudly: ‘I am burnt! I am burnt!’ though he was not burnt at all. Now, though Isuro had the leaves about him, he did not dare to produce them at the last moment lest the baboon should guess why he had stayed behind. So he just went round a corner for a short time, and then came hopping back in a great hurry. But, quick though he was, Gudu had been quicker still, and nothing remained but some drops of water.

‘How unlucky you are,’ said Gudu, snatching the leaves; ‘no sooner had you gone than ever so many people arrived, and washed their hands, as you see, and ate your portion.’ But, though Isuro knew better than to believe him, he said nothing, and went to bed hungrier than he had ever been in his life.

Early next morning they started for another village, and passed on the way a large garden where people were very busy gathering monkey-nuts.

‘You can have a good breakfast at last,’ said Gudu, pointing to a heap of empty shells; never doubting but that Isuro would meekly take the portion shown him, and leave the real nuts for himself. But what was his surprise when Isuro answered:

‘Thank you; I think I should prefer these.’ And, turning to the kernels, never stopped as long as there was one left. And the worst of it was that, with so many people about, Gudu could not take the nuts from him.

It was night when they reached the village where dwelt the mother of Gudu’s betrothed, who laid meat and millet porridge before them.

‘I think you told me you were fond of porridge,’ said Gudu; but Isuro answered: ‘You are mistaking me for somebody else, as I always eat meat when I can get it.’ And again Gudu was forced to be content with the porridge, which he hated.

While he was eating it, however, a sudden thought darted into his mind, and he managed to knock over a great pot of water which was hanging in front of the fire, and put it quite out.

‘*Now,*’ said the cunning creature to himself, ‘I shall be able in the dark to steal his meat!’ But the rabbit had grown as cunning as he, and standing in a corner hid the meat behind him, so that the baboon could not find it.

‘O Gudu!’ he cried, laughing aloud, ‘it is you who have taught me how to be clever.’ And calling to the people of the house, he bade them kindle the fire, for Gudu would sleep by it, but that he would pass the night with some friends in another hut.

It was still quite dark when Isuro heard his name called very softly, and, on opening his eyes, beheld Gudu standing by him. Laying his finger on his nose, in token of silence, he signed to Isuro to get up and follow him, and it was not until they were some distance from the hut that Gudu spoke.

‘I am hungry and want something to eat better than that nasty porridge that I had for supper. So I am going to kill one of those goats, and as you are a good cook you must boil the flesh for me.’ The rabbit nodded, and Gudu disappeared behind a rock, but soon returned dragging the dead goat with him. The two then set about skinning it, after which they stuffed the skin with dried leaves, so that no one would have guessed it was not alive, and set it up in the middle of a clump of bushes, which kept it firm on its feet. While he was doing this, Isuro collected sticks for a fire, and when it was kindled, Gudu hastened to another hut to steal a pot which he filled with water from the river, and, planting two branches in the ground, they hung the pot with the meat in it over the fire.

‘It will not be fit to eat for two hours at least,’ said Gudu, ‘so we can both have a nap.’ And he stretched himself out on the ground, and pretended to fall fast asleep, but, in reality, he was only waiting till it was safe to take all the meat for himself. ‘Surely I hear him snore,’ he thought; and he stole to the place where Isuro was lying on a pile of wood, but the rabbit’s eyes were wide open.

‘How tiresome,’ muttered Gudu, as he went back to his place; and after waiting a little longer he got up, and peeped again, but still the rabbit’s pink eyes stared widely. If Gudu had only known, Isuro was asleep all the time; but this he never guessed, and by-and-bye he grew so tired with watching that he went to sleep himself. Soon after, Isuro woke up, and he too felt hungry, so he crept softly to the pot and ate all the meat, while he tied the bones together and hung them in Gudu’s fur. After that he went back to the wood-pile and slept again.

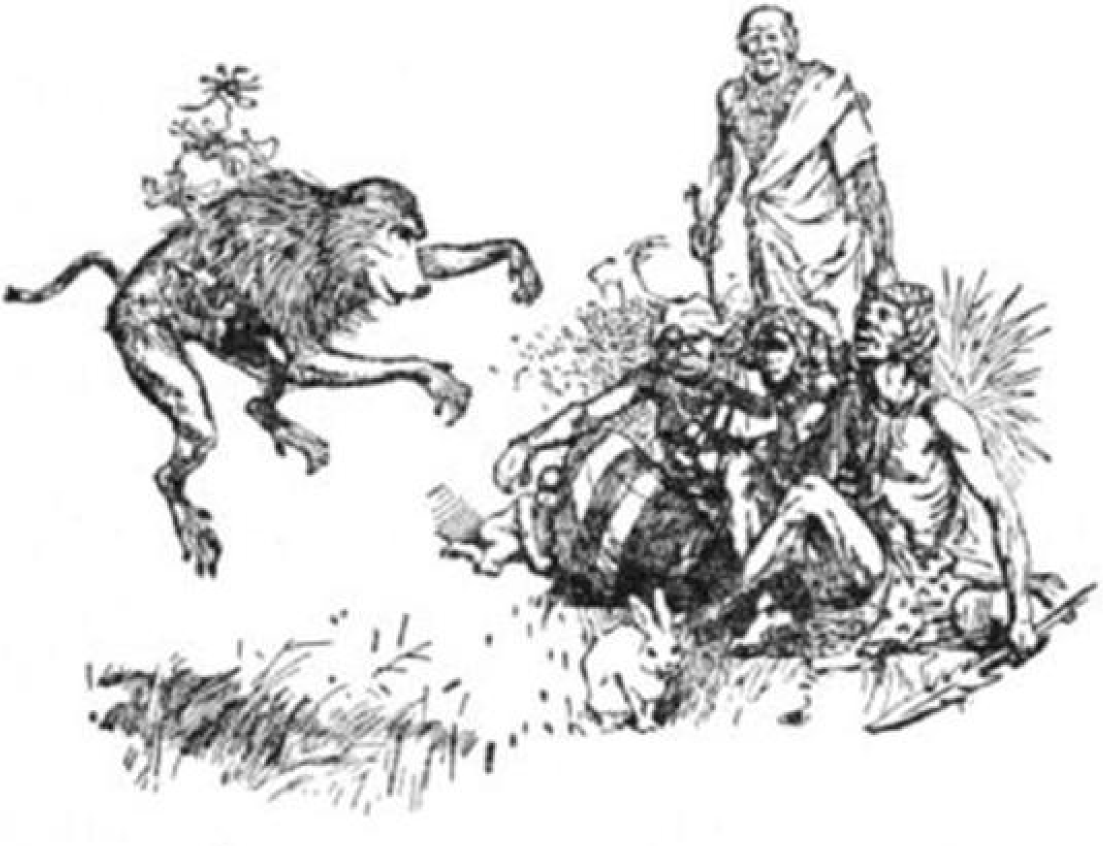

How GUDU danced & the bones rattled

In the morning the mother of Gudu’s betrothed came out to milk her goats, and on going to the bushes where the largest one seemed entangled, she found out the trick. She made such lament that the people of the village came running, and Gudu and Isuro jumped up also, and pretended to be as surprised and interested as the rest. But they must have looked guilty after all, for suddenly an old man pointed to them, and cried:

‘Those are the thieves.’ And at the sound of his voice the big Gudu trembled all over.

‘How dare you say such things? I defy you to prove it,’ answered Isuro boldly. And he danced forward, and turned head over heels, and shook himself before them all.

‘I spoke hastily; you are innocent,’ said the old man; ‘but now let the baboon do likewise.’ And when Gudu began to jump the goat’s bones rattled, and the people cried: ‘It is Gudu who is the goat-slayer!’ But Gudu answered:

‘Nay, I did not kill your goat; it was Isuro, and he ate the meat, and hung the bones round my neck. So it is he who should die!’ And the people looked at each other, for they knew not what to believe. At length one man said:

‘Let them both die, but they may choose their own deaths.’

Then Isuro answered:

‘If we must die, put us in the place where the wood is cut, and heap it up all round us, so that we cannot escape, and set fire to the wood; and if one is burned and the other is not, then he that is burned is the goat-slayer.’

And the people did as Isuro had said. But Isuro knew of a hole under the wood-pile, and when the fire was kindled he ran into the hole, but Gudu died there.

When the fire had burned itself out, and only ashes were left where the wood had been, Isuro came out of his hole, and said to the people:

‘Lo! did I not speak well? He who killed your goat is among those ashes.’

(*Mashona Story*.)

IAN, THE SOLDIER'S SON

There dwelt a knight in Grianaig of the land of the West, who had three daughters, and for goodness and beauty they had not their like in all the isles. All the people loved them, and loud was the weeping when one day, as the three maidens sat on the rocks on the edge of the sea, dipping their feet in the water, there arose a great beast from under the waves and swept them away beneath the ocean. And none knew whither they had gone, or how to seek them.

Now there lived in a town a few miles off a soldier who had three sons, fine youths and strong, and the best players at shinny in that country. At Christmastide that year, when families met together and great feasts were held, Ian, the youngest of the three brothers, said:

'Let us have a match at shinny on the lawn of the knight of Grianaig, for his lawn is wider and the grass smoother than ours.'

But the others answered:

'Nay, for he is in sorrow, and he will think of the games that we have played there when his daughters looked on.'

'Let him be pleased or angry as he will,' said Ian; 'we will drive our ball on his lawn to-day.'

And so it was done, and Ian won three games from his brothers. But the knight looked out of his window, and was wroth; and bade his men bring the youths before him. When he stood in his hall and beheld them, his heart was softened somewhat; but his face was angry as he asked:

'Why did you choose to play shinny in front of my castle when you knew full well that the remembrance of my daughters would come back to me? The pain which you have made me suffer you shall suffer also.'

'Since we have done you wrong,' answered Ian, the youngest, 'build us a ship, and we will go and seek your daughters. Let them be to windward, or to leeward, or under the four brown boundaries of the sea, we will find them before a year and a day goes by, and will carry them back to Grianaig.'

In seven days the ship was built, and great store of food and wine placed in her. And the three brothers put her head to the sea and sailed away, and in seven days the ship ran herself on to a beach of white sand, and they all went ashore. They had none of them ever seen that land before, and looked about them. Then they saw that, a short way from them, a number of men were working on a rock, with one man standing over them.

‘What place is this?’ asked the eldest brother. And the man who was standing by made answer:

‘This is the place where dwell the three daughters of the knight of Grianaig, who are to be wedded to-morrow to three giants.’

‘How can we find them?’ asked the young man again. And the overlooker answered:

‘To reach the daughters of the knight of Grianaig you must get into this basket, and be drawn by a rope up the face of this rock.’

‘Oh, that is easily done,’ said the eldest brother, jumping into the basket, which at once began to move — up, and up, and up — till he had gone about half-way, when a fat black raven flew at him and pecked him till he was nearly blind, so that he was forced to go back the way he had come.

After that the second brother got into the creel; but he fared no better, for the raven flew upon him, and he returned as his brother had done.

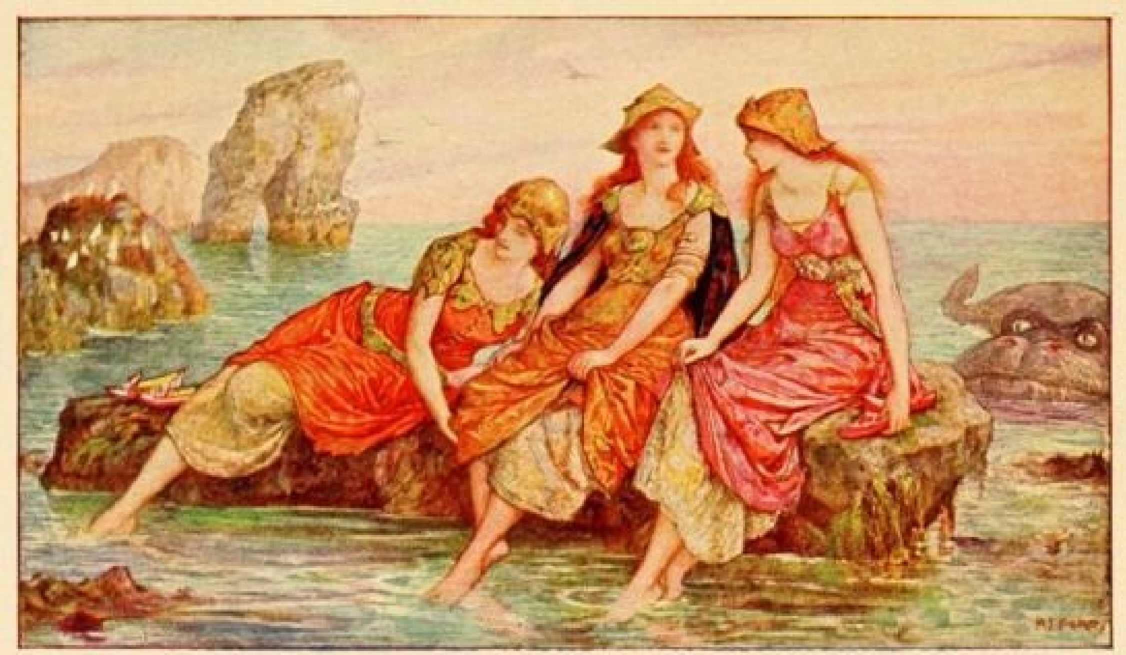

THE THREE MAIDENS SITTING ON THE ROCKS

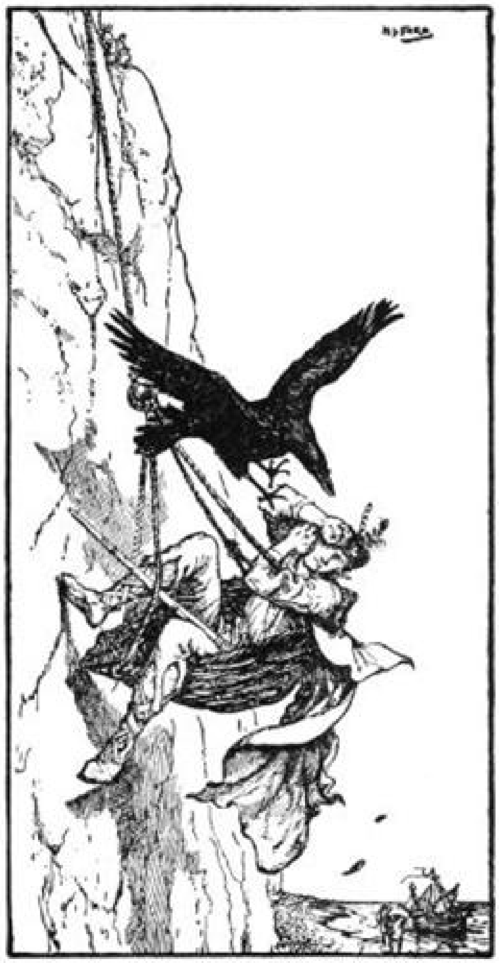

THE KNIGHT AND THE RAVEN

‘Now it is my turn,’ said Ian. But when he was half-way up the raven set upon him also.

‘Quick! quick!’ cried Ian to the men who held the rope. ‘Quick! quick! or I shall be blinded!’ And the men pulled with all their might, and in another moment Ian was on top, and the raven behind him.

‘Will you give me a piece of tobacco?’ asked the raven, who was now quite quiet.

‘You rascal! Am I to give you tobacco for trying to peck my eyes out?’ answered Ian.

‘That was part of my duty,’ replied the raven; ‘but give it to me, and I will prove a good friend to you.’ So Ian broke off a piece of tobacco and gave it to him. The raven hid it under his wing, and then went on: ‘Now I will take you to the house of the big giant, where the knight’s daughter sits sewing, sewing, till even her thimble is wet with tears.’ And the raven hopped before him till they reached a large house, the door of which stood open. They entered and passed through one hall after the other, until they found the knight’s daughter, as the bird had said.

‘What brought you here?’ asked she. And Ian made answer:

‘Why may I not go where you can go?’

‘I was brought hither by a giant,’ replied she.

‘I know that,’ said Ian; ‘but tell me where the giant is, that I may find him.’

‘He is on the hunting hill,’ answered she; ‘and nought will bring him home save a shake of the iron chain which hangs outside the gate. But, there, neither to leeward, nor to windward, nor in the four brown boundaries of the sea is there any man that can hold battle against him, save only Ian, the soldier’s son, and he is now but sixteen years old, and how shall he stand against the giant?’

‘In the land whence I have come there are many men with the strength of Ian,’ answered he. And he went outside and pulled at the chain, but he could not move it, and fell on to his knees. At that he rose swiftly, and gathering up his strength, he seized the chain, and this time he shook it so that the link broke. And the giant heard it on the hunting hill, and lifted his head, thinking —

‘It sounds like the noise of Ian, the soldier’s son,’ said he; ‘but as yet he is only sixteen years old. Still, I had better look to it.’ And home he came.

‘Are you Ian, the soldier’s son?’ he asked, as he entered the castle.

‘No, of a surety,’ answered the youth, who had no wish that they should know him.

‘Then who are you in the leeward, or in the windward, or in the four brown boundaries of the sea, who are able to move my battle-chain?’

‘That will be plain to you after wrestling with me as I wrestle with my mother. And one time she got the better of me, and two times she did not.’

So they wrestled, and twisted and strove with each other till the giant forced Ian to his knee.

‘You are the stronger,’ said Ian; and the giant answered:

‘All men know that!’ And they took hold of each other once more, and at last Ian threw the giant, and wished that the raven were there to help him. No sooner had he wished his wish than the raven came.

‘Put your hand under my right wing and you will find a knife sharp enough to take off his head,’ said the raven. And the knife was so sharp that it cut off the giant’s head with a blow.

‘Now go and tell the daughter of the knight of Grianaig; but take heed lest you listen to her words, and promise to go no further, for she will seek to keep you. Instead, seek the middle daughter, and when you have found her, you shall give me a piece of tobacco for reward.’

‘Well have you earned the half of all I have,’ answered Ian. But the raven shook his head.

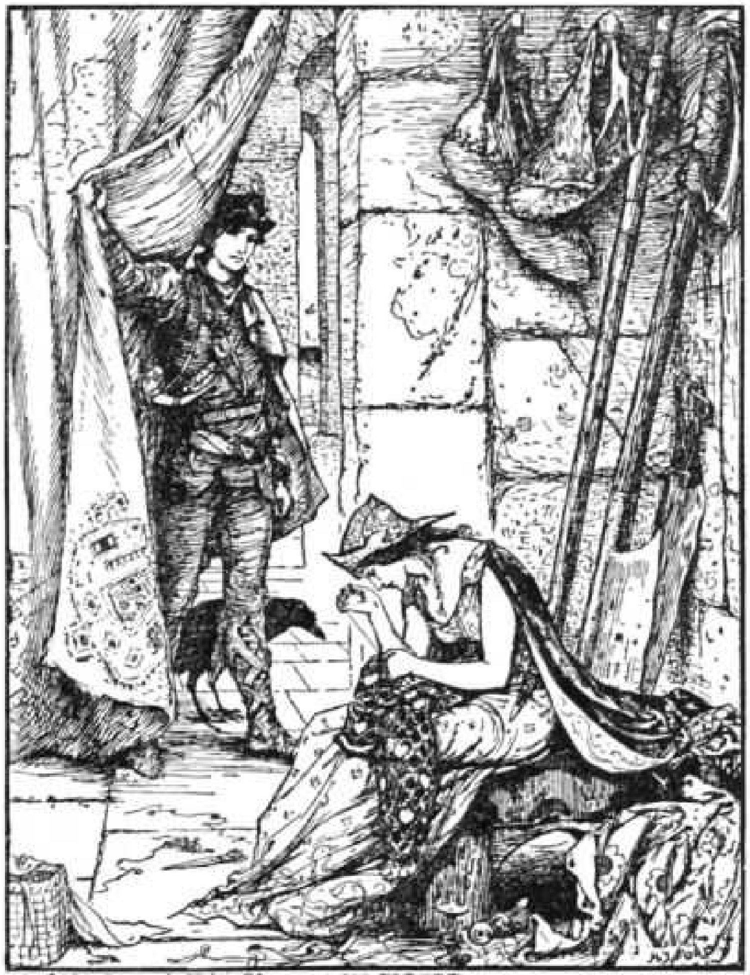

◦ IAN FINDS THE YOUNGEST SISTER ◦

‘You know only what has passed, and nothing of what lies before. If you would not fail, wash yourself in clean water, and take balsam from a vessel on top of the door, and rub it over your body, and to-morrow you will be as strong as many men, and I will lead you to the dwelling of the middle one.’

Ian did as the raven bade him, and in spite of the eldest daughter’s entreaties, he set out to seek her next sister. He found her where she was seated sewing, her very thimble wet from the tears which she had shed.

‘What brought you here?’ asked the second sister.

‘Why may I not go where you can go?’ answered he; ‘and why are you weeping?’

‘Because in one day I shall be married to the giant who is on the hunting hill.’

‘How can I get him home?’ asked Ian.

‘Nought will bring him but a shake of that iron chain which hangs outside the gate. But there is neither to leeward, nor to westward, nor in the four brown boundaries of the sea, any man that can hold battle with him, save Ian, the soldier’s son, and he is now but sixteen years of age.’

‘In the land whence I have come there are many men with the strength of Ian,’ said he. And he went outside and pulled at the chain, but he could not move it, and fell on his knees. At that he rose to his feet, and gathering up his strength mightily, he seized the chain, and this time he shook it so that three links broke. And the second giant heard it on the hunting hill, and lifted his head, thinking —

‘It sounds like the noise of Ian, the soldier’s son,’ said he; ‘but as yet he is only sixteen years old. Still, I had better look to it.’ And home he came.

‘Are you Ian, the soldier’s son?’ he asked, as he entered the castle.

‘No, of a surety,’ answered Ian, who had no wish that this giant should know him either; ‘but I will wrestle with you as if I were he.’

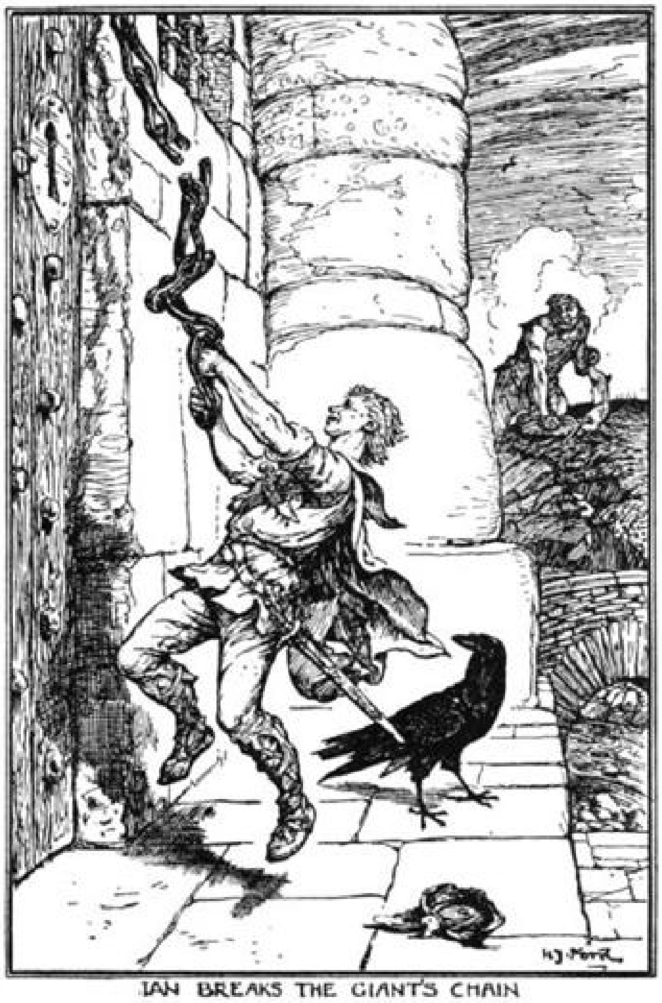

IAN BREAKS THE GIANT'S CHAIN

Then they seized each other by the shoulder, and the giant threw him on his two knees. ‘You are the stronger,’ cried Ian; ‘but I am not beaten yet.’ And rising to his feet, he threw his arms round the giant.

Backwards and forwards they swayed, and first one was uppermost and then the other; but at length Ian worked his leg round the giant's and threw him to the ground. Then he called to the raven, and the raven came flapping towards him, and said: 'Put your hand under my right wing, and you will find there a knife sharp enough to take off his head.' And sharp indeed it was, for with a single blow, the giant's head rolled from his body.

'Now wash yourself with warm water, and rub yourself over with oil of balsam, and to-morrow you will be as strong as many men. But beware of the words of the knight's daughter, for she is cunning, and will try to keep you at her side. So farewell; but first give me a piece of tobacco.'

'That I will gladly,' answered Ian, breaking off a large bit.

He washed and rubbed himself that night, as the raven had told him, and the next morning he entered the chamber where the knight's daughter was sitting.

'Abide here with me,' she said, 'and be my husband. There is silver and gold in plenty in the castle.' But he took no heed, and went on his way till he reached the castle where the knight's youngest daughter was sewing in the hall. And tears dropped from her eyes on to her thimble.

'What brought you here?' asked she. And Ian made answer:

'Why may I not go where you can go?'

'I was brought hither by a giant.'

'I know that full well,' said he.

'Are you Ian, the soldier's son?' asked she again. And again he answered:

'Yes, I am; but tell me, why you are weeping?'

'To-morrow the giant will return from the hunting hill, and I must marry him,' she sobbed. And Ian took no heed, and only said: 'How can I bring him home?'

'Shake the iron chain that hangs outside the gate.'

And Ian went out, and gave such a pull to the chain that he fell down at full length from the force of the shake. But in a moment he was on his feet again, and seized the chain with so much strength that four links came off in his hand. And the giant heard him in the hunting hill, as he was putting the game he had killed into a bag.

'In the leeward, or the windward, or in the four brown boundaries of the sea, there is none who could give my chain a shake save only Ian, the soldier's son. And if he has reached me, then he has left my two brothers dead behind him.' With that he strode back to the castle, the earth trembling under him as he went.

'Are you Ian, the soldier's son?' asked he. And the youth answered:

'No, of a surety.'

'Then who are you in the leeward, or the windward, or in the four brown boundaries of the sea, who are able to shake my battle chain? There is only Ian, the soldier's son, who can do this, and he is but now sixteen years old.'

'I will show you who I am when you have wrestled with me,' said Ian. And they threw their arms round each other, and the giant forced Ian on to his knees; but in a moment he was up again, and crooking his leg round the shoulders of the giant, he threw him heavily to the ground. 'Stumpy black raven, come quick!' cried he; and the raven came, and beat the giant about the head with his wings, so that he could not get up. Then he bade Ian take out a sharp knife from under his feathers, which he carried with him for cutting berries, and Ian smote off the giant's head with it. And so sharp was that knife that, with one blow, the giant's head rolled on the ground.

'Rest now this night also,' said the raven, 'and to-morrow you shall take the knight's three daughters to the edge of the rock that leads to the lower world. But take heed to go down first yourself, and let them follow after you. And before I go you shall give me a piece of tobacco.'

'Take it all,' answered Ian, 'for well have you earned it.'

'No; give me but a piece. You know what is behind you, but you have no knowledge of what is before you.' And picking up the tobacco in his beak, the raven flew away.

So the next morning the knight's youngest daughter loaded asses with all the silver and gold to be found in the castle, and she set out with Ian the soldier's son for the house where her second sister was waiting to see what would befall. She also had asses laden with precious things to carry away, and so had the eldest sister, when they reached the castle where she had been kept a prisoner. Together they all rode to the edge of the rock, and then Ian lay down and shouted, and the basket was drawn up, and in it they got one by one, and were let down to the bottom. When the last one was gone, Ian should have gone also, and left the three sisters to come after him; but he had forgotten the raven's warning, and bade them go first, lest some accident should happen. Only, he begged the youngest sister to let him keep the little gold cap which, like the others, she wore on her head; and then he helped them, each in her turn, into the basket.

Long he waited, but wait as he might, the basket never came back, for in their joy at being free the knight's daughters had forgotten all about Ian, and had set sail in the ship that had brought him and his brothers to the land of Grianaig.

At last he began to understand what had happened to him, and while he was taking counsel with himself what had best be done, the raven came to him.

'You did not heed my words,' he said gravely.

'No, I did not, and therefore am I here,' answered Ian, bowing his head.

'The past cannot be undone,' went on the raven. 'He that will not take counsel will take combat. This night, you will sleep in the giant's castle. And now you shall give me a piece of tobacco.'

'I will. But, I pray you, stay in the castle with me.'

'That I may not do, but on the morrow I will come.'

And on the morrow he did, and he bade Ian go to the giant's stable where stood a horse to whom it mattered nothing if she journeyed over land or sea.

'But be careful,' he added, 'how you enter the stable, for the door swings without ceasing to and fro, and if it touches you, it will cause you to cry out. I will go first and show you the way.'

'Go,' said Ian. And the raven gave a bob and a hop, and thought he was quite safe, but the door slammed on a feather of his tail, and he screamed loudly.

Then Ian took a run backwards, and a run forwards, and made a spring; but the door caught one of his feet, and he fell fainting on the stable floor. Quickly the raven pounced on him, and picked him up in his beak and claws, and carried him back to the castle, where he laid ointments on his foot till it was as well as ever it was.

'Now come out to walk,' said the raven, 'but take heed that you wonder not at aught you may behold; neither shall you touch anything. And, first, give me a piece of tobacco.'

Many strange things did Ian behold in that island, more than he had thought for. In a glen lay three heroes stretched on their backs, done to death by three spears that still stuck in their breasts. But he kept his counsel and spake nothing, only he pulled out the spears, and the men sat up and said:

'You are Ian the soldier's son, and a spell is laid upon you to travel in our company, to the cave of the black fisherman.'

So together they went till they reached the cave, and one of the men entered, to see what should be found there. And he beheld a hag, horrible to look upon, seated on a rock, and before he could speak, she struck him with her club, and changed him into a stone; and in like manner she dealt with the other three. At the last Ian entered.

'These men are under spells,' said the witch, 'and alive they can never be till you have anointed them with the water which you must fetch from the island of Big Women. See that you do not tarry.' And Ian turned away with a sinking heart, for he would fain have followed the youngest daughter of the knight of Grianaig.

'You did not obey my counsel,' said the raven, hopping towards him, 'and so trouble has come upon you. But sleep now, and to-morrow you shall mount the horse which is in the giant's stable, that can gallop over sea and land. When you reach the island of Big Women, sixteen boys will come to meet you, and will offer the horse food, and wish to take her saddle and bridle from her. But see that they touch her not, and give her food yourself, and yourself lead her into the stable, and shut the door. And be sure that for every turn of the lock given by the sixteen stable lads you give one. And now you shall break me off a piece of tobacco.'

The next morning Ian arose, and led the horse from the stable, without the door hurting him, and he rode her across the sea to the island of Big Women, where the sixteen stable lads met him, and each one offered to take his horse, and to feed her, and to put her into the stable. But Ian only answered:

'I myself will put her in and will see to her.' And thus he did. And while he was rubbing her sides the horse said to him:

'Every kind of drink will they offer you, but see you take none, save whey and water only.' And so it fell out; and when the sixteen stable-boys saw that he would drink nothing, they drank it all themselves, and one by one lay stretched around the board.

Then Ian felt pleased in his heart that he had withstood their fair words, and he forgot the counsel that the horse had likewise given him saying:

'Beware lest you fall asleep, and let slip the chance of getting home again'; for while the lads were sleeping sweet music reached his ears, and he slept also.

When this came to pass the steed broke through the stable door, and kicked him and woke him roughly.

'You did not heed my counsel,' said she; 'and who knows if it is not too late to win over the sea? But first take that sword which hangs on the wall, and cut off the heads of the sixteen grooms.'

Filled with shame at being once more proved heedless, Ian arose and did as the horse bade him. Then he ran to the well and poured some of the water into a leather bottle, and jumping on the horse's back rode over the sea to the island where the raven was waiting for him.

'Lead the horse into the stable,' said the raven, 'and lie down yourself to sleep, for to-morrow you must make the heroes to live again, and must slay the hag. And have a care not to be so foolish to-morrow as you were to-day.'

'Stay with me for company,' begged Ian; but the raven shook his head, and flew away.

In the morning Ian awoke, and hastened to the cave where the old hag was sitting, and he struck her dead as she was, before she could cast spells on him. Next he sprinkled the water over the heroes, who came to life again, and together they all journeyed to the other side of the island, and there the raven met them.

'At last you have followed the counsel that was given you,' said the raven; 'and now, having learned wisdom, you may go home again to Grianaig. There you will find that the knight’s two eldest daughters are to be wedded this day to your two brothers, and the youngest to the chief of the men at the rock. But her gold cap you shall give to me, and, if you want it, you have only to think of me and I will bring it to you. And one more warning I give you. If anyone asks you whence you came, answer that you have come from behind you; and if anyone asks you whither you are going, say that you are going before you.’

So Ian mounted the horse and set her face to the sea and her back to the shore, and she was off, away and away till she reached the church of Grianaig, and there, in a field of grass, beside a well of water, he leaped down from his saddle.

‘Now,’ the horse said to him, ‘draw your sword and cut off my head.’ But Ian answered:

‘Poor thanks would that be for all the help I have had from you.’

‘It is the only way that I can free myself from the spells that were laid by the giants on me and the raven; for I was a girl and he was a youth wooing me! So have no fears, but do as I have said.’

Then Ian drew his sword as she bade him, and cut off her head, and went on his way without looking backwards. As he walked he saw a woman standing at her house door. She asked him whence he had come, and he answered as the raven had told him, that he came from behind. Next she inquired whither he was going, and this time he made reply that he was going on before him, but that he was thirsty and would like a drink.

‘You are an impudent fellow,’ said the woman; ‘but you shall have a drink.’ And she gave him some milk, which was all she had till her husband came home.

‘Where is your husband?’ asked Ian, and the woman answered him:

‘He is at the knight’s castle trying to fashion gold and silver into a cap for the youngest daughter, like unto the caps that her sisters wear, such as are not to be found in all this land. But, see, he is returning; and now we shall hear how he has sped.’

At that the man entered the gate, and beholding a strange youth, he said to him: ‘What is your trade, boy?’

‘I am a smith,’ replied Ian. And the man answered:

‘Good luck has befallen me, then, for you can help me to make a cap for the knight’s daughter.’

‘You cannot make that cap, and you know it,’ said Ian.

‘Well, I must try,’ replied the man, ‘or I shall be hanged on a tree; so it were a good deed to help me.’

‘I will help you if I can,’ said Ian; ‘but keep the gold and silver for yourself, and lock me into the smithy to-night, and I will work my spells.’ So the man, wondering to himself, locked him in.

As soon as the key was turned in the lock Ian wished for the raven, and the raven came to him, carrying the cap in his mouth.

‘Now take my head off,’ said the raven. But Ian answered:

‘Poor thanks were that for all the help you have given me.’

‘It is the only thanks you can give me,’ said the raven, ‘for I was a youth like yourself before spells were laid on me.’

Then Ian drew his sword and cut off the head of the raven, and shut his eyes so that he might see nothing. After that he lay down and slept till morning dawned, and the man came and unlocked the door and shook the sleeper.

‘Here is the cap,’ said Ian drowsily, drawing it from under his pillow. And he fell asleep again directly.

The sun was high in the heavens when he woke again, and this time he beheld a tall, brown-haired youth standing by him.

‘I am the raven,’ said the youth, ‘and the spells are broken. But now get up and come with me.’

Then they two went together to the place where Ian had left the dead horse; but no horse was there now, only a beautiful maiden.

‘I am the horse,’ she said, ‘and the spells are broken’; and she and the youth went away together.

In the meantime the smith had carried the cap to the castle, and bade a servant belonging to the knight’s youngest daughter bear it to her mistress. But when the girl’s eyes fell on it, she cried out:

‘He speaks false; and if he does not bring me the man who really made the cap I will hang him on the tree beside my window.’

The servant was filled with fear at her words, and hastened and told the smith, who ran as fast as he could to seek for Ian. And when he found him and brought him into the castle, the girl was first struck dumb with joy; then she declared that she would marry nobody else. At this some one fetched to her the knight of Grianaig, and when Ian had told his tale, he vowed that the maiden was right, and that his elder daughters should never wed with men who had not only taken glory to themselves which did not belong to them, but had left the real doer of the deeds to his fate.

And the wedding guests said that the knight had spoken well; and the two elder brothers were fain to leave the country, for no one would hold converse with them.

(From *Tales of the West Highlands*.)

THE FOX AND THE WOLF

At the foot of some high mountains there was, once upon a time, a small village, and a little way off two roads met, one of them going to the east and the other to the west. The villagers were quiet, hard-working folk, who toiled in the fields all day, and in the evening set out for home when the bell began to ring in the little church. In the summer mornings they led out their flocks to pasture, and were happy and contented from sunrise to sunset.

One summer night, when a round full moon shone down upon the white road, a great wolf came trotting round the corner.

‘I positively *must* get a good meal before I go back to my den,’ he said to himself; ‘it is nearly a week since I have tasted anything but scraps, though perhaps no one would think it to look at my figure! Of course there are plenty of rabbits and hares in the mountains; but indeed one needs to be a greyhound to catch *them*, and I am not so young as I was! If I could only dine off that fox I saw a fortnight ago, curled up into a delicious hairy ball, I should ask nothing better; I would have eaten her then, but unluckily her husband was lying beside her, and one knows that foxes, great and small, run like the wind. Really it seems as if there was not a living creature left for me to prey upon but a wolf, and, as the proverb says: “One wolf does not bite another.” However, let us see what this village can produce. I am as hungry as a schoolmaster.’

Now, while these thoughts were running through the mind of the wolf, the very fox he had been thinking of was galloping along the other road.

‘The whole of this day I have listened to those village hens clucking till I could bear it no longer,’ murmured she as she bounded along, hardly seeming to touch the ground. ‘When you are fond of fowls and eggs it is the sweetest of all music. As sure as there is a sun in heaven I will have some of them this night, for I have grown so thin that my very bones rattle, and my poor babies are crying for food.’ And as she spoke she reached a little plot of grass, where the two roads joined, and flung herself under a tree to take a little rest, and to settle her plans. At this moment the wolf came up.

At the sight of the fox lying within his grasp his mouth began to water, but his joy was somewhat checked when he noticed how thin she was. The fox’s quick ears heard the sound of his paws, though they were as soft as velvet, and turning her head she said politely:

‘Is that you, neighbour? What a strange place to meet in! I hope you are quite well?'

'Quite well as regards my health,' answered the wolf, whose eye glistened greedily, 'at least, as well as one can be when one is very hungry. But what is the matter with *you*? A fortnight ago you were as plump as heart could wish!'

'I have been ill — very ill,' replied the fox, 'and what you say is quite true. A worm is fat in comparison with me.'

'He is. Still, you are good enough for me; for "to the hungry no bread is hard."'

'Oh, you are always joking! I'm sure you are not half as hungry as I!'

'That we shall soon see,' cried the wolf, opening his huge mouth and crouching for a spring.

'What are you doing?' exclaimed the fox, stepping backwards.

'What am I doing? What I am *going* to do is to make my supper off you, in less time than a cock takes to crow.'

'Well, I suppose you must have your joke,' answered the fox lightly, but never removing her eye from the wolf, who replied with a snarl which showed all his teeth:

'I don't want to joke, but to eat!'

'But surely a person of your talents must perceive that you might eat me to the very last morsel and never know that you had swallowed anything at all!'

'In this world the cleverest people are always the hungriest,' replied the wolf.

'Ah! how true that is; but — —'

'I can't stop to listen to your "buts" and "yets,"' broke in the wolf rudely; 'let us get to the point, and the point is that I want to eat you and not talk to you.'

'Have you no pity for a poor mother?' asked the fox, putting her tail to her eyes, but peeping slily out of them all the same.

'I am dying of hunger,' answered the wolf, doggedly; 'and you know,' he added with a grin, 'that charity begins at home.'

'Quite so,' replied the fox; 'it would be unreasonable of me to object to your satisfying your appetite at my expense. But if the fox resigns herself to the sacrifice, the mother offers you one last request.'

'Then be quick and don't waste time, for I can't wait much longer. What is it you want?'

'You must know,' said the fox, 'that in this village there is a rich man who makes in the summer enough cheeses to last him for the whole year, and keeps them in an old well, now dry, in his courtyard. By the well hang two buckets on a pole that were used, in former days, to draw up water. For many nights I have crept down to the place, and have lowered myself in the bucket, bringing home with me enough cheese to feed the children. All I beg of you is to come with me, and, instead of hunting chickens and such things, I will make a good meal off cheese before I die.'

'But the cheeses may be all finished by now?'

'If you were only to see the quantities of them!' laughed the fox. 'And even if they *were* finished, there would always be *me* to eat.'

'Well, I will come. Lead the way, but I warn you that if you try to escape or play any tricks you are reckoning without your host — that is to say, without my legs, which are as long as yours!'

All was silent in the village, and not a light was to be seen but that of the moon, which shone bright and clear in the sky. The wolf and the fox crept softly along, when suddenly they stopped and looked at each other; a savoury smell of frying bacon reached their noses, and reached the noses of the sleeping dogs, who began to bark greedily.

'Is it safe to go on, think you?' asked the wolf in a whisper. And the fox shook her head.

'Not while the dogs are barking,' said she; 'someone might come out to see if anything was the matter.' And she signed to the wolf to curl himself up in the shadow beside her.

In about half an hour the dogs grew tired of barking, or perhaps the bacon was eaten up and there was no more smell to excite them. Then the wolf and the fox jumped up, and hastened to the foot of the wall.

'I am lighter than he is,' thought the fox to herself, 'and perhaps if I make haste I can get a start, and jump over the wall on the other side before he manages to spring over this one.' And she quickened her pace. But if the wolf could not run he could jump, and with one bound he was beside his companion.

'What were you going to do, comrade?'

'Oh, nothing,' replied the fox, much vexed at the failure of her plan.

'I think if I were to take a bite out of your haunch you would jump better,' said the wolf, giving a snap at her as he spoke. The fox drew back uneasily.

'Be careful, or I shall scream,' she snarled. And the wolf, understanding all that might happen if the fox carried out her threat, gave a signal to his companion to leap on the wall, where he immediately followed her.

Once on the top they crouched down and looked about them. Not a creature was to be seen in the courtyard, and in the furthest corner from the house stood the well, with its two buckets suspended from a pole, just as the fox had described it. The two thieves dragged themselves noiselessly along the wall till they were opposite the well, and by stretching out her neck as far as it would go the fox was able to make out that there was only very little water in the bottom, but just enough to reflect the moon, big, and round and yellow.

‘How lucky!’ cried she to the wolf. ‘There is a huge cheese about the size of a mill wheel. Look! look! did you ever see anything so beautiful!’

‘Never!’ answered the wolf, peering over in his turn, his eyes glistening greedily, for he imagined that the moon’s reflection in the water was really a cheese.

‘And now, unbeliever, what have you to say?’ And the fox laughed gently.

‘That you are a woman — I mean a fox — of your word,’ replied the wolf.

‘Well, then, go down in that bucket and eat your fill,’ said the fox.

‘Oh, is that your game?’ asked the wolf, with a grin. ‘No! no! The person who goes down in the bucket will be *you*! And if *you* don’t go down your head will go without you!’

‘Of course I will go down, with the greatest pleasure,’ answered the fox, who had expected the wolf’s reply.

‘And be sure you don’t eat all the cheese, or it will be the worse for you,’ continued the wolf. But the fox looked up at him with tears in her eyes.

‘Farewell, suspicious one!’ she said sadly. And climbed into the bucket.

In an instant she had reached the bottom of the well, and found that the water was not deep enough to cover her legs.

‘Why, it is larger and richer than I thought,’ cried she, turning towards the wolf, who was leaning over the wall of the well.

‘Then be quick and bring it up,’ commanded the wolf.

‘How can I, when it weighs more than I do?’ asked the fox.

‘If it is so heavy bring it in two bits, of course,’ said he.

‘But I have no knife,’ answered the fox. ‘You will have to come down yourself, and we will carry it up between us.’

‘And how am I to come down?’ inquired the wolf.

‘Oh, you are really very stupid! Get into the other bucket that is nearly over your head.’

The wolf looked up, and saw the bucket hanging there, and with some difficulty he climbed into it. As he weighed at least four times as much as the fox the bucket went down with a jerk, and the other bucket, in which the fox was seated, came to the surface.

As soon as he understood what was happening, the wolf began to speak like an angry wolf, but was a little comforted when he remembered that the cheese still remained to him.

‘But where *is* the cheese?’ he asked of the fox, who in her turn was leaning over the parapet watching his proceedings with a smile.

‘The cheese?’ answered the fox; ‘why I am taking it home to my babies, who are too young to get food for themselves.’

‘Ah, traitor!’ cried the wolf, howling with rage. But the fox was not there to hear this insult, for she had gone off to a neighbouring fowl-house, where she had noticed some fat young chickens the day before.

‘Perhaps I *did* treat him rather badly,’ she said to herself. ‘But it seems getting cloudy, and if there should be heavy rain the other bucket will fill and sink to the bottom, and his will go up — at least it *may*!’

(From *Cuentos Populares*, por Antonio de Trueba.)

HOW IAN DIREACH GOT THE BLUE FALCON

Long ago a king and queen ruled over the islands of the west, and they had one son, whom they loved dearly. The boy grew up to be tall and strong and handsome, and he could run and shoot, and swim and dive better than any lad of his own age in the country. Besides, he knew how to sail about, and sing songs to the harp, and during the winter evenings, when everyone was gathered round the huge hall fire shaping bows or weaving cloth, Ian Direach would tell them tales of the deeds of his fathers.

So the time slipped by till Ian was almost a man, as they reckoned men in those days, and then his mother the queen died. There was great mourning throughout all the isles, and the boy and his father mourned her bitterly also; but before the new year came the king had married another wife, and seemed to have forgotten his old one. Only Ian remembered.

On a morning when the leaves were yellow in the trees of the glen, Ian slung his bow over his shoulder, and filling his quiver with arrows, went on the hill in search of game. But not a bird was to be seen anywhere, till at length a blue falcon flew past him, and raising his bow he took aim at her. His eye was straight and his hand steady, but the falcon's flight was swift, and he only shot a feather from her wing. As the sun was now low over the sea he put the feather in his game bag, and set out homewards.

'Have you brought me much game to-day?' asked his stepmother as he entered the hall.

'Nought save this,' he answered, handing her the feather of the blue falcon, which she held by the tip and gazed at silently. Then she turned to Ian and said:

'I am setting it on you as crosses and as spells, and as the fall of the year! That you may always be cold, and wet and dirty, and that your shoes may ever have pools in them, till you bring me hither the blue falcon on which that feather grew.'

'If it is spells you are laying, I can lay them too,' answered Ian Direach; 'and you shall stand with one foot on the great house and another on the castle, till I come back again, and your face shall be to the wind, from wheresoever it shall blow.' Then he went away to seek the bird, as his stepmother bade him; and, looking homewards from the hill, he saw the queen standing with one foot on the great house, and the other on the castle, and her face turned towards whatever tempest should blow.

On he journeyed, over hills, and through rivers till he reached a wide plain, and never a glimpse did he catch of the falcon. Darker and darker it grew, and the small birds were seeking their nests, and at length Ian Direach could see no more, and he lay down under some bushes and sleep came to him. And in his dream a soft nose touched him, and a warm body curled up beside him, and a low voice whispered to him:

‘Fortune is against you, Ian Direach; I have but the cheek and the hoof of a sheep to give you, and with these you must be content.’ With that Ian Direach awoke, and beheld Gille Mairtean the fox.

Between them they kindled a fire, and ate their supper. Then Gille Mairtean the fox bade Ian Direach lie down as before, and sleep till morning. And in the morning, when he awoke, Gille Mairtean said:

‘The falcon that you seek is in the keeping of the Giant of the Five Heads, and the Five Necks, and the Five Humps. I will show you the way to his house, and I counsel you to do his bidding, nimbly and cheerfully, and, above all, to treat his birds kindly, for in this manner he may give you his falcon to feed and care for. And when this happens, wait till the giant is out of his house; then throw a cloth over the falcon and bear her away with you. Only see that not one of her feathers touches anything within the house, or evil will befall you.’

‘I thank you for your counsel,’ spake Ian Direach, ‘and I will be careful to follow it.’ Then he took the path to the giant’s house.

‘Who is there?’ cried the giant, as someone knocked loudly on the door of his house.

‘One who seeks work as a servant,’ answered Ian Direach.

‘And what can you do?’ asked the giant again.

‘I can feed birds and tend pigs; I can feed and milk a cow, and also goats and sheep, if you have any of these,’ replied Ian Direach.

‘Then enter, for I have great need of such a one,’ said the giant.

So Ian Direach entered, and tended so well and carefully all the birds and beasts, that the giant was better satisfied than ever he had been, and at length he thought that he might even be trusted to feed the falcon. And the heart of Ian was glad, and he tended the blue falcon till his feathers shone like the sky, and the giant was well pleased; and one day he said to him:

‘For long my brothers on the other side of the mountain have besought me to visit them, but never could I go for fear of my falcon. Now I think I can leave her with you for one day, and before nightfall I shall be back again.’

Scarcely was the giant out of sight next morning when Ian Direach seized the falcon, and throwing a cloth over her head hastened with her to the door. But the rays of the sun pierced through the thickness of the cloth, and as they passed the doorpost she gave a spring, and the tip of one of her feathers touched the post, which gave a scream, and brought the giant back in three strides. Ian Direach trembled as he saw him; but the giant only said:

‘If you wish for my falcon you must first bring me the White Sword of Light that is in the house of the Big Women of Dhiurradh.’

‘And where do they live?’ asked Ian. But the giant answered:

‘Ah, that is for you to discover.’ And Ian dared say no more, and hastened down to the waste. There, as he hoped, he met his friend Gille Mairtean the fox, who bade him eat his supper and lie down to sleep. And when he had wakened next morning the fox said to him:

‘Let us go down to the shore of the sea.’ And to the shore of the sea they went. And after they had reached the shore, and beheld the sea stretching before them, and the isle of Dhiurradh in the midst of it, the soul of Ian sank, and he turned to Gille Mairtean and asked why he had brought him thither, for the giant, when he had sent him, had known full well that without a boat he could never find the Big Women.

‘Do not be cast down,’ answered the fox, ‘it is quite easy! I will change myself into a boat, and you shall go on board me, and I will carry you over the sea to the Seven Big Women of Dhiurradh. Tell them that you are skilled in brightening silver and gold, and in the end they will take you as servant, and if you are careful to please them they will give you the White Sword of Light to make bright and shining. But when you seek to steal it, take heed that its sheath touches nothing inside the house, or ill will befall you.’

So Ian Direach did all things as the fox had told him, and the Seven Big Women of Dhiurradh took him for their servant, and for six weeks he worked so hard that his seven mistresses said to each other: ‘Never has a servant had the skill to make all bright and shining like this one. Let us give him the White Sword of Light to polish like the rest.’

Then they brought forth the White Sword of Light from the iron closet where it hung, and bade him rub it till he could see his face in the shining blade; and he did so. But one day, when the Seven Big Women were out of the way, he bethought him that the moment had come for him to carry off the sword, and, replacing it in its sheath, he hoisted it on his shoulder. But just as he was passing through the door the tip of the sheath touched it, and the door gave a loud shriek. And the Big Women heard it, and came running back, and took the sword from him, and said:

‘If it is our sword you want, you must first bring us the bay colt of the King of Erin.’

Humbled and ashamed, Ian Direach left the house, and sat by the side of the sea, and soon Gille Mairtean the fox came to him.

‘Plainly I see that you have taken no heed to my words, Ian Direach,’ spoke the fox. ‘But eat first, and yet once more will I help you.’

At these words the heart returned again to Ian Direach, and he gathered sticks and made a fire and ate with Gille Mairtean the fox, and slept on the sand. At dawn next morning Gille Mairtean said to Ian Direach:

‘I will change myself into a ship, and will bear you across the seas to Erin, to the land where dwells the king. And you shall offer yourself to serve in his stable, and to tend his horses, till at length so well content is he, that he gives you the bay colt to wash and brush. But when you run away with her see that nought except the soles of her hoofs touch anything within the palace gates, or it will go ill with you.’

After he had thus counselled Ian Direach, the fox changed himself into a ship, and set sail for Erin. And the king of that country gave into Ian Direach’s hands the care of his horses, and never before did their skins shine so brightly or was their pace so swift. And the king was well pleased, and at the end of a month he sent for Ian and said to him:

‘You have given me faithful service, and now I will entrust you with the most precious thing that my kingdom holds.’ And when he had spoken, he led Ian Direach to the stable where stood the bay colt. And Ian rubbed her and fed her, and galloped with her all round the country, till he could leave one wind behind him and catch the other which was in front.

‘I am going away to hunt,’ said the king one morning while he was watching Ian tend the bay colt in her stable. ‘The deer have come down from the hill, and it is time for me to give them chase.’ Then he went away; and when he was no longer in sight, Ian Direach led the bay colt out of the stable, and sprang on her back. But as they rode through the gate, which stood between the palace and the outer world, the colt swished her tail against the post, which shrieked loudly. In a moment the king came running up, and he seized the colt’s bridle.

‘If you want my bay colt, you must first bring me the daughter of the king of the Franks.’

With slow steps went Ian Direach down to the shore where Gille Mairtean the fox awaited him.

‘Plainly I see that you have not done as I bid you, nor will you ever do it,’ spoke Gille Mairtean the fox; ‘but I will help you yet again. For a third time I will change myself into a ship, and we will sail to France.’

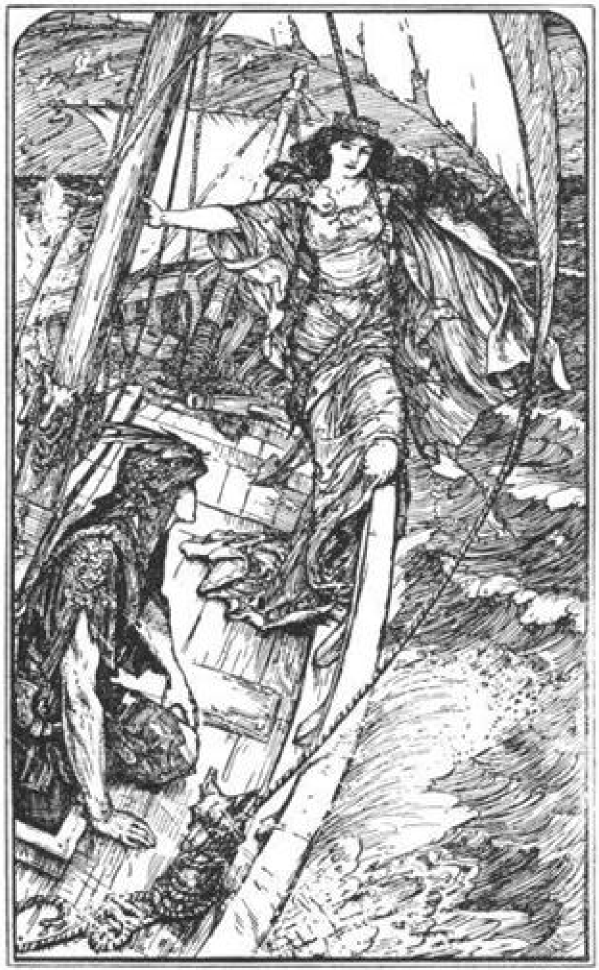

THE PRINCESS FINDS HERSELF A PRISONER ON THE SHIP

And to France they sailed, and, as he was the ship, the Gille Mairtean sailed where he would, and ran himself into the cleft of a rock, high on to the land. Then he commanded Ian Direach to go up to the king’s palace, saying that he had been wrecked, that his ship was made fast in a rock, and that none had been saved but himself only.

Ian Direach listened to the words of the fox, and he told a tale so pitiful, that the king and queen, and the princess their daughter, all came out to hear it. And when they had heard, nought would please them except to go down to the shore and visit the ship, which by now was floating, for the tide was up. Torn and battered was she, as if she had passed through many dangers, yet music of a wondrous sweetness poured forth from within.

‘Bring hither a boat,’ cried the princess, ‘that I may go and see for myself the harp that gives forth such music,’ And a boat was brought, and Ian Direach stepped in to row it to the side of the ship.

To the further side he rowed, so that none could see, and when he helped the princess on board he gave a push to the boat, so that she could not get back to it again. And the music sounded always sweeter, though they could never see whence it came, and sought it from one part of the vessel to another. When at last they reached the deck and looked around them, nought of land could they see, or anything save the rushing waters.

The princess stood silent, and her face grew grim. At last she said:

‘An ill trick have you played me! What is this that you have done, and whither are we going?’

‘It is a queen you will be,’ answered Ian Direach, ‘for the king of Erin has sent me for you, and in return he will give me his bay colt, that I may take him to the Seven Big Women of Dhiurradh, in exchange for the White Sword of Light. This I must carry to the giant of the Five Heads and Five Necks and Five Humps, and in place of it, he will bestow on me the blue falcon, which I have promised my stepmother, so that she may free me from the spell which she has laid on me.’

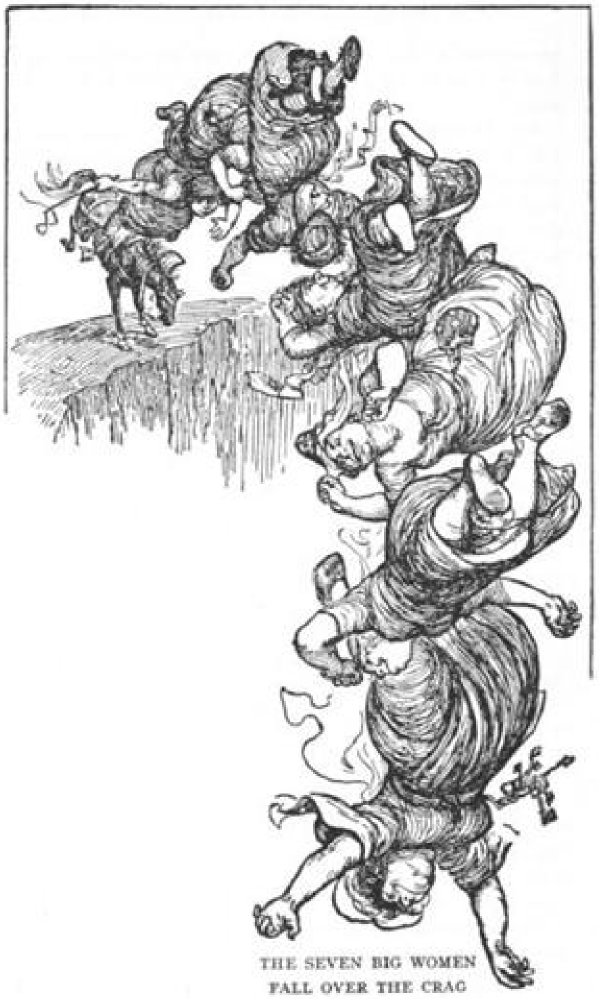

THE SEVEN BIG WOMEN FALL OVER THE CRAG

‘I would rather be wife to you,’ answered the princess.

By-and-by the ship sailed into a harbour on the coast of Erin, and cast anchor there. And Gille Mairtean the fox bade Ian Direach tell the princess that she must bide yet a while in a cave amongst the rocks, for they had business on land, and after a while they would return to her. Then they took a boat and rowed up to some rocks, and as they touched the land Gille Mairtean changed himself into a fair woman, who laughed and said to Ian Direach, ‘I will give the king a fine wife.’

Now the king of Erin had been hunting on the hill, and when he saw a strange ship sailing towards the harbour, he guessed that it might be Ian Direach, and left his hunting, and ran down the hill to the stable. Hastily he led the bay colt from his stall, and put the golden saddle on her back, and the silver bridle over his head, and with the colt’s bridle in his hand, he hurried to meet the princess.

‘I have brought you the king of France’s daughter,’ said Ian Direach. And the king of Erin looked at the maiden, and was well pleased, not knowing that it was Gille Mairtean the fox. And he bowed low, and besought her to do him the honour to enter the palace; and Gille Mairtean, as he went in, turned to look back at Ian Direach, and laughed.

In the great hall the king paused and pointed to an iron chest which stood in a corner.

‘In that chest is the crown that has waited for you for many years,’ he said, ‘and at last you have come for it.’ And he stooped down to unlock the box.

In an instant Gille Mairtean the fox had sprung on his back, and gave him such a bite that he fell down unconscious. Quickly the fox took his own shape again, and galloped away to the sea shore, where Ian Direach and the princess and the bay colt awaited him.

‘I will become a ship,’ cried Gille Mairtean, ‘and you shall go on board me.’ And so he did, and Ian Direach led the bay colt into the ship and the princess went after them, and they set sail for Dhiurradh. The wind was behind them, and very soon they saw the rocks of Dhiurradh in front. Then spoke Gille Mairtean the fox:

‘Let the bay colt and the king’s daughter hide in these rocks, and I will change myself into the colt, and go with you to the house of the Seven Big Women.’

Joy filled the hearts of the Big Women when they beheld the bay colt led up to their door by Ian Direach. And the youngest of them fetched the White Sword of Light, and gave it into the hands of Ian Direach, who took off the golden saddle and the silver bridle, and went down the hill with the sword to the place where the princess and the real colt awaited him.

‘Now we shall have the ride that we have longed for!’ cried the Seven Big Women; and they saddled and bridled the colt, and the eldest one got upon the saddle. Then the second sister sat on the back of the first, and the third on the back of the second, and so on for the whole seven. And when they were all seated, the eldest struck her side with a whip and the colt bounded forward. Over the moors she flew, and round and round the mountains, and still the Big Women clung to her and snorted with pleasure. At last she leapt high in the air, and came down on top of Monadh the high hill, where the crag is. And she rested her fore feet on the crag, and threw up her hind legs, and the Seven Big Women fell over the crag, and were dead when they reached the bottom. And the colt laughed, and became a fox again and galloped away to the sea shore, where Ian Direach, and the princess and the real colt and the White Sword of Light were waiting him.

‘I will make myself into a ship,’ said Gille Mairtean the fox, ‘and will carry you and the princess, and the bay colt and the White Sword of Light, back to the land.’ And when the shore was reached, Gille Mairtean the fox took back his own shape, and spoke to Ian Direach in this wise:

‘Let the princess and the White Sword of Light, and the bay colt, remain among the rocks, and I will change myself into the likeness of the White Sword of Light, and you shall bear me to the giant, and, instead, he will give you the blue falcon.’ And Ian Direach did as the fox bade him, and set out for the giant’s castle. From afar the giant beheld the blaze of the White Sword of Light, and his heart rejoiced; and he took the blue falcon and put it in a basket, and gave it to Ian Direach, who bore it swiftly away to the place where the princess, and the bay colt, and the real Sword of Light were awaiting him.

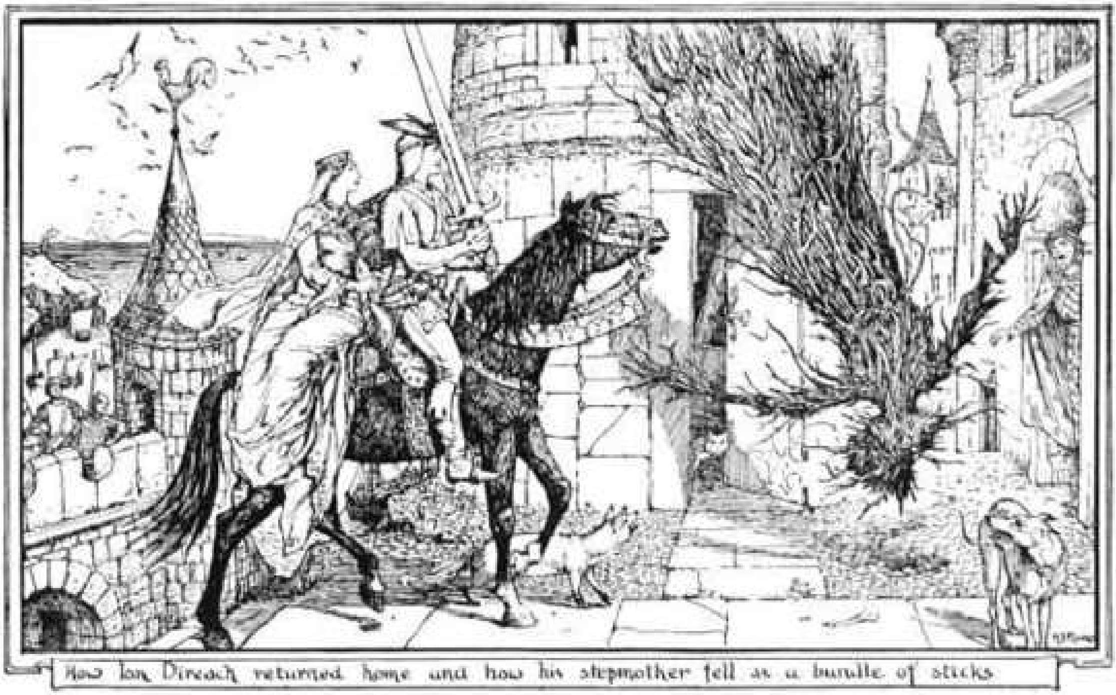

How Ian Direach returned home and how his stepmother fell as a bundle of sticks

So well content was the giant to possess the sword he had coveted for many a year, that he began at once to whirl it through the air, and to cut and slash with it. For a little while Gille Mairtean let the giant play with him in this manner; then he turned in the giant’s hand, and cut through the Five Necks, so that the Five Heads rolled on the ground. Afterwards he went back to Ian Direach and said to him:

‘Saddle the colt with the golden saddle, and bridle her with the silver bridle, and sling the basket with the falcon over your shoulders, and hold the White Sword of Light with its back against your nose. Then mount the colt, and let the princess mount behind you, and ride thus to your father’s palace. But see that the back of the sword is ever against your nose, else when your stepmother beholds you, she will change you into a dry faggot. If, however, you do as I bid you, she will become herself a bundle of sticks.’

Ian Direach hearkened to the words of Gille Mairtean, and his stepmother fell as a bundle of sticks before him; and he set fire to her, and was free from her spells for ever. After that he married the princess, who was the best wife in all the islands of the West. Henceforth he was safe from harm, for had he not the bay colt who could leave one wind behind her and catch the other wind, and the blue falcon to bring him game to eat, and the White Sword of Light to pierce through his foes?

And Ian Direach knew that all this he owed to Gille Mairtean the fox, and he made a compact with him that he might choose any beast out of his herds, whenever hunger seized him, and that henceforth no arrow should be let fly at him or at any of his race. But Gille Mairtean the fox would take no reward for the help he had given to Ian Direach, only his friendship. Thus all things prospered with Ian Direach till he died.

(From *Tales of the West Highlands*.)

THE UGLY DUCKLING

It was summer in the land of Denmark, and though for most of the year the country looks flat and ugly, it was beautiful now. The wheat was yellow, the oats were green, the hay was dry and delicious to roll in, and from the old ruined house which nobody lived in, down to the edge of the canal, was a forest of great burdocks, so tall that a whole family of children might have dwelt in them and never have been found out.

It was under these burdocks that a duck had built herself a warm nest, and was now sitting all day on six pretty eggs. Five of them were white, but the sixth, which was larger than the others, was of an ugly grey colour. The duck was always puzzled about that egg, and how it came to be so different from the rest. Other birds might have thought that when the duck went down in the morning and evening to the water to stretch her legs in a good swim, some lazy mother might have been on the watch, and have popped her egg into the nest. But ducks are not clever at all, and are not quick at counting, so this duck did not worry herself about the matter, but just took care that the big egg should be as warm as the rest.

This was the first set of eggs that the duck had ever laid, and, to begin with, she was very pleased and proud, and laughed at the other mothers, who were always neglecting their duties to gossip with each other or to take little extra swims besides the two in the morning and evening that were necessary for health. But at length she grew tired of sitting there all day. ‘Surely eggs take longer hatching than they did,’ she said to herself; and she pined for a little amusement also. Still, she knew that if she left her eggs and the ducklings in them to die none of her friends would ever speak to her again; so there she stayed, only getting off the eggs several times a day to see if the shells were cracking — which may have been the very reason why they did not crack sooner.

She had looked at the eggs at least a hundred and fifty times, when, to her joy, she saw a tiny crack on two of them, and scrambling back to the nest she drew the eggs closer the one to the other, and never moved for the whole of that day. Next morning she was rewarded by noticing cracks in the whole five eggs, and by midday two little yellow heads were poking out from the shells. This encouraged her so much that, after breaking the shells with her bill, so that the little creatures could get free of them, she sat steadily for a whole night upon the nest, and before the sun arose the five white eggs were empty, and ten pairs of eyes were gazing out upon the green world.

Now the duck had been carefully brought up, and did not like dirt, and, besides, broken egg shells are not at all comfortable things to sit or walk upon; so she pushed the rest out over the side, and felt delighted to have some company to talk to till the big egg hatched. But day after day went on, and the big egg showed no signs of cracking, and the duck grew more and more impatient, and began to wish to consult her husband, who never came.

‘I can’t think what is the matter with it,’ the duck grumbled to her neighbour who had called in to pay her a visit. ‘Why I could have hatched two broods in the time that this one has taken!’

‘Let me look at it,’ said the old neighbour. ‘Ah, I thought so; it is a turkey’s egg. Once, when I was young, they tricked me to sitting on a brood of turkey’s eggs myself, and when they were hatched the creatures were so stupid that nothing would make them learn to swim. I have no patience when I think of it.’

‘Well, I will give it another chance,’ sighed the duck, ‘and if it does not come out of its shell in another twenty-four hours, I will just leave it alone and teach the rest of them to swim properly and to find their own food. I really can’t be expected to do two things at once.’ And with a fluff of her feathers she pushed the egg into the middle of the nest.

All through the next day she sat on, giving up even her morning bath for fear that a blast of cold might strike the big egg. In the evening, when she ventured to peep, she thought she saw a tiny crack in the upper part of the shell. Filled with hope, she went back to her duties, though she could hardly sleep all night for excitement. When she woke with the first streaks of light she felt something stirring under her. Yes, there it was at last; and as she moved, a big awkward bird tumbled head foremost on the ground.

There was no denying it was ugly, even the mother was forced to admit that to herself, though she only said it was ‘large’ and ‘strong.’ ‘You won’t need any teaching when you are once in the water,’ she told him, with a glance of surprise at the dull brown which covered his back, and at his long naked neck. And indeed he did not, though he was not half so pretty to look at as the little yellow balls that followed her.

When they returned they found the old neighbour on the bank waiting for them to take them into the duckyard. ‘No, it is not a young turkey, certainly,’ whispered she in confidence to the mother, ‘for though it is lean and skinny, and has no colour to speak of, yet there is something rather distinguished about it, and it holds its head up well.’

‘It is very kind of you to say so,’ answered the mother, who by this time had some secret doubts of its loveliness. ‘Of course, when you see it by itself it is all right, though it is different, somehow, from the others. But one cannot expect *all* one’s children to be beautiful!’

By this time they had reached the centre of the yard, where a very old duck was sitting, who was treated with great respect by all the fowls present.

‘You must go up and bow low before her,’ whispered the mother to her children, nodding her head in the direction of the old lady, ‘and keep your legs well apart, as you see me do. No well-bred duckling turns in its toes. It is a sign of common parents.’

The little ducks tried hard to make their small fat bodies copy the movements of their mother, and the old lady was quite pleased with them; but the rest of the ducks looked on discontentedly, and said to each other:

‘Oh, dear me, here are ever so many more! The yard is full already; and did you *ever* see anything quite as ugly as that great tall creature? He is a disgrace to any brood. I shall go and chase him out!’ So saying she put up her feathers, and running to the big duckling bit his neck.

The duckling gave a loud quack; it was the first time he had felt any pain, and at the sound his mother turned quickly.

‘Leave him alone,’ she said fiercely, ‘or I will send for his father. He was not troubling *you*.’

‘No; but he is so ugly and awkward no one can put up with him,’ answered the stranger. And though the duckling did not understand the meaning of the words, he felt he was being blamed, and became more uncomfortable still when the old Spanish duck who ruled the fowl-yard struck in:

‘It certainly *is* a great pity he is so different from these beautiful darlings. If he could only be hatched over again!’

The poor little fellow drooped his head, and did not know where to look, but was comforted when his mother answered:

‘He may not be quite as handsome as the others, but he swims better, and is very strong; I am sure he will make his way in the world as well as anybody.’

‘Well, you must feel quite at home here,’ said the old duck waddling off. And so they did, all except the duckling, who was snapped at by everyone when they thought his mother was not looking. Even the turkeycock, who was so big, never passed him without mocking words, and his brothers and sisters, who would not have noticed any difference unless it had been put into their heads, soon became as rude and unkind as the rest.

At last he could bear it no longer, and one day he fancied he saw signs of his mother turning against him too; so that night, when the ducks and hens were still asleep, he stole away through an open door, and under cover of the burdock leaves scrambled on by the bank of the canal, till he reached a wide grassy moor, full of soft marshy places where the reeds grew. Here he lay down, but he was too tired and too frightened to fall asleep, and with the earliest peep of the sun the reeds began to rustle, and he saw that he had blundered into a colony of wild ducks. But as he could not run away again he stood up and bowed politely.

‘You *are* ugly,’ said the wild ducks, when they had looked him well over; ‘but, however, it is no business of ours, unless you wish to marry one of our daughters, and that we should not allow.’ And the duckling answered that he had no idea of marrying anybody, and wanted nothing but to be left alone after his long journey.

So for two whole days he lay quietly among the reeds, eating such food as he could find, and drinking the water of the moorland pool, till he felt himself quite strong again. He wished he might stay where he was for ever, he was so comfortable and happy, away from everyone, with nobody to bite him and tell him how ugly he was.

He was thinking these thoughts, when two young ganders caught sight of him as they were having their evening splash among the reeds, looking for their supper.

‘We are getting tired of this moor,’ they said, ‘and to-morrow we think of trying another, where the lakes are larger and the feeding better. Will you come with us?’

‘Is it nicer than this?’ asked the duckling doubtfully. And the words were hardly out of his mouth, when ‘Pif! paf!’ and the two new-comers were stretched dead beside him.

At the sound of the gun the wild ducks in the rushes flew into the air, and for a few minutes the firing continued.

Luckily for himself the duckling could not fly, and he floundered along through the water till he could hide himself amidst some tall ferns which grew in a hollow. But before he got there he met a huge creature on four legs, which he afterwards knew to be a dog, who stood and gazed at him with a long red tongue hanging out of his mouth. The duckling grew cold with terror, and tried to hide his head beneath his little wings; but the dog snuffed at him and passed on, and he was able to reach his place of shelter.

‘I am too ugly even for a dog to eat,’ said he to himself. ‘Well, that is a great mercy.’ And he curled himself up in the soft grass till the shots died away in the distance.

When all had been quiet for a long time, and there were only the stars to see him, he crept out and looked about him.

He would never go near a pool again, *never*, thought he; and seeing that the moor stretched far away in the opposite direction from which he had come, he marched bravely on till he got to a small cottage, which seemed too tumbledown for the stones to hold together many hours longer. Even the door only hung upon one hinge, and as the only light in the room sprang from a tiny fire, the duckling edged himself cautiously in, and lay down, under a chair close to the broken door, from which he could get out if necessary. But no one seemed to see him or smell him; so he spent the rest of the night in peace.

Now in the cottage dwelt an old woman, her cat, and a hen; and it was really they, and not *she*, who were masters of the house. The old woman, who passed all her days in spinning yarn, which she sold at the nearest town, loved both the cat and the hen as her own children, and never contradicted them in any way; so it was their grace, and not hers, that the duckling would have to gain.

It was only next morning, when it grew light, that they noticed their visitor, who stood trembling before them, with his eye on the door ready to escape at any moment. They did not, however, appear very fierce, and the duckling became less afraid as they approached him.

‘Can you lay eggs?’ asked the hen. And the duckling answered meekly:

‘No; I don’t know how.’ Upon which the hen turned her back, and the cat came forward.

‘Can you ruffle your fur when you are angry, or purr when you are pleased?’ said she. And again the duckling had to admit that he could do nothing but swim, which did not seem of much use to anybody.

So the cat and the hen went straight off to the old woman, who was still in bed.

‘Such a useless creature has taken refuge here,’ they said. ‘It calls itself a duckling; but it can neither lay eggs nor purr! What had we better do with it?’

‘Keep it, to be sure!’ replied the old woman briskly. ‘It is all nonsense about it not laying eggs. Anyway, we will let it stay here for a bit, and see what happens.’

So the duckling remained for three weeks, and shared the food of the cat and the hen; but nothing in the way of eggs happened at all. Then the sun came out, and the air grew soft, and the duckling grew tired of being in a hut, and wanted with all his might to have a swim. And one morning he got so restless that even his friends noticed it.

‘What is the matter?’ asked the hen; and the duckling told her.

‘I am so longing for the water again. You can’t think how delicious it is to put your head under the water and dive straight to the bottom.’

‘I don’t think *I* should enjoy it,’ replied the hen doubtfully. ‘And I don’t think the cat would like it either.’ And the cat, when asked, agreed there was nothing she would hate so much.

‘I can’t stay here any longer, I *must* get to the water,’ repeated the duck. And the cat and the hen, who felt hurt and offended, answered shortly:

‘Very well then, go.’

The duckling would have liked to say good-bye, and thank them for their kindness, as he was polite by nature; but they had both turned their backs on him, so he went out of the rickety door feeling rather sad. But, in spite of himself, he could not help a thrill of joy when he was out in the air and water once more, and cared little for the rude glances of the creatures he met. For a while he was quite happy and content; but soon the winter came on, and snow began to fall, and everything to grow very wet and uncomfortable. And the duckling soon found that it is one thing to enjoy being in the water, and quite another to like being damp on land.

The sun was setting one day, like a great scarlet globe, and the river, to the duckling’s vast bewilderment, was getting hard and slippery, when he heard a sound of whirring wings, and high up in the air a flock of swans were flying. They were as white as the snow which had fallen during the night, and their long necks with yellow bills were stretched southwards, for they were going — they did not quite know whither — but to a land where the sun shone all day. Oh, if he only could have gone with them! But that was not possible, of course; and besides, what sort of companion could an ugly thing like him be to those beautiful beings? So he walked sadly down to a sheltered pool and dived to the very bottom, and tried to think it was the greatest happiness he could dream of. But, all the same, he knew it wasn’t!

And every morning it grew colder and colder, and the duckling had hard work to keep himself warm. Indeed, it would be truer to say that he never was warm at all; and at last, after one bitter night, his legs moved so slowly that the ice crept closer and closer, and when the morning light broke he was caught fast, as in a trap; and soon his senses went from him.

A few hours more and the poor duckling’s life had been ended. But, by good fortune, a man was crossing the river on his way to his work, and saw in a moment what had happened. He had on thick wooden shoes, and he went and stamped so hard on the ice that it broke, and then he picked up the duckling and tucked him under his sheep-skin coat, where his frozen bones began to thaw a little.

Instead of going on to his work, the man turned back and took the bird to his children, who gave him a warm mess to eat and put him in a box by the fire, and when they came back from school he was much more comfortable than he had been since he had left the old woman’s cottage. They were kind little children, and wanted to play with him; but, alas! the poor fellow had never played in his life, and thought they wanted to tease him, and flew straight into the milk-pan, and then into the butter-dish, and from that into the meal-barrel, and at last, terrified at the noise and confusion, right out of the door, and hid himself in the snow amongst the bushes at the back of the house.

He never could tell afterwards exactly how he had spent the rest of the winter. He only knew that he was very miserable and that he never had enough to eat. But by-and-by things grew better. The earth became softer, the sun hotter, the birds sang, and the flowers once more appeared in the grass. When he stood up, he felt different, somehow, from what he had done before he fell asleep among the reeds to which he had wandered after he had escaped from the peasant’s hut. His body seemed larger, and his wings stronger. Something pink looked at him from the side of a hill. He thought he would fly towards it and see what it was.

Oh, how glorious it felt to be rushing through the air, wheeling first one way and then the other! He had never thought that flying could be like that! The duckling was almost sorry when he drew near the pink cloud and found it was made up of apple blossoms growing beside a cottage whose garden ran down to the banks of the canal. He fluttered slowly to the ground and paused for a few minutes under a thicket of syringas, and while he was gazing about him, there walked slowly past a flock of the same beautiful birds he had seen so many months ago. Fascinated, he watched them one by one step into the canal, and float quietly upon the waters as if they were part of them.

‘I will follow them,’ said the duckling to himself; ‘ugly though I am, I would rather be killed by them than suffer all I have suffered from cold and hunger, and from the ducks and fowls who should have treated me kindly.’ And flying quickly down to the water, he swam after them as fast as he could.

It did not take him long to reach them, for they had stopped to rest in a green pool shaded by a tree whose branches swept the water. And directly they saw him coming some of the younger ones swam out to meet him with cries of welcome, which again the duckling hardly understood. He approached them glad, yet trembling, and turning to one of the older birds, who by this time had left the shade of the tree, he said:

‘If I am to die, I would rather you should kill me. I don’t know why I was ever hatched, for I am too ugly to live.’ And as he spoke, he bowed his head and looked down into the water.

Reflected in the still pool he saw many white shapes, with long necks and golden bills, and, without thinking, he looked for the dull grey body and the awkward skinny neck. But no such thing was there. Instead, he beheld beneath him a beautiful white swan!

‘The new one is the best of all,’ said the children when they came down to feed the swans with biscuit and cake before going to bed. ‘His feathers are whiter and his beak more golden than the rest.’ And when he heard that, the duckling thought that it was worth while having undergone all the persecution and loneliness that he had passed through, as otherwise he would never have known what it was to be really happy.

(Hans Andersen.)

THE TWO CASKETS

Far, far away, in the midst of a pine forest, there lived a woman who had both a daughter and a stepdaughter. Ever since her own daughter was born the mother had given her all that she cried for, so she grew up to be as cross and disagreeable as she was ugly. Her stepsister, on the other hand, had spent her childhood in working hard to keep house for her father, who died soon after his second marriage; and she was as much beloved by the neighbours for her goodness and industry as she was for her beauty.

As the years went on, the difference between the two girls grew more marked, and the old woman treated her stepdaughter worse than ever, and was always on the watch for some pretext for beating her, or depriving her of her food. Anything, however foolish, was good enough for this, and one day, when she could think of nothing better, she set both the girls to spin while sitting on the low wall of the well.

‘And you had better mind what you do,’ said she, ‘for the one whose thread breaks first shall be thrown to the bottom.’

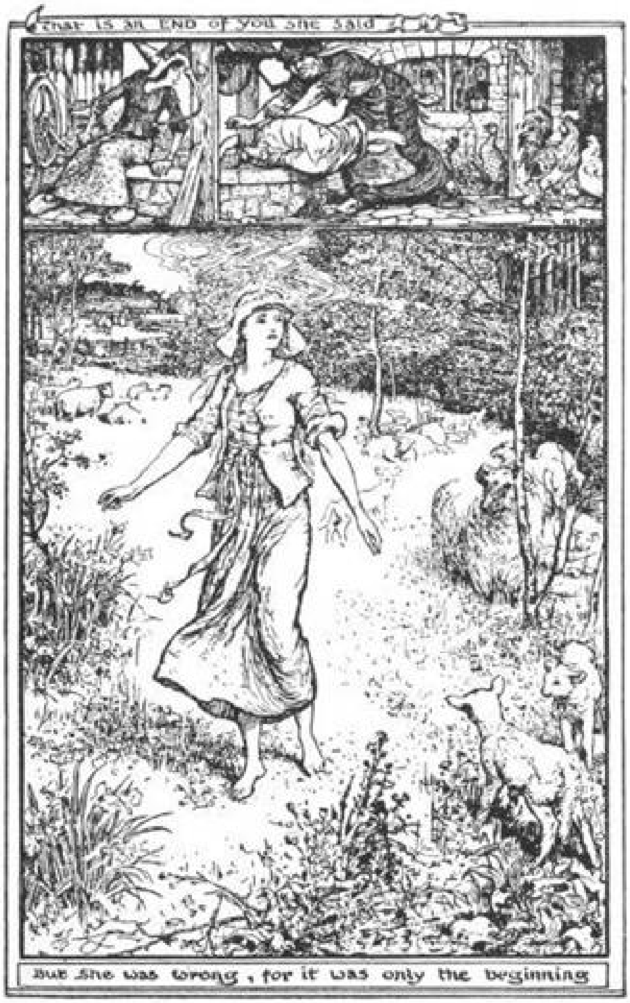
That is an END of you she said
But she was wrong, for it was only the beginning

But of course she took good care that her own daughter’s flax was fine and strong, while the stepsister had only some coarse stuff, which no one would have thought of using. As might be expected, in a very little while the poor girl’s thread snapped, and the old woman, who had been watching from behind a door, seized her stepdaughter by her shoulders, and threw her into the well.

‘That is an end of you!’ she said. But she was wrong, for it was only the beginning.

Down, down, down went the girl — it seemed as if the well must reach to the very middle of the earth; but at last her feet touched the ground, and she found herself in a field more beautiful than even the summer pastures of her native mountains. Trees waved in the soft breeze, and flowers of the brightest colours danced in the grass. And though she was quite alone, the girl’s heart danced too, for she felt happier than she had done since her father died. So she walked on through the meadow till she came to an old tumbledown fence — so old that it was a wonder it managed to stand up at all, and it looked as if it depended for support on the old man’s beard that climbed all over it.

The girl paused for a moment as she came up, and gazed about for a place where she might safely cross. But before she could move a voice cried from the fence:

‘Do not hurt me, little maiden; I am so old, so old, I have not much longer to live.’

And the maiden answered:

‘No, I will not hurt you; fear nothing.’ And then, seeing a spot where the clematis grew less thickly than in other places, she jumped lightly over.

‘May all go well with thee,’ said the fence, as the girl walked on.

She soon left the meadow and turned into a path which ran between two flowery hedges. Right in front of her stood an oven, and through its open door she could see a pile of white loaves.

‘Eat as many loaves as you like, but do me no harm, little maiden,’ cried the oven. And the maiden told her to fear nothing, for she never hurt anything, and was very grateful for the oven’s kindness in giving her such a beautiful white loaf. When she had finished it, down to the last crumb, she shut the oven door and said: ‘Good-morning.’

‘May all go well with thee,’ said the oven, as the girl walked on.

By-and-by she became very thirsty, and seeing a cow with a milk-pail hanging on her horn, turned towards her.

‘Milk me and drink as much as you will, little maiden,’ cried the cow, ‘but be sure you spill none on the ground; and do me no harm, for I have never harmed anyone.’

‘Nor I,’ answered the girl; ‘fear nothing.’ So she sat down and milked till the pail was nearly full. Then she drank it all up except a little drop at the bottom.

‘Now throw any that is left over my hoofs, and hang the pail on my horns again,’ said the cow. And the girl did as she was bid, and kissed the cow on her forehead and went her way.

Many hours had now passed since the girl had fallen down the well, and the sun was setting.

‘Where shall I spend the night?’ thought she. And suddenly she saw before her a gate which she had not noticed before, and a very old woman leaning against it.

‘Good evening,’ said the girl politely; and the old woman answered:

‘Good evening, my child. Would that everyone was as polite as you. Are you in search of anything?’

‘I am in search of a place,’ replied the girl; and the woman smiled and said:

‘Then stop a little while and comb my hair, and you shall tell me all the things you can do.’

‘Willingly, mother,’ answered the girl. And she began combing out the old woman’s hair, which was long and white.

Half an hour passed in this way, and then the old woman said:

‘As you did not think yourself too good to comb me, I will show you where you may take service. Be prudent and patient and all will go well.’

So the girl thanked her, and set out for a farm at a little distance, where she was engaged to milk the cows and sift the corn.

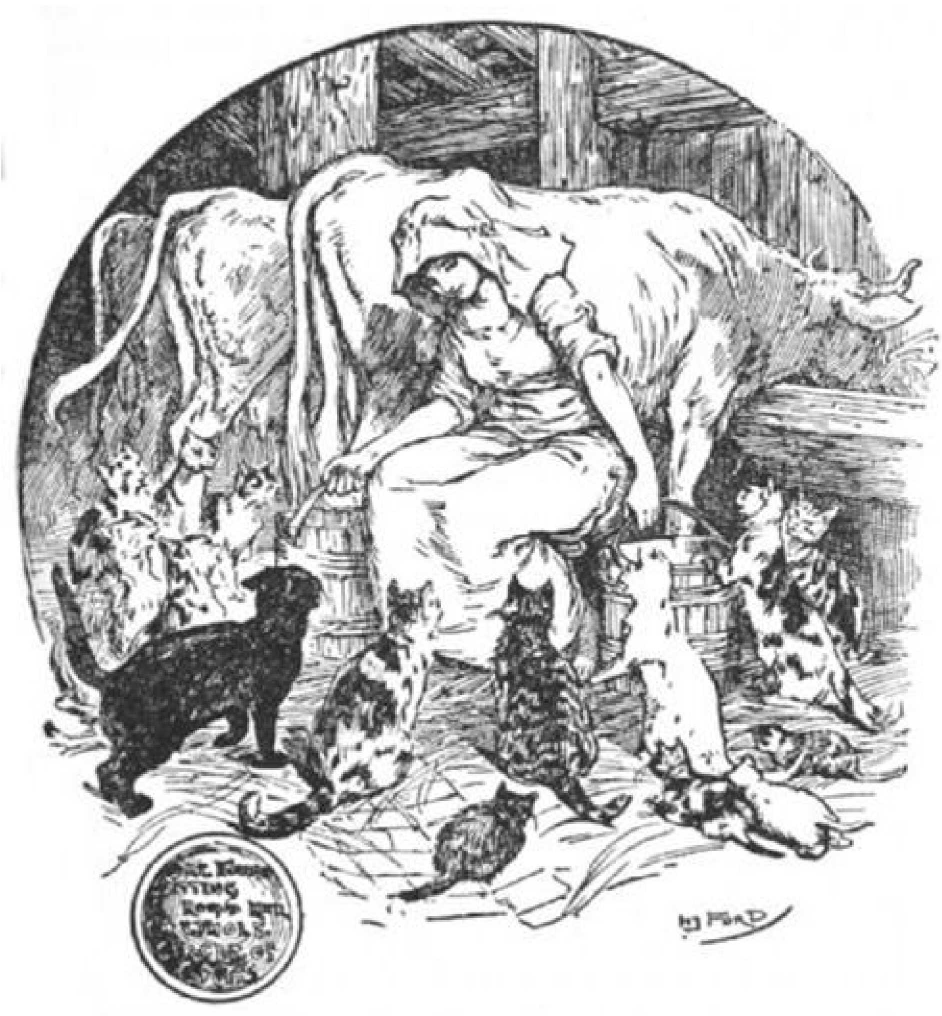

As soon as it was light next morning the girl got up and went into the cow-house. ‘I’m sure you must be hungry,’ said she, patting each in turn. And then she fetched hay from the barn, and while they were eating it, she swept out the cow-house, and strewed clean straw upon the floor. The cows were so pleased with the care she took of them that they stood quite still while she milked them, and did not play any of the tricks on her that they had played on other dairymaids who were rough and rude. And when she had done, and was going to get up from her stool, she found sitting round her a whole circle of cats, black and white, tabby and tortoiseshell, who all cried with one voice:

‘We are very thirsty, please give us some milk!’

‘My poor little pussies,’ said she, ‘of course you shall have some.’ And she went into the dairy, followed by all the cats, and gave each one a little red saucerful. But before they drank they all rubbed themselves against her knees and purred by way of thanks.

The next thing the girl had to do was to go to the storehouse, and to sift the corn through a sieve. While she was busy rubbing the corn she heard a whirr of wings, and a flock of sparrows flew in at the window.

‘We are hungry; give us some corn! give us some corn!’ cried they; and the girl answered:

‘You poor little birds, of course you shall have some!’ and scattered a fine handful over the floor. When they had finished they flew on her shoulders and flapped their wings by way of thanks.

Time went by, and no cows in the whole country-side were so fat and well tended as hers, and no dairy had so much milk to show. The farmer’s wife was so well satisfied that she gave her higher wages, and treated her like her own daughter. At length, one day, the girl was bidden by her mistress to come into the kitchen, and when there, the old woman said to her: ‘I know you can tend cows and keep a dairy; now let me see what you can do besides. Take this sieve to the well, and fill it with water, and bring it home to me without spilling one drop by the way.’

The girl’s heart sank at this order; for how was it possible for her to do her mistress’s bidding? However, she was silent, and taking the sieve went down to the well with it. Stooping over the side, she filled it to the brim, but as soon as she lifted it the water all ran out of the holes. Again and again she tried, but not a drop would remain in the sieve, and she was just turning away in despair when a flock of sparrows flew down from the sky.

‘Ashes! ashes!’ they twittered; and the girl looked at them and said:

‘Well, I can’t be in a worse plight than I am already, so I will take your advice.’ And she ran back to the kitchen and filled her sieve with ashes. Then once more she dipped the sieve into the well, and, behold, this time not a drop of water disappeared!

‘Here is the sieve, mistress,’ cried the girl, going to the room where the old woman was sitting.

‘You are cleverer than I expected,’ answered she; ‘or else someone helped you who is skilled in magic.’ But the girl kept silence, and the old woman asked her no more questions.

Many days passed during which the girl went about her work as usual, but at length one day the old woman called her and said:

'I have something more for you to do. There are here two yarns, the one white, the other black. What you must do is to wash them in the river till the black one becomes white and the white black.' And the girl took them to the river and washed hard for several hours, but wash as she would they never changed one whit.

'This is worse than the sieve,' thought she, and was about to give up in despair when there came a rush of wings through the air, and on every twig of the birch trees which grew by the bank was perched a sparrow.

'The black to the east, the white to the west!' they sang, all at once; and the girl dried her tears and felt brave again. Picking up the black yarn, she stood facing the east and dipped it in the river, and in an instant it grew white as snow, then turning to the west, she held the white yarn in the water, and it became as black as a crow's wing. She looked back at the sparrows and smiled and nodded to them, and flapping their wings in reply they flew swiftly away.

At the sight of the yarn the old woman was struck dumb; but when at length she found her voice she asked the girl what magician had helped her to do what no one had done before. But she got no answer, for the maiden was afraid of bringing trouble on her little friends.

For many weeks the mistress shut herself up in her room, and the girl went about her work as usual. She hoped that there was an end to the difficult tasks which had been set her; but in this she was mistaken, for one day the old woman appeared suddenly in the kitchen, and said to her:

'There is one more trial to which I must put you, and if you do not fail in that you will be left in peace for evermore. Here are the yarns which you washed. Take them and weave them into a web that is as smooth as a king's robe, and see that it is spun by the time that the sun sets.'

'This is the easiest thing I have been set to do,' thought the girl, who was a good spinner. But when she began she found that the skein tangled and broke every moment.

'Oh, I can never do it!' she cried at last, and leaned her head against the loom and wept; but at that instant the door opened, and there entered, one behind another, a procession of cats.

'What is the matter, fair maiden?' asked they. And the girl answered:

'My mistress has given me this yarn to weave into a piece of cloth, which must be finished by sunset, and I have not even begun yet, for the yarn breaks whenever I touch it.'

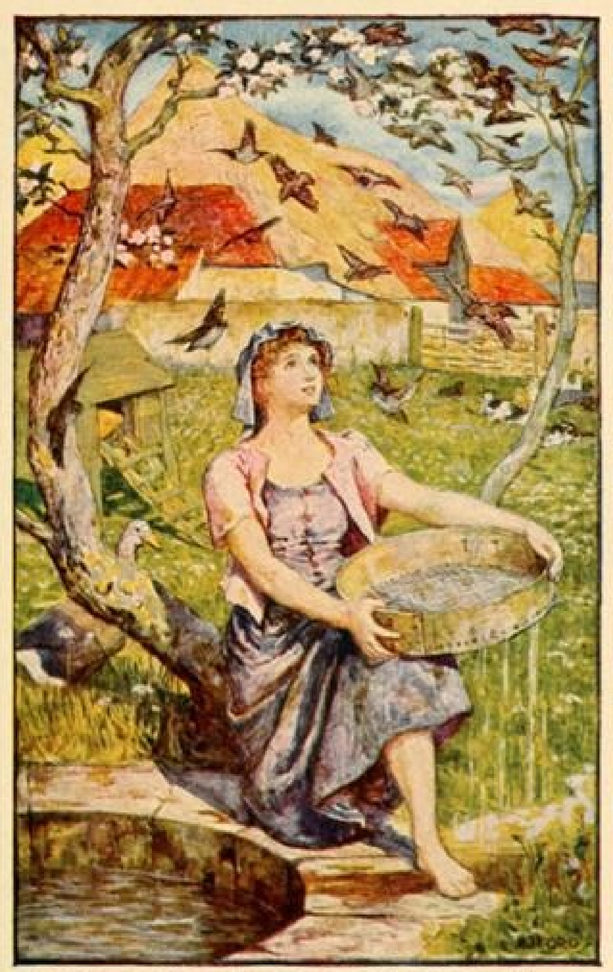

ASHES · ASHES · TWITTERED · THE · SPARROWS ·

‘If that is all, dry your eyes,’ said the cats; ‘we will manage it for you.’ And they jumped on the loom, and wove so fast and so skilfully that in a very short time the cloth was ready and was as fine as any king ever wore. The girl was so delighted at the sight of it that she gave each cat a kiss on his forehead as they left the room one behind the other as they had come.

‘Who has taught you this wisdom?’ asked the old woman, after she had passed her hands twice or thrice over the cloth and could find no roughness anywhere. But the girl only smiled and did not answer. She had learned early the value of silence.

After a few weeks the old woman sent for her maid and told her that as her year of service was now up, she was free to return home, but that, for her part, the girl had served her so well that she hoped she might stay with her. But at these words the maid shook her head, and answered gently:

‘I have been happy here, Madam, and I thank you for your goodness to me; but I have left behind me a stepsister and a stepmother, and I am fain to be with them once more.’ The old woman looked at her for a moment, and then she said:

‘Well, that must be as you like; but as you have worked faithfully for me I will give you a reward. Go now into the loft above the storehouse and there you will find many caskets. Choose the one which pleases you best, but be careful not to open it till you have set it in the place where you wish it to remain.’

The girl left the room to go to the loft, and as soon as she got outside, she found all the cats waiting for her. Walking in procession, as was their custom, they followed her into the loft, which was filled with caskets big and little, plain and splendid. She lifted up one and looked at it, and then put it down to examine another yet more beautiful. Which should she choose, the yellow or the blue, the red or the green, the gold or the silver? She hesitated long, and went first to one and then to another, when she heard the cats’ voices calling: ‘Take the black! take the black!’

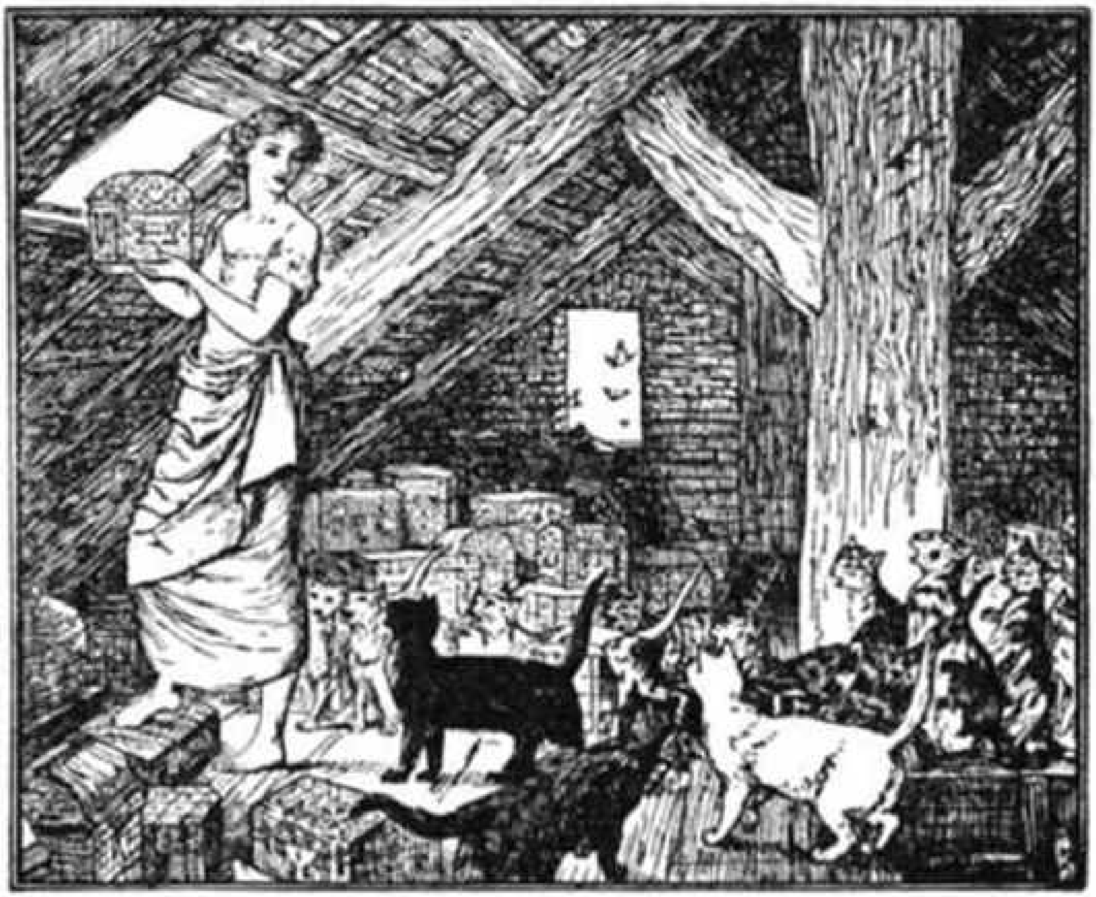

TAKE THE BLACK TAKE THE BLACK cried the cats

The words made her look round — she had seen no black casket, but as the cats continued their cry she peered into several corners that had remained unnoticed, and at length discovered a little black box, so small and so black, that it might easily have been passed over.

‘This is the casket that pleases me best, mistress,’ said the girl, carrying it into the house. And the old woman smiled and nodded, and bade her go her way. So the girl set forth, after bidding farewell to the cows and the cats and the sparrows, who all wept as they said good-bye.

She walked on and on and on, till she reached the flowery meadow, and there, suddenly, something happened, she never knew what, but she was sitting on the wall of the well in her stepmother’s yard. Then she got up and entered the house.

The woman and her daughter stared as if they had been turned into stone; but at length the stepmother gasped out:

‘So you are alive after all! Well, luck was ever against me! And where have you been this year past?’ Then the girl told how she had taken service in the under-world, and, besides her wages, had brought home with her a little casket, which she would like to set up in her room.

‘Give me the money, and take the ugly little box off to the outhouse,’ cried the woman, beside herself with rage, and the girl, quite frightened at her violence, hastened away, with her precious box clasped to her bosom.

The outhouse was in a very dirty state, as no one had been near it since the girl had fallen down the well; but she scrubbed and swept till everything was clean again, and then she placed the little casket on a small shelf in the corner.

‘Now I may open it,’ she said to herself; and unlocking it with the key which hung to its handle, she raised the lid, but started back as she did so, almost blinded by the light that burst upon her. No one would ever have guessed that that little black box could have held such a quantity of beautiful things! Rings, crowns, girdles, necklaces — all made of wonderful stones; and they shone with such brilliance that not only the stepmother and her daughter but all the people round came running to see if the house was on fire. Of course the woman felt quite ill with greed and envy, and she would have certainly taken all the jewels for herself had she not feared the wrath of the neighbours, who loved her stepdaughter as much as they hated her.

But if she could not steal the casket and its contents for herself, at least she could get another like it, and perhaps a still richer one. So she bade her own daughter sit on the edge of the well, and threw her into the water, exactly as she had done to the other girl; and, exactly as before, the flowery meadow lay at the bottom.

Every inch of the way she trod the path which her stepsister had trodden, and saw the things which she had seen; but there the likeness ended. When the fence prayed her to do it no harm, she laughed rudely, and tore up some of the stakes so that she might get over the more easily; when the oven offered her bread, she scattered the loaves on the ground and stamped on them; and after she had milked the cow, and drunk as much as she wanted, she threw the rest on the grass, and kicked the pail to bits, and never heard them say, as they looked after her: ‘You shall not have done this to me for nothing!’

Towards evening she reached the spot where the old woman was leaning against the gate-post, but she passed her by without a word.

‘Have you no manners in your country?’ asked the crone.

‘I can’t stop and talk; I am in a hurry,’ answered the girl. ‘It is getting late, and I have to find a place.’

‘Stop and comb my hair for a little,’ said the old woman, ‘and I will help you to get a place.’

‘Comb your hair, indeed! I have something better to do than that!’ And slamming the gate in the crone’s face she went her way. And she never heard the words that followed her: ‘You shall not have done this to me for nothing!’

By-and-by the girl arrived at the farm, and she was engaged to look after the cows and sift the corn as her stepsister had been. But it was only when someone was watching her that she did her work; at other times the cow-house was dirty, and the cows ill-fed and beaten, so that they kicked over the pail, and tried to butt her; and everyone said they had never seen such thin cows or such poor milk. As for the cats, she chased them away, and ill-treated them, so that they had not even the spirit to chase the rats and mice, which nowadays ran about everywhere. And when the sparrows came to beg for some corn, they fared no better than the cows and the cats, for the girl threw her shoes at them, till they flew in a fright to the woods, and took shelter amongst the trees.

Months passed in this manner, when, one day, the mistress called the girl to her.

‘All that I have given you to do you have done ill,’ said she, ‘yet will I give you another chance. For though you cannot tend cows, or divide the grain from the chaff, there may be other things that you can do better. Therefore take this sieve to the well, and fill it with water, and see that you bring it back without spilling a single drop.’

The girl took the sieve and carried it to the well as her sister had done; but no little birds came to help her, and after dipping it in the well two or three times she brought it back empty.

‘I thought as much,’ said the old woman angrily; ‘she that is useless in one thing is useless in another.’

Perhaps the mistress may have thought that the girl had learnt a lesson, but, if she did, she was quite mistaken, as the work was no better done than before. By-and-by she sent for her again, and gave her maid the black and the white yarn to wash in the river; but there was no one to tell her the secret by which the black would turn white, and the white black; so she brought them back as they were. This time the old woman only looked at her grimly, but the girl was too well pleased with herself to care what anyone thought about her.

After some weeks her third trial came, and the yarn was given her to spin, as it had been given to her stepsister before her.

But no procession of cats entered the room to weave a web of fine cloth, and at sunset she only brought back to her mistress an armful of dirty, tangled wool.

‘There seems nothing in the world you can do,’ said the old woman, and left her to herself.

Soon after this the year was up, and the girl went to her mistress to tell her that she wished to go home.

‘Little desire have I to keep you,’ answered the old woman, ‘for no one thing have you done as you ought. Still, I will give you some payment, therefore go up into the loft, and choose for yourself one of the caskets that lies there. But see that you do not open it till you place it where you wish it to stay.’

This was what the girl had been hoping for, and so rejoiced was she, that, without even stopping to thank the old woman, she ran as fast as she could to the loft. There were the caskets, blue and red, green and yellow, silver and gold; and there in the corner stood a little black casket, just like the one her stepsister had brought home.

‘If there are so many jewels in that little black thing, this big red one will hold twice the number,’ she said to herself; and snatching it up she set off on her road home without even going to bid farewell to her mistress.

‘See, mother, see what I have brought!’ cried she, as she entered the cottage holding the casket in both hands.

‘Ah! you have got something very different from that little black box,’ answered the old woman with delight. But the girl was so busy finding a place for it to stand that she took little notice of her mother.

‘It will look best here — no, here,’ she said, setting it first on one piece of furniture and then on another. ‘No, after all it is too fine to live in a kitchen, let us place it in the guest chamber.’

So mother and daughter carried it proudly upstairs and put it on a shelf over the fireplace; then, untying the key from the handle, they opened the box. As before, a bright light leapt out directly the lid was raised, but it did not spring from the lustre of jewels, but from hot flames, which darted along the walls and burnt up the cottage and all that was in it, and the mother and daughter as well.

As they had done when the stepdaughter came home, the neighbours all hurried to see what was the matter; but they were too late. Only the hen-house was left standing; and, in spite of her riches, there the stepdaughter lived happily to the end of her days.

(From Thorpe's *Yule-Tide Stories*.)

THE GOLDSMITH'S FORTUNE

Once upon a time there was a goldsmith who lived in a certain village where the people were as bad and greedy, and covetous, as they could possibly be; however, in spite of his surroundings, he was fat and prosperous. He had only one friend whom he liked, and that was a cowherd, who looked after cattle for one of the farmers in the village. Every evening the goldsmith would walk across to the cowherd's house and say: 'Come, let's go out for a walk!'

Now the cowherd didn't like walking in the evening, because, he said, he had been out grazing the cattle all day, and was glad to sit down when night came; but the goldsmith always worried him so that the poor man had to go against his will. This at last so annoyed him that he tried to think how he could pick a quarrel with the goldsmith, so that he should not beg him to walk with him any more. He asked another cowherd for advice, and he said the best thing he could do was to go across and kill the goldsmith's wife, for then the goldsmith would be *sure* to regard him as an enemy; so, being a foolish person, and there being no laws in that country by which a man would be certainly punished for such a crime, the cowherd one evening took a big stick and went across to the goldsmith's house when only Mrs. Goldsmith was at home, and banged her on the head so hard that she died then and there.

When the goldsmith came back and found his wife dead he said nothing, but just took her outside into the dark lane and propped her up against the wall of his house, and then went into the courtyard and waited. Presently a rich stranger came along the lane, and seeing someone there, as he supposed, he said: 'Good-evening, friend! a fine night to-night!' But the goldsmith's wife said nothing. The man then repeated his words louder; but still there was no reply. A third time he shouted: 'Good-evening, friend! are you *deaf*?' but the figure never replied. Then the stranger, being angry at what he thought very rude behaviour, picked up a big stone and threw it at Mrs. Goldsmith, crying: 'Let *that* teach you manners!'

Instantly poor Mrs. Goldsmith tumbled over; and the stranger, horrified at seeing what he had done, was immediately seized by the goldsmith, who ran out screaming: 'Wretch! you have killed my wife! Oh, miserable one; we will have justice done to thee!'

With many protestations and reproaches they wrangled together, the stranger entreating the goldsmith to say nothing and he would pay him handsomely to atone for the sad accident. At last the goldsmith quieted down, and agreed to accept one thousand gold pieces from the stranger, who immediately helped him to bury his poor wife, and then rushed off to the guest house, packed up his things and was off by daylight, lest the goldsmith should repent and accuse him as the murderer of his wife. Now it very soon appeared that the goldsmith had a lot of extra money, so that people began to ask questions, and finally demanded of him the reason for his sudden wealth.

‘Oh,’ said he, ‘my wife died, and I sold her.’

‘You sold your dead wife?’ cried the people.

‘Yes,’ said the goldsmith.

‘For how much?’

‘A thousand gold pieces,’ replied the goldsmith.

Instantly the villagers went away and each caught hold of his own wife and throttled her, and the next day they all went off to sell their dead wives. Many a weary mile did they tramp, but got nothing but hard words or laughter, or directions to the nearest cemetery, from people to whom they offered dead wives for sale. At last they perceived that they had been cheated somehow by that goldsmith. So off they rushed home, seized the unhappy man, and, without listening to his cries and entreaties, hurried him down to the river bank and flung him — plop! — into the deepest, weediest, and nastiest place they could find.

‘*That* will teach him not to play tricks on us,’ said they. ‘For as he can’t swim he’ll drown, and we sha’n’t have any more trouble with *him*!’

Now the goldsmith really could not swim, and as soon as he was thrown into the deep river he sank below the surface; so his enemies went away believing that they had seen the last of him. But, in reality, he was carried down, half drowned, below the next bend in the river, where he fortunately came across a ‘snag’ floating in the water (a snag is, you know, a part of a tree or bush which floats very nearly under the surface of the water); and he held on to this snag, and by great good luck eventually came ashore some two or three miles down the river. At the place where he landed he came across a fine fat cow buffalo, and immediately he jumped on her back and rode home. When the village people saw him, they ran out in surprise, and said: ‘Where on earth do you come from, and where did you get that buffalo?’

‘Ah!’ said the goldsmith, ‘you little know what delightful adventures I have had! Why, down in that place in the river where you threw me in I found meadows, and trees, and fine pastures, and buffaloes, and all kinds of cattle. In fact, I could hardly tear myself away; but I thought that I must really let you all know about it.’

‘Oh, oh!’ thought the greedy village people; ‘if there are buffaloes to be had for the taking we’ll go after some too.’ Encouraged by the goldsmith they nearly all ran off the very next morning to the river; and, in order that they might get down quickly to the beautiful place the goldsmith told them of, they tied great stones on to their feet and their necks, and one after another they jumped into the water as fast as they could, and were drowned. And whenever any one of them waved his hands about and struggled the goldsmith would cry out: ‘Look! he’s beckoning the rest of you to come; he’s got a fine buffalo!’ And others who were doubtful would jump in, until not one was left. Then the cunning goldsmith went back and took all the village for himself, and became very rich indeed. But do you think he was happy? Not a bit. Lies never made a man happy yet. Truly, he got the better of a set of wicked and greedy people, but only by being wicked and greedy himself; and, as it turned out, when he got so rich he got very fat; and at last was so fat that he couldn’t move, and one day he got the apoplexy and died, and no one in the world cared the least bit.

(*Told by a Pathan to Major Campbell.*)

THE ENCHANTED WREATH

Once upon a time there lived near a forest a man and his wife and two girls; one girl was the daughter of the man, and the other the daughter of his wife; and the man’s daughter was good and beautiful, but the woman’s daughter was cross and ugly. However, her mother did not know that, but thought her the most bewitching maiden that ever was seen.

One day the man called to his daughter and bade her come with him into the forest to cut wood. They worked hard all day, but in spite of the chopping they were very cold, for it rained heavily, and when they returned home, they were wet through. Then, to his vexation, the man found that he had left his axe behind him, and he knew that if it lay all night in the mud it would become rusty and useless. So he said to his wife:

‘I have dropped my axe in the forest, bid your daughter go and fetch it, for mine has worked hard all day and is both wet and weary.’

But the wife answered:

‘If your daughter is wet already, it is all the more reason that *she* should go and get the axe. Besides, she is a great strong girl, and a little rain will not hurt her, while *my* daughter would be sure to catch a bad cold.’

By long experience the man knew there was no good saying any more, and with a sigh he told the poor girl she must return to the forest for the axe.

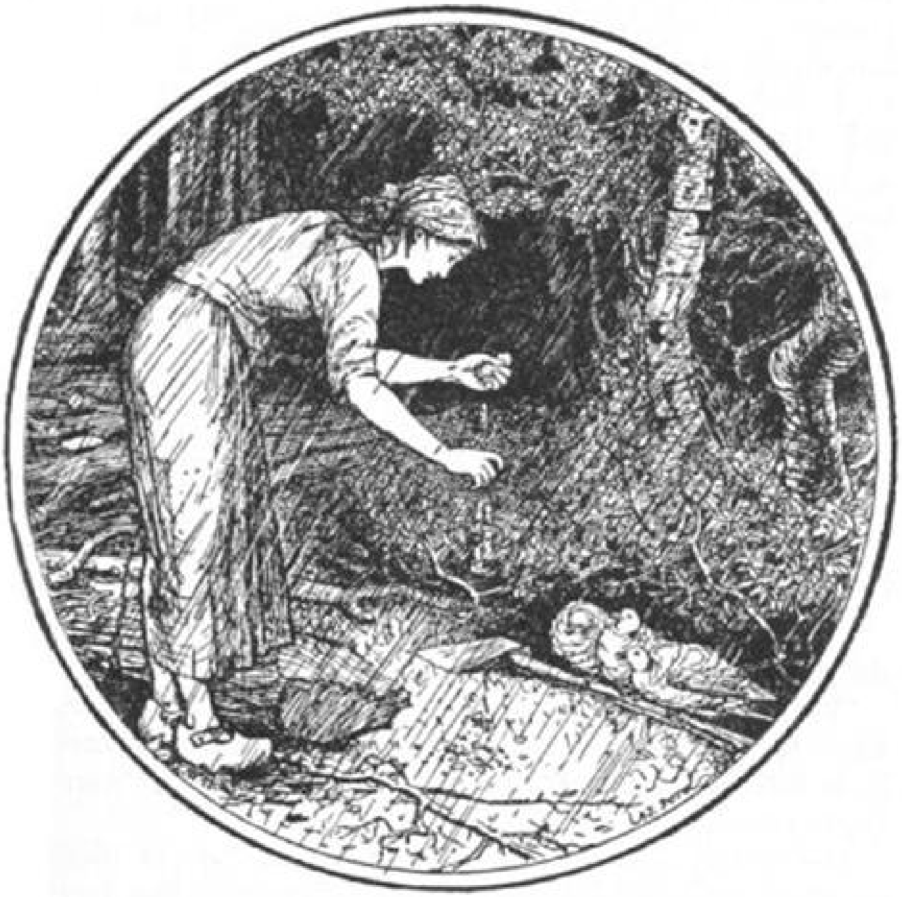

THREE LITTLE DOVES WERE SEATED ON THE HANDLE OF THE AXE

The walk took some time, for it was very dark, and her shoes often stuck in the mud; but she was brave as well as beautiful and never thought of turning back merely because the path was both difficult and unpleasant. At last, with her dress torn by brambles that she could not see, and her face scratched by the twigs on the trees, she reached the spot where she and her father had been cutting in the morning, and found the axe in the place he had left it. To her surprise, three little doves were sitting on the handle, all of them looking very sad.

'You poor little things,' said the girl, stroking them. 'Why do you sit there and get wet? Go and fly home to your nest, it will be much warmer than this; but first eat this bread, which I saved from my dinner, and perhaps you will feel happier. It is my father's axe you are sitting on, and I must take it back as fast as I can, or I shall get a terrible scolding from my stepmother.' She then crumbled the bread on the ground, and was pleased to see the doves flutter quite cheerfully towards it.

'Good-bye,' she said, picking up the axe, and went her way homewards.

By the time they had finished all the crumbs the doves felt much better, and were able to fly back to their nests in the top of a tree.

‘That is a good girl,’ said one; ‘I really was too weak to stretch out a wing before she came. I should like to do something to show how grateful I am.’

‘Well, let us give her a wreath of flowers that will never fade as long as she wears it,’ cried another.

‘And let the tiniest singing birds in the world sit amongst the flowers,’ rejoined the third.

‘Yes, that will do beautifully,’ said the first. And when the girl stepped into her cottage a wreath of rose-buds was on her head, and a crowd of little birds were singing unseen.

The father, who was sitting by the fire, thought that, in spite of her muddy clothes, he had never seen his daughter looking so lovely; but the stepmother and the other girl grew wild with envy.

‘How absurd to walk about on such a pouring night, dressed up like that,’ she remarked crossly, and roughly pulled off the wreath as she spoke, to place it on her own daughter. As she did so the roses became withered and brown, and the birds flew out of the window.

‘See what a trumpery thing it is!’ cried the stepmother; ‘and now take your supper and go to bed, for it is near upon midnight.’

But though she pretended to despise the wreath, she longed none the less for her daughter to have one like it.

Now it happened that the next evening the father, who had been alone in the forest, came back a second time without his axe. The stepmother’s heart was glad when she saw this, and she said quite mildly:

‘Why, you have forgotten your axe again, you careless man! But now *your* daughter shall stay at home, and *mine* shall go and bring it back’; and throwing a cloak over the girl’s shoulders, she bade her hasten to the forest.

With a very ill grace the damsel set forth, grumbling to herself as she went; for though she wished for the wreath, she did not at all want the trouble of getting it.

By the time she reached the spot where her stepfather had been cutting the wood the girl was in a very bad temper indeed, and when she caught sight of the axe, there were the three little doves, with drooping heads and soiled, bedraggled feathers, sitting on the handle.

‘You dirty creatures,’ cried she, ‘get away at once, or I will throw stones at you.’ And the doves spread their wings in a fright and flew up to the very top of a tree, their bodies shaking with anger.

‘What shall we do to revenge ourselves on her?’ asked the smallest of the doves, ‘we were never treated like that before.’

‘Never,’ said the biggest dove. ‘We must find some way of paying her back in her own coin!'

'*I* know,' answered the middle dove; 'she shall never be able to say anything but "dirty creatures" to the end of her life.'

'Oh, how clever of you! That will do beautifully,' exclaimed the other two. And they flapped their wings and clucked so loud with delight, and made such a noise, that they woke up all the birds in the trees close by.

'What in the world is the matter?' asked the birds sleepily.

'That is *our* secret,' said the doves.

Meanwhile the girl had reached home crosser than ever; but as soon as her mother heard her lift the latch of the door she ran out to hear her adventures. 'Well, did you get the wreath?' cried she.

'Dirty creatures!' answered her daughter.

'Don't speak to me like that! What do you mean?' asked the mother again.

'Dirty creatures!' repeated the daughter, and nothing else could she say.

Then the woman saw that something evil had befallen her, and turned in her rage to her stepdaughter.

'*You* are at the bottom of this, I know,' she cried; and as the father was out of the way she took a stick and beat the girl till she screamed with pain and went to bed sobbing.

If the poor girl's life had been miserable before, it was ten times worse now, for the moment her father's back was turned the others teased and tormented her from morning till night; and their fury was increased by the sight of the wreath, which the doves had placed again on her head.

Things went on like this for some weeks, when, one day, as the king's son was riding through the forest, he heard some strange birds singing more sweetly than birds had ever sung before. He tied his horse to a tree, and followed where the sound led him, and, to his surprise, he saw before him a beautiful girl chopping wood, with a wreath of pink rose-buds, out of which the singing came. Standing in the shelter of a tree, he watched her a long while, and then, hat in hand, he went up and spoke to her.

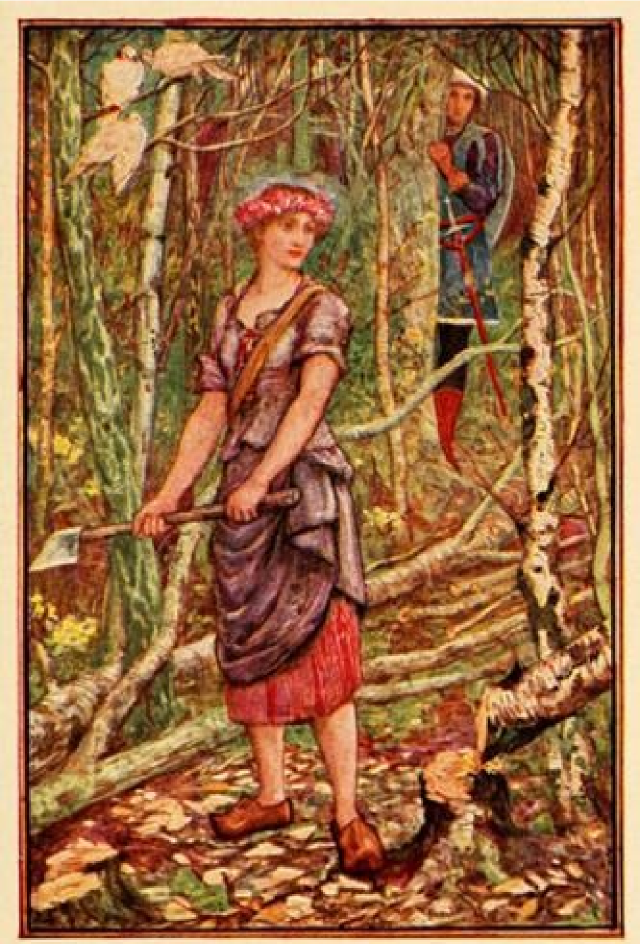

STANDING IN THE SHELTER OF A TREE, HE WATCHED HER A LONG WHILE

‘Fair maiden, who are you, and who gave you that wreath of singing roses?’ asked he, for the birds were so tiny that till you looked closely you never saw them.

‘I live in a hut on the edge of the forest,’ she answered, blushing, for she had never spoken to a prince before. ‘And as to the wreath, I know not how it came there, unless it may be the gift of some doves whom I fed when they were starving.’ The prince was delighted with this answer, which showed the goodness of the girl’s heart, and besides he had fallen in love with her beauty, and would not be content till she promised to return with him to the palace, and become his bride. The old king was naturally disappointed at his son’s choice of a wife, as he wished him to marry a neighbouring princess; but as from his birth the prince had always done exactly as he liked, nothing was said and a splendid wedding feast was got ready.

The day after her marriage the bride sent a messenger, bearing handsome presents to her father, and telling him of the good fortune which had befallen her. As may be imagined, the stepmother and her daughter were so filled with envy that they grew quite ill, and had to take to their beds, and nobody would have been sorry if they had never got up again; but that did not happen. At length, however, they began to feel better, for the mother invented a plan by which she could be revenged on the girl who had never done her any harm.

Her plan was this. In the town where she had lived before she was married there was an old witch, who had more skill in magic than any other witch she knew. To this witch she would go and beg her to make her a mask with the face of her stepdaughter, and when she had the mask the rest would be easy. She told her daughter what she meant to do, and although the daughter could only say ‘dirty creatures,’ in answer, she nodded and smiled and looked well pleased.

Everything fell out exactly as the woman had hoped. By the aid of her magic mirror the witch beheld the new princess walking in her gardens in a dress of green silk, and in a few minutes had produced a mask so like her that very few people could have told the difference. However, she counselled the woman that when her daughter first wore it — for that, of course, was what she intended her to do — she had better pretend that she had a toothache, and cover her head with a lace veil. The woman thanked her and paid her well, and returned to her hut, carrying the mask with her under her cloak.

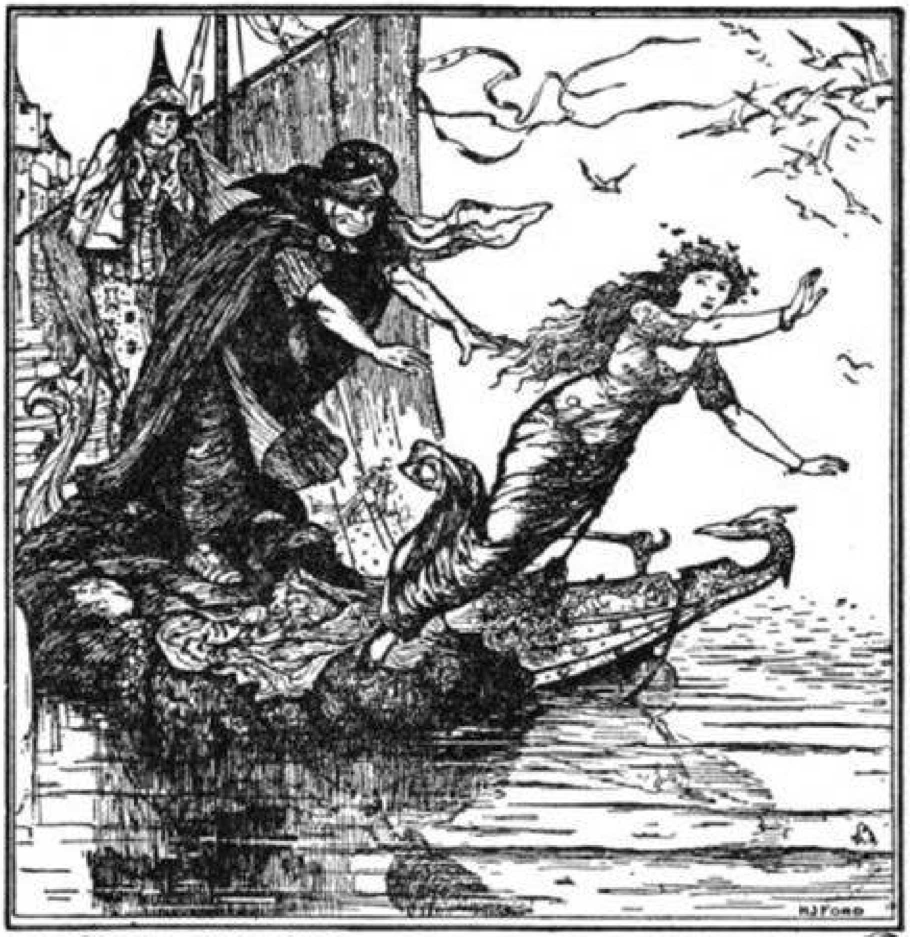

The Stepmother tries to drown the Princess

In a few days she heard that a great hunt was planned, and the prince would leave the palace very early in the morning, so that his wife would be alone all day. This was a chance not to be missed, and taking her daughter with her she went up to the palace, where she had never been before. The princess was too happy in her new home to remember all that she had suffered in the old one, and she welcomed them both gladly, and gave them quantities of beautiful things to take back with them. At last she took them down to the shore to see a pleasure boat which her husband had had made for her; and here, the woman seizing her opportunity, stole softly behind the girl and pushed her off the rock on which she was standing, into the deep water, where she instantly sank to the bottom. Then she fastened the mask on her daughter, flung over her shoulders a velvet cloak, which the princess had let fall, and finally arranged a lace veil over her head.

‘Rest your cheek on your hand, as if you were in pain, when the prince returns,’ said the mother; ‘and be careful not to speak, whatever you do. I will go back to the witch and see if she cannot take off the spell laid on you by those horrible birds. Ah! why did I not think of it before!’

No sooner had the prince entered the palace than he hastened to the princess's apartments, where he found her lying on the sofa apparently in great pain.

'My dearest wife, what is the matter with you?' he cried, kneeling down beside her, and trying to take her hand; but she snatched it away, and pointing to her cheek murmured something he could not catch.

'What is it? tell me! Is the pain bad? When did it begin? Shall I send for your ladies to bathe the place?' asked the prince, pouring out these and a dozen other questions, to which the girl only shook her head.

'But I can't leave you like this,' he continued, starting up, 'I must summon all the court physicians to apply soothing balsams to the sore place.' And as he spoke he sprang to his feet to go in search of them. This so frightened the pretended wife, who knew that if the physicians once came near her the trick would at once be discovered, that she forgot her mother's counsel not to speak, and forgot even the spell that had been laid upon her, and catching hold of the prince's tunic, she cried in tones of entreaty: 'Dirty creatures!'

The young man stopped, not able to believe his ears, but supposed that pain had made the princess cross, as it sometimes does. However, he guessed somehow that she wished to be left alone, so he only said:

'Well, I dare say a little sleep will do you good, if you can manage to get it, and that you will wake up better to-morrow.'

Now, that night happened to be very hot and airless, and the prince, after vainly trying to rest, at length got up and went to the window. Suddenly he beheld in the moonlight a form with a wreath of roses on her head rise out of the sea below him and step on to the sands, holding out her arms as she did so towards the palace.

'That maiden is strangely like my wife,' thought he; 'I must see her closer.' And he hastened down to the water. But when he got there, the princess, for she indeed it was, had disappeared completely, and he began to wonder if his eyes had deceived him.

The next morning he went to the false bride's room, but her ladies told him she would neither speak nor get up, though she ate everything they set before her. The prince was sorely perplexed as to what could be the matter with her, for naturally he could not guess that she was expecting her mother to return every moment, and to remove the spell the doves had laid upon her, and meanwhile was afraid to speak lest she should betray herself. At length he made up his mind to summon all the court physicians; he did not tell her what he was going to do, lest it should make her worse, but he went himself and begged the four learned leaches attached to the king's person to follow him to the princess's apartments. Unfortunately, as they entered, the princess was so enraged at the sight of them that she forgot all about the doves, and shrieked out: ‘Dirty creatures! dirty creatures!’ which so offended the physicians that they left the room at once, and nothing that the prince could say would prevail on them to remain. He then tried to persuade his wife to send them a message that she was sorry for her rudeness, but not a word would she say.

Late that evening, when he had performed all the tiresome duties which fall to the lot of every prince, the young man was leaning out of his window, refreshing himself with the cool breezes that blew off the sea. His thoughts went back to the scene of the morning, and he wondered if, after all, he had not made a great mistake in marrying a low-born wife, however beautiful she might be. How could he have imagined that the quiet, gentle girl who had been so charming a companion to him during the first days of their marriage, could have become in a day the rude, sulky woman, who could not control her temper even to benefit herself. One thing was clear, if she did not change her conduct very shortly he would have to send her away from court.

He was thinking these thoughts, when his eyes fell on the sea beneath him, and there, as before, was the figure that so closely resembled his wife, standing with her feet in the water, holding out her arms to him.

‘Wait for me! Wait for me! Wait for me!’ he cried; not even knowing he was speaking. But when he reached the shore there was nothing to be seen but the shadows cast by the moonlight.

A state ceremonial in a city some distance off caused the prince to ride away at daybreak, and he left without seeing his wife again.

‘Perhaps she may have come to her senses by to-morrow,’ said he to himself; ‘and, anyhow, if I am going to send her back to her father, it might be better if we did not meet in the meantime.’ Then he put the matter from his mind, and kept his thoughts on the duty that lay before him.

It was nearly midnight before he returned to the palace, but, instead of entering, he went down to the shore and hid behind a rock. He had scarcely done so when the girl came out of the sea, and stretched out her arms towards his window. In an instant the prince had seized her hand, and though she made a frightened struggle to reach the water — for she in her turn had had a spell laid upon her — he held her fast.

‘You are my own wife, and I shall never let you go,’ he said. But the words were hardly out of his mouth when he found that it was a hare that he was holding by the paw. Then the hare changed into a fish, and the fish into a bird, and the bird into a slimy wriggling snake. This time the prince’s hand nearly opened of itself, but with a strong effort he kept his fingers shut, and drawing his sword cut off its head, when the spell was broken, and the girl stood before him as he had seen her first, the wreath upon her head and the birds singing for joy.

The very next morning the stepmother arrived at the palace with an ointment that the old witch had given her to place upon her daughter's tongue, which would break the dove's spell, if the rightful bride had really been drowned in the sea; if not, then it would be useless. The mother assured her that she had seen her stepdaughter sink, and that there was no fear that she would ever come up again; but, to make all quite safe, the old woman might bewitch the girl; and so she did. After that the wicked stepmother travelled all through the night to get to the palace as soon as possible, and made her way straight into her daughter's room.

'I have got it! I have got it!' she cried triumphantly, and laid the ointment on her daughter's tongue.

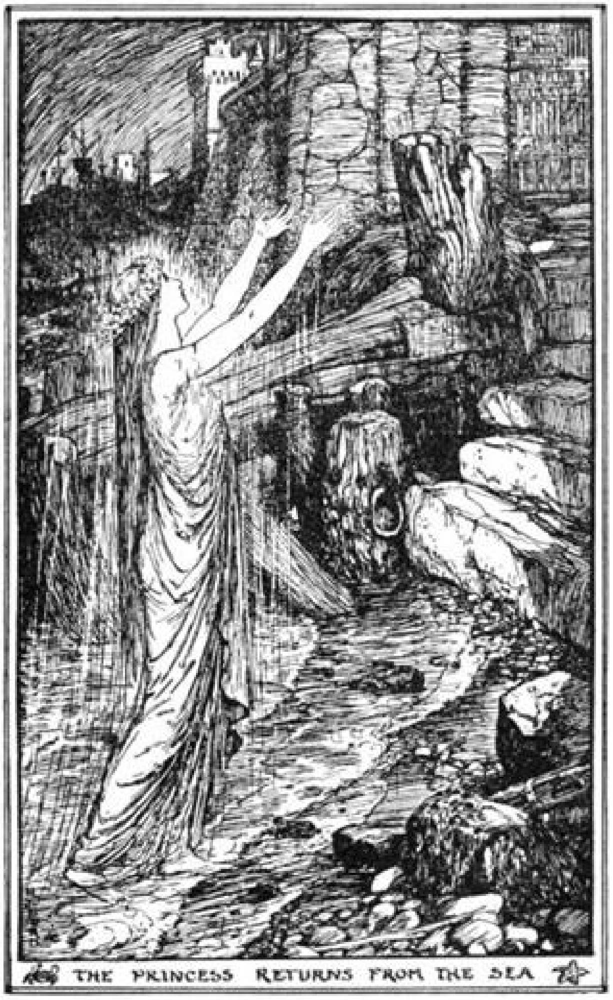

THE PRINCESS RETURNS FROM THE SEA

'*Now* what do you say?' she asked proudly.

'Dirty creatures! dirty creatures!' answered the daughter; and the mother wrung her hands and wept, as she knew that all her plans had failed.

At this moment the prince entered with his real wife. ‘You both deserve death,’ he said, ‘and if it were left to me, you should have it. But the princess has begged me to spare your lives, so you will be put into a ship and carried off to a desert island, where you will stay till you die.’

Then the ship was made ready and the wicked woman and her daughter were placed in it, and it sailed away, and no more was heard of them. But the prince and his wife lived together long and happily, and ruled their people well.

(Adapted from Thorpe’s *Yule-Tide Stories*.)

THE FOOLISH WEAVER

Once a weaver, who was in want of work, took service with a certain farmer as a shepherd.

The farmer, knowing that the man was very slow-witted, gave him the most careful instructions as to everything that he was to do.

Finally he said: ‘If a wolf or any wild animal attempts to hurt the flock you should pick up a big stone like *this*’ (suiting the action to the word) ‘and throw a few such at him, and he will be afraid and go away.’ The weaver said that he understood, and started with the flocks to the hillsides where they grazed all day.

By chance in the afternoon a leopard appeared, and the weaver instantly ran home as fast as he could to get the stones which the farmer had shown him, to throw at the creature. When he came back all the flock were scattered or killed, and when the farmer heard the tale he beat him soundly. ‘Were there no stones on the hillside that you should run back to get them, you senseless one?’ he cried; ‘you are not fit to herd sheep. To-day you shall stay at home and mind my old mother who is sick, perhaps you will be able to drive flies off her face, if you can’t drive beasts away from the sheep!’

So, the next day, the weaver was left at home to take care of the farmer’s old sick mother. Now as she lay outside on a bed, it turned out that the flies became very troublesome, and the weaver looked around for something to drive them away with; and as he had been told to pick up the nearest stone to drive the beasts away from the flock, he thought he would this time show how cleverly he could obey orders. Accordingly he seized the nearest stone, which was a big, heavy one, and dashed it at the flies; but, unhappily, he slew the poor old woman also; and then, being afraid of the wrath of the farmer, he fled and was not seen again in that neighbourhood.

All that day and all the next night he walked, and at length he came to a village where a great many weavers lived together.

‘You are welcome,’ said they. ‘Eat and sleep, for to-morrow six of us start in search of fresh wool to weave, and we pray you to give us your company.’

‘Willingly,’ answered the weaver. So the next morning the seven weavers set out to go to the village where they could buy what they wanted. On the way they had to cross a ravine which lately had been full of water, but now was quite dry. The weavers, however, were accustomed to swim over this ravine; therefore, regardless of the fact that this time it was dry, they stripped, and, tying their clothes on their heads, they proceeded to swim across the dry sand and rocks that formed the bed of the ravine. Thus they got to the other side without further damage than bruised knees and elbows, and as soon as they were over, one of them began to count the party to make sure that all were safe there. He counted all except himself, and then cried out that somebody was missing! This set each of them counting; but each made the same mistake of counting all except himself, so that they became certain that one of their party was missing! They ran up and down the bank of the ravine wringing their hands in great distress and looking for signs of their lost comrade. There a farmer found them and asked what was the matter. ‘Alas!’ said one, ‘seven of us started from the other bank and one must have been drowned on the crossing, as we can only find six remaining!’ The farmer eyed them a minute, and then, picking up his stick, he dealt each a sounding blow, counting, as he did so, ‘One! two! three!’ and so on up to the seven. When the weavers found that there were seven of them they were overcome with gratitude to one whom they took for a magician as he could thus make seven out of an obvious six.

(*From the Pushto.*)

THE CLEVER CAT

Once upon a time there lived an old man who dwelt with his son in a small hut on the edge of the plain. He was very old, and had worked very hard, and when at last he was struck down by illness he felt that he should never rise from his bed again.

So, one day, he bade his wife summon their son, when he came back from his journey to the nearest town, where he had been to buy bread.

‘Come hither, my son,’ said he; ‘I know myself well to be dying, and I have nothing to leave you but my falcon, my cat and my greyhound; but if you make good use of them you will never lack food. Be good to your mother, as you have been to me. And now farewell!’

Then he turned his face to the wall and died.

There was great mourning in the hut for many days, but at length the son rose up, and calling to his greyhound, his cat and his falcon, he left the house saying that he would bring back something for dinner. Wandering over the plain, he noticed a troop of gazelles, and pointed to his greyhound to give chase. The dog soon brought down a fine fat beast, and slinging it over his shoulders, the young man turned homewards. On the way, however, he passed a pond, and as he approached a cloud of birds flew into the air. Shaking his wrist, the falcon seated on it darted into the air, and swooped down upon the quarry he had marked, which fell dead to the ground. The young man picked it up, and put it in his pouch and then went towards home again.

Near the hut was a small barn in which he kept the produce of the little patch of corn, which grew close to the garden. Here a rat ran out almost under his feet, followed by another and another; but quick as thought the cat was upon them and not one escaped her.

When all the rats were killed, the young man left the barn. He took the path leading to the door of the hut, but stopped on feeling a hand laid on his shoulder.

‘Young man,’ said the Jew (for such was the stranger), ‘you have been a good son, and you deserve the piece of luck which has befallen you this day. Come with me to that shining lake yonder, and fear nothing.’

Wondering a little at what might be going to happen to him, the youth did as the Jew bade him, and when they reached the shore of the lake, the old man turned and said to him:

‘Step into the water and shut your eyes! You will find yourself sinking slowly to the bottom; but take courage, all will go well. Only bring up as much silver as you can carry, and we will divide it between us.'

So the young man stepped bravely into the lake, and felt himself sinking, sinking, till he reached firm ground at last. In front of him lay four heaps of silver, and in the midst of them a curious white shining stone, marked over with strange characters, such as he had never seen before. He picked it up in order to examine it more closely, and as he held it the stone spoke.

'As long as you hold me, all your wishes will come true,' it said. 'But hide me in your turban, and then call to the Jew that you are ready to come up.'

In a few minutes the young man stood again by the shores of the lake.

'Well, where is the silver?' asked the Jew, who was awaiting him.

'Ah, my father, how can I tell you! So bewildered was I, and so dazzled with the splendours of everything I saw, that I stood like a statue, unable to move. Then hearing steps approaching I got frightened, and called to you, as you know.'

'You are no better than the rest,' cried the Jew, and turned away in a rage.

When he was out of sight the young man took the stone from his turban and looked at it. 'I want the finest camel that can be found, and the most splendid garments,' said he.

'Shut your eyes then,' replied the stone. And he shut them; and when he opened them again the camel that he had wished for was standing before him, while the festal robes of a desert prince hung from his shoulders. Mounting the camel, he whistled the falcon to his wrist, and, followed by his greyhound and his cat, he started homewards.

His mother was sewing at her door when this magnificent stranger rode up, and, filled with surprise, she bowed low before him.

'Don't you know me, mother?' he said with a laugh. And on hearing his voice the good woman nearly fell to the ground with astonishment.

'How have you got that camel and those clothes?' asked she. 'Can a son of mine have committed murder in order to possess them?'

'Do not be afraid; they are quite honestly come by,' answered the youth. 'I will explain all by-and-by; but now you must go to the palace and tell the king I wish to marry his daughter.'

At these words the mother thought her son had certainly gone mad, and stared blankly at him. The young man guessed what was in her heart, and replied with a smile:

'Fear nothing. Promise all that he asks; it will be fulfilled somehow.'

So she went to the palace, where she found the king sitting in the Hall of Justice listening to the petitions of his people. The woman waited until all had been heard and the hall was empty, and then went up and knelt before the throne.

‘My son has sent me to ask for the hand of the princess,’ said she.

The king looked at her and thought that she was mad; but, instead of ordering his guards to turn her out, he answered gravely:

‘Before he can marry the princess he must build me a palace of ice, which can be warmed with fires, and wherein the rarest singing-birds can live!’

‘It shall be done, your Majesty,’ said she, and got up and left the hall.

Her son was anxiously awaiting her outside the palace gates, dressed in the clothes that he wore every day.

‘Well, what have I got to do?’ he asked impatiently, drawing his mother aside so that no one could overhear them.

‘Oh, something quite impossible; and I hope you will put the princess out of your head,’ she replied.

‘Well, but what *is* it?’ persisted he.

‘Nothing but to build a palace of ice wherein fires can burn that shall keep it so warm that the most delicate singing-birds can live in it!’

‘I thought it would be something much harder than that,’ exclaimed the young man. ‘I will see about it at once.’ And leaving his mother, he went into the country and took the stone from his turban.

‘I want a palace of ice that can be warmed with fires and filled with the rarest singing-birds!’

‘Shut your eyes, then,’ said the stone; and he shut them, and when he opened them again there was the palace, more beautiful than anything he could have imagined, the fires throwing a soft pink glow over the ice.

‘It is fit even for the princess,’ thought he to himself.

As soon as the king awoke next morning he ran to the window, and there across the plain he beheld the palace.

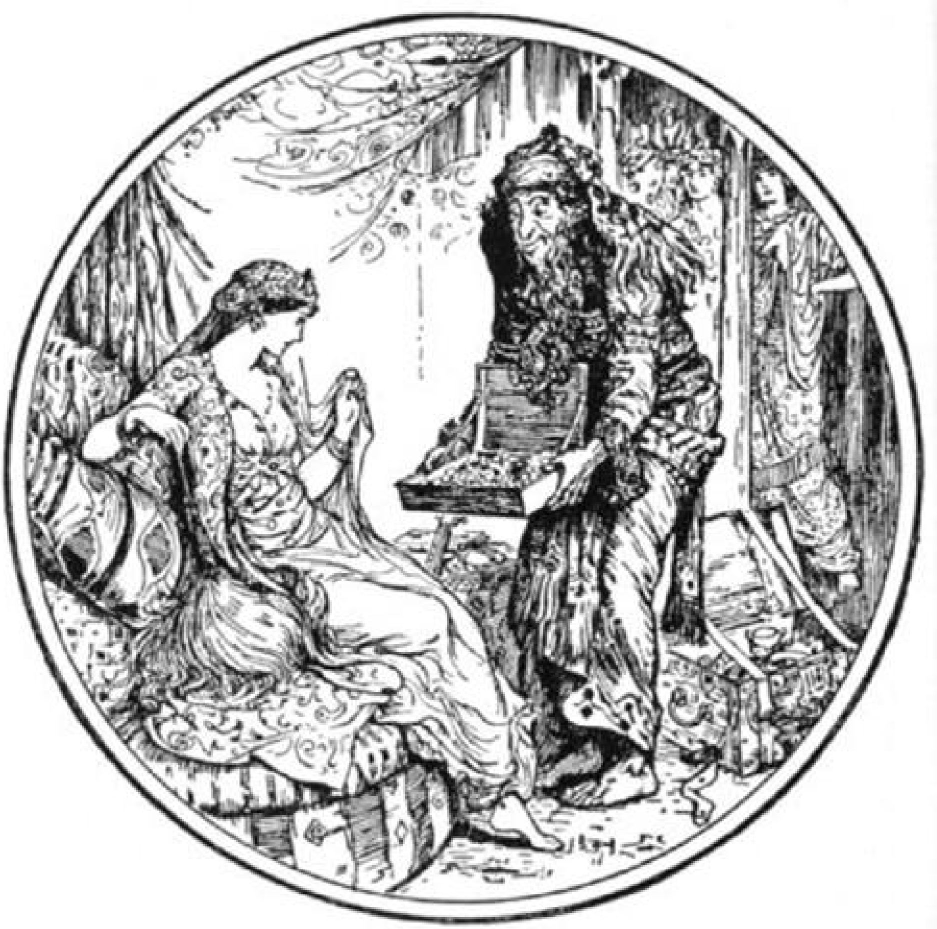

THE JEW BRINGS
THE JEWELS TO THE PRINCESS

‘That young man must be a great wizard; he may be useful to me.’ And when the mother came again to tell him that his orders had been fulfilled he received her with great honour, and bade her tell her son that the wedding was fixed for the following day.

The princess was delighted with her new home, and with her husband also; and several days slipped happily by, spent in turning over all the beautiful things that the palace contained. But at length the young man grew tired of always staying inside walls, and he told his wife that the next day he must leave her for a few hours, and go out hunting. ‘You will not mind?’ he asked. And she answered as became a good wife:

‘Yes, of course I shall mind; but I will spend the day in planning out some new dresses; and then it will be so delightful when you come back, you know!’

So the husband went off to hunt, with the falcon on his wrist, and the greyhound and the cat behind him — for the palace was so warm that even the cat did not mind living in it.

No sooner had he gone, than the Jew, who had been watching his chance for many days, knocked at the door of the palace.

‘I have just returned from a far country,’ he said, ‘and I have some of the largest and most brilliant stones in the world with me. The princess is known to love beautiful things, perhaps she might like to buy some?’

Now the princess had been wondering for many days what trimming she should put on her dresses, so that they should outshine the dresses of the other ladies at the court balls. Nothing that she thought of seemed good enough, so, when the message was brought that the Jew and his wares were below, she at once ordered that he should be brought to her chamber.

Oh! what beautiful stones he laid before her; what lovely rubies, and what rare pearls! No other lady would have jewels like *those* — of that the princess was quite sure; but she cast down her eyes so that the Jew might not see how much she longed for them.

‘I fear they are too costly for me,’ she said carelessly; ‘and besides, I have hardly need of any more jewels just now.’

‘I have no particular wish to sell them myself,’ answered the Jew, with equal indifference. ‘But I have a necklace of shining stones which was left me by my father, and one, the largest, engraven with weird characters, is missing. I have heard that it is in your husband’s possession, and if you can get me that stone you shall have any of these jewels that you choose. But you will have to pretend that you want it for yourself; and, above all, do not mention me, for he sets great store by it, and would never part with it to a stranger! To-morrow I will return with some jewels yet finer than those I have with me to-day. So, madam, farewell!’

Left alone, the princess began to think of many things, but chiefly as to whether she would persuade her husband to give her the stone or not. At one moment she felt he had already bestowed so much upon her that it was a shame to ask for the only object he had kept back. No, it would be mean; she could not do it! But then, those diamonds, and those strings of pearls! After all, they had only been married a week, and the pleasure of giving it to her ought to be far greater than the pleasure of keeping it for himself. And she was sure it *would* be!

Well, that evening, when the young man had supped off his favourite dishes which the princess took care to have specially prepared for him, she sat down close beside him, and began stroking his hand. For some time she did not speak, but listened attentively to all the adventures that had befallen him that day.

‘But I was thinking of you all the time,’ said he at the end, ‘and wishing that I could bring you back something you would like. But, alas! what is there that you do not possess already?’

‘How good of you not to forget me when you are in the midst of such dangers and hardships,' answered she. 'Yes, it is true I have many beautiful things; but if you *want* to give me a present — and to-morrow is my birthday — there *is* one thing that I wish for very much.'

'And what is that? Of course you shall have it directly!' he asked eagerly.

'It is that bright stone which fell out of the folds of your turban a few days ago,' she answered, playing with his finger; 'the little stone with all those funny marks upon it. I never saw any stone like it before.'

The young man did not answer at first; then he said, slowly:

'I have promised, and therefore I must perform. But will you swear never to part from it, and to keep it safely about you always? More I cannot tell you, but I beg you earnestly to take heed to this.'

The princess was a little startled by his manner, and began to be sorry that she had ever listened to the Jew. But she did not like to draw back, and pretended to be immensely delighted at her new toy, and kissed and thanked her husband for it.

'After all I needn't give it to the Jew,' thought she as she dropped to sleep.

Unluckily the next morning the young man went hunting again, and the Jew, who was watching, knew this, and did not come till much later than before. At the moment that he knocked at the door of the palace the princess had tired of all her employments, and her attendants were at their wits' end how to amuse her, when a tall negro dressed in scarlet came to announce that the Jew was below, and desired to know if the princess would speak with him.

'Bring him hither at once!' cried she, springing up from her cushions, and forgetting all her resolves of the previous night. In another moment she was bending with rapture over the glittering gems.

'Have you got it?' asked the Jew in a whisper, for the princess's ladies were standing as near as they dared to catch a glimpse of the beautiful jewels.

'Yes, here,' she answered, slipping the stone from her sash and placing it among the rest. Then she raised her voice, and began to talk quickly of the prices of the chains and necklaces, and after some bargaining, to deceive the attendants, she declared that she liked one string of pearls better than all the rest, and that the Jew might take away the other things, which were not half so valuable as he supposed.

'As you please, madam,' said he, bowing himself out of the palace.

Soon after he had gone a curious thing happened. The princess carelessly touched the wall of her room, which was wont to reflect the warm red light of the fire on the hearth, and found her hand quite wet. She turned round, and — was it her fancy? or did the fire burn more dimly than before? Hurriedly she passed into the picture gallery, where pools of water showed here and there on the floor, and a cold chill ran through her whole body. At that instant her frightened ladies came running down the stairs, crying:

‘Madam! madam! what has happened? The palace is disappearing under our eyes!’

‘My husband will be home very soon,’ answered the princess — who, though nearly as much frightened as her ladies, felt that she must set them a good example. ‘Wait till then, and he will tell us what to do.’

So they waited, seated on the highest chairs they could find, wrapped in their warmest garments, and with piles of cushions under their feet, while the poor birds flew with numbed wings hither and thither, till they were so lucky as to discover an open window in some forgotten corner. Through this they vanished, and were seen no more.

At last, when the princess and her ladies had been forced to leave the upper rooms, where the walls and floors had melted away, and to take refuge in the hall, the young man came home. He had ridden back along a winding road from which he did not see the palace till he was close upon it, and stood horrified at the spectacle before him. He knew in an instant that his wife must have betrayed his trust, but he would not reproach her, as she must be suffering enough already. Hurrying on he sprang over all that was left of the palace walls, and the princess gave a cry of relief at the sight of him.

‘Come quickly,’ he said, ‘or you will be frozen to death!’ And a dreary little procession set out for the king’s palace, the greyhound and the cat bringing up the rear.

At the gates he left them, though his wife besought him to allow her to enter.

‘You have betrayed me and ruined me,’ he said sternly; ‘I go to seek my fortune alone.’ And without another word he turned and left her.

With his falcon on his wrist, and his greyhound and cat behind him, the young man walked a long way, inquiring of everyone he met whether they had seen his enemy the Jew. But nobody had. Then he bade his falcon fly up into the sky — up, up, and up — and try if *his* sharp eyes could discover the old thief. The bird had to go so high that he did not return for some hours; but he told his master that the Jew was lying asleep in a splendid palace in a far country on the shores of the sea. This was delightful news to the young man, who instantly bought some meat for the falcon, bidding him make a good meal.

‘To-morrow,’ said he, ‘you will fly to the palace where the Jew lies, and while he is asleep you will search all about him for a stone on which is engraved strange signs; this you will bring to me. In three days I shall expect you back here.’

‘Well, I must take the cat with me,’ answered the bird.

The sun had not yet risen before the falcon soared high into the air, the cat seated on his back, with his paws tightly clasping the bird's neck.

'You had better shut your eyes or you may get giddy,' said the bird; and the cat, who had never before been off the ground except to climb a tree, did as she was bid.

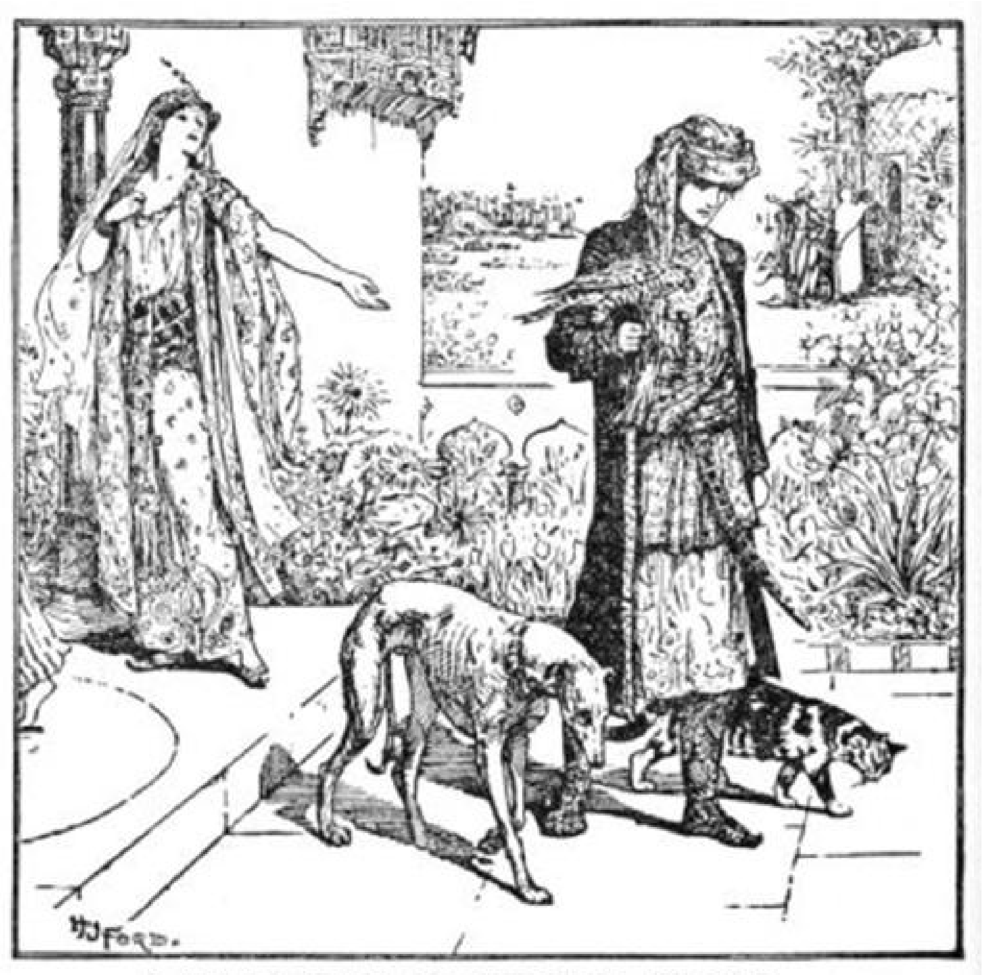

I GO TO SEEK MY FORTUNE ALONE

All that day and all that night they flew, and in the morning they saw the Jew's palace lying beneath them.

'Dear me,' said the cat, opening her eyes for the first time, 'that looks to me very like a rat city down there, let us go down to it; they may be able to help us.' So they alighted in some bushes in the heart of the rat city. The falcon remained where he was, but the cat lay down outside the principal gate, causing terrible excitement among the rats.

At length, seeing she did not move, one bolder than the rest put its head out of an upper window of the castle, and said, in a trembling voice:

‘Why have you come here? What do you want? If it is anything in our power, tell us, and we will do it.’

‘If you would have let me speak to you before, I would have told you that I come as a friend,’ replied the cat; ‘and I shall be greatly obliged if you would send four of the strongest and cunningest among you, to do me a service.’

‘Oh, we shall be delighted,’ answered the rat, much relieved. ‘But if you will inform me what it is you wish them to do I shall be better able to judge who is most fitted for the post.’

‘I thank you,’ said the cat. ‘Well, what they have to do is this: To-night they must burrow under the walls of the castle and go up to the room where a Jew lies asleep. Somewhere about him he has hidden a stone, on which are engraved strange signs. When they have found it they must take it from him without his waking, and bring it to me.’

‘Your orders shall be obeyed,’ replied the rat. And he went out to give his instructions.

About midnight the cat, who was still sleeping before the gate, was awakened by some water flung at him by the head rat, who could not make up his mind to open the doors.

‘Here is the stone you wanted,’ said he, when the cat started up with a loud mew; ‘if you will hold up your paws I will drop it down.’ And so he did. ‘And now farewell,’ continued the rat; ‘you have a long way to go, and will do well to start before daybreak.’

‘Your counsel is good,’ replied the cat, smiling to itself; and putting the stone in her mouth she went off to seek the falcon.

Now all this time neither the cat nor the falcon had had any food, and the falcon soon got tired carrying such a heavy burden. When night arrived he declared he could go no further, but would spend it on the banks of a river.

‘And it is my turn to take care of the stone,’ said he, ‘or it will seem as if you had done everything and I nothing.’

‘No, I got it, and I will keep it,’ answered the cat, who was tired and cross; and they began a fine quarrel. But, unluckily, in the midst of it, the cat raised her voice, and the stone fell into the ear of a big fish which happened to be swimming by, and though both the cat and the falcon sprang into the water after it, they were too late.

Half drowned, and more than half choked, the two faithful servants scrambled back to land again. The falcon flew to a tree and spread his wings in the sun to dry, but the cat, after giving herself a good shake, began to scratch up the sandy banks and to throw the bits into the stream.

‘What are you doing that for?’ asked a little fish. ‘Do you know that you are making the water quite muddy?'

'That doesn't matter at all to me,' answered the cat. 'I am going to fill up all the river, so that the fishes may die.'

'That is very unkind, as we have never done you any harm,' replied the fish. 'Why are you so angry with us?'

'Because one of you has got a stone of mine — a stone with strange signs upon it — which dropped into the water. If you will promise to get it back for me, why, perhaps I will leave your river alone.'

'I will certainly try,' answered the fish in a great hurry; 'but you must have a little patience, as it may not be an easy task.' And in an instant his scales might be seen flashing quickly along.

The fish swam as fast as he could to the sea, which was not far distant, and calling together all his relations who lived in the neighbourhood, he told them of the terrible danger which threatened the dwellers in the river.

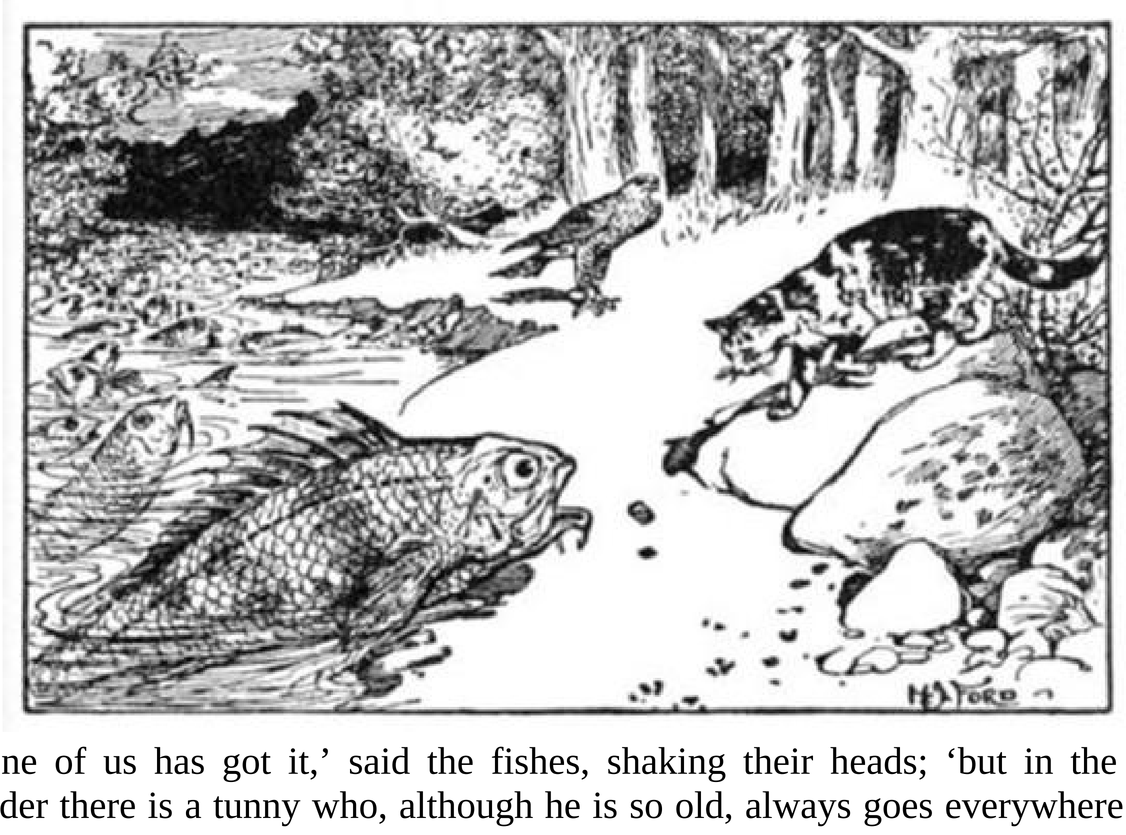

'None of us has got it,' said the fishes, shaking their heads; 'but in the bay yonder there is a tunny who, although he is so old, always goes everywhere. He will be able to tell you about it, if anyone can.' So the little fish swam off to the tunny, and again related his story.

'Why *I* was up that river only a few hours ago!' cried the tunny; 'and as I was coming back something fell into my ear, and there it is still, for I went to sleep when I got home and forgot all about it. Perhaps it may be what you want.' And stretching up his tail he whisked out the stone.

'Yes, I think that must be it,' said the fish with joy. And taking the stone in his mouth he carried it to the place where the cat was waiting for him.

'I am much obliged to you,' said the cat, as the fish laid the stone on the sand, 'and to reward you, I will let your river alone.' And she mounted the falcon's back, and they flew to their master.

Ah, how glad he was to see them again with the magic stone in their possession. In a moment he had wished for a palace, but *this* time it was of green marble; and then he wished for the princess and her ladies to occupy it. And there they lived for many years, and when the old king died the princess's husband reigned in his stead.

(Adapted from *Contes Berbères*.)

THE STORY OF MANUS

Far away over the sea of the West there reigned a king who had two sons; and the name of the one was Oireal, and the name of the other was Iarlaid. When the boys were still children, their father and mother died, and a great council was held, and a man was chosen from among them who would rule the kingdom till the boys were old enough to rule it themselves.

The years passed on, and by-and-by another council was held, and it was agreed that the king's sons were now of an age to take the power which rightly belonged to them. So the youths were bidden to appear before the council, and Oireal the elder was smaller and weaker than his brother.

'I like not to leave the deer on the hill and the fish in the rivers, and sit in judgment on my people,' said Oireal, when he had listened to the words of the chief of the council. And the chief waxed angry, and answered quickly:

'Not one clod of earth shall ever be yours if this day you do not take on yourself the vows that were taken by the king your father.'

Then spake Iarlaid, the younger, and he said: 'Let one half be yours, and the other give to me; then you will have fewer people to rule over.'

'Yes, I will do that,' answered Oireal.

After this, one half of the men of the land of Lochlann did homage to Oireal, and the other half to Iarlaid. And they governed their kingdoms as they would, and in a few years they became grown men with beards on their chins; and Iarlaid married the daughter of the king of Greece, and Oireal the daughter of the king of Orkney. The next year sons were born to Oireal and Iarlaid; and the son of Oireal was big and strong, but the son of Iarlaid was little and weak, and each had six foster brothers who went everywhere with the princes.

One day Manus, son of Oireal, and his cousin, the son of Iarlaid, called to their foster brothers, and bade them come and play a game at shinny in the great field near the school where they were taught all that princes and nobles should know. Long they played, and swiftly did the ball pass from one to another, when Manus drove the ball at his cousin, the son of Iarlaid. The boy, who was not used to be roughly handled, even in jest, cried out that he was sorely hurt, and went home with his foster brothers and told his tale to his mother. The wife of Iarlaid grew white and angry as she listened, and thrusting her son aside, sought the council hall where Iarlaid was sitting.

'Manus has driven a ball at my son, and fain would have slain him,' said she.

‘Let an end be put to him and his ill deeds.’

But Iarlaid answered:

‘Nay, I will not slay the son of my brother.’

‘And he shall not slay my son,’ said the queen. And calling to her chamberlain she ordered him to lead the prince to the four brown boundaries of the world, and to leave him there with a wise man, who would care for him, and let no harm befall him. And the wise man set the boy on the top of a hill where the sun always shone, and he could see every man, but no man could see him.

Then she summoned Manus to the castle, and for a whole year she kept him fast, and his own mother could not get speech of him. But in the end, when the wife of Oireal fell sick, Manus fled from the tower which was his prison, and stole back to his own home.

For a few years he stayed there in peace, and then the wife of Iarlaid his uncle sent for him.

‘It is time that you were married,’ she said, when she saw that Manus had grown tall and strong like unto Iarlaid. ‘Tall and strong you are, and comely of face. I know a bride that will suit you well, and that is the daughter of the mighty earl of Finghaidh, that does homage for his lands to me. I myself will go with a great following to his house, and you shall go with me.’

Thus it was done; and though the earl’s wife was eager to keep her daughter with her yet a while, she was fain to yield, as the wife of Iarlaid vowed that not a rood of land should the earl have, unless he did her bidding. But if he would give his daughter to Manus, she would bestow on him the third part of her own kingdom, with much treasure beside. This she did, not from love to Manus, but because she wished to destroy him. So they were married, and rode back with the wife of Iarlaid to her own palace. And that night, while he was sleeping, there came a wise man, who was his father’s friend, and awoke him saying: ‘Danger lies very close to you, Manus, son of Oireal. You hold yourself favoured because you have as a bride the daughter of a mighty earl; but do you know what bride the wife of Iarlaid sought for her own son? It was no worldly wife she found for *him*, but the swift March wind, and never can you prevail against her.’

‘Is it thus?’ answered Manus. And at the first streak of dawn he went to the chamber where the queen lay in the midst of her maidens.

‘I have come,’ he said, ‘for the third part of the kingdom, and for the treasure which you promised me.’ But the wife of Iarlaid laughed as she heard him.

‘Not a clod shall you have here,’ spake she. ‘You must go to the Old Bergen for that. Mayhap under its stones and rough mountains you may find a treasure!’

‘Then give me your son’s six foster brothers as well as my own,’ answered he. And the queen gave them to him, and they set out for Old Bergen.

A year passed by, and found them still in that wild land, hunting the reindeer, and digging pits for the mountain sheep to fall into. For a time Manus and his twelve companions lived merrily, but at length Manus grew weary of the strange country, and they all took ship for the land of Lochlann. The wind was fierce and cold, and long was the voyage; but, one spring day, they sailed into the harbour that lay beneath the castle of Iarlaid. The queen looked from her window and beheld him mounting the hill, with the twelve foster brothers behind him. Then she said to her husband: ‘Manus has returned with his twelve foster brothers. Would that I could put an end to him and his murdering and his slaying.’

‘That were a great pity,’ answered Iarlaid. ‘And it is not I that will do it.’

‘If you will not do it I will,’ said she. And she called the twelve foster brothers and made them vow fealty to herself. So Manus was left with no man, and sorrowful was he when he returned alone to Old Bergen. It was late when his foot touched the shore, and took the path towards the forest. On his way there he met him a man in a red tunic.

‘Is it you, Manus, come back again?’ asked he.

‘It is I,’ answered Manus; ‘alone have I returned from the land of Lochlann.’

The man eyed him silently for a moment, and then he said:

‘I dreamed that you were girt with a sword and became king of Lochlann.’ But Manus answered:

‘I have no sword and my bow is broken.’

‘I will give you a new sword if you will make me a promise,’ said the man once more.

‘To be sure I will make it, if ever I am king,’ answered Manus. ‘But speak, and tell me what promise I am to make!’

‘I was your grandfather’s armourer,’ replied the man, ‘and I wish to be your armourer also.’

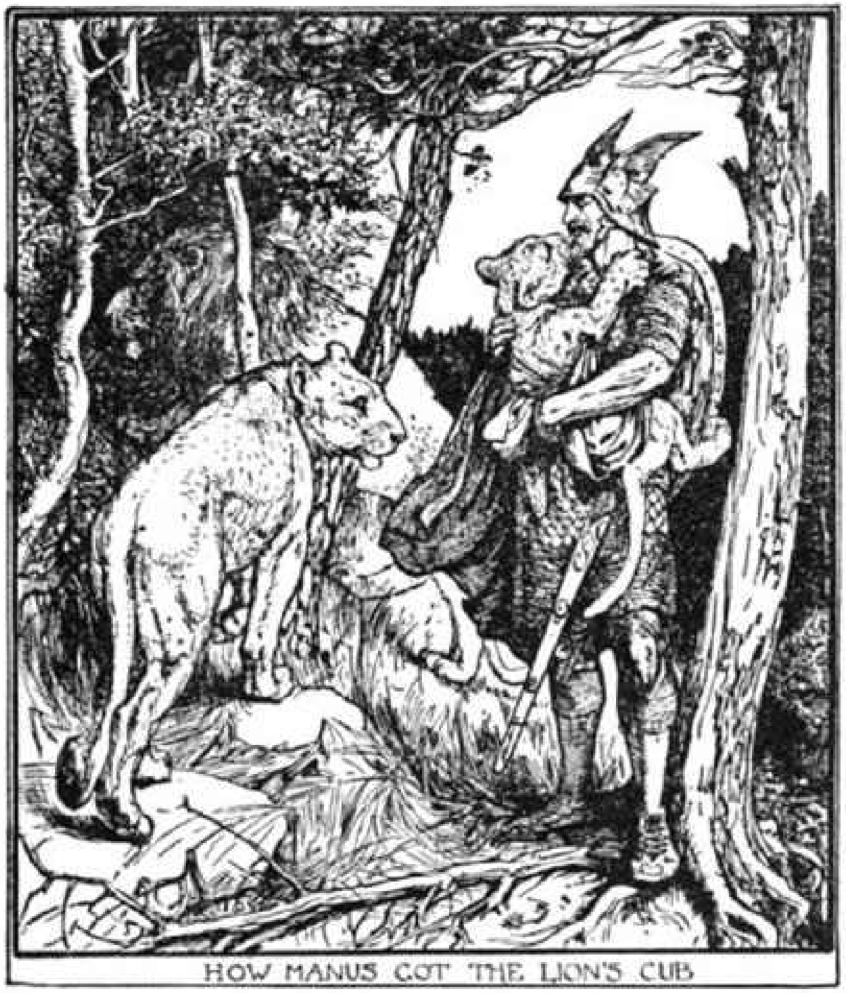

HOW MANUS GOT THE LION'S CUB

‘That I will promise readily,’ said Manus; and followed the man into his house, which was at a little distance. But the house was not like other houses, for the walls of every room were hung so thick with arms that you could not see the boards.

‘Choose what you will,’ said the man; and Manus unhooked a sword and tried it across his knee, and it broke, and so did the next, and the next.

‘Leave off breaking the swords,’ cried the man, ‘and look at this old sword and helmet and tunic that I wore in the wars of your grandfather. Perhaps you may find them of stouter steel.’ And Manus bent the sword thrice across his knee but he could not break it. So he girded it to his side, and put on the old helmet. As he fastened the strap his eye fell on a cloth flapping outside the window.

‘What cloth is that?’ asked he.

‘It is a cloth that was woven by the Little People of the forest,’ said the man; ‘and when you are hungry it will give you food and drink, and if you meet a foe, he will not hurt you, but will stoop and kiss the back of your hand in token of submission. Take it, and use it well.’ Manus gladly wrapped the shawl round his arm, and was leaving the house, when he heard the rattling of a chain blown by the wind.

‘What chain is that?’ asked he.

‘The creature who has that chain round his neck, need not fear a hundred enemies,’ answered the armourer. And Manus wound it round him and passed on into the forest.

Suddenly there sprang out from the bushes two lions, and a lion cub with them. The fierce beasts bounded towards him, roaring loudly, and would fain have eaten him, but quickly Manus stooped and spread the cloth upon the ground. At that the lions stopped, and bowing their great heads, kissed the back of his wrist and went their ways. But the cub rolled itself up in the cloth; so Manus picked them both up, and carried them with him to Old Bergen.

Another year went by, and then he took the lion cub and set forth to the land of Lochlann. And the wife of Iarlaid came to meet him, and a brown dog, small but full of courage, came with her. When the dog beheld the lion cub he rushed towards him, thinking to eat him; but the cub caught the dog by the neck, and shook him, and he was dead. And the wife of Iarlaid mourned him sore, and her wrath was kindled, and many times she tried to slay Manus and his cub, but she could not. And at last they two went back to Old Bergen, and the twelve foster brothers went also.

‘Let them go,’ said the wife of Iarlaid, when she heard of it. ‘My brother the Red Gruagach will take the head off Manus as well in Old Bergen as elsewhere.’

Now these words were carried by a messenger to the wife of Oireal, and she made haste and sent a ship to Old Bergen to bear away her son before the Red Gruagach should take the head off him. And in the ship was a pilot. But the wife of Iarlaid made a thick fog to cover the face of the sea, and the rowers could not row, lest they should drive the ship on to a rock. And when night came, the lion cub, whose eyes were bright and keen, stole up to Manus, and Manus got on his back, and the lion cub sprang ashore and bade Manus rest on the rock and wait for him. So Manus slept, and by-and-by a voice sounded in his ears, saying: ‘Arise!’ And he saw a ship in the water beneath him, and in the ship sat the lion cub in the shape of the pilot.

Then they sailed away through the fog, and none saw them; and they reached the land of Lochlann, and the lion cub with the chain round his neck sprang from the ship and Manus followed after. And the lion cub killed all the men that guarded the castle, and Iarlaid and his wife also, so that, in the end, Manus son of Oireal was crowned king of Lochlann.

(Shortened from *West Highland Tales*.)

PINKEL THE THIEF

Long, long ago there lived a widow who had three sons. The two eldest were grown up, and though they were known to be idle fellows, some of the neighbours had given them work to do on account of the respect in which their mother was held. But at the time this story begins they had both been so careless and idle that their masters declared they would keep them no longer.

So home they went to their mother and youngest brother, of whom they thought little, because he made himself useful about the house, and looked after the hens, and milked the cow. ‘Pinkel,’ they called him in scorn, and by-and-by ‘Pinkel’ became his name throughout the village.

The two young men thought it was much nicer to live at home and be idle than to be obliged to do a quantity of disagreeable things they did not like, and they would have stayed by the fire till the end of their lives had not the widow lost patience with them and said that since they would not look for work at home they must seek it elsewhere, for she would not have them under her roof any longer. But she repented bitterly of her words when Pinkel told her that he too was old enough to go out into the world, and that when he had made a fortune he would send for his mother to keep house for him.

The widow wept many tears at parting from her youngest son, but as she saw that his heart was set upon going with his brothers, she did not try to keep him. So the young men started off one morning in high spirits, never doubting that work such as they might be willing to do would be had for the asking, as soon as their little store of money was spent.

But a very few days of wandering opened their eyes. Nobody seemed to want them, or, if they did, the young men declared that they were not able to undertake all that the farmers or millers or woodcutters required of them. The youngest brother, who was wiser, would gladly have done some of the work that the others refused, but he was small and slight, and no one thought of offering him any. Therefore they went from one place to another, living only on the fruit and nuts they could find in the woods, and getting hungrier every day.

One night, after they had been walking for many hours and were very tired, they came to a large lake with an island in the middle of it. From the island streamed a strong light, by which they could see everything almost as clearly as if the sun had been shining, and they perceived that, lying half hidden in the rushes, was a boat.

‘Let us take it and row over to the island, where there must be a house,’ said the eldest brother; ‘and perhaps they will give us food and shelter.’ And they all got in and rowed across in the direction of the light. As they drew near the island they saw that it came from a golden lantern hanging over the door of a hut, while sweet tinkling music proceeded from some bells attached to the golden horns of a goat which was feeding near the cottage. The young men’s hearts rejoiced as they thought that at last they would be able to rest their weary limbs, and they entered the hut, but were amazed to see an ugly old woman inside, wrapped in a cloak of gold which lighted up the whole house. They looked at each other uneasily as she came forward with her daughter, as they knew by the cloak that this was a famous witch.

‘What do you want?’ asked she, at the same time signing to her daughter to stir the large pot on the fire.

‘We are tired and hungry, and would fain have shelter for the night,’ answered the eldest brother.

‘You cannot get it here,’ said the witch, ‘but you will find both food and shelter in the palace on the other side of the lake. Take your boat and go; but leave this boy with me — I can find work for him, though something tells me he is quick and cunning, and will do me ill.’

‘What harm can a poor boy like me do a great Troll like you,’ answered Pinkel. ‘Let me go, I pray you, with my brothers. I will promise never to hurt you.’ And at last the witch let him go, and he followed his brothers to the boat.

The way was further than they thought, and it was morning before they reached the palace.

Now, at last, their luck seemed to have turned, for while the two eldest were given places in the king’s stables, Pinkel was taken as page to the little prince. He was a clever and amusing boy, who saw everything that passed under his eyes, and the king noticed this, and often employed him in his own service, which made his brothers very jealous.

Things went on in this way for some time, and Pinkel every day rose in the royal favour. At length the envy of his brothers became so great that they could bear it no longer, and consulted together how best they might ruin his credit with the king. They did not wish to kill him — though, perhaps, they would not have been sorry if they had heard he was dead — but merely wished to remind him that he was after all only a child, not half so old and wise as they.

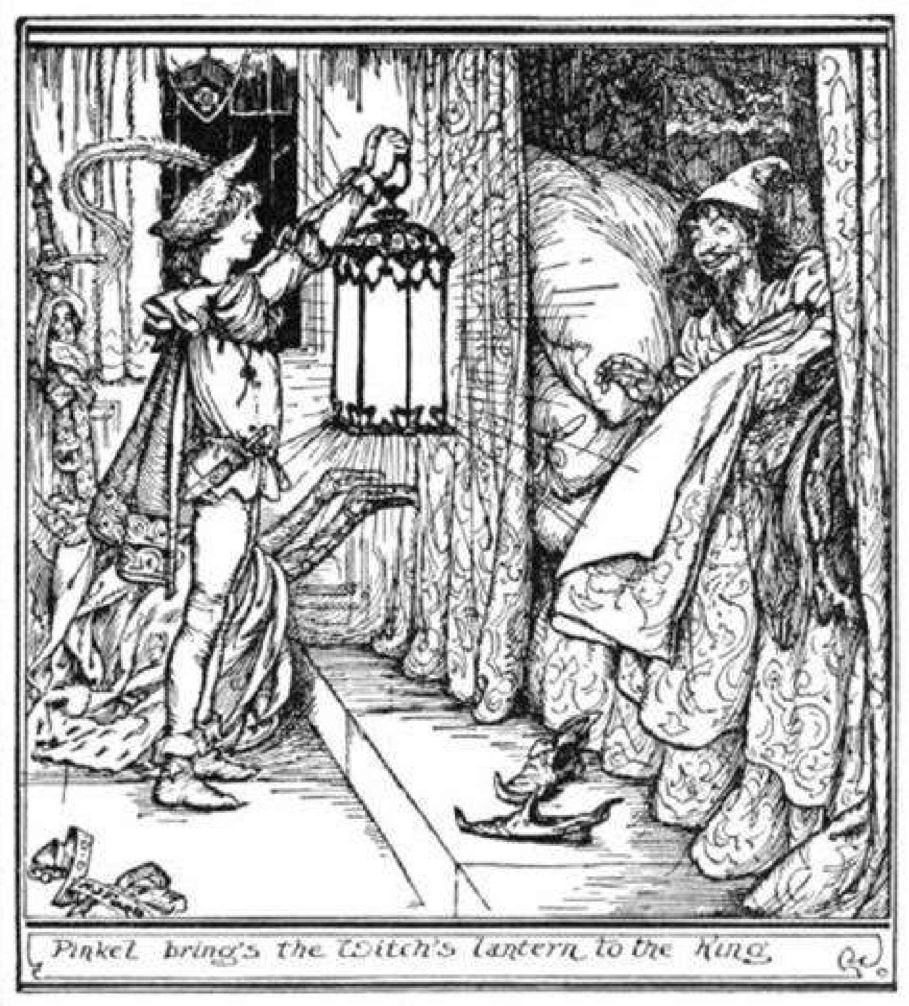

Pinkel brings the Witch's lantern to the King

Their opportunity soon came. It happened to be the king’s custom to visit his stables once a week, so that he might see that his horses were being properly cared for. The next time he entered the stables the two brothers managed to be in the way, and when the king praised the beautiful satin skins of the horses under their charge, and remarked how different was their condition when his grooms had first come across the lake, the young men at once began to speak of the wonderful light which sprang from the lantern over the hut. The king, who had a passion for collecting all the rarest things he could find, fell into the trap directly, and inquired where he could get this marvellous lantern.

‘Send Pinkel for it, Sire,’ said they. ‘It belongs to an old witch, who no doubt came by it in some evil way. But Pinkel has a smooth tongue, and he can get the better of any woman, old or young.’

‘Then bid him go this very night,’ cried the king; ‘and if he brings me the lantern I will make him one of the chief men about my person.’

Pinkel was much pleased at the thought of his adventure, and without more ado he borrowed a little boat which lay moored to the shore, and rowed over to the island at once. It was late by the time he arrived, and almost dark, but he knew by the savoury smell that reached him that the witch was cooking her supper. So he climbed softly on to the roof, and, peering, watched till the old woman's back was turned, when he quickly drew a handful of salt from his pocket and threw it into the pot. Scarcely had he done this when the witch called her daughter and bade her lift the pot off the fire and put the stew into a dish, as it had been cooking quite long enough and she was hungry. But no sooner had she tasted it than she put her spoon down, and declared that her daughter must have been meddling with it, for it was impossible to eat anything that was all made of salt.

'Go down to the spring in the valley, and get some fresh water, that I may prepare a fresh supper,' cried she, 'for I feel half-starved.'

'But, mother,' answered the girl, 'how can I find the well in this darkness? For you know that the lantern's rays shed no light down there.'

'Well, then, take the lantern with you,' answered the witch, 'for supper I must have, and there is no water that is nearer.'

So the girl took her pail in one hand and the golden lantern in the other, and hastened away to the well, followed by Pinkel, who took care to keep out of the way of the rays. When at last she stooped to fill her pail at the well Pinkel pushed her into it, and snatching up the lantern hurried back to his boat and rowed off from the shore.

He was already a long distance from the island when the witch, who wondered what had become of her daughter, went to the door to look for her. Close around the hut was thick darkness, but what was that bobbing light that streamed across the water? The witch's heart sank as all at once it flashed upon her what had happened.

'Is that you, Pinkel?' cried she; and the youth answered:

'Yes, dear mother, it is I!'

'And are you not a knave for robbing me?' said she.

'Truly, dear mother, I am,' replied Pinkel, rowing faster than ever, for he was half afraid that the witch might come after him. But she had no power on the water, and turned angrily into the hut, muttering to herself all the while:

'Take care! take care! A second time you will not escape so easily!'

The sun had not yet risen when Pinkel returned to the palace, and, entering the king's chamber, he held up the lantern so that its rays might fall upon the bed. In an instant the king awoke, and seeing the golden lantern shedding its light upon him, he sprang up, and embraced Pinkel with joy.

'O cunning one,' cried he, 'what treasure hast thou brought me!' And calling for his attendants he ordered that rooms next his own should be prepared for

Pinkel, and that the youth might enter his presence at any hour. And besides this, he was to have a seat on the council.

It may easily be guessed that all this made the brothers more envious than they were before; and they cast about in their minds afresh how best they might destroy him. At length they remembered the goat with the golden horns and the bells, and they rejoiced; 'For,' said they, '*this* time the old woman will be on the watch, and let him be as clever as he likes, the bells on the horns are sure to warn her.' So when, as before, the king came down to the stables and praised the cleverness of their brother, the young men told him of that other marvel possessed by the witch, the goat with the golden horns.

From this moment the king never closed his eyes at night for longing after this wonderful creature. He understood something of the danger that there might be in trying to steal it, now that the witch's suspicions were aroused, and he spent hours in making plans for outwitting her. But somehow he never could think of anything that would do, and at last, as the brothers had foreseen, he sent for Pinkel.

'I hear,' he said, 'that the old witch on the island has a goat with golden horns, from which hang bells that tinkle the sweetest music. That goat I must have! But, tell me, how am I to get it? I would give the third part of my kingdom to anyone that would bring it to me.'

'I will fetch it myself,' answered Pinkel.

This time it was easier for Pinkel to approach the island unseen, as there was no golden lantern to throw its beams over the water. But, on the other hand, the goat slept inside the hut, and would therefore have to be taken from under the very eyes of the old woman. How was he to do it? All the way across the lake he thought and thought, till at length a plan came into his head which seemed as if it might do, though he knew it would be very difficult to carry out.

The first thing he did when he reached the shore was to look about for a piece of wood, and when he had found it he hid himself close to the hut, till it grew quite dark and near the hour when the witch and her daughter went to bed. Then he crept up and fixed the wood under the door, which opened outwards, in such a manner that the more you tried to shut it the more firmly it stuck. And this was what happened when the girl went as usual to bolt the door and make all fast for the night.

'What are you doing?' asked the witch, as her daughter kept tugging at the handle.

'There is something the matter with the door; it won't shut,' answered she.

'Well, leave it alone; there is nobody to hurt us,' said the witch, who was very sleepy; and the girl did as she was bid, and went to bed. Very soon they both might have been heard snoring, and Pinkel knew that his time was come. Slipping off his shoes he stole into the hut on tiptoe, and taking from his pockets some food of which the goat was particularly fond, he laid it under his nose. Then, while the animal was eating it, he stuffed each golden bell with wool which he had also brought with him, stopping every minute to listen, lest the witch should awaken, and he should find himself changed into some dreadful bird or beast. But the snoring still continued, and he went on with his work as quickly as he could. When the last bell was done he drew another handful of food out of his pocket, and held it out to the goat, which instantly rose to its feet and followed Pinkel, who backed slowly to the door, and directly he got outside he seized the goat in his arms and ran down to the place where he had moored his boat.

As soon as he had reached the middle of the lake, Pinkel took the wool out of the bells, which began to tinkle loudly. Their sound awoke the witch, who cried out as before:

‘Is that you, Pinkel?’

‘Yes, dear mother, it is I,’ said Pinkel.

‘Have you stolen my golden goat?’ asked she.

‘Yes, dear mother, I have,’ answered Pinkel.

‘Are you not a knave, Pinkel?’

‘Yes, dear mother, I am,’ he replied. And the old witch shouted in a rage:

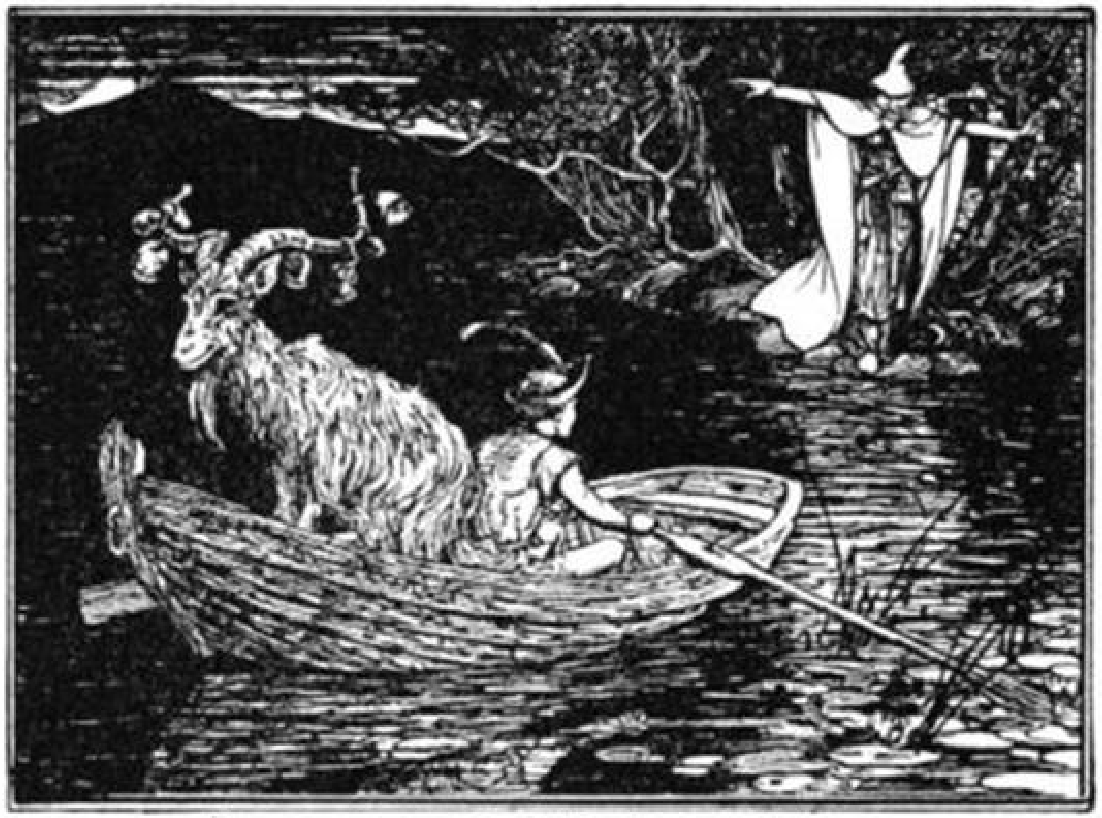

PINKEL STEALS THE WITCH'S GOAT

'Ah! beware how you come hither again, for next time you shall not escape me!'

But Pinkel only laughed and rowed on.

The king was so delighted with the goat that he always kept it by his side, night and day; and, as he had promised, Pinkel was made ruler over the third part of the kingdom. As may be supposed, the brothers were more furious than ever, and grew quite thin with rage.

'How can we get rid of him?' said one to the other. And at length they remembered the golden cloak.

'He will need to be clever if he is to steal *that*!' they cried, with a chuckle. And when next the king came to see his horses they began to speak of Pinkel and his marvellous cunning, and how he had contrived to steal the lantern and the goat, which nobody else would have been able to do.

'But as he *was* there, it is a pity he could not have brought away the golden cloak,' added they.

'The golden cloak! what is that?' asked the king. And the young men described its beauties in such glowing words that the king declared he should never know a day's happiness till he had wrapped the cloak round his own shoulders.

'And,' added he, 'the man who brings it to me shall wed my daughter, and shall inherit my throne.’

‘None can get it save Pinkel,’ said they; for they did not imagine that the witch, after two warnings, could allow their brother to escape a third time. So Pinkel was sent for, and with a glad heart he set out.

He passed many hours inventing first one plan and then another, till he had a scheme ready which he thought might prove successful.

Thrusting a large bag inside his coat, he pushed off from the shore, taking care this time to reach the island in daylight. Having made his boat fast to a tree, he walked up to the hut, hanging his head, and putting on a face that was both sorrowful and ashamed.

‘Is that you, Pinkel?’ asked the witch when she saw him, her eyes gleaming savagely.

‘Yes, dear mother, it is I,’ answered Pinkel.

‘So you have dared, after all you have done, to put yourself in my power!’ cried she. ‘Well, you sha’n’t escape me *this* time!’ And she took down a large knife and began to sharpen it.

‘Oh! dear mother, spare me!’ shrieked Pinkel, falling on his knees, and looking wildly about him.

‘Spare you, indeed, you thief! Where are my lantern and my goat? No! no! there is only one fate for robbers!’ And she brandished the knife in the air so that it glittered in the firelight.

‘Then, if I *must* die,’ said Pinkel, who, by this time, was getting really rather frightened, ‘let me at least choose the manner of my death. I am very hungry, for I have had nothing to eat all day. Put some poison, if you like, into the porridge, but at least let me have a good meal before I die.’

‘That is not a bad idea,’ answered the woman; ‘as long as you *do* die, it is all one to me.’ And ladling out a large bowl of porridge, she stirred some poisonous herbs into it, and set about some work that had to be done. Then Pinkel hastily poured all the contents of the bowl into his bag, and made a great noise with his spoon, as if he was scraping up the last morsel.

‘Poisoned or not, the porridge is excellent. I have eaten it, every scrap; do give me some more,’ said Pinkel, turning towards her.

‘Well, you have a fine appetite, young man,’ answered the witch; ‘however, it is the last time you will ever eat it, so I will give you another bowlful.’ And rubbing in the poisonous herbs, she poured him out half of what remained, and then went to the window to call her cat.

In an instant Pinkel again emptied the porridge into the bag, and the next minute he rolled on the floor, twisting himself about as if in agony, uttering loud groans the while. Suddenly he grew silent and lay still.

‘Ah! I thought a second dose of that poison would be too much for you,’ said the witch looking at him. ‘I warned you what would happen if you came back. I wish that all thieves were as dead as you! But why does not my lazy girl bring the wood I sent her for, it will soon be too dark for her to find her way? I suppose I must go and search for her. What a trouble girls are!’ And she went to the door to watch if there were any signs of her daughter. But nothing could be seen of her, and heavy rain was falling.

‘It is no night for my cloak,’ she muttered; ‘it would be covered with mud by the time I got back.’ So she took it off her shoulders and hung it carefully up in a cupboard in the room. After that she put on her clogs and started to seek her daughter. Directly the last sound of the clogs had ceased, Pinkel jumped up and took down the cloak, and rowed off as fast as he could.

He had not gone far when a puff of wind unfolded the cloak, and its brightness shed gleams across the water. The witch, who was just entering the forest, turned round at that moment and saw the golden rays. She forgot all about her daughter, and ran down to the shore, screaming with rage at being outwitted a third time.

‘Is that you, Pinkel?’ cried she.

‘Yes, dear mother, it is I.’

‘Have you taken my gold cloak?’

‘Yes, dear mother, I have.’

‘Are you not a great knave?’

‘Yes, truly dear mother, I am.’

And so indeed he was!

But, all the same, he carried the cloak to the king’s palace, and in return he received the hand of the king’s daughter in marriage. People said that it was the bride who ought to have worn the cloak at her wedding feast; but the king was so pleased with it that he would not part from it; and to the end of his life was never seen without it. After his death, Pinkel became king; and let us hope that he gave up his bad and thievish ways, and ruled his subjects well. As for his brothers, he did not punish them, but left them in the stables, where they grumbled all day long.

(Thorpe’s *Yule-Tide Stories*.)

THE ADVENTURES OF A JACKAL

In a country which is full of wild beasts of all sorts there once lived a jackal and a hedgehog, and, unlike though they were, the two animals made great friends, and were often seen in each other's company.

One afternoon they were walking along a road together, when the jackal, who was the taller of the two, exclaimed:

'Oh! there is a barn full of corn; let us go and eat some.'

'Yes, do let us!' answered the hedgehog. So they went to the barn, and ate till they could eat no more. Then the jackal put on his shoes, which he had taken off so as to make no noise, and they returned to the high road.

After they had gone some way they met a panther, who stopped, and bowing politely, said:

'Excuse my speaking to you, but I cannot help admiring those shoes of yours. Do you mind telling me who made them?'

'Yes, I think they *are* rather nice,' answered the jackal; 'I made them myself, though.'

'Could you make me a pair like them?' asked the panther eagerly.

'I would do my best, of course,' replied the jackal; 'but you must kill me a cow, and when we have eaten the flesh I will take the skin and make your shoes out of it.'

So the panther prowled about until he saw a fine cow grazing apart from the rest of the herd. He killed it instantly, and then gave a cry to the jackal and hedgehog to come to the place where he was. They soon skinned the dead beast, and spread its skin out to dry, after which they had a grand feast before they curled themselves up for the night, and slept soundly.

Next morning the jackal got up early and set to work upon the shoes, while the panther sat by and looked on with delight. At last they were finished, and the jackal arose and stretched himself.

'Now go and lay them in the sun out there,' said he; 'in a couple of hours they will be ready to put on; but do not attempt to wear them before, or you will feel them most uncomfortable. But I see the sun is high in the heavens, and we must be continuing our journey.'

The panther, who always believed what everybody told him, did exactly as he was bid, and in two hours' time began to fasten on the shoes. They certainly set off his paws wonderfully, and he stretched out his fore-paws and looked at them with pride. But when he tried to *walk* — ah! that was another story! They were so stiff and hard that he nearly shrieked every step he took, and at last he sank down where he was, and actually began to cry.

After some time some little partridges who were hopping about heard the poor panther's groans, and went up to see what was the matter. He had never tried to make his dinner off *them*, and they had always been quite friendly.

'You seem in pain,' said one of them, fluttering close to him, 'can we help you?'

'Oh, it is the jackal! He made me these shoes; they are so hard and tight that they hurt my feet, and I cannot manage to kick them off.'

'Lie still, and we will soften them,' answered the kind little partridge. And calling to his brothers, they all flew to the nearest spring, and carried water in their beaks, which they poured over the shoes. This they did till the hard leather grew soft, and the panther was able to slip his feet out of them.

'Oh, thank you, thank you,' he cried, skipping round with joy. 'I feel a different creature. Now I will go after the jackal and pay him my debts.' And he bounded away into the forest.

But the jackal had been very cunning, and had trotted backwards and forwards and in and out, so that it was very difficult to know which track he had really followed. At length, however, he caught sight of his enemy, at the same moment that the jackal had caught sight of him. The panther gave a loud roar, and sprung forward, but the jackal was too quick for him and plunged into a dense thicket, where the panther could not follow.

Disgusted with his failure, but more angry than ever, the panther lay down for a while to consider what he should do next, and as he was thinking, an old man came by.

'Oh! father, tell me how I can repay the jackal for the way he has served me!' And without more ado he told his story.

'If you take my advice,' answered the old man, 'you will kill a cow, and invite all the jackals in the forest to the feast. Watch them carefully while they are eating, and you will see that most of them keep their eyes on their food. But if one of them glances at *you*, you will know that is the traitor.'

The panther, whose manners were always good, thanked the old man, and followed his counsel. The cow was killed, and the partridges flew about with invitations to the jackals, who gathered in large numbers to the feast. The wicked jackal came amongst them; but as the panther had only seen him once he could not distinguish him from the rest. However, they all took their places on wooden seats placed round the dead cow, which was laid across the boughs of a fallen tree, and began their dinner, each jackal fixing his eyes greedily on the piece of meat before him. Only one of them seemed uneasy, and every now and then glanced in the direction of his host. This the panther noticed, and suddenly made a bound at the culprit and seized his tail; but again the jackal was too quick for him, and catching up a knife he cut off his tail and darted into the forest, followed by all the rest of the party. And before the panther had recovered from his surprise he found himself alone.

‘What am I to do *now*?’ he asked the old man, who soon came back to see how things had turned out.

‘It is very unfortunate, certainly,’ answered he; ‘but I think I know where you can find him. There is a melon garden about two miles from here, and as jackals are very fond of melons they are nearly sure to have gone there to feed. If you see a tailless jackal you will know that he is the one you want.’ So the panther thanked him and went his way.

Now the jackal had guessed what advice the old man would give his enemy, and so, while his friends were greedily eating the ripest melons in the sunniest corner of the garden, he stole behind them and tied their tails together. He had only just finished when his ears caught the sound of breaking branches; and he cried: ‘Quick! quick! here comes the master of the garden!’ And the jackals sprang up and ran away in all directions, leaving their tails behind them. And how was the panther to know which was his enemy?

‘They none of them had any tails,’ he said sadly to the old man, ‘and I am tired of hunting them. I shall leave them alone and go and catch something for supper.’

Of course the hedgehog had not been able to take part in any of these adventures; but as soon as all danger was over, the jackal went to look for his friend whom he was lucky enough to find at home.

‘Ah, there you are,’ he said gaily. ‘I have lost my tail since I saw you last. And other people have lost theirs too; but that is no matter! I am hungry, so come with me to the shepherd who is sitting over there, and we will ask him to sell us one of his sheep.’

‘Yes, that is a good plan,’ answered the hedgehog. And he walked as fast as his little legs would go to keep up with the jackal. When they reached the shepherd the jackal pulled out his purse from under his foreleg, and made his bargain.

‘Only wait till to-morrow,’ said the shepherd, ‘and I will give you the biggest sheep you ever saw. But he always feeds at some distance from the rest of the flock, and it would take me a long time to catch him.’

‘Well, it is very tiresome, but I suppose I must wait,’ replied the jackal. And he and the hedgehog looked about for a nice dry cave in which to make themselves comfortable for the night. But, after they had gone, the shepherd killed one of his sheep, and stripped off his skin, which he sewed tightly round a greyhound he had with him, and put a cord round its neck. Then he lay down and went to sleep.

Very, very early, before the sun was properly up, the jackal and the hedgehog were pulling at the shepherd's cloak.

'Wake up,' they said, 'and give us that sheep. We have had nothing to eat all night, and are very hungry.'

The shepherd yawned, and rubbed his eyes. 'He is tied up to that tree; go and take him.' So they went to the tree and unfastened the cord, and turned to go back to the cave where they had slept, dragging the greyhound after them. When they reached the cave the jackal said to the hedgehog:

'Before I kill him let me see whether he is fat or thin.' And he stood a little way back, so that he might the better examine the animal. After looking at him, with his head on one side, for a minute or two, he nodded gravely.

'He is quite fat enough; he is a good sheep.'

But the hedgehog, who sometimes showed more cunning than anyone would have guessed, answered:

'My friend, you are talking nonsense. The wool is indeed a sheep's wool, but the paws of my uncle the greyhound peep out from underneath.'

'He is a *sheep*,' repeated the jackal, who did not like to think anyone cleverer than himself.

'Hold the cord while *I* look at him,' answered the hedgehog.

Very unwillingly the jackal held the rope, while the hedgehog walked slowly round the greyhound till he reached the jackal again. He knew quite well by the paws and tail that it was a greyhound and not a sheep, that the shepherd had sold them; and as he could not tell what turn affairs might take, he resolved to get out of the way.

'Oh! yes, you are right,' he said to the jackal; 'but I never can eat till I have first drunk. I will just go and quench my thirst from that spring at the edge of the wood, and then I shall be ready for breakfast.'

'Don't be long, then,' called the jackal, as the hedgehog hurried off at his best pace. And he lay down under a rock to wait for him.

More than an hour passed by and the hedgehog had had plenty of time to go to the spring and back, and still there was no sign of him. And this was very natural, as he had hidden himself in some long grass under a tree!

At length the jackal guessed that for some reason his friend had run away, and determined to wait for his breakfast no longer. So he went up to the place where the greyhound had been tethered and untied the rope. But just as he was about to spring on his back and give him a deadly bite, the jackal heard a low growl, which never proceeded from the throat of any sheep. Like a flash of lightning the jackal threw down the cord and was flying across the plain; but though his legs were long, the greyhound’s legs were longer still, and he soon came up with his prey. The jackal turned to fight, but he was no match for the greyhound, and in a few minutes he was lying dead on the ground, while the greyhound was trotting peacefully back to the shepherd.

(*Nouveaux Contes Berbères* par René Basset.)

THE ADVENTURES OF THE JACKAL’S ELDEST SON

Now, though the jackal was dead, he had left two sons behind him, every whit as cunning and tricky as their father. The elder of the two was a fine handsome creature, who had a pleasant manner and made many friends. The animal he saw most of was a hyena; and one day, when they were taking a walk together, they picked up a beautiful green cloak, which had evidently been dropped by some one riding across the plain on a camel. Of course each wanted to have it, and they almost quarrelled over the matter; but at length it was settled that the hyena should wear the cloak by day and the jackal by night. After a little while, however, the jackal became discontented with this arrangement, declaring that none of his friends, who were quite different from those of the hyena, could see the splendour of the mantle, and that it was only fair that he should sometimes be allowed to wear it by day. To this the hyena would by no means consent, and they were on the eve of a quarrel when the hyena proposed that they should ask the lion to judge between them. The jackal agreed to this, and the hyena wrapped the cloak about him, and they both trotted off to the lion’s den.

The jackal, who was fond of talking, at once told the story; and when it was finished the lion turned to the hyena and asked if it was true.

‘Quite true, your majesty,’ answered the hyena.

‘Then lay the cloak on the ground at my feet,’ said the lion, ‘and I will give my judgment.’ So the mantle was spread upon the red earth, the hyena and the jackal standing on each side of it.

There was silence for a few moments, and then the lion sat up, looking very great and wise.

‘My judgment is that the garment shall belong wholly to whoever first rings the bell of the nearest mosque at dawn to-morrow. Now go; for much business awaits me!’

All that night the hyena sat up, fearing lest the jackal should reach the bell before him, for the mosque was close at hand. With the first streak of dawn he bounded away to the bell, just as the jackal, who had slept soundly all night, was rising to his feet.

‘Good luck to you,’ cried the jackal. And throwing the cloak over his back he darted away across the plain, and was seen no more by his friend the hyena.

After running several miles the jackal thought he was safe from pursuit, and seeing a lion and another hyena talking together, he strolled up to join them.

‘Good morning,’ he said; ‘may I ask what is the matter? You seem very serious about something.’

‘Pray sit down,’ answered the lion. ‘We were wondering in which direction we should go to find the best dinner. The hyena wishes to go to the forest, and I to the mountains. What do you say?’

‘Well, as I was sauntering over the plain, just now, I noticed a flock of sheep grazing, and some of them had wandered into a little valley quite out of sight of the shepherd. If you keep among the rocks you will never be observed. But perhaps you will allow me to go with you and show you the way?’

‘You are really very kind,’ answered the lion. And they crept stealthily along till at length they reached the mouth of the valley where a ram, a sheep and a lamb were feeding on the rich grass, unconscious of their danger.

‘How shall we divide them?’ asked the lion in a whisper to the hyena.

‘Oh, it is easily done,’ replied the hyena. ‘The lamb for me, the sheep for the jackal, and the ram for the lion.’

‘So I am to have that lean creature, which is nothing but horns, am I?’ cried the lion in a rage. ‘I will teach you to divide things in that manner!’ And he gave the hyena two great blows, which stretched him dead in a moment. Then he turned to the jackal and said: ‘How would you divide them?’

‘Quite differently from the hyena,’ replied the jackal. ‘You will breakfast off the lamb, you will dine off the sheep, and you will sup off the ram.’

‘Dear me, how clever you are! Who taught you such wisdom?’ exclaimed the lion, looking at him admiringly.

‘The fate of the hyena,’ answered the jackal, laughing, and running off at his best speed; for he saw two men armed with spears coming close behind the lion!

The jackal continued to run till at last he could run no longer. He flung himself under a tree panting for breath, when he heard a rustle amongst the grass, and his father’s old friend the hedgehog appeared before him.

‘Oh, is it you?’ asked the little creature; ‘how strange that we should meet so far from home!’

‘I have just had a narrow escape of my life,’ gasped the jackal, ‘and I need some sleep. After that we must think of something to do to amuse ourselves.’ And he lay down again and slept soundly for a couple of hours.

‘Now I am ready,’ said he; ‘have you anything to propose?’

‘In a valley beyond those trees,’ answered the hedgehog, ‘there is a small farm-house where the best butter in the world is made. I know their ways, and in an hour’s time the farmer’s wife will be off to milk the cows, which she keeps at some distance. We could easily get in at the window of the shed where she keeps the butter, and I will watch, lest some one should come unexpectedly, while you have a good meal. Then you shall watch, and I will eat.'

'That sounds a good plan,' replied the jackal; and they set off together.

But when they reached the farm-house the jackal said to the hedgehog: 'Go in and fetch the pots of butter, and I will hide them in a safe place.'

'Oh no,' cried the hedgehog, 'I really couldn't. They would find out directly! And, besides, it is so different just eating a little now and then.'

'Do as I bid you *at once,*' said the jackal, looking at the hedgehog so sternly that the little fellow dared say no more, and soon rolled the jars to the window where the jackal lifted them out one by one.

When they were all in a row before him he gave a sudden start.

'Run for your life,' he whispered to his companion; 'I see the woman coming over the hill!' And the hedgehog, his heart beating, set off as fast as he could. The jackal remained where he was, shaking with laughter, for the woman was not in sight at all, and he had only sent the hedgehog away because he did not want him to know where the jars of butter were buried. But every day he stole out to their hiding-place and had a delicious feast.

At length, one morning, the hedgehog suddenly said:

'You never told me what you did with those jars?'

'Oh, I hid them safely till the farm people should have forgotten all about them,' replied the jackal. 'But as they are still searching for them we must wait a little longer, and then I'll bring them home, and we will share them between us.'

So the hedgehog waited and waited; but every time he asked if there was no chance of getting the jars of butter the jackal put him off with some excuse. After a while the hedgehog became suspicious, and said:

'I should like to know where you have hidden them. To-night, when it is quite dark, you shall show me the place.'

'I really *can't* tell you,' answered the jackal. 'You talk so much that you would be sure to confide the secret to somebody, and then we should have had our trouble for nothing, besides running the risk of our necks being broken by the farmer. I can see that he is getting disheartened, and very soon he will give up the search. Have patience just a little longer.'

The hedgehog said no more, and pretended to be satisfied; but when some days had gone by he woke the jackal, who was sleeping soundly after a hunt which had lasted several hours.

'I have just had notice,' remarked the hedgehog, shaking him, 'that my family wish to have a banquet to-morrow, and they have invited you to it. Will you come?'

'Certainly,' answered the jackal, 'with pleasure. But as I have to go out in the morning you can meet me on the road.’

‘That will do very well,’ replied the hedgehog. And the jackal went to sleep again, for he was obliged to be up early.

Punctual to the moment the hedgehog arrived at the place appointed for their meeting, and as the jackal was not there he sat down and waited for him.

‘Ah, there you are!’ he cried, when the dusky yellow form at last turned the corner. ‘I had nearly given you up! Indeed, I almost wish you had not come, for I hardly know where I shall hide you.’

‘Why should you hide me anywhere?’ asked the jackal. ‘What is the matter with you?’

‘Well, so many of the guests have brought their dogs and mules with them, that I fear it may hardly be safe for you to go amongst them. No; don’t run off that way,’ he added quickly, ‘because there is another troop that are coming over the hill. Lie down here, and I will throw these sacks over you; and keep still for your life, whatever happens.’

And what did happen was, that when the jackal was lying covered up, under a little hill, the hedgehog set a great stone rolling, which crushed him to death.

(*Contes Berbères.*)

THE ADVENTURES OF THE YOUNGER SON OF THE JACKAL

Now that the father and elder brother were both dead, all that was left of the jackal family was one son, who was no less cunning than the others had been. He did not like staying in the same place any better than they, and nobody ever knew in what part of the country he might be found next.

One day, when he was wandering about he beheld a nice fat sheep, which was cropping the grass and seemed quite contented with her lot.

‘Good morning,’ said the jackal, ‘I am so glad to see you. I have been looking for you everywhere.’

‘For *me*?’ answered the sheep, in an astonished voice; ‘but we have never met before!’

‘No; but I have *heard* of you. Oh! you don’t know *what* fine things I have heard! Ah, well, some people have all the luck!’

‘You are very kind, I am sure,’ answered the sheep, not knowing which way to look. ‘Is there any way in which I can help you?’

‘There *is* something that I had set my heart on, though I hardly like to propose it on so short an acquaintance; but from what people have told me, I thought that you and I might keep house together comfortably, if you would only agree to try. I have several fields belonging to me, and if they are kept well watered they bear wonderful crops.’

‘Perhaps I might come for a short time,’ said the sheep, with a little hesitation; ‘and if we do not get on, we can but part company.’

‘Oh, thank you, thank you,’ cried the jackal; ‘do not let us lose a moment.’ And he held out his paw in such an inviting manner that the sheep got up and trotted beside him till they reached home.

‘Now,’ said the jackal, ‘you go to the well and fetch the water, and I will pour it into the trenches that run between the patches of corn.’ And as he did so he sang lustily. The work was very hard, but the sheep did not grumble, and by-and-by was rewarded at seeing the little green heads poking themselves through earth. After that the hot sun ripened them quickly, and soon harvest time was come. Then the grain was cut and ground and ready for sale.

When everything was complete, the jackal said to the sheep:

‘Now let us divide it, so that we can each do what we like with his share.’

‘You do it,’ answered the sheep; ‘here are the scales. You must weigh it carefully.'

So the jackal began to weigh it, and when he had finished, he counted out loud:

'One, two, three, four, five, six, seven parts for the jackal, and one part for the sheep. If she likes it she can take it, if not, she can leave it.'

The sheep looked at the two heaps in silence — one so large, the other so small; and then she answered:

'Wait for a minute, while I fetch some sacks to carry away my share.'

But it was not sacks that the sheep wanted; for as soon as the jackal could no longer see her she set forth at her best pace for the home of the greyhound, where she arrived panting with the haste she had made.

'Oh, good uncle, help me, I pray you!' she cried, as soon as she could speak.

'Why, what is the matter?' asked the greyhound, looking up in astonishment.

'I beg you to return with me, and frighten the jackal into paying me what he owes me,' answered the sheep. 'For months we have lived together, and I have twice every day drawn the water, while he only poured it into the trenches. Together we have reaped our harvest; and now, when the moment to divide our crop has come, he has taken seven parts for himself, and only left one for me.'

She finished, and giving herself a twist, passed her woolly tail across her eyes; while the greyhound watched her, but held his peace. Then he said:

'Bring me a sack.' And the sheep hastened away to fetch one. Very soon she returned, and laid the sack down before him.

'Open it wide, that I may get in,' cried he; and when he was comfortably rolled up inside he bade the sheep take him on her back, and hasten to the place where she had left the jackal.

She found him waiting for her, and pretending to be asleep, though she clearly saw him wink one of his eyes. However, she took no notice, but throwing the sack roughly on the ground, she exclaimed:

'Now measure!'

At this the jackal got up, and going to the heap of grain which lay close by, he divided it as before into eight portions — seven for himself and one for the sheep.

'What are you doing that for?' asked she indignantly. 'You know quite well that it was I who drew the water, and you who only poured it into the trenches.'

'You are mistaken,' answered the jackal. 'It was *I* who drew the water, and *you* who poured it into the trenches. Anybody will tell you that! If you like, I will ask those people who are digging there.'

'Very well,' replied the sheep. And the jackal called out:

'Ho! you diggers, tell me: Who was it you heard singing over the work?'

‘Why, it was you, of course, jackal! You sang so loud that the whole world might have heard you!’

‘And who is it that sings — he who draws the water, or he who empties it?’

‘Why, certainly he who draws the water!’

‘You hear?’ said the jackal, turning to the sheep. ‘Now come and carry away your own portion, or else I shall take it for myself.’

‘You have got the better of me,’ answered the sheep; ‘and I suppose I must confess myself beaten! But as I bear no malice, go and eat some of the dates that I have brought in that sack.’ And the jackal, who loved dates, ran instantly back, and tore open the mouth of the sack. But just as he was about to plunge his nose in he saw two brown eyes calmly looking at him. In an instant he had let fall the flap of the sack and bounded back to where the sheep was standing.

‘I was only in fun; and you have brought my uncle the greyhound. Take away the sack, we will make the division over again.’ And he began re-arranging the heaps.

‘One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, for my mother the sheep, and one for the jackal,’ counted he; casting timid glances all the while at the sack.

‘Now you can take your share and go,’ said the sheep. And the jackal did not need twice telling! Whenever the sheep looked up, she still saw him flying, flying across the plain; and, for all I know, he may be flying across it still.

(*Contes Berbères*, par René Basset.)

THE THREE TREASURES OF THE GIANTS

Long, long ago, there lived an old man and his wife who had three sons; the eldest was called Martin, the second Michael, while the third was named Jack.

One evening they were all seated round the table, eating their supper of bread and milk.

‘Martin,’ said the old man suddenly, ‘I feel that I cannot live much longer. You, as the eldest, will inherit this hut; but, if you value my blessing, be good to your mother and brothers.’

‘Certainly, father; how can you suppose I should do them wrong?’ replied Martin indignantly, helping himself to all the best bits in the dish as he spoke. The old man saw nothing, but Michael looked on in surprise, and Jack was so astonished that he quite forgot to eat his own supper.

A little while after, the father fell ill, and sent for his sons, who were out hunting, to bid him farewell. After giving good advice to the two eldest, he turned to Jack.

‘My boy,’ he said, ‘you have not got quite as much sense as other people, but if Heaven has deprived you of some of your wits, it has given you a kind heart. Always listen to what it says, and take heed to the words of your mother and brothers, as well as you are able!’ So saying the old man sank back on his pillows and died.

The cries of grief uttered by Martin and Michael sounded through the house, but Jack remained by the bedside of his father, still and silent, as if he were dead also. At length he got up, and going into the garden, hid himself in some trees, and wept like a child, while his two brothers made ready for the funeral.

No sooner was the old man buried than Martin and Michael agreed that they would go into the world together to seek their fortunes, while Jack stayed at home with their mother. Jack would have liked nothing better than to sit and dream by the fire, but the mother, who was very old herself, declared that there was no work for him to do, and that he must seek it with his brothers.

So, one fine morning, all three set out; Martin and Michael carried two great bags full of food, but Jack carried nothing. This made his brothers very angry, for the day was hot and the bags were heavy, and about noon they sat down under a tree and began to eat. Jack was as hungry as they were, but he knew that it was no use asking for anything; and he threw himself under another tree, and wept bitterly.

‘Another time perhaps you won’t be so lazy, and will bring food for yourself,’ said Martin, but to his surprise Jack answered:

‘You are a nice pair! You talk of seeking your fortunes, so as not to be a burden on our mother, and you begin by carrying off all the food she has in the house!’

This reply was so unexpected that for some moments neither of the brothers made any answer. Then they offered their brother some of their food, and when he had finished eating they went their way once more.

Towards evening they reached a small hut, and knocking at the door, asked if they might spend the night there. The man, who was a wood-cutter, invited them in, and begged them to sit down to supper. Martin thanked him, but being very proud, explained that it was only shelter they wanted, as they had plenty of food with them; and he and Michael as once opened their bags and began to eat, while Jack hid himself in a corner. The wife, on seeing this, took pity on him, and called him to come and share their supper, which he gladly did, and very good he found it. At this, Martin regretted deeply that he had been so foolish as to refuse, for his bits of bread and cheese seemed very hard when he smelt the savoury soup his brother was enjoying.

‘He shan’t have such a chance again,’ thought he; and the next morning he insisted on plunging into a thick forest where they were likely to meet nobody.

For a long time they wandered hither and thither, for they had no path to guide them; but at last they came upon a wide clearing, in the midst of which stood a castle. Jack shouted with delight, but Martin, who was in a bad temper, said sharply:

‘We must have taken the wrong turning! Let us go back.’

‘Idiot!’ replied Michael, who was hungry too, and, like many people when they are hungry, very cross also. ‘We set out to travel through the world, and what does it matter if we go to the right or to the left?’ And, without another word, took the path to the castle, closely followed by Jack, and after a moment by Martin likewise.

The door of the castle stood open, and they entered a great hall, and looked about them. Not a creature was to be seen, and suddenly Martin — he did not know why — felt a little frightened. He would have left the castle at once, but stopped when Jack boldly walked up to a door in the wall and opened it. He could not for very shame be outdone by his younger brother, and passed behind him, into another splendid hall, which was filled from floor to ceiling with great pieces of copper money.

The sight quite dazzled Martin and Michael, who emptied all the provisions that remained out of their bags, and heaped them up instead with handfuls of copper.

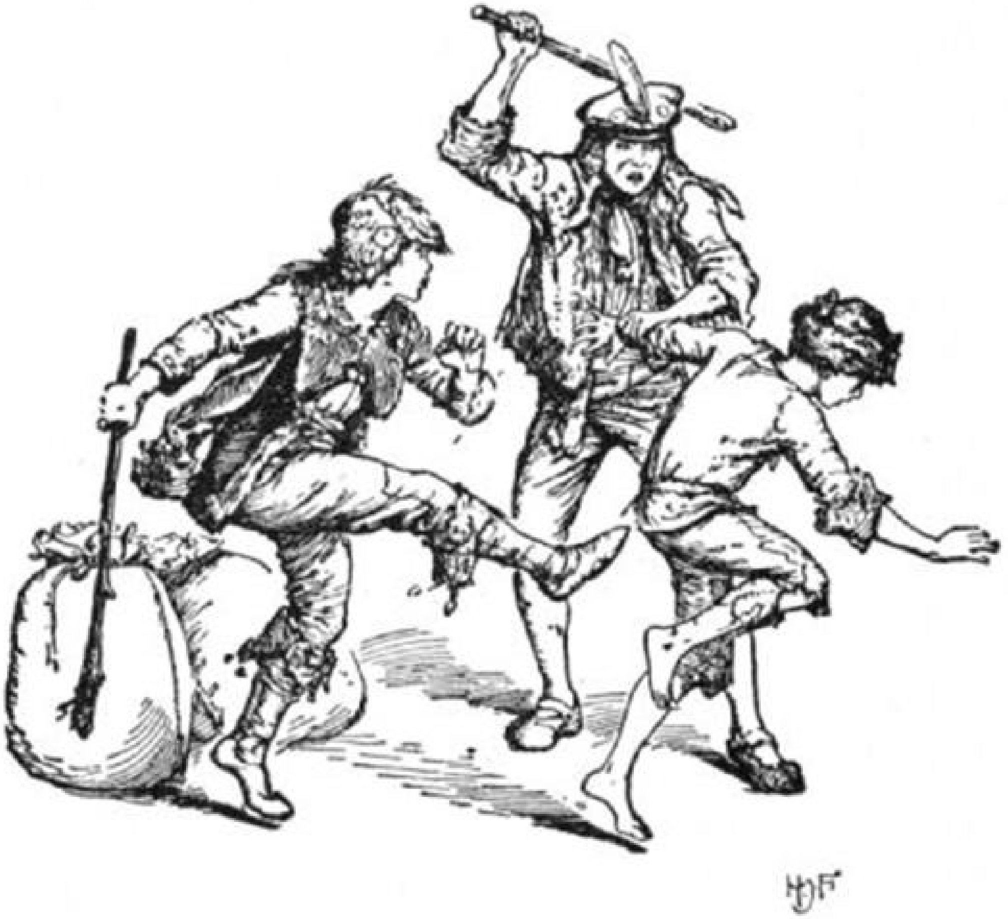

The Brothers illtreat poor Jack

Scarcely had they done this when Jack threw open another door, and this time it led to a hall filled with silver. In an instant his brothers had turned their bags upside down, so that the copper money tumbled out on to the floor, and were shovelling in handfuls of the silver instead. They had hardly finished, when Jack opened yet a third door, and all three fell back in amazement, for this room was a mass of gold, so bright that their eyes grew sore as they looked at them. However, they soon recovered from their surprise, and quickly emptied their bags of silver, and filled them with gold instead. When they would hold no more, Martin said:

‘We had better hurry off now lest somebody else should come, and we might not know what to do’; and, followed by Michael, he hastily left the castle. Jack lingered behind for a few minutes to put a piece of gold, silver, and copper into his pocket, and to eat the food that his brothers had thrown down in the first room. Then he went after them, and found them lying down to rest in the midst of a forest. It was near sunset, and Martin began to feel hungry, so, when Jack arrived, he bade him return to the castle and bring the bread and cheese that they had left there.

‘It is hardly worth doing that,’ answered Jack; ‘for I picked up the pieces and ate them myself.’

At this reply both brothers were beside themselves with anger, and fell upon the boy, beating him, and calling him names, till they were quite tired.

‘Go where you like,’ cried Martin with a final kick; ‘but never come near us again.’ And poor Jack ran weeping into the woods.

The next morning his brothers went home, and bought a beautiful house, where they lived with their mother like great lords.

Jack remained for some hours in hiding, thankful to be safe from his tormentors; but when no one came to trouble him, and his back did not ache so much, he began to think what he had better do. At length he made up his mind to go to the castle and take away as much money with him as would enable him to live in comfort for the rest of his life. This being decided, he sprang up, and set out along the path which led to the castle. As before, the door stood open, and he went on till he had reached the hall of gold, and there he took off his jacket and tied the sleeves together so that it might make a kind of bag. He then began to pour in the gold by handfuls, when, all at once, a noise like thunder shook the castle. This was followed by a voice, hoarse as that of a bull, which cried:

‘I smell the smell of a man.’ And two giants entered.

‘So, little worm! it is *you* who steal our treasures!’ exclaimed the biggest. ‘Well, we have got you now, and we will cook you for supper!’ But here the other giant drew him aside, and for a moment or two they whispered together. At length the first giant spoke:

‘To please my friend I will spare your life on condition that, for the future, you shall guard our treasures. If you are hungry take this little table and rap on it, saying, as you do so: “The dinner of an emperor!” and you will get as much food as you want.’

With a light heart Jack promised all that was asked of him, and for some days enjoyed himself mightily. He had everything he could wish for, and did nothing from morning till night; but by-and-by he began to get very tired of it all.

‘Let the giants guard their treasures themselves,’ he said to himself at last; ‘I am going away. But I will leave all the gold and silver behind me, and will take nought but you, my good little table.’

So, tucking the table under his arm, he started off for the forest, but he did not linger there long, and soon found himself in the fields on the other side. There he saw an old man, who begged Jack to give him something to eat.

‘You could not have asked a better person,’ answered Jack cheerfully. And signing to him to sit down with him under a tree, he set the table in front of them, and struck it three times, crying:

‘The dinner of an emperor!’ He had hardly uttered the words when fish and meat of all kinds appeared on it!

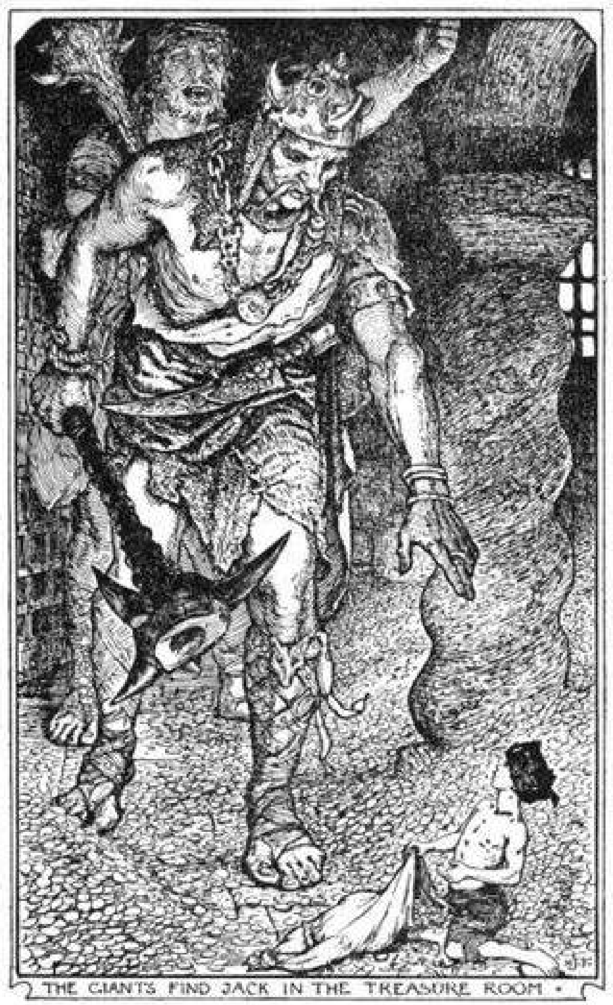

THE GIANTS FIND JACK IN THE TREASURE ROOM •

‘That is a clever trick of yours,’ said the old man, when he had eaten as much as he wanted. ‘Give it to me in exchange for a treasure I have which is still better. Do you see this cornet? Well, you have only to tell it that you wish for an army, and you will have as many soldiers as you require.’

Now, since he had been left to himself, Jack had grown ambitious, so, after a moment’s hesitation, he took the cornet and gave the table in exchange. The old man bade him farewell, and set off down one path, while Jack chose another, and for a long time he was quite pleased with his new possession. Then, as he felt hungry, he wished for his table back again, as no house was in sight, and he wanted some supper badly. All at once he remembered his cornet, and a wicked thought entered his mind.

'Two hundred hussars, forward!' cried he. And the neighing of horses and the clanking of swords was heard close at hand. The officer who rode at their head approached Jack, and politely inquired what he wished them to do.

'A mile or two along that road,' answered Jack, 'you will find an old man carrying a table. Take the table from him and bring it to me.'

The officer saluted and went back to his men, who started at a gallop to do Jack's bidding.

In ten minutes they had returned, bearing the table with them.

'That is all, thank you,' said Jack; and the soldiers disappeared inside the cornet.

Oh, what a good supper Jack had that night, quite forgetting that he owed it to a mean trick. The next day he breakfasted early, and then walked on towards the nearest town. On the way thither he met another old man, who begged for something to eat.

'Certainly you shall have something to eat,' replied Jack. And placing the table on the ground, he cried:

'The dinner of an emperor!' when all sorts of good dishes appeared. At first the old man ate greedily, and said nothing; but, after his hunger was satisfied, he turned to Jack and said:

'That is a very clever trick of yours. Give the table to me, and you shall have something still better.'

'I don't believe there *is* anything better,' answered Jack.

'Yes, there is. Here is my bag; it will give you as many castles as you can possibly want.'

Jack thought for a moment; then he replied: 'Very well, I will exchange with you.' And passing the table to the old man, he hung the bag over his arm.

Five minutes later he summoned five hundred lancers out of the cornet and bade them go after the old man and fetch back the table.

Now that by his cunning he had obtained possession of the three magic objects, he resolved to return to his native place. Smearing his face with dirt, and tearing his clothes so as to look like a beggar, he stopped the passers by and, on pretence of seeking money or food, he questioned them about the village gossip. In this manner he learned that his brothers had become great men, much respected in all the country round. When he heard that, he lost no time in going to the door of their fine house and imploring them to give him food and shelter;

but the only thing he got was hard words, and a command to beg elsewhere. At length, however, at their mother's entreaty, he was told that he might pass the night in the stable. Here he waited until everybody in the house was sound asleep, when he drew his bag from under his cloak, and desired that a castle might appear in that place; and the cornet gave him soldiers to guard the castle, while the table furnished him with a good supper. In the morning, he caused it all to vanish, and when his brothers entered the stable they found him lying on the straw.

Jack remained here for many days, doing nothing, and — as far as anybody knew — eating nothing. This conduct puzzled his brothers greatly, and they put such constant questions to him, that at length he told them the secret of the table, and even gave a dinner to them, which far outdid any they had ever seen or heard of. But though they had solemnly promised to reveal nothing, somehow or other the tale leaked out, and before long reached the ears of the king himself. That very evening his chamberlain arrived at Jack's dwelling, with a request from the king that he might borrow the table for three days.

'Very well,' answered Jack, 'you can take it back with you. But tell his majesty that if he does not return it at the end of the three days I will make war upon him.'

So the chamberlain carried away the table and took it straight to the king, telling him at the same time of Jack's threat, at which they both laughed till their sides ached.

Now the king was so delighted with the table, and the dinners it gave him, that when the three days were over he could not make up his mind to part with it. Instead, he sent for his carpenter, and bade him copy it exactly, and when it was done he told his chamberlain to return it to Jack with his best thanks. It happened to be dinner time, and Jack invited the chamberlain, who knew nothing of the trick, to stay and dine with him. The good man, who had eaten several excellent meals provided by the table in the last three days, accepted the invitation with pleasure, even though he was to dine in a stable, and sat down on the straw beside Jack.

'The dinner of an emperor!' cried Jack. But not even a morsel of cheese made its appearance.

'The dinner of an emperor!' shouted Jack in a voice of thunder. Then the truth dawned upon him; and, crushing the table between his hands, he turned to the chamberlain, who, bewildered and half-frightened, was wondering how to get away.

'Tell your false king that to-morrow I will destroy his castle as easily as I have broken this table.'

The chamberlain hastened back to the palace, and gave the king Jack's message, at which he laughed more than before, and called all his courtiers to hear the story. But they were not quite so merry when they woke next morning and beheld ten thousand horsemen, and as many archers, surrounding the palace. The king saw it was useless to hold out, and he took the white flag of truce in one hand, and the real table in the other, and set out to look for Jack.

'I committed a crime,' said he; 'but I will do my best to make up for it. Here is your table, which I own with shame that I tried to steal, and you shall have besides, my daughter as your wife!'

There was no need to delay the marriage when the table was able to furnish the most splendid banquet that ever was seen, and after everyone had eaten and drunk as much as they wanted, Jack took his bag and commanded a castle filled with all sorts of treasures to arise in the park for himself and his bride.

At this proof of his power the king's heart died within him.

'Your magic is greater than mine,' he said; 'and you are young and strong, while I am old and tired. Take, therefore, the sceptre from my hand, and my crown from my head, and rule my people better than I have done.'

So at last Jack's ambition was satisfied. He could not hope to be more than a king, and as long as he had his cornet to provide him with soldiers he was secure against his enemies. He never forgave his brothers for the way they had treated him, though he presented his mother with a beautiful castle, and everything she could possibly wish for. In the centre of his own palace was a treasure chamber, and in this chamber the table, the cornet, and the bag were kept as the most prized of all his possessions, and not a week passed without a visit from king John to make sure they were safe. He reigned long and well, and died a very old man, beloved by his people. But his good example was not followed by his sons and his grandsons. They grew so proud that they were ashamed to think that the founder of their race had once been a poor boy; and as they and all the world could not fail to remember it, as long as the table, the cornet, and the bag were shown in the treasure chamber, one king, more foolish than the rest, thrust them into a dark and damp cellar.

For some time the kingdom remained, though it became weaker and weaker every year that passed. Then, one day, a rumour reached the king that a large army was marching against him. Vaguely he recollected some tales he had heard about a magic cornet which could provide as many soldiers as would serve to conquer the earth, and which had been removed by his grandfather to a cellar. Thither he hastened that he might renew his power once more, and in that black and slimy spot he found the treasures indeed. But the table fell to pieces as he touched it, in the cornet there remained only a few fragments of leathern belts which the rats had gnawed, and in the bag nothing but broken bits of stone.

And the king bowed his head to the doom that awaited him, and in his heart cursed the ruin wrought by the pride and foolishness of himself and his forefathers.

(From *Contes Populaires Slaves*, par Louis Leger.)

THE ROVER OF THE PLAIN

A long way off, near the sea coast of the east of Africa, there dwelt, once upon a time, a man and his wife. They had two children, a son and a daughter, whom they loved very much, and, like parents in other countries, they often talked of the fine marriages the young people would make some day. Out there both boys and girls marry early, and very soon, it seemed to the mother, a message was sent by a rich man on the other side of the great hills offering a fat herd of oxen in exchange for the daughter. Everyone in the house and in the village rejoiced, and the maiden was despatched to her new home. When all was quiet again the father said to his son:

'Now that we own such a splendid troop of oxen you had better hasten and get yourself a wife, lest some illness should overtake them. Already we have seen in the villages round about one or two damsels whose parents would gladly part with them for less than half the herd. Therefore tell us which you like best, and we will buy her for you.'

But the son answered:

'Not so; the maidens I have seen do not please me. If, indeed, I must marry, let me travel and find a wife for myself.'

'It shall be as you wish,' said his parents; 'but if by-and-by trouble should come of it, it will be your fault and not ours.'

The youth, however, would not listen; and bidding his father and mother farewell, set out on his search. Far, far away he wandered, over mountains and across rivers, till he reached a village where the people were quite different to those of his own race. As he glanced about him he noticed that the girls were fair to look upon, as they pounded maize or stewed something that smelt very nice in earthen pots — especially if you were hot and tired; and when one of the maidens turned round and offered the stranger some dinner, he made up his mind that he would wed her and nobody else.

So he sent a message to her parents asking their leave to take her for his wife, and they came next day to bring their answer.

'We will give you our daughter,' said they, 'if you can pay a good price for her. Never was there so hard-working a girl; and how we shall do without her we cannot tell! Still no doubt your father and mother will come themselves and bring the dowry?'

'No; I have the dowry with me,' replied the young man; laying down a handful of gold pieces. ‘Here it is — take it.’

The old couple’s eyes glittered greedily; but custom forbade them to touch the dowry before all was arranged.

‘At least,’ said they, after a moment’s pause, ‘we may expect them to fetch your wife to her new home?’

‘No; they are not used to travelling,’ answered the bridegroom. ‘Let the ceremony be performed without delay, and we will set forth at once. It is a long journey.’

Then the parents called in the girl, who was lying in the sun outside the hut, and, in the presence of all the village, a goat was killed, the sacred dance took place, and a blessing was said over the heads of the young people. After that the bride was led aside by her father, whose duty it was to bestow on her some parting advice as to her conduct in her married life.

‘Be good to your husband’s parents,’ added he, ‘and always do the will of your husband.’ And the girl nodded her head obediently. Next it was the mother’s turn; and, as was the custom of the tribe, she spoke to her daughter:

‘Will you choose which of your sisters shall go with you to cut your wood and carry your water?’

‘I do not want any of them,’ answered she; ‘they are no use. They will drop the wood and spill the water.’

‘Then will you have any of the other children? There are enough and to spare,’ asked the mother again. But the bride said quickly:

‘I will have none of them! You must give me our buffalo, the Rover of the Plain; he alone shall serve me.’

‘What folly you talk!’ cried the parents. ‘Give you our buffalo, the Rover of the Plain? Why, you know that our life depends on him. Here he is well fed and lies on soft grass; but how can you tell what will befall him in another country? The food may be bad, he will die of hunger; and, if he dies we die also.’

‘No, no,’ said the bride; ‘I can look after him as well as you. Get him ready, for the sun is sinking and it is time we set forth.’

So she went away and put together a small pot filled with healing herbs, a horn that she used in tending sick people, a little knife, and a calabash containing deer fat; and, hiding these about her, took leave of her father and mother and started across the mountains by the side of her husband.

But the young man did not see the buffalo that followed them, which had left his home to be the servant of his wife.

No one ever knew how the news spread to the kraal that the young man was coming back, bringing a wife with him; but, somehow or other, when the two entered the village, every man and woman was standing in the road uttering shouts of welcome.

‘Ah, you are not dead after all,’ cried they; ‘and have found a wife to your liking, though you would have none of our girls. Well, well, you have chosen your own path; and if ill comes of it beware lest you grumble.’

Next day the husband took his wife to the fields and showed her which were his, and which belonged to his mother. The girl listened carefully to all he told her, and walked with him back to the hut; but close to the door she stopped, and said:

‘I have dropped my necklace of beads in the field, and I must go back and look for it.’ But in truth she had done nothing of the sort, and it was only an excuse to go and seek the buffalo.

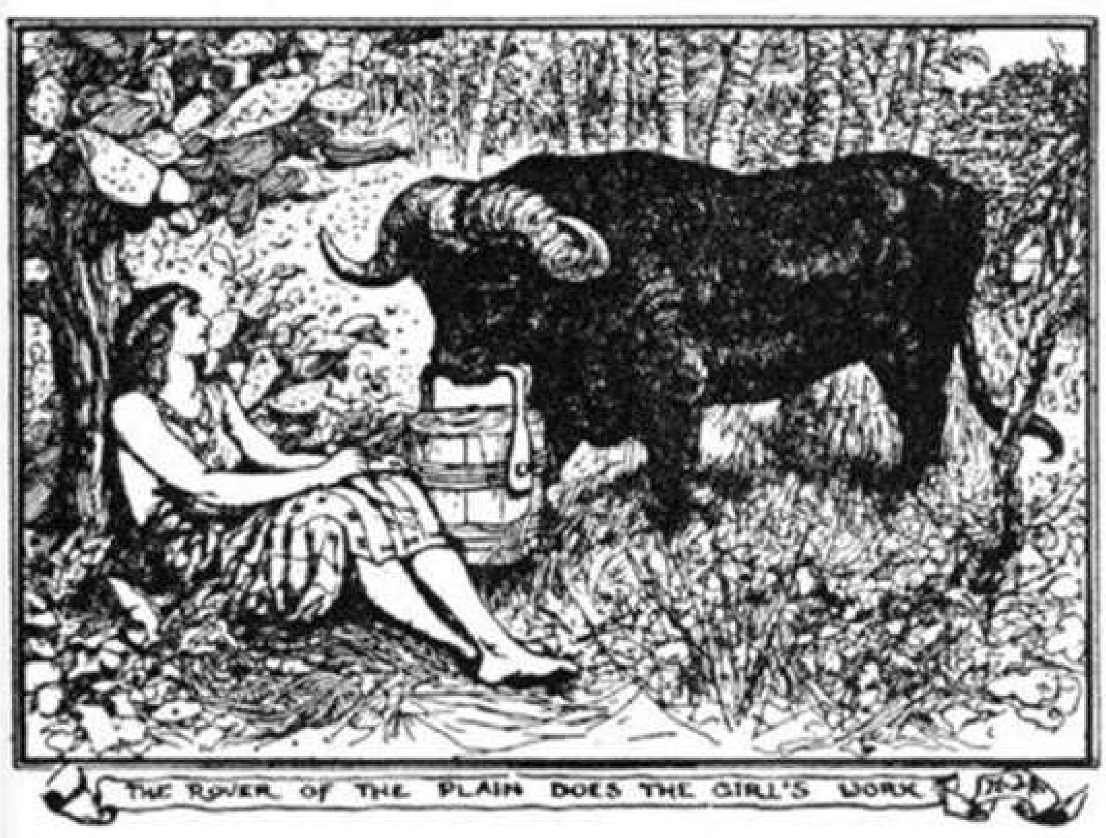

THE ROVER OF THE PLAIN DOES THE GIRL'S WORK

The beast was crouching under a tree when she came up, and snorted with pleasure at the sight of her.

‘You can roam about this field, and this, and this,’ she said, ‘for they belong to my husband; and that is his wood, where you may hide yourself. But the other fields are his mother’s, so beware lest you touch them.’

‘I will beware,’ answered the buffalo; and, patting his head, the girl left him.

Oh, how much better a servant he was than any of the little girls the bride had refused to bring with her! If she wanted water, she had only to cross the patch of maize behind the hut and seek out the place where the buffalo lay hidden, and put down her pail beside him. Then she would sit at her ease while he went to the lake and brought the bucket back brimming over. If she wanted wood, he would break the branches off the trees and lay them at her feet. And the villagers watched her return laden, and said to each other:

'Surely the girls of her country are stronger than our girls, for none of *them* could cut so quickly or carry so much!' But then, nobody knew that she had a buffalo for a servant.

Only, all this time she never gave the poor buffalo anything to eat, because she had just one dish, out of which she and her husband ate; while in her old home there was a dish put aside expressly for the Rover of the Plain. The buffalo bore it as long as he could; but, one day, when his mistress bade him go to the lake and fetch water, his knees almost gave way from hunger. He kept silence, however, till the evening, when he said to his mistress:

'I am nearly starved; I have not touched food since I came here. I can work no more.'

'Alas!' answered she, 'what can I do? I have only one dish in the house. You will have to steal some beans from the fields. Take a few here and a few there; but be sure not to take too many from one place, or the owner may notice it.'

Now the buffalo had always lived an honest life, but if his mistress did not feed him, he must get it for himself. So that night, when all the village was asleep, he came out from the wood and ate a few beans here and a few there, as his mistress had bidden him. And when at last his hunger was satisfied, he crept back to his lair. But a buffalo is not a fairy, and the next morning, when the women arrived to work in the fields, they stood still with astonishment, and said to each other:

'Just look at this; a savage beast has been destroying our crops, and we can see traces of his feet!' And they hurried to their homes to tell their tale.

In the evening the girl crept out to the buffalo's hiding-place, and said to him:

'They perceived what happened, of course; so to-night you had better seek your supper further off.' And the buffalo nodded his head and followed her counsel; but in the morning, when these women also went out to work, the traces of hoofs were plainly to be seen, and they hastened to tell their husbands, and begged them to bring their guns, and to watch for the robber.

It happened that the stranger girl's husband was the best marksman in all the village, and he hid himself behind the trunk of a tree and waited.

The buffalo, thinking that they would probably make a search for him in the fields he had laid waste the evening before, returned to the bean patch belonging to his mistress.

The young man saw him coming with amazement.

‘Why, it is a buffalo!’ cried he; ‘I never have beheld one in this country before!’ And raising his gun, he aimed just behind the ear.

The buffalo gave a leap into the air, and then fell dead.

‘It was a good shot,’ said the young man. And he ran to the village to tell them that the thief was punished.

When he entered his hut he found his wife, who had somehow heard the news, twisting herself to and fro and shedding tears.

‘Are you ill?’ asked he. And she answered: ‘Yes; I have pains all over my body.’ But she was not ill at all, only very unhappy at the death of the buffalo which had served her so well. Her husband felt anxious, and sent for the medicine man; but though she pretended to listen to him, she threw all his medicine out of the door directly he had gone away.

With the first rays of light the whole village was awake, and the women set forth armed with baskets and the men with knives in order to cut up the buffalo. Only the girl remained in her hut; and after a while she too went to join them, groaning and weeping as she walked along.

‘What are you doing here?’ asked her husband when he saw her. ‘If you are ill you are better at home.’

‘Oh! I could not stay alone in the village,’ said she. And her mother-in-law left off her work to come and scold her, and to tell her that she would kill herself if she did such foolish things. But the girl would not listen and sat down and looked on.

When they had divided the buffalo’s flesh, and each woman had the family portion in her basket, the stranger wife got up and said:

‘Let me have the head.’

‘You could never carry anything so heavy,’ answered the men, ‘and now you are ill besides.’

‘You do not know how strong I am,’ answered she. And at last they gave it her.

She did not walk to the village with the others, but lingered behind, and, instead of entering her hut, she slipped into the little shed where the pots for cooking and storing maize were kept. Then she laid down the buffalo’s head and sat beside it. Her husband came to seek her, and begged her to leave the shed and go to bed, as she must be tired out; but the girl would not stir, neither would she attend to the words of her mother-in-law.

‘I wish you would leave me alone!’ she answered crossly. ‘It is impossible to sleep if somebody is always coming in.’ And she turned her back on them, and would not even eat the food they had brought. So they went away, and the young man soon stretched himself out on his mat; but his wife’s odd conduct made him anxious, and he lay awake all night, listening.

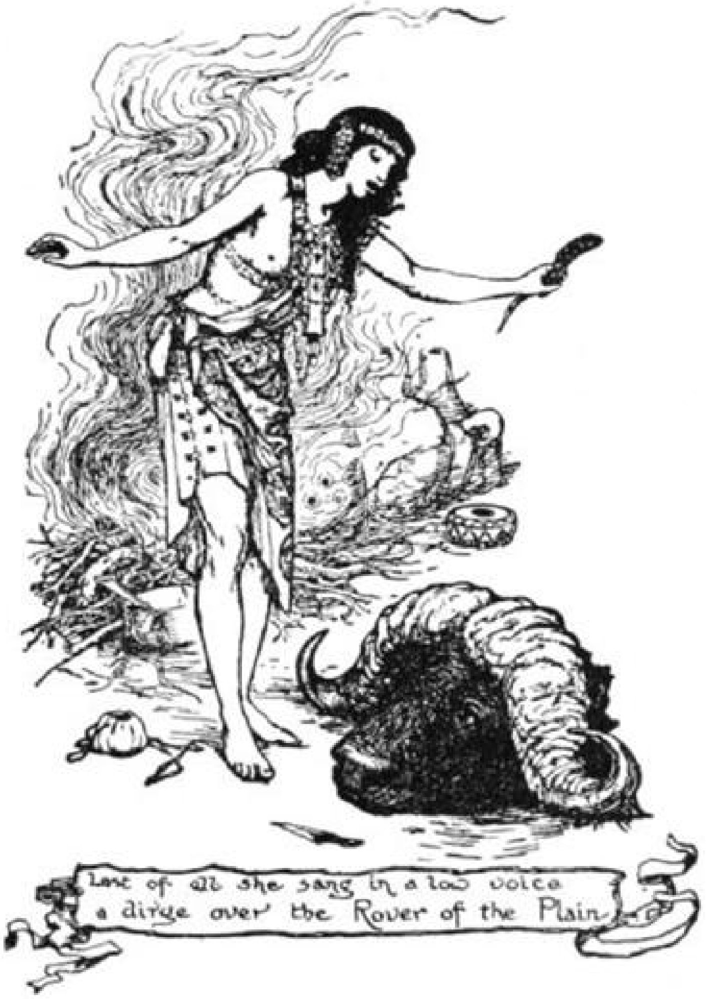
Last of all she sang in a low voice a dirge over the Rover of the Plain

When all was still the girl made a fire and boiled some water in a pot. As soon as it was quite hot she shook in the medicine that she had brought from home, and then, taking the buffalo’s head, she made incisions with her little knife behind the ear, and close to the temple where the shot had struck him. Next she applied the horn to the spot and blew with all her force till, at length, the blood began to move. After that she spread some of the deer fat out of the calabash over the wound, which she held in the steam of the hot water. Last of all, she sang in a low voice a dirge over the Rover of the Plain.

As she chanted the final words the head moved, and the limbs came back. The buffalo began to feel alive again and shook his horns, and stood up and stretched himself. Unluckily it was just at this moment that the husband said to himself:

‘I wonder if she is crying still, and what is the matter with her! Perhaps I had better go and see.’ And he got up and, calling her by name, went out to the shed.

‘Go away! I don’t want you!’ she cried angrily. But it was too late. The buffalo had fallen to the ground, dead, and with the wound in his head as before.

The young man who, unlike most of his tribe, was afraid of his wife, returned to his bed without having seen anything, but wondering very much what she could be doing all this time. After waiting a few minutes, she began her task over again, and at the end the buffalo stood on his feet as before. But just as the girl was rejoicing that her work was completed, in came the husband once more to see what his wife was doing; and this time he sat himself down in the hut, and said that he wished to watch whatever was going on. Then the girl took up the pitcher and all her other things and left the shed, trying for the third time to bring the buffalo back to life.

She was too late; the dawn was already breaking, and the head fell to the ground, dead and corrupt as it was before.

The girl entered the hut, where her husband and his mother were getting ready to go out.

‘I want to go down to the lake, and bathe,’ said she.

‘But you could never walk so far,’ answered they. ‘You are so tired, as it is, that you can hardly stand!’

However, in spite of their warnings, the girl left the hut in the direction of the lake. Very soon she came back weeping, and sobbed out:

‘I met some one in the village who lives in my country, and he told me that my mother is very, very ill, and if I do not go to her at once she will be dead before I arrive. I will return as soon as I can, and now farewell.’ And she set forth in the direction of the mountains. But this story was not true; she knew nothing about her mother, only she wanted an excuse to go home and tell her family that their prophecies had come true, and that the buffalo was dead.

Balancing her basket on her head, she walked along, and directly she had left the village behind her she broke out into the song of the Rover of the Plain, and at last, at the end of the day, she came to the group of huts where her parents lived. Her friends all ran to meet her, and, weeping, she told them that the buffalo was dead.

This sad news spread like lightning through the country, and the people flocked from far and near to bewail the loss of the beast who had been their pride.

‘If you only had listened to *us*,’ they cried, ‘he would be alive now. But you refused all the little girls we offered you, and would have nothing but the buffalo. And remember what the medicine-man said: “If the buffalo dies you die also!”’

So they bewailed their fate, one to the other, and for a while they did not perceive that the girl’s husband was sitting in their midst, leaning his gun against a tree. Then one man, turning, beheld him, and bowed mockingly.

‘Hail, murderer! hail! you have slain us all!’

The young man stared, not knowing what he meant, and answered, wonderingly:

‘I shot a buffalo; is that why you call me a murderer?’

‘A buffalo — yes; but the servant of your wife! It was he who carried the wood and drew the water. Did you not know it?’

‘No; I did not know it,’ replied the husband in surprise. ‘Why did no one tell me? Of course I should not have shot him!’

‘Well, he is dead,’ answered they, ‘and we must die too.’

At this the girl took a cup in which some poisonous herbs had been crushed, and holding it in her hands, she wailed: ‘O my father, Rover of the Plain!’ Then drinking a deep draught from it, fell back dead. One by one her parents, her brothers and her sisters, drank also and died, singing a dirge to the memory of the buffalo.

The girl’s husband looked on with horror; and returned sadly home across the mountains, and, entering his hut, threw himself on the ground. At first he was too tired to speak; but at length he raised his head and told all the story to his father and mother, who sat watching him. When he had finished they shook their heads and said:

‘Now you see that we spoke no idle words when we told you that ill would come of your marriage! We offered you a good and hard-working wife, and you would have none of her. And it is not only your wife you have lost, but your fortune also. For who will give you back your dowry if they are all dead?’

‘It is true, O my father,’ answered the young man. But in his heart he thought more of the loss of his wife than of the money he had given for her.

(From *L’Etude Ethnographique sur Les Baronga*, par Henri Junod.)

THE WHITE DOE

Once upon a time there lived a king and queen who loved each other dearly, and would have been perfectly happy if they had only had a little son or daughter to play with. They never talked about it, and always pretended that there was nothing in the world to wish for; but, sometimes, when they looked at other people’s children, their faces grew sad, and their courtiers and attendants knew the reason why.

One day the queen was sitting alone by the side of a waterfall which sprung from some rocks in the large park adjoining the castle. She was feeling more than usually miserable, and had sent away her ladies so that no one might witness her grief. Suddenly she heard a rustling movement in the pool below the waterfall, and, on glancing up, she saw a large crab climbing on to a stone beside her.

‘Great queen,’ said the crab, ‘I am here to tell you that the desire of your heart will soon be granted. But first you must permit me to lead you to the palace of the fairies, which, though hard by, has never been seen by mortal eyes because of the thick clouds that surround it. When there you will know more; that is, if you will trust, yourself to me.’

The queen had never before heard an animal speak and was struck dumb with surprise. However, she was so enchanted at the words of the crab that she smiled sweetly and held out her hand; it was taken, not by the crab, which had stood there only a moment before, but by a little old woman smartly dressed in white and crimson with green ribbons in her grey hair. And, wonderful to say, not a drop of water fell from her clothes.

The old woman ran lightly down a path along which the queen had been a hundred times before, but it seemed so different she could hardly believe it was the same. Instead of having to push her way through nettles and brambles, roses and jasmine hung about her head, while under her feet the ground was sweet with violets. The orange trees were so tall and thick that, even at midday, the sun was never too hot, and at the end of the path was a glimmer of something so dazzling that the queen had to shade her eyes, and peep at it only between her fingers.

‘What can it be?’ she asked, turning to her guide; who answered:

‘Oh, that is the fairies’ palace, and here are some of them coming to meet us.’

As she spoke the gates swung back and six fairies approached, each bearing in her hand a flower made of precious stones, but so like a real one that it was only by touching you could tell the difference.

‘Madam,’ they said, ‘we know not how to thank you for this mark of your confidence, but have the happiness to tell you that in a short time you will have a little daughter.’

The queen was so enchanted at this news that she nearly fainted with joy; but when she was able to speak, she poured out all her gratitude to the fairies for their promised gift.

‘And now,’ she said, ‘I ought not to stay any longer, for my husband will think that I have run away, or that some evil beast has devoured me.’

In a little while it happened just as the fairies had foretold, and a baby girl was born in the palace. Of course both the king and queen were delighted, and the child was called Désirée, which means ‘desired,’ for she had been ‘desired’ for five long years before her birth.

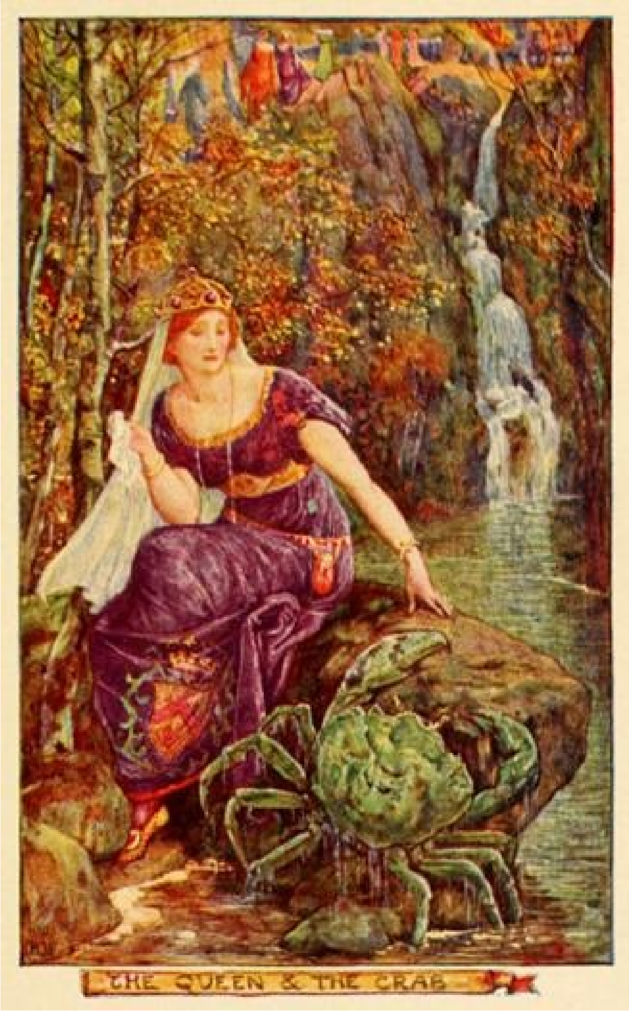

THE QUEEN & THE CRAB

At first the queen could think of nothing but her new plaything, but then she remembered the fairies who had sent it to her. Bidding her ladies bring her the posy of jewelled flowers which had been given her at the palace, she took each flower in her hand and called it by name, and, in turn, each fairy appeared before her. But, as unluckily often happens, the one to whom she owed most, the crab-fairy, was forgotten, and by this, as in the case of other babies you have read about, much mischief was wrought.

However, for the moment all was gaiety in the palace, and everybody inside ran to the windows to watch the fairies' carriages, for no two were alike. One had a car of ebony, drawn by white pigeons, another was lying back in her ivory chariot, driving ten black crows, while the rest had chosen rare woods or many-coloured sea-shells, with scarlet and blue macaws, long-tailed peacocks, or green love-birds for horses. These carriages were only used on occasions of state, for when they went to war flying dragons, fiery serpents, lions or leopards, took the place of the beautiful birds.

The fairies entered the queen's chamber followed by little dwarfs who carried their presents and looked much prouder than their mistresses. One by one their burdens were spread upon the ground, and no one had ever seen such lovely things. Everything a baby could possibly wear or play with was there, and, besides, they had other and more precious gifts to give her, which only children who have fairies for godmothers can ever hope to possess.

They were all gathered round the heap of pink cushions on which the baby lay asleep, when a shadow seemed to fall between them and the sun, while a cold wind blew through the room. Everybody looked up, and there was the crab-fairy, who had grown as tall as the ceiling in her anger.

'So I am forgotten!' cried she, in a voice so loud that the queen trembled as she heard it. 'Who was it soothed you in your trouble? Who was it led you to the fairies? Who was it brought you back in safety to your home again? Yet I — I — am overlooked, while *these* who have done nothing in comparison, are petted and thanked.'

The queen, almost dumb with terror, in vain tried to think of some explanation or apology; but there was none, and she could only confess her fault and implore forgiveness. The fairies also did their best to soften the wrath of their sister, and knowing that, like many plain people, who are *not* fairies, she was very vain, they entreated her to drop her crab's disguise, and to become once more the charming person they were accustomed to see.

For some time the enraged fairy would listen to nothing; but at length the flatteries began to take effect. The crab's shell fell from her, she shrank into her usual size, and lost some of her fierce expression.

‘Well,’ she said, ‘I will not cause the princess’ death, as I had meant to do, but at the same time she will have to bear the punishment of her mother’s fault, as many other children have done before her. The sentence I pass upon her is, that if she is allowed to see one ray of daylight before her fifteenth birthday she will rue it bitterly, and it may perhaps cost her her life.’ And with these words she vanished by the window through which she came, while the fairies comforted the weeping queen and took counsel how best the princess might be kept safe during her childhood.

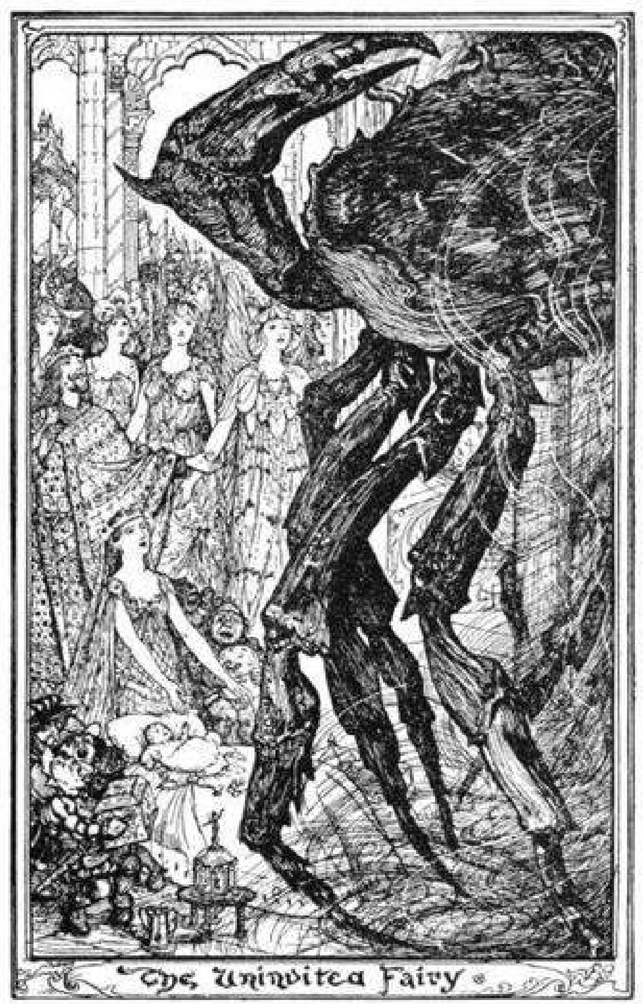

The Uninvited Fairy

At the end of half an hour they had made up their minds what to do, and at the command of the fairies, a beautiful palace sprung up, close to that of the king and queen, but different from every other palace in the world, in having no windows, and only a door right under the earth. However, once within, daylight was hardly missed, so brilliant were the multitudes of tapers that were burning on the walls.

Now up to this time the princess's history has been like the history of many a princess that you have read about; but, when the period of her imprisonment was nearly over, her fortunes took another turn. For almost fifteen years the fairies had taken care of her, and amused her and taught her, so that when she came into the world she might be no whit behind the daughters of other kings in all that makes a princess charming and accomplished. They all loved her dearly, but the fairy Tulip loved her most of all; and as the princess's fifteenth birthday drew near, the fairy began to tremble lest something terrible should happen — some accident which had not been foreseen. 'Do not let her out of your sight,' said Tulip to the queen, 'and meanwhile, let her portrait be painted and carried to the neighbouring Courts, as is the custom, in order that the kings may see how far her beauty exceeds that of every other princess, and that they may demand her in marriage for their sons.'

And so it was done; and as the fairy had prophesied, all the young princes fell in love with the picture; but the last one to whom it was shown could think of nothing else, and refused to let it be removed from his chamber, where he spent whole days gazing at it.

The king his father was much surprised at the change which had come over his son, who generally passed all his time in hunting or hawking, and his anxiety was increased by a conversation he overheard between two of his courtiers that they feared the prince must be going out of his mind, so moody had he become. Without losing a moment the king went to visit his son, and no sooner had he entered the room than the young man flung himself at his father's feet.

'You have betrothed me already to a bride I can never love!' cried he; 'but if you will not consent to break off the match, and ask for the hand of the princess Désirée, I shall die of misery, thankful to be alive no longer.'

These words much displeased the king, who felt that, in breaking off the marriage already arranged, he would almost certainly be bringing on his subjects a long and bloody war; so, without answering, he turned away, hoping that a few days might bring his son to reason. But the prince's condition grew rapidly so much worse that the king, in despair, promised to send an embassy at once to Désirée's father.

This news cured the young man in an instant of all his ills; and he began to plan out every detail of dress and of horses and carriages which were necessary to make the train of the envoy, whose name was Becasigue, as splendid as possible. He longed to form part of the embassy himself, if only in the disguise of a page; but this the king would not allow, and so the prince had to content himself with searching the kingdom for everything that was rare and beautiful to send to the princess. Indeed, he arrived, just as the embassy was starting, with his portrait, which had been painted in secret by the court painter.

The king and queen wished for nothing better than that their daughter should marry into such a great and powerful family, and received the ambassador with every sign of welcome. They even wished him to see the princess Désirée, but this was prevented by the fairy Tulip, who feared some ill might come of it.

‘And be sure you tell him,’ added she, ‘that the marriage cannot be celebrated till she is fifteen years old, or else some terrible misfortune will happen to the child.’

So when Becasigue, surrounded by his train, made a formal request that the princess Désirée might be given in marriage to his master’s son, the king replied that he was much honoured, and would gladly give his consent; but that no one could even see the princess till her fifteenth birthday, as the spell laid upon her in her cradle by a spiteful fairy, would not cease to work till that was past. The ambassador was greatly surprised and disappointed, but he knew too much about fairies to venture to disobey them, therefore he had to content himself with presenting the prince’s portrait to the queen, who lost no time in carrying it to the princess. As the girl took it in her hands it suddenly spoke, as it had been taught to do, and uttered a compliment of the most delicate and charming sort, which made the princess flush with pleasure.

‘How would you like to have a husband like that?’ asked the queen, laughing.

‘As if I knew anything about husbands!’ replied Désirée, who had long ago guessed the business of the ambassador.

‘Well, he will be your husband in three months,’ answered the queen, ordering the prince’s presents to be brought in. The princess was very pleased with them, and admired them greatly, but the queen noticed that all the while her eyes constantly strayed from the softest silks and most brilliant jewels to the portrait of the prince.

The ambassador, finding that there was no hope of his being allowed to see the princess, took his leave, and returned to his own court; but here a new difficulty appeared. The prince, though transported with joy at the thought that Désirée was indeed to be his bride, was bitterly disappointed that she had not been allowed to return with Becasigue, as he had foolishly expected; and never having been taught to deny himself anything or to control his feelings, he fell as ill as he had done before. He would eat nothing nor take pleasure in anything, but lay all day on a heap of cushions, gazing at the picture of the princess.

‘If I have to wait three months before I can marry the princess I shall die!’ was all this spoilt boy would say; and at length the king, in despair, resolved to send a fresh embassy to Désirée’s father to implore him to permit the marriage to be celebrated at once. ‘I would have presented my prayer in person,’ he added in his letter, ‘but my great age and infirmities do not suffer me to travel; however my envoy has orders to agree to any arrangement that you may propose.’

On his arrival at the palace Becasigue pleaded his young master’s cause as fervently as the king his father could have done, and entreated that the princess might be consulted in the matter. The queen hastened to the marble tower, and told her daughter of the sad state of the prince. Désirée sank down fainting at the news, but soon came to herself again, and set about inventing a plan which would enable her to go to the prince without risking the doom pronounced over her by the wicked fairy.

‘I see!’ she exclaimed joyfully at last. ‘Let a carriage be built through which no light can come, and let it be brought into my room. I will then get into it, and we can travel swiftly during the night and arrive before dawn at the palace of the prince. Once there, I can remain in some underground chamber, where no light can come.’

‘Ah, how clever you are,’ cried the queen, clasping her in her arms. And she hurried away to tell the king.

‘What a wife our prince will have!’ said Becasigue bowing low; ‘but I must hasten back with the tidings, and to prepare the underground chamber for the princess.’ And so he took his leave.

In a few days the carriage commanded by the princess was ready. It was of green velvet, scattered over with large golden thistles, and lined inside with silver brocade embroidered with pink roses. It had no windows, of course; but the fairy Tulip, whose counsel had been asked, had managed to light it up with a soft glow that came no one knew whither.

It was carried straight up into the great hall of the tower, and the princess stepped into it, followed by her faithful maid of honour, Eglantine, and by her lady in waiting Cérisette, who also had fallen in love with the prince’s portrait and was bitterly jealous of her mistress. The fourth place in the carriage was filled by Cérisette’s mother, who had been sent by the queen to look after the three young people.

Now the Fairy of the Fountain was the godmother of the princess Nera, to whom the prince had been betrothed before the picture of Désirée had made him faithless. She was very angry at the slight put upon her godchild, and from that moment kept careful watch on the princess. In this journey she saw her chance, and it was she who, invisible, sat by Cérisette, and put bad thoughts into the minds of both her and her mother.

The way to the city where the prince lived ran for the most part through a thick forest, and every night when there was no moon, and not a single star could be seen through the trees, the guards who travelled with the princess opened the carriage to give it an airing. This went on for several days, till only twelve hours journey lay between them and the palace. Then Cérisette persuaded her mother to cut a great hole in the side of the carriage with a sharp knife which she herself had brought for the purpose. In the forest the darkness was so intense that no one perceived what she had done, but when they left the last trees behind them, and emerged into the open country, the sun was up, and for the first time since her babyhood, Désirée found herself in the light of day.

She looked up in surprise at the dazzling brilliance that streamed through the hole; then gave a sigh which seemed to come from her heart. The carriage door swung back, as if by magic, and a white doe sprung out, and in a moment was lost to sight in the forest. But, quick as she was, Eglantine, her maid of honour, had time to see where she went, and jumped from the carriage in pursuit of her, followed at a distance by the guards.

Cérisette and her mother looked at each other in surprise and joy. They could hardly believe in their good fortune, for everything had happened exactly as they wished. The first thing to be done was to conceal the hole which had been cut, and when this was managed (with the help of the angry fairy, though they did not know it), Cérisette hastened to take off her own clothes, and put on those of the princess, placing the crown of diamonds on her head. She found this heavier than she expected; but then, she had never been accustomed to wear crowns, which makes all the difference.

At the gates of the city the carriage was stopped by a guard of honour sent by the king as an escort to his son’s bride. Though Cérisette and her mother could of course see nothing of what was going on outside, they heard plainly the shouts of welcome from the crowds along the streets.

The carriage stopped at length in the vast hall which Becasigue had prepared for the reception of the princess. The grand chamberlain and the lord high steward were awaiting her, and when the false bride stepped into the brilliantly lighted room, they bowed low, and said they had orders to inform his highness the moment she arrived. The prince, whom the strict etiquette of the court had prevented from being present in the underground hall, was burning with impatience in his own apartments.

‘So she has come!’ cried he, throwing down the bow he had been pretending to mend. ‘Well, was I not right? Is she not a miracle of beauty and grace? And has she her equal in the whole world?’ The ministers looked at each other, and made no reply; till at length the chamberlain, who was the bolder of the two, observed:

‘My lord, as to her beauty, you can judge of that for yourself. No doubt it is as great as you say; but at present it seems to have suffered, as is natural, from the fatigues of the journey.’

This was certainly not what the prince expected to hear. Could the portrait have flattered her? He had known of such things before, and a cold shiver ran through him; but with an effort he kept silent from further questioning, and only said:

‘Has the king been told that the princess is in the palace?’

‘Yes, your highness; and he has probably already joined her.’

‘Then I will go too,’ said the prince.

Weak as he was from his long illness, the prince descended the staircase, supported by the ministers, and entered the room just in time to hear his father’s loud cry of astonishment and disgust at the sight of Cérisette.

‘There has been treachery at work,’ he exclaimed, while the prince leant, dumb with horror, against the doorpost. But the lady in waiting, who had been prepared for something of the sort, advanced, holding in her hand the letters which the king and queen had entrusted to her.

‘This is the princess Désirée,’ said she, pretending to have heard nothing, ‘and I have the honour to present to you these letters from my liege lord and lady, together with the casket containing the princess’ jewels.’

The king did not move or answer her; so the prince, leaning on the arm of Becasigue, approached a little closer to the false princess, hoping against hope that his eyes had deceived him. But the longer he looked the more he agreed with his father that there was some treason somewhere, for in no single respect did the portrait resemble the woman before him. Cérisette was so tall that the dress of the princess did not reach her ankles, and so thin that her bones showed through the stuff. Besides that her nose was hooked, and her teeth black and ugly.

In his turn, the prince stood rooted to the spot. At last he spoke, and his words were addressed to his father and not to the bride who had come so far to marry him.

‘We have been deceived,’ he said, ‘and it will cost me my life.’ And he leaned so heavily on the envoy that Becasigue feared he was going to faint, and hastily laid him on the floor. For some minutes no one could attend to anybody but the prince; but as soon as he revived the lady in waiting made herself heard.

‘Oh, my lovely princess, why did we ever leave home?’ cried she. ‘But the king your father will avenge the insults that have been heaped on you when we tell him how you have been treated.’

‘I will tell him myself,’ replied the king in wrath; ‘he promised me a wonder of beauty, he has sent me a skeleton! I am not surprised that he has kept her for fifteen years hidden from the eyes of the world. Take them both away,' he continued, turning to his guards, 'and lodge them in the state prison. There is something more I have to learn of this matter.'

His orders were obeyed, and the prince, loudly bewailing his sad fate, was led back to his bed, where for many days he lay in a high fever. At length he slowly began to gain strength, but his sorrow was still so great that he could not bear the sight of a strange face, and shuddered at the notion of taking his proper part in the court ceremonies. Unknown to the king, or to anybody but Becasigue, he planned that, as soon as he was able, he would make his escape and pass the rest of his life in some solitary place. It was some weeks before he had regained his health sufficiently to carry out his design; but finally, one beautiful starlight night, the two friends stole away, and when the king woke next morning he found a letter lying by his bed, saying that his son had gone, he knew not whither. He wept bitter tears at the news, for he loved the prince dearly; but he felt that perhaps the young man had done wisely, and he trusted to time and Becasigue's influence to bring the wanderer home.

And while these things were happening, what had become of the white doe? Though when she sprang from the carriage she was aware that some unkind fate had changed her into an animal, yet, till she saw herself in a stream, she had no idea what it was.

'Is it really, I, Désirée?' she said to herself, weeping. 'What wicked fairy can have treated me so; and shall I never, never take my own shape again? My only comfort that, in this great forest, full of lions and serpents, my life will be a short one.'

Now the fairy Tulip was as much grieved at the sad fate of the princess as Désirée's own mother could have been if she had known of it. Still, she could not help feeling that if the king and queen had listened to her advice the girl would by this time be safely in the walls of her new home. However, she loved Désirée too much to let her suffer more than could be helped, and it was she who guided Eglantine to the place where the white doe was standing, cropping the grass which was her dinner.

At the sound of footsteps the pretty creature lifted her head, and when she saw her faithful companion approaching she bounded towards her, and rubbed her head on Eglantine's shoulder. The maid of honour was surprised; but she was fond of animals, and stroked the white doe tenderly, speaking gently to her all the while. Suddenly the beautiful creature lifted her head, and looked up into Eglantine's face, with tears streaming from her eyes. A thought flashed through her mind, and quick as lightning the girl flung herself on her knees, and lifting the animal's feet kissed them one by one. 'My princess! O my dear princess!'

cried she; and again the white doe rubbed her head against her, for though the spiteful fairy had taken away her power of speech, she had not deprived her of her reason!

All day long the two remained together, and when Eglantine grew hungry she was led by the white doe to a part of the forest where pears and peaches grew in abundance; but, as night came on, the maid of honour was filled with the terrors of wild beasts which had beset the princess during her first night in the forest.

‘Is there no hut or cave we could go into?’ asked she. But the doe only shook her head; and the two sat down and wept with fright.

The fairy Tulip who, in spite of her anger, was very softhearted, was touched at their distress, and flew quickly to their help.

‘I cannot take away the spell altogether,’ she said, ‘for the Fairy of the Fountain is stronger than I; but I can shorten the time of your punishment, and am able to make it less hard, for as soon as darkness falls you shall resume your own shape.’

To think that by-and-by she would cease to be a white doe — indeed, that she would at once cease to be one during the night — was for the present joy enough for Désirée, and she skipped about on the grass in the prettiest manner.

‘Go straight down the path in front of you,’ continued the fairy, smiling as she watched her; ‘go straight down the path and you will soon reach a little hut where you will find shelter.’ And with these words she vanished, leaving her hearers happier than they ever thought they could be again.

An old woman was standing at the door of the hut when Eglantine drew near, with the white doe trotting by her side.

‘Good evening!’ she said; ‘could you give me a night’s lodging for myself and my doe?’

‘Certainly I can,’ replied the old woman. And she led them into a room with two little white beds, so clean and comfortable that it made you sleepy even to look at them.

The door had hardly closed behind the old woman when the sun sank below the horizon, and Désirée became a girl again.

‘Oh, Eglantine! what should I have done if you had not followed me,’ she cried. And she flung herself into her friend’s arms in a transport of delight.

Early in the morning Eglantine was awakened by the sound of someone scratching at the door, and on opening her eyes she saw the white doe struggling to get out. The little creature looked up and into her face, and nodded her head as the maid of honour unfastened the latch, but bounded away into the woods, and was lost to sight in a moment.

Meanwhile, the prince and Becasigue were wandering through the wood, till at last the prince grew so tired, that he lay down under a tree, and told Becasigue that he had better go in search of food, and of some place where they could sleep. Becasigue had not gone very far, when a turn of the path brought him face to face with the old woman, who was feeding her doves before her cottage.

‘Could you give me some milk and fruit?’ asked he. ‘I am very hungry myself, and, besides, I have left a friend behind me who is still weak from illness.’

‘Certainly I can,’ answered the old woman. ‘But come and sit down in my kitchen while I catch the goat and milk it.’

Becasigue was glad enough to do as he was bid, and in a few minutes the old woman returned with a basket brimming over with oranges and grapes.

‘If your friend has been ill he should not pass the night in the forest,’ said she. ‘I have a room in my hut — tiny enough, it is true; but better than nothing, and to that you are both heartily welcome.’

Becasigue thanked her warmly, and by this time it was almost sunset, he set out to fetch the prince. It was while he was absent that Eglantine and the white doe entered the hut, and having, of course, no idea that in the very next room was the man whose childish impatience had been the cause of all their troubles.

In spite of his fatigue, the prince slept badly, and directly it was light he rose, and bidding Becasigue remain where he was, as he wished to be alone, he strolled out into the forest. He walked on slowly, just as his fancy led him, till, suddenly, he came to a wide open space, and in the middle was the white doe quietly eating her breakfast. She bounded off at the sight of a man, but not before the prince, who had fastened on his bow without thinking, had let fly several arrows, which the fairy Tulip took care should do her no harm. But, quickly as she ran, she soon felt her strength failing her, for fifteen years of life in a tower had not taught her how to exercise her limbs.

Luckily, the prince was too weak to follow her far, and a turn of a path brought her close to the hut, where Eglantine was awaiting her. Panting for breath, she entered their room, and flung herself down on the floor.

When it was dark again, and she was once more the princess Désirée, she told Eglantine what had befallen her.

‘I feared the Fairy of the Fountain, and the cruel beasts,’ said she; ‘but somehow I never thought of the dangers that I ran from men. I do not know now what saved me.’

‘You must stay quietly here till the time of your punishment is over,’ answered Eglantine. But when the morning dawned, and the girl turned into a doe, the longing for the forest came over her, and she sprang away as before.

As soon as the prince was awake he hastened to the place where, only the day before, he had found the white doe feeding; but of course she had taken care to go in the opposite direction. Much disappointed, he tried first one green path and then another, and at last, wearied with walking, he threw himself down and went fast asleep.

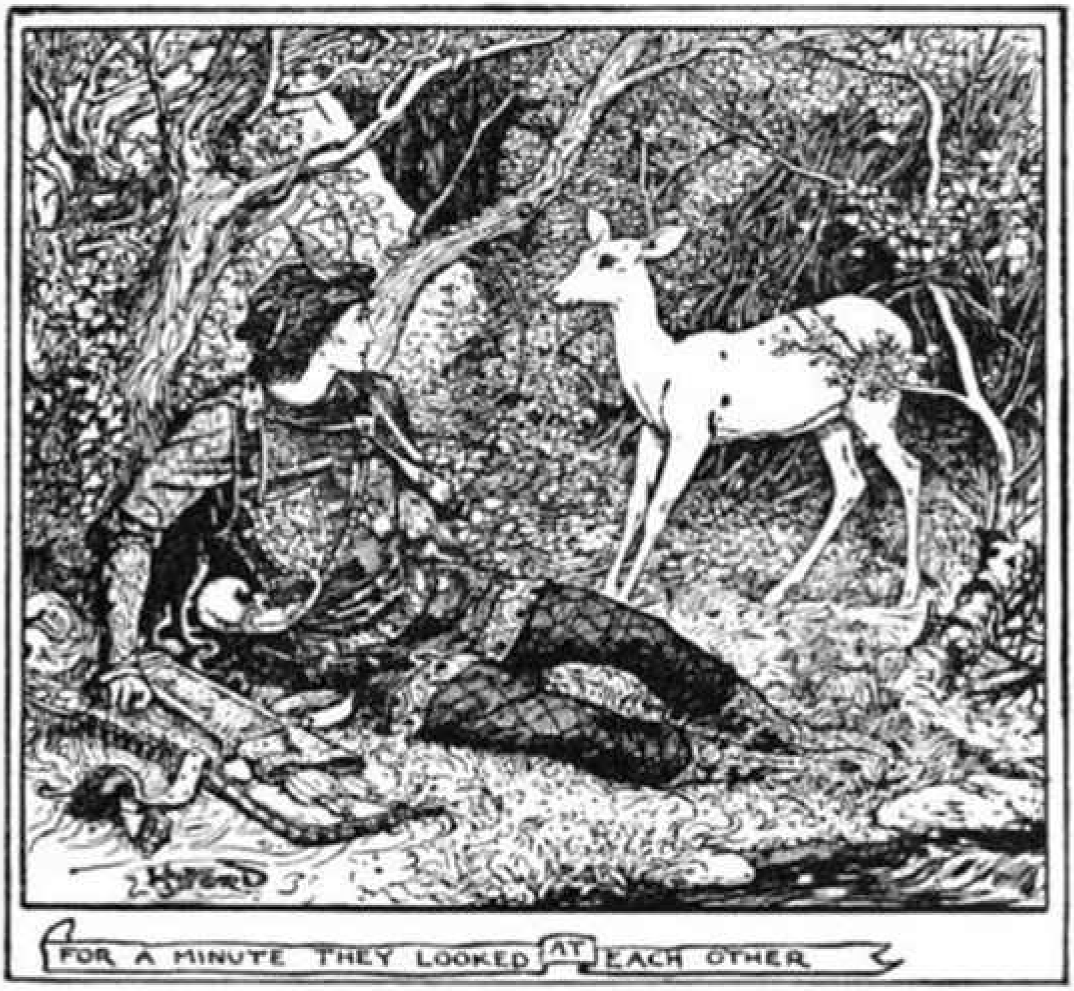

FOR A MINUTE THEY LOOKED AT EACH OTHER

Just at this moment the white doe sprang out of a thicket near by, and started back trembling when she beheld her enemy lying there. Yet, instead of turning to fly, something bade her go and look at him unseen. As she gazed a thrill ran through her, for she felt that, worn and wasted though he was by illness, it was the face of her destined husband. Gently stooping over him she kissed his forehead, and at her touch he awoke.

For a minute they looked at each other, and to his amazement he recognised the white doe which had escaped him the previous day. But in an instant the animal was aroused to a sense of her danger, and she fled with all her strength into the thickest part of the forest. Quick as lightning the prince was on her track, but this time it was with no wish to kill or even wound the beautiful creature.

‘Pretty doe! pretty doe! stop! I won’t hurt you,’ cried he, but his words were carried away by the wind.

At length the doe could run no more, and when the prince reached her, she was lying stretched out on the grass, waiting for her death blow. But instead the prince knelt at her side, and stroked her, and bade her fear nothing, as he would take care of her. So he fetched a little water from the stream in his horn hunting cup, then, cutting some branches from the trees, he twisted them into a litter which he covered with moss, and laid the white doe gently on it.

For a long time they remained thus, but when Désirée saw by the way that the light struck the trees, that the sun must be near its setting, she was filled with alarm lest the darkness should fall, and the prince should behold her in her human shape.

‘No, he must not see me for the first time here,’ she thought, and instantly began to plan how to get rid of him. Then she opened her mouth and let her tongue hang out, as if she were dying of thirst, and the prince, as she expected, hastened to the stream to get her some more water.

When he returned, the white doe was gone.

That night Désirée confessed to Eglantine that her pursuer was no other than the prince, and that far from flattering him, the portrait had never done him justice.

‘Is it not hard to meet him in this shape,’ wept she, ‘when we both love each other so much?’ But Eglantine comforted her, and reminded her that in a short time all would be well.

The prince was very angry at the flight of the white doe, for whom he had taken so much trouble, and returning to the cottage he poured out his adventures and his wrath to Becasigue, who could not help smiling.

‘She shall not escape me again,’ cried the prince. ‘If I hunt her every day for a year, I will have her at last.’ And in this frame of mind he went to bed.

When the white doe entered the forest next morning, she had not made up her mind whether she would go and meet the prince, or whether she would shun him, and hide in the thickets of which he knew nothing. She decided that the last plan was the best; and so it would have been if the prince had not taken the very same direction in search of her.

Quite by accident he caught sight of her white skin shining through the bushes, and at the same instant she heard a twig snap under his feet. In a moment she was up and away, but the prince, not knowing how else to capture her, aimed an arrow at her leg, which brought her to the ground.

The young man felt like a murderer as he ran hastily up to where the white doe lay, and did his best to soothe the pain she felt, which, in reality, was the last part of the punishment sent by the Fairy of the Fountain. First he brought her some water, and then he fetched some healing herbs, and having crushed them in his hands, laid them on the wound.

‘Ah! what a wretch I was to have hurt you,’ cried he, resting her head upon his knees; ‘and now you will hate me and fly from me for ever!’

For some time the doe lay quietly where she was, but, as before, she remembered that the hour of her transformation was near. She struggled to her feet, but the prince would not hear of her walking, and thinking the old woman might be able to dress her wound better than he could, he took her in his arms to carry her back to the hut. But, small as she was, she made herself so heavy that, after staggering a few steps under her weight, he laid her down, and tied her fast to a tree with some of the ribbons off his hat. This done he went away to get help.

Meanwhile Eglantine had grown very uneasy at the long absence of her mistress, and had come out to look for her. Just as the prince passed out of sight the fluttering ribbons danced before her eyes, and she descried her beautiful princess bound to a tree. With all her might she worked at the knots, but not a single one could she undo, though all appeared so easy. She was still busy with them when a voice behind her said:

‘Pardon me, fair lady, but it is *my* doe you are trying to steal!’

‘Excuse me, good knight,’ answered Eglantine, hardly glancing at him, ‘but it is *my* doe that is tied up here! And if you wish for a proof of it, you can see if she knows me or not. Touch my heart, my little one,’ she continued, dropping on her knees. And the doe lifted up its fore-foot and laid it on her side. ‘Now put your arms round my neck, and sigh.’ And again the doe did as she was bid.

‘You are right,’ said the prince; ‘but it is with sorrow I give her up to you, for though I have wounded her yet I love her deeply.’

To this Eglantine answered nothing; but carefully raising up the doe, she led her slowly to the hut.

Now both the prince and Becasigue were quite unaware that the old woman had any guests besides themselves, and, following afar, were much surprised to behold Eglantine and her charge enter the cottage. They lost no time in questioning the old woman, who replied that she knew nothing about the lady and her white doe, who slept next the chamber occupied by the prince and his friend, but that they were very quiet, and paid her well. Then she went back to her kitchen.

‘Do you know,’ said Becasigue, when they were alone, ‘I am certain that the lady that we saw is the maid of honour to the Princess Désirée, whom I met at the palace. And, as her room is next to this, it will be easy to make a small hole through which I can satisfy myself whether I am right or not.’

So, taking a knife out of his pocket, he began to saw away the woodwork. The girls heard the grating noise, but fancying it was a mouse, paid no attention, and Becasigue was left in peace to pursue his work. At length the hole was large enough for him to peep through, and the sight was one to strike him dumb with amazement. He had guessed truly: the tall lady was Eglantine herself; but the other — where had he seen her? Ah! now he knew — it was the lady of the portrait!

Désirée, in a flowing dress of green silk, was lying stretched out upon cushions, and as Eglantine bent over her to bathe the wounded leg, she began to talk:

‘Oh! let me die!’ cried she, ‘rather than go on leading this life. You cannot tell the misery of being a beast all the day, and unable to speak to the man I love, to whose impatience I owe my cruel fate. Yet, even so, I cannot bring myself to hate him.’

These words, low though they were spoken, reached Becasigue, who could hardly believe his ears. He stood silent for a moment; then, crossing to the window out of which the prince was gazing, he took his arm and led him across the room. A single glance was sufficient to show the prince that it was indeed Désirée; and how another had come to the palace bearing her name, at that instant he neither knew nor cared. Stealing on tiptoe from the room, he knocked at the next door, which was opened by Eglantine, who thought it was the old woman bearing their supper.

She started back at the sight of the prince, whom this time she also recognised. But he thrust her aside, and flung himself at the feet of Désirée, to whom he poured out all his heart!

Dawn found them still conversing; and the sun was high in the heavens before the princess perceived that she retained her human form. Ah! how happy she was when she knew that the days of her punishment were over; and with a glad voice she told the prince the tale of her enchantment.

So the story ended well after all; and the fairy Tulip, who turned out to be the old woman of the hut, made the young couple such a wedding feast as had never been seen since the world began. And everybody was delighted, except Cérisette and her mother, who were put in a boat and carried to a small island, where they had to work hard for their living.

(*Contes des Fées*, par Madame d’Aulnoy.)

THE GIRL-FISH

Once upon a time there lived, on the bank of a stream, a man and a woman who had a daughter. As she was an only child, and very pretty besides, they never could make up their minds to punish her for her faults or to teach her nice manners; and as for work — she laughed in her mother's face if she asked her to help cook the dinner or to wash the plates. All the girl would do was to spend her days in dancing and playing with her friends; and for any use she was to her parents they might as well have had no daughter at all.

However, one morning her mother looked so tired that even the selfish girl could not help seeing it, and asked if there was anything she was able to do, so that her mother might rest a little.

The good woman looked so surprised and grateful for this offer that the girl felt rather ashamed, and at that moment would have scrubbed down the house if she had been requested; but her mother only begged her to take the fishing-net out to the bank of the river and mend some holes in it, as her father intended to go fishing that night.

The girl took the net and worked so hard that soon there was not a hole to be found. She felt quite pleased with herself, though she had had plenty to amuse her, as everybody who passed by had stopped and had a chat with her. But by this time the sun was high over head, and she was just folding her net to carry it home again, when she heard a splash behind her, and looking round she saw a big fish jump into the air. Seizing the net with both hands, she flung it into the water where the circles were spreading one behind the other, and, more by luck than skill, drew out the fish.

'Well, you are a beauty!' she cried to herself; but the fish looked up to her and said:

'You had better not kill me, for, if you do, I will turn you into a fish yourself!'

The girl laughed contemptuously, and ran straight in to her mother.

'Look what I have caught,' she said gaily; 'but it is almost a pity to eat it, for it can talk, and it declares that, if I kill it, it will turn me into a fish too.'

'Oh, put it back, put it back!' implored the mother. 'Perhaps it is skilled in magic. And I should die, and so would your father, if anything should happen to you.'

'Oh, nonsense, mother; what power could a creature like that have over me? Besides, I am hungry, and if I don't have my dinner very soon, I shall be cross.'

And off she went to gather some flowers to stick in her hair.

About an hour later the blowing of a horn told her that dinner was ready.

‘Didn’t I say that fish would be delicious?’ she cried; and plunging her spoon into the dish the girl helped herself to a large piece. But the instant it touched her mouth a cold shiver ran through her. Her head seemed to flatten, and her eyes to look oddly round the corners; her legs and her arms were stuck to her sides, and she gasped wildly for breath. With a mighty bound she sprang through the window and fell into the river, where she soon felt better, and was able to swim to the sea, which was close by.

No sooner had she arrived there than the sight of her sad face attracted the notice of some of the other fishes, and they pressed round her, begging her to tell them her story.

‘I am not a fish at all,’ said the new-comer, swallowing a great deal of salt water as she spoke; for you cannot learn how to be a proper fish all in a moment. ‘I am not a fish at all, but a girl; at least I was a girl a few minutes ago, only ——’ And she ducked her head under the waves so that they should not see her crying.

‘Only you did not believe that the fish you caught had power to carry out its threat,’ said an old tunny. ‘Well, never mind, that has happened to all of us, and it really is not a bad life. Cheer up and come with us and see our queen, who lives in a palace that is much more beautiful than any *your* queens can boast of.’

The new fish felt a little afraid of taking such a journey; but as she was still more afraid of being left alone, she waved her tail in token of consent, and off they all set, hundreds of them together. The people on the rocks and in the ships that saw them pass said to each other:

‘Look what a splendid shoal!’ and had no idea that they were hastening to the queen’s palace; but, then, dwellers on land have so little notion of what goes on in the bottom of the sea! Certainly the little new fish had none. She had watched jelly-fish and nautilus swimming a little way below the surface, and beautiful coloured sea-weeds floating about; but that was all. *Now*, when she plunged deeper her eyes fell upon strange things.

Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl, inestimable stones, unvalued jewels — all scattered in the bottom of the sea! Dead men’s bones were there also, and long white creatures who had never seen the light, for they mostly dwelt in the clefts of rocks where the sun’s rays could not come. At first our little fish felt as if she were blind also, but by-and-by she began to make out one object after another in the green dimness, and by the time she had swum for a few hours all became clear.

‘Here we are at last,’ cried a big fish, going down into a deep valley, for the sea has its mountains and valleys just as much as the land. ‘That is the palace of the queen of the fishes, and I think you must confess that the emperor himself has nothing so fine.’

‘It is beautiful indeed,’ gasped the little fish, who was very tired with trying to swim as fast as the rest, and beautiful beyond words the palace was. The walls were made of pale pink coral, worn smooth by the waters, and round the windows were rows of pearls; the great doors were standing open, and the whole troop floated into a chamber of audience, where the queen, who was half a woman after all, was seated on a throne made of a green and blue shell.

‘Who are you, and where do you come from?’ said she to the little fish, whom the others had pushed in front. And in a low, trembling voice, the visitor told her story.

‘I was once a girl too,’ answered the queen, when the fish had ended; ‘and my father was the king of a great country. A husband was found for me, and on my wedding-day my mother placed her crown on my head and told me that as long as I wore it I should likewise be queen. For many months I was as happy as a girl could be, especially when I had a little son to play with. But, one morning, when I was walking in my gardens, there came a giant and snatched the crown from my head. Holding me fast, he told me that he intended to give the crown to his daughter, and to enchant my husband the prince, so that he should not know the difference between us. Since then she has filled my place and been queen in my stead. As for me, I was so miserable that I threw myself into the sea, and my ladies, who loved me, declared that they would die too; but, instead of dying, some wizard, who pitied my fate, turned us all into fishes, though he allowed me to keep the face and body of a woman. And fishes we must remain till someone brings me back my crown again!’

‘*I* will bring it back if you will tell me what to do!’ cried the little fish; who would have promised anything that was likely to carry her up to earth again. And the queen answered:

‘Yes, I will tell you what to do.’

She sat silent for a moment, and then went on:

‘There is no danger if you will only follow my counsel; and first you must return to earth, and go up to the top of a high mountain, where the giant has built his castle. You will find him sitting on the steps weeping for his daughter, who has just died while the prince was away hunting. At the last she sent her father my crown by a faithful servant. But I warn you to be careful, for if he sees you he may kill you. Therefore I will give you the power to change yourself into any creature that may help you best. You have only to strike your forehead, and call out its name.’

This time the journey to land seemed much shorter than before, and when once the fish reached the shore she struck her forehead sharply with her tail, and cried:

'Deer, come to me.'

In a moment the small slimy body disappeared, and in its place stood a beautiful beast with branching horns and slender legs, quivering with longing to be gone. Throwing back her head and snuffing the air, she broke into a run, leaping easily over the rivers and walls that stood in her way.

It happened that the king's son had been hunting since daybreak, but had killed nothing, and when the deer crossed his path as he was resting under a tree he determined to have her. He flung himself on his horse, which went like the wind, and as the prince had often hunted the forest before, and knew all the short cuts, he at last came up with the panting beast.

'By your favour let me go, and do not kill me,' said the deer, turning to the prince with tears in her eyes, 'for I have far to run and much to do.' And as the prince, struck dumb with surprise, only looked at her, the deer cleared the next wall and was soon out of sight.

'That can't *really* be a deer,' thought the prince to himself, reining in his horse and not attempting to follow her. 'No deer ever had eyes like that. It must be an enchanted maiden, and I will marry her and no other.'

So, turning his horse's head, he rode slowly back to his palace.

The deer reached the giant's castle quite out of breath, and her heart sank as she gazed at the tall, smooth walls which surrounded it. Then she plucked up courage and cried:

'Ant, come to me!' And in a moment the branching horns and beautiful shape had vanished, and a tiny brown ant, invisible to all who did not look closely, was climbing up the walls.

It was wonderful how fast she went, that little creature! The wall must have appeared miles high in comparison with her own body; yet, in less time than would have seemed possible, she was over the top and down in the courtyard on the other side. Here she paused to consider what had best be done next, and looking about her she saw that one of the walls had a tall tree growing by it, and in this corner was a window very nearly on a level with the highest branches of the tree.

'Monkey, come to me!' cried the ant; and before you could turn round a monkey was swinging herself from the topmost branches into the room where the giant lay snoring.

'Perhaps he will be so frightened at the sight of me that he may die of fear, and I shall never get the crown,' thought the monkey. 'I had better become something else.' And she called softly: 'Parrot, come to me!'

Then a pink and grey parrot hopped up to the giant, who by this time was stretching himself and giving yawns which shook the castle. The parrot waited a little until he was really awake, and then she said boldly that she had been sent to take away the crown, which was not his any longer, now his daughter the queen was dead.

On hearing these words the giant leapt out of bed with an angry roar, and sprang at the parrot in order to wring her neck with his great hands. But the bird was too quick for him, and, flying behind his back, begged the giant to have patience, as her death would be of no use to him.

'That is true,' answered the giant; 'but I am not so foolish as to give you that crown for nothing. Let me think what I will have in exchange!' And he scratched his huge head for several minutes, for giants' minds always move slowly.

'Ah, yes, that will do!' exclaimed the giant at last, his face brightening. 'You shall have the crown if you will bring me a collar of blue stones from the Arch of St. Martin, in the great City.'

Now when the parrot had been a girl she had often heard of this wonderful arch and the precious stones and marbles that had been let into it. It sounded as if it would be a very hard thing to get them away from the building of which they formed a part, but all had gone well with her so far, and at any rate she could but try. So she bowed to the giant, and made her way back to the window where the giant could not see her. Then she called quickly:

'Eagle, come to me!'

Before she had even reached the tree she felt herself borne up on strong wings ready to carry her to the clouds if she wished to go there, and, seeming a mere speck in the sky, she was swept along till she beheld the Arch of St. Martin far below, with the rays of the sun shining on it. Then she swooped down, and, hiding herself behind a buttress so that she could not be detected from below, she set herself to dig out the nearest blue stones with her beak. It was even harder work than she had expected; but at last it was done, and hope arose in her heart. She next drew out a piece of string that she had found hanging from a tree, and sitting down to rest strung the stones together. When the necklace was finished she hung it round her neck, and called: 'Parrot, come to me!' And a little later the pink and grey parrot stood before the giant.

'Here is the necklace you asked for,' said the parrot. And the eyes of the giant glistened as he took the heap of blue stones in his hand. But for all that he was not minded to give up the crown.

'They are hardly as blue as I expected,' he grumbled, though the parrot knew as well as he did that he was not speaking the truth; 'so you must bring me something else in exchange for the crown you covet so much. If you fail it will cost you not only the crown but your life also.'

'What is it you want now?' asked the parrot; and the giant answered:

'If I give you my crown I must have another still more beautiful; and this time you shall bring me a crown of stars.'

The parrot turned away, and as soon as she was outside she murmured:

'Toad, come to me!' And sure enough a toad she was, and off she set in search of the starry crown.

She had not gone far before she came to a clear pool, in which the stars were reflected so brightly that they looked quite real to touch and handle. Stooping down she filled a bag she was carrying with the shining water and, returning to the castle, wove a crown out of the reflected stars. Then she cried as before:

'Parrot, come to me!' And in the shape of a parrot she entered the presence of the giant.

'Here is the crown you asked for,' she said; and this time the giant could not help crying out with admiration. He knew he was beaten, and still holding the chaplet of stars, he turned to the girl.

'Your power is greater than mine: take the crown; you have won it fairly!'

The parrot did not need to be told twice. Seizing the crown, she sprang on to the window, crying: 'Monkey, come to me!' And to a monkey, the climb down the tree into the courtyard did not take half a minute. When she had reached the ground she said again: 'Ant, come to me!' And a little ant at once began to crawl over the high wall. How glad the ant was to be out of the giant's castle, holding fast the crown which had shrunk into almost nothing, as she herself had done, but grew quite big again when the ant exclaimed:

'Deer, come to me!'

Surely no deer ever ran so swiftly as that one! On and on she went, bounding over rivers and crashing through tangles till she reached the sea. Here she cried: for the last time:

'Fish, come to me!' And, plunging in, she swam along the bottom as far as the palace, where the queen and all the fishes were gathered together awaiting her.

The hours since she had left had gone very slowly — as they always do to people that are waiting — and many of them had quite given up hope.

'I am tired of staying here,' grumbled a beautiful little creature, whose colours changed with every movement of her body, 'I want to see what is going on in the upper world. It must be *months* since that fish went away.'

'It was a very difficult task, and the giant must certainly have killed her or she would have been back long ago,' remarked another.

'The young flies will be coming out now,' murmured a third, 'and they will all be eaten up by the river fish! It is really *too* bad!' When, suddenly, a voice was heard from behind: 'Look! look! what is that bright thing that is moving so swiftly towards us?' And the queen started up, and stood on her tail, so excited was she.

A silence fell on all the crowd, and even the grumblers held their peace and gazed like the rest. On and on came the fish, holding the crown tightly in her mouth, and the others moved back to let her pass. On she went right up to the queen, who bent, and taking the crown, placed it on her own head. Then a wonderful thing happened. Her tail dropped away or, rather, it divided and grew into two legs and a pair of the prettiest feet in the world, while her maidens, who were grouped around her, shed their scales and became girls again. They all turned and looked at each other first, and next at the little fish who had regained her own shape and was more beautiful than any of them.

'It is *you* who have given us back our life; *you*, *you*!' they cried; and fell to weeping for very joy.

So they all went back to earth and the queen's palace, and quite forgot the one that lay under the sea. But they had been so long away that they found many changes. The prince, the queen's husband, had died some years since, and in his place was her son, who had grown up and was king! Even in his joy at seeing his mother again an air of sadness clung to him, and at last the queen could bear it no longer, and begged him to walk with her in the garden. Seated together in a bower of jessamine — where she had passed long hours as a bride — she took her son's hand and entreated him to tell her the cause of his sorrow. 'For,' said she, 'if I can give you happiness you shall have it.'

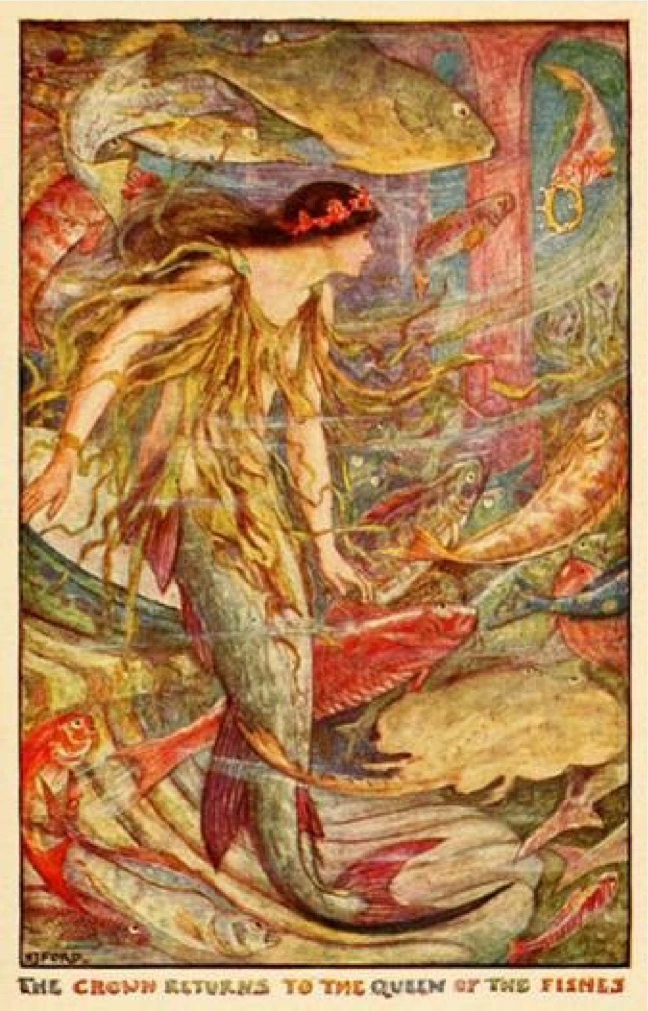

THE CROWN RETURNS TO THE QUEEN OF THE FISHES

‘It is no use,’ answered the prince; ‘nobody can help me. I must bear it alone.’

‘But at least let me share your grief,’ urged the queen.

‘No one can do that,’ said he. ‘I have fallen in love with what I can never marry, and I must get on as best I can.’

‘It may not be so impossible as you think,’ answered the queen. ‘At any rate, tell me.’

There was silence between them for a moment, then, turning away his head, the prince answered gently:

‘I have fallen in love with a beautiful deer!’

‘Ah, if *that* is all,’ exclaimed the queen joyfully. And she told him in broken words that, as he had guessed, it was no deer but an enchanted maiden who had won back the crown and brought her home to her own people.

‘She is here, in my palace,’ added the queen. ‘I will take you to her.’

But when the prince stood before the girl, who was so much more beautiful than anything he had ever dreamed of, he lost all his courage, and stood with bent head before her.

Then the maiden drew near, and her eyes, as she looked at him, were the eyes of the deer that day in the forest. She whispered softly:

‘By your favour let me go, and do not kill me.’

And the prince remembered her words, and his heart was filled with happiness. And the queen, his mother, watched them and smiled.

(From *Cuentos Populars Catalans* por lo Dr. D. Francisco de S. Maspons y Labros.)

THE OWL AND THE EAGLE

Once upon a time, in a country where the snow lies deep for many months in the year, there lived an owl and an eagle. Though they were so different in many ways they became great friends, and at length set up house together, one passing the day in hunting and the other the night. In this manner they did not see very much of each other — and perhaps agreed all the better for that; but at any rate they were perfectly happy, and only wanted one thing, or, rather, two things, and that was a wife for each.

‘I really am too tired when I come home in the evening to clean up the house,’ said the eagle.

‘And I am much too sleepy at dawn after a long night’s hunting to begin to sweep and dust,’ answered the owl. And they both made up their minds that wives they must have.

They flew about in their spare moments to the young ladies of their acquaintance, but the girls all declared they preferred one husband to two. The poor birds began to despair, when, one evening, after they had been for a wonder hunting together, they found two sisters fast asleep on their two beds. The eagle looked at the owl and the owl looked at the eagle.

‘They will make capital wives if they will only stay with us,’ said they. And they flew off to give themselves a wash, and to make themselves smart before the girls awoke.

For many hours the sisters slept on, for they had come a long way, from a town where there was scarcely anything to eat, and felt weak and tired. But by-and-by they opened their eyes and saw the two birds watching them.

‘I hope you are rested?’ asked the owl politely.

‘Oh, yes, thank you,’ answered the girls. ‘Only we are so very hungry. Do you think we could have something to eat?’

‘Certainly!’ replied the eagle. And he flew away to a farm-house a mile or two off, and brought back a nest of eggs in his strong beak; while the owl, catching up a tin pot, went to a cottage where lived an old woman and her cow, and entering the shed by the window dipped the pot into the pail of new milk that stood there.

The girls were so much delighted with the kindness and cleverness of their hosts that, when the birds inquired if they would marry them and stay there for ever, they accepted without so much as giving it a second thought. So the eagle took the younger sister to wife, and the owl the elder, and never was a home more peaceful than theirs!

All went well for several months, and then the eagle’s wife had a son, while, on the same day, the owl’s wife gave birth to a frog, which she placed directly on the banks of a stream near by, as he did not seem to like the house. The children both grew quickly, and were never tired of playing together, or wanted any other companions.

One night in the spring, when the ice had melted, and the snow was gone, the sisters sat spinning in the house, awaiting their husbands’ return. But long though they watched, neither the owl nor the eagle ever came; neither that day nor the next, nor the next, nor the next. At last the wives gave up all hope of their return; but, being sensible women, they did not sit down and cry, but called their children, and set out, determined to seek the whole world over till the missing husbands were found.

Now the women had no idea in which direction the lost birds had gone, but they knew that some distance off was a thick forest, where good hunting was to be found. It seemed a likely place to find them, or, at any rate, they might hear something of them, and they walked quickly on, cheered by the thought that they were doing something. Suddenly the young sister, who was a little in front, gave a cry of surprise.

‘Oh! look at that lake!’ she said, ‘we shall never get across it.’

‘Yes we shall,’ answered the elder; ‘I know what to do.’ And taking a long piece of string from her pocket, fastened it into the frog’s mouth, like a bit.

‘You must swim across the lake,’ she said, stooping to put him in, ‘and we will walk across on the line behind you.’ And so they did, till they got to about the middle of the lake, when the frog boy stopped.

‘I don’t like it, and I won’t go any further,’ cried he sulkily. And his mother had to promise him all sorts of nice things before he would go on again.

When at last they reached the other side, the owl’s wife untied the line from the frog’s mouth and told him he might rest and play by the lake till they got back from the forest. Then she and her sister and the boy walked on, with the great forest looming before them. But they had by this time come far and were very tired, and felt glad enough to see some smoke curling up from a little hut in front of them.

‘Let us go in and ask for some water,’ said the eagle’s wife; and in they went.

The inside of the hut was so dark that at first they could see nothing at all; but presently they heard a feeble croak from one corner. Both sisters turned to look, and there, tied by wings and feet, and their eyes sunken, were the husbands that they sought. Quick as lightning the wives cut the deer-thongs which bound them;

but the poor birds were too weak from pain and starvation to do more than utter soft sounds of joy. Hardly, however, were they set free, than a voice of thunder made the two sisters jump, while the little boy clung tightly round his mother’s neck.

‘What are you doing in my house?’ cried she. And the wives answered boldly that now they had found their husbands they meant to save them from such a wicked witch.

‘Well, I will give you your chance,’ answered the ogress, with a hideous grin; ‘we will see if you can slide down this mountain. If you can reach the bottom of the cavern, you shall have your husbands back again.’ And as she spoke she pushed them before her out of the door to the edge of a precipice, which went straight down several hundreds of feet. Unseen by the witch, the frog’s mother fastened one end of the magic line about her, and whispered to the little boy to hold fast to the other. She had scarcely done so when the witch turned round.

‘You don’t seem to like your bargain,’ said she; but the girl answered:

‘Oh, yes, I am quite ready. I was only waiting for you!’ And sitting down she began her slide. On, on, she went, down to such a depth that even the witch’s eyes could not follow her; but she took for granted that the woman was dead, and told the sister to take her place. At that instant, however, the head of the elder appeared, above the rock, brought upwards by the magic line. The witch gave a howl of disgust, and hid her face in her hands; thus giving the younger sister time to fasten the cord to her waist before the ogress looked up.

‘You can’t expect such luck twice,’ she said; and the girl sat down and slid over the edge. But in a few minutes she too was back again, and the witch saw that she had failed, and feared lest her power was going. Trembling with rage though she was, she dared not show it, and only laughed hideously.

‘I sha’n’t let my prisoners go as easily as all that!’ she said. ‘Make my hair grow as thick and as black as yours, or else your husbands shall never see daylight again.’

‘That is quite simple,’ replied the elder sister; ‘only you must do as we did — and perhaps you won’t like the treatment.’

‘If *you* can bear it, of course *I* can,’ answered the witch. And so the girls told her they had first smeared their heads with pitch and then laid hot stones upon them.

‘It is very painful,’ said they, ‘but there is no other way that we know of. And in order to make sure that all will go right, one of us will hold you down while the other pours on the pitch.’

And so they did; and the elder sister let down her hair till it hung over the witch’s eyes, so that she might believe it was her own hair growing. Then the other brought a huge stone and clove in her skull, and she died, groaning terribly.

So when the sisters saw that she was dead they went to the hut and nursed their husbands till they grew strong. Then they picked up the frog, and all went to make another home on the other side of the great lake.

(From the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*.)

THE FROG AND THE LION FAIRY

Once upon a time there lived a king who was always at war with his neighbours, which was very strange, as he was a good and kind man, quite content with his own country, and not wanting to seize land belonging to other people. Perhaps he may have tried too much to please everybody, and that often ends in pleasing nobody; but, at any rate, he found himself, at the end of a hard struggle, defeated in battle, and obliged to fall back behind the walls of his capital city. Once there, he began to make preparations for a long siege, and the first thing he did was to plan how best to send his wife to a place of security.

The queen, who loved her husband dearly, would gladly have remained with him and share his dangers, but he would not allow it. So they parted, with many tears, and the queen set out with a strong guard to a fortified castle on the outskirts of a great forest, some two hundred miles distant. She cried nearly all the way, and when she arrived she cried still more, for everything in the castle was dusty and old, and outside there was only a gravelled courtyard, and the king had forbidden her to go beyond the walls without at least two soldiers to take care of her.

Now the queen had only been married a few months, and in her own home she had been used to walk and ride all over the hills without any attendants at all; so she felt very dull at her being shut up in this way. However, she bore it for a long while because it was the king’s wish, but when time passed and there were no signs of the war drifting in the direction of the castle, she grew bolder, and sometimes strayed outside the walls, in the direction of the forest.

Then came a dreadful period, when news from the king ceased entirely.

‘He must surely be ill or dead,’ thought the poor girl, who even now was only sixteen. ‘I can bear it no longer, and if I do not get a letter from him soon I shall leave this horrible place, and go back to see what is the matter. Oh! I do wish I had never come away!’

So, without telling anyone what she intended to do, she ordered a little low carriage to be built, something like a sledge, only it was on two wheels — just big enough to hold one person.

‘I am tired of being always in the castle,’ she said to her attendants; ‘and I mean to hunt a little. Quite close by, of course,’ she added, seeing the anxious look on their faces. ‘And there is no reason that you should not hunt too.’

All the faces brightened at that, for, to tell the truth, they were nearly as dull as their mistress; so the queen had her way, and two beautiful horses were brought from the stable to draw the little chariot. At first the queen took care to keep near the rest of the hunt, but gradually she stayed away longer and longer, and at last, one morning, she took advantage of the appearance of a wild boar, after which her whole court instantly galloped, to turn into a path in the opposite direction.

Unluckily, it did not happen to lead towards the king's palace, where she intended to go, but she was so afraid her flight would be noticed that she whipped up her horses till they ran away.

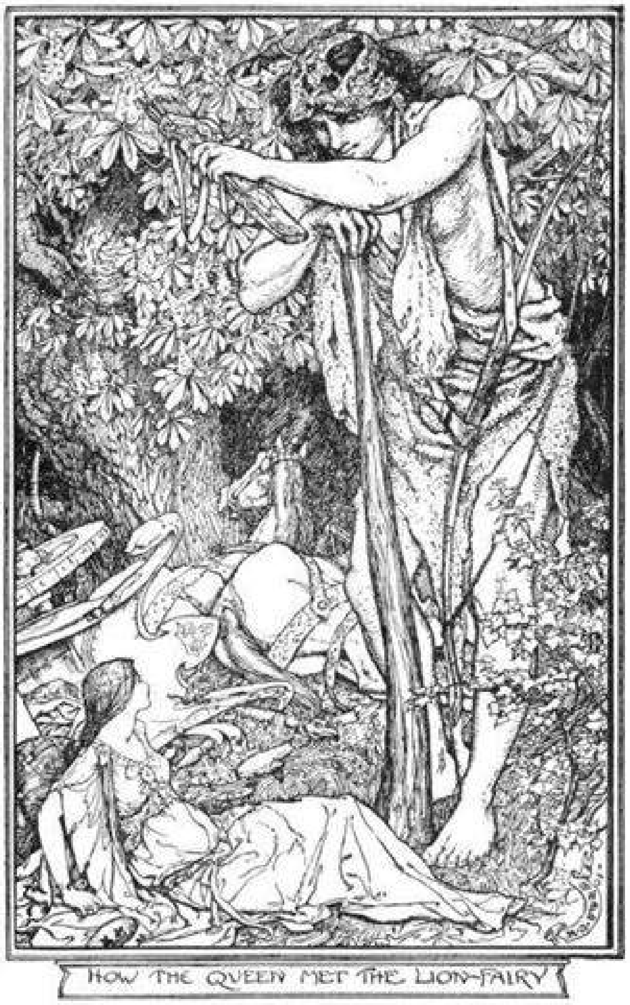

HOW THE QUEEN MET THE LION-FAIRY

When she understood what was happening the poor young queen was terribly frightened, and, dropping the reins, clung to the side of the chariot. The horses, thus left without any control, dashed blindly against a tree, and the queen was flung out on the ground, where she lay for some minutes unconscious.

A rustling sound near her at length caused her to open her eyes; before her stood a huge woman, almost a giantess, without any clothes save a lion's skin, which was thrown over her shoulders, while a dried snake's skin was plaited into her hair. In one hand she held a club on which she leaned, and in the other a quiver full of arrows.

At the sight of this strange figure the queen thought she must be dead, and gazing on an inhabitant of another world. So she murmured softly to herself:

'I am not surprised that people are so loth to die when they know that they will see such horrible creatures.' But, low as she spoke, the giantess caught the words, and began to laugh.

'Oh, don't be afraid; you are still alive, and perhaps, after all, you may be sorry for it. I am the Lion Fairy, and you are going to spend the rest of your days with me in my palace, which is quite near this. So come along.' But the queen shrank back in horror.

'Oh, Madam Lion, take me back, I pray you, to my castle; and fix what ransom you like, for my husband will pay it, whatever it is.' But the giantess shook her head.

'I am rich enough already,' she answered, 'but I am often dull, and I think you may amuse me a little.' And, so saying, she changed her shape into that of a lion, and throwing the queen across her back, she went down the ten thousand steps that led to her palace. The lion had reached the centre of the earth before she stopped in front of a house, lighted with lamps, and built on the edge of a lake of quicksilver. In this lake various huge monsters might be seen playing or fighting — the queen did not know which — and around flew rooks and ravens, uttering dismal croaks. In the distance was a mountain down whose sides waters slowly course — these were the tears of unhappy lovers — and nearer the gate were trees without either fruit or flowers, while nettles and brambles covered the ground. If the castle had been gloomy, what did the queen feel about this?

For some days the queen was so much shaken by all she had gone through that she lay with her eyes closed, unable either to move or speak. When she got better, the Lion Fairy told her that if she liked she could build herself a cabin, as she would have to spend her life in that place. At these words the queen burst into tears, and implored her gaoler to put her to death rather than condemn her to such a life; but the Lion Fairy only laughed, and counselled her to try and make herself pleasant, as many worse things might befall her.

'Is there *no* way in which I can touch your heart?' asked the poor girl in despair.

'Well, if you *really* wish to please me you will make me a pasty out of the stings of bees, and be sure it is good.'

'But I don't see any bees,' answered the queen, looking round.

'Oh, no, there aren't any,' replied her tormentor; 'but you will have to find them all the same.’ And, so saying, she went away.

‘After all, what does it matter?’ thought the queen to herself, ‘I have only one life, and I can but lose it.’ And not caring what she did, she left the palace and seating herself under a yew tree, poured out all her grief.

‘Oh, my dear husband,’ wept she, ‘what will you think when you come to the castle to fetch me and find me gone? Rather a thousand times that you should fancy me dead than imagine that I had forgotten you! Ah, how fortunate that the broken chariot should be lying in the wood, for then you may grieve for me as one devoured by wild beasts. And if another should take my place in your heart —— Well, at least I shall never know it.’

She might have continued for long in this fashion had not the voice of a crow directly overhead attracted her attention. Looking up to see what was the matter she beheld, in the dim light, a crow holding a fat frog in his claws, which he evidently intended for his supper. The queen rose hastily from the seat, and striking the bird sharply on the claws with the fan which hung from her side, she forced him to drop the frog, which fell to the ground more dead than alive. The crow, furious at his disappointment, flew angrily away.

As soon as the frog had recovered her senses she hopped up to the queen, who was still sitting under the yew. Standing on her hind legs, and bowing low before her, she said gently:

‘Beautiful lady, by what mischance do you come here? You are the only creature that I have seen do a kind deed since a fatal curiosity lured me to this place.’

‘What sort of a frog can you be that knows the language of mortals?’ asked the queen in her turn. ‘But if you do, tell me, I pray, if I alone am a captive, for hitherto I have beheld no one but the monsters of the lake.’

‘Once upon a time they were men and women like yourself,’ answered the frog, ‘but having power in their hands, they used it for their own pleasure. Therefore fate has sent them here for a while to bear the punishment of their misdoings.’

‘But you, friend frog, you are not one of these wicked people, I am sure?’ asked the queen.

‘I am half a fairy,’ replied the frog; ‘but, although I have certain magic gifts, I am not able to do all I wish. And if the Lion Fairy were to know of my presence in her kingdom she would hasten to kill me.’

‘But if you are a fairy, how was it that you were so nearly slain by the crow?’ said the queen, wrinkling her forehead.

‘Because the secret of my power lies in my little cap that is made of rose leaves; but I had laid it aside for the moment, when that horrible crow pounced upon me. Once it is on my head I fear nothing. But let me repeat; had it not been for you I could not have escaped death, and if I can do anything to help you, or soften your hard fate, you have only to tell me.'

'Alas,' sighed the queen, 'I have been commanded by the Lion Fairy to make her a pasty out of the stings of bees, and, as far as I can discover, there are none here; as how should there be, seeing there are no flowers for them to feed on? And, even if there were, how could I catch them?'

'Leave it to me,' said the frog, 'I will manage it for you.' And, uttering a strange noise, she struck the ground thrice with her foot. In an instant six thousand frogs appeared before her, one of them bearing a little cap.

'Cover yourselves with honey, and hop round by the bee-hives,' commanded the frog, putting on the cap which her friend was holding in her mouth. And turning to the queen, he added:

'The Lion Fairy keeps a store of bees in a secret place near to the bottom of the ten thousand steps leading into the upper world. Not that she wants them for herself, but they are sometimes useful to her in punishing her victims. However, this time we will get the better of her.'

Just as she had finished speaking the six thousand frogs returned, looking so strange with bees sticking to every part of them that, sad as she felt, the poor queen could not help laughing. The bees were all so stupefied with what they had eaten that it was possible to draw their stings without hunting them. So, with the help of her friend, the queen soon made ready her pasty and carried it to the Lion Fairy.

'It is not bad,' said the giantess, gulping down large morsels, in order to hide the surprise she felt. 'Well, you have escaped this time, and I am glad to find I have got a companion a little more intelligent than the others I have tried. Now, you had better go and build yourself a house.'

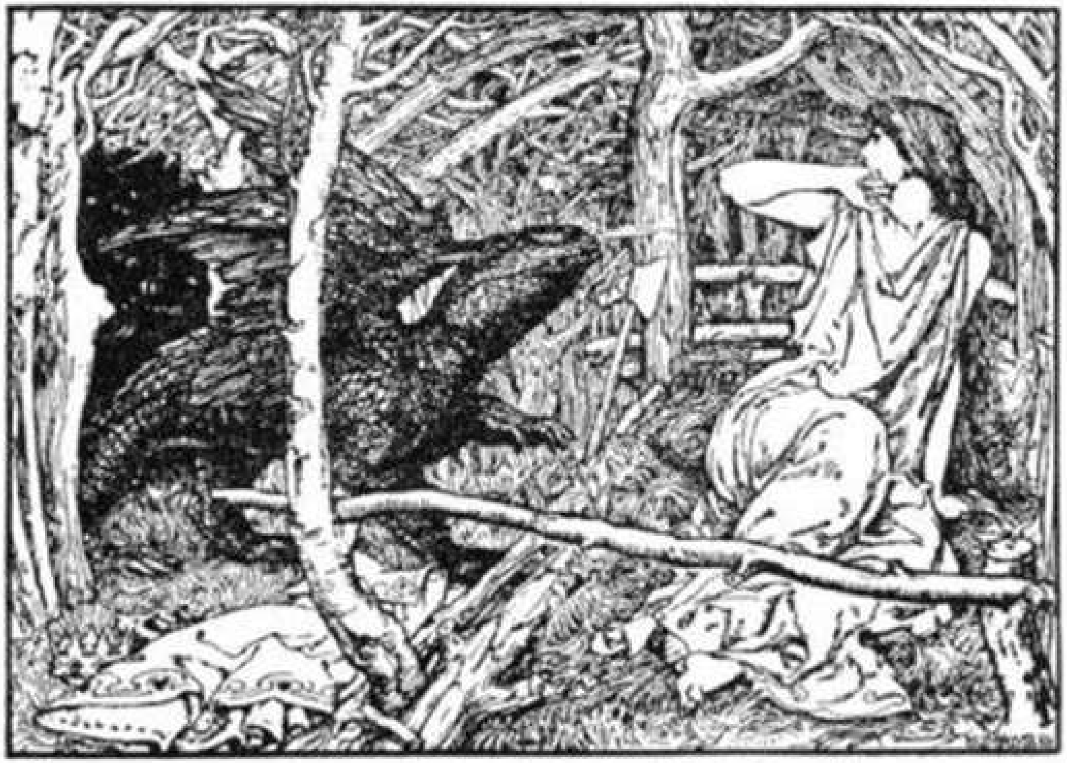

"A small dragon crept in and terrified her"

So the queen wandered away, and picking up a small axe which lay near the door she began with the help of her friend the frog to cut down some cypress trees for the purpose. And not content with that the six thousand froggy servants were told to help also, and it was not long before they had built the prettiest little cabin in the world, and made a bed in one corner of dried ferns which they fetched from the top of the ten thousand steps. It looked soft and comfortable, and the queen was very glad to lie down upon it, so tired was she with all that had happened since the morning. Scarcely, however, had she fallen asleep when the lake monsters began to make the most horrible noises just outside, while a small dragon crept in and terrified her so that she ran away, which was just what the dragon wanted!

The poor queen crouched under a rock for the rest of the night, and the next morning, when she woke from her troubled dreams, she was cheered at seeing the frog watching by her.

'I hear we shall have to build you another palace,' said she. 'Well, this time we won't go so near the lake.' And she smiled with her funny wide mouth, till the queen took heart, and they went together to find wood for the new cabin.

The tiny palace was soon ready, and a fresh bed made of wild thyme, which smelt delicious. Neither the queen nor the frog said anything about it, but somehow, as always happens, the story came to the ears of the Lion Fairy, and she sent a raven to fetch the culprit.

‘What gods or men are protecting you?’ she asked, with a frown. ‘This earth, dried up by a constant rain of sulphur and fire, produces nothing, yet I hear that *your* bed is made of sweet smelling herbs. However, as you can get flowers for yourself, of course you can get them for me, and in an hour’s time I must have in my room a nosegay of the rarest flowers. If not —— ! Now you can go.’

The poor queen returned to her house looking so sad that the frog, who was waiting for her, noticed it directly.

‘What is the matter?’ said she, smiling.

‘Oh, how can you laugh!’ replied the queen. ‘This time I have to bring her in an hour a posy of the rarest flowers, and where am I to find them? If I fail I know she will kill me.’

‘Well, I must see if *I* can’t help you,’ answered the frog. ‘The only person I have made friends with here is a bat. She is a good creature, and always does what I tell her, so I will just lend her my cap, and if she puts it on, and flies into the world, she will bring back all we want. I would go myself, only she will be quicker.’

Then the queen dried her eyes, and waited patiently, and long before the hour had gone by the bat flew in with all the most beautiful and sweetest flowers that grew on the earth. The girl sprang up overjoyed at the sight, and hurried with them to the Lion Fairy, who was so astonished that for once she had nothing to say.

Now the smell and touch of the flowers had made the queen sick with longing for her home, and she told the frog that she would certainly die if she did not manage to escape somehow.

‘Let me consult my cap,’ said the frog; and taking it off she laid it in a box, and threw in after it a few sprigs of juniper, some capers, and two peas, which she carried under her right leg; she then shut down the lid of the box, and murmured some words which the queen did not catch.

In a few moments a voice was heard speaking from the box.

‘Fate, who rules us all,’ said the voice, ‘forbids your leaving this place till the time shall come when certain things are fulfilled. But, instead, a gift shall be given you, which will comfort you in all your troubles.’

And the voice spoke truly, for, a few days after, when the frog peeped in at the door she found the most beautiful baby in the world lying by the side of the queen.

‘So the cap has kept its word,’ cried the frog with delight. ‘How soft its cheeks are, and what tiny feet it has got! What shall we call it?'

This was a very important point, and needed much discussion. A thousand names were proposed and rejected for a thousand silly reasons. One was too long, and one was too short. One was too harsh, and another reminded the queen of somebody she did not like; but at length an idea flashed into the queen's head, and she called out:

'I know! We will call her Muffette.'

'That is the very thing,' shouted the frog, jumping high into the air; and so it was settled.

The princess Muffette was about six months old when the frog noticed that the queen had begun to grow sad again.

'Why do you have that look in your eyes?' she asked one day, when she had come in to play with the baby, who could now crawl.

The way they played their game was to let Muffette creep close to the frog, and then for the frog to bound high into the air and alight on the child's head, or back, or legs, when she always set up a shout of pleasure. There is no playfellow like a frog; but then it must be a *fairy* frog, or else you might hurt it, and if you did something dreadful might happen to you. Well, as I have said, our frog was struck with the queen's sad face, and lost no time in asking her what was the reason.

'I don't see what you have to complain of now; Muffette is quite well and quite happy, and even the Lion Fairy is kind to her when she sees her. What *is* it?'

'Oh! if her father could only see her!' broke forth the queen, clasping her hands. 'Or if I could only tell him all that has happened since we parted. But they will have brought him tidings of the broken carriage, and he will have thought me dead, or devoured by wild beasts. And though he will mourn for me long — I know that well — yet in time they will persuade him to take a wife, and she will be young and fair, and he will forget me.'

And in all this the queen guessed truly, save that nine long years were to pass before he would consent to put another in her place.

The frog answered nothing at the time, but stopped her game and hopped away among the cypress trees. Here she sat and thought and thought, and the next morning she went back to the queen and said:

'I have come, madam, to make you an offer. Shall I go to the king instead of you, and tell him of your sufferings, and that he has the most charming baby in the world for his daughter? The way is long, and I travel slowly; but, sooner or later, I shall be sure to arrive. Only, are you not afraid to be left without my protection? Ponder the matter carefully; it is for you to decide.'

‘Oh, it needs no pondering,’ cried the queen joyfully, holding up her clasped hands, and making Muffette do likewise, in token of gratitude. ‘But in order that he may know that you have come from me I will send him a letter.’ And pricking her arm, she wrote a few words with her blood on the corner of her handkerchief. Then tearing it off, she gave it to the frog, and they bade each other farewell.

It took the frog a year and four days to mount the ten thousand steps that led to the upper world, but that was because she was still under the spell of a wicked fairy. By the time she reached the top, she was so tired that she had to remain for another year on the banks of a stream to rest, and also to arrange the procession with which she was to present herself before the king. For she knew far too well what was due to herself and her relations, to appear at Court as if she was a mere nobody. At length, after many consultations with her cap, the affair was settled, and at the end of the second year after her parting with the queen they all set out.

First walked her bodyguard of grasshoppers, followed by her maids of honour, who were those tiny green frogs you see in the fields, each one mounted on a snail, and seated on a velvet saddle. Next came the water-rats, dressed as pages, and lastly the frog herself, in a litter borne by eight toads, and made of tortoiseshell. Here she could lie at her ease, with her cap on her head, for it was quite large and roomy, and could easily have held two eggs when the frog was not in it.

The journey lasted seven years, and all this time the queen suffered tortures of hope, though Muffette did her best to comfort her. Indeed, she would most likely have died had not the Lion Fairy taken a fancy that the child and her mother should go hunting with her in the upper world, and, in spite of her sorrows, it was always a joy to the queen to see the sun again. As for little Muffette, by the time she was seven her arrows seldom missed their mark. So, after all, the years of waiting passed more quickly than the queen had dared to hope.

The frog was always careful to maintain her dignity, and nothing would have persuaded her to show her face in public places, or even along the high road, where there was a chance of meeting anyone. But sometimes, when the procession had to cross a little stream, or go over a piece of marshy ground, orders would be given for a halt; fine clothes were thrown off, bridles were flung aside, and grasshoppers, water-rats, even the frog herself, spent a delightful hour or two playing in the mud.

But at length the end was in sight, and the hardships were forgotten in the vision of the towers of the king’s palace; and, one bright morning, the cavalcade entered the gates with all the pomp and circumstance of a royal embassy. And surely no ambassador had ever created such a sensation! Doors and windows, even the roofs of houses, were filled with people, whose cheers reached the ears of the king. However, he had no time to attend to such matters just then, as, after nine years, he had at last consented to the entreaties of his courtiers, and was on the eve of celebrating his second marriage.

The frog's heart beat high when her litter drew up before the steps of the palace, and leaning forward she beckoned to her side one of the guards who were standing in his doorway.

'I wish to see his Majesty,' said he.

'His Majesty is engaged, and can see no one,' answered the soldier.

'His Majesty will see *me*,' returned the frog, fixing her eye upon him; and somehow the man found himself leading the procession along the gallery into the Hall of Audience, where the king sat surrounded by his nobles arranging the dresses which everyone was to wear at his marriage ceremony.

All stared in surprise as the procession advanced, and still more when the frog gave one bound from the litter on to the floor, and with another landed on the arm of the chair of state.

'I am only just in time, sire,' began the frog; 'had I been a day later you would have broken your faith which you swore to the queen nine years ago.'

'Her remembrance will always be dear to me,' answered the king gently, though all present expected him to rebuke the frog severely for her impertinence. 'But know, Lady Frog, that a king can seldom do as he wishes, but must be bound by the desires of his subjects. For nine years I have resisted them; now I can do so no longer, and have made choice of the fair young maiden playing at ball yonder.'

'You cannot wed her, however fair she may be, for the queen your wife is still alive, and sends you this letter written in her own blood,' said the frog, holding out the square of handkerchief as she spoke. 'And, what is more, you have a daughter who is nearly nine years old, and more beautiful than all the other children in the world put together.'

The king turned pale when he heard these words, and his hand trembled so that he could hardly read what the queen had written. Then he kissed the handkerchief twice or thrice, and burst into tears, and it was some minutes before he could speak. When at length he found his voice he told his councillors that the writing was indeed that of the queen, and now that he had the joy of knowing she was alive he could, of course, proceed no further with his second marriage. This naturally displeased the ambassadors who had conducted the bride to court, and one of them inquired indignantly if he meant to put such an insult on the princess on the word of a mere frog.

'I am not a "mere frog," and I will give you proof of it,' retorted the angry little creature. And putting on her cap, she cried: ‘Fairies that are my friends, come hither!’ And in a moment a crowd of beautiful creatures, each one with a crown on her head, stood before her. Certainly none could have guessed that they were the snails, water-rats, and grasshoppers, from which she had chosen her retinue.

At a sign from the frog the fairies danced a ballet, with which everyone was so delighted that they begged to have it repeated; but now it was not youths and maidens who were dancing, but flowers. Then these again melted into fountains, whose waters interlaced and, rushing down the sides of the hall, poured out in a cascade down the steps, and formed a river round the castle, with the most beautiful little boats upon it, all painted and gilded.

‘Oh, let us go in them for a sail!’ cried the princess, who had long ago left her game of ball for a sight of these marvels; and, as she was bent upon it, the ambassadors, who had been charged never to lose sight of her, were obliged to go also, though they never entered a boat if they could help it.

But the moment they and the princess had seated themselves on the soft cushions, river and boats vanished, and the princess and the ambassadors vanished too. Instead, the snails and grasshoppers and water-rats stood round the frog in their natural shapes.

‘Perhaps,’ said she, ‘your Majesty may now be convinced that I am a fairy and speak the truth. Therefore lose no time in setting in order the affairs of your kingdom and go in search of your wife. Here is a ring that will admit you into the presence of the queen, and will likewise allow you to address unharmed the Lion Fairy, though she is the most terrible creature that ever existed.’

By this time the king had forgotten all about the princess, whom he had only chosen to please his people, and was as eager to depart on his journey as the frog was for him to go. He made one of his ministers regent of the kingdom, and gave the frog everything her heart could desire; and with her ring on his finger he rode away to the outskirts of the forest. Here he dismounted, and bidding his horse go home, he pushed forward on foot.

Having nothing to guide him as to where he was likely to find the entrance of the under-world, the king wandered hither and thither for a long while, till, one day, while he was resting under a tree, a voice spoke to him.

‘Why do you give yourself so much trouble for nought, when you might know what you want to know for the asking? Alone you will never discover the path that leads to your wife.’

Much startled, the king looked about him. He could see nothing, and somehow, when he thought about it, the voice seemed as if it were part of himself. Suddenly his eyes fell on the ring, and he understood.

‘Fool that I was!’ cried he; ‘and how much precious time have I wasted? Dear ring, I beseech you, grant me a vision of my wife and my daughter!’ And even as he spoke there flashed past him a huge lioness, followed by a lady and a beautiful young maid mounted on fairy horses.

Almost fainting with joy he gazed after them, and then sank back trembling on the ground.

‘Oh, lead me to them, lead me to them!’ he exclaimed. And the ring, bidding him take courage, conducted him safely to the dismal place where his wife had lived for ten years.

Now the Lion Fairy knew beforehand of his expected presence in her dominions, and she ordered a palace of crystal to be built in the middle of the lake of quicksilver; and in order to make it more difficult of approach she let it float whither it would. Immediately after their return from the chase, where the king had seen them, she conveyed the queen and Muffette into the palace, and put them under the guard of the monsters of the lake, who one and all had fallen in love with the princess. They were horribly jealous, and ready to eat each other up for her sake, so they readily accepted the charge. Some stationed themselves round the floating palace, some sat by the door, while the smallest and lightest perched themselves on the roof.

Of course the king was quite ignorant of these arrangements, and boldly entered the palace of the Lion Fairy, who was waiting for him, with her tail lashing furiously, for she still kept her lion’s shape. With a roar that shook the walls she flung herself upon him; but he was on the watch, and a blow from his sword cut off the paw she had put forth to strike him dead. She fell back, and with his helmet still down and his shield up, he set his foot on her throat.

‘Give me back the wife and the child you have stolen from me,’ he said, ‘or you shall not live another second!’

But the fairy answered:

‘Look through the window at that lake and see if it is in my power to give them to you.’ And the king looked, and through the crystal walls he beheld his wife and daughter floating on the quicksilver. At that sight the Lion Fairy and all her wickedness was forgotten. Flinging off his helmet, he shouted to them with all his might. The queen knew his voice, and she and Muffette ran to the window and held out their hands. Then the king swore a solemn oath that he would never leave the spot without them if it should cost him his life; and he meant it, though at the moment he did not know what he was undertaking.

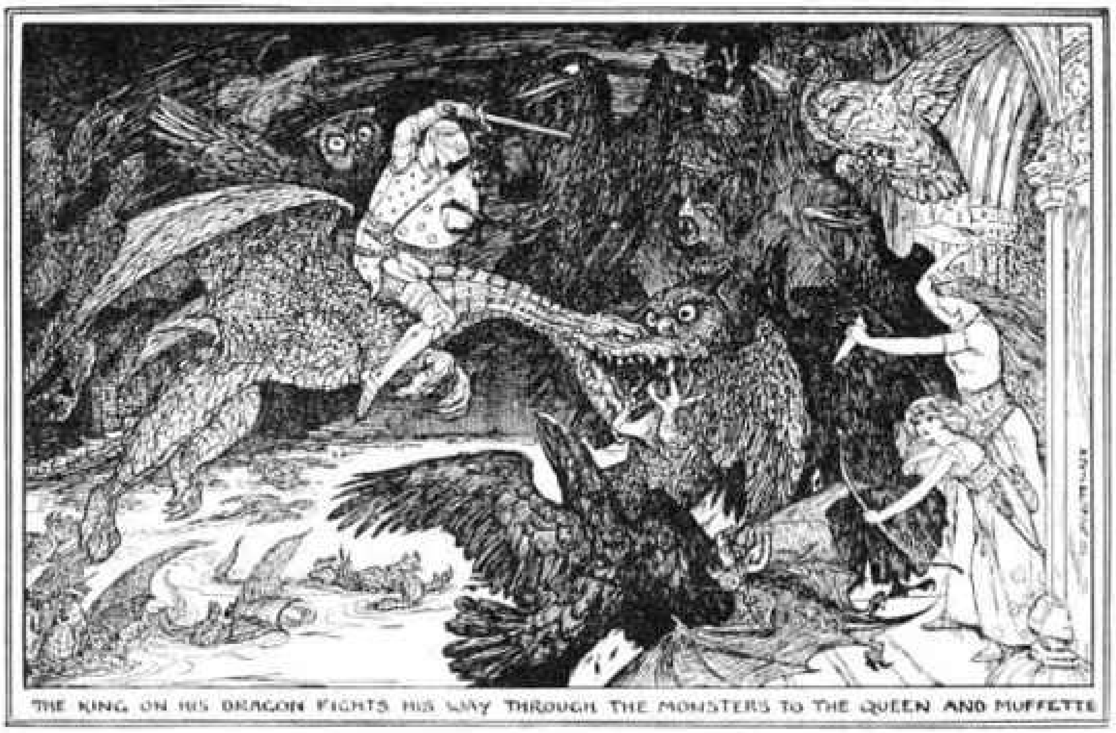

THE KING ON HIS DRAGON FIGHTS HIS WAY THROUGH THE MONSTERS TO THE QUEEN AND MUFFETTE

Three years passed by, and the king was no nearer to obtaining his heart’s desire. He had suffered every hardship that could be imagined — nettles had been his bed, wild fruits more bitter than gall his food, while his days had been spent in fighting the hideous monsters which kept him from the palace. He had not advanced one single step, nor gained one solitary advantage. Now he was almost in despair, and ready to defy everything and throw himself into the lake.

It was at this moment of his blackest misery that, one night, a dragon who had long watched him from the roof crept to his side.

‘You thought that love would conquer all obstacles,’ said he; ‘well, you have found it hasn’t! But if you will swear to me by your crown and sceptre that you will give me a dinner of the food that I never grow tired of, whenever I choose to ask for it, I will enable you to reach your wife and daughter.’

Ah, how glad the king was to hear that! What oath would he not have taken so as to clasp his wife and child in his arms? Joyfully he swore whatever the dragon asked of him; then he jumped on his back, and in another instant would have been carried by the strong wings into the castle if the nearest monster had not happened to awake and hear the noise of talking and swum to the shore to give battle. The fight was long and hard, and when the king at last beat back his foes another struggle awaited him. At the entrance gigantic bats, owls, and crows set upon him from all sides; but the dragon had teeth and claws, while the queen broke off sharp bits of glass and stabbed and cut in her anxiety to help her husband. At length the horrible creatures flew away; a sound like thunder was heard, the palace and the monsters vanished, while, at the same moment — no one knew how — the king found himself standing with his wife and daughter in the hall of his own home.

The dragon had disappeared with all the rest, and for some years no more was heard or thought of him. Muffette grew every day more beautiful, and when she was fourteen the kings and emperors of the neighbouring countries sent to ask her in marriage for themselves or their sons. For a long time the girl turned a deaf ear to all their prayers; but at length a young prince of rare gifts touched her heart, and though the king had left her free to choose what husband she would, he had secretly hoped that out of all the wooers this one might be his son-in-law. So they were betrothed that same day with great pomp, and then, with many tears, the prince set out for his father's court, bearing with him a portrait of Muffette.

The days passed slowly to Muffette, in spite of her brave efforts to occupy herself and not to sadden other people by her complaints. One morning she was playing on her harp in the queen's chamber when the king burst into the room and clasped his daughter in his arms with an energy that almost frightened her.

'Oh, my child! my dear child! why were you ever born?' cried he, as soon as he could speak.

'Is the prince dead?' faltered Muffette, growing white and cold.

'No, no; but — oh, how can I tell you!' And he sank down on a pile of cushions while his wife and daughter knelt beside him.

At length he was able to tell his tale, and a terrible one it was! There had just arrived at court a huge giant, as ambassador from the dragon by whose help the king had rescued the queen and Muffette from the crystal palace. The dragon had been very busy for many years past, and had quite forgotten the princess till the news of her betrothal had reached his ears. Then he remembered the bargain he had made with her father; and the more he heard of Muffette the more he felt sure she would make a delicious dish. So he had ordered the giant who was his servant to fetch her at once.

No words would paint the horror of both the queen and the princess as they listened to this dreadful doom. They rushed instantly to the hall, where the giant was awaiting them, and flinging themselves at his feet implored him to take the kingdom if he would, but to have pity on the princess. The giant looked at them kindly, for he was not at all hard-hearted, but said that he had no power to do anything, and that if the princess did not go with him quietly the dragon would come himself.

Several days went by, and the king and queen hardly ceased from entreating the aid of the giant, who by this time was getting weary of waiting.

‘There is only one way of helping you,’ he said at last, ‘and that is to marry the princess to my nephew, who, besides being young and handsome, has been trained in magic, and will know how to keep her safe from the dragon.’

‘Oh, thank you, thank you!’ cried the parents, clasping his great hands to their breasts. ‘You have indeed lifted a load from us. She shall have half the kingdom for her dowry.’ But Muffette stood up and thrust them aside.

‘I will not buy my life with faithlessness,’ she said proudly; ‘and I will go with you this moment to the dragon’s abode.’ And all her father’s and mother’s tears and prayers availed nothing to move her.

The next morning Muffette was put into a litter, and, guarded by the giant and followed by the king and queen and the weeping maids of honour, they started for the foot of the mountain where the dragon had his castle. The way, though rough and stony, seemed all too short, and when they reached the spot appointed by the dragon the giant ordered the men who bore the litter to stand still.

‘It is time for you to bid farewell to your daughter,’ said he; ‘for I see the dragon coming to us.’

It was true; a cloud appeared to pass over the sun, for between them and it they could all discern dimly a huge body half a mile long approaching nearer and nearer. At first the king could not believe that this was the small beast who had seemed so friendly on the shore of the lake of quicksilver; but then he knew very little of necromancy, and had never studied the art of expanding and contracting his body. But it was the dragon and nothing else, whose six wings were carrying him forward as fast as might be, considering his great weight and the length of his tail, which had fifty twists and a half.

He came quickly, yes; but the frog, mounted on a greyhound, and wearing her cap on her head, went quicker still. Entering a room where the prince was sitting gazing at the portrait of his betrothed, she cried to him:

‘What are you doing lingering here, when the life of the princess is nearing its last moment? In the courtyard you will find a green horse with three heads and twelve feet, and by its side a sword eighteen yards long. Hasten, lest you should be too late!’

The fight lasted all day, and the prince’s strength was well-nigh spent, when the dragon, thinking that the victory was won, opened his jaws to give a roar of triumph. The prince saw his chance, and before his foe could shut his mouth again had plunged his sword far down his adversary’s throat. There was a desperate clutching of the claws to the earth, a slow flagging of the great wings, then the monster rolled over on his side and moved no more. Muffette was delivered.

After this they all went back to the palace. The marriage took place the following day, and Muffette and her husband lived happy for ever after.

(From *Les Contes des Fées*, par Madame d’Aulnoy.)

THE ADVENTURES OF COVAN THE BROWN-HAIRED

On the shores of the west, where the great hills stand with their feet in the sea, dwelt a goat-herd and his wife, together with their three sons and one daughter. All day long the young men fished and hunted, while their sister took out the kids to pasture on the mountain, or stayed at home helping her mother and mending the nets.

For several years they all lived happily together, when, one day, as the girl was out on the hill with the kids, the sun grew dark and an air cold as a thick white mist came creeping, creeping up from the sea. She rose with a shiver, and tried to call to her kids, but the voice died away in her throat, and strong arms seemed to hold her.

Loud were the wails in the hut by the sea when the hours passed on and the maiden came not. Many times the father and brothers jumped up, thinking they heard her steps, but in the thick darkness they could scarcely see their own hands, nor could they tell where the river lay, nor where the mountain. One by one the kids came home, and at every bleat someone hurried to open the door, but no sound broke the stillness. Through the night no one slept, and when morning broke and the mist rolled back, they sought the maiden by sea and by land, but never a trace of her could be found anywhere.

Thus a year and a day slipped by, and at the end of it Gorla of the Flocks and his wife seemed suddenly to have grown old. Their sons too were sadder than before, for they loved their sister well, and had never ceased to mourn for her. At length Ardan the eldest spoke and said:

‘It is now a year and a day since our sister was taken from us, and we have waited in grief and patience for her to return. Surely some evil has befallen her, or she would have sent us a token to put our hearts at rest; and I have vowed to myself that my eyes shall not know sleep till, living or dead, I have found her.’

‘If you have vowed, then must you keep your vow,’ answered Gorla. ‘But better had it been if you had first asked your father’s leave before you made it. Yet, since it is so, your mother will bake you a cake for you to carry with you on your journey. Who can tell how long it may be?’

So the mother arose and baked not one cake but two, a big one and a little one.

‘Choose, my son,’ said she. ‘Will you have the little cake with your mother’s blessing, or the big one without it, in that you have set aside your father and taken on yourself to make a vow?'

'I will have the large cake,' answered the youth; 'for what good would my mother's blessing do for me if I was dying of hunger?' And taking the big cake he went his way.

Straight on he strode, letting neither hill nor river hinder him. Swiftly he walked — swiftly as the wind that blew down the mountain. The eagles and the gulls looked on from their nests as he passed, leaving the deer behind him; but at length he stopped, for hunger had seized on him, and he could walk no more. Trembling with fatigue he sat himself on a rock and broke a piece off his cake.

'Spare me a morsel, Ardan son of Gorla,' asked a raven, fluttering down towards him.

'Seek food elsewhere, O bearer of ill-news,' answered Ardan son of Gorla; 'it is but little I have for myself.' And he stretched himself out for a few moments, then rose to his feet again. On and on went he till the little birds flew to their nests, and the brightness died out of the sky, and a darkness fell over the earth. On and on, and on, till at last he saw a beam of light streaming from a house and hastened towards it.

The door was opened and he entered, but paused when he beheld an old man lying on a bench by the fire, while seated opposite him was a maiden combing out the locks of her golden hair with a comb of silver.

'Welcome, fair youth,' said the old man, turning his head. 'Sit down and warm yourself, and tell me how fares the outer world. It is long since I have seen it.'

'All my news is that I am seeking service,' answered Ardan son of Gorla; 'I have come from far since sunrise, and glad was I to see the rays of your lamp stream into the darkness.'

'I need someone to herd my three dun cows, which are hornless,' said the old man. 'If, for the space of a year, you can bring them back to me each evening before the sun sets, I will make you payment that will satisfy your soul.'

But here the girl looked up and answered quickly:

'Ill will come of it if he listens to your offer.'

'Counsel unsought is worth nothing,' replied, rudely, Ardan son of Gorla. 'It would be little indeed that I am fit for if I cannot drive three cows out to pasture and keep them safe from the wolves that may come down from the mountains. Therefore, good father, I will take service with you at daybreak, and ask no payment till the new year dawns.'

Next morning the bell of the deer was not heard amongst the fern before the maiden with the hair of gold had milked the cows, and led them in front of the cottage where the old man, and Ardan son of Gorla awaited them.

‘Let them wander where they will,’ he said to his servant, ‘and never seek to turn them from their way, for well they know the fields of good pasture. But take heed to follow always behind them, and suffer nothing that you see, and nought that you hear, to draw you into leaving them. Now go, and may wisdom go with you.’

As he ceased speaking he touched one of the cows on her forehead, and she stepped along the path, with the two others one on each side. As he had been bidden, behind them came Ardan son of Gorla, rejoicing in his heart that work so easy had fallen to his lot. At the year’s end, thought he, enough money would lie in his pocket to carry him into far countries where his sister might be, and, in the meanwhile, someone might come past who could give him tidings of her.

Thus he spoke to himself, when his eyes fell on a golden cock and a silver hen running swiftly along the grass in front of him. In a moment the words that the old man had uttered vanished from his mind and he gave chase. They were so near that he could almost seize their tails, yet each time he felt sure he could catch them his fingers closed on the empty air. At length he could run no more, and stopped to breathe, while the cock and hen went on as before. Then he remembered the cows, and, somewhat frightened, turned back to seek them. Luckily they had not strayed far, and were quietly feeding on the thick green grass.

Ardan son of Gorla was sitting under a tree, when he beheld a staff of gold and a staff of silver doubling themselves in strange ways on the meadow in front of him, and starting up he hastened towards them. Though he followed them till he was tired he could not catch them, though they seemed ever within his reach. When at last he gave up the quest his knees trembled beneath him for very weariness, and glad was he to see a tree growing close by laden with fruits of different sorts, of which he ate greedily.

The sun was by now low in the heavens, and the cows left off feeding, and turned their faces home again, followed by Ardan son of Gorla. At the door of their stable the maiden stood awaiting them, and saying nought to their herd, she sat down and began to milk. But it was not milk that flowed into her pail; instead it was filled with a thin stream of water, and as she rose up from the last cow the old man appeared outside.

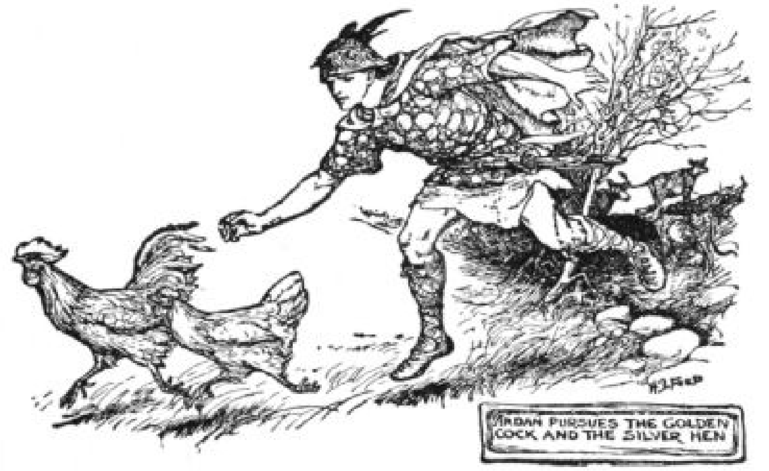

ARDAN PURSUES THE GOLDEN COCK AND THE SILVER HEN

‘Faithless one, you have betrayed your trust!’ he said to Ardan son of Gorla. ‘Not even for one day could you keep true! Well, you shall have your reward at once that others may take warning from you.’ And waving his wand he touched with it the chest of the youth, who became a pillar of stone.

Now Gorla of the Flocks and his wife were full of grief that they had lost a son as well as a daughter, for no tidings had come to them of Ardan their eldest born. At length, when two years and two days had passed since the maiden had led her kids to feed on the mountain and had been seen no more, Ruais, second son of Gorla, rose up one morning, and said:

‘Time is long without my sister and Ardan my brother. So I have vowed to seek them wherever they may be.’

And his father answered:

‘Better it had been if you had first asked my consent and that of your mother; but as you have vowed so must you do.’ Then he bade his wife make a cake, but instead she made two, and offered Ruais his choice, as she had done to Ardan. Like Ardan, Ruais chose the large, unblessed cake, and set forth on his way, doing always, though he knew it not, that which Ardan had done; so, needless is it to tell what befell him till he too stood, a pillar of stone, on the hill behind the cottage, so that all men might see the fate that awaited those who broke their faith.

Another year and a day passed by, when Covan the Brown-haired, youngest son of Gorla of the Flocks, one morning spake to his parents, saying:

‘It is more than three years since my sister left us. My brothers have also gone, no one knows whither, and of us four none remains but I. Now, therefore, I long to seek them, and I pray you and my mother to place no hindrance in my way.’

And his father answered:

‘Go, then, and take our blessing with you.’

So the wife of Gorla of the Flocks baked two cakes, one large, and one small;

and Covan took the small one, and started on his quest. In the wood he felt hungry, for he had walked far, and he sat down to eat. Suddenly a voice behind him cried:

‘A bit for me! a bit for me!’ And looking round he beheld the black raven of the wilderness.

‘Yes, you shall have a bit,’ said Covan the Brown-haired; and breaking off a piece he stretched it upwards to the raven, who ate it greedily. Then Covan arose and went forward, till he saw the light from the cottage streaming before him, and glad was he, for night was at hand.

‘Maybe I shall find some work there,’ he thought, ‘and at least I shall gain money to help me in my search; for who knows how far my sister and my brothers may have wandered?’

The door stood open and he entered, and the old man gave him welcome, and the golden-haired maiden likewise. As happened before, he was offered by the old man to herd his cows; and, as she had done to his brothers, the maiden counselled him to leave such work alone. But, instead of answering rudely, like both Ardan and Ruais, he thanked her, with courtesy, though he had no mind to heed her; and he listened to the warnings and words of his new master.

Next day he set forth at dawn with the dun cows in front of him, and followed patiently wherever they might lead him. On the way he saw the gold cock and silver hen, which ran even closer to him than they had done to his brothers. Sorely tempted, he longed to give them chase; but, remembering in time that he had been bidden to look neither to the right nor to the left, with a mighty effort he turned his eyes away. Then the gold and silver staffs seemed to spring from the earth before him, but this time also he overcame; and though the fruit from the magic tree almost touched his mouth, he brushed it aside and went steadily on.

That day the cows wandered farther than ever they had done before, and never stopped till they had reached a moor where the heather was burning. The fire was fierce, but the cows took no heed, and walked steadily through it, Covan the Brown-haired following them. Next they plunged into a foaming river, and Covan plunged in after them, though the water came high above his waist. On the other side of the river lay a wide plain, and here the cows lay down, while Covan looked about him. Near him was a house built of yellow stone, and from it came sweet songs, and Covan listened, and his heart grew light within him.

While he was thus waiting there ran up to him a youth, scarcely able to speak so swiftly had he sped; and he cried aloud:

‘Hasten, hasten, Covan the Brown-haired, for your cows are in the corn, and you must drive them out!’

‘Nay,’ said Covan smiling, ‘it had been easier for you to have driven them out than to come here to tell me.’ And he went on listening to the music.

Very soon the same youth returned, and cried with panting breath:

‘Out upon you, Covan son of Gorla, that you stand there agape. For our dogs are chasing your cows, and you must drive them off!’

‘Nay, then,’ answered Covan as before, ‘it had been easier for you to call off your dogs than to come here to tell me.’ And he stayed where he was till the music ceased.

Then he turned to look for his cows, and found them all lying in the place where he had left them; but when they saw Covan they rose up and walked homewards, taking a different path to that they had trod in the morning. This time they passed over a plain so bare that a pin could not have lain there unnoticed, yet Covan beheld with surprise a foal and its mother feeding there, both as fat as if they had pastured on the richest grass. Further on they crossed another plain, where the grass was thick and green, but on it were feeding a foal and its mother, so lean that you could have counted their ribs. And further again the path led them by the shores of a lake whereon were floating two boats; one full of gay and happy youths, journeying to the land of the Sun, and another with grim shapes clothed in black, travelling to the land of Night.

‘What can these things mean?’ said Covan to himself, as he followed his cows.

Darkness now fell, the wind howled, and torrents of rain poured upon them. Covan knew not how far they might yet have to go, or indeed if they were on the right road. He could not even see his cows, and his heart sank lest, after all, he should have failed to bring them safely back. What was he to do?

He waited thus, for he could go neither forwards nor backwards, till he felt a great friendly paw laid on his shoulder.

‘My cave is just here,’ said the Dog of Maol-mór, of whom Covan son of Gorla had heard much. ‘Spend the night here, and you shall be fed on the flesh of lamb, and shall lay aside three-thirds of thy weariness.’

And Covan entered, and supped, and slept, and in the morning rose up a new man.

‘Farewell, Covan,’ said the Dog of Maol-mór. ‘May success go with you, for you took what I had to give and did not mock me. So, when danger is your companion, wish for me, and I will not fail you.’

At these words the Dog of Maol-mór disappeared into the forest, and Covan went to seek his cows, which were standing in the hollow where the darkness had come upon them.

At the sight of Covan the Brown-haired, they walked onwards, Covan followed ever behind them, and looking neither to the right nor to the left. All that day they walked, and when night fell they were in a barren plain, with only rocks for shelter.

'We must rest here as best we can,' spoke Covan to the cows. And they bowed their heads and lay down in the place where they stood. Then came the black raven of Corri-nan-creag, whose eyes never closed, and whose wings never tired; and he fluttered before the face of Covan and told him that he knew of a cranny in the rock where there was food in plenty, and soft moss for a bed.

'Go with me thither,' he said to Covan, 'and you shall lay aside three-thirds of your weariness, and depart in the morning refreshed.' And Covan listened thankfully to his words, and at dawn he rose up to seek his cows.

'Farewell!' cried the black raven. 'You trusted me, and took all I had to offer in return for the food you once gave me. So if in time to come you need a friend, wish for me, and I will not fail you.'

As before, the cows were standing in the spot where he had left them, ready to set out. All that day they walked, on and on, and on, Covan son of Gorla walking behind them, till night fell while they were on the banks of a river.

'We can go no further,' spake Covan to the cows. And they began to eat the grass by the side of the stream, while Covan listened to them, and longed for some supper also, for they had travelled far, and his limbs were weak under him. Then there was a swish of water at his feet, and out peeped the head of the famous otter Doran-donn of the stream.

'Trust to me and I will find you warmth and shelter,' said Doran-donn; 'and for food fish in plenty.' And Covan went with him thankfully, and ate and rested, and laid aside three-thirds of his weariness. At sunrise he left his bed of dried sea-weed, which had floated up with the tide, and with grateful heart bade farewell to Doran-donn.

'Because you trusted me and took what I had to offer, you have made me your friend, Covan,' said Doran-donn. 'And if you should be in danger, and need help from one who can swim a river or dive beneath a wave, call to me and I will come to you.' Then he plunged into the stream, and was seen no more.

The cows were standing ready in the place where Covan had left them, and they journeyed on all that day, till, when night fell, they reached the cottage. Joyful indeed was the old man as the cows went into their stables, and he beheld the rich milk that flowed into the pail of the golden-haired maiden with the silver comb.

'You have done well indeed,' he said to Covan son of Gorla. 'And now, what would you have as a reward?'

'I want nothing for myself,' answered Covan the Brown-haired; 'but I ask you to give me back my brothers and my sister who have been lost to us for three years past. You are wise and know the lore of fairies and witches; tell me where I can find them, and what I must do to bring them back to life again.'

The old man looked grave at the words of Covan.

'Yes, truly I know where they are,' answered he, 'and I say not that they may not be brought to life again. But the perils are great — too great for you to overcome.'

'Tell me what they are,' said Covan again, 'and I shall know better if I may overcome them.'

'Listen, then, and judge. In the mountain yonder there dwells a roe, white of foot, with horns that branch like the antlers of a deer. On the lake that leads to the land of the Sun floats a duck whose body is green and whose neck is of gold. In the pool of Corri-Bui swims a salmon with a skin that shines like silver, and whose gills are red — bring them all to me, and then you shall know where dwell your brothers and your sister!'

'To-morrow at cock-crow I will begone!' answered Covan.

The way to the mountain lay straight before him, and when he had climbed high he caught sight of the roe with the white feet and the spotted sides, on the peak in front.

Full of hope he set out in pursuit of her, but by the time he had reached that peak she had left it and was to be seen on another. And so it always happened, and Covan's courage had well-nigh failed him, when the thought of the Dog of Maol-mór darted into his mind.

'Oh, that he was here!' he cried. And looking up he saw him.

'Why did you summon me?' asked the Dog of Maol-mór. And when Covan had told him of his trouble, and how the roe always led him further and further, the Dog only answered:

'Fear nothing; I will soon catch her for you.' And in a short while he laid the roe unhurt at Covan's feet.

'What will you wish me to do with her?' said the Dog. And Covan answered:

'The old man bade me bring her, and the duck with the golden neck, and the salmon with the silver sides, to his cottage; if I shall catch them, I know not. But carry you the roe to the back of the cottage, and tether her so that she cannot escape.'

'It shall be done,' said the Dog of Maol-mór.

Then Covan sped to the lake which led to the land of the Sun, where the duck with the green body and the golden neck was swimming among the water-lilies.

'Surely I can catch him, good swimmer as I am,' to himself. But, if he could swim well, the duck could swim better, and at length his strength failed him, and he was forced to seek the land.

‘Oh that the black raven were here to help me!’ he thought to himself. And in a moment the black raven was perched on his shoulder.

‘How can I help you?’ asked the raven. And Covan answered:

‘Catch me the green duck that floats on the water.’ And the raven flew with his strong wings, and picked him up in his strong beak, and in another moment the bird was laid at the feet of Covan.

This time it was easy for the young man to carry his prize, and after giving thanks to the raven for his aid, he went on to the river.

In the deep dark pool of which the old man had spoken the silver-sided salmon was lying under a rock.

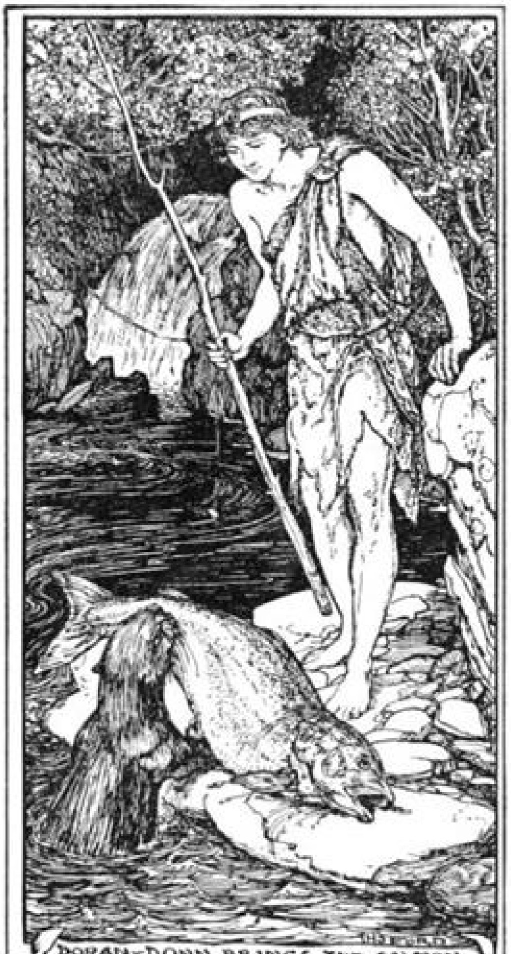

DORAN-DONN BRINGS THE SALMON TO COVAN THE BROWN-HAIRED

‘Surely I, good fisher as I am, can catch him,’ said Covan son of Gorla. And cutting a slender pole from a bush, he fastened a line to the end of it. But cast with what skill he might, it availed nothing, for the salmon would not even look at the bait.

‘I am beaten at last, unless the Doran-donn can deliver me,’ he cried. And as he spoke there was a swish of the water, and the face of the Doran-donn looked up at him.

‘O catch me, I pray you, that salmon under the rock!’ said Covan son of Gorla. And the Doran-donn dived, and laying hold of the salmon by his tail, bore it back to the place where Covan was standing.

‘The roe, and the duck, and the salmon are here,’ said Covan to the old man, when he reached the cottage. And the old man smiled on him and bade him eat and drink, and after he hungered no more, he would speak with him.

And this was what the old man said: ‘You began well, my son, so things have gone well with you. You set store by your mother’s blessing, therefore you have been blest. You gave food to the raven when it hungered, you were true to the promise you had made to me, and did not suffer yourself to be turned aside by vain shows. You were skilled to perceive that the boy who tempted you to leave the temple was a teller of false tales, and took with a grateful heart what the poor had to offer you. Last of all, difficulties gave you courage, instead of lending you despair.

‘And now, as to your reward, you shall in truth take your sister home with you, and your brothers I will restore to life; but idle and unfaithful as they are their lot is to wander for ever. And so farewell, and may wisdom be with you.’

‘First tell me your name?’ asked Covan softly.

‘I am the Spirit of Age,’ said the old man.

(*Taken from a Celtic Story.* Translated by Norman Macleod.)

THE PRINCESS BELLA-FLOR

Once upon a time there lived a man who had two sons. When they grew up the elder went to seek his fortune in a far country, and for many years no one heard anything about him. Meanwhile the younger son stayed at home with his father, who died at last in a good old age, leaving great riches behind him.

For some time the son who stayed at home spent his father’s wealth freely, believing that he alone remained to enjoy it. But, one day, as he was coming down stairs, he was surprised to see a stranger enter the hall, looking about as if the house belonged to him.

‘Have you forgotten me?’ asked the man.

‘I can’t forget a person I have never known,’ was the rude answer.

‘I am your brother,’ replied the stranger, ‘and I have returned home without the money I hoped to have made. And, what is worse, they tell me in the village that my father is dead. I would have counted my lost gold as nothing if I could have seen him once more.’

‘He died six months ago,’ said the rich brother,’and he left you, as your portion, the old wooden chest that stands in the loft. You had better go there and look for it; I have no more time to waste.’ And he went his way.

So the wanderer turned his steps to the loft, which was at the top of the storehouse, and there he found the wooden chest, so old that it looked as if it were dropping to pieces.

‘What use is this old thing to me?’ he said to himself. ‘Oh, well, it will serve to light a fire at which I can warm myself; so things might be worse after all.’

Placing the chest on his back, the man, whose name was José, set out for his inn, and, borrowing a hatchet, began to chop up the box. In doing so he discovered a secret drawer, and in it lay a paper. He opened the paper, not knowing what it might contain, and was astonished to find that it was the acknowledgment of a large debt that was owing to his father. Putting the precious writing in his pocket, he hastily inquired of the landlord where he could find the man whose name was written inside, and he ran out at once in search of him.

The debtor proved to be an old miser, who lived at the other end of the village. He had hoped for many months that the paper he had written had been lost or destroyed, and, indeed, when he saw it, was very unwilling to pay what he owed. However, the stranger threatened to drag him before the king, and when the miser saw that there was no help for it he counted out the coins one by one. The stranger picked them up and put them in his pocket, and went back to his inn feeling that he was now a rich man.

A few weeks after this he was walking through the streets of the nearest town, when he met a poor woman crying bitterly. He stopped and asked her what was the matter, and she answered between her sobs that her husband was dying, and, to make matters worse, a creditor whom he could not pay was anxious to have him taken to prison.

‘Comfort yourself,’ said the stranger kindly; ‘they shall neither send your husband to prison nor sell your goods. I will not only pay his debts but, if he dies, the cost of his burial also. And now go home, and nurse him as well as you can.’

And so she did; but, in spite of her care, the husband died, and was buried by the stranger. But everything cost more than he had expected, and when all was paid he found that only three gold pieces were left.

‘What am I to do now?’ said he to himself. ‘I think I had better go to court, and enter into the service of the king.’

At first he was only a servant, who carried the king the water for his bath, and saw that his bed was made in a particular fashion. But he did his duties so well that his master soon took notice of him, and in a short time he rose to be a gentleman of the bedchamber.

Now, when this happened the younger brother had spent all the money he had inherited, and did not know how to make any for himself. He then bethought him of the king’s favourite, and went whining to the palace to beg that his brother, whom he had so ill-used, would give him his protection, and find him a place. The elder, who was always ready to help everyone, spoke to the king on his behalf, and the next day the young man took up his work at court.

Unfortunately, the new-comer was by nature spiteful and envious, and could not bear anyone to have better luck than himself. By dint of spying through keyholes and listening at doors, he learned that the king, old and ugly though he was, had fallen in love with the Princess Bella-Flor, who would have nothing to say to him, and had hidden herself in some mountain castle, no one knew where.

‘That will do nicely,’ thought the scoundrel, rubbing his hands. ‘It will be quite easy to get the king to send my brother in search of her, and if he returns without finding her, his head will be the forfeit. Either way, he will be out of *my* path.’

So he went at once to the Lord High Chamberlain and craved an audience of the king, to whom he declared he wished to tell some news of the highest importance. The king admitted him into the presence chamber without delay, and bade him state what he had to say, and to be quick about it.

'Oh, sire! the Princess Bella-Flor — —' answered the man, and then stopped as if afraid.

'What of the Princess Bella-Flor?' asked the king impatiently.

'I have heard — it is whispered at court — that your majesty desires to know where she lies in hiding.'

'I would give half my kingdom to the man who will bring her to me,' cried the king, eagerly. 'Speak on, knave; has a bird of the air revealed to you the secret?'

'It is not I, but my brother, who knows,' replied the traitor; 'if your majesty would ask him — —' But before the words were out of his mouth the king had struck a blow with his sceptre on a golden plate that hung on the wall.

'Order José to appear before me instantly,' he shouted to the servant who ran to obey his orders, so great was the noise his majesty had made; and when José entered the hall, wondering what in the world could be the matter, the king was nearly dumb with rage and excitement.

'Bring me the Princess Bella-Flor this moment,' stammered he, 'for if you return without her I will have you drowned!' And without another word he left the hall, leaving José staring with surprise and horror.

'How can I find the Princess Bella-Flor when I have never even seen her?' thought he. 'But it is no use staying here, for I shall only be put to death.' And he walked slowly to the stables to choose himself a horse.

There were rows upon rows of fine beasts with their names written in gold above their stalls, and José was looking uncertainly from one to the other, wondering which he should choose, when an old white horse turned its head and signed to him to approach.

'Take me,' it said in a gentle whisper, 'and all will go well.'

José still felt so bewildered with the mission that the king had given him that he forgot to be astonished at hearing a horse talk. Mechanically he laid his hand on the bridle and led the white horse out of the stable. He was about to mount on his back, when the animal spoke again:

'Pick up those three loaves of bread which you see there, and put them in your pocket.'

José did as he was told, and being in a great hurry to get away, asked no questions, but swung himself into the saddle.

They rode far without meeting any adventures, but at length they came to an ant-hill, and the horse stopped.

'Crumble those three loaves for the ants,' he said. But José hesitated.

'Why, we may want them ourselves!' answered he.

'Never mind that; give them to the ants all the same. Do not lose any chance of helping others.’ And when the loaves lay in crumbs on the road, the horse galloped on.

By-and-by they entered a rocky pass between two mountains, and here they saw an eagle which had been caught in a hunter’s net.

‘Get down and cut the meshes of that net, and set the poor bird free,’ said the horse.

‘But it will take so long,’ objected José, ‘and we may miss the princess.’

‘Never mind that; do not miss a chance of helping others,’ answered the horse. And when the meshes were cut, and the eagle was free, the horse galloped on.

They had ridden many miles, and at last they came to a river, where they beheld a little fish lying gasping on the sand, and the horse said:

‘Do you see that little fish? it will die if you do not put it back in the water.’

‘But, really, we shall never find the Princess Bella-Flor, if we waste our time like this!’ cried José.

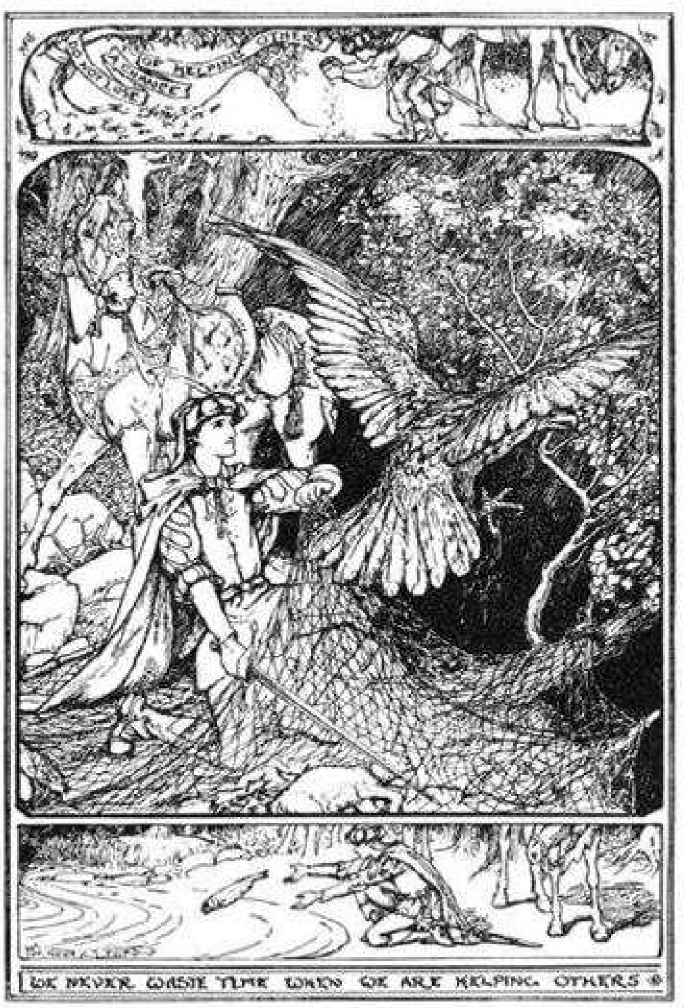
WE NEVER WASTE TIME WHEN WE ARE HELPING OTHERS

‘We never waste time when we are helping others,’ answered the horse. And soon the little fish was swimming happily away.

A little while after they reached a castle, which was built in the middle of a very thick wood, and right in front was the Princess Bella-Flor feeding her hens.

‘Now listen,’ said the horse. ‘I am going to give all sorts of little hops and skips, which will amuse the Princess Bella-Flor. Then she will tell you that she would like to ride a little way, and you must help her to mount. When she is seated I shall begin to neigh and kick, and you must say that I have never carried a woman before, and that you had better get up behind so as to be able to manage me. Once on my back we will go like wind to the king’s palace.’

José did exactly as the horse told him, and everything fell out as the animal prophesied; so that it was not until they were galloping breathlessly toward the palace that the princess knew that she was taken captive. She said nothing, however, but quietly opened her apron which contained the bran for the chickens, and in a moment it lay scattered on the ground.

‘Oh, I have let fall my bran!’ cried she; ‘please get down and pick it up for me.’ But José only answered:

‘We shall find plenty of bran where we are going.’ And the horse galloped on.

They were now passing through a forest, and the princess took out her handkerchief and threw it upwards, so that it stuck in one of the topmost branches of a tree.

‘Dear me; how stupid! I have let my handkerchief blow away,’ said she. ‘Will you climb up and get it for me?’ But José answered:

‘We shall find plenty of handkerchiefs where we are going.’ And the horse galloped on.

After the wood they reached a river, and the princess slipped a ring off her finger and let it roll into the water.

‘How careless of me,’ gasped she, beginning to sob. ‘I have lost my favourite ring; *do* stop for a moment and look if you can see it.’ But José answered:

‘You will find plenty of rings where you are going.’ And the horse galloped on.

At last they entered the palace gates, and the king’s heart bounded with joy at beholding his beloved Bella-Flor. But the princess brushed him aside as if he had been a fly, and locked herself into the nearest room, which she would not open for all his entreaties.

‘Bring me the three things I lost on the way, and perhaps I may think about it,’ was all she would say. And, in despair, the king was driven to take counsel of José.

‘There is no remedy that I can see,’ said his majesty, ‘but that you, who know where they are, should go and bring them back. And if you return without them I will have you drowned.’

Poor José was much troubled at these words. He thought that he had done all that was required of him, and that his life was safe. However, he bowed low, and went out to consult his friend the horse.

‘Do not vex yourself,’ said the horse, when he had heard the story; ‘jump up, and we will go back and look for the things.’ And José mounted at once.

They rode on till they came to the ant-hill, and then the horse asked:

‘Would you like to have the bran?’

‘What is the use of liking?’ answered José.

‘Well, call the ants, and tell them to fetch it for you; and, if some of it has been scattered by the wind, to bring in its stead the grains that were in the cakes you gave them.’ José listened in surprise. He did not much believe in the horse’s plan; but he could not think of anything better, so he called to the ants, and bade them collect the bran as fast as they could.

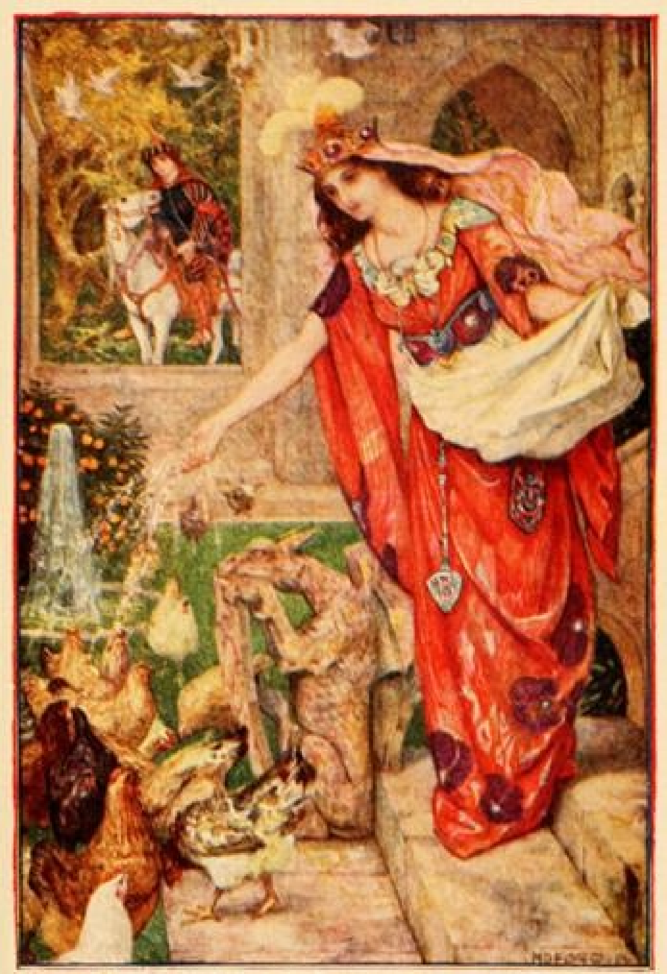

HOW JOSE FOUND THE PRINCESS BELLAFLOR

Then he sat under a tree and waited, while his horse cropped the green turf.

‘Look there!’ said the animal, suddenly raising its head; and José looked behind him and saw a little mountain of bran, which he put into a bag that was hung over his saddle.

‘Good deeds bear fruit sooner or later,’ observed the horse; ‘but mount again, as we have far to go.’

When they arrived at the tree, they saw the handkerchief fluttering like a flag from the topmost branch, and José’s spirits sank again.

‘How am I to get that handkerchief?’ cried he; ‘why I should need Jacob’s ladder!’ But the horse answered:

‘Do not be frightened; call to the eagle you set free from the net, he will bring it to you.’

So José called to the eagle, and the eagle flew to the top of the tree and brought back the handkerchief in its beak. José thanked him, and vaulting on his horse they rode on to the river.

A great deal of rain had fallen in the night, and the river, instead of being clear as it was before, was dark and troubled.

‘How am I to fetch the ring from the bottom of this river when I do not know exactly where it was dropped, and cannot even see it?’ asked José. But the horse answered: ‘Do not be frightened; call the little fish whose life you saved, and she will bring it to you.’

So he called to the fish, and the fish dived to the bottom and slipped behind big stones, and moved little ones with its tail till it found the ring, and brought it to José in its mouth.

Well pleased with all he had done, José returned to the palace; but when the king took the precious objects to Bella-Flor, she declared that she would never open her door till the bandit who had carried her off had been fried in oil.

‘I am very sorry,’ said the king to José, ‘I really would rather not; but you see I have no choice.’

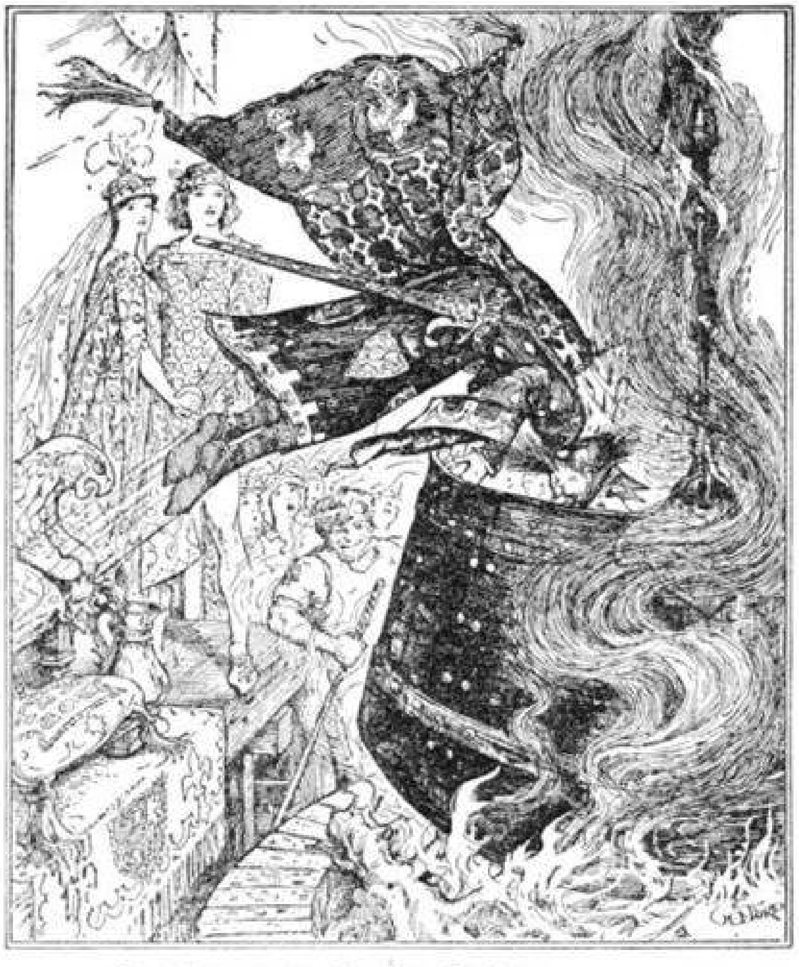

The King jumps into the Cauldron

While the oil was being heated in the great caldron, José went to the stables to inquire of his friend the horse if there was no way for him to escape.

‘Do not be frightened,’ said the horse. ‘Get on my back, and I will gallop till my whole body is wet with perspiration, then rub it all over your skin, and no matter how hot the oil may be you will never feel it.’

José did not ask any more questions, but did as the horse bade him; and men wondered at his cheerful face as they lowered him into the caldron of boiling oil. He was left there till Bella-Flor cried that he must be cooked enough. Then out came a youth so young and handsome, that everyone fell in love with him, and Bella-Flor most of all.

As for the old king, he saw that he had lost the game; and in despair he flung himself into the caldron, and was fried instead of José. Then José was proclaimed king, on condition that he married Bella-Flor, which he promised to do the next day. But first he went to the stables and sought out the horse, and said to him: ‘It is to you that I owe my life and my crown. Why have you done all this for me?’

And the horse answered: ‘I am the soul of that unhappy man for whom you spent all your fortune. And when I saw you in danger of death I begged that I might help you, as you had helped me. For, as I told you, Good deeds bear their own fruit!’

(From *Cuentos, Oraciones, y Adivinas*, por Fernan Caballero.)

THE BIRD OF TRUTH

Once upon a time there lived a poor fisher who built a hut on the banks of a stream which, shunning the glare of the sun and the noise of towns, flowed quietly past trees and under bushes, listening to the songs of the birds overhead.

One day, when the fisherman had gone out as usual to cast his nets, he saw borne towards him on the current a cradle of crystal. Slipping his net quickly beneath it he drew it out and lifted the silk coverlet. Inside, lying on a soft bed of cotton, were two babies, a boy and a girl, who opened their eyes and smiled at him. The man was filled with pity at the sight, and throwing down his lines he took the cradle and the babies home to his wife.

The good woman flung up her hands in despair when she beheld the contents of the cradle.

‘Are not eight children enough,’ she cried, ‘without bringing us two more? How do you think we can feed them?’

‘You would not have had me leave them to die of hunger,’ answered he, ‘or be swallowed up by the waves of the sea? What is enough for eight is also enough for ten.’

The wife said no more; and in truth her heart yearned over the little creatures. Somehow or other food was never lacking in the hut, and the children grew up and were so good and gentle that, in time, their foster-parents loved them as well or better than their own, who were quarrelsome and envious. It did not take the orphans long to notice that the boys did not like them, and were always playing tricks on them, so they used to go away by themselves and spend whole hours by the banks of the river. Here they would take out the bits of bread they had saved from their breakfast and crumble them for the birds. In return, the birds taught them many things: how to get up early in the morning, how to sing, and how to talk their language, which very few people knew.

But though the little orphans did their best to avoid quarrelling with their foster-brothers, it was very difficult always to keep the peace. Matters got worse and worse till, one morning, the eldest boy said to the twins:

‘It is all very well for you to pretend that you have such good manners, and are so much better than we, but we have at least a father and mother, while *you* have only got the river, like the toads and the frogs.’

The poor children did not answer the insult; but it made them very unhappy. And they told each other in whispers that they could not stay there any longer, but must go into the world and seek their fortunes.

So next day they arose as early as the birds and stole downstairs without anybody hearing them. One window was open, and they crept softly out and ran to the side of the river. Then, feeling as if they had found a friend, they walked along its banks, hoping that by-and-by they should meet some one to take care of them.

The whole of that day they went steadily on without seeing a living creature, till, in the evening, weary and footsore, they saw before them a small hut. This raised their spirits for a moment; but the door was shut, and the hut seemed empty, and so great was their disappointment that they almost cried. However, the boy fought down his tears, and said cheerfully:

‘Well, at any rate here is a bench where we can sit down, and when we are rested we will think what is best to do next.’

Then they sat down, and for some time they were too tired even to notice anything; but by-and-by they saw that under the tiles of the roof a quantity of swallows were sitting, chattering merrily to each other. Of course the swallows had no idea that the children understood their language, or they would not have talked so freely; but, as it was, they said whatever came into their heads.

‘Good evening, my fine city madam,’ remarked a swallow, whose manners were rather rough and countryfied, to another who looked particularly distinguished. ‘Happy, indeed, are the eyes that behold you! Only think of your having returned to your long-forgotten country friends, after you have lived for years in a palace!’

‘I have inherited this nest from my parents,’ replied the other, ‘and as they left it to me I certainly shall make it my home. But,’ she added politely, ‘I hope that you and all your family are well?’

‘Very well indeed, I am glad to say. But my poor daughter had, a short time ago, such bad inflammation in her eyes that she would have gone blind had I not been able to find the magic herb, which cured her at once.’

‘And how is the nightingale singing? Does the lark soar as high as ever? And does the linnet dress herself as smartly?’ But here the country swallow drew herself up.

‘I never talk gossip,’ she said severely. ‘Our people, who were once so innocent and well-behaved, have been corrupted by the bad examples of men. It is a thousand pities.’

‘What! innocence and good behaviour are not to be met with among birds, nor in the country! My dear friend, what are you saying?’

‘The truth and nothing more. Imagine, when we returned here, we met some linnets who, just as the spring and the flowers and the long days had come, were setting out for the north and the cold? Out of pure compassion we tried to persuade them to give up this folly; but they only replied with the utmost insolence.'

'How shocking!' exclaimed the city swallow.

'Yes, it was. And, worse than that, the crested lark, that was formerly so timid and shy, is now no better than a thief, and steals maize and corn whenever she can find them.'

'I am astonished at what you say.'

'You will be more astonished when I tell you that on my arrival here for the summer I found my nest occupied by a shameless sparrow! "This is *my* nest," I said. "*Yours?*" he answered, with a rude laugh. "Yes, mine; my ancestors were born here, and my sons will be born here also." And at that my husband set upon him and threw him out of the nest. I am sure nothing of this sort ever happens in a town.'

'Not exactly, perhaps. But I have seen a great deal — if you only knew!'

'Oh! do tell us! do tell us!' cried they all. And when they had settled themselves comfortably, the city swallow began:

'You must know, then, that our king fell in love with the youngest daughter of a tailor, who was as good and gentle as she was beautiful. His nobles hoped that he would have chosen a queen from one of their daughters, and tried to prevent the marriage; but the king would not listen to them, and it took place. Not many months later a war broke out, and the king rode away at the head of his army, while the queen remained behind, very unhappy at the separation. When peace was made, and the king returned, he was told that his wife had had two babies in his absence, but that both were dead; that she herself had gone out of her mind and was obliged to be shut up in a tower in the mountains, where, in time, the fresh air might cure her.'

'And was this not true?' asked the swallows eagerly.

'Of course not,' answered the city lady, with some contempt for their stupidity. 'The children were alive at that very moment in the gardener's cottage; but at night the chamberlain came down and put them in a cradle of crystal, which he carried to the river.

'For a whole day they floated safely, for though the stream was deep it was very still, and the children took no harm. In the morning — so I am told by my friend the kingfisher — they were rescued by a fisherman who lived near the river bank.'

The children had been lying on the bench, listening lazily to the chatter up to this point; but when they heard the story of the crystal cradle which their foster-mother had always been fond of telling them, they sat upright and looked at each other.

‘Oh, how glad I am I learnt the birds’ language!’ said the eyes of one to the eyes of the other.

Meanwhile the swallows had spoken again.

‘That was indeed good fortune!’ cried they.

‘And when the children are grown up they can return to their father and set their mother free.’

‘It will not be so easy as you think,’ answered the city swallow, shaking her head; ‘for they will have to prove that they *are* the king’s children, and also that their mother never went mad at all. In fact, it is so difficult that there is only one way of proving it to the king.’

‘And what is that?’ cried all the swallows at once. ‘And how do you know it?’

‘I know it,’ answered the city swallow ‘because, one day, when I was passing through the palace garden, I met a cuckoo, who, as I need not tell you, always pretends to be able to see into the future. We began to talk about certain things which were happening in the palace, and of the events of past years. “Ah,” said he, “the only person who can expose the wickedness of the ministers and show the king how wrong he has been is the Bird of Truth, who can speak the language of men.”

‘“And where can this bird be found?” I asked.

‘“It is shut up in a castle guarded by a fierce giant, who only sleeps one quarter of an hour out of the whole twenty-four,” replied the cuckoo.’

‘And where is this castle?’ inquired the country swallow, who, like all the rest, and the children most of all, had been listening with deep attention.

‘That is just what I don’t know,’ answered her friend. ‘All I can tell you is that not far from here is a tower, where dwells an old witch, and it is she who knows the way, and she will only teach it to the person who promises to bring her the water from the fountain of many colours, which she uses for her enchantments. But never will she betray the place where the Bird of Truth is hidden, for she hates him, and would kill him if she could; knowing well, however, that this bird cannot die, as he is immortal, she keeps him closely shut up, and guarded night and day by the Birds of Bad Faith, who seek to gag him so that his voice should not be heard.’

‘And is there no one else who can tell the poor boy where to find the bird, if he should ever manage to reach the tower?’ asked the city swallows.

‘No one,’ replied she, ‘except an owl, who lives a hermit’s life in that desert, and he knows only one word of man’s speech, and that is “cross.” So that even if the prince did succeed in getting there, he could never understand what the owl said. But, look, the sun is sinking to his nest in the depths of the sea, and I must go to mine. Good-night, friends, good-night!’

Then the swallow flew away, and the children, who had forgotten both hunger and weariness in the joy of this strange news, rose up and followed in the direction of her flight. After two hours’ walking, they arrived at a large city, which they felt sure must be the capital of their father’s kingdom. Seeing a good-natured looking woman standing at the door of a house, they asked her if she would give them a night’s lodging, and she was so pleased with their pretty faces and nice manners that she welcomed them warmly.

It was scarcely light the next morning before the girl was sweeping out the rooms, and the boy watering the garden, so that by the time the good woman came downstairs there was nothing left for her to do. This so delighted her that she begged the children to stay with her altogether, and the boy answered that he would leave his sister with her gladly, but that he himself had serious business on hand and must not linger in pursuit of it. So he bade them farewell and set out.

For three days he wandered by the most out-of-the-way paths, but no signs of a tower were to be seen anywhere. On the fourth morning it was just the same, and, filled with despair, he flung himself on the ground under a tree and hid his face in his hands. In a little while he heard a rustling over his head, and looking up, he saw a turtle dove watching him with her bright eyes.

‘Oh dove!’ cried the boy, addressing the bird in her own language, ‘Oh dove! tell me, I pray you, where is the castle of Come-and-never-go?’

‘Poor child,’ answered the dove, ‘who has sent you on such a useless quest?’

‘My good or evil fortune,’ replied the boy, ‘I know not which.’

‘To get there,’ said the dove, ‘you must follow the wind, which to-day is blowing towards the castle.’

The boy thanked her, and followed the wind, fearing all the time that it might change its direction and lead him astray. But the wind seemed to feel pity for him and blew steadily on.

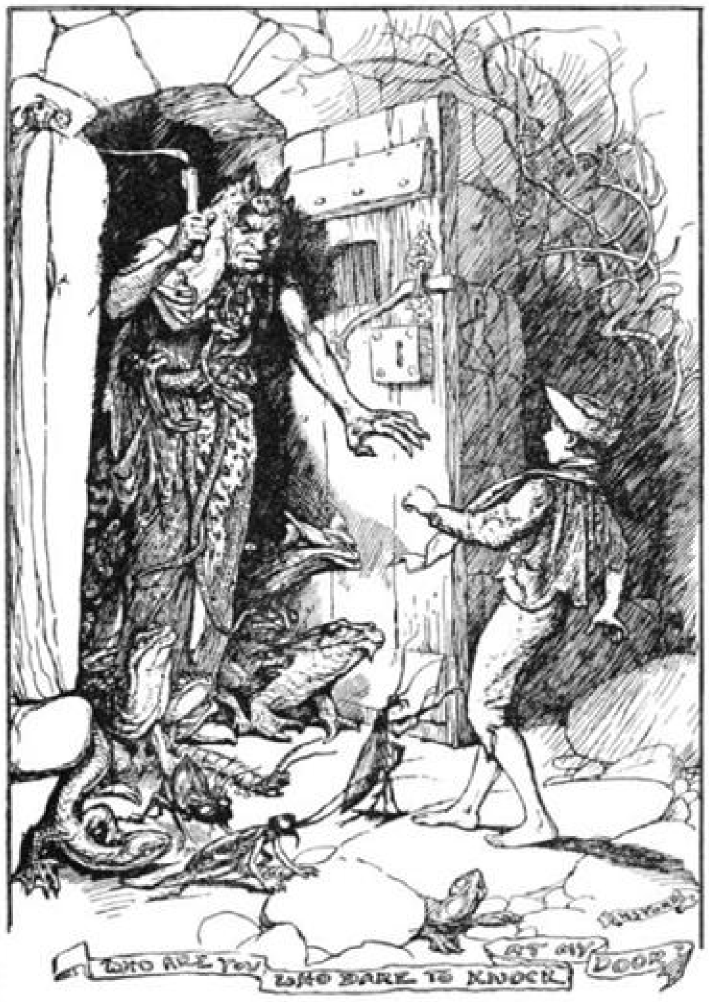

With each step the country became more and more dreary, but at nightfall the child could see behind the dark and bare rocks something darker still. This was the tower in which dwelt the witch; and seizing the knocker he gave three loud knocks, which were echoed in the hollows of the rocks around.

The door opened slowly, and there appeared on the threshold an old woman holding up a candle to her face, which was so hideous that the boy involuntarily stepped backwards, almost as frightened by the troop of lizards, beetles, and such creatures that surrounded her, as by the woman herself.

‘Who are you who dare to knock at my door and wake me?’ cried she. ‘Be quick and tell me what you want, or it will be the worse for you.’

‘Madam,’ answered the child, ‘I believe that you alone know the way to the castle of Come-and-never-go, and I pray you to show it to me.’

‘Very good,’ replied the witch, with something that she meant for a smile, ‘but to-day it is late. To-morrow you shall go. Now enter, and you shall sleep with my lizards.’

‘I cannot stay,’ said he. ‘I must go back at once, so as to reach the road from which I started before day dawns.'

'If I tell you, will you promise me that you will bring me this jar full of the many-coloured water from the spring in the courtyard of the castle?' asked she. 'If you fail to keep your word I will change you into a lizard for ever.'

'I promise,' answered the boy.

Then the old woman called to a very thin dog, and said to him:

'Conduct this pig of a child to the castle of Come-and-never-go, and take care that you warn my friend of his arrival.' And the dog arose and shook itself, and set out.

At the end of two hours they stopped in front of a large castle, big and black and gloomy, whose doors stood wide open, although neither sound nor light gave sign of any presence within. The dog, however, seemed to know what to expect, and, after a wild howl, went on; but the boy, who was uncertain whether this was the quarter of an hour when the giant was asleep, hesitated to follow him, and paused for a moment under a wild olive that grew near by, the only tree which he had beheld since he had parted from the dove. 'Oh, heaven, help me!' cried he.

'Cross! cross!' answered a voice.

The boy leapt for joy as he recognised the note of the owl of which the swallow had spoken, and he said softly in the bird's language:

'Oh, wise owl, I pray you to protect and guide me, for I have come in search of the Bird of Truth. And first I must fill this jar with the many-coloured water in the courtyard of the castle.'

'Do not do that,' answered the owl, 'but fill the jar from the spring which bubbles close by the fountain with the many-coloured water. Afterwards, go into the aviary opposite the great door, but be careful not to touch any of the bright-plumaged birds contained in it, which will cry to you, each one, that he is the Bird of Truth. Choose only a small white bird that is hidden in a corner, which the others try incessantly to kill, not knowing that it cannot die. And, be quick! — for at this very moment the giant has fallen asleep, and you have only a quarter of an hour to do everything.'

The boy ran as fast as he could and entered the courtyard, where he saw the two springs close together. He passed by the many-coloured water without casting a glance at it, and filled the jar from the fountain whose water was clear and pure. He next hastened to the aviary, and was almost deafened by the clamour that rose as he shut the door behind him. Voices of peacocks, voices of ravens, voices of magpies, each claiming to be the Bird of Truth. With steadfast face the boy walked by them all, to the corner where, hemmed in by a band of fierce crows, was the small white bird he sought. Putting her safely in his breast, he passed out, followed by the screams of the Birds of Bad Faith which he left behind him.

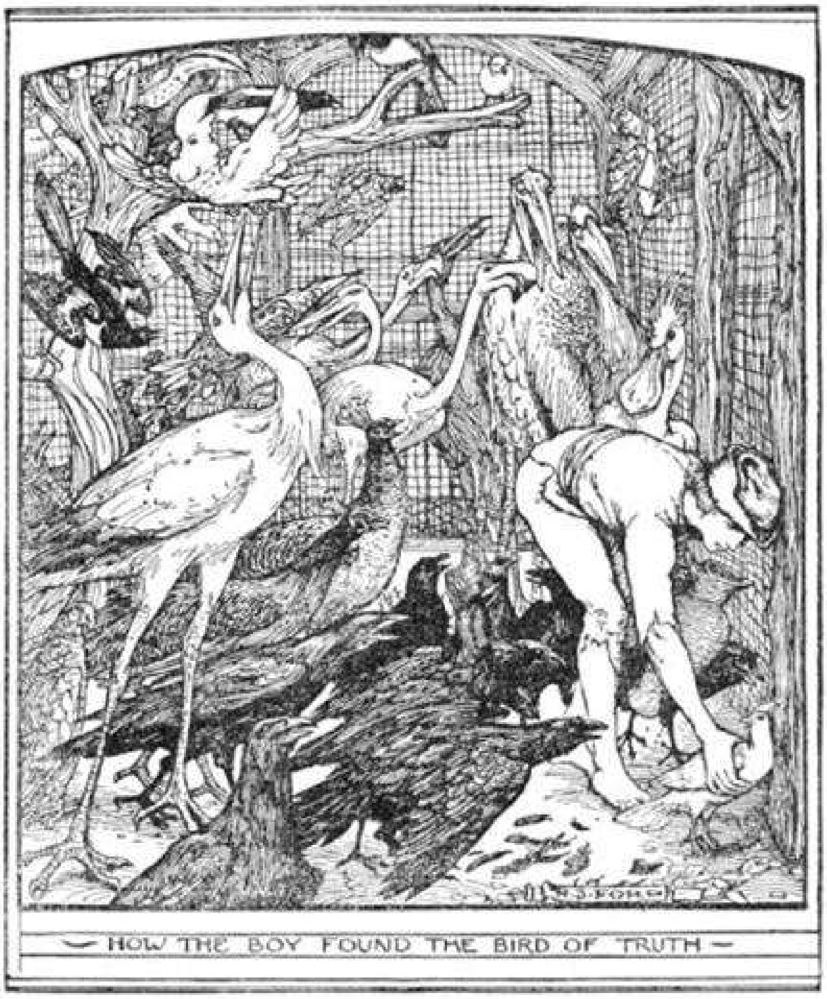

HOW THE BOY FOUND THE BIRD OF TRUTH

Once outside, he ran without stopping to the witch’s tower, and handed to the old woman the jar she had given him.

‘Become a parrot!’ cried she, flinging the water over him. But instead of losing his shape, as so many had done before, he only grew ten times handsomer; for the water was enchanted for good and not ill. Then the creeping multitude around the witch hastened to roll themselves in the water, and stood up, human beings again.

When the witch saw what was happening, she took a broomstick and flew away.

Who can guess the delight of the sister at the sight of her brother, bearing the Bird of Truth? But although the boy had accomplished much, something very difficult yet remained, and that was how to carry the Bird of Truth to the king without her being seized by the wicked courtiers, who would be ruined by the discovery of their plot.

Soon — no one knew how — the news spread abroad that the Bird of Truth was hovering round the palace, and the courtiers made all sorts of preparations to hinder her reaching the king.

They got ready weapons that were sharpened, and weapons that were poisoned; they sent for eagles and falcons to hunt her down, and constructed cages and boxes in which to shut her up if they were not able to kill her. They declared that her white plumage was really put on to hide her black feathers — in fact there was nothing they did not do in order to prevent the king from seeing the bird or from paying attention to her words if he did.

As often happens in these cases, the courtiers brought about that which they feared. They talked so much about the Bird of Truth that at last the king heard of it, and expressed a wish to see her. The more difficulties that were put in his way the stronger grew his desire, and in the end the king published a proclamation that whoever found the Bird of Truth should bring her to him without delay.

As soon as he saw this proclamation the boy called his sister, and they hastened to the palace. The bird was buttoned inside his tunic, but, as might have been expected, the courtiers barred the way, and told the child that he could not enter. It was in vain that the boy declared that he was only obeying the king’s commands; the courtiers only replied that his majesty was not yet out of bed, and it was forbidden to wake him.

They were still talking, when, suddenly, the bird settled the question by flying upwards through an open window into the king’s own room. Alighting on the pillow, close to the king’s head, she bowed respectfully, and said:

‘My lord, I am the Bird of Truth whom you wished to see, and I have been obliged to approach you in this manner because the boy who brought me is kept out of the palace by your courtiers.’

‘They shall pay for their insolence,’ said the king. And he instantly ordered one of his attendants to conduct the boy at once to his apartments; and in a moment more the prince entered, holding his sister by the hand.

‘Who are you?’ asked the king; ‘and what has the Bird of Truth to do with you?’

‘If it please your majesty, the Bird of Truth will explain that herself,’ answered the boy.

And the bird *did* explain; and the king heard for the first time of the wicked plot that had been successful for so many years. He took his children in his arms, with tears in his eyes, and hurried off with them to the tower in the mountains where the queen was shut up. The poor woman was as white as marble, for she had been living almost in darkness; but when she saw her husband and children, the colour came back to her face, and she was as beautiful as ever.

They all returned in state to the city, where great rejoicings were held. The wicked courtiers had their heads cut off, and all their property was taken away. As for the good old couple, they were given riches and honour, and were loved and cherished to the ends of their lives.

(From *Cuentos, Oraciones, y Adivinas*, por Fernan Caballero.)

THE MINK AND THE WOLF

In the big forest in the north of America lived a quantity of wild animals of all sorts. They were always very polite when they met; but, in spite of that, they kept a close watch one upon the other, as each was afraid of being killed and eaten by somebody else. But their manners were so good that no one would ever have guessed that.

One day a smart young wolf went out to hunt, promising his grandfather and grandmother that he would be sure to be back before bedtime. He trotted along quite happily through the forest till he came to a favourite place of his, just where the river runs into the sea. There, just as he had hoped, he saw the chief mink fishing in a canoe.

'I want to fish too,' cried the wolf. But the mink said nothing, and pretended not to hear.

'I wish you would take me into your boat!' shouted the wolf, louder than before, and he continued to beseech the mink so long that at last he grew tired of it, and paddled to the shore close enough for the wolf to jump in.

'Sit down quietly at that end or we shall be upset,' said the mink; 'and if you care about sea-urchins' eggs, you will find plenty in that basket. But be sure you eat only the white ones, for the red ones would kill you.'

So the wolf, who was always hungry, began to eat the eggs greedily; and when he had finished he told the mink he thought he would have a nap.

'Well, then, stretch yourself out, and rest your head on that piece of wood,' said the mink. And the wolf did as he was bid, and was soon fast asleep. Then the mink crept up to him and stabbed him to the heart with his knife, and he died without moving. After that he landed on the beach, skinned the wolf, and taking the skin to his cottage, he hung it up before the fire to dry.

Not many days later the wolf's grandmother who, with the help of her relations, had been searching for him everywhere, entered the cottage to buy some sea-urchins' eggs, and saw the skin, which she at once guessed to be that of her grandson.

'I knew he was dead — I knew it! I knew it!' she cried, weeping bitterly, till the mink told her rudely that if she wanted to make so much noise she had better do it outside as he liked to be quiet. So, half-blinded by her tears, the old woman went home the way she had come, and running in at the door, she flung herself down in front of the fire.

‘What are you crying for?’ asked the old wolf and some friends who had been spending the afternoon with him.

‘I shall never see my grandson any more!’ answered she. ‘Mink has killed him, oh! oh!’ And putting her head down, she began to weep as loudly as ever.

‘There! there!’ said her husband, laying his paw on her shoulder. ‘Be comforted; if he *is* dead, we will avenge him.’ And calling to the others they proceeded to talk over the best plan. It took them a long time to make up their minds, as one wolf proposed one thing and one another; but at last it was agreed that the old wolf should give a great feast in his house, and that the mink should be invited to the party. And in order that no time should be lost it was further agreed that each wolf should bear the invitations to the guests that lived nearest to him.

Now the wolves thought they were very cunning, but the mink was more cunning still; and though he sent a message by a white hare, that was going that way, saying he should be delighted to be present, he determined that he would take his precautions. So he went to a mouse who had often done him a good turn, and greeted her with his best bow.

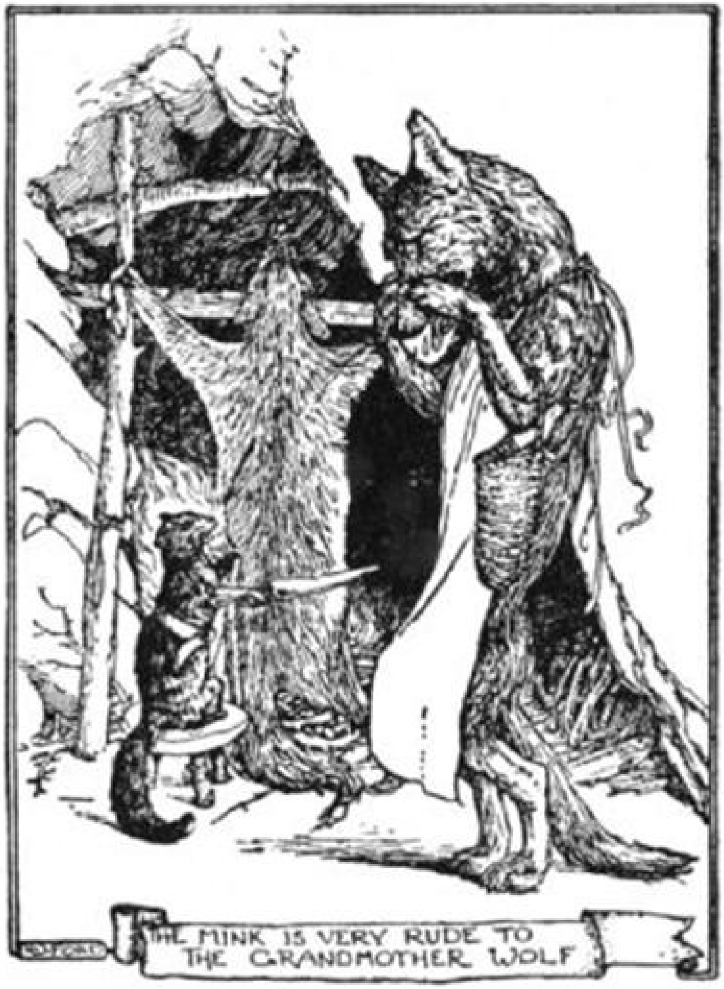

THE MINK IS VERY RUDE TO THE GRANDMOTHER WOLF

‘I have a favour to ask of you, friend mouse,’ said he, ‘and if you will grant it I will carry you on my back every night for a week to the patch of maize right up the hill.’

‘The favour is *mine*,’ answered the mouse. ‘Tell me what it is that I can have the honour of doing for you.’

‘Oh, something quite easy,’ replied the mink. ‘I only want you — between to-day and the next full moon — to gnaw through the bows and paddles of the wolf people, so that directly they use them they will break. But of course you must manage it so that they notice nothing.’

‘Of course,’ answered the mouse, ‘nothing is easier; but as the full moon is to-morrow night, and there is not much time, I had better begin at once.’ Then the mink thanked her, and went his way; but before he had gone far he came back again.

‘Perhaps, while you are about the wolf’s house seeing after the bows, it would do no harm if you were to make that knot-hole in the wall a little bigger,’ said he. ‘Not large enough to draw attention, of course; but it *might* come in handy.’

And with another nod he left her.

The next evening the mink washed and brushed himself carefully and set out for the feast. He smiled to himself as he looked at the dusty track, and perceived that though the marks of wolves' feet were many, not a single guest was to be seen anywhere. He knew very well what *that* meant; but he had taken his precautions and was not afraid.

The house door stood open, but through a crack the mink could see the wolves crowding in the corner behind it. However, he entered boldly, and as soon as he was fairly inside the door was shut with a bang, and the whole herd sprang at him, with their red tongues hanging out of their mouths. Quick as they were they were too late, for the mink was already through the knot-hole and racing for his canoe.

The knot-hole was too small for the wolves, and there were so many of them in the hut that it was some time before they could get the door open. Then they seized the bows and arrows which were hanging on the walls and, once outside, aimed at the flying mink; but as they pulled the bows broke in their paws, so they threw them away, and bounded to the shore, with all their speed, to the place where their canoes were drawn up on the beach.

Now, although the mink could not run as fast as the wolves, he had had a good start, and was already afloat when the swiftest among them threw themselves into the nearest canoe. They pushed off, but as they dipped the paddles into the water, they snapped as the bows had done, and were quite useless.

'I know where there are some new ones,' cried a young fellow, leaping on shore and rushing to a little cave at the back of the beach. And the mink's heart smote him when he heard, for he had not known of this secret store.

After a long chase the wolves managed to surround their prey, and the mink, seeing it was no good resisting any more, gave himself up. Some of the older wolves brought out some cedar bands, which they always carried wound round their bodies, but the mink laughed scornfully at the sight of them.

'Why I could snap those in a moment,' said he; 'if you want to make sure that I cannot escape, better take a line of kelp and bind me with that.'

'You are right,' answered the grandfather; 'your wisdom is greater than ours.' And he bade his servants gather enough kelp from the rocks to make a line, as they had brought none with them.

'While the line is being made you might as well let me have one last dance,' remarked the mink. And the wolves replied: 'Very good, you may have your dance; perhaps it may amuse us as well as you.' So they brought two canoes and placed them one beside the other. The mink stood up on his hind legs and began to dance, first in one canoe and then in the other; and so graceful was he, that the wolves forgot they were going to put him to death, and howled with pleasure.

‘Pull the canoes a little apart; they are too close for this new dance,’ he said, pausing for a moment. And the wolves separated them while he gave a series of little springs, sometimes pirouetting while he stood with one foot on the prow of both. ‘Now nearer, now further apart,’ he would cry as the dance went on. ‘No! further still.’ And springing into the air, amidst howls of applause, he came down head foremost, and dived to the bottom. And though the wolves, whose howls had now changed into those of rage, sought him everywhere, they never found him, for he hid behind a rock till they were out of sight, and then made his home in another forest.

(From the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*.)

ADVENTURES OF AN INDIAN BRAVE

A long, long way off, right away in the west of America, there once lived an old man who had one son. The country round was covered with forests, in which dwelt all kinds of wild beasts, and the young man and his companions used to spend whole days in hunting them, and he was the finest hunter of all the tribe.

One morning, when winter was coming on, the youth and his companions set off as usual to bring back some of the mountain goats and deer to be salted down, as he was afraid of a snow-storm; and if the wind blew and the snow drifted the forest might be impassable for some weeks. The old man and the wife, however, would not go out, but remained in the wigwam making bows and arrows.

It soon grew so cold in the forest that at last one of the men declared they could walk no more, unless they could manage to warm themselves.

'That is easily done,' said the leader, giving a kick to a large tree. Flames broke out in the trunk, and before it had burnt up they were as hot as if it had been summer. Then they started off to the place where the goats and deer were to be found in the greatest numbers, and soon had killed as many as they wanted. But the leader killed most, as he was the best shot.

'Now we must cut up the game and divide it,' said he; and so they did, each one taking his own share; and, walking one behind the other, set out for the village. But when they reached a great river the young man did not want the trouble of carrying his pack any further, and left it on the bank.

'I am going home another way,' he told his companions. And taking another road he reached the village long before they did.

'Have you returned with empty hands?' asked the old man, as his son opened the door.

'Have I *ever* done that, that you put me such a question?' asked the youth. 'No; I have slain enough to feast us for many moons, but it was heavy, and I left the pack on the bank of the great river. Give me the arrows, I will finish making them, and you can go to the river and bring home the pack!'

So the old man rose and went, and strapped the meat on his shoulder; but as he was crossing the ford the strap broke and the pack fell into the river. He stooped to catch it, but it swirled past him. He clutched again; but in doing so he overbalanced himself and was hurried into some rapids, where he was knocked against some rocks, and he sank and was drowned, and his body was carried down the stream into smoother water when it rose to the surface again. But by this time it had lost all likeness to a man, and was changed into a piece of wood.

The wood floated on, and the river got bigger and bigger and entered a new country. There it was borne by the current close to the shore, and a woman who was down there washing her clothes caught it as it passed, and drew it out, saying to herself: ‘What a nice smooth plank! I will use it as a table to put my food upon.’ And gathering up her clothes she took the plank with her into her hut.

When her supper time came she stretched the board across two strings which hung from the roof, and set upon it the pot containing a stew that smelt very good. The woman had been working hard all day and was very hungry, so she took her biggest spoon and plunged it into the pot. But what was her astonishment and disgust when both pot and food vanished instantly before her.

‘Oh, you horrid plank, you have brought me ill-luck!’ she cried. And taking it up she flung it away from her.

The woman had been surprised before at the disappearance of her food, but she was more astonished still when, instead of the plank, she beheld a baby. However, she was fond of children and had none of her own, so she made up her mind that she would keep it and take care of it. The baby grew and throve as no baby in that country had ever done, and in four days he was a man, and as tall and strong as any brave of the tribe.

‘You have treated me well,’ he said, ‘and meat shall never fail in your house. But now I must go, for I have much work to do.’

Then he set out for his home.

It took him many days to get there, and when he saw his son sitting in his place his anger was kindled, and his heart was stirred to take vengeance upon him. So he went out quickly into the forest and shed tears, and each tear became a bird. ‘Stay there till I want you,’ said he; and he returned to the hut.

‘I saw some pretty new birds, high up in a tree yonder,’ he remarked. And the son answered: ‘Show me the way and I will get them for dinner.’

The two went out together, and after walking for about half an hour the old man stopped. ‘That is the tree,’ he said. And the son began to climb it.

Now a strange thing happened. The higher the young man climbed the higher the birds seemed to be, and when he looked down the earth below appeared no bigger than a star. Still he tried to go back, but he could not, and though he could not see the birds any longer he felt as if something were dragging him up and up.

He thought that he had been climbing that tree for days, and perhaps he had, for suddenly a beautiful country, yellow with fields of maize, stretched before him, and he gladly left the top of the tree and entered it. He walked through the maize without knowing where he was going, when he heard a sound of knocking, and saw two old blind women crushing their food between two stones. He crept up to them on tiptoe, and when one old woman passed her dinner to the other he held out his hand and took it and ate it for himself.

‘How slow you are kneading that cake,’ cried the other old woman at last.

‘Why, I have given you your dinner, and what more do you want?’ replied the second.

‘You didn’t; at least I never got it,’ said the other.

‘I certainly thought you took it from me; but here is some more.’ And again the young man stretched out his hand; and the two old women fell to quarrelling afresh. But when it happened for the third time the old women suspected some trick, and one of them exclaimed:

‘I am sure there is a man here; tell me, are you not my grandson?’

‘Yes,’ answered the young man, who wished to please her, ‘and in return for your good dinner I will see if I cannot restore your sight; for I was taught the art of healing by the best medicine men in the tribe.’ And with that he left them, and wandered about till he found the herb which he wanted. Then he hastened back to the old women, and begging them to boil him some water, he threw the herb in. As soon as the pot began to sing he took off the lid, and sprinkled the eyes of the women the sight came back to them once more.

There was no night in that country, so, instead of going to bed very early, as he would have done in his own hut, the young man took another walk. A splashing noise near by drew him down to a valley through which ran a large river, and up a waterfall some salmon were leaping. How their silver sides glistened in the light, and how he longed to catch some of the great fellows! But how could he do it? He had beheld no one except the old women, and it was not very likely that they would be able to help him. So with a sigh he turned away and went back to them, but, as he walked, a thought struck him. He pulled out one of his hairs which hung nearly to his waist, and it instantly became a strong line, nearly a mile in length.

‘Weave me a net that I may catch some salmon,’ said he. And they wove him the net he asked for, and for many weeks he watched by the river, only going back to the old women when he wanted a fish cooked.

At last, one day, when he was eating his dinner, the old woman who always spoke first, said to him:

‘We have been very glad to see you, grandson, but now it is time that you went home.’ And pushing aside a rock, he saw a deep hole, *so* deep that he could not see to the bottom. Then they dragged a basket out of the house, and tied a rope to it. ‘Get in, and wrap this blanket round your head,’ said they; ‘and, whatever happens, don’t uncover it till you get to the bottom.’ Then they bade him farewell, and he curled himself up in the basket.

Down, down, down he went; would he *ever* stop going? But when the basket *did* stop, the young man forgot what he had been told, and put his head out to see what was the matter. In an instant the basket moved, but, to his horror, instead of going down, he felt himself being drawn upwards, and shortly after he beheld the faces of the old women.

‘You will never see your wife and son if you will not do as you are bid,’ said they. ‘Now get in, and do not stir till you hear a crow calling.’

This time the young man was wiser, and though the basket often stopped, and strange creatures seemed to rest on him and to pluck at his blanket, he held it tight till he heard the crow calling. Then he flung off the blanket and sprang out, while the basket vanished in the sky.

He walked on quickly down the track that led to the hut, when, before him, he saw his wife with his little son on her back.

‘Oh! there is father at last,’ cried the boy; but the mother bade him cease from idle talking.

‘But, mother, it is true; father is coming!’ repeated the child. And, to satisfy him, the woman turned round and perceived her husband.

Oh, how glad they all were to be together again! And when the wind whistled through the forest, and the snow stood in great banks round the door, the father used to take the little boy on his knee and tell him how he caught salmon in the Land of the Sun.

(From the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*.)

HOW THE STALOS WERE TRICKED

‘Mother, I have seen such a wonderful man,’ said a little boy one day, as he entered a hut in Lapland, bearing in his arms the bundle of sticks he had been sent out to gather.

‘Have you, my son; and what was he like?’ asked the mother, as she took off the child’s sheep-skin coat and shook it on the doorstep.

‘Well, I was tired of stooping for the sticks, and was leaning against a tree to rest, when I heard a noise of ‘sh-’sh, among the dead leaves. I thought perhaps it was a wolf, so I stood very still. But soon there came past a tall man — oh! twice as tall as father — with a long red beard and a red tunic fastened with a silver girdle, from which hung a big silver-handled knife. Behind him followed a great dog, which looked stronger than any wolf, or even a bear. But why are you so pale, mother?’

‘It was the Stalo,’ replied she, her voice trembling; ‘Stalo the man-eater! You did well to hide, or you might never have come back. But, remember that, though he is so tall and strong, he is very stupid, and many a Lapp has escaped from his clutches by playing him some clever trick.’

Not long after the mother and son had held this talk, it began to be whispered in the forest that the children of an old man called Patto had vanished one by one, no one knew whither. The unhappy father searched the country for miles round without being able to find as much as a shoe or a handkerchief, to show him where they had passed, but at length a little boy came with news that he had seen the Stalo hiding behind a well, near which the children used to play. The boy had waited behind a clump of bushes to see what would happen, and by-and-by he noticed that the Stalo had laid a cunning trap in the path to the well, and that anybody who fell over it would roll into the water and drown there.

And, as he watched, Patto’s youngest daughter ran gaily down the path, till her foot caught in the strings that were stretched across the steepest place. She slipped and fell, and in another instant had rolled into the water within reach of the Stalo.

As soon as Patto heard this tale his heart was filled with rage, and he vowed to have his revenge. So he straightway took an old fur coat from the hook where it hung, and putting it on went out into the forest. When he reached the path that led to the well he looked hastily round to be sure that no one was watching him, then laid himself down as if he had been caught in the snare and had rolled into the well, though he took care to keep his head out of the water.

Very soon he heard the ‘sh-’sh of the leaves, and there was the Stalo pushing his way through the undergrowth to see what chance he had of a dinner. At the first glimpse of Patto’s head in the well, he laughed loudly, crying:

‘Ha! ha! This time it is the old ass! I wonder how *he* will taste?’ And drawing Patto out of the well, he flung him across his shoulders and carried him home. Then he tied a cord round him and hung him over the fire to roast, while he finished a box that he was making before the door of the hut, which he meant to hold Patto’s flesh when it was cooked. In a very short time the box was so nearly done that it only wanted a little more chipping out with an axe; but this part of the work was easier accomplished indoors, and he called to one of his sons, who were lounging inside, to bring him the tool.

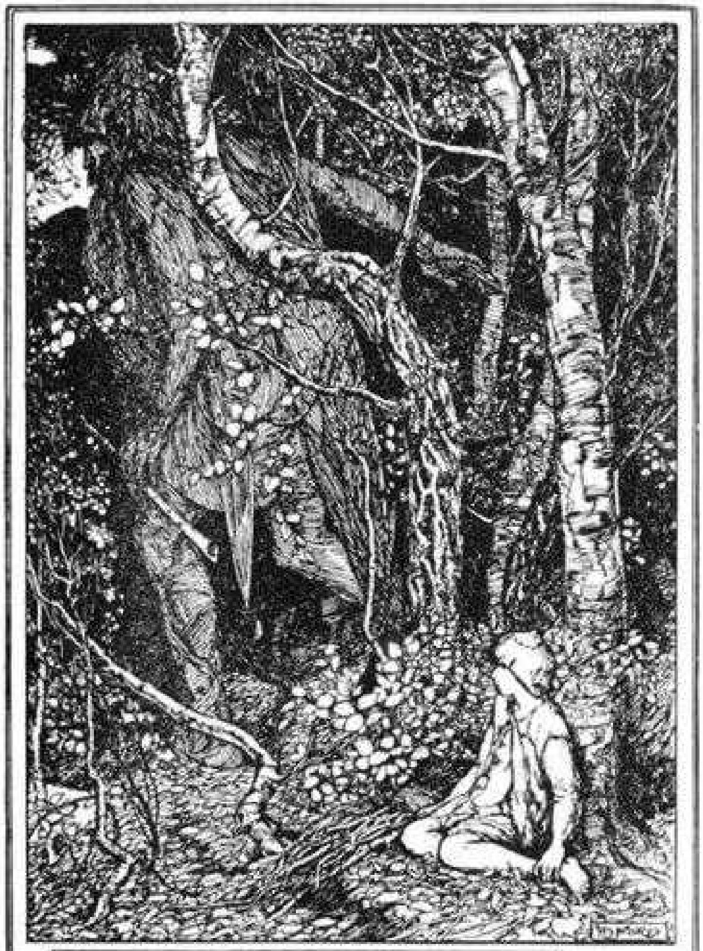

The little boy sees the Stalo in the wood.

The young man looked everywhere, but he could not find the axe, for the very good reason that Patto had managed to pick it up and hide it in his clothes.

‘Stupid fellow! what is the use of you?’ grumbled his father angrily; and he bade first one and then another of his sons to fetch him the tool, but they had no better success than their brother.

‘I must come myself, I suppose!’ said Stalo, putting aside the box. But, meanwhile, Patto had slipped from the hook and concealed himself behind the door, so that, as Stalo stepped in, his prisoner raised the axe, and with one blow the ogre’s head was rolling on the ground. His sons were so frightened at the sight that they all ran away.

And in this manner Patto avenged his dead children.

But though Stalo was dead, his three sons were still living, and not very far off either. They had gone to their mother, who was tending some reindeer on the pastures, and told her that by some magic, they knew not what, their father’s head had rolled from his body, and they had been so afraid that something dreadful would happen to them that they had come to take refuge with her. The ogress said nothing. Long ago she had found out how stupid her sons were, so she just sent them out to milk the reindeer, while she returned to the other house to bury her husband’s body.

Now, three days’ journey from the hut on the pastures two brothers named Sodno dwelt in a small cottage with their sister Lyma, who tended a large herd of reindeer while they were out hunting. Of late it had been whispered from one to another that the three young Stalos were to be seen on the pastures, but the Sodno brothers did not disturb themselves, the danger seemed too far away.

Unluckily, however, one day, when Lyma was left by herself in the hut, the three Stalos came down and carried her and the reindeer off to their own cottage. The country was very lonely, and perhaps no one would have known in which direction she had gone had not the girl managed to tie a ball of thread to the handle of a door at the back of the cottage and let it trail behind her. Of course the ball was not long enough to go all the way, but it lay on the edge of a snowy track which led straight to the Stalos’ house.

When the brothers returned from their hunting they found both the hut and the sheds empty. Loudly they cried: ‘Lyma! Lyma!’ But no voice answered them; and they fell to searching all about, lest perchance their sister might have dropped some clue to guide them. At length their eyes dropped on the thread which lay on the snow, and they set out to follow it.

On and on they went, and when at length the thread stopped the brothers knew that another day’s journey would bring them to the Stalos’ dwelling. Of course they did not dare to approach it openly, for the Stalos had the strength of giants, and besides, there were three of them; so the two Sodnos climbed into a big bushy tree which overhung a well.

‘Perhaps our sister may be sent to draw water here,’ they said to each other.

But it was not till the moon had risen that the sister came, and as she let down her bucket into the well, the leaves seemed to whisper ‘Lyma! Lyma!’

The girl started and looked up, but could see nothing, and in a moment the voice came again.

‘Be careful — take no notice, fill your buckets, but listen carefully all the while, and we will tell you what to do so that you may escape yourself and set free the reindeer also.’

So Lyma bent over the well lower than before, and seemed busier than ever.

‘You know,’ said her brother, ‘that when a Stalo finds that anything has been dropped into his food he will not eat a morsel, but throws it to his dogs. Now, after the pot has been hanging some time over the fire, and the broth is nearly cooked, just rake up the log of wood so that some of the ashes fly into the pot. The Stalo will soon notice this, and will call you to give all the food to the dogs; but, instead, you must bring it straight to us, as it is three days since we have eaten or drunk. That is all you need do for the present.’

Then Lyma took up her buckets and carried them into the house, and did as her brothers had told her. They were so hungry that they ate the food up greedily without speaking, but when there was nothing left in the pot, the eldest one said:

‘Listen carefully to what I have to tell you. After the eldest Stalo has cooked and eaten a fresh supper, he will go to bed and sleep so soundly that not even a witch could wake him. You can hear him snoring a mile off, and then you must go into his room and pull off the iron mantle that covers him, and put it on the fire till it is almost red hot. When that is done, come to us and we will give you further directions.’

‘I will obey you in everything, dear brothers,’ answered Lyma; and so she did.

It had happened that on this very evening the Stalos had driven in some of the reindeer from the pasture, and had tied them up to the wall of the house so that they might be handy to kill for next day’s dinner. The two Sodnos had seen what they were doing, and where the beasts were secured; so, at midnight, when all was still, they crept down from their tree and seized the reindeer by the horns which were locked together. The animals were frightened, and began to neigh and kick, as if they were fighting together, and the noise became so great that even the eldest Stalo was awakened by it, and *that* was a thing which had never occurred before. Raising himself in his bed, he called to his youngest brother to go out and separate the reindeer or they would certainly kill themselves.

The young Stalo did as he was bid, and left the house; but no sooner was he out of the door than he was stabbed to the heart by one of the Sodnos, and fell without a groan. Then they went back to worry the reindeer, and the noise became as great as ever, and a second time the Stalo awoke.

‘The boy does not seem able to part the beasts,’ he cried to his second brother; ‘go and help him, or I shall never get to sleep.’ So the brother went, and in an instant was struck dead as he left the house by the sword of the eldest Sodno. The Stalo waited in bed a little longer for things to get quiet, but as the clatter of the reindeers’ horns was as bad as ever, he rose angrily from his bed muttering to himself:

‘It is extraordinary that they cannot unlock themselves; but as no one else seems able to help them I suppose I must go and do it.’

Rubbing his eyes, he stood up on the floor and stretched his great arms and gave a yawn which shook the walls. The Sodnos heard it below, and posted themselves, one at the big door and one at the little door at the back, for they did not know which their enemy would come out at.

The Stalo put out his hand to take his iron mantle from the bed, where it always lay, but the mantle was not there. He wondered where it could be, and who could have moved it, and after searching through all the rooms, he found it hanging over the kitchen fire. But the first touch burnt him so badly that he let it alone, and went with nothing, except a stick in his hand, through the back door.

The young Sodno was standing ready for him, and as the Stalo passed the threshold struck him such a blow on the head that he rolled over with a crash and never stirred again. The two Sodnos did not trouble about him, but quickly stripped the younger Stalos of their clothes, in which they dressed themselves. Then they sat still till the dawn should break and they could find out from the Stalos’ mother where the treasure was hidden.

With the first rays of the sun the young Sodno went upstairs and entered the old woman’s room. She was already up and dressed, and sitting by the window knitting, and the young man crept in softly and crouched down on the floor, laying his head on her lap. For a while he kept silence, then he whispered gently:

‘Tell me, dear mother, where did my eldest brother conceal his riches?’

‘What a strange question! Surely you must know,’ answered she.

‘No, I have forgotten; my memory is so bad.’

‘He dug a hole under the doorstep and placed it there,’ said she. And there was another pause.

By-and-by the Sodno asked again:

‘And where may my second brother’s money be?’

‘Don’t you know that either?’ cried the mother in surprise.

‘Oh, yes; I did once. But since I fell upon my head I can remember nothing.’

‘It is behind the oven,’ answered she. And again was silence.

‘Mother, dear mother,’ said the young man at last, ‘I am almost afraid to ask you; but I really have grown so stupid of late. Where did I hide my own money?'

But at this question the old woman flew into a passion, and vowed that if she could find a rod she would bring his memory back to him. Luckily, no rod was within her reach, and the Sodno managed, after a little, to coax her back into good humour, and at length she told him that the youngest Stalo had buried his treasure under the very place where she was sitting.

'Dear mother,' said Lyma, who had come in unseen, and was kneeling in front of the fire. 'Dear mother, do you know who it is you have been talking with?'

The old woman started, but answered quietly:

'It is a Sodno, I suppose?'

'You have guessed right,' replied Lyma.

The mother of the Stalos looked round for her iron cane, which she always used to kill her victims, but it was not there, for Lyma had put it in the fire.

'Where is my iron cane?' asked the old woman.

'There!' answered Lyma, pointing to the flames.

The old woman sprang forward and seized it, but her clothes caught fire, and in a few minutes she was burned to ashes.

So the Sodno brothers found the treasure, and they carried it, and their sister and the reindeer, to their own home, and were the richest men in all Lapland.

(From *Lappländische Mährchen*, J. C. Poestion.)

ANDRAS BAIVE

Once upon a time there lived in Lapland a man who was so very strong and swift of foot that nobody in his native town of Vadsö could come near him if they were running races in the summer evenings. The people of Vadsö were very proud of their champion, and thought that there was no one like him in the world, till, by-and-by, it came to their ears that there dwelt among the mountains a Lapp, Andras Baive by name, who was said by his friends to be even stronger and swifter than the bailiff. Of course not a creature in Vadsö believed *that*, and declared that if it made the mountaineers happier to talk such nonsense, why, let them!

The winter was long and cold, and the thoughts of the villagers were much busier with wolves than with Andras Baive, when suddenly, on a frosty day, he made his appearance in the little town of Vadsö. The bailiff was delighted at this chance of trying his strength, and at once went out to seek Andras and to coax him into giving proof of his vigour. As he walked along his eyes fell upon a big eight-oared boat that lay upon the shore, and his face shone with pleasure. ‘That is the very thing,’ laughed he, ‘I will make him jump over that boat.’ Andras was quite ready to accept the challenge, and they soon settled the terms of the wager. He who could jump over the boat without so much as touching it with his heel was to be the winner, and would get a large sum of money as the prize. So, followed by many of the villagers, the two men walked down to the sea.

An old fisherman was chosen to stand near the boat to watch fair play, and to hold the stakes, and Andras, as the stranger, was told to jump first. Going back to the flag which had been stuck into the sand to mark the starting place, he ran forward, with his head well thrown back, and cleared the boat with a mighty bound. The lookers on cheered him, and indeed he well deserved it; but they waited anxiously all the same to see what the bailiff would do. On he came, taller than Andras by several inches, but heavier of build. He too sprang high and well, but as he came down his heel just grazed the edge of the boat. Dead silence reigned amidst the townsfolk, but Andras only laughed and said carelessly:

‘Just a little too short, bailiff; next time you must do better than that.’

The bailiff turned red with anger at his rival’s scornful words, and answered quickly: ‘Next time you will have something harder to do.’ And turning his back on his friends, he went sulkily home. Andras, putting the money he had earned in his pocket, went home also.

In the following spring Andras happened to be driving his reindeer along a great fiord to the west of Vadsö. A boy who had met him hastened to tell the bailiff that his enemy was only a few miles off; and the bailiff, disguising himself as a Stalo, or ogre, called his son and his dog and rowed away across the fiord to the place where the boy had met Andras.

Now the mountaineer was lazily walking along the sands, thinking of the new hut that he was building with the money that he had won on the day of his lucky jump. He wandered on, his eyes fixed on the sands, so that he did not see the bailiff drive his boat behind a rock, while he changed himself into a heap of wreckage which floated in on the waves. A stumble over a stone recalled Andras to himself, and looking up he beheld the mass of wreckage. 'Dear me! I may find some use for that,' he said; and hastened down to the sea, waiting till he could lay hold of some stray rope which might float towards him. Suddenly — he could not have told why — a nameless fear seized upon him, and he fled away from the shore as if for his life. As he ran he heard the sound of a pipe, such as only ogres of the Stalo kind were wont to use; and there flashed into his mind what the bailiff had said when they jumped the boat: 'Next time you will have something harder to do.' So it was no wreckage after all that he had seen, but the bailiff himself.

It happened that in the long summer nights up in the mountain, where the sun never set, and it was very difficult to get to sleep, Andras had spent many hours in the study of magic, and this stood him in good stead now. The instant he heard the Stalo music he wished himself to become the feet of a reindeer, and in this guise he galloped like the wind for several miles. Then he stopped to take breath and find out what his enemy was doing. Nothing could he see, but to his ears the notes of a pipe floated over the plain, and ever, as he listened, it drew nearer.

A cold shiver shook Andras, and this time he wished himself the feet of a reindeer calf. For when a reindeer calf has reached the age when he begins first to lose his hair he grows so swift that neither beast nor bird can come near him. A reindeer calf is the swiftest of all things living. Yes; but not so swift as a Stalo, as Andras found out when he stopped to rest, and heard the pipe playing!

For a moment his heart sank, and he gave himself up for dead, till he remembered that, not far off, were two little lakes joined together by a short though very broad river. In the middle of the river lay a stone that was always covered by water, except in very dry seasons, and as the winter rains had been very heavy, he felt quite sure that not even the top of it could be seen. The next minute, if anyone had been looking that way, he would have beheld a small reindeer calf speeding northwards, and by-and-by give a great spring, which landed him in the midst of the stream. But, instead of sinking to the bottom, he paused to steady himself, then gave a second spring which landed him on the further shore. He next ran on to a little hill where he sat down and began to neigh loudly, so that the Stalo might know exactly where he was.

‘Ah! *there* you are,’ cried the Stalo, appearing on the opposite bank; ‘for a moment I really thought I had lost you.’

‘No such luck,’ answered Andras, shaking his head sorrowfully. By this time he had taken his own shape again.

‘Well, but I don’t see how I am to get to you!’ said the Stalo, looking up and down.

‘Jump over, as I did,’ answered Andras; ‘it is quite easy.’

‘But I could not jump this river; and I don’t know how you did,’ replied the Stalo.

‘I should be ashamed to say such things,’ exclaimed Andras. ‘Do you mean to tell me that a jump, which the weakest Lapp boy would make nothing of, is beyond your strength?’

The Stalo grew red and angry when he heard these words, just as Andras meant him to do. He bounded into the air and fell straight into the river. Not that *that* would have mattered, for he was a good swimmer; but Andras drew out the bow and arrows which every Lapp carries, and took aim at him. His aim was good, but the Stalo sprang so high into the air that the arrow flew between his feet. A second shot, directed at his forehead, fared no better, for this time the Stalo jumped so high to the other side that the arrow passed between his finger and thumb. Then Andras aimed his third arrow a little over the Stalo’s head, and when he sprang up, just an instant too soon, it hit him between the ribs.

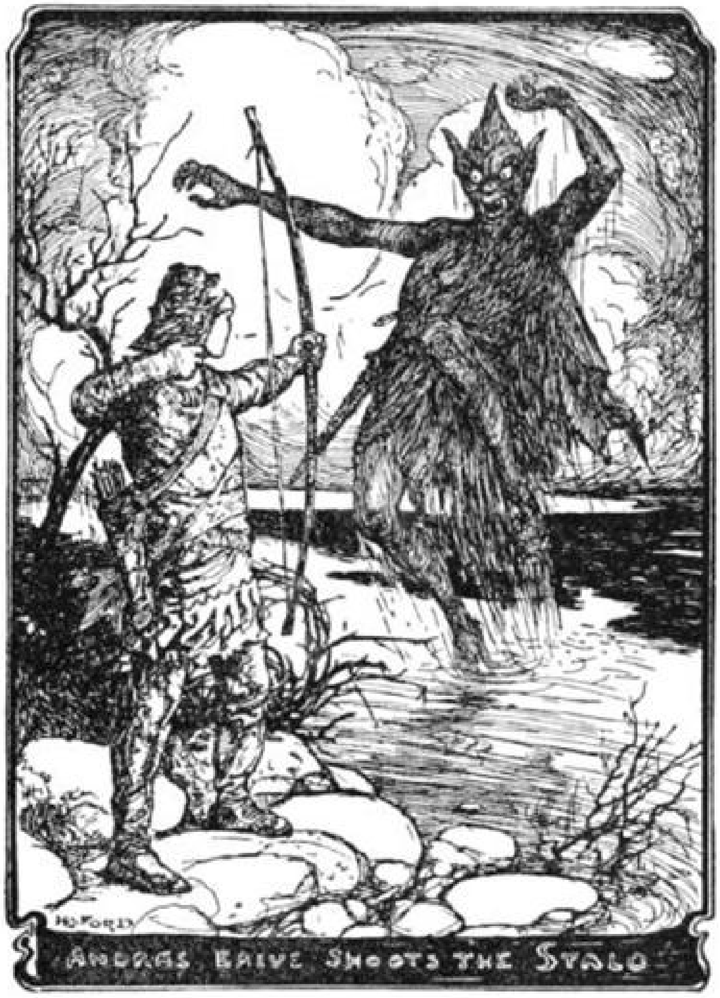

ANDRAS BAIVE SHOOTS THE STALO

Mortally wounded as he was, the Stalo was not yet dead, and managed to swim to the shore. Stretching himself on the sand, he said slowly to Andras:

‘Promise that you will give me honourable burial, and when my body is laid in the grave go in my boat across the fiord, and take whatever you find in my house which belongs to me. My dog you must kill, but spare my son, Andras.’

Then he died; and Andras sailed in his boat away across the fiord and found the dog and boy. The dog, a fierce, wicked-looking creature, he slew with one blow from his fist, for it is well-known that if a Stalo’s dog licks the blood that flows from his dead master’s wounds the Stalo comes to life again. That is why no *real* Stalo is ever seen without his dog; but the bailiff, being only half a Stalo, had forgotten his, when he went to the little lakes in search of Andras. Next, Andras put all the gold and jewels which he found in the boat into his pockets, and bidding the boy get in, pushed it off from the shore, leaving the little craft to drift as it would, while he himself ran home. With the treasures he possessed he was able to buy a great herd of reindeer; and he soon married a rich wife, whose parents would not have him as a son-in-law when he was poor, and the two lived happy for ever after.

(From *Lappländische Mährchen*, J. C. Poestion.)

THE WHITE SLIPPER

Once upon a time there lived a king who had a daughter just fifteen years old. And *what* a daughter!

Even the mothers who had daughters of their own could not help allowing that the princess was much more beautiful and graceful than any of them; and as for the fathers, if one of them ever beheld her by accident he could talk of nothing else for a whole day afterwards.

Of course the king, whose name was Balancin, was the complete slave of his little girl from the moment he lifted her from the arms of her dead mother; indeed, he did not seem to know that there was anyone else in the world to love.

Now Diamantina, for that was her name, did not reach her fifteenth birthday without proposals of marriage from every country under heaven; but be the suitor who he might, the king always said him nay.

Behind the palace a large garden stretched away to the foot of some hills, and more than one river flowed through. Hither the princess would come each evening towards sunset, attended by her ladies, and gather herself the flowers that were to adorn her rooms. She also brought with her a pair of scissors to cut off the dead blooms, and a basket to put them in, so that when the sun rose next morning he might see nothing unsightly. When she had finished this task she would take a walk through the town, so that the poor people might have a chance of speaking with her, and telling her of their troubles; and then she would seek out her father, and together they would consult over the best means of giving help to those who needed it.

But what has all this to do with the White Slipper? my readers will ask.

Have patience, and you will see.

Next to his daughter, Balancin loved hunting, and it was his custom to spend several mornings every week chasing the boars which abounded in the mountains a few miles from the city. One day, rushing downhill as fast as he could go, he put his foot into a hole and fell, rolling into a rocky pit full of brambles. The king’s wounds were not very severe, but his face and hands were cut and torn, while his feet were in a worse plight still, for, instead of proper hunting boots, he only wore sandals, to enable him to run more swiftly.

In a few days the king was as well as ever, and the signs of the scratches were almost gone; but one foot still remained very sore, where a thorn had pierced deeply and had festered. The best doctors in the kingdom treated it with all their skill; they bathed, and poulticed, and bandaged, but it was in vain. The foot only grew worse and worse, and became daily more swollen and painful.

After everyone had tried his own particular cure, and found it fail, there came news of a wonderful doctor in some distant land who had healed the most astonishing diseases. On inquiring, it was found that he never left the walls of his own city, and expected his patients to come to see *him*; but, by dint of offering a large sum of money, the king persuaded the famous physician to undertake the journey to his own court.

On his arrival the doctor was led at once into the king's presence, and made a careful examination of his foot.

'Alas! your majesty,' he said, when he had finished, 'the wound is beyond the power of man to heal; but though I cannot cure it, I can at least deaden the pain, and enable you to walk without so much suffering.'

'Oh, if you can only do that,' cried the king, 'I shall be grateful to you for life! Give your own orders; they shall be obeyed.'

'Then let your majesty bid the royal shoemaker make you a shoe of goat-skin very loose and comfortable, while I prepare a varnish to paint over it of which I alone have the secret!' So saying, the doctor bowed himself out, leaving the king more cheerful and hopeful than he had been for long.

The days passed very slowly with him during the making of the shoe and the preparation of the varnish, but on the eighth morning the physician appeared, bringing with him the shoe in a case. He drew it out to slip it on the king's foot, and over the goat-skin he had rubbed a polish so white that the snow itself was not more dazzling.

'While you wear this shoe you will not feel the slightest pain,' said the doctor. 'For the balsam with which I have rubbed it inside and out has, besides its healing balm, the quality of strengthening the material it touches, so that, even were your majesty to live a thousand years, you would find the slipper just as fresh at the end of that time as it is now.'

The king was so eager to put it on that he hardly gave the physician time to finish. He snatched it from the case and thrust his foot into it, nearly weeping for joy when he found he could walk and run as easily as any beggar boy.

'What can I give you?' he cried, holding out both hands to the man who had worked this wonder. 'Stay with me, and I will heap on you riches greater than ever you dreamed of.' But the doctor said he would accept nothing more than had been agreed on, and must return at once to his own country, where many sick people were awaiting him. So king Balancin had to content himself with ordering the physician to be treated with royal honours, and desiring that an escort should attend him on his journey home.

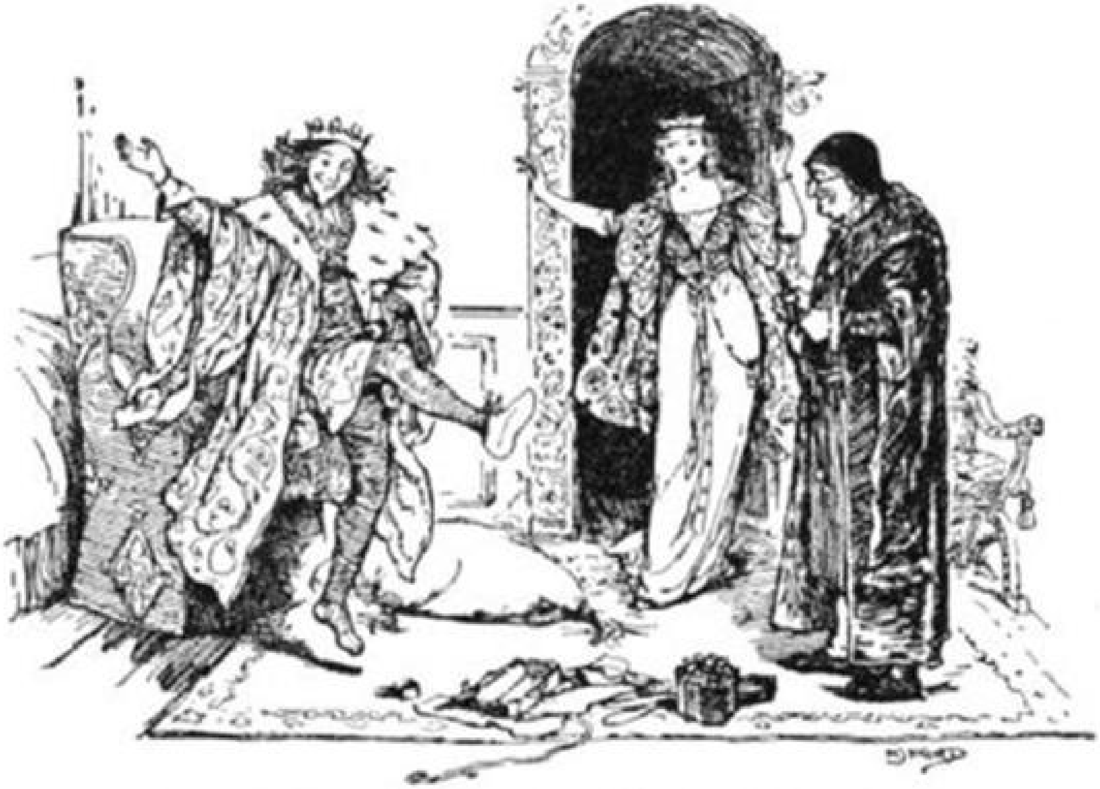

Balancin's delight at the White slipper

For two years everything went smoothly at court, and to king Balancin and his daughter the sun no sooner rose than it seemed time for it to set. Now, the king's birthday fell in the month of June, and as the weather happened to be unusually fine, he told the princess to celebrate it in any way that pleased her. Diamantina was very fond of being on the river, and she was delighted at this chance of indulging her tastes. She would have a merry-making such as never had been seen before, and in the evening, when they were tired of sailing and rowing, there should be music and dancing, plays and fireworks. At the very end, before the people went home, every poor person should be given a loaf of bread, and every girl who was to be married within the year a new dress.

The great day appeared to Diamantina to be long in coming, but, like other days, it came at last. Before the sun was fairly up in the heavens the princess, too full of excitement to stay in the palace, was walking about the streets so covered with precious stones that you had to shade your eyes before you could look at her. By-and-by a trumpet sounded, and she hurried home, only to appear again in a few moments walking by the side of her father down to the river. Here a splendid barge was waiting for them, and from it they watched all sorts of races and feats of swimming and diving. When these were over the barge proceeded up the river to the field where the dancing and concerts were to take place, and after the prizes had been given away to the winners, and the loaves and the dresses had been distributed by the princess, they bade farewell to their guests, and turned to step into the barge which was to carry them back to the palace.

Then a dreadful thing happened. As the king stepped on board the boat one of the sandals of the white slipper, which had got loose, caught in a nail that was sticking out, and caused the king to tumble. The pain was great, and unconsciously he turned and shook his foot, so that the sandals gave way, and in a moment the precious shoe was in the river.

It had all occurred so quickly that nobody had noticed the loss of the slipper, not even the princess, whom the king's cries speedily brought to his side.

'What is the matter, dear father?' asked she. But the king could not tell her; and only managed to gasp out: 'My shoe! my shoe!' While the sailors stood round staring, thinking that his majesty had suddenly gone mad.

Seeing her father's eyes fixed on the stream, Diamantina looked hastily in that direction. There, dancing on the current, was the point of something white, which became more and more distant the longer they watched it. The king could bear the sight no more, and, besides, now that the healing ointment in the shoe had been removed the pain in his foot was as bad as ever; he gave a sudden cry, staggered, and fell over the bulwarks into the water.

In an instant the river was covered with bobbing heads all swimming their fastest towards the king, who had been carried far down by the swift current. At length one swimmer, stronger than the rest, seized hold of his tunic, and drew him to the bank, where a thousand eager hands were ready to haul him out. He was carried, unconscious, to the side of his daughter, who had fainted with terror on seeing her father disappear below the surface, and together they were placed in a coach and driven to the palace, where the best doctors in the city were awaiting their arrival.

In a few hours the princess was as well as ever; but the pain, the wetting, and the shock of the accident, all told severely on the king, and for three days he lay in a high fever. Meanwhile, his daughter, herself nearly mad with grief, gave orders that the white slipper should be sought for far and wide; and so it was, but even the cleverest divers could find no trace of it at the bottom of the river.

When it became clear that the slipper must have been carried out to sea by the current, Diamantina turned her thoughts elsewhere, and sent messengers in search of the doctor who had brought relief to her father, begging him to make another slipper as fast as possible, to supply the place of the one which was lost. But the messengers returned with the sad news that the doctor had died some weeks before, and, what was worse, his secret had died with him.

In his weakness this intelligence had such an effect on the king that the physicians feared he would become as ill as before. He could hardly be persuaded to touch food, and all night long he lay moaning, partly with pain, and partly over his own folly in not having begged the doctor to make him several dozens of white slippers, so that in case of accidents he might always have one to put on. However, by-and-by he saw that it was no use weeping and wailing, and commanded that they should search for his lost treasure more diligently than ever.

What a sight the river banks presented in those days! It seemed as if all the people in the country were gathered on them. But this second search was no more fortunate than the first, and at last the king issued a proclamation that whoever found the missing slipper should be made heir to the crown, and should marry the princess.

Now many daughters would have rebelled at being disposed of in this manner; and it must be admitted that Diamantina's heart sank when she heard what the king had done. Still, she loved her father so much that she desired his comfort more than anything else in the world, so she said nothing, and only bowed her head.

Of course the result of the proclamation was that the river banks became more crowded than before; for all the princess's suitors from distant lands flocked to the spot, each hoping that he might be the lucky finder. Many times a shining stone at the bottom of the stream was taken for the slipper itself, and every evening saw a band of dripping downcast men returning homewards. But one youth always lingered longer than the rest, and night would still see him engaged in the search, though his clothes stuck to his skin and his teeth chattered.

One day, when the king was lying on his bed racked with pain, he heard the noise of a scuffle going on in his antechamber, and rang a golden bell that stood by his side to summon one of his servants.

'Sire,' answered the attendant, when the king inquired what was the matter, 'the noise you heard was caused by a young man from the town, who has had the impudence to come here to ask if he may measure your majesty's foot, so as to make you another slipper in place of the lost one.'

'And what have you done to the youth?' said the king.

'The servants pushed him out of the palace, and added a few blows to teach him not to be insolent,' replied the man.

'Then they did very ill,' answered the king, with a frown. 'He came here from kindness, and there was no reason to maltreat him.'

'Oh, my lord, he had the audacity to wish to touch your majesty's sacred person — he, good-for-nothing boy, a mere shoemaker's apprentice, perhaps! And even if he could make shoes to perfection they would be no use without the healing balsam.'

The king remained silent for a few moments, then he said:

'Never mind. Go and fetch the youth and bring him to me. I would gladly try any remedy that may relieve my pain.'

So, soon afterwards, the youth, who had not gone far from the palace, was caught and ushered into the king's presence.

He was tall and handsome and, though he professed to make shoes, his manners were good and modest, and he bowed low as he begged the king not only to allow him to take the measure of his foot, but also to suffer him to place a healing plaster over the wound.

Balancin was pleased with the young man's voice and appearance, and thought that he looked as if he knew what he was doing. So he stretched out his bad foot which the youth examined with great attention, and then gently laid on the plaster.

Very shortly the ointment began to soothe the sharp pain, and the king, whose confidence increased every moment, begged the young man to tell him his name.

'I have no parents; they died when I was six, sire,' replied the youth, modestly. 'Everyone in the town calls me Gilguerillo, because, when I was little, I went singing through the world in spite of my misfortunes. Luckily for me I was born happy.'

Linnet.

'And you really think you can cure me?' asked the king.

'Completely, my lord,' answered Gilguerillo.

'And how long do you think it will take?'

'It is not an easy task; but I will try to finish it in a fortnight,' replied the youth.

A fortnight seemed to the king a long time to make one slipper. But he only said:

'Do you need anything to help you?'

'Only a good horse, if your majesty will be kind enough to give me one,' answered Gilguerillo. And the reply was so unexpected that the courtiers could hardly restrain their smiles, while the king stared silently.

'You shall have the horse,' he said at last, 'and I shall expect you back in a fortnight. If you fulfil your promise you know your reward; if not, I will have you flogged for your impudence.'

Gilguerillo bowed, and turned to leave the palace, followed by the jeers and scoffs of everyone he met. But he paid no heed, for he had got what he wanted.

He waited in front of the gates till a magnificent horse was led up to him, and vaulting into the saddle with an ease which rather surprised the attendant, rode quickly out of the town amidst the jests of the assembled crowd, who had heard of his audacious proposal. And while he is on his way let us pause for a moment and tell who he is.

Both father and mother had died before the boy was six years old; and he had lived for many years with his uncle, whose life had been passed in the study of chemistry. He could leave no money to his nephew, as he had a son of his own; but he taught him all he knew, and at his death Gilguerillo entered an office, where he worked for many hours daily. In his spare time, instead of playing with the other boys, he passed hours poring over books, and because he was timid and liked to be alone he was held by every one to be a little mad. Therefore, when it became known that he had promised to cure the king’s foot, and had ridden away — no one knew where — a roar of laughter and mockery rang through the town, and jeers and scoffing words were sent after him.

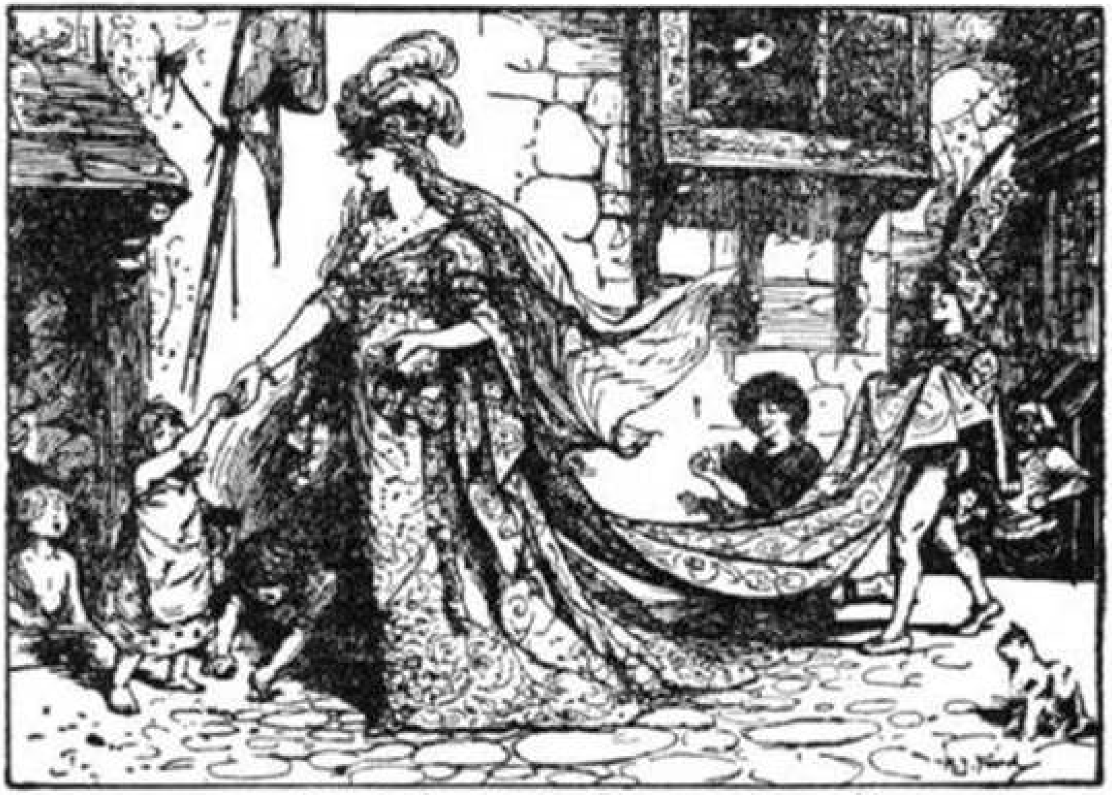

Gilguerillo falls in love with Princess Diamantina

But if they had only known what were Gilguerillo’s thoughts they would have thought him madder than ever.

The real truth was that, on the morning when the princess had walked through the streets before making holiday on the river, Gilguerillo had seen her from his window, and had straightway fallen in love with her. Of course he felt quite hopeless. It was absurd to imagine that the apothecary's nephew could ever marry the king's daughter; so he did his best to forget her, and study harder than before, till the royal proclamation suddenly filled him with hope. When he was free he no longer spent the precious moments poring over books, but, like the rest, he might have been seen wandering along the banks of the river, or diving into the stream after something that lay glistening in the clear water, but which turned out to be a white pebble or a bit of glass.

And at the end he understood that it was not by the river that he would win the princess; and, turning to his books for comfort, he studied harder than ever.

There is an old proverb which says: 'Everything comes to him who knows how to wait.' It is not all men who know how to wait, any more than it is all men who can learn by experience; but Gilguerillo was one of the few, and instead of thinking his life wasted because he could not have the thing he wanted most, he tried to busy himself in other directions. So, one day, when he expected it least, his reward came to him.

He happened to be reading a book many hundreds of years old, which told of remedies for all kinds of diseases. Most of them, he knew, were merely invented by old women, who sought to prove themselves wiser than other people; but at length he came to something which caused him to sit up straight in his chair, and made his eyes brighten. This was a description of a balsam — which would cure every kind of a sore or wound — distilled from a plant only to be found in a country so distant that it would take a man on foot two months to go and come back again.

When I say that the book declared that the balsam could heal *every* sort of sore or wound, there were a few against which it was powerless, and it gave certain signs by which these might be known. This was the reason why Gilguerillo demanded to see the king's foot before he would undertake to cure it; and to obtain admittance he gave out that he was a shoemaker. However, the dreaded signs were absent, and his heart bounded at the thought that the princess was within his reach.

Perhaps she was; but a great deal had to be accomplished yet, and he had allowed himself a very short time in which to do it.

He spared his horse only so much as was needful, yet it took him six days to reach the spot where the plant grew. A thick wood lay in front of him, and, fastening the bridle tightly to a tree, he flung himself on his hands and knees and began to hunt for the treasure. Many times he fancied it was close to him, and many times it turned out to be something else; but, at last, when light was fading, and he had almost given up hope, he came upon a large bed of the plant, right under his feet! Trembling with joy, he picked every scrap he could see, and placed it in his wallet. Then, mounting his horse, he galloped quickly back towards the city.

It was night when he entered the gates, and the fifteen days allotted were not up till the next day. His eyes were heavy with sleep, and his body ached with the long strain, but, without pausing to rest, he kindled a fire on his hearth, and quickly filling a pot with water, threw in the herbs and left them to boil. After that he lay down and slept soundly.

The sun was shining when he awoke, and he jumped up and ran to the pot. The plant had disappeared and in its stead was a thick syrup, just as the book had said that there would be. He lifted the syrup out with a spoon, and after spreading it in the sun till it was partly dry, poured it into a small flask of crystal. He next washed himself thoroughly, and dressed himself in his best clothes, and putting the flask in his pocket, set out for the palace, and begged to see the king without delay.

Now Balancin, whose foot had been much less painful since Gilguerillo had wrapped it in the plaster, was counting the days to the young man’s return; and when he was told Gilguerillo was there, ordered him to be admitted at once. As he entered, the king raised himself eagerly on his pillows, but his face fell when he saw no signs of a slipper.

‘You have failed, then?’ he said, throwing up his hands in despair.

‘I hope not, your majesty; I think not,’ answered the youth. And drawing the flask from his pocket, he poured two or three drops on the wound.

‘Repeat this for three nights, and you will find yourself cured,’ said he. And before the king had time to thank him he had bowed himself out.

Of course the news soon spread through the city, and men and women never tired of calling Gilguerillo an impostor, and prophesying that the end of the three days would see him in prison, if not on the scaffold. But Gilguerillo paid no heed to their hard words, and no more did the king, who took care that no hand but his own should put on the healing balsam.

On the fourth morning the king awoke and instantly stretched out his wounded foot that he might prove the truth or falsehood of Gilguerillo’s remedy. The wound was certainly cured on that side, but how about the other? Yes, that was cured also; and not even a scar was left to show where it had been!

Was ever any king so happy as Balancin when he satisfied himself of this?

Lightly as a deer he jumped from his bed, and began to turn head over heels, and to perform all sorts of antics, so as to make sure that his foot was in truth as well as it looked. And when he was quite tired he sent for his daughter, and bade the courtiers bring the lucky young man to his room.

‘He is *really* young and handsome,’ said the princess to herself, heaving a sigh of relief that it was not some dreadful old man who had healed her father; and while the king was announcing to his courtiers the wonderful cure that had been made, Diamantina was thinking that if Gilguerillo looked so well in his common dress, how much he would be improved by the splendid garments of a king’s son. However, she held her peace, and only watched with amusement when the courtiers, knowing there was no help for it, did homage and obeisance to the chemist’s boy.

Then they brought to Gilguerillo a magnificent tunic of green velvet bordered with gold, and a cap with three white plumes stuck in it; and at the sight of him so arrayed, the princess fell in love with him in a moment. The wedding was fixed to take place in eight days, and at the ball afterwards nobody danced so long or so lightly as king Balancin.

(From *Capullos de Rosa*, por D. Enrique Ceballos Quintana.)

THE MAGIC BOOK

There was once an old couple named Peder and Kirsten who had an only son called Hans. From the time he was a little boy he had been told that on his sixteenth birthday he must go out into the world and serve his apprenticeship. So, one fine summer morning, he started off to seek his fortune with nothing but the clothes he wore on his back.

For many hours he trudged on merrily, now and then stopping to drink from some clear spring or to pick some ripe fruit from a tree. The little wild creatures peeped at him from beneath the bushes, and he nodded and smiled, and wished them 'Good-morning.' After he had been walking for some time he met an old white-bearded man who was coming along the foot-path. The boy would not step aside, and the man was determined not to do so either, so they ran against one another with a bump.

'It seems to me,' said the old fellow, 'that a boy should give way to an old man.'

'The path is for me as well as for you,' answered young Hans saucily, for he had never been taught politeness.

'Well, that's true enough,' answered the other mildly. 'And where are you going?'

'I am going into service,' said Hans.

'Then you can come and serve me,' replied the man.

Well, Hans could do that; but what would his wages be?

'Two pounds a year, and nothing to do but keep some rooms clean,' said the new-comer.

This seemed to Hans to be easy enough; so he agreed to enter the old man's service, and they set out together. On their way they crossed a deep valley and came to a mountain, where the man opened a trap-door, and bidding Hans follow him, he crept in and began to go down a long flight of steps. When they got to the bottom Hans saw a large number of rooms lit by many lamps and full of beautiful things. While he was looking round the old man said to him:

'Now you know what you have to do. You must keep these rooms clean, and strew sand on the floor every day. Here is a table where you will always find food and drink, and there is your bed. You see there are a great many suits of clothes hanging on the wall, and you may wear any you please; but remember that you are never to open this locked door. If you do ill will befall you.

Farewell, for I am going away again and cannot tell when I may return.’

No sooner had the old man disappeared than Hans sat down to a good meal, and after that went to bed and slept until the morning. At first he could not remember what had happened to him, but by-and-by he jumped up and went into all the rooms, which he examined carefully.

‘How foolish to bid me to put sand on the floors,’ he thought, ‘when there is nobody here but myself! I shall do nothing of the sort.’ And so he shut the doors quickly, and only cleaned and set in order his own room. And after the first few days he felt that that was unnecessary too, because no one came there to see if the rooms were clean or not. At last he did no work at all, but just sat and wondered what was behind the locked door, till he determined to go and look for himself.

The key turned easily in the lock. Hans entered, half frightened at what he was doing, and the first thing he beheld was a heap of bones. That was not very cheerful; and he was just going out again when his eye fell on a shelf of books. Here was a good way of passing the time, he thought, for he was fond of reading, and he took one of the books from the shelf. It was all about magic, and told you how you could change yourself into anything in the world you liked. Could anything be more exciting or more useful? So he put it in his pocket, and ran quickly away out of the mountain by a little door which had been left open.

When he got home his parents asked him what he had been doing and where he had got the fine clothes he wore.

‘Oh, I earned them myself,’ answered he.

‘You never earned them in this short time,’ said his father. ‘Be off with you; I won’t keep you here. I will have no thieves in my house!’

‘Well I only came to help you,’ replied the boy sulkily. ‘Now I’ll be off, as you wish; but to-morrow morning when you rise you will see a great dog at the door. Do not drive it away, but take it to the castle and sell it to the duke, and they will give you ten dollars for it; only you must bring the strap you lead it with, back to the house.’

Sure enough the next day the dog was standing at the door waiting to be let in. The old man was rather afraid of getting into trouble, but his wife urged him to sell the dog as the boy had bidden him, so he took it up to the castle and sold it to the duke for ten dollars. But he did not forget to take off the strap with which he had led the animal, and to carry it home. When he got there old Kirsten met him at the door.

‘Well, Peder, and have you sold the dog?’ asked she.

‘Yes, Kirsten; and I have brought back ten dollars, as the boy told us,’ answered Peder.

‘Ay! but that’s fine!’ said his wife. ‘Now you see what one gets by doing as one is bid; if it had not been for me you would have driven the dog away again, and we should have lost the money. After all, I always know what is best.’

‘Nonsense!’ said her husband; ‘women always think they know best. I should have sold the dog just the same whatever you had told me. Put the money away in a safe place, and don’t talk so much.’

The next day Hans came again; but though everything had turned out as he had foretold, he found that his father was still not quite satisfied.

‘Be off with you!’ said he, ‘you’ll get us into trouble.’

‘I haven’t helped you enough yet,’ replied the boy. ‘To-morrow there will come a great fat cow, as big as the house. Take it to the king’s palace and you’ll get as much as a thousand dollars for it. Only you must unfasten the halter you lead it with and bring it back, and don’t return by the high road, but through the forest.’

The next day, when the couple arose, they saw an enormous head looking in at their bedroom window, and behind it was a cow which was nearly as big as their hut. Kirsten was wild with joy to think of the money the cow would bring them.

‘But how are you going to put the rope over her head?’ asked she.

‘Wait and you’ll see, mother,’ answered her husband. Then Peder took the ladder that led up to the hayloft and set it against the cow’s neck, and he climbed up and slipped the rope over her head. When he had made sure that the noose was fast they started for the palace, and met the king himself walking in his grounds.

‘I heard that the princess was going to be married,’ said Peder, ‘so I’ve brought your majesty a cow which is bigger than any cow that was ever seen. Will your majesty deign to buy it?’

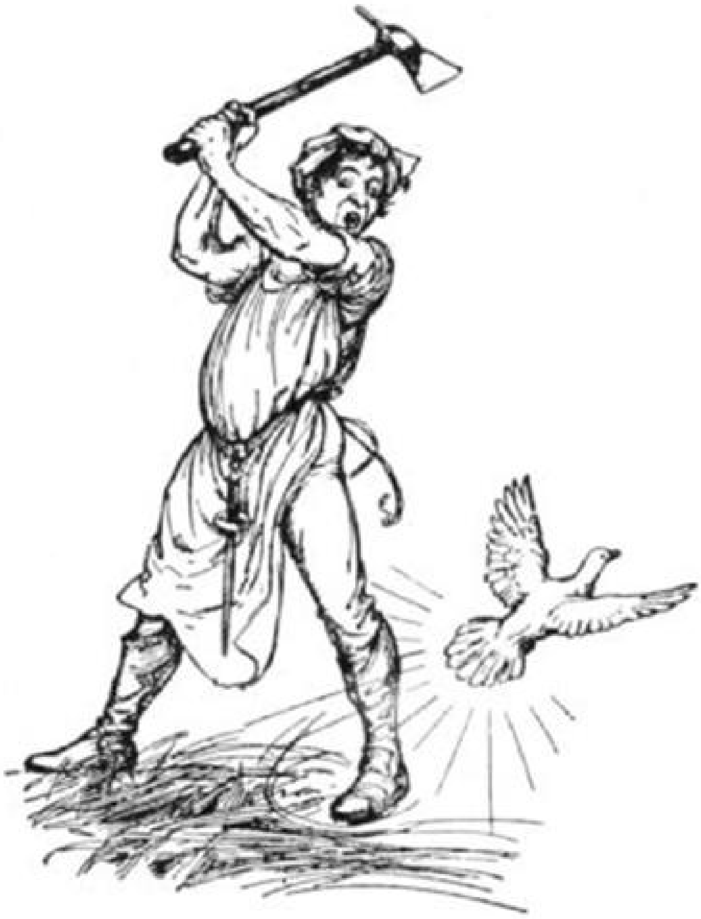

'Just as he was going to strike'

The king had, in truth, never seen so large a beast, and he willingly paid the thousand dollars, which was the price demanded; but Peder remembered to take off the halter before he left. After he was gone the king sent for the butcher and told him to kill the animal for the wedding feast. The butcher got ready his pole-axe; but just as he was going to strike, the cow changed itself into a dove and flew away; and the butcher stood staring after it as if he were turned to stone. However, as the dove could not be found, he was obliged to tell the king what had happened, and the king in his turn despatched messengers to capture the old man and bring him back. But Peder was safe in the woods, and could not be found. When at last he felt the danger was over, and he might go home, Kirsten nearly fainted with joy at the sight of all the money he brought with him.

'Now that we are rich people we must build a bigger house,' cried she; and was vexed to find that Peder only shook his head and said: 'No; if they did that people would talk, and say that they got their wealth by ill-doing.'

A few mornings later Hans came again.

'Be off before you get us into trouble,' said his father. 'So far the money has come right enough, but I don’t trust it.’

‘Don’t worry over that, father,’ said Hans. ‘To-morrow you will find a horse outside by the gate. Ride it to market and you will get a thousand dollars for it. Only don’t forget to loosen the bridle when you sell it.’

Well, in the morning there was the horse; Kirsten had never seen so fine an animal. ‘Take care it doesn’t hurt you, Peder,’ said she.

‘Nonsense, wife,’ answered he crossly. ‘When I was a lad I lived with horses, and could ride anything for twenty miles round.’ But that was not quite the truth, for he had never mounted a horse in his life.

Still, the animal was quiet enough, so Peder got safely to market on its back. There he met a man who offered nine hundred and ninety-nine dollars for it, but Peder would take nothing less than a thousand. At last there came an old, grey-bearded man who looked at the horse and agreed to buy it; but the moment he touched it the horse began to kick and plunge. ‘I must take the bridle off,’ said Peder. ‘It is not to be sold with the animal as is usually the case.’

‘I’ll give you a hundred dollars for the bridle,’ said the old man, taking out his purse.

‘No, I can’t sell it,’ replied Hans’s father.

‘Five hundred dollars!’

‘No.’

‘A thousand!’

At this splendid offer Peder’s prudence gave way; it was a shame to let so much money go. So he agreed to accept it. But he could hardly hold the horse, it became so unmanageable. So he gave the animal in charge to the old man, and went home with his two thousand dollars.

Kirsten, of course, was delighted at this new piece of good fortune, and insisted that the new house should be built and land bought. This time Peder consented, and soon they had quite a fine farm.

Meanwhile the old man rode off on his new purchase, and when he came to a smithy he asked the smith to forge shoes for the horse. The smith proposed that they should first have a drink together, and the horse was tied up by the spring whilst they went indoors. The day was hot, and both men were thirsty, and, besides, they had much to say; and so the hours slipped by and found them still talking. Then the servant girl came out to fetch a pail of water, and, being a kind-hearted lass, she gave some to the horse to drink. What was her surprise when the animal said to her: ‘Take off my bridle and you will save my life.’

‘I dare not,’ said she; ‘your master will be so angry.’

‘He cannot hurt you,’ answered the horse, ‘and you will save my life.’

At that she took off the bridle; but nearly fainted with astonishment when the horse turned into a dove and flew away just as the old man came out of the house. Directly he saw what had happened he changed himself into a hawk and flew after the dove. Over the woods and fields they went, and at length they reached a king's palace surrounded by beautiful gardens. The princess was walking with her attendants in the rose garden when the dove turned itself into a gold ring and fell at her feet.

'Why, here is a ring!' she cried, 'where could it have come from?' And picking it up she put it on her finger. As she did so the hill-man lost his power over Hans — for of course you understand that it was he who had been the dog, the cow, the horse and the dove.

'Well, that is really strange,' said the princess. 'It fits me as though it had been made for me!'

Just at that moment up came the king.

'Look what I have found!' cried his daughter.

'Well, that is not worth much, my dear,' said he. 'Besides, you have rings enough, I should think.'

'Never mind, I like it,' replied the princess.

But as soon as she was alone, to her amazement, the ring suddenly left her finger and became a man. You can imagine how frightened she was, as, indeed, anybody would have been; but in an instant the man became a ring again, and then turned back into a man, and so it went on for some time until she began to get used to these sudden changes.

'I am sorry I frightened you,' said Hans, when he thought he could safely speak to the princess without making her scream. 'I took refuge with you because the old hill-man, whom I have offended, was trying to kill me, and here I am safe.'

'You had better stay here then,' said the princess. So Hans stayed, and he and she became good friends; though, of course, he only became a man when no one else was present.

This was all very well; but, one day, as they were talking together, the king happened to enter the room, and although Hans quickly changed himself into a ring again it was too late.

The king was terribly angry.

'So this is why you have refused to marry all the kings and princes who have sought your hand?' he cried.

And, without waiting for her to speak, he commanded that his daughter should be walled up in the summer-house and starved to death with her lover.

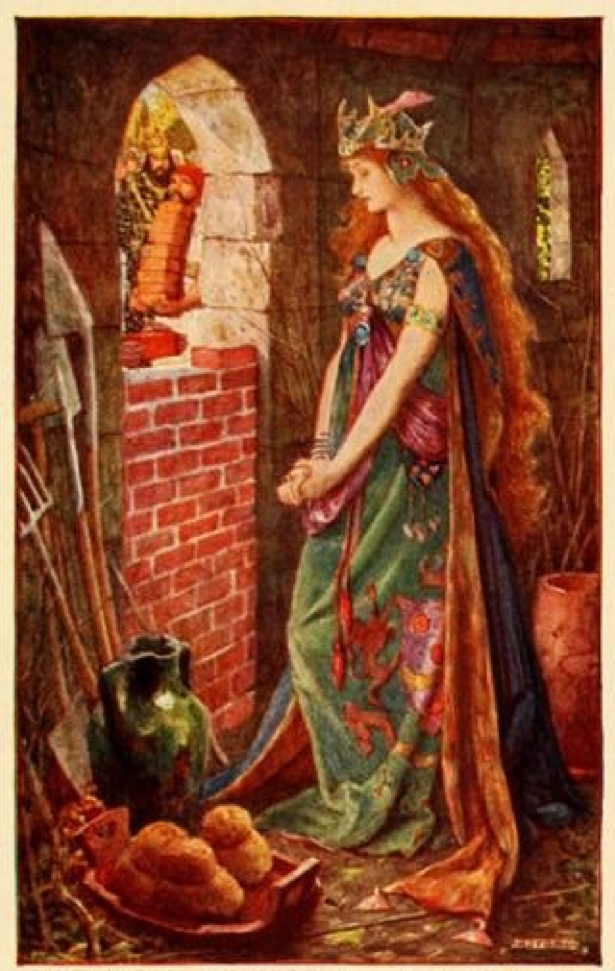

THE PRINCESS IMPRISONED IN THE SUMMERHOUSE

That evening the poor princess, still wearing her ring, was put into the summer-house with enough food to last for three days, and the door was bricked up. But at the end of a week or two the king thought it time to give her a grand funeral, in spite of her bad behaviour, and he had the summer-house opened. He could hardly believe his eyes when he found that the princess was not there, nor Hans either. Instead, there lay at his feet a large hole, big enough for two people to pass through.

Now what had happened was this.

When the princess and Hans had given up hope, and cast themselves down on the ground to die, they fell down into this hole, and right through the earth as well, and at last they stumbled into a castle built of pure gold, at the other side of the world, and there they lived happily. But of this, of course, the king knew nothing.

‘Will any one go down and see where the passage leads to?’ he asked, turning to his guards and courtiers. ‘I will reward splendidly the man who is brave enough to explore it.’

For a long time nobody answered. The hole was dark and deep, and if it had a bottom no one could see it. At length a soldier, who was a careless sort of fellow, offered himself for the service, and cautiously lowered himself into the darkness. But in a moment he, too, fell down, down, down. Was he going to fall for ever, he wondered! Oh, how thankful he was in the end to reach the castle, and to meet the princess and Hans, looking quite well and not at all as if they had been starved. They began to talk, and the soldier told them that the king was very sorry for the way he had treated his daughter, and wished day and night that he could have her back again.

Then they all took ship and sailed home, and when they came to the princess's country, Hans disguised himself as the sovereign of a neighbouring kingdom, and went up to the palace alone. He was given a hearty welcome by the king, who prided himself on his hospitality, and a banquet was commanded in his honour. That evening, whilst they sat drinking their wine, Hans said to the king:

'I have heard the fame of your majesty's wisdom, and I have travelled from far to ask your counsel. A man in my country has buried his daughter alive because she loved a youth who was born a peasant. How shall I punish this unnatural father, for it is left to me to give judgment?'

The king, who was still truly grieved for his daughter's loss, answered quickly:

'Burn him alive, and strew his ashes all over the kingdom.'

Hans looked at him steadily for a moment, and then threw off his disguise.

'You are the man,' said he; 'and I am he who loved your daughter, and became a gold ring on her finger. She is safe, and waiting not far from here; but you have pronounced judgment on yourself.'

Then the king fell on his knees and begged for mercy; and as he had in other respects been a good father, they forgave him. The wedding of Hans and the princess was celebrated with great festivities which lasted a month. As for the hill-man he intended to be present; but whilst he was walking along a street which led to the palace a loose stone fell on his head and killed him. So Hans and the princess lived in peace and happiness all their days, and when the old king died they reigned instead of him.

(From *Eventyr fra Jylland samlede og optegnede af Tang Kristensen*.
Translated from the Danish by Mrs. Skavgaard-Pedersen.)

THE OLIVE FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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THE
OLIVE
FAIRY BOOK

The first edition

THE OLIVE FAIRY BOOK

PREFACE

Many years ago my friend and publisher, Mr. Charles Longman, presented me with *Le Cabinet des Fées* (‘The Fairy Cabinet’). This work almost requires a swinging bookcase for its accommodation, like the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and in a revolving bookcase I bestowed the volumes. Circumstances of an intimately domestic character, ‘not wholly unconnected,’ as Mr. Micawber might have said, with the narrowness of my study (in which it is impossible to ‘swing a cat’), prevent the revolving bookcase from revolving at this moment. I can see, however, that the Fairy Cabinet contains at least forty volumes, and I think there are about sixty in all. This great plenitude of fairy tales from all quarters presents legends of fairies, witches, genii or Djinn, monsters, dragons, wicked step-mothers, princesses, pretty or plain, princes lucky or unlucky, giants, dwarfs, and enchantments. The stories begin with those which children like best — the old *Blue Beard*, *Puss in Boots*, *Hop o’ my Thumb*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *Toads and Pearls*. These were first collected, written, and printed at Paris in 1697. The author was Monsieur Charles Perrault, a famous personage in a great *perruque*, who in his day wrote large volumes now unread. He never dreamed that he was to be remembered mainly by the shabby little volume with the tiny headpiece pictures — how unlike the fairy way of drawing by Mr. Ford, said to be known as ‘Over-the-wall Ford’ among authors who play cricket, because of the force with which he swipes! Perrault picked up the rustic tales which the nurse of his little boy used to tell, and he told them again in his own courtly, witty way. They do not seem to have been translated into English until nearly thirty years later, when they were published in English, with the French on the opposite page, by a Mr. Pote, a bookseller at Eton. Probably the younger Eton boys learned as much French as they condescended to acquire from these fairy tales, which are certainly more amusing than the *Télémaque* of Messire François de Salignac de la Motte-Fénelon, tutor of the children of France, Archbishop Duke of Cambrai, and Prince of the Holy Roman Empire.

The success of Perrault was based on the pleasure which the court of Louis XIV. took in fairy tales; we know that they were told among Court ladies, from a letter of Madame de Sévigné. Naturally, Perrault had imitators, such as Madame d’Aulnoy, a wandering lady of more wit than reputation. To her we owe *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Yellow Dwarf*. Anthony Hamilton tried his hand with *The Ram*, a story too prolix and confused, best remembered for the remark, ‘Ram, my friend, begin at the beginning!' Indeed, the narrative style of the Ram is lacking in lucidity! Then came *The Arabian Nights*, translated by Monsieur Galland. Nobody has translated *The Arabian Nights* so well as Galland. His is the reverse of a scientific rendering, but it is as pleasantly readable as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* would be if Alexandre Dumas had kept his promise to translate Homer. Galland omitted the verses and a great number of passages which nobody would miss, though the anthropologist is supposed to find them valuable and instructive in later scientific translations which do not amuse. Later, Persian Tales, Tales of the Sea, and original inventions, more or less on the fairy model, were composed by industrious men and women. They are far too long — are novels, indeed, and would please no child or mature person of taste. All these were collected in the vast Fairy Cabinet, published in 1786, just before the Revolution. Probably their attempt to be simple charmed a society which was extremely artificial, talked about 'the simple life' and the 'state of nature,' and was on the eve of a revolution in which human nature revealed her most primitive traits in orgies of blood.

That was the end of the Court and of the Court Fairy Tales, and just when they were demolished, learned men like the Grimms and Sir Walter Scott began to take an interest in the popular tales of peasants and savages all the world over. All the world over the tales were found to be essentially the same things. *Cinderella* is everywhere; a whole book has been written on *Cinderella* by Miss Cox, and a very good book it is, but not interesting to children. For them the best of the collections of foreign fairy tales are the German stories by the Grimms, the *Tales from the Norse*, by Sir G. W. Dasent, (which some foolish 'grown-ups' denounced as 'improper'), and Miss Frere's Indian stories. There are hundreds of collections of savage and peasant fairy tales, but, though many of these are most interesting, especially Bishop Callaway's Zulu stories (with the Zulu versions), these do not come in the way of parents and uncles, and therefore do not come in the way of children. It is my wish that children should be allowed to choose their own books. Let their friends give them the money and turn them loose in the book shops! They know their own tastes, and if the children are born bookish, while their dear parents are the reverse, (and this does occur!), then the children make the better choice. They are unaffected in their selections; some want Shakespeares of their own, and some prefer a volume entitled *Buster Brown*. A few — alas, how few! — are fond of poetry; a still smaller number are fond of history. 'We know that there are no fairies, but history stories are *true*!' say these little innocents. I am not so sure that there are no fairies, and I am only too well aware that the best 'history stories' are not true.

What children do love is ghost stories. 'Tell us a ghost story!' they cry, and I am able to meet the demand, with which I am in sincere sympathy. Only strong control prevents me from telling the last true ghost story which I heard yesterday. It would suit children excellently well. ‘The Grey Ghost Story Book’ would be a favourite. At a very early age I read a number of advertisements of books, and wept because I could not buy dozens of them, and somebody gave me a book on Botany! It looked all right, nicely bound in green cloth, but within it was full of all manner of tediousness.

In our Fairy Cabinet, which cannot extend to sixty volumes, we have aimed at pleasing children, not ‘grown-ups,’ at whom the old French writers directed their romances, but have hunted for fairy tales in all quarters, not in Europe alone. In this volume we open, thanks to Dr. Ignaz Künos, with a story from the Turks. ‘Little King Loc’ is an original invention by M. Anatole France, which he very kindly permitted Mrs. Lang to adapt from *L’Abeille*.

Major Campbell, as previously, tells tales which he collected among the natives of India. But the sources are usually named at the end of each story, and when they are not named children will not miss them. Mrs. Lang, except in cases mentioned, has translated and adapted to the conditions of young readers the bulk of the collection, and Mrs. Skovgaard-Pedersen has done ‘The Green Knight’ from the Danish. I must especially thank Monsieur Macler for permitting us to use some of his *Contes Arméniens* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, Editeur).

MADSCHUN

Once upon a time there lived, in a small cottage among some hills, a woman with her son, and, to her great grief, the young man, though hardly more than twenty years of age, had not as much hair on his head as a baby. But, old as he looked, the youth was very idle, and whatever trade his mother put him to he refused to work, and in a few days always came home again.

On a fine summer morning he was lying as usual half asleep in the little garden in front of the cottage when the sultan’s daughter came riding by, followed by a number of gaily dressed ladies. The youth lazily raised himself on his elbow to look at her, and that one glance changed his whole nature.

‘I will marry her and nobody else,’ he thought. And jumping up, he went to find his mother.

‘You must go at once to the sultan, and tell him that I want his daughter for my wife,’ he said.

‘What?’ shouted the old woman, shrinking back into a corner, for nothing but sudden madness could explain such an amazing errand.

‘Don’t you understand? You must go at once to the sultan and tell him that I want his daughter for my wife,’ repeated the youth impatiently.

‘But — but, do you know what you are saying?’ stammered the mother. ‘You will learn no trade, and have only the five gold pieces left you by your father, and can you really expect that the sultan would give his daughter to a penniless bald-pate like you?’

‘That is *my* affair; do as I bid you.’ And neither day nor night did her son cease tormenting her, till, in despair, she put on her best clothes, and wrapped her veil about her, and went over the hill to the palace.

It was the day that the sultan set apart for hearing the complaints and petitions of his people, so the woman found no difficulty in gaining admission to his presence.

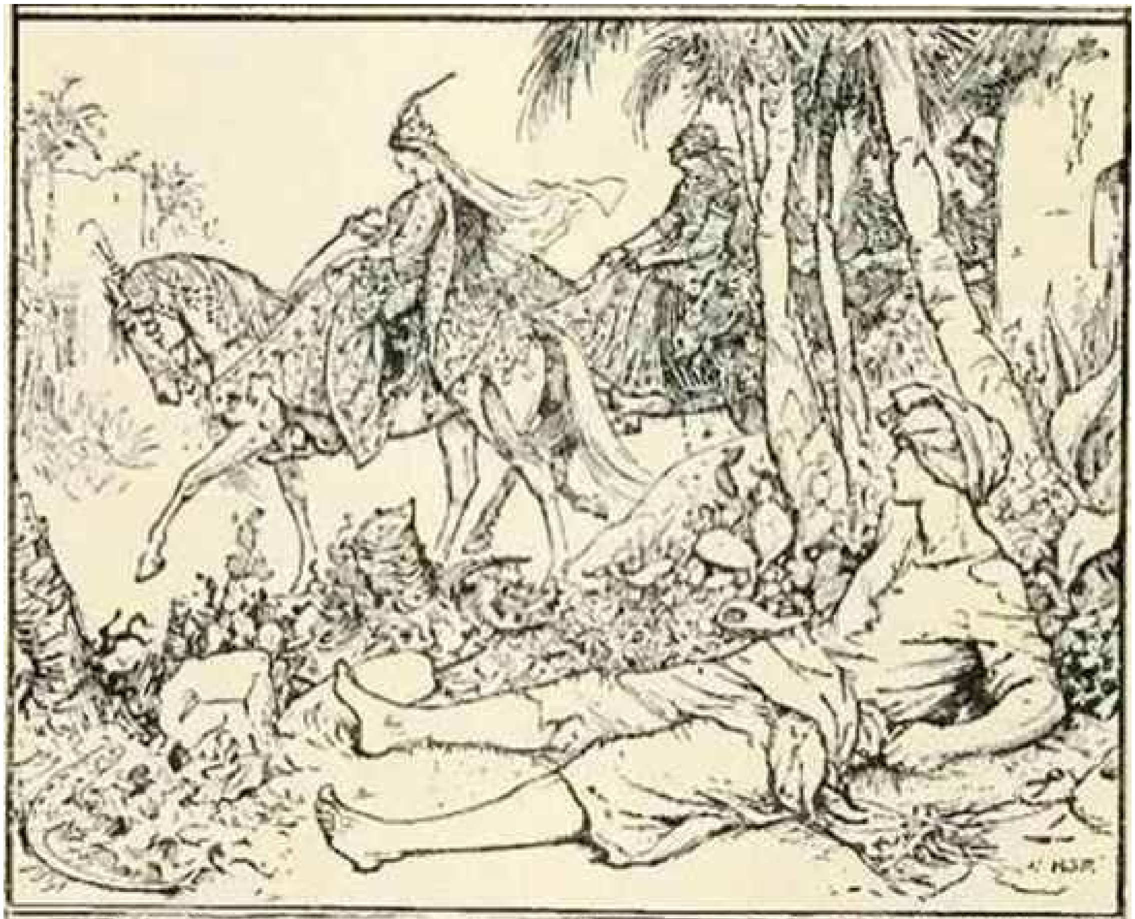

Love at first Sight

‘Do not think me mad, O Excellency,’ she began, ‘though I know I must seem like it. But I have a son who, since his eyes have rested on the veiled face of the princess, has not left me in peace day or night till I consented to come to the palace, and to ask your Excellency for your daughter’s hand. It was in vain I answered that my head might pay the forfeit of my boldness, he would listen to nothing. Therefore am I here; do with me even as you will!’

Now the sultan always loved anything out of the common, and this situation was new indeed. So, instead of ordering the trembling creature to be flogged or cast into prison, as some other sovereigns might have done, he merely said: ‘Bid your son come hither.’

The old woman stared in astonishment at such a reply. But when the sultan repeated his words even more gently than before, and did not look in anywise angered, she took courage, and bowing again she hastened homeward.

‘Well, how have you sped?’ asked her son eagerly as she crossed the threshold.

‘You are to go up to the palace without delay, and speak to the sultan himself,’ replied the mother. And when he heard the good news, his face lightened up so wonderfully that his mother thought what a pity it was that he had no hair, as then he would be quite handsome.

‘Ah, the lightning will not fly more swiftly,’ cried he. And in another instant he was out of her sight.

When the sultan beheld the bald head of his daughter’s wooer, he no longer felt in the mood for joking, and resolved that he must somehow or other shake himself free of such an unwelcome lover. But as he had summoned the young man to the palace, he could hardly dismiss him without a reason, so he hastily said:

‘I hear you wish to marry my daughter? Well and good. But the man who is to be her husband must first collect all the birds in the world, and bring them into the gardens of the palace; for hitherto no birds have made their homes in the trees.’

The young man was filled with despair at the sultan’s words. How was he to snare all these birds? and even if he *did* succeed in catching them it would take years to carry them to the palace! Still, he was too proud to let the sultan think that he had given up the princess without a struggle, so he took a road that led past the palace and walked on, not noticing whither he went.

In this manner a week slipped by, and at length he found himself crossing a desert with great rocks scattered here and there. In the shadow cast by one of these was seated a holy man or dervish, as he was called, who motioned to the youth to sit beside him.

‘Something is troubling you, my son,’ said the holy man; ‘tell me what it is, as I may be able to help you.’

‘O, my father,’ answered the youth, ‘I wish to marry the princess of my country; but the sultan refuses to give her to me unless I can collect all the birds in the world and bring them into his garden. And how can I, or any other man, do that?’

‘Do not despair,’ replied the dervish, ‘it is not so difficult as it sounds. Two days’ journey from here, in the path of the setting sun, there stands a cypress tree, larger than any other cypress that grows upon the earth. Sit down where the shadow is darkest, close to the trunk, and keep very still. By-and-by you will hear a mighty rushing of wings, and all the birds in the world will come and nestle in the branches. Be careful not to make a sound till everything is quiet again, and then say “Madschun!” At that the birds will be forced to remain where they are — not one can move from its perch; and you will be able to place them all over your head and arms and body, and in this way you must carry them to the sultan.’

With a glad heart the young man thanked the dervish, and paid such close heed to his directions that, a few days later, a strange figure covered with soft feathers walked into the presence of the sultan. The princess’s father was filled with surprise, for never had he seen such a sight before. Oh! how lovely were those little bodies, and bright frightened eyes! Soon a gentle stirring was heard, and what a multitude of wings unfolded themselves: blue wings, yellow wings, red wings, green wings. And when the young man whispered ‘Go,’ they first flew in circles round the sultan’s head, and then disappeared through the open window, to choose homes in the garden.

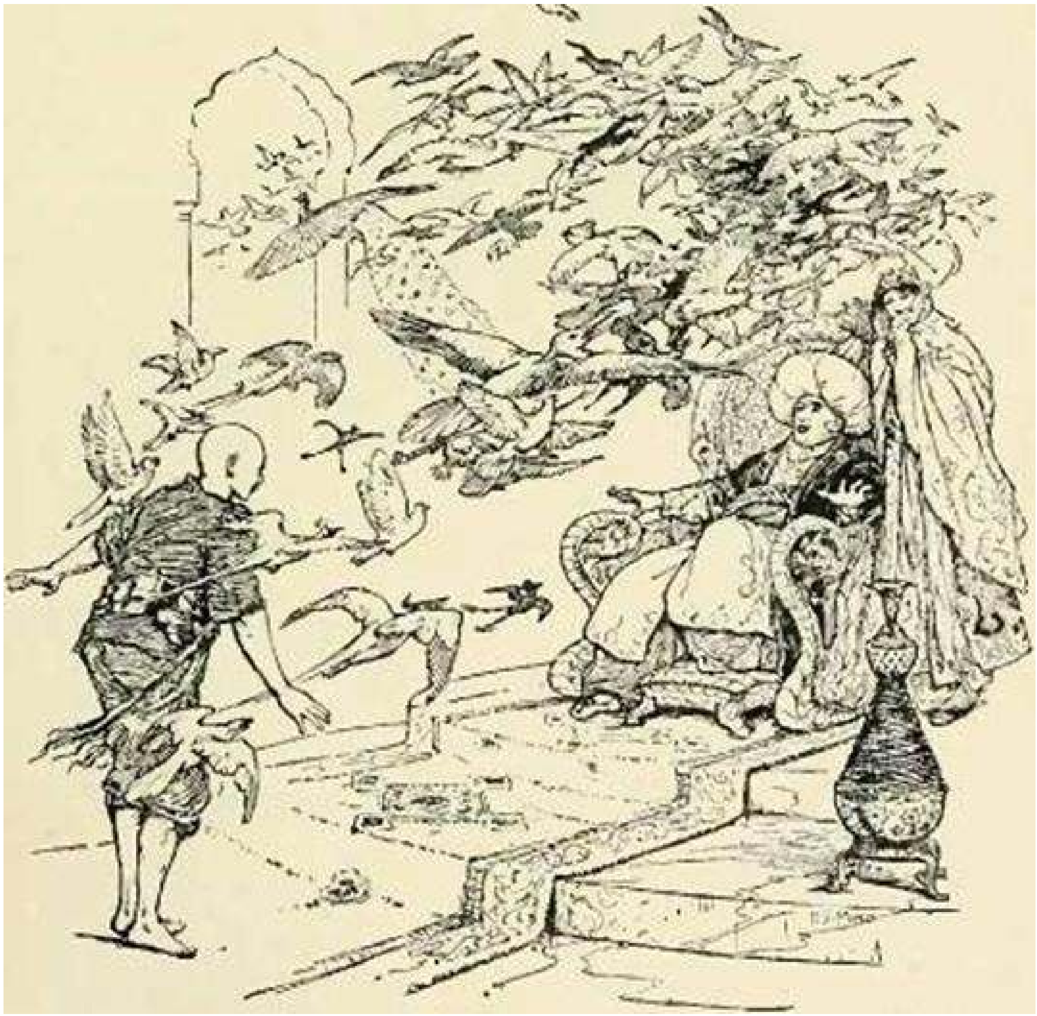

‘I have done your bidding, O Sultan, and now give me the princess,’ said the youth. And the sultan answered hurriedly:

‘Yes! oh, yes! you have pleased me well! Only one thing remains to turn you into a husband that any girl might desire. That head of yours, you know — it is so *very* bald! Get it covered with nice thick curly hair, and *then* I will give you my daughter. You are so clever that I am sure this will give you no trouble at all.’

Silently the young man listened to the sultan’s words, and silently he sat in his mother’s kitchen for many days to come, till, one morning, the news reached him that the sultan had betrothed his daughter to the son of the wizir, and that the wedding was to be celebrated without delay in the palace. With that he arose in wrath, and made his way quickly and secretly to a side door, used only by the workmen who kept the building in repair, and, unseen by anyone, he made his way into the mosque, and then entered the palace by a gallery which opened straight into the great hall. Here the bride and bridegroom and two or three friends were assembled, waiting for the appearance of the sultan for the contract to be signed.

‘Madschun!’ whispered the youth from above. And instantly everyone remained rooted to the ground; and some messengers whom the sultan had sent to see that all was ready shared the same fate.

At length, angry and impatient, the sultan went down to behold with his own eyes what had happened, but as nobody could give him any explanation, he bade one of his attendants to fetch a magician, who dwelt near one of the city gates, to remove the spell which had been cast by some evil genius.

‘It is your own fault,’ said the magician, when he had heard the sultan’s story. ‘If you had not broken your promise to the young man, your daughter would not have had this ill befall her. Now there is only one remedy, and the bridegroom you have chosen must yield his place to the bald-headed youth.’

Sore though he was in his heart, the sultan knew that the magician was wiser than he, and despatched his most trusted servants to seek out the young man without a moment’s delay and bring him to the palace. The youth, who all this time had been hiding behind a pillar, smiled to himself when he heard these words, and, hastening home, he said to his mother: ‘If messengers from the sultan should come here and ask for me, be sure you answer that it is a long while since I went away, and that you cannot tell where I may be, but that if they will give you money enough for your journey, as you are very poor, you will do your best to find me.’ Then he hid himself in the loft above, so that he could listen to all that passed.

The next minute someone knocked loudly at the door, and the old woman jumped up and opened it.

‘Is your bald-headed son here?’ asked the man outside. ‘If so, let him come with me, as the sultan wishes to speak with him directly.’

‘Alas! sir,’ replied the woman, putting a corner of her veil to her eyes, ‘he left me long since, and since that day no news of him has reached me.’

‘Oh! good lady, can you not guess where he may be? The sultan intends to bestow on him the hand of his daughter, and he is certain to give a large reward to the man who brings him back.'

'He never told me whither he was going,' answered the crone, shaking her head. 'But it is a great honour that the sultan does him, and well worth some trouble. There *are* places where, perhaps, he may be found, but they are known to me only, and I am a poor woman and have no money for the journey.'

'Oh! that will not stand in the way,' cried the man. 'In this purse are a thousand gold pieces; spend them freely. Tell me where I can find him and you shall have as many more.'

'Very well,' said she, 'it is a bargain; and now farewell, for I must make some preparations; but in a few days at furthest you shall hear from me.'

For nearly a week both the old woman and her son were careful not to leave the house till it was dark, lest they should be seen by any of the neighbours, and as they did not even kindle a fire or light a lantern, everyone supposed that the cottage was deserted. At length one fine morning, the young man got up early and dressed himself, and put on his best turban, and after a hasty breakfast took the road to the palace.

The huge negro before the door evidently expected him, for without a word he let him pass, and another attendant who was waiting inside conducted him straight into the presence of the sultan, who welcomed him gladly.

'Ah, my son! where have you hidden yourself all this time?' said he. And the bald-headed man answered:

'Oh, Sultan! Fairly I won your daughter, but you broke your word, and would not give her to me. Then my home grew hateful to me, and I set out to wander through the world! But now that you have repented of your ill-faith, I have come to claim the wife who is mine of right. Therefore bid your wizir prepare the contract.'

So a fresh contract was prepared, and at the wish of the new bridegroom was signed by the sultan and the wizir in the chamber where they met. After this was done, the youth begged the sultan to lead him to the princess, and together they entered the big hall, where everyone was standing exactly as they were when the young man had uttered the fatal word.

'Can you remove the spell?' asked the sultan anxiously.

'I think so,' replied the young man (who, to say the truth, was a little anxious himself), and stepping forward, he cried:

'Let the victims of Madschun be free!'

No sooner were the words uttered than the statues returned to life, and the bride placed her hand joyfully in that of her new bridegroom. As for the old one, he vanished completely, and no one ever knew what became of him.

(Adapted from *Türkische Volksmärchen aus Stambul*. Dr. Ignaz Künos. E. J. Brill, Leiden.)

THE BLUE PARROT

In a part of Arabia where groves of palms and sweet-scented flowers give the traveller rest after toilsome journeys under burning skies, there reigned a young king whose name was Lino. He had grown up under the wise rule of his father, who had lately died, and though he was only nineteen, he did not believe, like many young men, that he must change all the laws in order to show how clever he was, but was content with the old ones which had made the people happy and the country prosperous. There was only one fault that his subjects had to find with him, and that was that he did not seem in any hurry to be married, in spite of the prayers that they frequently offered him.

The neighbouring kingdom was governed by the Swan fairy, who had an only daughter, the Princess Hermosa, who was as charming in her way as Lino in his. The Swan fairy always had an ambassador at the young king’s court, and on hearing the grumbles of the citizens that Lino showed no signs of taking a wife, the good man resolved that *he* would try his hand at match-making. ‘For,’ he said, ‘if there is any one living who is worthy of the Princess Hermosa he is to be found here. At any rate, I can but try and bring them together.’

Now, of course, it was not proper to offer the princess in marriage, and the difficulty was to work upon the unconscious king so as to get the proposal to come from *him*. But the ambassador was well used to the ways of courts, and after several conversations on the art of painting, which Lino loved, he led the talk to portraits, and mentioned carelessly that a particularly fine picture had lately been made of his own princess. ‘Though, as for a likeness,’ he concluded, ‘perhaps it is hardly as good as this small miniature, which was painted a year ago.’

The king took it, and looked at it closely.

‘Ah!’ he sighed, ‘that must be flattered! It cannot be possible that any woman should be such a miracle of beauty.’

‘If you could only see her,’ answered the ambassador.

The king did not reply, but the ambassador was not at all surprised when, the following morning, he was sent for into the royal presence.

‘Since you showed me that picture,’ began Lino, almost before the door was shut, ‘I have not been able to banish the face of the princess from my thoughts. I have summoned you here to inform you that I am about to send special envoys to the court of the Swan fairy, asking her daughter in marriage.’

‘I cannot, as you will understand, speak for my mistress in so important a matter,’ replied the ambassador, stroking his beard in order to conceal the satisfaction he felt. ‘But I know that she will certainly be highly gratified at your proposal.’

‘If that is so,’ cried the king, his whole face beaming with joy, ‘then, instead of sending envoys, I will go myself, and take you with me. In three days my preparations will be made, and we will set out.’

Unluckily for Lino, he had for his neighbour on the other side a powerful magician named Ismenor, who was king of the Isle of Lions, and the father of a hideous daughter, whom he thought the most beautiful creature that ever existed. Riquette, for such was her name, had also fallen in love with a portrait, but it was of King Lino, and she implored her father to give him to her for a husband. Ismenor, who considered that no man lived who was worthy of his treasure, was about to send his chief minister to King Lino on this mission, when the news reached him that the king had already started for the court of the Swan fairy. Riquette was thrown into transports of grief, and implored her father to prevent the marriage, which Ismenor promised to do; and calling for an ugly and humpbacked little dwarf named Rabot, he performed some spells which transported them quickly to a rocky valley through which the king and his escort were bound to pass. When the tramp of horses was heard, the magician took out an enchanted handkerchief, which rendered invisible any one who touched it. Giving one end to Rabot, and holding the other himself, they walked unseen amongst the horsemen, but not a trace of Lino was to be found. And this was natural enough, because the king, tired out with the excitement and fatigue of the last few days, had bidden the heavy coaches, laden with presents for the princess, to go forwards, while he rested under the palms with a few of his friends. Here Ismenor beheld them, all sound asleep; and casting a spell which prevented their waking till he wished them to do so, he stripped the king of all his clothes and dressed him in those of Rabot, whom he touched with his ring, saying:

‘Take the shape of Lino until you have wedded the daughter of the Swan fairy.’

And so great was the magician’s power that Rabot positively believed himself to be really the king!

When the groom had mounted Lino’s horse, and had ridden out of sight, Ismenor aroused the king, who stared with astonishment at the dirty garments in which he was dressed; but before he had time to look about him, the magician caught him up in a cloud, and carried him off to his daughter.

Meantime Rabot had come up with the others, who never guessed for a moment that he was not their own master.

‘I am hungry,’ said he, ‘give me something to eat at once.’

‘May it please your majesty,’ answered the steward, ‘the tents are not even set up, and it will be at least an hour before your supper is served! We thought ——’

‘Who taught you to think?’ interrupted the false king rudely. ‘You are nothing but a fool! Get me some horse’s flesh directly — it is the best meat in the world!’

The steward could hardly believe his ears. King Lino, the most polite man under the sun, to speak to his faithful servant in such a manner! And to want horse’s flesh too! Why he was so delicate in his appetite that he lived mostly on fruit and cakes. Well, well, there was no knowing what people would come to; and, anyhow, he must obey at once, if he wished to keep his head on his shoulders. Perhaps, after all, it was love which had driven him mad, and, if so, by-and-by he might come right again.

Whatever excuses his old servants might invent for their master, by the time the procession reached the Swan’s fairy capital there were no more horses left, and they were forced to walk up to the palace on foot. Hiding their surprise as best they could, they begged the king to follow them, dismounting from their own horses, as he, they supposed, preferred to walk. They soon perceived the Swan fairy and her daughter awaiting them on a low balcony, under which the king stopped.

‘Madam,’ he said, ‘you may be surprised that I have come to ask your daughter’s hand in so unceremonious a fashion; but the journey is long, and I was hungry and ate my horse, which is the best meat in the world; and I forced my courtiers to eat theirs also. But for all that I am a great king, and wish to be your son-in-law. And now that is settled, where is Hermosa?’

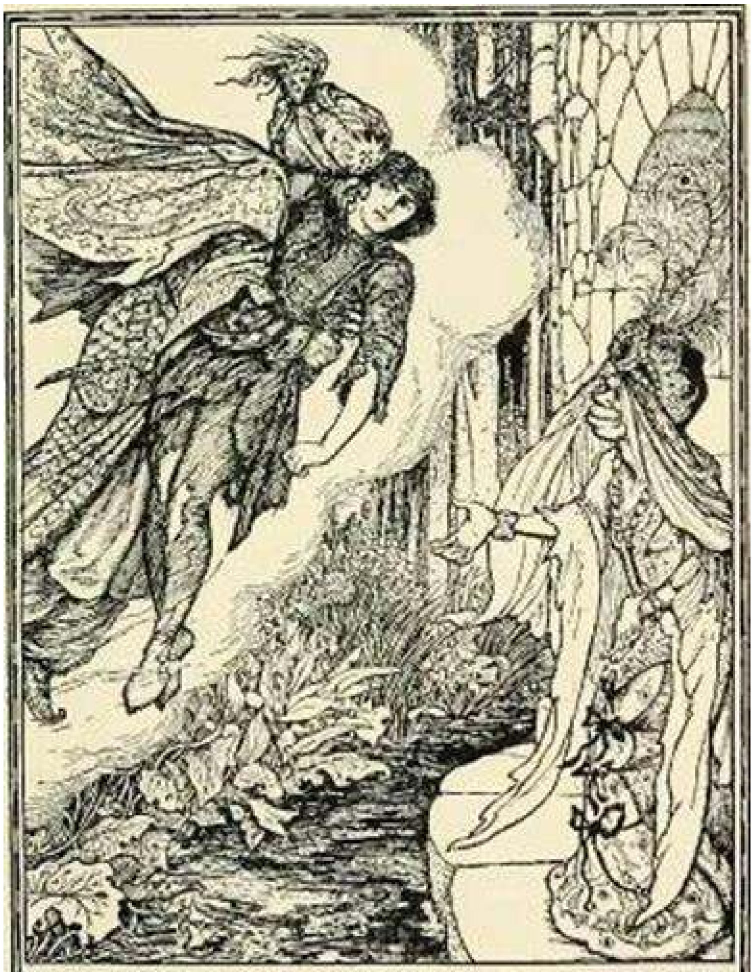

ISMENOK brings LINO to RIQUETTE

‘Sire,’ answered the queen, not a little displeased as well as amazed at the king’s manner, which was so different from anything she had been led to expect. ‘You possess my daughter’s portrait, and it can have made but little impression on you if you don’t recognise her at once.’

‘I don’t remember any portrait,’ replied Rabot; ‘but perhaps it may be in my pocket after all.’ And he searched everywhere, while the ladies-in-waiting looked on with astonishment, but of course found nothing. When he had finished he turned to the princess, who stood there blushing and angry, and said:

‘If it is you whom I have come to marry, I think you are very beautiful, and I am sure if I had even seen your portrait I should have remembered it. Let us have the wedding as soon as possible; and, meantime, I should like to go to sleep, for your country is very different from mine, and I can assure you that after walking over stones and sand for days and days one needs a little rest.’

And without waiting for a reply he bade one of the pages conduct him to his room, where he was soon snoring so loud that he could be heard at the other end of the town.

As soon as he was out of their sight the poor princess flung herself into her mother’s arms, and burst into tears. For fifteen days she had had King Lino’s portrait constantly before her, while the letter from their own ambassador speaking of the young man’s grace and charm had never left her pocket. True, the portrait was faithful enough, but how could that fair outside contain so rough and rude a soul? Yet this even she might have forgiven had the king shown any of the signs of love and admiration to which she had been so long accustomed. As for her mother, the poor Swan fairy was so bewildered at the extraordinary manners of her new son-in-law, that she was almost speechless.

Matters were in this state when King Lino’s chamberlain begged for a private audience of her majesty, and no sooner were they alone than he told her that he feared that his master had suddenly gone mad, or had fallen under the spell of some magician.

‘I had been lost in astonishment before,’ said he, ‘but now that he has failed to recognise the princess, and no longer possesses her portrait, which he never would part from for a single instant, my amazement knows no bounds. Perhaps, madam, your fairy gifts may be able to discover the reason of this change in one whose courtesy was the talk of the kingdom.’ And with a low bow he took his departure.

The queen stood where the chamberlain left her, thinking deeply. Suddenly her face cleared, and going to an old chest which she kept in a secret room, she drew from it a small mirror. In this mirror she could see faithfully reflected whatever she wished, and at this moment she desired above all things to behold King Lino *as he really was*.

Ah! the chamberlain was right! It was not he who was lying on his bed snoring till the whole palace shook beneath him. No, *this* was her real son-in-law — the man dressed in dirty clothes, and imprisoned in one of Ismenor’s strongest towers, and kissing the portrait of Hermosa, which had escaped the wizard’s notice, owing to the young king having worn it, for better concealment, tied amongst his hair. Calling hastily to her daughter, she bade her also look, and Hermosa had the pleasure of gazing on Lino, who was behaving exactly as she could have wished. The mirror was still in her hand when the door of the prison opened, and there entered the hideous Riquette, who, from her upraised eyes, seemed to be begging from Lino some favour which he refused to grant. Of course Hermosa and her mother could not hear their words, but from Riquette’s angry face as she left the room, it was not difficult to guess what had happened. But the mirror had more to tell, for it appeared that in fury at her rejection by the king, Riquette had ordered four strong men to scourge him till he fainted, which was done in the sight of Hermosa, who in horror dropped the mirror, and would have fallen, had she not been caught by her mother.

‘Control yourself, my child,’ said the fairy. ‘We have need of all our wits if we are to rescue the king from the power of those wicked people. And first it is necessary to know who the man that has taken his name and his face really is.’

Then, picking up the mirror, she wished that she might behold the false lover; and the glass gave back a vision of a dirty, greasy groom, lying, dressed as he was, on her bed of state.

‘So this is the trick Ismenor hoped to play us! Well, we will have our revenge, whatever it costs us to get it. Only we must be very careful not to let him guess that he has not deceived us, for his skill in magic is greater than mine, and I shall have to be very prudent. To begin with, I must leave you, and if the false king asks why, then answer that I have to settle some affairs on the borders of my kingdom. Meanwhile, be sure you treat him most politely, and arrange fêtes to amuse him. If he shows any sign of being suspicious, you can even give him to understand that, on your marriage, I intend to give up the crown to your husband. And now farewell!’ So saying, the Swan fairy waved her hand, and a cloud came down and concealed her, and nobody imagined that the beautiful white cloud that was blown so rapidly across the sky was the chariot that was carrying the Swan fairy to the tower of Ismenor.

Now the tower was situated in the midst of a forest, so the queen thought that, under cover of the dark trees, it would be quite easy for her to drop to earth unseen. But the tower was so thoroughly enchanted that the more she tried to reach the ground the tighter something tried to hold her back. At length, by putting forth all the power she possessed, she managed to descend to the foot of the tower, and there, weak and faint as she was with her exertions, she lost no time in working her spells, and found that she could only overcome Ismenor by means of a stone from the ring of Gyges. But how was she to get this ring? for the magic book told her that Ismenor guarded it night and day among his most precious treasures. However, get it she must, and in the meantime the first step was to see the royal prisoner himself. So, drawing out her tablets, she wrote as follows:

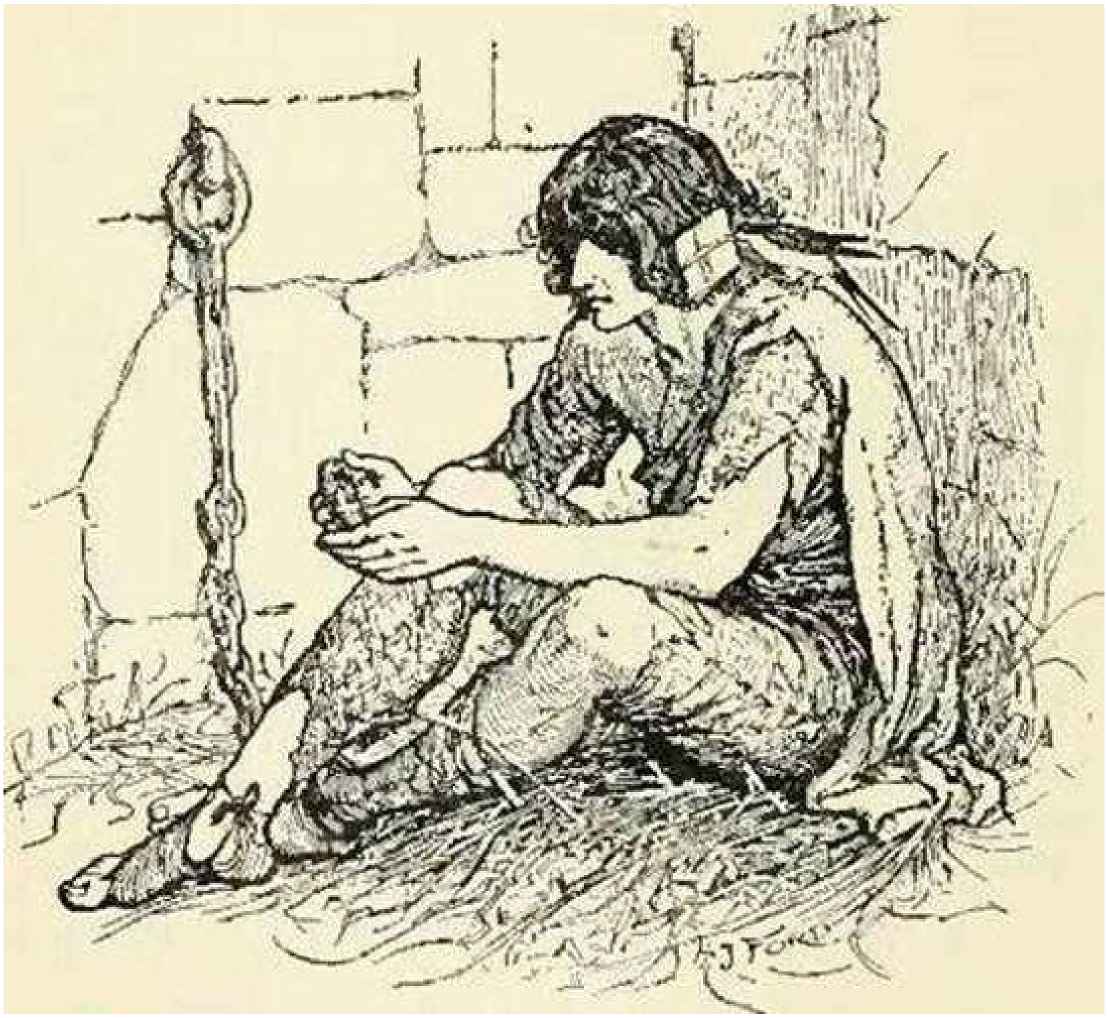

‘The bird which brings you this letter is the Swan fairy, mother of Hermosa, who loves you as much as you love her!’ And after this assurance, she related the wicked plot of which he had been the victim. Then, quickly changing herself into a swallow, she began to fly round the tower, till she discovered the window of Lino’s prison. It was so high up that bars seemed needless, especially as four soldiers were stationed in the passage outside, therefore the fairy was able to enter, and even to hop on his shoulder, but he was so much occupied with gazing at the princess’s portrait that it was some time before she could attract his attention. At last she gently scratched his cheek with the corner of the note, and he looked round with a start. On perceiving the swallow he knew at once that help had come, and tearing open the letter, he wept with joy on seeing the words it contained, and asked a thousand questions as to Hermosa, which the swallow was unable to answer, though, by repeated nods, she signed to him to read further. ‘Must I indeed pretend to wish to marry that horrible Riquette?’ he cried, when he had finished. ‘Can I obtain the stone from the magician?’

Accordingly the next morning, when Riquette paid him her daily visit, he received her much more graciously than usual. The magician’s daughter could not contain her delight at this change, and in answer to her expressions of joy, Lino told her that he had had a dream by which he had learned the inconstancy of Hermosa; also that a fairy had appeared and informed him that if he wished to break the bonds which bound him to the faithless princess and transfer his affections to the daughter of Ismenor, he must have in his possession for a day and a night a stone from the ring of Gyges, now in the possession of the magician. This news so enchanted Riquette, that she flung her arms round the king’s neck and embraced him tenderly, greatly to his disgust, as he would infinitely have preferred the sticks of the soldiers. However, there was no help for it, and he did his best to seem pleased, till Riquette relieved him by announcing that she must lose no time in asking her father and obtaining from him the precious stone.

His daughter’s request came as a great surprise to Ismenor, whose suspicions were instantly excited; but, think as he would, he could not see any means by which the king, so closely guarded, might have held communication with the Swan fairy. Still, he would do nothing hastily, and, hiding his dismay, he told Riquette that his only wish was to make her happy, and that as she wished so much for the stone he would fetch it for her. Then he went into the closet where all his spells were worked, and in a short time he discovered that his enemy the Swan fairy was at that moment inside his palace.

‘So that is it!’ he said, smiling grimly. ‘Well, she shall have a stone by all means, but a stone that will turn everyone who touches it into marble.’ And placing a small ruby in a box, he returned to his daughter.

‘Here is the talisman which will gain you the love of King Lino,’ he said; ‘but be sure you give him the box unopened, or else the stone will lose all its virtue.’ With a cry of joy Riquette snatched the box from his hands, and ran off to the prison, followed by her father, who, holding tightly the enchanted handkerchief, was able, unseen, to watch the working of the spell. As he expected, at the foot of the tower stood the Swan fairy, who had had the imprudence to appear in her natural shape, waiting for the stone which the prince was to throw to her. Eagerly she caught the box as it fell from the prince’s hands, but no sooner had her fingers touched the ruby, than a curious hardening came over her, her limbs stiffened, and her tongue could hardly utter the words ‘We are betrayed.’

‘Yes, you *are* betrayed,’ cried Ismenor, in a terrible voice; ‘and *you*,’ he continued, dragging the king to the window, ‘you shall turn into a parrot, and a parrot you will remain until you can persuade Hermosa to crush in your head.’

He had hardly finished before a blue parrot flew out into the forest; and the magician, mounting in his winged chariot, set off for the Isle of Swans, where he changed everybody into statues, exactly in the positions in which he found them, not even excepting Rabot himself. Only Hermosa was spared, and her he ordered to get into his chariot beside him. In a few minutes he reached the Forest of Wonders, when the magician got down, and dragged the unhappy princess out after him.

‘I have changed your mother into a stone, and your lover into a parrot,’ said he, ‘and you are to become a tree, and a tree you will remain until you have crushed the head of the person you love best in the world. But I will leave you your mind and memory, that your tortures may be increased a thousand-fold.’

Great magician as he was, Ismenor could not have invented a more terrible fate had he tried for a hundred years. The hours passed wearily by for the poor princess, who longed for a wood-cutter’s axe to put an end to her misery. How were they to be delivered from their doom? And even supposing that King Lino *did* fly that way, there were thousands of blue parrots in the forest, and how was she to know him, or he her? As to her mother — ah! that was too bad to think about! So, being a woman, she kept on thinking.

Meanwhile the blue parrot flew about the world, making friends wherever he went, till, one day, he entered the castle of an old wizard who had just married a beautiful young wife. Grenadine, for such was her name, led a very dull life, and was delighted to have a playfellow, so she gave him a golden cage to sleep in, and delicious fruits to eat. Only in one way did he disappoint her — he never would talk as other parrots did.

‘If you only knew how happy it would make me, I’m sure you would try,’ she was fond of saying; but the parrot did not seem to hear her.

One morning, however, she left the room to gather some flowers, and the parrot, finding himself alone, hopped to the table, and, picking up a pencil, wrote some verses on a piece of paper. He had just finished when he was startled by a noise, and letting fall the pencil, he flew out of the window.

Now hardly had he dropped the pencil when the wizard lifted a corner of the curtain which hung over the doorway, and advanced into the room. Seeing a paper on the table, he picked it up, and great was his surprise as he read:

‘Fair princess, to win your grace, I will hold discourse with you; Silence, though, were more in place Than chatt’ring like a cockatoo.’

‘I half suspected it was enchanted,’ murmured the wizard to himself. And he fetched his books and searched them, and found that instead of being a parrot, the bird was really a king who had fallen under the wrath of a magician, and that magician the man whom the wizard hated most in the world. Eagerly he read on, seeking for some means of breaking the enchantment, and at last, to his great joy, he discovered the remedy. Then he hurried to his wife, who was lying on some cushions under the tree on which the parrot had perched, and informed her that her favourite was really the king of a great country, and that, if she would whistle for the bird, they would all go together to a certain spot in the Forest of Marvels, ‘where I will restore him to his own shape. Only you must not be afraid or cry out, whatever I do,’ added he, ‘or everything will be spoilt.’ The wizard’s wife jumped up in an instant, so delighted was she, and began to whistle the song that the parrot loved; but as he did not wish it to be known that he had been listening to the conversation he waited until she had turned her back, when he flew down the tree and alighted on her shoulder. Then they got into a golden boat, which carried them to a clearing in the forest, where three tall trees stood by themselves.

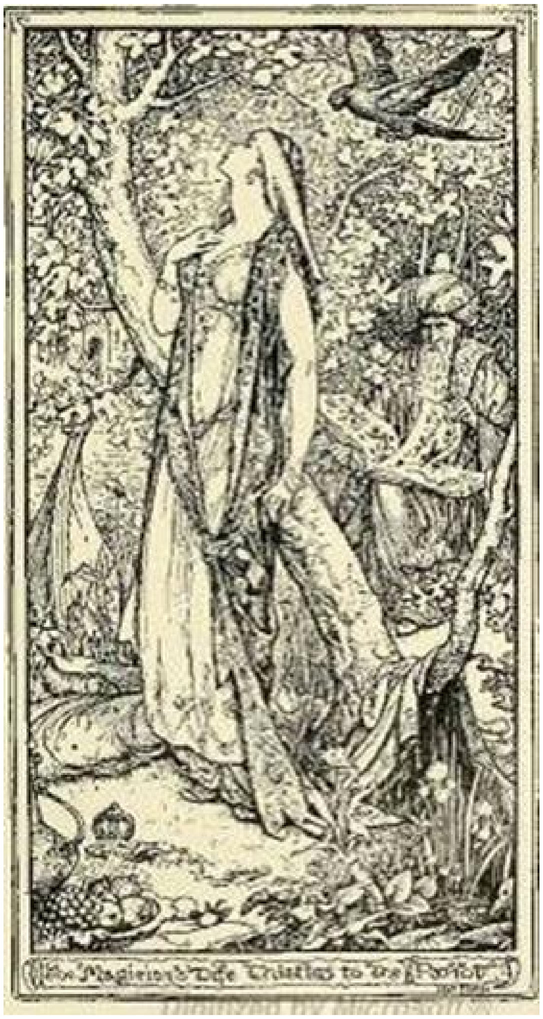

The Magician's Wife Whistles to the Parrot

‘I want these trees for my magic fire,’ he said to his wife; ‘put the parrot on that branch, he will be quite safe, and go yourself to a little distance. If you stay too near you may get your head crushed in their fall.’

At these words the parrot suddenly remembered the prophecy of Ismenor, and held himself ready, his heart beating at the thought that in one of those trees he beheld Hermosa. Meanwhile the magician took a spade, and loosened the earth of the roots of the three trees so that they might fall all together. Directly the parrot observed them totter he spread his wings and flew right under the middle one, which was the most beautiful of the three. There was a crash, then Lino and Hermosa stood facing each other, clasped hand in hand.

After the first few moments, the princess’s thoughts turned to her mother, and falling at the feet of the magician, who was smiling with delight at the success of his plan, she implored him to help them once more, and to give the Swan fairy back her proper shape.

‘That is not so easy,’ said he, ‘but I will try what I can do.’ And transporting himself to his palace to obtain a little bottle of poisoned water, he waited till nightfall, and started at once for Ismenor’s tower. Of course, had Ismenor consulted his books he would have seen what his enemy was doing, he might have protected himself; but he had been eating and drinking too much, and had gone to bed, sleeping heavily. Changing himself into a bat, the magician flew into the room, and hiding himself in the curtains, he poured all the liquid over Ismenor’s face, so that he died without a groan. At the same instant the Swan fairy became a woman again, for no magician, however powerful, can work spells which last beyond his own life.

So when the Swan fairy returned to her capital she found all her courtiers waiting at the gate to receive her, and in their midst, beaming with happiness, Hermosa and King Lino. Standing behind them, though a long way off, was Rabot; but his dirty clothes had given place to clean ones, when his earnest desire was granted, and the princess had made him head of her stables.

And here we must bid them all farewell, feeling sure they will have many years of happiness before them after the terrible trials through which they have passed.

(Adapted and shortened from *Le Cabinet des Fées*.)

GEIRLAUG THE KING’S DAUGHTER

One day a powerful king and his beautiful wife were sitting in the gardens of their capital city, talking earnestly about the future life of their little son, who was sleeping by their side in his beautiful golden cradle. They had been married for many years without children, so when this baby came they thought themselves the happiest couple in the whole world. He was a fine sturdy little boy, who loved to kick and to strike out with his fists; but even if he had been weak and small they would still have thought him the most wonderful creature upon earth, and so absorbed were they in making plans for him, that they never noticed a huge dark shadow creeping up, till a horrible head with gleaming teeth stretched over them, and in an instant their beloved baby was snatched away.

For a while the king and queen remained where they were, speechless with horror. Then the king rose slowly, and holding out his hand to his wife, led her weeping into the palace, and for many days their subjects saw no more of them.

Meanwhile the dragon soared high into the air, holding the cradle between his teeth, and the baby still slept on. He flew so fast that he soon crossed the borders of another kingdom, and again he beheld the king and queen of the country seated in the garden with a little girl lying in a wonderful cradle of white satin and lace. Swooping down from behind as he had done before, he was just about to seize the cradle, when the king jumped up and dealt him such a blow with his golden staff that the dragon not only started back, but in his pain let fall the boy, as he spread his wings and soared into the air away from all danger.

‘That was a narrow escape,’ said the king, turning to his wife, who sat pale with fright, and clasping her baby tightly in her arms. ‘Frightful,’ murmured the queen; ‘but look, what is that glittering object that is lying out there?’ The king walked in the direction of her finger, and to his astonishment beheld another cradle and another baby.

‘Ah! the monster must have stolen this as he sought to steal Geirlaug,’ cried he. And stooping lower, he read some words that were written on the fine linen that was wound round the boy. ‘This is Grethari, son of Grethari the king!’ Unfortunately it happened that the two neighbouring monarchs had had a serious quarrel, and for some years had ceased holding communication with each other. So, instead of sending a messenger at once to Grethari to tell him of the safety of his son, the king contented himself with adopting the baby, which was brought up with Geirlaug the princess.

For a while things went well with the children, who were as happy as the day was long, but at last there came a time when the queen could no more run races or play at hide-and-seek with them in the garden as she was so fond of doing, but lay and watched them from a pile of soft cushions. By-and-by she gave up doing even that, and people in the palace spoke with low voices, and even Geirlaug and Grethari trod gently and moved quietly when they drew near her room. At length, one morning, they were sent for by the king himself, who, his eyes red with weeping, told them that the queen was dead.

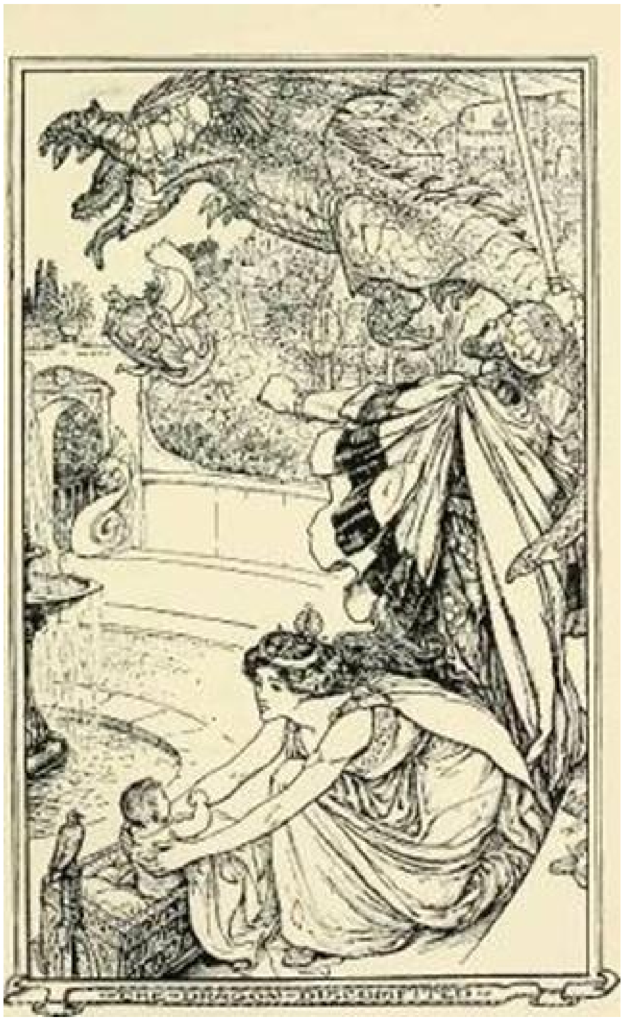

Great was the sorrow of the two children, for they had loved the queen very dearly, and life seemed dull without her. But the lady-in-waiting who took care of them in the tower which had been built for them while they were still babies, was kind and good, and when the king was busy or away in other parts of his kingdom she made them quite happy, and saw that they were taught everything that a prince and princess ought to know. Thus two or three years passed, when, one day, as the children were anxiously awaiting their father's return from a distant city, there rode post haste into the courtyard of the palace a herald whom the king had sent before him, to say that he was bringing back a new wife.

Now, in itself, there was nothing very strange or dreadful in the fact that the king should marry again, but, as the old lady-in-waiting soon guessed, the queen, in spite of her beauty, was a witch, and as it was easy to see that she was jealous of everyone who might gain power over her husband, it boded ill for Geirlaug and Grethari. The faithful woman could not sleep for thinking about her charges, and her soul sank when, a few months after the marriage, war broke out with a country across the seas, and the king rode away at the head of his troops. Then there happened what she had so long expected. One night, when, unlike her usual habit, she was sleeping soundly — afterwards she felt sure that a drug had been put into her food — the witch came to the tower. Exactly what she did there no one knew, but, when the sun rose, the beds of Grethari and Geirlaug were empty. At dawn the queen summoned some of her guards, and told them that she had been warned in a dream that some evil fate would befall her through a wild beast, and bade them go out and kill every animal within two miles of the palace. But the only beasts they found were two black foals of wondrous beauty, fitted for the king's riding; it seemed a pity to kill them, for what harm could two little foals do anyone? So they let them run away, frisking over the plain, and returned to the palace.

'Did you see *nothing*, really *nothing*?' asked the queen, when they again appeared before her.

'Nothing, your majesty,' they replied. But the queen did not believe them, and when they were gone, she gave orders to her steward that at supper the guards should be well plied with strong drink so that their tongues should be loosened, and, further, that he was to give heed to their babble, and report to her, whatever they might let fall.

'Your majesty's commands have been obeyed,' said the steward when, late in the evening, he begged admittance to the royal apartments; 'but, after all, the men have told you the truth. I listened to their talk from beginning to end, and nothing did they see save two black foals.' He might have added more, but the look in the queen's blazing eyes terrified him, and, bowing hastily, he backed quickly out of her presence.

In a week's time the king came home, and right glad were all the courtiers to see him.

'Now, perhaps, she will find some one else to scream at,' whispered they amongst themselves. 'She' was the queen, who had vented her rage on her attendants during these days, though what had happened to make her so angry nobody knew. But whatever might be the meaning of it, things would be sure to improve with the king to rule in the palace instead of his wife. Unfortunately, their joy only lasted a short while; for the very first night after the king's arrival the queen related the evil dream she had dreamt in his absence, and begged him to go out the next morning and kill every living creature he saw within two miles of the city. The king, who always believed everything the queen said, promised to do as she wished. But before he had ridden through the lovely gardens that surrounded the palace, he was attracted by the singing of two little blue birds perched on a scarlet-berried holly, which made him think of everything beautiful that he had ever heard of or imagined. Hour after hour passed by, and still the birds sang, and still the king listened, though of course he never guessed that it was Geirlaug and Grethari whose notes filled him with enchantment. At length darkness fell; the birds' voices were hushed, and the king awoke with a start to find that for that day his promise to the queen could not be kept.

'Well! did you see anything?' she asked eagerly, when the king entered her apartments.

'Ah, my dear, I am almost ashamed to confess to you. But the fact is that before I rode as far as the western gate the singing of two strange little blue birds made me forget all else in the world. And you will hardly believe it — but not until it grew dark did I remember where I was and what I should have been doing. However, to-morrow nothing shall hinder me from fulfilling your desires.'

'There will be no to-morrow,' muttered the queen, as she turned away with a curious glitter in her eyes. But the king did not hear her.

That night the king gave a great supper in the palace in honour of the victory he had gained over the enemy. The three men whom the queen had sent forth to slay the wild beasts held positions of trust in the household, for to them was committed the custody of the queen's person. And on the occasion of a feast their places were always next that of the king, so it was easy for the queen to scatter a slow but fatal poison in their cups without anyone being the wiser. Before dawn the palace was roused by the news that the king was dead, and that the three officers of the guards were dying also. Of course nobody's cries and laments were as loud as those of the queen. But when once the splendid funeral was over, she gave out that she was going to shut herself up in a distant castle till the year of her mourning was over, and after appointing a regent of the kingdom, she set out attended only by a maid who knew all her secrets. Once she had left the palace she quickly began to work her spells, to discover under what form Geirlaug and Grethari lay hidden. Happily, the princess had studied magic under a former governess, so was able to fathom her step-mother’s wicked plot, and hastily changed herself into a whale, and her foster-brother into its fin. Then the queen took the shape of a shark and gave chase.

For several hours a fierce battle raged between the whale and the shark, and the sea around was red with blood; first one of the combatants got the better, and then the other, but at length it became plain to the crowd of little fishes gathered round to watch, that the victory would be to the whale. And so it was. But when, after a mighty struggle, the shark floated dead and harmless on the surface of the water, the whale was so exhausted that she had only strength enough to drag her wounded body into a quiet little bay, and for three days she remained there as still and motionless as if she had been dead herself. At the end of the three days her wounds were healed, and she began to think what it was best to do.

‘Let us go back to your father’s kingdom,’ she said to Grethari, when they had both resumed their proper shapes, and were sitting on a high cliff above the sea.

‘How clever you are! I never should have thought of that!’ answered Grethari, who, in truth, was not clever at all. But Geirlaug took a small box of white powder from her dress, and sprinkled some over him and some over herself, and, quicker than lightning, they found themselves in the palace grounds from which Grethari had been carried off by the dragon so many years before.

‘Now take up the band with the golden letters and bind it about your forehead,’ said Geirlaug, ‘and go boldly up to the castle. And, remember, however great may be your thirst, you must drink nothing till you have first spoken to your father. If you do, ill will befall us both.’

‘*Why* should I be thirsty?’ replied Grethari, staring at her in astonishment. ‘It will not take me five minutes to reach the castle gate.’ Geirlaug held her peace, but her eyes had in them a sad look. ‘Good-bye,’ she said at last, and she turned and kissed him.

Grethari had spoken truly when he declared that he could easily get to the castle in five minutes. At least, no one would have dreamed that it could possibly take any longer. Yet, to his surprise, the door which stood so widely open that he could see the colour of the hangings within never appeared to grow any nearer, while each moment the sun burned more hotly, and his tongue was parched with thirst.

‘I don’t understand! What *can* be the matter with me — and why haven’t I reached the castle long ago?’ he murmured to himself, as his knees began to knock under him with fatigue, and his head to swim. For a few more paces he staggered on blindly, when, suddenly, the sound of rushing water smote upon his ears; and in a little wood that bordered the path he beheld a stream falling over a rock. At this sight his promise to Geirlaug was forgotten. Fighting his way through the brambles that tore his clothes, he cast himself down beside the fountain, and seizing the golden cup that hung from a tree, he drank a deep draught.

When he rose up the remembrance of Geirlaug and of his past life had vanished, and, instead, something stirred dimly within him at the vision of the white-haired man and woman who stood in the open door with outstretched hands.

‘Grethari! Grethari! So you have come home at last,’ cried they.

For three hours Geirlaug waited in the spot where Grethari had left her, and then she began to understand what had happened. Her heart was heavy, but she soon made up her mind what to do, and pushing her way out of the wood, she skirted the high wall that enclosed the royal park and gardens, till she reached a small house where the forester lived with his two daughters.

‘Do you want a girl to sweep, and to milk the cows?’ asked she, when one of the sisters answered her knock.

‘Yes, we do, very badly; and as you look strong and clean, we will take you for a servant if you like to come,’ replied the young woman.

‘But, first, what is your name?’

‘Lauphertha,’ said Geirlaug quickly, for she did not wish anyone to know who she was; and following her new mistress into the house, she begged to be taught her work without delay. And so clever was she, that, by-and-by, it began to be noised abroad that the strange girl who had come to live in the forester’s house had not her equal in the whole kingdom for skill as well as beauty. Thus the years slipped away, during which Geirlaug grew to be a woman. Now and then she caught glimpses of Grethari as he rode out to hunt in the forest, but when she saw him coming she hid herself behind the great trees, for her heart was still sore at his forgetfulness. One day, however, when she was gathering herbs, he came upon her suddenly, before she had time to escape, though as she had stained her face and hands brown, and covered her beautiful hair with a scarlet cap, he did not guess her to be his foster-sister.

‘What is your name, pretty maiden?’ asked he.

‘Lauphertha,’ answered the girl with a low curtesy.

‘Ah! it is you, then, of whom I have heard so much,’ said he; ‘you are too beautiful to spend your life serving the forester’s daughters. Come with me to the palace, and my mother the queen will make you one of her ladies in waiting.’

‘Truly, that would be a great fortune,’ replied the maiden. ‘And, if you really mean it, I will go with you. But how shall I know that you are not jesting?’

‘Give me something to do for you, and I will do it, whatever it is,’ cried the young man eagerly. And she cast down her eyes, and answered:

‘Go to the stable, and bind the calf that is there so that it shall not break loose in the night and wander away, for the forester and his daughters have treated me well, and I would not leave them with aught of my work still undone.’

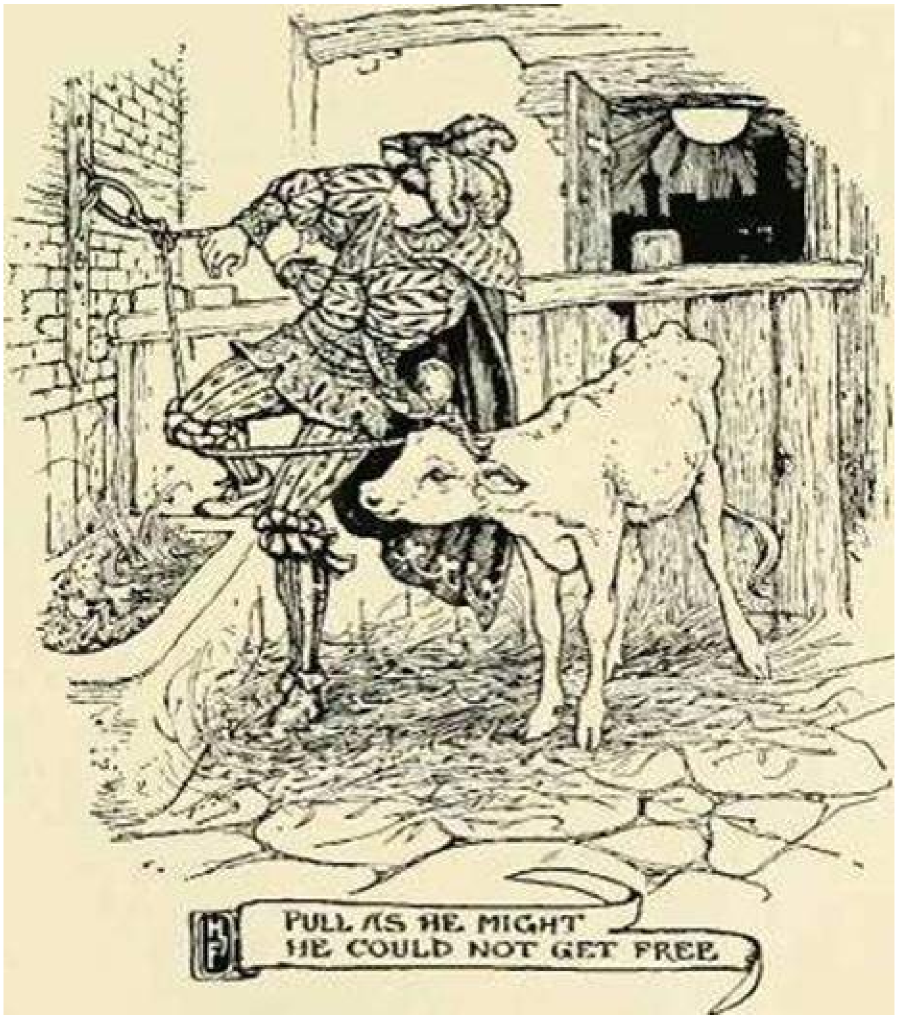
PULL AS HE MIGHT
HE COULD NOT GET FREE

So Grethari set out for the stable where the calf stood, and wound the rope about its horns. But when he had made it fast to the wall, he found that a coil of the rope had twisted itself round his wrist, and, pull as he might, he could not get free. All night he wriggled and struggled till he was half dead with fatigue. But when the sun rose the rope suddenly fell away from him, and, very angry with the maiden he dragged himself back to the palace. ‘She is a witch,’ he muttered crossly to himself, ‘and I will have no more to do with her.’ And he flung himself on his bed and slept all day.

Not long after this adventure the king and queen sent their beloved son on an embassy to a neighbouring country to seek a bride from amongst the seven princesses. The most beautiful of all was, of course, the one chosen, and the young pair took ship without delay for the kingdom of the prince’s parents. The wind was fair and the vessel so swift that, in less time than could have been expected, the harbour nearest the castle was reached. A splendid carriage had been left in readiness close to the beach, but no horses were to be found, for every one had been carried off to take part in a great review which the king was to hold that day in honour of his son’s marriage.

‘I can’t stay here all day,’ said the princess, crossly, when Grethari told her of the plight they were in. ‘I am perfectly worn out as it is, and you will have to find something to draw the carriage, if it is only a donkey. If you don’t, I will sail back straight to my father.’

Poor Grethari was much troubled by the words of the princess. Not that he felt so very much in love with her, for during the voyage she had shown him several times how vain and bad tempered she was; but as a prince and a bridegroom, he could not, of course, bear to think that any slight had been put upon her. So he hastily bade his attendants to go in search of some animal, and bring it at once to the place at which they were waiting.

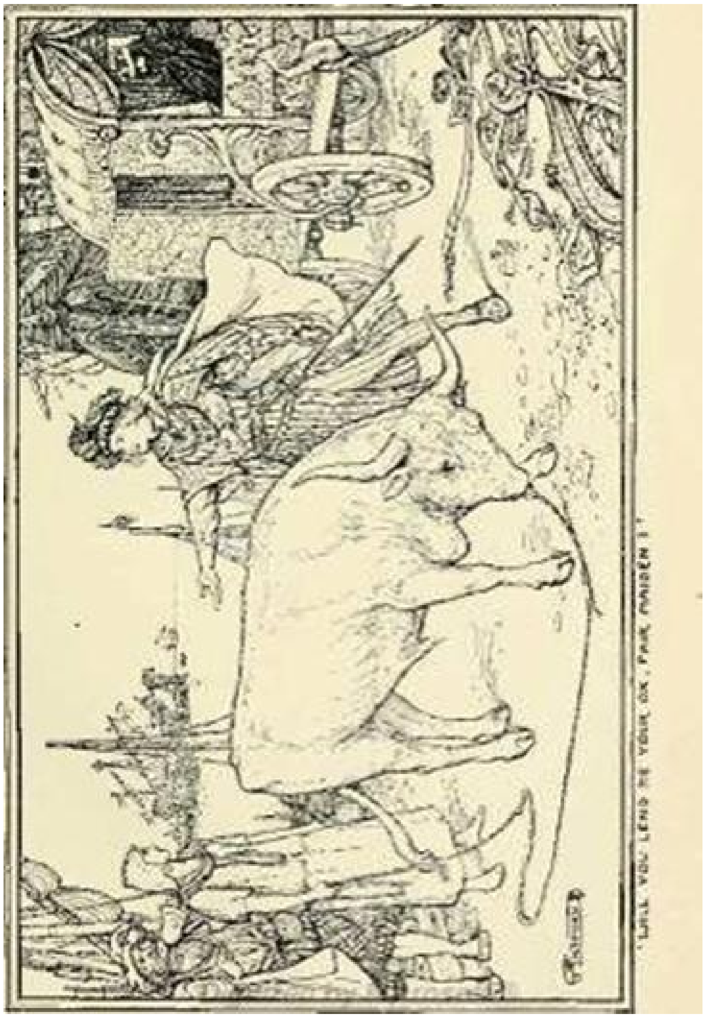

'WILL YOU LEND ME YOUR OX, FAIR MAIDEN?'

During the long pause the princess sat in the beautiful golden coach, her blue velvet mantle powdered with silver bees drawn closely round her, so that not even the tip of her nose could be seen. At length a girl appeared driving a young ox in front of her, followed by one of the prince's messengers, who was talking eagerly.

'Will you lend me your ox, fair maiden?' asked Grethari, jumping up and going to meet them. 'You shall fix your own price, and it shall be paid ungrudgingly, for never before was king's son in such a plight.'

'My price is seats for me and my two friends behind you and your bride at the wedding feast,' answered she. And to this Grethari joyfully consented.

Six horses would not have drawn the coach at the speed of this one ox. Trees and fields flew by so fast that the bride became quite giddy, and expected, besides, that they would be upset every moment. But, in spite of her fears, nothing happened, and they drew up in safety at the door of the palace, to the great surprise of the king and queen. The marriage preparations were hurried on, and by the end of the week everything was ready. It was, perhaps, fortunate that the princess was too busy with her clothes and her jewels during this period to pay much heed to Grethari, so that by the time the wedding day came round he had almost forgotten how cross and rude she had been on the journey.

The oldest men and women in the town agreed that nothing so splendid had ever been seen as the bridal procession to the great hall, where the banquet was to be held, before the ceremony was celebrated in the palace. The princess was in high good humour, feeling that all eyes were upon her, and bowed and smiled right and left. Taking the prince's hand, she sailed proudly down the room, where the guests were already assembled, to her place at the head of the table by the side of the bridegroom. As she did so, three strange ladies in shining dresses of blue, green, and red, glided in and seated themselves on a vacant bench immediately behind the young couple. The red lady was Geirlaug, who had brought with her the forester's daughters, and in one hand she held a wand of birch bark, and in the other a closed basket.

Silently they sat as the feast proceeded; hardly anyone noticed their presence, or, if they did, supposed them to be attendants of their future queen. Suddenly, when the merriment was at its height, Geirlaug opened the basket, and out flew a cock and hen. To the astonishment of everyone, the birds circled about in front of the royal pair, the cock plucking the feathers out of the tail of the hen, who tried in vain to escape from him.

'Will you treat me as badly as Grethari treated Geirlaug?' cried the hen at last. And Grethari heard, and started up wildly. In an instant all the past rushed back to him; the princess by his side was forgotten, and he only saw the face of the child with whom he had played long years ago.

'Where is Geirlaug?' he exclaimed, looking round the hall; and his eyes fell upon the strange lady. With a smile she held out a ring which he had given her on her twelfth birthday, when they were still children, without a thought of the future. 'You and none other shall be my wife,' he said, taking her hand, and leading her into the middle of the company.

It is not easy to describe the scene that followed. Of course, nobody understood what had occurred, and the king and queen imagined that their son had suddenly gone mad. As for the princess her rage and fury were beyond belief. The guests left the hall as quickly as they could, so that the royal family might arrange their own affairs, and in the end it was settled that half the kingdom must be given to the despised princess, instead of a husband. She sailed back at once to her country, where she was soon betrothed to a young noble, whom, in reality, she liked much better than Grethari. That evening Grethari was married to Geirlaug, and they lived happily till they died, and made all their people happy also.

(From *Neuisländischen Volksmärchen*.)

THE STORY OF LITTLE KING LOC

Two or three miles from the coast of France, anyone sailing in a ship on a calm day can see deep, deep down, the trunks of great trees standing up in the water. Many hundreds of years ago these trees formed part of a large forest, full of all sorts of wild animals, and beyond the forest was a fine city, guarded by a castle in which dwelt the Dukes of Clarides. But little by little the sea drew nearer to the town; the foundations of the houses became undermined and fell in, and at length a shining sea flowed over the land. However, all this happened a long time after the story I am going to tell you.

The Dukes of Clarides had always lived in the midst of their people, and protected them both in war and peace.

At the period when this tale begins the Duke Robert was dead, leaving a young and beautiful duchess who ruled in his stead. Of course everyone expected her to marry again, but she refused all suitors who sought her hand, saying that, having only one soul she could have only one husband, and that her baby daughter was quite enough for her.

One day, she was sitting in the tower, which looked out over a rocky heath, covered in summer with purple and yellow flowers, when she beheld a troop of horsemen riding towards the castle. In the midst, seated on a white horse with black and silver trappings, was a lady whom the duchess at once knew to be her friend the Countess of Blanchelande, a young widow like herself, mother of a little boy two years older than Abeille des Clarides. The duchess hailed her arrival with delight, but her joy was soon turned into weeping when the countess sank down beside her on a pile of cushions, and told the reason of her visit.

‘As you know,’ she said, taking her friend’s hand and pressing it between her own, ‘whenever a Countess of Blanchelande is about to die she finds a white rose lying on her pillow. Last night I went to bed feeling unusually happy, but this morning when I woke the rose was resting against my cheek. I have no one to help me in the world but you, and I have come to ask if you will take Youri my son, and let him be a brother to Abeille?’

Tears choked the voice of the duchess, but she flung herself on the countess’s neck, and pressed her close. Silently the two women took leave of each other, and silently the doomed lady mounted her horse and rode home again. Then, giving her sleeping boy into the care of Francœur, her steward, she laid herself quietly on her bed, where, the next morning, they found her dead and peaceful.

So Youri and Abeille grew up side by side, and the duchess faithfully kept her promise, and was a mother to them both. As they got bigger she often took them with her on her journeys through her duchy, and taught them to know her people, and to pity and to aid them.

It was on one of these journeys that, after passing through meadows covered with flowers, Youri caught sight of a great glittering expanse lying beneath some distant mountains.

‘What is that, godmother?’ he asked, waving his hand. ‘The shield of a giant, I suppose.’

‘No; a silver plate as big as the moon!’ said Abeille, twisting herself round on her pony.

‘It is neither a silver plate nor a giant’s shield,’ replied the duchess; ‘but a beautiful lake. Still, in spite of its beauty, it is dangerous to go near it, for in its depths dwell some Undines, or water spirits, who lure all passers-by to their deaths.’

Nothing more was said about the lake, but the children did not forget it, and one morning, after they had returned to the castle, Abeille came up to Youri.

‘The tower door is open,’ whispered she; ‘let us go up. Perhaps we shall find some fairies.’

But they did not find any fairies; only, when they reached the roof, the lake looked bluer and more enchanting than ever. Abeille gazed at it for a moment, and then she said:

‘Do you see? I mean to go there!’

‘But you mustn’t,’ cried Youri. ‘You heard what your mother said. And, besides, it is so far; how could we get there?’

‘*You* ought to know that,’ answered Abeille scornfully. ‘What is the good of being a man, and learning all sorts of things, if you have to ask me. However, there are plenty of other men in the world, and I shall get one of them to tell me.’

Youri coloured; Abeille had never spoken like this before, and, instead of being two years younger than himself, she suddenly seemed many years older. She stood with her mocking eyes fixed on him, till he grew angry at being outdone by a girl, and taking her hand he said boldly:

‘Very well, we will *both* go to the lake.’

The next afternoon, when the duchess was working at her tapestry surrounded by her maidens, the children went out, as usual, to play in the garden. The moment they found themselves alone, Youri turned to Abeille, and holding out his hand, said:

‘Come.’

‘Come where?’ asked Abeille, opening her eyes very wide.

‘To the lake, of course,’ answered the boy.

Abeille was silent. It was one thing to pretend you meant to be disobedient some day, a long time off, and quite another to start for such a distant place without anyone knowing that you had left the garden. ‘And in satin shoes, too! How stupid boys were to be sure.’

‘Stupid or not, I am going to the lake, and you are going with me!’ said Youri, who had not forgotten or forgiven the look she had cast on him the day before. ‘Unless,’ added he, ‘you are afraid, and in that case I shall go alone.’

This was too much for Abeille. Bursting into tears, she flung herself on Youri’s neck, and declared that wherever he went she would go too. So, peace having been made between them, they set out.

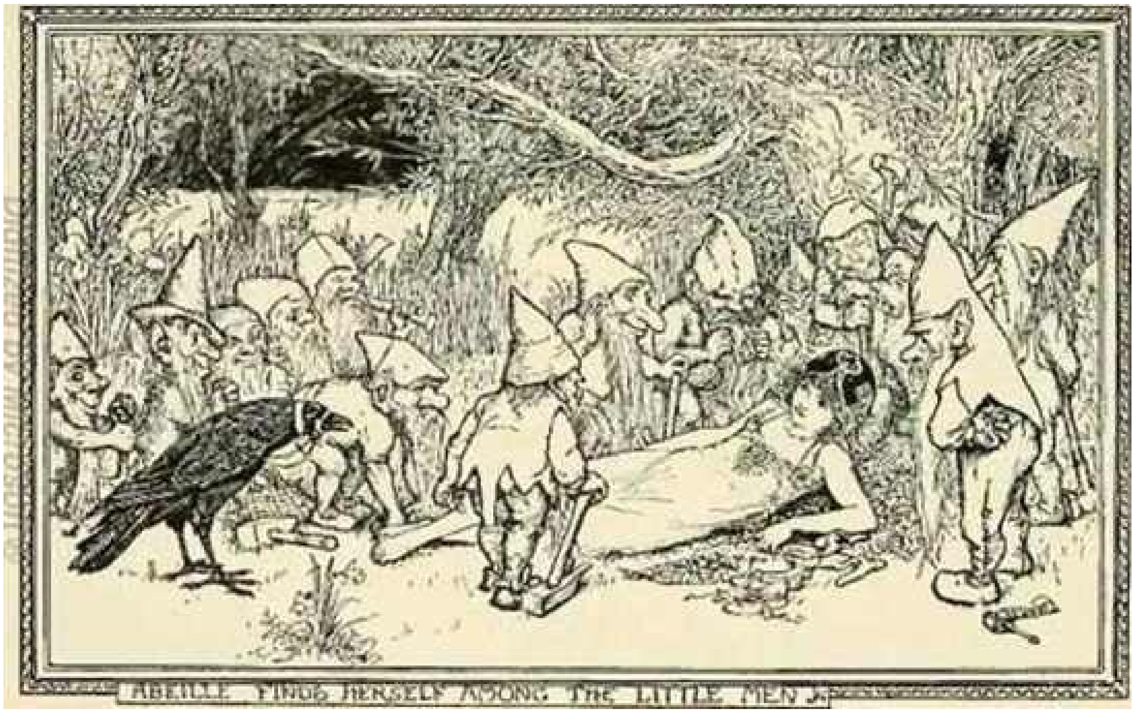

ABEILLE FINDS HERSELF AMONG THE LITTLE MEN.

It was a hot day, and the townspeople were indoors waiting till the sun was low in the sky before they set out either to work or play, so the children passed through the streets unperceived, and crossed the river by the bridge into the flowery meadows along the road by which they had ridden with the duchess. By-and-by Abeille began to feel thirsty, but the sun had drunk up all the water, and not a drop was left for her. They walked on a little further, and by good luck found a cherry-tree covered with ripe fruit, and after a rest and a refreshing meal, they were sure that they were strong enough to reach the lake in a few minutes. But soon Abeille began to limp and to say that her foot hurt her, and Youri had to untie the ribbons that fastened her shoe and see what was the matter. A stone had got in, so this was easily set right, and for a while they skipped along the path singing and chattering, till Abeille stopped again. This time her shoe had come off, and turning to pick it up she caught sight of the towers of the castle, looking such a long way off that her heart sank, and she burst into tears.

‘It is getting dark, and the wolves will eat us,’ sobbed she. But Youri put his arms round her and comforted her.

‘Why we are close to the lake now. There is nothing to be afraid of! We shall be home again to supper,’ cried he. And Abeille dried her eyes, and trotted on beside him.

Yes, the lake was there, blue and silvery with purple and gold irises growing on its banks, and white water-lilies floated on its bosom. Not a trace was there of a man, or of one of the great beasts so much feared by Abeille, but only the marks of tiny forked feet on the sand. The little girl at once pulled off her torn shoes and stockings and let the water flow over her, while Youri looked about for some nuts or strawberries. But none were to be found.

‘I noticed, a little way back, a clump of blackberry bushes,’ said he. ‘Wait here for me, and I will go and gather some fruit, and after that we will start home again.’ And Abeille, leaning her head drowsily against a cushion of soft moss, murmured something in reply, and soon fell asleep. In her dream a crow, bearing the smallest man that ever was seen, appeared hovering for a moment above her, and then vanished. At the same instant Youri returned and placed by her side a large leaf-full of strawberries.

‘It is a pity to wake her just yet,’ thought he, and wandered off beyond a clump of silvery willows to a spot from which he could get a view of the whole lake. In the moonlight, the light mist that hung over the surface made it look like fairyland. Then gradually the silver veil seemed to break up, and the shapes of fair women with outstretched hands and long green locks floated towards him. Seized with a sudden fright, the boy turned to fly. But it was too late.

Unconscious of the terrible doom that had befallen her foster-brother, Abeille slept on, and did not awake even when a crowd of little men with white beards down to their knees came and stood in a circle round her.

‘What shall we do with her?’ asked Pic, who seemed older than any of them, though they were all very old.

‘Build a cage and put her into it,’ answered Rug.

‘No! No! What should such a beautiful princess do in a cage?’ cried Dig. And Tad, who was the kindest of them all, proposed to carry her home to her parents. But the other gnomes were too pleased with their new toy to listen to this for a moment.

‘Look, she is waking,’ whispered Pau. And as he spoke Abeille slowly opened her eyes. At first she imagined she was still dreaming; but as the little men did not move, it suddenly dawned upon her that they were real, and starting to her feet, she called loudly:

‘Youri! Youri! Where are you?’

At the sound of her voice the gnomes only pressed more closely round her, and, trembling with fear, she hid her face in her hands. The gnomes were at first much puzzled to know what to do; then Tad, climbing on a branch of the willow tree that hung over her, stooped down, and gently stroked her fingers. The child understood that he meant to be kind, and letting her hands fall, gazed at her captors. After an instant’s pause she said:

‘Little men, it is a great pity that you are so ugly. But, all the same, I will love you if you will only give me something to eat, as I am dying of hunger.’

A rustle was heard among the group as she spoke. Some were very angry at being called ugly, and said she deserved no better fate than to be left where she was. Others laughed, and declared that it did not matter what a mere mortal thought about them; while Tad bade Bog, their messenger, fetch her some milk and honey, and the finest white bread that was made in their ovens under the earth. In less time than Abeille would have taken to tie her shoe he was back again, mounted on his crow. And by the time she had eaten the bread and honey and drunk the milk, Abeille was not frightened any more, and felt quite ready to talk.

‘Little men,’ she said, looking up with a smile, ‘your supper was very good, and I thank you for it. My name is Abeille, and my brother is called Youri. Help me to find him, and tell me which is the path that leads to the castle, for mother must think something dreadful has happened to us!’

‘But your feet are so sore that you cannot walk,’ answered Dig. ‘And we may not cross the bounds into your country. The best we can do is to make a litter of twigs and cover it with moss, and we will bear you into the mountains, and present you to our king.’

Now, many a little girl would have been terrified at the thought of being carried off alone, she did not know where. But Abeille, when she had recovered from her first fright, was pleased at the notion of her strange adventure.

‘How much she would have to tell her mother and Youri on her return. Probably *they* would never go inside a mountain, if they lived to be a hundred.’ So she curled herself comfortably on her nest of moss, and waited to see what would happen.

Up, and up, and up they went; and by-and-by Abeille fell asleep again, and did not wake till the sun was shining. Up, and up, and up, for the little men could only walk very slowly, though they could spring over rocks quicker than any mortal. Suddenly the light that streamed through the branches of the litter began to change. It seemed hardly less bright, but it was certainly different; then the litter was put down, and the gnomes crowded round and helped Abeille to step out of it.

Before her stood a little man not half her size, but splendidly dressed and full of dignity. On his head was a crown of such huge diamonds that you wondered how his small body could support it. A royal mantle fell from his shoulders, and in his hand he held a lance.

'King Loc,' said one of the forest gnomes, 'we found this beautiful child asleep by the lake, and have brought her to you. She says that her name is Abeille, and her mother is the Duchess des Clarides.'

'You have done well,' answered the king; 'she shall be one of us.' And standing on tiptoe, so that he could kiss her hand, he told her that they would all take care of her and make her happy, and that anything she wished for she should have at once.

'I want a pair of shoes,' replied Abeille.

'Shoes!' commanded the king, striking the ground with his lance; and immediately a lovely pair of silver shoes embroidered with pearls were slipped on her feet by one of the gnomes.

'They are beautiful shoes,' said Abeille rather doubtfully; 'but do you think they will carry me all the way back to my mother?'

'No, they are not meant for rough roads,' replied the king, 'but for walking about the smooth paths of the mountain, for we have many wonders to show you.'

'Little King Loc,' answered Abeille, 'take away these beautiful slippers and give me a pair of wooden shoes instead, and let me go back to my mother.' But King Loc only shook his head.

'Little King Loc,' said Abeille again — and this time her voice trembled— 'let me go back to my mother and Youri, and I will love you with all my heart, nearly as well as I love them.'

'Who is Youri?' asked King Loc.

'Why — Youri — who has lived with us since I was a baby,' replied Abeille; surprised that he did not know what everyone else was aware of, and never guessing that by mentioning the boy she was sealing her own fate. For King Loc had already thought what a good wife she would make him in a few years' time, and he did not want Youri to come between them. So he was silent, and Abeille, seeing he was not pleased, burst into tears.

'Little King Loc,' she cried, taking hold of a corner of his mantle, 'think how unhappy my mother will be. She will fancy that wild beasts have eaten me, or that I have got drowned in the lake.'

'Be comforted,' replied King Loc; 'I will send her a dream, so that she shall know that you are safe.'

At this Abeille's sad face brightened. 'Little King Loc,' she said, smiling, 'how clever you are! But you must send her a dream every night, so that she shall see *me* — and *me* a dream, so that I may see her.'

And this King Loc promised to do.

When Abeille grew accustomed to do without her mother and Youri, she made herself happy enough in her new home. Everyone was kind to her, and petted her, and then there were such quantities of new things for her to see. The gnomes were always busy, and knew how to fashion beautiful toys as well or better than the people who lived on the earth; and now and then, wandering with Tad or Dig in the underground passages, Abeille would catch a glimpse of blue sky through a rent in the rocks, and this she loved best of all. In this manner six years passed away.

'His Highness King Loc wishes to see you in his presence chamber,' said Tad, one morning, to Abeille, who was singing to herself on a golden lute; and Abeille, wondering why the king had grown so formal all of a sudden, got up obediently. Directly she appeared, King Loc opened a door in the wall which led into his treasure chamber. Abeille had never been there before, and was amazed at the splendid things heaped up before her. Gold, jewels, brocades, carpets, lay round the walls, and she walked about examining one glittering object after another, while King Loc mounted a throne of gold and ivory at one end of the hall, and watched her. 'Choose whatever you wish,' he said at last. A necklace of most lovely pearls was hanging from the wall, and after hesitating for a moment between that and a circlet of diamonds and sapphires, Abeille stretched up her hand towards it. But before she touched it her eyes lighted on a tiny piece of sky visible through a crack of the rock, and her hand dropped by her side. 'Little King Loc, let me go up to the earth once again,' she said.

Then King Loc made a sign to the treasurer, who opened a coffer full of nothing but precious stones, larger and more dazzling than were worn by any earthly monarch. 'Choose what you will, Abeille,' whispered King Loc.

But Abeille only shook her head.

'A drop of dew in the garden at Clarides is brighter to me than the best of those diamonds,' she answered, 'and the bluest of the stones are not as blue as the eyes of Youri.' And as she spoke a sharp pain ran through the heart of King Loc. For an instant he said nothing, then he lifted his head and looked at her. 'Only those who despise riches should possess them. Take this crown, from henceforth you are the Princess of the Gnomes.'

During thirty days no work was done in those underground regions, for a feast was held in honour of the new princess. At the end of that period, the king appeared before Abeille, clad in his most splendid garments, and solemnly asked her to be his wife.

'Little King Loc,' answered the girl, 'I love you as you are, for your goodness and kindness to me; but never, never can I love you as anything else.'

The king sighed. It was only what he had expected; still, his disappointment was great, though he tried bravely to hide it, and even to smile as he said: 'Then, Abeille, will you promise me one thing? If there should come a day when you find that there is somebody whom you *could* love, will you tell me?'

And in her turn Abeille promised.

After this, in spite of the fact that everyone was just as kind to her as before, Abeille was no longer the merry child who passed all her days playing with the little gnomes. People who dwell under the earth grow up much faster than those who live on its surface, and, at thirteen, the girl was already a woman. Besides, King Loc's words had set her thinking; she spent many hours by herself, and her face was no longer round and rosy, but thin and pale. It was in vain that the gnomes did their best to entice her into her old games, they had lost their interest, and even her lute lay unnoticed on the ground.

But one morning a change seemed to come over her. Leaving the room hung with beautiful silks, where she usually sat alone, she entered the king's presence, and taking his hand she led him through long corridors till they came to a place where a strip of blue sky was to be seen.

'Little King Loc,' she said, turning her eyes upon him, 'let me behold my mother again, or I shall surely die.' Her voice shook, and her whole body trembled. Even an enemy might have pitied her; but the king, who loved her, answered nothing. All day long Abeille stayed there, watching the light fade, and the sky grow pale. By-and-by the stars came out, but the girl never moved from her place. Suddenly a hand touched her. She looked round with a start, and there was King Loc, covered from head to foot in a dark mantle, holding another over his arm. 'Put on this and follow me,' was all he said. But Abeille somehow knew that she was going to see her mother.

On, and on, and on they went, through passages where Abeille had never been before, and at length she was out in the world again. Oh! how beautiful it all was! How fresh was the air, and how sweet was the smell of the flowers! She felt as if she should die with joy, but at that moment King Loc lifted her off the ground, and, tiny though he was, carried her quite easily across the garden and through an open door into the silent castle.

‘Listen, Abeille,’ he whispered softly. ‘You have guessed where we are going, and you know that every night I send your mother a vision of you, and she talks to it in her dream, and smiles at it. To-night it will be no vision she sees, but you yourself; only remember, that if you touch her or speak to her my power is lost, and never more will she behold either you or your image.’

By this time they had reached the room which Abeille knew so well, and her heart beat violently as the gnome carried her over the threshold. By the light of a lamp hanging over the bed Abeille could see her mother, beautiful still, but with a face that had grown pale and sad. As she gazed the sadness vanished, and a bright smile came in its stead. Her mother’s arms were stretched out towards her, and the girl, her eyes filled with tears of joy, was stooping to meet them, when King Loc hastily snatched her up, and bore her back to the realm of the gnomes.

If the king imagined that by granting Abeille’s request he would make her happy, he soon found out his mistake, for all day long the girl sat weeping, paving no heed to the efforts of her friends to comfort her.

‘Tell me what is making you so unhappy?’ said King Loc, at last. And Abeille answered:

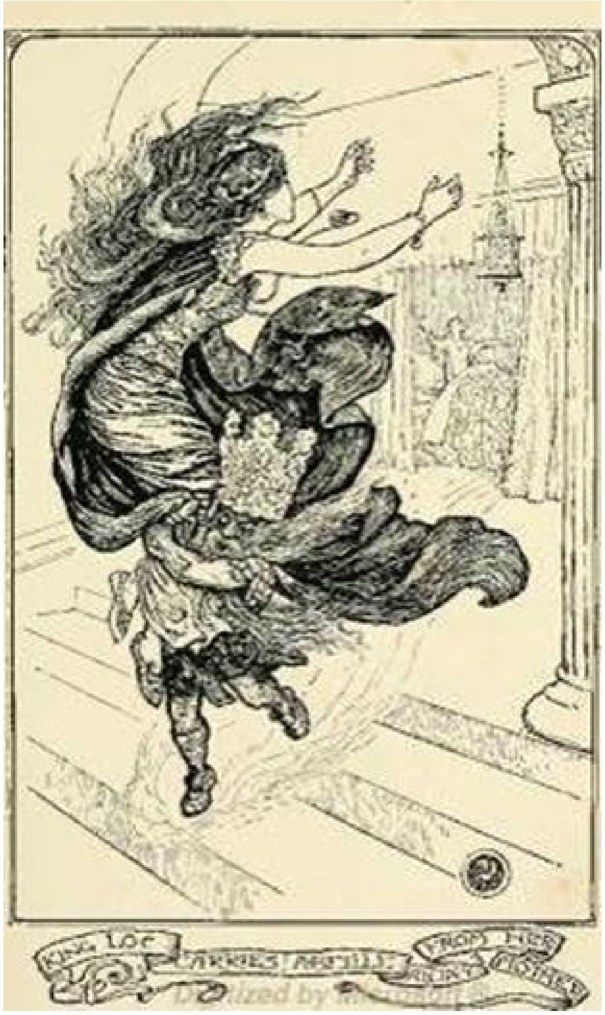

King Loc carries Abeille away from her mother

‘Little King Loc, and all my friends here, you are so good and kind that I know that you are miserable when I am in trouble. I would be happy if I could, but it is stronger than I. I am weeping because I shall never see again Youri de Blanchelande, whom I love with all my heart. It is a worse grief than parting with my mother, for at least I know where she is and what she is doing; while, as for Youri, I cannot tell if he is dead or alive.’

The gnomes were all silent. Kind as they were, they were not mortals, and had never felt either great joys or deep sorrows. Only King Loc dimly guessed at something of both, and he went away to consult an old, old gnome, who lived in the lowest depth of the mountain, and had spectacles of every sort, that enabled him to see all that was happening, not only on the earth, but under the sea.

Nur, for such was his name, tried many of these spectacles before he could discover anything about Youri de Blanchelande.

‘There he is!’ he cried at last. ‘He is sitting in the palace of the Undines, under the great lake; but he does not like his prison, and longs to be back in the world, doing great deeds.’

It was true. In the seven years that had passed since he had left the castle of Clarides to go with Abeille to the blue lake, Youri in his turn had become a man.

The older he grew the more weary he got of the petting and spoiling he received at the hands of the green-haired maidens, till, one day, he flung himself at the feet of the Undine queen, and implored permission to return to his old home.

The queen stooped down and stroked his hair.

‘We cannot spare you,’ she murmured gently. ‘Stay here, and you shall be king, and marry me.’

‘But it is Abeille I want to marry,’ said the youth boldly. But he might as well have talked to the winds, for at last the queen grew angry, and ordered him to be put in a crystal cage which was built for him round a pointed rock.

It was here that King Loc, aided by the spectacles of Nur, found him after many weeks’ journey. As we know, the gnomes walk slowly, and the way was long and difficult. Luckily, before he started, he had taken with him his magic ring, and the moment it touched the wall the crystal cage split from top to bottom.

‘Follow that path, and you will find yourself in the world again,’ he said to Youri; and without waiting to listen to the young man’s thanks, set out on the road he had come.

‘Bog,’ he cried, to the little man on the crow, who had ridden to meet him. ‘Hasten to the palace and inform the Princess Abeille that Youri de Blanchelande, for seven years a captive in the kingdom of the Undines, has now returned to the castle of Clarides.’

The first person whom Youri met as he came out of the mountain was the tailor who had made all his clothes from the time that he came to live at the castle. Of this old friend, who was nearly beside himself with joy at the sight of the little master, lost for so many years, the count begged for news of his foster-mother and Abeille.

‘Alas! my lord, where can you have been that you do not know that the Princess Abeille was carried off by the gnomes on the very day that you disappeared yourself? At least, so we guess. Ah! that day has left many a mark on our duchess! Yet she is not without a gleam of hope that her daughter is living yet, for every night the poor mother is visited by a dream which tells her all that the princess is doing.’

The good man went on to tell of all the changes that seven years had brought about in the village, but Youri heard nothing that he said, for his mind was busy with thoughts of Abeille.

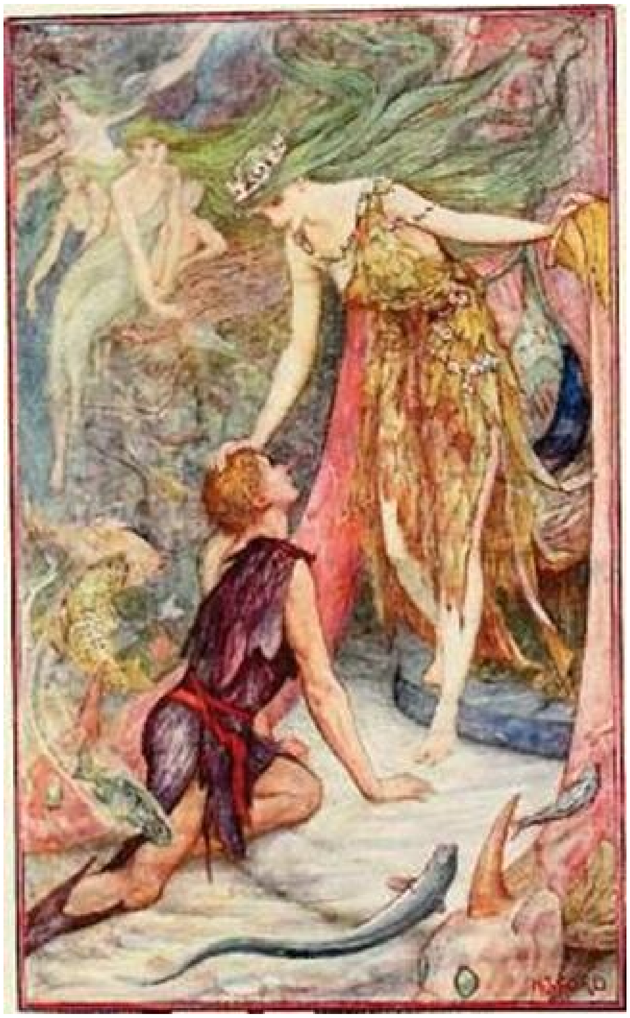

At length he roused himself, and ashamed of his delay, he hastened to the chamber of the duchess, who held him in her arms as if she would never let him go. By-and-by, however, when she became calmer, he began to question her about Abeille, and how best to deliver her from the power of the gnomes. The duchess then told him that she had sent out men in all directions to look for the children directly they were found to be missing, and that one of them had noticed a troop of little men far away on the mountains, evidently carrying a litter. He was hastening after them, when, at his feet, he beheld a tiny satin slipper, which he stooped to pick up. But as he did so a dozen of the gnomes had swarmed upon him like flies, and beat him about the head till he dropped the slipper, which they took away with them, leaving the poor man dizzy with pain. When he recovered his senses the group on the mountain had disappeared.

That night, when everyone was asleep, Youri and his old servant Francœur, stole softly down into the armoury, and dressed themselves in light suits of chain armour, with helmets and short swords, all complete. Then they mounted two horses that Francœur had tied up in the forest, and set forth for the kingdom of the gnomes. At the end of an hour’s hard riding, they came to the cavern which Francœur had heard from childhood led into the centre of the earth. Here they dismounted, and entered cautiously, expecting to find darkness as thick as what they had left outside. But they had only gone a few steps when they were nearly blinded by a sudden blaze of light, which seemed to proceed from a sort of portcullis door, which barred the way in front of them.

‘Who are you?’ asked a voice. And the count answered:

‘Youri de Blanchelande, who has come to rescue Abeille des Clarides.’ And at these words the gate slowly swung open, and closed behind the two strangers.

Youri listened to the clang with a spasm of fear in his heart; then the desperate position he was in gave him courage. There was no retreat for him now, and in front was drawn up a large force of gnomes, whose arrows were falling like hail about him. He raised his shield to ward them off, and as he did so his eyes fell on a little man standing on a rock above the rest, with a crown on his head and a royal mantle on his shoulders. In an instant Youri had flung away his shield and sprung forward, regardless of the arrows that still fell about him.

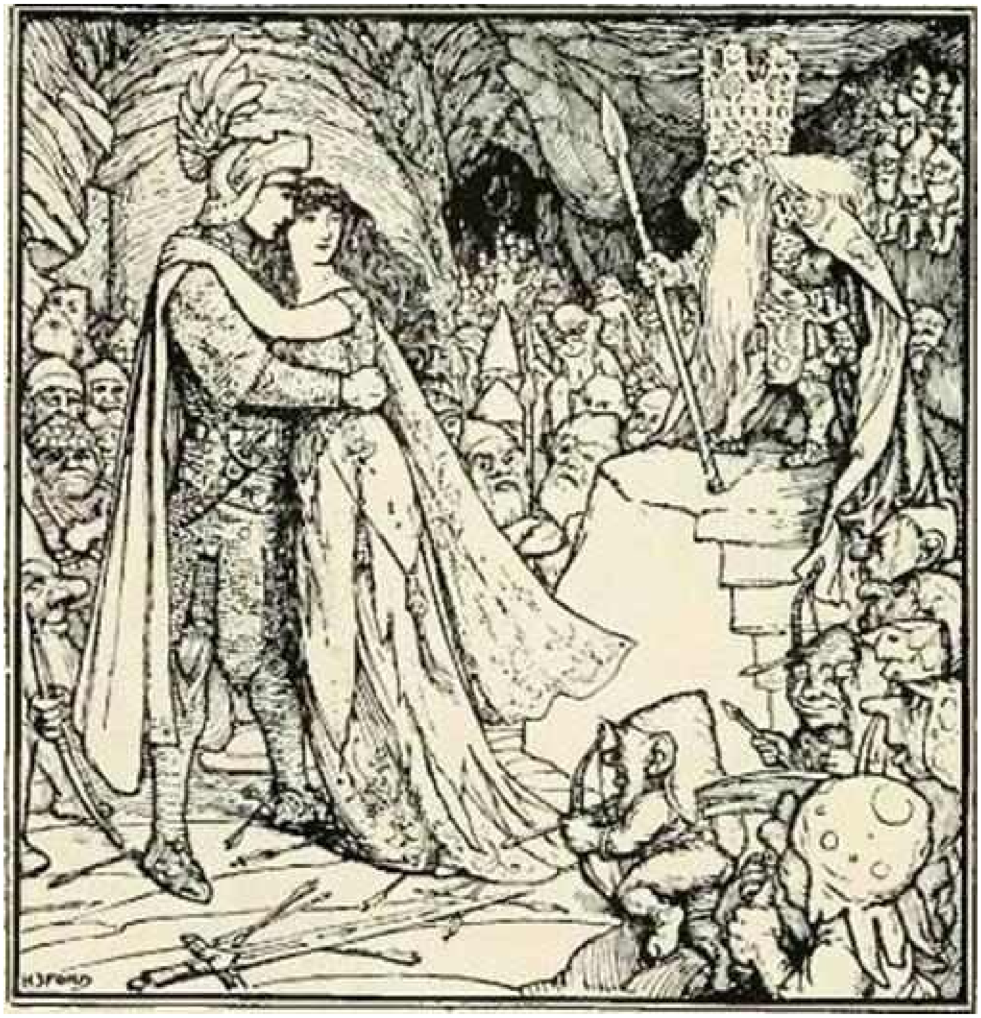

‘Oh, is it you, is it *really* you, my deliverer? And is it your subjects who hold as a captive Abeille whom I love?’

‘I am King Loc,’ was the answer. And the figure with the long beard bent his eyes kindly on the eager youth. ‘If Abeille has lived with us all these years, for many of them she was quite happy. But the gnomes, of whom you think so little, are a just people, and they will not keep her against her will. Beg the princess to be good enough to come hither,’ he added, turning to Rug.

Amidst a dead silence Abeille entered the vast space and looked around her. At first she saw nothing but a vast host of gnomes perched on the walls and crowding on the floor of the big hall. Then her eyes met those of Youri, and with a cry that came from her heart she darted towards him, and threw herself on his breast.

‘Abeille,’ said the king, when he had watched her for a moment, with a look of pain on his face, ‘is this the man that you wish to marry?’

‘Yes, Little King Loc, this is he and nobody else! And see how I can laugh now, and how happy I am!’ And with that she began to cry.

‘Hush, Abeille! there must be no tears to-day,’ said Youri, gently stroking her hair. ‘Come, dry your eyes, and thank King Loc, who rescued me from the cage in the realm of the Undines.’

As Youri spoke Abeille lifted her head, and a great light came into her face. At last she understood.

‘You did that for me?’ she whispered. ‘Ah, Little King Loc —— !’

So, loaded with presents, and followed by regrets, Abeille went home. In a few days the marriage took place; but however happy she was, and however busy she might be, never a month passed by without a visit from Abeille to her friends in the kingdom of the gnomes.

(Adapted and shortened from the story of *Abeille*, by M. Anatole France.)

A LONG-BOW STORY

One day a bunniah, or banker, was walking along a country road when he overtook a farmer going in the same direction. Now the bunniah was very grasping, like most of his class, and was lamenting that he had had no chance of making any money that day; but at the sight of the man in front he brightened up wonderfully.

‘That is a piece of luck,’ he said to himself. ‘Let me see if this farmer is not good for something’; and he hastened his steps.

After they had bid one another good day very politely, the bunniah said to the farmer:

‘I was just thinking how dull I felt, when I beheld you, but since we are going the same way, I shall find the road quite short in such agreeable company.’

‘With all my heart,’ replied the farmer; ‘but what shall we talk about? A city man like you will not care to hear about cattle and crops.’

‘Oh,’ said the bunniah, ‘I’ll tell you what we will do. We will each tell the other the wildest tale we can imagine, and he who first throws doubt on the other’s story shall pay him a hundred rupees.’

To this the farmer agreed, and begged the bunniah to begin, as he was the bigger man of the two; and privately he made up his mind that, however improbable it might be, nothing should induce him to hint that he did not believe in the bunniah’s tale. Thus politely pressed the great man started:

‘I was going along this road one day, when I met a merchant travelling with a great train of camels laden with merchandise — —’

‘Very likely,’ murmured the farmer; ‘I’ve seen that kind of thing myself.’

‘No less than one hundred and one camels,’ continued the bunniah, ‘all tied together by their nose strings — nose to tail — and stretching along the road for almost half a mile — —’

‘Well?’ said the farmer.

‘Well, a kite swooped down on the foremost camel and bore him off, struggling, into the air, and by reason of them all being tied together the other hundred camels had to follow — —’

‘Amazing, the strength of that kite!’ said the farmer. ‘But — well — yes, doubtless; yes — well — one hundred and one camels — and what did he do with them?’

‘You doubt it?’ demanded the bunniah.

‘Not a bit!’ said the farmer heartily.

‘Well,’ continued the bunniah, ‘it happened that the princess of a neighbouring kingdom was sitting in her private garden, having her hair combed by her maid, and she was looking upward, with her head thrown back, whilst the maid tugged away at the comb, when that wretched kite, with its prey, went soaring overhead; and, as luck would have it, the camels gave an extra kick just then, the kite lost his hold, and the whole hundred and one camels dropped right into the princess’s left eye!’

‘Poor thing!’ said the farmer; ‘it’s so painful having anything in one’s eye.’

‘Well,’ said the bunniah, who was now warming to his task, ‘the princess shook her head, and sprang up, clapping her hand on her eye. “Oh dear!” she cried, “I’ve got something in my eye, and how it *does* smart!”’

‘It always does,’ observed the farmer, ‘perfectly true. Well, what did the poor thing do?’

‘At the sound of her cries, the maid came running to her assistance. “Let me look,” said she; and with that she gave the princess’s eyelid a twitch, and out came a camel, which the maid put in her pocket—’ (‘Ah!’ grunted the farmer)—‘and then she just twisted up the corner of her headcloth and fished a hundred more of them out of the princess’s eye, and popped them all into her pocket with the other.’

Here the bunniah gasped as one who is out of breath, but the farmer looked at him slowly. ‘Well?’ said he.

‘I can’t think of anything more now,’ replied the bunniah. ‘Besides, that is the end; what do you say to it?’

‘Wonderful,’ replied the farmer, ‘and no doubt perfectly true!’

‘Well, it is your turn,’ said the bunniah. ‘I am so anxious to hear your story. I am sure it will be very interesting.’

‘Yes, I think it will,’ answered the farmer, and he began:

‘My father was a very prosperous man. Five cows he had, and three yoke of oxen, and half a dozen buffaloes, and goats in abundance; but of all his possessions the thing he loved best was a mare. A well bred mare she was — oh, a very fine mare!’

‘Yes, yes,’ interrupted the bunniah, ‘get on!’

‘I’m getting on,’ said the farmer, ‘don’t you hurry me! Well, one day, as ill-luck would have it, he rode that mare to market with a torn saddle, which galled her so, that when they got home she had a sore on her back as big as the palm of your hand.’

‘Yes,’ said the bunniah impatiently, ‘what next?’

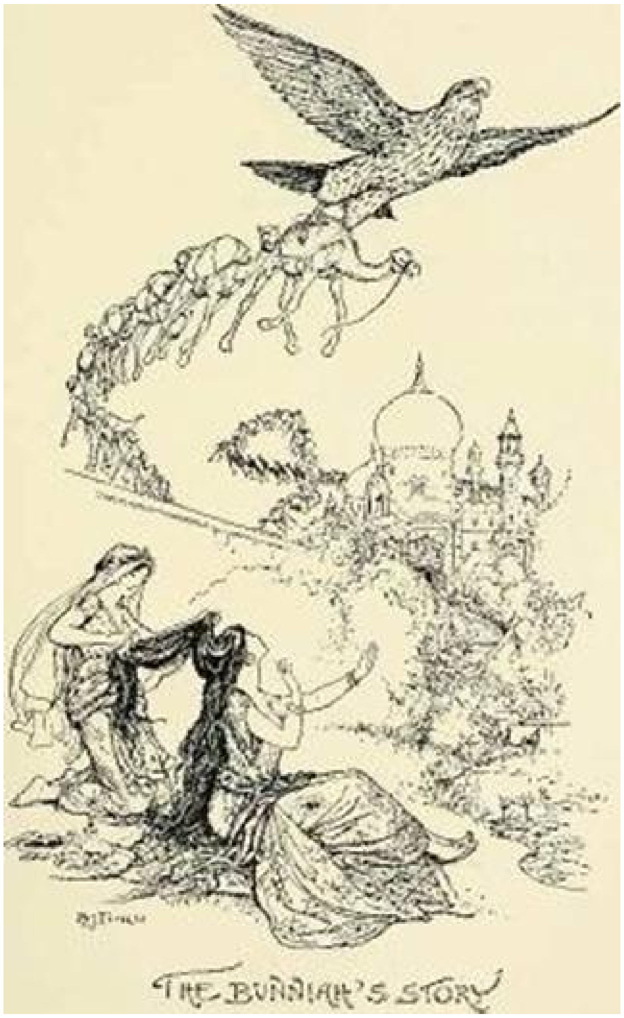

‘It was June,’ said the farmer, ‘and you know how, in June, the air is full of dust-storms with rain at times? Well, the poor beast got dust in that wound, and what’s more, with the dust some grains of wheat, and, what with the dust and the heat and the wet, that wheat sprouted and began to grow!’

‘Wheat does when it gets a fair chance,’ said the bunniah.

‘Yes; and the next thing we knew was that there was a crop of wheat on that horse’s back as big as anything you ever saw in a hundred-acre field, and we had to hire twenty men to reap it!’

‘One generally has to hire extra hands for reaping,’ said the bunniah.

‘And we got four hundred maunds of wheat off that mare’s back!’ continued the farmer.

‘A good crop!’ murmured the bunniah.

‘And your father,’ said the farmer, ‘a poor wretch, with hardly enough to keep body and soul together — (the bunniah snorted, but was silent) — came to my father, and he said, putting his hands together as humble as could be — —’

The bunniah here flashed a furious glance at his companion, but bit his lips and held his peace.

‘“I haven’t tasted food for a week. Oh! great master, let me have the loan of sixteen maunds of wheat from your store, and I will repay you.”’

‘“Certainly, neighbour,” answered my father; “take what you need, and repay it as you can.”’

‘Well?’ demanded the bunniah with fury in his eye.

‘Well, he took the wheat away with him,’ replied the farmer; ‘but he never repaid it, and it’s a debt to this day. Sometimes I wonder whether I shall not go to law about it.’

Then the bunniah began running his thumb quickly up and down the fingers of his right hand, and his lips moved in quick calculation.

‘What is the matter?’ asked the farmer.

‘The wheat is the cheaper; I’ll pay you for the wheat,’ said the bunniah, with the calmness of despair, as he remembered that by his own arrangement he was bound to give the farmer a hundred rupees.

And to this day they say in those parts, when a man owes a debt: ‘Give me the money; or, if not that, give me at least the wheat.’

(This is from oral tradition.)

JACKAL OR TIGER?

One hot night, in Hindustan, a king and queen lay awake in the palace in the midst of the city. Every now and then a faint air blew through the lattice, and they hoped they were going to sleep, but they never did. Presently they became more broad awake than ever at the sound of a howl outside the palace.

‘Listen to that tiger!’ remarked the king.

‘Tiger?’ replied the queen. ‘How should there be a tiger inside the city? It was only a jackal.’

‘I tell you it was a tiger,’ said the king.

‘And I tell you that you were dreaming if you thought it was anything but a jackal,’ answered the queen.

‘I say it was a tiger,’ cried the king; ‘don’t contradict me.’

‘Nonsense!’ snapped the queen. ‘It was a jackal.’ And the dispute waxed so warm that the king said at last:

‘Very well, we’ll call the guard and ask; and if it was a jackal I’ll leave this kingdom to you and go away; and if it was a tiger then you shall go, and I will marry a new wife.’

‘As you like,’ answered the queen, ‘there isn’t any doubt which it was.’

So the king called the two soldiers who were on guard outside and put the question to them. But, whilst the dispute was going on, the king and queen had got so excited and talked so loud that the guards had heard nearly all they said, and one man observed to the other:

‘Mind you declare that the king is right. It certainly was a jackal, but, if we say so, the king will probably not keep his word about going away, and we shall get into trouble, so we had better take his side.’

To this the other agreed; therefore, when the king asked them what animal they had seen, both the guards said it was certainly a tiger, and that the king was right of course, as he always was. The king made no remark, but sent for a palanquin, and ordered the queen to be placed in it, bidding the four bearers of the palanquin to take her a long way off into the forest and there leave her. In spite of her tears, she was forced to obey, and away the bearers went for three days and three nights until they came to a dense wood. There they set down the palanquin with the queen in it, and started home again.

Now the queen thought to herself that the king could not mean to send her away for good, and that as soon as he had got over his fit of temper he would summon her back; so she stayed quite still for a long time, listening with all her ears for approaching footsteps, but heard none. After a while she grew nervous, for she was all alone, and put her head out of the palanquin and looked about her. Day was just breaking, and birds and insects were beginning to stir; the leaves rustled in a warm breeze; but, although the queen’s eyes wandered in all directions, there was no sign of any human being. Then her spirit gave way, and she began to cry.

It so happened that close to the spot where the queen’s palanquin had been set down, there dwelt a man who had a tiny farm in the midst of the forest, where he and his wife lived alone far from any neighbours. As it was hot weather the farmer had been sleeping on the flat roof of his house, but was awakened by the sound of weeping. He jumped up and ran downstairs as fast as he could, and into the forest towards the place the sound came from, and there he found the palanquin.

‘Oh, poor soul that weeps,’ cried the farmer, standing a little way off, ‘who are you?’ At this salutation from a stranger the queen grew silent, dreading she knew not what.

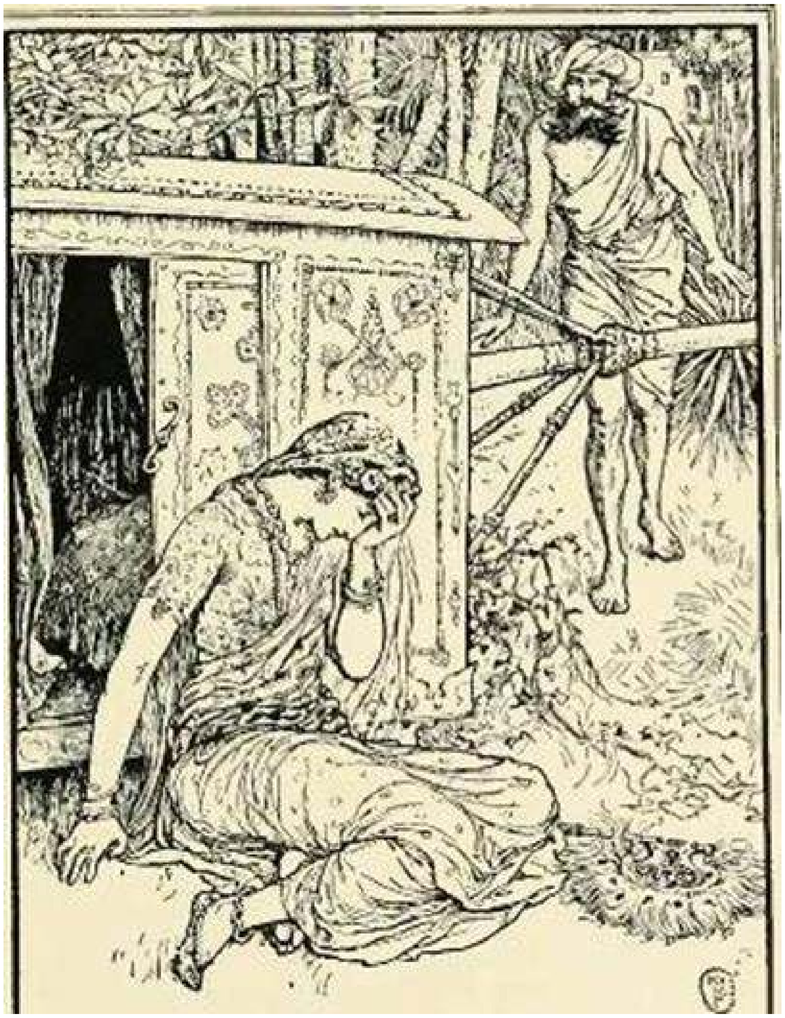

‘Oh, you that weep,’ repeated the farmer, ‘fear not to speak to me, for you are to me as a daughter. Tell me, who are you?’

His voice was so kind that the queen gathered up her courage and spoke. And when she had told her story, the farmer called his wife, who led her to their house, and gave her food to eat, and a bed to lie on. And in the farm, a few days later, a little prince was born, and by his mother’s wish named Ameer Ali.

Years passed without a sign from the king. His wife might have been dead for all he seemed to care, though the queen still lived with the farmer, and the little prince had by this time grown up into a strong, handsome, and healthy youth. Out in the forest they seemed far from the world; very few ever came near them, and the prince was continually begging his mother and the farmer to be allowed to go away and seek adventures and to make his own living. But she and the wise farmer always counselled him to wait, until, at last, when he was eighteen years of age, they had not the heart to forbid him any longer. So he started off one early morning, with a sword by his side, a big brass pot to hold water, a few pieces of silver, and a galail or two-stringed bow in his hand, with which to shoot birds as he travelled.

Many a weary mile he tramped day after day, until, one morning, he saw before him just such a forest as that in which he had been born and bred, and he stepped joyfully into it, like one who goes to meet an old friend. Presently, as he made his way through a thicket, he saw a pigeon which he thought would make a good dinner, so he fired a pellet at it from his galail, but missed the pigeon which fluttered away with a startled clatter. At the same instant he heard a great clamour from beyond the thicket, and, on reaching the spot, he found an ugly old woman streaming wet and crying loudly as she lifted from her head an earthen vessel with a hole in it from which the water was pouring. When she saw the prince with his galail in his hand, she called out:

‘Oh, wretched one! why must you choose an old woman like me to play your pranks upon? Where am I to get a fresh pitcher instead of this one that you have broken with your foolish tricks? And how am I to go so far for water twice when one journey wearies me?’

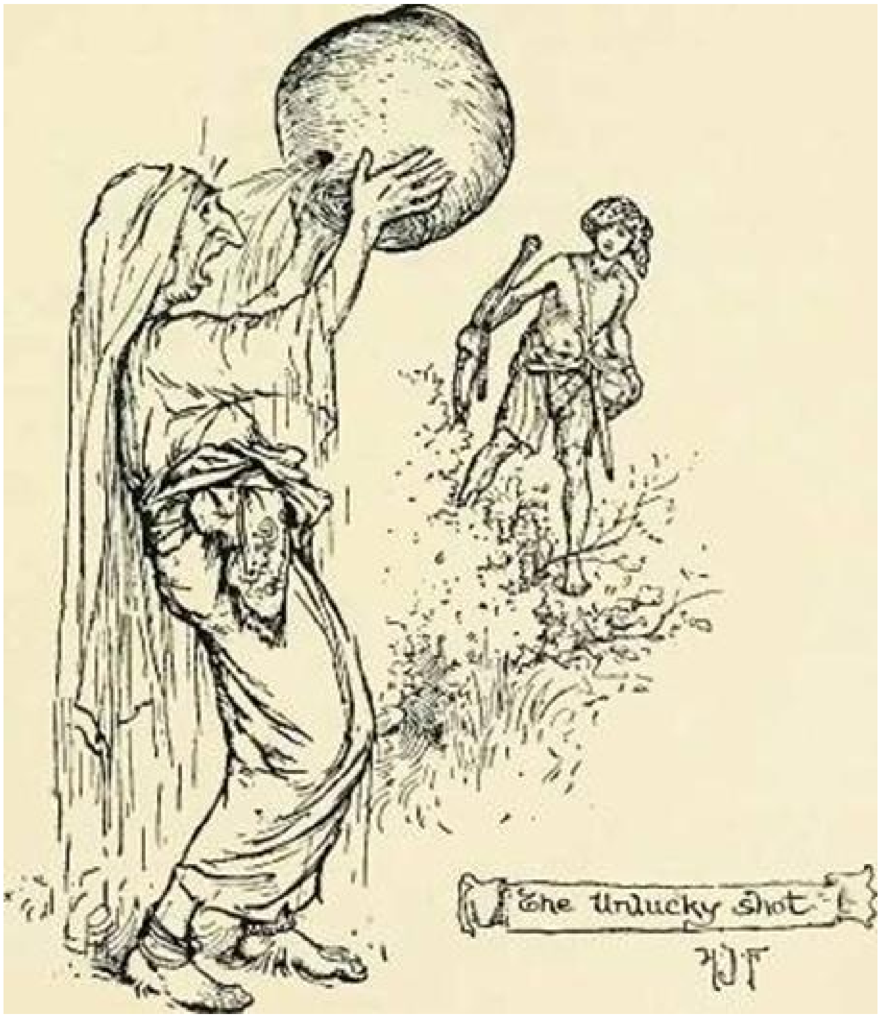

‘But, mother,’ replied the prince, ‘I played no trick upon you! I did but shoot at a pigeon that should have served me for dinner, and as my pellet missed it, it must have broken your pitcher. But, in exchange, you shall have my brass pot, and that will not break easily; and as for getting water, tell me where to find it, and I’ll fetch it while you dry your garments in the sun, and carry it whither you will.’

At this the old woman’s face brightened. She showed him where to seek the water, and when he returned a few minutes later with his pot filled to the brim, she led the way without a word, and he followed. In a short while they came to a hut in the forest, and as they drew near it Ameer Ali beheld in the doorway the loveliest damsel his eyes had ever looked on. At the sight of a stranger she drew her veil about her and stepped into the hut, and much as he wished to see her again Ameer Ali could think of no excuse by which to bring her back, and so, with a heavy heart, he made his salutation, and bade the old woman farewell. But when he had gone a little way she called after him:

‘If ever you are in trouble or danger, come to where you now stand and cry:

“Fairy of the Forest! Fairy of the forest, help me now!” And I will listen to you.’

The prince thanked her and continued his journey, but he thought little of the old woman’s saying, and much of the lovely damsel. Shortly afterwards he arrived at a city; and, as he was now in great straits, having come to the end of his money, he walked straight to the palace of the king and asked for employment. The king said he had plenty of servants and wanted no more; but the young man pleaded so hard that at last the rajah was sorry for him, and promised that he should enter his bodyguard on the condition that he would undertake any service which was especially difficult or dangerous. This was just what Ameer Ali wanted, and he agreed to do whatever the king might wish.

Soon after this, on a dark and stormy night, when the river roared beneath the palace walls, the sound of a woman weeping and wailing was heard above the storm. The king ordered a servant to go and see what was the matter; but the servant, falling on his knees in terror, begged that he might not be sent on such an errand, particularly on a night so wild, when evil spirits and witches were sure to be abroad. Indeed, so frightened was he, that the king, who was very kind-hearted, bade another to go in his stead, but each one showed the same strange fear. Then Ameer Ali stepped forward:

‘This is my duty, your majesty,’ he said, ‘I will go.’

The king nodded, and off he went. The night was as dark as pitch, and the wind blew furiously and drove the rain in sheets into his face; but he made his way down to the ford under the palace walls and stepped into the flooded water. Inch by inch, and foot by foot he fought his way across, now nearly swept off his feet by some sudden swirl or eddy, now narrowly escaping being caught in the branches of some floating tree that came tossing and swinging down the stream. At length he emerged, panting and dripping wet, on the other side. Close by the bank stood a gallows, and on the gallows hung the body of some evildoer, whilst from the foot of it came the sound of sobbing that the king had heard.

Ameer Ali was so grieved for the one who wept there that he thought nothing of the wildness of the night or of the roaring river. As for ghosts and witches, they had never troubled him, so he walked up towards the gallows where crouched the figure of the woman.

‘What ails you?’ he said.

Now the woman was not really a woman at all, but a horrid kind of witch who really lived in Witchland, and had no business on earth. If ever a man strayed into Witchland the ogresses used to eat him up, and this old witch thought she would like to catch a man for supper, and that is why she had been sobbing and crying in hopes that someone out of pity might come to her rescue.

So when Ameer Ali questioned her, she replied:

‘Ah, kind sir, it is my poor son who hangs upon that gallows; help me to get him down and I will bless you for ever.’

Ameer Ali thought that her voice sounded rather eager than sorrowful, and he suspected that she was not telling the truth, so he determined to be very cautious.

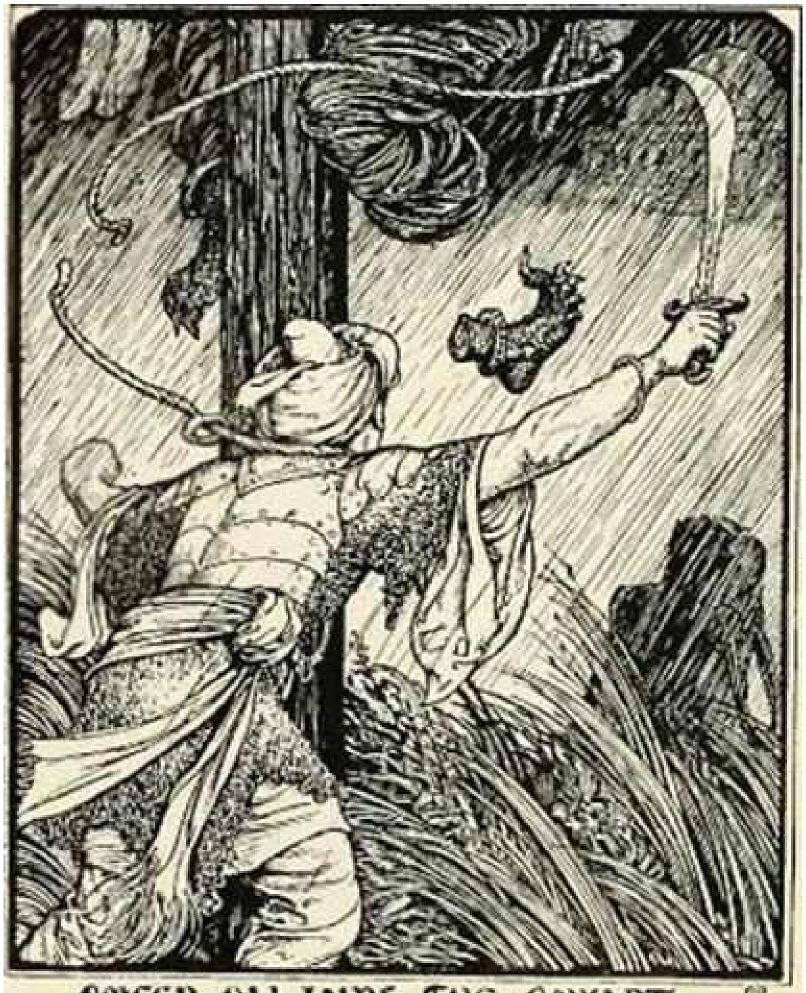

AMEER ALI WINS THE ANKLET

‘That will be rather difficult,’ he said, ‘for the gallows is high, and we have no ladder.’

‘Ah, but if you will just stoop down and let me climb upon your shoulders,’ answered the old witch, ‘I think I could reach him.’ And her voice now sounded so cruel that Ameer Ali was sure that she intended some evil. But he only said:

‘Very well, we will try.’ With that he drew his sword, pretending that he needed it to lean upon, and bent so that the old woman could clamber on to his back, which she did very nimbly. Then, suddenly, he felt a noose slipped over his neck, and the old witch sprang from his shoulders on to the gallows, crying:

‘Now, foolish one, I have got you, and will kill you for my supper.’

But Ameer Ali gave a sweep upwards with his sharp sword to cut the rope that she had slipped round his neck, and not only cut the cord but cut also the old woman’s foot as it dangled above him; and with a yell of pain and anger she vanished into the darkness.

Ameer Ali then sat down to collect himself a little, and felt upon the ground by his side an anklet that had evidently fallen off the old witch’s foot. This he put into his pocket, and as the storm had by this time passed over he made his way back to the palace. When he had finished his story, he took the anklet out of his pocket and handed it to the king, who, like everyone else, was amazed at the glory of the jewels which composed it. Indeed, Ameer Ali himself was astonished, for he had slipped the anklet into his pocket in the dark and had not looked at it since. The king was delighted at its beauty, and having praised and rewarded Ameer Ali, he gave the anklet to his daughter, a proud and spoiled princess.

Now in the women’s apartments in the palace there hung two cages, in one of which was a parrot and in the other a starling, and these two birds could talk as well as human beings. They were both pets of the princess who always fed them herself, and the next day, as she was walking grandly about with her treasure tied round her ankle, she heard the starling say to the parrot:

‘Oh, Toté’ (that was the parrot’s name), ‘how do you think the princess looks in her new jewel?’

‘Think?’ snapped the parrot, who was cross because they hadn’t given him his bath that morning, ‘I think she looks like a washerwoman’s daughter, with one shoe on and the other off! Why doesn’t she wear two of them, instead of going about with one leg adorned and the other empty?’

When the princess heard this she burst into tears; and sending for her father she declared that he must get her another such an anklet to wear on the other leg, or she would die of shame. So the king sent for Ameer Ali and told him that he must get a second anklet exactly like the first within a month, or he should be hanged, for the princess would certainly die of disappointment.

Poor Ameer Ali was greatly troubled at the king’s command, but he thought to himself that he had, at any rate, a month in which to lay his plans. He left the palace at once, and inquired of everyone where the finest jewels were to be got; but though he sought night and day he never found one to compare with the anklet. At last only a week remained, and he was in sore difficulty, when he remembered the Fairy of the forest, and determined to go without loss of time and seek her. Therefore away he went, and after a day’s travelling he reached the cottage in the forest, and, standing where he had stood when the old woman called to him, he cried:

‘Fairy of the forest! Fairy of the forest! Help me! help me!’

Then there appeared in the doorway the beautiful girl he had seen before, whom in all his wanderings he had never forgotten.

‘What is the matter?’ she asked, in a voice so soft that he listened like one struck dumb, and she had to repeat the question before he could answer. Then he told her his story, and she went within the cottage and came back with two wands, and a pot of boiling water. The two wands she planted in the ground about six feet apart, and then, turning to him, she said:

‘I am going to lie down between these two wands. You must then draw your sword and cut off my foot, and, as soon as you have done that, you must seize it and hold it over the cauldron, and every drop of blood that falls from it into the water will become a jewel. Next you must change the wands so that the one that stood at my head is at my feet, and the one at my feet stands at my head, and place the severed foot against the wound and it will heal, and I shall become quite well again as before.’

At first Ameer Ali declared that he would sooner be hanged twenty times over than treat her so roughly; but at length she persuaded him to do her bidding. He nearly fainted himself with horror when he found that, after the cruel blow which lopped her foot off, she lay as one lifeless; but he held the severed foot over the cauldron, and, as drops of blood fell from it, and he saw each turn in the water into shining gems, his heart took courage. Very soon there were plenty of jewels in the cauldron, and he quickly changed the wands, placed the severed foot against the wound, and immediately the two parts became one as before. Then the maiden opened her eyes, sprang to her feet, and drawing her veil about her, ran into the hut, and would not come out or speak to him any more. For a long while he waited, but, as she did not appear, he gathered up the precious stones and returned to the palace. He easily got some one to set the jewels, and found that there were enough to make, not only one, but three rare and beautiful anklets, and these he duly presented to the king on the very day that his month of grace was over.

The king embraced him warmly, and made him rich gifts; and the next day the vain princess put two anklets on each foot, and strutted up and down in them admiring herself in the mirrors that lined her room.

‘Oh, Toté,’ asked the starling, ‘how do you think our princess looks now in these fine jewels?’

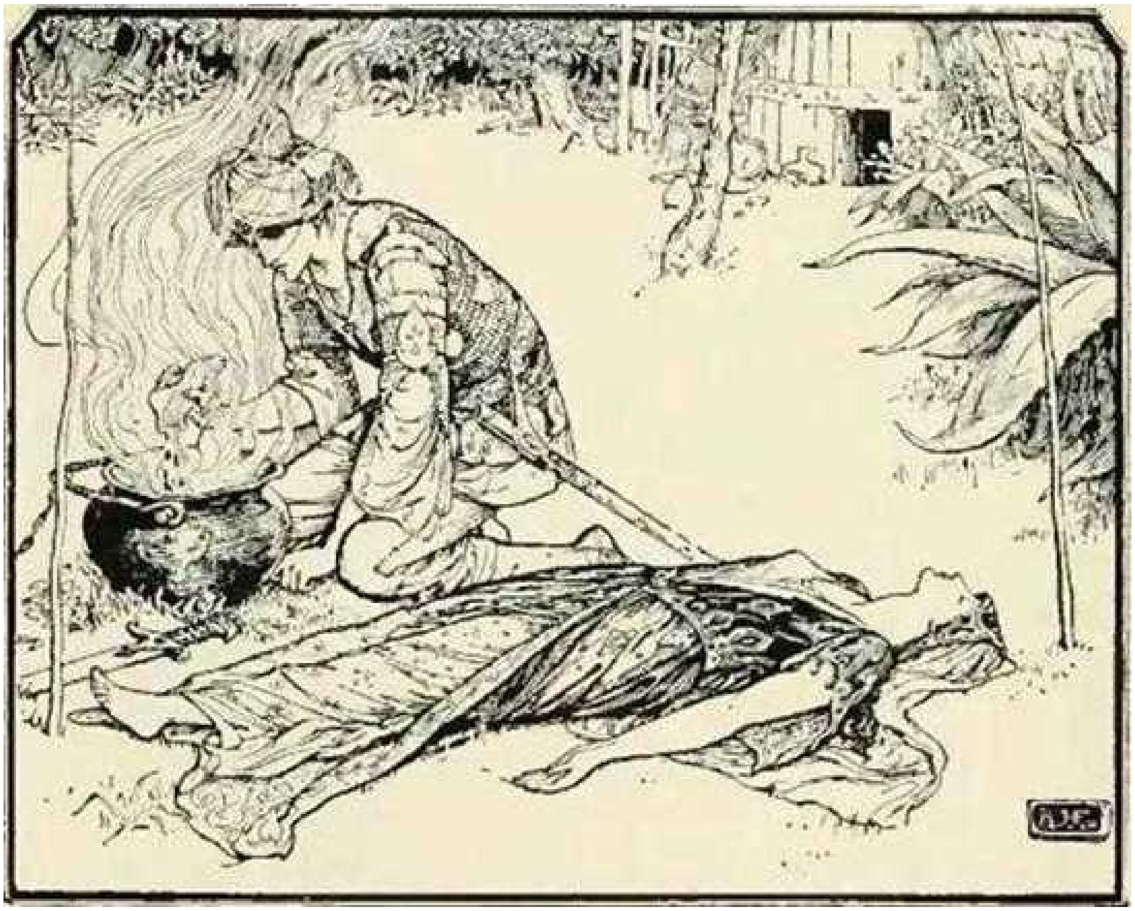

‘Ugh!’ growled the parrot, who was really always cross in the mornings, and never recovered his temper until after lunch, ‘she’s got all her beauty at one end of her now; if she had a few of those fine gew-gaws round her neck and wrists she would look better; but now, to my mind, she looks more than ever like the washerwoman’s daughter dressed up.’

Poor princess! she wept and stormed and raved until she made herself quite ill; and then she declared to her father that, unless she had bracelets and necklace to match the anklets she would die.

Again the king sent for Ameer Ali, and ordered him to get a necklace and bracelets to match those anklets within a month, or be put to a cruel death.

And again Ameer Ali spent nearly the whole month searching for the jewels, but all in vain. At length he made his way to the hut in the forest, and stood and cried:

‘Fairy of the forest! Fairy of the forest! Help me! help me!’

Once more the beautiful maiden appeared at his summons and asked what he wanted, and when he had told her she said he must do exactly as he had done the first time, except that now he must cut off both her hands and her head. Her words turned Ameer Ali pale with horror; but she reminded him that no harm had come to her before, and at last he consented to do as she bade him. From her severed hands and head there fell into the cauldron bracelets and chains of rubies and diamonds, emeralds and pearls that surpassed any that ever were seen. Then the head and hands were joined on to the body, and left neither sign nor scar. Full of gratitude, Ameer Ali tried to speak to her, but she ran into the house and would not come back, and he was forced to leave her and go away laden with the jewels.

When, on the day appointed, Ameer Ali produced a necklace and bracelets each more beautiful and priceless than the last, the king's astonishment knew no bounds, and as for his daughter she was nearly mad with joy. The very next morning she put on all her finery, and thought that now, at least, that disagreeable parrot could find no fault with her appearance, and she listened eagerly when she heard the starling say:

'Oh, Toté, how do you think our princess is looking *now*?'

'Very fine, no doubt,' grumbled the parrot; 'but what is the use of dressing up like that for oneself only? She ought to have a husband — why doesn't she marry the man who got her all these splendid things?'

Then the princess sent for her father and told him that she wished to marry Ameer Ali.

'My dear child,' said her father, 'you really are very difficult to please, and want something new every day. It certainly is time you married someone, and if you choose this man, of course he shall marry you.'

So the king sent for Ameer Ali, and told him that within a month he proposed to do him the honour of marrying him to the princess, and making him heir to the throne.

On hearing this speech Ameer Ali bowed low and answered that he had done and would do the king all the service that lay in his power, save only this one thing. The king, who considered his daughter's hand a prize for any man, flew into a passion, and the princess was more furious still. Ameer Ali was instantly thrown into the most dismal prison that they could find, and ordered to be kept there until the king had time to think in what way he should be put to death.

Meanwhile the king determined that the princess ought in any case to be married without delay, so he sent forth heralds throughout the neighbouring countries, proclaiming that on a certain day any person fitted for a bridegroom and heir to the throne should present himself at the palace.

When the day came, all the court were gathered together, and a great crowd assembled of men, young and old, who thought that they had as good a chance as anyone else to gain both the throne and the princess. As soon as the king was seated, he called upon an usher to summon the first claimant. But, just then, a farmer who stood in front of the crowd cried out that he had a petition to offer.

‘Well, hasten then,’ said the king; ‘I have no time to waste.’

‘Your majesty,’ said the farmer, ‘has now lived and administered justice long in this city, and will know that the tiger who is king of beasts hunts only in the forest, whilst jackals hunt in every place where there is something to be picked up.’

‘What is all this? what is all this?’ asked the king. ‘The man must be mad!’

‘No, your majesty,’ answered the farmer, ‘I would only remind your majesty that there are plenty of jackals gathered to-day to try and claim your daughter and kingdom: every city has sent them, and they wait hungry and eager; but do not, O king, mistake or pretend again to mistake the howl of a jackal for the hunting cry of a tiger.’

The king turned first red and then pale.

‘There is,’ continued the farmer, ‘a royal tiger bred in the forest who has the first and only true claim to your throne.’

‘Where? what do you mean?’ stammered the king, growing pale as he listened.

‘In prison,’ replied the farmer; ‘if your majesty will clear this court of the jackals I will explain.’

‘Clear the court!’ commanded the king; and, very unwillingly, the visitors left the palace.

‘Now tell me what riddle this is,’ said he.

Then the farmer told the king and his ministers how he had rescued the queen and brought up Ameer Ali; and he fetched the old queen herself, whom he had left outside. At the sight of her the king was filled with shame and self-reproach, and wished he could have lived his life over again, and not have married the mother of the proud princess, who caused him endless trouble until her death.

‘My day is past,’ said he. And he gave up his crown to his son Ameer Ali, who went once more and called to the forest fairy to provide him with a queen to share his throne.

‘There is only one person I will marry,’ said he. And this time the maiden did not run away, but agreed to be his wife. So the two were married without delay, and lived long and reigned happily.

As for the old woman whose pitcher Ameer Ali had broken, she was the forest maiden’s fairy godmother, and when she was no longer needed to look after the girl she gladly returned to fairyland.

The old king has never been heard to contradict his wife any more. If he even looks as if he does not agree with her, she smiles at him and says:

‘Is it the tiger, then? or the jackal?’ And he has not another word to say.

THE COMB AND THE COLLAR

Once upon a time there was a king of Lombardy who, though he was uglier than any of his subjects, loved beauty in others, so he married a wife who was declared by everyone to be the handsomest of women; and, whispered some, the most ill-natured also. Certainly she could not endure the sight of a pretty person, and her ladies were all the plainest of their sex. Worse than all, she was desperately jealous of the king's son and daughter by his former wife.

Unfortunately, in spite of all her evil qualities, the king was her complete slave, and badly though she treated the boy, the lovely princess was made to suffer ten times as much. Not contented with giving the girl, for a governess, a woman whose temper was as bad as the queen's own, the cruel step-mother did everything she could think of to spoil the girl's beauty, and to force her to appear as ugly as she was herself; but, try as she might, when the hideous clothes and frightful brown paint had been removed, her loveliness shone out as bright as ever.

Now the king of Lombardy was cousin to the Archduke of Placenza, who had lately lost his reason, to the great grief of his son and daughter, Perarthrites and Ferrandina. The doctors having all failed to restore him to health, the prince and princess sent a messenger to consult a famous enchantress, called the Mother of Sheaths, because everyone who visited her brought with him a knife, which she thrust into one of the sheaths with which her cavern was lined. However, they obtained little comfort from the witch, who bade them 'seek their father's wits in the place where he had lost them.' Against the wishes of the chief ministers, Perarthrites and Ferrandina rode off to the mysterious castle where the king had slept when his terrible fate had overtaken him, and, once inside the gates, nothing more was heard of them.

When three weeks had passed and still there was no news, the king's chief minister called a council to talk over the matter, and, at the end, it was decided that a company of distinguished persons should visit the Mother of Sheaths, and that the knives they must take with them should be of pure gold, richly set with precious stones. The witch was so pleased with the beauty of the gifts that she not only listened attentively to their story, but proceeded to a hole in the cavern, from which she drew out a little case containing a comb, and a steel collar, fastened by a gold key.

'Carry this comb and the collar to every court until you find a lady beautiful enough to unlock the collar, and a man good enough to draw the comb from its case. When you have discovered these, you can return whence you came.'

'But I do not see,' said the chamberlain, 'how that will help us to bring back our lost prince and princess.'

'It is all I can do for you,' answered the Mother of Sheaths; and she went into the back of the cavern, where they dared not follow her.

For the next few months the mad king's principal ministers wandered from one court to another, till at last they reached Lombardy, where they found that their story had already travelled before them. As soon as they appeared in the presence-chamber the king received them with open arms, for in his heart he had no doubt that his wife was the peerless beauty destined to unfasten the collar. And, indeed, if paint and hair-dye and magnificent dresses could have ensured her doing so, he would certainly have been right. But, blinded by his love for this wicked woman, he had really no idea that her charms were not her own.

At the appointed hour the queen entered the throne-room, having by her side the young princess, in the most grievous plight imaginable. Her dress was so contrived as to give the idea that she had a hump; her pink-and-white skin was thickly covered with yellow paint, and her black hair all hidden by a close-fitting brown cloth cap. Murmurs of indignation rose on all sides, and the ambassadors, who had frequently heard the princess compared to the lovely Ferrandina, were dumb with astonishment. As for the king, he could hardly raise his eyes from the ground, so ashamed was he; and signing to his son to take his place, he withdrew from the scene.

Mounting the throne, the prince commanded the trial to begin at once, and the collar was handed to the princess's governess, who, being one of the ugliest women that ever was seen, naturally failed to turn the key. Seizing the chance of his being for a short time in power, the prince resolved to punish her cruelties towards his sister, and especially this last one, to which she had prompted the queen, and ordered her to be taken out and executed, which was done, with great good will, by the attendants. He then further commanded the ladies in waiting to attend his sister to her apartments, and bathe her and dress her in the queen's most splendid robes, as she had none of her own; and the queen, though gnashing her teeth with anger, for once dared not interfere. More quickly than could have been expected, the princess returned, looking so beautiful that if anyone had doubted before who would be able to unlock the collar they were instantly convinced. The prince glanced at her, but said nothing, and, signing to one of the ambassadors, he ordered him to make trial of the comb. One by one each man present did his best to remove it from its case, and one by one each was forced to own himself beaten. At length only the prince remained, but as he was the judge he must wait till the last.

After the men had finished, the ladies of the court had the collar presented to them according to rank, but none could even turn the key. Finally it was handed to the queen, who managed to open it a little way. Her heart beat with triumph, but immediately it closed again with a snap, and she sank back, fainting from disappointment.

By this time there were only left the prince and his sister; and no sooner did he touch the case than it opened of itself, while the lock of the collar yielded directly the princess took hold of the key. Cries of delight rose from the courtiers and attendants; but these were interrupted by a whirlwind accompanied by thick darkness, and followed by an earthquake.

When all was calm again, and the sun shining, the prince and princess had disappeared.

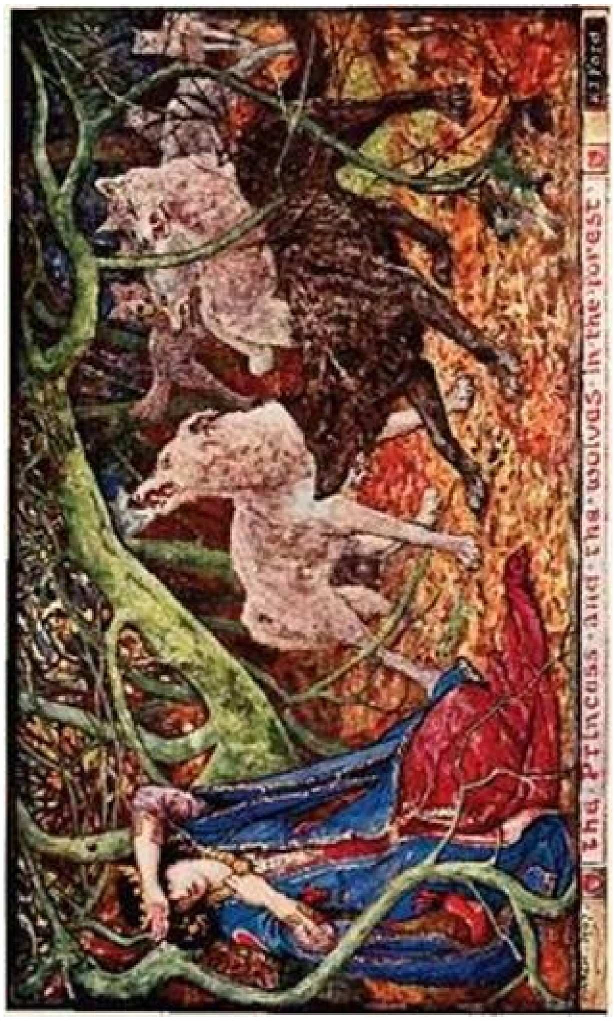
The Princess and the Wolves in the Forest
H J Ford

Although the king’s son and daughter were the only persons who had vanished in the storm, unluckily they had been carried off in opposite directions. The rapid motion through the air deprived the princess of her senses, which she nearly lost a second time, from fright, when she was set down alone in the middle of a thick forest. She ran wildly about, calling to her brother to come to her aid; but her cries only attracted the attention of some hungry wolves, who sprung towards her with their jaws gaping and their red tongues hanging out. Falling on her knees, she covered her face with one hand unconsciously grasping the collar with the other, and awaited her doom. Already she could feel their hot breath on her cheek, and crouched lower and lower, when the eyes of the foremost wolf caught sight of the collar. With a howl that echoed through the forest he bounded away, followed by his companions.

As soon as the princess had recovered from the shock she rose and fled, without knowing whither, until she found herself in a broad road, and beheld, approaching her, a flock of sheep driven by two shepherds. She hastened towards them in order to implore their help, when suddenly the sheep caught sight of her collar and instantly scattered in all directions.

‘I must have something about me which frightens all beasts,’ she thought, and took great comfort therefrom; and in good spirits she went her way, till she came to the gates of an old castle. She was just about to enter and beg for a night’s shelter, when a snow white fox ran across the road, and stopped in front of her.

He was so pretty, and had such bright beseeching eyes, that the princess hastily tucked the collar under her dress, lest he too should flee at the sight of it. Very gently she drew near, hoping he might follow her into the castle, but he only set off in another direction, and, tired though she was, something forced the girl to follow him. Thankful indeed was she when he turned a corner and sat down before the door of a tiny palace, which was built on the bank of a river. When she came up he took the hem of her dress between his teeth and led her into a room where there was a table covered with milk and fruit. After she had eaten and drunk, she lay down upon a pile of cushions, with the fox at her feet, and fell asleep to dream of her lost brother.

If the princess was dreaming of her brother, he was no less thinking of her, on the wild sea-shore, whither the whirlwind had cast him. All was bleak and bare, except a green island which he could only see from the top of a high rock where he passed all his days, gazing on the waving palm trees and glittering waterfalls in the distance.

‘Suppose she should be there?’ he said to himself; and though there was no reason to expect that the princess should be in that place more than in any other, he could not get the notion out of his head.

A song, sung in the loveliest voice he had ever heard, roused the young man from his musings, and he instantly turned in the direction from which it had come. But though the singer seemed close to him he could see her nowhere, and indeed, no sooner had he reached one spot than the voice sounded in another direction, and he followed it up and down, till he was suddenly stopped by the sight of a large fish's skin, which lay stretched on the sand between the sea and the rocks. The thing was so ugly, that he stepped aside in disgust, and at that instant something leapt into the sea behind his back. This caused him to look round. The fish's skin was no longer there, but in a cave in the rock behind it he discovered a bath of ebony lined with gold, which glittered in the sunlight.

Days passed without any adventures, and the prince had almost made up his mind to leave the shore, and to seek his sister inland, when once more he heard the voice that had so charmed him, and beheld the bloody skin lying on the sand, and the bath, now filled with water, in the grotto. Little sleep had he that night, and before dawn he hid himself behind the rocks, determined not to move from the place till the fish should come back again.

He had not very long to wait, for with the first rays of the sun there appeared, out to sea, a shining white object which was blown by gentle breezes towards the shore. As it came nearer he beheld a maiden, of dazzling loveliness, seated in a shell where blues and pinks and greens all melted into each other. In her hand she held the rope with which the shell was guided.

The prince was so bewildered at her beauty that he forgot that he was in hiding, and, rushing out, sank on his knees on the sands, holding out his hands towards this wonderful vision. But as he did so the comb and its case fell out of his pocket, and at the sight the lady uttered a wild shriek, and, steering her shell round, vanished speedily in the direction of the island. Throwing off his clothes, the prince was preparing to swim after her, when he perceived beside him a snow white fox, looking the same way, and making frantic signs with his paws, till a small boat put out and set sail towards them, to the great joy of the little creature.

When the boat drew up to the beach, the fox waved his paw towards the prince's clothes, which he took to mean that he was to put them on again. This done, they both got in, and had just pushed off, when the prince suddenly recollected that the sight of the comb had frightened away the beautiful lady. In a transport of fury he raised his hand to fling it into the sea, but the fox sprang on him and held on so tightly to his arm that he could not lift it. At that moment a horseman on the shore let fly an arrow at the fox, with so true an aim that the little creature fell heavily into the well of the boat, and closed its eyes, like one who has received his death-blow. The grief of the prince was sore. He instantly leaped to land, but the murderer was already far distant. When the young man turned round again, the boat and the fox were nowhere to be seen.

An approaching storm drove him into the grotto, which was lighted up by a multitude of tapers, each one being in the shape of a knife half out of its sheath. Over the bath was a tent-shaped covering of white, embroidered with sheaths, and from beneath it came a voice:

‘Prince, will you trust me whatever happens, knowing that my heart is yours, and as I feel that yours is mine? But, beware, for if you give the smallest sign of fear, when the tent is opened, you will lose me for ever.’

She did well to warn him; and even then he had much ado to keep the colour in his cheeks and his hand from trembling, for a crocodile’s head with snapping jaws advanced towards him. With a mighty effort he managed to remain still, and to gaze steadily at the horrible beast, and as he did so, the head bent backwards, and beneath it was seen the lovely countenance of the Lady of the Shell.

‘Quick! prince! quick! the time is flying, comb me at once or I shall vanish from your sight.’ At her words he took out the comb, but found to his surprise that it needed all his strength to draw it from its sheath. And, strange to say, that in proportion as the comb emerged from its sheath the lady’s head was freed from its horrible covering, and her body rose a little more out of the water. When her shoulders and arms were freed, she called to him:

‘Enough, so far you have obeyed my orders. Now burn my skin.’

‘Ah, that I can *never* do,’ cried he; but the lady cut him short.

‘Then we shall both rue it for ever,’ she said gravely; ‘for I can only be the wife of him who will burn my skin.’ And while he still stood hesitating, the curtains of the tent fell back on her, and the tapers fizzled out.

Bitterly repenting his slowness, he wandered towards the forest where a fire was burning, hardly knowing what he did; but on his way he almost fell over the skin, which was lying across his path.

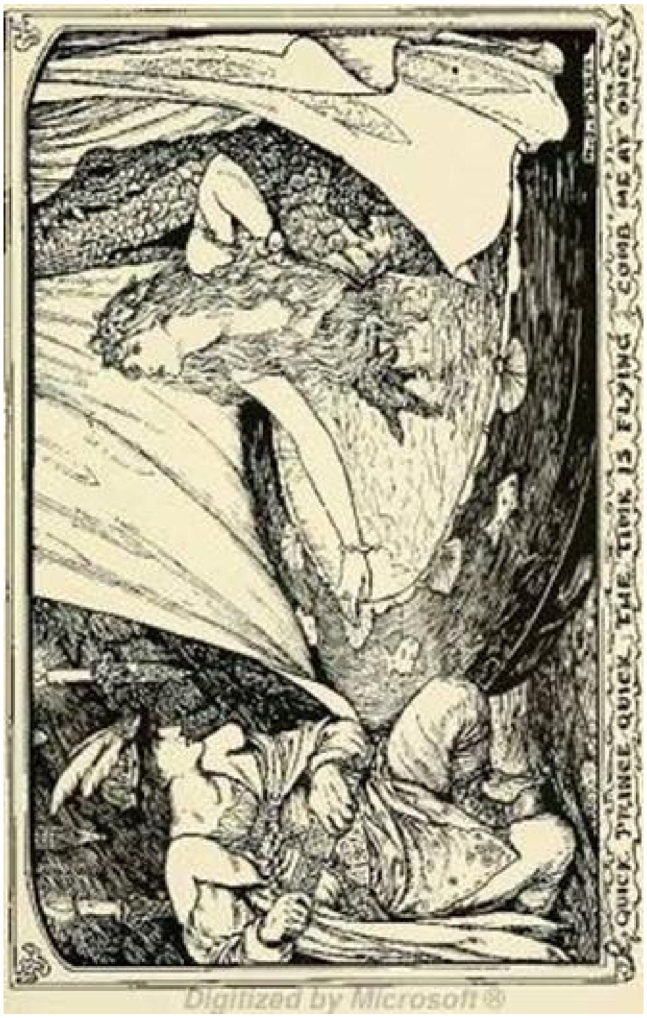
QUICK, PRINCE, QUICK, THE TIME IS FLYING, COMB ME AT ONCE

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'Ah, fool that I was! This must be the skin she wished me to burn,' said he. And seizing it in both hands he flung it into the fire, where it exploded with a terrific noise. At first he rushed off to some distance, not knowing what might next befall, but after a while found that his steps had led him back to the place of the fire. The skin had gone and left no traces, but among the cinders he beheld something shining, which proved to be the magic collar. Ah! then his sister, for whom he had so greatly longed, must be near at last! And before he could turn his head or pick up the collar, her arms were round his neck, and everything else was forgotten.

'You shall tell your story first,' she said, when at length they could speak. And so he did; but his head was so full of the Lady of the Shell that he forgot to say anything about the fox. And it was well that he had forgotten, for when the princess had poured forth her own adventures, she ended up by speaking of all she owed to the little white fox.

'You cannot even guess the care he took of me in the little palace. But though nothing could exceed his kindness, I saw by his eyes that there was something he wanted me to give him, but I could not tell what. Alas! the day came that I learnt it to my cost. I had hidden the collar in a thick bush, lest the fox should catch sight of it and be scared away as the other animals had been. But, one day, when we were in the garden, the sun happened to shine straight on it, and he sprang towards it with every sign of delight. He was about to seize it between his teeth when it closed with a loud noise. The fox fled away with a piercing scream, and though I have sought him far and wide, I have never seen him since. I was here when you flung the skin into the cinders, and no doubt, in my hurry to escape, the collar must have dropped from me. Ah, dear brother,' she continued with tears in her eyes, 'I can no longer live without my beloved fox; help me, I entreat you, to find him.'

So great was her grief that the prince dared not tell her what sad fate had overtaken the poor little animal, and trusted that time might soothe her. He assured her that he would go with her wherever she desired if she would grant him this one day to spend on the sea-shore; and with this the princess was forced to be content.

The prince was standing on the rock, looking out towards the lovely island, and straining his eyes to see the white sail once more, when frightful shrieks from the wood a little way off caused him to hasten with all his speed in that direction. He soon perceived a knight on horseback with a bow slung to his back, struggling to lift a woman on to his saddle. The knights' surprise at the sight of a man in this desolate spot caused him to drop the woman's arm, and she rushed to take shelter behind her defender, who, to his amazement, then recognised his step-mother.

'How did you come here?' he asked coldly, more than half regretting that he had not left her to her fate; but she read what was in his heart, and fell on her knees before him.

'Oh, forgive me my wickedness,' she cried, 'for indeed I have repented of it long ago, and come to the aid of your father who has been sorely smitten by that mad archduke from whom you have just saved me! There is no time to pursue him,' she added, as the prince started at the sound of the vanishing hoofs; and as they pushed their way along the path she told him all that had happened since they had last met.

'From the moment that the king knew of my cruelty to your sister,' said she, 'he vowed he would never see me again, and left the court in search of you both. I followed him secretly, but not being able to gain any tidings of him, consulted the Mother of Sheaths, who took me to rest in that island where the palm trees are waving. There she showed me a lovely princess who, under a spell, was forced daily to take the form of a crocodile, and when the dreaded moment arrived the skin appeared before her, and, shudder as she might, some unseen power impelled her to wrap herself in it and plunge into the sea. It is to this island I am leading you; but first we must find your sister, for on her presence hangs the life of the white fox — if, indeed, he is not dead already.'

'The white fox!' exclaimed the prince. 'What do you know of him?'

'Not much,' answered the queen; 'but, since I arrived on the island, he was always with us, and charmed us all. Yesterday we missed him, but in the evening a little boat drifted up on the sands, and in it lay the fox, covered with blood. While his wounds were being tended in the palace with all the care imaginable, I set out to consult a wizard, who told me that I must enter the skiff and seek for the prince and princess of Lombardy, and that if, in twenty-four hours, I could bring them into the presence of the fox, his life would be saved. On a rock along the beach I found your father with an arrow through his shoulder, from the bow of his cousin the mad archduke, who was drawing another from his quiver, destined for me, when I fled into the forest!'

'My father so near!' cried the prince. 'We must return and seek him, and also look for my sister.'

They found her in the grotto, with her father's head in her lap, trying vainly to staunch his wounds. Between them they contrived to carry him to the boat, which sailed swiftly towards the island. On the way the prince gently broke to his sister the sad state of the white fox.

'Take me to him!' she said, as soon as the boat touched the island; and in silence the queen went down the path to the palace.

The white fox was lying on a soft mattress in front of a fire, his eyes closed, and a look on his face which told that death was not far distant. But he knew, somehow, that the princess was near him, and opened his eyes and wagged his tail feebly. The princess burst into sobs and tears, till a hand on her shoulder checked her.

'Why do you waste the few moments that are left you in this manner?' asked the governor of the island sternly. 'Place the collar you wear round his neck, and he will be cured at once. But you must act quickly.'

The princess seemed turned to stone as she listened. 'The collar!' she gasped. 'But I have not got it, I lost it in the forest!' And the thousand sheaths with which the walls were hung took up the cry:

'The collar is lost! The collar is lost!'

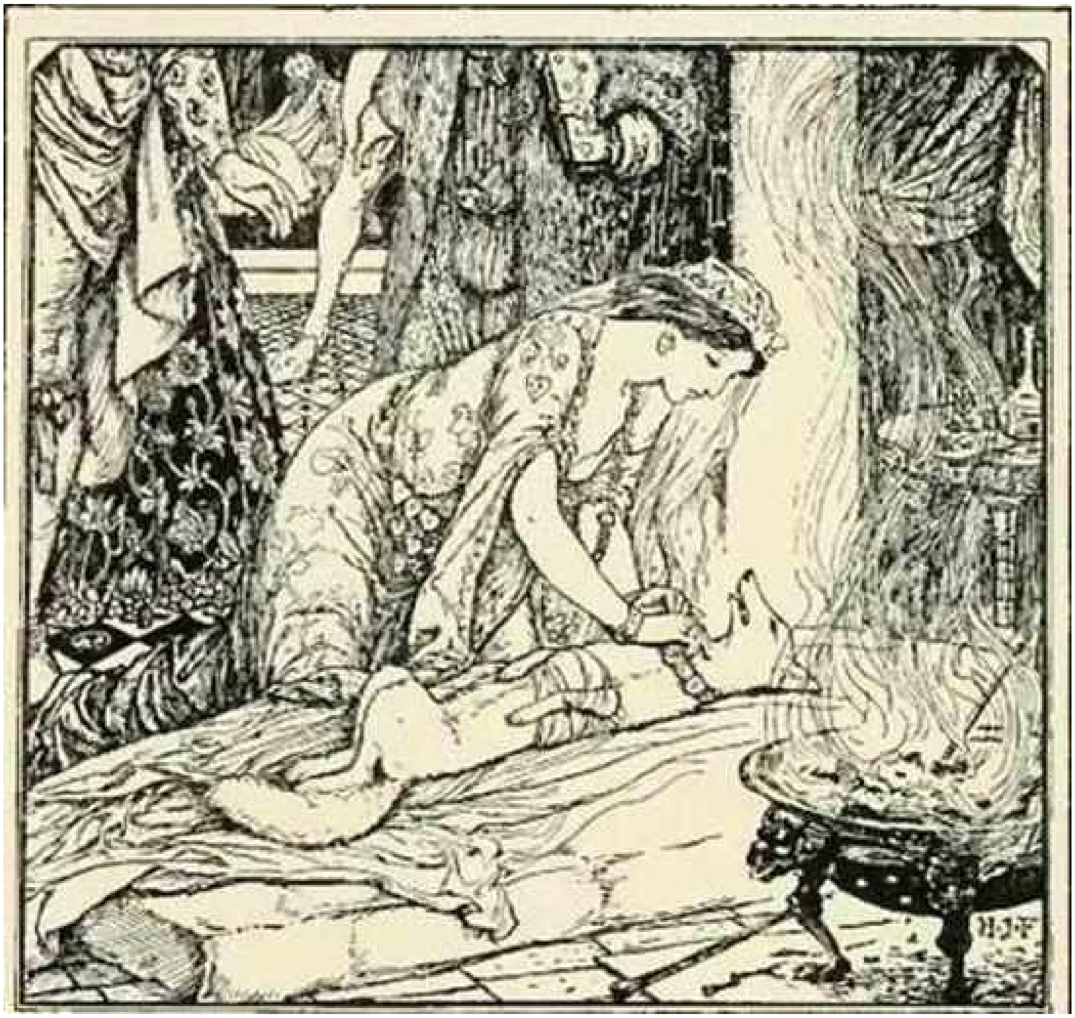

‘What collar are you talking about?’ asked the king, who was lying on another bed, with the physicians bending over him. ‘Here is one that I picked up among some cinders, before that madman shot me — perhaps it may be the one you want, or, at all events, it may do as well.’ And he signed to an attendant to take the collar from the pocket of his velvet jerkin.

The princess leapt forward with joy at the sight of the precious thing, and snatching it from the hand of the man she placed it round the neck of the fox. All present held their breath as they watched what was happening; and what *did* happen was that his legs grew longer and longer, and his nose grew shorter and shorter. The fox was gone, and in his stead there lay Perarthrites, in a coat of thick white fur.

But though the prince of Lombardy was rejoiced to see his friend and cousin again, his heart still bled for the beautiful lady who had vanished so mysteriously. His face was so troubled that the governor of the island marked it, and asked what was the matter. ‘Oh! help me, if you can,’ cried the prince. ‘The thought of the sufferings that the enchanted nymph may be undergoing tortures me!’

‘They are far worse than you can imagine,’ gravely replied the governor; ‘but if you still possess your comb, you may yet relieve her of them. Ah! that is well,’ he continued, as the prince quickly drew the comb from its case. ‘Now follow me.’

Not only the prince, but every one else followed; and the governor led them down a long gallery to a heavy iron door, which flew open at its own accord. But what a sight met the prince’s eyes! The lady whom he had last beheld in peerless beauty was sitting in a chair wrapped in flames, which were twisting like hair about her head. Her face was swollen and red; her mouth was open as if gasping for breath. Only her arms and neck were as lovely as ever in their whiteness.

‘This is your doing,’ said the governor to the prince; ‘you brought her to this when you burnt the crocodile’s skin. Now try if, by combing, you can soothe her agony.’

At the first touch of the comb the flames became suddenly extinguished; at the second, the look of pain vanished from the face, and it shrank into its usual size; at the third, she rose from the chair, lovelier than she ever was before, and flung herself into the arms of her brother Perarthrites.

After this there was nothing more to be done but to marry the two couples as fast as possible. And when the wedding was over, Perarthrites and his bride returned to Placenza, and Ferrandina and her husband to Lombardy, and they all lived happily till they died.

(From Count Anthony Hamilton’s *Fairy Tales*.)

THE THANKSGIVING OF THE WAZIR

Once upon a time there lived in Hindustan two kings whose countries bordered upon each other; but, as they were rivals in wealth and power, and one was a Hindu rajah and the other a Mohammedan bâdshah, they were not good friends at all. In order, however, to escape continual quarrels, the rajah and the bâdshah had drawn up an agreement, stamped and signed, declaring that if any of their subjects, from the least to the greatest, crossed the boundary between the two kingdoms, he might be seized and punished.

One morning the bâdshah and his chief wazir, or prime minister, were just about to begin their morning's work over the affairs of the kingdom, and the bâdshah had taken up a pen and was cutting it to his liking with a sharp knife, when the knife slipped and cut off the tip of his finger.

'Oh-he, wazir!' cried the king, 'I've cut the tip of my finger off!'

'That is good hearing!' said the wazir in answer.

'Insolent one,' exclaimed the king. 'Do you take pleasure in the misfortunes of others, and in mine also? Take him away, my guards, and put him in the court prison until I have time to punish him as he deserves!'

Instantly the officers in attendance seized upon the luckless wazir, and dragged him out of the king's presence towards the narrow doorway, through which unhappy criminals were wont to be led to prison or execution. As the door opened to receive him, the wazir muttered something into his great white beard which the soldiers could not hear.

'What said the rascal?' shouted the angry king.

He says, 'he thanks your majesty,' replied one of the gaolers. And at his words, the king stared at the closing door, in anger and amazement.

'He must be mad,' he cried, 'for he is grateful, not only for the misfortunes of others, but for his own; surely something has turned his head!'

Now the king was very fond of his old wazir, and although the court physician came and bound up his injured finger with cool and healing ointment, and soothed the pain, he could not soothe the soreness of the king's heart, nor could any of all his ministers and courtiers, who found his majesty very cross all the day long.

Early next morning the king ordered his horse and declared that he would go hunting. Instantly all was bustle and preparation in stable and hall, and by the time he was ready a score of ministers and huntsmen stood ready to mount and accompany him; but to their astonishment the king would have none of them. Indeed, he glared at them so fiercely that they were glad to leave him. So away and away he wandered, over field and through forest, so moody and thoughtful that many a fat buck and gaudy pheasant escaped without notice, and so careless was he whither he was going that he strayed without perceiving it over into the rajah's territory, and only discovered the fact when, suddenly, men stepped from all sides out of a thicket, and there was nothing left but surrender. Then the poor bâdshah was seized and bound and taken to the rajah's prison, thinking most of the time of his wazir, who was suffering a similar fate, and wishing that, like the wazir, he could feel that there was something to give thanks for.

That night the rajah held a special council to consider what should be done to his rival who had thus given himself into his hands. All the Brahmans were sent for — fat priests who understood all about everything, and what days were lucky and what unlucky — and, whilst all the rest of the rajah's councillors were offering him different advice until he was nearly crazy with anger and indecision, the chief Brahman was squatting in a corner figuring out sums and signs to himself with an admiring group of lesser priests around him. At last he arose, and advanced towards the throne.

'Well,' said the rajah anxiously, 'what have you to advise?'

'A very unlucky day!' exclaimed the chief Brahman. 'Oh, a very unlucky day! The god Devi is full of wrath, and commands that to-morrow you must chop off this bâdshah's head and offer it in to him in sacrifice.'

'Ah, well,' said the rajah, 'let it be done. I leave it to you to carry out the sentence.' And he bowed to the priests and left the room.

Before dawn great preparations were being made for a grand festival in honour of the great idol Devi. Hundreds of banners waved, hundreds of drummers drummed, hundreds of singers chanted chants, hundreds of priests, well washed and anointed, performed their sacred rites, whilst the rajah sat, nervous and ill at ease, amongst hundreds of courtiers and servants, wishing it were all well over. At last the time came for the sacrifice to be offered, and the poor bâdshah was led out bound, to have his head chopped off.

The chief Brahman came along with a smile on his face, and a big sword in his hand, when, suddenly, he noticed that the bâdshah's finger was tied up in a bit of rag. Instantly he dropped the sword, and, with his eyes starting out of his head with excitement, pounced upon the rag and tore it off, and there he saw that the tip of his victim's finger was missing. At this he got very red and angry indeed, and he led the bâdshah up to where the rajah sat wondering.

'Behold! O rajah,' he said, 'this sacrifice is useless, the tip of his finger is gone! A sacrifice is no sacrifice unless it is complete.' And he began to weep with rage and mortification.

But of instead of wailing likewise, the rajah gave a sigh of relief, and answered: ‘Well, that settles the matter. If it had been anyone else I should not have minded; but, somehow — a king and all — well, it doesn’t seem quite right to sacrifice a king.’ And with that he jumped up and with his jewelled dagger cut the bâdshah’s cords, and marched with him out of the temple back to the palace.

After having bathed and refreshed his guest, the rajah loaded him with gifts, and himself accompanied him with a large escort as far as the frontier between their kingdoms, where, amidst salutes and great rejoicings, they tore up the old agreement and drew up another in which each king promised welcome and safe conduct to any of the other’s people, from the least to the greatest, who came over the border on any errand whatever. And so they embraced, and each went his own way.

When the bâdshah got home that very evening he sent for his imprisoned wazir.

‘Well, O wazir!’ he said, when the old man had been brought before him, ‘what think you has been happening to me?’

‘How can a man in prison know what is happening outside it?’ answered the wazir.

Then the bâdshah told him all his adventures. And when he had reached the end he added:

‘I have made up my mind, as a token of gratitude for my escape, to pardon you freely, if you will tell me why you gave thanks when I cut off the tip of my finger.’

‘Sire,’ replied the old wazir, ‘am I not right in thinking that it was a very lucky thing for you that you *did* cut off the tip of your finger, for otherwise you would certainly have lost your head. And to lose a scrap of one’s finger is surely the least of the two evils.’

‘Very true,’ answered the king, touching his head as he spoke, as if to make quite certain that it was still there, ‘but yet — why did you likewise give thanks when I put you into prison?’

‘I gave thanks,’ said the wazir, ‘because it is good always to give thanks. And had I known that my being in prison was to prevent the god Devi claiming me instead of your majesty, as a perfect offering, I should have given greater thanks still.’

(Punjâbi story.)

SAMBA THE COWARD

In the great country far away south, through which flows the river Nile, there lived a king who had an only child called Samba.

Now, from the time that Samba could walk he showed signs of being afraid of everything, and as he grew bigger he became more and more frightened. At first his father's friends made light of it, and said to each other:

'It is strange to see a boy of our race running into a hut at the trumpeting of an elephant, and trembling with fear if a lion cub half his size comes near him; but, after all, he is only a baby, and when he is older he will be as brave as the rest.'

'Yes, he is only a baby,' answered the king who overheard them, 'it will be all right by-and-by.' But, somehow, he sighed as he said it, and the men looked at him and made no reply.

The years passed away, and Samba had become a tall and strong youth. He was good-natured and pleasant, and was liked by all, and if during his father's hunting parties he was seldom to be seen in any place of danger, he was too great a favourite for much to be said.

'When the king holds the feast and declares him to be his heir, he will cease to be a child,' murmured the rest of the people, as they had done before; and on the day of the ceremony their hearts beat gladly, and they cried to each other:

'It is Samba, Samba, whose chin is above the heads of other men, who will defend us against the tribes of the robbers!'

Not many weeks after, the dwellers in the village awoke to find that during the night their herds had been driven away, and their herdsmen carried off into slavery by their enemies. Now was the time for Samba to show the brave spirit that had come to him with his manhood, and to ride forth at the head of the warriors of his race. But Samba could nowhere be found, and a party of the avengers went on their way without him.

It was many days later before he came back, with his head held high, and a tale of a lion which he had tracked to its lair and killed, at the risk of his own life. A little while earlier and his people would have welcomed his story, and believed it all, but now it was too late.

'Samba the Coward,' cried a voice from the crowd; and the name stuck to him, even the very children shouted it at him, and his father did not spare him. At length he could bear it no longer, and made up his mind to leave his own land for another where peace had reigned since the memory of man. So, early next morning, he slipped out to the king’s stables, and choosing the quietest horse he could find, he rode away northwards.

Never as long as he lived did Samba forget the terrors of that journey. He could hardly sleep at night for dread of the wild beasts that might be lurking behind every rock or bush, while, by day, the distant roar of a lion would cause him to start so violently, that he almost fell from his horse. A dozen times he was on the point of turning back, and it was not the terror of the mocking words and scornful laughs that kept him from doing so, but the terror lest he should be forced to take part in their wars. Therefore he held on, and deeply thankful he felt when the walls of a city, larger than he had ever dreamed of, rose before him.

Drawing himself up to his full height, he rode proudly through the gate and past the palace, where, as was her custom, the princess was sitting on the terrace roof, watching the bustle in the street below.

‘That is a gallant figure,’ thought she, as Samba, mounted on his big black horse, steered his way skilfully among the crowds; and, beckoning to a slave, she ordered him to go and meet the stranger, and ask him who he was and whence he came.

‘Oh, princess, he is the son of a king, and heir to a country which lies near the Great River,’ answered the slave, when he had returned from questioning Samba. And the princess on hearing this news summoned her father, and told him that if she was not allowed to wed the stranger she would die unmarried.

Like many other fathers, the king could refuse his daughter nothing, and besides, she had rejected so many suitors already that he was quite alarmed lest no man should be good enough for her. Therefore, after a talk with Samba, who charmed him by his good humour and pleasant ways, he gave his consent, and three days later the wedding feast was celebrated with the utmost splendour.

The princess was very proud of her tall handsome husband, and for some time she was quite content that he should pass the days with her under the palm trees, telling her the stories that she loved, or amusing her with tales of the manners and customs of his country, which were so different to those of her own. But, by-and-by, this was not enough; she wanted other people to be proud of him too, and one day she said:

‘I really almost wish that those Moorish thieves from the north would come on one of their robbing expeditions. I should love so to see you ride out at the head of our men, to chase them home again. Ah, how happy I should be when the city rang with your noble deeds!’

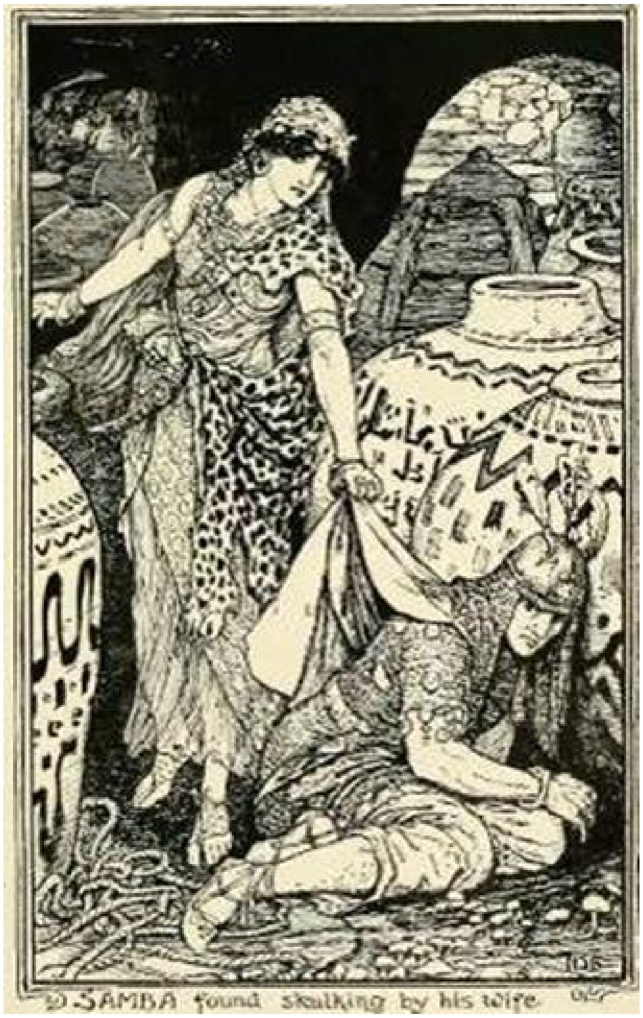

SAMBA found skulking by his wife

She looked lovingly at him as she spoke; but, to her surprise, his face grew dark, and he answered hastily:

‘Never speak to me again of the Moors or of war. It was to escape from them that I fled from my own land, and at the first word of invasion I should leave you for ever.’

‘How funny you are,’ cried she, breaking into a laugh. ‘The idea of anyone as big as you being afraid of a Moor! But still, you mustn’t say those things to anyone except me, or they might think you were in earnest.’

Not very long after this, when the people of the city were holding a great feast outside the walls of the town, a body of Moors, who had been in hiding for days, drove off all the sheep and goats which were peacefully feeding on the slopes of a hill. Directly the loss was discovered, which was not for some hours, the king gave orders that the war drum should be beaten, and the warriors assembled in the great square before the palace, trembling with fury at the insult which had been put upon them. Loud were the cries for instant vengeance, and for Samba, son-in-law of the king, to lead them to battle. But shout as they might, Samba never came.

And where was he? No further than in a cool, dark cellar of the palace, crouching among huge earthenware pots of grain. With a rush of pain at her heart, there his wife found him, and she tried with all her strength to kindle in him a sense of shame, but in vain. Even the thought of the future danger he might run from the contempt of his subjects was as nothing when compared with the risks of the present.

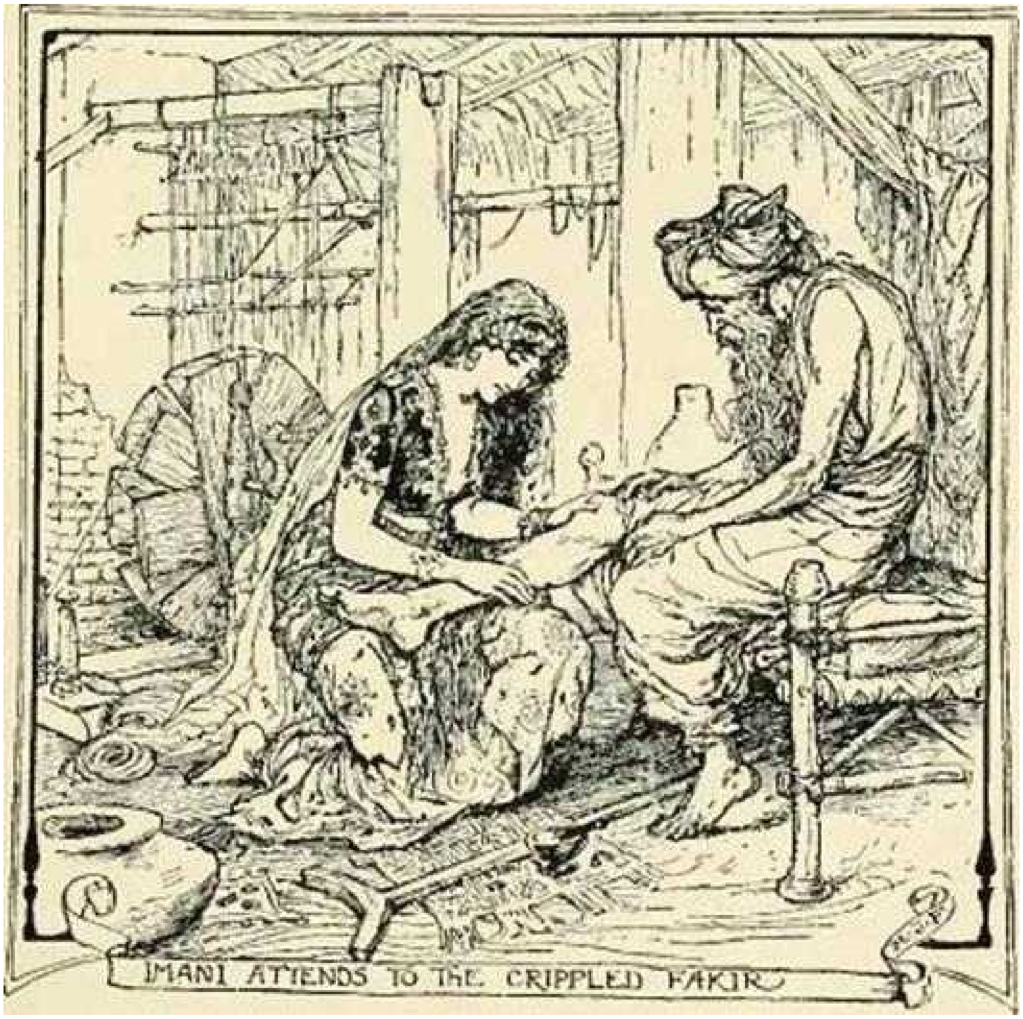
IMANI ATTENDS TO THE CRIPPLED FAKIR

'Take off your tunic of mail,' said the princess at last; and her voice was so stern and cold that none would have known it. 'Give it to me, and hand me besides your helmet, your sword and your spear.' And with many fearful glances to right and to left, Samba stripped off the armour inlaid with gold, the property of the king's son-in-law. Silently his wife took, one by one, the pieces from him, and fastened them on her with firm hands, never even glancing at the tall form of her husband who had slunk back to his corner. When she had fastened the last buckle, and lowered her vizor, she went out, and mounting Samba's horse, gave the signal to the warriors to follow.

Now, although the princess was much shorter than her husband, she was a tall woman, and the horse which she rode was likewise higher than the rest, so that when the men caught sight of the gold-inlaid suit of chain armour, they did not doubt that Samba was taking his rightful place, and cheered him loudly. The princess bowed in answer to their greeting, but kept her vizor down; and touching her horse with the spur, she galloped at the head of her troops to charge the enemy. The Moors, who had not expected to be so quickly pursued, had scarcely time to form themselves into battle array, and were speedily put to flight. Then the little troop of horsemen returned to the city, where all sung the praises of Samba their leader.

The instant they reached the palace the princess flung her reins to a groom, and disappeared up a side staircase, by which she could, unseen, enter her own rooms. Here she found Samba lying idly on a heap of mats; but he raised his head uneasily as the door opened and looked at his wife, not feeling sure how she might act towards him. However, he need not have been afraid of harsh words: she merely unbuttoned her armour as fast as possible, and bade him put it on with all speed. Samba obeyed, not daring to ask any questions; and when he had finished the princess told him to follow her, and led him on to the flat roof of the house, below which a crowd had gathered, cheering lustily.

'Samba, the king's son-in-law! Samba, the bravest of the brave! Where is he? Let him show himself!' And when Samba did show himself the shouts and applause became louder than ever. 'See how modest he is! He leaves the glory to others!' cried they. And Samba only smiled and waved his hand, and said nothing.

Out of all the mass of people assembled there to do honour to Samba, one alone there was who did not shout and praise with the rest. This was the princess's youngest brother, whose sharp eyes had noted certain things during the fight which recalled his sister much more than they did her husband. Under promise of secrecy, he told his suspicions to the other princes, but only got laughed at, and was bidden to carry his dreams elsewhere.

'Well, well,' answered the boy, 'we shall see who is right; but the next time we give battle to the Moors I will take care to place a private mark on our commander.'

In spite of their defeat, not many days after the Moors sent a fresh body of troops to steal some cattle, and again Samba's wife dressed herself in her husband's armour, and rode out at the head of the avenging column. This time the combat was fiercer than before, and in the thick of it her youngest brother drew near, and gave his sister a slight wound on the leg. At the moment she paid no heed to the pain, which, indeed, she scarcely felt; but when the enemy had been put to flight and the little band returned to the palace, faintness suddenly overtook her, and she could hardly stagger up the staircase to her own apartments.

‘I am wounded,’ she cried, sinking down on the mats where he had been lying, ‘but do not be anxious; it is really nothing. You have only got to wound yourself slightly in the same spot and no one will guess that it was I and not you who were fighting.’

‘What!’ cried Samba, his eyes nearly starting from his head in surprise and terror. ‘Can you possibly imagine that I should agree to anything so useless and painful? Why, I might as well have gone to fight myself!’

‘Ah, I ought to have known better, indeed,’ answered the princess, in a voice that seemed to come from a long way off; but, quick as thought, the moment Samba turned his back she pierced one of his bare legs with a spear.

He gave a loud scream and staggered backwards, from astonishment, much more than from pain. But before he could speak his wife had left the room and had gone to seek the medicine man of the palace.

‘My husband has been wounded,’ said she, when she had found him, ‘come and tend him with speed, for he is faint from loss of blood.’ And she took care that more than one person heard her words, so that all that day the people pressed up to the gate of the palace, asking for news of their brave champion.

‘You see,’ observed the king’s eldest sons, who had visited the room where Samba lay groaning, ‘you see, O wise young brother, that we were right and you were wrong about Samba, and that he really *did* go into the battle.’ But the boy answered nothing, and only shook his head doubtfully.

It was only two days later that the Moors appeared for the third time, and though the herds had been tethered in a new and safer place, they were promptly carried off as before. ‘For,’ said the Moors to each other, ‘the tribe will never think of our coming back so soon when they have beaten us so badly.’

When the drum sounded to assemble all the fighting men, the princess rose and sought her husband.

‘Samba,’ cried she, ‘my wound is worse than I thought. I can scarcely walk, and could not mount my horse without help. For to-day, then, I cannot do your work, so you must go instead of me.’

‘What nonsense,’ exclaimed Samba, ‘I never heard of such a thing. Why, I might be wounded, or even killed! You have three brothers. The king can choose one of them.’

‘They are all too young,’ replied his wife; ‘the men would not obey them. But if, indeed, you will not go, at least you can help me harness my horse.’ And to this Samba, who was always ready to do anything he was asked when there was no danger about it, agreed readily.

So the horse was quickly harnessed, and when it was done the princess said:

‘Now ride the horse to the place of meeting outside the gates, and I will join you by a shorter way, and will change places with you.’ Samba, who loved riding in times of peace, mounted as she had told him, and when he was safe in the saddle, his wife dealt the horse a sharp cut with her whip, and he dashed off through the town and through the ranks of the warriors who were waiting for him. Instantly the whole place was in motion. Samba tried to check his steed, but he might as well have sought to stop the wind, and it seemed no more than a few minutes before they were grappling hand to hand with the Moors.

Then a miracle happened. Samba the coward, the skulker, the terrified, no sooner found himself pressed hard, unable to escape, than something sprang into life within him, and he fought with all his might. And when a man of his size and strength begins to fight he generally fights well.

That day the victory was really owing to Samba, and the shouts of the people were louder than ever. When he returned, bearing with him the sword of the Moorish chief, the old king pressed him in his arms and said:

‘Oh, my son, how can I ever show you how grateful I am for this splendid service?’

But Samba, who was good and loyal when fear did not possess him, answered straightly:

‘My father, it is to your daughter and not to me to whom thanks are due, for it is she who has turned the coward that I was into a brave man.’

(*Contes Soudainais.* Par C. Monteil.)

KUPTI AND IMANI

Once there was a king who had two daughters; and their names were Kupti and Imani. He loved them both very much, and spent hours in talking to them, and one day he said to Kupti, the elder:

‘Are you satisfied to leave your life and fortune in my hands?’

‘Verily yes,’ answered the princess, surprised at the question. ‘In whose hands should I leave them, if not in yours?’

But when he asked his younger daughter Imani the same question, she replied:

‘No, indeed! If I had the chance I would make my own fortune.’

At this answer the king was very displeased, and said:

‘You are too young to know the meaning of your words. But, be it so; I will give you the chance of gratifying your wish.’

Then he sent for an old lame fakir who lived in a tumbledown hut on the outskirts of the city, and when he had presented himself, the king said:

‘No doubt, as you are very old and nearly crippled, you would be glad of some young person to live with you and serve you; so I will send you my younger daughter. She wants to earn her living, and she can do so with you.’

Of course the old fakir had not a word to say, or, if he had, he was really too astonished and troubled to say it; but the young princess went off with him smiling, and tripped along quite gaily, whilst he hobbled home with her in perplexed silence.

Directly they got to the hut the fakir began to think what he could arrange for the princess’s comfort; but after all he was a fakir, and his house was bare except for one bedstead, two old cooking pots and an earthen jar for water, and one cannot get much comfort out of those things. However, the princess soon ended his perplexity by asking:

‘Have you any money?’

‘I have a penny somewhere,’ replied the fakir.

‘Very well,’ rejoined the princess, ‘give me the penny and go out and borrow me a spinning-wheel and a loom.’

After much seeking the fakir found the penny and started on his errand, whilst the princess went off shopping. First she bought a farthing’s worth of oil, and then she bought three farthings’ worth of flax. When she got back with her purchases she set the old man on the bedstead and rubbed his crippled leg with the oil for an hour. Then she sat down to the spinning-wheel and spun and spun all night long whilst the old man slept, until, in the morning, she had spun the finest thread that ever was seen. Next she went to the loom and wove and wove until by the evening she had woven a beautiful silver cloth.

‘Now,’ said she to the fakir, ‘go into the market-place and sell my cloth whilst I rest.’

‘And what am I to ask for it?’ said the old man.

‘Two gold pieces,’ replied the princess.

So the fakir hobbled away, and stood in the market-place to sell the cloth. Presently the elder princess drove by, and when she saw the cloth she stopped and asked the price.

‘Two gold pieces,’ said the fakir. And the princess gladly paid them, after which the old fakir hobbled home with the money. As she had done before so Imani did again day after day. Always she spent a penny upon oil and flax, always she tended the old man’s lame limb, and spun and wove the most beautiful cloths and sold them at high prices. Gradually the city became famous for her beautiful stuffs, the old fakir’s lame leg became straighter and stronger, and the hole under the floor of the hut where they kept their money became fuller and fuller of gold pieces. At last, one day, the princess said:

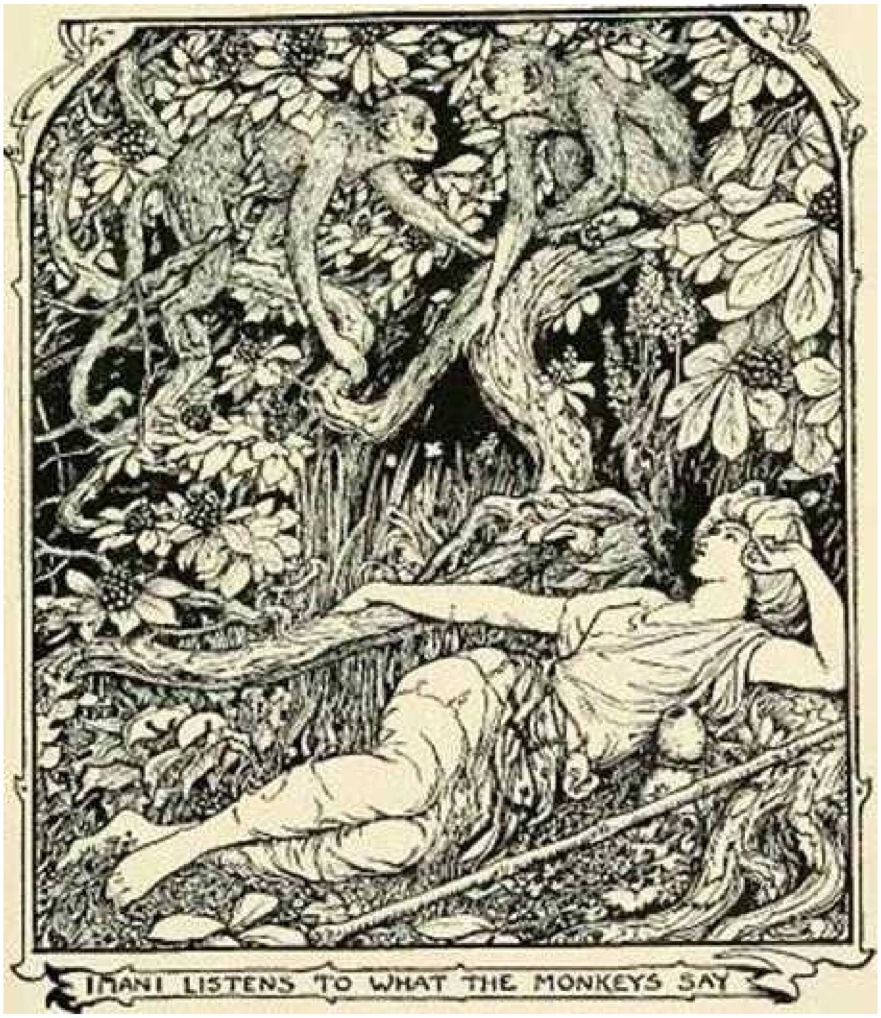

IMANI LISTENS TO WHAT THE MONKEYS SAY

‘I really think we have got enough to live in greater comfort.’ And she sent for builders, and they built a beautiful house for her and the old fakir, and in all the city there was none finer except the king’s palace. Presently this reached the ears of the king, and when he inquired whose it was they told him that it belonged to his daughter.

‘Well,’ exclaimed the king, ‘she said that she would make her own fortune, and somehow or other she seems to have done it!’

A little while after this, business took the king to another country, and before he went he asked his elder daughter what she would like him to bring her back as a gift.

‘A necklace of rubies,’ answered she. And then the king thought he would like to ask Imani too; so he sent a messenger to find out what sort of a present she wanted. The man happened to arrive just as she was trying to disentangle a knot in her loom, and bowing low before her, he said:

‘The king sends me to inquire what you wish him to bring you as a present from the country of Dûr?’ But Imani, who was only considering how she could best untie the knot without breaking the thread, replied:

‘Patience!’ meaning that the messenger should wait till she was able to attend to him. But the messenger went off with this as an answer, and told the king that the only thing the princess Imani wanted was ‘patience.’

‘Oh!’ said the king, ‘I don’t know whether that’s a thing to be bought at Dûr; I never had it myself, but if it is to be got I will buy it for her.’

Next day the king departed on his journey, and when his business at Dûr was completed he bought for Kupti a beautiful ruby necklace. Then he said to a servant:

‘The princess Imani wants some patience. I did not know there was such a thing, but you must go to the market and inquire, and if any is to be sold, get it and bring it to me.’

The servant saluted and left the king’s presence. He walked about the market for some time crying: ‘Has anyone patience to sell? patience to sell?’ And some of the people mocked, and some (who had no patience) told him to go away and not be a fool; and some said: ‘The fellow’s mad! As though one could buy or sell patience!’

At length it came to the ears of the king of Dûr that there was a madman in the market trying to buy patience. And the king laughed and said:

‘I should like to see that fellow, bring him here!’

And immediately his attendants went to seek the man, and brought him to the king, who asked:

‘What is this you want?’

And the man replied: ‘Sire! I am bidden to ask for patience.’

‘Oh,’ said the king, ‘you must have a strange master! What does he want with it?’

‘My master wants it as a present for his daughter Imani,’ replied the servant.

‘Well,’ said the king, ‘I know of some patience which the young lady might have if she cares for it; but it is not to be bought.’

Now the king’s name was Subbar Khan, and Subbar *means* ‘patience’; but the messenger did not know that, or understand that he was making a joke. However, he declared that the princess Imani was not only young and beautiful, but also the cleverest, most industrious, and kindest-hearted of princesses; and he would have gone on explaining her virtues had not the king laughingly put up his hand and stopped him saying:

‘Well, well, wait a minute, and I will see what can be done.’

With that he got up and went to his own apartments and took out a little casket. Into the casket he put a fan, and shutting it up carefully he brought it to the messenger and said:

‘Here is a casket. It has no lock nor key, and yet will open only to the touch of the person who needs its contents — and whoever opens it will obtain patience; but I can’t tell whether it will be quite the kind of patience that is wanted.’ And the servant bowed low, and took the casket; but when he asked what was to be paid, the king would take nothing. So he went away and gave the casket and an account of his adventures to his master.

As soon as their father got back to his country Kupti and Imani each got the presents he had brought for them. Imani was very surprised when the casket was brought to her by the hand of a messenger.

‘But,’ she said, ‘what is this? I never asked for anything! Indeed I had no time, for the messenger ran away before I had unravelled my tangle.’

But the servant declared that the casket was for her, so she took it with some curiosity, and brought it to the old fakir. The old man tried to open it, but in vain — so closely did the lid fit that it seemed to be quite immovable, and yet there was no lock, nor bolt, nor spring, nor anything apparently by which the casket was kept shut. When he was tired of trying he handed the casket to the princess, who hardly touched it before it opened quite easily, and there lay within a beautiful fan. With a cry of surprise and pleasure Imani took out the fan, and began to fan herself.

Hardly had she finished three strokes of the fan before there suddenly appeared from nowhere in particular, king Subbar Khan of Dûr! The princess gasped and rubbed her eyes, and the old fakir sat and gazed in such astonishment that for some minutes he could not speak. At length he said:

‘Who may you be, fair sir, if you please?’

‘My name,’ said the king, ‘is Subbar Khan of Dûr. This lady,’ bowing to the princess, ‘has summoned me, and here I am!’

‘I?’ — stammered the princess— ‘I have summoned you? I never saw or heard of you in my life before, so how could that be?’

Then the king told them how he had heard of a man in his own city of Dûr trying to buy patience, and how he had given him the fan in the casket.

‘Both are magical,’ he added; ‘when anyone uses the fan, in three strokes of it I am with them; if they fold it and tap it on the table, in three taps I am at home again. The casket will not open to all, but you see it was this fair lady who asked for patience, and, as that is my name, here I am, very much at her service.’

Now the princess Imani, being of a high spirit, was anxious to fold up the fan, and give the three taps which would send the king home again; but the old fakir was very pleased with his guest, and so in one way and another they spent quite a pleasant evening together before Subbar Khan took his leave.

After that he was often summoned; and as both the fakir and he were very fond of chess and were good players, they used to sit up half the night playing, and at last a little room in the house began to be called the king’s room, and whenever he stayed late he used to sleep there and go home again in the morning.

By-and-by it came to the ears of the princess Kupti that there was a rich and handsome young man visiting at her sister’s house, and she was very jealous. So she went one day to pay Imani a visit, and pretended to be very affectionate, and interested in the house, and in the way in which Imani and the old fakir lived, and of their mysterious and royal visitor. As the sisters went from place to place, Kupti was shown Subbar Khan’s room; and presently, making some excuse, she slipped in there by herself and swiftly spread under the sheet which lay upon the bed a quantity of very finely powdered and splintered glass which was poisoned, and which she had brought with her concealed in her clothes. Shortly afterwards she took leave of her sister, declaring that she could never forgive herself for not having come near her all this time, and that she would now begin to make amends for her neglect.

That very evening Subbar Khan came and sat up late with the old fakir playing chess as usual. Very tired, he at length bade him and the princess good-night and, as soon as he lay down on the bed, thousands of tiny, tiny splinters of poisoned glass ran into him. He could not think what was the matter, and started this way and that until he was pricked all over, and he felt as though he were burning from head to foot. But he never said a word, only he sat up all night in agony of body and in worse agony of mind to think that he should have been poisoned, as he guessed he was, in Imani’s own house. In the morning, although he was nearly fainting, he still said nothing, and by means of the magic fan was duly transported home again. Then he sent for all the physicians and doctors in his kingdom, but none could make out what his illness was; and so he lingered on for weeks and weeks trying every remedy that anyone could devise, and passing sleepless nights and days of pain and fever and misery, until at last he was at the point of death.

Meanwhile the princess Imani and the old fakir were much troubled because, although they waved the magic fan again and again, no Subbar Khan appeared, and they feared that he had tired of them, or that some evil fate had overtaken him. At last the princess was in such a miserable state of doubt and uncertainty that she determined to go herself to the kingdom of Dûr and see what was the matter. Disguising herself in man’s clothes as a young fakir, she set out upon her journey alone and on foot, as a fakir should travel. One evening she found herself in a forest, and lay down under a great tree to pass the night. But she could not sleep for thinking of Subbar Khan, and wondering what had happened to him. Presently she heard two great monkeys talking to one another in the tree above her head.

‘Good evening, brother,’ said one, ‘whence come you — and what is the news?’

Maia carried off by the Cockchafer

‘I come from Dûr,’ said the other, ‘and the news is that the king is dying.’

‘Oh,’ said the first, ‘I’m sorry to hear that, for he is a master hand at slaying leopards and creatures that ought not to be allowed to live. What is the matter with him?’

‘No man knows,’ replied the second monkey, ‘but the birds, who see all and carry all messages, say that he is dying of poisoned glass that Kupti the king’s daughter spread upon his bed.’

‘Ah!’ said the first monkey, ‘that is sad news; but if they only knew it, the berries of the very tree we sit in, steeped in hot water, will cure such a disease as that in three days at most.’

‘True!’ said the other, ‘it’s a pity that we can’t tell some man of a medicine so simple, and so save a good man’s life. But men are so silly; they go and shut themselves up in stuffy houses in stuffy cities instead of living in nice airy trees, and so they miss knowing all the best things.’

Now when Imani heard that Subbar Khan was dying she began to weep silently; but as she listened she dried her tears and sat up; and as soon as daylight dawned over the forest she began to gather the berries from the tree until she had filled her cloth with a load of them. Then she walked on as fast as she could, and in two days reached the city of Dûr. The first thing she did was to pass through the market crying:

‘Medicine for sale! Are any ill that need my medicine?’ And presently one man said to his neighbour:

‘See, there is a young fakir with medicine for sale, perhaps he could do something for the king.’

‘Pooh!’ replied the other, ‘where so many grey-beards have failed, how should a lad like that be of any use?’

‘Still,’ said the first, ‘he might try.’ And he went up and spoke to Imani, and together they set out for the palace and announced that another doctor was come to try and cure the king.

After some delay Imani was admitted to the sick room, and, whilst *she* was so well disguised that the king did not recognize her, *he* was so wasted by illness that she hardly knew *him*. But she began at once, full of hope, by asking for some apartments all to herself and a pot in which to boil water. As soon as the water was heated she steeped some of her berries in it and gave the mixture to the king’s attendants and told them to wash his body with it. The first washing did so much good that the king slept quietly all the night. Again the second day she did the same, and this time the king declared he was hungry, and called for food. After the third day he was quite well, only very weak from his long illness. On the fourth day he got up and sat upon his throne, and then sent messengers to fetch the physician who had cured him. When Imani appeared everyone marvelled that so young a man should be so clever a doctor; and the king wanted to give him immense presents of money and of all kinds of precious things. At first Imani would take nothing, but at last she said that, if she must be rewarded, she would ask for the king’s signet ring and his handkerchief. So, as she would take nothing more, the king gave her his signet ring and his handkerchief, and she departed and travelled back to her own country as fast as she could.

A little while after her return, when she had related to the fakir all her adventures, they sent for Subbar Khan by means of the magic fan; and when he appeared they asked him why he had stayed away for so long. Then he told them all about his illness, and how he had been cured, and when he had finished the princess rose up and, opening a cabinet, brought out the ring and handkerchief, and said, laughing:

‘Are these the rewards you gave to your doctor?’

At that the king looked, and he recognised her, and understood in a moment all that had happened; and he jumped up and put the magic fan in his pocket, and declared that no one should send him away to his own country any more unless Imani would come with him and be his wife. And so it was settled, and the old fakir and Imani went to the city of Dûr, where Imani was married to the king and lived happily ever after.

(Punjâbi story.)

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF LITTLE MAIA

Once upon a time there lived a woman who had a pretty cottage and garden right in the middle of a forest. All through the summer she was quite happy tending her flowers and listening to the birds singing in the trees, but in the winter, when snow lay on the ground and wolves came howling about the door, she felt very lonely and frightened. ‘If I only had a child to speak to, however small, what a comfort it would be!’ she said to herself. And the heavier the snow fell the oftener she repeated the words. And at last a day arrived when she could bear the silence and solitude no longer, and set off to walk to the nearest village to beg someone to sell her or lend her a child.

The snow was very deep, and reached above her ankles, and it took her almost an hour to go a few hundred yards.

‘It will be dark at this rate before I get to the first house,’ thought she, and stopped to look about her. Suddenly a little woman in a high-crowned hat stepped from behind a tree in front of her.

‘This is a bad day for walking! Are you going far?’ inquired the little woman.

‘Well, I want to go to the village; but I don’t see how I am ever to get there,’ answered the other.

‘And may I ask what important business takes you there?’ asked the little woman, who was really a witch.

‘My house is so dreary, with no one to speak to; I cannot stay in it alone, and I am seeking for a child — I don’t mind how small she is — who will keep me company.’

‘Oh, if that is all, you need go no further,’ replied the witch, putting her hand in her pocket. ‘Look, here is a barley corn, as a favour you shall have it for twelve shillings, and if you plant it in a flower-pot, and give it plenty of water, in a few days you will see something wonderful.’

This promise raised the woman’s spirits. She gladly paid down the price, and as soon as she returned home she dug a hole in a flower-pot and put in the seed.

For three days she waited, hardly taking her eyes from the flower-pot in its warm corner, and on the third morning she saw that, while she was asleep, a tall red tulip had shot up, sheathed in green leaves.

‘What a beautiful blossom,’ cried the woman, stooping to kiss it, when, as she did so, the red petals burst asunder, and in the midst of them was a lovely little girl only an inch high. This tiny little creature was seated on a mattress of violets, and covered with a quilt of rose leaves, and she opened her eyes and smiled at the woman as if she had known her all her life.

‘Oh! you darling; I shall never be lonely any more!’ she exclaimed in rapture; and the baby nodded her head as much as to say:

‘No, of course you won’t!’

The woman lost no time in seeking for a roomy walnut-shell, which she lined thickly with white satin, and on it she placed the mattress, with the child, whom she called Maia, upon it. This was her bed, and stood on a chair close to where her foster-mother was sleeping; but in the morning she was lifted out, and placed on a leaf in the middle of a large bowl of water, and given two white horse-hairs to row herself about with. She was the happiest baby that ever was seen, and passed the whole day singing to herself, in a language of her own, that nobody else could understand.

For some weeks the two lived together and never grew tired of each other’s society, and then a terrible misfortune happened. One night, when the foster-mother lay sound asleep after a hard day’s work, a big, ugly, wet frog hopped in through the open window and stood staring at Maia under her quilt of rose leaves.

‘Dear me! that is quite a pretty little girl,’ thought the frog to herself; ‘she would make a nice wife for my son.’ And picking up the walnut cradle in her mouth, she hopped with it to the edge of a stream which ran through the garden.

‘Come and see what I have brought you,’ called the old frog, when she reached her home in the mud.

‘Croak! croak! croak!’ uttered the son, gazing with pleasure at the sleeping child.

‘Hush; don’t make such a noise or you will wake her!’ whispered the mother. ‘I mean her to be a wife for you, and while we are preparing for the wedding we will set her on that water-lily leaf in the middle of the brook, so that she may not be able to run away from us.’

It was on this green floating prison that Maia awoke, frightened and puzzled, with the first rays of the sun. She stood up straight on the leaf, looking about her for a way of escape, and, finding none, she sat down again and began to weep bitterly. At length her sobs were heard by the old frog, who was busy in her house at the bottom of the marsh, twisting rushes into a soft carpet for Maia’s feet, and twining reeds and grapes over the doorway, to make it look pretty for the bride.

‘Ah! the poor child feels lost and unhappy,’ she thought pitifully, for her heart was kind. ‘Well, I have just done, and then my son and I will go to fetch her. When she sees how handsome he is she will be all smiles again.’ And in a few minutes they both appeared beside the leaf.

‘This is your future husband. Did you ever see anyone like him?’ asked the proud mother, pushing him forward. But, after one glance, Maia only cried the more; and the little fishes who lived in the stream came swimming round to see what was the matter.

‘It is absurd that such a pretty creature should be forced to take a husband whom she does not want,’ said they to each other. ‘And such an ugly one too! However, we can easily prevent it.’ And by turns they gnawed the stem of the lily-leaf close to the root, till at length it was free, and taking it in their mouths they bore Maia far away, till the little stream grew into a great river.

Oh, how Maia enjoyed that voyage, when once she became quite certain that the frogs could no longer reach her. Past many towns she went, and the people on the banks all turned to look at her, and exclaimed:

‘What a lovely little girl! Where can she have come from?’

‘What a lovely little girl!’ twittered the birds in the bushes. And a blue butterfly fell in love with her, and would not leave her; so she took off her sash, which just matched him, and tied it round his body, so that with this new kind of horse she travelled much faster than before.

Unluckily, a great cockchafer, who was buzzing over the river, happened to catch sight of her, and caught her up in his claws. The poor butterfly was terribly frightened at the sight of him, and he struggled hard to free himself, so that the sash bow gave way, and he flew off into the sunshine. But Maia wasn’t so fortunate, and though the cockchafer collected honey from the flowers for her dinner, and told her several times how pretty she was, she could not feel at ease with him. The cockchafer noticed this, and summoned his sisters to play with her; but they only stared rudely, and said:

‘Where did you pick up that strange object? She is very ugly to be sure, but one ought to pity her for she has only two legs.’

‘Yes, and no feelers,’ added another; ‘and she is so thin! Well, our brother has certainly very odd taste!’

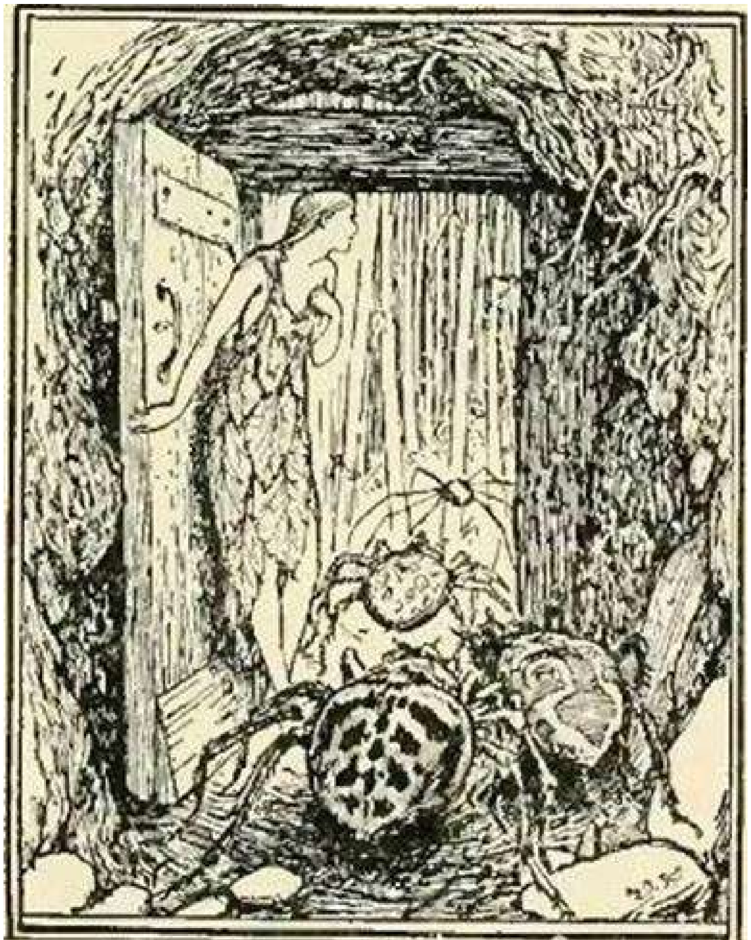

MAIA AND THE SPIDERS IN THE EVENING

‘Indeed he has!’ echoed the others. And they repeated it so loud and so often that, in the end, he believed it too, and snatching her up from the tree where he had placed her, set her down upon a daisy which grew near the ground.

Here Maia stayed for the whole summer, and really was not at all unhappy. She ventured to walk about by herself, and wove herself a bed of some blades of grass, and placed it under a clover leaf for shelter. The red cups that grew in the moss held as much dew as she wanted, and the cockchafer had taught her how to get honey. But summer does not last for ever, and by-and-by the flowers withered, and instead of dew there was snow and ice. Maia did not know what to do, for her clothes were worn to rags, and though she tried to roll herself up in a dry leaf it broke under her fingers. It soon was plain to her that if she did not get some other shelter she would die of hunger and cold.

So, gathering up all her courage, she left the forest and crossed the road into what had been, in the summer, a beautiful field of waving corn, but was now only a mass of hard stalks. She wandered on, seeing nothing but the sky above her head, till she suddenly found herself close to an opening which seemed to lead underground.

‘It will be warm, at any rate,’ thought Maia, ‘and perhaps the person who lives there will give me something to eat. At any rate, I can’t be worse off than I am now.’ And she walked boldly down the passage. By-and-by she came to a door which stood ajar, and, peeping in, discovered a whole room full of corn. This gave her heart, and she went on more swiftly, till she reached a kitchen where an old field mouse was baking a cake.

‘You poor little animal,’ cried the mouse, who had never seen anything like her before, ‘you look starved to death! Come and sit here and get warm, and share my dinner with me.’

Maia almost wept with joy at the old mouse’s kind words. She needed no second bidding, but ate more than she had ever done in her life, though it was not a breakfast for a humming-bird! When she had quite finished she put out her hand and smiled, and the old mouse said to her:

‘Can you tell stories? If so you may stay with me till the sun gets hot again, and you shall help me with my house. But it is dull here in the winter unless you have somebody clever enough to amuse you.’

Yes, Maia had learned a great many stories from her foster-mother, and, besides, there were all her own adventures, and her escapes from death. She knew also how a room should be swept, and never failed to get up early in the morning and have everything clean and tidy for the old mouse.

So the winter passed away pleasantly, and Maia began to talk of the spring, and of the time when she would have to go out into the world again and seek her fortune.

‘Oh, you need not begin to think of *that* for a while yet,’ answered the field-mouse. ‘Up on the earth they have a proverb:

When the day lengthens Then the cold strengthens;

it has been quite warm up to now, and the snow may fall any time. Never a winter goes by without it, and *then* you will be very thankful you are *here*, and not outside! But I dare say it is quiet for a young thing like you,’ she added, ‘and I have invited my neighbour the mole to come and pay us a visit. He has been asleep all these months, but I hear he is waking up again. You would be a lucky girl if he took into his head to marry you, only, unfortunately, he is blind, and cannot see how pretty you are.’ And for this blindness Maia felt truly glad, as she did not want a mole for a husband.

However, by-and-by he paid his promised visit, and Maia did not like him at all. He might be as rich and learned as possible, but he hated the sun, and the trees, and the flowers, and all that Maia loved best. To be sure, being blind, he had never seen them, and, like many other people, he thought that anything *he* did not know was not worth knowing. But Maia’s tales amused him, though he would not for the world have let her see it, and he admired her voice when she sang:

Mary, Mary, quite contrary, How does your garden grow?

Hush-a-bye, baby, on the tree-top;

though he told her that it was all nonsense, and that trees and gardens were mere foolishness. When she was *his* wife he would teach her things better worth learning.

‘Meanwhile,’ he said, with a grand air, ‘I have burrowed a passage from this house to my own, in which you can walk; but I warn you not to be frightened at a great dead creature that has fallen through a hole in the roof, and is lying on one side.’

‘What sort of creature is it?’ asked Maia eagerly.

‘Oh, I really can’t tell you,’ answered the mole, indifferently; ‘it is covered with something soft, and it has two thin legs, and a long sharp thing sticking out of its head.’

‘It is a bird,’ cried Maia joyfully, ‘and I love birds! It must have died of cold,’ she added, dropping her voice. ‘Oh! good Mr. Mole, do take me to see it!’

‘Come then, as I am going home,’ replied the mole. And calling to the old field-mouse to accompany them, they all set out.

‘Here it is,’ said the mole at last; ‘dear me, how thankful I am Fate did not make me a bird. They can’t say anything but “twit, twit,” and die with the first breath of cold.’

‘Ah, yes, poor useless creature,’ answered the field-mouse. But while they were talking, Maia crept round to the other side and stroked the feathers of the little swallow, and kissed his eyes.

All that night she lay awake, thinking of the swallow lying dead in the passage. At length she could bear it no longer, and stole away to the place where the hay was kept, and wove a thick carpet. Next she went to the field-mouse’s store of cotton which she picked in the summer from some of the marsh flowers, and carrying them both down the passage, she tucked the cotton underneath the bird and spread the hay quilt over him.

‘Perhaps you were one of the swallows who sang to me in the summer,’ said she. ‘I wish I could have brought you to life again; but now, good-bye!’ And she laid her face, wet with tears, on the breast of the bird. Surely she felt a faint movement against her cheek? Yes, there it was again! Suppose the bird was not dead after all, but only senseless with cold and hunger! And at this thought Maia hastened back to the house, and brought some grains of corn, and a drop of water in a leaf. This she held close to the swallow’s beak, which he opened unconsciously, and when he had sipped the water she gave him the grains one by one.

‘Make no noise, so that no one may guess you are not dead,’ she said. ‘To-night I will bring you some more food, and I will tell the mole that he must stuff up the hole again, as it makes the passage too cold for me to walk in. And now farewell.’ And off she went, back to the field-mouse, who was sound asleep.

After some days of Maia’s careful nursing, the swallow felt strong enough to talk, and he told Maia how he came to be in the place where she found him. Before he was big enough to fly very high he had torn his wing in a rosebush, so that he could not keep up with his family and friends when they took their departure to warmer lands. In their swift course they never noticed that their little brother was not with them, and at last he dropped on the ground from sheer fatigue, and must have rolled down the hole into the passage.

It was very lucky for the swallow that both the mole and the field-mouse thought he was dead, and did not trouble about him, so that when the spring *really* came, and the sun was hot, and blue hyacinths grew in the woods and primroses in the hedges, he was as tall and strong as any of his companions.

‘You have saved my life, dear little Maia,’ said he; ‘but now the time has come for me to leave you — unless,’ he added, ‘you will let me carry you on my back far away from this gloomy prison.’

Maia’s eyes sparkled at the thought, but she shook her head bravely.

‘Yes, you must go; but I must stay behind,’ she answered. ‘The field-mouse has been good to me, and I cannot desert her like that. Do you think you can open the hole for yourself?’ she asked anxiously. ‘If so, you had better begin now, for this evening we are to have supper with the mole, and it would never do for my foster-mother to find you working at it.’

‘That is true,’ answered the swallow. And flying up to the roof, — which, after all, was not very high above them — he set to work with his bill, and soon let a flood of sunshine into the dark place.

‘*Won’t* you come with me, Maia?’ said he. And though her heart longed for the trees and the flowers, she answered as before:

‘No, I cannot.’

That one glimpse of the sun was all Maia had for some time, for the corn sprung up so thickly over the hole and about the house, that there might almost as well have been no sun at all. However, though she missed her bird friend every moment, she had no leisure to be idle, for the field-mouse had told her that very soon she was to be married to the mole, and kept her spinning wool and cotton for her outfit. And as she had never in her life made a dress, four clever spiders were persuaded to spend the days underground, turning the wool and cotton into tiny garments. Maia liked the clothes, but hated the thought of the blind mole, only she did not know how to escape him. In the evenings, when the spiders were going to their homes for the night, she would walk with them to the door and wait till a puff of wind blew the corn ears apart, and she could see the sky.

‘If the swallow would only come now,’ she said to herself, ‘I would go with him to the end of the world.’ But he never came!

‘Your outfit is all finished,’ said the field-mouse one day when the berries were red and the leaves yellow, ‘and the mole and I have decided that your wedding shall be in four weeks’ time.’

‘Oh, not so soon! not so soon!’ cried Maia, bursting into tears; which made the field-mouse very angry, and declare that Maia had no more sense than other girls, and did not know what was good for her. Then the mole arrived, and carried her on his back to see the new house he had dug for her, which was so very far under ground that Maia’s tiny legs could never bring her up even as high as the field-mouse’s dwelling, from which she might see the sunlight. Her heart grew heavier and heavier as the days went by, and in the last evening of all she crept out into the field among the stubble, to watch the sun set before she bade it good-bye for ever.

‘Farewell, farewell,’ she said ‘and farewell to my little swallow. Ah! if he only knew, he would come to help me.’

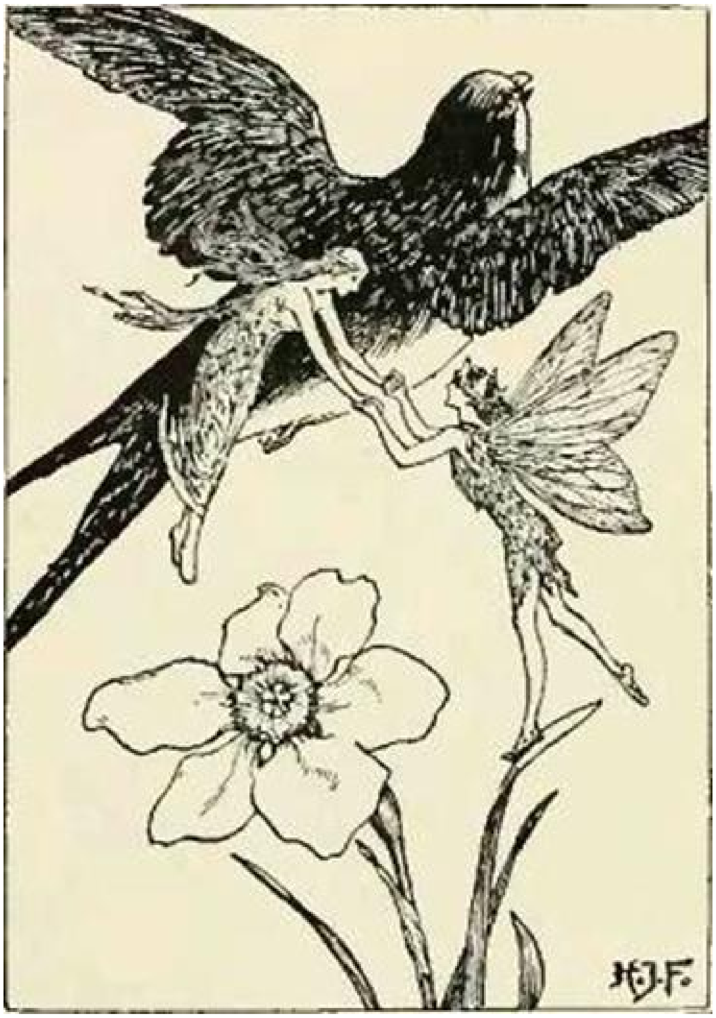

‘Twit! twit,’ cried a voice just above her; and the swallow fluttered to the ground beside her. ‘You look sad; are you *really* going to let that ugly mole marry you?’

‘I shall soon die, that is one comfort,’ she answered weeping. But the swallow only said:

‘Tut! tut! get on my back, as I told you before, and I will take you to a land where the sun always shines, and you will soon forget that such a creature as a mole ever existed.’

‘Yes, I will come,’ said Maia.

Then the swallow tore off one of the corn stalks with his strong beak, and bade her tie it safely to his wing. And they started off, flying, flying south for many a day.

Oh! how happy Maia was to see the beautiful earth again! A hundred times she longed for the swallow to stop, but he always told her that the best was yet to be; and they flew on and on, only halting for short rests, till they reached a place covered with tall white marble pillars, some standing high, wreathed in vines, out of which endless swallows’ heads were peeping; others lying stretched among the flowers, white, yellow, and blue.

‘I live up there,’ said the swallow, pointing to the tallest of the pillars. ‘But such a house would never do for you, as you would only fall out of it and kill yourself. So choose one of those flowers below, and you shall have it for your own, and sleep all night curled up in its leaves.’

‘I will have that one,’ answered Maia, pointing to a white flower shaped like a star, with a tiny crinkled wreath of red and yellow in its centre, and a long stem that swayed in the wind; ‘that one is the prettiest of all, and it smells so sweet.’ Then the swallow flew down towards it; but as they drew near they saw a tiny little manikin with a crown on his head, and wings on his shoulders, balancing himself on one of the leaves. ‘Ah, that is the king of the flower-spirits,’ whispered the swallow. And the king stretched out his hands to Maia, and helped her to jump from the swallow’s back.

‘I have waited for you for a long while,’ said he, ‘and now you have come at last to be my queen.’

And Maia smiled, and stood beside him as all the fairies that dwelt in the flowers ran to fetch presents for her; and the best of them all was a pair of lovely gauzy blue wings to help fly about like one of themselves.

So instead of marrying the mole, Little Maia was crowned a queen, and the fairies danced round her in a ring, while the swallow sang the wedding song.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND

In a village in Hindustan there once lived a merchant who, although he rose early, worked hard, and rested late, remained very poor; and ill-luck so dogged him that he determined at last to go to some distant country and there to try his fortune. Twelve years passed by; his luck had turned, and now he had gathered great wealth, so that having plenty to keep him in comfort for the rest of his days, he thought once more of his native village, where he desired to spend the remainder of his life among his own people. In order to carry his riches with him in safety over the many weary miles that lay between him and his home, he bought some magnificent jewels, which he locked up in a little box and wore concealed upon his person; and, so as not to draw the attention of the thieves who infested the highways and made their living by robbing travellers, he started off in the poor clothes of a man who has nothing to lose.

Thus prepared, he travelled quickly, and within a few days' journey from his own village came to a city where he determined to buy better garments and — now that he was no longer afraid of thieves — to look more like the rich man he had become. In his new raiment he approached the city, and near the great gate he found a bazaar where, amongst many shops filled with costly silks, and carpets, and goods of all countries, was one finer than all the rest. There, amidst his goods, spread out to the best advantage, sat the owner smoking a long silver pipe, and thither the merchant bent his steps, and saluting the owner politely, sat down also and began to make some purchases. Now, the proprietor of the shop, Beeka Mull by name, was a very shrewd man, and as he and the merchant conversed, he soon felt sure that his customer was richer than he seemed, and was trying to conceal the fact. Certain purchases having been made, he invited the new-comer to refresh himself and in a short time they were chatting pleasantly together. In the course of the conversation Beeka Mull asked the merchant whither he was travelling, and hearing the name of the village, he observed:

'Ah, you had better be careful on that road — it's a very bad place for thieves.'

The merchant turned pale at these words. It would be such a bitter thing, he thought, just at the end of his journey to be robbed of all the fortune he had heaped up with such care. But this bland and prosperous Beeka Mull must surely know best, so presently he said:

‘Lala-ji, could you oblige me by locking up for me a small box for a short while? When once I get to my village I could bring back half-a-dozen sturdy men of my own kinsfolk and claim it again.’

The Lala shook his head. ‘I could not do it,’ replied he. ‘I am sorry; but such things are not my business. I should be afraid to undertake it.’

‘But,’ pleaded the merchant, ‘I know no one in this city, and you must surely have some place where you keep your own precious things. Do this, I pray you, as a great favour.’

Still Beeka Mull politely but firmly refused; but the merchant, feeling that he had now betrayed the fact that he was richer than he seemed, and being loth to make more people aware of it by inquiring elsewhere, continued to press him, until at last he consented. The merchant produced the little box of jewels, and Beeka Mull locked it up for him in a strong chest with other precious stones; and so, with many promises and compliments, they parted.

In a place like an Eastern bazaar, where the shops lie with wide open fronts, and with their goods displayed not only within but without on terraces and verandahs raised a few feet above the public roadway, such a long talk as that between Beeka Mull and the merchant could not but attract some attention from the other shop-keepers in the narrow street. If the merchant had but known it, nearly every shop-owner in that district was a thief, and the cleverest and biggest of all was Beeka Mull. But he did not know it, only he could not help feeling a little uneasy at having thus parted with all his wealth to a stranger. And so, as he wandered down the street, making a purchase here and there, he managed in one way and another to ask some questions about the honesty of Beeka Mull, and each rascal whom he spoke to, knowing that there was some good reason in the question, and hoping to get in return some share of the spoils, replied in praise of Beeka Mull as a model of all the virtues.

In this way the merchant’s fears were stilled, and, with a comparatively light heart, he travelled on to his village; and within a week or so returned to the city with half-a-dozen sturdy young nephews and friends whom he had enlisted to help him carry home his precious box.

At the great market-place in the centre of the city the merchant left his friends, saying that he would go and get the box of jewels and rejoin them, to which they consented, and away he went. Arrived at the shop of Beeka Mull, he went up and saluted him.

‘Good-day, Lala-ji,’ said he. But the Lala pretended not to see him. So he repeated the salutation. ‘What do you want?’ snapped Beeka Mull; ‘you’ve said your “good-day” twice, why don’t you tell me your business?’

‘Don’t you remember me?’ asked the merchant.

‘Remember you?’ growled the other; ‘no, why should I? I have plenty to do to remember good customers without trying to remember every beggar who comes whining for charity.’

When he heard this the merchant began to tremble.

‘Lala-ji!’ he cried, ‘surely you remember me and the little box I gave you to take care of? And you promised — yes, indeed, you promised very kindly — that I might return to claim it, and — —’

‘You scoundrel,’ roared Beeka Mull, ‘get out of my shop! Be off with you, you impudent scamp! Every one knows that I never keep treasures for anyone; I have trouble enough to do to keep my own! Come, off with you!’ With that he began to push the merchant out of the shop; and, when the poor man resisted, two of the bystanders came to Beeka Mull’s help, and flung the merchant out into the road, like a bale of goods dropped from a camel. Slowly he picked himself up out of the dust, bruised, battered, and bleeding, but feeling nothing of the pain in his body, nothing but a dreadful numbing sensation that, after all, he was ruined and lost! Slowly he dragged himself a little further from where the fat and furious Beeka Mull still stood amongst his disordered silks and carpets, and coming to a friendly wall he crouched and leant against it, and putting his head into his hands gave himself up to an agony of misery and despair.

There he sat motionless, like one turned to stone, whilst darkness fell around him; and when, about eleven o’clock that night, a certain gay young fellow named Kooshy Ram passed by with a friend, he saw the merchant sitting hunched against the wall, and remarked: ‘A thief, no doubt.’ ‘You are wrong,’ returned the other, ‘thieves don’t sit in full view of people like that, even at night.’ And so the two passed on, and thought no more of him. About five o’clock next morning Kooshy Ram was returning home again, when, to his astonishment, he saw the miserable merchant still sitting as he had seen him sit hours before. Surely something must be the matter with a man who sat all night in the open street, and Kooshy Ram resolved to see what it was; so he went up and shook the merchant gently by the shoulder. ‘Who are you?’ asked he— ‘and what are you doing here — are you ill?’

‘Ill?’ said the merchant in a hollow voice, ‘yes; ill with a sickness for which there is no medicine.’

‘Oh, nonsense!’ cried Kooshy Ram. ‘Come along with me, I know a medicine that will cure you, I think.’ So the young man seized the merchant by the arm, and hoisting him to his feet, dragged him to his own lodging; where he first of all gave him a large glass of wine, and then, after he had refreshed him with food, bade him tell his adventures.

Meanwhile the merchant’s companions in the market-place, being dull-witted persons, thought that as he did not return he must have gone home by himself; and as soon as they were tired of waiting they went back to their village and left him to look after his own affairs. He would therefore have fared badly had it not been for his rescuer, Kooshy Ram, who, whilst still a boy, had been left a great deal of money with no one to advise him how to spend it. He was high-spirited, kind-hearted, and shrewd into the bargain; but he threw away his money like water, and generally upon the nearest thing or person in his way, and that, alas! most often was himself! Now, however, he had taken it into his head to befriend this miserable merchant, and he meant to do it; and on his side the merchant felt confidence revive, and without further ado told all that had happened.

Kooshy Ram laughed heartily at the idea of any stranger entrusting his wealth to Beeka Mull.

‘Why, he is the greatest rascal in the city,’ he cried, ‘unless you believe what some of them say of me! Well, there is nothing to be done for the present, but just to stay here quietly, and I think that at the end of a short time I shall find a medicine which will heal your sickness.’ At this the merchant again took courage, and a little ease crept into his heart as he gratefully accepted his new friend’s invitation.

A few days later Kooshy Ram sent for some friends to see him, and talked with them long, and, although the merchant did not hear the conversation, he did hear shouts of laughter as though at some good joke; but the laughter echoed dully in his own heart, for the more he considered the more he despaired of ever recovering his fortune from the grasp of Beeka Mull.

One day, soon after this, Kooshy Ram came to him and said:

‘You remember the wall where I found you that night, near Beeka Mull’s shop?’

‘Yes, indeed I do,’ answered the merchant.

‘Well,’ continued Kooshy Ram, ‘this afternoon you must go and stand in that same spot and watch; and when someone gives you a signal, you must go up to Beeka Mull and salute him and say, “Oh, Lala-ji, will you kindly let me have back that box of mine which you have on trust?”’

‘What’s the use of that?’ asked the merchant. ‘He won’t do it any more now than he would when I asked him before.’

‘Never mind!’ replied Kooshy Ram, ‘do exactly what I tell you, and repeat exactly what I say, word for word, and I will answer for the rest.’

So, that afternoon, the merchant at a certain time went and stood by the wall as he was told. He noticed that Beeka Mull saw him, but neither took any heed of the other. Presently up the bazaar came a gorgeous palanquin like those in which ladies of rank are carried about. It was borne by four bearers well dressed in rich liveries, and its curtains and trappings were truly magnificent. In attendance was a grave-looking personage whom the merchant recognized as one of the friends who visited Kooshy Ram; and behind him came a servant with a box covered with a cloth upon his head.

The palanquin was borne along at a smart pace and was set down at Beeka Mull's shop. The fat shop-keeper was on his feet at once, and bowed deeply as the gentleman in attendance advanced.

'May I inquire,' he said, 'who this is in the palanquin that deigns to favour my humble shop with a visit? And what may I do for her?'

The gentleman, after whispering at the curtain of the palanquin, explained that this was a relative of his who was travelling, but as her husband could go no further with her, she desired to leave with Beeka Mull a box of jewels for safe custody. Lala bowed again to the ground. 'It was not,' he said, 'quite in his way of business; but of course, if he could please the lady, he would be most happy, and would guard the box with his life.' Then the servant carrying the box was called up; the box was unlocked, and a mass of jewellery laid open to the gaze of the enraptured Lala, whose mouth watered as he turned over the rich gems.

All this the merchant had watched from the distance, and now he saw — could he be mistaken? — no, he distinctly saw a hand beckoning through the curtain on that side of the palanquin away from the shop. 'The signal! Was this the signal?' thought he. The hand beckoned again, impatiently it seemed to him. So forward he went, very quietly, and saluting Beeka Mull, who was sitting turning over the contents of this amazing box of jewels which fortune and some fools were putting into his care, he said:

'Oh, Lala-ji, will you kindly let me have back that box of mine which you have on trust?'

The Lala looked up as though he had been stung; but quickly the thought flashed through his mind that if this man began making a fuss again he would lose the confidence of these new and richer customers; so he controlled himself, and answered:

'Dear me, of course, yes! I had forgotten all about it.' And he went off and brought the little box and put it into the merchant's trembling hands. Quickly the latter pulled out the key, which hung by a string round his neck, and opened the box; and when he saw that his treasures were all there he rushed into the road, and, with the box under his arm, began dancing like a madman, with great shouts and screams of laughter. Just then a messenger came running up and, saluting the gentleman attending the palanquin, he said:

'The lady's husband has returned, and is prepared to travel with her, so that there is no necessity to deposit the jewels.' Whereat the gentleman quickly closed and relocked the box, and handed it back to the waiting servant. Then from the palanquin came a yell of laughter, and out jumped — not a lady — but Kooshy Ram, who immediately ran and joined the merchant in the middle of the road and danced as madly as he. Beeka Mull stood and stared stupidly at them; then, with a shrill cackle of laughter, he flung off his turban, bounced out into the road with the other two, and fell to dancing and snapping his fingers until he was out of breath.

‘Lala-ji,’ said the gentleman who had played the part of the relative attendant on the palanquin, ‘why do you dance? The merchant dances because he has recovered his fortune; Kooshy Ram dances because he is a madman and has tricked you; but why do *you* dance?’

‘I dance,’ panted Beeka Ram, glaring at him with a bloodshot eye, ‘I dance because I knew thirteen different ways of deceiving people by pretending confidence in them. I didn’t know there were any more, and now here’s a fourteenth! That’s why I dance!’

(Punjâbi Story, Major Campbell, Feroshepore.)

THE GREEN KNIGHT

There lived once a king and queen who had an only daughter, a charming and beautiful girl, dearer to them than anything else in the world. When the princess was twelve years old the queen fell sick, and nothing that could be done for her was of any use. All the doctors in the kingdom did their best to cure her, but in spite of their efforts she grew worse and worse. As she was about to die, she sent for the king and said to him:

‘Promise me that whatever our daughter asks, you will do, no matter whether you wish to or not.’

The king at first hesitated, but as she added:

‘Unless you promise this I cannot die in peace,’ he at length did as she desired, and gave the promise, after which she became quite happy and died.

It happened that near the king’s palace lived a noble lady, whose little girl was of about the same age as the princess, and the two children were always together. After the queen’s death the princess begged that this lady should come to live with her in the palace. The king was not quite pleased with this arrangement, for he distrusted the lady; but the princess wished so much for it that he did not like to refuse.

‘I am lonely, father,’ she said, ‘and all the beautiful presents you give me cannot make up to me for the loss of my mother. If this lady comes to live here I shall almost feel as if the queen had come back to me.’

So a magnificent suite of rooms was prepared and set aside for the new-comers, and the little princess was wild with joy at the thought of having her friends so near her. The lady and her daughter arrived, and for a long time all went well. They were very kind to the motherless princess, and she almost began to forget how dull she had been before they came. Then, one day, as she and the other girl were playing together in the gardens of the palace, the lady came to them, dressed for a journey, and kissed the princess tenderly, saying:

‘Farewell, my child; my daughter and I must leave you and go far away.’

The poor princess began to cry bitterly. ‘Oh! you must not leave me!’ she sobbed. ‘What shall I do without you? Please, oh! please stay.’

The lady shook her head.

‘It almost breaks my heart to go, dear child,’ she said, ‘but, alas! it must be.’

‘Is there nothing that can keep you here?’ asked the princess.

‘Only one thing,’ answered the lady, ‘and as that is impossible, we will not speak of it.’

‘Nothing is impossible,’ persisted the princess. ‘Tell me what it is, and it shall be done.’

So at last her friend told her.

‘If the king, your father, would make me his queen I would stay,’ she said; ‘but that he would never do.’

‘Oh, yes! *that* is easy enough!’ cried the princess, delighted to think that, after all, they need not be parted. And she ran off to find her father, and beg him to marry the lady at once. He had done everything she asked, and she was quite certain he would do it.

‘What is it, my daughter?’ he asked, when he saw her. ‘You have been crying — are you not happy?’

‘Father,’ she said, ‘I have come to ask you to marry the countess’ — (for that was the lady’s real title)— ‘if you do not she will leave us, and then I shall be as lonely as before. You have never refused me what I have asked before, do not refuse me now.’

The king turned quite pale when he heard this. He did not like the countess, and so, of course, he did not wish to marry her; besides, he still loved his dead wife.

‘No, that I cannot do, my child,’ he said at last.

At these words the princess began to cry once more, and the tears ran down her cheeks so fast, and she sobbed so bitterly, that her father felt quite miserable too. He remembered the promise he had given always to do what his daughter asked him and in the end he gave way, and promised to marry the countess. The princess at once was all smiles, and ran away to tell the good news.

Soon after, the wedding was celebrated with great festivities, and the countess became queen; but, in spite of all the joy and merriment that filled the palace, the king looked pale and sad, for he was certain that ill would come of the marriage. Sure enough, in a very short time the queen’s manner towards the princess began to change. She was jealous of her because she, instead of her own daughter, was heir to the throne, and very soon she could no longer hide her thoughts. Instead of speaking kindly and lovingly as before, her words became rough and cruel, and once or twice she even slapped the princess’s face.

The king was very unhappy at seeing his dearly loved daughter suffer, and at last she became so wretched that he could no longer bear it. Calling her to him one day he said:

‘My daughter, you are no longer merry as you should be, and I fear that it is the fault of your step-mother. It will be better for you to live with her no longer; therefore I have built you a castle on the island in the lake, and that is to be your home in future. There you can do just as you like, and your step-mother will never enter it.'

The princess was delighted to hear this, and still more pleased when she saw the castle, which was full of beautiful things, and had a great number of windows looking out on the lovely blue water. There was a boat in which she might row herself about, and a garden where she could walk whenever she wished without fear of meeting the unkind queen; and the king promised to visit her every day.

For a long time she dwelt in peace, and grew more and more beautiful every day. Everyone who saw her said 'The princess is the loveliest lady in the land.' And this was told to the queen, who hated her step-daughter still more because her own daughter was ugly and stupid.

One day it was announced that a great meeting of knights and nobles was to be held in a neighbouring kingdom distant about two days' journey. There were to be all kinds of festivities, and a tournament was to be fought and a banquet held, in honour of the coming of age of the prince of the country.

The princess's father was amongst those invited, but before he set out he went to take leave of his daughter. Although she had such a beautiful home, and was no longer scolded by the queen, the poor princess was dreadfully lonely, and she told her father that it would be better if she were dead. He did his best to comfort her and promised that he would soon return. Was there anything he could do to help her?

'Yes,' she said. 'You may greet the Green Knight from me.'

Now the king wondered a little at these words, for he had never heard of the Green Knight; but there was no time to ask questions, therefore he gave the promise, and rode off on his journey. When he came to the palace where the festivities were to take place, the first thing he did was to ask:

'Can anyone tell me where I may find the Green Knight?'

No, they were very sorry; but none had ever heard of such a person either — certainly he was not to be found there. At this the king grew troubled, and not even the banquet or the tournament could make him feel happier. He inquired of everyone he saw, 'Do you know the Green Knight?' but the only answer he got was:

'No, your majesty, we have never heard of him.'

At length he began to believe that the princess was mistaken, and that there was no such person; and he started on his homeward journey sorrowfully enough, for this was the first time for many months that the princess had asked him to do anything for her and he could not do it. He thought so much about it that he did not notice the direction his horse was taking, and presently he found himself in the midst of a dense forest where he had never been before. He rode on and on, looking for the path, but as the sun began to set he realised that he was lost. At last, to his delight, he saw a man driving some pigs, and riding up to him, he said:

‘I have lost my way. Can you tell me where I am?’

‘You are in the Green Knight’s forest,’ answered the man, ‘and these are his pigs.’

At that the king’s heart grew light. ‘Where does the Green Knight live?’ he asked.

‘It is a very long way from here,’ said the swineherd; ‘but I will show you the path.’ So he went a little farther with the king and put him on the right road, and the king bade him farewell.

Presently he came to a second forest, and there he met another swineherd driving pigs.

‘Whose beasts are those, my man?’ he asked.

‘They are the Green Knight’s,’ said the man.

‘And where does he live?’ inquired the king.

‘Oh, not far from here,’ was the reply.

Then the king rode on, and about midday he reached a beautiful castle standing in the midst of the loveliest garden you can possibly imagine, where fountains played in marble basins, and peacocks walked on the smooth lawns. On the edge of a marble basin sat a young and handsome man, who was dressed from head to foot in a suit of green armour, and was feeding the goldfish which swam in the clear water.

‘This must be the Green Knight,’ thought the king; and going up to the young man he said courteously:

‘I have come, sir, to give you my daughter’s greeting. But I have wandered far, and lost my way in your forest.’

The knight looked at him for a moment as though puzzled.

‘I have never met either you or your daughter,’ he said at last; ‘but you are very welcome all the same.’ And he waved his hand towards the castle. However, the king took no notice, and told him that his daughter had sent a message to the Green Knight, and as he was the only Green Knight in the kingdom this message must be for him.

‘You must pass the night with me here,’ said the knight; and as the sun was already set, the king was thankful to accept the invitation. They sat down in the castle hall to a magnificent banquet, and although he had travelled much and visited many monarchs in their palaces, the king had never fared better than at the table of the Green Knight, whilst his host himself was so clever and agreeable, that he was delighted, and thought ‘what a charming son-in-law this knight would make!’

Next morning, when he was about to set forth on his journey home, the Green Knight put into his hand a jewelled casket, saying:

‘Will your highness graciously condescend to carry this gift to the princess, your daughter? It contains my portrait, that when I come she may know me; for I feel certain that she is the lady I have seen night after night in a dream, and I must win her for my bride.’

The king gave the knight his blessing, and promised to take the gift to his daughter. With that he set off, and ere long reached his own country.

The princess was awaiting him anxiously when he arrived, and ran to his arms in her joy at seeing her dear father again.

‘And did you see the Green Knight?’ she asked.

‘Yes,’ answered the king, drawing out the casket the knight had sent, ‘and he begged me to give you this that you may know him when he arrives and not mistake him for somebody else.’

When the princess saw the portrait she was delighted, and exclaimed: ‘It is indeed the man whom I have seen in my dreams! Now I shall be happy, for he and no other shall be my husband.’

Very soon after the Green Knight arrived, and he looked so handsome in his green armour, with a long green plume in his helmet, that the princess fell still more in love with him than before, and when he saw her, and recognised her as the lady whom he had so often dreamt of, he immediately asked her to be his bride. The princess looked down and smiled as she answered him:

‘We must keep the secret from my step-mother until the wedding-day,’ said she, ‘for otherwise she will find a way to do us some evil.’

‘As you please,’ replied the prince; ‘but I must visit you daily, for I can live no longer without you! I will come early in the morning and not leave until it is dark; thus the queen will not see me row across the lake.’

For a long time, the Green Knight visited the princess every day, and spent many hours wandering with her through the beautiful gardens where they knew the queen could not see them. But secrets, as you know, are dangerous things, and at last, one morning, a girl who was in service at the palace happened to be walking by the lake early in the morning and beheld a wonderfully handsome young man, in a beautiful suit of green satin, come down to the edge of the lake. Not guessing that he was watched, he got into a little boat that lay moored to the bank, rowed himself over to the island where the princess’s castle stood. The girl went home wondering who the knight could be; and as she was brushing the queen’s hair, she said to her:

‘Does your majesty know that the princess has a suitor?’

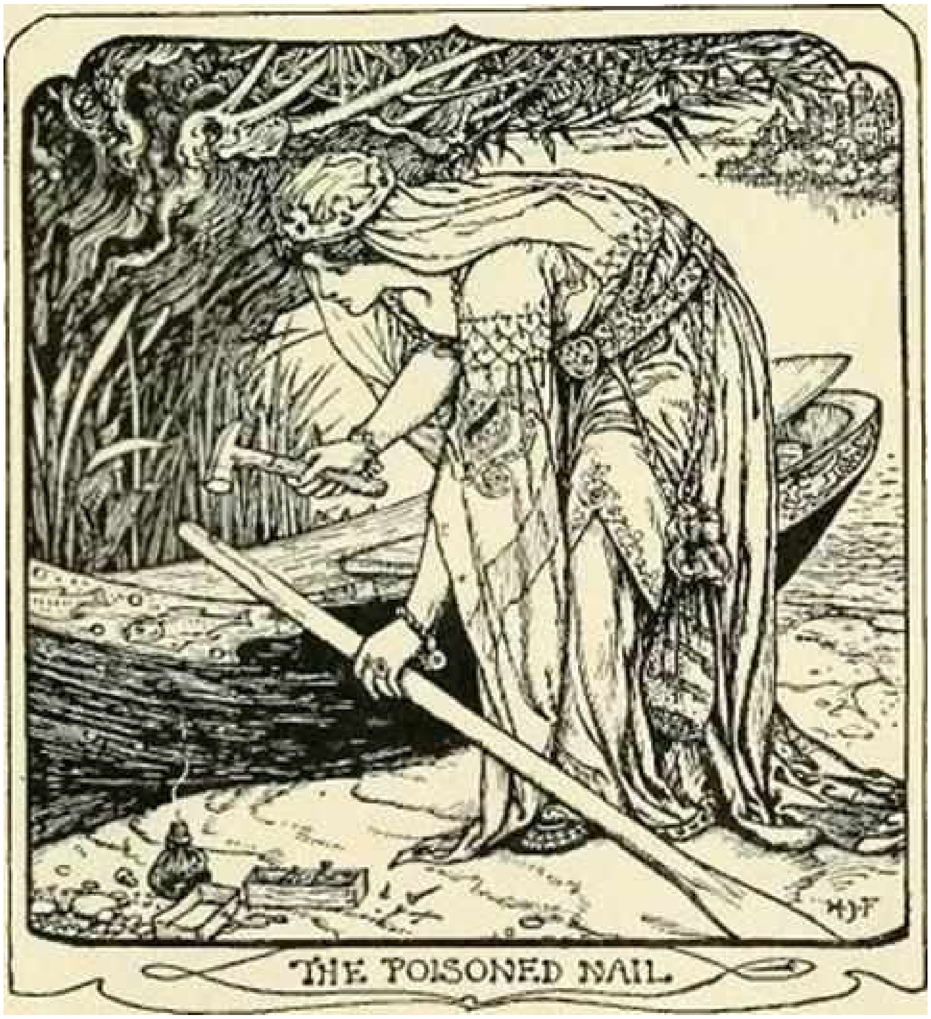

THE POISONED NAIL.

‘Nonsense!’ replied the queen crossly. But she was dreadfully vexed at the mere idea, as her own daughter was still unmarried, and was likely to remain so, because she was so ill-tempered and stupid that no one wanted her.

‘It is true,’ persisted the girl. ‘He is dressed all in green, and is very handsome. I saw him myself, though he did not see me, and he got into a boat and rowed over to the island, and the princess was waiting for him at the castle door.’

‘I must find out what this means,’ thought the queen. But she bade her maid of honour cease chattering and mind her own business.

Early next morning the queen got up and went down to the shore of the lake, where she hid herself behind a tree. Sure enough there came a handsome knight dressed in green, just as the maid of honour had said, and he got into a boat and rowed over to the island where the princess awaited him. The angry queen remained by the lake all day, but it was not until the evening that the knight returned, and leaping on shore, he tied the boat to its moorings and went away through the forest.

‘I have caught my step-daughter nicely,’ thought the queen. ‘But she shall not be married before my own sweet girl. I must find a way to put a stop to this.’

Accordingly she took a poisoned nail and stuck it in the handle of the oar in such a way that the knight would be sure to scratch his hand when he picked up the oar. Then she went home laughing, very much pleased with her cleverness.

The next day the Green Knight went to visit the princess as usual; but directly he took up the oars to row over to the island he felt a sharp scratch on his hand.

‘Oof!’ he said, dropping the oars from pain, ‘what can have scratched so?’ But, look as he might, only a tiny mark was to be seen.

‘Well, it’s strange how a nail could have come here since yesterday,’ he thought. ‘Still, it is not very serious, though it hurts a good deal.’ And, indeed, it seemed such a little thing that he did not mention it to the princess. However, when he reached home in the evening, he felt so ill he was obliged to go to bed, with no one to attend on him except his old nurse. But of this, of course, the princess knew nothing; and the poor girl, fearing lest some evil should have befallen him, or some other maiden more beautiful than she should have stolen his heart from her, grew almost sick with waiting. Lonely, indeed, she was, for her father, who would have helped her, was travelling in a foreign country, and she knew not how to obtain news of her lover.

In this manner time passed away, and one day, as she sat by the open window crying and feeling very sad, a little bird came and perched on the branch of a tree that stood just underneath. It began to sing, and so beautifully that the princess was obliged to stop crying and listen to it, and very soon she found out that the bird was trying to attract her attention.

‘*Tu-whit, tu-whit!* your lover is sick!’ it sang.

‘Alas!’ cried the princess. ‘What can I do?’

‘*Tu-whit, tu-whit!* you must go to your father’s palace!’

‘And what shall I do there?’ she asked.

‘*Tu-whit!* there you will find a snake with nine young ones.’

‘Ugh!’ answered the princess with a shiver, for she did not like snakes. But the little bird paid no heed.

‘Put them in a basket and go to the Green Knight’s palace,’ said she.

‘And what am I to do with them when I get there?’ she cried, blushing all over, though there was no one to see her but the bird.

‘Dress yourself as a kitchen-maid and ask for a place. *Tu-whit!* Then you must make soup out of the snakes. Give it three times to the knight and he will be cured. *Tu-whit!*'

'But what has made him ill?' asked the princess. The bird, however, had flown away, and there was nothing for it but to go to her father's palace and look for the snakes. When she came there she found the mother snake with the nine little snakes all curled up so that you could hardly tell their heads from their tails. The princess did not like having to touch them, but when the old snake had wriggled out of the nest to bask a little in the sun, she picked up the young ones and put them in a basket as the bird had told her, and ran off to find the Green Knight's castle. All day she walked along, sometimes stopping to pick the wild berries, or to gather a nosegay; but though she rested now and then, she would not lie down to sleep before she reached the castle. At last she came in sight of it, and just then she met a girl driving a flock of geese.

'Good-day!' said the princess; 'can you tell me if this is the castle of the Green Knight?'

'Yes, that it is,' answered the goose girl, 'for I am driving his geese. But the Green Knight is very ill, and they say that unless he can be cured within three days he will surely die.'

At this news the princess grew as white as death. The ground seemed to spin round, and she closed her hand tight on a bush that was standing beside her. By-and-by, with a great effort, she recovered herself and said to the goose girl:

'Would you like to have a fine silk dress to wear?'

The goose girl's eyes glistened.

'Yes, that I would!' answered she.

'Then take off your dress and give it to me, and I will give you mine,' said the princess.

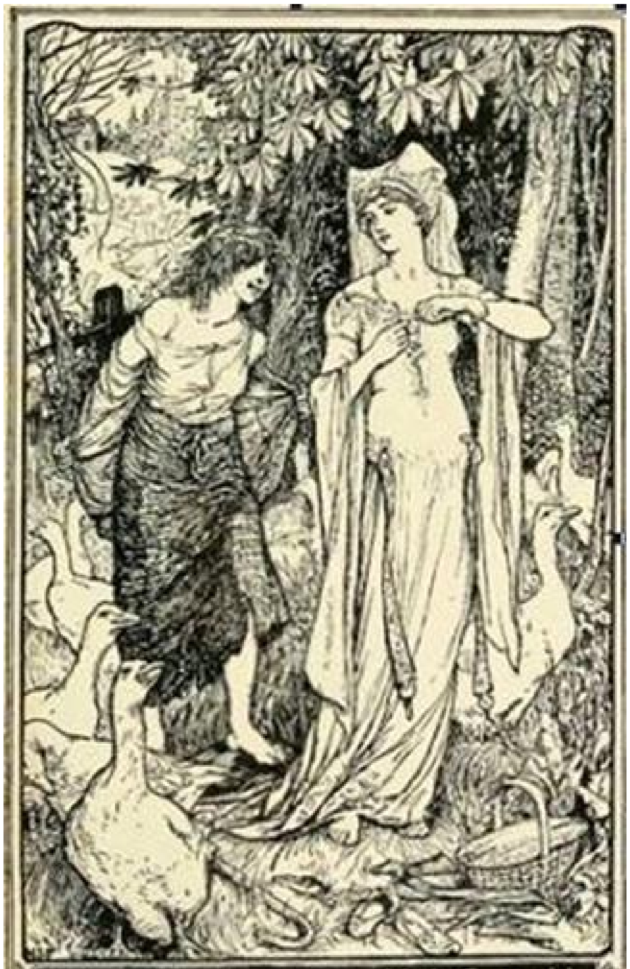

The Princess changes clothes with the Goose-girl

The girl could scarcely believe her ears, but the princess was already unfastening her beautiful silk dress, and taking off her silk stockings and pretty red shoes; and the goose girl lost no time in slipping out of her rough linen skirt and tunic. Then the princess put on the other's rags and let down her hair, and went to the kitchen to ask for a place.

'Do you want a kitchen-maid?' she said.

'Yes, we do,' answered the cook, who was too busy to ask the new-comer many questions.

The following day, after a good night's rest, the princess set about her new duties. The other servants were speaking of their master, and saying to each other how ill he was, and that unless he could be cured within three days he would surely die.

The princess thought of the snakes, and the bird's advice, and lifting her head from the pots and pans she was scouring, she said: 'I know how to make a soup that has such a wonderful power that whoever tastes it is sure to be cured, whatever his illness may be. As the doctors cannot cure your master shall I try?'

At first they all laughed at her.

‘What! a scullion cure the knight when the best physicians in the kingdom have failed?’

But at last, just because all the physicians *had* failed, they decided that it would do no harm to try; and she ran off joyfully to fetch her basket of snakes and make them into broth. When this was ready she carried some to the knight’s room and entered it boldly, pushing aside all the learned doctors who stood beside his bed. The poor knight was too ill to know her, besides, she was so ragged and dirty that he would not have been likely to do so had he been well; but when he had taken the soup he was so much better that he was able to sit up.

The next day he had some more, and then he was able to dress himself.

‘That is certainly wonderful soup!’ said the cook.

The third day, after he had eaten his soup, the knight was quite well again.

‘Who are you?’ he asked the girl; ‘was it you who made this soup that has cured me?’

‘Yes,’ answered the princess.

‘Choose, then, whatever you wish as a reward,’ said the knight, ‘and you shall have it.’

‘I would be your bride!’ said the princess.

The knight frowned in surprise at such boldness, and shook his head.

‘That is the one thing I cannot grant,’ he said, ‘for I am pledged to marry the most beautiful princess in the world. Choose again.’

Then the princess ran away and washed herself and mended her rags, and when she returned the Green Knight recognised her at once.

You can think what a joyful meeting that was!

Soon after, they were married with great splendour. All the knights and princes in the kingdom were summoned to the wedding, and the princess wore a dress that shone like the sun, so that no one had ever beheld a more gorgeous sight. The princess’s father, of course, was present, but the wicked queen and her daughter were driven out of the country, and as nobody has seen them since, very likely they were eaten by wild beasts in the forest. But the bride and bridegroom were so happy that they forgot all about them, and they lived with the old king till he died, when they succeeded him.

(From *“Eventyr fra Jylland,” samlede og optegnede af Evald Tang Kristensen*. Translated from the Danish by Mrs. Skovgaard-Pedersen.)

THE FIVE WISE WORDS OF THE GURU

Once there lived a handsome young man named Ram Singh, who, though a favourite with everyone, was unhappy because he had a scold for a step-mother. All day long she went on talking, until the youth was driven so distracted that he determined to go away somewhere and seek his fortune. No sooner had he decided to leave his home than he made his plans, and the very next morning he started off with a few clothes in a wallet, and a little money in his pocket.

But there was one person in the village to whom he wished to say good-bye, and that was a wise old guru, or teacher, who had taught him much. So he turned his face first of all towards his master's hut, and before the sun was well up was knocking at his door. The old man received his pupil affectionately; but he was wise in reading faces, and saw at once that the youth was in trouble.

'My son,' said he, 'what is the matter?'

'Nothing, father,' replied the young man, 'but I have determined to go into the world and seek my fortune.'

'Be advised,' returned the guru, 'and remain in your father's house; it is better to have half a loaf at home than to seek a whole one in distant countries.'

But Ram Singh was in no mood to heed such advice, and very soon the old man ceased to press him.

'Well,' said he at last, 'if your mind is made up I suppose you must have your way. But listen carefully, and remember five parting counsels which I will give you; and if you keep these no evil shall befall you. First — always obey without question the orders of him whose service you enter; second — never speak harshly or unkindly to anyone; third — never lie; fourth — never try to appear the equal of those above you in station; and fifth — wherever you go, if you meet those who read or teach from the holy books, stay and listen, if but for a few minutes, that you may be strengthened in the path of duty.'

Then Ram Singh started out upon his journey, promising to bear in mind the old man's words.

After some days he came to a great city. He had spent all the money which he had at starting, and therefore resolved to look for work however humble it might be. Catching sight of a prosperous-looking merchant standing in front of a shop full of grain of all kinds, Ram Singh went up to him and asked whether he could give him anything to do. The merchant gazed at him so long that the young man began to lose heart, but at length he answered:

‘Yes, of course; there is a place waiting for you.’

‘What do you mean?’ asked Ram Singh.

‘Why,’ replied the other, ‘yesterday our rajah’s chief wazir dismissed his body servant and is wanting another. Now you are just the sort of person that he needs, for you are young and tall, and handsome; I advise you to apply there.’

Thanking the merchant for this advice, the young man set out at once for the wazir’s house, and soon managed, thanks to his good looks and appearance, to be engaged as the great man’s servant.

One day, soon after this, the rajah of the place started on a journey and the chief wazir accompanied him. With them was an army of servants and attendants, soldiers, muleteers, camel-drivers, merchants with grain and stores for man and beast, singers to make entertainment by the way and musicians to accompany them, besides elephants, camels, horses, mules, ponies, donkeys, goats, and carts and wagons of every kind and description, so that it seemed more like a large town on the march than anything else.

Thus they travelled for several days, till they entered a country that was like a sea of sand, where the swirling dust floated in clouds, and men and beasts were half choked by it. Towards the close of that day they came to a village, and when the headmen hurried out to salute the rajah and to pay him their respects, they began, with very long and serious faces, to explain that, whilst they and all that they had were of course at the disposal of the rajah, the coming of so large a company had nevertheless put them into a dreadful difficulty because they had never a well nor spring of water in their country; and they had no water to give drink to such an army of men and beasts!

Great fear fell upon the host at the words of the headmen, but the rajah merely told the wazir that he must get water somehow, and that settled the matter so far as *he* was concerned. The wazir sent off in haste for all the oldest men in the place, and began to question them as to whether there were no wells near by.

They all looked helplessly at each other, and said nothing; but at length one old grey-beard replied:

‘Truly, Sir Wazir, there is, within a mile or two of this village, a well which some former king made hundreds of years ago. It is, they say, great and inexhaustible, covered in by heavy stone-work and with a flight of steps leading down to the water in the very bowels of the earth; but no man ever goes near it because it is haunted by evil spirits, and it is known that whoso disappears down the well shall never be seen again.’

The wazir stroked his beard and considered a moment. Then he turned to Ram Singh who stood behind his chair.

‘There is a proverb,’ said he, ‘that no man can be trusted until he has been tried. Go you and get the rajah and his people water from this well.'

Then there flashed into Ram Singh's mind the first counsel of the old guru—'*Always obey without question the orders of him whose service you enter*.' So he replied at once that he was ready, and left to prepare for his adventure. Two great brazen vessels he fastened to a mule, two lesser ones he bound upon his shoulders, and thus provided he set out, with the old villager for his guide. In a short time they came to a spot where some big trees towered above the barren country, whilst under their shadow lay the dome of an ancient building. This the guide pointed out as the well, but excused himself from going further as he was an old man and tired, and it was already nearly sunset, so that he must be returning home. So Ram Singh bade him farewell, and went on alone with the mule.

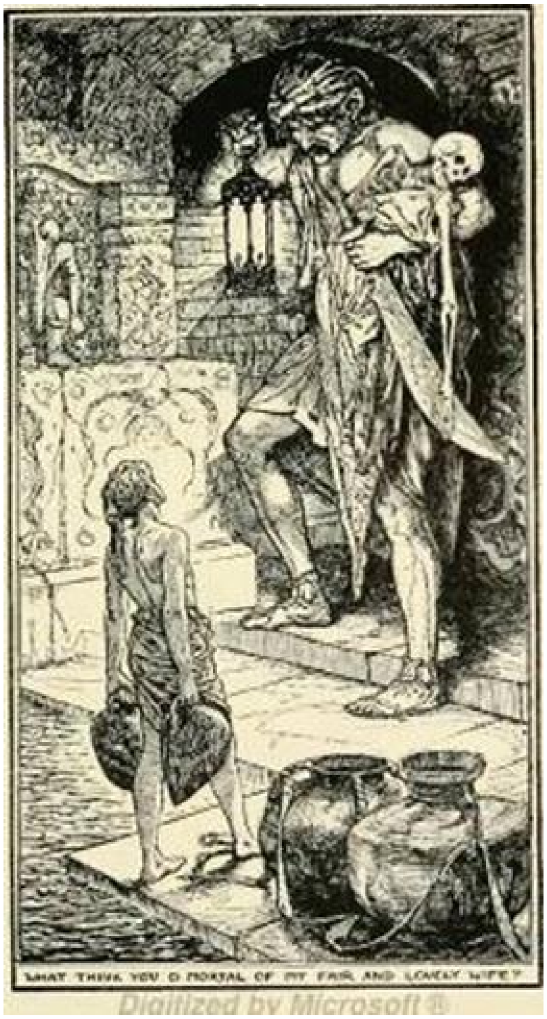

WHAT THINK YOU O MORTAL OF MY FAIR AND LOVELY WIFE?

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Arrived at the trees, Ram Singh tied up his beast, lifted the vessels from his shoulder, and having found the opening of the well, descended by a flight of steps which led down into the darkness. The steps were broad white slabs of alabaster which gleamed in the shadows as he went lower and lower. All was very silent. Even the sound of his bare feet upon the pavements seemed to wake an echo in that lonely place, and when one of the vessels which he carried slipped and fell upon the steps it clanged so loudly that he jumped at the noise. Still he went on, until at last he reached a wide pool of sweet water, and there he washed his jars with care before he filled them, and began to remount the steps with the lighter vessels, as the big ones were so heavy he could only take up one at a time. Suddenly, something moved above him, and looking up he saw a great giant standing on the stairway! In one hand he held clasped to his heart a dreadful looking mass of bones, in the other was a lamp which cast long shadows about the walls, and made him seem even more terrible than he really was.

'What think you, O mortal,' said the giant, 'of my fair and lovely wife?' And he held the light towards the bones in his arms and looked lovingly at them.

Now I must tell you that this poor giant had had a very beautiful wife, whom he had loved dearly; but, when she died, her husband refused to believe in her death, and always carried her about long after she had become nothing but bones. Ram Singh of course did not know of this, but there came to his mind the second wise saying of the guru, which forbade him to speak harshly or inconsiderately to others; so he replied:

'Truly, sir, I am sure you could find nowhere such another.'

'Ah, what eyes you have!' cried the delighted giant, 'you at least can see! I do not know how often I have slain those who insulted her by saying she was but dried bones! You are a fine young man, and I will help you.'

So saying, he laid down the bones with great tenderness, and snatching up the huge brass vessels, carried them up again, and replaced them with such ease that it was all done by the time that Ram Singh had reached the open air with the smaller ones.

'Now,' said the giant, 'you have pleased me, and you may ask of me one favour, and whatever you wish I will do it for you. Perhaps you would like me to show you where lies buried the treasure of dead kings?' he added eagerly.

But Ram Singh shook his head at the mention of buried wealth.

'The favour that I would ask,' said he, 'is that you will leave off haunting this well, so that men may go in and out and obtain water.'

Perhaps the giant expected some favour more difficult to grant, for his face brightened, and he promised to depart at once; and as Ram Singh went off through the gathering darkness with his precious burden of water, he beheld the giant striding away with the bones of his dead wife in his arms.

Great was the wonder and rejoicing in the camp when Ram Singh returned with the water. He never said anything, however, about his adventure with the giant, but merely told the rajah that there was nothing to prevent the well being used; and used it was, and nobody ever saw any more of the giant.

The rajah was so pleased with the bearing of Ram Singh that he ordered the wazir to give the young man to him in exchange for one of his own servants. So Ram Singh became the rajah's attendant; and as the days went by the king became more and more delighted with the youth because, mindful of the old guru's third counsel, he was always honest and spoke the truth. He grew in favour rapidly, until at last the rajah made him his treasurer, and thus he reached a high place in the court and had wealth and power in his hands. Unluckily the rajah had a brother who was a very bad man; and this brother thought that if he could win the young treasurer over to himself he might by this means manage to steal little by little any of the king's treasure which he needed. Then, with plenty of money, he could bribe the soldiers and some of the rajah's counsellors, head a rebellion, dethrone and kill his brother, and reign himself instead. He was too wary, of course, to tell Ram Singh of all these wicked plans; but he began by flattering him whenever he saw him, and at last offered him his daughter in marriage. But Ram Singh remembered the fourth counsel of the old guru — never to try to appear the equal of those above him in station — therefore he respectfully declined the great honour of marrying a princess. Of course the prince, baffled at the very beginning of his enterprise, was furious, and determined to work Ram Singh's ruin, and entering the rajah's presence he told him a story about Ram Singh having spoken insulting words of his sovereign and of his daughter. What it was all about nobody knew, and, as it was not true, the wicked prince did not know either; but the rajah grew very angry and red in the face as he listened, and declared that until the treasurer's head was cut off neither he nor the princess nor his brother would eat or drink.

'But,' added he, 'I do not wish any one to know that this was done by my desire, and anyone who mentions the subject will be severely punished.' And with this the prince was forced to be content.

Then the rajah sent for an officer of his guard, and told him to take some soldiers and ride at once to a tower which was situated just outside the town, and if anyone should come to inquire when the building was going to be finished, or should ask any other questions about it, the officer must chop his head off, and bring it to him. As for the body, that could be buried on the spot. The old officer thought these instructions rather odd, but it was no business of his, so he saluted, and went off to do his master's bidding.

Early in the morning the rajah, who had not slept all night, sent for Ram Singh, and bade him go to the new hunting-tower, and ask the people there how it was getting on and when it was going to be finished, and to hurry back with the answer! Away went Ram Singh upon his errand, but, on the road, as he was passing a little temple on the outskirts of the city, he heard someone inside reading aloud; and, remembering the guru's fifth counsel, he just stepped inside and sat down to listen for a minute. He did not mean to stay longer, but became so deeply interested in the wisdom of the teacher, that he sat, and sat, and sat, while the sun rose higher and higher.

In the meantime, the wicked prince, who dared not disobey the rajah's command, was feeling very hungry; and as for the princess, she was quietly crying in a corner waiting for the news of Ram Singh's death, so that she might eat her breakfast.

Hours passed, and stare as he might from the window no messenger could be seen.

At last the prince could bear it no longer, and hastily disguising himself so that no one should recognise him, he jumped on a horse and galloped out to the hunting-tower, where the rajah had told him that the execution was to take place. But, when he got there, there was no execution going on. There were only some men engaged in building, and a number of soldiers idly watching them. He forgot that he had disguised himself and that no one would know him, so, riding up, he cried out:

'Now then, you men, why are you idling about here instead of finishing what you came to do? When is it to be done?'

At his words the soldiers looked at the commanding officer, who was standing a little apart from the rest. Unperceived by the prince he made a slight sign, a sword flashed in the sun, and off flew a head on the ground beneath!

As part of the prince's disguise had been a thick beard, the men did not recognise the dead man as the rajah's brother; but they wrapped the head in a cloth, and buried the body as their commander bade them. When this was ended, the officer took the cloth, and rode off in the direction of the palace.

Meanwhile the rajah came home from his council, and to his great surprise found neither head nor brother awaiting him; as time passed on, he became uneasy, and thought that he had better go himself and see what the matter was. So ordering his horse he rode off alone.

It happened that, just as the rajah came near to the temple where Ram Singh still sat, the young treasurer, hearing the sound of a horse's hoofs, looked over his shoulder and saw that the rider was the rajah himself! Feeling much ashamed of himself for having forgotten his errand, he jumped up and hurried out to meet his master, who reined up his horse, and seemed very surprised (as indeed he was) to see *him*. At that moment there arrived the officer of the guard carrying his parcel. He saluted the rajah gravely, and, dismounting, laid the bundle in the road and began to undo the wrappings, whilst the rajah watched him with wonder and interest. When the last string was undone, and the head of his brother was displayed to his view, the rajah sprang from his horse and caught the soldier by the arm. As soon as he could speak he questioned the man as to what had occurred, and little by little a dark suspicion darted through him. Then, briefly telling the soldier that he had done well, the rajah drew Ram Singh to one side, and in a few minutes learned from him how, in attending to the guru's counsel, he had delayed to do the king's message.

In the end the rajah found from some papers the proofs of his dead brother's treachery; and Ram Singh established his innocence and integrity. He continued to serve the rajah for many years with unswerving fidelity; and married a maiden of his own rank in life, with whom he lived happily; dying at last honoured and loved by all men. Sons were born to him; and, in time, to them also he taught the five wise sayings of the old guru.

(A Punjâbi story.)

THE GOLDEN-HEADED FISH

Once upon a time there lived in Egypt a king who lost his sight from a bad illness. Of course he was very unhappy, and became more so as months passed, and all the best doctors in the land were unable to cure him. The poor man grew so thin from misery that everyone thought he was going to die, and the prince, his only son, thought so too.

Great was therefore the rejoicing through Egypt when a traveller arrived in a boat down the river Nile, and after questioning the people as to the reason of their downcast looks, declared that he was court physician to the king of a far country, and would, if allowed, examine the eyes of the blind man. He was at once admitted into the royal presence, and after a few minutes of careful study announced that the case, though very serious, was not quite hopeless.

‘Somewhere in the Great Sea,’ he said, ‘there exists a Golden-headed Fish. If you can manage to catch this creature, bring it to me, and I will prepare an ointment from its blood which will restore your sight. For a hundred days I will wait here, but if at the end of that time the fish should still be uncaught I must return to my own master.’

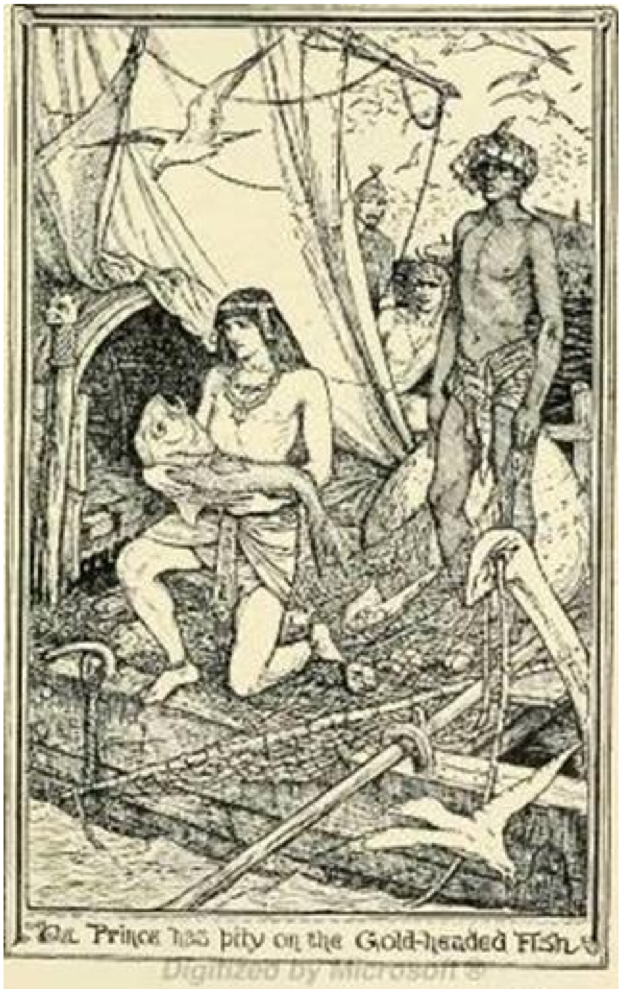

The Prince has pity on the Gold-headed Fish

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The next morning the young prince set forth in quest of the fish, taking with him a hundred men, each man carrying a net. Quite a little fleet of boats was awaiting them and in these they sailed to the middle of the Great Sea. During three months they laboured diligently from sunrise to sunset, but though they caught large multitudes of fishes, not one of them had a golden head.

‘It is quite useless now,’ said the prince on the very last night. ‘Even if we find it this evening, the hundred days will be over in an hour, and long before we could reach the Egyptian capital the doctor will be on his way home. Still, I will go out again, and cast the net once more myself.’ And so he did, and at the very moment that the hundred days were up, he drew in the net with the Golden-headed Fish entangled in its meshes.

‘Success has come, but, as happens often, it is too late,’ murmured the young man, who had studied in the schools of philosophy; ‘but, all the same, put the fish in that vessel full of water, and we will take it back to show my father that we have done what we could.’ But when he drew near the fish it looked up at him with such piteous eyes that he could not make up his mind to condemn it to death. For he knew well that, though the doctors of his own country were ignorant of the secret of the ointment, they would do all in their power to extract something from the fish’s blood. So he picked up the prize of so much labour, and threw it back into the sea, and then began his journey back to the palace. When at last he reached it he found the king in a high fever, caused by his disappointment, and he refused to believe the story told him by his son.

‘Your head shall pay for it! Your head shall pay for it!’ cried he; and bade the courtiers instantly summon the executioner to the palace.

But of course somebody ran at once to the queen, and told her of the king’s order, and she put common clothes on the prince, and filled his pockets with gold, and hurried him on board a ship which was sailing that night for a distant island.

‘Your father will repent some day, and then he will be thankful to know you are alive,’ said she. ‘But one last counsel will I give you, and that is, take no man into your service who desires to be paid every month.’

The young prince thought this advice rather odd. If the servant had to be paid anyhow, he did not understand what difference it could make whether it was by the year or by the month. However, he had many times proved that his mother was wiser than he, so he promised obedience.

After a voyage of several weeks, he arrived at the island of which his mother had spoken. It was full of hills and woods and flowers, and beautiful white houses stood everywhere in gardens.

‘What a charming spot to live in,’ thought the prince. And he lost no time in buying one of the prettiest of the dwellings.

Then servants came pressing to offer their services; but as they all declared that they must have payment at the end of every month, the young man, who remembered his mother’s words, declined to have anything to say to them. At length, one morning, an Arab appeared and begged that the prince would engage him.

‘And what wages do you ask?’ inquired the prince, when he had questioned the new-comer and found him suitable.

‘I do not want money,’ answered the Arab; ‘at the end of a year you can see what my services are worth to you, and can pay me in any way you like.’ And the young man was pleased, and took the Arab for his servant.

Now, although no one would have guessed it from the look of the side of the island where the prince had landed, the other part was a complete desert, owing to the ravages of a horrible monster which came up from the sea, and devoured all the corn and cattle. The governor had sent bands of soldiers to lie in wait for the creature in order to kill it; but, somehow, no one ever happened to be awake at the moment that the ravages were committed. It was in vain that the sleepy soldiers were always punished severely — the same thing invariably occurred next time; and at last heralds were sent throughout the island to offer a great reward to the man who could slay the monster.

As soon as the Arab heard the news, he went straight to the governor's palace.

'If my master can succeed in killing the monster, what reward will you give him?' asked he.

'My daughter and anything besides that he chooses,' answered the governor. But the Arab shook his head.

'Give him your daughter and keep your wealth,' said he; 'but, henceforward, let her share in your gains, whatever they are.'

'It is well,' replied the governor; and ordered a deed to be prepared, which was signed by both of them.

That night the Arab stole down to the shore to watch, but, before he set out, he rubbed himself all over with some oil which made his skin smart so badly that there was no chance of *his* going to sleep as the soldiers had done. Then he hid himself behind a large rock and waited. By-and-by a swell seemed to rise on the water, and, a few minutes later, a hideous monster — part bird, part beast, and part serpent — stepped noiselessly on to the rocks. It walked stealthily up towards the fields, but the Arab was ready for it, and, as it passed, plunged his dagger into the soft part behind the ear. The creature staggered and gave a loud cry, and then rolled over dead, with its feet in the sea.

The Arab watched for a little while, in order to make sure that there was no life left in his enemy, but as the huge body remained quite still, he quitted his hiding-place, and cut off the ears of his foe. These he carried to his master, bidding him show them to the governor, and declare that he himself, and no other, had killed the monster.

'But it was you, and not I, who slew him,' objected the prince.

'Never mind; do as I bid you. I have a reason for it,' answered the Arab. And though the young man did not like taking credit for what he had never done, at length he gave in.

The governor was so delighted at the news that he begged the prince to take his daughter to wife that very day; but the prince refused, saying that all he desired was a ship which would carry him to see the world. Of course this was granted him at once, and when he and his faithful Arab embarked they found, heaped up in the vessel, stores of diamonds and precious stones, which the grateful governor had secretly placed there.

So they sailed, and they sailed, and they sailed; and at length they reached the shores of a great kingdom. Leaving the prince on board, the Arab went into the town to find out what sort of a place it was. After some hours he returned, saying that he heard that the king's daughter was the most beautiful princess in the world, and that the prince would do well to ask for her hand.

Nothing loth, the prince listened to this advice, and taking some of the finest necklaces in his hand, he mounted a splendid horse which the Arab had bought for him, and rode up to the palace, closely followed by his faithful attendant.

The strange king happened to be in a good humour, and they were readily admitted to his presence. Laying down his offerings on the steps of the throne, he prayed the king to grant him his daughter in marriage.

The monarch listened to him in silence; but answered, after a pause:

'Young man, I will give you my daughter to wife, if that is your wish; but first I must tell you that she has already gone through the marriage ceremony with a hundred and ninety young men, and not one of them lived for twelve hours after. So think, while there is yet time.'

The prince *did* think, and was so frightened that he very nearly went back to his ship without any more words. But just as he was about to withdraw his proposal the Arab whispered:

'Fear nothing, but take her.'

'The luck must change some time,' he said, at last; 'and who would not risk his head for the hand of such a peerless princess?'

'As you will,' replied the king. 'Then I will give orders that the marriage shall be celebrated to-night.'

And so it was done; and after the ceremony the bride and bridegroom retired to their own apartments to sup by themselves, for such was the custom of the country. The moon shone bright, and the prince walked to the window to look out upon the river and upon the distant hills, when his gaze suddenly fell on a silken shroud neatly laid out on a couch, with his name embroidered in gold thread across the front; for this also was the pleasure of the king.

Horrified at the spectacle, he turned his head away, and this time his glance rested on a group of men, digging busily beneath the window. It was a strange hour for any one to be at work, and what was the hole for? It was a curious shape, so long and narrow, almost like —— Ah! yes, that was what it was! It was *his* grave that they were digging!

The shock of the discovery rendered him speechless, yet he stood fascinated and unable to move. At this moment a small black snake darted from the mouth of the princess, who was seated at the table, and wriggled quickly towards him. But the Arab was watching for something of the sort to happen, and seizing the serpent with some pincers that he held in one hand, he cut off its head with a sharp dagger.

The king could hardly believe his eyes when, early the next morning, his new son-in-law craved an audience of his Majesty.

‘What, you?’ he cried, as the young man entered.

‘Yes, I. Why not?’ asked the bridegroom, who thought it best to pretend not to know anything that had occurred. ‘You remember, I told you that the luck must turn at last, and so it has. But I came to ask whether you would be so kind as to bid the gardeners fill up a great hole right underneath my window, which spoils the view.’

‘Oh! certainly, yes; of course it shall be done!’ stammered the king. ‘Is there anything else?’

‘No, nothing, thank you,’ replied the prince, as he bowed and withdrew.

Now, from the moment that the Arab cut off the snake’s head, the spell, or whatever it was, seemed to have been taken off the princess, and she lived very happily with her husband. The days passed swiftly in hunting in the forests, or sailing on the broad river that flowed past the palace, and when night fell she would sing to her harp, or the prince would tell her tales of his own country.

One evening a man in a strange garb, with a face burnt brown by the sun, arrived at court. He asked to see the bridegroom, and falling on his face announced that he was a messenger sent by the queen of Egypt, proclaiming him king in succession to his father, who was dead.

‘Her Majesty begs you will set out without delay, and your bride also, as the affairs of the kingdom are somewhat in disorder,’ ended the messenger.

Then the young man hastened to seek an audience of his father-in-law, who was delighted to find that his daughter’s husband was not merely the governor of a province, as he had supposed, but the king of a powerful country. He at once ordered a splendid ship to be made ready, and in a week’s time rode down to the harbour, to bid farewell to the young couple.

In spite of her grief for the dead king, the queen was overjoyed to welcome her son home, and commanded the palace to be hung with splendid stuffs to do honour to the bride. The people expected great things from their new sovereign, for they had suffered much from the harsh rule of the old one, and crowds presented themselves every morning with petitions in their hands, which they hoped to persuade the king to grant. Truly, he had enough to keep him busy; but he was very happy for all that, till, one night, the Arab came to him, and begged permission to return to his own land.

Filled with dismay the young man said: ‘Leave me! Do you really wish to leave me?’ Sadly the Arab bowed his head.

‘No, my master; never could I wish to leave you! But I have received a summons, and I dare not disobey it.’

The king was silent, trying to choke down the grief he felt at the thought of losing his faithful servant.

‘Well, I must not try to keep you,’ he faltered out at last. ‘That would be a poor return for all that you have done for me! Everything I have is yours; take what you will, for without you I should long ago have been dead!’

‘And without *you*, *I* should long ago have been dead,’ answered the Arab. ‘*I* am the Golden-headed Fish.’

(Adapted from *Contes Arméniens*. Par Frédéric Macler, Paris. Ernest Leroux, Editeur.)

DORANI

Once upon a time there lived in a city of Hindustan a seller of scents and essences, who had a very beautiful daughter named Dorani. This maiden had a friend who was a fairy, and the two were high in favour with Indra, the king of fairyland, because they were able to sing so sweetly and dance so deftly that no one in the kingdom could equal them for grace and beauty. Dorani had the most lovely hair in the world, for it was like spun gold, and the smell of it was like the smell of fresh roses. But her locks were so long and thick that the weight of it was often unbearable, and one day she cut off a shining tress, and wrapping it in a large leaf, threw it in the river which ran just below her window. Now it happened that the king's son was out hunting, and had gone down to the river to drink, when there floated towards him a folded leaf, from which came a perfume of roses. The prince, with idle curiosity, took a step into the water and caught the leaf as it was sailing by. He opened it, and within he found a lock of hair like spun gold, and from which came a faint, exquisite odour.

When the prince reached home that day he looked so sad and was so quiet that his father wondered if any ill had befallen him, and asked what was the matter. Then the youth took from his breast the tress of hair which he had found in the river, and holding it up to the light, replied:

'See, my father, was ever hair like this? Unless I may win and marry the maiden that owns that lock I must die!'

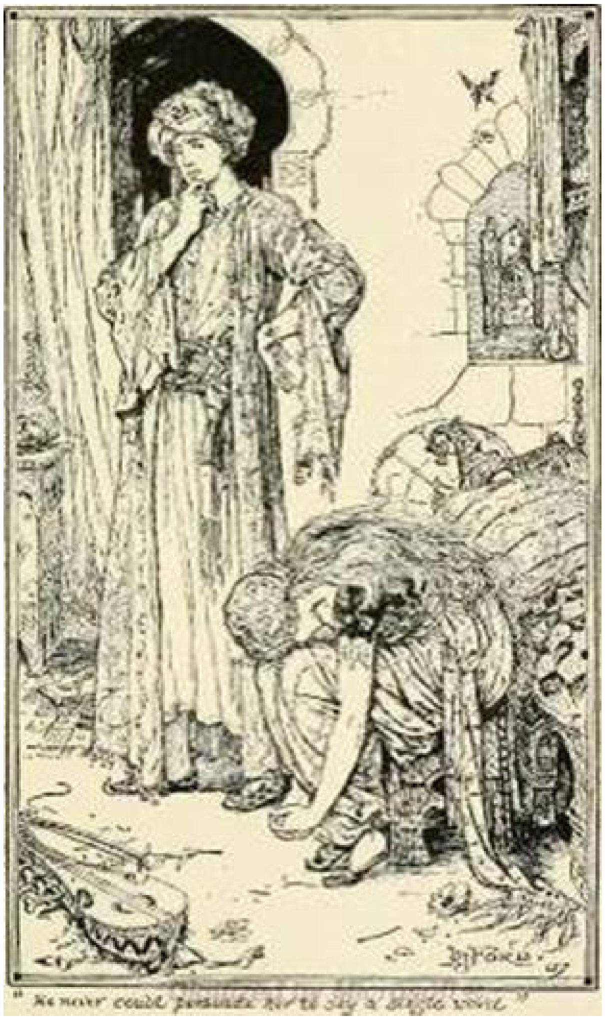

"He never could persuade her to say a single word"

So the king immediately sent heralds throughout all his dominions to search for the damsel with hair like spun gold; and at last he learned that she was the daughter of the scent-seller. The object of the herald's mission was quickly noised abroad, and Dorani heard of it with the rest; and, one day, she said to her father:

'If the hair is mine, and the king requires me to marry his son, I must do so; but, remember, you must tell him that if, after the wedding, I stay all day at the palace, every night will be spent in my old home.'

The old man listened to her with amazement, but answered nothing, as he knew she was wiser than he. Of course the hair was Dorani's, and heralds soon returned and informed the king, their master, who summoned the scent-seller, and told him that he wished for his daughter to be given in marriage to the prince. The father bowed his head three times to the ground, and replied:

'Your highness is our lord, and all that you bid us we will do. The maiden asks this only — that if, after the wedding, she stays all day at the palace, she may go back each night to her father's house.'

The king thought this a very strange request; but said to himself it was, after all, his son's affair, and the girl would surely soon get tired of going to and fro. So he made no difficulty, and everything was speedily arranged and the wedding was celebrated with great rejoicings.

At first, the condition attaching to his wedding with the lovely Dorani troubled the prince very little, for he thought that he would at least see his bride all day. But, to his dismay, he found that she would do nothing but sit the whole time upon a stool with her head bowed forward upon her knees, and he could never persuade her to say a single word. Each evening she was carried in a palanquin to her father's house, and each morning she was brought back soon after daybreak; and yet never a sound passed her lips, nor did she show by any sign that she saw, or heard, or heeded her husband.

One evening the prince, very unhappy and troubled, was wandering in an old and beautiful garden near the palace. The gardener was a very aged man, who had served the prince's great grandfather; and when he saw the prince he came and bowed himself to him, and said:

'Child! child! why do you look so sad — is aught the matter?' Then the prince replied, 'I am sad, old friend, because I have married a wife as lovely as the stars, but she will not speak to me, and I know not what to do. Night after night she leaves me for her father's house, and day after day she sits in mine as though turned to stone, and utters no word, whatever I may do or say.'

The old man stood thinking for a moment, and then he hobbled off to his own cottage. A little later he came back to the prince with five or six small packets, which he placed in his hands and said:

'To-morrow, when your bride leaves the palace, sprinkle the powder from one of these packets upon your body, and while seeing clearly, you will become yourself invisible. More I cannot do for you, but may all go well!'

And the prince thanked him, and put the packets carefully away in his turban.

The next night, when Dorani left for her father's house in her palanquin, the prince took out a packet of the magic powder and sprinkled it over himself, and then hurried after her. He soon found that, as the old man had promised, he was invisible to everyone, although he felt as usual, and could see all that passed. He speedily overtook the palanquin and walked beside it to the scent-seller's dwelling. There it was set down, and, when his bride, closely veiled, left it and entered the house, he, too, entered unperceived.

At the first door Dorani removed one veil; then she entered another doorway at the end of a passage where she removed another veil; next she mounted the stairs, and at the door of the women's quarters removed a third veil. After this she proceeded to her own room where were set two large basins, one of attar of roses and one of water; in these she washed herself, and afterwards called for food. A servant brought her a bowl of curds, which she ate hastily, and then arrayed herself in a robe of silver, and wound about her strings of pearls, while a wreath of roses crowned her hair. When fully dressed, she seated herself upon a four-legged stool over which was a canopy with silken curtains, these she drew around her, and then called out:

‘Fly, stool, to the palace of rajah Indra.’

Instantly the stool rose in the air, and the invisible prince, who had watched all these proceedings with great wonder, seized it by one leg as it flew away, and found himself being borne through the air at a rapid rate.

In a short while they arrived at the house of the fairy who, as I told you before, was the favourite friend of Dorani. The fairy stood waiting on the threshold, as beautifully dressed as Dorani herself was, and when the stool stopped at her door she cried in astonishment:

‘Why, the stool is flying all crooked to-day! What is the reason of that, I wonder? I suspect that you have been talking to your husband, and so it will not fly straight.’

But Dorani declared that she had not spoken one word to him, and she couldn’t think why the stool flew as if weighed down at one side. The fairy still looked doubtful, but made no answer, and took her seat beside Dorani, the prince again holding tightly one leg. Then the stool flew on through the air until it came to the palace of Indra the rajah.

All through the night the women sang and danced before the rajah Indra, whilst a magic lute played of itself the most bewitching music; till the prince, who sat watching it all, was quite entranced. Just before dawn the rajah gave the signal to cease; and again the two women seated themselves on the stool, and, with the prince clinging to the leg, it flew back to earth, and bore Dorani and her husband safely to the scent-seller’s shop. Here the prince hurried away by himself past Dorani’s palanquin with its sleepy bearers, straight on to the palace; and, as he passed the threshold of his own rooms he became visible again. Then he lay down upon a couch and waited for Dorani’s arrival.

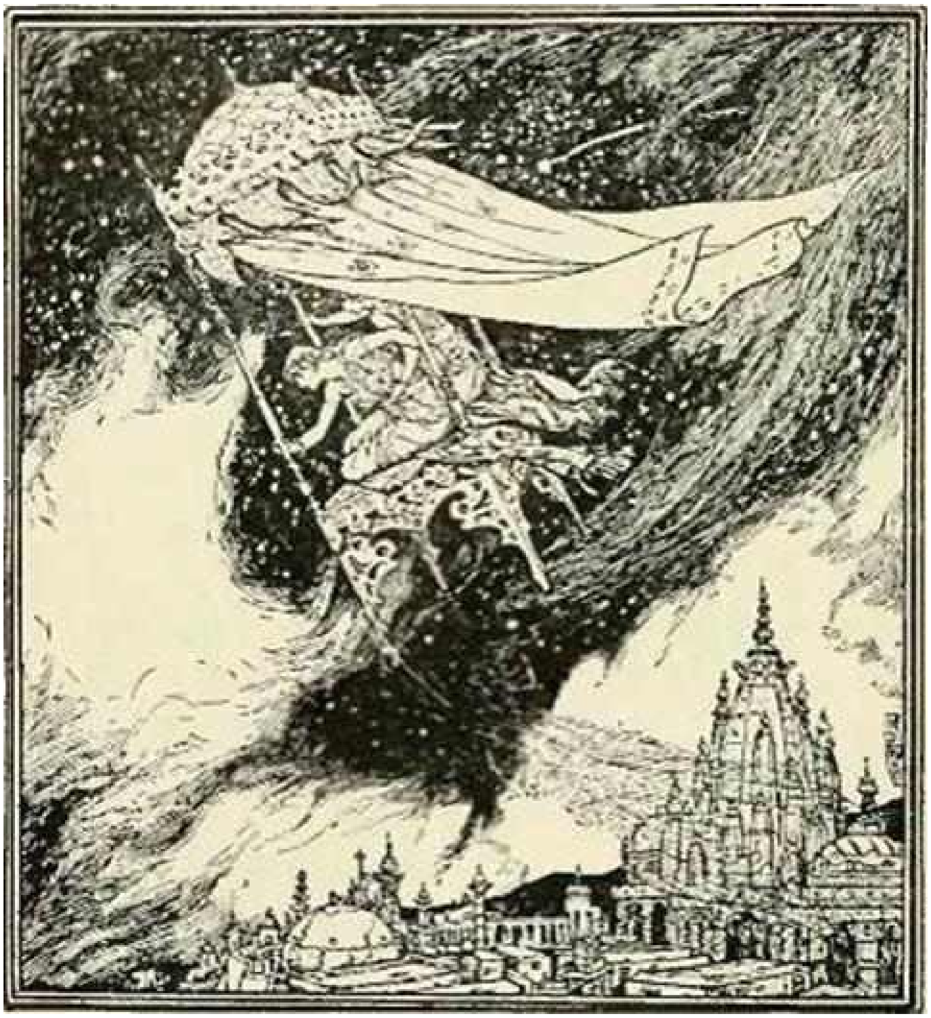

As soon as she arrived she took a seat and remained as silent as usual, with her head bowed on her knees. For a while not a sound was heard, but presently the prince said:

'I dreamed a curious dream last night, and as it was all about you I am going to tell it you, although you heed nothing.'

The girl, indeed, took no notice of his words, but in spite of that he proceeded to relate every single thing that had happened the evening before, leaving out no detail of all that he had seen or heard. And when he praised her singing — and his voice shook a little — Dorani just looked at him; but she said naught, though, in her own mind, she was filled with wonder. 'What a dream!' she thought. 'Could it have been a dream? How could he have learnt in a dream all she had done or said?' Still she kept silent; only she looked that once at the prince, and then remained all day as before, with her head bowed upon her knees.

When night came the prince again made himself invisible and followed her. The same things happened again as had happened before, but Dorani sang better than ever. In the morning the prince a second time told Dorani all that she had done, pretending that he had dreamt of it. Directly he had finished Dorani gazed at him, and said:

'Is it true that you dreamt this, or were you really there?'

'I was there,' answered the prince.

'But why do you follow me?' asked the girl.

'Because,' replied the prince, 'I love you, and to be with you is happiness.'

This time Dorani's eyelids quivered; but she said no more, and was silent the rest of the day. However, in the evening, just as she was stepping into her palanquin, she said to the prince:

'If you love me, prove it by not following me to-night.'

And so the prince did as she wished, and stayed at home.

That evening the magic stool flew so unsteadily that they could hardly keep their seats, and at last the fairy exclaimed:

'There is only one reason that it should jerk like this! You have been talking to your husband!'

And Dorani replied: 'Yes, I have spoken; oh, yes, I have spoken!' But no more would she say.

That night Dorani sang so marvellously that at the end the rajah Indra rose up and vowed that she might ask what she would and he would give it to her. At first she was silent; but, when he pressed her, she answered:

'Give me the magic lute.'

The rajah, when he heard this, was displeased with himself for having made so rash a promise, because this lute he valued above all his possessions. But as he had promised, so he must perform, and with an ill grace he handed it to her.

'You must never come here again,' said he, 'for, once having asked so much, how will you in future be content with smaller gifts?'

Dorani bowed her head silently as she took the lute, and passed with the fairy out of the great gate, where the stool awaited them. More unsteadily than before, it flew back to earth.

When Dorani got to the palace that morning she asked the prince whether he had dreamt again. He laughed with happiness, for this time she had spoken to him of her own free will; and he replied:

'No; but I begin to dream now — not of what *has* happened in the past, but of what *may* happen in the future.'

That day Dorani sat very quietly, but she answered the prince when he spoke to her; and when evening fell, and with it the time for her departure, she still sat on. Then the prince came close to her and said softly:

'Are you not going to your house, Dorani?'

At that she rose and threw herself weeping into his arms, whispering gently:

‘Never again, my lord, never again would I leave thee!’

So the prince won his beautiful bride; and though they neither of them dealt any further with fairies and their magic, they learnt more daily of the magic of Love, which one may still learn, although fairy magic has fled away.

(Punjâbi Story, Major Campbell, Feroshepore.)

THE SATIN SURGEON

Once upon a time there was a very rich and powerful king who, in spite of having been married several times, had only two daughters.

The elder was extremely plain — she squinted and was hunchbacked; but at the same time she was very clever and amusing, so, though at heart both spiteful and untruthful, she was her father’s favourite.

The younger princess, on the other hand, was both lovely and sweet-tempered, and those who knew her well could hardly say whether her charming face or pleasant manners was the more attractive.

The neighbouring country was governed by a young emperor, who, though not much over twenty years of age, had shown great courage in battle, and, had he wished it, might very likely have conquered the whole world. Luckily he preferred peace to war, and occupied his time with trying to rule his own kingdom well and wisely. His people were very anxious that he should marry, and as the two princesses were the only ladies to be heard of of suitable age and rank, the emperor sent envoys to their father’s court to ask for the hand of one of them in marriage. But, as he was resolved only to marry a woman whom he could love and be happy with, he determined to see the lady himself before making up his mind. For this purpose he set out in disguise not long after the departure of his ambassadors, and arrived at the palace very soon after they did; but as he had foolishly kept his plan secret, he found, when he reached the court, that they had already made proposals for the elder princess.

Now the emperor might just as well have gone openly, for his presence soon became known; and when the king heard of it he prepared to receive him royally, though of course he had to pretend that he had no idea who he was. So it was settled that the ambassadors should present their master under the name of one of the princes, and in this manner he was received by the king.

At night there was a grand ball at which the young emperor was able to see the two princesses and to make their acquaintance. The ugly face and figure and spiteful remarks of the elder displeased him so greatly that he felt he could not marry her even if she owned ten kingdoms, whilst the sweet face and gentle manners of the younger sister charmed him so much that he would gladly have shared his throne with her had she been only a simple shepherdess.

He found it very difficult to conceal his thoughts and to pay the elder princess the amount of attention due to her, though he did his best to be polite; while all he saw or heard during the next few days only increased his love for her younger sister, and at last he confessed that his dearest wish was to make her his wife, if she and her father would grant his desire.

He had commanded his ambassadors to put off their farewell audience for a little time, hoping that the king might perceive the state of his feelings; but when it could be deferred no longer, he bade them propose in his name for the younger princess.

On hearing this news, so different from what he had been led to expect, the king who — as we have said before — was devoted to his elder daughter and entirely under her influence, could hardly contain his displeasure. Directly the audience was over he sent for the princess and told her of the insolent proposal the emperor had made for her sister. The princess was even more furious than her father, and after consulting together they decided to send the younger daughter to some distant place out of reach of the young emperor; but *where* this should be they did not quite know. However, at length, after they had both racked their brains to find a suitable prison, they fixed on a lonely castle called the Desert Tower, where they thought she would be quite safe.

Meantime, it was thought best to let the court gaieties go on as usual, and orders were given for all sorts of splendid entertainments; and on the day that was fixed for carrying off the princess, the whole court was invited to a great hunt in the forest.

The emperor and the young princess were counting the hours till this morning, which promised to be so delightful, should dawn. The king and his guest arrived together at the meeting-place, but what was the surprise and distress of the young man at not seeing the object of his love amongst the ladies present. He waited anxiously, looking up and down, not hearing anything that the king said to him; and when the hunt began and she still was absent, he declined to follow, and spent the whole day seeking her, but in vain.

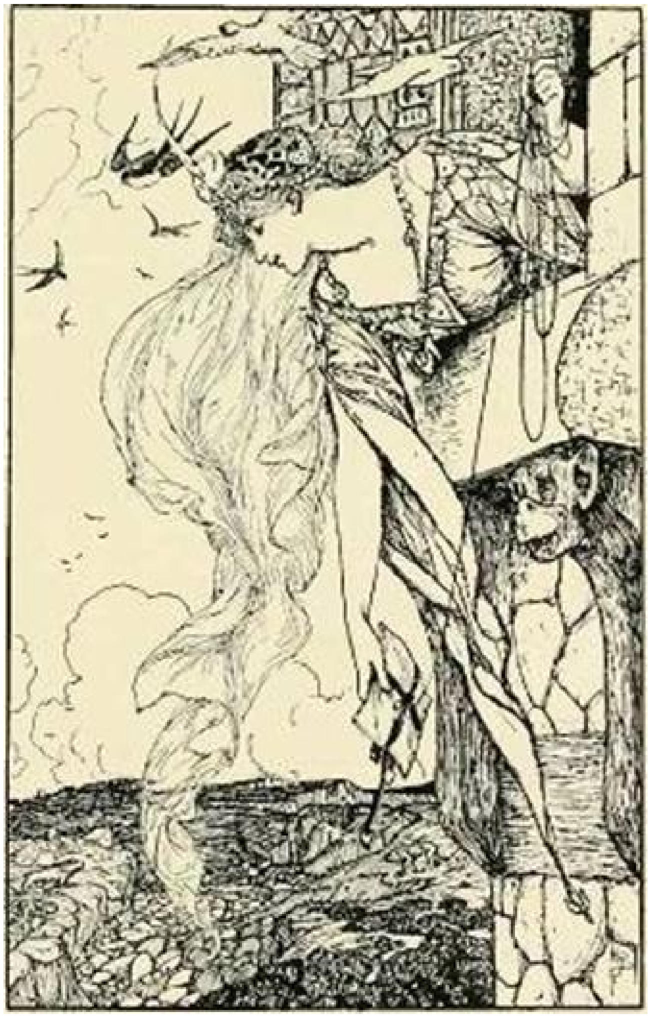

On his return, one of his attendants told him that some hours before he had met the princess's carriage, escorted by a troop of soldiers who were riding on each side, so that no one could get speech of her. He had followed them at a distance, and saw them stop at the Desert Tower, and on its return he noticed that the carriage was empty. The emperor was deeply grieved by this news. He left the court at once, and ordered his ambassadors to declare war the very next day, unless the king promised to set free the princess. And more than this, no sooner had he reached his own country than he raised a large army, with which he seized the frontier towns, before his enemy had had time to collect any troops. But, ere he quitted the court, he took care to write a letter to his beloved princess, imploring her to have patience and trust to him; and this he gave into the hands of his favourite equerry, who would he knew lay down his life in his service.

With many precautions the equerry managed to examine the surroundings of the tower, and at last discovered, not only where the princess lodged, but that a little window in her room looked out on a desolate plot full of brambles.

Now the unhappy princess was much annoyed that she was not even allowed to take the air at this little window, which was the only one in her room. Her keeper was her elder sister's former nurse, a woman whose eyes never slept. Not for an instant could she be induced to stir from the side of the princess, and she watched her slightest movement.

One day, however, the spy was for once busy in her room writing an account of the princess to her elder sister, and the poor prisoner seized the opportunity to lean out of the window. As she looked about her she noticed a man hidden amongst the bushes, who stepped forward as soon as he caught sight of her, and showed her a letter, which he took from his jerkin. She at once recognised him as one of the emperor's attendants, and let down a long string, to which he tied the letter. You can fancy how quickly she drew it up again, and luckily she had just time to read it before her gaoler had finished her report and entered the room.

The princess's delight was great, and next day she managed to write an answer on a sheet of her note book, and to throw it down to the equerry, who hastened to carry it back to his master. The emperor was so happy at having news of his dear princess, that he resolved, at all risks, to visit the Desert Tower himself, if only to see her for a moment. He ordered his equerry to ask leave to visit her, and the princess replied that she should indeed rejoice to see him, but that she feared that her gaoler's watchfulness would make his journey useless, unless he came during the short time when the old woman was writing alone in her own room.

Naturally, the bare idea of difficulties only made the emperor more eager than ever. He was ready to run any risks, but, by the advice of the equerry, he decided to try cunning rather than force. In his next letter he enclosed a sleeping powder, which the princess managed to mix with her gaoler's supper, so that when the emperor reached the tower in the evening the princess appeared fearlessly at her window on hearing his signal. They had a long and delightful conversation, and parted in the fond hope that their meeting had not been observed. But in this they were sadly mistaken. The watchful eyes of the old nurse were proof against any sleeping draught — she had seen and heard all; and lost no time in writing to report everything to her mistress.

The news made the spiteful little hunchback furious, and she resolved to be cruelly revenged for the contempt with which the emperor had treated her. She ordered her nurse to pretend not to notice what might be passing, and meantime she had a trap made so that if the emperor pushed his way through the brambles at the foot of the tower, it would not only catch him, as if he were a mouse, but would let loose a number of poisoned arrows, which would pierce him all over. When it was ready, the trap was hidden amongst the brambles without being observed by the princess.

That same evening the emperor hurried to the tower with all the impatience of love. As he came near he heard the princess break into a long, joyous peal of laughter. He advanced quickly to give the usual signal, when suddenly his foot trod on something, he knew not what. A sharp, stinging pain ran through him, and he turned white and faint, but, luckily, the trap had only opened a little way, and only a few of the arrows flew out. For a moment he staggered, and then fell to the ground covered with blood.

Had he been alone he would have died very shortly, but his faithful squire was close at hand, and carried his master off to the wood where the rest of his escort were waiting for him. His wounds were bound up, and some poles were cut to make a rough litter, and, almost unconscious, the emperor was borne away out of his enemy's country to his own palace.

All this time the princess was feeling very anxious. She had been whiling away the hours before this meeting by playing with a little pet monkey, which had been making such funny faces that, in spite of her troubles, she had burst into the hearty laugh overheard by the emperor. But by-and-by she grew restless, waiting for the signal which never came, and, had she dared, would certainly have rebelled when her gaoler, whom she believed to be fast asleep, ordered her to go to bed at once.

A fortnight passed, which was spent in great anxiety by the poor girl, who grew thin and weak with the uncertainty. At the end of this period, when the nurse went to her room one morning as usual in order to write her daily report, she carelessly left the key in the door. This was perceived by the princess, who turned it upon her so quickly and quietly that she never found out she was locked in till she had finished writing, and got up to seek her charge.

Finding herself free, the princess flew to the window, and to her horror saw the arrows lying about amongst the bloodstained brambles. Distracted with terror she slipped down the stairs and out of the tower, and ran for some time along a path, when with great good luck she met the husband of her own nurse, who had only just learned of her imprisonment, and was on his way to try and find out whether he could serve her. The princess begged him to get her some men's clothes while she awaited him in a little wood close by. The good man was overjoyed to be of use, and started at once for the nearest town, where he soon discovered a shop where the court lackeys were accustomed to sell their masters' cast-off clothes. The princess dressed herself at once in the disguise he had brought, which was of rich material and covered with precious stones; and, putting her own garments into a bag, which her servant hung over his shoulders, they both set out on their journey.

This lasted longer than either of them expected. They walked by day as far as the princess could manage, and by night they slept in the open air. One evening they camped in a lovely valley watered by a rippling stream, and towards morning the princess was awakened by a charming voice singing one of the songs of her own childhood. Anxious to find out where the sound came from, she walked to a thicket of myrtles, where she saw a little boy with a quiver at his back and an ivory bow in his hand, singing softly to himself as he smoothed the feathers of his shafts.

‘Are you surprised at seeing my eyes open?’ he asked, with a smile. ‘Ah! I am not always blind. And sometimes it is well to know what sort of a heart needs piercing. It was I who sent out my darts the day that you and the emperor met, so, as I have caused the wound, I am in duty bound to find the cure!’

Then he gave her a little bottle full of a wonderful salve with which to dress the emperor’s wounds when she found him.

‘In two days you can reach his palace,’ he said. ‘Do not waste time, for sometimes time is life.’

The princess thanked the boy with tears in her eyes, and hastened to awake her guide so that they might start, and set off at once on their way.

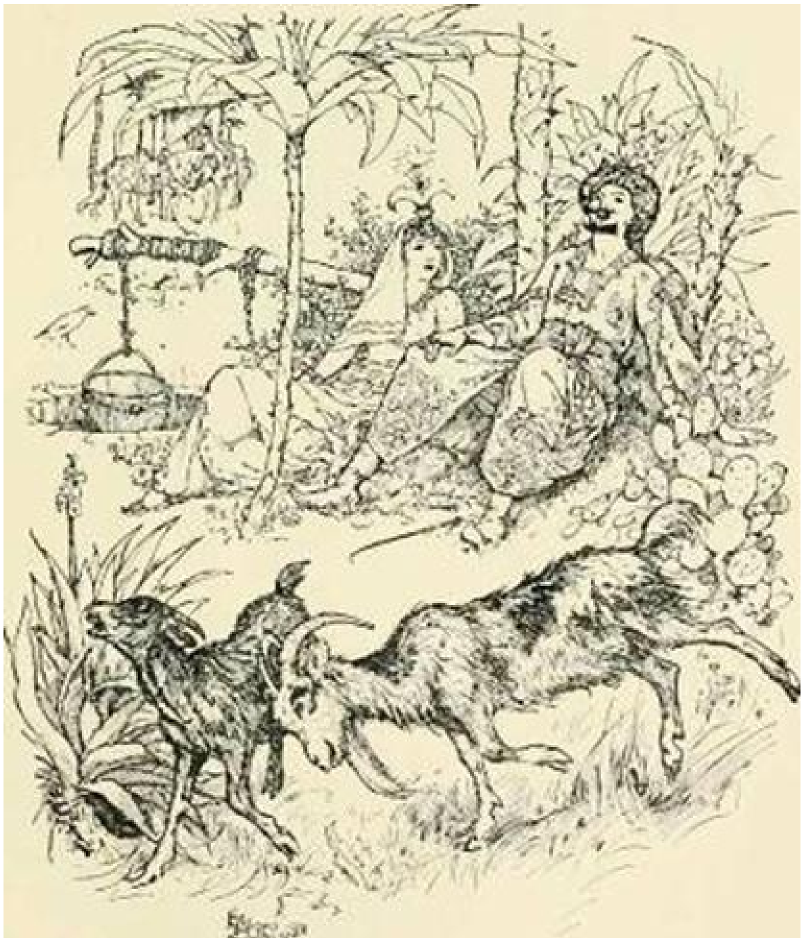

The King laughs at the Billygoat

As the boy had foretold, in two days the tower and walls of the city came in sight, and her heart beat wildly at the thought that she would soon be face to face with the emperor, but on inquiring after his health she learned, to her horror, that he was sinking fast. For a moment her grief was so great that she nearly betrayed herself. Then, calling all her courage to her aid, she announced that she was a doctor, and that if they would leave him in her charge for a few days she would promise to cure him.

Now, in order to make a good appearance at court the new doctor resolved to have an entire suit made of pale blue satin. She bought the richest, most splendid stuff to be had in the shops, and summoned a tailor to make it for her, engaging to pay him double if he would finish the work in two hours. Next she went to the market, where she bought a fine mule, bidding her servant see that its harness was adorned with trappings of blue satin also.

Whilst all was being made ready the princess asked the woman in whose house she lived whether she knew any of the emperor’s attendants, and found to her satisfaction that her cousin was his majesty’s chief valet. The doctor then bade the woman inform everyone she met that on hearing of the emperor’s illness a celebrated surgeon had hastened to attend him, and had undertaken to cure him entirely; declaring himself prepared to be burnt alive in case of failure.

The good woman, who loved nothing better than a bit of gossip, hurried to the palace with her news. Her story did not lose in telling. The court physicians were very scornful about the new-comer, but the emperor’s attendants remarked that as, in spite of their remedies, his majesty was dying before their eyes, there could be no harm in consulting this stranger.

So the lord chamberlain begged the young doctor to come and prescribe for the royal patient without delay; and the doctor sent a message at once, that he would do himself the honour to present himself at the palace, and he lost no time in mounting his mule and setting out. As the people and soldiers saw him ride past they cried out:

‘Here comes the Satin Surgeon! Look at the Satin Surgeon! Long live the Satin Surgeon!’ And, on arriving, he was announced by this name, and at once taken to the sick room of the dying man.

The emperor was lying with his eyes closed, and his face as white as the pillow itself; but directly he heard the new-comer’s voice, he looked up and smiled, and signed that he wished the new doctor to remain near him. Making a low bow, the Satin Surgeon assured the emperor that he felt certain of curing his malady, but insisted that everyone should leave the room except the emperor’s favourite equerry. He then dressed the wounds with the magic salve which the boy had given him, and it so relieved the emperor’s pain that he slept soundly all that night.

When morning broke, the courtiers and doctors hurried to the emperor’s chamber, and were much surprised to find him free of pain. But they were promptly ordered out of the room by the Satin Surgeon, who renewed the dressings with such good results that next morning the emperor was nearly well, and able to leave his bed. As he grew stronger, his thoughts dwelt more and more on the cause of all his sufferings, and his spirits grew worse as his health grew better. The face and voice of his new doctor reminded him of the princess who had, he imagined, betrayed him, and caused him such dreadful torture; and, unable to bear the thought, his eyes filled with tears.

The doctor noticed his sad countenance and did all he could to enliven his patient with cheerful talk and amusing stories, till at last he won the emperor’s confidence and heard all the story of his love for a lady who had treated him cruelly, but whom, in spite of everything, he could not help loving. The Satin Surgeon listened with sympathy, and tried to persuade the emperor that possibly the princess was not so much to blame as might appear; but, eager though the sick man was to believe this, it took a long while to persuade him of it. At length a day came when the emperor was nearly well, and for the last time the doctor dressed the wounds with the precious salve. Then, both patient and surgeon, being wearied out with something they could not explain, fell asleep and slept for hours.

Early next morning, the princess, having decided to resume her own clothes which she had brought with her in a bag, dressed herself with great care and put on all her jewels so as to make herself look as lovely as possible. She had just finished when the emperor awoke, feeling so strong and well that he thought he must be dreaming, nor could he believe himself to be awake when he saw the princess draw aside his curtains.

For some minutes they gazed at each other, unable to speak, and then they only uttered little gasps of joy and thankfulness. By-and-by the princess told him the whole story of her adventures since their last interview at the Desert Tower; and the emperor, weak as he was, threw himself at her feet with vows of love and gratitude, without ever giving a thought to the fact that the household and court physicians were awaiting their summons in the ante-room.

The emperor, anxious to prove how much he owed to the Satin Surgeon, opened his door himself, and great was everyone’s surprise and joy at seeing him in such perfect health. Like good courtiers, they hastened in to praise and compliment the Satin Surgeon, but what was their astonishment on finding that he had disappeared, leaving in his place the loveliest princess in the whole world.

‘Whilst thanking the surgeon for his miraculous cure, you might at the same time do homage to your empress,’ observed the emperor. He wished to have the marriage celebrated the same day, but the princess declared that she must wait to get her father’s permission first.

Messengers were therefore instantly despatched to the neighbouring capital, and soon returned with the king’s consent, for he had lately discovered all the mischief caused by his elder daughter.

The spiteful princess was so furious at the failure of her plans that she took to her bed, and died in a fit of rage and jealousy. No one grieved for her, and the king, being tired of the fatigues of Government, gave up his crown to his younger daughter; so the two kingdoms henceforth became one.

(From the *Cabinet des Fées*.)

THE BILLY GOAT AND THE KING

Once there lived a certain king who understood the language of all birds and beasts and insects. This knowledge had of course been given him by a fairy godmother; but it was rather a troublesome present, for he knew that if he were ever to reveal anything he had thus learned he would turn into a stone. How he managed to avoid doing so long before this story opens I cannot say, but he had safely grown up to manhood, and married a wife, and was as happy as monarchs generally are.

This king, I must tell you, was a Hindu; and when a Hindu eats his food he has a nice little place on the ground freshly plastered with mud, and he sits in the middle of it with very few clothes on — which is quite a different way from ours.

Well, one day the king was eating his dinner in just such a nice, clean, mud-plastered spot, and his wife was sitting opposite to wait upon him and keep him company. As he ate he dropped some grains of rice upon the ground, and a little ant, who was running about seeking a living, seized upon one of the grains and bore it off towards his hole. Just outside the king's circle this ant met another ant, and the king heard the second one say:

'Oh, dear friend, do give me that grain of rice, and get another one for yourself. You see my boots are so dirty that, if I were to go upon the king's eating place, I should defile it, and I can't do that, it would be so very rude.'

But the owner of the grain of rice only replied:

'If you want rice go and get it. No one will notice your dirty boots; and you don't suppose that I am going to carry rice for all our kindred?'

Then the king laughed.

The queen looked at herself up and down, but she could not see or feel anything in her appearance to make the king laugh, so she said:

'What are you laughing at?'

'Did I laugh?' replied the king.

'Of course you did,' retorted the queen; 'and if you think that I am ridiculous I wish you would say so, instead of behaving in that stupid way! What are you laughing at?'

'I'm not laughing at anything,' answered the king.

'Very well, but you *did* laugh, and I want to know why.'

'Well, I'm afraid I can't tell you,' said the king.

‘You *must* tell me,’ replied the queen impatiently. ‘If you laugh when there’s nothing to laugh at you must be ill or mad. What is the matter?’

Still the king refused to say, and still the queen declared that she must and would know. For days the quarrel went on, and the queen gave her husband no rest, until at last the poor man was almost out of his wits, and thought that, as life had become for him hardly worth living while this went on, he might as well tell her the secret and take the consequences.

‘But,’ thought he, ‘if I am to become a stone, I am not going to lie, if I can help it, on some dusty highway, to be kicked here and there by man and beast, flung at dogs, be used as the plaything of naughty children, and become generally restless and miserable. I will be a stone at the bottom of the cool river, and roll gently about there until I find some secure resting-place where I can stay for ever.’

So he told his wife that if she would ride with him to the middle of the river he would tell her what he had laughed at. She thought he was joking, and laughingly agreed; their horses were ordered and they set out.

On the way they came to a fine well beneath the shade of some lofty, wide-spreading trees, and the king proposed that they should get off and rest a little, drink some of the cool water, and then pass on. To this the queen consented; so they dismounted and sat down in the shade by the well-side to rest.

It happened that an old goat and his wife were browsing in the neighbourhood, and, as the king and queen sat there, the nanny goat came to the well’s brink and peering over saw some lovely green leaves that sprang in tender shoots out of the side of the well.

‘Oh!’ cried she to her husband, ‘come quickly and look. Here are some leaves which make my mouth water; come and get them for me!’

Then the billy goat sauntered up and looked over, and after that he eyed his wife a little crossly.

‘You expect me to get you those leaves, do you? I suppose you don’t consider how in the world I am to reach them? You don’t seem to think at all; if you did you would know that if I tried to reach those leaves I should fall into the well and be drowned!’

‘Oh,’ cried the nanny goat, ‘why should you fall in? Do try and get them!’

‘I am not going to be so silly,’ replied the billy goat.

But the nanny goat still wept and entreated.

‘Look here,’ said her husband, ‘there are plenty of fools in the world, but I am not one of them. This silly king here, because he can’t cure his wife of asking questions, is going to throw his life away. But I know how to cure you of your follies, and I’m going to.’

And with that he butted the nanny goat so severely that in two minutes she was submissively feeding somewhere else, and had made up her mind that the leaves in the well were not worth having.

Then the king, who had understood every word, laughed once more.

The queen looked at him suspiciously, but the king got up and walked across to where she sat.

‘Are you still determined to find out what I was laughing at the other day?’ he asked.

‘Quite,’ answered the queen angrily.

‘Because,’ said the king, tapping his leg with his riding whip, ‘I’ve made up my mind not to tell you, and moreover, I have made up my mind to stop you mentioning the subject any more.’

‘What *do* you mean?’ asked the queen nervously.

‘Well,’ replied the king, ‘I notice that if that goat is displeased with his wife, he just butts her, and that seems to settle the question — —’

‘Do you mean to say you would *beat* me?’ cried the queen.

‘I should be extremely sorry to have to do so,’ replied the king; ‘but I have got to persuade you to go home quietly, and to ask no more silly questions when I say I cannot answer them. Of course, if you *will* persist, why — —’

And the queen went home, and so did the king; and it is said that they are both happier and wiser than ever before.

(Punjâbi Story, Major Campbell, Feroshepore)

THE STORY OF ZOULVISIA

In the midst of a sandy desert, somewhere in Asia, the eyes of travellers are refreshed by the sight of a high mountain covered with beautiful trees, among which the glitter of foaming waterfalls may be seen in the sunlight. In that clear, still air it is even possible to hear the song of the birds, and smell of the flowers; but though the mountain is plainly inhabited — for here and there a white tent is visible — none of the kings or princes who pass it on the road to Babylon or Baalbec ever plunge into its forests — or, if they do, they never come back. Indeed, so great is the terror caused by the evil reputation of the mountain that fathers, on their death-beds, pray their sons never to try to fathom its mysteries. But in spite of its ill-fame, a certain number of young men every year announce their intention of visiting it and, as we have said, are never seen again.

Now there was once a powerful king who ruled over a country on the other side of the desert, and, when dying, gave the usual counsel to his seven sons. Hardly, however, was he dead than the eldest, who succeeded to the throne, announced his intention of hunting in the enchanted mountain. In vain the old men shook their heads and tried to persuade him to give up his mad scheme. All was useless; he went, but did not return; and in due time the throne was filled by his next brother.

And so it happened to the other five, but when the youngest became king, and he also proclaimed a hunt in the mountain, a loud lament was raised in the city.

‘Who will reign over us when you are dead? For dead you surely will be,’ cried they. ‘Stay with us, and we will make you happy.’ And for a while he listened to their prayers, and the land grew rich and prosperous under his rule. But in a few years the restless fit again took possession of him, and this time he would hear nothing. Hunt in that forest he would, and calling his friends and attendants round him, he set out one morning across the desert.

They were riding through a rocky valley, when a deer sprang up in front of them and bounded away. The king instantly gave chase, followed by his attendants; but the animal ran so swiftly that they never could get up to it, and at length it vanished in the depths of the forest.

Then the young man drew rein for the first time, and looked about him. He had left his companions far behind, and, glancing back, he beheld them entering some tents, dotted here and there amongst the trees. For himself, the fresh coolness of the woods was more attractive to him than any food, however delicious, and for hours he strolled about as his fancy led him.

By-and-by, however, it began to grow dark, and he thought that the moment had arrived for them to start for the palace. So, leaving the forest with a sigh, he made his way down to the tents, but what was his horror to find his men lying about, some dead, some dying. These were past speech, but speech was needless. It was as clear as day that the wine they had drunk contained deadly poison.

‘I am too late to help you, my poor friends,’ he said, gazing at them sadly; ‘but at least I can avenge you! Those that have set the snare will certainly return to see to its working. I will hide myself somewhere, and discover who they are!’

Near the spot where he stood he noticed a large walnut tree, and into this he climbed. Night soon fell, and nothing broke the stillness of the place; but with the earliest glimpse of dawn a noise of galloping hoofs was heard.

Pushing the branches aside the young man beheld a youth approaching, mounted on a white horse. On reaching the tents the cavalier dismounted, and closely inspected the dead bodies that lay about them. Then, one by one, he dragged them to a ravine close by and threw them into a lake at the bottom. While he was doing this, the servants who had followed him led away the horses of the ill-fated men, and the courtiers were ordered to let loose the deer, which was used as a decoy, and to see that the tables in the tents were covered as before with food and wine.

Having made these arrangements he strolled slowly through the forest, but great was his surprise to come upon a beautiful horse hidden in the depths of a thicket.

‘There was a horse for every dead man,’ he said to himself. ‘Then whose is this?’

‘Mine!’ answered a voice from a walnut tree close by. ‘Who are you that lure men into your power and then poison them? But you shall do so no longer. Return to your house, wherever it may be, and we will fight before it!’

The cavalier remained speechless with anger at these words; then with a great effort he replied:

‘I accept your challenge. Mount and follow me. I am Zoulvisia.’ And, springing on his horse, he was out of sight so quickly that the king had only time to notice that light seemed to flow from himself and his steed, and that the hair under his helmet was like liquid gold.

Clearly, the cavalier was a woman. But who could she be? Was she queen of all the queens? Or was she chief of a band of robbers? She was neither: only a beautiful maiden.

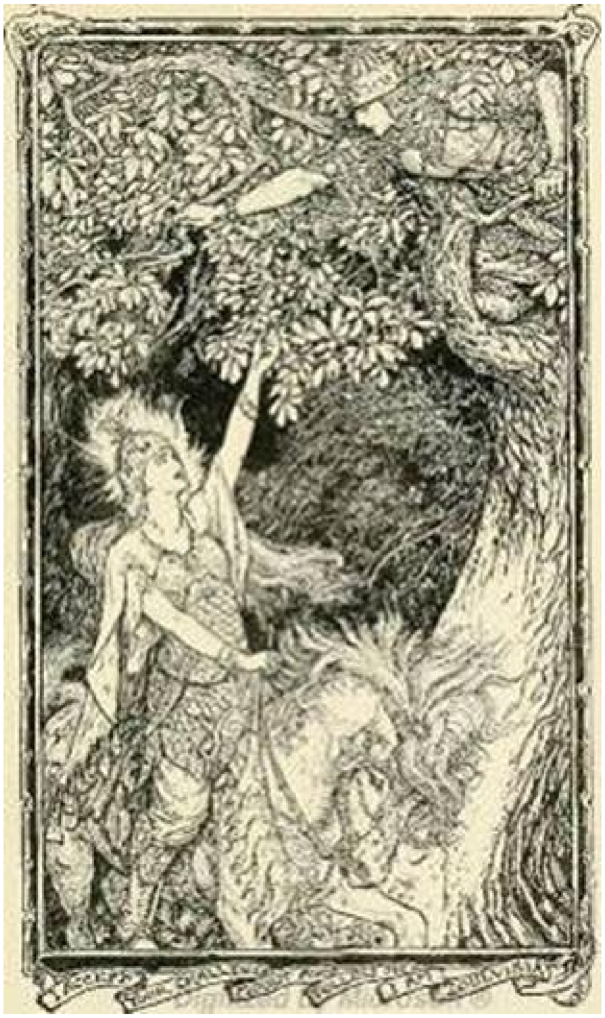

Wrapped in these reflections, he remained standing beneath the walnut tree, long after horse and rider had vanished from sight. Then he awoke with a start, to remember that he must find the way to the house of his enemy, though where it was he had no notion. However, he took the path down which the rider had come, and walked along it for many hours till he came to three huts side by side, in each of which lived an old fairy and her sons.

The poor king was by this time so tired and hungry that he could hardly speak, but when he had drunk some milk, and rested a little, he was able to reply to the questions they eagerly put to him.

‘I am going to seek Zoulvisia,’ said he, ‘she has slain my brothers and many of my subjects, and I mean to avenge them.’

He had only spoken to the inhabitants of one house, but from all three came an answering murmur.

‘What a pity we did not know! Twice this day has she passed our door, and we might have kept her prisoner.’

But though their words were brave their hearts were not, for the mere thought of Zoulvisia made them tremble.

‘Forget Zoulvisia, and stay with us,’ they all said, holding out their hands; ‘you shall be our big brother, and we will be your little brothers.’ But the king would not.

Drawing from his pocket a pair of scissors, a razor and a mirror, he gave one to each of the old fairies, saying:

‘Though I may not give up my vengeance I accept your friendship, and therefore leave you these three tokens. If blood should appear on the face of either know that my life is in danger, and, in memory of our sworn brotherhood, come to my aid.’

‘We will come,’ they answered. And the king mounted his horse and set out along the road they showed him.

By the light of the moon he presently perceived a splendid palace, but, though he rode twice round it, he could find no door. He was considering what he should do next, when he heard the sound of loud snoring, which seemed to come from his feet. Looking down, he beheld an old man lying at the bottom of a deep pit, just outside the walls, with a lantern by his side.

‘Perhaps *he* may be able to give me some counsel,’ thought the king; and, with some difficulty, he scrambled into the pit and laid his hand on the shoulder of the sleeper.

‘Are you a bird or a snake that you can enter here?’ asked the old man, awakening with a start. But the king answered that he was a mere mortal, and that he sought Zoulvisia.

‘Zoulvisia? The world’s curse?’ replied he, gnashing his teeth. ‘Out of all the thousands she has slain I am the only one who has escaped, though why she spared me only to condemn me to this living death I cannot guess.’

‘Help me if you can,’ said the king. And he told the old man his story, to which he listened intently.

‘Take heed then to my counsel,’ answered the old man. ‘Know that every day at sunrise Zoulvisia dresses herself in her jacket of pearls, and mounts the steps of her crystal watch-tower. From there she can see all over her lands, and behold the entrance of either man or demon. If so much as one is detected she utters such fearful cries that those who hear her die of fright. But hide yourself in a cave that lies near the foot of the tower, and plant a forked stick in front of it; then, when she has uttered her third cry, go forth boldly, and look up at the tower. And go without fear, for you will have broken her power.’

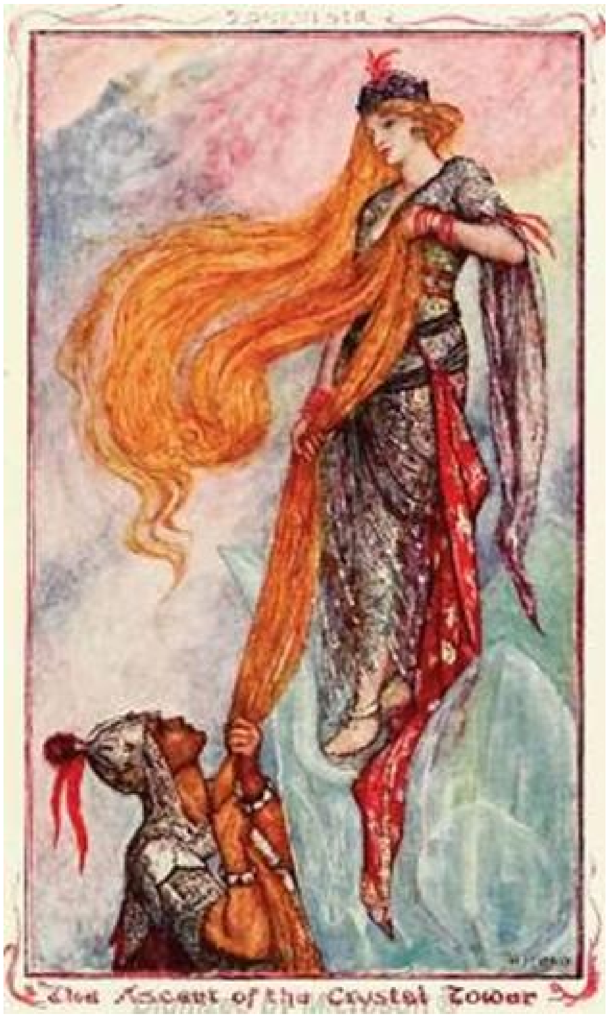

The Ascent of the Crystal Tower

Word for word the king did as the old man had bidden him, and when he stepped forth from the cave, their eyes met.

‘You have conquered me,’ said Zoulvisia, ‘and are worthy to be my husband, for you are the first man who has not died at the sound of my voice!’ And letting down her golden hair, she drew up the king to the summit of the tower as with a rope. Then she led him into the hall of audience, and presented him to her household.

‘Ask of me what you will, and I will grant it to you,’ whispered Zoulvisia with a smile, as they sat together on a mossy bank by the stream. And the king prayed her to set free the old man to whom he owed his life, and to send him back to his own country.

‘I have finished with hunting, and with riding about my lands,’ said Zoulvisia, the day that they were married. ‘The care of providing for us all belongs henceforth to you.’ And turning to her attendants, she bade them bring the horse of fire before her.

‘This is your master, O my steed of flame,’ cried she; ‘and you will serve him as you have served me.’ And kissing him between his eyes, she placed the bridle in the hand of her husband.

The horse looked for a moment at the young man, and then bent his head, while the king patted his neck and smoothed his tail, till they felt themselves old friends. After this he mounted to do Zoulvisia’s bidding, but before he started she gave him a case of pearls containing one of her hairs, which he tucked into the breast of his coat.

He rode along for some time, without seeing any game to bring home for dinner. Suddenly a fine stag started up almost under his feet, and he at once gave chase. On they sped, but the stag twisted and turned so that the king had no chance of a shot till they reached a broad river, when the animal jumped in and swam across. The king fitted his cross-bow with a bolt, and took aim, but though he succeeded in wounding the stag, it contrived to gain the opposite bank, and in his excitement he never observed that the case of pearls had fallen into the water.

The stream, though deep, was likewise rapid, and the box was swirled along miles, and miles, and miles, till it was washed up in quite another country. Here it was picked up by one of the water-carriers belonging to the palace, who showed it to the king. The workmanship of the case was so curious, and the pearls so rare, that the king could not make up his mind to part with it, but he gave the man a good price, and sent him away. Then, summoning his chamberlain, he bade him find out its history in three days, or lose his head.

But the answer to the riddle, which puzzled all the magicians and wise men, was given by an old woman, who came up to the palace and told the chamberlain that, for two handfuls of gold, she would reveal the mystery.

Of course the chamberlain gladly gave her what she asked, and in return she informed him that the case and the hair belonged to Zoulvisia.

‘Bring her hither, old crone, and you shall have gold enough to stand up in,’ said the chamberlain. And the old woman answered that she would try what she could do.

She went back to her hut in the middle of the forest, and standing in the doorway, whistled softly. Soon the dead leaves on the ground began to move and to rustle, and from underneath them there came a long train of serpents. They wriggled to the feet of the witch, who stooped down and patted their heads, and gave each one some milk in a red earthen basin. When they had all finished, she whistled again, and bade two or three coil themselves round her arms and neck, while she turned one into a cane and another into a whip. Then she took a stick, and on the river bank changed it into a raft, and seating herself comfortably, she pushed off into the centre of the stream.

All that day she floated, and all the next night, and towards sunset the following evening she found herself close to Zoulvisia’s garden, just at the moment that the king, on the horse of flame, was returning from hunting.

‘Who are you?’ he asked in surprise; for old women travelling on rafts were not common in that country. ‘Who are you, and why have you come here?’

‘I am a poor pilgrim, my son,’ answered she, ‘and having missed the caravan, I have wandered foodless for many days through the desert, till at length I reached the river. There I found this tiny raft, and to it I committed myself, not knowing if I should live or die. But since you have found me, give me, I pray you, bread to eat, and let me lie this night by the dog who guards your door!’

This piteous tale touched the heart of the young man, and he promised that he would bring her food, and that she should pass the night in his palace.

‘But mount behind me, good woman,’ cried he, ‘for you have walked far, and it is still a long way to the palace.’ And as he spoke he bent down to help her, but the horse swerved on one side.

And so it happened twice and thrice, and the old witch guessed the reason, though the king did not.

‘I fear to fall off,’ said she; ‘but as your kind heart pities my sorrows, ride slowly, and lame as I am, I think I can manage to keep up.’

At the door he bade the witch to rest herself, and he would fetch her all she needed. But Zoulvisia his wife grew pale when she heard whom he had brought, and besought him to feed the old woman and send her away, as she would cause mischief to befall them.

The king laughed at her fears, and answered lightly:

‘Why, one would think she was a witch to hear you talk! And even if she were, what harm could she do to us?’ And calling to the maidens he bade them carry her food, and to let her sleep in their chamber.

Now the old woman was very cunning, and kept the maidens awake half the night with all kinds of strange stories. Indeed, the next morning, while they were dressing their mistress, one of them suddenly broke into a laugh, in which the others joined her.

‘What is the matter with you?’ asked Zoulvisia. And the maid answered that she was thinking of a droll adventure told them the evening before by the new-comer.

‘And, oh, madam!’ cried the girl, ‘it may be that she is a witch, as they say; but I am sure she never would work a spell to harm a fly! And as for her tales, they would pass many a dull hour for you, when my lord was absent!’

So, in an evil hour, Zoulvisia consented that the crone should be brought to her, and from that moment the two were hardly ever apart.

One day the witch began to talk about the young king, and to declare that in all the lands she had visited she had seen none like him.

‘It was so clever of him to guess your secret so as to win your heart,’ said she. ‘And of course he told you his, in return?’

‘No, I don’t think he has got any,’ returned Zoulvisia.

‘Not got any secrets?’ cried the old woman scornfully. ‘That is nonsense! Every man has a secret, which he always tells to the woman he loves. And if he has not told it to *you,* it is that he does not love you!’

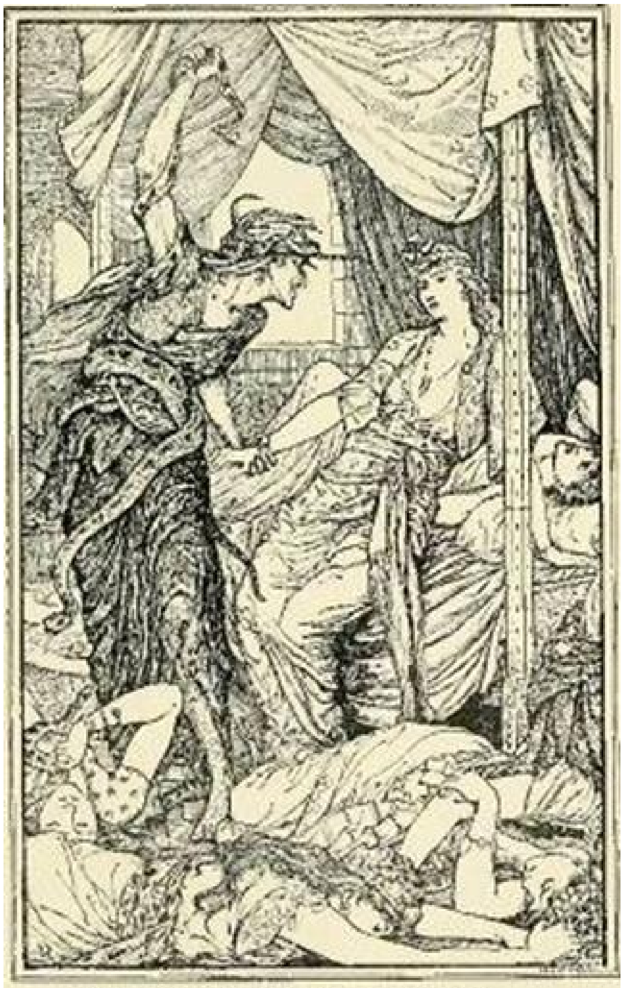

The Witch and her Snakes

These words troubled Zoulvisia mightily, though she would not confess it to the witch. But the next time she found herself alone with her husband, she began to coax him to tell her in what lay the secret of his strength. For a long while he put her off with caresses, but when she would be no longer denied, he answered:

‘It is my sabre that gives me strength, and day and night it lies by my side. But now that I have told you, swear upon this ring, that I will give you in exchange for yours, that you will reveal it to nobody.’ And Zoulvisia swore; and instantly hastened to betray the great news to the old woman.

Four nights later, when all the world was asleep, the witch softly crept into the king’s chamber and took the sabre from his side as he lay sleeping. Then, opening her lattice, she flew on to the terrace and dropped the sword into the river.

The next morning everyone was surprised because the king did not, as usual, rise early and go off to hunt. The attendants listened at the keyhole and heard the sound of heavy breathing, but none dared enter, till Zoulvisia pushed past. And what a sight met their gaze! There lay the king almost dead, with foam on his mouth, and eyes that were already closed. They wept, and they cried to him, but no answer came.

Suddenly a shriek broke from those who stood hindmost, and in strode the witch, with serpents round her neck and arms and hair. At a sign from her they flung themselves with a hiss upon the maidens, whose flesh was pierced with their poisonous fangs. Then turning to Zoulvisia, she said:

‘I give you your choice — will you come with me, or shall the serpents slay you also?’ And as the terrified girl stared at her, unable to utter one word, she seized her by the arm and led her to the place where the raft was hidden among the rushes. When they were both on board she took the oars, and they floated down the stream till they had reached the neighbouring country, where Zoulvisia was sold for a sack of gold to the king.

Now, since the young man had entered the three huts on his way through the forest, not a morning had passed without the sons of the three fairies examining the scissors, the razor and the mirror, which the young king had left them. Hitherto the surfaces of all three things had been bright and undimmed, but on this particular morning, when they took them out as usual, drops of blood stood on the razor and the scissors, while the little mirror was clouded over.

‘Something terrible must have happened to our little brother,’ they whispered to each other, with awestruck faces; ‘we must hasten to his rescue ere it be too late.’ And putting on their magic slippers they started for the palace.

The servants greeted them eagerly, ready to pour forth all they knew, but that was not much; only that the sabre had vanished, none knew where. The new-comers passed the whole of the day in searching for it, but it could not be found, and when night closed in, they were very tired and hungry. But how were they to get food? The king had not hunted that day, and there was nothing for them to eat. The little men were in despair, when a ray of the moon suddenly lit up the river beneath the walls.

‘How stupid! Of course there are fish to catch,’ cried they; and running down to the bank they soon succeeded in landing some fine fish, which they cooked on the spot. Then they felt better, and began to look about them.

Further out, in the middle of the stream, there was a strange splashing, and by-and-by the body of a huge fish appeared, turning and twisting as if in pain. The eyes of all the brothers were fixed on the spot, when the fish leapt in the air, and a bright gleam flashed through the night. ‘The sabre!’ they shouted, and plunged into the stream, and with a sharp tug, pulled out the sword, while the fish lay on the water, exhausted by its struggles. Swimming back with the sabre to land, they carefully dried it in their coats, and then carried it to the palace and placed it on the king’s pillow. In an instant colour came back to the waxen face, and the hollow cheeks filled out. The king sat up, and opening his eyes he said:

‘Where is Zoulvisia?’

‘That is what we do not know,’ answered the little men; ‘but now that you are saved you will soon find out.’ And they told him what had happened since Zoulvisia had betrayed his secret to the witch.

‘Let me go to my horse,’ was all he said. But when he entered the stable he could have wept at the sight of his favourite steed, which was nearly in as sad a plight as his master had been. Languidly he turned his head as the door swung back on its hinges, but when he beheld the king he rose up, and rubbed his head against him.

‘Oh, my poor horse! How much cleverer were you than I! If I had acted like you I should never have lost Zoulvisia; but we will seek her together, you and I.’

For a long while the king and his horse followed the course of the stream, but nowhere could he learn anything of Zoulvisia. At length, one evening, they both stopped to rest by a cottage not far from a great city, and as the king was lying outstretched on the grass, lazily watching his horse cropping the short turf, an old woman came out with a wooden bowl of fresh milk, which she offered him.

He drank it eagerly, for he was very thirsty, and then laying down the bowl, began to talk to the woman, who was delighted to have someone to listen to her conversation.

‘You are in luck to have passed this way just now,’ said she, ‘for in five days the king holds his wedding banquet. Ah! but the bride is unwilling, for all her blue eyes and her golden hair! And she keeps by her side a cup of poison, and declares that she will swallow it rather than become his wife. Yet he is a handsome man too, and a proper husband for her — more than she could have looked for, having come no one knows whither, and bought from a witch — —’

The king started. Had he found her after all? His heart beat violently, as if it would choke him; but he gasped out:

‘Is her name Zoulvisia?’

‘Ay, so she says, though the old witch —— But what ails you?’ she broke off, as the young man sprang to his feet and seized her wrists.

‘Listen to me,’ he said. ‘Can you keep a secret?’

‘Ay,’ answered the old woman again, ‘if I am paid for it.’

‘Oh, you shall be paid, never fear — as much as your heart can desire! Here is a handful of gold: you shall have as much again if you will do my bidding.’ The old crone nodded her head.

‘Then go and buy a dress such as ladies wear at court, and manage to get admitted into the palace, and into the presence of Zoulvisia. When there, show her this ring, and after that she will tell you what to do.’

So the old woman set off, and clothed herself in a garment of yellow silk, and wrapped a veil closely round her head. In this dress she walked boldly up the palace steps behind some merchants whom the king had sent for to bring presents for Zoulvisia.

At first the bride would have nothing to say to any of them; but on perceiving the ring, she suddenly grew as meek as a lamb. And thanking the merchants for their trouble, she sent them away, and remained alone with her visitor.

‘Grandmother,’ asked Zoulvisia, as soon as the door was safely shut, ‘where is the owner of this ring?’

‘In my cottage,’ answered the old woman, ‘waiting for orders from you.’

‘Tell him to remain there for three days; and now go to the king of this country, and say that you have succeeded in bringing me to reason. Then he will let me alone and will cease to watch me. On the third day from this I shall be wandering about the garden near the river, and there your guest will find me. The rest concerns myself only.’

The morning of the third day dawned, and with the first rays of the sun a bustle began in the palace; for that evening the king was to marry Zoulvisia. Tents were being erected of fine scarlet cloth, decked with wreaths of sweet-smelling white flowers, and in them the banquet was spread. When all was ready a procession was formed to fetch the bride, who had been wandering in the palace gardens since daylight, and crowds lined the way to see her pass. A glimpse of her dress of golden gauze might be caught, as she passed from one flowery thicket to another; then suddenly the multitude swayed, and shrank back, as a thunderbolt seemed to flash out of the sky to the place where Zoulvisia was standing. Ah! but it was no thunderbolt, only the horse of fire! And when the people looked again, it was bounding away with two persons on its back.

Zoulvisia and her husband both learnt how to keep happiness when they had got it; and *that* is a lesson that many men and woman never learn at all. And besides, it is a lesson which nobody can teach, and that every boy and girl must learn for themselves.

(From *Contes Arméniens*. Par Frédéric Macler.)

GRASP ALL, LOSE ALL

Once, in former times, there lived in a certain city in India a poor oil-seller, called Déna, who never could keep any money in his pockets; and when this story begins he had borrowed from a banker, of the name of Léna, the sum of one hundred rupees; which, with the interest Léna always charged, amounted to a debt of three hundred rupees. Now Déna was doing a very bad business, and had no money with which to pay his debt, so Léna was very angry, and used to come round to Déna's house every evening and abuse him until the poor man was nearly worried out of his life. Léna generally fixed his visit just when Déna's wife was cooking the evening meal, and would make such a scene that the poor oil-seller and his wife and daughter quite lost their appetites, and could eat nothing. This went on for some weeks, till, one day, Déna said to himself that he could stand it no longer, and that he had better run away; and, as a man cannot fly easily with a wife and daughter, he thought he must leave them behind. So that evening, instead of turning into his house as usual after his day's work, he just slipped out of the city without knowing very well where he was going.

At about ten o'clock that night Déna came to a well by the wayside, near which grew a giant peepul tree; and, as he was very tired, he determined to climb it, and rest for a little before continuing his journey in the morning. Up he went and curled himself so comfortably amongst the great branches that, overcome with weariness, he fell fast asleep. Whilst he slept, some spirits, who roam about such places on certain nights, picked up the tree and flew away with it to a far-away shore where no creature lived, and there, long before the sun rose, they set it down. Just then the oil-seller awoke; but instead of finding himself in the midst of a forest, he was amazed to behold nothing but waste shore and wide sea, and was dumb with horror and astonishment. Whilst he sat up, trying to collect his senses, he began to catch sight here and there of twinkling, flashing lights, like little fires, that moved and sparkled all about, and wondered what they were. Presently he saw one so close to him that he reached out his hand and grasped it, and found that it was a sparkling red stone, scarcely smaller than a walnut. He opened a corner of his loin-cloth and tied the stone in it; and by-and-by he got another, and then a third, and a fourth, all of which he tied up carefully in his cloth. At last, just as the day was breaking, the tree rose, and, flying rapidly through the air, was deposited once more by the well where it had stood the previous evening.

When Déna had recovered a little from the fright which the extraordinary antics of the tree had caused him, he began to thank Providence that he was alive, and, as his love of wandering had been quite cured, he made his way back to the city and to his own house. Here he was met and soundly scolded by his wife, who assailed him with a hundred questions and reproaches. As soon as she paused for breath, Déna replied:

‘I have only this one thing to say, just look what I have got!’ And, after carefully shutting all the doors, he opened the corner of his loin-cloth and showed her the four stones, which glittered and flashed as he turned them over and over.

‘Pooh!’ said his wife, ‘the silly pebbles! If it was something to eat, now, there’d be some sense in them; but what’s the good of *such* things?’ And she turned away with a sniff, for it had happened that the night before, when Léna had come round as usual to storm at Déna, he had been rather disturbed to find that his victim was from home, and had frightened the poor woman by his threats. Directly, however, he heard that Déna had come back, Léna appeared in the doorway. For some minutes he talked to the oil-seller at the top of his voice, until he was tired, then Déna said:

‘If your honour would deign to walk into my humble dwelling, I will speak.’

So Léna walked in, and the other, shutting as before all the doors, untied the corner of his loin-cloth and showed him the four great flashing stones.

‘This is all,’ said he, ‘that I have in the world to set against my debt, for, as your honour knows, I haven’t a penny, but the stones are pretty!’

Now Léna looked and saw at once that these were magnificent rubies, and his mouth watered for them; but as it would never do to show what was in his mind, he went on:

‘What do I care about your stupid stones? It is my money I want, my lawful debt which you owe me, and I shall get it out of you yet somehow or another, or it will be the worst for you.’

To all his reproaches Déna could answer nothing, but sat with his hands joined together beseechingly, asking for patience and pity. At length Léna pretended that, rather than have a bad debt on his hand, he would be at the loss of taking the stones in lieu of his money; and, whilst Déna nearly wept with gratitude, he wrote out a receipt for the three hundred rupees; and, wrapping the four stones in a cloth, he put them into his bosom, and went off to his house.

‘How shall I turn these rubies into money?’ thought Léna, as he walked along; ‘I daren’t keep them, for they are of great value, and if the rajah heard that I had them he would probably put me into prison on some pretence and seize the stones and all else that I have as well. But what a bargain I have got! Four rubies worth a king’s ransom, for one hundred rupees! Well, well, I must take heed not to betray my secret.’ And he went on making plans. Presently he made up his mind what to do, and, putting on his cleanest clothes, he set off to the house of the chief wazir, whose name was Musli, and, after seeking a private audience, he brought out the four rubies and laid them before him.

The wazir’s eyes sparkled as he beheld the splendid gems.

‘Fine, indeed,’ murmured he. ‘I can’t buy them at their real value; but, if you like to take it, I will give you ten thousand rupees for the four.’

To this the banker consented gratefully; and handing over the stones in exchange for the rupees, he hurried home, thanking his stars that he had driven such a reasonable bargain and obtained such an enormous profit.

After Léna had departed the wazir began casting about in his mind what to do with the gems; and very soon determined that the best thing to do was to present them to the rajah, whose name was Kahré. Without losing a moment, he went that very day to the palace, and sought a private interview with the rajah; and when he found himself alone with his royal master, he brought the four jewels and laid them before him.

‘Oh, ho!’ said the rajah, ‘these are priceless gems, and you have done well to give them to me. In return I give you and your heirs the revenues of ten villages.’

Now the wazir was overjoyed at these words, but only made his deepest obeisance; and, whilst the king put the rubies into his turban, hurried away beaming with happiness at the thought that for ten thousand rupees he had become lord of ten villages. The rajah was also equally pleased, and strolled off with his new purchases to the women’s quarters and showed them to the queen, who was nearly out of her mind with delight. Then, as she turned them over and over in her hands, she said: ‘Ah! if I had eight more such gems, what a necklace they would make! Get me eight more of them or I shall die!’

‘Most unreasonable of women,’ cried the rajah, ‘where am I to get eight more such jewels as these? I gave ten villages for them, and yet you are not satisfied!’

‘What does it matter?’ said the rani; ‘do you want me to die? Surely you can get some more where these came from?’ And then she fell to weeping and wailing until the rajah promised that in the morning he would make arrangements to get some more such rubies, and that if she would be patient she should have her desire.

In the morning the rajah sent for the wazir, and said that he must manage to get eight more rubies like those he had brought him the day before, ‘and if you don’t I shall hang you,’ cried the rajah, for he was very cross. The poor wazir protested in vain that he knew not where to seek them; his master would not listen to a word he said.

‘You *must*,’ said he; ‘the rani shall not die for the want of a few rubies! Get more where those came from.’

The wazir left the palace, much troubled in mind, and bade his slaves bring Léna before him. ‘Get me eight more such rubies as those you brought yesterday,’ commanded the wazir, directly the banker was shown into his presence. ‘Eight more, and be quick, or I am a dead man.’

‘But how can I?’ wailed Léna; ‘rubies like those don’t grow upon bushes!’

‘Where did you get them from?’ asked the wazir.

‘From Déna, the oil-seller,’ said the banker.

‘Well, send for him and ask him where *he* got them,’ answered the wazir. ‘I am not going to hang for twenty Dénas!’ And more slaves were sent to summon Déna.

When Déna arrived he was closely questioned, and then all three started to see the rajah, and to him Déna told the whole story.

‘What night was it that you slept in the peepul tree?’ demanded the rajah.

‘I can’t remember,’ said Déna; ‘but my wife will know.’

Then Déna’s wife was sent for, and she explained that it was on the last Sunday of the new moon.

Now everyone knows that it is on the Sunday of the new moon that spirits have special power to play pranks upon mortals. So the rajah forbade them all, on pain of death, to say a word to anyone; and declared that, on the next Sunday of the new moon, they four — Kahré, Musli, Léna and Déna — would go and sit in the peepul tree and see what happened.

The days dragged on to the appointed Sunday, and that evening the four met secretly, and entered the forest. They had not far to go before they reached the peepul tree, into which they climbed as the rajah had planned. At midnight the tree began to sway, and presently it moved through the air.

‘See, sire,’ whispered Déna, ‘the tree is flying!’

‘Yes, yes,’ said the rajah, ‘you have told the truth. Now sit quiet, and we shall see what happens.’

Away and away flew the tree with the four men clinging tightly to its branches, until at last it was set down by the waste sea-shore where a great wide sea came tumbling in on a desert beach. Presently, as before, they began to see little points of light that glistened like fires all around them. Then Déna thought to himself:

‘Think! last time I only took four that came close to me, and I got rid of all my debt in return. This time I will take all I can get and be rich!’

‘If I got ten thousand rupees for four stones,’ thought Léna, ‘I will gather forty now for myself, and become so wealthy that they will probably make me a wazir at least!'

'For four stones I received ten villages,' Musli was silently thinking; 'now I will get stones enough to purchase a kingdom, become a rajah, and employ wazirs of my own!'

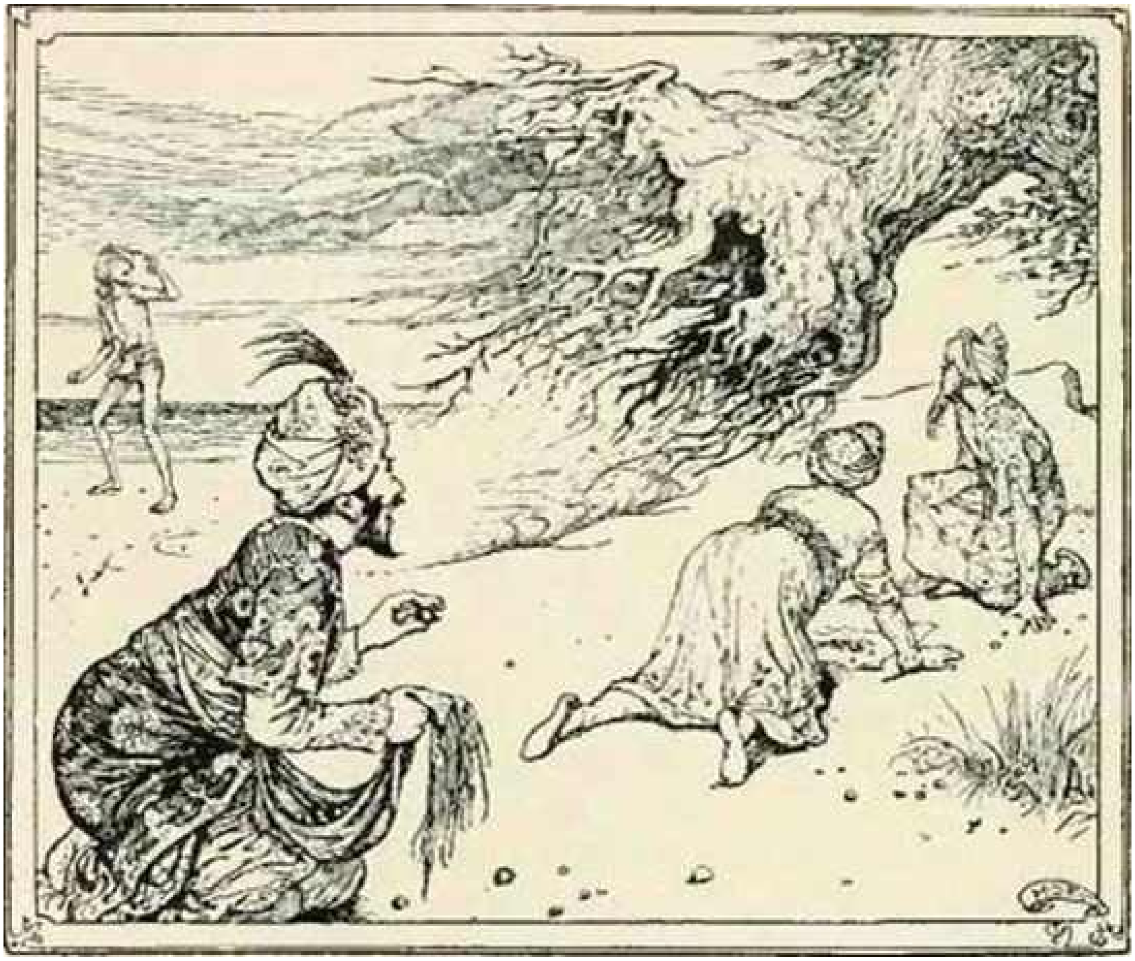

And Kahré thought: 'What is the good of only getting eight stones? Why, here are enough to make twenty necklaces; and wealth means power!'

Full of avarice and desire, each scrambled down from the tree, spread his cloth, and darted hither and thither picking up the precious jewels, looking the while over his shoulder to see whether his neighbour fared better than he. So engrossed were they in the business of gathering wealth that the dawn came upon them unawares; and suddenly the tree rose up again and flew away, leaving them upon the sea-shore staring after it, each with his cloth heavy with priceless jewels.

Morning broke in the city, and great was the consternation in the palace when the chamberlains declared that the rajah had gone out the evening before and had not returned.

‘Ah!’ said one, ‘it is all right! Musli wazir will know where he is, for it was he who was the king’s companion.’

Then they went to the wazir’s house, and there they learnt that the wazir had left it the evening before and had not returned; ‘but,’ said a servant, ‘Léna the banker will know where he is, for it was with him that Musli went.’

Then they visited the house of Léna, and there they learnt that the banker had gone out the evening before, and that he too had not returned; but the porter told them that he was accompanied by Déna the oil-seller, so he would know where they were.

So they departed to Déna’s house, and Déna’s wife met them with a torrent of reproaches and wailings, for Déna too had gone off the evening before to Léna’s house and had not returned.

In vain they waited, and searched — never did any of the hapless four return to their homes; and the confused tale which was told by Déna’s wife was the only clue to their fate.

To this day, in that country, when a greedy man has overreached himself, and lost all in grasping at too much, folks say:

‘All has he lost! — neither Déna, nor Léna, nor Musli, nor Kahré remain.’ And not five men in a hundred know how the proverb began, nor what it really signifies.

(Major Campbell, Feroshepore.)

THE FATE OF THE TURTLE

In a very hot country, far away to the east, was a beautiful little lake where two wild ducks made their home, and passed their days swimming and playing in its clear waters. They had it all to themselves, except for a turtle, who was many years older than they were, and had come there before them, and, luckily, instead of taking a dislike to the turtle, as so often happens when you have only one person to speak to, they became great friends, and spent most of the day in each other's company.

All went on smoothly and happily till one summer, when the rains failed and the sun shone so fiercely that every morning there was a little less water in the lake and a little more mud on the bank. The water-lilies around the edge began to droop, and the palms to hang their heads, and the ducks' favourite swimming place, where they could dive the deepest, to grow shallower and shallower. At length there came a morning when the ducks looked at each other uneasily, and before nightfall they had whispered that if at the end of two days rain had not come, they must fly away and seek a new home, for if they stayed in their old one, which they loved so much, they would certainly die of thirst.

Earnestly they watched the sky for many hours before they tucked their heads under their wings and fell asleep from sheer weariness, but not the tiniest cloud was to be seen covering the stars that shone so big and brilliant, and hung so low in the heavens that you felt as if you could touch them. So, when the morning broke, they made up their minds that they must go and tell the turtle of their plans, and bid him farewell.

They found him comfortably curled up on a pile of dead rushes, more than half asleep, for he was old, and could not venture out in the heat as he once used.

'Ah! here you are,' he cried; 'I began to wonder if I was ever going to see you again, for, somehow, though the lake has grown smaller, I seem to have grown weaker, and it is lonely spending all day and night by oneself!'

'Oh! my friend,' answered the elder of the two ducks, 'if you have suffered we have suffered also. Besides, I have something to tell you, that I fear will cause you greater pain still. If we do not wish to die of thirst we must leave this place at once, and seek another where the sun's rays do not come. My heart bleeds to say this, for there is nothing — nothing else in the world — which would have induced us to separate from you.'

The turtle was so astonished as well as so distressed at the duck's speech that for a moment he could find no words to reply. But when he had forced back his tears, he said in a shaky voice:

‘How can you think that I am able to live without you, when for so long you have been my only friends? If you leave me, death will speedily put an end to my grief.’

‘*Our* sorrow is as great as yours,’ answered the other duck, ‘but what can we do? And remember that if we are not here to drink the water, there will be the more for you! If it had not been for this terrible misfortune, be sure that nothing would have parted us from one whom we love so dearly.’

‘My friends,’ replied the turtle, ‘water is as necessary to me as to you, and if death stares in your faces, it stares in mine also. But in the name of all the years we have passed together, do not, I beseech you, leave me to perish here alone! Wherever you may go take me with you!’

There was a pause. The ducks felt wretched at the thought of abandoning their old comrade, yet, at the same time, how could they grant his prayer? It seemed quite impossible, and at length one of them spoke:

‘Oh, how can I find words to refuse?’ cried he, ‘yet how can we do what you ask? Consider that, like yours, our bodies are heavy and our feet small. Therefore, how could we walk with you over mountains and deserts, till we reached a land where the sun’s rays no longer burn? Why, before the day was out we should all three be dead of fatigue and hunger! No, our only hope lies in our wings — and, alas! you cannot fly!’

‘No, I cannot fly, of course,’ answered the turtle, with a sigh. ‘But you are so clever, and have seen so much of the world — surely you can think of some plan?’ And he fixed his eyes eagerly on them. Now, when the ducks saw how ardently the turtle wished to accompany them their hearts were touched, and making a sign to their friend that they wished to be alone they swam out into the lake to consult together. Though he could not hear what they said, the turtle could watch, and the half-hour that their talk lasted felt to him like a hundred years. At length he beheld them returning side by side, and so great was his anxiety to know his fate he almost died from excitement before they reached him.

‘We hope we have found a plan that may do for you,’ said the big duck gravely, ‘but we must warn you that it is not without great danger, especially if you are not careful to follow our directions.’

‘How is it possible that I should not follow your directions when my life and happiness are at stake?’ asked the turtle joyfully. ‘Tell me what they are, and I will promise to obey them gratefully.’

‘Well, then,’ answered the duck, ‘whilst we are carrying you through the air, in the manner that we have fixed upon, you must remain as quiet as if you were dead. However high above the earth you may find yourself, you must not feel afraid, nor move your feet nor open your mouth. No matter what you see or hear, it is absolutely needful for you to be perfectly still, or I cannot answer for the consequences.'

'I will be absolutely obedient,' answered the turtle, 'not only on this occasion but during all my life; and once more I promise faithfully not to move head or foot, to fear nothing, and never to speak a word during the whole journey.'

This being settled, the ducks swam about till they found, floating in the lake, a good stout stick. This they tied to their necks with some of the tough water-lily roots, and returned as quickly as they could to the turtle.

'Now,' said the elder duck, pushing the stick gently towards his friend, 'take this stick firmly in your mouth, and do not let it go till we have set you down on earth again.'

The turtle did as he was told, and the ducks in their turn seized the stick by the two ends, spread their wings and mounted swiftly into the air, the turtle hanging between them.

For a while all went well. They swept across valleys, over great mountains, above ruined cities, but no lake was to be seen anywhere. Still, the turtle had faith in his friends, and bravely hung on to the stick.

At length they saw in the distance a small village, and very soon they were passing over the roofs of the houses. The people were so astonished at the strange sight, that they all — men, women and children — ran out to see it, and cried to each other:

'Look! look! behold a miracle! Two ducks supporting a turtle! Was ever such a thing known before!' Indeed, so great was the surprise that men left their ploughing and women their weaving in order to add their voices to their friends'.

The ducks flew steadily on, heeding nothing of the commotion below; but not so the turtle. At first he kept silence, as he had been bidden to do, but at length the clamour below proved too much for him, and he began to think that everyone was envying him the power of travelling through the air. In an evil moment he forgot the promises he had made so solemnly, and opened his mouth to reply, but, before he could utter a word, he was rushing so swiftly through the air that he quickly became unconscious, and in this state was dashed to pieces against the side of a house. Then the ducks let fall after him the stick that had held up their friend, and which was of no further use. Sadly they looked at each other and shook their heads.

'We feared it would end so,' said they, 'yet, perhaps, he was right after all. Certainly this death was better than the one which awaited him.'

(From *Les Contes et Fables Indiennes*. Par M. Galland, 1724.)

THE SNAKE PRINCE

Once upon a time there lived by herself, in a city, an old woman who was desperately poor. One day she found that she had only a handful of flour left in the house, and no money to buy more nor hope of earning it. Carrying her little brass pot, very sadly she made her way down to the river to bathe and to obtain some water, thinking afterwards to come home and to make herself an unleavened cake of what flour she had left; and after that she did not know what was to become of her.

Whilst she was bathing she left her little brass pot on the river bank covered with a cloth, to keep the inside nice and clean; but when she came up out of the river and took the cloth off to fill the pot with water, she saw inside it the glittering folds of a deadly snake. At once she popped the cloth again into the mouth of the pot and held it there; and then she said to herself:

‘Ah, kind death! I will take thee home to my house, and there I will shake thee out of my pot and thou shalt bite me and I will die, and then all my troubles will be ended.’

With these sad thoughts in her mind the poor old woman hurried home, holding her cloth carefully in the mouth of the pot; and when she got home she shut all the doors and windows, and took away the cloth, and turned the pot upside down upon her hearthstone. What was her surprise to find that, instead of the deadly snake which she expected to see fall out of it, there fell out with a rattle and a clang a most magnificent necklace of flashing jewels!

For a few minutes she could hardly think or speak, but stood staring; and then with trembling hands she picked the necklace up, and folding it in the corner of her veil, she hurried off to the king’s hall of public audience.

‘A petition, O king!’ she said. ‘A petition for thy private ear alone!’ And when her prayer had been granted, and she found herself alone with the king, she shook out her veil at his feet, and there fell from it in glittering coils the splendid necklace. As soon as the king saw it he was filled with amazement and delight, and the more he looked at it the more he felt that he must possess it at once. So he gave the old woman five hundred silver pieces for it, and put it straightway into his pocket. Away she went full of happiness; for the money that the king had given her was enough to keep her for the rest of her life.

As soon as he could leave his business the king hurried off and showed his wife his prize, with which she was as pleased as he, if not more so; and, as soon as they had finished admiring the wonderful necklace, they locked it up in the great chest where the queen’s jewellery was kept, the key of which hung always round the king’s neck.

A short while afterwards, a neighbouring king sent a message to say that a most lovely girl baby had been born to him; and he invited his neighbours to come to a great feast in honour of the occasion. The queen told her husband that of course they must be present at the banquet, and she would wear the new necklace which he had given her. They had only a short time to prepare for the journey, and at the last moment the king went to the jewel chest to take out the necklace for his wife to wear, but he could see no necklace at all, only, in its place, a fat little boy baby crowing and shouting. The king was so astonished that he nearly fell backwards, but presently he found his voice, and called for his wife so loudly that she came running, thinking that the necklace must at least have been stolen.

‘Look here! look!’ cried the king, ‘haven’t we always longed for a son? And now heaven has sent us one!’

‘What do you mean?’ cried the queen. ‘Are you mad?’

‘Mad? no, I hope not,’ shouted the king, dancing in excitement round the open chest. ‘Come here, and look! Look what we’ve got instead of that necklace!’

Just then the baby let out a great crow of joy, as though he would like to jump up and dance with the king; and the queen gave a cry of surprise, and ran up and looked into the chest.

‘Oh!’ she gasped, as she looked at the baby, ‘what a darling! Where could he have come from?’

‘I’m sure I can’t say,’ said the king; ‘all I know is that we locked up a necklace in the chest, and when I unlocked it just now there was no necklace, but a baby, and as fine a baby as ever was seen.’

By this time the queen had the baby in her arms. ‘Oh, the blessed one!’ she cried, ‘fairer ornament for the bosom of a queen than any necklace that ever was wrought. Write,’ she continued, ‘write to our neighbour and say that we cannot come to his feast, for we have a feast of our own, and a baby of our own! Oh, happy day!’

So the visit was given up; and, in honour of the new baby, the bells of the city, and its guns, and its trumpets, and its people, small and great, had hardly any rest for a week; there was such a ringing, and banging, and blaring, and such fireworks, and feasting, and rejoicing, and merry-making, as had never been seen before.

A few years went by; and, as the king’s boy baby and his neighbour’s girl baby grew and throve, the two kings arranged that as soon as they were old enough they should marry; and so, with much signing of papers and agreements, and wagging of wise heads, and stroking of grey beards, the compact was made, and signed, and sealed, and lay waiting for its fulfilment. And this too came to pass; for, as soon as the prince and princess were eighteen years of age, the kings agreed that it was time for the wedding; and the young prince journeyed away to the neighbouring kingdom for his bride, and was there married to her with great and renewed rejoicings.

Now, I must tell you that the old woman who had sold the king the necklace had been called in by him to be the nurse of the young prince; and although she loved her charge dearly, and was a most faithful servant, she could not help talking just a little, and so, by-and-by, it began to be rumoured that there was some magic about the young prince's birth; and the rumour of course had come in due time to the ears of the parents of the princess. So now that she was going to be the wife of the prince, her mother (who was curious, as many other people are) said to her daughter on the eve of the ceremony:

'Remember that the first thing you must do is to find out what this story is about the prince. And in order to do it, you must not speak a word to him whatever he says until he asks you why you are silent; then you must ask him what the truth is about his magic birth; and until he tells you, you must not speak to him again.'

And the princess promised that she would follow her mother's advice.

Therefore when they were married, and the prince spoke to his bride, she did not answer him. He could not think what was the matter, but even about her old home she would not utter a word. At last he asked why she would not speak; and then she said:

'Tell me the secret of your birth.'

Then the prince was very sad and displeased, and although she pressed him sorely he would not tell her, but always reply:

'If I tell you, you will repent that ever you asked me.'

For several months they lived together; and it was not such a happy time for either as it ought to have been, for the secret was still a secret, and lay between them like a cloud between the sun and the earth, making what should be fair, dull and sad.

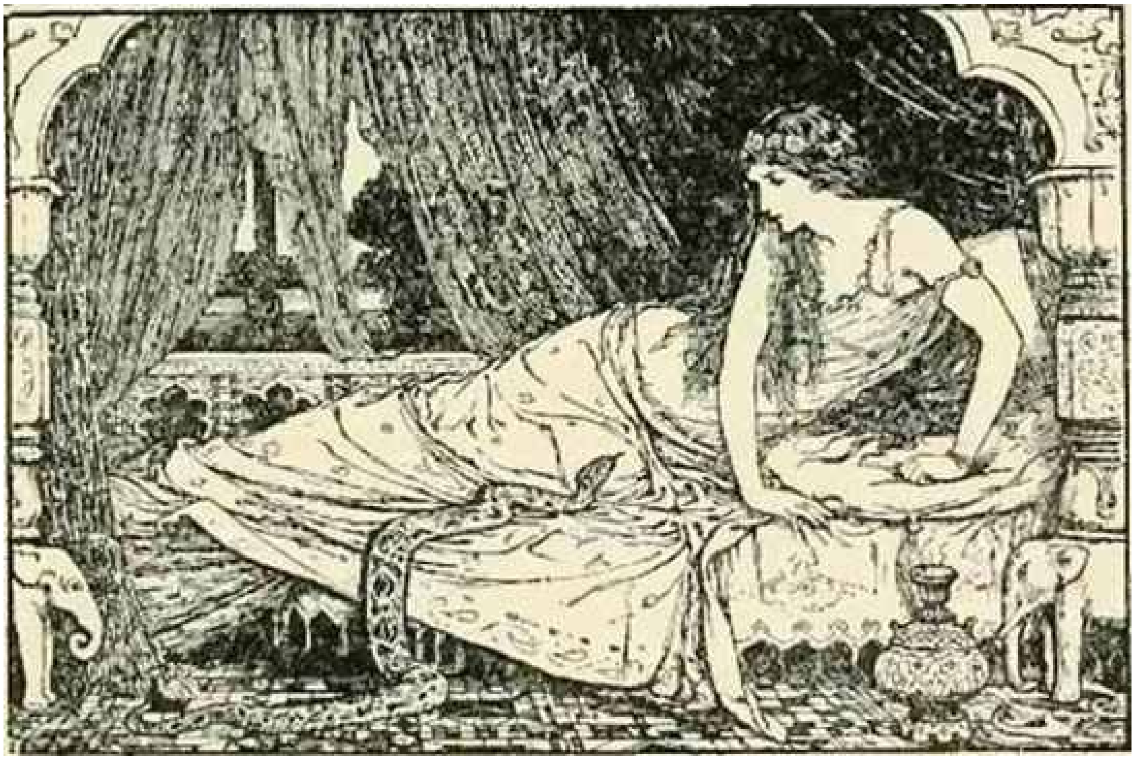

At length the prince could bear it no longer; so he said to his wife one day: ‘At midnight I will tell you my secret if you still wish it; but you will repent it all your life.’ However, the princess was overjoyed that she had succeeded, and paid no attention to his warnings.

That night the prince ordered horses to be ready for the princess and himself a little before midnight. He placed her on one, and mounted the other himself, and they rode together down to the river to the place where the old woman had first found the snake in her brass pot. There the prince drew rein and said sadly: ‘Do you still insist that I should tell you my secret?’ And the princess answered ‘Yes.’ ‘If I do,’ answered the prince, ‘remember that you will regret it all your life.’ But the princess only replied ‘Tell me!’

‘Then,’ said the prince, ‘know that I am the son of the king of a far country, but by enchantment I was turned into a snake.’

The word ‘snake’ was hardly out of his lips when he disappeared, and the princess heard a rustle and saw a ripple on the water; and in the faint moonlight she beheld a snake swimming into the river. Soon it disappeared and she was left alone. In vain she waited with beating heart for something to happen, and for the prince to come back to her. Nothing happened and no one came; only the wind mourned through the trees on the river bank, and the night birds cried, and a jackal howled in the distance, and the river flowed black and silent beneath her.

In the morning they found her, weeping and dishevelled, on the river bank; but no word could they learn from her or from anyone as to the fate of her husband. At her wish they built on the river bank a little house of black stone; and there she lived in mourning, with a few servants and guards to watch over her.

A long, long time passed by, and still the princess lived in mourning for her prince, and saw no one, and went nowhere away from her house on the river bank and the garden that surrounded it. One morning, when she woke up, she found a stain of fresh mud upon the carpet. She sent for the guards, who watched outside the house day and night, and asked them who had entered her room while she was asleep. They declared that no one *could* have entered, for they kept such careful watch that not even a bird could fly in without their knowledge; but none of them could explain the stain of mud. The next morning, again, the princess found another stain of wet mud, and she questioned everyone most carefully; but none could say how the mud came there. The third night the princess determined to lie awake herself and watch; and, for fear that she might fall asleep, she cut her finger with a penknife and rubbed salt into the cut, that the pain of it might keep her from sleeping. So she lay awake, and at midnight she saw a snake come wriggling along the ground with some mud from the river in its mouth; and when it came near the bed, it reared up its head and dropped its muddy head on the bedclothes. She was very frightened, but tried to control her fear, and called out:

‘Who are you, and what do you here?’

And the snake answered:

‘I am the prince, your husband, and I am come to visit you.’

Then the princess began to weep; and the snake continued:

‘Alas! did I not say that if I told you my secret you would repent it? and have you not repented?’

‘Oh, indeed!’ cried the poor princess, ‘I have repented it, and shall repent it all my life! Is there nothing I can do?’

And the snake answered:

‘Yes, there is one thing, if you dared to do it.’

‘Only tell me,’ said the princess, ‘and I will do *anything*!’

‘Then,’ replied the snake, ‘on a certain night you must put a large bowl of milk and sugar in each of the four corners of this room. All the snakes in the river will come out to drink the milk, and the one that leads the way will be the queen of the snakes. You must stand in her way at the door, and say: “Oh, Queen of Snakes, Queen of Snakes, give me back my husband!” and perhaps she will do it. But if you are frightened, and do not stop her, you will never see me again.’ And he glided away.

On the night of which the snake had told her, the princess got four large bowls of milk and sugar, and put one in each corner of the room, and stood in the doorway waiting. At midnight there was a great hissing and rustling from the direction of the river, and presently the ground appeared to be alive with horrible writhing forms of snakes, whose eyes glittered and forked tongues quivered as they moved on in the direction of the princess’s house. Foremost among them was a huge, repulsive scaly creature that led the dreadful procession. The guards were so terrified that they all ran away; but the princess stood in the doorway, as white as death, and with her hands clasped tight together for fear she should scream or faint, and fail to do her part. As they came closer and saw her in the way, all the snakes raised their horrid heads and swayed them to and fro, and looked at her with wicked beady eyes, while their breath seemed to poison the very air. Still the princess stood firm, and, when the leading snake was within a few feet of her, she cried: ‘Oh, Queen of Snakes, Queen of Snakes, give me back my husband!’ Then all the rustling, writhing crowd of snakes seemed to whisper to one another ‘Her husband? her husband?’ But the queen of snakes moved on until her head was almost in the princess’s face, and her little eyes seemed to flash fire. And still the princess stood in the doorway and never moved, but cried again: ‘Oh, Queen of Snakes, Queen of Snakes, give me back my husband!’ Then the queen of snakes replied: ‘To-morrow you shall have him — to-morrow!’ When she heard these words and knew that she had conquered, the princess staggered from the door, and sank upon her bed and fainted. As in a dream, she saw that her room was full of snakes, all jostling and squabbling over the bowls of milk until it was finished. And then they went away.

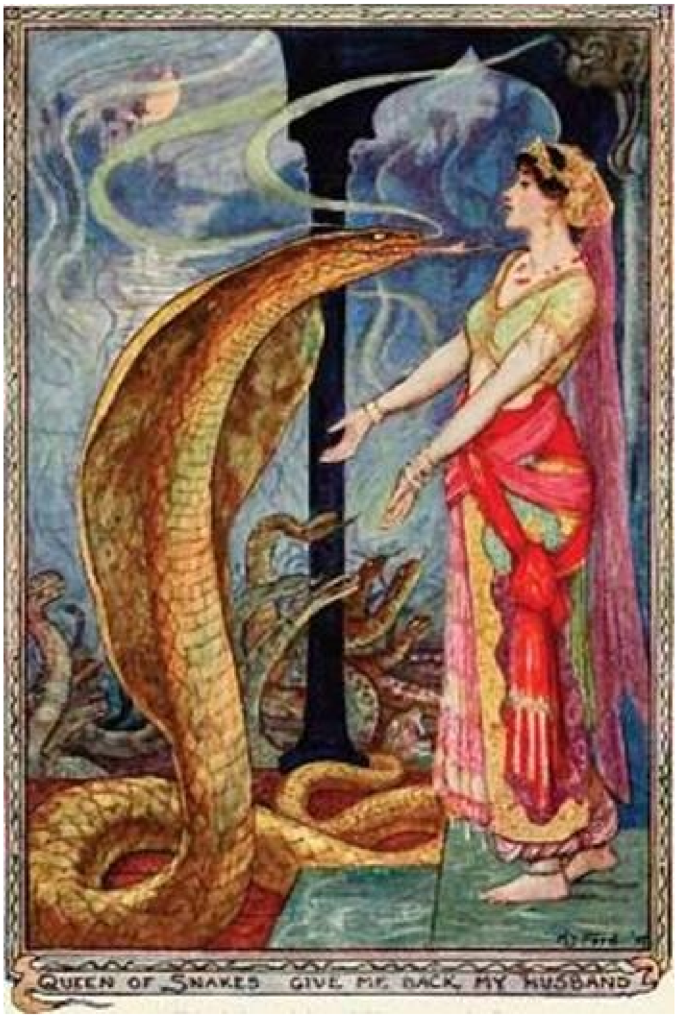

QUEEN OF SNAKES GIVE ME BACK MY HUSBAND

In the morning the princess was up early, and took off the mourning dress which she had worn for five whole years, and put on gay and beautiful clothes. And she swept the house and cleaned it, and adorned it with garlands and nosegays of sweet flowers and ferns, and prepared it as though she were making ready for her wedding. And when night fell she lit up the woods and gardens with lanterns, and spread a table as for a feast, and lit in the house a thousand wax candles. Then she waited for her husband, not knowing in what shape he would appear. And at midnight there came striding from the river the prince, laughing, but with tears in his eyes; and she ran to meet him, and threw herself into his arms, crying and laughing too.

So the prince came home; and the next day they two went back to the palace, and the old king wept with joy to see them. And the bells, so long silent, were set aringing again, and the guns firing, and the trumpets blaring, and there was fresh feasting and rejoicing.

And the old woman who had been the prince’s nurse became nurse to the prince’s children — at least she was called so; though she was far too old to do anything for them but love them. Yet she still thought that she was useful, and knew that she was happy. And happy, indeed, were the prince and princess, who in due time became king and queen, and lived and ruled long and prosperously.

(Major Campbell, Feroshepore.)

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS IN THE FOREST

There were, once upon a time, a king and queen of Denmark who had an only son, a handsome and clever lad. When he was eighteen, his father, the old king, fell very ill, and there was no hope that he would ever get well again. The queen and the prince were very unhappy, for they loved him dearly; but though they did all they could, he only grew worse and worse, and, one day, when the summer had come and the birds were singing, he raised his head and, taking a long look out of the window, fell back dead.

During many weeks the queen could hardly eat or sleep, so sorely did she grieve for him, and the prince feared that she would die also if she went on weeping; so he begged her to go with him to a beautiful place that he knew of on the other side of the forest, and after some time she consented. The prince was overjoyed, and arranged that they should set off early next morning.

They travelled all day, only stopping now and then to rest, and already the queen began to be better and to take a little interest in the things she saw. Just as the evening was coming on they entered the forest. Here it was quite dark, for the trees grew so close together that the sun could not shine through them, and very soon they lost the path, and wandered helplessly about wondering what they should do.

‘If we sleep in this dreadful place,’ said the queen, who was tired and frightened, ‘the wild beasts will eat us.’ And she began to cry.

‘Cheer up, mother,’ answered her son, ‘I have a feeling that luck is coming to us.’ And at the next turning they came to a little house, in the window of which a light was burning.

‘Didn’t I tell you so?’ cried the prince. ‘Stay here a moment and I will go and see if I can get food and shelter for the night.’ And away he ran as fast as he could go, for by this time they were very hungry, as they had brought very little food with them and had eaten up every scrap! When one takes a long journey on foot one does not like to have too much to carry.

The prince entered the house and looked about him, going from one room to the other, but seeing nobody and finding nothing to eat. At last, as he was going sorrowfully away, he caught sight of a sword and shirt of mail hanging on the wall in an inner room, with a piece of paper fastened under them. On the paper was some writing, which said that whoever wore the coat and carried the sword would be safe from all danger.

The prince was so delighted at the sight that he forgot how hungry he was, and instantly slipped on the coat of chain armour under his tunic, and hid the sword under his cloak, for he did not mean to say anything about what he had found. Then he went back to his mother, who was waiting impatiently for him.

‘What have you been doing all this time?’ she asked angrily. ‘I thought you had been killed by robbers!’

‘Oh, just looking round,’ he answered; ‘but though I searched everywhere I could find nothing to eat.’

‘I am very much afraid that it is a robbers’ den,’ said the queen. ‘We had better go on, hungry though we are.’

‘No, it isn’t; but still, we had better not stay here,’ replied the prince, ‘especially as there is nothing to eat. Perhaps we shall find another house.’

They went on for some time, until, sure enough, they came to another house, which also had a light in the window.

‘We’ll go in here,’ said the prince.

‘No, no; I am afraid!’ cried the queen. ‘We shall be attacked and killed! It is a robbers’ den: I am sure it is!’

‘Yes, it looks like it; but we can’t help that,’ said her son. ‘We have had nothing to eat for hours, and I’m nearly as tired as you.’

The poor queen was, indeed, quite worn out; she could hardly stand for fatigue, and in spite of her terror was half anxious to be persuaded.

‘And there’s going to be a storm,’ added the prince; who feared nothing now that he had the sword.

So they went into the house, where they found nobody. In the first room stood a table laid for a meal, with all sorts of good things to eat and drink, though some of the dishes were empty.

‘Well, this looks nice,’ said the prince, sitting down and helping himself to some delicious strawberries piled on a golden dish, and some iced lemonade. Never had anything tasted so nice; but, all the same, it *was* a robbers’ den they had come to, and the robbers, who had only just dined, had gone out into the forest to see whom they could rob.

When the queen and the prince could eat no more they remembered that they were very tired, and the prince looked about till he discovered a comfortable bed, with silken sheets, standing in the next room.

‘You get into bed, mother,’ he said, ‘and I’ll lie down by the side. Don’t be alarmed; you can sleep quite safely till the morning.’ And he lay down with his sword in his hand, and kept watch until the day began to break; then the queen woke up and said she was quite rested and ready to start again.

‘First I’ll go out into the forest and see if I can find our road,’ said the prince.

‘And while I’m gone you light the fire and make some coffee. We must eat a good breakfast before we start.’

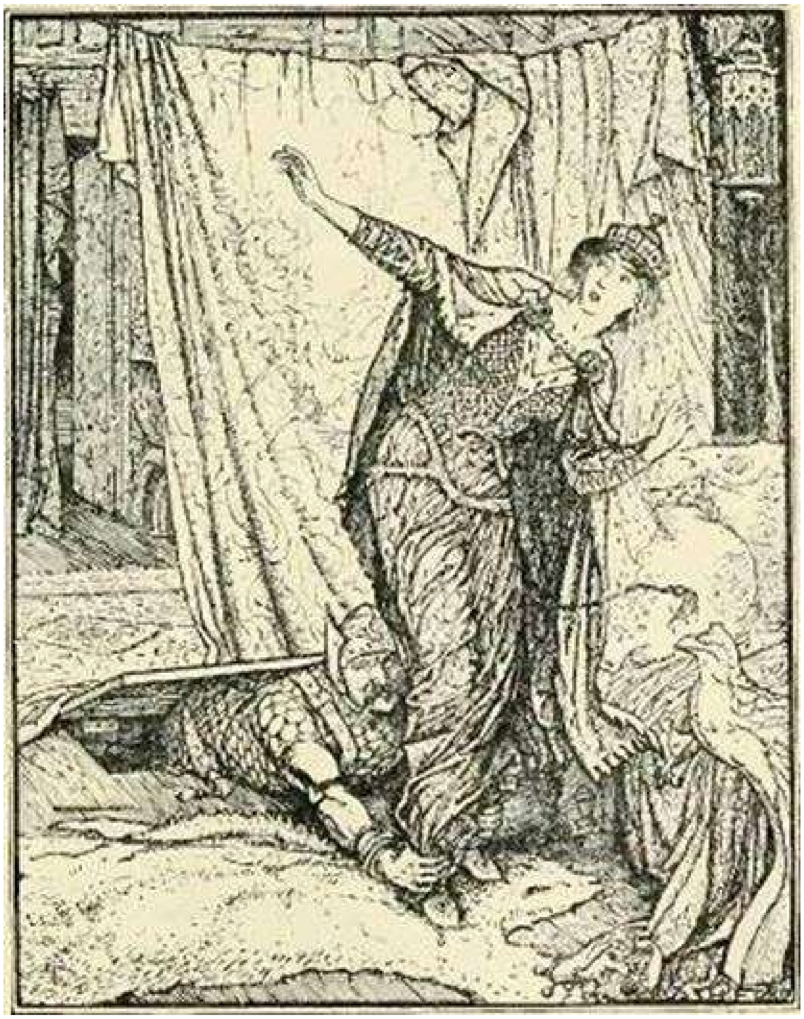

And he ran off into the wood.

After he had gone the queen lit the fire, and then thought she would like to see what was in the other rooms; so she went from one to another, and presently came to one that was very prettily furnished, with lovely pictures on the walls, and pale blue curtains and soft yellow cushions and comfortable easy chairs. As she was looking at all these things, suddenly a trap-door opened in the floor, and the robber-chief came out of the hole and seized her ankles. The queen almost died of fright, and shrieked loudly, then fell on her knees and begged him to spare her life.

‘Yes, if you will promise me two things,’ he replied; ‘first that you will take me home to your country and let me be crowned king instead of your son; and secondly, that you will kill him in case he should try to take the throne from me

— if you will not agree to this I shall kill you.'

'Kill my own son!' gasped the queen, staring at him in horror.

'You need not do that exactly,' said the robber. 'When he returns, just lie on the bed and say that you have been taken ill, and add that you have dreamed that in a forest, a mile away, there are some beautiful apples. If you could only get some of these you would be well again, but if not you will die.'

The queen shuddered as she listened. She was fond of her son, but she was a terrible coward; and so in the end she agreed, hoping that something would occur to save the prince. She had hardly given her promise when a step was heard, and the robber hastily hid himself.

'Well, mother,' cried the prince as he entered, 'I have been through the forest and found the road, so we will start directly we have had some breakfast.'

'Oh, I feel so ill!' said the queen. 'I could not walk a single step; and there is only one thing that will cure me.'

'What is that?' asked the prince.

'I dreamed,' answered the queen, in a faint voice, 'that, a mile away, there is a forest where the most beautiful apples grow, and if I could have some of them I should soon be well again.'

'Oh! but dreams don't mean anything,' said the prince. 'There is a magician who lives near here. I'll go to him and ask for a spell to cure you.'

'My dreams always mean something,' said the queen, shaking her head. 'If I don't get any apples I shall die.' She did not know why the robber wanted to send the prince to this particular forest, but as a matter of fact it was full of wild animals who would tear to pieces any traveller who entered it.

'Well, I'll go,' answered the prince. 'But I really must have some breakfast first; I shall walk all the faster.'

'If you do not hurry you will find me dead when you come back,' murmured the queen fretfully. She thought her son was not nearly anxious enough about her, and by this time she had begun to believe that she really was as ill as she had said.

When the prince had eaten and drunk, he set off, and soon came to a forest, and sure enough it was full of lions and tigers, and bears and wolves, who came rushing towards him; but instead of springing on him and tearing him to pieces, they lay down on the ground and licked his hands. He speedily found the tree with the apples which his mother wanted, but the branches were so high he could not reach them, and there was no way of climbing up the smooth trunk.

'It is no use after all, I can't get up there,' he said to himself. 'What am I to do now?'

But, as he turned away, his sword chanced to touch the tree, and immediately two apples fell down. He picked them up joyfully, and was going away when a little dog came out of a hill close by, and running up to him, began tugging at his clothes and whining.

'What do you want, little dog?' asked the prince, stooping down to pat his soft black head.

The dog ran to a hole that was in the hill and sat there looking out, as much as to say: 'Come along in with me.'

'I may as well go and see what is in there,' thought the prince, and he went over to the hill. But the hole was so small that he could not get through it, so he thrust his sword into it, and immediately it became larger.

'Ha, ha!' he chuckled; 'it's worth something to have a sword like that.' And he bent down and crept through the hole.

The first thing he beheld, when he entered a room at the very end of a dark passage, was a beautiful princess, who was bound by an iron chain to an iron pillar.

'What evil fate brought you here?' he asked in surprise: and the lady answered:

'It isn't much use for me to tell you lest my lot becomes yours.'

'I am not afraid of that. Tell me who you are and what has brought you here,' begged the prince.

'My story is not long,' she said, smiling sadly. 'I am a princess from Arabia, and twelve robbers who dwell in this place are fighting among themselves as to which shall have me to wife.'

'Shall I save you?' asked the prince. And she answered:

'Yes; but you can't do it. To begin with, how could you break the chain I am bound with?'

'Oh, that's easy enough,' said he, taking out his sword; and directly it touched the chain the links fell apart and the princess was free.

'Come!' said the prince, taking her hand. But she drew back.

'No, I dare not!' she cried. 'If we should meet the robbers in the passage they would kill us both.'

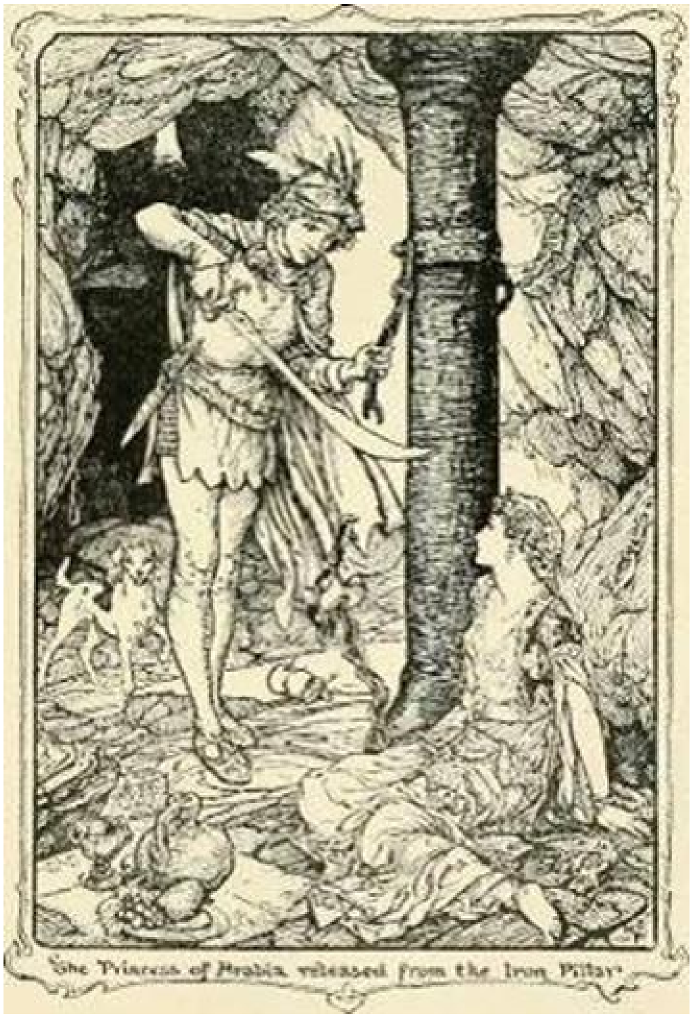

The Princess of Arabia released from the Iron Pillar

'Not they!' said the prince, brandishing his sword. 'But how long have you been here?' he added quickly.

'About twenty years, I think,' said the princess, reckoning with her fingers.

'Twenty years!' exclaimed the prince. 'Then you had better shut your eyes, for when you have been sitting there so long it might hurt you to go too suddenly into the daylight. So you are the Princess of Arabia, whose beauty is famous throughout all the world! I, too, am a prince.'

'Will you not come back to Arabia and marry me, now you have saved my life?' asked the princess. 'Even if my father is living still, he must be old, and after his death you can be king.'

'No,' replied the prince, 'I cannot do that — I must live and die in my own country. But at the end of a year I will follow you and marry you.' And that was all he would say.

Then the princess took a heavy ring from her finger and put it on his. Her father's and her mother's names were engraved in it, as well as her own, and she asked him to keep it as a reminder of his promise.

‘I will die before I part from it,’ said the prince. ‘And if at the end of a year I am still living, I will come. I believe I have heard that at the other side of this forest there is a port from which ships sail to Arabia. Let us hasten there at once.’

Hand in hand they set off through the forest, and when they came to the port they found a ship just ready to sail. The princess said good-bye to the prince, and went on board the vessel, and when she reached her own country there were great rejoicings, for her parents had never expected to see her again. She told them how a prince had saved her from the robbers, and was coming in a year’s time to marry her, and they were greatly pleased.

‘All the same,’ said the king, ‘I wish he were here now. A year is a long time.’

When the princess was no longer before his eyes, the prince recollected why he had entered the forest, and made all the haste he could back to the robbers’ home.

The robber-chief could smell the apples from afar, for he had a nose like an ogre, and he said to the queen:

‘That is a strange fellow! If he had gone into the forest the wild beasts must have eaten him unless he has a powerful charm to protect him. If that is so we must get it away from him.’

‘No, he has nothing,’ answered the queen, who was quite fascinated by the robber.

But the robber did not believe her.

‘We must think of a way to get it,’ he said. ‘When he comes in say you are well again, and have some food ready for him. Then, whilst he is eating, tell him you dreamed that he was attacked by wild beasts, and ask him how he managed to escape from them. After he has told you I can easily find a way to take his charm from him.’

Shortly after the prince came in.

‘How are you, mother!’ he said gaily. ‘Here are your apples. Now you will soon be well again, and ready to come away with me.’

‘Oh, I am better already,’ she said. ‘And see, your dinner is all hot for you, eat it up, and then we will start.’

Whilst he was eating she said to him: ‘I had a horrible dream while you were away. I saw you in a forest full of wild animals, and they were running round you and growling fiercely. How did you manage to escape from them?’

‘Oh, it was only a dream!’ laughed the prince.

‘But *my* dreams are always true,’ said his mother. ‘Tell me how it was.’

The prince wondered for some time whether he should tell her or not, but at last he decided to let her into the secret.

‘One should tell one’s mother everything,’ he thought. And he told her.

‘See, mother, here are a sword and a mail shirt which I found in the first house we entered in the forest, and as long as I carry them nothing can hurt me. That is what saved me from the wild beasts.’

‘How can I be thankful enough!’ exclaimed the queen. And directly the prince’s back was turned, she hurried to tell the robber.

The robber, as soon as he heard the news, made a sleeping-draught, and bade the queen give it to her son before he went to bed that night.

Accordingly, as soon as the prince began to get sleepy, the queen handed him the cup containing the draught.

‘Drink this, to please me,’ she said. ‘It will do you good after all you’ve gone through, and make you sleep well.’

‘What an odd taste it has!’ murmured the prince as he drank it.

Immediately he fell asleep; and the robber came in and took away his sword and shirt of mail.

‘These things belong to my brother,’ he said. After he had got them both in his hand the robber woke him.

‘I am the master now,’ said he. ‘Choose one of two things — either you must die, or your eyes will be put out, and you will be sent back to the forest.’

The prince’s blood grew cold at these words. Then a thought struck him, and he turned to his mother: ‘Is this *your* doing?’ he asked sternly. And though she burst into tears and denied it, the prince knew she was not telling the truth.

‘Well,’ said he, ‘“whilst there is life there is hope.” I will go back to the forest.’

Then the robber put out his eyes, gave him a stick, and some food and drink, and drove him into the forest, hoping that the wild beasts would kill him, as he no longer had the sword and shirt to protect him.

‘Now,’ he said to the queen, ‘we will return to your country.’

The next day they set sail, and as soon as they reached home, they were married, and the robber became king.

Meanwhile the poor prince was wandering about in the forest, hoping to find someone who would help him, and perhaps take him into service, for now he had no money and no home. It so happened that there had been a great hunt in the forest, and the wild beasts had all fled before the hunters and were hiding, so nothing did him any harm. At last one day, just when his food was all gone and he had made up his mind that he must surely die of hunger, he came to the port whence the ships sailed for Arabia. One vessel was just ready to start, and the captain was going on board when he saw the prince.

‘Why, here is a poor blind fellow!’ he said. ‘No doubt that is the work of the robbers. Let us take him to Arabia with us. Would you like to come, my good man?' he asked the prince.

Oh, how glad he was to hear someone speak kindly to him again! And he answered that he would, and the sailors helped him to climb up the side of the ship. When they got to Arabia the captain took him to the public baths, and ordered one of the slaves to wash him. Whilst he was being washed the princess's ring slipped off his finger and was afterwards found by the slave who cleaned out the bath. The man showed it to a friend of his who lived at the palace.

'Why, it is the princess's ring!' he said. 'Where did it come from?'

'It fell off a blind man's finger,' said the slave. 'He must have stolen it; but I dare say you will be able to return it to the princess.'

So that evening the man took the ring to the palace and gave it to his daughter, who was the princess's favourite slave, and the girl gave it to her mistress. When the princess saw it she uttered a cry of joy.

'It is the ring I gave my betrothed!' she said. 'Take me to him at once.'

The bath-keeper thought it strange that the princess should be betrothed to a blind beggar, but he did as she bade him, and when she saw the prince she cried:

'At last you have come! The year is over, and I thought you were dead. Now we will be married immediately.' And she went home and told the king that he was to send an escort to bring her betrothed to the palace. Naturally the king was rather surprised at the sudden arrival of the prince; but when he heard that he was blind he was very much annoyed.

'I cannot have a blind person to succeed me,' he said. 'It is perfectly absurd!'

But the princess had had her own way all her life, and in the end the king gave way as he had always done. The prince was taken to the palace with much ceremony and splendour; but in spite of this the king was not contented. Still, it could not be helped, and really it was time the princess was married, though she looked as young as ever. There had been hundreds of knights and princes who had begged her to bestow her hand upon them, but she would have nothing to do with anyone; and now she had taken it into her head to marry this blind prince, and nobody else would she have.

One evening, as it was fine, the prince and princess went into the garden, and sat down under a tree.

Two ravens were perched on a bush near by, and the prince, who could understand bird language, heard one of them say: 'Do you know that it is Midsummer-eve to-night?'

'Yes,' said the other.

'And do you know that part of the garden which is known as the Queen's

Bed?’

‘Yes.’

‘Well, perhaps you don’t know this, that whoever has bad eyes, or no eyes at all, should bathe his eye-sockets in the dew that falls there to-night, because then he will get his sight back. Only he must do it between twelve and one o’clock.’

That was good news for the prince and princess to hear, and the young man begged the princess to lead him to the place called the Queen’s Bed, which was the little plot of grass where the queen used often to lie down and take her midday nap. Then, between twelve and one o’clock, he bathed his eyes with the dew that was falling there, and found he could see again as well as ever.

‘I can see you!’ he said to the princess, gazing at her as if he had never seen anything before.

‘I don’t believe it,’ she answered.

‘Well, go and hang your handkerchief on a bush, and if I find it at once you *must* believe me,’ he said.

And so she did, and he went straight up to the handkerchief.

‘Yes, indeed, you can see,’ cried the princess. ‘To think that my mother’s bed has really given back your sight!’ and she went to the bank and sat down again; and by-and-by, as the day was hot, the princess fell asleep. As the prince watched her he suddenly saw something shining on her neck. It was a little golden lamp that gave out a bright light, and it hung from a golden chain. The prince thought he would like to examine it more closely, so he unfastened the chain, but as he did so the lamp fell to the ground. Before he could pick it up a hawk flew in, snatched up the little lamp and flew away again with it. The prince set off in pursuit, and ran on and on without being able to catch the bird, until at length he had lost his way. Trying to find it, he wandered on, up and down, until he came to the forest where he had found the princess.

Meantime, the princess woke up, and finding herself alone she set out to look for him. In the end she also lost her way, and as she was walking about, not knowing what to do, the robbers captured her and took her back to the cave from which the prince had rescued her. So there they were after all their trouble — no better off than before!

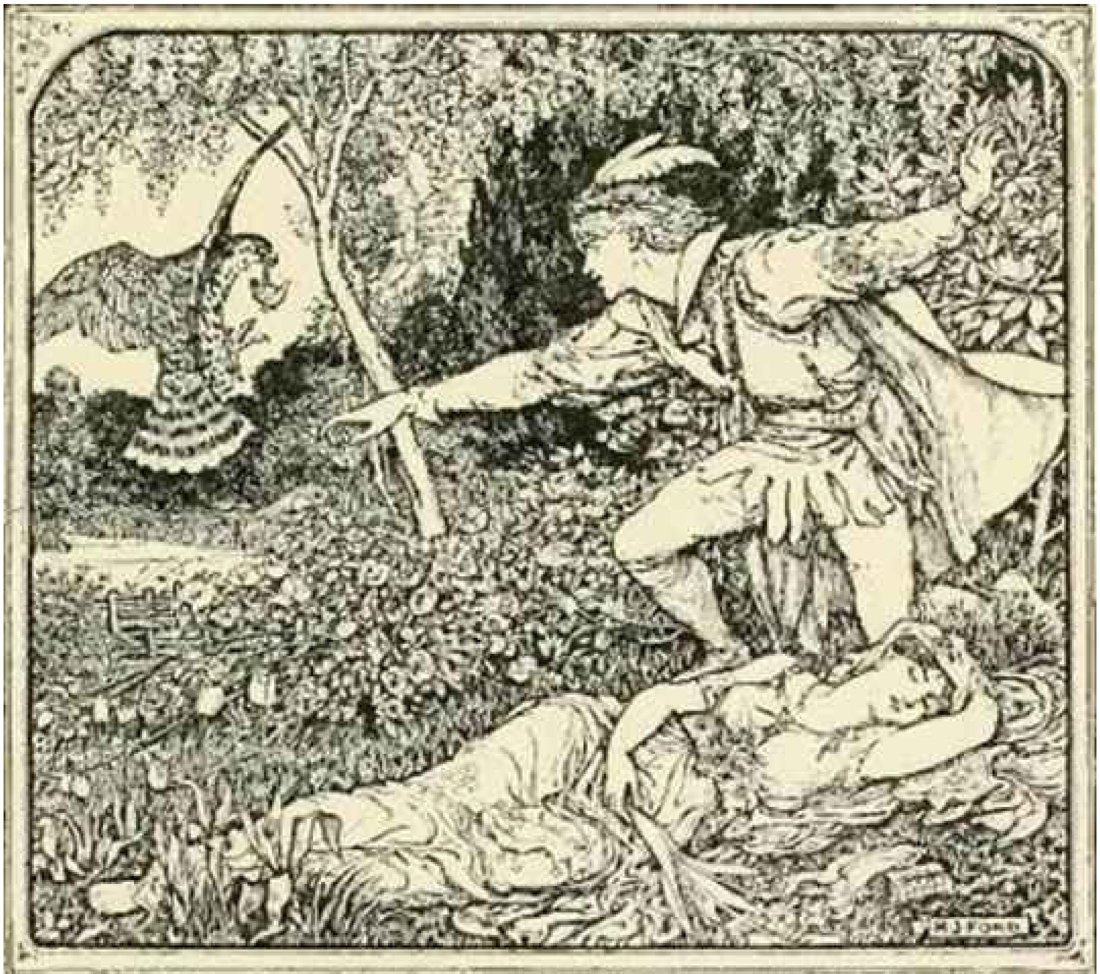

The Hawk Flies away with the Lamp

The prince wandered on, trying to find his way back to Arabia, until he chanced one day to meet twelve youths, walking gaily through the forest, singing and laughing. ‘Where are you going?’ he asked. And they told him they were looking for work.

‘I’ll join you, if I may,’ said the prince. And they answered: ‘The more the merrier.’

Then the prince went with them, and they all journeyed on until they met an old troll.

‘Where are you going, my masters?’ asked the troll.

‘To seek service,’ they told him.

‘Then come and serve me,’ he said; ‘there will be plenty to eat and drink, and not much work to do, and if, at the end of a year, you can answer three questions, I’ll give you each a sack of gold. Otherwise you must be turned into beasts.’

The youths thought this sounded easy enough, so they went home with the troll to his castle.

‘You will find all that you want here,’ he said; ‘and all you need do is to take care of the house, for I am going away, and shall only return when the year is over.’

Then he went away, and the young men, left to themselves, had a fine time of it; for they did no work, and only amused themselves with singing and drinking. Every day they found the table laid with good things to eat and drink, and when they had finished, the plates and dishes were cleared away by invisible hands. Only the prince, who was sad for his lost princess, ate and drank sparingly, and worked hard keeping the house in order.

One day, as he sat in his own room, he heard the voice of the old troll beneath his window talking to another troll.

‘To-morrow,’ said he, ‘the year is up.’

‘And what questions will you ask?’ inquired the other.

‘First I shall ask how long they have been here — they don’t know, the young fools! Secondly I shall ask what shines on the roof of the castle.’

‘And what is that?’

‘The lamp that was stolen by me from the princess as she slept in the garden.’

‘And what is the third question?’

‘I shall ask where the food and drink they consume every day come from. I steal it from the king’s table; but they don’t know that.’

The day after, the troll entered.

‘Now I shall ask my questions,’ said he. ‘To begin with: How long have you been here?’

The young men had been so busy drinking and making merry that they had forgotten all about the agreement, so they remained silent.

‘One week,’ said one, at last.

‘Two months,’ guessed another. But the prince answered, ‘One year.’

‘Right,’ replied the troll. But the second question was more difficult.

‘What is it that shines on the roof?’

The young men guessed and guessed. ‘The sun — the moon.’ But none of them really knew.

‘May I answer?’ asked the prince.

‘Yes, certainly,’ replied the troll; and the prince spoke.

‘The lamp that you stole from the princess whilst she was asleep in the garden.’ And again the troll nodded.

The third question was harder still.

‘Where does the meat and drink you have had here come from?’

None of the young men could guess.

‘May I say?’ asked the prince.

‘Yes, if you can,’ replied the troll.

‘It comes from the king’s table,’ said the prince.

And that was all. Now they might take the sacks of gold and go, and the young men went off in such a hurry that the prince was left behind. Presently, they met an old man who asked for money.

‘No, we haven’t any,’ they answered.

So they hurried on, and by-and-by up came the prince.

‘Has your lordship a piece of money for a poor man?’ asked the old fellow.

‘Yes,’ said the prince, and gave him his whole sackful.

‘I don’t want it,’ said the old man, who was really the troll they had just left in disguise. ‘But since you’re so generous, here is the princess’s lamp, and the princess herself is in the cave where you found her; but how you’re going to save her again without the magic sword I don’t know.’

When he heard that, the prince knew where she was; and that was the beginning of her rescue. So he disguised himself to look like a peddler and travelled on until he reached his own city, where his mother, the queen, and the robber-chief were living. Then he went in to a goldsmith’s shop and ordered a great number of kitchen pots to be made out of pure gold. That was not an order the goldsmith had every day, but the things were ready at last, saucepans and kettles and gridirons all of pure gold. Then the prince put them in his basket and went up to the palace, and asked to see the queen.

Directly she heard about the wonderful gold pots and pans she came out at once, and began unpacking the basket and admiring the things. She was so absorbed in them that the prince soon found an opportunity to steal into the bedroom and take the sword and shirt which were hung there, and go back again without his mother having noticed his absence.

‘The things are all beautiful!’ she said. ‘How much would you take for them?’

‘Name your own price, your majesty,’ answered the prince.

‘I really don’t know what to say,’ said the queen. ‘Wait till my husband comes back — men understand such things better; and then, as you are a stranger, he would like to chat with you a little.’ The prince bowed, and waited silently in a corner.

Soon after the robber returned.

‘Come and see all these lovely gold saucepans!’ cried the queen.

But, as the robber entered the room, the prince touched him with the magic sword, and he fell to the ground.

‘Perhaps, now you know me, mother,’ the prince said, taking off his disguise, ‘you had better repent for all the wrong you have done me, or your life will be short.’

‘Oh, have mercy!’ she cried, ‘I could not help it. I was so frightened.’

The prince had mercy. He ordered the wicked king to be stripped of his fine clothes, and to be driven into the forest, where the wild beasts tore him to pieces. The queen he sent to her own country. Then he set off for the cave where the princess was sitting chained as before, and with the help of the magic sword he rescued her again without any difficulty. They soon reached the port and set sail for Arabia, where they were married; and till they died, a long while after, they reigned happily over both countries.

(From *Eventyr fra Gylbauck samlede og optegnede af Evald Tang Kristensen*. Translated from the Danish by Mrs. Skovgaard-Pedersen.)

THE CLEVER WEAVER

Once upon a time the king of a far country was sitting on his throne, listening to the complaints of his people, and judging between them. That morning there had been fewer cases than usual to deal with, and the king was about to rise and go into his gardens, when a sudden stir was heard outside, and the lord high chamberlain entered, and inquired if his majesty would be graciously pleased to receive the ambassador of a powerful emperor who lived in the east, and was greatly feared by the neighbouring sovereigns. The king, who stood as much in dread of him as the rest, gave orders that the envoy should be admitted at once, and that a banquet should be prepared in his honour. Then he settled himself again on his throne, wondering what the envoy had to say.

The envoy said nothing. He advanced to the throne where the king was awaiting him, and stooping down, traced on the floor with a rod which he held in his hand a black circle all round it. Then he sat down on a seat that was near, and took no further notice of anyone.

The king and his courtiers were equally mystified and enraged at this strange behaviour, but the envoy sat as calm and still as an image, and it soon became plain that they would get no explanation from *him*. The ministers were hastily summoned to a council, but not one of them could throw any light upon the subject. This made the king more angry than ever, and he told them that unless before sunset they could find someone capable of solving the mystery he would hang them all.

The king was, as the ministers knew, a man of his word; and they quickly mapped out the city into districts, so that they might visit house by house, and question the occupants as to whether they could fathom the action of the ambassador. Most of them received no reply except a puzzled stare; but, luckily, one of them was more observant than the rest, and on entering an empty cottage where a swing was swinging of itself, he began to think it might be worth while for him to see the owner. Opening a door leading into another room, he found a second swing, swinging gently like the first, and from the window he beheld a patch of corn, and a willow which moved perpetually without any wind, in order to frighten away the sparrows. Feeling more and more curious, he descended the stairs and found himself in a large light workshop in which was seated a weaver at his loom. But all the weaver did was to guide his threads, for the machine that he had invented to set in motion the swings and the willow pole made the loom work.

When he saw the great wheel standing in the corner, and had guessed the use of it, the merchant heaved a sigh of relief. At any rate, if the weaver could not guess the riddle, he at least might put the minister on the right track. So without more ado he told the story of the circle, and ended by declaring that the person who could explain its meaning should be handsomely rewarded.

‘Come with me at once,’ he said. ‘The sun is low in the heavens, and there is no time to lose.’

The weaver stood thinking for a moment and then walked across to a window, outside of which was a hen-coop with two knuckle-bones lying beside it. These he picked up, and taking the hen from the coop, he tucked it under his arm.

‘I am ready,’ he answered, turning to the minister.

In the hall the king still sat on his throne, and the envoy on his seat. Signing to the minister to remain where he was, the weaver advanced to the envoy, and placed the knuckle-bones on the floor beside him. For answer, the envoy took a handful of millet seed out of his pocket and scattered it round; upon which the weaver set down the hen, who ate it up in a moment. At that the envoy rose without a word, and took his departure.

As soon as he had left the hall, the king beckoned to the weaver.

‘You alone seem to have guessed the riddle,’ said he, ‘and great shall be your reward. But tell me, I pray you, what it all means?’

‘The meaning, O king,’ replied the weaver, ‘is this: The circle drawn by the envoy round your throne is the message of the emperor, and signifies, “If I send an army and surround your capital, will you lay down your arms?” The knuckle-bones which I placed before him told him, “You are but children in comparison with us. Toys like these are the only playthings you are fit for.” The millet that he scattered was an emblem of the number of soldiers that his master can bring into the field; but by the hen which ate up the seed he understood that one of our men could destroy a host of theirs.’

‘I do not think,’ he added, ‘that the emperor will declare war.’

‘You have saved me and my honour,’ cried the king, ‘and wealth and glory shall be heaped upon you. Name your reward, and you shall have it even to the half of my kingdom.’

‘The small farm outside the city gates, as a marriage portion for my daughter, is all I ask,’ answered the weaver, and it was all he would accept. ‘Only, O king,’ were his parting words, ‘I would beg of you to remember that weavers also are of value to a state, and that they are sometimes cleverer even than ministers!’

(From *Contes Arméniens*. Par Frédéric Macler.)

THE BOY WHO FOUND FEAR AT LAST

Once upon a time there lived a woman who had one son whom she loved dearly. The little cottage in which they dwelt was built on the outskirts of a forest, and as they had no neighbours, the place was very lonely, and the boy was kept at home by his mother to bear her company.

They were sitting together on a winter's evening, when a storm suddenly sprang up, and the wind blew the door open. The woman started and shivered, and glanced over her shoulder as if she half expected to see some horrible thing behind her. 'Go and shut the door,' she said hastily to her son, 'I feel frightened.'

'Frightened?' repeated the boy. 'What does it feel like to be frightened?'

'Well — just frightened,' answered the mother. 'A fear of something, you hardly know what, takes hold of you.'

'It must be very odd to feel like that,' replied the boy. 'I will go through the world and seek fear till I find it.' And the next morning, before his mother was out of bed, he had left the forest behind him.

After walking for some hours he reached a mountain, which he began to climb. Near the top, in a wild and rocky spot, he came upon a band of fierce robbers, sitting round a fire. The boy, who was cold and tired, was delighted to see the bright flames, so he went up to them and said, 'Good greeting to you, sirs,' and wriggled himself in between the men, till his feet almost touched the burning logs.

The robbers stopped drinking and eyed him curiously, and at last the captain spoke.

'No caravan of armed men would dare to come here, even the very birds shun our camp, and who are you to venture in so boldly?'

'Oh, I have left my mother's house in search of fear. Perhaps you can show it to me?'

'Fear is wherever *we* are,' answered the captain.

'But *where*?' asked the boy, looking round. 'I see nothing.'

'Take this pot and some flour and butter and sugar over to the churchyard which lies down there, and bake us a cake for supper,' replied the robber. And the boy, who was by this time quite warm, jumped up cheerfully, and slinging the pot over his arm, ran down the hill.

When he got to the churchyard he collected some sticks and made a fire; then he filled the pot with water from a little stream close by, and mixing the flour and butter and sugar together, he set the cake on to cook. It was not long before it grew crisp and brown, and then the boy lifted it from the pot and placed it on a stone, while he put out the fire. At that moment a hand was stretched from a grave, and a voice said:

‘Is that cake for me?’

‘Do you think I am going to give to the dead the food of the living?’ replied the boy, with a laugh. And giving the hand a tap with his spoon, and picking up the cake, he went up the mountain side, whistling merrily.

‘Well, have you found fear?’ asked the robbers when he held out the cake to the captain.

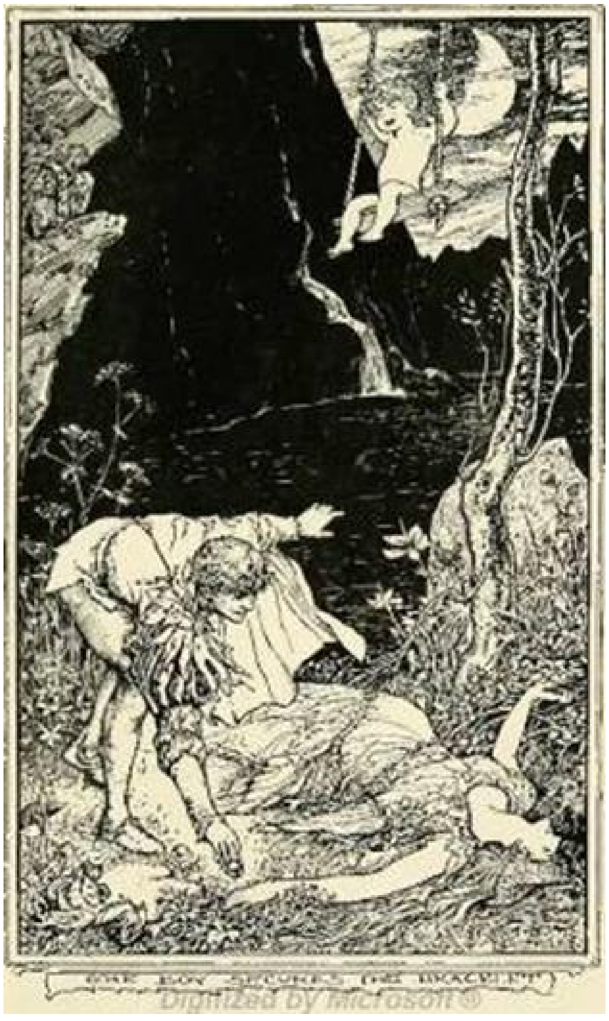

THE BOY SECURES THE BRACELET

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‘No; was it there?’ answered the boy. ‘I saw nothing but a hand which came from a grave, and belonged to someone who wanted my cake, but I just rapped the fingers with my spoon, and said it was not for him, and then the hand vanished. Oh, how nice the fire is!' And he flung himself on his knees before it, and so did not notice the glances of surprise cast by the robbers at each other.

'There is another chance for you,' said one at length. 'On the other side of the mountain lies a deep pool; go to that, and perhaps you may meet fear on the way.'

'I hope so, indeed,' answered the boy. And he set out at once.

He soon beheld the waters of the pool gleaming in the moonlight, and as he drew near he saw a tall swing standing just over it, and in the swing a child was seated, weeping bitterly.

'That is a strange place for a swing,' thought the boy; 'but I wonder what he is crying about.' And he was hurrying on towards the child, when a maiden ran up and spoke to him.

'I want to lift my little brother from the swing,' cried she, 'but it is so high above me, that I cannot reach. If you will get closer to the edge of the pool, and let me mount on your shoulder, I think I can reach him.'

'Willingly,' replied the boy, and in an instant the girl had climbed to his shoulders. But instead of lifting the child from the swing, as she could easily have done, she pressed her feet so firmly on either side of the youth's neck, that he felt that in another minute he would be choked, or else fall into the water beneath him. So gathering up all his strength, he gave a mighty heave, and threw the girl backwards. As she touched the ground a bracelet fell from her arm, and this the youth picked up.

'I may as well keep it as a remembrance of all the queer things that have happened to me since I left home,' he said to himself, and turning to look for the child, he saw that both it and the swing had vanished, and that the first streaks of dawn were in the sky.

With the bracelet on his arm, the youth started for a little town which was situated in the plain on the further side of the mountain, and as, hungry and thirsty, he entered its principal street, a Jew stopped him. 'Where did you get that bracelet?' asked the Jew. 'It belongs to me.'

'No, it is mine,' replied the boy.

'It is not. Give it to me at once, or it will be the worse for you!' cried the Jew.

'Let us go before a judge, and tell him our stories,' said the boy. 'If he decides in your favour, you shall have it; if in mine, I will keep it!'

To this the Jew agreed, and the two went together to the great hall, in which the kadi was administering justice. He listened very carefully to what each had to say, and then pronounced his verdict. Neither of the two claimants had proved his right to the bracelet, therefore it must remain in the possession of the judge till its fellow was brought before him.

When they heard this, the Jew and the boy looked at each other, and their eyes said: ‘Where are we to go to find the other one?’ But as they knew there was no use in disputing the decision, they bowed low and left the hall of audience.

Wandering he knew not whither, the youth found himself on the sea-shore. At a little distance was a ship which had struck on a hidden rock, and was rapidly sinking, while on deck the crew were gathered, with faces white as death, shrieking and wringing their hands.

‘Have you met with fear?’ shouted the boy. And the answer came above the noise of the waves.

‘Oh, help! help! We are drowning!’

Then the boy flung off his clothes, and swam to the ship, where many hands were held out to draw him on board.

‘The ship is tossed hither and thither, and will soon be sucked down,’ cried the crew again. ‘Death is very near, and we are frightened!’

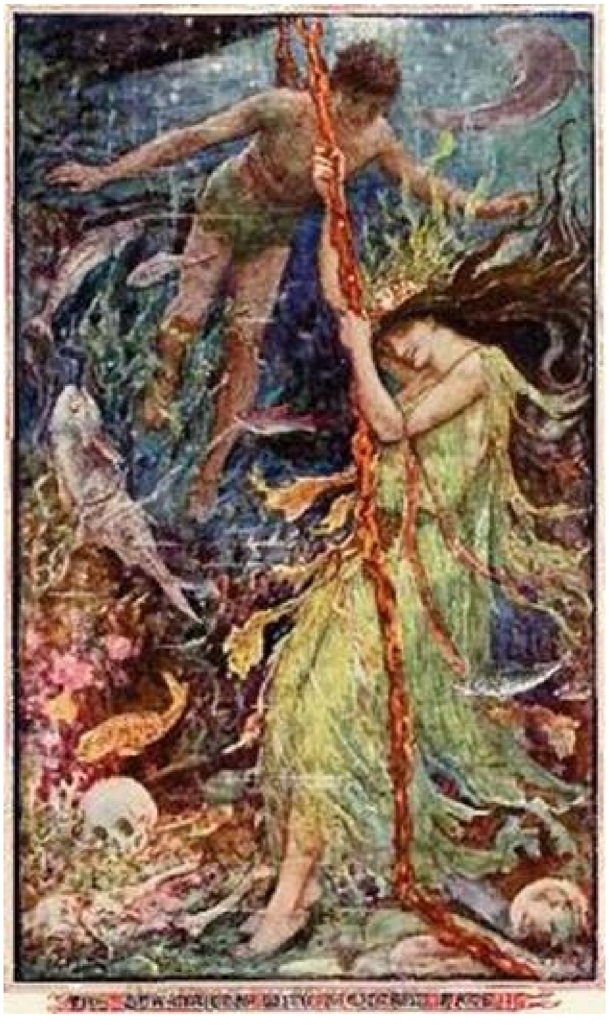

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‘Give me a rope,’ said the boy in reply, and he took it, and made it safe round his body at one end, and to the mast at the other, and sprang into the sea. Down he went, down, down, down, till at last his feet touched the bottom, and he stood up and looked about him. There, sure enough, a sea-maiden with a wicked face was tugging hard at a chain which she had fastened to the ship with a grappling iron, and was dragging it bit by bit beneath the waves. Seizing her arms in both his hands, he forced her to drop the chain, and the ship above remaining steady, the sailors were able gently to float her off the rock. Then taking a rusty knife from a heap of seaweed at his feet, he cut the rope round his waist and fastened the sea-maiden firmly to a stone, so that she could do no more mischief, and bidding her farewell, he swam back to the beach, where his clothes were still lying.

The youth dressed himself quickly and walked on till he came to a beautiful shady garden filled with flowers, and with a clear little stream running through. The day was hot, and he was tired, so he entered the gate, and seated himself under a clump of bushes covered with sweet-smelling red blossoms, and it was not long before he fell asleep. Suddenly a rush of wings and a cool breeze awakened him, and raising his head cautiously, he saw three doves plunging into the stream. They splashed joyfully about, and shook themselves, and then dived to the bottom of a deep pool. When they appeared again they were no longer three doves, but three beautiful damsels, bearing between them a table made of mother of pearl. On this they placed drinking cups fashioned from pink and green shells, and one of the maidens filled a cup from a crystal goblet, and was raising it to her mouth, when her sister stopped her.

‘To whose health do you drink?’ asked she.

‘To the youth who prepared the cake, and rapped my hand with the spoon when I stretched it out of the earth,’ answered the maiden, ‘and was never afraid as other men were! But to whose health do you drink?’

‘To the youth on whose shoulders I climbed at the edge of the pool, and who threw me off with such a jerk, that I lay unconscious on the ground for hours,’ replied the second. ‘But you, my sister,’ added she, turning to the third girl, ‘to whom do you drink?’

‘Down in the sea I took hold of a ship and shook it and pulled it till it would soon have been lost,’ said she. And as she spoke she looked quite different from what she had done with the chain in her hands, seeking to work mischief. ‘But a youth came, and freed the ship and bound me to a rock. To his health I drink,’ and they all three lifted their cups and drank silently.

As they put their cups down, the youth appeared before them.

‘Here am I, the youth whose health you have drunk; and now give me the bracelet that matches a jewelled band which of a surety fell from the arm of one of you. A Jew tried to take it from me, but I would not let him have it, and he dragged me before the kadi, who kept my bracelet till I could show him its fellow. And I have been wandering hither and thither in search of it, and that is how I have found myself in such strange places.’

‘Come with us, then,’ said the maidens, and they led him down a passage into a hall, out of which opened many chambers, each one of greater splendour than the last. From a shelf heaped up with gold and jewels the eldest sister took a bracelet, which in every way was exactly like the one which was in the judge’s keeping, and fastened it to the youth’s arm.

‘Go at once and show this to the kadi,’ said she, ‘and he will give you the fellow to it.’

‘I shall never forget you,’ answered the youth, ‘but it may be long before we meet again, for I shall never rest till I have found fear.’ Then he went his way, and won the bracelet from the kadi. After this, he again set forth in his quest of fear.

On and on walked the youth, but fear never crossed his path, and one day he entered a large town, where all the streets and squares were so full of people, he could hardly pass between them.

‘Why are all these crowds gathered together?’ he asked of a man who stood next him.

‘The ruler of this country is dead,’ was the reply, ‘and as he had no children, it is needful to choose a successor. Therefore each morning one of the sacred pigeons is let loose from the tower yonder, and on whomsoever the bird shall perch, that man is our king. In a few minutes the pigeon will fly. Wait and see what happens.’

Every eye was fixed on the tall tower which stood in the centre of the chief square, and the moment that the sun was seen to stand straight over it, a door was opened and a beautiful pigeon, gleaming with pink and grey, blue and green, came rushing through the air. Onward it flew, onward, onward, till at length it rested on the head of the boy. Then a great shout arose:

‘The king! the king!’ but as he listened to the cries, a vision, swifter than lightning, flashed across his brain. He saw himself seated on a throne, spending his life trying, and never succeeding, to make poor people rich; miserable people happy; bad people good; never doing anything he wished to do, not able even to marry the girl that he loved.

‘No! no!’ he shrieked, hiding his face in his hands; but the crowds who heard him thought he was overcome by the grandeur that awaited him, and paid no heed.

‘Well, to make quite sure, let fly more pigeons,’ said they, but each pigeon followed where the first had led, and the cries arose louder than ever:

‘The king! the king!’ And as the young man heard, a cold shiver, that he knew not the meaning of, ran through him.

‘This is fear whom you have so long sought,’ whispered a voice, which seemed to reach his ears alone. And the youth bowed his head as the vision once more flashed before his eyes, and he accepted his doom, and made ready to pass his life with fear beside him.

(Adapted from *Türkische Volksmärchen*. Von Dr. Ignaz Künos. E. J. Brill, Leiden.)

HE WINS WHO WAITS

Once upon a time there reigned a king who had an only daughter. The girl had been spoiled by everybody from her birth, and, besides being beautiful, was clever and wilful, and when she grew old enough to be married she refused to have anything to say to the prince whom her father favoured, but declared she would choose a husband for herself. By long experience the king knew that when once she had made up her mind, there was no use expecting her to change it, so he inquired meekly what she wished him to do.

‘Summon all the young men in the kingdom to appear before me a month from to-day,’ answered the princess; ‘and the one to whom I shall give this golden apple shall be my husband.’

‘But, my dear—’ began the king, in tones of dismay.

‘The one to whom I shall give this golden apple shall be my husband,’ repeated the princess, in a louder voice than before. And the king understood the signal, and with a sigh proceeded to do her bidding.

The young men arrived — tall and short, dark and fair, rich and poor. They stood in rows in the great courtyard in front of the palace, and the princess, clad in robes of green, with a golden veil flowing behind her, passed before them all, holding the apple. Once or twice she stopped and hesitated, but in the end she always passed on, till she came to a youth near the end of the last row. There was nothing specially remarkable about him, the bystanders thought; nothing that was likely to take a girl’s fancy. A hundred others were handsomer, and all wore finer clothes; but he met the princess’s eyes frankly and with a smile, and she smiled too, and held out the apple.

‘There is some mistake,’ cried the king, who had anxiously watched her progress, and hoped that none of the candidates would please her. ‘It is impossible that she can wish to marry the son of a poor widow, who has not a farthing in the world! Tell her that I will not hear of it, and that she must go through the rows again and fix upon someone else’; and the princess went through the rows a second and a third time, and on each occasion she gave the apple to the widow’s son. ‘Well, marry him if you will,’ exclaimed the angry king; ‘but at least you shall not stay here.’ And the princess answered nothing, but threw up her head, and taking the widow’s son by the hand, they left the castle.

That evening they were married, and after the ceremony went back to the house of the bridegroom’s mother, which, in the eyes of the princess, did not look much bigger than a hen-coop.

The old woman was not at all pleased when her son entered bringing his bride with him.

‘As if we were not poor enough before,’ grumbled she. ‘I dare say this is some fine lady who can do nothing to earn her living.’ But the princess stroked her arm, and said softly:

‘Do not be vexed, dear mother; I am a famous spinner, and can sit at my wheel all day without breaking a thread.’

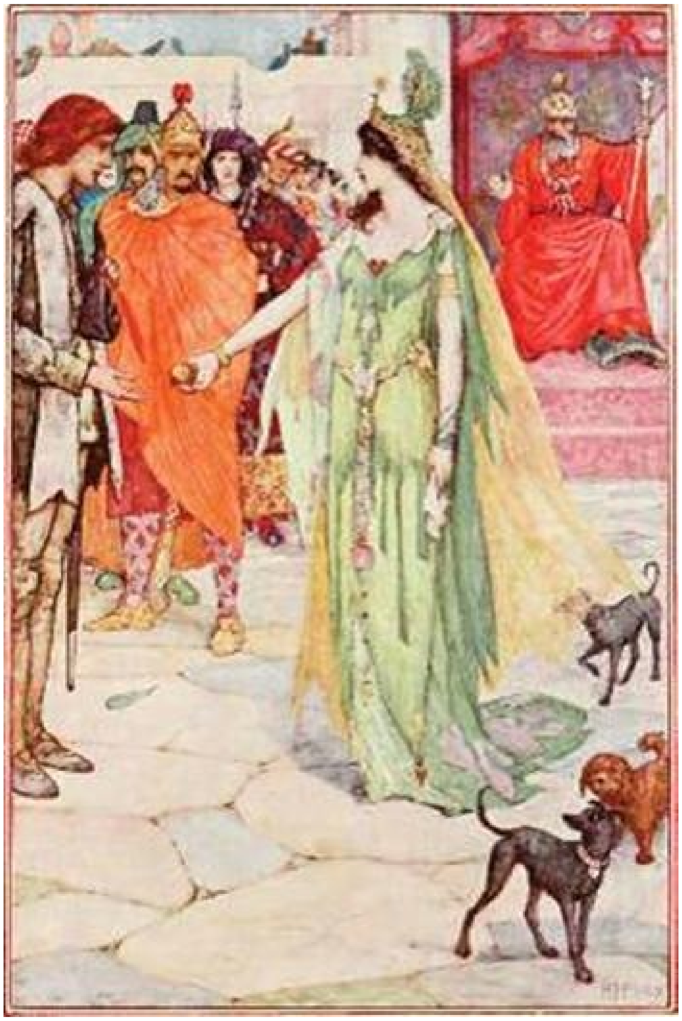

And she kept her word; but in spite of the efforts of all three, they became poorer and poorer; and at the end of six months it was agreed that the husband should go to the neighbouring town to get work. Here he met a merchant who was about to start on a long journey with a train of camels laden with goods of all sorts, and needed a man to help him. The widow’s son begged that he would take him as a servant, and to this the merchant assented, giving him his whole year's salary beforehand. The young man returned home with the news, and next day bade farewell to his mother and his wife, who were very sad at parting from him.

'Do not forget me while you are absent,' whispered the princess as she flung her arms round his neck; 'and as you pass by the well which lies near the city gate, stop and greet the old man you will find sitting there. Kiss his hand, and then ask him what counsel he can give you for your journey.'

Then the youth set out, and when he reached the well where the old man was sitting he asked the questions as his wife had bidden him.

'My son,' replied the old man, 'you have done well to come to me, and in return remember three things: "She whom the heart loves, is ever the most beautiful." "Patience is the first step on the road to happiness." "He wins who waits."'

The young man thanked him and went on his way. Next morning early the caravan set out, and before sunset it had arrived at the first halting place, round some wells, where another company of merchants had already encamped. But no rain had fallen for a long while in that rocky country, and both men and beasts were parched with thirst. To be sure, there *was* another well about half a mile away, where there was always water; but to get it you had to be lowered deep down, and, besides, no one who had ever descended that well had been known to come back.

However, till they could store some water in their bags of goat-skin, the caravans dared not go further into the desert, and on the night of the arrival of the widow's son and his master, the merchants had decided to offer a large reward to anyone who was brave enough to go down into the enchanted well and bring some up. Thus it happened that at sunrise the young man was aroused from his sleep by a herald making his round of the camp, proclaiming that every merchant present would give a thousand piastres to the man who would risk his life to bring water for themselves and their camels.

The youth hesitated for a little while when he heard the proclamation. The story of the well had spread far and wide, and long ago had reached his ears. The danger was great, he knew; but then, if he came back alive, he would be the possessor of eighty thousand piastres. He turned to the herald who was passing the tent:

'*I* will go,' said he.

'What madness!' cried his master, who happened to be standing near. 'You are too young to throw away your life like that. Run after the herald and tell him you take back your offer.' But the young man shook his head, and the merchant saw that it was useless to try and persuade him.

‘Well, it is your own affair,’ he observed at last. ‘If you must go, you must. Only, if you ever return, I will give you a camel’s load of goods and my best mule besides.’ And touching his turban in token of farewell, he entered the tent.

Hardly had he done so than a crowd of men were seen pouring out of the camp.

‘How can we thank you!’ they exclaimed, pressing round the youth. ‘Our camels as well as ourselves are almost dead of thirst. See! here is the rope we have brought to let you down.’

‘Come, then,’ answered the youth. And they all set out.

On reaching the well, the rope was knotted securely under his arms, a big goat-skin bottle was given him, and he was gently lowered to the bottom of the pit. Here a clear stream was bubbling over the rocks, and, stooping down, he was about to drink, when a huge Arab appeared before him, saying in a loud voice:

‘Come with me!’

The young man rose, never doubting that his last hour had come; but as he could do nothing, he followed the Arab into a brilliantly lighted hall, on the further side of the little river. There his guide sat down, and drawing towards him two boys, one black and the other white, he said to the stranger:

‘I have a question to ask you. If you answer it right, your life shall be spared. If not, your head will be forfeit, as the head of many another has been before you. Tell me: which of my two children do I think the handsomer.’

The question did not seem a hard one, for while the white boy was as beautiful a child as ever was seen, his brother was ugly even for a negro. But, just as the youth was going to speak, the old man’s counsel flashed into the youth’s mind, and he replied hastily: ‘The one whom we love best is always the handsomest.’

‘You have saved me!’ cried the Arab, rising quickly from his seat, and pressing the young man in his arms. ‘Ah! if you could only guess what I have suffered from the stupidity of all the people to whom I have put that question, and I was condemned by a wicked genius to remain here until it was answered! But what brought you to this place, and how can I reward you for what you have done for me?’

‘By helping me to draw enough water for my caravan of eighty merchants and their camels, who are dying for want of it,’ replied the youth.

‘That is easily done,’ said the Arab. ‘Take these three apples, and when you have filled your skin, and are ready to be drawn up, lay one of them on the ground. Half-way to the earth, let fall another, and at the top, drop the third. If you follow my directions no harm will happen to you. And take, besides, these three pomegranates, green, red and white. One day you will find a use for them!’

The young man did as he was told, and stepped out on the rocky waste, where the merchants were anxiously awaiting him. Oh, how thirsty they all were! But even after the camels had drunk, the skin seemed as full as ever.

Full of gratitude for their deliverance, the merchants pressed the money into his hands, while his own master bade him choose what goods he liked, and a mule to carry them.

So the widow’s son was rich at last, and when the merchant had sold his merchandise, and returned home to his native city, his servant hired a man by whom he sent the money and the mule back to his wife.

‘I will send the pomegranates also,’ thought he ‘for if I leave them in my turban they may some day fall out,’ and he drew them out of his turban. But the fruit had vanished, and in their places were three precious stones, green, white and red.

For a long time he remained with the merchant, who gradually trusted him with all his business, and gave him a large share of the money he made. When his master died, the young man wished to return home, but the widow begged him to stay and help her; and one day he awoke with a start, to remember that twenty years had passed since he had gone away.

‘I want to see my wife,’ he said next morning to his mistress. ‘If at any time I can be of use to you, send a messenger to me; meanwhile, I have told Hassan what to do.’ And mounting a camel he set out.

Now, soon after he had taken service with the merchant a little boy had been born to him, and both the princess and the old woman toiled hard all day to get the baby food and clothing. When the money and the pomegranates arrived there was no need for them to work any more, and the princess saw at once that they were not fruit at all, but precious stones of great value. The old woman, however, not being accustomed, like her daughter-in-law, to the sight of jewels, took them only for common fruit, and wished to give them to the child to eat. She was very angry when the princess hastily took them from her and hid them in her dress, while she went to the market and bought the three finest pomegranates she could find, which she handed the old woman for the little boy.

Then she bought beautiful new clothes for all of them, and when they were dressed they looked as fine as could be. Next, she took out one of the precious stones which her husband had sent her, and placed it in a small silver box. This she wrapped up in a handkerchief embroidered in gold, and filled the old woman’s pockets with gold and silver pieces.

‘Go, dear mother,’ she said, ‘to the palace, and present the jewel to the king, and if he asks you what he can give you in return, tell him that you want a paper, with his seal attached, proclaiming that no one is to meddle with anything you may choose to do. Before you leave the palace distribute the money amongst the servants.’

The old woman took the box and started for the palace. No one there had ever seen a ruby of such beauty, and the most famous jeweller in the town was summoned to declare its value. But all he could say was:

‘If a boy threw a stone into the air with all his might, and you could pile up gold as high as the flight of the stone, it would not be sufficient to pay for this ruby.’

At these words the king’s face fell. Having once seen the ruby he could not bear to part with it, yet all the money in his treasury would not be enough to buy it. So for a little while he remained silent, wondering what offer he could make the old woman, and at last he said:

‘If I cannot give you its worth in money, is there anything you will take in exchange?’

‘A paper signed by your hand, and sealed with your seal, proclaiming that I may do what I will, without let or hindrance,’ answered she promptly. And the king, delighted to have obtained what he coveted at so small a cost, gave her the paper without delay. Then the old woman took her leave and returned home.

The fame of this wonderful ruby soon spread far and wide, and envoys arrived at the little house to know if there were more stones to sell. Each king was so anxious to gain possession of the treasure that he bade his messenger outbid all the rest, and so the princess sold the two remaining stones for a sum of money so large that if the gold pieces had been spread out they would have reached from here to the moon. The first thing she did was to build a palace by the side of the cottage, and it was raised on pillars of gold, in which were set great diamonds, which blazed night and day. Of course the news of this palace was the first thing that reached the king her father, on his return from the wars, and he hurried to see it. In the doorway stood a young man of twenty, who was his grandson, though neither of them knew it, and so pleased was the king with the appearance of the youth, that he carried him back to his own palace, and made him commander of the whole army.

Not long after this, the widow’s son returned to his native land. There, sure enough, was the tiny cottage where he had lived with his mother, but the gorgeous building beside it was quite new to him. What had become of his wife and his mother, and who could be dwelling in that other wonderful place. These were the first thoughts that flashed through his mind; but not wishing to betray himself by asking questions of passing strangers, he climbed up into a tree that stood opposite the palace and watched.

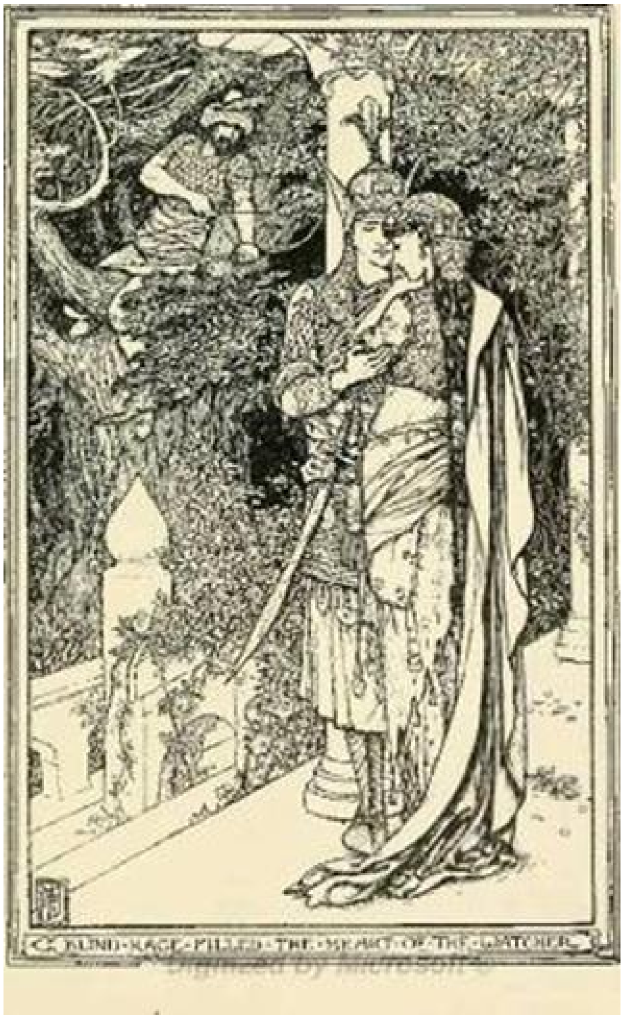

BLIND·RAGE·FILLED·THE·HEART·OF·THE·WATCHER

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By-and-by a lady came out, and began to gather some of the roses and jessamine that hung about the porch. The twenty years that had passed since he had last beheld her vanished in an instant, and he knew her to be his own wife, looking almost as young and beautiful as on the day of their parting. He was about to jump down from the tree and hasten to her side, when she was joined by a young man who placed his arm affectionately round her neck. At this sight the angry husband drew his bow, but before he could let fly the arrow, the counsel of the wise man came back to him: ‘Patience is the first step on the road to happiness.’ And he laid it down again.

At this moment the princess turned, and drawing her companion’s head down to hers, kissed him on each cheek. A second time blind rage filled the heart of the watcher, and he snatched up his bow from the branch where it hung, when words, heard long since, seemed to sound in his ears:

‘He wins who waits.’ And the bow dropped to his side. Then, through the silent air came the sound of the youth’s voice:

‘Mother, can you tell me nothing about my father? Does he still live, and will he never return to us?’

‘Alas! my son, how can I answer you?’ replied the lady. ‘Twenty years have passed since he left us to make his fortune, and, in that time, only once have I heard aught of him. But what has brought him to your mind just now?’

‘Because last night I dreamed that he was here,’ said the youth, ‘and then I remembered what I have so long forgotten, that I *had* a father, though even his very history was strange to me. And now, tell me, I pray you, all you can concerning him.’

And standing under the jessamine, the son learnt his father’s history, and the man in the tree listened also.

‘Oh,’ exclaimed the youth, when it was ended, while he twisted his hands in pain, ‘I am general-in-chief, you are the king’s daughter, and we have the most splendid palace in the whole world, yet my father lives we know not where, and for all we can guess, may be poor and miserable. To-morrow I will ask the king to give me soldiers, and I will seek him over the whole earth till I find him.’

Then the man came down from the tree, and clasped his wife and son in his arms. All that night they talked, and when the sun rose it still found them talking. But as soon as it was proper, he went up to the palace to pay his homage to the king, and to inform him of all that had happened and who they all really were. The king was overjoyed to think that his daughter, whom he had long since forgiven and sorely missed, was living at his gates, and was, besides, the mother of the youth who was so dear to him. ‘It was written beforehand,’ cried the monarch. ‘You are my son-in-law before the world, and shall be king after me.’

And the man bowed his head.

He had waited; and he had won.

(From *Contes Arméniens*. Par Frédéric Macler.)

THE STEEL CANE

Once upon a time there lived an old woman who had a small cottage on the edge of the forest. Behind the cottage was a garden in which all sorts of vegetables grew, and, beyond that, a field with two or three cows in it, so her neighbours considered her quite rich, and envied her greatly.

As long as she was strong enough to work all day in her garden the old woman never felt lonely, but after a while she had a bad illness, which left her much weaker than before, and she began to think that now and then it would be nice to have some one to speak to. Just at this moment she heard of the death of a shepherd and his wife, who dwelt on the other side of the plain, leaving a little boy quite alone in the world.

‘That will just suit me,’ she said; and sent a man over to bring the child, whom she intended to adopt for her own.

Now the boy, who was about twelve years old, ought to have considered himself very lucky, for his new mother was as kind to him as the old one. But, unfortunately, he made friends with some bad rude companions whose tricks caused them to be a terror to everyone, and the poor old woman never ceased regretting her lost solitude.

Things went on in this way for some years, till the boy became a man.

‘Perhaps, if he were to be married he might sober down,’ she thought to herself. And she inquired among the neighbours what girls there were of an age to choose from. At length one was found, good and industrious, as well as pretty; and as the young man raised no objections the wedding took place at once, and the bride and bridegroom went to live in the cottage with the old woman. But no change was to be seen in the husband’s conduct. All day long he was out amusing himself in the company of his former friends, and if his wife dared to say anything to him on his return home he beat her with his stick. And next year, when a baby was born to them, he beat it also.

At length the old woman’s patience was worn out. She saw that it was quite useless to expect the lazy, idle creature to mend his ways, and one day she said to him:

‘Do you mean to go on like this for ever? Remember, you are no longer a boy, and it is time that you left off behaving like one. Come, shake off your bad habits, and work for your wife and child, and above all, stop beating them. If not I will transform you into an ass, and heavy loads shall be piled on your back, and men shall ride you. Briars shall be your food, a goad shall prick you, and in your turn you shall know how it feels to be beaten.'

But if she expected her words to do any good she soon found out her mistake, for the young man only grew angry and cried rudely:

'Bah! hold your tongue or I will whip you also.'

'*Will* you?' she answered grimly: and, swift as lightning she picked up a steel cane that stood in the corner and laid it across his shoulders. In an instant his ears had grown long and his face longer, his arms had become legs, and his body was covered with close grey hair. Truly, he was an ass; and a very ugly one, too!

'Leave the house!' commanded the old woman. And, shambling awkwardly, he went.

As he was standing in the path outside, not knowing what to do, a man passed by.

'Ho! my fine fellow, you are exactly what I was looking for! You don't seem to have a master, so come with me. I will find something for you to do.' And taking him by the ear he led him from the cottage.

For seven years the ass led a hard life, just as the old woman had foretold. But instead of remembering that he had brought all his suffering on himself, and being sorry for his evil ways, he grew harder, and more bitter. At the end of the seven years his ass skin wore out, and he became a man again, and one day returned to the cottage.

His wife opened the door in answer to his knock; then, letting fall the latch, she ran inside, crying:

'Grandmother! grandmother! your son has come back!'

'I thought he would,' replied the old woman, going on with her spinning. 'Well, we could have done very well without him. But as he is here I suppose he must come in.'

And come in he did. But as the old woman expected, he behaved still worse than before. For some weeks she allowed him to do what he liked; then at last she said:

'So experience has taught you nothing! After all, there are very few people who have sense to learn by it. But take care lest I change you into a wolf, to be a prey for dogs and men!'

'You talk too much. I shall break your head for you!' was all the answer she got.

Had the young man looked at her face he might have taken warning, but he was busy making a pipe, and took no notice. The next moment the steel cane had touched his shoulders, and a big grey wolf bounded through the door.

Oh! what a yapping among the dogs, and what a shouting among the neighbours as they gave chase.

For seven years he led the life of a hunted animal, often cold and nearly always hungry, and never daring to allow himself a sound sleep. At the end of that time his wolf skin wore out also, and again he appeared at the cottage door. But the second seven years had taught him no more than the first — his conduct was worse than before; and one day he beat his wife and son so brutally that they screamed to the old woman to come to their aid.

She did, and brought the steel cane with her. In a second the ruffian had vanished, and a big black crow was flying about the room, crying ‘Gour! Gour!’

The window was open, and he darted through it; and seeking the companions who had ruined him, he managed to make them understand what had happened.

‘We will avenge you,’ said they; and taking up a rope, set out to strangle the old woman.

But she was ready for them. One stroke of her cane and they were all changed into a troop of black crows, and *this* time their feathers are lasting still.

(From *Contes Arméniens*. Par Frédéric Macler.)

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE FAIRY GANGANA

Once upon a time there lived a king and queen who ruled over a country so small that you could easily walk round it in one day. They were both very good, simple people; not very wise, perhaps, but anxious to be kind to everybody; and this was often a mistake, for the king allowed all his subjects to talk at once, and offer advice upon the government of the kingdom as well as upon private matters. And the end of it all was, that it was very difficult to get any laws made, and, still more, to get anyone to obey them.

Now, no traveller ever passed through the kingdom without inquiring how it came to be so small. And this was the reason. As soon as Petaldo (for that was the king's name) had been born, his father and mother betrothed him to the niece of their friend the fairy Gangana — if she should ever have one. But as the years passed on, and Gangana was still without a niece, the young prince forgot all about his destined bride, and when he was twenty-five he secretly married the beautiful daughter of a rich farmer, with whom he had fallen violently in love.

When the fairy heard the news she fell into a violent rage, and hurried off to tell the king. The old man thought in his heart that his son had waited quite long enough; but he did not dare to say so, lest some dreadful spell might be thrown over them all, and they should be changed into birds or snakes, or, worst of all, into stones. So, much against his will, he was obliged to disinherit the young man, and to forbid him to come to court. Indeed, he would have been a beggar had it not been for the property his wife had had given her by the farmer, which the youth obtained permission to erect into a kingdom.

Most princes would have been very angry at this treatment, especially as the old king soon died, and the queen was delighted to reign in his place. But Petaldo was a contented young man, and was quite satisfied with arranging his tiny court on the model of his father's, and having a lord chamberlain, and a high steward and several gentlemen in attendance; while the young queen appointed her own ladies-in-waiting and maids of honour. He likewise set up a mint to coin money, and chose a seneschal as head of the five policemen who kept order in the capital and punished the boys who were caught in the act of throwing stones at the palace windows.

The first to fill this important office was the young king's father-in-law, an excellent man of the name of Caboche. He was much beloved by everyone, and so sensible that he was not at all vain at rising at once to the dignity of seneschal, when he had only been a common farmer, but went about his fields every day as usual. This conduct so struck his king that very soon he never did anything without consulting him.

Each morning Caboche and his son-in-law had breakfast together, and when they had finished, the king took out of his iron chest great bundles of state papers, which he desired to talk over with his seneschal. Sometimes they would spend two hours at least in deciding these important matters, but more often after a few minutes Caboche would say:

'Excuse me, sire, but your majesty does not understand this affair in the least. Leave it to me, and I will settle it.'

'But what am I to do, then?' asked the king. And his minister answered:

'Oh, you can rule your wife, and see after your fruit garden. You will find that those two things will take up all your time.'

'Well, perhaps you are right,' the king replied; secretly glad to be rid of the cares of government. But though Caboche did all the work, Petaldo never failed to appear on grand occasions, in his royal mantle of red linen, holding a sceptre of gilded wood. Meanwhile he passed his mornings in studying books, from which he learned the proper seasons to plant his fruit trees, and when they should be pruned; and his afternoons in his garden, where he put his knowledge into practice. In the evening he played cards with his father-in-law, and supped in public with the queen, and by ten o'clock everybody in the palace was fast asleep.

The queen, on her side, was quite as happy as her husband. She loved to be in her dairy, and nobody in the kingdom could make such delicious cheeses. But however busy she might be, she never forgot to bake a little barley cake, and make a tiny cream cheese, and to put them under a particular rose-tree in the garden. If you had asked her whom they were for, and where they went to, she could not have told you, but would have said that on the night of her marriage a fairy had appeared to her in a dream, and had bidden her to perform this ceremony.

After the king and the queen had six children, a little boy was born, with a small red cap on his head, so that he was quite different from his brothers and sisters, and his parents loved Cadichon better than any of them.

The years went on, and the children were growing big, when, one day, after Gillette the queen had finished baking her cake, and had turned it out on a plate, a lovely blue mouse crept up the leg of the table and ran to the plate. Instead of chasing it away, as most women would have done, the queen pretended not to notice what the mouse was doing, and was much surprised to see the little creature pick up the cake and carry it off to the chimney. She sprang forwards to stop it, when, suddenly, both the mouse and cake vanished, and in their place stood an old woman only a foot high, whose clothes hung in rags about her. Taking up a sharp pointed iron stick, she drew on the earthen floor some strange signs, uttering seven cries as she did so, and murmuring something in a low voice, among which the queen was sure she caught the words, ‘faith,’ ‘wisdom,’ ‘happiness.’ Then, seizing the kitchen broom, she whirled it three times round her head, and vanished. Immediately there arose a great noise in the next room, and on opening the door, the queen beheld three large cockchafers, each one with a princess between its feet, while the princes were seated on the backs of three swallows. In the middle was a car formed of a single pink shell, and drawn by two robin redbreasts, and in this car Cadichon was sitting by the side of the blue mouse, who was dressed in a splendid mantle of black velvet fastened under her chin. Before the queen had recovered from her surprise, cockchafers, redbreasts, mouse and children had all flown, singing, to the window, and disappeared from view.

The loud shrieks of the queen brought her husband and father running into the room, and when at last they made out from her broken sentences what had really happened, they hastily snatched up some stout sticks that were lying about and set off to the rescue — one going in one direction and the other in another.

For at least an hour the queen sat sobbing where they had left her, when at last she was roused by a piece of folded paper falling at her feet. She stooped and picked it up eagerly, hoping that it might contain some news of her lost children. It was very short, but when she had read the few words, Gillette was comforted, for it bade her take heart, as they were well and happy under the protection of a fairy. ‘On your own faith and prudence depend your happiness,’ ended the writer. ‘It is I who have all these years eaten the food you placed under the rose-tree, and some day I shall reward you for it. “Everything comes to him who knows how to wait,” is the advice given by, — The Fairy of the Fields.’

Then the queen rose up, and bathed her face, and combed her shining hair; and as she turned away from her mirror she beheld a linnet sitting on her bed. No one would have known that it was anything but a common linnet, and yesterday the queen would have thought so too. But this morning so many wonderful things had happened that she did not doubt for a moment that the writer of the letter was before her.

‘Pretty linnet,’ said she, ‘I will try to do all you wish. Only give me, I pray you, now and then, news of my little Cadichon.’

And the linnet flapped her wings and sang, and flew away. So the queen knew that she had guessed rightly, and thanked her in her heart.

By-and-by the king and his seneschal returned, hungry and tired with their fruitless search. They were amazed and rather angry to find the queen, whom they had left weeping, quite cheerful. Could she *really* care for her children so little and have forgotten them so soon? What *could* have caused this sudden change? But to all their questions Gillette would only answer: 'Everything comes to him who knows how to wait.'

'That is true,' replied her father; 'and, after all, your majesty must remember that the revenues of your kingdom would hardly bear the cost of seven princes and princesses brought up according to their rank. Be grateful, then, to those who have relieved you of the burden.'

'You are right! You are always right!' cried the king, whose face once more beamed with smiles. And life at the palace went on as before, till Petaldo received a piece of news which disturbed him greatly.

The queen, his mother, who had for some time been a widow, suddenly made up her mind to marry again, and her choice had fallen on the young king of the Green Isles, who was younger than her own son, and, besides, handsome and fond of pleasure, which Petaldo was not. Now the grandmother, foolish though she was in many respects, had the sense to see that a woman as old and as plain as she was, could hardly expect a young man to fall in love with her, and that, if this was to happen, it would be needful to find some spell which would bring back her youth and beauty. Of course, the fairy Gangana could have wrought the change with one wave of her wand; but unluckily the two were no longer friends, because the fairy had tried hard to persuade the queen to declare her niece heiress to the crown, which the queen refused to do. Naturally, therefore, it was no use asking the help of Gangana to enable the queen to take a second husband, who would be certain to succeed her; and messengers were sent all over the neighbouring kingdoms, seeking to find a witch or a fairy who would work the wished-for miracle. None, however, could be found with sufficient skill, and at length the queen saw that if ever the king of the Green Isles was to be her husband she must throw herself on the mercy of the fairy Gangana.

The fairy's wrath was great when she heard the queen's story, but she knew very well that, as the king of the Green Isles had spent all his money, he would probably be ready to marry even an old woman, like her friend, in order to get more. So, in order to gain time, she hid her feelings, and told the queen that in three days the spell would be accomplished.

Her words made the queen so happy that twenty years seemed to fall from her at once, and she counted, not only the hours, but the minutes to the appointed time. It came at last, and the fairy stood before her in a long robe of pink and silver, held up by a tiny brown dwarf, who carried a small box under his arm. The queen received her with all the marks of respect that she could think of, and at the request of Gangana, ordered the doors and windows of the great hall to be closed, and her attendants to retire, so that she and her guest might be quite alone. Then, opening the box, which was presented to her on one knee by the dwarf, the fairy took from it a small vellum book with silver clasps, a wand that lengthened out as you touched it, and a crystal bottle filled with very clear green water. She next bade the queen sit on a seat in the middle of the room, and the dwarf to stand opposite her, after which she stooped down and drew three circles round them with a golden rod, touched each of them thrice with her wand, and sprinkled the liquid over both. Gradually the queen's big features began to grow smaller and her face fresher, while at the same time the dwarf became about twice as tall as he had been before. This sight, added to the blue flames which sprang up from the three circles, so frightened the queen that she fainted in her chair, and when she recovered, both the page and the fairy had vanished.

At first she felt vaguely puzzled, not remembering clearly what had happened; then it all came back to her, and jumping up she ran to the nearest mirror. Oh! how happy she was! Her long nose and her projecting teeth had become things of beauty, her hair was thick and curly, and bright gold. The fairy had indeed fulfilled her promise! But, in her hurry and pleasure, the queen never noticed that she had not been changed into a beautiful young lady, but into a very tall little girl of eight or nine years old! Instead of her magnificent velvet dress, edged with fur and embroidered in gold, she wore a straight muslin frock, with a little lace apron, while her hair, which was always combed and twisted and fastened with diamond pins, hung in curls down her back. But if she had only known, something besides this had befallen her, for except as regards her love for the king of the Green Isles, her mind as well as her face had become that of a child, and this her courtiers were aware of, if she was not. Of course they could not imagine what had occurred, and did not know how to behave themselves, till the chief minister set them the example by ordering his wife and daughters to copy the queen's clothes and way of speaking. Then, in a short time, the whole court, including the men, talked and dressed like children, and played with dolls, or little tin soldiers, while at the state dinners nothing was seen but iced fruits, or sweet cakes made in the shape of birds and horses. But whatever she might be doing, the queen hardly ceased talking about the king of the Green Isles, whom she always spoke of as 'my little husband,' and as weeks passed on, and he did not come, she began to get very cross and impatient, so that her courtiers kept away from her as much as they could. By this time, too, they were growing tired of pretending to be children, and whispered their intention of leaving the palace and taking service under a neighbouring sovereign, when, one day, a loud blast of trumpets announced the arrival of the long-expected guest. In an instant all was smiles again, and in spite of the strictest rules of court etiquette, the queen insisted on receiving the young king at the bottom of the stairs. Unfortunately, in her haste, she fell over her dress, and rolled down several steps, screaming like a child, from fright. She was not really much hurt, though she had scratched her nose and bruised her forehead, but she was obliged to be carried to her room and have her face bathed in cold water. Still, in spite of this, she gave strict orders that the king should be brought to her presence the moment he entered the palace.

A shrill blast outside her door sent a twinge of pain through the queen's head, which by this time was aching badly; but in her joy at welcoming her future husband she paid no heed to it. Between two lines of courtiers, bowing low, the young king advanced quickly; but at the sight of the queen and her bandages, broke out into such violent fits of laughter that he was forced to leave the room, and even the palace.

When the queen had recovered from the vexation caused by the king's rude behaviour, she bade her attendants to hasten after him and fetch him back, but no promises or entreaties would persuade him to return. This of course made the queen's temper even worse than it was before, and a plot was set on foot to deprive her of the crown, which would certainly have succeeded had not the fairy Gangana, who had only wished to prevent her marriage, restored her to her proper shape. But, far from thanking her friend for this service, the sight of her old face in the mirror filled her with despair; and from that day she hated Gangana with a deadly hatred.

And where were Petaldo's children all this while? Why, in the island of Bambini, where they had playfellows to their hearts' content, and plenty of fairies to take care of them all. But out of all the seven princes and princesses whom the queen had seen carried off through the window, there was only Cadichon who was good and obedient; the other six were so rude and quarrelsome that they could get no one to play with them, and at last, as a punishment, the fairy changed them all into marionettes, till they should learn to behave better.

Now, in an unlucky moment, the Fairy of the Fields determined to visit her friend the queen of the fairies, who lived in a distant island, in order to consult her as to what was to become of Cadichon.

As she was entering the Hall of Audience, Gangana was leaving it, and sharp words were exchanged between them. After her enemy had flown off in a rage, the Fairy of the Fields poured out the whole story of Gangana's wickedness to the queen, and implored her counsel.

'Be comforted,' answered the fairy queen. 'For a while she must work her will, and at this moment she is carrying off Cadichon to the island where she still holds her niece captive. But should she make an evil use of the power she has, her punishment will be swift and great. And now I will give you this precious phial. Guard it carefully, for the liquid it contains will cause you to become invisible, and safe from the piercing eyes of all fairies. Against the eyes of mortals it has no charm!'

With a heart somewhat lighter, the Fairy of the Fields returned to her own island, and, the better to protect the six new marionettes from the wicked fairy, she sprinkled them with a few drops of the liquid, only avoiding just the tips of their noses, so that she might be able to know them again. Then she set off for the kingdom of Petaldo, which she found in a state of revolt, because for the first time since he had ascended the throne he had dared to impose a tax. Indeed, matters might have ended in a war, or in cutting off the king's head, had not the fairy discovered a means of contenting everybody, and of whispering anew to the queen that all was well with her children, for she dared not tell her of the loss of Cadichon.

And what had become of Cadichon? Well, the Fairy of the Fields had found out — by means of her books, which had told her — that the poor little boy had been placed by Gangana in an enchanted island, round which flowed a rapid river, sweeping rocks and trees in its current. Besides the river, the island was guarded by twenty-four enormous dragons, breathing flames, and forming a rampart of fire which it seemed as if none could pass.

The Fairy of the Fields knew all this, but she had a brave heart, and determined that by some means or other she would overcome all obstacles, and rescue Cadichon from the power of Gangana. So, taking with her the water of invisibility, she sprinkled it over her, and mounting her favourite winged lizard, set out for the island. When it appeared in sight she wrapped herself in her fireproof mantle; then, bidding the lizard return home, she slipped past the dragons and entered the island.

Scarcely had she done so than she beheld Gangana approaching her, talking loudly and angrily to a genius who flew by her side. From what she said, the fairy learned that Petaldo's mother, the old queen, had died of rage on hearing of the marriage of the king of the Green Isles to a young and lovely bride, and instead of leaving her kingdom to Gangana, had bequeathed it to one of the children of her son Petaldo.

'But all the trouble I have had with that foolish old woman shall not go for nothing,' cried Gangana. 'Go at once to my stables, and fetch out the strongest and swiftest griffins you can find in the stalls, and harness them to the yellow coach. Drive this, with all the speed you may, to the Isle of Bambini, and carry off the six children of Petaldo that are still there. I will see to Petaldo and Gillette myself. When I have got them all safe here I will change the parents into rabbits and the children into dogs. As for Cadichon, I have not quite made up my mind what I shall do with him.’

The Fairy of the Fields did not wait to hear more. No time was to be lost in seeking the help of the fairy queen if Petaldo and his family were to be saved from this dreadful doom. So, without waiting to summon her lizard, she flew across the island and past the dragons till her feet once more touched the ground again. But at that instant a black cloud rolled over her, loud thunder rent the air, and the earth rocked beneath her. Then wild lightnings lit up the sky, and by their flashes she saw the four-and-twenty dragons fighting together, uttering shrieks and yells, till the whole earth must have heard the uproar. Trembling with terror, the fairy stood rooted to the spot; and when day broke, island, torrent, and dragons had vanished, and in their stead was a barren rock. On the summit of the rock stood a black ostrich, and on its back were seated Cadichon, and the little niece of the fairy Gangana, for whose sake she had committed so many evil deeds. While the Fairy of the Fields was gazing in surprise at this strange sight, the ostrich spread its wings and flew off in the direction of the Fortunate Isle, and, followed unseen by the good fairy, entered the great hall where the queen was sitting on her throne.

Proud and exultant was Gangana in her new shape, for, by all the laws of fairydom, if she succeeded in laying Cadichon at the feet of the queen, and received him back from her, he was in her power for life, and she might do with him as she would. This the good fairy knew well, and pressed on with all her strength, for the dreadful events of the night had almost exhausted her. But, with a mighty effort, she snatched the children away from the back of the ostrich, and placed them on the lap of the queen.

With a scream of baffled rage the ostrich turned away, and Gangana stood in her place, waiting for the doom which she had brought upon herself.

‘You have neglected all my warnings,’ said the queen, speaking more sternly than any fairy had ever heard her; ‘and my sentence is that during two hundred years you lose all your privileges as a fairy, and under the form of an ostrich shall become the slave of the lowest and wickedest of the genii whom you have made your friends. As for these children, I shall keep them with me, and they shall be brought up at my court.’

And so they were, until they grew up and were old enough to be married. Then the Fairy of the Fields took them back to the kingdom of the old queen, where Petaldo was now reigning. But the cares of state proved too heavy both for him and Gillette, after the quiet life they had led for so many years, and they were rejoiced to be able to lay aside their crowns, and place them on the heads of Cadichon and his bride, who was as good as she was beautiful, though she *was* the niece of the wicked Gangana! And so well had Cadichon learned the lessons taught him at the court of the fairy queen, that never since the kingdom *was* a kingdom had the people been so well governed or so happy. And they went about the streets and the fields smiling with joy at the difference between the old times and the new, and whispering softly to each other:

‘Everything comes to him who knows how to wait.’

(From *Le Cabinet des Fées*.)

THE SILENT PRINCESS

Once upon a time there lived in Turkey a pasha who had only one son, and so dearly did he love this boy that he let him spend the whole day amusing himself, instead of learning how to be useful like his friends.

Now the boy's favourite toy was a golden ball, and with this he would play from morning till night, without troubling anybody. One day, as he was sitting in the summer-house in the garden, making his ball run all along the walls and catching it again, he noticed an old woman with an earthen pitcher coming to draw water from a well which stood in a corner of the garden. In a moment he had caught his ball and flung it straight at the pitcher, which fell to the ground in a thousand pieces. The old woman started with surprise, but said nothing; only turned round to fetch another pitcher, and as soon as she had disappeared, the boy hurried out to pick up his ball.

Scarcely was he back in the summer-house when he beheld the old woman a second time, approaching the well with the pitcher on her shoulder. She had just taken hold of the handle to lower it into the water, when — crash! And the pitcher lay in fragments at her feet. Of course she felt very angry, but for fear of the pasha she still held her peace, and spent her last pence in buying a fresh pitcher. But when this also was broken by a blow from the ball, her wrath burst forth, and shaking her fist towards the summer-house where the boy was hiding, she cried:

'I wish you may be punished by falling in love with the silent princess.' And having said this she vanished.

For some time the boy paid no heed to her words — indeed he forgot them altogether; but as years went by, and he began to think more about things, the remembrance of the old woman's wish came back to his mind.

'Who is the silent princess? And why should it be a punishment to fall in love with her?' he asked himself, and received no answer. However, that did not prevent him from putting the question again and again, till at length he grew so weak and ill that he could eat nothing, and in the end was forced to lie in bed altogether. His father the pasha became so frightened by this strange disease, that he sent for every physician in the kingdom to cure him, but no one was able to find a remedy.

'How did your illness first begin, my son?' asked the pasha one day. 'Perhaps, if we knew that, we should also know better what to do for you.'

Then the youth told him what had happened all those years before, when he was a little boy, and what the old woman had said to him.

‘Give me, I pray you,’ he cried, when his tale was finished, ‘give me, I pray you, leave to go into the world in search of the princess, and perhaps this evil state may cease.’ And, sore though his heart was to part from his only son, the pasha felt that the young man would certainly die if he remained at home any longer.

‘Go, and peace be with you,’ he answered; and went out to call his trusted steward, whom he ordered to accompany his young master.

Their preparations were soon made, and early one morning the two set out. But neither old man nor young had the slightest idea where they were going, or what they were undertaking. First they lost their way in a dense forest, and from that they at length emerged in a wilderness where they wandered for six months, not seeing a living creature and finding scarcely anything to eat or drink, till they became nothing but skin and bone, while their garments hung in tatters about them. They had forgotten all about the princess, and their only wish was to find themselves back in the palace again, when, one day, they discovered that they were standing on the shoulder of a mountain. The stones beneath them shone as brightly as diamonds, and both their hearts beat with joy at beholding a tiny old man approaching them. The sight awoke all manner of recollections; the numb feeling that had taken possession of them fell away as if by magic, and it was with glad voices that they greeted the new-comer. ‘Where are we, my friend?’ asked they; and the old man told them that this was the mountain where the sultan’s daughter sat, covered by seven veils, and the shining of the stones was only the reflection of her own brilliance.

On hearing this news all the dangers and difficulties of their past wandering vanished from their minds.

‘How can I reach her soonest?’ asked the youth eagerly. But the old man only answered:

‘Have patience, my son, yet awhile. Another six months must go by before you arrive at the palace where she dwells with the rest of the women. And, even so, think well, when you can, as should you fail to make her speak, you will have to pay forfeit with your life, as others have done. So beware!’

But the prince only laughed at this counsel — as others had also done.

After three months they found themselves on the top of another mountain, and the prince saw with surprise that its sides were coloured a beautiful red. Perched on some cliffs, not far off, was a small village, and the prince proposed to his friend that they should go and rest there. The villagers, on their part, welcomed them gladly, and gave them food to eat and beds to sleep on, and thankful indeed were the two travellers to repose their weary limbs.

The next morning they asked their host if he could tell them whether they were still many days' journey from the princess, and whether he knew why the mountain was so much redder than other mountains.

'For three and a half more months you must still pursue your way,' answered he, 'and by that time you will find yourselves at the gate of the princess's palace. As for the colour of the mountain, that comes from the soft hue of her cheeks and mouth, which shines through the seven veils which cover her. But none have ever beheld her face, for she sits there, uttering no word, though one hears whispers of many having lost their lives for her sake.'

The prince, however, would listen no further; and thanking the man for his kindness, he jumped up and, with the steward, set out to climb the mountain.

On and on and on they went, sleeping under the trees or in caves, and living upon berries and any fish they could catch in the rivers. But at length, when their clothes were nearly in rags and their legs so tired that they could hardly walk any further, they saw on the top of the next mountain a palace of yellow marble.

'There it is, at last,' cried the prince; and fresh blood seemed to spring in his veins. But as he and his companion began to climb towards the top they paused in horror, for the ground was white with dead men's skulls. It was the prince who first recovered his voice, and he said to his friend, as carelessly as he could:

'These must be the skulls of the men who tried to make the princess speak and failed. Well, if we fail too, our bones will strew the ground likewise.'

'Oh! turn back now, my prince, while there is yet time,' entreated his companion. 'Your father gave you into my charge; but when we set out I did not know that certain death lay before us.'

'Take heart, O Lala, take heart!' answered the prince. 'A man can but die once. And, besides, the princess will have to speak *some* day, you know.'

So they went on again, past skulls and dead men's bones in all degrees of whiteness. And by-and-by they reached another village, where they determined to rest for a little while, so that their wits might be fresh and bright for the task that lay before them. But this time, though the people were kind and friendly, their faces were gloomy, and every now and then woeful cries would rend the air.

'Oh! my brother, have I lost you?' 'Oh! my son, shall I see you no more?' And then, as the prince and his companion asked the meaning of these laments — which, indeed, was plain enough — the answer was given:

'Ah, you also have come hither to die! This town belongs to the father of the princess, and when any rash man seeks to move the princess to speech he must first obtain leave of the sultan. If that is granted him he is then led into the presence of the princess. What happens afterwards, perhaps the sight of these bones may help you to guess.'

The young man bowed his head in token of thanks, and stood thoughtful for a short time. Then, turning to the Lala, he said:

'Well, our destiny will soon be decided! Meanwhile we will find out all we can, and do nothing rashly.'

For two or three days they wandered about the bazaars, keeping their eyes and ears open, when, one morning, they met a man carrying a nightingale in a cage. The bird was singing so joyously that the prince stopped to listen, and at once offered to buy him from his owner.

'Oh, why cumber yourself with such a useless thing,' cried the Lala in disgust; 'have you not enough to occupy your hands and mind, without taking an extra burden?' But the prince, who liked having his own way, paid no heed to him, and paying the high price asked by the man, he carried the bird back to the inn, and hung him up in his chamber. That evening, as he was sitting alone, trying to think of something that would make the princess talk, and failing altogether, the nightingale pecked open her cage door, which was lightly fastened by a stick, and, perching on his shoulder, murmured softly in his ear:

'What makes you so sad, my prince?' The young man started. In his native country birds did not talk, and, like many people, he was always rather afraid of what he did not understand. But in a moment he felt ashamed of his folly, and explained that he had travelled for more than a year, and over thousands of miles, to win the hand of the sultan's daughter. And now that he had reached his goal he could think of no plan to force her to speak.

'Oh! do not trouble your head about that,' replied the bird, 'it is quite easy! Go this evening to the women's apartments, and take me with you, and when you enter the princess's private chamber hide me under the pedestal which supports the great golden candlestick. The princess herself will be wrapped so thickly in her seven veils that she can see nothing, neither can her face be seen by anyone. Then inquire after her health, but she will remain quite silent; and next say that you are sorry to have disturbed her, and that you will have a little talk with the pedestal of the candlestick. When you speak I will answer.'

The prince threw his mantle over the bird, and started for the palace, where he begged an audience of the sultan. This was soon granted him, and leaving the nightingale hidden by the mantle, in a dark corner outside the door, he walked up to the throne on which his highness was sitting, and bowed low before him.

'What is your request?' asked the sultan, looking closely at the young man, who was tall and handsome; but when he heard the tale he shook his head pityingly.

‘If you can make her speak she shall be your wife,’ answered he; ‘but if not — did you mark the skulls that strewed the mountain side?’

‘Some day a man is bound to break the spell, O sultan,’ replied the youth boldly; ‘and why should not I be he as well as another? At any rate, my word is pledged, and I cannot draw back now.’

‘Well, go if you must,’ said the sultan. And he bade his attendants lead the way to the chamber of the princess, but to allow the young man to enter alone.

Catching up, unseen, his mantle and the cage as they passed into the dark corridor — for by this time night was coming on — the youth found himself standing in a room bare except for a pile of silken cushions, and one tall golden candlestick. His heart beat high as he looked at the cushions, and knew that, shrouded within the shining veils that covered them, lay the much longed-for princess. Then, fearful that after all other eyes might be watching him, he hastily placed the nightingale under the open pedestal on which the candlestick was resting, and turning again he steadied his voice, and besought the princess to tell him of her well-being.

Not by even a movement of her hand did the princess show that she had heard, and the young man, who of course expected this, went on to speak of his travels and of the strange countries he had passed through; but not a sound broke the silence.

‘I see clearly that you are interested in none of these things,’ said he at last, ‘and as I have been forced to hold my peace for so many months, I feel that now I really *must* talk to somebody, so I shall go and address my conversation to the candlestick.’ And with that he crossed the room behind the princess, and cried: ‘O fairest of candlesticks, how are you?’

‘Very well indeed, my lord,’ answered the nightingale; ‘but I wonder how many years have gone by since any one has spoken with me. And, now that you have come, rest, I pray you, awhile, and listen to my story.’

‘Willingly,’ replied the youth, curling himself up on the floor, for there was no cushion for him to sit on.

‘Once upon a time,’ began the nightingale, ‘there lived a pasha whose daughter was the most beautiful maiden in the whole kingdom. Suitors she had in plenty, but she was not easy to please, and at length there were only three whom she felt she could even *think* of marrying. Not knowing which of the three she liked best, she took counsel with her father, who summoned the young men into his presence, and then told them that they must each of them learn some trade, and whichever of them proved the cleverest at the end of six months should become the husband of the princess.

‘Though the three suitors may have been secretly disappointed, they could not help feeling that this test was quite fair, and left the palace together, talking as they went of what handicrafts they might set themselves to follow. The day was hot, and when they reached a spring that gushed out of the side of the mountain, they stopped to drink and rest, and then one of them said:

'"It will be best that we should each seek our fortunes alone; so let us put our rings under this stone, and go our separate ways. And the first one who returns hither will take his ring, and the others will take theirs. Thus we shall know whether we have all fulfilled the commands of the pasha, or if some accident has befallen any of us."

'"Good," replied the other two. And three rings were placed in a little hole, and carefully covered again by the stone.

'Then they parted, and for six months they knew naught of each other, till, on the day appointed, they met at the spring. Right glad they all were, and eagerly they talked of what they had done, and how the time had been spent.

'"I think I shall win the princess," said the eldest, with a laugh, "for it is not everybody that is able to accomplish a whole year's journey in an hour!"

'"That is very clever, certainly," answered his friend; "but if you are to govern a kingdom it may be still more useful to have the power of seeing what is happening at a distance; and that is what *I* have learnt," replied the second.

'"No, no, my dear comrades," cried the third, "your trades are all very well; but when the pasha hears that I can bring back the dead to life he will know which of us three is to be his son-in-law. But come, there only remain a few hours of the six months he granted us. It is time that we hastened back to the palace."

'"Stop a moment," said the second, "it would be well to know what is going on in the palace." And plucking some small leaves from a tree near by, he muttered some words and made some signs, and laid them on his eyes. In an instant he turned pale, and uttered a cry.

'"What is it? What is it?" exclaimed the others; and, with a shaking voice, he gasped:

'"The princess is lying on her bed, and has barely a few minutes to live. Oh! can no one save her?"

'"*I* can," answered the third, taking a small box from his turban; "this ointment will cure any illness. But how to reach her in time?"

'"Give it to me," said the first. And he wished himself by the bedside of the princess, which was surrounded by the sultan and his weeping courtiers. Clearly there was not a second to lose, for the princess had grown unconscious, and her face cold. Plunging his finger into the ointment he touched her eyes, mouth and ears with the paste, and with beating heart awaited the result.

‘It was swifter than he supposed. As he looked the colour came back into her cheeks, and she smiled up at her father. The sultan, almost speechless with joy at this sudden change, embraced his daughter tenderly, and then turned to the young man to whom he owed her life:

‘“Are you not one of those three whom I sent forth to learn a trade six months ago?” asked he. And the young man answered yes, and that the other two were even now on their way to the palace, so that the sultan might judge between them.’

At this point in his story the nightingale stopped, and asked the prince which of the three he thought had the best right to the princess.

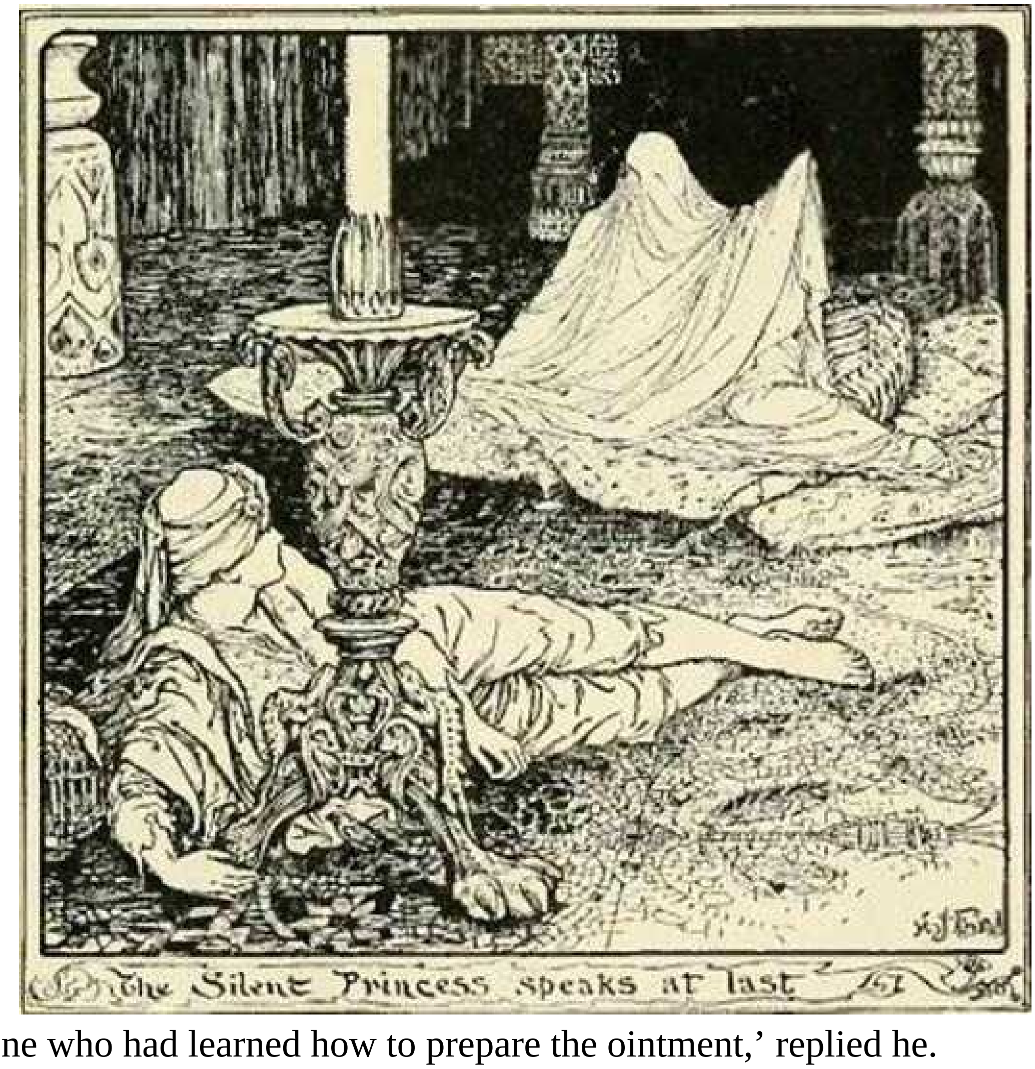

The Silent Princess speaks at last

‘The one who had learned how to prepare the ointment,’ replied he.

‘But if it had not been for the man who could see what was happening at a distance they would never have known that the princess was ill,’ said the nightingale. ‘I would give it to *him*.’ And the strife between them waxed hot, till, suddenly, the listening princess started up from her cushions and cried:

‘Oh, you fools! cannot you understand that if it had not been for him who had power to reach the palace in time the ointment itself would have been useless, for death would have claimed her? It is he and no other who ought to have the princess!’

At the first sound of the princess’s voice, a slave, who was standing at the door, ran at full speed to tell the sultan of the miracle which had taken place, and the delighted father hastened to the spot. But by this time the princess perceived that she had fallen into a trap which had been cunningly laid for her, and would not utter another word. All she could be prevailed on to do was to make signs to her father that the man who wished to be her husband must induce her to speak three times. And she smiled to herself beneath her seven veils as she thought of the impossibility of *that*.

When the sultan told the prince that though he had succeeded once, he would have twice to pass through the same test, the young man’s face clouded over. It did not seem to him fair play, but he dared not object, so he only bowed low, and contrived to step back close to the spot where the nightingale was hidden. As it was now quite dark he tucked unseen the little cage under his cloak, and left the palace.

‘Why are you so gloomy?’ asked the nightingale, as soon as they were safely outside. ‘Everything has gone exactly right! Of course the princess was very angry with herself for having spoken. And did you see that, at her first words, the veils that covered her began to rend? Take me back to-morrow evening, and place me on the pillar by the lattice. Fear nothing, you have only to trust to me!’

The next evening, towards sunset, the prince left the cage behind him, and with the bird in the folds of his garment slipped into the palace and made his way straight to the princess’s apartments. He was at once admitted by the slaves who guarded the door, and took care to pass near the window so that the nightingale hopped unseen to the top of a pillar. Then he turned and bowed low to the princess, and asked her several questions; but, as before, she answered nothing, and, indeed, gave no sign that she heard. After a few minutes the young man bowed again, and crossing over to the window, he said:

‘Oh, pillar! it is no use speaking to the princess, she will not utter one word; and as I must talk to somebody, I have come to you. Tell me how you have been all this long while?’

‘I thank you,’ replied a voice from the pillar, ‘I am feeling very well. And it is lucky for me that the princess is silent, or else you would not have wanted to speak to me. To reward you, I will relate to you an interesting tale that I lately overheard, and about which I should like to have your opinion.’

‘That will be charming,’ answered the prince, ‘so pray begin at once.’

‘Once upon a time,’ said the nightingale, ‘there lived a woman who was so beautiful that every man who saw her fell in love with her. But she was very hard to please, and refused to wed any of them, though she managed to keep friends with all. Years passed away in this manner, almost without her noticing them, and one by one the young men grew tired of waiting, and sought wives who may have been less handsome, but were also less proud, and at length only three of her former wooers remained — Baldschi, Jagdschi, and Firedschi. Still she held herself apart, thought herself better and lovelier than other women, when, on a certain evening, her eyes were opened at last to the truth. She was sitting before her mirror, combing her curls, when amongst her raven locks she found a long white hair!

‘At this dreadful sight her heart gave a jump, and then stood still.

‘“I am growing old,” she said to herself, “and if I do not choose a husband soon, I shall never get one! I know that either of those men would gladly marry me to-morrow, but I cannot decide between them. I must invent some way to find out which of them is the best, and lose no time about it.”

‘So instead of going to sleep, she thought all night long of different plans, and in the morning she arose and dressed herself.

‘“That will have to do,” she muttered as she pulled out the white hair which had cost her so much trouble. “It is not very good, but I can think of nothing better; and — well, they are none of them clever, and I dare say they will easily fall into the trap.” Then she called her slave and bade her let Jagdschi know that she would be ready to receive him in an hour’s time. After that she went into the garden and dug a grave under a tree, by which she laid a white shroud.

‘Jagdschi was delighted to get the gracious message; and, putting on his newest garments, he hastened to the lady’s house, but great was his dismay at finding her stretched on her cushions, weeping bitterly.

‘“What is the matter, O Fair One?” he asked, bowing low before her.

‘“A terrible thing has happened,” said she, her voice choked with sobs. “My father died two nights ago, and I buried him in my garden. But now I find that he was a wizard, and was not dead at all, for his grave is empty and he is wandering about somewhere in the world.”

‘“That is evil news indeed,” answered Jagdschi; “but can I do nothing to comfort you?”

‘“There is one thing you can do,” replied she, “and that is to wrap yourself in the shroud and lay yourself in the grave. If he should not return till after three hours have elapsed he will have lost his power over me, and be forced to go and wander elsewhere.”

‘Now Jagdschi was proud of the trust reposed in him, and wrapping himself in the shroud, he stretched himself at full length in the grave. After some time Baldschi arrived in his turn, and found the lady groaning and lamenting. She told him that her father had been a wizard, and that in case, as was very likely, he should wish to leave his grave and come to work her evil, Baldschi was to take a stone and be ready to crush in his head, if he showed signs of moving.

‘Baldschi, enchanted at being able to do his lady a service, picked up a stone, and seated himself by the side of the grave wherein lay Jagdschi.

‘Meanwhile the hour arrived in which Firedschi was accustomed to pay his respects, and, as in the case of the other two, he discovered the lady overcome with grief. To him she said that a wizard who was an enemy of her father’s had thrown the dead man out of his grave, and had taken his place. “But,” she added, “if you can bring the wizard into my presence, all his power will go from him; if not, then I am lost.”

‘“Ah, lady, what is there that I would not do for you!” cried Firedschi; and running down to the grave, he seized the astonished Jagdschi by the waist, and flinging the body over his shoulder, he hastened with him into the house. At the first moment Baldschi was so surprised at this turn of affairs, for which the lady had not prepared him, that he sat still and did nothing. But by-and-by he sprang up and hurled the stone after the two flying figures, hoping that it might kill them both. Fortunately it touched neither, and soon all three were in the presence of the lady. Then Jagdschi, thinking that he had delivered her from the power of the wizard, slid off the back of Firedschi, and threw the shroud from him.’

‘Tell me, my prince,’ said the nightingale, when he had finished his story, ‘which of the three men deserved to win the lady? I myself should choose Firedschi.’

‘No, no,’ answered the prince, who understood the wink the bird had given him; ‘it was Baldschi who took the most trouble, and it was certainly he who deserved the lady.’

But the nightingale would not agree; and they began to quarrel, till a third voice broke in:

‘How can you talk such nonsense?’ cried the princess — and as she spoke a sound of tearing was heard. ‘Why, you have never even thought of Jagdschi, who lay for three hours in the grave, with a stone held over his head! Of course it was *he* whom the lady chose for her husband!’

It was not many minutes before the news reached the sultan; but even now he would not consent to the marriage till his daughter had spoken a third time. On hearing this, the young man took counsel with the nightingale how best to accomplish this, and the bird told him that as the princess, in her fury at having fallen into the snare laid for her, had ordered the pillar to be broken in pieces, he must be hidden in the folds of a curtain that hung by the door.

The following evening the prince entered the palace, and walked boldly up to the princess’s apartments. As he entered the nightingale flew from under his arm and perched himself on top of the door, where he was entirely concealed by the folds of the dark curtain. The young man talked as usual to the princess without obtaining a single word in reply, and at length he left her lying under the heap of shining veils — now rent in many places — and crossed the room towards the door, from which came a voice that gladly answered him.

For a while the two talked together: then the nightingale asked if the prince was fond of stories, as he had lately heard one which interested and perplexed him greatly. In reply, the prince begged that he might hear it at once, and without further delay the nightingale began:

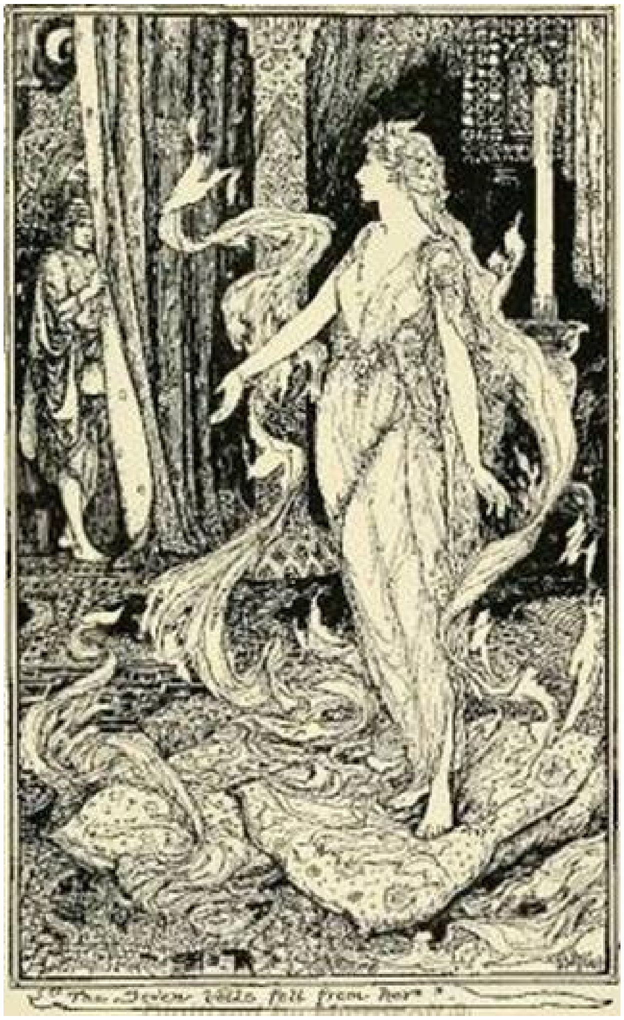

“The Seven Veils fell from her.”

‘Once upon a time, a carpenter, a tailor, and a student set out together to see the world. After wandering about for some months they grew tired of travelling, and resolved to stay and rest in a small town that took their fancy. So they hired a little house, and looked about for work to do, returning at sunset to smoke their pipes and talk over the events of the day.

‘One night in the middle of summer it was hotter than usual, and the carpenter found himself unable to sleep. Instead of tossing about on his cushions, making himself more uncomfortable than he was already, the man wisely got up and drank some coffee and lit his long pipe. Suddenly his eye fell on some pieces of wood in a corner and, being very clever with his fingers, he had soon set up a perfect statue of a girl about fourteen years old. This so pleased and quieted him that he grew quite drowsy, and going back to bed fell fast asleep.

‘But the carpenter was not the only person who lay awake that night. Thunder was in the air, and the tailor became so restless that he thought he would go downstairs and cool his feet in the little fountain outside the garden door. To reach the door he had to pass through the room where the carpenter had sat and smoked, and against the wall he beheld standing a beautiful girl. He stood speechless for an instant before he ventured to touch her hand, when, to his amazement, he found that she was fashioned out of wood.

‘“Ah! I can make you more beautiful still,” said he. And fetching from a shelf a roll of yellow silk which he had bought that day from a merchant, he cut and draped and stitched, till at length a lovely robe clothed the slender figure. When this was finished, the restlessness had departed from him, and he went back to bed.

‘As dawn approached the student arose and prepared to go to the mosque with the first ray of sunlight. But, when he saw the maiden standing there, he fell on his knees and lifted his hands in ecstasy.

‘“Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air, clad in the beauty of ten thousand stars,” he murmured to himself. “Surely a form so rare was never meant to live without a soul.” And forthwith he prayed with all his might that life should be breathed into it.

‘And his prayer was heard, and the beautiful statue became a living girl, and the three men all fell in love with her, and each desired to have her to wife.

‘Now,’ said the nightingale, ‘to which of them did the maiden really belong? It seems to me that the carpenter had the best right to her.’

‘Oh, but the student would never have thought of praying that she might be given a soul had not the tailor drawn attention to her loveliness by the robe which he put upon her,’ answered the prince, who guessed what he was expected to say: and they soon set up quite a pretty quarrel. Suddenly the princess, furious that neither of them alluded to the part played by the student, quite forgot her vow of silence and cried loudly:

‘Idiots that you are! how could she belong to any one but the student? If it had not been for him, all that the others did would have gone for nothing! Of course it was he who married the maiden!’ And as she spoke the seven veils fell from her, and she stood up, the fairest princess that the world has ever seen.

‘You have won me,’ she said smiling, holding out her hand to the prince.

And so they were married: and after the wedding-feast was over they sent for the old woman whose pitcher the prince had broken so long ago, and she dwelt in the palace, and became nurse to their children, and lived happily till she died.

(Adapted from *Türkische Volksmärchen aus Stambul gesammelt, übersetzt und eingeleitet* von Dr. Ignaz Künos. Brill, Leiden.)

THE LILAC FAIRY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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The first edition

THE LILAC FAIRY BOOK

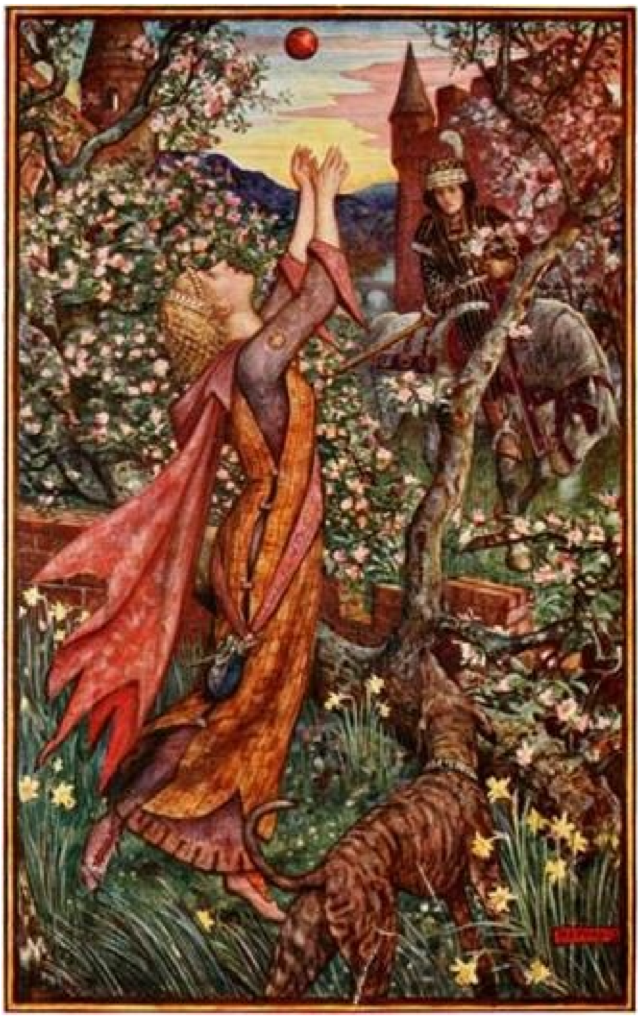

“How the King found the girl playing at ball in the orchard.”

PREFACE

‘What cases are you engaged in at present?’ ‘Are you stopping many teeth just now?’ ‘What people have you converted lately?’ Do ladies put these questions to the men — lawyers, dentists, clergymen, and so forth — who happen to sit next them at dinner parties?

I do not know whether ladies thus indicate their interest in the occupations of their casual neighbours at the hospitable board. But if they do not know me, or do not know me well, they generally ask ‘Are you writing anything now?’ (as if they should ask a painter ‘Are you painting anything now?’ or a lawyer ‘Have you any cases at present?’). Sometimes they are more definite and inquire ‘What are you writing now?’ as if I must be writing something — which, indeed, is the case, though I dislike being reminded of it. It is an awkward question, because the fair being does not care a bawbee what I am writing; nor would she be much enlightened if I replied ‘Madam, I am engaged on a treatise intended to prove that Normal is prior to Conceptional Totemism’ — though that answer would be as true in fact as obscure in significance. The best plan seems to be to answer that I have entirely abandoned mere literature, and am contemplating a book on ‘The Causes of Early Blight in the Potato,’ a melancholy circumstance which threatens to deprive us of our chief esculent root. The inquirer would never be undeceived. One nymph who, like the rest, could not keep off the horrid topic of my occupation, said ‘You never write anything but fairy books, do you?’ A French gentleman, too, an educationist and expert in portraits of Queen Mary, once sent me a newspaper article in which he had written that I was exclusively devoted to the composition of fairy books, and nothing else. He then came to England, visited me, and found that I knew rather more about portraits of Queen Mary than he did.

In truth I never did write any fairy books in my life, except ‘Prince Prigio,’ ‘Prince Ricardo,’ and ‘Tales from a Fairy Court’ — that of the aforesaid Prigio. I take this opportunity of recommending these fairy books — poor things, but my own — to parents and guardians who may never have heard of them. They are rich in romantic adventure, and the Princes always marry the right Princesses and live happy ever afterwards; while the wicked witches, stepmothers, tutors and governesses are *never* cruelly punished, but retire to the country on ample pensions. I hate cruelty: I never put a wicked stepmother in a barrel and send her tobogganing down a hill. It is true that Prince Ricardo *did* kill the Yellow Dwarf; but that was in fair fight, sword in hand, and the dwarf, peace to his ashes! *died* *in harness*.

The object of these confessions is not only that of advertising my own fairy books (which are not 'out of print'; if your bookseller says so, the truth is not in him), but of giving credit where credit is due. The fairy books have been almost wholly the work of Mrs. Lang, who has translated and adapted them from the French, German, Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, Catalan, and other languages.

My part has been that of Adam, according to Mark Twain, in the Garden of Eden. Eve worked, Adam superintended. I also superintend. I find out where the stories are, and advise, and, in short, superintend. *I do not write the stories out of my own head.* The reputation of having written all the fairy books (an European reputation in nurseries and the United States of America) is 'the burden of an honour unto which I was not born.' It weighs upon and is killing me, as the general fash of being the wife of the Lord of Burleigh, Burleigh House by Stamford Town, was too much for the village maiden espoused by that peer.

Nobody really *wrote* most of the stories. People told them in all parts of the world long before Egyptian hieroglyphics or Cretan signs or Cyprian syllabaries, or alphabets were invented. They are older than reading and writing, and arose like wild flowers before men had any education to quarrel over. The grannies told them to the grandchildren, and when the grandchildren became grannies they repeated the same old tales to the new generation. Homer knew the stories and made up the 'Odyssey' out of half a dozen of them. All the history of Greece till about 800 B.C. is a string of the fairy tales, all about Theseus and Heracles and Oedipus and Minos and Perseus is a *Cabinet des Fées*, a collection of fairy tales. Shakespeare took them and put bits of them into 'King Lear' and other plays; he could not have made them up himself, great as he was. Let ladies and gentlemen think of this when they sit down to write fairy tales, and have them nicely typed, and send them to Messrs. Longman & Co. to be published. They think that to write a new fairy tale is easy work. They are mistaken: the thing is impossible. Nobody can write a *new* fairy tale; you can only mix up and dress up the old, old stories, and put the characters into new dresses, as Miss Thackeray did so well in 'Five Old Friends.' If any big girl of fourteen reads this preface, let her insist on being presented with 'Five Old Friends.'

But the three hundred and sixty-five authors who try to write new fairy tales are very tiresome. They always begin with a little boy or girl who goes out and meets the fairies of polyanthuses and gardenias and apple blossoms: 'Flowers and fruits, and other winged things.' These fairies try to be funny, and fail; or they try to preach, and succeed. Real fairies never preach or talk slang. At the end, the little boy or girl wakes up and finds that he has been dreaming.

Such are the new fairy stories. May we be preserved from all the sort of them!

Our stories are almost all old, some from Ireland, before that island was as celebrated for her wrongs as for her verdure; some from Asia, made, I dare say, before the Aryan invasion; some from Moydart, Knoydart, Morar and Ardnamurchan, where the sea streams run like great clear rivers and the saw-edged hills are blue, and men remember Prince Charlie. Some are from Portugal, where the golden fruits grow in the Garden of the Hesperides; and some are from wild Wales, and were told at Arthur's Court; and others come from the firesides of the kinsmen of the Welsh, the Bretons. There are also modern tales by a learned Scandinavian named Topelius.

All the stories were translated or adapted by Mrs. Lang, except 'The Jogi's Punishment' and 'Moti,' done by Major Campbell out of the Pushtoo language; 'How Brave Walter hunted Wolves,' which, with 'Little Lasse' and 'The Raspberry Worm,' was done from Topelius by Miss Harding; and 'The Sea King's Gift,' by Miss Christie, from the same author.

It has been suggested to the Editor that children and parents and guardians would like 'The Grey True Ghost-Story Book.' He *knows* that the children would like it well, and he would gladly give it to them; but about the taste of fond anxious mothers and kind aunts he is not quite so certain. Before he was twelve the Editor knew true ghost stories enough to fill a volume. They were a pure joy till bedtime, but then, and later, were not wholly a source of unmixed pleasure. At that time the Editor was not afraid of the dark, for he thought, 'If a ghost is here, we can't see him.' But when older and better informed persons said that ghosts brought their own light with them (which is too true), then one's emotions were such as parents do not desire the young to endure. For this reason 'The Grey True Ghost-Story Book' is never likely to be illustrated by Mr. Ford.

THE SHIFTY LAD

In the land of Erin there dwelt long ago a widow who had an only son. He was a clever boy, so she saved up enough money to send him to school, and, as soon as he was old enough, to apprentice him to any trade that he would choose. But when the time came, he said he would not be bound to any trade, and that he meant to be a thief.

Now his mother was very sorrowful when she heard of this, but she knew quite well that if she tried to stop his having his own way he would only grow more determined to get it. So all the answer she made was that the end of thieves was hanging at the bridge of Dublin, and then she left him alone, hoping that when he was older he might become more sensible.

One day she was going to church to hear a sermon from a great preacher, and she begged the Shifty Lad, as the neighbours called him from the tricks he played, to come with her. But he only laughed and declared that he did not like sermons, adding:

‘However, I will promise you this, that the first trade you hear named after you come out from church shall be my trade for the rest of my life.’

These words gave a little comfort to the poor woman, and her heart was lighter than before as she bade him farewell.

When the Shifty Lad thought that the hour had nearly come for the sermon to be over, he hid himself in some bushes in a little path that led straight to his mother’s house, and as she passed along, thinking of all the good things she had heard, a voice shouted close to her ear ‘Robbery! Robbery! Robbery!’ The suddenness of it made her jump. The naughty boy had managed to change his voice, so that she did not know it for his, and he had concealed himself so well that, though she peered about all round her, she could see no one. As soon as she had turned the corner the Shifty Lad came out, and by running very fast through the wood he contrived to reach home before his mother, who found him stretched out comfortably before the fire.

‘Well, have you got any news to tell me?’ asked he.

‘No, nothing; for I left the church at once, and did not stop to speak to anyone.’

‘Oh, then no one has mentioned a trade to you?’ he said in tones of disappointment.

‘Ye — es,’ she replied slowly. ‘At least, as I walked down the path a voice cried out “Robbery! Robbery! Robbery!” but that was all.’

‘And quite enough too,’ answered the boy. ‘What did I tell you? That is going to be my trade.’

‘Then your end will be hanging at the bridge of Dublin,’ said she. But there was no sleep for her that night, for she lay in the dark thinking about her son.

‘If he is to be a thief at all, he had better be a good one. And who is there that can teach him?’ the mother asked herself. But an idea came to her, and she arose early, before the sun was up, and set off for the home of the Black Rogue, or Gallows Bird, who was such a wonderful thief that, though all had been robbed by him, no one could catch him.

‘Good-morning to you,’ said the woman as she reached the place where the Black Gallows Bird lived when he was not away on his business. ‘My son has a fancy to learn your trade. Will you be kind enough to teach him?’

‘If he is clever, I don’t mind trying,’ answered the Black Gallows Bird; ‘and, of course, if *any* one can turn him into a first-rate thief, it is I. But if he is stupid, it is no use at all; I can’t bear stupid people.’

‘No, he isn’t stupid,’ said the woman with a sigh. ‘So to-night, after dark, I will send him to you.’

The Shifty Lad jumped for joy when his mother told him where she had been.

‘I will become the best thief in all Erin!’ he cried, and paid no heed when his mother shook her head and murmured something about ‘the bridge of Dublin.’

Every evening after dark the Shifty Lad went to the home of the Black Gallows Bird, and many were the new tricks he learned. By and bye he was allowed to go out with the Bird and watch him at work, and at last there came a day when his master thought that he had grown clever enough to help in a big robbery.

‘There is a rich farmer up there on the hill, who has just sold all his fat cattle for much money and has bought some lean ones which will cost him little. Now it happens that, while he has received the money for the fat cattle, he has not yet paid the price of the thin ones, which he has in the cowhouse. To-morrow he will go to the market with the money in his hand, so to-night we must get at the chest. When all is quiet we will hide in the loft.’

There was no moon, and it was the night of Hallowe’en, and everyone was burning nuts and catching apples in a tub of water with their hands tied, and playing all sorts of other games, till the Shifty Lad grew quite tired of waiting for them to get to bed. The Black Gallows Bird, who was more accustomed to the business, tucked himself up on the hay and went to sleep, telling the boy to wake him when the merry-makers had departed. But the Shifty Lad, who could keep still no longer, crept down to the cowshed and loosened the heads of the cattle which were tied, and they began to kick each other and bellow, and made such a noise that the company in the farmhouse ran out to tie them up again. Then the Shifty Lad entered the room and picked up a big handful of nuts, and returned to the loft, where the Black Rogue was still sleeping. At first the Shifty Lad shut his eyes too, but very soon he sat up, and, taking a big needle and thread from his pocket, he sewed the hem of the Black Gallows Bird's coat to a heavy piece of bullock's hide that was hanging at his back.

By this time the cattle were all tied up again, but as the people could not find their nuts they sat round the fire and began to tell stories.

'I will crack a nut,' said the Shifty Lad.

'You shall not,' cried the Black Gallows Bird; 'they will hear you.'

'I don't care,' answered the Shifty Lad. 'I never spent Hallowe'en yet without cracking a nut'; and he cracked one.

'Some one is cracking nuts up there,' said one of the merry-makers in the farmhouse. 'Come quickly, and we will see who it is.'

He spoke loudly, and the Black Gallows Bird heard, and ran out of the loft, dragging the big leather hide after him which the Shifty Lad had sewed to his coat.

'He is stealing my hide!' shouted the farmer, and they all darted after him; but he was too swift for them, and at last he managed to tear the hide from his coat, and then he flew like a hare till he reached his old hiding-place. But all this took a long time, and meanwhile the Shifty Lad got down from the loft, and searched the house till he found the chest with the gold and silver in it, concealed behind a load of straw and covered with loaves of bread and a great cheese. The Shifty Lad slung the money bags round his shoulders and took the bread and the cheese under his arm, then set out quietly for the Black Rogue's house.

'Here you are at last, you villain!' cried his master in great wrath. 'But I will be revenged on you.'

'It is all right,' replied the Shifty Lad calmly. 'I have brought what you wanted'; and he laid the things he was carrying down on the ground.

'Ah! you are the better thief,' said the Black Rogue's wife; and the Black Rogue added:

'Yes, it is you who are the clever boy'; and they divided the spoil, and the Black Gallows Bird had one half and the Shifty Lad the other half.

A few weeks after that the Black Gallows Bird had news of a wedding that was to be held near the town; and the bridegroom had many friends and everybody sent him a present. Now a rich farmer who lived up near the moor thought that nothing was so useful to a young couple when they first began to keep house as a fine fat sheep, so he bade his shepherd go off to the mountain where the flock were feeding, and bring him back the best he could find. And the shepherd chose out the largest and fattest of the sheep and the one with the whitest fleece; then he tied its feet together and put it across his shoulder, for he had a long way to go.

That day the Shifty Lad happened to be wandering over the moor, when he saw the man with the sheep on his shoulder walking along the road which led past the Black Rogue’s house. The sheep was heavy and the man was in no hurry, so he came slowly and the boy knew that he himself could easily get back to his master before the shepherd was even in sight.

‘I will wager,’ he cried, as he pushed quickly through the bushes which hid the cabin— ‘I will wager that I will steal the sheep from the man that is coming before he passes here.’

‘Will you indeed?’ said the Gallows Bird. ‘I will wager you a hundred silver pieces that you can do nothing of the sort.’

‘Well, I will try it, anyway,’ replied the boy, and disappeared in the bushes. He ran fast till he entered a wood through which the shepherd must go, and then he stopped, and taking off one of his shoes smeared it with mud and set it in the path. When this was done he slipped behind a rock and waited.

Very soon the man came up, and, seeing the shoe lying there, he stopped and looked at it.

‘It is a good shoe,’ he said to himself, ‘but very dirty. Still, if I had the fellow, I would be at the trouble of cleaning it’; so he threw the shoe down again and went on.

The Shifty Lad smiled as he heard him, and, picking up the shoe, he crept round by a short way and laid the other shoe on the path. A few minutes after the shepherd arrived, and beheld the second shoe lying on the path.

‘Why, that is the fellow of the dirty shoe!’ he exclaimed when he saw it. ‘I will go back and pick up the other one, and then I shall have a pair of good shoes,’ and he put the sheep on the grass and returned to fetch the shoe. Then the Shifty Lad put on his shoes, and, picking up the sheep, carried it home. And the Black Rogue paid him the hundred marks of his wager.

When the shepherd reached the farmhouse that night he told his tale to his master, who scolded him for being stupid and careless, and bade him go the next day to the mountain and fetch him a kid, and he would send *that* as a wedding gift. But the Shifty Lad was on the lookout, and hid himself in the wood, and the moment the man drew near with the kid on his shoulders began to bleat like a sheep, and no one, not even the sheep’s own mother, could have told the difference.

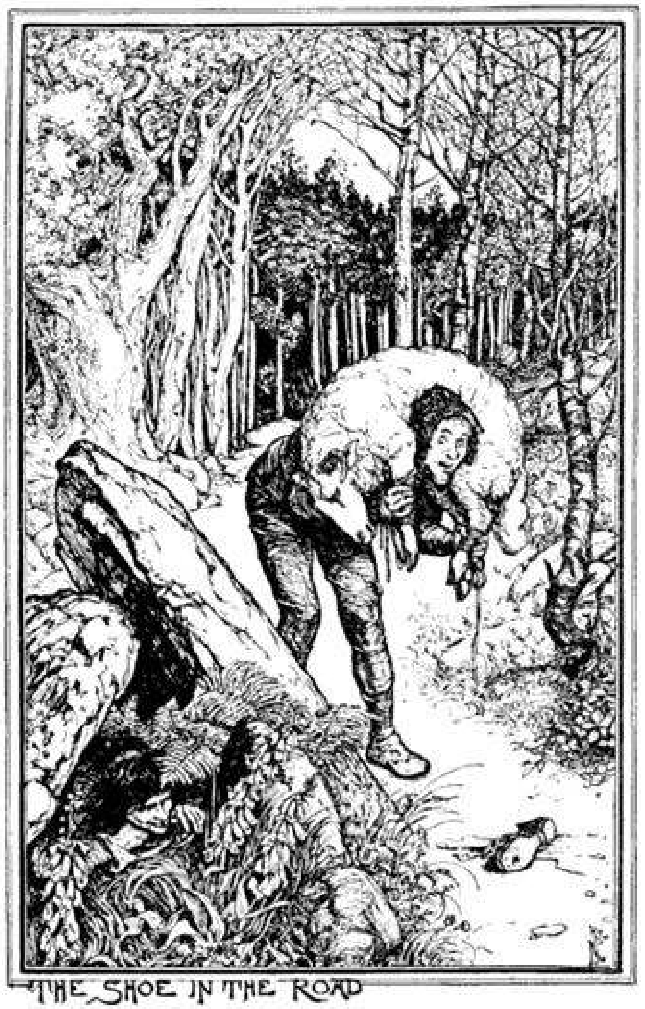

THE SHOE IN THE ROAD

‘Why, it must have got its feet loose, and have strayed after all,’ thought the man; and he put the kid on the grass and hurried off in the direction of the bleating. Then the boy ran back and picked up the kid, and took it to the Black Gallows Bird.

The shepherd could hardly believe his eyes when he returned from seeking the sheep and found that the kid had vanished. He was afraid to go home and tell the same tale that he had told yesterday; so he searched the wood through and through till night was nearly come. Then he felt that there was no help for it, and he must go home and confess to his master.

Of course, the farmer was very angry at this second misfortune; but this time he told him to drive one of the big bulls from the mountain, and warned him that if he lost *that* he would lose his place also. Again the Shifty Lad, who was on the watch, perceived him pass by, and when he saw the man returning with the great bull he cried to the Black Rogue:

‘Be quick and come into the wood, and we will try and get the bull also.’

‘But how can we do that?’ asked the Black Rogue.

‘Oh, quite easily! You hide yourself out there and baa like a sheep, and I will go in the other direction and bleat like a kid. It will be all right, I assure you.’

The shepherd was walking slowly, driving the bull before him, when he suddenly heard a loud baa amongst the bushes far away on one side of the path, and a feeble bleat answering it from the other side.

‘Why, it must be the sheep and the kid that I lost,’ said he. ‘Yes, surely it must’; and tying the bull hastily to a tree, he went off after the sheep and the kid, and searched the wood till he was tired. Of course by the time he came back the two thieves had driven the bull home and killed him for meat, so the man was obliged to go to his master and confess that he had been tricked again.

After this the Black Rogue and the Shifty Lad grew bolder and bolder, and stole great quantities of cattle and sold them and grew quite rich. One day they were returning from the market with a large sum of money in their pockets when they passed a gallows erected on the top of a hill.

‘Let us stop and look at that gallows,’ exclaimed the Shifty Lad. ‘I have never seen one so close before. Yet some say that it is the end of all thieves.’

There was no one in sight, and they carefully examined every part of it.

‘I wonder how it feels to be hung,’ said the Shifty Lad. ‘I should like to know, in case they ever catch me. I’ll try first, and then you can do so.’

As he spoke he fastened the loose cord about his neck, and when it was quite secure he told the Black Rogue to take the other end of the rope and draw him up from the ground.

‘When I am tired of it I will shake my legs, and then you must let me down,’ said he.

The Black Rogue drew up the rope, but in half a minute the Shifty Lad’s legs began to shake, and he quickly let it down again.

‘You can’t imagine what a funny feeling hanging gives you,’ murmured the Shifty Lad, who looked rather purple in the face and spoke in an odd voice. ‘I don’t think you have ever tried it, or you wouldn’t have let me go up first. Why, it is the pleasantest thing, I have ever done. I was shaking my legs from sheer delight, and if you had been there you would have shaken your legs too.’

‘Well, let me try, if it is so nice,’ answered the Black Rogue. ‘But be sure you tie the knot securely, for I don’t want to fall down and break my neck.’

‘Oh, I will see to that!’ replied the Shifty Lad. ‘When you are tired, just whistle, and I’ll let you down.’

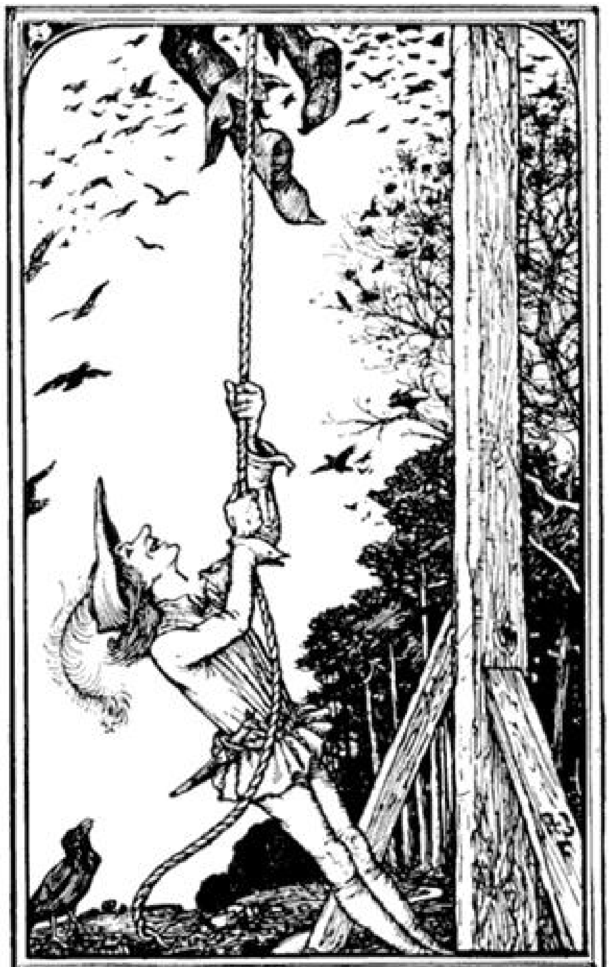

HOW THE BLACK ROGUE WAS TRICKED

So the Black Rogue was drawn up, and as soon as he was as high as the rope would allow him to go the Shifty Lad called to him:

‘Don’t forget to whistle when you want to come down; but if you are enjoying yourself as I did, shake your legs.’

And in a moment the Black Rogue’s legs began to shake and to kick, and the Shifty Lad stood below, watching him and laughing heartily.

‘Oh, how funny you are! If you could only see yourself! Oh, you *are* funny! But when you have had enough, whistle and you shall be let down’; and he rocked again with laughter.

But no whistle came, and soon the legs ceased to shake and to kick, for the Black Gallows Bird was dead, as the Shifty Lad intended he should be.

Then he went home to the Black Rogue’s wife, and told her that her husband was dead, and that he was ready to marry her if she liked. But the woman had been fond of the Black Rogue, thief though he was, and she shrank from the Shifty Lad in horror, and set the people after him, and he had to fly to another part of the country where none knew of his doings.

Perhaps if the Shifty Lad’s mother knew anything of all this, she may have thought that by this time her son might be tired of stealing, and ready to try some honest trade. But in reality he loved the tricks and danger, and life would have seemed very dull without them. So he went on just as before, and made friends whom he taught to be as wicked as himself, till they took to robbing the king’s storehouses, and by the advice of the Wise Man the king sent out soldiers to catch the band of thieves.

For a long while they tried in vain to lay hands on them. The Shifty Lad was too clever for them all, and if they laid traps he laid better ones. At last one night he stole upon some soldiers while they were asleep in a barn and killed them, and persuaded the villagers that if *they* did not kill the other soldiers before morning they would certainly be killed themselves. Thus it happened that when the sun rose not a single soldier was alive in the village.

Of course this news soon reached the king’s ears, and he was very angry, and summoned the Wise Man to take counsel with him. And this was the counsel of the Wise Man — that he should invite all the people in the countryside to a ball, and among them the bold and impudent thief would be sure to come, and would be sure to ask the king’s daughter to dance with him.

‘Your counsel is good,’ said the king, who made his feast and prepared for his ball; and all the people of the countryside were present, and the Shifty Lad came with them.

When everyone had eaten and drunk as much as they wanted they went into the ballroom. There was a great throng, and while they were pressing through the doorway the Wise Man, who had a bottle of black ointment hidden in his robes, placed a tiny dot on the cheek of the Shifty Lad near his ear. The Shifty Lad felt nothing, but as he approached the king’s daughter to ask her to be his partner he caught sight of the black dot in a silver mirror. Instantly he guessed who had put it there and why, but he said nothing, and danced so beautifully that the princess was quite delighted with him. At the end of the dance he bowed low to his partner and left her, to mingle with the crowd that was filling the doorway. As he passed the Wise Man he contrived not only to steal the bottle, but to place two black dots on his face, and one on the faces of twenty other men. Then he slipped the bottle back in the Wise Man’s robe.

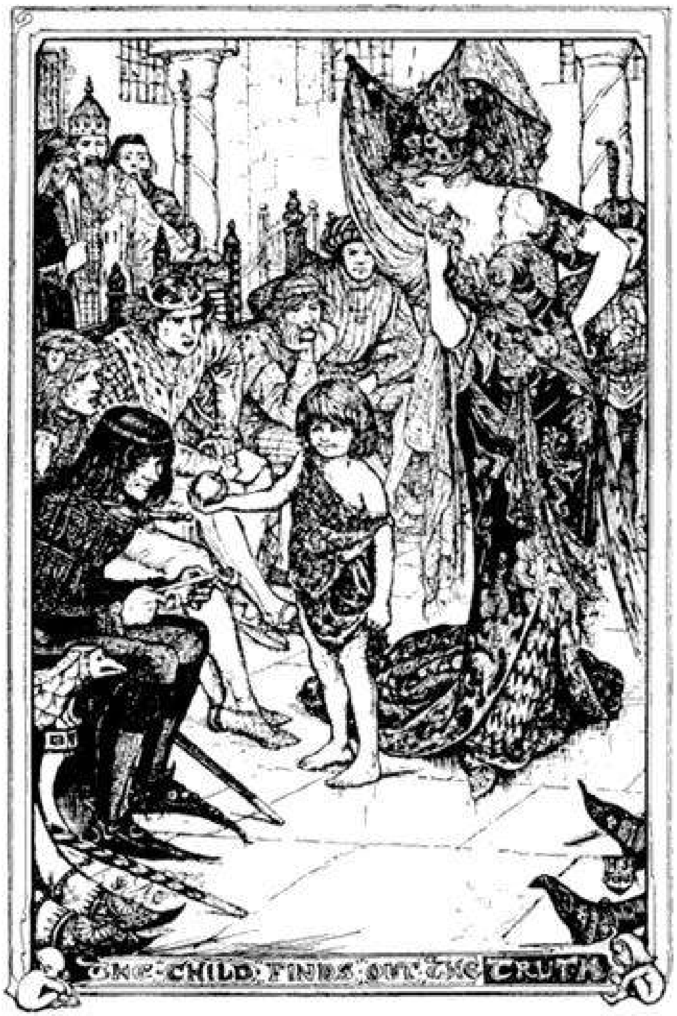

THE CHILD FINDS OUT THE TRUTH

By and bye he went up to the king’s daughter again, and begged for the honour of another dance. She consented, and while he was stooping to tie the ribbons on his shoe she took out from her pocket another bottle, which the Wizard had given her, and put a black dot on his cheek. But she was not as skilful as the Wise Man, and the Shifty Lad felt the touch of her fingers; so as soon as the dance was over he contrived to place a second black dot on the faces of the twenty men and two more on the Wizard, after which he slipped the bottle into her pocket.

At length the ball came to an end, and then the king ordered all the doors to be shut, and search made for a man with two black dots on his cheek. The chamberlain went among the guests, and soon found such a man, but just as he was going to arrest him and bring him before the king his eye fell on another with the same mark, and another, and another, till he had counted twenty — besides the Wise Man — on whose face were found spots.

Not knowing what to do, the chamberlain hurried back with his tale to the king, who immediately sent for the Wise Man, and then for his daughter.

‘The thief must have stolen your bottle,’ said the king to the Wizard.

‘No, my lord, it is here,’ answered the Wise Man, holding it out.

‘Then he must have got yours,’ he cried, turning to his daughter.

‘Indeed, father, it is safe in my pocket,’ replied she, taking it out as she spoke; and they all three looked at each other and remained silent.

‘Well,’ said the king at last, ‘the man who has done this is cleverer than most men, and if he will make himself known to me he shall marry the princess and govern half my kingdom while I am alive, and the whole of it when I am dead. Go and announce this in the ballroom,’ he added to an attendant, ‘and bring the fellow hither.’

So the attendant went into the ballroom and did as the king had bidden him, when, to his surprise, not one man, but twenty, stepped forward, all with black dots on their faces.

‘I am the person you want,’ they all exclaimed at once, and the attendant, as much bewildered as the chamberlain had been, desired them to follow him into the king’s presence.

But the question was too difficult for the king to decide, so he called together his council. For hours they talked, but to no purpose, and in the end they hit upon a plan which they might just as well have thought of at the beginning.

And this was the plan. A child was to be brought to the palace, and next the king’s daughter would give her an apple. Then the child was to take the apple and be led into a room where the twenty men with the black dots were sitting in a ring. And to whomsoever the child gave the apple, that man should marry the king’s daughter.

‘Of course,’ said the king, ‘it may not be the right man, after all, but then again it *may* be. Anyhow, it is the best we can do.’

The princess herself led the child into the room where the twenty men were now seated. She stood in the centre of the ring for a moment, looking at one man after another, and then held out the apple to the Shifty Lad, who was twisting a shaving of wood round his finger, and had the mouthpiece of a bagpipe hanging from his neck.

‘You ought not to have anything which the others have not got,’ said the chamberlain, who had accompanied the princess; and he bade the child stand outside for a minute, while he took away the shaving and the mouthpiece, and made the Shifty Lad change his place. Then he called the child in, but the little girl knew him again, and went straight up to him with the apple.

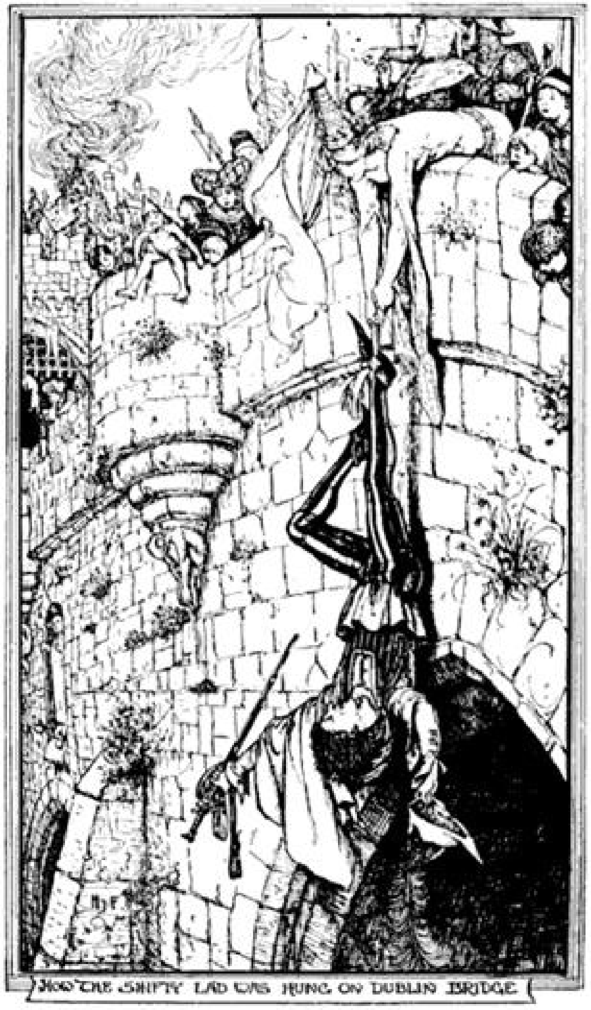

HOW THE SHIFTY LAD WAS HUNG ON DUBLIN BRIDGE

‘This is the man whom the child has twice chosen,’ said the chamberlain, signing to the Shifty Lad to kneel before the king. ‘It was all quite fair; we tried it twice over.’ In this way the Shifty Lad won the king’s daughter, and they were married the next day.

A few days later the bride and bridegroom were taking a walk together, and the path led down to the river, and over the river was a bridge.

‘And what bridge may this be?’ asked the Shifty Lad; and the princess told him that this was the bridge of Dublin.

‘Is it indeed?’ cried he. ‘Well, now, many is the time that my mother has said, when I played her a trick that my end would be that I should hang on the bridge of Dublin.’

‘Oh, if you want to fulfil her prophecies,’ laughed the princess, ‘you have only to let me tie my handkerchief round your ankle, and I will hold you as you hang over the wall of the bridge.’

‘That would be fine fun,’ said he; ‘but you are not strong enough to hold me up.’

‘Oh yes, I am,’ said the princess; ‘just try.’ So at last he let her bind the handkerchief round his ankle and hang him over the wall, and they both laughed and jested at the strength of the princess.

‘Now pull me up again,’ called he; but as he spoke a great cry arose that the palace was burning. The princess turned round with a start, and let go her handkerchief, and the Shifty Lad fell, and struck his head on a stone, and died in an instant.

So his mother’s prophecy had come true, after all.

West Highland Tales.

THE FALSE PRINCE AND THE TRUE

The king had just awakened from his midday sleep, for it was summer, and everyone rose early and rested from twelve to three, as they do in hot countries. He had dressed himself in cool white clothes, and was passing through the hall on his way to the council chamber, when a number of young nobles suddenly appeared before him, and one amongst them stepped forward and spoke.

‘Sire, this morning we were all playing tennis in the court, the prince and this gentleman with the rest, when there broke out some dispute about the game. The prince lost his temper, and said many insulting things to the other, who was playing against him, till at length the gentleman whom you see there struck him violently in the face, so that the blood ran from his mouth and nose. We were all so horrified at the sight, that we should most likely have killed the man then and there, for daring to lay hands on the prince, had not his grandfather the duke stepped between and commanded us to lay the affair before you.’

The king had listened attentively to the story, and when it was ended he said:

‘I suppose the prince had no arms with him, or else he would have used them?’

‘Yes, sire, he had arms; he always carries a dagger in his belt. But when he saw the blood pouring from his face, he went to a corner of the court and began to cry, which was the strangest thing of all.’

On hearing this the king walked to the window and stood for a few minutes with his back to the room, where the company of young men remained silent. Then he came back, his face white and stern.

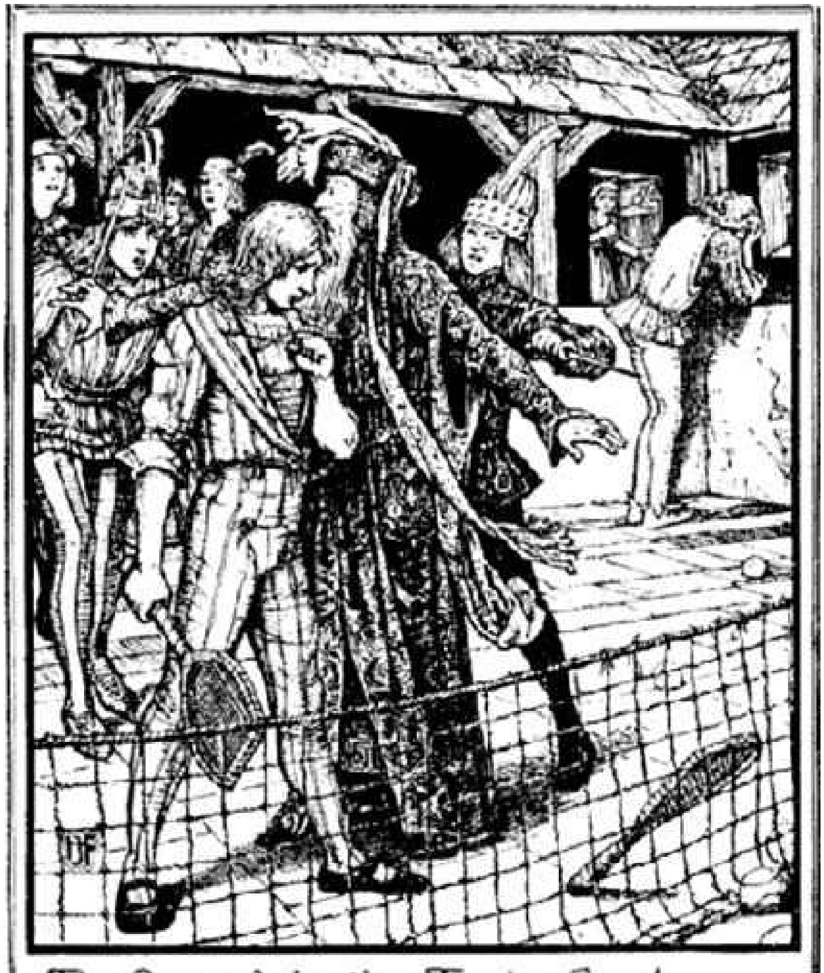

The Quarrel in the Tennis Court

‘I tell you,’ he said, ‘and it is the solemn truth, that I would rather you had told me that the prince was dead, though he is my only son, than know that he would suffer such an injury without attempting to avenge it. As for the gentleman who struck him, he will be brought before my judges, and will plead his own cause, but I hardly think he can escape death, after having assaulted the heir to the crown.’

The young man raised his head as if to reply, but the king would not listen, and commanded his guards to put him under arrest, adding, however, that if the prisoner wished to visit any part of the city, he was at liberty to do so properly guarded, and in fifteen days he would be brought to trial before the highest judges in the land.

The young man left the king’s presence, surrounded by soldiers, and accompanied by many of his friends, for he was a great favourite. By their advice he spent the fourteen days that remained to him going about to seek counsel from wise men of all sorts, as to how he might escape death, but no one could help him, for none could find any excuse for the blow he had given to the prince.

The fourteenth night had come, and in despair the prisoner went out to take his last walk through the city. He wandered on hardly knowing where he went, and his face was so white and desperate that none of his companions dared speak to him. The sad little procession had passed some hours in this manner, when, near the gate of a monastery, an old woman appeared round a corner, and suddenly stood before the young man. She was bent almost double, and was so wizened and wrinkled that she looked at least ninety; only her eyes were bright and quick as those of a girl.

‘Sir,’ she said, ‘I know all that has happened to you, and how you are seeking if in any wise you can save your life. But there is none that can answer that question save only I myself, if you will promise to do all I ask.’

At her words the prisoner felt as if a load had all at once been rolled off him.

‘Oh, save me, and I will do anything!’ he cried. ‘It is so hard to leave the world and go out into the darkness.’

‘You will not need to do that,’ answered the old woman, ‘you have only got to marry me, and you will soon be free.’

‘Marry you?’ exclaimed he, ‘but — but — I am not yet twenty, and you — why, you must be a hundred at least! Oh, no, it is quite impossible.’

He spoke without thinking, but the flash of anger which darted from her eyes made him feel uncomfortable. However, all she said was:

‘As you like; since you reject me, let the crows have you,’ and hurried away down the street.

Left to himself, the full horror of his coming death rushed upon the young man, and he understood that he had thrown away his sole chance of life. Well, if he must, he must, he said to himself, and began to run as fast as he could after the old crone, who by this time could scarcely be seen, even in the moonlight. Who would have believed a woman past ninety could walk with such speed? It seemed more like flying! But at length, breathless and exhausted, he reached her side, and gasped out:

‘Madam, pardon me for my hasty words just now; I was wrong, and will thankfully accept the offer you made me.’

‘Ah, I thought you would come to your senses,’ answered she, in rather an odd voice. ‘We have no time to lose — follow me at once,’ and they went on silently and swiftly till they stopped at the door of a small house in which the priest lived. Before him the old woman bade the prisoner swear that she should be his wife, and this he did in the presence of witnesses. Then, begging the priest and the guards to leave them alone for a little, she told the young man what he was to do, when the next morning he was brought before the king and the judges.

The hall was full to overflowing when the prisoner entered it, and all marvelled at the brightness of his face. The king inquired if he had any excuse to plead for the high treason he had committed by striking the heir to the throne, and, if so, to be quick in setting it forth. With a low bow the youth made answer in a clear voice:

'O my lord and gracious king, and you, nobles and wise men of the land, I leave my cause without fear in your hands, knowing that you will listen and judge rightly, and that you will suffer me to speak to the end, before you give judgment.

'For four years, you, O king, had been married to the queen and yet had no children, which grieved you greatly. The queen saw this, and likewise that your love was going from her, and thought night and day of some plan that might put an end to this evil. At length, when you were away fighting in distant countries, she decided what she would do, and adopted in secret the baby of a poor quarryman, sending a messenger to tell you that you had a son. No one suspected the truth except a priest to whom the queen confessed the truth, and in a few weeks she fell ill and died, leaving the baby to be brought up as became a prince. And now, if your highness will permit me, I will speak of myself.'

'What you have already told me,' answered the king, 'is so strange that I cannot imagine what more there is to tell, but go on with your story.'

'One day, shortly after the death of the queen,' continued the young man, 'your highness was hunting, and outstripped all your attendants while chasing the deer. You were in a part of the country which you did not know, so seeing an orchard all pink and white with apple-blossoms, and a girl tossing a ball in one corner, you went up to her to ask your way. But when she turned to answer you, you were so struck with her beauty that all else fled from your mind. Again and again you rode back to see her, and at length persuaded her to marry you. She only thought you a poor knight, and agreed that, as you wished it, the marriage should be kept secret.

'After the ceremony you gave her three rings and a charm with a cross on it, and then put her in a cottage in the forest, thinking to hide the matter securely.

'For some months you visited the cottage every week; but a rebellion broke out in a distant part of the kingdom, and called for your presence. When next you rode up to the cottage, it was empty, and none could inform you whither your bride had gone. That, sire, I can now tell you,' and the young man paused and looked at the king, who coloured deeply. 'She went back to her father the old duke, once your chamberlain, and the cross on her breast revealed at once who you were. Fierce was his anger when he heard his daughter's tale, and he vowed that he would hide her safely from you, till the day came when you would claim her publicly as your queen.

‘By and bye I was born, and was brought up by my grandfather in one of his great houses. Here are the rings you gave to my mother, and here is the cross, and these will prove if I am your son or not.’

As he spoke the young man laid the jewels at the feet of the king, and the nobles and the judges pressed round to examine them. The king alone did not move from his seat, for he had forgotten the hall of justice and all about him, and saw only the apple-orchard as it was twenty years ago, and the beautiful girl playing at ball. A sudden silence round him made him look up, and he found the eyes of the assembly fixed on him.

‘It is true; it is he who is my son, and not the other,’ he said with an effort, ‘and let every man present swear to acknowledge him as king, after my death.’

Therefore one by one they all knelt before him and took the oath, and a message was sent to the false prince, forbidding him ever again to appear at court, though a handsome pension was granted him.

At last the ceremony was over, and the king, signing to his newly found son to follow him, rose and went into another room.

‘Tell me how you knew all that,’ he said, throwing himself into a carved chair filled with crimson cushions, and the prince told of his meeting with the old woman who had brought him the jewels from his mother, and how he had sworn before a priest to marry her, though he did not want to do it, on account of the difference in their ages, and besides, he would rather receive a bride chosen by the king himself. But the king frowned, and answered sharply:

‘You swore to marry her if she saved your life, and, come what may, you must fulfil your promise.’ Then, striking a silver shield that hung close by, he said to the equerry who appeared immediately:

‘Go and seek the priest who lives near the door of the prison, and ask him where you can find the old woman who visited him last night; and when you have found her, bring her to the palace.’

It took some time to discover the whereabouts of the old woman, but at length it was accomplished, and when she arrived at the palace with the equerry, she was received with royal honours, as became the bride of the prince. The guards looked at each other with astonished eyes, as the wizened creature, bowed with age, passed between their lines; but they were more amazed still at the lightness of her step as she skipped up the steps to the great door before which the king was standing, with the prince at his side. If they both felt a shock at the appearance of the aged lady they did not show it, and the king, with a grave bow, took her hand, and led her to the chapel, where a bishop was waiting to perform the marriage ceremony.

For the next few weeks little was seen of the prince, who spent all his days in hunting, and trying to forget the old wife at home. As for the princess, no one troubled himself about her, and she passed the days alone in her apartments, for she had absolutely declined the services of the ladies-in-waiting whom the king had appointed for her.

One night the prince returned after a longer chase than usual, and he was so tired that he went up straight to bed. Suddenly he was awakened by a strange noise in the room, and suspecting that a robber might have stolen in, he jumped out of bed, and seized his sword, which lay ready to his hand. Then he perceived that the noise proceeded from the next room, which belonged to the princess, and was lighted by a burning torch. Creeping softly to the door, he peeped through it, and beheld her lying quietly, with a crown of gold and pearls upon her head, her wrinkles all gone, and her face, which was whiter than the snow, as fresh as that of a girl of fourteen. Could that really be his wife — that beautiful, beautiful creature?

The prince was still gazing in surprise when the lady opened her eyes and smiled at him.

‘Yes, I really *am* your wife,’ she said, as if she had guessed his thoughts, ‘and the enchantment is ended. Now I must tell you who I am, and what befell to cause me to take the shape of an old woman.

‘The king of Granada is my father, and I was born in the palace which overlooks the plain of the Vega. I was only a few months old when a wicked fairy, who had a spite against my parents, cast a spell over me, bending my back and wrinkling my skin till I looked as if I was a hundred years old, and making me such an object of disgust to everyone, that at length the king ordered my nurse to take me away from the palace. She was the only person who cared about me, and we lived together in this city on a small pension allowed me by the king.

‘When I was about three an old man arrived at our house, and begged my nurse to let him come in and rest, as he could walk no longer. She saw that he was very ill, so put him to bed and took such care of him that by and bye he was as strong as ever. In gratitude for her goodness to him, he told her that he was a wizard and could give her anything she chose to ask for, except life or death, so she answered that what she longed for most in the world was that my wrinkled skin should disappear, and that I should regain the beauty with which I was born. To this he replied that as my misfortune resulted from a spell, this was rather difficult, but he would do his best, and at any rate he could promise that before my fifteenth birthday I should be freed from the enchantment if I could get a man who would swear to marry me as I was.

‘As you may suppose, this was not easy, as my ugliness was such that no one would look at me a second time. My nurse and I were almost in despair, as my fifteenth birthday was drawing near, and I had never so much as spoken to a man. At last we received a visit from the wizard, who told us what had happened at court, and your story, bidding me to put myself in your way when you had lost all hope, and offer to save you if you would consent to marry me.

'That is my history, and now you must beg the king to send messengers at once to Granada, to inform my father of our marriage, and I *think*,' she added with a smile, 'that he will not refuse us his blessing.'

Adapted from the Portuguese.

THE JOGI’S PUNISHMENT

Once upon a time there came to the ancient city of Rahmatabad a jogi of holy appearance, who took up his abode under a tree outside the city, where he would sit for days at a time fasting from food and drink, motionless except for the fingers that turned restlessly his string of beads. The fame of such holiness as this soon spread, and daily the citizens would flock to see him, eager to get his blessing, to watch his devotions, or to hear his teaching, if he were in the mood to speak. Very soon the rajah himself heard of the jogi, and began regularly to visit him to seek his counsel and to ask his prayers that a son might be vouchsafed to him. Days passed by, and at last the rajah became so possessed with the thought of the holy man that he determined if possible to get him all to himself. So he built in the neighbourhood a little shrine, with a room or two added to it, and a small courtyard closely walled up; and, when all was ready, besought the jogi to occupy it, and to receive no other visitors except himself and his queen and such pupils as the jogi might choose, who would hand down his teaching. To this the jogi consented; and thus he lived for some time upon the king’s bounty, whilst the fame of his godliness grew day by day.

Now, although the rajah of Rahmatabad had no son, he possessed a daughter, who as she grew up became the most beautiful creature that eye ever rested upon. Her father had long before betrothed her to the son of the neighbouring rajah of Dilaram, but as yet she had not been married to him, and lived the quiet life proper to a maiden of her beauty and position. The princess had of course heard of the holy man and of his miracles and his fastings, and she was filled with curiosity to see and to speak to him; but this was difficult, since she was not allowed to go out except into the palace grounds, and then was always closely guarded. However, at length she found an opportunity, and made her way one evening alone to the hermit’s shrine.

Unhappily, the hermit was not really as holy as he seemed; for no sooner did he see the princess than he fell in love with her wonderful beauty, and began to plot in his heart how he could win her for his wife. But the maiden was not only beautiful, she was also shrewd; and as soon as she read in the glance of the jogi the love that filled his soul, she sprang to her feet, and, gathering her veil about her, ran from the place as fast as she could. The jogi tried to follow, but he was no match for her; so, beside himself with rage at finding that he could not overtake her, he flung at her a lance, which wounded her in the leg. The brave princess stooped for a second to pluck the lance out of the wound, and then ran on until she found herself safe at home again. There she bathed and bound up the wound secretly, and told no one how naughty she had been, for she knew that her father would punish her severely.

Next day, when the king went to visit the jogi, the holy man would neither speak to nor look at him.

‘What is the matter?’ asked the king. ‘Won’t you speak to me to-day?’

‘I have nothing to say that you would care to hear,’ answered the jogi.

‘Why?’ said the king. ‘Surely you know that I value all that you say, whatever it may be.’

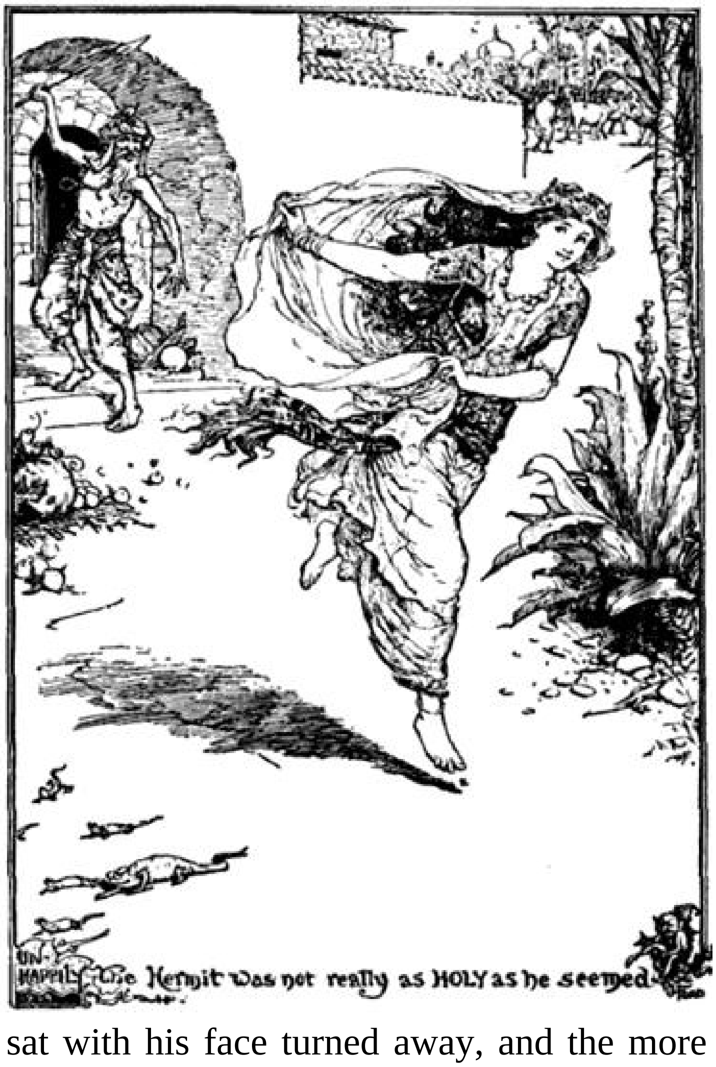

UN-HAPPILY the Hermit was not really as HOLY as he seemed

But still the jogi sat with his face turned away, and the more the king pressed him the more silent and mysterious he became. At last, after much persuasion, he said:

‘Let me tell you, then, that there is in this city a creature which, if you do not put an end to it, will kill every single person in the place.’

The king, who was easily frightened, grew pale.

‘What,’ he gasped— ‘what is this dreadful thing? How am I to know it and to catch it? Only counsel me and help me, and I will do all that you advise.’

‘Ah!’ replied the jogi, ‘it is indeed dreadful. It is in the shape of a beautiful girl, but it is really an evil spirit. Last evening it came to visit me, and when I looked upon it its beauty faded into hideousness, its teeth became horrible fangs, its eyes glared like coals of fire, great claws sprang from its slender fingers, and were I not what I am it might have consumed me.’

The king could hardly speak from alarm, but at last he said:

‘How am I to distinguish this awful thing when I see it?’

‘Search,’ said the jogi, ‘for a lovely girl with a lance wound in her leg, and when she is found secure her safely and come and tell me, and I will advise you what to do next.’

Away hurried the king, and soon set all his soldiers scouring the country for a girl with a lance wound in her leg. For two days the search went on, and then it was somehow discovered that the only person with a lance wound in the leg was the princess herself. The king, greatly agitated, went off to tell the jogi, and to assure him that there must be some mistake. But of course the jogi was prepared for this, and had his answer ready.

‘She is not really your daughter, who was stolen away at her birth, but an evil spirit that has taken her form,’ said he solemnly. ‘You can do what you like, but if you don’t take my advice she will kill you all.’ And so solemn he appeared, and so unshaken in his confidence, that the king’s wisdom was blinded, and he declared that he would do whatever the jogi advised, and believe whatever he said. So the jogi directed him to send him secretly two carpenters; and when they arrived he set them to make a great chest, so cunningly jointed and put together that neither air nor water could penetrate it. There and then the chest was made, and, when it was ready, the jogi bade the king to bring the princess by night; and they two thrust the poor little maiden into the chest and fastened it down with long nails, and between them carried it to the river and pushed it out into the stream.

As soon as the jogi got back from this deed he called two of his pupils, and pretended that it had been revealed to him that there should be found floating on the river a chest with something of great price within it; and he bade them go and watch for it at such a place far down the stream, and when the chest came slowly along, bobbing and turning in the tide, they were to seize it and secretly and swiftly bring it to him, for he was now determined to put the princess to death himself. The pupils set off at once, wondering at the strangeness of their errand,

and still more at the holiness of the jogi to whom such secrets were revealed.

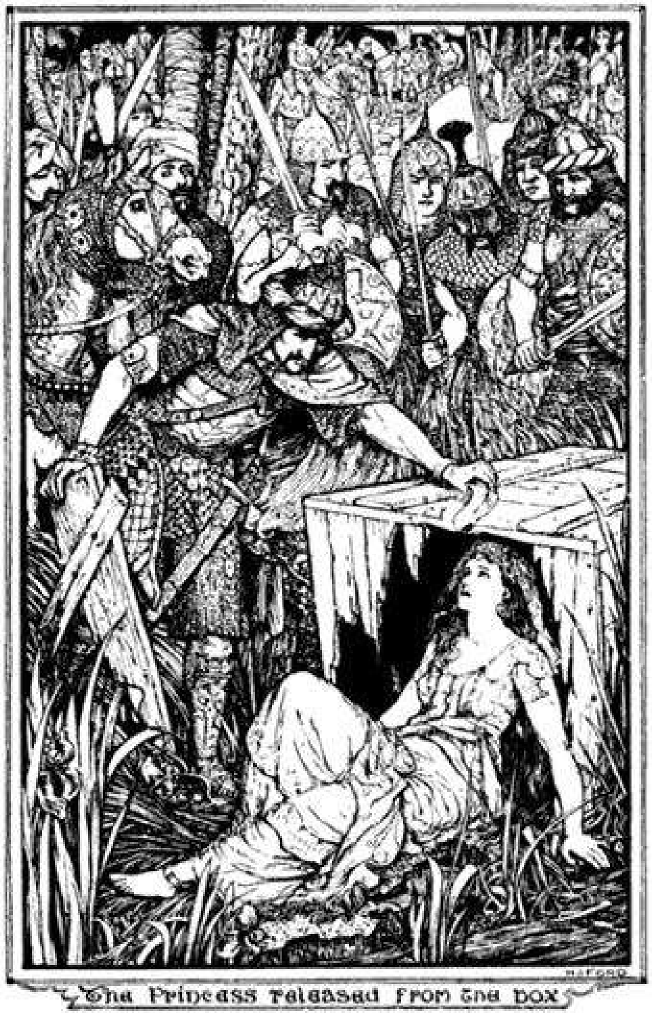

The Princess released from the box

It happened that, as the next morning was dawning, the gallant young prince of Dilaram was hunting by the banks of the river, with a great following of wazirs, attendants, and huntsmen, and as he rode he saw floating on the river a large chest, which came slowly along, bobbing and turning in the tide. Raising himself in his saddle, he gave an order, and half a dozen men plunged into the water and drew the chest out on to the river bank, where every one crowded around to see what it could contain. The prince was certainly not the least curious among them; but he was a cautious young man, and, as he prepared to open the chest himself, he bade all but a few stand back, and these few to draw their swords, so as to be prepared in case the chest should hold some evil beast, or djinn, or giant. When all were ready and expectant, the prince with his dagger forced open the lid and flung it back, and there lay, living and breathing, the most lovely maiden he had ever seen in his life.

Although she was half stifled from her confinement in the chest, the princess speedily revived, and, when she was able to sit up, the prince began to question her as to who she was and how she came to be shut up in the chest and set afloat upon the water; and she, blushing and trembling to find herself in the presence of so many strangers, told him that she was the princess of Rahmatabad, and that she had been put into the chest by her own father. When he on his part told her that he was the prince of Dilaram, the astonishment of the young people was unbounded to find that they, who had been betrothed without ever having seen one another, should have actually met for the first time under such strange circumstances. In fact, the prince was so moved by her beauty and modest ways that he called up his wazirs and demanded to be married at once to this lovely lady who had so completely won his heart. And married they were then and there upon the river bank, and went home to the prince's palace, where, when the story was told, they were welcomed by the old rajah, the prince's father, and the remainder of the day was given over to feasting and rejoicing. But when the banquet was over, the bride told her husband that now, on the threshold of their married life, she had more to relate of her adventures than he had given her the opportunity to tell as yet; and then, without hiding anything, she informed him of all that happened to her from the time she had stolen out to visit the wicked jogi.

In the morning the prince called his chief wazir and ordered him to shut up in the chest in which the princess had been found a great monkey that lived chained up in the palace, and to take the chest back to the river and set it afloat once more and watch what became of it. So the monkey was caught and put into the chest, and some of the prince's servants took it down to the river and pushed it off into the water. Then they followed secretly a long way off to see what became of it.

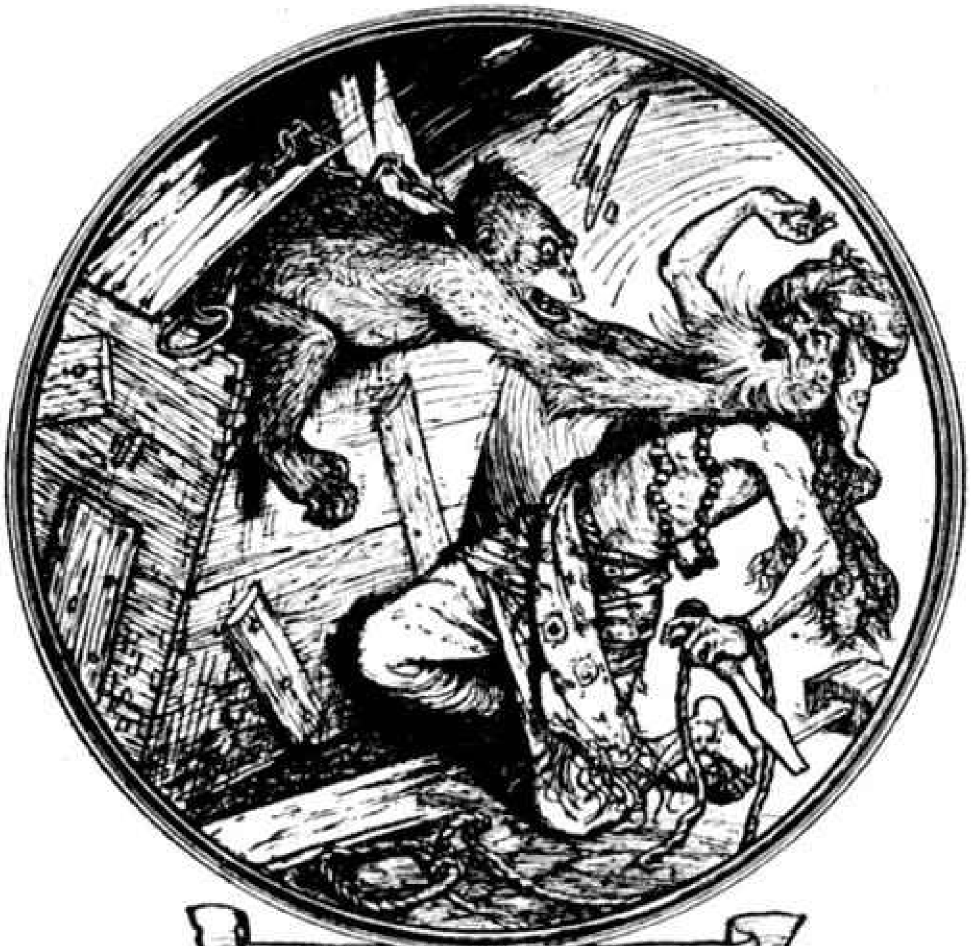

The Terrible End of the Jogi

Meanwhile the jogi’s two pupils watched and watched for the chest until they were nearly tired of watching, and were beginning to wonder whether the jogi was right after all, when on the second day they spied the great chest coming floating on the river, slowly bobbing and turning on the tide; and instantly a great joy and exultation seized them, for they thought that here indeed was further proof of the wonderful wisdom of their master. With some difficulty they secured the chest, and carried it back as swiftly and secretly as possible to the jogi’s house. As soon as they brought in the chest, the jogi, who had been getting very cross and impatient, told them to put it down, and to go outside whilst he opened the magic chest.

‘And even if you hear cries and sounds, however alarming, you must on no account enter,’ said the jogi, walking over to a closet where lay the silken cord that was to strangle the princess.

And the two pupils did as they were told, and went outside and shut close all the doors. Presently they heard a great outcry within, and the jogi’s voice crying aloud for help; but they dared not enter, for had they not been told that whatever the noise, they must not come in? So they sat outside, waiting and wondering; and at last all grew still and quiet, and remained so for such a long time that they determined to enter and see if all was well. No sooner had they opened the door leading into the courtyard than they were nearly upset by a huge monkey that came leaping straight to the doorway and escaped past them into the open fields. Then they stepped into the room, and there they saw the jogi's body lying torn to pieces on the threshold of his dwelling!

Very soon the story spread, as stories will, and reached the ears of the princess and her husband, and when she knew that her enemy was dead she made her peace with her father.

From Major Campbell, Feroshepore.

THE HEART OF A MONKEY

A long time ago a little town made up of a collection of low huts stood in a tiny green valley at the foot of a cliff. Of course the people had taken great care to build their houses out of reach of the highest tide which might be driven on shore by a west wind, but on the very edge of the town there had sprung up a tree so large that half its boughs hung over the huts and the other half over the deep sea right under the cliff, where sharks loved to come and splash in the clear water. The branches of the tree itself were laden with fruit, and every day at sunrise a big grey monkey might have been seen sitting in the topmost branches having his breakfast, and chattering to himself with delight.

After he had eaten all the fruit on the town side of the tree the monkey swung himself along the branches to the part which hung over the water. While he was looking out for a nice shady place where he might perch comfortably he noticed a shark watching him from below with greedy eyes.

‘Can I do anything for you, my friend?’ asked the monkey politely.

‘Oh! if you only *would* throw me down some of those delicious things, I should be so grateful,’ answered the shark. ‘After you have lived on fish for fifty years you begin to feel you would like a change. And I am so very, very tired of the taste of salt.’

‘Well, I don’t like salt myself,’ said the monkey; ‘so if you will open your mouth I will throw this beautiful juicy kuyu into it,’ and, as he spoke, he pulled one off the branch just over his head. But it was not so easy to hit the shark’s mouth as he supposed, even when the creature had turned on his back, and the first kuyu only struck one of his teeth and rolled into the water. However, the second time the monkey had better luck, and the fruit fell right in.

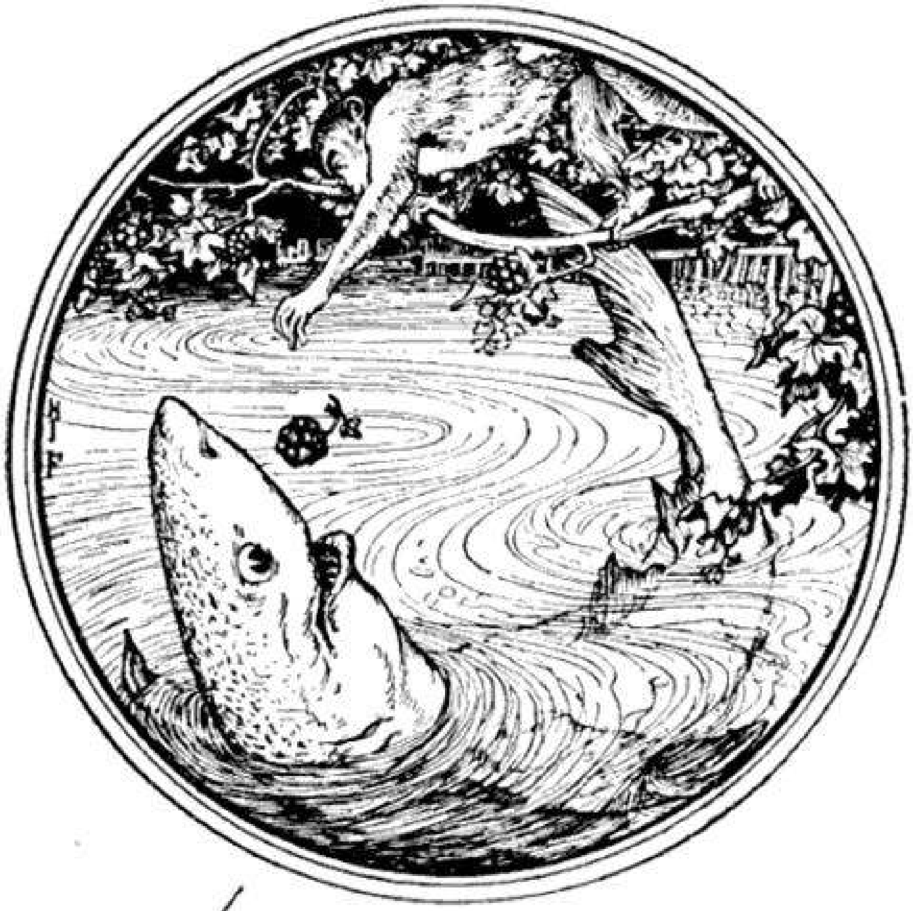

The Monkey feeds the Shark

‘Ah, how good!’ cried the shark. ‘Send me another, please,’ and the monkey grew tired of picking the kuyu long before the shark was tired of eating them.

‘It is getting late, and I must be going home to my children,’ he said at length, ‘but if you are here at the same time to-morrow I will give you another treat.’

‘Thank you, thank you,’ said the shark, showing all his great ugly teeth as he grinned with delight; ‘you can’t guess how happy you have made me,’ and he swam away into the shadow, hoping to sleep away the time till the monkey came again.

For weeks the monkey and the shark breakfasted together, and it was a wonder that the tree had any fruit left for them. They became fast friends, and told each other about their homes and their children, and how to teach them all they ought to know. By and bye the monkey became rather discontented with his green house in a grove of palms beyond the town, and longed to see the strange things under the sea which he had heard of from the shark. The shark perceived this very clearly, and described greater marvels, and the monkey as he listened grew more and more gloomy.

Matters were in this state when one day the shark said: ‘I really hardly know how to thank you for all your kindness to me during these weeks. Here I have nothing of my own to offer you, but if you would only consent to come home with me, how gladly would I give you anything that might happen to take your fancy.’

‘I should like nothing better,’ cried the monkey, his teeth chattering, as they always did when he was pleased. ‘But how could I get there? Not by water. Ugh! It makes me ill to think of it!’

‘Oh! don’t let that trouble you,’ replied the shark, ‘you have only to sit on my back and I will undertake that not a drop of water shall touch you.’

So it was arranged, and directly after breakfast next morning the shark swam close up under the tree and the monkey dropped neatly on his back, without even a splash. After a few minutes — for at first he felt a little frightened at his strange position — the monkey began to enjoy himself vastly, and asked the shark a thousand questions about the fish and the sea-weeds and the oddly-shaped things that floated past them, and as the shark always gave him some sort of answer, the monkey never guessed that many of the objects they saw were as new to his guide as to himself.

The sun had risen and set six times when the shark suddenly said, ‘My friend, we have now performed half our journey, and it is time that I should tell you something.’

‘What is it?’ asked the monkey. ‘Nothing unpleasant, I hope, for you sound rather grave?’

‘Oh, no! Nothing at all. It is only that shortly before we left I heard that the sultan of my country is very ill, and that the only thing to cure him is a monkey’s heart.’

‘Poor man, I am very sorry for him,’ replied the monkey; ‘but you were unwise not to tell me till we had started.’

‘What do you mean?’ asked the shark; but the monkey, who now understood the whole plot, did not answer at once, for he was considering what he should say.

‘Why are you so silent?’ inquired the shark again.

‘I was thinking what a pity it was you did not tell me while I was still on land, and then I would have brought my heart with me.’

‘Your heart! Why, isn’t your heart here?’ said the shark, with a puzzled expression.

‘Oh, no! Of course not. Is it possible you don’t know that when we leave home we always hang up our hearts on trees, to prevent their being troublesome? However, perhaps you won’t believe that, and will just think I have invented it because I am afraid, so let us go on to your country as fast as we can, and when we arrive you can look for my heart, and if you find it you can kill me.’

The monkey spoke in such a calm, indifferent way that the shark was quite deceived, and began to wish he had not been in such a hurry.

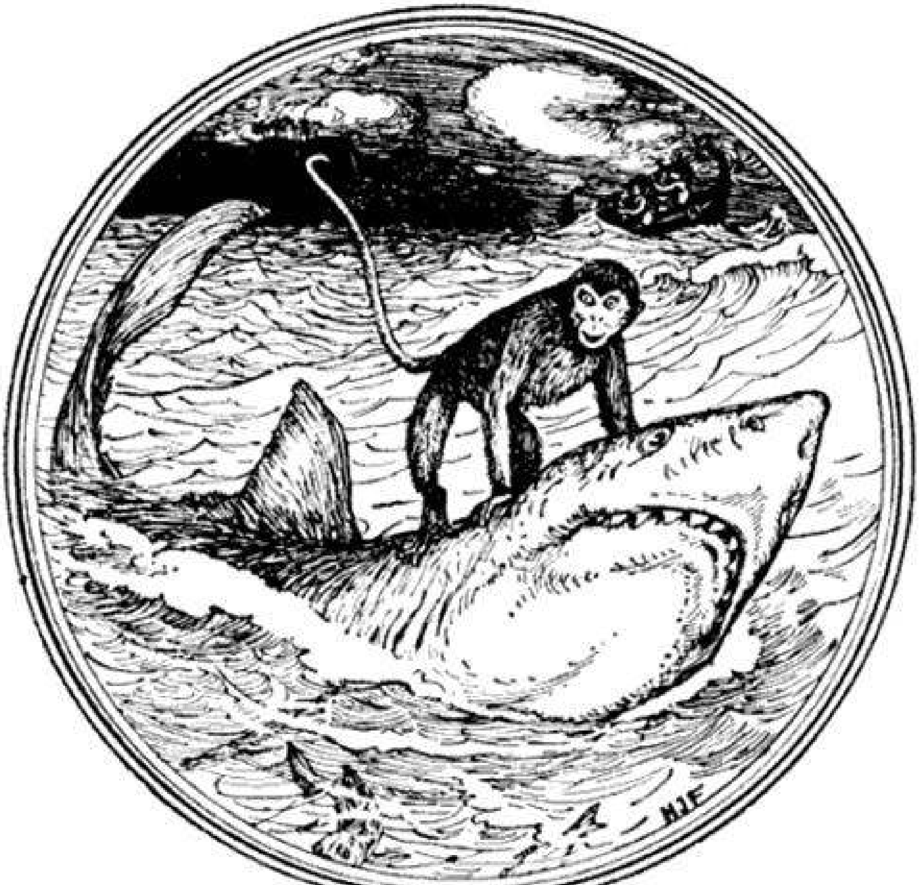

The Monkey has a ride

‘But there is no use going on if your heart is not with you,’ he said at last. ‘We had better turn back to the town, and then you can fetch it.’

Of course, this was just what the monkey wanted, but he was careful not to seem too pleased.

‘Well, I don’t know,’ he remarked carelessly, ‘it is such a long way; but you may be right.’

‘I am sure I am,’ answered the shark, ‘and I will swim as quickly as I can,’ and so he did, and in three days they caught sight of the kuyu tree hanging over the water.

With a sigh of relief the monkey caught hold of the nearest branch and swung himself up.

‘Wait for me here,’ he called out to the shark. ‘I am so hungry I must have a little breakfast, and then I will go and look for my heart,’ and he went further and further into the branches so that the shark could not see him. Then he curled himself up and went to sleep.

‘Are you there?’ cried the shark, who was soon tired of swimming about under the cliff, and was in haste to be gone.

The monkey awoke with a start, but did not answer.

‘Are you *there*?’ called the shark again, louder than before, and in a very cross voice.

‘Oh, yes. I am here,’ replied the monkey; ‘but I wish you had not wakened me up. I was having such a nice nap.’

‘Have you got it?’ asked the shark. ‘It is time we were going.’

‘Going *where*?’ inquired the monkey.

‘Why, to my country, of course, with your heart. You *can’t* have forgotten!’

‘My dear friend,’ answered the monkey, with a chuckle, ‘I think you must be going a little mad. Do you take me for a washerman’s donkey?’

‘Don’t talk nonsense,’ exclaimed the shark, who did not like being laughed at. ‘What do you mean about a washerman’s donkey? And I wish you would be quick, or we may be too late to save the sultan.’

‘Did you *really* never hear of the washerman’s donkey?’ asked the monkey, who was enjoying himself immensely. ‘Why, he is the beast who has no heart. And as I am not feeling very well, and am afraid to start while the sun is so high lest I should get a sunstroke, if you like, I will come a little nearer and tell you his story.’

‘Very well,’ said the shark sulkily, ‘if you won’t come, I suppose I may as well listen to that as do nothing.’

So the monkey began.

‘A washerman once lived in the great forest on the other side of the town, and he had a donkey to keep him company and to carry him wherever he wanted to go. For a time they got on very well, but by and bye the donkey grew lazy and ungrateful for her master’s kindness, and ran away several miles into the heart of the forest, where she did nothing but eat and eat and eat, till she grew so fat she could hardly move.

‘One day as she was tasting quite a new kind of grass and wondering if it was as good as what she had had for dinner the day before, a hare happened to pass by.

‘“Well, that *is* a fat creature,” thought she, and turned out of her path to tell the news to a lion who was a friend of hers. Now the lion had been very ill, and was not strong enough to go hunting for himself, and when the hare came and told him that a very fat donkey was to be found only a few hundred yards off, tears of disappointment and weakness filled his eyes.

'"What is the good of telling me that?" he asked, in a weepy voice; "you know I cannot even walk as far as that palm."

'"Never mind," answered the hare briskly. "If you can't go to your dinner your dinner shall come to you," and nodding a farewell to the lion she went back to the donkey.

'"Good morning," said she, bowing politely to the donkey, who lifted her head in surprise. "Excuse my interrupting you, but I have come on very important business."

'"Indeed," answered the donkey, "it is most kind of you to take the trouble. May I inquire what the business is?"

'"Certainly," replied the hare. "It is my friend the lion who has heard so much of your charms and good qualities that he has sent me to beg that you will give him your paw in marriage. He regrets deeply that he is unable to make the request in person, but he has been ill and is too weak to move."

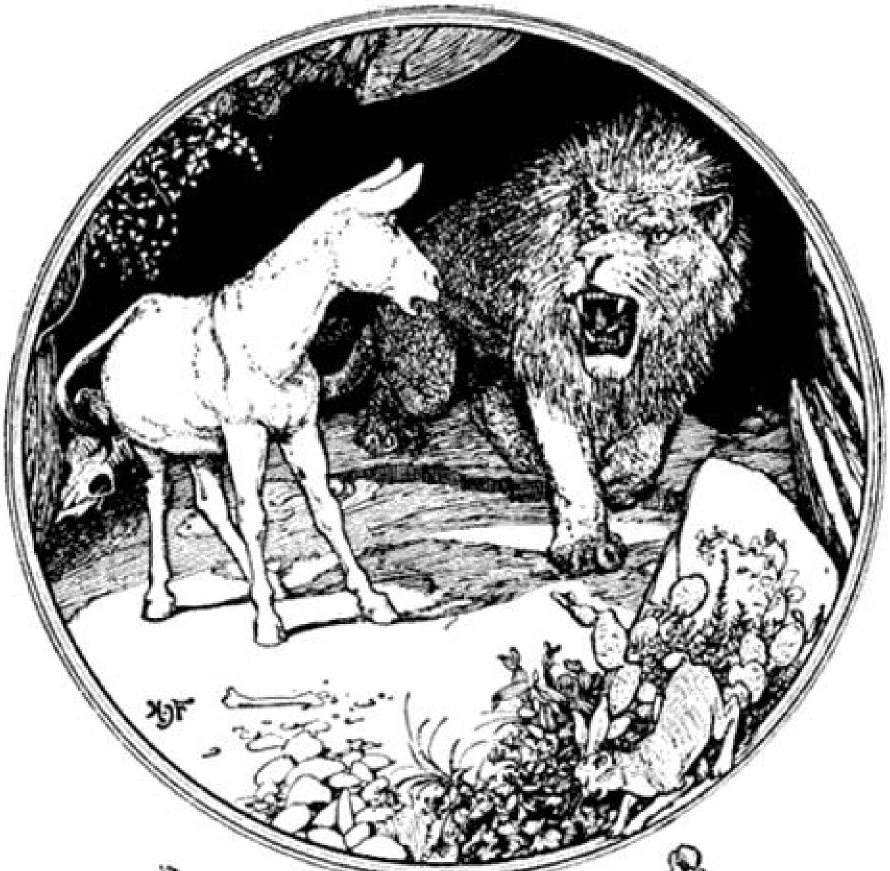

The Donkey expected
The Lion would
speak of their Marriage

‘“Poor fellow! How sad!” said the donkey. “But you must tell him that I feel honoured by his proposal, and will gladly consent to be Queen of the Beasts.”

‘“Will you not come and tell him so yourself?” asked the hare.

‘Side by side they went down the road which led to the lion’s house. It took a long while, for the donkey was so fat with eating she could only walk very slowly, and the hare, who could have run the distance in about five minutes, was obliged to creep along till she almost dropped with fatigue at not being able to go at her own pace. When at last they arrived the lion was sitting up at the entrance, looking very pale and thin. The donkey suddenly grew shy and hung her head, but the lion put on his best manners and invited both his visitors to come in and make themselves comfortable.

‘Very soon the hare got up and said, “Well, as I have another engagement I will leave you to make acquaintance with your future husband,” and winking at the lion she bounded away.

‘The donkey expected that as soon as they were left alone the lion would begin to speak of their marriage, and where they should live, but as he said nothing she looked up. To her surprise and terror she saw him crouching in the corner, his eyes glaring with a red light, and with a loud roar he sprang towards her. But in that moment the donkey had had time to prepare herself, and jumping on one side dealt the lion such a hard kick that he shrieked with the pain. Again and again he struck at her with his claws, but the donkey could bite too, as well as the lion, who was very weak after his illness, and at last a well-planted kick knocked him right over, and he rolled on the floor, groaning with pain. The donkey did not wait for him to get up, but ran away as fast as she could and was lost in the forest.

‘Now the hare, who knew quite well what would happen, had not gone to do her business, but hid herself in some bushes behind the cave, where she could hear quite clearly the sounds of the battle. When all was quiet again she crept gently out, and stole round the corner.

‘“Well, lion, have you killed her?” asked she, running swiftly up the path.

‘“Killed her, indeed!” answered the lion sulkily, “it is she who has nearly killed me. I never knew a donkey could kick like that, though I took care she should carry away the marks of my claws.”

‘“Dear me! Fancy such a great fat creature being able to fight,” cried the hare. “But don’t vex yourself. Just lie still, and your wounds will soon heal,” and she bade her friend good bye, and returned to her family.

‘Two or three weeks passed, and only bare places on the donkey’s back showed where the lion’s claws had been, while, on his side, the lion had recovered from his illness and was now as strong as ever. He was beginning to think that it was almost time for him to begin hunting again, when one morning a rustle was heard in the creepers outside, and the hare’s head peeped through.

‘“Ah! there is no need to ask how you are,” she said. “Still you mustn’t overtire yourself, you know. Shall *I* go and bring you your dinner?”

‘“If you will bring me that donkey I will tear it in two,” cried the lion savagely, and the hare laughed and nodded and went on her errand.

‘This time the donkey was much further than before, and it took longer to find her. At last the hare caught sight of four hoofs in the air, and ran towards them. The donkey was lying on a soft cool bed of moss near a stream, rolling herself backwards and forwards from pleasure.

‘“Good morning,” said the hare politely, and the donkey got slowly on to her legs, and looked to see who her visitor could be.

‘“Oh, it is *you*, is it?” she exclaimed. “Come in and have a chat. What news have you got?”

‘“I mustn’t stay,” answered the hare; “but I promised the lion to beg you to pay him a visit, as he is not well enough to call on you.”

'"Well, I don't know," replied the donkey gloomily, "the last time we went he scratched me very badly, and really I was quite afraid."

'"He was only trying to kiss you," said the hare, "and you bit him, and of course that made him cross."

'"If I were sure of *that*," hesitated the donkey.

'"Oh, you may be quite sure," laughed the hare. "I have a large acquaintance among lions. But let us be quick," and rather unwillingly the donkey set out.

'The lion saw them coming and hid himself behind a large tree. As the donkey went past, followed by the hare, he sprang out, and with one blow of his paw stretched the poor foolish creature dead before him.

'"Take this meat and skin it and roast it," he said to the hare; "but my appetite is not so good as it was, and the only part I want for myself is the heart. The rest you can either eat for yourself or give away to your friends."

'"Thank you," replied the hare, balancing the donkey on her back as well as she was able, and though the legs trailed along the ground she managed to drag it to an open space some distance off, where she made a fire and roasted it. As soon as it was cooked the hare took out the heart and had just finished eating it when the lion, who was tired of waiting, came up.

'"I am hungry," said he. "Bring me the creature's heart; it is just what I want for supper."

'"But there is no heart," answered the hare, looking up at the lion with a puzzled face.

'"What nonsense!" said the lion. "As if every beast had not got a heart. What do you mean?"

'"This is a washerman's donkey," replied the hare gravely.

'"Well, and suppose it is?"

'"Oh, fie!" exclaimed the hare. "You a lion and a grown-up person, and ask questions like that. If the donkey had had a heart would she be here now? The first time she came she knew you were trying to kill her, and ran away. Yet she came back a second time. Well, if she had had a heart would she have come back a second time? Now *would* she?"

'And the lion answered slowly, "No, she would not."

'So you think I am a washerman's donkey?' said the monkey to the shark, when the story was ended. 'You are wrong; I am not. And as the sun is getting low in the sky, it is time for you to begin your homeward journey. You will have a nice cool voyage, and I hope you will find the sultan better. Farewell!' And the monkey disappeared among the green branches, and was gone.

From 'Swahili Tales,' by Edward Steere, LL.D.

THE FAIRY NURSE

There was once a little farmer and his wife living near Coolgarrow. They had three children, and my story happened while the youngest was a baby. The wife was a good wife enough, but her mind was all on her family and her farm, and she hardly ever went to her knees without falling asleep, and she thought the time spent in the chapel was twice as long as it need be. So, friends, she let her man and her two children go before her one day to Mass, while she called to consult a fairy man about a disorder one of her cows had. She was late at the chapel, and was sorry all the day after, for her husband was in grief about it, and she was very fond of him.

Late that night he was wakened up by the cries of his children calling out, ‘Mother! mother!’ When he sat up and rubbed his eyes, there was no wife by his side, and when he asked the little ones what was become of their mother, they said they saw the room full of nice little men and women, dressed in white and red and green, and their mother in the middle of them, going out by the door as if she was walking in her sleep. Out he ran, and searched everywhere round the house, but neither tale nor tidings did he get of her for many a day.

Well, the poor man was miserable enough, for he was as fond of his woman as she was of him. It used to bring the salt tears down his cheeks to see his poor children neglected and dirty, as they often were, and they’d be bad enough only for a kind neighbour that used to look in whenever she could spare time. The infant was away with a nurse.

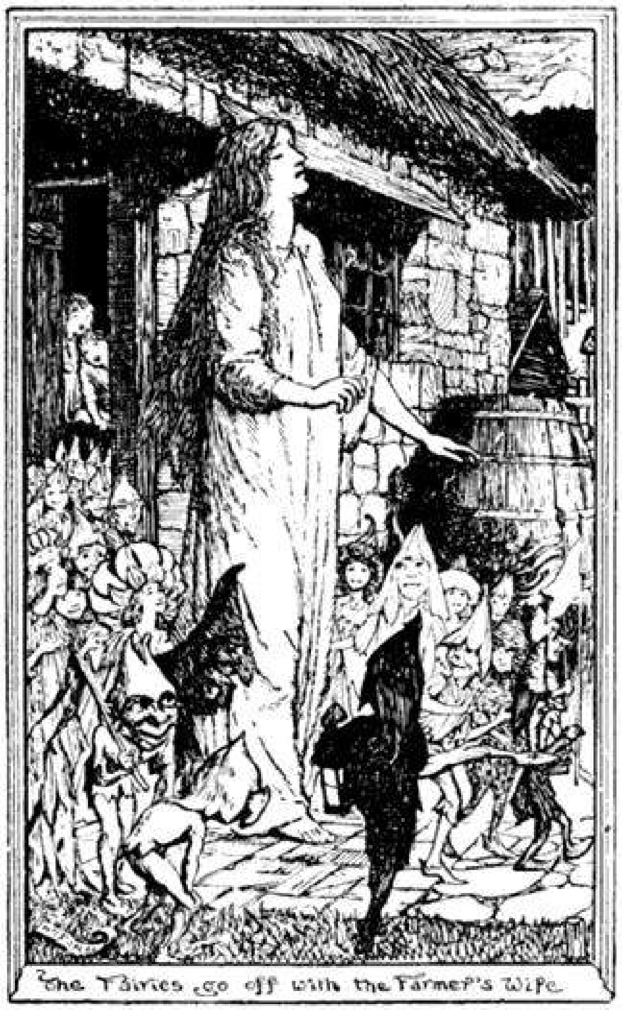

The Fairies go off with the Farmer's Wife

About six weeks after — just as he was going out to his work one morning — a neighbour, that used to mind women when they were ill, came up to him, and kept step by step with him to the field, and this is what she told him.

‘Just as I was falling asleep last night, I heard a horse’s tramp on the grass and a knock at the door, and there, when I came out, was a fine-looking dark man, mounted on a black horse, and he told me to get ready in all haste, for a lady was in great want of me. As soon as I put on my cloak and things, he took me by the hand, and I was sitting behind him before I felt myself stirring. “Where are we going, sir?” says I. “You’ll soon know,” says he; and he drew his fingers across my eyes, and not a ray could I see. I kept a tight grip of him, and I little knew whether he was going backwards or forwards, or how long we were about it, till my hand was taken again, and I felt the ground under me. The fingers went the other way across my eyes, and there we were before a castle door, and in we went through a big hall and great rooms all painted in fine green colours, with red and gold bands and ornaments, and the finest carpets and chairs and tables and window curtains, and grand ladies and gentlemen walking about. At last we came to a bedroom, with a beautiful lady in bed, with a fine bouncing boy beside her. The lady clapped her hands, and in came the Dark Man and kissed her and the baby, and praised me, and gave me a bottle of green ointment to rub the child all over.

'Well, the child I rubbed, sure enough; but my right eye began to smart, and I put up my finger and gave it a rub, and then stared, for never in all my life was I so frightened. The beautiful room was a big, rough cave, with water oozing over the edges of the stones and through the clay; and the lady, and the lord, and the child weazened, poverty-bitten creatures — nothing but skin and bone — and the rich dresses were old rags. I didn't let on that I found any difference, and after a bit says the Dark Man, "Go before me, to the hall door, and I will be with you in a few moments, and see you safe home." Well, just as I turned into the outside cave, who should I see watching near the door but poor Molly. She looked round all terrified, and says she to me in a whisper, "I'm brought here to nurse the child of the king and queen of the fairies; but there is one chance of saving me. All the court will pass the cross near Templeshambo next Friday night, on a visit to the fairies of Old Ross. If John can catch me by the hand or cloak when I ride by, and has courage not to let go his grip, I'll be safe. Here's the king. Don't open your mouth to answer. I saw what happened with the ointment."

'The Dark Man didn't once cast his eye towards Molly, and he seemed to have no suspicion of me. When we came out I looked about me, and where do you think we were but in the dyke of the Rath of Cromogue. I was on the horse again, which was nothing but a big rag-weed, and I was in dread every minute I'd fall off; but nothing happened till I found myself in my own cabin. The king slipped five guineas into my hand as soon as I was on the ground, and thanked me, and bade me good-night. I hope I'll never see his face again. I got into bed, and couldn't sleep for a long time; and when I examined my five guineas this morning, that I left in the table drawer the last thing, I found five withered leaves of oak — bad luck to the giver!'

Well, you may all think the fright, and the joy, and the grief the poor man was in when the woman finished her story. They talked and they talked, but we needn't mind what they said till Friday night came, when both were standing where the mountain road crosses the one going to Ross.

There they stood, looking towards the bridge of Thuar, in the dead of the night, with a little moonlight shining from over Kilachdiarmid. At last she gave a start, and 'By this and by that,' says she, 'here they come, bridles jingling and feathers tossing!' He looked, but could see nothing; and she stood trembling and her eyes wide open, looking down the way to the ford of Ballinacoola. 'I see your wife,' says she, 'riding on the outside just so as to rub against us. We'll walk on quietly, as if we suspected nothing, and when we are passing I'll give you a shove. If you don't do *your* duty then, woe be with you!'

Well, they walked on easy, and the poor hearts beating in both their breasts; and though he could see nothing, he heard a faint jingle and trampling and rustling, and at last he got the push that she promised. He spread out his arms, and there was his wife's waist within them, and he could see her plain; but such a hullabulloo rose as if there was an earthquake, and he found himself surrounded by horrible-looking things, roaring at him and striving to pull his wife away. But he made the sign of the cross and bid them begone in God's name, and held his wife as if it was iron his arms were made of. Bedad, in one moment everything was as silent as the grave, and the poor woman lying in a faint in the arms of her husband and her good neighbour. Well, all in good time she was minding her family and her business again; and I'll go bail, after the fright she got, she spent more time on her knees, and avoided fairy men all the days of the week, and particularly on Sunday.

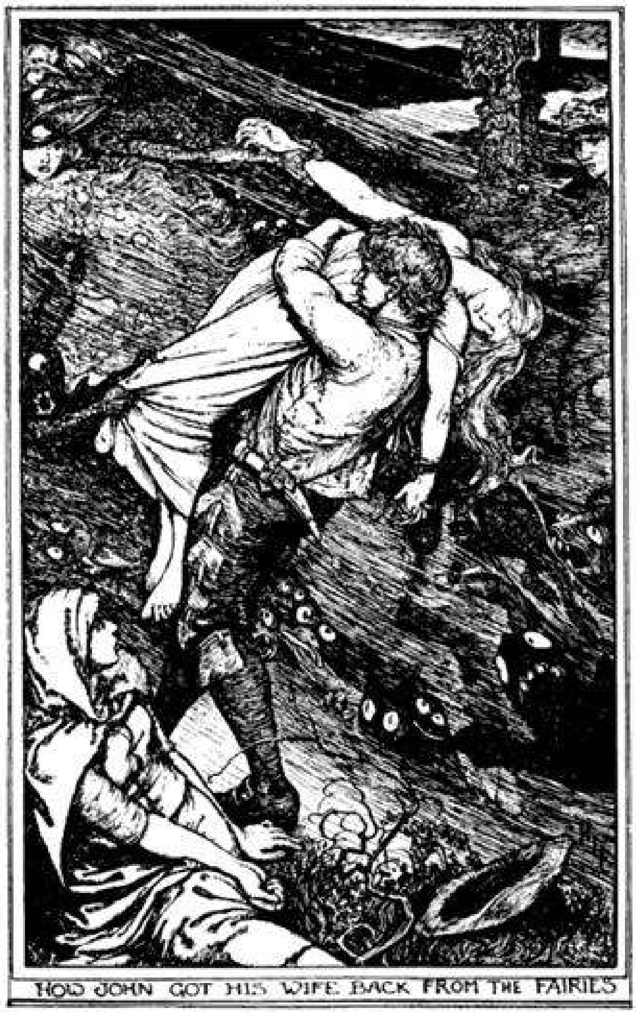

HOW JOHN GOT HIS WIFE BACK FROM THE FAIRIES

It is hard to have anything to do with the good people without getting a mark from them. My brave nurse didn’t escape no more than another. She was one Thursday at the market of Enniscorthy, when what did she see walking among the tubs of butter but the Dark Man, very hungry-looking, and taking a scoop out of one tub and out of another. ‘Oh, sir,’ says she, very foolish, ‘I hope your lady is well, and the baby.’ ‘Pretty well, thank you,’ says he, rather frightened like. ‘How do I look in this new suit?’ says he, getting to one side of her. ‘I can’t see you plain at all, sir,’ says she. ‘Well, now?’ says he, getting round her back to the other side. ‘Musha, indeed, sir, your coat looks no better than a withered dock-leaf.’ ‘Maybe, then,’ says he, ‘it will be different now,’ and he struck the eye next him with a switch.

Friends, she never saw a glimmer after with that one till the day of her death.

‘Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts,’ by Patrick Kennedy.

A LOST PARADISE

In the middle of a great forest there lived a long time ago a charcoal-burner and his wife. They were both young and handsome and strong, and when they got married, they thought work would never fail them. But bad times came, and they grew poorer and poorer, and the nights in which they went hungry to bed became more and more frequent.

Now one evening the king of that country was hunting near the charcoal-burner's hut. As he passed the door, he heard a sound of sobbing, and being a good-natured man he stopped to listen, thinking that perhaps he might be able to give some help.

'Were there ever two people so unhappy!' said a woman's voice. 'Here we are, ready to work like slaves the whole day long, and no work can we get. And it is all because of the curiosity of old mother Eve! If she had only been like *me*, who never want to know anything, we should all have been as happy as kings to-day, with plenty to eat, and warm clothes to wear. Why — —' but at this point a loud knock interrupted her lamentations.

'Who is there?' asked she.

'I!' replied somebody.

'And who is "I"?'

'The king. Let me in.'

Full of surprise the woman jumped up and pulled the bar away from the door. As the king entered, he noticed that there was no furniture in the room at all, not even a chair, so he pretended to be in too great a hurry to see anything around him, and only said, 'You must not let me disturb you, I have no time to stay, but you seemed to be in trouble. Tell me; are you very unhappy?'

'Oh, my lord, we can find no work and have eaten nothing for two days!' answered she. 'Nothing remains for us but to die of hunger.'

'No, no, you shan't do that,' cried the king, 'or if you do, it will be your own fault. You shall come with me into my palace, and you will feel as if you were in Paradise, I promise you. In return, I only ask one thing of you, that you shall obey my orders exactly.'

The charcoal-burner and his wife both stared at him for a moment, as if they could hardly believe their ears; and, indeed, it was not to be wondered at! Then they found their tongues, and exclaimed together:

'Oh, yes, yes, my lord! we will do everything you tell us. How could we be so ungrateful as to disobey you, when you are so kind?'

The king smiled, and his eyes twinkled.

'Well, let us start at once,' said he. 'Lock your door, and put the key in your pocket.'

The woman looked as if she thought this was needless, seeing it was quite, quite certain they would never come back. But she dared not say so, and did as the king told her.

After walking through the forest for a couple of miles, they all three reached the palace, and by the king's orders servants led the charcoal-burner and his wife into rooms filled with beautiful things such as they had never even dreamed of. First they bathed in green marble baths where the water looked like the sea, and then they put on silken clothes that felt soft and pleasant. When they were ready, one of the king's special servants entered, and took them into a small hall, where dinner was laid, and this pleased them better than anything else.

They were just about to sit down to the table when the king walked in.

'I hope you have been attended to properly,' said he, 'and that you will enjoy your dinner. My steward will take care you have all you want, and I wish you to do exactly as you please. Oh, by the bye, there is one thing! You notice that soup-tureen in the middle of the table? Well, be careful on no account to lift the lid. If once you take off the cover, there is an end of your good fortune.' Then bowing to his guests, he left the room.

'Did you hear what he said?' inquired the charcoal-burner in an awe-stricken voice. 'We are to have what we want, and do what we please. Only we must not touch the soup-tureen.'

'No, of course we won't,' answered the wife. 'Why should we wish to? But all the same it is rather odd, and one can't help wondering what is inside.'

For many days life went on like a beautiful dream to the charcoal-burner and his wife. Their beds were so comfortable, they could hardly make up their minds to get up, their clothes were so lovely they could scarcely bring themselves to take them off; their dinners were so good that they found it very difficult to leave off eating. Then outside the palace were gardens filled with rare flowers and fruits and singing birds, or if they desired to go further, a golden coach, painted with wreaths of forget-me-nots and lined with blue satin, awaited their orders. Sometimes it happened that the king came to see them, and he smiled as he glanced at the man, who was getting rosier and plumper each day. But when his eyes rested on the woman, they took on a look which seemed to say 'I knew it,' though this neither the charcoal-burner nor his wife ever noticed.

'Why are you so silent?' asked the man one morning when dinner had passed before his wife had uttered one word. 'A little while ago you used to be chattering all the day long, and now I have almost forgotten the sound of your voice.’

‘Oh, nothing; I did not feel inclined to talk, that was all!’ She stopped, and added carelessly after a pause, ‘Don’t you ever wonder what is in that soup-tureen?’

‘No, never,’ replied the man. ‘It is no affair of ours,’ and the conversation dropped once more, but as time went on, the woman spoke less and less, and seemed so wretched that her husband grew quite frightened about her. As to her food, she refused one thing after another.

‘My dear wife,’ said the man at last, ‘you really *must* eat something. What in the world is the matter with you? If you go on like this you will die.’

‘I would rather die than not know what is in that tureen,’ she burst forth so violently that the husband was quite startled.

‘Is *that* it?’ cried he; ‘are you making yourself miserable because of *that*? Why, you know we should be turned out of the palace, and sent away to starve.’

‘Oh no, we shouldn’t. The king is too good-natured. Of course he didn’t mean a little thing like this! Besides, there is no need to lift the lid off altogether. Just raise one corner so that I may peep. We are quite alone: nobody will ever know.’

The man hesitated: it *did* seem a ‘little thing,’ and if it was to make his wife contented and happy it was well worth the risk. So he took hold of the handle of the cover and raised it very slowly and carefully, while the woman stooped down to peep. Suddenly she started back with a scream, for a small mouse had sprung from the inside of the tureen, and had nearly hit her in the eye. Round and round the room it ran, round and round they both ran after it, knocking down chairs and vases in their efforts to catch the mouse and put it back in the tureen. In the middle of all the noise the door opened, and the mouse ran out between the feet of the king. In one instant both the man and his wife were hiding under the table, and to all appearance the room was empty.

‘You may as well come out,’ said the king, ‘and hear what I have to say.’

‘I know what it is,’ answered the charcoal-burner, hanging his head. ‘The mouse has escaped.’

‘A guard of soldiers will take you back to your hut,’ said the king. ‘Your wife has the key.’

‘Weren’t they *silly*?’ cried the grandchildren of the charcoal-burners when they heard the story. ‘How we wish that *we* had had the chance! *We* should never have wanted to know what was in the soup-tureen!’

From ‘Littérature Orale de l’Auvergne,’ par P. Sébillot.

HOW BRAVE WALTER HUNTED WOLVES

A little back from the high road there stands a house which is called ‘Hemgard.’ Perhaps you remember the two beautiful mountain ash trees by the reddish-brown palings, and the high gate, and the garden with the beautiful barberry bushes which are always the first to become green in spring, and which in summer are weighed down with their beautiful berries.

Behind the garden there is a hedge with tall aspens which rustle in the morning wind, behind the hedge is a road, behind the road is a wood, and behind the wood the wide world.

But on the other side of the garden there is a lake, and beyond the lake is a village, and all around stretch meadows and fields, now yellow, now green.

In the pretty house, which has white window-frames, a neat porch and clean steps, which are always strewn with finely-cut juniper leaves, Walter’s parents live. His brother Frederick, his sister Lotta, old Lena, Jonas, Caro and Bravo, Putte and Murre, and Kuckeliku.

Caro lives in the dog house, Bravo in the stable, Putte with the stableman, Murre a little here and a little there, and Kuckeliku lives in the hen house, that is his kingdom.

Walter is six years old, and he must soon begin to go to school. He cannot read yet, but he can do many other things. He can turn cartwheels, stand on his head, ride see-saw, throw snowballs, play ball, crow like a cock, eat bread and butter and drink sour milk, tear his trousers, wear holes in his elbows, break the crockery in pieces, throw balls through the windowpanes, draw old men on important papers, walk over the flower-beds, eat himself sick with gooseberries, and be well after a whipping. For the rest he has a good heart but a bad memory, and forgets his father’s and his mother’s admonitions, and so often gets into trouble and meets with adventures, as you shall hear, but first of all I must tell you how brave he was and how he hunted wolves.

Once in the spring, a little before Midsummer, Walter heard that there were a great many wolves in the wood, and that pleased him. He was wonderfully brave when he was in the midst of his companions or at home with his brothers and sister, then he used often to say ‘One wolf is nothing, there ought to be at least *four*.’

When he wrestled with Klas Bogenstrom or Frithiof Waderfelt and struck them in the back, he would say: ‘That is what I shall do to a wolf!’ and when he shot arrows at Jonas and they rattled against his sheepskin coat he would say ‘That is how I should shoot you if you were a wolf!’

Indeed, some thought that the brave boy boasted a little; but one must indeed believe him since he said so himself. So Jonas and Lena used to say of him ‘Look, there goes Walter, who shoots the wolves.’ And other boys and girls would say: ‘Look, there goes brave Walter who is brave enough to fight with four.’

There was no one so fully convinced of this as Walter himself, and one day he prepared himself for a real wolf hunt. He took with him his drum, which had holes in one end, since the time he had climbed up on it to reach a cluster of rowan berries, and his tin sabre, which was a little broken because he had with incredible courage fought his way through a whole unfriendly army of gooseberry bushes.

He did not forget to arm himself quite to the teeth with his pop-gun, his bow, and his air-pistol. He had a burnt cork in his pocket to blacken his moustache, and a red cock’s feather to put in his cap to make himself look fierce. He had besides in his trouser pocket a clasp-knife with a bone handle, to cut off the ears of the wolves as soon as he had killed them, for he thought it would be cruel to do that while they were still living.

It was such a good thing that Jonas was going with corn to the mill, for Walter got a seat on the load, while Caro ran barking beside them. As soon as they came to the wood Walter looked cautiously around him to see perchance there was a wolf in the bushes, and he did not omit to ask Jonas if wolves were afraid of a drum. ‘Of course they are’ (that is understood) said Jonas. Thereupon Walter began to beat his drum with all his might while they were going through the wood.

When they came to the mill Walter immediately asked if there had been any wolves in the neighbourhood lately.

‘Alas! yes,’ said the miller, ‘last night the wolves have eaten our fattest ram there by the kiln not far from here.’

‘Ah!’ said Walter, ‘do you think that there were many?’

‘We don’t know,’ answered the miller.

‘Oh, it is all the same,’ said Walter. ‘I only asked so that I should know if I should take Jonas with me.

‘I could manage very well alone with *three*, but if there were more, I might not have time to kill them all before they ran away.’

‘In Walter’s place I should go quite alone, it is more manly,’ said Jonas.

‘No, it is better for you to come, too,’ said Walter. ‘Perhaps there are many.’

‘No, I have not time,’ said Jonas, ‘and besides there are sure not to be more than three. Walter can manage them very well alone.’

‘Yes,’ said Walter, ‘certainly I could; but, you see, Jonas, it might happen that one of them might bite me in the back, and I should have more trouble in killing them. If I only knew that there were not more than two I should not mind, for then I should take one in each hand and give them a good shaking, like Susanna once shook me.’

‘I certainly think that there will not be more than two,’ said Jonas, ‘there are never more than two when they slay children and rams; Walter can very well shake them without me.’

‘But, you see Jonas,’ said Walter, ‘if there are two, it might still happen that one of them escapes and bites me in the leg, for you see I am not so strong in the left hand as in the right. You can very well come with me, and take a good stick in case there are really two. Look, if there is only one, I shall take him so with both my hands and throw him living on to his back, and he can kick as much as he likes, I shall hold him fast.’

‘Now, when I really think over the thing,’ said Jonas, ‘I am almost sure there will not be more than one. What would two do with one ram? There will certainly not be more than one.’

‘But you should come with me all the same, Jonas,’ said Walter. ‘You see I can very well manage one, but I am not quite accustomed to wolves yet, and he might tear holes in my new trousers.’

‘Well, just listen,’ said Jonas, ‘I am beginning to think that Walter is not so brave as people say. First of all Walter would fight against four, and then against three, then two, and then one, and now Walter wants help with one. Such a thing must never be; what would people say? Perhaps they would think that Walter is a coward?’

‘That’s a lie,’ said Walter, ‘I am not at all frightened, but it is more amusing when there are two. I only want someone who will see how I strike the wolf and how the dust flies out of his skin.’

‘Well, then, Walter can take the miller’s little Lisa with him. She can sit on a stone and look on,’ said Jonas.

‘No, she would certainly be frightened,’ said Walter, ‘and how would it do for a girl to go wolf-hunting? Come with me, Jonas, and you shall have the skin, and I will be content with the ears and the tail.’

‘No, thank you,’ said Jonas, ‘Walter can keep the skin for himself. Now I see quite well that he is frightened. Fie, shame on him!’

This touched Walter’s pride very near. ‘I shall show that I am not frightened,’ he said; and so he took his drum, sabre, cock’s feather, clasp-knife, pop-gun and air-pistol, and went off quite alone to the wood to hunt wolves.

It was a beautiful evening, and the birds were singing in all the branches. Walter went very slowly and cautiously. At every step he looked all round him to see if perchance there was anything lurking behind the stones. He quite thought something moved away there in the ditch. Perhaps it was a wolf. It is better for me to beat the drum a little before I go there, thought Walter.

Br-r-r, so he began to beat his drum. Then something moved again. Caw! caw! a crow flew up from the ditch. Walter immediately regained courage. ‘It was well I took my drum with me,’ he thought, and went straight on with courageous steps. Very soon he came quite close to the kiln, where the wolves had killed the ram. But the nearer he came the more dreadful he thought the kiln looked. It was so grey and old. Who knew how many wolves there might be hidden there? Perhaps the very ones which killed the ram were still sitting there in a corner. Yes, it was not at all safe here, and there were no other people to be seen in the neighbourhood. It would be horrible to be eaten up here in the daylight, thought Walter to himself; and the more he thought about it the uglier and grayer the old kiln looked, and the more horrible and dreadful it seemed to become the food of wolves.

‘Shall I go back and say that I struck one wolf and it escaped?’ thought Walter. ‘Fie!’ said his conscience, ‘Do you not remember that a lie is one of the worst sins, both in the sight of God and man? If you tell a lie to-day and say you struck a wolf, to-morrow surely it will eat you up.’

‘No, I will go to the kiln,’ thought Walter, and so he went. But he did not go quite near. He went only so near that he could see the ram’s blood which coloured the grass red, and some tufts of wool which the wolves had torn from the back of the poor animal.

It looked so dreadful.

‘I wonder what the ram thought when they ate him up,’ thought Walter to himself; and just then a cold shiver ran through him from his collar right down to his boots.

‘It is better for me to beat the drum,’ he thought to himself again, and so he began to beat it. But it sounded horrid, and an echo came out from the kiln that seemed almost like the howl of a wolf. The drum-sticks stiffened in Walter’s hands, and he thought now they are coming. . . . !

Yes, sure enough, just then a shaggy, reddish-brown wolf’s head looked out from under the kiln!

What did Walter do now? Yes, the brave Walter who alone could manage four, threw his drum far away, took to his heels and ran, and ran as fast as he could back to the mill.

But, alas! the wolf ran after him. Walter looked back; the wolf was quicker than he and only a few steps behind him. Then Walter ran faster. But fear got the better of him, he neither heard nor saw anything more. He ran over sticks, stones and ditches; he lost drum-sticks, sabre, bow, and air-pistol, and in his terrible hurry he tripped over a tuft of grass. There he lay, and the wolf jumped on to him. . . .

It was a gruesome tale! Now you may well believe that it was all over with Walter and all his adventures. That would have been a pity. But do not be surprised if it was not quite so bad as that, for the wolf was quite a friendly one. He certainly jumped on to Walter, but he only shook his coat and rubbed his nose against his face; and Walter shrieked. Yes, he shrieked terribly!

Happily Jonas heard his cry of distress, for Walter was quite near the mill now, and he ran and helped him up.

‘What has happened?’ he asked. ‘Why did Walter scream so terribly?’

‘A wolf! A wolf!’ cried Walter, and that was all he could say.

‘Where is the wolf?’ said Jonas, ‘I don’t see any wolf.’

‘Take care, he is here, he has bitten me to death,’ groaned Walter.

Then Jonas began to laugh; yes, he laughed so that he nearly burst his skin belt.

Well, well, was that the wolf? Was that the wolf which Walter was to take by the neck and shake and throw down on its back, no matter how much it struggled? Just look a little closer at him, he is your old friend, your own good old Caro. I quite expect he found a leg of the ram in the kiln. When Walter beat his drum, Caro crept out, and when Walter ran away, Caro ran after him, as he so often does when Walter wants to romp and play.

‘Down, Caro, you ought to be rather ashamed to have put such a great hero to flight!’

Walter got up feeling very foolish.

‘Down, Caro!’ he said, both relieved and annoyed.

‘It was only a dog, then if it had been a wolf I certainly should have killed him. . . .’

‘If Walter would listen to my advice, and boast a little less, and do a little more,’ said Jonas, consolingly. ‘Walter is not a coward is he?’

‘I! You shall see Jonas when we next meet a bear. You see I like so much better to fight with bears.’

‘Indeed!’ laughed Jonas. ‘Are you at it again?’

‘Dear Walter, remember that it is only cowards who boast; a really brave man never talks of his bravery.’

From Z. Topelius.

THE KING OF THE WATERFALLS

When the young king of Easaidh Ruadh came into his kingdom, the first thing he thought of was how he could amuse himself best. The sports that all his life had pleased him best suddenly seemed to have grown dull, and he wanted to do something he had never done before. At last his face brightened.

‘I know!’ he said, ‘I will go and play a game with the Gruagach. Now the Gruagach was a kind of wicked fairy, with long curly brown hair, and his house was not very far from the king’s house.

But though the king was young and eager, he was also prudent, and his father had told him on his deathbed to be very careful in his dealings with the ‘good people,’ as the fairies were called. Therefore before going to the Gruagach, the king sought out a wise man of the country side.

‘I am wanting to play a game with the curly-haired Gruagach,’ said he.

‘Are you, indeed?’ replied the wizard. ‘If you will take my counsel, you will play with someone else.’

‘No; I will play with the Gruagach,’ persisted the king.

‘Well, if you must, you must, I suppose,’ answered the wizard; ‘but if you win that game, ask as a prize the ugly crop-headed girl that stands behind the door.’

‘I will,’ said the king.

So before the sun rose he got up and went to the house of the Gruagach, who was sitting outside.

‘O king, what has brought you here to-day?’ asked the Gruagach. ‘But right welcome you are, and more welcome will you be still if you will play a game with me.’

‘That is just what I want,’ said the king, and they played; and sometimes it seemed as if one would win, and sometimes the other, but in the end it was the king who was the winner.

‘And what is the prize that you will choose?’ inquired the Gruagach.

‘The ugly crop-headed girl that stands behind the door,’ replied the king.

‘Why, there are twenty others in the house, and each fairer than she,’ exclaimed the Gruagach.

‘Fairer they may be, but it is she whom I wish for my wife, and none other,’ and the Gruagach saw that the king’s mind was set upon her, so he entered his house, and bade all the maidens in it come out one by one, and pass before the king.

One by one they came; tall and short, dark and fair, plump and thin, and each said, ‘I am she whom you want. You will be foolish indeed if you do not take me.’

But he took none of them, neither short nor tall, dark nor fair, plump nor thin, till at the last the crop-headed girl came out.

‘This is mine,’ said the king, though she was so ugly that most men would have turned from her. ‘We will be married at once, and I will carry you home.’ And married they were, and they set forth across a meadow to the king’s house. As they went, the bride stooped and picked a sprig of shamrock, which grew amongst the grass, and when she stood upright again her ugliness had all gone, and the most beautiful woman that ever was seen stood by the king’s side.

The next day, before the sun rose, the king sprang from his bed, and told his wife he must have another game with the Gruagach.

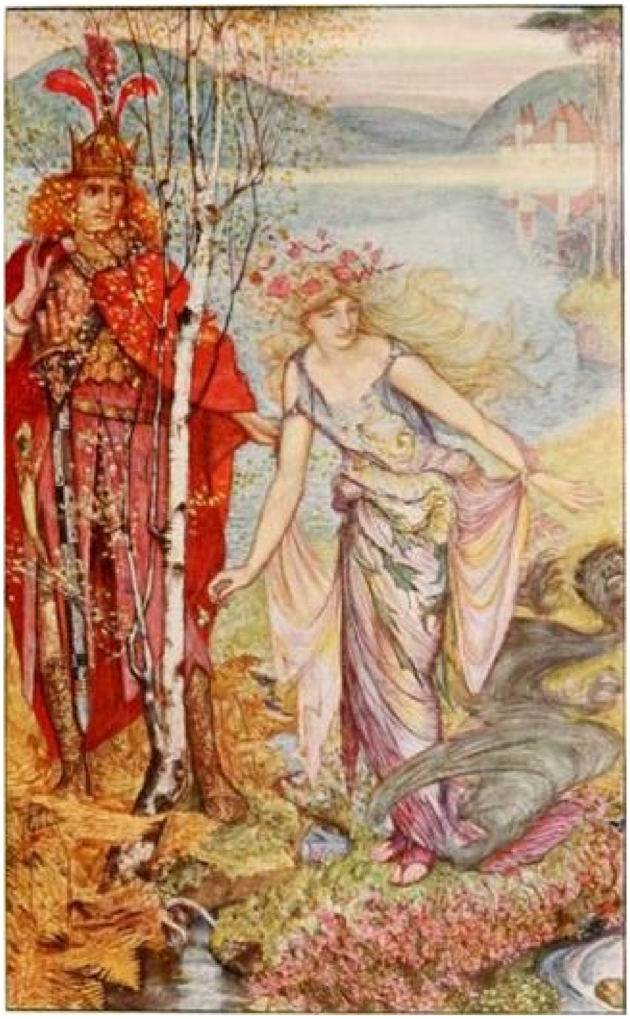

“When she stood upright her ugliness had all gone.”

‘If my father loses that game, and you win it,’ said she, ‘accept nothing for your prize but the shaggy young horse with the stick saddle.’

‘I will do that,’ answered the king, and he went.

‘Does your bride please you?’ asked the Gruagach, who was standing at his own door.

‘Ah! does she not!’ answered the king quickly, ‘otherwise I should be hard indeed to please. But will you play a game to-day?’

‘I will,’ replied the Gruagach, and they played, and sometimes it seemed as if one would win, and sometimes the other, but in the end the king was the winner.

‘What is the prize that you will choose?’ asked the Gruagach.

‘The shaggy young horse with the stick saddle,’ answered the king, but he noticed that the Gruagach held his peace, and his brow was dark as he led out the horse from the stable. Rough was its mane and dull was its skin, but the king cared nothing for that, and throwing his leg over the stick saddle, rode away like the wind.

On the third morning the king got up as usual before dawn, and as soon as he had eaten food he prepared to go out, when his wife stopped him. ‘I would rather,’ she said, ‘that you did not go to play with the Gruagach, for though twice *you* have won yet some day *he* will win, and then he will put trouble upon you.’

‘Oh! I *must* have one more game,’ cried the king; ‘just this one,’ and he went off to the house of the Gruagach.

Joy filled the heart of the Gruagach when he saw him coming, and without waiting to talk they played their game. Somehow or other, the king’s strength and skill had departed from him, and soon the Gruagach was the victor.

‘Choose your prize,’ said the king, when the game was ended, ‘but do not be too hard on me, or ask what I cannot give.’

‘The prize I choose,’ answered the Gruagach, ‘is that the crop-headed creature should take thy head and thy neck, if thou dost not get for me the Sword of Light that hangs in the house of the king of the oak windows.’

‘I will get it,’ replied the young man bravely, but as soon as he was out of sight of the Gruagach, he pretended no more, and his face grew dark and his steps lagging.

‘You have brought nothing with you to-night,’ said the queen, who was standing on the steps awaiting him. She was so beautiful that the king was fain to smile when he looked at her, but then he remembered what had happened, and his heart grew heavy again.

‘What is it? What is the matter? Tell me thy sorrow that I may bear it with thee, or, it may be, help thee!’ Then the king told her everything that had befallen him, and she stroked his hair the while.

‘That is nothing to grieve about,’ she said when the tale was finished. ‘You have the best wife in Erin, and the best horse in Erin. Only do as I bid you, and all will go well.’ And the king suffered himself to be comforted.

He was still sleeping when the queen rose and dressed herself, to make everything ready for her husband’s journey, and the first place she went to was the stable, where she fed and watered the shaggy brown horse and put the saddle on it. Most people thought this saddle was of wood, and did not see the little sparkles of gold and silver that were hidden in it. She strapped it lightly on the horse’s back, and then led it down before the house, where the king waited.

‘Good luck to you and victories in all your battles,’ she said, as she kissed him before he mounted. ‘I need not be telling you anything. Take the advice of the horse, and see you obey it.’

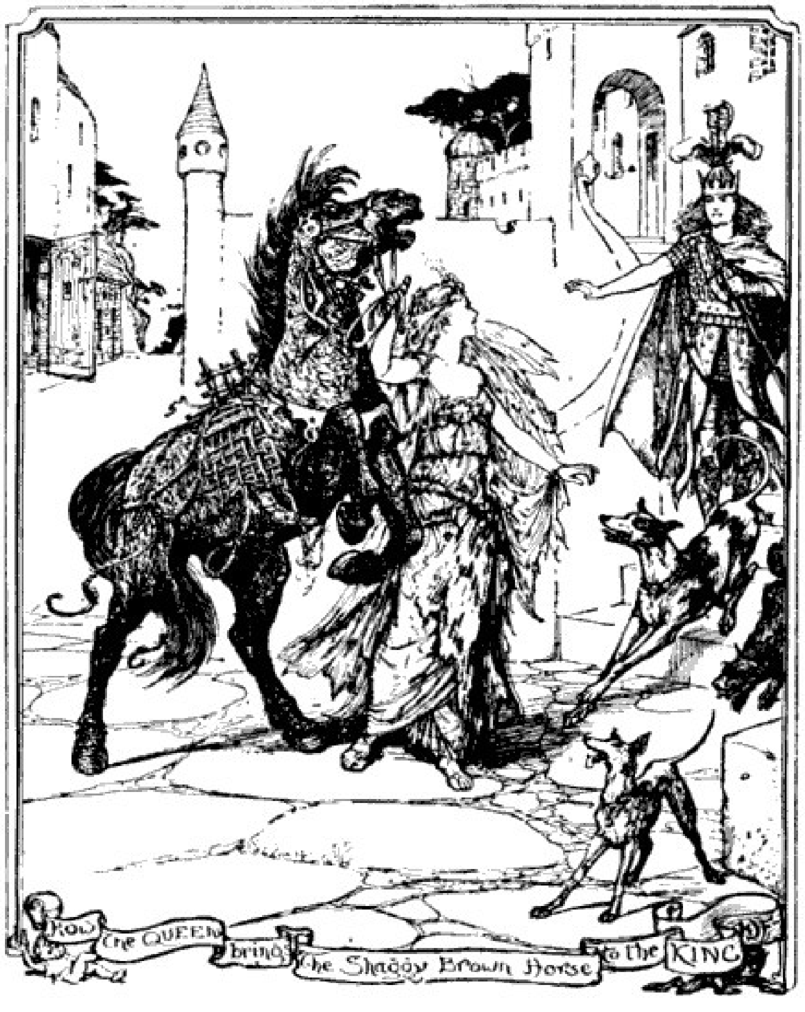
How the QUEEN brings the Shaggy Brown Horse to the KING

So he waved his hand and set out on his journey, and the wind was not swifter than the brown horse — no, not even the March wind which raced it, and could not catch it. But the horse never stopped nor looked behind, till in the dark of the night he reached the castle of the king of the oak windows.

‘We are at the end of the journey,’ said the horse, ‘and you will find the Sword of Light in the king’s own chamber. If it comes to you without scrape or sound, the token is a good one. At this hour the king is eating his supper, and the room is empty, so none will see you. The sword has a knob at the end, and take heed that when you grasp it, you draw it softly out of its sheath. Now go! I will be under the window!’

Stealthily the young man crept along the passage, pausing now and then to make sure that no man was following him, and entered the king’s chamber. A strange white line of light told him where the sword was, and crossing the room on tiptoe, he seized the knob, and drew it slowly out of the sheath. The king could hardly breathe with excitement lest it should make some noise and bring all the people in the castle running to see what was the matter. But the sword slid swiftly and silently along the case till only the point was left touching it. Then a low sound was heard, as of the edge of a knife touching a silver plate, and the king was so startled that he nearly dropped the knob.

‘Quick! quick!’ cried the horse, and the king scrambled hastily through the small window, and leapt into the saddle.

‘He has heard and he will follow,’ said the horse; ‘but we have a good start.’ And on they sped, on and on, leaving the winds behind them.

At length the horse slackened its pace. ‘Look and see who is behind you,’ it said, and the young man looked.

‘I see a swarm of brown horses racing madly after us,’ he answered.

‘We are swifter than those,’ said the horse, and flew on again.

‘Look again, O king! Is anyone coming now?’

‘A swarm of black horses, and one has a white face, and on that horse a man is seated. He is the king of the oak windows.’

‘That is my brother, and swifter still than I,’ said the horse, ‘and he will fly past me with a rush. Then you must have your sword ready, and take off the head of the man who sits on him, as he turns and looks at you. And there is no sword in the world that will cut off his head, save only that one.’

‘I will do it,’ replied the king, and he listened with all his might, till he judged that the white-faced horse was close to him. Then he sat up very straight and made ready.

The next moment there was a rushing noise as of a mighty tempest, and the young man caught a glimpse of a face turned toward him. Almost blindly he struck, not knowing whether he had killed or only wounded the rider. But the head rolled off, and was caught in the brown horse’s mouth.

‘Jump on my brother, the black horse, and go home as fast as you can, and I will follow as quickly as I may,’ cried the brown horse; and leaping forward the king alighted on the back of the black horse, but so near the tail that he almost fell off again. But he stretched out his arm and clutched wildly at the mane and pulled himself into the saddle.

Before the sky was streaked with red he was at home again, and the queen was sitting waiting till he arrived, for sleep was far from her eyes. Glad was she to see him enter, but she said little, only took her harp and sang softly the songs which he loved, till he went to bed, soothed and happy.

It was broad day when he woke, and he sprang up saying,

‘Now I must go to the Gruagach, to find out if the spells he laid on me are loose.’

‘Have a care,’ answered the queen, ‘for it is not with a smile as on the other days that he will greet you. Furiously he will meet you, and will ask you in his wrath if you have got the sword, and you will reply that you have got it. Next he will want to know how you got it, and to this you must say that but for the knob you had not got it at all. Then he will raise his head to look at the knob, and you must stab him in the mole which is on the right side of his neck; but take heed, for if you miss the mole with the point of the sword, then my death and your death are certain. He is brother to the king of the oak windows, and sure will he be that the king must be dead, or the sword would not be in your hands.’ After that she kissed him, and bade him good speed.

‘Didst thou get the sword?’ asked the Gruagach, when they met in the usual place.

‘I got the sword.’

‘And how didst thou get it?’

‘If it had not had a knob on the top, then I had not got it,’ answered the king.

‘Give me the sword to look at,’ said the Gruagach, peering forward; but like a flash the king had drawn it from under his nose and pierced the mole, so that the Gruagach rolled over on the ground.

‘Now I shall be at peace,’ thought the king. But he was wrong, for when he reached home he found his servants tied together back to back, with cloths bound round their mouths, so that they could not speak. He hastened to set them free, and he asked who had treated them in so evil a manner.

‘No sooner had you gone than a great giant came, and dealt with us as you see, and carried off your wife and your two horses,’ said the men.

‘Then my eyes will not close nor will my head lay itself down till I fetch my wife and horses home again,’ answered he, and he stooped and noted the tracks of the horses on the grass, and followed after them till he arrived at the wood when the darkness fell.

‘I will sleep here,’ he said to himself, ‘but first I will make a fire.’ And he gathered together some twigs that were lying about, and then took two dry sticks and rubbed them together till the fire came, and he sat by it.

The twigs crackled and the flame blazed up, and a slim yellow dog pushed through the bushes and laid his head on the king’s knee, and the king stroked his head.

‘Wuf, wuf,’ said the dog. ‘Sore was the plight of thy wife and thy horses when the giant drove them last night through the forest.’

‘That is why I have come;’ answered the king, and suddenly his heart seemed to fail him and he felt that he could not go on.’

‘I cannot fight that giant,’ he cried, looking at the dog with a white face. ‘I am afraid, let me turn homewards.’

‘No, don’t do that,’ replied the dog. ‘Eat and sleep, and I will watch over you.’ So the king ate and lay down, and slept till the sun waked him.

‘It is time for you to start on your way,’ said the dog, ‘and if danger presses, call on me, and I will help you.’

‘Farewell, then,’ answered the king; ‘I will not forget that promise,’ and on he went, and on, and on, till he reached a tall cliff with many sticks lying about.

‘It is almost night,’ he thought; ‘I will make a fire and rest,’ and thus he did, and when the flames blazed up, the hoary hawk of the grey rock flew on to a bough above him.

‘Sore was the plight of thy wife and thy horses when they passed here with the giant,’ said the hawk.

‘Never shall I find them,’ answered the king, ‘and nothing shall I get for all my trouble.’

‘Oh, take heart,’ replied the hawk, ‘things are never so bad but what they might be worse. Eat and sleep and I will watch thee,’ and the king did as he was bidden by the hawk, and by the morning he felt brave again.

‘Farewell,’ said the bird, ‘and if danger presses call to me, and I will help you.’

On he walked, and on, and on, till as the dusk was falling he came to a great river, and on the bank there were sticks lying about.

‘I will make myself a fire,’ he thought, and thus he did, and by and bye a smooth brown head peered at him from the water, and a long body followed it.

‘Sore was the plight of thy wife and thy horses when they passed the river last night,’ said the otter.

‘I have sought them and not found them,’ answered the king, ‘and nought shall I get for my trouble.’

‘Be not so downcast,’ replied the otter; ‘before noon to-morrow thou shalt behold thy wife. But eat and sleep and I will watch over thee.’ So the king did as the otter bid him, and when the sun rose he woke and saw the otter lying on the bank.

‘Farewell,’ cried the otter as he jumped into the water, ‘and if danger presses, call to me and I will help you.’

For many hours the king walked, and at length he reached a high rock, which was rent in two by a great earthquake. Throwing himself on the ground he looked over the side, and right at the very bottom he saw his wife and his horses. His heart gave a great bound, and all his fears left him, but he was forced to be patient, for the sides of the rock were smooth, and not even a goat could find foothold. So he got up again, and made his way round through the wood, pushing by trees, scrambling over rocks, wading through streams, till at last he was on flat ground again, close to the mouth of the cavern.

His wife gave a shriek of joy when he came in, and then burst into tears, for she was tired and very frightened. But her husband did not understand why she wept, and he was tired and bruised from his climb, and a little cross too.

‘You give me but a sorry welcome,’ grumbled he, ‘when I have half-killed myself to get to you.’

‘Do not heed him,’ said the horses to the weeping woman, ‘put him in front of us, where he will be safe, and give him food for he is weary.’ And she did as the horses told her, and he ate and rested, till by and bye a long shadow fell over them, and their hearts beat with fear, for they knew that the giant was coming.

‘I smell a stranger,’ cried the giant, as he entered, but it was dark inside the chasm, and he did not see the king, who was crouching down between the feet of the horses.

‘A stranger, my lord! no stranger ever comes here, not even the sun!’ and the king’s wife laughed gaily as she went up to the giant and stroked the huge hand which hung down by his side.

‘Well, I perceive nothing, certainly,’ answered he, ‘but it is very odd. However, it is time that the horses were fed’; and he lifted down an armful of hay from a shelf of rock and held out a handful to each animal, who moved forward to meet him, leaving the king behind. As soon as the giant’s hands were near their mouths they each made a snap, and began to bite them, so that his groans and shrieks might have been heard a mile off. Then they wheeled round and kicked him till they could kick no more. At length the giant crawled away, and lay quivering in a corner, and the queen went up to him.

‘Poor thing! poor thing!’ she said, ‘they seem to have gone mad; it was awful to behold.’

‘If I had had my soul in my body they would certainly have killed me,’ groaned the giant.

‘It was lucky indeed,’ answered the queen; ‘but tell me, where is thy soul, that I may take care of it?’

‘Up there, in the Bonnach stone,’ answered the giant, pointing to a stone which was balanced loosely on an edge of rock. ‘But now leave me, that I may sleep, for I have far to go to-morrow.’

Soon snores were heard from the corner where the giant lay, and then the queen lay down too, and the horses, and the king was hidden between them, so that none could see him.

Before the dawn the giant rose and went out, and immediately the queen ran up to the Bonnach stone, and tugged and pushed at it till it was quite steady on its ledge, and could not fall over. And so it was in the evening when the giant came home; and when they saw his shadow, the king crept down in front of the horses.

‘Why, what have you done to the Bonnach stone?’ asked the giant.

‘I feared lest it should fall over, and be broken, with your soul in it,’ said the queen, ‘so I put it further back on the ledge.

‘It is not there that my soul is,’ answered he, ‘it is on the threshold. But it is time the horses were fed’; and he fetched the hay, and gave it to them, and they bit and kicked him as before, till he lay half dead on the ground.

Next morning he rose and went out, and the queen ran to the threshold of the cave, and washed the stones, and pulled up some moss and little flowers that were hidden in the crannies, and by and bye when dusk had fallen the giant came home.

‘You have been cleaning the threshold,’ said he.

‘And was I not right to do it, seeing that your soul is in it?’ asked the queen.

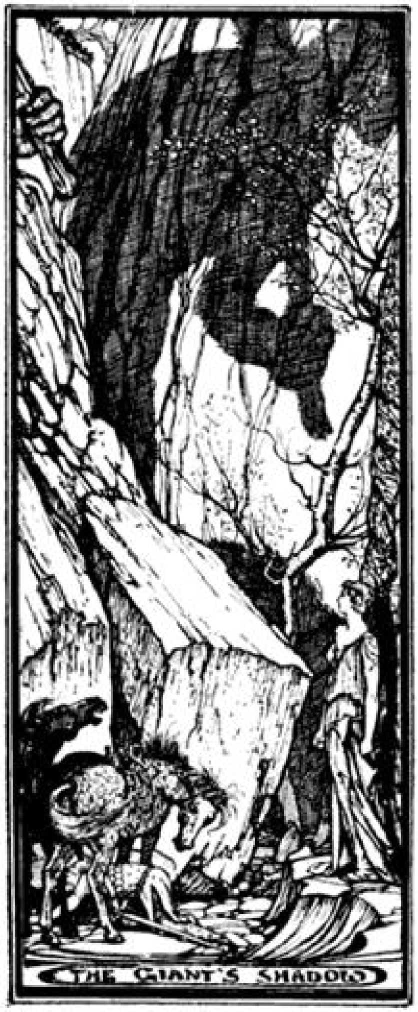

‘It is not there that my soul is,’ answered the giant. ‘Under the threshold is a stone, and under the stone is a sheep, and in the sheep’s body is a duck, and in the duck is an egg, and in the egg is my soul. But it is late, and I must feed the horses’; and he brought them the hay, but they only bit and kicked him as before, and if his soul had been within him, they would have killed him outright.

It was still dark when the giant got up and went his way, and then the king and the queen ran forward to take up the threshold, while the horses looked on. But sure enough! just as the giant had said, underneath the threshold was the flagstone, and they pulled and tugged till the stone gave way. Then something jumped out so suddenly, that it nearly knocked them down, and as it fled past, they saw it was a sheep.

‘If the slim yellow dog of the greenwood were only here, he would soon have that sheep,’ cried the king; and as he spoke, the slim yellow dog appeared from the forest, with the sheep in his mouth. With a blow from the king, the sheep fell dead, and they opened its body, only to be blinded by a rush of wings as the duck flew past.

‘If the hoary hawk of the rock were only here he would soon have that duck,’ cried the king; and as he spoke the hoary hawk was seen hovering above them, with the duck in his mouth. They cut off the duck’s head with a swing of the king’s sword, and took the egg out of its body, but in his triumph the king held it carelessly, and it slipped from his hand, and rolled swiftly down the hill right into the river.

‘If the brown otter of the stream were only here, he would soon have that egg,’ cried the king; and the next minute there was the brown otter, dripping with water, holding the egg in his mouth. But beside the brown otter, a huge shadow came stealing along — the shadow of the giant.

The king stood staring at it, as if he were turned into stone, but the queen snatched the egg from the otter and crushed it between her two hands. And after that the shadow suddenly shrank and was still, and they knew that the giant was dead, because they had found his soul.

Next day they mounted the two horses and rode home again, visiting their friends the brown otter and the hoary hawk and the slim yellow dog by the way.

From ‘West Highland Tales.’

A FRENCH PUCK

Among the mountain pastures and valleys that lie in the centre of France there dwelt a mischievous kind of spirit, whose delight it was to play tricks on everybody, and particularly on the shepherds and the cowboys. They never knew when they were safe from him, as he could change himself into a man, woman or child, a stick, a goat, a ploughshare. Indeed, there was only one thing whose shape he could not take, and that was a needle. At least, he *could* transform himself into a needle, but try as he might he never was able to imitate the hole, so every woman would have found him out at once, and this he knew.

Now the hour oftenest chosen by this naughty sprite (whom we will call Puck) for performing his pranks was about midnight, just when the shepherds and cowherds, tired out with their long day's work, were sound asleep. Then he would go into the cowsheds and unfasten the chains that fixed each beast in its own stall, and let them fall with a heavy clang to the ground. The noise was so loud that it was certain to awaken the cowboys, however fatigued they might be, and they dragged themselves wearily to the stable to put back the chains. But no sooner had they returned to their beds than the same thing happened again, and so on till the morning. Or perhaps Puck would spend his night in plaiting together the manes and tails of two of the horses, so that it would take the grooms hours of labour to get them right in the morning, while Puck, hidden among the hay in the loft, would peep out to watch them, enjoying himself amazingly all the time.

One evening more than eighty years ago a man named William was passing along the bank of a stream when he noticed a sheep who was bleating loudly. William thought it must have strayed from the flock, and that he had better take it home with him till he could discover its owner. So he went up to where it was standing, and as it seemed so tired that it could hardly walk, he hoisted it on his shoulders and continued on his way. The sheep was pretty heavy, but the good man was merciful and staggered along as best he could under his load.

'It is not much further,' he thought to himself as he reached an avenue of walnut trees, when suddenly a voice spoke out from over his head, and made him jump.

'Where are you?' said the voice, and the sheep answered:

'Here on the shoulders of a donkey.'

In another moment the sheep was standing on the ground and William was running towards home as fast as his legs would carry him. But as he went, a laugh, which yet was something of a bleat, rang in his ears, and though he tried not to hear, the words reached him, ‘Oh, dear! What fun I have had, to be sure!’

Puck was careful not always to play his tricks in the same place, but visited one village after another, so that everyone trembled lest he should be the next victim. After a bit he grew tired of cowboys and shepherds, and wondered if there was no one else to give him some sport. At length he was told of a young couple who were going to the nearest town to buy all that they needed for setting up house. Quite certain that they would forget something which they could not do without, Puck waited patiently till they were jogging along in their cart on their return journey, and changed himself into a fly in order to overhear their conversation.

For a long time it was very dull — all about their wedding day next month, and who were to be invited. This led the bride to her wedding dress, and she gave a little scream.

‘Just think! Oh! how *could* I be so stupid! I have forgotten to buy the different coloured reels of cotton to match my clothes!’

‘Dear, dear!’ exclaimed the young man. ‘That *is* unlucky; and didn’t you tell me that the dressmaker was coming in to-morrow?’

‘Yes, I did,’ and then suddenly she gave another little scream, which had quite a different sound from the first. ‘Look! Look!’

The bridegroom looked, and on one side of the road he saw a large ball of thread of all colours — of all the colours, that is, of the dresses that were tied on to the back of the cart.

‘Well, that is a wonderful piece of good fortune,’ cried he, as he sprang out to get it. ‘One would think a fairy had put it there on purpose.’

‘Perhaps she has,’ laughed the girl, and as she spoke she seemed to hear an echo of her laughter coming from the horse, but of course that was nonsense.

The dressmaker was delighted with the thread that was given her. It matched the stuffs so perfectly, and never tied itself in knots, or broke perpetually, as most thread did. She finished her work much quicker than she expected, and the bride said she was to be sure to come to the church and see her in her wedding dress.

There was a great crowd assembled to witness the ceremony, for the young people were immense favourites in the neighbourhood, and their parents were very rich. The doors were open, and the bride could be seen from afar, walking under the chestnut avenue.

‘What a beautiful girl!’ exclaimed the men. ‘What a lovely dress!’ whispered the women. But just as she entered the church and took the hand of the bridegroom, who was waiting for her, a loud noise was heard.

‘Crick! crack! Crick! crack!’ and the wedding garments fell to the ground, to the great confusion of the wearer.

Not that the ceremony was put off for a little thing like that. Cloaks in profusion were instantly offered to the young bride, but she was so upset that she could hardly keep from tears. One of the guests, more curious than the rest, stayed behind to examine the dress, determined, if she could, to find out the cause of the disaster.

‘The thread *must* have been rotten,’ she said to herself. ‘I will see if I can break it.’ But search as she would she could find none.

The thread had vanished.

From ‘Littérature Orale de l’Auvergne,’ par Paul Sébillot.

THE THREE CROWNS

There was once a king who had three daughters. The two eldest were very proud and quarrelsome, but the youngest was as good as they were bad. Well, three princes came to court them, and two of them were exactly like the eldest ladies, and one was just as lovable as the youngest. One day they were all walking down to a lake that lay at the bottom of the lawn when they met a poor beggar. The king wouldn't give him anything, and the eldest princesses wouldn't give him anything, nor their sweethearts; but the youngest daughter and her true love did give him something, and kind words along with it, and that was better than all.

When they got to the edge of the lake what did they find but the beautifullest boat you ever saw in your life; and says the eldest, 'I'll take a sail in this fine boat'; and says the second eldest, 'I'll take a sail in this fine boat'; and says the youngest, 'I won't take a sail in that fine boat, for I am afraid it's an enchanted one.' But the others persuaded her to go in, and her father was just going in after her, when up sprung on the deck a little man only seven inches high, and ordered him to stand back. Well, all the men put their hands to their swords; and if the same swords were only playthings, they weren't able to draw them, for all strength that was left their arms. *Seven Inches* loosened the silver chain that fastened the boat, and pushed away, and after grinning at the four men, says he to them, 'Bid your daughters and your brides farewell for awhile. You,' says he to the youngest, 'needn't fear, you'll recover your princess all in good time, and you and she will be as happy as the day is long. Bad people, if they were rolling stark naked in gold, would not be rich. Good-bye.' Away they sailed, and the ladies stretched out their hands, but weren't able to say a word.

Well, they weren't crossing the lake while a cat 'ud be lickin' her ear, and the poor men couldn't stir hand or foot to follow them. They saw *Seven Inches* handing the three princesses out of the boat, and letting them down by a basket into a draw-well, but king nor princes ever saw an opening before in the same place. When the last lady was out of sight, the men found the strength in their arms and legs again. Round the lake they ran, and never drew rein till they came to the well and windlass; and there was the silk rope rolled on the axle, and the nice white basket hanging to it. 'Let me down,' says the youngest prince. 'I'll die or recover them again.' 'No,' says the second daughter's sweetheart, 'it is my turn first.' And says the other, 'I am the eldest.' So they gave way to him, and in he got into the basket, and down they let him. First they lost sight of him, and then, after winding off a hundred perches of the silk rope, it slackened, and they stopped turning. They waited two hours, and then they went to dinner, because there was no pull made at the rope.

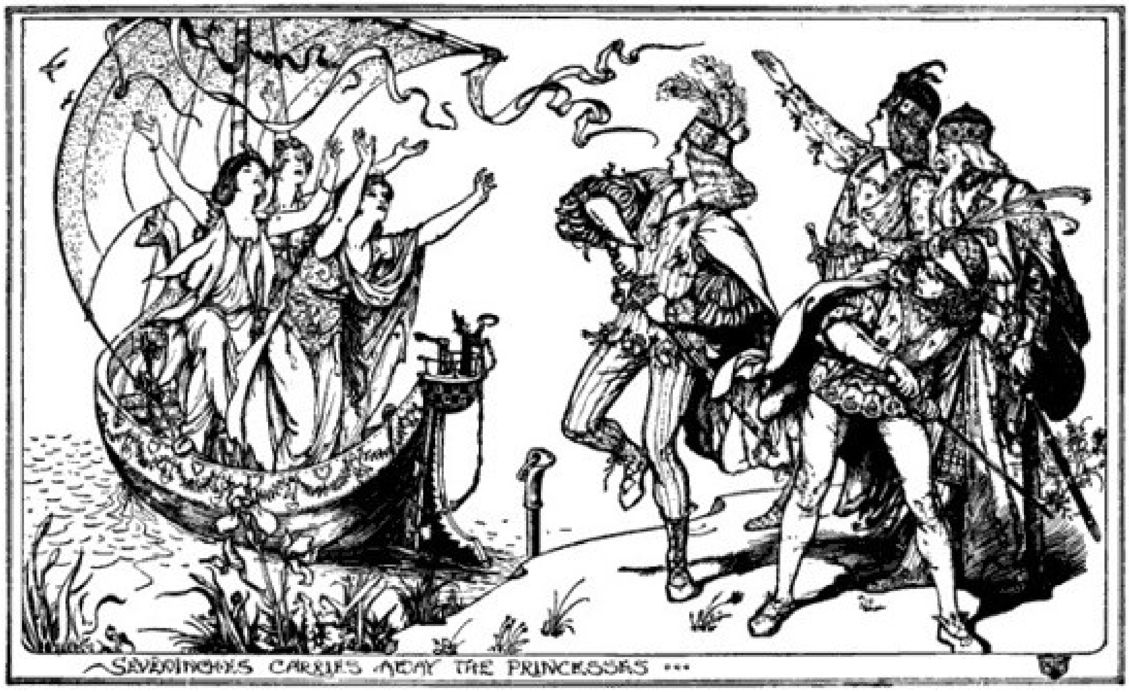

SAVDRINCHAS CARRIES AWAY THE PRINCESSES ...

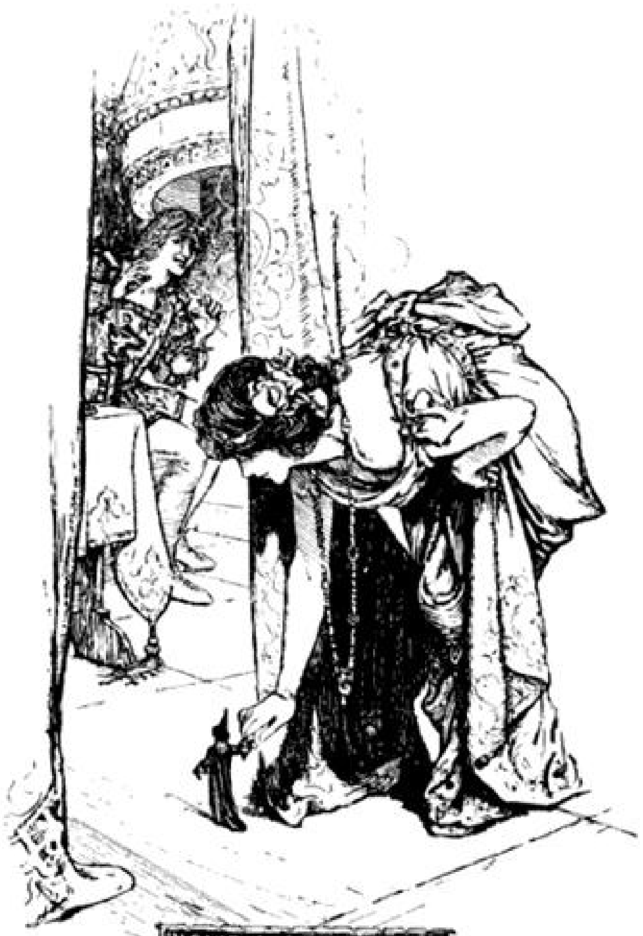

IN CAME SEVEN INCHES HAND IN HAND WITH THE YOUNGEST SISTER

Guards were set till next morning, and then down went the second prince, and sure enough, the youngest of all got himself let down on the third day. He went down perches and perches, while it was as dark about him as if he was in a big pot with a cover on. At last he saw a glimmer far down, and in a short time he felt the ground. Out he came from the big lime-kiln, and, lo! and behold you, there was a wood, and green fields, and a castle in a lawn, and a bright sky over all. ‘It’s in Tir-na-n-Oge I am,’ says he. ‘Let’s see what sort of people are in the castle.’ On he walked, across fields and lawn, and no one was there to keep him out or let him into the castle; but the big hall-door was wide open. He went from one fine room to another that was finer, and at last he reached the handsomest of all, with a table in the middle. And such a dinner as was laid upon it! The prince was hungry enough, but he was too mannerly to eat without being invited. So he sat by the fire, and he did not wait long till he heard steps, and in came *Seven Inches* with the youngest sister by the hand. Well, prince and princess flew into one another’s arms, and says the little man, says he, ‘Why aren’t you eating?’ ‘I think, sir,’ says the prince, ‘it was only good manners to wait to be asked.’ ‘The other princes didn’t think so,’ says he. ‘Each o’ them fell to without leave, and only gave me the rough words when I told them they were making more free than welcome. Well, I don’t think they feel much hunger now. There they are, good *marble* instead of flesh and blood,’ says he, pointing to two statues, one in one corner, and the other in the other corner of the room. The prince was frightened, but he was afraid to say anything, and *Seven Inches* made him sit down to dinner between himself and his bride; and he’d be as happy as the day is long, only for the sight of the stone men in the corner. Well, that day went by, and when the next came, says *Seven Inches* to him, ‘Now, you’ll have to set out that way,’ pointing to the sun, ‘and you’ll find the second princess in a giant’s castle this evening, when you’ll be tired and hungry, and the eldest princess to-morrow evening; and you may as well bring them here with you. You need not ask leave of their masters; and perhaps if they ever get home, they’ll look on poor people as if they were flesh and blood like themselves.’

Away went the prince, and bedad! it’s tired and hungry he was when he reached the first castle, at sunset. Oh, wasn’t the second princess glad to see him! and what a good supper she gave him. But she heard the giant at the gate, and she hid the prince in a closet. Well, when he came in, he snuffed, an’ he snuffed, and says he, ‘*By* the life, I smell fresh meat.’ ‘Oh,’ says the princess, ‘it’s only the calf I got killed to-day.’ ‘Ay, ay,’ says he, ‘is supper ready?’ ‘It is,’ says she; and before he rose from the table he ate three-quarters of a calf, and a flask of wine. ‘I think,’ says he, when all was done, ‘I smell fresh meat still.’ ‘It’s sleepy you are,’ says she; ‘go to bed.’ ‘When will you marry me?’ says the giant. ‘You’re putting me off too long.’ ‘St. Tibb’s Eve,’ says she. ‘I wish I knew how far off that is,’ says he; and he fell asleep, with his head in the dish.

Next day, he went out after breakfast, and she sent the prince to the castle where the eldest sister was. The same thing happened there; but when the giant was snoring, the princess wakened up the prince, and they saddled two steeds in the stables and rode into the field on them. But the horses’ heels struck the stones outside the gate, and up got the giant and strode after them. He roared and he shouted, and the more he shouted, the faster ran the horses, and just as the day was breaking he was only twenty perches behind. But the prince didn’t leave the castle of *Seven Inches* without being provided with something good. He reined in his steed, and flung a short, sharp knife over his shoulder, and up sprung a thick wood between the giant and themselves. They caught the wind that blew before them, and the wind that blew behind them did not catch them. At last they were near the castle where the other sister lived; and there she was, waiting for them under a high hedge, and a fine steed under her.

But the giant was now in sight, roaring like a hundred lions, and the other giant was out in a moment, and the chase kept on. For every two springs the horses gave, the giants gave three, and at last they were only seventy perches off. Then the prince stopped again, and flung the second knife behind him. Down went all the flat field, till there was a quarry between them a quarter of a mile deep, and the bottom filled with black water; and before the giants could get round it, the prince and princesses were inside the kingdom of the great magician, where the high thorny hedge opened of itself to everyone that he chose to let in. There was joy enough between the three sisters, till the two eldest saw their lovers turned into stone. But while they were shedding tears for them, *Seven Inches* came in, and touched them with his rod. So they were flesh, and blood, and life once more, and there was great hugging and kissing, and all sat down to breakfast, and *Seven Inches* sat at the head of the table.

When breakfast was over, he took them into another room, where there was nothing but heaps of gold, and silver, and diamonds, and silks, and satins; and on a table there was lying three sets of crowns: a gold crown was in a silver crown, and that was lying in a copper crown. He took up one set of crowns, and gave it to the eldest princess; and another set, and gave it to the second youngest princess; and another, and gave it to the youngest of all; and says he, ‘Now you may all go to the bottom of the pit, and you have nothing to do but stir the basket, and the people that are watching above will draw you up. But remember, ladies, you are to keep your crowns safe, and be married in them, all the same day. If you be married separately, or if you be married without your crowns, a curse will follow — mind what I say.’

So they took leave of him with great respect, and walked arm-in-arm to the bottom of the draw-well. There was a sky and a sun over them, and a great high wall, covered with ivy, rose before them, and was so high they could not see to the top of it; and there was an arch in this wall, and the bottom of the draw-well was inside the arch. The youngest pair went last; and says the princess to the prince, ‘I’m sure the two princes don’t mean any good to you. Keep these crowns under your cloak, and if you are obliged to stay last, don’t get into the basket, but put a big stone, or any heavy thing inside, and see what will happen.’

As soon as they were inside the dark cave, they put in the eldest princess first, and stirred the basket, and up she went. Then the basket was let down again, and up went the second princess, and then up went the youngest; but first she put her arms round her prince’s neck, and kissed him, and cried a little. At last it came to the turn of the youngest prince, and instead of going into the basket he put in a big stone. He drew on one side and listened, and after the basket was drawn up about twenty perches, down came it and the stone like thunder, and the stone was broken into little bits.

Well, the poor prince had nothing for it but to walk back to the castle; and through it and round it he walked, and the finest of eating and drinking he got, and a bed of bog-down to sleep on, and long walks he took through gardens and lawns, but not a sight could he get, high or low, of *Seven Inches*. He, before a week, got tired of it, he was so lonesome for his true love; and at the end of a month he didn't know what to do with himself.

One morning he went into the treasure room, and took notice of a beautiful snuff-box on the table that he didn't remember seeing there before. He took it in his hands and opened it, and out *Seven Inches* walked on the table. 'I think, prince,' says he, 'you're getting a little tired of my castle?' 'Ah!' says the other, 'if I had my princess here, and could see you now and then, I'd never know a dismal day.' 'Well, you're long enough here now, and you're wanted there above. Keep your bride's crowns safe, and whenever you want my help, open this snuff-box. Now take a walk down the garden, and come back when you're tired.'

The prince was going down a gravel walk with a quickset hedge on each side, and his eyes on the ground, and he was thinking of one thing and another. At last he lifted his eyes, and there he was outside of a smith's gate, that he often passed before, about a mile away from the palace of his betrothed princess. The clothes he had on him were as ragged as you please, but he had his crowns safe under his old cloak.

Then the smith came out, and says he, 'It's a shame for a strong, big fellow like you to be lazy, and so much work to be done. Are you any good with hammer and tongs? Come in and bear a hand, an I'll give you diet and lodging, and a few pence when you earn them.' 'Never say't twice,' says the prince. 'I want nothing but to be busy.' So he took the hammer, and pounded away at the red-hot bar that the smith was turning on the anvil to make into a set of horse-shoes.

They hadn't been long at work when a tailor came in, and he sat down and began to talk. 'You all heard how the two princesses were loth to be married till the youngest would be ready with her crowns and her sweetheart. But after the windlass loosened *accidentally* when they were pulling up her bridegroom that was to be, there was no more sign of a well, or a rope, or a windlass, than there is on the palm of your hand. So the princes that were courting the eldest ladies wouldn't give peace or ease to their lovers nor the king till they got consent to the marriage, and it was to take place this morning. Myself went down out o' curiosity, and to be sure I was delighted with the grand dresses of the two brides, and the three crowns on their heads — gold, silver, and copper, one inside the other. The youngest was standing by mournful enough, and all was ready. The two bridegrooms came in as proud and grand as you please, and up they were walking to the altar rails, when the boards opened two yards wide under their feet and down they went among the dead men and the coffins in the vaults. Oh, such shrieks as the ladies gave! and such running and racing and peeping down as there was! but the clerk soon opened the door of the vault, and up came the two princes, their fine clothes covered an inch thick with cobwebs and mould.

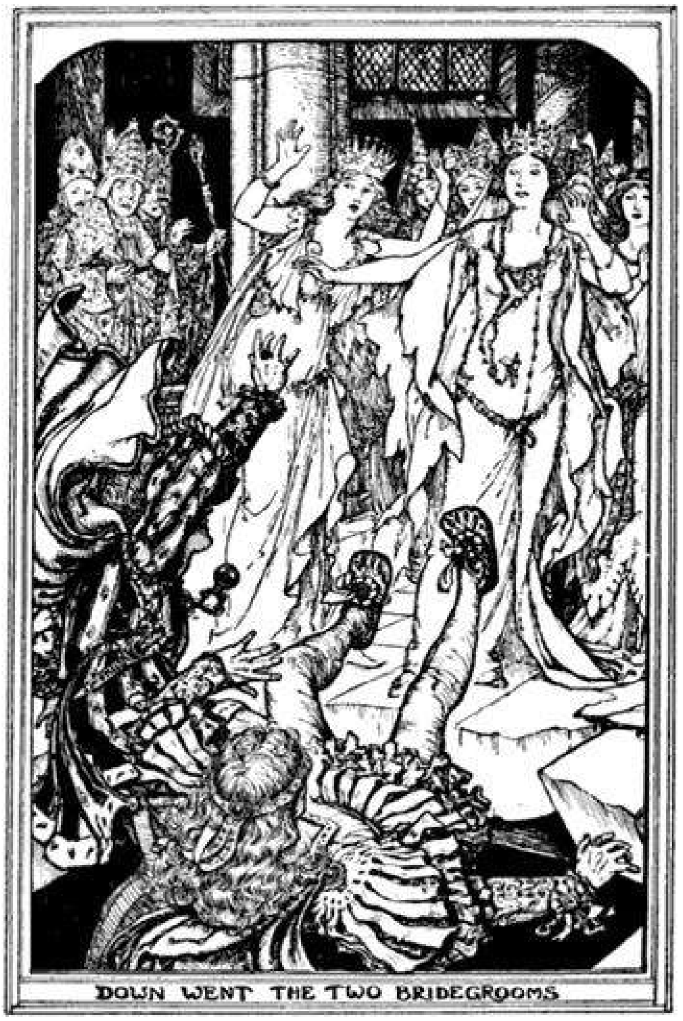

DOWN WENT THE TWO BRIDEGROOMS

So the king said they should put off the marriage. ‘For,’ says he, ‘I see there is no use in thinking of it till the youngest gets her three crowns, and is married with the others. I’ll give my youngest daughter for a wife to whoever brings three crowns to me like the others; and if he doesn’t care to be married, some other one will, and I’ll make his fortune.’

‘I wish,’ says the smith, ‘I could do it; but I was looking at the crowns after the princesses got home, and I don’t think there’s a black or a white smith on the face of the earth that could imitate them.’ ‘Faint heart never won fair lady,’ says the prince. ‘Go to the palace and ask for a quarter of a pound of gold, a quarter of a pound of silver, and a quarter of a pound of copper. Get one crown for a pattern, and my head for a pledge, I’ll give you out the very things that are wanted in the morning.’ ‘Are you in earnest?’ says the smith. ‘Faith, I am so,’ says he. ‘Go! you can’t do worse than lose.’

To make a long story short, the smith got the quarter of a pound of gold, and the quarter of a pound of silver, and the quarter of a pound of copper, and gave them and the pattern crown to the prince. He shut the forge door at nightfall, and the neighbours all gathered in the yard, and they heard him hammering, hammering, hammering, from that to daybreak; and every now and then he’d throw out through the window bits of gold, silver, and copper; and the idlers scrambled for them, and cursed one another, and prayed for the good luck of the workman.

Well, just as the sun was thinking to rise, he opened the door, and brought out the three crowns he got from his true love, and such shouting and huzzaing as there was! The smith asked him to go along with him to the palace, but he refused; so off set the smith, and the whole townland with him; and wasn’t the king rejoiced when he saw the crowns! ‘Well,’ says he to the smith, ‘you’re a married man. What’s to be done?’ ‘Faith, your majesty, I didn’t make them crowns at all. It was a big fellow that took service with me yesterday.’ ‘Well, daughter, will you marry the fellow that made these crowns?’ ‘Let me see them first, father,’ said she; but when she examined them she knew them right well, and guessed it was her true love that sent them. ‘I will marry the man that these crowns came from,’ says she.

‘Well,’ says the king to the eldest of the two princes, ‘go up to the smith’s forge, take my best coaches, and bring home the bridegroom.’ He did not like doing this, he was so proud, but he could not refuse. When he came to the forge he saw the prince standing at the door, and beckoned him over to the coach. ‘Are you the fellow,’ says he, ‘that made these crowns?’ ‘Yes,’ says the other. ‘Then,’ says he, ‘maybe you’d give yourself a brushing, and get into that coach; the king wants to see you. I pity the princess.’ The young prince got into the carriage, and while they were on the way he opened the snuff-box, and out walked *Seven Inches*, and stood on his thigh. ‘Well,’ says he, ‘what trouble is on you now?’ ‘Master,’ says the other, ‘please let me go back to my forge, and let this carriage be filled with paving stones.’ No sooner said than done. The prince was sitting in his forge, and the horses wondered what was after happening to the carriage.

When they came into the palace yard, the king himself opened the carriage door, for respect to his new son-in-law. As soon as he turned the handle, a shower of small stones fell on his powdered wig and his silk coat, and down he fell under them. There was great fright and some laughter, and the king, after he wiped the blood from his forehead, looked very cross at the eldest prince. ‘My lord,’ says he, ‘I’m very sorry for this *accident*, but I’m not to blame. I saw the young smith get into the carriage, and we never stopped a minute since.’ ‘It’s uncivil you were to him. Go,’ says he to the other prince, ‘and bring the young smith here, and be polite.’ ‘Never fear,’ says he.

But there’s some people that couldn’t be good-natured if they tried, and not a bit civiller was the new messenger than the old, and when the king opened the carriage door a second time, it’s a shower of mud that came down on him. ‘There’s no use,’ says he, ‘going on this way. The fox never got a better messenger than himself.’

So he changed his clothes, and washed himself, and out he set to the prince’s forge and asked him to sit along with himself. The prince begged to be allowed to sit in the other carriage, and when they were half-way he opened his snuff-box. ‘Master,’ says he, ‘I’d wish to be dressed now according to my rank.’ ‘You shall be that,’ says *Seven Inches*. ‘And now I’ll bid you farewell. Continue as good and kind as you always were; love your wife; and that’s all the advice I’ll give you.’ So *Seven Inches* vanished; and when the carriage door was opened in the yard, out walks the prince as fine as hands could make him, and the first thing he did was to run over to his bride and embrace her.

Every one was full of joy but the two other princes. There was not much delay about the marriages, and they were all celebrated on the one day. Soon after, the two elder couples went to their own courts, but the youngest pair stayed with the old king, and they were as happy as the happiest married couple you ever heard of in a story.

From ‘West Highland Tales.’

THE STORY OF A VERY BAD BOY

Once upon a time there lived in a little village in the very middle of France a widow and her only son, a boy about fifteen, whose name was Antoine, though no one ever called him anything but Touéno-Bouéno. They were very poor indeed, and their hut shook about their ears on windy nights, till they expected the walls to fall in and crush them, but instead of going to work as a boy of his age ought to do, Touéno-Bouéno did nothing but lounge along the street, his eyes fixed on the ground, seeing nothing that went on round him.

‘You are very, very stupid, my dear child,’ his mother would sometimes say to him, and then she would add with a laugh, ‘Certainly *you* will never catch a wolf by the tail.’

One day the old woman bade Antoine go into the forest and collect enough dry leaves to make beds for herself and him. Before he had finished it began to rain heavily, so he hid himself in the hollow trunk of a tree, where he was so dry and comfortable that he soon fell fast asleep. By and bye he was awakened by a noise which sounded like a dog scratching at the door, and he suddenly felt frightened, *why* he did not know. Very cautiously he raised his head, and right above him he saw a big hairy animal, coming down tail foremost.

‘It is the wolf that they talk so much about,’ he said to himself, and he made himself as small as he could and shrunk into a corner.

The wolf came down the inside of the tree, slowly, slowly; Antoine felt turned to stone, so terrified was he, and hardly dared to breathe. Suddenly an idea entered his mind, which he thought might save him still. He remembered to have heard from his mother that a wolf could neither bend his back nor turn his head, so as to look behind him, and quick as lightning he stretched up his hand, and seizing the wolf’s tail, pulled it towards him.

Then he left the tree and dragged the animal to his mother’s house.

‘Mother, you have often declared that I was too stupid to catch a wolf by the tail. Now see,’ he cried triumphantly.

‘Well, well, wonders will never cease,’ answered the good woman, who took care to keep at a safe distance. ‘But as you really *have* got him, let us see if we can’t put him to some use. Fetch the skin of the ram which died last week out of the chest, and we will sew the wolf up in it. He will make a splendid ram, and to-morrow we will drive him to the fair and sell him.’

Very likely the wolf, who was cunning and clever, may have understood what she said, but he thought it best to give no sign, and suffered the skin to be sewn upon him.

‘I can always get away if I choose,’ thought he, ‘it is better not to be in a hurry’; so he remained quite still while the skin was drawn over his head, which made him very hot and uncomfortable, and resisted the temptation to snap off the fingers or noses that were so close to his mouth.

The fair was at its height next day when Touéno-Bouéno arrived with his wolf in ram’s clothing. All the farmers crowded round him, each offering a higher price than the last. Never had they beheld such a beautiful beast, said they, and at last, after much bargaining, he was handed over to three brothers for a good sum of money.

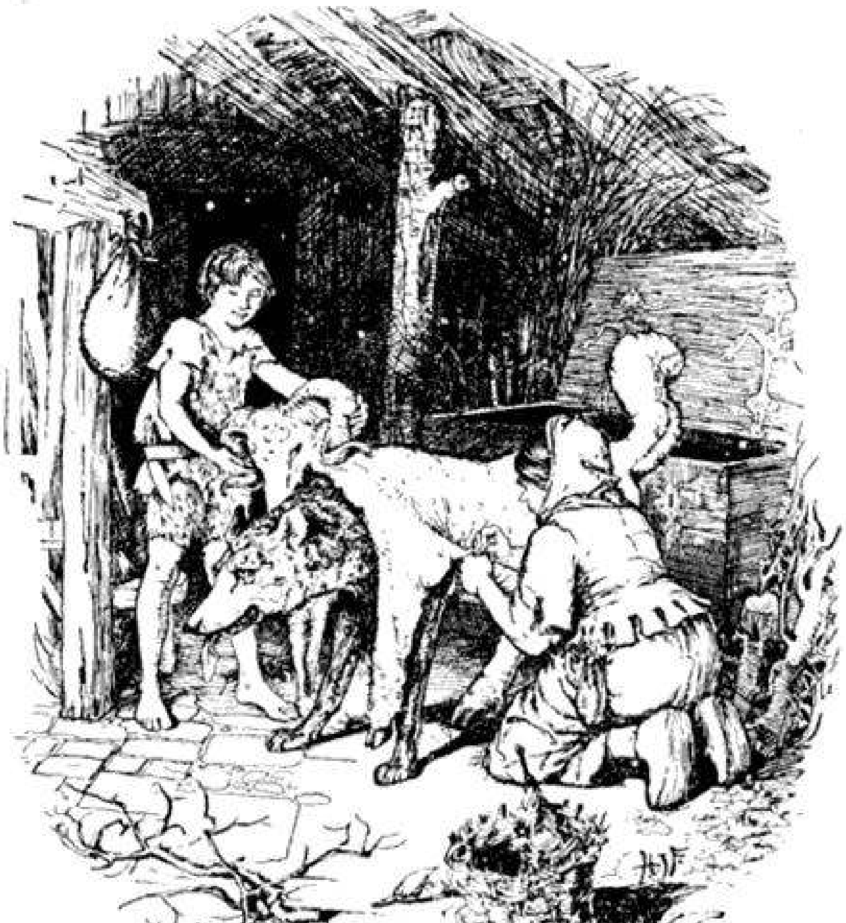

He will make a Splendid Ram

It happened that these three brothers owned large flocks of sheep, though none so large and fine as the one they had just bought.

‘My flock is the nearest,’ observed the eldest brother; ‘we will leave him in the fold for the night, and to-morrow we will decide which pastures will be best for him.’ And the wolf grinned as he listened, and held up his head a little higher than before.

Early next morning the young farmer began to go his rounds, and the sheep-fold was the first place he visited. To his horror, the sheep were all stretched out dead before him, except one, which the wolf had eaten, bones and all. Instantly the truth flashed upon him. It was no ram that lay curled up in the corner pretending to be asleep (for in reality he could bend back and turn his head as much as he liked), but a wolf who was watching him out of the corner of his eye, and might spring upon him at any moment. So the farmer took no notice, and only thought that here was a fine chance of revenging himself on his next brother for a trick which he had played, and merely told him that the ram would not eat the grass in that field, and it might be well to drive him to the pasture by the river, where his own flock was feeding. The second brother eagerly swallowed the bait, and that evening the wolf was driven down to the field where the young man kept the sheep which had been left him by his father. By the next morning they also were all dead, but the second brother likewise held his peace, and allowed the sheep which belonged to the youngest to share the fate of the other two. Then they met and confessed to each other their disasters, and resolved to take the animal as fast as possible back to Touéno-Bouéno, who should get a sound thrashing.

Antoine was sitting on a plum tree belonging to a neighbour, eating the ripe fruit, when he saw the three young farmers coming towards him. Swinging himself down, he flew home to the hut, crying breathlessly, ‘Mother, mother, the farmers are close by with the wolf. They have found out all about it, and will certainly kill me, and perhaps you too. But if you do as I tell you, I may be able to save us both. Lie down on the floor, and pretend to be dead, and be sure not to speak, whatever happens.’

Thus when the three brothers, each armed with a whip, entered the hut a few seconds later, they found a woman extended on the floor, and Touéno kneeling at her side, whistling loudly into her ears.

‘What are you doing now, you rascal?’ asked the eldest.

‘What am I doing? Oh, my poor friends, I am the most miserable creature in the world! I have lost the best of mothers, and I don’t know what will become of me,’ and he hid his face in his hands and sobbed again.

‘But what are you whistling like that for?’

‘Well, it is the only chance. This whistle has been known to bring the dead back to life, and I hoped—’ here he buried his face in his hands again, but peeping between his fingers he saw that the brothers had opened their six eyes as wide as saucers.

‘Look!’ he suddenly exclaimed with a cry, ‘Look! I am sure I felt her body move! And now her nostrils are twitching. Ah! the whistle has not lost its power after all,’ and stooping down, Touéno whistled more loudly than before, so that the old woman’s feet and hands showed signs of life, and she soon was able to lift her head.

The farmers were so astonished at her restoration, that it was some time before they could speak. At length the eldest turned to the boy and said:

‘Now listen to me. There is no manner of doubt that you are a young villain. You sold us a ram knowing full well that it was a wolf, and we came here to-day to pay you out for it. But if you will give us that whistle, we will pardon what you have done, and will leave you alone.’

‘It is my only treasure, and I set great store by it,’ answered the boy, pretending to hesitate. ‘But as you wish for it so much, well, I suppose I can’t refuse,’ and he held out the whistle, which the eldest brother put in his pocket.

Armed with the precious whistle, the three brothers returned home full of joy, and as they went the youngest said to the others, ‘I have such a good idea! Our wives are all lazy and grumbling, and make our lives a burden. Let us give them a lesson, and kill them as soon as we get in. Of course we can restore them to life at once, but they will have had a rare fright.’

‘Ah, how clever you are,’ answered the other two. ‘Nobody else would have thought of that.’

So gaily the three husbands knocked down their three wives, who fell dead to the ground. Then one by one the men tried the whistle, and blew so loudly that it seemed as if their lungs would burst, but the women lay stark and stiff and never moved an eyelid. The husbands grew pale and cold, for they had never dreamed of this, nor meant any harm, and after a while they understood that their efforts were of no use, and that once more the boy had tricked them. With stern faces they rose to their feet, and taking a large sack they retraced their steps to the hut.

This time there was no escape. Touéno had been asleep, and only opened his eyes as they entered. Without a word on either side they thrust him into the sack, and tying up the mouth, the eldest threw it over his shoulders. After that they all set out to the river, where they intended to drown the boy.

But the river was a long way off, and the day was very hot and Antoine was heavy, heavier than a whole sheaf of corn. They carried him in turns, but even so they grew very tired and thirsty, and when a little tavern came in sight on the roadside, they thankfully flung the sack down on a bench and entered to refresh themselves. They never noticed that a beggar was sitting in the shade of the end of the bench, but Touéno’s sharp ears caught the sound of someone eating, and as soon as the farmers had gone into the inn, he began to groan softly.

‘What is the matter?’ asked the beggar drawing a little nearer. ‘Why have they shut you up, poor boy?’

‘Because they wanted to make me a bishop, and I would not consent,’ answered Touéno.

‘Dear me,’ exclaimed the beggar, ‘yet it isn’t such a bad thing to be a bishop.’

‘I don’t say it is,’ replied the young rascal, ‘but I should never like it. However, if *you* have any fancy for wearing a mitre, you need only untie the sack, and take my place.’

‘I should like nothing better,’ said the man, as he stooped to undo the big knot.

So it was the beggar and not Touéno-Buéno who was flung into the water.

The next morning the three wives were buried, and on returning from the cemetery, their husbands met Touéno-Buéno driving a magnificent flock of sheep. At the sight of him the three farmers stood still with astonishment.

‘What! you scoundrel!’ they cried at last, ‘we drowned you yesterday, and to-day we find you again, as well as ever!’

‘It does seem odd, doesn’t it?’ answered he. ‘But perhaps you don’t know that beneath this world there lies another yet more beautiful and far, far richer. Well, it was there that you sent me when you flung me into the river, and though I felt a little strange at first, yet I soon began to look about me, and to see what was happening. There I noticed that close to the place I had fallen, a sheep fair was being held, and a bystander told me that every day horses or cattle were sold somewhere in the town. If I had only had the luck to be thrown into the river on the side of the horse fair I might have made my fortune! As it was, I had to content myself with buying these sheep, which you can get for nothing.’

‘And do you know exactly the spot in the river which lies over the horse fair?’

‘As if I did not know it, when I have seen it with my own eyes.’

‘Then if you do not want us to avenge our dead flocks and our murdered wives, you will have to throw us into the river just over the place of the horse fair.’

‘Very well; only you must get three sacks and come with me to that rock which juts into the river. I will throw you in from there, and you will fall nearly on to the horses’ backs.’

So he threw them in, and as they were never seen again, no one ever knew into which fair they had fallen.

From ‘Littérature Orale de l’Auvergne,’ par Paul Sébillot.

THE BROWN BEAR OF NORWAY

There was once a king in Ireland, and he had three daughters, and very nice princesses they were. And one day, when they and their father were walking on the lawn, the king began to joke with them, and to ask them whom they would like to be married to. ‘I’ll have the king of Ulster for a husband,’ says one; ‘and I’ll have the king of Munster,’ says another; ‘and,’ says the youngest, ‘I’ll have no husband but the Brown Bear of Norway.’ For a nurse of hers used to be telling her of an enchanted prince that she called by that name, and she fell in love with him, and his name was the first name on her tongue, for the very night before she was dreaming of him. Well, one laughed, and another laughed, and they joked with the princess all the rest of the evening. But that very night she woke up out of her sleep in a great hall that was lighted up with a thousand lamps; the richest carpets were on the floor, and the walls were covered with cloth of gold and silver, and the place was full of grand company, and the very beautiful prince she saw in her dreams was there, and it wasn’t a moment till he was on one knee before her, and telling her how much he loved her, and asking her wouldn’t she be his queen. Well, she hadn’t the heart to refuse him, and married they were in the same evening.

‘Now, my darling,’ says he, when they were left by themselves, ‘you must know that I am under enchantment. A sorceress, that had a beautiful daughter, wished me for her son-in-law; but the mother got power over me, and when I refused to wed her daughter she made me take the form of a bear by day, and I was to continue so till a lady would marry me of her own free will, and endure five years of great trials after.’

Well, when the princess woke in the morning, she missed her husband from her side, and spent the day very sadly. But as soon as the lamps were lighted in the grand hall, where she was sitting on a sofa covered with silk, the folding doors flew open, and he was sitting by her side the next minute. So they spent another happy evening, but he warned her that whenever she began to tire of him, or ceased to have faith in him, they would be parted for ever, and he’d be obliged to marry the witch’s daughter.

She got used to find him absent by day, and they spent a happy twelvemonth together, and at last a beautiful little boy was born; and happy as she was before, she was twice as happy now, for she had her child to keep her company in the day when she couldn’t see her husband.

At last, one evening, when herself, and himself, and her child were sitting with a window open because it was a sultry night, in flew an eagle, took the infant’s sash in his beak, and flew up in the air with him. She screamed, and was going to throw herself out through the window after him, but the prince caught her, and looked at her very seriously. She bethought of what he said soon after their marriage, and she stopped the cries and complaints that were on her tongue. She spent her days very lonely for another twelvemonth, when a beautiful little girl was sent to her. Then she thought to herself she’d have a sharp eye about her this time; so she never would allow a window to be more than a few inches open.

But all her care was in vain. Another evening, when they were all so happy, and the prince dandling the baby, a beautiful greyhound stood before them, took the child out of the father’s hand, and was out of the door before you could wink. This time she shouted and ran out of the room, but there were some of the servants in the next room, and all declared that neither child nor dog passed out. She felt, somehow, as if it was her husband’s fault, but still she kept command over herself, and didn’t once reproach him.

When the third child was born she would hardly allow a window or a door to be left open for a moment; but she wasn’t the nearer to keep the child to herself. They were sitting one evening by the fire, when a lady appeared standing by them. The princess opened her eyes in a great fright and stared at her, and while she was doing so, the lady wrapped a shawl round the baby that was sitting in its father’s lap, and either sank through the ground with it or went up through the wide chimney. This time the mother kept her bed for a month.

‘My dear,’ said she to her husband, when she was beginning to recover, ‘I think I’d feel better if I was to see my father and mother and sisters once more. If you give me leave to go home for a few days, I’d be glad.’ ‘Very well,’ said he, ‘I will do that, and whenever you feel inclined to return, only mention your wish when you lie down at night.’ The next morning when she awoke she found herself in her own old chamber in her father’s palace. She rang the bell, and in a short time she had her mother and father and married sisters about her, and they laughed till they cried for joy at finding her safe back again.

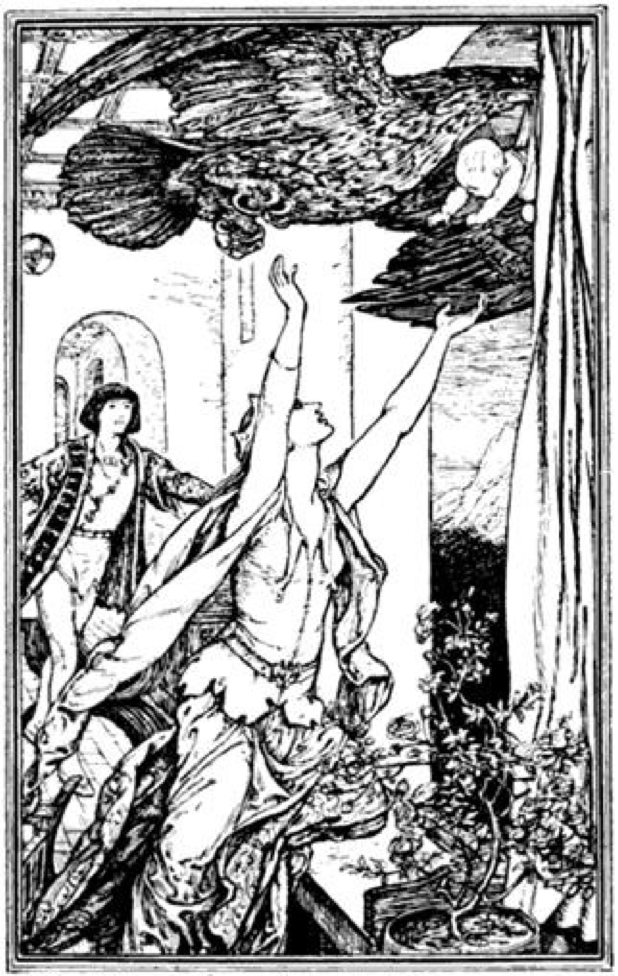

The Princess loses her first Baby.

In time she told them all that happened to her, and they didn’t know what to advise her to do. She was as fond of her husband as ever, and said she was sure that he couldn’t help letting the children go; but still she was afraid beyond the world to have another child torn from her. Well, the mother and sisters consulted a wise woman that used to bring eggs to the castle, for they had great faith in her wisdom. She said the only plan was to secure the bear’s skin that the prince was obliged to put on every morning, and get it burned, and then he couldn’t help being a man night and day, and the enchantment would be at an end.

So they all persuaded her to do that, and she promised she would; and after eight days she felt so great a longing to see her husband again that she made the wish the same night, and when she woke three hours after, she was in her husband’s palace, and he himself was watching over her. There was great joy on both sides, and they were happy for many days.

Now she began to think how she never minded her husband leaving her in the morning, and how she never found him neglecting to give her a sweet drink out of a gold cup just as she was going to bed.

One night she contrived not to drink any of it, though she pretended to do so; and she was wakeful enough in the morning, and saw her husband passing out through a panel in the wainscot, though she kept her eyelids nearly closed. The next night she got a few drops of the sleepy posset that she saved the evening before put into her husband's night drink, and that made him sleep sound enough. She got up after midnight, passed through the panel, and found a beautiful brown bear's hide hanging in the corner. Then she stole back, and went down to the parlour fire, and put the hide into the middle of it till it was all fine ashes. She then lay down by her husband, gave him a kiss on the cheek, and fell asleep.

If she was to live a hundred years she'd never forget how she wakened next morning, and found her husband looking down on her with misery and anger in his face. 'Unhappy woman,' said he, 'you have separated us for ever! Why hadn't you patience for five years? I am now obliged, whether I like or no, to go a three days' journey to the witch's castle, and marry her daughter. The skin that was my guard you have burned it, and the egg-wife that gave you the counsel was the witch herself. I won't reproach you: your punishment will be severe enough without it. Farewell for ever!'

He kissed her for the last time, and was off the next minute, walking as fast as he could. She shouted after him, and then seeing there was no use, she dressed herself and pursued him. He never stopped, nor stayed, nor looked back, and still she kept him in sight; and when he was on the hill she was in the hollow, and when he was in the hollow she was on the hill. Her life was almost leaving her, when, just as the sun was setting, he turned up a lane, and went into a little house. She crawled up after him, and when she got inside there was a beautiful little boy on his knees, and he kissing and hugging him. 'Here, my poor darling,' says he, 'is your eldest child, and there,' says he, pointing to a woman that was looking on with a smile on her face, 'is the eagle that carried him away.' She forgot all her sorrows in a moment, hugging her child, and laughing and crying over him. The woman washed their feet, and rubbed them with an ointment that took all the soreness out of their bones, and made them as fresh as a daisy. Next morning, just before sunrise, he was up, and prepared to be off. 'Here,' said he to her, 'is a thing which may be of use to you. It's a scissors, and whatever stuff you cut with it will be turned into silk. The moment the sun rises, I'll lose all memory of yourself and the children, but I'll get it at sunset again. Farewell!' But he wasn't far gone till she was in sight of him again, leaving her boy behind. It was the same to-day as yesterday: their shadows went before them in the morning and followed them in the evening. He never stopped, and she never stopped, and as the sun was setting he turned up another lane, and there they found their little daughter. It was all joy and comfort again till morning, and then the third day’s journey commenced.

But before he started he gave her a comb, and told her that whenever she used it, pearls and diamonds would fall from her hair. Still he had his memory from sunset to sunrise; but from sunrise to sunset he travelled on under the charm, and never threw his eye behind. This night they came to where the youngest baby was, and the next morning, just before sunrise, the prince spoke to her for the last time. ‘Here, my poor wife,’ said he, ‘is a little hand-reel, with gold thread that has no end, and the half of our marriage ring. If you ever get to my house, and put your half-ring to mine, I shall recollect you. There is a wood yonder, and the moment I enter it I will forget everything that ever happened between us, just as if I was born yesterday. Farewell, dear wife and child, for ever!’ Just then the sun rose, and away he walked towards the wood. She saw it open before him, and close after him, and when she came up, she could no more get in than she could break through a stone wall. She wrung her hands and shed tears, but then she recollected herself, and cried out, ‘Wood, I charge you by my three magic gifts, the scissors, the comb, and the reel — to let me through’; and it opened, and she went along a walk till she came in sight of a palace, and a lawn, and a woodman’s cottage on the edge of the wood where it came nearest the palace.

She went into this lodge, and asked the woodman and his wife to take her into their service. They were not willing at first; but she told them she would ask no wages, and would give them diamonds, and pearls, and silk stuffs, and gold thread whenever they wished for them, and then they agreed to let her stay.

It wasn’t long till she heard how a young prince, that was just arrived, was living in the palace of the young mistress. He seldom stirred abroad, and every one that saw him remarked how silent and sorrowful he went about, like a person that was searching for some lost thing.

The servants and conceited folk at the big house began to take notice of the beautiful young woman at the lodge, and to annoy her with their impudence. The head footman was the most troublesome, and at last she invited him to *come and take tea* with her. Oh, how rejoiced he was, and how he bragged of it in the servants’ hall! Well, the evening came, and the footman walked into the lodge, and was shown to her sitting-room; for the lodge-keeper and his wife stood in great awe of her, and gave her two nice rooms for herself. Well, he sat down as stiff as a ramrod, and was talking in a grand style about the great doings at the castle, while she was getting the tea and toast ready. ‘Oh,’ says she to him, ‘would you put your hand out at the window and cut me off a sprig or two of honeysuckle? He got up in great glee, and put out his hand and head; and said she, ‘By the virtue of my magic gifts, let a pair of horns spring out of your head, and sing to the lodge.’ Just as she wished, so it was. They sprung from the front of each ear, and met at the back. Oh, the poor wretch! And how he bawled and roared! and the servants that he used to be boasting to were soon flocking from the castle, and grinning and huzzaing, and beating tunes on tongs and shovels and pans; and he cursing and swearing, and the eyes ready to start out of his head, and he so black in the face, and kicking out his legs behind like mad.

At last she pitied him, and removed the charm, and the horns dropped down on the ground, and he would have killed her on the spot, only he was as weak as water, and his fellow-servants came in and carried him up to the big house.

Well, some way or other the story came to the ears of the prince, and he strolled down that way. She had only the dress of a countrywoman on her as she sat sewing at the window, but that did not hide her beauty, and he was greatly puzzled after he had a good look, just as a body is puzzled to know whether something happened to him when he was young or if he only dreamed it. Well, the witch’s daughter heard about it too, and she came to see the strange girl; and what did she find her doing but cutting out the pattern of a gown from brown paper; and as she cut away, the paper became the richest silk she ever saw. The witch’s daughter looked on with greedy eyes, and, says she, ‘What would you be satisfied to take for that scissors?’ ‘I’ll take nothing,’ says she, ‘but leave to spend one night outside the prince’s chamber.’ Well, the proud lady fired up, and was going to say something dreadful; but the scissors kept on cutting, and the silk growing richer and richer every inch. So she promised what the girl had asked her.

When the night came on she was let into the palace and lay down till the prince was in such a dead sleep that all she did couldn’t awake him. She sung this verse to him, sighing and sobbing, and kept singing it the night long, and it was all in vain:

Four long years I was married to thee; Three sweet babes I bore to thee; Brown Bear of Norway, won’t you turn to me?

At the first dawn the proud lady was in the chamber, and led her away, and the footman of the horns put out his tongue at her as she was quitting the palace.

So there was no luck so far; but the next day the prince passed by again and looked at her, and saluted her kindly, as a prince might a farmer’s daughter, and passed on; and soon the witch’s daughter passed by, and found her combing her hair, and pearls and diamonds dropping from it.

Well, another bargain was made, and the princess spent another night of sorrow, and she left the castle at daybreak, and the footman was at his post and enjoyed his revenge.

The third day the prince went by, and stopped to talk with the strange woman.

He asked her could he do anything to serve her, and she said he might. She asked him did he ever wake at night. He said that he often did, but that during the last two nights he was listening to a sweet song in his dreams, and could not wake, and that the voice was one that he must have known and loved in some other world long ago. Says she, ‘Did you drink any sleepy posset either of these evenings before you went to bed?’ ‘I did,’ said he. ‘The two evenings my wife gave me something to drink, but I don’t know whether it was a sleepy posset or not.’ ‘Well, prince,’ said she, ‘as you say you would wish to oblige me, you can do it by not tasting any drink to-night.’ ‘I will not,’ says he, and then he went on his walk.

Well, the great lady came soon after the prince, and found the stranger using her hand-reel and winding thread of gold off it, and the third bargain was made.

That evening the prince was lying on his bed at twilight, and his mind much disturbed; and the door opened, and in his princess walked, and down she sat by his bedside and sung:

Four long years I was married to thee; Three sweet babes I bore to thee; Brown Bear of Norway, won’t you turn to me?

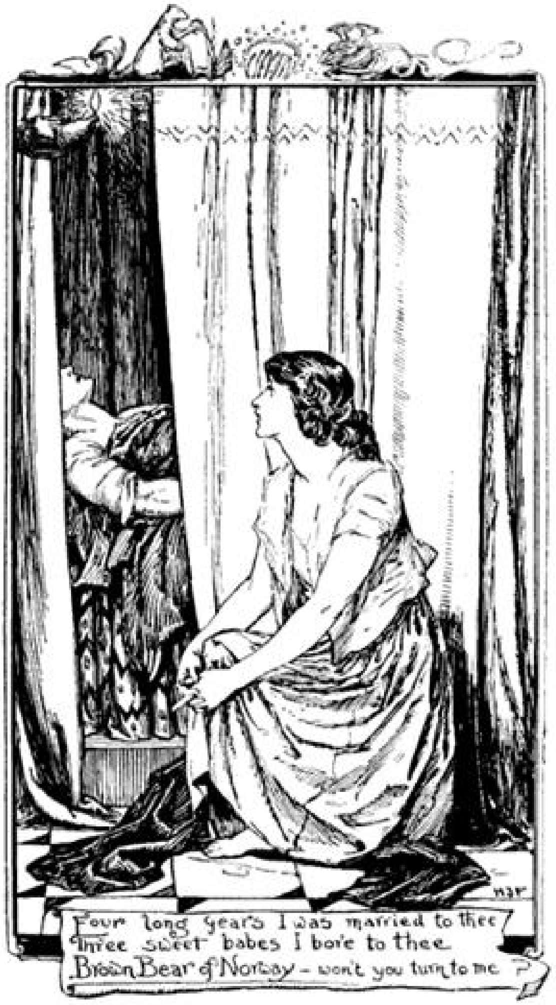
Four long years I was married to thee
Three sweet babes I bore to thee
Brown Bear of Norway – won't you turn to me ?

'Brown Bear of Norway!' said he. 'I don't understand you.' 'Don't you remember, prince, that I was your wedded wife for four years?' 'I do not,' said he, 'but I'm sure I wish it was so.' 'Don't you remember our three babes, that are still alive?' 'Show me them. My mind is all a heap of confusion.' 'Look for the half of our marriage ring, that hangs at your neck, and fit it to this.' He did so, and the same moment the charm was broken. His full memory came back on him, and he flung his arms round his wife's neck, and both burst into tears.

Well, there was a great cry outside, and the castle walls were heard splitting and cracking. Everyone in the castle was alarmed, and made their way out. The prince and princess went with the rest, and by the time all were safe on the lawn, down came the building, and made the ground tremble for miles round. No one ever saw the witch and her daughter afterwards. It was not long till the prince and princess had their children with them, and then they set out for their own palace. The kings of Ireland, and of Munster, and Ulster, and their wives, soon came to visit them, and may everyone that deserves it be as happy as the Brown Bear of Norway and his family.

From ‘West Highland Tales.’

LITTLE LASSE

There was once a little boy whose name was Lars, and because he was so little he was called Little Lasse; he was a brave little man, for he sailed round the world in a pea-shell boat.

It was summer time, when the pea shells grew long and green in the garden. Little Lasse crept into the pea bed where the pea stalks rose high above his cap, and he picked seventeen large shells, the longest and straightest he could find.

Little Lasse thought, perhaps, that no one saw him; but that was foolish, for God sees everywhere.

Then the gardener came with his gun over his shoulder, and he heard something rustling in the pea bed.

‘I think that must be a sparrow,’ he said. ‘Ras! Ras!’ But no sparrows flew out, for Little Lasse had no wings, only two small legs. ‘Wait! I will load my gun and shoot the sparrows,’ said the gardener.

Then Little Lasse was frightened, and crept out on to the path.

‘Forgive me, dear gardener!’ he said. ‘I wanted to get some fine boats.’

‘Well, I will this time,’ said the gardener. ‘But another time Little Lasse must ask leave to go and look for boats in the pea bed.’

‘I will,’ answered Lasse; and he went off to the shore. Then he opened the shells with a pin, split them carefully in two, and broke small little bits of sticks for the rowers’ seats. Then he took the peas which were in the shells and put them in the boats for cargo. Some of the shells got broken, some remained whole, and when all were ready Lasse had twelve boats. But they should not be boats, they should be large warships. He had three liners, three frigates, three brigs and three schooners. The largest liner was called *Hercules*, and the smallest schooner *The Flea*. Little Lasse put all the twelve into the water, and they floated as splendidly and as proudly as any great ship over the waves of the ocean.

And now the ships must sail round the world. The great island over there was Asia; that large stone Africa; the little island America; the small stones were Polynesia; and the shore from which the ships sailed out was Europe. The whole fleet set off and sailed far away to other parts of the world. The ships of the line steered a straight course to Asia, the frigates sailed to Africa, the brigs to America, and the schooners to Polynesia. But Little Lasse remained in Europe, and threw small stones out into the great sea.

Now, there was on the shore of Europe a real boat, father’s own, a beautiful white-painted boat, and Little Lasse got into it. Father and mother had forbidden this, but Little Lasse forgot. He thought he should very much like to travel to some other part of the world.

‘I shall row out a little way — only a very little way,’ he thought. The pea-shell boats had travelled so far that they only looked like little specks on the ocean. ‘I shall seize *Hercules* on the coast of Asia,’ said Lasse, ‘and then row home again to Europe.’

He shook the rope that held the boat, and, strange to say, the rope became loose. Ditsch, ratsch, a man is a man, and so Little Lasse manned the boat.

Now he would row — and he could row, for he had rowed so often on the steps at home, when the steps pretended to be a boat and father’s big stick an oar. But when Little Lasse wanted to row there were no oars to be found in the boat. The oars were locked up in the boat-house, and Little Lasse had not noticed that the boat was empty. It is not so easy as one thinks to row to Asia without oars.

What could Little Lasse do now? The boat was already some distance out on the sea, and the wind, which blew from land, was driving it still further out. Lasse was frightened and began to cry. But there was no one on the shore to hear him. Only a big crow perched alone in the birch tree; and the gardener’s black cat sat under the birch tree, waiting to catch the crow. Neither of them troubled themselves in the least about Little Lasse, who was drifting out to sea.

Ah! how sorry Little Lasse was now that he had been disobedient and got into the boat, when father and mother had so often forbidden him to do so! Now it was too late, he could not get back to land. Perhaps he would be lost out on the great sea. What should he do?

When he had shouted until he was tired and no one heard him, he put his two little hands together and said, ‘Good God, do not be angry with Little Lasse.’ And then he went to sleep. For although it was daylight, old Nukku Matti was sitting on the shores of the ‘Land of Nod,’ and was fishing for little children with his long fishing rod. He heard the low words which Little Lasse said to God, and he immediately drew the boat to himself and laid Little Lasse to sleep on a bed of rose leaves.

Then Nukku Matti said to one of the Dreams, ‘Play with Little Lasse, so that he does not feel lonesome.’

It was a little dream-boy, so little, so little, that he was less than Lasse himself; he had blue eyes and fair hair, a red cap with a silver band, and white coat with pearls on the collar. He came to Little Lasse and said, ‘Would you like to sail round the world?’

‘Yes,’ said Lasse in his sleep, ‘I should like to.’

‘Come, then,’ said the dream-boy, ‘and let us sail in your pea-shell boats. You shall sail in *Hercules* and I shall sail in *The Flea*.’

So they sailed away from the ‘Land of Nod,’ and in a little while *Hercules* and *The Flea* were on the shores of Asia away at the other end of the world, where the Ice Sea flows through Behring Straits into the Pacific Ocean. A long way off in the winter mist they could see the explorer Nordenskiöld with his ship *Vega* trying to find an opening between the ice. It was so cold, so cold; the great icebergs glittered strangely, and the huge whales now lived under the ice, for they could not make a hole through with their awkward heads. All around on the dreary shore there was snow and snow as far as the eye could see; little grey men in shaggy skins moved about, and drove in small sledges through the snow drifts, but the sledges were drawn by dogs.

‘Shall we land here?’ asked the dream-boy.

‘No,’ said Little Lasse. ‘I am so afraid that the whales would swallow us up, and the big dogs bite us. Let us sail instead to another part of the world.’

‘Very well,’ said the dream-boy with the red cap and the silver band; ‘it is not far to America’ — and at the same moment they were there.

The sun was shining and it was very warm. Tall palm trees grew in long rows on the shore and bore coconuts in their top branches. Men red as copper galloped over the immense green prairies and threw their arrows at the buffaloes, who turned against them with their sharp horns. An enormous cobra which had crept up the stem of a tall palm tree threw itself on to a little llama that was grazing at the foot. Knaps! it was all over with the little llama.

‘Shall we land here?’ asked the dream-boy.

‘No,’ said Little Lasse. ‘I am so afraid that the buffaloes will butt us, and the great serpent eat us up. Let us travel to another part of the world.’

‘Very well,’ said the dream-boy with the white coat, ‘it is only a little way to Polynesia’ — and then they were there.

It was very warm there, as warm as in a hot bath in Finland. Costly spices grew on the shores: the pepper plant, the cinnamon tree, ginger, saffron; the coffee plant and the tea plant. Brown people with long ears and thick lips, and hideously painted faces, hunted a yellow-spotted tiger among the high bamboos on the shore, and the tiger turned on them and stuck its claws into one of the brown men. Then all the others took to flight.

‘Shall we land here?’ asked the dream-boy.

‘No,’ said Little Lasse. ‘Don’t you see the tiger away there by the pepper plant? Let us travel to another part of the world.’

‘We can do so,’ said the dream-boy with the blue eyes. ‘We are not far from Africa’ — and as he said that they were there.

They anchored at the mouth of a great river where the shores were as green as the greenest velvet. A little distance from the river an immense desert stretched away. The air was yellow; the sun shone so hot, so hot as if it would burn the earth to ashes, and the people were as black as the blackest jet. They rode across the desert on tall camels; the lions roared with thirst, and the great crocodiles with their grey lizard heads and sharp white teeth gaped up out of the river.

‘Shall we land here?’ asked the dream-boy.

‘No,’ said Little Lasse. ‘The sun would burn us, and the lions and the crocodiles would eat us up. Let us travel to another part of the world.’

‘We can travel back to Europe,’ said the dream-boy with the fair hair. And with that they were there.

They came to a shore where it was all so cool and familiar and friendly. There stood the tall birch tree with its drooping leaves; at the top sat the old crow, and at its foot crept the gardener’s black cat. Not far away was a house which Little Lasse had seen before; near the house there was a garden, and in the garden a pea bed with long pea shells. An old gardener with a green coat walked about and wondered if the cucumbers were ripe. Fylax was barking on the steps, and when he saw Little Lasse he wagged his tail. Old Stina was milking the cows in the farmyard, and there was a very familiar lady in a check woollen shawl on her way to the bleaching green to see if the clothes were bleached. There was, too, a well-known gentleman in a yellow summer coat, with a long pipe in his mouth; he was going to see if the reapers had cut the rye. A boy and a girl were running on the shore and calling out, ‘Little Lasse! Come home for bread-and-butter!’

‘Shall we land here?’ asked the dream-boy, and he blinked his blue eyes roguishly.

‘Come with me, and I shall ask mother to give you some bread-and-butter and a glass of milk,’ said Little Lasse.

‘Wait a little,’ said the dream-boy. And now Little Lasse saw that the kitchen door was open, and from within there was heard a low, pleasant frizzling, like that which is heard when one whisks yellow batter with a wooden ladle into a hot frying-pan.

‘Perhaps we should sail back to Polynesia now?’ said the dream-boy.

‘No; they are frying pancakes in Europe just now,’ said Little Lasse; and he wanted to jump ashore, but he could not. The dream-boy had tied him with a chain of flowers, so that he could not move. And now all the little dreams came about him, thousands and thousands of little children, and they made a ring around him and sang a little song:

The world is very, very wide, Little Lasse, Lasse, And though you’ve sailed beyond the tide, You can never tell how wide It is on the other side, Lasse, Little

Lasse. You have found it cold and hot, Little Lasse, Lasse; But in no land is God not, Lasse, Little Lasse. Many men live there as here, But they all to God are dear, Little Lasse, Lasse. When His angel is your guide, Little Lasse, Lasse, Then no harm can e’er betide, Even on the other side Where the wild beasts wander. But tell us now, Whene’er you roam, Do you not find the best is home Of all the lands you’ve looked upon, Lasse, Little Lasse?

When the dreams had sung their song they skipped away, and Nukku Matti carried Lasse back to the boat. He lay there for a long time quite still, and he still heard the frying-pan frizzling at home on the fire, the frizzling was very plain, Little Lasse heard it quite near him; and so he woke up and rubbed his eyes.

There he lay in the boat, where he had fallen asleep. The wind had turned, and the boat had drifted out with one wind and drifted in with another while Little Lasse slept, and what Lasse thought was frizzling in a frying-pan was the low murmur of the waves as they washed against the stones on the shore. But he was not altogether wrong, for the clear blue sea is like a great pan in which God’s sun all day makes cakes for good children.

Little Lasse rubbed the sleep out of his eyes and looked around him. Everything was the same as before; the crow in the birch tree, the cat on the grass, and the pea-shell fleet on the shore. Some of the ships had foundered, and some had drifted back to land. *Hercules* had come back with its cargo from Asia, *The Flea* had arrived from Polynesia, and the other parts of the world were just where they were before.

Little Lasse did not know what to think. He had so often been in that grotto in the ‘Land of Nod’ and did not know what tricks dreams can play. But Little Lasse did not trouble his head with such things; he gathered together his boats and walked up the shore back to the house.

His brother and sister ran to meet him, and called out from the distance, ‘Where have you been so long, Lasse? Come home and get some bread-and-butter.’ The kitchen door stood open, and inside was heard a strange frizzling.

The gardener was near the gate, watering the dill and parsley, the carrots and parsnips.

‘Well,’ he said, ‘where has Little Lasse been so long?’

Little Lasse straightened himself up stiff, and answered: ‘I have sailed round the world in a pea-shell boat.’

‘Oh!’ said the gardener.

He had forgotten Dreamland. But you have not forgotten it; you know that it exists. You know the beautiful grotto and the bright silver walls whose lustre never fades, the sparkling diamonds which never grow dim, the music which never ceases its low, soft murmur through the sweet evening twilight. The airy fairy fancies of happy Dreamland never grow old; they, like the glorious stars above us, are always young. Perhaps you have caught a glimpse of their ethereal wings as they flew around your pillow. Perhaps you have met the same dream-boy with the blue eyes and the fair hair, the one who wore the red cap with the silver band and the white coat with pearls on the collar. Perhaps he has taken you to see all the countries of the world and the peoples, the cold waste lands and the burning deserts, the many coloured men and the wild creatures in the sea and in the woods, so that you may learn many things, but come gladly home again. Yes, who knows? Perhaps you also have sailed round the wide world once in a pea-shell boat.

From Z. Topelius.

MOTI

Once upon a time there was a youth called Moti, who was very big and strong, but the clumsiest creature you can imagine. So clumsy was he that he was always putting his great feet into the bowls of sweet milk or curds which his mother set out on the floor to cool, always smashing, upsetting, breaking, until at last his father said to him:

‘Here, Moti, are fifty silver pieces which are the savings of years; take them and go and make your living or your fortune if you can.’

Then Moti started off one early spring morning with his thick staff over his shoulder singing gaily to himself as he walked along.

In one way and another he got along very well until a hot evening when he came to a certain city where he entered the travellers’ ‘serai’ or inn to pass the night. Now a serai, you must know, is generally just a large square enclosed by a high wall with an open colonnade along the inside all round to accommodate both men and beasts, and with perhaps a few rooms in towers at the corners for those who are too rich or too proud to care about sleeping by their own camels and horses. Moti, of course, was a country lad and had lived with cattle all his life, and he wasn’t rich and he wasn’t proud, so he just borrowed a bed from the innkeeper, set it down beside an old buffalo who reminded him of home, and in five minutes was fast asleep.

In the middle of the night he woke, feeling that he had been disturbed, and putting his hand under his pillow found to his horror that his bag of money had been stolen. He jumped up quietly and began to prowl around to see whether anyone seemed to be awake, but, though he managed to arouse a few men and beasts by falling over them, he walked in the shadow of the archways round the whole serai without coming across a likely thief. He was just about to give it up when he overhead two men whispering, and one laughed softly, and, peering behind a pillar, he saw two Afghan horse-dealers counting out his bag of money! Then Moti went back to bed!

In the morning Moti followed the two Afghans outside the city to the horsemarket in which their horses were offered for sale. Choosing the best-looking horse amongst them he went up to it and said:

‘Is this horse for sale? may I try it?’ and, the merchants assenting, he scrambled up on its back, dug in his heels, and off they flew. Now Moti had never been on a horse in his life, and had so much ado to hold on with both hands as well as with both legs that the animal went just where it liked, and very soon broke into a break-neck gallop and made straight back to the serai where it had spent the last few nights.

‘This will do very well,’ thought Moti as they whirled in at the entrance. As soon as the horse had arrived at its stable it stopped of its own accord and Moti immediately rolled off; but he jumped up at once, tied the beast up, and called for some breakfast. Presently the Afghans appeared, out of breath and furious, and claimed the horse.

‘What do you mean?’ cried Moti, with his mouth full of rice, ‘it’s my horse; I paid you fifty pieces of silver for it — quite a bargain, I’m sure!’

‘Nonsense! it is *our* horse,’ answered one of the Afghans, beginning to untie the bridle.

‘Leave off,’ shouted Moti, seizing his staff; ‘if you don’t let my horse alone I’ll crack your skulls! you thieves! *I* know you! Last night you took *my* money, so to-day I took your horse; that’s fair enough!’

Now the Afghans began to look a little uncomfortable, but Moti seemed so determined to keep the horse that they resolved to appeal to the law, so they went off, and laid a complaint before the king that Moti had stolen one of their horses and would not give it up nor pay for it.

Presently a soldier came to summon Moti to the king; and, when he arrived and made his obeisance, the king began to question him as to why he had galloped off with the horse in this fashion. But Moti declared that he had got the animal in exchange for fifty pieces of silver, whilst the horse merchants vowed that the money they had on them was what they had received for the sale of other horses; and in one way and another the dispute got so confusing that the king (who really thought that Moti had stolen the horse) said at last, ‘Well, I tell you what I will do. I will lock something into this box before me, and if he guesses what it is, the horse is his, and if he doesn’t, then it is yours.’

To this Moti agreed, and the king arose and went out alone by a little door at the back of the Court, and presently came back clasping something closely wrapped up in a cloth under his robe, slipped it into the little box, locked the box, and set it up where all might see.

‘Now,’ said the king to Moti, ‘guess!’

It happened that when the king had opened the door behind him, Moti noticed that there was a garden outside: without waiting for the king’s return he began to think what could be got out of the garden small enough to be shut in the box. ‘Is it likely to be a fruit or a flower? No, not a flower this time, for he clasped it too tight. Then it must be a fruit or a stone. Yet not a stone, because he wouldn’t wrap a dirty stone in his nice clean cloth. Then it is a fruit! And a fruit without much scent, or else he would be afraid that I might smell it. Now what fruit without much scent is in season just now? When I know that I shall have guessed the riddle!'

As has been said before, Moti was a country lad, and was accustomed to work in his father's garden. He knew all the common fruits, so he thought he ought to be able to guess right, but so as not to let it seem too easy, he gazed up at the ceiling with a puzzled expression, and looked down at the floor with an air of wisdom and his fingers pressed against his forehead, and then he said, slowly, with his eyes on the king, —

'It is freshly plucked! it is round and it is red! it is a pomegranate!'

Now the king knew nothing about fruits except that they were good to eat; and, as for seasons, he asked for whatever fruit he wanted whenever he wanted it, and saw that he got it; so to him Moti's guess was like a miracle, and clear proof not only of his wisdom but of his innocence, for it *was* a pomegranate that he had put into the box. Of course when the king marvelled and praised Moti's wisdom, everybody else did so too; and, whilst the Afghans went off crestfallen, Moti took the horse and entered the king's service.

Very soon after this, Moti, who continued to live in the serai, came back one wet and stormy evening to find that his precious horse had strayed. Nothing remained of him but a broken halter cord, and no one knew what had become of him. After inquiring of everyone who was likely to know, Moti seized the cord and his big staff and sallied out to look for him. Away and away he tramped out of the city and into the neighbouring forest, tracking hoof-marks in the mud. Presently it grew late, but still Moti wandered on until suddenly in the gathering darkness he came right upon a tiger who was contentedly eating his horse.

'You thief!' shrieked Moti, and ran up, and, just as the tiger, in astonishment, dropped a bone — whack! came Moti's staff on his head with such good will that the beast was half stunned and could hardly breathe or see. Then Moti continued to shower upon him blows and abuse until the poor tiger could hardly stand, whereupon his tormentor tied the end of the broken halter round his neck and dragged him back to the serai.

'If you had my horse,' he said, 'I will at least have you, that's fair enough!' And he tied him up securely by the head and heels, much as he used to tie the horse; then, the night being far gone, he flung himself beside him and slept soundly.

You cannot imagine anything like the fright of the people in the serai, when they woke up and found a tiger — very battered but still a tiger — securely tethered amongst themselves and their beasts! Men gathered in groups talking and exclaiming, and finding fault with the innkeeper for allowing such a dangerous beast into the serai, and all the while the innkeeper was just as troubled as the rest, and none dared go near the place where the tiger stood blinking miserably on everyone, and where Moti lay stretched out snoring like thunder.

At last news reached the king that Moti had exchanged his horse for a live tiger; and the monarch himself came down, half disbelieving the tale, to see if it were really true. Someone at last awaked Moti with the news that his royal master was come; and he arose yawning, and was soon delightedly explaining and showing off his new possession. The king, however, did not share his pleasure at all, but called up a soldier to shoot the tiger, much to the relief of all the inmates of the serai except Moti. If the king, however, was before convinced that Moti was one of the wisest of men, he was now still more convinced that he was the bravest, and he increased his pay a hundredfold, so that our hero thought that he was the luckiest of men.

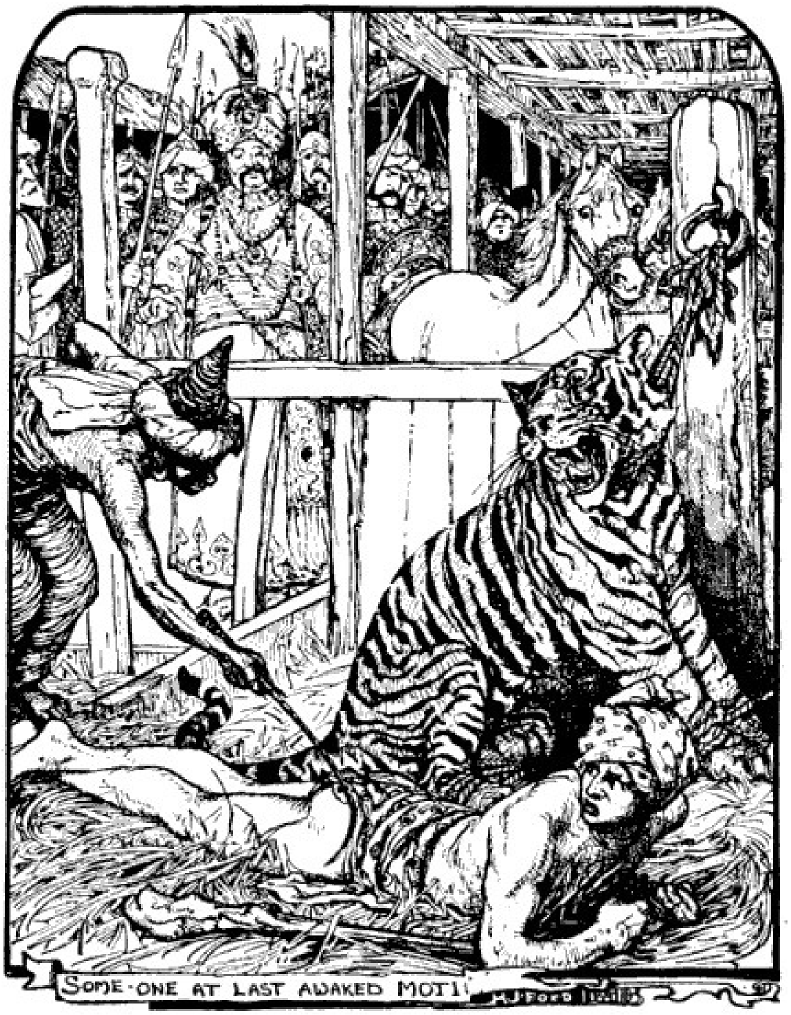

SOME-ONE AT LAST AWAKED MOTI!

A week or two after this incident the king sent for Moti, who on arrival found his master in despair. A neighbouring monarch, he explained, who had many more soldiers than he, had declared war against him, and he was at his wits’ end, for he had neither money to buy him off nor soldiers enough to fight him — what was he to do?

‘If that is all, don’t you trouble,’ said Moti. ‘Turn out your men, and I’ll go with them, and we’ll soon bring this robber to reason.’

The king began to revive at these hopeful words, and took Moti off to his stable where he bade him choose for himself any horse he liked. There were plenty of fine horses in the stalls, but to the king’s astonishment Moti chose a poor little rat of a pony that was used to carry grass and water for the rest of the stable.

‘But why do you choose that beast?’ said the king.

‘Well, you see, your majesty,’ replied Moti, ‘there are so many chances that I may fall off, and if I choose one of your fine big horses I shall have so far to fall that I shall probably break my leg or my arm, if not my neck, but if I fall off this little beast I can’t hurt myself much.’

A very comical sight was Moti when he rode out to the war. The only weapon he carried was his staff, and to help him to keep his balance on horseback he had tied to each of his ankles a big stone that nearly touched the ground as he sat astride the little pony. The rest of the king’s cavalry were not very numerous, but they pranced along in armour on fine horses. Behind them came a great rabble of men on foot armed with all sorts of weapons, and last of all was the king with his attendants, very nervous and ill at ease. So the army started.

They had not very far to go, but Moti’s little pony, weighted with a heavy man and two big rocks, soon began to lag behind the cavalry, and would have lagged behind the infantry too, only they were not very anxious to be too early in the fight, and hung back so as to give Moti plenty of time. The young man jogged along more and more slowly for some time, until at last, getting impatient at the slowness of the pony, he gave him such a tremendous thwack with his staff that the pony completely lost his temper and bolted. First one stone became untied and rolled away in a cloud of dust to one side of the road, whilst Moti nearly rolled off too, but clasped his steed valiantly by its ragged mane, and, dropping his staff, held on for dear life. Then fortunately the other rock broke away from his other leg and rolled thunderously down a neighbouring ravine. Meanwhile the advanced cavalry had barely time to draw to one side when Moti came dashing by, yelling bloodthirsty threats to his pony:

‘You wait till I get hold of you! I’ll skin you alive! I’ll wring your neck! I’ll break every bone in your body!’ The cavalry thought that this dreadful language was meant for the enemy, and were filled with admiration of his courage. Many of their horses too were quite upset by this whirlwind that galloped howling through their midst, and in a few minutes, after a little plunging and rearing and kicking, the whole troop were following on Moti’s heels.

Far in advance, Moti continued his wild career. Presently in his course he came to a great field of castor-oil plants, ten or twelve feet high, big and bushy, but quite green and soft. Hoping to escape from the back of his fiery steed Moti grasped one in passing, but its roots gave way, and he dashed on, with the whole plant looking like a young tree flourishing in his grip.

The enemy were in battle array, advancing over the plain, their king with them confident and cheerful, when suddenly from the front came a desperate rider at a furious gallop.

‘Sire!’ he cried, ‘save yourself! the enemy are coming!’

‘What *do* you mean?’ said the king.

‘Oh, sire!’ panted the messenger, ‘fly at once, there is no time to lose. Foremost of the enemy rides a mad giant at a furious gallop. He flourishes a tree for a club and is wild with anger, for as he goes he cries, “You wait till I get hold of you! I’ll skin you alive! I’ll wring your neck! I’ll break every bone in your body!” Others ride behind, and you will do well to retire before this whirlwind of destruction comes upon you.’

Just then out of a cloud of dust in the distance the king saw Moti approaching at a hard gallop, looking indeed like a giant compared with the little beast he rode, whirling his castor-oil plant, which in the distance might have been an oak tree, and the sound of his revilings and shoutings came down upon the breeze! Behind him the dust cloud moved to the sound of the thunder of hoofs, whilst here and there flashed the glitter of steel. The sight and the sound struck terror into the king, and, turning his horse, he fled at top speed, thinking that a regiment of yelling giants was upon him; and all his force followed him as fast as they might go. One fat officer alone could not keep up on foot with that mad rush, and as Moti came galloping up he flung himself on the ground in abject fear. This was too much for Moti’s excited pony, who shied so suddenly that Moti went flying over his head like a sky rocket, and alighted right on the top of his fat foe.

Quickly regaining his feet Moti began to swing his plant round his head and to shout:

‘Where are your men? Bring them up and I’ll kill them. My regiments! Come on, the whole lot of you! Where’s your king? Bring him to me. Here are all my fine fellows coming up and we’ll each pull up a tree by the roots and lay you all flat and your houses and towns and everything else! Come on!’

But the poor fat officer could do nothing but squat on his knees with his hands together, gasping. At last, when he got his breath, Moti sent him off to bring his king, and to tell him that if he was reasonable his life should be spared. Off the poor man went, and by the time the troops of Moti’s side had come up and arranged themselves to look as formidable as possible, he returned with his king. The latter was very humble and apologetic, and promised never to make war any more, to pay a large sum of money, and altogether do whatever his conqueror wished.

So the armies on both sides went rejoicing home, and this was really the making of the fortune of clumsy Moti, who lived long and contrived always to be looked up to as a fountain of wisdom, valour, and discretion by all except his relations, who could never understand what he had done to be considered so much wiser than anyone else.

A Pushto Story.

THE ENCHANTED DEER

A young man was out walking one day in Erin, leading a stout cart-horse by the bridle. He was thinking of his mother and how poor they were since his father, who was a fisherman, had been drowned at sea, and wondering what he should do to earn a living for both of them. Suddenly a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a voice said to him:

‘Will you sell me your horse, son of the fisherman?’ and looking up he beheld a man standing in the road with a gun in his hand, a falcon on his shoulder, and a dog by his side.

‘What will you give me for my horse?’ asked the youth. ‘Will you give me your gun, and your dog, and your falcon?’

‘I will give them,’ answered the man, and he took the horse, and the youth took the gun and the dog and the falcon, and went home with them. But when his mother heard what he had done she was very angry, and beat him with a stick which she had in her hand.

‘That will teach you to sell my property,’ said she, when her arm was quite tired, but Ian her son answered her nothing, and went off to his bed, for he was very sore.

That night he rose softly, and left the house carrying the gun with him. ‘I will not stay here to be beaten,’ thought he, and he walked and he walked and he walked, till it was day again, and he was hungry and looked about him to see if he could get anything to eat. Not very far off was a farm-house, so he went there, and knocked at the door, and the farmer and his wife begged him to come in, and share their breakfast.

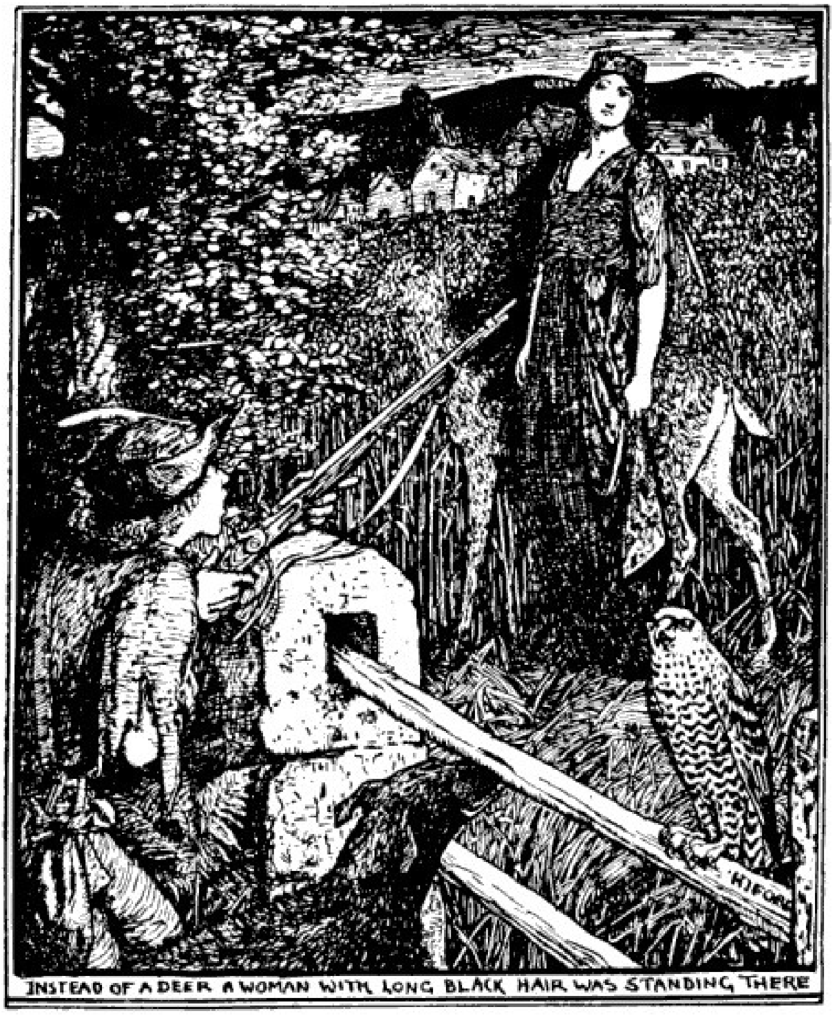

INSTEAD OF A DEER A WOMAN WITH LONG BLACK HAIR WAS STANDING THERE

‘Ah, you have a gun,’ said the farmer as the young man placed it in a corner. ‘That is well, for a deer comes every evening to eat my corn, and I cannot catch it. It is fortune that has sent you to me.’

‘I will gladly remain and shoot the deer for you,’ replied the youth, and that night he hid himself and watched till the deer came to the cornfield; then he lifted his gun to his shoulder and was just going to pull the trigger, when, behold! instead of a deer, a woman with long black hair was standing there. At this sight his gun almost dropped from his hand in surprise, but as he looked, there was the deer eating the corn again. And thrice this happened, till the deer ran away over the moor, and the young man after her.

On they went, on and on and on, till they reached a cottage which was thatched with heather. With a bound the deer sprang on the roof, and lay down where none could see her, but as she did so she called out, ‘Go in, fisher’s son, and eat and drink while you may.’ So he entered and found food and wine on the table, but no man, for the house belonged to some robbers, who were still away at their wicked business.

After Ian, the fisher’s son, had eaten all he wanted, he hid himself behind a great cask, and very soon he heard a noise, as of men coming through the heather, and the small twigs snapping under their feet. From his dark corner he could see into the room, and he counted four and twenty of them, all big, cross-looking men.

‘Someone has been eating our dinner,’ cried they, ‘and there was hardly enough for ourselves.’

‘It is the man who is lying under the cask,’ answered the leader. ‘Go and kill him, and then come and eat your food and sleep, for we must be off betimes in the morning.’

So four of them killed the fisher’s son and left him, and then went to bed.

By sunrise they were all out of the house, for they had far to go. And when they had disappeared the deer came off the roof, to where the dead man lay, and she shook her head over him, and wax fell from her ear, and he jumped up as well as ever.

‘Trust me and eat as you did before, and no harm shall happen to you,’ said she. So Ian ate and drank, and fell sound asleep under the cask. In the evening the robbers arrived very tired, and crosser than they had been yesterday, for their luck had turned and they had brought back scarcely anything.

‘Someone has eaten our dinner again,’ cried they.

‘It is the man under the barrel,’ answered the captain. ‘Let four of you go and kill him, but first slay the other four who pretended to kill him last night and didn’t, because he is still alive.’

Then Ian was killed a second time, and after the rest of the robbers had eaten, they lay down and slept till morning.

No sooner were their faces touched with the sun’s rays than they were up and off. Then the deer entered and dropped the healing wax on the dead man, and he was as well as ever. By this time he did not mind what befell him, so sure was he that the deer would take care of him, and in the evening that which had happened before happened again — the four robbers were put to death and the fisher’s son also, but because there was no food left for them to eat, they were nearly mad with rage, and began to quarrel. From quarrelling they went on to fighting, and fought so hard that by and bye they were all stretched dead on the floor.

Then the deer entered, and the fisher’s son was restored to life, and bidding him follow her, she ran on to a little white cottage where dwelt an old woman and her son, who was thin and dark.

‘Here I must leave you,’ said the deer, ‘but to-morrow meet me at midday in the church that is yonder.’ And jumping across the stream, she vanished into a wood.

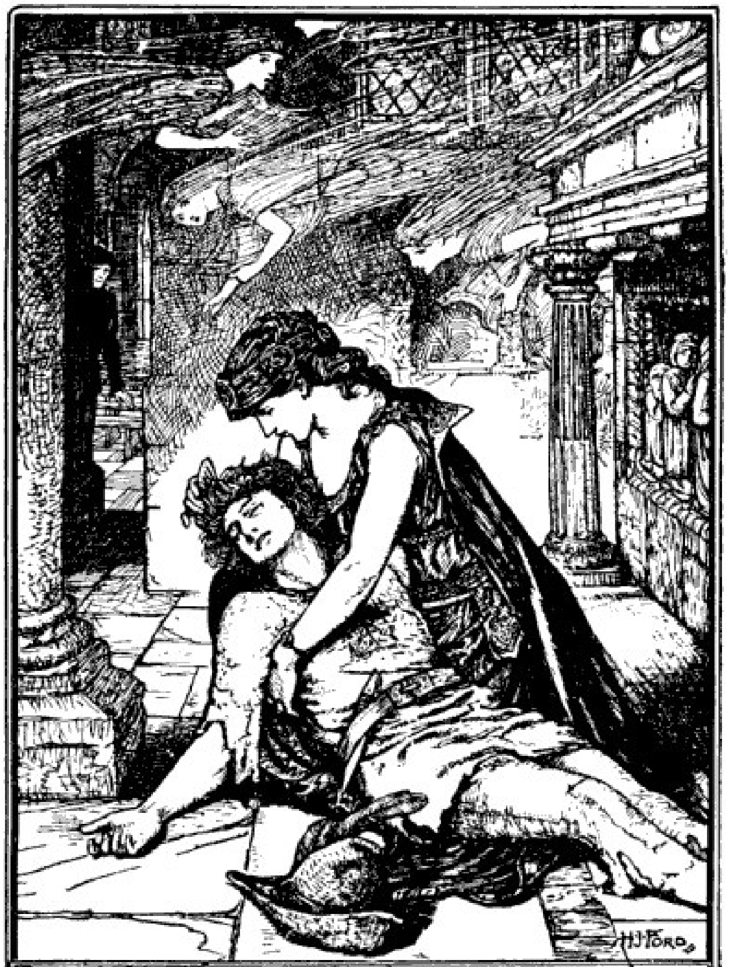

She combed his hair with a golden comb but his eyes opened not

Next day he set out for the church, but the old woman of the cottage had gone before him, and had stuck an enchanted stick called ‘the spike of hurt’ in a crack of the door, so that he would brush against it as he stepped across the threshold. Suddenly he felt so sleepy that he could not stand up, and throwing himself on the ground he sank into a deep slumber, not knowing that the dark lad was watching him. Nothing could waken him, not even the sound of sweetest music, nor the touch of a lady who bent over him. A sad look came on her face, as she saw it was no use, and at last she gave it up, and lifting his arm, wrote her name across his side— ‘the daughter of the king of the town under the waves.’

‘I will come to-morrow,’ she whispered, though he could not hear her, and she went sorrowfully away.

Then he awoke, and the dark lad told him what had befallen him, and he was very grieved. But the dark lad did not tell him of the name that was written underneath his arm.

On the following morning the fisher’s son again went to the church, determined that he would not go to sleep, whatever happened. But in his hurry to enter he touched with his hand the spike of hurt, and sank down where he stood, wrapped in slumber. A second time the air was filled with music, and the lady came in, stepping softly, but though she laid his head on her knee, and combed his hair with a golden comb, his eyes opened not. Then she burst into tears, and placing a beautifully wrought box in his pocket she went her way.

The next day the same thing befell the fisher’s son, and this time the lady wept more bitterly than before, for she said it was the last chance, and she would never be allowed to come any more, for home she must go.

As soon as the lady had departed the fisher’s son awoke, and the dark lad told him of her visit, and how he would never see her as long as he lived. At this the fisher’s son felt the cold creeping up to his heart, yet he knew the fault had not been his that sleep had overtaken him.

‘I will search the whole world through till I find her,’ cried he, and the dark lad laughed as he heard him. But the fisher’s son took no heed, and off he went, following the sun day after day, till his shoes were in holes and his feet were sore from the journey. Nought did he see but the birds that made their nests in the trees, not so much as a goat or a rabbit. On and on and on he went, till suddenly he came upon a little house, with a woman standing outside it.

‘All hail, fisher’s son!’ said she. ‘I know what you are seeking; enter in and rest and eat, and to-morrow I will give you what help I can, and send you on your way.’

Gladly did Ian the fisher’s son accept her offer, and all that day he rested, and the woman gave him ointment to put on his feet, which healed his sores. At daybreak he got up, ready to be gone, and the woman bade him farewell, saying:

‘I have a sister who dwells on the road which you must travel. It is a long road, and it would take you a year and a day to reach it, but put on these old brown shoes with holes all over them, and you will be there before you know it. Then shake them off, and turn their toes to the known, and their heels to the unknown, and they will come home of themselves.’

The fisher’s son did as the woman told him, and everything happened just as she had said. But at parting the second sister said to him, as she gave him another pair of shoes:

‘Go to my third sister, for she has a son who is keeper of the birds of the air, and sends them to sleep when night comes. He is very wise, and perhaps he can help you.’

Then the young man thanked her, and went to the third sister.

The third sister was very kind, but had no counsel to give him, so he ate and drank and waited till her son came home, after he had sent all the birds to sleep. He thought a long while after his mother had told him the young man's story, and at last he said that he was hungry, and the cow must be killed, as he wanted some supper. So the cow was killed and the meat cooked, and a bag made of its red skin.

'Now get into the bag,' bade the son, and the young man got in and took his gun with him, but the dog and the falcon he left outside. The keeper of the birds drew the string at the top of the bag, and left it to finish his supper, when in flew an eagle through the open door, and picked the bag up in her claws and carried it through the air to an island. There was nothing to eat on the island, and the fisher's son thought he would die for lack of food, when he remembered the box that the lady had put in his pocket. He opened the lid, and three tiny little birds flew out, and flapping their wings they asked,

'Good master, is there anything we can do for thee?'

'Bear me to the kingdom of the king under the waves,' he answered, and one little bird flew on to his head, and the others perched on each of his shoulders, and he shut his eyes, and in a moment there he was in the country under the sea. Then the birds flew away, and the young man looked about him, his heart beating fast at the thought that here dwelt the lady whom he had sought all the world over.

He walked on through the streets, and presently he reached the house of a weaver who was standing at his door, resting from his work.

'You are a stranger here, that is plain,' said the weaver, 'but come in, and I will give you food and drink.' And the young man was glad, for he knew not where to go, and they sat and talked till it grew late.

'Stay with me, I pray, for I love company and am lonely,' observed the weaver at last, and he pointed to a bed in a corner, where the fisher's son threw himself, and slept till dawn.

'There is to be a horse-race in the town to-day,' remarked the weaver, 'and the winner is to have the king's daughter to wife.' The young man trembled with excitement at the news, and his voice shook as he answered:

'That will be a prize indeed, I should like to see the race.'

'Oh, that is quite easy — anyone can go,' replied the weaver. 'I would take you myself, but I have promised to weave this cloth for the king.'

'That is a pity,' returned the young man politely, but in his heart he rejoiced, for he wished to be alone.

Leaving the house, he entered a grove of trees which stood behind, and took the box from his pocket. He raised the lid, and out flew the three little birds.

‘Good master, what shall we do for thee?’ asked they, and he answered, ‘Bring me the finest horse that ever was seen, and the grandest dress, and glass shoes.’

‘They are here, master,’ said the birds, and so they were, and never had the young man seen anything so splendid.

Mounting the horse he rode into the ground where the horses were assembling for the great race, and took his place among them. Many good beasts were there which had won many races, but the horse of the fisher’s son left them all behind, and he was first at the winning post. The king’s daughter waited for him in vain to claim his prize, for he went back to the wood, and got off his horse, and put on his old clothes, and bade the box place some gold in his pockets. After that he went back to the weaver’s house, and told him that the gold had been given him by the man who had won the race, and that the weaver might have it for his kindness to him.

Now as nobody had appeared to demand the hand of the princess, the king ordered another race to be run, and the fisher’s son rode into the field, still more splendidly dressed than he was before, and easily distanced everybody else. But again he left the prize unclaimed, and so it happened on the third day, when it seemed as if all the people in the kingdom were gathered to see the race, for they were filled with curiosity to know who the winner could be.

‘If he will not come of his own free will, he must be brought,’ said the king, and messengers who had seen the face of the victor were sent to seek him in every street of the town. This took many days, and when at last they found the young man in the weaver’s cottage, he was so dirty and ugly and had such a strange appearance, that they declared he could not be the winner they had been searching for, but a wicked robber who had murdered ever so many people, but had always managed to escape.

‘Yes, it must be the robber,’ said the king, when the fisher’s son was led into his presence; ‘build a gallows at once and hang him in the sight of all my subjects, that they may behold him suffer the punishment of his crimes.’

So the gallows was built upon a high platform, and the fisher’s son mounted the steps up to it, and turned at the top to make the speech that was expected from every doomed man, innocent or guilty. As he spoke he happened to raise his arm, and the king’s daughter, who was there at her father’s side, saw the name which she had written under it. With a shriek she sprang from her seat, and the eyes of the spectators were turned towards her.

‘Stop! stop!’ she cried, hardly knowing what she said. ‘If that man is hanged there is not a soul in the kingdom but shall die also.’ And running up to where the fisher’s son was standing, she took him by the hand, saying, ‘Father, this is no robber or murderer, but the victor in the three races, and he loosed the spells that were laid upon me.’

Then, without waiting for a reply, she conducted him into the palace, and he bathed in a marble bath, and all the dirt that the fairies had put upon him disappeared like magic, and when he had dressed himself in the fine garments the princess had sent to him, he looked a match for any king’s daughter in Erin. He went down into the great hall where she was awaiting him, and they had much to tell each other but little time to tell it in, for the king, her father, and the princes who were visiting him, and all the people of the kingdom were still in their places expecting her return.

‘How did you find me out?’ she whispered as they went down the passage.

‘The birds in the box told me,’ answered he, but he could say no more, as they stepped out into the open space that was crowded with people. There the princess stopped.

‘O kings!’ she said, turning towards them, ‘if one of you were killed to-day, the rest would fly; but this man put his trust in me, and had his head cut off three times. Because he has done this, I will marry him rather than one of you, who have come hither to wed me, for many kings here sought to free me from the spells, but none could do it save Ian the fisher’s son.’

From ‘Popular Tales of the West Highlands.’

A FISH STORY

Perhaps you think that fishes were always fishes, and never lived anywhere except in the water, but if you went to Australia and talked to the black people in the sandy desert in the centre of the country you would learn something quite different. They would tell you that long, long ago you would have met fishes on the land, wandering from place to place, and hunting all sorts of animals, and if you consider how fishes are made, you will understand how difficult this must have been and how clever they were to do it. Indeed, so clever were they that they might have been hunting still if a terrible thing had not happened.

One day the whole fish tribe came back very tired from a hunting expedition, and looked about for a nice cool spot in which to pitch their camp. It was very hot, and they thought that they could not find a more comfortable place than under the branches of a large tree which grew by the bank of a river. So they made their fire to cook some food, right on the edge of a steep bank, which had a deep pool of water lying beneath it at the bottom. While the food was cooking they all stretched themselves lazily out under the tree, and were just dropping off to sleep when a big black cloud which they had never noticed spread over the sun, and heavy drops of rain began to fall, so that the fire was almost put out, and that, you know, is a very serious thing in savage countries where they have no matches, for it is very hard to light it again. To make matters worse, an icy wind began to blow, and the poor fishes were chilled right through their bodies.

‘This will never do,’ said Thuggai, the oldest of all the fish tribe. ‘We shall die of cold unless we can light the fire again,’ and he bade his sons rub two sticks together in the hope of kindling a flame, but though they rubbed till they were tired, not a spark could they produce.

‘Let *me* try,’ cried Biernuga, the bony fish, but he had no better luck, and no more had Kumbal, the bream, nor any of the rest.

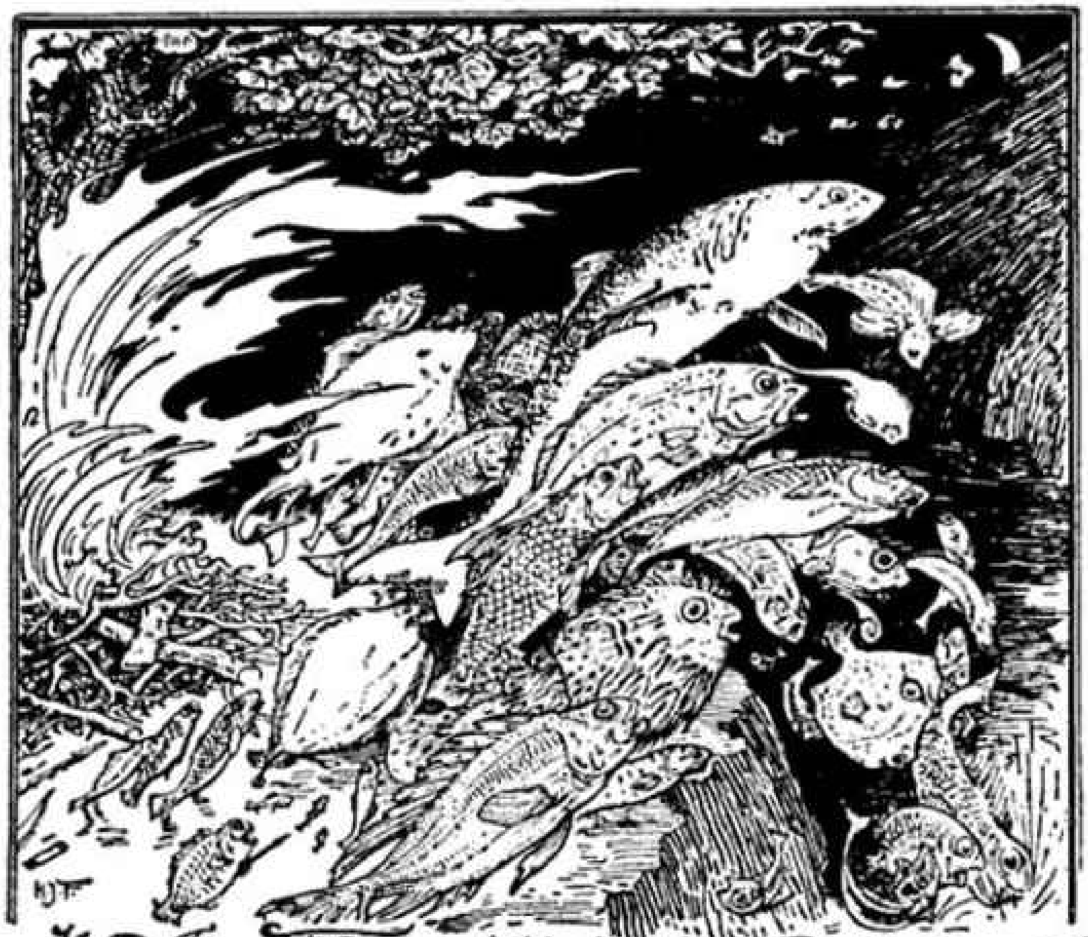
How the Fish got into the Water

‘It is no use,’ exclaimed Thuggai, at last. ‘The wood is too wet. We must just sit and wait till the sun comes out again and dries it.’ Then a very little fish indeed, not more than four inches long and the youngest of the tribe, bowed himself before Thuggai, saying, ‘Ask my father, Guddhu the cod, to light the fire. He is skilled in magic more than most fishes.’ So Thuggai asked him, and Guddhu stripped some pieces of bark off a tree, and placed them on top of the smouldering ashes. Then he knelt by the side of the fire and blew at it for a long while, till slowly the feeble red glow became a little stronger and the edges of the bark showed signs of curling up. When the rest of the tribe saw this they pressed close, keeping their backs towards the piercing wind, but Guddhu told them they must go to the other side, as he wanted the wind to fan his fire. By and bye the spark grew into a flame, and a merry crackling was heard.

‘More wood,’ cried Guddhu, and they all ran and gathered wood and heaped it on the flames, which leaped and roared and sputtered.

‘We shall soon be warm now,’ said the people one to another. ‘Truly Guddhu is great’; and they crowded round again, closer and closer. Suddenly, with a shriek, a blast of wind swept down from the hills and blew the fire out towards them. They sprang back hurriedly, quite forgetting where they stood, and all fell down the bank, each tumbling over the other, till they rolled into the pool that lay below. Oh, how cold it was in that dark water on which the sun never shone! Then in an instant they felt warm again, for the fire, driven by the strong wind, had followed them right down to the bottom of the pool, where it burned as brightly as ever. And the fishes gathered round it as they had done on the top of the cliff, and found the flames as hot as before, and that fire never went out, like those upon land, but kept burning for ever. So now you know why, if you dive deep down below the cold surface of the water on a frosty day, you will find it comfortable and pleasant underneath, and be quite sorry that you cannot stay there.

Australian ‘Folk’ Tale.

THE WONDERFUL TUNE

Maurice Connor was the king, and that’s no small word, of all the pipers in Munster. He could play jig and reel without end, and Ollistrum’s March, and the Eagle’s Whistle, and the Hen’s Concert, and odd tunes of every sort and kind. But he knew one far more surprising than the rest, which had in it the power to set everything dead or alive dancing.

In what way he learned it is beyond my knowledge, for he was mighty cautious about telling how he came by so wonderful a tune. At the very first note of that tune the shoes began shaking upon the feet of all who heard it — old or young, it mattered not — just as if the shoes had the ague; then the feet began going, going, going from under them, and at last up and away with them, dancing like mad, whisking here, there, and everywhere, like a straw in a storm — there was no halting while the music lasted.

Not a fair, nor a wedding, nor a feast in the seven parishes round, was counted worth the speaking of without ‘blind Maurice and his pipes.’ His mother, poor woman, used to lead him about from one place to another just like a dog.

Down through Iveragh, Maurice Connor and his mother were taking their rounds. Beyond all other places Iveragh is the place for stormy coasts and steep mountains, as proper a spot it is as any in Ireland to get yourself drowned, or your neck broken on the land, should you prefer that. But, notwithstanding, in Ballin-skellig Bay there is a neat bit of ground, well fitted for diversion, and down from it, towards the water, is a clean smooth piece of strand, the dead image of a calm summer’s sea on a moonlight night, with just the curl of the small waves upon it.

Here it was that Maurice’s music had brought from all parts a great gathering of the young men and the young women; for ’twas not every day the strand of Trafraska was stirred up by the voice of a bagpipe. The dance began; and as pretty a dance it was as ever was danced. ‘Brave music,’ said everybody, ‘and well done,’ when Maurice stopped.

‘More power to your elbow, Maurice, and a fair wind in the bellows,’ cried Paddy Dorman, a humpbacked dancing master, who was there to keep order. ‘’Tis a pity,’ said he, ‘if we’d let the piper run dry after such music; ’twould be a disgrace to Iveragh, that didn’t come on it since the week of the three Sundays.’ So, as well became him, for he was always a decent man, says he, ‘Did you drink, piper?’

‘I will, sir,’ said Maurice, answering the question on the safe side, for you never yet knew piper or schoolmaster who refused his drink.

‘What will you drink, Maurice?’ says Paddy.

‘I’m no ways particular,’ says Maurice; ‘I drink anything barring *raw* water; but if it’s all the same to you, Mister Dorman, may-be you wouldn’t lend me the loan of a glass of whisky.’

‘I’ve no glass, Maurice,’ said Paddy; ‘I’ve only the bottle.’

‘Let that be no hindrance,’ answered Maurice; ‘my mouth just holds a glass to the drop; often I’ve tried it sure.’

So Paddy Dorman trusted him with the bottle — more fool was he; and, to his cost, he found that though Maurice’s mouth might not hold more than the glass at one time, yet, owing to the hole in his throat, it took many a filling.

‘That was no bad whisky neither,’ says Maurice, handing back the empty bottle.

‘By the holy frost, then!’ says Paddy, ‘’tis but *cold* comfort there’s in that bottle now; and ’tis your word we must take for the strength of the whisky, for you’ve left us no sample to judge by’; and to be sure Maurice had not.

Now I need not tell any gentleman or lady that if he or she was to drink an honest bottle of whisky at one pull, it is not at all the same thing as drinking a bottle of water; and in the whole course of my life I never knew more than five men who could do so without being the worse. Of these Maurice Connor was not one, though he had a stiff head enough of his own. Don’t think I blame him for it; but true is the word that says, ‘When liquor’s in sense is out’; and puff, at a breath, out he blasted his wonderful tune.

’Twas really then beyond all belief or telling the dancing. Maurice himself could not keep quiet; staggering now on one leg, now on the other, and rolling about like a ship in a cross sea, trying to humour the tune. There was his mother, too, moving her old bones as light as the youngest girl of them all; but her dancing, no, nor the dancing of all the rest, is not worthy the speaking about to the work that was going on down upon the strand. Every inch of it covered with all manner of fish jumping and plunging about to the music, and every moment more and more would tumble in out of the water, charmed by the wonderful tune. Crabs of monstrous size spun round and round on one claw with the nimbleness of a dancing master, and twirled and tossed their other claws about like limbs that did not belong to them. It was a sight surprising to behold. But perhaps you may have heard of Father Florence Conry, as pleasant a man as one would wish to drink with of a hot summer’s day; and he had rhymed out all about the dancing fishes so neatly that it would be a thousand pities not to give you his verses; so here they are in English:

The big seals in motion, Like waves of the ocean, Or gouty feet prancing, Came heading the gay fish, Crabs, lobsters, and cray-fish, Determined on dancing.

The sweet sounds they followed, The gasping cod swallow’d— ’Twas wonderful, really; And turbot and flounder, ‘Mid fish that were rounder, Just caper’d as gaily.

John-dories came tripping; Dull hake, by their skipping, To frisk it seem’d given; Bright mackrel went springing, Like small rainbows winging Their flight up to heaven.

The whiting and haddock Left salt water paddock This dance to be put in; Where skate with flat faces Edged out some old plaices; But soles kept their footing.

Sprats and herrings in powers Of silvery showers All number out-numbered; And great ling so lengthy Was there in such plenty The shore was encumber’d.

The scollop and oyster Their two shells did roister, Like castanets flitting; While limpets moved clearly, And rocks very nearly With laughter were splitting.

Never was such a hullabullo in this world, before or since; ’twas as if heaven and earth were coming together; and all out of Maurice Connor’s wonderful tune!

In the height of all these doings, what should there be dancing among the outlandish set of fishes but a beautiful young woman — as beautiful as the dawn of day! She had a cocked hat upon her head; from under it her long green hair — just the colour of the sea — fell down behind, without hindrance to her dancing. Her teeth were like rows of pearls; her lips for all the world looked like red coral; and she had a shining gown pale green as the hollow of the wave, with little rows of purple and red seaweeds settled out upon it; for you never yet saw a lady, under the water or over the water, who had not a good notion of dressing herself out.

Up she danced as last to Maurice, who was flinging his feet from under him as fast as hops — for nothing in this world could keep still while that tune of his was going on — and says she to him, chanting it out with a voice as sweet as honey:

I’m a lady of honour Who live in the sea; Come down, Maurice Connor, And be married to me. Silver plates and gold dishes You shall have, and shall be The king of the fishes, When you’re married to me.

Drink was strong in Maurice’s head, and out he chanted in return for her great civility. It is not every lady, may-be, that would be after making such an offer to a blind piper; therefore ’twas only right in him to give her as good as she gave herself, so says Maurice:

I’m obliged to you, madam: Off a gold dish or plate, If a king, and I had ‘em, I could dine in great state.

With your own father’s daughter I’d be sure to agree, But to drink the salt water Wouldn’t do so with me!

The lady looked at him quite amazed, and swinging her head from side to side like a great scholar, ‘Well,’ says she, ‘Maurice, if you’re not a poet, where is poetry to be found?’

In this way they kept on at it, framing high compliments; one answering the other, and their feet going with the music as fast as their tongues. All the fish kept dancing, too; Maurice heard the clatter and was afraid to stop playing lest it might be displeasing to the fish, and not knowing what so many of them may take it into their heads to do to him if they got vexed.

Well, the lady with the green hair kept on coaxing Maurice with soft speeches, till at last she over-persuaded him to promise to marry her, and be king over the fishes, great and small. Maurice was well fitted to be their king, if they wanted one that could make them dance; and he surely would drink, barring the salt water, with any fish of them all.

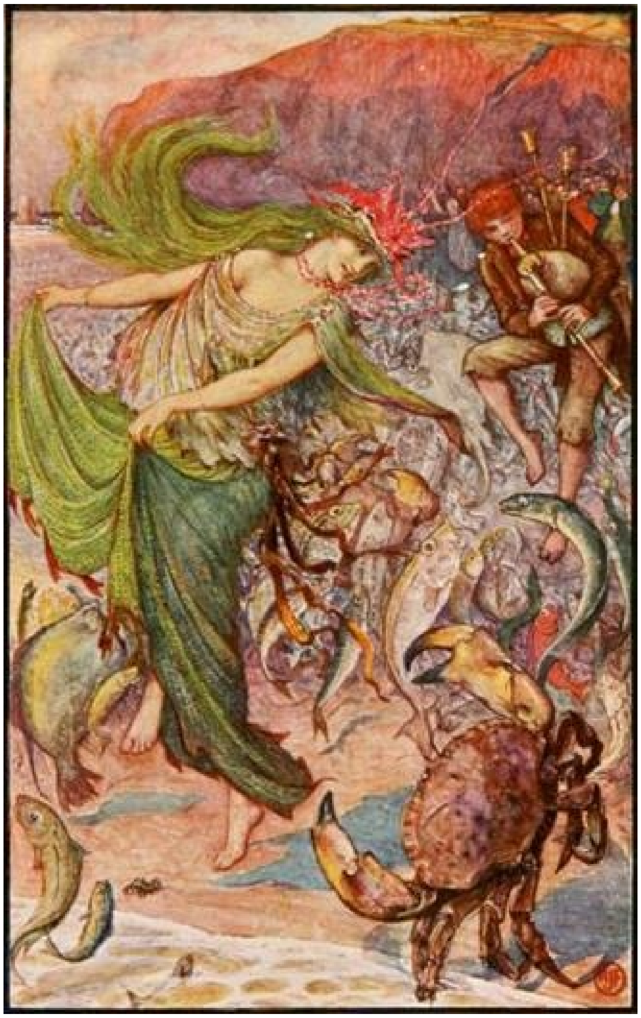

The Sea-lady allures Maurice into the Sea.

When Maurice’s mother saw him with that unnatural thing in the form of a green-haired lady as his guide, and he and she dancing down together so lovingly to the water’s edge, through the thick of the fishes, she called out after him to stop and come back. ‘Oh, then,’ says she, ‘as if I was not widow enough before, there he is going away from me to be married to that scaly woman. And who knows but ’tis grandmother I may be to a hake or a cod — Lord help and pity me, but ’tis a mighty unnatural thing! And may-be ’tis boiling and eating my own grandchild I’ll be, with a bit of salt butter, and I not knowing it! Oh, Maurice, Maurice, if there’s any love or nature left in you, come back to your own *ould* mother, who reared you like a decent Christian!’ Then the poor woman began to cry and sob so finely that it would do anyone good to hear her.

Maurice was not long getting to the rim of the water. There he kept playing and dancing on as if nothing was the matter, and a great thundering wave coming in towards him ready to swallow him up alive; but as he could not see it, he did not fear it. His mother it was who saw it plainly through the big tears that were rolling down her cheeks; and though she saw it, and her heart was aching as much as ever mother’s heart ached for a son, she kept dancing, dancing all the time for the bare life of her. Certain it was she could not help it, for Maurice never stopped playing that wonderful tune of his.

He only turned his ear to the sound of his mother’s voice, fearing it might put him out in his steps, and all the answer he made back was, ‘Whisht with you, mother — sure I’m going to be king over the fishes down in the sea, and for a token of luck, and a sign that I’m alive and well, I’ll send you in, every twelvemonth on this day, a piece of burned wood to Trafraska.’ Maurice had not the power to say a word more, for the strange lady with the green hair, seeing the wave just upon them, covered him up with herself in a thing like a cloak with a big hood to it, and the wave curling over twice as high as their heads, burst upon the strand, with a rush and a roar that might be heard as far as Cape Clear.

That day twelvemonth the piece of burned wood came ashore in Trafraska. It was a queer thing for Maurice to think of sending all the way from the bottom of the sea. A gown or a pair of shoes would have been something like a present for his poor mother; but he had said it, and he kept his word. The bit of burned wood regularly came ashore on the appointed day for as good, ay, and better than a hundred years. The day is now forgotten, and may-be that is the reason why people say how Maurice Connor has stopped sending the luck-token to his mother. Poor woman, she did not live to get as much as one of them; for what through the loss of Maurice, and the fear of eating her own grandchildren, she died in three weeks after the dance. Some say it was the fatigue that killed her, but whichever it was, Mrs. Connor was decently buried with her own people.

Seafaring people have often heard, off the coast of Kerry, on a still night, the sound of music coming up from the water; and some, who have had good ears could plainly distinguish Maurice Connor’s voice singing these words to his pipes —

Beautiful shore, with thy spreading strand, Thy crystal water, and diamond sand; Never would I have parted from thee, But for the sake of my fair ladie.

From ‘Fairy Tales and Traditions of the South of Ireland.’

THE RICH BROTHER AND THE POOR BROTHER

There was once a rich old man who had two sons, and as his wife was dead, the elder lived with him, and helped him to look after his property. For a long time all went well; the young man got up very early in the morning, and worked hard all day, and at the end of every week his father counted up the money they had made, and rubbed his hands with delight, as he saw how big the pile of gold in the strong iron chest was becoming. ‘It will soon be full now, and I shall have to buy a larger one,’ he said to himself, and so busy was he with the thought of his money, that he did not notice how bright his son’s face had grown, nor how he sometimes started when he was spoken to, as if his mind was far away.

One day, however, the old man went to the city on business, which he had not done for three years at least. It was market day, and he met with many people he knew, and it was getting quite late when he turned into the inn yard, and bade an ostler saddle his horse, and bring it round directly. While he was waiting in the hall, the landlady came up for a gossip, and after a few remarks about the weather and the vineyards she asked him how he liked his new daughter-in-law, and whether he had been surprised at the marriage.

The old man stared as he listened to her. ‘Daughter-in-law? Marriage?’ said he. ‘I don’t know what you are talking about! I’ve got no daughter-in-law, and nobody has been married lately, that ever I heard of.’

Now this was exactly what the landlady, who was very curious, wanted to find out; but she put on a look of great alarm, and exclaimed:

‘Oh, dear! I hope I have not made mischief. I had no idea — or, of course, I would not have spoken — but’ —— and here she stopped and fumbled with her apron, as if she was greatly embarrassed.

‘As you have said so much you will have to say a little more,’ retorted the old man, a suspicion of what she meant darting across him; and the woman, nothing loth, answered as before.

‘Ah, it was not all for buying or selling that your handsome son has been coming to town every week these many months past. And not by the shortest way, either! No, it was over the river he rode, and across the hill and past the cottage of Miguel the vine-keeper, whose daughter, they say, is the prettiest girl in the whole country side, though she is too white for *my* taste,’ and then the landlady paused again, and glanced up at the farmer, to see how he was taking it.

She did not learn much. He was looking straight before him, his teeth set. But as she ceased to talk, he said quietly, ‘Go on.’

‘There is not much more to tell,’ replied the landlady, for she suddenly remembered that she must prepare supper for the hungry men who always stopped at the inn on market days, before starting for home, ‘but one fine morning they both went to the little church on top of the hill, and were married. My cousin is servant to the priest, and she found out about it and told me. But good-day to you, sir; here is your horse, and I must hurry off to the kitchen.’

It was lucky that the horse was sure-footed and knew the road, for his bridle hung loose on his neck, and his master took no heed of the way he was going. When the farm-house was reached, the man led the animal to his stable, and then went to look for his son.

‘I know everything — you have deceived me. Get out of my sight at once — I have done with you,’ he stammered, choking with passion as he came up to the young man, who was cutting a stick in front of the door, whistling gaily the while.

‘But, father — —’

‘You are no son of mine; I have only one now. Begone, or it will be the worse for you,’ and as he spoke he lifted up his whip.

The young man shrank back. He feared lest his father should fall down in a fit, his face was so red and his eyes seemed bursting from his head. But it was no use staying: perhaps next morning the old man might listen to reason, though in his heart the son felt that he would never take back his words. So he turned slowly away, and walked heavily along a path which ended in a cave on the side of the hill, and there he sat through the night, thinking of what had happened.

Yes, he had been wrong, there was no doubt of that, and he did not quite know how it had come about. He had *meant* to have told his father all about it, and he was sure, *quite* sure, that if once the old man had seen his wife, he would have forgiven her poverty on account of her great beauty and goodness. But he had put it off from day to day, hoping always for a better opportunity, and now this was the end!

If the son had no sleep that night, no more had the father, and as soon as the sun rose, he sent a messenger into the great city with orders to bring back the younger brother. When he arrived the farmer did not waste words, but informed him that he was now his only heir, and would inherit all his lands and money, and that he was to come and live at home, and to help manage the property.

Though very pleased at the thought of becoming such a rich man — for the brothers had never cared much for each other — the younger would rather have stayed where he was, for he soon got tired of the country, and longed for a town life. However, this he kept to himself, and made the best of things, working hard like his brother before him.

In this way the years went on, but the crops were not so good as they had been, and the old man gave orders that some fine houses he was building in the city should be left unfinished, for it would take all his savings to complete them. As to the elder son, he would never even hear his name mentioned, and died at last without ever seeing his face, leaving to the younger as he had promised, all his lands, as well as his money.

Meanwhile, the son whom he had disinherited had grown poorer and poorer. He and his wife were always looking out for something to do, and never spent a penny that they could help, but luck was against them, and at the time of his father's death they had hardly bread to eat or clothes to cover them. If there had been only himself, he would have managed to get on somehow, but he could not bear to watch his children becoming weaker day by day, and swallowing his pride, at length he crossed the mountains to his old home where his brother was living.

It was the first time for long that the two men had come face to face, and they looked at each other in silence. Then tears rose in the eyes of the elder, but winking them hastily away, he said:

'Brother, it is not needful that I should tell you how poor I am; you can see that for yourself. I have not come to beg for money, but only to ask if you will give me those unfinished houses of yours in the city, and I will make them water-tight, so that my wife and children can live in them, and that will save our rent. For as they are, they profit you nothing.'

And the younger brother listened and pitied him, and gave him the houses that he asked for, and the elder went away happy.

For some years things went on as they were, and then the rich brother began to feel lonely, and thought to himself that he was getting older, and it was time for him to be married. The wife he chose was very wealthy, but she was also very greedy, and however much she had, she always wanted more. She was, besides, one of those unfortunate people who invariably fancy that the possessions of other people must be better than their own. Many a time her poor husband regretted the day that he had first seen her, and often her meanness and shabby ways put him to shame. But he had not the courage to rule her, and she only got worse and worse.

After she had been married a few months the bride wanted to go into the city and buy herself some new dresses. She had never been there before, and when she had finished her shopping, she thought she would pay a visit to her unknown sister-in-law, and rest for a bit. The house she was seeking was in a broad street, and *ought* to have been very magnificent, but the carved stone portico enclosed a mean little door of rough wood, while a row of beautiful pillars led to nothing. The dwellings on each side were in the same unfinished condition, and water trickled down the walls. Most people would have considered it a wretched place, and turned their backs on it as soon as they could, but this lady saw that by spending some money the houses could be made as splendid as they were originally intended to be, and she instantly resolved to get them for herself.

Full of this idea she walked up the marble staircase, and entered the little room where her sister-in-law sat making clothes for her children. The bride seemed full of interest in the houses, and asked a great many questions about them, so that her new relations liked her much better than they expected, and hoped they might be good friends. However, as soon as she reached home, she went straight to her husband, and told him that he must get back those houses from his brother, as they would exactly suit her, and she could easily make them into a palace as fine as the king's. But her husband only told her that she might buy houses in some other part of the town, for she could not have those, as he had long since made a gift of them to his brother, who had lived there for many years past.

At this answer the wife grew very angry. She began to cry, and made such a noise that all the neighbours heard her and put their heads out of the windows, to see what was the matter. 'It was absurd,' she sobbed out, 'quite unjust. Indeed, if you came to think of it, the gift was worth nothing, as when her husband made it he was a bachelor, and since then he had been married, and she had never given her consent to any such thing.' And so she lamented all day and all night, till the poor man was nearly worried to death; and at last he did what she wished, and summoned his brother in a court of law to give up the houses which, he said, had only been lent to him. But when the evidence on both sides had been heard, the judge decided in favour of the poor man, which made the rich lady more furious than ever, and she determined not to rest until she had gained the day. If one judge would not give her the houses another should, and so time after time the case was tried over again, till at last it came before the highest judge of all, in the city of Evora. Her husband was heartily tired and ashamed of the whole affair, but his weakness in not putting a stop to it in the beginning had got him into this difficulty, and now he was forced to go on.

On the same day the two brothers set out on their journey to the city, the rich one on horseback, with plenty of food in his knapsack, the poor one on foot with nothing but a piece of bread and four onions to eat on the way. The road was hilly and neither could go very fast, and when night fell, they were both glad to see some lights in a window a little distance in front of them.

The lights turned out to have been placed there by a farmer, who had planned to have a particularly good supper as it was his wife's birthday, and bade the rich man enter and sit down, while he himself took the horse to the stable. The poor man asked timidly if he might spend the night in a corner, adding that he had brought his own supper with him. Another time permission might have been refused him, for the farmer was no lover of humble folk, but now he gave the elder brother leave to come in, pointing out a wooden chair where he could sit.

Supper was soon served, and very glad the younger brother was to eat it, for his long ride had made him very hungry. The farmer's wife, however, would touch nothing, and at last declared that the only supper she wanted was one of the onions the poor man was cooking at the fire. Of course he gave it to her, though he would gladly have eaten it himself, as three onions are not much at the end of a long day's walk, and soon after they all went to sleep, the poor man making himself as comfortable as he could in his corner.

A few hours later the farmer was aroused by the cries and groans of his wife.

'Oh, I feel so ill, I'm sure I'm going to die,' wept she. 'It was that onion, I know it was. I wish I had never eaten it. It must have been poisoned.'

'If the man has poisoned you he shall pay for it,' said her husband, and seizing a thick stick he ran downstairs and began to beat the poor man, who had been sound asleep, and had nothing to defend himself with. Luckily, the noise aroused the younger brother, who jumped up and snatched the stick from the farmer's hand, saying:

'We are both going to Evora to try a law-suit. Come too, and accuse him there if he has attempted to rob you or murder you, but don't kill him now, or you will get yourself into trouble.'

'Well, perhaps you are right,' answered the farmer, 'but the sooner that fellow has his deserts, the better I shall be pleased,' and without more words he went to the stables and brought out a horse for himself and also the black Andalusian mare ridden by the rich man, while the poor brother, fearing more ill-treatment, started at once on foot.

Now all that night it had rained heavily, and did not seem likely to stop, and in some places the road was so thick with mud that it was almost impossible to get across it. In one spot it was so very bad that a mule laden with baggage had got stuck in it, and tug as he might, his master was quite unable to pull him out. The muleteer in despair appealed to the two horsemen, who were carefully skirting the swamp at some distance off, but they paid no heed to his cries, and he began to talk cheerfully to his mule, hoping to keep up his spirits, declaring that if the poor beast would only have a little patience help was sure to come.

And so it did, for very soon the poor brother reached the place, bespattered with mud from head to foot, but ready to do all he could to help the mule and his master. First they set about finding some stout logs of wood to lay down on the marsh so that they could reach the mule, for by this time his frantic struggles had broken his bridle, and he was deeper in than ever. Stepping cautiously along the wood, the poor man contrived to lay hold of the animal’s tail, and with a desperate effort the mule managed to regain his footing on dry ground, but at the cost of leaving his tail in the poor man’s hand. When he saw this the muleteer’s anger knew no bounds, and forgetting that without the help given him he would have lost his mule altogether, he began to abuse the poor man, declaring that he had ruined his beast, and the law would make him pay for it. Then, jumping on the back of the mule, which was so glad to be out of the choking mud that he did not seem to mind the loss of his tail, the ungrateful wretch rode on, and that evening reached the inn at Evora, where the rich man and the farmer had already arrived for the night.

Meanwhile the poor brother walked wearily along, wondering what other dreadful adventures were in store for him.

‘I shall certainly be condemned for one or other of them,’ thought he sadly; ‘and after all, if I *have* to die, I would rather choose my own death than leave it to my enemies,’ and as soon as he entered Evora he looked about for a place suitable for carrying out the plan he had made. At length he found what he sought, but as it was too late and too dark for him to make sure of success, he curled himself up under a doorway, and slept till morning.

Although it was winter, the sun rose in a clear sky, and its rays felt almost warm when the poor man got up and shook himself. He intended it to be the day of his death, but in spite of that, and of the fact that he was leaving his wife and children behind him, he felt almost cheerful. He had struggled so long, and was so very, very tired; but he would not have minded that if he could have proved his innocence, and triumphed over his enemies. However, they had all been too clever for him, and he had no strength to fight any more. So he mounted the stone steps that led to the battlements of the city, and stopped for a moment to gaze about him.

It happened that an old sick man who lived near by had begged to be carried out and to be laid at the foot of the wall so that the beams of the rising sun might fall upon him, and he would be able to talk with his friends as they passed by to their work. Little did he guess that on top of the battlements, exactly over his head, stood a man who was taking his last look at the same sun, before going to his death that awaited him. But so it was; and as the steeple opposite was touched by the golden light, the poor man shut his eyes and sprang forward. The wall was high, and he flew rapidly through the air, but it was not the ground he touched, only the body of the sick man, who rolled over and died without a groan. As for the other, he was quite unhurt, and was slowly rising to his feet when his arms were suddenly seized and held.

‘You have killed our father, do you see? do you see?’ cried two young men, ‘and you will come with us this instant before the judge, and answer for it.’

‘Your father? but I don’t know him. What do you mean?’ asked the poor man, who was quite bewildered with his sudden rush through the air, and could not think why he should be accused of this fresh crime. But he got no reply, and was only hurried through the streets to the court-house, where his brother, the muleteer, and the farmer had just arrived, all as angry as ever, all talking at once, till the judge entered and ordered them to be silent.

‘I will hear you one by one,’ he said, and motioned the younger brother to begin.

He did not take long to state his case. The unfinished houses were his, left him with the rest of the property by his father, and his brother refused to give them up. In answer, the poor man told, in a few words, how he had begged the houses from his brother, and produced the deed of gift which made him their owner.

The judge listened quietly and asked a few questions; then he gave his verdict.

‘The houses shall remain the property of the man to whom they were given, and to whom they belong. And as you,’ he added, turning to the younger brother, ‘brought this accusation knowing full well it was wicked and unjust, I order you, besides losing the houses, to pay a thousand pounds damages to your brother.’

The rich man heard the judge with rage in his heart, the poor man with surprise and gratitude. But he was not safe yet, for now it was the turn of the farmer. The judge could hardly conceal a smile at the story, and inquired if the wife was dead before the farmer left the house, and received for answer that he was in such a hurry for justice to be done that he had not waited to see. Then the poor man told his tale, and once more judgment was given in his favour, while twelve hundred pounds was ordered to be paid him. As for the muleteer, he was informed very plainly that he had proved himself mean and ungrateful for the help that had been given him, and as a punishment he must pay to the poor man a fine of fifty pounds, and hand him over the mule till his tail had grown again.

Lastly, there came the two sons of the sick man.

‘This is the wretch who killed our father,’ they said, ‘and we demand that he should die also.’

‘How did you kill him?’ asked the judge, turning to the accused, and the poor man told how he had leaped from the wall, not knowing that anyone was beneath.

‘Well, this is my judgment,’ replied the judge, when they had all spoken: ‘Let the accused sit under the wall, and let the sons of the dead man jump from the top and fall on him and kill him, and if they will not do this, then they are condemned to pay eight hundred pounds for their false accusation.'

The young men looked at each other, and slowly shook their heads.

'We will pay the fine,' said they, and the judge nodded.

So the poor man rode the mule home, and brought back to his family enough money to keep them in comfort to the end of their days.

Adapted from the Portuguese.

THE ONE-HANDED GIRL

An old couple once lived in a hut under a grove of palm trees, and they had one son and one daughter. They were all very happy together for many years, and then the father became very ill, and felt he was going to die. He called his children to the place where he lay on the floor — for no one had any beds in that country — and said to his son, ‘I have no herds of cattle to leave you — only the few things there are in the house — for I am a poor man, as you know. But choose: will you have my blessing or my property?’

‘Your property, certainly,’ answered the son, and his father nodded.

‘And you?’ asked the old man of the girl, who stood by her brother.

‘I will have blessing,’ she answered, and her father gave her much blessing.

That night he died, and his wife and son and daughter mourned for him seven days, and gave him a burial according to the custom of his people. But hardly was the time of mourning over, than the mother was attacked by a disease which was common in that country.

‘I am going away from you,’ she said to her children, in a faint voice; ‘but first, my son, choose which you will have: blessing or property.’

‘Property, certainly,’ answered the son,

‘And you, my daughter?’

‘I will have blessing,’ said the girl; and her mother gave her much blessing, and that night she died.

When the days of mourning were ended, the brother bade his sister put outside the hut all that belonged to his father and his mother. So the girl put them out, and he took them away, save only a small pot and a vessel in which she could clean her corn. But she had no corn to clean.

She sat at home, sad and hungry, when a neighbour knocked at the door.

‘My pot has cracked in the fire, lend me yours to cook my supper in, and I will give you a handful of corn in return.’

And the girl was glad, and that night she was able to have supper herself, and next day another woman borrowed her pot, and then another and another, for never were known so many accidents as befell the village pots at that time. She soon grew quite fat with all the corn she earned with the help of her pot, and then one evening she picked up a pumpkin seed in a corner, and planted it near her well, and it sprang up, and gave her many pumpkins.

At last it happened that a youth from her village passed through the place where the girl’s brother was, and the two met and talked.

‘What news is there of my sister?’ asked the young man, with whom things had gone badly, for he was idle.

‘She is fat and well-liking,’ replied the youth, ‘for the women borrow her mortar to clean their corn, and borrow her pot to cook it in, and for all this they give her more food than she can eat.’ And he went his way.

Now the brother was filled with envy at the words of the man, and he set out at once, and before dawn he had reached the hut, and saw the pot and the mortar were standing outside. He slung them over his shoulders and departed, pleased with his own cleverness; but when his sister awoke and sought for the pot to cook her corn for breakfast, she could find it nowhere. At length she said to herself:

‘Well, some thief must have stolen them while I slept. I will go and see if any of my pumpkins are ripe.’ And indeed they were, and so many that the tree was almost broken by the weight of them. So she ate what she wanted and took the others, to the village, and gave them in exchange for corn, and the women said that no pumpkins were as sweet as these, and that she was to bring every day all that she had. In this way she earned more than she needed for herself, and soon was able to get another mortar and cooking pot in exchange for her corn. Then she thought she was quite rich.

Unluckily someone else thought so too, and this was her brother’s wife, who had heard all about the pumpkin tree, and sent her slave with a handful of grain to buy her a pumpkin. At first the girl told him that so few were left that she could not spare any; but when she found that he belonged to her brother, she changed her mind, and went out to the tree and gathered the largest and the ripest that was there.

‘Take this one,’ she said to the slave, ‘and carry it back to your mistress, but tell her to keep the corn, as the pumpkin is a gift.’

The brother’s wife was overjoyed at the sight of the fruit, and when she tasted it, she declared it was the nicest she had ever eaten. Indeed, all night she thought of nothing else, and early in the morning she called another slave (for she was a rich woman) and bade him go and ask for another pumpkin. But the girl, who had just been out to look at her tree, told him that they were all eaten, so he went back empty-handed to his mistress.

In the evening her husband returned from hunting a long way off, and found his wife in tears.

‘What is the matter?’ asked he.

‘I sent a slave with some grain to your sister to buy some pumpkins, but she would not sell me any, and told me there were none, though I know she lets other people buy them.’

‘Well, never mind now — go to sleep,’ said he, ‘and to-morrow I will go and pull up the pumpkin tree, and that will punish her for treating you so badly.’

So before sunrise he got up and set out for his sister’s house, and found her cleaning some corn.

‘Why did you refuse to sell my wife a pumpkin yesterday when she wanted one?’ he asked.

‘The old ones are finished, and the new ones are not yet come,’ answered the girl. ‘When her slave arrived two days ago, there were only four left; but I gave him one, and would take no corn for it.’

‘I do not believe you: you have sold them all to other people. I shall go and cut down the pumpkin,’ cried her brother in a rage.

‘If you cut down the pumpkin you shall cut off my hand with it,’ exclaimed the girl, running up to her tree and catching hold of it. But her brother followed, and with one blow cut off the pumpkin and her hand too.

Then he went into the house and took away everything he could find, and sold the house to a friend of his who had long wished to have it, and his sister had no home to go to.

Meanwhile she had bathed her arm carefully, and bound on it some healing leaves that grew near by, and wrapped a cloth round the leaves, and went to hide in the forest, that her brother might not find her again.

For seven days she wandered about, eating only the fruit that hung from the trees above her, and every night she climbed up and tucked herself safely among the creepers which bound together the big branches, so that neither lions nor tigers nor panthers might get at her.

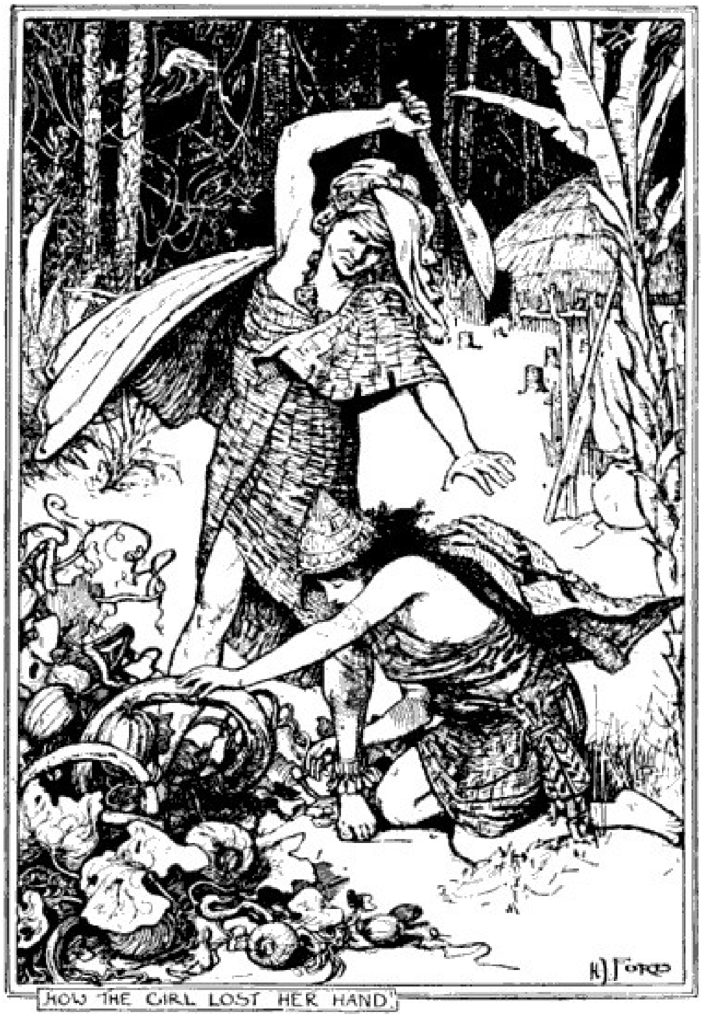

HOW THE GIRL LOST HER HAND

When she woke up on the seventh morning she saw from her perch smoke coming up from a little town on the edge of the forest. The sight of the huts made her feel more lonely and helpless than before. She longed desperately for a draught of milk from a gourd, for there were no streams in that part, and she was very thirsty, but how was she to earn anything with only one hand? And at this thought her courage failed, and she began to cry bitterly.

It happened that the king’s son had come out from the town very early to shoot birds, and when the sun grew hot he felt tired.

‘I will lie here and rest under this tree,’ he said to his attendants. ‘You can go and shoot instead, and I will just have this slave to stay with me!’ Away they went, and the young man fell asleep, and slept long. Suddenly he was awakened by something wet and salt falling on his face.

‘What is that? Is it raining?’ he said to his slave. ‘Go and look.’

‘No, master, it is not raining,’ answered the slave.

‘Then climb up the tree and see what it is,’ and the slave climbed up, and came back and told his master that a beautiful girl was sitting up there, and that it must have been her tears which had fallen on the face of the king’s son.

‘Why was she crying?’ inquired the prince.

‘I cannot tell — I did not dare to ask her; but perhaps she would tell you.’ And the master, greatly wondering, climbed up the tree.

‘What is the matter with you?’ said he gently, and, as she only sobbed louder, he continued:

‘Are you a woman, or a spirit of the woods?’

‘I am a woman,’ she answered slowly, wiping her eyes with a leaf of the creeper that hung about her.

‘Then why do you cry?’ he persisted.

‘I have many things to cry for,’ she replied, ‘more than you could ever guess.’

‘Come home with me,’ said the prince; ‘it is not very far. Come home to my father and mother. I am a king’s son.’

‘Then why are you here?’ she said, opening her eyes and staring at him.

‘Once every month I and my friends shoot birds in the forest,’ he answered, ‘but I was tired and bade them leave me to rest. And you — what are you doing up in this tree?’

At that she began to cry again, and told the king’s son all that had befallen her since the death of her mother.

‘I cannot come down with you, for I do not like anyone to see me,’ she ended with a sob.

‘Oh! I will manage all that,’ said the king’s son, and swinging himself to a lower branch, he bade his slave go quickly into the town, and bring back with him four strong men and a curtained litter. When the man was gone, the girl climbed down, and hid herself on the ground in some bushes. Very soon the slave returned with the litter, which was placed on the ground close to the bushes where the girl lay.

‘Now go, all of you, and call my attendants, for I do not wish to stay here any longer,’ he said to the men, and as soon as they were out of sight he bade the girl get into the litter, and fasten the curtains tightly. Then he got in on the other side, and waited till his attendants came up.

‘What is the matter, O son of a king?’ asked they, breathless with running.

‘I think I am ill; I am cold,’ he said, and signing to the bearers, he drew the curtains, and was carried through the forest right inside his own house.

‘Tell my father and mother that I have a fever, and want some gruel,’ said he, ‘and bid them send it quickly.’

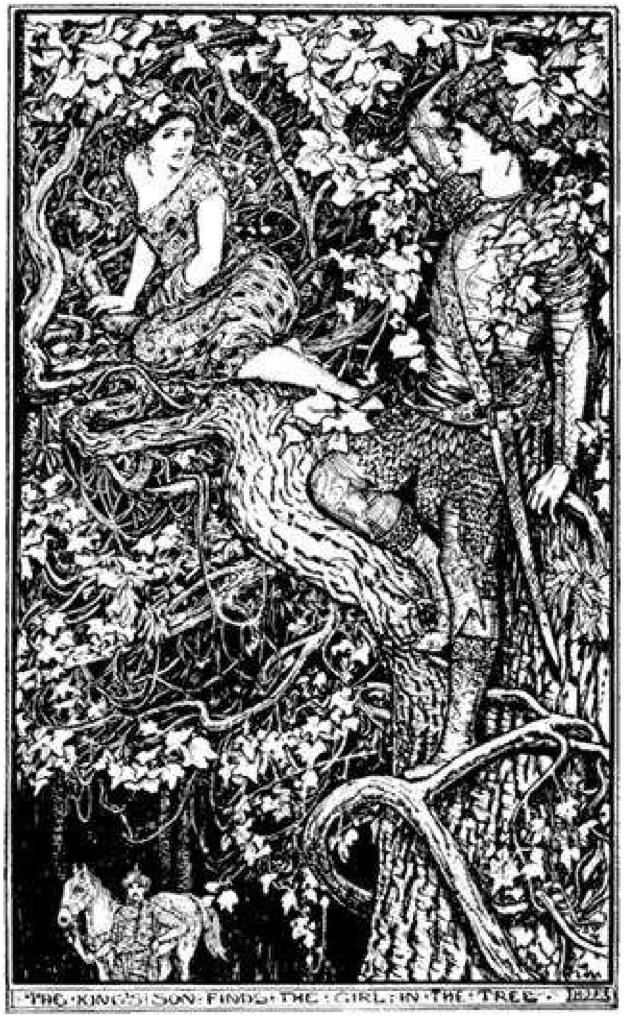

THE KING'S SON FINDS THE GIRL IN THE TREE

So the slave hastened to the king’s palace and gave his message, which troubled both the king and the queen greatly. A pot of hot gruel was instantly prepared, and carried over to the sick man, and as soon as the council which was sitting was over, the king and his ministers went to pay him a visit, bearing a message from the queen that she would follow a little later.

Now the prince had pretended to be ill in order to soften his parents’ hearts, and the next day he declared he felt better, and, getting into his litter, was carried to the palace in state, drums being beaten all along the road.

He dismounted at the foot of the steps and walked up, a great parasol being held over his head by a slave. Then he entered the cool, dark room where his father and mother were sitting, and said to them:

‘I saw a girl yesterday in the forest whom I wish to marry, and, unknown to my attendants, I brought her back to my house in a litter. Give me your consent, I beg, for no other woman pleases me as well, even though she has but one hand!’

Of course the king and queen would have preferred a daughter-in-law with two hands, and one who could have brought riches with her, but they could not bear to say ‘No’ to their son, so they told him it should be as he chose, and that the wedding feast should be prepared immediately.

The girl could scarcely believe her good fortune, and, in gratitude for all the kindness shown her, was so useful and pleasant to her husband’s parents that they soon loved her.

By and bye a baby was born to her, and soon after that the prince was sent on a journey by his father to visit some of the distant towns of the kingdom, and to set right things that had gone wrong.

No sooner had he started than the girl’s brother, who had wasted all the riches his wife had brought him in recklessness and folly, and was now very poor, chanced to come into the town, and as he passed he heard a man say, ‘Do you know that the king’s son has married a woman who has lost one of her hands?’ On hearing these words the brother stopped and asked, ‘Where did he find such a woman?’

‘In the forest,’ answered the man, and the cruel brother guessed at once it must be his sister.

A great rage took possession of his soul as he thought of the girl whom he had tried to ruin being after all so much better off than himself, and he vowed that he would work her ill. Therefore that very afternoon he made his way to the palace and asked to see the king.

When he was admitted to his presence, he knelt down and touched the ground with his forehead, and the king bade him stand up and tell wherefore he had come.

‘By the kindness of your heart have you been deceived, O king,’ said he. ‘Your son has married a girl who has lost a hand. Do you know why she has lost it? She was a witch, and has wedded three husbands, and each husband she has put to death with her arts. Then the people of the town cut off her hand, and turned her into the forest. And what I say is true, for her town is my town also.’

The king listened, and his face grew dark. Unluckily he had a hasty temper, and did not stop to reason, and, instead of sending to the town, and discovering people who knew his daughter-in-law and could have told him how hard she had worked and how poor she had been, he believed all the brother’s lying words, and made the queen believe them too. Together they took counsel what they should do, and in the end they decided that they also would put her out of the town. But this did not content the brother.

‘Kill her,’ he said. ‘It is no more than she deserves for daring to marry the king’s son. Then she can do no more hurt to anyone.’

‘We cannot kill her,’ answered they; ‘if we did, our son would assuredly kill us. Let us do as the others did, and put her out of the town.’ And with this the envious brother was forced to be content.

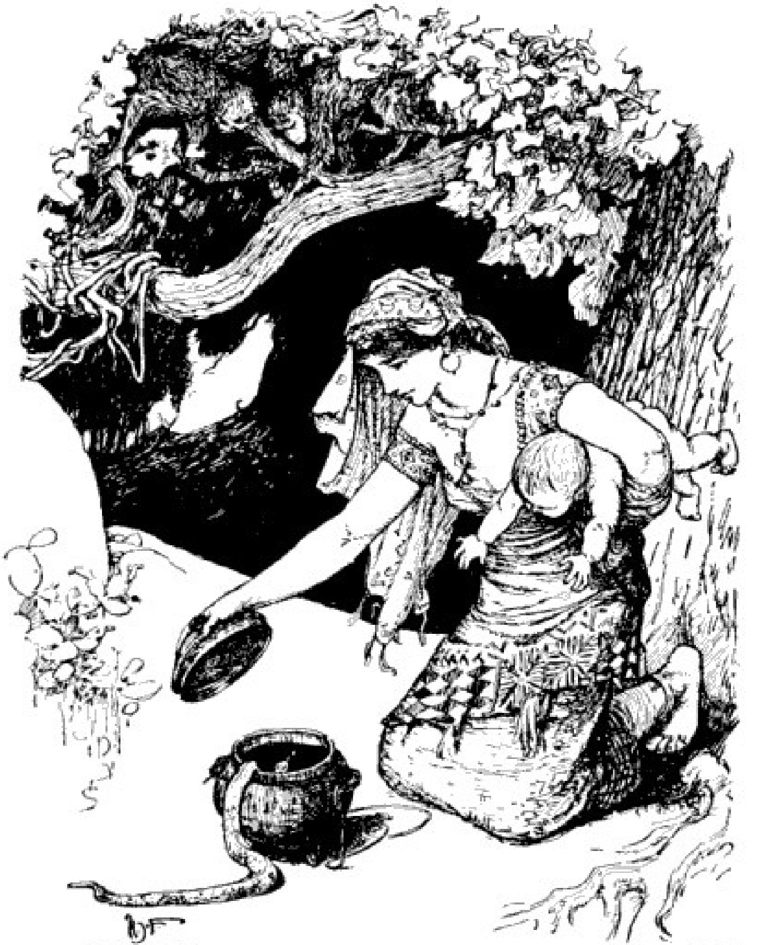

The One-handed Girl befriends a snake

The poor girl loved her husband very much, but just then the baby was more to her than all else in the world, and as long as she had him with her, she did not very much mind anything. So, taking her son on her arm, and hanging a little earthen pot for cooking round her neck, she left her house with its great peacock fans and slaves and seats of ivory, and plunged into the forest.

For a while she walked, not knowing whither she went, then by and bye she grew tired, and sat under a tree to rest and to hush her baby to sleep. Suddenly she raised her eyes, and saw a snake wriggling from under the bushes towards her.

‘I am a dead woman,’ she said to herself, and stayed quite still, for indeed she was too frightened to move. In another minute the snake had reached her side, and to her surprise he spoke.

‘Open your earthen pot, and let me go in. Save me from sun, and I will save you from rain,’ and she opened the pot, and when the snake had slipped in, she put on the cover. Soon she beheld another snake coming after the other one, and when it had reached her it stopped and said, ‘Did you see a small grey snake pass this way just now?’

‘Yes,’ she answered, ‘it was going very quickly.’

‘Ah, I must hurry and catch it up,’ replied the second snake, and it hastened on.

When it was out of sight, a voice from the pot said:

‘Uncover me,’ and she lifted the lid, and the little grey snake slid rapidly to the ground.

‘I am safe now,’ he said. ‘But tell me, where are you going?’

‘I cannot tell you, for I do not know,’ she answered. ‘I am just wandering in the wood.’

‘Follow me, and let us go home together,’ said the snake, and the girl followed him through the forest and along the green paths, till they came to a great lake, where they stopped to rest.

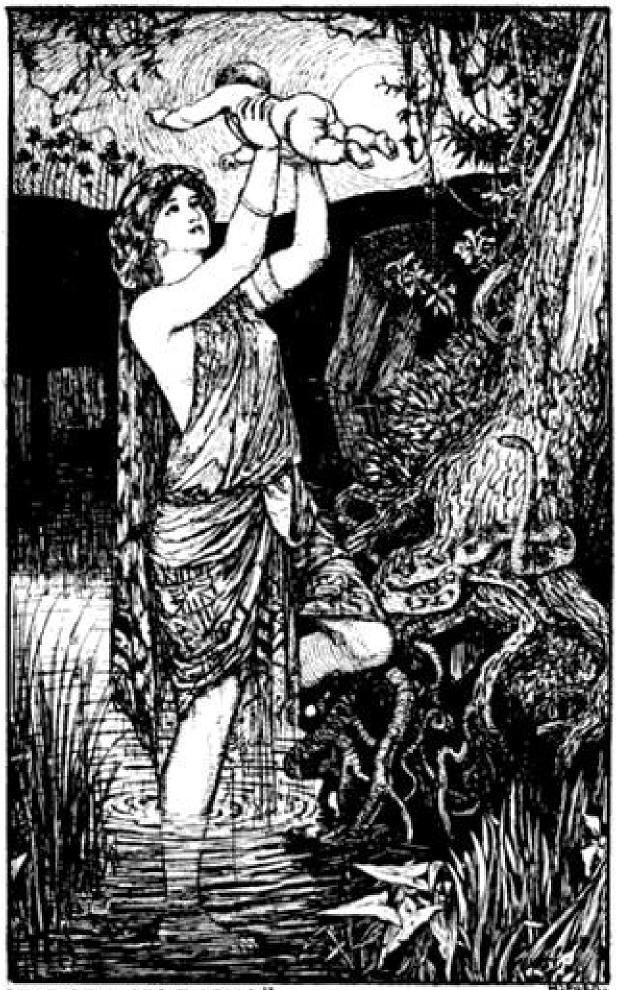

MY BABY, MY BABY!"

'The sun is hot,' said the snake, 'and you have walked far. Take your baby and bathe in that cool place where the boughs of the tree stretch far over the water.'

'Yes, I will,' answered she, and they went in. The baby splashed and crowed with delight, and then he gave a spring and fell right in, down, down, down, and his mother could not find him, though she searched all among the reeds.

Full of terror, she made her way back to the bank, and called to the snake, 'My baby is gone! — he is drowned, and never shall I see him again.'

'Go in once more,' said the snake, 'and feel everywhere, even among the trees that have their roots in the water, lest perhaps he may be held fast there.'

Swiftly she went back and felt everywhere with her whole hand, even putting her fingers into the tiniest crannies, where a crab could hardly have taken shelter.

'No, he is not here,' she cried. 'How am I to live without him?' But the snake took no notice, and only answered, 'Put in your other arm too.'

'What is the use of that?' she asked, 'when it has no hand to feel with?' but all the same she did as she was bid, and in an instant the wounded arm touched something round and soft, lying between two stones in a clump of reeds.

‘My baby, my baby!’ she shouted, and lifted him up, merry and laughing, and not a bit hurt or frightened.

‘Have you found him this time?’ asked the snake.

‘Yes, oh, yes!’ she answered, ‘and, why — why — I have got my hand back again!’ and from sheer joy she burst into tears.

The snake let her weep for a little while, and then he said —

‘Now we will journey on to my family, and we will all repay you for the kindness you showed to me.’

‘You have done more than enough in giving me back my hand,’ replied the girl; but the snake only smiled.

‘Be quick, lest the sun should set,’ he answered, and began to wriggle along so fast that the girl could hardly follow him.

By and bye they arrived at the house in a tree where the snake lived, when he was not travelling with his father and mother. And he told them all his adventures, and how he had escaped from his enemy. The father and mother snake could not do enough to show their gratitude. They made their guest lie down on a hammock woven of the strong creepers which hung from bough to bough, till she was quite rested after her wanderings, while they watched the baby and gave him milk to drink from the coconuts which they persuaded their friends the monkeys to crack for them. They even managed to carry small fruit tied up in their tails for the baby’s mother, who felt at last that she was safe and at peace. Not that she forgot her husband, for she often thought of him and longed to show him her son, and in the night she would sometimes lie awake and wonder where he was.

In this manner many weeks passed by.

And what was the prince doing?

Well, he had fallen very ill when he was on the furthest border of the kingdom, and he was nursed by some kind people who did not know who he was, so that the king and queen heard nothing about him. When he was better he made his way slowly home again, and into his father’s palace, where he found a strange man standing behind the throne with the peacock’s feathers. This was his wife’s brother, whom the king had taken into high favour, though, of course, the prince was quite ignorant of what had happened.

For a moment the king and queen stared at their son, as if he had been unknown to them; he had grown so thin and weak during his illness that his shoulders were bowed like those of an old man.

‘Have you forgotten me so soon?’ he asked.

At the sound of his voice they gave a cry and ran towards him, and poured out questions as to what had happened, and why he looked like that. But the prince did not answer any of them.

‘How is my wife?’ he said. There was a pause.

Then the queen replied:

‘She is dead.’

‘*Dead!’* he repeated, stepping a little backwards. ‘And my child?’

‘He is dead too.’

The young man stood silent. Then he said, ‘Show me their graves.’

At these words the king, who had been feeling rather uncomfortable, took heart again, for had he not prepared two beautiful tombs for his son to see, so that he might never, never guess what had been done to his wife? All these months the king and queen had been telling each other how good and merciful they had been not to take her brother’s advice and to put her to death. But now, this somehow did not seem so certain.

Then the king led the way to the courtyard just behind the palace, and through the gate into a beautiful garden where stood two splendid tombs in a green space under the trees. The prince advanced alone, and, resting his head against the stone, he burst into tears. His father and mother stood silently behind with a curious pang in their souls which they did not quite understand. Could it be that they were ashamed of themselves?

But after a while the prince turned round, and walking past them into the palace he bade the slaves bring him mourning. For seven days no one saw him, but at the end of them he went out hunting, and helped his father rule his people as before. Only no one dared to speak to him of his wife and son.

At last one morning, after the girl had been lying awake all night thinking of her husband, she said to her friend the snake:

‘You have all shown me much kindness, but now I am well again, and want to go home and hear some news of my husband, and if he still mourns for me!’ Now the heart of the snake was sad at her words, but he only said:

‘Yes, thus it must be; go and bid farewell to my father and mother, but if they offer you a present, see that you take nothing but my father’s ring and my mother’s casket.’

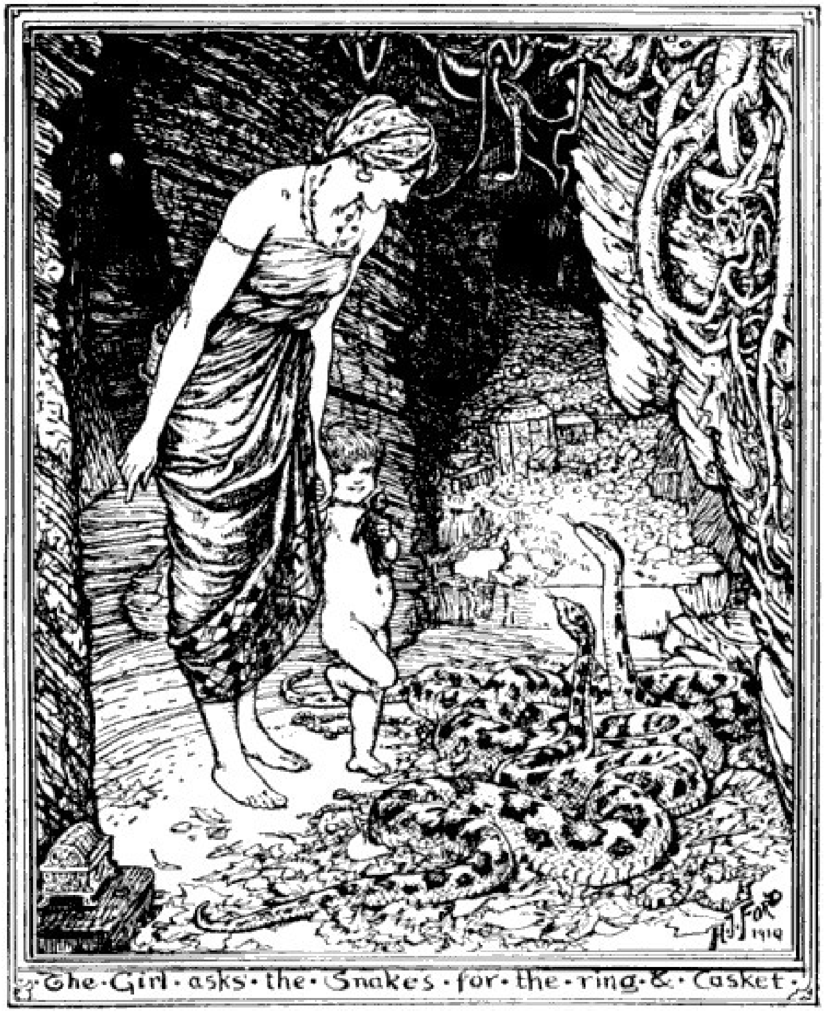

The Girl asks the Snakes for the ring & Casket.

So she went to the parent snakes, who wept bitterly at the thought of losing her, and offered her gold and jewels as much as she could carry in remembrance of them. But the girl shook her head and pushed the shining heap away from her.

‘I shall never forget you, never,’ she said in a broken voice, ‘but the only tokens I will accept from you are that little ring and this old casket.’

The two snakes looked at each other in dismay. The ring and the casket were the only things they did not want her to have. Then after a short pause they spoke.

‘Why do you want the ring and casket so much? Who has told you of them?’

‘Oh, nobody; it is just my fancy,’ answered she. But the old snakes shook their heads and replied:

‘Not so; it is our son who told you, and, as he said, so it must be. If you need food, or clothes, or a house, tell the ring and it will find them for you. And if you are unhappy or in danger, tell the casket and it will set things right.’ Then they both gave her their blessing, and she picked up her baby and went her way.

She walked for a long time, till at length she came near the town where her husband and his father dwelt. Here she stopped under a grove of palm trees, and told the ring that she wanted a house.

‘It is ready, mistress,’ whispered a queer little voice which made her jump, and, looking behind her, she saw a lovely palace made of the finest woods, and a row of slaves with tall fans bowing before the door. Glad indeed was she to enter, for she was very tired, and, after eating a good supper of fruit and milk which she found in one of the rooms, she flung herself down on a pile of cushions and went to sleep with her baby beside her.

Here she stayed quietly, and every day the baby grew taller and stronger, and very soon he could run about and even talk. Of course the neighbours had a great deal to say about the house which had been built so quickly — so very quickly — on the outskirts of the town, and invented all kinds of stories about the rich lady who lived in it. And by and bye, when the king returned with his son from the wars, some of these tales reached his ears.

‘It is really very odd about that house under the palms,’ he said to the queen; ‘I must find out something of the lady whom no one ever sees. I daresay it is not a lady at all, but a gang of conspirators who want to get possession of my throne. To-morrow I shall take my son and my chief ministers and insist on getting inside.’

Soon after sunrise next day the prince’s wife was standing on a little hill behind the house, when she saw a cloud of dust coming through the town. A moment afterwards she heard faintly the roll of the drums that announced the king’s presence, and saw a crowd of people approaching the grove of palms. Her heart beat fast. Could her husband be among them? In any case they must not discover her there; so just bidding the ring prepare some food for them, she ran inside, and bound a veil of golden gauze round her head and face. Then, taking the child’s hand, she went to the door and waited.

In a few minutes the whole procession came up, and she stepped forward and begged them to come in and rest.

‘Willingly,’ answered the king; ‘go first, and we will follow you.’

They followed her into a long dark room, in which was a table covered with gold cups and baskets filled with dates and coconuts and all kinds of ripe yellow fruits, and the king and the prince sat upon cushions and were served by slaves, while the ministers, among whom she recognised her own brother, stood behind.

‘Ah, I owe all my misery to him,’ she said to herself. ‘From the first he has hated me,’ but outwardly she showed nothing. And when the king asked her what news there was in the town she only answered:

‘You have ridden far; eat first, and drink, for you must be hungry and thirsty, and then I will tell you my news.’

‘You speak sense,’ answered the king, and silence prevailed for some time longer. Then he said:

‘Now, lady, I have finished, and am refreshed, therefore tell me, I pray you, who you are, and whence you come? But, first, be seated.’

She bowed her head and sat down on a big scarlet cushion, drawing her little boy, who was asleep in a corner, on to her knee, and began to tell the story of her life. As her brother listened, he would fain have left the house and hidden himself in the forest, but it was his duty to wave the fan of peacock’s feathers over the king’s head to keep off the flies, and he knew he would be seized by the royal guards if he tried to desert his post. He must stay where he was, there was no help for it, and luckily for him the king was too much interested in the tale to notice that the fan had ceased moving, and that flies were dancing right on the top of his thick curly hair.

The story went on, but the story-teller never once looked at the prince, even through her veil, though he on his side never moved his eyes from her. When she reached the part where she had sat weeping in the tree, the king’s son could restrain himself no longer.

‘It is my wife,’ he cried, springing to where she sat with the sleeping child in her lap. ‘They have lied to me, and you are not dead after all, nor the boy either! But what has happened? Why did they lie to me? and why did you leave my house where you were safe?’ And he turned and looked fiercely at his father.

‘Let me finish my tale first, and then you will know,’ answered she, throwing back her veil, and she told how her brother had come to the palace and accused her of being a witch, and had tried to persuade the king to slay her. ‘But he would not do that,’ she continued softly, ‘and after all, if I had stayed on in your house, I should never have met the snake, nor have got my hand back again. So let us forget all about it, and be happy once more, for see! our son is growing quite a big boy.’

‘And what shall be done to your brother?’ asked the king, who was glad to think that someone had acted in this matter worse than himself.

‘Put him out of the town,’ answered she.

From ‘Swaheli Tales,’ by E. Steere.

THE BONES OF DJULUNG

In a beautiful island that lies in the southern seas, where chains of gay orchids bind the trees together, and the days and nights are equally long and nearly equally hot, there once lived a family of seven sisters. Their father and mother were dead, and they had no brothers, so the eldest girl ruled over the rest, and they all did as she bade them. One sister had to clean the house, a second carried water from the spring in the forest, a third cooked their food, while to the youngest fell the hardest task of all, for she had to cut and bring home the wood which was to keep the fire continually burning. This was very hot and tiring work, and when she had fed the fire and heaped up in a corner the sticks that were to supply it till the next day, she often threw herself down under a tree, and went sound asleep.

One morning, however, as she was staggering along with her bundle on her back, she thought that the river which flowed past their hut looked so cool and inviting that she determined to bathe in it, instead of taking her usual nap. Hastily piling up her load by the fire, and thrusting some sticks into the flame, she ran down to the river and jumped in. How delicious it was diving and swimming and floating in the dark forest, where the trees were so thick that you could hardly see the sun! But after a while she began to look about her, and her eyes fell on a little fish that seemed made out of a rainbow, so brilliant were the colours he flashed out.

‘I should like him for a pet,’ thought the girl, and the next time the fish swam by, she put out her hand and caught him. Then she ran along the grassy path till she came to a cave in front of which a stream fell over some rocks into a basin. Here she put her little fish, whose name was Djulung-djulung, and promising to return soon and bring him some dinner, she went away.

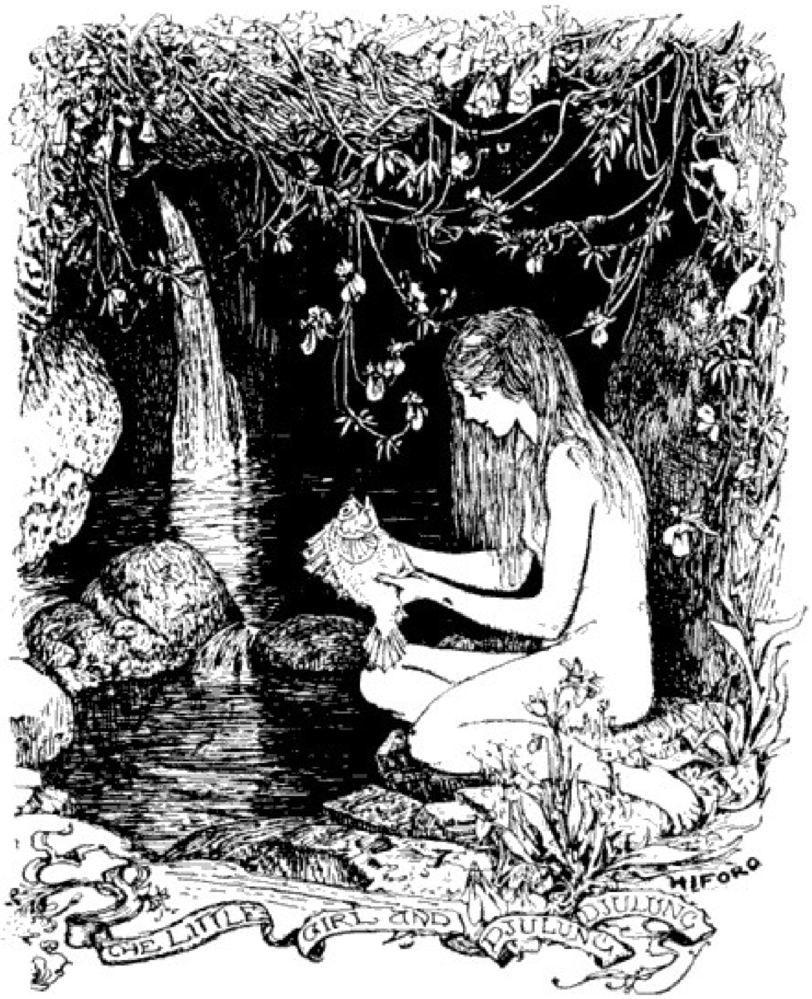
THE LITTLE GIRL AND DJULUNG DJULUNG
HJFORD

By the time she got home, the rice for their dinner was ready cooked, and the eldest sister gave the other six their portions in wooden bowls. But the youngest did not finish hers, and when no one was looking, stole off to the fountain in the forest where the little fish was swimming about.

‘See! I have not forgotten you,’ she cried, and one by one she let the grains of rice fall into the water, where the fish gobbled them up greedily, for he had never tasted anything so nice.

‘That is all for to-day,’ she said at last, ‘but I will come again to-morrow,’ and bidding him good-bye she went down the path.

Now the girl did not tell her sisters about the fish, but every day she saved half of her rice to give him, and called him softly in a little song she had made for herself. If she sometimes felt hungry, no one knew of it, and, indeed, she did not mind that much, when she saw how the fish enjoyed it. And the fish grew fat and big, but the girl grew thin and weak, and the loads of wood felt heavier every day, and at last her sisters noticed it.

Then they took counsel together, and watched her to see what she did, and one of them followed her to the fountain where Djulung lived, and saw her give him all the rice she had saved from her breakfast. Hastening home the sister told the others what she had witnessed, and that a lovely fat fish might be had for the catching. So the eldest sister went and caught him, and he was boiled for supper, but the youngest sister was away in the woods, and did not know anything about it.

Next morning she went as usual to the cave, and sang her little song, but no Djulung came to answer it; twice and thrice she sang, then threw herself on her knees by the edge, and peered into the dark water, but the trees cast such a deep shadow that her eyes could not pierce it.

‘Djulung cannot be dead, or his body would be floating on the surface,’ she said to herself, and rising to her feet she set out homewards, feeling all of a sudden strangely tired.

‘What is the matter with me?’ she thought, but somehow or other she managed to reach the hut, and threw herself down in a corner, where she slept so soundly that for days no one was able to wake her.

At length, one morning early, a cock began to crow so loud that she could sleep no longer; and as he continued to crow she seemed to understand what he was saying, and that he was telling her that Djulung was dead, killed and eaten by her sisters, and that his bones lay buried under the kitchen fire. Very softly she got up, and took up the large stone under the fire, and creeping out carried the bones to the cave by the fountain, where she dug a hole and buried them anew. And as she scooped out the hole with a stick she sang a song, bidding the bones grow till they became a tree — a tree that reached up so high into the heavens that its leaves would fall across the sea into another island, whose king would pick them up.

As there was no Djulung to give her rice to, the girl soon became fat again, and as she was able to do her work as of old, her sisters did not trouble about her. They never guessed that when she went into the forest to gather her sticks, she never failed to pay a visit to the tree, which grew taller and more wonderful day by day. Never was such a tree seen before. Its trunk was of iron, its leaves were of silk, its flowers of gold, and its fruit of diamonds, and one evening, though the girl did not know it, a soft breeze took one of the leaves, and blew it across the sea to the feet of one of the king’s attendants.

‘What a curious leaf! I have never beheld one like it before. I must show it to the king,’ he said, and when the king saw it he declared he would never rest until he had found the tree which bore it, even if he had to spend the rest of his life in visiting the islands that lay all round. Happily for him, he began with the island that was nearest, and here in the forest he suddenly saw standing before him the iron tree, its boughs covered with shining leaves like the one he carried about him.

‘But what sort of a tree is it, and how did it get here?’ he asked of the attendants he had with him. No one could answer him, but as they were about to pass out of the forest a little boy went by, and the king stopped and inquired if there was anyone living in the neighbourhood whom he might question.

‘Seven girls live in a hut down there,’ replied the boy, pointing with his finger to where the sun was setting.

‘Then go and bring them here, and I will wait,’ said the king, and the boy ran off and told the sisters that a great chief, with strings of jewels round his neck, had sent for them.

Pleased and excited the six elder sisters at once followed the boy, but the youngest, who was busy, and who did not care about strangers, stayed behind, to finish the work she was doing. The king welcomed the girls eagerly, and asked them all manner of questions about the tree, but as they had never even heard of its existence, they could tell him nothing. ‘And if we, who live close by the forest, do not know, you may be sure no one does,’ added the eldest, who was rather cross at finding this was all that the king wanted of them.

‘But the boy told me there were seven of you, and there are only six here,’ said the king.

‘Oh, the youngest is at home, but she is always half asleep, and is of no use except to cut wood for the fire,’ replied they in a breath.

‘That may be, but perhaps she dreams,’ answered the king. ‘Anyway, I will speak to her also.’ Then he signed to one of his attendants, who followed the path that the boy had taken to the hut.

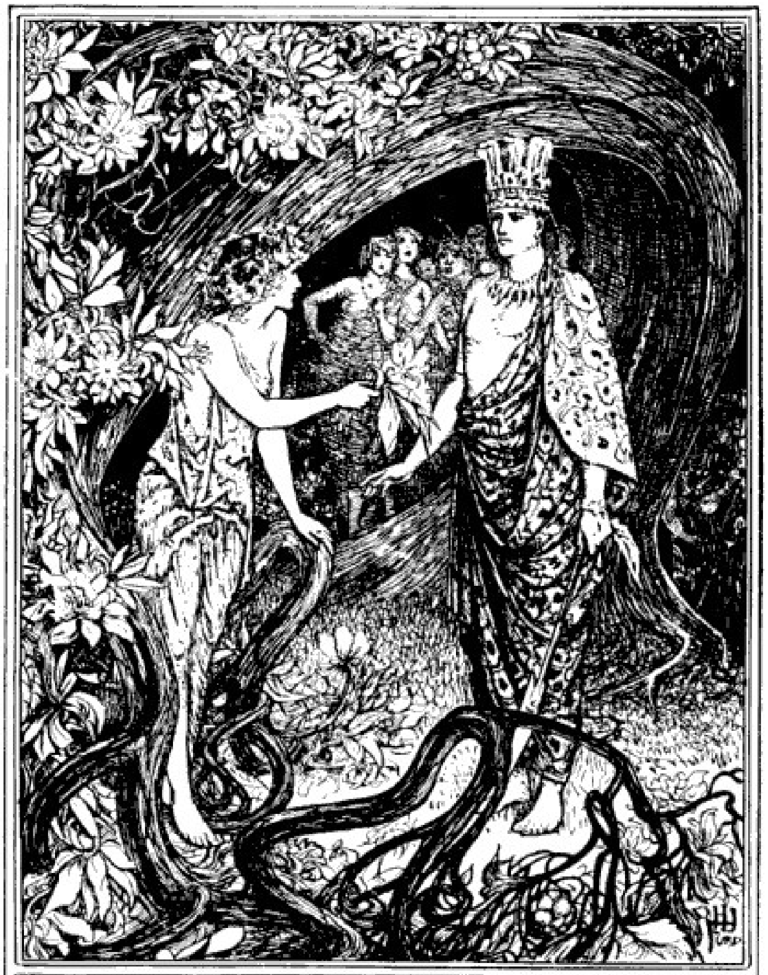

HOW THE IRON TREE BOWED DOWN AND THE GIRL GAVE OF ITS LEAVES AND FLOWERS TO THE KING.

Soon the man returned, with the girl walking behind him. And as soon as she reached the tree it bowed itself to the earth before her, and she stretched out her hand and picked some of its leaves and flowers and gave them to the king.

‘The maiden who can work such wonders is fitted to be the wife of the greatest chief,’ he said, and so he married her, and took her with him across the sea to his own home, where they lived happy for ever after.

From ‘Folk Lore,’ by A. F. Mackenzie.

THE SEA KING’S GIFT

There was once a fisherman who was called Salmon, and his Christian name was Matte. He lived by the shore of the big sea; where else could he live? He had a wife called Maie; could you find a better name for her? In winter they dwelt in a little cottage by the shore, but in spring they flitted to a red rock out in the sea and stayed there the whole summer until it was autumn. The cottage on the rock was even smaller than the other; it had a wooden bolt instead of an iron lock to the door, a stone hearth, a flagstaff, and a weathercock on the roof.

The rock was called Ahtola, and was not larger than the market-place of a town. Between the crevices there grew a little rowan tree and four alder bushes. Heaven only knows how they ever came there; perhaps they were brought by the winter storms. Besides that, there flourished some tufts of velvety grass, some scattered reeds, two plants of the yellow herb called tansy, four of a red flower, and a pretty white one; but the treasures of the rock consisted of three roots of garlic, which Maie had put in a cleft. Rock walls sheltered them on the north side, and the sun shone on them on the south. This does not seem much, but it sufficed Maie for a herb plot.

All good things go in threes, so Matte and his wife fished for salmon in spring, for herring in summer, and for cod in winter. When on Saturdays the weather was fine and the wind favourable, they sailed to the nearest town, sold their fish, and went to church on Sunday. But it often happened that for weeks at a time they were quite alone on the rock Ahtola, and had nothing to look at except their little yellow-brown dog, which bore the grand name of Prince, their grass tufts, their bushes and blooms, the sea bays and fish, a stormy sky and the blue, white-crested waves. For the rock lay far away from the land, and there were no green islets or human habitations for miles round, only here and there appeared a rock of the same red stone as Ahtola, besprinkled day and night with the ocean spray.

Matte and Maie were industrious, hard-working folk, happy and contented in their poor hut, and they thought themselves rich when they were able to salt as many casks of fish as they required for winter and yet have some left over with which to buy tobacco for the old man, and a pound or two of coffee for his wife, with plenty of burned corn and chicory in it to give it a flavour. Besides that, they had bread, butter, fish, a beer cask, and a buttermilk jar; what more did they require? All would have gone well had not Maie been possessed with a secret longing which never let her rest; and this was, how she could manage to become the owner of a cow.

‘What would you do with a cow?’ asked Matte. ‘She could not swim so far, and our boat is not large enough to bring her over here; and even if we had her, we have nothing to feed her on.’

‘We have four alder bushes and sixteen tufts of grass,’ rejoined Maie.

‘Yes, of course,’ laughed Matte, ‘and we have also three plants of garlic. Garlic would be fine feeding for her.’

‘Every cow likes salt herring,’ rejoined his wife. ‘Even Prince is fond of fish.’

‘That may be,’ said her husband. ‘Methinks she would soon be a dear cow if we had to feed her on salt herring. All very well for Prince, who fights with the gulls over the last morsel. Put the cow out of your head, mother, we are very well off as we are.’

Maie sighed. She knew well that her husband was right, but she could not give up the idea of a cow. The buttermilk no longer tasted as good as usual in the coffee; she thought of sweet cream and fresh butter, and of how there was nothing in the world to be compared with them.

One day as Matte and his wife were cleaning herring on the shore they heard Prince barking, and soon there appeared a gaily painted boat with three young men in it, steering towards the rock. They were students, on a boating excursion, and wanted to get something to eat.

‘Bring us a junket, good mother,’ cried they to Maie.

‘Ah! if only I had such a thing!’ sighed Maie.

‘A can of fresh milk, then,’ said the students; ‘but it must not be skim.’

‘Yes, if only I had it!’ sighed the old woman, still more deeply.

‘What! haven’t you got a cow?’

Maie was silent. This question so struck her to the heart that she could not reply.

‘We have no cow,’ Matte answered; ‘but we have good smoked herring, and can cook them in a couple of hours.’

‘All right, then, that will do,’ said the students, as they flung themselves down on the rock, while fifty silvery-white herring were turning on the spit in front of the fire.

‘What’s the name of this little stone in the middle of the ocean?’ asked one of them.

‘Ahtola,’ answered the old man.

‘Well, you should want for nothing when you live in the Sea King’s dominion.’

Matte did not understand. He had never read Kalevala and knew nothing of the sea gods of old, but the students proceeded to explain to him.

‘Ahti,’ said they, ‘is a mighty king who lives in his dominion of Ahtola, and has a rock at the bottom of the sea, and possesses besides a treasury of good things. He rules over all fish and animals of the deep; he has the finest cows and the swiftest horses that ever chewed grass at the bottom of the ocean. He who stands well with Ahti is soon a rich man, but one must beware in dealing with him, for he is very changeful and touchy. Even a little stone thrown into the water might offend him, and then as he takes back his gift, he stirs up the sea into a storm and drags the sailors down into the depths. Ahti owns also the fairest maidens, who bear the train of his queen Wellamos, and at the sound of music they comb their long, flowing locks, which glisten in the water.’

‘Oh!’ cried Matte, ‘have your worships really seen all that?’

‘We have as good as seen it,’ said the students. ‘It is all printed in a book, and everything printed is true.’

‘I’m not so sure of that,’ said Matte, as he shook his head.

But the herring were now ready, and the students ate enough for six, and gave Prince some cold meat which they happened to have in the boat. Prince sat on his hind legs with delight and mewed like a pussy cat. When all was finished, the students handed Matte a shining silver coin, and allowed him to fill his pipe with a special kind of tobacco. They then thanked him for his kind hospitality and went on their journey, much regretted by Prince, who sat with a woeful expression and whined on the shore as long as he could see a flip of the boat’s white sail in the distance.

Maie had never uttered a word, but thought the more. She had good ears, and had laid to heart the story about Ahti. ‘How delightful,’ thought she to herself, ‘to possess a fairy cow! How delicious every morning and evening to draw milk from it, and yet have no trouble about the feeding, and to keep a shelf near the window for dishes of milk and junkets! But this will never be my luck.’

‘What are you thinking of?’ asked Matte.

‘Nothing,’ said his wife; but all the time she was pondering over some magic rhymes she had heard in her childhood from an old lame man, which were supposed to bring luck in fishing.

‘What if I were to try?’ thought she.

Now this was Saturday, and on Saturday evenings Matte never set the herring-net, for he did not fish on Sunday. Towards evening, however, his wife said:

‘Let us set the herring-net just this once.’

‘No,’ said her husband, ‘it is a Saturday night.’

‘Last night was so stormy, and we caught so little,’ urged his wife; ‘to-night the sea is like a mirror, and with the wind in this direction the herring are drawing towards land.’

‘But there are streaks in the north-western sky, and Prince was eating grass this evening,’ said the old man.

‘Surely he has not eaten my garlic,’ exclaimed the old woman.

‘No; but there will be rough weather by to-morrow at sunset,’ rejoined Matte.

‘Listen to me,’ said his wife, ‘we will set only one net close to the shore, and then we shall be able to finish up our half-filled cask, which will spoil if it stands open so long.’

The old man allowed himself to be talked over, and so they rowed out with the net. When they reached the deepest part of the water, she began to hum the words of the magic rhyme, altering the words to suit the longings of her heart:

Oh, Ahti, with the long, long beard, Who dwellest in the deep blue sea, Finest treasures have I heard, And glittering fish belong to thee. The richest pearls beyond compare Are stored up in thy realm below, And Ocean’s cows so sleek and fair Feed on the grass in thy green meadow.

King of the waters, far and near, I ask not of thy golden store, I wish not jewels of pearl to wear, Nor silver either, ask I for, But one is odd and even is two, So give me a cow, sea-king so bold, And in return I’ll give to you A slice of the moon, and the sun’s gold.

‘What’s that you’re humming?’ asked the old man.

‘Oh, only the words of an old rhyme that keeps running in my head,’ answered the old woman; and she raised her voice and went on:

Oh, Ahti, with the long, long beard, Who dwellest in the deep blue sea, A thousand cows are in thy herd, I pray thee give one unto me.

‘That’s a stupid sort of song,’ said Matte. ‘What else should one beg of the sea-king but fish? But such songs are not for Sunday.’

His wife pretended not to hear him, and sang and sang the same tune all the time they were on the water. Matte heard nothing more as he sat and rowed the heavy boat, while thinking of his cracked pipe and the fine tobacco. Then they returned to the island, and soon after went to bed.

But neither Matte nor Maie could sleep a wink; the one thought of how he had profaned Sunday, and the other of Ahti’s cow.

About midnight the fisherman sat up, and said to his wife:

‘Dost thou hear anything?’

‘No,’ said she.

‘I think the twirling of the weathercock on the roof bodes ill,’ said he; ‘we shall have a storm.’

‘Oh, it is nothing but your fancy,’ said his wife.

Matte lay down, but soon rose again.

‘The weathercock is squeaking now,’ said he.

‘Just fancy! Go to sleep,’ said his wife; and the old man tried to.

For the third time he jumped out of bed.

‘Ho! how the weathercock is roaring at the pitch of its voice, as if it had a fire inside it! We are going to have a tempest, and must bring in the net.’

Both rose. The summer night was as dark as if it had been October, the weathercock creaked, and the storm was raging in every direction. As they went out the sea lay around them as white as snow, and the spray was dashing right over the fisher-hut. In all his life Matte had never remembered such a night. To launch the boat and put to sea to rescue the net was a thing not to be thought of. The fisherman and his wife stood aghast on the doorstep, holding on fast by the doorpost, while the foam splashed over their faces.

‘Did I not tell thee that there is no luck in Sunday fishing?’ said Matte sulkily; and his wife was so frightened that she never even once thought of Ahti’s cows.

As there was nothing to be done, they went in. Their eyes were heavy for lack of slumber, and they slept as soundly as if there had not been such a thing as an angry sea roaring furiously around their lonely dwelling. When they awoke, the sun was high in the heavens, the tempest had ceased, and only the swell of the sea rose in silvery heavings against the red rock.

‘What can that be?’ said the old woman, as she peeped out of the door.

‘It looks like a big seal,’ said Matte.

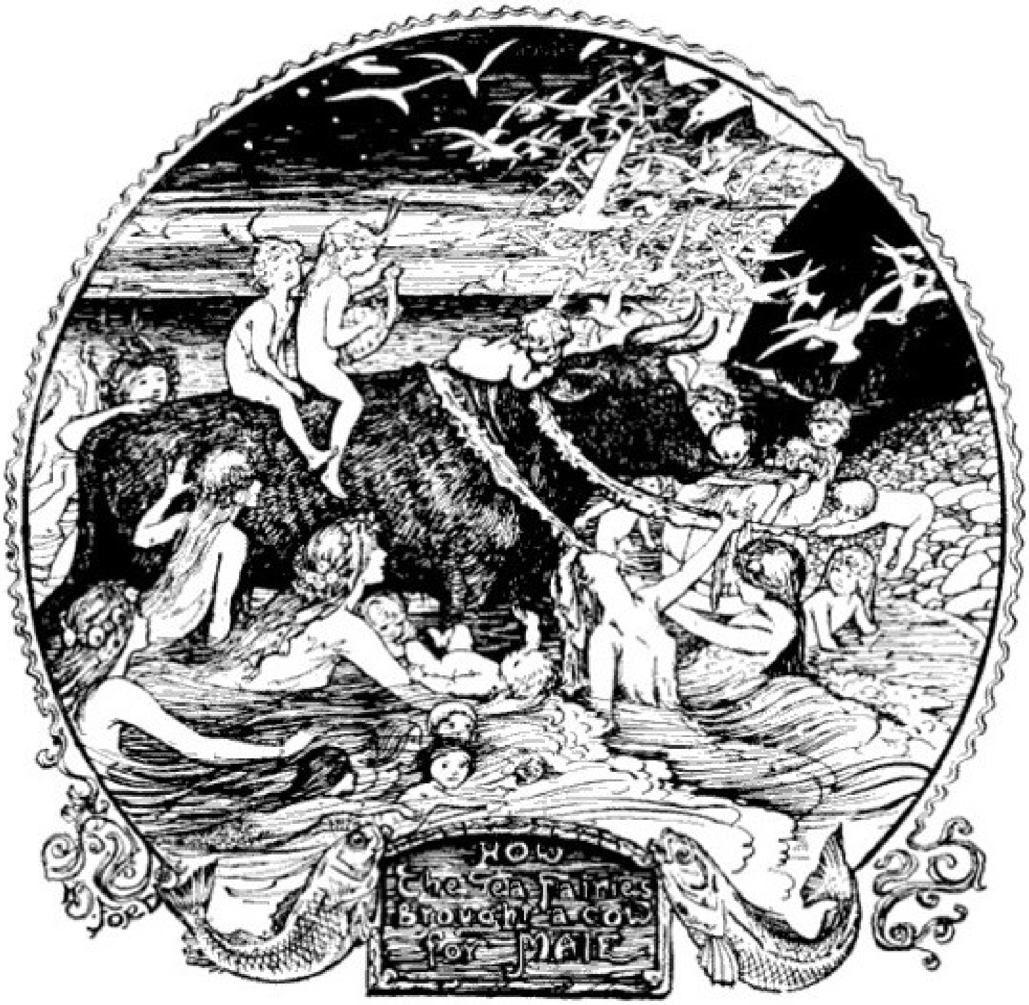

‘As sure as I live, it’s a cow!’ exclaimed Maie. And certainly it was a cow, a fine red cow, fat and flourishing, and looking as if it had been fed all its days on spinach. It wandered peacefully up and down the shore, and never so much as even looked at the poor little tufts of grass, as if it despised such fare.

Matte could not believe his eyes. But a cow she seemed, and a cow she was found to be; and when the old woman began to milk her, every pitcher and pan, even to the baler, was soon filled with the most delicious milk.

The old man troubled his head in vain as to how she came there, and sallied forth to seek for his lost net. He had not proceeded far when he found it cast up on the shore, and so full of fish that not a mesh was visible.

‘It is all very fine to possess a cow,’ said Matte, as he cleaned the fish; ‘but what are we going to feed her on?’

‘We shall find some means,’ said his wife; and the cow found the means herself. She went out and cropped the seaweed which grew in great abundance near the shore, and always kept in good condition. Every one, Prince alone excepted, thought she was a clever beast; but Prince barked at her, for he had now got a rival.

From that day the red rock overflowed with milk and junkets, and every net was filled with fish. Matte and Maie grew fat on this fine living, and daily became richer. She churned quantities of butter, and he hired two men to help him in his fishing. The sea lay before him like a big fish tank, out of which he hauled as many as he required; and the cow continued to fend for herself. In autumn, when Matte and Maie went ashore, the cow went to sea, and in spring, when they returned to the rock, there she stood awaiting them.

‘We shall require a better house,’ said Maie the following summer; ‘the old one is too small for ourselves and the men.’

‘Yes,’ said Matte. So he built a large cottage, with a real lock to the door, and a store-house for fish as well; and he and his men caught such quantities of fish that they sent tons of salmon, herring, and cod to Russia and Sweden.

‘I am quite overworked with so many folk,’ said Maie; ‘a girl to help me would not come amiss.’

‘Get one, then,’ said her husband; and so they hired a girl.

Then Maie said: ‘We have too little milk for all these folk. Now that I have a servant, with the same amount of trouble she could look after three cows.’

‘All right, then,’ said her husband, somewhat provoked, ‘you can sing a song to the fairies.’

This annoyed Maie, but nevertheless she rowed out to sea on Sunday night and sang as before:

Oh, Ahti, with the long, long beard, Who dwellest in the deep blue sea, A thousand cows are in thy herd, I pray thee give three unto me.

The following morning, instead of one, three cows stood on the island, and they all ate seaweed and fended for themselves like the first one.

‘Art thou satisfied now?’ said Matte to his wife.

‘I should be quite satisfied,’ said his wife, ‘if only I had two servants to help, and if I had some finer clothes. Don’t you know that I am addressed as Madam?’

‘Well, well,’ said her husband. So Maie got several servants, and clothes fit for a great lady.

‘Everything would now be perfect if only we had a little better dwelling for summer. You might build us a two-story house, and fetch soil to make a garden. Then you might make a little arbour up there to let us have a sea-view; and we might have a fiddler to fiddle to us of an evening, and a little steamer to take us to church in stormy weather.’

‘Anything more?’ asked Matte; but he did everything that his wife wished. The rock Ahtola became so grand and Maie so great that all the sea-urchins and herring were lost in wonderment. Even Prince was fed on beefsteaks and cream scones till at last he was as round as a butter jar.

‘Are you satisfied now?’ asked Matte.

‘I should be quite satisfied,’ said Maie, ‘if only I had thirty cows. At least that number is required for such a household.’

‘Go to the fairies,’ said Matte.

His wife set out in the new steamer and sang to the sea-king. Next morning thirty cows stood on the shore, all finding food for themselves.

‘Know’st thou, good man, that we are far too cramped on this wretched rock, and where am I to find room for so many cows?’

‘There is nothing to be done but to pump out the sea.’

‘Rubbish!’ said his wife. ‘Who can pump out the sea?’

‘Try with thy new steamer, there is a pump in it.’

Maie knew well that her husband was only making fun of her, but still her mind was set upon the same subject. ‘I never could pump the sea out,’ thought she, ‘but perhaps I might fill it up, if I were to make a big dam. I might heap up sand and stones, and make our island as big again.’

Maie loaded her boat with stones and went out to sea. The fiddler was with her, and fiddled so finely that Ahti and Wellamos and all the sea’s daughters rose to the surface of the water to listen to the music.

‘What is that shining so brightly in the waves?’ asked Maie.

‘That is sea foam glinting in the sunshine,’ answered the fiddler.

‘Throw out the stones,’ said Maie.

The people in the boat began to throw out the stones, splash, splash, right and left, into the foam. One stone hit the nose of Wellamos’s chief lady-in-waiting, another scratched the sea queen herself on the cheek, a third plumped close to Ahti’s head and tore off half of the sea-king’s beard; then there was a commotion in the sea, the waves bubbled and bubbled like boiling water in a pot.

‘Whence comes this gust of wind?’ said Maie; and as she spoke the sea opened and swallowed up the steamer. Maie sank to the bottom like a stone, but, stretching out her arms and legs, she rose to the surface, where she found the fiddler’s fiddle, and used it as a float. At the same moment she saw close beside her the terrible head of Ahti, and he had only half a beard!

‘Why did you throw stones at me?’ roared the sea-king.

‘Oh, your majesty, it was a mistake! Put some bear’s grease on your beard and that will soon make it grow again.’

‘Dame, did I not give you all you asked for — nay, even more?’

‘Truly, truly, your majesty. Many thanks for the cows.’

‘Well, where is the gold from the sun and the silver from the moon that you promised me?’

‘Ah, your majesty, they have been scattered day and night upon the sea, except when the sky was overcast,’ slyly answered Maie.

‘I’ll teach you!’ roared the sea-king; and with that he gave the fiddle such a ‘puff’ that it sent the old woman up like a sky-rocket on to her island. There Prince lay, as famished as ever, gnawing the carcase of a crow. There sat Matte in his ragged grey jacket, quite alone, on the steps of the old hut, mending a net.

‘Heavens, mother,’ said he, ‘where are you coming from at such a whirlwind pace, and what makes you in such a dripping condition?’

Maie looked around her amazed, and said, ‘Where is our two-story house?’

‘What house?’ asked her husband.

‘Our big house, and the flower garden, and the men and the maids, and the thirty beautiful cows, and the steamer, and everything else?’

‘You are talking nonsense, mother,’ said he. ‘The students have quite turned your head, for you sang silly songs last evening while we were rowing, and then you could not sleep till early morning. We had stormy weather during the night, and when it was past I did not wish to waken you, so rowed out alone to rescue the net.’

‘But I’ve seen Ahti,’ rejoined Maie.

‘You’ve been lying in bed, dreaming foolish fancies, mother, and then in your sleep you walked into the water.’

‘But there is the fiddle,’ said Maie.

‘A fine fiddle! It is only an old stick. No, no, old woman, another time we will be more careful. Good luck never attends fishing on a Sunday.’

From Z. Topelius.

THE RASPBERRY WORM

‘Phew!’ cried Lisa.

‘Ugh!’ cried Aina.

‘What now?’ cried the big sister.

‘A worm!’ cried Lisa.

‘On the raspberry!’ cried Aina.

‘Kill it!’ cried Otto.

‘What a fuss over a poor little worm!’ said the big sister scornfully.

‘Yes, when we had cleaned the raspberries so carefully,’ said Lisa.

‘It crept out from that very large one,’ put in Aina.

‘And supposing some one had eaten the raspberry,’ said Lisa.

‘Then they would have eaten the worm, too,’ said Aina.

‘Well, what harm?’ said Otto.

‘Eat a worm!’ cried Lisa.

‘And kill him with one bite!’ murmured Aina.

‘Just think of it!’ said Otto laughing.

‘Now it is crawling on the table,’ cried Aina again.

‘Blow it away!’ said the big sister.

‘Tramp on it!’ laughed Otto.

But Lisa took a raspberry leaf, swept the worm carefully on to the leaf and carried it out into the yard. Then Aina noticed that a sparrow sitting on the fence was just getting ready to pounce on the poor little worm, so she took up the leaf, carried it out into the wood and hid it under a raspberry bush where the greedy sparrow could not find it. Yes, and what more is there to tell about a raspberry worm? Who would give three straws for such a miserable little thing? Yes, but who would not like to live in such a pretty home as it lives in; in such a fresh fragrant dark-red cottage, far away in the quiet wood among flowers and green leaves!

Now it was just dinner time, so they all had a dinner of raspberries and cream. ‘Be careful with the sugar, Otto,’ said the big sister; but Otto’s plate was like a snowdrift in winter, with just a little red under the snow.

Soon after dinner the big sister said: ‘Now we have eaten up the raspberries and we have none left to make preserve for the winter; it would be fine if we could get two baskets full of berries, then we could clean them this evening, and to-morrow we could cook them in the big preserving pan, and then we should have raspberry jam to eat on our bread!'

'Come, let us go to the wood and pick,' said Lisa.

'Yes, let us,' said Aina. 'You take the yellow basket and I will take the green one.'

'Don't get lost, and come back safely in the evening,' said the big sister.

'Greetings to the raspberry worm,' said Otto, mockingly. 'Next time I meet him I shall do him the honour of eating him up.'

So Aina and Lisa went off to the wood. Ah! how delightful it was there, how beautiful! It was certainly tiresome sometimes climbing over the fallen trees, and getting caught in the branches, and waging war with the juniper bushes and the midges, but what did that matter? The girls climbed well in their short dresses, and soon they were deep in the wood.

There were plenty of bilberries and elder berries, but no raspberries. They wandered on and on, and at last they came . . . No, it could not be true! . . . they came to a large raspberry wood. The wood had been on fire once, and now raspberry bushes had grown up, and there were raspberry bushes and raspberry bushes as far as the eye could see. Every bush was weighed to the ground with the largest, dark red, ripe raspberries, such a wealth of berries as two little berry pickers had never found before!

Lisa picked, Aina picked. Lisa ate, Aina ate, and in a little while their baskets were full.

'Now, we shall go home,' said Aina. 'No, let us gather a few more,' said Lisa. So they put the baskets down on the ground and began to fill their pinafores, and it was not long before their pinafores were full, too.

'Now we shall go home,' said Lisa. 'Yes, now we shall go home,' said Aina. Both girls took a basket in one hand and held up her apron in the other and then turned to go home. But that was easier said than done. They had never been so far in the great wood before, they could not find any road nor path, and soon the girls noticed that they had lost their way.

The worst of it was that the shadows of the trees were becoming so long in the evening sunlight, the birds were beginning to fly home, and the day was closing in. At last the sun went down behind the pine tops, and it was cool and dusky in the great wood.

The girls became anxious but went steadily on, expecting that the wood would soon end, and that they would see the smoke from the chimneys of their home.

After they had wandered on for a long time it began to grow dark. At last they reached a great plain overgrown with bushes, and when they looked around them, they saw, as much as they could in the darkness, that they were among the same beautiful raspberry bushes from which they had picked their baskets and their aprons full. Then they were so tired that they sat down on a stone and began to cry.

‘I am so hungry,’ said Lisa.

‘Yes,’ said Aina, ‘if we had only two good meat sandwiches now.’

As she said that, she felt something in her hand, and when she looked down, she saw a large sandwich of bread and chicken, and at the same time Lisa said: ‘How very queer! I have a sandwich in my hand.’

‘And I, too,’ said Aina. ‘Will you dare to eat it?’

‘Of course I will,’ said Lisa. ‘Ah, if we only had a good glass of milk now!’

Just as she said that she felt a large glass of milk between her fingers, and at the same time Aina cried out, ‘Lisa! Lisa! I have a glass of milk in my hand! Isn’t it queer?’

The girls, however, were very hungry, so they ate and drank with a good appetite. When they had finished Aina yawned, stretched out her arms and said: ‘Oh, if only we had a nice soft bed to sleep on now!’

Scarcely had she spoken before she felt a nice soft bed by her side, and there beside Lisa was one too. This seemed to the girls more and more wonderful, but tired and sleepy as they were, they thought no more about it, but crept into the little beds, drew the coverlets over their heads and were soon asleep.

When they awoke the sun was high in the heavens, the wood was beautiful in the summer morning, and the birds were flying about in the branches and the tree tops.

At first the girls were filled with wonder when they saw that they had slept in the wood among the raspberry bushes. They looked at each other, they looked at their beds, which were of the finest flax covered over with leaves and moss. At last Lisa said: ‘Are you awake, Aina?’

‘Yes,’ said Aina.

‘But I am still dreaming,’ said Lisa.

‘No,’ said Aina, ‘but there is certainly some good fairy living among these raspberry bushes. Ah, if we had only a hot cup of coffee now, and a nice piece of white bread to dip into it!’

Scarcely had she finished speaking when she saw beside her a little silver tray with a gilt coffee-pot, two cups of rare porcelain, a sugar basin of fine crystal, silver sugar tongs, and some good fresh white bread. The girls poured out the beautiful coffee, put in the cream and sugar, and tasted it; never in their lives had they drunk such beautiful coffee.

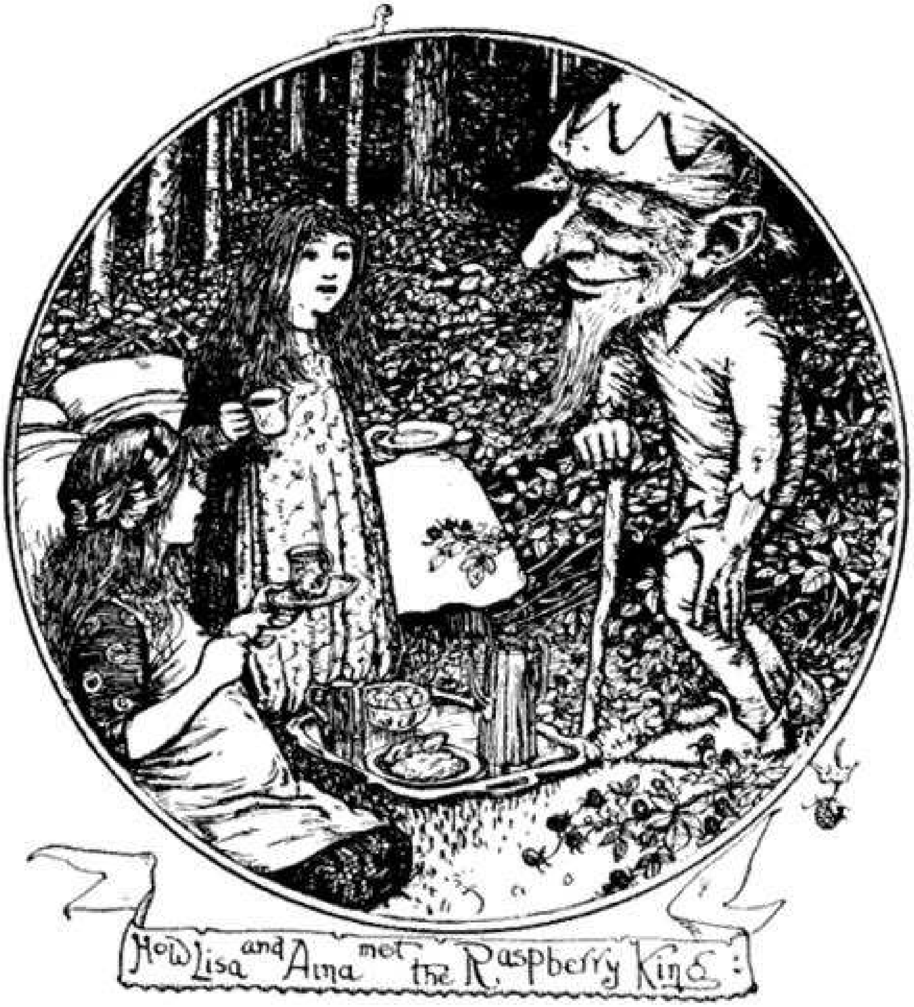

How Lisa and Aina met the Raspberry King:

‘Now I should like to know very much who has given us all this,’ said Lisa gratefully.

‘I have, my little girls,’ said a voice just then from the bushes.

The children looked round wonderingly, and saw a little kind-looking old man, in a white coat and a red cap, limping out from among the bushes, for he was lame in his left foot; neither Lisa nor Aina could utter a word, they were so filled with surprise.

‘Don’t be afraid, little girls,’ he said smiling kindly at them; he could not laugh properly because his mouth was crooked. ‘Welcome to my kingdom! Have you slept well and eaten well and drunk well?’ he asked.

‘Yes, indeed we have,’ said both the girls, ‘but tell us . . .’ and they wanted to ask who the old man was, but were afraid to.

‘I will tell you who I am,’ said the old man; ‘I am the raspberry king, who reigns over all this kingdom of raspberry bushes, and I have lived here for more than a thousand years. But the great spirit who rules over the woods, and the sea, and the sky, did not want me to become proud of my royal power and my long life. Therefore he decreed that one day in every hundred years I should change into a little raspberry worm, and live in that weak and helpless form from sunrise till sunset. During that time my life is dependent on the little worm's life, so that a bird can eat me, a child can pick me with the berries and trample under foot my thousand years of life. Now yesterday was just my transformation day, and I was taken with the raspberry and would have been trampled to death if you had not saved my life. Until sunset I lay helpless in the grass, and when I was swept away from your table I twisted one of my feet, and my mouth became crooked with terror; but when evening came and I could take my own form again, I looked for you to thank you and reward you. Then I found you both here in my kingdom, and tried to meet you both as well as I could without frightening you. Now I will send a bird from my wood to show you the way home. Good-bye, little children, thank you for your kind hearts; the raspberry king can show that he is not ungrateful.' The children shook hands with the old man and thanked him, feeling very glad that they had saved the little raspberry worm. They were just going when the old man turned round, smiled mischievously with his crooked mouth, and said: 'Greetings to Otto from me, and tell him when I meet him again I shall do him the honour of eating him up.'

'Oh, please don't do that,' cried both the girls, very frightened.

'Well, for your sake I will forgive him,' said the old man, 'I am not revengeful. Greetings to Otto and tell him that he may expect a gift from me, too. Good-bye.'

The two girls, light of heart, now took their berries and ran off through the wood after the bird; and soon it began to get lighter in the wood and they wondered how they could have lost their way yesterday, it seemed so easy and plain now.

One can imagine what joy there was when the two reached home. Everyone had been looking for them, and the big sister had not been able to sleep, for she thought the wolves had eaten them up.

Otto met them; he had a basket in his hand and said: 'Look, here is something that an old man has just left for you.'

When the girls looked into the basket they saw a pair of most beautiful bracelets of precious stones, dark red, and made in the shape of a ripe raspberry and with an inscription: 'To Lisa and Aina'; beside them there was a diamond breast pin in the shape of a raspberry worm: on it was inscribed 'Otto, never destroy the helpless!'

Otto felt rather ashamed: he quite understood what it meant, but he thought that the old man's revenge was a noble one.

The raspberry king had also remembered the big sister, for when she went in to set the table for dinner, she found eleven big baskets of most beautiful raspberries, and no one knew how they had come there, but everyone guessed.

And so there was such a jam-making as had never been seen before, and if you like to go and help in it, you might perhaps get a little, for they must surely be making jam still to this very day.

From Z. Topelius.

THE STONES OF PLOUHINEC

Perhaps some of you may have read a book called ‘Kenneth; or the Rear-Guard of the Grand Army of Napoleon.’ If so, you will remember how the two Scotch children found in Russia were taken care of by the French soldiers and prevented as far as possible from suffering from the horrors of the terrible Retreat. One of the soldiers, a Breton, often tried to make them forget how cold and hungry they were by telling them tales of his native country, Brittany, which is full of wonderful things. The best and warmest place round the camp fire was always given to the children, but even so the bitter frost would cause them to shiver. It was then that the Breton would begin: ‘Plouhinec is a small town near Hennebonne by the sea,’ and would continue until Kenneth or Effie would interrupt him with an eager question. Then he forgot how his mother had told him the tale, and was obliged to begin all over again, so the story lasted a long while, and by the time it was ended the children were ready to be rolled up in whatever coverings could be found, and go to sleep.

It is this story that I am going to tell to you.

Plouhinec is a small town near Hennebonne by the sea. Around it stretches a desolate moor, where no corn can be grown, and the grass is so coarse that no beast grows fat on it. Here and there are scattered groves of fir trees, and small pebbles are so thick on the ground that you might almost take it for a beach. On the further side, the fairies, or korigans, as the people called them, had set up long long ago two rows of huge stones; indeed, so tall and heavy were they, that it seemed as if all the fairies in the world could not have placed them upright.

Not far off from this great stone avenue, and on the banks of the little river Intel, there lived a man named Marzinne and his sister Rozennik. They always had enough black bread to eat, and wooden shoes or sabots to wear, and a pig to fatten, so the neighbours thought them quite rich; and what was still better, they thought themselves rich also.

Rozennik was a pretty girl, who knew how to make the best of everything, and she could, if she wished, have chosen a husband from the young men of Plouhinec, but she cared for none of them except Bernèz, whom she had played with all her life, and Bernèz, though he worked hard, was so very very poor that Marzinne told him roughly he must look elsewhere for a wife. But whatever Marzinne might say Rozennik smiled and nodded to him as before, and would often turn her head as she passed, and sing snatches of old songs over her shoulder.

Christmas Eve had come, and all the men who worked under Marzinne or on the farms round about were gathered in the large kitchen to eat the soup flavoured with honey followed by rich puddings, to which they were always invited on this particular night. In the middle of the table was a large wooden bowl, with wooden spoons placed in a circle round it, so that each might dip in his turn. The benches were filled, and Marzinne was about to give the signal, when the door was suddenly thrown open, and an old man came in, wishing the guests a good appetite for their supper. There was a pause, and some of the faces looked a little frightened; for the new comer was well known to them as a beggar, who was also said to be a wizard who cast spells over the cattle, and caused the corn to grow black, and old people to die, of what, nobody knew. Still, it was Christmas Eve, and besides it was as well not to offend him, so the farmer invited him in, and gave him a seat at the table and a wooden spoon like the rest.

There was not much talk after the beggar's entrance, and everyone was glad when the meal came to an end, and the beggar asked if he might sleep in the stable, as he should die of cold if he were left outside. Rather unwillingly Marzinne gave him leave, and bade Bernèz take the key and unlock the door. There was certainly plenty of room for a dozen beggars, for the only occupants of the stable were an old donkey and a thin ox; and as the night was bitter, the wizard lay down between them for warmth, with a sack of reeds for a pillow.

He had walked far that day, and even wizards get tired sometimes, so in spite of the hard floor he was just dropping off to sleep, when midnight struck from the church tower of Plouhinec. At this sound the donkey raised her head and shook her ears, and turned towards the ox.

'Well, my dear cousin,' said she, 'and how have you fared since last Christmas Eve, when we had a conversation together?'

Instead of answering at once, the ox eyed the beggar with a long look of disgust.

'What is the use of talking,' he replied roughly, 'when a good-for-nothing creature like that can hear all we say?'

'Oh, you mustn't lose time in grumbling,' rejoined the donkey gaily, 'and don't you see that the wizard is asleep?'

'His wicked pranks do not make him rich, certainly,' said the ox, 'and he isn't even clever enough to have found out what a piece of luck might befall him a week hence.'

'What piece of luck?' asked the donkey.

'Why, don't you know,' inquired the ox, 'that once every hundred years the stones on Plouhinec heath go down to drink at the river, and that while they are away the treasures underneath them are uncovered?'

'Ah, I remember now,' replied the donkey, 'but the stones return so quickly to their places, that you certainly would be crushed to death unless you have in your hands a bunch of crowsfoot and of five-leaved trefoil.'

'Yes, but that is not enough,' said the ox; 'even supposing you get safely by, the treasures you have brought with you will crumble into dust if you do not give in exchange a baptized soul. It is needful that a Christian should die before you can enjoy the wealth of Plouhinec.'

The donkey was about to ask some further questions, when she suddenly found herself unable to speak: the time allowed them for conversation was over.

'Ah, my dear creatures,' thought the beggar, who had of course heard everything, 'you are going to make me richer than the richest men of Vannes or Lorient. But I have no time to lose; to-morrow I must begin to hunt for the precious plants.'

He did not dare to seek too near Plouhinec, lest somebody who knew the story might guess what he was doing, so he went away further towards the south, where the air was softer and the plants are always green. From the instant it was light, till the last rays had faded out of the sky, he searched every inch of ground where the magic plants might grow; he scarcely gave himself a minute to eat and drink, but at length he found the crowsfoot in a little hollow! Well, that was certainly a great deal, but after all, the crowsfoot was of no use without the trefoil, and there was so little time left.

He had almost given up hope, when on the very last day before it was necessary that he should start for Plouhinec, he came upon a little clump of trefoil, half hidden under a rock. Hardly able to breathe from excitement, he sat down and hunted eagerly through the plant which he had torn up. Leaf after leaf he threw aside in disgust, and he had nearly reached the end when he gave a cry of joy — the five-leaved trefoil was in his hand.

The beggar scrambled to his feet, and without a pause walked quickly down the road that led northwards. The moon was bright, and for some hours he kept steadily on, not knowing how many miles he had gone, nor even feeling tired. By and bye the sun rose, and the world began to stir, and stopping at a farmhouse door, he asked for a cup of milk and slice of bread and permission to rest for a while in the porch. Then he continued his journey, and so, towards sunset on New Year's Eve, he came back to Plouhinec.

As he was passing the long line of stones, he saw Bernèz working with a chisel on the tallest of them all.

'What are you doing there?' called the wizard, 'do you mean to hollow out for yourself a bed in that huge column?'

'No,' replied Bernèz quietly, 'but as I happened to have no work to do to-day, I thought I would just carve a cross on this stone. The holy sign can never come amiss.'

'I believe you think it will help you to win Rozennik,' laughed the old man.

Bernèz ceased his task for a moment to look at him.

'Ah, so you know about that,' replied he; 'unluckily Marzinne wants a brother-in-law who has more pounds than I have pence.'

'And suppose I were to give you more pounds than Marzinne ever dreamed of?' whispered the sorcerer, glancing round to make sure that no one overheard him.

'You?'

'Yes, I.'

'And what am I to do to gain the money,' inquired Bernèz, who knew quite well that the Breton peasant gives nothing for nothing.

'What I want of you only needs a little courage,' answered the old man.

'If that is all, tell me what I have got to do, and I will do it,' cried Bernèz, letting fall his chisel. 'If I have to risk thirty deaths, I am ready.'

When the beggar knew that Bernèz would give him no trouble, he told him how, during that very night, the treasures under the stones would be uncovered, and how in a very few minutes they could take enough to make them both rich for life. But he kept silence as to the fate that awaited the man who was without the crowsfoot and the trefoil, and Bernèz thought that nothing but boldness and quickness were necessary. So he said:

'Old man, I am grateful, indeed, for the chance you have given me, and there will always be a pint of my blood at your service. Just let me finish carving this cross. It is nearly done, and I will join you in the fir wood at whatever hour you please.'

'You must be there without fail an hour before midnight,' answered the wizard, and went on his way.

As the hour struck from the great church at Plouhinec, Bernèz entered the wood. He found the beggar already there with a bag in each hand, and a third slung round his neck.

'You are punctual,' said the old man, 'but we need not start just yet. You had better sit down and think what you will do when your pockets are filled with gold and silver and jewels.'

'Oh, it won't take me long to plan out that,' returned Bernèz with a laugh. 'I shall give Rozennik everything she can desire, dresses of all sorts, from cotton to silk, and good things of all kinds to eat, from white bread to oranges.'

‘The silver you find will pay for all that, and what about the gold?’

‘With the gold I shall make rich Rozennik’s relations and every friend of hers in the parish,’ replied he.

‘So much for the gold; and the jewels?’

‘Then,’ cried Bernèz, ‘I will divide the jewels amongst everybody in the world, so that they may be wealthy and happy; and I will tell them that it is Rozennik who would have it so.’

‘Hush! it is close on midnight — we must go,’ whispered the wizard, and together they crept to the edge of the wood.

With the first stroke of twelve a great noise arose over the silent heath, and the earth seemed to rock under the feet of the two watchers. The next moment by the light of the moon they beheld the huge stones near them leave their places and go down the slope leading to the river, knocking against each other in their haste. Passing the spot where stood Bernèz and the beggar, they were lost in the darkness. It seemed as if a procession of giants had gone by.

‘Quick,’ said the wizard, in a low voice, and he rushed towards the empty holes, which even in the night shone brightly from the treasures within them. Flinging himself on his knees, the old man began filling the wallets he had brought, listening intently all the time for the return of the stones up the hill, while Bernèz more slowly put handfuls of all he could see into his pockets.

The sorcerer had just closed his third wallet, and was beginning to wonder if he could carry away any more treasures when a low murmur as of a distant storm broke upon his ears.

The stones had finished drinking, and were hastening back to their places.

On they came, bent a little forward, the tallest of them all at their head, breaking everything that stood in their way. At the sight Bernèz stood transfixed with horror, and said,

‘We are lost! They will crush us to death.’

‘Not me!’ answered the sorcerer, holding up the crowsfoot and the five-leaved trefoil, ‘for these will preserve me. But in order to keep my riches, I was obliged to sacrifice a Christian to the stones, and an evil fate threw you in my way.’ And as he spoke he stretched out the magic herbs to the stones, which were advancing rapidly. As if acknowledging a power greater than theirs, the monstrous things instantly parted to the right and left of the wizard, but closed their ranks again as they approached Bernèz.

The young man did not try to escape, he knew it was useless, and sank on his knees and closed his eyes. But suddenly the tall stone that was leading stopped straight in front of Bernèz, so that no other could get past.

It was the stone on which Bernèz had carved the cross, and it was now a baptized stone, and had power to save him.

So the stone remained before the young man till the rest had taken their places, and then, darting like a bird to its own hole, came upon the beggar, who, thinking himself quite safe, was staggering along under the weight of his treasures.

Seeing the stone approaching, he held out the magic herbs which he carried, but the baptized stone was no longer subject to the spells that bound the rest, and passed straight on its way, leaving the wizard crushed into powder in the heather.

Then Bernèz went home, and showed his wealth to Marzinne, who this time did not refuse him as a brother-in-law, and he and Rozennik were married, and lived happy for ever after.

From ‘Le Foyer Breton,’ par Emile Souvestre.

THE CASTLE OF KERGLAS

Peronnik was a poor idiot who belonged to nobody, and he would have died of starvation if it had not been for the kindness of the village people, who gave him food whenever he chose to ask for it. And as for a bed, when night came, and he grew sleepy, he looked about for a heap of straw, and making a hole in it, crept in, like a lizard. Idiot though he was, he was never unhappy, but always thanked gratefully those who fed him, and sometimes would stop for a little and sing to them. For he could imitate a lark so well, that no one knew which was Peronnik and which was the bird.

He had been wandering in a forest one day for several hours, and when evening approached, he suddenly felt very hungry. Luckily, just at that place the trees grew thinner, and he could see a small farmhouse a little way off. Peronnik went straight towards it, and found the farmer's wife standing at the door holding in her hands the large bowl out of which her children had eaten their supper.

'I am hungry, will you give me something to eat?' asked the boy.

'If you can find anything here, you are welcome to it,' answered she, and, indeed, there was not much left, as everybody's spoon had dipped in. But Peronnik ate what was there with a hearty appetite, and thought that he had never tasted better food.

'It is made of the finest flour and mixed with the richest milk and stirred by the best cook in all the countryside,' and though he said it to himself, the woman heard him.

'Poor innocent,' she murmured, 'he does not know what he is saying, but I will cut him a slice of that new wheaten loaf,' and so she did, and Peronnik ate up every crumb, and declared that nobody less than the bishop's baker could have baked it. This flattered the farmer's wife so much that she gave him some butter to spread on it, and Peronnik was still eating it on the doorstep when an armed knight rode up.

'Can you tell me the way to the castle of Kerglas?' asked he.

'To Kerglas? are you *really* going to Kerglas?' cried the woman, turning pale.

'Yes; and in order to get there I have come from a country so far off that it has taken me three months' hard riding to travel as far as this.'

'And why do you want to go to Kerglas?' said she.

'I am seeking the basin of gold and the lance of diamonds which are in the castle,' he answered. Then Peronnik looked up.

'The basin and the lance are very costly things,' he said suddenly.

'More costly and precious than all the crowns in the world,' replied the stranger, 'for not only will the basin furnish you with the best food that you can dream of, but if you drink of it, it will cure you of any illness however dangerous, and will even bring the dead back to life, if it touches their mouths. As to the diamond lance, that will cut through any stone or metal.'

'And to whom do these wonders belong?' asked Peronnik in amazement.

'To a magician named Rogéar who lives in the castle,' answered the woman. 'Every day he passes along here, mounted on a black mare, with a colt thirteen months old trotting behind. But no one dares to attack him, as he always carries his lance.'

'That is true,' said the knight, 'but there is a spell laid upon him which forbids his using it within the castle of Kerglas. The moment he enters, the basin and lance are put away in a dark cellar which no key but one can open. And *that* is the place where I wish to fight the magician.'

'You will never overcome him, Sir Knight,' replied the woman, shaking her head. 'More than a hundred gentlemen have ridden past this house bent on the same errand, and not one has ever come back.'

'I know that, good woman,' returned the knight, 'but then they did not have, like me, instructions from the hermit of Blavet.'

'And what did the hermit tell you?' asked Peronnik.

'He told me that I should have to pass through a wood full of all sorts of enchantments and voices, which would try to frighten me and make me lose my way. Most of those who have gone before me have wandered they know not where, and perished from cold, hunger, or fatigue.'

'Well, suppose you get through safely?' said the idiot.

'If I do,' continued the knight, 'I shall then meet a sort of fairy armed with a needle of fire which burns to ashes all it touches. This dwarf stands guarding an apple-tree, from which I am bound to pluck an apple.'

'And next?' inquired Peronnik.

'Next I shall find the flower that laughs, protected by a lion whose mane is formed of vipers. I must pluck that flower, and go on to the lake of the dragons and fight the black man who holds in his hand the iron ball which never misses its mark and returns of its own accord to its master. After that, I enter the valley of pleasure, where some who conquered all the other obstacles have left their bones. If I can win through this, I shall reach a river with only one ford, where a lady in black will be seated. She will mount my horse behind me, and tell me what I am to do next.'

He paused, and the woman shook her head.

‘You will never be able to do all that,’ said she, but he bade her remember that these were only matters for men, and galloped away down the path she pointed out.

The farmer’s wife sighed and, giving Peronnik some more food, bade him good-night. The idiot rose and was opening the gate which led into the forest when the farmer himself came up.

‘I want a boy to tend my cattle,’ he said abruptly, ‘as the one I had has run away. Will you stay and do it?’ and Peronnik, though he loved his liberty and hated work, recollected the good food he had eaten, and agreed to stop.

At sunrise he collected his herd carefully and led them to the rich pasture which lay along the borders of the forest, cutting himself a hazel wand with which to keep them in order.

His task was not quite so easy as it looked, for the cows had a way of straying into the wood, and by the time he had brought one back another was off. He had gone some distance into the trees, after a naughty black cow which gave him more trouble than all the rest, when he heard the noise of horse’s feet, and peeping through the leaves he beheld the giant Rogéar seated on his mare, with the colt trotting behind. Round the giant’s neck hung the golden bowl suspended from a chain, and in his hand he grasped the diamond lance, which gleamed like fire. But as soon as he was out of sight the idiot sought in vain for traces of the path he had taken.

This happened not only once but many times, till Peronnik grew so used to him that he never troubled to hide. But on each occasion he saw him the desire to possess the bowl and the lance became stronger.

One evening the boy was sitting alone on the edge of the forest, when a man with a white beard stopped beside him. ‘Do you want to know the way to Kerglas?’ asked the idiot, and the man answered ‘I know it well.’

‘You have been there without being killed by the magician?’ cried Peronnik.

‘Oh! he had nothing to fear from me,’ replied the white-bearded man, ‘I am Rogéar’s elder brother, the wizard Bryak. When I wish to visit him I always pass this way, and as even I cannot go through the enchanted wood without losing myself, I call the colt to guide me.’ Stooping down as he spoke he traced three circles on the ground and murmured some words very low, which Peronnik could not hear. Then he added aloud:

Colt, free to run and free to eat, Colt, gallop fast until we meet,

and instantly the colt appeared, frisking and jumping to the wizard, who threw a halter over his neck and leapt on his back.

Peronnik kept silence at the farm about this adventure, but he understood very well that if he was ever to get to Kerglas he must first catch the colt which knew the way. Unhappily he had not heard the magic words uttered by the wizard, and he could not manage to draw the three circles, so if he was to summon the colt at all he must invent some other means of doing it.

All day long, while he was herding the cows, he thought and thought how he was to call the colt, for he felt sure that once on its back he could overcome the other dangers. Meantime he must be ready in case a chance should come, and he made his preparations at night, when every one was asleep. Remembering what he had seen the wizard do, he patched up an old halter that was hanging in a corner of the stable, twisted a rope of hemp to catch the colt’s feet, and a net such as is used for snaring birds. Next he sewed roughly together some bits of cloth to serve as a pocket, and this he filled with glue and larks’ feathers, a string of beads, a whistle of elder wood, and a slice of bread rubbed over with bacon fat. Then he went out to the path down which Rogéar, his mare, and the colt always rode, and crumbled the bread on one side of it.

Punctual to their hour all three appeared, eagerly watched by Peronnik, who lay hid in the bushes close by. Suppose it was useless; suppose the mare, and not the colt, ate the crumbs? Suppose — but no! the mare and her rider went safely by, vanishing round a corner, while the colt, trotting along with its head on the ground, smelt the bread, and began greedily to lick up the pieces. Oh, how good it was! Why had no one ever given it that before, and so absorbed was the little beast, sniffing about after a few more crumbs, that it never heard Peronnik creep up till it felt the halter on its neck and the rope round its feet, and — in another moment — some one on its back.

Going as fast as the hobbles would allow, the colt turned into one of the wildest parts of the forest, while its rider sat trembling at the strange sights he saw. Sometimes the earth seemed to open in front of them and he was looking into a bottomless pit; sometimes the trees burst into flames and he found himself in the midst of a fire; often in the act of crossing a stream the water rose and threatened to sweep him away; and again, at the foot of a mountain, great rocks would roll towards him, as if they would crush him and his colt beneath their weight. To his dying day Peronnik never knew whether these things were real or if he only imagined them, but he pulled down his knitted cap so as to cover his eyes, and trusted the colt to carry him down the right road.

At last the forest was left behind, and they came out on a wide plain where the air blew fresh and strong. The idiot ventured to peep out, and found to his relief that the enchantments seemed to have ended, though a thrill of horror shot through him as he noticed the skeletons of men scattered over the plain, beside the skeletons of their horses. And what were those grey forms trotting away in the distance? Were they — could they be — *wolves*?

But vast though the plain seemed, it did not take long to cross, and very soon the colt entered a sort of shady park in which was standing a single apple-tree, its branches bowed down to the ground with the weight of its fruit. In front was the korigan — the little fairy man — holding in his hand the fiery sword, which reduced to ashes everything it touched. At the sight of Peronnik he uttered a piercing scream, and raised his sword, but without appearing surprised the youth only lifted his cap, though he took care to remain at a little distance.

‘Do not be alarmed, my prince,’ said Peronnik, ‘I am just on my way to Kerglas, as the noble Rogéar has begged me to come to him on business.’

‘Begged *you* to come!’ repeated the dwarf, ‘and who, then, are you?’

‘I am the new servant he has engaged, as you know very well,’ answered Peronnik.

‘I do not know at all,’ rejoined the korigan sulkily, ‘and you may be a robber for all I can tell.’

‘I am so sorry,’ replied Peronnik, ‘but I may be wrong in calling myself a servant, for I am only a bird-catcher. But do not delay me, I pray, for his highness the magician expects me, and, as you see, has lent me his colt so that I may reach the castle all the quicker.’

At these words the korigan cast his eyes for the first time on the colt, which he knew to be the one belonging to the magician, and began to think that the young man was speaking the truth. After examining the horse, he studied the rider, who had such an innocent, and indeed vacant, air that he appeared incapable of inventing a story. Still, the dwarf did not feel *quite* sure that all was right, and asked what the magician wanted with a bird-catcher.

‘From what he says, he wants one very badly,’ replied Peronnik, ‘as he declares that all his grain and all the fruit in his garden at Kerglas are eaten up by the birds.’

‘And how are you going to stop that, my fine fellow?’ inquired the korigan; and Peronnik showed him the snare he had prepared, and remarked that no bird could possibly escape from it.

‘That is just what I should like to be sure of,’ answered the korigan. ‘My apples are completely eaten up by blackbirds and thrushes. Lay your snare, and if you can manage to catch them, I will let you pass.’

‘That is a fair bargain,’ and as he spoke Peronnik jumped down and fastened his colt to a tree; then, stooping, he fixed one end of the net to the trunk of the apple-tree, and called to the korigan to hold the other while he took out the pegs. The dwarf did as he was bid, when suddenly Peronnik threw the noose over his neck and drew it close, and the korigan was held as fast as any of the birds he wished to snare.

Shrieking with rage, he tried to undo the cord, but he only pulled the knot tighter. He had put down the sword on the grass, and Peronnik had been careful to fix the net on the other side of the tree, so that it was now easy for him to pluck an apple and to mount his horse, without being hindered by the dwarf, whom he left to his fate.

When they had left the plain behind them, Peronnik and his steed found themselves in a narrow valley in which was a grove of trees, full of all sorts of sweet-smelling things — roses of every colour, yellow broom, pink honeysuckle — while above them all towered a wonderful scarlet pansy whose face bore a strange expression. This was the flower that laughs, and no one who looked at it could help laughing too. Peronnik’s heart beat high at the thought that he had reached safely the second trial, and he gazed quite calmly at the lion with the mane of vipers twisting and twirling, who walked up and down in front of the grove.

The young man pulled up and removed his cap, for, idiot though he was, he knew that when you have to do with people greater than yourself, a cap is more useful in the hand than on the head. Then, after wishing all kinds of good fortune to the lion and his family, he inquired if he was on the right road to Kerglas.

‘And what is your business at Kerglas?’ asked the lion with a growl, and showing his teeth.

‘With all respect,’ answered Peronnik, pretending to be very frightened, ‘I am the servant of a lady who is a friend of the noble Rogéar and sends him some larks for a pasty.’

‘Larks?’ cried the lion, licking his long whiskers. ‘Why, it must be a century since I have had any! Have you a large quantity with you?’

‘As many as this bag will hold,’ replied Peronnik, opening, as he spoke, the bag which he had filled with feathers and glue; and to prove what he said, he turned his back on the lion and began to imitate the song of a lark.

‘Come,’ exclaimed the lion, whose mouth watered, ‘show me the birds! I should like to see if they are fat enough for my master.’

‘I would do it with pleasure,’ answered the idiot, ‘but if I once open the bag they will all fly away.’

‘Well, open it wide enough for me to look in,’ said the lion, drawing a little nearer.

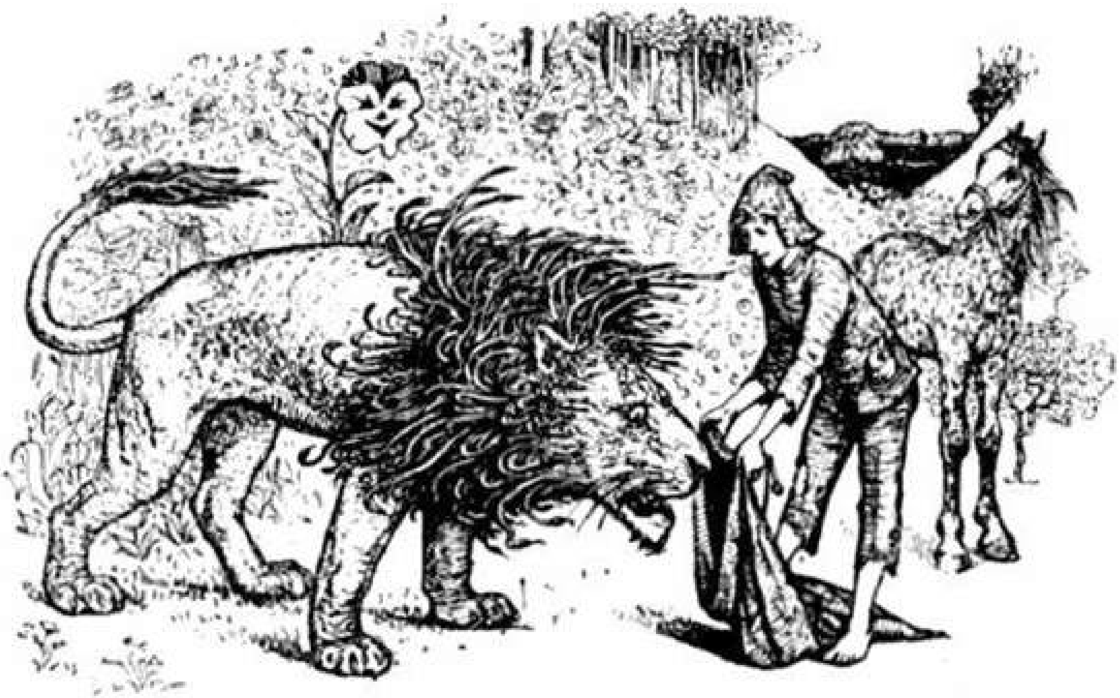

How Peronnik tricked the Viper-maned Lion with a bag

Now this was just what Peronnik had been hoping for, so he held the bag while the lion opened it carefully and put his head right inside, so that he might get a good mouthful of larks. But the mass of feathers and glue stuck to him, and before he could pull his head out again Peronnik had drawn tight the cord, and tied it in a knot that no man could untie. Then, quickly gathering the flower that laughs, he rode off as fast as the colt could take him.

The path soon led to the lake of the dragons, which he had to swim across. The colt, who was accustomed to it, plunged into the water without hesitation; but as soon as the dragons caught sight of Peronnik they approached from all parts of the lake in order to devour him.

This time Peronnik did not trouble to take off his cap, but he threw the beads he carried with him into the water, as you throw black corn to a duck, and with each bead that he swallowed a dragon turned on his back and died, so that the idiot reached the other side without further trouble.

The valley guarded by the black man now lay before him, and from afar Peronnik beheld him, chained by one foot to a rock at the entrance, and holding the iron ball which never missed its mark and always returned to its master’s hand. In his head the black man had six eyes that were never all shut at once, but kept watch one after the other. At this moment they were all open, and Peronnik knew well that if the black man caught a glimpse of him he would cast his ball.

So, hiding the colt behind a thicket of bushes, he crawled along a ditch and crouched close to the very rock to which the black man was chained.

The day was hot, and after a while the man began to grow sleepy. Two of his eyes closed, and Peronnik sang gently. In a moment a third eye shut, and Peronnik sang on. The lid of a fourth eye dropped heavily, and then those of the fifth and the sixth. The black man was asleep altogether.

Then, on tiptoe, the idiot crept back to the colt, which he led over soft moss past the black man into the vale of pleasure, a delicious garden full of fruits that dangled before your mouth, fountains running with wine, and flowers chanting in soft little voices. Further on, tables were spread with food, and girls dancing on the grass called to him to join them.

Peronnik heard, and, scarcely knowing what he did drew the colt into a slower pace. He sniffed greedily the smell of the dishes, and raised his head the better to see the dancers. Another instant and he would have stopped altogether and been lost, like others before him, when suddenly there came to him like a vision the golden bowl and the diamond lance. Drawing his whistle from his pocket, he blew it loudly, so as to drown the sweet sounds about him, and ate what was left of his bread and bacon to still the craving of the magic fruits. His eyes he fixed steadily on the ears of the colt, that he might not see the dancers.

In this way he was able to reach the end of the garden, and at length perceived the castle of Kerglas, with the river between them which had only one ford. Would the lady be there, as the old man had told him? Yes, surely that was she, sitting on a rock, in a black satin dress, and her face the colour of a Moorish woman’s. The idiot rode up, and took off his cap more politely than ever, and asked if she did not wish to cross the river.

‘I was waiting for you to help me do so,’ answered she. ‘Come near, that I may get up behind you.’

Peronnik did as she bade him, and by the help of his arm she jumped nimbly on to the back of the colt.

‘Do you know how to kill the magician?’ asked the lady, as they were crossing the ford.

‘I thought that, being a magician, he was immortal, and that no one could kill him,’ replied Peronnik.

‘Persuade him to taste that apple, and he will die, and if that is not enough I will touch him with my finger, for I am the plague,’ answered she.

‘But if I kill him, how am I to get the golden bowl and the diamond lance that are hidden in the cellar without a key?’ rejoined Peronnik.

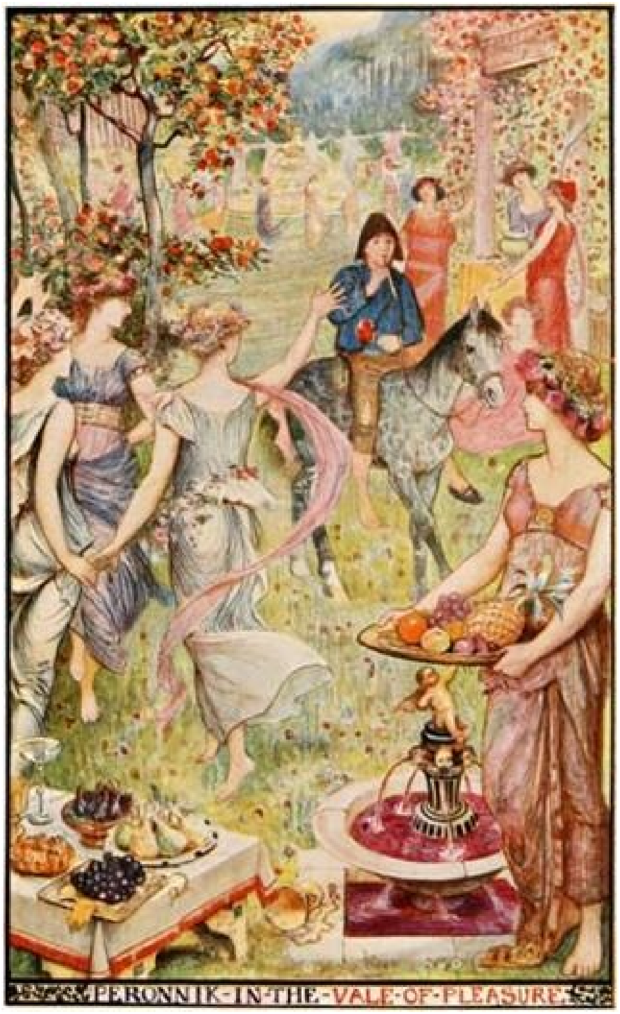

PERONNIK IN THE VALE OF PLEASURE

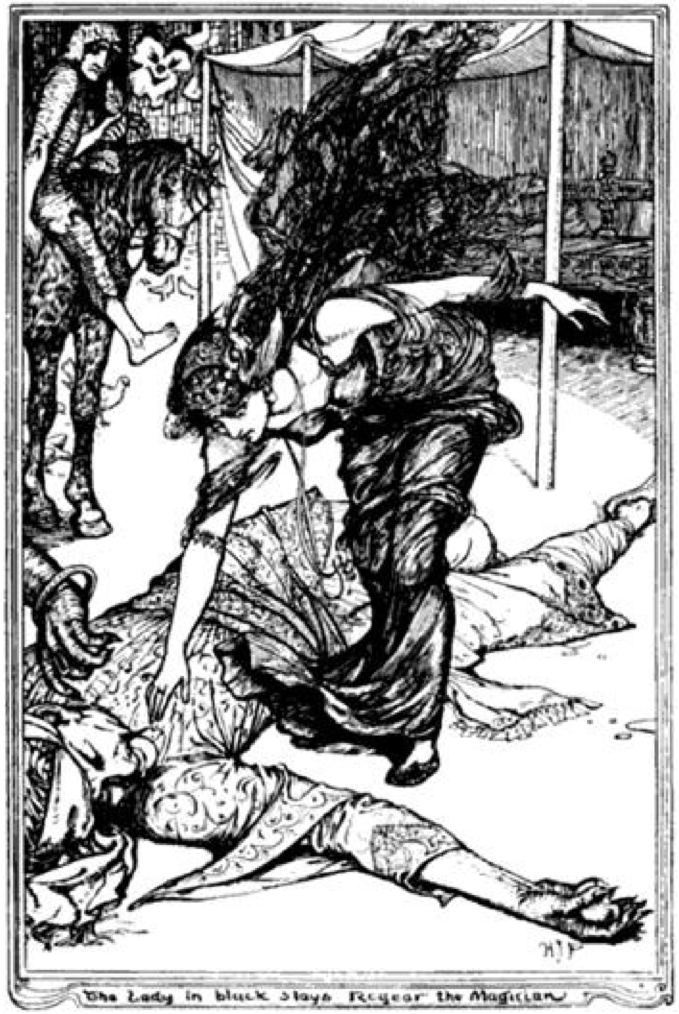

The Lady in black slays Regear the Magician

‘The flower that laughs opens all doors and lightens all darkness,’ said the lady; and as she spoke, they reached the further bank, and advanced towards the castle.

In front of the entrance was a sort of tent supported on poles, and under it the giant was sitting, basking in the sun. As soon as he noticed the colt bearing Peronnik and the lady, he lifted his head, and cried in a voice of thunder:

‘Why, it is surely the idiot, riding my colt thirteen months old!’

‘Greatest of magicians, you are right,’ answered Peronnik.

‘And how did you manage to catch him?’ asked the giant.

‘By repeating what I learnt from your brother Bryak on the edge of the forest,’ replied the idiot. ‘I just said —

Colt, free to run and free to eat, Colt, gallop fast until we meet,

and it came directly.’

‘You know my brother, then?’ inquired the giant. ‘Tell me why he sent you here.’

‘To bring you two gifts which he has just received from the country of the

Moors,' answered Peronnik: 'the apple of delight and the woman of submission. If you eat the apple you will not desire anything else, and if you take the woman as your servant you will never wish for another.'

'Well, give me the apple, and bid the woman get down,' answered Rogéar.

The idiot obeyed, but at the first taste of the apple the giant staggered, and as the long yellow finger of the woman touched him he fell dead.

Leaving the magician where he lay, Peronnik entered the palace, bearing with him the flower that laughs. Fifty doors flew open before him, and at length he reached a long flight of steps which seemed to lead into the bowels of the earth. Down these he went till he came to a silver door without a bar or key. Then he held up high the flower that laughs, and the door slowly swung back, displaying a deep cavern, which was as bright as day from the shining of the golden bowl and the diamond lance. The idiot hastily ran forward and hung the bowl round his neck from the chain which was attached to it, and took the lance in his hand. As he did so, the ground shook beneath him, and with an awful rumbling the palace disappeared, and Peronnik found himself standing close to the forest where he led the cattle to graze.

Though darkness was coming on, Peronnik never thought of entering the farm, but followed the road which led to the court of the duke of Brittany. As he passed through the town of Vannes he stopped at a tailor's shop, and bought a beautiful costume of brown velvet and a white horse, which he paid for with a handful of gold that he had picked up in the corridor of the castle of Kerglas. Thus he made his way to the city of Nantes, which at that moment was besieged by the French.

A little way off, Peronnik stopped and looked about him. For miles round the country was bare, for the enemy had cut down every tree and burnt every blade of corn; and, idiot though he might be, Peronnik was able to grasp that inside the gates men were dying of famine. He was still gazing with horror, when a trumpeter appeared on the walls, and, after blowing a loud blast, announced that the duke would adopt as his heir the man who could drive the French out of the country.

On the four sides of the city the trumpeter blew his blast, and the last time Peronnik, who had ridden up as close as he might, answered him.

'You need blow no more,' said he, 'for I myself will free the town from her enemies.' And turning to a soldier who came running up, waving his sword, he touched him with the magic lance, and he fell dead on the spot. The men who were following stood still, amazed. Their comrade's armour had not been pierced, of that they were sure, yet he was dead, as if he had been struck to the heart. But before they had time to recover from their astonishment, Peronnik cried out:

‘You see how my foes will fare; now behold what I can do for my friends,’ and, stooping down, he laid the golden bowl against the mouth of the soldier, who sat up as well as ever. Then, jumping his horse across the trench, he entered the gate of the city, which had opened wide enough to receive him.

The news of these marvels quickly spread through the town, and put fresh spirit into the garrison, so that they declared themselves able to fight under the command of the young stranger. And as the bowl restored all the dead Bretons to life, Peronnik soon had an army large enough to drive away the French, and fulfilled his promise of delivering his country.

As to the bowl and the lance, no one knows what became of them, but some say that Bryak the sorcerer managed to steal them again, and that any one who wishes to possess them must seek them as Peronnik did.

From ‘Le Foyer Breton,’ par Emile Souvestre.

THE BATTLE OF THE BIRDS

There was to be a great battle between all the creatures of the earth and the birds of the air. News of it went abroad, and the son of the king of Tethertown said that when the battle was fought he would be there to see it, and would bring back word who was to be king. But in spite of that, he was almost too late, and every fight had been fought save the last, which was between a snake and a great black raven. Both struck hard, but in the end the snake proved the stronger, and would have twisted himself round the neck of the raven till he died had not the king's son drawn his sword, and cut off the head of the snake at a single blow. And when the raven beheld that his enemy was dead, he was grateful, and said:

'For thy kindness to me this day, I will show thee a sight. So come up now on the root of my two wings.' The king's son did as he was bid, and before the raven stopped flying, they had passed over seven bens and seven glens and seven mountain moors.

'Do you see that house yonder?' said the raven at last. 'Go straight to it, for a sister of mine dwells there, and she will make you right welcome. And if she asks, "Wert thou at the battle of the birds?" answer that thou wert, and if she asks, "Didst thou see my likeness?" answer that thou sawest it, but be sure thou meetest me in the morning at this place.'

The king's son followed what the raven told him and that night he had meat of each meat, and drink of each drink, warm water for his feet, and a soft bed to lie in.

Thus it happened the next day, and the next, but on the fourth morning, instead of meeting the raven, in his place the king's son found waiting for him the handsomest youth that ever was seen, with a bundle in his hand.

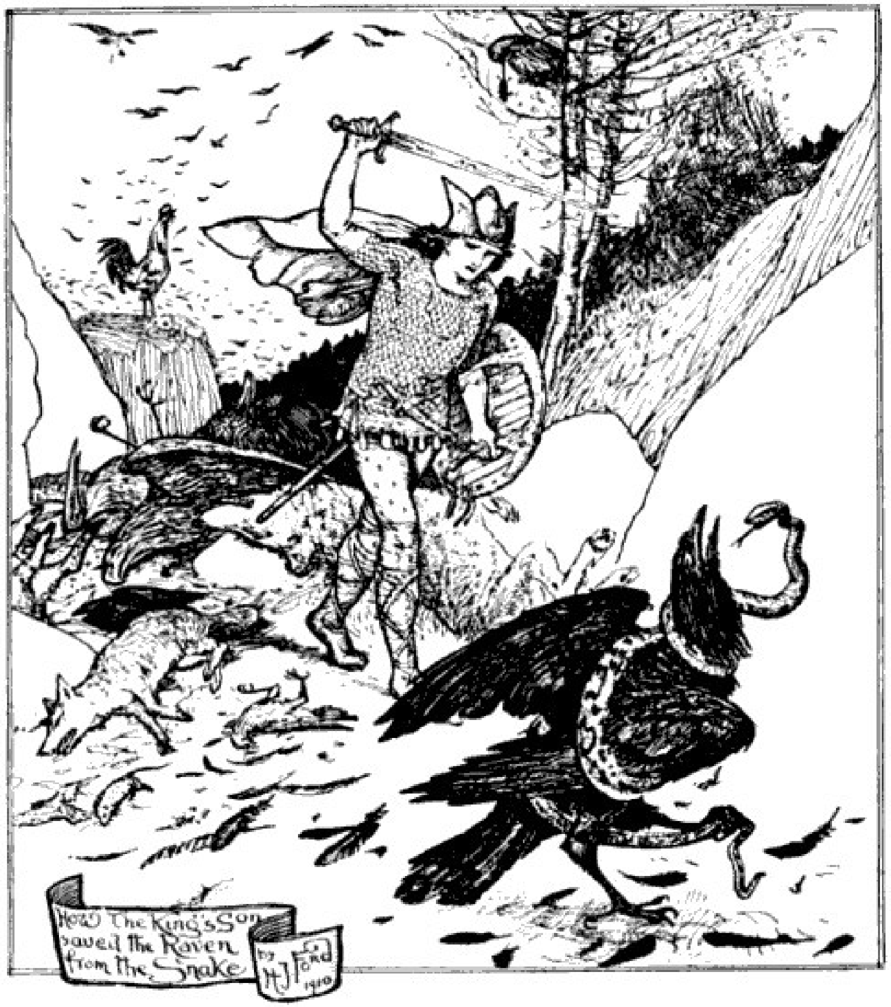
How the King's Son saved the Raven from the Snake
by H. J. Ford 1910

‘Is there a raven hereabouts?’ asked the king’s son, and the youth answered:

‘I am that raven, and I was delivered by thee from the spells that bound me, and in reward thou wilt get this bundle. Go back by the road thou camest, and lie as before, a night in each house, but be careful not to unloose the bundle till thou art in the place wherein thou wouldst most wish to dwell.’

Then the king’s son set out, and thus it happened as it had happened before, till he entered a thick wood near his father’s house. He had walked a long way, and suddenly the bundle seemed to grow heavier; first he put it down under a tree, and next he thought he would look at it.

The string was easy to untie, and the king’s son soon unfastened the bundle. What was it he saw there? Why, a great castle with an orchard all about it, and in the orchard fruit and flowers and birds of every kind. It was all ready for him to dwell in, but instead of being in the midst of the forest, he *did* wish he had left the bundle unloosed till he had reached the green valley close to his father’s palace. Well, it was no use wishing, and with a sigh he glanced up, and beheld a huge giant coming towards him.

‘Bad is the place where thou hast built thy house, king’s son,’ said the giant.

‘True; it is not here that I wish it to be,’ answered the king’s son.

‘What reward wilt thou give me if I put it back in the bundle?’ asked the giant.

‘What reward dost thou ask?’ answered the king’s son.

‘The first boy thou hast when he is seven years old,’ said the giant.

‘If I have a boy thou shalt get him,’ answered the king’s son, and as he spoke the castle and the orchard were tied up in the bundle again.

‘Now take thy road, and I will take mine,’ said the giant. ‘And if thou forgettest thy promise, *I* will remember it.’

Light of heart the king’s son went on his road, till he came to the green valley near his father’s palace. Slowly he unloosed the bundle, fearing lest he should find nothing but a heap of stones or rags. But no! all was as it had been before, and as he opened the castle door there stood within the most beautiful maiden that ever was seen.

‘Enter, king’s son,’ said she, ‘all is ready, and we will be married at once,’ and so they were.

The maiden proved a good wife, and the king’s son, now himself a king, was so happy that he forgot all about the giant. Seven years and a day had gone by, when one morning, while standing on the ramparts, he beheld the giant striding towards the castle. Then he remembered his promise, and remembered, too, that he had told the queen nothing about it. Now he must tell her, and perhaps she might help him in his trouble.

The queen listened in silence to his tale, and after he had finished, she only said:

‘Leave thou the matter between me and the giant,’ and as she spoke, the giant entered the hall and stood before them.

‘Bring out your son,’ cried he to the king, ‘as you promised me seven years and a day since.’

The king glanced at his wife, who nodded, so he answered:

‘Let his mother first put him in order,’ and the queen left the hall, and took the cook’s son and dressed him in the prince’s clothes, and led him up to the giant, who held his hand, and together they went out along the road. They had not walked far when the giant stopped and stretched out a stick to the boy.

‘If your father had that stick, what would he do with it?’ asked he.

‘If my father had that stick, he would beat the dogs and cats that steal the king’s meat,’ replied the boy.

‘Thou art the cook’s son!’ cried the giant. ‘Go home to thy mother;’ and turning his back he strode straight to the castle.

‘If you seek to trick me this time, the highest stone will soon be the lowest,’ said he, and the king and queen trembled, but they could not bear to give up their boy.

‘The butler’s son is the same age as ours,’ whispered the queen; ‘he will not know the difference,’ and she took the child and dressed him in the prince’s clothes, and the giant led him away along the road. Before they had gone far he stopped, and held out a stick.

‘If thy father had that rod, what would he do with it?’ asked the giant.

‘He would beat the dogs and cats that break the king’s glasses,’ answered the boy.

‘Thou art the son of the butler!’ cried the giant. ‘Go home to thy mother;’ and turning round he strode back angrily to the castle.

‘Bring out thy son at once,’ roared he, ‘or the stone that is highest will be lowest,’ and this time the real prince was brought.

But though his parents wept bitterly and fancied the child was suffering all kinds of dreadful things, the giant treated him like his own son, though he never allowed him to see his daughters. The boy grew to be a big boy, and one day the giant told him that he would have to amuse himself alone for many hours, as he had a journey to make. So the boy wandered by the river, and down to the sea, and at last he wandered to the top of the castle, where he had never been before. There he paused, for the sound of music broke upon his ears, and opening a door near him, he beheld a girl sitting by the window, holding a harp.

‘Haste and begone, I see the giant close at hand,’ she whispered hurriedly, ‘but when he is asleep, return hither, for I would speak with thee.’ And the prince did as he was bid, and when midnight struck he crept back to the top of the castle.

‘To-morrow,’ said the girl, who was the giant’s daughter, ‘to-morrow thou wilt get the choice of my two sisters to marry, but thou must answer that thou wilt not take either, but only me. This will anger him greatly, for he wishes to betroth me to the son of the king of the Green City, whom I like not at all.’

Then they parted, and on the morrow, as the girl had said, the giant called his three daughters to him, and likewise the young prince, to whom he spoke.

‘Now, O son of the king of Tethertown, the time has come for us to part. Choose one of my two elder daughters to wife, and thou shalt take her to your father’s house the day after the wedding.’

‘Give me the youngest instead,’ replied the youth, and the giant’s face darkened as he heard him.

‘Three things must thou do first,’ said he.

‘Say on, I will do them,’ replied the prince, and the giant left the house, and bade him follow to the byre, where the cows were kept.

‘For a hundred years no man has swept this byre,’ said the giant, ‘but if by nightfall, when I reach home, thou hast not cleaned it so that a golden apple can roll through it from end to end, thy blood shall pay for it.'

All day long the youth toiled, but he might as well have tried to empty the ocean. At length, when he was so tired he could hardly move, the giant's youngest daughter stood in the doorway.

'Lay down thy weariness,' said she, and the king's son, thinking he could only die once, sank on the floor at her bidding, and fell sound asleep. When he woke the girl had disappeared, and the byre was so clean that a golden apple could roll from end to end of it. He jumped up in surprise, and at that moment in came the giant.

'Hast thou cleaned the byre, king's son?' asked he.

'I have cleaned it,' answered he.

'Well, since thou wert so active to-day, to-morrow thou wilt thatch this byre with a feather from every different bird, or else thy blood shall pay for it,' and he went out.

Before the sun was up, the youth took his bow and his quiver and set off to kill the birds. Off to the moor he went, but never a bird was to be seen that day. At last he got so tired with running to and fro that he gave up heart.

'There is but one death I can die,' thought he. Then at midday came the giant's daughter.

'Thou art tired, king's son?' said she.

'I am,' answered he; 'all these hours have I wandered, and there fell but these two blackbirds, both of one colour.'

'Lay down thy weariness on the grass,' said she, and he did as she bade him, and fell fast asleep.

When he woke the girl had disappeared, and he got up, and returned to the byre. As he drew near, he rubbed his eyes hard, thinking he was dreaming, for there it was, beautifully thatched, just as the giant had wished. At the door of the house he met the giant.

'Hast thou thatched the byre, king's son?'

'I have thatched it.'

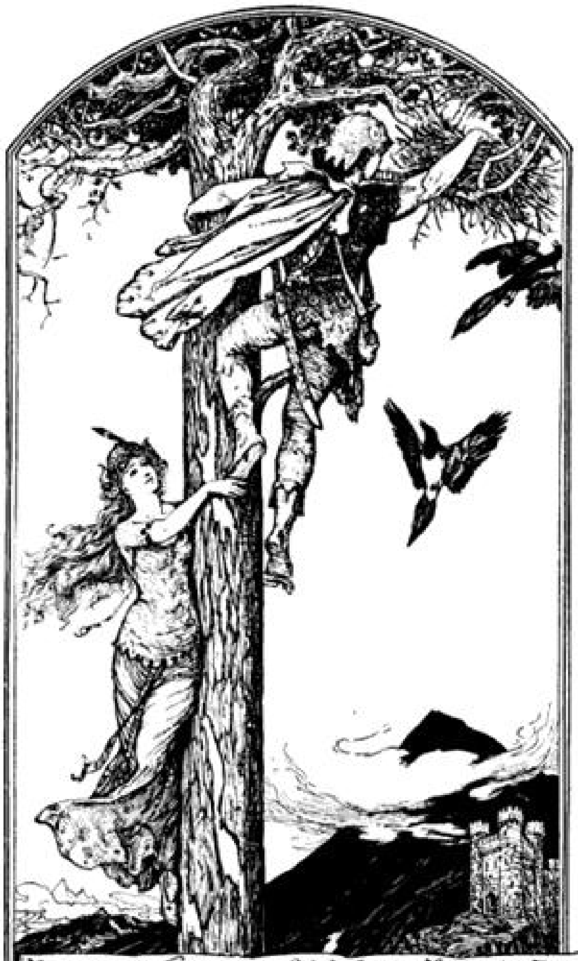

How the King's Son fetched the Magpie's Eggs

‘Well, since thou hast been so active to-day, I have something else for thee! Beside the loch thou seest over yonder there grows a fir tree. On the top of the fir tree is a magpie’s nest, and in the nest are five eggs. Thou wilt bring me those eggs for breakfast, and if one is cracked or broken, thy blood shall pay for it.’

Before it was light next day, the king’s son jumped out of bed and ran down to the loch. The tree was not hard to find, for the rising sun shone red on the trunk, which was five hundred feet from the ground to its first branch. Time after time he walked round it, trying to find some knots, however small, where he could put his feet, but the bark was quite smooth, and he soon saw that if he was to reach the top at all, it must be by climbing up with his knees like a sailor. But then he was a king’s son and not a sailor, which made all the difference.

However, it was no use standing there staring at the fir, at least he must try to do his best, and try he did till his hands and knees were sore, for as soon as he had struggled up a few feet, he slid back again. Once he climbed a little higher than before, and hope rose in his heart, then down he came with such force that his hands and knees smarted worse than ever.

‘This is no time for stopping,’ said the voice of the giant’s daughter, as he leant against the trunk to recover his breath.

‘Alas! I am no sooner up than down,’ answered he.

‘Try once more,’ said she, and she laid a finger against the tree and bade him put his foot on it. Then she placed another finger a little higher up, and so on till he reached the top, where the magpie had built her nest.

‘Make haste now with the nest,’ she cried, ‘for my father’s breath is burning my back,’ and down he scrambled as fast as he could, but the girl’s little finger had caught in a branch at the top, and she was obliged to leave it there. But she was too busy to pay heed to this, for the sun was getting high over the hills.

‘Listen to me,’ she said. ‘This night my two sisters and I will be dressed in the same garments, and you will not know me. But when my father says ‘Go to thy wife, king’s son,’ come to the one whose right hand has no little finger.’

So he went and gave the eggs to the giant, who nodded his head.

‘Make ready for thy marriage,’ cried he, ‘for the wedding shall take place this very night, and I will summon thy bride to greet thee.’ Then his three daughters were sent for, and they all entered dressed in green silk of the same fashion, and with golden circlets round their heads. The king’s son looked from one to another. *Which* was the youngest? Suddenly his eyes fell on the hand of the middle one, and there was no little finger.

‘Thou hast aimed well this time too,’ said the giant, as the king’s son laid his hand on her shoulder, ‘but perhaps we may meet some other way;’ and though he pretended to laugh, the bride saw a gleam in his eye which warned her of danger.

The wedding took place that very night, and the hall was filled with giants and gentlemen, and they danced till the house shook from top to bottom. At last everyone grew tired, and the guests went away, and the king’s son and his bride were left alone.

‘If we stay here till dawn my father will kill thee,’ she whispered, ‘but thou art my husband and I will save thee, as I did before,’ and she cut an apple into nine pieces, and put two pieces at the head of the bed, and two pieces at the foot, and two pieces at the door of the kitchen, and two at the big door, and one outside the house. And when this was done, and she heard the giant snoring, she and the king’s son crept out softly and stole across to the stable, where she led out the blue-grey mare and jumped on its back, and her husband mounted before her. Not long after, the giant awoke.

‘Are you asleep?’ asked he.

‘Not yet,’ answered the apple at the head of the bed, and the giant turned over, and soon was snoring as loudly as before. By and bye he called again.

‘Are you asleep?’

‘Not yet,’ said the apple at the foot of the bed, and the giant was satisfied. After a while, he called a third time, ‘Are you asleep?’

‘Not yet,’ replied the apple in the kitchen, but when, in a few minutes, he put the question for the fourth time and received an answer from the apple outside the house door, he guessed what had happened, and ran to the room to look for himself.

The bed was cold and empty!

‘My father’s breath is burning my back,’ cried the girl, ‘put thy hand into the ear of the mare, and whatever thou findest there, throw it behind thee.’ And in the mare’s ear there was a twig of sloe tree, and as he threw it behind him there sprung up twenty miles of thornwood so thick that scarce a weasel could go through it. And the giant, who was striding headlong forwards, got caught in it, and it pulled his hair and beard.

‘This is one of my daughter’s tricks,’ he said to himself, ‘but if I had my big axe and my wood-knife, I would not be long making a way through this,’ and off he went home and brought back the axe and the wood-knife.

It took him but a short time to cut a road through the blackthorn, and then he laid the axe and the knife under a tree.

‘I will leave them there till I return,’ he murmured to himself, but a hoodie crow, which was sitting on a branch above, heard him.

‘If thou leavest them,’ said the hoodie, ‘we will steal them.’

‘You will,’ answered the giant, ‘and I must take them home.’ So he took them home, and started afresh on his journey.

‘My father’s breath is burning my back,’ cried the girl at midday. ‘Put thy finger in the mare’s ear and throw behind thee whatever thou findest in it,’ and the king’s son found a splinter of grey stone, and threw it behind him, and in a twinkling twenty miles of solid rock lay between them and the giant.

‘My daughter’s tricks are the hardest things that ever met me,’ said the giant, ‘but if I had my lever and my crowbar, I would not be long in making my way through this rock also,’ but as he had *not* got them, he had to go home and fetch them. Then it took him but a short time to hew his way through the rock.

‘I will leave the tools here,’ he murmured aloud when he had finished.

‘If thou leavest them, we will steal them,’ said a hoodie who was perched on a stone above him, and the giant answered:

‘Steal them if thou wilt; there is no time to go back.’

‘My father’s breath is burning my back,’ cried the girl; ‘look in the mare’s ear, king’s son, or we are lost,’ and he looked, and found a tiny bladder full of water, which he threw behind him, and it became a great loch. And the giant, who was striding on so fast, could not stop himself, and he walked right into the middle and was drowned.

The blue-grey mare galloped on like the wind, and the next day the king's son came in sight of his father's house.

'Get down and go in,' said the bride, 'and tell them that thou hast married me. But take heed that neither man nor beast kiss thee, for then thou wilt cease to remember me at all.'

'I will do thy bidding,' answered he, and left her at the gate. All who met him bade him welcome, and he charged his father and mother not to kiss him, but as he greeted them his old greyhound leapt on his neck, and kissed him on the mouth. And after that he did not remember the giant's daughter.

All that day she sat on a well which was near the gate, waiting, waiting, but the king's son never came. In the darkness she climbed up into an oak tree that shadowed the well, and there she lay all night, waiting, waiting.

On the morrow, at midday, the wife of a shoemaker who dwelt near the well went to draw water for her husband to drink, and she saw the shadow of the girl in the tree, and thought it was her own shadow.

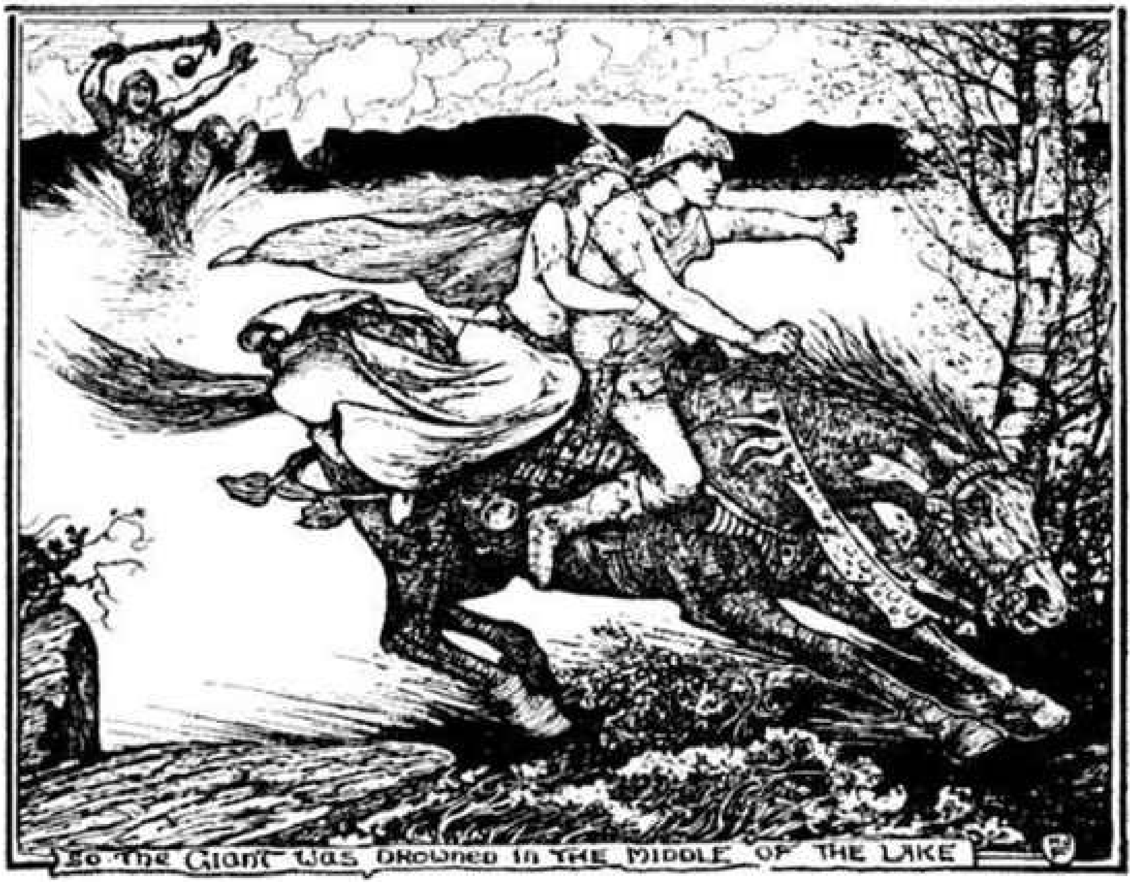

SO THE GIANT WAS DROWNED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE

‘How handsome I am, to be sure,’ said she, gazing into the well, and as she stooped to behold herself better, the jug struck against the stones and broke in pieces, and she was forced to return to her husband without the water, and this angered him.

‘Thou hast turned crazy,’ said he in wrath. ‘Go thou, my daughter, and fetch me a drink,’ and the girl went, and the same thing befell her as had befallen her mother.

‘Where is the water?’ asked the shoemaker, when she came back, and as she held nothing save the handle of the jug he went to the well himself. He too saw the reflection of the woman in the tree, but looked up to discover whence it came, and there above him sat the most beautiful woman in the world.

‘Come down,’ he said, ‘for a while thou canst stay in my house,’ and glad enough the girl was to come.

Now the king of the country was about to marry, and the young men about the court thronged the shoemaker’s shop to buy fine shoes to wear at the wedding.

‘Thou hast a pretty daughter,’ said they when they beheld the girl sitting at work.

‘Pretty she is,’ answered the shoemaker, ‘but no daughter of mine.’

‘I would give a hundred pounds to marry her,’ said one.

‘And I,’ ‘And I,’ cried the others.

‘That is no business of mine,’ answered the shoemaker, and the young men bade him ask her if she would choose one of them for a husband, and to tell them on the morrow. Then the shoemaker asked her, and the girl said that she would marry the one who would bring his purse with him. So the shoemaker hurried to the youth who had first spoken, and he came back, and after giving the shoemaker a hundred pounds for his news, he sought the girl, who was waiting for him.

‘Is it thou?’ inquired she. ‘I am thirsty, give me a drink from the well that is out yonder.’ And he poured out the water, but he could not move from the place where he was; and there he stayed till many hours had passed by.

‘Take away that foolish boy,’ cried the girl to the shoemaker at last, ‘I am tired of him,’ and then suddenly he was able to walk, and betook himself to his home, but he did not tell the others what had happened to him.

Next day there arrived one of the other young men, and in the evening, when the shoemaker had gone out and they were alone, she said to him, ‘See if the latch is on the door.’ The young man hastened to do her bidding, but as soon as he touched the latch, his fingers stuck to it, and there he had to stay for many hours, till the shoemaker came back, and the girl let him go. Hanging his head, he went home, but he told no one what had befallen him.

Then was the turn of the third man, and *his* foot remained fastened to the floor, till the girl unloosed it. And thankfully he ran off, and was not seen looking behind him.

‘Take the purse of gold,’ said the girl to the shoemaker, ‘I have no need of it, and it will better thee.’ And the shoemaker took it and told the girl he must carry the shoes for the wedding up to the castle.

‘I would fain get a sight of the king’s son before he marries,’ sighed she.

‘Come with me, then,’ answered he; ‘the servants are all my friends, and they will let you stand in the passage down which the king’s son will pass, and all the company too.’

Up they went to the castle, and when the young men saw the girl standing there, they led her into the hall where the banquet was laid out and poured her out some wine. She was just raising the glass to drink when a flame went up out of it, and out of the flame sprang two pigeons, one of gold and one of silver. They flew round and round the head of the girl, when three grains of barley fell on the floor, and the silver pigeon dived down, and swallowed them.

‘If thou hadst remembered how I cleaned the byre, thou wouldst have given me my share,’ cooed the golden pigeon, and as he spoke three more grains fell, and the silver pigeon ate them as before.

‘If thou hadst remembered how I thatched the byre, thou wouldst have given me my share,’ cooed the golden pigeon again; and as he spoke three more grains fell, and for the third time they were eaten by the silver pigeon.

‘If thou hadst remembered how I got the magpie’s nest, thou wouldst have given me my share,’ cooed the golden pigeon.

Then the king’s son understood that they had come to remind him of what he had forgotten, and his lost memory came back, and he knew his wife, and kissed her. But as the preparations had been made, it seemed a pity to waste them, so they were married a second time, and sat down to the wedding feast.

From ‘Tales of the West Highlands.’

THE LADY OF THE FOUNTAIN

In the centre of the great hall in the castle of Caerleon upon Usk, king Arthur sat on a seat of green rushes, over which was thrown a covering of flame-coloured silk, and a cushion of red satin lay under his elbow. With him were his knights Owen and Kynon and Kai, while at the far end, close to the window, were Guenevere the queen and her maidens embroidering white garments with strange devices of gold.

'I am weary,' said Arthur, 'and till my food is prepared I would fain sleep. You yourselves can tell each other tales, and Kai will fetch you from the kitchen a flagon of mead and some meat.'

And when they had eaten and drunk, Kynon, the oldest among them, began his story.

'I was the only son of my father and mother, and much store they set by me, but I was not content to stay with them at home, for I thought no deed in all the world was too mighty for me. None could hold me back, and after I had won many adventures in my own land, I bade farewell to my parents and set out to see the world. Over mountains, through deserts, across rivers I went, till I reached a fair valley full of trees, with a path running by the side of a stream. I walked along that path all the day, and in the evening I came to a castle in front of which stood two youths clothed in yellow, each grasping an ivory bow, with arrows made of the bones of the whale, and winged with peacock's feathers. By their sides hung golden daggers with hilts of the bones of the whale.

'Near these young men was a man richly dressed, who turned and went with me towards the castle, where all the dwellers were gathered in the hall. In one window I beheld four and twenty damsels, and the least fair of them was fairer than Guenevere at her fairest. Some took my horse, and others unbuckled my armour, and washed it, with my sword and spear, till it all shone like silver. Then I washed myself and put on a vest and doublet which they brought me, and I and the man that entered with me sat down before a table of silver, and a goodlier feast I never had.

'All this time neither the man nor the damsels had spoken one word, but when our dinner was half over, and my hunger was stilled, the man began to ask who I was. Then I told him my name and my father's name, and why I came there, for indeed I had grown weary of gaining the mastery over all men at home, and sought if perchance there was one who could gain the mastery over me. And at this the man smiled and answered:

'"If I did not fear to distress thee too much, I would show thee what thou seekest." His words made me sorrowful and fearful of myself, which the man perceived, and added, "If thou meanest truly what thou sayest, and desirest earnestly to prove thy valour, and not to boast vainly that none can overcome thee, I have somewhat to show thee. But to-night thou must sleep in this castle, and in the morning see that thou rise early and follow the road upwards through the valley, until thou reachest a wood. In the wood is a path branching to the right; go along this path until thou comest to a space of grass with a mound in the middle of it. On the top of the mound stands a black man, larger than any two white men; his eye is in the centre of his forehead and he has only one foot. He carries a club of iron, and two white men could hardly lift it. Around him graze a thousand beasts, all of different kinds, for he is the guardian of that wood, and it is he who will tell thee which way to go in order to find the adventure thou art in quest of."

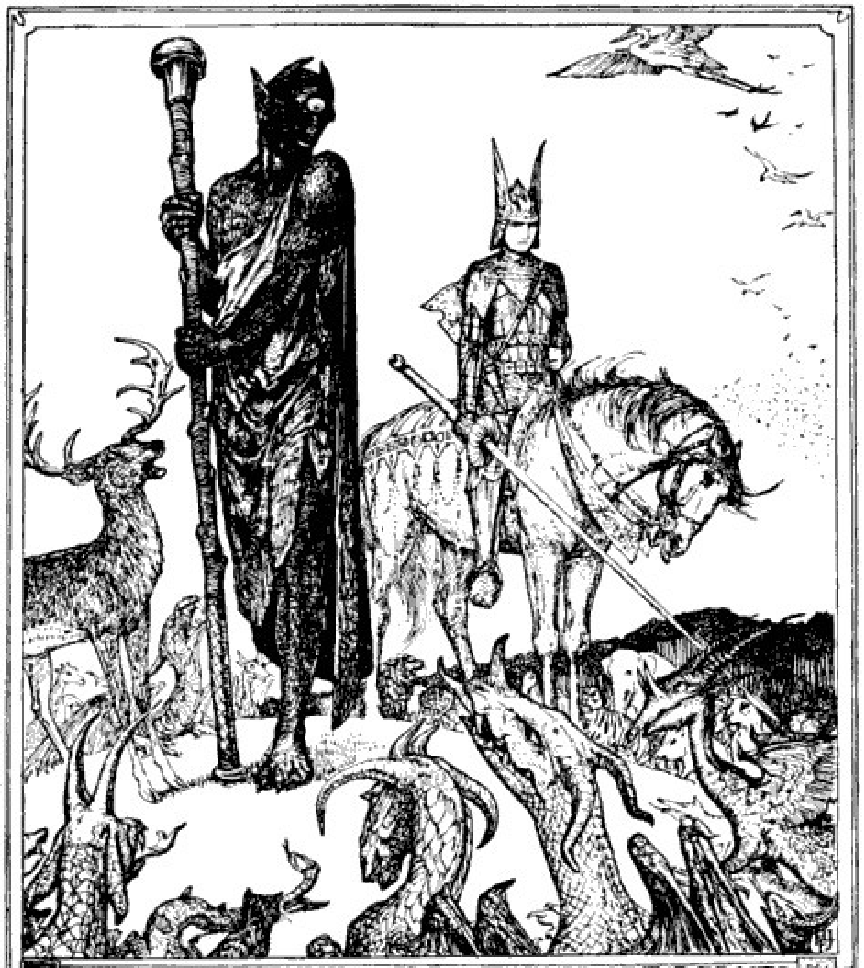

KYNON MEETS WITH THE BLACK MASTER OF THE BEASTS

‘So spake the man, and long did that night seem to me, and before dawn I rose and put on my armour, and mounted my horse and rode on till I reached the grassy space of which he had told me. There was the black man on top of the mound, as he had said, and in truth he was mightier in all ways than I had thought him to be. As for the club, Kai, it would have been a burden for four of our warriors. He waited for me to speak, and I asked him what power he held over the beasts that thronged so close about him.

‘“I will show thee, little man,” he answered, and with his club he struck a stag on the head till he brayed loudly. And at his braying the animals came running, numerous as the stars in the sky, so that scarce was I able to stand among them. Serpents were there also, and dragons, and beasts of strange shapes, with horns in places where never saw I horns before. And the black man only looked at them and bade them go and feed. And they bowed themselves before him, as vassals before their lord.

‘“Now, little man, I have answered thy question and showed thee my power,” said he. “Is there anything else thou wouldest know?” Then I inquired of him my way, but he grew angry, and, as I perceived, would fain have hindered me; but at the last, after I had told him who I was, his anger passed from him.

'"Take that path," said he, "that leads to the head of this grassy glade, and go up the wood till thou reachest the top. There thou wilt find an open space, and in the midst of it a tall tree. Under the tree is a fountain, and by the fountain a marble slab, and on the slab a bowl of silver, with a silver chain. Dip the bowl in the fountain, and throw the water on the slab, and thou wilt hear a mighty peal of thunder, till heaven and earth seem trembling with the noise. After the thunder will come hail, so fierce that scarcely canst thou endure it and live, for the hailstones are both large and thick. Then the sun will shine again, but every leaf of the tree will be lying on the ground. Next a flight of birds will come and alight on the tree, and never didst thou hear a strain so sweet as that which they will sing. And at the moment in which their song sounds sweetest thou wilt hear a murmuring and complaining coming towards thee along the valley, and thou wilt see a knight in black velvet bestriding a black horse, bearing a lance with a black pennon, and he will spur his steed so as to fight thee. If thou turnest to flee, he will overtake thee, and if thou abidest where thou art, he will unhorse thee. And if thou dost not find trouble in that adventure, thou needest not to seek it during the rest of thy life."

'So I bade the black man farewell, and took my way to the top of the wood, and there I found everything just as I had been told. I went up to the tree beneath which stood the fountain, and filling the silver bowl with water, emptied it on the marble slab. Thereupon the thunder came, louder by far than I had expected to hear it, and after the thunder came the shower, but heavier by far than I had expected to feel it, for, of a truth I tell thee, Kai, not one of those hailstones would be stopped by skin or by flesh till it had reached the bone. I turned my horse's flank towards the shower, and, bending over his neck, held my shield so that it might cover his head and my own. When the hail had passed, I looked on the tree and not a single leaf was left on it, and the sky was blue and the sun shining, while on the branches were perched birds of every kind, who sang a song sweeter than any that has come to my ears, either before or since.

'Thus, Kai, I stood listening to the birds, when lo, a murmuring voice approached me, saying:

'"O knight, what has brought thee hither? What evil have I done to thee, that thou shouldest do so much to me, for in all my lands neither man nor beast that met that shower has escaped alive." Then from the valley appeared the knight on the black horse, grasping the lance with the black pennon. Straightway we charged each other, and though I fought my best, he soon overcame me, and I was thrown to the ground, while the knight seized the bridle of my horse, and rode away with it, leaving me where I was, without even despoiling me of my armour.

‘Sadly did I go down the hill again, and when I reached the glade where the black man was, I confess to thee, Kai, it was a marvel that I did not melt into a liquid pool, so great was my shame. That night I slept at the castle where I had been before, and I was bathed and feasted, and none asked me how I had fared. The next morning when I arose I found a bay horse saddled for me, and, girding on my armour, I returned to my own court. The horse is still in the stable, and I would not part with it for any in Britain.

‘But of a truth, Kai, no man ever confessed an adventure so much to his own dishonour, and strange indeed it seems that none other man have I ever met that knew of the black man, and the knight, and the shower.’

‘Would it not be well,’ said Owen, ‘to go and discover the place?’

‘By the hand of my friend,’ answered Kai, ‘often dost thou utter that with thy tongue which thou wouldest not make good with thy deeds.’

‘In truth,’ said Guenevere the queen, who had listened to the tale, ‘thou wert better hanged, Kai, than use such speech towards a man like Owen.’

‘I meant nothing, lady,’ replied Kai; ‘thy praise of Owen is not greater than mine.’ And as he spoke Arthur awoke, and asked if he had not slept for a little.

‘Yes, lord,’ answered Owen, ‘certainly thou hast slept.’

‘Is it time for us to go to meat?’

‘It is, lord,’ answered Owen.

Then the horn for washing themselves was sounded, and after that the king and his household sat down to eat. And when they had finished, Owen left them, and made ready his horse and his arms.

With the first rays of the sun he set forth, and travelled through deserts and over mountains and across rivers, and all befell him which had befallen Kynon, till he stood under the leafless tree listening to the song of the birds. Then he heard the voice, and turning to look found the knight galloping to meet him. Fiercely they fought till their lances were broken, and then they drew their swords, and a blow from Owen cut through the knight’s helmet, and pierced his skull.

Feeling himself wounded unto death the knight fled, and Owen pursued him till they came to a splendid castle. Here the knight dashed across the bridge that spanned the moat, and entered the gate, but as soon as he was safe inside, the drawbridge was pulled up and caught Owen’s horse in the middle, so that half of him was inside and half out, and Owen could not dismount and knew not what to do.

While he was in this sore plight a little door in the castle gate opened, and he could see a street facing him, with tall houses. Then a maiden with curling hair of gold looked through the little door and bade Owen open the gate.

‘By my troth!’ cried Owen, ‘I can no more open it from here than thou art able to set me free.’

‘Well,’ said she, ‘I will do my best to release thee if thou wilt do as I tell thee. Take this ring and put it on with the stone inside thy hand, and close thy fingers tight, for as long as thou dost conceal it, it will conceal thee. When the men inside have held counsel together, they will come to fetch thee to thy death, and they will be much grieved not to find thee. I will stand on the horse block yonder and thou canst see me though I cannot see thee. Therefore draw near and place thy hand on my shoulder and follow me wheresoever I go.’

Upon that she went away from Owen, and when the men came out from the castle to seek him and did not find him they were sorely grieved, and they returned to the castle.

Then Owen went to the maiden and placed his hand on her shoulder, and she guided him to a large room, painted all over with rich colours, and adorned with images of gold. Here she gave him meat and drink, and water to wash with and garments to wear, and he lay down upon a soft bed, with scarlet and fur to cover him, and slept gladly.

In the middle of the night he woke hearing a great outcry, and he jumped up and clothed himself and went into the hall, where the maiden was standing.

‘What is it?’ he asked, and she answered that the knight who owned the castle was dead, and they were bearing his body to the church. Never had Owen beheld such vast crowds, and following the dead knight was the most beautiful lady in the world, whose cry was louder than the shout of the men, or the braying of the trumpets. And Owen looked on her and loved her.

‘Who is she?’ he asked the damsel. ‘That is my mistress, the countess of the fountain, and the wife of him whom thou didst slay yesterday.’

‘Verily,’ said Owen, ‘she is the woman that I love best.’

‘She shall also love thee not a little,’ said the maiden.

Then she left Owen, and after a while went into the chamber of her mistress, and spoke to her, but the countess answered her nothing.

‘What aileth thee, mistress?’ inquired the maiden.

‘Why hast thou kept far from me in my grief, Luned?’ answered the countess, and in her turn the damsel asked:

‘Is it well for thee to mourn so bitterly for the dead, or for anything that is gone from thee?’

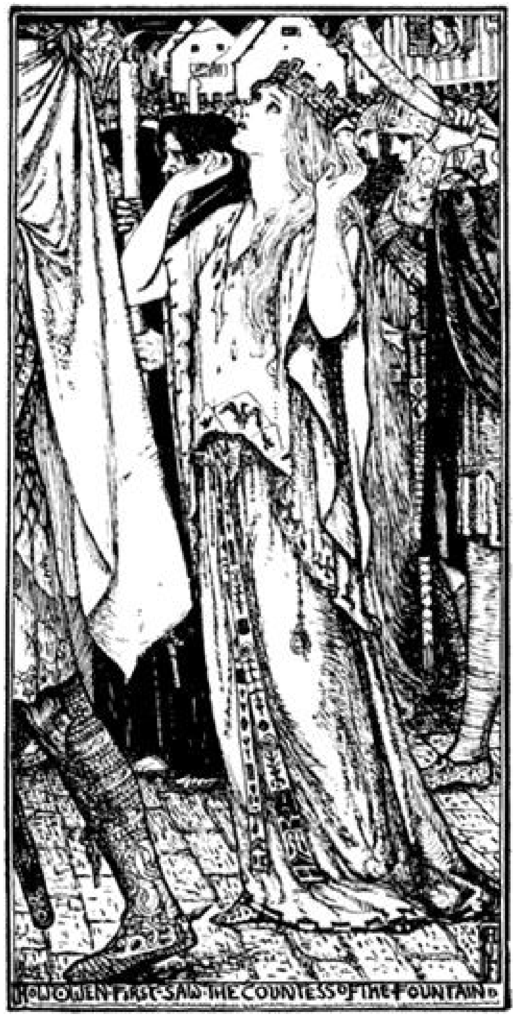

HOW OWEN FIRST SAW THE COUNTESS OF THE FOUNTAIN

‘There is no man in the world equal to him,’ replied the countess, her cheeks growing red with anger. ‘I would fain banish thee for such words.’

‘Be not angry, lady,’ said Luned, ‘but listen to my counsel. Thou knowest well that alone thou canst not preserve thy lands, therefore seek some one to help thee.’

‘And how can I do that?’ asked the countess.

‘I will tell thee,’ answered Luned. ‘Unless thou canst defend the fountain all will be lost, and none can defend the fountain except a knight of Arthur’s court. There will I go to seek him, and woe betide me if I return without a warrior that can guard the fountain, as well as he who kept it before.’

‘Go then,’ said the countess, ‘and make proof of that which thou hast promised.’

So Luned set out, riding on a white palfrey, on pretence of journeying to King Arthur’s court, but instead of doing that she hid herself for as many days as it would have taken her to go and come, and then she left her hiding-place, and went in to the countess.

‘What news from the court?’ asked her mistress, when she had given Luned a warm greeting.

‘The best of news,’ answered the maiden, ‘for I have gained the object of my mission. When wilt thou that I present to thee the knight who has returned with me?’

‘To-morrow at midday,’ said the countess, ‘and I will cause all the people in the town to come together.’

Therefore the next day at noon Owen put on his coat of mail, and over it he wore a splendid mantle, while on his feet were leather shoes fastened with clasps of gold. And he followed Luned to the chamber of her mistress.

Right glad was the countess to see them, but she looked closely at Owen and said:

‘Luned, this knight has scarcely the air of a traveller.’

‘What harm is there in that, lady?’ answered Luned.

‘I am persuaded,’ said the countess, ‘that this man and no other chased the soul from the body of my lord.’

‘Had he not been stronger than thy lord,’ replied the damsel, ‘he could not have taken his life, and for that, and for all things that are past, there is no remedy.’

‘Leave me, both of you,’ said the countess, ‘and I will take counsel.’

Then they went out.

The next morning the countess summoned her subjects to meet in the courtyard of the castle, and told them that now that her husband was dead there was none to defend her lands.

‘So choose you which it shall be,’ she said. ‘Either let one of you take me for a wife, or give me your consent to take a new lord for myself, that my lands be not without a master.’

At her words the chief men of the city withdrew into one corner and took counsel together, and after a while the leader came forward and said that they had decided that it was best, for the peace and safety of all, that she should choose a husband for herself. Thereupon Owen was summoned to her presence, and he accepted with joy the hand that she offered him, and they were married forthwith, and the men of the earldom did him homage.

From that day Owen defended the fountain as the earl before him had done, and every knight that came by was overthrown by him, and his ransom divided among his barons. In this way three years passed, and no man in the world was more beloved than Owen.

Now at the end of the three years it happened that Gwalchmai the knight was with Arthur, and he perceived the king to be very sad.

‘My lord, has anything befallen thee?’ he asked.

‘Oh, Gwalchmai, I am grieved concerning Owen, whom I have lost these three years, and if a fourth year passes without him I can live no longer. And sure am I that the tale told by Kynon the son of Clydno caused me to lose him. I will go myself with the men of my household to avenge him if he is dead, to free him if he is in prison, to bring him back if he is alive.’

Then Arthur and three thousand men of his household set out in quest of Owen, and took Kynon for their guide. When Arthur reached the castle, the youths were shooting in the same place, and the same yellow man was standing by, and as soon as he beheld Arthur he greeted him and invited him in, and they entered together. So vast was the castle that the king’s three thousand men were of no more account than if they had been twenty.

At sunrise Arthur departed thence, with Kynon for his guide, and reached the black man first, and afterwards the top of the wooded hill, with the fountain and the bowl and the tree.

‘My lord,’ said Kai, ‘let me throw the water on the slab and receive the first adventure that may befall.’

‘Thou mayest do so,’ answered Arthur, and Kai threw the water.

Immediately all happened as before; the thunder and the shower of hail which killed many of Arthur’s men; the song of the birds and the appearance of the black knight. And Kai met him and fought him, and was overthrown by him. Then the knight rode away, and Arthur and his men encamped where they stood.

In the morning Kai again asked leave to meet the knight and to try to overcome him, which Arthur granted. But once more he was unhorsed, and the black knight’s lance broke his helmet and pierced the skin even to the bone, and humbled in spirit he returned to the camp.

After this every one of the knights gave battle, but none came out victor, and at length there only remained Arthur himself and Gwalchmai.

‘Oh, let me fight him, my lord,’ cried Gwalchmai, as he saw Arthur taking up his arms.

‘Well, fight then,’ answered Arthur, and Gwalchmai threw a robe over himself and his horse, so that none knew him. All that day they fought, and neither was able to throw the other, and so it was on the next day. On the third day the combat was so fierce that they fell both to the ground at once, and fought on their feet, and at last the black knight gave his foe such a blow on his head that his helmet fell from his face.

‘I did not know it was thee, Gwalchmai,’ said the black knight. ‘Take my sword and my arms.’

‘No,’ answered Gwalchmai, ‘it is thou, Owen, who art the victor, take thou my sword’: but Owen would not.

‘Give me your swords,’ said Arthur from behind them, ‘for neither of you has vanquished the other,’ and Owen turned and put his arms round Arthur’s neck.

The next day Arthur would have given orders to his men to make ready to go back whence they came, but Owen stopped him.

‘My lord,’ he said, ‘during the three years that I have been absent from thee I have been preparing a banquet for thee, knowing full well that thou wouldst come to seek me. Tarry with me, therefore, for a while, thou and thy men.’

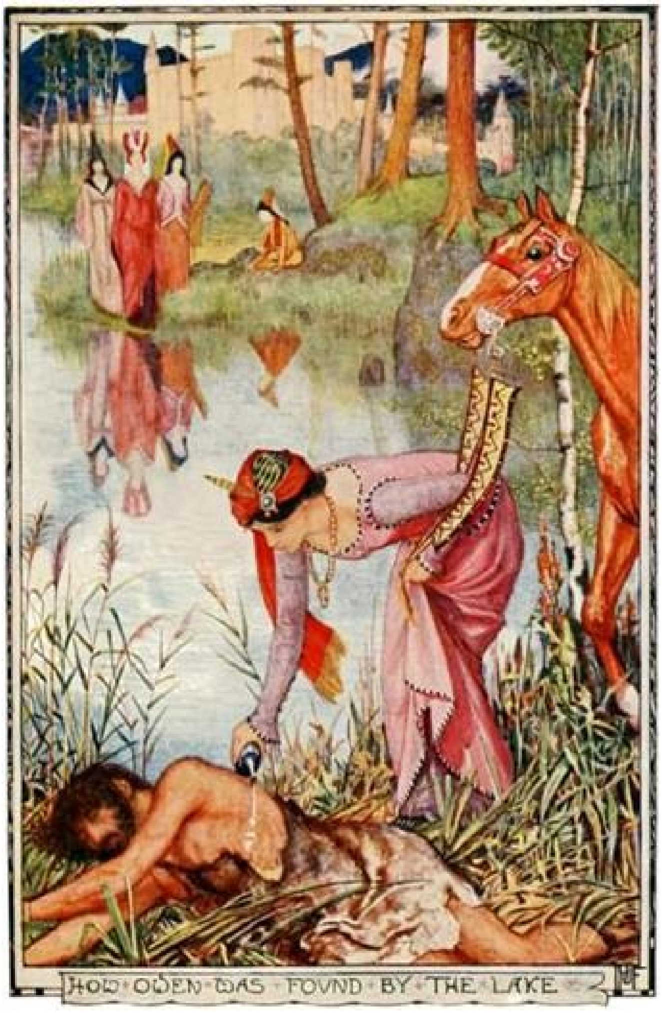
HOW OWEN WAS FOUND BY THE LAKE

So they rode to the castle of the countess of the fountain, and spent three months in resting and feasting. And when it was time for them to depart Arthur besought the countess that she would allow Owen to go with him to Britain for the space of three months. With a sore heart she granted permission, and so content was Owen to be once more with his old companions that three years instead of three months passed away like a dream.

One day Owen sat at meat in the castle of Caerleon upon Usk, when a damsel on a bay horse entered the hall, and riding straight up to the place where Owen sat she stooped and drew the ring from off his hand.

‘Thus shall be treated the traitor and the faithless,’ said she, and turning her horse’s head she rode out of the hall.

At her words Owen remembered all that he had forgotten, and sorrowful and ashamed he went to his own chamber and made ready to depart. At the dawn he set out, but he did not go back to the castle, for his heart was heavy, but he wandered far into wild places till his body was weak and thin, and his hair was long. The wild beasts were his friends, and he slept by their side, but in the end he longed to see the face of a man again, and he came down into a valley and fell asleep by a lake in the lands of a widowed countess.

Now it was the time when the countess took her walk, attended by her maidens, and when they saw a man lying by the lake they shrank back in terror, for he lay so still that they thought he was dead. But when they had overcome their fright, they drew near him, and touched him, and saw that there was life in him. Then the countess hastened to the castle, and brought from it a flask of precious ointment and gave it to one of her maidens.

‘Take that horse which is grazing yonder,’ she said, ‘and a suit of men’s garments, and place them near the man, and pour some of this ointment near his heart. If there is any life in him that will bring it back. But if he moves, hide thyself in the bushes near by, and see what he does.’

The damsel took the flask and did her mistress’ bidding. Soon the man began to move his arms, and then rose slowly to his feet. Creeping forward step by step he took the garments from off the saddle and put them on him, and painfully he mounted the horse. When he was seated the damsel came forth and greeted him, and glad was he when he saw her, and inquired what castle that was before him.

‘It belongs to a widowed countess,’ answered the maiden. ‘Her husband left her two earldoms, but it is all that remains of her broad lands, for they have been torn from her by a young earl, because she would not marry him.’

‘That is a pity,’ replied Owen, but he said no more, for he was too weak to talk much. Then the maiden guided him to the castle, and kindled a fire, and brought him food. And there he stayed and was tended for three months, till he was handsomer than ever he was.

At noon one day Owen heard a sound of arms outside the castle, and he asked of the maiden what it was.

‘It is the earl of whom I spoke to thee,’ she answered, ‘who has come with a great host to carry off my mistress.’

‘Beg of her to lend me a horse and armour,’ said Owen, and the maiden did so, but the countess laughed somewhat bitterly as she answered:

‘Nay, but I will *give* them to him, and such a horse and armour and weapons as he has never had yet, though I know not what use they will be to him. Yet mayhap it will save them from falling into the hands of my enemies.’

The horse was brought out and Owen rode forth with two pages behind him, and they saw the great host encamped before them.

‘Where is the earl?’ said he, and the pages answered:

‘In yonder troop where are four yellow standards.’

‘Await me,’ said Owen, at the gate of the castle, and he cried a challenge to the earl, who came to meet him. Hard did they fight, but Owen overthrew his enemy and drove him in front to the castle gate and into the hall.

‘Behold the reward of thy blessed balsam,’ said he, as he bade the earl kneel down before her, and made him swear that he would restore all that he had taken from her.

After that he departed, and went into the desert, and as he was passing through a wood he heard a loud yelling. Pushing aside the bushes he beheld a lion standing on a great mound, and by it a rock. Near the rock was a lion seeking to reach the mound, and each time he moved out darted a serpent from the rock to prevent him. Then Owen unsheathed his sword, and cut off the serpent’s head and went on his way, and the lion followed and played about him, as if he had been a greyhound. And much more useful was he than a greyhound, for in the evening he brought large logs in his mouth to kindle a fire, and killed a fat buck for dinner.

Owen made his fire and skinned the buck, and put some of it to roast, and gave the rest to the lion for supper. While he was waiting for the meat to cook he heard a sound of deep sighing close to him, and he said:

‘Who art thou?’

‘I am Luned,’ replied a voice from a cave so hidden by bushes and green hanging plants that Owen had not seen it.

‘And what dost thou here?’ cried he.

‘I am held captive in this cave on account of the knight who married the countess and left her, for the pages spoke ill of him, and because I told them that no man living was his equal they dragged me here and said I should die unless he should come to deliver me by a certain day, and that is no further than the day after to-morrow. His name is Owen, the son of Urien, but I have none to send to tell him of my danger, or of a surety he would deliver me.’

Owen held his peace, but gave the maiden some of the meat, and bade her be of good cheer. Then, followed by the lion, he set out for a great castle on the other side of the plain, and men came and took his horse and placed it in a manger, and the lion went after and lay down on the straw. Hospitable and kind were all within the castle, but so full of sorrow that it might have been thought death was upon them. At length, when they had eaten and drunk, Owen prayed the earl to tell him the reason of their grief.

‘Yesterday,’ answered the earl, ‘my two sons were seized, while they were hunting, by a monster who dwells on those mountains yonder, and he vows that he will not let them go unless I will give him my daughter to wife.’

‘That shall never be,’ said Owen; ‘but what form hath this monster?’

‘In shape he is a man, but in stature he is a giant,’ replied the earl, ‘and it were better by far that he should slay my sons than that I should give up my daughter.’

Early next morning the dwellers in the castle were awakened by a great clamour, and they found that the giant had arrived with the two young men. Swiftly Owen put on his armour and went forth to meet the giant, and the lion followed at his heels. And when the great beast beheld the hard blows which the giant dealt his master he flew at his throat, and much trouble had the monster in beating him off.

‘Truly,’ said the giant, ‘I should find no difficulty in fighting thee, if it were not for that lion.’ When he heard that Owen felt shame that he could not overcome the giant with his own sword, so he took the lion and shut him up in one of the towers of the castle, and returned to the fight. But from the sound of the blows the lion knew that the combat was going ill for Owen, so he climbed up till he reached the top of the tower, where there was a door on to the roof, and from the tower he sprang on to the walls, and from the walls to the ground. Then with a loud roar he leaped upon the giant, who fell dead under the blow of his paw.

Now the gloom of the castle was turned into rejoicing, and the earl begged Owen to stay with him till he could make him a feast, but the knight said he had other work to do, and rode back to the place where he had left Luned, and the lion followed at his heels. When he came there he saw a great fire kindled, and two youths leading out the maiden to cast her upon the pile.

‘Stop!’ he cried, dashing up to them. ‘What charge have you against her?’

‘She boasted that no man in the world was equal to Owen,’ said they, ‘and we shut her in a cave, and agreed that none should deliver her but Owen himself, and that if he did not come by a certain day she should die. And now the time has past and there is no sign of him.’

‘In truth he is a good knight, and had he but known that the maid was in peril he would have come to save her,’ said Owen; ‘but accept me in his stead, I entreat you.’

‘We will,’ replied they, and the fight began.

The youths fought well and pressed hard on Owen, and when the lion saw that he came to help his master. But the youths made a sign for the fight to stop, and said:

‘Chieftain, it was agreed we should give battle to thee alone, and it is harder for us to contend with yonder beast than with thee.’

Then Owen shut up the lion in the cave where the maiden had been in prison, and blocked up the front with stones. But the fight with the giant had sorely tried him, and the youths fought well, and pressed him harder than before. And when the lion saw that he gave a loud roar, and burst through the stones, and sprang upon the youths and slew them. And so Luned was delivered at the last.

Then the maiden rode back with Owen to the lands of the lady of the fountain. And he took the lady with him to Arthur’s court, where they lived happily till they died.

From the ‘Mabinogion.’

THE FOUR GIFTS

In the old land of Brittany, once called Cornwall, there lived a woman named Barbaïk Bourhis, who spent all her days in looking after her farm with the help of her niece Téphany. Early and late the two might be seen in the fields or in the dairy, milking cows, making butter, feeding fowls; working hard themselves and taking care that others worked too. Perhaps it might have been better for Barbaïk if she had left herself a little time to rest and to think about other things, for soon she grew to love money for its own sake, and only gave herself and Téphany the food and clothes they absolutely needed. And as for poor people, she positively hated them, and declared that such lazy creatures had no business in the world.

Well, this being the sort of person Barbaïk was, it is easy to guess at her anger when one day she found Téphany talking outside the cow-house to young Denis, who was nothing more than a day labourer from the village of Plover. Seizing her niece by the arm, she pulled her sharply away, exclaiming:

‘Are you not ashamed, girl, to waste your time over a man who is as poor as a rat, when there are a dozen more who would be only too happy to buy you rings of silver, if you would let them?’

‘Denis is a good workman, as you know very well,’ answered Téphany, red with anger, ‘and he puts by money too, and soon he will be able to take a farm for himself.’

‘Nonsense,’ cried Barbaïk, ‘he will never save enough for a farm till he is a hundred. I would sooner see you in your grave than the wife of a man who carries his whole fortune on his back.’

‘What does fortune matter when one is young and strong?’ asked Téphany, but her aunt, amazed at such words, would hardly let her finish.

‘What does fortune matter?’ repeated Barbaïk, in a shocked voice. ‘Is it possible that you are really so foolish as to despise money? If this is what you learn from Denis, I forbid you to speak to him, and I will have him turned out of the farm if he dares to show his face here again. Now go and wash the clothes and spread them out to dry.’

Téphany did not dare to disobey, but with a heavy heart went down the path to the river.

‘She is harder than these rocks,’ said the girl to herself, ‘yes, a thousand times harder. For the rain at least can at last wear away the stone, but you might cry for ever, and she would never care. Talking to Denis is the only pleasure I have, and if I am not to see him I may as well enter a convent.’

Thinking these thoughts she reached the bank, and began to unfold the large packet of linen that had to be washed. The tap of a stick made her look up, and standing before her she saw a little old woman, whose face was strange to her.

‘You would like to sit down and rest, granny?’ asked Téphany, pushing aside her bundle.

‘When the sky is all the roof you have, you rest where you will,’ replied the old woman in trembling tones.

‘Are you so lonely, then?’ inquired Téphany, full of pity. ‘Have you no friends who would welcome you into their houses?’

The old woman shook her head.

‘They all died long, long ago,’ she answered, ‘and the only friends I have are strangers with kind hearts.’

The girl did not speak for a moment, then held out the small loaf and some bacon intended for her dinner.

‘Take this,’ she said; ‘to-day at any rate you shall dine well,’ and the old woman took it, gazing at Téphany the while.

‘Those who help others deserve to be helped,’ she answered; ‘your eyes are still red because that miser Barbaïk has forbidden you to speak to the young man from Plover. But cheer up, you are a good girl, and I will give you something that will enable you to see him once every day.’

‘You?’ cried Téphany, stupefied at discovering that the beggar knew all about her affairs, but the old woman did not hear her.

‘Take this long copper pin,’ she went on, ‘and every time you stick it in your dress Mother Bourhis will be obliged to leave the house in order to go and count her cabbages. As long as the pin is in your dress you will be free, and your aunt will not come back until you have put it in its case again.’ Then, rising, she nodded to Téphany and vanished.

The girl stood where she was, as still as a stone. If it had not been for the pin in her hands she would have thought she was dreaming. But by that token she knew it was no common old woman who had given it to her, but a fairy, wise in telling what would happen in the days to come. Then suddenly Téphany’s eyes fell on the clothes, and to make up for lost time she began to wash them with great vigour.

Next evening, at the moment when Denis was accustomed to wait for her in the shadow of the cow-house, Téphany stuck the pin in her dress, and at the very same instant Barbaïk took up her *sabots* or wooden shoes and went through the orchard and past to the fields, to the plot where the cabbages grew. With a heart as light as her footsteps, the girl ran from the house, and spent her evening happily with Denis. And so it was for many days after that. Then, at last, Téphany began to notice something, and the something made her very sad.

At first Denis seemed to find the hours that they were together fly as quickly as she did, but when he had taught her all the songs he knew, and told her all the plans he had made for growing rich and a great man, he had nothing more to say to her, for he, like a great many other people, was fond of talking himself, but not of listening to any one else. Sometimes, indeed, he never came at all, and the next evening he would tell Téphany that he had been forced to go into the town on business, but though she never reproached him she was not deceived and saw plainly that he no longer cared for her as he used to do.

Day by day her heart grew heavier and her cheeks paler, and one evening, when she had waited for him in vain, she put her water-pot on her shoulder and went slowly down to the spring. On the path in front of her stood the fairy who had given her the pin, and as she glanced at Téphany she gave a little mischievous laugh and said:

‘Why, my pretty maiden hardly looks happier than she did before, in spite of meeting her lover whenever she pleases.’

‘He has grown tired of me,’ answered Téphany in a trembling voice, ‘and he makes excuses to stay away. Ah! granny dear, it is not enough to be able to see him, I must be able to amuse him and to keep him with me. He is so clever, you know. Help *me* to be clever too.’

‘Is that what you want?’ cried the old woman. ‘Well, take this feather and stick it in your hair, and you will be as wise as Solomon himself.’

Blushing with pleasure Téphany went home and stuck the feather into the blue ribbon which girls always wear in that part of the country. In a moment she heard Denis whistling gaily, and as her aunt was safely counting her cabbages, she hurried out to meet him. The young man was struck dumb by her talk. There was nothing that she did not seem to know, and as for songs she not only could sing those from every part of Britanny, but could compose them herself. Was this *really* the quiet girl who had been so anxious to learn all he could teach her, or was it somebody else? Perhaps she had gone suddenly mad, and there was an evil spirit inside her. But in any case, night after night he came back, only to find her growing wiser and wiser. Soon the neighbours whispered their surprise among themselves, for Téphany had not been able to resist the pleasure of putting the feather in her hair for some of the people who despised her for her poor clothes, and many were the jokes she made about them. Of course they heard of her jests, and shook their heads saying:

‘She is an ill-natured little cat, and the man that marries her will find that it is she who will hold the reins and drive the horse.’

It was not long before Denis began to agree with them, and as he always liked to be master wherever he went, he became afraid of Téphany’s sharp tongue, and instead of laughing as before when she made fun of other people he grew red and uncomfortable, thinking that his turn would come next.

So matters went on till one evening Denis told Téphany that he really could not stay a moment, as he had promised to go to a dance that was to be held in the next village.

Téphany’s face fell; she had worked hard all day, and had been counting on a quiet hour with Denis. She did her best to persuade him to remain with her, but he would not listen, and at last she grew angry.

‘Oh, I know why you are so anxious not to miss the dance,’ she said; ‘it is because Azilicz of Penenru will be there.’

Now Azilicz was the loveliest girl for miles round, and she and Denis had known each other from childhood.

‘Oh yes, Azilicz will be there,’ answered Denis, who was quite pleased to see her jealous, ‘and naturally one would go a long way to watch her dance.’

‘Go then!’ cried Téphany, and entering the house she slammed the door behind her.

Lonely and miserable she sat down by the fire and stared into the red embers. Then, flinging the feather from her hair, she put her head on her hands, and sobbed passionately.

‘What is the use of being clever when it is beauty that men want? That is what I ought to have asked for. But it is too late, Denis will never come back.’

‘Since you wish it so much you shall have beauty,’ said a voice at her side, and looking round she beheld the old woman leaning on her stick.

‘Fasten this necklace round your neck, and as long as you wear it you will be the most beautiful woman in the world,’ continued the fairy. With a little shriek of joy Téphany took the necklace, and snapping the clasp ran to the mirror which hung in the corner. Ah, *this* time she was not afraid of Azilicz or of any other girl, for surely none could be as fair and white as she. And with the sight of her face a thought came to her, and putting on hastily her best dress and her buckled shoes she hurried off to the dance.

On the way she met a beautiful carriage with a young man seated in it.

‘What a lovely maiden!’ he exclaimed, as Téphany approached. ‘Why, there is not a girl in my own country that can be compared to her. She, and no other, shall be my bride.’

The carriage was large and barred the narrow road, so Téphany was forced, much against her will, to remain where she was. But she looked the young man full in the face as she answered:

‘Go your way, noble lord, and let me go mine. I am only a poor peasant girl, accustomed to milk and make hay and spin.’

‘Peasant you may be, but I will make you a great lady,’ said he, taking her hand and trying to lead her to the carriage.

‘I don’t want to be a great lady, I only want to be the wife of Denis,’ she replied, throwing off his hand and running to the ditch which divided the road from the cornfield, where she hoped to hide. Unluckily the young man guessed what she was doing, and signed to his attendants, who seized her and put her in the coach. The door was banged, and the horses whipped up into a gallop.

At the end of an hour they arrived at a splendid castle, and Téphany, who would not move, was lifted out and carried into the hall, while a priest was sent for to perform the marriage ceremony. The young man tried to win a smile from her by telling of all the beautiful things she should have as his wife, but Téphany did not listen to him, and looked about to see if there was any means by which she could escape. It did not seem easy. The three great doors were closely barred, and the one through which she had entered shut with a spring, but her feather was still in her hair, and by its aid she detected a crack in the wooden panelling, through which a streak of light could be dimly seen. Touching the copper pin which fastened her dress, the girl sent every one in the hall to count the cabbages, while she herself passed through the little door, not knowing whither she was going.

By this time night had fallen, and Téphany was very tired. Thankfully she found herself at the gate of a convent, and asked if she might stay there till morning. But the portress answered roughly that it was no place for beggars, and bade her begone, so the poor girl dragged herself slowly along the road, till a light and the bark of a dog told her that she was near a farm.

In front of the house was a group of people; two or three women and the sons of the farmer. When their mother heard Téphany’s request to be given a bed the good wife’s heart softened, and she was just going to invite her inside, when the young men, whose heads were turned by the girl’s beauty, began to quarrel as to which should do most for her. From words they came to blows, and the women, frightened at the disturbance, pelted Téphany with insulting names. She quickly ran down the nearest path, hoping to escape them in the darkness of the trees, but in an instant she heard their footsteps behind her. Wild with fear her legs trembled under her, when suddenly she bethought herself of her necklace. With a violent effort she burst the clasp and flung it round the neck of a pig which was grunting in a ditch, and as she did so she heard the footsteps cease from pursuing her and run after the pig, for her charm had vanished.

On she went, scarcely knowing where she was going, till she found herself, to her surprise and joy, close to her aunt’s house. For several days she felt so tired and unhappy that she could hardly get through her work, and to make matters worse Denis scarcely ever came near her.

‘He was too busy,’ he said, ‘and really it was only rich people who could afford to waste time in talking.’

As the days went on Téphany grew paler and paler, till everybody noticed it except her aunt. The water-pot was almost too heavy for her now, but morning and evening she carried it to the spring, though the effort to lift it to her shoulder was often too much for her.

‘How could I have been so foolish,’ she whispered to herself, when she went down as usual at sunset. ‘It was not freedom to see Denis that I should have asked for, for he was soon weary of me, nor a quick tongue, for he was afraid of it, nor beauty, for that brought me nothing but trouble, but riches which make life easy both for oneself and others. Ah! if I only dared to beg this gift from the fairy, I should be wiser than before and know how to choose better.’

‘Be satisfied,’ said the voice of the old woman, who seemed to be standing unseen at Téphany’s elbow. ‘If you look in your right-hand pocket when you go home you will find a small box. Rub your eyes with the ointment it contains, and you will see that you yourself contain a priceless treasure.’

Téphany did not in the least understand what she meant, but ran back to the farm as fast as she could, and began to fumble joyfully in her right-hand pocket. Sure enough, there was the little box with the precious ointment. She was in the act of rubbing her eyes with it when Barbaïk Bourhis entered the room. Ever since she had been obliged to leave her work and pass her time, she did not know why, in counting cabbages, everything had gone wrong, and she could not get a labourer to stay with her because of her bad temper. When, therefore, she saw her niece standing quietly before her mirror, Barbaïk broke out:

‘So this is what you do when I am out in the fields! Ah! it is no wonder if the farm is ruined. Are you not ashamed, girl, to behave so?’

Téphany tried to stammer some excuse, but her aunt was half mad with rage, and a box on the ears was her only answer. At this Téphany, hurt, bewildered and excited, could control herself no longer, and turning away burst into tears. But what was her surprise when she saw that each tear-drop was a round and shining pearl. Barbaïk, who also beheld this marvel, uttered a cry of astonishment, and threw herself on her knees to pick them up from the floor.

She was still gathering them when the door opened and in came Denis.

‘Pearls! Are they really pearls?’ he asked, falling on his knees also, and looking up at Téphany he perceived others still more beautiful rolling down the girl’s cheeks.

‘Take care not to let any of the neighbours hear of it, Denis,’ said Barbaïk. ‘Of course you shall have your share, but nobody else shall get a single one. Cry on, my dear, cry on,’ she continued to Téphany. It is for your good as well as ours,’ and she held out her apron to catch them, and Denis his hat.

But Téphany could hardly bear any more. She felt half choked at the sight of their greediness, and wanted to rush from the hall, and though Barbaïk caught her arm to prevent this, and said all sorts of tender words which she thought would make the girl weep the more, Téphany with a violent effort forced back her tears, and wiped her eyes.

‘Is she finished already?’ cried Barbaïk, in a tone of disappointment. ‘Oh, try again, my dear. Do you think it would do any good to beat her a little?’ she added to Denis, who shook his head.

‘That is enough for the first time. I will go into the town and find out the value of each pearl.’

‘Then I will go with you,’ said Barbaïk, who never trusted any one and was afraid of being cheated. So the two went out, leaving Téphany behind them.

She sat quite still on her chair, her hands clasped tightly together, as if she was forcing something back. At last she raised her eyes, which had been fixed on the ground, and beheld the fairy standing in a dark corner by the hearth, observing her with a mocking look. The girl trembled and jumped up, then, taking the feather, the pin, and the box, she held them out to the old woman.

‘Here they are, all of them,’ she cried; ‘they belong to you. Let me never see them again, but I have learned the lesson that they taught me. Others may have riches, beauty and wit, but as for me I desire nothing but to be the poor peasant girl I always was, working hard for those she loves.’

‘Yes, you have learned your lesson,’ answered the fairy, ‘and now you shall lead a peaceful life and marry the man you love. For after all it was not yourself you thought of but him.’

Never again did Téphany see the old woman, but she forgave Denis for selling her tears, and in time he grew to be a good husband, who did his own share of work.

From ‘Le Foyer Breton,’ par E. Souvestre.

THE GROAC'H OF THE ISLE OF LOK

In old times, when all kinds of wonderful things happened in Brittany, there lived in the village of Lanillis a young man named Houarn Pogamm and a girl called Bellah Postik. They were cousins, and as their mothers were great friends, and constantly in and out of each other's houses, they had often been laid in the same cradle, and had played and fought over their games.

'When they are grown up they will marry,' said the mothers; but just as every one was beginning to think of wedding bells, the two mothers died, and the cousins, who had no money, went as servants in the same house. This was better than being parted, of course, but not so good as having a little cottage of their own, where they could do as they liked, and soon they might have been heard bewailing to each other the hardness of their lots.

'If we could only manage to buy a cow and get a pig to fatten,' grumbled Houarn, 'I would rent a bit of ground from the master, and then we could be married.'

'Yes,' answered Bellah, with a deep sigh; 'but we live in such hard times, and at the last fair the price of pigs had risen again.'

'We shall have long to wait, that is quite clear,' replied Houarn, turning away to his work.

Whenever they met they repeated their grievances, and at length Houarn's patience was exhausted, and one morning he came to Bellah and told her that he was going away to seek his fortune.

The girl was very unhappy as she listened to this, and felt sorry that she had not tried to make the best of things. She implored Houarn not to leave her, but he would listen to nothing.

'The birds,' he said, 'continue flying until they reach a field of corn, and the bees do not stop unless they find the honey-giving flowers, and why should a man have less sense than they? Like them, I shall seek till I get what I want — that is, money to buy a cow and a pig to fatten. And if you love me, Bellah, you won't attempt to hinder a plan which will hasten our marriage.'

The girl saw it was useless to say more, so she answered sadly:

'Well, go then, since you must. But first I will divide with you all that my parents left me,' and going to her room, she opened a small chest, and took from it a bell, a knife, and a little stick.

'This bell,' she said, 'can be heard at any distance, however far, but it only rings to warn us that our friends are in great danger. The knife frees all it touches from the spells that have been laid on them; while the stick will carry you wherever you want to go. I will give you the knife to guard you against the enchantments of wizards, and the bell to tell me of your perils. The stick I shall keep for myself, so that I can fly to you if ever you have need of me.'

Then they cried for a little on each other's necks, and Houarn started for the mountains.

But in those days, as in these, beggars abounded, and through every village he passed they followed Houarn in crowds, mistaking him for a gentleman, because there were no holes in his clothes.

'There is no fortune to be made *here*,' he thought to himself; 'it is a place for spending, and not earning. I see I must go further,' and he walked on to Pont-aven, a pretty little town built on the bank of a river.

He was sitting on a bench outside an inn, when he heard two men who were loading their mules talking about the Groac'h of the island of Lok.

'What is a Groac'h?' asked he. 'I have never come across one.' And the men answered that it was the name given to the fairy that dwelt in the lake, and that she was rich — oh! richer than all the kings in the world put together. Many had gone to the island to try and get possession of her treasures, but no one had ever come back.

As he listened Houarn's mind was made up.

'I will go, and return too,' he said to the muleteers. They stared at him in astonishment, and besought him not to be so mad and to throw away his life in such a foolish manner; but he only laughed, and answered that if they could tell him of any other way in which to procure a cow and a pig to fatten, he would think no more about it. But the men did not know how this was to be done, and, shaking their heads over his obstinacy, left him to his fate.

So Houarn went down to the sea, and found a boatman who engaged to take him to the isle of Lok.

The island was large, and lying almost across it was a lake, with a narrow opening to the sea. Houarn paid the boatman and sent him away, and then proceeded to walk round the lake. At one end he perceived a small skiff, painted blue and shaped like a swan, lying under a clump of yellow broom. As far as he could see, the swan's head was tucked under its wing, and Houarn, who had never beheld a boat of the sort, went quickly towards it and stepped in, so as to examine it the better. But no sooner was he on board than the swan woke suddenly up; his head emerged from under his wing, his feet began to move in the water, and in another moment they were in the middle of the lake.

As soon as the young man had recovered from his surprise, he prepared to jump into the lake and swim to shore. But the bird had guessed his intentions, and plunged beneath the water, carrying Houarn with him to the palace of the Groac'h.

Now, unless you have been under the sea and beheld all the wonders that lie there, you can never have an idea what the Groac'h's palace was like. It was all made of shells, blue and green and pink and lilac and white, shading into each other till you could not tell where one colour ended and the other began. The staircases were of crystal, and every separate stair sang like a woodland bird as you put your foot on it. Round the palace were great gardens full of all the plants that grow in the sea, with diamonds for flowers.

In a large hall the Groac'h was lying on a couch of gold. The pink and white of her face reminded you of the shells of her palace, while her long black hair was intertwined with strings of coral, and her dress of green silk seemed formed out of the sea. At the sight of her Houarn stopped, dazzled by her beauty.

'Come in,' said the Groac'h, rising to her feet. 'Strangers and handsome youths are always welcome here. Do not be shy, but tell me how you found your way, and what you want.'

'My name is Houarn,' he answered, 'Lanillis is my home, and I am trying to earn enough money to buy a little cow and a pig to fatten.'

'Well, you can easily get that,' replied she; 'it is nothing to worry about. Come in and enjoy yourself.' And she beckoned him to follow her into a second hall whose floors and walls were formed of pearls, while down the sides there were tables laden with fruit and wines of all kinds; and as he ate and drank, the Groac'h talked to him and told him how the treasures he saw came from shipwrecked vessels, and were brought to her palace by a magic current of water.

'I do not wonder,' exclaimed Houarn, who now felt quite at home— 'I do not wonder that the people on the earth have so much to say about you.'

'The rich are always envied.'

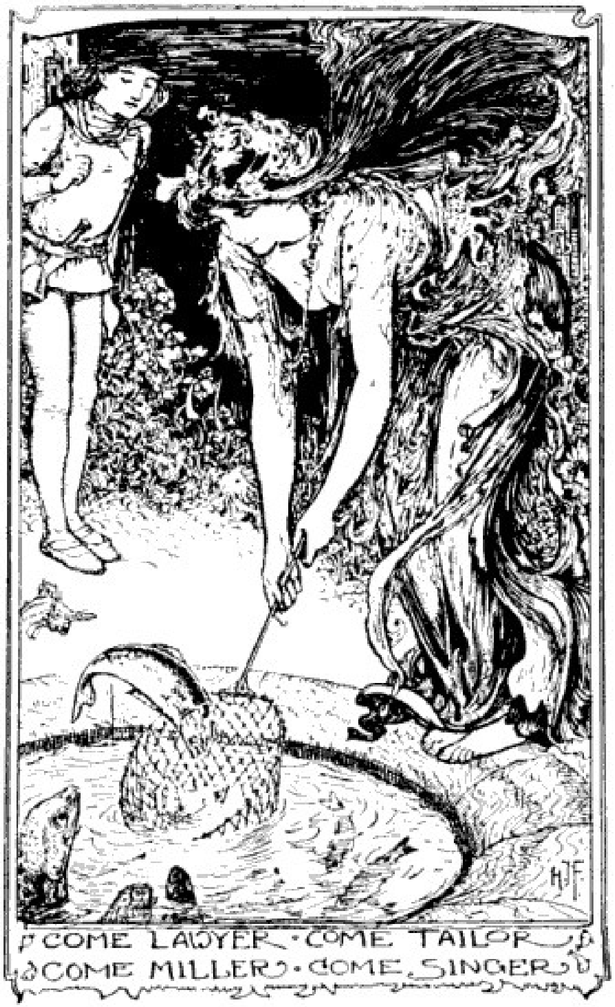

COME LAWYER · COME TAILOR
COME MILLER · COME SINGER

‘For myself,’ he added, with a laugh, ‘I only ask for the half of your wealth.’

‘You can have it, if you will, Houarn,’ answered the fairy.

‘What do you mean?’ cried he.

‘My husband, Korandon, is dead,’ she replied, ‘and if you wish it, I will marry you.’

The young man gazed at her in surprise. Could any one so rich and so beautiful really wish to be his wife? He looked at her again, and Bellah was forgotten as he answered:

‘A man would be mad indeed to refuse such an offer. I can only accept it with joy.’

‘Then the sooner it is done the better,’ said the Groac’h, and gave orders to her servants. After that was finished, she begged Houarn to accompany her to a fish-pond at the bottom of the garden.

‘Come lawyer, come miller, come tailor, come singer!’ cried she, holding out a net of steel; and at each summons a fish appeared and jumped into the net. When it was full she went into a large kitchen and threw them all into a golden pot; but above the bubbling of the water Houarn seemed to hear the whispering of little voices.

‘Who is it whispering in the golden pot, Groac’h?’ he inquired at last.

‘It is nothing but the noise of the wood sparkling,’ she answered; but it did not sound the least like that to Houarn.

‘There it is again,’ he said, after a short pause.

‘The water is getting hot, and it makes the fish jump,’ she replied; but soon the noise grew louder and like cries.

‘What *is* it?’ asked Houarn, beginning to feel uncomfortable.

‘Just the crickets on the hearth,’ said she, and broke into a song which drowned the cries from the pot.

But though Houarn held his peace, he was not as happy as before. Something seemed to have gone wrong, and then he suddenly remembered Bellah.

‘Is it possible I can have forgotten her so soon? What a wretch I am!’ he thought to himself; and he remained apart and watched the Groac’h while she emptied the fish into a plate, and bade him eat his dinner while she fetched wine from her cellar in a cave.

Houarn sat down and took out the knife which Bellah had given him, but as soon as the blade touched the fish the enchantment ceased, and four men stood before him.

‘Houarn, save us, we entreat you, and save yourself too!’ murmured they, not daring to raise their voices.

‘Why, it must have been *you* who were crying out in the pot just now!’ exclaimed Houarn.

‘Yes, it was us,’ they answered. ‘Like you, we came to the isle of Lok to seek our fortunes, and like you we consented to marry the Groac’h, and no sooner was the ceremony over than she turned us into fishes, as she had done to all our forerunners, who are in the fish-pond still, where you will shortly join them.’

On hearing this Houarn leaped into the air, as if he already felt himself frizzling in the golden pot. He rushed to the door, hoping to escape that way; but the Groac’h, who had heard everything, met him on the threshold. Instantly she threw the steel net over his head, and the eyes of a little green frog peeped through the meshes.

‘You shall go and play with the rest,’ she said, carrying him off to the fish-pond.

It was at this very moment that Bellah, who was skimming the milk in the farm dairy, heard the fairy bell tinkle violently.

At the sound she grew pale, for she knew it meant that Houarn was in danger; and, hastily changing the rough dress she wore for her work, she left the farm with the magic stick in her hand.

Her knees were trembling under her, but she ran as fast as she could to the cross roads, where she drove her stick into the ground, murmuring as she did so a verse her mother had taught her:

Little staff of apple-tree, Over the earth and over the sea, Up in the air be guide to me, Everywhere to wander free,

and immediately the stick became a smart little horse, with a rosette at each ear and a feather on his forehead. He stood quite still while Bellah scrambled up, then he started off, his pace growing quicker and quicker, till at length the girl could hardly see the trees and houses as they flashed past. But, rapid as the pace was, it was not rapid enough for Bellah, who stooped and said:

‘The swallow is less swift than the wind, the wind is less swift than the lightning. But you, my horse, if you love me, must be swifter than them all, for there is a part of my heart that suffers — the best part of my heart that is in danger.’

And the horse heard her, and galloped like a straw carried along by a tempest till they reached the foot of a rock called the Leap of the Deer. There he stopped, for no horse or mule that ever was born could climb that rock, and Bellah knew it, so she began to sing again:

Horse of Léon, given to me, Over the earth and over the sea, Up in the air be guide to me, Everywhere to wander free,

and when she had finished, the horse’s fore legs grew shorter and spread into wings, his hind legs became claws, feathers sprouted all over his body, and she sat on the back of a great bird, which bore her to the summit of the rock. Here she found a nest made of clay and lined with dried moss, and in the centre a tiny man, black and wrinkled, who gave a cry of surprise at the sight of Bellah.

‘Ah! you are the pretty girl who was to come and save me!’

‘To save you!’ repeated Bellah. ‘But who are you, my little friend?’

‘I am the husband of the Groac’h of the isle of Lok, and it is owing to her that I am here.’

‘But what are you doing in this nest?’

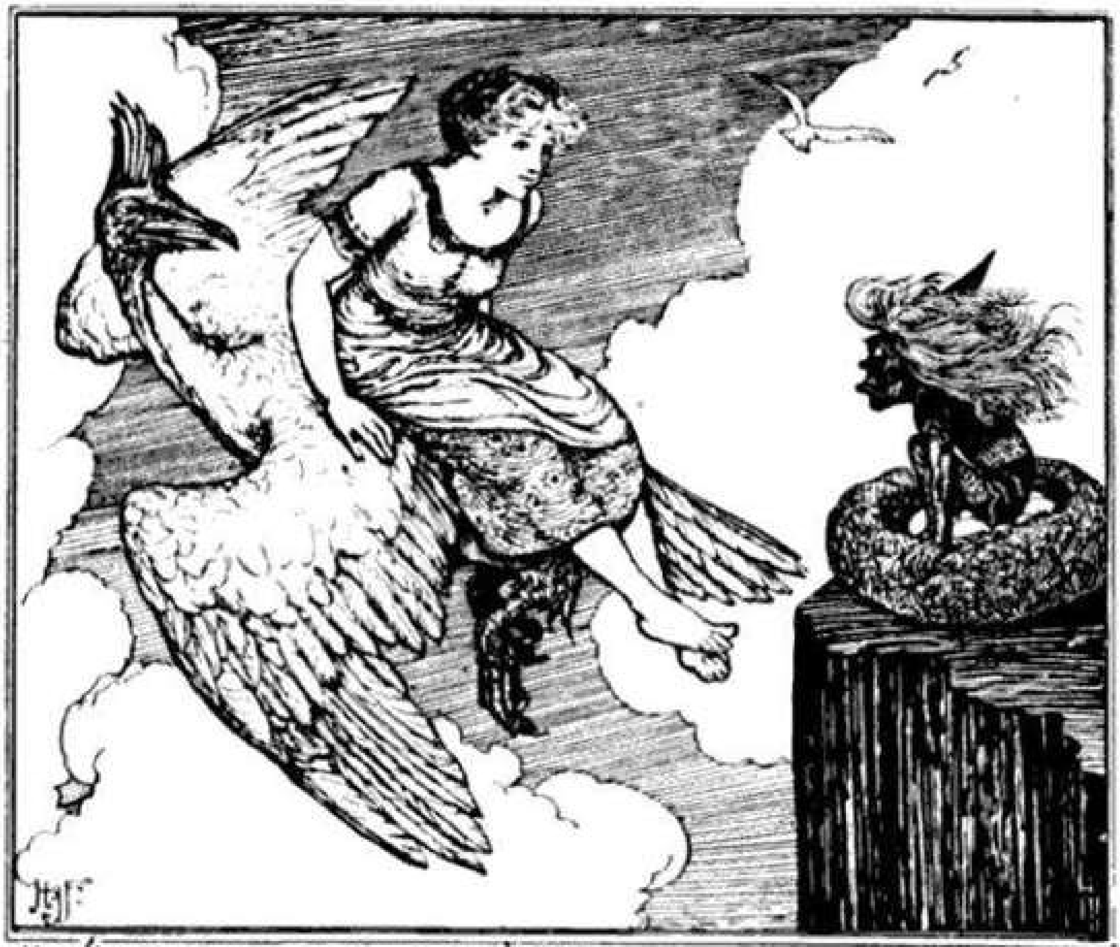

HOW BELLAH FOUND KORANDON

‘I am sitting on six eggs of stone, and I shall not be set free till they are hatched.’

On hearing this Bellah began to laugh.

‘Poor little cock!’ she said, ‘and how am I to deliver you?’

‘By delivering Houarn, who is in the power of the Groac’h.’

‘Ah! tell me how I can manage that, and if I have to walk round the whole of Brittany on my bended knees I will do it!’

‘Well, first you must dress yourself as a young man, and then go and seek the Groac’h. When you have found her you must contrive to get hold of the net of steel that hangs from her waist, and shut her up in it for ever.’

‘But where am I to find a young man’s clothes?’ asked she.

‘I will show you,’ he replied, and as he spoke he pulled out three of his red hairs and blew them away muttering something the while. In the twinkling of an eye the four hairs changed into four tailors, of whom the first carried a cabbage, the second a pair of scissors, the third a needle, and the fourth an iron. Without waiting for orders, they sat down in the nest and, crossing their legs comfortably, began to prepare the suit of clothes for Bellah.

With one of the leaves of the cabbage they made her a coat, and another served for a waistcoat; but it took two for the wide breeches which were then in fashion. The hat was cut from the heart of the cabbage, and a pair of shoes from the thick stem. And when Bellah had put them all on you would have taken her for a gentleman dressed in green velvet, lined with white satin.

She thanked the little men gratefully, and after a few more instructions, jumped on the back of her great bird and was borne away to the isle of Lok. Once there, she bade him transform himself back into a stick, and with it in her hand she stepped into the blue boat, which conducted her to the palace of shells.

The Groac'h seemed overjoyed to see her, and told her that never before had she beheld such a handsome young man. Very soon she led her visitor into the great hall, where wine and fruit were always waiting, and on the table lay the magic knife, left there by Houarn. Unseen by the Groac'h, Bellah hid it in a pocket of her green coat, and then followed her hostess into the garden, and to the pond which contained the fish, their sides shining with a thousand different colours.

'Oh! what beautiful, beautiful creatures!' said she. 'I'm sure I should never be tired of watching them.' And she sat down on the bank, with her elbows on her knees and her chin in her hands, her eyes fixed on the fishes as they flashed past.

'Would you not like to stay here always?' asked the Groac'h; and Bellah answered that she desired nothing better.

'Then you have only to marry me,' said the Groac'h. 'Oh! don't say no, for I have fallen deeply in love with you.'

'Well, I won't say "No,"' replied Bellah, with a laugh, 'but you must promise first to let me catch one of those lovely fish in your net.'

'It is not so easy as it looks,' rejoined the Groac'h, smiling, 'but take it, and try your luck.'

Bellah took the net which the Groac'h held out, and, turning rapidly, flung it over the witch's head.

'Become in body what you are in soul!' cried she, and in an instant the lovely fairy of the sea was a toad, horrible to look upon. She struggled hard to tear the net asunder, but it was no use. Bellah only drew it the tighter, and, flinging the sorceress into a pit, she rolled a great stone across the mouth, and left her.

As she drew near the pond she saw a great procession of fishes advancing to meet her, crying in hoarse tones:

'This is our lord and master, who has saved us from the net of steel and the pot of gold!'

'And who will restore you to your proper shapes,' said Bellah, drawing the knife from her pocket. But just as she was going to touch the foremost fish, her eyes fell on a green frog on his knees beside her, his little paws crossed over his little heart. Bellah felt as if fingers were tightening round her throat, but she managed to cry:

‘Is this you, my Houarn? Is this you?’

‘It is I,’ croaked the little frog; and as the knife touched him he was a man again, and, springing up, he clasped her in his arms.

‘But we must not forget the others,’ she said at last, and began to transform the fishes to their proper shapes. There were so many of them that it took quite a long time. Just as she had finished there arrived the little dwarf from the Deer’s Leap in a car drawn by six cockchafers, which once had been the six stone eggs.

‘Here I am!’ he exclaimed. ‘You have broken the spell that held me, and now come and get your reward,’ and, dismounting from his chariot, he led them down into the caves filled with gold and jewels, and bade Bellah and Houarn take as much as they wanted.

When their pockets were full, Bellah ordered her stick to become a winged carriage, large enough to bear them and the men they had rescued back to Lanillis.

There they were married the next day, but instead of setting up housekeeping with the little cow and pig to fatten that they had so long wished for, they were able to buy lands for miles round for themselves, and gave each man who had been delivered from the Groac’h a small farm, where he lived happily to the end of his days.

From ‘Le Foyer Breton,’ par E. Souvestre.

THE ESCAPE OF THE MOUSE

Manawyddan the prince and his friend Pryderi were wanderers, for the brother of Manawyddan had been slain, and his throne taken from him. Very sorrowful was Manawyddan, but Pryderi was stout of heart, and bade him be of good cheer, as he knew a way out of his trouble.

‘And what may that be?’ asked Manawyddan.

‘It is that thou marry my mother Rhiannon and become lord of the fair lands that I will give her for dowry. Never did any lady have more wit than she, and in her youth none was more lovely; even yet she is good to look upon.’

‘Thou art the best friend that ever a man had,’ said Manawyddan. ‘Let us go now to seek Rhiannon, and the lands where she dwells.’

Then they set forth, but the news of their coming ran swifter still, and Rhiannon and Kicva, wife of Pryderi, made haste to prepare a feast for them. And Manawyddan found that Pryderi had spoken the truth concerning his mother, and asked if she would take him for her husband. Right gladly did she consent, and without delay they were married, and rode away to the hunt, Rhiannon and Manawyddan, Kicva and Pryderi, and they would not be parted from each other by night or by day, so great was the love between them.

One day, when they were returned, they were sitting out in a green place, and suddenly the crash of thunder struck loudly on their ears, and a wall of mist fell between them, so that they were hidden one from the other. Trembling they sat till the darkness fled and the light shone again upon them, but in the place where they were wont to see cattle, and herds, and dwellings, they beheld neither house nor beast, nor man nor smoke; neither was any one remaining in the green place save these four only.

‘Whither have they gone, and my host also?’ cried Manawyddan, and they searched the hall, and there was no man, and the castle, and there was none, and in the dwellings that were left was nothing save wild beasts. For a year these four fed on the meat that Manawyddan and Pryderi killed out hunting, and the honey of the bees that sucked the mountain heather. For a time they desired nothing more, but when the next year began they grew weary.

‘We cannot spend our lives thus,’ said Manawyddan at last, ‘let us go into England and learn some trade by which we may live.’ So they left Wales, and went to Hereford, and there they made saddles, while Manawyddan fashioned blue enamel ornaments to put on their trappings. And so greatly did the townsfolk love these saddles, that no others were bought throughout the whole of Hereford, till the saddlers banded together and resolved to slay Manawyddan and his companions.

When Pryderi heard of it, he was very wroth, and wished to stay and fight. But the counsels of Manawyddan prevailed, and they moved by night to another city.

‘What craft shall we follow?’ asked Pryderi.

‘We will make shields,’ answered Manawyddan.

‘But do we know anything of that craft?’ answered Pryderi.

‘We will try it,’ said Manawyddan, and they began to make shields, and fashioned them after the shape of the shields they had seen; and these likewise they enamelled. And so greatly did they prosper that no man in the town bought a shield except they had made it, till at length the shield-makers banded together as the saddlers had done, and resolved to slay them. But of this they had warning, and by night betook themselves to another town.

‘Let us take to making shoes,’ said Manawyddan, ‘for there are not any among the shoemakers bold enough to fight us.’

‘I know nothing of making shoes,’ answered Pryderi, who in truth despised so peaceful a craft.

‘But I know,’ replied Manawyddan, ‘and I will teach thee to stitch. We will buy the leather ready dressed, and will make the shoes from it.’

Then straightway he sought the town for the best leather, and for a goldsmith to fashion the clasps, and he himself watched till it was done, so that he might learn for himself. Soon he became known as ‘The Maker of Gold Shoes,’ and prospered so greatly, that as long as one could be bought from him not a shoe was purchased from the shoemakers of the town. And the craftsmen were wroth, and banded together to slay them.

‘Pryderi,’ said Manawyddan, when he had received news of it, ‘we will not remain in England any longer. Let us set forth to Dyved.’

So they journeyed until they came to their lands at Narberth. There they gathered their dogs round them, and hunted for a year as before.

After that a strange thing happened. One morning Pryderi and Manawyddan rose up to hunt, and loosened their dogs, which ran before them, till they came to a small bush. At the bush, the dogs shrank away as if frightened, and returned to their masters, their hair bristling on their backs.

‘We must see what is in that bush,’ said Pryderi, and what was in it was a boar, with a skin as white as the snow on the mountains. And he came out, and made a stand as the dogs rushed on him, driven on by the men. Long he stood at bay; then at last he betook himself to flight, and fled to a castle which was newly built, in a place where no building had ever been known. Into the castle he ran, and the dogs after him, and long though their masters looked and listened, they neither saw nor heard aught concerning dogs or boar.

‘I will go into the castle and get tidings of the dogs,’ said Pryderi at last.

‘Truly,’ answered Manawyddan, ‘thou wouldst do unwisely, for whosoever has cast a spell over this land has set this castle here.’

‘I cannot give up my dogs,’ replied Pryderi, and to the castle he went.

But within was neither man nor beast; neither boar nor dogs, but only a fountain with marble round it, and on the edge a golden bowl, richly wrought, which pleased Pryderi greatly. In a moment he forgot about his dogs, and went up to the bowl and took hold of it, and his hands stuck to the bowl, and his feet to the marble slab, and despair took possession of him.

Till the close of day Manawyddan waited for him, and when the sun was fast sinking, he went home, thinking that he had strayed far.

‘Where are thy friend and thy dogs?’ said Rhiannon, and he told her what had befallen Pryderi.

‘A good friend hast thou lost,’ answered Rhiannon, and she went up to the castle and through the gate, which was open. There, in the centre of the courtyard, she beheld Pryderi standing, and hastened towards him.

‘What dost thou here?’ she asked, laying her hand on the bowl, and as she spoke she too stuck fast, and was not able to utter a word. Then thunder was heard and a veil of darkness descended upon them, and the castle vanished and they with it.

When Kicva, the wife of Pryderi, found that neither her husband nor his mother returned to her, she was in such sorrow that she cared not whether she lived or died. Manawyddan was grieved also in his heart, and said to her:

‘It is not fitting that we should stay here, for we have lost our dogs and cannot get food. Let us go into England — it is easier for us to live there.’ So they set forth.

‘What craft wilt thou follow?’ asked Kicva as they went along.

‘I shall make shoes as once I did,’ replied he; and he got all the finest leather in the town and caused gilded clasps to be made for the shoes, till everyone flocked to buy, and all the shoemakers in the town were idle and banded together in anger to kill him. But luckily Manawyddan got word of it, and he and Kicva left the town one night and proceeded to Narberth, taking with him a sheaf of wheat, which he sowed in three plots of ground. And while the wheat was growing up, he hunted and fished, and they had food enough and to spare. Thus the months passed until the harvest; and one evening Manawyddan visited the furthest of his fields of wheat; and saw that it was ripe.

‘To-morrow I will reap this,’ said he; but on the morrow when he went to reap the wheat he found nothing but the bare straw.

Filled with dismay he hastened to the second field, and there the corn was ripe and golden.

‘To-morrow I will reap this,’ he said, but on the morrow the ears had gone, and there was nothing but the bare straw.

‘Well, there is still one field left,’ he said, and when he looked at it, it was still fairer than the other two. ‘To-night I will watch here,’ thought he, ‘for whosoever carried off the other corn will in like manner take this, and I will know who it is.’ So he hid himself and waited.

The hours slid by, and all was still, so still that Manawyddan well-nigh dropped asleep. But at midnight there arose the loudest tumult in the world, and peeping out he beheld a mighty host of mice, which could neither be numbered nor measured. Each mouse climbed up a straw till it bent down with its weight, and then it bit off one of the ears, and carried it away, and there was not one of the straws that had not got a mouse to it.

Full of wrath he rushed at the mice, but he could no more come up with them than if they had been gnats, or birds of the air, save one only which lingered behind the rest, and this mouse Manawyddan came up with. Stooping down he seized it by the tail, and put it in his glove, and tied a piece of string across the opening of the glove, so that the mouse could not escape. When he entered the hall where Kicva was sitting, he lighted a fire, and hung the glove up on a peg.

‘What hast thou there?’ asked she.

‘A thief,’ he answered, ‘that I caught robbing me.’

‘What kind of a thief may it be which thou couldst put in thy glove?’ said Kicva.

‘That I will tell thee,’ he replied, and then he showed her how his fields of corn had been wasted, and how he had watched for the mice.

‘And one was less nimble than the rest, and is now in my glove. To-morrow I will hang it, and I only wish I had them all.’

‘It is a marvel, truly,’ said she, ‘yet it would be unseemly for a man of thy dignity to hang a reptile such as this. Do not meddle with it, but let it go.’

‘Woe betide me,’ he cried, ‘if I would not hang them all if I could catch them, and such as I have I will hang.’

‘Verily,’ said she, ‘there is no reason that I should succour this reptile, except to prevent discredit unto thee.’

‘If I knew any cause that I should succour it, I would take thy counsel,’ answered Manawyddan, ‘but as I know of none, I am minded to destroy it.’

‘Do so then,’ said Kicva.

So he went up a hill and set up two forks on the top, and while he was doing this he saw a scholar coming towards him, whose clothes were tattered. Now it was seven years since Manawyddan had seen man or beast in that place, and the sight amazed him.

‘Good day to thee, my lord,’ said the scholar.

‘Good greeting to thee, scholar. Whence dost thou come?’

‘From singing in England; but wherefore dost thou ask?’

‘Because for seven years no man hath visited this place.’

‘I wander where I will,’ answered the scholar. ‘And what work art *thou* upon?’

‘I am about to hang a thief that I caught robbing me!’

‘What manner of thief is that?’ inquired the scholar. ‘I see a creature in thy hand like unto a mouse, and ill does it become a man of thy rank to touch a reptile like this. Let it go free.’

‘I will not let it go free,’ cried Manawyddan. ‘I caught it robbing me, and it shall suffer the doom of a thief.’

‘Lord!’ said the scholar, ‘sooner than see a man like thee at such a work, I would give thee a pound which I have received as alms to let it go free.’

‘I will not let it go free, neither will I sell it.’

‘As thou wilt, lord,’ answered the scholar, and he went his way.

Manawyddan was placing the cross-beam on the two forked sticks, where the mouse was to hang, when a priest rode past.

‘Good-day to thee, lord; and what art thou doing?’

‘I am hanging a thief that I caught robbing me.’

‘What manner of thief, lord?’

‘A creature in the form of a mouse. It has been robbing me, and it shall suffer the doom of a thief.’

‘Lord,’ said the priest, ‘sooner than see thee touch this reptile, I would purchase its freedom.’

‘I will neither sell it nor set it free.’

‘It is true that a mouse is worth nothing, but rather than see thee defile thyself with touching such a reptile as this, I will give thee three pounds for it.’

‘I will not take any price for it. It shall be hanged as it deserves.’

‘Willingly, my lord, if it is thy pleasure.’ And the priest went his way.

Then Manawyddan noosed the string about the mouse’s neck, and was about to draw it tight when a bishop, with a great following and horses bearing huge packs, came by.

‘What work art thou upon?’ asked the bishop, drawing rein.

‘Hanging a thief that I caught robbing me.’

‘But is not that a *mouse* that I see in thine hand?’ asked the bishop.

‘Yes; that is the thief,’ answered Manawyddan.

‘Well, since I have come at the doom of this reptile, I will ransom it of thee for seven pounds, rather than see a man of thy rank touch it. Loose it, and let it go!’

‘I will not let it loose.’

‘I will give thee four and twenty pounds to set it free,’ said the bishop.

‘I will not set it free for as much again.’

‘If thou wilt not set it free for this, I will give thee all the horses thou seest and the seven loads of baggage.’

‘I will not set it free.’

‘Then tell me at what price thou wilt loose it, and I will give it.’

‘The spell must be taken off Rhiannon and Pryderi,’ said Manawyddan.

‘That shall be done.’

‘But not yet will I loose the mouse. The charm that has been cast over all my lands must be taken off likewise.’

‘This shall be done also.’

‘But not yet will I loose the mouse till I know who she is.’

‘She is my wife,’ answered the bishop.

‘And wherefore came she to me?’ asked Manawyddan.

‘To despoil thee,’ replied the bishop, ‘for it is I who cast the charm over thy lands, to avenge Gwawl the son of Clud my friend. And it was I who threw the spell upon Pryderi to avenge Gwawl for the trick that had been played on him in the game of Badger in the Bag. And not only was I wroth, but my people likewise, and when it was known that thou wast come to dwell in the land, they besought me much to change them into mice, that they might eat thy corn. The first and the second nights it was the men of my own house that destroyed thy two fields, but on the third night my wife and her ladies came to me and begged me to change them also into the shape of mice, that they might take part in avenging Gwawl. Therefore I changed them. Yet had she not been ill and slow of foot, thou couldst not have overtaken her. Still, since she was caught, I will restore thee Pryderi and Rhiannon, and will take the charm from off thy lands. I have told thee who she is; so now set her free.’

‘I will not set her free,’ answered Manawyddan, ‘till thou swear that no vengeance shall be taken for this, either upon Pryderi, or upon Rhiannon, or on me.’

‘I grant thee this boon; and thou hast done wisely to ask it, for on thy head would have lit all the trouble. Set now my wife free.’

‘I will not set her free till Pryderi and Rhiannon are with me.’

‘Behold, here they come,’ said the bishop.

Then Manawyddan held out his hands and greeted Pryderi and Rhiannon, and they seated themselves joyfully on the grass.

‘Ah, lord, hast thou not received all thou didst ask?’ said the bishop. ‘Set now my wife free!’

‘That I will gladly,’ answered Manawyddan, unloosing the cord from her neck, and as he did so the bishop struck her with his staff, and she turned into a young woman, the fairest that ever was seen.

‘Look around upon thy land,’ said he, ‘and thou wilt see it all tilled and peopled, as it was long ago.’ And Manawyddan looked, and saw corn growing in the fields, and cows and sheep grazing on the hill-side, and huts for the people to dwell in. And he was satisfied in his soul, but one more question he put to the bishop.

‘What spell didst thou lay upon Pryderi and Rhiannon?’

‘Pryderi has had the knockers of the gate of my palace hung about him, and Rhiannon has carried the collars of my asses around her neck,’ said the bishop with a smile.

From the ‘Mabinogion.’

THE BELIEVING HUSBANDS

Once upon a time there dwelt in the land of Erin a young man who was seeking a wife, and of all the maidens round about none pleased him as well as the only daughter of a farmer. The girl was willing and the father was willing, and very soon they were married and went to live at the farm. By and bye the season came when they must cut the peats and pile them up to dry, so that they might have fires in the winter. So on a fine day the girl and her husband, and the father and his wife all went out upon the moor.

They worked hard for many hours, and at length grew hungry, so the young woman was sent home to bring them food, and also to give the horses their dinner. When she went into the stable, she suddenly saw the heavy pack-saddle of the speckled mare just over her head, and she jumped and said to herself:

‘Suppose that pack-saddle were to fall and kill me, how dreadful it would be!’ and she sat down just under the pack-saddle she was so much afraid of, and began to cry.

Now the others out on the moor grew hungrier and hungrier.

‘What *can* have become of her?’ asked they, and at length the mother declared that she would wait no longer, and must go and see what had happened.

As the bride was nowhere in the kitchen or the dairy, the old woman went into the stable, where she found her daughter weeping bitterly.

‘What is the matter, my dove?’ and the girl answered, between her sobs:

‘When I came in and saw the pack-saddle over my head, I thought how dreadful it would be if it fell and killed me,’ and she cried louder than before.

The old woman struck her hands together: ‘Ah, to think of it! If that were to be, what should I do?’ and she sat down by her daughter, and they both wrung their hands and let their tears flow.

‘Something strange must have occurred,’ exclaimed the old farmer on the moor, who by this time was not only hungry, but cross. ‘I must go after them.’ And he went and found them in the stable.

‘What is the matter?’ asked he.

‘Oh!’ replied his wife, ‘when our daughter came home, did she not see the pack-saddle over her head, and she thought how dreadful it would be if it were to fall and kill her.’

‘Ah, to think of it!’ exclaimed he, striking his hands together, and he sat down beside them and wept too.

As soon as night fell the young man returned full of hunger, and there they were, all crying together in the stable.

‘What is the matter?’ asked he.

‘When thy wife came home,’ answered the farmer, ‘she saw the pack-saddle over her head, and she thought how dreadful it would be if it were to fall and kill her.’

‘Well, but it didn’t fall,’ replied the young man, and he went off to the kitchen to get some supper, leaving them to cry as long as they liked.

The next morning he got up with the sun, and said to the old man and to the old woman and to his wife:

‘Farewell: my foot shall not return to the house till I have found other three people as silly as you,’ and he walked away till he came to the town, and seeing the door of a cottage standing open wide, he entered. No man was present, but only some women spinning at their wheels.

‘You do not belong to this town,’ said he.

‘You speak truth,’ they answered, ‘nor you either?’

‘I do not,’ replied he, ‘but is it a good place to live in?’

The women looked at each other.

‘The men of the town are so silly that we can make them believe anything we please,’ said they.

‘Well, here is a gold ring,’ replied he, ‘and I will give it to the one amongst you who can make her husband believe the most impossible thing,’ and he left them.

As soon as the first husband came home his wife said to him:

‘Thou art sick!’

‘Am I?’ asked he.

‘Yes, thou art,’ she answered; ‘take off thy clothes and lie down.’

So he did, and when he was in his bed his wife went to him and said:

‘Thou art dead.’

‘Oh, am I?’ asked he.

‘Thou art,’ said she; ‘shut thine eyes and stir neither hand nor foot.’

And dead he felt sure he was.

Soon the second man came home, and his wife said to him:

‘You are not my husband!’

‘Oh, am I not?’ asked he.

‘No, it is not you,’ answered she, so he went away and slept in the wood.

When the third man arrived his wife gave him his supper, and after that he went to bed, just as usual. The next morning a boy knocked at the door, bidding him attend the burial of the man who was dead, and he was just going to get up when his wife stopped him.

‘Time enough,’ said she, and he lay still till he heard the funeral passing the window.

‘Now rise, and be quick,’ called the wife, and the man jumped out of bed in a great hurry, and began to look about him.

‘Why, where are my clothes?’ asked he.

‘Silly that you are, they are on your back, of course,’ answered the woman.

‘Are they?’ said he.

‘They are,’ said she, ‘and make haste lest the burying be ended before you get there.’

Then off he went, running hard, and when the mourners saw a man coming towards them with nothing on but his nightshirt, they forgot in their fright what they were there for, and fled to hide themselves. And the naked man stood alone at the head of the coffin.

Very soon a man came out of the wood and spoke to him.

‘Do you know me?’

‘Not I,’ answered the naked man. ‘I do not know you.’

‘But why are you naked?’ asked the first man.

‘Am I naked? My wife told me that I had all my clothes on,’ answered he.

‘And *my* wife told me that I myself was dead,’ said the man in the coffin.

But at the sound of his voice the two men were so terrified that they ran straight home, and the man in the coffin got up and followed them, and it was *his* wife that gained the gold ring, as he had been sillier than the other two.

From ‘West Highland Tales.’

THE HOODIE-CROW

Once there lived a farmer who had three daughters, and good useful girls they were, up with the sun, and doing all the work of the house. One morning they all ran down to the river to wash their clothes, when a hoodie came round and sat on a tree close by.

‘Wilt thou wed me, thou farmer’s daughter?’ he said to the eldest.

‘Indeed I won’t wed thee,’ she answered, ‘an ugly brute is the hoodie.’ And the bird, much offended, spread his wings and flew away. But the following day he came back again, and said to the second girl:

‘Wilt thou wed me, farmer’s daughter?’

‘Indeed I will not,’ answered she, ‘an ugly brute is the hoodie.’ And the hoodie was more angry than before, and went away in a rage. However, after a night’s rest he was in a better temper, and thought that he might be more lucky the third time, so back he went to the old place.

‘Wilt thou wed me, farmer’s daughter?’ he said to the youngest.

‘Indeed I will wed thee; a pretty creature is the hoodie,’ answered she, and on the morrow they were married.

‘I have something to ask thee,’ said the hoodie when they were far away in his own house. ‘Wouldst thou rather I should be a hoodie by day and a man by night, or a man by day and a hoodie by night?’

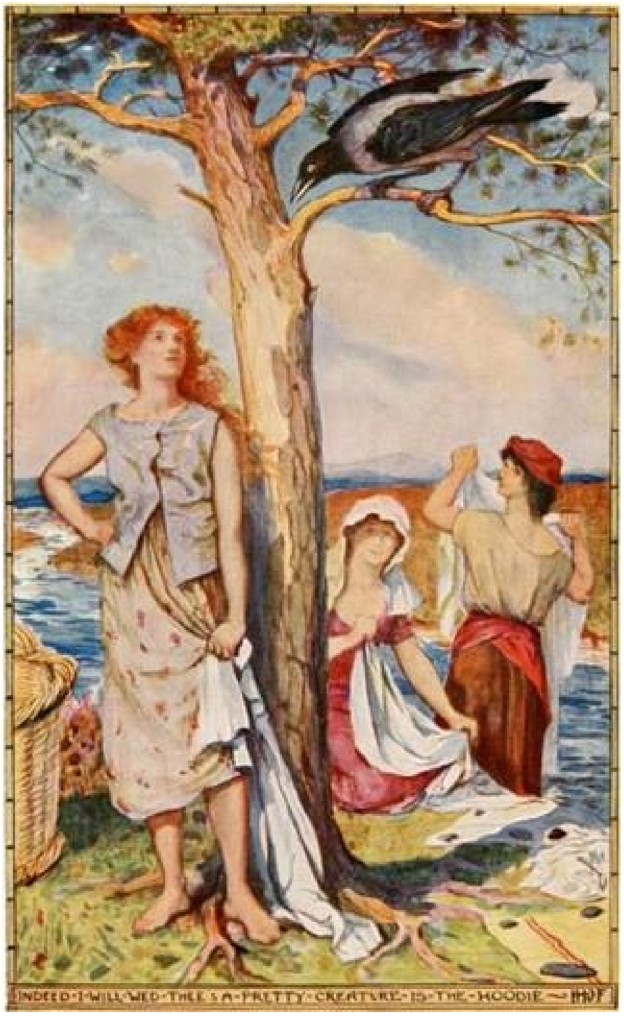

INDEED I WILL WED THEE 'S A PRETTY CREATURE IS THE HOODIE

The girl was surprised at his words, for she did not know that he could be anything but a hoodie at all times.

Still she said nothing of this, and only replied, ‘I would rather thou wert a man by day and a hoodie by night.’ And so he was; and a handsomer man or a more beautiful hoodie never was seen. The girl loved them both, and never wished for things to be different.

By and bye they had a son, and very pleased they both were. But in the night soft music was heard stealing close towards the house, and every man slept, and the mother slept also. When they woke again it was morning, and the baby was gone. High and low they looked for it, but nowhere could they find it, and the farmer, who had come to see his daughter, was greatly grieved, as he feared it might be thought that he had stolen it, because he did not want the hoodie for a son-in-law.

The next year the hoodie’s wife had another son, and this time a watch was set at every door. But it was no use. In vain they all determined that, come what might, they would not close their eyes; at the first note of music they all fell asleep, and when the farmer arrived in the morning to see his grandson, he found them all weeping, for while they had slept the baby had vanished.

Well, the next year it all happened again, and the hoodie’s wife was so unhappy that her husband resolved to take her away to another house he had, and her sisters with her for company. So they set out in a coach which was big enough to hold them, and had not gone very far when the hoodie suddenly said:

‘You are sure you have not forgotten anything?’

‘I have forgotten my coarse comb,’ answered the wife, feeling in her pocket, and as she spoke the coach changed into a withered faggot, and the man became a hoodie again, and flew away.

The two sisters returned home, but the wife followed the hoodie. Sometimes she would see him on a hilltop, and then would hasten after him, hoping to catch him. But by the time she had got to the top of the hill, he would be in the valley on the other side. When night came, and she was tired, she looked about for some place to rest, and glad she was to see a little house full of light straight in front of her, and she hurried towards it as fast as she could.

At the door stood a little boy, and the sight of him filled her heart with pleasure, she did not know why. A woman came out, and bade her welcome, and set before her food, and gave her a soft bed to lie on. And the hoodie’s wife lay down, and so tired was she, that it seemed to her but a moment before the sun rose, and she awoke again. From hill to hill she went after the hoodie, and sometimes she saw him on the top; but when she got to the top, he had flown into the valley, and when she reached the valley he was on the top of another hill — and so it happened till night came round again. Then she looked round for some place to rest in, and she beheld a little house of light before her, and fast she hurried towards it. At the door stood a little boy, and her heart was filled with pleasure at the sight of him, she did not know why. After that a woman bade her enter, and set food before her, and gave her a soft bed to lie in. And when the sun rose she got up, and left the house, in search of the hoodie. This day everything befell as on the two other days, but when she reached the small house, the woman bade her keep awake, and if the hoodie flew into the room, to try to seize him.

But the wife had walked far, and was very tired, and strive as she would, she fell sound asleep.

Many hours she slept, and the hoodie entered through a window, and let fall a ring on her hand. The girl awoke with a start, and leant forward to grasp him, but he was already flying off, and she only seized a feather from his wing. And when dawn came, she got up and told the woman.

‘He has gone over the hill of poison,’ said she, ‘and there you cannot follow him without horse-shoes on your hands and feet. But I will help you. Put on this suit of men’s clothes, and go down this road till you come to the smithy, and there you can learn to make horse-shoes for yourself.’

The girl thanked her, and put on the clothes and went down the road to do her bidding. So hard did she work, that in a few days she was able to make the horse-shoes. Early one morning she set out for the hill of poison. On her hands and feet she went, but even with the horse-shoes on she had to be very careful not to stumble, lest some poisoned thorns should enter into her flesh, and she should die. But when at last she was over, it was only to hear that her husband was to be married that day to the daughter of a great lord.

Now there was to be a race in the town, and everyone meant to be there, except the stranger who had come over the hill of poison — everyone, that is, but the cook, who was to make the bridal supper. Greatly he loved races, and sore was his heart to think that one should be run without his seeing it, so when he beheld a woman whom he did not know coming along the street, hope sprang up in him.

‘Will you cook the wedding feast in place of me?’ he said, ‘and I will pay you well when I return from the race.’

Gladly she agreed, and cooked the feast in a kitchen that looked into the great hall, where the company were to eat it. After that she watched the seat where the bridegroom was sitting, and taking a plateful of the broth, she dropped the ring and the feather into it, and set it herself before him.

With the first spoonful he took up the ring, and a thrill ran through him; in the second he beheld the feather and rose from his chair.

‘Who has cooked this feast?’ asked he, and the real cook, who had come back from the race, was brought before him.

‘He may be the cook, but he did not cook this feast,’ said the bridegroom, and then inquiry was made, and the girl was summoned to the great hall.

‘That is my married wife,’ he declared, ‘and no one else will I have,’ and at that very moment the spells fell off him, and never more would he be a hoodie. Happy indeed were they to be together again, and little did they mind that the hill of poison took long to cross, for she had to go some way forwards, and then throw the horse-shoes back for him to put on. Still, at last they were over, and they went back the way she had come, and stopped at the three houses in order to take their little sons to their own home.

But the story never says who had stolen them, nor what the coarse comb had to do with it.

From ‘West Highland Tales.’

THE BROWNIE OF THE LAKE

Once upon a time there lived in France a man whose name was Jalm Riou. You might have walked a whole day without meeting any one happier or more contented, for he had a large farm, plenty of money, and, above all, a daughter called Barbaïk, the most graceful dancer and the best-dressed girl in the whole country side. When she appeared on holidays in her embroidered cap, five petticoats, each one a little shorter than the other, and shoes with silver buckles, the women were all filled with envy, but little cared Barbaïk what they might whisper behind her back as long as she knew that her clothes were finer than any one else's and that she had more partners than any other girl.

Now amongst all the young men who wanted to marry Barbaïk, the one whose heart was most set on her was her father's head man, but as his manners were rough and he was exceedingly ugly she would have nothing to say to him, and, what was worse, often made fun of him with the rest.

Jégu, for that was his name, of course heard of this, and it made him very unhappy. Still, he would not leave the farm, and look for work elsewhere, as he might have done, for then he would never see Barbaïk at all, and what was life worth to him without that?

One evening he was bringing back his horses from the fields, and stopped at a little lake on the way home to let them drink. He was tired with a long day's work, and stood with his hand on the mane of one of the animals, waiting till they had done, and thinking all the while of Barbaïk, when a voice came out of the gorse close by.

'What is the matter, Jégu? You mustn't despair yet.'

The young man glanced up in surprise, and asked who was there.

'It is I, the brownie of the lake,' replied the voice.

'But where *are* you?' inquired Jégu.

'Look close, and you will see me among the reeds in the form of a little green frog. I can take,' he added proudly, 'any shape I choose, and even, which is much harder, be invisible if I want to.'

'Then show yourself to me in the shape in which your family generally appear,' replied Jégu.

'Certainly, if you wish,' and the frog jumped on the back of one of the horses, and changed into a little dwarf, all dressed green.

This transformation rather frightened Jégu, but the brownie bade him have no fears, for he would not do him any harm; indeed, he hoped that Jégu might find him of some use.

‘But why should you take all this interest in me?’ asked the peasant suspiciously.

‘Because of a service you did me last winter, which I have never forgotten,’ answered the little fellow. ‘You know, I am sure, that the korigans who dwell in the White Corn country have declared war on my people, because they say that they are the friends of man. We were therefore obliged to take refuge in distant lands, and to hide ourselves at first under different animal shapes. Since that time, partly from habit and partly to amuse ourselves, we have continued to transform ourselves, and it was in this way that I got to know you.’

‘How?’ exclaimed Jégu, filled with astonishment.

‘Do you remember when you were digging in the field near the river, three months ago, you found a robin redbreast caught in a net?’

‘Yes,’ answered Jégu, ‘I remember it very well, and I opened the net and let him go.’

‘Well, I was that robin redbreast, and ever since I have vowed to be your friend, and as you want to marry Barbaïk, I will prove the truth of what I say by helping you to do so.’

‘Ah! my little brownie, if you can do that, there is nothing I won’t give you, except my soul.’

‘Then let me alone,’ rejoined the dwarf, ‘and I promise you that in a very few months you shall be master of the farm and of Barbaïk.’

‘But how are you going to do it?’ exclaimed Jégu wonderingly.

‘That is my affair. Perhaps I may tell you later. Meanwhile you just eat and sleep, and don’t worry yourself about anything.’

Jégu declared that nothing could be easier, and then taking off his hat, he thanked the dwarf heartily, and led his horses back to the farm.

Next morning was a holiday, and Barbaïk was awake earlier than usual, as she wished to get through her work as soon as possible, and be ready to start for a dance which was to be held some distance off. She went first to the cow-house, which it was her duty to keep clean, but to her amazement she found fresh straw put down, the racks filled with hay, the cows milked, and the pails standing neatly in a row.

‘Of course, Jégu must have done this in the hope of my giving him a dance,’ she thought to herself, and when she met him outside the door she stopped and thanked him for his help. To be sure, Jégu only replied roughly that he didn’t know what she was talking about, but this answer made her feel all the more certain that it was he and nobody else.

The same thing took place every day, and never had the cow-house been so clean nor the cows so fat. Morning and evening Barbaïk found her earthen pots full of milk and a pound of butter freshly churned, ornamented with leaves. At the end of a few weeks she grew so used to this state of affairs that she only got up just in time to prepare breakfast.

Soon even this grew to be unnecessary, for a day arrived when, coming downstairs, she discovered that the house was swept, the furniture polished, the fire lit, and the food ready, so that she had nothing to do except to ring the great bell which summoned the labourers from the fields to come and eat it. This, also, she thought was the work of Jégu, and she could not help feeling that a husband of this sort would be very useful to a girl who liked to lie in bed and to amuse herself.

Indeed, Barbaïk had only to express a wish for it to be satisfied. If the wind was cold or the sun was hot and she was afraid to go out lest her complexion should be spoilt, she need only to run down to the spring close by and say softly, ‘I should like my churns to be full, and my wet linen to be stretched on the hedge to dry,’ and she need never give another thought to the matter.

If she found the rye bread too hard to bake, or the oven taking too long to heat, she just murmured, ‘I should like to see my six loaves on the shelf above the bread box,’ and two hours after there they were.

If she was too lazy to walk all the way to market along a dirty road, she would say out loud the night before, ‘Why am I not already back from Morlaix with my milk pot empty, my butter bowl inside it, a pound of wild cherries on my wooden plate, and the money I have gained in my apron pocket?’ and in the morning when she got up, lo and behold! there were standing at the foot of her bed the empty milk pot with the butter bowl inside, the black cherries on the wooden plate, and six new pieces of silver in the pocket of her apron. And she believed that all this was owing to Jégu, and she could no longer do without him, even in her thoughts.

When things had reached this pass, the brownie told the young man that he had better ask Barbaïk to marry him, and this time the girl did not turn rudely away, but listened patiently to the end. In her eyes he was as ugly and awkward as ever, but he would certainly make a most useful husband, and she could sleep every morning till breakfast time, just like a young lady, and as for the rest of the day, it would not be half long enough for all she meant to do. She would wear the beautiful dresses that came when she wished for them, and visit her neighbours, who would be dying of envy all the while, and she would be able to dance as much as she wished. Jégu would always be there to work for her, and save for her, and watch over her. So, like a well-brought-up girl, Barbaïk answered that it should be as her father pleased, knowing quite well that old Riou had often said that after he was dead there was no one so capable of carrying on the farm.

The marriage took place the following month, and a few days later the old man died quite suddenly. Now Jégu had everything to see to himself, and somehow it did not seem so easy as when the farmer was alive. But once more the brownie stepped in, and was better than ten labourers. It was he who ploughed and sowed and reaped, and if, as happened occasionally, it was needful to get the work done quickly, the brownie called in some of his friends, and as soon as it was light a host of little dwarfs might have been seen in the fields, busy with hoe, fork or sickle. But by the time the people were about all was finished, and the little fellows had disappeared.

And all the payment the brownie ever asked for was a bowl of broth.

From the very day of her marriage Barbaïk had noted with surprise and rage that things ceased to be done for her as they had been done all the weeks and months before. She complained to Jégu of his laziness, and he only stared at her, not understanding what she was talking about. But the brownie, who was standing by, burst out laughing, and confessed that all the good offices she spoke of had been performed by him, for the sake of Jégu, but that now he had other business to do, and it was high time that she looked after her house herself.

Barbaïk was furious. Each morning when she was obliged to get up before dawn to milk the cows and go to market, and each evening when she had to sit up till midnight in order to churn the butter, her heart was filled with rage against the brownie who had caused her to expect a life of ease and pleasure. But when she looked at Jégu and beheld his red face, squinting eyes, and untidy hair, her anger was doubled.

‘If it had not been for *you*, you miserable dwarf!’ she would say between her teeth, ‘if it had not been for *you* I should never have married that man, and I should still have been going to dances, where the young men would have brought me presents of nuts and cherries, and told me that I was the prettiest girl in the parish. While *now* I can receive no presents except from my husband. I can never dance, except with my husband. Oh, you wretched dwarf, I will never, never forgive you!’

In spite of her fierce words, no one knew better than Barbaïk how to put her pride in her pocket when it suited her, and after receiving an invitation to a wedding, she begged the brownie to get her a horse to ride there. To her great joy he consented, bidding her set out for the city of the dwarfs and to tell them exactly what she wanted. Full of excitement, Barbaïk started on her journey. It was not long, and when she reached the town she went straight to the dwarfs, who were holding counsel in a wide green place, and said to them, ‘Listen, my friends! I have come to beg you to lend me a black horse, with eyes, a mouth, ears, bridle and saddle.’

She had hardly spoken when the horse appeared, and mounting on his back she started for the village where the wedding was to be held.

At first she was so delighted with the chance of a holiday from the work which she hated, that she noticed nothing, but very soon it struck her as odd that as she passed along the roads full of people they all laughed as they looked at her horse. At length she caught some words uttered by one man to another, ‘Why, the farmer’s wife has sold her horse’s tail!’ and turned in her saddle. Yes; it was true. Her horse had no tail! She had forgotten to ask for one, and the wicked dwarfs had carried out her orders to the letter!

‘Well, at any rate, I shall soon be there,’ she thought, and shaking the reins, tried to urge the horse to a gallop. But it was of no use; he declined to move out of a walk; and she was forced to hear all the jokes that were made upon her.

In the evening she returned to the farm more angry than ever, and quite determined to revenge herself on the brownie whenever she had the chance, which happened to be very soon.

It was the spring, and just the time of year when the dwarfs held their fête, so one day the brownie asked Jégu if he might bring his friends to have supper in the great barn, and whether he would allow them to dance there. Of course, Jégu was only too pleased to be able to do anything for the brownie, and he ordered Barbaïk to spread her best table-cloths in the barn, and to make a quantity of little loaves and pancakes, and, besides, to keep all the milk given by the cows that morning. He expected she would refuse, as he knew she hated the dwarfs, but she said nothing, and prepared the supper as he had bidden her.

When all was ready, the dwarfs, in new green suits, came bustling in, very happy and merry, and took their seats at the table. But in a moment they all sprang up with a cry, and ran away screaming, for Barbaïk had placed pans of hot coals under their feet, and all their poor little toes were burnt.

‘You won’t forget that in a hurry,’ she said, smiling grimly to herself, but in a moment they were back again with large pots of water, which they poured on the fire. Then they joined hands and danced round it, singing:

Wicked traitress, Barbe Riou, Our poor toes are burned by you; Now we hurry from your hall — Bad luck light upon you all.

That evening they left the country for ever, and Jégu, without their help, grew poorer and poorer, and at last died of misery, while Barbaïk was glad to find work in the market of Morlaix.

From ‘Le Foyer Breton,’ par E. Souvestre

THE WINNING OF OLWEN

There was once a king and queen who had a little boy, and they called his name Kilwch. The queen, his mother, fell ill soon after his birth, and as she could not take care of him herself she sent him to a woman she knew up in the mountains, so that he might learn to go out in all weathers, and bear heat and cold, and grow tall and strong. Kilwch was quite happy with his nurse, and ran races and climbed hills with the children who were his playfellows, and in the winter, when the snow lay on the ground, sometimes a man with a harp would stop and beg for shelter, and in return would sing them songs of strange things that had happened in the years gone by.

But long before this, changes had taken place in the court of Kilwch’s father. Soon after she had sent her baby away the queen became much worse, and at length, seeing that she was going to die, she called her husband to her and said:

‘Never again shall I rise from this bed, and by and bye thou wilt take another wife. But lest she should make thee forget thy son, I charge thee that thou take not a wife until thou see a briar with two blossoms upon my grave.’ And this he promised her. Then she further bade him to see to her grave that nothing might grow thereon. This likewise he promised her, and soon she died, and for seven years the king sent a man every morning to see that nothing was growing on the queen’s grave, but at the end of seven years he forgot.

One day when the king was out hunting he rode past the place where the queen lay buried, and there he saw a briar growing with two blossoms on it.

‘It is time that I took a wife,’ said he, and after long looking he found one. But he did not tell her about his son; indeed he hardly remembered that he had one till she heard it at last from an old woman whom she had gone to visit. And the new queen was very pleased, and sent messengers to fetch the boy, and in his father’s court he stayed, while the years went by till one day the queen told him that a prophecy had foretold that he was to win for his wife Olwen the daughter of Yspaddaden Penkawr.

When he heard this Kilwch felt proud and happy. Surely he must be a man now, he thought, or there would be no talk of a wife for him, and his mind dwelt all day upon his promised bride, and what she would be like when he beheld her.

‘What aileth thee, my son?’ asked his father at last, when Kilwch had forgotten something he had been bidden to do, and Kilwch blushed red as he answered:

‘My stepmother says that none but Olwen, the daughter of Yspaddaden Penkawr, shall be my wife.’

‘That will be easily fulfilled,’ replied his father. ‘Arthur the king is thy cousin. Go therefore unto him and beg him to cut thy hair, and to grant thee this boon.’

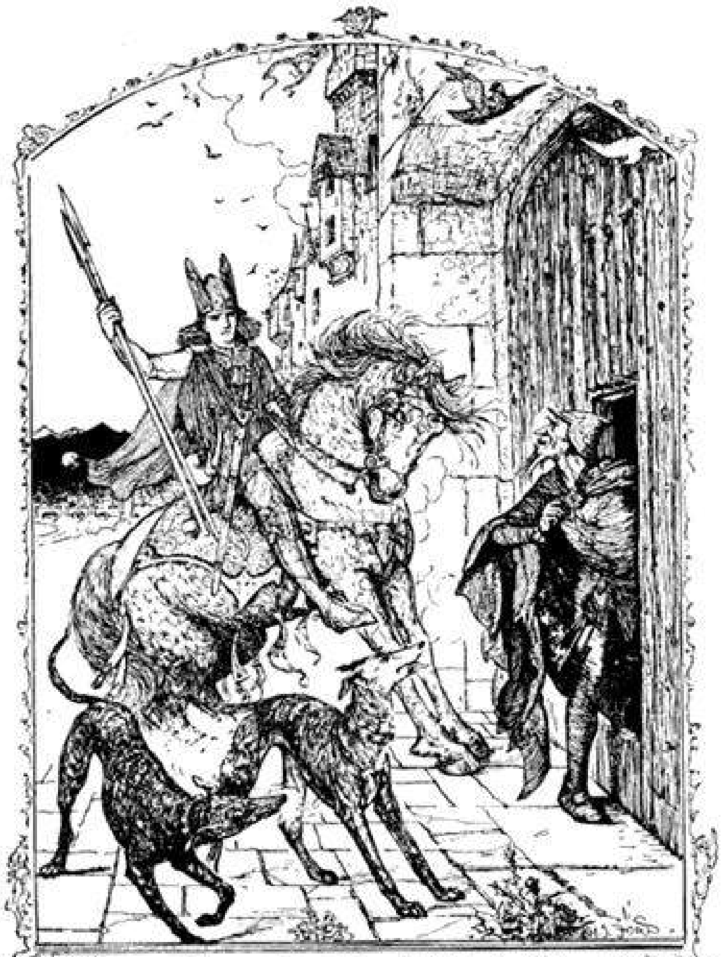

Kilwch arrives at the Gate of Arthur's Palace

Then the youth pricked forth upon a dapple grey horse of four years old, with a bridle of linked gold, and gold upon his saddle. In his hand he bore two spears of silver with heads of steel; a war-horn of ivory was slung round his shoulder, and by his side hung a golden sword. Before him were two brindled white-breasted greyhounds with collars of rubies round their necks, and the one that was on the left side bounded across to the right side, and the one on the right to the left, and like two sea-swallows sported round him. And his horse cast up four sods with his four hoofs, like four swallows in the air about his head, now above, now below. About him was a robe of purple, and an apple of gold was at each corner, and every one of the apples was of the value of a hundred cows. And the blades of grass bent not beneath him, so light were his horse’s feet as he journeyed toward the gate of Arthur’s palace.

‘Is there a porter?’ cried Kilwch, looking round for some one to open the gate.

‘There is; and I am Arthur’s porter every first day of January,’ answered a man coming out to him. ‘The rest of the year there are other porters, and among them Pennpingyon, who goes upon his head to save his feet.’

‘Well, open the portal, I say.’

‘No, that I may not do, for none can enter save the son of a king or a pedlar who has goods to sell. But elsewhere there will be food for thy dogs and hay for thy horse, and for thee collops cooked and peppered, and sweet wine shall be served in the guest chamber.’

‘That will not do for me,’ answered Kilwch. ‘If thou wilt not open the gate I will send up three shouts that shall be heard from Cornwall unto the north, and yet again to Ireland.’

‘Whatsoever clamour thou mayest make,’ spake Glewlwyd the porter, ‘thou shalt not enter until I first go and speak with Arthur.’

Then Glewlwyd went into the hall, and Arthur said to him:

‘Hast thou news from the gate?’ and the porter answered:

‘Far have I travelled, both in this island and elsewhere, and many kingly men have I seen; but never yet have I beheld one equal in majesty to him who now stands at the door.’

‘If walking thou didst enter here, return thou running,’ replied Arthur, ‘and let every one that opens and shuts the eye show him respect and serve him, for it is not meet to keep such a man in the wind and rain.’ So Glewlwyd unbarred the gate and Kilwch rode in upon his charger.

‘Greeting unto thee, O ruler of this land,’ cried he, ‘and greeting no less to the lowest than to the highest.’

‘Greeting to thee also,’ answered Arthur. ‘Sit thou between two of my warriors, and thou shalt have minstrels before thee and all that belongs to one born to be a king, while thou remainest in my palace.’

‘I am not come,’ replied Kilwch, ‘for meat and drink, but to obtain a boon, and if thou grant it me I will pay it back, and will carry thy praise to the four winds of heaven. But if thou wilt not grant it to me, then I will proclaim thy discourtesy wherever thy name is known.’

‘What thou askest that shalt thou receive,’ said Arthur, ‘as far as the wind dries and the rain moistens, and the sun revolves and the sea encircles and the earth extends. Save only my ship and my mantle, my sword and my lance, my shield and my dagger, and Guinevere my wife.’

‘I would that thou bless my hair,’ spake Kilwch, and Arthur answered:

‘That shall be granted thee.’

Forthwith he bade his men fetch him a comb of gold and a scissors with loops of silver, and he combed the hair of Kilwch his guest.

‘Tell me who thou art,’ he said, ‘for my heart warms to thee, and I feel thou art come of my blood.’

‘I am Kilwch, son of Kilydd,’ replied the youth.

‘Then my cousin thou art in truth,’ replied Arthur, ‘and whatsoever boon thou mayest ask thou shalt receive.’

‘The boon I crave is that thou mayest win for me Olwen, the daughter of Yspaddaden Penkawr, and this boon I seek likewise at the hands of thy warriors. From Sol, who can stand all day upon one foot; from Ossol, who, if he were to find himself on the top of the highest mountain in the world, could make it into a level plain in the beat of a bird’s wing; from Clust, who, though he were buried under the earth, could yet hear the ant leave her nest fifty miles away: from these and from Kai and from Bedwyr and from all thy mighty men I crave this boon.’

‘O Kilwch,’ said Arthur, ‘never have I heard of the maiden of whom thou speakest, nor of her kindred, but I will send messengers to seek her if thou wilt give me time.’

‘From this night to the end of the year right willingly will I grant thee,’ replied Kilwch; but when the end of the year came and the messengers returned Kilwch was wroth, and spoke rough words to Arthur.

It was Kai, the boldest of the warriors and the swiftest of foot — he who could pass nine nights without sleep, and nine days beneath the water — that answered him:

‘Rash youth that thou art, darest thou speak thus to Arthur? Come with us, and we will not part company till we have won that maiden, or till thou confess that there is none such in the world.’

Then Arthur summoned his five best men and bade them go with Kilwch. There was Bedwyr the one-handed, Kai’s comrade and brother in arms, the swiftest man in Britain save Arthur; there was Kynddelig, who knew the paths in a land where he had never been as surely as he did those of his own country; there was Gwrhyr, that could speak all tongues; and Gwalchmai the son of Gwyar, who never returned till he had gained what he sought; and last of all there was Menw, who could weave a spell over them so that none might see them, while they could see every one.

So these seven journeyed together till they reached a vast open plain in which was a fair castle. But though it seemed so close it was not until the evening of the third day that they really drew near to it, and in front of it a flock of sheep was spread, so many in number that there seemed no end to them. A shepherd stood on a mound watching over them, and by his side was a dog, as large as a horse nine winters old.

‘Whose is this castle, O herdsman?’ asked the knights.

‘Stupid are ye truly,’ answered the herdsman. ‘All the world knows that this is the castle of Yspaddaden Penkawr.’

‘And who art thou?’

‘I am called Custennin, brother of Yspaddaden, and ill has he treated me. And who are you, and what do you here?’

‘We come from Arthur the king, to seek Olwen the daughter of Yspaddaden,’ but at this news the shepherd gave a cry:

‘O men, be warned and turn back while there is yet time. Others have gone on that quest, but none have escaped to tell the tale,’ and he rose to his feet as if to leave them. Then Kilwch held out to him a ring of gold, and he tried to put it on his finger, but it was too small, so he placed it in his glove, and went home and gave it to his wife.

‘Whence came this ring?’ asked she, ‘for such good luck is not wont to befall thee.’

‘The man to whom this ring belonged thou shalt see here in the evening,’ answered the shepherd; ‘he is Kilwch, son of Kilydd, cousin to king Arthur, and he has come to seek Olwen.’ And when the wife heard that she knew that Kilwch was her nephew, and her heart yearned after him, half with joy at the thought of seeing him, and half with sorrow for the doom she feared.

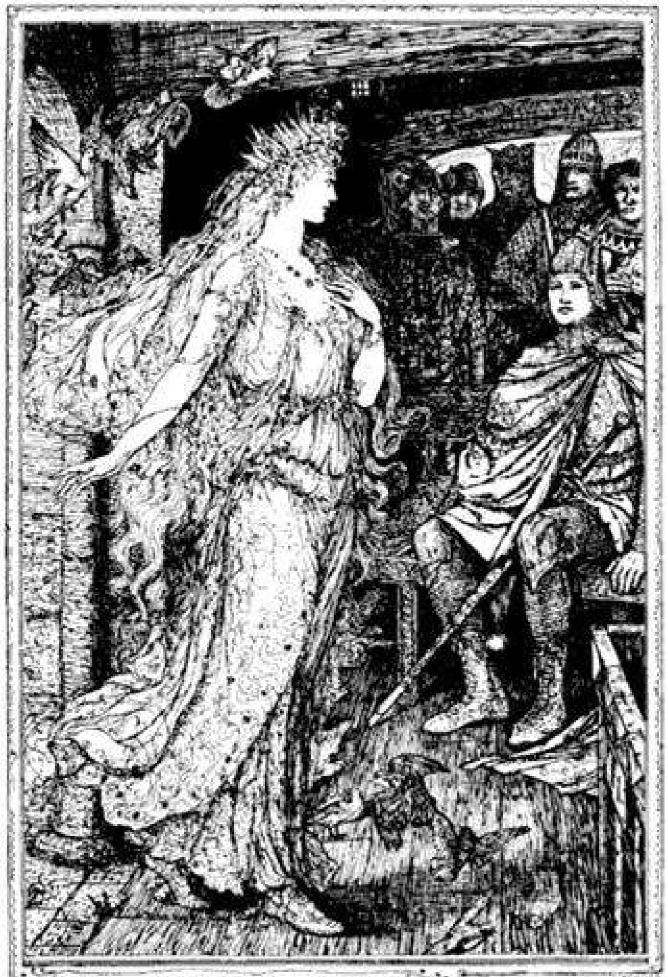

FAIR • OLWEN • ARRIVES

Soon they heard steps approaching, and Kai and the rest entered into the house and ate and drank. After that the woman opened a chest, and out of it came a youth with curling yellow hair.

‘It is a pity to hide him thus,’ said Gwrhyr, ‘for well I know that he has done no evil.’

‘Three and twenty of my sons has Yspaddaden slain, and I have no more hope of saving this one,’ replied she, and Kai was full of sorrow and answered:

‘Let him come with me and be my comrade, and he shall never be slain unless I am slain also.’ And so it was agreed.

‘What is your errand here?’ asked the woman.

‘We seek Olwen the maiden for this youth,’ answered Kai; ‘does she ever come hither so that she may be seen?’

‘She comes every Saturday to wash her hair, and in the vessel where she washes she leaves all her rings, and never does she so much as send a messenger to fetch them.’

‘Will she come if she is bidden?’ asked Kai, pondering.

‘She will come; but unless you pledge me your faith that you will not harm her I will not fetch her.’

‘We pledge it,’ said they, and the maiden came.

A fair sight was she in a robe of flame-coloured silk, with a collar of ruddy gold about her neck, bright with emeralds and rubies. More yellow was her head than the flower of the broom, and her skin was whiter than the foam of the wave, and fairer were her hands than the blossom of the wood anemone. Four white trefoils sprang up where she trod, and therefore was she called Olwen.

She entered, and sat down on a bench beside Kilwch, and he spake to her:

‘Ah, maiden, since first I heard thy name I have loved thee — wilt thou not come away with me from this evil place?’

‘That I cannot do,’ answered she, ‘for I have given my word to my father not to go without his knowledge, for his life will only last till I am betrothed. Whatever is, must be, but this counsel I will give you. Go, and ask me of my father, and whatsoever he shall require of thee grant it, and thou shalt win me; but if thou deny him anything thou wilt not obtain me, and it will be well for thee if thou escape with thy life.’

‘All this I promise,’ said he.

So she returned to the castle, and all Arthur’s men went after her, and entered the hall.

‘Greeting to thee, Yspaddaden Penkawr,’ said they. ‘We come to ask thy daughter Olwen for Kilwch, son of Kilydd.’

‘Come hither to-morrow and I will answer you,’ replied Yspaddaden Penkawr, and as they rose to leave the hall he caught up one of the three poisoned darts that lay beside him and flung it in their midst. But Bedwyr saw and caught it, and flung it back so hard that it pierced the knee of Yspaddaden.

‘A gentle son-in-law, truly!’ he cried, writhing with pain. ‘I shall ever walk the worse for this rudeness. Cursed be the smith who forged it, and the anvil on which it was wrought!’

That night the men slept in the house of Custennin the herdsman, and the next day they proceeded to the castle, and entered the hall, and said:

‘Yspaddaden Penkawr, give us thy daughter and thou shalt keep her dower. And unless thou wilt do this we will slay thee.’

‘Her four great grandmothers and her four great grandfathers yet live,’ answered Yspaddaden Penkawr; ‘it is needful that I take counsel with them.’

‘Be it so; we will go to meat,’ but as they turned he took up the second dart that lay by his side and cast it after them. And Menw caught it, and flung it at him, and wounded him in the chest, so that it came out at his back.

‘A gentle son-in-law, truly!’ cried Yspaddaden; ‘the iron pains me like the bite of a horse-leech. Cursed be the hearth whereon it was heated, and the smith who formed it!’

The third day Arthur’s men returned to the palace into the presence of Yspaddaden.

‘Shoot not at me again,’ said he, ‘unless you desire death. But lift up my eyebrows, which have fallen over my eyes, that I may see my son-in-law.’ Then they arose, and as they did so Yspaddaden Penkawr took the third poisoned dart and cast it at them. And Kilwch caught it, and flung it back, and it passed through his eyeball, and came out on the other side of his head.

‘A gentle son-in-law, truly! Cursed be the fire in which it was forged and the man who fashioned it!’

The next day Arthur’s men came again to the palace and said:

‘Shoot not at us any more unless thou desirest more pain than even now thou hast, but give us thy daughter without more words.’

‘Where is he that seeks my daughter? Let him come hither so that I may see him.’ And Kilwch sat himself in a chair and spoke face to face with him.

‘Is it thou that seekest my daughter?’

‘It is I,’ answered Kilwch.

‘First give me thy word that thou wilt do nothing towards me that is not just, and when thou hast won for me that which I shall ask, then thou shalt wed my daughter.’

‘I promise right willingly,’ said Kilwch. ‘Name what thou wilt.’

‘Seest thou yonder hill? Well, in one day it shall be rooted up and ploughed and sown, and the grain shall ripen, and of that wheat I will bake the cakes for my daughter’s wedding.’

‘It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest deem it will not be easy,’ answered Kilwch, thinking of Ossol, under whose feet the highest mountain became straightway a plain, but Yspaddaden paid no heed, and continued:

‘Seest thou that field yonder? When my daughter was born nine bushels of flax were sown therein, and not one blade has sprung up. I require thee to sow fresh flax in the ground that my daughter may wear a veil spun from it on the day of her wedding.’

‘It will be easy for me to compass this.’

‘Though thou compass this there is that which thou wilt not compass. For thou must bring me the basket of Gwyddneu Garanhir which will give meat to the whole world. It is for thy wedding feast. Thou must also fetch me the drinking-horn that is never empty, and the harp that never ceases to play until it is bidden. Also the comb and scissors and razor that lie between the two ears of Trwyth the boar, so that I may arrange my hair for the wedding. And though thou get this yet there is that which thou wilt not get, for Trwyth the boar will not let any man take from him the comb and the scissors, unless Drudwyn the whelp hunt him. But no leash in the world can hold Drudwyn save the leash of Cant Ewin, and no collar will hold the leash except the collar of Canhastyr.’

‘It will be easy for me to compass this, though thou mayest think it will not be easy,’ Kilwch answered him.

‘Though thou get all these things yet there is that which thou wilt not get. Throughout the world there is none that can hunt with this dog save Mabon the son of Modron. He was taken from his mother when three nights old, and it is not known where he now is, nor whether he is living or dead, and though thou find him yet the boar will never be slain save only with the sword of Gwrnach the giant, and if thou obtain it not neither shalt thou obtain my daughter.’

‘Horses shall I have, and knights from my lord Arthur. And I shall gain thy daughter, and thou shalt lose thy life.’

The speech of Kilwch the son of Kilydd with Yspaddaden Penkawr was ended.

Then Arthur’s men set forth, and Kilwch with them, and journeyed till they reached the largest castle in the world, and a black man came out to meet them.

‘Whence comest thou, O man?’ asked they, ‘and whose is that castle?’

‘That is the castle of Gwrnach the giant, as all the world knows,’ answered the man, ‘but no guest ever returned thence alive, and none may enter the gate except a craftsman, who brings his trade.’ But little did Arthur’s men heed his warning, and they went straight to the gate.

‘Open!’ cried Gwrhyr.

‘I will not open,’ replied the porter.

‘And wherefore?’ asked Kai.

‘The knife is in the meat, and the drink is in the horn, and there is revelry in the hall of Gwrnach the giant, and save for a craftsman who brings his trade the gate will not be opened to-night.’

‘Verily, then, I may enter,’ said Kai, ‘for there is no better burnisher of swords than I.’

‘This will I tell Gwrnach the giant, and I will bring thee his answer.’

‘Bid the man come before me,’ cried Gwrnach, when the porter had told his tale, ‘for my sword stands much in need of polishing,’ so Kai passed in and saluted Gwrnach the giant.

‘Is it true what I hear of thee, that thou canst burnish swords?’

‘It is true,’ answered Kai. Then was the sword of Gwrnach brought to him.

‘Shall it be burnished white or blue?’ said Kai, taking a whetstone from under his arm.

‘As thou wilt,’ answered the giant, and speedily did Kai polish half the sword. The giant marvelled at his skill, and said:

‘It is a wonder that such a man as thou shouldst be without a companion.’

‘I have a companion, noble sir, but he has no skill in this art.’

‘What is his name?’ asked the giant.

‘Let the porter go forth, and I will tell him how he may know him. The head of his lance will leave its shaft, and draw blood from the wind, and descend upon its shaft again.’ So the porter opened the gate and Bedwyr entered.

Now there was much talk amongst those who remained without when the gate closed upon Bedwyr, and Goreu, son of Custennin, prevailed with the porter, and he and his companions got in also and hid themselves.

By this time the whole of the sword was polished, and Kai gave it into the hand of Gwrnach the giant, who felt it and said:

‘Thy work is good; I am content.’

Then said Kai:

‘It is thy scabbard that hath rusted thy sword; give it to me that I may take out the wooden sides of it and put in new ones.’ And he took the scabbard in one hand and the sword in the other, and came and stood behind the giant, as if he would have sheathed the sword in the scabbard. But with it he struck a blow at the head of the giant, and it rolled from his body. After that they despoiled the castle of its gold and jewels, and returned, bearing the sword of the giant, to Arthur’s court.

They told Arthur how they had sped, and they all took counsel together, and agreed that they must set out on the quest for Mabon the son of Modron, and Gwrhyr, who knew the languages of beasts and of birds, went with them. So they journeyed until they came to the nest of an ousel, and Gwrhyr spoke to her.

‘Tell me if thou knowest aught of Mabon the son of Modron, who was taken when three nights old from between his mother and the wall.’

And the ousel answered:

‘When I first came here I was a young bird, and there was a smith’s anvil in this place. But from that time no work has been done upon it, save that every evening I have pecked at it, till now there is not so much as the size of a nut remaining thereof. Yet all that time I have never once heard of the man you name. Still, there is a race of beasts older than I, and I will guide you to them.’

So the ousel flew before them, till she reached the stag of Redynvre; but when they inquired of the stag whether he knew aught of Mabon he shook his head.

‘When first I came hither,’ said he, ‘the plain was bare save for one oak sapling, which grew up to be an oak with a hundred branches. All that is left of that oak is a withered stump, but never once have I heard of the man you name. Nevertheless, as you are Arthur's men, I will guide you to the place where there is an animal older than I;' and the stag ran before them till he reached the owl of Cwm Cawlwyd. But when they inquired of the owl if he knew aught of Mabon he shook his head.

'When first I came hither,' said he, 'the valley was a wooded glen; then a race of men came and rooted it up. After that there grew a second wood, and then a third, which you see. Look at my wings also — are they not withered stumps? Yet until to-day I have never heard of the man you name. Still, I will guide you to the oldest animal in the world, and the one that has travelled most, the eagle of Gwern Abbey.' And he flew before them, as fast as his old wings would carry him, till he reached the eagle of Gwern Abbey, but when they inquired of the eagle whether he knew aught of Mabon he shook his head.

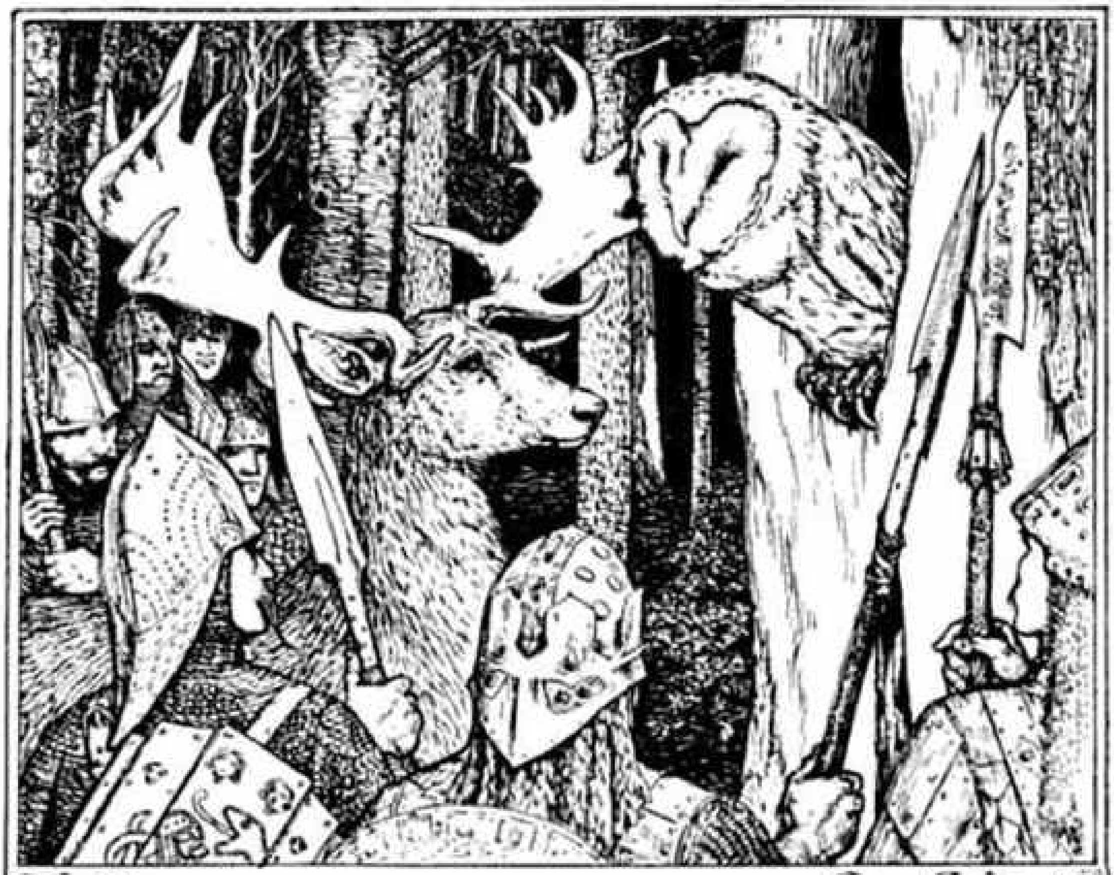

The Stag — of Redynvre brings the Seven Companions to the Owl of — Cwm Cawlwyd

'When I first came hither,' said the eagle, 'there was a rock here, and every evening I pecked at the stars from the top of it. Now, behold, it is not even a span high! But only once have I heard of the man you name, and that was when I went in search of food as far as Llyn Llyw. I swooped down upon a salmon, and struck my claws into him, but he drew me down under water till scarcely could I escape from him. Then I summoned all my kindred to destroy him, but he made peace with me, and I took fifty fish spears from his back. Unless he may know something of the man whom you seek I cannot tell who may. But I will guide you to the place where he is.'

So they followed the eagle, who flew before them, though so high was he in the sky, it was often hard to mark his flight. At length he stopped above a deep pool in a river.

'Salmon of Llyn Llyw,' he called, 'I have come to thee with an embassy from Arthur to inquire if thou knowest aught concerning Mabon the son of Modron?' And the Salmon answered:

'As much as I know I will tell thee. With every tide I go up the river, till I reach the walls of Gloucester, and there have I found such wrong as I never found elsewhere. And that you may see that what I say is true let two of you go thither on my shoulders.' So Kai and Gwrhyr went upon the shoulders of the salmon, and were carried under the walls of the prison, from which proceeded the sound of great weeping.

'Who is it that thus laments in this house of stone?'

'It is I, Mabon the son of Modron.'

'Will silver or gold bring thy freedom, or only battle and fighting?' asked Gwrhyr again.

'By fighting alone shall I be set free,' said Mabon.

Then they sent a messenger to Arthur to tell him that Mabon was found, and he brought all his warriors to the castle of Gloucester and fell fiercely upon it; while Kai and Bedwyr went on the shoulders of the salmon to the gate of the dungeon, and broke it down and carried away Mabon. And he now being free returned home with Arthur.

After this, on a certain day, as Gwrhyr was walking across a mountain he heard a grievous cry, and he hastened towards it. In a little valley he saw the heather burning and the fire spreading fast towards an anthill, and all the ants were hurrying to and fro, not knowing whither to go. Gwrhyr had pity on them, and put out the fire, and in gratitude the ants brought him the nine bushels of flax seed which Yspaddaden Penkawr required of Kilwch. And many of the other marvels were done likewise by Arthur and his knights, and at last it came to the fight with Trwyth the boar, to obtain the comb and the scissors and the razor that lay between his ears. But hard was the boar to catch, and fiercely did he fight when Arthur's men gave him battle, so that many of them were slain.

Up and down the country went Trwyth the boar, and Arthur followed after him, till they came to the Severn sea. There three knights caught his feet unawares and plunged him into the water, while one snatched the razor from him, and another seized the scissors. But before they laid hold of the comb he had shaken them all off, and neither man nor horse nor dog could reach him till he came to Cornwall, whither Arthur had sworn he should not go. Thither Arthur followed after him with his knights, and if it had been hard to win the razor and the scissors, the struggle for the comb was fiercer still. Often it seemed as if the boar would be the victor, but at length Arthur prevailed, and the boar was driven into the sea. And whether he was drowned or where he went no man knows to this day.

In the end all the marvels were done, and Kilwch set forward, and with him Goreu, the son of Custennin, to Yspaddaden Penkawr, bearing in their hands the razor, the scissors and the comb, and Yspaddaden Penkawr was shaved by Kaw.

‘Is thy daughter mine now?’ asked Kilwch.

‘She is thine,’ answered Yspaddaden, ‘but it is Arthur and none other who has won her for thee. Of my own free will thou shouldst never have had her, for now I must lose my life.’ And as he spake Goreu the son of Custennin cut off his head, as it had been ordained, and Arthur’s hosts returned each man to his own country.

From the ‘Mabinogion.’

The Fairy Tales

Balliol College, Oxford — where Lang studied

LIST OF THE FAIRY TALES IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

THE BRONZE RING
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THE DAUGHTER OF BUK ETTEMSUCH
LAUGHING EYE AND WEEPING EYE, OR THE LIMPING FOX
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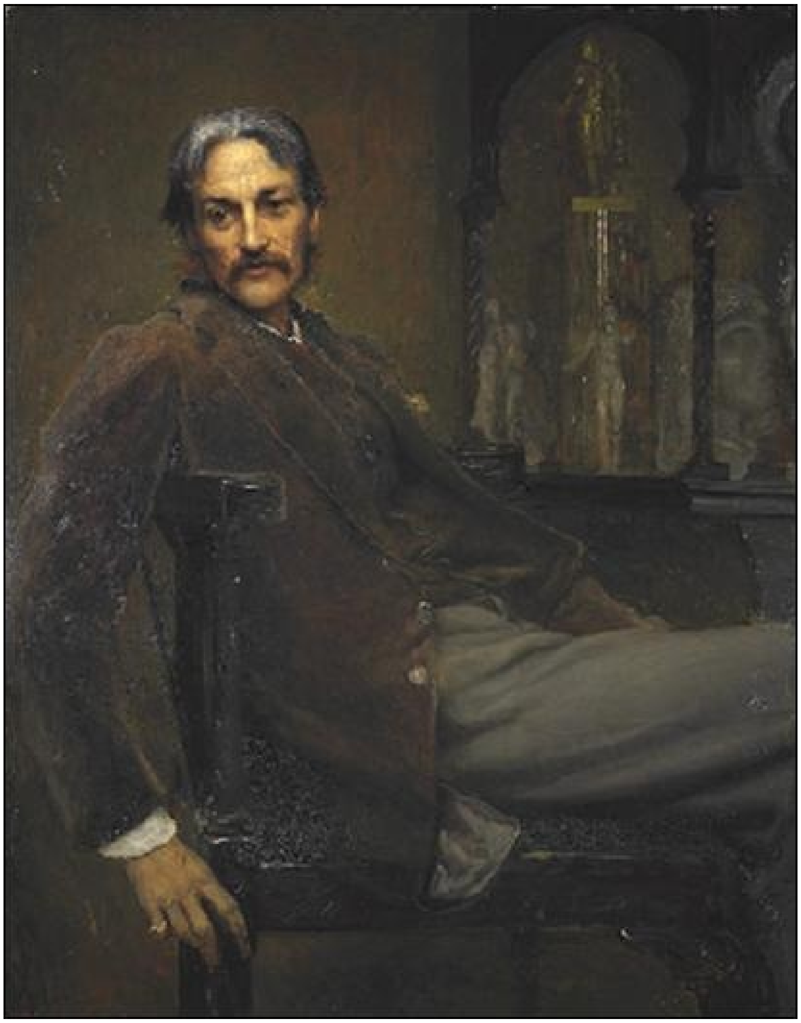

Andrew Lang by W. B. Richmond, 1894

MUCH DARKER DAYS

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BOOK I

PREFACE

A belief that modern Christmas fiction is too cheerful in tone, too artistic in construction, and too original in motive, has inspired the author of this tale of middle-class life. He trusts that he has escaped, at least, the errors he deplores, and has set an example of a more seasonable and sensational style of narrative.

CHAPTER I. — The Curse (Registered).

WHEN this story of my life, or of such parts of it as are not deemed wholly unfit for publication, is read (and, no doubt, a public which devoured 'Scrawled Black' will stand almost anything), it will be found that I have sometimes acted without prim cautiousness — that I have, in fact, wallowed in crime. Stillicide and Mayhem I (rare old crimes!) are child's play to *me*, who have been an 'accessory after the fact!' In excuse, I can but plead two things-the excellence of the opportunity to do so, and the weakness of the resistance which my victim offered.

If you cannot allow for these, throw the book out of the railway-carriage window! You have paid your money, and to the verdict of your pale morality or absurd sense of art in fiction I am therefore absolutely indifferent. You are too angelic for me; I am too fiendish for you. Let us agree to differ. I say nothing about my boyhood. Twenty-five years ago a poor boy-but no matter. *I* was that boy! I hurry on to the soaring period of manhood, 'when the strength, the nerve, the intellect is or should be at its height,' or *are* or should be at *their* height, if you *must* have grammar in a Christmas Annual. *My* nerve was at its height: I was thirty.

Yet, what was I then? A miserable moonstruck mortal, duly entitled to write M.D. (of Tarrytown College, Alaska) after my name — for the title of Doctor is useful in the profession — but with no other source of enjoyment or emotional recreation in a cold, casual world. Often and often have I written M.D. after my name, till the glowing pleasure palled, and I have sunk back asking, 'Has life, then, no more than this to offer?'

Bear with me if I write like this for ever so many pages; bear with me, it is such easy writing, and only thus can I hope to make you understand my subsequent and slightly peculiar conduct.

How rare was hers, the loveliness of the woman I lost — of her whose loss brought me down to the condition I attempt to depict!

How strange was her rich beauty! She was at once dark and fair — *la blonde et la brune!* How different from the Spotted Girls and Two-headed Nightingales whom I have often seen exhibited, and drawing money too, as the types of physical imperfections! Warm Southern blood glowed darkly in one of Philippa's cheeks — the left; pale Teutonic grace smiled in the other — the right. Her mother was a fair blonde Englishwoman, but it was Old Calabar that gave her daughter those curls of sable wool, contrasting so exquisitely with her silken-golden tresses. Her English mother may have lent Philippa many exquisite graces, but it was from her father, a pure-blooded negro, that she inherited her classic outline of profile.

Philippa, in fact, was a natural arrangement in black and white. Viewed from one side she appeared the Venus of the Gold Coast, from the other she outshone the Hellenic Aphrodite. From any point of view she was an extraordinarily attractive addition to the Exhibition and Menagerie which at that time I was running in the Midland Counties.

Her father, the nature of whose avocation I never thought it necessary to inquire into, was a sea cook on board a Peninsular and Oriental steamer. His profession thus prevented him from being a permanent resident in this, or indeed in any other country.

Our first meeting was brought about in a most prosaic way. Her mother consulted me professionally about Philippa’s prospects. We did not at that time come to terms. I thought I might conclude a more advantageous arrangement if Philippa’s *heart* was touched, if she would be mine. But she did not love me. Moreover, she was ambitious; she knew, small blame to her, how unique she was.

‘The fact is,’ she would observe when I pressed my suit, ‘the fact is I look higher than a mere showman, even if he can write M.D. after his name.’ Philippa soon left the circuit ‘to better herself.’

In a short time a telegram from her apprised me that she was an orphan. I flew to where she lodged, in a quiet, respectable street, near Ratcliff Highway. She expressed her intention of staying here for some time.

‘But alone, Philippa?’

(She was but eight-and-thirty).

‘Not so much alone as you suppose,’ she replied archly.

This should have warned me, but again I passionately urged my plea. I offered most attractive inducements. A line to herself in the bills! Everything found!

‘Basil,’ she observed, blushing in her usual partial manner, ‘you are a day after the fair.’

‘But there are plenty of fairs,’ I cried, ‘all of which we attend regularly. What can you mean? Has another — —’

‘He hev,’ said Philippa, demurely but decidedly.

‘You are engaged?’ She raised her lovely hand, and was showing me a gold wedding circlet, when the door opened, and a strikingly handsome man of some forty summers entered.

There was something written in his face (a dark contusion, in fact, under the left eye) which told me that he could not be a pure and high-souled Christian gentleman.

‘Basil South, M.D.’ said Philippa, introducing us. ‘Mr. Baby Farmer’ (obviously a name of endearment), and again a rosy blush crept round her neck in the usual partial manner, which made one of her most peculiar charms.

I bowed mechanically, and, amid a few dishevelled remarks on the weather, left the house the most disappointed showman in England.

‘Cur, sneak, coward, villain!’ I hissed when I felt sure I was well out of hearing. ‘Farewell, farewell, Philippa!’

To drown remembrance and regret, I remained in town, striving in a course of what moralists call ‘gaiety’ to forget what I had lost.

How many try the same prescription, and seem rather to like it! I often met my fellow-patients.

One day, on the steps of the Aquarium, I saw the man whom I suspected of not being Philippa’s husband.

‘Who is that cove?’ I asked.

‘Him with the gardenia?’ replied a friend, idiomatically. ‘That is Sir Runan Errand, the amateur showman — him that runs the Live Mermaid, the Missing Link, and Koot Hoomi, the Mahatma of the Mountain.’

‘What kind of man is he?’

‘Just about the usual kind of man you see generally here. Just about as hot as they make them. Mad about having a show of his own; crazed on two-headed calves.’

‘Is he married?’

‘If every lady who calls herself Lady Errand had a legal title to do so, the “Baronetage” would have to be extended to several supplementary volumes.’

And this was Philippa’s husband!

What was she among so many?

My impulse was to demand an explanation from the baronet, but for reasons not wholly unconnected with my height and fighting weight, I abstained.

I did better. I went to my hotel, called for the hotel book, and registered an oath, which is, therefore, copyright. I swore that in twenty-five years I would be even with him I hated. I prayed, rather inconsistently, that honour and happiness might be the lot of her I had lost. After that I felt better.

CHAPTER II. — A Villain’s By-Blow.

PHILIPPA was another’s! Life was no longer worth living. Hope was evaluated; ambition was blunted. The interest which I had hitherto felt in my profession vanished. All the spring, the elasticity seemed taken out of my two Bounding Brothers from the Gutta Percha coast. For months I did my work in a perfunctory manner. I added a Tattooed Man to my exhibition and a Two-headed Snake, also a White-eyed Botocudo, who played the guitar, and a pair of Siamese Twins, who were fired out of a double-barrelled cannon, and then did the lofty trapeze business. They drew, but success gave me no pleasure. So long as I made money enough for my daily needs (and whisky was cheap), what recked I? My mood was none of the sweetest. My friends fell off from me; ay, they fell like nine-pins whenever I could get within reach of them. I was alone in the world.

You will not be surprised to hear it; the wretched have no friends. So things went on for a year. I became worse instead of better. My gloom deepened, my liver grew more and more confirmed in its morbid inaction. These are not lover’s rhapsodies, they merely show the state of my body and mind, and explain what purists may condemn. In this condition I heard without hypocritical regret that a distant relative (a long-lost uncle) had conveniently left me his vast property. I cared only because it enabled me to withdraw from the profession. I disposed of my exhibition, or rather I let it go for a song. I simply handed over the Tattooed Man, the Artillery Twins, and the Double-headed Serpent to the first-comer, who happened to be a rural dean. Far in the deeps of the country, near the little town of Roding, on a lonely highway, where no man ever came, I took a ‘pike. Here I dwelt like a hermit, refusing to give change to the rare passers-by in carts and gigs, and attended by a handy fellow, William Evans, stolid as the Sphynx, which word, for reasons that may or may not appear later in this narrative, I prefer to spell with a *y*, contrary to the best authorities and usual custom.

It was midwinter, and midnight. My room lay in darkness. Heavy snow was falling. I went to the window and flattened my nose against the pane.

‘What,’ I asked myself, ‘is most like a cat looking out of a window?’

‘A cat looking in at a window,’ answered a silvery voice from the darkness.

Flattened against the self-same pane was another nose, a woman’s. It was the lovely organ of mixed architecture belonging to Philippa! With a low cry of amazement, I broke the pane: it was no idle vision, no case of the ‘horrors;’ the cold, cold nose of my Philippa encountered my own. The ice was now broken; she swept into my chamber, lovelier than ever in her strange unearthly beauty, and a new sealskin coat. Then she seated herself with careless grace, tilting back her chair, and resting her feet on the chimney-piece.

‘Dear Philippa,’ I exclaimed politely, ‘how is your husband?’

‘Husband! I have none,’ she hissed. ‘Tell me, Basil, did you ever hate a fellow no end?’

‘Yes,’ I answered, truly; for, like Mr. Carlyle, I just detested most people, and him who had robbed me of Philippa most of all.

‘Do you know what he did, Basil? *He insisted on having a latch-key!* Did you ever hate a man?’

I threw out my arms. My heart was full of bitterness.

‘He did more! He has refused to pay my last quarter’s salary. Basil, didn’t you ever hate a man?’

My brain reeled at these repeated outrages.

‘And where are you staying at present, Philippa? I hope you are pretty comfortable?’ I inquired, anxiously.

Philippa went on: ‘My husband as was has chucked me. I was about to have a baby. I bored him. I was in the way — in the family-way. Basil, did you ever hate a fellow? If not, read this letter.’

She threw a letter towards me. She chucked it with all her old gracious dexterity. It was dated from Monte Carlo, and ran thus: —

‘As we don’t seem quite to hit it off, I think I may as well finish this business of our marriage. The shortest way to make things clear to your very limited intelligence is to assure you that you are not my wife at all. Before I married you I was the husband of the Live Mermaid. She has died since then, and I might have married you over and over again; but I was not quite so infatuated. I shall just run across and settle up about this little affair on Wednesday. As you are five miles from the station, as the weather is perfectly awful, as moreover I am a luxurious, self-indulgent baronet and as this story would never get on unless I walked, don’t send to meet me. I would *rather* walk.’

Here was a pretty letter from a fond husband. ‘But, ha! proud noble,’ I whispered to my heart, ‘you and me shall meet tomorrow.’

‘And where are you staying, Philippa?’ I repeated, to lead the conversation into a more agreeable channel.

‘With a Mrs. Thompson,’ she replied; ‘a lady connected with Sir Runan.’

‘Very well, let me call for your things tomorrow. I can pass myself off as your brother, you know.’

‘My half-brother,’ said Philippa, blushing, ‘on the mother’s side.’

The brave girl thought of *everything*. The child of white parents, I should have in vain pretended to be Philippa's full brother. They would not have believed me had I sworn it.

'Don't you think,' Philippa continued, as a sudden thought occurred to her, 'that as it is almost midnight and snowing heavily it would be more proper for me to return to Mrs. Thompson's?'

There was no contesting this.

We walked together to the house of that lady, and at my suggestion Philippa sought her couch. I sat down and awaited the advent of Mrs. Thompson. She soon appeared.

A woman of about five-and-thirty, with an aquiline face, and a long, dark, silky beard sweeping down to her waist. Whatever this woman's charms might have been for me when I was still in the profession, she could now boast of very few. Doubtless she had been in Sir Runan's show, and was one of his victims.

I apologised for the lateness of my call, and entered at once on business.

Mrs. Thompson remarked that 'my sister's health was not as it should be,' — not all she could wish.

'I do not wish to alarm you; no doubt you, her brother, are *used* to it; but, for a girl as mad as a hatter — well, I'll trouble you!'

'I myself can write M.D. after my name,' I replied,' and you are related, I think, to Sir Runan Errand?'

'We are connections,' she said, not taking the point of my sarcasm. 'His conduct rarely astonishes me. When I found, however, that this lady, your sister, was his wife, I own, for once, I *was* surprised.'

Feeling that this woman had the better of it, with her calm, polished, highbred sarcasms, I walked back to the 'pike, full of hopes of a sweet revenge.

As, however, I had never spoken to a baronet before, I could not but fear that his lofty air of superior rank might daunt me when we met tomorrow.

CHAPTER III. — Mes Gages! Mes Gages!

NEXT morning came, chill and grey, and reminded me that I had two duties. I was to wait at home till Philippa came over from Mrs. Thompson’s, and I was also to hang about the road from the station, and challenge Sir Runan to mortal combat. Can duties clash? They can. They did! The hours lagged slowly by, while I read Sir Runan’s letter, read and re-read it, registered and re-registered (a pretty term of my own invention) this vow of vengeance.

Philippa’s ‘things ‘ — her boxes with all her properties — arrived in due time.

Philippa did not.

I passed a distracted day, now bounding forth half way to the railway station to meet Sir Runan, now speeding back at the top of my pace to welcome Philippa at the ‘pike.

As I knew not by what train Sir Runan would reach Roding, nor when Philippa might be looked for, I thus obtained exercise enough to make up for months of inaction.

Finally the last train was due.

It was now pitch-dark and snowing heavily, the very time which Philippa generally chose for a quiet evening walk.

I rushed half-way to Roding, changed my mind, headed back, and arrived at the ‘pike.

‘Has a lady called for me?’ I asked the Sphynx.

‘Now, is it likely, sir?’ answered my fellow, with rough humour.

‘Well, I must go and meet her,’ I cried, and, hastily snatching a bull’s-eye lantern and policeman’s rattle from the Sphynx, I plunged into the darkness.

First I hurried to Mrs. Thompson’s, where I learned that Philippa had just gone out for a stroll after a somewhat prolonged luncheon. This was like Philippa. I recognised that shrinking modesty which always made her prefer to veil her charms by walking about after nightfall.

Turning from Mrs. Thompson’s, I felt the snow more sharply on my face. Furiously, blindly, madly it whirled here and drifted there.

Should I go for Sir Runan? Should I wait where I was? Should I whistle for a cab? Should I return to the ‘pike?

Suddenly out of the snow came a peal of silvery laughter. Philippa waltzed gracefully by in a long ulster whitened with snow.

I detected her solely by means of my dark lantern.

I rushed on her, I seized her. I said, ‘Philippa, come back with me!’

‘No, all the fun’s in the front,’ shrieked Philippa. ‘My quarter’s salary! Oh, my last quarter’s salary!’

With these wild words, like bullets from a Gatling gun rattling in my ears, I seized Philippa’s hand.

Something fell, and would have rattled on the hard high road had it not been for the snow.

I stooped to pick up this shining object, and with one more wild yell of ‘My quarter’s salary!’ Philippa waltzed again into the darkness.

Fatigued with the somewhat exhausting and unusual character of the day’s performances, and out of training as I was, I could not follow her.

Mechanically, I still groped on the ground, and picked up a small chill object.

It was a latch-key! I thrust it in my pocket with my other keys.

Then a thought occurred to me, and I chucked it over the hedge, to serve as circumstantial evidence. Next I turned and went up the road, springing my rattle and flashing my bull’s-eye lantern on every side, like Mr. Pickwick when he alarmed the scientific gentleman.

Suddenly, with a cry of horror, I stopped short. At my very feet, in the little circle of concentrated light thrown by the lantern, lay a white crushed, cylindrical mass.

That mass I had seen before in the warm summer weather — that mass, once a white hat, had adorned the brows of that masher!

It was Sir Runan’s topper!

CHAPTER IV. — As A Hatter!

YES, the white hat, lying there all battered and crushed on the white snow, must be the hat of Sir Runan! Who else but the tigerish aristocrat that disdained the homely four-wheeler and preferred to walk five miles to his victim on this night of dread — who else would wear the gay gossamer of July in stormy December?

In that hat, thanks doubtless to its airy *insouciant* grace, he had won Philippa; in that hat he would have bearded her, defied her, and cast her off! The cruelty of man! The larger and bulkier crumpled heap which lay on the road a little beyond the hat, that heap with all its outlines already blurred by snow, that heap must be the baronet himself!

Oh, but this was vengeance, swift, deadly vengeance!

But how, but how had she wreaked it? *She*, already my heart whispered *she!*

Was my peerless Philippa then a murderess?

Oh, say not so; call hers (ye would do so an she had been an Irish felon) ‘the wild justice of revenge,’ or the speedy execution of the outraged creditor.

Killed by Philippa!

Yes, and why? The answer was only too obvious. She must have gone forth to meet him, and to wring from him, by what means she might, that quarter’s salary which the dastard had left unpaid. Then my thoughts flew to the door-key, the cause of that fierce family hatred which burned between Philippa and her betrayer. That latch-key she had wrested from him, it had fallen from her hand, and I — I had pitched it into space!

Overcome with emotion, I staggered in the direction of the ‘pike. All the way, in the blinding, whirling snow, I traced the unobliterated prints of a small fairy foot.

This was a dreary comfort! Philippa had gone before me; the prints of the one small foot were hers. She must, then, have hopped all the way! Could such a mode of progression be consistent with a feeling of guilt? Could remorse step so gaily?

My man William, the Sphynx, opened the door to me. Assuming a natural air, I observed: —

‘Miss South is at home?’

‘Yes, sir. Just come in, sir.’

‘Where is she now?’

‘Well, sir, she just is on the rampage. “I’ll make ‘is fur fly,” she up and sez,

sez she, when she heard as you was hout. Not a nice young lady for a small tea-party, sir,' he added, lowering his voice; 'a regular out-and-outer your sister is, to be sure.'

The Sphynx, in spite of his stolidity, occasionally ventured upon some slight liberty when addressing me.

I made a gay rejoinder, reflecting on the character of his own unmarried female relations, and entered the room.

Philippa was sitting on the lofty, dark oak chimney-piece, with her feet dangling unconventionally over the fireplace. The snow, melting from her little boots and her hair, had made a large puddle on the floor.

I came up and stood waiting for her to speak, but she kept pettishly swinging her small feet, as one who, by the action, means to signify displeasure.

'Philippa,' I said sternly, 'speak to me.'

'Well, here's a gay old flare-up!' cried Philippa, leaping from the chimney-piece, and folding her arms fiercely akimbo.

'Who are you? Where's the baby? *You* a brother; you're a pretty brother! Is *this* the way you keep 'pointments with a poor girl? Who killed the baby? You did — you *all* did it.'

Her words ran one into the other, as with an eloquence, which I cannot hope to reproduce (and indeed my excellent publisher would not permit it for a moment), she continued to dance derisively at me, and to heap reproaches of the most vexatious and frivolous nature on my head.

'Philippa,' I remarked at last, 'you frivol too much.'

A sullen look settled on her face, and, with the aid of a chair, she reseated herself in her former listless, drooping attitude upon the chimney-piece.

On beholding these symptoms, on hearing these reproaches, a great wave of joy swept over my heart. Manifestly, Philippa was indeed, as Mrs. Thompson had said, 'as mad as a hatter.' Whatever she might have done did not count, and was all right. We would plead insanity.

She had fallen a victim to a mental disease, the source of which I have no hesitation in saying has not yet been properly investigated. So far as I know there is no monograph on the subject, or certainly I would have read it up carefully for the purpose of this Christmas Annual. I cannot get on without a mad woman in my stories, and if I can't find a proper case in the medical books, why, I invent one, or take it from the French. This one I have invented.

The details of Philippa's case, though of vast and momentous professional interest, I shall reserve for a communication to some journal of Science.

As for the treatment, I measured out no less than sixty drops of laudanum, with an equal amount of very old brandy, in a separate vessel. But preparing a dose and getting a patient like this to take it, are two different things. I succeeded by the following device.

I sent for some hot water and sugar and a lemon. I mixed the boiling element carefully with the brandy, and (separately) with the laudanum.

I took a little of the *former* beverage. Philippa with unaffected interest beheld me repeat this action again and again. A softer, more contented look stole over her beautiful face. I seized the moment. Once more I pressed the potion (the *other* potion) upon her.

This time successfully.

Softly murmuring ‘More sugar,’ Philippa sank into a sleep — sound as the sleep of death.

Philippa might awaken, I hoped, with her memory free from the events of the day.

As Princess Toto, in the weird old Elizabethan tragedy, quite forgot the circumstance of her Marriage, so Philippa might entirely forget her Murder.

When we remember what women are, the latter instance of obliviousness appears the more probable.

CHAPTER V. — The White Groom.

I SHALL, I am sure, scarcely be credited when I say that Philippa's unconsciousness lasted for sixteen days. I had wished her to sleep so long that the memory of her deeds on the awful night should fade from her memory. She seemed likely to do so.

All the time she slept I felt more and more secure, because the snow never ceased falling. It must have been thirty feet deep above all that was mortal of Sir Runan Errand. The deeper the better. The baronet was never missed by any one, curious to say. No inquiries were made; and this might have puzzled a person less unacquainted than myself with the manners of baronets and their friends.

Sometimes an awful fascination led me along the road where I had found the broken, battered mass. I fancied I could see the very drift where the thing lay, and a dreary temptation (dating probably from the old times when I had some wild beasts in the exhibition) urged me to 'stir it up with a long pole.' I resisted it, and, bitterly weeping, I turned away towards Philippa's bedside.

As I walked I met Mrs. Thompson.

'Does she hate him?' she asked suddenly.

'Forgiveness is a Christian virtue,' I answered evasively.

I could not trust this woman.

'Listen,' she said, 'and try to understand. If I thought she hated him, I would tell her something. If she thought you hated them, he would tell me something. If ye or you thought he hated her, I would tell him something. I will wait and see.'

She left me to make the best (which was not much) of her enigmatical words.

She was evidently a strange woman.

I felt that she was mixed up in Sir Runan's early life, and that we were mixed up in Sir Runan's early death — in fact, that everything was very mixed indeed.

She came back. 'Give me your name and college,' she said, 'not necessarily for publication,' and I divined that she had once been a proctor at Girton. I gave her my address at the public-house round the corner, and we parted, Mrs. Thompson whispering that she 'would write.'

On reaching home I leaped to Philippa's apartment.

A great change had come over her.

She was awake!

I became at once a prey to the wildest anxiety.

The difficulties of my position for the first time revealed themselves to me. If

Philippa remained insane, how was I to remove her from the scene of her — alas! of her crime? If Philippa had become sane, her position under my roof was extremely compromising. Again, if she were insane, a jury might acquit her, when the snow melted and revealed all that was left of the baronet. But, in that case, what pleasure or profit could I derive from the society of an insane Philippa? Supposing, on the other hand, she was sane, then was I not an ‘accessory after the fact,’ and liable to all the pains and penalties of such a crime?

Here the final question arose and shook its ghostly finger at me: ‘Can a sane man be an accessory after the fact in a murder committed by an insane woman?’

So far as I know, there is no monograph on this subject, or certainly I would have consulted it for the purpose of this Christmas Annual.

All these questions swept like lightning through my brain, as I knelt by Philippa’s bedside, and awaited her first word.

‘*Bon jour*, Philippine,’ I said.

‘Basil,’ she replied, ‘where am I?’

‘Under my roof — your brother’s roof,’ I said.

‘Brother! oh, stow that bosh!’ she said, turning languidly away.

There could not be a doubt of it, Philippa was herself again!

I rose pensively, and wandered out towards the stables.

Covered with white snow over a white macintosh, I met by the coach-house door William, the Sphynx.

The White Groom!

Twiddling a small object, *a door-key of peculiar make*, in his hand, he grinned stolidly at me.

‘She’s a rum un, squire, your sister, she be,’ chuckled the Sphynx.

‘William,’ I said, ‘go to Roding, and bring back two nurses, even if they have to hire twenty drags to draw them here. And, William, bring some drugs in the drags.’

By setting him on this expedition I got rid of the Sphynx. Was he a witness? *He was certainly acquainted with the nature of an oath!*

CHAPTER VI. — Hard As Nails.

OF course when I woke next morning my first thought was of Philippa; my second was of the weather. Always interesting, meteorological observation becomes peculiarly absorbing when it entirely depends on the thermometer whether you shall, or shall not, be arrested as an accessory after the fact, or (as lawyers say) *post-mortem*. My heart sank into my boots, or rather (for I had not yet dressed) into my slippers, when I found that, for the first time during sixteen days, the snow had ceased falling. I threw up the sash, the cold air cut me like a knife. Mechanically I threw up the sponge; it struck hard against the ceiling, and fell back a mass of brittle, jingling icicles, so severe was the iron frost that had bound it.

I gathered up a handful of snow from the window-sill. It crumbled in my fingers like patent camphorated tooth-powder, for which purpose I instantly proceeded to use it. Necessity is the mother of invention. Then I turned, as a final test, to my bath. Oh, joy! it was frozen ten inches thick! No tub for me today! I ran downstairs gleefully, and glanced at the thermometer outside my study window. Hooray, it registered twenty degrees below zero! It registered! That reminded me of my oath! I registered it once more, regardless of legal expenses.

My spirits rose as rapidly as the glass had fallen. The wind was due east, not generally a matter for indecent exultation.

But while the wind was due east, so long the frost would last, and that white mass on the roadside would remain *in statu quo*.

So long, Philippa was safe.

After that her fate, and mine too, depended on the eccentricities of a jury, the chartered libertinism of an ermined judge, the humour of the law, on a series of points without precedent concerning which no monograph had as yet been written; and, as a last desperate resource, on the letters of a sympathetic British public in the penny papers. The penny papers, the criminal’s latest broadsheet anchor! Under the exasperating circumstances, Philippa remained as well as could be expected. She spoke little, but ate and drank a good deal. Day after day the brave black frost lasted, and the snowy grave hid all that it would have been highly inconvenient for me to have discovered. The heavens themselves seemed to be shielding us and working for us. Do the heavens generally shield accessories after the fact, and ladies who have shortened the careers of their lords? These questions I leave to the casuist, the meteorologist, the compilers of weather forecasts, and other constituted authorities on matters connected with theology and the state of the barometer.

I have not given the year in which these unobtrusive events occurred.

Many who can remember that mighty fall of snow, exceeding aught in the recollection of the oldest inhabitant, and the time during which the frost kept it on the earth, will be able and willing to fix the date.

I do not object to their thus occupying their leisure with chronological research.

If they feel at all baffled by the difficulties of the problem, I will give them an additional ‘light’: *Since that year there has been no weather like it*.

Answers may be sent to the Puzzle Editor of *Truth*.

Day by day Philippa grew better and better. This appears to be the usual result, of excessively seasonable weather acting on a constitution previously undermined by bigamy, murder, and similar excesses.

I spare all technical summary of the case, sufficient to say that this was one of the rare instances in which the mind, totally unhinged, is restored to its balance by sixty drops of laudanum taken fasting, with a squeeze of lemon, after violent exercise on an empty stomach.

The case is almost unique; but, had things fallen out otherwise, this story could never have been got ready in time to romp in before the other Christmas Annuals.

Matters would have become really *too* complicated!

As Philippa recovered, it became more and more evident even to the most dilatory mind that the sooner she left the scene of her late unrehearsed performance the better.

The baronet had not yet been missed — indeed, he never *was* missed, and that is one of the very most remarkable points in the whole affair.

When he *did* come to be missed, however, he would naturally be sought for in the neighbourhood of the most recent and attractive of his wives.

That wife was Philippa.

Everything pointed to instant flight.

But how was I to get Philippa to see this? *Ex hypothesi* she knew nothing of the murder. On the other hand, all her pure, though passionate nature would revolt against sharing my home longer than was necessary. But would not the same purity prevent her from accompanying me abroad?

Brother and sister we had called ourselves but Philippa had never been the dupe of this terminology.

Besides, was not her position, in any case, just a little shady?

An idea now occurred to me for the first time. Many men would long ere now have asked their mothers to *chaperon* them. It flashed across me that I had a mother.

He who says ‘mother’ says ‘chaperon.’

I would take my Philippa to my mother. Philippa was now completely convalescent.

I can only attribute my lingering to the sense of fatality that all things would come round and be all square.

Love I had laid aside till I could see my way a little clearer in the certainly perplexing combination of circumstances. Nevertheless, Philippa, I say it advisedly, seemed to me a good deal more pure and innocent than when we first met. True, she had been secretly married to a man under a name which she knew to be false.

True, she had given birth to a baby whose later fate remains a mystery even to this day. True, her hands were stained with the blood of Sir Runan Errand.

But why speak of Redistribution, why agitate for Woman’s Suffrage, if trifles like these are to obstruct a girl’s path in society?

Philippa’s wrongs had goaded her to madness. Her madness was responsible for the act. She was not mad any longer. Therefore she was not responsible. Therefore Philippa was innocent.

If she became mad again, then it would be time to speak of guilt.

But would these arguments be as powerful with a British as they certainly would have proved with a French jury?

Once Philippa seemed to awaken to a sense of the situation.

Once she asked me ‘How she came to my home that night?’

‘You came *out of* the whirling snow, and *in* a high state of delirium,’ I answered, epigrammatically.

‘I thought I came on foot,’ she replied, dreamily.

‘But, Basil,’ she went on, ‘what afterwards? What’s the next move, my noble sportsman?’

What, indeed! Philippa had me there.

Clearly it was time to move.

In order to avert suspicion, I thought it was better not to shut up my house.

For the same purpose, I did a little in crime on my own account.

A man tires of only being an accessory.

William, the Sphynx, obviously ‘was in the know,’ as sporting characters say. Was in the know of what was in the snow! I must silence William.

I took my measures quietly.

First I laid in two dozen of very curious pale sherry at half-a-crown.

I bought each bottle at a separate shop in a different disguise (making twenty-four in all), that my proceedings might not attract attention.

I laid down the deadly fluid with all proper caution in the cellar.

At parting from William I gave him five shillings and the cellar key, telling him to be very careful, and await my instructions.

I knew well that long before my ‘instructions’ could reach him, the faithful William would be speechless, and far beyond the reach of human science.

His secret would sleep with the White Groom.

Then Philippa and I drove to town, Philippa asking me conundrums, like Nebuchadnezzar.

‘There was something I dreamed of. Tell me what it was?’ she asked.

But, though better informed than the Wise Men and Soothsayers of old, I did not gratify her unusual desire.

On reaching town I drove straight to the hotel at which my mother was staying.

It was one of those highly-priced private hotels in the New Out.

As, however, I had no desire to purchase this place of entertainment, the exorbitant value set on it by its proprietors did not affect my spirits.

In a few minutes I had told my mother all save two things: the business of the baby, and the fate which had overtaken Sir Runan.

With these trifling exceptions she knew all.

To fall into Philippa’s arms was, to my still active parent, the work of a moment.

Then Philippa looked at me with an artless wink.

‘Basil, my brother, you are really too good.’

Ah, how happy I should have felt could that one dark night’s work have been undone!

CHAPTER VII. — Rescue And Retire!

HITHERTO I have said little about my mother, and I may even seem to have regarded that lady in the light of a temporary convenience. My readers will, however, already have guessed that *my* mother was no common character.

Consider for a moment the position which she so readily consented to occupy.

The trifling details about the sudden decease of Sir Runan and the affair of the baby, as we have seen, I had thought it better *not* to name to her.

Matters, therefore, in her opinion, stood thus: — Philippa was the victim of a baronet’s wiles.

When off with the new love, she had promptly returned and passed a considerable time under the roof of the old love; that is, of myself.

Then I had suddenly arrived with this eligible prospective daughter-in-law at my mother’s high-priced hotel, and I kept insisting that we should at once migrate, we three, to foreign parts — the more foreign the better.

I had especially dilated on the charms of the scenery and the salubrity of the climate in *countries where there was no extradition treaty with England*.

Even if there was nothing in these circumstances to arouse the watchful jealousy of a mother, it must be remembered that, as a *chaperon*, she did seem to come a little late in the day.

‘As you have lived together so long without me,’ some parents would have observed, ‘you can do without me altogether.’

None of these trivial objections occurred to my mother.

She was good-nature itself.

Just returned from a professional tour on the Continent (she was, I should have said, in the profession herself, and admirably filled the *exigeant* part of Stout Lady in a highly respectable exhibition), my mother at once began to pack up her properties and make ready to accompany us.

Never was there a more good-humoured *chaperon*. If one of us entered the room where she was sitting with the other, she would humorously give me a push, and observing ‘Two is company, young people, three is none,’ would toddle off with all the alacrity that her figure and age permitted.

I learned from inquiries addressed to the *Family Herald* (correspondence column) that the Soudan was then, even as it is now, the land safest against English law. Spain, in this respect, was reckoned a bad second.

The very next day I again broached the subject of foreign travel to my mother.

It was already obvious that the frost would not last for ever. Once the snow melted, once the crushed mass that had been a baronet was discovered, circumstantial evidence would point to Philippa. True, there was no one save myself who could positively *swear* that Philippa had killed Sir Runan. Again, though I could positively swear it, my knowledge was only an inference of my own. Philippa herself had completely forgotten the circumstance. But the suspicions of the Bearded Woman and of the White Groom were sure to be aroused, and the Soudan I resolved to seek without an hour's delay.

I reckoned without my hostess.

My mother at first demurred.

'You certainly don't look well, Basil. But why the Soudan?'

'A whim, a sick man's fancy. Perhaps because it is not so very remote from Old Calabar, the country of Philippa's own father. Mother, tell me, how do you like her?'

'She is the woman you love, and however shady her antecedents, however peculiar her style of conversation, she is, she must be, blameless. To say more, after so short an acquaintance, might savour of haste and exaggeration.'

A woman's logic!

'Then you *will* come to the Soudan with us to-morrow?'

'No, my child, further south than Spain I will *not* go, not this journey!'

Here Philippa entered.

'Well, what's the next news, old man?' she said.

'To Spain, to-morrow!'

'Rain, rain, Go to Spain, Be sure you don't come back again.'

sang sweet Philippa, in childish high spirits.

I had rarely seen her thus!

Alas, Philippa's nursery charm against the rain proved worse than unavailing.

That afternoon, after several months of brave black frost, which had gripped the land in its stern clasp, the rain began to fall heavily.

The white veil of snow gradually withdrew.

All that night I dreamed of the white snow slowly vanishing from the white hat.

Next morning the snow had vanished, and the white hat must have been obvious to the wayfaring man though a fool.

Next morning, and the next, and the next, found me still in London.

Why?

My mother was shopping!

Oh, the awful torture of having a gay mother shopping the solemn hours away, when each instant drew her son nearer to the doom of an accessory after the fact!

My mother did not object to travel, but she *did* like to have her little comforts about her.

She occupied herself in purchasing — A water-bed.

A *boule*, or hot-water bottle.

A portable stove.

A travelling kitchen-range.

A medicine chest.

A complete set of Ollendorff.

Ten thousand pots of Dundee marmalade. And such other articles as she deemed essential to her comfort and safety during the expedition. In vain I urged that our motto was *Rescue and Retire*, and that such elaborate preparations might prevent our retiring from our native shore, and therefore make rescue exceedingly problematical.

My Tory mother only answered by quoting the example of Lord Wolseley and the Nile Expedition.

‘How long did *they* tarry among the pots — the marmalade pots?’ said my mother. ‘Did *they* start before every mess had its proper share of extra teaspoons in case of accident, and a double supply of patent respirators for the drummer-boys, and of snow-shoes for the Canadian boatmen in case the climate proved uncertain?’

My mother’s historical knowledge, and the unique example of provident and exhaustive equipment which she cited, reduced me to silence, but did not diminish my anxiety. The delay made me nervous, excited, and chippy.

To-morrow morning we were to start.

To-morrow morning was too late.

With an effort I opened the morning paper — the *Morning Post*, as it happened — and ran hastily up and down the columns, active exercise having been recommended to me. What cared I for politics, foreign news, or even the sportive intelligence? All I sought for was a paragraph headed ‘Horrible Disclosures,’ or, ‘Awful Death of a Baronet.’ I ran up and down the columns in vain.

No such item of news met my eye. Joyously I rose to go, when my eye fell on the Standard.

Mechanically I opened it.

Those words were written (or so they seemed to me to be written) in letters of fire, though the admirable press at Shoe Lane did not really employ that suitable medium.

‘Horrible Discovery near Roding.’

At once the truth flashed across me. The *Morning Post* had not contained the intelligence because, The Government had Boycotted the ‘Morning Post’!

Only journals which more or less supported the Government were permitted to obtain ‘copy’ of such thrilling interest!

And yet they speak of a free press and a free country!

Tearing myself away from these reflections, I bent my mind on the awful paragraph.

‘The melting of the snow has thrown a lurid light on the mysterious disappearance (which up to this moment had attracted no attention) of an eccentric baronet, well known in sporting circles. Yesterday afternoon a gentleman’s groom, wading down the highway, discovered the white hat of a gentleman floating on the muddy stream into which the unparalleled weather and the negligence of the Road Trustees has converted our thoroughfare. An inscription in red ink within the lining leaves no doubt that this article of dress is all that is left of the late Sir Runan Errand. The unfortunate nobleman’s friends have been communicated with. The active and intelligent representative of the local police believes that he is in possession of a clue to the author of the crime. Probably the body of the murdered noble has been carried down by the flooded road to the sea.’

I tore that paper to pieces, and used it to wrap up sandwiches for the journey.

Once again I say, if you cannot feel with me, throw this tale aside. Heaven knows it is a sombre one, and it goes on getting sombrer and sombrer! But probably, by this time, you have either tossed the work away or looked at the end to see what happened to them all.

The morning dawned.

I filled my bag with Hanover pieces, which I thought might come in handy on the Spanish Turf, and packed up three or four yellow, red, green, and blue opera hats, so useful to the adventurous bookmaker.

At this very moment the postman arrived and gave me a letter in a woman’s hand.

I thrust it in my breast pocket recklessly.

The cab rattled away.

At last we were off.

I am sure that no one who could have seen us that morning would have dreamt that out of that party of three — a more than comfortable-looking English matron, a girl whose strange beauty has been sufficiently dwelt upon, and a gentleman in a yellow crush hat and a bookmaker’s bag — two were flying from the hands of justice.

Our appearance was certainly such as to disarm all suspicion.

But appearances are proverbially deceitful. Were ours deceitful enough?

‘But where are we going?’ said my mother, with the short memory of old age.

‘To Paris first, then to Spain, and, if needful, down to Khartoum.’

‘*Then* you young people will have to go alone. I draw the line at Dongola.’

I glanced at Philippa.

Then for the first time since her malady I saw Philippa blushing! Her long curved eyelashes hid her eyes, which presumably were also pink, but certainly my mother’s broad pleasantry had called a tell-tale blush to the cheek of the young person.

As we drew near Folkestone I remembered the letter, but the sight of the Roding postmark induced me to defer opening it till we should be on board the steamer. When Philippa was battling with the agonies of the voyage, then, undisturbed, I might ascertain what Mrs. Thompson (for it was sure to be Mrs. Thompson) had to say.

We were now on board. Philippa and my mother fled to the depths of the saloon, and I opened the fateful missive. It began without any conventional formalities, and the very first words blanched a cheek already pale.

‘I see yer!’

This strange epistle commenced: — ‘*I* know why Sir Runan never reached my house. I know the reason (it was only too obvious) for *her* strange, excited state. I know how he met the death he deserved.

‘I never had the pluck. None of the rest of us ever had the pluck. We all swore we’d swing for him as, one after another, he wedded and deserted us. The Two-headed Nightingale swore it, and the Missing Link, and the Spotted Girl, and the Strong Woman who used to double up horseshoes. Now she doubles up her perambulator with her children in it, but she never doubled up him.

‘As to your sister, tell her from me that she is all right. She has made herself his widow, she is the Dowager Lady Errand.

‘The fact is, *the Live Mermaid was never alive at all!* She was a put-up thing of waxwork and a stuffed *salmo ferox*. His pretended marriage with *her* is therefore a mere specious excuse to enable him to avoid your sister’s claims.

‘Now he is dead, your sister can take the name, title, and estates. I wish she may get them.’

CHAPTER VIII. — Local Colour.

I READ the woman’s letter again and again, read it with feelings of the most mingled description. First, I reflected with solemn pride that Philippa was *more* than an honest woman; that she really was a baronet’s lady! After we were married she should keep her title. Many people do. How well it would sound when we entered a room together—’ Dr. South and Lady Errand!’ Yet, on second thoughts, would not this conjunction of names rather set people asking questions?

Yes, disagreeable associations might be revived.

My second thought was that, if Mrs. Thompson kept her word, we might as well go home at once, without bothering about the Soudan. The White Groom, I felt certain, had long been speechless. There was thus no one to connect Lady Errand with the decease of Sir Runan.

Moreover, Philippa’s self-respect was now assured. She had lost it when she learned that she was not Sir Runan’s wife; she would regain it when she became aware that she had made herself Sir Runan’s widow. Such is the character of feminine morality, as I understand the workings of woman’s heart.

I had reached this point in my soliloquy, when I reflected that perhaps I had better *not* tell Philippa anything about it.

You see, things were so very mixed, because Philippa’s memory was so curiously constructed that she had entirely forgotten the murder which she had committed; and even if I proved to her by documentary evidence that she had only murdered her own husband, it might not help to relieve her burdened conscience as much as I had hoped. There are times when I almost give up this story in despair. To introduce a heroine who is mad in and out, so to speak, and forgets and remembers things exactly at the right moment, seems a delightfully simple artifice.

But, upon my word, I am constantly forgetting what it is that Philippa should remember, and on the point of making her remember the very things she forgets!

So puzzled had I become that I consoled myself by cursing Sir Runan’s memory. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum!*

What a lot of trouble a single little murder, of which one thinks little enough at the time, often gives a fellow.

All this while we were approaching Paris.

The stains of travel washed away, my mother gave a sigh of satisfaction as she seated herself at the dinner table. As any one might guess who looked at her, she was no despiser of the good things of this life! That very night we went to the Hippodrome, where we met many old acquaintances. My own Artillery Twins were there, and kissed their hands to me as they flew gracefully over our heads towards the desired trapeze. Here, also, was the Tattooed Man, and I grasped his variegated and decorative hand with an emotion I have rarely felt. Without vanity I may say that Philippa and my mother had a *succès fou*.

From the moment when they entered their box every *lorgnette* was fixed upon them.

All Paris was there, the *tout Paris* of *premières*, of *les courses*, the *tout Paris* of *clubsman* of *belles petites*, of ladies *à chignon jaune*. Here were the Booksmen, the *gommeux*, they who *font courir*, the journalists, and here I observed with peculiar interest my great masters, M. Fortuné du Boisgobey and M. Xavier de Montépin.

In the intervals of the performance *tout le monde* crowded into our *loge*, and I observed that my mother and Lady Errand made an almost equal impression on many a gallant and enterprising young *impresario*.

We supped at the *Cafe Bignon*; toasts were carried; I also was carried home.

Next morning I partly understood the mental condition of Philippa. I had absolutely forgotten the events of the later part of the entertainment.

Several bills arrived for windows, which, it seems, I had broken in a moment of effusion.

Gendarmes arrived, and would have arrested me on a charge of having knocked down some thirty-seven of their number.

This little matter was easily arranged.

I apologised separately and severally to each of the thirty-seven *braves hommes*, and collectively to the whole corps, the French army, the President, the Republic, and the statue of Strasbourg in the Place de la Concorde. These duties over, I was at leisure to reflect on the injustice of English law.

Certain actions which I had entirely forgotten I expiated at the cost of a few thousand francs, and some dozen apologies.

For only one action, about which she remembered nothing at all, Philippa had to fly from English justice, and give up her title and place in society! Both ladies now charmed me with a narrative of the compliments that had been paid them; both absolutely declined to leave Paris.

‘I want to look at the shops,’ said my mother.

‘I want the *gommeux* to look at me,’ said Philippa.

Neither of them saw the least fun in my proposed expedition to Spain.

Weeks passed and found us still in the capital of pleasure.

My large fortune, except a few insignificant thousands, had passed away in the fleeting exhilaration of baccarat.

We must do something to restore our wealth.

My mother had an idea.

‘Basil,’ she said, ‘you speak of Spain. You long to steep yourself in local colour. You sigh for *hidalgos, sombreros, carbonados, and carboncillos*, why not combine business with pleasure?

‘Why not take the Alhambra?’

This *was* an idea!

Where could we be safer than under the old Moorish flag?

Philippa readily fell in with my mother’s proposal. When woman has once tasted of public admiration, when once she has stepped on the boards, she retires without enthusiasm, even at the age of forty.

‘I had thought,’ said Philippa, of exhibiting myself at the Social Science Congress, and lecturing on self-advertisement and the ethical decline of the Moral Show business, with some remarks on waxworks. But the Alhambra sounds ever so much more toney.’

It was decided on.

I threw away the Baedeker and Murray, and Ford’s ‘Spain,’ on which I had been relying for three chapters of padding and local colour. I ceased to think of the very old churches of St. Croix and St. Seurin and a variety of other interesting objects. I did not bother about St. Sebastian, and the Valley of the Giralda, and Burgos, the capital of the old Castilian kingdom, and the absorbing glories of the departed Moore. Gladly, gaily, I completed the necessary negotiations, and found myself, with Philippa, my mother, and many of my old *troupe*, in the dear old Alhambra, safe under the shelter of the gay old Moorish flag.

Shake off black gloom, Basil South, and make things skip.

You have conquered Fate!

CHAPTER IX. — Saved! Saved!

GLORIOUS, wonderful Alhambra! Magical Cuadrado de Leicestero! Philippa and I were as happy as children, and the house was full every night.

We called everything by Spanish names, and played perpetually at being Spaniards.

The *foyer* we named a *patio* — a space fragrant with the perfume of oranges, which the public were always sucking, and perilous with peel. Add to this a refreshment-room, *refectorio*, full of the rarest old *cigarros*, and redolent of *aqua de soda and aguardiente*. Here the *botellas* of *aqua de soda* were continually popping, and the *corchos* flying with a murmur of merry voices and of mingling waters. Here half through the night you could listen to — The delight of happy laughter, The delight of low replies.

With such surroundings, almost those of a sybarite, who can blame me for being lulled into security, and telling myself that my troubles were nearly at an end? Who can wonder at the *cháteaux en Espagne* that I built as I lounged in the *patio*, and assisted my customers to consume the *media aqua de soda*, or ‘split soda,’ of the country? Sometimes we roamed as far as the Alcazar; sometimes we wandered to the Oxford, or laughed light-heartedly in the stalls of the *Alegria*.

Such was our life. So in calm and peace (for we had secured a Tory *chuckerouto* from Birmingham) passed the even tenor of out days.

As to marrying Philippa, it had always been my *intention*.

Whether she was or was not Lady Errand; whether she had or had not precipitated the hour of her own widowhood, made no kind of difference to me.

A moment of ill-judged haste had been all her crime.

That moment had passed. Philippa was not that moment. I was not marrying that moment, but Philippa.

Picture, then, your Basil naming and insisting on the day, yet somehow the day had not yet arrived. It did, however, arrive at last.

The difficulty now arose under which name was Philippa to be married?

To tell you the truth, I cannot remember under which name Philippa *was* married. It was a difficult point. If she wedded me under her maiden name, and if Mrs. Thompson’s letter contained the truth, then would the wedding be legal and binding?

If she married me under the name of Lady Errand, and if Mrs. Thompson’s letter was false, then would the wedding be all square?

So far as I know, there is no monograph on the subject, or there was none at the time.

Be it as it may, wedded we were.

Morality was now restored to the show business, the legitimate drama began to look up, and the hopes of the Social Science Congress were fulfilled.

But evil days were at hand.

One day, Philippa and I were lounging in the *patio*, when I heard the young *hidalgos* — or *Macheros*, as they are called — talking as they smoked their princely *cigaritos*.

‘Sir Runan Errand,’ said one of them; ‘where he’s gone under. A rare bad lot he was.’

‘Murdered,’ replied the other. ‘Nothing ever found of him but his hat.’

‘What a rum go!’ replied the other.

I looked at Philippa. She had heard all. I saw her dark brow contract in anguish. She was beating her breast furiously — her habit in moments of agitation.

Then I seem to remember that I and the two *hidalgos* bore Philippa to a couch in the *patio*, while I smiled and smiled and talked of the heat of the weather!

When Philippa came back to herself, she looked at me with her wondrous eyes and said, — ‘Basil; tell me the square truth, honest Injun! What had I been up to that night?’

CHAPTER X. — Not Too Mad, But Just Mad Enough.

IT was out! She knew!

What was I to say, how evade her impulsive cross-examinations. I fell back upon evasions.

‘Why do I want to know?’ she echoed, ‘because I choose to! I hated him. He took a walk, I took a walk, and I had taken something before I took a walk. If we met, I was bound to have words with him. Basil, did I dream it, or read it long ago in some old penny dreadful of the past?’

Philippa occasionally broke into blank verse like this, but not often.

‘Dearest, it must have been a dream,’

I said, catching at this hope of soothing her.

‘No, no!’ she screamed; ‘no — no dream. Not any more, thank you! I can see myself standing now over that crushed white mass! Basil, I could never bear him in that hat, and I must have gone for him!’

I consoled Philippa as well as I could, but she kept screaming.

‘*How* did I kill him?’

‘Goodness only knows, Philippa,’ I replied; ‘but you had a key in your hand — a door-key.’

‘Ah, that fatal latch-key!’ she said, ‘the cause of our final quarrel. Where is it? What have you done with it?’ she shouted.

‘I threw it away,’ I replied. This was true, but I could not think of anything better to say.

‘You threw it away! Didn’t you know it would become a *pièce justificatif?*’ said my poor Philippa, who had not read Gaboriau to no purpose.

I passed the night wrestling in argument with Philippa. She reproached me for having returned from Spain, ‘which was quite safe, you know — it is the place city men go to when they bust up,’ she remarked in her peculiarly idiomatic style. She reproved me for not having told her all about it before, in which case she would never have consented to return to England.

‘They will try me — they will hang me!’ she repeated.

‘Not a bit,’ I answered. ‘I can prove that you were quite out of your senses when you did for him.’

‘*You* prove it!’ she sneered; ‘a pretty lawyer *you* are. Why, they won’t take a husband’s evidence for or against a wife in a criminal case. This comes of your insisting on marrying me.’

‘But I doubt if we *are* married, Philippa, dear, as we never could remember whether you were wedded under your maiden name or as Philippa Errand. Besides — —’ I was going to say that William, the White Groom (late the Sphynx), could show to her having been (as he once expressed it) as ‘crazy as a loon,’ but I remembered in time. William had, doubtless, long been speechless.

The sherry must have done its fatal work.

This is the worst of committing crimes. They do nothing, very often, but complicate matters.

Had I not got rid of William — but it was too late for remorse. As to the evidence of her nurses, I forgot all about *that*. I tried to console Philippa on another line.

I remarked that, if she had ‘gone for’ Sir Runan, she had only served him right.

Then I tried to restore her self-respect by quoting the bearded woman’s letter.

I pointed out that she had been Lady Errand, after all.

This gave Philippa no comfort.

‘It makes things worse,’ she said. ‘I thought I had only got rid of my betrayer; and now you say I have killed my husband. You men have no tact.’

‘Besides,’ Philippa went on, after pausing to reflect, ‘I have not bettered myself one bit. If I had not gone for him I would be Lady Errand, and no end of a swell, and now I’m only plain Mrs. Basil South.’ Speaking thus, Philippa wept afresh, and refused to be comforted.

Her remarks were not flattering to my self-esteem.

At this time I felt, with peculiar bitterness, the blanks in Philippa’s memory. Nothing is more difficult than to make your heroine not too mad, but just mad enough.

Had Philippa been a trifle saner, or less under the influence of luncheon, at first, she would either never have murdered Sir Runan at all (which perhaps would have been the best course), or she would have known *how* she murdered him.

The entire absence of information on this head added much to my perplexities.

On the other hand, had Philippa been a trifle madder, or *more* under the influence of luncheon, nothing could ever have recalled the event to her memory at all.

As it is, my poor wife (if she *was* my wife, a subject on which I intend to submit a monograph to a legal contemporary), my poor wife was almost provoking in what she forgot and what she remembered.

One day as my dear patient was creeping about the *patio*, she asked me if I saw *all* the papers?

I said I saw most of them.

‘Well, look at them *all*, for who knows how many may be boycotted by the present Government? In a boycotted print you don’t know but you may miss an account of how some fellow was hanged for what I did. I believe two people can’t be executed for the same crime. Now, if any one swings for Sir Runan, *I* am safe; but it might happen, and you never know it.’

Dear Philippa, ever thoughtful for others! I promised to read every one of the papers, and I was soon rewarded for the unparalleled tedium of these studies.

CHAPTER XI. — A Terrible Temptation.

I HATE looking back and reading words which I have written when the printer’s devil was waiting for copy in the hall, but I fancy I have somewhere called this tale a confession; if not, I meant to do so. It has no more claim to be called a work of art than the cheapest penny dreadful. How could it?

It holds but two characters, a man and a woman.

All the rest are the merest supers. Perhaps you may wonder that I thus anticipate criticism; but review-writing is so easy that I may just as well fill up with this as with any other kind of padding.

My publisher insists on so many pages of copy. When he does not get what he wants, the language rich and powerful enough to serve his needs has yet to be invented.

But he struggles on with the help of a dictionary of American expletives.

However, we are coming to the conclusion, and that, I think, will waken the public up! And yet this chapter will be a short one. It will be the review of a struggle against a temptation to commit, not perhaps crime, but an act of the grossest bad taste.

To that temptation I succumbed; we both succumbed.

It is a temptation to which I dare think poor human nature has rarely been subjected.

The temptation to go and see a man, a fellow-creature, tried for a crime which one’s wife committed, and to which one is an accessory after the fact.

Oh, that morning!

How well I remember it.

Breakfast was just oyer, the table with its relics of fragrant bloaters and *terrine* of *paté* still stood in the *patio*.

I was alone. I loafed lazily and at my ease.

Then I lighted a princely *havanna*, blaming myself for profaning the scented air from *el Cuadro de Leicester*.

You see I have such a sensitive aesthetic conscience.

Then I took from my pocket the *Sporting Times*, and set listlessly to work to skim its lengthy columns.

This was owing to my vow to Philippa, that I would read every journal published in England. As the day went on, I often sat with them up to my shoulders, and littering all the *patio*.

I ran down the topics of the day. This scene is an ‘under-study,’ by the way, of the other scene in which I read of the discovery of Sir Runan’s hat. At last I turned my attention to the provincial news column. A name, a familiar name, caught my eye; the name of one who, I had fondly fancied, had: long-lain unburied in my cellar at the ‘pike. My princely *havanna* fell unheeded on the marble pavement of the *patio*, as with indescribable amazement I read the following ‘par.’

‘William Evans, the man accused of the murder of Sir Runan Errand, will be tried at the Newnham Assizes on the 20th. The case, which excites considerable interest among the *élite* of Boding and district, will come on the *tapis* the first day of the meeting. The evidence will be of a purely circumstantial kind.’

Every word of that ‘par’ was a staggerer. I sat as one stunned, dazed, stupid, motionless, with my eye on the sheet.

Was ever man in such a situation before?

Your wife commits a murder.

You become an accessory after the fact.

You take steps to destroy one of the two people who suspect the truth.

And then you find that the man on whom you committed murder is accused of the murder which you and your wife committed.

The sound of my mother’s voice scolding Philippa wakened me from my stupor. They were coming.

I could not face them.

Doubling up the newspaper, I thrust it into my pocket, and sped swiftly out of the *patio*.

Where did I go? I scarcely remember. I think it must have been to one of the public gardens or public-houses, I am not certain which. All sense of locality left me. I found at last some lonely spot, and there I threw myself on the ground, dug my finger-nails into the dry ground, and held on with all the tenacity of despair. In the wild whirl of my brain I feared that I might be thrown off into infinite space. This sensation passed off. At first I thought I had gone mad. Then I felt pretty certain that it must be the other people who had gone mad.

I had killed William Evans.

My wife had killed Runan Errand.

How, then, could Runan Errand have been killed by William Evans?

‘Which is absurd,’ I found myself saying, in the language of Eukleides, the grand old Greek.

Human justice! What is justice? See how it can err! Was there ever such a boundless, unlimited blunder in the whole annals of penny fiction? Probably not. I remember nothing like it in all the learned pages of the *London Journal* and the

Family Herald. Mrs. Henry Wood and Miss Braddon never dreamed of aught like this. Philippa *must* be told. It was too good a joke. Would she laugh? Would she be alarmed?

Picture me lying on the ground, with the intelligence fresh in my mind.

I felt confidence, on the whole, in Philippa's sense of humour.

Then rose the temptation.

Trust this man (William Evans, late the Sphynx) to the vaunted array of justice!

Let him have a run for his money.

Nay, more.

Go down and see the fun!

Why hesitate? You cannot possibly be implicated in the deed. You will enjoy a position nearly unique in human history. You will see the man, of whose murder you thought you were guilty, tried for the offence which you know was committed by your wife.

Every sin is not easy. My sense of honour arose against this temptation. I struggled, but I was mastered. I *would* go and see the trial. Home I went and broached the subject to Philippa. The brave girl never blenched. She had no hesitations, no scruples to conquer.

'Oh! Basil,' she exclaimed, with sparkling eyes, 'wot larx! When do we start?'

The reader will admit that I did myself no injustice when, at the commencement of this tale, I said I had wallowed in crime.

CHAPTER XII. — Judge Juggins.

WE got down to Newnham, where the ‘Sizes were held, on the morning of September 20th. There we discovered that we had an hour or two for refreshment, and I may say that both Philippa and I employed that time to the best advantage. While at the hotel I tried to obtain the file of the *Times*. I wanted to look back and see if I could find the account of the magisterial proceedings against the truly unlucky William Evans.

After all, should I call him unlucky? He had escaped the snare I had laid for him, and perhaps (such things have been) even a Newnham jury might find him not guilty.

But the file of the *Times* was not forthcoming.

I asked the sleepy-eyed Teutonic waiter for it. He merely answered, with the fatuous patronising grin of the German *kellner*: —

‘You vant?’

‘I want the file of the Times!’

‘I have the corkscrew of the good landlord; but the file of the *Times* I have it not. Have you your boots, your fish-sauce, your currycomb?’ he went on. Then, lapsing into irrelevant local gossip, ‘the granddaughter of the blacksmith has the landing-net of the bad tailor.’

‘I want my bill, my note, my *addition*, my *consommation*,’ I answered angrily.

‘Very good bed, very good post-horse,’ he replied at random, and I left the County Hotel without being able to find out why suspicion had fallen on “William Evans”.

We hailed one of the cabs which stood outside the hotel door, when a heavy hand was laid on my shoulder, and a voice, strange but not unfamiliar, exclaimed, ‘Dr. South, as I am a baronet—’

I turned round suddenly and found myself face to face with

Sir Runan Errand!

My brain once more began to reel. Here were the real victim and the true perpetrators of a murder come to view the trial of the man who was charged with having committed it!

Though I was trembling like an aspen leaf? I remembered that we lived in an age of ‘telepathy’ and psychical research.

Sir Runan was doubtless what Messrs. Myers and Gurney call a *visible apparition* as distinguished from the common *invisible apparition*.

If a real judge confesses, like Sir E. Hornby, to having seen a ghost, why should not a mere accessory after the fact?

Regaining my presence of mind, I asked, ‘What brings you here?’

‘Oh, to see the fun,’ he replied. ‘Fellow being tried for killing me. The morbid interest excited round here is very great. Doubt your getting front seats.’

‘Can’t you manage it for me?’ I asked imploringly.

‘Daresay I can. Here, take my card, and just mention my name, and they’ll let you in. Case for the prosecution, by the way, *most* feeble.’

Here the appearance, handing me a card, nodded, and vanished in the crowd.

I returned to Philippa, where I had left her in the four-wheeler. We drove off, and found ourselves before a double-swinging (ay, ominous as it seemed, *swinging*) plain oak door, over which in old English letters was written —

CRIMINAL COURT.

I need not describe the aspect of the court. Probably most of my readers have at some time in their lives found themselves in such a place.

True to the minute, the red-robed Judge appears. It is Sir Joshua Juggins, well known for his severity as ‘Gibbeting Juggins.’

Ah, there is little hope for William Evans.

I have learned from a neighbour in court the evidence against Evans is purely circumstantial. He has been found in possession of a peculiar key, believed to have belonged to Sir Runan.

Well may they call the case for the prosecution weak.

William must have found that fatal key which Philippa took from the slain man.

On that accident the whole presumption of his guilt is founded.

The Grand Jury (country gentlemen — idiots all!) find a ‘True Bill.’

The clerk reads the indictment that ‘he, William Evans, did feloniously, wilfully, and of malice aforethought, kill and murder Sir Runan Errand, Baronet.’

As the reading goes on Philippa is strangely moved.

‘Basil,’ she whispered, ‘don’t you see the splendid, unequalled chance for an advertisement! I’ll get up and make a speech, and say *I* did it. Of course they can’t prove it, but it will set every one talking, and bring hundreds of pounds into the house every night.’

I now observed that Philippa had half slipped off her mantle and bonnet. Beneath these coverings she was dressed in wig and gown, like Mrs. Weldon in the photographs.

‘For goodness’ sake, Philippa, *don’t!*’ I whispered.

The clerk turned to William Evans, the prisoner at the Bar.

‘Are you guilty, or not guilty?’

In the silence a cigarette-ash might have been heard to drop, if any one had been smoking.

The long silence was broken, but not by the prisoner.

By Philippa!

Rising to all her stately height, with her flowing robes around her, she stood at bay. Then her clear deep voice rang out: —

‘My lord, I was the party that did it!’

‘Order in the court! order in the court!’ cried the ushers.

‘I commit you! I commit you!’ thundered Lord Justice Juggins. ‘Take her away. Five years and hard labour.’

Struggling violently, Philippa was dragged away by the minions of the law.

I notice one visitor turn round, and gaze at the commotion.

It is Mrs. Thompson, the Bearded Woman.

Silence has scarcely been restored, when it is again broken.

A manly form rises. A deep voice exclaims: —

‘My lord, the prisoner is innocent. *I* am the person whom he is said to have murdered.’

The form, the voice — it is Sir Runan Errand!

Again I hear the sharp accents of Mr. Justice Juggins.

‘Is this court a bear-garden or the House of Commons? Take that man out. Give him five years and two dozen lashes.’

Scarcely had the court resumed its wonted aspect of business, scarcely had the prisoner again been asked to plead, when a shrill voice shattered the stillness.

‘My lord, the key found in the prisoner’s possession is my cellar-key.’

This time the bold interrupter was Mrs. Thompson, the Bearded Woman.

‘Five years as usual, and hard labour,’ said Sir Joshua Juggins, wearily. He was tiring of his task. ‘Please, my lord, it warn’t none of me,’ came a hoarse whisper from the prisoner at the bar.

‘Who asked *you* to speak? Is that the way to plead?’ snapped the judge. ‘Give him five years also, for contempt of court.’

William Evans was carried out in hysterics.

The plot, the mystery had thickened.

I now felt that there was only one way of fathoming the secret of the crime. I also must get myself committed! Then I would be able to rejoin the other actors in this strange drama, and learn their motives, and the real facts of the case.

In a moment my resolution was taken.

Springing to my feet, I exclaimed in clarion tones: —

‘My lord, I am an accessory after the fact.’

Sir Joshua Juggins gave a cry of despair. Then mastering himself, he whispered: —

‘Take that idiot away, and give him penal servitude for life.’

As I left the court in chains, I heard the next case being called.

CHAPTER XIII. — Cleared Up. (From The ‘Green Park Gazette.’)

THE legitimate public interest in the Nownham Mystery suggested to us the propriety of sending one of our young men down to interview all parties. After having visited the Maori King, Mrs. Weldon, several Eminent Advertisers, and the crew of the *Mignonette*, he felt that his present task was a light one. He had to see the murderer, William Evans; the murderess, Mrs. South, or Lady Errand; the accessory after the fact, Dr. South; the victim, Sir Runan Errand; and Mrs. Thompson, the owner of the key on which the case for the prosecution hinged.

His adventures in the various Asylums where those unhappy persons are unconfined have little public interest. We print the Confessions just as our young man took them down in shorthand from the lips of the sufferers.

The Confession of Sir Runan Errand.

‘I need not tell you that I never was even the husband of the woman Phllippa at all. She stood in no relation to me, except as one of the persons in the *troupe* which I was foolish enough to manage. Instead of visiting her in January last to settle her pecuniary claims against me, I sent my valet. It appears that the man wore an old hat of mine, which he lost in the storm. That was not the only article of property belonging to me he carried off. I have since had a penitent letter from him. He is doing well in the United States, and has been elected to the Legislature. I have given up the freak of dabbling in the show business, and merely keep a private theatre at such a distance from human abodes that no one can complain of it as a nuisance. Since the disappearance of my valet I have been travelling in my own yacht. I reached England the day before the trial. ‘No. I never read the newspapers. Thank goodness I am no bookworm.’

The Confession of Philippa South, *calling herself* Lady Errand.

‘I tell you again, as I told you before, I know nothing about what I did that night. Go back to your employers.’

Nothing more of a nature suited to our columns could be extracted from this lady.

The Confession of Mrs. Thompson.

‘I lost my cellar key the night Philippa left my roof. I now recognise it as the key in the possession of William Evans. How he got it I have no idea whatever.’

The Confession of Basil South, M.D.

‘I begin to understand it all at last. The key which I took from Philippa on the night of the storm and supposed murder had not been taken by her from Sir Runan.

‘She had brought it with her from the house of Mrs. Thompson, with whom she had been residing.

‘When I threw away a key, which I believed to be the one I had taken from Philippa, I made a mistake.

‘I threw away a key of my own. When I thought I was giving William Evans the key of my cellar (with fatal intentions and designs, hoping that he would never survive the contents of that cellar), I really gave him the key I had taken from Philippa.

‘Consequently the key would not fit the cellar lock.

‘Consequently William Evans never tasted the fatal fluid, and so escaped his doom.

‘I have nothing to add to this confession, except that I am deeply penitent, and will never again offer a thoughtless public a Christmas Annual so absurd, morbid, and incoherent.’

This last statement made it unnecessary to interview William Evans.

All the other persons in this dismal affair are detained during her Majesty’s displeasure.

IN THE WRONG PARADISE AND OTHER STORIES

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DEDICATION.

DEAR RIDER HAGGARD,

I have asked you to let me put your name here, that I might have the opportunity of saying how much pleasure I owe to your romances. They make one a boy again while one is reading them; and the student of “The Witch’s Head” and of “King Solomon’s Mines” is as young, in heart, as when he hunted long ago with Chingachgook and Uncas. You, who know the noble barbarian in his African retreats, appear to retain more than most men of his fresh natural imagination. We are all savages under our white skins; but you alone recall to us the delights and terrors of the world’s nonage. We are hunters again, trappers, adventurers bold, while we study you, and the blithe barbarian wakens even in the weary person of letters. He forgets proof-sheets and papers, and the “young lion” seeks his food from God, in the fearless ancient way, with bow or rifle. Of all modern heroes of romance, the dearest to me is your faithful Zulu, and I own I cried when he bade farewell to his English master, in “The Witch’s Head.”

In the following tales the natural man takes a hand, but he is seen through civilized spectacles, not, as in your delightful books, with the eyes of the sympathetic sportsman. If Why-Why and Mr. Gowles amuse you a little, let this be my Diomedean exchange of bronze for gold — of the new Phæacia for Kukuana land, or for that haunted city of Kôr, in which your fair Ayesha dwells undying, as yet unknown to the future lovers of *She.*

Very sincerely yours,
A. LANG.
CROMER, *August* 29, 1886.

PREFACE.

The writer of these apologues hopes that the Rev. Mr. Gowles will not be regarded as his idea of a typical missionary. The countrymen of Codrington and Callaway, of Patteson and Livingstone, know better what missionaries may be, and often are. But the wrong sort as well as the right sort exists everywhere, and Mr. Gowles is not a very gross caricature of the ignorant teacher of heathendom. I am convinced that he would have seen nothing but a set of darkened savages in the ancient Greeks. The religious eccentricities of the Hellenes are not exaggerated in "The End of Phæacia;" nay, Mr. Gowles might have seen odder things in Attica than he discovered, or chose to record, in Boothland.

To avoid the charge of plagiarism, perhaps it should be mentioned that "The Romance of the First Radical" was written long before I read Tanner's "Narrative of a Captivity among the Indians." Tanner, like Why-Why, had trouble with the chief medicine-man of his community.

If my dear kinsman and companion of old days, J. J. A., reads "My Friend the Beach-comber," he will recognize many of his own yarns, but the portrait of the narrator is wholly fanciful.

"In Castle Perilous" and "A Cheap Nigger" are reprinted from the *Cornhill Magazine*; "My Friend the Beach-comber," from *Longman's*; "The Great Gladstone Myth," from *Macmillan's*; "In the Wrong Paradise," from the *Fortnightly Review*; "A Duchess's Secret," from the *Overland Mail*; "The Romance of the First Radical," from *Fraser's Magazine*; and "The End of Phæacia," from *Time*, by the courteous permission of the editors and proprietors of those periodicals.

THE END OF PHÆACIA

I. INTRODUCTORY.

The Rev. Thomas Gowles, well known in Colonial circles where the Truth is valued, as "the Boanerges of the Pacific," departed this life at Hackney Wick, on the 6th of March, 1885. The Laodiceans in our midst have ventured to affirm that the world at large has been a more restful place since Mr. Gowles was taken from his corner of the vineyard. The Boanerges of the Pacific was, indeed, one of those rarely-gifted souls, souls like a Luther or a Knox, who can tolerate no contradiction, and will palter with no compromise, where the Truth is concerned. Papists, Puseyites, Presbyterians, and Pagans alike, found in Mr. Gowles an opponent whose convictions were firm as a rock, and whose method of proclaiming the Truth was as the sound of a trumpet. Examples of his singular courage and daring in the work of the ministry abound in the following narrative. Born and brought up in the Bungletonian communion, himself collaterally connected, by a sister's marriage, with Jedediah Bungleton, the revered founder of the Very Particular People, Gowles was inaccessible to the scepticism of the age.

His youth, it is true, had been stormy, like that of many a brand afterwards promoted to being a vessel. His worldly education was of the most elementary and indeed eleemosynary description, consequently he despised secular learning, and science "falsely so called." It is recorded of him that he had almost a distaste for those difficult chapters of the Epistles in which St. Paul mentions by name his Greek friends and converts. In a controversy with an Oxford scholar, conducted in the open air, under the Martyrs' Memorial in that centre of careless professors, Gowles had spoken of "Nicodmus," "Eubmlus," and "Stephnas." His unmannerly antagonist jeering at these slips of pronunciation, Gowles uttered his celebrated and crushing retort, "Did Paul know Greek?" The young man, his opponent, went away, silenced if not convinced.

Such a man was the Rev. Thomas Gowles in his home ministry. Circumstances called him to that wider field of usefulness, the Pacific, in which so many millions of our dusky brethren either worship owls, butterflies, sharks, and lizards, or are led away captive by the seductive pomps of the Scarlet Woman, or lapse languidly into the lap of a bloated and Erastian establishment, ignorant of the Truth as possessed by our community. Against all these forms of soul-destroying error the Rev. Thomas Gowles thundered nobly, "passing," as an admirer said, “like an evangelical cyclone, from the New Hebrides to the Aleutian Islands.” It was during one of his missionary voyages, in a labour vessel, the *Blackbird*, that the following singular events occurred, events which Mr. Gowles faithfully recorded, as will be seen, in his missionary narrative. We omit, as of purely secular interest, the description of the storm which wrecked the *Blackbird*, the account of the destruction of the steamer with all hands (not, let us try to hope, with all souls) on board, and everything that transpired till Mr. Gowles found himself alone, the sole survivor, and bestriding the mast in the midst of a tempestuous sea. What follows is from the record kept on pieces of skin, shards of pottery, plates of metal, papyrus leaves, and other strange substitutes for paper, used by Mr. Gowles during his captivity.

II. NARRATIVE OF MR. GOWLES.

"I must now, though in sore straits for writing materials, and having entirely lost count of time, post up my diary, or rather commence my narrative. So far as I can learn from the jargon of the strange and lost people among whom Providence has cast me, this is, in their speech, the last of the month, *Thargeelyun*, as near as I can imitate the sound in English. Being in doubt as to the true time, I am resolved to regard to-morrow, and every seventh day in succession, as the Sabbath. The very natives, I have observed with great interest, keep one day at fixed intervals sacred to the Sun-god, whom they call Apollon, perhaps the same word as Apollyon. On this day they do no manner of work, but *that* is hardly an exception to their usual habits. A less industrious people (slaves and all) I never met, even in the Pacific. As to being more than common idle on one day out of seven, whether they have been taught so much of what is *essential* by some earlier missionary, or whether they may be the corrupted descendants of the Lost Tribes (whom they do not, however, at all resemble outwardly, being, I must admit, of prepossessing appearance), I can only conjecture. This Apollon of theirs, in his graven images (of which there are many), carries a bow and arrows, *fiery darts of the wicked*, another point in common between him and Apollyon, in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. May I, like Christian, turn aside and quench his artillery!

To return to my narrative. When I recovered consciousness, after the sinking of the *Blackbird*, I found myself alone, clinging to the mast. Now was I tossed on the crest of the wave, now the waters opened beneath me, and I sank down in the valleys of the sea. Cold, numbed, and all but lifeless, I had given up hope of earthly existence, and was nearly insensible, when I began to revive beneath the rays of the sun.

The sea, though still moved by a swell, was now much smoother, and, but for a strange vision, I might have believed that I was recovering my strength. I must, however, have been delirious or dreaming, for it appeared to me that a foreign female, of prepossessing exterior, though somewhat indelicately dressed, arose out of the waters close by my side, as lightly as if she had been a sea-gull on the wing. About her head there was wreathed a kind of muslin scarf, which she unwound and offered to me, indicating that I was to tie it about my waist, and it would preserve me from harm. So weak and exhausted was I that, without thinking, I did her bidding, and then lost sight of the female. Presently, as it seemed (but I was so drowsy that the time may have been longer than I fancied), I caught sight of land from the crest of a wave. Steep blue cliffs arose far away out of a white cloud of surf, and, though a strong swimmer, I had little hope of reaching the shore in safety.

Fortunately, or rather, I should say, providentially, the current and tide-rip carried me to the mouth of a river, and, with a great effort, I got into the shoal-water, and finally staggered out on shore. There was a wood hard by, and thither I dragged myself. The sun was in mid heavens and very warm, and I managed to dry my clothes. I am always most particular to wear the dress of my calling, observing that it has a peculiar and gratifying effect on the minds of the natives. I soon dried my tall hat, which, during the storm, I had attached to my button-hole by a string, and, though it was a good deal battered, I was not without hopes of partially restoring its gloss and air of British respectability. As will be seen, this precaution was, curiously enough, the human means of preserving my life. My hat, my black clothes, my white neck-tie, and the hymn-book I carry would, I was convinced, secure for me a favourable reception among the natives (if of the gentle brown Polynesian type), whom I expected to find on the island.

Exhausted by my sufferings, I now fell asleep, but was soon wakened by loud cries of anguish uttered at no great distance. I started to my feet, and beheld an extraordinary spectacle, which at once assured me that I had fallen among natives of the worst and lowest type. The dark places of the earth are, indeed, full of horrid cruelty.

The first cries which had roused me must have been comparatively distant, though piercing, and even now they reached me confused in the notes of a melancholy chant or hymn. But the shrieks grew more shrill, and I thought I could distinguish the screams of a woman in pain or dread from the groans drawn with more difficulty from a man. I leaped up, and, climbing a high part of the river bank, I beheld, within a couple of hundred yards, an extraordinary procession coming from the inner country towards the mouth of the stream.

At first I had only a confused view of bright stuffs — white, blue, and red — and the shining of metal objects, in the midst of a crowd partly concealed by the dust they raised on their way. Very much to my surprise I found that they were advancing along a wide road, paved in a peculiar manner, for I had never seen anything of this kind among the heathen tribes of the Pacific. Their dresses, too, though for the most part mere wraps, as it were, of coloured stuff, thrown round them, pinned with brooches, and often clinging in a very improper way to the figure, did not remind me of the costume (what there is of it) of Samoans, Fijians, or other natives among whom I have been privileged to labour.

But these observations give a more minute impression of what I saw than, for the moment, I had time to take in. The foremost part of the procession consisted of boys, many of them almost naked. Their hands were full of branches, wreathed in a curious manner with strips of white or coloured wools. They were all singing, and were led by a woman carrying in her arms a mis-shapen wooden idol, not much unlike those which are too frequent spectacles all over the Pacific. Behind the boys I could now distinctly behold a man and woman of the Polynesian type, naked to the waist, and staggering with bent backs beneath showers of blows. The people behind them, who were almost as light in colour as ourselves, were cruelly flogging them with cutting branches of trees. Round the necks of the unfortunate victims — criminals I presumed — were hung chains of white and black figs, and in their hands they held certain herbs, figs, and cheese, for what purpose I was, and remain, unable to conjecture. Whenever their cries were still for a moment, the woman who carried the idol turned round, and lifted it in her arms with words which I was unable to understand, urging on the tormentors to ply their switches with more severity.

Naturally I was alarmed by the strangeness and ferocity of the natives, so I concealed myself hastily in some brushwood behind a large tree. Much to my horror I found that the screams, groans, and singing only drew nearer and nearer. The procession then passed me so close that I could see blood on the backs of the victims, and on their faces an awful dread and apprehension. Finally, the crowd reached the mouth of the river, at the very place where I had escaped from the sea. By aid of a small pocket-glass I could make out that the men were piling great faggots of green wood, which I had noticed that some of them carried, on a spot beneath the wash of high tide. When the pile had reached a considerable height, the two victims were placed in the middle. Then, by some means, which I was too far off to detect, fire was produced, and applied to the wild wood in which the unhappy man and woman were enveloped. Soon, fortunately, a thick turbid smoke, in which but little flame appeared, swept all over the beach. I endeavoured to stop my ears, and turned my head away that I might neither see nor hear more of this spectacle, which I now perceived to be a human sacrifice more cruel than is customary even among the Fijians.

When I next ventured to look up, the last trails of smoke were vanishing away across the sea; the sun gazed down on the bright, many-coloured throng, who were now singing another of their hymns, while some of the number were gathering up ashes (human ashes!) from a blackened spot on the sand, and were throwing them into the salt water. The wind tossed back a soft grey dust in their faces, mixed with the surf and spray. It was dark before the crowd swept by me again, now chanting in what appeared to be a mirthful manner, and with faces so smiling and happy that I could scarcely believe they had just taken part in such abominable cruelty. On the other hand, a weight seemed to have been removed from their consciences. So deceitful are the wiles of Satan, who deludes the heathen most in their very religion! Tired and almost starved as I was, these reflections forced themselves upon me, even while I was pondering on the dreadful position in which I found myself. Way of escape from the island (obviously a very large one) there was none. But, if I remained all night in the wood, I must almost perish of cold and hunger. I had therefore no choice but to approach the barbarous people, though, from my acquaintance with natives, I knew well that they were likely either to kill and eat me, or to worship me as a god. Either event was too dreadful to bear reflection. I was certain, however, that, owing to the dress of my sacred calling, I could not be mistaken for a mere beach-comber or labour-hunter, and I considered that I might easily destroy the impression (natural among savages on first seeing a European) that I was a god. I therefore followed the throng from a distance, taking advantage for concealment of turns in the way, and of trees and underwood beside the road. Some four miles' walking, for which I was very unfit, brought us across a neck of land, and from high ground in the middle I again beheld the sea. Very much to my surprise the cape on which I looked down, safe in the rear of the descending multitude, was occupied by a kind of city.

The houses were not the mere huts of South Sea Islanders, but, though built for the most part of carved and painted wood, had white stone foundations, and were of considerable height. On a rock in the centre of the bay were some stone edifices which I took to be temples or public buildings. The crowd gradually broke up, turning into their own dwellings on the shore, where, by the way, some large masted vessels were drawn up in little docks. But, while the general public, if I may say so, slowly withdrew, the woman with the idol in her arms, accompanied by some elderly men of serious aspect, climbed the road up to the central public buildings.

Moved by some impulse which I could hardly explain, I stealthily followed them, and at last found myself on a rocky platform, a kind of public square, open on one side to the sea, and shut in on either hand, and at the back, by large houses with smooth round pillars, and decorated with odd coloured carvings. There was in the open centre of the square an object which I recognized as an altar, with a fire burning on it. Some men came out of the chief building, dragging a sheep, with chains of flowers round its neck. Another man threw something on the fire, which burned with a curious smell. At once I recognized the savour of incense, against which (as employed illegally by the Puseyites) I had often firmly protested in old days at home. The spirit of a soldier of the Truth entered into me; weary as I was, I rushed from the dusky corner where I had been hidden in the twilight, ran to the altar, and held up my hand with my hymn-book as I began to repeat an address that had often silenced the papistic mummers in England. Before I had uttered half a dozen words, the men who were dragging the sheep flew at me, and tried to seize me, while one of them offered a strange-looking knife at my throat. I thought my last hour had come, and the old Adam awakening in me, I delivered such a blow with my right on the eye of the man with the knife, that he reeled and fell heavily against the altar. Then assuming an attitude of self-defence (such as was, alas! too familiar to me in my unregenerate days), I awaited my assailants.

They were coming on in a body when the veil of the large edifice in front was lifted, and a flash of light streamed out on the dusky square, as an old man dressed in red hurried to the scene of struggle. He wore a long white beard, had green leaves twisted in his hair, and carried in his hand a gilded staff curiously wreathed with wool. When they saw him approaching, my assailants fell back, each of them kissing his own hand and bowing slightly in the direction of the temple, as I rightly supposed it to be. The old man, who was followed by attendants carrying torches burning, was now close to us, and on beholding me, he exhibited unusual emotions.

My appearance, no doubt, was at that moment peculiar, and little creditable, as I have since thought, to a minister, however humble. My hat was thrust on the back of my head, my coat was torn, my shirt open, my neck-tie twisted round under my ear, and my whole attitude was not one generally associated with the peaceful delivery of the message. Still, I had never conceived that any spectacle, however strange and unbecoming, could have produced such an effect on the native mind, especially in a person who was manifestly a chief, or high-priest of some heathen god. Seeing him pause, and turn pale, I dropped my hands, and rearranged my dress as best I might. The old Tohunga, as my New Zealand flock used to call their priest, now lifted his eyes to heaven with an air of devotion, and remained for some moments like one absorbed in prayer or meditation. He then rapidly uttered some words, which, of course, I could not understand, whereon his attendants approached me gently, with signs of respect and friendship. Not to appear lacking in courtesy, or inferior in politeness to savages, I turned and raised my hat, which seemed still more to alarm the old priest. He spoke to one of his attendants, who instantly ran across the square, and entered the courtyard of a large house, surrounded by a garden, of which the tall trees looked over the wall, and wooden palisade. The old man then withdrew into the temple, and I distinctly saw him scatter, with the leafy bough of a tree, some water round him as he entered, from a vessel beside the door. This convinced me that some of the emissaries of the Scarlet Woman had already been busy among the benighted people, a conjecture, however, which proved to be erroneous.

I was now left standing by the altar, the attendants observing me with respect which I feared might at any moment take the blasphemous form of worship. Nor could I see how I was to check their adoration, and turn it into the proper channel, if, as happened to Captain Cook, and has frequently occurred since, these darkened idolaters mistook me for one of their own deities. I might spurn them, indeed; but when Nicholson adopted that course, and beat the Fakirs who worshipped him during the Indian Mutiny, his conduct, as I have read, only redoubled their enthusiasm. However, as events proved, they never at any time were inclined to substitute me for their heathen divinities; very far from it indeed, though their peculiar conduct was calculated to foster in my breast this melancholy delusion.

I had not been left long to my own thoughts when I marked lights wandering in the garden or courtyard whither the messenger had been sent by the old priest. Presently there came forth from the court a man of remarkable stature, and with an air of seriousness and responsibility. In his hand he carried a short staff, or baton, with gold knobs, and he wore a thin golden circlet in his hair. As he drew near, the veil of the temple was again lifted, and the aged priest came forward, bearing in his arms a singular casket of wood, ornamented with alternate bands of gold and ivory, carved with outlandish figures. The torch-bearers crowded about us in the darkness, and it was a strange spectacle to behold the smoky, fiery light shining on the men’s faces and the rich coloured dresses, or lighting up the white idol of Apollon, which stood among the laurel trees at the entrance of the temple.

III. THE PROPHECY.

The priest and the man with the gold circlet, whom I took to be a chief, now met, and, fixing their eyes on me, held a conversation of which, naturally, I understood nothing. I maintained an unmoved demeanour, and, by way of showing my indifference, and also of impressing the natives with the superiority of our civilization, I took out and wound up my watch, which, I was glad to find, had not been utterly ruined by the salt water. Meanwhile the priest was fumbling in his casket, whence he produced a bundle of very ragged and smoky old bits of parchment and scraps of potsherds. These he placed in the hands of his attendants, who received them kneeling. From the very bottom of the casket he extracted some thin plates of a greyish metal, lead, I believe, all mouldy, stained, and ragged. Over these he pored and puzzled for some time, trying, as I guessed, to make out something inscribed on this curious substitute for writing-paper. I had now recovered my presence of mind, and, thinking at once to astonish and propitiate, I drew from my pocket, wiped, and presented to him my spectacles, indicating, by example, the manner of their employment. No sooner did he behold these common articles of every-day use, than the priest's knees began to knock together, and his old hands trembled so that he could scarcely fix the spectacles on his nose. When he had managed this it was plain that he found much less difficulty with his documents. He now turned them rapidly over, and presently discovered one thin sheet of lead, from which he began to read, or rather chant, in a slow measured tone, every now and then pausing and pointing to me, to my hat, and to the spectacles which he himself wore at the moment. The chief listened to him gravely, and with an expression of melancholy that grew deeper and sadder till the end. It was a strange scene.

I afterwards heard the matter of the prophecy, as it proved to be, which was thus delivered. I have written it down in the language of the natives, spelling it as best I might, and I give the translation which I made when I became more or less acquainted with their very difficult dialect. It will be seen that the prophecy, whatever its origin, was strangely fulfilled. Perhaps the gods of this people were not mere idols, but evil spirits, permitted, for some wise purpose, to delude their unhappy worshippers. This, doubtless, they might best do by occasionally telling the truth, as in my instance. But this theory — namely, that the gods of the heathen are perhaps evil and wandering spirits — is, for reasons which will afterwards appear, very painful to me, personally reminding me that I may have sinned as few have done since the days of the early Christians. But I trust this will not be made a reproach to me in our Connection, especially as I have been the humble instrument of so blessed a change in the land of the heathen, there being no more of them left. But, to return to the prophecy, it is given roughly here in English. It ran thus:— “But when a man, having a chimney pot on his head, and four eyes, appears, and when a sail-less ship also comes, sailing without wind and breathing smoke, then will destruction fall upon the Scherian island.” Perhaps, from this and other expressions to be offered in a later chapter, the learned will be able to determine whether the speech is of the Polynesian or the Papuan family, or whether, as I sometimes suspect, it is of neither, but of a character quite isolated and peculiar.

The effect produced on the mind of the chief by the prophecy amazed me, as he looked, for a native, quite a superior and intelligent person. None of them, however, as I found, escaped the influence of their baneful superstitions. Approaching me, he closely examined myself, my dress, and the spectacles which the old priest now held in his hands. The two men then had a hurried discussion, and I have afterwards seen reason to suppose that the chief was pointing out the absence of certain important elements in the fulfilment of the prophecy. Here was I, doubtless, “a man bearing a chimney on his head” (for in this light they regarded my hat), and having “four eyes,” that is, including my spectacles, a convenience with which they had hitherto been unacquainted. It was undeniable that a prophecy written by a person not accustomed to the resources of civilization, could not more accurately have described me and my appearance. But the “ship without sails” was still lacking to the completion of what had been foretold, as the chief seemed to indicate by waving his hand towards the sea. For the present, therefore, they might hope that the worst would not come to the worst. Probably this conclusion brought a ray of hope into the melancholy face of the chief, and the old priest himself left off trembling. They even smiled, and, in their conversation, which assumed a lighter tone, I caught and recorded in pencil on my shirt-cuff, for future explanation, words which sounded like *aiskistos aneer*, *farmakos*, *catharma*, and *Thargeelyah*. Finally the aged priest hobbled back into his temple, and the chief, beckoning me to follow, passed within the courtyard of his house.

IV. AT THE CHIEF’S HOUSE.

The chief leading the way, I followed through the open entrance of the courtyard. The yard was very spacious, and under the dark shade of the trees I could see a light here and there in the windows of small huts along the walls, where, as I found later, the slaves and the young men of the family slept. In the middle of the space there was another altar, I am sorry to say; indeed, there were altars everywhere. I never heard of a people so religious, in their own darkened way, as these islanders. At the further end of the court was a really large and even stately house, with no windows but a clerestory, indicated by the line of light from within, flickering between the top of the wall and the beginning of the high-pitched roof. Light was also streaming through the wide doorway, from which came the sound of many voices. The house was obviously full of people, and, just before we reached the deep verandah, a roofed space open to the air in front, they began to come out, some of them singing. They had flowers in their hair, and torches in their hands. The chief, giving me a sign to be silent, drew me apart within the shadow of a plane tree, and we waited there till the crowd dispersed, and went, I presume, to their own houses. There were no women among them, and the men carried no spears nor other weapons. When the court was empty, we walked up the broad stone steps and stood within the doorway. I was certainly much surprised at what I saw. There was a rude magnificence about this house such as I had never expected to find in the South Sea Islands. Nay, though I am not unacquainted with the abodes of opulence at home, and have been a favoured guest of some of our merchant princes (including Messrs. Bunton, the eminent haberdashers, whose light is so generously bestowed on our Connection), I admit that I had never looked on a more spacious reception-room, furnished, of course, in a somewhat savage manner, but, obviously, regardless of expense. The very threshold between the court and the reception-room, to which you descended by steps, was made of some dark metal, inlaid curiously with figures of beasts and birds, also in metal (gold, as I afterwards learned), of various shades of colour and brightness.

At first I had some difficulty in making out the details of the vast apartment which lay beyond. I was almost dizzy with hunger and fatigue, and my view was further obscured by a fragrant blue smoke, which rose in soft clouds from an open fireplace in the middle of the room. Singular to say, there was no chimney, merely a hole in the lofty roof, through which most of the smoke escaped. The ceiling itself, which was supported by carved rafters, was in places quite black with the vapour of many years. The smoke, however, was thin, and as the fuel on the fire, and on the braziers, was of dry cedar and sandal-wood, the perfume, though heavy, was not unpleasant. The room was partly illuminated by the fire itself, partly by braziers full of blazing branches of trees; but, what was most remarkable, there were rows of metal images of young men (naked, I am sorry to say), with burning torches in their hands, ranged all along the side walls.

A good deal of taste, in one sense, had been expended in making these images, and money had clearly been no object. I might have been somewhat dazzled by the general effect, had I not reflected that, in my own country, gas is within reach of the poorest purse, while the electric light itself may be enjoyed by the very beggar in the street. Here, on the contrary, the dripping of the wax from the torches, the black smoke on the roof, the noisy crackling of the sandal-wood in the braziers, all combined to prove that these natives, though ingenious enough in their way, were far indeed below the level of modern civilization. The abominable ceremony of the afternoon would have proved as much, and now the absence of true *comfort*, even in the dwelling of a chief, made me think once more of the hardships of a missionary's career.

But I must endeavour to complete the picture of domestic life in the island, which I now witnessed for the first time, and which will never be seen again by Europeans. The walls themselves were of some dark but glittering metal, on which designs in lighter metal were inlaid. There were views of the chief going to the chase, his bow in his hand; of the chief sacrificing to idols; of men and young women engaged in the soul-destroying practice of promiscuous dancing; there were wild beasts, lions among others; rivers, with fish in them; mountains, trees, the sun and moon, and stars, all not by any means ill designed, for the work of natives. The pictures, indeed, reminded me a good deal of the ugly Assyrian curiosities in the British Museum, as I have seen them when conducting the children of the Bungletonian Band of Hope through the rooms devoted to the remains of Bible peoples, such as the Egyptians, Hittites, and others.

Red or blue curtains, strangely embroidered, hung over the doors, and trophies of swords, shields, and spears, not of steel, but of some darker metal, were fixed on the tall pillars that helped to prop the roof. At the top of the wall, just beneath the open unglazed spaces, which admitted light and air in the daytime, and wind and rain in bad weather, was a kind of frieze, or coping, of some deep blue material. All along the sides of the hall ran carved seats, covered with pretty light embroidered cloths, not very different from modern Oriental fabrics. The carpets and rugs were precisely like those of India and Persia, and I supposed that they must have been obtained through commerce. But I afterwards learned that they were, beyond doubt, of native manufacture.

At the further end of the room was a kind of platform, or daïs, on which tables were set with fruit and wine. But much more curious than the furniture of the hall was the group of women sitting by the fire in the centre. There sat in two rows some twenty girls, all busily weaving, and throwing the shuttle from hand to hand, laughing and chattering in low voices. In the midst of them, on a high chair of cedar-wood, decorated with ivory, and with an ivory footstool, sat a person whom, in a civilized country, one must have looked on with respect as a lady of high rank. She, like her husband the chief, had a golden circlet twisted in her hair, which was still brown and copious, and she wore an appearance of command.

At her feet, on a stool, reclined a girl who was, I must confess, of singular beauty. Doto had long fair hair, a feature most unusual among these natives. She had blue eyes, and an appearance of singular innocence and frankness. She was, at the moment, embroidering a piece of work intended, as I afterwards learned with deep pain, for the covering of one of their idols, to whose service the benighted young woman was devoted. Often in after days, I saw Doto stooping above her embroidery and deftly interweaving the green and golden threads into the patterns of beasts and flowers. Often my heart went out to this poor child of pagan tribe, and I even pleased myself with the hope that some day, a reclaimed and enlightened character, she might employ her skill in embroidering slippers and braces for a humble vessel. I seemed to see her, a helpmate meet for me, holding Mothers' Meetings, playing hymn-tunes on the lyre, or the double pipes, the native instruments, and, above all, winning the islanders from their cruel and abominable custom of exposing their infant children on the mountains. How differently have all things been arranged.

But I am wandering from my story. When we reached the group by the fireside, who had at first been unaware of our entrance, the chief's wife gave a slight start, alarmed doubtless by my appearance. She could never have seen, nor even dreamed of, such a spectacle as I must have presented, haggard, ragged, faint with hunger, and worn with fatigue as I was. The chief motioned to me that I should kneel at his wife's feet, and kiss her hand, but I merely bowed, not considering this a fit moment to protest otherwise against such sacrilegious mummeries. But the woman — her name I learned later was Ocyale — did not take my attitude in bad part. The startled expression of her face changed to a look of pity, and, with a movement of her hand, she directed Doto to bring a large golden cup from the table at the upper end of the room. Into this cup she ladled some dark liquid from a bowl which was placed on a small three-legged stand, or dumb waiter, close to her side. Next she spilt a little of the wine on the polished floor, with an appearance of gravity which I did not understand. It appears that this spilling of wine is a drink offering to their idols. She then offered me the cup, which I was about to taste, when I perceived that the liquor was indubitably *alcoholic*!

A total abstainer, I had, I am thankful to say, strength enough to resist the temptation thus adroitly thrust upon me. Setting down the cup, I pointed to the badge of blue ribbon, which, though damp and colourless, remained faithful to my button-hole. I also made signs I was hungry, and would be glad of something to eat. My gestures, as far as the blue ribbon went, must have been thrown away, of course, but any one could understand that I was fainting from hunger. The mistress of the house called to one of the spinning girls, who rose and went within the door opening from the platform at the upper end of the room. She presently returned with an old woman, a housekeeper, as we would say, and obviously a faithful and familiar servant. After some conversation, of which I was probably the topic, the old woman hobbled off, laughing. She soon came back, bringing, to my extreme delight, a basket with cakes and goat cheese, and some cold pork in a dish.

I ought, perhaps, to say here that, in spite of the luxury of their appointments, and their extraordinary habit of "eating and drinking all day to the going down of the sun" (as one of their own poets says), these islanders are by no means good cooks. I have tasted of more savoury meats, dressed in coverings of leaves on hot stones, in Maori *pahs*, or in New Caledonian villages, than among the comparatively civilized natives of the country where I now found myself. Among the common people, especially, there was no notion of hanging or keeping meat. Often have I seen a man kill a hog on the floor of his house, cut it up, toast it, as one may say, at the fire, and then offer the grilled and frequently under-done flesh to his guests. Invariably the guests are obliged to witness the slaughter of the animal which is to supply their dinner. This slaughter is performed as a kind of sacrifice; the legs of the beast are the portions of the gods, and are laid, with bits of fat, upon the altars. Then chops, or rather kabobs, of meat are hacked off, spitted, and grilled or roasted at the fire. Consequently all the meat tasted in this island is actually "meat offered to idols."

When I made this discovery the shock was very great, and I feared I was repeating a sin denounced from the earliest ages. But what was I to do? Not the meat only, but the vegetables, the fruit, the grain, the very fish (which the natives never eat except under stress of great hunger), were sacred to one or other of their innumerable idols. I must eat, or starve myself to death — a form of suicide. I therefore made up my mind to eat without scruple, remembering that the gods of the nations are nothing at all, but the fancies of vain dreamers, and the invention of greedy and self-seeking priests.

These scruples were of later growth, after I had learned that their meals were invariably preceded by a sacrifice, partly to provide the food, partly as grace before meat. On the present occasion I made an excellent supper, though put to a good deal of inconvenience by the want of forks, which were entirely unknown on the island. Finding that I would not taste the alcoholic liquor, which the natives always mixed with a large proportion of water, Doto rose, went out, and returned with a great bowl of ivy-wood, curiously carved, and full of milk. In this permitted beverage, as my spirits were rising, I drank the young lady's health, indicating my gratitude as well as I could. She bowed gracefully, and returned to her task of embroidery. Meanwhile her father and mother were deep in conversation, and paid no attention to me, obviously understanding that my chief need was food. I could not but see that the face of the chief's wife was overclouded, probably with anxiety caused by the prophecy of which I was, or was taken for, the subject.

When my hunger was satisfied, I fell, it seems, into a kind of doze, from which I was wakened by the noise of people rising, moving, and pushing back chairs. I collected my senses, and perceived that the room was almost dark, most of the inmates had gone, and the chief was lighting a torch at one of the braziers. This torch he placed in my hand, indicating, as I understood, that I was to put myself under the guidance of two of the young women who had been spinning. At this I was somewhat perplexed, but followed where they went before me, each of them holding a burning torch. The light flared and the smoke drifted among the corridors, till we came within sound of running water. In a lofty green chamber was a large bath of polished marble, carved with shapes of men armed with pitchforks, and employed in spearing fish. The bath was full of clear water, of somewhat higher than tepid heat, and the stream, welling up in one part, flowed out in another, not splashing or spilling. The young women now brought flasks of oil, large sponges, such as are common in these seas, and such articles of dress as are worn by the men among the natives. But, to my astonishment, the girls showed no intention of going away, and it soon became evident *that they meant to assist me in my toilet*! I had some difficulty in getting them to understand the indecorum of their conduct, or rather (for I doubt if they understood it after all) in prevailing on them to leave me. I afterwards learned that this custom, shocking as it appears to Europeans, is regarded as entirely right and usual even by the better class of islanders; nor, to do them justice, have I ever heard any imputations on the morality of their women. Except among the shepherds and shepherdesses in the rural districts, whose conduct was very regardless, a high standard of modesty prevailed among the female natives. In this, I need not say, they were a notable exception among Polynesian races.

Left to my own devices by the retreat of the young women, I revelled in the pleasures of the bath, and then the question arose, How was I to be clothed?

I had, of course, but one shirt with me, and that somewhat frayed and worn. My boots, too, were almost useless from their prolonged immersion in salt water. Yet I could not bring myself to adopt the peculiar dress of the natives, though the young persons had left in the bath-room changes of raiment such as are worn by the men of rank. These garments were simple, and not uncomfortable, but, as they showed the legs from the knees downwards, like kilts, I felt that they would be unbecoming to one in my position.

Almost the chief distinction between civilized man and the savage, is the wearing of trousers. When a missionary in Tongo, and prime minister of King Haui Ha there, I made the absence of breeches in the males an offence punishable by imprisonment. Could I, on my very first appearance among the islanders to-morrow, fly, as it were, in the face of my own rules, and prove false to my well-known and often expressed convictions? I felt that such backsliding was impossible. On mature consideration, therefore, I made the following arrangement.

The garments of the natives, when they condescended to wear any, were but two in number. First, there was a long linen or woollen shirt or smock, without sleeves, which fell from the neck to some distance below the knees. This shirt I put on. A belt is generally worn, into which the folds of the smock can be drawn up or "kilted," when the wearer wishes to have his limbs free for active exercise. The other garment is simply a large square piece of stuff, silken or woollen as it happens in accordance with the weather, and the rank of the wearer. In this a man swathes himself, somewhat as a Highlander does in his plaid, pinning it over the shoulder and leaving the arms free. When one is accustomed to it, this kind of dress is not uncomfortable, and many of the younger braves carried it with a good deal of grace, showing some fancy and originality in the dispositions of the folds. Though attired in this barbarous guise, I did not, of course, dispense with my trousers, which, being black, contrasted somewhat oddly with my primrose-coloured *ki ton*, as they call the smock, and the dark violet *clamis*, or plaid. When the natives do not go bareheaded, they usually wear a kind of light, soft wideawake, but this. I discarded in favour of my hat, which had already produced so remarkable an effect on their superstitious minds.

Now I was dressed, as fittingly as possible in the circumstances, but I felt that my chief need was a bed to lie down upon. I did not wish to sleep in the bathroom, so, taking my torch from the stand in which I had placed it, I sallied forth into the corridors, attired as I have described, and carrying my coat under my arm. A distant light, and the noise of females giggling, which increased most indecorously as I drew near, attracted my attention. Walking in the direction of the sounds, I soon discovered the two young women to whose charge I had been committed by the chief. They appeared to be in high spirits, and, seizing my arms before I could offer any resistance, they dragged me at a great pace down the passage and out into the verandah. Here the air was very fragrant and balmy, and a kind of comfortable "shakedown" of mattresses, covered with coloured blankets, had been laid for me in a corner. I lay down as soon as the sound of the young women's merriment died out in the distance, and after the extraordinary events of the night, I was soon sleeping as soundly as if I had been in my father's house at Hackney Wick.

V. A STRANGER ARRIVES.

When I wakened next morning, wonderfully refreshed by sleep and the purity of the air, I had some difficulty in remembering where I was and how I came there in such a peculiar costume. But the voices of the servants in the house, and the general stir of people going to and fro, convinced me that I had better be up and ready to put my sickle into this harvest of heathen darkness. Little did I think how soon the heathen darkness would be trying to put the sickle into me! I made my way with little difficulty, being guided by the sound of the running water, to the bath-room, and thence into the gardens. These were large and remarkably well arranged in beds and plots of flowers and fruit-trees. I particularly admired a fountain in the middle, which watered the garden, and supplied both the chief's house and the town. Returning by way of the hall, I met the chief, who, saluting me gravely, motioned me to one of many small tables on which was set a bowl of milk, some cakes, and some roasted kid's flesh.

After I had done justice to this breakfast, he directed me to follow him, and, walking before me with his gold-knobbed staff in his hand, passed out of the shady court into the public square. Here we found a number of aged men seated on unpleasantly smooth and cold polished stones in a curious circle of masonry. They were surrounded by a crowd of younger men, shouting, laughing, and behaving with all the thoughtless levity and merriment of a Polynesian mob. They became silent as the chief approached, and the old men rose from their places till he had taken a kind of rude throne in the circle.

For my part, I was obliged to stand alone in their midst, and it seemed that they were debating about myself and my future treatment. First the old priest, whom I had seen on the night before, got up, and, as I fancied, his harangue was very unfavourable to me. He pointed at the inevitable flower-crowned altar which, of course, was in the centre of the market-place, and from the way he shook a sickle he held in his hand I believe that he was proposing to sacrifice me on the spot. In the midst of his oration two vultures, black with white breasts, flew high over our heads, chasing a dove, which they caught and killed right above the market-place, so that the feathers fell down on the altar. The islanders, as I afterwards discovered, are full of childish superstitions about the flight of birds, from which they derive omens as to future events. The old priest manifestly attempted to make political capital against me out of the interesting occurrence in natural history which we had just observed. He hurried to the altar, caught up a handful of the bleeding feathers, and, with sickle in hand, was rushing towards me, when he tripped over the head of a bullock that had lately been sacrificed, and fell flat on his face, while the sickle flew far out of his hand.

On this the young men, who were very frivolous, like most of the islanders, laughed aloud, and even the elders smiled. The chief now rose with his staff in his grasp, and, pointing first to me and then to the sky, was, I imagined, propounding a different interpretation of the omen from that advanced by the old priest. Meantime the latter, with a sulky expression of indifference, sat nursing his knees, which had been a good deal damaged by his unseemly sprawl on the ground. When the chief sat down, a very quiet, absent-minded old gentleman arose. Elatreus was his name, as I learned later; his family had a curious history, and he himself afterwards came to an unhappy and terrible end, as will be shown in a subsequent part of my narrative.

I felt quite at home, as if I had been at some vestry-meeting, or some committee in the old country, when Elatreus got up. He was stout, very bald, and had a way of thrusting his arm behind him, and of humming and hawing, which vividly brought back to mind the oratory of my native land. He had also, plainly enough, the trick of forgetting what he intended to say, and of running off after new ideas, a trick very uncommon among these natives, who are born public speakers. I flattered myself that this orator was in favour of leniency towards me, but nobody was paying much attention to him, when a shout was heard from the bottom of the hill on which the square is built. Everybody turned round, the elders jumped up with some alacrity for the sake of a better view on the polished stones where they had been sitting, and so much was the business before the meeting forgotten in the new excitement, that I might have run away unnoticed, had there been anywhere to run to. But flight was out of the question, unless I could get a boat and some provisions, and I had neither. I was pleased, however, to see that I was so lightly and laxly guarded.

The cause of the disturbance was soon apparent. A number of brown, half-naked, sturdy sailors, with red caps, not unlike fezzes, on their heads, appeared, bawling and making for the centre of the square. They were apparently carrying or dragging some person with them, some person who offered a good deal of resistance. Among the foreign and unintelligible cries and howls which rang through the market-place, my heart leaped up, in natural though unsanctified pleasure, as I heard the too well-known but unexpected accents of British profanity.

“Where the (somewhere) are you blooming sons of beach-combers dragging a Bri’sh shailor? Shtand off, you ragged set of whitewashed Christy Minstrels, you! Where’s the Bri’sh Conshul’s? Take me, you longshore sons of sharks, to the Bri'sh Conshul's! If there's one white man among you let him stand out and hit a chap his own weight."

"Hullo!" suddenly cried the speaker, whom I had recognized as William Bludger, one of the most depraved and regardless of the whole wicked crew of the *Blackbird,*— "hullo, if here isn't old Captain Hymn-book!" — a foolish nickname the sailors had given me.

He was obviously more than half-drunk, and carried in his hand a black rum-bottle, probably (from all I knew of him) not nearly full. His shirt and trousers were torn and dripping; apparently he had been washed ashore, like myself, after the storm, and had been found and brought into the town by some of the fishing population.

What a blow to all my hopes was the wholly unlooked-for arrival of this tipsy, irreclaimable seaman, this unawakened Bill Bludger! I had framed an ideal of what my own behaviour, in my trying circumstances, ought to be. Often had I read how these islanders possess a tradition that a wonderful white man, a being all sweetness and lucidity, landed in their midst, taught them the knowledge of the arts, converted them to peace and good manners, and at last mysteriously departed, promising that he would return again. I had hopes — such things have happened — that the islanders might take me for this wonderful white man of their traditions, come back according to his promise. If this delusion should occur, I would not at once undeceive them, but take advantage of the situation, and so bring them all into the Bungletonian fold. I knew there was no time to waste. Lutheran, French, or Church of England schemers, in schooners, might even now be approaching the island, with their erroneous and deplorable tenets. Again, I had reckoned, if my hopes proved false, on attaining, not without dignity, the crown of the proto-martyr of my Connection. Beyond occasional confinement in police cells, consequent on the strategic manœuvres of the Salvation Army, none of us had ever known what it was to suffer in the cause. If I were to be the first to testify with my blood, on this unknown soil, at least I could meet my doom with dignity. In any case, I should be remembered, I had reckoned, in the island traditions, either as an isolated and mysterious benefactor, the child of an otherwise unknown race, or as a solitary martyr from afar.

All these vain hopes of spiritual pride were now blown to the wind by Bill Bludger's unexpected appearance and characteristic conduct. No delusions about a divine white stranger from afar could survive the appearance and behaviour of so compromising an acquaintance as William. He was one white stranger too many. There he was, still struggling, shouting, swearing, smelling of rum, and making frantic attempts to reach me and shake hands with me.

"Let bygones be bygones, Captain Hymn-book, your Reverence," he screamed; "here's your jolly good health and song," and he put his horrible black bottle to his unchastened lips. "Here we are, Captain, two Englishmen agin a lot o' blooming Kanekas; let's clear out their whole blessed town, and steer for Sydney."

But, perceiving that I did not intend to recognize or carouse with him, William Bludger now changed his tone; "Yah, you lily-livered Bible-reader," he exclaimed, "what are you going about in *that* toggery for: copying Mr. Toole in *Paw Claudian*? *You* call yourself a missionary? Jove, you're more like a blooming play hactor in a penny gaff! Easy, then, my hearties," he added, seeing that the fishermen were approaching him again, with ropes in their hands. "Avast! stow your handcuffs."

In spite of his oaths and struggles, the inebriated mariner was firmly bound, hand and foot, and placed in the centre of the assembly. I only wished that the natives had also gagged him, for his language, though, of course, unintelligible to them, was profane, and highly painful to me.

Before returning to business, the chiefs carefully inspected the black bottle, of which they had dispossessed William Bludger. A golden vase was produced — they had always plenty of *them* handy — and the dark fluid was poured into this princely receptacle, diffusing a strong odour of rum. Each chief carefully tasted the stuff, and I was pained, on gathering, from the expression of their countenances, that they obviously relished the "fire-water" which has been the ruin of so many peoples in these beautiful but benighted seas. However, there was not enough left to go round, and it was manifestly unlikely that William Bludger had succeeded in conveying larger supplies from the wreck.

The meeting now assumed its former air of earnestness, and it was not hard to see that the arrival of my unhappy and degraded fellow-countryman had introduced a new element into the debate. Man after man spoke, and finally the chief rose, as I had little doubt, to sum up the discussion. He pointed to myself, and to William Bludger alternately, and the words which I had already noted, *Thargeelyah,* and *farmakoi,* frequently recurred in his speech. His ideas seemed to meet with general approval; even the old priest laid aside his sickle, and beat applause with his hands. He next rose, and, taking two garlands of beautiful flowers from the horns of the altar, placed one wreath on the head of the drunken sailor, who had fallen asleep by this time. He then drew near me, and I had little doubt that he meant to make me also wear a garland, like some woman of rank and fashion at a giddy secular entertainment. Whatever his motive might be I was determined to wear nothing of the kind. But here some attendants grappled and held me, my hat was lifted from my brows, and the circlet of blossoms was carefully entwined all round my hat. The head-covering was then replaced, the whole assembly, forming a circle, danced around me and the unconscious Bludger, and, finally, the old priest, turning his face alternately to me and to the sun, intoned a hymn, the audience joining in at intervals.

My worst fears were, apparently, being realized. In spite of the compromising appearance and conduct of Bludger, it seemed beyond doubt that we were both regarded as, in some degree, divine and sacred. Resistance on my part was, it will be seen, impossible. I could not escape from the hands of my tormentors, and I was so wholly ignorant, at that time, of their tongue, that I knew not how to disclaim the honours thus blasphemously thrust upon me. I did my best, shouting, in English, "I am no *Thargeelyah*. I am no *farmakos*" supposing those words to be the native terms for one or other of their gods. On this the whole assembly, even the gravest, burst out laughing, each man poking his neighbour in the ribs, and uttering what I took to be jests at my expense. Their behaviour in this juncture, and frequently afterwards, when I attempted to make them tell me the meaning of the unknown words, and of *catharma* (another expression the chief had used), greatly perplexed me. I had afterwards too good reason to estimate their dreadful lack of the ordinary feelings of humanity at its true value.

However, nothing but laughter (most unfitting the occasion) could be got out of the assembled natives. They now began to return to their homes, and Bludger, crowned with flowers that became him but ill, was carried off, not, as it seemed to me, without even a reverential demeanour on the part of his escort. Those who surrounded me, a kind of body-guard of six young men, had entirely recovered their composure, and behaved to me with a deference that was astonishing, but reassuring. From this time, I ought to say, though permitted to go where I would, and allowed to observe even their most secret rites, enjoying opportunities such as will never fall to another European, I was never, but once, entirely alone. My worshippers, as they might almost be called, so humble was their demeanour, still kept watchful eyes upon me, as if I were a being so precious that they were jealous of my every movement. It was now made plain to me, by signs, that I must wait for some little space before being conveyed to my appointed residence.

VI. A BACKSLIDER. A WARNING.

We had not remained long by ourselves in the square, when the most extraordinary procession which I had ever beheld began to climb into the open space from the town beneath. I do not know if I have made it sufficiently clear that the square, on the crest of the isolated hill above the sea, was occupied only by public buildings, such as the temple, the house of the chief, and a large edifice used as a kind of town hall, so to speak. The natives in general lived in much smaller houses, many of them little better than huts, and divided by extremely narrow and filthy streets, on the slopes, and along the shores of the bay.

It was from these houses and from all the country round that the procession, with persons who fell into its ranks as they came, was now making its way. Almost all the parties concerned were young, boys and girls, or very young men and women, and though their dress was much scantier and less decent than what our ideas of delicacy require, it must be admitted that the general aspect of the procession was far from unpleasing. The clothes and wraps which the men and women wore were of various gay colours, and were, in most cases, embroidered quite skilfully with representations of flowers, fruits, wild beasts, and individuals of grotesque appearance. Every one was crowned with either flowers or feathers.

But, most remarkable of all, there was scarcely a person in this large gathering who did not bring or lead some wild bird or beast. The girls carried young wild doves, young rooks, or the nestlings of such small fowls as sparrows and finches. It was a pretty sight to see these poor uninstructed young women, flushed with the exertion of climbing, and merry, flocking into the square, each with her pet (as I supposed, but the tender mercies of the heathen are cruel) half hidden in the folds of her gown. Of the young men, some carried hawks, some chained eagles, some young vultures. Many were struggling, too, with wild stags and wild goats, which they compelled with the utmost difficulty to march in the ranks of the procession. A number of young persons merely bore in their hands such fruits as were in season, obviously fine specimens, of which they had reason to be proud.

Others, again, were carrying little young bears, all woolly, comfortable-looking creatures, while the parent bears, adult bears at any rate, were brought along, chained, in the rear. My guards, or adorers, or whatever the young men who looked after me really were, led me forward, and made signs to me that I was to bring up the rear of the procession — behind the bears, which made no attempt (as in the case of the prophet) to take the part of a Minister of the Bungletonian Connection. What a position for one who would fain have been opening the eyes of this darkened people to better things! But, till I had acquired some knowledge of their language, I felt my only chance was to acquiesce in everything not positively sinful. The entrance of a menagerie and horticultural exhibition into the town — for thus I explained to myself what was going on before my eyes — could not be severely censured by the harshest critic, and I prepared to show my affability by joining in an innocent diversion and popular entertainment.

Soon I found that, after all, I was not to be absolutely last in the advance of this miscellaneous exhibition, nor were the intentions of the people so harmless as I had imagined. This was no affair of cottage window gardens, and a distribution of prizes.

The crowd which had collected in front of the chief's house opened suddenly, and, in the throng of people, I detected a movement of excitement and alarm. Next I saw the horns of animals mixed with the heads and shoulders of the multitude, and then an extraordinary spectacle burst, at full speed, upon my gaze. Four great wild stags, plunging, rearing, and kicking, rushed by, dragging a small vehicle of unusual shape, in which stood, to my horror, the chief's beautiful daughter, Doto. The vehicle passed me like a flash of horns, in spite of the attempts of four resolute men, who clung at the stags' heads to restrain the impetuosity of these coursers. The car, I should explain — though I can hardly expect to be believed — was not unlike the floor of a hansom cab, from which the seat, the roof, the driver's perch, and everything else should have been removed, except the basis, the wheels, and the splashboard, the part on which we generally find the advertisements of Messrs. Mappin and Webb. On this floor, then, Doto stood erect, holding the reins; her yellow hair had become unbound, and was floating like a flag behind her, and her beautiful face, far from displaying any alarm, was flushed with pleasure and pride. She was dressed in splendid and glittering attire, over which was fastened — so strange were the manners of these islanders — the newly-stripped skin of a great black bear. Thus dragged by the wild deer, Doto passed like a flash through the midst of the men and women, her stags being maddened to fresh excitement by the sight and smell of the bears, and other wild animals. But, eager as were the brutes that dragged the precarious carriage, they were somewhat tamed by the great steepness of the ascent, up which they bounded, to the heights at the back of the town. Up this path, often narrow and excessively dangerous, we all took our way, and finally, after passing through various perilous defiles and skirting many cliffs, we arrived at a level space in front of an ancient temple of one of their heathen gods. It was built like the others in the settlement below, but the white stone had become brown and yellow with time and weather, and the colours, chiefly red and blue, with which the graven images, in contempt of the second commandment, were painted, had faded, and grown very dim.

On the broad platform in front of this home of evil spirits had been piled a great mound of turf, sloping very gradually and smoothly, like the terrace of a well-kept lawn, to the summit, which itself was, perhaps, a hundred feet in circumference. On this was erected a kind of breastwork of trunks of trees, each tree some fifteen feet in length, and in the centre of the circular breastwork was an altar, as usual, under which blazed a fire of great fierceness. From the temple came a very aged woman, dressed in bear skins, who carried a torch. This torch she lit at the blaze under the altar, and a number of the young men, lighting their torches at hers, set fire to the outer breastwork, in which certain open spaces or entrances had been purposely left. No sooner had the trees begun to catch fire, which they did slowly, being of green wood, than the multitude outside, with the most horrible and piercing outcries, began to drive the animals which they had brought with them into the midst of the flames.

The spectacle was one of the most terrible I ever beheld, even among this cruel and outlandish people, whose abominable inventions contrasted so strangely with the mildness of their demeanour where their religion was not concerned. It was pitiful to see the young birds, many of them not yet able to fly, flutter into the flames and the stifling smoke, and then fall, scorched, and twittering miserably. The young lambs and other domesticated animals were forced in without much resistance, but the great difficulty was to urge the wolves, antelopes, and other wild creatures, into the blaze. The cries of the multitude, who bounded about like maniacs, armed with clubs and torches, rose madly over the strange unusual screams and howls uttered by the wild beasts in their pain and terror. Ever and anon some animal would burst through the crowd, perhaps half burned, and with its fur on fire, and would be pursued to a certain distance, after which it was allowed to escape by the sacrificers. As I was watching, with all my hopes enlisted on its side, the efforts of an antelope to escape, I heard a roar which was horrible even in that babel of abominable sights and sounds.

A great black bear, its pelt one sheet of flame, its whole appearance (if I may be permitted to say so) like that of a fiend from the pit, forced its way through the throng, and, bounding madly to the spot where Doto’s car stood at a little distance, rose erect on its hind feet, and fixed its claws in the flank of one of the stags, the off-leader. Instantly the team of stags, escaping from the hands of the strong men who stood at their heads, plunged violently down the narrow and dangerous path which led to the city. I shouted to Doto to leap out, but she did not hear or did not understand me.

With a fixed look of horror on her white face, she dropped the useless reins, and the vehicle passed out of sight round a corner of the cliff.

I had but a moment in which to reflect on what might be done to rescue her. In that moment I providentially spied a double-edged axe which lay beside me on the grass, having fallen from the hands of one of the natives. Snatching up this weapon, I rushed to the edge of the cliff, and looked down. It was almost a sheer precipice, broken only by narrow shelves and clefts, on some of which grass grew, while on others a slight mountain-ash or a young birch just managed to find foothold.

Far, far beneath, hundreds of feet below, I could trace the windings of the path up which we had climbed.

Instantly my plan was conceived. I would descend the cliff, risking my life, of course, but that was now of small value in this hopelessly heathen land, and endeavour to save the benighted Doto from the destruction to which she was hastening. Her car must pass along that portion of the path which lay, like a ribbon, in the depth below me, unless, as seemed too probable, it chanced to be upset before reaching the spot. To pursue it from behind was manifestly hopeless.

These thoughts flashed through my brain more rapidly than even the flight of the maddened red deer; and scarcely less swiftly, I began scrambling down the face of the cliff. It was really a series of almost hopeless leaps to which I was committed, and the axe, to which I clung, rather impeded than aided me as I let myself drop from one rocky shelf to another, catching at the boughs and roots of trees to break my fall. At last I reached the last ledge before the sheer wall of rock, which hung above the path. As I let myself down, feeling with my feet for any shelf or crack in the wall, I heard the blare of the stags, and the rattle of the wheels. Half intentionally, half against my will, I left my hold of a tree-root, and slid, bumping and scratching myself terribly, down the slippery and slatey face of the rocky wall, till I fell in a mass on the narrow road. In a moment I was on my feet, the axe I had thrown in front of me, and I grasped it instinctively as I rose. It was not too soon. The deer were almost on me. Stepping to the side of the way, where a rock gave some shelter, I dealt a blow at the nearest stag, under which he reeled and fell to the ground, his companion stumbling over him. In the mad group of rearing beasts I smote right and left at the harness, which gave way beneath my strokes, and the unhurt stags sped down the glen, and then rushed into separate corries of the hills. The car was upset, and Doto lay pale and bleeding among the hoofs of the stricken deer.

I dragged her out of the danger to the side of the path. I felt her pulse, which still fluttered. I brought her, in my hat, water from the stream; and, finally, had the pleasure of seeing her return to life before the first of her friends came, wailing and lamenting, and tearing their hair, down the path.

When they found the girl unwounded, though still weak and faint, their joy knew no bounds, though I too plainly perceived that they were returning thanks to the heathen goddess whose priestess Doto was. As for me, they once more crowned me in the most elaborate, and, I think, unbecoming manner, with purple pandanus flowers. Then, having laid Doto on a litter, they returned in procession to the town, where the girl was taken into the chiefs house. As we parted, she held out her hand to me, but instantly withdrew it with a deep sigh. I closely watched her. She was weeping. I had noticed before that all the natives, as much as possible, avoided personal contact with me. This fact, coupled with the reverence which they displayed towards me, confirmed my impression that they regarded me as something supernatural, not of this world, and divine.

To remove this belief was most certainly my duty, but how was it to be done? Alas! I must now admit that I yielded to a subtle temptation, and was led into conduct unworthy of a vessel. Sad to say, as I search the rewards of my own heart, I am compelled to confess that my real desire was not so much to undeceive the people — for in their bewildering myriads of foolish beliefs one more or less was of small importance — as to recommend myself to Doto. This young woman, though not a member of our Connection, and wholly ignorant of saving Truths, had begun to find favour in my eyes, and I hoped to lead her to the altar; altars, for that matter, being plentiful enough in this darkened land. I should have remembered the words once spoken by a very gracious young woman, the daughter of a pious farmer. "Mother," said she, "I have made up my mind never to let loose my affections upon any man as is not pious, and in good circumstances." Doto was, for an islander, in good circumstances, but who, ah! who, could call her pious?

I endeavoured, it is true, to convert her, but, ah! did I go to work in the right way? Did I draw, in awful colours, the certain consequences of ignorance of the Truth? Did I endeavour to strike a salutary terror into her heathen heart?

No; such would have been a proper course of conduct, but such was not mine! I weakly adopted the opposite plan — that used by the Jesuits in their dealings with the Chinese and other darkened peoples. I attempted, meanly attempted (but, as may be guessed, with but limited success), to give an orthodox Nonconformist character to the observances of Doto's religion. For example, instead of thundering, as was my duty, at her worldly diversions of promiscuous dancing, and ball play, I took a part in these secular pursuits, fondly persuading myself that my presence discouraged levity, and was a check upon unseemly mirth.

Thus, among the young native men and maidens, in the windings of the mazy dance, might have been seen disporting himself, a person of stalwart form, whose attire still somewhat faintly indicated his European origin and sacred functions. A hymn-book in my hand instead of a rattle (used by the natives), I capered gaily through their midst. Often and often I led the music, instructing my festive flock in English hymns, which, however, I adapted to gay and artless melodies, such as "There's some one in de house wid Dinah!" or "Old Joe kicking up behind and afore!"

This kind of entertainment was entirely new to the natives, who heartily preferred it to their own dull music, resembling what are called, I believe, "Gregorians," by a bloated and Erastian establishment.

So far, then, I may perchance trust that my efforts were not altogether vain, and the seed thus sown may, in one or two cases, have fallen on ground not absolutely stony. But, alas! I have little room for hope.

I pursued my career of unblushing "economy" — as the Jesuits say, meaning, alas! economy of plain truth speaking — and of heathen dissipation. Few were the dances in which I did not take a part, sinking so low as occasionally to oblige with a hornpipe. My blue ribbon had long ago worn out, and with it my strict views on Temperance. I acquired a liking for the strange drink of the islanders — a thick wine and water, sometimes mixed with cheese and honey. In fact, I was sliding back — like the unfortunate Fanti missionary, John Greedy, M.A., whose case, as reported by precious Mr. Grant Allen, so painfully moved serious circles — I was sliding back to the level of the savagery around me. May these confessions be accepted in the same spirit as they are offered; may it partly palliate my guilt that I had apparently no chance of escape from the island, and no hope beyond that of converting the natives and marrying Doto. I trusted to do it, not (as of old) by open and fearless denunciation, but by slowly winning hearts, in a secular and sportive capacity, before gaining souls.

Even so have I seen young priests of the prelatical Establishment aim at popularity by playing cricket with liberal coal-miners of sectarian persuasions. They told me they were "in the mission field," and one observed that his favourite post in the field was third man. I know not what he meant. But to return to the island.

My career of soul-destroying "amusement" (ah, how hollow!) was not uninterrupted by warnings. Every now and again the mask was raised, and I saw clearly the unspeakable horrors of heathen existence.

For example, in an earlier part of this narrative, I have mentioned an old heathen called Elatreus, a good-natured, dull, absent-minded man, who reminded me of a respectable British citizen. How awful was *his* end, how trebly awful when I reflect how nearly I — but let me not anticipate. Elatreus was the head, and eldest surviving member of a family which had a singular history. I never could make out what the story was, but, in consequence of some ancient crime, the chief of the family was never allowed to enter the town hall. The penalty, if he infringed the law, was terrible. Now it chanced one day that I was wandering down the street, my hands full of rare flowers which I had gathered for Doto, and with four young doves in my hat. It was spring, and at that season the young persons of the island expected to receive such gifts from their admirers. I was also followed by eleven little fawns, which I had tamed for her, and four young whelps of the bear. At the same time, in the lightness of my foolish heart, I was singing a native song, all about one Lityerses, to the tune of “Barbara Allen.”

At this moment, I observed, coming out of a side street, old Elatreus. He was doddering along, his hands behind his back, and his nose in the air, followed by a small but increasing crowd of the natives, who crept stealthily behind at a considerable distance. I paused to watch what was happening.

Elatreus entered the main street, and lounged along till he came opposite the town hall, on which some repairs were being made. The door stood wide open. He gazed at it, in a vacant but interested way, and went up the steps, where he stood staring in an absent-minded, vacant kind of fashion. I could see that the crowd watching him from the corner of the side street was vastly excited.

Elatreus now passed his hand across his brow, seemed vastly puzzled, and yawned. Then he slowly entered the town hall. With a wild yell of savage triumph the mob rushed in after him, and in a few moments came forth again, with Elatreus bound and manacled. Some one sped away, and brought the old priest, who carried the sickle. He appeared full of joy, and lustily intoned — for they have this Popish custom of intoning — an unintelligible hymn. By this time Elatreus had been wreathed and crowned with flowers, and the rude multitude for this purpose seized the interesting orchids which I had gathered for my Doto. They then dragged the old man, pitifully lamenting, to the largest altar in the centre of the square.

Need I say what followed? The scene was too awful. With a horrible expression of joy the priest laid the poor wretch on the great stone altar, and with his keen sickle — but it is too horrible! . . . This was the penalty for a harmless act, forbidden by a senseless law, which Elatreus — a most respectable man for an idolater — had broken in mere innocent absence of mind.

Alas! among such a people, how could I ever hope, alone and unaided, to effect any truly regenerating work?

Yet I was not wholly discouraged; indeed, my *infatuation* for Doto made me overlook much profligate behaviour that I do not care to mention in a tract which may fall into the hands of the young. One other example of the native barbarity, however, I must narrate.

A respected couple in the vicinity had long been childless. At length their wishes were crowned with success, and a little baby girl was born to them. But the priest, who had curious ideas of his own, insisted on consulting, as to this child, a certain witch, a woman who dwelt apart in a cave where there was a sulphurous hot-water spring, surrounded by laurel bushes, regarded as sacred by the benighted islanders. This spring, or the fumes that arose from it, was supposed to confer on the dweller in the cave the gift of prophecy. She was the servant of Apollon, and was credited with possessing a spirit of divination. The woman, after undergoing, or simulating, an epileptic attack, declared, in rhythmical language, that the babe must not be allowed to live. She averred that it would "bring destruction on Scheria," the native name for the island, which I have styled Boothland, in honour of the Salvation Army. This was enough for the priests, who did not actually slay the infant, but exposed it on the side of a mountain, where the beasts and birds were likely to have their way with it.

Now it chanced that I had climbed the hill-top that day to watch for a sail, for I never quite lost hope of being taken away by some British or continental vessel. My attendants, for a wonder, were all absent at some feast — Carneia, I think they called it — of their heathen gods. The time was early summer; it only wanted a fortnight of the date, as far as I could reckon, at which I had first been cast on the island, a year before.

As I descended the hillside, pleased, I must own, by the warm blight sunlight, the colour of the sea, and the smell of the aromatic herbs, — pleased, and half forgetful of the horrid heathenism that surrounded me, I heard a low wail as of an infant. I searched about, in surprise, and came on a beautiful baby, in rich swaddling bands, with a gold signet ring tied round its neck. Such an occurrence was not very unusual, as the natives, like most savages, were in the habit of keeping down the surplus population, by thus exposing their little ones. The history of the island was full of legends of exposed children, picked up by the charitable (there was, oddly enough, no prohibition against this), and afterwards recognized and welcomed by their families. As any Englishman would have done, I lifted the dear little thing in my arms, and, a happy thought occurring to me, carried it off as a present to Doto, who doted on babies, as all girls do. The gift proved to be the most welcome that I had ever offered, though Doto, as usual, would not accept it from my hands, but made me lay it down beside the hearth, which they regarded as a sacred place. Even if an enemy reached the hearth of his foe, he would, thenceforth, be quite safe in his house. Doto then picked up the child, warmed and caressed it, sent for milk for its entertainment, and was full of pleasure in her new pet.

She was a dear good girl, Doto, in spite of her heathen training.

Strangely enough, as I thought at the time, she burst out weeping when I took my leave of her, and seemed almost as if she had some secret to impart to me. This, at least, showed an interest in me, and I walked to my home with high presumptuous thoughts.

As I passed a certain group of rocks, in a lonely uncultivated district, while the grey of evening was falling, I heard a low whistle. The place had a bad reputation, being thought to be haunted. Perhaps I had unconsciously imbibed some of the superstitions of the natives, for I started in alarm.

Then I heard an unmistakably British voice cry, in a suppressed tone, “Hi!”

The underwood rustled, and I beheld, to my astonishment, the form, the crawling and abject form, of William Bludger!

Since the day of his landing we had never once met, William having been sent off to a distant part of the island.

“Hi!” he said again, and when I exclaimed, naturally, “Hullo!” he put his finger on his lips, and beckoned to me to join him. This I did, and found that he was lurking in a cavern under the group of grey weather-worn stones.

When I entered the cave, Bludger fell a-trembling so violently that he could not speak. He seemed in the utmost alarm, his face quite ashen with terror.

“What is the matter, William Bludger?” I asked; “have you had a Call, or why do you thrust yourself on me?”

“Have *you* sich a thing as a chaw about ye?” he asked in tremulous accents. “I’m *that* done; never a drop has passed my lips for three days, strike me dead; and I’d give anything for a chaw o’ tobacco. A sup of drink you have *not* got, Capt’n Hymn-book, axing your pardon for the liberty?”

“William,” I said, “even in this benighted island, you set a pitiful example. You have been drinking, sir; you are reaping what you have sown; and only temperance, strict, undeviating total abstinence rather, can restore your health.”

“So help me!” cried the wretched man, “except a drop of Pramneian I took, the morning I cut and run, — and that was three days ago, — nothing stronger than castor-oil berries have crossed my lips. It ain’t that, sir; it ain’t the drink. It’s — it’s the *Thargeelyah*. Next week, sir, they are going to roast us — you and me — flog us first, and roast us after. Oh Lord! Oh Lord!”

VII. FLIGHT.

"Flog us first, and roast us afterwards." I repeated mechanically the words of William Bludger. "Why, you must be mad; they are more likely to fall down and worship us, — *me* at any rate."

"No, Capt'n," replied William; "that's your mistake. They say we're both *Catharmata*; that's what they call us; and you're no better than me."

"And what are *Catharmata*?" I inquired, remembering that this word, or something like it, had been constantly used by the natives in my hearing.

"Well, Capt'n, it means, first and foremost, just the off-scourings of creation, the very dust and sweepings of the shop," answered Bludger, who had somehow regained his confidence. To have a fellow-sufferer, and to see the pallor which, doubtless, overspread my features, was a source of comfort to this hardened man. At the same time I confess that, if William Bludger alone had been destined to suffer, I could have contemplated the decree with Christian resignation.

"I speak the beggars' patter pretty well now," Bludger went on; "and I see *Catharmata* means more than just mere dirt. It means two unlucky devils."

"William?" I exclaimed.

"It means, saving your presence, two poor coves, as has no luck, like you and me, and that can be got rid of once a year, at an entertainment they call the *Thargeelyah*, I dunno why, a kind o' friendly lead. They choose fellows as either behaves ill, or has no friends to make a fuss about them, and they gives them three dozen, or more, and takes them down to the beach, and burns them alive over a slow fire. And then they toss the ashes out to sea, and think all the bad luck goes away with the tide. Oh, I never was in such a hole as this!"

Bludger's words made me shudder. I had never forgotten the hideous sacrifice, doubtless the *Thargeelyah*, as they called it, that greeted me when I was first cast ashore on the island. To think that I had only been saved that I might figure as a victim of some of their heathen gods!

Oh, now the thought came back to me with a bitter repentance, that if I had only converted all the islanders, they would never have dreamed of sacrificing me in honour of a mere idol! Why had I been so lukewarm, why had I backslidden, why had I endeavoured to make myself agreeable by joining in promiscuous dances, when I should have been thundering against Pagan idolatry, holy water, idols, sacrifices and the whole abominable system of life on the island? True, I might have goaded them into slaying me; I might have suffered as a martyr; but, at the least, I would have deserved the martyr's crown. And now I was to perish at the stake, without even the precious consolation of being a real martyr, and was to be flogged into the bargain.

I gave a hollow groan as these reflections passed through my mind, and this appeared to afford William Bludger some consolation.

"You don't seem to like it yourself, Capt'n; what's your advice? We're both in the same boat; leastways I wish we *were* in a boat; anyhow we're both in the same hole."

There was no denying this, and it was high time to mature some plan of escape. Already I must have been missed by my attendants, my gaolers rather, who would have returned from their festival, and would be looking for me everywhere.

I bitterly turned over in my mind the facts of our situation; "ours," for, as a just punishment of my remissness, I was in the same quandary as a drunken, dissipated sailor before the mast.

If William had but possessed a sweet and tuneful voice (often a gift found in the most depraved natures), and if I had been able to borrow a harmonium on wheels, I would not, even now, have despaired of converting the whole island in the course of the week. As remarkable feats have been performed, with equal alacrity, by precious Messrs. Moody and Sankey, and I am informed that expeditious conversions are by no means infrequent among politicians. But it was vain to think of this resource, as William had no voice, and knew no hymns, while I had no means of access to a perambulating harmonium.

"I'll tell you what it is, sir," said Bludger; "I have a notion."

"Name it, William," I replied, my heart and manner softened by community in suffering and terror.

"Well, if I were you, sir, I would not go home to-night at all; I'd stop where you are. The beggars won't find you, let them hunt as they like; they daren't come near this place, bless you, it's an 'Arnt;" by which he meant that it was haunted.

"Well," said I, "but how should we be any better off to-morrow morning?"

"That's just it, sir," said Bludger. "We'll be up with the first stroke of dawn, nip down to the harbour, get on board a boat, and be off before any of them are stirring."

"But, even if we manage to secure a boat," I said, "what about provisions, and where are we to sail for?"

"Oh, never mind that," said Bill; "we can't be worse off than we are, and I'll slip out to-night, and lay in some prog in the town. Also some grog, if I can lay my hands on it," he added, with an unholy smile.

"No, William," I murmured; "no grog; our lives depend on our sobriety."

"Always a-preaching, the old tub-thumper," I heard William say to himself; but he made no further reference to the subject.

It was now quite dark, and we lay whispering, in the damp hollow under the great stone. Our plan was to crawl away at the first blush of dawn, when men generally sleep most soundly; that William should enter one of the unguarded houses (for these people never stole, and did not know the meaning of the word "thief"), that he should help himself to provisions, and that meanwhile I should have a boat ready to start in the harbour.

This larcenous but inevitable programme we carried out, after waiting through dreadful hours of cold and shivering anxiety. Every cry of a night bird from the marsh or the wood sent my heart into my mouth. I felt inconceivably mean and remorseful, my vanity having received a dreadful shock from the discovery that, far from being a god, I was to be a kind of burnt-offering.

At last the east grew faintly grey, and we started, not keeping together, but Bludger marching cautiously in my rear, at a considerable distance. We only met one person, a dissipated young man, who, I greatly fear, had been paying his court to a shepherdess in the hills. When he shouted a challenge, I replied, *Erastes eimi*, which means, I am sorry to say, "I am a lover," and implied that I, also, had been engaged in low intrigue. "Farewell, with good fortune," he replied, and went on his way, singing some catch about Amaryllis, who, I presume, was the object of his unhallowed attentions.

We slipped into the silent town, unwalled and unguarded as it was, for as one of their own poets had said, "We dwell by the wash of the waves, far off from toilsome men, and with us are no folk conversant." They were a race that knew war only by a vague tradition, that they had dwelt, at some former age, in an island, perhaps New Zealand, where they were subject to constant annoyance from Giants, — a likely story. Thence they had migrated to their present home, where only one white man had ever been cast away — one Odysseus, so their traditions declared — before our arrival. Him, however, they had treated hospitably, very unlike their contemplated behaviour to Bludger and me.

I am obliged to make this historical digression that the reader may understand how it happened, under Providence, that we were not detected in passing through the town, and how Bludger successfully accomplished what, I fear, was by no means his first burglary.

We parted at the chief's house, Bill to secure provisions, and I to unmoor a boat, and bring her round to a lonely bay on the coast, where my companion was to join me.

I accomplished my task without the slightest difficulty, selected a light craft, — they did not use canoes, but rowed boats like coracles, — and was lying at anchor, moored with a heavy stone, in the bay.

The dawn was now breaking in the most beautiful colours — gold, purple, crimson, and green — across the sea. All nature was still, save for the first pipe of awakening birds.

There was a delicate fragrance in the air, which was at once soft and keen, and, as I watched the red sunlight on the high cliffs, and on the smooth trunks of the palm trees, I felt, strange to say, a kind of reluctance to leave the island.

The people, apart from their cruel and abominable religion, were the gentlest and most peaceful I have ever known. They were beautiful to look upon, so finely made and shapely that I have never seen their like. Their language was exquisitely sweet and melodious, and though, except hymns, I do not care for poetry, yet I must admit that some of their compositions in verse were extremely pleasing, though they were ignorant of the art of rhyme. All about them was beautifully made, and they were ignorant of poverty. I never saw a beggar on the island; and Christians, unhappily, do not share their goods with each other, and with the poor, so freely as did these benighted heathens. Often have I laboured to make them understand what our Pauper Question means, but they could not comprehend me.

“How can a man lack home, and food, and fire?” they would say; “do people not love each other in your country?”

I explained that we love each other *as Christians*, but this did not seem to enlighten their benighted minds. On the other hand, it is true that they settle their population question by strangling or exposing the majority of their infant daughters.

Rocked on the smooth green swell of the sea, beneath the white rocks, I was brooding over these and many other matters, when I heard sudden and violent movements in the deep vegetation on the hillside. The laurel groves were stirred, and Bill Bludger, with a basket in his hand, bounded down the slope, and swam for dear life to the boat.

“They’re after me,” he cried; and at that moment an arrow quivered in the side of the boat.

I helped William on board as well as I might, under a shower of arrows from the hill-top, most of which, owing to the distance, were ill directed and fell short, or went wide.

Into the boat, at last, I got him, and thrusting an oar in his direction, I said, “Pull for your life,” and began rowing. To my horror, the boat made no way, but kept spinning round. A glance in the bow showed me what was the matter:

William Bludger was hopelessly intoxicated! He had got at the jars of wine in the chief’s cellar, — *thalamos*, they call it, — and had not taken the precaution of mixing the liquor with water, as the natives invariably do when they drink. The excitement of running had sent the alcoholic fumes direct to his brain, and now he lay, a useless and embarrassing cargo, in the bows. Meanwhile, the shouts of the natives rang nearer and louder, and I knew that boats would soon be launched for our capture. I thought of throwing Bludger overboard, and sculling, but determined not to stain what might be my last moments with an act of selfishness. I therefore pulled hard for the open sea, but to no avail. On every side boats crowded round me, and I should probably have been shot, or speared, but for the old priest, who, erect in the bows of the largest vessel, kept yelling that we were to be taken alive.

Alas! I well knew the secret of his cruel mercies.

He meant to reserve us for the sacrifice.

VIII. SAVED!

Why should I linger over the sufferings of the miserable week that followed our capture? Hauled back to my former home, I was again made the object of the mocking reverence of my captors. Ah, how often, in my reckless youth, have my serious aunts warned me that I "would be a goat at the last"! Too true, too true; now I was to be a scapegoat, to be driven forth, as these ignorant and strangely perverted people believed, with the sins of the community on my head, those sins which would, according to their *miserable superstition*, be expiated by the death, and consumed away by the burning, of myself and William Bludger!

The week went by, as all weeks must, and at length came the solemn day which they call *Thargeelyah*, the day more sacred than any other to their idol, Apollon. Long before sunrise the natives were astir; indeed, I do not think they went to bed at all, but spent the night in hideous orgies. I know that, tossing sleepless through the weary hours, I heard the voices of young men and women singing on the hillsides, and among the myrtle groves which are holy to the most disreputable of their deities, a female, named *Aphrodighty*. Harps were twanging too, and I heard the refrain of one of the native songs, "To-night they love who never loved before; to-night let him who loves love all the more." The words have unconsciously arranged themselves, even in English, as poetry; those who know Thomas Gowles best, best know how unlikely it is that he would willingly dabble in the worldly art of verse-fashioning. Think of my reflections with a painful, shameful, and, above all, *undeserved* death before me, while all the fragrant air was ringing with lascivious merriment. My impression is that, as all the sins of the year were, in their opinion, to be got rid of next day, and tossed into the sea with the ashes of Bludger and myself, the natives had made up their minds — an eligible opportunity now presenting itself — to be *as wicked as they knew how*. Alas! though I have not dwelt on this painful aspect of their character, they "knew how" only too well.

The sun rose at last, and flooded the island, when I perceived that, from every side, crowds of revellers were pressing together to the place where I lay in fetters. They had a wild, dissipated air, flowers were wreathed and twisted in their wet and dewy locks, which floated on the morning wind. Many of the young men were merely dressed — if "dressed" it could be called — in the skins of leopards, panthers, bears, goats, and deer, tossed over their shoulders. In their hands they all held wet, dripping branches of fragrant trees, many of them tipped with pine cones, and wreathed with tendrils of the vine. Others carried switches, of which I divined the use only too clearly, and the women were waving over their heads tame serpents, which writhed and wriggled hideously. It was an awful spectacle!

I was dragged forth by these revellers; many of them were intoxicated, and, in a moment — I blush even now to think of it — I was stripped naked! Nothing was left to me but my hat and spectacles, which, for some religious reason I presume, I was, fortunately, allowed to retain. Then I was driven with blows, which hurt a great deal, into the market-place, and up to the great altar, where William Bludger, also naked, was lying more dead than alive.

"William," I said solemnly, "what cheer?" He did not answer me. Even in that supreme moment it was not difficult to discern that William had been looking on the wine when it was red, and had not confined himself to mere ocular observation. I tried to make him remember he was an Englishman, that the honour of our country was in our hands, and that we should die with the courage and dignity befitting our race. These were strange consolations and exhortations for *me* to offer in such an extremity, but, now it had come to the last pass, it is curious what mere worldly thoughts hurried through my mind.

My words were wasted: the natives seized William and forced him to his feet. Then, while a hymn was sung, they put chains of black and white figs round our necks, and thrust into our hands pieces of cheese, figs, and certain peculiar herbs. This formed part of what may well be called the "Ritual" of this cruel race. May Ritualists heed my words, and turn from the errors of their ways!

Too well I knew all that now awaited us. All that I had seen and shuddered at, on the day of my landing on the island, was now practised on self and partner. We had to tread the long paved way to the distant cove at the river's mouth; we had to endure the lashes from the switches of wild fig. The priestess, carrying the wooden idol, walked hard by us, and cried out, whenever the blows fell fewer or lighter, that the idol was waxing too heavy for her to bear. Then they redoubled their cruelties.

It was a wonderfully lovely day. In the blue heaven there was not a cloud. We had reached the river's mouth, and were fast approaching the stakes that had already been fixed in the sands for our execution; nay, the piles of green wood were already being heaped up by the young men. There was, there could be, no hope, and, weary and wounded, I almost welcomed the prospect of death, however cruel.

Suddenly the blows ceased to shower on me, and I heard a cry from the lips of the old priest, and, turning about, I saw that the eyes of all the assembled multitude were fixed on a point on the horizon.

Looking automatically in the direction towards which they were gazing, I beheld — oh joy, oh wonder! — I beheld a long trail of cloud floating level with the sea! It was the smoke of a steamer!

"Too late, too late," I thought, and bitterly reflected that, had the vessel appeared but an hour earlier, the attention of my cruel captors might have been diverted to such a spectacle as they had never seen before.

But it was *not* too late.

Perched on a little hillock, and straining his gaze to the south, the old priest was speaking loudly and excitedly. The crowd deserted us, and gathered about him.

I threw myself on the sand, weary, hopeless, parched with thirst, and racked with pain. Bludger was already lying in a crumpled mass at my feet. I think he had fainted.

I retained consciousness, but that was all. The fierceness of the sun beat upon me, the sky and sea and shore swam before me in a mist. Presently I heard the voice of the priest, raised in the cadences which he favoured when he was reading texts out of their sacred books, if books they could be called. I looked at him with a faint curiosity, and perceived that he held in his hands the wooden casket, adorned with strangely carved bands of gold and ivory, which I had seen on the night of my arrival on the island.

From this he had selected the old grey scraps of metal, scratched, as I was well aware, with what they conceived to be ancient prophecies.

I was now sufficiently acquainted with the language to understand the verses which he was chanting, and which I had already heard, without comprehending them. They ran thus in English:

"But when a man, having a chimney pot on his head, and four eyes, appears in Scheria, and when a ship without sails also comes, sailing without wind, and breathing smoke, then shall destruction fall on the island."

He had not ended when it was plain, even to those ignorant people, that the prophecy was about to be fulfilled. From the long, narrow, black line of the steamer, which had approached us with astonishing speed, "sailing without wind, and breathing smoke," there burst six flashes of fire, followed by a peal like thunder, and six tall fountains, as the natives fancied, of sea-water rose and fell in the bay, where the shells had lighted.

It was plain that the commander of the vessel, finding himself in unknown seas, and hard by an unvisited country, was determined to strike terror and command respect by this salute.

The noise of the broadside had scarcely died away, when the natives fled, disappeared like magic, leaving many of their garments behind them.

They were making for their town, which was concealed from the view of the rapidly nearing steamer. From her mast I could now see, flaunting the slight breeze, the dear old Union Jack, and the banner of the Salvation Navy!

My resolution was taken in a moment. Bludger had now recovered consciousness, and was picking up heart. I thrust into his hands one of the branches with which we had been flogged, fastened to it a cloak of one of the natives, bade him keep waving it from a rocky promontory, and, rushing down to the sea, I leaped in, and swam with all my strength towards the vessel. Weak as I was, my new hopes gave me strength, and presently, from the crest of a wave, I saw that the people of the steamer were lowering a boat, and rowing towards me.

In a few minutes they had reached me, my countrymen's hands were in mine. They dragged me on board; they pulled back to their vessel; and I stood, entirely undressed, on the deck of a British ship!

So long had I lived among people heedless of modesty that I was rushing, with open arms, towards the officer on the quarter-deck, who was dressed as a bishop, when I heard a scream of horror. I turned round in time to see the bishop's wife fleeing precipitately to the cabin, and driving her children and governess in front of her.

Then all the horror of the situation flooded my heart and brain, and I fell fainting on the quarter-deck.

When I recovered my consciousness, I found myself plainly but comfortably dressed in the ordinary costume, except the hat, which lay beside me, of a dean in the Church of England. My wounds had been carefully attended to, William Bludger had been taken on board, and I was surrounded by the kind faces of my benefactors, including the bishop's consort. My apologies for my somewhat sudden and unceremonious intrusion were cut short by the arrival of tea and a slight collation suitable for an invalid. In an hour I was walking the quarter-deck with the bishop in command of the *William Wilberforce*, armed steam yacht, of North Shields, fitted out for the purposes of the Salvation Navy. From the worthy prelate in command of the *William Wilberforce*, I learned much concerning his own past career and the nature of his enterprise, as I directed the navigation of the vessel through the shoals and reefs which lay about the harbour of the island.

The bishop (a purely brevet title) would refresh his memory, now and then, from a penny biography of himself with which he was provided, and the following, in brief, is a record of his life and adventures: —

Thomas Sloggins (that was his name), from his earliest infancy, had been possessed with a passion for *doing good to others*, a passion, alas! but too rarely reciprocated. I pass over many affecting details of his adventures as a ministering child: how he endeavoured to win his father from tobacco by breaking his favourite pipes; how he strove to wean his elder brother from cruel field-sports, by stuffing the joints of his fishing-rod with gravel; with many other touching incidents.

Being almost entirely uneducated, young Sloggins, when he reached man's estate, conceived that he would most benefit his fellow-creatures by combining the professions of the pulpit and the press — by preaching on Sundays and at odd times, while he acted as outdoor reporter to *The Rowdy Puritan* on every lawful day. Being a man of great earnestness and enterprise, he soon rose in the ranks of the Salvation Navy; and at one time commanded an evangelical barge on the benighted canals of our country. Finally, he made England almost too hot to hold him, by the original forms of his benevolence, while, at the same time, he acquired the utmost esteem and confidence of many wealthy philanthropists and excellent, if impulsive, ladies. These good people provided him with that well-equipped and armed steam yacht, the *William Wilberforce,* which he manned with a crew of converted characters (they certainly looked as if they must have needed a great deal of converting), and he had now for months been cruising in the South Pacific. A local cyclone had driven the *William Wilberforce* out of her reckoning, and hence the appearance of that vessel in the very nick of time to achieve my rescue.

When the bishop had finished his story, I briefly recapitulated to him my own adventures, and we agreed that the conversion of the island must be our earliest task. To begin with, we steered into the harbour, where a vast multitude of the natives were assembled in arms, and awaited our approach with a threatening demeanour. Our landing was opposed, but a few well-directed volleys from a Gardiner gun (which did not jam) caused the hostile force to disperse, and we landed in great state. Marching on the chief's house, we were received with an abject submission that I had scarcely expected. The people were absolutely cowed, more by the fulfilment of the prophecy, I think, than even by the execution done by our Gardiner machine gun. At the bishop's request, I delivered a harangue in the native tongue, declaring that we only required the British flag to be hoisted on the palace, and the immediate disendowment of the heathen church as in those parts established. I was listened to in uneasy silence; but my demand for lodgings in the palace was acceded to; and, in a few hours, the bishop, with his wife and children, were sumptuously housed under the roof of the chief. The ladies of the chief's family showed great curiosity in watching and endeavouring to converse with our friends. I was amused to see how soon the light-hearted islanders appeared to forget their troubles and apprehensions. Doto, in particular, became quite devoted to the prelate's elder daughter (the youngest of the bishop’s family was suffering from measles), and would never be out of her company. Thus all seemed to fare merrily; presents were brought to us — flowers, fruit, the feathers of rare birds, and ornaments of native gold were literally showered upon the ladies of the party. The chief promised to call a meeting of his counsellors on the morrow, and all seemed going on well, when, alas! measles broke out in the palace. The infant whom I had presented to Doto — the infant whom I had found on the mountain side — was the first sufferer. Then Doto caught the disease herself, then her mother, then the chief. In vain we attempted to nurse and tend them; in vain we expended the contents of the ship’s medicine chest on the invalids. The malady having, as it were, an entirely new field to work upon, raged like the most awful pestilence. Through all ranks of the people it spread like wild-fire; many died, none could be induced to take the most ordinary precautions. The natives became, as it were, mad under the torments of fever and the burning heat of the unaccustomed malady; they rushed about, quite unclad, for the sake of the deceptive coolness, and hundreds of them cast themselves into the sea and into the river.

It was my sad lot to see my dear Doto die — the first of the sufferers in the palace to succumb to the disease. Meanwhile, the bishop and myself being entirely absorbed in attendance on the sick, the crew of the *William Wilberforce*, I deeply regret to say, escaped from all restraint, and forgot what was due to themselves and their profession. They revelled with the most abandoned of the natives, and disease and drink ravaged the once peaceful island. Every sign of government and order vanished. The old priest built a huge pile of firewood, and laying himself there with the images of the gods, set fire to the whole, and perished with his own false religion.

After this event, the island ceased to be a safe residence for ourselves. Among the mountains, as I learned, where the pestilence had not yet penetrated, the shepherds and the wilder tribes were gathering in arms. One night we stole on board the *William Wilberforce*, leaving the city desolate, filled with the smoke of funeral pyres, and the wailing of men and women. There was a dreadful sultry stillness in the air, and all day long wild beasts had been dashing madly into the sea, and the sky had been obscured by flights of birds. On all the crests of the circle of surrounding hills we saw, in the growing darkness, the beacons and camp fires of the insurgents from the interior. Just before the dawn the *William Wilberforce* was attacked by the whole mass of the natives in boats and rafts. But we had not been unprepared for this movement, nor were the resources of science unequal to the occasion. We had surrounded the *William Wilberforce* with a belt, or cordon, of torpedoes, and as each of the assaulting boats touched the boom, a terrible explosion shook the water into fountains of foam, and the waves were strewn with scalded, wounded, and mutilated men. Meanwhile, we bombarded the city and the harbour, and the night passed amid the most awful sounds and sights — fire, smoke, yells of anger and pain, cries of the native leaders encouraging their men, and shouts from our own people, who had to repel the boarders, when the boom was at last forced, with pikes and cutlasses. Just before the dawn a strange thing happened. A great glowing coal, as it seemed, fell with a hissing crash on the deck of the *William Wilberforce*, and others dropped, with a strange sound and a dreadful odour of burning, in the water all around us. Had the natives discovered some mode of retaliating on our use of firearms?

I looked in the direction of their burning city, and beheld, on the sharp peak of the highest mountain (now visible in the grey morning light), an object like a gigantic pine-tree of fire. The blazing trunk rose, slim and straight, from the mountain crest, and, at a vast height, developed a wilderness of burning branches. Fearful hollow sounds came from the hill, its sides were seamed with racing cataracts of living lava, of coursing and leaping flames, which rolled down with incredible swiftness and speed towards the doomed city. Then the waters of the harbour were smitten and shaken, and the *William Wilberforce* rocked and heaved as in the most appalling storm, though all the winds were silent, while a mighty wave swept far inland towards the streams of fire. There was no room for doubt; a volcanic eruption was occurring, and a submarine earthquake, as not uncommonly happens, had also taken place. Our only hope was in immediate flight. Presently steam was got up, and we steamed away into the light of the glowing east, leaving behind us only a burning island, and a fire like an ugly dawn flaring in the western sky.

When we returned in the evening, Boothland — as I may now indeed call it, for Scheria has ceased to be — was one black smoking cinder.

Hardly a tree or a recognizable rock remained to show that this had once been a peaceful home of men. The oracle, or prophecy of the old priest, had been horribly, though, of course, quite accidentally, fulfilled.

*

Little remains to be told. On my return home, I chanced to visit the British Museum, and there, much to my surprise, observed an old piece of stone, chipped with the characters, or letters, in use among the natives of Scheria.

“Why,” said I, reading the words aloud, “these are the characters which the natives employed on my island.”

“These?” said the worthy official who accompanied me. “Why, these are the most archaic Greek letters which have yet been discovered: inscriptions from beneath the lava beds of Santorin.”

“I can’t help that,” I said. “The Polynesians used them too; and you see I can read them easily, though I don’t know Greek.”

I then told him the whole story of my connection with the island, and of the unfortunate results of the contact between these poor people and our superior modern civilization.

I have rarely seen a man more affected by any recital than was the head of the classical department of the Museum by my artless narrative. When I described the sacrifice I saw on landing in the island, he exclaimed, “Great Heavens! the Attic Thargelia.” He grew more and more excited as I went on, and producing a Greek book, “Pausanias,” he showed me that the sacrifice of wild beasts was practised sixteen hundred years ago in honour of Artemis Elaphria. The killing of old Elatreus for entering the town hall reminded him of a custom in Achæa Pthiotis. When I had finished my tale, he burst out into violent and libellous language. “You have destroyed,” he said, “with your miserable modern measles and Gardiner guns, the last remaining city of the ancient Greeks. The winds cast you on the shore of Phæacia, the island sung by Homer; and, in your brutal ignorance, you never knew it. You have ruined a happy, harmless, and peaceful people, and deprived archæology of an opportunity that can never, never return!”

I do not know about archæology, but as for “harmless and peaceful people,” I leave it to my readers to say whether the islanders were anything of the sort.

I learn that the Government has just refused to give the Museum a grant of five thousand pounds to be employed in what are called “Excavations in Ancient Phæacia,” diggings, that is, in Boothland.

With so many darkened people still ignorant of our enlightened civilization, I think the grant would be a shameful waste of public money.

*

We publish the original text of the prophecy repeatedly alluded to by Mr. Gowles. The learned say that no equivalent occurs for the line about his “four eyes,” and it is insinuated, in a literary journal of eminence, that Mr. Gowles pilfered the notion from Good’s glass eye, in a secular romance, called *King Solomon’s Mines*, which Mr. Gowles, we are sure, never heard of in his life. —ED.

THE PROPHECY.

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IN THE WRONG PARADISE

AN OCCIDENTAL APOLOGUE.

In the drawing-room, or, as it is more correctly called, the “dormitory,” of my club, I had been reading a volume named “Sur l’Humanité Posthume,” by M. D’Assier, a French follower of Comte. The mixture of positivism and ghost-stories highly diverted me. Moved by the sagacity and pertinence of M. D’Assier’s arguments for a limited and fortuitous immortality, I fell into such an uncontrollable fit of laughter as caused, I could see, first annoyance and then anxiety in those members of my club whom my explosion of mirth had awakened. As I still chuckled and screamed, it appeared to me that the noise I made gradually grew fainter and more distant, seeming to resound in some vast empty space, even more funereal and melancholy than the dormitory of my club, the “Tepidarium.” It has happened to most people to laugh themselves awake out of a dream, and every one who has done so must remember the ghastly, hollow, and maniacal sound of his own mirth. It rings horribly in a quiet room where there has been, as the Veddahs of Ceylon say is the case in the world at large, “nothing to laugh at.” Dean Swift once came to himself, after a dream, laughing thus hideously at the following conceit: “I told Apronia to be very careful especially about the legs.” Well, the explosions of my laughter crackled in a yet more weird and lunatic fashion about my own ears as I slowly became aware that I had died of an excessive sense of the ludicrous, and that the space in which I was so inappropriately giggling was, indeed, the fore-court of the House of Hades. As I grew more absolutely convinced of this truth, and began dimly to discern a strange world visible in a sallow light, like that of the London streets when a black fog hangs just over the houses, my hysterical chuckling gradually died away. Amusement at the poor follies of mortals was succeeded by an awful and anxious curiosity as to the state of immortality and the life after death. Already it was certain that “the *Manes* are somewhat,” and that annihilation is the dream of people sceptical through lack of imagination. The scene around me now resolved itself into a high grey upland country, bleak and wild, like the waste pastoral places of Liddesdale. As I stood expectant, I observed a figure coming towards me at some distance. The figure bore in its hand a gun, and, as I am short-sighted, I at first conceived that he was the gamekeeper. “This affair,” I tried to say to myself, “is only a dream after all; I shall wake and forget my nightmare.”

But still the man drew nearer, and I began to perceive my error. Gamekeepers do not usually paint their faces red and green, neither do they wear scalp-locks, a tuft of eagle’s feathers, moccasins, and buffalo-hide cloaks, embroidered with representations of war and the chase. This was the accoutrement of the stranger who now approached me, and whose copper-coloured complexion indicated that he was a member of the Red Indian, or, as the late Mr. Morgan called it the “Ganowanian” race. The stranger’s attire was old and clouted; the barrel of his flint-lock musket was rusted, and the stock was actually overgrown with small funguses. It was a peculiarity of this man that everything he carried was more or less broken and outworn. The barrel of his piece was riven, his tomahawk was a mere shard of rusted steel, on many of his accoutrements the vapour of fire had passed. He approached me with a stately bearing, and, after saluting me in the fashion of his people, gave me to know that he welcomed me to the land of spirits, and that he was deputed to carry me to the paradise of the Ojibbeways.

“But, sir,” I cried in painful confusion, “there is here some great mistake. I am no Ojibbeway, but an Agnostic; the after-life of spirits is only (as one of our great teachers says) ‘an hypothesis based on contradictory probabilities;’ and I really must decline to accompany you to a place of which the existence is uncertain, and which, if it does anywhere exist, would be uncongenial in the extreme to a person of my habits.”

To this remonstrance my Ojibbeway Virgil answered, in effect, that in the enormous passenger traffic between the earth and the next worlds mistakes must and frequently do occur. *Quisque suos patimur manes*, as the Roman says, is the rule, but there are many exceptions. Many a man finds himself in the paradise of a religion not his own, and suffers from the consequences. This was, in brief, the explanation of my guide, who could only console me by observing that if I felt ill at ease in the Ojibbeway paradise, I might, perhaps, be more fortunate in that of some other creed. “As for your Agnostics,” said he, “their main occupation in their own next world is to read the poetry of George Eliot and the philosophical works of Mr. J. S. Mill.” On hearing this, I was much consoled for having missed the entrance to my proper sphere, and I prepared to follow my guide with cheerful alacrity, into the paradise of the Ojibbeways.

Our track lay, at first, along the “Path of Souls,” and the still, grey air was only disturbed by a faint rustling and twittering of spirits on the march. We seemed to have journeyed but a short time, when a red light shone on the left hand of the way. As we drew nearer, this light appeared to proceed from a prodigious strawberry, a perfect mountain of a strawberry. Its cool and shining sides seemed very attractive to a thirsty Soul. A red man, dressed strangely in the feathers of a raven, stood hard by, and loudly invited all passers-by to partake of this refreshment. I was about to excavate a portion of the monstrous strawberry (being partial to that fruit), when my guide held my hand and whispered in a low voice that they who accepted the invitation of the man that guarded the strawberry were lost. He added that, into whatever paradise I might stray, I must beware of tasting any of the food of the departed. All who yield to the temptation must inevitably remain where they have put the food of the dead to their lips. "You," said my guide, with a slight sneer, "seem rather particular about your future home, and you must be especially careful to make no error." Thus admonished, I followed my guide to the river which runs between our world and the paradise of the Ojibbeways. A large stump of a tree lies half across the stream, the other half must be crossed by the agility of the wayfarer. Little children do but badly here, and "an Ojibbeway woman," said my guide, "can never be consoled when her child dies before it is fairly expert in jumping. Such young children they cannot expect to meet again in paradise." I made no reply, but was reminded of some good and unhappy women I had known on earth, who were inconsolable because their babes had died before being sprinkled with water by a priest. These babes they, like the Ojibbeway matrons, "could not expect to meet again in paradise." To a grown-up spirit the jump across the mystic river presented no difficulty, and I found myself instantly among the wigwams of the Ojibbeway heaven. It was a remarkably large village, and as far as the eye could see huts and tents were erected along the river. The sound of magic songs and of drums filled all the air, and in the fields the spirits were playing lacrosse. All the people of the village had deserted their homes and were enjoying themselves at the game. Outside one hut, however, a perplexed and forlorn phantom was sitting, and to my surprise I saw that he was dressed in European clothes. As we drew nearer I observed that he wore the black garb and white neck-tie of a minister in some religious denomination, and on coming to still closer quarters I recognized an old acquaintance, the Rev. Peter McSnadden. Now Peter had been a "jined member" of that mysterious "U. P. Kirk" which, according to the author of "Lothair," was founded by the Jesuits for the greater confusion of Scotch theology. Peter, I knew, had been active as a missionary among the Red Men in Canada; but I had neither heard of his death nor could conceive how his shade had found its way into a paradise so inappropriate as that in which I encountered him. Though never very fond of Peter, my heart warmed to him, as the heart sometimes does to an acquaintance unexpectedly met in a strange land. Coming cautiously behind him, I slapped Peter on the shoulder, whereon he leaped up with a wild unearthly yell, his countenance displaying lively tokens of terror. When he recognized me he first murmured, “I thought it was these murdering Apaches again;” and it was long before I could soothe him, or get him to explain his fears, and the circumstance of his appearance in so strange a final home. “Sir,” said Peter, “it’s just some terrible mistake. For twenty years was I preaching to these poor painted bodies anent heaven and hell, and trying to win them from their fearsome notions about a place where they would play at the ba’ on the Sabbath, and the like shameful heathen diversions. Many a time did I round it to them about a far, far other place —

“Where congregations ne’er break up,
And sermons never end!”

And now, lo and behold, here I am in their heathenish Gehenna, where the Sabbath-day is just clean neglected; indeed, I have lost count myself, and do not know one day from the other. Oh, man, it’s just rideec’lous. A body — I mean a soul — does not know where to turn.” Here Peter, whose accent I cannot attempt to reproduce (he was a Paisley man), burst into honest tears. Though I could not but agree with Peter that his situation was “just rideec’lous,” I consoled him as well as I might, saying that a man should make the best of every position, and that “where there was life there was hope,” a sentiment of which I instantly perceived the futility in this particular instance. “Ye do not know the worst,” the Rev. Mr. McSnadden went on. “I am here to make them sport, like Samson among the Philistines. Their paradise would be no paradise to them if they had not a pale-face, as they say, to scalp and tomahawk. And I am that pale-face. Before you can say ‘scalping-knife’ these awful Apaches may be on me, taking my scalp and other leeberties with my person. It grows again, my scalp does, immediately; but that’s only that they may take it some other day.” The full horror of Mr. McSnadden’s situation now dawned upon me, but at the same time I could not but perceive that, without the presence of some pale-face to torture — Peter or another — paradise would, indeed, be no paradise to a Red Indian. In the same way Tertullian (or some other early Father) has remarked that the pleasures of the blessed will be much enhanced by what they observe of the torments of the wicked. As I was reflecting thus two wild yells burst upon my hearing. One came from a band of Apache spirits who had stolen into the Ojibbeway village; the other scream was uttered by my unfortunate friend. I confess that I fled with what speed I might, nor did I pause till the groans of the miserable Peter faded in the distance. He was, indeed, a man in the wrong paradise.

In my anxiety to avoid sharing the fate of Peter at the hands of the Apaches, I had run out of sight and sound of the Ojibbeway village. When I paused I found myself alone, on a wide sandy tract, at the extremity of which was an endless thicket of dark poplar-trees, a grove dear to Persephone. Here and there in the dank sand, half buried by the fallen generations of yellow poplar-leaves, were pits dug, a cubit every way, and there were many ruinous altars of ancient stones. On some were engraved figures of a divine pair, a king and queen seated on a throne, while men and women approached them with cakes in their hands or with the sacrifice of a cock. While I was admiring these strange sights, I beheld as it were a moving light among the deeps of the poplar thicket, and presently saw coming towards me a young man clad in white raiment and of a radiant aspect. In his hand he bore a golden wand whereon were wings of gold. The first down of manhood was on his lip; he was in that season of life when youth is most gracious. Then I knew him to be no other than Hermes of the golden rod, the guide of the souls of men outworn. He took my hand with a word of welcome, and led me through the gloom of the poplar trees.

Like Thomas the Rhymer, on his way to Fairyland —

“We saw neither sun nor moon,
But we heard the roaring of the sea.”

This eternal “swowing of a flode” was the sound made by the circling stream of Oceanus, as he turns on his bed, washing the base of the White Rock, and the sands of the region of dreams. So we fleeted onwards till we came to marvellous lofty gates of black adamant, that rose before us like the steep side of a hill. On the left side of the gates we beheld a fountain flowing from beneath the roots of a white cypress-tree, and to this fountain my guide forbade me to draw near. “There is another yonder,” he said, pointing to the right hand, “a stream of still water that issues from the Lake of Memory, and there are guards who keep that stream from the lips of the profane. Go to them and speak thus: ‘I am the child of earth and of the starry sky, yet heavenly is my lineage, and this yourselves know right well. But I am perishing with thirst, so give me speedily of that still water which floweth forth of the mere of Memory.’ And they will give thee to drink of that spring divine, and then shalt thou dwell with the heroes and the blessed.” So I did as he said, and went before the guardians of the water. Now they were veiled, and their voices, when they answered me, seemed to come from far away. “Thou comest to the pure, from the pure,” they said, “and thou art a suppliant of holy Persephone. Happy and most blessed art thou, advance to the reward of the crown desirable, and be no longer mortal, but divine.” Then a darkness fell upon me, and lifted again like mist on the hills, and we found ourselves in the most beautiful place that can be conceived, a meadow of that short grass which grows on some shores beside the sea. There were large spaces of fine and solid turf, but, where the little streams flowed from the delicate-tinted distant mountains, there were narrow valleys full of all the flowers of a southern spring. Here grew narcissus and hyacinths, violets and creeping thyme, and crocus and the crimson rose, as they blossomed on the day when the milk-white bull carried off Europa. Beyond the level land beside the sea, between these coasts and the far-off hills, was a steep lonely rock, on which were set the shining temples of the Grecian faith. The blue seas that begirt the coasts were narrow, and ran like rivers between many islands not less fair than the country to which we were come, while other isles, each with its crest of clear-cut hills, lay westward, far away, and receding into the place of the sunset. Then I recognized the Fortunate Islands spoken of by Pindar, and the paradise of the Greeks. "Round these the ocean breezes blow and golden flowers are glowing, some from the land on trees of splendour, and some the water feedeth, with wreaths whereof they entwine their hands." And, as Pindar says again, "for them shineth below the strength of the sun, while in our world it is night, and the space of crimson-flowered meadows before their city is full of the shade of frankincense-trees and of fruits of gold. And some in horses and in bodily feats, and some in dice, and some in harp-playing have delight, and among them thriveth all fair flowering bliss; and fragrance ever streameth through the lovely land as they mingle incense of every kind upon the altars of the gods." In this beautiful country I took great delight, now watching the young men leaping and running (and they were marvellously good over a short distance of ground), now sitting in a chariot whereto were harnessed steeds swifter than the wind, like those that, Homer says, "the gods gave, glorious gifts, to Peleus." And the people, young and old, received me kindly, welcoming me in their Greek speech, which was like the sound of music. And because I had ever been a lover of them and of their tongue, my ears were opened to understand them, though they spoke not Greek as we read it. Now when I had beheld many of the marvels of the Fortunate Islands, and had sat at meat with those kind hosts (though I only made semblance to eat of what they placed before me), and had seen the face of Rhadamanthus of the golden hair, who is the lord of that country, my friends told me that there was come among them one of my own nation who seemed most sad and sorrowful, and they could make him no mirth. Then they carried me to a house in a grove, and all around it a fair garden, and a well in the midst.

Now stooping over the well, that he might have sight of his own face, was a most wretched man. He was pale and very meagre; he had black rings under his eyes, and his hair was long, limp, and greasy, falling over his shoulders. He was clad somewhat after the manner of the old Greeks, but his raiment was wofully ill-made and ill-girt upon him, nor did he ever seem at his ease. As soon as I beheld his sallow face I knew him for one I had seen and mocked at in the world of the living. He was a certain Figgins, and he had been honestly apprenticed to a photographer; but, being a weak and vain young fellow, he had picked up modern notions about art, the nude, plasticity, and the like, in the photographer's workroom, whereby he became a weariness to the photographer and to them that sat unto him. Being dismissed from his honest employment, this chitterling must needs become a model to some painters that were near as ignorant as himself. They talked to him about the Greeks, about the antique, about Paganism, about the Renaissance, till they made him as much the child of folly as themselves. And they painted him as Antinous, as Eros, as Sleep, and I know not what, but whatever name they called him he was always the same lank-haired, dowdy, effeminate, pasty-faced photographer's young man. Then he must needs take to writing poems all about Greece, and the free ways of the old Greeks, and Lais, and Phryne, and therein he made "Aeolus" rhyme to "control us." For of Greek this fellow knew not a word, and any Greek that met him had called him a º¿»»¿È, and bidden him begone to the crows for a cursed fellow, and one that made false quantities in every Greek name he uttered. But his little poems were much liked by young men of his own sort, and by some of the young women. Now death had come to Figgins, and here he was in the Fortunate Islands, the very paradise of those Greeks about whom he had always been prating while he was alive. And yet he was not happy. A little lyre lay beside him in the grass, and now and again he twanged on it dolorously, and he tried to weave himself garlands from the flowers that grew around him; but he knew not the art, and ever and anon he felt for his button-hole, wherein to stick a lily or the like. But he had no button-hole. Then he would look at himself in the well, and yawn and wish himself back in his friends' studios in London. I almost pitied the wretch, and, going up to him, I asked him how he did. He said he had never been more wretched. "Why," I asked, "was your mouth not always full of the 'Greek spirit,' and did you not mock the Christians and their religion? And, as to their heaven, did you not say that it was a tedious place, full of pious old ladies and Philistines? And are you not got to the paradise of the Greeks? What, then, ails you with your lot?" "Sir," said he, "to be plain with you, I do not understand a word these fellows about me say, and I feel as I did the first time I went to Paris, before I knew enough French to read the Master's poems. Again, every one here is mirthful and gay, and there is no man with a divinely passionate potentiality of pain. When I first came here they were always asking me to run with them or jump against them, and one fellow insisted I should box with him, and hurt me very much. My potentiality of pain is considerable. Or they would have me drive with them in these dangerous open chariots, — me, that never rode in a hansom cab without feeling nervous. And after dinner they sing songs of which I do not catch the meaning of one syllable, and the music is like nothing I ever heard in my life. And they are all abominably active and healthy. And such of their poets as I admired — in Bohn's cribs, of course — the poets of the Anthology, are not here at all, and the poets who are here are tremendous proud toffs" (here Figgins relapsed into his natural style as it was before he became a Neopagan poet), "and won't say a word to a cove. And I'm sick of the Greeks, and the Fortunate Islands are a blooming fraud, and oh, for paradise, give me Pentonville." With these words, perhaps the only unaffected expression of genuine sentiment poor Figgins had ever uttered, he relapsed into a gloomy silence. I advised him to cultivate the society of the authors whose selected works are in the Greek Delectus, and to try to make friends with Xenophon, whose Greek is about as easy as that of any ancient. But I fear that Figgins, like the Rev. Peter McSnadden, is really suffering a kind of punishment in the disguise of a reward, and all through having accidentally found his way into what he foolishly thought would be the right paradise for him.

Now I might have stayed long in the Fortunate Islands, yet, beautiful as they were, I ever felt like Odysseus in the island of fair Circe. The country was lovely and the land desirable, but the Christian souls were not there without whom heaven itself were no paradise to me. And it chanced that as we sat at the feast a maiden came to me with a pomegranate on a plate of silver, and said, "Sir, thou hast now been here for the course of a whole moon, yet hast neither eaten nor drunk of what is set before thee. Now it is commanded that thou must taste if it were but a seed of this pomegranate, or depart from among us." Then, making such excuses as I might, I was constrained to refuse to eat, for no soul can leave a paradise wherein it has tasted food. And as I spoke the walls of the fair hall wherein we sat, which were painted with the effigies of them that fell at Thermopylæ and in Arcadion, wavered and grew dim, and darkness came upon me.

The first of my senses which returned to me was that of smell, and I seemed almost drowned in the spicy perfumes of Araby. Then my eyes became aware of a green soft fluttering, as of the leaves of a great forest, but quickly I perceived that the fluttering was caused by the green scarfs of a countless multitude of women. They were "fine women" in the popular sense of the term, and were of the school of beauty admired by the Faithful of Islam, and known to Mr. Bailey, in "Martin Chuzzlewit," as "crumby." These fond attendant nymphs carried me into gardens twain, in each two gushing springs, in each fruit, and palms, and pomegranates. There were the blessed reclining, precisely as the Prophet has declared, "on beds the linings whereof are brocade, and the fruit of the two gardens within reach to cull." There also were the "maids of modest glances," previously indifferent to the wooing "of man or ginn." "Bright and large-eyed maids kept in their tents, reclining on green cushions and beautiful carpets. About the golden couches went eternal youths with goblets and ewers, and a cup of flowing wine. No headache shall they feel therefrom," says the compassionate Prophet, "nor shall their wits be dimmed." And all that land is misty and fragrant with the perfume of the softest Latakia, and the gardens are musical with the bubbling of countless *narghilés*; and I must say that to the Christian soul which enters that paradise the whole place has, certainly, a rather curious air, as of a highly transcendental Cremorne. There could be no doubt, however, that the Faithful were enjoying themselves amazingly— "right lucky fellows," as we read in the new translation of the Koran. Yet even here all was not peace and pleasantness, for I heard my name called by a small voice, in a tone of patient subdued querulousness. Looking hastily round, I with some difficulty recognized, in a green turban and silk gown to match, my old college tutor and professor of Arabic. Poor old Jones had been the best and the most shy of university men. As there was never any undergraduate in his time (it is different now) who wished to learn Arabic, his place had been a sinecure, and he had chiefly devoted his leisure to "drawing" pupils who were too late for college chapel. The sight of a lady of his acquaintance in the streets had at all times been alarming enough to drive him into a shop or up a lane, and he had not survived the creation of the first batch of married fellows. How he had got into this thoroughly wrong paradise was a mystery which he made no attempt to explain. "A nice place this, eh?" he said to me. "Nice gardens; remind me of Magdalene a good deal. It seems, however, to be decidedly rather gay just now; don't you think so? Commemoration week, perhaps. A great many young ladies up, certainly; a good deal of cup drunk in the gardens too. I always did prefer to go down in Commemoration week, myself; never was a dancing man. There is a great deal of dancing here, but the young ladies dance alone, rather like what is called the *ballet*, I believe, at the opera. I must say the young persons are a little forward; a little embarrassing it is to be alone here, especially as I have forgotten a good deal of my Arabic. Don't you think, my dear fellow, you and I could manage to give them the slip? Run away from them, eh?" He uttered a timid little chuckle, and at that moment an innumerable host of houris began a *ballet d'action* illustrative of a series of events in the career of the Prophet. It was obvious that my poor uncomplaining old friend was really very miserable. The "thornless loto trees" were all thorny to him, and the "tal'h trees with piles of fruit, the outspread shade, and water outpoured" could not comfort him in his really very natural shyness. A happy thought occurred to me. In early and credulous youth I had studied the works of Cornelius Agrippa and Petrus de Abano. Their lessons, which had not hitherto been of much practical service, recurred to my mind. Stooping down, I drew a circle round myself and my old friend in the fragrant white blossoms which were strewn so thick that they quite hid the grass. This circle I fortified by the usual signs employed, as Benvenuto Cellini tells us, in the conjuration of evil spirits. I then proceeded to utter one of the common forms of exorcism. Instantly the myriad houris assumed the forms of irritated demons; the smoke from the uncounted *narghilés* burned thick and black; the cries of the frustrated *ginns*, who were no better than they should be, rang wildly in our ears; the palm-trees shook beneath a mighty wind; the distant summits of the minarets rocked and wavered, and, with a tremendous crash, the paradise of the Faithful disappeared.

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As I rang the bell, and requested the club-waiter to carry away the smoking fragments of the moderator-lamp which I had accidentally knocked over in awaking from my nightmare, I reflected on the vanity of men and the unsubstantial character of the future homes that their fancy has fashioned. The ideal heavens of modern poets and novelists, and of ancient priests, come no nearer than the drugged dreams of the angekok and the biraark of Greenland and Queensland to that rest and peace whereof it has not entered into the mind of man to conceive. To the wrong man each of our pictured heavens would be a hell, and even to the appropriate devotee each would become a tedious purgatory.

A CHEAP NIGGER.

I.

"Have you seen the *Clayville Dime*?"

Moore chucked me a very shabby little sheet of printed matter. It fluttered feebly in the warm air, and finally dropped on my recumbent frame. I was lolling in a hammock in the shade of the verandah.

I did not feel much inclined for study, but I picked up the *Clayville Dime* and lazily glanced at that periodical, while Moore relapsed into the pages of Ixtlilxochitl. He was a literary character for a planter, had been educated at Oxford (where I made his acquaintance), and had inherited from his father, with a large collection of Indian and Mexican curiosities, a taste for the ancient history of the New World.

Sometimes I glanced at the newspaper; sometimes I looked out at the pleasant Southern garden, where the fountain flashed and fell among weeping willows, and laurels, orange-trees, and myrtles.

"Hullo!" I cried suddenly, disturbing Moore's Aztec researches, "here is a queer affair in the usually quiet town of Clayville. Listen to this;" and I read aloud the following "par," as I believe paragraphs are styled in newspaper offices: —

"'Instinct and Accident. — As Colonel Randolph was driving through our town yesterday and was passing Captain Jones's sample-room, where the colonel lately shot Moses Widlake in the street, the horses took alarm and started violently downhill. The colonel kept his seat till rounding the corner by the Clayville Bank, when his wheels came into collision with that edifice, and our gallant townsman was violently shot out. He is now lying in a very precarious condition. This may relieve Tom Widlake of the duty of shooting the colonel in revenge for his father. It is commonly believed that Colonel Randolph's horses were maddened by the smell of the blood which has dried up where old Widlake was shot. Much sympathy is felt for the colonel. Neither of the horses was injured.'"

"Clayville appears to be a lively kind of place," I said. "Do you often have shootings down here?"

"We do," said Moore, rather gravely; "it is one of our institutions with which I could dispense."

"And do you 'carry iron,' as the Greeks used to say, or 'go heeled,' as your citizens express it?"

“No, I don’t; neither pistol nor knife. If any one shoots me, he shoots an unarmed man. The local bullies know it, and they have some scruple about shooting in that case. Besides, they know I am an awkward customer at close quarters.”

Moore relapsed into his Mexican historian, and I into the newspaper.

“Here is a chance of seeing one of your institutions at last,” I said.

I had found an advertisement concerning a lot of negroes to be sold that very day by public auction in Clayville. All this, of course, was “before the war.”

“Well, I suppose you ought to see it,” said Moore, rather reluctantly. He was gradually emancipating his own servants, as I knew, and was even suspected of being a director of “the Underground Railroad” to Canada.

“Peter,” he cried, “will you be good enough to saddle three horses and bring them round?”

Peter, a “darkey boy” who had been hanging about in the garden, grinned and went off. He was a queer fellow, Peter, a plantation humourist, well taught in all the then unpublished lore of “Uncle Remus.” Peter had a way of his own, too, with animals, and often aided Moore in collecting objects of natural history.

“Did you get me those hornets, Peter?” said Moore, when the black returned with the horses.

“Got ’em safe, massa, in a little box,” replied Peter, who then mounted and followed at a respectful distance as our squire.

Without many more words we rode into the forest which lay between Clayville and Moore’s plantation. Through the pine barrens ran the road, and on each side of the way was luxuriance of flowering creepers. The sweet faint scent of the white jessamine and the homely fragrance of honeysuckle filled the air, and the wild white roses were in perfect blossom. Here and there an aloe reminded me that we were not at home, and dwarf palms and bayonet palmettoes, with the small pointed leaf of the “live oak,” combined to make the scenery look foreign and unfamiliar. There was a soft haze in the air, and the sun’s beams only painted, as it were, the capitals of the tall pillar-like pines, while the road was canopied and shaded by the skeins of grey moss that hung thickly on all the boughs.

The trees grew thinner as the road approached the town. Dusty were the ways, and sultry the air, when we rode into Clayville and were making for “the noisy middle market-place.” Clayville was but a small border town, though it could then boast the presence of a squadron of cavalry, sent there to watch the “border ruffians.” The square was neither large nor crowded, but the spectacle was strange and interesting to me. Men who had horses or carts to dispose of were driving or riding about, noisily proclaiming the excellence of their wares. But buyers were more concerned, like myself, with the slave-market. In the open air, in the middle of the place, a long table was set. The crowd gathered round this, and presented types of various sorts of citizens. The common "mean white" was spitting and staring — a man fallen so low that he had no nigger to wallop, and was thus even more abject, because he had no natural place and functions in local society, than the slaves themselves. The local drunkard was uttering sagacities to which no mortal attended. Two or three speculators were bidding on commission, and there were a few planters, some of them mounted, and a mixed multitude of tradesmen, loafers, bar-keepers, newspaper reporters, and idlers in general. At either end of the long table sat an auctioneer, who behaved with the traditional facetiousness of the profession. As the "lots" came on for sale they mounted the platform, generally in family parties. A party would fetch from one thousand to fifteen hundred dollars, according to its numbers and "condition." The spectacle was painful and monstrous. Most of the "lots" bore the examination of their points with a kind of placid dignity, and only showed some little interest when the biddings grew keen and flattered their pride.

The sale was almost over, and we were just about to leave, when a howl of derision from the mob made us look round. What *I* saw was the apparition of an extremely aged and debilitated black man standing on the table. What Moore saw to interest him I could not guess, but he grew pale and uttered an oath of surprise under his breath, though he rarely swore. Then he turned his horse's head again towards the auctioneer. That merry tradesman was extolling the merits of nearly his last lot. "A very remarkable specimen, gentlemen! Admirers of the antique cannot dispense with this curious nigger — very old and quite imperfect. Like so many of the treasures of Greek art which have reached us, he has had the misfortune to lose his nose and several of his fingers. How much offered for this exceptional lot — unmarried and without encumbrances of any kind? He is dumb too, and may be trusted with any secret."

"Take him off!" howled some one in the crowd.

"Order his funeral!"

"Chuck him into the next lot."

"What, gentlemen, *no* bids for this very eligible nigger? With a few more rags he would make a most adequate scarecrow."

While this disgusting banter was going on I observed a planter ride up to one of the brokers and whisper for some time in his ear. The planter was a bad but unmistakable likeness of my friend Moore, worked over, so to speak, with a loaded brush and heavily glazed with old Bourbon whisky. After giving his orders to the agent he retired to the outskirts of the crowd, and began flicking his long dusty boots with a serviceable cowhide whip.

"Well, gentlemen, we must really adopt the friendly suggestion of Judge Lee and chuck this nigger into the next lot."

So the auctioneer was saying, when the broker to whom I have referred cried out, "Ten dollars."

"*This* is more like business," cried the auctioneer. "Ten dollars offered! What amateur says more than ten dollars for this lot? His extreme age and historical reminiscences alone, if he could communicate them, would make him invaluable to the student."

To my intense amazement Moore shouted from horseback, "Twenty dollars."

"What, *you* want a cheap nigger to get your hand in, do you, you blank-blanked abolitionist?" cried a man who stood near. He was a big, dirty-looking bully, at least half drunk, and attending (not unnecessarily) to his toilet with the point of a long, heavy knife.

Before the words were out of his mouth Moore had leaped from his horse and delivered such a right-handed blow as that wherewith the wandering beggar-man smote Irus of old in the courtyard of Odysseus, Laertes' son. "On his neck, beneath the ear, he smote him, and crushed in the bones; and the red blood gushed up through his mouth, and he gnashed his teeth together as he kicked the ground." Moore stooped, picked up the bowie-knife, and sent it glittering high through the air.

"Take him away," he said, and two rough fellows, laughing, carried the bully to the edge of the fountain that played in the corner of the square. He was still lying crumpled up there when we rode out of Clayville.

The bidding, of course, had stopped, owing to the unaffected interest which the public took in this more dramatic interlude. The broker, it is true, had bid twenty-five dollars, and was wrangling with the auctioneer.

"You have my bid, Mr. Brinton, sir, and there is no other offer. Knock down the lot to me."

"You wait your time, Mr. Isaacs," said the auctioneer. "No man can do two things at once and do them well. When Squire Moore has settled with Dick Bligh he will desert the paths of military adventure for the calmer and more lucrative track of commercial enterprise."

The auctioneer's command of long words was considerable, and was obviously of use to him in his daily avocations.

When he had rounded his period, Moore was in the saddle again, and nodded silently to the auctioneer.

"Squire Moore bids thirty dollars. Thirty dollars for this once despised but now appreciated fellow-creature," rattled on the auctioneer.

The agent nodded again.

"Forty dollars bid," said the auctioneer.

"Fifty," cried Moore.

The broker nodded.

"Sixty."

The agent nodded again.

The bidding ran rapidly up to three hundred and fifty dollars.

The crowd were growing excited, and had been joined by every child in the town, by every draggled and sunburnt woman, and the drinking-bar had disgorged every loafer who felt sober enough to stay the distance to the centre of the square.

My own first feelings of curiosity had subsided. I knew how strong and burning was Moore's hatred of oppression, and felt convinced that he merely wished at any sacrifice of money to secure for this old negro some peaceful days and a quiet deathbed.

The crowd doubtless took the same obvious view of the case as I did, and was now eagerly urging on the two competitors.

"Never say die, Isaacs."

"Stick to it, Squire; the nigger's well worth the dollars."

So they howled, and now the biddings were mounting towards one thousand dollars, when the sulky planter rode up to the neighbourhood of the table — much to the inconvenience of the "gallery" — and whispered to his agent. The conference lasted some minutes, and at the end of it the agent capped Moore's last offer, one thousand dollars, with a bid of one thousand two hundred.

"Fifteen hundred," said Moore, amidst applause.

"Look here, Mr. Knock-'em-down," cried Mr. Isaacs: "it's hot and thirsty work sitting, nodding here; I likes my ease on a warm day; so just you reckon that I see the Squire, and go a hundred dollars more as long as I hold up my pencil."

He stuck a long gnawed pencil erect between his finger and thumb, and stared impertinently at Moore. The Squire nodded, and the bidding went on in this silent fashion till the bids had actually run up to three thousand four hundred dollars. All this while the poor negro, whose limbs no longer supported him, crouched in a heap on the table, turning his haggard eye alternately on Moore and on the erect and motionless pencil of the broker. The crowd had become silent with excitement. Unable to stand the heat and agitation, Moore's unfriendly brother had crossed the square in search of a "short drink." Moore nodded once more.

"Three thousand six hundred dollars bid," cried the auctioneer, and looked at Isaacs.

With a wild howl Isaacs dashed his pencil in the air, tossed up his hands, and thrust them deep down between his coat collar and his body, uttering all the while yells of pain.

"Don't you bid, Mr. Isaacs?" asked the auctioneer, without receiving any answer except Semitic appeals to holy Abraham, blended with Aryan profanity.

"Come," said Moore very severely, "his pencil is down, and he has withdrawn his bid. There is no other bidder; knock the lot down to me."

"No more offers?" said the auctioneer slowly, looking all round the square.

There were certainly no offers from Mr. Isaacs, who now was bounding like the gad-stung Io to the furthest end of the place.

"This fine buck-negro, warranted absolutely unsound of wind and limb, going, going, a shameful sacrifice, for a poor three thousand six hundred dollars. Going, going — gone!"

The hammer fell with a sharp, decisive sound.

A fearful volley of oaths rattled after the noise, like thunder rolling away in the distance.

Moore's brother had returned from achieving a "short drink" just in time to see his coveted lot knocked down to his rival.

We left the spot, with the negro in the care of Peter, as quickly as might be.

"I wonder," said Moore, as we reached the inn and ordered a trap to carry our valuable bargain home in— "I wonder what on earth made Isaacs run off like a maniac."

"Massa," whispered Peter, "yesterday I jes' caught yer Brer Hornet a-loafin' around in the wood. 'Come wi' me,' says I, 'and bottled him in this yer pasteboard box,'" showing one which had held Turkish tobacco. "When I saw that Hebrew Jew wouldn't stir his pencil, I jes' crept up softly and dropped Brer Hornet down his neck. Then he jes' rose and went. Spec's he and Brer Hornet had business of their own."

"Peter," said Moore, "you are a good boy, but you will come to a bad end."

II.

As we rode slowly homeward, behind the trap which conveyed the dear-bought slave, Moore was extremely moody and disinclined for conversation.

"Is your purchase not rather an expensive one?" I ventured to ask, to which Moore replied shortly —

"No; think he is perhaps the cheapest nigger that was ever bought."

To put any more questions would have been impertinent, and I possessed my curiosity in silence till we reached the plantation.

Here Moore's conduct became decidedly eccentric. He had the black man conveyed at once into a cool, dark, strong room with a heavy iron door, where the new acquisition was locked up in company with a sufficient meal. Moore and I dined hastily, and then he summoned all his negroes together into the court of the house. "Look here, boys," he cried: "all these trees" — and he pointed to several clumps "must come down immediately, and all the shrubs on the lawn and in the garden. Fall to at once, those of you that have axes, and let the rest take hoes and knives and make a clean sweep of the shrubs." The idea of wholesale destruction seemed not disagreeable to the slaves, who went at their work with eagerness, though it made my heart ache to see the fine old oaks beginning to fall and to watch the green garden becoming a desert. Moore first busied himself with directing the women, who, under his orders, piled up mattresses and bags of cotton against the parapets of the verandahs. The house stood on the summit of a gradually sloping height, and before the moon began to set (for we worked without intermission through the evening and far into the night) there was nothing but a bare slope of grass all round the place, while smoke and flame went up from the piles of fallen timber. The plantation, in fact, was ready to stand a short siege.

Moore now produced a number of rifles, which he put, with ammunition, into the hands of some of the more stalwart negroes. These he sent to their cabins, which lay at a distance of about a furlong and a half on various sides of the house. The men had orders to fire on any advancing enemy, and then to fall back at once on the main building, which was now barricaded and fortified. One lad was told to lurk in a thicket below the slope of the hill and invisible from the house.

"If Wild Bill's men come on, and you give them the slip, cry thrice like the 'Bob White,'" said Moore; "if they take you, cry once. If you get off, run straight to Clayville, and give this note to the officer commanding the cavalry.”

The hour was now about one in the morning; by three the dawn would begin. In spite of his fatigues, Moore had no idea of snatching an hour’s rest. He called up Peter (who had been sleeping, coiled up like a black cat, in the smoking-room), and bade him take a bath and hot water into the room where Gumbo, the newly purchased black, had all this time been left to his own reflections. “Soap him and lather him well, Peter,” said Moore; “wash him white, if you can, and let me know when he’s fit to come near.”

Peter withdrew with his stereotyped grin to make his preparations.

Presently, through the open door of the smoking-room, we heard the sounds of energetic splashings, mingled with the inarticulate groans of the miserable Gumbo. Moore could not sit still, but kept pacing the room, smoking fiercely. Presently Peter came to the door —

“Nigger’s clean now, massa.”

“Bring me a razor, then,” said Moore, “and leave me alone with him.”

*

When Moore had retired, with the razor, into the chamber where his purchase lay, I had time to reflect on the singularity of the situation. In every room loaded rifles were ready; all the windows were cunningly barricaded, and had sufficient loopholes. The peaceful planter’s house had become a castle; a dreadful quiet had succeeded to the hubbub of preparation, and my host, yesterday so pleasant, was now locked up alone with a dumb negro and a razor! I had long ago given up the hypothesis that Gumbo had been purchased out of pure philanthropy. The disappointment of baffled cruelty in Moore’s brother would not alone account for the necessity of such defensive preparations as had just been made. Clearly Gumbo was not a mere fancy article, but a negro of real value, whose person it was desirable to obtain possession of at any risk or cost. The ghastly idea occurred to me (suggested, I fancy, by Moore’s demand for a razor) that Gumbo, at some period of his career, must have swallowed a priceless diamond. This gem must still be concealed about his person, and Moore must have determined by foul means, as no fair means were available, to become its owner. When this fancy struck me I began to feel that it was my duty to interfere. I could not sit by within call (had poor Gumbo been capable of calling) and allow my friend to commit such a deed of cruelty. As I thus parleyed with myself, the heavy iron door of the store-room opened, and Moore came out, with the razor (bloodless, thank Heaven!) in his hand. Anxiety had given place to a more joyous excitement.

"Well?" I said interrogatively.

"Well, all's well. That man has, as I felt sure, the Secret of the Pyramid."

I now became quite certain that Moore, in spite of all his apparent method, had gone out of his mind. It seemed best to humour him, especially as so many loaded rifles were lying about.

"He has seen the myst'ry hid
Under Egypt's pyramid,"

I quoted; "but, my dear fellow, as the negro is dumb, I don't see how you are to get the secret out of him."

"I did not say he *knew* it," answered Moore crossly; "I said he *had* it. As to Egypt, I don't know what you are talking about—"

At this moment we heard the crack of rifles, and in the instant of silence which followed came the note of the "Bob White."

Once it shrilled, and we listened eagerly; then the notes came twice rapidly, and a sound of voices rose up from the negro outposts, who had been driven in and were making fast the one door of the house that had been left open. From the negroes we learned that our assailants (Bill Hicock's band of border ruffians, "specially engaged for this occasion") had picketed their horses behind the dip of the hill and were advancing on foot. Moore hurried to the roof to reconnoitre. The dawn was stealing on, and the smoke from the still smouldering trees, which we had felled and burned, rose through the twilight air.

"Moore, you hound," cried a voice through the smoke of the furthest pile, "we have come for your new nigger. Will you give him up or will you fight?"

Moore's only reply was a bullet fired in the direction whence the voice was heard. His shot was answered by a perfect volley from men who could just be discerned creeping through the grass about four hundred yards out. The bullets rattled harmlessly against wooden walls and iron shutters, or came with a thud against the mattress fortifications of the verandah. The firing was all directed against the front of the house.

"I see their game," said Moore. "The front attack is only a feint. When they think we are all busy here, another detachment will try to rush the place from the back and to set fire to the building. We'll 'give them their kail through the reek.'"

Moore's dispositions were quickly made. He left me with some ten of the blacks to keep up as heavy a fire as possible from the roof against the advancing skirmishers. He posted himself, with six fellows on whom he could depend, in a room of one of the wings which commanded the back entrance. As many men, with plenty of ready-loaded rifles, were told off to a room in the opposite wing. Both parties were thus in a position to rake the entrance with a cross fire. Moore gave orders that not a trigger should be pulled till the still invisible assailants had arrived on his side, between the two projecting wings. "Then fire into them, and let every one choose his man."

On the roof our business was simple enough. We lay behind bags of cotton, firing as rapidly and making as much show of force as possible, while women kept loading for us. Our position was extremely strong, as we were quite invisible to men crouching or running hurriedly far below. Our practice was not particularly good; still three or four of the skirmishers had ceased to advance, and this naturally discouraged the others, who were aware, of course, that their movement was only a feint. The siege had now lasted about half an hour, and I had begun to fancy that Moore's theory of the attack was a mistake, and that he had credited the enemy with more generalship than they possessed, when a perfect storm of fire broke out beneath us, from the rooms where Moore and his company were posted. Dangerous as it was to cease for a moment from watching the enemy, I stole across the roof, and, looking down between two of the cotton bags which filled the open spaces of the balustrades, I saw the narrow ground between the two wings simply strewn with dead or wounded men. The cross fire still poured from the windows, though here and there a marksman tried to pick off the fugitives. Rapidly did I cross the roof to my post. To my horror the skirmishers had advanced, as if at the signal of the firing, and were now running up at full speed and close to the walls of the house. At that moment the door opened, and Moore, heading a number of negroes, picked off the leading ruffian and rushed out into the open. The other assailants fired hurriedly and without aim, then — daunted by the attack so suddenly carried into their midst, and by the appearance of one or two of their own beaten comrades — the enemy turned and fairly bolted. We did not pursue. Far away down the road we heard the clatter of hoofs, and thin and clear came the thrice-repeated cry of the "Bob White."

"Dick's coming back with the soldiers," said Moore; "and now I think we may look after the wounded."

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I did not see much of Moore that day. The fact is that I slept a good deal, and Moore was mysteriously engaged with Gumbo. Night came, and very much needed quiet and sleep came with it. Then we passed an indolent day, and I presumed that adventures were over, and that on the subject of "the Secret of the

Pyramid” Moore had recovered his sanity. I was just taking my bedroom candle when Moore said, “Don’t go to bed yet. You will come with me, won’t you, and see out the adventure of the Cheap Nigger?”

“You don’t mean to say the story is to be continued?” I asked.

“Continued? Why the fun is only beginning,” Moore answered. “The night is cloudy, and will just suit us. Come down to the branch.”

The “branch,” as Moore called it, was a strong stream that separated, as I knew, his lands from his brother’s. We walked down slowly, and reached the broad boat which was dragged over by a chain when any one wanted to cross. At the “scow,” as the ferry-boat was called, Peter joined us; he ferried us deftly over the deep and rapid water, and then led on, as rapidly as if it had been daylight, along a path through the pines.

“How often I came here when I was a boy,” said Moore; “but now I might lose myself in the wood, for this is my brother’s land, and I have forgotten the way.”

As I knew that Mr. Bob Moore was confined to his room by an accident, through which an ounce of lead had been lodged in a portion of his frame, I had no fear of being arrested for trespass. Presently the negro stopped in front of a cliff.

“Here is the ‘Sachem’s Cave,’” said Moore. “You’ll help us to explore the cave, won’t you?”

I did not think the occasion an opportune one for exploring caves, but to have withdrawn would have demanded a “moral courage,” as people commonly say when they mean cowardice, which I did not possess. We stepped within a narrow crevice of the great cliff. Moore lit a lantern and went in advance; the negro followed with a flaring torch.

Suddenly an idea occurred to me, which I felt bound to communicate to Moore. “My dear fellow,” I said in a whisper, “is this quite sportsmanlike? You know you are after some treasure, real or imaginary, and, I put it to you as a candid friend, is not this just a little bit like poaching? Your brother’s land, you know.”

“What I am looking for is in my own land,” said Moore. “The river is the march. Come on.”

We went on, now advancing among fairy halls, glistering with stalactites or paved with silver sand, and finally pushing our way through a concealed crevice down dank and narrow passages in the rock. The darkness increased; the pavement plashed beneath our feet, and the drip, drip of water was incessant. “We are under the river-bed,” said Moore, “in a kind of natural Thames Tunnel.” We made what speed we might through this combination of the Valley of the Shadow with the Slough of Despond, and soon were on firmer ground again beneath Moore’s own territory. Probably no other white men had ever crawled through the hidden passage and gained the further penetralia of the cave, which now again began to narrow. Finally we reached four tall pillars, of about ten feet in height, closely surrounded by the walls of rock. As we approached these pillars, that were dimly discerned by the torchlight, our feet made a faint metallic jingling sound among heaps of ashes which strewed the floor. Moore and I went up to the pillars and tried them with our knives. They were of wood, all soaked and green with the eternal damp. “Peter,” said Moore, “go in with the lantern and try if you can find anything there.”

Peter had none of the superstitions of his race, or he would never have been our companion. “All right, massa; me look for Brer Spook.”

So saying, Peter walked into a kind of roofed over-room, open only at the front, and examined the floor with his lantern, stamping occasionally to detect any hollowness in the ground.

“Nothing here, massa, but this dead fellow’s leg-bone and little bits of broken jugs,” and the dauntless Peter came out with his ghastly trophy.

Moore seemed not to lose heart.

“Perhaps,” he said, “there is something on the roof. Peter, give me a back.”

Peter stooped down beside one of the wooden pillars and firmly grasped his own legs above the knee. Moore climbed on the improvised ladder, and was just able to seize the edge of the roof, as it seemed to be, with his hands.

“Now steady, Peter,” he exclaimed, and with a spring he drew himself up till his head was above the level of the roof. Then he uttered a cry, and, leaping from Peter’s back retreated to the level where we stood in some confusion.

“Good God!” he said, “what a sight!”

“What on earth is the matter?” I asked.

“Look for yourself, if you choose,” said Moore, who was somewhat shaken, and at the same time irritated and ashamed.

Grasping the lantern, I managed to get on to Peter’s shoulders, and by a considerable gymnastic effort to raise my head to the level of the ledge, and at the same time to cast the light up and within.

The spectacle was sufficiently awful.

I was looking along a platform, on which ten skeletons were disposed at full length, with the skulls still covered with long hair, and the fleshless limbs glimmering white and stretching back into the darkness.

On the right hand, and crouching between a skeleton and the wall of the chamber (what we had taken for a roof was the floor of a room raised on pillars), I saw the form of a man. He was dressed in gay colours, and, as he sat with his legs drawn up, his arms rested on his knees.

On the first beholding of a dreadful thing, our instinct forces us to rush against it, as if to bring the horror to the test of touch. This instinct wakened in me. For a moment I felt dazed, and then I continued to stare involuntarily at the watcher of the dead. He had not stirred. My eyes became accustomed to the dim and flickering light which the lantern cast in that dark place.

“Hold on, Peter,” I cried, and leaped down to the floor of the cave.

“It’s all right, Moore,” I said. “Don’t you remember the picture in old Lafitau’s ‘Mœurs des Sauvages Américains’? We are in a burying-place of the Cherouines, and the seated man is only the *kywash*, ‘which is an image of woode keeping the deade.’”

“Ass that I am!” cried Moore. “I knew the cave led us from the Sachem’s Cave to the Sachem’s Mound, and I forgot for a moment how the fellows disposed of their dead. We must search the platform. Peter, make a ladder again.”

Moore mounted nimbly enough this time. I followed him.

The *kywash* had no more terrors for us, and we penetrated beyond the fleshless dead into the further extremity of the sepulchre. Here we lifted and removed vast piles of deerskin bags, and of mats, filled as they were with “the dreadful dust that once was man.” As we reached the bottom of the first pile something glittered yellow and bright beneath the lantern.

Moore stooped and tried to lift what looked like an enormous plate. He was unable to raise the object, still weighed down as it was with the ghastly remnants of the dead. With feverish haste we cleared away the *débris*, and at last lifted and brought to light a huge and massive disk of gold, divided into rays which spread from the centre, each division being adorned with strange figures in relief — figures of animals, plants, and what looked like rude hieroglyphs.

This was only the firstfruits of the treasure.

A silver disk, still larger, and decorated in the same manner, was next uncovered, and last, in a hollow dug in the flooring of the sepulchre, we came on a great number of objects in gold and silver, which somewhat reminded us of Indian idols. These were thickly crusted with precious stones, and were accompanied by many of the sacred emeralds and opals of old American religion. There were also some extraordinary manuscripts, if the term may be applied to picture writing on prepared deerskins that were now decaying. We paid little attention to cloaks of the famous feather-work, now a lost art, of which one or two examples are found in European museums. The gold, and silver, and precious stones, as may be imagined, overcame for the moment any ethnological curiosity.

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Dawn was growing into day before we reached the mouth of the cave again, and after a series of journeys brought all our spoil to the light of the upper air. It was quickly enough bestowed in bags and baskets. Then, aided by three of Moore's stoutest hands, whom we found waiting for us in the pine wood, we carried the whole treasure back, and lodged it in the strong room which had been the retreat of Gumbo.

III.

The conclusion of my story shall be very short. What was the connection between Gumbo and the spoils of the Sachem's Mound, and how did the treasures of the Aztec Temple of the Sun come to be concealed in the burial place of the Red Man? All this Moore explained to me the day after we secured the treasures.

"My father," said Moore, "was, as you know, a great antiquarian, and a great collector of Mexican and native relics. He had given almost as much time as Brasseur de Bourbourg to Mexican hieroglyphics, and naturally had made nothing out of them. His chief desire was to discover the Secret of the Pyramid — not the pyramids of Egypt, as you fancied, but the Pyramid of the Sun, Tonatiuh, at Teohuacan. To the problem connected with this mysterious structure, infinitely older than the empire of Montezuma, which Cortes destroyed, he fancied he had a clue in this scroll."

Moore handed me a prepared sheet of birch bark, like those which the red men use for their rude picture writings. It was very old, but the painted characters were still brilliant, and even a tyro could see that they were not Indian, but of the ancient Mexican description. In the upper left-hand corner was painted a pyramidal structure, above which the sun beamed. Eight men, over whose heads the moon was drawn, were issuing from the pyramid; the two foremost bore in their hands effigies of the sun and moon; each of the others seemed to carry smaller objects with a certain religious awe. Then came a singular chart, which one might conjecture represented the wanderings of these men, bearing the sacred things of their gods. In the lowest corner of the scroll they were being received by human beings dressed unlike themselves, with head coverings of feathers and carrying bows in their hands.

"This scroll," Moore went on, "my father bought from one of the last of the red men who lingered on here, a prey to debt and whisky. My father always associated the drawings with the treasures of Teohuacan, which, according to him, must have been withdrawn from the pyramid, and conveyed secretly to the north, the direction from which the old Toltec pyramid builders originally came. In the north they would find no civilized people like themselves, he said, but only the Indians. Probably, however, the Indians would receive with respect the bearers of mysterious images and rites, and my father concluded that the sacred treasures of the Sun might still be concealed among some wandering tribe of red men. He had come to this conclusion for some time, when I and my brother returned from school, hastily summoned back, to find him extremely ill. He had suffered from a paralytic stroke, and he scarcely recognized us. But we made out, partly from his broken and wandering words, partly from old Tom (Peter's father, now dead), that my father's illness had followed on a violent fit of passion. He had picked up, it seems, from some Indians a scroll which he considered of the utmost value, and which he placed in a shelf of the library. Now, old Gumbo was a house-servant at that time, and, dumb as he was, and stupid as he was, my father had treated him with peculiar kindness. Unluckily Gumbo yielded to the favourite illusion of all servants, white and black, male and female, that anything they find in the library may be used to light a fire with. One chilly day Gumbo lighted the fire with the newly purchased Indian birch scroll. My father, when he heard of this performance, lost all self-command. In his ordinary temper the most humane of men, he simply raged at Gumbo. He would teach him, he said, to destroy his papers. And it appeared, from what we could piece together (for old Tom was very reticent and my father very incoherent), that he actually branded or tattooed a copy of what Gumbo had burnt on the nigger's body!"

"But," I interrupted, "your father knew all the scroll had to tell him, else he could not have copied it on Gumbo. So why was he in such a rage?"

"You," said Moore, with some indignation, "are not a collector, and you can't understand a collector's feelings. My father knew the contents of the scroll, but what of that? The scroll was the first edition, the real original, and Gumbo had destroyed it. Job would have lost his temper if Job had been a collector. Let me go on. My brother and I both conjectured that the scroll had some connection with the famous riches of the Sun and the secret of the Pyramid of Teohuacan. Probably, we thought, it had contained a chart (now transferred to Gumbo's frame) of the hiding-place of the treasure. However, in the confusion caused by my father's illness, death, and burial, Gumbo escaped, and, being an unusually stupid nigger, he escaped due south-west. Here he seems to have fallen into the hands of some slave-holding Indians, who used him even worse than any white owners would have done, and left him the mere fragment you saw. He filtered back here through the exchange of commerce, 'the higgling of the market,' and as soon as I recognized him at the sale I made up my mind to purchase him. So did my brother; but, thanks to Peter and his hornets, I became Gumbo's owner. On examining him, after he was well washed on the night of the attack, I found this chart, as you may call it, branded on Gumbo's back." Here Moore made a rapid tracing on a sheet of paper. "I concluded that the letters S M (introduced by my father, of course, as the Indian scroll must have been 'before letters') referred to the Sachem’s Mound, which is in my land; that the Sun above referred to the treasures of the Sun, that S C stood for the Sachem’s Cave, and that the cave led, under the river, within the mound. We might have opened the mound by digging on our own land, but it would have been a long job, and must have attracted curiosity and brought us into trouble. So, you see, the chart Gumbo destroyed was imprinted by my father on his black back, and though he *knew* nothing of the secret he distinctly *had* it.”

“Yes,” said I, “but why did you ask for a razor when you were left alone with Gumbo?”

“Why,” said Moore, “I knew Gumbo was marked somewhere and somehow, but the place and manner I didn’t know. And my father might have remembered the dodge of Histiæus in Herodotus: he might have shaved Gumbo’s head, tattooed the chart on that, and then allowed the natural covering to hide the secret ‘on the place where the wool ought to grow.’”

THE ROMANCE OF THE FIRST RADICAL.

A PREHISTORIC APOLOGUE.

“Titius. Le premier qui supprime un abus, comme on dit, est toujours victime du service qu’il rend.

Un Homme du Peuple. C’est de sa faute! Pourquoi se mêlé t’il de ce qui ne le regarde pas.” — Le Prêtre de Nemi.

The Devil, according to Dr. Johnson and other authorities, was the first Whig. History tells us less about the first Radical — the first man who rebelled against the despotism of unintelligible customs, who asserted the rights of the individual against the claims of the tribal conscience, and who was eager to see society organized, off-hand, on what he thought a rational method. In the absence of history, we must fall back on that branch of hypothetics which is known as prehistoric science. We must reconstruct the Romance of the First Radical from the hints supplied by geology, and by the study of Radicals at large, and of contemporary savages among whom no Radical reformer has yet appeared. In the following little apologue no trait of manners is invented.

The characters of our romance lived shortly after the close of the last glacial epoch in Europe, when the ice had partly withdrawn from the face of the world, and when land and sea had almost assumed their modern proportions. At this period Europe was inhabited by scattered bands of human creatures, who roamed about its surface much as the black fellows used to roam over the Australian continent. The various groups derived their names from various animals and other natural objects, such as the sun, the cabbage, serpents, sardines, crabs, leopards, bears, and hyænas. It is important for our purpose to remember that all the children took their family name from the mother’s side. If she were of the Hyæna clan, the children were Hyænas. If the mother were tattooed with the badge of the Serpent, the children were Serpents, and so on. No two persons of the same family name and crest might marry, on pain of death. The man of the Bear family who dwelt by the Mediterranean might not ally himself with a woman of the Bear clan whose home was on the shores of the Baltic, and who was in no way related to him by consanguinity. These details are dry, but absolutely necessary to the comprehension of the First Radical’s stormy and melancholy career. We must also remember that, among the tribes, there was no fixed or monarchical government. The little democratic groups were much influenced by the medicine-men or wizards, who combined the functions of the modern clergy and of the medical profession. The old men, too, had some power; the braves, or warriors, constituted a turbulent oligarchy; the noisy outcries of the old women corresponded to the utterances of an intelligent daily press. But the real ruler was a body of strange and despotic customs, the nature of which will become apparent as we follow the fortunes of the First Radical.

THE YOUTH OF WHY-WHY.

Why-Why, as our hero was commonly called in the tribe, was born, long before Romulus built his wall, in a cave which may still be observed in the neighbourhood of Mentone. On the warm shores of the Mediterranean, protected from winds by a wall of rock, the group of which Why-Why was the offspring had attained conditions of comparative comfort. The remains of their dinners, many feet deep, still constitute the flooring of the cave, and the tourist, as he pokes the soil with the point of his umbrella, turns up bits of bone, shreds of chipped flint, and other interesting relics. In the big cave lived several little families, all named by the names of their mothers. These ladies had been knocked on the head and dragged home, according to the marriage customs of the period, from places as distant as the modern Marseilles and Genoa. Why-Why, with his little brothers and sisters, were named Serpents, were taught to believe that the serpent was the first ancestor of their race, and that they must never injure any creeping thing. When they were still very young, the figure of the serpent was tattooed over their legs and breasts, so that every member of primitive society who met them had the advantage of knowing their crest and highly respectable family name.

The birth of Why-Why was a season of discomfort and privation. The hill tribe which lived on the summit of the hill now known as the Tête du Chien had long been aware that an addition to the population of the cave was expected. They had therefore prepared, according to the invariable etiquette of these early times, to come down on the cave people, maltreat the ladies, steal all the property they could lay hands on, and break whatever proved too heavy to carry. Good manners, of course, forbade the cave people to resist this visit, but etiquette permitted (and in New Caledonia still permits) the group to bury and hide its portable possessions. Canoes had been brought into the little creek beneath the cave, to convey the women and children into a safe retreat, and the men were just beginning to hide the spears, bone daggers, flint fish-hooks, mats, shell razors, nets, and so forth, when Why-Why gave an early proof of his precocity by entering the world some time before his arrival was expected.

Instantly all was confusion. The infant, his mother and the other non-combatants of the tribe, were bundled into canoes and paddled, through a tempestuous sea, to the site of the modern Bordighiera. The men who were not with the canoes fled into the depths of the Gorge Saint Louis, which now severs

France from Italy. The hill tribe came down at the double, and in a twinkling had "made hay" (to borrow a modern agricultural expression) of all the personal property of the cave dwellers. They tore the nets (the use of which they did not understand), they broke the shell razors, they pouched the opulent store of flint arrowheads and bone daggers, and they tortured to death the pigs, which the cave people had just begun to try to domesticate. After performing these rites, which were perfectly legal — indeed, it would have been gross rudeness to neglect them — the hill people withdrew to their wind-swept home on the Tête du Chien.

Philosophers who believe in the force of early impressions will be tempted to maintain that Why-Why's invincible hatred of established institutions may be traced to these hours of discomfort in which his life began.

The very earliest years of Why-Why, unlike those of Mr. John Stuart Mill, whom in many respects he resembled, were not distinguished by proofs of extraordinary intelligence. He rather promptly, however, showed signs of a sceptical character. Like other sharp children, Why-Why was always asking metaphysical conundrums. Who made men? Who made the sun? Why has the cave-bear such a hoarse voice? Why don't lobsters grow on trees? — he would incessantly demand. In answer to these and similar questions, the mother of Why-Why would tell him stories out of the simple mythology of the tribe. There was quite a store of traditional replies to inquisitive children, replies sanctioned by antiquity and by the authority of the medicine-men, and in this lore Why-Why's mother was deeply versed.

Thus, for example, Why-Why would ask his mother who made men. She would reply that long ago Pund-jel, the first man, made two images of human beings in clay, and stuck on curly bark for hair. He then danced a corroboree round them, and sang a song. They rose up, and appeared as full-grown men. To this statement, hallowed by immemorial belief, Why-Why only answered by asking who made Pund-jel. His mother said that Pund-jel came out of a plot of reeds and rushes. Why-Why was silent, but thought in his heart that the whole theory was "bosh-bosh," to use the early reduplicative language of these remote times. Nor could he conceal his doubts about the Deluge and the frog who once drowned all the world. Here is the story of the frog:— "Once, long ago, there was a big frog. He drank himself full of water. He could not get rid of the water. Once he saw a sand-eel dancing on his tail by the sea-shore. It made him laugh so that he burst, and all the water ran out. There was a great flood, and every one was drowned except two or three men and women, who got on an island. Past came the pelican, in a canoe; he took off the men, but wanting to marry the woman, kept her to the last. She wrapped up a log in a 'possum rug to deceive the pelican, and swam to shore and escaped. The pelican was very angry; he began to paint himself white, to show that he was on the war trail, when past came another pelican, did not like his looks, and killed him with his beak. That is why pelicans are partly black and white, if you want to know, my little dear," said the mother of Why-Why.

Many stories like this were told in the cave, but they found no credit with Why-Why. When he was but ten years old, his inquiring spirit showed itself in the following remarkable manner. He had always been informed that a serpent was the mother of his race, and that he must treat serpents with the greatest reverence. To kill one was sacrilege. In spite of this, he stole out unobserved and crushed a viper which had stung his little brother. He noticed that no harm ensued, and this encouraged him to commit a still more daring act. None but the old men and the warriors were allowed to eat oysters. It was universally held that if a woman or a child touched an oyster, the earth would open and swallow the culprit. Not daunted by this prevalent belief, Why-Why one day devoured no less than four dozen oysters, opening the shells with a flint spear-head, which he had secreted in his waist-band. The earth did not open and swallow him as he had swallowed the oysters, and from that moment he became suspicious of all the ideas and customs imposed by the old men and wizards.

Two or three touching incidents in domestic life, which occurred when Why-Why was about twelve years old, confirmed him in the dissidence of his dissent, for the first Radical was the first Dissenter. The etiquette of the age (which survives among the Yorubas and other tribes) made it criminal for a woman to see her husband, or even to mention his name. When, therefore, the probable father of Why-Why became weary of supporting his family, he did not need to leave the cave and tramp abroad. He merely ceased to bring in tree-frogs, grubs, roots, and the other supplies which Why-Why's mother was accustomed to find concealed under a large stone in the neighbourhood of the cave.

The poor pious woman, who had always religiously abstained from seeing her lord's face, and from knowing his name, was now reduced to destitution. There was no one to grub up pig-nuts for her, nor to extract insects of an edible sort from beneath the bark of trees. As she could not identify her invisible husband, she was unable to denounce him to the wizards, who would, for a consideration, have frightened him out of his life or into the performance of his duty. Thus, even with the aid of Why-Why, existence became too laborious for her strength, and she gradually pined away. As she lay in a half-fainting and almost dying state, Why-Why rushed out to find the most celebrated local medicine-man. In half an hour the chief medicine-man appeared, dressed in the skin of a wolf, tagged about with bones, skulls, dead lizards, and other ornaments of his official attire. You may see a picture very like him in Mr. Catlin's book about the Mandans. Armed with a drum and a rattle, he leaped into the presence of the sick woman, uttering unearthly yells. His benevolent action and "bedside manner" were in accordance with the medical science of the time. He merely meant to frighten away the evil spirit which (according to the received hypothesis) was destroying the mother of Why-Why. What he succeeded in doing was to make Why-Why's mother give a faint scream, after which her jaw fell, and her eyes grew fixed and staring.

The grief of Why-Why was profound. Reckless of consequences, he declared, with impious publicity, that the law which forbade a wife to see her own husband, and the medical science which frightened poor women to death were cruel and ridiculous. As Why-Why (though a promising child) was still under age, little notice was taken of remarks which were attributed to the petulance of youth. But when he went further, and transgressed the law which then forbade a brother to speak to his own sister, on pain of death, the general indignation was no longer repressed. In vain did Why-Why plead that if he neglected his sister no one else would comfort her. His life was spared, but the unfortunate little girl's bones were dug up by a German savant last year, in a condition which makes it only too certain that cannibalism was practised by the early natives of the Mediterranean coast. These incidents then, namely, the neglect of his unknown father, the death of his mother, and the execution of his sister, confirmed Why-Why in the belief that radical social reforms were desirable.

The coming of age of Why-Why was celebrated in the manner usual among primitive people. The ceremonies were not of a character to increase his pleasure in life, nor his respect for constituted authority. When he was fourteen years of age, he was pinned, during his sleep, by four adult braves, who knocked out his front teeth, shaved his head with sharp chips of quartzite, cut off the first joint of his little finger, and daubed his whole body over with clay. They then turned him loose, imposing on him his name of Why-Why; and when his shaven hair began to show through the clay daubing, the women of the tribe washed him, and painted him black and white. The indignation of Why-Why may readily be conceived. Why, he kept asking, should you shave a fellow's head, knock out his teeth, cut off his little finger, daub him with clay, and paint him like a pelican, because he is fourteen years old? To these radical questions, the braves (who had all lost their own front teeth) replied, that this was the custom of their fathers. They tried to console him, moreover, by pointing out that now he might eat oysters, and catch himself a bride from some hostile tribe, or give his sister in exchange for a wife. This was little comfort to Why-Why. He had eaten oysters already without supernatural punishment, and his sister, as we have seen, had suffered the extreme penalty of the law. Nor could our hero persuade himself that to club and carry off a hostile girl in the dark was the best way to win a loving wife. He remained single, and became a great eater of oysters.

THE MANHOOD OF WHY-WHY.

As time went on our hero developed into one of the most admired braves of his community. No one was more successful in battle, and it became almost a proverb that when Why-Why went on the war-path there was certain to be meat enough and to spare, even for the women. Why-Why, though a Radical, was so far from perfect that he invariably complied with the usages of his time when they seemed rational and useful. If a little tattooing on the arm would have saved men from a horrible disease, he would have had all the tribe tattooed. He was no bigot. He kept his word, and paid his debts, for no one was ever very "advanced" all at once. It was only when the ceremonious or superstitious ideas of his age and race appeared to him senseless and mischievous that he rebelled, or at least hinted his doubts and misgivings. This course of conduct made him feared and hated both by the medicine-men, or clerical wizards, and by the old women of the tribe. They naturally tried to take their revenge upon him in the usual way.

A charge of heresy, of course, could not well be made, for in the infancy of our race there were neither Courts of Arches nor General Assemblies. But it was always possible to accuse Why-Why of malevolent witchcraft. The medicine-men had not long to wait for an opportunity. An old woman died, as old women will, and every one was asking "Who sent the evil spirit that destroyed poor old Dada?" In Why-Why's time no other explanation of natural death by disease or age was entertained. The old woman's grave was dug, and all the wizards intently watched for the first worm or insect that should crawl out of the mould. The head-wizard soon detected a beetle, making, as he alleged, in the direction where Why-Why stood observing the proceedings. The wizard at once denounced our hero as the cause of the old woman's death. To have blenched for a moment would have been ruin. But Why-Why merely lifted his hand, and in a moment a spear flew from it which pinned his denouncer ignominiously to a pine-tree. The funeral of the old woman was promptly converted into a free fight, in which there was more noise than bloodshed. After this event the medicine-men left Why-Why to his own courses, and waited for a chance of turning public opinion against the sceptic.

The conduct of Why-Why was certainly calculated to outrage all conservative feeling. When on the war-path or in the excitement of the chase he had even been known to address a tribesman by his name, as "Old Cow," or "Flying

Cloud,” or what not, instead of adopting the orthodox nomenclature of the classificatory system, and saying, “Third cousin by the mother’s side, thrice removed, will you lend me an arrow?” or whatever it might be. On “tabu-days,” once a week, when the rest of the people in the cave were all silent, sedentary, and miserable (from some superstitious feeling which we can no longer understand), Why-Why would walk about whistling, or would chip his flints or set his nets. He ought to have been punished with death, but no one cared to interfere with him.

Instead of dancing at the great “corroborees,” or religious ballets of his people, he would “sit out” with a girl whose sad, romantic history became fatally interwoven with his own. In vain the medicine-men assured him that Pund-jel, the great spirit, was angry. Why-Why was indifferent to the thunder which was believed to be the voice of Pund-jel. His behaviour at the funeral of a celebrated brave actually caused what we would call a reformation in burial ceremonies.

It was usual to lay the corpses of the famous dead in a cave, where certain of the tribesmen were sent to watch for forty days and nights the decaying body. This ghastly task was made more severe by the difficulty of obtaining food. Everything that the watchers were allowed to eat was cooked outside the cave with complicated ceremonies. If any part of the ritual was omitted, if a drop or a morsel were spilled, the whole rite had to be done over again from the beginning. This was not all. The chief medicine-man took a small portion of the meat in a long spoon, and entered the sepulchral cavern. In the dim light he approached one of the watchers of the dead, danced before him, uttered a mysterious formula of words, and made a shot at the hungry man’s mouth with a long spoon. If the shot was straight, if the spoon did not touch the lips or nose or mouth, the watcher made ready to receive a fresh spoonful. But if the attempt failed, if the spoon did not go straight to the mark, the mourners were obliged to wait till all the cooking ceremonies were performed afresh, when the feeding began again.

Now, Why-why was a mourner whom the chief medicine-man was anxious to “spite,” as children say, and at the end of three days’ watching our hero had not received a morsel of food. The spoon had invariably chanced to miss him. On the fourth night Why-Why entertained his fellow-watchers with a harangue on the imbecility of the whole proceeding. He walked out of the cave, kicked the chief medicine-man into a ravine, seized the pot full of meat, brought it back with him, and made a hearty meal. The other mourners, half dead with fear, expected to see the corpse they were “waking” arise, “girn,” and take some horrible revenge. Nothing of the sort occurred, and the burials of the cave dwellers gradually came to be managed in a less irksome way.

THE LOVES OF VERVA AND WHY-WHY.

No man, however intrepid, can offend with impunity the most sacred laws of society. Why-Why proved no exception to this rule. His decline and fall date, we may almost say, from the hour when he bought a fair-haired, blue-eyed female child from a member of a tribe that had wandered out of the far north. The tribe were about to cook poor little Verva because her mother was dead, and she seemed a *bouche inutile*. For the price of a pair of shell fish-hooks, a bone dagger, and a bundle of grass-string Why-Why (who had a tender heart) ransomed the child. In the cave she lived an unhappy life, as the other children maltreated and tortured her in the manner peculiar to pitiless infancy.

Such protection as a man can give to a child the unlucky little girl received from Why-Why. The cave people, like most savages, made it a rule never to punish their children. Why-Why got into many quarrels because he would occasionally box the ears of the mischievous imps who tormented poor Verva, the fair-haired and blue-eyed captive from the north. There grew up a kind of friendship between Why-Why and the child. She would follow him with dog-like fidelity and with a stealthy tread when he hunted the red deer in the forests of the Alpine Maritimes. She wove for him a belt of shells, strung on stout fibres of grass. In this belt Why-Why would attend the tribal corroborees, where, as has been said, he was inclined to "sit out" with Verva and watch, rather than join in the grotesque dance performed as worship to the Bear.

As Verva grew older and ceased to be persecuted by the children, she became beautiful in the unadorned manner of that early time. Her friendship with Why-Why began to embarrass the girl, and our hero himself felt a quite unusual shyness when he encountered the captive girl among the pines on the hillside. Both these untutored hearts were strangely stirred, and neither Why-Why nor Verva could imagine wherefore they turned pale or blushed when they met, or even when either heard the other's voice. If Why-Why had not distrusted and indeed detested the chief medicine-man, he would have sought that worthy's professional advice. But he kept his symptoms to himself, and Verva also pined in secret.

These artless persons were in love without knowing it.

It is not surprising that they did not understand the nature of their complaint, for probably before Why-Why no one had ever been in love. Courtship had consisted in knocking a casual girl on the head in the dark, and the only marriage ceremony had been that of capture. Affection on the side of the bride was out of the question, for, as we have remarked, she was never allowed so much as to see her husband's face. Probably the institution of falling in love has been evolved in, and has spread from, various early centres of human existence. Among the primitive Ligurian races, however, Why-Why and Verva must be held the inventors, and, alas! the protomartyrs of the passion. Love, like murder, "will out," and events revealed to Why-Why and Verva the true nature of their sentiments.

It was a considerable exploit of Why-Why's that brought him and the northern captive to understand each other. The brother of Why-Why had died after partaking too freely of a member of a hostile tribe. The cave people, of course, expected Why-Why to avenge his kinsman. The brother, they said, must have been destroyed by a *boilya* or vampire, and, as somebody must have sent that vampire against the lad, somebody must be speared for it. Such are primitive ideas of medicine and justice. An ordinary brave would have skulked about the dwellings of some neighbouring human groups till he got a chance of knocking over a child or an old woman, after which justice and honour would have been satisfied. But Why-Why declared that, if he must spear somebody, he would spear a man of importance. The forms of a challenge were therefore notched on a piece of stick, which was solemnly carried by heralds to the most renowned brave of a community settled in the neighbourhood of the modern San Remo. This hero might have very reasonably asked, "Why should I spear Why-Why because his brother over-ate himself?" The laws of honour, however (which even at this period had long been established), forbade a gentleman when challenged to discuss the reasonableness of the proceeding.

The champions met on a sandy plain beside a little river near the modern Ventimiglia. An amphitheatre of rock surrounded them, and, far beyond, the valley was crowned by the ancient snow of an Alpine peak. The tribes of either party gathered in the rocky amphitheatre, and breathlessly watched the issue of the battle. Each warrior was equipped with a shield, a sheaf of spears, and a heavy, pointed club. At thirty paces distance they began throwing, and the spectators enjoyed a beautiful exposition of warlike skill. Both men threw with extreme force and deadly aim; while each defended himself cleverly with his shield. The spears were exhausted, and but one had pierced the thigh of Why-Why, while his opponent had two sticking in his neck and left arm.

Then, like two meeting thunder-clouds, the champions dashed at each other with their clubs. The sand was whirled up around them as they spun in the wild dance of battle, and the clubs rattled incessantly on the heads and shields. Twice Why-Why was down, but he rose with wonderful agility, and never dropped his shield. A third time he stooped beneath a tremendous whack, but when all seemed over, grasped a handful of sand, and flung it right in his enemy's eyes. The warrior reeled, blinded and confused, when Why-Why gave point with the club in his antagonist's throat; the blood leaped out, and both fell senseless on the plain.

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When the slow mist cleared from before the eyes of Why-Why he found himself (he was doubtless the first hero of the many heroes who have occupied this romantic position) stretched on a grassy bed, and watched by the blue eyes of Verva. Where were the sand, the stream, the hostile warrior, the crowds of friends and foes? It was Verva's part to explain. The champion of the other tribe had never breathed after he received the club-thrust, and the chief medicine-man had declared that Why-Why was also dead. He had suggested that both champions should be burned in the desolate spot where they lay, that their *boilyas*, or ghosts, might not harm the tribes. The lookers-on had gone to their several and distant caves to fetch fire for the ceremony (they possessed no means of striking a light), and Verva, unnoticed, had lingered beside Why-Why, and laid his bleeding head in her lap. Why-Why had uttered a groan, and the brave girl dragged him from the field into a safe retreat among the woods not far from the stream. Why-Why had been principally beaten about the head, and his injuries, therefore, were slight.

After watching the return of the tribesmen, and hearing the chief medicine-man explain that Why-Why's body had been carried away by "the bad black-fellow with a tail who lives under the earth," Why-Why enjoyed the pleasure of seeing his kinsmen and his foes leave the place to its natural silence. Then he found words, and poured forth his heart to Verva. They must never be sundered — they must be man and wife! The girl leaned her golden head on Why-Why's dark shoulder, and sniffed at him, for kissing was an institution not yet evolved. She wept. She had a dreadful thing to tell him, — that she could never be his. "Look at this mark," she said, exposing the inner side of her arm. Why-Why looked, shuddered, and turned pale. On Verva's arm he recognized, almost defaced, the same tattooed badge that wound its sinuous spirals across his own broad chest and round his manly legs. *It was the mark of the Serpent*!

Both were Serpents; both, unknown to Why-Why, though not to Verva, bore the same name, the same badge, and, if Why-Why had been a religious man, both would have worshipped the same reptile. Marriage between them then was a thing accursed; man punished it by death. Why-Why bent his head and thought. He remembered all his youth — the murder of his sister for no crime; the killing of the serpent, and how no evil came of it; the eating of the oysters, and how the earth had not opened and swallowed him. His mind was made up. It was absolutely certain that his tribe and Verva's kin had never been within a thousand miles of each other. In a few impassioned words he explained to Verva his faith, his simple creed that a thing was not necessarily wrong because the medicine-men said so, and the tribe believed them. The girl's own character was all trustfulness, and Why-Why was the person she trusted. "Oh, Why-Why, dear," she said blushing (for she had never before ventured to break the tribal rule which forbade calling any one by his name), "Oh, Why-Why, you are *always* right!"

And o'er the hills, and far away
   Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
   Through all the world she followed him.

LA MORT WHY-WHY.

Two years had passed like a dream in the pleasant valley which, in far later ages, the Romans called Vallis Aurea, and which we call Vallauris. Here, at a distance of some thirty miles from the cave and the tribe, dwelt in fancied concealment Why-Why and Verva. The clear stream was warbling at their feet, in the bright blue weather of spring; the scent of the may blossoms was poured abroad, and, lying in the hollow of Why-Why's shield, a pretty little baby with Why-Why's dark eyes and Verva's golden locks was crowing to his mother. Why-Why sat beside her, and was busily making the first European pipkin with the clay which he had found near Vallauris. All was peace.

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There was a low whizzing sound, something seemed to rush past Why-Why, and with a scream Verva fell on her face. A spear had pierced her breast. With a yell like that of a wounded lion, Why-Why threw himself on the bleeding body of his bride. For many moments he heard no sound but her long, loud and unconscious breathing. He did not mark the yells of his tribesmen, nor feel the spears that rained down on himself, nor see the hideous face of the chief medicine-man peering at his own. Verva ceased to breathe. There was a convulsion, and her limbs were still. Then Why-Why rose. In his right hand was his famous club, "the watcher of the fords;" in his left his shield. These had never lain far from his hand since he fled with Verva.

He knew that the end had come, as he had so often dreamt of it; he knew that he was trapped and taken by his offended tribesmen. His first blow shattered the head of the chief medicine-man. Then he flung himself, all bleeding from the spears, among the press of savages who started from every lentisk bush and tuft of tall flowering heath. They gave back when four of their chief braves had fallen, and Why-Why lacked strength and will to pursue them. He turned and drew Verva's body beneath the rocky wall, and then he faced his enemies. He threw down shield and club and raised his hands. A light seemed to shine about his face, and his first word had a strange tone that caught the ear and chilled the heart of all who heard him. "Listen," he said, "for these are the last words of Why-Why. He came like the water, and like the wind he goes, he knew not whence, and he knows not whither. He does not curse you, for you are that which you are. But the day will come" (and here Why-Why's voice grew louder and his eyes burned), “the day will come when you will no longer be the slave of things like that dead dog,” and here he pointed to the shapeless face of the slain medicine-man. “The day will come, when a man shall speak unto his sister in loving kindness, and none shall do him wrong. The day will come when a woman shall unpunished see the face and name the name of her husband. As the summers go by you will not bow down to the hyænas, and the bears, and worship the adder and the viper. You will not cut and bruise the bodies of your young men, or cruelly strike and seize away women in the darkness. Yes, and the time will be when a man may love a woman of the same family name as himself” — but here the outraged religion of the tribesmen could endure no longer to listen to these wild and blasphemous words. A shower of spears flew out, and Why-Why fell across the body of Verva. His own was “like a marsh full of reeds,” said the poet of the tribe, in a song which described these events, “so thick the spears stood in it.”

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When he was dead, the tribe knew what they had lost in Why-Why. They bore his body, with that of Verva, to the cave; there they laid the lovers — Why-Why crowned with a crown of sea-shells, and with a piece of a rare magical substance (iron) at his side. Then the tribesmen withdrew from that now holy ground, and built them houses, and forswore the follies of the medicine-men, as Why-Why had prophesied. Many thousands of years later the cave was opened when the railway to Genoa was constructed, and the bones of Why-Why, with the crown, and the fragment of iron, were found where they had been laid by his repentant kinsmen. He had bravely asserted the rights of the individual conscience against the dictates of Society; he had lived, and loved, and died, not in vain. Last April I plucked a rose beside his cave, and laid it with another that had blossomed at the door of the last house which covered the homeless head of SHELLEY.

The prophecies of Why-Why have been partially fulfilled. Brothers, if they happen to be on speaking terms, may certainly speak to their sisters, though we are still, alas, forbidden to marry the sisters of our deceased wives. Wives *may* see their husbands, though in Society, they rarely avail themselves of the privilege. Young ladies are still forbidden to call young men at large by their Christian names; but this tribal law, and survival of the classificatory system, is rapidly losing its force. Burials in the savage manner to which Why-Why objected, will soon, doubtless, be permitted to conscientious Nonconformists in the graveyards of the Church of England. The teeth of boys are still knocked out at public and private schools, but the ceremony is neither formal nor universal.

Our advance in liberty is due to an army of forgotten Radical martyrs of whom we know less than we do of Mr. Bradlaugh.

A DUCHESS’S SECRET.

When I was poor, and honest, and a novelist, I little thought that I should ever be rich, and something not very unlike a Duke; and, as to honesty, but an indifferent character. I have had greatness thrust on me. I am, like Simpcox in the *dramatis personæ* of “Henry IV.,” “an impostor;” and yet I scarcely know how I could have escaped this deplorable (though lucrative) position. “Love is a great master,” says the “Mort d’Arthur,” and I perhaps may claim sympathy and pity as a victim of love. The following unaffected lines (in which only names and dates are disguised) contain all the apology I can offer to a censorious world.

Two or three years ago I was dependent on literature for my daily bread. I was a regular man-of-all-work. Having the advantage of knowing a clerk in the Foreign Office who went into society (he had been my pupil at the university), I picked up a good deal of scandalous gossip, which I published in the *Pimlico Postboy*, a journal of fashion. I was also engaged as sporting prophet to the *Tipster*, and was not less successful than my contemporaries as a vaticinator of future events. At the same time I was contributing a novel (anonymously) to the *Fleet Street Magazine*, a very respectable publication, though perhaps a little dull. The editor had expressly requested me to make things rather more lively, and I therefore gave my imagination free play in the construction of my plot. I introduced a beautiful girl, daughter of a preacher in the Shaker community. Her hand was sought in marriage by a sporting baronet, who had seen her as he pursued the chase through the pathless glens of the New Forest. This baronet she married after suffering things intolerable from the opposition of the Shakers. Here I had a good deal of padding about Shakers and their ways; and, near the end of the sixth chapter my heroine became the wife of Sir William Buckley. But the baronet proved a perfect William Rufus for variegated and versatile blackguardism. Lady Buckley’s life was made impossible by his abominable conduct. At this juncture my heroine chanced to be obliged to lunch at a railway refreshment-room. My last chapter had described the poor lady lunching lonely in the bleak and gritty waiting room of Swilby Junction, lonely except for the company of her little boy. I showed how she fell into a strange and morbid vein of reflection suggested by the qualities of the local sherry. If she was to live, her lord and master, Sir W. Buckley, must die! And I described how a fiendish temptation was whispered to her by the glass of local sherry. “William’s constitution, strong as it is,” she murmured inwardly, “could never stand a dozen of that sherry. Suppose he chanced to partake of it — accidentally — rather late in the evening." Amidst these reflections I allowed the December instalment of "The Baronet's Wife" to come to a conclusion in the *Fleet Street Magazine*. Obviously crime was in the wind.

It is my habit to read the "Agony Column" (as it is flippantly called), the second column in the outer sheet of the *Times*. Who knows but he may there see something to his advantage; and, besides, the mysterious advertisements may suggest ideas for plots. One day I took up the "Agony Column," as usual, at my club, and, to my surprise, read the following advertisement: —

"F. S. M. — SHERRY WINE. WRECK OF THE "JINGO." — WRETCHED BOY: Stay your unhallowed hand! Would you expose an erring MOTHER'S secret? Author will please communicate with Messrs. Mantlepiece and Co., Solicitors, Upton-on-the-Wold."

As soon as I saw this advertisement, as soon as my eyes fell on "Sherry Wine" and "Author," I felt that here was something for me. "F. S. M." puzzled me at first, but I read it *Fleet Street Magazine*, by a flash of inspiration. "Wretched Boy" seemed familiar and unappropriate — I was twenty-nine — but what of that? Of course I communicated with Messrs. Mantlepiece, saying that I had reason for supposing that I was the "author" alluded to in the advertisement. As to the words, "Wreck of the *Jingo*" they entirely beat me, but I hoped that some light would be thrown on their meaning by the respectable firm of solicitors. It did occur to me that if any one had reasons for communicating with me, it would have been better and safer to address a letter to me, under cover, to the editor of the *Fleet Street Magazine*. But the public have curious ideas on these matters. Two days after I wrote to Messrs. Mantlepiece I received a very guarded reply, in which I was informed that their client wished to make my acquaintance, and that a carriage would await me, if I presented myself at Upton-on-the-Wold Station, by the train arriving at 5.45 on Friday. Well, I thought to myself, I may as well do a "week-ending," as some people call it, with my anonymous friend as anywhere else. At the same time I knew that the "carriage" might be hired by enemies to convey me to the Pauper Lunatic Asylum or to West Ham, the place where people disappear mysteriously. I might be the victim of a rival's jealousy (and many men, novelists of most horrible imaginings, envied my talents and success), or a Nihilist plot might have drawn me into its machinery. But I was young, and I thought I would see the thing out. My journey was unadventurous, if you except a row with a German, who refused to let me open the window. But this has nothing to do with my narrative, and is not a false scent to make a guileless reader keep his eye on the Teuton. Some novelists permit themselves these artifices, which I think untradesmanlike and unworthy. When I arrived at

Upton, the station-master made a charge at my carriage, and asked me if I was "The gentleman for the Towers?" The whole affair was so mysterious that I thought it better to answer in the affirmative. My luggage (a Gladstone bag) was borne by four stately and liveried menials to a roomy and magnificent carriage, in which everything, from the ducal crown on the silver foot-warmers to the four splendid bays, breathed of opulence, directed and animated by culture. I dismissed all thoughts of the Pauper Lunatic Asylum and the Nihilists, and was whirled through miles of park and up an avenue lighted by electricity. We reached the baronial gateway of the Towers, a vast Gothic pile in the later manner of Inigo Jones, and a seneschal stood at the foot of a magnificent staircase to receive me. I had never seen a seneschal before, but I recognized him by the peeled white wand he carried, by his great silver chain, and his black velvet coat and knee-breeches.

"Your lordship's room," says the seneschal (obviously an old and confidential family servant), "is your old one — the Tapestried Chamber. Her Grace is waiting anxiously for you."

Then two menials marched, with my Gladstone bag, to the apartment thus indicated. For me, I felt in a dream, or like a man caught up into the fairyland of the "Arabian Nights." "Her Grace" was all very well — the aristocracy always admired my fictitious creations; but "Your Lordship!" Why your Lordship? Then the chilling idea occurred to me that I had *not* been "the gentleman for the Towers;" that I was in the position of the hero of "Happy Thoughts" when he went to the Duke's by mistake for the humble home of the Plyte Frazers. But I was young. "Her Grace" could not eat me, and I determined, as I said before, to see it out.

I dressed very deliberately, and that process over, was led by the worthy seneschal into a singular octagonal boudoir, hung with soft dark blue arras. The only person in the room was a gaunt, middle-aged lady, in deep mourning. Though I knew no more of the British aristocracy than Mr. W. D. Howells, of New York, I recognized her for the Duchess by her nose, which resembled those worn by the duchesses of Mr. Du Maurier. As soon as we were alone, she rose, drew me to her bosom, much to my horror, looked at me long and earnestly, and at last exclaimed, "How changed you are, Percy!" (My name is Thomas — Thomas Cobson.) Before I could reply, she was pouring out reproaches on me for having concealed my existence, and revealed in my novel what she spoke of as "the secret."

When she grew, not calm, but fatigued, I ventured to ask why she had conferred on me the honour of her invitation, and how I had been unfortunate enough to allude to affairs of which I had certainly no knowledge. Her reply was given with stately dignity. “You need not pretend,” she said, “to have forgotten what I told you in this very room, before you left England for an African tour in the *Jingo*. I then revealed to you the secret of my life, the secret of the Duke’s death. Your horror when you heard how that most unhappy man compelled me to free myself from his tyranny, by a method which his habits rendered only too easy — in short, by a dose of cheap sherry, was deep and natural. Oh, Percy, you did not kiss your mother before starting on your ill-omened voyage. As soon as I heard of the wreck of the *Jingo*, and that you were the only passenger drowned, I recognized an artifice, *un vieux truc*, by which you hoped to escape from a mother of whom you were ashamed. You had only pretended to be the victim of Ocean’s rage! People who are drowned in novels always *do* reappear: and, Percy, your mother is an old novel-reader! My agents have ever since been on your track, but it was reserved for *me* to discover the last of the Birkenheads in the anonymous author of the ‘Baronet’s Wife.’ That romance, in which you have had the baseness to use your knowledge of a mother’s guilt as a *motif* in your twopenny plot, unveiled to me the secret of your hidden existence. You must stop the story, or alter the following numbers; you must give up your discreditable mode of life. Heavens, that a Birkenhead should be a literary character! And you must resume your place in my house and in society.”

Here the Duchess of Stalybridge paused; she had quite recovered that repose of manner and icy *hauteur* which, I understand, is the heritage of the house of Birkenhead. For my part, I had almost lost the modest confidence which is, I believe, hereditary in the family of Cobson. It was a scene to make the boldest stand aghast. Here was an unknown lady of the highest rank confessing a dreadful crime to a total stranger, and recognizing in that stranger her son, and the heir to an enormous property and a title as old — as old as British dukedoms, however old they may be. Ouida would have said “heir to a title older than a thousand centuries,” but I doubt if the English duke is so ancient as that, or a direct descendant of the Dukes of Edom mentioned in Holy Writ. I began pouring out an incoherent flood of evidence to show that I was only Thomas Cobson, and had never been any one else, but at that moment a gong sounded, and a young lady entered the room. She also was dressed in mourning, and the Duchess introduced her to me as my cousin, Miss Birkenhead. “Gwyneth was a child, Percy,” said my august hostess, “when you went to Africa.” I shook hands with my cousin with as much composure as I could assume, for, to tell the truth, I was not only moved by my recent adventures, but I had on the spot fallen hopelessly in love with my new relative. It was *le coup de foudre* of a French writer on the affections — M. Stendhal. Miss Birkenhead had won my heart from the first moment of our meeting. Why should I attempt to describe a psychological experience as rare as instantaneous conversion, or more so? Miss Birkenhead was tall and dark, with a proud pale face, and eyes which unmistakably indicated the possession of a fine sense of humour. Proud pale people seldom look when they first meet a total stranger — still more a long-lost cousin — as if they had some difficulty in refraining from mirth. Miss Birkenhead's face was as fixed and almost as pure as marble, but I read sympathy and amusement and kindness in her eyes.

Presently the door opened again, and an elderly man in the dress of a priest came in. To him I was presented —

"Your old governor, Percy."

For a moment my unhappy middle-class association made me suppose that the elderly ecclesiastic was my "old Guv'nor," — my father, the late Duke. But an instant's reflection proved to me that her Grace meant "tutor" by governor. I am ashamed to say that I now entered into the spirit of the scene, shook the holy man warmly by the hand, and quoted a convenient passage from Horace.

He appeared to fall into the trap, and began to speak of old recollections of my boyhood.

Stately liveried menials now, greatly to my surprise, brought in tea. I was just declining tea (for I expected dinner in a few minutes), when a voice (a sweet low voice) whispered —

"Take some!"

I took some, providentially, as it turned out. Again, I was declining tea-cake, when I could have sworn I heard the same voice (so low that it seemed like the admonition of a passing spirit) say —

"Take some!"

I took some, for I was exceedingly hungry; and then the conversation lapsed, began again vaguely, and lapsed again.

We all know that wretched quarter of an hour, or half hour, which unpunctual guests make us pass in famine and fatigue while they keep dinner waiting. Upon my word, we waited till half-past eleven before dinner was announced. But for the tea, I must have perished; for, like the butler in Sir George Dasent's novel, "I likes my meals regular."

The Duchess had obviously forgotten all about dinner. There was a spinning-wheel in the room, and she sat and span like an elderly Fate. When dinner was announced at last, I began to fear it would never end. The menu covered *both sides* of the card. The Duchess ate little, and "hardly anything was drunk." At last the ladies left us, about one in the morning. I saw my chance, and began judiciously to "draw" the chaplain. It appeared that the Duchess did not always dine at half-past eleven. The feast was a movable one, from eight o'clock onwards. The Duchess and the establishment had got into these habits during the old Duke's time. A very strange man the old Duke; rarely got up till eight in the evening, often prolonged breakfast till next day.

"But I need not tell *you* all this, Percy, my old pupil," said the chaplain; and he winked as a clergyman ought not to wink.

"My dear sir," cried I, encouraged by this performance, "for Heaven's sake tell me what all this means? In this so-called nineteenth century, in our boasted age of progress, what *does* the Duchess mean by her invitation to me, and by her conduct at large? Indeed, why is *she* at large?"

The chaplain drew closer to me. "Did ye ever hear of a duchess in a madhouse?" said he; and I owned that I never had met with such an incident in my reading (unless there is one in Webster's plays, somewhere).

"Well, then, who is to make a beginning?" asked the priest. "The Duchess has not a relation in the world but Miss Birkenhead, the only daughter of a son of the last Duke but one. The late Duke was a dreadful man, and he turned the poor Duchess's head with the life he led her. The drowning of her only son in the *Jingo* finished the business. She has got that story about" — (here he touched the decanter of sherry: I nodded)— "she has got that story into her head, and she believes her son is alive; otherwise she is as sane and unimaginative as — as — as Mr. Chaplin," said he, with a flash of inspiration. "Happily you are an honest man, or you seem like one, and won't take advantage of her delusion."

This was all I could get out of the chaplain; indeed, there was no more to be got. I went to bed, but not to sleep. Next day, and many other days, I spent wrestling in argument with the Duchess. I brought her my certificate of baptism, my testamurs in Smalls and Greats, an old passport, a bill of Poole's, anything I could think of to prove my identity. She was obdurate, and only said— "If you are not Percy, how do you know my secret?" I had in the meantime to alter the intended course of my novel— "The Baronet's Wife." The Baronet was made to become a reformed character. But in all those days at the lonely Towers, and in the intervals of arguing with the poor Duchess, I could not but meet Gwyneth Birkenhead. We met, not as cousins, for Miss Birkenhead had only too clearly appreciated the situation from the moment she first met me. The old seneschal, too, was in the secret; I don't know what the rest of the menials thought. They were accustomed to the Duchess. But if Gwyneth and I did not meet as cousins, we met as light-hearted young people, in a queer situation, and in a strange, dismal old house.

We could not in the selfsame mansion dwell

Without some stir of heart, some malady;
We could not sit at meals but feel how well
It soothed each to be the other by.

Indeed *I* could not sit at meals without being gratefully reminded of Gwyneth’s advice about “taking some” on the night of my first arrival at the Towers.

These queer happy times ended.

One day a party of archæologists came to visit the Towers. They were members of a “Society for Badgering the Proprietors of Old Houses,” and they had been lunching at Upton-on-the-Wold. After luncheon they invaded the Towers, personally conducted by Mr. Bulkin, a very learned historian. Bulkin had nearly plucked me in Modern History, and when I heard his voice afar off I arose and fled swiftly. Unluckily the Duchess chanced, by an unprecedented accident, to be in the library, a room which the family never used, and which was, therefore, exhibited to curious strangers. Into this library Bulkin precipitated himself, followed by his admirers, and began to lecture on the family portraits. Beginning with the Crusaders (painted by Lorenzo Credi) he soon got down to modern times. He took no notice of the Duchess, whom he believed to be a housekeeper; but, posting himself between the unfortunate lady and the door, gave a full account of the career of the late Duke. This was more than the Duchess (who knew all about the subject of the lecture) could stand; but Mr. Bulkin, referring her to his own Appendices, finished his address, and offered the Duchess half-a-crown as he led his troop to other victories. From this accident the Duchess never recovered. Her spirits, at no time high, sank to zero, and she soon passed peacefully away. She left a will in which her personal property (about £40,000 a year) was bequeathed to Gwyneth, “as my beloved son, Percy, has enough for his needs,” the revenues of the dukedom of Stalybridge being about £300,000 per annum before the agricultural depression. She might well have thought I needed no more. Of course I put in no claim for these estates, messuages, farms, mines, and so forth, nor for my hereditary ducal pension of £15,000. But Gwyneth and I are not uncomfortably provided for, and I no longer contribute paragraphs of gossip to the *Pimlico Postboy*, nor yet do I vaticinate in the columns of the *Tipster*. Perhaps I ought to have fled from the Towers the morning after my arrival. And I declare that I would have fled but for Gwyneth and “Love, that is a great Master.”

THE HOUSE OF STRANGE STORIES.

The House of Strange Stories, as I prefer to call it (though it is not known by that name in the county), seems the very place for a ghost. Yet, though so many peoples have dwelt upon its site and in its chambers, though the ancient Elizabethan oak, and all the queer tables and chairs that a dozen generations have bequeathed, might well be tenanted by ancestral spirits, and disturbed by rappings, it is a curious fact that there is *not* a ghost in the House of Strange Stories. On my earliest visit to this mansion, I was disturbed, I own, by a not unpleasing expectancy. There *must*, one argued, be a shadowy lady in green in the bedroom, or, just as one was falling asleep, the spectre of a Jesuit would creep out of the priest's hole, where he was starved to death in the "spacious times of great Elizabeth," and would search for a morsel of bread. The priest was usually starved out, sentinels being placed in all the rooms and passages, till at last hunger and want of air would drive the wretched man to give himself up, for the sake of change of wretchedness. Then perhaps he was hanged, or he "died in our hands," as one of Elizabeth's officers euphemistically put it, when the Jesuit was tortured to death in the Tower. No "House of Seven Gables" across the Atlantic can have quite such memories as these, yet, oddly enough, I do not know of more than one ghost of a Jesuit in all England. *He* appeared to a learned doctor in a library, and the learned doctor described the phantom, not long ago, in the *Athenæum*.

"Does the priest of your 'priest-hole' walk?" I asked the squire one winter evening in the House of Strange Stories.

Darkness had come to the rescue of the pheasants about four in the afternoon, and all of us, men and women, were sitting at afternoon tea in the firelit study, drowsily watching the flicker of the flame on the black panelling. The characters will introduce themselves, as they take part in the conversation.

"No," said the squire, "even the priest does not walk. Somehow very few of the Jesuits have left ghosts in country houses. They are just the customers you would expect to 'walk,' but they don't."

There is, to be sure, one priestly ghost-story, which you may or may not know, and I tell it here, though I don't believe it, just as I heard it from the Bishop of Dunchester himself. According to this most affable and distinguished prelate, now no more, he once arrived in a large country house shortly before dinner-time; he was led to his chamber, he dressed, and went downstairs. Not knowing the plan of the house, he found his way into the library, a chamber lined with the books of many studious generations. Here the learned bishop remained for a few minutes, when the gong sounded for dinner, and a domestic, entering the apartment showed the prelate the way to the drawing-room, where the other guests were now assembled. The bishop, when the company appeared complete, and was beginning to manœuvre towards the dining-room, addressed his host (whom we shall call Lord Birkenhead), and observed that the ecclesiastic had not yet appeared.

“What ecclesiastic?” asked his lordship.

“The priest,” replied the bishop, “whom I met in the library.”

Upon this Lord Birkenhead’s countenance changed somewhat, and, with a casual remark, he put the question by. After dinner, when the ladies had left the men to their wine, Lord Birkenhead showed some curiosity as to “the ecclesiastic,” and learned that he had seemed somewhat shy and stiff, yet had the air of a man just about to enter into conversation.

“At that moment,” said the bishop, “I was summoned to the drawing-room, and did not at first notice that my friend the priest had not followed me. He had an interesting and careworn face,” added the bishop.

“You have certainly seen the family ghost,” said Lord Birkenhead; “he only haunts the library, where, as you may imagine, his retirement is but seldom disturbed.” And, indeed, the habits of the great, in England, are not studious, as a rule.

“Then I must return, Lord Birkenhead, to your library,” said the bishop, “and that without delay, for this appears to be a matter in which the services of one of the higher clergy, however unworthy, may prove of incalculable benefit.”

“If I could only hope,” answered Lord Birkenhead (who was a Catholic) with a deep sigh, “that his reverence would recognize Anglican orders!”

The bishop was now, as may be fancied, on his mettle, and without further parley, retired to the library. The rest of the men awaited his return, and beguiled the moments of expectation with princely havannas.

In about half an hour the bishop reappeared, and a close observer might have detected a shade of paleness on his apostolic features, yet his face was radiant like that of a good man who has performed a good action. Being implored to relieve the anxiety of the company, the worthy prelate spoke as follows:

“On entering the library, which was illuminated by a single lamp, I found myself alone. I drew a chair to the fire, and, taking up a volume of M. Renan’s which chanced to be lying on the table, I composed myself to detect the sophistries of this brilliant but unprincipled writer. Thus, by an effort of will, I distracted myself from that state of ‘expectant attention’ to which modern science attributes such phantoms and spectral appearances as can neither be explained away by a morbid condition of the liver, nor as caused by the common rat (*Mus rattus*). I should observe by the way," said the learned bishop, interrupting his own narrative, "that scepticism will in vain attempt to account, by the latter cause, namely rats, for the spectres, *Lemures*, *simulacra*, and haunted houses of the ancient Greeks and Romans. With these supernatural phenomena, as they prevailed in Athens and Rome, we are well acquainted, not only from the *Mostellaria* of Plautus, but from the numerous ghost-stories of Pliny, Plutarch, the *Philopseudes* of Lucian, and similar sources. But it will at once be perceived, and admitted even by candid men of science, that these spiritual phenomena of the classical period cannot plausibly, nor even possibly, be attributed to the agency of rats, when we recall the fact that the rat was an animal unknown to the ancients. As the learned M. Sélys Longch observes in his *Études de Micromammalogie* (Paris, 1839, p. 59), 'the origin of the rat is obscure, the one thing certain is that the vermin was unknown to the ancients, and that it arrived in Europe, introduced, perhaps, by the Crusaders, after the Middle Ages.' I think," added the prelate, looking round, not without satisfaction, "that I have completely disposed of the rat hypothesis, as far, at least, as the ghosts of classical tradition are concerned."

"Your reasoning, bishop," replied Lord Birkenhead, "is worthy of your reputation; but pray pardon the curiosity which entreats you to return from the *simulacra* of the past to the ghost of the present."

"I had not long been occupied with M. Renan," said the bishop, thus adjured, "when I became aware of the presence of another person in the room. I think my eyes had strayed from the volume, as I turned a page, to the table, on which I perceived the brown strong hand of a young man. Looking up, I beheld my friend the priest, who was indeed a man of some twenty-seven years of age, with a frank and open, though somewhat careworn, aspect. I at once rose, and asked if I could be of service to him in anything, and I trust I did not betray any wounding suspicion that he was other than a man of flesh and blood.

"'You can, indeed, my lord, relieve me of a great burden,' said the young man, and it was apparent enough that he *did* acknowledge the validity of Anglican orders. 'Will you kindly take from the shelf that volume of Cicero "De Officiis," he said, pointing to a copy of an Elzevir *variorum* edition, — not the small duodecimo Elzevir,— 'remove the paper you will find there, and burn it in the fire on the hearth.'

"'Certainly I will do as you say, but will you reward me by explaining the reason of your request?'

"'In me,' said the appearance, 'you behold Francis Wilton, priest. I was born in 1657, and, after adventures and an education with which I need not trouble you, found myself here as chaplain to the family of the Lord Birkenhead of the period. It chanced one day that I heard in confession, from the lips of Lady Birkenhead, a tale so strange, moving, and, but for the sacred circumstances of the revelation, so incredible, that my soul had no rest for thinking thereon. At last, neglecting my vow, and fearful that I might become forgetful of any portion of so marvellous a narrative, I took up my pen and committed the confession to the security of manuscript. *Litera scripta manet*. Scarcely had I finished my unholy task when the sound of a distant horn told me that the hunt (to which pleasure I was passionately given) approached the demesne. I thrust the written confession into that volume of Cicero, hurried to the stable, saddled my horse with my own hands, and rode in the direction whence I heard the music of the hounds. On my way a locked gate barred my progress. I put Rupert at it, he took off badly, fell, and my spirit passed away in the fall. But not to the place of repose did my sinful spirit wing its flight. I found myself here in the library, where, naturally, scarcely any one ever comes except the maids. When I would implore them to destroy the unholy document that binds me to earth, they merely scream; nor have I found any scion of the house, nor any guest, except your lordship, of more intrepid resolution or more charitable mood. And now, I trust, you will release me.'

"I rose (for I had seated myself during his narrative), my heart was stirred with pity; I took down the Cicero, and lit on a sheet of yellow paper covered with faded manuscript, which, of course, I did not read. I turned to the hearth, tossed on the fire the sere old paper, which blazed at once, and then, hearing the words *pax vobiscum*, I looked round. But I was alone. After a few minutes, devoted to private ejaculations, I returned to the dining-room; and that is all my story. Your maids need no longer dread the ghost of the library. He is released."

"Will any one take any more wine?" asked Lord Birkenhead, in tones of deep emotion. "No? Then suppose we join the ladies."

"Well," said one of the ladies, the Girton girl, when the squire had finished the prelate's narrative, "*I* don't call that much of a story. What was Lady Birkenhead's confession about? That's what one really wants to know."

"The bishop could not possibly have read the paper," said the Bachelor of Arts, one of the guests; "not as a gentleman, nor a bishop."

"I wish *I* had had the chance," said the Girton girl.

"Perhaps the confession was in Latin," said the Bachelor of Arts.

The Girton girl disdained to reply to this unworthy sneer.

"I have often observed," she said in a reflective voice, "that the most authentic and best attested bogies don't come to very much. They appear in a desultory manner, without any context, so to speak, and, like other difficulties, require a context to clear up their meaning."

These efforts of the Girton girl to apply the methods of philology to spectres, were received in silence. The women did not understand them, though they had a strong personal opinion about their learned author.

"The only ghost *I* ever came across, or, rather, came within measurable distance of, never appeared at all so far as one knew."

"Miss Lebas has a story," said the squire, "Won't she tell us her story?"

The ladies murmured, "Do, please."

"It really cannot be called a ghost-story," remarked Miss Lebas, "it was only an uncomfortable kind of coincidence, and I never think of it without a shudder. But I know there is not any reason at all why it should make any of *you* shudder; so don't be disappointed.

"It was the Long Vacation before last," said the Girton girl, "and I went on a reading-party to Bantry Bay, with Wyndham and Toole of Somerville, and Clare of Lady Margaret's. Leighton coached us."

"Dear me! With all these young men, my dear?" asked the maiden aunt.

"They were all women of my year, except Miss Leighton of Newnham, who was our coach," answered the Girton girl composedly.

"Dear me! I beg your pardon for interrupting you," said the maiden aunt.

"Well, term-time was drawing near, and Bantry Bay was getting pretty cold, when I received an invitation from Lady Garryowen to stay with them at Dundellan on my way south. They were two very dear, old, hospitable Irish ladies, the last of their race, Lady Garryowen and her sister, Miss Patty. They were *so* hospitable that, though I did not know it, Dundellan was quite full when I reached it, overflowing with young people. The house has nothing very remarkable about it: a grey, plain building, with remains of the château about it, and a high park wall. In the garden wall there is a small round tower, just like those in the precinct wall at St. Andrews. The ground floor is not used. On the first floor there is a furnished chamber with a deep round niche, almost a separate room, like that in Queen Mary's apartments in Holy Rood. The first floor has long been fitted up as a bedroom and dressing-room, but it had not been occupied, and a curious old spinning-wheel in the corner (which has nothing to do with my story, if you can call it a story), must have been unused since '98, at least. I reached Dublin late — our train should have arrived at half-past six — it was ten before we toiled into the station. The Dundellan carriage was waiting for me, and, after an hour's drive, I reached the house. The dear old ladies had sat up for me, and I went to bed as soon as possible, in a very comfortable room. I fell asleep at once, and did not waken till broad daylight, between seven and eight, when, as my eyes wandered about, I saw, by the pictures on the wall, and the names on the books beside my bed, that Miss Patty must have given up her own room to me. I was quite sorry and, as I dressed, determined to get her to let me change into any den rather than accept this sacrifice. I went downstairs, and found breakfast ready, but neither Lady Garryowen nor Miss Patty. Looking out of the window into the garden, I heard, for the only time in my life, the wild Irish *keen* over the dead, and saw the old nurse wailing and wringing her hands and hurrying to the house. As soon as she entered she told me, with a burst of grief, and in language I shall not try to imitate, that Miss Patty was dead.

"When I arrived the house was so full that there was literally no room for me. But 'Dundellan was never beaten yet,' the old ladies had said. There was still the room in the tower. But this room had such an evil reputation for being 'haunted' that the servants could hardly be got to go near it, at least after dark, and the dear old ladies never dreamed of sending any of their guests to pass a bad night in a place with a bad name. Miss Patty, who had the courage of a Bayard, did not think twice. She went herself to sleep in the haunted tower, and left her room to me. And when the old nurse went to call her in the morning, she could not waken Miss Patty. She was dead. Heart-disease, they called it. Of course," added the Girton girl, "as I said, it was only a coincidence. But the Irish servants could not be persuaded that Miss Patty had not seen whatever the thing was that they believed to be in the garden tower. I don't know what it was. You see the context was dreadfully vague, a mere fragment."

There was a little silence after the Girton girl's story.

"I never heard before in my life," said the maiden aunt, at last, "of any host or hostess who took the haunted room themselves, when the house happened to be full. They always send the stranger within their gates to it, and then pretend to be vastly surprised when he does not have a good night. I had several bad nights myself once. In Ireland too."

"Tell us all about it, Judy," said her brother, the squire.

"No," murmured the maiden aunt. "You would only laugh at me. There was no ghost. I didn't hear anything. I didn't see anything. I didn't even *smell* anything, as they do in that horrid book, 'The Haunted Hotel.'"

"Then why had you such bad nights?"

"Oh, I *felt*" said the maiden aunt, with a little shudder.

"What did *you feel*, Aunt Judy?"

"I *know* you will laugh," said the maiden aunt, abruptly entering on her nervous narrative. "I felt all the time *as if somebody was looking through the window*. Now, you know, there *couldn't* be anybody. It was in an Irish country house where I had just arrived, and my room was on the second floor. The window was old-fashioned and narrow, with a deep recess. As soon as I went to bed, my dears, I *felt* that some one was looking through the window, and meant to come in. I got up, and bolted the window, though I knew it was impossible for anybody to climb up there, and I drew the curtains, but I could not fall asleep. If ever I began to dose, I would waken with a start, and turn and look in the direction of the window. I did not sleep all night, and next night, though I was dreadfully tired, it was just the same thing. So I had to take my hostess into my confidence, though it was extremely disagreeable, my dears, to seem so foolish. I only told her that I thought the air, or something, must disagree with me, for I could not sleep. Then, as some one was leaving the house that day, she implored me to try another room, where I slept beautifully, and afterwards had a very pleasant visit. But, the day I went away, my hostess asked me if I had been kept awake by anything in particular, for instance, by a feeling that some one was trying to come in at the window. Well, I admitted that I *had* a nervous feeling of that sort, and she said that she was very sorry, and that every one who lay in the room had exactly the same sensation. She supposed they must all have heard the history of the room, in childhood, and forgotten that they had heard it, and then been consciously reminded of it by reflex action. It seems, my dears, that that is the new scientific way of explaining all these things, presentiments and dreams and wraiths, and all that sort of thing. We have seen them before, and remember them without being aware of it. So I said I'd never heard the history of the room; but she said I *must* have, and so must all the people who felt as if some one was coming in by the window. And I said that it was rather a curious thing they should *all* forget they knew it, and *all* be reminded of it without being aware of it, and that, if she did not mind, I'd like to be reminded of it again. So she said that these objections had all been replied to (just as clergymen always say in sermons), and then she told me the history of the room. It only came to this, that, three generations before, the family butler (whom every one had always thought a most steady, respectable man), dressed himself up like a ghost, or like his notion of a ghost, and got a ladder, and came in by the window to steal the diamonds of the lady of the house, and he frightened her to death, poor woman! That was all. But, ever since, people who sleep in the room don't sleep, so to speak, and keep thinking that some one is coming in by the casement. That's all; and I told you it was not an interesting story, but perhaps you will find more interest in the scientific explanation of all these things."

The story of the maiden aunt, so far as it recounted her own experience, did not contain anything to which the judicial faculties of the mind refused assent. Probably the Bachelor of Arts felt that something a good deal more unusual was wanted, for he instantly started, without being asked, on the following narrative:—

"I also was staying," said the Bachelor of Arts, "at the home of my friends, the aristocracy in Scotland. The name of the house, and the precise rank in the peerage of my illustrious host, it is not necessary for me to give. All, however, who know those more than feudal and baronial halls, are aware that the front of the castle looks forth on a somewhat narrow drive, bordered by black and funereal pines. On the night of my arrival at the castle, although I went late to bed, I did not feel at all sleepy. Something, perhaps, in the mountain air, or in the vicissitudes of *baccarat*, may have banished slumber. I had been in luck, and a pile of sovereigns and notes lay, in agreeable confusion, on my dressing-table. My feverish blood declined to be tranquillized, and at last I drew up the blind, threw open the latticed window, and looked out on the drive and the pine-wood. The faint and silvery blue of dawn was just wakening in the sky, and a setting moon hung, with a peculiarly ominous and wasted appearance, above the crests of the forest. But conceive my astonishment when I beheld, on the drive, and right under my window, a large and well-appointed hearse, with two white horses, with plumes complete, and attended by mutes, whose black staffs were tipped with silver that glittered pallid in the dawn.

I exhausted my ingenuity in conjectures as to the presence of this remarkable vehicle with the white horses, so unusual, though, when one thinks of it, so appropriate to the chariot of Death. Could some belated visitor have arrived in a hearse, like the lady in Miss Ferrier's novel? Could one of the domestics have expired, and was it the intention of my host to have the body thus honourably removed without casting a gloom over his guests?

Wild as these hypotheses appeared, I could think of nothing better, and was just about to leave the window, and retire to bed, when the driver of the strange carriage, who had hitherto sat motionless, turned, and looked me full in the face. Never shall I forget the appearance of this man, whose sallow countenance, close-shaven dark chin, and small, black moustache, combined with I know not what of martial in his air, struck into me a certain indefinable alarm. No sooner had he caught my eye, than he gathered up his reins, just raised his whip, and started the mortuary vehicle at a walk down the road. I followed it with my eyes till a bend in the avenue hid it from my sight. So wrapt up was my spirit in the exercise of the single sense of vision that it was not till the hearse became lost to view that I noticed the entire absence of sound which accompanied its departure. Neither had the bridles and trappings of the white horses jingled as the animals shook their heads, nor had the wheels of the hearse crashed upon the gravel of the avenue. I was compelled by all these circumstances to believe that what I had looked upon was not of this world, and, with a beating heart, I sought refuge in sleep.

"Next morning, feeling far from refreshed, I arrived among the latest at a breakfast which was a desultory and movable feast. Almost all the men had gone forth to hill, forest, or river, in pursuit of the furred, finned, or feathered denizens of the wilds—"

"You speak," interrupted the schoolboy, "like a printed book! I like to hear you speak like that. Drive on, old man! Drive on your hearse!"

The Bachelor of Arts "drove on," without noticing this interruption. "I tried to 'lead up' to the hearse," he said, "in conversation with the young ladies of the castle. I endeavoured to assume the languid and preoccupied air of the guest who, in ghost-stories, has had a bad night with the family spectre. I drew the conversation to the topic of apparitions, and even to warnings of death. I knew that every family worthy of the name has its omen: the Oxenhams a white bird, another house a brass band, whose airy music is poured forth by invisible performers, and so on. Of course I expected some one to cry, 'Oh, *we've* got a hearse with white horses,' for that is the kind of heirloom an ancient house regards with complacent pride. But nobody offered any remarks on the local omen, and even when I drew near the topic of *hearses*, one of the girls, my cousin, merely quoted, 'Speak not like a death's-head, good Doll' (my name is Adolphus), and asked me to play at lawn-tennis.

In the evening, in the smoking-room, it was no better, nobody had ever heard of an omen in this particular castle. Nay, when I told my story, for it came to that at last, they only laughed at me, and said I must have dreamed it. Of course I expected to be wakened in the night by some awful apparition, but nothing disturbed me. I never slept better, and hearses were the last things I thought of during the remainder of my visit. Months passed, and I had almost forgotten the vision, or dream, for I began to feel apprehensive that, after all, it *was* a dream. So costly and elaborate an apparition as a hearse with white horses and plumes complete, could never have been got up, regardless of expense, for one occasion only, and to frighten one undergraduate, yet it was certain that the hearse was not 'the old family coach.' My entertainers had undeniably never heard of it in their lives before. Even tradition at the castle said nothing of a spectral hearse, though the house was credited with a white lady deprived of her hands, and a luminous boy.

Here the Bachelor of Arts paused, and a shower of chaff began.

"Is that really all?" asked the Girton girl.

"Why, this is the third ghost-story to-night without any ghost in it!"

"I don't remember saying that it *was* a ghost-story," replied the Bachelor of

Arts; “but I thought a little anecdote of a mere ‘warning’ might not be unwelcome.”

“But where does the warning come in?” asked the schoolboy.

“That’s just what I was arriving at,” replied the narrator, “when I was interrupted with as little ceremony as if I had been Mr. Gladstone in the middle of a most important speech. I was going to say that, in the Easter Vacation after my visit to the castle, I went over to Paris with a friend, a fellow of my college. We drove to the *Hôtel d’Alsace* (I believe there is no hotel of that name; if there is, I beg the spirited proprietor’s pardon, and assure him that nothing personal is intended). We marched upstairs with our bags and baggage, and jolly high stairs they were. When we had removed the soil of travel from our persons, my friend called out to me, ‘I say, Jones, why shouldn’t we go down by the lift.’ ‘All right,’ said I, and my friend walked to the door of the mechanical apparatus, opened it, and got in. I followed him, when the porter whose business it is to ‘personally conduct’ the inmates of the hotel, entered also, and was closing the door.

“His eyes met mine, and I knew him in a moment. I had seen him once before. His sallow face, black, closely shaven chin, furtive glance, and military bearing, were the face and the glance and bearing of the driver of that awful hearse!

“In a moment — more swiftly than I can tell you — I pushed past the man, threw open the door, and just managed, by a violent effort, to drag my friend on to the landing. Then the lift rose with a sudden impulse, fell again, and rushed, with frightful velocity, to the basement of the hotel, whence we heard an appalling crash, followed by groans. We rushed downstairs, and the horrible spectacle of destruction that met our eyes I shall never forget. The unhappy porter was expiring in agony; but the warning had saved my life and my friend’s.”

“*I was that friend*,” said I — the collector of these anecdotes; “and so far I can testify to the truth of Jones’s story.”

At this moment, however, the gong for dressing sounded, and we went to our several apartments, after this emotional specimen of “Evenings at Home.”

IN CASTLE PERILOUS.

“What we suffer from most,” said the spectre, when I had partly recovered from my fright, “is a kind of *aphasia*.”

The spectre was sitting on the armchair beside my bed in the haunted room of Castle Perilous.

“I don’t know,” said I, as distinctly as the chattering of my teeth would permit, “that I quite follow you. Would you mind — excuse me — handing me that flask which lies on the table near you. . . . Thanks.”

The spectre, without stirring, so arranged the *a priori* sensuous schemata of time and space that the silver flask, which had been well out of my reach, was in my hand. I poured half the contents into a cup and offered it to him.

“No spirits,” he said curtly.

I swallowed eagerly the heady liquor, and felt a little more like myself.

“You were complaining,” I remarked, “of something like *aphasia*?”

“I was,” he replied. “You know what *aphasia* is in the human subject? A paralysis of certain nervous centres, which prevents the patient, though perfectly sane, from getting at the words which he intends to use, and forces others upon him. He may wish to observe that it is a fine morning, and may discover that his idea has taken the form of an observation about the Roman Calendar under the Emperor Justinian. That is *aphasia*, and we suffer from what, I presume, is a spiritual modification of that disorder.”

“Yet to-night,” I responded, “you are speaking like a printed book.”

“To-night,” said the spectre, acknowledging the compliment with a bow, “the conditions are peculiarly favourable.”

“Not to *me*,” I thought, with a sigh.

“And I am able to manifest myself with unusual clearness.”

“Then you are not always in such form as I am privileged to find you in?” I inquired.

“By no means,” replied the spectre. “Sometimes I cannot appear worth a cent. Often I am invisible to the naked eye, and even quite indiscernible by any of the senses. Sometimes I can only rap on the table, or send a cold wind over a visitor’s face, or at most pull off his bedclothes (like the spirit which appeared to Caligula, and is mentioned by Suetonius) and utter hollow groans.”

“That’s exactly what you *did*,” I said, “when you wakened me. I thought I should have died.”

“I can’t say how distressed I am,” answered the spectre. “It is just an instance of what I was trying to explain. We don’t know how we are going to manifest ourselves.”

“Don’t apologize,” I replied, “for a constitutional peculiarity. To what do you attribute your success to night?”

“Partly to your extremely receptive condition, partly to the whisky you took in the smoking-room, but chiefly to the magnetic environment.”

“Then you do not suffer at all from *aphasia* just now?”

“Not a touch of it at this moment, thank you; but, as a rule, we all *do* suffer horribly. This accounts for everything that you embodied spirits find remarkable and enigmatic in our conduct. We *mean* something, straight enough; but our failure is in expression. Just think how often you go wrong yourselves, though *your* spirits have a brain to play on, like the musician with a piano. Now *we* have to do as well as we can without any such mechanical advantage as a brain of cellular tissue” — here he suddenly took the form of a white lady with a black sack over her head, and disappeared in the wainscot.

“Excuse me,” he said a moment afterwards, quite in his ordinary voice, “I had a touch of it, I fancy. I lost the thread of my argument, and am dimly conscious of having expressed myself in some unusual and more or less incoherent fashion. I hope it was nothing at all vulgar or distressing?”

“Nothing out of the way in haunted houses, I assure you,” I replied, “merely a white lady with a black sack over her head.”

“Oh, *that* was it,” he answered with a sigh; “I often am afflicted in that way. Don’t mind me if I turn into a luminous boy, or a very old man in chains, or a lady in a green gown and high-heeled shoes, or a headless horseman, or a Mauth hound, or anything of that sort. They are all quite imperfect expressions of our nature, — symptoms, in short, of the malady I mentioned.”

“Then the appalling manifestations to which you allude are not the apparitions of the essential ghost? It is not in those forms that he appears among his friends?”

“Certainly not,” said the spectre; “and it would be very promotive of good feeling between men and disembodied spirits if this were more generally known. I myself—”

Here he was interrupted by an attack of spirit rappings. A brisk series of sharp faint taps, of a kind I never heard before, resounded from all the furniture of the room. While the disturbance continued, the spectre drummed nervously with his fingers on his knee. The sounds ended as suddenly as they had begun, and he expressed his regrets. “It is a thing I am subject to,” he remarked; “nervous, I believe, but, to persons unaccustomed to it, alarming.”

“It *is* rather alarming,” I admitted.

“A mere fit of sneezing,” he went on; “but you are now able to judge, from the events of to-night, how extremely hard it is for us, with the best intentions, to communicate coherently with the embodied world. Why, there is the Puddifant ghost — in Lord Puddifant’s family, you know: *he* has been trying for generations to inform his descendants that the drainage of the castle is execrable. Yet he can never come nearer what he means than taking the form of a shadowy hearse-and-four, and driving round and round Castle Puddifant at midnight. And old Lady Wadham’s ghost, what a sufferer that woman is! She merely desires to remark that the family diamonds, lost many years ago, were never really taken abroad by the valet and sold. He only had time to conceal them in a secret drawer behind the dining-room chimney-piece. Now she can get no nearer expressing herself than producing a spirited imitation of the music of the bagpipes, which wails up and down the house, and frightens the present Sir Robert Wadham and his people nearly out of their wits. And that’s the way with almost all of us: there is literally no connection (as a rule) between our expressions and the things we intend to express. You know how the Psychical Society make quite a study of rappings, and try to interpret them by the alphabet? Well, these, as I told you, are merely a nervous symptom; annoying, no doubt, but not dangerous. The only spectres, almost, that manage to hint what they really mean are Banshees.”

“*They* intend to herald an approaching death?” I asked.

“They do, and abominably bad taste I call it, unless a man has neglected to insure his life, and *then* I doubt if a person of honour could make use of information from — from that quarter. Banshees are chiefly the spectres of attached and anxious old family nurses, women of the lower orders, and completely destitute of tact. I call a Banshee rather a curse than a boon and a blessing to men. Like most old family servants, they are apt to be presuming.”

It occurred to me that the complacent spectre himself was not an unmixed delight to the inhabitants of Castle Perilous, or at least to their guests, for they never lay in the Green Chamber themselves.

“Can nothing be done,” I asked sympathetically, “to alleviate the disorders which you say are so common and distressing?”

“The old system of spiritual physic,” replied the spectre, “is obsolete, and the holy-water cure, in particular, has almost ceased to number any advocates, except the Rev. Dr F. G. Lee, whose books,” said this candid apparition, “appear to me to indicate superstitious credulity. No, I don’t know that any new discoveries have been made in this branch of therapeutics. In the last generation they tried to bolt me with a bishop: like putting a ferret into a rabbit-warren, you know. Nothing came of *that*, and lately the Psychical Society attempted to ascertain my weight by an ingenious mechanism. But they prescribed nothing, and made me feel so nervous that I was rapping at large, and knocking furniture about for months. The fact is that nobody understands the complaint, nor can detect the cause that makes the ghost of a man who was perfectly rational in life behave like an uneducated buffoon afterwards. The real reason, as I have tried to explain to you, is a solution of continuity between subjective thought and will on the side of the spectre, and objective expression of them — confound it—"

Here he vanished, and the sound of heavy feet was heard promenading the room, and balls of incandescent light floated about irresolutely, accompanied by the appearance of a bearded man in armour. The door (which I had locked and bolted before going to bed) kept opening and shutting rapidly, so as to cause a draught, and my dog fled under the bed with a long low howl.

"I do hope," remarked the spectre, presently reappearing, "that these interruptions (only fresh illustrations of our malady) have not frightened your dog into a fit. I have known very valuable and attached dogs expire of mere unreasoning terror on similar unfortunate occasions."

"I'm sure I don't wonder at it," I replied; "but I believe Bingo is still alive; in fact, I hear him scratching himself."

"Would you like to examine him?" asked the spectre.

"Oh, thanks, I am sure he is all right," I answered (for nothing in the world would have induced me to get out of bed while he was in the room). "Do you object to a cigarette?"

"Not at all, not at all; but Lady Perilous, I assure you, is a very old fashioned châtelaine. However, if *you* choose to risk it—"

I found my cigarette-case in my hand, opened it, and selected one of its contents, which I placed between my lips. As I was looking round for a match-box, the spectre courteously put his forefinger to the end of the cigarette, which lighted at once.

"Perhaps you wonder," he remarked, "why I remain at Castle Perilous, the very one of all my places which I never could bear while I was alive — as you call it?"

"I had a delicacy about asking," I answered.

"Well," he continued, "I am the family genius."

"I might have guessed *that*," I said.

He bowed and went on. "It is hereditary in our house, and I hold the position of genius till I am relieved. For example, when the family want to dig up the buried treasure under the old bridge, I thunder and lighten and cause such a storm that they desist."

"Why on earth do you do *that*?" I asked. "It seems hardly worth while to have a genius at all."

"In the interests of the family morality. The money would soon go on the turf, and on dice, drink, etc., if they excavated it; and then I work the curse, and bring off the prophecies, and so forth."

"What prophecies?"

"Oh, the rigmarole the old family seer came out with before they burned him for an unpalatable prediction at the time of the '15. He was very much vexed about it, of course, and he just prophesied any nonsense of a disagreeable nature that came into his head. You know what these crofter fellows are — ungrateful, vindictive rascals. He had been in receipt of outdoor relief for years. Well, he prophesied stuff like this: 'When the owl and the eagle meet on the same blasted rowan tree, then a lassie in a white hood from the east shall make the burn of Cross-cleugh run full red,' and drivel of that insane kind. Well, you can't think what trouble that particular prophecy gave me. It had to be fulfilled, of course, for the family credit, and I brought it off as near as, I flatter myself, it could be done."

"Lady Perilous was telling me about it last night," I said, with a shudder. "It was a horrible affair,"

"Yes, no doubt, no doubt; a cruel business! But how I am to manage some of them I'm sure *I* don't know. There's one of them in rhyme. Let me see, how does it go?

"'When Mackenzie lies in the perilous ha',
The wild Red Cock on the roof shall craw,
And the lady shall flee ere the day shall daw,
And the land shall girn in the deed man's thraw.'

"The 'crowing of the wild Red Cock' means that the castle shall be burned down, of course (I'm beginning to know his style by this time), and the lady is to elope, and the laird — that's Lord Perilous — is to expire in the 'deed man's thraw': that is the name the old people give the Secret Room. And all this is to happen when a Mackenzie, a member of a clan with which we are at feud, sleeps in the Haunted Chamber — where we are just now. By the way, what is *your* name?"

I don't know what made me reply, "Allan Mackenzie." It was true, but it was not politic.

"By Jove!" said the spectre, eagerly. "Here's a chance! I don't suppose a Mackenzie has slept here for those hundred years. And now, how is it to be done? Setting fire to the castle is simple" — here I remembered how he had lighted my cigarette— "but who on earth is to elope with Lady Perilous? She's fifty if she's a day, and evangelical *à tout casser*! Oh no; the thing is out of the question. It really must be put off for another generation or two. There is no hurry."

I felt a good deal relieved. He was clearly a being of extraordinary powers, and might, for anything I knew, have made *me* run away with Lady Perilous. And then, when the pangs of remorse began to tell on her ladyship, never a very lively woman at the best of times — However, the spectre seemed to have thought better of it.

"Don't you think it is rather hard on a family," I asked, "to have a family genius, and prophecies, and a curse, and—"

"And everything handsome about them," he interrupted me by exclaiming; "and you call yourself a Mackenzie of Megasky! What has become of family pride? Why, you yourselves have Gruagach of the Red Hand in the hall, and he, I can tell you, is a very different sort of spectre from *me*. Pre-Christian, you know — one of the oldest ghosts in Ross-shire. But as to 'hard on a family,' why, *noblesse oblige*."

"Considering that you are the family genius, you don't seem to have brought them much luck," I put in, for the house of Perilous is neither rich in gold nor very distinguished in history.

"Yes, but just think what they would have been without a family genius, if they are what they are with one! Besides, the prophecies are really responsible," he added, with the air of one who says, "I have a partner — Mr. Jorkins."

"Do you mind telling me one thing?" I asked eagerly. "What is the mystery of the Secret Chamber — I mean the room whither the heir is taken when he comes of age, and he never smiles again, nor touches a card except at baccarat?"

"Never smiles *again*!" said the spectre. "Doesn't he? Are you quite certain that he ever smiled *before*?"

This was a new way of looking at the question, and rather disconcerted me.

"I did not know the Master of Perilous before he came of age," said I; "but I have been here for a week, and watched him and Lord Perilous, and I never observed a smile wander over their lips. And yet little Tompkins" (he was the chief social buffoon of the hour) "has been in great force, and I may say that I myself have occasionally provoked a grin from the good-natured."

"That's just it," said the spectre. "The Perilouses have no sense of humour — never had. I am entirely destitute of it myself. Even in Scotland, even *here*, this family failing has been remarked — been the subject, I may say, of unfavourable comment. The Perilous of the period lost his head because he did not see the point of a conundrum of Macbeth’s. We felt, some time in the fifteenth century, that this peculiarity needed to be honourably accounted for, and the family developed that story of the Secret Chamber, and the Horror in the house. There is nothing in the chamber whatever, — neither a family idiot aged three hundred years, nor a skeleton, nor the devil, nor a wizard, nor missing title-deeds. The affair is a mere formality to account creditably for the fact that we never see anything to laugh at — never see the joke. Some people can’t see ghosts, you know” (lucky people! thought I), “and some can’t see jokes.”

“This is very disappointing,” I said.

“I can’t help it,” said the spectre; “the truth often is. Did you ever hear the explanation of the haunted house in Berkeley Square?”

“Yes,” said I. “The bell was heard to ring thrice with terrific vehemence, and on rushing to the fatal scene they found him beautiful in death.”

“Fudge!” replied the spectre. “The lease and furniture were left to an old lady, who was not to underlet the house nor sell the things. She had a house of her own in Albemarle Street which she preferred, and so the house in Berkeley Square was never let till the lease expired. That’s the whole affair. The house was empty, and political economists could conceive no reason for the waste of rent except that it was haunted. The rest was all Miss Broughton’s imagination, in ‘Tales for Christmas Eve.’”

He had evidently got on his hobby, and was beginning to be rather tedious. The contempt which a genuine old family ghost has for mere *parvenus* and impostors is not to be expressed in mere words apparently, for Mauth-hounds of prodigious size and blackness, with white birds, and other disastrous omens, now began to display themselves profusely in the Haunted Chamber. Accustomed as I had become to regard all these appearances as mere automatic symptoms, I confess that I heard with pleasure the crow of a distant cock.

“You have enabled me to pass a most instructive evening, most agreeable, too, I am sure,” I remarked to the spectre, “but you will pardon me for observing that the first cock has gone. Don’t let me make you too late for any appointment you may have about this time — anywhere.”

“Oh, you still believe in that old superstition about cock-crow, do you?” he sneered. “‘I thought you had been too well educated. ‘It faded on the crowing of the cock,’ did it, indeed, and that in Denmark too, — almost within the Arctic Circle! Why, in those high latitudes, and in summer, a ghost would not have an hour to himself on these principles. Don’t you remember the cock Lord Dufferin took North with him, which crowed at sunrise, and ended by crowing without intermission and going mad, when the sun did not set at all? You must observe that any rule of that sort about cock-crow would lead to shocking irregularities, and to an early-closing movement for spectres in summer, which would be ruinous to business — simply ruinous — and, in these days of competition, intolerable.”

This was awful, for I could see no way of getting rid of him. He might stay to breakfast, or anything.

“By the way,” he asked, “who does the Cock at the Lyceum just now? It is a small but very exacting part— ‘Act I. scene I. Cock crows.’”

“I believe Mr. Irving has engaged a real fowl, to crow at the right moment behind the scenes,” I said. “He is always very particular about these details. Quite right too. ‘The Cock, by kind permission of the Aylesbury Dairy Company,’ is on the bills. They have no Cock at the Français; Mounet Sully would not hear of it.”

I knew nothing about it, but if this detestable spectre was going to launch out concerning art and the drama there would be no sleep for me.

“Then the glow-worm,” he said— “have they a real glow-worm for the Ghost’s ‘business’ (Act I. scene 5) when he says? —

”’Fare thee well at once,
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And ‘gins to pale his ineffectual fire.’

Did it ever strike you how inconsistent that is? Clearly the ghost appeared in winter; don’t you remember how they keep complaining of the weather?

“‘For this relief much thanks; ’tis bitter cold,’ and

"'The air bites shrewdly: it is very cold.'"

"Horatio blows on his hands to warm them, at the Français," I interrupted.

"Quite right; good business," said he; "and yet they go on about the glow-worms in the neighbourhood! Most incongruous. How does Furnivall take it? An interpolation by Middleton?"

I don't like to be rude, but I admit that I hate being bothered about Shakespeare, and I yawned.

"Good night," he said snappishly, and was gone.

Presently I heard him again, just as I was dropping into a doze.

"You won't think, in the morning, that this was all a dream, will you? Can I do anything to impress it on your memory? Suppose I shrivel your left wrist with a touch of my hand? Or shall I leave 'a sable score of fingers four' burned on the table? Something of that sort is usually done."

"Oh, *pray* don't take the trouble," I said. "I'm sure Lady Perilous would not like to have the table injured, and she might not altogether believe my explanation. As for myself, I'll be content with your word for it that you were really here. Can I bury your bones for you, or anything? Very well, as you *must* be off, good night!"

"No, thanks," he replied. "By the way, I've had an idea about my apparitions in disguise. Perhaps it is my 'Unconscious Self' that does them. You have read about the 'Unconscious Self' in the *Spectator*?"

Then he really went.

A nun in grey, who moaned and wrung her hands, remained in the room for a short time, but was obviously quite automatic.

I slept till the hot water was brought in the morning.

THE GREAT GLADSTONE MYTH.

In the post-Christian myths of the Teutonic race settled in England, no figure appears more frequently and more mysteriously than that of Gladstone or Mista Gladstone. To unravel the true germinal conception of Gladstone, and to assign to all the later accretions of myth their *provenance* and epoch, are the problems attempted in this chapter. It is almost needless (when we consider the perversity of men and the lasting nature of prejudice) to remark that some still see in Gladstone a shadowy historical figure. Just as our glorious mythical Bismarck has been falsely interpreted as the shadowy traditional Arminius (the Arminius of Tacitus, not of Leo Adolescens), projected on the mists of the Brocken, so Gladstone has been recognized as a human hero of the Fourth Dynasty. In this capacity he has been identified with Gordon (probably the north wind), with Spurgeon, whom I have elsewhere shown to be a river god, and with

Livingstone. In the last case the identity of the suffix "stone," and the resemblance of the ideas of "joy" and of "vitality," lend some air of speciousness to a fundamental error. Livingstone is *ohne zweifel*, a mythical form of the midnight sun, now fabled to wander in the "Dark Continent," as Bishop of Natal, the land of the sun's birthplace, now alluded to as lost in the cloud-land of comparative mythology. Of all these cobwebs spun by the spiders of sciolism, the Euhemeristic or Spencerian view — that Gladstone is an historical personage — has attracted most attention. Unluckily for its advocates, the whole contemporary documents of the Victorian Dynasty have perished. When an over-educated and over-rated populace, headed by two mythical figures, Wat Tyler and one Jo, rose in fury against the School Boards and the Department, they left nothing but tattered fragments of the literature of the time. Consequently we are forced to reconstruct the Gladstonian myth by the comparative method — that is, by comparing the relics of old Ritual treatises, hymns, imprecations, and similar religious texts, with works of art, altars, and statues, and with popular traditions and folklore. The results, again, are examined in the light of the Vedas, the Egyptian monuments, and generally of everything that, to the unscientific eye, seems most turbidly obscure in itself, and most hopelessly remote from the subject in hand. The aid of Philology will not be rejected because Longus, or Longinus, has meanly argued that her services must be accepted with cautious diffidence. On the contrary, Philology is the only real key to the labyrinths of post-Christian myth.

The philological analysis of the name of Gladstone is attempted, with very various results, by Roth, Kuhn, Schwartz, and other contemporary descendants of the old scholars. Roth finds in "Glad" the Scotch word "gled," a hawk or falcon. He then adduces the examples of the Hawk-Indra, from the Rig Veda, and of the Hawk-headed Osiris, both of them indubitably personifications of the sun. On the other hand, Kuhn, with Schwartz, fixes his attention on the suffix "stone," and quotes, from a fragment attributed to Shakespeare, "the all-dreaded thunder-stone." Schwartz and Kuhn conclude, in harmony with their general system, that Gladstone is really and primarily the thunderbolt, and secondarily the spirit of the tempest. They quote an isolated line from an early lay about the "Pilot who weathered the storm," which they apply to Gladstone in his human or political aspect, when the storm-spirit had been anthropomorphised, and was regarded as an ancestral politician. But such scanty folklore as we possess assures us that the storm, on the other hand, weathered Gladstone; and that the poem quoted refers to quite another person, also named William, and probably identical with William Tell — that is, with the sun, which of course brings us back to Roth's view of the hawk, or solar Gladstone, though this argument in his own favour has been neglected by the learned mythologist. He might also, if he cared, adduce the solar stone of Delphi, fabled to have been swallowed by Cronus. Kuhn, indeed, lends an involuntary assent to this conclusion (*Ueber Entwick. der Myth*.) when he asserts that the stone swallowed by Cronus was the setting sun. Thus we have only to combine our information to see how correct is the view of Roth, and how much to be preferred to that of Schwartz and Kuhn. Gladstone, philologically considered, is the “hawkstone,” combining with the attributes of the Hawk-Indra and Hawk-Osiris those of the Delphian sun-stone, which we also find in the Egyptian Ritual for the Dead. The ludicrous theory that Gladstone is a territorial surname, derived from some place (“Gledstane” *Falkenstein*), can only be broached by men ignorant of even the grammar of science; dabblers who mark with a pencil the pages of travellers and missionaries. We conclude, then, that Gladstone is, primarily, the hawk-sun, or sun-hawk.

From philology we turn to the examination of literary fragments, which will necessarily establish our already secured position (that Gladstone is the sun), or so much the worse for the fragments. These have reached us in the shape of burned and torn scraps of paper, covered with printed texts, which resolve themselves into hymns, and imprecations or curses. It appears to have been the custom of the worshippers of Gladstone to salute his rising, at each dawn, with printed outcries of adoration and delight, resembling in character the Osirian hymns. These are sometimes couched in rhythmical language, as when we read —

“ dstone, the pillar of the People’s hopes,” —

to be compared with a very old text, referring obscurely to “the People’s William,” and “a popular Bill,” doubtless one and the same thing, as has often been remarked. Among the epithets of Gladstone which occur in the hymns, we find “versatile,” “accomplished,” “philanthropic,” “patriotic,” “statesmanlike,” “subtle,” “eloquent,” “illustrious,” “persuasive,” “brilliant,” “clear,” “unambiguous,” “resolute.” All of those are obviously intelligible only when applied to the sun. At the same time we note a fragmentary curse of the greatest importance, in which Gladstone is declared to be the beloved object of “the Divine Figure from the North,” or “the Great White Czar.” This puzzled the learned, till a fragment of a mythological disquisition was recently unearthed. In this text it was stated, on the authority of Brinton, that “the Great White Hare” worshipped by the Red Indians was really, when correctly understood, the Dawn. It is needless to observe (when one is addressing students) that “Great White Hare” (in Algonkin, *Manibozho*) becomes *Great White Czar* in Victorian English. Thus the Divine Figure from the North, or White Czar, with whom

Gladstone is mythically associated, turns out to be the Great White Hare, or Dawn Hero, of the Algonkins. The sun (Gladstone) may naturally and reasonably be spoken of in mythical language as the "Friend of the Dawn." This proverbial expression came to be misunderstood, and we hear of a Liberal statesman, Gladstone, and of his affection for a Russian despot. The case is analogous to Apollo's fabled love for Daphne = Dâhana, the Dawn. While fragments of laudatory hymns are common enough, it must not be forgotten that dirges or curses (*Diræ*) are also discovered in the excavations. These *Diræ* were put forth both morning and evening, and it is interesting to note that the imprecations vented at sunset ("evening papers," in the old mythical language) are even more severe and unsparing than those uttered ("morning papers") at dawn.

How are the imprecations to be explained? The explanation is not difficult, nothing *is* difficult — to a comparative mythologist. Gladstone is the sun, the enemy of Darkness. But Darkness has her worshippers as well as Light. Set, no less than Osiris, was adored in the hymns of Egypt, perhaps by kings of an invading Semitic tribe. Now there can be no doubt that the enemies of Gladstone, the *Rishis*, or hymn-writers who execrated him, were regarded by his worshippers as a darkened class, foes of enlightenment. They are spoken of as "the stupid party," as "obscurantist," and so forth, with the usual amenity of theological controversy. It would be painful, and is unnecessary, to quote from the curses, whether matins or vespers, of the children of night. Their language is terribly severe, and, doubtless, was regarded as blasphemy by the sun-worshippers. Gladstone is said to have "no conscience," "no sense of honour," to be so fugitive and evasive in character, that one might almost think the moon, rather than the sun, was the topic under discussion. But, as Roth points out, this is easily explained when we remember the vicissitudes of English weather, and the infrequent appearances of the sun in that climate. By the curses, uttered as they were in the morning, when night has yielded to the star of day, and at evening, when day is, in turn, vanquished by night, our theory of the sun Gladstone is confirmed beyond reach of cavil; indeed, the solar theory is no longer a theory, but a generally recognized fact.

Evidence, which is bound to be confirmatory, reaches us from an altar and from works of art. The one altar of Gladstone is by some explained as the pedestal of his statue, while the anthropological sciolists regard it simply as a milestone! In speaking to archæologists it is hardly necessary even to touch on this preposterous fallacy, sufficiently confuted by the monument itself.

On the road into western England, between the old sites of Bristol and London, excavations recently laid bare the very interesting monument figured here.

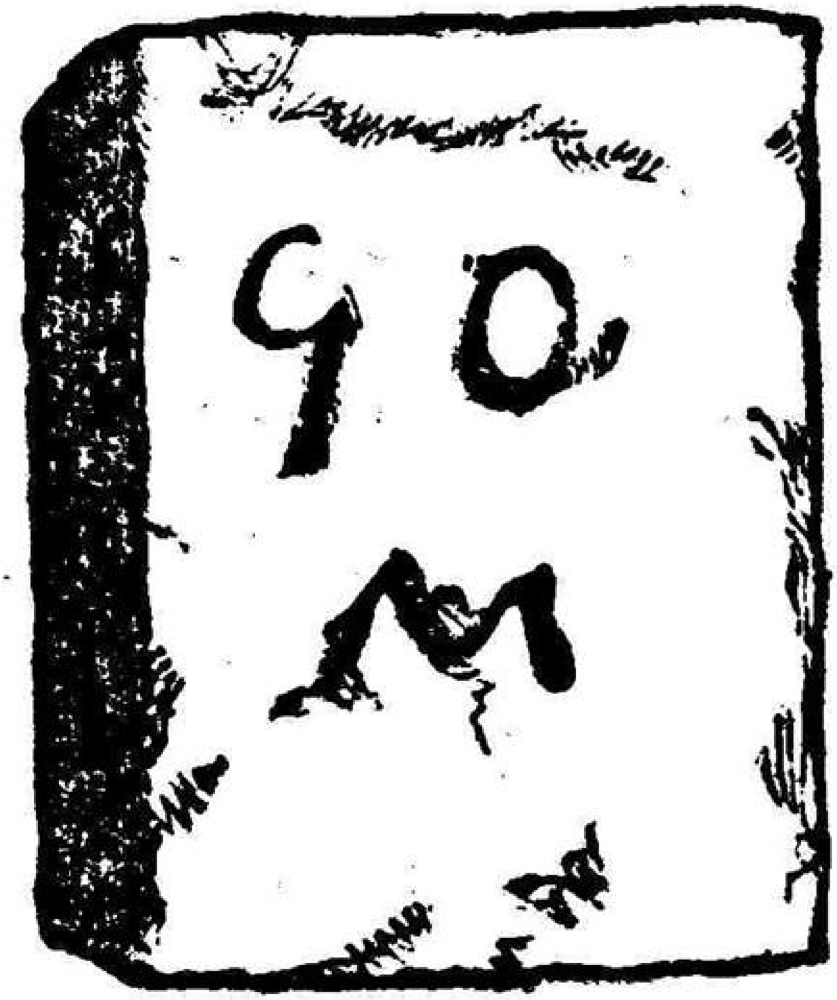

Though some letters or hieroglyphs are defaced, there can be no doubt that the inscription is correctly read G. O. M. The explanation which I have proposed (*Zeitschrift für Ang. Ant*) is universally accepted by scholars. I read *Gladstonio Optimo Maximo*, “To Gladstone, Best and Greatest,” a form of adoration, or adulation, which survived in England (like municipal institutions, the game laws, and trial by jury) from the date of the Roman occupation. It is a plausible conjecture that Gladstone stepped into the shoes of Jupiter Optimus Maximus. Hence we may regard him (like Osiris) as the sum of the monotheistic conception in England.

This interpretation is so manifest, that, could science sneer, we might laugh at the hazardous conjectures of smatterers. They, as usual, are greatly divided among themselves. The Spencerian or Euhemeristic school, — if that can be called a school

”Where blind and naked Ignorance
Delivers brawling judgments all day long
On all things, unashamed,” —

protests that the monument is a pedestal of a lost image of Gladstone. The inscription (G. O. M.) is read “Grand Old Man,” and it is actually hinted that this was the *petit nom*, or endearing title, of a real historical politician. Weak as we may think such reasonings, we must regard them as, at least, less unscholarly than the hypothesis that the inscription should be read

“90 M.”

meaning “ninety miles from London.” It is true that the site whence the monument was excavated is at a distance of ninety miles from the ruins of London, but that is a mere coincidence, on which it were childish to insist. Scholars know at what rate such accidents should be estimated, and value at its proper price one clear interpretation like G. O. M. = *Gladstonio Optimo Maximo*.

It is, of course, no argument against this view that the authors of the *Diræ* regard Gladstone as a *maleficent* being. How could they do otherwise? They were the scribes of the opposed religion. Diodorus tells us about an Ethiopian sect which detested the Sun. A parallel, as usual, is found in Egypt, where Set, or Typhon, is commonly regarded as a maleficent spirit, the enemy of Osiris, the midnight sun. None the less it is certain that under some dynasties Set himself was adored — the deity of one creed is the Satan of its opponents. A curious coincidence seems to show (as Bergaigne thinks) that Indra, the chief Indo-Aryan deity, was occasionally confounded with Vrittra, who is usually his antagonist. The myths of Egypt, as reported by Plutarch, say that Set, or Typhon, forced his way out of his mother’s side, thereby showing his natural malevolence even in the moment of his birth. The myths of the extinct Algonkins of the American continent repeat absolutely the same tale about Malsumis, the brother and foe of their divine hero, Glooskap. Now the Rig Veda (iv. 18, 1-3) attributes this act to Indra, and we may infer that Indra had been the Typhon, or Set, or Glooskap, of some Aryan kindred, before he became the chief and beneficent god of the Kusika stock of Indo-Aryans. The evil myth clung to the good god. By a similar process we may readily account for the imprecations, and for the many profane and blasphemous legends, in which Gladstone is represented as oblique, mysterious, and equivocal. (Compare Apollo Loxias.) The same class of ideas occurs in the myths about Gladstone “in Opposition” (as the old mythical language runs), that is, about the too ardent sun of summer. When “in Opposition” he is said to have found himself in a condition “of more freedom and less responsibility,” and to “have made it hot for his enemies," expressions transparently mythical. If more evidence were wanted, it would be found in the myth which represents Gladstone as the opponent of Huxley. As every philologist knows, Huxley, by Grimm's law, is Huskley, the hero of a "husk myth" (as Ralston styles it), a brilliant being enveloped in a husk, probably the night or the thunder-cloud. The dispute between Gladstone and Huskley as to what occurred at the Creation is a repetition of the same dispute between Wainamoinen and Joukahainen, in the Kalewala of the Finns. Released from his husk, the opponent becomes Beaconsfield = the field of light, or radiant sky.

In works of art, Gladstone is represented as armed with an axe. This, of course, is probably a survival from the effigies of Zeus Labrandeus, *den Man auf Münsen mit der streitaxt erblickt* (Preller, i. 112). We hear of axes being offered to Gladstone by his worshippers. Nor was the old custom of clothing the image of the god (as in the sixth book of the "Iliad") neglected. We read that the people of a Scotch manufacturing town, Galashiels, presented the Midlothian Gladstone (a local hero), with "trouserings," which the hero graciously accepted. Indeed he was remarkably unlike Death, as described by Æschylus, "Of all gods, Death only recks not of gifts." Gladstone, on the other hand, was the centre of a lavish system of sacrifice — loaves of bread, axes, velocipedes, books, in vast and overwhelming numbers, were all dedicated at his shrine. Hence some have identified him with Irving, also a deity propitiated (as we read in Josephus Hatton) by votive offerings. In a later chapter I show that Irving is really one of the Asvins of Vedic mythology, "the Great Twin Brethren," or, in mythic language, "the Corsican Brothers" (compare Myriantheus on the Asvins). His inseparable companion is Wilson-Barrett.

Among animals the cow is sacred to Gladstone; and, in works of art, gems and vases (or "jam-pots"), he is represented with the cow at his feet, like the mouse of Horus, of Apollo Smintheus, and of the Japanese God of Plenty (see an ivory in the Henley Collection). How are we to explain the companionship of the cow? At other times the Sun-hero sits between the horns of the Cow-Goddess Dilemma, worshipped at Westminster. (Compare Brugsch, "Religion und Mythologie der alten Aegypter," p. 168, "Die Darstellungen Zeigen uns den Sonnengott zwischen den Hörnern der Kuh sitzend.") The idea of Le Page Renouf, and of Pierret and De Rougé, is that the cow is a symbol of some Gladstonian attribute, perhaps "squeezability," a quality attributed to the hero by certain Irish minstrels. I regard it as more probable that the cow is (as in the Veda) the rain-cloud, released from prison by Gladstone, as by Indra. At the same time the cow, in the Veda, stands for Heaven, Earth, Dawn, Night, Cloud, Rivers, Thunder, Sacrifice, Prayer, and Soma. We thus have a wide field to choose from, nor is our selection of very much importance, as any, or all, of these interpretations will be welcomed by Sanskrit scholars. The followers of McLennan have long ago been purged out of the land by the edict of Oxford against this sect of mythological heretics. *They* would doubtless have maintained that the cow was Gladstone's totem, or family crest, and that, like other totemists, he was forbidden to eat beef.

It is curious that on some old and worn coins we detect a half-obliterated male figure lurking behind the cow. The inscription may be read "Jo," or "Io," and appears to indicate Io, the cow-maiden of Greek myth (see the "Prometheus" of Æschylus).

Another proof of the mythical character of Gladstone is the number of his birthplaces. Many cities claimed the honour of being his cradle, exactly as in the cases of Apollo and Irving. Their claims were allowed by the Deity. (Compare Callimachus, *Hymn to Apollo*.)

In addressing scholars it is needless to refute the Euhemeristic hypothesis, worthy of the Abbé Banier, that the cow is a real cow, offered by a real historical Gladstone, or by his companion, Jo, to the ignorant populace of the rural districts. We have already shown that Jo is a mythological name. The tendency to identify Gladstone with the cow (as the dawn with the sun) is a natural and edifying tendency, but the position must not be accepted without further inquiry. The Sun-god, in Egyptian myth, is a Bull, but there is a difference, which we must not overlook, between a bull and a cow. Caution, prudence, a tranquil balancing of all available evidence, and an absence of preconceived opinions, — these are the guiding stars of comparative mythology.

MY FRIEND THE BEACH-COMBER.

"Been in some near things in the islands?" said my friend the beach-comber; "I fancy I *have*."

The beach-comber then produced a piece of luggage like a small Gladstone bag, which he habitually carried, and thence he extracted a cigar about the size of the butt of a light trout-rod. He took a vesuvian out of a curious brown hollowed nut-shell, mounted in gold (the beach-comber, like Mycenæ in Homer, was *polychrysos*, rich in gold in all his equipments), and occupied himself with the task of setting fire to his weed. The process was a long one, and reminded me of the arts by which the beach-comber's native friends fire the root of a tree before they attack it with their stone tomahawks. However, there was no use in trying to hurry the ancient mariner. He was bound to talk while his cigar lasted, thereby providing his hearer with plenty of what is called "copy" in the profession of letters.

The beach-comber was a big man, loose (in *physique* only of course), broad, and black-bearded, his face about the colour of a gun-stock. We called him by the nickname he bore (he bore it very good-naturedly), because he had spent the years of his youth among the countless little islands of the South Seas, especially among those which lie at "the back of beyond," that is, on the far side of the broad shoulder of Queensland. In these regions the white man takes his life and whatever native property he can annex in his hand, caring no more for the Aborigines' Protection Society than for the Kyrle Company for diffusing stamped-leather hangings and Moorish lustre plates among the poor of the East-End. The common beach-comber is usually an outcast from that civilization of which, in the islands, he is the only pioneer. Sometimes he deals in rum, sometimes in land, most frequently in "black-birds" — that is, in coolies, as it is now usual to call slaves. Not, of course, that all coolies are slaves. My friend the beach-comber treated his dusky labourers with distinguished consideration, fed them well, housed them well, taught them the game of cricket, and dismissed them, when the term of their engagement was up, to their island homes. He was, in fact, a planter, with a taste for observing wild life in out-of-the-way places.

"Yes, I have been in some near things," he went on, when the trunk of his cigar was fairly ignited. "Do you see these two front teeth?"

The beach-comber opened wide a cavernous mouth. The late Mr. Macadam, who invented the system of making roads called by his name, allowed no stone to be laid on the way which the stone-breaker could not put in his mouth. The beach-comber could almost have inserted a milestone.

I did not see "these two front teeth," because, like the Spanish Fleet, they were not in sight. But I understood my friend to be drawing my attention to their absence.

"I see the place where they have been," I answered.

"Well, *that* was a near go," said the beach-comber. "I was running for my life before a pack of screeching naked beggars in the Admiralty Islands. I had emptied my revolver, and my cartridges, Government ones, were all in a parcel — a confounded Government parcel — fastened with a strong brass wire. Where's the good of giving you cartridges, which you need in a hurry if you need them at all, in a case you can't open without a special instrument? Well, as I ran, and the spears whizzed round me, I tore at the wire with my teeth. It gave at last, or my head would now be decorating a stake outside the chief's *pah*. But my teeth gave when the brass cord gave, and I'll never lift a heavy table with them again."

"But you got out the cartridges?"

"Oh yes. I shot two of the beggars, and 'purwailed on them to stop,' and then I came within sight of the boats, and Thompson shouted, and the others bolted. What a voice that fellow had! It reminded me of that Greek chap I read about at school; he went and faced the Trojans with nothing in his hand, and they hooked it when they only heard him roar. Poor Thompson! "and the beach-comber drank, in silence, to the illustrious dead.

"Who shot him?"

"A scientific kind of poop, a botanizing shaloot that was travelling around with a tin box on his back, collecting beetles and bird-skins. Poor Thompson! this was how it happened. He was the strongest fellow I ever saw; he could tear a whole pack of cards across with his hands. That man was all muscle. He and I had paddled this botanizing creature across to an island where some marooned fellow had built a hut, and we kept a little whisky in a bunk, and used the place sometimes for shooting or fishing. It was latish one night, the botanist had not come home, I fell asleep, and left Thompson with the whisky. I was awakened by hearing a shot, and there lay Thompson, stone-dead, a bullet in his forehead, and the naturalist with a smoking revolver in his hand, and trembling like an aspen leaf. It seems he had lost his way, and by the time he got home, Thompson was mad drunk, and came for him with his fists. If once he hit you, just in play, it was death, and the stranger knew that. Thompson had him in a corner, and I am bound to say that shooting was his only chance. Poor old Thompson!"

“And what was done to the other man?”

“Done! why there was no one to do anything, unless I had shot him, or marooned him. No law runs in these parts. Thompson was the best partner I ever had; he was with me in that lark with the tabooed pig.”

“What lark?”

“Oh, I’ve often spun you the yarn.”

“Never!”

“Well, it was like this. Thompson and I, and some other chaps, started in a boat, with provisions, just prospecting about the islands. So we went in and out among the straits — horrid places, clear water full of sharks, and nothing but mangroves on every side. One of these sounds is just like another. Once I was coming home in a coasting steamer, and got them to set me down on a point that I believed was within half-a-mile of my place. Well, I was landed, and I began walking homewards, when I found I was on the wrong track, miles and miles of mangrove swamp, cut up with a dozen straits of salt water, lay between me and the station. The first stretch of water I came to, gad! I didn’t like it. I kept prospecting for sharks very close before I swam it, with my clothes on my head. I was in awful luck all the way, though, — not one of them had a snap at me.”

“But about the taboo pig? *Revenons à nos cochons*!”

“I’m coming to that. Well, we landed at an island we had never been on before, where there was a village of Coast natives. A crowd of beehive-shaped huts, you know, the wall about three feet high, and all the rest roof, wattle, and clay, and moss, built as neat as a bird’s-nest outside, not very sweet inside. So we landed and got out the grub, and marched up to the village. Not a soul to be seen; not a black in the place. Their gear was all cleaned out too; there wasn’t a net, nor a spear, nor a mat, nor a bowl (they’re great beggars for making pipkins), not a blessed fetich stone even, in the whole place. You never saw anything so forsaken. But just in the middle of the row of huts, you might call it a street if you liked, there lay, as happy as if he was by the fireside among the children in Galway, a great big fat beast of a hog. Well, we couldn’t make out what had become of the people. Thought we had frightened them away, only then they’d have taken the hog. Suddenly, out of some corner, comes a black fellow making signs of peace. He held up his hands to show he had no weapon in them, and then he held up his feet ditto.”

“Why on earth did he hold up his feet?”

“To show he wasn’t trailing a spear between his toes; that is a common dodge of theirs. We made signs to him to come up, and up he came, speaking a kind of pigeon English. It seems he was an interpreter by trade, paying a visit to his native village; so we tried to get out of him what it was all about. Just what we might have expected. A kid had been born in the village that day."

"What had the birth of a kid got to do with it?"

"It's like this, don't you know. Every tribe is divided into Coast natives and Bush natives. One set lives by the sea, and is comparatively what you might call civilized. The other set, their cousins, live in the Bush, and are a good deal more savage. Now, when anything out of the way, especially anything of a fortunate kind, happens in one division of the tribe, the other division pops down on them, loots everything it can lay hands on, maltreats the women, breaks what's too heavy to carry, and generally plays the very mischief. The birth of a child is *always* celebrated in that way."

"And don't the others resist?"

"Resist! No! It would be the height of rudeness. Do *you* resist when people leave cards at your house, 'with kind inquiries'? It's just like that; a way they have of showing a friendly interest."

"But what can be the origin of such an extraordinary custom?"

"*I* don't know. Guess it has a kind of civilizing effect, as you'll see. Resources of civilization get handed on to the Bush tribes, but that can't be what it was started for. However, recently the tribes have begun to run cunning, and they hide themselves and all their goods when they have reason to expect a friendly visit. This was what they had done the day we landed. But, while we were jawing with the interpreter, we heard a yell to make your hair stand on end. The Bush tribe came down on the village all in their war paint, — white clay; an arrangement, as you say, in black and white. Down they came, rushed into every hut, rushed out again, found nothing, and an awful rage they were in. They said this kind of behaviour was most ungentlemanly; why, where was decent feeling? where was neighbourliness? While they were howling, they spotted the hog, and made for him in a minute; here was luncheon, anyhow, — pork chops. So they soon had a fire, set a light to one of the houses in fact, and heaped up stones; that's how they cook. They cut you up in bits, wrap them in leaves—"

"*En papillotte*?"

"Just that, and broil you on the hot stones. They cook everything that way."

"Are they cannibals?"

"Oh yes, in war-time. Or criminals they'll eat. I've often heard the queer yell a native will give, quite a peculiar cry, when he is carrying a present of cold prisoner of war from one chief to another. He cries out like that, to show what his errand is, at the border of the village property."

"Before entering the Mark?" I said, for I had been reading Sir Henry Maine.

"The *pah*, the beggars about me call it," said the beach-comber; "perhaps some niggers you've been reading about call it the Mark. I don't know. But to be done with this pig. The fire was ready, and they were just going to cut the poor beast's throat with a green-stone knife, when the interpreter up and told them 'hands off.' 'That's a taboo pig,' says he. 'A black fellow that died six months ago that pig belonged to. When he was dying, and leaving his property to his friends, he was very sorry to part with the pig, so he made him taboo; nobody can touch him. To eat him is death.'

"Of course this explained why that pig had been left when all the other live stock and portable property was cleared out. Nobody would touch a taboo pig, and that pig, I tell you, was tabooed an inch thick. The man he belonged to had been a *Tohunga*, and still 'walked,' in the shape of a lizard. Well, the interpreter, acting most fairly, I must say, explained all this to the Bush tribe, and we went down to the boat and lunched. Presently a smell of roast pork came drifting down on the wind. They had been hungry and mad after their march, and they were cooking the taboo pig. The interpreter grew as white as a Kaneka can; he knew something would happen.

"Presently the Bush fellows came down to the boat, licking their lips. There hadn't been much more than enough to go round, and they accepted some of our grub, and took to it kindly.

"'Let's offer them some rum,' says Thompson; he never cruised without plenty aboard. 'No, no,' says I; 'tea, give them tea.' But Thompson had a keg of rum out, and a tin can, and served round some pretty stiff grog. Now, would you believe it, these poor devils had never tasted spirits before? Most backward race they were. But they took to the stuff, and got pretty merry, till one of them tried to move back to the village. He staggered up and down, and tumbled against rocks, and finally he lay flat and held on tight. The others, most of them, were no better as soon as they tried to move. A rare fright they were in! They began praying and mumbling; praying, of all things, to the soul of the taboo pig! They thought they were being punished for the awful sin they had committed in eating him. The interpreter improved the occasion. He told them their faults pretty roundly. Hadn't he warned them? Didn't they know the pig was taboo? Did any good ever come of breaking a taboo? The soberer fellows sneaked off into the bush, the others lay and snoozed till the Coast tribe came out of hiding, and gave it to them pretty warm with throwing sticks and the flat side of waddies. I guess the belief in taboo won't die out of that Bush tribe in a hurry."

"It was like the companions of Odysseus devouring the oxen of the Sun," I said.

"Very likely," replied the beach-comber. "Never heard of the parties. They're superstitious beggars, these Kanekas. You've heard of buying a thing ‘for a song’? Well, I got my station for a whistle. They believe that spirits twitter and whistle, and you’ll hardly get them to go out at night, even with a boiled potato in their hands, which they think good against ghosts, for fear of hearing the bogies. So I just went whistling, ‘Bonny Dundee’ at nights all round the location I fancied, and after a week of that, not a nigger would go near it. They made it over to me, gratis, with an address on my courage and fortitude. I gave them some blankets in; and that’s how real property used to change hands in the Pacific.”

HE

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HE

BY THE AUTHOR OF

‘IT’ ’KING SOLOMON’S WIVES’ ’BESS’

‘MUCH DARKER DAYS’ ’MR MORTON’S SUBTLER’

AND OTHER ROMANCES

‘SHE.’
TO H. RIDER HAGGARD.

Not in the waste beyond the swamp and sand,
The fever-haunted forest and lagoon,
Mysterious Kôr, thy fanes forsaken stand,
With lonely towers beneath the lonely Moon!
Not there doth Ayesha linger, — rune by rune
Spelling the scriptures of a people banned, —
The world is disenchanted! oversoon
Shall Europe send her spies through all the land!
Nay, not in Kôr, but in whatever spot,
In fields, or towns, or by the insatiate sea,
Hearts brood o’er buried Loves and unforgot,
Or wreck themselves on some Divine decree,
Or would o’er-leap the limits of our lot,
There in the Tombs and deathless, dwelleth SHE!

DEDICATION.

Kôr,
Jan. 30, 1887.

Dear Allan Quatermain,

You, who, with others, have aided so manfully in the Restoration of King Romance, know that His Majesty is a Merry Monarch.

You will not think, therefore, that the respectful Liberty we have taken with your Wondrous Tale (as Pamela did with the 137th Psalm) indicates any lack of Loyalty to our Lady Ayesha.

Her beauties are beyond the reach of danger from Burlesque, nor does her *form flit across our humble pages.*

May you restore to us yet the prize of her perfections, for we, at least, can never believe that she wholly perished in the place of the Pillar of Fire!

Yours ever,
Two of the Ama Lo-Grolla.

CHAPTER I.

EDITOR’S INTRODUCTION.

As I sat, one evening, idly musing on memories of roers and Boers, and contemplating the horns of a weendigo I had shot in Labrador and the head of a Moo Cow[1] from Canada, I was roused by a ring at the door bell.

The hall-porter presently entered, bearing a huge parcel, which had just arrived by post. I opened it with all the excitement that an unexpected parcel can cause, and murmured, like Thackeray’s sailor-man, ‘Claret, perhaps, Mumm, I hope — —’

It was a Mummy Case, by Jingo!

This was no common, or museum mummy case. The lid, with the gilded mask, was absent, and the under half or lower segment, painted all over with hieroglyphics of an unusual type, and *green* in colour — had obviously been used as a cradle for unconscious infancy. A baby had slept in the last sleeping-place of the dead! What an opportunity for the moralist! But I am not a collector of cradles.

Who had sent it, and why?

The question was settled by an envelope in a feminine hand, which, with a cylindrical packet, fell out of the Mummy Case, and contained a letter running as follows: —

‘Lady Betty’s, Oxford.

‘My dear Sir, — You have not forgotten me and my friend Leonora O’Dolite?

‘The Mummy Case which encloses this document is the Cradle of her ancient Race.

‘We are, for reasons you will discover in the accompanying manuscript, about to start for Treasure Island, where, if anywhere in this earth, ready money is to be found on easy terms of personal insecurity.’

‘Oh, confound it,’ I cried, ‘here’s another fiend of a woman sending me another manuscript! They are always at it! Wants to get it into a high-class magazine, as usual.’ And my guess was correct.

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[1] A literary friend to whom I have shown your MS. says a weendigo is Ojibbeway for a cannibal. And why do you shoot poor Moo Cows? — Publisher.

Mere slip of the pen. Meant a Cow Moose. Literary gent no sportsman. — Ed.

All right. — Publisher.

The letter went on: —

‘*You, who are so well known, will have no difficulty in getting the editor of the Nineteenth Century, or the Quarterly Review, or Bow Bells, to accept my little contribution. I shall be glad to hear what remuneration I am to expect, and cheques may be forwarded to*

‘*Yours very truly,*

‘Mary Martin.

‘P.S. — *The mummy case is very valuable. Please deposit it at the Old Bank, in the High, where it will represent my balance.*

‘M. M.’

Now I get letters like this (not usually escorted by a mummy case) about thrice a day, and a pretty sum it costs me in stamps to send back the rubbish to the amateur authors. But how could I send back a manuscript to a lady already on her way to Treasure Island?

Here, perhaps, I should explain how Mary Martin, as she signed herself, came to choose *me* for her literary agent. To be sure, total strangers are always sending me their manuscripts, but Mrs. Martin had actually been introduced to me years before.

I was staying, as it happened, at one of our university towns, which I shall call Oxford, for short — not that that was *really* its name. Walking one day with a niece, a scholar of Lady Betty’s Hall, we chanced to meet in the High two rather remarkable persons. One of them was the very prettiest girl I ever saw in my life. Her noble frame marked her as the victor over Girton at lawn-tennis; while her *pince-nez* indicated the student. She reminded me, in the grace of her movements, of the Artemis of the Louvre and the Psyche of Naples, while her thoughtful expression recalled the celebrated ‘Reading Girl’ of Donatello. Only a reading girl, indeed, could have been, as she was, Reader in English Literature on the Churton Collins Foundation.

‘Who is she?’ I said to my friend, the scholar of Lady Betty’s; ‘what a lovely creature she is!’

‘Who, *that*?’ she replied with some tartness. ‘Well, what you can see in *her*, *I* don’t know. That’s Leonora O’Dolite, and the lady with her is the Lady Superior of Lady Betty’s.

‘They call them Pretty and the Proctor,’ my friend went on, ‘as Mrs. Martin — Polly they call her too — has been Proctor twice.’[2]

[2] I say, you know, keep clear of improbabilities! No one was ever old enough to have been Proctor *twice*. — Publisher.

That’s all you know about it. Why, I shall bring in a character old enough to have been Proctor a thousand times. — Ed.

Now nobody could have called Polly bewitching. Her age must really have been quite thirty-five. I dislike dwelling on this topic, but she was short, dumpy, wore blue spectacles, a green umbrella, a red and black shawl, worsted mittens and uncompromising boots. She had also the ringlets and other attractions with which French Art adorns its ideal Englishwoman.

At my request, I was introduced; but presently some thirty professors, six or seven senior dons, and a sprinkling of Heads of Houses in red and black sleeves came bounding out of University sermon, and gathered round the lovely Leonora. The master of St. Catherine’s was accompanied by a hitherto Unattached student, who manifestly at once fell a victim to Leonora’s charms.

This youth was of peculiar aspect. He was a member of the nearly extinct Boshman tribe of Kokoatinaland. His long silky hair, originally black, had been blanched to a permanent and snowy white by failures in the attempt to matriculate at Balliol. He was short — not above four feet nine — and was tattooed all over his dark but intelligent features.

When he was introduced I had my first opportunity of admiring Leonora’s extraordinary knowledge of native customs and etiquette.

‘Let me present to you,’ said the Master of St. Catherine’s, ‘the Boshman chief, Ustâni!’

‘You ‘stonish me!’ answered Leonora, with a smile that captivated the Boshman. It is a rule among the tribes of Kokoatinaland, and in Africa generally, to greet a new acquaintance with a verbal play on his name.[3] Owing to our insular ignorance, and the difficulty of the task, this courtesy had been omitted at Oxford in Ustâni’s case, even by the Professors of Comparative Philology and the learned Keeper of the Museum. From that hour to another which struck later, when *he* struck too, Ustâni was Leonora’s slave.

[3] Is this *bonâ fide*? — Publisher.

All right, see *She* (p. 145), Ayesha’s elegant pun on Holly. It’s always done — pun, I mean. — Ed.

I had no further opportunity of conversing with Leonora and Polly, nor indeed did I ever think of them again, till Polly’s letter and mummy case recalled them to my memory.

Perhaps for pretty Leonora’s sake I did, after all, take up and open the vast cylindrical roll of MS.[4] in the mummy case. Dawn found me still reading the following record of unparalleled adventure.[5]

[4] Don’t you think it would stand being cut a little? — Publisher.

We shall see. — Ed.

[5] There is just one thing that puzzles me. Polly and Leonora have gone, no man knows where, and, taking everything into consideration, it may be a good two thousand years before they come back.

Ought I not, then, to invest, *in my own name*, the princely cheque of the Intelligent Publishers? — Ed.

CHAPTER II.

POLLY’S NARRATIVE.

I am the plainest woman in England, bar none.[6] Even in youth I was not, strictly speaking, voluptuously lovely. Short, stumpy, with a fringe like the thatch of a newly evicted cottage, such was my appearance at twenty, and such it remains. Like Cain, I was branded.[7] But enough of personalities. I had in youth but one friend, a lady of kingly descent (the kings, to be sure, were Irish), and of bewitching loveliness. When she rushed into my lonely rooms, one wild winter night, with a cradle in her arms and a baby in the cradle; when she besought me to teach that infant Hittite, Hebrew, and the Differential Calculus, and to bring it up in college, on commons (where the air is salubrious), what could I do but acquiesce? It is unusual, I know, for a student of my sex, however learned, to educate an infant in college and bring her up on commons. But for once the uncompromising nature of my charms strangled the breath of scandal in the bud, and little Leonora O’Dolite became the darling of the university. The old Keeper of the Bodleian was a crusty bachelor, who liked nothing young but calf, and preferred morocco to *that*. But even *he* loved Leonora. One night the little girl was lost, and only after looking for her in the Hebdomadal Boardroom, in the Sheldonian, the Pusaeum, and all the barges, did we find that unprincipled old man amusing her by letting off crackers and Roman-candles among the Mexican MSS. in the Bodleian!

These were halcyon hours, happier as Leonora grew up and received the education prescribed for her by her parent. Her Hebrew was fair, and her Hittite up to a first class, but, to my distress, she mainly devoted herself to Celtic studies.

I should tell you that Leonora’s chief interest in life was the decipherment of the inscriptions on her cradle — the mummy case which had rocked her ancestors since Abraham’s time, and which is now in your possession. Of itself it is a sufficient proof of the accuracy of this narrative. The mummy case is not the ordinary coffin of Egyptian commerce. The hieroglyphics have baffled Dr. Isaac Taylor, and have been variously construed as Chinese, Etruscan, and Basque, by the various professors of these learned lingoes.[8]

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[6] I may as well say at once that I *will not* be responsible for Polly’s style. Sometimes it is flat, they tell me, and sometimes it is flamboyant, whatever they may mean. It is never the least like what one would expect an elderly lady don (or Donna), to write. — Ed.

[7] See *The Mark of Cain* , an excellent shillingsworth. — Ed.

Is this not ‘log rolling’? — Publisher.

[8] Don’t you think this bit is a little dull? The public don’t care about dead languages. — Publisher.

Story can’t possibly get on without it, as you’ll see. You *must* have something of this sort in a romance. Look at Poe’s cypher in the *Gold Beetle*, and the chart in *Treasure Island*, and the Portuguee’s scroll in *King Solomon’s Mines*. — Ed.

Now about this mummy case: you must know that it had been in Leonora’s family ever since her ancestress, Theodolitê, Pharaoh’s daughter, left Egypt, not knowing when she was well off, and settled in Ireland, of all places, where she founded the national prosperity.[9]

[9] Is not *this* a little steep? — Publisher.

No; it is in all the Irish histories. See Lady Wilde’s *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, if you don’t believe me. — Ed.

The mummy case and a queer ring (see cover) inscribed with a duck, a duck’s egg, and an umbrella, were about all that the O’Dolites kept of their ancient property. The older Leonora grew the more deeply she studied the inscriptions on the mummy case. She tried it as Zend, she tried it as Sanskrit, and Japanese, and the American language, and finally she tried it as Irish.

We had a very rainy season that winter even for Oxford, and the more it rained the more Leonora pored over that mummy case. I kept telling her there was nothing in it, but she would not listen to me.

CHAPTER III.

LEONORA’S DISCOVERY.

One wild winter night, when the sleet lashed the pane, my door suddenly opened. I started out of a slumber, and — could I believe my eyes? can history repeat itself? — there stood the friend of my early youth, her eyes ablaze, a cradle in her arms. Was it all coming round again? A moment’s reflection showed me that it was *not* my early friend, but her daughter, Leonora.

‘Leonora,’ I screamed, ‘don’t tell me that *you* — —’

‘I have deciphered the inscription,’ said the girl proudly, setting down the cradle. The baby had *not* come round.

‘Oh, is *that* all?’ I replied. ‘Let’s have a squint at it’ (in my case no mere figure of speech).

‘What do you call *that*?’ said Leonora, handing me the accompanying document.

‘I call it pie,’ said I, using a technical term of typography. ‘I can’t make head or tail of it,’ I said peevishly.

‘Well, pie or no pie, I love it like pie, and I’ve broken the crust,’ answered the girl, ‘according to my interpretation, which I cannot mistrust.’

‘Why?’ I asked.

‘Because,’ she answered; and the response seemed sufficient when mixed with her bright smile.

‘It runs thus,’ she resumed with severity, ‘in the only language *you* can partially understand —— ‘It runs thus,’ she reiterated, and I could not help saying under such breath as I had left, ‘Been running a long time now.’

She frowned and read —

‘*I, Theodolitê, daughter of a race that has never been run out, did to the magician Jambres, whose skill was even as the skill of the gods, those things which as you have not yet heard I shall now proceed to relate to you.*

‘*Of him, I say, was I jealous, for that he loved a maiden inferior — Oh how inferior! — to me in charms, wit, beauty, intellect, stature, girth, and ancestry. Therefore, being well assured of this, I made the man into a mummy, ere ever his living spirit had left him. What arts I used to this last purpose it boots not, nor do I choose to tell. When I had done this thing I put him secretly away in a fitting box, even as Set concealed Osiris. Then came my maidens and tidied him away,* *as is the wont of these accursed ones. From that hour, even until now, has no man nor woman known where to find him, even Jambres the magician. For though the mummifying, as thou shalt not fail to discover, was in some sort incomplete, yet the tidying away and the losing were so complete that no putting forth of precious papyri into cupboards beneath flights of stairs has ever equalled it.*

‘*Now, therefore, shall I curse these maidens, even in Amenti, the place of their tormenting.*

‘*Forget them, may they be eternally forgotten.*

‘*Curse them up and down through the whole solar system.*’

‘This is very violent language, my dear,’ said I.

‘Our people swore terribly in Egypt,’ answered Leonora, calmly.

‘*But it is vain, no woman can curse worth a daric.*[10]

‘*But for this, the losing of the one whom I mummied, must I suffer countless penalties. For I, even the seeress, know not what the said maidens did with the said mummy, nor do you know, nor any other. And not to know, for I want my mummy to have a good cry over, is great part of my punishment. But this I, the seeress, do know right well, for it was revealed to me in a dream. And this I do prophesy unto thee, my daughter, or daughter’s daughter, ay, this do I say, that a curse will rest upon me until He who was mummied shall be found.*

‘*Now this also do I, the seeress, tell thee. He who was mummified shall be found in the dark country, where there is no sun, and men breathe the vapour of smoke, and light lamps at noonday, and wire themselves even with wires when the wind bloweth. And the place where the mummy dwelleth is beneath the Three Balls of Gold. And one will lead thee thither who abides hard by the great tree carven like the head of an Ethiopian. And thou shalt come to the people who slate strangers, and to the place of the Rolling of Logs, and the music thereof.*

‘*Thereafter shalt thou find Him, even Jambres. And when thou hast healed him the Curse shall fall from me!*

‘*Nor, indeed, shall the unmummying be accomplished, even then, unless thou, O my daughter, or my daughter’s daughter as before, shalt go with He-who-was-mummied to the Hall of Egyptian Darkness and sit in the Wizard’s Chair that is thereby, even the seat which was erst the Siege Perilous. These things have I said, well knowing that they shall be accomplished.*

‘*To thee, my daughter!*

‘Thy Grandmother.’

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[10] From the use of the word *daric* I conjecture that Leonora’s ancestress lived under the Persian Empire. There or thereabout. — M. M.

‘There, Polly, what do you say to *that*?’ said Nora.

‘Your grandmother!’ I replied.

‘Polly!’ said Miss Nora, looking at me with quite needlessly flashing eyes, ‘you and I will set out on the search for this unhappy mummied one.’

‘Don’t you think the critics will call the *motive* rather thin?’ I demurred.

‘Thin, to rescue my ancestress from a curse!’ said Leonora.

‘There’s just one other thing,’ she mused. ‘Shall we take a low comedy character this time, or not?’

‘Let’s take Ustâni,’ I proposed, ‘he can double the part with that of the Faithful Black! A great saving in hotel bills and railway fares.’

CHAPTER IV.

THE EQUIPMENT.

After it had been decided that we should start in search of '*He* who had been mummified alive,' the next step seemed to be to go. But Leonora demurred to this.

'We must have our things,' she said; 'what do you think we should take?'

'Scissors,' I replied; and I regret to say that at first she misinterpreted the phrase.

Leonora is a powerful as well as a pretty girl, and when the bear fight that ensued was over my rooms were a little mixed.

This suggested mixed biscuits, that invaluable refreshment of the traveller, and from one thing to another we soon made up a complete list of our needs.

The scissors, and skates, and the soap we procured at the Church and State stores,[11] but not, of course, the revolvers. The revolvers we got of the genuine Government pattern, because both Leonora and I are dreadfully afraid of fire-arms, and we knew that *these*, anyhow, would not 'go off.' The jam we got, of course, at the official cartridge emporium, same which we did *not* shoot the Arabs. The Gladstone bag and the Bryant & May's matches we procured direct from the makers, resisting the piteous appeals of itinerant vendors. Some life-belts we laid in, and, as will presently be seen, we could have made no more judicious purchase.

[11] Won't the critics say you are advertising the stores? And the tradesmen won't like it. — Publisher.

Where would the *stern reality* of the story be (see *Spectator*), and the contrast with the later goings on, if you didn't give names? — Ed.

As, from information received on a mummy case, we were travelling in search of a mummy, of course we laid in a case of Mumm, which was often a source of gaiety in our darkest hours. The wine was procured, as I would advise every African traveller to do, from Messrs. —— .[12]

[12] Messrs. Who? Printers in a hurry. — Publisher.

Suppressed the name. Messrs. —— gave an impolite response to our suggestions as to mutual arrangements. — Ed.

Being acquainted with the deleterious effects of a malarious tropical atmosphere, we secured a pair of overalls, advertised as sovran for ‘all-overishness,’ the dreaded curse of an African climate. These we got at the celebrated emporium of Messrs. —— .[13]

Our preparations being now exhaustively completed, Leonora and I returned to Oxford, packed our things, and consulted as to the route which we should adopt.

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[13] Name suppressed. When eligible opportunity for advertisement as a substitute for a cheque was hinted at, Messrs. —— brusquely replied, in the low Essex *patois*, ‘Wadyermean?’

CHAPTER V.

DOWN THE DARK RIVER.

Down the Dark River, the mystic Isis, so Leonora had decided, we sped: Ustâni plying the long pole of the dhow, or native flat-bottomed boat, while we took it in turns to keep him up to his work by flicking him with a tandem-whip.

The moon went slowly down, and it occurred to Leonora to remark that we were ‘going down’ too, an unusual thing so early in term. Like some sweet bride into her chamber the moon departed, and the quivering footsteps of the Don[14] shook the planets from their places, to the consternation of the Savilian Professor of Astronomy, who, as in duty bound, was contemplating these revolutionary performances from the observatory in the Parks. A number of moral ideas occurred to Leonora and myself, but out of regard for Ustâni’s feelings we denied them expression. I began, indeed, to utter a few appropriate sentiments, but the poor Boshman exclaimed, ‘You floggee, floggee, Missy, or preachee, preachee, but no *both* floggee and preachee—’ in a tone that would have disarmed a Bampton lecturer.

Down we drifted, ever downwards, obedient to the inscrutable laws of the equilibrium of fluids. Now we swept past the White Willow, now through the cruel crawling waters of the Gut, now threaded the calamitous gorge of Iffley, and then shot the perilous cataract of Sandford.

At this moment, just when the dhow was yet quivering with the strain, I noticed an expression of abject fear on the face of Ustâni. His dark countenance was positively blanched with horror, and his teeth chattered.

‘Silence, chatterbox!’ I cried, querulously perhaps, when he laid down his pole and seated himself in an attitude of despair.

‘What’s the matter, old boy?’ asked Leonora, and the reply came in faltering accents —

‘*The Ama Barghîs!*’[15]

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[14] Do you mean the Dawn? — Publisher.

Every Oxford man knows what I mean. — Ed.

[15] *Ama* is the prefix of all the tribal names; Ama Zulu, Ama Hagger. I connect it with the Greek preposition ±¼±. — Ed.

Don’t keep hammer hammering away at Greek! This is a boy’s book, not a holiday task, this is! — Publisher.

We glanced in terror down the river’s edge.

There, on the path trodden by so many millions of feet that now are silent,[16] there were the burly forms of five or six splendid savages.

[16] *Please* don’t begin moralising again. One never knows when it will come upon you. — Publisher.

Couldn’t help just throwing it in. — Ed.

The character of their language — which was borne to us on the pure breeze of morning — their costume, their floating house, in which these scourges of the water highway commonly reside — everything combined to demonstrate that they belonged to the Barghîz, the most powerful and most dreaded of the native populations.

‘*Me umslopogey,*’ whispered Ustâni in his native language, meaning that he would retreat.

‘Eyes in the boat,’ cried Leonora, in her clear, commanding tones; ‘paddle on all!’

The Boshman, cowed by her aspect, and the mere slave of discipline (he had pulled in the St. Catherine’s second torpid), obeyed her command, and presently we were abreast of the Barghîz.

‘Hi, Miss,’ cried the Barghî chief, a man of colossal stature, ‘Can’t yer look where yer a shovin’ to?’

Though his words were unintelligible, his tone was insulting.

Leonora rose to her feet, and to the occasion.

By virtue of her rare acquaintance with savage customs, she was able to taunt the Barghîz with the horrors of their tribal mystery, to divulge which is *Death*!

She openly insulted the secret orgies of the tribe.

She denounced the Dog-Feast!

‘Who ate the puppy pie under Marlowe Bridge?’ shrilled Leonora in her proud sweet young voice.

In a moment a shower of stones struck the dhow, and spurred the water into storm. Frank Muller, the Barghî chief, distinguished himself by the fury of his imprecations and the accuracy of his aim. A smothered groan told me that Ustâni had been hit in the mouth.

Whid, whad, crash went the stones, while Leonora plied the pole with desperate energy, and I erected the patent reversible umbrellas with which we were provided to catch any breath of favourable wind.

The fierce rapidity of the stream finally carried us out of the reach of the infuriated Barghîz (who, moreover, were providentially slain by lightning — a common enough occurrence in that favoured climate, where nobody thinks anything of it), and we rested, weary and wounded, in a sheltered backwater.[17]

‘The dhow’s looking rather dowdy,’ said Leonora, glancing at the shattered craft.

‘If doughty deeds my lady please,’ said I, catching her light tone, ‘why, she must take the consequences. But, Leonora,’ I added, shuddering, ‘I’m sure my feet are damp.’

If there is one thing I dread it is damp feet.

‘No wonder,’ said Leonora, calmly. ‘The dhow has sprung a leek.’

I searched the dhow everywhere, but could find no trace of the vegetable.

Meanwhile the water had risen above the capstan, and Ustâni, shivering audibly, had perched himself on the bowsprit.

‘Now or never,’ said Leonora, ‘is the moment for our life-belts.’

We hurriedly put on our life-belts, regretting the absence of an experienced maid.

‘I’ll be Mrs. Lecks, and you’ll be Mrs. Aleshine!’ laughed Leonora, as the dhow, shuddering in all her timbers, collapsed.

‘*Ego et Lecks mea!*’ cried I, not to seem deficient in opportune gaiety of allusion, and we were in the water. We advanced briskly down stream, Ustâni propelling himself with the pole of the dhow.

Ever anxious about Ustâni’s University education (interrupted by this expedition), Leonora kept ‘coaching’ him in the usual way.

‘Bow, you’re feathering under water,’ she exclaimed, when the unfortunate Ustâni disappeared in a lasher, where we, thanks to our life-belts, floated gaily enough.

Here we paused to catch a few of the perch and gudgeons, which Leonora had attracted by carefully wearing white stockings.

‘Nothing like white stockings for perch,’ she said.

As there were not perch enough to go round, Ustâni was told to content himself with the pole, a synonym, if not an equivalent.

Laying our trencher-caps on the water, we used them, as of old, for trenchers, and made an excellent meal.

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[17] Are you not gliding insensibly into *Bess*? — Publisher.

No; all right. It is a tremendous country for storms; can’t use them too often; adds to the sense of reality. — Ed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ZÛ.

Our course was now through a series of cross streams, and finally we emerged into a long, perfectly straight, and perfectly tranquil expanse of water, bordered by a path which had every appearance of having been made by the hand of man.

Night fell: a strange, murky night, smelling of lucifer matches, and lit on the eastern horizon by a mysterious light, flaring like a dreary dawn.

Our passage was obstructed by a thousand obstacles, and at one point we plunged into the very bowels of the earth for a distance of at least a quarter of a mile. Next we found the canal barred by a grinning row of black iron teeth, under which we dived as best we might. We were now, Ustâni whispered to us, within the strange and dreaded region known to the superstitious natives as *the Zû*. For the first time in our expedition we heard the roaring of innumerable wild beasts. The rattling trumpet of the elephant, the drum of the gorilla, the scream of the lion, the chattering of countless apes, the yells of myriads of cockatoos, the growls of bears, the sobs of walri,[18] the whistle of rhinocerotes, combined to make a strange pandemonium — strange, I call it, because the zoological learning I had picked up while with Nora at Oxford, informed me at once that the variety of roars, screams, grunts, skreeks, whirrings, which our footsteps seemed to awake in every kind of animal, bird, and insect, could be paralleled only in the pages of the 'Swiss Family Robinson.' Add to this, that it was *night*, yet dark as a day on the London flags when the fog creeps silently about your feet and, rising from utter blackness, grows white and whiter in its ascent, till it coils round your neck, a white choker!

18

Is this plural correct? — Publisher.

I can't find walrus in the Latin dictionary nor anything else beginning with W somehow, but it *seems* all right. — Ed.

Yes, the fog was playing a dark game, but Nora could see it and go one lighter (there were several on the stream we had quitted). She produced a patent electric light.[19] Aided by this, we looked about us and saw the strange denizens of the Zû.

19

Patent in the first sense of the word. She has not yet received offers advantageous enough to close with in the other sense.

It was now that the presence of mind of Leonora saved us. Foreseeing the probability of an encounter with wild beasts, she had filled her practicable pocket (she belonged to the Rational Dress Association) with buns and gingerbread nuts.

The elephant now walked round, the wolves also circulated, the bear climbed his pole, the great gorilla beat his breast and roared.

Leonora was their match.

For the elephant she had a rusk, a bun for the bear, and the gorilla was pacified by an offering of nuts from his native Brazil.

THIS WAY TO THE CROCODILE HOUSE

we now read, on an inscription in black letters, and, following the path indicated, we reached the dank tank where the monsters dwell. We had arrived at a place which I find it difficult to describe. The floor was smooth and hard.

‘What do you make of *this*?’ asked Leonora, tapping her dainty foot on the floor.

‘Flags,’ I replied phlagmatically, and she was silent.

In the centre of the space was a dark pool, circled by crystalline palaces inhabited by the sacred snakes, from huge pythons to the terrapin proud of his tureen. Again, there was a whipsnake, and a toad, bloated as the aristocracy of old time, and puffed up as the plutocracy of to-day. For such is the lot of toads!

Now a strange thing happened.

‘*Hark!*’ said Ustâni; ‘*hark! hark! hark!* a den is opening!’

He was right; it was the den of a catawampuss, an animal whose habits are so well known that I need not delay to describe them.

In the centre of the dark pool in the middle of the vague space lay one crocodile. The rest were sleeping on the banks. The catawampuss secretly emerged from its den — horror, I am not ashamed to say, prevented me from interfering — stealthily crept across the cold floor, and, true to the instincts of all the feline tribe,[20] made straight for the water.

[20] *Is* the catawampuss one of the Felidæ? — Publisher.

Of course he is. Look at his name! — Ed.

‘Ah!’ cried Ustâni, ‘he’s going for him!’

The expression was ambiguous, but we understood it.

The catawampuss, cunning as the dread jerboa, crept to the edge of the pool, took a header into it, and then, still true to the feline instincts, *swimming on its back*, made its way to the crocodile. In this manner it caught the crocodile by the tail and waked it. When the tail of a crocodile awakes the head awakes also. The crocodile’s head, then, waking as the catawampuss seized its tail, caught the tail of the catawampuss. The interview was hurried and tumultuous.

The crocodile had one of his ears chawed off (first blood for the catawampuss), but this was a mere temporary advantage. When next we saw clearly through the tempest of flying fur and scales, the head of the catawampuss *had entirely disappeared*, and the animal was clearly much distressed.

Then, all of a sudden, the end came.

They had swallowed each other!

Not a vestige of either was left!

This duel was a wonderful and shocking sight, and was therefore withdrawn, by request, as the patrons of the Gardens are directly interested in the morality of the establishment.

CHAPTER VII.

AMONG THE LO-GROLLAS.

How to escape from our perilous position on the banks of a pestilential stream, haunted by catawampodes and other fell birds of prey, now became a subject for consideration. Our object, of course, was to reach the people of the Lo-grollas, through whose region, according to the prophecy, we must pass before finding the Magician that should guide us to the mummy. Our perplexity was only increased by the discovery that we were surrounded on every side by the walls and houses of a gigantic city. Stealing out by the canal as we had entered, we found to our comfort that this must be the very city mentioned by Theodolitê. As the seeress had declared, a deep and noisome night always prevailed, only broken here and there as a wanderer scratched one of Bryant & May's matches and painfully endeavoured to decipher the number on the door of his house. The streets, moreover, were strewn and interwoven with long strings of iron fallen from the sky.

'*The people who wire themselves with wires*,' whispered Leonora; 'what do you think of my interpretation *now*?'

'I shall inquire,' I answered, and I *did* inquire for the land of the Lo-grollas, but in vain.

Happily we chanced to meet an old man, clothed in a whitish robe of some unknown substance, not unlike paper. This fluttering vesture was marked with strange characters, in black and red, which Leonora was able to interpret. She read them thus. They were but fragmentary.

On the fragments the words, 'Tragedy,' 'Awful Revelations,' 'Purity,' and other apparently inconsistent hieroglyphics might be deciphered.

He had a large and ragged staff; on his back he carried a vast Budget, and he was always asking everybody, 'Won't you put something in the Budget?'

'Father,' said Leonora, in a respectful tone, 'canst thou tell us the way to the land of the people called Lo-grolla, and the place of the Rolling of Logs.'

He stroked his beautiful white beard, and smiled faintly.

'Indeed, child, we not only know it, but ourselves discovered it and wrote it up — we mean, sent our representative,' he answered.

It was a peculiarity of this man that he always spoke, like royalty, in the first person plural.

‘And if a daughter may ask,’ said Leonora, ‘what is the name of my father?’

Stedfastly regarding her, he answered, ‘Our name is Pellmelli.’

‘And whither go we, my father?’

‘That you shall see — as soon, that is, as the fog lifts, or as our representative has made interest with a gas company.’

With these words he furnished an unequalled supply of litter, which came, he said, ‘from the office,’ where there was plenty, and we were borne rapidly in a westward direction.

As we journeyed, old Pellmelli gave us a good deal of information about the Lo-grollas, whom he did not seem to like.

They were, he said, a savage and treacherous tribe, inhabiting for the most part the ruined abodes of some kingly race of old.

The names of their chief dwellings, he told us, were still called, in some ancient and long-lost speech, ‘The Academy,’ and ‘The Athenæum.’

Leonora, whose knowledge of languages was extensive and peculiar, told Pellmelli that these names were derived from the old Greek.

‘Ah,’ said he, ‘you have clearly drunk of the wisdom of the past, and thy hands have held the water of the world’s knowledge. Know you Latin also?’

‘Yes, O Pellmelli,’ replied Leonora, and Pellmelli said he preferred modern tongues, though it would often be useful to him if he did in his dealings with the Lo-grollas.

‘However, if our Greek is a little to seek, our Russian is O.K.,’ he said proudly.

He was very bitter against the Lo-grollas.

The Lo-grollas’ favourite weapon, he told us, was the club, and he even proposed to show us this instrument.

Our litter presently stopped outside a stately palace.

The street was dark, as always in this strange city, but old Pellmelli paused, sniffed, and, bending his ear to the ground, listened intently.

‘I smell the incense,’ he said, ‘and hear the melodious Rolling of the Logs. But they shall know their master!’

Thus speaking, he led us into a vast hall, where the Lo-grollas were sitting or standing, ‘offering each other incense,’ as Pellmelli remarked, from thin tubes of paper, which smoked at one end.

‘Now listen,’ said Pellmelli, and he cried aloud the name of a poet known to the Lo-grollas.

Instantly we heard, from I know not what recess, a rolling fire of applause and admiration, which swept past us with stately and solemn music, like a hymn of praise.

‘*There,’* said Pellmelli, ‘I told you so. This is the place of the Rolling of Logs, and yourselves have heard it.’

Leonora said she did not mind how often she heard it, as she quite agreed with the sentiments.

‘Not so!’ said Pellmelli; and he cried aloud another name — the name of a poetaster — which was almost strange to us.

Then followed through that vasty hall a sharp and rattling crash, as of the descent of innumerable slates.

‘Great heavens!’ whispered Leonora, ‘remember the writing; *the place where they slate strangers*!’

As *we* were strangers, and wholly unknown to the Lo-grollas, we thought they might slate *us*, and, beating a hasty retreat, soon found ourselves with Pellmelli in the dark outer air.

‘They are a desperate lot,’ said he; ‘they won’t ever put anything in the Budget.’

He was quivering with indignation; and Leonora, to soothe him, told him the story of our quest for the mummy, and asked him if he could help us.

‘We are your man,’ said he. ‘We propose to-morrow to send our representative to interview a magician who has just arrived in this country. He is a mysterious character; his name is Asher,[21] and it is said that he is the Wandering Jew, or, at all events, has lived for many centuries. He, if any one, can direct you in your search.’

[21] Pronounced *Assha*. — Ed.

He then appointed a place where his representative should meet us next day, and we separated, Pellmelli taking his staff, and going off to lead an excursion against the Ama-Tory, a brutal and licentious tribe.

CHAPTER VIII.

HE.

Next day Leonora was suffering from a slight feverish cold, and I don’t wonder at it considering what we suffered in the Zû. I therefore went alone to the rendezvous where I was to meet ‘our representative.’

To my surprise, nobody was there but old Pellmelli himself.

‘Why, you said you would send your representative!’ I exclaimed.

‘We are our usual representative,’ he answered rather sulkily. ‘Come on, for we have to call on Messrs. Apples, the famous advertisers.’

‘Why?’ said I.

‘Can you ask?’ he replied. ‘Can aught be more interesting than an advertiser?’

‘*I* call it log rolling,’ I answered; but he was silent.

He went at a great pace, and presently, in a somewhat sordid street, pointed his finger silently to an object over a door.

It was the carven head of an Ethiopian!

This new confirmation of the prophecy gave me quite a turn, especially when I read the characters inscribed beneath —

Try our Fine Negro’s Head!

‘Here dwells the sorcerer, even Asher,’ said Pellmelli, and began to crawl upstairs on his hands and knees.

‘Why do you do that?’ I asked, determined, if I must follow Pellmelli, at all events not to follow his example.

‘It is the manner of the tribe of Interviewers, my daughter. Ours is a blessed task, yet must we feign humility, or the savage people kick us and drive us forth with our garments rent.’

He now humbly tapped at a door, and a strange voice cried,

‘*Entrez!*’

Pellmelli (whose Russian is his strong point) paused in doubt, but I explained that the word was French for ‘come in.’

He crawled in on his stomach, while I followed him erect, and we found ourselves before a strange kind of tent. It had four posts, and a broidered veil was drawn all round it.

Within the veil the sorcerer was concealed, and he asked in a gruff tone,

‘Wadyerwant?’

Pellmelli explained that he had come to receive a brief personal statement for the Budget.

The Voice replied, without hesitation, ‘The Centuries and the Æons pass, and I too make the pass. *Je saute la coupe*,’ he added, in a foreign tongue. ‘While thy race wore naught but a little blue paint, I dwelt among the forgotten peoples. The Red Sea knows me, and the Nile has turned scarlet at my words. I am Khoot Hoomi, I am also the Chela of the Mountain!’

‘Now it is my turn to ask *you* a few easy questions.

‘Who sitteth on the throne of Hokey, Pokey, Winky Wum, the Monarch of the Anthropophagi?

‘Have the Jews yet come to their land, or have the owners of the land gone to the Jews?

‘Doth Darius the Mede yet rule, or hath his kingdom passed to the Bassarids?’

As Pellmelli was utterly floored by these inquiries (which indicated that the sorcerer had been for a considerable time out of the range of the daily papers), I answered them as well as I could.

When his very natural curiosity had been satisfied by a course of Mangnall’s Questions, I ventured to broach my own business.

He said he did not deal in mummies himself, though he had a stuffed crocodile very much at my service; but would I call to-morrow, and bring Leonora? He added that he had known of our coming by virtue of his secret art of divination. ‘And thyself,’ he added, ‘shalt gaze without extra charge in the Fountain of Knowledge.’

Thrusting a withered yellow hand out of the mystic tent, he pointed to a table where stood a small circular dish or cup of white earthenware, containing some brown milky liquid.

‘Gaze therein!’ said the sorcerer.

I gazed — *There was a Stranger in the tea!*

Deeply impressed with the belief (laugh at it if you will) that I was in the presence of a being of more than mortal endowments, I was withdrawing, when my glance fell on his weird familiars, — two tailless cats. This prodigy made me shudder, and I said, in tones of the deepest awe and sympathy, ‘Poor puss!’

‘Yes,’ came the strange voice from within the tent, ‘they are *born* without tails. I bred them so; it hath taken many centuries and much trouble, but at last I have triumphed. Once, too, I reared a breed of dogs with two tails, but after a while they became a proverb for pride; Nature loathed them, and they perished. §±¹Áµ! *Vale!*’[22]

[22] I have consulted the authorities at the British Museum, who tell me these are

the Greek and the Latin words for ‘Don’t you think you had better go? Get out!’ — Ed.

This, though not understood, of course, by Pellmelli, was as good as an invitation to withdraw, so I induced the old man to come away, promising the magician I would return on the morrow.

Who was this awful man, to whom centuries were as moments, whose very correspondence, as I had noticed, came through the Dead Letter Office, and who spoke in the tongues of the dead past?

CHAPTER IX.

THE POWER OF HE.

Next day Leonora, the Boshman, and I returned to the home of the mage. He stood before us, a tall thin figure enwrapped in yellowish, strange garments, of a singular and perfumed character — spicy in fact — which produced upon me a feeling which I cannot attempt to describe, and which I can only vaguely hint at by saying that the whole form conveyed to me the notion of *something wrapped up*.[23]

With a curious swaying motion which I have never seen anything like — for he seemed less to be walking than to be impelled from behind like a perambulator, or dragged from in front like a canal-boat — he advanced to the table, where lay some pieces of a white substance like papyrus, all of the same size and oblong shape, which showed on their surfaces, some of them antique-looking figures and faces curiously stained, and others red and black dots, arranged, as it seemed to me, in some sort of design, although at first sight they looked jumbled enough. Near to these lay a book bound in brown, but with heavy black and gold lettering, amid which I thought I could make out the words *Modern Magic*, and the name *Hoffmann*. The swathed figure poised itself a moment, resting one thin hand on the table, and then spoke.

‘There is naught that is wonderful about this matter,’ it said, ‘could you but understand it. Prestigiation itself is wonderful, but that its phases and phrases should be changed is not wonderful. Not now, I ween, is the *gibecière* of the Ancient Wizard seen; not now the “Presto, pass!” of the less ancient conjurer heard. Nay, all things change, yet I change not; that which is not yet cannot yet have taken place — at least not its proper place; that which shall not be may yet come to a bad pass, and the blind race of man watches helpless the trammels it could shake off did it but greatly dare. My business, ladies and gentlemen, now is, as I have just explained to you, to attempt to puzzle your eyes by the quickness of my fingers. Yours, on the other hand, will be to detect the way — or *modus operandi*, as old Simon Magus used to say — in which I perform my little wonders — if you can. Will any gentleman lend me a helmet — I mean a hat?’

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[23] The public will say, so is your meaning. — Publisher.

Don’t give it away, but that’s what I mean. — Ed.

As the only male person present was the Boshman, this appeared to me a futile question, and even the stately Magician seemed to be struck by some dim idea of the kind, for I could discern a pair of mysterious eyes peering anxiously through his swathings, and I heard him mutter to himself in several languages, ‘Ought to have thought of that. No hat present. Don’t know any trick to produce one. Nothing about it in the book.’

But he recovered himself quickly, and went on in clear cheerful tones, ‘Ladies and gentlemen, as no person present has a hat, I will proceed to another of the tricks on my little programme. Will any lady oblige me by drawing a card? Will you, madam?’ he said, bowing with infinite grace to Leonora.

Her hand touched Asher’s as she drew a card, and I saw a shiver pass over the veiled figure.

‘Will the lady on your left now oblige me?’ he continued, turning to me, who was indeed standing on Leonora’s left hand, though how he knew it is a thing I have never been able fully to understand.

‘Now, please,’ he continued, ‘look well at your cards, but do not show them to me or to each other. *Basta*. *Assez*. š¿³¾ Ÿ¼À±¾. Now, please, still hiding the cards from me and from each other, exchange them. Now,’ he continued, his form dilating with conscious power, ‘see how true is it that change is perennial, even so far as magic and Nature herself can be perennial. For she who held the King of Hearts now holds the Queen of Spades, and she who held the Queen of Spades now holds the King of Hearts. Thus much among the shifting shadows of life can I, the wizard, see as a sure and accomplished fact. Is it not so, my children?’

We bowed in silence, overawed by the wonder of his presence, although Leonora whispered to me, ‘He has got the cards wrong, but we had better say nothing about it.’

‘And now,’ he continued, ‘look upon this glass (it was an ordinary wineglass) and on this silver coin,’ producing a *stater* of the Eretrian Republic. ‘See! I place the coin in the glass, and now can I tell you by its means what you will of the future. There is no magic in it, only a little knowledge of the secrets, mutable yet immutable, of Nature. And this is an old secret. I did not find it. It was known of yore in Atlantis and in Chichimec, in Ur and in Lycosura. Even now the rude Boshmen keep up the tradition among their medicine-men. Vill any lady ask the coin a qvestion?’ he continued, in a hoarse Semitic whisper, for all currencies and all languages were alike to him. ‘Sure it’s the coin ‘ll be afther tellun’ ye what ye like. Voulez-vous demander, Mademoiselle? Wollen Sie, gnädige Signora?’

‘Then,’ said Leonora, in trembling accents, ‘I demand to know if I shall find that which I seek.’

The figure, drawing itself up to its full height, passed its hand with a proud, impatient, and mystic gesture across the glass, and then stood in the attitude of one who awaited a response. ‘Should the coin, my daughter, jump three times,’ he said, ‘the answer is yea. Should it jump but once, nay.’

We waited anxiously. The coin did not jump at all! The wizard took up the glass, shook it impatiently, and put it down again. Still the coin showed no sign of animation. Then the wizard uttered some private ejaculations in Hittite, but still the coin did not move. Then he affected an air of jauntiness, and said, ‘I remember a circumstance of a similar kind when I was playing odd man out (ÄÁ¹¿Â ±½¸ÁÉÀ¿Â dear old Sokrates used to call it) with Darius the night before Marathon. Darius was the Mede. *I* was the Medium.’ Then he seemed about to work another wonder, when he was interrupted by the harsh cackling laughter of the Boshman, who advanced with careless defiance and observed in his own tongue, which we all knew perfectly, that he ‘could see all the tricks the wizard could do and go several better.’ I waited, horror-struck, to see what would follow this insolence.

Asher made a movement so swift that I could scarcely follow it; but it seemed to me that he lightly laid his hand upon the poor Boshman’s head. I looked at Ustâni, and then staggered back in wonder, for there upon his snowy hair, right across the wool-white tresses, were five finger-marks *black as coal*.

‘Now go and stand in the corner,’ said the magician, in a cold inhuman voice. The unhappy Boshman tremblingly did his bidding, putting his hands to his head in a dazed way as he went, and, incredible as it may seem, thus transferring — as if the curse carried double force — some of the black mark to his own fingers.

‘I will now,’ continued the wizard, who had regained his ordinary polished, if somewhat swaying and overbalanced, manner— ‘I will now, with your kind permission, show you a little trick which was a great favourite with the late Tubal Cain when we were boys together. Observe, I take this paper-knife — it is an ordinary paper-knife — look at it for yourselves. I will place it on my down-turned hand. It is an ordinary hand — look at it for yourselves, but don’t touch it; the consequences might be disastrous.’

I, for my part, having seen the consequences in the case of Ustâni’s hair, had no desire to do so.

‘You see,’ continued the sorcerer, ‘I place the paper-knife *there*! It falls. Why? Because of gravity. What is gravity? Newton, as you know well, invented the art; but what of that? Did he find that which did not exist? No, for the non-existent is as though it had never been. But now, availing myself of the resources of science, which is ever old and ever young, I clasp my wrist — the wrist of the hand on which the paper-knife rests — with the other hand, and — you see.’

As the sorcerer spoke, he deftly turned his hand palm downwards, and the paper-knife fell with a crash and a clatter on the floor. It was terrible to see the dumb wrath of the swathed figure at this new defeat.

Even in this moment the Boshman glided like a serpent among us, picked up the paper-knife, and triumphantly performed the very miracle in which the wizard had failed. A harsh cackle of laughter announced his success. But the mage was even with him, or rather he was ‘odds and evens.’ Rapidly he drew his forefinger across the Boshman’s face, perpendicularly and horizontally —

On the skin of Ustâni, azure with terror, appeared the above diagram in lines of white! The mage then made the sign of a +, thus —

and challenged Leonora to a contest of skill in ‘oughts and crosses.’ But the Boshman, catching a view of his own altered aspect in a mirror, exclaimed, ‘You ‘standy Ustâni? Him no standy He! Him show hisself for tin! Adults one shilling, kids tizzy. *Me Umslopoguey!*’ And he sloped; nor did we ever again see this victim of an overwhelming Power (limited).

We presently took our leave of the mage, promising to call next day, and bring a policeman.

CHAPTER X.

A BODY IN PAWN.

‘Gin a body meet a body!’ — Burns.

Though Leonora’s faith in the magician had been a good deal shaken by his failures in his black art, she admitted that, as a clairvoyant, he might be more inspired. We therefore went, as he had directed us, to the neighbourhood of Clare Market, where he had prophesied that we should find a Temple adorned with the Three Balls of Gold, which the Lombards bore with them from their far Aryan home in Frangipani. Nor did this part of the prophecy fail to coincide with the document on the mummy case. Through the thick and choking darkness which has made ‘The Lights of London’ a proverb, we beheld the glittering of three aureate orbs. And now, how to win our way, without pass-word or, indeed, pass-book, into this home of mystery?

Here, in these immemorial recesses, the natives had long been wont to bury, as we learned, their oldest objects of interest and value. There, when we pushed our way within the swinging portal, lay around us, in vast and solemn pyramids of portable property, the silent and touching monuments of human existence. The busy life of a nation lay sleeping here! Here, for example, stood that ancestral instrument for the reckoning of winged Time, which in the native language is styled a ‘Grandfather’s Clock.’ Hard by lay the pipe, fashioned of the ‘foam of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn,’ the pipe on which, perchance, some swain had discoursed sweet music near the shady heights of High Holborn. The cradle of infancy, the gamp of decrepitude, the tricycle of fleeting youth, the paraffin lamp which had lighted bridal gaiety, the flask which had held the foaming malt, — all were gathered here, and the dust lay deep on all of them!

I was about to make some appropriate moral remarks, when I heard Leonora (whose command of tongues is simply *marvellous*) address an attendant priestess in the local dialect.

‘Here, miss,’ said she, ‘‘ow much can yer let us ‘ave on this ‘ere ticker?’ (producing her watch).

The priestess, whose clear-cut features and two lovely black eyes betrayed a mixture of Semitic blood, was examining the ‘turnip’ — as she called the watch — when Leonora, saying ‘Mum’s the word,’ rather violently called my attention (with her elbow) to a strange parcel lying apart from the rest.

It was a long bundle, as long as a man, and was swathed in cerements of white Egyptian tissue.

‘’Tis you! ’tis you!’ I sneezed rapturously, recognising the object of our search, the very mummy which, two thousand years ago, Theodolitê had prepared with her own fair but cruel hands.

There, beyond the shadow of doubt, lay all that was mortal of the unlucky Jambres! On the tissue which wrapped the bundle I distinctly recognised *the stencilled mark corresponding to Leonora’s scarab*, a duck, the egg of a duck, and an umbrella.[24]

‘How much,’ said I to the priestess of the temple, ‘could you afford to let me have that old bundle of rags for?’

‘That old bundle of rags?’ said the woman, ‘Take it, dear lady, take it and keep it (if you can), and the blessing of Abraham be on your head!’

So anxious was she to part with the mummy that we could hardly get her to accept a merely nominal price. To give plausibility to the purchase, we said we wanted the rags for a paper-mill. Joyously did Leonora and I call a passing chariot, and, with the mummy between us, we drove to our abode. I was surprised on the way by receiving a pettish push from Leonora’s foot.

‘Don’t tread on my toes,’ she said, though I had not even stirred. I told her as much, and we were getting a little animated when my bonnet was twitched off and thrown out into the darkness.

‘Leonora,’ I said severely, ‘these manners are unworthy of a lady!’

‘I declare, my dear Polly,’ she replied, ‘that I never even moved!’ and as she was obviously in earnest I had to accept her word.

When we reached home, after a series of petty but provoking accidents,[25] we first locked up the mummy very carefully in the spare bedroom. To-morrow would be time enough, we said, to consult the wizard as to our next movement. We ordered a repast of the native viands (which included, I remember, a small but savoury fish, the Blô-ta), and sought our couches, in better spirits than usual.

Next morning, long before Leonora was awake, the young but intelligent Slavî (so the common people call housemaids) crept into my chamber with a death-white face.

[24] See cover. Most important to have this cover bound in *sur brochure*. — Publisher.

[25] I say, are you not gliding insensibly into *The Fallen Idol*? — Publisher.

Not a bit, you wait and you’ll see. — Ed.

‘Ômum,’ she said (it is a term of courtesy), ‘wot a night we’ve been having?’

‘Why, what is the matter, Jemimaran?’ I asked, for that was her melodious native name.

‘There’s *something* in the spare room, mum, a-carrying on horful. The bell ringing all night, and the Thing screaming and walking up and down as restless! I’m a-going to give warning, mum,’ she added confidentially.

‘Why, you’ve *given* it,’ I said, to reassure her. ‘Forewarned is forearmed.’

‘Four-legged It do run sometimes, like a beast, mum, wailing terrible. Up and down, up and down It goes, and always ringing the bell, and crying high for a brandy-and-soda, mum, like a creature tormented.’[26]

[26] Do take care. This is copyright! Don’t you remember Mr. Hyde? — Publisher.

Neither Hyde nor Hidol, you’re so nervous. Do wait till the end. — Ed.

Wish it was come! — Publisher.

‘Well,’ I asked, though every hair upon my head stood erect with horror (adding greatly to the peculiarity of my appearance), ‘well, did you take It what It asked for?’

‘Yes, mum; for very fear I dared not refuse. And when I had handed it in by a chink in the open door, first there was a sound like drinking, then an awful cry, “Potash again!” and then a heavy soft thud, as if you had knocked over a bolster stuffed with lead, mum.’

Through the brown glimmer of dawn (it was about ten a.m.) I hurried to Leonora’s chamber. She was dressed, and came out. ‘What do you advise?’ I asked.

‘Send for Mr. Urmson, the eminent lawyer, at once,’ said she, ‘he is used to this kind of thing. Nothing like taking Counsel’s opinion. But first let me knock the door open!’ She applied her magnificent white shoulder to the door, which flew into splinters.

There was not a trace of the mummy, but there, in a deprecatory attitude, stood the philosopher Asher![27]

[27] Please pronounce *Assha*. — Ed.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WIZARD UNBOSOMS.

‘Sir,’ said Leonora, ‘may I request you to inform me why we find you, rampaging an unbidden guest, in the chamber which is sacred to hospitality?’

¤·½ ´ ±À±¼µ²¿¼µ½¿Â ÀÁ¿Ãµ¦· º¿ÁÅ¸±¹¿»¿Â Asher,’ answered the magician, dreamily. ‘Do my senses deceive me, or — that voice, that winsome bearing — am I once more with Helen on the walls of Ilion?’

‘No, sir, you are in 30 Acacia Gardens,’ replied Leonora, severely. ‘*Why*, permit me to repeat myself, do I find you here, an unbidden guest?’

‘To say that I never guessed you’d find me here,’ answered the magician, ‘might seem a mere trifling with language and with your feelings.’

‘My feelings!’ exclaimed the proud girl, indignantly, ‘just as if —— But answer me!’

‘When a man has seen as much of life as I have,’ answered the magician, ‘when the Æons are to him merely as drops in a bucket which he will never kick — and when he suffers,’ he added mournfully, ‘from attacks of multiplex personality, he recognises the futility of personal explanations.’

‘At least I can compel you to tell us *Where is the mummy?*’ said Leonora.

‘I am, or lately was, that mummy,’ said the wizard, haughtily; then, drawing himself up to his full height, he added, ‘I am the Real Jambres! Old Gooseberry Jamberries,’ he added solemnly. ‘No other is genuine!’

‘You are playing, sir, on our credulity,’ replied the girl; ‘no living man can be a mummy, — outside of the House of Lords or the Royal Academy.’

‘You speak,’ he said tenderly, ‘with the haste of youth and inexperience. When you have lived as long as I have, you will know better. Hearken to my story.

‘Three or four thousand years ago — for what is time? — I was the authorised magician at the Court of Ptolemy Patriarchus. I had a rival — the noted witch Theodolitê. In an evil hour she won me by a show of false affection, and, taking advantage of my passion, mummified me alive. To this I owe my remarkable state of preservation at an advanced age. *Très bien conservé*,’ he added fatuously.

‘But she only half accomplished her purpose. By some accident, which has never been explained, and in spite of the stress of competition, she had purchased *pure* salts of potash for the execution of her fell purpose in place of *adulterated* salts of soda.

‘To this I owe it that I am now a living man; and in a moment — —’

A certain stiffness of demeanour, which we had noticed, but ascribed to pride, worked an unspeakable change in the mage. As we looked at him *he hardened into our cheap mummy*.

‘Here’s a jolly go!’ said Leonora, her mind submerged in terror.

I sprang to the bell, ‘*Soda water at once!*’ I cried, and the *slavî* appeared with the fluid. We applied it to the parched lips of the mummy, and Jambres was himself again.

‘Now will you tell me?’ I asked, when he had been given a cigarette and made comfortable, ‘why we found you — I mean the mummy — under the Three Balls?’

‘’Twas a pledge,’ he replied. ‘When my resources ran low, and my rent was unpaid, the landlady used to take advantage of my condition and raise a small sum on me.’

All seemed now explained; but Leonora was not yet satisfied.

‘You have — —’ she began.

‘Yes, a strawberry mark,’ he replied wearily, ‘on the usual place!’

‘The quest is accomplished,’ I said.

‘Nay,’ replied Jambres, to give him his real name. ‘There is still the adventure of the Siege Perilous.’

CHAPTER XII.

THE WIZARD’S SCHEME.

‘We must, as you are aware, visit the Siege Perilous in the Hall of Egypt, and risk ourselves in the chair of the Viewless Maiden, of Her that is not to be seen of Man.’

‘We know it,’ said Leonora.

‘It is,’ continued the mage, ‘your wish to accomplish the end for which you set forth. This seems to you an easy matter enough; young hearts are full of such illusions, and, believe me, I would willingly change my years, which are lost in geological time, for one hand’s breadth of your daring. Know, then,’ continued this strange creature, ‘that the time has now come when matters must be brought to an end between us. It will be my business, and, I will add, my pleasure,’ he continued with a lofty air which sat drolly enough upon him in his yellow duds, ‘to conduct you to the Siege Perilous. From you, in return, I must exact an unquestioning obedience; and I will add a measureless *confidence*. I beg you to bear in mind that the slightest resistance to my will must be followed by consequences of which you cannot estimate either the reach or the extension.’

There was such a parrot-like pomp about the creature’s tautology, and such an old-world affectation of fine manners \in his constant obeisances, that I could hold it no longer, but fairly laughed out in his face.

I dreaded, it is true, lest some such fate as Ustâni’s might punish me for my temerity, but for reasons which doubtless seemed sufficient to himself the wizard merely looked at me through his veil, shook himself a little in his swathings, and said in a matter-of-fact voice, ‘Well, well, perhaps we have had enough of such talk as this. Let’s get ahead with the business before us. That business is to reach the Siege Perilous, or Magic Chair. Thither will I guide ye, and there ye shall see what ye shall see. But first it is needful, as all sages have declared, that ye shall show your confidence in me! I value not wealth. Gold is mere dross — nay, I have the mines of King Solomon at my disposal. But when the weary King Ecclesiast confided to me, in his palace of ivory and cedar in Jerusalem, long ago, the secret of these diamond treasures, he bade me reveal it to none who did not show their confidence in me.

‘Let *them* entrust *you*,’ said Solomon, ‘with their paltry wealth, ere *you* place in *their* hands opulence beyond the dreams of avarice. Give me, then, merely as a sign of confidence, gold, much gold, or,’ he continued in a confidential and Semitic tone, ‘its equivalent in any safe securities, American railways preferred. Don’t bring bank-notes, my dear — risky things, risky things! Why, when I was pals with Claude Duval — but ’tis gone, ’tis gone! Now, my dears, what have you got? what have you got?’

‘I have,’ answered Leonora, in her clear sweet voice and girlish trustfulness, ‘as is my invariable custom, my *dot*, namely, 300,000*l.* worth of American railway shares, chiefly Chicago N.W. and L. & N., in my pocket.’

‘That’s right, my dear, that’s right,’ said the Erie wizard; ‘just hand those to me, and then we can start at once.

‘*And when* (he went on in italics)
o my Leonora
when that mystic change has been worked
which has been predestined
for countless ages and which shall come as
sure as fate,
then on another continent
kindred to thine yet strange, even in the land
of the railways that thy shares are in,
Thou and I,
the Magician and the Novice,
the Celebrated Wizard of the West
and his Accomplished Pupil
Mademoiselle Léonore
will make a tour that shall drag in the
dollars
by the hatful. NOW COME!’

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PERILOUS PATH.

Forth we rushed into the darkness, through the streaming deluge of that tropic clime. For the seraphic frenzy had now come upon the mage in good earnest, and all the Thought-reader burned in his dusky eyes.

We presented, indeed, a strange spectacle, for the mage, in his silvery swathings, held Leonora by the hands, and Leonora held me, as we raced through the gloom.

In any other city our aspect and demeanour had excited attention and claimed the interference of the authorities.

In Berlin Uhlans would have charged us, in Paris grape-shot would have ploughed through our ranks. *Here* they deemed we were but of the sacred race of Thought-readers, who, by a custom of the strange people, are permitted to run at random through the streets and even to enter private houses.

We were not even followed, in our headlong career, by a crowd, for the public had ceased to interest itself in frenzied research for hidden pins or concealed cigarettes.

After a frantic chase Jambres (late ‘the Mage’) paused, breathless, in front of a building of portentous proportions.

How it chanced I have never been able to understand, but, as I am a living and honourable woman, this hall had the characteristics of ancient Egyptian architecture, and that (miraculous as it may appear) in perfect preservation.

There are the hypostyle halls, the two Osirid pillars — colossal figures of strange gods, in coloured relief — there is the great blue scarab, the cartouche, the *pschent*, the *pschutt*, and all that we admire in the Rameseum of the Ancient Empire.

But all was silent, all was deserted; the vast adamantine portals were closed.

Jambres paused in dismay.

‘Since I last gave an exhibition of mine art in those halls,’ said he, ‘(’twas in old forgotten days, in Bosco’s palmy time), much is altered. Open sesame!’ he cried; but, curious to say, *nothing opened*!

At that moment a dark figure crawled submissively to our feet. It was old Pellmelli.

His instinct for ‘copy’ had brought him on our track, and he began —

‘As our representative, I am commissioned — —’

Jambres (late ‘Asher’) turned from him, and he fell (still making notes) prone on his face, where we left him, as the pace was too good to inquire.

The mage now reconnoitred carefully the vast façade of the Hall of Egypt, and finally fixed his gaze on a perpendicular leaden column, adorned with strange symbols, through which (for it was a rainy night) raging torrents of water were distinctly heard flowing downwards to who knows what abysmal and unfathomable depths?

In this weird climate it was the familiar yet dreaded *waterspout*!

Jambres, with the feline agility of a catapult of the mountain, began to climb the perpendicular leaden channel to which he had called our attention, and of course we had to follow him. It was perfectly marvellous to see the ease and grace with which he skipped and hopped up the seemingly naked face of the wall. There were places indeed where our position was perilous enough, and it did not add to our cheerfulness to hear the horrid roaring and gurgling of the unseen and imprisoned waters that poured down the channel with a violence which seemed as if they might at any moment burst their bonds. Helped, however, by certain ledges which projected from the wall beneath square openings filled with some transparent substance, on which ledges from time to time we rested, we arrived at the steep crest, and paused for repose beneath the leafy shade of the roof-tree, Jambres lightly leading the way.

‘Now,’ said Jambres, ‘comes the most delicate part of our journey.’

So indeed it proved, for the mage began rapidly to divest himself of his mysterious swathings. Wrapper by wrapper he undid, cerement on cerement, till both Leonora and I wondered when he would stop.

Stop he did, however, and, with a practised hand, shot his linen into one long rope, which he carefully attached to an erect and smoking pillar, perhaps of basaltic formation, perhaps an ancient altar of St. Simeon Skylitês. When all was taut, Jambres approached a slanting slope, smooth and transparent, perhaps of glacial origin. On this he stamped, and the fragments tinkled as they fell into unknown deeps. Then he seized the rope, let himself down, and from far below we heard his voice calling to us to follow him.

Leonora and I descended with agility to some monstrous basin in the abyss — the Pit, Jambres called it. Here Jambres met us, and bade us light the railway reading-lamps which, as I forgot to mention, we had brought with us. Then, jumping off with the lead, he advanced along the floor, picking his way with great care, as indeed it was most necessary to do, for the floor was strewn with strange forms, stumbling over the legs and backs of which it would have been easy to break one’s own. When we halted, brought up by a barrier, of which I did not at first discern the nature, our lamps (as is sometimes the way of some such patent lamps[28]) suddenly went out. Jambres whispered hoarsely, ‘Wot are yer waitin’ for? Come on; ±»» ±³µ. *Nunc est scandendum.’* We saw before us a vast expanse, of which it was impossible to gauge the extent, so impenetrable, so overpowering was the gloom of its blackness. ‘It is the abode,’ said Jambres, mysteriously, ‘of my rival De Kolta!’ He himself, owing to his use of his swathings, was sufficiently *décolleté*

[28] I think I’ve managed not to be libellous. — Ed.

We shall see. — Publisher.

On the hither side was a row of *lumières à pied* which seemed *afloat* on the darkness, and in their centre a sudden chasm which looked as if it had been made by human agency. The fitful moonbeams[29] showed us a most curious and accurately shaped spur, or *run-down* as it is called in the native dialect, which connected the floor on which we stood with the darkness beyond.

[29] You’ve not mentioned them before. — Publisher.

That’s why I do now. — Ed.

What mortal, however hardy, dared cross this quivering wavering bridge in the total darkness? Beneath our feet it swayed and leaped like rotten ice on the magic Serpentine.

‘Hush,’ cried Jambres, ‘it comes, it comes! Be still!’

Even as he spoke, we saw a *long shaft of yellow light* streaming from an unknown centre, and searching out the recesses of the cavern.

‘Be still, as you value your liberty,’ whispered Jambres. ‘The Bobî is on his beat.’

Then, as the long shaft smote the swaying bridge, he lightly crossed it, and beckoned us to follow. We obeyed, and in another instant all was again darkness.

‘He has gone his round,’ said Jambres. ‘Won’t be back for hours!’

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MAGIC CHAIR.

There, on the plateau, or platform, we had seen, stood, in naked mystery, the Enchanted Chair.

‘’Tis the weird chair of the Viewless Maiden, the place of Her who is no more seen,’ said Jambres. ‘Who shall sit therein?’

‘The writing said,’ remarked the dauntless Leonora, ‘that a descendant of Theodolitê must achieve this adventure. I am ready.’

‘Nay, not so, maiden,’ murmured Jambres, ‘try it not till I have made experience thereof. Me it cannot harm; in me you see the original inventor; beware of spurious imitations. But it is a dread experience; let me work it first!’

Leonora could not resist his winning manner and concern for her safety.

‘I move,’ she said, ‘that Mr. Jambres do take the chair at this meeting.’

‘I second that proposal,’ said I, and there was not a dissentient voice.

‘Mr. Jambres will now take the chair,’ said Leonora, and the wizard, his swathing robes bulging with Leonora’s securities, glided forward.

Then an awful thing occurred. No sooner had Jambres sat down than Leonora and I found ourselves — how can we expect it to be believed? — gazing on a blank, bare space!

The chair was still there, but the wizard was gone. Leonora turned to me, horror in her eyes, her golden curls changed to a pale German silver.

‘It is the chair of the Vanishing Lady,’ she said.

‘It is the Confidence Trick,’ I cried; and we both lost consciousness as the true state of the case flashed on our minds. The wizard was off with 300,000*l.* in high-class American securities.

CHAPTER XV.

THE END.

What remains to be told is of little public interest. When we came to ourselves, all was darkness. Escape seemed impossible.

We could not swarm up the rope, by the way we had come.

We knew not when the shaft of yellow light might return on its beat.

We lit a Bryant & May's match, and thereby groped our way downwards, ever downwards.

Finally, as we had given up all for lost, Leonora said, 'Don't you think the air is a little stuffy?'

We sniffed about the rocky floor, and found an iron grating.

It yielded to a strong tug, and we descended into subterranean passages, framed by the art of men, through which rolled and surged torrents of turbid water.

Through these we waded, attacked by armies of rats, till, thank goodness! we saw a moving light, flashing hither and thither on the torrent.

Half swimming, half wading, we reached the bearer of the light.

It was old Pellmelli, 'doing a Sanitary special,' as he told us.

We, somewhat deceitfully, led him to believe that we had lost ourselves on a similar errand, for a rival Budget, with which he was concerned in a Paper Mill.[30]

On our faithfully promising to give him exclusive information about our adventures, 'for an Extra,' as he said, old Pellmelli conducted us to an orifice in the rock, whence we escaped, at last, into the light of such day as dwells in the Dark City.

Our hopes now entirely rest on finding Jambres again, but it may be, of course, a good three or four thousand years before that.

Here this strange narrative closes; and as I end my editorial task, I have only one question to ask myself — Will this thing go on? will Jambres and Leonora meet? will the Americans give up Jambres under the Extradition Act? or ——

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[30] What do you mean by a Paper Mill? — Publisher.

A Journalistic War, then. — Ed.

Is the great drama Played Out? — Ed.

THE GOLD OF FAIRNILEE

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CHAPTER I. — The Old House

YOU may still see the old Scotch house where Randal was born, so long ago. Nobody lives there now. Most of the roof has fallen in, there is no glass in the windows, and all the doors are open. They were open in the days of Randal's father — nearly four hundred years have passed since then — and everyone who came was welcome to his share of beef and broth and ale. But now the doors are not only open, they are quite gone, and there is nobody within to give you a welcome.

So there is nothing but emptiness in the old house where Randal lived with Jean, three hundred and sixty years or so before you were born. It is a high old house, and wide, with the broken slates still on the roof. At the corner there are little round towers, like pepperboxes, with sharp peaks. The stems of the ivy that covers the walls are as thick as trees. There are many trees crowding all round, and there are hills round it too; and far below you hear the Tweed whispering all day. The house is called Fairnilee, which means "the Fairies' Field;" for people believed in fairies, as you shall hear, when Randal was a boy, and even when my father was a boy.

Randal was all alone in the house when he was a little fellow — alone with his mother, and Nancy the old nurse, and Simon Grieve the butler, who wore a black velvet coat and a big silver chain. Then there were the maids, and the grooms, and the farm folk, who were all friends of Randal's. He was not lonely, and he did not feel unhappy, even before Jean came, as you shall be told. But the grown-up people were sad and silent at Fairnilee. Randal had no father; his mother, Lady Ker, was a widow. She was still quite young, and Randal thought her the most beautiful person in the world. Children think these things about their mothers, and Randal had seen no ladies but his mother only. She had brown hair and brown eyes and red lips, and a grave kind face, which looked serious under her great white widow's cap with the black hood over it. Randal never saw his mother cry; but when he was a very little child indeed, he had heard her crying in the night: this was after his father went away.

CHAPTER II. — *How Randal's Father Came Home*

RANDAL remembered his father's going to fight the English, and how he came back again. It was a windy August evening when he went away: the rain had fallen since morning. Randal had watched the white mists driven by the gale down through the black pine-wood that covers the hill opposite Fairnilee. The mist looked like armies of ghosts, he thought, marching, marching through the pines, with their white flags flying and streaming. Then the sun came out red at evening, and Randal's father rode away with all his men. He had a helmet on his head, and a great axe hanging from his neck by a chain, and a spear in his hand. He was riding his big horse, *Sir Hugh*, and he caught Randal up to the saddle and kissed him many times before he clattered out of the courtyard. All the tenants and men about the farm rode with him, all with spears and a flag embroidered with a crest in gold. His mother watched them from the tower till they were out of sight. And Randal saw them ride away, not on hard, smooth roads like ours, but along a green grassy track, the water splashing up to their stirrups where they crossed the marshes.

Then the sky turned as red as blood, in the sunset, and next it grew brown, like the rust on a sword; and the Tweed below, when they rode the ford, was all red and gold and brown.

Then time went on; that seemed a long time to Randal. Only the women were left in the house, and Randal played with the shepherd's children. They sailed boats in the mill-pond, and they went down to the boat-pool and watched to see the big copper-coloured salmon splashing in the still water. One evening Randal looked up suddenly from his play. It was growing dark. He had been building a house with the round stones and wet sand by the river. He looked up, and there was his own father! He was riding all alone, and his horse, *Sir Hugh,* was very lean and lame, and scarred with the spurs. The spear in his father's hand was broken, and he had no sword; and he looked neither to right nor to left. His eyes were wide open, but he seemed to see nothing.

Randal cried out to him, "Father! Father!" but he never glanced at Randal. He did not look as if he heard him, or knew he was there, and suddenly he seemed to go away, Randal did not know how or where.

Randal was frightened.

He ran into the house, and went to his mother.

"Oh, mother," he said, "I have seen father! He was riding all alone, and he would not look at me. *Sir Hugh* was lame!”

“Where has he gone?” said Lady Ker, in a strange voice.

“He went away out of sight,” said Randal. “I could not see where he went.”

Then his mother told him it could not be, that his father would not have come back alone. He would not leave his men behind him in the war.

But Randal was so sure, that she did not scold him. She knew he believed what he said.

He saw that she was not happy.

All that night, which was the Fourth of September, in the year 1513, the day of Flodden fight, Randal’s mother did not go to bed. She kept moving about the house. Now she would look from the tower window up Tweed; and now she would go along the gallery and look down Tweed from the other tower. She had lights burning in all the windows. All next day she was never still. She climbed, with two of her maids, to the top of the hill above Yair, on the other side of the river, and she watched the roads down Ettrick and Yarrow. Next night she slept little, and rose early. About noon, Randal saw three or four men riding wearily, with tired horses. They could scarcely cross the ford of Tweed, the horses were so tired. The men were Simon Grieve the butler, and some of the tenants. They looked very pale; some of them had their heads tied up, and there was blood on their faces. Lady Ker and Randal ran to meet them.

Simon Grieve lighted from his horse, and whispered to Randal’s mother.

Randal did not hear what he said, but his mother cried, “I knew it! I knew it!” and turned quite white.

“Where is he?” she said.

Simon pointed across the hill. “They are bringing the corp,” he said. Randal knew the “corp” meant the dead body.

He began to cry. “Where is my father?” he said, “where is my father?”

His mother led him into the house. She gave him to the old nurse, who cried over him, and kissed him, and offered him cakes, and made him a whistle with a branch of plane tree, So in a short while Randal only felt puzzled. Then he forgot, and began to play. He was a very little boy.

Lady Ker shut herself up in her own room — her “bower,” the servants called it.

Soon Randal heard heavy steps on the stairs, and whispering. He wanted to run out, and his nurse caught hold of him, and would not have let him go, but he slipped out of her hand, and looked over the staircase.

They were bringing up the body of a man stretched on a shield.

It was Randal’s father.

He had been slain at Flodden, fighting for the king. An arrow had gone through his brain, and he had fallen beside James IV., with many another brave knight, all the best of Scotland, the Flowers of the Forest.

What was it Randal saw, when he thought he met his father in the twilight, three days before?

He never knew. His mother said he must have dreamed it all.

The old nurse used to gossip about it to the maids. “He’s an unco’ bairn, oor Randal; I wush he may na be fey.”

She meant that Randal was a strange child, and that strange things would happen to him.

CHAPTER III. — *How Jean was brought to Fairnlee*

THE winter went by very sadly. At first the people about Fairnilee expected the English to cross the Border and march against them. They drove their cattle out on the wild hills, and into marshes where only they knew the firm paths, and raised walls of earth and stones — *barmkyns*, they called them — round the old house; and made many arrows to shoot out of the narrow windows at the English. Randal used to like to see the arrow-making beside the fire at! night. He was not afraid; and said he would show the English what he could do with his little bow. But weeks went on and no enemy came. Spring drew near, the snow melted from the hills. One night Randal was awakened by a great noise of shouting; he looked out of the window, and saw bright torches moving about. He heard the cows "routing," or bellowing, and the women screaming. He thought the English had come. So they had; not the English army, but some robbers from the other side of the Border. At that time the people on the south side of Scotland and the north side of England used to steal each other's cows time about. When a Scotch squire, or "laird," like Randal's father, had been robbed by the neighbouring English, he would wait his chance and drive away cattle from the English side. This time most of Randal's mother's herds were seized, by a sudden attack in the night, and were driven away through the Forest to England. Two or three of Lady Ker's men were hurt by the English, but old Simon Grieve took a prisoner. He did this in a curious way. He shot an arrow after the robbers as they rode off, and the arrow pinned an Englishman's leg to the saddle, and even into his horse. The horse was hurt and frightened, and ran away right back to Fairnilee, where it was caught, with the rider and all, for of course he could not dismount.

They treated him kindly at Fairnilee, though they laughed at him a good deal. They found out from him where the English had come from. He did not mind telling them, for he was really a gipsy from Yetholm, where the gipsies live, and Scot or Southron was all one to him.

When old Simon Grieve knew who the people were that had taken the cows, he was not long in calling the men together, and trying to get back what he had lost. Early one April morning, a grey morning, with snow in the air, he and his spearmen set out, riding down through the Forest, and so into Liddes-dale. When they came back again, there were great rejoicings at Fairnilee. They drove most of their own cows before them, and a great many other cows that they had not lost; cows of the English farmers. The byres and yards were soon full of cattle, lowing and roaring, very uneasy, and some of them with marks of the spears that had goaded them across many a ford, and up many a rocky pass in the hills.

Randal jumped downstairs to the great hall, where his mother sat. Simon Grieve was telling her all about it.

"Sae we drave oor ain kye hame, my lady," he said, "and aiblins some orra anes that was na oor ain. For-bye we raikit a' the plenishing oot o' the ha' o' Hardriding, and a bonny burden o' tapestries, and plaids, and gear we hae, to show for our ride."*

> * "We drove our own cattle home, and perhaps some others
> that were not ours. And we took all the goods out of the
> hall at Hardriding, and a pretty load of tapestries, and
> rugs, and other things we have to show for our ride."

Then he called to some of his men, who came into the hall, and cast down great piles of all sorts of spoil and booty, silver plate, and silken hangings, and a heap of rugs, and carpets, and plaids, such as Randal had never seen before, for the English were much richer than the Scotch.

Randal threw himself on the pile of rugs and began to roll on it.

"Oh, mother," he cried suddenly, jumping up and looking with wide-open eyes, "there 's something living in the heap! Perhaps it's a doggie, or a rabbit, or a kitten."

Then Randal tugged at the cloths, and then they all heard a little shrill cry.

"Why, it's a bairn!" said Lady Ker, who had sat very grave all the time, pleased to have done the English some harm; for they had killed her husband, and were all her deadly foes. "It's a bairn!" she cried, and pulled out of the great heap of cloaks and rugs a little beautiful child, in its white nightdress, with its yellow curls all tangled over its blue eyes.

Then Lady Ker and the old nurse could not make too much of the pretty English child that had come here in such a wonderful way.

How did it get mixed up with all the spoil? and how had it been carried so far on horseback without being hurt? Nobody ever knew. It came as if the fairies had sent it. English it was, but the best Scot could not hate such a pretty child. Old Nancy Dryden ran up to the old nursery with it, and laid it in a great wooden tub full of hot water, and was giving it warm milk to drink, and dandling it, almost before the men knew what had happened.

"Yon bairn will be a bonny mate for you, Maister Randal," said old Simon Grieve. "'Deed, I dinna think her kin will come speering* after her at Fairnilee. The Red Cock's crawing ower Hardriding Ha' this day, and when the womenfolk come back frae the wood, they'll hae other thing to do for-bye looking for bairns."

* Asking.

When Simon Grieve said that the Red Cock was crowing over his enemies' home, he meant that he had set it on fire after the people who lived in it had run away.

Lady Ker grew pale when she heard what he said. She hated the English, to be sure, but she was a woman with a kind heart. She thought of the dreadful danger that the little English girl had escaped, and she went upstairs and helped the nurse to make the child happy.

CHAPTER IV. — *Randal and Jean.*

THE little girl soon made everyone at Fairnilee happy. She was far too young to remember her own home, and presently she was crawling up and down the long hall and making friends with Randal. They found out that her name was Jane Musgrave, though she could hardly say Musgrave; and they called her Jean, with their Scotch tongues, or "Jean o' the Kye," because she came when the cows were driven home again.

Soon the old nurse came to like her near as well as Randal, "her ain bairn" (her own child), as she called him. In the summer days, Jean, as she grew older, would follow Randal about like a little doggie. They went fishing together, and Randal would pull the trout out of Caddon Burn, or the Burn of Peel; and Jeanie would be very proud of him, and very much alarmed at the big, wide jaws of the yellow trout. And Randal would plait helmets with green rushes for her and him, and make spears of bulrushes, and play at tilts and tournaments. There was peace in the country; or if there was war, it did not come near the quiet valley of the Tweed and the hills that lie round Fairnilee. In summer they were always on the hills and by the burnsides.

You cannot think, if you have not tried, what pleasant company a burn is. It comes out of the deep; black wells in the moss, far away on the tops of the hills, where the sheep feed, and the fox peers from his hole, and the ravens build in the crags. The burn flows down from the lonely places, cutting a way between steep, green banks, tumbling in white waterfalls over rocks, and lying in black, deep pools below the waterfalls. At every turn it does something new, and plays a fresh game with its brown waters. The white pebbles in the water look like gold: often Randal would pick one out and think he had found a gold-mine, till he got it into the sunshine, and then it was only a white stone, what he called a "chucky — stane;" but he kept hoping for better luck next time. In the height of summer, when the streams were very low, he and the shepherd's boys would build dams of stones and turf across a narrow part of the burn, while Jean sat and watched them on a little round knoll. Then, when plenty of water had collected in the pool, they would break the dam and let it all run downhill in a little flood; they called it a "hurly gush." And in winter they would slide on the black, smooth ice of the boat-pool, beneath the branches of the alders.

Or they would go out with *Yarrow*, the shepherd's dog, and follow the track of wild creatures in the snow. The rabbit makes marks like **, and the hare makes marks like **; but the fox’s track is just as if you had pushed a piece of wood through the snow — a number of cuts in the surface, going straight along.

When it was very cold, the grouse and black-cocks would come into the trees near the house, and Randal and Jean would put out porridge for them to eat. And the great white swans floated in from the frozen lochs on the hills, and gathered round open reaches and streams of the Tweed. It was pleasant to be a boy then in the North. And at Hallow E’en they would duck for apples in tubs of water, and burn nuts in the fire, and look for the shadow of the lady Randal was to marry, in the mirror; but he only saw Jean looking over his shoulder.

The days were very short in winter, so far North, and they would soon be driven into the house. Then they sat by the nursery fire; and those were almost the pleasantest hours, for the old nurse would tell them old Scotch stories of elves and fairies, and sing them old songs. Jean would crawl close to Randal and hold his hand, for fear the Red Etin, or some other awful bogle, should get her: and in the dancing shadows of the firelight she would think she saw Whuppity Stoorie, the wicked old witch with the spinning-wheel; but it was really nothing but the shadow of the wheel that the old nurse drove with her foot — *birr, birr* — and that whirred and rattled as she span and told her tale.

For people span their cloth at home then, instead of buying it from shops; and the old nurse was a great woman for spinning.

She was a great woman for stories, too, and believed in fairies, and “bogles,” as she called them. Had not her own cousin, Andrew Tamson, passed the Cauldshiels Loch one New Year morning? And had he not heard a dreadful roaring, as if all the cattle on Faldonside Hill were routing at once? And then did he not see a great black beast roll down the hillside, like a black ball, and run into the loch, which grew white with foam, and the waves leaped up the banks like a tide rising? What could that be except the kelpie that lives in Cauldshiels Loch, and is just a muckle big water bull? “And what for should there no be water kye, if there ‘s land kye?”

Randal and Jean thought it was very likely there were “kye,” or cattle, in the water. And some Highland people think so still, and believe they have seen the great kelpie come roaring out of the lake; or Shellycoat, whose skin is all crusted like a rock with shells, sitting beside the sea.

The old nurse had other tales, that nobody believes any longer, about Brownies. A Brownie was a very useful creature to have in a house. He was a kind of fairy-man, and he came out in the dark, when everybody had gone to bed, just as mice pop out at night.

He never did anyone any harm, but he sat and warmed himself at the kitchen fire. If any work was unfinished he did it, and made everything tidy that was left out of order. It is a pity there are no such bogles now! If anybody offered the Brownie any payment, even if it was only a silver penny or a new coat, he would take offence and go away.

Other stories the old nurse had, about hidden treasures and buried gold. If you believed her, there was hardly an old stone on the hillside but had gold under it. The very sheep that fed upon the Eildon Hills, which Randal knew well, had yellow teeth because there was so much gold under the grass. Randal had taken two scones, or rolls, in his pocket for dinner, and ridden over to the Eildon Hills. He had seen a rainbow touch one of them, and there he hoped he would find the treasure that always lies at the tail of the rainbow. But he got very soon tired of digging for it with his little dirk, or dagger. It blunted the dagger, and he found nothing. Perhaps he had not marked quite the right place, he thought. But he looked at the teeth of the sheep, and they were yellow; so he had no doubt that there was a gold-mine under the grass, if he could find it.

The old nurse knew that it was very difficult to dig up fairy gold. Generally something happened just when people heard their pick-axes clink on the iron pot that held the treasure. A dreadful storm of thunder and lightning would break out; or the burn would be flooded, and rush down all red and roaring, sweeping away the tools and drowning the digger; or a strange man, that nobody had ever seen before, would come up, waving his arms, and crying out that the Castle was on fire. Then the people would hurry up to the Castle, and find that it was not on fire at all. When they returned, all the earth would be just as it was before they began, and they would give up in despair. Nobody could ever see the man again that gave the alarm.

“Who could he be, nurse?” Randal asked.

“Just one of the good folk, I ‘m thinking; but it’s no weel to be speaking o’ *them*.”

Randal knew that the “good folk” meant the fairies. The old nurse called them the good folk for fear of offending them. She would not speak much about them, except now and then, when the servants had been making merry.

“And is there any treasure hidden near Fairnilee, nursie?” asked little Jean.

“Treasure, my bonny doo! Mair than a’ the men about the toon could carry away frae morning till nicht. Do ye no ken the auld rhyme? —

‘Atween the wet ground and the dry
The gold of Fairnilee doth lie.’

And there’s the other auld rhyme —

‘Between the Camp o’ Rink
And Tweed water clear,

Lie nine kings’ ransoms
  For nine hundred year!’”

Randal and Jean were very glad to hear so much gold was near them as would pay nine kings’ ransoms. They took their small spades and dug little holes in the Camp of Rink, which is a great old circle of stonework, surrounded by a deep ditch, on the top of a hill above the house. But Jean was not a very good digger, and even Randal grew tired. They thought they would wait till they grew bigger, and *then* find the gold.

CHAPTER V. — *The Good Folk*

“EVERYBODY knows there’s fairies,” said the old nurse one night when she was bolder than usual. What she said we will put in English, not Scotch as she spoke it. “But they do not like to be called fairies. So the old rhyme runs: ‘If ye call me imp or elf.

I warn you look well to yourself; If ye call me fairy, Ye ‘ll find me quite contrary; If good neighbour you call me, Then good neighbour I will be; But if you call me kindly sprite, I ‘ll be your friend both day and night.’

So you must always call them ‘good neighbours’ or ‘good folk,’ when you speak of them.”

“Did *you* ever see a fairy, nurse?” asked Randal.

“Not myself, but my mother knew a woman — they called her Tibby Dickson, and her husband was a shepherd, and she had a bairn, as bonny a bairn as ever you saw. And one day she went to the well to draw water, and as she was coming back she heard a loud scream in her house. Then her heart leaped, and fast she ran and flew to the cradle; and there she saw an awful sight — not her own bairn, but a withered imp, with hands like a mole’s, and a face like a frog’s, and a mouth from ear to ear, and two great staring eyes.”

“What was it?” asked Jeanie, in a trembling voice.

“A fairy’s bairn that had not thriven,” said nurse; “and when their bairns do not thrive, they just steal honest folks’ children and carry them away to their own country.”

“And where’s that?” said Randal.

“It’s under the ground,” said nurse, “and there they have gold and silver and diamonds; and there’s the Queen of them all, that’s as beautiful as the day. She has yellow hair-down to her feet, and she has blue eyes, like the sky on a fine day, and her voice like all the mavises singing in the spring. And she is aye dressed in green, and all her court in green; and she rides a white horse with golden bells on the bridle.”

“I would like to go there and see her,” said Randal.

“Oh, never say that, my bairn; you never know who may hear you! And if you go there, how will you come back again? and what will your mother do? and Jean here, and me that’s carried you many a time in weary arms when you were a babe?”

“Can’t people come back again?” asked Randal.

“Some say ‘Yes,’ and some say ‘No.’ There was Tarn Hislop, that vanished away the day before all the lads and your own father went forth to that weary war at Flodden, and the English, for once, by guile, won the day. Well, Tam Hislop, when the news came that all must arm and mount and ride, he could nowhere be found. It was as if the wind had carried him away. High and low they sought him, but there was his clothes and his jack,* and his sword and his spear, but no Tam Hislop. Well, no man heard more of him for seven whole years, not till last year, and then he came back: sore tired he looked, ay, and older than when he was lost. And I met him by the well, and I was frightened; and ‘Tam,’ I said, ‘where have ye been this weary time?’ ‘I have been with them that I will not speak the name-of,’ says he. ‘Ye mean the good folk,’ said I. ‘Ye have said it,’ says he. Then I went up to the house, with my heart in my mouth, and I met Simon Grieve. ‘Simon,’ I says, ‘here’s Tam Hislop come home from the good folk.’ ‘I ‘ll soon send him back to them,’ says he. And he takes a great rung** and lays it about Tarn’s shoulders, calling him coward loon, that ran away from the fighting. And since then Tam has never been seen about the place. But the Laird’s man, of Gala, knows them that say he was in Perth the last seven years, and not in Fairyland at all. But it was Fairyland he told me, and he would not lie to his own mother’s half-brother’s cousin.”

* Jack, a kind of breastplate.

** Rung, a staff.

Randal did not care much for the story of Tam Hislop. A fellow who would let old Simon Grieve beat him could not be worthy of the Fairy Queen.

Randal was about thirteen now, a tall boy, with dark eyes, black hair, a brown face with the red on his cheeks. He had grown up in a country where everything was magical and haunted; where fairy knights rode on the leas after dark, and challenged men to battle. Every castle had its tale of Redcap, the sly spirit, or of the woman of the hairy hand. Every old mound was thought to cover hidden gold. And all was so lonely; the green hills rolling between river and river, with no men on them, nothing but sheep, and grouse, and plover. No wonder that Randal lived in a kind of dream. He would lie and watch the long grass till it locked like a forest, and he thought he could see elves dancing between the green grass stems, that were like fairy trees. He kept wishing that he, too, might meet the Fairy Queen, and be taken into that other world where everything was beautiful.

CHAPTER VI. — *The Wishing Well*

“JEAN,” said Randal one midsummer day, “I am going to the Wishing Well.”

“Oh, Randal,” said Jean, “it is so far away!”

“I can walk it,” said Randal, “and you must come, too; I want you, Jeanie. It ‘s not so very far.”

“But mother says it is wrong to go to Wishing Wells,” Jean answered.

“Why is it wrong?” said Randal, switching at the tall foxgloves with a stick.

“Oh, she says it is a wicked thing, and forbidden by the Church. People who go to wish there, sacrifice to the spirits of the well; and Father Francis told her that it was very wrong.”

“Father Francis is a shaveling,” said Randal. “I heard Simon Grieve say so.”

“What’s a shaveling, Randal?”

“I don’t know: a man that does not fight, I think. I don’t care what a shaveling says: so I mean just to go and wish, and I won’t sacrifice anything. There can’t be any harm in *that!*”

“But, oh Randal, you’ve got your green doublet on!”

“Well! why not?”

“Do you not know it angers the fair — I mean the good folk, — that anyone should wear green on the hill but themselves?”

“I cannot help it,” said Randal. “If I go in and change my doublet, they will ask what I do that for. I ‘ll chance it, green or grey, and wish my wish for all that.”

“And what are you going to wish?”

“I ‘m going to wish to meet the Fairy Queen! Just think how beautiful she must be! dressed all in green, with gold bells on her bridle, and riding a white horse shod with gold! I think I see her galloping through the woods and out across the hill, over the heather.’

“But you will go away with her, and never see me any more,” said Jean.

“No, I won’t; or if I do, I ‘ll come back, with such a horse, and a sword with a gold handle. I’m going to the Wishing Well. Come on!”

Jean did not like to say “No,” and off they went.

Randal and Jean started without taking anything with them to eat. They were afraid to go back to the house for food. Randal said they would be sure to find something somewhere. The Wishing Well was on the top of a hill between Yarrow and Tweed. So they took off their shoes, and waded the Tweed at the shallowest part, and then they walked up the green grassy bank on the other side, till they came to the burn of Peel. Here they passed the old square tower of Peel, and the shepherd dogs came out and barked at them. Randal threw a stone at them, and they ran away with their tails between their legs.

"Don't you think we had better go into Peel, and get some bannocks to eat on the way, Randal?" said Jean.

But Randal said he was not hungry; and, besides, the people at Peel would tell the Fairnilee people where they had gone.

"We'll *wish* for things to eat when we get to the Wishing Well," said Randal. "All sorts of good things — cold venison pasty, and everything you like."

So they began climbing the hill, and they followed the Peel burn. It ran in and out, winding this way and that, and when they did get to the top of the hill, Jean was very tired and very hungry. And she was very disappointed. For she expected to see some wonderful new country at her feet, and there was only a low strip of sunburnt grass and heather, and then another hill-top! So Jean sat down, and the hot sun blazed on her, and the flies buzzed about her and tormented her.

"Come on, Jean," said Randal; "it must be over the next hill!"

So poor Jean got up and followed him, but he walked far too fast for her. When she reached the crest of the next hill, she found a great cairn, or pile of grey stones; and beneath her lay, far, far below, a deep valley covered with woods, and a stream running through it that she had never seen before.

That stream was the Yarrow.

Randal was nowhere in sight, and she did not know where to look for the Wishing Well. If she had walked straight forward through the trees she would have come to it; but she was so tired, and so hungry, and so hot, that she sat down at the foot of the cairn and cried as if her heart would break.

Then she fell asleep.

When Jean woke, it was as dark as it ever is on a midsummer night in Scotland.

It was a soft, cloudy night; not a clear night with a silver sky.

Jeanie heard a loud roaring close to her, and the red light of a great fire was in her sleepy eyes.

In the firelight she saw strange black beasts, with horns, plunging and leaping and bellowing, and dark figures rushing about the flames. It was the beasts that made the roaring. They were bounding about close to the fire, and sometimes in it, and were all mixed in the smoke.

Jeanie was dreadfully frightened, too frightened to scream.

Presently she heard the voices of men shouting on the hill below her. The shouts and the barking of dogs came nearer and nearer.

Then a dog ran up to her, and licked her face, and jumped about her.

It was her own sheepdog, *Yarrow*.

He ran back to the men who were following him, and came again with one of them.

It was old Simon Grieve, very tired, and so much out of breath that he could scarcely speak.

Jean was very glad to see him, and not frightened any longer.

“Oh, Jeanie, my doo’,” said Simon, “where hae ye been? A muckle gliff ye hae gien us, and a weary spiel up the weary braes.”

Jean told him all about it: how she had come with Randal to see the Wishing Well, and how she had lost him, and fallen asleep.

“And sic a nicht for you bairns to wander on the hill,” said Simon. “It’s the nicht o’ St. John, when the guid folk hae power. And there’s a’ the lads burning the Bel fires, and driving the nowt* through them: nae less will serve them. Sic a nicht!”

* Nowt, cattle.

This was the cause of the fire Jean saw, and of the noise of the cattle. On midsummer’s night the country people used to light these fires, and drive the cattle through them. It was an old, old custom come down from heathen times.

Now the other men from Fairnilee had gathered round Jean. Lady Ker had sent them out to look for Randal and her on the hills. They had heard from the good wife at Peel that the children had gone up the burn, and *Yarrow* had tracked them till Jean was found.

CHAPTER VII. — *Where is Randal?*

JEAN was found, but where was Randal? She told the men who had come out to look for her, that Randal had gone on to look for the Wishing Well. So they rolled her up in a big shepherd's plaid, and two of them carried Jean home in the plaid, while all the rest, with lighted torches in their hands, went to look for Randal through the wood.

Jean was so tired that she fell asleep again in her plaid before they reached Fairnilee. She was wakened by the men shouting as they drew near the house, to show that they were coming home. Lady Ker was waiting at the gate, and the old nurse ran down the grassy path to meet them.

"Where's my bairn?" she cried as soon as she was within call.

The men said, "Here 's Mistress Jean, and Randal will be here soon; they have gone to look for him."

"Where are they looking?" cried nurse.

"Just about the Wishing Well."

The nurse gave a scream, and hobbled back to Lady Ker.

"Ma bairn's tint!"* she cried, "ma bairn's tint! They 'll find him never. The good folk have stolen him away from that weary Wishing Well!"

* Tint, lost.

"Hush, nurse," said Lady Ker, "do not frighten Jean."

She spoke to the men, who had no doubt that Randal would soon be found and brought home.

So Jean was put to bed, where she forgot all her troubles; and Lady Ker waited, waited, all night, till the grey light began to come in, about two in the morning.

Lady Ker kept very still and quiet, telling her beads, and praying. But the old nurse would never be still, but was always wandering out, down to the river's edge, listening for the shouts of the shepherds coming home. Then she would come back again, and moan and wring her hands, crying for "her bairn."

About six o'clock, when it was broad daylight and all the birds were singing, the men returned from the hill.

But Randal did not come with them.

Then the old nurse set up a great cry, as the country people do over the bed of someone who has just died.

Lady Ker sent her away, and called Simon Grieve to her own room.

“You have not found the boy yet?” she said, very stately and pale. “He must have wandered over into Yarrow; perhaps he has gone as far as Newark, and passed the night at the castle, or with the shepherd at Foulshiels.”

“No, my Lady,” said Simon Grieve, “some o’ the men went over to Newark, and some to Foulshiels, and other some down to Sir John Murray’s at Philiphaugh; but there’s never a word o’ Randal in a’ the country-side.”

“Did you find no trace of him?” said Lady Ker, sitting down suddenly in the great armchair.

“We went first through the wood, my Lady, by the path to the Wishing Well. And he had been there, for the whip he carried in his hand was lying on the grass. And we found *this*.”

He put his hand in his pouch, and brought out a little silver crucifix, that Randal used always to wear round his neck on a chain.

“This was lying on the grass beside the Wishing Well, my Lady—”

Then he stopped, for Lady Ker had swooned away. She was worn out with watching and with anxiety about Randal.

Simon went and called the maids, and they brought water and wine, and soon Lady Ker came back to herself, with the little silver crucifix in her hand.

The old nurse was crying, and making a great noise.

“The good folk have taken ma bairn,” she said, “this nicht o’ a’ the nichts in the year, when the fairy folk — preserve us frae them! — -have power. But they could nae take the blessed rood o’ grace; it was beyond their strength. If gipsies, or robber folk frae the Debatable Land, had carried away the bairn, they would hae taken him, cross and a’. But the guid folk have gotten him, and Randal Ker will never, never mair come hame to bonny Fairnilee.”

What the old nurse said was what everybody thought. Even Simon Grieve shook his head, and did not like it.

But Lady Ker did not give up hope. She sent horsemen through all the country-side: up Tweed to the Crook, and to Talla; up Yarrow, past Catslack Tower, and on to the Loch of Saint Mary; up Ettrick to Thirlestane and Buccleugh, and over to Gala, and to Branxholme in Teviotdale; and even to Hermitage Castle, far away by Liddel water.

They rode far and rode fast, and at every cottage and every tower they asked “had anyone seen a boy in green?” But nobody had seen Randal through all the country-side. Only a shepherd lad, on Foulshiels hill, had heard bells ringing in the night, and a sound of laughter go past him, like a breeze of wind over the heather.

Days went by, and all the country, was out to look for Randal. Down in Yetholme they sought him, among the gipsies; and across the Eden in merry

Carlisle; and through the Land Debatable, where the robber Armstrongs and Grahames lived; and far down Tweed, past Melrose, and up Jed water, far into the Cheviot hills.

But there never came any word of Randal. He had vanished as if the earth had opened and swallowed him. Father Francis came from Melrose Abbey, and prayed with Lady Ker, and gave her all the comfort he could. He shook his head when he heard of the Wishing Well, but he said that no spirit of earth or air could have power for ever over a Christian soul. But, even when he spoke, he remembered that, once in seven years, the fairy folk have to pay a dreadful tax, one of themselves, to the King of a terrible country of Darkness; and what if they had stolen Randal, to pay the tax with *him!*

This was what troubled good Father Francis, though, like a wise man, he said nothing about it, and even put the thought away out of his own mind.

But you may be sure that the old nurse had thought of this tax on the fairies too, and that *she* did not hold her peace about it, but spoke to everyone that would listen to her, and would have spoken to the mistress if she had been allowed. But when she tried to begin, Lady Ker told her that she had put her own trust in Heaven, and in the Saints. And she gave the nurse such a look when she said that, "if ever Jean heard of this, she would send nurse away from Fairnilee, out of the country," that the old woman was afraid, and was quiet.

As for poor Jean, she was perhaps the most unhappy of them all. She thought to herself, if she had refused to go with Randal to the Wishing Well, and had run in and told Lady Ker, then Randal would never have started to find the Wishing Well. And she put herself in great danger, as she fancied, to find him. She wandered alone on the hills, seeking all the places that were believed to be haunted by fairies.

At every Fairy Knowe, as the country people called the little round green knolls in the midst of the heather, Jean would stoop her ear to the ground, trying to hear the voices of the fairies within. For it was believed that you might hear the sound of their speech, and the trampling of their horses, and the shouts of the fairy children. But no sound came, except the song of the burn flowing by, and the hum of gnats in the air, and the *gock, gock*, the cry of the grouse, when you frighten him in the heather.

Then Jeanie would try another way of meeting the fairies, and finding Randal. She would walk nine times round a Fairy Knowe, beginning from the left side, because then it was fancied that the hill-side would open, like a door, and show a path into Fairyland. But the hill-side never opened, and she never saw a single fairy; not even old Whuppity Stoorie sit with her spinning-wheel in a green glen, spinning grass into gold, and singing her fairy song: —

“I once was young and fair,
My eyes were bright and blue,
As if the sun shone through,
And golden was my hair.
“Down to my feet it rolled
Ruddy and ripe like corn,
Upon an autumn morn,
In heavy waves of gold.
“Now am I grey and old,
And so I sit and spin,
With trembling hand and thin,
This metal bright and cold.
“I would give all the gain,
These heaps of wealth untold
Of hard and glittering gold,
Could I be young again!”

CHAPTER VIII. — *The Ill Years*

SO autumn came, and all the hill-sides were golden with the heather; and the red coral berries of the rowan trees hung from the boughs, and were wet with the spray of the waterfalls in the burns. And days grew shorter, and winter came with snow, but Randal never came back to Fairnilee. Season after season passed, and year after year. Lady Ker's hair grew white like snow, and her face thin and pale — for she fasted often, as was the rule of her Church; all this was before the Reformation. And she slept little, praying half the night for Randal's sake. And she went on pilgrimages to many shrines of the Saints: to St. Boswell and St. Rule's, hard by the great Cathedral of St. Andrew's on the sea. Nay, she went across the Border as far as the Abbey of St. Alban's, and even to St. Thomas's shrine of Canterbury, taking Jean with her. Many a weary mile they rode over hill and dale, and many an adventure they had, and ran many dangers from robbers, and soldiers disbanded from the wars.

But at last they had to come back to Fairnilee; and a sad place it was, and silent without the sound of Randal's voice in the hall, and the noise of his hunting-horn in the woods. None of the people wore mourning for him, though they mourned in their hearts. For to put on black would look as if they had given up all hope. Perhaps most of them thought they would never see him again, but Jeanie was not one who despaired.

The years that had turned Lady Ker's hair white, had made Jean a tall, slim lass— "very bonny," everyone said; and the country people called her the Flower of Tweed. The Yarrow folk had their Flower of Yarrow, and why not the folk of Tweedside? It was now six years since Randal had been lost, and Jeanie was grown a young woman, about seventeen years old. She had always kept a hope that if Randal was with the Fairy Queen he would return perhaps in the seventh year. People said on the country-side that many a man and woman had escaped out of Fairyland after seven years' imprisonment there.

Now the sixth year since Randal's disappearance began very badly, and got worse as it went on. Just when spring should have been beginning, in the end of February, there came the most dreadful snowstorm. It blew and snowed, and blew again, and the snow was as fine as the dust on a road in summer. The strongest shepherds could not hold their own against the tempest, and were "smoored" (or smothered) in the waste. The flocks moved down from the hill-sides, down and down, till all the sheep on a farm would be gathered together in a crowd, under the shelter of a wood in some deep dip of the hills. The storm seemed as if it would never cease; for thirteen days the snow drifted and the wind blew. There was nothing for the sheep to eat, and if there had been hay enough, it would have been impossible to carry it to them. The poor beasts bit at the wool on each other's backs, and so many of them died that the shepherds built walls with the dead bodies to keep the wind and snow away from those that were left alive.

There could be little work done on the farm that spring; and summer came in so cold and wet that the corn could not ripen, but was levelled to the ground. Then autumn was rainy, and the green sheaves lay out in the fields, and sprouted and rotted; so that little corn was reaped, and little flour could be made that year. Then in winter, and as spring came on, the people began to starve. They had no grain, and there were no potatoes in those days, and no rice; nor could corn be brought in from foreign countries. So men and women and children might be seen in the fields, with white pinched faces, gathering nettles to make soup, and digging for roots that were often little better than poison. They ground the bark of the fir trees, and mixed it with the little flour they could get; and they ate such beasts as never are eaten except in time of famine.

It is said that one very poor woman and her daughter always looked healthy and plump in these dreadful times, till people began to suspect them of being witches. And they were taken, and charged before the Sheriff with living by witchcraft, and very likely they would have been burned. So they confessed that they had fed ever since the famine began — on snails! But there were not snails enough for all the country-side, even if people had cared to eat them. So many men and women died, and more were very weak and ill.

Lady Ker spent all her money in buying food for her people. Jean and she lived on as little as they could, and were as careful as they could be. They sold all the beautiful silver plate, except the cup that Randal's father used to drink out of long ago. But almost everything else was sold to buy corn.

So the weary year went on, and Midsummer Night came round — the seventh since the night when Randal was lost.

Then Jean did what she had always meant to do. In the afternoon she slipped out of the house of Fairnilee, taking a little bread in a basket, and saying that she, would go to see the farmer's wife at Peel, which was on the other side of Tweed. But her mind was to go to the Wishing Well.

There she would wish for Randal back again, to help his mother in the evil times. And if she, too, passed away as he had passed out of sight and hearing, then at least she might meet him in that land where he had been carried.

How strange it seemed to Jean to be doing everything over again that she had done seven years before. Then she had been a little girl, and it had been hard work for her to climb up the side of the Peel burn. Now she walked lightly and quickly, for she was tall and well-grown. Soon she reached the crest of the first hill, and remembered how she had sat down there and cried, when she was a child, and how the flies had tormented her. They were buzzing and teasing still; for good times or bad make no difference to them, as long as the sun shines. Then she reached the cairn at the top of the next hill, and far below her lay the forest, and deep within it ran Yarrow, glittering like silver.

Jean paused a few moments, and then struck into a green path which led through the wood. The path wound beneath dark pines; their topmost branches, were red in the evening light, but the shade was black beneath them. Soon the path reached a little grassy glade, and there among cold, wet grasses was the Wishing Well. It was almost hidden by the grass, and looked very black, and cool, and deep. A tiny trickle of water flowed out of it, flowed down to join the Yarrow. The trees about it had scraps of rags and other things pinned to them, offerings made by the country people to the spirits of the well.

CHAPTER IX. — *The White Roses*

JEANIE sat down beside the well. She wished her three wishes: to see Randal, to win him back from Fairyland, and to help the people in the famine. Then she knelt on the grass, and looked down into the well-water. At first she saw nothing but the smooth black water, with little waves trembling in it. Then the water began to grow bright within, as if the sun was shining far, far below. Then it grew as clear as crystal, and she saw through it, like a glass, into a new country — a beautiful country with a wide green plain, and in the midst of the plain a great castle, with golden flags floating from the tops of all the towers. Then she heard a curious whispering noise that thrilled and murmured, as if the music of all the trees that the wind blows through the world were in her ears, as if the noise of all the waves of every sea, and the rustling of heather-bells on every hill, and the singing of all birds were sounding, low and sweet, far, far away. Then she saw a great company of knights and ladies, dressed in green, ride up to the castle; and one knight rode apart from the rest, on a milk-white steed. They all went into the castle gates; but this knight rode slowly and sadly behind the others, with his head bowed on his breast.

Then the musical sounds were still, and the castle and the plain seemed to wave in the water. Next they quite vanished, and the well grew dim, and then grew dark and black and smooth as it had been before. Still she looked, and the little well bubbled up with sparkling foam, and so became still again, like a mirror, till Jeanie could see her own face in it, and beside her face came the reflection of another face, a young man's, dark, and sad, and beautiful. The lips smiled at her, and then Jeanie knew it was Randal. She thought he must be looking over her shoulder, and she leaped up with a cry, and glanced round.

But she was all alone, and the wood about her was empty and silent. The light had gone out of the sky, which was pale like silver, and overhead she saw the evening star.

Then Jeanie thought all was over. She had seen Randal as if it had been in a glass, and she hardly knew him: he was so much older, and his face was so sad. She sighed, and turned to go away over the hills, back, to Fairnilee.

But her feet did not seem to carry her the way she wanted to go. It seemed as if something within her were moving her in a kind of dream. She felt herself going on through the forest, she did not know where. Deeper into the wood she went, and now it grew so dark that she saw scarce anything; only she felt the fragrance of briar roses, and it seemed to her that she was guided towards these roses. Then she knew there was a hand in her hand, though she saw nobody, and the hand seemed to lead her on. And she came to an open place in the forest, and there the silver light fell clear from the sky, and she saw a great shadowy rose tree, covered with white wild roses.

The hand was still in her hand, and Jeanie began to wish for nothing so much in the world as to gather some of these roses. She put out her hand and she plucked one, and there before her stood a strange creature — a dwarf, dressed in yellow and red, with a very angry face.

“Who are you,” he cried, “that pluck my roses without my will?”

“And who are *you?*” said Jeanie, trembling, “and what right have you on the hills of this world?”

Then she made the holy sign of the cross, and the face of the elf grew black, and the light went out of the sky.

She only saw the faint glimmer of the white flowers, and a kind of shadow standing where the dwarf stood.

“I bid you tell me,” said Jeanie, “whether you are a Christian man, or a spirit that dreads the holy sign,” and she crossed him again.

Now all grew dark as the darkest winter’s night. The air was warm and deadly still, and heavy with the scent of the fairy flowers.

In the blackness and the silence, Jeanie made the sacred sign for the third time. Then a clear fresh wind blew on her face, and the forest boughs were shaken, and the silver light grew and gained on the darkness, and she began to see a shape standing where the dwarf had stood. It was far taller than the dwarf and the light grew and grew, and a star looked down out of the night, and Jean saw Randal standing by her. And she kissed him, and he kissed her, and he put his hand in hers, and they went out of the wood together. They came to the crest of the hill and the cairn. Far below them they saw the Tweed shining through an opening among the trees, and the lights in the farm of Peel, and they heard the nightbirds crying, and the bells of the sheep ringing musically as they wandered through the fragrant heather on the hills.

CHAPTER X. — *Out of fairyland*

YOU may fancy, if you can, what joy there was in Fairnilee when Randal came home. They quite forgot the hunger and the hard times, and the old nurse laughed and cried over her bairn that had grown into a tall, strong young man. And to Lady Ker it was all one as if her husband had come again, as he was when first she knew him long ago; for Randal had his face, and his eyes, and the very sound of his voice. They could hardly believe he was not a spirit, and they clasped his hands, and hung on his neck, and could not keep their eyes off him. This was the end of all their sorrow, and it was as if Randal had come back from the dead; so that no people in the world were ever so happy as they were next day, when the sun shone down on the Tweed and the green trees that rustle in the wind round Fairnilee. But in the evening, when the old nurse was out of the way, Randal sat between his mother and Jean, and they each held his hands, as if they could not let him go, for fear he should vanish away from them again. And they would turn round anxiously if anything stirred, for fear it should be the two white deer that sometimes were said to come for people escaped from Fairyland, and then these people must rise and follow them, and never return any more. But the white deer never came for Randal.

So he told them all his adventures, and all that had happened to him since that midsummer night, seven long years ago.

It had been with him as it was with Jean He had gone to the Wishing Well, and wished to see the Fairy Queen and Fairyland. And he had seen the beautiful castle in the well, and a beautiful woman’s face had floated up to meet his on the water. Then he had gathered the white roses, and then he heard a great sound of horses’ feet, and of bells jingling, and a lady rode up, the very lady he had seen in the well. She had a white horse, and she was dressed in green, and she beckoned to Randal to mount on her horse, with her before him on the pillion. And the bells on the bridle rang, and the horse flew faster than the wind.

So they rode and rode through the summer night, and they came to a desert place, and living lands were left far behind. Then the Fairy Queen showed him three paths, one steep and narrow, and beset with briars and thorns: that was the road to goodness and happiness, but it was little trodden or marked with the feet of people that had come and gone.

And there was a wide smooth road that went through fields of lilies, and that was the path of easy living and pleasure.

The third path wound about the wild hillside, through ferns and heather, and that was the way to Elfland, and that way they rode. And still they rode through a country of dark night, and they crossed great black rivers, and they saw neither sun nor moon, but they heard the roaring of the sea. From that country they came into the light, and into the beautiful garden that lies round the castle of the Fairy Queen. There they lived in a noble company of gallant knights and fair ladies. All seemed very mirthful, and they rode, and hunted, and danced; and it was never dark night, nor broad daylight, but like early summer dawn before the sun has risen.

There Randal said that he had quite forgotten his mother and Jean, and the world where he was born, and Fairnilee.

But one day he happened to see a beautiful golden bottle of a strange shape, all set with diamonds, and he opened it. There was in it a sweet-smelling water, as clear as crystal, and he poured it into his hand, and passed his hand over his eyes. Now this water had the power to destroy the "glamour" in Fairyland, and make people see it as it really was. And when Randal touched his eyes with it, lo, everything was changed in a moment. He saw that nothing was what it had seemed. The gold vanished from the embroidered curtains, the light grew dim and wretched like a misty winter day.

The Fairy Queen, that had seemed so happy and beautiful in her bright dress, was a weary, pale woman in black, with a melancholy face and melancholy eyes. She looked as if she had been there for thousands of years, always longing for the sunlight and the earth, and the wind and rain. There were sleepy poppies twisted in her hair, instead of a golden crown. And the knights and ladies were changed. They looked but half alive; and some, in place of their gay green robes, were dressed in rusty mail, pierced with spears and stained with blood. And some were in burial robes of white, and some in dresses torn or dripping with water, or marked with the burning of fire. All were dressed strangely in some ancient fashion; their weapons were old-fashioned, too, unlike any that Randal had ever seen on earth. And their festivals were not of dainty meats, but of cold, tasteless flesh, and of beans, and pulse, and such things as the old heathens, before the coming of the Gospel, used to offer to the dead. It was dreadful to see them at such feasts, and dancing, and riding, and pretending to be merry with hollow faces and unhappy eyes.

And Randal wearied of Fairyland, which now that he saw it clearly looked like a great unending stretch of sand and barren grassy country, beside a grey sea where there was no tide. All the woods were of black cypress trees and poplar, and a wind from the sea drove a sea-mist through them, white and cold, and it blew through the open courts of the fairy castle.

So Randal longed more and more for the old earth he had left, and the changes of summer and autumn? and the streams of Tweed, and the hills, and his friends. Then the voice of Jeanie had come down to him, sounding from far away. And he was sent up by the Fairy Queen in a fairy form, as a hideous dwarf, to frighten her away from the white roses in the enchanted forest.

But her goodness and her courage had saved him, for he was a christened knight, and not a man of the fairy world. And he had taken his own form again beneath her hand, when she signed him with the Cross, and here he was, safe and happy, at home at Fairnilee.

CHAPTER XI. — *The Fairy Bottle*

WE soon grow used to the greatest changes, and almost forget the things that we were accustomed to before. In a day or two, Randal had nearly forgotten what a dull life he had lived in Fairyland, after he had touched his eyes with the strange water in the fairy bottle. He remembered the long, grey sands, and the cold mist, and the white faces of the strange people, and the gloomy queen, no more than you remember the dream you dreamed a week ago. But he did notice that Fairnilee was not the happy place it had been before he went away. Here, too, the faces were pinched and white, and the people looked hungry. And he missed many things that he remembered: the silver cups, and plates, and tankards. And the dinners were not like what they had been, but only a little thin soup, and some oatmeal cakes, and trout taken from the Tweed. The beef and ale of old times were not to be found, even in the houses of the richer people.

Very soon Randal heard all about the famine; you may be sure the old nurse was ready to tell him all the saddest stories.

“Full many a place in evil case Where joy was wont afore, oh! Wi’ Humes that dwell in Leader braes, And Scotts that dwell in Yarrow!”

And the old woman would croon her old prophecies, and tell them how Thomas the Rhymer, that lived in Ercildoune, had foretold all this. And she would wish they could find these hidden treasures that the rhymes were full of, and that maybe were lying — who knew? — quite near them on their own lands.

“Where is the Gold of Fairnilee?” she would cry; “and, oh, Randal! can you no dig for it, and find it, and buy corn out of England for the poor folk that are dying at your doors?

‘Atween the wet ground and the dry
The Gold o’ Fairnilee doth lie.’

There it is, with the sun never glinting on it; there it may bide till the Judgment-day, and no man the better for it.

‘Between the Camp o’ Rink
And Tweed water clear,
Lie nine kings’ ransoms
For nine hundred year.’”

“I doubt it’s fairy gold, nurse,” said Randal, “and would all turn black when it saw the sun. It would just be like this bottle, the only thing I brought with me out of Fairyland.”

Then Randal put his hand in his velvet pouch, and brought out a curious small bottle.* It was shaped like this,

and was made of something that none of them had ever seen before. It was black, and you could see the light through it, and there were green and yellow spots and streaks on it.

* In bottles like this, the old Romans used to keep their tears for their dead friends.

“That ugly bottle looked like gold and diamonds when I found it in Fairyland,” said Randal, “and the water in it smelled as sweet as roses. But when I touched my eyes with it, a drop that ran into my mouth was as salt as the sea, and immediately everything changed: the gold bottle became this glass thing, and the fairies became like folk dead, and the sky grew grey, and all turned waste and ugly. That’s the way with fairy gold, nurse; and if you found it, even, it would all be dry leaves and black bits of coal before the sun set.”

“Maybe so, and maybe no,” said the old nurse. “The Gold o’ Fairnilee may no be fairy gold, but just wealth o’ this world that folk buried here lang syne. But noo, Randal, ma bairn, I maun gang out and see ma sister’s son’s dochter, that’s lying sair sick o’ the kincough* at Rink, and take her some of the physic that I gae you and Jean when you were bairns.”

* Kincough, whooping cough.

So the old nurse went out, and Randal and Jean began to be sorry for the child she was going to visit. For they remembered the taste of the physic that the old nurse made by boiling the bark of elder-tree branches; and I remember it too, for it was the very nastiest thing that ever was tasted, and did nobody any good after all.

Then Randal and Jean walked out, strolling along without much noticing where they went, and talking about the pleasant days when they were children.

CHAPTER XII. — *At the Catrail*

THEY had climbed up the slope of a hill, and they came to a broad old ditch, beneath the shade of a wood of pine trees. Below them was a wide marsh, all yellow with marsh flowers, and above them was a steep slope made of stones. Now the dry ditch, where they sat down on the grass, looking towards the Tweed, with their backs to the hill, was called the *Catrail*. It ran all through that country, and must have been made by men very long ago. Nobody knows who made it, nor why. They did not know in Randal's time, and they do not know now. They do not even know what the name *Catrail* means, but that is what it has always been called. The steep slope of stone above them was named the Camp of Rink; it is a round place, like a ring, and no doubt it was built by the old Britons, when they fought against the Romans, many hundreds of years ago. The stones of which it is built are so large that we cannot tell how men moved them. But it is a very pleasant, happy place on a warm summer day, like the day when Randal and Jean sat there, with the daisies at their feet, and the wild doves cooing above their heads, and the rabbits running in and out among the ferns.

Jean and Randal talked about this and that, chiefly of how some money could be got to buy corn and cattle for the people. Randal was in favour of crossing the Border at night, and driving away cattle from the English side, according to the usual custom.

"Every day I expect to see a pair of spurs in a dish for all our dinner," said Randal.

That was the sign the lady of the house in the Forest used to give her men, when all the beef was done, and more had to be got by fighting.

But Jeanie would not hear of Randal taking spear and jack, and putting himself in danger by fighting the English. They were her own people after all, though she could not remember them and the days before she was carried out of England by Simon Grieve.

"Then," said Randal, "am I to go back to Fairyland, and fetch more gold like this ugly thing?" and he felt in his pocket for the fairy bottle.

But it was not in his pocket.

"What have I done with my fairy treasure?" cried Randal, jumping up. Then he stood still quite suddenly, as if he saw something strange.

He touched Jean on the shoulder, making a sign to her not to speak.

Jean rose quietly, and looked where Randal pointed, and this was what she saw.

She looked over a corner of the old grassy ditch, just where the marsh and the yellow flowers came nearest to it.

Here there stood three tall grey stones, each about as high as a man. Between them, with her back to the single stone, and between the two others facing Randal and Jean, the old nurse was kneeling.

If she had looked up, she could hardly have seen Randal and Jean, for they were within the ditch, and only their eyes were on the level of the rampart.

Besides, she did not look up; she was groping in the breast of her dress for something, and her eyes were on the ground.

“What can the old woman be doing?” whispered Randal. “Why, she has got my fairy bottle in her hand!”

Then he remembered how he had shown her the bottle, and how she had gone out without giving it back to him.

Jean and he watched, and kept very quiet.

They saw the old nurse, still kneeling, take the stopper out of the black strange bottle, and turn the open mouth gently on her hand. Then she carefully put in the stopper, and rubbed her eyes with the palm of her hand. Then she crawled along in their direction, very slowly, as if she were looking for something in the grass.

Then she stopped, still looking very closely at the grass.

Next she jumped to her feet with a shrill cry, clapping her hands; and then she turned, and was actually *running* along the edge of the marsh, towards Fairnilee.

“Nurse!” shouted Randal, and she stopped suddenly, in a fright, and let the fairy bottle fall.

It struck on a stone, and broke to pieces with a jingling sound, and the few drops of strange water in it ran away into the grass.

“Oh, ma bairns, ma bairns, what have you made me do?” cried the old nurse pitifully. “The fairy gift is broken, and maybe the Gold of Fairnilee, that my eyes have looked on, will ne’er be seen again.”

CHAPTER XIII. — *The Gold of Fairnilee.*

RANDAL and Jean went to the old woman and comforted her, though they could not understand what she meant. She cried and sobbed, and threw her arms about; but, by degrees, they found out all the story. When Randal had told her how all he saw in Fairyland was changed after he had touched his eyes with the water from the bottle, the old woman remembered many tales that she had heard about some charm known to the fairies, which helped them to find things hidden, and to see through walls and stones. Then she had got the bottle from Randal, and had stolen out, meaning to touch her eyes with the water, and try whether *that* was the charm and whether she could find the treasure spoken of in the old rhymes. She went

> “Between the Camp o’ Rink
> And Tweed water clear,”

and to the place which lay

> “Between the wet land and the dry,”

that is, between the marsh and the Catrail.

Here she had noticed the three great Stones; which made a kind of chamber on the hill-side, and here she had anointed her eyes with the salt water of the bottle of tears.

Then she had seen through the grass, she declared, and through the upper soil, and she had beheld great quantities of gold. And she was running with the bottle to tell Randal, and to touch his eyes with the water that he might see it also. But, out of Fairyland, the strange water only had its magical power while it was still wet on the eyelashes. This the old nurse soon found; for she went back to the three standing stones, and looked and saw nothing, only grass and daisies. And the fairy bottle was broken, and all the water spilt.

This was her story, and Randal did not know what to believe. But so many strange things had happened to him, that one more did not seem impossible. So he and Jean took the old nurse home, and made her comfortable in her room, and Jean put her to bed, and got her a little wine and an oat-cake.

Then Randal very quietly locked the door outside, and put the key in his pocket. It would have been of no use to tell the old nurse to be quiet about what she thought she had seen.

By this time it was late and growing dark. But that night there would be a moon.

After supper, of which there was very little, Lady Ker went to bed. But Randal and Jean slipped out into the moonlight. They took a sack with them, and Randal carried a pickaxe and a spade. They walked quickly to the three great stones, and waited for a while to hear if all was quiet. Then Jean threw a white cloak round her, and stole about the edges of the camp and the wood. She knew that if any wandering man came by, he would not stay long where such a figure was walking. The night was cool, the dew lay on the deep fern; there was a sweet smell from the grass and from the pine wood.

In the meantime, Randal was digging a long trench with his pickaxe, above the place where the old woman had knelt, as far as he could remember it.

He worked very hard, and when he was in the trench up to his knees, his pickaxe struck against a stone. He dug round it with the spade, and came to a layer of black burnt ashes of bones. Beneath these, which he scraped away, was the large flat stone on which his pick had struck. It was a wide slab of red sandstone, and Randal soon saw that it was the lid of a great stone coffin, such as the ploughshare sometimes strikes against when men are ploughing the fields in the Border country.

Randal had seen these before, when he was a boy, and he knew that there was never much in them, except ashes and one or two rough pots of burnt clay.

He was much disappointed.

It had seemed as if he was really coming to something, and, behold, it was only an old stone coffin!

However, he worked on till he had cleared the whole of the stone coffin-lid. It was a very large stone chest, and must have been made, Randal thought, for the body of a very big man.

With the point of his pickaxe he raised the lid.

In the moonlight he saw something of a strange shape.

He put down his hand, and pulled it out.

It was an image, in metal, about a foot high, and represented a beautiful woman, with wings on her shoulders, sitting on a wheel.

Randal had never seen an image like this; but in an old book, which belonged to the Monks of Melrose, he had seen, when he was a boy, a picture of such a woman.

The Monks had told him that she was Fortune, with her swift wings that carry her from one person to another, as luck changes, and with her wheel that she turns with the turning of chance in the world.

The image was very heavy. Randal rubbed some of the dirt and red clay off, and found that the metal was yellow. He cut it with his knife; it was soft. He cleaned a piece, which shone bright and unrusted in the moonlight, and touched it with his tongue. Then he had no doubt any more. *The image was gold!*

Randal knew now that the old nurse had not been mistaken. With the help of the fairy water she had seen *The Gold of Fairnilee*. He called very softly to Jeanie, who came glimmering in her white robes through the wood, looking herself like a fairy. He put the image in her hand, and set his finger on his lips to show that she must not speak.

Then he went back to the great stone coffin, and began to grope in it with his hands. There was much earth in it that had slowly sifted through during the many years that it, had been buried. But there was also a great round bowl of metal and a square box.

Randal got out the bowl first. It was covered with a green rust, and had a lid; in short, it was a large ancient kettle, such as soldiers use in camp. Randal got the lid off, and, behold, it was all full of very ancient gold coins, not Greek nor Roman, but like such in use in Briton before Julius Caesar came.

The box was of iron. On the lid, in the moonshine, Jeanie could read the letters S. P. Q. R., but she did not know what they meant. The box had been locked, and chained, and clamped with iron bars. But all was so rusty that the bars were easily broken, and the lid torn off.

Then the moon shone on bars of gold, and on great plates and dishes of gold and silver, marked with letters, and with what Randal thought were crests. Many of the cups were studded with red and green and blue stones. And there were beautiful plates and dishes, purple, gold, and green; and one of these fell, and broke into a thousand pieces, for it was of some strange kind of glass. There were three gold sword-hilts, carved wonderfully into the figures of strange beasts with wings, and heads like lions.

Randal and Jean looked at it and marvelled, and Jean sang in a low, sweet voice:

“Between the Camp o’ Rink
And Tweed water clear,
Lie nine kings’ ransoms
For nine hundred year.”*

Nobody ever saw so much treasure in all broad Scotland.

Jean and Randal passed the rest of the night in hiding what they had found. Part they hid in the secret chamber of Fairnilee, of which only Jean and Lady Ker and Randal knew the secret. The rest they stowed away in various places. Then Randal filled the earth into the trench, and cast wood on the place, and set fire to the wood, so that next day there was nothing there but ashes and charred earth.

You will not need to be told what Randal did, now that he had treasure in plenty. Some he sold in France, to the king, Henry II., and some in Rome, to the Pope; and with the money which they gave him he bought corn and cattle in England, enough to feed all his neighbours, and stock the farms, and sow the fields for next year. And Fairnilee became a very rich and fortunate house, for Randal married Jean, and soon their children were playing on the banks of the Tweed, and rolling down the grassy slope to the river, to bathe on hot days. And the old nurse lived long and happy among her new bairns, and often she told them how it was *she* who really found the Gold of Fairnilee.

You may wonder what the gold was, and how it came there? Probably Father Francis, the good Melrose Monk, was right. He said that the iron box and the gold image of Fortune, and the kettle full of coins, had belonged to some regiment of the Roman army: the kettle and the coins, they must have taken from the Britons; the box and all the plate were their own, and brought from Italy. Then they, in their turn, must have been defeated by some of the fierce tribes beyond the Roman wall, and must have lost all their treasure. That must have been buried by the victorious enemy; and *they*, again, must have been driven from their strong camp at Rink, either by some foes from the north, or by a new Roman army from the south. So all the gold lay at Fairnilee for many hundred years, never quite forgotten, as the old rhyme showed, but never found till it was discovered, in their sore need, by the old nurse and Randal and Jean.

As for Randal and Jean, they lived to be old, and died on one day, and they are buried at Dryburgh in one tomb, and a green tree grows over them; and the Tweed goes murmuring past their grave, and past the grave of Sir Walter Scott.

THE END

PRINCE PRIGIO

Illustrated by Gordon Browne

This was the title of a literary fairy tale first published in 1889. The plot begins with the introduction of a queen who does not believe in fairies. After many childless years, she and the king finally had a boy, Prigio. When the queen refused to invite the fairies to the christening, none of the nobles would attend, and so the king and queen were alone when the fairies arrived and presented the child with gifts. Among the gifts were a never-empty purse, seven-league boots, a cap of darkness which would make him invisible, a wishing cap, a magic carpet, and also beauty, courage, and luck, but the last fairy decreed, “My child, you shall be too clever!”

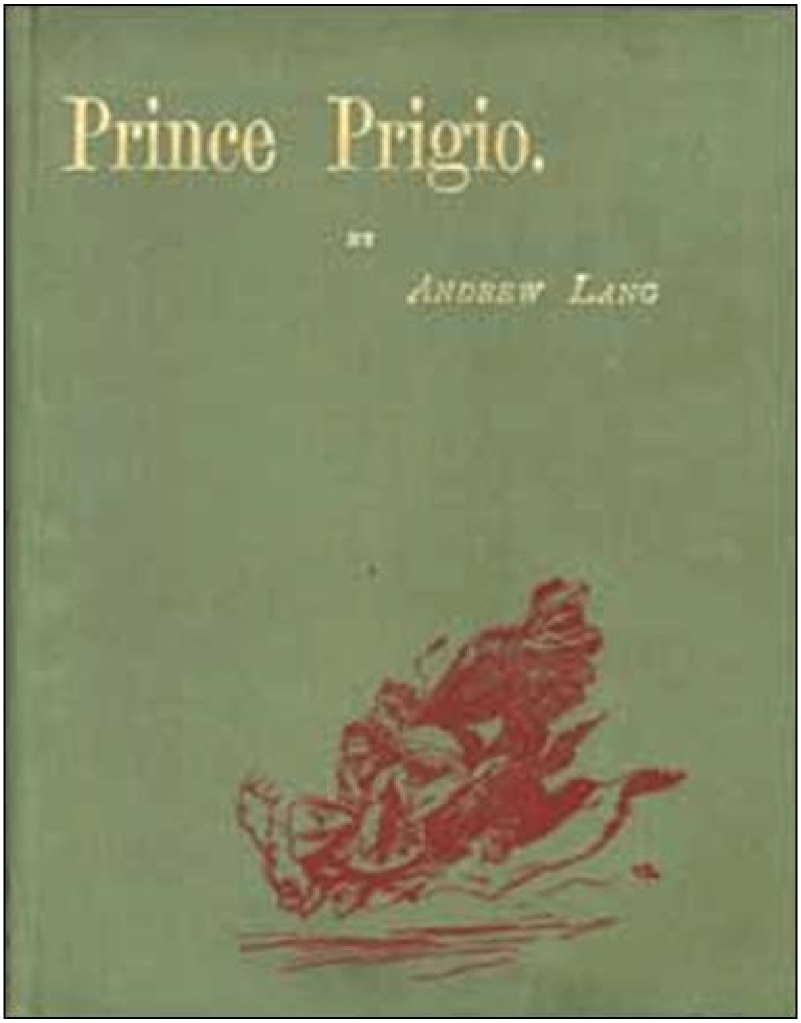
Prince Prigio.
BY
ANDREW LANG

The first edition

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TO CHILDREN.

The Author of this book is also the Editor of the Blue, Red, Greenland Yellow Fairy Books. He has always felt rather an impostor, because so many children seem to think that he made up these books out of his own head. Now he only picked up a great many old fairy tales, told in French, German, Greek, Chinese, Red Indian, Russian, and other languages, and had them translated and printed, with pictures. He is glad that children like them, but he must confess that they should be grateful to old forgotten people, long ago, who first invented these tales, and who knew more about fairies than we can hope to do.

My Own Fairy Book, which you now have in your hands, was made up altogether out of his own head by the Author, of course with the help of the Historical Papers in the kingdom of Pantouflia. About that ancient kingdom very little is known. The natives speak German; but the Royal Family, as usual, was of foreign origin. Just as England has had Norman, Scottish, and, at present, a line of German monarchs, so the kings of Pantouflia are descended from an old Greek family, the Hypnotidæ, who came to Pantouflia during the Crusades. They wanted, they explained, not to be troubled with the Crusades, which they thought very injudicious and tiresome. The Crest of the regal house is a Dormouse, dormant, proper, on a field vert, and the Motto, when translated out of the original Greek, means, *Anything for a Quiet Life*.

It may surprise the young reader that princes like Prigio and Ricardo, whose feet were ever in the stirrup, and whose lances were always in rest, should have descended from the family of the Hypnotidæ, who were remarkably lazy and peaceful. But these heroes doubtless inherited the spirit of their great ancestress, whose story is necessary to be known. On leaving his native realm during the Crusades, in search of some secure asylum, the founder of the Pantouflian monarchy landed in the island of Cyprus, where, during the noon-tide heat, he lay down to sleep in a cave. Now in this cave dwelt a dragon of enormous size and unamiable character. What was the horror of the exiled prince when he was aroused from slumber by the fiery breath of the dragon, and felt its scaly coils about him!

“Oh, hang your practical jokes!” exclaimed the prince, imagining that some of his courtiers were playing a prank on him.

“Do you call *this* a joke?” asked the dragon, twisting its forked tail into a line with his royal highness’s eye.

“Do take that thing away,” said the prince, “and let a man have his nap peacefully.’’

“Kiss me!” cried the dragon, which had already devoured many gallant knights for declining to kiss it.

“Give you a kiss,” murmured the prince; “oh, certainly, if that’s all! *Anything for a quiet life.*”

So saying, he kissed the dragon, which instantly became a most beautiful princess; for she had lain enchanted as a dragon, by a wicked magician, till somebody should be bold enough to kiss her.

“My love! my hero! my lord! how long I have waited for thee; and now I am eternally thine own!”

So murmured, in the most affectionate accents, the Lady Dragonissa, as she was now called.

Though wedded to a bachelor life, the prince was much too well-bred to make any remonstrance.

The Lady Dragonissa, a female of extraordinary spirit, energy, and ambition, took command of him and of his followers, conducted them up the Danube, seized a principality whose lord had gone crusading, set her husband on the throne, and became in course of time the mother of a little prince, who, again, was great, great, great, great-grandfather of our Prince Prigio.

From this adventurous Lady Dragonissa, Prince Prigio derived his character for gallantry. But her husband, it is said, was often heard to remark, by a slight change of his family motto:

“*Anything for a Quiet Wife!*”

You now know as much as the Author does of the early history of Pantouflia.

As to the story called *The Gold of Fairnilee*, such adventures were extremely common in Scotland long ago, as may be read in many of the works of Sir Walter Scott and of the learned in general. Indeed, Fairnilee is the very place where the fairy queen appointed to meet her lover, Thomas the Rhymer.

With these explanations, the Author leaves to the judgment of young readers his *Own Fairy Book.*

Dedicated

TO

ALMA, THYRA, EDITH, ROSALIND, NORNA, CECILY, AND VIOLET

PREFACE.

In compiling the following History from the Archives of Pantouflia, the Editor has incurred several obligations to the Learned. The Return of Benson (chapter xii.) is the fruit of the research of the late Mr. Allen Quatermain, while the final *wish* of Prince Prigio was suggested by the invention or erudition of a Lady.

A study of the *Firedrake* in South Africa, where he is called the *Nanaboulélé*, a difficult word-has been published in French (translated from the Basuto language) by M. Paul Sébillot, in the *Revue des Traditione Populaires*. For the *Rémora*, the Editor is indebted to the *Voyage à la Lune* of M. Cyrano de Bergérac.

PRINCE PRIGIO.

CHAPTER I. — *How the Fairies were not Invited to Court*

ONCE upon a time there reigned in Pantouflia a king and a queen. With almost everything else to make them happy, they wanted one thing: they had no children. This vexed the king even more than the queen, who was very clever and learned, and who had hated dolls when she was a child. However, she too, in spite of all the books she read and all the pictures she painted, would have been glad enough to be the mother of a little prince. The king was anxious to consult the fairies, but the queen would not hear of such a thing. She did not believe in fairies: she said that they had never existed; and that she maintained, though *The History of the Royal Family* was full of chapters about nothing else.

Well, at long and at last they had a little boy, who was generally regarded as the finest baby that had ever been seen. Even her majesty herself remarked that, though she could never believe all the courtiers told her, yet he certainly was a fine child — a very fine child.

Now, the time drew near for the christening party, and the king and queen were sitting at breakfast in their summer parlour talking over it. It was a splendid room, hung with portraits of the royal ancestors. There was Cinderella, the grandmother of the reigning monarch, with her little foot in her glass slipper thrust out before her. There was the Marquis de Carabas, who, as everyone knows, was raised to the throne as prince consort after his marriage with the daughter of the king of the period. On the arm of the throne was seated his celebrated cat, wearing boots. There, too, was a portrait of a beautiful lady, sound asleep: this was Madame La Belle au Bois-dormant, also an ancestress of the royal family. Many other pictures of celebrated persons were hanging on the walls.

“You have asked all the right people, my dear?” said the king.

“Everyone who should be asked,” answered the queen.

“People are so touchy on these occasions,” said his majesty. “You have not forgotten any of our aunts?”

“No; the old cats!” replied the queen; for the king’s aunts were old-fashioned, and did not approve of her, and she knew it. “They are very kind old ladies in their way,” said the king; “and were nice to me when I was a boy.”

Then he waited a little, and remarked:

“The fairies, of course, you have invited? It has always been usual, in our family, on an occasion like this; and I think we have neglected them a little of late."

"How *can* you be so *absurd?*" cried the queen. "How often must I tell you that there are *no* fairies? And even if there were — but, no matter; pray let us drop the subject."

"They are very old friends of our family, my dear, that's all," said the king timidly. "Often and often they have been godmothers to us. One, in particular, was most kind and most serviceable to Cinderella I., my own grandmother."

"Your grandmother!" interrupted her majesty. "Fiddle-de-dee! If anyone puts such nonsense into the head of my little Prigio — —"

But here the baby was brought in by the nurse, and the queen almost devoured it with kisses. And so the fairies were not invited! It was an extraordinary thing, but none of the nobles could come to the christening party when they learned that the fairies had not been asked. Some were abroad; several were ill; a few were in prison among the Saracens; others were captives in the dens of ogres. The end of it was that the king and queen had to sit down alone, one at each end of a very long table, arrayed with plates and glasses for a hundred guests — for a hundred guests who never came!

"Any soup, my dear?" shouted the king, through a speaking-trumpet; when, suddenly, the air was filled with a sound like the rustling of the wings of birds.

Flitter, flitter, flutter, went the noise; and when the queen looked up, lo and behold! on every seat was a lovely fairy, dressed in green, each with a *most interesting-looking parcel* in her hand. Don't you like opening parcels? The king did, and he was most friendly and polite to the fairies. But the queen, though she saw them distinctly, took no notice of them. You see, she did not believe in fairies, nor in her own eyes, when she saw them. So she talked across the fairies to the king, just as if they had not been there; but the king behaved as politely as if they were *real* — which, of course, they were.

When dinner was over, and when the nurse had brought in the baby, all the fairies gave him the most magnificent presents. One offered a purse which could never be empty; and one a pair of seven-leagued boots; and another a cap of darkness, that nobody might see the prince when he put it on; and another a wishing-cap; and another a carpet, on which, when he sat, he was carried wherever he wished to find himself. Another made him beautiful for ever; and another, brave; and another, lucky: but the last fairy of all, a cross old thing, crept up and said, "My child, you shall be *too* clever!"

This fairy's gift would have pleased the queen, if she had believed in it, more than anything else, because she was so clever herself. But she took no notice at all; and the fairies went each to her own country, and none of them stayed there at the palace, where nobody believed in them, except the king, a little. But the queen tossed all their nice boots and caps, carpets, purses, swords, and all, away into a dark lumber-room; for, of course, she thought that they were *all nonsense*, and merely old rubbish out of books, or pantomime “properties.”

CHAPTER II. — *Prince Prigio and his family*

WELL, the little prince grew up. I think I’ve told you that his name was Prigio — did I not? Well, that *was* his name.

You cannot think how clever he was. He argued with his nurse as soon as he could speak, which was very soon. He argued that he did not like to be washed, because the soap got into his eyes. However, when he was told all about the *pores of the skin*, and how they could not be healthy if he was not washed, he at once ceased to resist, for he was very reasonable. He argued with his father that he did not see why there should be kings who were rich, while beggars were poor; and why the king — who was a little greedy — should have poached eggs and plum-cake at afternoon tea, while many other persons went without dinner. The king was so surprised and hurt at these remarks that he boxed the prince’s ears, saying, “I ‘ll teach you to be too clever, my lad.” Then he remembered the awful curse of the oldest fairy, and was sorry for the rudeness of the queen. And when the prince, after having his ears boxed, said that “force was no argument,” the king went away in a rage.

Indeed, I cannot tell you how the prince was hated by all! He would go down into the kitchen, and show the cook how to make soup. He would visit the poor people’s cottage, and teach them how to make the beds, and how to make plum pudding out of turnip-tops, and venison cutlets out of rusty bacon. He showed the fencing-master how to fence, and the professional cricketer how to bowl, and instructed the rat-catcher in breeding terriers. He set sums to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and assured the Astronomer Royal that the sun does not go round the earth — which, for my part, I believe it does. The young ladies of the court disliked dancing with him, in spite of his good looks, because he was always asking, “Have you read this?” and “Have you read that?” — and when they said they hadn’t, he sneered; and when they said they *had*, he found them out.

He found out all his tutors and masters in the same horrid way; correcting the accent of his French teacher, and trying to get his German tutor not to eat peas with his knife. He also endeavoured to teach the queen-dowager, his grandmother, an art with which she had long been perfectly familiar! In fact, he knew everything better than anybody else; and the worst of it was that he *did*: and he never was in the wrong, and he always said, “Didn’t I tell you so?” And, what was more, he *had!*

As time went on, Prince Prigio had two younger brothers, whom everybody liked: They were not a bit clever, but jolly. Prince Alphonso, the third son, was round, fat, good-humoured, and as brave as a lion. Prince Enrico, the second, was tall, thin, and a “little sad, but *never* too clever.” Both were in love with two of their own cousins (with the approval of their dear parents); and all the world said, “What nice, unaffected princes they are!” But Prigio nearly got the country into several wars by being too clever for the foreign ambassadors. Now, as Pantouflia was a rich, lazy country, which hated fighting, this was very unpleasant, and did not make people love Prince Prigio any better.

CHAPTER III. — *About the Firedrake.*

OF all the people who did not like Prigio, his own dear papa, King Grognio, disliked him most. For the king knew he was not clever himself. When he was in the counting-house, counting out his money, and when he happened to say, “Sixteen shillings and fourteen and twopence are three pounds, fifteen,” it made him wild to hear Prigio whisper, “One pound, ten and twopence,” — which, of course, it *is*. And the king was afraid that Prigio would conspire, and get made king himself — which was the last thing Prigio really wanted. He much preferred to idle about, and know everything without seeming to take any trouble.

Well, the king thought and thought. How was he to get Prigio out of the way, and make Enrico or Alphonso his successor? He read in books about it; and all the books showed that, if a king sent his three sons to do anything, it was always the youngest who did it, and got the crown. And he wished he had the chance. Well, it arrived at last.

There was a very hot summer! It began to be hot in March.’ All the rivers were dried up. The grass did not grow. The corn did not grow. The thermometers exploded with heat. The barometers stood at Set Fair. The people were much distressed, and came and broke the palace win-dows — as they usually do when things go wrong in Pantouflia.

The king consulted the learned men about the Court, who told him that probably a FIREDRAKE was in the neighbourhood.

Now, the Firedrake is a beast, or bird, about the bigness of an elephant. Its body is made of iron, and it is always red-hot. A more terrible and cruel beast cannot be imagined; for, if you go near it, you are at once broiled by the Firedrake.

But the king was not ill-pleased: “for,” thought he, “of course my three sons must go after the brute, the eldest first; and, as usual, it will kill the first two, and be beaten by the youngest. It is a little hard on Enrico, poor boy; but *anything* to get rid of that Prigio!”

Then the king went to Prigio, and said that his country was in danger, and that he was determined to leave the crown to whichever of them would bring him the horns (for it has horns) and tail of the Firedrake.

“It is an awkward brute to tackle,” the king said, “but you are the oldest, my lad; go where glory waits you! Put on your armour, and be off with you!”

This the king said, hoping that either the Firedrake would roast Prince Prigio alive (which he could easily do, as I have said; for he is all over as hot as a red-hot poker), or that, if the prince succeeded, at least his country would be freed from the monster.

But the prince, who was lying on the sofa doing sums in compound division, for fun, said in the politest way:

"Thanks to the education your majesty has given me, I have learned that the Firedrake, like the siren, the fairy, and so forth, is a fabulous animal which does not exist. But even granting, for the sake of argument, that there is a Firedrake, your majesty is well aware that there is no kind of use in sending *me*. It is always the eldest son who goes out first, and comes to grief on these occasions, and it is always the third son that succeeds. Send Alphonso" (this was the youngest brother), "and *he* will do the trick at once. At least, if he fails, it will be most unusual, and Enrico can try his luck."

Then he went back to his arithmetic and his slate, and the king had to send for Prince Alphonso and Prince Enrico. They both came in very warm; for they had been whipping tops, and the day was unusually hot.

"Look here," said the king, "just you two younger ones look at Prigio! You see how hot it is, and how coolly he takes it, and the country suffering; and all on account of a Firedrake, you know, which has apparently built his nest not far off. Well, I have asked that lout of a brother of yours to kill it, and he says—"

"That he does not believe in Firedrakes," interrupted Prigio, "The weather's warm enough without going out hunting!"

"Not believe in Firedrakes!" cried Alphonso. "I wonder what you *do* believe in! Just let me get at the creature!" for he was as brave as a lion. "Hi! Page, my chain-armour, helmet, lance, and buckler! *A Molinda! A Molinda!*" which was his *war-cry*.

The page ran to get the armour; but it was *so uncommonly hot* that he dropped it, and put his fingers in his mouth, crying!

"You had better put on flannels, Alphonso, for this kind of work," said Prigio. "And if I were you, I'd take a light garden-engine, full of water, to squirt at the enemy."

"Happy thought!" said Alphonso. "I will!" And off he went, kissed his dear Molinda, bade her keep a lot of dances for him (there was to be a dance when he had killed the Firedrake), and then he rushed to the field!

But he never came back any more!

Everyone wept bitterly — everyone but Prince Prigio; for he thought it was a practical joke, and said that Alphonso had taken the opportunity to start off on his travels and see the world.

“There is some dreadful mistake, sir,” said Prigio to the king. “You know as well as I do that the youngest son has always succeeded, up to now. But I entertain great hopes of Enrico!”

And he grinned; for he fancied it was all *nonsense*, and that there were no Firedrakes.

Enrico was present when Prigio was consoling the king in this unfeeling way.

“Enrico, my boy,” said his majesty, “the task awaits you, and the honour. When *you* come back with the horns and tail of the Firedrake, you shall be crown prince; and Prigio shall be made an usher at the Grammar School — it is all he is fit for.”

Enrico was not quite so confident as Alphonso had been. He insisted on making his will; and he wrote a poem about the pleasures and advantages of dying young. This is part of it:

The violet is a blossom sweet,
  That droops before the day is done —
Slain by thine overpowering heat, O Sun!
  And I, like that sweet purple flower,
May roast, or boil, or broil, or bake,
  If burned by thy terrific power, Firedrake!

This poem comforted Enrico more or less, and he showed it to Prigio. But the prince only laughed, and said that the second line of the last verse was not very good; for violets do not “roast, or boil, or broil, or bake.”

Enrico tried to improve it, but could not. So he read it to his cousin, Lady Kathleena, just as it was; and she cried over it (though I don’t think she understood it); and Enrico cried a little, too.

However, next day he started, with a spear, a patent refrigerator, and a lot of the bottles people throw at fires to put them out.

But *he* never came back again!

After shedding torrents of tears, the king summoned Prince Prigio to his presence.

“Dastard!” he said. “Poltroon! *Your* turn, which should have come first, has arrived at last. *You* must fetch me the horns and the tail of the Fired rake. Probably you will be grilled, thank goodness; but who will give me back Enrico and Alphonso?”

“Indeed, your majesty,” said Prigio, “you must permit me to correct your policy. Your only reason for dispatching your sons in pursuit of this dangerous but I believe *fabulous* animal, was to ascertain which of us would most worthily succeed to your throne, at the date — long may it be deferred! — of your lamented decease. Now, there can be no further question about the matter. I, unworthy as I am, represent the sole hope of the royal family. Therefore to send me after the Firedrake were* both dangerous and unnecessary. Dangerous, because, if he treats me as you say he did my brothers — my unhappy brothers, — the throne of Pantouflia will want an heir. But, if I do come back alive — why, I cannot be more the true heir than I am at present; now *can* I? Ask the Lord Chief Justice, if you don't believe *me*."

* Subjunctive mood! He was a great grammarian!

These arguments were so clearly and undeniably correct that the king, unable to answer them, withdrew into a solitary place where he could express himself with freedom, and give rein to his passions.

CHAPTER IV. — *How Prince Prigio was deserted by Everybody*

MEANWHILE, Prince Prigio had to suffer many unpleasant things. Though he was the crown prince (and though his arguments were unanswerable), everybody shunned him for a coward. The queen, who did not believe in Firedrakes, alone took his side. He was not only avoided by all, but he had most disagreeable scenes with his own cousins, Lady Molinda and Lady Kathleena. In the garden Lady Molinda met him walking alone, and did not bow to him.

“Dear Molly,” said the prince, who liked her, “how have I been so unfortunate as to offend you?”

“My name, sir, is Lady Molinda,” she said, very proudly; “and you have sent your own brother to his grave!”

“Oh, excuse me,” said the prince, “I am certain he has merely gone off on his travels. He’ll come back when he’s tired: there *are* no Firedrakes; a French writer says they are ‘purement fabuleux, purely fabulous, you know.”

“Prince Alphonso has gone on his travels, and will come back when he is tired! And was he then — tired — of *me*?” cried poor Molinda, bursting into tears, and forgetting her dignity.

“Oh! I beg your pardon, I never noticed; I’m sure I am very sorry,” cried the prince, who, never having been in love himself, never thought of other people. And he tried to take Molinda’s hand, but she snatched it from him and ran away through the garden to the palace, leaving Prince Prigio to feel foolish, for once, and ashamed.

As for Lady Kathleena, she swept past him like a queen, without a word. So the prince, for all his cleverness, was not happy.

After several days had gone by, the king returned from the solitary place where he had been speaking his mind. He now felt calmer and better; and so at last he came back to the palace. But on seeing Prince Prigio, who was lolling in a hammock, translating Egyptian hieroglyphs into French poetry for his mother, the king broke out afresh, and made use of the most cruel and impolite expressions.

At last, he gave orders that all the Court should pack up and move to a distant city; and that Prince Prigio should be left alone in the palace by himself. For he was quite unendurable, the king said, and he could not trust his own temper when he thought of him. And he grew so fierce, that even the queen was afraid of him now.

The poor queen cried a good deal; Prigio being her favourite son, on account of his acknowledged ability and talent. But the rest of the courtiers were delighted at leaving Prince Prigio behind. For his part, he, very good-naturedly, showed them the best and shortest road to Falkenstein, the city where they were going; and easily proved that neither the chief secretary for geography, nor the general of the army, knew anything about the matter — which, indeed, they did not.

The ungrateful courtiers left Prigio with hoots and yells, for they disliked him so much that they forgot he would be king one day. He therefore reminded them of this little fact in future history, which made them feel uncomfortable enough, and then lay down in his hammock and went to sleep.

When he wakened, the air was cold and the day was beginning to grow dark. Prince Prigio thought he would go down and dine at a tavern in the town, for no servants had been left with him. But what was his annoyance when he found that his boots, his sword, his cap, his cloak — all his clothes, in fact, except those he wore, — had been taken away by the courtiers, merely to spite him! His wardrobe had been ransacked, and everything that had not been carried off had been cut up, burned, and destroyed. Never was such a spectacle of wicked mischief. It was as if hay had been made of everything he possessed. What was worse, he had not a penny in his pocket to buy new things; and his father had stopped his allowance of fifty thousand pounds a month.

Can you imagine anything more cruel and *unjust* than this conduct? for it was not the prince’s fault that he was so clever. The cruel fairy had made him so. But, even if the prince had been born clever (as may have happened to you), was he to be blamed for that? The other people were just as much in fault for being born so stupid; but the world, my dear children, can never be induced to remember this. If you are clever, you will find it best not to let people know it — if you want them to like you.

Well, here was the prince in a pretty plight. Not a pound in his pocket, not a pair of boots to wear, not even a cap to cover his head from the rain; nothing but cold meat to eat, and never a servant to answer the bell.

CHAPTER V. — *What Prince Prigio found in the garret.*

THE prince walked from room to room of the palace; but, unless he wrapped himself up in a curtain, there was nothing for him to wear when he went out in the rain. At last he climbed up a turret-stair in the very oldest part of the castle, where he had never been before; and at the very top was a little round room, a kind of garret. The prince pushed in the door with some difficulty — not that it was locked, but the handle was rusty, and the wood had swollen with the damp. The room was very dark; only the last grey light of the rainy evening came through a slit of a window, one of those narrow windows that they used to fire arrows out of in old times.

But in the dusk the prince saw a heap of all sorts of things lying on the floor and on the table. There were two caps; he put one on — an old, grey, ugly cap it was, made of felt. There was a pair of boots; and he kicked off his slippers, and got into *them*. They were a good deal worn, but fitted as if they had been made for him. On the table was a purse with just three gold coins — old ones, too — in it; and this, as you may fancy, the prince was very well pleased to put in his pocket. A sword, with a sword-belt, he buckled about his waist; and the rest of the articles, a regular collection of odds and ends, he left just where they were lying. Then he ran downstairs, and walked out of the hall door.

CHAPTER VI. — *What Happened to Prince Prigio in Town*

BY this time the prince was very hungry. The town was just three miles off; but he had such a royal appetite, that he did not like to waste it on bad cookery, and the people of the royal town were bad cooks. “I wish I were in ‘The Bear,’ at Gluckstein,” said he to himself; for he remembered that there was a very good cook there. But, then, the town was twenty-one leagues away — sixty-three long miles!

No sooner had the prince said this, and taken just three steps, than he found himself at the door of the “Bear Inn” at Gluckstein!

“This is the most extraordinary dream,” said he to himself; for he was far too clever, of course, to believe in seven-league boots. Yet he had a pair on at that very moment, and it was they which had carried him in three strides from the palace to Gluckstein!

The truth is, that the prince, in looking about the palace for clothes, had found his way into that very old lumber-room where the magical gifts of the fairies had been thrown by his clever mother, who did not believe in them. But this, of course, the prince did not know.

Now you should be told that seven-league boots only take those prodigious steps when you say you *want* to go a long distance. Otherwise they would be very inconvenient — when you only want to cross the room, for example. Perhaps this has not been explained to you by your governess?

Well, the prince walked into “The Bear,” and it seemed odd to him that nobody took any notice of him. And yet his face was as well known as that of any man in Pantouflia; for everybody had seen it, at least in pictures. He was so puzzled by not being attended to as usual, that *he quite forgot to take off his cap*.

He sat down at a table, however, and shouted “*Kellner!*” at which all the waiters jumped, and looked round in every direction, but nobody came to him. At first he thought they were too busy, but presently another explanation occurred to him.

“The king,” said he to himself, “has threatened to execute anybody who speaks to me, or helps me in any way. Well, I don’t mean to starve in the midst of plenty, anyhow; here goes!”

The prince rose, and went to the table in the midst of the room, where a huge roast turkey had just been placed. He helped himself to half the breast, some sausages, chestnut stuffing, bread sauce, potatoes, and a bottle of red wine — Burgundy. He then went back to a table in a corner, where he dined very well, nobody taking any notice of him. When he had finished, he sat watching the other people dining, and smoking his cigarette. As he was sitting thus, a very tall man, an officer in the uniform of the Guards, came in, and, walking straight to the prince's table, said: "Kellner, clean this table, and bring in the bill of fare."

With these words, the officer sat down suddenly in the prince's lap, as if he did not see him at all. He was a heavy man, and the prince, enraged at the insult, pushed him away and jumped to his feet. As he did so, *his cap dropped off*. The officer fell on his knees at once, crying:

"Pardon, my prince, pardon! I never saw you!"

This was more than the prince could be expected to believe.

"Nonsense! Count Frederick von Matterhorn," he said; "you must be intoxicated. Sir! you have insulted your prince and your superior officer. Consider yourself under arrest! You shall be sent to a prison to-morrow."

On this, the poor officer appealed piteously to everybody in the tavern. They all declared that they had not seen the prince, nor ever had an idea that he was doing them the honour of being in the neighbourhood of their town.

More and more offended, and convinced that there was a conspiracy to annoy and insult him, the prince shouted for the landlord, called for his bill, threw down his three pieces of gold without asking for change, and went into the street.

"It is a disgraceful conspiracy," he said. "The king shall answer for this! I shall write to the newspapers at once!"

He was not put in a better temper by the way in which people hustled him in the street. They ran against him exactly as if they did not see him, and then staggered back in the greatest surprise, looking in every direction for the person they had jostled. In one of these encounters, the prince pushed so hard against a poor old beggar woman that she fell down. As he was usually most kind and polite, he pulled off his cap to beg her pardon, when, behold, the beggar woman gave one dreadful scream, and fainted! A crowd was collecting, and the prince, forgetting that he had thrown down all his money in the tavern, pulled out his purse. Then he remembered what he had done, and expected to find it empty; but, lo, there were three pieces of gold in it! Overcome with surprise, he thrust the money into the woman's hand, and put on his cap again. In a moment the crowd, which had been staring at him, rushed away in every direction, with cries of terror, declaring that there was a magician in the town, and a fellow who could appear and disappear at pleasure!

By this time, you or I, or anyone who was not so extremely clever as Prince Prigio, would have understood what was the matter. He had put on, without knowing it, not only the seven-league boots, but the cap of darkness, and had taken Fortunatus's purse, which could never be empty, however often you took all the money out. All those and many other delightful wares the fairies had given him at his christening, and the prince had found them in the dark garret. But the prince was so extremely wise, and learned, and scientific, that he did not believe in fairies, nor in fairy gifts.

"It is indigestion," he said to himself: "those sausages were not of the best; and that Burgundy was extremely strong. Things are not as they appear."

Here, as he was arguing with himself, he was nearly run over by a splendid carriage and six, the driver of which never took the slightest notice of him. Annoyed at this, the prince leaped up behind, threw down the two footmen, who made no resistance, and so was carried to the door of a magnificent palace. He was determined to challenge the gentleman who was in the carriage; but, noticing that he had a very beautiful young lady with him, whom he had never seen before, he followed them into the house, not wishing to alarm the girl, and meaning to speak to the gentleman when he found him alone.

A great ball was going on; but, as usual, nobody took any notice of the prince. He walked among the guests, being careful not to jostle them, and listening to their conversation.

It was all about himself! Everyone had heard of his disgrace, and almost everyone cried "Serve him right!" They said that the airs he gave himself were quite unendurable — that nothing was more rude than to be always in the right — that cleverness might be carried far too far — that it was better even to be born stupid ("Like the rest of you," thought the prince); and, in fact, nobody had a good word for him.

Yes, one had! It was the pretty lady of the carriage. I never could tell you how pretty she was. She was tall, with cheeks like white roses blushing: she had dark hair, and very large dark-grey eyes, and her face was the kindest in the world! The prince first thought how nice and good she looked, even before he thought how pretty she looked. *She* stood up for Prince Prigio when her partner would speak ill of him. She had never seen the prince, for she was but newly come to Pantouflia; but she declared that it was his *misfortune*, not his fault, to be so clever. "And, then, think how hard they made him work at school! Besides," said this kind young lady, "I hear he is extremely handsome, and very brave; and he has a good heart, for he was kind, I have heard, to a poor boy, and did all his examination papers for him, so that the boy passed first in *everything*. And now he is Minister for Education, though he can't do a line of Greek prose!"

The prince blushed at this, for he knew his conduct had not been honourable. But he at once fell over head and ears in love with the young lady, a thing he had never done in his life before, because — he said— “women were so stupid!” You see he was so clever!

Now, at this very moment — when the prince, all of a sudden, was as deep in love as if he had been the stupidest officer in the room — an extraordinary thing happened! Something seemed to give a whirr! in his brain, and in one instant *he knew all about it!* He believed in fairies and fairy gifts, and understood that his cap was the cap of darkness, and his shoes the seven-league boots, and his purse the purse of Fortunatus! He had read about those things in historical books: but now he believed in them.

CHAPTER VII. — *The Prince Falls in Love*

HE understood all this, and burst out laughing, which nearly frightened an old lady near him out of her wits. Ah! how he wished he was only in evening dress, that he might dance with the charming young lady. But there he was, dressed just as if he were going out to hunt, if anyone could have seen him. So, even if he took off his cap of darkness, and became visible, he was no figure for a ball. Once he would not have cared, but now he cared very much indeed.

But the prince was not clever for nothing. He thought for a moment, then went out of the room, and, in three steps of the seven-league boots, was at his empty, dark, cold palace again. He struck a light with a flint and steel, lit a torch, and ran upstairs to the garret. The flaring light of the torch fell on the pile of “rubbish,” as the queen would have called it, which he turned over with eager hands. Was there — yes, there *was* another cap! There it lay, a handsome green one with a red feather.

The prince pulled off the cap of darkness, put on the other, and said:

“*I wish I were dressed in my best suit of white and gold, with the royal Pantouflia diamonds!*”

In one moment there he was in white and gold, the greatest and most magnificent dandy in the whole world, and the handsomest man!

“How about my boots, I wonder,” said the prince; for his seven-league boots were stout riding-boots, not good to dance in, whereas *now* he was in elegant shoes of silk and gold.

He threw down the wishing cap, put on the other — the cap of darkness — and made three strides in the direction of Gluckstein. But he was only three steps nearer it than he had been, and the seven-league boots were standing beside him on the floor!

“No,” said the prince; “no man can be in two different pairs of boots at one and the same time! That’s mathematics!”

He then hunted about in the lumber-room again till he found a small, shabby, old Persian carpet, the size of a hearthrug. He went to his own room, took a portmanteau in his hand, sat down on the carpet, and said:

“I wish I were in Gluckstein.”

In a moment there he found himself; for this was that famous carpet which Prince Hussein bought long ago, in the market at Bisnagar, and which the fairies had brought, with the other presents, to the christening of Prince Prigio.

When he arrived at the house where the ball was going on, he put the magical carpet in the portmanteau, and left it in the cloakroom, receiving a numbered ticket in exchange. Then he marched in all his glory (and, of course, without the cap of darkness) into the room where they were dancing. Everybody made place for him, bowing down to the ground, and the loyal band struck up *The Prince's March*:

Heaven bless our Prince Prigio! What is there he doesn't know? Greek, Swiss, German (High and Low), And the names of the mountains in Mexico, Heaven bless the prince!

He used to be very fond of this march, and the words — some people even said he had made them himself. But now, somehow, he didn't much like it. He went straight to the Duke of Stumpfelbahn, the Hereditary Master of the Ceremonies, and asked to be introduced to the beautiful young lady. She was the daughter of the new English Ambassador, and her name was Lady Rosalind. But she nearly fainted when she heard who it was that wished to dance with her, for she was not at all particularly clever; and the prince had such a bad character for snubbing girls, and asking them difficult questions. However, it was impossible to refuse, and so she danced with the prince, and he danced very well. Then they sat out in the conservatory, among the flowers, where nobody came near them; and then they danced again, and then the Prince took her down to supper. And all the time he never once said, "Have you read *this?*" or "Have you read *that?*" or, "What! you never heard of Alexander the Great?" or Julius Caesar, or Michael Angelo, or whoever it might be — horrid, difficult questions he used to ask. That was the way he *used* to go on: but now he only talked to the young lady about *herself*; and she quite left off being shy or frightened, and asked him all about his own country, and about the Firedrake shooting, and said how fond she was of hunting herself. And the prince said:

"Oh, if *you* wish it, you shall have the horns and tail of a Firedrake to hang up in your hall, to-morrow evening!"

Then she asked if it was not very dangerous work, Firedrake hunting; and he said it was nothing, when you knew the trick of it: and he asked her if she would but give him a rose out of her bouquet; and, in short, he made himself so agreeable and *unaffected*, that she thought him very nice indeed.

For, even a clever person can be nice when he likes — above all, when he is not thinking about himself. And now the prince was thinking of nothing in the world but the daughter of the English Ambassador, and how to please her-He got introduced to her father too, and quite won his heart; and, at last, he was invited to dine next day at the Embassy.

In Pantouflia, it is the custom that a ball must not end while one of the royal family goes on dancing. *This* ball lasted till the light came in, and the birds were singing out of doors, and all the mothers present were sound asleep.

Then nothing would satisfy the prince, but that they all should go home singing through the streets; in fact, there never had been so merry a dance in all Pantouflia. The prince had made a point of dancing with almost every girl there: and he had suddenly become the most beloved of the royal family. But everything must end at last; and the prince, putting on the cap of darkness and sitting on the famous carpet, flew back to his lonely castle.

CHAPTER VIII. — *The Prince is Puzzled*

PRINCE PRIGIO did not go to bed. It was bright daylight, and he had promised to bring the horns and tail of a Firedrake as a present to a pretty lady. He had said it was easy to do this; but now, as he sat and thought over it, he did not feel so victorious.

“First,” he said, “where is the Firedrake?”

He reflected for a little, and then ran upstairs to the garret.

“It *should* be here!” he cried, tossing the fairies’ gifts about; “and, by George, here it is!”

Indeed, he had found the spyglass of carved ivory which Prince Ali, in the *Arabian Nights*, bought in the bazaar in Schiraz. Now, this glass was made so that, by looking through it, you could see anybody or anything you wished, however far away. Prigio’s first idea was to look at his lady. “But she does not expect to be looked at,” he thought; “and I *won’t!*” On the other hand, he determined to look at the Firedrake; for, of course, he had no delicacy about spying on *him*, the brute.

The prince clapped the glass to his eye, stared out of window, and there, sure enough, he saw the Firedrake. He was floating about in a sea of molten lava, on the top of a volcano. There he was, swimming and diving for pleasure, tossing up the flaming waves, and blowing fountains of fire out of his nostrils, like a whale spouting!

The prince did not like the looks of him.

“With all my cap of darkness, and my shoes of swiftness, and my sword of sharpness, I never could get near that beast,” he said; “and if I *did* stalk him, I could not hurt him. Poor little Alphonso! poor Enrico! what plucky fellows they were! I fancied that there was no such thing as a Firedrake: he’s not in the Natural History books; and I thought the boys were only making fun, and would be back soon, safe and sound. How horrid being too clever makes one! And now, what *am* I to do?”

What was he to do, indeed? And what would you have done? Bring the horns and tail he must, or perish in the adventure. Otherwise, how could he meet his lady? — why, she would think him a mere braggart.

The prince sat down, and thought and thought; and the day went on, and it was now high noon.

At last he jumped up and rushed into the library, a room where nobody ever went except himself and the queen. There he turned the books upside down, in his haste, till he found an old one, by a French gentleman, Monsieur Cyrano de Bergerac. It was an account of a voyage to the moon, in which there is a great deal of information about matters not generally known; for few travellers have been to the moon. In that book, Prince Prigio fancied he would find something he half remembered, and that would be of use to him. And he *did!* So you see that cleverness, and minding your book, have some advantages, after all. For here the prince learned that there is a very rare beast called a Remora, which is at least as cold as the Firedrake is hot!

"Now," thought he, "*if I can only make these two fight*, why the Remora may kill the Firedrake, or take the heat out of him, at least, so that I may have a chance."

Then he seized the ivory glass, clapped it to his eye, and looked for the Remora. Just the tip of his nose, as white as snow and as smooth as ice, was sticking out of a chink in a frozen mountain, not far from the burning mountain of the Firedrake.

"Hooray!" said the prince softly to himself; and he jumped like mad into the winged shoes of swiftness, stuck on the cap of darkness, girdled himself with the sword of sharpness, and put a good slice of bread, with some cold tongue, in a wallet, which he slung on his back. Never you fight, if you can help it, except with plenty of food to keep you going and in good heart. Then off he flew, and soon he reached the volcano of the Firedrake.

CHAPTER IX. — *The Prince and the Firedrake*

IT was dreadfully hot, even high up in the air, where the prince hung invisible. Great burning stones were tossed up by the volcano, and nearly hit him several times. Moreover, the steam and smoke, and the flames which the Firedrake spouted like foam from his nostrils, would have daunted even the bravest man. The sides of the hill, too, were covered with the blackened ashes of his victims, whom he had roasted when they came out to kill him. The garden-engine of poor little Alphonso was lying in the valley, all broken and useless. But the Firedrake, as happy as a wild duck on a lonely lock, was rolling and diving in the liquid flame, all red-hot and full of frolic. “Hi!” shouted the prince. The Firedrake rose to the surface, his horns as red as a red crescent-moon, only bigger, and lashing the fire with his hoofs and his blazing tail.

“Who’s there?” he said in a hoarse, angry voice. “Just let me get at you!”

“It’s me,” answered the prince. It was the first time he had forgotten his grammar, but he was terribly excited.

“What do you want?” grunted the beast. “I wish I could see you”; and, horrible to relate, he rose on a pair of wide, flaming wings, and came right at the prince, guided by the sound of his voice.

Now, the prince had never heard that Firedrakes could fly; indeed, he had never believed in them at all, till the night before. For a moment he was numb with terror; then he flew down like a stone to the very bottom of the hill and shouted: “Hi!”

“Well,” grunted the Firedrake, “what’s the matter? Why can’t you give a civil answer to a civil question?”

“Will you go back to your hole and swear, on your honour as a Firedrake, to listen quietly?”

“On my sacred word of honour,” said the beast, casually scorching an eagle that flew by into ashes. The cinders fell, jingling and crackling, round the prince in a little shower.

Then the Firedrake dived back, with an awful splash of flame, and the mountain roared round him.

The prince now flew high above him, and cried:

“A message from the Remora. He says you are afraid to fight him.”

“Don’t know him,” grunted the Firedrake.

“He sends you his glove,” said Prince Prigio, “as a challenge to mortal combat, till death do you part.”

Then he dropped his own glove into the fiery lake.

“Does he?” yelled the Firedrake. “Just let me get at him!” and he scrambled out, all red-hot as he was.

“I’ll go and tell him you’re coming,” said the prince; and with two strides he was over the frozen mountain of the Remora.

CHAPTER X. — *The Prince and the Remora*

If he had been too warm before, the prince was too cold now. The hill of the Remora was one solid mass of frozen steel, and the cold rushed out of it like the breath of some icy beast, which indeed it *was*. All around were things like marble statues of men in armour: they were the dead bodies of the knights, horses and all, who had gone out of old to fight the Remora, and who had been frosted up by him. The prince felt his blood stand still, and he grew faint; but he took heart, for there was no time to waste. Yet he could nowhere see the Remora. “Hi!” shouted the prince. Then, from a narrow chink at the bottom of the smooth, black hill, — a chink no deeper than that under a door, but a mile wide, — stole out a hideous head!

It was as fiat as the head of a skate-fish, it was deathly pale, and two chill-blue eyes, dead-coloured like stones, looked out of it.

Then there came a whisper, like the breath of the bitter east wind on a wintry day:

“Where are you, and how can I come to you?”

“Here I am!” said the prince from the top of the hill.

Then the flat, white head set itself against the edge of the chink from which it had peeped, and slowly, like the movement of a sheet of ice, it slipped upwards and curled upwards, and up, and up! There seemed no end to it at all; and it moved horribly, without feet, holding on by its own frost to the slippery side of the frozen hill. Now all the lower part of the black hill was covered with the horrid white thing coiled about it in smooth, flat shiny coils; and still the head was higher than the rest; and still the icy cold came nearer and nearer, like Death.

The prince almost fainted: everything seemed to swim; and in one moment more he would have fallen stiff on the mountain-top, and the white head would have crawled over him, and the cold coils would have slipped over him and turned him to stone. And still the thing slipped up, from the chink under the mountain.

But the prince made a great effort; he moved, and in two steps he was far away, down in the valley where it was not so very cold.

“Hi!” he shouted, as soon as his tongue could move within his chattering teeth.

There came a clear, hissing answer, like frozen words dropping round him:

“Wait till I come down. What do you want?”

Then the white folds began to slide, like melting ice, from the black hill.

Prince Prigio felt the air getting warmer behind him, and colder in front of him.

He looked round, and there were the trees beginning to blacken in the heat, and the grass looking like a sea of fire along the plains; for the Firedrake was coming!

The prince just took time to shout, “The Firedrake is going to pay you a visit!” and then he soared to the top of a neighbouring hill, and looked on at what followed.

CHAPTER XI. — *The Battle*

IT was an awful sight to behold! When the Remora heard the name of the Firedrake, his hated enemy, he slipped with wonderful speed from the cleft of the mountain into the valley. On and on and on he poured over rock and tree, as if a frozen river could slide downhill; on and on, till there were miles of him stretching along the valley — miles of the smooth-ribbed, icy creature, crawling and slipping forwards. The green trees dropped their leaves as he advanced; the birds fell down dead from the sky, slain by his frosty breath! But, fast as the Remora stole forward, the Firedrake came quicker yet, flying and clashing his fiery wings. At last they were within striking distance; and the Firedrake, stooping from the air, dashed with his burning horns and flaming feet slap into the body of the Remora.

Then there rose a steam so dreadful, such a white yet fiery vapour of heat, that no one who had not the prince’s magic glass could have seen what happened. With horrible grunts and roars the Firedrake tried to burn his way right through the flat body of the Remora, and to chase him to his cleft in the rock. But the Remora, hissing terribly, and visibly melting away in places, yet held his ground; and the prince could see his cold white folds climbing slowly up the hoofs of the Firedrake — up and up, till they reached his knees, and the great burning beast roared like a hundred bulls with the pain. Then up the Firedrake leaped, and hovering on his fiery wings, he lighted in the midst of the Remora’s back, and dashed into it with his horns. But the flat, cruel head writhed backwards, and, slowly bending over on itself, the wounded Remora slid greedily to fasten again on the limbs of the Firedrake.

Meanwhile, the prince, safe on his hill, was lunching on the loaf and the cold tongue he had brought with him.

“Go it, Remora! Go it, Firedrake! you’re gaining. Give it him, Remora!” he shouted in the wildest excitement.

Nobody had ever seen such a battle; he had it all to himself, and he never enjoyed anything more. He hated the Remora so much, that he almost wished the Firedrake could beat it; for the Firedrake was the more natural beast of the pair. Still, he was alarmed when he saw that the vast flat body of the Remora was now slowly coiling backwards, backwards, into the cleft below the hill; while a thick wet mist showed how cruelly it had suffered. But the Firedrake, too, was in an unhappy way; for his legs were now cold and black, his horns were black also, though his body, especially near the heart, glowed still like red-hot iron.

“Go it, Remora!” cried the prince: “his legs are giving way; he’s groggy on his pins! One more effort, and he won’t be able to move!”

Encouraged by this advice, the white, slippery Remora streamed out of his cavern again, more and more of him uncoiling, as if the mountain were quite full of him. He had lost strength, no doubt: for the steam and mist went up from him in clouds, and the hissing of his angry voice grew fainter; but so did the roars of the Firedrake. Presently they sounded more like groans; and at last the Remora slipped up his legs above the knees, and fastened on his very heart of fire. Then the Firedrake stood groaning like a black bull, knee-deep in snow; and still the Remora climbed and climbed.

“Go it now, Firedrake!” shouted the prince; for he knew that if the Remora won, it would be too cold for him to draw near the place, and cut off the Firedrake’s head and tail.

“Go it, Drake! he’s slackening!” cried the prince again; and the brave Firedrake made one last furious effort, and rising on his wings, dropped just on the spine of his enemy.

The wounded Remora curled back his head again on himself, and again crawled, steaming terribly, towards his enemy. But the struggle was too much for the gallant Remora. The flat, cruel head moved slower; the steam from his thousand wounds grew fiercer; and he gently breathed his last just as the Firedrake, too, fell over and lay exhausted. With one final roar, like the breath of a thousand furnaces, the Firedrake expired.

The prince, watching from the hill-top, could scarcely believe that these two *awful scourges of Nature*, which had so long devastated his country, were actually dead. But when he had looked on for half-an-hour, and only a river ran where the Remora had been, while the body of the Firedrake lay stark and cold, he hurried to the spot.

Drawing the sword of sharpness, he hacked off, at two blows, the iron head and the tail of the Firedrake. They were a weary weight to carry; but in a few strides of the shoes of swiftness he was at his castle, where he threw down his burden, and nearly fainted with excitement and fatigue.

But the castle clock struck half-past seven; dinner was at eight, and the poor prince crawled on hands and knees to the garret. Here he put on the wishing-cap; wished for a pint of champagne, a hot bath, and his best black velvet and diamond suit. In a moment these were provided; he bathed, dressed, drank a glass of wine, packed up the head and tail of the Firedrake; sat down on the flying carpet, and knocked at the door of the English Ambassador as the clocks were striking eight’ in Gluckstein.

Punctuality is the politeness of princes; and a prince *is* polite when he is in love!

The prince was received at the door by a stout porter and led into the hall, where *several* butlers met him, and he laid the mortal remains of the Firedrake under the cover of the flying carpet.

Then he was led upstairs, and he made his bow to the pretty lady, who, of course, made him a magnificent courtesy. She seemed prettier and kinder than ever. The prince was so happy, that he never noticed how something went wrong about the dinner. The ambassador looked about, and seemed to miss someone, and spoke in a low voice to one of the servants, who answered also in a low voice, and what he said seemed to displease the ambassador. But the prince was so busy in talking to his lady, and in eating his dinner too, that he never observed anything unusual. He had *never* been at such a pleasant dinner!

CHAPTER XII. — *A Terrible Misfortune*

WHEN the ladies left, and the prince and the other gentlemen were alone, the ambassador appeared more gloomy than ever. At last he took the prince into a corner, on pretence of showing him a rare statue. “Does your royal highness not know,” he asked, “that you are in considerable danger?” “Still?” said the prince, thinking of the Firedrake.

The ambassador did not know what he meant, for *he* had never heard of the fight, but he answered gravely: “Never more than now.” Then he showed the prince two proclamations, which had been posted all about the town. Here is the first: TO ALL LOYAL SUBJECTS.

Whereas,

Our eldest son, Prince Prigio, hath of late been guilty of several high crimes and misdemeanours.

First: By abandoning the post of danger against the Firedrake, whereby our beloved sons, Prince Alphonso and Prince Enrico, have perished, and been overdone by that monster.

Secondly: By attending an unseemly revel in the town of Gluckstein, where he brawled in the streets.

Thirdly: By trying to seduce away the hearts of our loyal subjects in that city, and to blow up a party against our crown and our peace.

This is to give warning, That whoever consorts with, comforts, aids, or abets the said Prince Prigio, is thereby a partner in his treason; and That a reward of Five Thousand Purses will be given to whomsoever brings the said prince, alive, to our Castle of Falkenstein.

Grognio R.

And here is the second proclamation: Reward. The firedrake. *Whereas,* Our dominions have lately been devastated by a Firedrake (the *Salamander Furiosus* of Buffon); *This is to advise all,* That whosoever brings the horns and tail of the said Firedrake to our Castle of Falkenstein, shall receive Five Thousand Purses, the position of Crown Prince, with the usual perquisites, and the hand of the king’s niece, the Lady Molinda.

Grognio R.

“H’m,” said the prince; “I did not think his majesty wrote so well;” and he would have *liked* to say, “Don’t you think we might join the ladies?”

“But, sir,” said the ambassador, “the streets are lined with soldiers; and I know not how you have escaped them. *Here*, under my roof, you are safe for the moment; but a prolonged stay — excuse my inhospitality — could not but strain the harmonious relations which prevail between the Government of Pantouflia and that which I have the honour to represent.”

“We don’t want to fight; and no more, I think, do you,” said the prince, smiling.

“Then how does your royal highness mean to treat the proclamations?”

“Why, by winning these ten thousand purses. I can tell you £1,000,000 is worth having,” said the prince. “I ‘ll deliver up the said prince, alive, at Falkenstein this very night; also the horns and tail of the said Firedrake. But I don’t want to marry my Cousin Molly.”

“May I remind your royal highness that Falkenstein is three hundred miles away? Moreover, my head butler, Benson, disappeared from the house before dinner, and I fear he went to warn Captain Kopzoffski that you are *here!*”

“That is nothing,” said the prince; “but, my dear Lord Kelso, may I not have the pleasure of presenting Lady Rosalind with a little gift, a Philippine which I lost to her last night, merely the head and tail of a Firedrake which I stalked this morning?”

The ambassador was so astonished that he ran straight upstairs, forgetting his manners, and crying: “Linda! Linda! come down at once; here’s a surprise for you!”

Lady Rosalind came sweeping down, with a smile on her kind face. *She* guessed what it was, though the prince had said nothing about it at dinner.

“Lead the way, your royal highness!” cried the ambassador; and the prince offering Lady Rosalind his arm, went out into the hall, where he saw neither his carpet nor the horns and tail of the Firedrake!

He turned quite pale, and said: “Will you kindly ask the servants where the little Persian prayer-rug and the parcel which I brought with me have been placed?”

Lord Kelso rang the bell, and in came all the servants, with William, the under-butler, at their head.

"William," said his lordship, "where have you put his royal highness's parcel and his carpet?"

"Please, your lordship," said William, "we think Benson have took them away with him."

"And where is Benson?"

"We don't know, your lordship. We think he have been come for!"

"Come for — by whom?"

William stammered, and seemed at a loss for a reply.

"Quick! answer! what do you know about it?"

William said at last, rather as if he were making a speech: "Your royaliness, and my lords and ladies, it was like this. His royaliness comed in with a rug over his arm, and summat under it. And he lays it down on that there seat, and Thomas shows him into the droring-room. Then Benson says: 'Dinner'll be ready in five minutes; how tired I do feel! 'Then he takes the libbuty of sitting hisself down on his royaliness's rug, and he says, asking your pardon, 'I 've had about enough of service here. I 'm about tired, and I thinks of bettering myself. I wish I was at the king's court, and butler.'

But before the words was out of his mouth, off he flies like a shot through the open door, and his royaliness's parcel with him. I run to the door, and there he was, flying right hover the town, in a northerly direction. And that's all I know; for I would not tell a lie, not if it was hever so. And me, and Thomas — as didn't see it, — and cook, we thinks as how Benson was come for. And cook says as she don't wonder at it, neither; for a grumblinger, more ill-conditioneder—"

"Thank you, William," said Lord Kelso; "that will do; you can go, for the present."

CHAPTER XIII. — *Surprises*

THE prince said nothing, the ambassador said nothing, Lady Rosalind said never a word till they were in the drawing-room. It was a lovely warm evening, and the French windows were wide open on the balcony, which looked over the town and away north to the hills. Below them flowed the clear, green water of the Gluckthal And still nobody said a word. At last the prince spoke: “This is a very strange story, Lord Kelso!”

“Very, sir!” said the ambassador. “But true,” added the prince; “at least, there is no reason in the nature of things why it shouldn’t be true.”

“I can hardly believe, sir, that the conduct of Benson, whom I always found a most respectable man, deserved—”

“That he should be ‘come for,’” said the prince. “Oh, no; it was a mere accident, and might have happened to any of us who chanced to sit down on my carpet.”

And then the prince told them, shortly, all about it: how the carpet was one of a number of fairy properties, which had been given him at his christening; and how so long a time had gone by before he discovered them; and how, probably, the carpet had carried the butler where he had said he wanted to go — namely, to the king’s Court at Falkenstein.

“It would not matter so much,” added the prince, “only I had relied on making my peace with his majesty, my father, by aid of those horns and that tail. He was set on getting them; and if the Lady Rosalind had not expressed a wish for them, they would to-day have been in his possession.”

“Oh, sir, you honour us too highly,” murmured Lady Rosalind; and the prince blushed and said:

“Not at all! Impossible!”

Then, of course, the ambassador became quite certain that his daughter was admired by the crown prince, who was on bad terms with the king of the country; and a more uncomfortable position for an ambassador — however, they are used to them.

“What on earth am I to do with the young man?” he thought. “He can’t stay here for ever; and without his carpet he can’t get away, for the soldiers have orders to seize him as soon as he appears in the street. And in the meantime Benson will be pretending that *he* killed the Firedrake — for he must have got to Falkenstein by now, — and they will be for marrying him to the king’s niece, and making my butler crown prince to the kingdom of Pantouflia! It is dreadful!”

Now all this time the prince was on the balcony, telling Lady Rosalind all about how he got the Firedrake done for, in the most modest way; for, as he said: “I didn’t kill him: and it is really the Remora, poor fellow, who should marry Molly; but he ‘s dead.”

At this very moment there was a *whizz* in the air; something shot past them, and, through the open window, the king, the queen, Benson, and the mortal remains of the Firedrake were shot into the ambassador’s drawing room!

CHAPTER XIV. — *The King Explains.*

THE first who recovered his voice and presence of mind was Benson.

“Did your lordship ring for coffee?” he asked, quietly; and when he was told “Yes,” he bowed and withdrew, with majestic composure. When he had gone, the prince threw himself at the king’s feet, crying:

“Pardon, pardon, my liege!” “Don’t speak to me, sir!” answered the king, very angrily; and the poor prince threw himself at the feet of the queen.

But she took no notice of him whatever, no more than if he had been a fairy; and the prince heard her murmur, as she pinched her royal arms:

“I shall waken presently; this is nothing out of the way for a dream. Dr. Rumpfino ascribes it to imperfect nutrition.”

All this time, the Lady Rosalind, as pale as a marble statue, was leaning against the side of the open window. The prince thought he could do nothing wiser than go and comfort her, so he induced her to sit down on a chair in the balcony, — for he felt that he was not wanted in the drawing-room; — and soon they were talking happily about the stars, which had begun to appear in the summer night.

Meanwhile, the ambassador had induced the king to take a seat; but there was no use in talking to the queen.

“It would be a miracle,” she said to herself, “and miracles do not happen; therefore this has not happened. Presently, I shall wake up in my own bed at Falkenstein.”

Now, Benson, William, and Thomas brought in the coffee, but the queen took no notice. When they went away, the rest of the company slipped off quietly, and the king was left alone with the ambassador; for the queen could hardly be said to count.

“You want to know all about it, I suppose?” said his majesty in a sulky voice. “Well, you have a right to it, and I shall tell you. We were just sitting down to dinner at Falkenstein, rather late, — hours get later every year, I think — when I heard a row in the premises, and the captain of the guard, Colonel McDougal, came and told us that a man had arrived with the horns and tail of the Firedrake, and was claiming the reward. Her majesty and I rose and went into the outer court, where we found, sitting on that carpet with a glass of beer in his hand, a respectable-looking upper servant, whom I recognised as your butler. He informed us that he had just killed the beast, and showed us the horns and tail, sure enough; there they are! The tail is like the iron handle of a pump, but the horns are genuine. A pair were thrown up by a volcano, in my great-grandfather's time Giglio I.* Excellent coffee this, of yours!"

* The History of this Prince may be read in a treatise
called *The Rose and the Ring*, by M. A. Titmarsh.
London, 1855.

The ambassador bowed.

"Well, we asked him *where* he killed the Firedrake, and he said in a garden near Gluckstein. Then he began to speak about the reward, and the 'perkisits,' as he called them, which it seems he had read about in my proclamation. Rather a neat thing; drew it up myself," added his majesty.

"Very much to the point," said the ambassador, wondering what the king was coming to.

"Glad you like it," said the king, much pleased. "Well, where was I? Oh, yes; your man said he had killed the creature in a garden, quite near Gluckstein. I didn't much like the whole affair: he is an alien, you see; and then there was my niece, Molinda — poor girl, *she* was certain to give trouble. Her heart is buried, if I may say so, with poor Alphonso. But the queen is a very remarkable woman — very remarkable—"

"Very!" said the ambassador, with perfect truth.

"'Caitiff!' she cries to your butler," his majesty went on; "'perjured knave, thou liest in thy throat! Gluckstein is a hundred leagues from here, and how say est thou that thou slewest the molester, and earnest hither in a few hours' space?' This had not occurred to me, — I am a plain king, but I at once saw the force of her majesty's argument. Yes,' said I; 'how did you manage it?' But he — your man, I mean — was not a bit put out. 'Why, your majesty,' says he, 'I just sat down on that there bit of carpet, wished I was here, and here *I ham*. And I 'd be glad, having had the trouble, — and my time not being my own, — to see the colour of them perkisits, according to the proclamation.' On this her majesty grew more indignant, if possible. 'Nonsense!' she cried; 'a story out of the 'Arabian Nights' is not suited for a modern public, and fails to win æsthetic credence.' These were her very words."

"Her majesty's expressions are ever choice and appropriate," said the ambassador.

"'Sit down there, on the carpet, knave,' she went on; 'ourself and consort' — meaning *me*— 'will take our places by thy side, and I shall wish us in Gluckstein, at thy master's! When the experiment has failed, thy head shall from thy shoulders be shorn!' So your man merely said, 'Very well, mum, — your majesty, I mean,' and sat down. The queen took her place at the edge of the carpet; I sat between her and the butler, and she said, ‘I wish I were in Gluckstein!’ Then we rose, flew through the air at an astonishing pace, and here we are! So I suppose the rest of the butler’s tale is true, which I regret; but a king’s word is sacred, and he shall take the place of that sneak, Prigio. But as we left home before dinner, and *yours* is over, may I request your lordship to believe that I should be delighted to take something cold?”

The ambassador at once ordered a sumptuous collation, to which the king did full justice; and his majesty was shown to the royal chamber, as he complained of fatigue. The queen accompanied him, remarking that she was sound asleep, but would waken presently. Neither of them said “Good-night” to the prince. Indeed, they did not see him again, for he was on the balcony with Lady Rosalind. They found a great deal to say to each other, and at last the prince asked her to be his wife; and she said that if the king and her father gave their permission — why, then she would! After this she went to bed; and the prince, who had not slept at all the night before, felt very sleepy also. But he knew that first he had something that must be done. So he went into the drawing-room, took his carpet, and wished to be — now where do you suppose? Beside the dead body of the Firedrake! There he was in a moment; and dreadful the body looked, lying stark and cold in the white moonshine. Then the prince cut off its four hoofs, put them in his wallet, and with these he flew back in a second, and met the ambassador just as he came from ushering the king to bed. Then the prince was shown his own room, where he locked up the hoofs, the carpet, the cap of darkness, and his other things in an iron box; and so he went to bed and dreamed of his Lady Rosalind.

CHAPTER XV. — *The King's Cheque*

WHEN they all awakened next morning, their first ideas were confused. It is often confusing to wake in a strange bed, much more so when you have flown through the air, like the king, the queen, and Benson the butler. For her part, the queen was the most perplexed of all; for she did undeniably wake, and yet she was not at home, where she had expected to be. However, she was a determined woman, and stood to it that nothing unusual was occurring. The butler made up his mind to claim the crown princeship and the hand of the Lady Molinda; because, as he justly remarked to William, here was such a chance to better himself as might not soon come in his way again. As for the king, he was only anxious to get back to Falkenstein, and have the whole business settled in a constitutional manner. The ambassador was not sorry to get rid of the royal party; and it was proposed that they should all sit down on the flying carpet, and wish themselves at home again. But the queen would not hear of it: she said it was childish and impossible; so the carriage was got ready for her, and she started without saying a word of good-bye to anyone. The king, Benson, and the prince were not so particular, and they simply flew back to Falkenstein in the usual way, arriving there at 11.35 — a week before her majesty.

The king at once held a Court; the horns and tail of the monster were exhibited amidst general interest, and Benson and the prince were invited to state their claims.

Benson's evidence was taken first. He declined to say exactly where or how he killed the Firedrake. There might be more of them left, he remarked, — young ones, that would take a lot of killing, — and he refused to part with his secret. Only he claimed the reward, which was offered, if you remember, *not* to the man who killed the beast, but to him wha brought its horns and tail. This was allowed by the lawyers present to be very sound law; and Benson was cheered by the courtiers, who decidedly preferred him to Prigio, and who, besides, thought he was going to be crown prince. As for Lady Molinda, she was torn by the most painful feelings; for, much as she hated Prigio, she could not bear the idea of marrying Benson. Yet one or the other choice seemed certain.

Unhappy lady! Perhaps no girl was ever more strangely beset by misfortune!

Prince Prigio was now called on to speak.

He admitted that the reward was offered for bringing the horns and tail, not for killing the monster. But were the king's *intentions* to go for nothing? When a subject only *meant* well, of course he had to suffer; but when a king said one thing, was he not to be supposed to have meant another? Any fellow with a waggon could *bring* the horns and tail; the difficult thing was to kill the monster. If Benson's claim was allowed, the royal prerogative of saying one thing and meaning something else was in danger.

On hearing this argument, the king so far forgot himself as to cry, "Bravo, well said!" and to clap his hands, whereon all the courtiers shouted and threw up their hats.

The prince then said that whoever had killed the monster could, of course, tell where to find him, and could bring his hoofs. He was ready to do this himself. Was Mr. Benson equally ready? On this being interpreted to him — for he did not speak Pantouflian — Benson grew pale with horror, but fell back on the proclamation. He had brought the horns and tail, and so he must have the perquisites, and the Lady Molinda!

The king's mind was so much confused by this time, that he determined to leave it to the Lady Molinda herself.

"Which of them will you have, my dear?" he asked, in a kind voice.

But poor Molinda merely cried. Then his majesty was almost *driven* to say that he would give the reward to whoever produced the hoofs by that day week. But no sooner had he said this than the prince brought them out of his wallet, and displayed them in open Court. This ended the case; and Benson, after being entertained with sherry and sandwiches in the steward's room, was sent back to his master, And I regret to say that his temper was not at all improved by his failure to better himself. On the contrary, he was unusually cross and disagreeable for several days; but we must, perhaps, make some allowance for his disappointment.

But if Benson was irritated, and suffered from the remarks of his fellow-servants, I do not think we can envy Prince Prigio. Here he was, restored to his position indeed, but by no means to *the royal favour*. For the king disliked him as much as ever, and was as angry as ever about the deaths of Enrico and Alphonso. Nay, he was even *more* angry; and, perhaps, not without reason. He called up Prigio before the whole Court, and thereon the courtiers cheered like anything, but the king cried:

"Silence! McDougal, drag the first man that shouts to the serpent-house in the zoological gardens, and lock him up with the rattlesnakes!"

After that the courtiers were very quiet.

"Prince," said the king, as Prigio bowed before the throne, "you are restored to your position, because I cannot break my promise. But your base and malevolent nature is even more conspicuously manifest in your selfish success than in your previous dastardly contempt of duty. Why, confound you!" cried the king, dropping the high style in which he had been speaking, and becoming the *father*, not the monarch,— "why, if you *could* kill the Firedrake, did you let your poor little brothers go and be b — b — b — broiled? Eh! what do you say, you sneak? 'You didn't believe there *were* any Firedrakes?' That just comes of your eternal conceit and arrogance! If you were clever enough to kill the creature — and I admit that — you were clever enough to know that what everybody said must be true. 'You have not generally found it so?' Well, you *have* this time, and let it be a lesson to you; not that there is much comfort in that, for it is not likely you will ever have such another chance" — exactly the idea that had occurred to Benson.

Here the king wept, among the tears of the lord chief justice, the poet laureate (who had been awfully frightened when he heard of the rattlesnakes), the maids of honour, the chaplain royal, and everyone but Colonel McDougal, a Scottish soldier of fortune, who maintained a military reserve.

When his majesty had recovered, he said to Prigio (who had not been crying, he was too much absorbed):

"A king's word is his bond. Bring me a pen, somebody, and my cheque-book."

The royal cheque-book, bound in red morocco, was brought in by eight pages, with ink and a pen. His majesty then filled up and signed the following satisfactory document — (Ah! my children, how I wish Mr. Arrowsmith would do as much for *me*!):

"There!" said his majesty, crossing his cheque and throwing sand over it, for blotting-paper had not yet been invented; "there, take *that*, and be off with you!"

Prince Prigio was respectfully but rapidly obeying his royal command, for he thought he had better cash the royal cheque as soon as possible, when his majesty yelled:

"Hi! here! come back! I forgot something; you've got to marry Molinda!"

CHAPTER XVI. — *A Melancholy Chapter*

THE prince had gone some way, when the king called after him. How he wished he had the seven-league boots on, or that he had the cap of darkness in his pocket! If he had been so lucky, he would now have got back to Gluckstein, and crossed the border with Lady Rosalind. A million of money may not seem much, but a pair of young people who really love each other could live happily on less than the cheque he had in his pocket. However, the king shouted very loud, as he always did when he meant to be obeyed, and the prince sauntered slowly back again.

“Prigio!” said his majesty, “where were you off to? Don’t you remember that this is your wedding-day? My proclamation offered, not only the money (which you have), but the hand of the Lady Molinda, which the Court chaplain will presently make your own. I congratulate you, sir; Molinda is a dear girl.”

“I have the highest affection and esteem for my cousin, sir,” said the prince, “but:—”

“I’ll never marry him!” cried poor Molinda, kneeling at the throne, where her streaming eyes and hair made a pretty and touching picture. “Never! I despise him!”

“I was about to say, sir,” the prince went on, “that I cannot possibly have the pleasure of wedding my cousin.”

“The family gibbet, I presume, is in good working order?” asked the king of the family executioner, a tall gaunt man in black and scarlet, who was only employed in the case of members of the blood royal.

“Never better, sire,” said the man, bowing with more courtliness than his profession indicated.

“Very well,” said the king; “Prince Prigio, you have your choice. *There* is the gallows, *here* is Lady Molinda. My duty is painful, but clear. A king’s word cannot be broken. Molly, or the gibbet!”

The prince bowed respectfully to Lady Molinda:

“Madam, my cousin,” said he, “your clemency will excuse my answer, and you will not misinterpret the apparent discourtesy of my conduct. I am compelled, most unwillingly, to slight your charms, and to select the Extreme Rigour of the Law. Executioner, lead on! Do your duty; for me, *Prigio est prêt*;” — for this was his motto, and meant that he was ready.

Poor Lady Molinda could not but be hurt by the prince’s preference for death over marriage to her, little as she liked him.

"Is life, then, so worthless? and is Molinda so terrible a person that you prefer *those* arms," and she pointed to the gibbet, "to *these?*" — here she held out her own, which were very white, round and pretty; for Molinda was a good-hearted girl, she could not bear to see Prigio put to death; and then, perhaps, she reflected that there are worse positions than the queenship of Pantouflia. For Alphonso was gone — crying would not bring him back.

"Ah, Madam!" said the prince, "you are forgiving—"

"For *you* are brave!" said Molinda, feeling: quite a respect for him.

"But neither your heart nor mine is ours to give. Since mine was another's, I understand too well the feeling of *yours!* Do not let us buy life at the price of happiness and honour."

Then, turning to the king the prince said:

"Sir, is there no way but by death or marriage? You say you cannot keep half only of your promise; and that, if I accept the reward, I must also unite myself with my unwilling cousin. Cannot the whole proclamation be annulled, and will you consider the bargain void if I tear up this flimsy scroll?"

And here the prince fluttered the cheque for £1,000,000 in the air.

For a moment the king was tempted; but then he said to himself:

"Never mind, it's only an extra penny on the income-tax." Then, "Keep your dross," he shouted, meaning the million; "but let *me* keep my promise. To chapel at once, or—" and he pointed to the executioner. "The word of a king of Pantouflia is sacred."

"And so is that of a crown prince," answered Prigio; "and *mine* is pledged to a lady."

"She shall be a mourning bride," cried the king savagely, "unless" — here he paused for a moment— "unless you bring me back Alphohso and Enrico, safe and well!"

The prince thought for the space of a flash of lightning.

"I accept the alternative," he said, "if your majesty will grant me my conditions."

"Name them!" said the king.

"Let me be transported to Gluckstein, left there unguarded, and if, in three days, I do not return with my brothers safe and well, your majesty shall be spared a cruel duty. Prigio of Pantouflia will perish by his own hand."

The king, whose mind did not work very quickly, took some minutes to think over it. Then he saw that by granting the prince's conditions, he would either recover his dear sons, or, at least, get rid of Prigio, without the unpleasantness of having him executed. For, though some kings have put their eldest sons to death, and most have wished to do so, they have never been better loved by the people for their Roman virtue.

“Honour bright?” said the king at last.

“Honour bright!” answered the prince, and for the first time in many months, the royal father and son shook hands.

“For you, madam,” said Prigio in a stately way to Lady Molinda, “in less than a week I trust we shall be taking our vows at the same altar, and that the close of the ceremony which finds us cousins will leave us brother and sister.”

Poor Molinda merely stared; for she could not imagine what he meant. In a moment he was gone; and having taken, by the king’s permission, the flying carpet, he was back at the ambassador’s house in Gluckstein.

CHAPTER XVII. — *The Black Cat and the brethren*

WHO was glad to see the prince, if it was not Lady Rosalind? The white roses of her cheeks turned to red roses in a moment, and then back to white again, they were so alarmed at the change. So the two went into the gardens together, and talked about a number of things; but at last the prince told her that, before three days were over, all would be well, or all would be over with him. For either he would have brought his brothers back, sound and well, to Falkenstein, or he would not survive his dishonour.

“It is no more than right,” he said; “for had I gone first, neither of them would have been sent to meet the monster after I had fallen. And I *should* have fallen, dear Rosalind, if I had faced the Firedrake before I knew *you.*”

Then when she asked him why, and what good she had done him, he told her all the story; and how, before he fell in love with her, he didn’t believe in fairies, or Firedrakes, or caps of darkness, or anything nice and impossible, but only in horrid useless facts, and chemistry, and geology, and arithmetic, and mathematics, and even political economy. And the Firedrake would have made a mouthful of him, then.

So she was delighted when she heard this, almost as much delighted as she was afraid that he might fail in the most difficult adventure. For it was one thing to egg on a Remora to kill a Firedrake, and quite another to find the princes if they were alive, and restore them if they were dead!

But the prince said he had his plan, and he stayed that night at the ambassador’s. Next morning he rose very early, before anyone else was up, that he might not have to say “Good-bye” to Lady Rosalind. Then he flew in a moment to the old lonely castle, where nobody went for fear of ghosts, ever since the Court retired to Falkenstein.

How still it was, how deserted; not a sign of life, and yet the prince was looking everywhere *for some living thing*. He hunted the castle through in vain, and then went out to the stable-yard; but all the dogs, of course, had been taken away, and the farmers had offered homes to the poultry. At last, stretched at full length in a sunny place, the prince found a very old, half-blind, miserable cat. The poor creature was lean, and its fur had fallen off in patches; it could no longer catch birds, nor even mice, and there was nobody to give it milk. But cats do not look far into the future; and this old black cat — Frank was his name — had got a breakfast somehow, and was happy in the sun. The prince stood and looked at him pityingly, and he thought that even a sick old cat was, in some ways, happier than most men.

“Well,” said the prince at last, “he could not live long anyway, and it must be done. He will feel nothing.”

Then he drew the sword of sharpness, and with one turn of his wrist cut the cat’s head clean off.

It did not at once change into a beautiful young lady, as perhaps you expect; no, that was improbable, and, as the prince was in love already, would have been vastly inconvenient. The dead cat lay there, like any common cat.

Then the prince built up a heap of straw, with wood on it; and there he laid poor puss, and set fire to the pile. Very soon there was nothing of old black Frank left but ashes!

Then the prince ran upstairs to the fairy cupboard, his heart beating loudly with excitement, The sun was shining through the arrow-shot window; all the yellow motes were dancing in its rays. The light fell on the strange heaps of fairy things — talismans and spells. The prince hunted about here and there, and at last he discovered six ancient water-vessels of black leather, each with a silver plate on it, and on the plate letters engraved. This was what was written on the plates: *AQVA. DE. FONTE. LEONVM.**

* Water from the Fountain of Lions.

“Thank heaven!” said the prince. “I thought they were sure to have brought it!”

Then he took one of the old black-leather bottles, and ran downstairs again to the place where he had burned the body of the poor old sick cat.

He opened the bottle, and poured a few drops of the water on the ashes and the dying embers.

Up there sprang a tall, white flame of fire, waving like a tongue of light; and forth from the heap jumped the most beautiful, strong, funny, black cat that ever was seen!

It was Frank as he had been in the vigour of his youth; and he knew the prince at once, and rubbed himself against him and purred.

The prince lifted up Frank and kissed his nose for joy; and a bright tear rolled down on Frank’s face, and made him rub his nose with his paw in the most comical manner.

Then the prince set him down, and he ran round and round after his tail; and, lastly, cocked his tail up, and marched proudly after the prince into the castle.

“Oh, Frank!” said Prince Prigio, “no cat since the time of Puss in Boots was ever so well taken care of as you shall be. For if the fairy water from the Fountain of Lions can bring *you* back to life — why, there is a chance for

Alphonso and Enrico!”

Then Prigio bustled about, got ready some cold luncheon from the store-room, took all his fairy things that he was likely to need, sat down with them on the flying carpet, and wished himself at the mountain of the Firedrake.

“I have the king now,” he said; “for if I can’t find the ashes of my brothers, by Jove! I’ll!—”

Do you know what he meant to do, if he could not find his brothers? Let every child-guess.

Off he flew; and there he was in a second, just beside poor Alphonso’s garden-engine. Then Prigio, seeing a little heap of grey ashes beside the engine, watered them with the fairy water; and up jumped Alphonso, as jolly as ever, his sword in his hand.

“Hullo, Prigio!” cried he; “are you come after the monster too? I’ve been asleep, and I had a kind of dream that he beat me. But the pair of us will tackle him. How is Molinda?”

“Prettier than ever,” said Prigio; “but anxious about you. However, the Firedrake’s dead and done for; so never mind him. But I left Enrico somewhere about. Just you sit down and wait a minute, till I fetch him.”

The prince said this, because he did not wish Alphonso to know that he and Enrico had not had quite the best of it in the affair with the monster.

“All right, old fellow,” says Alphonso; “but have you any luncheon with you? Never was so hungry in my life!”

Prince Prigio had thought of this, and he brought out some cold sausage (to which Alphonso was partial) and some bread, with which the younger prince expressed himself satisfied. Then Prigio went up the hill some way, first warning Alphonso *not* to sit on his carpet for fear of *accidents* like that which happened to Benson. In a hollow of the hill, sure enough there was the sword of Enrico, the diamonds of the hilt gleaming in the sun. And there was a little heap of grey ashes.

The prince poured a few drops of the water from the Fountain of Lions on them, and up, of course, jumped Enrico, just as Alphonso had done.

“Sleepy old chap you are, Enrico,” said the prince; “but come on, Alphonso will have finished the grub unless we look smart.”

So back they came, in time to get their share of what was going; and they drank the Remora’s very good health, when Prigio told them about the fight. But neither of them ever knew that they had been dead and done for; because Prigio invented a story that the mountain was enchanted, and that, as long as the Firedrake lived, everyone who came there fell asleep. He did tell them about the flying carpet, however, which of course did not much surprise them, because they had read all about it in the *Arabian Nights* and other historical works.

“And now I ‘ll show you fun!” said Prigio; and he asked them both to take their seats on the carpet, and wished to be in the valley of the Remora.

There they were in a moment, among the old knights whom, if you remember, the Remora had frozen into stone. There was quite a troop of them, in all sorts of armour — Greek and Roman, and Knight Templars like Front’ de Bouf and Brian du Bois Gilbert — all the brave warriors that had tried to fight the Remora since the world began.

Then Prigio gave each of his brothers some of the water in their caps, and told them to go round pouring a drop or two on each frozen knight. And as they did it, lo and behold! each knight came alive, with his horse, and lifted his sword and shoute: “Long live Prince Prigio!” in Greek, Latin, Egyptian, French, German, and Spanish, — all of which the prince perfectly understood, and spoke like a native.

So he marshalled them in order, and sent them off to ride to Falkenstein and cry:

“Prince Prigio is coming!”

Off they went, the horses’ hoofs clattering, banners flying, sunshine glittering on the spear-points. Off they rode to Falkenstein; and when the king saw them come galloping in, I can tell you he had no more notion of hanging Prigio.

CHAPTER XVIII. — *The Very Last*

THE princes returned to Gluckstein on the carpet, and went to the best inn, where they dined together and slept. Next morning they, and the ambassador, who had been told all the story, and Lady Rosalind, floated comfortably on the carpet, back to Falkenstein, where the king wept like anything on the shoulders of Alphonso and Enrico. They could not make out why he cried so, nor why Lady Molinda and Lady Kathleena cried; but soon they were all laughing and happy again. But then — would you believe he could be so mean? — he refused to keep his royal promise, and restore Prigio to his crown-princeship! Kings are like that.

But Prigio, very quietly asking for the head of the Firedrake, said he'd pour the magic water on *that*, and bring the Firedrake back to life again, unless his majesty behaved rightly. This threat properly frightened King Grognio, and he apologised. Then the king shook hands with Prigio in public, and thanked him, and said he was proud of him. As to Lady Rosalind, the old gentleman quite fell in love with her, and he sent at once to the Chaplain Royal to get into his surplice, and marry all the young people off at once, without waiting for wedding-cakes, and milliners, and all the rest of it.

Now, just as they were forming a procession to march into church, who should appear but the queen! Her majesty had been travelling by post all the time, and, luckily, had heard of none of the doings since Prigio, Benson, and the king left Gluckstein. I say *luckily* because if she had heard of them, she would not have believed a word of them. But when she saw Alphonso and Enrico, she was much pleased, and said:

"Naughty boys! Where have you been hiding? The king had some absurd story about your having been killed by a fabulous monster. Bah! don't tell *me*. I always said you would come back after a little trip — didn't I, Prigio?"

"Certainly, madam," said Prigio; "and I said so, too. Didn't I say so?" And all the courtiers cried: "Yes, you did;" but some added, to themselves, "He *always* says, 'Didn't I say so?'"

Then the queen was introduced to Lady Rosalind, and she said it was "rather a short engagement, but she supposed young people understood their own affairs best." And they do! So the three pairs were married, with the utmost rejoicings; and her majesty never, her whole life long, could be got to believe that anything unusual had occurred.

The honeymoon of Prince Prigio and the Crown Princess Rosalind was passed at the castle, where the prince had been deserted by the Court. But now it was delightfully fitted up; and Master Frank marched about the house with his tail in the air, as if the place belonged to him.

Now, on the second day of their honeymoon, the prince and princess were sitting in the garden together, and the prince said, “Are you *quite* happy, my dear?” and Rosalind said, “Yes; *quite*.”

But the prince did not like the tone of her voice, and he said:

“No, there’s something; do tell me what it is.”

“Well,” said Rosalind, putting her head on his shoulder, and speaking very low, “I want everybody to love you as much as I do. No, not quite so very much, — but I want them to like you. Now they *can’t*, because they are afraid of you; for you are so awfully clever. Now, couldn’t you take the wishing cap, and wish to be no cleverer than other people? Then everybody would like you!”

The prince thought a minute, then he said:

“Your will is law, my dear; anything to please you. Just wait a minute!”

Then he ran upstairs, for the last time, to the fairy garret, and he put on the wishing cap.

“No,” thought he to himself, “I won’t wish *that*. Every man has one secret from his wife, and this shall be mine.”

Then he said aloud: “I wish to SEEM no CLEVERER THAN OTHER PEOPLE.”

Then he ran downstairs again, and the princess noticed a great difference in him (though, of course, there was really none at all), and so did everyone. For the prince remained as clever as ever he had been; but, as nobody observed it, he became the most popular prince, and finally the best-beloved king who had ever sat on the throne of Pantouflia.

But occasionally Rosalind would say, “I do believe, my dear, that you are really as clever as ever!”

And he *was!*

THE TRUE STORY BOOK

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DEDICATION

TO FRANCIS McCUNN

You like the things I used to like,
The things I’m fond of still,
The sound of fairy wands that strike
Men into beasts at will;

The cruel stepmother, the fair
Stepdaughter, kind and leal,
The bull and bear so debonair,
The trenchant fairy steel.

You love the world where brute and fish
Converse with man and bird,
Where dungeons open at a wish,
And seas dry at a word.

That merry world to-day we leave,
We list an ower-true tale,
Of hearts that sore for Charlie grieve,
When handsome princes fail,

Of gallant races overthrown,
Of dungeons ill to climb,
There’s no such tale of trouble known,
In all the fairy time.

There Montezuma still were king,
There Charles would wear the crown,
And there the Highlanders would ding

The Hanoverian down:

In Fairyland the Rightful Cause
Is never long a-winning,
In Fairyland the fairy laws
Are prompt to punish sinning:

For Fairyland’s the land of joy,
And this the world of pain,
So back to Fairyland, my boy,
We’ll journey once again!

INTRODUCTION

It is not without diffidence that the editor offers *The True Story Book* to children. We have now given them three fairy books, and their very kind and flattering letters to the editor prove, not only that they like the three fairy books, but that they clamour for more. What disappointment, then, to receive a volume full of adventures which actually happened to real people! There is not a dragon in the collection, nor even a giant; witches, here, play no part, and almost all the characters are grown up. On the other hand, if we have no fairies, we have princes in plenty, and a sweeter young prince than Tearlach (as far as this part of his story goes) the editor flatters himself that you shall nowhere find, not in Grimm, or Dasent, or Perrault. Still, it cannot be denied that true stories are not so good as fairy tales. They do not always end happily, and, what is worse, they do remind a young student of lessons and schoolrooms. A child may fear that he is being taught under a specious pretence of diversion, and that learning is being thrust on him under the disguise of entertainment. Prince Charlie and Cortés may be asked about in examinations, whereas no examiner has hitherto set questions on ‘Blue Beard,’ or ‘Heart of Ice,’ or ‘The Red Etin of Ireland.’ There is, to be honest, no way of getting over this difficulty. But the editor vows that he does not mean to teach anybody, and he has tried to mix the stories up so much that no clear and consecutive view of history can possibly be obtained from them; moreover, when history does come in, it is not the kind of history favoured most by examiners. They seldom set questions on the conquest of Mexico, for example.

That is a very long story, but, to the editor’s taste, it is simply the best true story in the world, the most unlikely, and the most romantic. For who could have supposed that the new-found world of the West held all that wealth of treasure, emeralds and gold, all those people, so beautiful and brave, so courteous and cruel, with their terrible gods, hideous human sacrifices, and almost Christian prayers? That a handful of Spaniards, themselves mistaken for children of a white god, should have crossed the sea, should have found a lovely lady, as in a fairy tale, ready to lead them to victory, should have planted the cross on the shambles of Huitzilopochtli, after that wild battle on the temple crest, should have been driven in rout from, and then recaptured, the Venice of the West, the lake city of Mexico — all this is as strange, as unlooked for, as any story of adventures in a new planet could be. No invention of fights and wanderings in Noman’s land, no search for the mines of Solomon the king, can approach, for strangeness and romance, this tale, which is true, and vouched for by Spanish conquerors like Bernal Diaz, and by native historians like Ixtlilochitl, and by later missionaries like Sahagun. Cortés is the great original of all treasure-hunters and explorers in fiction, and here no feigned tale can be the equal of the real. As Mr. Prescott’s admirable history is not a book much read by children (nor even by ‘grown-ups’ for that matter), the editor hopes children will be pleased to find the ‘Adventures in Anahuac’ in this collection. Miss Edgeworth tells us in *Orlandino* how much the tale delighted the young before Mr. Prescott wrote that excellent narrative of the world’s chief adventure. May it please still, as it did when the century was young!

The adventures of Prince Charlie are already known, in part, to boys and girls who have read the *Tales of a Grandfather*, for pleasure and not as a school book. But here Mrs. McCunn has treated of them at greater length and more minutely. The source, here, is in these seven brown octavo volumes, all written in the closest hand, which are a treasure of the Advocates’ Library in Edinburgh. The author is Mr. Forbes, a bishop of the persecuted Episcopalian Church in Scotland. Mr. Forbes collected his information very carefully, closely comparing the narratives of the various actors in the story. Into the boards of his volumes are fastened a scrap of the Prince’s tartan waistcoat, a rag from his sprigged calico dress, a bit of his brogues — a twopenny treasure that has been wept and prayed over by the faithful. Nobody, in a book for children, would have the heart to tell the tale of the Prince’s later years, of a moody, heart-broken, degraded exile. But, in the hills and the isles, bating a little wilfulness and foolhardiness, and the affair of the broken punch-bowl, Prince Charles is a model for princes and all men, brave, gay, much-enduring, good-humoured, kind, royally courteous, and considerate, even beyond what may be gathered from this part of the book, while the loyalty of the Highlanders (as in the case of Mackinnon, flogged nearly to death) was proof against torture as well as against gold. It is the Sobieski strain, not the Stuart, that we here admire in Prince Charles; it is a piety, a loyalty, a goodness like Gordon's that we revere in old Lord Pitsligo in another story.

Many of the tales are concerned with fighting, for that is the most dramatic part of mortal business. These English captives who retake a ship from the Turks, these heroes of the *Shannon* and the *Chesapeake,* were doubtless good men and true in all their lives, but the light of history only falls on them in war. The immortal Three Hundred of Thermopylæ would also have been unknown, had they not died, to a man, for the sake of the honour of Lacedæmon. The editor conceives that it would have been easy to give more 'local colour' to the sketch of Thermopylæ: to have dealt in description of the Immortals, drawn from the friezes in Susa, lately discovered by French enterprise. But the story is Greek, and the Greeks did not tell their stories in that way, but with a simplicity almost bald. Yet who dare alter and 'improve' the narrative of Herodotus? In another most romantic event, the finding of Vineland the Good, by Leif the Lucky, our materials are vague with the vagueness of a dream. Later fancy has meddled with the truth of the saga. English readers, no doubt, best catch the charm of the adventure in Mr. Rudyard Kipling's astonishingly imaginative tale called 'The Best Story in the World.' For the account of Isandhlwana, and Rorke's Drift, 'an ower-true tale,' the editor has to thank his friend Mr. Rider Haggard, who was in South Africa at the time of the disaster, and who has generously given time and labour to the task of ascertaining, as far as it can be ascertained, the exact truth of the melancholy, but, finally, not inglorious, business. The legend of 'Two Great Cricket Matches' is taken, in part, from Lillywhite's scores, and Mr. Robert Lyttelton's spirited pages in the 'Badminton' book of Cricket. The second match the editor writes of 'as he who saw it,' to quote Caxton on Dares Phrygius. These legends prove that a match is never lost till it is won.

Some of the True Stories contain, we may surmise, traces of the imaginative faculty. The escapes of Benvenuto Cellini, of Trenck, and of Casanova must be taken as the heroes chose to report them; Benvenuto and Casanova have no firm reputation for veracity. Again, the escape of Cæsar Borgia is from a version handed down by the great Alexandre Dumas, and we may surmise that Alexandre allowed it to lose nothing in the telling; he may have 'given it a sword and a cocked hat,' as was Sir Walter's wont. About Kaspar Hauser's mystery we can hardly speak of 'the truth,' for the exact truth will never be known. The depositions of the earliest witnesses were not taken at once; some witnesses altered their evidence in later years; parts of the records of Nuremberg are lost in suspicious circumstances. The Duchess of Cleveland's book, *Kaspar Hauser*, is written in defence of her father, Lord Stanhope. The charges against Lord Stanhope, that he aided in, or connived at, the slaying of Kaspar, because Kaspar was the true heir of the House of Baden — are as childish as they are wicked. But the Duchess hardly allows for the difficulties in which we find ourselves if we regard Kaspar as absolutely and throughout an impostor. This, however, is not the place to discuss an historical mystery; this 'true story' is told as a romance founded on fact; the hypothesis that Kaspar was a son and heir of the house of Baden seems, to the editor, to be absolutely devoid of evidence.

To Madame Von Platt Stuart the author owes permission to quote the striking adventures of her father, or of her uncle, on the flooded Findhorn. The *Lays of the Deer Forest*, which contain this tale in the volume of notes, were written by John Sobieski Stuart, and by Charles Edward Stuart, and the editor is uncertain as to which of those gentlemen was the hero of these perilous crossings of the Highland river. Many other good tales, legends, and studies of natural history and of Highland manners may be found in the *Lays of the Deer Forest*, apart from the curious interest of the poems. On the whole, with certain exceptions, the editor has tried to find true stories rather out of the beaten paths of history; the narrative of John Tanner, for instance, is probably true, but the book in which his adventures were published is now rather difficult to procure. For 'A Boy among the Red Indians,' 'Two Cricket Matches,' 'The Spartan Three Hundred,' 'The Finding of Vineland the Good,' and 'The Escapes of Lord Pitsligo,' the editor is himself responsible, as far as they do not consist of extracts from the original sources. Miss May Kendall translated or adapted Casanova's escape and the piratical and Algerine tales. Mrs. Lang reduced the narrative of the Chevalier Johnstone, and did the escapes of Cæsar Borgia, of Trenck, and Cervantes, while Miss Blackley renders that of Benvenuto Cellini. Mrs. McCunn, as already said, compiled from the sources indicated the Adventures of Prince Charles, and she tells the story of Grace Darling; the contemporary account is, unluckily, rather meagre. Miss Alleyne did 'The Kidnapping of the Princes,' Mrs. Plowden the 'Story of Kaspar Hauser.' Miss Wright reduced the Adventures of Cortés from Prescott, and Mr. Rider Haggard has already been mentioned in connection with Isandhlwana.

Here the editor leaves *The True Story Book* to the indulgence of children, explaining, once more, that his respect for their judgment is very great, and that he would not dream of imposing *lessons* on *them*, in the shape of a Christmas book. No, lessons are one thing, and stories are another. But though fiction is undeniably stranger and more attractive than truth, yet true stories are also rather attractive and strange, now and then. And, after all, we may return once more to Fairyland, after this excursion into the actual workaday world.

A BOY AMONG THE RED INDIANS

THE earliest event of my life which I distinctly remember (says John Tanner) is the death of my mother. This happened when I was two years old, and many of the attending circumstances made so deep an impression that they are still fresh in my memory. I cannot recollect the name of the settlement at which we lived, but I have since learned it was on the Kentucky River, at a considerable distance from the Ohio.

My father, whose name was John Tanner, was an emigrant from Virginia, and had been a clergyman.

When about to start one morning to a village at some distance, he gave, as it appeared, a strict charge to my sisters, Agatha and Lucy, to send me to school; but this they neglected to do until afternoon, and then, as the weather was rainy and unpleasant, I insisted on remaining at home. When my father returned at night, and found that I had been at home all day, he sent me for a parcel of small canes, and flogged me much more severely than I could suppose the offence merited. I was displeased with my sisters for attributing all the blame to me, when they had neglected even to tell me to go to school in the forenoon. From that time, my father's house was less like home to me, and I often thought and said, 'I wish I could go and live among the Indians.'

One day we went from Cincinnati to the mouth of the Big Miami, opposite which we were to settle. Here was some cleared land, and one or two log cabins, but they had been deserted on account of the Indians. My father rebuilt the cabins, and inclosed them with a strong picket. It was early in the spring when we arrived at the mouth of the Big Miami, and we were soon engaged in preparing a field to plant corn. I think it was not more than ten days after our arrival, when my father told us in the morning, that, from the actions of the horses, he perceived there were Indians lurking about in the woods, and he said to me, 'John, you must not go out of the house to-day.' After giving strict charge to my stepmother to let none of the little children go out, he went to the field, with the negroes, and my elder brother, to drop corn.

Three little children, besides myself, were left in the house with my stepmother. To prevent me from going out, my stepmother required me to take care of the little child, then not more than a few months old; but as I soon became impatient of confinement, I began to pinch my little brother, to make him cry. My mother, perceiving his uneasiness, told me to take him in my arms and walk about the house; I did so, but continued to pinch him. My mother at length took him from me to nurse him. I watched my opportunity, and escaped into the yard; thence through a small door in the large gate of the wall into the open field. There was a walnut-tree at some distance from the house, and near the side of the field where I had been in the habit of finding some of the last year's nuts. To gain this tree without being seen by my father and those in the field, I had to use some precaution. I remember perfectly well having seen my father, as I skulked towards the tree; he stood in the middle of the field, with his gun in his hand, to watch for Indians, while the others were dropping corn. As I came near the tree, I thought to myself, 'I wish I could see these Indians.' I had partly filled with nuts a straw hat which I wore, when I heard a crackling noise behind me; I looked round, and saw the Indians; almost at the same instant, I was seized by both hands, and dragged off betwixt two. One of them took my straw hat, emptied the nuts on the ground, and put it on my head. The Indians who seized me were an old man and a young one; these were, as I learned subsequently, Manito-o-geezhik, and his son Kish-kau-ko.

After I saw myself firmly seized by both wrists by the two Indians, I was not conscious of anything that passed for a considerable time. I must have fainted, as I did not cry out, and I can remember nothing that happened to me until they threw me over a large log, which must have been at a considerable distance from the house. The old man I did not now see; I was dragged along between Kish-kau-ko and a very short thick man. I had probably made some resistance, or done something to irritate this last, for he took me a little to one side, and drawing his tomahawk, motioned to me to look up. This I plainly understood, from the expression of his face, and his manner, to be a direction for me to look up for the last time, as he was about to kill me. I did as he directed, but Kish-kau-ko caught his hand as the tomahawk was descending, and prevented him from burying it in my brains. Loud talking ensued between the two. Kish-kau-ko presently raised a yell: the old man and four others answered it by a similar yell, and came running up. I have since understood that Kish-kau-ko complained to his father that the short man had made an attempt to kill his little brother, as he called me. The old chief, after reproving him, took me by one hand, and Kish-kau-ko by the other and dragged me betwixt them, the man who had threatened to kill me, and who was now an object of terror to me, being kept at some distance. I could perceive, as I retarded them somewhat in their retreat, that they were apprehensive of being overtaken; some of them were always at some distance from us.

It was about one mile from my father’s house to the place where they threw me into a hickory-bark canoe, which was concealed under the bushes, on the bank of the river. Into this they all seven jumped, and immediately crossed the Ohio, landing at the mouth of the Big Miami, and on the south side of that river. Here they abandoned their canoe, and stuck their paddles in the ground, so that they could be seen from the river. At a little distance in the woods they had some blankets and provisions concealed; they offered me some dry venison and bear’s grease, but I could not eat. My father’s house was plainly to be seen from the place where we stood; they pointed at it, looked at me, and laughed, but I have never known what they said.

After they had eaten a little, they began to ascend the Miami, dragging me along as before.

It must have been early in the spring when we arrived at Sau-ge-nong, for I can remember that at this time the leaves were small, and the Indians were about planting their corn. They managed to make me assist at their labours, partly by signs, and partly by the few words of English old Manito-o-geezhik could speak. After planting, they all left the village, and went out to hunt and dry meat. When they came to their hunting-grounds, they chose a place where many deer resorted, and here they began to build a long screen like a fence; this they made of green boughs and small trees. When they had built a part of it, they showed me how to remove the leaves and dry brush from that side of it to which the Indians were to come to shoot the deer. In this labour I was sometimes assisted by the squaws and children, but at other times I was left alone. It now began to be warm weather, and it happened one day that, having been left alone, as I was tired and thirsty, I fell asleep. I cannot tell how long I slept, but when I began to awake, I thought I heard someone crying a great way off. Then I tried to raise up my head, but could not. Being now more awake, I saw my Indian mother and sister standing by me, and perceived that my face and head were wet. The old woman and her daughter were crying bitterly, but it was some time before I perceived that my head was badly cut and bruised. It appears that, after I had fallen asleep, Manito-o-geezhik, passing that way, had perceived me, had tomahawked me, and thrown me in the bushes; and that when he came to his camp he had said to his wife, ‘Old woman, the boy I brought you is good for nothing; I have killed him; you will find him in such a place.’ The old woman and her daughter having found me, discovered still some signs of life, and had stood over me a long time, crying, and pouring cold water on my head, when I waked. In a few days I recovered in some measure from this hurt, and was again set to work at the screen, but I was more careful not to fall asleep; I endeavoured to assist them at their labours, and to comply in all instances with their directions, but I was notwithstanding treated with great harshness, particularly by the old man, and his two sons She-mung and Kwo-tash-e. While we remained at the hunting camp, one of them put a bridle in my hand, and pointing in a certain direction motioned me to go. I went accordingly, supposing he wished me to bring a horse: I went and caught the first I could find, and in this way I learned to discharge such services as they required of me.

I had been about two years at Sau-ge-nong, when a great council was called by the British agents at Mackinac. This council was attended by the Sioux, the Winnebagoes, the Menomonees, and many remote tribes, as well as by the Ojibbeways, Ottawwaws, &c. When old Manito-o-geezhik returned from this council, I soon learned that he had met there his kinswoman, Net-no-kwa, who, notwithstanding her sex, was then regarded as principal chief of the Ottawwaws. This woman had lost her son, of about my age, by death; and, having heard of me, she wished to purchase me to supply his place. My old Indian mother, the Otter woman, when she heard of this, protested vehemently against it. I heard her say, ‘My son has been dead once, and has been restored to me; I cannot lose him again.’ But these remonstrances had little influence when Net-no-kwa arrived with plenty of whisky and other presents. She brought to the lodge first a ten-gallon keg of whisky, blankets, tobacco, and other articles of great value. She was perfectly acquainted with the dispositions of those with whom she had to negotiate. Objections were made to the exchange until the contents of the keg had circulated for some time; then an additional keg, and a few more presents, completed the bargain, and I was transferred to Net-no-kwa. This woman, who was then advanced in years, was of a more pleasing aspect than my former mother. She took me by the hand, after she had completed the negotiation with my former possessors, and led me to her own lodge, which stood near. Here I soon found I was to be treated more indulgently than I had been. She gave me plenty of food, put good clothes upon me, and told me to go and play with her own sons. We remained but a short time at Sau-ge-nong. She would not stop with me at Mackinac, which we passed in the night, but ran along to Point St. Ignace, where she hired some Indians to take care of me, while she returned to Mackinac by herself, or with one or two of her young men. After finishing her business at Mackinac, she returned, and, continuing on our journey, we arrived in a few days at Shab-a-wy-wy-a-gun.

The husband of Net-no-kwa was an Ojibbeway of Red River, called Taw-ga-we-ninne, the hunter. He was seventeen years younger than Net-no-kwa, and had turned off a former wife on being married to her. Taw-ga-we-ninne was always indulgent and kind to me, treating me like an equal, rather than as a dependent. When speaking to me, he always called me his son. Indeed, he himself was but of secondary importance in the family, as everything belonged to Net-no-kwa, and she had the direction in all affairs of any moment. She imposed on me, for the first year, some tasks. She made me cut wood, bring home game, bring water, and perform other services not commonly required of the boys of my age; but she treated me invariably with so much kindness that I was far more happy and content than I had been in the family of Manito-o-geezhik. She sometimes whipped me, as she did her own children: but I was not so severely and frequently beaten as I had been before.

Early in the spring, Net-no-kwa and her husband, with their family, started to go to Mackinac. They left me, as they had done before, at Point St. Ignace, as they would not run the risk of losing me by suffering me to be seen at Mackinac. On our return, after we had gone twenty-five or thirty miles from Point St. Ignace, we were detained by contrary winds at a place called Me-nau-ko-king, a point running out into the lake. Here we encamped with some other Indians, and a party of traders. Pigeons were very numerous in the woods, and the boys of my age, and the traders, were busy shooting them. I had never killed any game, and, indeed, had never in my life discharged a gun. My mother had purchased at Mackinac a keg of powder, which, as they thought it a little damp, was here spread out to dry. Taw-ga-we-ninne had a large horseman’s pistol; and, finding myself somewhat emboldened by his indulgent manner toward me, I requested permission to go and try to kill some pigeons with the pistol. My request was seconded by Net-no-kwa, who said, ‘It is time for our son to begin to learn to be a hunter.’ Accordingly, my father, as I called Taw-ga-we-ninne, loaded the pistol and gave it to me, saying, ‘Go, my son, and if you kill anything with this, you shall immediately have a gun and learn to hunt.’ Since I have been a man, I have been placed in difficult situations; but my anxiety for success was never greater than in this, my first essay as a hunter. I had not gone far from the camp before I met with pigeons, and some of them alighted in the bushes very near me. I cocked my pistol, and raised it to my face, bringing the breech almost in contact with my nose. Having brought the sight to bear upon the pigeon, I pulled trigger, and was in the next instant sensible of a humming noise, like that of a stone sent swiftly through the air. I found the pistol at the distance of some paces behind me, and the pigeon under the tree on which he had been sitting. My face was much bruised, and covered with blood. I ran home, carrying my pigeon in triumph. My face was speedily bound up; my pistol exchanged for a fowling-piece; I was accoutred with a powder-horn, and furnished with shot, and allowed to go out after birds. One of the young Indians went with me, to observe my manner of shooting. I killed three more pigeons in the course of the afternoon, and did not discharge my gun once without killing. Henceforth I began to be treated with more consideration, and was allowed to hunt often, that I might become expert.

Game began to be scarce, and we all suffered from hunger. The chief man of our band was called As-sin-ne-boi-nainse (the Little Assinneboin), and he now proposed to us all to move, as the country where we were was exhausted. The day on which we were to commence our removal was fixed upon, but before it arrived our necessities became extreme. The evening before the day on which we intended to move my mother talked much of all our misfortunes and losses, as well as of the urgent distress under which we were then labouring. At the usual hour I went to sleep, as did all the younger part of the family; but I was wakened again by the loud praying and singing of the old woman, who continued her devotions through great part of the night. Very early on the following morning she called us all to get up, and put on our moccasins, and be ready to move. She then called Wa-me-gon-a-biew to her, and said to him, in rather a low voice, ‘My son, last night I sung and prayed to the Great Spirit, and when I slept, there came to me one like a man, and said to me, “Net-no-kwa, to-morrow you shall eat a bear. There is, at a distance from the path you are to travel to-morrow, and in such a direction” (which she described to him), “a small round meadow, with something like a path leading from it; in that path there is a bear.” Now, my son, I wish you to go to that place, without mentioning to anyone what I have said, and you will certainly find the bear, as I have described to you.’ But the young man, who was not particularly dutiful, or apt to regard what his mother said, going out of the lodge, spoke sneeringly to the other Indians of the dream. ‘The old woman,’ said he, ‘tells me we are to eat a bear to-day; but I do not know who is to kill it.’ The old woman, hearing him, called him in, and reproved him; but she could not prevail upon him to go to hunt.

I had my gun with me, and I continued to think of the conversation I had heard between my mother and Wa-me-gon-a-biew respecting her dream. At length I resolved to go in search of the place she had spoken of, and without mentioning to anyone my design, I loaded my gun as for a bear, and set off on our back track. I soon met a woman belonging to one of the brothers of Taw-ga-we-ninne, and of course my aunt. This woman had shown little friendship for us, considering us as a burthen upon her husband, who sometimes gave something for our support; she had also often ridiculed me. She asked me immediately what I was doing on the path, and whether I expected to kill Indians, that I came there with my gun. I made her no answer; and thinking I must be not far from the place where my mother had told Wa-me-gon-a-biew to leave the path, I turned off, continuing carefully to regard all the directions she had given. At length I found what appeared at some former time to have been a pond. It was a small, round, open place in the woods, now grown up with grass and small bushes. This I thought must be the meadow my mother had spoken of; and examining around it, I came to an open space in the bushes, where, it is probable, a small brook ran from the meadow; but the snow was now so deep that I could see nothing of it. My mother had mentioned that, when she saw the bear in her dream, she had, at the same time, seen a smoke rising from the ground. I was confident this was the place she had indicated, and I watched long, expecting to see the smoke; but, wearied at length with waiting, I walked a few paces into the open place, resembling a path, when I unexpectedly fell up to my middle in the snow. I extricated myself without difficulty, and walked on; but, remembering that I had heard the Indians speak of killing bears in their holes, it occurred to me that it might be a bear’s hole into which I had fallen, and, looking down into it, I saw the head of a bear lying close to the bottom of the hole. I placed the muzzle of my gun nearly between his eyes and discharged it. As soon as the smoke cleared away, I took a piece of stick and thrust it into the eyes and into the wound in the head of the bear, and, being satisfied that he was dead, I endeavoured to lift him out of the hole; but being unable to do this, I returned home, following the track I had made in coming out. As I came near the camp, where the squaws had by this time set up the lodges, I met the same woman I had seen in going out, and she immediately began again to ridicule me. ‘Have you killed a bear, that you come back so soon, and walk so fast?’ I thought to myself, ‘How does she know that I have killed a bear?’ But I passed by her without saying anything, and went into my mother’s lodge. After a few minutes, the old woman said, ‘My son, look in that kettle, and you will find a mouthful of beaver meat, which a man gave me since you left us in the morning. You must leave half of it for Wa-me-gon-a-biew, who has not yet returned from hunting, and has eaten nothing to-day.’ I accordingly ate the beaver meat, and when I had finished it, observing an opportunity when she stood by herself, I stepped up to her, and whispered in her ear, ‘My mother, I have killed a bear.’ ‘What do you say, my son?’ said she. ‘I have killed a bear.’ ‘Are you sure you have killed him?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Is he quite dead?’ ‘Yes.’ She watched my face for a moment, and then caught me in her arms, hugging and kissing me with great earnestness, and for a long time. I then told her what my aunt had said to me, both going and returning, and this being told to her husband when he returned, he not only reproved her for it, but gave her a severe flogging. The bear was sent for, and, as being the first I had killed, was cooked all together, and the hunters of the whole band invited to feast with us, according to the custom of the Indians. The same day one of the Crees killed a bear and a moose, and gave a large share of the meat to my mother.

One winter I hunted for a trader called by the Indians Aneeb, which means an elm-tree. As the winter advanced, and the weather became more and more cold, I found it difficult to procure as much game as I had been in the habit of supplying, and as was wanted by the trader. Early one morning, about mid-winter, I started an elk. I pursued until night, and had almost overtaken him; but hope and strength failed me at the same time. What clothing I had on me, notwithstanding the extreme coldness of the weather, was drenched with sweat. It was not long after I turned towards home that I felt it stiffening about me. My leggings were of cloth, and were torn in pieces in running through the bush. I was conscious I was somewhat frozen before I arrived at the place where I had left our lodge standing in the morning, and it was now midnight. I knew it had been the old woman's intention to move, and I knew where she would go; but I had not been informed she would go on that day. As I followed on their path, I soon ceased to suffer from cold, and felt that sleepy sensation which I knew preceded the last stage of weakness in such as die of cold. I redoubled my efforts, but with an entire consciousness of the danger of my situation; it was with no small difficulty that I could prevent myself from lying down. At length I lost all consciousness for some time, how long I cannot tell, and, awaking as from a dream, I found I had been walking round and round in a small circle not more than twenty or twenty-five yards over. After the return of my senses, I looked about to try to discover my path, as I had missed it; but, while I was looking, I discovered a light at a distance, by which I directed my course. Once more, before I reached the lodge, I lost my senses; but I did not fall down; if I had, I should never have got up again; but I ran round and round in a circle as before. When I at last came into the lodge, I immediately fell down, but I did not lose myself as before. I can remember seeing the thick and sparkling coat of frost on the inside of the pukkwi lodge, and hearing my mother say that she had kept a large fire in expectation of my arrival; and that she had not thought I should have been so long gone in the morning, but that I should have known long before night of her having moved. It was a month before I was able to go out again, my face, hands, and legs having been much frozen.

There is, on the bank of the Little Saskawjewun, a place which looks like one the Indians would always choose to encamp at. In a bend of the river is a beautiful landing-place, behind it a little plain, a thick wood, and a small hill rising abruptly in the rear. But with that spot is connected a story of fratricide, a crime so uncommon that the spot where it happened is held in detestation, and regarded with terror. No Indian will land his canoe, much less encamp, at ‘*the place of the two dead men*.’ They relate that many years ago the Indians were encamped here, when a quarrel arose between two brothers, having she-she-gwi for totems. One drew his knife and slew the other; but those of the band who were present, looked upon the crime as so horrid that, without hesitation or delay, they killed the murderer, and buried them together.

As I approached this spot, I thought much of the story of the two brothers, who bore the same totem with myself, and were, as I supposed, related to my Indian mother. I had heard it said that, if any man encamped near their graves, as some had done soon after they were buried, they would be seen to come out of the ground, and either re-act the quarrel and the murder, or in some other manner so annoy and disturb their visitors that they could not sleep. Curiosity was in part my motive, and I wished to be able to tell the Indians that *I* not only stopped, but slept quietly at a place which they shunned with so much fear and caution. The sun was going down as I arrived; and I pushed my little canoe in to the shore, kindled a fire, and, after eating my supper, lay down and slept. Very soon I saw the two dead men come and sit down by my fire, opposite me. Their eyes were intently fixed upon me, but they neither smiled nor said anything. I got up and sat opposite them by the fire, and in this situation I awoke. The night was dark and gusty, but I saw no men, or heard any other sound than that of the wind in the trees. It is likely I fell asleep again, for I soon saw the same two men standing below the bank of the river, their heads just rising to the level of the ground I had made my fire on, and looking at me as before. After a few minutes, they rose one after the other, and sat down opposite me; but now they were laughing, and pushing at me with sticks, and using various methods of annoyance. I endeavoured to speak to them, but my voice failed me; I tried to fly, but my feet refused to do their office. Throughout the whole night I was in a state of agitation and alarm. Among other things which they said to me, one of them told me to look at the top of the little hill which stood near. I did so, and saw a horse fettered, and standing looking at me. ‘There, my brother,’ said the ghost, ‘is a horse which I give you to ride on your journey to-morrow; and as you pass here on your way home, you can call and leave the horse, and spend another night with us.’

At last came the morning, and I was in no small degree pleased to find that with the darkness of the night these terrifying visions vanished. But my long residence among the Indians, and the frequent instances in which I had known the intimations of dreams verified, occasioned me to think seriously of the horse the ghost had given me. Accordingly I went to the top of the hill, where I discovered tracks and other signs, and, following a little distance, found a horse, which I knew belonged to the trader I was going to see. As several miles travel might be saved by crossing from this point on the Little Saskawjewun to the Assinneboin, I left the canoe, and, having caught the horse, and put my load upon him, led him towards the trading-house, where I arrived next day. In all subsequent journeys through this country, I carefully shunned ‘the place of the two dead’; and the account I gave of what I had seen and suffered there confirmed the superstitious terrors of the Indians.

I was standing by our lodge one evening, when I saw a good-looking young woman walking about and smoking. She noticed me from time to time, and at last came up and asked me to smoke with her. I answered that I never smoked. ‘You do not wish to touch my pipe; for that reason you will not smoke with me.’ I took her pipe and smoked a little, though I had not been in the habit of smoking before. She remained some time, and talked with me, and I began to be pleased with her. After this we saw each other often, and I became gradually attached to her.

I mention this because it was to this woman that I was afterwards married, and because the commencement of our acquaintance was not after the usual manner of the Indians. Among them it most commonly happens, even when a young man marries a woman of his own band, he has previously had no personal acquaintance with her. They have seen each other in the village; he has perhaps looked at her in passing, but it is probable they have never spoken together. The match is agreed on by the old people, and when their intention is made known to the young couple, they commonly find, in themselves, no objection to the arrangement, as they know, should it prove disagreeable mutually, or to either party, it can at any time be broken off.

I now redoubled my diligence in hunting, and commonly came home with meat in the early part of the day, at least before night. I then dressed myself as handsomely as I could, and walked about the village, sometimes blowing the Pe-be-gwun, or flute. For some time Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa pretended she was not willing to marry me, and it was not, perhaps, until she perceived some abatement of ardour on my part that she laid this affected coyness entirely aside. For my own part, I found that my anxiety to take a wife home to my lodge was rapidly becoming less and less. I made several efforts to break off the intercourse, and visit her no more; but a lingering inclination was too strong for me. When she perceived my growing indifference, she sometimes reproached me, and sometimes sought to move me by tears and entreaties; but I said nothing to the old woman about bringing her home, and became daily more and more unwilling to acknowledge her publicly as my wife.

About this time I had occasion to go to the trading-house on Red River, and I started in company with a half-breed belonging to that establishment, who was mounted on a fleet horse. The distance we had to travel has since been called by the English settlers seventy miles. We rode and went on foot by turns, and the one who was on foot kept hold of the horse’s tail, and ran. We passed over the whole distance in one day. In returning, I was by myself, and without a horse, and I made an effort, intending, if possible, to accomplish the same journey in one day; but darkness, and excessive fatigue, compelled me to stop when I was within about ten miles of home.

When I arrived at our lodge, on the following day, I saw Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa sitting in my place. As I stopped at the door of the lodge, and hesitated to enter, she hung down her head; but Net-no-kwa greeted me in a tone somewhat harsher than was common for her to use to me. ‘Will you turn back from the door of the lodge, and put this young woman to shame, who is in all respects better than you are? This affair has been of your seeking, and not of mine or hers. You have followed her about the village heretofore; now you would turn from her, and make her appear like one who has attempted to thrust herself in your way.’ I was, in part, conscious of the justness of Net-no-kwa’s reproaches, and in part prompted by inclination; I went in and sat down by the side of Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa, and thus we became man and wife. Old Net-no-kwa had, while I was absent at Red River, without my knowledge or consent, made her bargain with the parents of the young woman, and brought her home, rightly supposing that it would be no difficult matter to reconcile me to the measure. In most of the marriages which happen between young persons, the parties most interested have less to do than in this case. The amount of presents which the parents of a woman expect to receive in exchange for her diminishes in proportion to the number of husbands she may have had.

I now began to attend to some of the ceremonies of what may be called the initiation of warriors, this being the first time I had been on a war-party. For the first three times that a man accompanies a war-party, the customs of the Indians require some peculiar and painful observances, from which old warriors may, if they choose, be exempted. The young warrior must constantly paint his face black; must wear a cap, or head-dress of some kind; must never precede the old warriors, but follow them, stepping in their tracks. He must never scratch his head, or any other part of his body, with his fingers, but if he is compelled to scratch he must use a small stick; the vessel he eats or drinks out of, or the knife he uses, must be touched by no other person.

The young warrior, however long and fatiguing the march, must neither eat, nor drink, nor sit down by day; if he halts for a moment, he must turn his face towards his own country, that the Great Spirit may see that it is his wish to return home again.

It was Tanner’s wish to return home again, and after many dangerous and disagreeable adventures he did at last, when almost an old man, come back to the Whites and tell his history, which, as he could not write, was taken down at his dictation.

CASANOVA’S ESCAPE

IN July 1755 Casanova di Seingalt, a Venetian gentleman, who, by reason of certain books of magic he possessed, fell under the displeasure of the Church, was imprisoned by order of the Inquisition in a cell in the ducal palace.

The cell in which he was imprisoned was one of seven called ‘The Leads,’ because they were under the palace roof, which was covered neither by slates nor bricks, but great heavy sheets of lead. They were guarded by archers, and could only be reached by passing through the hall of council. The secretary of the Inquisition had charge of their key, which the gaoler, after going the round of the prisoners, restored to him every morning. Four of the cells faced eastward over the palace canal, the other three westward over the court. Casanova’s was one of the three, and he calculated that it was exactly above the private room of the inquisitors.

For many hours after the gaoler first turned the key upon Casanova he was left alone in the gloomy cell, not high enough for him to stand upright in, and destitute even of a couch. He laid aside his silk mantle, his hat adorned with Spanish lace and a white plume — for, when roused from sleep and arrested by the Inquisition, he had put on the suit lying ready, in which he intended to have gone to a gay entertainment. The heat of the cell was extreme: the prisoner leaned his elbows on the ledge of the grating which admitted to the cell what light there was, and fell into a deep and bitter reverie. Eight hours passed, and then the complete solitude in which he was left began to trouble him. Another hour, another, and another; but when night really fell, to take Casanova’s own account,

‘I became like a raging madman, stamping, cursing, and uttering wild cries. After more than an hour of this furious exercise, seeing no one, not hearing the least sign which could have made me imagine that anyone was aware of my fury, I stretched myself on the ground. . . . But my bitter grief and anger, and the hard floor on which I lay, did not prevent me from sleeping.

‘The midnight bell woke me: I could not believe that I had really passed three hours without consciousness of pain. Without moving, lying as I was on my left side, I stretched out my right hand for my handkerchief, which I remembered was there. Groping with my hand — heavens! suddenly it rested upon *another* hand, icy cold! Terror thrilled me from head to foot, and my hair rose: I had never in all my life known such an agony of fear, and would never have thought myself capable of it.

‘Three or four minutes I passed, not only motionless, but bereft of thought; then, recovering my senses, I began to think that the hand I touched was imaginary. In that conviction I stretched out my arm once more, only to encounter the same hand, which, with a cry of horror, I seized, and let go again, drawing back my own. I shuddered, but being able to reason by this time, I decided that while I slept a corpse had been laid near me — for I was sure there was nothing when I lay down on the floor. But whose was the dead body? Some innocent sufferer, perhaps one of my own friends, whom they had strangled, and laid there that I might find before my eyes when I woke the example of what my own fate was to be? That thought made me furious: for the third time I approached the hand with my own: I clasped it, and at the same instant I tried to rise, to draw this dead body towards me, and be certain of the hideous crime. But, as I strove to prop myself on my left elbow, the cold hand I was clasping became alive, and was withdrawn — and I knew that instant, to my utter astonishment, that I held none other than my own left hand, which, lying stiffened on the hard floor, had lost heat and sensation entirely.’

That incident, though comic, did not cheer Casanova, but gave him matter for the darkest reflections — since he saw himself in a place where, if the unreal seemed so true, reality might one day become a dream. In other words, he feared approaching madness.

But at last came daybreak, and by-and-by the gaoler returned, asking the prisoner if he had had time to find out what he would like to eat. Casanova was allowed to send for all he needed from his own apartments in Venice, but writing-implements, any metal instruments whatever, even knife and fork, and the books he mentioned, were struck from his list. The inquisitors sent him books which they themselves thought suitable, and which drove him, he said, to the verge of madness.

He was not ill-treated — having a daily allowance given him to buy what food he liked, which was more than he could spend. But the loss of liberty soon became insupportable. For months he believed that his deliverance was close at hand; but when November came, and he saw no prospect of release, he began to form projects of escape. And soon the idea of freeing himself, however wild and impossible it seemed, took complete possession of him.

By-and-by he was allowed half an hour’s daily promenade in the corridor (galetas) outside his cell — a dingy, rat-infested place, into which old rubbish was apt to drift. One day Casanova noticed a piece of black marble on the floor — polished, an inch thick and six inches long. He picked it up stealthily, and without any definite intention, managed to hide it away in his cell.

Another morning his eyes fell upon a long iron bolt, lying on the floor with other old odds and ends, and that also, concealed in his dress, he bore into his cell. When left alone, he examined it carefully, and realised that if pointed, it would make an excellent spontoon. He took the black marble, and after grinding one end of the bolt against it for a long while, he saw that he had really succeeded in wearing the iron down. For fifteen days he worked, till he could hardly stir his right arm, and his shoulder felt almost dislocated. But he had made the bolt into a real tool; or, if necessary, a weapon, with an excellent point. He hid it in the straw of his armchair so carefully that, to find it, one must have known that it was there; and then he began to consider what use he should make of it.

He was certain that the room underneath was the one in which on entering he had seen the secretary of the Inquisition, and which was probably opened every morning. A hole once made in the floor, he could easily lower himself by a rope made of the sheets of his bed, and fastened to one of the bed-posts. He might hide under the great table of the tribunal till the door was opened, and then make good his escape. It was probable, indeed, that one of the archers would mount guard in this room at night; but him Casanova resolved to kill with his pointed iron. The great difficulty really was that the hole in the floor was not to be made in a day, but might be a work of months. And therefore some pretext must be found to prevent the archers from sweeping out the cell, as they were accustomed to do every morning.

Some days after, alleging no reason, he ordered the archers not to sweep. This omission was allowed to pass for several mornings, and then the gaoler demanded Casanova’s reason. He answered, that the dust settled on his lungs, and made him cough, and might give him a mortal disease. Laurent, the gaoler, offered to throw water on the floor before sweeping it; but Casanova’s arguments against the dampness of the atmosphere that would result were equally ingenious. Laurent’s suspicions, however, were roused, and one day he ordered the room to be swept most carefully, and even lit a candle, and on the pretence of cleanliness, searched the cell thoroughly. Casanova seemed indifferent, but the next day, having pricked his finger, he showed his handkerchief stained with blood, and said that the gaoler’s cruelty had brought on so severe a cough that he had actually broken a small blood-vessel. A doctor was sent for, who took the prisoner’s part, and forbade sweeping out the cell in future. One great point was gained; but the work could not begin yet, owing to the fearful cold. The prisoner would have been forced to wear gloves, and the sight of a worn glove might have excited suspicion. So he occupied himself with another stratagem — the creation, little by little, of a lamp, for the solace of the endless winter nights. One by one, the gaoler himself, unsuspectingly, brought the different ingredients: oil was imported in salads, wick the prisoner himself made from threads pulled from the quilt, and in time the lamp was complete.

The very unwelcome sojourn of a Jewish usurer, like himself captive of the Inquisition, in his cell, forced Casanova to delay his projects of escape till after Easter, when the Jew was imprisoned elsewhere.

No sooner had he left than Casanova, by the light of the lamp constructed with so much difficulty, began his task. Drawing his bed away, he set to work to bore through the plank underneath, gathering the fragments of wood in a napkin — which the next morning he contrived to empty out behind a heap of old cahier books in the corridor — and after six hours' labour, pulling back his bed, which concealed all trace of it from the gaoler's eyes.

The first plank was two inches thick; the next day he found another plank beneath it, and he pierced this only to find a third plank. It was three weeks before he dug out a cavity large enough for his purpose in this depth of wood, and his disappointment was great when, underneath the planks, he came to a marble pavement which resisted his one tool. But he remembered having read of a general who had broken with an axe hard stones, which he first made brittle by vinegar, and this Casanova possessed. He poured a bottle of strong vinegar into the hole, and the next day, whether it was the effect of the vinegar or of his stronger resolution, he managed to loosen the cement which bound the pieces of marble together, and in four hours had destroyed the pavement, and found another plank, which, however, he believed to be the last.

At this point his work was once more interrupted by the arrival of a fellow prisoner, who only stayed, however, for eight days. A more serious delay was caused by the fact that unwittingly a part of his work had been just above one of the great beams that supported the ceiling, and he was forced to enlarge the hole by one-fourth. But at last all was done. Through a hole so thin as to be quite imperceptible from below he saw the room underneath. There was only a thin film of wood to be broken through on the night of his escape. For various reasons, he had fixed on the night of August 27. But hear his own words:

'On the 25th,' writes Casanova, 'there happened what makes me shudder even as I write. Precisely at noon I heard the rattling of bolts, a fearful beating of my heart made me think that my last moment had come, and I flung myself on my armchair, stupefied. Laurent entered, and said gaily:

'"Sir, I have come to bring you good news, on which I congratulate you!"

‘At first I thought my liberty was to be restored — I knew no other news which *could* be good; and I saw that I was lost, for the discovery of the hole would have undone me. But Laurent told me to follow him. I asked him to wait till I got ready.

‘“No matter,” he said, “you are only going to leave this dismal cell for a light one, quite new, where you can see half Venice through the two windows; where you can stand upright; where — —”

‘But I cannot bear to write of it — I seemed to be dying. I implored Laurent to tell the secretary that I thanked the tribunal for its mercy, but begged it in Heaven’s name to leave me where I was. Laurent told me, with a burst of laughter, that I was mad, that my present cell was execrable, and that I was to be transferred to a delightful one.

‘“Come, come, you must obey orders,” he exclaimed.

‘He led me away. I felt a momentary solace in hearing him order one of his men to follow with the armchair, where my spontoon was still concealed. That was always something! If my beautiful hole in the floor, that I had made with such infinite pains, could have followed me too — but that was impossible! My body went; my soul stayed behind.

‘As soon as Laurent saw me in the fresh cell, he had the armchair set down. I flung myself upon it, and he went away, telling me that my bed and all my other belongings should be brought to me at once.’

For two hours Casanova was left alone in his new cell, utterly hopeless, and expecting to be consigned for the rest of his life to one of the palace dungeons, from which no escape could be possible. Then the gaoler returned, almost mad with rage, and demanded the axe and all the instruments which the prisoner must have employed in penetrating the marble pavement. Calmly, without stirring, Casanova told him that he did not know what he was talking about, but that, if he *had* procured tools, it could only have been from Laurent himself, who alone had entrance to the cell.

Such a reply did not soften the gaoler’s anger, and for some time Casanova was very badly treated. Everything was searched; but his tool had been so cleverly concealed that Laurent never found it. Fortunately it was the gaoler’s interest not to let the tribunal know of the discovery he had made. He had the floor of the cell mended without the knowledge of the secretary of the Inquisition, and when this was done, and he found himself secure from blame, Casanova had little difficulty in making peace with him, and even told him the secret of the lamp’s construction.

Fortunately, out of the tribunal’s allowance to the prisoner enough was always left, after he had provided for his own needs, for a gift — or bribe, to the gaoler.

But Laurent did not relax his vigilance, and every morning one of the archers went round the cell with an iron bar, giving blows to walls and floor, to assure himself that there was nothing broken. But he never struck the ceiling, a fact which Casanova resolved to turn to account at the first opportunity.

One day the prisoner ordered his gaoler to buy him a particular book, and Laurent, objecting to an expense which seemed to him quite needless, offered to borrow him a book of one of the other prisoners, in exchange for one of his own. Here at last was an opportunity. Casanova chose a volume out of his small library, and gave it to the gaoler, who returned in a few minutes with a Latin book belonging to one of the other prisoners.

Pen and ink were forbidden, but in this book Casanova found a fragment of paper; and he contrived, with the nail of his little finger, dipped in mulberry juice, to write on it a list of his library — and returned the volume, asking for a second. The second came, and in it a short letter in Latin. The correspondence between the prisoners had really begun.

The writer of the Latin letter was the monk Balbi, imprisoned in the Leads with a companion, Count André Asquin. He followed it by a much longer one, giving the history of his own life, and all that he knew of his fellow-prisoners. Casanova formed a very poor opinion of Father Balbi’s character from his letters; but assistance of some kind he must have, since the gaoler must needs discover any attempt to break through the ceiling, unless that attempt was made from above. But Casanova soon thought of a plan by which Balbi could break through *his* ceiling, undiscovered.

‘I wrote to him,’ he relates, ‘that I would find some means of sending him an instrument with which he could break through the roof of his cell, and having climbed upon it, go to the wall separating his roof from mine. Breaking through that, he would find himself on *my* roof, which also must be broken through. That done, I would leave my cell, and he, the Count, and I together, would manage to raise one of the great leaden squares that formed the highest palace roof. Once outside *that*, I would be answerable for the rest.

‘But first he must tell the gaoler to buy him forty or fifty pictures of saints, and by way of proving his piety, he must cover his walls and ceiling with these, putting the largest on the ceiling. When he had done this, I would tell him more.

‘I next ordered Laurent to buy me the new folio Bible that was just printed; for I fancied its great size might enable me to conceal my tool there, and so send it to the monk. But when I saw it, I became gloomy — the bolt was two inches longer than the Bible. The monk wrote to me that the cell was already covered according to my direction, and hoped I would lend him the great Bible which Laurent told him I had bought. But I replied that for three or four days I needed it myself.

‘At last I hit upon a device. I told Laurent that on Michaelmas Day I wanted two dishes of macaroni, and one of these must be the largest dish he had, for I meant to season it, and send it, with my compliments, to the worthy gentleman who had lent me books. Laurent would bring me the butter and the Parmesan cheese, but I myself should add them to the boiling macaroni.

‘I wrote to the monk preparing him for what was to happen, and on St. Michael’s Day all came about as I expected. I had hidden the bolt in the great Bible, wrapped in paper, one inch of it showing on each side. I prepared the cheese and butter; and in due time Laurent brought me in the boiling macaroni and the great dish. Mixing my ingredients, I filled the dish so full that the butter nearly ran over the edge, and then I placed it carefully on the Bible, and put that, with the dish resting on it, into Laurent’s hand, warning him not to spill a drop. All his caution was necessary: he went away with his eyes fixed on his burden, lest the butter should run over; and the Bible, with the bolt projecting from it, were covered, and more than covered, by the huge dish. His one care was to hold that steady, and I saw that I had succeeded. Presently he came back to tell me that not a drop of butter had been spilt.’

Father Balbi next began his work, detaching from the roof one large picture, which he regularly put back in the same place to conceal the hole. In eight days he had made his way through the roof, and attacked the wall. This was harder work, but at last he had removed six and twenty bricks, and could pass through to Casanova’s roof. This he was obliged to work at very carefully, lest any fracture should appear visible below.

One Monday, as Father Balbi was busy at the roof, Casanova suddenly heard the sound of opening doors. It was a terrible moment, but he had time to give the alarm signal, two quick blows on the ceiling. Then Laurent entered, bringing another prisoner, an ugly, ill-dressed little man of fifty, in a black wig, who looked like what he was, a spy of the Inquisition.

Casanova soon learned the history of Soradici — for this was the spy’s name — and when his new companion was asleep he wrote to Balbi the account of what had happened. For the present, evidently the work must be given up, no confidence whatever could be placed in Soradici. Yet soon Casanova thought of a plan of making use even of this traitor.

First he ordered Laurent to buy him an image of the Virgin Mary, holy water, and a crucifix. Next he wrote two letters, addressed to friends in Venice — letters in which he made no complaint, but spoke of the benevolence of the Inquisition, and the blessing that his trials had been to him. These letters, which, even if they reached the hands of the secretary, could do him no possible harm, he entrusted to Soradici, in case he should soon be set free; exacting the spy’s solemn oath, on the crucifix and the image of the Virgin, not to betray him, but to give the letters to his friends.

Soradici took the oath required of him, and sewed the letters into his vest. None the less, Casanova felt confident that he would be betrayed, and this was exactly what happened. Two days after the spy was sent for to the secretary, and when he returned to the cell, his companion soon discovered that he had given up the letters.

Casanova affected the utmost anguish and despair. He flung himself down before the image of the Virgin, and demanded vengeance on the monster who had ruined him by breaking so solemn a pledge. Then he lay down with his face to the wall, and for the whole day uttered no single word to the spy, who, terrified at his companion’s prayer for vengeance, entreated his forgiveness. But when the spy slept he wrote to Father Balbi and told him to go on with his work the next day, beginning at exactly three o’clock, and working four hours.

The next day, after the gaoler had left them, bearing with him the book of Father Balbi in which the prisoner’s letter was concealed, Casanova called his companion. The spy, by this time, was really ill with terror; for he believed that he had provoked the wrath of the Virgin Mary by breaking his oath. He was ready to do anything his companion told him to do, and weak enough to credit any falsehood.

Casanova put on a look of inspiration, and said:

‘Learn that at break of day the Holy Virgin appeared to me, and commanded me to forgive you. You shall not die. The grief that your treachery caused me made me pass all the night sleepless, since I knew that the letters you had given to the secretary would prove my ruin — and my one consolation was to believe that in three days I should see you die in this very cell. But though my mind was full of my revenge — unworthy of a Christian — at break of day the image of the Blessed Virgin that you see moved, opened her lips, and said: “Soradici is under my protection: I would have you pardon him. In reward of your generosity I will send one of my angels in figure of a man, who shall descend from heaven to break the roof of the cell, and in five or six days to release you. To-day this angel will begin his work at three o’clock, and will work till half an hour before the sun sets, for he must return to me by daylight. When you escape you will take Soradici with you, and you will take care of him all his life, on condition that he quits the profession of a spy for ever.” With these words the Blessed Virgin disappeared.’

At first even the spy’s credulity would hardly be persuaded that Casanova had not dreamed; but when at the appointed hour the sound of the angel working in the roof was really to be heard, when it lasted four hours, and ceased again as foretold, all his doubt vanished, and he was ready to follow Casanova blindly. The thought of once more betraying him never entered his mind; he believed that the Blessed Virgin herself was on the side of his companion.

The angel would appear, Casanova told him, on the evening of October 31. And at the hour appointed Father Balbi, not looking in the least like an angel, came feet foremost through the ceiling. Casanova embraced him, left him to guard the spy, and himself ascending through the roof, crossed over into the other cell and greeted the monk’s fellow-prisoner, Count André, who had all this time kept their secret, but, being old and infirm, had no desire to fly with them.

The next thing was to return into the garret above the two cells, and set to work to break through the palace roof itself. Most of this task fell to Casanova, till he reached the great sheet of lead surmounting the planks, and there the monk’s help was necessary. Uniting their strength, they raised it till an opening was made wide enough to pass through. But outside the moonlight was too strong, and they would have been seen from below had they ventured on the roof. They returned into the cell and waited. Casanova had made strong ropes by tying together sheets, towels, and whatever else would serve. Now, since there was nothing to be done till the moon sank, he sat down and wrote a courteous letter to the Inquisition, explaining his reasons for attempting to escape.

The spy, too cowardly to risk his life in so daring a venture, and beginning to see that he had been imposed upon, begged Casanova on his knees to leave him behind, praying for the fugitives — and this Casanova was thankful to do, for Soradici could only have encumbered him. Father Balbi, though for the last hour he had been heaping reproaches on his friend’s rashness, was less of a coward than the spy, and as the time had come to start he followed Casanova. They crept out on the roof, and began cautiously to ascend it. Half-way up the monk begged his companion to stop, saying that he had lost one of the packages tied round his neck.

‘Was it the package of cord?’ asked Casanova.

‘No,’ replied the monk, ‘but a black coat, and a very precious manuscript.’

‘Then,’ said Casanova, resisting a sudden temptation to throw Balbi after his packet, ‘you must be patient, and come along.’

The monk sighed, and followed. Soon they had reached the highest point of the roof, and here Balbi contrived to lose his hat, which rolled down the roof, failed to lodge in the gutter, and fell into the canal below. The poor fellow grew desperate, and said it was a bad omen. Casanova soothed him, and left him seated where he was, while he himself went to investigate, his faithful tool in his hand.

Now fresh difficulties began. For a long time Casanova could find no way of re-entering the palace, except into the cell they had quitted. He was growing hopeless, when he saw a skylight, that he was sure was too far away from their starting point to belong to any of the cells. He made his way to it; it was barred with a fine iron grating that needed a file. And Casanova only had one tool!

Sitting on the roof of the skylight, he nearly abandoned himself to despair, till the bell striking midnight suddenly roused him. It was the first of November: All Saint's Day — the day on which he had long had a curious foreboding that he should recover his liberty. Fired with hope, he set his tool to work at the grating, and in a quarter of an hour he had wrenched it away entire. He set it down by the skylight, and went back for the monk. They regained the skylight together.

Casanova let down his companion through the skylight by the cord, and found that the floor was so far away that he himself dared not risk the leap. And though the cord was still in his hands, he had nowhere to fasten it. The monk, inside, could give him no help — and, not knowing what to do, he set out on another voyage of discovery.

It was successful, for in a part of the roof which he had not yet visited he found a ladder left by some workmen, and long enough for his purpose. Indeed, it seemed likely to be too long, for when he tried to introduce it into the skylight, it only entered as far as the sixth round, and then was stopped by the roof. However, with a superhuman effort Casanova, hanging to the roof, below the skylight, managed to lift the other end of the ladder, nearly, in the action, flinging himself down into the canal. But he had succeeded in forcing the ladder farther in, and the rest was comparatively easy. He climbed up again to the skylight, lowered the ladder, and in another moment was standing by his companion's side.

They found themselves in a garret opening into another room, well barred and bolted. But just then Casanova was past all exertion. He flung himself on the ground, the packet of cord under his head, and fell into a sleep of utter exhaustion. It was dawn when he was roused at last by the monk's despairing efforts. For two hours the latter had been shaking him, and even shouting in his ears, without the slightest effect!

Casanova rose, saying:

'This place must have a way out. Let us break everything — there is no time to lose!'

They found, at last, a door, of which Casanova's tool forced the lock, and which led them into the room containing the archives or records of the Venetian Republic. From this they descended a staircase, then another, and so made their way into the chancellor's office. Here Casanova found a tool which secretaries used to pierce parchment, and which was some little help to them — for he found it impossible to force the lock of the door through which they had next to part, and the only way was to break a hole in it. Casanova set to work at the part of the door that looked most likely to yield, while his companion did what he could with the secretary’s instrument — they pushed, rent, tore the wood; the noise that they made was alarming, but they were compelled to risk it. In half an hour they had made a hole large enough to get through. The monk went first, being the thinner; he pulled Casanova after him — dusty, torn, and bleeding, for he had worked harder than Father Balbi, who still looked respectable.

They were now in a part of the palace guarded by doors against which no possible effort of theirs could have availed. The only way was to wait till they were opened, and then take flight. Casanova tranquilly changed his tattered garments for a suit which he had brought with him, arranged his hair, and made himself look — except for the bandages he had tied round his wounds — much more like a strayed reveller than an escaped prisoner. All this time the monk was upbraiding him bitterly, and at last, tired of listening, Casanova opened a window, and put out his head, adorned with a gay plumed hat. The window looked out upon the palace court, and Casanova was seen at once by people walking there. He drew back his head, thinking that he had brought destruction upon himself; but after all the accident proved fortunate. Those who had seen him went immediately to tell the authority who kept the key of the hall at the top of the grand staircase, at whose window Casanova’s head had appeared, that he must unwittingly have shut someone in the night before. Such a thing might easily have happened, and the keeper of the keys came immediately to see if the news were true.

Presently the door opened, and quite at his ease, the keeper appeared, key in hand. He looked startled at Casanova’s strange figure, but the latter, without stopping or uttering a word, passed him, and descended the stairs, followed by the frightened monk. They did not run, nor did they loiter; Casanova was already, in spirit, beyond the confines of the Venetian Republic. Still followed by the monk, he reached the water-side, stepped into a gondola, and flinging himself down carelessly, promised the rowers more than their fare if they would reach Fusina quickly. Soon they had left Venice behind them; and a few days after his wonderful escape Casanova was in perfect safety beyond Italy.

ADVENTURES ON THE FINDHORN

THE following adventures in crossing the Findhorn are extracted from ‘Lays of the Deer Forest,’ by John Sobieski and Charles Edward Stuart (London, 1848).

I had lost my boat in the last speat; it was the third which had been taken away in that year, and, until I obtained another, I was obliged to ford the river. I went one day as usual; there was a dark bank of cloud lying in the west upon Beann-Drineachain, but all the sky above was blue and clear, and the water moderate, as I crossed into the forest. I merely wanted a buck, and, therefore, only made a short circuit to the edge of Dun-Fhearn, and rolled a stone down the steep into the deep, wooded den. As it plunged into the burn below, I heard the bound of feet coming up; but they were only two small does, and I did not ‘speak’ to them, but amused myself with watching their uneasiness and surprise as they perked into the bosky gorge, down which the stone had crashed like a nine-pounder; and, as their white targets jinked over the brae, I went on to try the western terraces.

There is a smooth dry brae opposite to Logie Cumming, called ‘Braigh Choilich-Choille,’ great part of the slope of which is covered with a growth of brackens from five to six feet high, mixed with large masses of foxgloves, of such luxuriance that the stems sometimes rise five from a single root, and more than seven feet in height, of which there is often an extent of five feet of blossoms, loaded with a succession of magnificent bells. As we crossed below this beautiful covert, I observed Dreadnought suddenly turn up the wind towards it. I immediately made for the crest beyond where the bank rises smooth and open, and whence I had a free sweep of the summit and of both sides. I had just reached the top when the dog entered the thicket of the ferns, and I saw their tall heads stir about twenty yards before him, followed by a roar from his deep tongue, and a fine buck bolted up the brae. I gave a short whistle to stop him, and immediately he stood to listen, but behind a great spruce fir, which then, with many others, formed a noble group upon the summit of the terrace. The sound of the dog dislodged him in an instant, and he shot out through the open glade, when I followed him with the rifle, and sent him over on his horns like a wheel down the steep, and splash, like a round shot, into the little rill at its foot. We brittled him on the knog of an old pine, and rewarded the dog, and drank the

Dochfalla; when, having occasion to send the piper to the other side of the wood, and being so near home, I shouldered the roe, and took the way for the ford of Craig-Darach, a strong wide broken stream with a very bad bottom, but the nearest then passable.

As I descended the Bruach-gharbh, Dreadnought stopped and looked up into a pine, then approaching the tree, searched it all round with his nose. I scanned the branches, but could see nothing except an old hawk’s nest, which had been disused long ago; and if it had not, I do not understand how it should be interesting to a hound. The dog, however, continued to investigate the stump and stem of the fir, gaze into the branches, turning his head from side to side, and setting up his ears like a cocked-hat. I laid down the buck, and unslung my double gun, and threw a stick at the nest, when out shot a large pine-martin, and, like a squirrel, sprung along the branches from tree to tree, till I brought him to the ground. Dreadnought examined him with a sort of wrinkle in his whiskers, and turned away, and sat down in dignified abstraction; while I remounted the buck, and braced the martin to his feet with the little ‘ial-chas,’ or foot-straps used for trussing the legs of the roe. We then resumed our path for the ford.

As I descended through the Boat-Shaw, I heard a heavy sound from the water, but when I came out from the birches upon the green bank on its brink, I saw that the river had come down, and was just lipping with the top of the stone, the sight of whose head was the mark for the last possibility of crossing. As I looked upon its contracting ring, I perceived that the stream was still growing; there was no time to be lost, for the alternative now was to go round by the bridge of Daltulich, a circuit of four miles; and I knew that, before I reached the next good ford, the water would be a continuous rapid, probably six feet deep: I decided, therefore, upon trying the chance where I was. Dreadnought, who had gone about thirty yards up the stream to take the deep water in the pool of Craig-Darach, had observed my hesitation with one leg out and one in the water, and was standing on the point of the rock waiting the result. As soon as I made another step he plunged into the river, and in a few moments was rolling on the bank of silver sand thrown up by the back-water upon the opposite side of the river. As I advanced through the stream, he looked at me occasionally, and I at him, and the beautiful smooth sand and green bank upon his side — for by that time I began to wish I was there too. I was then in pretty deep water for a ford, but still some distance from the deepest part; my kilt was floating round me in the boiling water, and the strong eddy, formed by the stream running against my legs, gulped and gushed with increasing weight. I moved slowly and carefully, for the whole ford was filled with large round slippery stones from the size of a sixty-pound shot to a two-hundredweight shell. I stopped to rest, and looked back to the ford mark: it was wholly gone, and I saw only the broad smooth wave of water which slipped over its head. Ten paces more, and I should be through the deepest part. I stepped steadily and rigidly, but I wanted the use of my balancing limbs and the freedom of my breath; for the barrels of the double gun and rifle, which were slung at my back, were passed under my arms to keep them out of the water; and I was also obliged to hold the legs of the buck, which, loaded with the ‘wood-cat,’ were crossed upon my breast. At every step the round and slidering stones endangered my footing, rendered still more unsteady by the upward pressure of the water. In this struggle the current gave a great gulp, and a wave splashed up over my guns. I staggered downwards with the stream, and could not recover a sure footing for several yards. At last I secured my hold against a large fixed stone, and paused to rest. After a little I made another effort to proceed.

The water was now running above my belt, and at the first step which I made from the stone I found that it deepened abruptly before me. I felt that in six inches more that strong stream would lift me off my legs; and with great difficulty I gained about two yards up the current to ascertain if the depth was continuous, but the bottom still shelved before me, and, as I persisted in attempting it, I was turned round by the stream, the waves were leaping through the deep channel before me, and having no arms to balance my steps, I began to think of the bonnie banks on *either* side the river. In this jeopardy poor Dreadnought had not been unconcerned; at the first moment of my struggle he had gone down the great stony beach which lay before me, and, sitting down by the water, watched me with great anxiety, and at last began to whine, and whimper, and tremble with agitation. But when he saw me stagger down the stream, he rose, went in up to his knees, howled, pawed the water, and lapped the waves with impatience. Meanwhile I was obliged to come to a rest, with my left foot planted strongly against a stone, for the mere resistance to the pressure of water, which, rushing with a white foam from my side, was sufficient exertion without the weight of the buck and the two guns, which amounted to more than seventy pounds.

After a few moments’ pause I made a last effort to reach the east bank; but it was now impossible, and I turned to make an attempt to regain the Tarnaway side. I was at least thirty yards lower down than when I entered the stream, and the water was rushing and foaming all round me; another stagger nearly carried me off my feet, and, in the exertion to keep them, a thick transpiration rose upon my forehead, my ears began to sing, and my head to swim, while, disordered in their balance, the buck and the guns almost strangled me, I looked down the channel; the water was running in a white, broken rapid into the black pool below, and swept with a wide, foaming back-water under the steep rock which turned its force. The soft green bank before me was sleeping beneath the shade of the weeping birches, where bluebells and primroses grew thick in the short smooth turf, and, though they had long shed their blossoms, the bright patches of their clusters were yet visible among the tall foxgloves, which still retained the purple bells upon their tops. The bank looked softer, and greener, and more inviting than ever it had done before; but my eyes grew dim and my limbs faint with that last struggle. I felt for my dirk knife, for a desperate rolling swim for life seemed now inevitable, and, steadying myself in the stream, I cut loose the straps of the buck and the slings of the guns, and retaining them only with my hands, held them ready to let go as soon as I should be taken off my legs. When they were free, I dipped my hand in the water, and laved it over my brow and face. The singing of my ears ceased, and my sight came clear, and I discovered that I had lost my bonnet in the struggle, and distinguished the white cockade dancing like a little ‘cailleach’ of foam in the vortex of the pool below.

Being now *morally* relieved from the weight of the roe and guns — though resolved to preserve them to the last — I resumed my attempt for the west bank; but when I reached a similar distance to that which I had gained for the other, I found an equally deep channel before me, and that the diminished water by which I had been encouraged was only the shoaling of a long bank which extended with the stream. I now saw that before I joined my bonnet, which still danced and circled in the pool below, there was only one effort left — to struggle up the stream, and reach the point from which I had taken the water. But this was a desperate attempt; for at every step I had to find a safe footing at the upper side of some stone, and then with all my strength to force myself against the current. But often the stones gave way, and, loosening from their bed, went rolling and rumbling down the rapid, and I was driven back several feet, to recommence the same struggle. The river also was still increasing, and the flat sand, which was dry when I left it, was now a sheet of water. While I was thus wrestling with the stream, I saw Dreadnought enter, not at his usual place in the pool, but at the tail, just above the run of the stream in which I was struggling. He came whimpering over, and crossed about a yard or two above me; but instead of making for the bank, he turned in the water, and swam towards me. The stream, however, was too strong for him, and carried him down. I called and waved to the forest, and he turned and steered for its bank, but did not reach the shelving sand till he was well tumbled in the top of the rapid, out of which he only emerged in time to catch a little back-water, which helped him on to the shore. The attempt of the dog to reach me had passed while I rested: and when he gained the bank, I resumed my effort to make the shallower water.

Dreadnought’s eye was turned towards me as he came dripping up the bank, and seeing me move forward, he ran before me to the water’s edge, at the right entrance of the ford, whining, and howling, and baying, as if he knew as well as I that it was the place to make for. In a few steps the stones became less slippery, and the bottom more even, and I began to think that I might gain it, when, at the rocky point above, I saw a white mass of foam, loaded with brushwood, sticks, and rubbish, borne along by a ridge of yellow curdling water, at least two feet higher than the stream. I gathered all my strength, and made a struggle for the bank opposite to where I was. The water was already above my belt, and rushing between my arms as I bore up the guns. I felt myself lifted off my legs; again I held the ground. The green bank was only a few yards distant, but the deep water was close below, and the yellow foaming flood above. As I staggered on, I heard it coming down, crumpling up and crackling the dead boughs which it bore along. I stumbled upon a round stone, and nearly fell backward, but it was against the stream which forced me forward. I felt the spray splash over my head: I was nearly blind and deaf. I made a desperate effort with the last strength which I had left, and threw myself gasping on the bank.

Dreadnought sprang forward, jumped over and over me, whined, and kissed my face and hands, and tried to turn me over with his snout, and scratched and pawed me to make me speak; but I could not yet, and gasped, and choked, and felt as if my heart would burst. I lay, dripping and panting, with my arms stretched out on the grass, unable to move, except with the convulsive efforts of my breath. At last I sat up, but I could scarcely see: a thin gauzy cloud was over my eyes, a heavy pressure rung in my ears, my feet still hung in the water, which was now sweeping a wide white torrent from bank to bank, and running with a fierce current through both the pools below. The back-water, where my bonnet had danced, no longer remained; all was carried clear out in one long rush down to the Cluag. ‘Benedictum sit nomen Domini!’ I thought, as I crossed myself. I stretched out my hand, and plucked the nearest flowers, and smelled their sweet greenwood scent with inexpressible delight. I never thought that flowers looked so beautiful, or had half so much perfume, though they were only the pale wild blossoms of the fading year. I placed them in my breast, and have them still, and never look upon them without repeating —

‘DE PROFUNDIS CLAMAVI AD TE, DOMINE!’

THE FINDHORN.

Such were the hazards on the fords of the Findhorn; but even by boat the struggle was sometimes no less arduous, though it enabled us to cross the water at a height otherwise impassable, of which the following passage is an example:—

One evening I was returning with the piper, and the old hound which had accompanied me at the ford. As we descended towards the pool of Cluag, where I had left the coble quietly moored in the morning, Dreadnought frequently turned and looked at me with hanging ears and a heavy cheerless eye; and when we came to the path which led down to the river he stopped, and dropped behind, and followed at my heel, though usually he trotted on before, and instead of waiting for the boat, took the water, which he preferred to the coble. When we came out from the trees upon the steep bank above the river, I understood his altered manner. From rock to rock the stream was running a white, furious, rushing torrent, and the little boat tugging and jibbing on her chain, and swinging and bobbing upon the top of the froth, like the leaves which danced upon the eddy. Dreadnought had heard the sound of the river, and knew what there was at work before us. The boat was moored near the throat of the pool, in the back-water of a little bay, now entirely filled with froth and foam up to the gunwale of the coble, which was defended by a sharp point of rock, from whose breakwater the stream was thrown off in a wild shooting torrent. Within the bay the reaction of the tide formed a quick back-water, which raised the stream without nearly two feet higher than the level within, and at times sucked the boat on to the point, where she was struck in the stem by the gushing stream and sent spinning round at the full swing of her ‘tether.’

Donald looked at me. There was no alternative but the bridge of Daltullich, more than four miles about, with two bucks to carry, and ourselves well run since four o’clock in the morning. I stood for some moments considering the chances, and the manifest probability of going down the stream. Immediately after emerging from the little mooring bay there was a terrific rush of water discharged through the narrow throat of the pool, and raised to the centre in a white fierce tumbling ridge, for which the shortness of the pool afforded no allowance for working, while the little back-water, which, in ordinary cases, caught us on the opposite side, and took us into the bank, was lost in a flood, which ran right through the basin like a mill-lead. ‘Can you swim, Donald?’ said I mechanically. ‘*Swim*, Sir!’ said he, who knew how often I had seen him tumbled by the waves both in salt water and fresh. ‘Oh yes, I know you can. But I was thinking of that stream.’ ‘Ougudearbh!’ replied Donald: ‘But it was myself that never tried it yon way!’ ‘And what do you think of her?’ ‘Faith, Thighearna, you know best — but if you try it, I shall not stay behind.’

We had often ridden the water together by day and night, in flood and fair; and, narrow as the pool was, I thought we could get through it. We threw in a broken branch to prove the speed of the current, but it leaped through the plunging water like a greyhound, and was away in a moment down to the fierce white battling vortex of the Scuddach, where there was no salvation for thing alive; a few moments it disappeared in the wild turmoil, and then came up beyond — white and barked, and shivered like a splintered bone. Donald, however, saw that I was going to try the venture, and he was already up the bank unlocking the chain without a word. The bucks were deposited in the stern of the boat, the guns laid softly across them, covered with a plaid, and Dreadnought followed slowly and sternly, and laid himself down with an air as if, like Don Alphonso of Castile, ‘the body trembled at the dangers into which the soul was going to carry it.’ I took the oars — there were no directions to be given — Donald knew how to cross the pool, and every other where we were used to ferry.

The boat’s head was brought round to the stream, for it was necessary to run her into it with the impulse of the back-water to shoot her forward, or she would have been drawn back, stern foremost, into the eddy, where the jaw of the water, over the point of the rock, would have swamped us in an instant. Donald knelt at the bows, and held fast by a light painter till I cried ‘Ready!’ when the little shallop sprung from the rope, tilted away like a sea-bird, and glided towards the roaring torrent. I looked over my shoulder; Donald was gripping the bows, his teeth set fast, but a gleam of light was in his eye as we plunged headlong into the bursting stream. A blow like the stroke of a mighty wooden hammer lifted the boat into the surf; there was a crack as if her bows were stove in, and she shot shivering through the pool, filled with water to our knees, and sending the spray over us like a sheet. The rocks and trees seemed to fly away; the roaring water spouted and boiled, as it lifted up the boat, which spun round like a leaf, with her starboard gunwale lipping with the waves; but a few seconds swept us through the pool, and we were flying into the mad tumbling thunder of the rapid below. I kept the larboard bow to the stream, and pulled with all my might; but I thought she did not move, the eddy of the great mid-stream seemed to fix her in the ridge of the torrent, and take her along with it; the oars bent like willows to the strain, a boiling gush from below lifted her bows, and threw her gunwale under the froth. I thought we were gone, but I redoubled the last desperate strokes, and we shot out of the foaming ridge towards the opposite bank, rolling, and leaping, and plunging into the throat of the rapid. Donald sat like a tiger ready for the spring, and as we neared the shore, bounded on the grass with the chain. This checked the speed of the boat; I unshipped the oars, and sprung out just as the coble came crash alongside the bank, then swirling round, her head flew out to the stream, dragging Donald along the grass after her. I jumped into the water, and caught hold of the bow; for two minutes the struggle was doubtful and she continued to drag us along: at last Donald reached the stump of a tree, and, running round it, made a turn of the chain and brought her up.

We sat down, and wiped our faces, and looked at each other in silence. The incredibly short space of time which had elapsed since we stood on the '*other side*,' with the mysterious future before us, and now to be sitting on '*this*,' and call it the *past*, was like a dream. The tumult, the flying shoot, the concussion at parting and arriving, seemed like an explosion, as if we had been blown up and thrown over. 'I don't think that boat will ever go back again, Thighearna,' said Donald. 'Why not?' 'Did you not feel her twist, and hear her split, when we came into the burst of the stream?' replied Donald. 'I don't know,' said I; 'I felt and heard a great many things, but there was no time to think what they were.' 'Oh, it was not *thinking* that I was,' answered Donald; 'but the water came squirting up in my face through her ribs, and I held on by both bows, expecting at every stroke to see them open and let me through.' We got up and examined the boat's bottom; there was a yawning rent from the stem to the centre, and part of the torn planks lapped one over the other by the twist, the bows being only held together by the iron band which bound the gunwale.

THE STORY OF GRACE DARLING

A CAREFUL reader of the ‘Times’ on the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 1838, might have found, if he cared to look, a certain paragraph in an obscure corner headed ‘The Wreck of the “Forfarshire.”’ It is printed in the small type of that period; the story is four days old, for in those days news was not flashed from one end of the country to the other; and, moreover, the story is very incomplete.

On the evening of Wednesday, September 5, the steamship ‘Forfarshire’ left Hull for Dundee, carrying a cargo of iron, and having some forty passengers on board. The ship was only eight years old; the master, John Humble, was an experienced seaman; and the crew, including firemen and engineers, was complete. But even before the vessel left the dock one passenger at least had felt uneasily that something was wrong — that there was an unusual commotion among officials and sailors. Still, no alarm was given, and at dusk the vessel steamed prosperously down the Humber.

The next day (Thursday, the 6th) the weather changed, the wind blowing N.N.W., and increasing towards midnight to a perfect gale. On the morning of Friday, the 7th, a sloop from Montrose, making for South Shields, saw a small boat labouring hard in the trough of the sea. The Montrose vessel bore down on it, and in spite of the state of the weather managed to get the boat’s crew on board.

They were nine men in all, the sole survivors, as they believed themselves to be, of the crew and passengers of the ‘Forfarshire,’ which was then lying a total wreck on Longstone, one of the outermost of the Farne Islands.

It was a wretched story they had to tell of lives thrown away through carelessness and negligence, unredeemed, as far as their story went, by any heroism or unselfish courage.

While still in the Humber, and not twenty miles from Hull, it was found that one of the boilers leaked, but the captain refused to put about. The pumps were set to work to fill the boiler, and the vessel kept on her way, though slowly, not passing between the Farne Islands and the mainland till Thursday evening. It was eight o’clock when they entered Berwick Bay; the wind freshened and was soon blowing hard from the N.N.W. The motion of the vessel increased the leakage, and it was now found that there were holes in all the three boilers. Two men were set to work the pumps, one or two of the passengers also assisting, but as fast as the water was pumped into the boilers it poured out again. The bilge was so full of steam and boiling water that the firemen could not get to the fires. Still the steamer struggled on, labouring heavily, for the sea was running very high. At midnight they were off St. Abbs Head, when the engineers reported that the case was hopeless; the engines had entirely ceased to work. The ship rolled helplessly in the waves, and the rocky coast was at no great distance. They ran up the sails fore and aft to try and keep her off the rocks, and put her round so that she might run before the wind, and as the tide was setting southward she drifted fast with wind and tide. Torrents of rain were falling, and in spite of the wind there was a thick fog. Some of the passengers were below, others were on deck with crew and captain, knowing well their danger.

About three the noise of breakers was distinctly heard a little way ahead, and at the same time a light was seen away to the left, glimmering faintly through the darkness. It came home to the anxious crew with sickening certainty that they were being driven on the Farne Islands.

The master of the ‘Forfarshire’ in this desperate strait attempted to make for the channel which runs between the Islands and the mainland. It was at best a forlorn chance; it was hopeless here; the vessel refused to answer her helm! On she drove in the darkness, nearer and nearer came the sound of the breakers; the fear and agitation on board the boat grew frantic. Women wailed and shrieked; the captain’s wife clung to him, weeping; the crew lost all instinct of discipline, and thought of nothing but saving their skins.

Between three and four the shock came — a hideous grinding noise, a strain and shiver of the whole ship, and she struck violently against a great rock. In the awful moment which followed five of the crew succeeded in lowering the larboard quarter-boat and pushed off in her. The mate swung himself over the side, and also reached her; and a passenger rushing at this moment up from the cabin and seeing the boat already three yards from the ship, cleared the space with a bound and landed safely in her, though nearly upsetting her by his weight. She righted, and the crew pulled off with the desperate energy of men rowing for their lives. The sight of agonised faces, the shrieks of the drowning were lost in the darkness and in the howling winds, and the boat with the seven men on board was swept along by the rapidly-flowing tide.

Such was the story the exhausted boat’s crew told next morning to their rescuers on board the Montrose sloop. And the rest of the ship’s company — what of them? Had they all gone down by the island crag with never a hand stretched out to help them?

Hardly had the boat escaped from the stranded vessel when a great wave struck her on the quarter, lifted her up bodily, and dashed her back on the rock.

She struck midships on the sharp edge and broke at once into two pieces. The after part was washed clean away with about twenty passengers clinging to it, the captain and his wife being among them. A group of people, about nine in number, were huddled together near the bow; they, with the whole fore part of the ship, were lifted right on to the rock. In the fore cabin was a poor woman, Mrs. Dawson, with a child on each arm. When the vessel was stranded on the rock the waves rushed into the exposed cabin, but she managed to keep her position, cowering in a corner. First one and then the other child died from cold and exhaustion, and falling from the fainting mother were swept from her sight by the waves, but the poor soul herself survived all the horrors of the night.

GRACE DARLING.

It was now four o’clock; the storm was raging with unabated violence, and it was still two hours to daybreak. About a mile from Longstone, the island on which the vessel struck, lies Brownsman, the outermost of the Farne Islands, on which stands the lighthouse. At this time the keeper of the lighthouse was a man of the name of William Darling. He was an elderly, almost an old man, and the only other inmates of the lighthouse were his wife and daughter Grace, a girl of twenty-two. On this Friday night she was awake, and through the raging of the storm heard shrieks more persistent and despairing than those of the wildest sea-birds. In great trouble she rose and awakened her father. The cries continued, but in the darkness they could do nothing. Even after day broke it was difficult to make out distant objects, for a mist was still hanging over the sea. At length, with a glass they could discern the wreck on Longstone, and figures moving about on it. Between the two islands lay a mile of yeasty sea, and the tide was running hard between them. The only boat on the lighthouse was a clumsily built jolly-boat, heavy enough to tax the strength of two strong men in ordinary weather, and here there was but an old man and a young girl to face a raging sea and a tide running dead against them. Darling hesitated to undertake anything so dangerous, but his daughter would hear of no delay. On the other side of that rough mile of sea men were perishing, and she *could* not stay where she was and see them die.

So off they set in the heavy coble, the old man with one oar, the girl with the other, rowing with straining breath and beating hearts. Any moment they might be whelmed in the sea or dashed against the rocks. Even if they got the crew off it would be doubtful if they could row them to the lighthouse; the tide was about to turn, and would be against them on their homeward journey; death seemed to face them on every side.

When close to the rock there was imminent danger of their being dashed to pieces against it. Steadying the boat an instant, Darling managed to jump on to the rock, while Grace rapidly rowed out a little and kept the boat from going on the rocks by rowing continually. It is difficult to imagine how the nine shipwrecked people, exhausted and wearied as they were, were got into the boat in such a sea, especially as the poor woman, Mrs. Dawson, was in an almost fainting condition; but finally got on board they all were. Fortunately, one or two of the rescued crew were able to assist in the heavy task of rowing the boat back to Brownsman.

The storm continued to rage for several days after, and the whole party had to remain in the lighthouse. Moreover, a boatload which had come to their rescue from North Shields was also storm-stayed, twenty guests in all, so that the housewifely powers of Grace and her mother were taxed to the utmost.

It is told of this admirable girl that she was the tenderest and gentlest of nurses and hostesses, as she was certainly one of the most singularly courageous of women.

She could never be brought to look upon her exploit as in any way remarkable, and when by-and-by honours and distinctions were showered upon her, and people came from long distances to see her, she kept through it all the dignity of perfect simplicity and modesty.

Close to Bamborough, on a windy hill, lie a little grey church and a quiet churchyard. At all seasons high winds from the North Sea blow over the graves and fret and eat away the soft grey sandstone of which the plain headstones are made. So great is the wear and tear of these winds that comparatively recent monuments look like those which have stood for centuries. On one of these stones lies a recumbent figure, with what looks not unlike a lance clasped in the hand and laid across the breast. Involuntarily one thinks of the stone Crusaders, who lie in their armour, clasping their half-drawn swords, awaiting the Resurrection morning. It is the monument of Grace Darling, who here lies at rest with her oar still clasped in her strong right hand.

THE ‘SHANNON’ AND THE ‘CHESAPEAKE’

AMONG the captains of British 38-gun frigates who ardently longed for a meeting with one of the American 44-guns, in our war with the United States, was Captain Philip Bowesbere Broke, of the ‘Shannon.’ The desire sprang from no wish to display his own valour, only to show the world what wonderful deeds could be done when the ship and crew were in all respects fitted for battle. He had put his frigate in fighting order, taught his men the art of attack and defence, and out of a crew not very well disposed and got together in a rather haphazard manner, had made a company as pleasant to command as it was dangerous to meet.

With this desire, in March 1813 Captain Broke sailed from Halifax on a cruise in Boston Bay. But to his disappointment two American frigates, the weather being foggy, left the harbour without his having a chance to encounter them. Two remained, however, and one of these, the ‘Chesapeake,’ commanded by Captain James Lawrence, was nearly ready for sea. When her preparations were complete, Captain Broke addressed to her commanding officer a letter of challenge, having previously sent a verbal message, which had met with no reply.

‘As the “Chesapeake” appears now ready for sea,’ began this letter, ‘I request you will do me the favour to meet the “Shannon” with her, ship to ship, to try the fortune of our respective flags.’

He then gave an account of the ‘Shannon’s’ forces, which were somewhat inferior to the ‘Chesapeake’s.’ The ‘Chesapeake’ had 376 men, the ‘Shannon’ 306 men and 24 boys, and the American vessel also had the advantage in guns.

‘I entreat you, sir,’ Captain Broke concluded, ‘not to imagine that I am urged by mere personal vanity to the wish of meeting the “Chesapeake,” or that I depend only upon your personal ambition for your acceding to this invitation. We have both nobler motives. . . . Favour me with a speedy reply. We are short of provisions and water, and cannot stay long here.’

This letter he entrusted to Captain Plocum, a discharged prisoner; but it so happened that before his boat reached the shore, the American frigate left it — Captain Lawrence having received permission from Commodore Bairbridge to sail and attack the ‘Shannon’ in response to Captain Broke’s verbal challenge.

Some manœuvring between the two ships took place; but at last, in the evening of June 1, 1813, the ‘Chesapeake,’ with three ensigns flying, steered straight for the ‘Shannon’s’ starboard quarter. Besides the ensigns, she had flying at the fore a large white flag, inscribed with the words: ‘Sailors’ Rights and Free Trade,’ with the idea, perhaps, that this favourite American motto would damp the energy of the ‘Shannon’s’ men. The ‘Shannon’ had a Union Jack at the fore, an old rusty blue ensign at the mizzen peak, and two other flags rolled up, ready to be spread if either of these should be shot away. She stood much in need of paint, and her outward appearance hardly inspired much belief in the order and discipline that reigned within.

At twenty minutes to six Captain Lawrence came within fifty yards of the ‘Shannon’s’ starboard quarter, and gave three cheers. Ten minutes after the ‘Shannon’ fired her first gun, then a second. Then the ‘Chesapeake’ returned fire, and the remaining guns on the broadside of each ship went off as fast as they could be discharged.

Four minutes before six the ‘Chesapeake’s’ helm, probably from the death of the men stationed at it, being for the moment unattended to, the ship lay with her stem and quarter exposed to her opponent’s broadside, which did terrible execution. At six o’clock, the ‘Chesapeake’ and ‘Shannon’ being in close contact, the ‘Chesapeake,’ endeavouring to make a little ahead, was stopped by becoming entangled with the anchor of the ‘Shannon.’ Captain Broke now ran forward, and, seeing the ‘Chesapeake’s’ men deserting the quarter-deck guns, he ordered the two ships to be lashed together, the great guns to cease firing, and Lieutenant Watt to bring up the quarter-deck men, who were to act as boarders. This was done instantly, and at two minutes past six Captain Broke leaped aboard the ‘Chesapeake,’ followed by twenty men, and reached her quarter-deck.

Here not an officer or man was to be seen. Upon the ‘Chesapeake’s’ gangways, twenty-five or thirty Americans made a slight resistance, but were quickly driven towards the forecastle. Several fled over the bows, some, it is believed, plunged into the sea, the rest laid down their arms and submitted.

Lieutenant Watt, with others, followed quickly. Hardly had he stepped upon the taffrail of the ‘Chesapeake’ when he was shot through the foot by a musket ball; but, rising in spite of it, he ordered one of the ‘Shannon’s’ 9-pounders to be directed at the ‘Chesapeake’s’ mizzen top, whence the shot had come. The second division of the Marines now rushed forward, and while one party kept down the Americans who were ascending the main hatchway, another party answered a destructive fire which still continued from the main and mizzen tops. The ‘Chesapeake’s’ main top was presently stormed by midshipman William Smith. This gallant young man deliberately passed along the ‘Shannon’s’ foreyard, which was braced up to the ‘Chesapeake’s’ mainyard, and thence into her top. All further annoyance from the ‘Chesapeake’s’ mizzen top was put a stop to by another of the ‘Shannon’s’ midshipmen, who fired at the Americans from the yardarm as fast as his men could load the muskets and hand them to him.

After the Americans upon the forecastle had submitted, Captain Broke ordered one of his men to stand sentry over them, and sent most of the others aft, where the conflict was still going on. He was in the act of giving them orders when the sentry called out lustily to him. On turning, the captain found himself opposed by three of the Americans, who, seeing they were superior to the British then near them, had armed themselves afresh. Captain Broke parried the middle fellow’s pike, and wounded him in the face, but instantly received from the man on the pikeman’s right a blow with the butt-end of a musket, which bared his skull and nearly stunned him. Determined to finish the British commander, the third man cut him down with his broadsword, but at that very instant was himself cut down by Mindham, one of the ‘Shannon’s’ seamen. Can it be wondered if all concerned in this breach of faith fell victims to the indignation of the ‘Shannon’s’ men? It was as much as Captain Broke could do to save from their fury a young midshipman, who, having slid down a rope from the ‘Chesapeake’s’ foretop, begged his protection.

While in the act of tying a handkerchief round his commander’s head, Mindham, pointing aft, called out:

‘There, sir — there goes up the old ensign over the Yankee colours!’

Captain Broke saw it hoisting (with what feelings may be imagined), and was instantly led to the ‘Chesapeake’s’ quarter-deck, where he sat down.

That act of changing the ‘Chesapeake’s’ colours proved fatal to a gallant British officer and four or five fine fellows of the ‘Shannon’s’ crew. We left Lieutenant Watt just as, having raised himself on his feet after his wound, he was hailing the ‘Shannon’ to fire at the ‘Chesapeake’s’ mizzen top. He then called for an English ensign, and hauling down the American flag, bent, owing to the ropes being tangled, the English flag below instead of above it. Observing the American stripes going up first, the ‘Shannon’s’ people reopened their fire, and, directing their guns with their accustomed precision at the lower part of the ‘Chesapeake’s’ mizzen mast, killed Lieutenant Watt and four or five of their comrades. Before the flags had got halfway to the mizzen peak, they were pulled down and hoisted properly, and the men of the ‘Shannon’ ceased their fire.

An unexpected fire of musketry, opened by the Americans who had fled to the hold, killed a fine young marine, William Young. On this, Lieutenant Falkiner ordered three or four muskets that were ready to be fired down the hold, and Captain Broke, from the quarter-deck, told the lieutenant to summon. The

Americans replied, ‘We surrender’; and all hostilities ceased. Almost immediately after Captain Broke’s senses failed him from loss of blood, and he was conveyed on board his own ship.

Between the discharge of the first gun and the time of Captain Broke’s boarding only eleven minutes had passed, and in four minutes more the ‘Chesapeake’ was completely his. As a rule, however, this good fortune did not attend our arms in the conflict with the American marine.

CAPTAIN SNELGRAVE AND THE PIRATES

IN the year 1719, I, being appointed commander of the ‘Bird’ galley, arrived at the River Sierra Leone, on the north coast of Guinea. There were, at the time of our unfortunate arrival in that river, three pirate ships, who had then taken ten English ships in that place. The first of these was the ‘Rising Sun,’ one Cochlyn commander, who had not with him above twenty-five men; the second was a brigantine commanded by one Le Bouse, a Frenchman, whose crew had formerly served with Cochlyn’s under the pirate Moody; the third was a large ship commanded by Captain Davis, with a crew of near one hundred and fifty men. This Davis was a generous man, nor had he agreed to join with the others when I was taken by Cochlyn; which proved a great misfortune to me, for I found Cochlyn and his crew to be a set of the basest and most cruel villains that ever were.

I come now to give an account of how I was taken by them. It becoming calm about seven o’clock, and growing dark, we anchored in the river’s mouth, soon after which I went to supper with the officers that usually ate with me. About eight o’clock the officer of the watch upon deck sent me word, ‘He heard the rowing of a boat.’ Whereupon we all immediately went on deck, and the night being very dark, I ordered lanterns and candles to be got ready, supposing the boat might come from the shore with some white gentlemen that lived there as free merchants. I ordered also, by way of precaution, the first mate, Mr. Jones, to go into the steerage to put things in order, and to send me twenty men on the quarter-deck with firearms and cutlasses, which I thought he went about, for I did not in the least suspect Mr. Jones would have proved such a villain as he did afterwards.

As it was dark, I could not yet see the boat, but heard the noise of the rowing very plain. Whereupon I ordered the second mate to hail the boat, to which the people in it answered, ‘They belonged to the “Two Friends,” Captain Elliot, of Barbadoes.’ At this, one of the officers who stood by me said he knew that captain very well. I replied, ‘It might be so, but I would not trust any boat in such a place,’ and ordered him to hasten the first mate, with the people and arms, on deck. By this time our lanterns and candles were brought up, and I ordered the boat to be hailed again; to which the people in it answered, ‘They were from America,’ and at the same time fired a volley of small shot at us, which showed the boldness of these villains. For there were in the boat only twelve of them, as

I understood afterwards, who knew nothing of the strength of our ship, which was indeed considerable, we having sixteen guns and forty-five men on board. But, as they told me after we were taken, ‘they depended on the same good-fortune as in the other ships they had taken, having met with no resistance, for the people were generally glad of an opportunity of entering with them.’

Which last was but too true.

When they first began to fire, I called aloud to the first mate to fire at the boat out of the steerage portholes, which not being done, and the people I had ordered upon deck with small arms not appearing, I was extremely surprised, and the more when an officer came and told me ‘The people would not take arms.’

I went down into the steerage, where I saw a great many of them looking at one another, little thinking that my first mate had prevented them from taking arms. I asked them with some roughness why they had not obeyed my orders, saying it would be the greatest reproach in the world to us all to be taken by a boat.

Some of them answered that they would have taken arms, but the chest they were kept in could not be found.

By this time the boat was along the ship’s side, and there being nobody to oppose them, the pirates immediately boarded us, and coming on the quarter-deck, fired their pieces several times down into the steerage, giving one sailor a wound of which he died afterwards.

At last some of our people bethought themselves to call out for quarter, which the pirates granting, their quartermaster came down into the steerage, asking where the captain was. I told him I had been so till now. On that he asked me how I durst order my people to fire at their boat out of the steerage.

I answered, ‘I thought it my duty to defend my ship if my people would have fought.’

On that he presented a pistol to my breast, which I had but just time to parry before it went off, so that the bullet passed between my side and arm. The rogue, finding he had not shot me, turned the butt-end of the pistol, and gave me such a blow on the head as stunned me, so that I fell on my knees, but immediately recovering myself, I jumped out of the steerage upon the quarter-deck, where the pirate boatswain was.

He was a bloodthirsty villain, having a few days before killed a poor sailor because he did not do something as soon as he ordered him. This cruel monster was asking some of my people where their captain was, so at my coming upon deck one of them pointed me out. Though the night was very dark, yet, there being four lanterns with candles, he had a full sight of me; whereupon, lifting up his broadsword, he swore that no quarter should be given to any captain that defended his ship, at the same time aiming a full stroke at my head. To avoid it I stooped so low that the quarter-deck rail received the blow, and was cut in at least an inch deep, which happily saved my head from being cleft asunder, and the sword breaking at the same time with the force of his blow on the rail, it prevented his cutting me to pieces.

By good fortune his pistols, that hung at his girdle, were all discharged, otherwise he would doubtless have shot me. But he took one of them and endeavoured to beat out my brains, which some of my people observing, cried:

‘For God’s sake don’t kill our captain, for we never were with a better man.’

This turned the rage of him and two other pirates on my people, and saved my life; but they cruelly used my poor men, cutting and beating them unmercifully. One of them had his chin almost cut off, and another received such a wound on the head that he fell on the deck as dead, but afterwards, by the care of our surgeon, he recovered.

Then the quartermaster, coming on deck, took me by the hand, and told me my life was safe, provided none of my people complained of me. I answered that I was sure none of them could.

By this time the pirate ship had drawn near, for they had sent their boat before to discover us; and on approaching, without asking any questions, gave us a great broadside, believing, as it proved afterwards, that we had taken their boat and people. So the quartermaster told them, through the speaking-trumpet, that they had taken a brave prize, with all manner of good victuals and fresh provisions on board.

Just after this, Cochlyn, the pirate captain, ordered them to dress a quantity of these victuals; so they took many geese, turkeys, fowls, and ducks, making our people cut their heads off and pull the great feathers out of their wings, but they would not stay till the other feathers were pulled off. All these they put into our great furnace, which would boil victuals for five hundred negroes, together with several Westphalia hams and a large pig. This strange medley filled the furnace, and the cook was ordered to boil them out of hand.

As soon as the pirate ship had done firing, I asked the quartermaster’s leave for our surgeon to dress my poor people that had been wounded, and I likewise went to have my arm dressed, it being very much bruised by the blow given me by the pirate boatswain. Just after that a person came to me from the quartermaster, desiring to know what o’clock it was by my watch; which, judging to be a civil way of demanding it, I sent it him immediately, desiring the messenger to tell him it was a very good gold watch. When it was delivered to the quartermaster he held it up by the chain, and presently laid it down on the deck, giving it a kick with his foot, saying it was a pretty football. On which one of the pirates caught it up, saying he would put it in the common chest to be sold at the mast.

By this time I was loudly called upon to go on board the pirate ship, and there was taken to the commander, who asked me several questions about my ship, saying she would make a fine pirate man-of-war.

As soon as I had done answering the captain's questions, a tall man, with four pistols in his girdle and a broadsword in his hand, came to me on the quarter-deck, telling me his name was James Griffin, and we had been schoolfellows. Though I remembered him very well, yet having formerly heard it had proved fatal to some who had been taken by pirates to own any knowledge of them, I told him I could not remember any such person by name. On that he mentioned some boyish pranks that had formerly passed between us. But I, still denying any knowledge of him, he told me that he supposed I took him to be one of the pirate's crew because I saw him dressed in that manner, but that he was a forced man, and since he had been taken, though they spared his life, they had obliged him to act as master of the pirate ship. And the reason of his being so armed was to prevent their ill-using him, for there were hardly any among the crew but what were cruel villains. But he would himself take care of me that night, when I should be in the greatest danger, because many of their people would soon get drunk with the good liquors found in my ship.

I then readily owned my former acquaintance with him, and he turned to Captain Cochlyn and desired that a bowl of punch might be made. So we went into the cabin, where there was not chair, nor anything else to sit upon, for they always kept a clear ship, ready for an engagement. So a carpet was spread on the deck, on which we sat down cross-legged, and Captain Cochlyn drank my health, desiring that I would not be cast down at my misfortune, for my ship's company in general spoke well of me, and they had goods enough left in the ships they had taken to make a man of me. Then he drank several other healths, among which was that of the Pretender, by the name of King James the Third.

It being by this time midnight, my schoolfellow desired the captain to have a hammock hung up for me to sleep in, for it seemed everyone lay rough, as they call it, that is, on the deck, the captain himself not being allowed a bed. This being granted, and soon after done, I took leave of the captain, and got into my hammock, but I could not sleep in my melancholy circumstances. Moreover, the execrable curses I heard among the ship's company kept me awake, though Mr. Griffin, according to his promise, walked by me with his broadsword in his hand, to protect me from insults.

Some time after, it being about two o'clock in the morning, the pirate boatswain (that attempted to kill me when taken) came on board very drunk, and being told I was in a hammock, he came near me with his cutlass. My generous schoolfellow asked him what he wanted; he answered, ‘To kill me, for I was a vile dog.’ Then Griffin bade the boatswain keep his distance, or he would cleave his head asunder with his broadsword. Nevertheless, the bloodthirsty villain came on to kill me; but Mr. Griffin struck at him with his sword, from which he had a narrow escape; and then he ran away. So I lay unmolested till daylight.

I come now to relate how Mr. Simon Jones, my first mate, and ten of my men entered with the pirates. The morning after we were taken he came to me and told me that his circumstances were bad at home; moreover, he had a wife whom he could not love; and for these reasons he had entered with the pirates and signed their articles. I was greatly surprised at this declaration, and told him I believed he would repent when too late. And, indeed, I saw the poor man afterwards despised by his brethren in iniquity, and have been told he died a few months after they left Sierra Leone. However, I must do him the justice to own he never showed any disrespect to me, and the ten people he persuaded to enter with him remained very civil to me. But I learned afterwards from one of them that, before we came to Sierra Leone, Jones had said that he hoped we should meet with pirates, and that it was by his contrivance that the chest of arms was hid out of the way when we were taken. And when I called on the people in the steerage to fire on the pirate boat, Jones prevented them, declaring that this was an opportunity he had long wished for, and that if they fired a musket they would all be cut to pieces. Moreover, to induce them to enter with the pirates, he had assured them that I had promised to enter myself. So it was a wonder I escaped so well, having such a base wretch for my first officer.

As soon as the fumes of the liquor were out of the pirates’ heads they went on board the prize, as they called my ship, and all hands went to work to clear it, by throwing over bales of woollen goods, with many other things of great value, so that before night they had destroyed between three and four thousand pounds worth of the cargo — money and necessaries being what they wanted. The sight of this much grieved me, but I was obliged in prudence to be silent.

That afternoon there came on board to see me Captain Henry Glynn, with whom I was acquainted, who resided at Sierra Leone, but though an honest, generous person, was on good terms with the pirates. He brought with him the captains of the two other pirate ships, and Captain Davis generously said he was ashamed to hear how I had been used, for their reasons for going a-pirating were to revenge themselves on base merchants and cruel commanders, but none of my people gave me the least ill character; and, indeed, it was plain that they loved me.

This was by no means relished by Cochlyn; however, he put a good face on it.

That night the boatswain came down into the steerage, where he had seen me sitting with the ship’s carpenter, but since we happened to have changed places, and it had grown so dark he could not distinguish our faces, he, thinking I sat where he had seen me before, presented a pistol and drew the trigger, swearing he would blow my brains out. By good fortune the pistol did not go off, but only flashed in the pan; by the light of which the carpenter, observing that he should have been shot instead of me, it so provoked him that he ran in the dark to the boatswain, and having wrenched the pistol out of his hand, he beat him to such a degree that he almost killed him. The noise of the fray being heard on board the pirate ship that lay close to us, a boat was sent from her, and they being told the truth of the matter, the officer in her carried away this wicked villain, who had three times tried to murder me.

I had one bundle of my own things left to me, in which was a black suit of clothes. But a pirate, who was tolerably sober, came in and said he would see what was in it. He then took out my black suit, a good hat and wig, and some other things. Whereon I told him I hoped he would not deprive me of them, for they would be of no service to him in so hot a country, but would be of great use to me, as I hoped soon to return to England.

I had hardly done speaking, when he lifted up his broadsword and gave me a blow on the shoulder with the flat side of it, whispering in my ear at the same time:

‘I give you this caution, never to dispute the will of a pirate; for, supposing I had cleft your skull asunder for your impudence, what would you have got by it but destruction?’

I gave him thanks for his warning, and soon after he put on the clothes, which in less than half an hour after I saw him take off and throw overboard, for some of the pirates, seeing him dressed in that manner, had thrown several buckets of claret upon him. This person’s true name was Francis Kennedy.

The next day, understanding that the three pirate captains were on shore at my friend Captain Glynn’s, I asked leave to go to them, which was granted, and next day I went on board in company with them. Captain Davis desired Cochlyn to order all his people on the quarter-deck, and made a speech to them on my behalf, which they falling in with, it was resolved to give me the ship they designed to leave to go into mine, with the remains of my cargo, and further, the goods remaining in the other prizes, worth, with my own, several thousand pounds. Then one of the leading pirates proposed that I should go along with them down the coast of Guinea, where I might exchange the goods for gold, and that, no doubt, as they went they should take some French and Portuguese vessels, and then they might give me as many of their best slaves as would fill the ship; that then he would advise me to go to the island of St. Thomas and sell them there, and after rewarding my people in a handsome manner, I might return with a large sum of money to London and bid the merchants defiance.

This proposal was approved of, but it struck me with a sudden damp. So I began to say it would not be proper for me to accept of such a quantity of other people’s goods as they had so generously voted for me. On which I was interrupted by several, who began to be very angry.

‘SOME OF THE PIRATES . . . HAD THROWN SEVERAL BUCKETS OF CLARET UPON HIM.’

On this Captain Davis said: ‘I know this man, and can easily guess his thoughts; for he thinks, if he should act in the manner you have proposed, he will ever after lose his reputation. Now I am for allowing everybody to go to the devil their own way, so desire you will give him the remains of his own cargo and let him do with it what he thinks fitting.’

This was readily granted; and now, the tide being turned, they were as kind to me as they had at first been severe, and we employed ourselves in saving what goods we could.

And through the influence of Captain Davis, one of the ships the pirates had taken, called the ‘Bristol Snow,’ was spared from burning — for they burned such prizes as they had no use for. And I was set entirely at liberty, and went to the house of Captain Glynn, who, when the pirates left the river of Sierra Leone, together with other English captains who had been hiding from the pirates in the woods, their ships having been taken, helped me to fit up the ‘Bristol Snow’ that we might return to England in it. And we left the river Sierra Leone the 10th day of May, and came safe to Bristol, where I found a letter from the owner of the ship I had gone out with, who had heard of my misfortune, and most generously comforted me, giving money for my poor sailors and promising me command of another ship — a promise which he soon after performed.

I shall now inform the reader what became of my kind schoolfellow, Griffin, and my generous friend Davis. The first got out of the hands of the pirates by taking away a boat from the stern of the ship he was in when on the coast of Guinea, and was driven on shore there. But afterwards he went passenger to Barbadoes in an English ship, where he was taken with a violent fever, and so died.

As for Davis, he sailed to the island Princess, belonging to the Portuguese, which is in the Bay of Guinea. Here the people soon discovered they were pirates by their lavishness; but the Governor winked at it, because of the great gain he made by them. But afterwards, someone putting it into his mind that if the King of Portugal heard of this it would be his ruin, he plotted to destroy Davis. And when, before sailing, Captain Davis came on shore with the surgeon and some others to bid farewell to the Governor, they found no Governor, but many people with weapons were gathered together in the street, who at a word from the Governor's steward fired at Davis and his men. The surgeon and two others were killed on the spot, but Davis, though struck by four shots, went on running towards the boat. But being closely pursued, a fifth shot made him fall; and the Portuguese, being amazed at his great strength and courage, cut his throat that they might be sure of him. Thus fell Captain Davis, who, allowing for the course of life he had been unhappily engaged in, was a most generous, humane person.

THE SPARTAN THREE HUNDRED

THIS is the story of the greatest deed of arms that was ever done. The men who fought in it were not urged by ambition or greed, nor were they soldiers who knew not why they went to battle. They warred for the freedom of their country, they were few against many, they might have retreated with honour, after inflicting great loss on the enemy, but they preferred, with more honour, to die.

It was four hundred and eighty years before the birth of Christ. The Great King, as the Greeks called Xerxes, the Persian monarch, was leading the innumerable armies of Asia against the small and divided country of Greece. It was then split into a number of little States, not on good terms with each other, and while some were for war, and freedom, and ruin, if ruin must come, with honour, others were for peace and slavery. The Greeks, who determined to resist Persia at any cost, met together at the Isthmus of Corinth, and laid their plans of defence. The Asiatic army, coming by land, would be obliged to march through a narrow pass called Thermopylæ, with the sea on one side of the road, and a steep and inaccessible precipice on the other. Here, then, the Greeks made up their minds to stand. They did not know, till they had marched to Thermopylæ, that behind the pass there was a mountain path, by which soldiers might climb round and over the mountain, and fall upon their rear. As the sea on the right hand of the Pass of Thermopylæ lies in a narrow strait, bounded by the island of Eubœa, the Greeks thought that their ships would guard their rear and prevent the Persians from landing men to attack it. Their army encamped in the Pass, having wide enough ground to manœuvre in, between the narrow northern gateway, so to speak, by which the invaders would try to enter, and a gateway to the south. Their position was also protected by an old military wall, which they repaired.

The Greek general was Leonidas, the Spartan king. He chose three hundred men, all of whom had sons at home to maintain their families and to avenge them if they fell. Now the manner of the Spartans was this: to die rather than yield. However sorely defeated, or overwhelmed by numbers, they never left the ground alive and unvictorious, and as this was well known, their enemies were seldom eager to attack such resolute fighters.

Besides the Spartans, Leonidas led some three or four thousand men from other cities, and he was joined at Thermopylæ by the Locrians and a thousand Phocians. Perhaps he may have had six or eight thousand soldiers under him, while the Persians may have outnumbered them by the odds of a hundred to one. Why, you may ask, did the Greeks not send a stronger force? The reason was very characteristic. They were holding their sports at the time, racing, running, boxing, jumping, and they were also about to be engaged in another festival. They would not omit or put off their games however many thousand barbarians might be knocking at their gates. There is something boyish, and something fine in this conduct, but we must remember, too, that the games were a sacred festival, and that the Gods might be displeased if they were omitted.

Leonidas, then, thought that at least he could hold the Pass till the games were over, and his countrymen could join him. But when he found, on arriving at Thermopylæ, that he would have to hold two positions, the Pass itself, and the mountain path, of whose existence he had not been aware, then some of his army wished to return home. But Leonidas refused to let them retreat, and bade the Phocians guard the path across the hills, while he sent home for reinforcements. He could not desert the people whom he had come to protect. Meanwhile the Greek fleet was also alarmed, but was rescued by a storm which wrecked many of the Persian vessels.

Xerxes was now within sight of Thermopylæ. He sent a horseman forward to spy out the Greek camp, and this man saw the Spartans amusing themselves with running and wrestling, and combing their long hair, outside the wall. They took no notice of him, and he returning, told Xerxes how few they were, and how unconcerned. Xerxes then sent for Demaratus, an exiled king of Sparta in his camp, and asked what these things meant. ‘O king!’ said Demaratus, ‘this is what I told you of yore, when you laughed at my words. These men have come to fight you for the Pass, and for that battle they are making ready, for it is our country fashion to comb and tend our hair when we are about to put our heads in peril.’

Xerxes would not believe Demaratus. He waited four days, and then, in a rage, bade his best warriors, the Medes and Cissians, bring the Greeks into his presence. The Medes, who were brave men, and had their defeat at Marathon, ten years before, to avenge, fell on, but their spears were short, their shields were thin, and they could not break a way into the stubborn forest of bronze and steel. In wave upon wave, all day long, they dashed against the Greeks, and left their best lying at the mouth of the Pass. ‘Thereby was it made clear to all men, and not least to the king, that men are many, but heroes are few.’

Next day Xerxes called on his bodyguard, the Ten Thousand Immortals, and they came to close quarters, but got no more glory than the Medes. Thrice the King leaped from his chair in dismay as thrice the Greeks drove the barbarians in rout. And on the third day they had no better fortune.

But there was a man, a Malian, whose name is a scorn to this hour; he was called Epialtes. He betrayed to Xerxes the secret of the mountain path, probably for money. He later fled to Thessaly with a price on his head, but returned to Anticyra, and there he was slain by Athenades. Then Xerxes was glad beyond measure when he heard of the path, and sent his men along the path by night. They found the Phocians guarding it, but the Phocians disgracefully fled to the higher part of the mountain. The Persians, disdaining to pursue them, marched to the pass behind the Spartan camp, and the Greeks were now surrounded in van and rear. But news of this had come to Leonidas, and his army was not of one mind as to what they should do. Some were for retreating and abandoning a position which it was now impossible to hold. Leonidas bade them depart; but for him and his countrymen it was not honourable to turn their backs on any foe. He sent away the soothsayer, or prophet, Megistias, but he returned, and bade his son go home. The Thespians, to their immortal honour, chose to bide the brunt with Leonidas. There thus remained what was left of the Three Hundred, their personal attendants, seven hundred Thespians, and some Thebans, about whose conduct it is difficult to speak with certainty, as accounts differ. Leonidas, on this last day of his life, did not wait to be attacked in front and rear, but, sallying into the open, himself assailed the Persians. They drove the barbarians like cattle with their spears; the captains of the barbarians drove them back on the spears with whips. Many fell from the path into the sea, and there perished, and many more were trodden down and died beneath the feet of their own companions. But the spears of the Greeks broke at last in their hands, so they drew their swords, and rushed to yet closer quarters. In this charge fell Leonidas, ‘the bravest man,’ says the Greek historian, ‘of men whose names I know,’ and he knew the names of all the Three Hundred. Over the body of Leonidas fell the two brothers of Xerxes, for they fought for the corpse, and four times the Greeks drove back the Persians. Now came up the Persians with the traitor Epialtes, attacking the Greeks in the rear. Now was their last hour come, so they bore the body of the king within the wall. There they occupied a little mound in a sea of enemies, and there each man fought till he died, stabbing with his dagger when his sword was broken, and biting, and striking with the fist, when the dagger-point was blunted. Among them all, none made a better end than Eurytus. He was suffering from a disease of the eyes, but he bade them arm him, and lead him into the thick of the battle. Of another, Dieneces, it is told that hearing the arrows of the Persians would darken the sun, he answered, ‘Good news! we shall fight in the shade.’ One man only, Aristodemus, who also was suffering from a disease of the eyes, did not join his countrymen, but returned to Sparta. There he was scouted for a coward, but, in the following year, he fell at Platæa, excelling all the Spartans in deeds of valour.

This is the story of the Three Hundred. The marble lion erected where Leonidas fell has perished, and perished has the column engraved with their names, but their glory is immortal.

PRINCE CHARLIE’S WANDERINGS

CHAPTER I

THE FLIGHT

APRIL 16, 1746. It was an April afternoon, grey and cold, with gleams of watery sunshine, for in the wilds of Badenoch the spring comes but slowly, and through April on to May the mountains are as black and the moors as sombre and lifeless as in the dead of winter. In a remote corner of this wild track stood, in 1746, a grey, stone house with marsh-lands in front, severe and meagre as the houses were at that time in the Highlands. Upstairs in a room by herself a little girl of ten was looking out of the window. She had been sent up there to be out of the way, for this was a very busy day in the household of Gortuleg. The Master, Mr. Fraser, was entertaining the chief of his clan, old Lord Lovat, who, in these anxious days, when the Prince was at Inverness and the Duke of Cumberland at Aberdeen, had thought fit to retire into the wilds of Badenoch, to the house of his faithful clansman.

Downstairs, the astute old man of eighty was sitting in his armchair by the fire, plotting how he could keep in with both parties and secure his own advantage whichever side might win. By some strange infatuation the household at Gortuleg were cheerful and elate. A battle was imminent, nay, might have been fought even now, and they were counting securely on another success to the Prince’s army. So the ladies of the family — staunch Jacobites every one of them (as, indeed, most ladies were even in distinctly Whig households) — were busy preparing a feast in honour of the expected victory. The little girl sat alone upstairs, hearing the din and commotion and looking out on the vacant marsh-land outside. Suddenly and completely the noise ceased below, and the child seized her opportunity and crept downstairs. All was still in the big living-room, only in the dim recess of the fireplace the old lord was sitting, a silent, brooding figure, in his deep armchair. The rest of the household, men and women, gentle and simple, were all crowded in the doorway, breathlessly intent on something outside. Threading her way through them the child crept outside the circle and looked eagerly to see what this might be. Across the grey marshes horsemen were riding, riding fast, though the horses strained and stumbled, and the riders had a weary, dispirited air. ‘It is the fairies’ was the idea that flashed through her brain, and in a moment she was holding her eyelids open with her fingers, for she knew that the ‘good people,’ if they do show themselves, are only visible between one winking of the eyes and another. But this vision did not pass away, and surely never were fairy knights in such a sorry plight as was this travel-stained, dishevelled company that drew rein at the door of Gortuleg.

The leader of the band was a young man in Highland dress, tall and fair, and with that ‘air’ of which his followers fondly complained afterwards that no disguise could conceal it. At the sight of him, arriving in this plight at their doors, a great cry of consternation broke from the assembled household. There was no need to tell the terrible news: the Prince was a fugitive, a battle had been lost, and the good cause was for ever undone! It was no time for idle grieving, immediate relief and refreshment must be provided, and the Prince sent forward without delay on his perilous flight. The ladies tore off their laces and handkerchiefs to bind up wounds, and wine was brought out for the fugitives. There is no certain account of Charles’s interview with Lord Lovat; we do not know whether the cunning old man turned and upbraided the Prince in his misfortune, or whether the instincts of a Highland gentleman overcame for a moment the selfishness of the old chief. Anyway, this was no time to bandy either upbraidings or compliments. Forty minutes of desperate fighting on the field of Culloden that morning had broken for ever the strength of the Jacobite cause. Hundreds lay dead where they fell, hundreds were prisoners in the hands of the most relentless of enemies, hundreds were fleeing in disarray to their homes among the mountain fastnesses. For the Prince the only course seemed to be flight to the West coast. There, surely, some vessel might be found to convey him to France, there to await better times and to secure foreign allies. A price was on his head, his enemies would certainly be soon on his traces, he dared not delay longer than to snatch a hasty meal and drink some cups of wine.

At Gortuleg the party broke up and went their several ways. The Prince was accompanied by the Irish officers of his household, Sir Thomas Sheridan, O’Neal, and O’Sullivan, gentlemen-adventurers who had accompanied him from France and whose advice in his day of triumph had often been injudicious. Let it be said for them that they were at least faithful and devoted when his fortunes were desperate. As guide went a certain Edward Burke, who, fortunately for the party, knew every yard of rugged ground between Inverness and the Western sea. During all the time that he shared the Prince’s wanderings this Edward

Burke acted as his valet, giving him that passionate devotion which Charles seems to have inspired in all who knew him personally at this time. Reduced now to a handful of weary, wounded men, the Prince's party continued their flight through the chilly April night. At two o'clock next morning they had passed the blackened ruins of Fort George. As dawn broke they drew rein at the house of Invergarry. But the gallant chief of the Macdonells was away, and the hospitable house was deserted and silent; the very rooms were without furniture or any accommodation, and the larder was bare of provisions. But wearied men are not fastidious, and without waiting to change their clothes, they rolled themselves up in their plaids on the bare boards, and slept the sleep of utter weariness. It was high noon before they woke up again — woke up to find breakfast unexpectedly provided, for the faithful Burke had risen betimes and drawn two fine salmon from the nets set in the river. Here for greater security the Prince and his valet changed clothes, and the journey was continued through Lochiel's country. The next stage was at the head of Loch Arkaig, where they were the guests of a certain Cameron of Glenpean, a stalwart, courageous farmer, whom the Prince was destined to see more of in his wanderings. Here the country became so wild and rugged that they had to abandon their horses and clamber over the high and rocky mountains on foot. In his boyhood in Italy the Prince had been a keen sportsman, and had purposely inured himself to fatigue and privations. These habits stood him now in good stead; he could rival even the light-footed Highlanders on long marches over rough ground; the coarsest and scantiest meals never came amiss to him; he could sleep on the hard ground or lie hid in bogs for hours with a stout heart and a cheerful spirit.

Here on the night of Saturday, the 19th, among the mountains that surround Loch Morar, no better shelter could be found than a shieling used for shearing sheep.

The next day, Sunday, the 20th, they came down to the coast and found refuge in the hospitable house of Borodale, belonging to Mr. Angus Macdonald, a clansman of Clanranald's. Nine months before, when the Prince had landed from France and had thrown himself without arms or following on the loyalty of his Highland friends, this Angus Macdonald had been proud to have him as his guest. One of his sons, John, had joined the Prince's army and had fought under his own chief, young Clanranald. This young man was at this time supposed to have been killed at Culloden, though in fact he had escaped unhurt. When the Prince, therefore, entered this house of mourning he went up to Mrs. Macdonald and asked her with tears in his eyes if she could endure the sight of one who had caused her such distress. 'Yes,' said the high-hearted old Highland-woman, 'I would be glad to have served my Prince though all my sons had perished in his service, for in so doing they would only have done their duty.’

While resting here at Borodale, Charles sent his final orders to the remnant of his gallant army, which under their chiefs had drawn to a head at Ruthven. They were to disperse, he wrote, and secure their own safety as best they could; they must wait for better times, when he hoped to return bringing foreign succours. Heartbreaking orders these were for the brave men who had lost all in the Prince’s cause, and who were now proscribed and homeless fugitives.

Charles and the handful of men who accompanied him had expected that, once safely arrived at the coast, their troubles would be over and the way to France clear. But at Borodale they learned that the Western seas swarmed with English ships of war and with sloops manned by the local militia. A thorough search was being made of every bay and inlet of the mainland, and of every island, even to the Outer Hebrides, and further, to remote St. Kilda! This disconcerting news was brought by young Clanranald and Mr. Æneas Macdonald of Kinloch Moidart, the Parisian banker who had accompanied Charles from France. The latter had just returned from an expedition to South Uist, where he had more than once narrowly escaped being taken by some vigilant English cruiser. It was impossible, he urged, for a ship of any size to escape through such a closely-drawn net; the idea of starting directly for France must be abandoned, but could the Prince escape to the outer islands and there secure a suitable vessel, he *might* be out upon the wide seas before his departure was discovered. It was therefore decided that the little party should cross the Minch in an open boat and make for the Long Island. For this expedition the very man was forthcoming in the person of the Highland pilot who had accompanied Mr. Macdonald to South Uist. This was old Donald MacLeod of Guatergill, in Skye, a trader of substance and a man of shrewdness and experience. In spite of being a MacLeod he was a staunch Jacobite, and had joined the Prince’s army at Inverness. He had a son, a mere lad, at school in that place; this boy, hearing that a battle was likely to take place, flung aside his book, borrowed a dirk and a pistol, and actually fought in the battle of Culloden. More lucky than most, he escaped from the fight, tracked the Prince to Borodale, and arrived in time to take his place as one of the eight rowers whom his father had collected for the expedition. The boat belonged to the missing John Macdonald, for the Borodale family gave life and property equally unhesitatingly in the Prince’s service.

On April 26, in the deepening twilight, the party started from Lochnanuagh. Hardly had they set out when they were overtaken by a terrible storm, the worst storm, Donald declared, that he had ever been out in, and he was an experienced sailor. The Prince demanded vehemently that the boat should be run on shore, but Donald, knowing the rock-bound coast, answered that to do so would be to run on certain death. Their one chance was to hold out straight to sea. It was pitch dark, the rain fell in torrents; they had neither lantern, compass, nor pump on board. Charles lay at the bottom of the boat, with his head between Donald's knees. No one spoke a word; every moment they expected to be overwhelmed in the waves or dashed against a rock, and for several hours the vessel rushed on in the darkness. 'But as God would have it,' to use Donald's words, 'by peep of day we discovered ourselves to be on the coast of the Long Isle. We made directly for the nearest land, which was Rossinish in Benbecula.'

Here they found only a deserted hut, low, dark, and destitute of window or chimney; the floor was clay, and when they had lit a fire, the peat smoke was blinding and stifling. Still, they could dry their clothes and sleep, even though it were on a bed no better than a sail spread on the hard ground. Here they rested two days, and then found a more comfortable refuge in the Island of Scalpa, where the tacksman — although a Campbell — was a friend of Donald MacLeod's and received them hospitably.

CHAPTER II

ON THE LONG ISLAND

The object of the expedition was, of course, to find some vessel big enough to carry the Prince and his friends over to France. Such ships were to be had in Stornoway, and Donald MacLeod, being a man well known in these parts, undertook to secure a vessel and pilot, under the pretence of going on a trading expedition to the Orkneys. The Prince and his party were to remain at Scalpa till Donald should send for them. On May 3 came the message that vessel and pilot were in readiness, and that they should come to Stornoway without a moment's delay.

Owing to the wind being ahead it was impossible to go by sea, and the Prince and his two Irish followers were forced to go the thirty miles to Stornoway on foot. No footpath led through the wastes of heavy, boggy moorlands, the rain fell with an even downpour, and the guide stupidly mistook the way and added eight long Highland miles to the distance. They were thoroughly drenched, exhausted, and famished when Donald met them at a place a mile or two out of Stornoway. Having cheered their bodies with bread and cheese and brandy, and their souls with the hopeful prospect of starting the next day for France, he took them to a house in the neighbourhood, Kildun, where the mistress, though a MacLeod, was, like most of her sex, an ardent Jacobite. Leaving the Prince and his friends to the enjoyment of food, dry clothes, a good fire, and the prospect of comfortable beds for tired limbs, Donald went back to Stornoway in hopeful spirits to complete his arrangements for taking the Prince on board. Another twenty-four hours and the ship would have weighed anchor, and the worst difficulties would be left behind. But as soon as he entered Stornoway he saw that something was wrong. Three hundred men of the militia were in arms, and the whole place was in an uproar. The secret had leaked out; one of the boat's crew, getting tipsy, had boasted that the Prince was at hand with five hundred men, ready to take by force what he could not obtain by good-will.

The inhabitants of Stornoway were all Mackenzies, pledged by their chief, Seaforth, to loyal support of the Government. It is eternally to their honour that all that they demanded was that the Prince should instantly remove himself from their neighbourhood. Not one amongst them seems to have suggested that a sum of 30,000*l.* was to be gained by taking the Prince prisoner. So complete was

Donald’s confidence in their honesty that he did not hesitate to say to a roomful of armed militiamen, ‘He has only two companions with him, *and when I am there I make a third*, and yet let me tell you, gentlemen, that if Seaforth himself were here he durst not put a hand to the Prince’s breast.’ Donald doubtless looked pretty formidable as he said these words; at any rate, the ‘honest Mackenzies’ had no sinister intentions, only they vehemently insisted that the party should depart at once, and, what was worse, absolutely refused to give them a pilot. In vain Donald offered 500*l.*; fear made them obdurate; and so, depressed and crestfallen, Donald returned to Kildun and urged the Prince to instant flight. But not even the fear of immediate capture could induce the three wearied men to set out again in the wet and darkness to plod over rocks and morasses with no certain goal. So Donald had to control his fears and impatience till next day.

At eight next morning they started in the boat, hospitable Mrs. MacLeod insisting on their taking with them beef, meal, and even the luxuries of brandy, butter, and sugar. The weather being stormy they landed on a little desert island called Eiurn, which the Stornoway fishermen used as a place for drying fish. Between some fish which they found drying on the rocks and Mrs. MacLeod’s stores they lived in comparative luxury for the next few days. Ned Burke, the valet, was told off as cook; but he soon found that the Prince was far more skilful in the art of cookery than himself. It was his Royal Highness who suggested the luxury of butter with the fish, and who made a quite original cake by mixing the brains of a cow with some meal, giving orders to ‘birsle the bannock weel, or it would not do at all.’ Donald used to declare that in all his life ‘he never knew anyone better at a shift than the Prince when he happened to be at a pinch.’ Like many another unfortunate man, whether prince or peasant, Charles found unfailing comfort in tobacco. He seems to have smoked nothing more splendid than clay pipes, and ‘as in his wanderings these behoved to break, he used to take quills, and putting one into the other and all into the end of the “cutty,” this served to make it long enough, and the tobacco to smoke cool.’

Donald records another characteristic little trait of the Prince at this time. On quitting the island he insisted on leaving money on the rocks to pay for the fish they had consumed.

In the meantime the situation was growing more and more dangerous. Rumours had got abroad that the Prince was in the Long Island, and the search was being actively pursued. Two English men-of-war were stationed near the island, and sloops and gunboats ran up every bay and sound, while bodies of militia carried on the search by land. These, from their intimate knowledge of the country, would have been the more formidable enemy of the two if many of their officers had not had a secret sympathy with the Jacobite cause and very lukewarm loyalty to the Government.

For several days the Prince’s boat had been so constantly pursued that it was impossible for the crew to land. They ran short of food, and were reduced to eating oatmeal mixed with salt water, a nauseous mixture called in Gaelic, Drammach. At last they ran into a lonely bay in Benbecula, where they were free from pursuit. It is characteristic of the Prince’s irrepressible boyishness that he and the boatmen here went lobster-hunting with great enjoyment and success.

Without help at this juncture the little party must either have starved or fallen into the hands of their enemies. Charles therefore sent a message to the old chief of Clanranald — the largest proprietor in South Uist — begging him to come and see him.

Nine months before, when the Prince had landed on that island on his way from France, the old gentleman had refused to see him, pleading old age and infirmity. His brother, Macdonald of Boisdale, had seen the Prince and had vehemently urged him to give up so hopeless a design and to return to France; and, when he found that all persuasion was in vain, had roundly refused to promise him any assistance from his brother’s clan. And though young Clanranald had, indeed, joined the Prince’s standard, it was with many misgivings and against his better judgment.

But now, in the hour of Charles’s total abandonment and distress, this gallant family laid aside all selfish prudence. The old chief, in spite of age and ill-health, came immediately to the wretched hut where Charles had taken refuge, bringing with him Spanish wines, provisions, shoes, and stockings. He found the young man, whom he reverenced as his rightful king, in a hut as big as, and no cleaner than, a pig-stye, haggard and worn with hardship and hunger. ‘His shirt,’ as Dougal Graham, the servant, was quick to observe, ‘was as dingy as a dish-clout.’ That last little detail of misery appealed strongly to the womanly heart of Lady Clanranald, who immediately sent six good shirts to the Prince.

For the next three weeks Charles enjoyed a respite under the vigilant protection of Clanranald and his brother Boisdale. They found a hiding-place for him in the Forest-house of Glencoridale, a hut rather bigger and better than most. By a system of careful spies and watchers they kept the Prince informed of every movement of the enemy. It was the month of June — June as it is in the North, when days are warm and sunny and the evening twilight is prolonged till the early dawn, and there is no night at all. South Uist, beyond all other islands of the Hebrides, abounds in game of all kinds, and the Prince was always a keen sportsman. He delighted his followers by shooting birds on the wing, he fished (though it was only sea-fishing from a boat), and he shot red-deer on the mountains.

Once, when Ned Burke was preparing some collops from a deer the Prince had shot, a wild, starved-looking lad approached, and seeing the food, thrust his hand into the dish without either ‘with your leave or by your leave,’ and began devouring it like a savage. Ned in a rage very naturally began to beat the boy, but the gentle Prince interfered, and reminded his servant of the Christian duty of feeding the hungry, adding, ‘I cannot see anyone perish for lack of food or raiment if I have it in my power to help them.’ Having been fed and clothed the wretched boy went off straight to a body of militia in the neighbourhood and tried to betray the Prince to them. Fortunately, his appearance and manners were such that no one believed him, and he was laughed at for his pains. Out of at least a hundred souls, gentle and simple, who knew of the Prince’s hiding-place, this ‘young Judas’ was the only one who dropped the slightest hint of his whereabouts.

Nor was it only among the Jacobite clans that Charles found devoted and vigilant friends.

The two most powerful chiefs in the North-west of Scotland were at this time MacLeod of MacLeod and Sir Alexander Macdonald of Mugstatt, or Mouggestot, in Skye. These two had, to the great disappointment of the Jacobites, declared for the Government, and had shown considerable zeal in trying to suppress the rising; but in the very household of Mugstatt Charles had a romantic and zealous adherent in the person of Lady Margaret, Sir Alexander Macdonald’s wife. A daughter of the house of Eglintoun, she had been brought up in Jacobite principles, and now, in the absence of her husband, did all she could to help the Prince in his distress. Through the help of a certain Mr. Hugh Macdonald of Belshair she kept Charles informed of the enemy’s movements and sent him newspapers. Towards the end of June the Government authorities were pretty certain that the Prince was hiding somewhere in the Long Island, and attention began to be concentrated on that spot. Two more English cruisers were sent there, under Captains Scott and Fergusson — men who had learnt lessons of cruelty from the greatest master of that art, the Duke of Cumberland — and militia bands patrolled the whole island. It was quite necessary to remove the Prince from Glencoridale, and the faithful Belshair was at once despatched by Lady Margaret to consult with Charles about his further movements. This Mr. Macdonald of Belshair arranged with Macdonald of Boisdale — one of the shrewdest as well as kindest of the Prince’s friends — that they should meet at the Forest-house of Glencoridale. The meeting, in spite of hardships and danger and a worse than uncertain future, was a merry one. The two Highland gentlemen dined with the Prince (on ‘sooty beef’ and apparently a plate of butter!), and the talk was cheerful and free. Forgetful of the gloomy prospects of the Jacobite cause, and ignoring the victorious enemies encamped within a few miles of them, they talked hopefully of future meetings at St. James's, the Prince declaring that 'if he had never so much ado he would be at least one night merry with his Highland friends.' But St. James's was far enough off from Coridale, and in the meantime it became daily more certain that there was no longer safety for the Prince in Uist.

The pleasant life in the Forest-house had to be broken up, and for the next ten weary days the little party lived in their boat, eluding as well as they could their enemies by sea and by land.

Their difficulties were much increased and their spirits sadly disturbed by the fact that their generous friend Boisdale had been taken prisoner.

It is one of the most singular facts of the Prince's wanderings that as soon as he lost one helpful friend another immediately rose up to take his place. This time an ally was found literally in the enemy's camp. One of the officers in command of the militia in Benbecula was a certain Hugh Macdonald of Armadale, in Skye, a clansman of Sir Alexander's, but, like many another Macdonald, a Jacobite at heart. It is very uncertain how far he was personally responsible for the plan that was at this time being formed for the Prince's escape. Donald MacLeod and others of the Prince's party were certain that Charles had met and talked with him at Rossinish and had presented him with his pistols. This gentleman had a stepdaughter, a certain Flora Macdonald, a girl of remarkable character, courage, and discretion. She generally lived with her mother at Armadale, in Skye, but just now she was paying a visit to her brother in South Uist. It is difficult to make out how or when or by whom the idea was first started that this lady should convey the Prince to Skye disguised as her servant, but it appears that she had had more than one interview with O'Neal on the subject. On Saturday, June 21, being closely pursued by the implacable Captain Scott, Charles parted with his faithful little band of followers in Uist, paying the boatmen as generously as his slender purse would allow. With two clean shirts under his arm and with only O'Neal as his companion he started for Benbecula. Arriving at midnight in a small shieling belonging to Macdonald of Milton, 'by good fortune,' as O'Neal puts it, 'we met with Miss Flora Macdonald, whom I formerly knew.' It is a little difficult to believe that young ladies of Miss Flora's discretion were in the habit of frequenting lonely shielings far from their homes at midnight, at a time when the whole country was infested with soldiers. Nor does the beginning of her interview with O'Neal sound like the language of surprise. 'Then I told her I brought a friend to see her; and she, with some emotion, asked me if it was the Prince. I answered that it was, and instantly brought him in.’ Among all the stout Highland hearts which were ready to risk everything for him, Charles never found one more brave and pitiful than that of the girl who was introduced to him in this strange and perilous situation.

The plan was at once proposed to her that she should convey the Prince with her to Skye disguised in female attire as her maid. Flora was no mere romantic miss, eager for adventure and carried away by her feelings. She was quite aware of the danger she would bring on herself, and more especially on her friends, by this course. It was with some reluctance that she at last gave her consent, but once her word was pledged she was ready to go to the death if need were, and threw all her feminine ingenuity into carrying out the scheme. They arranged that she was to go next day to consult with Lady Clanranald and to procure feminine attire as a disguise for the Prince. As soon as all was prepared they were to meet at Rossinish in Benbecula; in the meantime O’Neal undertook to come and go between the Prince and Miss Macdonald to report progress and convey messages.

The two men seem to have returned to a hiding-place in the neighbourhood of Glencoridale, and Miss Flora returned to Milton. She had to pass one of the narrow sea fords next day on her way to Ormaclade, the Clanranalds’ house; this ford was guarded by a body of militia, and having no passport, she and her servant, Neil MacKechan, were taken prisoners. The situation was awkward in the extreme, and every hour’s delay was an added danger. To her great relief she learned that the officer in command, who was expected that morning, was her stepfather, Mr. Hugh Macdonald. On his arrival he was (or affected to be) extremely surprised to find his stepdaughter a prisoner in the guard-room; but with a complaisance very remarkable in an officer of the Government, he drew her out passports for herself, for her servant Neil, and for a new Irish servant, Betty Burke, whom she desired to take with her to Skye. So great was Macdonald’s interest in this unknown Betty that he actually wrote a letter to his wife in Skye recommending the girl.

‘I have sent your daughter from this country,’ he wrote, ‘lest she should be frightened by the troops lying here. She has got one Betty Burke, an Irish girl, who, she tells me, is a good spinster. If her spinning pleases you, you may keep her till she spins all your lint.’ In spite of the gravity of the situation, one cannot help thinking that Flora and her stepfather must have had a good deal of amusement concocting this circumstantial and picturesque falsehood.

As soon as she was set at liberty Flora went to Ormaclade, where Lady Clanranald entered heartily into the plan. Among her stores they chose a light coloured quilted petticoat, a flowered gown — lilac flowers on a white ground, to be particular — an apron and a long duffle cloak. Fortunately Highland women are tall and large, for the Prince's height, 5 feet 10 inches, though moderate for a man, looked ungainly enough in petticoats.

It was Friday the 25th before the way was clear for Flora and Lady Clanranald to meet the Prince at the rendezvous at Rossinish in Benbecula. The four intervening days had been full of difficulties for Charles and O'Neal. The fords between the two islands were so well guarded that there was no chance of their being able to cross them on foot; they had no boat, and the hours were passing for them in an agony of suspense. At last they risked asking a chance boat which was passing to set them across, and accomplished the passage in safety. But when they did arrive at the hut at Rossinish, cold, wet, and wearied, they found that a party of militia were encamped within half a mile, and that the soldiers came every morning to that very hut for milk. Charles was by this time accustomed to the feeling that he was carrying his life in his hands. At daybreak he had to leave the hut to make room for his pursuers, all day he had to lie in an unsheltered fissure of a rock, where the rain — the heavy, relentless rain of the West Highlands — poured down on him; if it did clear at all, then that other plague of the Highlands, swarms of midges, nearly drove him distracted. On Friday the militiamen moved off, and the way being clear, Lady Clanranald, Miss Flora Macdonald, and a certain Mrs. Macdonald of Kirkibost came to visit him and O'Neal in their hut, bringing the female attire with them. These loyal ladies found their lawful sovereign roasting a sheep's liver on a spit; but neither discomfort, danger, nor dirt could do away with the courtly charm of his manner or the fine gaiety of his address. He placed Miss Macdonald on his right hand — he always gave his preserver the seat of honour — and Lady Clanranald at his left, and the strange little dinner-party proceeded merrily. But before it was finished a messenger broke in to tell Lady Clanranald that the infamous Captain Fergusson had arrived at Ormaclade, and was demanding the mistress of the house with angry suspicion.

The Prince had now to part with O'Neal, in spite of the poor fellow's entreaties to be allowed to remain with him. Miss Macdonald had only passports for three and the danger was urgent. He was a faithful and affectionate friend, this O'Neal, if a little boastful and muddle-headed. He could shortly afterwards have escaped to France — as O'Sullivan did — in a French ship, if he had not insisted on going to Skye to try to fetch off the Prince. He missed the Prince, and fell into the hands of Captain Fergusson.

CHAPTER III

IN SKYE

On Saturday (June 26) the Prince put on his female attire for the first time, and very strange he must have felt as he sat in flowered calico on wet, slippery rocks, trying to keep himself warm beside a fire kindled on the beach. It was eight in the evening when they started, and the storm broke on them as soon as they were out at sea. The whole party was distressed and anxious, apparently, except Charles himself, who sang songs and told stories to keep up the spirits of his companions. Long afterwards Flora Macdonald loved to tell how chivalrously and considerately he looked after her comfort on that dangerous journey.

Going round the north end of the Isle of Skye, they came ashore close to Mugstatt, Sir Alexander Macdonald’s place. That chief was himself away at Fort Augustus with the Duke of Cumberland, but his wife, Lady Margaret, who, as we have seen, was a staunch friend to the Prince, was at home. Still, in her position it was most undesirable that Charles should present himself at her house. Miss Macdonald and her servant Neil went up to the house — the garden sloped down to the part of the shore where they had landed — leaving Betty Burke sitting on the boxes in her flowered gown and duffle cloak.

Miss Macdonald had good reason to congratulate herself on her prudence when she found Lady Margaret’s drawing-room full of guests. Among these was Mrs. Macdonald of Kirkibost, but she was already in the secret; Mr. Macdonald of Kingsburgh was also there, but he was a man of such a chivalrous spirit and so kindly in his disposition, that the secret would have been safe with him even if he had not been — as he was — a staunch Jacobite at heart. Far more formidable was a third guest, young Lieutenant MacLeod, a militia officer who, with a small body of men, was stationed at Mugstatt for the express purpose of examining every boat that might arrive from the Long Island. He certainly neglected this duty as far as Miss Macdonald’s boat was concerned, possibly out of complaisance to her hostess, Lady Margaret, possibly because the young lady’s careless demeanour disarmed all suspicion.

The situation was a most anxious one for Miss Macdonald; she had to carry on an easy flow of chat with a young officer while all the time she could think of nothing but Betty Burke sitting on her box on the shore. Every moment was precious and nothing was being done.

At last, during dinner, she managed to confide the whole situation to Kingsburgh, and while she kept the lieutenant engaged, the latter left the room and sent for Lady Margaret to speak to him on business. (He was her husband's factor, and there was nothing to excite remark in his wanting a private talk with her.) On learning the news she for a moment lost her head, and screamed out that they were undone. But with much sense and kindness Kingsburgh reassured her, saying that if necessary he would take the Prince to his own house, adding, with a touch of his characteristic chivalry, that he was now an old man, and it made very little difference to him whether he should die with a halter round his neck or await a death which could not be far distant.

As for the immediate future, the first idea that occurred both to Lady Margaret and Kingsburgh was, 'Let us send for Donald Roy.' This Donald was a brother of the Macdonald of Belshair who had visited the Prince at Coridale. He had been 'out' with the Prince's army, and was now living with a surgeon near Mugstatt, trying to recover from a serious wound in his foot received at Culloden. This Donald must have been a good fellow, popular, and liked by all; for even in those dangerous times he seems to have lived on an intimate footing with the very militia officers who were sent to search for hidden Jacobites.

No man could have been more suited for Kingsburgh's purpose than Donald. Not only was he sensible, honourable, and brave, but as an acknowledged Jacobite he had less to lose if discovered, and as a young and amiable man his person could not fail to be acceptable to the Prince.

On his arrival he found Kingsburgh and Lady Margaret walking up and down the garden. 'O Donald!' cried the lady, 'we are undone for ever!' After much rapid, anxious talk, the three agreed that the safest place for the Prince would be the Island of Rasay. Old Rasay had been 'out' and was in hiding, his second son was recovering from a wound received at Culloden, and the eldest, though he had kept quiet from motives of prudence, was quite as keen a Jacobite as the other two. Their eagerness to serve the Prince could be relied on, and as the island had been recently devastated by the Government soldiers, it was not likely to be visited again.

Donald Roy undertook to see young MacLeod of Rasay and to make arrangements for meeting the Prince at Portree next day, while Kingsburgh promised to carry the Prince off with him to his own house and to send him next day under safe guidance to Portree. In this way, whatever happened, Lady Margaret would not be compromised.

So the garden conclave broke up, and the three separated. Lady Margaret returned to her drawing-room, where, poor woman, she sadly disconcerted Miss Macdonald by nervously going in and out of the room. However, the lieutenant seems to have been too much taken up with his companion to notice his hostess's demeanour. Donald Roy, in spite of his lame foot, set off for Portree in search of young Rasay, and old Kingsburgh hurried off to look for Charles, carrying refreshments with him. Not finding him on the shore below the garden, the old man walked on rather anxiously till, seeing some sheep running, he concluded that someone must have disturbed them, and went to the spot. A tall, ungainly woman in a long cloak started forward to meet him brandishing a big knotted stick. As soon as Kingsburgh named himself the Prince knew that he had found a friend, and placed himself in his hands with the frank confidence he always showed in dealing with his Highland followers, a confidence which they so nobly justified.

After the Prince had had something to eat and drink, the pair set out to walk to Kingsburgh, a considerable distance off. Unfortunately it was Sunday, and they met many country people returning from church, who were all eager to have a little business chat with Sir Alexander's factor. He got rid of most of them by slyly reminding them of the sacredness of the day, for the Prince's awkward movements and masculine stride made his disguise very apparent. 'They may call you the Pretender,' cried Kingsburgh, between annoyance and amusement, 'but I never knew anyone so bad at your trade.'

At the first stream they had to cross the Prince lifted his skirts with a most masculine disregard of appearances, and to mend matters, when he came to the next, let his petticoats float in the water with a most unfeminine disregard of his clothes.

Halfway on their road Miss Macdonald rode past them on horseback, accompanied by Mrs. Macdonald of Kirkibost and the latter's maid. 'Look, look,' cried that damsel, 'what strides the jade takes! I dare say she's an Irishwoman or else a man in woman's clothes.' Miss Macdonald thought it best to quicken her pace and make no reply.

She was already at Kingsburgh when the Prince and his host arrived there at about eleven o'clock. All the household were in bed. A message was sent up to Mrs. Macdonald to tell her of the arrival of guests, but she very naturally refused to get up, and merely sent her compliments to Miss Macdonald and begged she would help herself to everything she wanted. When, however, her husband came up to her room and gravely requested her to come down and attend to his guest, she felt that something was wrong. Nor did it allay her fears when her little daughter ran up crying that 'the most odd, muckle, ill-shaken-up wife' she had seen in all her life was walking up and down in the hall. Mrs. Macdonald entered the main room with some misgiving, and in the uncertain firelight saw a tall, ungainly woman striding up and down. The figure approached her and, according to the manners of the time, saluted her. The rough touch of the unshaven lip left no doubt on the lady's mind; her husband's guest was certainly a man in disguise, probably a proscribed Jacobite. She hurried out of the room and met Kingsburgh in the hall. It did not occur to this good woman to upbraid her husband for bringing danger on his family; her first question was, 'Do you think the stranger will know anything about the Prince?'

'My dear,' said Kingsburgh very gravely, taking her hands in his, '*this is the Prince himself*!'

'The Prince!' cried Mrs. Macdonald, rather overwhelmed, 'then we shall all be hanged!'

'We can die but once,' said her husband, 'could we ever die in a better cause?'

Then, returning to the homely necessities of the hour, he begged her to bring bread and cheese and eggs.

Bread and cheese and eggs to set before Royalty! This disgrace to her housewifery affected Mrs. Macdonald almost as feelingly as the danger they were in. The idea, too, of sitting down at supper with her lawful sovereign caused the simple lady the greatest embarrassment. However, she was prevailed upon to take the seat at the Prince's left hand, while Miss Macdonald had her usual place at his right. After the ladies had retired Charles lighted his 'cutty,' and he and Kingsburgh had a comfortable chat and a bowl of punch over the fire. Indeed, good food, good fires, and good company were such congenial luxuries after the life he had been leading, that Charles sat on and on in his chair, and the hospitable Kingsburgh had at last to insist upon his guest going to bed.

Hour after hour the Prince slept on next morning, Kingsburgh being unwilling to disturb the one good rest he might have for weeks; Miss Macdonald was growing impatient and Mrs. Macdonald anxious, and at last Kingsburgh consented to rouse him at about one o'clock. Portree was seven miles off, and had to be reached before dark. It was decided that the Prince might resume male attire *en route*, but in case of exciting suspicion among the servants he had still to masquerade as Betty Burke till he left the house. Mrs. Macdonald, her daughter, and Miss Flora all came up to assist at his toilet, for 'deil a preen could he put in,' as his hostess expressed herself. He laughed so heartily over his own appearance that they could hardly get his dress fastened. Before he left the room he permitted Flora Macdonald to cut off a lock of his hair, which she divided with Mrs. MacLeod. What is a still more touching proof of the devotion of these two good women is that they carefully took off the sheets of the Prince's bed, vowing that these should be neither washed nor used again till they should serve each of them as winding-sheets. Kingsburgh accompanied his guests part of the way, assisted Charles to change his dress in a little wood, and then, with tears, bade him farewell.

Flora Macdonald rode on to Portree by another road, leaving her servant, Neil MacKechan, and a little herd-boy to act as guides to the Prince.

In the meantime, Donald Roy had been active in the Prince’s service. At Portree he had met young Rona MacLeod of Rasay and his brother Murdoch, and, as he had expected, found them eager to face any danger or difficulty for their Prince. They had a cousin rather older than themselves, Malcolm MacLeod, who had been a captain in the Prince’s army. He entered into the scheme as heartily as the other two, and only suggested prudently that Rona should leave the matter to himself and Murdoch, who were ‘already as black as black can be.’ But Rona was not to be baulked of his share of the danger and glory of serving the Prince, and vowed that he *would* go even if it should cost him his estate and his head. So with two stout faithful boatmen they arrived within a mile of Portree, drew up their boat among the rocks where it could be hid, and remained waiting for the Prince, while the night fell and the rain came down in sheets.

It had been arranged at Mugstatt that Donald Roy was to meet the Prince late on Monday afternoon in the one public-house that Portree could boast. This public-house consisted of one large, dirty, smoky room, and people of all kinds kept going in and out, and here Donald took up his post. Flora Macdonald was the first to arrive, and she, Donald Roy, and Malcolm MacLeod sat together over the fire waiting anxiously. It was already dark when a small, wet herd-boy slipped in and going up to Donald whispered that a gentleman wanted to see him. The poor Prince was standing in the darkness outside drenched to the skin. As soon as they were at the inn Donald insisted on his changing his clothes, and Malcolm at once gave him his own dry philibeg. Food they could get, and water was brought in an old, battered, rusty tin from which the Prince drank, being afraid of arousing suspicion by any fastidiousness. He also bought sixpennyworth of the coarsest tobacco, and nearly betrayed his quality to the already suspicious landlord by a princely indifference to his change, but Malcolm prudently secured the ‘bawbees’ and put them into the Prince’s sporran.

Miss Flora now rose very sadly to go, as she had to continue her journey that night. The Prince kissed her and said farewell with much suppressed emotion, but with his usual hopefulness added that he trusted that they might yet meet at St. James’s. These constant partings from so many faithful, warm-hearted friends were among the hardest trials of Charles’s wandering life. He seems to have clung with special affection to Donald Roy, and urged him again and again not to leave him, but to go with him to Rasay. Donald could only reply that the state of his wounded foot made it impossible.

This conversation took place as they plunged through wet and darkness from Portree down to the shore where the boat was lying. Malcolm MacLeod, who made a third in the little party, had a spirit as firm and a heart as warm as Donald’s own, and before the end of the week the Prince was clinging with the same affection to this new friend.

The wild and desolate island of Rasay offered the Prince a comparatively secure hiding-place, and the three MacLeods had both the will and the power to protect him, and to provide a reasonable amount of comfort for him. But a kind of restlessness seems to have come over the Prince at this time. It was only by being constantly on the move that he could escape from anxious and painful thoughts. Possibly he may have felt a little insecure in the midst of the Clan MacLeod (though he had met nowhere with more devotion than that of the three cousins); he certainly seems to have bestowed far more affection and confidence on Malcolm than on the other two.

On Thursday he insisted on starting for Skye, in spite of the entreaties of the young MacLeods, nor would he turn back when a storm broke and threatened to overwhelm them. It was night before they landed at Trotternish, a night such as had become familiar to the Prince, dark and chill and pouring with rain. They made for a byre on the property of Mr. Nicholson of Scorobeck. Young Rasay went on in front to see that no one was there. ‘If there had been anyone in it, what would you have done?’ he asked the Prince rather reproachfully; for Charles’s self-will and foolhardiness must at times have been very trying to those who were risking life and estate for him. In the byre they lighted a fire, dried their clothes, and slept for some hours. The next day, Rona being away, the Prince asked Murdoch if he would accompany him into the country of the Mackinnons in the south of Skye (the old chief of that clan had been in the Prince’s army, and Charles felt that he would be safe amongst them). Murdoch’s wound prevented his undertaking such a journey — it was thirty miles over the wildest part of Skye — but Malcolm could go, and his cousin assured the Prince that he could nowhere find a more faithful and devoted servant. So the pair set out in the morning for their wild tramp. To prevent discovery the Prince affected to be Malcolm’s servant, walked behind him, and, further to disguise himself, put his periwig in his pocket and bound a dirty cloth round his head — a disguise specially calculated, one would think, to excite attention. The two young men talked frankly and confidentially, making great strides in friendship as they went along. Once a covey of partridges rose, and, with a true British instinct for sport at all hazards, the Prince raised his gun and would have fired if Malcolm had not caught his arm. They were careful to pass through the hostile MacLeod country at night, and at break of day arrived in Strath, the country of the Mackinnons.

Malcolm MacLeod had a sister married to a Mackinnon, an honest, warm-hearted follow who had followed his chief and served as captain in the Prince’s army. To his house they directed their steps; Mackinnon himself was away, but his wife received her brother and his friend with the utmost kindness. The Prince passed for a certain Lewis Caw, a surgeon’s apprentice (who was actually ‘skulking’ in Skye at the time), and acted his part of humble retainer so well that poor Malcolm was quite embarrassed; and the rough servant-lass treated him with the contempt Highland servants seem to have for their own class, if ‘Lowland bodies.’ Both the tired travellers lay down to sleep, and when Malcolm awoke late in the afternoon he found the sweet-tempered Prince playing with Mrs. Mackinnon’s little child. ‘Ah, little man,’ he cried, in a moment of forgetfulness, ‘you may live to be a captain in my service yet.’ ‘Or you an old sergeant in his,’ said the indignant nurse, jealous of her charge’s position.

Next day Malcolm went out to meet his brother-in-law. He had absolute confidence in Mackinnon’s faithfulness and loyalty, but he feared that his warm-hearted feelings might lead him into indiscretions which would betray the Prince; and in spite of all warnings Mackinnon could not restrain his tears when he saw his Prince under his roof in such a wretched plight.

It was important that Charles should be at once taken to the mainland, and John Mackinnon went off at noon to the house of the chief of the Mackinnons to borrow a boat. This old man was a fine type of a Highland gentleman. It was his daily — probably his only — prayer that he might die on the field of battle fighting for his king and country. He was simple-minded, brave, and faithful, and though now between sixty and seventy, as active and courageous as any young man. John had received injunctions not to betray the Prince’s presence in the neighbourhood to the laird, but to keep such a piece of news from his chief was quite beyond honest John’s powers. Nothing would restrain the old man from going off at once with his wife to pay their homage to the Prince. Nor would he hear of anyone conducting Charles to the mainland but himself.

PRINCE CHARLIE’S WANDERINGS.
The black lines indicating land and the dotted lines sea journeys.

At eight o’clock that night the little party embarked. The Prince took a most affecting farewell of Malcolm MacLeod. With courtly punctilio he sent a note to Donald Roy to tell of his safe departure, then pressed ten guineas — almost his last — on his friend’s acceptance, smoked a last pipe with him, and finally presented him with the invaluable ‘cutty.’

CHAPTER IV

ON THE MAINLAND

To understand the Prince’s proceedings for the next few weeks it is necessary to have a clear idea of the country which was the scene of his wanderings. From Loch Hourn (which opens opposite Sleat in Skye) on the north down to Loch Shiel on the south a little group of wild and rugged peninsulas run out into the Atlantic, called respectively Knoydart, Morar, Arisaig, and Moidart. Between these deep narrow lochs run far inland. Loch Nevis lies between Knoydart and Morar; Loch Morar, a freshwater loch, cuts off the peninsula of the same name from Arisaig, and this again is separated from Moidart by Lochs Nanuagh and Aylort, and Loch Shiel separates the whole group from Ardnamurchan in the south. The wild, inaccessible nature of the country, the deep valleys and many rocky hollows in the hills offered many hiding-places; but a glance at the map will show that a vigilant enemy by stationing men-of-war in all the lochs and drawing a cordon of soldiers from the head of Loch Hourn to the head of Loch Shiel, could draw the net so tightly that escape would be nearly impossible.

In these first days of July, however, the search was still chiefly confined to the Long Island and Skye, and Charles got a clear start of his enemies. On July 5, in the early morning, he and his faithful Mackinnons landed at a place named Mallach on Loch Nevis, and spent the next three days in the open. They were in a good deal of perplexity as to their next movements, and when Charles learned that old Clanranald was staying in the neighbourhood, at the home of his kinsman Scothouse, he sent to ask his advice and help, expecting confidently to find the old faithful kindness that had helped him in Uist. But the old gentleman had had enough of danger and suffering in the Prince’s cause; his son was a fugitive, his brother a prisoner, he himself was in hiding. The sudden appearance of Mackinnon startled him into a state of nervous terror, and he declared querulously that he could do no more nor knew anyone else who could give any help. Mackinnon returned indignant and mortified, but the Prince received the news philosophically, ‘Well, Mr. Mackinnon, we must do the best we can for ourselves.’

It was the first rebuff he had met with; but a day or two later he found the same lukewarm spirit in Mr. Macdonald of Morar, a former friend. The poor man had had his house burnt over his head and was living with his family in a wretched hut, and probably thought that he had suffered enough for the cause. This desertion cut the Prince to the quick. ‘I hope, Mackinnon,’ he cried, addressing John, ‘that you will not desert me too.’ The old chief thought that the words were addressed to him. ‘I will never leave your Royal Highness in the hour of danger,’ he declared, with tears, and John’s reply was no less fervent.

There was one house in the neighbourhood where the Prince could always count on a welcome whether he came at midnight, at cockcrow, or at noon, whether as a Prince on his way to win a crown or as a beggar with neither home nor hope. The hospitable house of Borodale was a mass of blackened ruins, but the laird— ‘my kind old landlord,’ as the Prince fondly called him — and his two sons had still strong hands, shrewd heads, and warm hearts ready for the Prince’s service.

From Morar the Prince and the two Mackinnons walked through the summer night over the wildest mountain track and arrived at Borodale in the early morning. Old Angus was still in bed when they knocked at the door of the bothy where the family was living. He came to the door, wrapt in his blanket. When Mackinnon explained who it was that desired his hospitality, the old man’s welcome came prompt and unhesitating. ‘*I* have brought him here,’ said Mackinnon, ‘and will commit him to *your* charge. I have done my duty, do you do yours.’

‘I am glad of it,’ said Angus, ‘and shall not fail to take care of him. I shall lodge him so securely that all the forces in Great Britain shall not find him.’

So John Mackinnon, having done all he could, parted from the Prince with the same affectionate sorrow that had marked the farewells of all his faithful Highlanders. He was caught on his return to Skye, by the cruel Captain Scott, and five days later was brought back to Lochnanuagh, a prisoner on board an English man-of-war. Opposite the place where the ship cast anchor was a fissure in the rock, and halfway up was what looked like a mere grassy bank. In reality it was a small hut roofed with sods, so contrived that no one unless he were in the secret would have suspected it of being anything but a grassy slope. Here the Prince had spent the preceding night, but as soon as the ship entered the loch he betook himself to the hills. He was accompanied by old Borodale and his son John — the young man who had been supposed to have died at Culloden. A cousin of Borodale’s, Macdonald of Glenaladale, had always been a special friend of the Prince’s. He joined him now in the wilds, resolved to share all his worst dangers, though he had to leave his wife and ‘five weak pretty children’ unprotected and living in a bothy, the only home the English soldiers had left them. The first plan these brave men concerted together was to carry the Prince into Lochiel’s country, where young Clanranald had promised to provide him a hiding-place. On their way, however, they heard that a body of soldiers were approaching from Loch Arkaig, which completely blocked their way on that side. That same night old Borodale learnt that General Campbell with several ships was in Loch Nevis, Captain Scott was still in Lochnanuagh, and parties from these ships were searching every foot of ground in their neighbourhoods. At the same time troops had been landed at the head of Loch Hourn, and others simultaneously at the head of Loch Shiel. Between these two points the distance as the crow flies must be some twenty or five-and-twenty miles, but the wild mountainous nature of the country makes the actual distance far greater. In spite of all difficulties the Government troops in a few days had drawn a complete cordon from one point to the other. This cordon consisted of single sentinels planted within sight of each other who permitted no one to pass unchallenged. At night large fires were lighted, and every quarter of an hour patrolling parties passed from one to the other to see that all the sentinels were on the alert.

Charles’s case was almost desperate. For several days he and his companions lived like hunted animals on the mountain-tops. They were frequently within sight of some camp of the enemy; more than once they had to go precipitately down one side of a hill because the soldiers were coming up the other. They changed their quarters at night, sometimes marching long miles merely to reach some mountain which having been searched the day before was less likely to be visited again. In the daytime the Prince could snatch a few hours of troubled sleep in some rocky hollow while the rest of the party kept guard. News of the enemy’s movements was brought them occasionally by secret friends under cover of darkness, but even their approach was full of terror for the fugitives. Worst of all was their suffering from hunger. The soldiers devoured and destroyed what meagre stores the country could boast, and in spite of the generosity of the poorer clansmen no food could be had. For four days the whole party lived on a few handfuls of dry meal and some butter. On one occasion soldiers passed below their lair driving cattle. The Prince, who was starving, proposed to follow them, and ‘lift’ some of the cattle in the night. His companions remonstrated, but he led the party himself, and secured the beef. The guide, and indeed the leader of the little band, was a farmer, Donald Cameron of Glenpean. But for this man’s daring courage and his intimate knowledge of the country the Prince must sooner or later have fallen into the hands of his enemies.

The circle was daily being drawn more closely round the prey, and daily the fear of starvation stared them in the face. Should they wait to die like driven deer or make one desperate effort to break through the toils that surrounded them, and either escape or die like men? For brave men there could only be one answer to such a question. On the night of July 25 they determined to force their way through the cordon.

All that day the Prince had lain in closest hiding on a hill on the confines of Knoydart, not a mile from the chain of sentinels. He had slept some hours while two of the party had kept watch and the other two had gone and foraged for food, bringing back two dry cheeses as the result. (Old Borodale had gone back at this time; the party consisted of his son John, Glenaladale and his brother, and Cameron of Glenpean.) All day parties of soldiers had been searching the neighbourhood, and now the sentinel fires were alight all along the line of defence. At nightfall the little band started, walking silently and rapidly up a mountain called Drumnachosi. The way was very steep, and the night very dark. Once crossing a little stream the Prince’s foot slipped, he stumbled, and would have fallen down over a cliff had not Cameron caught one arm and Glenaladale the other and pulled him up. From the top of the hill they could see the sentinel fires close in front of them, and were near enough to hear the voices of the soldiers quite distinctly. Under cover of the friendly darkness they crept up another hill and came out opposite another fire. At a point midway between these two posts a mountain torrent had made a deep fissure on the side of a hill on the further side. Could they break through the line and reach this river-bed the overhanging banks, aided by the darkness of night, would conceal their figures, and following the stream they could cross over into wild broken country, where they could hide themselves. Donald Cameron, with a fine Highland gallantry, undertook to make trial of the way first. If he could reach the spot and return again to report ‘all safe,’ the rest of the party might make the attempt. It had all to be done in a quarter of an hour, for that was the interval at which the patrolling parties succeeded each other.

In dead silence they waited till the sentinels had past; then as stealthily and rapidly as a cat Cameron slipped down the hillside and disappeared into the darkness. The rest stood breathless, straining every nerve for the faintest sound; no footfall or falling pebble broke the stillness, and in a few long, heavily-weighted minutes Cameron returned and whispered that all was well. It was two o’clock now and the darkness was growing thinner. They waited till the sentries had crossed again and had now their backs to the passage, then they all moved forward in perfect silence. Reaching the torrent, they sank on all fours and one after the other crept up the rocky bed without a sound. The dreaded cordon was passed, and in a short time they reached a place where they were completely hidden and could take a little much-needed rest.

Once clear of this chain of their enemies they turned northward to the Glenelg country. Their plan was to go through the Mackenzie's country to Poole Ewe, where they hoped to find a French vessel. But the next day they learned from a wayfaring man that the only French ship which had been there had left the coast. Seeing that that plan was fruitless, their next idea was to move eastward into the wilds of Inverness and wait there till the way should be clear for the Prince's joining Lochiel in Badenoch.

In Glen Sheil they parted with Cameron of Glenpean, and here too they had a curious adventure which might have proved seriously inconvenient to them. They had spent a whole hot August day hiding behind some rocks on a bare hillside, the midges had tormented them, and they were oppressed with thirst, but had not ventured from their hiding-place even to look for water. At sunset a boy appeared bringing quarts of goat's milk; he was the son of a certain Macraw, a staunch though secret friend in the neighbourhood. Glenaladale at this time carried the fortune of the little party — some forty gold louis and a few shillings — in his sporran. He paid the lad for the milk, and in his hurry did not notice that he had dropped his purse. They had hardly gone an English mile before the loss was discovered, and Glenaladale insisted at all risks on going back to look for the purse. He and his cousin did indeed find it lying at the expected place, but though some shillings remained the louis were gone. It was midnight before the indignant pair reached Macraw's house, and the family were all asleep. They roused the master, however, and fairly told him what had happened. No shadow of doubt seems to have crossed the father's mind, no word of expostulation rose to his lips. 'Without a moment's delay he returned to the house, got hold of a rope hanging there, and gripped his son by the arm in great passion, saying, "You damned scoundrel, this instant get these poor gentlemen's money, or by the heavens I'll hang you to that very tree you see there." The boy, shivering with fear, went instantly for the money, which he had buried underground thirty yards from his father's house.' This accident turned out most luckily for the Prince. He and Glenaladale's brother while awaiting the other two had hidden behind some rocks; shortly after they were hidden they saw an officer and two soldiers *coming along the very path they had intended to take*. But for the delay caused by their companions going back they must have fallen into the hands of their enemies.

They now turned eastward, and after a long night's march found themselves in the wild tract of country called the Braes of Glenmoriston.

Here Charles was to find a new set of friends, different indeed from the chivalrous Kingsburgh and the high-bred Lady Margaret, but men who were as staunch and incorruptible as any of his former friends. These were the famous ‘Seven Men of Glenmoriston,’ men who had served in the Prince’s army, and who now lived a wild, lawless life among the mountains, at feud with everything that represented the existing law and order. They have been described as a robber band, but that title is misleading. They were rather a small remnant of irreconcilable rebels who had vowed undying enmity and revenge against Cumberland and his soldiers. And indeed there was ample excuse for their hatred and violence in the cruelties they saw practised all round them. Sixty of their clansmen after surrendering themselves had been shipped off to the colonies, all their own possessions and those of their neighbours had been seized, and friends and kinsfolk had been brutally put to death.

Swooping down like mountain eagles on detached bands of soldiers, these seven men wreaked instant vengeance on oppressors and informers, and carried off arms and baggage in the face of larger bodies of the enemy. To these men, ignorant, reckless, and lawless, Charles unhesitatingly confided his person, a person on whose head a sum of thirty thousand pounds was set.

Four of these men were in a cave, Coraghoth, in the Braes of Glenmoriston, when Glenaladale brought Charles to see them. They had expected to see young Clanranald, and as soon as they saw the Prince one of their number recognised him, but had the presence of mind to address him as an old acquaintance by the name of ‘MacCullony.’ When the four knew who their guest really was, they bound themselves to be faithful to him by the dreadful Highland oath, praying ‘that their backs might be to God, and their faces to the devil, and that all the curses the Scriptures do pronounce might come upon them and their posterity if they did not stand firm to the Prince in the greatest danger.’

For about three weeks Charles shared the life of these outlaws, sleeping in caves and holes of the earth, living on the wild deer of their shooting and the secret gifts of the peasantry. They did not understand his English, but the Prince was beginning to pick up a little Gaelic. He was able at least to improve their cooking and reprove their swearing, two services they liked afterwards to recall. Here too, as elsewhere on his wanderings, the Prince gained the hearts of all his followers by his gracious gaiety and plucky endurance of hardships. In the beginning of August his hopes had again turned to Poole Ewe, but learning for a second time that no French ship could land on the closely guarded coast, he and his friends determined to remain in the northern straths of Inverness-shire till the Government troops should withdraw from the Great Glen — the chain of lakes which now forms the Caledonian Canal — and thus leave the way clear into Badenoch, where Lochiel and Macpherson of Cluny were hiding.

A curious incident is supposed to have helped the Prince at this time. There had been among his Life Guards a handsome youth named Roderick Mackenzie, son of a jeweller in Edinburgh, who in face and figure was startlingly like the Prince. This lad was actually ‘skulking’ among the Braes of Glenmoriston at the time when the Prince was surrounded in Knoydart. A party of soldiers tracked him to a hut, which they surrounded. Flight was impossible, and the poor boy stood at bay. As he fell beneath their sword-thrusts he cried out, ‘Villains, ye have slain your King.’ Whether these words were a curious last flash of vanity, or whether he intended to serve the Prince by a generous act of imposture, can never be known. The soldiers at any rate believed that they had secured the prize. They carried off Mackenzie’s head with them to Fort Augustus, and the authorities seem for some time to have been under the impression that it was indeed that of the Prince. Possibly it was owing to this that in the middle of August the Government rather relaxed their vigilance along the Great Glen. Charles was eager to press at once into Badenoch, but the wary outlaws would only consent to taking him to the Lochiel country, between Loch Arkaig, Loch Lochy, and Loch Garry. They travelled chiefly by night; the season was very wet, and the rivers were in flood, and they had to cross the River Garry Highland fashion in a line, with each man’s arm on his neighbour’s shoulder, for the water was running breast-high.

At this time the Prince’s condition was as bad as at any period of his wanderings. His clothes were of the coarsest, and *they* were in rags. Lady Clanranald’s six good shirts had long since disappeared; it was as much as he could do to have a clean shirt once a fortnight. The provisions they carried were reduced to one peck of meal. In this state did the Prince arrive in the familiar country round Loch Arkaig. It was a year almost to the day since he had passed through that very country elate and hopeful at the head of his brave Macdonalds and Camerons. He was now a fugitive, ill-fed, ill-clad, with a price on his head; the only thing that was unchanged was the faithful devotion of his Highlanders.

Cameron of Clunes and Macdonald of Lochgarry, or Lochgarie, though they were themselves ‘skulking,’ received the Prince with the utmost kindness and found a hiding-place for him in a hut in a wood at the south side of Loch Arkaig. Here the outlaws left him; only one of their number, Patrick Grant, remained till the Prince should be supplied with money to reward their faithful service. From this place, also, John Macdonald and Glenaladale’s brother returned to the coast, where they were to keep a careful look-out and to send the Prince news of any French ship which might appear.

Glenaladale still remained, but the Prince’s thoughts were turning more and more towards Badenoch, where his friend Lochiel was in comparatively secure hiding.

Among all the gallant gentlemen who risked life and estate in this rising there is no figure more attractive than that of the ‘Gentle Lochiel.’ He had for years before the rebellion been the mainstay of the Jacobite party. No man in the Highlands carried so much weight as he, partly from his position, but more from his talents and the charm of his character. ‘Wise’ and ‘gentle’ are the words that were applied to him, and with all the qualities of a high-bred gentleman he combined the simpler virtues of the Highland clansman — faithfulness, courage, and a jealous sense of personal honour. From the very beginning he had seen the folly of the rising. But when he had failed to convince Charles of its hopelessness, he had thrown himself into the movement as if it had been of his own devising. Never did he afterwards reproach Charles by word or look for the ill-fated result.

He and his cousin, Macpherson of Cluny, were at this time hiding among the recesses of Benalder. The road to Inverness ran by within a few miles, and at a little distance lay Lord Loudoun’s camp, but so great was the devotion of the clansmen, so admirable their caution and secrecy, that the English commander had not the slightest suspicion that the two most important Jacobite fugitives had for three months been in hiding so near to him. Lochiel had been wounded in the feet at Culloden, and his lameness as well as his dangerous position prevented his going to look for the Prince. He had two brothers, one a doctor and the other a clergyman, both accomplished and bold men, who had also been involved in the Jacobite rebellion. Towards the end of August, news having come to Benalder that the Prince was living near Auchnacarry under the protection of Cameron of Clunes, the two Cameron brothers set off secretly for that country. The Prince with a son of Clunes and the faithful outlaw Patrick Grant were at this time living in a hut in a wood close to Loch Arkaig. It was early on the morning of August 25, the Prince and young Clunes were asleep in the hut, while Patrick Grant kept watch. He must have got drowsy, for waking with a start he saw a party of men approaching. He rushed into the hut and roused the Prince and his companion. Charles had long lived in expectation of such moments. He kept his presence of mind completely, decided that it was too late to fly, and prepared to defend himself. The fowling-pieces were loaded and got into position, and they very nearly received their friends with a volley. Dr. Cameron in his narrative describes the Prince’s appearance thus: ‘He was barefoot; had an old black kilt coat on and philibeg and waistcoat, a dirty shirt and a long red beard, a gun in his hand and a pistol and dirk at his side; still he was very cheerful and in good health.’

Another week they all waited in the neighbourhood of Auchnacarry (the ruined home of the Lochiels). At last a message reached them from Benalder that the passes were free and that they might safely try to join Lochiel. Having parted with his devoted friend Glenaladale, who returned to the coast, the Prince, with Dr. Cameron and Lochgarry, arrived on August 30 at Mellaneuir, at the foot of Benalder. People in hiding have no means of discriminating their friends from their enemies at a little distance. Lochiel seeing a considerable party approaching believed that he was discovered and determined to make a good fight for it. He as narrowly missed shooting Charles as Charles had missed shooting Dr. Cameron the week before. When, however, he recognised the figure in the coarse brown coat, the shabby kilt, and the rough red beard, he hobbled to the door and wanted to receive the Prince on his knees. ‘My dear Lochiel,’ remonstrated Charles as he embraced him, ‘you don’t know who may be looking down from these hills.’

In the hut there was a sufficiency of mutton, beef sausages, bacon, butter, cheese, &c., and an anker of whisky, and the Prince was almost overwhelmed by such an excess of luxury. ‘Now, gentlemen,’ he said with a cheerful air, ‘now I *live like a Prince*.’ Charles’s wardrobe was as usual most dilapidated, and Cluny’s three sisters set at once to work to make him a set of six shirts with their own fair hands, doubtless sewing the most passionate loyalty and infinite regret into their ‘seams.’

The hiding-place where the Prince was now concealed was a very curious hut contrived by Cluny in one of the inmost recesses of the hills. It was called ‘The Cage,’ and was placed in a little thicket on the rocky slope of a hill. The walls were formed by actual growing trees with stakes planted between them, the whole woven together by ropes of heather and birch. Till you were close to the hut it looked merely like a thick clump of trees and bushes. The smoke escaped along the rocks, and the stone being of a bluish colour it could easily pass unnoticed. This hut could only hold six persons at a time, so the party generally divided in this way: one man cooked the food, four played cards, and the last man looked on at the others and possibly smoked!

Probably they played cards and talked and jested over the daily needs and hardships, and spoke little of the disastrous times that lay behind them, or the doubtful hopes that lay before them. Fearing lest the Prince might have to remain in hiding all winter the ingenious Cluny began to fit up a subterranean dwelling, thickly boarded up, where the party would have been in safety and shelter. But in the meantime no efforts were lacking to find a means of escape. Lochiel’s brother, the clergyman, a man of great prudence, went secretly to Edinburgh, and there procured a ship and sent it round to a port on the East coast to await the Prince. Succour, however, had come from another quarter; it was known to the Prince and his followers that a certain Colonel Warren was fitting out a couple of ships in France for the purpose of bringing off the Prince, and daily they expected news of their arrival. On September 6 two ships, *L'Heureux* and *La Princesse*, appeared at Lochnanuagh. Old Borodale and his two sons immediately fled to the hills, leaving a faithful servant to find out and report to them who the strangers might be. After nightfall, twelve French officers came to the hut where they were hiding and told their errand. Information was at once sent to Glenaladale, who undertook to go to Auchnacarry and send on the news through Cameron of Clunes, he himself not knowing where the Prince was hiding. Any delay, even of a few hours, might be fatal, as the presence of the French ships must sooner or later become known to the authorities at Fort Augustus. To his dismay Glenaladale failed to find Clunes, and only by an accident met with an old woman, who directed him to the place where the latter was hiding. A messenger was at once despatched, and he, happening by a curious chance to meet with Cluny and Dr. Cameron on a dark night in Badenoch, gave them his message, and an express was at once sent to the Cage. On September 13, at one in the morning, the party — which now included Cluny, Lochiel, Macpherson of Breakachie, and some others of the Prince's more important followers — set off for the coast. They travelled by night, remaining in concealment by day, but so lonely was the country, so recklessly high were the Prince's spirits, that one whole day he amused himself by flinging up caps into the air and shooting at them.

Again he passed through the well-known country round Loch Arkaig, past Auchnacarry, the home of the Lochiels, which was lying in ruins, over the rugged hills where he had been hunted like a wild creature a few weeks before, down to the familiar waters of Lochnanuagh, back to the warm-hearted household of Borodale.

A considerable number of Jacobite gentlemen who had lain for months in hiding had been drawn to Lochnanuagh by the report of the landing of the French ships; amongst these were young Clanranald, Glenaladale, and Macdonald of Daleby. On the Prince's ship there sailed with him Lochgarry, John Roy Stuart, Dr. Cameron, and Lochiel. 'The gentlemen as well as commons were seen to weep, though they boasted of being soon back with an irresistible force,' says the newspaper of the day. For the greater part they never came back, never saw again the homes they loved so well. Most were to spend a life of hope deferred and of desperate longings for home, as dependents on a foreign Court. Dr. Cameron was ten years later taken prisoner in London and executed, the last man who suffered as a rebel; Lochiel died two years after he left Scotland, a heart-broken exile. ‘Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep sore for him that goeth away, for he shall return no more nor see his native country.’

TWO GREAT MATCHES

THE University matches, between the elevens of Oxford and Cambridge, are the most exciting that are played at Lord’s. The elevens have been so equal that neither University is ever more than one or two victories ahead of its opponent. The players are at their best for activity and strength, and the fielding is usually the finest that can anywhere be seen. But, of all University matches, the most famous are those of 1870 and of 1875, for these were the most closely contested.

In 1870 Cambridge had won for three years running. They had on their side Mr. Yardley, one among the three best gentlemen bats who ever played, the others being Dr. Grace and Mr. Alan Steel. In 1869, when Cambridge won by 58 runs, Mr. Yardley had only made 19 and 0. Mr. Dale and Mr. Money were the other pillars of Cambridge batting: they had Mr. Thornton too, the hardest of hitters, who hit over the pavilion (with a bat which did not drive!) when he played for Eton against Harrow. On the Oxford side were Mr. Tylecote (E. F. S.), a splendid bat, Mr. Ottaway, one of the most finished bats of his day, and Mr. Pauncefote. The Oxford team was unlucky in its bowling, as Mr. Butler had strained his arm. In one University match, Mr. Butler took all ten wickets in one innings. He was fast, with a high delivery, and wickets were not so good then as they are now. Mr. Francis was also an excellent bowler, not so fast as Mr. Butler; and Mr. Belcher, who bowled with great energy, but did not excel as a bat, was a useful man. For Cambridge, Mr. Cobden bowled fast, Mr. Ward was an excellent medium pace bowler, Mr. Money’s slows were sometimes fortunate, and Mr. Bourne bowled slow round. Cambridge went in first, and only got 147. Mr. Yardley fell for 2, being caught by Mr. Butler off Mr. Francis. Mr. Scott’s 45 was the largest score, and Mr. Thornton contributed 17, while Mr. Francis and Mr. Belcher divided the wickets. Oxford was only 28 runs better than Cambridge, so that you might call it anybody’s match. A good stand was made for the first wicket, Mr. Fortescue getting 35, and Mr. Hadow 17, but there was no high scoring. Mr. Butler got 18, which is not a bad score for a bowler, but Mr. Stewart and Mr. Belcher, who followed him, got ducks, and clearly the tail was not strong in batting. The beginning of the Cambridge second innings was most flattering to Oxford. When the fifth wicket fell, Cambridge had but 40 runs, or twelve ‘on.’

Tobin and Money, Fryer and Scott had made but 8 among them, but Dale was in, and Yardley joined him. Mr. Dale was playing in perfect style, and he needed to do so, for Mr. Francis was bowling his best. Then came an hour and a half, or so, of sorrow for Oxford. Mr. Butler was tried, and bowled eight overs for 8 runs, but his arm was hurt, and he had to go off. He got Mr. Thornton's wicket, but Oxford were playing, as Tom Sayers fought, with a broken arm. Seven bowlers were put on, but the end of it was that, after making the first 100 recorded in these matches, Mr. Yardley sent a hard hit to Mr. Francis, who caught and bowled him. Mr. Dale was splendidly caught at leg by Mr. Ottaway, off Mr. Francis, with one hand over the ropes. He got 67; there was but one other double figure, Mr. Thornton's 11.

Oxford had to make 178 to win, and 178 is never easy to get, especially in a University match, where *so much depends on it*, and men are often nervous, as you shall see. Mr. Hadow came to grief, but Mr. Ottaway and Mr. Fortescue were not nervous bats. Mr. Ward bowled beautifully, but they got 44 and 69; it was 72 for one wicket, and Oxford were buoyant. At 86, however, the second wicket fell, and E. F. S. joined Mr. Ottaway. He put on 29, and Ottaway's defence was like a stone wall. Finally Mr. Ward bowled Mr. Tylecote; 25 to get and seven wickets to get them. It seemed all over but shouting. Another wicket fell for 1; 24 to get, and six wickets to fall. Mr. Hill came in, and played like a printed book, while Mr. Ottaway was always there. He played a ball to short leg, and Mr. Fryer held it so low down that Mr. Ottaway appealed. I dare say Oxford men in the pavilion distinctly saw that ball touch the ground, but the umpire did not; 17 to get, and four wickets to fall; but the last two wickets had scored exactly nothing in the first innings. But Mr. Francis could bat, and he stayed while Mr. Hill made 12, when he was l. b. w. to Ward, for a single. Four runs to get, and three wickets to fall! 'Mr. Charles Marsham's face wore a look that his friends know well.' Mr. Butler came in; he scored well in the first innings, and he could hit. Then came a bye. Four to get and three wickets to fall. Mr. Hill hit the next square, good for a 4, but Mr. Bourne got at it, and only a single was run. Three to get and three wickets to fall. *We did not get them!* Mr. Cobden, who had not done much, took the ball. Mr. Hill made a single to cover point. The next ball, to Mr. Butler, was well up on the off stump. Mr. Butler drove at it, Mr. Bourne caught it, and Mr. Belcher walked in, 'rather pale,' says Mr. Lyttelton, and if so, it was unusual. Mr. Belcher was of a ruddy countenance. He was yorked! he took a yorker for a half volley. Let us pity Mr. Stewart. If he could escape that one ball, the odds were that Mr. Hill would make the runs next over. Mr. Pauncefote had told Mr. Stewart to keep his bat immovable in the block-hole, but — he did not. Cobden scattered his bails to the breezes, ‘and smash went Mr. Charles Marsham’s umbrella against the pavilion brickwork.’ Cambridge had won by two.

This is called Cobden’s year, and will be so called while cricket is played. But, in fact, Mr. Ward had taken six wickets for 29, and these were all the best bats.

THE BALL HIT THE MIDDLE STUMP

Mr. Butler’s revenge came next year. He took fifteen wickets, and made the winning hit. Oxford’s revenge came in 1875. In 1874 Cambridge was terribly beaten. They went in on a good wicket. Mr. Tabor, first man in, got 52, when a shower came. The first ball after the shower, Mr. Tabor hit at a dropping ball of Mr. Lang’s, and was bowled. The whole side were then demolished by Mr. Lang and Mr. Ridley, for 109, and 64 second innings, while Oxford got 265 first innings. In 1876 Oxford had Mr. Webbe, an admirable bat, as he is still; Mr. Lang, who had been known to score; Mr. Ridley, a cricketer of the first class; Mr. Royle, the finest field, with Mr. Jardine, ever seen; Mr. Game, who had not quite come into his powers as a hitter; and Mr. Grey Tylecote, a good all-round man; also Mr. Pulman, a sterling cricketer, and Mr. Buckland, a very useful player all round. Cambridge had Mr. George Longman, who could play anything but Mr. Ridley’s slows; Mr. Edward Lyttelton, one of the prettiest and most spirited bats in the world; Mr. A. P. Lucas, whom it were superfluous to praise; Mr. Sims, a hard hitter; Mr. W. J. Patterson, a renowned bat, and others. In bowling, Oxford had Mr. Ridley, whose slows were rather fast and near the ground. Being as tall as Mr. Spofforth, and following his ball far up the pitch, Mr. Ridley was alarming to the nervous batsman. He fielded his own bowling beautifully. Mr. Lang was a slow round-arm bowler with a very high delivery, and a valuable twist from either side. Mr. Buckland was afterwards better known as a bowler; Mr. Royle could also deliver a dangerous ball; the fast bowler was Mr. Foord Kelcey, but he, again, was lame, through an accident to his foot. For Cambridge Mr. Sharpe and Mr. Sims bowled. Lang and Webbe went to the wicket for Oxford, and made a masterly stand, the ball being cut and driven to the ropes in all directions. Mr. Webbe got 55, Mr. Lang 45, while Mr. Ridley contributed 21, Mr. Pulman 25, and Mr. Buckland 22. The whole score was 200, 86 for the first wicket. Mr. Longman’s 40 was the best score for Cambridge, and Mr. Edward Lyttelton got 23; total 163. Mr. Lang got five wickets for 35, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Buckland, and Mr. Foord Kelcey divided the other four. In the second Oxford innings Mr. Sharpe got six wickets for 66, and the whole score was but 137, in which Mr. Pulman’s 30 was very useful; Mr. Royle, Mr. Game, and Mr. Webbe got 21, 22, and 21, and Mr. Grey Tylecote, not out, contributed an invaluable 12. The tail of the Cambridge side made 14 among them in the first innings, not an assortment of duck's eggs. Cambridge went in, with 175 to get, much like Oxford in 1870. An over was bowled before seven o'clock, and resulted in a four to leg. Sharpe and Hamilton, who went in last, first innings, went in first in the second, to avoid losing a good bat in the five minutes before drawing stumps. One doubts if it was worth Mr. Ridley's while to insist on that one over, but such is the letter of the law. The two victims, in any case, played rarely, Mr. Sharpe making 29 and Mr. Hamilton 11. Mr. Lucas, however, was bowled by Mr. Buckland for 5. Two for 26. Mr. Longman came in and drove off Mr. Lang and Mr. Ridley. Mr. Royle then took the ball, a fast change-bowler. He bowled three maidens, and then settled Mr. Sharpe (at 65), Mr. Blacker (at 67), and Mr. Longman at 76 (for 23), with a fine breaking shooter such as you seldom see now. Twenty years ago a large percentage of balls shot dead. Mr. Greenfield and Mr. Edward Lyttelton stuck together.

At 97, an awful yell went up; mid-on had missed Mr. Lyttelton, a low hard catch, but one which he would have taken nine times in ten. At 101, Mr. Campbell caught Mr. Greenfield off Mr. Royle, six down and 70 to get. Then Mr. Sims came in, and another yell was heard. Mid-on had given Mr. Lyttelton another let-off, an easy thing he might have held in his mouth. Mid-on wished that the earth would open and swallow him. Presently Mr. Lyttelton hit Mr. Buckland a beautiful skimming smack to square leg. Mr. Webbe was standing deeper, but, running at full speed along the ropes, sideways to the catch, he held it low down — a repetition of what he did unto Mr. Lyttelton when they played for Harrow and Eton. Mr. Lyttelton had scored 20, but not in his best manner. There were now three wickets to fall for 60; Oxford seemed to have the advantage. Sims and Patterson had added 14 (40 to win), when a heavy shower came down, lasted for an hour and a half, and left Oxford with a wet ball and a slippery ground. The rain, which favoured Oxford in 1874, when Cambridge collapsed, was now on the Cambridge side. Mr. Sims was determined to knock the runs off by a forcing game, and these were the right tactics. Then Ridley went on, and his first slow bowled Mr. Patterson clean. Mr. Macan came in, and got a single (13 to win). Then Mr. Sims hit Mr. Ridley over his head to the ropes for 4 (9 to win). Mr. Lang went on for Mr. Royle, a leg bye followed, and then a no-ball (7 to win). Mr. Lang then, in a moment of despair, as unusual measures were needed, bowled a full pitch right at Mr. Sims's head. Mr. Sims, naturally concluding that two more hits would finish the match, hit at it as hard as he could. Mr. Pulman was standing by the ropes 'in the country' and the ball soared towards him; would it cross the ropes? would Pulman reach it; he had a long way to run? He reached it, he held it, and back went Mr. Sims. There remained Mr. Smith, in the same historical position as Mr. Belcher. There were six runs to get, and Mr. Macan, his companion, a good bat, was not yet settled. Some one in the pavilion said, ‘His legs are trembling, Oxford wins.’ Mr. Smith, unlike Mr. Belcher, stopped two of Mr. Ridley’s slows, but not with enthusiasm. To the third he played slowly forward, the ball hit the middle stump, and Oxford won by six runs.

There was also a very good match in 1891. Cambridge was far the better team, and went in, second innings, for a small score. But Mr. Berkeley (left-hand medium) bowled so admirably that there were only two wickets to fall for the last run. Mr. Woods, however, was not nervous, and hit the first ball he received for 4 to the ropes. Still, I am inclined to think that, in these three matches, the bowling of Mr. Berkeley was the best, for he had very little encouragement, whereas, with 178 or so to get, a bowler has a good chance, and is on his mettle.

The moral is, don’t poke about in your block-hole, but hit, and, when you bowl in an emergency, aim at getting wickets by any means, rather than at keeping down runs.

THE STORY OF KASPAR HAUSER

ON May 28, 1828, the town of Nuremberg, in Bavaria, presented a singularly deserted appearance, as it was Whit-Monday, and most of the inhabitants were spending their holiday in the country. A cobbler, who lived in Umschlitt Square, was an exception to the general rule, but towards four o’clock he, too, thought that he would take a stroll outside the city walls. When he came out of his door his curiosity was excited by a strange figure, which was leaning, as if unable to support itself, against a wall near, and uttering a moaning sound. The figure was that of a young man of about seventeen, dressed in a grey riding suit, and wearing a pair of dilapidated boots; he held a letter in one hand.

The cobbler’s curiosity led him to approach the strange figure, which moaned some incoherent sounds, and held out the letter in its hand. This was addressed ‘To the Captain of the 4th squadron of the 6th regiment of dragoons now stationed at Nuremberg’; and, as he lived quite near, the cobbler thought the surest way of gratifying his own curiosity was to take the stranger there. The poor creature stumbled and shuffled along behind his guide, and reached the captain’s house quite worn out. The captain was not at home, but his servant, pitying the sufferings of the stranger, gave him a sack of straw to lie on in the stable, and brought him some bread and meat and beer. The meat and the beer he would not touch, but ate the bread greedily and drank some water; he then fell fast asleep. Towards eight o’clock the captain came home, and was told of his strange visitor, and of the letter he had brought with him. This letter was written in a feigned hand, and said that the writer, a poor labourer with ten children, had received the boy in 1812, and had kept him shut up in his house for sixteen years, not allowing him to see or know anything; that he could keep him no longer, and so sent him to the captain, who could make a soldier of him, hang him, or put him up the chimney, just as he chose. He added that the boy knew nothing and could tell nothing, but was quick at learning. Enclosed was a letter giving the date of the boy’s birth (April 30, 1812), and purporting to be written by the mother; but the writing, paper, and ink all showed that the two letters were by the same person.

The captain could make nothing of this mysterious letter, but went to the stable, where he found the stranger still asleep. After many pushes, kicks, and thumps he awoke. When asked his name and where he came from, he made some sounds, which were at last understood to be, ‘Want to be a soldier, as father was;’ ‘Don’t know,’ and ‘Horse home.’ These sentences he repeated over and over again like a parrot, and at last the captain decided to send his new recruit to the police office. Here he was asked his name, where he came from, &c., &c., but the result of the police inspector’s questioning was the same: the stranger repeated his three sentences, and at last, in despair of getting any sensible reply from him, he was put into a cell in the west tower of the prison where vagrants were kept. This cell he shared with another prisoner, a butcher boy, who was ordered to watch him carefully, as the police naturally suspected him of being an impostor. He slept soundly through the night and woke at sunrise. He spent the greater part of the day sitting on the floor taking no notice of anything, but at last the gaoler gave him a sheet of paper and a pencil to play with. These he seized with pleasure and carried them off to a seat; nor did he stop writing until he had covered the paper with letters and syllables, arranged just as they would be in a copy-book. Among the letters were three complete words, ‘Kaspar Hauser,’ and ‘reiter’ (horse soldier). ‘Kaspar Hauser’ was evidently his name, though he did not recognise it when called by it.

The news of the strange arrival spread through the city. The guard-house, where he spent part of the day, was thronged by a curious crowd, anxious to see this strange creature, who looked at things without seeing them, who could not bear a strong light, who loathed any food but bread and water, and who, parrot-like, repeated a couple of phrases which he evidently did not understand, and one word, ‘horse,’ to which he seemed to attach some meaning. What they saw was a youth of about seventeen, with fair hair and blue eyes, the lower part of his face slightly projecting like a monkey’s. He was four feet nine inches in height, broad-shouldered, with tiny hands and delicate little feet, which had never worn shoes nor been put to their natural use, for the soles were as soft as a baby’s. He was dressed in grey riding-breeches, a round jacket, which had been made out of a frock-coat by cutting off the skirts, and wore a round felt hat bound with red leather. In his pockets were some rags, some tracts, a rosary, and a paper of gold sand.

Everyone who saw him and watched him came to the same conclusion, that his mind was that of a child of two or three, while his body was nearly grown up; and yet he was not half-witted, because he immediately began to pick up words and phrases, had a wonderful memory, and never forgot a face he had once seen, or the name which belonged to it. During the next two or three weeks he spent part of every day in the guard-room; part with the family of the gaoler, whose children taught him to talk and to walk as they did their own baby sister. He was not afraid of anything; swords were whirled round his head without his paying any attention to them; he stretched out his hand to the flame of a lighted candle, and cried when it burnt him, and when he saw his face in a looking-glass, looked behind it for the other person. He was particularly pleased when anything bright or glittering was given to him. Whenever this happened he called out ‘Horse, horse,’ and made signs as if he wanted to hang it on to the neck of something. At last one of the policemen gave him a wooden horse, when his happiness was complete, and he spent hours sitting on the floor playing with this horse and the dozens of horses which were given to him by his visitors as soon as they heard of his liking for them.

Six or seven weeks passed in this way, and all this time the town council were discussing what they would do with him. At last they decided to adopt him as the ‘Child of Nuremberg,’ and to have him properly cared for and taught, so that, if possible, something of his past might be learned. He was taken away from the prison and put under the charge of Professor Daumer, whose interest in the youth led him to undertake the difficult task of developing his mind so that it might fit his body. The burgomaster issued a notice to the inhabitants that in future they would not be allowed to see Kaspar Hauser at all hours of the day, and that the police had orders to interfere if the curiosity of visitors led them to annoy Dr. Daumer and his household. He entered Dr. Daumer’s house on July 18, 1828, and during the next five months made such astonishing progress that the delight of his teacher knew no bounds. In order to satisfy public curiosity the burgomaster published, in July, a short account of Hauser’s previous life, gleaned from him by careful questioning. It was to this effect: —

‘He neither knows who he is nor where he came from, for it was only at Nuremberg that he came into the world. He always lived in a hole, where he sat on straw on the ground; he never heard a sound, nor saw any vivid light. He awoke and he slept, and awoke again; when he awoke he found a loaf of bread and a pitcher of water beside him. Sometimes the water tasted nasty and then he fell asleep again, and when he woke up found he had a clean shirt on; he never saw the face of the man who came to him. He had two wooden horses and some ribbons to play with; was never ill, never unhappy in his hole; once only the man struck him with a stick for making too much noise with his horses. One day the man came into his room and put a table over his feet; something white lay on the table, and on this the man made black marks with a pencil which he put into his fingers. This the man did several times, and when he was gone Kaspar imitated what he had done. At last he taught him to stand and to walk, and finally carried him out of his hole. Of what happened next Kaspar had no very clear idea, until he found himself in Nuremberg with the letter in his hand.’

At first sight this story seems quite impossible, but it is borne out by two or three things. Kaspar’s legs were deformed in just such a way as would happen in the case of a person who had spent years sitting on the ground; he never walked properly to the end, and had great difficulty in getting upstairs. His feet showed no signs of use, except the blisters made by his boots and his walk to Nuremberg; he could see in the dark easily and disliked light; and finally, for several months after he came to Nuremberg, he refused to eat anything but bread and water, and was, in fact, made quite ill by the smell of meat, beer, wine, or milk.

For the first four months of his stay with Daumer, his senses of sight, taste, hearing, and smell were very acute. He had got past the stage in which he disliked light, and could now see much further than most people by day, without, however, losing his power of seeing in the dark; at the same time he could not distinguish between a thing and a picture of that thing, and could not for a long time judge distances at all, for he saw everything flat. His favourite colours were red and yellow; black and green he particularly disliked; everything ugly was called green. He could not be persuaded that a ball did not roll because it wished to do so, or that his top did not spin of its own accord. For a long time he saw no reason why animals should not behave like human beings, and was much annoyed because the cat refused to sit up at table and to eat with its paws, blaming its disobedience in not doing as it was told. He further thought that a cow which had lain down in the road would do well to go home to bed if it were tired. His sense of smell was very keen, painfully so, in fact, for he was made quite ill by the smell of the dye in his clothes, the smell of paper, and of many other things which other people do not notice at all; while the smell of a sweep a hundred yards off on the other side of the road upset him for a week. On the other hand, he could distinguish the leaves of trees by their smell.

By November he had made sufficient progress to make it possible for Dr. Daumer to teach him other things besides the use of his senses: he was encouraged to write letters and essays, to use his hands in every way, to draw, to make paper-models, to dig in the garden, where he had a little plot of ground with his name in mustard and cress; in fact, to use his lately acquired knowledge. The great difficulty was to persuade him to eat anything but bread and water, but by slow degrees he learned to eat different forms of farinaceous food, gruel, bread and milk, rice, &c., into which a little gravy and meat was gradually introduced. By the following May he could eat meat without being made ill by it, but never drank anything but water, except at breakfast, when he had chocolate.

For the next eleven months he lived a happy, simple life with his friend and tutor, who mentions, however, that the intense acuteness of his senses was gradually passing away, but that he had still the charming, obedient, child-like nature which had won all hearts. In the summer, public interest was aroused by the news that Kaspar Hauser was writing his life, and the paper was eagerly looked forward to. All went well until October 17, when Kaspar was discovered senseless in a cellar under Dr. Daumer's house, with a wound in his forehead. He was carried upstairs and put to bed, when he kept on moaning, 'Man! man! — tell mother (Mrs. Daumer) — tell professor — man beat me — black sweep.' For some days he was too ill to give any account of his wound, but at last said, that he had gone downstairs and was suddenly attacked by a man with a black face, who hit him on the head; that he fell down, and when he got up the man was gone; that he went to look for Mrs. Daumer, and, as he could not find her, finally hid in the cellar to be quite safe. After this murderous attack it was no longer safe to leave him in Dr. Daumer's house, so when well again he was removed to the house of one of the magistrates, and constantly guarded by two policemen, without whom he never went out. He was not very happy here, and after some months was put under the charge of Herr von Tucher (June 1830), with whom he remained for eighteen months. At first the arrangement answered admirably; he was happy in his new home, his only trouble being that he was sent to the grammar school and put into one of the upper forms, where he had to learn Latin, a task which proved too hard for his brain. By this time his face had quite lost the brutish character it had when he came to Nuremberg, and its expression was pleasant, though rather sad. Unfortunately for himself, he was one of the sights of Nuremberg, was always introduced to any stranger of distinction who came to the town, and attracted even more attention than the kangaroo; so that even his warmest friends were obliged to admit that he was rather spoiled.

At the beginning of 1831, an Englishman, Lord Stanhope, came to Nuremberg, saw the foundling, was curiously interested in him, and wished to adopt him. Kaspar was very much flattered, and drew unfavourable comparisons between this Englishman who thought nothing too good for him, and his guardians, who were thinking of apprenticing him to a bookbinder. Lord Stanhope's kindness turned his head, and Herr von Tucher, after repeated remonstrances, resigned his guardianship in December 1831. With the full consent of the town council of Nuremberg, Lord Stanhope removed Kaspar to Ausbach, and placed him under the care of Dr. Mayer. It was generally supposed that this was only preparatory to taking him to England. Ample funds were provided for his maintenance, but the journey to England was again and again put off; and at last there were signs that Lord Stanhope was not quite satisfied with his new plaything. So much had been said about Kaspar's cleverness, that his new teachers were disappointed to find that his acquirements were about those of a boy of eight. They accused him of laziness and of deceit; and he, finding himself suspected and closely questioned as to everything he did, took refuge in falsehood. At last a government clerkship of the lowest class was procured for him, but great complaints were made of his inattention to his duties (mainly copying); he was unhappy, and, when on a visit to Nuremberg in the summer, made plans for the happy time when he should be able to come back and live with his friends there. For the people of Ausbach, though making him one of the shows of the place, do not seem to have had that perfect belief in him shown by his earlier friends; while his new guardians expected a great deal too much from him. His chief friend in Ausbach was the clergyman who had prepared him for confirmation, who noticed, in November 1833, that he was very much depressed; but this passed away. On the afternoon of December 14, Kaspar came to call on the clergyman's wife, and was particularly happy and bright. Three hours afterwards he staggered into his tutor's house, holding his hand to his side, gasping out 'Garden — man — stabbed — give purse — let it drop — come—' and dragged the astonished Dr. Mayer off to a public garden, where a little purse was found on the ground. In it was a piece of paper, on which was written backwards in pencil these lines: 'I come from the Bavarian frontier. I will even tell you my name, "M. L. O."'

Kaspar was taken home and put to bed, when it was discovered that there was a deep stab in his left side. For some hours he was too ill to be questioned, but on the 15th he was able to tell his story. On the 14th, as he was coming out of the government buildings to go home to dinner, he was accosted by a man who promised to tell him who his parents were, if he would come to a spot in the public gardens. He refused, as he was going home to dinner, but made an appointment for that afternoon. After dinner he called on the clergyman's wife, and then went to the gardens, where he found the man waiting for him. The man led him to the Uz monument, which was at a little distance from the main path, and shut in by trees. Here he made him take a solemn oath of secrecy and handed him the little purse, which Kaspar, in his hurry to seize it, let drop. As he stooped to pick it up he was stabbed, and when he lifted himself up the stranger was gone. Then he ran home.

For two days he was not supposed to be in any danger, but fever set in; the doctors gave no hope of his recovery, and on the 17th he died.

His death caused great excitement, not only in Ausbach and Nuremberg, but throughout all Germany. The question as to whether he was an impostor or not was hotly debated; those who favoured the former theory insisting that he had killed himself accidentally when he only meant to wound himself and so excite sympathy. Some of the doctors declared, however, that that was quite impossible, for the wound was meant to kill, and could only have been self-inflicted by a left-handed person of great strength, for it had pierced through a padded coat. A large reward (1,200*l.*) was offered for the capture of the assassin, but in vain; and the spot of the murder was marked by an inscription in Latin:

HIC
OCCULTUS
OCCULTO
OCCISUS EST

(Here the Mystery was mysteriously murdered).

The same idea is repeated on his tombstone. ‘Here lies K. H., the riddle of the age. His birth was unknown, his death mysterious.’

His death was the signal for a violent paper-war between his friends and his enemies. It raged hotly for years; but his friends have never succeeded in proving who he was; why, after having been shut up for so long, he was at last set free; or why his death was, after all, necessary; while his enemies have utterly failed to prove that he was an impostor.

AN ARTIST’S ADVENTURE

NEARLY four hundred years ago, a boy was born in Italy who grew up to be one of the most accomplished artists of his own or any other age. Besides excelling as a sculptor, modeller, and medallist, he was a musician, an author, and an admirable swordsman; and popes, kings, and other great princes eagerly employed him, and vied with each other to secure his services. His name was Benvenuto Cellini.

Under Pope Clement VII. he took part in the defence of the Castle of St. Angelo, when it was besieged by the Constable de Bourbon, and the Pope reposed such confidence in Cellini that he was entrusted with the task of removing all the gems in the treasury from their settings, and concealing the stones in the thick folds of his clothing. However, I am not going to enlarge on Benvenuto’s many talents, but to tell you of a wonderful adventure which befell him in the very Castle of St. Angelo he had helped to defend.

Those were lawless days, and Cellini was a man of fiery temper, to whom blows came more naturally than patience and forbearance. So it came to pass that, being told that a certain goldsmith named Pompeo had been spreading false reports about him, Benvenuto fell upon him one fine day in the very midst of Rome, and promptly stabbed him to death.

This might possibly have been overlooked, but a workman, jealous of Cellini’s success and reputation, accused the artist to the reigning Pope, Paul III., of having purloined some of the jewels entrusted to his care during the siege, and Paul was not to be trifled with where the affairs of the treasury were concerned. Moreover, a near relation of the Pope’s was Cellini’s sworn enemy, and this sufficed to seal his fate.

So, when taking a walk one morning, Benvenuto suddenly found himself face to face with Crespino, the sheriff, attended by his band of constables. Crespino advanced, saying, ‘You are the Pope’s prisoner.’

‘Crespino,’ exclaimed Benvenuto, ‘you must take me for some one else.’

‘No, no,’ replied Crespino, ‘I know you perfectly, Benvenuto, and I have orders to carry you to the Castle of St. Angelo, where great nobles and men of talent like yourself are sent.’

Then he politely begged Benvenuto to give up his sword, and led him off to the Castle, where he was locked up in a room above the keep.

It was easy enough for Benvenuto to refute the accusations brought against him; nevertheless he was kept prisoner, in spite of the intervention of the French ambassador, who demanded his liberty in the name of Francis I.

The governor of the Castle was, like Cellini, a Florentine, and at first showed himself full of kind attentions towards his countryman, allowing him a certain amount of liberty on parole, within the Castle walls. Growing suspicious later, he kept his prisoner closer, but after a time he restored him to comparative liberty.

When Benvenuto found how changeable the governor’s humour was, he set himself to think over matters seriously. ‘For,’ he reflected, ‘should a fresh fit of anger or suspicion cause him to confine me more strictly, I should feel myself released from my word, and it may be as well to be prepared.’

Accordingly he ordered some new coarse linen sheets to be brought him, but when soiled he did not send them back. When his servants asked for the sheets so as to have them washed he bade them say no more, as he had given them to one of the poor soldiers on guard, who would be sure to get into trouble if the matter were known. By degrees he emptied the straw out of his mattress, burning a little of it at a time in his fireplace, and replacing it with the sheets, which he cut into strips some inches wide. As soon as he thought these strips were long enough for his purpose, he told his servants that he had given all the sheets away, and that in future they had better bring him finer linen, which he would be sure to return.

Now it so happened that every year the governor was subject to a most distressing illness, which, for the time being, entirely deprived him of his reason. When it began to come on, he would talk and chatter incessantly. Each year he had some fresh hallucination, at one time fancying himself an oil-jar, at another a frog, and skipping about like one. Again, another time, he declared he was dead, and wished to be buried; and so, year by year, he was the victim of some new delusion. This year he imagined he was a bat, and as he walked about he uttered little half-smothered cries like a bat, and flapped his hands and moved his body as though about to fly. His faithful old servants and his doctors noticed this, and, thinking change of ideas and variety of conversation might do him good, they frequently fetched Benvenuto to entertain him.

One day the governor asked Benvenuto whether it had ever occurred to him to desire to fly, and; on being answered in the affirmative, he inquired further how he should set about it.

Benvenuto replied that the only flying creature it would be at all possible to imitate artificially was the bat, on which the poor man cried out, ‘True, true, that’s it, that’s the thing.’ Then turning round he said, ‘Benvenuto, if you had everything you required for it, do you think you could fly?’

‘Oh, yes,’ said the artist; ‘if you will only leave me free to do it, I will engage to make a pair of wings of fine waxed cloth, and to fly from here to Prati with them.’

‘And I, too,’ exclaimed the governor; ‘I could do it too, but the Pope has ordered me to keep you like the apple of his eye, and as I strongly suspect you’re a cunning fellow, I shall lock you well up and give you no chance of flying.’

Thereupon, and in spite of all Benvenuto’s entreaties and protestations, the governor ordered him to be taken back to prison and more carefully guarded than ever.

Seeing he could not help himself, Cellini exclaimed before the officers and attendants: ‘Very well! lock me up and keep me safe, for I give you due warning I mean to escape in spite of everything.’

No sooner was he shut up in his cell than he fell to turning over in his mind how this escape could be made, and began minutely examining his prison, and, after discovering what he thought would be a sure way of getting out, he considered how best he might let himself down from the top of this enormous donjon tower, which went by the name of ‘Il Mastio.’ He began by measuring the length of the linen strips, which he had cut and joined firmly together so as to form a sort of rope, and he thought there would be enough for his purpose. Next, he armed himself with a pair of pincers which he had taken from one of his guards who was fond of carpentering, and who, amongst his tools, had a particularly large and strong pair of pincers, which appeared so useful to Benvenuto that he abstracted them, and hid them in his mattress.

As soon as he thought himself safe from interruption, he began to feel about for the nails in the ironwork of the door, but owing to its immense thickness they were by no means easy to get at. However, he managed at length to extract the first nail. Then came the question, how to conceal the hole left behind. This he contrived by making a paste of rusty scrapings and wax, which he modelled into an exact representation of the head of a nail, and in this way he replaced each nail he drew by a facsimile of its head in wax.

Great care was required to leave just a sufficient number of nails to keep the ironwork and hinges in their places. But Benvenuto managed this by first drawing the nails, cutting them as short as he dared, and then replacing them in such a way as to keep things together, and yet to allow of their being easily drawn out at the last moment.

All this was by no means easy to contrive, for the governor was constantly sending some one to make sure that his prisoner was safe.

The two men who were specially charged with this duty were rough and rude, and one of them in particular took pains to inspect the whole room carefully every evening, paying special attention to the locks and hinges.

Cellini lived in constant terror lest it should occur to them to examine his bedding, where, besides the pincers, he had hidden a long sharp dagger and some other instruments, as well as his long strips of linen. Each morning he swept out and dusted his room and carefully made his bed, ornamenting it with flowers which he got the soldier from whom he had taken the pincers to bring him. When his two warders appeared he desired them on no account to go near or touch his bed, for fear of soiling or disturbing it. Sometimes, in order to tease him, they would touch it, and then he would shout: ‘Ah! you dirty rascals! Just let me get at one of your swords and see how I’ll punish you! How dare you touch the bed of such a man as I am? Little care I about risking my own life, for I should be certain to take yours. Leave me in peace with my grief and trouble, or I will show you what a man can do when driven to desperation!’

These words were repeated to the governor, who forbade the gaolers touching Cellini’s bed, or entering his room armed. The bed once safe, he felt as if all else must go right.

One night the governor had a worse attack than ever, and in a fit of madness kept repeating that he certainly was a bat, and that, should they hear of Benvenuto’s escape, they must let him fly off too, as he was sure he could fly better at night and would overtake the fugitive. ‘Benvenuto,’ said he, ‘is but a sham bat, but as I am a real bat, and he has been given into my keeping, I shall soon catch him again, depend on it.’

This bad attack lasted several nights, and the Savoyard soldier, who took an interest in Benvenuto, reported to him that the servants were quite worn out watching their sick master. Hearing this, Cellini resolved to attempt his escape at once, and set hard to work to complete his preparations. He worked all night, and about two hours before dawn he, with much care and trouble, removed the hinges from the door. The casing and bolts prevented his opening it wide, so he chipped away the woodwork, till at length he was able to slip through, taking with him his linen ropes, which he had wound on two pieces of wood like two great reels of thread.

Having passed the door he turned to the right of the tower, and having removed a couple of tiles, he easily got out on the roof. He wore a white doublet and breeches and white boots, into one of which he had slipped his dagger. Taking one end of his linen rope, he now proceeded to hook it carefully over an antique piece of tile which was firmly cemented into the wall. This tile projected barely four fingers’ breadth, and the band hooked over it as on a stirrup. When he had made it firm he prayed thus: ‘O Lord, my God, come now to my aid, for Thou knowest that my cause is righteous, and that I am aiding myself.’ Then he gently let himself slide down the rope till he reached the ground. There was no moon, but the sky was clear, and once down he gazed up at the tower from which he had made so bold a descent, and went off in high spirits, thinking himself at liberty, which indeed was by no means the case.

On this side of the Castle the governor had had two high walls built to inclose his stables and his poultry-yard, and these walls had gates securely bolted and barred on the outside.

In despair at these obstacles Benvenuto roamed about at random, cursing his bad luck, when suddenly he hit his foot against a long pole which lay hidden in the straw. With a good deal of effort he managed to raise it against the wall and to scramble up to the top. Here he found a sharply sloping coping stone which made it impossible to draw the pole up after him, but he fastened a portion of the second linen band to it, and by this means let himself down as he had done outside the donjon tower.

By this time Benvenuto was much exhausted, and his hands were all cut and bleeding; however, after a short rest he climbed the last inclosure, and was just in the act of fastening his rope to a battlement, when, to his horror, he saw a sentinel close to him. Desperate at this interruption, and at the thought of the risk he ran, he prepared to attack the sentry, who, however, seeing a man advance on him with a drawn dagger and determined air, promptly took to his heels, and Benvenuto returned to his rope. Another guard was near, but, hoping not to have been observed, the fugitive secured his band and hastily slid down it. Whether it was fatigue, or that he thought himself nearer the ground than he really was, it is impossible to say, but he loosened his hold, and fell, hitting his head, and lay stretched on the ground for more than an hour.

The sharp freshness of the air just before sunrise revived him, but his memory did not return immediately, and he fancied his head had been cut off and that he was in purgatory. By degrees, as his senses returned, he realised that he was no longer in the Castle, and remembered what he had done. He put his hands to his head and withdrew them covered with blood, but on carefully examining himself he found he had no serious wound, though on attempting to move he discovered that his right leg was broken. Nothing daunted, he drew from his boot his poniard with its sheath, which had a large ball at the end; the pressure of this ball on the bone had caused the fracture. He threw away the sheath, and cutting off a piece of the remaining linen band with his dagger, he bound up his leg as best he could, and then, dagger in hand, proceeded to drag himself along on his knees towards the gate of the town. It was still closed, but seeing one stone near the bottom, which did not look very huge, he tried to displace it. After repeated efforts it shook, and at length yielded to his efforts, so, forcing it out, he squeezed himself through.

He had barely entered Rome when he was attacked by a band of savage dogs, who bit and worried him cruelly. He fought desperately with his dagger, and gave one dog such a stab that it fled howling, followed by the rest of the pack, leaving Benvenuto free to drag himself as best he could towards St. Peter's.

By this time it was broad daylight, and there was much risk of discovery; so, seeing a water-carrier passing with his train of asses laden with jars full of water, Benvenuto hailed him and begged he would carry him as far as the steps of St. Peter's.

'I am a poor fellow,' said he, 'who have broken my leg trying to get out of the window of a house where I went to see my lady-love. As the house belongs to a great family, I much fear I shall be cut to pieces if I am found here; so pray help me off and you shall have a gold crown for your pains,' and Benvenuto put his hand to his purse, which was well filled.

The water-carrier readily consented, and carried him to St. Peter's, where he left him on the steps, from whence Benvenuto began to crawl towards the palace of Duke Ottavio, whose wife, a daughter of the emperor's, had brought many of Cellini's friends from Florence to Rome in her train. She was well disposed towards the great artist, and he felt that beneath her roof he would be in safety. Unluckily, as he struggled along, he was seen and recognised by a servant of Cardinal Cornaro's, who had apartments in the Vatican. The man hurried to his master's room, woke him up, and cried: 'Most reverend lord, Benvenuto is below; he must have escaped from the Castle, and is all bleeding and wounded. He appears to have broken his leg, and we have no idea where he is going.'

'Run at once,' exclaimed the Cardinal, 'and fetch him here, to my room.'

When Benvenuto appeared the Cardinal assured him he need have no fears, and sent off for the first surgeons in Rome to attend to him. Then he shut him up in a secret room, and went off to try and obtain his pardon from the Pope.

Meantime a great commotion arose in Rome, for the linen ropes dangling from the great tower had attracted notice, and all the town was running out to see the strange sight. At the Vatican Cardinal Cornaro met a friend, to whom he related all the details of Benvenuto's escape, and how he was at that very moment hidden in a secret chamber. Then they both went to the Pope, who, as they threw themselves at his feet, cried, 'I know what you want with me.'

'Holy Father,' said the Cardinal's friend, 'we entreat you to grant us the life of this poor man. His genius deserves some consideration; and he has just shown an almost superhuman amount of courage and dexterity. We do not know what may be the crimes for which your Holiness has seen fit to imprison him, but if they are pardonable we implore you to forgive him.'

The Pope, looking somewhat abashed, replied that he had imprisoned Benvenuto for being too presumptuous; ‘however,’ he added, ‘I am well aware of his talents and am anxious to keep him near me, and am resolved to treat him so well that he shall have no desire to return to France. I am sorry he is ill; bid him recover quickly, and we will make him forget his past sufferings.’

I am sorry to say the Pope was not so good as his words, for Benvenuto’s enemies plotted against him, and after a time he was once more shut up in his former prison, from which, however, he was eventually delivered at the urgent request of the King of France, who warmly welcomed the great artist to his Court, where he spent some years in high honour.

THE TALE OF ISANDHLWANA AND RORKE’S DRIFT

ALTHOUGH but fourteen years have gone by since 1879, perhaps some people, if they chance to be young, have forgotten about the Zulus, and the story of our war with them; so, before beginning the tale of Isandhlwana and Rorke’s Drift, it may be worth while to tell of these matters in a few words.

The Zulus live in South-Eastern Africa. Originally they were not one tribe but many, though the same blood was in them all. Nobody knows whence they came or who were their forefathers; but they seem to have sprung from an Arab or Semitic stock, and many of their customs, such as the annual feast of the first fruits, resemble those of the Jews. At the beginning of this century there arose a warrior king, called Chaka, who gathered up the scattered tribes of the Zulus as a woodman gathers sticks, and as of the frail brushwood the woodman makes a stout faggot, that none can break, so of these tribes Chaka fashioned a nation so powerful that no other black people could conquer it.

The deeds of Chaka are too many to write of here. Seldom has there been a monarch, black or white, so terrible or so absolute, and never perhaps has a man lived more wicked or more clever. Out of ‘nothing,’ as the Kafirs say, he made the Amazulu, or the ‘people of heaven,’ so powerful, that before he died he could send out an army of a hundred thousand men to destroy those whom he feared or hated or whose cattle he coveted. These soldiers were never beaten; if they dared to turn their back upon an enemy, however numerous, they were killed when the battle was done, so that soon they learned to choose death with honour before the foe in preference to death with shame at the hands of the executioner. Where Chaka’s armies went they conquered, till the country was swept of people for hundreds of miles in every direction. At length, after he had killed or been the cause of the violent death of more than a million human beings, in the year 1828 Chaka’s own hour came; for, as the Zulu proverb says, ‘the swimmer is at last borne away by the stream.’ He was murdered by the princes of his house and his body servant Umbopo or Mopo. But as he lay dying beneath their spear thrusts, it is said that the great king prophesied of the coming of white men who should conquer the land that he had won.

‘What,’ he said, ‘do you slay me, my brothers — dogs of mine own house whom I have fed, thinking to possess the land? I tell you that I hear the sound of running feet, the feet of a great white people, and they shall stamp you flat, children of my father.'

After the death of Chaka his brother Dingaan reigned who had murdered him. In due course he was murdered also, and his brother Panda succeeded to the throne. Panda was a man of peace, and the only one of the four Zulu kings who died a natural death; for though it is not commonly known, the last of these kings, our enemy Cetywayo, is believed to have met his end by poison. In 1873, Cetywayo was crowned king of Zululand in succession to his father Panda on behalf of the English Government by Sir Theophilus Shepstone. He remained a firm friend to the British till Sir Bartle Frere declared war on him in 1879. Sir Bartle Frere made war upon the Zulus because he was afraid of their power, and the Zulus accepted the challenge because we annexed the Transvaal and would not allow them to fight the Boers or the Swazis. They made a brave resistance, and it was not until there were nearly as many English soldiers in their country armed with breech-loading rifles as they had effective warriors left alive in it, for the most part armed with spears only, that at length we conquered them. But their heart was never in the war; they defended their country against invasion indeed, but by Cetywayo's orders they never attacked ours. Had they wished to do so, there was nothing to prevent them from sweeping the outlying districts of Natal and the Transvaal after our first great defeat at Isandhlwana, but they spared us.

And now I have done with dull explanations, and will go on to tell of the disaster at Isandhlwana or the 'place of the Little Hand,' and of the noble defence of Rorke's Drift.

On the 20th of January, 1879, one of the British columns that were invading Zululand broke its camp on the left bank of the Buffalo river, and marched by the road that ran from Rorke's Drift to the Indeni forest, encamping that evening under the shadow of a steep-cliffed and lonely mountain, called Isandhlwana. This force was known as number 3 column, and with it went Lord Chelmsford, the general in command of the troops. The buildings at Rorke's Drift were left in charge of sixty men of the 2nd battalion 24th regiment under the late Colonel Bromhead, then a lieutenant, and some volunteers and others, the whole garrison being commanded, on the occasion of the attack, by Lieutenant Chard, R.E.

On January 21, Colonel, then Major, Dartnell, the officer in command of the Natal Mounted Police and volunteers, who had been sent out to effect a reconnaissance of the country beyond Isandhlwana, reported that the Zulus were in great strength in front of him. Thereupon Lord Chelmsford ordered six companies of the 2nd battalion 24th regiment, together with four guns and the Mounted Infantry, to advance to his support. This force, under the command of

Colonel Glyn, and accompanied by Lord Chelmsford himself, left Isandhlwana at dawn on the 22nd, a despatch having first been sent to Lieut.-Colonel Durnford, R.E., who was in command of some five hundred friendly Natal Zulus, about half of whom were mounted and armed with breech-loaders, to move up from Rorke's Drift and strengthen the camp, which was now in charge of Lieut.-Colonel Pulleine of the 1st battalion 24th regiment. Orders were given to Colonel Pulleine by the general that he was to 'defend' the camp.

About ten o'clock that morning Colonel Durnford arrived at Isandhlwana and took over the command of the camp, which was then garrisoned by seven hundred and seventy-two European and eight hundred and fifty-one native troops, in all one thousand six hundred and twenty-three men, with two guns. Little did Lord Chelmsford and those with him guess in what state they would find that camp when they returned to it some eighteen hours later, or that of those sixteen hundred men the great majority would then be dead!

Meanwhile a Zulu 'impi' or army, numbering about twenty thousand men, or something more than one-third of King Cetywayo's entire strength, had moved from the Upindo Hill on the night of January 21, and taken up its position on a stony plain, a mile and a half to the east of Isandhlwana. The impi was made up of the Undi regiment, about three thousand strong, that formed its breast, or centre, the Nokenke and Umcityu regiments, seven thousand strong, that formed its right wing or horn, and the Imbonanbi and Nkobamikosi regiments, ten thousand strong, forming its left horn or wing. That night the impi slept upon its spears and watched in silence, lighting no fires. The king had reviewed it three days previously, and his orders to it were that it should attack number 3 column, and drive it back over the Buffalo, but it had no intention of giving battle on the 22nd, for the state of the moon was not propitious, so said the 'doctors'; moreover, the soldiers had not been 'moutied,' that is, sprinkled with medicines to 'put a great heart' into them and ensure their victory. The intention of the generals was to attack the camp at dawn on the 23rd; and the actual engagement was brought about by an accident.

Before I tell of this or of the fight, however, it may be as well to describe how these splendid savages were armed and disciplined. To begin with, every corps had a particular head-dress and fighting shields of one colour, just as in our army each regiment has its own facings on the tunics. These shields are cut from the hides of oxen, and it is easy to imagine what a splendid sight was presented by a Zulu impi twenty thousand strong, divided into several regiments, one with snow-white shields and tall cranes' feathers on their heads, one with coal-black shields and black plumes, and others with red and mottled shields, and bands of fur upon their foreheads. In their war with the English many of the Zulus were armed with muzzle-loading guns and rifles of the worst description, of which they could make little use, for few of them were trained to handle firearms. A much more terrible weapon in their hands, and one that did nearly all the execution at Isandhlwana, was the broad-bladed short-shafted stabbing assegai. This shape of spear was introduced by the great king Chaka, and if a warrior cast it at an enemy, or even chanced to lose it in a fight, he was killed when the fray was over. Before Chaka's day the Zulu tribes used light assegais, which they threw at the enemy from a distance, and thus their ammunition was sometimes spent before they came to close quarters with the foe.

Among the Zulus every able-bodied man was enrolled in one or other of the regiments — even the girls and boys were made into regiments or attached to them, and though these did not fight, they carried the mats and cooking pots of the army, and drove the cattle for the soldiers to eat when on the march. Thus it will be seen that this people differed from any other in the world in modern days, for whereas even the most courageous and martial of mankind look upon war as an exceptional state of affairs and an evil only to be undertaken in self-defence, or perhaps for purposes of revenge and aggrandisement, the Zulus looked on peace as the exceptional state, and on warfare as the natural employment of man. Chaka taught them that lesson, and they had learnt it well, and so it came about that Cetywayo was forced to allow the army to fight with us when Sir Bartle Frere gave them an opportunity of doing so, since their hearts were sick with peace, and for years they had clamoured to be allowed to 'wash their spears,' saying that they were no longer men, but had become a people of women. Indeed, had the king not done so, they would have fought with each other. It is a terrible thing to be obliged, year after year, to keep quiet an army of some fifty or sixty thousand men who are too proud to work and clamour daily to be led to battle that they may die as their fathers died. We may be sure that the heart of many a Zulu warrior beat high as in dead silence he marched that night from the heights of Upindo towards the doomed camp of Isandhlwana, since at last he was to satisfy the longing of his blood, and fight to the death with a foe whom he knew to be worthy of him.

Doubtless, also, the hearts of the white men beat high that night as they gathered round the fires of their camp, little knowing that thousands of Zulu eyes were watching them from afar, or that the black rock looming above them was destined to stand like some great tombstone over their bones for ever. Englishmen also are a warlike race, and there was honour and advancement to be won, and it would seem that but few of those who marched into the Zulu country guessed how formidable was the foe with whom they had to deal. A horde of half-naked savages armed with spears did not strike English commanders, imperfectly acquainted with the history and nature of those savages, as particularly dangerous enemies. Some there were, indeed, who, having spent their lives in the country, knew what was to be expected, but they were set down as ‘croakers,’ and their earnest warnings of disaster to come were disregarded.

Now let us return to the camp. It will be remembered that Colonel Glyn’s force, accompanied by General Lord Chelmsford, had left at dawn. About eight o’clock a picket placed some 1,500 yards distant reported that Zulus were approaching from the north-east. This information was despatched by mounted messengers to Colonel Glyn’s column.

Lieut.-Colonel Durnford, with his mounted natives and a rocket battery arriving from Rorke’s Drift about 10 A.M., took over the command of the camp from Colonel Pulleine. According to the evidence of Lieutenant Cochrane given at the court of inquiry, Colonel Pulleine thereupon stated to Colonel Durnford the orders that he had received, to ‘defend the camp,’ and it would appear that either then or subsequently some altercation took place between these two officers. In the issue, however, Colonel Durnford advanced his mounted force to ascertain the enemy’s movements, and directed a company of the 1st battalion 24th regiment to occupy a hill about 1,200 yards to the north of the camp.

Other companies of the 24th were stationed at various points at a distance from the camp. It may be well to explain here, that to these movements of troops, which, so far as can be ascertained, were made by the direct orders of Colonel Durnford, must be attributed the terrible disaster that followed. There are two ways of fighting a savage or undisciplined enemy; the scientific way, such as is taught in staff colleges, and the unscientific way that is to be learned in the sterner school of experience. We English were not the first white men who had to deal with the rush of the Zulu impis. The Boers had encountered them before, at the battle of the Blood River, and armed only with muzzle-loading ‘roers,’ or elephant guns, despite their desperate valour, had worsted them, with fearful slaughter. But they did not advance bodies of men to this point or to that, according to the scientific method; they drew their ox waggons into a square, lashing them together with ‘reims’ or hide-ropes, and from behind this rough defence, with but trifling loss to themselves, rolled back charge after charge of the warriors of Dingaan.

Had this method been followed by our troops at the battle of Isandhlwana, who had ample waggons at hand to enable them to execute the manœuvre, had the soldiers even been collected in a square beneath the cliff of the mountain, it cannot be doubted but that, armed as they were with breech-loaders, they would have been able to drive back not only the impi sent against them, but, if necessary, the entire Zulu army. Indeed, that this would have been so is demonstrated by what happened on the same day at Rorke’s Drift, where a hundred and thirty men repelled the desperate assaults of three or four thousand. Why, then, it may be asked, did Colonel Durnford, a man of considerable colonial experience, adopt the more risky, if the more scientific, mode of dealing with the present danger, and this in spite of Colonel Pulleine’s direct intimation to him that his orders were ‘to defend the camp’? As it chances, the writer of this account, who knew Colonel Durnford well, and has the greatest respect for the memory of that good officer, and honourable gentleman, is able to suggest an answer to the problem which at the time was freely offered by the Natal colonists. A few years before, it happened that Colonel Durnford was engaged upon some military operations against a rebellious native chief in Natal. Coming into contact with the followers of this chief, in the hope that matters might be arranged without bloodshed, Durnford ordered the white volunteers under his command not to fire, with the result that the rebels fired, killing several of his force and wounding him in the arm. This incident gave rise to an irrational indignation in the colony, and for a while he himself was designated by the ungenerous nickname of ‘Don’t fire Durnford.’ It is alleged, none can know with what amount of truth, that it was the memory of this undeserved insult which caused Colonel Durnford to insist upon advancing the troops under his command to engage the Zulus in the open, instead of withdrawing them to await attack in the comparative safety of a ‘laager.’

The events following the advance of the various British companies at Isandhlwana are exceedingly difficult to describe in their proper order, since the evidence of the survivors is confused.

It would appear, however, that Durnford’s mounted Basutos discovered and fired on a portion of the Umcityu regiment, which, forgetting its orders, sprang up and began to charge. Thereon, accepting the position, the other Zulu regiments joined the movement. Very rapidly, and with the most perfect order, the impi adopted the traditional Zulu ox-head formation, namely, that of a centre and two horns, the centre representing the skull of the ox. In this order they advanced towards the English camp, slowly and without sound. Up to this time there had been no particular alarm in the camp. The day was bright and lovely, with a hot sun tempered by a gentle breeze that just stirred the tops of the grasses, and many men seem to have been strolling about quite unaware of their imminent danger, although orders were given to collect the transport oxen, which were at graze outside the camp; not for the purpose of inspanning the waggons, but to prevent them from being captured by the enemy. One officer (Captain, now Colonel, Essex) reports that after the company had been sent out, he retired to his tent to write letters, till, about twelve o’clock, a sergeant came to tell him that firing was to be heard behind a hill in face of the camp. He mounted a horse and rode up the slope, to find the company firing on a line of Zulus eight hundred paces away to their front. This line was about a thousand yards long, and shaped like a horn, tapering towards the point. It advanced slowly, taking shelter with great skill behind rocks, and opened a quite ineffective fire on the soldiers. Meanwhile the two guns were shelling the Zulu centre with great effect, the shells cutting lanes through their dense ranks, which closed up over the dead in perfect discipline and silence. The attack was now general, all the impi taking part in it except a reserve regiment that sat down upon the ground taking snuff, and never came into action, and the Undi corps, which moved off to the right with the object of passing round the north side of the Isandhlwana hill.

On came the Zulus in silence, and ever as they came the two horns crept further and further ahead of the black breast of their array. Hundreds of them fell beneath the fire of the breech-loaders, but they did not pause in their attack. Ammunition began to fail the soldiers, and orders having reached them — too late — to concentrate on the camp, they retired slowly to that position. Captain Essex also rode back, and assisted the quartermaster of the 24th to place boxes of ammunition in a mule cart, till presently the quartermaster was shot dead at his side. Now the horns or nippers of the foe were beginning to close on the doomed camp, and the friendly natives, who knew well what this meant, though as yet the white men had not understood their danger, began to steal away by twos and threes, and then, breaking into open rout, they rushed through the camp, seeking the waggon road to Rorke’s Drift.

Then at last the Zulu generals saw that the points of the horns had met behind the white men, and the moment was ripe. Abandoning its silence and slow advance, the breast of the impi raised the war-cry and charged, rolling down upon the red coats like a wave of steel. So swift and sudden was this last charge, that many of the soldiers had no time to fix bayonets. For a few moments the scattered companies held the impi back, and the black stream flowed round them, then it flowed *over* them, sweeping them along like human wreckage. In a minute the defence had become an utter rout. Some of the defenders formed themselves into groups and fought back to back till they fell where they stood, to be found weeks afterwards mere huddled heaps of bones. Hundreds of others fled for the waggon road, to find that the Undi regiment, passing round the Isandhlwana mountain, had occupied it already. Back they rolled from the hedge of Undi spears to fall upon the spears of the attacking regiments. One path of retreat alone remained, a dry and precipitous ‘donga’ or watercourse, and into this plunged a rabble of men, white and black, mules, horses, guns, and waggons.

Meanwhile the last act of the tragedy was being played on the field of death. With a humming sound such as might be made by millions of bees, the Zulu swarms fell upon those of the soldiers who remained alive, and, after a desperate resistance, stabbed them. Wherever the eye looked, men were falling and spears flashing in the sunshine, while the ear was filled with groans of the dying and the savage *S’gee S’gee* of the Zulu warriors as they passed their assegais through and through the bodies of the fallen. Many a deed of valour was done there as white men and black grappled in the death-struggle, but their bones alone remained to tell the tale of them. Shortly after the disaster, one of the survivors told the present writer of a duel which he witnessed between a Zulu and an officer of the 24th regiment. The officer having emptied his revolver, set his back against the wheel of a waggon and drew his sword. Then the Zulu came at him with his shield up, turning and springing from side to side as he advanced. Presently he lowered the shield, exposing his head, and the white man falling into the trap aimed a fierce blow at it. As it fell the shield was raised again, and the sword sank deep into its edge, remaining fixed in the tough ox-hide. This was what the Zulu desired; with a twist of his strong arm he wrenched the sword from his opponent’s hand, and in another instant the unfortunate officer was down with an assegai through his breast.

In a few minutes it was done, all resistance had been overpowered, the wounded had been murdered — for the Zulu on the war-path has no mercy — and the dead mutilated and cut open to satisfy the horrible native superstition. Then those regiments that remained upon the field began the work of plunder. Most of the bodies they stripped naked, clothing themselves in the uniforms of the dead soldiers. They stabbed the poor oxen that remained fastened to the ‘trek-tows’ of the waggons, and they drank all the spirits that they could find, some of them, it is said, perishing through the accidental consumption of the medical stores. Then, when the sun grew low, they retreated, laden with plunder, taking with them the most of their dead, of whom there are believed to have been about fifteen hundred, for the Martinis did their work well, and our soldiers had not died unavenged.

All this while Lord Chelmsford and the division which he accompanied were in ignorance of what had happened within a few miles of them, though rumours had reached them that a Zulu force was threatening the camp. The first to discover the dreadful truth was Commandant Lonsdale of the Natal Native Contingent. This officer had been ill, and was returning to camp alone, a fact that shows how little anything serious was expected. He reached it about the middle of the afternoon, and there was nothing to reveal to the casual observer that more than three thousand human beings had perished there that day. The sun shone, on the white tents and on the ox waggons, around and about which groups of red-coated men were walking, sitting, and lying. It did not chance to occur to him that those who were moving were Zulus wearing the coats of English soldiers, and those lying down, soldiers whom the Zulus had killed. As Commandant Lonsdale rode, a gun was fired, and he heard a bullet whizz past his head. Looking in the direction of the sound, he saw a native with a smoking rifle in his hand, and concluding that it was one of the men under his command who had discharged his piece accidentally, he took no more notice of the matter. Forward he rode, till he was within ten yards of what had been the headquarter tents, when suddenly out of one of them there stalked a great Zulu, bearing in his hand a broad assegai from which blood was dripping. Then his intelligence awoke, and he understood. The camp was in the possession of the enemy, and those who lay here and there upon the grass like holiday makers in a London park on a Sunday in summer, were English soldiers indeed, not living but dead.

Turning his horse, Commandant Lonsdale fled as swiftly as it could carry him. More than a hundred rifle-shots were fired after him, but the Zulu marksmanship was poor, and he escaped untouched. A while afterwards, a solitary horseman met Lord Chelmsford and his staff returning: he saluted, and said, ‘*The camp is in the possession of the enemy, sir!*’ None who heard those words will forget them, and few men can have experienced a more terrible shock than that which fell upon the English general in this hour.

Slowly, and with all military precaution, Lord Chelmsford and his force moved onward, till at length, when darkness had fallen, they encamped beneath the fatal hill of Isandhlwana. Here, momentarily expecting to be attacked, they remained all night amid the wreck, the ruin, and the dead, but not till the following dawn did they learn the magnitude of the disaster that had overtaken our arms. Then they saw, and in silence marched from that fatal field, heading for Rorke’s Drift, and leaving its mutilated dead to the vulture and the jackal.

Now let us follow the fate of the mob of fugitives, who, driven back from the waggon road by the Undi, plunged desperately into the donga near it, the sole avenue of retreat which had not been besieged by the foe, in the hope that they might escape the slaughter by following the friendly natives who were mixed up with them. How many entered on that terrible race for life is not known, but it is certain that very few won through. Indeed, it is said that, with the exception of some natives, no single man who was not mounted lived to pass the Buffalo River. For five miles or more they rode and ran over paths that a goat would have found it difficult to keep his footing on, while by them, and mixed up with them, went the destroying Zulus. Very soon the guns became fixed among the boulders, and one by one the artillerymen were assegaied. On went the survivors, hopeless yet hoping. Now a savage sprang on this man, and now on that; the assegai flashed up, a cry of agony echoed among the rocks, and a corpse fell heavily to the red earth. Still, those whom it pleased Providence to protect struggled forward, clinging to their horses' manes as they leaped from boulder to boulder, till at length they came to a cliff, beneath which the Buffalo rolled in flood. Down this cliff they slid and stumbled, few of them can tell how; then, driven to it by the pitiless spears, they plunged into the raging river. Many were drowned in its waters, some were shot in the stream, some were stabbed upon the banks, yet a few, clinging to the manes and tails of their horses, gained the opposite shore in safety.

Among these were two men whose memory their country will not willingly let die, who, indeed (it is the first time in our military history), have been decreed the Victoria Cross although they were already dead: Lieutenants Coghill and Melvill of the 24th regiment. One of these, Lieutenant Coghill, the writer of this sketch had the good fortune to know well. A kindlier-hearted and merrier young English gentleman never lived. Melvill and Coghill were swept away upon the tide of flight, down the dreadful path that led to Fugitives' Drift, but Melvill bore with him the colours of the 24th regiment that were in his charge as adjutant, not tied round his waist, as has been reported, but upon the pole to which they were attached. He arrived in safety at the river, but, owing to the loss of his horse, was unable to cross it, and took refuge upon a rock in mid-stream, still holding the colours in his hand. Coghill, whose knee was disabled by an accident and who had reached the Natal bank already, saw the terrible position of his friend and brother officer, and, though spears flashed about him and bullets beat the water like hail, with a courage that has rarely been equalled, he turned his horse and swam back to his assistance. The worst was over; safety lay before him, there behind him in the river was almost certain death; but this gallant gentleman heeded none of these things, for there also were the colours of his regiment and his drowning friend. Back he swam to the rock through the boiling current. Soon his horse was shot dead beneath him, yet, though none knows how, the two of them came safe to shore. The colours were lost indeed, for they could no longer carry them and live, but these never fell into the hands of their savage foes: days afterwards they were searched for and found in the bed of the river. Breathless, desperate, lamed, and utterly outworn, the two friends struggled up the bank and the hill beyond. But Zulus had crossed that stream as well as the fugitive Englishmen. They staggered forward for a few hundred yards, then, unable to go further, the friends stood back to back and the foe closed in upon them. There they stood, and there, fighting desperately, the heroes died. Peace be with them in that land to which they have journeyed, and among men, immortal honour to their names!

They sold their lives dearly, for several Zulus were found lying about their bodies.

About forty white men lived to cross the river at Fugitives' Drift, and these, almost the only English survivors of the force at Isandhlwana, rode on, still followed by Zulus, to the provision depôt at Helpmakaar some fifteen miles away, where they mustered and entrenched themselves as best they were able, expecting to be attacked at any moment. But no attack was delivered, the Zulus being busily employed elsewhere.

Some little distance from the banks of the Buffalo, and on the Natal side near to a mountain called Tyana, stood two buildings erected by the Rev. Mr. Witt; Rorke's Drift, from which No. 3 column had advanced, being immediately in front of them. One of these buildings had been utilised as a storehouse and hospital, and in it were thirty-five sick men. The other was occupied by a company of the 2nd 24th regiment, under the command of the late Lieut. Bromhead.

On January 22, the ponts at Rorke's Drift were left in charge of Lieut. Chard, R.E., with a few men. About a quarter-past three on that day an officer of Lonsdale's regiment, Lieut. Adendorff, and a carbineer, were seen galloping wildly towards the ponts. On coming to the bank of the river, they shouted to Lieut. Chard to take them across, and so soon as he reached them, they communicated to him the terrifying news that the general's camp had been captured and destroyed by a Zulu impi. A few minutes later a message arrived from Lieut. Bromhead, who also had learned the tidings of disaster, requesting Lieut. Chard to join him at the commissariat store. Mounting his horse he rode thither, to find Lieut. Bromhead, assisted by Mr. Dolton, of the commissariat, and the entire force at his command, amounting to about 130, inclusive of the sick and the chaplain, Mr. Smith, a Norfolk man, actively engaged in loopholing and barricading the house and hospital (both of which buildings were thatched), and in connecting them by means of a fortification of mealie bags and waggons. Having ridden round the position, Lieut. Chard returned to the Drift. Sergeant Milne and Mr. Daniells, who managed the ponts, offered to moor them in the middle of the stream, and with the assistance of a few men to defend them from their decks. This gallant suggestion being rejected as impracticable, Lieut. Chard withdrew to the buildings with the waggon and those under his command.

They arrived there about 3.30, and shortly afterwards an officer of Durnford’s native horse rode up, accompanied by about 100 mounted men, and asked for orders. He was requested to send out outposts in the direction of the enemy, and, having checked their advance as much as possible, to fall back, when forced so to do, upon the buildings and assist in their defence. Posts were then assigned to each man in the little garrison, and, this done, the defensive preparations went on, all doing their utmost, for they felt that the life of every one of them was at stake. Three-quarters of an hour went by, and the officer of Durnford’s horse rode up, reporting that the Zulus were advancing in masses, and that his men were deserting in the direction of Helpmakaar. At this time some natives of the Natal contingent under the command of Capt. Stephenson also retired, an example which was followed by that officer himself.

Lieuts. Chard and Bromhead now saw that their lines of defence were too large for the number of men left to them, and at once began the erection of an inner entrenchment formed of biscuit boxes taken from the stores. When this wall was but two boxes high, suddenly there appeared five or six hundred Zulus advancing at a run against the southern side of their position. These were soldiers of the Undi regiment, the same that had turned the Isandhlwana mountain, cutting off all possibility of retreat by the waggon road, who, when they knew that the camp was taken, had advanced to destroy the guard of Rorke’s Drift. On they came, to be met presently by a terrible and concentrated fire from the Martinis. Many fell, but they did not stay till, when within 50 yards of the wall, the cross fire from the store took them in flank. Their loss was now so heavy that, checking their advance, some of them took cover among the ovens, cookhouse, and outbuildings, whence they in turn opened fire upon the garrison. Hundreds more rushing round the hospital came at full speed against the north-west fortification of sacks filled with corn. In vain did the Martinis pump a hail of lead into them: on they came straight to the frail defence, striving to take it at the point of the assegai. But here they were met by British bayonets and a fire so terrible that even the courage of the Zulus could not prevail against it, and they fell back, that is, those of them who were left alive.

By this time the main force of the Undi had arrived, two thousand of them, perhaps, and having lined an overlooking ledge of rocks, took possession of the garden of the station and the bush surrounding it, from all of which the fire, though badly directed, was so continuous that at length the little garrison of white men were forced back into their inner entrenchment of biscuit boxes. Creeping up under cover of the bush, the Zulus now delivered assault after assault upon the wall. Each of these fierce rushes was repelled with the bayonets wielded by the brave white men on its further side. The assegais clashed against the rifle barrels, everywhere the musketry rang and rolled, the savage war-cries and the cheers of the Englishmen rose together through the din, while British soldier and Zulu warrior thrust and shot and tore at each other across the narrow wall, that wall which all the Undi could not climb.

Now it grew dark, for the night was closing in; the spears flashed dimly, and in place of smoke long tongues of flame shot from the rifle barrels, illumining the stern faces of those who held them as lightning does. But soon there was to be light. If any had leisure to observe, they may have seen flakes of fire flying upwards from the dim bush, and wondered what they were. They were bunches of burning grass being thrown on spears to fall in the thatch of the hospital roof. Presently something could be seen on this roof that shone like a star. It grew dim, then suddenly began to brighten and to increase till the star-like spot was a flame, and a hoarse cry passed from man to man of: ‘O God! the hospital is on fire!’

The hospital was on fire, and in it were sick men, some of whom could not move. It was defended by a garrison, a handful of men, and at one and the same time these must bear away the sick to the store building, and hold the burning place against the Zulus, who now were upon them. They did it, but not all of it, for this was beyond the power of mortal bravery and devotion. When the thatch blazed above them, room after room did Privates Williams and Hook, R. and W. Jones, and some few others hold with the white arm — for their ammunition was spent — against the assegais of the Zulus, while their disabled comrades were borne away to the store building beneath the shelter of the connecting wall. One of them lost his life here, others were grievously wounded, but, dead or alive, their names should always be remembered among their countrymen, ay! and always will. Yet they could not save them every one; the fire scorched overhead and the assegais bit deep in front, and ever, as foes fell, fresh ones sprang into their places, and so, fighting furiously, those few gallant men were thrust back, alas! leaving some helpless comrades to die by fire and the spear.

It would be of little use to follow step by step all the events of that night. All night long the firing went on, varied from time to time by desperate assaults. All night long the little band of defenders held back the foe. All were weary, some of them were dead and more wounded, but they fought on by the light of the burning hospital, wasting no single shot. To and fro went the bearded clergyman with prayers and consolations upon his lips, and a bag of cartridges in his hands, and to and fro also went Chard and Bromhead, directing all things. By degrees the Englishmen were driven back, the hospital and its approaches were in the hands of the foe, and now they must retire to the inner wall of the cattle kraal. But they collected sacks of mealies and built two redoubts, which gave them a second line of fire, and let the Zulus do what they would, storm the place they could not, nor could they serve it as they had served the hospital and destroy it by fire.

At length the attacks slackened, the firing dwindled and died, and the dawn broke, that same dawn which showed to General Lord Chelmsford and those with him all the horror of Isandhlwana's field. Here also at Rorke's Drift it revealed death and to spare, but for the most part the corpses were those of the foe, some four hundred of whom lay lost in their last sleep around the burning hospital, in the bush, and beneath the walls of corn-sacks; four hundred killed by one hundred and thirty-nine white men all told, of whom thirty-five were sick when the defence began. The little band had suffered, indeed, for fifteen of them were dead, and twelve wounded, some mortally, but seeing what had been done the loss was small. Had the Zulus once won an entrance over the last entrenchment of biscuit boxes not a man would have remained alive. Surely biscuits were never put to a nobler or a stranger use.

The daylight had come and the enemy vanished with the night, retreating over a hill to the south-west. But, as the defenders of Rorke's Drift guessed, he had no intention of abandoning his attack. Therefore they knew that this was no time to be idle. Sallying out of their defences they collected the arms of the dead Zulus, then returned, and began to strip the roof of the store of its thatch, which was a constant source of danger to them, seeing that fire is a deadlier foe even than the assegai. They were thus engaged when again the Zulus appeared to make an end of them. Once more the weary soldiers took up their positions, and a while passed. Now they perceived that the Undi, which had been advancing, slowly commenced to fall back, a movement that they were at a loss to understand, till a shout from those who were engaged in stripping the roof told the glad news that English troops were advancing to their relief.

These were the remains of No. 3 column, moving down from Isandhlwana. Little did the general and those with him expect to find a soul living at Rorke's Drift, for they also had seen the sullen masses of the Undi retreating from the post, and the columns of smoke rising from the burning hospital confirmed their worst fears. What then was their joy when they perceived a Union Jack flying amidst the smoke, and heard the ring of a British cheer rising from the shattered walls and the defences of sacks of corn! Forward galloped Col. Russell and his mounted men, and in five minutes more those who remained of the garrison were safe, and the defence of Rorke's Drift was a thing of the past; another glorious page ready to be bound into that great book which is called 'The Deeds of Englishmen.’

Nearly six months passed before all the dead at Isandhlwana were reverently buried. Strange were the scenes that those saw whose task it was to lay them to their rest. Here, hidden by the rank grass, in one heap behind the officers’ tents, lay the bodies of some seventy men, who had made their last stand at this spot; lower down the hill lay sixty more. Another band of about the same strength evidently had taken refuge among the rocks of the mountains, and defended themselves there till their ammunition was exhausted, and their ring broken by the assegai. All about the plain lay Englishmen and Zulus, as they had died in the dread struggle: — here side by side, amidst rusted rifles and bent assegais, here their bony arms still locked in the last hug of death, and yonder the Zulu with the white man’s bayonet through his skull, the soldier with the Zulu’s assegai in what had been his heart. One man was found, who, when his cartridges were spent, and his rifle was broken, had defended himself to the end with a tent-hammer that lay among his bones, and another was stretched beneath the precipice, from the crest of which he had been hurled.

Well, they buried them where they were discovered, and there they sleep soundly beneath the shadow of Isandhlwana’s cliff.

And now a few words more, and this true story will be finished. We conquered the Zulus at last, at a battle called Ulundi, where they hurled themselves in vain upon the bullets and bayonets of the British square. To the end they fought bravely for their king and country, and though they were savages, and, like all savages, cruel when at war, they were also gallant enemies, and deserve our respect. The king himself, Cetywayo, was hunted down, captured, and sent into captivity. Afterwards, there was what is called a ‘popular movement’ on his behalf in England, and he was sent back to Zululand, with permission to rule half the country. Meanwhile, after the conclusion of the war, our Government would not take the land, and a settlement was effected, under which thirteen chiefs were put in authority over the country. As might have been expected, these chiefs fought with each other, and many men were killed. When Cetywayo returned the fighting became fiercer than ever, since those who had tasted power refused to be dispossessed, until at last he was finally defeated, and, it is believed, poisoned by his own side, to whom he had ceased to be serviceable. Meanwhile also, the Dutch Boers, taking advantage of the confusion, occupied a great part of Zululand, which they still hold. Indeed, they would long ago have taken it all, had not the English government, seeing the great misery to which its ever-changing policy had reduced the unhappy Zulus, assumed authority over the remainder of the country. From that day forward, there has been no more killing or trouble in British Zululand, which is ruled by Sir Melmoth Osborn, K.C.M.G., and the Queen has no more contented subjects than the Zulus, nor any who pay their taxes with greater regularity!

But the Zulus as a nation are dead, and never again will a great Impi, such as swept away our troops at Isandhlwana, be seen rushing down to war. Their story is but one scene in the vast drama which is being enacted in this generation, and which some of you who read these lines may live to see, not accomplished, indeed, but in the way of accomplishment — the drama of the building up of a great Anglo-Saxon empire in Africa — an empire that within the next few centuries may well become one of the mightiest in the world. We have made many and many a mistake, but still that empire grows; in spite of the errors of the Home Government, the obstinacy of the Boers, the power of native chiefs, and the hatred of Portuguese, still it grows. Already it is about as big as Europe, and it is only a baby yet, a baby begotten by the genius and courage of individual Englishmen.

When the child has become a giant — yes, even in those far-off ages when it is a very old giant, a king among the nations — we may be sure that, from generation to generation, men will show their sons the mountain that was called Isandhlwana, or the place of the Little Hand, and a certain spot on the banks of the Buffalo River, and tell the tale of how beneath that hill the wild Zulus of the ancient times overwhelmed the forces of the early English settlers; of how, for a long night through, a few men of those forces held two grass-thatched sheds against their foe’s savage might; and of how some miles away two heroes named Melville and Coghill died together whilst striving to save the colours of their regiment from the grasp of the victorious ‘Children of Heaven.’

Now it may interest you to know that these last words are written with a pen that was found among the bones of the dead at Isandhlwana.

H. Rider Haggard.

HOW LEIF THE LUCKY FOUND VINELAND THE GOOD

THIS is the story of the first finding of America by the Icelanders, nearly five hundred years before Columbus. They landed on the coast, and stayed for a short time; where they landed is uncertain. Thinking that it was in New England, the people of Boston have erected a statue of Leif in their town. The story was not written till long after Leif’s time, and it cannot *all* be true. Dead men do not return and give directions about their burial as we read here. We have omitted a silly tale of a one-footed man. In the middle ages, people believed that one-footed men lived in Africa; they thought Vineland was near Africa, so they brought the fable into the Saga.

Hundreds of years before Columbus discovered America, there lived in Iceland a man named Eric the Red. His father had slain a man in Norway, and fled with his family to Iceland. Eric, too, was a dangerous man. His servants did mischief on the farm of a neighbour, who slew them. Then Eric slew the farmer, and also Holmgang Hrafn, a famous duellist, of whom the country was well rid. Eric was banished from that place, and, in his new home, had a new quarrel. He lent some furniture to a man who refused to restore it. Eric, therefore, carried off his goods, and the other pursued him. They fought, and Eric killed him. For this he was made an outlaw, and went sailing to discover new countries. He found one, where he settled, calling it Greenland, because, he said, people would come there more readily if it had a good name.

One Thorbiorn, among others, sailed to Greenland, but came in an unlucky time, for fish were scarce, and some settlers were drowned. At that day, some of the new comers were Christians, some still worshipped the old Gods, Thor and Woden, and practised magic. These sent for a prophetess to tell them what the end of their new colony would be. It is curious to know what a real witch was like, and how she behaved, so we shall copy the story from the old Icelandic book.

‘When she came in the evening, with the man who had been sent to meet her, she was clad in a dark-blue cloak, fastened with a strap, and set with stones quite down to the hem. She wore glass beads around her neck, and upon her head a black lambskin hood, lined with white catskin. In her hands she carried a staff upon which there was a knob, which was ornamented with brass, and set with stones up about the knob. Circling her waist she wore a girdle of touchwood, and attached to it a great skin pouch, in which she kept the charms which she used when she was practising her sorcery. She wore upon her feet shaggy calfskin shoes, with long, tough latchets, upon the ends of which there were large brass buttons. She had catskin gloves upon her hands; the gloves were white inside and lined with fur. When she entered, all of the folk felt it to be their duty to offer her becoming greetings. She received the salutations of each individual according as he pleased her. Yeoman Thorkel took the sibyl by the hand, and led her to the seat which had been made ready for her. Thorkel bade her run her eyes over man and beast and home. She had little to say concerning all these. The tables were brought forth in the evening, and it remains to be told what manner of food was prepared for the prophetess. A porridge of goat's beestings was made for her, and for meat there were dressed the hearts of every kind of beast which could be obtained there. She had a brass spoon, and a knife with a handle of walrus tusk, with a double hasp of brass around the haft, and from this the point was broken. And when the tables were removed, Yeoman Thorkel approaches the prophetess Thorbiorg, and asks how she is pleased with the home, and the character of the folk, and how speedily she would be likely to become aware of that concerning which he had questioned her, and which the people were anxious to know. She replied that she could not give an opinion in this matter before the morrow, after that she had slept there through the night. And on the morrow, when the day was far spent, such preparations were made as were necessary to enable her to accomplish her soothsaying. She bade them bring her those women who knew the incantation which she required to work her spells, and which she called Warlocks; but such women were not to be found. Thereupon a search was made throughout the house, to see whether anyone knew this . Then says Gudrid, Thorbiorn's daughter: "Although I am neither skilled in the black art nor a sibyl, yet my foster-mother, Halldis, taught me in Iceland that spell-song, which she called Warlocks." Thorbiorg answered: "Then art thou wise in season!" Gudrid replies; "This is an incantation and ceremony of such a kind that I do not mean to lend it any aid, for that I am a Christian woman." Thorbiorg answers: "It might so be that thou couldst give thy help to the company here, and still be no worse woman than before; however, I leave it with Thorkel to provide for my needs." Thorkel now so urged Gudrid that she said she must needs comply with his wishes. The women then made a ring round about, while Thorbiorg sat up on the spell-daïs. Gudrid then sang the song, so sweet and well, that no one remembered ever before to have heard the melody sung with so fair a voice as this. The sorceress thanked her for the song, and said: “She has indeed lured many spirits hither, who think it pleasant to hear this song, those who were wont to forsake us hitherto and refuse to submit themselves to us. Many things are now revealed to me, which hitherto have been hidden, both from me and from others. And I am able to announce that this period of famine will not endure longer, but the season will mend as spring approaches. The visitation of disease, which has been so long upon you, will disappear sooner than expected.”’

After this, Thorbiorn sailed to the part of Greenland where Eric the Red lived, and there was received with open arms. Eric had two sons, one called Thorstein, the other Leif the Lucky, and it was Leif who afterwards discovered Vineland the Good, that is, the coast of America, somewhere between Nova Scotia and New England. He found it by accident. He had been in Norway, at the court of king Olaf, who bade him proclaim Christianity in Greenland. As he was sailing thither, Leif was driven by tempests out of his course, and came upon coasts which he had never heard of, where wild vines grew, and hence he called that shore Vineland the Good. The vine did not grow, of course, in Iceland. But Leif had with him a German Tyrker, and one day, when they were on shore, Tyrker was late in joining the rest. He was very much excited, and spoke in the German tongue, saying ‘I have found something new, vines and grapes.’ Then they filled their boat full of grapes, and sailed away. He also brought away some men from a wreck, and with these, and the message of the Gospel, he sailed back to Greenland, to his father, Eric the Red, and from that day he was named Leif the Lucky. But Eric had no great mind to become a Christian, he had been born to believe in Thor and his own sword.

Next year Leif’s brother, Thorstein, set out to find Vineland, and Eric, first burying all his treasures, started with him, but he fell from his horse, and broke his ribs, and his company came within sight of Ireland, but Vineland they did not see, so they returned to Ericsfirth in Greenland, and there passed the winter.

There was much sickness, and one woman died. After her death she rose, and they could only lay her by holding an axe before her breast. Thorstein, Eric’s son, died also, but in the night he arose again and said that Christian burial should be given to men in consecrated ground. For the manner had been to bury the dead in their farms with a long pole driven through the earth till it touched the breast of the corpse. Afterwards the priest came, and poured holy water through the hole, and not till then, perhaps long after the death, was the funeral service held. After Thorstein rose and spoke, Christian burial was always used in Greenland. Next year came Karlsefni from Iceland, with two ships, and Eric received him kindly, and gave all his crew winter quarters. In summer nothing would serve Karlsefni but to search again for Vineland the Good. They took three ships and one hundred and sixty men, and south they sailed. They passed Flat Stone Land, where there were white foxes, and Bear Island, where they saw a bear, and Forest Land, and a cape where they found the keel of a wrecked ship, this they named Keelness. Then they reached the Wonder Strands, long expanses of sandy shore. Now Karlsefni had with him two Scotch or Irish savages, the swiftest of all runners, whom King Olaf had given to Leif the Lucky, and they were fleeter-footed than deer. They wore only a plaid and kilt all in one piece, for the rest they were naked. Karlsefni landed them south of Wonder Strands, and bade them run south and return on the third day to report about the country. When they returned one carried a bunch of grapes, the other ears of native wheat (maize?). Then they sailed on, passed an isle covered with birds' eggs, and a firth, which they called Streamfirth, from the tide in it.

Beyond Streamfirth they landed and established themselves there.

'There were mountains thereabouts. They occupied themselves exclusively with the exploration of the country. They remained there during the winter, and they had taken no thought for this during the summer. The fishing began to fail, and they began to fall short of food. Then Thorhall the Huntsman disappeared. They had already prayed to God for food, but it did not come as promptly as their necessities seemed to demand. They searched for Thorhall for three half-days, and found him on a projecting crag. He was lying there, and looking up at the sky, with mouth and nostrils agape, and mumbling something. They asked him why he had gone thither; he replied, that this did not concern anyone. They asked him then to go home with them, and he did so. Soon after this a whale appeared there, and they captured it, and flensed it, and no one could tell what manner of whale it was; and when the cooks had prepared it, they ate of it, and were all made ill by it. Then Thorhall, approaching them, says: "Did not the Red-beard (that is, Thor) prove more helpful than your Christ? This is my reward for the verses which I composed to Thor the Trustworthy; seldom has he failed me." When the people heard this, they cast the whale down into the sea, and made their appeals to God. The weather then improved, and they could now row out to fish, and thenceforward they had no lack of provisions, for they could hunt game on the land, gather eggs on the island, and catch fish from the sea.'

Next spring Thorhall the heathen left them, laughing at the wine which he had been promised, and sailed north. He and his crew were driven to Ireland, where they were captured and sold as slaves, and that was all Thorhall got by worshipping the Red Beard. Karlsefni sailed south and reached a rich country of wild maize, where also was plenty of fish and of game. Here they first met the natives, who came in a fleet of skin-canoes. ‘They were swarthy men and ill-looking, and the hair of their heads was ugly. They had great eyes and were broad of cheek.’

The Icelanders held up a white shield in sign of peace, and the natives withdrew. They may have been Eskimo or Red Indians.

The winter was mild and open, but spring had scarce returned, when the bay was as full of native canoes ‘as if ashes had been sprinkled over it.’ They only came to trade and exchanged furs for red cloth, nor did they seem to care whether they got a broad piece of cloth or a narrow one. They also wanted weapons, but these Karlsefni refused to sell. The market was going on busily when a bull that Karlsefni had brought from Greenland came out of the wood and began to bellow, whereon the Skraelings (as they called the natives) ran! Three weeks passed when the Skraelings returned in very great force, waving their clubs *against* the course of the sun, whereas in peace they waved them with it. Karlsefni showed a red shield, the token of war, and fighting began. It is not easy to make out what happened, for there are two sagas, or stories of these events, both written down long after they occurred. In one we read that the Skraelings were good slingers, and also that they used a machine which reminds one rather of gunpowder than of anything else. They swung from a pole a great black ball, and it made a fearful noise when it fell among Karlsefni’s men. So frightened were they that they saw Skraelings where there were none, and they were only rallied by the courage of a woman named Freydis, who seized a dead man’s sword and faced the Skraelings, beating her bare breast with the flat of the blade. On this the Skraelings ran to their canoes and paddled away. In the other account Karlsefni had fortified his house with a palisade, behind which the women waited. To one of them, Gudrid, the appearance of a white woman came; her hair was of a light chestnut colour, she was pale and had very large eyes. ‘What is thy name?’ she said to Gudrid. ‘My name is Gudrid; but what is thine?’ ‘Gudrid!’ says the strange woman. Then came the sound of a great crash and the woman vanished. A battle followed in which many Skraelings were slain.

It all reads like a dream. In the end Karlsefni sailed back to Ericsfirth with a great treasure of furs. A great and prosperous family in Iceland was descended from him at the time when the stories were written down. But it is said that Freydis who frightened the Skraelings committed many murders in Vineland among her own people.

The Icelanders never returned to Vineland the Good, though a bishop named Eric is said to have started for the country in 1121. Now, in the story of Cortés, you may read how the Mexicans believed in a God called Quetzalcoatl, a white man in appearance, who dwelt among them and departed mysteriously, saying that he would come again, and they at first took Cortés and his men for the children of Quetzalcoatl. So we may fancy if we please that Bishop Eric, or one of his descendants, wandered from Vineland south and west across the continent and arrived among the Aztecs, and by them was taken for a God.

THE ESCAPES OF CERVANTES

MOST people know of the terrible war, waged even down to the present century, between the Christian ships cruising about the Mediterranean and the dreaded Moors or Corsairs of the Barbary Coast. It was a war that began in the name of religion, the Crescent against the Cross; but, as far as we can learn from the records of both sides, there was little to choose in the way that either party treated the captives. A large number of these were chained to the oars of the galleys which were the ships of battle of the middle ages, and sometimes the oars were so long and heavy that they needed forty men to each. The rowers had food enough to give them the strength necessary for their work, and that was all, and the knowledge that they were exerting themselves for the downfall of their fellow-Christians, often of their fellow-countrymen, must have made their labour a toil indeed. Often it happened that a man's courage gave way and he denied his faith and his country, and rose to great honours in the service of the Sultan, the chief of the little kings who swarmed on the African coasts. The records of the Corsairs bristle with examples of these successful renegades, many of them captured as boys, who were careless under what flag they served, as long as their lives were lives of adventure.

All the captives were not, however, turned into galley slaves. Some were taken to the towns and kept in prisons called *bagnios*, waiting till their friends sent money to redeem them. If this was delayed, they were set to public works, and treated with great severity, so that their letters imploring deliverance might become yet more urgent. The others, known as the king's captives, whose ransom might be promptly expected, did no work and were kept apart from the rest.

It was on September 26, 1575, that Miguel Cervantes, the future author of 'Don Quixote,' fell into the hands of a Greek renegade Dali Mami by name, captain of a galley of twenty-two banks of oars. Cervantes, the son of a poor but well-descended gentleman of Castile, had served with great distinction under Don John of Austria at the battle of Lepanto four years earlier, and was now returning with his brother Rodrigo to Spain on leave, bearing with him letters from the commander-in-chief, Don John, the Duke of Sesa, Viceroy of Sicily, and other distinguished men, testifying to his qualities as a soldier, 'as valiant as he was unlucky,' and recommending Philip II. to give him the command of a Spanish company then being formed for Italian service. But all these honours proved his bane. The Spanish squadron had not sailed many days from Naples when it encountered a Corsair fleet, and after a sharp fight Cervantes and his friends were carried captive into Algiers.

Of course the first thing done was to examine each man as to his position in life, and the amount of ransom he might be expected to bring, and the letters found upon Miguel Cervantes impressed them with the notion that he was a person of consequence, and capable of furnishing a large sum of money. They therefore took every means of ensuring his safety, loading him with chains, appointing him guards, and watching him day and night.

‘Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage.’

Cervantes never lost heart a moment, but at once began to plan an escape for himself and his fellow-captives. But the scheme broke down owing to the treachery of the man in whom he had confided, and the Spaniards, particularly Cervantes, were made to suffer a stricter confinement than before. The following year the old Cervantes sent over what money he had been able to raise on his own property and his daughters’ marriage portions for the ransom of his sons, by the hands of the Redemptorist Fathers, an Order which had been founded for the sole purpose of carrying on this charitable work. But when the sum was offered to Dali Mami he declared it wholly insufficient for purchasing the freedom of such a captive, though it was considered adequate as the ransom of the younger brother Rodrigo. Accordingly, in August 1577, Rodrigo Cervantes set sail for Spain, bearing secret orders from his brother Miguel to fit out an armed frigate, and to send it by way of Valencia and Majorca to rescue himself and his friends.

But even before the departure of Rodrigo, Cervantes had been laying other plans. He had, somehow or other, managed to make acquaintance with the Navarrese gardener of a Greek renegade named Azan, who had a garden stretching down to the sea-shore, about three miles east of Algiers, where Cervantes was then imprisoned. This gardener had contrived to use a cave in Azan’s garden as a hiding place for some escaped Christians, and as far back as February 1577 about fifteen had taken refuge there, under the direction of Cervantes. How they remained for so many months undiscovered, and how they were all fed, no one can tell; but this part of the duty had been undertaken by a captive renegade called El Dorador, or the Gilder, to whom their secret had been confided.

Meanwhile, Rodrigo had proved faithful to his trust. He had equipped a frigate for sea, under the command of a tried soldier, Viana by name, who was familiar with the Barbary coast. It set sail at the end of September, and by the 28th had sighted Algiers. From motives of prudence the boat kept to sea till nightfall, when it silently approached the shore. The captives hailed it with joy, and were in the act of embarking, when a fishing craft full of Moors passed by, and the rescue vessel was forced to put to sea. Meanwhile, Cervantes and the fugitives in the cave had to return disheartened into hiding, and await another opportunity.

But once lost, the opportunity was gone for ever. Before any fresh scheme could be concerted, El Dorador had betrayed the hiding place of the Christians and their plan of escape to the cruel Dey or King Azan, who saw in the information a means to satisfy his greed. According to the law of the country, he was enabled to claim the escaped slaves as his own property (except Cervantes, for whom he paid 500 crowns), and with a company of armed men presented himself before the cave.

In this dreadful strait Cervantes' courage never faltered. He told the trembling captives not to fear, as he would take upon himself the entire responsibility of the plan. Then, addressing Azan's force, he proclaimed himself the sole contriver of the scheme, and professed his willingness to bear the punishment. The Turks were struck dumb at valour such as this, in the presence of the most dreadful torments, and contented themselves with ordering the captives into close confinement at the bagnio, hanging the gardener, and bringing Cervantes bound to receive his sentence from the Dey Azan himself.

The threats of impalement, torture, mutilation of every kind, which Cervantes well knew to be no mere threats, had no effect upon his faithful soul. He stuck to the story he had told, and the Dey, 'wearied by so much constancy,' as the Spanish historian says, ended by loading him with chains, and throwing him again into prison.

For some time he remained here, strictly and closely guarded, but his mind always active as to plans of escape. At last, however, he managed to enter into relations with Don Martin de Cordoba, General of Oran, by means of a Moor, who undertook to convey letters asking for help for the Spanish prisoners. But his ill fortune had not yet deserted him. The messenger fell into the hands of other Moors, who handed him over to Azan, and the wretched man was at once put to a cruel death by the Dey's orders. Curiously enough, the sentence of 2,000 lashes passed upon Cervantes was never carried into effect.

Disappointments and dangers only made Cervantes more determined to free himself or die in the attempt; but nearly two years dragged by before he saw another hope rise before him, though he did everything he could in the interval to soothe the wretched lot of his fellow-captives. This time his object was to induce two Valencia merchants of Algiers to buy an armed frigate, destined to carry Cervantes and a large number of Christians back to Spain, but at the last minute they were again betrayed, this time by a countryman, and again Cervantes took the blame on his own shoulders, and confessed nothing to the Dey.

Now it seemed indeed as if his last moment had come. His hands were tied behind him, and a cord was put round his neck; but Cervantes never swerved from the tale he had resolved to tell, and at the close of the interview found himself within the walls of a Moorish prison, where he lay for five months loaded with fetters and chains, and treated with every kind of severity, though never with actual cruelty.

All this time his mind was busy with a fresh scheme, nothing short of a concerted insurrection of all the captives in Algiers, numbering about 25,000, who were to overpower the city, and to plant the Spanish flag on its towers. His measures seem to have been taken with sufficient prudence and foresight to give them a fair chance of success, bold as the idea was, but treachery as usual caused the downfall of everything. Why, under such repeated provocation, the cruel Azan Aga did not put him to a frightful death it is hard to understand, but in his ‘Captive’s Story,’ Cervantes himself bears testimony to the comparative moderation of the Dey’s behaviour towards him. ‘Though suffering,’ he says, ‘often, if not indeed always, from hunger and thirst, the worst of all our miseries was the sight and sound of the tortures daily inflicted by our master on our fellow-Christians. Every day he hanged one, impaled another, cut off the ears of a third; and all this for so little reason, or even for none at all, that the very Turks knew he did it for the mere pleasure of doing it; and because to him cruelty was the natural employment of mankind. Only one man did he use well, and that was a Spanish soldier, named Saavedra, and though this Saavedra had struck blows for liberty which will be remembered by Moors for many years to come, yet Azan never either gave him stripes himself, nor ordered his servants to do so, neither did he ever throw him an evil word; while we trembled lest for the smallest of his offences the tyrant would have him impaled, and more than once he himself expected it.’ This straightforward account of matters inside the bagnio is the more valuable and interesting if we recollect that Cervantes’ great-grandmother was a Saavedra, and that the soldier alluded to in the text was really himself. It is impossible to explain satisfactorily the sheathing of the tiger’s claws on his account alone; did Cervantes exercise unconsciously a mesmeric influence over Azan? Did Azan ascribe his captive’s defiance of death and worse than death to his bearing a charmed life? Or did he hold him to be a man of such consequence in his own country, that it was well to keep him in as good condition as Azan’s greed would permit? We shall never know; only there remains Cervantes’ emphatic declaration that during the five long years of his captivity no man’s hand was ever lifted against him.

Meanwhile, having no more money wherewith to ransom his son, Rodrigo de Cervantes made a declaration of his poverty before a court of law, and set forth Miguel’s services and claims. In March 1578, the old man’s prayer was enforced by the appearance of four witnesses who had known him both in the Levant and in Algiers and could testify to the truth of his father’s statement, and a certificate of such facts as were within his knowledge being willingly offered by the Duke of Sesa, the King, Philip II., consented to furnish the necessary ransom.

But the ill-fortune which had attended Cervantes in these past years seemed to stick to him now. Just when the negotiations were drawing to a conclusion, his father suddenly died, and it appeared as if the expedition of the Redemptorist Fathers would sail without him. However, his mother was happily a woman of energy, and after managing somehow to raise three hundred ducats on her own possessions, appealed to the King for help. This he appears to have granted her at once, and he gave her an order for 2,000 ducats on some Valencia merchandise; but with their usual bad luck they only ultimately succeeded in obtaining about sixty, which with her own three hundred were placed in the hands of the Redemptorist Fathers.

It was time: the fact that the term of Azan’s government of Algiers had drawn to an end rendered him more than ever greedy for money, and he demanded for Cervantes double the price that he himself had paid, and threatened, if this was not forthcoming, to carry his captive on board his own vessel, which was bound for Constantinople. Indeed, this threat was actually put into effect, and Cervantes, bound and loaded with chains, was placed in a ship of the little squadron that was destined for Turkish waters. The good father felt that once in Constantinople, Cervantes would probably remain a prisoner to the end of his life, and made unheard of efforts to accomplish his release, borrowing the money that was still lacking from some Algerian merchants, and even using the ransoms that had been entrusted to him for other captives. Then at last Cervantes was set free, and after five years was able to go where he would and return to his native country.

His work however was not yet done. He somehow discovered that a Spaniard named Blanco de Paz, who had once before betrayed him, was determined, through jealousy, to have him arrested the moment he set foot in Spain, and to this end had procured a mass of false evidence respecting his conduct in Algiers. It is not easy to see what Cervantes could have done to incur the hatred of this man, but about this he did not trouble himself to inquire, and set instantly to consider the best way of bringing his schemes to naught. He entreated his friend, Father Gil, to be present at an interview held before the notary Pedro de Ribera, at which a number of respectable Christians appeared to answer a paper of twenty-five questions, propounded by Cervantes himself, as to the principal events of his five years of imprisonment, and his treatment of his fellow-captives. Armed with this evidence, he was able to defy the traitor, and to return in honour to his native land.

With the rest of his life we have nothing to do. It was not, we may be sure, lacking in adventure, for he was the kind of man to whom adventures come, and as his inheritance was all gone, he went back to his old trade, and joined the army which Philip was assembling to enforce his claim to the crown of Portugal. In this country as in all others to which his wandering life had led him, he made many friends and took notice of what went on around him. He was in all respects a man practical and vigorous, in many ways the exact opposite of his own Don Quixote, who saw everything enlarged and glorified and nothing as it really was, but in other ways the true counterpart of his hero in his desire to give help and comfort wherever it was needed, and to leave the world better than he found it.

THE WORTHY ENTERPRISE OF JOHN FOXE, AN ENGLISHMAN, IN DELIVERING TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SIX CHRISTIANS OUT OF THE CAPTIVITY OF THE TURKS AT ALEXANDRIA, JANUARY 3, 1577

AMONG our English merchants it is a common thing to traffic with Spain, for which purpose, in 1563, there set out from Portsmouth a ship called the ‘Three Half Moons,’ with thirty-eight men on board, and well armed, the better to encounter any foes they might meet. Now, drawing near the Straits, they found themselves beset by eight Turkish galleys, so that it was impossible for them to fly, but they must either yield or be sunk. This the owner perceiving, manfully encouraged his company, telling them not to faint in seeing such a heap of their foes ready to devour them; putting them in mind also that if it were God’s pleasure to give them into their enemies’ hands, there ought not to be one unpleasant look among them, but they must take it patiently; putting them in mind also of the ancient worthiness of their countrymen, who in the hardest extremities have always most prevailed. With other such encouragement they all fell on their knees, making their prayers briefly to God.

Then stood up Grove, the master, being a comely man, with his sword and target, holding them up in defiance against his enemies. Likewise stood up the owner, boatswain, purser, and every man well armed. Now also sounded up the trumpets, drums, and flutes, which would have encouraged any man, however little heart he had in him.

Then John Foxe, the gunner, took him to his charge, sending his bullets among the Turks, who likewise fired among the Christians, and thrice as fast. But shortly they drew near, so that the English bowmen fell to shooting so terribly among their galleys that there were twice as many of the Turks slain as the whole number of the Christians. But the Turks discharged twice as fast against the Christians, and so long that the ship was very sorely battered and bruised, which the foe perceiving, made the more haste to come aboard. For this coming aboard many a Turk paid dearly with his life, but it was all in vain, and board they did, where they found a hot skirmish. For the Englishmen showed themselves men indeed, and the boatswain was valiant above the rest, for he fought among the Turks like a mad lion, and there was none of them that could stand in his face; till at last there came a shot that struck him in the breast, so that he fell down, bidding them farewell, and to be of good comfort, and exhorting them rather to win praise by death than to live in captivity and shame. This, they hearing, indeed intended to have done, but the number and press of the Turks was so great that they could not wield their weapons, and so were taken, when they intended rather to have died, except only the master's mate, who shrank from the fight like a notable coward.

But so it was, and the Turks were victors, though they had little cause of triumph. Then it would have grieved any hard heart to see these infidels wantonly ill-treating the Christians, who were no sooner in the galleys than their garments were torn from their backs, and they set to the oars.

I will make no mention of their miseries, being now under their enemies' raging stripes, their bodies distressed with too much heat, and also with too much cold; but I will rather show the deliverance of those who, being in great misery, continually trust in God, with a steadfast hope that He will deliver them.

Near the city of Alexandria, being a harbour, there is a ship-road, very well defended by strong walls, into which the Turks are accustomed to bring their galleys every winter, and there repair them and lay them up against the spring. In this road there is a prison, in which the captives and all those prisoners who serve in the galleys are confined till the sea be calm again for voyaging, every prisoner being most grievously laden with irons on his legs, giving him great pain. Into this prison all these Christians were put, and fast guarded all the winter, and every winter. As time passed the master and the owner were redeemed by friends; but the rest were left in misery, and half-starved — except John Foxe, who being a somewhat skilful barber, made shift now and then, by means of his craft, to help out his fare with a good meal. Till at last God sent him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison, so that he had leave to go in and out to the road, paying a stipend to the keeper, and wearing a lock about his leg. This liberty six more had, on the same conditions; for after their long imprisonment, it was not feared that they would work any mischief against the Turks.

In the winter of the year 1577, all the galleys having reached port, and their masters and mariners being at their own homes, the ships themselves being stripped of their masts and sails, there were in the prison two hundred and sixty-eight Christian captives, belonging to sixteen different nations. Among these were three Englishmen, one of them John Foxe, the others William Wickney and

Robert Moore. And John Foxe, now having been thirteen or fourteen years under the bondage of the Turks, and being weary thereof, pondered continually, day and night, how he might escape, never ceasing to pray God to further his enterprise, if it should be to His glory.

Not far from the road, at one side of the city, there was a certain victualling-house, which one Peter Unticare had hired, paying a fee to the keeper of the prison. This Peter Unticare was a Spaniard, and also a Christian, and had been a prisoner about thirty years, never contriving any means to escape, but keeping himself quiet without being suspected of conspiracy. But on the coming of John Foxe they disclosed their minds to each other about their loss of liberty; and to this Unticare John Foxe confided a plan for regaining their freedom, which plan the three Englishmen continually brooded over, till they resolved to acquaint five more prisoners with their secret. This being done, they arranged in three more days to make their attempt at escape. Whereupon John Foxe, and Peter Unticare, and the other six arranged to meet in the prison on the last day of December, and there they told the rest of the prisoners what their intention was, and how they hoped to bring it to pass. And having, without much ado, persuaded all to agree, John Foxe gave them a kind of files, which he had hoarded together by means of Peter Unticare, charging them every man to be free of his fetters by eight o’clock on the following night.

The next night John Foxe and his six companions, all having met at the house of Peter Unticare, spent the evening mirthfully for fear of rousing suspicion, till it was time for them to put their scheme into execution. Then they sent Peter Unticare to the master of the road, in the name of one of the masters of the city, with whom he was well acquainted, and at the mention of whose name he was likely to come at once, desiring him to meet him there, and promising to bring him back again.

The keeper agreed to go with Unticare, telling the warders not to bar the gate, for he would come again with all speed. In the meantime the other seven had provided themselves with all the weapons they could find in the house, and John Foxe took a rusty old sword without a hilt, which he managed to make serve by bending the hand end of the sword instead of a hilt.

Now the keeper being come to the house, and seeing no light nor hearing any noise, straightway suspected the plot, and was turning back. But John Foxe, standing behind the corner of the house, stepped forth to him. He perceiving it to be John Foxe, said: ‘O Foxe! what have I deserved of thee that thou shouldest seek my death?’

‘Thou, villain,’ quoth Foxe, ‘hast been a blood-sucker of many a Christian’s blood, and now thou shalt know what thou hast deserved at my hands!’

Therewith he lifted up his bright shining sword, cleared of its ten years' rust, and struck him so strong a blow that his head was cleft asunder, and he fell stark dead to the ground. Thereupon Peter Unticare went in and told the rest how it was with the keeper, and at once they came forth, and with their weapons ran him through and cut off his head, so that no man should know who he was.

Then they marched towards the road, and entered it softly. There were six warders guarding it, and one of them asked who was there. Then quoth Foxe and his company, 'All friends!'

But when they were within it proved contrary, for, quoth Foxe to his companions:

'My masters, here there is not a man to a man, so look you play your parts!' They so behaved themselves indeed that they had despatched those six quickly. Then John Foxe, intending not to be thwarted in his enterprise, barred the gate surely, and planted a cannon against it.

They entered the gaoler's lodge, where they found the keys of the fortress and prison by his bedside, and then they all got better weapons. In this chamber was a chest holding a great treasure, all in ducats, which Peter Unticare and two more stuffed into their garments, as many as they could carry. But Foxe would not touch them, saying that it was his liberty and theirs he sought, and not to make a spoil of the wicked treasure of the infidels. Yet these words did not sink into their hearts, though they had no good of their gain.

Now, having provided themselves with the weapons they needed, they came to the prison, and unlocked its gates and doors, and called forth all the prisoners, whom they employed, some in ramming up the gate, some in fitting up a galley which was the best in the road.

In the prison were several warders, whom John Foxe and his company slew; but this was perceived by eight more Turks, who fled to the top of the prison, where Foxe and his company had to reach them by ladders. Then followed a hot skirmish, and John Foxe was shot thrice through his apparel, without being hurt; but Peter Unticare and the other two, who had weighed themselves down with the ducats so that they could not manage their weapons, were slain.

Among the Turks there was one thrust through who fell from the top of the prison wall, and made such a crying out that the inhabitants of a house or two that stood near came and questioned him, and soon understood the case — how the prisoners were attempting to escape. Then they raised both Alexandria on the west side of the road, and a castle at the end of the city next to the road, and also another fortress on the north side of the road. And now the prisoners had no way to escape but one that might seem impossible for them.

Then every man set to work, some to their tackling, some carrying arms and provisions into the galley, some keeping the enemy from the wall of the road. To be short, there was no man idle, nor any labour spent in vain; so that presently the galley was ready, and into it they all leaped hastily, and hoisted sail.

But when the galley had set sail, and was past the shelter of the road, the two castles had full power over it, and what could save it from sinking? The cannon let fly from both sides, and it was between them both.

Yet there was not one on board that feared the shot that came thundering about their ears, nor yet was any man scarred or touched. For now God held forth His buckler and shielded this galley, having tried their faith to the uttermost. And they sailed away, being not once touched with the glance of a shot, and were presently out of the reach of the Turkish cannon. Then might you see the Turks coming down to the waterside, in companies like swarms of bees, trying to make ready their galleys — which would have been a quick piece of work, seeing that they had in them neither oars, nor sails, nor anything else. Yet they carried them in, but some into one galley, some into another, for there was much confusion among them; and the sea being rough, and they having no certain guide, it was a thing impossible that they should overtake the prisoners. For they had neither pilot, mariners, nor any skilful master that was ready at this pinch.

When the Christians were safe out of the enemy’s coast, John Foxe called to them all, telling them to fall down upon their knees, thanking God for their delivery, and beseeching Him to aid them to the land of their friends. Then they fell straightway to labouring at the oars, striving to come to some Christian country, as near as they could guess by the stars. But the winds were so contrary, now driving them this way, now that, that they were bewildered, thinking that God had forsaken them and left them to yet greater danger. And soon there were no victuals left in the galley; and the famine grew to be so great that in twenty-eight days there had died eight persons.

But it fell out that upon the twenty-ninth day, they reached the Isle of Candy, and landed at Gallipoli, where they were made much of by the Abbot and monks, and cared for and refreshed. They kept there the sword with which John Foxe had killed the keeper, esteeming it a most precious jewel.

Then they sailed along the cost to Tarento, where they sold the galley, and went on foot to Naples, having divided the price. But at Naples they parted asunder, going every man his own way, and John Foxe journeyed to Rome, where he was well entertained by an Englishman and presented to the Pope, who rewarded him liberally and gave him letters to the King of Spain. And by the King of Spain also he was well entertained, and granted twenty pence a day. Thence, desiring to return into his own country, he departed in 1579, and being come into England, he went into the Court, and told all his travel to the Council, who, considering that he had spent a great part of his youth in thraldom, extended to him their liberality, to help to maintain him in age — to their own honour and the encouragement of all true-hearted Christians.

BARON TRENCK

MOST men who have escaped from prison owe their fame, not to their flight, but to the deeds which caused their imprisonment. It may, however, safely be asserted that few people out of his own country would have heard of Baron Trenck had it not been for the wonderful skill and cunning with which he managed to cut through the ‘stone walls’ and ‘iron bars’ of all his many ‘cages.’ He was born at Königsberg in Prussia in 1726, and entered the body-guard of Frederic II. in 1742, when he was about sixteen. Trenck was a young man of good family, rich, well-educated, and, according to his own account, fond of amusement. He confesses to having shirked his duties more than once for the sake of some pleasure, even after the War of the Austrian Succession had broken out (September 1744), and Frederic, strict though he was, had forgiven him. It is plain from this, that the King must have considered that Trenck had been guilty of some deadly treachery towards him, when in after years he declined to pardon him for crimes which after all the young man had never committed.

Trenck’s first confinement was in 1746, when he was thrown into the Castle of Glatz, on a charge of corresponding with his cousin and namesake, who was in the service of the Empress Maria Theresa, and of being an Austrian spy. At first he was kindly treated and allowed to walk freely about the fortifications, and he took advantage of the liberty given him to arrange a plan of escape with one of his fellow-prisoners. The plot was, however, betrayed by the other man, and a heavy punishment fell on Trenck. By the King’s orders, he was promptly deprived of all his privileges, and placed in a cell in one of the towers, which overlooked the ramparts lying ninety feet below, on the side nearest the town. This added a fresh difficulty to his chances of escape, as, in passing from the castle to the town, he was certain to be seen by many people. But no obstacles mattered to Trenck. He had money, and then, as now, money could do a great deal. So he began by bribing one of the officials about the prison, and the official in his turn bribed a soap-boiler, who lived not far from the castle gates, and promised to conceal Trenck somewhere in his house. Still, liberty must have seemed a long way off, for Trenck had only one little knife (*canif*) with which to cut through everything. By dint of incessant and hard work, he managed to saw through three thick steel bars, but even so, there were eight others left to do. His friend the official then procured him a file, but he was obliged to use it with great care, lest the scraping sound should be heard by his guards. Perhaps they wilfully closed their ears, for many of them were sorry for Trenck; but, at all events, the eleven bars were at last sawn through, and all that remained was to make a rope ladder. This he did by tearing his leather portmanteau into strips, and plaiting them into a rope, and as this was not long enough, he added his sheets. The night was dark and rainy, which favoured him, and he reached the bottom of the rampart in safety. Unluckily, he met here with an obstacle on which he had never counted. There was a large drain, opening into one of the trenches, which Trenck had neither seen nor heard of, and into this he fell. In spite of his struggles, he was held fast, and his strength being at last exhausted, he was forced to call the sentinel, and at midday, having been left in the drain for hours to make sport for the town, he was carried back to his cell.

Henceforth he was still more strictly watched than before, though, curiously enough, his money never seems to have been taken from him, and at this time he had about eighty louis left, which he always kept hidden about him. Eight days after his last attempt, Fouquet, the commandant of Glatz, who hated Trenck and all his family, sent a deputation consisting of the adjutant, an officer, and a certain Major Doo, to speak to the unfortunate man, and exhort him to patience and submission. Trenck entered into conversation with them for the purpose of throwing them off their guard, when suddenly he snatched away Doo’s sword, rushed from his cell, knocked down the sentinel and lieutenant who were standing outside, and striking right and left at the soldiers who came flying to bar his progress, he dashed down the stairs and leapt from the ramparts. Though the height was great, he fell into the fosse without injury, and still grasping his sword. He scrambled quickly to his feet and jumped easily over the second rampart, which was much lower than the first, and then began to breathe freely, as he thought he was safe from being overtaken by the soldiers, who would have to come a long way round. At this moment, however, he saw a sentinel making for him a short distance off, and he rushed for the palisades which divided the fortifications from the open country, from which the mountains and Bohemia were easily reached. In the act of scaling them, his foot was caught tight between the bars, and he was trapped till the sentinel came up, and after a sharp fight got him back to prison.

For some time poor Trenck was in a sad condition. In his struggle with the sentinel he had been wounded, while his right foot had got crushed in the palisades. Beside this, he was watched far more strictly than before, for an officer and two men remained always in his cell, and two sentinels were stationed outside. The reason of these precautions of course was to prevent his gaining over his guards singly, either by pity or bribery. His courage sank to its lowest ebb, as he was told on all sides that his imprisonment was for life, whereas long after he discovered the real truth, that the King’s intention had been to keep him under arrest for a year only, and if he had had a little more patience, three weeks would have found him free. His repeated attempts to escape naturally angered Frederic, while on the other hand the King knew nothing of the fact which excused Trenck’s impatience — namely, the belief carefully instilled in him by all around him that he was doomed to perpetual confinement.

It is impossible to describe in detail all the plans made by Trenck to regain his freedom, first because they were endless, and secondly because several were nipped in the bud. Still the unfortunate man felt that as long as his money was not taken from him his case was not hopeless, for the officers in command were generally poor and in debt, and were always sent to garrison work as a punishment. After one wild effort to liberate *all* the prisoners in the fortress, which was naturally discovered and frustrated, Trenck made friends with an officer named Schell, lately arrived at Glatz, who promised not only his aid but his company in the new enterprise. As more money would be needed than Trenck had in his possession, he contrived to apply to his rich relations outside the prison, and by some means — what we are not told — they managed to convey a large sum to him. Suspicion, however, got about that Trenck was on too familiar a footing with the officers, and orders were given that his door should always be kept locked. This occasioned further delay, as false keys had secretly to be made, before anything else could be done.

Their flight was unexpectedly hastened by Schell accidentally learning that he was in danger of arrest. One night they crept unobserved through the arsenal and over the inner palisade, but on reaching the rampart they came face to face with two of the officers, and again a leap into the fosse was the only way of escape. Luckily the wall at this point was not high, and Trenck arrived at the bottom without injury; but Schell was not so happy, and hurt his foot so badly that he called on his friend to kill him, and to make the best of his way alone. Trenck, however, declined to abandon him, and having dragged him over the outer palisade, took him on his back, and made for the frontier. Before they had gone five hundred yards they heard the boom of the alarm guns from the fortress, while clearer still were the sounds of pursuit. As they knew that they would naturally be sought on the side towards Bohemia, they changed their course and pushed on to the river Neiss, at this season partly covered with ice. Trenck swam over slowly with this friend on his back, and found a boat on the other side. By means of this boat they evaded their enemies, and reached the mountains after some hours, very hungry, and almost frozen to death.

Here a new terror awaited them. Some peasants with whom they took refuge recognised Schell, and for a moment the fugitives gave themselves up for lost. But the peasants took pity on the two wretched objects, fed them and gave them shelter, till they could make up their minds what was best to be done. To their unspeakable dismay, they found that they were, after all, only seven miles from Glatz, and that in the neighbouring town of Wunschelburg a hundred soldiers were quartered, with orders to capture all deserters from the fortress. This time, however, fortune favoured the luckless Trenck, and though he and Schell were both in uniform, they rode unobserved through the village while the rest of the people were at church, and, skirting Wunschelburg, crossed the Bohemian frontier in the course of the day.

Then follows a period of comparative calm in Trenck’s history. He travelled freely about Poland, Austria, Russia, Sweden, Denmark and Holland, and even ventured occasionally across the border into Prussia. Twelve years seem to have passed by in this manner, till in 1758 his mother died, and Trenck asked leave of the council of war to go up to Dantzic to see his family and to arrange his affairs. Curiously enough, it appears never to have occurred to him that he was a deserter, and as such liable to be arrested at any moment. And this was what actually happened. By order of the King, Trenck was taken first to Berlin, where he was deprived of his money and some valuable rings, and then removed to Magdeburg, of which place Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick was the governor.

Here his quarters were worse than he had ever known them. His cell was only six feet by ten, and the window was high, with bars without as well as within. The wall was seven feet thick, and beyond it was a palisade, which rendered it impossible for the sentinels to approach the window. On the other side the prisoner was shut in by three doors, and his food (which was not only bad, but very scanty) was passed to him through an opening.

One thing only was in his favour. His cell was only entered once a week, so he could pursue any work to further his escape without much danger of being discovered. Notwithstanding the high window, the thick wall, and the palisade, notwithstanding too his want of money, he soon managed to open negotiations with the sentinels, and found, to his great joy, that the next cell was empty. If he could only contrive to burrow his way into that, he would be able to watch his opportunity to steal through the open door; once free he could either swim the Elbe and cross into Saxony, which lay about six miles distant, or else float down the river in a boat till he was out of danger.

Small as the cell was, it contained a sort of cupboard fixed into the floor by irons, and on these Trenck began to work. After frightful labour he at last extracted the heavy nails which fastened the staples to the floor, and breaking off the heads (which he put back to avoid detection), he kept the rest to fashion for his own purposes. By this means he made instruments to raise the bricks.

On this side also the wall was seven feet thick, and formed of bricks and stones. Trenck numbered them as he went on with the greatest care, so that the cell might present its usual appearance before the Wednesday visit of his guards. To hide the joins, he scraped off some of the mortar, which he smeared over the place.

As may be supposed, all this took a very long time. He had nothing to work with but the tools he himself had made, which of course were very rough. But one day a friendly sentinel gave him a little iron rod, and a small knife with a wooden handle. These were treasures, indeed! And with their help he worked away for six months at his hole, as in some places the mortar had become so hard that it had to be pounded like a stone.

During this time he enlisted the compassion of some of the other sentinels, who not only described to him the lie of the country which he would have to traverse if he ever succeeded in getting out of prison, but interested in his behalf a Jewess named Esther Heymann, whose own father had been for two years a prisoner in Magdeburg. In this manner Trenck became the possessor of a file, a knife, and some writing paper, as the friendly Jewess had agreed to convey letters to some influential people both at Vienna and Berlin, and also to his sister. But this step led to the ruin, not only of Trenck, but of several persons concerned, for they were betrayed by an Imperial Secretary of Embassy called Weingarten, who was tempted by a bill for 20,000 florins. Many of those guilty of abetting Trenck in this fresh effort to escape were put to death, while his sister was ordered to build a new prison for him in the Fort de l’Etoile, and he himself was destined to pass nine more years in chains.

In spite of his fetters, Trenck was able in some miraculous way to get on with his hole, but his long labour was rendered useless by the circumstance that his new prison was finished sooner than he expected, and he was removed into it hastily, being only able to conceal his knife. He was now chained even more heavily than before, his two feet being attached to a heavy ring fixed in the wall, another ring being fastened round his body. From this ring was suspended a chain with a thick iron bar, two feet long at the bottom, and to this his hands were fastened. An iron collar was afterwards added to his instruments of torture.

Besides torments of body, nothing was wanting which could work on his mind. His prison was built between the trenches of the principal rampart, and was of course very dark. It was likewise very damp, and, to crown all, the name of ‘Trenck’ had been printed in red bricks on the wall, above a tomb whose place was indicated by a death’s head.

Here again, he tells us, he excited the pity of his guards, who gave him a bed and coverlet, and as much bread as he chose to eat; and, wonderful as it may seem, his health did not suffer from all these horrors. As soon as he got a little accustomed to his cramped position, he began to use the knife he had left, and to cut through his chains. He next burst the iron band, and after a long time severed his leg fetters, but in such a way that he could put them on again, and no one be any the wiser. Nothing is more common in the history of prisoners than this exploit, and nothing is more astonishing, yet we meet with the fact again and again in their memoirs and biographies. Trenck at any rate appears to have accomplished the feat without much difficulty, though he found it very hard to get his hand back into his handcuffs. After he had disposed of his bonds, he began to saw at the doors leading to the gallery. These were four in number, and all of wood, but when he arrived at the fourth, his knife broke in two, and the courage that had upheld him for so many years gave way. He opened his veins and lay down to die, when in his despair he heard the voice of Gefhardt, the friendly sentinel from the other prison. Hearing of Trenck’s sad plight, he scaled the palisade, and, we are told expressly, bound up his wounds, though we are *not* told how he managed to enter the cell. Be that as it may, the next day, when the guards came to open the door, they found Trenck ready to meet them, armed with a brick in one hand, and a knife, doubtless obtained from Gefhardt, in the other. The first man that approached him, he stretched wounded at his feet, and thinking it dangerous to irritate further a desperate man, they made a compromise with him. The governor took off his chains for a time, and gave him strong soup and fresh linen. Then, after a while, new doors were put to his cell, the inner door being lined with plates of iron, and he himself was fastened with stronger chains than those he had burst through.

For all this the watch must have been very lax, as Gefhardt soon contrived to open communications with him again, and letters were passed through the window (to which the prisoner had made a false and movable frame) and forwarded to Trenck’s rich friends. His appeal was always answered promptly and amply. More valuable than money were two files, also procured from Gefhardt, and by their means the new chains were speedily cut through, though, as before, without any apparent break. Having freed his limbs, he began to saw through the floor of his cell, which was of wood. Underneath, instead of hard rock, there was sand, which Trenck scooped out with his hands. This earth was passed through the window to Gefhardt, who removed it when he was on guard, and gave his friend pistols, a bayonet and knives to assist him when he had finally made his escape.

All seemed going smoothly. The foundations of the prison were only four feet deep, and Trenck's tunnel had reached a considerable distance when everything was again spoilt. A letter written by Trenck to Vienna fell into the hands of the governor, owing to some stupidity on the part of Gefhardt's wife, who had been entrusted to deliver it. The letter does not seem to have contained any special disclosure of his plan of escape, as the governor, who was still Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, could find nothing wrong in Trenck's cell except the false window frame. The cut chains, though examined, somehow escaped detection, from which we gather either that the officials were very careless, or the carpenter very stupid. Perhaps both may have been the case, for as the Seven Years' War (against Austria) was at this time raging, sentinels and officers were frequently changed, and prison discipline insensibly relaxed. Had this not been so, Trenck could never have been able to labour unseen, but as it was, he was merely deprived of his bed, as a punishment for tampering with the window.

As soon as he had recovered from his fright and an illness which followed, he returned to his digging. It was necessary for him to bore under the subterranean gallery of the principal rampart, which was a distance of thirty-seven feet, and to get outside the foundation of the rampart. Beyond that was a door leading to the second rampart. Trenck was forced to work naked, for fear of raising the suspicions of the officials by his dirty clothes, but in spite of all his precautions and the wilful blindness of his guards, who as usual were on his side, all was at length discovered. His hole was filled up, and a year's work lost.

The next torture invented for him was worse than any that had gone before. He was visited and awakened every quarter of an hour, in order that he might not set to work in the night. This lasted for four years, during part of which time Trenck employed himself in writing verses and making drawings on his tin cups, after the manner of all prisoners, and in writing books with his blood, as ink was forbidden. We are again left in ignorance as to how he got paper. He also began to scoop out another hole, but was discovered afresh, though nothing particular seems to have been done to him, partly owing to the kindness of the new governor, who soon afterwards died.

It had been arranged by his friends that for the space of one year horses should be ready for him at a certain place, on the first and fifteenth of every month. Inspired by this thought, he turned to his burrowing with renewed vigour, and worked away at every moment when he thought he could do so unseen. One day, however, when he had reached some distance, he dislodged a large stone which blocked up the opening towards his cell. His terror was frightful. Not only was the air suffocating and the darkness dreadful, but he knew that if any of the guards were unexpectedly to come into his cell, the opening must be discovered, and all his toil again lost. For eight hours he stayed in the tunnel paralysed by fear. Then he roused himself, and by dint of superhuman struggles managed to open a passage on one side of the stone, and to reach his cell, which for once appeared to him as a haven of rest.

Soon after this the war ended with the Peace of Paris (1763), and Trenck's hopes of release seemed likely to be realised. He procured money from his friends, and bribed the Austrian Ambassador in Berlin to open negotiations on his behalf, and while these were impending he rested from his labours for three whole months. Suddenly he was possessed by an idea which was little less than madness. He bribed a major to ask for a visit from Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, again governor of Magdeburg, offering to disclose his passage, and to reveal all his plans of escape, on condition that the Duke would promise to plead for him with the King. This message never reached the Duke himself, but some officers arrived ostensibly sent by him, but in reality tools of the major's. They listened to all he had to say, and saw all he had to show, then broke their word, filled up the passage, and redoubled the chains and the watch.

Notwithstanding this terrible blow, Trenck's trials were drawing to an end. Whether Frederic's heart was softened by his brilliant victories, or whether Trenck's influential friends succeeded in making themselves heard, we do not know, but six months later he was set free, on condition that he never tried to revenge himself on any one, and that he never again should cross the frontiers of Saxony or Prussia.

THE ADVENTURE OF JOHN RAWLINS

IN the year 1621, one John Rawlins, native of Rochester, sailed from Plymouth in a ship called the ‘Nicholas,’ which had in its company another ship of Plymouth, and had a fair voyage till they came within sight of Gibraltar. Then the watch saw five sails that seemed to do all in their power to come up with the ‘Nicholas,’ which, on its part, suspecting them to be pirates, hoisted all the sail it could; but to no avail, for before the day was over, the Turkish ships of war — for so they proved to be — not only overtook the Plymouth ships, but made them both prisoners.

Then they sailed for Argier, which, when they reached, the English prisoners were sold as slaves, being hurried like dogs into the market, as men sell horses in England, and marched up and down to see who would give most for them. And though they had heavy hearts and sad countenances, yet many came to behold them, sometimes taking them by the hand, sometimes turning them round about, sometimes feeling their arms and muscles, and bargaining for them accordingly, till at last they were sold.

John Rawlins was the last who was sold, because his hand was lame, and he was bought by the very captain who took him, named Villa Rise, who, knowing Rawlins’ skill as a pilot, bought him and his carpenter at a very low rate — paying for Rawlins seven pounds ten reckoned in English money. Then he sent them to work with other slaves: but the Turks, seeing that through Rawlins’ lame hand he could not do so much as the rest, complained to their master, who told him that unless he could obtain a ransom of fifteen pounds, he should be banished inland, where he would never see Christendom again.

But while John Rawlins was terrified with this stern threat of Villa Rise, there was lying in the harbour another English ship that had been surprised by the pirates — the ‘Exchange,’ of Bristol. This ship was bought by an English Turk, who made captain of it another English Turk, and because they were both renegades, they concluded to have English and Dutch slaves to go in her. So it came about that, inquiring if any English slave were to be sold who could serve them as pilot, they heard of John Rawlins, and forthwith bought him of his master, Villa Rise.

By January 7 the ship left Argier, with, on board her, sixty-three Turks and Moors, nine English slaves, and a French slave, four Dutchmen, who were free, and four gunners, one English, and one Dutch renegade.

Now, the English slaves were employed for the most part under hatches, and had to labour hard, all of which John Rawlins took to heart, thinking it a terrible lot to be subject to such pain and danger only to enrich other men, and themselves to return as slaves. Therefore he broke out at last with such words as these:

‘Oh, horrible slavery, to be thus subject to dogs! Oh, Heaven strengthen my heart and hand, and something shall be done to deliver us from these cruel Mahometan dogs!’

The other slaves, pitying what they thought his madness, bade him speak softly, lest they should all fare the worse for his rashness.

‘Worse,’ said Rawlins, ‘what can be worse? I will either regain my liberty at one time or another, or perish in the attempt; but if you would agree to join with me in the undertaking, I doubt not but we should find some way of winning glory with our freedom.’

‘Prithee be quiet,’ they returned, ‘and do not think of impossibilities, though, if indeed you could open some way of escape, so that we should not be condemned as madmen for trying as it were to pull the sun out of the heavens, then we would risk our lives; and you may be sure of silence.’

After this the slavery continued, and the Turks set their captives to work at all the meanest tasks, and even when they laboured hardest, flogged and reviled them, till more and more John Rawlins became resolved to recover his liberty and surprise the ship. So he provided ropes with broad spikes of iron, and all the iron crows, with which he could, with the help of the others, fasten up the scuttles, gratings, and cabins, and even shut up the captain himself with his companions; and so he intended to work the enterprise, that, at a certain watchword, the English being masters of the gunner-room and the powder, would either be ready to blow the Turks into the air, or kill them as they came out one by one, if by any chance they forced open the cabins.

Then, very cautiously, he told the four free Dutchmen of his plot, and last of all the Dutch renegades, who were also in the gunner-room; and all these consented readily to so daring an enterprise. So he fixed the time for the venture in the captain’s morning watch.

But you must understand that where the English slaves were there always hung four or five iron crows, just under the gun carriages, and when the time came it was very dark, so that John Rawlins, in taking out his iron dropped it on the side of the gun, making such a noise that the soldiers, hearing it, waked the Turks and told them to come down. At this the boatswain of the Turks descended with a candle, and searched everywhere, making a great deal of stir, but finding neither hatchet nor hammer, nor anything else suspicious, only the iron which lay slipped down under the gun-carriages, he went quietly up again and told the captain what had happened, who thought that it was no remarkable thing to have an iron slip from its place. But through this John Rawlins was forced to wait for another opportunity.

When they had sailed further northward there happened another suspicious accident, for Rawlins had told his scheme to the renegade gunner, who promised secrecy by everything that could induce one to believe in him. But immediately after he left Rawlins, and was absent about a quarter of an hour, when he returned and sat down again by him. Presently, as they were talking, in came a furious Turk, with his sword drawn, who threatened Rawlins as if he would certainly kill him. This made Rawlins suspect that the renegade gunner had betrayed him; and he stepped back and drew out his knife, also taking the gunner's out of its sheath; so that the Turk, seeing him with *two* knives, threw down his sword, saying he was only jesting. But the gunner, seeing that Rawlins suspected him, whispered something in his ear, calling Heaven to witness that he had never breathed a word of the enterprise, and never would. Nevertheless, Rawlins kept the knives in his sleeve all night, and was somewhat troubled, though afterwards the gunner proved faithful and zealous in the undertaking.

All this time Rawlins persuaded the captain, who himself had little knowledge of seamanship, to steer northward, meaning to draw him away from the neighbourhood of other Turkish vessels. On February 6 they descried a sail, and at once the Turks gave chase, and made her surrender. It proved to be a ship from near Dartmouth, laden with silk. As it was stormy weather, the Turks did not put down their boat, but made the master of the conquered ship put down his, and come on board with five of his men and a boy, while ten of the Turks' men, among whom were one English and two Dutch renegades belonging to the conspiracy, went to man the prize instead.

But when Rawlins saw this division of his friends, before they could set out for the other ship, he found means to tell them plainly that he would complete his enterprise either that night or the next, and that whatever came of it they must acquaint the four English left on the captured ship with his resolution, and steer for England while the Turks slept and suspected nothing. For, by God's grace, in his first watch he would show them a light, to let them know that the enterprise was begun, or about to be begun.

So the boat reached the ship from Dartmouth; and next Rawlins told the captain and his men whom the Turks had sent down among the other prisoners of his design, and found them willing to throw in their lot with him.

The next morning, being February 7, the prize from Dartmouth was not to be seen — the men indeed having followed Rawlins' counsel and steered for England. But the Turkish captain began to storm and swear, telling Rawlins to search the seas up and down for her — which he did all day without success. Then Rawlins, finding a good deal of water in the hold, persuaded the captain, by telling him that the ship was not rightly balanced, to have four of the guns brought aft, that the water might run to the pump. This being done, and the guns placed where the English could use them for their own purpose, the final arrangement was made. The ship having three decks, those that belonged to the gunner-room were all to be there, and break up the lower deck. The English slaves, who belonged to the middle deck, were to do the same with that, and watch the scuttles. Rawlins himself prevailed with the gunner to give him as much powder as would prime the guns, and told them all there was no better watchword than, when the signal gun was heard, to cry:

'For God, and King James, and Saint George for England.'

Then, all being prepared, and every man resolute, knowing what he had to do, Rawlins advised the gunner to speak to the captain, that he might send the soldiers to the poop, to bring the ship aft, and, weighing it down, send the water to the pumps. This the captain was very willing to do; and so, at two o'clock in the afternoon the signal was given, by the firing of the gun, whose report tore and broke down all the binnacle and compasses.

But when the Turks heard this, and the shouts of the conspirators, and saw that part of ship was torn away, and felt it shake under them, and knew that all threatened their destruction — no bear robbed of her whelps was ever so mad as they, for they not only called us dogs, and cried in their tongue, 'The fortune of war! the fortune of war!' but they tried to tear up the planking, setting to work hammers, hatchets, knives, the oars of the boat, the boat hook, and whatever else came to hand, besides the stones and bricks of the cook-room, still trying to break the hatches, and never ceasing their horrible cries and curses.

Then Rawlins, seeing them so violent, and understanding that the slaves had cleared the decks of all the Turks and Moors underneath, began to shoot at them through different scoutholes, with their own muskets, and so lessened their number. At this they cried for the pilot, and so Rawlins, with some to guard him, went to them, and understood by their kneeling that they cried for mercy and begged to come down. This they were bidden to do, but coming down one by one, they were taken and slain with their own curtleaxes. And the rest, perceiving this, some of them leapt into the water, still crying: 'The fortune of war!' and calling their foes English dogs, and some were slain with the curtleaxes, till the decks were well cleared, and the victory assured.

At the first report of the gun, and the hurly-burly on deck, the captain was writing in his cabin, and he came out with his curtleaxe in hand, thinking by his authority to quell the mischief. But when he saw that the ship was surprised, he threw down his curtleaxe, and begged Rawlins to save his life, telling him how he had redeemed him from Villa Rise, and put him in command in the ship, besides treating him well through the voyage. This Rawlins confessed, and at last consented to be merciful, and brought the captain and five more renegades into England.

When all was done, and the ship cleared of the dead bodies, John Rawlins assembled his men, and with one consent gave the praise to God, using the accustomed services on shipboard. And for want of books they lifted up their voices to God, as He put it into their hearts or renewed their memories. Then did they sing a psalm, and last of all, embraced one another for playing the men in such a deliverance, whereby their fear was turned into joy. That same night they steered for England, and arrived at Plymouth on February 13, and were welcomed with all gladness.

As for the ship from Dartmouth, that had arrived in Penzance on February 11, for the English had made the Turks believe that they were sailing to Argier, till they came in sight of England. Then one of the Turks said plainly *that the land was not like Cape Vincent*; but the Englishmen told them to go down into the hold, and trim more to windward, and they should see and know more to-morrow. Thereupon five of them went down very orderly, while the English feigned themselves asleep; but presently they started up, and nailed down the hatches, and so overpowered the Turks. And this is the story of this enterprise, and the end of John Rawlins' voyage.

THE CHEVALIER JOHNSTONE'S ESCAPE FROM CULLODEN

THE Chevalier Johnstone (or *de* Johnstone, as he preferred to call himself) was closely connected with the Highland army, hastily collected in 1745 for the purpose of restoring Charles Edward to his grandfather's throne. He was aide-de-camp to Lord George Murray, Generalissimo to the little force, and seems to have known enough of warfare to be capable of appreciating his commander's skill. He was also a captain in the regiment of the Duke of Perth, and later, when the petals of the White Rose were trampled under foot, he became an officer in the French service.

From his position, therefore, he was peculiarly fitted to tell the tale of those two eventful years, 1745 and 1746. Though only the son of a merchant, Johnstone was well connected, and, like many Scottish gentlemen of that day, had been bred in loyalty to the Jacobite cause. He was one of the first to join the Prince when he had reached Perth, and it was from the Prince himself that he received his company, after the fight at Prestonpans. His life was all romance, but the part on which it is our present purpose to dwell is the account he has left in his memoirs of his escape from the field of Culloden, and the terrible sufferings he went through for some months, till he finally made his way safely to Holland.

'The battle of Culloden,' he says, 'was lost rather by a series of mistakes on our part than by any skilful manœuvre of the Duke of Cumberland,' and every Scot in arms knew too well the doom that awaited him at the 'Butcher's' hands. The half-starved Highlanders were no match for the well-fed English troops, and when the day was lost, and the rout became general, each man sought to conceal himself in the fastnesses of the nearest mountains, and, as long as he put himself well out of reach, was not particular as to the means he took to purchase safety.

Panics disclose strange and unexpected depths in men's minds, and Johnstone was in no respect superior to his fellows. 'Being no longer able to keep myself on my legs,' he relates, 'and the enemy always advancing very slowly, but redoubling their fire, my mind was agitated and undecided whether I should throw away my life, or surrender a prisoner, which was a thousand times worse than death on the field of battle. All at once I perceived a horse, about thirty paces before me, without a rider. The idea of being yet able to escape gave me fresh strength and served as a spur to me. I ran and laid hold of the bridle, which was fast in the hand of a man lying on the ground, whom I supposed dead; but, what was my surprise when the cowardly poltroon, who was suffering from nothing but fear, dared to remain in the most horrible fire to dispute the horse with me, at twenty paces from the enemy. All my menaces could not induce him to quit the bridle. Whilst we were disputing, a discharge from a cannon loaded with grape-shot fell at our feet, without however producing any effect upon this singular individual, who obstinately persisted in retaining the horse. Fortunately for me, Finlay Cameron, an officer in Lochiel's regiment, a youth of twenty years of age, six feet high, and very strong and vigorous, happened to pass near us. I called on him to assist me. "Ah Finlay," said I, "this fellow will not give me up the horse." Finlay flew to me like lightning, immediately presented his pistol to the head of this man, and threatened to blow out his brains if he hesitated a moment to let go the bridle. The fellow, who had the appearance of a servant, at length yielded and took to his heels. Having obtained the horse, I attempted to mount him several times, but all my efforts were ineffectual, as I was without strength and completely exhausted. I called again on poor Finlay, though he was already some paces from me, to assist me to mount. He returned, took me in his arms, with as much ease as if I had been a child, and threw me on the horse like a loaded sack, giving the horse at the same time a heavy blow to make him set off with me. Then wishing that I might have the good fortune to make my escape, he bounded off like a roe, and was in a moment out of sight. We were hardly more than fifteen or twenty paces from the enemy when he quitted me. As soon as I found myself at the distance of thirty or forty paces, I endeavoured to set myself right on the horse, put my feet in the stirrups, and rode off as fast as the wretched animal could carry me.'

There is something peculiarly funny in the simplicity of this account of horse-stealing with violence! Why a man should be more of a coward who clings to his own property and only means of safety, than the person who deliberately deprives him of both, is not easy to see. But Johnstone never doubts for one moment that what he does is always right, and what anyone else does is always wrong, and he goes on complacently to remark that he probably 'saved the life of the poltroon who held the horse, in rousing him out of his panic fear, for in less than two minutes the English army would have passed over him.’

The shelter which Johnstone made up his mind to seek was the castle of Rothiemurchus, the property of the Grant family, situated in the heart of the mountains, and on the banks of the ‘rapid Spey.’ But his troubles were not so easily over. The English army barred the way, and Johnstone was forced to take the road to Inverness. Again he was turned from his path by the dreaded sight of the British uniform, and, accompanied by a Highlander whom he had met by chance, he took refuge in a small cottage in Fort Augustus. In spite of his peculiar views about courage, Johnstone was a man who generally managed to do whatever he had set his heart on. He had resolved to go to Rothiemurchus, and to Rothiemurchus he would go. At last he arrived there, but found, to his great disappointment, that the laird, his old friend, was away from home. In his place was his eldest son, who was urgent that Johnstone should surrender himself a prisoner, as Lord Balmerino had just done, by his advice, and under his escort. Johnstone replied that he would keep his liberty as long as he could, and when it was no longer possible, he would meet his fate with resignation. We all know the end to which poor Balmerino came, but Johnstone was more fortunate.

His brother-in-law, the son of Lord Rollo, had been made inspector of merchant ships in the town of Banff, and Johnstone fondly hoped that by his help he might obtain a passage to some foreign country. So he set off with three gentlemen of the name of Gordon, who had also been staying at Rothiemurchus, and rested the first night at the house of a shepherd near the mountain of Cairngorm. Here he saw for the first time the stones which bear this name, and though he is flying for his life, he dwells with the delight of a collector on the beauty of the colours, and even persuades his friends to put off their departure for a day, in order that he may search for some specimens himself. He contrived, he tells us, to find several beautiful topazes, two of which he had cut as seals, and presented to the Duke of York, brother of Prince Charles Edward.

Four days after leaving Rothiemurchus Banff was reached, and the fugitives were sheltered by a Presbyterian minister, who was a secret adherent of the Stuarts. Johnstone at once took the precaution of exchanging his laced Highland dress for that of an old labourer, ‘quite ragged, and exhaling a pestilential odour,’ due apparently to its having been used for many years ‘when he cleaned the stables of his master.’ In this unpleasant disguise, he entered the town of Banff, then garrisoned with four hundred English soldiers, and went straight to the house of a former acquaintance, Mr. Duff. After gaining admittance from the servant with some difficulty, he found with dismay that his brother-in-law was away from home, and he could not therefore carry out his plan of embarking, with his permission, on board one of the merchant ships. There seemed nothing for it, therefore, but for Johnstone to return at daybreak to the house of Mr. Gordon, where he had spent the previous night. At daybreak, however, he was roused by a fearful disturbance in the courtyard below, occasioned by the quarrels of some stray soldiers. For a moment he thought death was certain, but the soldiers had no suspicion of his presence in the house, and as soon as they had settled their affairs took themselves off elsewhere.

Mr. Rollo proved a broken reed, and the Chevalier found, after a few minutes' talk with his brother-in-law, that if he wished to reach the Continent he must not count on a passage in the merchant ships to help him. He therefore, after consultation with his friends, came to the conclusion that his best plan was to make for the Lowlands, and to this end he set out for Edinburgh as soon as possible. Of course this scheme was beset with difficulties and dangers of every kind. The counties through which he would be forced to pass were filled with Calvinists, inspired with deadly hatred of the Jacobite party. To escape their hands was almost certainly to fall into those of the soldiery, and over and above this, government passports were necessary for those who desired to cross the Firths of Forth and Tay.

But, nothing daunted, Johnstone went his way. He was passed in disguise from one house to another, well-fed at the lowest possible prices (he tells us of the landlady of a small inn who charged him threepence for 'an excellent young fowl' and his bed), till at last he found himself in the region of Cortachy, the country of the Ogilvies, who one and all were on the side of the Prince. At Cortachy he was quite secure, as long as no English soldiery came by, and even if they did, the mountains were full of hiding places, and there was no risk of treachery at home. Two officers who had served in the French army, Brown and Gordon by name, had sought refuge here before him, and lay concealed in the house of a peasant known as Samuel. They implored him not to run the risk of proceeding south till affairs had quieted down a little, and he agreed to remain at Samuel's cottage till it seemed less dangerous to travel south.

It would be interesting to know what was 'the gratification beyond his hopes' which Johnstone gave Samuel when they parted company some time after. It ought to have been something very handsome considering the risks which the peasant had run in his behalf, and also the fact that for several weeks Johnstone and his two friends had shared the scanty fare of Samuel and his family. They had 'no other food than oatmeal, and no other drink than the water of the stream which ran through the glen. We breakfasted every morning on a piece of oatmeal bread which we were enabled to swallow by draughts of water; for dinner we boiled oatmeal with water, till it acquired a consistency, and we ate it with horn spoons; in the evening, we poured boiling water on this meal in a dish, for our supper.’ Even this frugal diet could not be swallowed long in peace, for shortly after their arrival, Samuel’s daughter, who lived at the mouth of the glen, came to inform her father that some English troops had been seen in the neighbourhood, and whenever there was any chance of their appearing in the glen Johnstone and his friends had to take refuge in the mountains.

One day this woman arrived with the news that the soldiery were hovering dangerously near, and had taken several notable prisoners. Upon this the fugitives decided to leave their shelter at daybreak the following morning and to make the best of their way to the Highlands, where they would be sure of finding some rocks and caverns to hide them from their foes.

This resolution once taken, they all went early to bed, and there Johnstone had a dream which he relates with many apologies for his superstition. He fancied himself in Edinburgh safe from the snares of his enemies, and with no fears for the future, and describing his adventures and escapes since the battle of Culloden to his old friend Lady Jane Douglas. The impression of peace and happiness and relief from anxiety was so strong that it remained with him after he woke, and after lying turning the matter over in his mind for another hour, informed Samuel (who had come to rouse him with the intelligence that his companions had already set off for the mountains) that he had altered his plans and intended to go straight to Edinburgh. In vain the old man argued and entreated. Johnstone was determined, and that same evening he set forth on horseback with Samuel for his guide, and made straight for the nearest arm of the sea, which he describes, though quite wrongly, as being only eight miles from Cortachy.

To reach this, they were obliged to pass through Forfar, a town which, being a Calvinistic stronghold, the Chevalier can never mention without an abusive epithet. But here poor Samuel, whose nerves had doubtless been strained by the perpetual watching and waiting of the last few weeks, was frightened out of his senses by the barking of a dog, and tried to throw himself from his horse. At this juncture, Johnstone, who knew that to be left without a guide in this strange place meant certain death, interfered promptly. ‘He was continually struggling to get down,’ he says, ‘but I prevented him by the firm hold I had of his coat. I exhorted him to be quiet; I reproached him; I alternately entreated and menaced him; but all in vain. He no longer knew what he was about, and it was to no purpose I assured him that it was only the barking of a dog. He perspired at every pore, and trembled like a person in an ague. Fortunately I had an excellent horse, and galloped through Forfar at full speed, retaining always fast hold of his coat. As soon as we were fairly out of the town, as no persons had come out of their houses, poor Samuel began to breathe again, and made a thousand apologies for his fears.'

As the day broke and they drew near Broughty Ferry, where Johnstone intended to cross the Firth of Tay, the Chevalier dismounted, and being obliged to part from his horse, offered it as a present to Samuel, who declined the animal from motives of prudence. It was then turned loose in a field (the saddle and bridle being first thrown down a well), and the wayfarers proceeded on their way. Only a few minutes later, they were joined by an acquaintance of Samuel's, who seems to have been of a curious turn of mind, and cross-questioned him as to where he was going and why. Samuel, with more readiness than could have been expected from his recent behaviour, invented a story that sounded plausible enough, explaining Johnstone to be a young man whom he had picked up on the road, and had taken into his service at low wages, owing to his want of a character. The stranger was satisfied, and after a prolonged drink they separated, when Samuel informed Johnstone that the man was one of the 'greatest knaves and cheats in the country,' and that they would assuredly have been betrayed if he had discovered who they were.

They arrived at the Ferry about nine in the morning, and by Samuel's advice, the Chevalier immediately sought the help of Mr. Graham, a gentleman of Jacobite family, then living at Duntroon. After a warm welcome from Mr. Graham, who gave him all the entertainment he could without the knowledge of his servants, a boat was engaged to convey him across the Firth about nine that night. Mr. Graham did not, however, dare to be his guide down to the sea-shore, but gave him careful directions as to his following an old woman who had been provided for this purpose. But all Mr. Graham's precautions would have been useless, had not chance once more favoured the Chevalier. His protectress decided that it would be dangerous to allow him to loiter about the shore while the boat was getting ready for sea, so she told her charge to wait for her on the road on top of the hill, and she would return and fetch him when all was ready. Half an hour passed very slowly: the sun was sinking, and the Chevalier grew impatient. He left the road by which he had been sitting, and lay down in a furrow a few yards off, nearer the brow of the hill, so that he might perceive his guide at the earliest moment. Scarcely had he changed his quarters, than he heard the sound of horses, and peeping cautiously out, 'saw eight or ten horsemen pass in the very place he had just quitted.' No sooner were they out of sight, than the old woman arrived, trembling with fright. ‘Ah!’ she exclaimed in a transport of joy, ‘I did not expect to find you here.’ She then explained that the horsemen were English dragoons, and that they had so threatened the boatmen engaged by Mr. Graham that they absolutely refused to fulfil their compact. This was a terrible blow to the Chevalier, but he declined to listen to the old woman’s advice and return for shelter to Mr. Graham, and after much persuasion, induced his guide to show him the way to the public-house by the sea-shore. Here he was welcomed by the landlady, whose son had been likewise ‘out’ with the Prince, but neither her entreaties nor those of the Chevalier could move the boatmen from their resolution. They even resisted the prayers of the landlady’s two beautiful daughters, till the girls, disgusted and indignant with such cowardice, offered to row him across themselves.

‘We left Broughty Ferry,’ he writes in his memoirs, ‘at ten o’clock in the evening, and reached the opposite shore about midnight.’ He then took an affectionate leave of his preservers, and proceeded, footsore as he was, to walk to St. Andrews. At this time Johnstone seems to have felt more physically exhausted than at almost any other moment of his travels; and it was only by dint of perpetually washing his sore and bleeding feet in the streams he passed, that he managed to reach St. Andrews towards eight o’clock. He at once made his way to the house of his cousin, Mrs. Spence, who, herself a suspected person, was much taken aback by the sight of him, and hastily sent a letter to a tenant farmer living near the town, to provide the fugitive with a horse which would carry him to Wemyss, a seaport town on the way to Edinburgh. The old University city does not appear to have made a favourable impression on the Chevalier. He declares that no town ‘ever deserved so much the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah,’ and this, not from any particular wickedness on the part of the inhabitants, but because they were supposed to be Calvinists. However, his sentiments must have been confirmed when the farmer declined to take his horses out on a Sunday, and, lame as he was, Johnstone had no choice but to set out on foot for Wemyss. Halfway, he suddenly remembered that close by lived an old servant of his family, married to the gardener of Mr. Beaton, of Balfour. Here he was housed and fed for twenty hours, and then conducted by his host, a rigid Presbyterian, to a tavern at Wemyss, kept by the mother-in-law of the gardener. By her advice they applied to a man named Salmon, who, though a rabid Hanoverian, could be trusted not to betray those who had faith in him. It was hard work to gain over Salmon, who was proof against bribery, but at last it was done. By his recommendation Johnstone was to lie till dawn in a cave near Wemyss (a place whose name means ‘caves’), and with the first ray of light was to beg a passage to Leith from some men who were with Salmon part owners of a boat. In this cave, which, notwithstanding its narrow entrance, was deep and spacious, the Chevalier was glad to repose his weary bones. But, after dozing about an hour, he was ‘awakened by the most horrible and alarming cries that ever were heard.’ His first thought was that Salmon had betrayed him, and he retreated to the interior of the cavern, cocked his pistol, and prepared to sell his life dearly. Soon, however, the swift movements accompanying the noise convinced him that it did not proceed from men, for ‘sometimes the object was about my ears, and nearly stunned me, and, in an instant, at a considerable distance. At length I ceased to examine any more this horrible and incomprehensible phenomenon, which made a noise in confusion like that of a number of trumpets and drums, with a mixture of different sounds, altogether unknown to me.’

Effectually aroused by the whining of the owls and bats (for these, of course, were the authors of all this disturbance), Johnstone fixed his eyes on the sea to note the first entrance of the fishing boats into the harbour. He then went down to the shore and began to make the bargain as directed by Salmon, and the fishermen agreed to land him at Leith for half-a-crown. But alas! once more his hopes were blighted. He was in the act of stepping into the boat, when Salmon’s wife appeared on the scene, and forbade her husband to go to Leith that day, still less to take a stranger there. Neither Salmon nor Johnstone dared insist, for fear of rousing the woman’s suspicions, and after a short retreat in the cave in order to collect his thoughts, he returned to the tavern at Wemyss, to consult with the friendly landlady. Thanks to her, and with the help of one or two people to whom she introduced him, Johnstone at last arrived at the house of one Mr. Seton, whose son had formerly served with Johnstone in the army of the Prince. Here he remained eight days, vainly seeking to find a second man who could aid the fisherman who had already promised to put him across, though it does not appear why Johnstone, who had already observed that he was able to row, did not take an oar when his own head was at stake.

At last affairs were brought to a crisis, by rumours having got abroad of the presence of a fugitive on the coast. Things seemed in a desperate condition, when young Seton threw himself into the breach, and agreed to help Cousselain, the fisherman, to take the Chevalier to Leith. They were actually launching the boat when the inhabitants of the village, alarmed by the noise they made, raised a cry that a rebel was escaping, and the two oarsmen had barely time to conceal themselves without being discovered. However, in flat defiance of everyone’s advice, and, as it turned out, in spite of the drunken state of Cousselain, Johnstone resolved to repeat the attempt in an hour’s time, taking in the end, as he might have done at the beginning, his place at the oar. For a few moments they breathed freely; then the wind got up, and the waves, and, what was perhaps more dangerous, the drunken Cousselain, who had been placed in the bottom of the boat. ‘We were obliged to kick him most unmercifully in order to keep him quiet,’ observes Johnstone, ‘and to threaten to throw him overboard if he made the least movement. Seton and myself rowed like galley slaves. We succeeded in landing, about six in the morning, on a part of the coast a league and a half to the east of Edinburgh, near the battlefield of Gladsmuir.’ Here he parted with his deliverers, tenderly embracing young Seton, and presenting to the ‘somewhat sober’ Cousselain a gratification beyond his hopes.

After taking a little of the food with which Mr. Seton had provided him, he determined to seek refuge for a few days with an old governess, Mrs. Blythe, wife of a small shipowner at Leith. Blythe himself was another of the many ‘rigid Calvinists and sworn enemies of the house of Stuart’ to whom Johnstone entrusted his safety during his wanderings, and never once had occasion to repent it. Mr. Blythe, indeed, combined the profession of Calvinist with that of smuggler, and had numerous hiding places in his house for the concealment of contraband goods, which would prove equally serviceable, as Johnstone told him, for ‘the most contraband and dangerous commodity that he had ever had in his possession.’

Though Johnstone had reached the goal of his desires, his perils were by no means at an end. English soldiers visited the house, and could with difficulty be persuaded to admit the exemption pleaded by Mr. Blythe. In consequence of this event, Johnstone accepted the offer of an asylum made him by Lady Jane Douglas, in her place at Drumsheugh, half a league away. So his dream came true, and after all his wanderings he was safe with Lady Jane, telling the story of his adventures. He remained with her for two months, unknown to anyone but his hostess and the gardener, reading all day, and only taking a walk at night, when the household was in bed. At the end of that time, when Lady Jane and his father were of opinion that he might safely go to London, and thence abroad, fresh rumours as to his whereabouts began to arise, and fearing the immediate visit of a detachment of English soldiers, he was concealed for a whole day under a huge haycock, so overcome by the heat that he could hardly breathe, in spite of a bottle of water and another of wine, with which he was provided.

This measure, which after all was needless, for no soldiers came, was the last trial he had to undergo before leaving Scotland, and here we must part from him. In France, which he made his home, he became the friend of many eminent men, and was aide-de-camp in Canada to the Marquis de Montcalm. But the end of his life was sad, and he died in poverty.

THE ADVENTURES OF LORD PITSLIGO

WHEN Prince Charles came to Scotland in 1745, to seek his grandfather’s crown, no braver and no better man rode with him than Lord Pitsligo. He was now sixty-seven years of age, for he was born in 1678, ten years before James II. was driven out of England. As a young man he had lived much in France, where he became the friend of the famous Fénelon, author of ‘Télémaque.’ Though much interested in the doctrines of Fénelon, Lord Pitsligo did not change his faith, but remained a member of the persecuted Episcopal Church of Scotland. In France he met the members of the exiled Royal family, whom he never ceased to regard as his lawful monarchs, though Queen Anne, and later the First and Second Georges, occupied the throne of England. When the clans rose for King James, the son of James II., in 1715, Lord Pitsligo, then a man of twenty-seven, joined the forces under his kinsman, Lord Marr. His party was defeated, and he went abroad. He did not stay long with James in Rome, but was allowed to return to his estates in Scotland. Here he lived very quietly, beloved by rich and poor. But, in 1745, Prince Charles landed, and the old Lord believed it to be his duty to join him. He had, as he says, no keen enthusiasm for the Stuarts, but to his mind they were his lawful rulers. So aged was he, and so infirm, that, when he left a neighbour’s house before setting out, a little boy brought a stool to help him to mount his horse. ‘My little fellow,’ he said, ‘this is the severest reproof I have yet met with, for presuming to go on such an expedition.’ Lady Pitsligo in vain reminded him of the failure of 1715. ‘There never was a bridal,’ he replied, ‘but the second day was the best.’ The gentlemen of his county thought that they could not do wrong in following so learned and excellent a man, so they all mounted the white cockade and rode with him. He arrived just too late for the victory of Preston Pans. ‘It seemed,’ said an eye-witness, ‘as if religion, virtue, and justice were entering the camp under the appearance of this venerable old man.’ When he wrote home, he said, ‘I had occasion to discover the Prince’s humanity, I ought to say tenderness: this is giving myself no great airs, for he showed the same dispositions to everybody.’ In the fatigues of the campaign, the Prince, who was young and strong, insisted on Lord Pitsligo’s using his carriage, while he himself marched on foot at the head of his army.

After the defeat of Culloden, Lord Pitsligo hid among the mountains, living on oatmeal, moistened with hot water. They had not even salt to their brose; for, as one of the Highlanders said, ‘Salt is touchy,’ meaning expensive. Yet these men, who could not even buy salt, never betrayed their Prince for the great reward of thirty thousand pounds, nor any of the other gentlemen in hiding. Possibly they did not believe that there was so much money in the world. Lord Pitsligo had made up his mind not to go abroad again, but to live or die among his own people. At one time he lay for days hidden in a damp hole under a little bridge, and at other times concealed himself in the mosses and moors. Here the lapwings, flitting and crying above him, were like to have drawn the English soldiers to his retreat. His wife gave him two great bags, like those which beggars carried; in these he would place the alms which were given to him, and in this disguise he had many narrow escapes. Once he saw some dragoons on the road behind him, but he was too old and too ill to run. He was obliged to sit down and cough, and one of the dragoons who were in search of him actually gave him some money as they passed by, and condoled with him on the severity of his cough.

Lord Pitsligo often hid in a cave on the coast of Buchan. Here was a spring of water welling through the rock, and he carved a little cistern for it, to pass the time. He was fed by a little girl, too young to be suspected, who carried his meals from a neighbouring farm. One day he was sitting in the kitchen of the farm, when some soldiers came in, and asked the goodwife to guide them to Lord Pitsligo’s cave. She said, ‘That travelling body will go with you,’ and Lord Pitsligo conducted the soldiers to his hiding place, left them there, and walked back to the farm. But the following adventure was perhaps his narrowest escape.

In March 1756, and of course long after all apprehension of a search had ceased, information having been given to the then commanding officer at Fraserburgh, that Lord Pitsligo was at that moment in the house of Auchiries, it was acted upon with so much promptness and secrecy, that the search must have proved successful but for a very singular occurrence. Mrs. Sophia Donaldson, a lady who lived much with the family, repeatedly dreamt on that particular night that the house was surrounded by soldiers. Her mind became so haunted with the idea, that she got out of bed, and was walking through the room in hopes of giving a different current to her thoughts before she lay down again, when, day beginning to dawn, she accidentally looked out at the window as she passed it in traversing the room, and was astonished at actually observing the figures of soldiers among some trees near the house. So completely had all idea of a search been by that time laid asleep, that she supposed they had come to steal poultry; Jacobite poultry-yards affording a safe object of pillage for the English soldiers in those days. Under this impression Mrs. Sophia was proceeding to rouse the servants, when her sister having awaked, and inquiring what was the matter, and being told of soldiers near the house, exclaimed, in great alarm, that she feared they wanted something more than hens. She begged Mrs. Sophia to look out at a window on the other side of the house, when not only soldiers were seen in that direction, but also an officer giving instructions by signals, and frequently putting his fingers on his lips, as if enjoining silence. There was now no time to be lost in rousing the family, and all the haste that could be made was scarcely sufficient to hurry the venerable man from his bed, into a small recess behind the wainscot of an adjoining room, which was concealed by a bed, in which a lady, Miss Gordon of Towie, who was there on a visit, lay, before the soldiers obtained admission. A most minute search took place. The room in which Lord Pitsligo was concealed did not escape: Miss Gordon's bed was carefully examined, and she was obliged to suffer the rude scrutiny of one of the party, by feeling her chin, to ascertain that it was not a man in a lady's night-dress. Before the soldiers had finished their examination in this room, the confinement and anxiety increased Lord Pitsligo's asthma so much, and his breathing became so loud, that it obliged Miss Gordon, lying in bed, to counterfeit and continue a violent coughing, in order to prevent the high breathing behind the wainscot from being heard. It may easily be conceived what agony she would suffer, lest, by overdoing her part, she should increase suspicion, and in fact lead to a discovery. The *ruse* was fortunately successful. On the search through the house being given over, Lord Pitsligo was hastily taken from his confined situation, and again replaced in bed; and as soon as he was able to speak, his accustomed kindness of heart made him say to his servant, 'James, go and see that these poor fellows get some breakfast, and a drink of warm ale, for this is a cold morning; they are only doing their duty, and cannot bear me any ill-will.' When the family were felicitating each other on his escape, he pleasantly observed, 'A poor prize had they obtained it — an old dying man!' That the friends who lived in the house, — the hourly witnesses of his virtues, and the objects of his regard, who saw him escape all the dangers that surrounded him, should reckon him the peculiar care of Providence, is not to be wondered at; and that the dream which was so opportune, as the means of preventing his apprehension, and probably of saving his life, was supposed by some of them at last to be a special interposition of Heaven's protecting shield against his enemies, need not excite surprise. This was accordingly the belief of more than one to their dying hour.

After some fifteen years, the English Government ceased to think Lord Pitsligo dangerous. He was allowed to live unmolested at the house of his son, where he died in 1762, in his eighty-fifth year. ‘He was never heard to speak an ill word of any man living,’ says one who knew him well, and who himself spoke many ill words of others. Lord Pitsligo left a little book of ‘Thoughts on Sacred Things,’ which reminds those who read it of the meditations of General Gordon. His character, as far as its virtues went, is copied in the Baron Bradwardine, in Sir Walter Scott’s novel of ‘Waverley.’

THE ESCAPE OF CÆSAR BORGIA FROM THE CASTLE OF MEDINA DEL CAMPO

It was in June 1504 that Cæsar Borgia, General of the Church and Duke of Romagna and Valentinois, was conducted to the Castle of Medina del Campo in Spain. For two years Cæsar waited in prison, hoping that his old ally, Louis XII., whose cousin *Mlle.* d'Albret he had married, would come to his assistance. But he waited in vain and his courage began to give way, when one day something happened which proved to him that he had still one friend left, his faithful Michelotto, a soldier of fortune who had followed him to Spain, and was now hidden in the neighbourhood of the prison. It was breakfast time, and Cæsar was in the act of cutting his bread when he suddenly touched a hard substance, and found a file, and a small bottle containing a narcotic, and a note concealed in the loaf. The note was from Michelotto, and informed Cæsar that he and the Count of Benevento would hide themselves every night on the road between the castle and the village, in company with three good horses, and that he must make the best use he could of the file and the sleeping draught.

Two years' imprisonment had weighed too heavily on Cæsar for him to waste a single moment in trying to regain his freedom. He, therefore, lost no time in beginning to work on one of the bars of his window, which opened on an inside court, and soon contrived to cut through so far, that a violent shake would enable him to remove it altogether. But the window was nearly seventy feet above the ground, while the only way of leaving the court was by a door reserved for the governor alone, the key of which was always carried about his person. By day it was suspended from his belt, by night it was under his bolster. To gain possession of this key was the most difficult part of the matter.

Now in spite of the fact that he was a prisoner, Cæsar had invariably been treated with all the respect due to his name and rank. Every day at the dinner hour, he was conducted from the room in which he was confined to the governor's apartments and was received by him as an honoured guest. Don Manuel himself was an old soldier who had served with distinction under Ferdinand, and, while carrying out punctually his orders for Cæsar's safe custody, he admired his military talents, and listened with pleasure to the story of his fights. He had often desired that Cæsar should breakfast as well as dine with him, but, luckily for himself, the prisoner, perhaps aided by some presentiment, had always refused this favour. It was owing to his solitude that he was able to conceal the instruments for his escape sent by Michelotto.

Now it happened that the very same day that he had received them, Cæsar contrived to stumble, and twist his foot as he was returning to his room. When the hour of dinner came he tried to go down, but declared that walking hurt him so much, that he should be obliged to give it up, so the governor paid him a visit instead, and found him stretched on his bed.

The next day Cæsar was no better; his dinner was ordered to be served upstairs, and the governor paid him a visit as before. He found his prisoner so dull and bored with his own company, that he offered to come and share his supper. Cæsar accepted the offer with gratitude and joy.

This time it was the prisoner who did the honours of the table, and Cæsar was particularly charming and courteous in manner. The governor seized the opportunity of putting some questions as to his capture, and inquired, with the pride of a Castilian noble, who set honour above all, what was the exact truth as to the way in which Gonsalvo de Cordova and Ferdinand had broken their faith with him. Cæsar showed every disposition to give him satisfaction on this point, but indicated by a sign that he could not speak freely before the valets. This precaution was so natural, that the governor could not seem offended at it, and dismissed his attendants, so that he and his companion remained alone. When the door was shut, Cæsar filled his glass and that of the governor, and proposed the king’s health. The governor emptied his glass at once, and Cæsar began his story, but he had hardly told a third of it, when in spite of its exciting adventures, the eyes of his guest closed as if by magic, and his head fell on the table in a deep sleep.

At the end of half-an-hour, the servants, not hearing any noise, entered the room, and found the two boon companions, one on the table and the other under it. There was nothing very unusual about such an event to excite their suspicions, so they contented themselves with carrying Don Manuel to his chamber and laying Cæsar on his bed; they then locked the door with great care, leaving the prisoner alone.

For a minute or two longer Cæsar lay still, apparently plunged in a profound slumber, but when the sound of footsteps had completely died away, he softly raised his head, opened his eyes, and moved towards the door, rather slowly it is true, but without seeming to feel any ill-effects from his accident on the previous day. He stood still for a few seconds with his ear at the keyhole, then, raising himself, with a strange expression of triumph on his face, he passed his hand over his forehead, and, for the first time since the guards had left the room, breathed freely.

But there was no time to be lost, and without a moment’s delay he fastened the door from the inside as securely as it was fastened without. He next extinguished his lamp, threw open his window, and finished cutting through the bar. This done, he took off the bandages tied round his leg, tore down the curtains, both of his window and his bed, and made them into strips, adding to them sheets, table cloths, napkins, and whatever else he could lay hands on. At last he had a rope between fifty and sixty feet long, which he secured firmly at one end to the bar next to the one that he had sawn away, and mounting on the window-ledge, he began the most dangerous part of his expedition in trusting himself to this frail support. Happily, Cæsar was as strong as he was agile, and slid down the whole length of the cord without accident; but when he had reached the very end, in vain he tried to touch the earth with his feet. The rope was too short.

Cæsar’s position was terrible. The darkness of the night preventing his knowing how far he might be above the ground, and his exertions had so fatigued him that he could not have gone back even had he wished. There was no help for it, and, after muttering a short prayer, he let go the rope, and fell, a distance of twelve or fifteen feet.

The danger he had escaped was too great for the fugitive to mind some slight bruises caused by his fall, so he jumped up, and taking his bearings, made straight for the little door which stood between him and freedom. When he reached it he felt in his pocket for the key, and a cold sweat broke out on his face as he found it was not there. Had he forgotten it in his room, or had he lost it in his descent?

Collecting his thoughts as well as he could, he soon came to the conclusion that it must have fallen out of his pocket as he climbed down the rope. So he made his way a second time cautiously across the court, trying to discover the exact spot where it might be, by the aid of the wall of a cistern, which he had caught hold of to raise himself from the ground. But the lost key was so small and so insignificant, that there was little chance that he would ever see it. However, it was his last resource, and Cæsar was searching for it with all his might, when suddenly a door opened and the night patrol came out, preceded by two torches. At first Cæsar gave himself up for lost, then, remembering the water-butt that was behind him, he at once plunged into it up to his neck, watching with intense anxiety the movements of the soldiers who were advancing towards his hiding place. They passed him within a few feet, crossed the court, and vanished through the door opposite; but, though all this had taken such a very short time, the light of the torches had enabled Cæsar to distinguish the key lying on the ground, and hardly had the gate closed on the soldiers when he was once more master of his liberty.

Half-way between the castle and the village the Count of Benevento and Michelotto awaited him with a led horse. Cæsar flung himself on its back and all three set out for Navarre, where, after three days’ hard riding, they found an asylum with the king, Jean d’Albret, brother of Cæsar’s wife.

THE KIDNAPPING OF THE PRINCES

(*The following story is adapted from Carlyle’s Essay, ‘The Prinzenraub’*)

ABOUT the year 1455, one of the Electors of Saxony, Friedrich der Sanftmütige (Frederick the Mild), quarrelled with a certain knight named Konrad von Kaufungen. Friedrich had hired Konrad, or Kunz as he was called, to fight for him in a war against another Elector. In one of the battles, Kunz was taken prisoner. To ransom himself he was obliged to pay 4,000 gold gulden, for which he thought Friedrich ought to repay him. Friedrich refused to do so, as Kunz was not his vassal whom he was bound to protect, but only a hired soldier who had to take all risks on himself. Kunz was very angry, and threatened to revenge himself on the Elector, who took all his threats very calmly, saying to him, ‘Keep cool, Kunz; don’t burn the fish in the ponds.’ But Kunz was in bitter earnest. He went away to an old castle called Isenburg in Bohemia, on the Saxon frontier, where he lived for some time with his two squires, Mosen and Schönberg, plotting against the Elector and his family. He had, moreover, bribed one of the Elector’s servants, Hans Schwalbe, to tell him all that was being done in his castle of Altenburg. In July, Schwalbe sent word to him that, on the seventh day of the month, the Elector and most of his followers were going away to Leipzig, and would leave the Electress and his two boys, Ernst and Albrecht, guarded only by a few servants, and these, he added, would probably spend the evening drinking in the town. Now the castle of Altenburg was built on a steep hill, and one side of it overhung a precipice. As this side was little guarded, Hans agreed to let down a rope-ladder from one of the windows, and thus enable Kunz to get an entrance into the castle. His plan then was to make his way to the sleeping room of the two little princes, carry them off to his castle at Isenburg, and keep them till their father should grant his demands. Isenburg Castle was about a day’s journey from the little town of Altenburg; so Kunz and his two squires, Mosen and Schönberg, and a few other men, started early on the 7th to ride to Altenburg, and when they reached it they hid themselves till nightfall. About midnight Kunz and his men went as quietly as possible to the foot of the cliff. Everyone seemed asleep in the castle, and outside no sound was to be heard but the stealthy tramp of the armed men. When they reached the rendezvous under the castle, Kunz gave his men their orders. Mosen, Schönberg, and three or four more were to come with him into the castle, and, when inside, to lock the doors of the Electress’s and the servants’ room, while the rest were to guard the gates in order that no one should escape to give the alarm. Each was to be ready when once the princes were secured to ride away for Isenburg as hard as possible.

Then Kunz whistled softly. He listened for a moment; another whistle answered his own, and a rope-ladder was slowly lowered from one of the windows. Kunz mounted it, and made his way to the room where the two little princes were sleeping under the charge of an old governess. He seized the eldest, a boy of fourteen, and carried him down the ladder, and Mosen followed with a second child in his arms. This boy kept calling out, ‘I am not one of the princes; I am their playfellow, Count von Bardi. Let me go! Let me go!’ Thereupon, telling the others to ride on with Prince Ernst in order to secure him, Kunz dashed up the ladder again, and ran to the princes’ room, where he found little Prince Albrecht hiding under the bed. He caught him up and descended again with him. As he went, the Electress, roused by the boys’ cries and finding her door bolted, rushed to the window and begged and implored him not to take her children.

‘My husband shall grant all your demands, I swear to you,’ she cried, ‘only leave me my children!’

‘Tell the Elector, Madam,’ laughed Kunz, looking up, ‘that I *can* burn the fish in the ponds!’

Then he mounted his horse, which his servant was holding, and away they rode as fast as the horses would carry them. They had not ridden many miles before the clang of bells broke on their ears. The alarm peal of the castle had awakened that of the town, and in a few hours every bell in every belfry in Saxony was ringing an alarm. The sun rose, and Kunz and his followers plunged deeper into the forest, riding through morasses and swamps, over rough and stony ground — anywhere to escape from the din of those alarm bells. At last the ride for dear life was nearly over; the band was within an hour’s journey of the castle of Isenburg, when Prince Albrecht declared that he was dying of thirst.

‘For the love of Heaven, give me something to drink, Sir Knight,’ he implored.

Kunz bade the others ride on, and giving his squire his horse to hold he dismounted, lifted Albrecht down, and began looking for bilberries for him.

Whilst he was doing so, a charcoal-burner with his dog came up. He was much surprised to see such grand people in the forest, and asked,

‘What are you doing with the young lord?’

‘He has run away from his parents,’ answered Kunz, impatiently. ‘Can you tell me where bilberries are to be found here?’

‘I do not know,’ replied the charcoal-burner, still staring at the strangers.

Anxious to make him leave them, Kunz turned angrily round on him, and in doing so caught his spurs in the bushes, and fell flat on his face.

Albrecht caught hold of the charcoal-burner’s arm.

‘Save me!’ he whispered eagerly. ‘I am the Elector’s son; this man has stolen me!’

The squire struck at the Prince with his sword, but the charcoal-burner warded aside the blow with his long pole, and felled the man to the ground. Kunz fought fiercely with him, but in answer to his summons for help, and attracted by the barking of the dog, a number of other charcoal-burners appeared on the scene to help their comrade, and Kunz was disarmed and taken prisoner. They marched him in triumph to the monastery of Grünheim, where he was secured in one of the cells, and in a few days was sent to Freiburg. On the 14th he was tried and condemned to death. It is said that a pardon was sent by the Elector, but if it were so it arrived too late, and Kunz was beheaded.

The rest of the robber-band with Prince Ernst did not fare much better. The alarm bells had aroused the whole country; six of the men were captured, and Mosen and the others with Prince Ernst took refuge in a cave near Zwickau. Not daring to venture out, and half starving for want of food, they lay there for three days in wretched plight. Then they learned accidentally from some woodmen, whose conversation they overheard, that Kunz had been taken prisoner, had been tried, and by this time was in all probability beheaded. As soon as they received this piece of intelligence, they held a consultation and finally decided to send a message to the Amtmann of Zwickau, offering to restore Prince Ernst if a free pardon were granted to them, but threatening, if this was refused, they would at once kill him. Had they known that Kunz was still alive, they might have stipulated for his pardon as well, but believing him dead, they made no terms as regards his fate. The Amtmann had no choice but to accede to their demands when their proposal reached him. Prince Ernst was given up. Mosen and the rest fled away, nor were they ever heard of any more.

When the brave charcoal-burner, Georg Schmidt, was brought before the Elector and his court, the Electress asked him how he had dared to fight the robber-knight with no weapon but his pole.

‘Madam,’ he replied, ‘I gave him a sound “drilling” with my pole.’

All the court laughed, and thenceforward he was always called Georg der Triller (the Driller), and his descendants took this name as their surname. The only reward he would accept for his brave deed was leave for himself and his family to cut what wood they needed in the forest in which he lived.

The Electress and the two princes made a pilgrimage to the shrine at the monastery of Ebersdorf, and there in the church they hung up the coats which they and Kunz and the ‘Triller’ had worn on the memorable night when they were kidnapped, and there it is said they may be seen at this day.

THE CONQUEST OF MONTEZUMA’S EMPIRE

The Youth of Cortés

LONG ago, when Henry VIII. was King of England and Charles V. was King of Spain, there lived a young Spanish cavalier whose name was Hernando Cortés. His father, Don Martin Cortés, sent him to Salamanca when he was about fourteen years old, intending to have him educated as a lawyer. But Hernando cared nothing for books, and after wasting two years at college returned home, to the great annoyance of his parents, who were glad enough when, after another year of idleness, he proposed to go and seek his fortune in the New World so lately discovered by Columbus. An exploring expedition was just being fitted out, and Hernando Cortés had quite made up his mind to join it, when he unluckily fell from a high wall which he was climbing, and before he had recovered from his injuries the ships had sailed without him. Two more years did he remain at home after this misadventure, but at length, when he was nineteen years old, he joined a small fleet bound for the Indian Islands. The vessel in which he sailed was commanded by one Alonso Quintero, who, when they reached the Canary Islands, and all the other vessels were detained by taking in supplies, stole out of the harbour under cover of the night, meaning to reach Hispaniola before his companions, and so secure a better chance of trading. However, he met with a furious storm, and was driven back to the port with his ship dismasted and battered. The rest of the fleet generously consented to wait while his ship was being refitted, and after a short delay they set out again, but so soon as they neared the islands, the faithless Quintero again gave his companions the slip, but with no better success, for he met with such heavy gales that he entirely lost his reckoning, and for many days they tossed about helplessly, until one morning they were cheered by the sight of a white dove, which settled upon the rigging. Taking the direction of the bird’s flight, they soon reached Hispaniola, where the captain had the satisfaction of finding all the other ships had arrived before him, and had sold all their cargoes. Cortés, as soon as he landed, went to see Ovando, the governor of the island, whom he had known in Spain, and presently was persuaded by him to accept a grant of land and settle down to cultivate it, though at first he said, ‘I came to get gold, not to till the ground like a peasant.’ So six years passed, during which the monotony of Cortés’s life was only broken by occasional expeditions against the natives, in which he learned to endure toil and danger, and became familiar with the tactics of Indian warfare. At length, in 1511, when Diego Velasquez, the governor’s lieutenant, undertook the conquest of Cuba, Cortés gladly accompanied him, and throughout the expedition made himself a favourite both with the commander and the soldiers. But when later on there arose discontent over the distribution of lands and offices, the malcontents fixed upon Cortés as the most suitable person to go back to Hispaniola, and lay their grievances before the higher authorities. This came to the ears of Velasquez, however, and he at once seized Cortés, whom he loaded with fetters and threw into prison. Luckily he soon succeeded in freeing himself from the irons, and letting himself down from the window took refuge in the nearest church, where he claimed the right of sanctuary. Velasquez, who was very angry at his escape, stationed a guard with orders to seize Cortés if he should leave the sanctuary, and this he was soon careless enough to do. As he stood outside the church an officer suddenly sprang upon him from behind, and made him prisoner once more. This time he was carried on board a ship which was to sail the next morning for Hispaniola, where he was to be tried, but again he managed to escape by dragging his feet through the rings which fettered them, and dropping silently over the ship’s side into a little boat under cover of the darkness. As he neared the shore the water became so rough that the boat was useless, and he was forced to swim the rest of the way; but at last he got safely to land, and again took refuge in the church. After this he married a lady named Catalina Xuarez, and by the aid of her family managed to make his peace with Velasquez. Cortés now received a large estate near St. Jago, where he lived prosperously for some years, and even amassed a considerable sum of money. But at last news came of an exploring expedition which had set out in 1518 under Grijalva, the nephew of Velasquez. He had touched at various places on the Mexican coast, and had held a friendly conference with one cacique, or chief, who seemed desirous of collecting all the information he could about the Spaniards, and their motives in visiting Mexico, that he might transmit it to his master, the Aztec emperor. Presents were exchanged at this interview, and in return for a few glass beads, pins, and such paltry trifles, the Spaniards had received such a rich treasure of jewels and gold ornaments that the general at once sent back one of his ships under the command of Don Pedro de Alvarado to convey the spoil, and acquaint the governor of Cuba with the progress of the expedition, and also with all the information he had been able to glean respecting the Aztec emperor and his dominions. Now in those days nothing whatever was known about the interior of the country or of its inhabitants — it was as strange to the explorers as another planet.

The Wonders of Mexico

This was what they had to tell the governor. Far away towards the Pacific Ocean there stood, in a beautiful and most fertile valley, the capital of a great and powerful empire, called by its inhabitants ‘Tenochtitlan,’ but known to the Europeans only by its other name of ‘Mexico,’ derived from ‘Mexitli,’ the war-god of the Aztecs. These Aztecs seem to have come originally from the north, and after many wanderings to have halted at length on the south-western borders of a great lake, of which there were several in the Mexican valley. This celebrated valley was situated at a height of about 7,500 feet above the sea, and was oval in form, about 67 leagues in circumference, and surrounded by towering rocks, which seemed to be meant to protect it from invasion. It was in the year 1325 that the Aztecs paused upon the shore of the lake, and saw, as the sun rose, a splendid eagle perched upon a prickly pear which shot out of a crevice in the rock. It held a large serpent in its claws, and its broad wings were opened towards the rising sun. The Aztecs saw in this a most favourable omen, and there and then set about building themselves a city, laying its foundations upon piles in the marshy ground beside the lake, and to this day the eagle and the cactus form the arms of the Mexican republic.

The little body of settlers increased rapidly in number and power, and made their name terrible throughout the valley, in which various other tribes had long been settled, until at last they united themselves with the king of the Tezcucans, to aid him against a tribe called the Tepanecs, who had invaded his territory. The allies were completely successful, and this led to an agreement between the states of Mexico, Tezcuco, and Tlacopan, that they should support each other in all their wars, and divide all the spoils between them. This alliance remained unbroken for over a hundred years and under a succession of able princes the Aztec dominion grew, till at the coming of the Spaniards it reached across the continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. The Aztecs had many wise laws and institutions, and were indeed in some respects a highly civilised community. When their emperor died a new one was chosen from among his sons or nephews, by four nobles. The one preferred was obliged to have distinguished himself in war, and his coronation did not take place until a successful campaign had provided enough captives to grace his triumphal entry into the capital, and enough victims for the ghastly sacrifices which formed an important part of all their religious ceremonies. Communication was held with the remotest parts of the country by means of couriers, who, trained to it from childhood, travelled with amazing swiftness. Post-houses were established on the great roads, and the messenger bearing his despatches in the form of hieroglyphical paintings, ran to the first station, where they were taken by the next messenger and carried forward, being sent in one day a hundred or two hundred miles. Thus fish was served at the banquets of the emperor Montezuma which twenty-four hours before had been caught in the Gulf of Mexico, two hundred miles away. Thus too the news was carried when any war was going on, and as the messengers ran to acquaint the court with the movements of the royal armies, the people by the way knew whether the tidings were good or bad by the dress of the courier. But the training of warriors was the chief end and aim of all Aztec institutions. Their principal god was the god of war, and one great object of all their expeditions was the capture of victims to be sacrificed upon his altars. They believed that the soldier who fell in battle was transported at once to the blissful regions of the sun, and they consequently fought with an utter disregard of danger. The dress of the warriors was magnificent. Their bodies were protected by a vest of quilted cotton, impervious to light missiles, and over this the chiefs wore mantles of gorgeous feather-work, and the richer of them a kind of cuirass of gold or silver plates. Their helmets were of wood, fashioned like the head of some wild animal, or of silver surmounted by plumes of variously coloured feathers, sprinkled with precious stones, beside which they wore many ornaments of gold, and their banners were embroidered with gold and feather-work.

The Aztecs worshipped thirteen principal gods, and more than two hundred of less importance, each of whom, however, had his day of festival, which was duly observed. At the head of all stood the war-god, the terrible Huitzilopochtli, whose fantastic image was loaded with costly ornaments, and whose temples, in every city of the empire, were the most splendid and stately. The Aztecs also had a legend that there had once dwelt upon the earth the great Quetzalcoatl, god of the air, under whose sway all things had flourished and all people had lived in peace and prosperity; but he had in some way incurred the wrath of the principal gods, and was compelled to leave the country. On his way he stopped at the city of Cholula, where a temple was dedicated to him, of which the great ruins remain to this day. When he reached the shores of the Mexican Gulf he embarked in his magic boat, made of serpents’ skins, for the fabulous land of Tlapallan, but before he bade his followers farewell he promised that he and his descendants would one day come again. The Aztecs confidently looked forward to the return of their benevolent god, who was said to have been tall in stature, with a white skin, long dark hair, and a flowing beard, and this belief of theirs prepared the way, as you will presently see, for the success of Cortés. The Mexican temples, or teocallis as they were called — which means ‘Houses of God’ — were very numerous, there being several hundreds of them in each of the principal cities. They looked rather like the Egyptian pyramids, and were divided into four or five stories, each one being smaller than the one below it, and the ascent was by a flight of steps at an angle of the pyramid. This led to a sort of terrace at the base of the second story, which passed quite round the building to another flight of steps immediately over the first, so that it was necessary to go all round the temple several times before reaching the summit. The top was a broad space on which stood two towers, forty or fifty feet high, which contained the images of the gods. Before these towers stood the dreadful stone of sacrifice, and two lofty altars on which the sacred fires burned continually. Human sacrifices were adopted by the Aztecs about two hundred years before the coming of the Spaniards. Rare at first, they became more and more frequent till at length nearly every festival closed with this cruel abomination. The unhappy victim was held by five priests upon the stone of sacrifice, while the sixth, who was clothed in a scarlet mantle, emblematic of his horrible office, cut open his breast with a sharp razor of ‘itztli,’ a volcanic substance as hard as flint, and tearing out his heart, held it first up to the sun, which they worshipped, and then cast it at the feet of the god to whom the temple was devoted; and to crown the horror, the body of the captive thus sacrificed was afterwards given to the warrior who had taken him in battle, who thereupon gave a great banquet and served him up amid choice dishes and delicious beverages for the entertainment of his friends. When the great teocalli of Huitzilopochtli was dedicated in the year 1486, no less than 70,000 prisoners were thus sacrificed, and in the whole kingdom every year the victims were never fewer than 20,000, or, as some old writers say, 50,000. The Aztec writing was not with letters and words, but consisted of little coloured pictures, each of which had some special meaning. Thus a ‘tongue’ denoted speaking, a ‘footprint’ travelling, a ‘man sitting on the ground’ an earthquake. As a very slight difference in position or colour intimated a different meaning, this writing was very difficult to read, and in the Aztec colleges the priests specially taught it to their pupils. At the time of the coming of the Spaniards there were numbers of people employed in this picture-writing, but unfortunately hardly any of the manuscripts were preserved; for the Spaniards, looking upon them as magic scrolls, caused them to be burned by thousands. In many mechanical arts the Aztecs had made considerable progress. Their ground was well cultivated, they had discovered and used silver, lead, tin, and copper. Gold, which was found in the river-beds, they cast into bars, or used as money by filling transparent quills with gold dust. They also made many fantastic ornaments of gold and silver, and cast gold and silver vessels, which they carved delicately with chisels. Some of the silver vases were so large that a man could not encircle them with his arms. But the art in which they most delighted was the wonderful feather-work. With the gorgeous plumage of the tropical birds they could produce all the effect of a beautiful mosaic. The feathers, pasted upon a fine cotton web, were wrought into dresses for the wealthy, hangings for their palaces, and ornaments for their temples.

These then were the people of whom Grijalva sent back to Cuba a few vague reports, and these, and the accounts of the splendour of the treasure, spread like wildfire through the island. The governor having resolved to send out more ships to follow up these discoveries, looked about him for a suitable person to command the expedition and share the expenses of it, and being recommended by several of his friends to choose Hernando Cortés, he presently did so. Cortés had now attained his heart’s desire, and at once began with the utmost energy to purchase and fit out the ships. He used all the money he had saved, and as much more as he could persuade his friends to lend him, and very soon he was in possession of six vessels, and three hundred recruits had enrolled themselves under his banner. His orders were, first, to find Grijalva and to proceed in company with him; then to seek out and rescue six Christians, the survivors of a previous expedition, who were supposed to be lingering in captivity in the interior; and to bear in mind, before all things, that it was the great desire of the Spanish monarch that the Indians should be converted to Christianity. They were to be invited to give their allegiance to him, and to send him presents of gold and jewels to secure his favour and protection. The explorers were also to survey the coast, acquaint themselves with the general features of the country, and to barter with the natives.

The Beginning of the Expedition

But before Cortés was ready to start, a jealousy and distrust of him took possession of the mind of Velasquez, so that he determined to entrust the command of the fleet to someone else. This came to the ears of Cortés, and he with great promptitude assembled his officers secretly, and that very night set sail with what supplies he was able to lay hands upon, his ships being neither ready for sea nor properly provisioned. When morning broke news was carried to Velasquez that the fleet was under weigh, and he rose hastily and galloped down to the quay. Cortés rowed back to within speaking distance.

‘This is a courteous way of taking leave of me, truly,’ cried the governor.

‘Pardon me,’ answered Cortés, ‘time presses, and there are some things that should be done before they are even thought of.’ And with that he returned to his vessel, and the little fleet sailed away to Macaca, where Cortés laid in more stores. This was on November 18, 1518. Shortly afterwards he proceeded to Trinidad, a town on the south coast of Cuba, where he landed, and setting up his standard, invited all who would to join the expedition, holding out to them great hopes of wealth to be gained. Volunteers flocked in daily, including many young men of noble family, who were attracted by the fame of Cortés. Among them were Pedro de Alvarado, Cristóval de Olid, Alonso de Avila, Juan Velasquez de Leon, Alonso Hernandez de Puertocarrero, and Gonzalo de Sandoval, of all of whom you will hear again before the story is finished. Finally, in February 1519, when all the reinforcements were assembled, Cortés found he had eleven vessels, one hundred and ten mariners, five hundred and fifty-three soldiers, and two hundred Indians. He also had sixteen horses, ten large guns, and four lighter, which were called falconets. Cortés, before embarking, addressed his little army, saying that he held out to them a glorious prize, and that if any among them coveted riches, he would make them masters of such as their countrymen had never dreamed of; and so they sailed away for the coast of Yucatan.

The first thing that happened was that they were overtaken by a furious tempest, and Cortés was delayed by looking after a disabled vessel, and so was the last to reach the island of Cozumel. Here he found that Alvarado, one of his captains, had landed, plundered a temple, and by his violence caused the natives to fly and hide themselves inland.

Cortés, much displeased, severely reprimanded his officer, and, by the aid of an interpreter, explained his peaceful intentions to two Indians who had been captured. Then he loaded them with presents, and sent them to persuade their countrymen to return, which they presently did, and the Spaniards had the satisfaction of bartering the trifles they had brought for the gold ornaments of the natives. Next Cortés sent two ships to the opposite coast of Yucatan, where they were to despatch some Indians inland, to seek for and ransom the Christian captives, of whom he had gained some tidings from a trader, and while they were gone he explored the island, and induced the natives to declare themselves Christians by the very summary method of rolling their venerated idols out of their temple, and setting up in their stead an image of the Virgin and Child. When the Indians saw that no terrible consequences followed, they listened to the teaching of the good priest, Father Olmedo, who accompanied the expedition, though it is probable that they did not, after all, understand much of his instruction. After eight days the two ships came back, but with no news of the captives, and Cortés sorrowfully decided that he could wait no longer. He accordingly took in provisions and water, and set sail again, but before they had gone far one of the ships sprang a leak, which obliged them to put back into the same port. It was lucky that they did, for soon after they landed a canoe was seen coming from the shore of Yucatan, which proved to contain one of the long-lost Spaniards, who was called Aguilas. He had been for eight years a slave among the natives in the interior, but his master, tempted by the ransom of glass-beads, hawk-bells, and such treasures, had consented to release him. When he reached the coast the ships were gone, but owing to the fortunate accident of their return, he found himself once more among his countrymen. Cortés at once saw the importance of having him as an interpreter, but in the end he proved to be of more use to the explorers than could have been at first imagined.

Again the fleet set out, and coasted along the Gulf of Mexico till they reached the mouth of the Rio de Tabasco. Here Cortés landed, but found that the Indians were hostile, and were drawn up in great force against him. However, after some hard fighting the Spaniards were victorious, and having taken possession of the town of Tabasco, Cortés sent messengers to the chiefs saying that if they did not at once submit themselves he would ravage the country with fire and sword. As they had no mind for any more fighting they came humbly, bringing presents, and among them thirty slaves, one of whom, a beautiful Mexican girl named Malinche, was afterwards of the utmost importance to the expedition. She had come into the possession of the cacique of Tabasco through some traders from the interior of the country, to whom she had been secretly sold by her mother, who coveted her inheritance. Cortés now reembarked his soldiers and sailed away to the island of San Juan de Uloa, under the lee of which they anchored, and soon saw the light pirogues of the Indians coming off to them from the mainland. They brought presents of fruit and flowers, and little ornaments of gold which they gladly exchanged for the usual trifles. Cortés was most anxious to converse with them, but found to his disappointment that Aguilar could not understand their dialect. In this dilemma he was informed that one of the slaves was a Mexican, and could of course speak the language. This was Malinche, or as the Spaniards always called her, ‘Marina.’ Cortés was so charmed with her beauty and cleverness that he made her his secretary, and kept her always with him; and she very soon learned enough Spanish to interpret for him without the help of Aguilar. But at first they were both necessary, and by their aid Cortés learned that his visitors were subjects of Montezuma, the great Aztec emperor, and were governed by Tenhtlile, one of his nobles. Cortés having ascertained that there was abundance of gold in the interior, dismissed them, loaded with presents, to acquaint their governor with his desire for an interview. The next morning he landed on the mainland with all his force. It was a level sandy plain, and the troops employed themselves in cutting down trees and bushes to provide a shelter from the weather; in this they were aided by the natives, who built them huts with stakes and earth, mats and cotton carpets, and flocked from all the country round to see the wonderful strangers. They brought with them fruits, vegetables, flowers in abundance, game, and many dishes cooked after the fashion of the country; and these they gave to, or bartered with, the Spaniards. The next day came Tenhtlile, the governor, with a numerous train, and was met by Cortés, and conducted to his tent with great ceremony. All the principal officers were assembled, and after a ceremonious banquet at which the governor was regaled with Spanish wines and confections, the interpreters were sent for and a conversation began. Tenhtlile first asked about the country of the strangers, and the object of their visit. Cortés replied that he was the subject of a powerful monarch beyond the seas, who had heard of the greatness of the Mexican emperor, and had sent him with a present in token of his goodwill, and with a message which he must deliver in person. He concluded by asking when he could be admitted into Montezuma’s presence. To this the Aztec noble replied haughtily,

‘How is it that you have been here only two days, and demand to see the emperor?’

Then he added that he was surprised to hear that there could be another monarch as powerful as Montezuma, but if it were so his master would be happy to communicate with him, and that he would forward the royal gift brought by the Spanish commander, and so soon as he had learned Montezuma's will would inform him of it. Tenhtlile then ordered his slaves to bring forward the present for the Spanish general. It consisted of ten loads of fine cotton, several mantles of gorgeous feather-work, and a wicker basket of golden ornaments. Cortés received it with due acknowledgments, and in his turn ordered the presents for Montezuma to be brought forward. These were an armchair richly carved and painted, a crimson cloth cap with a gold medal, and a quantity of collars, bracelets, and other ornaments of cut-glass, which in a country where glass was unknown were as valuable as real gems. The Aztec governor observed a soldier in the camp in a shining gilt helmet, and expressed a wish that Montezuma should see it, as it reminded him of one worn by the god Quetzalcoatl. Cortés declared his willingness that the helmet should be sent, and begged that the emperor would return it filled with the gold dust of the country, that he might compare its quality with that of his own. He also said that the Spaniards were troubled with a disease of the heart, for which gold was a sure remedy. In fact, he made his want of gold very clear to the governor. While these things were passing Cortés observed one of Tenhtlile's attendants busy with a pencil, and on looking at his work he found it was a sketch of the Spaniards, their costumes, weapons, and all objects of interest being correctly represented both in form and colour. This was the celebrated picture-writing, and the governor said that this man was drawing all these things for Montezuma, as he would get a much better idea of their appearance thus. Cortés thereupon ordered out the cavalry, and caused them to go through their military exercises upon the firm wet sands of the beach; and the appearance of the horses — which were absolutely unknown in Mexico — filled the natives with astonishment, which turned to alarm when the general ordered the cannon to be fired, and they saw for the first time the smoke and flame, and beheld the balls crashing among the trees of the neighbouring forest and reducing them to splinters. Nothing of this sort was lost upon the painters, who faithfully recorded every particular, not omitting the ships — the 'water-houses,' as they called them — which swung at anchor in the bay. Finally, the governor departed as ceremoniously as he had come, leaving orders with his people to supply the Spanish general with all he might require till further instructions should come from the emperor.

In the meantime the arrival of the strangers was causing no small stir in the Mexican capital. A general feeling seems to have prevailed that the Return of the White God, Quetzalcoatl, was at hand, and many wonderful signs and occurrences seemed to confirm the belief.

In 1510 the great lake of Tezcuco, without tempest, earthquake, or any visible cause, became violently agitated, overflowed its banks, and, pouring into the streets of Mexico, swept away many buildings by the fury of its waters. In 1511 one of the towers of the great temple took fire, equally without any apparent cause, and continued to burn in defiance of all attempts to extinguish it. In the following years three comets were seen, and not long before the coming of the Spaniards a strange light broke forth in the east, resembling a great pyramid or flood of fire thickly powdered with stars: at the same time low voices were heard in the air, and doleful wailings, as if to announce some strange, mysterious calamity. A lady of the Royal house died, was buried, and rose again, prophesying ruin to come. After the conquest she became a Christian.

Montezuma, terrified at these apparitions, took counsel of Nezahualpilli, King of Tezcuco, who was a great proficient in astrology; but far from obtaining any comfort from him, he was still further depressed by being told that all these things predicted the speedy downfall of his empire. When, therefore, the picture-writings showing the Spanish invaders reached Montezuma, they caused him great apprehension, and he summoned the kings of Tezcuco and Tlacopan to consult with them as to how the strangers should be received. There was much division of opinion, but finally Montezuma resolved to send a rich present which should impress them with a high idea of his wealth and grandeur, while at the same time he would forbid them to approach the capital. After eight days at the most, which however seemed a long time to the Spaniards, who were suffering from the intense heat of the climate, the embassy, accompanied by the governor Tenhtlile, reached the camp, and presented to Cortés the magnificent treasure sent by Montezuma. One of the two nobles had been sent on account of his great likeness to the picture of Cortés which the Aztec painter had executed for Montezuma. This resemblance was so striking that the Spanish soldiers always called this chief ‘the Mexican Cortés.’ After the usual ceremonious salutes, the slaves unrolled the delicately wrought mats and displayed the gifts they had brought. There were shields, helmets, and cuirasses embossed with plates and ornaments of pure gold, with collars and bracelets of the same precious metal, sandals, fans, plumes, and crests of variegated feathers wrought with gold and silver thread and sprinkled with pearls and precious stones. Also imitations of birds and animals in wrought or cast gold and silver of exquisite workmanship; and curtain coverlets and robes of cotton, fine as silk — of rich and varied hues — interwoven with feather-work that rivalled the most delicate painting. There were more than thirty loads of cotton cloth, and the Spanish helmet was returned filled to the brim with grains of gold. But the things which excited the most admiration were two circular plates of gold and silver as large as carriage-wheels. One, representing the sun, was richly carved with plants and animals, and was worth fifty-two thousand five hundred pounds. The Spaniards could not conceal their rapture at this exhibition of treasure which exceeded their utmost dreams; and when they had sufficiently admired it the ambassadors courteously delivered their message, which was to the effect that Montezuma had great pleasure in holding communication with so powerful a monarch as the King of Spain, but he could not grant a personal interview to the Spaniards; the way to his capital was too long and too dangerous. Therefore the strangers must return to their own land with the gifts he had sent them. Cortés, though much vexed, concealed his annoyance and expressed his sense of the emperor's munificence. It made him, he said, only the more desirous of a personal interview, so that he felt it was impossible that he should present himself again before his sovereign without having accomplished this great object of his journey. He once more requested them to bear this message to their master, with another trifling gift. This they seemed unwilling to do, and took their leave repeating that the general's wish could not be gratified. The soldiers were by this time suffering greatly from the heat, surrounded as they were by burning sands and evil-smelling marshes, and swarms of venomous insects which tormented them night and day. Thirty of their number died, and the discomfort of the rest was greatly increased by the indifference of the natives, who no longer brought them such abundant supplies, and demanded an immense price for what they did provide. After ten days the Mexican envoys returned, bearing another rich present of stuffs and gold ornaments, which, though not so valuable as the first, was yet worth three thousand ounces of gold. Beside this there were four precious stones, somewhat resembling emeralds, each of which they assured the Spaniards was worth more than a load of gold, and was destined as a special mark of respect for the Spanish monarch, since only the nobles of Mexico were allowed to wear them. Unfortunately, however, they were of no value at all in Europe. Montezuma's answer was the same as before. He positively forbade the strangers to approach nearer to his capital, and requested them to take the treasure he had bestowed upon them, and return without delay to their own country. Cortés received this unwelcome message courteously, but coldly, and turning to his officers exclaimed, 'This is a rich and powerful prince indeed, yet it shall go hard but we will one day pay him a visit in his capital.' Father Olmedo then tried to persuade the Aztec chiefs to give up their idol-worship, and endeavoured by the aid of Marina and Aguilar to explain to them the mysteries of his own faith, but it is probable that he was not very successful. The chiefs presently withdrew coldly, and that same night every hut was deserted by the natives, and the Spaniards were left without supplies in a desolate wilderness. Cortés thought this so suspicious that he prepared for an attack, but everything remained quiet.

The general now decided to remove his camp to a more healthy place a little farther along the coast, where the ships could anchor and be sheltered from the north wind. But the soldiers began to grumble and be discontented, and to say that it was time to return with their spoil, and not linger upon those barren shores until they had brought the whole Mexican nation about their ears. Fortunately at this juncture five Indians made their appearance in the camp, and were taken to the general's tent. They were quite different from the Mexicans in dress and appearance, and wore rings of gold and bright blue gems in their ears and nostrils, while a gold leaf, delicately wrought, was attached to the under lip. Marina could not understand their language, but luckily she found that two of them could speak in the Aztec tongue. They explained that they came from Cempoalla, the chief town of a tribe called the Totonacs, and that their country had been lately conquered by the Aztecs, whose oppressions they greatly resented. They also said that the fame of the Spaniards had reached their master, who had sent to request them to visit him in his capital. It is easy to imagine how eagerly Cortés listened to this communication, and how important it was to him. Hitherto, as he knew absolutely nothing of the state of affairs in the interior of the country, he had supposed the empire to be strong and united. Now he saw that the discontent of the provinces conquered by Montezuma might be turned to his own advantage, and that by their aid he might hope to succeed in his cherished scheme of subduing the emperor himself. He therefore dismissed the Totonacs with many presents, promising soon to visit their city. Then with his usual energy and diplomacy he turned upon the immediate difficulties which beset him — the discontent of the soldiers, the jealousy of some of his officers, and the fact that he had no warrant for his ambitious plans in the commission that he had received from Velasquez. By tact and cunning he managed to settle everything as he wished, and set to work to establish a colony in the name of the Spanish sovereign, and appointed his chief friend Puertocarrero to be one of its magistrates, and Montejo, who was a friend of Velasquez, to be the other. The new town was called Villa Rica de Vera Cruz, 'The rich town of the True Cross,' and, as you see, its governors and officials were appointed before a single house was built. To them Cortés then resigned the commission which he had received from Velasquez, and the council, which consisted chiefly of his own friends, immediately reappointed him to be captain-general and chief justice of the colony, with power to do practically just as he liked. Of course this caused a great commotion in the opposing party, but Cortés put the leaders into irons and sent them on board one of the ships, while he sent the soldiers on a foraging expedition into the surrounding country. By the time these returned with supplies they had altered their minds, and joined their companions in arms, pledging themselves to a common cause, while even the cavaliers on board the ship came to the same conclusion, and were reconciled to the new government, and were from that time staunch adherents to Cortés.

Peace being thus restored, the army set out to march northwards to the place where it had been decided to build the town. They crossed a river in rafts and broken canoes which they found upon its bank, and presently came to a very different scene from the burning sandy waste, which they had left. The wide plains were covered with green grass, and there were groves of palms, among which the Spaniards saw deer and various wild animals, and flocks of pheasants and turkeys. On their way they passed through a deserted village, in the temples of which they found records in the picture-writing, and also, to their horror, the remains of sacrificed victims. As they proceeded up the river they were met by twelve Indians, sent by the cacique of Cempoalla to show them the way to his town. The farther they went the more beautiful did the country become. The trees were loaded with gorgeous fruits and flowers, and birds and butterflies of every hue abounded. As they approached the Indian city they saw gardens and orchards on each side of the road, and were met by crowds of natives, who mingled fearlessly with the soldiers, bringing garlands of flowers, in which they specially delighted, to deck the general's helmet and to hang about the neck of his horse. The cacique, who was tall and very fat, received Cortés with much courtesy, and assigned to the army quarters in a neighbouring temple, where they were well supplied with provisions, and the general received a present of gold and fine cotton. But in spite of all this friendliness he neglected no precautions, stationing sentinels, and posting his artillery so as to command the entrance. The following morning Cortés paid the cacique a visit at his own residence, and, by the aid of Marina, a long conference was held in which the Spanish general gained much important information, and promised to aid the Totonacs against Montezuma, and prevent him from carrying off their young men and maidens to be sacrificed to his gods. The following day the army marched off again to the town of Chiahuitztla, which stood like a fortress on a crag overlooking the gulf. Though the inhabitants were alarmed at first, they soon became friendly, and the chiefs came to confer with Cortés and the cacique of Cempoallo, who had accompanied him, carried in a litter. Just then there was a stir among the people, and five men entered the market-place where they were standing. By their rich and peculiar dress they seemed to belong to a different race: their dark glossy hair was tied in a knot at the top of the head, and they carried bunches of flowers in their hands. Their attendants carried wands, or fans, to brush away the flies and insects from their lordly masters. These persons passed the Spaniards haughtily, scarcely deigning to return their salutations, and they were immediately joined by the Totonac chiefs, who seemed anxious to conciliate them by every sort of attention. The general, much astonished, inquired of Marina what this meant, and she replied that these were Aztec nobles empowered to receive tribute for Montezuma.

Soon after the chiefs returned in dismay, saying that the Aztecs were very angry with them for entertaining the Spaniards without the emperor’s permission, and had demanded twenty young men and maidens to be sacrificed to the gods as a punishment. Cortés was most indignant at this insolence, and insisted that the Totonacs should not only refuse the demand, but should also seize the Aztec nobles, and throw them into prison. This they did, but the Spanish general managed to get two of them freed in the night, and brought before him. He then very cunningly made them believe that he regretted the indignity that had been offered them, and would help them to get away safely, and the next day would do his best to release their companions. He also told them to report this to Montezuma, assuring him of the great respect and regard in which he was held by the Spaniards. Them he sent them away secretly to the port, and they were taken in one of the vessels, and landed safely at a little distance along the coast. The Totonacs were furious at the escape of some of their prisoners, and would at once have sacrificed the remainder, had not Cortés expressed the utmost horror at the idea, and sent them on board one of the ships for safe keeping, whence he very soon allowed them to join their companions. This artful proceeding had, as we shall presently see, just the effect it was meant to have upon Montezuma. By order of Cortés, messengers were now sent to all the other Totonac towns, telling them of the defiance that had been shown to the emperor, and bidding them also refuse to pay the tribute. The Indians soon came flocking into Chiahuitztla to see and confer with the powerful strangers, in the hope of regaining liberty by their aid, and so cleverly had Cortés managed to embroil them with Montezuma, that even the most timid felt that they had no choice but to accept the protection of the Spaniards, and make a bold effort for the recovery of freedom.

Cortés accordingly made them swear allegiance to the Spanish sovereign, and then set out once more for the port where his colony was to be planted. This was only half a league distant, in a wide and fruitful plain, and he was not long in determining the circuit of the walls, and the site of the fort, granary, and other public buildings. The friendly Indians brought stone, lime, wood, and bricks, and in a few weeks a town rose up, which served as a good starting-point for future operations, a retreat for the disabled, a place for the reception of stores, or whatever might be sent to or from the mother-country, and was, moreover, strong enough to overawe the surrounding country. This was the first colony in New Spain, and was hailed with satisfaction by the simple natives, who could not foresee that their doom was sealed when a white man set his foot upon their soil.

While the Spaniards were still occupied with their new settlement they were surprised by another embassy from Mexico. When the account of the imprisonment of the royal collectors first reached Montezuma, his feelings of fear and superstition were swallowed up in indignation, and he began with great energy to make preparations for punishing his rebellious vassals, and avenging the insult offered to himself. But when the Aztec officers liberated by Cortés reached the capital and reported the courteous treatment they had received from the Spanish commander, he was induced to resume his former timid and conciliatory policy, and sent an embassy consisting of two young nephews of his own and four of his chief nobles to the Spanish quarters. As usual they bore a princely gift of gold, rich cotton stuffs, and wonderful mantles of feather embroidery. The envoys on coming before Cortés presented this offering, with the emperor’s thanks to him for the courtesy he had shown to the captive nobles. At the same time Montezuma expressed his surprise and regret that the Spaniards should have countenanced the rebellion. He had no doubt, he said, that Cortés and his followers were the long-looked-for strangers, and therefore of the same lineage as himself. From deference to them he would spare the Totonacs while they were present, but the day of vengeance would come. Cortés entertained the Indians with frank hospitality, taking care, however, to make such a display of his resources as should impress them with a sense of his power. Then he dismissed them with a few trifling gifts and a conciliatory message to the emperor, to the effect that he would soon pay his respects to him in his capital, when all misunderstanding between them would certainly be adjusted. The Totonacs were amazed when they understood the nature of this interview; for, in spite of the presence of the Spaniards, they had felt great apprehension as to the consequence of their rash act, and now they felt absolutely in awe of the strangers who even at a distance could exercise such a mysterious influence over the terrible Montezuma.

Not long after the cacique of Cempoalla appealed to Cortés to aid him against a neighbour with whom he had a quarrel. The general at once marched to support him with a part of his force, but when they reached the hostile city they were received in a most friendly manner, and Cortés had no difficulty in reconciling the two chiefs to one another. In token of gratitude the Indian cacique sent eight noble maidens, richly decked with collars and ornaments of gold, whom he begged the general to give as wives to his captains. Cortés seized the opportunity of declaring that they must first become Christians, and be baptized, since the sons of the Church could not be allowed to marry idolaters. The chief replied that his gods were good enough for him, and that he should at once resent any insults offered to them, even if they did not avenge themselves by instantly destroying the Spaniards. However, the general and his followers had seen too much already of the barbarous rites of the Indian religion and its horrible sacrifices. Without hesitation they attacked the principal teocalli, whereupon the cacique called his men to arms, the priests in their blood-stained robes rushed frantically about among the people, calling upon them to defend their gods, and all was tumult and confusion. Cortés acted with his usual promptitude at this crisis. He caused the cacique and the principal inhabitants and the priests to be taken prisoners, and then commanded them to quiet the people, threatening that a single arrow shot at the Spaniards should cost them their lives. Marina also represented the madness of resistance, reminding the cacique that if he lost the friendship of the strangers, he would be left alone to face the vengeance of Montezuma. This consideration decided him: covering his face with his hands, he exclaimed that the gods would avenge their own wrongs. Taking advantage of this tacit consent, fifty soldiers rushed up the stairway of the temple, and dragging the great wooden idols from their places in the topmost tower, they rolled them down the steps of the pyramid amid the groans of the natives and the triumphant shouts of their comrades, and then burnt them to ashes. The Totonacs, finding that their gods were unable to prevent or even punish this profanation of their temple, now believed that they were indeed less to be feared than the Spaniards, and offered no further resistance. By Cortés’s orders the teocalli was then thoroughly purified, and an altar was erected, surmounted by a great cross hung with garlands of roses, and Father Olmedo said Mass before the Indians and Spaniards, who seem to have been alike impressed by the ceremony. An old disabled soldier, named Juan de Torres, was left to watch over the sanctuary and instruct the natives in its services, while the general, taking a friendly leave of his Totonac allies, set out once more for Villa Rica, to finish his arrangements before departing for the capital. Here he was surprised to find that a Spanish vessel had arrived in his absence, having on board twelve soldiers and two horses, a very welcome addition to the tiny army. Cortés now resolved to execute a plan of which he had been thinking for some time. He knew very well that none of his arrangements about the colony would hold good without the Spanish monarch’s sanction, and also that Velasquez had great interest at court, and would certainly use it against him. Therefore he resolved to send despatches to the emperor himself, and such an amount of treasure as should give a great idea of the extent and importance of his discoveries. He gave up his own share of the spoil, and persuaded his officers to do the same, and a paper was circulated among the soldiers, calling upon all who chose to resign the small portion which was due to them, that a present worthy of the emperor's acceptance might be sent home. It is only another proof of the extraordinary power which Cortés had over these rough soldiers, who cared for nothing but plunder, that not a single one refused to give up the very treasure which he had risked so much to gain.

These are some of the wonderful things that were sent. Two collars made of gold and precious stones. Two birds made of green feathers, with feet, beaks, and eyes of gold, and in the same piece with them animals of gold resembling snails. A large alligator's head of gold. Two birds made of thread and feather-work, having the quills of their wings and tails, their feet, eyes and the ends of their beaks of gold, standing upon two reeds covered with gold, which are raised on balls of feather-work and gold embroidery, one white and the other yellow, with seven tassels of feather-work hanging from each of them. A large silver wheel, also bracelets, leaves, and five shields of the same metal. A box of feather-work embroidered on leather, with a large plate of gold weighing seventy ounces in the midst. A large wheel of gold with figures of strange animals on it, and worked with tufts of leaves, weighing three thousand eight hundred ounces. A fan of variegated feather-work with thirty-seven rods plated with gold. Sixteen shields of precious stones, with feathers of various colours hanging from their rims, and six shields each covered with a plate of gold, with something resembling a mitre in the centre. Besides all this there was a quantity of gold ore, and many pieces of richly embroidered cotton cloth and feather-work. He accompanied this present with a letter to the emperor in which he gave an account of all his adventures and discoveries, and ended by beseeching him to confirm his authority, as he was entirely confident that he should be able to place the Castilian crown in possession of this great Indian empire. He also sent four slaves, who had been rescued from the cage in which were kept the victims about to be sacrificed, and some Mexican manuscripts.

Very soon after the departure of the treasure-ship Cortés discovered that there was a conspiracy among some of his followers, who either did not like the way the general arranged matters, or else were terrified at the prospect of the dangerous campaign that was before them. They had seized one of the ships, and got provisions and water stored, and were on the eve of setting sail for Cuba, when one of their number repented of the part he had taken in the plot, and betrayed it to Cortés, who at once took measures for the arrest of the ringleaders, two of whom were afterwards hanged. This affair showed the general that there were some among his followers who were not heart and soul in the expedition, and who might therefore fail him when he most needed them, and might also cause their comrades to desert if there was any chance for them to escape. He therefore determined to take the bold step of destroying the ships without the knowledge of his army. Accordingly, he marched the whole army to Cempoalla, and when he arrived there he told his plan to a few of his devoted adherents, who entirely approved of it. Through them he persuaded the pilots to declare the ships unseaworthy, and then ordered nine of them to be sunk, having first brought on shore their sails, masts, iron, and all movable fittings. When the news of this proceeding reached Cempoalla, it caused the deepest consternation among the Spaniards, who felt themselves betrayed and abandoned, a mere handful of men arrayed against a great and formidable empire, and cut off from all chance of escape. They murmured loudly, and a serious mutiny was threatened. But Cortés, whose presence of mind never deserted him, managed to reassure them, and to persuade them that he had only done what was really best for everyone; and he so cunningly dwelt upon the fame and the treasure which they were on the eve of gaining, that not one of them accepted the offer which he made to them of returning to Cuba in the only remaining ship. Their enthusiasm for their leader revived, and as he concluded his speech they made the air ring with their shouts of ‘To Mexico! To Mexico!’

The March to Mexico

While he was still at Cempoalla, news came to Cortés from Villa Rica that four strange ships were hovering off the coast, and that they refused to respond to repeated signals made to them by Don Juan de Escalante, who was in command of the garrison left in the town. This greatly alarmed Cortés, who was continually dreading the interference of his enemy, the governor of Cuba. He rode hastily back to Villa Rica, and, almost without stopping to rest, pushed on a few leagues northwards along the coast, where he understood the ships were at anchor. On his way he met with three Spaniards just landed from them, and learned that they belonged to a squadron fitted out by Francisco de Garay, who had landed on the Florida coast a year before, and had obtained from Spain authority over the countries he might discover in its neighbourhood. Cortés saw he had nothing to fear from them, but he did wish he could have induced the crews of the ships to join his expedition. The three men he easily persuaded, but those who remained on board feared treachery, and refused to send a boat ashore. Finally, by a stratagem, Cortés succeeded in capturing three or four more, out of a boat's crew who came to fetch their comrades, and with this small party of recruits he returned to Cempoalla. On August 16, 1519, Cortés bade farewell to his hospitable Indian friends, and set out for Mexico. His force consisted of about four hundred foot and fifteen horse, with seven pieces of artillery, and in addition to these he had obtained from the cacique of Cempoalla thirteen hundred warriors, and a thousand porters to carry the baggage and drag the guns. During the first day the army marched through the 'tierra caliente,' or hot region. All around them fruit and flowers grew in the wildest profusion, as indeed they did all the year round in that wonderful climate; the air was heavy with perfume, and bright birds and insects abounded. But after some leagues' travel, over roads made nearly impassable by the summer rains, they began to ascend gradually, and at the close of the second day they reached Xalapa, from which they looked out over one of the grandest prospects that could be seen anywhere. Down below them lay the hot region with its gay confusion of meadows, streams, and flowering forests, sprinkled over with shining Indian villages, while a faint line of light upon the horizon told them that there was the ocean they had so lately crossed, beyond which lay their country, which many of them would never see again. To the south rose the mighty mountain called 'Orizaba,' in his mantle of snow, and in another direction the Sierra Madre, with its dark belt of pine-trees, stretched its long lines of shadowy hills away into the distance. Onward and upward they went, and on the fourth day they arrived at the strong town of Naulinco. Here the inhabitants entertained them hospitably, for they were friendly with the Totonacs, and Cortés endeavoured, through Father Olmedo, to teach them something about Christianity. They seem to have listened willingly, and allowed the Spaniards to erect a cross for their adoration, which indeed they did in most of the places where they halted. The troops now entered upon a rugged, narrow valley, called ‘the Bishop’s Pass,’ and now it began to be terribly cold, the snow and hail beat upon them, and the freezing wind seemed to penetrate to their very bones. The Spaniards were partly protected by their armour, and their thick coats of quilted cotton, but the poor Indians, natives of the hot region and with very little clothing, suffered greatly, and indeed several of them died by the way. The path lay round a bare and dreadful-looking volcanic mountain, and often upon the edge of precipices three thousand feet in depth. After three days of this dreary travelling the army emerged into a more genial climate; they had reached the great tableland which spreads out for hundreds of miles along the crests of the Cordilleras, more than seven thousand feet above the sea-level. The vegetation of the torrid and temperate regions had of course disappeared, but the fields were carefully cultivated. Many of the crops were unknown to the Spaniards, but they recognised maize and aloes, and various kinds of cactus. Suddenly the troops came upon what seemed to be a populous city, even larger than Cempoalla, and with loftier and more substantial buildings, of stone and lime. There were thirteen teocallis in the town, and in one place in the suburbs one of the Spaniards counted the stored-up skulls of a hundred thousand sacrificed victims. The lord of the town ruled over twenty thousand vassals; he was a tributary to Montezuma, and there was a strong Mexican garrison in the place. This was probably the reason of his receiving Cortés and his army very coldly, and vaunting the grandeur of the Mexican emperor, who could, he declared, muster thirty great vassals, each of whom commanded a hundred thousand men. In answer to the inquiries of Cortés, he told him about Montezuma and his capital. How more than twenty thousand prisoners of war were sacrificed every year upon the altars of his gods, and how the city stood in the midst of a great lake, and was approached by long causeways connected in places by wooden bridges, which when raised cut off all communication with the country — and many other strange things which were not of a kind to reassure the minds of the Spaniards. They hardly knew whether to believe the old cacique or not, but at any rate the wonders they heard made them, as one of their cavaliers said, ‘only the more earnest to prove the adventure, desperate as it might appear.’

The natives were also very curious to know about the Spaniards, their horses and dogs, and strange weapons, and Marina in answering their questions took care to expatiate upon the exploits and victories of her adopted countrymen, and to state the extraordinary marks of respect they had received from Montezuma. This had its effect upon the cacique, who presently sent the general some slaves to make bread for the soldiers, and supplied them with the means of refreshment and rest, which they needed so much after their toilful march.

The army rested in this city four or five days, and even at the end of the last century the Indians would still point out the cypress tree under the shelter of which the conqueror’s horse had been tied. When the journey was resumed, the way was through a broad green valley, watered by a splendid river and shaded by lofty trees. On either side of the river an unbroken line of Indian dwellings extended for several leagues, and on some rising ground stood a town which might contain five or six thousand inhabitants, commanded by a fortress with walls and trenches. Here the troops halted again, and met with friendly treatment.

In their last halting-place Cortés had been advised by the natives to take the route to the ancient city of Cholula, the inhabitants of which were a mild race, subjects of Montezuma, and given to peaceful arts, who were likely to receive him kindly. But his Cempoallan allies declared that the Cholulans were false and perfidious, and counselled him to go to Tlascala, a valiant little republic which had managed to maintain its independence against the arms of Mexico. The tribe had always been friendly with the Totonacs, and had the reputation of being frank, fearless, and trustworthy. The Spanish general decided to try and secure their goodwill, and accordingly despatched four of the principal Cempoallans with a gift, consisting of a cap of crimson cloth, a sword and a crossbow, to ask permission to pass through their country, expressing at the same time his admiration of their valour, and of their long resistance of the Aztecs, whose pride he, too, was determined to humble. Three days after the departure of the envoys the army resumed its march, lingering somewhat by the way in hopes of receiving an answer from the Indian Republic. But the messengers did not return, which occasioned the general no little uneasiness. As they advanced the country became rougher and the scenery bolder, and at last their progress was arrested by a most remarkable fortification. It was a stone wall nine feet high and twenty feet thick, with a parapet a foot and a half broad at the top, for the protection of those who defended it. It had only one opening in the centre, made by two semicircular lines of wall overlapping each other for the space of forty paces, and having a passage-way between, ten paces wide, so contrived as to be perfectly commanded by the inner wall. This fortification, which extended for more than two leagues, rested at either end on the bold, natural buttresses of the chain of mountains. It was built of immense blocks of stone nicely laid together without cement, and from the remains that still exist it is easy to imagine what its size and solidity must have been. This singular structure marked the limits of Tlascala, and was intended, the natives said, as a barrier against Mexican invasions. The soldiers paused amazed, and not a little apprehensive as to their reception in Tlascala, since a people who were capable of such a work as that would indeed prove formidable should they not be friendly. But Cortés, putting himself at the head of his cavalry, shouted, ‘Forward, soldiers; the Holy Cross is our banner, and under that we shall conquer.’ And so they marched through the undefended passage, and found themselves in Tlascala.

The Tlascalan people belonged to the same great family as the Aztecs, and had planted themselves upon the western shore of Lake Tezcuco at about the same period — at the close of the twelfth century. There they remained many years, until they had, for some reason, incurred the displeasure of all the surrounding tribes, who combined to attack them, and a terrible battle took place. Though the Tlascalans were entirely victorious, they were so disgusted by this state of things that they resolved to migrate, and the greater number of them finally settled in the warm and fruitful valley overshadowed by the mountains of Tlascala. After some years the monarchy was divided, first into two, then four separate states, each with its own chief, who was independent in his own territory, and possessed equal authority with the other three in all matters concerning the whole republic, the affairs of which were settled by a council consisting of the four chiefs and the inferior nobles. They were an agricultural people, and the fertility of their new country was signified by its name— ‘Tlascala’ meaning the land of bread. Presently their neighbours began to be envious of their prosperity, and they were frequently obliged to defend themselves against the Cholulans, and were always successful. But when Axayacatl, king of the Aztecs, sent demanding the same tribute and obedience from them which the other people of the country paid him, threatening, if they refused, to destroy their cities, and give their land to their enemies, they answered proudly, ‘Neither they nor their forefathers had ever paid tribute or homage to a foreign power, nor ever would pay it. If their country was invaded, they knew how to defend it.’

This answer brought upon them the forces of the Mexican monarch, and a pitched battle was fought in which the republic was again victorious, but from that time hostilities never ceased between the two nations, every captive was mercilessly sacrificed, and the Tlascalan children were trained from the cradle to hate the Mexicans with a deadly hatred. In this struggle the Tlascalans received valuable support from a wild and warlike race from the north, called the Otomies. Some of them settled in the republic, and having proved themselves courageous and faithful, were entrusted with the defence of the frontier. After Montezuma became emperor of Mexico greater efforts than before were made to subdue Tlascala. He sent a great army against it, commanded by his favourite son, but his troops were defeated and his son killed. Enraged and mortified, Montezuma made still greater preparations and invaded the valley with a terrific force. But the Tlascalans withdrew to the recesses of the hills, and watching their opportunity, swept down upon the enemy and drove them from their territory with dreadful slaughter. Nevertheless they were greatly harassed by these constant struggles with a foe so superior to themselves in numbers and resources. The Aztec armies lay between them and the coast, cutting off all possibility of obtaining any supplies. There were some things, as cotton, cacas, and salt, which they were unable to grow or manufacture, of which they had been deprived for more than fifty years, and their taste was so much affected by this enforced abstinence that they did not get used to eating salt with their food for several generations after the conquest. This was the state of affairs in Tlascala when the Spaniards reached it, and it is easy to see how important it was to Cortés to form an alliance with it, but that was not an easy thing to do.

The Tlascalans had heard about the Christians and their victorious advance, but they had not expected that they would come their way. So they were much embarrassed by the embassy demanding a passage through their territories. The council was assembled, and a great difference of opinion was found among its members. Some believed that these were the white-skinned, bearded men whose coming was foretold, and at all events they were enemies to Mexico, and might help them in their struggle against it. Others argued that this could not be: the march of the strangers through the land might be tracked by the broken images of the Indian gods, and desecrated temples. How could they be sure that they were not friends of Montezuma? They had received his embassies, accepted his gifts, and were even now on their way to his capital in company with his vassals. This last was the opinion of an aged chief, one of the four rulers of the republic. His name was Xicotencatl, and he was nearly blind, for he was over a hundred years old. He had a son of the same name as himself, an impetuous young man, who commanded a powerful force of Tlascalans and Otomies on the eastern frontier where the great fortification stood. The old chief advised that this force should at once fall upon the Spaniards. If they were conquered they would be at the mercy of the Tlascalans, but if by any mischance his son should fail, the council could declare that they had nothing to do with the attack, laying the whole blame of it upon the young Xicotencatl. Meantime the Cempoallan envoys were to be detained under pretence of assisting at a religious sacrifice. By this time, as we know, Cortés and his gallant band had passed the rocky rampart, from which, for some reason or other, the Otomie guard was absent. After advancing a few leagues he saw a small party of Indians, armed with sword and buckler, who fled at his approach. He made signs for them to halt, but they only fled the faster.

The Spaniards spurred their horses, and soon succeeded in overtaking them, when they at once turned, and, without showing the usual alarm at the horses and strange weapons of the cavaliers, attacked them furiously. The latter, however, were far too strong for them, and they would soon have been cut to pieces had not a body of several thousand Indians appeared, coming quickly to their rescue. Cortés seeing them, hastily despatched a messenger to hurry up his infantry. The Indians, having discharged their missiles, fell upon the little band of Spaniards, striving to drag the riders from their horses and to tear their lances from their grasp. They brought one cavalier to the ground, who afterwards died of his wounds, and they killed two horses, cutting their necks through with one blow of their formidable broadswords. This was a most serious loss to Cortés, whose horses were so important, and so few in number.

The struggle was a hard one, and it was with no small satisfaction that the Spaniards saw their comrades advancing to their aid. No sooner had the main body reached the field of battle, than, hastily falling into position, they poured such a volley from their muskets and crossbows as fairly astounded the enemy, who made no further attempt to continue the fight, but drew off in good order, leaving the road open to the Spaniards, who were only too glad to get rid of their foes and pursue their way. Presently they met two Tlascalan envoys, accompanied by two of the Cempoallans. The former, on being brought to the general, assured him of a friendly reception in the capital, and declared the late assault upon the troops to have been quite unauthorised. Cortés received his message courteously, pretending to believe that all was as he said. As it was now growing late the Spaniards quickened their pace, anxious to reach a suitable camping-ground before nightfall, and they chose a place upon the bank of a stream, where a few deserted huts were standing. These the weary and famishing soldiers ransacked in search of food, but could find nothing but some animals resembling dogs, which, however, they cooked and ate without ceremony, seasoning their unsavoury repast with the fruit of the Indian fig, which grew wild in the neighbourhood. After several desperate battles with the Tlascalans, Cortés finally won a great victory.

The next day — as he usually did after gaining a battle — the Spanish commander sent a new embassy to the Tlascalan capital, making as before professions of friendship, but this time threatening that if his offers were rejected he would visit their city as a conqueror, razing their house to the ground and putting every inhabitant to the sword. Of course this message was given to the envoys by the aid of the Lady Marina, who became day by day more necessary to Cortés, and who was, indeed, generally admired for her courage and the cheerfulness with which she endured all the hardships of the camp and raised the drooping spirits of the soldiers, while by every means in her power she alleviated the miseries of her own countrymen. This time, the ambassadors of Cortés received a respectful hearing from the deeply dejected council of Tlascala, for whom nothing remained but to submit. Four principal caciques were chosen to offer to the Spaniards a free passage through the country, and a friendly reception in the capital. Their friendship was accepted, with many excuses for the past, and the chiefs were further ordered to touch at the camp of Xicotencatl, the Tlascalan general, and require him to cease hostilities and furnish the white men with a plentiful supply of provisions.

While the Tlascalan envoys were still in the camp came a fresh embassy from Montezuma. Tidings had been sent to him of each step in the progress of the Spaniards, and it was with great satisfaction that he had heard of their taking the road to Tlascala, trusting that if they were mortal men they would find their graves there. Great was his dismay, therefore, when courier after courier brought him news of their successes, and how the most redoubtable warriors had been scattered by this handful of strangers. His superstitious fears returned with greater force than ever, and in his alarm and uncertainty he despatched five great nobles of his court, attended by two hundred slaves, to bear to Cortés a gift consisting of three thousand ounces of gold and several hundred robes of cotton and feather-work. As they laid it at his feet they said that they had come to offer Montezuma’s congratulations upon his victories, and to express his regret that he could not receive them in his capital, where the numerous population was so unruly that he could not be answerable for their safety. The merest hint of the emperor’s wishes would have been enough to influence any of the natives, but they made very little impression upon Cortés; and, seeing this, the envoys proceeded, in their master’s name, to offer tribute to the Spanish sovereign, provided the general would give up the idea of visiting the capital. This was a fatal mistake, and a most strange one for such a brave and powerful monarch to make, for it amounted to an admission that he was unable to protect his treasures. Cortés in replying expressed the greatest respect for Montezuma, but urged his own sovereign’s commands as a reason for disregarding his wishes. He added that though he had not at present the power of requiting his generosity as he could wish, he trusted ‘to repay him at some future day with good works.’ You will hear before long how he kept his word.

The Mexican ambassadors were anything but pleased at finding the war at an end and a firm friendship established between their mortal enemies and the Spaniards, and the general saw with some satisfaction the evidences of a jealousy between them, which was his surest hope of success in undermining the Mexican empire. Two of the Aztecs presently returned to acquaint Montezuma with the state of affairs; the others remained with the Spaniards, Cortés being willing that they should see the deference paid to him by the Tlascalans, who were most anxious for his presence in their city.

The city of Tlascala lay about six leagues away from the Spanish camp, and the road led through a hilly region, and across a deep ravine over which a bridge had just been built for the passage of the army; they passed some towns by the way, where they were received with the greatest hospitality. The people flocked out to meet them, bringing garlands of roses, with which they decorated the Spanish soldiers, and wreathed about the necks of their horses. Priests in their white robes mingled with the crowd, scattering clouds of incense from their censers, and thus escorted the army slowly made its way through the gates of the city of Tlascala. Here the press became so great that it was with difficulty that a passage was cleared for it. The flat housetops were crowded with eager spectators, while garlands of green boughs, roses, and honeysuckle were thrown across the streets, and the air was rent with songs and shouts and the wild music of the national instruments. Presently the procession halted before the palace of the aged Xicotencatl, the father of the general, and Cortés dismounted from his horse, that the blind old man might satisfy his natural curiosity respecting him, by passing his hand over his face. He then led the way to a spacious hall, where a banquet was served to the whole army, after which, quarters were assigned to them in a neighbouring teocalli, the Mexican ambassadors being, at the desire of Cortés, lodged next to himself that he might the better protect them in the city of their foes.

For some days the Spaniards were feasted and entertained in four quarters of the city, which was really like separate towns divided from one another by high walls, in each of which lived one of the rulers of the republic, surrounded by his own vassals. But amid all these friendly demonstrations the general never for a moment relaxed the strict discipline of the camp, and no soldier was allowed to leave his quarters without special permission. At first this offended the Tlascalan chiefs, as they thought it showed distrust of them. But when Cortés explained that this was only in accordance with the established military system of his country, they began to think it admirable, and the young Xicotencatl proposed, if possible, to imitate it. The Spanish commander now turned his thoughts to the converting of the Tlascalans; but as they refused to part with their own gods, though they were willing enough to add the God of the Christians to their number, he took the advice of the wise Father Olmedo, and abandoned the idea for the time. However, a cross was erected in one of the great squares, and there the Spaniards held their religious services unmolested, and it happened, strangely enough, that they had scarcely left the city when a thin, transparent cloud settled like a column upon the cross, wrapping it round, and continuing through the night to shed a soft light about it. This occurrence did more for the conversion of the natives than all the preaching of Father Olmedo. Several of the Indian princesses were now baptized, and given in marriage to the officers of Cortés. One, who was the daughter of Xicotencatl, became the wife of Alvarado, who was always a great favourite with the Tlascalans. From his gay manners, joyous countenance, and bright golden hair, he gained the nickname of ‘Tonatiuh,’ or the ‘Sun,’ while Cortés, who hardly ever appeared anywhere without the beautiful Marina, was called by the natives ‘Malinche,’ which you will remember was her Indian name. While all this was happening, came yet another embassy from Montezuma, loaded as usual with costly gifts. This time he invited the Spaniards to visit him in his capital, assuring them that they would be welcome. Further, he besought them to enter into no alliance with the base and barbarous Tlascalans, but he invited them to take the route of the friendly city of Cholula, where arrangements were being made, by his orders, for their reception. The Tlascalans were much concerned that Cortés should propose to go to Mexico, and what they told him fully confirmed all the reports he had heard of the power and ambition of Montezuma, of the strength of his capital, and the number of his soldiers. They warned him not to trust to his gifts and his fair words, and when the general said that he hoped to bring about a better understanding between the emperor and themselves, they replied that it was impossible; however smooth his words, he would hate them at heart. They also heartily protested against the general’s going to Cholula. The people, they said, though not brave in the open field, were crafty; they were Montezuma’s tools, and would do his bidding. That city, too, was specially under the protection of the god Quetzalcoatl, and the priests were confidently believed to have the power of opening an inundation from the foundations of his shrine, which should overwhelm their enemies in the deluge, and lastly, though many distant places had sent to testify their goodwill, and offer their allegiance, Cholula, only six leagues distant, had done neither. This consideration weighed more with the general than either of the preceding ones, and he promptly despatched a summons to the city demanding a formal tender of its submission. It was not long before deputies arrived from Cholula profuse in expressions of goodwill and invitations to visit their city; but the Tlascalans pointed out that these messengers were below the usual rank of ambassadors, which Cortés regarded as a fresh indignity. He therefore sent a new summons, declaring that if they did not at once send a deputation of their principal men he would treat them as rebels to his own sovereign, the rightful lord of these realms. This soon brought some of the highest nobles to the camp, who excused their tardy appearance, by saying that they had feared for their personal safety in the capital of their enemies. The Tlascalans were now more than ever averse to the projected visit. A strong Aztec force was known to be near Cholula, and the city was being actively prepared for defence. Cortés, too, was disturbed by these circumstances, but he had gone too far to recede without showing fear, which could not fail to have a bad effect on his own men, as well as on the natives. Therefore, after a short consultation with his officers, he decided finally to take the road to Cholula. This ancient city lay six leagues to the south of Tlascala, and was most populous and flourishing. The inhabitants excelled in the art of working in metals and manufacturing cotton cloth and delicate pottery, but were indisposed to war, and less distinguished for courage than for cunning. You will remember that it was in this place that the god Quetzalcoatl had paused on his way to the coast, and in his honour a tremendous pyramid had been erected, probably by building over a natural hill, and on the top of this rose a gorgeous temple, in which stood an image of the god bedecked with gold and jewels. To this temple pilgrims flocked from every corner of the empire, and many were the terrible sacrifices offered there, as, indeed, in all the other teocallis, of which there were about four hundred in the city. On the day appointed, the Spanish army set out for Cholula, followed by crowds of citizens, who admired the courage displayed by this little handful of men in proposing to brave the mighty Montezuma in his own territory. An immense body of warriors had offered to join the expedition, but Cortés thought it wise to accept only six thousand, and even these he left encamped at some distance from Cholula, because the caciques of that city, who came out to meet the Spaniards, objected to having their mortal enemies brought within its walls. As the troops drew near the town they were met by swarms of men, women, and children, all eager to catch a glimpse of the strangers, whose persons, horses, and weapons were equally objects of intense curiosity to them. They in their turn were struck by the noble aspect of the Cholulans, who were much superior in dress and general appearance to the other tribes they had encountered. An immense number of priests swinging censers mingled with the crowd, and, as before, they were decorated with garlands and bunches of flowers, and accompanied by gay music from various instruments. The Spaniards were also struck by the width and cleanliness of the streets and the solidity of the houses. They were lodged in the court of one of the many teocallis, and visited by the great nobles of the city, who supplied them plentifully with all they needed, and at first paid them such attentions as caused them to believe that the evil apprehensions of the Tlascalans had been merely suspicion and prejudice. But very soon the scene changed. Messengers came from Montezuma, who shortly and pleasantly told Cortés that his approach occasioned much disquietude to their master, and then conferred apart with the Mexicans who were still in the Spanish camp, presently departing, and taking one of them away with them. From this time the Cholulans visited the Spanish quarters no more, and when invited to do so excused themselves, saying they were ill. Also, the supply of provisions ran short, and they said it was because maize was scarce. Naturally, Cortés became very uneasy at this change, and his alarm was increased by the reports of the Cempoallans, who told him that in wandering about the city they had seen several streets barricaded, and in some places holes had been dug, and a sharp stake planted upright in each, and branches strewn to conceal them, while the flat roofs of the houses were being stored with stones and other missiles. Some Tlascalans also came in from their camp to inform him that a great sacrifice, mostly of children, had been held in a distant quarter of the town, to secure the aid of the gods in some intended enterprise, and numbers of the people had taken their wives and children out of the city.

These tidings confirmed the worst suspicions of Cortés, but just then the Lady Marina made a discovery which changed his doubts into certainty. The wife of one of the Cholulan caciques had taken a great fancy to the Mexican girl, and continually urged her to visit her house, hinting mysteriously that she would in this way escape a great danger which threatened the Spaniards. Marina pretended to be delighted with this proposal, and glad of the chance of escaping from the white men, and by degrees she thus won the confidence of the Cholulan, who presently revealed the whole plot to her. It originated, she said, with the Aztec emperor, who had bribed the caciques of Cholula, her husband among the number, to assault the Spaniards as they marched out of the city, and to throw them into confusion all sorts of obstacles had been placed in their way.

A force of twenty thousand Mexicans was already quartered near the city to support the Cholulans, and the Spaniards would, it was confidently expected, fall an easy prey to their united enemies. A sufficient number of them were to be reserved to be sacrificed in Cholula, and the rest led in fetters to the capital of Montezuma. While this conversation was taking place, Marina was making a show of collecting and packing up such dresses and jewels as she was to take with her to the house of her new friend. But after a while she managed to slip away without exciting her suspicion, and, rushing to the general, told him all. Cortés at once caused the cacique's wife to be seized, and she repeated to him the same story that she had told to Marina. He was most anxious to gain further particulars of the conspiracy, and accordingly induced two priests, one of them a person of much influence, to visit his quarters, where by courteous treatment and rich presents he got from them a complete confirmation of the report. The emperor had been in a state of pitiable vacillation since the arrival of the Spaniards. His first orders had been that they should be kindly received, but on consulting his oracles anew he had obtained for answer that Cholula would be the grave of his enemies, and so positive of success were the Aztecs, that they had already sent into the city numbers of the poles with thongs attached to them with which to bind the prisoners. Cortés now dismissed the priests, bidding them observe the strictest secrecy, which, indeed they were likely to do for their own sakes. He also requested that they would induce some of the principal caciques to grant him an interview in his quarters. When they came he gently rebuked them for their want of hospitality, and said that the Spaniards would burden them no longer, but would leave the city early the next morning. He also asked that they would supply him with two thousand men to carry his artillery and baggage. The chiefs, after some consultation, agreed to this as being likely to favour their own plans. Then he sent for the Mexican ambassadors, and acquainted them with his discovery of the plot, saying that it grieved him much to find Montezuma mixed up in so treacherous an affair, and that the Spaniards must now march as enemies against a monarch they had hoped to visit as a friend. The ambassadors, however, asserted their entire ignorance of the conspiracy, and their belief that Montezuma also knew nothing of it. The night that followed was one of intense anxiety; every soldier lay down fully armed, and the number of sentinels was doubled; but all remained quiet in the populous city, and the only sounds which reached their ears were the hoarse cries of the priests who, from the turrets of the teocallis, proclaimed through their trumpets the watches of the night.

With the first streak of morning light Cortés was on horseback, directing the movements of his little band, part of which he posted in the great square court. A strong guard was placed at each of the three gates, and the rest had charge of the great guns which were outside the enclosure, and so placed as to command the roads which led to the teocalli. The arrangements were hardly completed before the Cholulan caciques appeared, bringing a larger body of porters than had been demanded. They were marched at once into the square, which was, as we have seen, completely lined by the Spanish troops. Cortés then took the caciques aside, and sternly and abruptly charged them with the conspiracy, taking care to show that he knew every detail. The Cholulans were thunderstruck, and gazed with awe upon the strangers who seemed to have the power of reading their most secret thoughts. They made no attempt to deny the accusation, but tried to excuse themselves by throwing the blame on Montezuma. Cortés, however, declared with still more indignation that such a pretence would not serve them, and that he would now make such an example of them as should be a warning to the cities far and near, and then the fatal signal — the firing of a gun — was given, and in an instant every musket and crossbow was levelled at the unhappy Cholulans as they stood crowded together in the centre. They were completely taken by surprise, having heard nothing of what was going forward, and offered hardly any resistance to the Spanish soldiers, who followed up the discharge of their pieces by rushing upon them with their swords and mowing them down in ranks as they stood.

While this dreadful massacre was going on the Cholulans from outside, attracted by the noise, began a furious assault upon the Spaniards, but the heavy guns opened fire upon them and swept them off in files as they rushed on, and in the intervals of reloading the cavalry charged into their midst. By this time the Tlascalans had come up, having by order of Cortés bound wreaths of sedge about their heads that they might be the more easily distinguished from the Cholulans, and they fell upon the rear of the wretched townsmen, who, thus harassed on all sides, could no longer maintain their ground. They fled, some to the near buildings, which were speedily set on fire, others to the temples. One strong body headed by the priests got possession of the great teocalli. There was, as you remember, a tradition that if part of the wall was removed the god would send a flood to overwhelm his enemies. Now the Cholulans strove with might and main, and at last succeeded in wrenching away a few stones, but dust, not water, followed. In despair they crowded into the wooden turrets which surmounted the temple, and poured down stones, javelins, and burning arrows upon the Spaniards as they came swarming up the steps. But the fiery shower fell harmlessly upon the steel head-pieces of the soldiers, and they used the blazing shafts to set fire to the wooden towers, so that the wretched natives either perished in the flames or threw themselves headlong from the parapet. In the fair city, lately so peaceful and prosperous, all was confusion and slaughter, burning and plundering. The division of spoil was greatly simplified by the fact that the Tlascalans desired wearing-apparel and provisions far more than gold or jewels; they also took hundreds of prisoners, but these Cortés afterwards induced them to release. The work of destruction had gone on for some hours before the general yielded to the entreaties of the Cholulan chiefs who had been saved from the massacre, and of the Mexican envoys, and called off his men, putting a stop as well as he could to further violence. Two of the caciques were also permitted to go to their countrymen with offers of pardon and protection to all who would return to their obedience, and so by degrees the tumult was appeased. Presently Cortés helped the Cholulans to choose a successor to their principal cacique, who was among the slain, and confidence being thus restored the people from the country round began to flock in, the markets were again opened, and the ordinary life of the city resumed, though the black and smouldering ruins remained to tell the sad tale of the massacre of Cholula. This terrible vengeance made a great impression upon the natives, and none trembled more than the Mexican monarch upon his throne among the mountains. He felt his empire melting away from him like a morning mist, for some of the most important cities, overawed by the fate of Cholula, now sent envoys to the Spanish camp tendering their allegiance, and trying to secure the favour of the conqueror by rich gifts of gold and slaves. Again did Montezuma seek counsel from his gods, but the answers he obtained were far from reassuring, and he determined to send another embassy to Cortés to declare that he had nothing to do with the conspiracy at Cholula. As usual the envoys were charged with a splendid present of golden vessels and ornaments, and among other things were artificial birds, made in imitation of turkeys with plumage of worked gold; there were also fifteen hundred robes of delicate cotton cloth. The emperor's message expressed regret for the late catastrophe, and denied all knowledge of the plot which had, he said, brought a retribution upon its authors which they richly deserved; and he explained the presence of the Aztec force in the neighbourhood by saying that there was a disturbance that had to be quelled. More than a fortnight had passed since the Spaniards entered Cholula, and the general had, after the city was once more restored to order, tried to induce the people to give up their false gods, but this they would not do willingly. However, he seized upon the great teocalli of which all the woodwork had been burned, and built a church of the stone that remained, and he opened the cages in which the wretched victims about to be sacrificed were imprisoned, and restored them to liberty, and then he thought it time to begin the march to Mexico once more. So the allied army of Spaniards and Tlascalans set out upon their journey through luxuriant plains and flourishing plantations, met occasionally by embassies from different towns, anxious to claim the protection of the white men, and bringing rich gifts of gold to propitiate them. They passed between the two enormous mountain peaks, Popocatapetl, ‘the hill that smokes,’ and Iztaccihuatl, ‘the white woman,’ and presently encountered a blinding snow-storm, from which they found shelter in one of the large stone buildings, put up by the Mexicans for the use of travellers and couriers, and here they encamped for the night. The next morning they reached the top of a range of hills where progress was comparatively easy, and they had not gone far when, turning sharply round the shoulder of a hill, they saw spread out before them the lovely Mexican valley. The clearness of the air enabled them to see distinctly the shining cities, the lakes, woods, fields and gardens, and in the midst of all the fair city of Mexico rose as it were from the waters of the great lake, with its towers and temples white and gleaming, and behind it the royal hill of Chapoltepec, the residence of the Mexican kings, crowned with the very same gigantic cypress trees which to this day fling their broad shadows across the land. The Spaniards gazed in rapture over the gay scene, exclaiming, ‘It is the promised land!’ but presently the evidences of a power and civilisation so far superior to anything they had yet encountered disheartened the more timid among them, they shrank from the unequal contest, and begged to be led back again to Vera Cruz. But this was not the effect produced upon Cortés by the glorious prospect. His desire for treasure and love of adventure were sharpened by the sight of the dazzling spoil at his very feet, and with threats, arguments, and entreaties he revived the drooping spirits of his soldiers, and by the aid of his brave captains succeeded in once more rousing them to enthusiasm, and the march down the slope of the hill was gaily resumed.

With every step of their progress the woods became thinner, and villages were seen in green and sheltered nooks, the inhabitants of which came out to meet and welcome the Spaniards. Everywhere Cortés heard with satisfaction complaints of the cruelty and injustice of Montezuma, and he encouraged the natives to rely on his protection, as he had come to redress their wrongs. The army advanced but slowly, and was soon met by another embassy from the emperor, consisting of several Aztec lords bringing a rich gift of gold, and robes of delicate furs and feathers, and offering four loads of gold to the general, and one to each of his captains, with a yearly tribute to the Spanish sovereign, if they would even then turn back from Mexico. But Cortés replied that he could not answer it to his sovereign if he were to return without visiting the emperor in his capital. The Spaniards came in the spirit of peace as Montezuma would see for himself; but should their presence prove burdensome to him, it would be very easy for them to relieve him of it.

This embassy had been intended to reach the Spaniards before they crossed the mountains, and the dismay of the Aztec emperor was great when he learned that it had failed, and that the dreaded strangers were actually on their march across the valley. They were so utterly unlike anything he had ever known before, these strange beings, who seemed to have dropped from another planet, and by their superior knowledge and more deadly weapons overcome the hitherto unconquerable nations, though a mere handful of men in comparison to the swarms of his own countrymen. He felt himself to be the victim of a destiny from which nothing could save him. All peace, power, and security seemed to be gone from him, and in despair he shut himself up in his palace, refusing food, and trying by prayers and sacrifices to wring some favour from his gods. But the oracles were dumb. Then he called a council of his chief nobles, but a great difference of opinion arose amongst them. Cacama, the emperor’s nephew, king of Tezcuco, counselled him to receive the Spaniards courteously as ambassadors of a foreign prince, while Cuitlahua, his brother, urged him to muster his forces and then and there drive back the invaders, or die in the defence of his capital. But Montezuma could not rouse himself for this struggle. He exclaimed in deep dejection, “Of what avail is resistance when the gods have declared themselves against us? Yet I mourn for the old and infirm, the women and children, too feeble to fight or fly. For myself and the brave men around me, we must face the storm as best we may!” and he straightway sent off a last embassy, with his nephew at its head, to meet the Spaniards and welcome them to Mexico. By this time the army had reached the first of the towns built on piles driven into the lake, and were delighted with its fine stone houses, with canals between them instead of streets, up and down which boats passed continually, laden with all kinds of merchandise. Though received with great hospitality, Cortés still was strictly on his guard, and neglected no precaution for the security of his men. Before he left this place a messenger came, requesting him to wait for the arrival of the king of Tezcuco, who very soon afterwards appeared, borne in a palanquin richly decorated with plates of gold and precious stones, having pillars curiously wrought which supported a canopy of green plumes. He was accompanied by a numerous retinue of nobles and inferior attendants, and when he came into the presence of Cortés he descended from his palanquin and advanced towards him, his officers sweeping the ground before him as he did so.

The prince was a handsome young man, erect and dignified; he made the usual Mexican salutation to people of high rank, touching the earth with his right hand and raising it to his head, and said that he came as the representative of

Montezuma to bid the Spaniards welcome to Mexico, and presented the general with three pearls of uncommon size and lustre. Cortés embraced him, and in return threw over his neck a chain of cut glass. After this exchange of courtesies, and the most friendly and respectful assurances on the part of Cortés, the Indian prince withdrew, leaving the Spaniards much impressed by his superiority in state and bearing to anything they had before seen in the country.

Resuming their march along the southern shore of Lake Chalco, through splendid woods, and orchards glowing with unknown fruits, the army came at length to a great dyke or causeway four or five miles long, which divided the Lake Chalco from Xochicalco on the west. It was a lance in breadth at the narrowest part, and in some places wide enough for eight horsemen to ride abreast, and was solidly built of stone and lime. As they passed along it they saw multitudes of Indians darting up and down the lake in their light pirogues, eager to catch a glimpse of the strangers, and they were amazed at the sight of the floating islands, covered with flowers and vegetables and moving like rafts over the waters. All round the margin, and occasionally far out in the lake, they saw little towns and villages half buried in foliage; and the whole scene seemed to them so new and wonderful that they could only compare it to the magical pictures of the old romances. Midway across the lake the army halted at the town of Cuitlahuae, which was not large, but was remarkable for the beauty of its buildings. The curiosity of the Indians increased as the Spaniards proceeded, and they clambered up the causeway and lined the sides of the road, so that the troops were quite embarrassed by them, and Cortés was obliged to resort to commands, and even menaces, to clear a passage. He found, as he neared the capital, a considerable change in the feeling shown towards the government, and heard only of the pomp and magnificence of Montezuma, and nothing of his oppressions. From the causeway the army descended on a narrow point of land which lay between the two lakes, and crossing it reached the royal residence of Iztapalapan.

This place was governed by the emperor’s brother, who, to do greater honour to Cortés, had invited the neighbouring lords to be present at his reception, and at the banquet which followed. The Spaniards were struck with admiration, when, after the usual ceremonies had been gone through, and a gift of gold and costly stuffs had been presented, they were led into one of the gorgeous halls of the palace, the roof of which was of odorous cedar-wood, and the stone walls tapestried with brilliant hangings. But, indeed, this was only one of the many beautiful things which they saw in this fairy city. There were gardens cunningly planted, and watered in every part by means of canals and aqueducts, in which grew gorgeous flowers and luscious fruits. There was an aviary filled with all kinds of birds, remarkable for the brilliancy of their plumage and the sweetness of their songs. But the most elaborate piece of work was a huge reservoir of stone full of water and stocked with all kinds of fish, and by this all the fountains and aqueducts were supplied. In this city of enchantment the army rested for the night, within sight of the capital into which Cortés intended to lead them on the morrow.

The Occupation of Mexico.

MONTEZUMA GREETS THE SPANIARDS

With the first faint streak of dawn, on the morning of November 8, 1519, the Spanish general was astir and mustering his followers, and as the sun rose above the eastern mountains he set forth with his little troop of horsemen as a sort of advanced guard, the Spanish infantry followed, then the baggage, and finally the dark files of the Tlascalan warriors. The whole number cannot have amounted to seven thousand, of which less than four hundred were Spaniards. For a short distance the army kept along the narrow tongue of land between the lakes, and then entered upon the great dyke which crosses the salt waters of Lake Tezcuco to the very gates of the capital. It was wide enough all the way for ten horsemen to ride abreast, and from it the Spaniards could see many towns and villages — some upon the shores of the lake, some built upon piles running far out into its waters. These cities were evidently crowded with a thriving population, and contained many temples and other important buildings which were covered with a hard white stucco glistening like enamel in the sunshine. The lake was darkened with a swarm of canoes filled with Indians who were eager to gaze upon the strangers, and here and there floated those fairy islands of flowers which rose and fell with every undulation of the water, and yet were substantial enough to support trees of a considerable size. At the distance of half a league from the capital they encountered a solid fortification, like a curtain of stone, which was built across the dyke. It was twelve feet high, and had a tower at each end, and in the centre a battlemented gateway through which the troops passed. This place was called the Fort of Xoloc, and was afterwards occupied by Cortés in the famous siege of Mexico. Here they were met by several hundred Aztec chiefs in their gay and fanciful costume. Some of them wore broad mantles of delicate feather embroidery, and collars and bracelets of turquoise mosaic with which fine plumage was curiously mingled, while their ears, underlips, and sometimes even their noses, were adorned with pendants of precious stones, or crescents of fine gold. After the usual formal salutations, which caused some delay, the march was resumed, and the army presently reached a wooden drawbridge which crossed an opening in the dyke, meant to serve as an outlet for the water, should it for any reason rise beyond its usual height. As they left this bridge behind them the Spaniards felt that they were indeed committing themselves to the mercy of Montezuma, who might, by means of it, cut them off from communication with the country, and hold them prisoners in his capital. They now beheld the glittering retinue of the emperor emerging from the great street which led through the heart of the city. Amidst a crowd of Indian nobles, preceded by three officers of state bearing golden wands, they saw the royal palanquin, blazing with burnished gold. It was borne on the shoulders of nobles, and over it a canopy of gorgeous featherwork, powdered with jewels and fringed with silver, was supported by four attendants, also of high rank, who were barefooted and walked with a slow, measured pace, with their eyes bent upon the ground. As soon as the procession had come within a short distance of the Spaniards the emperor descended from his palanquin, and advanced under the canopy, leaning upon the arms of his nephew and his brother. The ground before him was strewn with cotton tapestry by his attendants, and the natives who lined the sides of the causeway bent forward with their eyes fixed upon the ground as he passed, whilst some of the humbler class prostrated themselves before him. Montezuma wore the usual broad girdle and square cloak of the finest cotton, on his feet were sandals with soles of gold, and leathern thongs ornamented with the same metal. Both cloak and sandals were sprinkled with pearls and precious stones, principally emeralds, and the green ‘chalchivitl,’ which was more highly esteemed by the Aztecs than any jewel. On his head he wore only a plume of royal green feathers, a badge of his military rank. He was at this time about forty years of age, and was tall and thin, and of a lighter complexion than is usual among his countrymen; he moved with dignity, and there was a benignity in his whole demeanour which was not to have been anticipated from the reports of his character which had reached the Spaniards. The army halted as Montezuma drew near, and Cortés dismounted and advanced to meet him with a few of the principal cavaliers. The emperor received him with princely courtesy, and expressed his satisfaction at seeing him in his capital. Cortés responded by the most profound expressions of respect and gratitude for all Montezuma’s munificence to the Spaniards; he then hung round the emperor’s neck a chain of coloured crystal, making at the same time a movement as if to embrace him, but was restrained by the two Aztec lords, who were shocked at the idea of such presumption. Montezuma then appointed his brother to conduct the Spaniards to their quarters in the city, and again entering his litter was borne off amid prostrate crowds in the same state in which he had come. The Spaniards quickly followed, and with colours flying and music playing entered the southern portion of the city of Mexico. The great wide street facing the causeway stretched for some miles in nearly a straight line through the centre of the city. In the clear atmosphere of the tableland it was easy to see the blue mountains in the distance beyond the temples, houses, and gardens which stood on either side of it. But what most impressed the Spaniards was the swarm of people who thronged every street, canal, and roof, and filled every window and doorway. To the Aztecs it must indeed have been a strange sensation when they beheld the fair-faced strangers, and for the first time heard their well-paved streets ringing under the iron tramp of the horses — those unknown animals which they regarded with superstitious terror. But their wonder changed to anger when they saw their detested enemies, the Tlascalans, stalking through their city with looks of ferocity and defiance.

As they passed along the troops frequently crossed bridges which spanned some of the numerous canals, and at length they halted in a wide open space, near the centre of the city, close to the huge temple of the war-god. Facing the western gate of the temple enclosure stood a range of low stone buildings, spreading over a large extent of ground, once a palace belonging to the emperor’s father. This was to be the lodging of the Spaniards. Montezuma himself was waiting in the courtyard to receive them. Approaching Cortés he took from one of his slaves a massive collar, made of the shells of a kind of crawfish much prized by the Indians, set in gold, and connected by heavy golden links; from this hung eight finely-worked ornaments, each a span long, made to resemble the crawfish, but of fine gold. This gorgeous collar he hung round the neck of the general, saying: ‘This palace belongs to you, Malinche’ (this was the name by which he always addressed him), ‘and your brethren. Rest after your fatigues, for you have much need to do so; in a little while I will visit you again.’ So saying, he withdrew with his attendants. The general’s first care was to inspect his new quarters. The rooms were of great size, and afforded accommodation for the whole army — the Tlascalans probably encamping in the outer courts. The best apartments were hung with draperies of gaily coloured cotton, and the floors were covered with mats or rushes. There were also low stools carved from single pieces of wood, and most of the rooms had beds made of the palm-leaf, woven into a thick mat, with coverlets, and sometimes canopies of cotton. The general, after a rapid survey, assigned his troops their respective quarters, and took as vigilant precautions for security as if he expected a siege; he planted his cannon so as to command the approaches to the palace, stationed sentinels along the walls, and ordered that no soldier should leave his quarters under pain of death. After all these precautions he allowed his men to enjoy the banquet prepared for them. This over, the emperor came again, attended by a few nobles; he was received with great deference by Cortés, and with Marina’s aid they conversed, while the Aztecs and the cavaliers stood around in respectful silence. Montezuma made many inquiries concerning the country of the Spaniards, its sovereign, and its government, and especially asked their reasons for visiting Mexico. Cortés replied that they had desired to see its great monarch, and to declare to him the true faith professed by the Christians. The emperor showed himself to be fully acquainted with all the doings of the Spaniards since their landing, and was curious as to their rank in their own country; he also learned the names of the principal cavaliers, and their position in the army. At the conclusion of the interview the Aztecs brought forward a gift of cotton robes, enough to supply every man, even including the Tlascalans, and gold chains and ornaments, which were distributed in profusion among the Spaniards. That evening Cortés ordered a general discharge of artillery, and the noise of the guns and the volumes of smoke filled the superstitious Aztecs with dismay, reminding them of the explosions of the great volcano.

On the following morning he asked permission to return the emperor’s visit, and Montezuma sent officers to conduct the Spaniards to his presence.

CORTÉS IN THE TEMPLE OF HUITZILOPOCHTLI

On reaching the hall of audience the Mexican officers took off their sandals, and covered their gay attire with mantles of ‘nequen,’ a coarse stuff made from the fibres of the aloe, and worn only by the poorest classes; for it was thus humbly that all, excepting the members of his own family, approached the sovereign. Then with downcast eyes and formal obeisance they ushered the Spaniards into the royal presence. They found Montezuma surrounded by a few of his favourite chiefs, and were kindly received by him; and Cortés soon began upon the subject uppermost in his thoughts, setting forth as clearly as he could the mysteries of his faith, and assuring Montezuma his idols would sink him in perdition. But the emperor only listened calmly, and showed no sign of being convinced. He had no doubt, he said, that the god of the Spaniards was good, but his own gods were good also; what Cortés told him of the creation of the world was like what he had been taught to believe. It was not worth while to discuss the matter farther. He added that his ancestors were not the original possessors of his land, but had been led there by the great Being, who, after giving them laws, and ruling over them for a time, had withdrawn to the region where the sun rises, declaring on his departure that he or his descendants would some day come again and reign. The wonderful deeds of the Spaniards, their fair faces, and the quarter whence they came all showed that they were his descendants. If Montezuma had resisted their visit to his capital, it was because he had heard that they were cruel, that they sent the lightning to consume his people, or crushed them to pieces under the hard feet of the ferocious animals on which they rode. He was now convinced that these were idle tales, that the Spaniards were kind and generous, — mortals indeed, but of a different race from the Aztecs, wiser, and more valiant. You, too, he added with a smile, have perhaps been told that I am a god and dwell in palaces of gold and silver. But you see it is false: my houses, though large, are of wood and stone; and as to my body, he said, baring his tawny arm, you see it is flesh and bone like yours. It is true that I have a great empire inherited from my ancestors, lands, and gold and silver, but your sovereign beyond the waters is, I know, the rightful lord of all. I rule in his name. You, Malinche, are his ambassador; you and your brethren shall share these things with me. Rest now from your labours. You are here in your own dwellings, and everything shall be provided for your subsistence. I will see that your wishes shall be obeyed in the same way as my own. Cortés, while he encouraged the idea that his own sovereign was the great Being, as Montezuma believed, assured him that his master had no desire to interfere with his authority otherwise than, out of concern for his welfare, to effect his conversion, and that of his people, to Christianity. Before the emperor dismissed his visitors, rich stuffs and ornaments of gold were distributed among them, so that the poorest soldier received at least two heavy collars of gold, and on their homeward way they could talk of nothing but the generosity and courtesy of the Indian monarch. But the general was harassed by many anxious thoughts. He had not been prepared to find so much luxury, civilisation, and power. He was in the heart of a great capital which seemed like an extensive fortification, with its dykes and drawbridges, where every house might be converted into a castle. At a nod from the sovereign all communication with the rest of the country might be cut off, and the whole warlike population be at once hurled upon himself and his handful of followers, and against such odds of what avail would be his superior science? As to the conquest of the empire, now he had seen the capital, it must have seemed to him a more doubtful enterprise than ever; but at any rate his best policy was to foster the superstitious reverence in which he was held by both prince and people, and to find out all he could about the city and its inhabitants. To this end he asked the emperor’s permission to visit the principal public buildings, which was readily granted, Montezuma even arranging to meet him at the great temple. Cortés put himself at the head of his cavalry, and, followed by nearly all the Spanish foot, set out under the guidance of several caciques sent by Montezuma. They led him to the great teocalli near their own quarters. It stood in the midst of a vast space which was surrounded by a wall of stone and lime about eight feet high, ornamented on the outer side by raised figures of serpents, which gave it the name of the ‘Coatepantli,’ or ‘wall of serpents.’ This wall was pierced by huge battlemented gateways, opening upon the four principal streets of the city, and over each gate was a kind of arsenal filled with arms and warlike gear. The teocalli itself was of the usual pyramidal shape, and five stories high, coated on the outside with hewn stones. The ascent was by flights of steps on the outside, and Cortés found two priests and several caciques waiting to carry him up them as they had just carried the emperor; but the general declined this compliment, preferring to march up at the head of his men. On reaching the great paved space at the summit, the first thing they saw was the stone on which the unhappy victims were stretched for sacrifice; at the other end of the platform stood two-towers, each three stories high, the lower story being of stone, the two upper of carved wood. In these stood the images of the gods, and before each stood an altar upon which blazed the undying fires, the putting out of which was supposed to portend so much woe to the nation. Here also was the huge drum, made of serpents’ skins, struck only on extraordinary occasions, when it sent forth a melancholy sound that could be heard for miles — a sound of woe to the Spaniards in after times. Montezuma, attended by a high priest, came forward to receive Cortés. After conferring with the priests the emperor conducted the Spaniards into the building, which was adorned with sculptured figures; at one end was a recess, with a roof of timber richly carved and gilt, and here stood a colossal image of Huitzilopochtli, the war-god. His countenance was hideous; in his right hand he held a bow, and in his left a bunch of golden arrows, which a mystic legend connected with the victories of his people. A huge serpent of pearls and precious stones was coiled about his waist, and costly jewels were profusely sprinkled over his person. On his left foot were the delicate feathers of the humming-bird, from which, singularly enough, he took his name, while round his neck hung a chain of gold and silver hearts, as an emblem of the sacrifice in which he most delighted. Indeed, even at that moment three bleeding human hearts lay upon the altar before him. The next sanctuary was dedicated to Tezcatlipoca, who, they believed, had created the earth and watched over it. He was represented as a young man, and his image of polished black stone was garnished with gold plates and ornaments, among which was a shield burnished like a mirror, in which he was supposed to see reflected all the doings of the world; and before this shrine also lay five hearts in a golden platter. From the horrors of this place the Spaniards gladly escaped into the open air, and Cortés said, turning to Montezuma, ‘I do not understand how a great and wise prince like you can put faith in such evil spirits as these idols. If you will but permit us to erect here the true cross, and place the images of the Blessed Virgin and her Son in your sanctuaries, you will soon see how your false gods will shrink before them.’ Montezuma was greatly shocked at this speech. ‘These,’ said he, ‘are the gods who have led the Aztecs on to victory since they were a nation, and who send us the seed time and harvest. Had I thought you would have offered them this outrage I would not have admitted you into their presence.’ Cortés then took his leave, expressing concern for having wounded the feelings of the emperor, who remained to expiate, if possible, the crime of having exposed the shrines of his gods to such profanation by the strangers. On descending into the court the Spaniards took a leisurely survey of the other buildings in the enclosure; there were several other teocallis, but much smaller ones, in which the Spaniards saw implements of sacrifice and many other horrors. And there was also a great mound with a timber framework upon its summit, upon which were strung hundreds of thousands of skulls — those of the victims who had been sacrificed. Schools, granaries, gardens, and fountains filled up the remainder of the enclosed space, which seemed a complete city in itself, containing a mixture of barbarism and civilisation altogether characteristic of the Aztec nation. The next day the Spaniards asked permission to convert one of the halls in their palace into a chapel where they might hold the services of their church. The request was granted, and while the work was in progress some of them discovered what seemed to be a door recently plastered over. As there was a rumour that Montezuma kept the treasures of his father in this palace, they did not scruple to gratify their curiosity by removing the plaster and forcing open the door which it concealed, when they beheld a great hall filled with rich and beautiful stuffs, articles of curious workmanship of various kinds, gold and silver in bars or just as it had been dug from the earth, and many jewels of great value. ‘I was a young man,’ says one of the Spaniards who was allowed a sight of the treasure, ‘and it seemed to me that all the riches of the world were in that room.’

By Cortés’ order the wall was built up again, and strict injunctions were given that the discovery should be kept a profound secret. The Spaniards had now been a week in Mexico, and the general’s anxieties increased daily. Cortés resolved upon a bold stroke. Calling a council of his officers, he laid his difficulties before them, and, ignoring the opinion of some who advised an immediate retreat, he proposed to march to the royal palace and by persuasion or force to induce Montezuma to take up his abode in the Spanish quarters. Once having obtained possession of his person, it would be easy to rule in his name by allowing him a show of sovereignty, until they had taken measures to secure their own safety and the success of their enterprise. A pretext for the seizure of the emperor was afforded by a circumstance which had come to the ears of Cortés while he was still in Cholula. Don Juan de Escalante, who had been left in charge of the Spanish settlement at Vera Cruz, had received a message from an Aztec chief called Quanhpopoca declaring his desire to come in person and tender his allegiance to the Spaniards, and requesting that four soldiers might be sent to protect him through the country of an unfriendly tribe. This was not an uncommon request, and the soldiers were sent, but on their arrival two of them were treacherously murdered by the Aztec; the others escaped, and made their way back to the garrison. The commander at once marched with fifty of his men and some thousands of Indians to take vengeance upon the cacique, and though his allies fled before the Mexicans, the few Spaniards stood firm, and by the aid of their firearms made good the field against the enemy. Unfortunately, seven or eight of them were killed, including Escalante himself, and the Indians who were taken prisoners declared that the whole proceeding had been by Montezuma’s orders. One of the Spaniards fell into the hands of the enemy, but soon died from his wounds. He happened to be a very big man of ferocious appearance, and when his head was sent to Montezuma, the Aztec emperor gazed upon it with a shudder, and commanded that it should be taken out of the city, and not offered at the shrine of any of his gods. He seemed to see in those terrible features a prophecy of his sure destruction. The bolder spirits among the cavaliers approved of the general’s plan, and the next day, having asked an audience of Montezuma, Cortés made the necessary arrangements for his enterprise. The principal part of his force was drawn up in the courtyard; one detachment was stationed in the avenue leading to the palace, to prevent any attempt at rescue by the citizens. Twenty-five or thirty soldiers were ordered to drop in at the palace by twos and threes, as if accidentally, and he took with him five cavaliers on whose coolness and courage he could rely.

That they should all be in full armour excited no suspicion; it was too common an occurrence. The Spaniards were graciously received by the emperor, who by the aid of interpreters held a gay conversation with them, and as usual presented them with gold and jewels. He paid Cortés the compliment of offering him one of his daughters in marriage — an honour which was respectfully declined, on the ground that he already had one wife. But as soon as the general saw that his soldiers had all come upon the scene he abruptly changed his tone, and accused the emperor of being the author of the treacherous proceedings on the coast. Montezuma listened in surprise, and declared that such an act could only have been imputed to him by his enemies. Cortés pretended to believe him, but said that Quanhpopoca and his accomplices must be sent for that they might be dealt with after their deserts. Montezuma agreed, and, taking his royal signet from his wrist, gave it to one of his nobles, with orders to show it to the Aztec governor and require his immediate presence in the capital, and in case of his resistance to call in the aid of the neighbouring towns. When the messenger had gone, Cortés assured the emperor that he was now convinced of his innocence in the matter, but that it was necessary that his own sovereign should be equally convinced of it. Nothing would promote this so much as for Montezuma to transfer his residence to the palace occupied by the Spaniards, as this would show a condescension and personal regard for them which would absolve him from all suspicion. The emperor listened to this proposal with profound amazement, exclaiming with resentment and offended dignity:

‘When was it ever heard that a great prince like myself willingly left his own palace to become a prisoner in the hands of strangers?’

Cortés declared that he would not go as a prisoner, but would be simply changing his residence. ‘If I should consent to such degradation,’ he cried, ‘my subjects never would.’

When further pressed, he offered one of his sons and two of his daughters as hostages, so that he might be spared this disgrace. Two hours passed in this fruitless discussion, till Velasquez de Leon, impatient of the long delay, and seeing that to fail in the attempt must ruin them, cried out, ‘Why do we waste words on this barbarian? Let us seize him, and if he resists plunge our swords into his body!’ The fierce tone and menacing gesture alarmed the emperor, who asked Marina what the angry Spaniard said. She explained as gently as she could, beseeching him to accompany the white men, who would treat him with all respect and kindness, while if he refused he would but expose himself to violence, perhaps to death.

This last appeal shook the resolution of Montezuma; looking round for support and sympathy, he saw only the stern faces and mail-clad forms of the Spaniards, and felt that his hour had indeed come. In a scarcely audible voice he consented to accompany them, and orders were given for the royal litter to be brought. The nobles who bore and attended it could hardly credit their senses, but now Montezuma had consented to go pride made him wish to appear to go willingly. As the royal retinue marched dejectedly down the avenue, escorted by the Spaniards, the people ran together in crowds, declaring that the emperor had been carried off by force, and a tumult would have arisen had not he himself called out to them to disperse, since he was of his own accord visiting his friends, and on reaching the Spanish quarters he sent out his nobles to the mob with similar assurances, bidding them all return to their homes.

He was received with ostentatious respect by the Spaniards, and chose the apartments which pleased him best, which were speedily furnished with tapestry, featherwork, and all other Indian luxuries. He was attended by his own household, and his meals were served with the usual pomp and ceremony, while not even the general himself approached him without due obeisance, or sat down in his presence uninvited. Nevertheless it was but too clear to his people that he was a prisoner, for day and night the palace was guarded by sixty sentinels in front and sixty in the rear, while another body was stationed in the royal antechamber. This was the state of affairs when Quanhpopoca arrived from the coast. Montezuma received him coldly, and referred the matter to Cortés, who speedily made an end of it by condemning the unhappy chief and his followers to be burnt to death. The funeral piles were erected in the courtyard before the palace, and were made of arrows, javelins, and other weapons drawn by the emperor’s permission from those stored round the great teocalli. To crown these extraordinary proceedings, Cortés, just before the executions took place, entered the emperor’s apartments, followed by a soldier bearing fetters in his hands. Sternly he again accused Montezuma of having been the original contriver of the treacherous deed, and said that a crime which merited death in a subject must in some way be atoned for even by a king, whereupon he ordered the soldier to fasten the fetters upon Montezuma’s ankles, and after coolly waiting until it was done turned his back and quitted the room.

The emperor was speechless under this last insult, like one struck down by a heavy blow. But though he offered no resistance low moans broke from him, which showed the anguish of his spirit. His faithful attendants did their utmost to console him, holding his feet in their arms, and trying to keep the irons from touching him by inserting their own robes; but it was not the bodily discomfort that so afflicted him, but the feeling that he was no more a king, and so utterly broken in spirit was he that when Cortés came after the execution had taken place, and with his own hands unclasped the irons, Montezuma actually thanked him as if for some great and unmerited favour. Not long after the Spanish general expressed his willingness that the emperor should if he wished return to his own palace, but Montezuma declined the offer, doubtless fearing to trust himself again to the haughty and ferocious chieftains, who could not but despise the cowardly proceedings of their master, so unlike the usual conduct of an Aztec monarch. Montezuma often amused himself with seeing the Spanish troops go through their exercises, or with playing at some of the national games with Cortés and his officers. A favourite one was called ‘totoloque,’ played with golden balls, which were thrown at a golden target, and the emperor always staked precious stones or ingots of gold, and won or lost with equal good-humour, and indeed it did not much matter to him, since if he did win he gave away his gains to his attendants. But while Montezuma thus resigned himself without a struggle to a life of captivity, some of his kinsmen were feeling very differently about the matter, and especially his nephew Cacama, lord of the Tezcuco, and second in power to Montezuma himself.

This prince saw with alarm and indignation his uncle’s abject submission to the Spaniards, and endeavoured to form a league with the other chiefs to rescue him out of their hands. But they, from jealousy, declined to join him, declaring themselves unwilling to do anything without the emperor’s sanction. These plots came to the ears of Cortés, who wished at once to march upon Tezcuco and stamp out this spark of rebellion, but Montezuma dissuaded him. He therefore sent a friendly message of expostulation, which met with a haughty response, and to a second message asserting the supremacy of the King of Spain Cacama replied that ‘he acknowledged no such authority. He knew nothing of the Spanish sovereign or his people, nor did he wish to know anything of them.’ When Montezuma sent to him to come to Mexico that this difference might be adjusted, he answered that he understood the position of his uncle, and that when he did visit the capital it would be to rescue it, as well as the emperor himself and their common gods, from bondage, to drive out the detested strangers who had brought such dishonour on their country. This reply made Cortés very angry; but Montezuma, anxious to prevent bloodshed, begged him still to refrain from declaring war against Cacama, saying that it would be better to obtain possession of him personally, which he could easily do by means of several Tezcucan nobles who were in his own pay. So Cacama was enticed by these faithless chiefs into a villa overhanging the lake, where he was easily overpowered and forced into a boat, which speedily brought him to Mexico. Cortés promptly fettered and imprisoned him, while Montezuma declared that he had by his rebellion forfeited his kingdom and appointed his brother — a mere boy — to reign in his stead. Now Cortés felt himself powerful enough to demand that Montezuma and all his nobles should formally swear allegiance to the Spanish sovereigns, and accordingly the emperor assembled his principal caciques and briefly stated to them the object for which he had summoned them.

‘You all know,’ said he, ‘our ancient tradition — how the great Being, who once ruled over the land, declared that he would one day return and reign again. That time has now arrived. The white men have come from the land beyond the ocean, where the sun rises, sent by their master to reclaim the obedience of his ancient subjects. I am ready, for my part, to acknowledge his authority. You have been faithful vassals of mine all the years that I have sat upon the throne of my fathers; I now expect that you will show me a last act of obedience, by acknowledging the great king beyond the waters to be your lord also, and that you will pay him tribute as you have hitherto done to me.’ As he spoke the tears fell fast down his cheeks, and his nobles were deeply affected by the sight of his distress. Many of them, coming from a distance, and not having realised what was taking place in the capital, were filled with astonishment on beholding the voluntary abasement of their master, whom they had reverenced as the all-powerful lord of the whole country. His will, they told him, was their law now as ever, and if he thought the sovereign of the strangers was the ancient lord of their country, they were willing to swear allegiance to him as such. Accordingly the oaths were administered with all due solemnity, and a full record of the proceedings was drawn up by the royal notary to be sent to Spain. Cortés now seemed to have accomplished most of the great objects of his expedition, but towards the conversion of the natives he had made no progress, and still the horrible sacrifices took place day by day. The general could bear it no longer, but told the emperor that the Christians could not consent to hold the services of their religion shut in within the narrow walls of the garrison. They wished to spread its light abroad and share its blessings with the people. To this end they requested that the great teocalli should be given up to them as a fit place where their worship might be conducted in the presence of the whole city. Montezuma listened in consternation.

‘Malinche,’ said he, ‘why will you push matters to an extremity that must surely bring down the vengeance of our gods and stir up an insurrection among my people, who will never endure this profanation of their temple?’

Cortés, seeing that he was much agitated, pretended that the demand had come from his followers, and that he would endeavour to persuade them to be contented with one of the sanctuaries of the teocalli. If that were not granted, they should be obliged to take it by force and to throw down the idols in the face of the city. Montezuma, still greatly disturbed, promised to confer with the priests, and in the end the Spaniards were allowed to take possession of one of the sanctuaries, in which, when it had been purified, an altar was raised, surmounted by a crucifix and the imago of the Virgin; its walls were decorated with garlands of fresh flowers, and an old soldier was stationed to watch over it. Then the whole army moved in solemn procession up the winding ascent of the pyramid, and mass was celebrated by Father Olmedo and another priest, while the Aztecs looked on with mingled curiosity and repugnance. For a nation will endure any outrage sooner than that which attacks its religion, and this profanation touched a feeling in the natives which the priests were not slow to take advantage of.

Soon the Spaniards noticed a change in Montezuma. He was grave instead of cheerful, and avoided their society. Many conferences went on between him and the priests and nobles, at which even Orteguilla, his favourite page, was not allowed to be present. Presently Cortés received a summons to appear before the emperor, who told him that his predictions had come to pass, his gods were offended, and threatened to forsake the city if the sacrilegious strangers were not driven from it, or sacrificed on their altars as an expiation. ‘If you have any regard for your safety,’ he continued, ‘you will leave the country without delay. I have only to raise my finger, and every Aztec in the land will rise against you.’

Cortés knew well enough that this was true, but, concealing his dismay, he replied that he should much regret to leave the capital so precipitately, especially when he had no ships to take him back to his own country. He should also regret that if he quitted it under these circumstances he should be driven to taking the emperor with him. Montezuma was evidently troubled by this last suggestion, and finally offered to send workmen to the coast to build ships under the direction of the Spaniards, while he restrained the impatience of his people with the assurance that the white men would leave their land as soon as they were ready. This was accordingly done, and the work went forward at Vera Cruz with great apparent alacrity, but those who directed it took care to interpose as many delays as possible, while Cortés hoped in the meantime to receive such reinforcements from Spain as should enable him to hold his ground. Nevertheless the whole aspect of affairs in the Spanish quarters was utterly changed; apprehension had taken the place of security, and as many precautions were observed as if the garrison was actually in a state of siege. Such was the unpleasant state of affairs when, in May 1520, six months after his arrival in the capital, Cortés received tidings from the coast which caused him greater alarm than even the threatened insurrection of the Aztecs. The jealous governor of Cuba was sending an expedition to attack Cortés.

It was the news of the arrival of this fleet at the place where he had himself landed at first that had caused Cortés so much consternation, for he at once suspected that it was sent by his bitter enemy the governor. The commander of this second expedition, who was called Narvaez, having landed, soon met with a Spaniard from one of the exploring parties sent out by Cortés. This man related all that had occurred since the Spanish envoys left Vera Cruz, the march into the interior, the furious battles with the Tlascalans, the occupation of Mexico, the rich treasures found in it, and the seizure of Montezuma, ‘whereby,’ said the soldier, ‘Cortés rules over the land like its own sovereign, so that a Spaniard may travel unarmed from one end of the country to the other without insult or injury.’

Narvaez and his followers listened in speechless amazement to this marvellous report, and the leader waxed more and more indignant at the thought of all that had been snatched from Velasquez, whose adherent he was. He now openly proclaimed his intention of marching against Cortés and punishing him, so that even the natives who had flocked to this new camp comprehended that these white men were enemies of those who had come before. Narvaez proposed to establish a colony in the barren, sandy spot which Cortés had abandoned, and when informed of the existence of Villa Rica, he sent to demand the submission of the garrison. Sandoval had kept a sharp eye upon the movements of Narvaez from the time that his ships had first appeared upon the horizon, and when he heard of his having landed he prepared to defend his post to the last extremity. But the only invaders of Villa Rica were a priest named Guevara and four other Spaniards, who formally addressed Sandoval, pompously enumerating the services and claims of Velasquez, taxing Cortés with rebellion, and finally demanding that Sandoval should tender his submission to Narvaez. That officer, greatly exasperated, promptly seized the unlucky priest and his companions, and, remarking that they might read the obnoxious proclamation to the general himself in Mexico, ordered them to be bound like bales of goods upon the backs of sturdy porters and placed under a guard of twenty Spaniards, and in this way, travelling day and night, only stopping to obtain relays of carriers, they came within sight of the capital at the end of the fourth day.

Its inhabitants were already aware of the fresh arrival of white men upon the coast. Indeed Montezuma had sent for Cortés and told him there was no longer any obstacle to his leaving the country, as a fleet was ready for him, and in answer to his astonished inquiries, had shown him a picture map sent him from the coast, whereon the Spaniards, with their ships and equipments, were minutely depicted. Cortés pretended to be vastly pleased by this intelligence, and the tidings were received in the camp with firing of cannon and other demonstrations of joy, for the soldiers took the newcomers for a reinforcement from Spain. Not so Cortés, who guessed from the first that they came from the governor of Cuba. He told his suspicions to his officers, who in turn informed the men; but, though alarm succeeded their joy, they resolved to stand by their leader come what might. When Sandoval’s letter acquainting him with all particulars was brought to Cortés, he instantly sent and released the bewildered prisoners from their ignominious position, and furnished them with horses to make their entry into the capital, where, by treating them with the utmost courtesy and loading them with gifts, he speedily converted them from enemies into friends, and obtained from them much important information respecting the designs of Narvaez and the feelings of his army. He gathered that gold was the great object of the soldiers, who were evidently willing to co-operate with Cortés if by so doing they could obtain it. Indeed, they had no particular regard for their own leader, who was arrogant, and by no means liberal. Profiting by these important hints, the general sent a conciliatory letter to Narvaez, beseeching him not to unsettle the natives by a show of animosity, when it was only by union they could hope for success, and declaring that for his part he was ready to greet Narvaez as a brother in arms, to share with him the fruits of conquest, and, if he could produce a royal commission, to submit to his authority. Of course Cortés knew well enough that he had no such commission to show. Soon after the departure of Guevara he resolved to send a special envoy of his own, and chose Father Olmedo for the task, with instructions to converse privately with as many of the officers and soldiers as he could with a view to securing their goodwill; and to this end he was also provided with a liberal supply of gold. During this time Narvaez had abandoned his idea of planting a colony on the sea-coast, and had marched inland and taken up his quarters at Cempoalla. He received the letter of Cortés with scorn, which changed to stern displeasure when Guevara enlarged upon the power of his rival and urged him to accept his friendly offers. But the troops, on the other hand, listened with greedy ears to the accounts of Cortés, his frank and liberal manners, and the wealth of his camp, where the meanest soldier could stake his ingot and his chain of gold at play, and where all revelled in plenty. And when Father Olmedo arrived, his eloquence and his gifts soon created a party in the interest of Cortés. This could not go on so secretly as not to excite the suspicions of Narvaez, and the worthy priest was sent back to his master, but the seed which he had sown was left to grow.

Narvaez continued to speak of Cortés as a traitor whom he intended to punish, and he also declared he would release Montezuma from captivity and restore him to his throne. It was rumoured that the Aztec monarch had sent him a rich gift, and entered into correspondence with him. All this was observed by the watchful eye of Sandoval, whose spies frequented his enemy’s camp, and he presently sent to Cortés saying that something must speedily be done to prevent Villa Rica from falling into the hands of the enemy, and pointing out that many of the Indians, from sheer perplexity, were no longer to be relied upon.

The general felt that it was indeed time to act, but the situation was one of great difficulty. However, he marched against Narvaez, defeated and captured him, embodied his forces, and set out on his return to Mexico, where he had left Alvarado in command.

On his march he received a letter from Alvarado, which conveyed the startling news that the Mexicans were up in arms and had assaulted the Spanish quarters, that they had overwhelmed the garrison with a torrent of missiles, which had killed some and wounded many, and had burned some brigantines which Cortés had built to secure a means of retreat, and it ended by imploring him to hasten to the relief of his men if he would save them or keep his hold on the capital. This was a heavy blow to Cortés, but there was no time for hesitation. He laid the matter fully before his soldiers, and all declared their readiness to follow him.

On June 24, 1520, the army reached the same causeway by which they had before entered the capital; but now no crowds lined the roads, and no pirogues swarmed upon the lake; a death-like stillness brooded over the scene. As they marched across Cortés ordered the trumpets to sound, and their shrill notes were answered by a joyful peal of artillery from the beleaguered fortress. The soldiers quickened their pace, and all were soon in the city once more. But here the appearance of things was far from reassuring. In many places they saw the smaller bridges had been taken away; the town seemed deserted, and the tramp of the horses awakened melancholy echoes in the deserted streets. When they reached the palace the great gates were speedily thrown open, and Cortés and his party were eagerly welcomed by the garrison, who had much to tell and to hear. Of course the general's first inquiry was as to the origin of the tumult, and this was the story he heard.

The Aztec festival called 'The incensing of Huitzilopochtli' was about to be celebrated, in which, as it was an important one, nearly all the nobles took part. The caciques asked the permission of Alvarado to perform their rites in the teocalli which contained the chapel of the Spaniards, and to be allowed the presence of Montezuma. This latter request was refused, but he consented to their using the teocalli provided they came unarmed and held no human sacrifice. Accordingly, on the day appointed the Aztecs assembled to the number of at least six hundred. They wore their magnificent gala costumes, with mantles of featherwork sprinkled with precious stones, and collars, bracelets, and ornaments of gold. Alvarado and his men, fully armed, attended as spectators, and when the hapless natives were engaged in one of their ceremonial dances, they fell upon them suddenly, sword in hand. Then followed a great and dreadful slaughter. Unarmed, and taken unawares, the Aztecs were hewn down without resistance. Those who attempted to escape by climbing the wall of serpents were speared ruthlessly, till presently not one of that gay company remained alive; then the Spaniards added the crowning horror to their dreadful deed by plundering the bodies of their murdered victims. The tidings of the massacre flew like wildfire through the capital, and every long-smothered feeling of hostility burst forth in the cry that arose for vengeance. The city rose in arms to a man and almost before the Spaniards could secure themselves in their defences, they were assaulted with desperate fury: some of the assailants attempted to scale the walls, others succeeded in partially undermining and setting fire to the works. It is impossible to say how the attack would have ended, but the Spaniards entreated Montezuma to interfere, and he, mounting the battlements, conjured the furious people to desist from storming the fortress out of regard for his safety. They so far respected him that they changed their operations into a regular blockade, throwing up works round the palace to prevent the egress of the Spaniards, and suspending the market so that they might not obtain any supplies, and then they sat down to wait sullenly till famine should throw their enemies into their hands.

The condition of the besieged was gloomy enough. True their provisions still held out, but they suffered greatly from want of water, that within the enclosure being quite brackish, until a fresh spring was suddenly discovered in the courtyard. Even then the fact that scarcely a man had escaped unwounded, and that they had no prospect before them but a lingering death by famine, or one more dreadful still upon the altar of sacrifice, made their situation a very trying one. The coming of their comrades was therefore doubly welcome. As an explanation of his atrocious act, Alvarado declared that he had but struck the blow to intimidate the natives and crush an intended rising of the people, of which he had received information through his spies.

Cortés listened calmly till the story was finished, then exclaimed with undisguised displeasure, ‘You have done badly. You have been false to your trust. Your conduct has been that of a madman!’ And so saying, he turned and left him abruptly, no doubt bitterly regretting that he had entrusted so important a command to one whose frank and captivating exterior was but the mask for a rash and cruel nature. Vexed with his faithless lieutenant, and embarrassed by the disastrous consequences of his actions, Cortés for the first time lost his self-control, and allowed his disgust and irritation to be plainly seen. He treated Montezuma with haughty coldness, even speaking of him as ‘this dog of a king’ in the presence of his chiefs, and bidding them fiercely go tell their master and his people to open the markets, or he would do it for them to their cost. The chiefs retired in deep resentment at the insult, which they comprehended well enough from his look and gesture, and the message lost nothing of its effect in transmission. By the suggestion of Montezuma, Cortés now released his brother Cuitlahua, thinking he might allay the tumult and bring about a better state of things. But this failed utterly, for the prince, who was bold and ambitious, was bitterly incensed by the injuries he had received from the Spaniards. Moreover, he was the heir presumptive to the crown, and was welcomed by the people as a substitute for the captive Montezuma. So being an experienced warrior, he set himself to arrange a more efficient plan of operations against the Spaniards, and the effect was soon visible. Cortés, meanwhile, had so little doubt of his ability to quench the insurrection that he said as much in the letter that he wrote to the garrison of Villa Rica informing them of his safe arrival in the capital. But his messenger had not been gone half-an-hour before he returned breathless with terror, and covered with wounds, saying that the city was in arms, the drawbridges were raised, and the enemy would soon be upon them.

Surely enough before long a hoarse, sullen roar arose, becoming louder and louder, till from the parapet surrounding the enclosure the great avenues that led to it could be seen dark with masses of warriors rolling on in a confused tide towards the fortress, while at the same time the flat roofs of the neighbouring houses were suddenly covered, as if by magic, with swarms of menacing figures, brandishing their weapons — a sight to appal the stoutest heart.

Fighting in Mexico.

When notice was given of the approach of the Aztecs, each man was soon at his post, and prepared to give them a warm reception. On they came, rushing forward in dense columns, each with its gay banner, and as they neared the enclosure they set up the hideous yell or shrill whistle used in fight, which rose high above the sound of their rude musical instruments. They followed this by a tempest of stones, darts, and arrows, which fell thick as rain on the besieged, and at the same time those upon the roofs also discharged a blinding volley. The Spaniards waited until the foremost column was within fire, and then, with a general discharge of artillery, swept the ranks of their assailants, mowing them down by hundreds. The Mexicans for a moment stood aghast, but soon rallying swept boldly forward over the prostrate bodies of their comrades: a second and third volley checked them and threw their ranks into disorder, but still they pressed on, letting off clouds of arrows, while those on the house-tops took deliberate aim at the soldiers in the courtyard. Soon some of the Aztecs succeeded in getting close enough to the wall to be sheltered by it from the fire of the Spaniards, and they made gallant efforts to scale the parapet, but only to be shot down, one after another, as soon as their heads appeared above the rampart. Defeated here, they tried to effect a breach by battering the wall with heavy pieces of timber, but it proved too strong for them, and then they shot burning arrows among the temporary buildings in the courtyard. Several of these took fire, and soon a fierce conflagration was raging, which was only to be checked by throwing down part of the wall itself, and thus laying open a formidable breach. This was protected by a battery of heavy guns, and a file of arquebusiers, who kept up an incessant volley through the opening. All day the fight raged with fury, and even when night came, and the Aztecs suspended operations according to their usual custom, the Spaniards found but little repose, being in hourly expectation of an assault. Early the next morning the combatants returned to the charge. Cortés did not yet realise the ferocity and determination of the Mexicans, and thought by a vigorous sortie he would reduce them to order, and, indeed, when the gates were thrown open, and he sallied out, followed by his cavalry, supported by a large body of infantry and Tlascalans, they were taken by surprise and retreated in some confusion behind a barricade which they had thrown up across the street.

But by the time Cortés had ordered up his heavy guns and demolished the barrier they had rallied again, and though, when the fight had raged all day, Cortés was, on the whole, victorious, still he had been so harassed on all sides by the battalions of natives who swarmed in from every side street and lane, by those in canoes upon the canal, and by the showers of huge stones from those upon the house-tops, that his losses had been severe. Earlier in the day he had caused a number of houses to be burned to rid himself of some of his tormentors, but the Aztecs could probably better afford to lose a hundred men than the Spaniards one, and the Mexican ranks showed no signs of thinning. At length, exhausted by toil and hunger, the Spanish commander drew off his men, and retreated into his quarters, pursued to the last by showers of darts and arrows; and when the Spaniards re-entered their fortress, the Indians once more encamped round it; and though through the night they were inactive, still they frequently broke the stillness with menacing cries and insults.

‘The gods have delivered you into our hands at last!’ they said. ‘Huitzilopochtli has long cried for his victims. The stone of sacrifice is ready — the knives are sharpened. The wild beasts in the palace are roaring for their feast.’ These taunts, which sounded dismally in the ears of the besieged, were mingled with piteous lamentations for Montezuma, whom they entreated the Spaniards to deliver up to them. Cortés was suffering much from a severe wound and from his many anxieties, and he determined to induce Montezuma to exert his authority to allay the tumult. In order to give greater effect to his appearance he put on his imperial robes. His mantle of blue and white was held by a rich clasp of the precious ‘chalchivitl,’ which with emeralds of uncommon size, set in gold, also ornamented other portions of his dress. His feet were shod with golden sandals, and upon his head he wore the Mexican diadem. Surrounded by a guard of Spaniards and preceded by a golden wand, the symbol of sovereignty, the Indian monarch ascended the central turret of the palace. His presence was instantly recognised by the people, and a magical change came over the scene: the clang of the instruments and the fierce cries of the assailants ceased, and many in the hushed throng knelt or prostrated themselves, while all eyes were turned with eager expectation upon the monarch whom they had been taught to regard with slavish awe. Montezuma saw his advantage, and in the presence of his awestruck people felt once more a king. With his former calm authority and confidence he addressed them:

‘Why do I see my people here in arms against the palace of my fathers? Is it that you think your sovereign a prisoner, and wish to release him? If so you have done well; but you are mistaken. I am no prisoner. The strangers are my guests. I remain with them only for choice, and can leave them when I will. Have you come to drive them from the city? That is unnecessary; they will depart of their own accord if you will open a way for them. Return to your homes then. Lay down your arms. Show your obedience to me, whose right it is. The white men shall go back to their land, and all shall be well again within the walls of Mexico.’

As Montezuma declared himself the friend of the detested strangers a murmur of contempt ran through the multitude. Their rage and desire for vengeance made them forget their ancient reverence, and turned them against their unfortunate monarch.

‘Base Aztec,’ they cried, ‘woman, coward! The white men have made you a woman, fit only to weave and spin.’

A chief of high rank brandished a javelin at Montezuma, as these taunts were uttered, and in an instant the place where he stood was assailed with a cloud of stones and arrows. The Spaniards, who had been thrown off their guard by the respect shown by the people on their lord’s appearance, now hastily interposed their shields, but it was too late: Montezuma was wounded by three of the missiles, one of which, a stone, struck him on the head with such violence that he fell senseless to the ground. The Mexicans, shocked at their own sacrilegious act, set up a dismal cry, and dispersed panic-stricken until not one of all the host remained in the great square before the palace. Meanwhile, the unhappy king was borne to his own apartments, and as soon as he recovered from his insensibility the full misery of his situation broke upon him. He had tasted the last bitterness of degradation. He had been reviled and rejected by his people. Even the meanest of the rabble had raised their hands against him, and he had nothing left to live for. In vain did Cortés and his officers endeavour to soothe the anguish of his spirit and encourage him to hope for better things. Montezuma answered not a word. His wounds, though dangerous, need not have proved fatal had he not refused all remedies, tearing off the bandages as often as they were applied, and maintaining all the while a determined silence. He sat motionless, with downcast eyes, brooding over his humiliation; but from this painful scene the Spanish general was soon called away by the new dangers which threatened the garrison.

Opposite to the Spanish quarters stood the great teocalli of Huitzilopochtli, rising to a height of nearly a hundred and fifty feet, and thus completely commanding the palace occupied by the Spaniards. A body of five or six hundred Mexicans, many of them nobles and warriors of the highest rank, now took possession of the teocalli, whence they discharged such a tempest of arrows upon the garrison that it was impossible for any soldier to show himself for an instant outside his defences without great danger, while the Mexicans themselves were completely sheltered. It was absolutely necessary that they should be dislodged, and Cortés entrusted the task to his chamberlain Escobar, giving him a hundred men for the purpose. But after making three desperate attempts, in which he was repulsed with considerable loss, this officer returned unsuccessful, and Cortés determined to lead the storming party himself, though he was suffering much from a wound which disabled his left hand. He made the arm serviceable, however, by strapping his shield to it, and thus prepared sallied forth at the head of three hundred chosen cavaliers and several thousand of the Indian allies. In the courtyard of the temple a body of Mexicans was drawn up to oppose him, and he charged them briskly, but the horses could not keep their footing on the slippery pavement, and many of them fell. Hastily dismounting the Spaniards sent the animals back to their quarters, and then, renewing the assault, had little difficulty in dispersing the Indians and securing a passage to the teocalli. And now began a great and terrible struggle. You will remember that the huge pyramid-shaped teocalli was built in five divisions, growing smaller and smaller, till at the top you came out upon a square platform, crowned only by the two sanctuaries in which stood the images of the Aztec gods. You will also remember that the only ascent was by flights of stone steps on the outside, one above another, and that it was necessary between each flight to pass by a kind of terrace, right round the building, so that a distance of nearly a mile had to be traversed before reaching the top. Cortés sprang up the lower stairway, followed by Alvarado, Sandoval, Ordaz, and the other gallant cavaliers, leaving a strong detachment to hold the enemy in check at the foot of the temple. On every terrace as well as on the topmost platform the Aztec warriors were drawn up to dispute his passage. From their elevated position they showered down heavy stones, beams, and burning rafters, which thundering along the stairway overturned the ascending Spaniards and carried desolation through their ranks. The more fortunate, eluding or springing over these obstacles, succeeded in gaining the first terrace, where they fell upon their enemies and compelled them to give way, and then, aided by a brisk fire from the musketeers below, they pressed on, forcing their opponents to retreat higher and higher, until at last they were glad to take shelter on the broad summit of the teocalli. Cortés and his companions were close behind them, and the two parties soon found themselves face to face upon this strange battle-field, engaged in mortal combat in the presence of the whole city, while even the troops in the courtyard ceased hostilities, as if by mutual consent, and watched with breathless interest the issue of the struggle.

The Spaniards and Mexicans closed with the desperate fury of men who have no hope but in victory. Quarter was neither asked nor given, and to fly was impossible. The edge of the platform was unprotected by parapet or battlement, and many of the combatants, as they struggled together, were seen to roll over the edge of the precipice, locked in a death-grip. Cortés himself but narrowly escaped this frightful fate. Two powerful warriors had seized upon him, and were dragging him violently towards the side of the pyramid, when, by sheer strength, he tore himself from their grasp and hurled one of them over the brink with his own arm.

The battle raged unceasingly for three hours. The number of the Mexicans was double that of the Spaniards, but the armour of the latter and their skill as swordsmen outweighed the odds against them. Resistance grew fainter and fainter on the side of the Aztecs. The priests, who had run to and fro among them with streaming hair and wild gestures, encouraging and urging them on, were all slain or captured. One by one the warriors fell dead upon the blood-drenched pavement, or were hurled from the dizzy height, until at last the wild struggle ceased, and the Spaniards stood alone upon the field of battle. Their victory had cost them dear, for forty-five of their comrades lay dead, and nearly all the remainder were more or less seriously wounded; but there was no time for regrets. The victorious cavaliers rushed to the sanctuaries to find that the cross and the image of the Virgin had disappeared from the one they had appropriated, and that in the other, before the grim figure of Huitzilopochtli, lay the usual offering of human hearts, possibly those of their own countrymen! With shouts of triumph the Spaniards tore the hideous idol from its niche, and in the sight of the horror-stricken Aztecs hurled it down the steps of the teocalli, and, after having set fire to the sanctuaries, descended joyfully into the courtyard.

Passing through the ranks of the Mexicans, who were too much dismayed by all they had witnessed to offer any resistance, they reached their own quarters in safety, and that very night they followed up the blow they had struck by sallying forth into the sleeping town and burning three hundred houses. Cortés now hoped that the natives were sufficiently subdued to be willing to come to terms with him. He therefore invited them to a parley, and addressed the principal chiefs, who had assembled in the great square, from the turret before occupied by Montezuma. As usual, Marina interpreted for him, and the Indians gazed curiously at their countrywoman, whose influence with the Spanish general was well known. Cortés told them that they must now know how little they had to hope from their opposition to the Spaniards. They had seen their gods trampled in the dust, their altars destroyed, their dwellings burned, and their warriors falling on all sides. ‘All this,’ he continued, ‘you have brought upon yourselves by your rebellion. Yet, for the sake of the affection felt for you by the sovereign you have treated so unworthily, I would willingly stay my hand if you will lay down your arms and return once more to your obedience. But if you do not,' he concluded, 'I will make your city a heap of ruins, and leave not a soul alive to mourn over it.'

But the Spanish commander did not yet understand the character of the Aztecs if he thought to intimidate them by menaces. It was true, they replied, that he had destroyed their temples, broken in pieces their gods, and massacred their countrymen. Many more doubtless were yet to fall under their terrible swords. But they were content so long as for every thousand Mexicans they could shed the blood of a single white man. 'Look out,' they said, 'upon our streets and terraces. See them still thronged with warriors as far as your eyes can reach. Our numbers are scarcely diminished by our losses. Yours, on the contrary, are lessening hour by hour. Your provisions and water are failing. You are perishing from hunger and sickness; you must soon fall into our hands. *The bridges are broken down, and you cannot escape!* There will be too few of you left to glut the vengeance of our gods.' With this they discharged a volley of arrows, which compelled the Spaniards to beat a speedy retreat from the turret. The fierce answer of the Aztecs filled the besieged with dismay.

The general himself, pressed by enemies without and factions within, was, as usual, only roused to more energetic action by a situation which would have paralysed any ordinary mind. He calmly surveyed his position before deciding what course he would pursue. To retreat was hazardous, and it mortified him cruelly to abandon the city in which he had so long been master and the rich treasure which he had secured, with which he had hoped to propitiate the King of Spain. To fly now was to acknowledge himself further than ever from the conquest and to give great opportunity to his enemy, the Governor of Cuba, to triumph over him. On the other hand, with his men daily diminishing in strength and numbers, with the stock of provisions so nearly exhausted that one small daily ration of bread was all the soldiers had, with the breaches in his fortifications widening every day and his ammunition nearly gone, it was manifestly impossible to hold the place much longer against the enemy. Having reached this conclusion, the next difficulty was to decide how and when it would be well to evacuate the city. He tried to fight his way out, but he failed, and when night fell the Mexicans dispersed as usual, and the Spaniards, tired, famished, and weak from their wounds, slowly re-entered the citadel, only to receive tidings of a fresh misfortune. Montezuma was dead. 'The tidings of his death,' says the old Spanish chronicler, 'were received with real grief by every cavalier and soldier in the army who had had access to his person, for we all loved him as a father, and no wonder, seeing how good he was.’

Montezuma’s death was a real misfortune for the Spaniards. While he lived there was still a possibility of his influence with the natives being of use to them. Now that hope was gone. The Spanish commander showed all respect for his memory. His body, arrayed in its royal robes, was laid upon a bier, and borne on the shoulders of those nobles who had remained with him to the last to his subjects in the city, whose wailings over it were distinctly heard by the Spaniards; but where he was buried, and with what honours, they never knew.

The Spanish general now called a council to decide as speedily as possible the all-important question of the retreat. It was his intention to fall back upon Tlascala, and once there to arrange according to circumstances his future operations. There was some difference of opinion as to the hour of departure; but owing to the predictions of a soldier named Botello, who pretended to be able to read the stars, and who announced that to leave the city at night would be for the good of his comrades, though he himself would meet his death through it, it was decided that the fortress should be abandoned that very night. After events proved that Botello’s prophecy was unfortunately only true as far as he himself was concerned.

The general’s first care was to provide for the safe conveyance of the treasure. The soldiers had most of them converted their share into gold chains or collars which could be easily carried about their persons. But the royal fifth, with that of Cortés himself and his principal officers, was in bars and wedges of solid gold.

That belonging to the crown was now given in charge to the royal officers, with the strongest horse to carry it, and a special guard for its protection. But much treasure belonging to the crown and to private individuals was necessarily abandoned, and the precious metal lay in shining heaps upon the floors of the palace. ‘Take what you will of it,’ said Cortés to the soldiers; ‘better you should have it than those Mexican hounds. But be careful not to overload yourselves: he travels safest who travels lightest.’ His own wary soldiers took heed to his counsel, taking few treasures, and those of the smallest size. But the troops of Narvaez thought that the very mines of Mexico lay open before them, and the riches for which they had risked so much were within their reach at last. Rushing upon the spoil, they loaded themselves with all they could possibly carry or stow away.

Cortés next arranged the order of march. The van consisted of two hundred Spanish foot, commanded by Sandoval, with twenty other cavaliers. The rest of the infantry formed the rear-guard under Alvarado and De Leon, while the general himself took charge of the centre, some of the heavy guns, the baggage, the treasure, and the prisoners, among whom were a son and two daughters of

Montezuma, Cacama, and several nobles. The Tlascalans were pretty equally divided among the three divisions. The general had previously superintended the construction of a portable bridge to be laid across the open canals. This was entrusted to the care of an officer named Magarino and forty men, all pledged to defend the passage to the last extremity. Well would it have been if three such bridges had been made, but the labour would have been great and the time was short. At midnight all was ready, and after a solemn mass had been celebrated by Father Olmedo, the Spaniards for the last time sallied forth from the ancient fortress, the scene of so much suffering and of such great courage.

The Night or Horror.

The night was dark, and a fine rain fell steadily. The vast square before the palace was deserted, as indeed it had been since the death of Montezuma, and the Spaniards made their way across it as noiselessly as possible, and entered the great street of Tlacopan. Though to their anxious eyes every dark lane and alley seemed to swarm with the shadowy forms of their enemies, it was not really so, and all went well until the van drew near the spot where the street opened upon the causeway. Before the bridge could be adjusted across the uncovered breach the Mexican sentinels stationed there fled, raising the alarm as they went. The priests from the summits of the teocallis heard them, and sounded their shells, while the huge drum upon the desolate temple of the war-god sent forth its solemn sound, which — heard only in seasons of calamity — vibrated through every corner of the capital. The Spaniards saw that there was no time to be lost; the bridge was fitted with all speed, and Sandoval rode across first to try its strength, followed by the first division, then came Cortés with the baggage and artillery, but before he was well over, a sound was heard as of a stormy wind rising in a forest. Nearer and nearer it came, and from the dark waters of the lake rose the plashing noise of many oars. Then a few stones and arrows fell at random among the hurrying troops, to be followed by more and more, ever thicker and faster, till they became a terrible blinding storm, while the air was rent with the yells and war-cries of the enemy, who seemed to be swarming in myriads over land and lake.

The Spaniards pushed on steadily, though the Mexicans, dashing their canoes against the sides of the causeway, clambered up and broke in upon their ranks. The soldiers, anxious only to make their escape, simply shook them off, or rode over them, or with their guns and swords drove them headlong down the sides of the dyke again. But the advance of such a body of men necessarily took time, and the leading files had already reached the second gap in the causeway before those in the rear had cleared the first. They were forced to halt, though severely harassed by the fire from the canoes, which clustered thickly round this opening, and many were the urgent messages which were sent to the rear, to hurry up the bridge. But when it was at length clear, and Magarino and his sturdy followers endeavoured to raise it, they found to their horror that the weight of the artillery and the horses passing over it had jammed it firmly into the sides of the dyke, and it was absolutely immovable. Not till many of his men were slain and all wounded did Magarino abandon the attempt, and then the dreadful tidings spread rapidly from man to man, and a cry of despair arose. All means of retreat were cut off; they were held as in a trap. Order and discipline were at an end, for no one could hope to escape except by his own desperate exertions. Those behind pressed forward, trampling the weak and wounded under foot, heeding not friend or foe. Those in front were forced over the edge of the gulf, across which some of the cavaliers succeeded in swimming their horses, but many failed, or rolled back into the lake in attempting to ascend the opposite bank. The infantry followed pell-mell, heaped one upon the other, frequently pierced by the Aztec arrows, or struck down by their clubs, and dragged into the canoes to be reserved for a more dreadful death. All along the causeway the battle raged fiercely.

The Mexicans clambered continually up the sides of the dyke, and grappled with the Spaniards, till they rolled together down into the canoes. But while the Aztec fell among friends, his unhappy antagonist was secured, and borne away in triumph to the sacrifice. The struggle was long and deadly, but by degrees the opening in the causeway was filled up by the wreck of the waggons, guns, rich bales of stuffs, chests of solid ingots, and bodies of men and horses which had fallen into it; and over this dismal ruin those in the rear were able to reach the other side. Cortés had found a place that was fordable, and, halting halfway across, had vainly endeavoured to check the confusion, and lead his followers safely to the opposite bank. But his voice was lost in the wild uproar; and at length, attended by a few trusty cavaliers, he pushed forward to the front. Here he found Sandoval and his companions, halting before the last breach, trying to cheer on the soldiers to attempt the crossing; but, though not so beset with enemies as the last, it was wide and deep, and the men’s resolution failed them. Again the cavaliers set the example, by plunging into the lake. Horse and foot followed, swimming or clinging to the manes and tails of the horses. Those fared best, as the general had predicted, who travelled lightest, and many were the unfortunate wretches, who, weighed down by the fatal treasure, were buried with it at the bottom of the lake. Cortés, with a few others, still kept in advance, leading the miserable remnant off the causeway. The din of battle was growing faint in the distance, when the rumour reached them that, without speedy succour, the rearguard must be utterly overwhelmed. It seemed a desperate venture, but the cavaliers, without thinking of the danger, turned their horses, and galloped back to the relief of their comrades. Swimming the canal again, they threw themselves into the thick of the fray. The first gleam of morning light showed the hideous confusion of the scene; the masses of combatants upon the dyke were struggling till the very causeway seemed to rock, while as far as the eye could see, the lake was covered with a dense crowd of canoes full of warriors. The cavaliers found Alvarado unhorsed, and, with a mere handful of followers, defending himself against an overwhelming tide of the enemy, who by this time possessed the whole rear of the causeway, and received constant reinforcements from the city. The Spanish artillery, which had done good service at first, had been overthrown, and utterly confounded by the rush from the back. In the general ruin, Cortés strove by a resolute charge to give his countrymen time to rally, but it was only for a moment: they were speedily borne down by the returning rush. The general and his companions were forced to plunge into the lake once more, though with their numbers reduced this time, and Alvarado stood for an instant upon the brink, uncertain what to do. There was no time to be lost. He was a tall and powerful man. Setting his long lance firmly on the wreck which strewed the lake, he gave a mighty leap which landed him in safety upon the opposite bank. Aztecs and Tlascalans looked on in amazement at this almost incredible feat, and a general shout arose. ‘This is truly the Tonatiuh — the Child of the Sun.’ To this day, the place is called ‘Alvarado’s Leap.’ Cortés now rode to the front, where the troops were straggling miserably off the fatal causeway. Most fortunately, the attention of the Aztecs was diverted by the rich spoil that strewed the ground, and their pursuit ceased, so that the Spaniards passed unmolested through the village of Popotla. There the Spanish commander dismounted from his weary steed, and sitting down on the steps of an Indian temple, looked mournfully on while the broken files dragged slowly past. It was a piteous spectacle. The cavalry, many of them dismounted, were mingled with the infantry, their shattered mail dripping with the salt ooze, and showing through its rents many a ghastly wound; their firearms, banners, baggage, artillery, everything was gone. Cortés, as he looked sadly on their thin, disordered ranks, sought in vain many a familiar face, and missed more than one trusty comrade who had stood by his side through all the perils of the conquest; and accustomed as he was to conceal his emotions, he could bear it no longer, but covered his face with his hands, while he wept tears of anguish. It was, however, some consolation to him that Marina had been carried safely through the awful night by her faithful guards. Aguilar was also alive, and Martin Lopez, who had built two boats for him in Mexico, as well as Alvarado, Avila, Sandoval, Olid, and Ordaz.

But this was no time to give way to vain regrets. Cortés hastily mounted again and led his men as speedily as possible through Tlacopan, and, as soon as he reached the open country, endeavoured to bring his disorganised battalions into something like order. The broken army, half-starved, moved slowly towards the coast. On the seventh morning the army reached the mountain range which overlooks the plains of Otumba. All the day before, parties of the enemy had hovered round, crying vindictively, ‘Hasten on. You will soon find yourselves where you cannot escape!’ Now, as they climbed the steep hillside, Cortés realised what this meant, for his scouts came back reporting that a powerful body of Aztecs was encamped upon the other side waiting for them, and truly enough, when they looked down into the valley, they saw it filled with a mighty host of warriors who had been gathered together by Cuitlahua, and stationed at this point to dispute the passage of the Spaniards. Every chief of importance had taken the field with his whole array. As far as the eye could reach extended a moving mass of glittering shields and spears, mingled with the banners and bright feather-mail of the caciques, and the white cotton robes of their followers. It was a sight to dismay the stoutest heart among the Spaniards, and even Cortés felt that his last hour was come. But since to escape was impossible, he disposed his little army to the best advantage, and prepared to cut his way through the enemy or perish in the attempt. He gave his force as broad a front as possible, protecting it on each flank with his cavalry, now reduced to twenty horsemen, who were instructed to direct their long lances at the faces of the enemy, and on no account to lose their hold of them. The infantry were to thrust, not strike, with their swords, and above all to make for the leaders of the enemy, and then, after a few brave words of encouragement, he and his little band began to descend the hill, rushing, as it seemed, to certain destruction. The enemy met them with the usual storm of stones and arrows, but when the Spaniards closed with them, their superiority became apparent, and the natives were thrown into confusion by their own numbers as they fell back from the charge. The infantry followed up their advantage, and a wide lane was opened in the ranks of the enemy, who receded on all sides as if to allow them a free passage. But it was only to return with fresh fury, and soon the little army was entirely surrounded, standing firmly, protected on all sides by its bristling swords and lances, like an island in the midst of a raging sea. In spite of many gallant deeds and desperate struggles, the Spaniards found themselves, at the end of several hours, only more deeply wedged in by the dense masses of the enemy. Cortés had received another wound, in the head, his horse had fallen under him, and he had been obliged to mount one taken from the baggage train. The fiery rays of the sun poured down upon the nearly exhausted soldiers, who were beginning to despair and give way, while the enemy, constantly reinforced from the rear, pressed on with redoubled fury. At this critical moment the eagle eye of Cortés, ever on the watch for any chance of arresting the coming ruin, descried in the distance a chief, who, from his dress and surroundings, he knew must be the commander of the Aztec forces. He wore a rich surcoat of feather-work, and a gorgeous plume of jewelled feathers floated from his helmet, while above this, and attached to his back between the shoulders, showed a golden net fastened to a short staff — the customary symbol of authority for an Aztec commander. Turning quickly round to Sandoval, Olid, Alvarado, and Avila who surrounded him, he cried, pointing to the chief, ‘There is our mark! Follow and support me!’ And shouting his war-cry he plunged into the thickest of the press. Taken by surprise the enemy fell back; those who could not escape were trampled under his horse’s feet, or pierced by his long lance; the cavaliers followed him closely; in a few minutes they were close to the Aztec chief, and Cortés hurled him to the ground with one stroke from his lance; a young cavalier named Juan de Salamanca hastily dismounted and slew him where he lay, and tearing away his banner presented it to the Spanish general. The cacique’s guard, overpowered by this sudden onset, fled precipitately, and their panic spread to the other Indians, who, on hearing of the death of their chief, fought no more, but thought only of escape. In their blind terror they impeded and trampled down their own comrades, and the Spaniards, availing themselves fully of the marvellous turn affairs had taken, pursued them off the field, and then returned to secure the rich booty they had left behind them.

Cortés reached Tlascala in safety, and at once began to prepare his revenge on the Mexicans, aided by reinforcements of a few Spaniards from Vera Cruz. Gunpowder had also to be manufactured, and a cavalier named Francio Montaño undertook the perilous task of obtaining sulphur for the purpose from the terrible volcano of Popocatepetl. He set out with four comrades, and after some days journeying, they reached the dense forest which covered the base of the mountain, and forcing their way upward, came by degrees to a more open region. As they neared the top the track ended, and they had to climb as best they could over the black glazed surface of the lava, which, having issued from the crater in a boiling flood, had risen into a thousand odd forms wherever it met with any obstacle, and continually impeded their progress. After this they arrived at the region of perpetual snow, which increased their difficulties, the treacherous ice giving way at every step, so that many times they narrowly escaped falling into the frozen chasms that yawned all round them. At last, however, they reached the mouth of the crater, and, crawling cautiously to the very edge, peered down into its gloomy depths. At the bottom of the abyss, which seemed to them to go down into the very heart of the earth, a lurid flame burned sullenly, sending up a sulphureous steam, which cooling as it rose, fell again in showers upon the sides of the cavity. Into this one of the brave explorers had to descend, and when they had cast lots the choice fell upon Montaño himself. His preparations were soon made, and his companions lowered him in a basket into the horrible chasm to a depth of four hundred feet, and there as he hung, he scraped the sulphur from the sides of the crater, descending again and again until he had procured enough for the wants of the army, with which they returned triumphantly to Tlascala. Meanwhile the construction of the ships went forward prosperously, and by Christmas, in the year 1520, there was no longer any reason to delay the march to Mexico.

While all these preparations were being made, some changes had taken place among the Aztecs. Cuitlahua had suddenly died after reigning four months, and Guatemozin his nephew had been chosen in his stead. This young prince had married one of Montezuma’s daughters. He was handsome and valiant, and so terrible that his followers trembled in his presence. He had a sort of religious hatred of the Spaniards, and prepared manfully to meet the perils which he saw threatening his country, for by means of spies he had kept a watch upon the movements of the Spaniards, and had discovered their intention of besieging the capital. Cortés, upon reviewing his army, found that his whole force fell little short of six hundred men, of whom forty were cavalry, and eighty arquebusiers and cross-bowmen. The rest were armed with sword, target, and the long copper-headed pikes, which had been made specially by the general’s directions. There were also nine cannons of moderate size, but the supply of powder was but indifferent. Cortés published a code of strict regulations for the guidance of his men before they set out, and addressed them as usual with stirring words, touching all the springs of devotion, honour, and ambition in their hearts, and rousing their enthusiasm as only he could have done. His plan of action was to establish his headquarters at some place upon the Tezcucan lake, whence he could cut off the supplies from the surrounding country, and place Mexico in a state of blockade until the completion of his ships should enable him to begin a direct assault. The most difficult of the three ways into the valley was the one

Cortés chose; it led right across the mountain chain, and he judged wisely that he would be less likely to be annoyed by the enemy in that direction. Before long the army halted within three leagues of Tezcuco, which you will remember was upon the opposite shore of the lake to Mexico, and somewhat further north. Up to this time they only had had a few slight skirmishes with the Aztecs, though beacon fires had blazed upon every hill-top, showing that the country was roused. Cortés thought it very unlikely that he would be allowed to enter Tezcuco, which was now reigned over by Coanaco, the friend and ally of Guatemozin. But the next morning, before the troops were well under arms, came an embassy bearing a golden flag, and a gift for Cortés, and imploring him to spare Coanaco's territories, and to take up his quarters in his capital. Cortés first sternly demanded an account of the Spaniards who, while convoying treasure to the coast, had been slain by Coanaco just when Cortés himself was retreating to Tlascala. The envoys declared at once that the Mexican emperor alone was to blame; he had ordered it to be done, and had received the gold and the prisoners. They then urged that to give them time to prepare suitable accommodation for him, Cortés should not enter Tezcuco until the next day; but disregarding this he marched in at once, only to find the place deserted, and Coanaco well on his way across the lake to Mexico. The general, however, turned this to his own advantage by assembling the few persons left in the city, and then and there electing a brother of the late sovereign to be ruler in his place, and when a few months later he died, he was succeeded by Ixtlilxochitl, son of Negahualpilli, who, always a friend of the Spaniards, now became their most valuable ally, and by the support of his personal authority and all his military resources, did more than any other Aztec chieftain to rivet the chains of the strangers round the necks of his own countrymen.

The Siege and Surrender of Mexico.

The city of Tezcuco, which lay about half a league from the shore of the lake, was probably the best position Cortés could have chosen for the headquarters of the army. His first care was to strengthen the defences of the palace in which they were lodged, and next to employ eight thousand Indian labourers in widening a stream, which ran towards the lake, so that when the ships arrived they might be put together in Tezcuco, and floated safely down to be launched upon it. Meanwhile many of the places in the neighbourhood sent in their submission to Cortés, and several noble Aztecs fell into his hands. These men he employed to bear a message to Guatemozin, in which he deprecated the necessity of the present hostilities, and declared himself willing to forget the past, inviting the Mexicans by a timely submission to save their capital from the horrors of a siege. But every man in Mexico was determined to defend it to the uttermost, and this appeal produced no effect. The general now turned his attention to securing all the strong places upon the lake. Iztapalapan was the first; the attacking party, after a sharp struggle, succeeded in entering the town; many of the inhabitants fled in their canoes, but those who remained were massacred by the Tlascalans in spite of all Cortés could do to restrain them. Darkness set in while the soldiers were eagerly loading themselves with plunder; some of the houses had been set on fire, and the flames lighted up the scene of ruin and desolation. Suddenly a sound was heard as of the rush of the incoming tide — and Cortés with great alarm realised that the Indians had broken down the dykes, and that before long the lowlying ground upon which the town stood would be under water. He hastily called off his men and retreated, the soldiers, heavily laden, wading with difficulty through the flood which gained fast upon them. As they left the burning city behind them they could no longer find their way, and sometimes plunged into deep water where many of the allies, unable to swim, were carried away and drowned. When morning dawned they were harassed by the enemy, who hovered round and discharged volleys of arrows and stones, so that it was with no small satisfaction that they presently found themselves once more within the walls of Tezcuco. Cortés was greatly disappointed at this disastrous end of an expedition which had begun so well, but after all the fate of Iztapalapan produced a good effect, and many more towns sent to tender their allegiance, amongst others Otumba and Chalco, which was a place of great importance. Cortés also managed to induce the tribes, who though friendly to him were hostile to one another, to forget their feuds and combine against Mexico, and to this wise policy he owed much of his future success.

News now came from Tlascala that the ships were ready, and Sandoval was despatched with a considerable guard to bring them to Tezcuco. On his way he was to stop at Zoltepec, where the massacre of the Spaniards had taken place, to find out and punish all who had had a hand in the matter; but when they got there the inhabitants had fled. In the deserted temples they had the horror of finding many traces of the fate of their comrades; for beside their arms and clothing, and the hides of their horses, the heads of several soldiers were found suspended as trophies of victory; while traced in charcoal upon the wall in one building were the words, in the Spanish language, ‘In this place the unfortunate Juan Juste, with many others of his company, was imprisoned.’ It was fortunate that the inhabitants had fled, for they would have met with but scant mercy from the Spaniards, who were full of indignation at the thought of the horrible doom which had overtaken their companions. Sandoval now resumed his march to Tlascala, but before he could reach it, the convoy appeared transporting the ships through the mountain passes. Retaining twenty thousand of the warriors as a guard, the Spanish captain dismissed the rest, and after four laborious days Cortés and his garrison had the joy of welcoming them safe within the walls of Tezcuco. It was not long before the general once more sallied forth to reconnoitre the capital, and by the way to chastise certain places which had sent him hostile messages. After an exciting struggle Xaltocan and three other towns were taken, and a considerable quantity of gold and food fell into the hands of the victors. Marching on, the general found himself before Tlacopan, through whose streets he had hurried in consternation at the end of the night of horror. It was his intention to occupy the town, which he did after a sharp fight, just before nightfall, and the next morning, seeing the enemy in battle array on the open ground before the city, he marched out against them and routed them utterly. The Aztecs fled into the town, but were driven through its streets at the point of the lance, and compelled once more to abandon it, after which the Tlascalans pillaged and set fire to the houses, much against the will of Cortés, but they were a fierce race, and sometimes dangerous to friends as well as foes. After six days the general went back to Tezcuco, and for some time things went on as before, with many skirmishes and expeditions against the towns garrisoned by the Mexicans. Sandoval took several strongholds which threatened the security of Chalco, and all the while the work upon the canal was going rapidly forward, and the ships were nearing completion in spite of three attempts made by the enemy to burn them. Just at this time came the welcome news that three vessels had arrived at Villa Rica, with two hundred men on board well provided with arms and ammunition, and with seventy or eighty horses, and the new comers soon made their way to Tezcuco, for the roads to the port were now safe and open.

In April 1521, Cortés started once more to scour the country with a large force, passing quite round the great lakes, and exploring the mountain regions to the south of them. Here he came upon Aztec forces intrenched in strong towns, often built like eagles’ nests upon some rocky height, so that to take them was a work of great difficulty and danger. Once he found himself before a city which it was absolutely necessary to subdue, but he was separated from it by a cleft in the solid rock of no great width, but going sheer down thousands of feet. The bridges which generally crossed it had been broken down at the approach of the Spaniards, and as they stood there, unable to advance, the enemy’s archers as usual kept up a steady fire, to which they were unavoidably exposed. The general sent a party to seek a passage lower down, but they met with no success until they came to a spot where two large trees, growing one on either side of the ravine, interlaced their branches overhead, and by this unsteady and perilous bridge one of the Tlascalans ventured to cross. His example was soon followed, and one by one about thirty Spaniards and some more of the natives crawled across, swinging dizzily above the abyss. Three lost their hold and fell, but the rest alighted in safety on the other side and attacked the Aztecs, who were as much amazed at their sudden appearance as if they had dropped from the clouds. Presently a temporary bridge was contrived by which the remainder of the force managed to cross also, and before long the town was taken, and the trembling caciques appeared before Cortés, throwing the blame of their resistance upon the Mexicans, and promising submission for the future.

The general then continued his march across the eastern shoulder of the mountain, descending finally upon Xochimilco, which was built partly upon the lake like Mexico itself, and was approached by causeways, which, however, were of no great length. It was in the first attack upon this town that Cortés was as nearly as possible taken prisoner by the Aztecs. He had thrown himself into the thick of the fight with his usual bravery, and was trying to resist an unexpected rush of the enemy, when his horse stumbled and fell, he himself received a severe blow upon the head before he could rise, and was seized and dragged off in triumph by several Indians. At this moment a Tlascalan saw his danger and sprang furiously upon his captors, trying to tear him from their grasp. Two Spaniards also rushed to the rescue, and between them the Aztecs were forced to quit their hold of the general, who lost no time in regaining his saddle, and laying about him with his good sword as vigorously as before. After a terrible struggle the enemy was driven out, and Cortés took possession of the city. As it was not yet dusk he ascended the principal teocalli to reconnoitre the surrounding country, and there beheld a sight which could but cause him grave anxiety. The lake was covered with rapidly approaching canoes full of warriors, while inland Indian squadrons were marching up in dense columns. Xochimilco was but four leagues from the capital, and at the first tidings of the arrival of the Spaniards, Guatemozin had mustered a strong force and marched to its relief. Cortés made all possible preparations for the defence of his quarters, but not until the next day did the Mexicans attack him, and then the battle raged long and with varying success; but in the end Spanish discipline prevailed, and the natives were routed with such dreadful slaughter that they made no further attempt to renew the conflict. The city yielded a rich hoard of plunder, being well stored with gold and feather-work, and many other articles of use or luxury, so that when the general mustered his men upon the neighbouring plain before resuming his march, many of them came staggering under the weight of their spoil. This caused him much uneasiness, since their way would be through a hostile country; but seeing that the soldiers were determined to keep what they had so hardly won, he contented himself with ordering the baggage to be placed in the centre guarded by part of the cavalry, and having disposed the rest to the best advantage, they once more set forth, at the last moment setting fire to the wooden buildings of Xochimilco, which blazed furiously, the glare upon the water telling far and wide the fate that had befallen it. Resting here and there, and engaging in many skirmishes with the Aztecs who followed them up, furious at the sight of the plunder which was being carried away by the invaders, the army presently completed the circuit of the lakes, and reached Tezcuco, to be greeted with the news that the ships were fully rigged and the canal completed, so that there was no longer any reason to delay their operations against Mexico.

It was a triumphant moment when the vessels were launched, and reached the lake in good order. Cortés saw to their being properly armed and manned, and then reviewed the rest of his forces, and summoned his native allies to furnish their promised levies at once.

The general’s plan of action against Mexico was to send Sandoval with one division to take possession of Iztapalapan at the southern end of the lake, while Alvarado and Olid were to secure Tlacopan and Chapoltepec upon its western shore, and at the latter place destroy the aqueduct, and so cut off the supply of fresh water from Mexico. This they did successfully, and in several days of fierce fighting breach after breach was carried, and the Spaniards penetrated the city as far as the great teocalli, driving the natives before them, while the Tlascalans in the rear filled up the gaps in the dyke as well as they could, and brought up the heavy guns. Cortés and his men now pushed their way into the inclosure of the temple, and some of them rushed to the top, so lately the scene of their terrible battle, and there found a fresh image of the war-god. Tearing away the gold and jewels with which it was bedecked, they hurled it and its attendant priests over the side of the pyramid, and hastened down to the assistance of their comrades, who were by this time in a most perilous position, the Aztecs having rallied and attacked them furiously. Indeed it seemed likely to go hard with them, for they were driven helplessly back down the great street in utter confusion and panic; but the timely arrival of a small body of cavalry created a diversion in their favour, and Cortés managed to turn them once more and drive the enemy back into the enclosure with much loss. As it was by this time evening, he retreated in good order to Xoloc. Though this affair caused some consternation among the Mexicans, they speedily opened the canals and built up the ramparts again, so that when Cortés renewed the attack the whole scene had to be gone through as before. When they had once gained the street, however, they found it much easier to advance, the Tlascalans having on the last occasion pulled down many of the houses on either side. This time Cortés had determined to destroy some of the cherished buildings of the Mexicans, and began by setting fire to his old quarters, the palace of Axayacatl, and then the palace of Montezuma on the other side of the great square. The sight so maddened the natives that the Spaniards had some ado to make good their retreat, and few reached their camp that night unwounded. The Aztec emperor for his part made frequent sallies against the Spaniards both by land and upon the lake, sometimes with considerable success. At first he managed to obtain supplies of food in canoes, under cover of the darkness, but by degrees the large towns on the mainland, seeing the Mexicans unable to defend themselves, gave in their allegiance to the Spaniards, and then starvation began to be felt in the unhappy city. In spite of everything, however, all offers of terms from Cortés were steadily refused.

At this juncture, the general was persuaded by some of his officers that it would be well for two of the divisions to unite, and occupy the great market-place in the heart of the town, and so at a given time they marched along their respective causeways and entered the city. Strict orders were given by Cortés that as they advanced every opening in the causeways should be filled up and made secure. The attack began, and the enemy, taken apparently by surprise, gave way and fell back; on rushed the Spaniards by every street, eager to reach the appointed meeting place. Only the general suspected that the enemy might be purposely luring them on to turn upon them when they were hopelessly involved. Taking a few men with him, he hastily proceeded to see for himself if the way was clear should a retreat become necessary, and found, as he had feared, that all had been too eager to be in the front to attend to this most important duty. In the first street he traversed was a huge gap, twelve feet wide, and at least as many deep, full of water, for it connected two canals. A feeble attempt had been made to fill this up with beams and rubbish, but it had been left before any good had been done. Worse than all Cortés saw that this breach was freshly made, and that his officers had probably rushed headlong into a snare laid by the enemy. Before his men could do anything towards filling up the trench, the distant sounds of the battle changed into an ever-increasing tumult, the mingled yells and war cries, and the trampling of many feet grew nearer, and at last, to his horror, Cortés beheld his men driven to the edge of the fatal gulf, confused, helpless, surrounded by their foes. The foremost files were soon hurried over the edge, some trying to swim across, some beaten down by the struggles of their comrades, or pierced by the darts of the Indians. In vain with outstretched hands did Cortés try to rescue his soldiers from death, or worse still from capture; he was soon recognised, and six of the enemy tried to seize and drag him into a canoe. It was only after a severe struggle, in which he was wounded in the leg, that he was rescued by his brave followers. Two were killed in the attempt, while another was taken alive as he held the general's horse for him to mount. In all, sixty Spaniards were captured on this fatal day, and it was only when the rest reached their guns in the open space before the causeway that they were able to rally and beat back the Aztecs. The other division had fared equally ill, and were moreover in great anxiety as to the fate of Cortés, who was reported to have been killed. When they once more reached their quarters, Sandoval, though badly wounded, rode into the camp of Cortés to learn the truth, and had a long and earnest consultation with him over the disaster, and what was next to be done. As he returned to his camp he was startled by the sound of the great drum on the temple of the war-god, heard only once before during the night of horror, and looking up he saw a long file of priests and warriors, winding round the terraces of the teocalli. As they came out upon the platform at the top he perceived, with rage and despair, that his own countrymen were about to be sacrificed with the usual ghastly ceremonies. The camp was near enough to the city for the white skins of the victims and their unavailing struggles to be distinctly seen by their comrades, who were nevertheless powerless to help them, and their distress and fury may be imagined.

For five days the horrible scenes went on, the Mexicans feasting, singing, and dancing, while their priests predicted that in eight days the war-god, appeased by these sacrifices, would overwhelm their enemies and deliver them into their hands. These prophecies had a great effect upon the native allies of Cortés, who withdrew from him in immense numbers. But the general treated their superstition with cheerful contempt, and only bargained with the deserters to remain close by and see what would happen. When the ninth day came, and the city was still seen to be beset on every side, they ceased to believe in the oracle, and returned, with their anger against the Mexicans rekindled, and their confidence in the Spaniards greatly strengthened. At this time another vessel loaded with stores and ammunition touched at Vera Cruz, and her cargo was seized and sent on to Cortés by the governor. With his strength thus renewed the Spanish general resumed active operations. This time not a step was taken in advance without securing the entire safety of the army, once and for all, by solidly building up the dykes, filling every canal, and pulling down every house, so that slowly and by degrees a bare open space was made, which took in more and more of the town, till at last the unhappy Aztecs, after many desperate sallies, were shut into the portion of the city which lay between the northern and western causeways. Here famine and pestilence did their awful work unchecked. The ordinary articles of food were long exhausted, and the wretched people ate moss, insects, grass, weeds, or the bark of trees. They had no fresh water. The dead were unburied, the wounded lay in misery, yet all the endeavours of Cortés to induce Guatemozin and his chiefs to submit were useless. Though the two divisions of the army had proceeded with their work of destruction until they could join their forces, and seven-eighths of the city lay in ruins, though the banner of Castile floated undisturbed from the smouldering remains of the sanctuary on the teocalli of the war-god, still the Aztecs defied the conquerors, and fiercely rejected their overtures of peace.

Hundreds of famishing wretches died every day, and lay where they fell, for there was no one to bury them. Familiarity with the spectacle made men indifferent to it. They looked on in dumb despair waiting for their own turn to come. There was no complaint or lamentation, but deep, unutterable woe. In the midst of this appalling misery Guatemozin remained calm and courageous, and as firmly resolved not to capitulate as at the beginning of the siege. It is even said that when Cortés persuaded a noble Aztec prisoner to bear his proposals for a treaty to the emperor, Guatemozin instantly ordered him to be sacrificed. The general, who had suspended hostilities for several days hoping for a favourable answer to his message, now resolved to drive him to submission by a general assault, and for that purpose led his men across the dreary waste of ruins to the narrow quarter of the city into which the wretched Mexicans had retreated. But he was met by several chiefs, who, holding out their emaciated arms, exclaimed, ‘Why do you delay so long to put an end to our miseries? Rather kill us at once that we may go to our god Huitzilopochtli, who waits to give us rest from our sufferings!’

Cortés, moved by the piteous sight, replied that he desired not their death but their submission. ‘Why does your master refuse to treat with me,’ he said, ‘when in a single hour I can crush him and all his people?’ Then once more he sent to demand an interview with Guatemozin. This time the emperor hesitated, and agreed that next day he would meet the Spanish general. Cortés, well satisfied, withdrew his force, and next morning presented himself at the appointed place in the great square, where a stone platform had been spread with mats and carpets and a banquet made ready. But after all Guatemozin, instead of coming himself, sent his nobles. Cortés, though greatly disappointed, received them courteously, persuading them to partake of the feast he had prepared, and dismissing them with a supply of provisions for their master and a renewed entreaty that he would next day come in person. But though he waited for three hours beyond the time appointed, neither the emperor nor his chiefs appeared, and the general heard that the Mexicans were preparing to resist an assault. He delayed no longer, but ordering Sandoval to support him by bringing up the ships and directing his big guns against the houses near the water, he marched at once into the enemy’s quarters. The Mexicans set up a fierce war-cry, and with their usual spirit sent off clouds of arrows and darts; but the struggle soon became a hand-to-hand one; and weakened by starvation and hemmed in as they were the unhappy Aztecs had no chance against their foes. After a scene of indescribable horror, which appalled even the soldiers of Cortés, used as they were to war and violence, the Spanish commander sounded a retreat and withdrew to his quarters, leaving behind him forty thousand corpses and a smouldering ruin. Through the long night that followed all was silent in the Mexican quarter. There was neither light nor movement. This last blow seemed to have utterly stunned them. They had nothing left to hope for. In the Spanish camp, however, all was rejoicing at the prospect of a speedy termination to the wearisome campaign. The great object of Cortés was now to secure the person of Guatemozin, and the next day, which was August 18, 1521, he led his forces for the last time across the black and blasted ruin which was all that remained of the once beautiful city. In order to give the distressed garrison one more chance, he obtained an interview with the principal chiefs and reasoned with them about the conduct of their emperor.

‘Surely,’ he said, ‘Guatemozin will not see you all perish when he can so easily save you.’ But when he had with difficulty prevailed upon them to urge the king to confer with him, the only answer they could bring was that Guatemozin was ready to die where he was, but would hold no communication with the Spanish commander. ‘Go then,’ replied the stern conqueror, ‘and prepare your countrymen for death. Their last moment is come.’ Still, however, he postponed the attack for several hours; but the troops were impatient at the delay, and a rumour spread that Guatemozin was preparing to escape by the lake. It was useless to hesitate: the word was given, and the terrible scene that ensued repeated the horrors of the day before. While this was going forward on shore numbers of canoes pushed off across the lake, most of them only to be intercepted and sunk by the Spanish ships, which beat down upon them, firing to right and left. Some few, however, under cover of the smoke, succeeded in getting into open water. Sandoval had given particular orders that his captains should watch any boat that might contain Guatemozin, and now two or three large canoes together attracted the attention of one named Garci Holguin, who instantly gave chase, and with a favourable wind soon overtook the fugitives, though they rowed with the energy of despair. As his men levelled their guns at the occupants of the boat one rose saying, ‘I am Guatemozin; lead me to Malinche; I am his prisoner. But let no harm come to my wife and followers.’

Holguin took them on board, and then requested that the emperor would order the people in the other canoes to surrender. ‘There is no need,’ he answered sadly, ‘they will fight no longer when they see their prince is taken.’ And so it was, for when the news of his capture reached the shore the Mexicans at once ceased to defend themselves. It seemed as if they had only gone on so long to give their sovereign a better chance of escape. Cortés, who had taken up his station on the flat roof of one of the houses, now sent to command that Guatemozin should be brought before him, and he came, escorted by Sandoval and Holguin, who each claimed the honour of having captured him. The conqueror, who was, as usual, accompanied by the Lady Marina, came forward with dignified courtesy to receive his noble prisoner. The Aztec monarch broke the silence saying, ‘I have done all I could to defend myself and my people. I am now reduced to this state. Deal with me, Malinche, as you will.’ Then laying his hand on a dagger which hung from the belt of Cortés, he added, ‘Better despatch me at once with this and rid me of life.’

‘Fear not,’ answered the conqueror. ‘You shall be treated with honour. You have defended your capital like a brave warrior, and a Spaniard knows how to respect valour even in an enemy.’ He then sent for the queen, who had remained on board the Spanish ship, and after ordering that the royal captives should be well cared for and supplied with all they needed, he proceeded to dispose of his troops. Olid and Alvarado drew off their divisions to their quarters, leaving only a small guard in the wasted suburbs of the pestilence stricken city, whilst the general himself, with Sandoval and the prisoners, retired to a town at the end of the southern causeway. That night a tremendous tempest arose, such as the Spaniards had never before witnessed, shaking to its foundations all that remained of the city of Mexico. The next day, at the request of Guatemozin, the Mexicans were allowed to leave the capital, and for three days a mournful train of men, women, and children straggled feebly across the causeways, sick and wounded, wasted with famine and misery, turning often to take one more look at the spot which was once their pleasant home. When they were gone the conquerors took possession of the place and purified it as speedily as possible, burying the dead and lighting huge bonfires in the deserted streets. The treasure of gold and jewels found in it fell far short of the expectation of the Spaniards, the Aztecs having probably buried their hoards or sunk them in the lake on purpose to disappoint the avarice of their enemies. Cortés, therefore, to his eternal disgrace, caused Guatemozin to be tortured; but fire and cord could not wring the secret of the treasure from this illustrious prince. In later days Cortés hanged Guatemozin, on pretence of a conspiracy. Cortés, having no further need for his native allies, now dismissed them with presents and flattering speeches, and they departed well pleased, loaded with the plunder of the Mexican houses, which was despised by the Spanish soldiers. Great was the satisfaction of the conquerors at having thus brought the long campaign successfully to an end. Cortés celebrated the event by a banquet as sumptuous as circumstances would permit, and the next day, at the request of Father Olmedo, the whole army took part in a solemn service and procession in token of their thankfulness for victory.

Thus, after a siege of nearly three months, in which the beleaguered Mexicans showed a constancy and courage under their sufferings which is unmatched in history, fell the renowned capital of the Aztecs, and with its fall the story of the nation comes to an end.

The Aztec empire fell by its own sin. The constant capture of men from neighbouring states as victims for sacrifice had caused the Aztecs to be hated; thus Cortés obtained the aid of the Tlascalans, but for which even his courage and energy would have been of no avail. He deserted Marina when she ceased to be useful, and gave her as a wife to one of his followers.

ADVENTURES OF BARTHOLOMEW PORTUGUES, A PIRATE

A CERTAIN pirate, born in Portugal, and from the name of his country called Bartholomew Portugues, was cruising from Jamaica in his boat (in which he had only thirty men and four small guns) near the Cape de Corrientes, in the island of Cuba. In this place he met with a great ship bound for the Havana, well provided, with twenty great guns and threescore and ten men, passengers and mariners. This ship he assaulted, but found strongly defended by them that were on board. The pirate escaping the first encounter, resolved to attack her more vigorously than before, seeing he had sustained no great damage hitherto. This resolution he boldly performed, renewing his assaults so often that after a long and dangerous fight he became master of the great vessel, having lost only ten men, and had four wounded.

Having possessed themselves of such a ship, and the wind being contrary for returning into Jamaica, the pirates resolved to steer towards the Cape of St. Anthony, on the western side of the isle of Cuba, there to repair themselves and take in fresh water, of which they had great necessity at the time.

Being now very near the cape above mentioned, they unexpectedly met with three great ships that were coming from New Spain, and bound for the Havana. By these, not being able to escape, were easily retaken both ship and pirates. Thus they were all made prisoners through the sudden change of fortune, and found themselves poor, oppressed, and stripped of all the riches they had won.

Two days after this misfortune there happened to arise a huge and dangerous tempest, which separated the ships one from another. The great vessel in which the pirates were arrived at Campeche, where many considerable merchants came to salute and welcome the captain. These knew the Portuguese pirate as one who had committed innumerable crimes upon these coasts, not only murders and robberies, but also lamentable burnings, which those of Campeche still preserved very fresh in their memory.

The next day after their arrival the magistrates of the city sent several of their officers to demand and take into custody the prisoners from on board the ship, with intent to punish them according to their deserts. Yet fearing lest the captain of the pirates should escape out of their hands on shore (as he had formerly done, being once their prisoner in the city before), they judged it more convenient to leave him safely guarded on board the ship for the present. In the meanwhile they caused a gibbet to be erected, whereon to hang him the very next day, without any other form of trial than to lead him from the ship to the place of punishment.

The rumour of this tragedy was presently brought to the ears of Bartholomew Portugues, and he sought all the means he could to escape that night. With this design he took two earthen jars, in which the Spaniards usually carry wine from Spain to the West Indies, and he stopped them very well, intending to use them for swimming, as those who are unskilled in that art do a sort of pumpkins in Spain, and in other places they use empty bladders. Having made this necessary preparation, he waited for the night when all should be asleep, even the sentry that guarded him. But seeing he could not escape his vigilance, he secretly purchased a knife, and with the same gave him a stab that suddenly deprived him of life and the possibility of making any noise. At that instant Bartholomew Portugues committed himself to the sea, with those two earthen jars before mentioned, and by their help and support, though never having learned to swim, he reached the shore. Having landed, without any delay he took refuge in the woods, where he hid himself for three days without daring to appear, not eating any food but wild herbs.

Those of the city failed not the next day to make diligent search for him in the woods, where they concluded him to be. This strict search Bartholomew Portugues watched from the hollow of a tree, wherein he lay concealed. Seeing them return without finding what they sought for, he adventured to sally forth towards the coast of Golfotriste, forty leagues distant from the city of Campeche. Here he arrived within a fortnight after his escape from the ship, in which time, as also afterwards, he endured extreme hunger, thirst, and fear of falling again into the hands of the Spaniards. For during all this journey he had no provision but a small calabash with a little water: neither did he eat anything but a few shellfish, which he found among the rocks nigh the seashore. Besides this, he was compelled to pass some rivers, not knowing well how to swim. Being in this distress, he found an old board which the waves had thrown upon the shore, in which there stuck a few great nails. These he took, and with no small labour whetted against a stone, until he made them sharp like knives. With these, and no other instruments, he cut down some branches of trees, which he joined together with twigs and osiers, and as well as he could made a boat, or rather a raft, with which he crossed over the rivers. Thus he reached the Cape of Golfotriste, as was said before, where he happened to find a certain vessel of pirates who wore great comrades of his own, and were lately come from Jamaica.

To these pirates he instantly related all his misfortunes, and asked of them a boat and twenty men to return to Campeche and assault the ship that was in the river, from which he had escaped fourteen days before. They readily granted his request, and equipped him a boat with the said number of men. With this small company he set forth for the execution of his design, which he bravely performed eight days after he separated from his comrades; for being arrived at the river of Campeche, with undaunted courage he assaulted the ship before mentioned. Those that were on board were persuaded that Bartholomew's was a boat from the land that came to bring goods, and therefore were not on their defence. So the pirates assaulted them without any fear of ill success, and in a short space of time compelled the Spaniards to surrender.

Being now masters of the ship, they immediately weighed anchor and set sail, determining to fly from the port, lest they should be pursued by other vessels. This they did with extreme joy, seeing themselves possessors of such a brave ship — especially Bartholomew Portugues, their captain, who now, by a second turn of fortune's wheel, was become rich and powerful again, who had been so lately in that same vessel a poor miserable prisoner, and condemned to the gallows. With this plunder he designed to do great things, for he had found in the vessel a great quantity of rich merchandise. Thus he continued his voyage towards Jamaica for four days. But coming nigh to the isle of Pino, on the south side of the island of Cuba, fortune suddenly turned her back once more, never to show him her countenance again; for a horrible storm arising at sea caused the ship to split against the rocks, and it was totally lost, and Bartholomew, with his companions, escaped in a canoe.

In this manner he arrived in Jamaica, where he remained but a short time, till he was ready to seek his fortune anew. But from that day of disaster it was always ill-luck with him.

THE RETURN OF THE FRENCH FREEBOOTERS

IN January, 1688, the daring band of French pirates who, sometimes alone, sometimes in company with English captains, had been cruising in the South Seas, resolved to return to St. Domingo with all the treasure they had won from the Spaniards. But it was manifest that this return would be a matter of great difficulty. They had not one seaworthy vessel left in which to set out for a long voyage, and, with forces exhausted by the frightful hardships they had gone through in the past years, they had to pass through a country peopled by Spaniards — cowardly, indeed, but innumerable, and only longing for revenge on the reckless crew that had plundered so many of their rich ships and towns. Moreover, provisions were scarce among the Spaniards themselves, and it seemed likely that the freebooters, in their passage, would find scant entertainment. But they were determined to risk everything, and having prayed, and sunk their canoes that the Spaniards might make no use of them, they set out on their journey. What followed is thus recounted by one of their party, Raveneau de Lussan: —

The Spaniards, having been warned of our approach, employed every means they could think of for our destruction, burning all the provisions before us, setting fire to the prairies we entered, so that we and our horses were almost stifled, and continually blocking our way with great barricades of trees. About three hundred of them formed themselves into a kind of escort, and morning and evening diverted us with the sound of trumpets, but never dared to show their faces.

A detachment of our men were always set to fire into woods and thickets, to find out if a Spanish ambush were concealed there. On January 9 we reached an opening in the forest where we could see a good way before us, and therefore did not fire. But we had been looking in front for what was really on both sides of us, for in the bushes right and left the Spaniards were crouching, and presently they let fly on us so suddenly that only half the guard had time to fire back, and two of our men were killed on the spot.

On the 10th we found another ambush, where we surprised our enemies, who took to flight, abandoning their horses, which became our property.

On the 11th, as we drew near Segovia, we found yet another ambuscade, which we forced to retire, and passed into the town, ready to fight our best — for we thought that here the Spaniards might make a great effort to expel us. But they only discharged their muskets at us now and then from the shelter of the pine-wood above the town, into which they had fled. But we found nothing to eat, for they had burned all the provisions.

On the 13th, having left Segovia, we climbed a hill which looked like a good place to camp, and we saw opposite us, on a mountain slope from which only a narrow valley divided us, twelve to fifteen hundred horses, which for some time we took for cattle pasturing there. Rejoicing in the prospect of good cheer, we sent forty men to make sure, and when they came back they told us that what we had taken for cattle were horses, ready saddled, and that in the same place they had found three intrenchments a pistol shot from each other, which, rising by degrees to about the middle of the mountain slope, entirely barred the way which we meant to travel the next day. These intrenchments commanded the river which ran the length of the valley, into which it was absolutely necessary for us to descend, there being no other way. They saw a man who, having discovered them, threatened them with a bare cutlass.

This grievous news was a bitter disappointment to us, especially the loss of our supposed cows, for we were perishing with hunger. But we had to take courage and find out how to leave this place — and without delay, for the Spaniards, who were assembling from all the country round, would fall upon our little troop, which must be overwhelmed, if we waited for them. The means were not easy to find, and perhaps escape would have seemed impossible, except to our reckless band, who had hitherto succeeded in nearly all our exploits. But ten thousand men could not have crossed that guarded valley without being cut off entirely, both by reason of the number of the Spaniards and the position they occupied.

Men alone could have gone round without crossing the valley, but we could find no way round for the horses and baggage. For the country on each side was nothing but a thick forest, without the trace of a path, all precipices and ravines, and choked with a multitude of fallen trees. And even had we found a way of escape through so many obstacles, it was indispensable to fight the Spaniards sooner or later, if they were ever to let us alone!

There was only one thing to be done — to cross these woods, rocks, and mountains, however inaccessible they seemed, and surprise our enemies, taking advantage of the place by coming upon them from above, where they certainly would not expect us. As to our prisoners, horses, and baggage, since through all our march a troop of three hundred Spaniards had been dogging our steps without daring to approach, we would leave eighty men to guard them — enough to beat four times as many Spaniards.

At nightfall we set out, leaving our eighty men, with orders to the sentinels to fire and beat the retreat and the diane at the usual times, to make the three hundred Spaniards who lurked near us think that we had not left the camp. If we were successful we would send back messengers with the good news, but if, an hour after the firing ended, none of us returned, they were to escape how they could.

All being arranged, we prayed in a low voice, not to be heard by the Spaniards, and set out by the moonlight, two hundred men of us, through this country of rocks, woods, and frightful precipices, where we went leaping and climbing, our feet seeming to be much less use to us than our hands and knees.

On the 14th, at the break of day, when we had already gained a great height, and were climbing on in profound silence, with the Spanish intrenchments to our left, we saw a sentry party, which, thanks to the fog — always thick in this country till ten o’clock in the morning — did not discover us. When it had passed we went straight to the place where we had seen it, and we found that there was really a road there. This, when we had halted half an hour to take breath, we followed, guided by the voices of the Spaniards, who were at matins. But we had only gone a few steps when we found two sentinels, very far advanced, on whom we were forced to fire, which warned the Spaniards, who dreamed of nothing less than our coming upon them from above, since they only expected us from below. So those who guarded the intrenchment — about five hundred men — being taken at a disadvantage when they thought they had all the advantage on their side, were so terribly frightened that, when we fell upon them all at once, they vanished from the place in an instant, and escaped into the thick fog.

This unexpected assault so utterly upset their plans that the men in the second intrenchment all passed into the lowest one, where they prepared to defend themselves. We fought them a whole hour, under cover of the first intrenchment, which we had taken, and which commanded them, being higher up the mountain side. But as they would not yield we fancied our shots must have missed, since the fog hindered us from seeing our foes distinctly, so, resolved to waste no more powder, we went down, and fell right on the spot whence they had been firing. Then we assailed them furiously, and at sight of our weapons close upon them — which hitherto the fog had concealed — they left everything, and fled into the road below the intrenchments. Here they fell into their own trap; for, thinking it was the only road we could possibly come by, they had cut down trees and blocked it up, and their way being stopped, we could fire upon them from their intrenchment without once missing aim.

At last, seeing the river in the ravine running down with blood, and tired of pursuing the fugitives, we spared the few remaining Spaniards. After we had chanted the ‘Te Deum,’ sixty of us went to tell those left in the camp of the victory which Heaven had vouchsafed to us. We found them on the point of giving battle to the three hundred Spaniards, who had already (on finding out their weakness) sent a message to them by an officer to tell them that it was hopeless for them to expect to cross the valley, and to offer terms of peace. To which our men replied that were there as many Spaniards as the blades of grass in the prairie they would not be afraid, but would pass through in spite of them, and go where they liked!

The officer, being just dismissed with this message when we arrived, shrugged his shoulders with astonishment when he saw us safe back again, and mounted on the horses of his comrades of the intrenchments. He rode off with the news to his troop, whom we presently fired upon, to rid them altogether from their desire to follow in our wake. Unfortunately for them they had not time to mount their horses, so after a brief conflict, in which a great number of them fell, we let the rest go, though we kept their horses. Then, with our baggage, we joined those of our men who had stayed to guard the intrenchments. In both these combats we had only two men slain and four wounded.

Continuing our journey, we passed one more Spanish intrenchment, where, since the news of our victory had gone before us, we found no resistance. At last, on the sixteenth day of our march, we reached the river which we had been seeking eagerly, by whose means we meant to gain the sea into which it flowed.

At once we entered the woods which are on its banks, and everyone set to work in good earnest to cut down trees, in order to construct *piperies*, with which to descend the river. The reader may perhaps imagine that these piperies were some kind of comfortable boat to carry us pleasantly along the stream, but they were anything but this. We joined together four or five trunks of a kind of tree with light floating wood, merely stripping off their bark, and binding them, instead of cord, with a climbing plant growing in those forests, and embracing the trees like ivy, and when these structures, each large enough to hold two men (and in appearance something like huge wicker baskets) were completed, vessels and crew were ready.

The safest plan was to stand upright in them, armed with long poles to push them off from the rocks, against which the fierce current every moment threatened to dash them. As it was, they sank two or three feet deep in the water, so that we were nearly always immersed up to our waists.

This river rises in the mountains of Segovia, and falls into the sea at Cape Gracia á Dios, after having flowed for a long distance, with frightful rapidity, among an infinite number of huge rocks, and between the most terrible precipices imaginable. We had to pass more than a hundred cataracts great and small, and there were three which the most daring of us could not look at without turning giddy with fear, when we saw and heard the water plunging from such a height into those horrible gulfs. Everything was so fearful that only those who have experienced it can imagine it; as for me, though I shall all my life have my memory full of pictures of the perils of that voyage, it would be impossible for me to give any idea of it which would not be far below the reality.

We let ourselves go with the current, so rapid that often, in spite of our resistance, it bore us into foaming whirlpools, where we were engulfed with our pieces of wood. But happily before the greatest cataracts, and also just beyond them, there was a basin of calm water, which made it possible for us to gain the bank, drawing our piperies after us. Then, taking out of them whatever valuables we had there, we descended with these, leaping from rock to rock till we had reached the foot of the cataract. Then one of us would return and throw the piperies, which we had left behind, down into the flood — and we below caught them as they descended. Sometimes, indeed, we failed to catch them, and had to make new ones.

When we first set out we voyaged all together, that in case of accident we might come to each other's aid. But in three days, being out of all danger of the Spaniards, we began to travel separately, since a piperie dashed against the rocks had often been prevented from freeing itself by other piperies which the current hurled against it. It was arranged for those who descended first, when they came to an especially dangerous rapid, to hoist a little flag at the end of a stick, not to warn those behind of the cataract, since they could hear it nearly a league away, but to mark the side on which they ought to land. This plan saved a number of lives, nevertheless many others were lost.

The bananas which we found on the river bank were almost our only nourishment, and saved us from dying of hunger; for, though there was plenty of game, our powder and weapons were all wet and spoiled, so that we could not hunt.

Some days after we had begun to descend the river, as we were travelling separate, several freebooters who had lost all their spoils in gambling were guilty of most cruel treachery. Having gone in advance, these villains concealed themselves behind some rocks commanding the river, in front of which we all had to pass, and as everyone was looking after himself, and we descended unsuspiciously, at some distance from each other — for the reasons already given — they had time to fix upon and to massacre five Englishmen, who possessed greater shares of booty than the rest of us. They were completely plundered by these assassins, and my companion and I found their dead bodies on the shore. At night, when we were encamped on the river bank, I reported what we had seen, and the story was confirmed both by the absence of the dead Englishmen and of their murderers, who dared not come back to us, and whom we never saw again.

On the 20th of February we found the river much wider, and there were no more cataracts. When we had descended some leagues further it was very fine, and the current was gentle, and seeing that the worst of our perils were over, we dispersed into bands of forty each to make canoes, in which we might safely complete our voyage down the river.

On the 1st of March, by dint of great diligence, having finished four canoes, a hundred and twenty of us embarked, leaving the others, whose canoes were still incomplete, to follow.

On the 9th we reached the mouth of the river in safety, and lived there among the mulattos and negroes who inhabit the coast, till an English boat, touching there, took on board fifty of us, of whom I was one. On the 6th of April, without any other accident, we arrived at our destination, St. Domingo.

PRINCE RICARDO OF PANTOUFLIA

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DEDICATION.

To Guy Campbell.

My dear Guy, You wanted to know more about Prince Prigio, who won the Lady Rosalind, and killed the Firedrake and the Remora by aid of his Fairy gifts. Here you have some of his later adventures, and you will learn from this story the advantages of minding your book.

Yours always,
A. Lang.

INTRODUCTORY.

Explaining Matters.

There may be children whose education has been so neglected that they have not read *Prince Prigio*. As this new story is about Prince Prigio’s son, Ricardo, you are to learn that Prigio was the child and heir of Grognio, King of Pantouflia. The fairies gave the little Prince cleverness, beauty, courage; but one wicked fairy added, “You shall be *too* clever.” His mother, the queen, hid away in a cupboard all the fairy presents, — the Sword of Sharpness, the Seven-League Boots, the Wishing Cap, and many other useful and delightful gifts, in which her

Majesty did not believe! But after Prince Prigio had become universally disliked and deserted, because he was so very clever and conceited, he happened to find all the fairy presents in the old turret chamber where they had been thrown. By means of these he delivered his country from a dreadful Red-Hot Beast, called the Firedrake, and, in addition to many other triumphs, he married the good and beautiful Lady Rosalind. His love for her taught him not to be conceited, though he did not cease to be extremely clever and fond of reading.

When this new story begins the Prince has succeeded to the crown, on the death of King Grognio, and is unhappy about his own son, Prince Ricardo, who is not clever, and who hates books! The story tells of Ricardo's adventures: how he tried to bring back Prince Charlie to England, how he failed; how he dealt with the odious old Yellow Dwarf; how he was aided by the fair magician, the Princess Jaqueline; how they both fell into a dreadful trouble; how King Prigio saved them; and how Jaqueline's dear and royal papa was discovered; with the end of all these adventures. The moral of the story will easily be discovered by the youngest reader, or, if not, it does not much matter.

CHAPTER I.

The Troubles of King Prigio.

“I’m sure I don’t know what to do with that boy!” said King Prigio of Pantouflia.

“If *you* don’t know, my dear,” said Queen Rosalind, his illustrious consort, “I can’t see what is to be done. You are so clever.”

The king and queen were sitting in the royal library, of which the shelves were full of the most delightful fairy books in all languages, all equally familiar to King Prigio. The queen could not read most of them herself, but the king used to read them aloud to her. A good many years had passed — seventeen, in fact — since Queen Rosalind was married, but you would not think it to look at her. Her grey eyes were as kind and soft and beautiful, her dark hair as dark, and her pretty colour as like a white rose blushing, as on the day when she was a bride. And she was as fond of the king as when he was only Prince Prigio, and he was as fond of her as on the night when he first met her at the ball.

“No, I don’t know what to do with Dick,” said the king.

He meant his son, Prince Ricardo, but he called him Dick in private.

“I believe it’s the fault of his education,” his Majesty went on. “We have not brought him up rightly. These fairy books are at the bottom of his provoking behaviour,” and he glanced round the shelves. “Now, when *I* was a boy, my dear mother tried to prevent me from reading fairy books, because she did not believe in fairies.”

“But she was wrong, you know,” said the queen. “Why, if it had not been for all these fairy presents, the Cap of Darkness and all the rest of them, you never could have killed the Fire-beast and the Ice-beast, and — you never could have married me,” the queen added, in a happy whisper, blushing beautifully, for that was a foolish habit of hers.

“It is quite true,” said the king, “and therefore I thought it best to bring Dick up on fairy books, that he might know what is right, and have no nonsense about him. But perhaps the thing has been overdone; at all events, it is not a success. I wonder if fathers and sons will ever understand each other, and get on well together? There was my poor father, King Grognio, he wanted me to take to adventures, like other princes, fighting Firedrakes, and so forth; and I did not care for it, till *you* set me on,” and he looked very kindly at her Majesty. “And now, here’s Dick,” the monarch continued, “I can’t hold him back. He is always after a giant, or a dragon, or a magician, as the case may be; he will certainly be ploughed for his examination at College. Never opens a book. What does he care, off after every adventure he can hear about? An idle, restless youth! Ah, my poor country, when I am gone, what may not be your misfortunes under Ricardo!"

Here his Majesty sighed, and seemed plunged in thought.

"But you are not going yet, my dear," said the queen. "Why you are not forty! And young people will be young people. You were quite proud when poor Dick came home with his first brace of gigantic fierce birds, killed off his own sword, and with such a pretty princess he had rescued — dear Jaqueline? I'm sure she is like a daughter to me. I cannot do without her."

"I wish she were a daughter-in-law; I wish Dick would take a fancy to marry her," said the king. "A nicer girl I never saw."

"And so accomplished," added Queen Rosalind. "That girl can turn herself into anything — a mouse, a fly, a lion, a wheelbarrow, a church! I never knew such talent for magic. Of course she had the *best* of teachers, the Fairy Paribanou herself; but very few girls, in our time, devote so many hours to *practice* as dear Jaqueline. Even now, when she is out of the schoolroom, she still practises her scales. I saw her turning little Dollie into a fish and back again in the bath-room last night. The child was delighted."

In these times, you must know, princesses learned magic, just as they learn the piano nowadays; but they had their music lessons too, dancing, calisthenics, and the use of the globes.

"Yes, she's a dear, good girl," said the king; "yet she looks melancholy. I believe, myself, that if Ricardo asked her to marry him, she would not say 'No.' But that's just one of the things I object to most in Dick. Round the world he goes, rescuing ladies from every kind of horror — from dragons, giants, cannibals, magicians; and then, when a girl naturally expects to be married to him, as is usual, off he rides! He has no more heart than a flounder. Why, at his age I—"

"At his age, my dear, you were so hard-hearted that you were quite a proverb. Why, I have been told that you used to ask girls dreadful puzzling questions, like 'Who was Cæsar Borgia?' 'What do you know of Edwin and Morcar?' and so on."

"I had not seen *you* then," said the king.

"And Ricardo has not seen *her*, whoever she may be. Besides, he can't possibly marry all of them. And I think a girl should consider herself lucky if she is saved from a dragon or a giant, without expecting to be married next day."

"Perhaps; but it is usual," said the king, "and their families expect it, and keep sending ambassadors to know what Dick's intentions are. I would not mind it all so very much if he killed the monsters off his own sword, as he did that first brace, in fair fight. But ever since he found his way into that closet where the fairy presents lie, everything has been made too easy for him. It is a royal road to glory, or giant-slaying made easy. In his Cap of Darkness a poor brute of a dragon can't see him. In his Shoes of Swiftness the giants can't catch him. His Sword of Sharpness would cut any oak asunder at a blow!"

"But you were very glad of them when you made the Ice-beast and the Fire-beast fight and kill each other," said the queen.

"Yes, my dear; but it wanted some wit, if I may say so, to do *that*, and Dick just goes at it hammer and tongs: anybody could do it. It's *intellect* I miss in Ricardo. How am I to know whether he could make a good fight for it without all these fairy things? I wonder what the young rogue is about to-day? He'll be late for dinner, as usual, I daresay. I can't stand want of punctuality at meals," remarked his Majesty, which is a sign that he was growing old after all; for where is the fun of being expected always to come home in time for dinner when, perhaps, you are fishing, and the trout are rising splendidly?

"Young people will be young people," said the queen. "If you are anxious about him, why don't you look for him in the magic crystal?"

Now the magic crystal was a fairy present, a great ball of glass in which, if you looked, you saw the person you wanted to see, and what he was doing, however far away he might be, if he was on the earth at all.

"I'll just take a look at it," said the king; "it only wants three-quarters of an hour to dinner-time."

His Majesty rose, and walked to the crystal globe, which was in a stand, like other globes. He stared into it, he turned it round and round, and Queen Rosalind saw him grow quite pale as he gazed.

"I don't see him anywhere," said the king, "and I have looked everywhere. I do hope nothing has happened to the boy. He is so careless. If he dropped his Cap of Darkness in a fight with a giant, why who knows what might occur?"

"Oh, 'Gio, how you frighten me!" said the queen.

King Prigio was still turning the crystal globe.

"Stop!" he cried; "I see a beautiful princess, fastened by iron chains to a rock beside the sea, in a lonely place. They must have fixed her up as a sacrifice to a sea-monster, like what's-her-name."

This proves how anxious he was, or, being so clever and learned, he would have remembered that her name was Andromeda.

"I bet Dick is not far off, where there is an adventure on hand. But where on earth can he be? . . . My word!" suddenly exclaimed the monarch, in obvious excitement.

"What is it, dear?" cried the queen, with all the anxiety of a mother.

"Why, the sea where the girl is, has turned all red as blood!" exclaimed the king. "Now it is all being churned up by the tail of a tremendous monster. He is a whopper! He's coming on shore; the girl is fainting. He's out on shore! He is extremely poorly, blood rushing from his open jaws. He's dying! And, hooray! here's Dick coming out of his enormous mouth, all in armour set with sharp spikes, and a sword in his hand. He's covered with blood, but he's well and hearty. He must have been swallowed by the brute, and cut him up inside. Now he's cutting the beast's head off. Now he's gone to the princess; a very neat bow he has made her. Dick's manners are positively improving! Now he's cutting her iron chains off with the Sword of Sharpness. And now he's made her another bow, and he's actually taking leave of her. Poor thing! How disappointed she is looking. And she's so pretty, too. I say, Rosalind, shall I shout to him through the magic horn, and tell him to bring her home here, on the magic carpet?"

"I think not, dear; the palace is quite full," said the queen. But the real reason was that she wanted Ricardo to marry her favourite Princess Jaqueline, and she did not wish the new princess to come in the way.

"As you like," said the king, who knew what was in her mind very well. "Besides, I see her own people coming for her. I'm sorry for her, but it can't be helped, and Dick is half-way home by now on the Shoes of Swiftness. I daresay he will not keep dinner waiting after all. But what a fright the boy has given me!"

At this moment a whirring in the air and a joyous shout were heard. It was Prince Ricardo flying home on his Seven-league Boots.

"Hi, Ross!" he shouted, "just weigh this beast's head. I've had a splendid day with a sea-monster. Get the head stuffed, will you? We'll have it set up in the billiard-room."

"Yes, Master Dick — I mean your Royal Highness," said Ross, a Highland keeper, who had not previously been employed by a Reigning Family. "It's a fine head, whatever," he added, meditatively.

Prince Ricardo now came beneath the library window, and gave his parents a brief account of his adventure.

"I picked the monster up early in the morning," he said, "through the magic telescope, father."

"What country was he in?" said the king.

"The country people whom I met called it Ethiopia. They were niggers."

"And in what part of the globe is Ethiopia, Ricardo?"

“Oh! I don’t know. Asia, perhaps,” answered the prince.

The king groaned.

“That boy will *never* understand our foreign relations. Ethiopia in Asia!” he said to himself, but he did not choose to make any remark at the moment.

The prince ran upstairs to dress. On the stairs he met the Princess Jaqueline.

“Oh, Dick! are you hurt?” she said, turning very pale.

“No, not I; but the monster is. I had a capital day, Jack; rescued a princess, too.”

“Was she — was she very pretty, Dick?”

“Oh! I don’t know. Pretty enough, I daresay. Much like other girls. Why, you look quite white! What’s the matter? Now you look all right again;” for, indeed, the Princess Jaqueline was blushing.

“I must dress. I’m ever so late,” he said, hurrying upstairs; and the princess, with a little sigh, went down to the royal drawing-room.

CHAPTER II.

Princess Jaqueline Drinks the Moon.

When dinner was over and the ladies had left the room, the king tried to speak *seriously* to Prince Ricardo. This was a thing which he disliked doing very much.

"There's very little use in preaching," his Majesty used to say, "to a man, or rather a boy, of another generation. My taste was for books; I only took to adventures because I was obliged to do it. Dick's taste is for adventures; I only wish some accident would make him take to books. But everyone must get his experience for himself; and when he has got it, he is lucky if it is not too late. I wish I could see him in love with some nice girl, who would keep him at home."

The king did not expect much from talking seriously to Dick. However, he began by asking questions about the day's sport, which Ricardo answered with modesty. Then his Majesty observed that, from all he had ever read or heard, he believed Ethiopia, where the fight was, to be in Africa, not in Asia.

"I really wish, Ricardo, that you would attend to your geography a little more. It is most necessary to a soldier that he should know where his enemy is, and if he has to fight the Dutch, for instance, not to start with his army for Central Asia."

"I could always spot them through the magic glass, father," said Dick; "it saves such a lot of trouble. I hate geography."

"But the glass might be lost or broken, or the Fairies might take it away, and then where are you?"

"Oh, *you* would know where to go, or Mr. Belsham."

Now Mr. Belsham was his tutor, from Oxford.

"But I shall not always be here, and when I die—"

"Don't talk of dying, sire," said Dick. "Why, you are not so very old; you may live for years yet. Besides, I can't stand the notion. You must live for ever!"

"That sentiment is unusual in a Crown Prince," thought the king; but he was pleased for all that.

"Well, to oblige you, I'll try to struggle against old age," he said; "but there are always accidents. Now, Dick, like a good fellow, and to please me, work hard all to-morrow till the afternoon. I'll come in and help you. And there's always a splendid evening rise of trout in the lake just now, so you can have your play after your work. You'll enjoy it more, and I daresay you are tired after a long day with the big game. It used to tire me, I remember."

"I *am* rather tired," said Dick; and indeed he looked a little pale, for a day in the inside of a gigantic sea-monster is fatiguing, from the heat and want of fresh air which are usually found in such places. "I think I'll turn in; goodnight, my dear old governor," he said, in an affectionate manner, though he was not usually given to many words.

Then he went and kissed his mother and the Princess Jaqueline, whom he engaged to row him on the lake next evening, while he fished.

"And don't you go muffing them with the landing-net, Jack, as you generally do," said his Royal Highness, as he lit his bedroom candle.

"I wish he would not call me Jack," said the princess to the queen.

"It's better than Lina, my dear," said her Majesty, who in late life had become fond of her little joke; "that always sounds as if someone else was fatter, — and I hope there is not someone else."

The princess was silent, and fixed her eyes on her book.

Presently the king came in, and played a game with Lina at picquet. When they were all going to bed, he said:

"Just come into the study, Lina. I want you to write a few letters for me."

The princess followed him and took her seat at the writing table. The letters were very short. One was to Herr Schnipp, tailor to the king and royal family; another was to the royal swordmaker, another to the bootmaker, another to the optician, another to the tradesman who supplied the august family with carpets and rugs, another to his Majesty's hatter. They were all summoned to be at the palace early next morning. Then his Majesty yawned, apologised, and went to bed. The princess also went to her room, or bower as it was then called, but not to sleep.

She was unhappy that Dick did not satisfy his father, and that he was so careless, and also about other things.

"And why does the king want all these tailors and hatters so suddenly, telescope-makers and swordmakers and shoemakers, too?" she asked herself, as she stood at the window watching the moon.

"I *could* find out. I could turn myself into a dog or a cat, and go into the room where he is giving his orders. But that is awkward, for when the servants see Rip" (that was the dog) "in two places at once, they begin to think the palace is haunted, and it makes people talk. Besides, I know it is wrong to listen to what one is not meant to hear. It is often difficult to be a magician and a good girl. The temptations are so strong, stronger than most people allow for." So she remained, with the moon shining on her pretty yellow hair and her white dress, wondering what the king intended to do, and whether it was something that Dick would not like.

"How stupid of me," she said at length, "after all the lessons I have had. Why, I can *drink the moon*!"

Now, this is a way of knowing what anyone else is thinking of and intends to do, for the moon sees and knows everything. Whether it is *quite fair* is another matter; but, at all events, it is not *listening*. And anyone may see that, if you are a magician, like the Princess Jaqueline, a great many difficult questions as to what is right and wrong at once occur which do not trouble other people. King Prigio's secret, why he sent for the tailor and the other people, was his own secret. The princess decided that she would not find it out by turning herself into Rip or the cat (whose name was Semiramis), and, so far, she was quite right. But she was very young, and it never occurred to her that it was just as wrong to find out what the king meant by *drinking the moon* as by listening in disguise. As she grew older she learned to know better; but this is just the danger of teaching young girls magic, and for that very reason it has been given up in most countries.

However, the princess did not think about right and wrong, unluckily. She went to the bookcase and took down her *Cornelius Agrippa*, in one great tall black volume, with silver clasps which nobody else could open; for, as the princess said, there are books which it would never do to leave lying about where the servants or anybody could read them. Nobody could undo the clasps, however strong or clever he might be; but the princess just breathed on them and made a sign, and the book flew open at the right place — Book IV., chapter vi., about the middle of page 576.

The magic spell was in Latin, of course; but the princess knew Latin very well, and soon she had the magic song by heart. Then she closed the book and put it back on the shelf. Then she threw open the window and drew back the curtains, and put out all the lights except two scented candles that burned with a white fire under a round mirror with a silver frame, opposite the window. And into that mirror the moon shone white and full, filling all the space of it, so that the room was steeped in a strange silver light. Now the whole room seemed to sway gently, waving and trembling; and as it trembled it sounded and rang with a low silver music, as if it were filled with the waves of the sea.

Then the princess took a great silver basin, covered with strange black signs and figures raised in the silver. She poured water into the basin, and as she poured it she sang the magic spell from the Latin book. It was something like this, in English:

“Oh Lady Moon, on the waters riding,
   On shining waters, in silver sheen,
Show me the secret the heart is hiding,
   Show me the truth of the thought, oh Queen!

“Oh waters white, where the moon is riding,
   That knows what shall be and what has been,
Tell me the secret the heart is hiding,
   Wash me the truth of it, clear and clean!”

As she sang the water in the silver basin foamed and bubbled, and then fell still again; and the princess knelt in the middle of the room, and the moon and the white light from the mirror of the moon fell in the water.

Then the princess raised the basin, and stooped her mouth to it and drank the water, spilling a few drops, and so she *drank the moon* and the knowledge of the moon. Then the moon was darkened without a cloud, and there was darkness in the sky for a time, and all the dogs in the world began to howl. When the moon shone again, the princess rose and put out the two white lights, and drew the curtains; and presently she went to bed.

“Now I know all about it,” she said. “It is clever; everything the king does is clever, and he is so kind that I daresay he does not mean any harm. But it seems a cruel trick to play on poor Ricardo. However, Jaqueline is on the watch, and I’ll show them a girl can do more than people think,” — as, indeed, she could.

After meditating in this way, the princess fell sleep, and did not waken till her maid came to call her.

“Oh! your Royal Highness, what’s this on the floor?” said the faithful Rosina, as she was arranging the princess’s things for her to get up.

“Why, what is it?” asked the princess.

“Ever so many — four, five, six, seven — little shining drops of silver lying on the carpet, as if they had melted and fallen there!”

“They have not hurt the carpet?” said the princess. “Oh dear! the queen won’t be pleased at all. It was a little chemical experiment I was trying last night.”

But she knew very well that she must have dropped seven drops of the enchanted water.

“No, your Royal Highness, the carpet is not harmed,” said Rosina; “only your Royal Highness should do these things in the laboratory. Her Majesty has often spoke about it.”

“You are quite right,” said the princess; “but as there is no harm done, we’ll say nothing about it this time. And, Rosina, you may keep the silver drops for yourself.”

“Your Royal Highness is always very kind,” said Rosina, which was true; but how much better and wiser it is not to *begin* to deceive! We never know how far we may be carried, and so Jaqueline found out.

For when she went down to breakfast, there was the king in a great state of excitement, for him.

“It’s *most* extraordinary,” said his Majesty.

“What is?” asked the queen.

“Why, didn’t you notice it? No, you had gone to bed before it happened. But I was taking a walk in the moonlight, on the balcony, and I observed it carefully.”

“Observed what, my dear?” asked the queen, who was pouring out the tea.

“Didn’t you see it, Dick? Late as usual, you young dog!” the king remarked as Ricardo entered the room.

“See what, sir?” said Dick.

“Oh, you were asleep hours before, now I think of it! But it was *the* most extraordinary thing, an unpredicted eclipse of the moon! You must have noticed it, Jaqueline; you sat up later. How the dogs howled!”

“No; I mean yes,” murmured poor Jaqueline, who of course had caused the whole affair by her magic arts, but who had forgotten, in the excitement of the moment, that an eclipse of the moon, especially if entirely unexpected, is likely to attract very general attention. Jaqueline could not bear to tell a fib, especially to a king who had been so kind to her; besides, fibbing would not alter the facts.

“Yes, I did see it,” she admitted, blushing. “Had it not been predicted?”

“Not a word about it whispered anywhere,” said his Majesty. “I looked up the almanack at once. It is the most extraordinary thing I ever saw, and I’ve seen a good many.”

“The astronomers must be duffers,” said Prince Ricardo. “I never thought there was much in physical science of any sort; most dreary stuff. Why, they say the earth goes round the sun, whereas any fool can see it is just the other way on.”

King Prigio was struck aghast by these sentiments in the mouth of his son and heir, the hope of Pantouflia. But what was the king to say in reply? The astronomers of Pantouflia, who conceived that they knew a great deal, had certainly been taken by surprise this time. Indeed, they have not yet satisfactorily explained this eclipse of the moon, though they have written volumes about it.

“Why, it may be the sun next!” exclaimed his Majesty. “Anything may happen. The very laws of gravitation themselves may go askew!”

At this moment the butler, William, who had been in the queen’s family when she was a girl, entered, and announced:

“Some of the royal tradesmen, by appointment, to see your Majesty.”

So the king, who had scarcely eaten any breakfast, much to the annoyance of the queen, who was not agitated by eclipses, went out and joined the tailors and the rest of them.

CHAPTER III.

The Adventure of the Shopkeepers.

Dick went on with his breakfast. He ate cold pastry, and poached eggs, and ham, and rolls, and raspberry jam, and hot cakes; and he drank two cups of coffee. Meanwhile the king had joined the tradesmen who attended by his orders. They were all met in the royal study, where the king made them a most splendid bow, and requested them to be seated. But they declined to sit in his sacred presence, and the king observed that, in that case he must stand up.

“I have invited you here, gentlemen,” he said, “on a matter of merely private importance, but I must request that you will be entirely silent as to the nature of your duties. It is difficult, I know, not to talk about one’s work, but in this instance I am sure you will oblige me.”

“Your Majesty has only to command,” said Herr Schnipp. “There have been monarchs, in neighbouring kingdoms, who would have cut off all our heads after we had done a bit of secret business; but the merest word of your Majesty is law to your loving subjects.”

The other merchants murmured assent, for King Prigio was really liked by his people. He was always good-tempered and polite. He never went to war with anybody. He spent most of the royal income on public objects, and of course there were scarcely any taxes to speak of. Moreover, he had abolished what is called compulsory education, or making everybody go to school whether he likes it or not; a most mischievous and tyrannical measure! “A fellow who can’t teach himself to read,” said the king, “is not worth teaching.”

For all these reasons, and because they were so fond of the queen, his subjects were ready to do anything in reason for King Prigio.

Only one tradesman, bowing very deep and blushing very much, said:

“Your Majesty, will you hear me for one moment?”

“For an hour, with pleasure, Herr Schmidt,” said the monarch.

“It is an untradesman-like and an unusual thing to decline an order; and if your Majesty asked for my heart’s blood, I am ready to shed it, not to speak of anything in the line of my business — namely, boot and shoe making. But keep a secret from my wife, I fairly own to your Majesty that I can *not*.”

Herr Schmidt went down on his knees and wept.

“Rise, Herr Schmidt,” said the king, taking him by the hand. “A more honourable and chivalrous confession of an amiable weakness, if it is to be called a weakness, I never heard. Sir, you have been true to your honour and your prince, in face of what few men can bear, the chance of ridicule. There is no one here, I hope, but respects and will keep the secret of Herr Schmidt's confession?"

The assembled shopkeepers could scarcely refrain from tears.

"Long live King Prigio the Good!" they exclaimed, and vowed that everything should be kept dark.

"Indeed, sire," said the swordmaker, "all the rest of us are bachelors."

"That is none the worse for my purpose gentlemen," said his Majesty; "but I trust that you will not long deprive me of sons and subjects worthy to succeed to such fathers. And now, if Herr Schmidt will kindly find his way to the buttery, where refreshments are ready, I shall have the pleasure of conducting you to the scene of your labours."

Thus speaking, the king, with another magnificent bow, led the way upstairs to a little turret-room, in a deserted part of the palace. Bidding the tradesmen enter, he showed them a large collection of miscellaneous things: an old cap or two, a pair of boots of a sort long out of fashion, an old broadsword, a shabby old Persian rug, an ivory spy-glass, and other articles. These were, in fact, the fairy presents, which had been given to the king at his christening, and by aid of which (and his natural acuteness) he had, in his youth, succeeded in many remarkable adventures.

The caps were the Wishing Cap and the Cap of Darkness. The rug was the famous carpet which carried its owner through the air wherever he wished to go. The sword was the Sword of Sharpness. The ivory glass showed you anyone you wanted to see, however far off. The boots were the Seven-league Boots, which Hop-o'-my-Thumb stole from the Ogre about 1697. There were other valuable objects, but these were the most useful and celebrated. Of course the king did not tell the tradesmen what they were.

"Now, gentlemen," said his Majesty, "you see these old things. For reasons which I must ask you to excuse me for keeping to myself, I wish you to provide me with objects exactly and precisely similar to these, with all the look of age."

The tradesmen examined the objects, each choosing that in his own line of business.

"As to the sword, sire," said the cutler, "it is an Andrea Ferrara, a fine old blade. By a lucky accident, I happen to have one at home in a small collection of ancient weapons, exactly like it. This evening it shall be at your Majesty's disposal."

"Perhaps, Herr Schnitzler, you will kindly write an order for it, as I wish no one of you to leave the palace, if you can conveniently stay, till your business is finished."

"With pleasure, your Majesty," says the cutler.

"As to the old rug," said the upholsterer, "I have a Persian one quite identical with it at home, at your Majesty's service."

"Then you can do like Herr Schnitzler," who was the cutler.

"And I," said the hatter, "have two old caps just like these, part of a bankrupt theatrical stock."

"We are most fortunate," said the king.

"The boots, now I come to think of it, are unimportant, at least for the present. Perhaps we can borrow a pair from the theatre."

"As for the glass," said the optician, "if your Majesty will allow me to take it home with me—"

"I am afraid I cannot part with it," said the king; "but that, too, is unimportant, or not very pressing."

Then he called for a servant, to order luncheon for the shopkeepers, and paper for them to write their orders on. But no one was within hearing, and in that very old part of the palace there were no bells.

"Just pardon me for an instant, while I run downstairs," said his Majesty; "and, it seems a strange thing to ask, but may I advise you not to sit down on that carpet? I have a reason for it."

In fact, he was afraid that someone might sit down on it, and wish he was somewhere else, and be carried away, as was the nature of the carpet.

King Prigio was not absent a minute, for he met William on the stairs; but when he came back, there was not one single person in the turret-room!

"Where on earth are they?" cried the king, rushing through all the rooms in that part of the castle. He shouted for them, and looked everywhere; but there was not a trace of tailor, hatter, optician, swordmaker, upholsterer.

The king hastened to a window over the gate, and saw the sentinels on duty.

"Hi!" he called.

And the sentinels turned round, looked up, and saluted.

"Have you seen anyone go out?" he cried.

"No one, sire," answered the soldiers.

The king, who began to guess what had happened, hurried back to the turret-room.

There were all the tradesmen with parcels under their arms.

"What means this, gentlemen?" said his Majesty, severely. "For what reason did you leave the room without my permission?"

They all knelt down, humbly imploring his compassion.

“Get up, you donkeys!” said the king, forgetting his politeness. “Get up, and tell me where you have been hiding yourselves.”

The hatter came forward, and said:

“Sire, you will not believe me; indeed, I can scarcely believe it myself!”

“Nor none of us can’t,” said the swordmaker. “We have been home, and brought the articles. All orders executed with punctuality and dispatch,” he added, quoting his own advertisement without thinking of it.

On this the swordmaker took out and exhibited the Andrea Ferrara blade, which was exactly like the Sword of Sharpness.

The upholsterer undid his parcel, and there was a Persian rug, which no one could tell from the magical carpet.

The hatter was fumbling with the string of his parcel, when he suddenly remembered, what the king in his astonishment had not noticed, that he had a cap on himself. He pulled it off in a hurry, and the king at once saw that it was his Wishing Cap, and understood all about the affair. The hatter, in his absence, had tried on the Wishing Cap, and had wished that he himself and his friends were all at home and back again with their wares at the palace. And what he wished happened, of course, as was natural. In a moment the king saw how much talk this business would produce in the country, and he decided on the best way to stop it.

Seizing the Wishing Cap, he put it on, wished all the tradesmen, including the shoemaker, back in the town at their shops, and also wished that none of them should remember anything about the whole affair.

In a moment he was alone in the turret-room. As for the shopkeepers, they had a kind of idea that they had dreamed something odd; but, as it went no further, of course they did not talk about it, and nobody was any the wiser.

“Owl that I am!” said King Prigio to himself. “I might have better wished for a complete set of sham fairy things which would not work. It would have saved a great deal of trouble; but I am so much out of the habit of using the cap, that I never thought of it. However, what I have got will do very well.”

Then, putting on the Cap of Darkness, that nobody might see him, he carried all the *real* fairy articles away, except the Seven-league Boots, to his own room, where he locked them up, leaving in their place the sham Wishing Cap, the sham Cap of Darkness, the sham Sword of Sharpness, and the carpet which was not a magic carpet at all.

His idea was, of course, that Ricardo would start on an expedition confiding in his fairy things, and he would find that they did not act. Then he would be left to his own cleverness and courage to get him out of the scrape. That would teach him, thought the king, to depend on himself, and to set a proper value on cleverness and learning, and minding his book.

Of course he might have locked the things up, and forbidden Ricardo to touch them, but that might have seemed harsh. And, as you may easily imagine, with all the powers at his command, the king fancied he could easily rescue Ricardo from any very serious danger at the hands of giants or magicians or monsters. He only wanted to give him a fright or two, and make him respect the judgment of older and wiser people than himself.

CHAPTER IV.

Two Lectures.

For several days Prince Ricardo minded his books, and, according to his tutors, made considerable progress in polite learning. Perhaps he ought not to be praised too highly for this, because, in fact, he saw no means of distinguishing himself by adventures just at that time. Every morning he would climb the turret and sweep the horizon, and even *much* beyond the horizon, with the ivory spy-glass. But look as he would, he saw no monsters preying on human-kind anywhere, nor princesses in distress. To be sure he saw plenty of poor people in distress, and, being a good-hearted, though careless, lad, Dick would occasionally fly off with the Purse of Fortunatus in his pocket, and give them as much money as they needed — it cost him nothing. But this was not the kind of adventure which he enjoyed. Dragons for his money!

One day the Princess Jaqueline took a curious plan of showing Ricardo how little interest, after all, there is in performing the most wonderful exploits without any real difficulty or danger. They were drifting before a light breeze on a hill lake; Ricardo was fishing, and Jaqueline was sculling a stroke now and then, just to keep the boat right with the wind. Ricardo had very bad sport, when suddenly the trout began to rise all over the lake. Dick got excited, and stumbled about the boat from stern to bow, tripping over Jaqueline’s feet, and nearly upsetting the vessel in his hurry to throw his flies over every trout he saw feeding.

But, as too often occurs, they were taking one particular fly which was on the water, and would look at nothing else.

“Oh, bother them!” cried Ricardo. “I can’t find a fly in my book in the least like that little black one they are feeding on!”

He tried half-a-dozen different fly-hooks, but all to no purpose; he lost his temper, got his tackle entangled in Jaqueline’s hair and then in the landing-net; and, though such a big boy, he was nearly crying with vexation.

The Princess Jaqueline, with great pains and patience, disentangled the casting line, first from her hair, which Ricardo was anxious to cut (the great stupid oaf, — her pretty hair!) then from the landing-net; but Dick had grown sulky.

“It’s no use,” he said; “I have not a fly that will suit. Let’s go home,” and he threw a tin can at a rising trout.

"Now, Dick," said Jaqueline, "you know I can help you. I did not learn magic for nothing. Just you look the other way for a minute or two, and you will find the right fly at the end of your line."

Dick turned his head away (it is not proper to look on at magical arts), and then in a moment, saw the right hook on his cast; but Jaqueline was not in the boat. She had turned herself into an artificial fly (a small black gnat), and Dick might set to his sport again.

"What a trump that girl is," he said aloud. "Clever, too!" and he began casting. He got a trout every cast, great big ones, over a pound, and soon he had a basketful. But he began to feel rather bored.

"There's not much fun taking them," he said, "when they are so silly."

At that very moment he noticed that the fly was off his cast, and Jaqueline was sitting at the oars.

"You see, Ricardo," she said, "I was right after all. There is not much pleasure in sport that is easy and certain. Now, apply this moral to dragon-killing with magic instruments. It may be useful when one is obliged to defend oneself, but surely a prince ought not to give his whole time to nothing else!"

Dick had no answer ready, so he only grumbled:

"You're always preaching at me, Jack; everybody always is. I seem to have been born just to be preached at."

Some people are; and it does grow rather tedious in the long run. But perhaps what Jaqueline said may have made some impression on Ricardo, for he stuck to his books for weeks, and was got into decimal fractions and Euclid.

All this, of course, pleased the king very much, and he began to entertain hopes of Ricardo's becoming a wise and learned prince, and a credit to his illustrious family.

Things were not always to go smoothly, far from it; and it was poor Jaqueline who fell into trouble next. She had been very ready to lecture Dick, as we saw, and took a good deal of credit to herself for his steadiness. But one day King Prigio happened to meet Jaqueline's maid, Rosina, on the stairs; and as Rosina was a pretty girl, and the king was always kind to his dependents, he stopped to have a chat with her.

"Why, Rosina, what a pretty little silver cross you are wearing," he said, and he lifted a curious ornament which hung from a chain on Rosina's neck. It consisted of seven drops of silver, set like this:

"May I look at it?" his Majesty asked, and Rosina, all in a flutter, took it off and gave if to him. "H'm!" said the king. "Very curious and pretty! May I ask you where you got this, Rosina?"

Now Rosina generally had her answer ready, and I am very sorry to say that she did not always speak the truth when she could think of anything better. On this occasion she was anxious to think of something better, for fear of getting Jaqueline into a scrape about the chemical experiment in her bedroom. But Rosina was fluttered, as we said, by the royal kindness, and she could think of nothing but to curtsy, and say:

"Please, your Majesty, the princess gave me the drops."

"Very interesting," said the king. "There is a little white moon shining in each of them! I wonder if they shine in the dark?"

He opened the door of a cupboard which had no windows, where the housemaid kept her mops and brooms, and shut himself in. Yes, there was no mistake; the darkness was quite lighted up with the sheen of the seven little moons in the silver. The king looked rather grave.

"If you can trust me with this cross till to-morrow, Rosina, I should like to have it examined and analysed. This is no common silver."

Of course Rosina could only curtsy, but she was very much alarmed about the consequences to her mistress.

After luncheon, the king asked Jaqueline to come into his study, as he often did, to help him with his letters. When they had sat down his Majesty said:

"My dear Jaqueline, I never interfere with your pursuits, but I almost doubt whether *Cornelius Agrippa* is a good book for a very young lady to read. The Fairy Paribanou, I am sure, taught you nothing beyond the ordinary magical accomplishments suited to your rank; but there are a great many things in the *Cornelius* which I think you should not study till you are older and wiser."

"What does your Majesty mean?" said poor Jaqueline, feeling very uncomfortable; for the king had never lectured her before.

"Why," said his Majesty, taking the silver cross out of his pocket, "did you not give this to Rosina?"

"Yes, sire, I did give her the drops. She had them made up herself."

"Then give it back to her when you see her next. I am glad you are frank, Jaqueline. And you know, of course, that the drops are not ordinary silver? They are moon silver, and that can only be got in one way, so far as I know, at least — when one spills the water when he, or she, is drinking the moon. Now, there is only one book which tells how that can be done, and there is only one reason for doing it; namely, to find out what is some other person's secret. I shall not ask you *whose* secret you wanted to find out, but I must request you never to do such a thing again without consulting me. You can have no reason for it, such as a great king might have whose enemies are plotting against his country."

"Oh, sire, I will tell you everything!" cried Jaqueline.

"No, don't; I don't want to know. I am sure you will make no use of your information which you think I should not approve of. But there is another thing — that eclipse of the moon! Oh, Jaqueline, was it honourable, or fair to the astronomers and men of science, to say nothing about it? Their European reputations are seriously injured."

Poor Jaqueline could only cry.

"Never mind," said his Majesty, comforting her. "There is no great harm done yet, and perhaps they would not believe you if you did explain; but just think, if some people ceased to believe in Science, what would they have left to believe in? But you are young, of course, and cannot be expected to think of everything."

"I never thought about it at all," wept Jaqueline.

"'Evil is wrought by want of thought,'" said the king, quoting the poet. "Now run away, dry your tears, and I think you had better bring me that book, and I'll put it back in one of the locked-up shelves. Later, when you are older, we shall see about it."

The princess flew to her room, and returned with her book. And the king kissed her, and told her to go and see if her Majesty meant to take a drive.

"I'll never deceive him again, never . . . unless it is *quite* necessary," said the princess to herself. "Indeed, it is not so easy to deceive the king. What a lot he has read!"

In fact, King Prigio had been very studious when a young man, before he came to the throne.

"Poor child!" thought the king. "No doubt she was trying her fortune, wondering if Ricardo cares for her a little. Of course I could not let her tell me *that*, poor child!"

In this guess, as we know, his Majesty was mistaken, which seldom happened to him.

"I wonder who she is?" the king went on speaking to himself. "That great booby, Ricardo, saved her from wild birds, which were just going to eat her. She was fastened to a mountain top, but *where*? that's the question. Ricardo never has any notion of geography. It was across the sea, he noticed *that*; but which sea, — Atlantic, Pacific, the Black Sea, the Caspian, the Sea of Marmora, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, the German Ocean, the Mediterranean? Her ornaments were very peculiar; there was a broad gold sun on her breast. I must look at them again some day. She said she was being sacrificed to wild birds (which her people worshipped), because there was some famine, or war, or trouble in the country. She said she was a Daughter of the Sun; but that, of course, is absurd, unless — By Jove! I believe I have it," said the king, and he went into the royal library and was looking for some old Spanish book, when his secretary came and said that the Russian Ambassador was waiting for an interview with his Majesty.

“Dismal old Muscovite!” sighed the king. “A monarch has not a moment to himself for his private studies. Ah, Prigio! why wert thou not born to a private station? But Duty before everything,” and wreathing his royal countenance in smiles, his Majesty prepared to give Count Snoreonski an audience.

It was all about the attitude of Pantouflia in the event of a Polish invasion of Russia. The king reassured Count Snoreonski, affirming that Pantouflia, while deeply regretting the disturbed relations between two States in whose welfare she was deeply interested, would ever preserve an attitude of benevolent neutrality, unless her own interests were threatened.

“I may give your message to my august mistress, the Czarina?” said the ambassador.

“By all means, adding an expression of my tender interest in her Majesty’s health and welfare,” said the king, presenting the count at the same time with a magnificent diamond snuffbox containing his portrait.

The old count was affected to tears, and withdrew, while King Prigio said:

“I have not lost a day; I have made an amiable but very stupid man happy.”

Such are, or rather such were, the toils of monarchs!

CHAPTER V.

Prince Ricardo Crosses the Path of History.

"I say, Jack," said Prince Ricardo one morning, "here's a queer letter for me!" King Prigio had gone to a distant part of his dominions, on business of importance, and the young people were sitting in the royal study. The letter, which Ricardo handed to Jaqueline, was written on a great broad sheet of paper, folded up without any envelope, as was the custom then, and was sealed with a huge seal in red wax.

"I don't know the arms," Ricardo said.

"Oh, Ricardo, how you *do* neglect your Heraldry! Old Green Stocking is in despair over your ignorance."

Now Green Stocking was the chief herald of Pantouflia, just like Blue Mantle in England.

"Why, these are the Royal Arms of England, you great ignorant Dick!"

"But Rome isn't in England, is it? — and the post-mark is 'Roma': that's Rome in some lingo, I expect. It is in Latin, anyhow, I know. *Mortuus est Romæ*— 'He died at Rome.' It's in the Latin Grammar. Let's see what the fellow says, anyhow," added Ricardo, breaking the seal.

"He begins, 'Prins and dear Cousin!' I say, Jaqueline, he spells it 'Prins;' now it is P-r-i-n-c-e. He *must* be an ignorant fellow!"

"People in glass houses should not throw stones, Dick," said Jaqueline.

"He signs himself 'Charles, P. W.,'" said Ricardo, looking at the end. "Who on earth can he be? Why does he not put 'P. W. Charles,' if these are his initials? Look here, it's rather a long letter; you might read it to us, Jack!"

The princess took the epistle and began:

"How nice it smells, all scented! The paper is gilt-edged, too."

"Luxurious beggar, whoever he is," said Ricardo.

"Well, he says: 'Prins and dear Cousin, — You and me' (oh, what grammar!) 'are much the same age, I being fifteen next birthday, and we should be better *ackwainted*. All the wurld has herd of the fame of Prins Ricardo, whose name is *feerd*, and his *sord* dreded, wherever there are Monsters and Tirants. Prins, you may be less well informed about my situation. I have not killed any Dragguns, there being nun of them here; but I have been *under fiar*, at Gaeta.' Where's Gaeta, Dick?"

“Never heard of it,” said Ricardo.

“Well, it is in Italy, and it was besieged lately. He goes on: ‘and I am told that I did not misbehave myself, nor disgrace *the blud of Bruce*.’”

“I’ve heard of Robert Bruce,” said Dick; “he was the man who did not kill the spider, but he cracked the head of Sir Harry Bohun with one whack of his axe. I remember *him* well enough.”

“Well, your correspondent seems to be a descendant of his.”

“That’s getting more interesting,” said Dick. “I wish my father would go to war with somebody. With the Sword of Sharpness I’d make the enemy whistle! Drive on, Jack.”

“‘As a prins in distress, I apeal to your valler, so renouned in Europe. I am kept out of my own; my royal father, King Gems,’ — well, this is the worst spelling I ever saw in my life! He means King *James*,— ‘my royal father, King Gems, being druv into exile by a crewl Usurper, the Elector of Hannover. King Gems is *old*, and likes a quiat life; but I am determined to make an effort, if I go alone, and Europe shall here of Prince Charles. Having heard — as who has not? — of your royal Highness’s courage and sordsmanship, I throw myself at your feet, and implore you to asist a prins in distres. Let our sords be drawn together in the caus of freedom and an outraged country, my own.

“‘I remain,
“‘Prins and dear Cuzen,
“‘Charles, P. W.’

“P. W. means Prince of Wales,” added Jaqueline. “He is turned out of England you know, and lives at Rome with his father.”

“I like that chap,” said Prince Ricardo. “He does not spell very well, as you say, but I sometimes make mistakes myself; and I like his spirit. I’ve been looking out for an adventure; but the big game is getting shy, and my sword rusts in his scabbard. I’ll tell you what, Jack — I’ve an idea! I’ll put him on the throne of his fathers; it’s as easy as shelling peas: and as for that other fellow, the Elector, I’ll send him back to Hanover, wherever that may be, and he can go on electing, and polling his vote in peace and quietness, at home. Just wait till I spot the places.”

The prince ran up to the turret, fetched the magic spy-glass, and looked up London, Rome, and Hanover, as you would in a map.

“Well, Dick, but how do you mean to do it?”

“Do it? — nothing simpler! I just take my Seven-league Boots, run over to Rome, pick up Prince Charles, put him on the magic carpet, fly to London, clap the Cap of Darkness on him so that nobody can see him, set him down on the throne of his fathers; pick up the Elector, carry him over to his beloved Hanover, and the trick is done — what they call a bloodless revolution in the history books."

"But if the English don't like Prince Charles when they get him?"

"Like him? they're sure to like him, a young fellow like that! Besides, I'll take the sword with me in case of accidents."

"But, Dick, it is your father's rule that you are never to meddle in the affairs of other countries, and never to start on an expedition when he is not at home."

"Oh, he won't mind this time! There's no kind of danger; and I'm sure he will approve of the *principle* of the thing. Kings must stick up for each other. Why, some electing characters might come here and kick *us* out!"

"Your father is not the sort of king who is kicked out," said Jaqueline.

But there was no use in talking to Dick. He made his simple preparations, and announced that he would be back in time for luncheon.

What was poor Jaqueline to do? She was extremely anxious. She knew, as we saw, what King Prigio had intended about changing the fairy things for others that would not work. She was certain Dick would get himself into a scrape; how was she to help him? She made up her mind quickly, while Dick was putting his things together. She told the queen (it was the nearest to the truth she could think of) that she "was going for a turn with Dick." Then she changed herself into a mosquito — a kind of gnat that bites — and hid herself under a fold of Dick's coat. Of course he knew nothing about her being there. Then he started off in his Seven-league Boots, and before you could say "Jack Robinson" he was in Rome, in the grounds of a splendid palace called the Villa Borghese.

There he saw an elderly gentleman, in a great curled wig, sound asleep on a seat beneath a tree. The old gentleman had a long, pale, melancholy face, and across his breast was a broad blue ribbon with a star. Ah! how changed was King James from the handsome Prince who had loved fair Beatrix Esmond, thirty years ago! Near him were two boys, not quite so old as Prince Ricardo. The younger was a pretty dark boy, with a funny little roundabout white wig. He was splendidly dressed in a light-blue silk coat; a delicate little lace scarf was tied round his neck; he had lace ruffles falling about his little ringed hands; he had a pretty sword, with a gold handle set with diamonds — in fact, he was the picture of a little dandy. The other lad had a broad Scotch bonnet on, and no wig; beautiful silky yellow locks fell about his shoulders. He had laid his sword on the grass. He was dressed in tartan, which Ricardo had never seen before; and he wore a kilt, which was also new to Ricardo, who wondered at his bare legs — for he was wearing shoes with no stockings. In his hand he held a curious club, with a long, slim handle, and a head made heavy with lead, and defended with horn. With this he was aiming at a little white ball; and suddenly he swung up the club and sent the ball out of sight in the air, over several trees.

Prince Ricardo stepped up to this boy, took off his cap, and said:

"I think I have the honour of addressing the Prince of Wales?"

Prince Charles started at the sight of a gentleman in long riding-boots, girt with a broadsword, which was not then generally worn, and carrying a Persian rug under his arm.

"That is what I am called, sir," he said, "by those who give me the title which is mine by right. May I inquire the reason which offers me the pleasure of this unexpected interview?"

"Oh, I'm Ricardo of Pantouflia!" says Dick. "I had a letter from you this morning, and I believe you wanted to see me."

"From Pantouflia, sir," said Prince Charles; "why, that is hundreds of leagues away!"

"It is a good distance," said Dick; "but a mere step when you wear Seven-league Boots like mine."

"My dear prince," said Charles, throwing himself into his arms with rapture, and kissing him in the Italian fashion, which Dick did not half like, "you are, indeed, worthy of your reputation; and these are the celebrated Seven-league Boots? Harry," he cried to his brother, "come here at once and let me present you to his Royal Highness, our illustrious ally, Prince Ricardo of Pantouflia. The Duke of York — Prince Ricardo of Pantouflia. Gentlemen, know each other!"

The prince bowed in the most stately manner.

"I say," said Dick, who was seldom at all up to the standard of royal conversation, "what's that game you were playing? It's new to me. You sent the ball a tremendous long shot."

"The game is called golf, and is the favourite pastime of my loyal Scottish subjects," said Prince Charles. "For that reason, that I may be able to share the amusements of my people, whom I soon hope to lead to a glorious victory, followed by a peaceful and prosperous reign, I am acquiring a difficult art. I'm practising walking without stockings, too, to harden my feet," he said, in a more familiar tone of voice. "I fancy there are plenty of long marches before me, and I would not be a spear's length behind the hardiest Highlander."

"By Jove! I respect you," said Dick, with the greatest sincerity; "but I don't think, with me on your side, you will need to make many marches. It will all be plain sailing."

"Pray explain your plan," said Prince Charles. "The task of conquering back the throne of my fathers is not so simple as you seem to suppose."

"I've done a good many difficult things," said Dick, modestly.

"The conqueror of the magician, Gorgonzola, and the Giant Who never Knew when he had Enough, need not tell me that," said Prince Charles, with a courteous allusion to two of Ricardo's most prodigious adventures.

"Oh! I've very little to be proud of, really," said Dick, blushing; "anyone could do as much with my fairy things, of which, no doubt, you have heard. With a Sword of Sharpness and a Cap of Darkness, and so forth, you have a great pull over almost anything."

"And you really possess those talismans?" said the prince.

"Certainly I do. You see how short a time I took in coming to your call from Pantouflia."

"And has Holy Church," asked the Duke of York, with anxiety, "given her sanction and her blessing to those instruments of an art, usually, in her wisdom, forbidden?"

"Oh, never mind Holy Church, Harry!" said Prince Charles. "This is *business*. Besides, the English are Protestants."

"I pray for their conversion daily," said the Duke of York.

"The end justifies the means, you know," answered Prince Charles. "All's fair in love and war."

"I should think so," said Ricardo, "especially against those brutes of Electors; they give trouble at home sometimes."

"You, too, are plagued with an Elector?" asked Prince Charles.

"*An* Elector? thousands of them!" answered Dick, who never could understand anything about politics.

Prince Charles looked puzzled, but requested Dick to explain his great plan.

They sat down on the grass, and Ricardo showed them how he meant to manage it, just as he had told Jaqueline. As he said, nothing could be simpler.

"Let's start at once," he said, and, inducing Prince Charles to sit down on the magic carpet, he cried:

"England! St. James's Palace!"

But nothing happened!

The carpet was not the right magic carpet, but the one which King Prigio had put in its place.

"Get on! England, I said!" cried Dick.

But there they remained, under the chestnut tree, sitting on the carpet above the flowery grass.

Prince Charles leaped to his feet; his face like fire, his eyes glowing.

“Enough of this fooling, sir!” he said. “It is easy, but cowardly, to mock at an unfortunate prince. Take your carpet and be off with you, out of the gardens, or your shoulders shall taste my club.”

“There has been some mistake,” Ricardo said; “the wrong carpet has been brought by accident, or the carpet has lost its power.”

“In this sacred city, blessed by the presence of his Holiness the Pope, and the relics of so many martyrs and saints, magic may well cease to be potent,” said the Duke of York.

“Nonsense! You are an impostor, sir! Leave my presence!” cried Prince Charles, lifting his golf-club.

Dick caught it out of his hand, and broke across his knee as fine a driver as ever came from Robertson’s shop at St. Andrew’s.

“The quarrels of princes are not settled with clubs, sir! Draw and defend yourself!” he said, kicking off his boots and standing in his socks on the grass.

Think of the horror of poor Jaqueline, who witnessed this terrible scene of passion from a fold in Prince Ricardo’s dress! What could the girl do to save the life of two princes, the hopes of one nation, and of a respectable minority in another?

In a moment Prince Charles’s rapier was shining in the sunlight, and he fell on guard in the most elegant attitude, his left hand gracefully raised and curved.

Dick drew his sword, but, as suddenly, threw it down again.

“Hang it!” he exclaimed, “I can’t hit you with *this*! This is the Sword of Sharpness; it would cut through your steel and your neck at a touch.”

He paused, and thought.

“Let me beseech your Royal Highness,” he said to the Duke of York, who was in a terrible taking, “to lend your blade to a hand not less royal than your own.”

“Give him it, Hal!” said Prince Charles, who was standing with the point of his sword on the ground, and the blade bent. “He seems to believe in his own nonsense.”

The duke yielded his sword; Dick took it, made a nourish, and rushed at Prince Charles.

Now Ricardo had always neglected his fencing lessons. “Where’s the good of it,” he used to ask, “all that stamping, and posture-making, and ha-haing? The Sword of Sharpness is enough for *me*.”

But now he could not, in honour, use the Sword of Sharpness; so on he came, waving the rapier like a claymore, and made a slice at Prince Charles’s head.

The prince, very much surprised, parried in prime, riposted, and touched Dick on the hand.

At this moment the Princess Jaqueline did what she should have thought of sooner. She flew out of Dick's coat, and stung old King James on his royal nose. The king wakened, nearly crushed the princess (so dangerous is the practice of magic to the artist), and then leaped up, and saw Dick's blade flying through the air, glittering in the sun. The prince had disarmed him.

"Hullo! what's all this? *À moi*, *mes gardes*!" cried the old king, in French and English; and then he ran up, just in time to hear Prince Charles say:

"Sir, take your life! I cannot strike an unarmed man. A prince you may be, but you have not learned the exercises of gentlemen."

"What is all this, Carluccio?" asked the old king. "Swords out! brawling in my very presence! blood drawn!" for Dick's hand was bleeding a good deal.

Prince Charles, as briefly as possible, explained the unusual nature of the circumstances.

"A king must hear both sides," said King James. "What reply have you, sir, to make to his Royal Highness's statements?"

"The carpet would not work, sir," said Dick. "It never happened before. Had I used my own sword," and he explained its properties, "the Prince of Wales would not be alive to tell his story. I can say no more, beyond offering my apology for a disappointment which I could not have foreseen. A gentleman can only say that he is sorry. But wait!" he added; "I can at least prove that my confidence in some of my resources is not misplaced. Bid me bring you something — anything — from the ends of the earth, and it shall be in your hands. I can't say fairer."

King James reflected, while Prince Ricardo was pulling on the Seven-league Boots, which he had kicked off to fight more freely, and while the Duke of York bandaged Dick's hand with a kerchief.

"Bring me," said his Majesty, "Lord Lovat's snuff-mull."

"Where does he live?" said Dick.

"At Gortuleg, in Scotland," answered King James.

Dick was out of sight before the words were fairly spoken, and in ten minutes was back, bearing a large ram's-horn snuff-box, with a big cairngorm set in the top, and the Frazer arms.

"Most astonishing!" said King James.

"A miracle!" said the Duke of York.

"You have entirely cleared your character," said the king. "Your honour is without a stain, though it is a pity about the carpet. Your nobility in not using your magical sword, under the greatest provocation, reconciles me to this fresh blighting of my hopes. All my allies fail me," said the poor king with a sigh; "you alone have failed with honour. Carluccio, embrace the prince!"

They fell into each other's arms.

"Prince," said Dick, "you have taught me a lesson for which I shall not be ungrateful. With any blade a gentleman should be able to hold his own in fair fight. I shall no longer neglect my fencing lessons."

"With any blade," said Prince Charles, "I shall be happy to find Prince Ricardo by my side in a stricken field. We shall not part till I have induced you to accept a sword which I can never hope to draw against another adversary so noble. In war, my weapon is the claymore."

Here the prince offered to Ricardo the ruby-studded hilt of his rapier, which had a beautiful white shark-skin sheath.

"You must accept it, sir," said King James; "the hilt holds the rubies of John Sobieski."

"Thank you, prince," said Ricardo, "for the weapon, which I shall learn to wield; and I entreat you to honour me by receiving this fairy gift — which *you* do not need — a ring which makes all men faithful to the wearer."

The Prince of Wales bowed, and placed the talisman on his finger.

Ricardo then, after a few words of courtesy on both parts, picked up his useless carpet, took his farewell of the royal party, and, with Jaqueline still hidden under his collar, returned at full speed, but with a heavy heart, to Pantouflia, where the palace gong was just sounding for luncheon.

Ricardo never interfered in foreign affairs again, but his ring proved very useful to Prince Charles, as you may have read in history.

CHAPTER VI.

Ricardo’s Repentance.

The queen, as it happened fortunately, was lunching with one of the ladies of her Court. Ricardo did not come down to luncheon, and Jaqueline ate hers alone; and very mournful she felt. The prince had certainly not come well out of the adventure. He had failed (as all attempts to restore the Stuarts always did); he had been wounded, though he had never received a scratch in any of his earlier exploits; and if his honour was safe, and his good intentions fully understood, that was chiefly due to Jaqueline, and to the generosity of King James and Prince Charles.

“I wonder what he’s doing?” she said to herself, and at last she went up and knocked at Ricardo’s door.

“Go away,” he said; “I don’t want to see anybody. Who is it?”

“It’s only me — Jaqueline.”

“Go away! I want nobody.”

“Do let me in, dear Dick; I have good news for you,” said the princess.

“What is it?” said Ricardo, unlocking the door. “Why do you bother a fellow so?”

He had been crying — his hand obviously hurt him badly; he looked, and indeed he was, very sulky.

“How did you get on in England, Dick?” asked the princess, taking no notice of his bandaged hand.

“Oh, don’t ask me!” said Ricardo. “I’ve not been to England at all.”

“Why, what happened?”

“Everything that is horrid happened,” said Dick; and then, unable to keep it any longer to himself, he said: “I’ve failed to keep my promise; I’ve been insulted, I’ve been beaten by a fellow younger than myself; and, oh! how my hand does hurt, and I’ve got such a headache! And what am I to say to my mother when she asks why my arm is in a sling? and what will my father say? I’m quite broken down and desperate. I think I’ll run away to sea;” and indeed he looked very wild and miserable.

“Tell me how it all happened, Dick,” said the princess; “I’m sure it’s not so bad as you make out. Perhaps I can help you.”

“How can a girl help a man?” cried Dick, angrily; and poor Jaqueline, remembering how she *had* helped him, at the risk of her own life, when King James nearly crushed her in the shape of a mosquito, turned her head away, and cried silently.

"I'm a beast," said Dick. "I beg your pardon, Jack dear. You are always a trump, I will say; but I don't see what you can do."

Then he told her all the story (which, of course, she knew perfectly well already), except the part played by the mosquito, of which he could not be aware.

"I was sure it was not so bad as you made it out, Dick," she said. "You see, the old king, who is not very wise, but is a perfectly honourable gentleman, gave you the highest praise." She thought of lecturing him a little about disobeying his father, but it did not seem a good opportunity. Besides, Jaqueline had been lectured herself lately, and had not enjoyed it.

"What am I to say to my mother?" Dick repeated.

"We must think of something to say," said Jaqueline.

"I can't tell my mother anything but the truth," Ricardo went on. "Here's my hand, how it does sting! and she must find out."

"I think I can cure it," said Jaqueline. "Didn't you say Prince Charles gave you his own sword?"

"Yes, there it is; but what has that to do with it?"

"Everything in the world to do with it, my dear Dick. How lucky it is that he gave it to you!"

And she ran to her own room, and brought a beautiful golden casket, which contained her medicines.

Taking out a small phial, marked (in letters of emerald):

"Weapon Salve,"

the princess drew the bright sword, extracted a little of the ointment from the phial, and spread it on a soft silk handkerchief.

"What are you going to do with the sword?" asked Ricardo.

"Polish it a little," said Jaqueline, smiling, and she began gently to rub, with the salve, the point of the rapier.

As she did so, Ricardo's arm ceased to hurt, and the look of pain passed from his mouth.

"Why, I feel quite better!" he said. "I can use my hand as well as ever."

Then he took off the stained handkerchief, and, lo, there was not even a mark where the wound had been! For this was the famous Weapon Salve which you may read about in Sir Kenelm Digby, and which the Lady of Branxholme used, in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. But the secret of making it has long been lost, except in Pantouflia.

“You are the best girl in the world, Jaqueline,” said Ricardo. “You may give me a kiss if you like; and I won’t call you ‘Jack,’ or laugh at you for reading books, any more. There’s something in books after all.”

The princess did not take advantage of Dick’s permission, but advised him to lie down and try to sleep.

“I say, though,” he said, “what about my father?”

“The king need never be told anything about it,” said Jaqueline, “need he?”

“Oh, that won’t do! I tell my father everything; but then, I never had anything like this to tell him before. Don’t you think, Jaqueline, you might break it to him? He’s very fond of you. Just tell him what I told you; it’s every word of it true, and he ought to know. He might see something about it in the *Mercure de France*.”

This was the newspaper of the period.

“I don’t think it will get into the papers,” said Jaqueline, smiling. “Nobody could tell, except the king and the princes, and they have reasons for keeping it to themselves.”

“I don’t trust that younger one,” said Dick, moodily; “I don’t care for that young man. Anyway, my father *must* be told; and, if you won’t, I must.”

“Well, I’ll tell him,” said Jaqueline. “And now lie down till evening.”

After dinner, in the conservatory, Jaqueline told King Prigio all about it.

His Majesty was very much moved.

“What extraordinary bad luck that family has!” he thought. “If I had not changed the rug, the merest accident, Prince Charles would have dined at St. James’s to-night, and King George in Hanover. It was the very nearest thing!”

“This meddling with practical affairs will never do,” he said aloud.

“Dick has had a lesson, sire,” said the princess. “He says he’ll never mix himself up with politics again, whatever happens. And he says he means to study all about them, for he feels frightfully ignorant, and, above all, he means to practise his fencing.”

These remarks were not part of the conversation between Ricardo and Jaqueline, but she considered that Dick *meant* all this, and, really, he did.

“That is well, as far as it goes,” said the king. “But, Jaqueline, about that mosquito?” for she had told him this part of the adventure. “That was a very convenient mosquito, though I don’t know how Dick was able to observe it from any distance. I see *your* hand in that, my dear, and I am glad you can make such kind and wise use of the lessons of the good Fairy Paribanou. Jaqueline,” he added solemnly, laying his hand on her head, “You have saved the honour of Pantouflia, which is dearer to me than life. Without your help, I tremble to think what might have occurred.”

The princess blushed very much, and felt very happy.

"Now run away to the queen, my dear," said his Majesty, "I want to think things over."

He did think them over, and the more he thought the more he felt the inconvenience attending the possession of fairy things.

"An eclipse one day, as nearly as possible a revolution soon after!" he said to himself. "But for Jaqueline, Ricardo's conduct would have been blazed abroad, England would have been irritated. It is true she cannot get at Pantouflia very easily; we have no sea-coast, and we are surrounded by friendly countries. But it would have been a ticklish and discreditable position. I must really speak to Dick," which he did next morning after breakfast.

"You have broken my rules, Ricardo," he said. "True, there is no great harm done, and you have confessed frankly; but how am I to trust you any longer?"

"I'll give you my sacred word of honour, father, that I'll never meddle with politics again, or start on an expedition, without telling you. I have had enough of it. And I'll turn over a new leaf. I've learned to be ashamed of my ignorance; and I've sent for Francalanza, and I'll fence every day, and read like anything."

"Very good," said the king. "I believe you mean what you say. Now go to your fencing lesson."

"But, I say, father," cried Ricardo, "was it not strange about the magic carpet?"

"I told you not to trust to these things," said the king. "Some enchanter may have deprived it of its power, it may be worn out, someone may have substituted a common Persian rug; anything may happen. You *must* learn to depend on yourself. Now, be off with you, I'm busy. And remember, you don't stir without my permission."

The prince ran off, and presently the sounds of stamping feet and "*un*, *deux*; *doublez*, *dégagez*, *vite*; *contre de carte*," and so forth, might be heard over a great part of the royal establishment.

CHAPTER VII.

Prince Ricardo and an Old Enemy.

“There is one brute I wish I could get upsides with,” said Ricardo, at breakfast one morning, his mouth full of sardine.

“Really, Ricardo, your language is most unprincely,” said his august father; “I am always noticing it. You mean, I suppose, that there is one enemy of the human race whom you wish to abolish. What is the name of the doomed foe?”

“Well, he is the greatest villain in history,” said Ricardo. “You must have read about him, sir, the Yellow Dwarf.”

“Yes, I have certainly studied what is told us about him,” said the king. “He is no favourite of mine.”

“He is the only one, if you notice, sir, of all the scoundrels about whom our ancestors inform us, who escaped the doom which he richly merited at the sword of a good knight.”

You may here remark that, since Dick took to his studies, he could speak, when he chose, like a printed book, which was by no means the case before.

“If you remember, sir, he polished off — I mean, he slew — the King of the Golden Mines and the beautiful, though frivolous, Princess Frutilla. All that the friendly Mermaid could do for them was to turn them into a pair of beautiful trees which intertwine their branches. Not much use in *that*, sir! And nothing was done to the scoundrel. He may be going on still; and, with your leave, I’ll go and try a sword-thrust with him. Francalanza says I’m improving uncommon.”

“You’ll take the usual Sword of Sharpness,” said his Majesty.

“What, sir, to a dwarf? Not I, indeed: a common small sword is good enough to settle *him*.”

“They say he is very cunning of fence,” said the king; “and besides, I have heard something of a diamond sword that he stole from the King of the Golden Mines.”

“Very likely he has lost it or sold it, the shabby little miscreant; however, I’ll risk it. And now I must make my preparations.”

The king did not ask what they were; as a rule, they were simple. But, being in the shop of the optician that day, standing with his back to the door, he heard Dick come in and order a pair of rose-coloured spectacles, with which he was at once provided. The people of Pantouflia were accustomed to wear them, saying that they improved the complexions of ladies whom they met, and added cheerfulness to things in general.

"Just plain rose-coloured glass, Herr Spex," said Dick, "I'm not short-sighted."

"The boy is beginning to show some sense," said the king to himself, knowing the nature and the difficulties of the expedition.

Ricardo did not disguise his intention of taking with him a Dandie Dinmont terrier, named Pepper, and the king, who understood the motive of this precaution, silently approved.

"The lad has come to some purpose and forethought," the king said, and he gladly advanced a considerable sum for the purchase of crocodiles' eggs, which can rarely be got quite fresh. When Jaqueline had made the crocodiles' eggs, with millet-seed and sugar-candy, into a cake for the Dwarf's lions, Ricardo announced that his preparations were complete.

Not to be the mere slave of custom, he made this expedition on horseback, and the only magical thing he took with him was the Cap of Darkness (the one which would not work, but he did not know that), and this he put in his pocket for future use. With plenty of egg sandwiches and marmalade sandwiches, and cold minced-collop sandwiches, he *pricked forth* into the wilderness, making for the country inhabited by the Yellow Dwarf. The princess was glad he was riding, for she privately accompanied him in the disguise of a wasp; and a wasp, of course, could not have kept up with him in his Seven-league Boots.

"Hang that wops!" said Prince Ricardo several times, buffeting it with his pocket-handkerchief when it buzzed in his ear and round his horse's head.

Meanwhile, King Prigio had taken his precautions, which were perfectly simple. When he thought Ricardo was getting near the place, the king put on his Wishing Cap, sat down before the magic crystal ball, and kept his eye on the proceedings, being ready to wish the right thing to help Ricardo at the right moment. He left the window wide open, smoked his cigar, and seemed the pattern of a good and wise father watching the conduct of a promising son.

The prince rode and rode, sometimes taking up Pepper on his saddle; passing through forests, sleeping at lonely inns, fording rivers, till one day he saw that the air was becoming Yellow. He knew that this showed the neighbourhood of Jaunia, or Daunia, the country of the Yellow Dwarf. He therefore drew bridle, placed his rose-coloured spectacles on his nose and put spurs to his horse, for the yellow light of Jaunia makes people melancholy and cowardly. As he pricked on, his horse stumbled and nearly came on its nose. The prince noticed that a steel chain had been drawn across the road.

“What caitiff has dared!” he exclaimed, when his hat was knocked off by a well-aimed orange from a neighbouring orange-tree, and a vulgar voice squeaked:

“Hi, Blinkers!”

There was the Yellow Dwarf, an odious little figure, sitting sucking an orange in the tree, swinging his wooden shoes, and grinning all over his wrinkled face.

“Well, young Blinkers!” said the Dwarf, “what are you doing on my grounds? You’re a prince, by your look. Yah! down with kings! I’m a man of the people!”

“You’re a dwarf of the worst description, that’s what *you* are,” said Ricardo; “and let me catch you, and I’ll flog the life out of you with my riding-whip!”

The very face of the Dwarf, even seen through rose-coloured spectacles, made him nearly ill.

“Yes, when you can catch me,” said the Dwarf; “but that’s not to-day, nor yet to-morrow. What are you doing here? Are you an ambassador, maybe come to propose a match for me? I’m not proud, I’ll hear you. They say there’s a rather well-looking wench in your parts, the Princess Jaqueline—”

“Mention that lady’s name, you villain,” cried Dick, “and I’ll cut down your orange-tree!” and he wished he had brought the Sword of Sharpness, for you cannot prod down a tree with the point of a rapier.

“Fancy her yourself?” said the Dwarf, showing his yellow teeth with a detestable grin; while Ricardo turned quite white with anger, and not knowing how to deal with this insufferable little monster.

“I’m a widower, I am,” said the Dwarf, “though I’m out of mourning,” for he wore a dirty clay-coloured Yellow jacket. “My illustrious consort, the Princess Frutilla, did not behave very nice, and I had to avenge my honour; in fact, I’m open to any offers, however humble. Going at an alarming sacrifice! Come to my box” (and he pointed to a filthy clay cottage, all surrounded by thistles, nettles, and black boggy water), “and I’ll talk over your proposals.”

“Hold your impudent tongue!” said Dick. “The Princess Frutilla was an injured saint; and as for the lady whom I shall not name in your polluting presence, I am her knight, and I defy you to deadly combat!”

We may imagine how glad the princess was when (disguised as a wasp) she heard Dick say he was her knight; not that, in fact, he had thought of it before.

“Oh! you’re for a fight, are you?” sneered the Dwarf. “I might tell you to hit one of your own weight, but I’m not afraid of six of you. Yah! mammy’s brat! Look here, young Blinkers, I don’t want to hurt you. Just turn old Dobbin’s head, and trot back to your mammy, Queen Rosalind, at Pantouflia. Does she know you’re out?”

"I'll be into *you*, pretty quick," said Ricardo. "But why do I bandy words with a miserable peasant?"

"And don't get much the best of them either," said the Dwarf, provokingly. "But I'll fight, if you will have it."

The prince leaped from his horse, leaving Pepper on the saddle-bow.

No sooner had he touched the ground than the Dwarf shouted:

"Hi! to him, Billy! to him, Daniel! at him, good lions, at him!" and, with an awful roar, two lions rushed from a neighbouring potato-patch and made for Ricardo. These were not ordinary lions, history avers, each having two heads, each being eight feet high, with four rows of teeth; their skins as hard as nails, and bright red, like morocco.

The prince did not lose his presence of mind; hastily he threw the cake of crocodiles' eggs, millet-seed, and sugar-candy to the lions. This is a dainty which lions can never resist, and running greedily at it, with four tremendous snaps, they got hold of each other by their jaws, and their eight rows of teeth were locked fast in a grim and deadly *struggle for existence*!

The Dwarf took in the affair at a glance.

"Cursed be he who taught you this!" he cried, and then whistled in a shrill and vulgar manner on his very dirty fingers. At his call rushed up an enormous Spanish cat, ready saddled and bridled, and darting fire from its eyes. To leap on its back, while Ricardo sprang on his own steed, was to the active Dwarf the work of a moment. Then clapping spurs to its sides (his spurs grew naturally on his bare heels, horrible to relate, like a cock's spurs) and taking his cat by the head, the Dwarf forced it to leap on to Ricardo's saddle. The diamond sword which slew the king of the Golden Mines — that invincible sword which hews iron like a reed — was up and flashing in the air!

At this very moment King Prigio, seeing, in the magic globe, all that passed, and despairing of Ricardo's life, was just about to wish the dwarf at Jericho, when through the open window, with a tremendous whirr, came a huge vulture, and knocked the king's wishing cap off! Wishing was now of no use.

This odious fowl was the Fairy of the Desert, the Dwarf's trusted ally in every sort of mischief. The vulture flew instantly out of the window; and ah! with what awful anxiety the king again turned his eyes on the crystal ball only a parent's heart can know. Should he see Ricardo bleeding at the feet of the abominable dwarf? The king scarcely dared to look; never before had he known the nature of fear. However, look he did, and saw the dwarf un-catted, and Pepper, the gallant Dandie Dinmont, with his teeth in the throat of the monstrous Spanish cat.

No sooner had he seen the cat leap on his master's saddle-bow than Pepper, true to the instinct of his race, sprang at its neck, just behind the head — the usual place, — and, with an awful and despairing mew, the cat (Peter was its name) gave up its life.

The dwarf was on his feet in a moment, waving the diamond sword, which lighted up the whole scene, and yelling taunts. Pepper was flying at his heels, and, with great agility, was keeping out of the way of the invincible blade.

"Ah!" screamed the Dwarf as Pepper got him by the ankle. "Call off your dog, you coward, and come down off your horse, and fight fair!"

At this moment, *bleeding yellow blood*, dusty, mad with pain, the dwarf was a sight to strike terror into the boldest.

Dick sprang from his saddle, but so terrific was the appearance of his adversary, and so dazzling was the sheen of the diamond sword, that he put his hand in his pocket, drew out, as he supposed, the sham Cap of Darkness, and placed it on his head.

"Yah! who's your hatter?" screamed the infuriated dwarf. "*I* see you!" and he disengaged, feinted in carte, and made a lunge in seconde at Dick which no mortal blade could have parried. The prince (thanks to his excellent training) just succeeded in stepping aside, but the dwarf recovered with astonishing quickness.

"Coward, *lâche*, poltroon, runaway!" he hissed through his clenched teeth, and was about to make a thrust in tierce which must infallibly have been fatal, when the Princess Jaqueline, in her shape as a wasp, stung him fiercely on the wrist.

With an oath so awful that we dare not set it down, the dwarf dropped the diamond sword, sucked his injured limb, and began hopping about with pain.

In a moment Prince Ricardo's foot was on the blade of the diamond sword, which he passed thrice through the body of the Yellow Dwarf. Squirming fearfully, the little monster expired, his last look a defiance, his latest word an insult:

"Yah! Gig-lamps!"

Prince Ricardo wiped the diamond blade clean from its yellow stains.

"Princess Frutilla is avenged!" he cried. Then pensively looking at his fallen foe, "Peace to his ashes," he said; "he died in harness!"

Turning at the word, he observed that the two lions were stiff and dead, locked in each other's gory jaws!

At that moment King Prigio, looking in the crystal ball, gave a great sigh of relief.

"All's well that ends well," he said, lighting a fresh cigar, for he had allowed the other to go out in his excitement, "but it was a fight! I am not satisfied," his Majesty went on reflecting, "with this plan of changing the magical articles. The first time was of no great importance, and I could not know that the boy would start on an expedition without giving me warning. But, in to-day's affair he owes his safety entirely to himself and Pepper," for he had not seen the wasp. "The Fairy of the Desert quite baffled me: it was terrible. I shall restore the right fairy things to-night. As to the Fairy of the Desert," he said, forgetting that his Wishing Cap was on, "I wish she were dead!"

A hollow groan and the sound of a heavy body falling interrupted the king. He looked all about the room, but saw nothing. He was alone!

"She must have been in the room, invisible," said the king; and, of course, she has died in that condition. "But I must find her body!"

The king groped about everywhere, like a blind man, and at last discovered the dead body of the wicked fairy lying on the sofa. He could not see it, of course, but he felt it with his hands.

"This is very awkward," he remarked. "I cannot ring for the servants and make them take her away. There is only one plan."

So he wished she were in her family pyramid, in the Egyptian desert, and in a second the sofa was unoccupied.

"A very dangerous and revengeful enemy is now removed from Ricardo's path in life," said his Majesty, and went to dress for dinner.

Meanwhile Ricardo was riding gaily home. The yellow light of Jaunia had vanished, and pure blue sky broke overhead as soon as the dauntless Dwarf had drawn his latest breath. The poor, trembling people of the country came out of their huts and accompanied Dick, cheering, and throwing roses which had been yellow roses, but blushed red as soon as the Dwarf expired. They attended him to the frontiers of Pantouflia, singing his praises, which Ricardo had the new and inestimable pleasure of knowing to be deserved.

"It was sharp work," he said to himself, "but much more exciting and glorious than the usual business."

On his return Dick did not fail to mention the wasp, and again the king felt how great was his debt to Jaqueline. But they did not think it well to trouble the good queen with the dangers Dick had encountered.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Giant who does not know when he has had Enough.

One morning the post brought a truly enormous letter for Dick. It was as broad as a table-cloth, and the address was written in letters as long as a hoop-stick. "I seem to know that hand," said Ricardo; "but I thought the fingers which held the pen had long been cold in death."

He opened, with his sword, the enormous letter, which was couched in the following terms:

"The Giant as does not know when he has had *enuf,* presents his compliments to Prince Ricardo; and I, having recovered from the effects of our little recent *rally,* will be happy to meet you in the old place for a return-match. I not being handy with the pen, the Giant hopes you will excuse mistakes and bad writing."

Dick simply gazed with amazement.

"If ever I thought an enemy was killed and done for, it was that Giant," said he. "Why, I made mere mince-collops of him!"

However, he could not refuse a challenge, not to speak of his duty to rid the world of so greedy and odious a tyrant. Dick, therefore, took the usual things (which the king had secretly restored), but first he tried them — putting on the Cap of Darkness before the glass, in which he could not see himself. On second thoughts, he considered it unfair to take the cap. All the other articles were in working order. Jaqueline on this occasion followed him in the disguise of a crow, flying overhead.

On reaching the cavern — a huge tunnel in the rock — where the Giant lived, Ricardo blew a blast on the horn which hung outside, and in obedience to a written notice, knocked also with a mace provided by the Giant for that purpose. Presently he heard heavy footsteps sounding along the cavern, and the Giant came out. He was above the common height for giants, and his whole face and body were seamed over with little red lines, crossing each other like tartan. These were marks of encounters, in which he had been cut to bits and come together again; for this was his peculiarity, which made him so dangerous. If you cut off his head, he went on just as before, only without it; and so about everything else. By dint of magic, he could put his head on again, just as if it had been his hat, if you gave him time enough. On the last occasion of their meeting, Ricardo had left him in a painfully scattered condition, and thought he was done for. But now, except that a bird had flown away with the little finger of his left hand and one of his ears, the Giant was as comfortable as anyone could be in his situation.

"Mornin' sir," he said to Dick, touching his forehead with his hand. "Glad to see you looking so well. No bad feeling, I hope, on either side?"

"None on mine, certainly," said Ricardo, holding out his hand, which the Giant took and shook; "but Duty is Duty, and giants must go. The modern world has no room for them."

"That's hearty," said the Giant; "I like a fellow of your kind. Now, shall we toss for corners?"

"All right!" said Dick, calling "Heads" and winning. He took the corner with the sun on his back and in the Giant's face. To it they went, the Giant aiming a blow with his club that would have felled an elephant.

Dick dodged, and cut off the Giant's feet at the ankles.

"First blood for the prince!" said the Giant, coming up smiling. "Half-minute time!"

He occupied the half-minute in placing the feet neatly beside each other, as if they had been a pair of boots.

Round II. — The Giant sparring for wind, Ricardo cuts him in two at the waist.

The Giant folded his legs up neatly, like a pair of trousers, and laid them down on a rock. He had now some difficulty in getting rapidly over the ground, and stood mainly on the defensive, and on his waist.

Round III. — Dick bisects the Giant. Both sides now attack him on either hand, and the feet kick him severely.

"No kicking!" said Dick.

"Nonsense; all fair in war!" said the Giant.

But do not let us pursue this sanguinary encounter in all its *horrible details*.

Let us also remember — otherwise the scene would be too painful for an elegant mind to contemplate with entertainment — that the Giant was in excellent training, and thought no more of a few wounds than you do of a crack on the leg from a cricket-ball. He well deserved the title given him by the Fancy, of "The Giant who does not Know when he has had Enough."

*

The contest was over; Dick was resting on a rock. The lists were strewn with interesting but imperfect fragments of the Giant, when a set of double teeth of enormous size flew up out of the ground and caught Ricardo by the throat! In vain he strove to separate the teeth, when the crow, stooping from the heavens, became the Princess Jaqueline, and changed Dick into a wren — a tiny bird, so small that he easily flew out of the jaws of the Giant and winged his way to a tree, whence he watched the scene.

But the poor Princess Jaqueline!

To perform the feat of changing Dick into a bird she had, of course, according to all the laws of magic, to resume her own natural form!

There she stood, a beautiful, trembling maiden, her hands crossed on her bosom, entirely at the mercy of the Giant!

No sooner had Dick escaped than the monster began to *collect himself*; and before Jaqueline could muster strength to run away or summon to her aid the lessons of the Fairy Paribanou, the Giant who never Knew when he had Enough was himself again. A boy might have climbed up a tree (for giants are no tree-climbers, any more than the grizzly bear), but Jaqueline could not climb. She merely stood, pale and trembling. She had saved Dick, but at an enormous sacrifice, for the sword and the Seven-league Boots were lying on the trampled grass. He had not brought the Cap of Darkness, and, in the shape of a wren, of course he could not carry away the other articles. Dick was rescued, that was all, and the Princess Jaqueline had sacrificed herself to her love for him.

The Giant picked himself up and pulled himself together, as we said, and then approached Jaqueline in a very civil way, for a person of his breeding, head in hand.

“Let me introduce myself,” he said, and mentioned his name and titles. “May I ask what *you* are doing here, and how you came?”

Poor Jaqueline threw herself at his feet, and murmured a short and not very intelligible account of herself.

“I don’t understand,” said the Giant, replacing his head on his shoulders. “What to do with you, I’m sure I don’t know. ‘*Please don’t eat me*,’ did you say? Why, what do you take me for? I’m not in that line at all; low, *I* call it!”

Jaqueline was somewhat comforted at these words, dropped out of the Giant’s lips from a considerable height.

“But they call you ‘The Giant who does not Know when he has had Enough,’” said Jaqueline.

“And proud of the title: not enough of fighting. Of *punishment* I am a glutton, or so my friends are pleased to say. A brace of oxen, a drove of sheep or two, are enough for me,” the Giant went on complacently, but forgetting to mention that the sheep and the oxen were the property of other people. “Where am I to put you till your friends come and pay your ransom?” the Giant asked again, and stared at Jaqueline in a perplexed way. “I can’t take you home with me, that is out of the question. I have a little woman of my own, and she's not very fond of other ladies; especially, she would like to poison them that have good looks."

Now Jaqueline saw that the Giant, big as he was, courageous too, was afraid of his wife!

"I'll tell you what I'll do; I'll hand you over to a neighbour of mine, who is a bachelor."

"A bachelor giant; would that be quite proper?" said Jaqueline, trying to humour him.

"He's not a giant, bless you; he's a queer fellow, it is not easy to say what he is. He's the Earthquaker, him as shakes the earth now and then, and brings the houses about people's ears."

Jaqueline fairly screamed at hearing this awful news.

"Hush! be quiet, do!" said the Giant. "You'll bring out my little woman, and she is not easy to satisfy with explanations when she finds me conversing with a lady unbeknown to her. The Earthquaker won't do you any harm; it's only for safe keeping I'll put you with him. Why, he don't waken, not once in fifty years. He's quite the dormouse. Turns on his bed now and then, and things upstairs get upset, more or less; but, as a rule, a child could play with him. Come on!"

Then, taking Jaqueline up on one hand, on which she sat as if on a chair, he crossed a few ranges of mountains in as many strides. In front was one tall blue hill, with a flattened peak, and as they drew near the princess felt a curious kind of wind coming round her and round her. You have heard of whirlpools in water; well, this was just like a whirlpool of air. Even the Giant himself could hardly keep his legs against it; then he tossed Jaqueline up, and the airy whirlpool seized her and carried her, as if on a tide of water, always round and round in narrowing circles, till she was sucked down into the hollow hill. Even as she went, she seemed to remember the hill, as if she had dreamed about it, and the shape and colour of the country. But presently she sank softly on to a couch, in a beautifully-lighted rocky hall. All around her the floor was of white and red marble, but on one side it seemed to end in black nothing.

Jaqueline, after a few moments, recovered her senses fully, and changing herself into an eagle, tried to fly up and out. But as soon as she was in the funnel, the whirlpool of air always sucking down and down, was too strong for her wings. She was a prisoner in this great gleaming hall, ending in black nothingness. So she resumed her usual form, and walking to the edge of the darkness, found that it was not empty air, but something black, soft, and strong — something living. It had no form or shape, or none that she could make out; but it pulsed with a heart. Jaqueline placed her foot on this curious thing, when a voice came, like thunder heard through a feather-bed:

"Not near time to get up yet!" and then there was a snore, and the great hall rocked like a ship at sea.

It was the Earthquaker!

The habits of this monstrous animal are very little known, as, of course, he never comes above ground, or at least very seldom, when he makes tracks like a dry river-bed across country. We are certain that there *are* Earthquakers, otherwise how can we account for earthquakes? But how to tackle an Earthquaker, how to get at him, and what to do with him when you have got at him, are questions which might puzzle even King Prigio.

It was not easy to have the better of an enchantress like Jaqueline and a prince like Ricardo. In no ordinary circumstances could they have been baffled and defeated; but now it must be admitted that they were in a very trying and alarming situation, especially the princess. The worst of it was, that as Jaqueline sat and thought and thought, she began to remember that she was back in her own country. The hills were those she used to see from her father's palace windows when she was a child. And she remembered with horror that once a year her people used to send a beautiful girl to the Earthquaker, by way of keeping him quiet, as you shall hear presently. And now she heard light footsteps and a sound of weeping, and lo! a great troop of pretty girls passed, sweeping in and out of the halls in a kind of procession, and looking unhappy and lost.

Jaqueline ran to them.

"Where am I? who are you?" she cried, in the language of her own country, which came back to her on a sudden.

"We are nurses of the Earthquaker," they said. "Our duty is to sing him asleep, and every year he must have a new song; and every year a new maiden must be sent down from earth, with a new sleepy song she has learned from the priests of Manoa, the City of the Sun. Are you the new singer?"

"No, I'm *not*," said Jaqueline. "I don't know the priests of Manoa; I don't know any new sleepy song. I only want to find the way out."

"There is no way, or we should have found it," said one of the maidens; "and, if you are the wrong girl, by the day after to-morrow they must send the right one, otherwise the Earthquaker will waken, and shake the world, and destroy Manoa, the City of the Sun." Then they all wept softly in the stillness. "Can we get anything to eat here?" asked poor Jaqueline, at last.

She was beginning to be very hungry, and however alarmed she might be, she felt that dinner would not be unwelcome. The tallest of the maidens clapped her hands, and immediately a long table was spread by unseen sprites with meringues and cold chicken, and several sorts of delicious ices.

We shall desert Jaqueline, who was rather less alarmed when she found that she was not to be starved, at all events, and return to Prince Ricardo, whom we left fluttering about as a little golden-crested wren. He followed the Giant and Jaqueline into the whirlpool of air as far as he dared, and when he saw her vanish down the cone of the hill, he flew straight back to Pantouflia.

CHAPTER IX.

Prigio has an Idea.

A weary and way-worn little bird was Prince Ricardo when he fluttered into the royal study window, in the palace of Pantouflia. The king was out at a council meeting; knowing that Ricardo had the right things, all in good order, he was not in the least anxious about him. The king was out, but Semiramis was in — Semiramis, the great grey cat, sitting on a big book on the top of the library steps. Now Semiramis was very fond of birds, and no sooner did Ricardo enter and flutter on to a table than Semiramis gathered herself together and made one fell spring at him. She just caught his tail feather. In all his adventures the prince had never been in greater danger. He escaped, but no more, and went flying round the ceiling, looking for a safe place. Finally he perched on a chandelier that hung from the roof. Here he was safe; and so weary was he, that he put his head under his wing and fell fast asleep. He was awakened by the return of the king, who threw himself on a sofa and exclaimed:

"Oh, that Prime Minister! his dulness is as heavy as lead; much heavier, in fact!"

Then his Majesty lit a cigar and took up a volume; he certainly was a sad bookworm.

Dick now began to fly about the room, brushing the king's face and trying to attract his notice.

"Poor little thing!" said his Majesty.

And Dick alighted, and nestled in his breast.

On seeing this, Semiramis began to growl, as cats do when they are angry, and slowly approached his Majesty.

"Get out, Semiramis!" said the king; and lifting her by the neck, he put her out of the room and shut the door, at which she remained scratching and mewing.

Dick now crept out of the royal waistcoat, flew to the king's ear, twittered, pointed out of the window with one claw, and, lying down on his back, pretended to be dead. Then he got up again, twittered afresh, pointed to the Wishing Cap, and, finally, convinced the king that this was no common fowl.

"An enchanted prince or princess," said Prigio, "such as I have often read of. Who can it be? Not Jaqueline; she could change herself back in a moment. By the way, where *is* Jaqueline?"

He rang the bell, and asked the servant to look for the princess.

Semiramis tried to come in, but was caught and shut up downstairs.

After doing this, the man replied that her Royal Highness had not been in the palace all day.

The king rushed to the crystal ball, looked all the world over; but no princess! He became very nervous, and at that moment Dick lighted on the crystal ball, and put his claw on the very hill where Jaqueline had disappeared. Then he cocked his little eye at the king.

“Nay, she is somewhere in the unknown centre of South America,” said his Majesty; “somewhere behind Mount Roraima, where nobody has ever been. I must look into this.”

Then he put on the Wishing Cap, and wished that the bird would assume his natural shape if he was under enchantment, as there seemed too good reason to believe.

Instantly Dick stood before him.

“Ricardo!” cried the king in horror; “and in this disguise! Where have you been? What have you done with Jaqueline? Where are the Seven-league Boots? Where is the Sword of Sharpness? Speak! Get up!” for Dick was kneeling and weeping bitterly at the royal feet.

“All lost!” said Dick. “Poor Jaqueline! she was the best girl, and the prettiest, and the kindest. And the Earthquaker’s got her, and the Giant’s got the other things,” Dick ended, crying bitterly.

“Calm yourself, Ricardo,” said his Majesty, very pale, but calm and determined. “Here, take a glass of port, and explain how all this happened.”

Dick drank the wine, and then he told his miserable story.

“You may well sob! Why didn’t you use the Cap of Darkness? Mere conceit! But there is no use in crying over spilt milk. The thing is, to rescue Jaqueline. And what are we to say to your mother?”

“That’s the worst of it all,” said Dick. “Mother will break her heart.”

“I must see her at once,” said the king, “and break it to her.”

This was a terrible task; but the queen had such just confidence in her Prigio that she soon dried her tears, remarking that Heaven would not desert Jaqueline, and that the king would find a way out of the trouble.

His Majesty retired to his study, put his head in his hands, and thought and thought.

“The thing is, of course,” he said, “to destroy the Earthquaker before he wakens; but how? What can kill such a monster? Prodding him with the sword would only stir him up and make him more vicious. And I know of no other beast we can set against him, as I did with the Fire-beast and the Ice-beast, when

I was young. Oh, for an idea!”

Then his mind, somehow, went back to the Council and the ponderous stupidity of the Prime Minister.

“Heavier than lead,” said the king. “By George! I have a plan. If I could get to the place where they keep the Stupidity, I could carry away enough of it to flatten out the Earthquaker.”

Then he remembered how, in an old Italian poem, he had read about all the strange lumber-room of odd things which is kept in the moon. That is the advantage of reading: *Knowledge is Power*; and you mostly get knowledge that is really worth having out of good old books which people do not usually read.

“If the Stupidity is kept in stock, up in the moon, and comes from there, falling naturally down on the earth in small quantities, I might obtain enough for my purpose,” thought King Prigio. “But — how to get to the moon? There are difficulties about that.”

But difficulties only sharpened the ingenuity of this admirable king.

“The other fellow had a Flying Horse,” said he.

By “the other fellow” King Prigio meant an Italian knight, Astolfo, who, in old times, visited the moon, and there found and brought back the common sense of his friend, Orlando, as you may read in the poem of Ariosto.

“Now,” reasoned King Prigio, “if there is a Flying Horse at all, he is in the stables of the King of Delhi. I must look into this.”

Taking the magic spy-glass, the king surveyed the world from China to Peru, and, sure enough, there was the famous Flying Horse in the king’s stable at Delhi. Hastily the king thrust his feet into the Shoes of Swiftness — so hastily, indeed, that, as the poet says, he “madly crammed a left-hand foot into a right-hand shoe.” But this, many people think, is a sign of good luck; so he put the shoes on the proper feet, and in a few minutes was in the presence of the Great Mogul.

The monarch received him with some surprise, but with stately kindness, and listened to Prigio while he explained what he wanted.

“I am only too happy to assist so adventurous a prince,” remarked the Great Mogul. “This is like old times! Every horse in my stable is at your service, but, as you say, only the Flying Horse is of any use to you in this expedition.”

He clapped his hands, the Grand Vizier appeared, and the king gave orders to have the Flying Horse saddled at once. He then presented King Prigio with a large diamond, and came down into the courtyard to see him mount.

“He’s very fresh,” said the groom who held the bridle; “has not been out of the stable for three hundred years!”

Prigio sprang into the saddle among the salaams of the dusky multitude, and all the ladies of the seraglio waved their scented handkerchiefs out of the windows.

The king, as he had been instructed, turned a knob of gold in the saddle of the Flying Horse, then kissed his hand to the ladies, and, giving the steed his head, cried, in excellent Persian:

"To the moon!"

Up flew the horse with an easy action, and the king's head nearly swam with the swiftness of the flight. Soon the earth below him was no bigger than a top, spinning on its own axis (see Geography books for this), and, as night fell, earth was only a great red moon.

Through the dark rode King Prigio, into the silver dawn of the moon. All now became clear and silvery; the coasts of the moon came into sight, with white seas breaking on them; and at last the king reached the silver walls, and the gate of opal. Before the gate stood two beautiful ladies. One was fair, with yellow locks, the colour of the harvest moon. She had a crown of a golden snake and white water-lilies, and her dress now shone white, now red, now golden; and in her hand was the golden pitcher that sheds the dew, and a golden wand. The other lady was as dark as night — dark eyes, dark hair; her crown was of poppies. She held the ebony Wand of Sleep. Her dress was of the deepest blue, sown with stars. The king knew that they were the maidens of the bright and the dark side of the moon — of the side you see, and of the side that no one has ever seen, except King Prigio. He stopped the Flying Horse by turning the other knob in the saddle, alighted, and bowed very low to each of the ladies.

"Daring mortal! what make you here?" they asked.

And then the king told them about Jaqueline and the Earthquaker, and how he needed a great weight of Stupidity to flatten him out with.

The ladies heard him in silence, and then they said:

"Follow us," and they flew lightly beside the Flying Horse till they had crossed all the bright side of the moon, above the silver palaces and silver seas, and reached the summit of the Mountains of the Moon which separate the bright from the dark side.

"Here I may go no further," said the bright lady; "and beyond, as you see, all is darkness and heavy sleep."

Then she touched Prigio with her golden wand with twisted serpents, and he became luminous, light raying out from him; and the dark lady, too, shone like silver in the night: and on they flew, over black rocks and black rivers, till they reached a huge mountain, like a mountain of coal, many thousand feet high, for its head was lost in the blackness of darkness. The dark Moon-Lady struck the rock with her ebony wand, and said, "Open!" and the cliffs opened like a door, and they were within the mountain.

"Here," said the dark lady, "is the storehouse of all the Stupidity; hence it descends in showers like Stardust on the earth whenever this mountain, which is a volcano, is in eruption. Only a little of the Stupidity reaches the earth, and that only in invisible dust; yet you know how weighty it is, even in that form."

"Indeed, madam," said the king, "no one knows it better than I do."

"Then make your choice of the best sort of Stupidity for your purpose," said the dark lady.

And in the light which flowed from their bodies King Prigio looked round at the various kinds of Solid Stupidity. There it all lay in masses — the Stupidity of bad Sermons, of ignorant reviewers, of bad poems, of bad speeches, of dreary novels, of foolish statesmen, of ignorant mobs, of fine ladies, of idle, naughty boys and girls; and the king examined them all, and all were very, very heavy. But when he came to the Stupidity of the Learned — of dull, blind writers on Shakspeare, and Homer, and the Bible — then King Prigio saw that he had found the sort he wanted, and that a very little of it would go a long way. He never could have got it on the saddle of the Flying Horse if the dark lady had not touched it with her ebony wand, and made it light to carry till it was wanted for his purpose. When he needed it for use, he was to utter a certain spell, which she taught him, and then the lump would recover its natural weight. So he easily put a great block on his saddle-bow, and he and the dark lady flew back till they reached the crest of the Mountains of the Moon. There she touched him with her ebony wand, and the silver light which the bright lady had shed on him died from his face and his body, and he became like other men.

"You see your way?" said the dark lady, pointing to the bright moon of earth, shining far off in the heavens.

Then he knelt down and thanked her, and she murmured strange words of blessing which he did not understand; but her face was grave and kind, and he thought of Queen Rosalind, his wife.

Then he jumped on the Flying Horse, galloped down and down, till he reached his palace gate; called for Ricardo, set him behind him on the saddle, and away they rode, above land and wide seas, till they saw the crest of the hollow hill, where Jaqueline was with the Earthquaker. Beyond it they marked the glittering spires and towers of Manoa, the City of the Sun; and "Thither," said King Prigio, who had been explaining how matters stood, to Ricardo, "we must ride, for I believe they stand in great need of our assistance."

"Had we not better go to Jaqueline first, sir?" said Ricardo.

"No," said the king; "I think mine is the best plan. Manoa, whose golden spires and pinnacles are shining below us, is the City of the Sun, which Sir

Walter Raleigh and the Spaniards could never find, so that men have doubted of its existence. We are needed there, to judge by that angry crowd in the marketplace. How they howl!”

CHAPTER X.

THE END

It was on a strange sight that the king and Ricardo looked down from the Flying Horse. Beneath them lay the City of Manoa, filling with its golden battlements and temples a hollow of the mountains. Here were palaces all carved over with faces of men and beasts, and with twisted patterns of serpents.

The city walls were built of huge square stones, and among the groves towered pyramids, on which the people did service to their gods. From every temple top came the roar of beaten drums, great drums of serpentskin.

But, in the centre of the chief square of the town, was gathered a wild crowd of men in shining copper armour and helmets of gold and glittering dresses of feathers. Among them ran about priests with hideous masks, crying them on to besiege and break down the royal palace. From the battlements of the palace the king's guardsmen were firing arrows and throwing spears. The mob shot arrows back, some of them tipped with lighted straw, to burn the palace down.

But, in the very centre of the square, was a clear space of ground, on which fell the shadow of a tall column of red stone, all carved with serpents and faces of gods. Beside it stood a figure horrible to see: a man clothed in serpent skins, whose face was the grinning face of a skull; but the skull was shining black and red in patches, and a long white beard flowed from beneath it. This man, mounted on a kind of altar of red stone, waved his hand and yelled, and seemed to point to the shadow of the column which fell across the square.

The people were so furious and so eager that they did not, at first, notice King Prigio as he slowly descended. But at last the eyes within the skull looked up and saw him, and then the man gave a great cry, rent his glittering dress of serpentskin, and held up his hands.

Then all the multitude looked up, and seeing the Flying Horse, let their weapons fall; and the man of the skull tore it from his face, and knelt before King Prigio, with his head in the dust.

"Thou hast come, oh, Pachacamac, as is foretold in the prophecy of the Cord of the Venerable Knots! Thou hast come, but behold the shadow of the stone! Thou art too late, oh Lord of the Earth and the Sea!"

Then he pointed to the shadow, which, naturally, was growing shorter, as the sun drew near mid-day.

He spoke in the language of the ancient Incas of Peru, which of course Prigio knew very well; and he also knew that Pachacamac was the god of that people.

"I have come," Prigio said, with presence of mind, "as it has been prophesied of old."

"Riding on a beast that flies," said the old priest, "even as the oracle declared. Glory to Pachacamac, even though we die to-day!"

"In what can I help my people?" said Prigio.

"Thou knowest; why should we instruct thee? Thou knowest that on midsummer-day, every year, before the shadow shrinks back to the base of the *huaca* of Manoa, we must offer a maiden to lull the Earthquaker with a new song. Lo, now the shadow shrinks to the foot of the *huaca*, and the maid is not offered! For the lot fell on the daughter of thy servant the Inca, and he refuses to give her up. One daughter of his, he says, has been sacrificed to the sacred birds, the *Cunturs*: the birds were found slain on the hill-top, no man knows how; but the maiden vanished."

"Why, it must have been Jaqueline. I killed the birds," said Ricardo, in Pantouflian.

"Silence, not a word!" said the king, sternly.

"And what makes you bear arms against the Inca?" he asked the old man.

"We would slay him and her," answered the priest; "for, when the shadow shrinks to the foot of the stone, the sun will shine straight down into the hollow hill of the Earthquaker, and he will waken and destroy Manoa and the Temples of the Sun."

"Then wherefore would you slay them, when you must all perish?"

"The people, oh Pachacamac, would have revenge before they die."

"Oh, folly of men!" said the king, solemnly; then he cried: "Lead me to the Inca; this day you shall not perish. Is it not predicted in the Cord of the Venerable Knots that I shall slay this monster?"

"Hasten, oh Pachacamac, for the shadow shortens!" said the priest.

"Lead me to the Inca," answered Prigio.

At this the people arose with a great shout, for they, too, had been kneeling; and, sending a flag of truce before King Prigio, the priest led him into the palace. The ground was strewn with bodies of the slain, and through them Prigio rode slowly into the courtyard, where the Inca was sitting in the dust, weeping and throwing ashes on his long hair and his golden raiment. The king bade the priest remain without the palace gates; then dismounted, and, advancing to the Inca, raised him and embraced him.

"I come, a king to a king," he said. "My cousin, take courage; your sorrows are ended. If I do not slay the Earthquaker, sacrifice me to your gods."

"The Prophecy is fulfilled," said the Inca, and wept for joy. "Yet thou must hasten, for it draws near to noon."

Then Prigio went up to the golden battlements, and saying no word, waved his hand. In a moment the square was empty, for the people rushed to give thanks in the temples.

"Wait my coming, my cousin," said Prigio to the Inca; "I shall bring you back the daughter that was lost, when I have slain your enemy."

The Inca would have knelt at his feet; but the king raised him, and bade him prepare such a feast as had never been seen in Manoa.

"The lost are found to-day," he said; "be you ready to welcome them."

Then, mounting the Flying Horse, with Dick beside him, he rose towards the peak of the hill where the Earthquaker had his home. Already the ground was beginning to tremble; the Earthquaker was stirring in his sleep, for the maiden of the new song had not been sent to him, and the year ended at noon, and then he would rise and ruin Manoa.

The sun was approaching mid-day, and Prigio put spurs to the Flying Horse. Ten minutes more, and the sun would look straight down the crater of the hollow hill, and the Earthquaker would arouse himself when the light and the heat fell on his body.

Already the light of the sun shone slanting half-way down the hollow cone as the whirlpool of air caught the Flying Horse, and drew him swiftly down and down to the shadowy halls. There knelt and wept the nurses of the Earthquaker on the marble floor; but Jaqueline stood a little apart, very pale, but not weeping.

Ricardo had leaped off before the horse touched the ground, and rushed to Jaqueline, and embraced her in his arms; and, oh! how glad she was to see him, so that she quite forgot her danger and laughed for joy.

"Oh! you have come, you have come; I knew you would come!" she cried.

Then King Prigio advanced, the mighty weight in his hand, to the verge of the dreadful gulf of the Earthquaker. The dim walls grew radiant; a long slant arm of yellow light touched the black body of the Earthquaker, and a thrill went through him, and shook the world, so that, far away, the bells rang in Pantouflia. A moment more, and he would waken in his strength; and once awake, he would shatter the city walls and ruin Manoa. Even now a great mass of rock fell from the roof deep down in the secret caves, and broke into flying fragments, and all the echoes roared and rang.

King Prigio stood with the mighty mass poised in his hands.

"Die!" he cried; and he uttered the words of power, the magic spell that the dark Moon Lady had taught him.

Then all its invincible natural weight came into the mass which the king held, and down it shot full on the body of the Earthquaker; and where that had been was nothing but a vast abyss, silent, empty, and blank, and bottomless.

Far, far below, thousands of miles below, in the very centre of the earth, lay the dead Earthquaker, crushed flat as a sheet of paper, and the sun of midsummer-day shone straight down on the dreadful chasm, and could not waken him any more for ever.

The king drew a long breath.

"Stupidity has saved the world," he said; and, with only strength to draw back one step from the abyss, he fell down, hiding his face in his hands.

But Jaqueline's arms were round his neck, and the maidens brought him water from an ice-cold spring; and soon King Prigio was himself again, and ready for anything. But afterwards he used to say that the moment when the Earthquaker stirred was the most dreadful in his life.

Now, in Manoa, where all the firm foundations of the city had trembled once, when the sun just touched the Earthquaker, the people, seeing that the shadow of the sacred column had crept to its foot, and yet Manoa stood firm again, and the Temple of the Sun was not overthrown, raised such a cry that it echoed even through the halls within the hollow hill.

Who shall describe the joy of the maidens, and how often Jaqueline and Ricardo kissed each other?

"You have saved me!" she cried to the king, throwing her arms round him again. "You have saved Manoa!"

"And *you* have saved the Hope of Pantouflia, not once or twice," said his Majesty, grandly.

And he told Dick how much he had owed to Jaqueline, in the fight with the Yellow Dwarf, and the fight with the Giant, for he did not think it necessary to mention the affair at Rome.

Then Dick kissed Jaqueline again, and all the maidens kissed each other, and they quite cried for gladness.

"But we keep his Majesty the Inca waiting," said Prigio. "Punctuality is the courtesy of kings. You ladies will excuse me, I am sure, if I remove first from the dungeon her whom we call the Princess Jaqueline. The Inca, her father, has a claim on us to this preference."

Then placing Jaqueline on the saddle, and leaving Dick to comfort the other young ladies, who were still rather nervous, the king flew off to Manoa, for the wind, of course, died with the death of the Earthquaker.

I cannot tell you the delight of all Manoa, and of the Inca, when they saw the Flying Horse returning, and recognised their long-lost princess, who rushed into the arms of her father. They beat the serpent drums, for they had no bells, on the tops of the temples. They went quite mad with delight: enemies kissed in the streets; and all the parents, without exception, allowed all the young people who happened to be in love to be married that very day. Then Prigio brought back all the maidens, one after the other, and Dick last; and he fell at the Inca's feet, and requested leave to marry Jaqueline.

But, before that could be done, King Prigio, mounted on the palace balcony, made a long but very lucid speech to the assembled people. He began by explaining that he was not their God, Pachacamac, but king of a powerful country of which they had never heard before, as they lived very much withdrawn in an unknown region of the world. Then he pointed out, in the most considerate manner, that their religion was not all he could wish, otherwise they would never sacrifice young ladies to wild birds and Earthquakers. He next sketched out the merits of his own creed, that of the Lutheran Church; and the Inca straightway observed that he proposed to establish it in Manoa at once.

Some objection was raised by the old priest in the skull mask; but when the Inca promised to make him an archbishop, and to continue all his revenues, the priest admitted that he was perfectly satisfied; and the general public cheered and waved their hats with emotion. It was arranged that the Inca, with his other daughters, should visit Pantouflia immediately, both because he could not bear to leave Jaqueline, and also because there were a few points on which he felt that he still needed information. The Government was left in the hands of the archbishop, who began at once by burning his skull mask (you may see one like it in the British Museum, in the Mexican room), and by letting loose all the birds and beasts which the Manoans used to worship.

So all the young people were married in the Golden Temple of the Sun, and all the Earthquaker's nurses who were under thirty were wedded to the young men who had been fond of them before they were sent into the hollow hill. These young men had never cared for any one else. Everybody wore bridal favours, all the unengaged young ladies acted as bridesmaids, and such a throwing of rice and old shoes has very seldom been witnessed. As for the happy royal pair, with their fathers, and the other princess (who did not happen to be engaged), back they flew to Pantouflia.

And there was Queen Rosalind waiting at the palace gates, and crying and laughing with pleasure when she heard that the wish of her heart was fulfilled, and Jaqueline was to be her daughter.

"And, as for the Earthquaker," said her Majesty, "I never was really anxious in the least, for I knew no beast in the world was a match for *you*, my dear."

So, just to make everything orderly and correct, Ricardo and Jaqueline were married over again, in the Cathedral of Pantouflia. The marriage presents came in afterwards, of course, and among them, what do you think? Why, the Seven-League Boots and the Sword of Sharpness, with a very polite note of extraordinary size:

“The Giant who does not Know when he has had Enough presents his hearty congratulations to the royal pair, and begs to lay at their feet the Seven-league Boots (they not fitting me) and the Sword which Prince Ricardo left in the Giant’s keeping recently. The Giant hopes *no bad blood*; and I am,

“Yours very faithfully,
“THE G., &c.

“P.S. — His little woman sends her congratulations.”

So you see the Giant was not such a bad sort of fellow after all, and Prince Ricardo always admitted that he never met a foe more gallant and good-humoured.

With such a clever wife, Ricardo easily passed all his examinations; and his little son, Prince Prigio (named after his august grandfather), never had to cry, “Mamma, mamma, father’s plucked again.”

So they lived happily in a happy country, occasionally visiting Manoa; and as they possessed the magical Water o Life from the Fountain of Lions, I do not believe that any of them ever died at all, but that Prigio is still King of Pantouflia.

“No need such kings should ever die!”

ANGLING SKETCHES

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DEDICATION

TO MRS HERBERT HILLS

‘NO FISHER
BUT A WELL-WISHER
TO THE GAME.’

IN MEMORY OF PLESANT DAYS AT CORBY

PREFACE

Several of the sketches in this volume have appeared in periodicals. “The Bloody Doctor” was in *Macmillan’s Magazine*, “The Confessions of a Duffer,” “Loch Awe,” and “The Lady or the Salmon?” were in the *Fishing Gazette*, but have been to some extent re-written. “The Double Alibi” was in *Longman’s Magazine*. The author has to thank the Editors and Publishers for permission to reprint these papers.

The gem engraved on the cover is enlarged from a small intaglio in the collection of Mr. M. H. N. STORY-MASKELYNE, M.P. Such gems were recommended by Clemens of Alexandria to the early Christians. “The figure of a man fishing will put them in mind of the Apostle.” Perhaps the Greek is using the red hackle described by Ælian in the only known Greek reference to fly-fishing.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A DUFFER

These papers do not boast of great sport. They are truthful, not like the tales some fishers tell. They should appeal to many sympathies. There is no false modesty in the confidence with which I esteem myself a duffer, at fishing. Some men are born duffers; others, unlike persons of genius, become so by an infinite capacity for not taking pains. Others, again, among whom I would rank myself, combine both these elements of incompetence. Nature, that made me enthusiastically fond of fishing, gave me thumbs for fingers, short-sighted eyes, indolence, carelessness, and a temper which (usually sweet and angelic) is goaded to madness by the laws of matter and of gravitation. For example: when another man is caught up in a branch he disengages his fly; I jerk at it till something breaks. As for carelessness, in boyhood I fished, by preference, with doubtful gut and knots ill-tied; it made the risk greater, and increased the excitement if one did hook a trout. I can’t keep a fly-book. I stuff the flies into my pockets at random, or stick them into the leaves of a novel, or bestow them in the lining of my hat or the case of my rods. Never, till 1890, in all my days did I possess a landing-net. If I can drag a fish up a bank, or over the gravel, well; if not, he goes on his way rejoicing. On the Test I thought it seemly to carry a landing-net. It had a hinge, and doubled up. I put the handle through a button-hole of my coat: I saw a big fish rising, I put a dry fly over him; the idiot took it. Up stream he ran, then down stream, then he yielded to the rod and came near me. I tried to unship my landing-net from my button-hole. Vain labour! I twisted and turned the handle, it would not budge. Finally, I stooped, and attempted to ladle the trout out with the short net; but he broke the gut, and went off. A landing-net is a tedious thing to carry, so is a creel, and a creel is, to me, a superfluity. There is never anything to put in it. If I do catch a trout, I lay him under a big stone, cover him with leaves, and never find him again. I often break my top joint; so, as I never carry string, I splice it with a bit of the line, which I bite off, for I really cannot be troubled with scissors and I always lose my knife. When a phantom minnow sticks in my clothes, I snap the gut off, and put on another, so that when I reach home I look as if a shoal of fierce minnows had attacked me and hung on like leeches. When a boy, I was — once or twice — a bait-fisher, but I never carried worms in box or bag. I found them under big stones, or in the fields, wherever I had the luck. I never tie nor otherwise fasten the joints of my rod; they often slip out of the sockets and splash into the water.

Mr. Hardy, however, has invented a joint-fastening which never slips. On the other hand, by letting the joint rust, you may find it difficult to take down your rod. When I see a trout rising, I always cast so as to get hung up, and I frighten him as I disengage my hook. I invariably fall in and get half-drowned when I wade, there being an insufficiency of nails in the soles of my brogues. My waders let in water, too, and when I go out to fish I usually leave either my reel, or my flies, or my rod, at home. Perhaps no other man's average of lost flies in proportion to taken trout was ever so great as mine. I lose plenty, by striking furiously, after a series of short rises, and breaking the gut, with which the fish swims away. As to dressing a fly, one would sooner think of dressing a dinner. The result of the fly-dressing would resemble a small blacking-brush, perhaps, but nothing entomological.

Then why, a persevering reader may ask, do I fish? Well, it is stronger than myself, the love of fishing; perhaps it is an inherited instinct, without the inherited power. I may have had a fishing ancestor who bequeathed to me the passion without the art. My vocation is fixed, and I have fished to little purpose all my days. Not for salmon, an almost fabulous and yet a stupid fish, which must be moved with a rod like a weaver's beam. The trout is more delicate and dainty — not the sea-trout, which any man, woman, or child can capture, but the yellow trout in clear water.

A few rises are almost all I ask for: to catch more than half a dozen fish does not fall to my lot twice a year. Of course, in a Sutherland loch one man is as good as another, the expert no better than the duffer. The fish will take, or they won't. If they won't, nobody can catch them; if they will, nobody can miss them. It is as simple as trolling a minnow from a boat in Loch Leven, probably the lowest possible form of angling. My ambition is as great as my skill is feeble; to capture big trout with the dry fly in the Test, that would content me, and nothing under that. But I can't see the natural fly on the water; I cannot see my own fly,

Let it sink or let it swim.

I often don't see the trout rise to me, if he is such a fool as to rise; and I can't strike in time when I do see him. Besides, I am unteachable to tie any of the orthodox knots in the gut; it takes me half an hour to get the gut through one of these newfangled iron eyes, and, when it is through, I knot it any way. The "jam" knot is a name to me, and no more. That, perhaps, is why the hooks crack off so merrily. Then, if I do spot a rising trout, and if he does not spot me as I crawl like the serpent towards him, my fly always fixes in a nettle, a haycock, a rose-bush, or whatnot, behind me. I undo it, or break it, and put up another, make a cast, and, "plop," all the line falls in with a splash that would frighten a crocodile. The fish's big black fin goes cutting the stream above, and there is a *sauve qui peut* of trout in all directions.

I once did manage to make a cast correctly: the fly went over the fish's nose; he rose; I hooked him, and he was a great silly brute of a grayling. The grayling is the deadest-hearted and the foolishest-headed fish that swims. I would as lief catch a perch or an eel as a grayling. This is the worst of it — this ambition of the duffer's, this desire for perfection, as if the golfing imbecile should match himself against Mr. Horace Hutchinson, or as the sow of the Greek proverb challenged Athene to sing. I know it all, I deplore it, I regret the evils of ambition; but *c'est plus fort que moi*. If there is a trout rising well under the pendant boughs that trail in the water, if there is a brake of briars behind me, a strong wind down stream, for that trout, in that impregnable situation, I am impelled to fish. If I raise him I strike, miss him, catch up in his tree, swish the cast off into the briars, break my top, break my heart, but — that is the humour of it. The passion, or instinct, being in all senses blind, must no doubt be hereditary. It is full of sorrow and bitterness and hope deferred, and entails the mockery of friends, especially of the fair. But I would as soon lay down a love of books as a love of fishing.

Success with pen or rod may be beyond one, but there is the pleasure of the pursuit, the rapture of endeavour, the delight of an impossible chase, the joys of nature — sky, trees, brooks, and birds. Happiness in these things is the legacy to us of the barbarian. Man in the future will enjoy bricks, asphalte, fog, machinery, "society," even picture galleries, as many men and most women do already. We are fortunate who inherit the older, not "the new spirit" — we who, skilled or unskilled, follow in the steps of our father, Izaak, by streams less clear, indeed, and in meadows less fragrant, than his. Still, they are meadows and streams, not wholly dispeopled yet of birds and trout; nor can any defect of art, nor certainty of laborious disappointment, keep us from the waterside when April comes.

Next to being an expert, it is well to be a contented duffer: a man who would fish if he could, and who will pleasure himself by flicking off his flies, and dreaming of impossible trout, and smoking among the sedges Hope's enchanted cigarettes. Next time we shall be more skilled, more fortunate. Next time! "To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow." Grey hairs come, and stiff limbs, and shortened sight; but the spring is green and hope is fresh for all the changes in the world and in ourselves. We can tell a hawk from a hand-saw, a March Brown from a Blue Dun; and if our success be as poor as ever, our fancy can dream as well as ever of better things and more fortunate chances. For fishing is like life; and in the art of living, too, there are duffers, though they seldom give us their confessions. Yet even they are kept alive, like the incompetent angler, by this undying hope: they will be more careful, more skilful, more lucky next time. The gleaming untravelled future, the bright untried waters, allure us from day to day, from pool to pool, till, like the veteran on Coquet side, we “try a farewell throw,” or, like Stoddart, look our last on Tweed.

A BORDER BOYHOOD

A fisher, says our father Izaak, is like a poet: he "must be born so." The majority of dwellers on the Border are born to be fishers, thanks to the endless number of rivers and burns in the region between the Tweed and the Coquet — a realm where almost all trout-fishing is open, and where, since population and love of the sport have increased, there is now but little water that merits the trouble of putting up a rod.

Like the rest of us in that country, I was born an angler, though under an evil star, for, indeed, my labours have not been blessed, and are devoted to fishing rather than to the catching of fish. Remembrance can scarcely recover, "nor time bring back to time," the days when I was not busy at the waterside; yet the feat is not quite beyond the power of Mnemosyne. My first recollection of the sport must date from about the age of four. I recall, in a dim brightness, driving along a road that ran between banks of bracken and mica-veined rocks, and the sunlight on a shining bend of a highland stream, and my father, standing in the shallow water, showing me a huge yellow fish, that gave its last fling or two on the grassy bank. The fish seemed as terrible and dangerous to me as to Tobit, in the Apocrypha, did that ferocious half-pounder which he carries on a string in the early Italian pictures. How oddly Botticelli and his brethren misconceived the man-devouring fish, which must have been a crocodile strayed from the Nile into the waters of the Euphrates! A half-pounder! To have been terrified by a trout seems a bad beginning; and, thereafter, the mist gather's over the past, only to lift again when I see myself, with a crowd of other little children, sent to fish, with crooked pins, for minnows, or "baggies" as we called them, in the Ettrick. If our parents hoped that we would bring home minnows for bait, they were disappointed. The party was under the command of a nursery governess, and probably she was no descendant of the mother of us all, Dame Juliana Berners. We did not catch any minnows, and I remember sitting to watch a bigger boy, who was angling in a shoal of them when a parr came into the shoal, and we had bright visions of alluring that monarch of the deep. But the parr disdained our baits, and for months I dreamed of what it would have been to capture him, and often thought of him in church. In a moment of profane confidence my younger brother once asked me: "What do *you* do in sermon time? I," said he in a whisper— "mind you don't tell — *I* tell stories to myself about catching trout." To which I added similar confession, for even so I drove the sermon by, and I have not “told” — till now.

By this time we must have been introduced to trout. Who forgets his first trout? Mine, thanks to that unlucky star, was a double deception, or rather there were two kinds of deception. A village carpenter very kindly made rods for us. They were of unpainted wood, these first rods; they were in two pieces, with a real brass joint, and there was a ring at the end of the top joint, to which the line was knotted. We were still in the age of Walton, who clearly knew nothing, except by hearsay, of a reel; he abandons the attempt to describe that machine as used by the salmon-fishers. He thinks it must be seen to be understood. With these innocent weapons, and with the gardener to bait our hooks, we were taken to the Yarrow, far up the stream, near Ladhope. How well one remembers deserting the gardener, and already appreciating the joys of having no gillie nor attendant, of being “alone with ourselves and the goddess of fishing”! I cast away as well as I could, and presently jerked a trout, a tiny one, high up in the air out of the water. But he fell off the hook again, he dropped in with a little splash, and I rushed up to consult my tutor on his unsportsmanlike behaviour, and the disappointing, nay, heart-breaking, occurrence. Was the trout not morally caught, was there no way of getting him to see this and behave accordingly? The gardener feared there was none. Meanwhile he sat on the bank and angled in a pool. “Try my rod,” he said, and, as soon as I had taken hold of it, “pull up,” he cried, “pull up.” I did “pull up,” and hauled my first troutling on shore. But in my inmost heart I feared that he was not my trout at all, that the gardener had hooked him before he handed the rod to me. Then we met my younger brother coming to us with quite a great fish, half a pound perhaps, which he had caught in a burn. Then, for the first time, my soul knew the fierce passion of jealousy, the envy of the angler. Almost for the last time, too; for, I know not why it is, and it proves me no true fisherman, I am not discontented by the successes of others. If one cannot catch fish oneself, surely the next best thing is to see other people catch them.

My own progress was now checked for long by a constitutional and insuperable aversion to angling with worm. If the gardener, or a pretty girl-cousin of the mature age of fourteen, would put the worm on, I did not “much mind” fishing with it. Dost thou remember, fair lady of the ringlets? Still, I never liked bait-fishing, and these mine allies were not always at hand. We used, indeed, to have great days with perch at Faldonside, on the land which Sir Walter Scott was always so anxious to buy from Mr. Nichol Milne. Almost the last entry in his diary, at Naples, breathes this unutterable hope. He had deluded himself into believing that his debts were paid, and that he could soon “speak a word to young Nichol Milne.” The word, of course, was never spoken, and the unsupplanted laird used to let us fish for his perch to our hearts' desire. Never was there such slaughter. The corks which we used as floats were perpetually tipping, bobbing, and disappearing, and then the red-finned perch would fly out on to dry land. Here I once saw two corks go down, two anglers haul up, and one perch, attached to both hooks, descend on the grassy bank. My brother and I filled two baskets once, and strung dozens of other perch on a stick.

But this was not legitimate business. Not till we came to fly-fishing were we really entered at the sport, and this initiation took place, as it chanced, beside the very stream where I was first shown a trout. It is a charming piece of water, amber-coloured and clear, flowing from the Morvern hills under the limes of an ancient avenue — trees that have long survived the house to which, of old, the road must have led. Our gillie put on for us big bright sea-trout flies — nobody fishes there for yellow trout; but, in our inexperience, small "brownies" were all we caught. Probably we were only taken to streams and shallows where we could not interfere with mature sportsmen. At all events, it was demonstrated to us that we could actually catch fish with fly, and since then I have scarcely touched a worm, except as a boy, in burns. In these early days we had no notion of playing a trout. If there was a bite, we put our strength into an answering tug, and, if nothing gave way, the trout flew over our heads, perhaps up into a tree, perhaps over into a branch of the stream behind us. Quite a large trout will yield to this artless method, if the rod be sturdy — none of your glued-up cane-affairs. I remember hooking a trout which, not answering to the first haul, ran right across the stream and made for a hole in the opposite bank. But the second lift proved successful and he landed on my side of the water. He had a great minnow in his throat, and must have been a particularly greedy animal. Of course, on this system there were many breakages, and the method was abandoned as we lived into our teens, and began to wade and to understand something about fly-fishing.

It was worth while to be a boy then in the south of Scotland, and to fish the waters haunted by old legends, musical with old songs, and renowned in the sporting essays of Christopher North and Stoddart. Even then, thirty long years ago, the old stagers used to tell us that "the waiter was owr sair fished," and they grumbled about the system of draining the land, which makes a river a roaring torrent in floods, and a bed of grey stones with a few clear pools and shallows, during the rest of the year. In times before the hills were drained, before the manufacturing towns were so populous, before pollution, netting, dynamiting, poisoning, sniggling, and the enormous increase of fair and unfair fishing, the border must have been the angler's paradise. Still, it was not bad when we were boys. We had Ettrick within a mile of us, and a finer natural trout-stream there is not in Scotland, though now the water only holds a sadly persecuted remnant. There was one long pool behind Lindean, flowing beneath a high wooded bank, where the trout literally seemed never to cease rising at the flies that dropped from the pendant boughs. Unluckily the water flowed out of the pool in a thin broad stream, directly it right angles to the pool itself. Thus the angler had, so to speak, the whole of lower Ettrick at his back when he waded: it was a long way up stream to the bank, and, as we never used landing-nets then, we naturally lost a great many trout in trying to unhook them in mid water. They only averaged as a rule from three to two to the pound, but they were strong and lively. In this pool there was a large tawny, table-shaped stone, over which the current broke. Out of the eddy behind this stone, one of my brothers one day caught three trout weighing over seven pounds, a feat which nowadays sounds quite incredible. As soon as the desirable eddy was empty, another trout, a trifle smaller than the former, seems to have occupied it. The next mile and a half, from Lindean to the junction with Tweed, was remarkable for excellent sport. In the last pool of Ettrick, the water flowed by a steep bank, and, if you cast almost on to the further side, you were perfectly safe to get fish, even when the river was very low. The flies used, three on a cast, were small and dusky, hare’s ear and woodcock wing, black palmers, or, as Stoddart sings,

Wee dour looking huiks are the thing,
Mouse body and laverock wing.

Next to Ettrick came Tweed: the former river joins the latter at the bend of a long stretch of water, half stream, half pool, in which angling was always good. In late September there were sea-trout, which, for some reason, rose to the fly much more freely than sea-trout do now in the upper Tweed. I particularly remember hooking one just under the railway bridge. He was a two-pounder, and practised the usual sea-trout tactics of springing into the air like a rocket. There was a knot on my line, of course, and I was obliged to hold him hard. When he had been dragged up on the shingle, the line parted, broken in twain at the knot; but it had lasted just long enough, during three exciting minutes. This accident of a knot on the line has only once befallen me since, with the strongest loch-trout I ever encountered. It was on Branxholme Loch, where the trout run to a great size, but usually refuse the fly. I was alone in a boat on a windy day; the trout soon ran out the line to the knot, and then there was nothing for it but to lower the top almost to the water’s edge, and hold on in hope. Presently the boat drifted ashore, and I landed him — better luck than I deserved. People who only know the trout of the Test and other chalk streams, cannot imagine how much stronger are the fish of the swift Scottish streams and dark Scottish lochs. They're worse fed, but they are infinitely more powerful and active; it is all the difference between an alderman and a clansman.

Tweed, at this time, was full of trout, but even then they were not easy to catch. One difficulty lay in the nature of the wading. There is a pool near Ashiesteil and Gleddis Weil which illustrated this. Here Scott and Hogg were once upset from a boat while "burning the water" — spearing salmon by torchlight. Herein, too, as Scott mentions in his Diary, he once caught two trout at one cast. The pool is long, is paved with small gravel, and allures you to wade on and on. But the water gradually deepens as you go forward, and the pool ends in a deep pot under each bank. Then to recover your ground becomes by no means easy, especially if the water is heavy. You get half-drowned, or drowned altogether, before you discover your danger. Many of the pools have this peculiarity, and in many, one step made rashly lets you into a very uncomfortable and perilous place. Therefore expeditions to Tweedside were apt to end in a ducking. It was often hard to reach the water where trout were rising, and the rise was always capricious. There might not be a stir on the water for hours, and suddenly it would be all boiling with heads and tails for twenty minutes, after which nothing was to be done. To miss "the take" was to waste the day, at least in fly-fishing. From a high wooded bank I have seen the trout feeding, and they have almost ceased to feed before I reached the waterside. Still worse was it to be allured into water over the tops of your waders, early in the day, and then to find that the rise was over, and there was nothing for it but a weary walk home, the basket laden only with damp boots. Still, the trout were undeniably *there*, and that was a great encouragement. They are there still, but infinitely more cunning than of old. Then, if they were feeding, they took the artificial fly freely; now it must be exactly of the right size and shade or they will have none of it. They come provokingly short, too; just plucking at the hook, and running out a foot of line or so, then taking their departure. For some reason the Tweed is more difficult to fish with the dry fly than — the Test, for example. The water is swifter and very dark, it drowns the fly soon, and on the surface the fly is less easily distinguished than at Whitchurch, in the pellucid streams. The Leader a tributary, may be fished with dry fly; on the Tweed one can hardly manage it. There is a plan by which rising trout may be taken — namely, by baiting with a small red worm and casting as in fly-fishing. But that is so hard on the worm! Probably he who can catch trout with fly on the Tweed between Melrose and Holy Lee can catch them anywhere. On a good day in April great baskets are still made in preserved parts of the Tweed, but, if they are made in open water, it must be, I fancy, with worm, or with the "screw," the lava of the May-fly. The screw is a hideous and venomous-looking animal, which is fixed on a particular kind of tackle, and cast up stream with a short line. The heaviest trout are fond of it, but it can only be used at a season when either school or Oxford keeps one far from what old Franck, Walton's contemporary, a Cromwellian trooper, calls "the glittering and resolute streams of Tweed."

Difficult as it is, that river is so beautiful and alluring that it scarcely needs the attractions of sport. The step banks, beautifully wooded, and in spring one mass of primroses, are crowned here and there with ruined Border towers — like Elibank, the houses of Muckle Mou'ed Meg; or with fair baronial houses like Fernilea. Meg made a bad exchange when she left Elibank with the salmon pool at its foot for bleak Harden, frowning over the narrow "den" where Harden kept the plundered cattle. There is no fishing in the tiny Harden burn, that joins the brawling Borthwick Water.

The burns of the Lowlands are now almost barren of trout. The spawning fish, flabby and useless, are killed in winter. All through the rest of the year, in the remotest places, tourists are hard at them with worm. In a small burn a skilled wormer may almost depopulate the pools, and, on the Border, all is fish that comes to the hook; men keep the very fingerlings, on the pretext that they are "so sweet" in the frying-pan. The crowd of anglers in glens which seem not easily accessible is provoking enough. Into the Meggat, a stream which feeds St. Mary's Loch, there flows the Glengaber, or Glencaber burn: the burn of the pine-tree stump. The water runs in deep pools and streams over a blue slatey rock, which contains gold under the sand, in the worn holes and crevices. My friend, Mr. McAllister, the schoolmaster at St. Mary's, tells me that one day, when fish were not rising, he scooped out the gravel of one of these holes with his knife, and found a tiny nugget, after which the gold-hunting fever came on him for a while. But little is got nowadays, though in some earlier period the burn has been diverted from its bed, and the people used solemnly to wash the sand, as in California or Australia. Well, whether in consequence of the gold, as the alchemical philosophers would have held, or not, the trout of the Glengaber burn were good. They were far shorter, thicker and stronger than those of the many neighbouring brooks. I have fished up the burn with fly, when it was very low, hiding carefully behind the boulders, and have been surprised at the size and gameness of the fish. As soon as the fly had touched the brown water, it was sucked down, and there was quite a fierce little fight before the fish came to hand.

"This, all this, was in the olden time, long ago."

The Glengaber burn is about twenty miles from any railway station, but, on the last occasion when I visited it, three louts were worming their way up it, within twenty yards of each other, each lout, with his huge rod, showing himself wholly to any trout that might be left in the water. Thirty years ago the burns that feed St. Mary's Loch were almost unfished, and rare sport we had in them, as boys, staying at Tibbie Sheil's famous cottage, and sleeping in her box-beds, where so often the Ettrick Shepherd and Christopher North have lain, after copious toddy. "'Tis gone, 'tis gone:" not in our time will any man, like the Ettrick Shepherd, need a cart to carry the trout he has slain in Meggat Water. That stream, flowing through a valley furnished with a grass-grown track for a road, flows, as I said, into St. Mary's Loch. There are two or three large pools at the foot of the loch, in which, as a small boy hardly promoted to fly, I have seen many monsters rising greedily. Men got into the way of fishing these pools after a flood with minnow, and thereby made huge baskets, the big fish running up to feed, out of the loch. But, when last I rowed past Meggat foot, the delta of that historic stream was simply crowded with anglers, stepping in in front of each other. I asked if this mob was a political "demonstration," but they stuck to business, as if they had been on the Regent's Canal. And this, remember, was twenty miles from any town! Yet there is a burn on the Border still undiscovered, still full of greedy trout. I shall give the angler such a hint of its whereabouts as Tiresias, in Hades, gave to Odysseus concerning the end of his second wanderings.

When, O stranger, thou hast reached a burn where the shepherd asks thee for the newspaper wrapped round thy sandwiches, that he may read the news, then erect an altar to Priapus, god of fishermen, and begin to angle boldly.

Probably the troops who fish our Border-burns still manage to toss out some dozens of tiny fishes, some six or eight to the pound. Are not these triumphs chronicled in the "Scotsman?" But they cannot imagine what angling was in the dead years, nor what great trout dwelt below the linns of the Crosscleugh burn, beneath the red clusters of the rowan trees, or in the waters of the "Little Yarrow" above the Loch of the Lowes. As to the lochs themselves, now that anyone may put a boat on them, now that there is perpetual trolling, as well as fly-fishing, so that every fish knows the lures, the fun is mainly over. In April, no doubt, something may still be done, and in the silver twilights of June, when as you drift on the still surface you hear the constant sweet plash of the rising trout, a few, and these good, may be taken. But the water wants re-stocking, and the burns in winter need watching, in the interests of spawning fish. It is nobody's interest, that I know of, to take trouble and incur expense; and free fishing, by the constitution of the universe, must end in bad fishing or in none at all. The best we can say for it is that vast numbers of persons may, by the still waters of these meres, enjoy the pleasures of hope. Even solitude is no longer to be found in the scene which Scott, in “Marmion,” chooses as of all places the most solitary.

Here, have I thought, ‘twere sweet to dwell,
And rear again the chaplain’s cell.

But no longer does

“Your horse’s hoof tread sound too rude,
So stilly is the solitude.”

Stilly! with the horns and songs from omnibusses that carry tourists, and with yells from nymphs and swains disporting themselves in the boats. Yarrow is only the old Yarrow in winter. Ages and revolutions must pass before the ancient peace returns; and only if the golden age is born again, and if we revive in it, shall we find St. Mary’s what St. Mary’s was lang syne —

Ah, Buddha, if thy tale be true,
  Of still returning life,
A monk may I be born anew,
  In valleys free from strife, —
A monk where Meggat winds and laves
The lone St. Mary’s of the Waves.

Yarrow, which flows out of St. Mary’s Loch was never a great favourite of mine, as far as fishing goes. It had, and probably deserved, a great reputation, and some good trout are still taken in the upper waters, and there must be monsters in the deep black pools, the “dowie dens” above Bowhill. But I never had any luck there. The choicest stream of all was then, probably, the Aill, described by Sir Walter in “William of Deloraine’s Midnight Ride” —

  Where Aill, from mountains freed,
Down from the lakes did raving come;
Each wave was crested with tawny foam,
  Like the mane of a chestnut steed.

As not uncommonly happens, Scott uses rather large language here. The steepy, grassy hillsides, the great green tablelands in a recess of which the Aill is born, can hardly be called “mountains.” The “lakes,” too, through which it passes, are much more like tarns, or rather, considering the flatness of their banks, like well-meaning ponds. But the Aill, near Sinton and Ashkirk, was a delightful trout-stream, between its willow-fringed banks, a brook about the size of the Lambourne. Nowhere on the Border were trout more numerous, better fed, and more easily beguiled. A week on Test would I gladly give for one day of boyhood beside the Aill, where the casting was not scientific, but where the fish rose gamely at almost any fly. Nobody seemed to go there then, and, I fancy, nobody need go there now. The nets and other dismal devices of the poachers from the towns have ruined that pleasant brook, where one has passed so many a happy hour, walking the long way home wet and weary, but well content. Into Aill flows a burn, the Headshaw burn, where there used to be good fish, because it runs out of Headshaw Loch, a weed-fringed lonely tarn on the bleak level of the tableland. Bleak as it may seem, Headshaw Loch has the great charm of absolute solitude: there are no tourists nor anglers here, and the life of the birds is especially free and charming. The trout, too, are large, pink of flesh, and game of character; but the world of mankind need not rush thither. They are not to be captured by the wiles of men, or so rarely that the most enthusiastic anglers have given them up. They are as safe in their tarn as those enchanted fish of the "Arabian Nights." Perhaps a silver sedge in a warm twilight may somewhat avail, but the adventure is rarely achieved.

These are the waters with which our boyhood was mainly engaged; it is a pleasure to name and number them. Memory, that has lost so much and would gladly lose so much more, brings vividly back the golden summer evenings by Tweedside, when the trout began to plash in the stillness — brings back the long, lounging, solitary days beneath the woods of Ashiesteil — days so lonely that they sometimes, in the end, begat a superstitious eeriness. One seemed forsaken in an enchanted world; one might see the two white fairy deer flit by, bringing to us, as to Thomas Rhymer, the tidings that we must back to Fairyland. Other waters we knew well, and loved: the little salmon-stream in the west that doubles through the loch, and runs a mile or twain beneath its alders, past its old Celtic battle-field, beneath the ruined shell of its feudal tower, to the sea. Many a happy day we had there, on loch or stream, with the big sea-trout which have somehow changed their tastes, and to-day take quite different flies from the green body and the red body that led them to the landing-net long ago. Dear are the twin Alines, but dearer is Tweed, and Ettrick, where our ancestor was drowned in a flood, and his white horse was found, next day, feeding near his dead body, on a little grassy island. There is a great pleasure in trying new methods, in labouring after the delicate art of the dry fly-fisher in the clear Hampshire streams, where the glassy tide flows over the waving tresses of crow's-foot below the poplar shade. But nothing can be so good as what is old, and, as far as angling goes, is practically ruined, the alternate pool and stream of the Border waters, where

  The triple pride
Of Eildon looks over Strathclyde,

and the salmon cast murmurs hard by the Wizard’s grave. They are all gone now, the old allies and tutors in the angler’s art — the kind gardener who baited our hooks; the good Scotch judge who gave us our first collection of flies; the friend who took us with him on his salmon-fishing expedition, and made men of us with real rods, and “pirns” of ancient make. The companions of those times are scattered, and live under strange stars and in converse seasons, by troutless waters. It is no longer the height of pleasure to be half-drowned in Tweed, or lost on the hills with no luncheon in the basket. But, except for scarcity of fish, the scene is very little altered, and one is a boy again, in heart, beneath the elms of Yair, or by the Gullets at Ashiesteil. However bad the sport, it keeps you young, or makes you young again, and you need not follow Ponce de Léon to the western wilderness, when, in any river you knew of yore, you can find the Fountain of Youth.

LOCH AWE

THE BOATMAN'S YARNS

Good trout-fishing in Scotland, south of the Pentland Firth, is almost impossible to procure. There are better fish, and more of them, in the Wandle, within twenty minutes of Victoria Station, than in any equal stretch of any Scotch river with which I am acquainted. But the pleasure of angling, luckily, does not consist merely of the catching of fish. The Wandle is rather too suburban for some tastes, which prefer smaller trout, better air, and wilder scenery. To such spirits, Loch Awe may, with certain distinct cautions, be recommended. There is more chance for anglers, now, in Scotch lochs than in most Scotch rivers. The lochs cannot so easily be netted, lined, polluted, and otherwise made empty and ugly, like the Border streams. They are farther off from towns and tourists, though distance is scarcely a complete protection. The best lochs for yellow trout are decidedly those of Sutherland. There are no railways, and there are two hundred lochs and more in the Parish of Assynt. There, in June, the angler who is a good pedestrian may actually enjoy solitude, sometimes. There is a loch near Strathnaver, and far from human habitations, where a friend of my own recently caught sixty-five trout weighing about thirty-eight pounds. They are numerous and plucky, but not large, though a casual big loch-trout may be taken by trolling. But it is truly a far way to this anonymous lake and all round the regular fishing inns, like Inchnadampf and Forsinard there is usually quite a little crowd of anglers. The sport is advertised in the newspapers; more and more of our eager fellow-creatures are attracted, more and more the shooting tenants are preserving waters that used to be open. The distance to Sutherland makes that county almost beyond the range of a brief holiday. Loch Leven is nearer, and at Loch Leven the scenery is better than its reputation, while the trout are excellent, though shy. But Loch Leven is too much cockneyfied by angling competitions; moreover, its pleasures are expensive. Loch Awe remains, a loch at once large, lovely, not too distant, and not destitute of sport.

The reader of Mr. Colquhoun's delightful old book, "The Moor and the Loch," must not expect Loch Awe to be what it once was. The railway, which has made the north side of the lake so ugly, has brought the district within easy reach of Glasgow and of Edinburgh. Villas are built on many a beautiful height; here couples come for their honeymoon, here whole argosies of boats are anchored off the coasts, here do steam launches ply. The hotels are extremely comfortable, the boatmen are excellent boatmen, good fishers, and capital company. All this is pleasant, but all this attracts multitudes of anglers, and it is not in nature that sport should be what it once was. Of the famous *salmo ferox* I cannot speak from experience. The huge courageous fish is still at home in Loch Awe, but now he sees a hundred baits, natural and artificial, where he saw one in Mr. Colquhoun's time. The truly contemplative man may still sit in the stern of the boat, with two rods out, and possess his soul in patience, as if he were fishing for tarpon in Florida. I wish him luck, but the diversion is little to my mind. Except in playing the fish, if he comes, all the skill is in the boatmen, who know where to row, at what pace, and in what depth of water. As to the chances of salmon again, they are perhaps less rare, but they are not very frequent. The fish does not seem to take freely in the loch, and on his way from the Awe to the Orchy. As to the trout-fishing, it is very bad in the months when most men take their holidays, August and September. From the middle of April to the middle of June is apparently the best time. The loch is well provided with bays, of different merit, according to the feeding which they provide; some come earlier, some later into season. Doubtless the most beautiful part of the lake is around the islands, between the Loch Awe and the Port Sonachan hotels. The Green Island, with its strange Celtic burying-ground, where the daffodils bloom among the sepulchres with their rude carvings of battles and of armed men, has many trout around its shores. The favourite fishing-places, however, are between Port Sonachan and Ford. In the morning early, the steam-launch tows a fleet of boats down the loch, and they drift back again, fishing all the bays, and arriving at home in time for dinner. Too frequently the angler is vexed by finding a boat busy in his favourite bay. I am not sure that, when the trout are really taking, the water near Port Sonachan is not as good as any other. Much depends on the weather. In the hard north-east winds of April we can scarcely expect trout to feed very freely anywhere. These of Loch Awe are very peculiar fish. I take it that there are two species — one short, thick, golden, and beautiful; but these, at least in April, are decidedly scarce. The common sort is long, lanky, of a dark green hue, and the reverse of lovely. Most of them, however, are excellent at breakfast, pink in the flesh, and better flavoured, I think, than the famous trout of Loch Leven. They are also extremely game for their size; a half-pound trout fights like a pounder. From thirty to forty fish in a day's incessant angling is reckoned no bad basket. In genial May weather, probably the trout average two to the pound, and a pounder or two may be in the dish. But three to the pound is decidedly nearer the average, at least in April. The flies commonly used are larger than what are employed in Loch Leven. A teal wing and red body, a grouse hackle, and the prismatic Heckham Peckham are among the favourites; but it is said that flies no bigger than Tweed flies are occasionally successful. In my own brief experience I have found the trout "dour," occasionally they would rise freely for an hour at noon, or in the evening; but often one passed hours with scarcely a rising fish. This may have been due to the bitterness of the weather, or to my own lack of skill. Not that lochs generally require much artifice in the angler. To sink the flies deep, and move them with short jerks, appears, now and then, to be efficacious. There has been some controversy about Loch Awe trouting; this is as favourable a view of the sport as I can honestly give. It is not excellent, but, thanks to the great beauty of the scenery, the many points of view on so large and indented a lake, the charm of the wood and wild flowers, Loch Awe is well worth a visit from persons who do not pitch their hopes too high.

Loch Awe would have contented me less had I been less fortunate in my boatman. It is often said that tradition has died out in the Highlands; it is living yet.

After three days of north wind and failure, it occurred to me that my boatman might know the local folklore — the fairy tales and traditions. As a rule, tradition is a purely professional part of a guide's stock-in-trade, but the angler who had my barque in his charge proved to be a fresh fountain of legend. His own county is not Argyleshire, but Inverness, and we did not deal much in local myth. True, he told me why Loch Awe ceased — like the site of Sodom and Gomorrah — to be a cultivated valley and became a lake, where the trout are small and, externally, green.

"Loch Awe was once a fertile valley, and it belonged to an old dame. She was called Dame Cruachan, the same as the hill, and she lived high up on the hillside. Now there was a well on the hillside, and she was always to cover up the well with a big stone before the sun set. But one day she had been working in the valley and she was weary, and she sat down by the path on her way home and fell asleep. And the sun had gone down before she reached the well, and in the night the water broke out and filled all the plain, and what was land is now water." This, then, was the origin of Loch Awe. It is a little like the Australian account of the Deluge. That calamity was produced by a man's showing a woman the mystic turndun, a native sacred toy. Instantly water broke out of the earth and drowned everybody.

This is merely a local legend, such as boatmen are expected to know. As the green trout utterly declined to rise, I tried the boatman with the Irish story of why the Gruagach Gaire left off laughing, and all about the hare that came and defiled his table, as recited by Mr. Curtin in his "Irish Legends" (Sampson, Low, & Co.). The boatman did not know this fable, but he did know of a red deer that came and spoke to a gentleman. This was a story from the Macpherson country. I give it first in the boatman’s words, and then we shall discuss the history of the legend as known to Sir Walter Scott and James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd.

THE YARN OF THE BLACK OFFICER

"It was about 'the last Christmas of the hundred' — the end of last century. They wanted men for the Black Watch (42nd Highlanders), and the Black Officer, as they called him, was sent to his own country to enlist them. Some he got willingly, and others by force. He promised he would only take them to London, where the King wanted to review them, and then let them go home. So they came, though they little liked it, and he was marching them south. Now at night they reached a place where nobody would have halted them except the Black Officer, for it was a great place for ghosts. And they would have run away if they had dared, but they were afraid of him. So some tried to sleep in threes and fours, and some were afraid to sleep, and they sat up round the fire. But the Black Officer, he went some way from the rest, and lay down beneath a tree.

"Now as the night wore on, and whiles it would be dark and whiles the moon shone, a man came — they did not know from where — a big red man, and drew up to the fire, and was talking with them. And he asked where the Black Officer was, and they showed him. Now there was one man, Shamus Mackenzie they called him, and he was very curious, and he must be seeing what they did. So he followed the man, and saw him stoop and speak to the officer, but he did not waken; then this individual took the Black Officer by the breast and shook him violently. Then Shamus knew who the stranger was, for no man alive durst have done as much to the Black Officer. And there was the Black Officer kneeling to him!

"Well, what they said, Shamus could not hear, and presently they walked away, and the Black Officer came back alone.

"He took them to England, but never to London, and they never saw the King. He took them to Portsmouth, and they were embarked for India, where we were fighting the French. There was a town we couldn't get into" (Seringapatam?), "and the Black Officer volunteered to make a tunnel under the walls. Now they worked three days, and whether it was the French heard them and let them dig on, or not, any way, on the third day the French broke in on them. They kept sending men into the tunnel, and more men, and still they wondered who was fighting within, and how we could have so large a party in the tunnel; so at last they brought torches, and there was no man alive on our side but the Black Officer, and he had a wall of corpses built up in front of him, and was fighting across it. He had more light to see by than the French had, for it was dark behind him, and there would be some light on their side. So at last they brought some combustibles and blew it all up. Three days after that we took the town. Some of our soldiers were sent to dig out the tunnel, and with them was Shamus Mackenzie."

"And they never found the Black Officer," I said, thinking of young Campbell in Sekukoeni's fighting koppie.

"Oh, yes," said the boatman, "Shamus found the body of the Black Officer, all black with smoke, and he laid him down on a green knoll, and was standing over the dead man, and was thinking of how many places they had been in together, and of his own country, and how he wished he was there again. Then the dead man's face moved.

"Shamus turned and ran for his life, and he was running till he met some officers, and he told them that the Black Officer's body had stirred. They thought he was lying, but they went off to the place, and one of them had the thought to take a flask of brandy in his pocket. When they came to the lifeless body it stirred again, and with one thing and another they brought him round.

"The Black Officer was not himself again for long, and they took him home to his own country, and he lay in bed in his house. And every day a red deer would come to the house, and go into his room and sit on a chair beside the bed, speaking to him like a man.

"Well, the Black Officer got better again, and went about among his friends; and once he was driving home from a dinner-party, and Shamus was with him. It was just the last night of the hundred. And on the road they met a man, and Shamus knew him — for it was him they had seen by the fire on the march, as I told you at the beginning. The Black Officer got down from his carriage and joined the man, and they walked a bit apart; but Shamus — he was so curious — whatever happened he must see them. And he came within hearing just as they were parting, and he heard the stranger say, 'This is the night.'

"'No,' said the Black Officer, 'this night next year.'

"So he came back, and they drove home. A year went by, and the Black Officer was seeking through the country for the twelve best men he could find to accompany him to some deer-hunt or the like. And he asked Shamus, but he pretended he was ill — Oh, he was very unwell! — and he could not go, but stayed in bed at home. So the Black Officer chose another man, and he and the twelve set out — the thirteen of them. But they were never seen again."

"Never seen again? Were they lost in the snow?"

"It did come on a heavy fall, sir."

"But their bodies were found?"

"No, sir — though they searched high and low; they are not found, indeed, till this day. It was thought the Black Officer had sold himself and twelve other men, sir."

"To the Devil?"

"It would be that."

For the narrator never mentions our ghostly foe, which produces a solemn effect.

This story was absolutely new to me, and much I wished that Mr. Louis Stevenson could have heard it. The blending of the far East with the Highlands reminds one of his "Master of Ballantrae," and what might he not make of that fairy red deer! My boatman, too, told me what Mr. Stevenson says the Highlanders will not tell — the name of the man who committed the murder of which Alan Breck was accused. But this secret I do not intend to divulge.

The story of the Black Officer then seemed absolutely unpublished. But when Sir Walter Scott's diary was given to the world in October, 1890, it turned out that he was not wholly ignorant of the legend. In 1828 he complains that he has been annoyed by a lady, because he had printed "in the 'Review'" a rawhead and bloody-bones story of her father, Major Macpherson, who was lost in a snowstorm. This Major Macpherson was clearly the Black Officer. Mr. Douglas, the publisher of Scott's diary, discovered that the "Review" mentioned vaguely by Scott was the "Foreign Quarterly," No. I, July, 1827. In an essay on Hoffmann's novels, Sir Walter introduced the tale as told to him in a letter from a nobleman some time deceased, not more distinguished for his love of science than his attachment to literature in all its branches.

The tale is too long to be given completely. Briefly, a Captain M., on St. Valentine's day, 1799, had been deer-shooting (at an odd time of the year) in the hills west of D-. He did not return, a terrible snowstorm set in, and finally he and his friends were found dead in a bothy, which the tempest had literally destroyed. Large stones from the walls were found lying at distances of a hundred yards; the wooden uprights were twisted like broken sticks. The Captain was lying dead, without his clothes, on the bed; one man was discovered at a distance, another near the Captain. Then it was remembered that, at the same bothy a month before, a shepherd lad had inquired for the Captain, had walked with him for some time, and that, on the officer's return, "a mysterious anxiety hung about him." A fire had also been seen blazing on an opposite height, and when some of the gillies went to the spot, "there was no fire to be seen." On the day when the expedition had started, the Captain was warned of the ill weather, but he said "he *must* go." He was an unpopular man, and was accused of getting money by procuring recruits from the Highlands, often by cruel means. "Our informer told us nothing more; he neither told us his own opinion, nor that of the country, but left it to our own notions of the manner in which good and evil is rewarded in this life to suggest the author of the miserable event. He seemed impressed with superstitious awe on the subject, and said, 'There was na the like seen in a' Scotland.' The man is far advanced in years and is a schoolmaster in the neighbourhood of Rannoch."

Sir Walter says that "the feeling of superstitious awe annexed to the catastrophe could not have been improved by any circumstances of additional horror which a poet could have invented." But is there not something more moving still in the boatman's version: "they were never seen again . . . they were not found indeed till this day"?

The folklorist, of course, is eager to know whether the boatman's much more complete and connected narrative is a popular mythical development in the years between 1820 and 1890, or whether the schoolmaster of Rannoch did not tell all he knew. It is unlikely, I think, that the siege of Seringapatam would have been remembered so long in connection with the Black Officer if it had not formed part of his original legend. Meanwhile the earliest printed notice of the event with which I am acquainted, a notice only ten years later than the date of the Major's death in 1799, is given by Hogg in "The Spy," 1810-11, pp. 101-3. I offer an abridgment of the narrative.

"About the end of last century Major Macpherson and a party of friends went out to hunt on the Grampians between Athole and Badenoch. They were highly successful, and in the afternoon they went into a little bothy, and, having meat and drink, they abandoned themselves to jollity.

"During their merry-making a young man entered whose appearance particularly struck and somewhat shocked Macpherson; the stranger beckoned to the Major, and he followed him instantly out of the bothy.

"When they parted, after apparently having had some earnest conversation, the stranger was out of sight long before the Major was half-way back, though only twenty yards away.

"The Major showed on his return such evident marks of trepidation that the mirth was marred and no one cared to ask him questions.

"This was early in the week, and on Friday the Major persuaded his friends to make a second expedition to the mountains, from which they never returned.

"On a search being made their dead bodies were found in the bothy, some considerably mangled, but some were not marked by any wound.

"It was visible that this had not been effected by human agency: the bothy was torn from its foundations and scarcely a vestige left of it, and one huge stone, which twelve men could not have raised, was tossed to a considerable distance.

"On this event Scott's beautiful ballad of 'Glenfinlas' is said to have been founded."

As will be seen presently, Hogg was wrong about 'Glenfinlas'; the boatman was acquainted with a traditional version of that wild legend. I found another at Rannoch.

The Highland fairies are very vampirish. The Loch Awe boatman lives at a spot haunted by a shadowy maiden. Her last appearance was about thirty years ago. Two young men were thrashing corn one morning, when the joint of the flail broke. The owner went to Larichban and entered an outhouse to look for a piece of sheepskin wherewith to mend the flail. He was long absent, and his companion went after him. He found him struggling in the arms of a ghostly maid, who had nearly murdered him, but departed on the arrival of his friend. It is not easy to make out what these ghoulish women are — not fairies exactly, nor witches, nor vampires. For example, three shepherds at a lonely sheiling were discoursing of their loves, and it was, "Oh, how happy I should be if Katie were here, or Maggie, or Bessie!" as the case might be. So they would say and so they would wish, and lo! one evening, the three girls came to the door of the hut. So they made them welcome; but one of the shepherds was playing the Jew's-harp, and he did not like the turn matters were taking.

The two others stole off into corners of the darkling hut with their lovers, but this prudent lad never took his lips off the Jew's-harp.

"Harping is good if no ill follows it," said the semblance of his sweetheart; but he never answered. He played and thrummed, and out of one dark corner trickled red blood into the fire-light, and out of another corner came a current of blood to meet it. Then he slowly rose, still harping, and backed his way to the door, and fled into the hills from these cruel airy shapes of false desire.

"And do the people actually believe all that?"

"Ay, do they!"

That is the boatman's version of Scott's theme in "Glenfinlas." Witches played a great part in his narratives.

In the boatman's country there is a plain, and on the plain is a knoll, about twice the height of a one-storeyed cottage, and pointed "like a sugar-loaf." The old people remember, or have heard, that this mound was not there when they were young. It swelled up suddenly out of the grave of a witch who was buried there.

The witch was a great enemy of a shepherd. Every morning she would put on the shape of a hare, and run before his dogs, and lead them away from the sheep. He knew it was right to shoot at her with a crooked sixpence, and he hit her on the hind leg, and the dogs were after her, and chased the hare into the old woman’s cottage. The shepherd ran after them, and there he found them, tearing at the old woman; but the hare was twisted round their necks, and she was crying, “Tighten, hare, tighten!” and it was choking them. So he tore the hare off the dogs; and then the old woman begged him to save her from them, and she promised never to plague him again. “But if the old dog’s teeth had been as sharp as the young one’s, she would have been a dead woman.”

When this witch died she knew she could never lie in safety in her grave; but there was a very safe churchyard in Aberdeenshire, a hundred and fifty miles away, and if she could get into that she would be at rest. And she rose out of her grave, and off she went, and the Devil after her, on a black horse; but, praise to the swiftness of her feet, she won the churchyard before him. Her first grave swelled up, oh, as high as that green hillock!

Witches are still in active practice. There was an old woman very miserly. She would alway be taking one of her neighbours’ sheep from the hills, and they stood it for long; they did not like to meddle with her. At last it grew so bad that they brought her before the sheriff, and she got eighteen months in prison. When she came out she was very angry, and set about making an image of the woman whose sheep she had taken. When the image was made she burned it and put the ashes in a burn. And it is a very curious thing, but the woman she made it on fell into a decline, and took to her bed.

The witch and her family went to America. They kept a little inn, in a country place, and people who slept in it did not come out again. They were discovered, and the eldest son was hanged; he confessed that he had committed nineteen murders before he left Scotland.

“They were not a nice family.”

“The father was a very respectable old man.”

The boatman gave me the name of this wicked household, but it is perhaps better forgotten.

The extraordinary thing is that this appears to be the Highland introduction to, or part first of, a gloomy and sanguinary story of a murder hole — an inn of assassins in a lonely district of the United States, which Mr. Louis Stevenson heard in his travels there, and told to me some years ago. The details have escaped my memory, but, as Mr. Stevenson narrated them, they rivalled De Quincey’s awful story of Williams’s murders in the Ratcliffe Highway.

Life must still be haunted in Badenoch, as it was on Ida’s hill, by forms of unearthly beauty, the goddess or the ghost yet wooing the shepherd; indeed, the boatman told me many stories of living superstition and terrors of the night; but why should I exhaust his wallet? To be sure, it seemed very full of tales; these offered here may be but the legends which came first to his hand. The boatman is not himself a believer in the fairy world, or not more than all sensible men ought to be. The supernatural is too pleasant a thing for us to discard in an earnest, scientific manner like Mr. Kipling's Aurelian McGubben. Perhaps I am more superstitious than the boatman, and the yarns I swopped with him about ghosts I have met would seem even more mendacious to possessors of pocket microscopes and of the modern spirit. But I would rather have one banshee story than fifteen pages of proof that "life, which began as a cell, with a c, is to end as a sell, with an s." It should be added that the boatman has given his consent to the printing of his yarns. On being offered a moiety of the profits, he observed that he had no objection to these, but that he entirely declined to be responsible for any share of the expenses. Would that all authors were as sagacious, for then the amateur novelist and the minor poet would vex us no more.

Perhaps I should note that I have not made the boatman say "whateffer," because he doesn't. The occasional use of the imperfect is almost his only Gaelic idiom. It is a great comfort and pleasure, when the trout do not rise, to meet a skilled and unaffected narrator of the old beliefs, old legends, as ancient as the hills that girdle and guard the loch, or as antique, at least, as man's dwelling among the mountains — the Yellow Hill, the Calf Hill, the Hill of the Stack. The beauty of the scene, the pleasant talk, the daffodils on the green isle among the Celtic graves, compensate for a certain "dourness" among the fishes of Loch Awe. On the occasions when they are not dour they rise very pleasant and free, but, in these brief moments, it is not of legends and folklore that you are thinking, but of the landing-net. The boatman, by the way, was either not well acquainted with *Märchen* — Celtic nursery-tales such as Campbell of Islay collected, or was not much interested in them, or, perhaps, had the shyness about narrating this particular sort of old wives' fables which is so common. People who do know them seldom tell them in Sassenach.

LOCH-FISHING

LITTLE LOCH BEG

There is something mysterious in loch-fishing, in the tastes and habits of the fish which inhabit the innumerable lakes and tarns of Scotland. It is not always easy to account either for their presence or their absence, for their numbers or scarcity, their eagerness to take or their "dourness." For example, there is Loch Borlan, close to the well-known little inn of Alt-na-geal-gach in Sutherland. Unless that piece of water is greatly changed, it is simply full of fish of about a quarter of a pound, which will rise at almost any time to almost any fly. There is not much pleasure in catching such tiny and eager trout, but in the season complacent anglers capture and boast of their many dozens. On the other hand, a year or two ago, a beginner took a four-pound trout there with the fly. If such trout exist in Borlan, it is hard to explain the presence of the innumerable fry. One would expect the giants of the deep to keep down their population. Not far off is another small lake, Loch Awe, which has invisible advantages over Loch Borlan, yet there the trout are, or were, "fat and fair of flesh," like Tamlane in the ballad. Wherefore are the trout in Loch Tummell so big and strong, from one to five pounds, and so scarce, while those in Loch Awe are numerous and small? One occasionally sees examples of how quickly trout will increase in weight, and what curious habits they will adopt. In a county of south-western Scotland there is a large village, populated by a keenly devoted set of anglers, who miss no opportunity. Within a quarter of a mile of the village is a small tarn, very picturesquely situated among low hills, and provided with the very tiniest feeder and outflow. There is a sluice at the outflow, and, for some reason, the farmer used to let most of the water out, in the summer of every year. In winter the tarn is used by the curling club. It is not deep, has rather a marshy bottom, and many ducks, snipe, and wild-fowl generally dwell among the reeds and marish plants of its sides. Nobody ever dreamed of fishing here, but one day a rustic, "glowering" idly over the wall of the adjacent road, saw fish rising. He mentioned his discovery to an angler, who is said to have caught some large trout, but tradition varies about everything, except that the fish are very "dour." One evening in August, a warm, still evening, I happened to visit the tarn. As soon as the sun fell below the hills, it was literally alive with large trout rising. As far as one could estimate from the brief view of heads and shoulders, they were sometimes two or three pounds in weight. I got my rod, of course, as did a rural friend. Mine was a small cane rod, his a salmon-rod. I fished with one Test-fly; he with three large loch-flies. The fish were rising actually at our feet, but they seemed to move about very much, never, or seldom, rising twice exactly at the same place. The hypothesis was started that there were but few of them, and that they ran round and round, like a stage army, to give an appearance of multitude. But this appears improbable. What is certain was our utter inability ever to get a rise from the provoking creatures. The dry fly is difficult to use on a loch, as there is no stream to move it, and however gently you draw it it makes a "wake" — a trail behind it. Wet or dry, or "twixt wet and dry," like the convivial person in the song, we could none of us raise them. I did catch a small but beautifully proportioned and pink-fleshed trout with the alder, but everything else, silver sedge and all, everything from midge to May-fly, in the late twilight, was offered to them in vain. In windy or cloudy weather it was just as useless; indeed, I never saw them rise, except in a warm summer stillness, at and after sunset. Probably they would have taken a small red worm, pitched into the ripple of a rise; but we did not try that. After a few evenings, they seemed to give up rising altogether. I don't feel certain that they had not been netted: yet no trout seemed to be on sale in the village. Their presence in the water may perhaps be accounted for thus: they may have come into the loch from the river, by way of the tiny feeder; but the river-trout are both scarce and small. A new farmer had given up letting the water off, and probably there must have been very rich feeding, water-shrimps or snails, which might partly account for the refusal to rise at the artificial fly. Or they may have been ottered by the villagers, though that would rather have made them rise short than not rise at all.

There is another loch on an extremely remote hillside, eight miles from the smallest town, in a pastoral country. There are trout enough in the loch, and of excellent size and flavour, but you scarcely ever get them. They rise freely, but they *always* rise short. It is, I think, the most provoking loch I ever fished. You raise them; they come up freely, showing broad sides of a ruddy gold, like the handsomest Test trout, but they almost invariably miss the hook. You do not land one out of twenty. The reason is, apparently, that people from the nearest town use the otter in the summer evenings, when these trout rise best. In a Sutherland loch, Mr. Edward Moss tells us (in "A Season in Sutherland"), that he once found an elegant otter, a well-made engine of some unscrupulous tourist, lying in the bottom of the water on a sunny day. At Loch Skene, on the top of a hill, twenty miles from any town, otters are occasionally found by the keeper or the shepherds, concealed near the shore. The practice of ottering can give little pleasure to any but a depraved mind, and nothing educates trout so rapidly into "rising short"; why they are not to be had when they are rising most vehemently, "to themselves," is another mystery. A few rises are encouraging, but when the water is all splashing with rises, as a rule the angler is only tantalised. A windy day, a day with a large ripple, but without white waves breaking, is, as a rule, best for a loch. In some lochs the sea-trout prefer such a hurricane that a boat can hardly be kept on the water. I have known a strong north wind in autumn put down the sea-trout, whereas the salmon rose, with unusual eagerness, just in the shallows where the waves broke in foam on the shore. The best day I ever had with sea-trout was muggy and grey, and the fish were most eager when the water was still, except for a tremendously heavy shower of rain, "a singing shower," as George Chapman has it. On that day two rods caught thirty-nine sea-trout, weighing forty pounds. But it is difficult to say beforehand what day will do well, except that sunshine is bad, a north wind worse, and no wind at all usually means an empty basket. Even to this rule there are exceptions, and one of these is in the case of a tarn which I shall call, pleonastically, Little Loch Beg.

This is not the real name of the loch — quite enough people know its real name already. Nor does it seem necessary to mention the district where the loch lies hidden; suffice it to say that a land of more streams and scarcer trout you will hardly find. We had tried all the rivers and burns to no purpose, and the lochs are capricious and overfished. One loch we had not tried, Loch Beg. You walk, or drive, a few miles from any village, then you climb a few hundred yards of hill, and from the ridge you see, on one hand a great amphitheatre of green and purple mountain-sides, in the west; on the east, within a hundred yards under a slope, is Loch Beg. It is not a mile in circumference, and all but some eighty yards of shore is defended against the angler by wide beds of water-lilies, with their pretty white floating lamps, or by tall sedges and reeds. Nor is the wading easy. Four steps you make with safety, at the fifth your foremost leg sinks in mud apparently bottomless. Most people fish only the eastern side, whereof a few score yards are open, with a rocky and gravelly bottom.

Now, all lochs have their humours. In some trout like a big fly, in some a small one, but almost all do best with a rough wind or rain. I knew enough of Loch Beg to approach it at noon on a blazing day of sunshine, when the surface was like glass. It was like that when first I saw it, and a shepherd warned us that we "would dae naething"; we did little, indeed, but I rose nearly every rising fish I cast over, losing them all, too, and in some cases being broken, as I was using very fine gut, and the fish were heavy. Another trial seemed desirable, and the number of rising trout was most tempting. All over it trout were rising to the natural fly, with big circles like those you see in the Test at twilight; while in the centre, where no artificial fly can be cast for want of a boat, a big fish would throw himself out of the water in his eagerness. One such I saw which could not have weighed under three pounds, a short, thick, dark-yellow fish.

I was using a light two-handed rod, and fancied that a single Test-fly on very fine tackle would be the best lure. It certainly rose the trout, if one threw into the circle they made; but they never were hooked. One fish of about a pound and a half threw himself out of the water at it, hit it, and broke the fine tackle. So I went on raising them, but never getting them. As long as the sun blazed and no breeze ruffled the water, they rose bravely, but a cloud or even a ripple seemed to send them down.

At last I tried a big alder, and with that I actually touched a few, and even landed several on the shelving bank. Their average weight, as we proved on several occasions, was exactly three-quarters of a pound; but we never succeeded in landing any of the really big ones.

A local angler told me he had caught one of two pounds, and lost another "like a young grilse," after he had drawn it on to the bank. I can easily believe it, for in no loch, but one, have I ever seen so many really big and handsome fish feeding. Loch Beg is within a mile of a larger and famous loch, but it is infinitely better, though the other looks much more favourable in all ways for sport. The only place where fishing is easy, as I have said, is a mere strip of coast under the hill, where there is some gravel, and the mouth of a very tiny feeder, usually dry. Off this place the trout rose freely, but not near so freely as in a certain corner, quite out of reach without a boat, where the leviathans lived and sported.

After the little expanse of open shore had been fished over a few times, the trout there seemed to grow more shy, and there was a certain monotony in walking this tiny quarter-deck of space. So I went round to the west side, where the water-lilies are. Fish were rising about three yards beyond the weedy beds, and I foolishly thought I would try for them. Now, you cannot overestimate the difficulty of casting a fly across yards of water-lilies. You catch in the weeds as you lift your line for a fresh cast, and then you have to extricate it laboriously, shortening line, and then to let it out again, and probably come to grief once more.

I saw a trout rise, with a huge sullen circle dimpling round him, cast over him, raised him, and missed him. The water was perfectly still, and the "plop" made by these fish was very exciting and tantalising. The next that rose took the alder, and, of course, ran right into the broad band of lilies. I tried all the dodges I could think of, and all that Mr. Halford suggests. I dragged at him hard. I gave him line. I sat down and endeavoured to disengage my thoughts, but I never got a glimpse of him, and finally had to wade as far in as I dared, and save as much of the casting line as I could; it was very little.

There was one thing to be said for the trout on this side: they meant business. They did not rise shyly, like the others, but went for the fly if it came at all near them, and then, down they rushed, and bolted into the lily-roots.

A new plan occurred to me. I put on about eighteen inches of the stoutest gut I had, to the end I knotted the biggest sea-trout fly I possessed, and, hooking the next fish that rose, I turned my back on the loch and ran uphill with the rod. Looking back I saw a trout well over a pound flying across the lilies; but alas! the hold was not strong enough, and he fell back. Again and again I tried this method, invariably hooking the trout, though the heavy short casting-line and the big fly fell very awkwardly in the dead stillness of the water. I had some exciting runs with them, for they came eagerly to the big fly, and did not miss it, as they had missed the Red Quill, or Whitchurch Dun, with which at first I tried to beguile them. One, of only the average weight, I did drag out over the lilies; the others fell off in mid-journey, but they never broke the uncompromising stout tackle.

With the first chill of evening they ceased rising, and I left them, not ungrateful for their very peculiar manners and customs. The chances are that the trout beyond the band of weeds never see an artificial fly, and they are, therefore, the more guileless — at least, late in the season. In spring, I believe, the lilies are less in the way, and I fear some one has put a Berthon boat on the loch in April. But it is not so much what one catches in Loch Beg, as the monsters which one might catch that make the tarn so desirable.

The loch seems to prove that any hill-tarn might be made a good place for sport, if trout were introduced where they do not exist already. But the size of these in Loch Beg puzzles me, nor can one see how they breed, as breed they do: for twice or thrice I caught a fingerling, and threw him in again. No burn runs out of the loch, and, even in a flood, the feeder is so small, and its course so extremely steep, that one cannot imagine where the fish manage to spawn. The only loch known to me where the common trout are of equal size, is on the Border. It is extremely deep, with very clear water, and with scarce any spawning ground. On a summer evening the trout are occasionally caught; three weighing seven pounds were taken one night, a year or two ago. I have not tried the evening fishing, but at all other times of day have found them the “dourest” of trout, and they grow dourer. But one is always lured on by the spectacle of the monsters which throw themselves out of water, with a splash that echoes through all the circuit of the low green hills. They probably reach at least four or five pounds, but it is unlikely that the biggest take the fly, and one may doubt whether they propagate their species, as small trout are never seen there.

There are two ways of enlarging the size of trout which should be carefully avoided. Pike are supposed to keep down the population and leave more food for the survivors, minnows are supposed to be nourishing food. Both of these novelties are dangerous. Pike have been introduced in that long lovely sheet of water, Loch Ken, and I have never once seen the rise of a trout break that surface, so “hideously serene.” Trout, in lochs which have become accustomed to feeding on minnows, are apt to disdain fly altogether. Of course there are lochs in which good trout coexist with minnows and with pike, but these inmates are too dangerous to be introduced. The introduction, too, of Loch Leven trout is often disappointing. Sometimes they escape down the burn into the river in floods; sometimes, perhaps for lack of proper food and sufficient, they dwindle terribly in size, and become no better than “brownies.” In St. Mary’s Loch, in Selkirkshire, some Canadian trout were introduced. Little or nothing has been seen of them, unless some small creatures of a quarter of a pound, extraordinarily silvery, and more often in the air than in the water when hooked, are these children of the remote West. If they grew up, and retained their beauty and sprightliness, they would be excellent substitutes for sea-trout. Almost all experiments in stocking lochs have their perils, except the simple experiment of putting trout where there were no trout before. This can do no harm, and they may increase in weight, let us hope not in wisdom, like the curiously heavy and shy fish mentioned in the beginning of this paper.

LOCH LEVEN

I had a friend once, an angler, who in winter was fond of another sport. He liked to cast his *louis* into the green baize pond at Monte Carlo, and, on the whole, he was generally "broken." He seldom landed the golden fish of the old man's dream in Theocritus. When the croupier had gaffed all his money he would repent and say, "Now, that would have kept me at Loch Leven for a fortnight." One used to wonder whether a fortnight of Loch Leven was worth an afternoon of the pleasure of losing at Monte Carlo. The loch has a name for being cockneyfied, beset by whole fleets of competitive anglers from various angling clubs in Scotland. That men should competitively angle shows, indeed, a great want of true angling sentiment. To fish in a crowd is odious, to work hard for prizes of flasks and creels and fly-books is to mistake the true meaning of the pastime. However, in this crowded age men are so constituted that they like to turn a contemplative exercise into a kind of Bank Holiday. There is no use in arguing with such persons; the worst of their pleasure is that it tends to change a Scotch loch into something like the pond of the Welsh Harp, at Hendon. It is always good news to read in the papers how the Dundee Walton Society had a bad day, and how the first prize was won by Mr. Macneesh, with five trout weighing three pounds and three quarters. Loch Leven, then, is crowded and cockneyfied by competitions; it has also no great name for beauty of landscape. Every one to his own taste in natural beauty, but in this respect I think Loch Leven is better than its reputation. It is certainly more pictorial, so to speak, than some remote moor lochs up near Cape Wrath; Forsinard in particular, where the scenery looks like one gigantic series of brown "baps," flat Scotch scones, all of low elevation, all precisely similar to each other.

Loch Leven is not such a cockney place as the majority of men who have not visited it imagine. It really is larger than the Welsh Harp at Hendon, and the scenery, though not like that of Ben Cruachan or Ben Mohr, excels the landscape of Middlesex. At the northern end is a small town, grey, with some red roofs and one or two characteristic Fifeshire church-towers, squat and strong. There are also a few factory chimneys, which are not fair to outward view, nor appropriate by a loch-side. On the west are ranges of distant hills, low but not uncomely. On the east rises a beautiful moorland steep with broken and graceful outlines. When the sun shines on the red tilled land, in spring; when the smoke of burning gorse coils up all day long into the sky, as if the Great Spirit were taking his pipe of peace on the mountains; when the islands are mirrored on the glassy water, then the artist rejoices, though the angler knows that he will waste his day. As far as fishing goes, he is bound to be "clean," as the boatmen say — to catch nothing; but the solemn peace, and the walls and ruined towers of Queen Mary's prison, may partially console the fisher. The accommodation is agreeable, there is a pleasant inn — an old town-house, perhaps, of some great family, when the great families did not rush up to London, but spent their winters in such country towns as Dumfries and St. Andrews. The inn has a great green garden at its doors, and if the talk is mainly of fishing, and if every one tells of his monster trout that escaped the net, there is much worse conversation than that.

When you reach Kinross, and, after excellent ham and eggs, begin to make a start, the cockney element is most visible at the first. Everybody's name is registered in a book; each pays a considerable, but not exorbitant, fee for the society — often well worth the money — and the assistance of boatmen. These gentlemen are also well provided with luncheon and beer, and, on the whole, there is more pleasure in the life of a Loch Leven boatman than in most arts, crafts, or professions. He takes the rod when his patron is lazy; it is said that he often catches the trout; he sees a good deal of good company, and, if his basket be heavy, who so content as he? The first thing is to row out to a good bay, and which will prove a good bay depends on the strength and direction of the wind. Perhaps the best fishing is farthest off, at the end of a long row, but the best scenery is not so distant. A good deal hangs on an early start when there are many boats out.

Loch Leven is a rather shallow loch, seldom much over fifteen feet deep, save where a long narrow rent or geological flaw runs through the bottom. The water is of a queer glaucous green, olive-coloured, or rather like the tint made when you wash out a box of water-colour paints. This is not so pretty as the black wave of Loch Awe or Loch Shin, but has a redeeming quality in the richness of the feeding for trout. These are fabled to average about a pound, but are probably a trifle under that weight, on the whole. They are famous, and, according to Sir Walter Scott, were famous as long ago as in Queen Mary's time, for the bright silver of their sides, for their pink flesh, and gameness when hooked. Theorists have explained all this by saying that they are the descendants of land-locked salmon. The flies used on the loch are smaller than those favoured in the Highlands; they are sold attached to casts, and four flies are actually employed at once. Probably two are quite enough at a time. If a veteran trout is attracted by seeing four flies, all of different species, and these like nothing in nature, all conspiring to descend on him at once, he must be less cautious than we generally find him. The Hampshire angler, of course, will sneer at the whole proceeding, the "chucking and chancing it," in the queer-coloured wave, and the use of so many fanciful entomological specimens. But the Hampshire angler is very welcome to try his arts, in a calm, and his natural-looking cocked-up flies. He will probably be defeated by a grocer from Greenock, sinking his four flies very deep, as is, by some experts, recommended. The trout are capricious, perhaps as capricious as any known to the angler, but they are believed to prefer a strong east wind and a dark day. The east wind is nowhere, perhaps, so bad as people fancy; it is certainly not so bad as the north wind, and on Loch Leven it is the favourite. The man who is lucky enough to hit on the right day, and to land a couple of dozen Loch Leven trout, has very good reason to congratulate himself, and need envy nobody. But such days and such takes are rare, and the summer of 1890 was much more unfortunate than that of 1889.

One great mistake is made by the company which farms the Loch, stocks it, supplies the boats, and regulates the fishing. They permit trolling with angels, or phantoms, or the natural minnow. Now, trolling may be comparatively legitimate, when the boat is being pulled against the wind to its drift, but there is no more skill in it than in sitting in an omnibus. But for trolling, many a boat would come home "clean" in the evening, on days of calm, or when, for other reasons of their own, the trout refuse to take the artificial fly. Yet there are men at Loch Leven who troll all day, and poor sport it must be, as a trout of a pound or so has no chance on a trolling-rod. This method is inimical to fly-fishing, but is such a consolation to the inefficient angler that one can hardly expect to see it abolished. The unsuccessful clamour for trolling, instead of consoling themselves, as sportsmen should do, with the conversation of the gillies, their anecdotes of great trout, and their reminiscences of great anglers, especially of the late Mr. Russell, the famed editor of the "Scotsman." This humourist is gradually "winning his way to the mythical." All fishing stories are attached to him; his eloquence is said (in the language of the historian of the Buccaneers) to have been "florid"; he is reported to have thrown his fly-book into Loch Leven on an unlucky day, saying, "You brutes, take your choice," and a rock, which he once hooked and held on to, is named after him, on the Tweed. In addition to the humane and varied conversation of the boatmen, there is always the pure pleasure of simply gazing at the hillsides and at the islands. They are as much associated with the memory of Mary Stuart as Hermitage or even Holyrood. On that island was her prison; here the rude Morton tried to bully her into signing away her rights; hence she may often have watched the shore at night for the lighting of a beacon, a sign that a rescue was at hand.

The hills, at least, are much as she may have seen them, and the square towers and crumbling walls on the island met her eyes when they were all too strong. The "quay" is no longer "rude," as when "The Abbot" was written, and is crowded with the green boats of the Loch Leven Company. But you still land on her island under "the huge old tree" which Scott saw, which the unhappy Mary may herself have seen. The small garden and the statues are gone, the garden whence Roland Graeme led Mary to the boat and to brief liberty and hope unfulfilled. Only a kind of ground-plan remains of the halls where Lindesay and Ruthven browbeat her forlorn Majesty. But you may climb the staircase where Roland Graeme stood sentinel, and feel a touch, of what Pepys felt when he kissed a dead Queen — Katherine of Valois. Like Roland Graeme, the Queen may have been "wearied to death of this Castle of Loch Leven," where, in spring, all seems so beautiful, the trees budding freshly above the yellow celandine and among the grey prison walls. It was a kindlier prison house than Fotheringay, and minds peaceful and contented would gladly have taken "this for a hermitage."

The Roman Emperors used to banish too powerful subjects to the lovely isles that lie like lilies on the Ægean. Plutarch tried to console these exiles, by showing them how fortunate they were, far from the bustle of the Forum, the vices, the tortures, the noise and smoke of Rome, happy, if they chose, in their gardens, with the blue waters breaking on the rocks, and, as he is careful to add, *with plenty of fishing*. Mr. Mahaffy calls this "rhetorical consolation," and the exiles may have been of his mind. But the exiles would have been wise to listen to Plutarch, and, had I enjoyed the luck of Mary Stuart, when Loch Leven was not overfished, when the trout were uneducated, never would I have plunged into politics again. She might have been very happy, with Ronsard's latest poems, with Italian romances, with a boat on the loch, and some Rizzio to sing to her on the still summer days. From her Castle she would hear how the politicians were squabbling, lying, raising a man to divinity and stoning him next day, cutting each other's heads off, swearing and forswearing themselves, conspiring and caballing. *Suave mari,* and the peace of Loch Leven and the island hermitage would have been the sweeter for the din outside. A woman, a Queen, a Stuart, could not attain, and perhaps ought not to have attained, this epicureanism. Mary Stuart had her chance, and missed it; perhaps, after all, her shrewish female gaoler made the passionless life impossible.

These, at Loch Leven, are natural reflections. The place has a charm of its own, especially if you make up your mind not to be disappointed, not to troll, and not to envy the more fortunate anglers who shout to you the number of their victories across the wave. Even at Loch Leven we may be contemplative, may be quiet, and go a-fishing.

THE BLOODY DOCTOR. (A BAD DAY ON CLEARBURN)

Thou askest me, my brother, how first and where I met the Bloody Doctor? The tale is weird, so weird that to a soul less proved than thine I scarce dare speak of the adventure.

*

This, perhaps, would be the right way of beginning a story (not that it is a story exactly), with the title forced on me by the name and nature of the hero. But I do not think I could keep up the style without a lady-collaborator; besides, I have used the term "weird" twice already, and thus played away the trumps of modern picturesque diction. To return to our Doctor: many a bad day have I had on Clearburn Loch, and never a good one. But one thing draws me always to the loch when I have the luck to be within twenty miles of it. There are trout in Clearburn! The Border angler knows that the trout in his native waters is nearly as extinct as the dodo. Many causes have combined to extirpate the shy and spirited fish. First, there are too many anglers:

Twixt Holy Lee and Clovenfords,
A tentier bit ye canna hae,

sang that good old angler, now with God, Mr. Thomas Tod Stoddart. But between Holy Lee and Clovenfords you may see half a dozen rods on every pool and stream. There goes that leviathan, the angler from London, who has been beguiled hither by the artless "Guide" of Mr. Watson Lyall. There fishes the farmer's lad, and the schoolmaster, and the wandering weaver out of work or disinclined to work. In his rags, with his thin face and red "goatee" beard, with his hazel wand and his home-made reel, there is withal something kindly about this poor fellow, this true sportsman. He loves better to hear the lark sing than the mouse cheep; he wanders from depopulated stream to depopulated burn, and all is fish that comes to his fly. Fingerlings he keeps, and does not return to the water "as pitying their youth." Let us not grudge him his sport as long as he fishes fair, and he is always good company. But he, with all the other countless fishermen, make fish so rare and so wary that, except after a flood in Meggat or the Douglas burn, trout are scarce to be taken by ordinary skill. As for

Thae reiving cheils
Frae Galashiels,

who use nets, and salmon roe, and poisons, and dynamite, they are miscreants indeed; they spoil the sport, not of the rich, but of their own class, and of every man who would be quiet, and go angling in the sacred streams of Christopher North and the Shepherd. The mills, with their dyes and dirt, are also responsible for the dearth of trout.

Untainted yet thy stream, fair Teviot, runs,

Leyden sang; but now the stream is very much tainted indeed below Hawick, like Tweed in too many places. Thus, for a dozen reasons, trout are nigh as rare as red deer. Clearburn alone remains full of unsophisticated fishes, and I have the less hesitation in revealing this, because I do not expect the wanderer who may read this page to be at all more successful than myself. No doubt they are sometimes to be had, by the basketful, but not often, nor by him who thinks twice before risking his life by smothering in a peaty bottom.

To reach Clearburn Loch, if you start from the Teviot, you must pass through much of Scott's country and most of Leyden's. I am credibly informed that persons of culture have forgotten John Leyden. He was a linguist and a poet, and the friend of Walter Scott, and knew

The mind whose fearless frankness naught could move,
The friendship, like an elder brother's love.

We remember what distant and what deadly shore has Leyden's cold remains, and people who do not know may not care to be reminded.

Leaving Teviot, with Leyden for a guide, you walk, or drive,

Where Bortha hoarse, that loads the meads with sand,
Rolls her red tide.

Not that it was red when we passed, but *electro purior*.

Through slaty hills whose sides are shagged with thorn,
Where springs, in scattered tufts, the dark green corn,
Towers wood-girt Harden far above the vale.

And very dark green, almost blue, was the corn in September, 1888. Upwards, always upwards, goes the road till you reach the crest, and watch far below the wide champaign, like a sea, broken by the shapes of hills, Windburg and Eildon, and Priesthaughswire, and “the rough skirts of stormy Ruberslaw,” and Penchrise, and the twin Maidens, shaped like the breasts of Helen. It is an old land, of war, of Otterburn, and Ancrum, and the Raid of the Fair Dodhead; but the plough has passed over all but the upper pastoral solitudes. Turning again to the downward slope you see the loch of Alemoor, small and sullen, with Alewater feeding it. Nobody knows much about the trout in it. “It is reckoned the residence of the water-cow,” a monster like the Australian bunyip. There was a water-cow in Scott’s loch of Cauldshiels, above Abbotsford. The water-cow has not lately emerged from Alemoor to attack the casual angler. You climb again by gentle slopes till you reach a most desolate tableland. Far beyond it is the round top of Whitecombe, which again looks down on St. Mary’s Loch, and up the Moffat, and across the Meggat Water; but none of these are within the view. Round are *pastorum loca vasta*, lands of Buccleugh and Bellenden, Deloraine, Sinton, Headshaw, and Glack. Deloraine, by the way, is pronounced “Delorran,” and perhaps is named from Orran, the Celtic saint. On the right lies, not far from the road, a grey sheet of water, and this is Clearburn, where first I met the Doctor.

The loch, to be plain, is almost unfishable. It is nearly round, and everywhere, except in a small segment on the eastern side, is begirt with reeds of great height. These reeds, again, grow in a peculiarly uncomfortable, quaggy bottom, which rises and falls, or rather which jumps and sinks when you step on it, like the seat of a very luxurious arm-chair. Moreover, the bottom is pierced with many springs, wherein if you set foot you shall have thrown your last cast.

By watching the loch when it is frozen, a man might come to learn something of the springs; but, even so, it is hard to keep clear of them in summer. Now the wind almost always blows from the west, dead against the little piece of gravelly shore at the eastern side, so that casting against it is hard work and unprofitable. On this day, by a rare chance, the wind blew from the east, though the sky at first was a brilliant blue, and the sun hot and fierce. I walked round to the east side, waded in, and caught two or three small fellows. It was slow work, when suddenly there began the greatest rise of trout I ever saw in my life. From the edge of the loch as far as one could clearly see across it there was that endless plashing murmur, of all sounds in this world the sweetest to the ear. Within the view of the eye, on each cast, there were a dozen trout rising all about, never leaping, but seriously and solemnly feeding. Now is my chance at last, I fancied; but it was not so — far from it. I might throw over the very noses of the beasts, but they seldom even glanced at the (artificial) fly. I tried them with Greenwell's Glory, with a March brown, with "the woodcock wing and hare-lug," but it was almost to no purpose. If one did raise a fish, he meant not business — all but "a casual brute," which broke the already weakened part of a small "glued-up" cane rod. I had to twist a piece of paper round the broken end, wet it, and push it into the joint, where it hung on somehow, but was not pleasant to cast with. From twelve to half-past one the gorging went merrily forward, and I saw what the fish were rising at. The whole surface of the loch, at least on the east side, was absolutely peppered with large, hideous insects. They had big grey-white wings, bodies black as night, and brilliant crimson legs, or feelers, or whatever naturalists call them. The trout seemed as if they could not have too much of these abominable wretches, and the flies were blown across the loch, not singly, but in populous groups. I had never seen anything like them in any hook-book, nor could I deceive the trout by the primitive dodge of tying a red thread round the shank of a dark fly. So I waded out, and fell to munching a frugal sandwich and watching Nature, not without a cigarette.

Now Nature is all very well. I have nothing to say against her of a Sunday, or when trout are not rising. But she was no comfort to me now. Smiling she gazed on my discomfiture. The lovely lines of the hills, curving about the loch, and with their deepest dip just opposite where I sat, were all of a golden autumn brown, except in the violet distance. The grass of Parnassus grew thick and white around me, with its moonlight tint of green in the veins. On a hillside by a brook the countryfolk were winning their hay, and their voices reached me softly from far off. On the loch the marsh-fowl flashed and dipped, the wild ducks played and dived and rose; first circling high and higher, then, marshalled in the shape of a V, they made for Alemoor. A solitary heron came quite near me, and tried his chance with the fish, but I think he had no luck. All this is pleasant to remember, and I made rude sketches in the fly-leaves of a copy of Hogg's poems, where I kept my flies. But what joy was there in this while the "take" grew fainter and ceased at least near the shore? Out in the middle, where few flies managed to float, the trout were at it till dark. But near shore there was just one trout who never stopped gorging all day. He lived exactly opposite the nick in the distant hills, and exactly a yard farther out than I could throw a fly. He was a big one, and I am inclined to think that he was the Devil. For, if I had stepped in deeper, and the water had come over my wading boots, the odds are that my frail days on earth would have been ended by a chill, and I knew this, and yet that fish went on tempting me to my ruin. I suppose I tried to reach him a dozen times, and cast a hundred, but it was to no avail. At length, as the afternoon grew grey and chill, I pitched a rock at him, by way of showing that I saw through his fiendish guile, and I walked away.

There was no rise now, and the lake was leaden and gloomy. When I reached the edge of the deep reeds I tried, once or twice, to wade through them within casting distance of the water, but was always driven off by the traitorous quagginess of the soil. At last, taking my courage in both hands, I actually got so near that I could throw a fly over the top of the tall reeds, and then came a heavy splash, and the wretched little broken rod nearly doubled up. "Hooray, here I am among the big ones!" I said, and held on. It was now that I learned the nature of Nero's diversion when he was an angler in the Lake of Darkness. The loch really did deserve the term "grim"; the water here was black, the sky was ashen, the long green reeds closed cold about me, and beyond them there was trout that I could not deal with. For when he tired of running, which was soon, he was as far away as ever. Draw him through the forest of reeds I could not. At last I did the fatal thing. I took hold of the line, and then, "plop," as the poet said. He was off. A young sportsman on the bank who had joined me expressed his artless disappointment. I cast over the confounded reeds once more. "Splash!" — the old story! I stuck to the fish, and got him into the watery wood, and then he went where the lost trout go. No more came on, so I floundered a yard or two farther, and climbed into a wild-fowl's nest, a kind of platform of matted reeds, all yellow and faded. The nest immediately sank down deep into the water, but it stopped somewhere, and I made a cast. The black water boiled, and the trout went straight down and sulked. I merely held on, till at last it seemed "time for us to go," and by cautious tugging I got him through the reedy jungle, and "gruppit him," as the Shepherd would have said. He was simply but decently wrapped round, from snout to tail, in very fine water-weeds, as in a garment. Moreover, he was as black as your hat, quite unlike the comely yellow trout who live on the gravel in Clearburn. It hardly seemed sensible to get drowned in this gruesome kind of angling, so, leaving the Lake of Darkness, we made for Buccleugh, passing the cleugh where the buck was ta'en. Surely it is the deepest, the steepest, and the greenest cleugh that is shone on by the sun! Thereby we met an angler, an ancient man in hodden grey, strolling home from the Rankle burn. And we told him of our bad day, and asked him concerning that hideous fly, which had covered the loch and lured the trout from our decent Greenwells and March browns. And the ancient man listened to our description of the monster, and He said: "Hoot, ay; ye've jest forgathered wi' the Bloody Doctor."

This, it appears, is the Border angler's name for the horrible insect, so much appreciated by trout. So we drove home, when all the great tableland was touched with yellow light from a rift in the west, and all the broken hills looked blue against the silvery grey. God bless them! for man cannot spoil them, nor any revolution shape them other than they are. We see them as the folk from Flodden saw them, as Leyden knew them, as they looked to William of Deloraine, as they showed in the eyes of Wat of Harden and of Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead. They have always girdled a land of warriors and of people fond of song, from the oldest ballad-maker to that Scotch Probationer who wrote,

Lay me here, where I may see
Teviot round his meadows flowing,
And about and over me
Winds and clouds for ever going.

It was dark before we splashed through the ford of Borthwick Water, and dined, and wrote to Mr. Anderson of Princes Street, Edinburgh, for a supply of Bloody Doctors. But we never had a chance to try them. I have since fished Clearburn from a boat, but it was not a day of rising fish, and no big ones came to the landing-net. There are plenty in the loch, but you need not make the weary journey; they are not for you nor me.

THE LADY OR THE SALMON?

The circumstances which attended and caused the death of the Hon. Houghton Grannom have not long been known to me, and it is only now that, by the decease of his father, Lord Whitchurch, and the extinction of his noble family, I am permitted to divulge the facts. That the true tale of my unhappy friend will touch different chords in different breasts, I am well aware. The sportsman, I think, will hesitate to approve him; the fair, I hope, will absolve. Who are we, to scrutinise human motives, and to award our blame to actions which, perhaps, might have been our own, had opportunity beset and temptation beguiled us? There is a certain point at which the keenest sense of honour, the most chivalrous affection and devotion, cannot bear the strain, but break like a salmon line under a masterful stress. That my friend succumbed, I admit; that he was his own judge, the severest, and passed and executed sentence on himself, I have now to show.

I shall never forget the shock with which I read in the "Scotsman," under "Angling," the following paragraph:

"Tweed. — Strange Death of an Angler. — An unfortunate event has cast a gloom over fishers in this district. As Mr. K — , the keeper on the B — water, was busy angling yesterday, his attention was caught by some object floating on the stream. He cast his flies over it, and landed a soft felt hat, the ribbon stuck full of salmon-flies. Mr. K — at once hurried up-stream, filled with the most lively apprehensions. These were soon justified. In a shallow, below the narrow, deep and dangerous rapids called 'The Trows,' Mr. K — saw a salmon leaping in a very curious manner. On a closer examination, he found that the fish was attached to a line. About seventy yards higher he found, in shallow water, the body of a man, the hand still grasping in death the butt of the rod, to which the salmon was fast, all the line being run out. Mr. K — at once rushed into the stream, and dragged out the body, in which he recognised with horror the Hon. Houghton Grannom, to whom the water was lately let. Life had been for some minutes extinct, and though Mr. K — instantly hurried for Dr. — , that gentleman could only attest the melancholy fact. The wading in 'The Trows' is extremely dangerous and difficult, and Mr. Grannom, who was fond of fishing without an attendant, must have lost his balance, slipped, and been dragged down by the weight of his waders. The recent breaking off of the hon. gentleman's contemplated marriage on the very wedding-day will be fresh in the memory of our readers."

This was the story which I read in the newspaper during breakfast one morning in November. I was deeply grieved, rather than astonished, for I have often remonstrated with poor Grannom on the recklessness of his wading. It was with some surprise that I received, in the course of the day, a letter from him, in which he spoke only of indifferent matters, of the fishing which he had taken, and so forth. The letter was accompanied, however, by a parcel. Tearing off the outer cover, I found a sealed document addressed to me, with the superscription, "Not to be opened until after my father's decease." This injunction, of course, I have scrupulously obeyed. The death of Lord Whitchurch, the last of the Grannoms, now gives me liberty to publish my friend's *Apologia pro morte et vita sua*.

"Dear Smith" (the document begins), "Before you read this — long before, I hope — I shall have solved the great mystery — if, indeed, we solve it. If the water runs down to-morrow, and there is every prospect that it will do so, I must have the opportunity of making such an end as even malignity cannot suspect of being voluntary. There are plenty of fish in the water; if I hook one in 'The Trows,' I shall let myself go whither the current takes me. Life has for weeks been odious to me; for what is life without honour, without love, and coupled with shame and remorse? Repentance I cannot call the emotion which gnaws me at the heart, for in similar circumstances (unlikely as these are to occur) I feel that I would do the same thing again.

"Are we but automata, worked by springs, moved by the stronger impulse, and unable to choose for ourselves which impulse that shall be? Even now, in decreeing my own destruction, do I exercise free-will, or am I the sport of hereditary tendencies, of mistaken views of honour, of a seeming self-sacrifice, which, perhaps, is but selfishness in disguise? I blight my unfortunate father's old age; I destroy the last of an ancient house; but I remove from the path of Olive Dunne the shadow that must rest upon the sunshine of what will eventually, I trust, be a happy life, unvexed by memories of one who loved her passionately. Dear Olive! how pure, how ardent was my devotion to her none knows better than you. But Olive had, I will not say a fault, though I suffer from it, but a quality, or rather two qualities, which have completed my misery. Lightly as she floats on the stream of society, the most casual observer, and even the enamoured beholder, can see that Olive Dunne has great pride, and no sense of humour. Her dignity is her idol. What makes her, even for a moment, the possible theme of ridicule is in her eyes an unpardonable sin. This sin, I must with penitence confess, I did indeed commit. Another woman might have forgiven me. I know not how that may be; I throw myself on the mercy of the court. But, if another could pity and pardon, to Olive this was impossible. I have never seen her since that fatal moment when, paler than her orange blossoms, she swept through the porch of the church, while I, dishevelled, mud-stained, half-drowned — ah! that memory will torture me if memory at all remains. And yet, fool, maniac, that I was, I could not resist the wild, mad impulse to laugh which shook the rustic spectators, and which in my case was due, I trust, to hysterical but *not* unmanly emotion. If any woman, any bride, could forgive such an apparent but most unintentional insult, Olive Dunne, I knew, was not that woman. My abject letters of explanation, my appeals for mercy, were returned unopened. Her parents pitied me, perhaps had reasons for being on my side, but Olive was of marble. It is not only myself that she cannot pardon, she will never, I know, forgive herself while my existence reminds her of what she had to endure. When she receives the intelligence of my demise, no suspicion will occur to her; she will not say 'He is fitly punished;' but her peace of mind will gradually return.

"It is for this, mainly, that I sacrifice myself, but also because I cannot endure the dishonour of a laggard in love and a recreant bridegroom.

"So much for my motives: now to my tale.

"The day before our wedding-day had been the happiest in my life. Never had I felt so certain of Olive's affections, never so fortunate in my own. We parted in the soft moonlight; she, no doubt, to finish her nuptial preparations; I, to seek my couch in the little rural inn above the roaring waters of the Budon.

"Move eastward, happy earth, and leave
   Yon orange sunset fading slow;
From fringes of the faded eve
   Oh, happy planet, eastward go,

I murmured, though the atmospheric conditions were not really those described by the poet.

"Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage morn,
And round again to —

"'River in grand order, sir,' said the voice of Robins, the keeper, who recognised me in the moonlight. 'There's a regular monster in the Ashweil,' he added, naming a favourite cast; 'never saw nor heard of such a fish in the water before.'

"'Mr. Dick must catch him, Robins,' I answered; 'no fishing for me to-morrow.'

"'No, sir,' said Robins, affably. 'Wish you joy, sir, and Miss Olive, too. It's a pity, though! Master Dick, he throws a fine fly, but he gets flurried with a big fish, being young. And this one is a topper.'

"With that he gave me good-night, and I went to bed, but not to sleep. I was fevered with happiness; the past and future reeled before my wakeful vision. I heard every clock strike; the sounds of morning were astir, and still I could not sleep. The ceremony, for reasons connected with our long journey to my father's place in Hampshire, was to be early — half-past ten was the hour. I looked at my watch; it was seven of the clock, and then I looked out of the window: it was a fine, soft grey morning, with a south wind tossing the yellowing boughs. I got up, dressed in a hasty way, and thought I would just take a look at the river. It was, indeed, in glorious order, lapping over the top of the sharp stone which we regarded as a measure of the due size of water.

"The morning was young, sleep was out of the question; I could not settle my mind to read. Why should I not take a farewell cast, alone, of course? I always disliked the attendance of a gillie. I took my salmon rod out of its case, rigged it up, and started for the stream, which flowed within a couple of hundred yards of my quarters. There it raced under the ash tree, a pale delicate brown, perhaps a little thing too coloured. I therefore put on a large Silver Doctor, and began steadily fishing down the ash-tree cast. What if I should wipe Dick's eye, I thought, when, just where the rough and smooth water meet, there boiled up a head and shoulders such as I had never seen on any fish. My heart leaped and stood still, but there came no sensation from the rod, and I finished the cast, my knees actually trembling beneath me. Then I gently lifted the line, and very elaborately tested every link of the powerful casting-line. Then I gave him ten minutes by my watch; next, with unspeakable emotion, I stepped into the stream and repeated the cast. Just at the same spot he came up again; the huge rod bent like a switch, and the salmon rushed straight down the pool, as if he meant to make for the sea. I staggered on to dry land to follow him the easier, and dragged at my watch to time the fish; a quarter to eight. But the slim chain had broken, and the watch, as I hastily thrust it back, missed my pocket and fell into the water. There was no time to stoop for it; the fish started afresh, tore up the pool as fast as he had gone down it, and, rushing behind the torrent, into the eddy at the top, leaped clean out of the water. He was 70 lbs. if he was an ounce. Here he slackened a little, dropping back, and I got in some line. Now he sulked so intensely that I thought he had got the line round a rock. It might be broken, might be holding fast to a sunken stone, for aught that I could tell;

and the time was passing, I knew not how rapidly. I tried all known methods, tugging at him, tapping the butt, and slackening line on him. At last the top of the rod was slightly agitated, and then, back flew the long line in my face. Gone! I reeled up with a sigh, but the line tightened again. He had made a sudden rush under my bank, but there he lay again like a stone. How long? Ah! I cannot tell how long! I heard the church clock strike, but missed the number of the strokes. Soon he started again down-stream into the shallows, leaping at the end of his rush — the monster. Then he came slowly up, and 'jiggered' savagely at the line. It seemed impossible that any tackle could stand these short violent jerks. Soon he showed signs of weakening. Once his huge silver side appeared for a moment near the surface, but he retreated to his old fastness. I was in a tremor of delight and despair. I should have thrown down my rod, and flown on the wings of love to Olive and the altar. But I hoped that there was time still — that it was not so very late! At length he was failing. I heard ten o'clock strike. He came up and lumbered on the surface of the pool. Gradually I drew him, plunging ponderously, to the gravelled beach, where I meant to 'tail' him. He yielded to the strain, he was in the shallows, the line was shortened. I stooped to seize him. The frayed and overworn gut broke at a knot, and with a loose roll he dropped back towards the deep. I sprang at him, stumbled, fell on him, struggled with him, but he slipped from my arms. In that moment I knew more than the anguish of Orpheus. Orpheus! Had I, too, lost my Eurydice? I rushed from the stream, up the steep bank, along to my rooms. I passed the church door. Olive, pale as her orange-blossoms, was issuing from the porch. The clock pointed to 10.45. I was ruined, I knew it, and I laughed. I laughed like a lost spirit. She swept past me, and, amidst the amazement of the gentle and simple, I sped wildly away. Ask me no more. The rest is silence."

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Thus ends my hapless friend's narrative. I leave it to the judgment of women and of men. Ladies, would you have acted as Olive Dunne acted? Would pride, or pardon, or mirth have ridden sparkling in your eyes? Men, my brethren, would ye have deserted the salmon for the lady, or the lady for the salmon? I know what I would have done had I been fair Olive Dunne. What I would have done had I been Houghton Grannom I may not venture to divulge. For this narrative, then, as for another, "Let every man read it as he will, and every woman as the gods have given her wit."

A TWEEDSIDE SKETCH

The story of the following adventure — this deplorable confession, one may say — will not have been written in vain if it impresses on young minds the supreme necessity of carefulness about details. Let the “casual” and regardless who read it — the gatless, as they say in Suffolk — ponder the lesson which it teaches: a lesson which no amount of bitter experience has ever impressed on the unprincipled narrator. Never do anything carelessly whether in fishing or in golf, and carry this important maxim even into the most serious affairs of life. Many a battle has been lost, no doubt, by lack of ammunition, or by plenty of ammunition which did not happen to suit the guns; and many a salmon has been lost, ay, and many a trout, for want of carefulness, and through a culpable inattention to the soundness of your gut, and tackle generally. What fiend is it that prompts a man just to try a hopeless cast, in a low water, without testing his tackle? As sure as you do that, up comes the fish, and with his first dash breaks your casting line, and leaves you lamenting. This doctrine I preach, being my own “awful example.” “Bad and careless little boy,” my worthy master used to say at school; and he would have provoked a smile in other circumstances. But Mr. Trotter, of the Edinburgh Academy, had something about him (he usually carried it in the tail-pocket of his coat) which inspired respect and discouraged ribaldry. Would that I had listened to Mr. Trotter; would that I had corrected, in early life, the happy-go-lucky disposition to scatter my Greek accents, as it were, with a pepper-caster, to fish with worn tackle, and, generally, to make free with the responsibilities of life and literature. It is too late to amend, but others may learn wisdom from this spectacle of deserved misfortune and absolute discomfiture.

I am not myself a salmon-fisher, though willing to try that art again, and though this is a tale of salmon. To myself the difference between angling for trout and angling for salmon is like the difference between a drawing of Lionardo’s, in silver point, and a loaded landscape by MacGilp, R.A. Trout-fishing is all an idyll, all delicacy — that is, trout-fishing on the Test or on the Itchen. You wander by clear water, beneath gracious poplar-trees, unencumbered with anything but a slim rod of Messrs. Hardy’s make, and a light toy-box of delicate flies. You need seldom wade, and the water is shallow, the bottom is of silver gravel. You need not search all day at random, but you select a rising trout, and endeavour to lay the floating fly delicately over him. If you part with him, there is always another feeding merrily:

Invenies alium si te hic fastidit.

It is like an excursion into Corot's country, it is rich in memories of Walton and Cotton: it is a dream of peace, and they bring you your tea by the riverside. In salmon-fishing, on the Tweed at least, all is different. The rod, at all events the rod which some one kindly lent me, is like a weaver's beam. The high heavy wading trousers and boots are even as the armour of the giant of Gath. You have to plunge waist deep, or deeper, into roaring torrents, and if the water be at all "drumly" you have not an idea where your next step may fall. It may be on a hidden rock, or on a round slippery boulder, or it may be into a deep "pot" or hole. The inexperienced angler staggers like a drunken man, is occasionally drowned, and more frequently is ducked. You have to cast painfully, with steep precipitous banks behind you, all overgrown with trees, with bracken, with bramble. It is a boy's work to disentangle the fly from the branches of ash and elm and pine. There is no delicacy, and there is a great deal of exertion in all this. You do not cast subtilely over a fish which you know is there, but you swish, swish, all across the current, with a strong reluctance to lift the line after each venture and try another. The small of the back aches, and it is literally in the sweat of your brow that you take your diversion. After all, there are many blank days, when the salmon will look at no fly, or when you encounter the Salmo irritans, who rises with every appearance of earnest good-will, but never touches the hook, or, if he does touch it, runs out a couple of yards of line, and vanishes for ever. What says the poet?

There's an accommodating fish,
In pool or stream, by rock or pot,
Who rises frequent as you wish,
At "Popham," "Parson," or "Jock Scott,"
Or almost any fly you've got
In all the furred and feathered clans.
You strike, but ah, you strike him not
He is the *Salmo irritans*!

It may be different in Norway or on the lower casts of the Tweed, as at Floors, or Makerstoun; but higher up the country, in Scott's own country, at Yair or Ashiesteil, there is often a terrible amount of fruitless work to be done. And I doubt if, except in throwing a very long line, and knowing the waters by old experience, there is very much skill in salmon-fishing. It is all an affair of muscle and patience. The choice of flies is almost a pure accident. Every one believes in the fly with which he has been successful. These strange combinations of blues, reds, golds, of tinsel and worsted, of feathers and fur, are purely fantastic articles. They are like nothing in nature, and are multiplied for the fanciful amusement of anglers. Nobody knows why salmon rise at them; nobody knows why they will bite on one day and not on another, or rather, on many others. It is not even settled whether we should use a bright fly on a bright day, and a dark fly on a dark day, as Dr. Hamilton advises, or reverse the choice as others use. Muscles and patience, these, I repeat, are the only ingredients of ultimate success.

However, one does do at Rome as the Romans do, and fishes for salmon in Tweed when the nets are off in October, when the yellowing leaves begin to fall, and when that beautiful reach of wooded valley from Elibank to the meeting of Tweed and Ettrick is in the height of its autumnal charm. Why has Yarrow been so much more besung than Tweed, in spite of the greater stream's far greater and more varied loveliness? The fatal duel in the Dowie Dens of Yarrow and the lamented drowning of Willie there have given the stream its 'pastoral melancholy,' and engaged Wordsworth in the renown of the water. For the poetry of Tweed we have chiefly, after Scott, to thank Mr. Stoddart, its loyal minstrel. "Dearer than all these to me," he says about our other valleys, "is sylvan Tweed."

Let ither anglers choose their ain,
And ither waters tak' the lead
O' Hieland streams we covet nane,
But gie to us the bonny Tweed;
And gie to us the cheerfu' burn,
That steals into its valley fair,
The streamlets that, at ilka turn,
Sae saftly meet and mingle there.

He kept his promise, given in the following verse:

And I, when to breathe is a labour, and joy
Forgets me, and life is no longer the boy,
On the labouring staff, and the tremorous knee,
Will wander, bright river, to thee!

Life is always "the boy" when one is beside the Tweed. Times change, and we change, for the worse. But the river changes little. Still he courses through the keen and narrow rocks beneath the bridge of Yair.

From Yair, which hills so closely bind,
Scarce can the Tweed his passage find,
Though much he fret, and chafe, and toil,
Till all his eddying currents boil.

Still the water loiters by the long boat-pool of Yair, as though loath to leave the drooping boughs of the elms. Still it courses with a deep eddy through the Elm Wheel, and ripples under Fernilea, where the author of the "Flowers of the Forest" lived in that now mouldering and roofless hall, with the peaked turrets. Still Neidpath is fair, Neidpath of the unhappy maid, and still we mark the tiny burn at Ashiesteil, how in November,

Murmuring hoarse, and frequent seen,
Through bush and briar, no longer green,
An angry brook, it sweeps the glade,
Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And foaming brown, with doubled speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

Still the old tower of Elibank is black and strong in ruin; Elibank, the home of that Muckle Mou'd Meg, who made Harden after all a better bride than he would have found in the hanging ash-tree of her father. These are unaltered, mainly, since Scott saw them last, and little altered is the homely house of Ashiesteil, where he had been so happy. And we, too, feel but little change among those scenes of long ago, those best-beloved haunts of boyhood, where we have had so many good days and bad, days of rising trout and success; days of failure, and even of half-drowning.

One cannot reproduce the charm of the strong river in pool and stream, of the steep rich bank that it rushes or lingers by, of the green and heathery hills beyond, or the bare slopes where the blue slate breaks through among the dark old thorn-trees, remnants of the forest. It is all homely and all haunted, and, if a Tweedside fisher might have his desire, he would sleep the long sleep in the little churchyard that lies lonely above the pool of Caddon-foot, and hard by

Christopher North's favourite quarters at Clovenfords.

However, while we are still on earth, Caddon-foot is more attractive for her long sweep of salmon-pool — the home of sea-trout too — than precisely for her kirk-yard. There will be time enough for that, and time it is to recur to the sad story of the big fish and the careless angler. It was about the first day of October, and we had enjoyed a "spate." Salmon-fishing is a mere child of the weather; with rain almost anybody may raise fish, without it all art is apt to be vain. We had been blessed with a spate. On Wednesday the Tweed had been roaring red from bank to bank. Salmon-fishing was wholly out of the question, and it is to be feared that the innumerable trout-fishers, busy on every eddy, were baiting with salmon roe, an illegal lure. On Thursday the red tinge had died out of the water, but only a very strong wader would have ventured in; others had a good chance, if they tried it, of being picked up at Berwick. Friday was the luckless day of my own failure and broken heart. The water was still very heavy and turbid, a frantic wind was lashing the woods, heaps of dead leaves floated down, and several sheaves of corn were drifted on the current. The long boat-pool at Yair, however, is sheltered by wooded banks, and it was possible enough to cast, in spite of the wind's fury. We had driven from a place about five miles distant, and we had not driven three hundred yards before I remembered that we had forgotten the landing-net. But, as I expected nothing, it did not seem worth while to go back for this indispensable implement. We reached the waterside, and found that the trout were feeding below the pendent branches of the trees and in the quiet, deep eddies of the long boat-pool. One cannot see rising trout without casting over them, in preference to labouring after salmon, so I put up a small rod and diverted myself from the bank. It was to little purpose. Tweed trout are now grown very shy and capricious; even a dry fly failed to do any execution worth mentioning. Conscience compelled me, as I had been sent out by kind hosts to fish for salmon, not to neglect my orders. The armour — the ponderous gear of the fisher — was put on with the enormous boots, and the gigantic rod was equipped. Then came the beginning of sorrows. We had left the books of salmon flies comfortably reposing at home. We had also forgotten the whiskey flask. Everything, in fact, except cigarettes, had been left behind. Unluckily, not quite everything: I had a trout fly-book, and therein lay just one large salmon fly, not a Tweed fly, but a lure that is used on the beautiful and hopeless waters of the distant Ken, in Galloway. It had brown wings, a dark body, and a piece of jungle-cock feather, and it was fastened to a sea-trout casting-line. Now, if I had possessed no salmon flies at all, I must either have sent back for some, or gone on innocently dallying with trout. But this one wretched fly lured me to my ruin. I saw that the casting-line had a link which seemed rather twisted. I tried it; but, in the spirit of Don Quixote with his helmet, I did not try it hard. I waded into the easiest-looking part of the pool, just above a huge tree that dropped its boughs to the water, and began casting, merely from a sense of duty. I had not cast a dozen times before there was a heavy, slow plunge in the stream, and a glimpse of purple and azure.

"That's him," cried a man who was trouting on the opposite bank. Doubtless it was "him," but he had not touched the hook. I believe the correct thing would have been to wait for half an hour, and then try the fish with a smaller fly. But I had no smaller fly, no other fly at all. I stepped back a few paces, and fished down again. In Major Traherne's work I have read that the heart leaps, or stands still, or otherwise betrays an uncomfortable interest, when one casts for the second time over a salmon which has risen. I cannot honestly say that I suffered from this tumultuous emotion. "He will not come again," I said, when there was a long heavy drag at the line, followed by a shrieking of the reel, as in Mr. William Black's novels. Let it be confessed that the first hooking of a salmon is an excitement unparalleled in trout-fishing. There have been anglers who, when the salmon was once on, handed him over to the gillie to play and land. One would like to act as gillie to those lordly amateurs. My own fish rushed down stream, where the big tree stands. I had no hope of landing him if he took that course, because one could neither pass the rod under the boughs, nor wade out beyond them. But he soon came back, while one took in line, and discussed his probable size with the trout-fisher opposite. His size, indeed! Nobody knows what it was, for when he had come up to the point whence he had started, he began a policy of violent short tugs — not "jiggering," as it is called, but plunging with all his weight on the line. I had clean forgotten the slimness of the tackle, and, as he was clearly well hooked, held him perhaps too hard. Only a very raw beginner likes to take hours over landing a fish. Perhaps I held him too tight: at all events, after a furious plunge, back came the line; the casting line had snapped at the top link.

There was no more to be said or done, except to hunt for another fly in the trout fly-book. Here there was no such thing, but a local spectator offered me a huge fly, more like a gaff, and equipped with a large iron eye for attaching the gut to. Withal I suspect this weapon was meant, not for fair fishing, but for "sniggling." Now "sniggling" is a form of cold-blooded poaching. In the open water, on the Ettrick, you may see half a dozen snigglers busy. They all wear high wading trousers; they are all armed with stiff salmon-rods and huge flies. They push the line and the top joints of the rod deep into the water, drag it along, and then bring the hook out with a jerk. Often it sticks in the side of a salmon, and in this most unfair and unsportsmanlike way the free sport of honest people is ruined, and fish are diminished in number. Now, the big fly *may* have been an honest character, but he was sadly like a rake-hook in disguise. He did not look as if an fish could fancy him. I, therefore, sent a messenger across the river to beg, buy, or borrow a fly at "The Nest." But this pretty cottage is no longer the home of the famous angling club, which has gone a mile or two up the water and builded for itself a new dwelling. My messenger came back with one small fatigued-looking fly, a Popham, I think, which had been lent by some one at a farmhouse. The water was so heavy that the small fly seemed useless; however, we fastened it on as a dropper, using the sniggler as the trail fly; so exhausted were our resources, that I had to cut a piece of gut off a minnow tackle and attach the small fly to that. The tiny gut loop of the fly was dreadfully frayed, and with a heavy heart I began fishing again. My friend on the opposite side called out that big fish were rising in the bend of the stream, so thither I went, stumbling over rocks, and casting with much difficulty, as the high overgrown banks permit no backward sweep of the line. You are obliged to cast by a kind of forward thrust of the arms, a knack not to be acquired in a moment. I splashed away awkwardly, but at last managed to make a straight, clean cast. There was a slight pull, such as a trout gives in mid-stream under water. I raised the point, and again the reel sang aloud and gleefully as the salmon rushed down the stream farther and faster than the first. It is a very pleasant thing to hook a salmon when you are all alone, as I was then — alone with yourself and the Goddess of Fishing. This salmon, just like the other, now came back, and instantly began the old tactics of heavy plunging tugs. But I knew the gut was sound this time, and as I fancied he had risen to the sniggler, I had no anxiety about the tackle holding. One more plunge, and back came the line as before. He was off. One could have sat down and gnawed the reel. What had gone wrong? Why, the brute had taken the old fly from the farmhouse and had snapped the loop that attaches the gut. The little loop was still on the fragment of minnow tackle which fastened it to the cast.

There was no more chance, for there were now no more flies, except a small "cobbery," a sea-trout fly from the Sound of Mull. It was time for us to go, with a heavy heart and a basket empty, except for two or three miserable trout. The loss of those two salmon, whether big or little fish, was not the whole misfortune. All the chances of the day were gone, and seldom have salmon risen so freely. I had not been casting long enough to smoke half a cigarette, when I hooked each of those fish. They rose at flies which were the exact opposites of each other in size, character, and colour. They were ready to rise at anything but the sniggler. And I had nothing to offer them, absolutely nothing bigger than a small red-spinner from the Test. On that day a fisher, not far off, hooked nine salmon and landed four of them, in one pool, I never had such a chance before; the heavy flood and high wind had made the salmon as “silly” as perch. One might have caught half a dozen of the great sturdy fellows, who make all trout, even sea-trout, seem despicable minnows. Next day I fished again in the same water, with a friend. I rose a fish, but did not hook it, and he landed a small one, five minutes after we started, and we only had one other rise all the rest of the day. Probably it was not dark and windy enough, but who can explain the caprices of salmon? The only certain thing is, that carelessness always brings misfortune; that if your tackle is weak fish will hook themselves on days, and in parts of the water, where you expected nothing, and then will go away with your fly and your casting-lines. Fortune never forgives. He who is lazy, and takes no trouble because he expects no fish, will always be meeting heart-breaking adventures. One should never make a hopeless or careless cast; bad luck lies in wait for that kind of performance. These are the experiences that embitter a man, as they embittered Dean Swift, who, old and ill, neglected and in Irish exile, still felt the pang of losing a great trout when he was a boy. What pleasure is there in landscape and tradition when such accidents befall you?

The sun upon the Weirdlaw hill,
In Ettrick’s vale is sinking sweet.

There is a fire of autumn colour in the tufted woods that embosom Fernilea. “Bother the setting sun,” we say, and the Maid of Neidpath, and the “Flowers of the Forest,” and the memories of Scott at Ashiesteil, and of Muckle Mou’d Meg, at Elibank. These are filmy, shadowy pleasures of the fancy, these cannot minister to the mind of him who has been “broken” twice, who cannot resume the contest for want of ammunition, and who has not even brought the creature-comfort of a flask. Since that woful day I have lain on the bank and watched excellent anglers skilfully flogging the best of water, and that water full of fish, without hooking one. Salmon-fishing, then, is a matter of chance, or of plodding patience. They will rise on one day at almost any fly (but the sniggler), however ill-presented to them. On a dozen other days no fly and no skill will avail to tempt them. The salmon is a brainless brute and the grapes are sour!

If only the gut had held, this sketch would have ended with sentiment, and a sunset, and the music of Ettrick, the melody of Tweed. In the gloaming we’d be roaming homeward, telling, perhaps, the story of the ghost seen by Sir Walter Scott near Ashiesteil, or discussing the Roman treasure still buried near Oakwood Tower, under an inscribed stone which men saw fifty years ago. Or was it a treasure of Michael Scott's, who lived at Oakwood, says tradition? Let Harden dig for Harden's gear, it is not for me to give hints as to its whereabouts. After all that ill-luck, to be brief, one is not in the vein for legendary lore, nor memories of boyhood, nor poetry, nor sunsets. I do not believe that one ever thinks of the landscape or of anything else, while there is a chance for a fish, and no abundance of local romance can atone for an empty creel. Poetical fishers try to make people believe these fallacies; perhaps they impose on themselves; but if one would really enjoy landscape, one should leave, not only the fly-book and the landing-net, but the rod and reel at home. And so farewell to the dearest and fairest of all rivers that go on earth, fairer than Eurotas or Sicilian Anapus with its sea-trout; farewell — for who knows how long? — to the red-fringed Gleddis-wheel, the rock of the Righ-wheel, the rushing foam of the Gullets, the woodland banks of Caddon-foot.

The valleys of England are wide,
Her rivers rejoice every one,
In grace and in beauty they glide,
And water-flowers float at their side,
As they gleam in the rays of the sun.

But where are the speed and the spray —
The dark lakes that welter them forth,
Tree and heath nodding over their way —
The rock and the precipice grey,
That bind the wild streams of the North?

Well, both, are good, the streams of north and south, but he who has given his heart to the Tweed, as did Tyro, in Homer, to the Enipeus will never change his love.

P.S. — That Galloway fly— "The Butcher and Lang" — has been avenged. A copy of him, on the line of a friend, has proved deadly on the Tweed, killing, among other victims, a sea-trout of thirteen pounds.

THE DOUBLE ALIBI

Glen Aline is probably the loneliest place in the lone moorlands of Western Galloway. The country is entirely pastoral, and I fancy that the very pasture is bad enough. Stretches of deer-grass and ling, rolling endlessly to the feet of Cairnsmure and the circle of the eastern hills, cannot be good feeding for the least Epicurean of sheep, and sheep do not care for the lank and sour herbage by the sides of the "lanes," as the half-stagnant, black, deep, and weedy burns are called in this part of the country. The scenery is not unattractive, but tourists never wander to these wastes where no inns are, and even the angler seldom visits them. Indeed, the fishing is not to be called good, and the "lanes," which "seep," as the Scotch say, through marshes and beneath low hillsides, are not such excellent company as the garrulous and brawling brooks of the Border or of the Highlands. As the lanes flow, however, from far-away lochs, it happens that large trout make their way into them — trout which, if hooked, offer a gallant resistance before they can be hauled over the weeds that usually line the watercourses.

Partly for the sake of trying this kind of angling, partly from a temporary distaste for the presence of men and women, partly for the purpose of finishing a work styled "A History of the Unexplained," I once spent a month in the solitudes of Glen Aline. I stayed at the house of a shepherd who, though not an unintelligent man was by no means possessed of the modern spirit. He and his brother swains had sturdily and successfully resisted an attempt made by the schoolmaster at a village some seven miles off to get a postal service in the glen more frequently than once a week. A post once a week was often enough for lucky people who did not get letters twice a year. It was not my shepherd, but another, who once came with his wife to the village, after a twelve miles' walk across the hills, to ask "what the day of the week was?" They had lost count, and the man had attended to his work on a day which the dame averred to be the Sabbath. He denied that it *was* the Sabbath, and I believe that it turned out to be a Tuesday. This little incident gives some idea of the delightful absence of population in Glen Aline. But no words can paint the utter loneliness, which could actually be felt — the empty moors, the empty sky. The heaps of stones by a burnside, here and there, showed that a cottage had once existed where now was no habitation. One such spot was rather to be shunned by the superstitious, for here, about 1698, a cottar family had been evicted by endless unaccountable disturbances in the house. Stones were thrown by invisible hands — though occasionally, by the way, a white hand, with no apparent body attached to it, *was* viewed by the curious who came to the spot. Heavy objects of all sorts floated in the air; rappings and voices were heard; the end wall was pulled down by an unknown agency. The story is extant in a pious old pamphlet called "Sadducees Defeated," and a great deal more to the same effect — a masterpiece by the parish minister, signed and attested by the other ministers of the Glen Kens. The Edinburgh edition of the pamphlet is rare; the London edition may be procured without much difficulty.

The site of this ruined cottage, however, had no terrors for the neighbours, or rather for the neighbour, my shepherd. In fact, he seemed to have forgotten the legend till I reminded him of it, for I had come across the tale in my researches into the Unexplained. The shepherd and his family, indeed, were quite devoid of superstition, and in this respect very unlike the northern Highlanders. However, the fallen cottage had nothing to do with my own little adventure in Glen Aline, and I mention it merely as the most notable of the tiny ruins which attest the presence, in the past, of a larger population. One cannot marvel that the people "flitted" from the moors and morasses of Glen Aline into less melancholy neighbourhoods. The very sheep seemed scarcer here than elsewhere; grouse-disease had devastated the moors, sportsmen consequently did not visit them; and only a few barren pairs, with crow-picked skeletons of dead birds in the heather now and then, showed that the shootings had once perhaps been marketable. My shepherd's cottage was four miles from the little-travelled road to Dalmellington; long bad miles they were, across bog and heather. Consequently I seldom saw any face of man, except in or about the cottage. My work went on rapidly enough in such an undisturbed life. Empires might fall, parties might break like bursting shells, and banks might break also: I plodded on with my labour, and went a-fishing when the day promised well. There was a hill loch (Loch Nan) about five miles away, which I favoured a good deal. The trout were large and fair of flesh, and in proper weather they rose pretty freely, and could be taken by an angler wading from the shore. There was no boat. The wading, however, was difficult and dangerous, owing to the boggy nature of the bottom, which quaked like a quicksand in some places. The black water, never stirred by duck or moorhen, the dry rustling reeds, the noisome smell of decaying vegetable-matter when you stirred it up in wading, the occasional presence of a dead sheep by the sullen margin of the tarn, were all opposed to cheerfulness. Still, the fish were there, and the "lane," which sulkily glided from the loch towards the distant river, contained some monsters, which took worm after a flood. One misty morning, as I had just topped the low ridge from which the loch became visible, I saw a man fishing from my favourite bench. Never had I noticed a human being there before, and I was not well pleased to think that some emissary of Mr. Watson Lyall was making experiments in Loch Nan, and would describe it in “The Sportsman’s Guide.” The mist blew white and thick for a minute or two over the loch-side, as it often does at Loch Skene; so white and thick and sudden that the bewildered angler there is apt to lose his way, and fall over the precipice of the Grey Mare’s Tail. When the curtain of cloud rose again, the loch was lonely: the angler had disappeared. I went on rejoicing, and made a pretty good basket, as the weather improved and grew warmer — a change which gives an appetite to trout in some hill lochs. Among the sands between the stones on the farther bank I found traces of the angler’s footsteps; he was not a phantom, at all events, for phantoms do not wear heavily nailed boots, as he evidently did. The traces, which were soon lost, of course, inclined me to think that he had retreated up a narrow green burnside, with rather high banks, through which, in rainy weather, a small feeder fell into the loch. I guessed that he had been frightened away by the descent of the mist, which usually “puts down” the trout and prevents them from feeding. In that case his alarm was premature. I marched homewards, happy with the unaccustomed weight of my basket, the contents of which were a welcome change from the usual porridge and potatoes, tea (without milk), jam, and scones of the shepherd’s table. But, as I reached the height above the loch on my westward path, and looked back to see if rising fish were dimpling the still waters, all flushed as they were with sunset, behold, there was the Other Man at work again!

I should have thought no more about him had I not twice afterwards seen him at a distance, fishing up a “lane” ahead of me, in the loneliest regions, and thereby, of course, spoiling my sport. I knew him by his peculiar stoop, which seemed not unfamiliar to me, and by his hat, which was of the clerical pattern once known, perhaps still known, as “a Bible-reader’s” — a low, soft, slouched black felt. The second time that I found him thus anticipating me, I left off fishing and walked rather briskly towards him, to satisfy my curiosity, and ask the usual questions, “What sport?” and “What flies?” But as soon as he observed me coming he strode off across the heather. Uncourteous as it seems, I felt so inquisitive that I followed him. But he walked so rapidly, and was so manifestly anxious to shake me off, that I gave up the pursuit. Even if he were a poacher whose conscience smote him for using salmon-roe, I was not “my brother’s keeper,” nor anybody’s keeper. He might “otter” the loch, but how could I prevent him?

It was no affair of mine, and yet — where had I seen him before? His gait, his stoop, the carriage of his head, all seemed familiar — but a short-sighted man is accustomed to this kind of puzzle: he is always recognising the wrong person, when he does not fail to recognise the right one.

I am rather short-sighted, but science has its resources. Two or three days after my encounter with this very shy sportsman, I went again to Loch Nan. But this time I took with me a strong field-glass. As I neared the crest of the low heathery slope immediately above the loch, whence the water first comes into view, I lay down on the ground and crawled like a deer-stalker to the skyline.

Then I got out the glass and reconnoitred. There was my friend, sure enough; moreover, he was playing a very respectable trout. But he was fishing on the near side of the loch, and though I had quite a distinct view of his back, and indeed of all his attenuated form, I was as far as ever from recognising him, or guessing where, if anywhere, I had seen him before. I now determined to stalk him; but this was not too easy, as there is literally no cover on the hillside except a long march dyke of the usual loose stones, which ran down to the loch-side, and indeed three or four feet into the loch, reaching it at a short distance to the right of the angler. Behind this I skulked, in an eagerly undignified manner, and was just about to climb the wall unobserved, when two grouse got up, with their wild "cluck cluck" of alarm, and flew down past the angler and over the loch. He did not even look round, but jerked his line out of the water, reeled it up, and set off walking along the loch-side. He was making, no doubt, for the little glen up which I fancied that he must have retreated on the first occasion when saw him. I set off walking round the tarn on my own side — the left side — expecting to anticipate him, and that he must pass me on his way up the little burnside. But I had miscalculated the distance, or the pace. He was first at the burnside; and now I cast courtesy and everything but curiosity to the winds, and deliberately followed him. He was a few score of yards ahead of me, walking rapidly, when he suddenly climbed the burnside to the left, and was lost to my eyes for a few moments. I reached the place, ascended the steep green declivity and found myself on the open undulating moor, with no human being in sight!

The grass and heather were short. I saw no bush, no hollow, where he could by any possibility have hidden himself. Had he met a Boojum he could not have more "softly and suddenly vanished away."

I make no pretence of being more courageous than my neighbours, and, in this juncture, perhaps I was less so. The long days of loneliness in waste Glen Aline, and too many solitary cigarettes, had probably injured my nerve. So, when I suddenly heard a sigh and the half-smothered sound of a convulsive cough-hollow, if ever a cough was hollow — hard by me, at my side as it were, and yet could behold no man, nor any place where a man might conceal himself —

nothing but moor and sky and tufts of rushes — then I turned away, and walked down the glen: not slowly. I shall not deny that I often looked over my shoulder as I went, and that, when I reached the loch, I did not angle without many a backward glance. Such an appearance and disappearance as this, I remembered, were in the experience of Sir Walter Scott. Lockhart does not tell the anecdote, which is in a little anonymous volume, "Recollections of Sir Walter Scott," published before Lockhart's book. Sir Walter reports that he was once riding across the moor to Ashiesteil, in the clear brown summer twilight, after sunset. He saw a man a little way ahead of him, but, just before he reached the spot, the man disappeared. Scott rode about and about, searching the low heather as I had done, but to no purpose. He rode on, and, glancing back, saw the same man at the same place. He turned his horse, galloped to the spot, and again — nothing! "Then," says Sir Walter, "neither the mare nor I cared to wait any longer." Neither had I cared to wait, and if there is any shame in the confession, on my head be it!

There came a week of blazing summer weather; tramping over moors to lochs like sheets of burnished steel was out of the question, and I worked at my book, which now was all but finished. At length I wrote THE END, and "ô le bon ouff! que je poussais," as Flaubert says about one of his own laborious conclusions. The weather broke, we had a deluge, and then came a soft cloudy day, with a warm southern wind suggesting a final march on Loch Nan. I packed some scones and marmalade into my creel, filled my flask with whiskey, my cigarette-case with cigarettes, and started on the familiar track with the happiest anticipations. The Lone Fisher was quite out of my mind; the day was exhilarating — one of those true fishing-days when you feel the presence of the sun without seeing him. Still, I looked rather cautiously over the edge of the slope above the loch, and, by Jove! there he was, fishing the near side, and wading deep among the reeds! I did not stalk him this time, but set off running down the hillside behind him, as quickly as my basket, with its load of waders and boots, would permit. I was within forty yards of him, when he gave a wild stagger, tried to recover himself, failed, and, this time, disappeared in a perfectly legitimate and accountable manner. The treacherous peaty bottom had given way, and his floating hat, with a splash on the surface, and a few black bubbles, were all that testified to his existence. There was a broken old paling hard by; I tore off a long plank, waded in as near as I dared, and, by help of the plank, after a good deal of slipping, which involved an exemplary drenching, I succeeded in getting him on to dry land. He was a distressing spectacle — his body and face all blackened with the slimy peat-mud; and he fell half-fainting on the grass, convulsed by a terrible cough. My first care was to give him whiskey, by perhaps a mistaken impulse of humanity; my next, as he lay, exhausted, was to bring water in my hat, and remove the black mud from his face.

Then I saw Percy Allen — Allen of St. Jude's! His face was wasted, his thin long beard (he had not worn a beard of old), clogged as it was with peat-stains, showed flecks of grey.

"Allen — Percy!" I said; "what wind blew *you* here?"

But he did not answer; and, as he coughed, it was too plain that the shock of his accident had broken some vessel in the lungs. I tended him as well as I knew how to do it. I sat beside him, giving him what comfort I might, and all the time my memory flew back to college days, and to our strange and most unhappy last meeting, and his subsequent inevitable disgrace. Far away from here — Loch Nan and the vacant moors — my memory wandered.

It was at Blocksby's auction-room, in a street near the Strand, on the eve of a great book-sale three years before, that we had met, for almost the last time, as I believed, though it is true that we had not spoken on that occasion. It is necessary that I should explain what occurred, or what I and three other credible witnesses believed to have occurred; for, upon my word, the more I see and hear of human evidence of any event, the less do I regard it as establishing anything better than an excessively probable hypothesis.

To make a long story as short as may be, I should say that Allen and I had been acquainted when we were undergraduates; that, when fellows of our respective colleges, our acquaintance had become intimate; that we had once shared a little bit of fishing on the Test; and that we were both book-collectors. I was a comparatively sane bibliomaniac, but to Allen the time came when he grudged every penny that he did not spend on rare books, and when he actually gave up his share of the water we used to take together, that his contribution to the rent might go for rare editions and bindings. After this deplorable change of character we naturally saw each other less, but we were still friendly. I went up to town to scribble; Allen stayed on at Oxford. One day I chanced to go into Blocksby's rooms; it was a Friday, I remember — there was to be a great sale on the Monday. There I met Allen in ecstasies over one of the books displayed in the little side room on the right hand of the sale-room. He had taken out of a glass case and was gloating over a book which, it seems, had long been the Blue Rose of his fancy as a collector. He was crazed about Longepierre, the old French amateur, whose volumes, you may remember, were always bound in blue morocco, and tooled, on the centre and at the corners, with his badge, the Golden Fleece. Now the tome which so fascinated Allen was a Theocritus, published at Rome by Caliergus — a Theocritus on blue paper, if you please, bound in Longepierre's morocco livery, *doublé* with red morocco, and, oh ecstasy! with a copy of Longepierre's version of one Idyll on the flyleaf, signed with the translator's initials, and headed "*à Mon Roy*." It is known to the curious that Louis XIV. particularly admired and praised this little poem, calling it "a model of honourable gallantry." Clearly the grateful author had presented his own copy to the king; and here it was, when king and crown had gone down into dust.

Allen showed me the book; he could hardly let it leave his hands.

"Here is a pearl," he had said, "a gem beyond price!"

"I'm afraid you'll find it so," I said; "that is for a Paillet or Rothschild, not for you, my boy."

"I fear so," he had answered; "if I were to sell my whole library to-morrow, I could hardly raise the money;" for he was poor, and it was rumoured that his mania had already made him acquainted with the Jews.

We parted. I went home to chambers; Allen stayed adoring the unexampled Longepierre. That night I dined out, and happened to sit next a young lady who possessed a great deal of taste, though that was the least of her charms. The fashion for book-collecting was among her innocent pleasures; she had seen Allen's books at Oxford, and I told her of his longings for the Theocritus. Miss Breton at once was eager to see the book, and the other books, and I obtained leave to go with her and Mrs. Breton to the auction-rooms next day. The little side-room where the treasures were displayed was empty, except for an attendant, when we went in; we looked at the things and made learned remarks, but I admit that I was more concerned to look at Miss Breton than at any work in leather by Derome or Bauzonnet. We were thus a good deal occupied, perhaps, with each other; people came and went, while our heads were bent over a case of volumes under the window. When we *did* leave, on the appeal of Mrs. Breton, we both — both I and Kate — Miss Breton, I mean — saw Allen — at least I saw him, and believed *she* did — absorbed in gazing at the Longepierre Theocritus. He held it rather near his face; the gas, which had been lit, fell on the shining Golden Fleeces of the cover, on his long thin hands and eager studious features. It would have been a pity to disturb him in his ecstasy. I looked at Miss Breton; we both smiled, and, of course, I presumed we smiled for the same reason.

I happen to know, and unluckily did it happen, the very minute of the hour when we left Blocksby's. It was a quarter to four o'clock — a church-tower was chiming the three-quarters in the Strand, and I looked half mechanically at my own watch, which was five minutes fast. On Sunday I went down to Oxford, and happened to walk into Allen's rooms. He was lying on a sofa reading the "Spectator." After chatting a little, I said, "You took no notice of me, nor of the Bretons yesterday, Allen, at Blocksby's."

"I didn't see you," he said; and as he was speaking there came a knock at the door.

"Come in!" cried Allen, and a man entered who was a stranger to me. You would not have called him a gentleman perhaps. However, I admit that I am possibly no great judge of a gentleman.

Allen looked up.

"Hullo, Mr. Thomas," he said, "have you come up to see Mr. Mortby?" mentioning a well-known Oxford bibliophile. "Wharton," he went on, addressing me, "this is Mr. Thomas from Blocksby's." I bowed. Mr. Thomas seemed embarrassed. "Can I have a word alone with you, sir?" he murmured to Allen.

"Certainly," answered Allen, looking rather surprised. "You'll excuse me a moment, Wharton," he said to me. "Stop and lunch, won't you? There's the old 'Spectator' for you;" and he led Mr. Thomas into a small den where he used to hear his pupils read their essays, and so forth.

In a few minutes he came out, looking rather pale, and took an embarrassed farewell of Mr. Thomas.

"Look here, Wharton," he said to me, "here is a curious business. That fellow from Blocksby's tells me that the Longepierre Theocritus disappeared yesterday afternoon; that I was the last person in whose hand it was seen, and that not only the man who always attends in the room but Lord Tarras and Mr. Wentworth, saw it in *my* hands just before it was missed."

"What a nuisance!" I answered. "You were looking at it when Miss Breton and I saw you, and you didn't notice us; Does Thomas know *when* — I mean about what o'clock — the book was first missed?"

"That's the lucky part of the whole worry," said Allen. "I left the rooms at three exactly, and it was missed about ten minutes to four; dozens of people must have handled it in that interval of time. So interesting a book!"

"But," I said, and paused— "are you sure your watch was right?"

"Quite certain; besides, I looked at a church clock. Why on earth do you ask?"

"Because — I am awfully sorry — there is some unlucky muddle; but it was exactly a quarter, or perhaps seventeen minutes, to four when both Miss Breton and I saw you absorbed in the Longepierre."

"Oh, it's quite *impossible,*" Allen answered; "I was far enough away from Blocksby's at a quarter to four."

"That's all right," I said. "Of course you can prove that; if it is necessary; though I dare say the book has fallen behind a row of others, and has been found by this time. Where were you at a quarter to four?"

“I really don’t feel obliged to stand a cross-examination before my time,” answered Allen, flushing a little. Then I remembered that I was engaged to lunch at All Souls’, which was true enough; convenient too, for I do not quite see how the conversation could have been carried on pleasantly much further. For I *had* seen him — not a doubt about it. But there was one curious thing. Next time I met Miss Breton I told her the story, and said, “You remember how we saw Allen, at Blocksby’s, just as we were going away?”

“No,” she said, “I did not see him; where was he?”

“Then why did you smile — don’t you remember? I looked at him and at you, and I thought you smiled!”

“Because — well, I suppose because *you* smiled,” she said. And the subject of the conversation was changed.

It was an excessively awkward affair. It did not come “before the public,” except, of course, in the agreeably mythical gossip of an evening paper. There was no more public scandal than that. Allen was merely ruined. The matter was introduced to the notice of the Wardens and the other Fellows of St. Jude’s. What Lord Tarras saw, what Mr. Wentworth saw, what I saw, clearly proved that Allen was in the auction-rooms, and had the confounded book in his hand, at an hour when, as *he* asserted, he had left the place for some time. It was admitted by one of the people employed at the sale-rooms that Allen had been noticed (he was well known there) leaving the house at three. But he must have come back again, of course, as at least four people could have sworn to his presence in the show-room at a quarter to four o’clock. When he was asked in a private interview, by the Head of his College, to say where he went after leaving Blocksby’s Allen refused to answer. He merely said that he could not prove the facts; that his own word would not be taken against that of so many unprejudiced and even friendly witnesses. He simply threw up the game. He resigned his fellowship; he took his name off the books; he disappeared.

There was a good deal of talk; people spoke about the unscrupulousness of collectors, and repeated old anecdotes on that subject. Then the business was forgotten. Next, in a year’s time or so, the book — the confounded Longepierre’s Theocritus — was found in a pawnbroker’s shop. The history of its adventures was traced beyond a shadow of doubt. It had been very adroitly stolen, and disposed of, by a notorious book-thief, a gentleman by birth — now dead, but well remembered. Ask Mr. Quaritch!

Allen’s absolute innocence was thus demonstrated beyond cavil, though nobody paid any particular attention to the demonstration. As for Allen, he had vanished; he was heard of no more.

He was *here*; dying here, beside the black wave of lone Loch Nan.

All this, so long in the telling, I had time enough to think over, as I sat and watched him, and wiped his lips with water from the burn, clearer and sweeter than the water of the loch.

At last his fit of coughing ceased, and a kind of peace came into his face.

"Allen, my dear old boy," I said — I don't often use the language of affection — "did you never hear that all that stupid story was cleared up; that everyone knows you are innocent?"

He only shook his head; he did not dare to speak, but he looked happier, and he put his hand in mine.

I sat holding his hand, stroking it. I don't know how long I sat there; I had put my coat and waterproof under him. He was "wet through," of course; there was little use in what I did. What could I do with him? how bring him to a warm and dry place?

The idea seemed to strike him, for he half rose and pointed to the little burnside, across the loch. A plan occurred to me; I tore a leaf from my sketch-book, put the paper with pencil in his hand, and said, "Where do you live? Don't speak. Write."

He wrote in a faint scrawl, "Help me to that burnside. Then I can guide you."

I hardly know how I got him there, for, light as he was, I am no Hercules. However, with many a rest, we reached the little dell; and then I carried him up its green side, and laid him on the heather of the moor.

He wrote again:

"Go to that clump of rushes — the third from the little hillock. Then look, but be careful. Then lift the big grass tussock."

The spot which Allen indicated was on the side of a rather steep grassy slope. I approached it, dragged at the tussock of grass, which came away easily enough, and revealed the entrance to no more romantic hiding-place than an old secret whiskey "still." Private stills, not uncommon in Sutherland and some other northern shires, are extinct in Galloway. Allen had probably found this one by accident in his wanderings, and in his half-insane bitterness against mankind had made it, for some time at least, his home. The smoke-blackened walls, the recesses where the worm-tub and the still now stood, all plainly enough betrayed the original user of the hiding-place. There was a low bedstead, a shelf or two, whereon lay a few books — a Shakespeare, a Homer, a Walton, Plutarch's "Lives"; very little else out of a library once so rich. There was a tub of oatmeal, a heap of dry peat, two or three eggs in a plate, some bottles, a keg of whiskey, some sardine-tins, a box with clothes — that was nearly all the "plenishing" of this hermitage. It was never likely to be discovered, except by the smoke, when the inmate lit a fire. The local shepherd knew it, of course, but Allen had bought his silence, not that there were many neighbours for the shepherd to tattle with.

Allen had recovered strength enough by this time to reach his den with little assistance. He made me beat up the white of one of the eggs with a little turpentine, which was probably, under the circumstances, the best styptic for his malady within his reach. I lit his fire of peats, undressed him, put him to bed, and made him as comfortable as might be in the den which he had chosen. Then I went back to the shepherd's, sent a messenger to the nearest doctor, and procured a kind of sledge, generally used for dragging peat home, wherein, with abundance of blankets for covering, I hoped to bring Allen back to the shepherd's cottage.

Not to delay over details, this was managed at last, and the unhappy fellow was under a substantial roof. But he was very ill; he became delirious and raved of many things — talked of old college adventures, bid recklessly for imaginary books, and practised other eccentricities of fever.

When his fever left him he was able to converse in a way — I talking, and he scrawling faintly with a pencil on paper. I told him how his character had been cleared, how he had been hunted for, advertised for, vainly enough. To the shepherds' cottages where he had lived till the beginning of that summer, newspapers rarely came; to his den in the old secret still, of course they never came at all.

His own story of what he had been doing at the fatal hour when so many people saw him at the auction-rooms was brief. He had left the rooms, as he said, at three o'clock, pondering how he might raise money for the book on which his heart was set. His feet had taken him, half unconsciously, to

a dismal court,
Place of Israelite resort,

where dwelt and dealt one Isaacs, from whom he had, at various times, borrowed money on usury. The name of Isaacs was over a bell, one of many at the door, and, when the bell was rung, the street door "opened of his own accord," like that of the little tobacco-and-talk club which used to exist in an alley off Pall Mall. Allen rang the bell, the outer door opened, and, as he was standing at the door of Isaacs' chambers, before he had knocked, *that* portal also opened, and the office-boy, a young Jew, slunk cautiously out. On seeing Allen, he had seemed at once surprised and alarmed. Allen asked if his master was in; the lad answered "No" in a hesitating way; but on second thoughts, averred that Isaacs "would be back immediately," and requested Allen to go in and wait. He did so, but Isaacs never came, and Allen fell asleep. He had a very distinct and singular dream, he said, of being in Messrs. Blocksy’s rooms, of handling the Longepierre, and of seeing Wentworth there, and Lord Tarras. When he wakened he was very cold, and, of course, it was pitch dark. He did not remember where he was; he lit a match and a candle on the chimney-piece. Then slowly his memory came back to him, and not only his memory, but his consciousness of what he had wholly forgotten — namely, that this was Saturday, the Sabbath of the Jews, and that there was not the faintest chance of Isaacs’ arrival at his place of business. In the same moment the embarrassment and confusion of the young Israelite flashed vividly across his mind, and he saw that he was in a very awkward position. If that fair Hebrew boy had been robbing, or trying to rob, the till, then Allen’s position was serious indeed, as here he was, alone, at an untimely hour, in the office. So he blew the candle out, and went down the dingy stairs as quietly as possible, took the first cab he met, drove to Paddington, and went up to Oxford.

It is probable that the young child of Israel, if he had been attempting any mischief, did not succeed in it. Had there been any trouble, it is likely enough that he would have involved Allen in the grief. Then Allen would have been in a, perhaps, unprecedented position. He could have established an alibi, as far as the Jew’s affairs went, by proving that he had been at Blocksby’s at the hour when the boy would truthfully have sworn that he had let him into Isaacs’ chambers. And, as far as the charge against him at Blocksby’s went, the evidence of the young Jew would have gone to prove that he was at Isaacs’, where he had no business to be, when we saw him at Blocksby’s. But, unhappily, each alibi would have been almost equally compromising. The difficulty never arose, but the reason why Allen refused to give any account of what he had been doing, and where he had been, at four o’clock on that Saturday afternoon — a refusal that told so heavily against him — is now sufficiently clear. His statement would, we may believe, never have been corroborated by the youthful Hebrew, who certainly had his own excellent reasons for silence, and who probably had carefully established an *alibi* of his own elsewhere.

The true account of Allen’s appearance, or apparition, at Blocksby’s, when I and Tarras, Wentworth and the attendant recognised him, and Miss Breton did *not*, is thus part of the History of the Unexplained. Allen might have appealed to precedents in the annals of the Psychical Society, where they exist in scores, and are technically styled “collective hallucinations.” But neither a jury, nor a judge, perhaps, would accept the testimony of experts in Psychical Research if offered in a criminal trial, nor acquit a wraith.

Possibly this scepticism has never yet injured the cause of an innocent man. Yet I know, in my own personal experience, and have heard from others, from men of age, sagacity, and acquaintance with the greatest affairs, instances in which people have been distinctly seen by sane, healthy, and honourable witnesses, in places and circumstances where it was (as we say) “physically impossible” that they should have been, and where they certainly were not themselves aware of having been. That is why human testimony seems to me to establish no more, in certain circumstances, than a highly probable working hypothesis — a hypothesis on which, of course, we are bound to act.

There is little more to tell. By dint of careful nursing, poor Allen was enabled to travel; he reached Mentone, and there the mistral ended him. He was a lonely man, with no kinsfolk; his character was cleared among the people who knew him best; the others have forgotten him. Nobody can be injured by this explanation of his silence when called on to prove his innocence, and of his unusually successful vanishing from a society which had never tried very hard to discover him in his retreat. He has lived and suffered and died, and left behind him little but an incident in the History of the Unexplained.

THE COMPLETE BUNGLER

SCENE I. — HAMPSHIRE

PISCATOR ANGLUS. PISCATOR SCOTUS

Scotus. — Well, now let’s go to your sport of angling. Where, Master, is your river?

Anglus. — Marry, ’tis here; mark you, this is the famous Test.

Scotus. — What, Master, this dry ditch? There be scarce three inches of water in it.

Anglus. — Patience, Scholar, the water is in the meadows, or Master Oakley, the miller, is holding it up. Nay, let us wait here some hour or so till the water is turned on. Or perchance, Scholar, for the matter of five shillings, Master Oakley will even raise his hatches, an you have a crown about you.

Scotus. — I like not to part with my substance, but, as needs must, here, Master, is the coin.

with your two pistol-shots.’ No more is known of this adventure. But Charles was popular both in Court and town: his resistance to expulsion was applauded. De Gèvres was sent by the King to entreat Charles to leave France; ‘he received de Gèvres gallantly, his hand on his sword-hilt.’ D’Argenson saw him at the opera on December 3, 1748, ‘fort gai et fort beau, admiré de tout le public.’

On December 10, 1748, Charles was arrested at the door of the opera house, bound hand and foot, searched, and dragged to Vincennes. The deplorable scene is too familiar for repetition. One point has escaped notice. Charles (according to d’Argenson) had told de Gèvres that he would die by his own hand, if arrested. Two pistols were found on him; he had always carried them since his Scottish expedition. But a *pair of compasses* was also found. Now it was with a pair of compasses that his friend, Lally Tollendal, long afterwards attempted to commit suicide in prison. The pistols were carried in fear of assassination, but what does a man want with a pair of compasses at the opera?

After some days of detention at Vincennes, Charles was released, was conducted out of French territory, and made his way to Avignon, where he resided during January and February 1749. He had gained the sympathy of the mob, both in Paris and in London. Some of the French Court, including the Dauphin, were eager in his cause. Songs and poems were written against Louis XV, D’Argenson, as we know, being out of office, composed a play on Charles’s martyrdom. So much contempt for Louis was excited, that a nail was knocked into the coffin of French royalty. The King, at the dictation of England, had arrested, bound, imprisoned, and expelled his kinsman, his guest, and (by the Treaty of Fontainebleau) his ally.

Applause and pity from the fickle and forgetful the Prince had won, but his condition was now desperate. Refusing to accept a pension from France, he was poor; his jewels he had pawned for the Scottish expedition. He had disobeyed his father's commands and mortally offended Louis by refusing to leave France. His adherents in Paris (as their letters to Rome prove) were in despair. His party, as has been shown, was broken up into hostile camps. Lochiel was dead. Lord George Murray had been insulted and estranged. The Earl Marischal had declined Charles's invitation to manage his affairs (1747). Elcho was a persistent and infuriated dun. Clancarty was reviling Charles, James, Louis, England, and the world at large. Madame de Pompadour, Cardinal Tencin, and de Puysieux were all hostile. The English Jacobites, though loyal, were timid. Europe was hermetically sealed against the Prince. Refuge in Fribourg, where the English threatened the town, Charles had refused. Not a single shelter was open to him, for England's policy was to drive him into the dominions of the Pope, where he would be distant and despised. Of advisers he had only such attached friends as Henry Goring, Bulkeley, Harrington, or such distrusted boon companions as Kelly - against whom the English Jacobites set all wheels in motion. Charles's refuge at Avignon even was menaced by English threats directed at the Pope. The Prince tried to amuse himself; he went to dances, he introduced boxing matches, just as years before he had brought golf into Italy. But his position was untenable, and he disappeared.

From the gossip of d'Argenson we have learned that Charles was no longer the same man as the gallant leader of the race to Derby, or the gay and resourceful young Ascanius who won the hearts of the Highlanders by his cheerful courage and contented endurance. He was now embittered by defeat; by suspicions of treachery which the Irish about him kindled and fanned, by the broken promises of Louis XV., by the indifference of Spain. He had become 'a wild man,' as his father's secretary, Edgar, calls him - 'Our dear wild man.' He spelled the name 'L'ome sauvage.' He was, in brief, a desperate, a soured, and a homeless outcast. His chief French friends were ladies - Madame de Vassé, Madame de Talmond, and others. Montesquieu, living in their society, and sending wine from his estate to the Jacobite Lord Elibank; rejoicing, too, in an Irish Jacobite housekeeper, 'Mlle. Betti,' was well disposed, like Voltaire, in an indifferent well-bred way. Most of these people were, later, protecting and patronising the Prince when concealed from the view of Europe, but theirs was a vague and futile alliance. Charles and his case were desperate.

In this mood, and in this situation at Avignon, he carried into practice the counsel which d’Argenson had elaborated in a written memoir. ‘I gave them’ (Charles and Henry) ‘the best possible advice,’ says La Bête. ‘My “Mémoire” I entrusted to O’Brien at Antwerp. Therein I suggested that the two princes should never return to Italy, *but that for some years they should lead a hidden and wandering life between France and Spain*. Charles might be given a pension and the vicariat of Navarre. This should only be allowed to slip out by degrees, while England would grow accustomed to the notion that they were *not* in Rome, and would be reduced to mere doubts as to their place of residence. Now they would be in Spain, now in France, finally in some town of Navarre, where their authority would, by slow degrees, be admitted. Peace once firmly established, it would not be broken over this question. They would be in a Huguenot country, and able to pass suddenly into Great Britain.’

This was d’Argenson’s advice before Henry fled Rome to be made a cardinal, and before the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, closing Europe against Charles, was concluded. The object of d’Argenson is plain; he wished to keep Charles out of the Pope’s domains, as England wanted to drive the Prince into the centre of ‘Popery.’ If he resided in Rome, Protestant England would always suspect Charles; moreover, he would be remote from the scene of action. To the Pope’s domains, therefore, Charles would not go. But the scheme of skulking in France, Spain, and Navarre had ceased to be possible. He, therefore, adopted ‘the fugitive and hidden life’ recommended by d’Argenson; he secretly withdrew from Avignon, and for many months his places of residence were unknown.

‘Charles,’ says Voltaire, ‘hid himself from the whole world.’ We propose to reveal his hiding-places.

CHAPTER III - THE PRINCE IN FAIRYLAND - FEBRUARY 1749-SEPTEMBER 1750 - I. WHAT THE WORLD SAID

Europe after Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle - A vast gambling establishment - Charles excluded - Possible chance in Poland - Supposed to have gone thither - 'Henry Goring's letter' - Romantic adventures attributed to Charles - Obvious blunders - Talk of a marriage - Count Brühl's opinion - Proposal to kidnap Charles - To rob a priest - The King of Poland's ideas - Lord Hyndford on Frederick the Great - Lord Hyndford's mare's nest - Charles at Berlin - 'Send him to Siberia' - The theory contradicted - Mischievous glee of Frederick - Charles discountenances plots to kill Cumberland - Father Myles Macdonnell to James - London conspiracy - Reported from Rome - The Bloody Butcher Club - Guesses of Sir Horace Mann - Charles and a strike - Charles reported to be very ill - Really on the point of visiting England - September 1750.

Europe, after the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, was like a vast political gambling establishment. Nothing, or nothing but the expulsion of Prince Charles from every secular State, had been actually settled. Nobody was really satisfied with the Peace. The populace, in France as in England, was discontented. Princes were merely resting and looking round for new combinations of forces. The various Courts, from St. Petersburg to Dresden, from London to Vienna, were so many tables where the great game of national *faro* was being played, over the heads of the people, by kings, queens, abbés, soldiers, diplomatists, and pretty women. Projects of new alliances were shuffled and cut, like the actual cards which were seldom out of the hands of the players, when Casanova or Barry Lyndon held the bank, and challenged all comers. It was the age of adventurers, from the mendacious Casanova to the mysterious Saint-Germain, from the Chevalier d'Eon to Charles Edward Stuart. That royal player was warned off the turf, as it were, ruled out of the game. Where among all these attractive tables was one on which Prince Charles, in 1749, might put down his slender stake, his name, his sword, the lives of a few thousand Highlanders, the fortunes of some faithful gentlemen? Who would accept Charles's empty alliance, which promised little but a royal title and a desperate venture? The Prince had wildly offered his hand to the Czarina; he was to offer that hand, vainly stretched after a flying crown, to a Princess of Prussia, and probably to a lady of Poland.

At this moment the Polish crown was worn by Augustus of Saxony, who was reckoned ‘a bad life.’ The Polish throne, the Polish alliance, had been, after various unlucky adventures since the days of Henri III. and the Duc d’Alençon, practically abandoned by France. But Louis XV. was beginning to contemplate that extraordinary intrigue in which Conti aimed at the crown of Poland, and the Comte de Broglie was employed (1752) to undermine and counteract the schemes of Louis’s official representatives. As a Sobieski by his mother’s side, the son of the exiled James (who himself had years before been asked to stand as a candidate for the kingdom of Poland), Charles was expected by politicians to make for Warsaw when he fled from Avignon. It is said, on the authority of a Polish manuscript, ‘communicated by Baron de Rondeau,’ that there was a conspiracy in Poland to unseat Augustus III. and give the crown to Prince Charles. In 1719, Charles’s maternal grandfather had declined a Russian proposal to make a dash for the crown, so the chivalrous Wogan narrates. In 1747 (June 6), Chambrier had reported to Frederick the Great that Cardinal Tencin was opposed to the ambition of the Saxon family, which desired to make the elective crown of Poland hereditary in its house. The Cardinal said that, in his opinion, there was a Prince who would figure well in Poland, *le jeune Edouard* (Prince Charles), who had just made himself known, and in whom there was the stuff of a man. But Frederick the Great declined to interfere in Polish matters, and Tencin was only trying to get rid of Charles without a rupture. In May 1748, Frederick refused to see Graeme, a Jacobite who was sent to demand a refuge for the Prince in Prussia. Without Frederick and without Sweden, Charles in 1749 could do nothing serious in Poland.

The distracted politics of Poland, however, naturally drew the attention of Europe to that country when Charles, on February *28*, vanished out of Avignon ‘into fairyland,’ like Frederick after Molwitz. Every Court in Europe was vainly searched for ‘the boy that cannot be found.’ The newsletters naturally sent him to Poland, so did Jacobite myth.

The purpose of this chapter is to record the guesses made by diplomatists at Charles’s movements, and the expedients by which they vainly endeavoured to discover him. We shall next lift, as far as possible, the veil which has concealed for a century and a half adventures in themselves unimportant enough. In spite of disappointments and dark hours of desertion, Charles, who was much of a boy, probably enjoyed the mystery which he now successfully created. If he could not startle Europe by a brilliant appearance on any stage, he could keep it talking and guessing by a disappearance. He obviously relished secrecy, pass-words, disguises, the ‘properties’ of the conspirator, in the spirit of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. He came of an evasive race. His grandfather, as Duke of York, had fled from England disguised as a girl. His father had worn many disguises in many adventures. *He* had been ‘Betty Burke.’

Though it is certain that, in March 1749 (the only month when he almost evades us), Charles could not have visited Berlin, Livadia, Stockholm, the reader may care to be reminded of a contemporary Jacobite romance in which he is made to do all these things. A glance should be cast on the pamphlet called ‘A Letter from H. G — g, Esq.’ (London, 1750). The editor announces that the letter has been left in his lodgings by a mistake; it has not been claimed, as the person for whom it was meant has gone abroad, and so the editor feels free to gratify ‘the curiosity of the town.’ The piece, in truth, is a Jacobite tract, meant to keep up the spirits of the faithful, and it is probable that the author really had some information, though he is often either mistaken, or fables by way of a ‘blind.’ About February 11, says the scribe (nominally Henry Goring, Charles’s equerry, an ex-officer of the Queen of Hungary), a mysterious stranger, the ‘Chevalier de la Luze,’ came to Avignon, and was received by the Prince ‘with extraordinary marks of distinction.’ ‘He understood not one word of English,’ which destroys, if true, the theory that the Earl Marischal, or Marshal Keith, is intended. French and Italian he spoke well, but with a foreign accent. Kelly ventured to question the Prince about the stranger, but was rebuffed. One day, probably February 24, the stranger received despatches, and vanished as he had come. The Prince gave a supper (d’Argenson’s ‘ball’), and, when his guests had retired, summoned Goring into his study. He told Goring that ‘there were spies about him’ (the Earl Marischal, we know, distrusted Kelly); he rallied him on a love-affair, and said that Goring only should be his confidant. Next morning, very early, they two started for Lyons, disguised as French officers. As far as Lyons, indeed, the French police actually traced them. But, according to the pamphlet, they did not stop in Lyons; they rested at a small town two leagues further on, whence the Prince sent dispatches to Kelly at Avignon. Engaging a new valet, Charles pushed to Strasbourg, where he again met La Luze, now described as ‘a person whose extraordinary talents had gained him the confidence one of the wisest Princes in Europe,’ obviously pointing to Frederick of Prussia, the master of Marshal Keith, and the friend and host of his brother, the Earl Marischal. At Strasbourg, Charles rescued a pretty young lady from a fire; she lost her heart at once to the ‘Comte d’Espoir’ (his travelling title), but the Prince behaved like Scipio, not to mention a patriarch famous for his continence. ‘I am no stoic,’ said His Royal Highness to La Luze, ‘but I have always been taught that pleasures, how pardonable soever in themselves, become highly criminal when indulged to the prejudice of another,’ adding many other noble and unimpeachable sentiments.

After a romantic adventure with English or Scottish assassins, in which His

Royal Highness shot a few of them, the travellers arrived at Leipzig. La Luze now assumed his real name, and carried Charles, by cross roads, to ‘a certain Court,’ where he spent ten days with much satisfaction. He stayed at the house of La Luze (Berlin and the Earl Marischal appear to be hinted at, but the Marischal told Pickle that he had never seen Charles at Berlin), secret business was done, and then, through territories friendly or hostile, ‘a certain port’ was reached. They sailed (from Dantzig?), were driven into a hostile port (Riga?), escaped and made another port (Stockholm?) where they met Lochgarry, ‘whom the Prince thought had been one of those that fell at Culloden.’

This is nonsense. Lochgarry had been with Charles after Culloden, and had proposed to waylay Cumberland, which the Prince forbade. Murray of Broughton, in his examination, and Bishop Forbes agree on this point, and James, we know, sent, by Edgar, a message to Lochgarry on Christmas Eve, 1748. Charles, therefore, knew excellently well that Lochgarry did *not* die at Culloden. After royal, but very secret entertainment ‘in this kingdom’ (Sweden?), Charles went into Lithuania, where old friends of his maternal ancestors, the Sobieskis, welcomed him. He resumed a gaiety which he had lost ever since his arrest at the opera in Paris, and had ‘an interview with a most illustrious and firm friend to his person and interest.’ Though his marriage, says the pamphleteer, had been much talked of, ‘he has always declined making any applications of that nature himself. It was his fixed determination to beget no royal beggars.’ D’Argenson reports Charles’s remark that he will never marry till the Restoration, and, no doubt, he was occasionally this mood, among others.

The pamphleteer vows that the Prince ‘loves and is loved,’ but will not marry ‘till his affairs take a more favourable turn.’ The lady is ‘of consummate beauty, yet is that beauty the least of her perfections.’

The pamphlet concludes with vague enigmatic hopes and promises, and certainly leaves its readers little wiser than they were before. In the opinion of the Messrs. ‘Sobieski Stuart’ (who called themselves his grandsons), Charles really did visit Sweden, and his jewel, as Grand Master of the Grand Masonic Lodge of Stockholm, is still preserved there. The castle where he resided in Lithuania, it is said, is that of Radzivil. The affectionate and beautiful lady is the Princess Radzivil, to whom the newspapers were busy marrying Charles at this time. The authors of ‘Tales of the Century,’ relying on some vague Polish traditions, think that a party was being made to raise the Prince to the Polish crown. In fact, there is not a word of truth in ‘Henry Goring’s letter.’

We now study the perplexities of Courts and diplomatists. Pickle was not yet at hand with accurate intelligence, and, even after he began to be employed, the English Government left their agents abroad to send in baffled surmises. From

Paris, on March 8, Colonel Joseph Yorke (whom d’Argenson calls by many ill names) wrote, ‘I am told for certain that he is now returned to Avignon.’ Mann, in Florence, hears (March 7) that the Prince has sent a Mr. Lockhart to James to ask for money, but that was really done on December 31, 1748. On March 11, Yorke learned from Puysieux that the Prince had been recognised by postboys as he drove through Lyons towards Metz; probably, Puysieux thought, on ‘an affair of gallantry.’ Others, says Yorke, ‘have sent him to Poland or Sweden,’ which, even in 1746, had been getting ready troops to assist Charles in Scotland. On March 20, Yorke hints that Charles may be in or near Paris, as he probably was. Berlin was suggested as his destination by Horace Mann (April 4). Again, he has been seen in disguise, walking into a gate of Paris (April 11). On April 14, Walton, from Florence, writes that James has had news of his son, is much excited, and is sending Fitzmorris to join him. The Pope knows and is sure to blab. On May 3, Yorke mentions a rumour, often revived, that the Prince is dead. On May 9, the Jacobites in Paris show a letter from Oxford inviting Charles to the opening of the Radcliffe, ‘where they assure him of better reception than the University has had at Court lately.’ Mann (May 2) mentions the Radzivil marriage, arranged, in a self-denying way, by the Princesse de Talmond. On May 17, Yorke hears from Puysieux that the French ambassador in Saxony avers that Charles is in Poland, and that Sir Charles Williams has remonstrated with Count Brühl. On May 1, 1749, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams wrote from Leipzig to the Duke of Newcastle. He suspects that Charles is one of several persons who have just passed through Leipzig on the way to Poland; Count Brühl is ‘almost certain’ of it. On May 5 (when Charles was really in or near Venice), Hanbury Williams sends a copy of his remonstrance with Brühl.

‘I asked Count Brühl whether, in the present divided and factious state of the nobility of Poland, His Polish Majesty would like to have a young adventurer (who can fish in no waters that are not troubled, and who, by his mother, is allied to a family that once sat upon the Polish throne) to go into that country where it would be natural for him to endeavour to encourage factions, nourish divisions, and foment confederations to the utmost of his power, and might not the evil-minded and indisposed Poles be glad to have such a tool in their hands, which at some time or other they might make use of to answer their own ends? To this Count Brühl answered in such terms as I could wish, and I must do him the justice to say that he showed the best disposition to serve His Majesty in the affair in question; but I am yet of opinion that, whatever is done effectually in this case, must be done by the Court of Petersburg, and I would humbly advise that, as soon as it is known for certain that the Pretender’s son is in Poland, His Majesty should order his minister at the Court of Petersburg to take such steps as

His Majesty's great wisdom shall judge most likely to make the Czarina act with a proper vigour upon this occasion.

'Your Grace knows that the republic of Poland is at present divided into two great factions, the one which is in the interest of Russia, to which the friends of the House of Austria attach themselves; the other is in the interest of France and Prussia. As I thought it most likely, if the Pretender's son went into Poland, he would seek protection from the French party, I have desired and requested the French ambassador that he would write to the French resident at Warsaw, and to others of his friends in Poland, that he might be informed of the truth of the Pretender's arrival, and the place that he was at in Poland, as soon as possible, and that when he was acquainted with it he would let me know what came to his knowledge, all which he has sincerely promised me to do, and I do not doubt but he will keep his word. . . . It is publicly said that the Pretender's son's journey to Poland is with a design to marry a princess of the House of Radzivil.

'As soon as I hear anything certain about the Pretender's son being in Poland, I will most humbly offer to your Grace the method that I think will be necessary for His Majesty to pursue with respect to the King and republic of Poland, in case His Majesty should think fit not to suffer the Pretender's son to remain in that country.

'C. HANBURY WILLIAMS.'

On May 12, Williams believes that Charles is *not* in Poland. On May 18, he guesses (wrongly) that the Prince is in Paris. On May 25, he fancies - 'plainly perceives' - that the French ambassador at Dresden believes in the Polish theory. On June 9, Brühl tells Williams (correctly) that Charles is in Venice. On June 11, Hanbury Williams proposes to have a harmless priest seized and robbed, and to kidnap Prince Charles! I give this example of British diplomatic energy and chivalrous behaviour.

From Sir Charles Hanbury Williams.
'Dresden: June 11, N.S. 1749.

' . . . Count Brühl has communicated to me the letters which he received by the last post from the Saxon resident at Venice, who says that the Pretender's son had been at Venice for some days; that he has received two expresses from his father at Rome since his being there; but that nobody knew how long he intended to stay there. . . *Mons.* Brühl further informs me that he hears from Poland that the Prince of Radzivil, who is Great General of Lithuania, has a strong desire to marry his daughter to the Pretender’s son. The young lady is between eleven and twelve years old, very plain, and can be no great fortune, for she has two brothers; but yet *Mons.* Brühl is of opinion that there is some negotiation on foot for this marriage, which is managed by an Italian priest who is a titular bishop, whose name is Lascarisk (*sic*), and who lives in and governs the Prince Radzivil’s family. This priest is soon to set out for Italy, under pretence of going to Rome for the Jubilee year, but *Mons.* Brühl verily thinks that he is charged with a secret commission for negotiating the above-mentioned marriage. If His Majesty thinks it worth while to have this priest watched, I will answer for having early intelligence of the time he intends beginning his journey, and then it would be no difficult matter to have him stopped, and his papers taken from him, as he goes through the Austrian territories into Italy. The more I think of it the more I am persuaded that the Pretender’s son will not go into Poland for many reasons, especially for one, which is that for a small sum of money I will undertake to find a Pole who will engage to seize upon his person in any part of Poland, and carry him to any port in the north that His Majesty shall appoint. I have had offers of this sort already made me, to which your Grace may be sure I gave no answer, except thanking the persons for the zeal they showed for the King, my master, but I am convinced that the thing is very practicable.

‘I had this day the honour to dine with the King of Poland, and, as I sat next to him at table, he told me that he was very glad to hear that the Pretender’s son was at length found to be at Venice, for that he would much rather have him there than in Poland; to which I answered that I was very glad, upon His Polish Majesty’s account, that the Pretender’s son had not thought fit to come into any of His Majesty’s territories, since I believed the visit would be far from being agreeable. To which the King of Poland replied that *it would be a very disagreeable visit to him*, and after that expressed himself in the handsomest manner imaginable with respect to His Majesty, and the regard he had for his Sacred person and Royal House; and I am convinced if the Pretender’s son had gone into Poland, His Polish Majesty and his minister would have done everything in their power to have drove him out of that kingdom as soon as possible.

‘C. HANBURY WILLIAMS.

‘P.S. - Since my writing this letter, Count Brühl tells me that the news of the Pretender’s son’s being at Venice is confirmed by letters from his best correspondent at Rome, but both accounts agree in the Pretender’s son’s being at Venice incognito, and that he appears in no public place, so that very few people know of his being there. . . . C. H. W.’

In 1751, Hanbury Williams renewed his proposal about waylaying Lascaris.

Charles, as we shall see, was for a short time at Venice in May 1749. Meanwhile the game of hide and seek through Europe went on as merrily as ever. Lord Hyndford, so well known to readers of Mr. Carlyle's 'Frederick,' now opens in full cry from Moscow, but really on a hopelessly wrong scent. As illustrating Hyndford's opinion of Frederick, who had invested him with the Order of the Thistle, we quote this worthy diplomatist:

Lord Hyndford to the Duke of Newcastle.
'Moscow: June 19, 1749.

' . . . I must acquaint your Grace of what I have learnt, through a private canal, from the last relation of Mr. Gross, the Russian minister at Berlin, although I dare say it is no news to your Grace. Mr. Gross writes that, some days before the date of his letter, the Pretender's eldest son arrived at Potsdam, and had been very well received by the King of Prussia, General Keith, and his brother, the late Earl Marshal; and all the other English, Scotch, and Irish Jacobites in the Prussian service were to wait upon him. This does not at all surprise me; but *Mons.* Valony, the French minister, went likewise to make his compliments at a country house, hired on purpose for this young vagabond. This is all that I know as yet of this affair in general, for the Chancellor has not thought proper as yet to inform me of the particulars. However, this public, incontestable proof of the little friendship and regard the King of Prussia has for His Majesty and His Royal Family, and for the whole British nation, will, I hope, open the eyes of the people who are blind to that Prince's monstrous faults, if any such are still left amongst us, and I doubt not but it will save His Majesty the trouble of sending Sir C. Hanbury Williams or any other minister to that perfidious Court.

'HYNDFORD.'

This was all a mare's nest; but Hyndford is for kidnapping the Prince. He writes:

'Moscow: June 26, 1749.

'My Lord, - Since the 19th inst., which was the date of my last letter to your Grace, I have been with the Chancellor, who made his excuses that he had not sooner communicated to me the intelligence which Mr. Gross, the Russian minister at Berlin, had sent him concerning the Pretender's eldest son. The Chancellor confirmed all that I wrote to your Grace on the 19th upon that subject, and he told me that he had received a second letter from Mr. Gross, wherein that minister says that the Young Pretender had left the country house where he was, in the neighbourhood of Berlin, and had entirely disappeared, without its being hitherto possible for him, Mr. Gross, or Count Choteck, the Austrian minister, to find out the route he has taken, although it is generally believed that he is gone into Poland; and that now the King of Prussia and his ministers deny that ever the Pretender's son was there, and take it mightily amiss of anybody that pretends to affirm it. I am sorry that the Russian troops are not now in Poland, for otherwise I believe it would have been an easy matter to prevail upon this Court to catch this young knight errant and to send him to Siberia, where he would not have been any more heard of; and if the Court of Dresden will enter heartily into such a scheme, it will not be impossible yet to apprehend him, and as it is very probable that the King of Prussia has sent him into Poland to make a party and breed confusion, it appears to be King Augustus's interest to secure him.

'HYNDFORD.'

Many months later, on Feb. 2, 1749-1750, Lord Hyndford, writing from Hanover, retracted. The rumour of Charles's presence at Berlin, he found, was started by Count de Choteck, the Austrian ambassador. In fact, Choteck used to meet a fair lady secretly in a garden near Berlin, and near the house of Field-Marshal Keith and his brother, Lord Marischal. Hard by was an inn, where a stranger lodged, a rich and handsome youth, whom Choteck, meeting, took for Prince Charles. He was really a young Polish gentleman, into whose reasons for retirement we need not examine.

Frederick, in his mischievous way, wrote about all this from Potsdam, on June 24, 1749:

'We have played a trick on Choteck; he spends much on spies, and, to prove that he is well served, he has taken it into his head that young Edouard, really at Venice, is at Berlin. He has been very busy over this, and no doubt has informed his Court.'

On July 7, 1749, Frederick, in a letter to his minister at Moscow, said that only dense ignorance could credit the Berlin legend.

These documents certainly demonstrate that the Prince fluttered the Courts, and that the Jacobite belief in English schemes to kidnap or murder him was not a mere mythical delusion. Only an opportunity was wanted. He had spared the Duke of Cumberland's life, even after the horrors of Culloden. But Hanbury

Williams knows a Pole who will waylay him; Hyndford wants to carry him off to Siberia. It was not once only, on the other hand, but twice at least, that Charles protected the Butcher, Cumberland. In 1746 he saved his enemy from Lochgarry's open attempt. In 1747 (May 4), a certain Father Myles Macdonnell wrote from St. Germain to James in Rome. He dwells on the jealousies among the Jacobites, and particularly denounces Kelly, then a trusted intimate of Charles. Kelly, he says, is a drunkard, and worse! It was probably he who raised 'a scruple' against a scheme relating to 'Cumberland's hateful person.' 'Honest warrantable people from London' came to Paris and offered 'without either fee or reward' to do the business. What was the 'business,' what measures were to be taken against 'Cumberland's hateful person'? Father Myles Macdonnell, writing to James, a Catholic priest to a Catholic King, does not speak of *assassination*. He talks of 'the scruple raised against securing Cumberland's person.' 'I suspect Parson Kelly of making a scruple of an action the most meritorious that could possibly be committed,' writes Father Myles. The talk of kidnapping, in such cases as those of Cumberland and Prince Charles - men of spirit and armed - is a mere blind. Murder is meant! Father Myles's letter proves that (unknown to James in Rome) there was a London conspiracy to kill the Butcher, but Prince Charles again rejected the proposal. He was less ungenerous than Hyndford and Hanbury Williams. The amusing thing is that the English Government knew, quite as well as Father Macdonnell or James, all about the conspiracy to slay the Duke of Cumberland. Here is the information, which reached Mann through Rome.

From Mr. Thomas Chamberlayne to Sir H. Mann.

'Capranica: November 18, 1747.

' . . . The family at Rome . . . was informed, by one who arrived there last October from London, that there are twelve persons, whose names I could not learn, but none of distinction, that are formed in a club or society, and meet at the Nag's Head in East Street, Holborn. They have bound themselves under most solemn oaths that this winter they will post themselves in different parts of the City of London mostly frequented by His Royal Highness, the Duke of Cumberland, in his night visits , and are resolved to lay violent hands on his royal person. The parole among the different parties in their respective posts is *The Bloody Butcher*. They are all resolute fellows, who first declared at their entering in this conspiracy to despise death or torture. This motive is worthy of your care, so I am certain you'll make proper use of it . . .

'THOMAS CHAMBERLAYNE.'

If Charles afterwards attempted to repay in kind the attentions of his royal cousins, or of their ministers, this can hardly be reckoned inhuman. If he was fluttering the Courts, they - Prussia, Russia, France, Poland - were leading him the life of a tracked beast. They were determined to drive him into the Papal domains; even in Venice he was harried by spies. On May 30, to retrace our steps, Mann, from Florence, reports that Charles has arrived at the Papal Nuncio’s in Venice, attended by one servant in the livery of the Duke of Modena. Walton adds that he has not a penny (June 6). Walton (July 11) writes from Florence that the Prince is reported from Venice to have paid assiduous court to the second daughter of the Duke of Modena, a needy potentate, but that he suddenly disappeared.’ On Sept. 5, 1749, Walton says he is in France. On Sept. 26, Walton writes that he is offering his sword to the Czarina, who declines. He is at Lübeck, or (Oct. 3) at Avignon. On Oct. 20, Mann writes that, from Lübeck, Charles has asked the Imperial ambassador at Paris to implore the Kaiser to give him an asylum in his States. On Oct. 31, Mann only knows that the Pope and James ‘reciprocally ask each other news about’ the Prince. On Jan. 23, 1750, poor Mann is ‘quite at a loss.’ James receives letters from the Prince, but never with date of place, otherwise Mann would have been better informed. Walton hears that James believes Charles to be imprisoned in a French fortress. From Paris, Jan. 17, 1750, Albemarle wrote that he heard the Prince was in Berlin. The Prince later told Pickle that he had been in Berlin more than once, and, as we shall see, Frederick amused him with hopes of assistance. Kelly has left Charles’s followers in distress at Avignon. Kelly, in fact, received his *congé*; he was distrusted by the Earl Marischal, and Carte, the historian. On Jan. 28, Albemarle hears that Charles has been in Paris ‘under the habit of a Capuchine Fryar,’ and this *was* a disguise of his, according to Pickle.

Meanwhile the French Government kept protesting their total ignorance. On April 3, 1750, Walton announces that James has had a long letter from Charles containing his plans and those of his adherents, for which he demands the Royal approval. James has sent a long letter to Charles by the courier of the Duc de Nivernais, the French ambassador in Rome. By the middle of June, James is reported by Walton to be full of hope, and to have heard excellent news. But these expectations were partly founded on a real scheme of Charles, partly on a strike of colliers at Newcastle. A mob orator there proclaimed the Prince, and the Jacobites in Rome thought that His Royal Highness was heading the strike! In July, the same illusions were entertained. On August 12, Albemarle, from Paris, reports the Prince to be dangerously ill, probably not far from the French capital. He was really preparing to embark for England. Albemarle, by way of trap, circulated in the English press a forged newsletter from Nancy in Lorraine, dated August 24, 1750. It announced Charles's death of pneumonia, in hopes of drawing forth a Jacobite denial. This stratagem failed. On August 4, James, though piqued by being kept in the dark, sent Charles a fresh commission of regency. Of the Prince's English expedition of September 1750, the Government of George II. knew nothing. Pickle was in Rome at the moment, not with Charles; what Pickle knew the English ministers knew, but there is a difficulty in dating his letters before 1752, and I am not aware that any despatches of his from Rome are extant.

We have now brought the history to a point (September 1750) where the Prince, for a moment, emerges from fairyland, and where we are not left to the perplexing conjectures of diplomatists in Paris, Dresden, Florence, Hanover, and St. Petersburg. In September 1750, Charles certainly visited London. There is a point of light. We now give an account of his actual movements in 1749-1750.

CHAPTER IV - THE PRINCE IN FAIRYLAND. II. - WHAT ACTUALLY OCCURRED

Charles mystifies Europe - Montesquieu knows his secret - Sources of information - The Stuart manuscripts - Charles's letters from Avignon - A proposal of marriage - Kennedy and the hidden treasure - Where to look for Charles - *Cherchez la femme*! - Hidden in Lorraine - Plans for entering Paris - Letter to Mrs. Drummond - To the Earl Marischal - Starts for Venice - At Strasbourg - Unhappy Harrington - Letter to James - Leaves Venice 'A bird without a nest' - Goes to Paris - The Prince's secret revealed - The convent of St. Joseph - Curious letter as Cartouche - Madame de Routh - Cartouche again - Goring sent to England - A cypher - Portrait of Madame de Talmond - Portrait of Madame d'Aiguillon - Intellectual society - Mademoiselle Luci - 'Dener Bash' - The secret hoard - Results of Goring's English mission - Timidity of English Jacobites - Supply of money - Charles a *bibliophile* - 'My big muff' - A patron of art - Quarrels with Madame de Talmond - Arms for a rising - Newton on Cluny - Kindness to Monsieur Le Coq - Madame de Talmond weary of Charles - Letters to her - Charles reads Fielding's novels - Determines to go to England - Large order of arms - Reproached by James - Intagli of James - *En route* for London - September 1750.

The reader has had an opportunity of observing the success of Charles in mystifying Europe. Diplomatists, ambassadors, and wits would have been surprised, indeed, had they known that one of the most famous men of the age possessed the secret for which they were seeking. The author of 'L'Esprit des Lois' could have enlightened them, for Charles's mystery was no mystery to Montesquieu, who was friendly with Scottish and English Jacobites. The French Ministers, truly or falsely, always professed entire ignorance. They promised to arrest the Prince wherever he might be found on French soil, and transport him to sea by Civita Vecchia. It will be shown later that, at least in the autumn of 1749, this ignorance was probably feigned.

What is really known of the movements of the Prince in 1749? Curiously enough, Mr. Ewald does not seem to have consulted the 'Stuart Papers' at Windsor, while the extracts in Browne's 'History of the Highland Clans' are meagre. To these papers then we turn for information. The most useful portions are *not* Charles's letters to James. These are brief and scanty. Thus he writes from Avignon (January 15, 1749), 'We are enjoying here the finest weather ever was seen.' He always remarks that his health 'is perfect.' He orders patterns for his servants' liveries and a button, blue and yellow, still remains in a letter from Edgar! The button outlasts the dynasty. Our intelligence must be extracted from ill-spelled, closely scrawled, and much erased sheets of brown paper, on which Charles has scribbled drafts for letters to his household, to Waters, his banker in Paris, to adherents in Paris or London, and to ladies. The notes are almost, and in places are quite, illegible. The Prince practised a disguised hand, and used pseudonyms instead of names. Many letters have been written in sympathetic ink, and then exposed to fire or the action of acids. However, something can be made out, but not why he concealed his movements even from his banker, even from his household, Oxburgh, Kelly, Harrington, and Graeme. It is certain that he started, with a marriage in his eye, from Avignon on February 28, 1749, accompanied by Henry Goring, of the Austrian service. There had already been a correspondence, vaguely hinted at by James's secretary, Edgar, between Charles and the Duke and a Princess of Hesse-Darmstadt. On February 24, 1749, Charles drafted, at Avignon, a proposal for the hand of the Duke's daughter. He also drafted (undated) a request to the King of Poland for leave to bring his wife, the Princess of Hesse-Darmstadt, into Polish territory. We may imagine His Polish Majesty's answer. Of course, the marriage did not take place.

Charles had other secrets. On February 3, 1749, he wrote to Waters about the care to be taken with certain letters. These were a correspondence with 'Thomas Newton,' (Major Kennedy), at Mr. Alexander Macarty's, in Gray's Inn, London. Newton was in relations with Cluny Macpherson, through a friend in Northumberland. Cluny, skulking on his Highland estates, was transmitting or was desired to transmit a part of the treasure of 40,000 *louis d'or*, buried soon after Culloden at the head of Loch Arkaig. Of this fatal treasure we shall hear much. A percentage of the coin was found to be false money, a very characteristic circumstance. Moreover, Cluny seems to have held out hopes, always deferred, of a rising in the Highlands. Charles had to be ready in secrecy, to put himself at the head of this movement. There was also to be an English movement, which was frowned on by official Jacobitism. On February 3, 1749, Charles writes from Avignon to 'Thomas Newton' (Kennedy) about the money sent south by Cluny. He repeated his remarks on March 6, giving no place of residence. But probably he was approaching Paris, dangerous as such a visit was, for in a note of March 6 to Waters, he says that he will 'soon call for letters.' His *noms de guerre* at this time were 'Williams' and 'Benn'; later he chose 'John Douglas.' He was also Smith, Mildmay, Burton, and so forth.

There should have been no difficulty in discovering Charles. Modern police, in search of a person who is 'wanted,' spy on his mistress. Now the Princesse de Talmond, when out of favour at Versailles, went to certain lands in Lorraine, near her exiled king, Stanislas. In Lorraine, therefore, at Lunéville, the Court of the ex-king of Poland, or at Commercy, Bar-le-Duc, or wherever the Princesse de Talmond might be, Charles was sure to be heard of by an intelligent spy, if permitted to enter the country. Consequently, we are not surprised to find Charles drafting on April 3, at Lunéville (where he resided at the house of one Mittie, physician of the ex-king of Poland), a 'Project for My arrival in Paris. Mr. Benn must go straight to Dijon, and his companion, Mr. Smith , to Paris. Mr. Smith will need a chaise, which he must buy at Lunéville. Next he will take up the servant of C. P. at Ligny, but on leaving that place Mr. Smith must ride on horseback, and the chaise can go there as if for his return to Paris; the person in it seeming to profit by this opportunity. Mr. Benn must remain for some days, as if he wanted to buy a trunk, and will give his own as if in friendship to Mr. Smith; all this seeming mere chance work. Next, Mr. Smith will go his way and his friend will go his, after waiting a few days, and on arriving at Dijon must write to nobody, except the letter to W- . The Chevalier Graeme, whom he must see (and to whom he may mention having been at Dijon on the Prince's business, without naming his companion, but as if alone), knows nothing, and Graeme must be left in the dark as if he (Mr. Smith) were in the same case, and were waiting new orders in total ignorance, not having seen me for a long time.'

There follow a few private addresses in Paris; and the name, to be remarked, of 'Mademoiselle Ferrand.'

All this is very puzzling; we only make out that, by some confusion of the personalities of 'Benn' (the Prince) and 'Mr. Smith' (Goring), Charles hoped to enter Paris undetected. Yet he *was* seen 'entering a gate of Paris in disguise.' Doubtless he had lady allies, but a certain Mademoiselle Ferrand, to whom he wrote, he seems not to have known personally. We shall find that she was later of use to him, and indeed his most valuable friend and ally.

Next, we find this letter of April 10 to Madame Henrietta Drummond, doubtless of the family of Macgregor, called Drummond, of Balhaldie. Charles appears to have had enough of Paris, and is going to Venice. He is anxious to meet the Earl Marischal.

'April 10, 1749.

'I have been very impatient to be able to give you nuse of me as I am fully persuaded of yr Friendship, and concern for everything that regards me; I send you here enclosed a Letter for Ld Marishal, be pleased to enclose it, and forward it without loss of time; the Bearer (he is neither known by you or me), is charged to receive at any time what Letters you want to send me, and you may be shure of their arriving safe. Iff Lord Marishal agrees with my Desier when you give his Packet to yr Bearer, you must put over it *en Dilligence*, iff otherwise, direct by my Name as I sign it here. I flatter myself of the Continuation of your Friendship, as I hope you will never doubt of mine which shall be constant. I remain yr moste obedient humble Servant

'JOHN DOUGLAS.

'P.S. - Tell ye Bearer when to comback for the answer of ye enclosed or any other Letters you want to send me.

'P.S. to Lord Marischal. - Whatever party you take, be pleased to keep my writing secret, and address to me at Venise to the Sig. Ignazio Testori to Mr. de Villelongue under cover to a Banquier of that town, and it will come safe to me.

'To Md. Henrietta Drummond.'

Charles, on April 20, wrote another letter to the Lord Marischal, imploring for an interview, at some place to be fixed. But the old Lord was not likely to go from Berlin to Venice, whither Charles was hastening.

It is perfectly plain that, leaving Avignon on February 28, Charles was making for Paris on March 6 by a circuitous route through Lorraine (where he doubtless met Madame de Talmond), and a double back on Burgundy. What he did or desired in Paris we do not know. He is said to have visited Lally Tollendal, and he must have seen Waters, his banker. By April 10 he is starting for Venice, where he had, as a boy, been royally received. But, in 1744, the Republic of Venice had resumed relations with England, interrupted by Charles's too kind reception in 1737. The whole romance, therefore, of Henry Goring's letter, and all the voyages to Stockholm, Berlin, Lithuania, and so forth, are visions. Charles probably saw some friends in Paris, was tolerated in Lorraine (where his father was protected before 1715), and he vainly looked for a home in any secular State of Europe. This was all, or nearly all, that occurred between March and May 1749. Europe was fluttered, secret service money was poured out like water, diplomatists caballed and scribbled despatches, all for very little. The best place to have hunted for Charles was really at Lunéville, near the gay Court of his kinsman, the Duke Stanislas Leczinski, the father of the Queen of France. There Charles's sometime admirer, Voltaire, was a welcome guest; thither too (as we saw) went his elderly cousin, people said his mistress, the Princesse de Talmond. But the English diplomatists appear to have neglected Lunéville. D'Argenson was better informed.

On April 26 Charles was at Strasbourg. Here, D'Argenson says, he was seen, and warned to go, by an *écuyer* of the late Cardinal Rohan. Hence he wrote again to the Earl Marischal at Berlin. From this note it is plain that he had sent Goring ('Mr. Smith') to the Earl; Goring, indeed, had carried his letters of April l0-20. He again proposes a meeting with the Earl Marischal at Venice. He will 'answer for the expenses,' and apologises for 'such a long and fatiguing journey.' He wrote to Waters, 'You may let Mr. Newton know that whenever he has thoroly finished his Business, Mr. Williams will make him very wellcum in all his Cuntrihouses.'

The 'business' of 'Mr. Newton' was to collect remittances from Cluny.

On April 30, the Prince, as 'Mr. Williams,' expresses 'his surprise and impatience for the delay of the horses and other goods promised by Mr. Newton.'

On May 3, Charles wrote, without address, to Goring, 'I go strete to Venice, and would willingly avoid your Garrison Towns, as much as possible: *id est,* of France. I believe to compass that by goin by Ruffach to Pfirt: there to wate for me. The Chese you may either leve it in consine to your post-master of Belfort, or, what is still better, to give it to the bearer.'

Goring and Harrington were to meet the bearer at Belfort, but Harrington seems to have been mystified, and to have failed in effecting a junction. The poor gentleman, we learn, from letters of Stafford and Sheridan, Charles's retainers at Avignon, could scarcely raise money to leave that town. Sir James Harrington was next to meet Charles at Venice. He was to carry a letter for Charles to a Venetian banker. 'Nota bene, that same banquier, though he will deliver to me your letter, knows nothing about me, nor who I am. . . . Change your name, and, in fine, keep as private as possible, till I tell you what is to be done.' Harrington failed, and lay for months in pawn at Venice, pouring out his griefs in letters to Goring. He was a lachrymose conspirator.

These weary affairs are complicated by mysterious letters to ladies: for example to Mademoiselle Lalasse, 'Je vous prie, Mademoiselle, de rendre justice à mon inviolable attachement . . .' (May 3). He gives her examples of his natural and of his disguised handwriting; probably she helped him in forwarding his correspondence. Charles's chief anxiety was to secure the Lord Marischal. Bulkeley and the official English Jacobites kept insisting that he should have a man with him who was trusted by the party. Kelly was distrusted, though Bulkeley defends him, and was cashiered in autumn. Charles's friends also kept urging that he must 'appear in public,' but where? Bulkeley suggested Bologna. The Earl Marischal, later (July 5), was for Fribourg. No place was really both convenient and possible. On May 17 Charles wrote from Venice to the Earl Marischal, 'I am just arrived, but will not be able for some days, to know what reception to meet with.' He fears he 'may be chased from hence,' and his fears were justified. On the same day (May 17) he wrote to Edgar in Rome, 'Venice, next to France, is the best for my interest, and the only one in Italy.'

Venice ejected the Prince. On May 26 he wrote to his father:

'Sir, - I received last night from ye Nuntio a definitive answer about my project, which is quite contrary to my expectation; as I have nothing further to do here, and would not run the least risk of being found out, I depart this very evening, having left a direction to the said Nuntio how to forward my letters for me.' On the same day he wrote to Chioseul de Stainville, the minister at Versailles of the Empress, 'Could an anonymous exiled Prince be received by the Kaiser and the Queen of Hungary? He would remain incognito.'

On June 3 Charles wrote to James, without address or news, and to Bulkeley. 'Now my friend must skulk to the perfect dishonour and glory of his worthy relations, until he finds a reception fitting at home or abroad.' On the back of the draft he writes:

'What can a bird do that has not found a right nest? He must flit from bough to bough - *ainsi use les Irondel*.'

Probably Charles, after a visit, perhaps, to Ferrara, returned to Paris and his Princess. We find a draft thus conceived and spelled:

'ARRENGEMENT.

'Goring to come here immediately, he to know nothing but that I am just arrived. I am not to go to Paris, but at the end of the month, as sooner no answer can be had, moreover perhaps obliged to wait another, which would oblige me to remain to long in P.' He also (June 3) wrote to Montesquieu, from whom (I think) there is an unsigned friendly letter. He sent compliments to the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, a lady much attached to Montesquieu. An unsigned English letter (June 5) advised him to appear publicly. People are coming to inquire into reports about his character, 'after which it is possible some proposals may be made to you.' The writer will say more when 'in a safer place.'

Newton (Kennedy), meanwhile, had been imprisoned and examined in London, but had been released, and was at Paris. He bought for the Prince 'a fine case of double barrill pistols, made by Barber,' and much admired 'on this side.' Charles expresses gratitude for the gift. Newton had been examined by the Duke of Newcastle about the 40,000 *louis d'or* buried at Loch Arkaig in 1740, but had given no information. On June 26 Charles again asks Bulkeley, 'What *can* a bird do that has found no right nest?'

On June 30 the Prince was probably in Paris, whither we have seen that he meant to go. He had 'found a right nest,' and a very curious nest he had found. The secret of the Prince's retreat became known, many years later, to Grimm, the Paris correspondent of Catherine the Great. Charles's biographers have overlooked or distrusted Grimm's gossip, but it is confirmed by Charles's accidentally writing two real names, in place of pseudonyms, in his correspondence. The history of his 'nest' was this. After her reign as favourite of Louis XIV., Madame de Montespan founded a convent of St. Joseph, in the Rue St. Dominique, in the Faubourg St. Germain. Attached to the convent were rooms in which ladies of rank might make a retreat, or practically occupy chambers.

About this convent and its inmates, Grimm writes as follows:

'The unfortunate Prince Charles, after leaving the Bastille lay hidden for three years in Paris, in the rooms of Madame de Vassé, who then resided with her friend, the celebrated Mademoiselle Ferrand, at the convent of St. Joseph. To Mademoiselle de Ferrand the Abbé Condillac owed the ingenious idea of the statue, which he has developed so well in his treatise on "The Sensations." The Princesse de Talmond, with whom Prince Charles was always much in love, inhabited the same house. All day he was shut up in a little *garderobe* of Madame de Vassé's, whence, by a secret staircase, he made his way at night to the chambers of the Princesse. In the evening he lurked behind an alcove in the rooms of Mademoiselle Ferrand. Thus, unseen and unknown, he enjoyed every day the conversation of the most distinguished society, and heard much good and much evil spoken of himself.

'The existence of the Prince in this retreat, and the profound mystery which so long hid him from the knowledge of the world, by a secret which three women shared, and in a house where the flower of the city and the Court used to meet, seems almost miraculous. M. de Choiseul, who heard the story several years after the departure of the Prince, could not believe it. When Minister of Foreign Affairs he wrote to Madame de Vassé and asked her for the particulars of the adventure. She told him all, and did not conceal the fact that she had been obliged to get rid of the Prince, because of the too lively scenes between him and Madame de Talmond. They began in tender effusions, and often ended in a quarrel, or even in blows. This fact we learn from an intimate friend of Madame de Vassé.'

There is exaggeration here. The Prince was not living a life 'fugitive and cloistered' for three whole unbroken years. But the convent of St. Joseph was one of his hiding-places from 1749 to 1752. Of Madame de Vassé I have been unable to learn much: a lady of that name was presented at Court in 1745, and the Duc de Luynes describes her as 'conveniently handsome.' She is always alluded to as 'La Grandemain' in Charles's correspondence, but once he lets her real name slip out in a memorandum. Mademoiselle Ferrand's father is apparently described by d'Hozier as 'Ferrand, Ecuyer, Sieur des Marres et de Ronville en Normandie.' Many of Charles's letters are addressed to 'Mademoiselle Luci,' *sister* of 'La Grandemain.' Now Madame de Vassé seems, from a passage in the Duc de Luynes's 'Mémoires,' to have been the only daughter of her father, M. de Pezé. But once, Charles, writing to 'Mademoiselle Luci,' addresses the letter to 'Mademoiselle La Marre,' for 'Marres.' Now, as *Marres* was an estate of the Ferrands, this address seems to identify 'Mademoiselle Luci' with Mademoiselle Ferrand, the intimate friend, not really the sister, of Madame de Vassé. Mademoiselle Ferrand, as Grimm shows, had a taste for philosophy. We shall remark the same taste in the Prince's friend, 'Mademoiselle Luci.'

Thus the secret which puzzled Europe is revealed. The Prince, sought vainly in Poland, Prussia, Italy, Silesia, and Staffordshire, was really lurking in a fashionable Parisian convent. Better had he been 'where the wind blows over seven glens, and seven Bens, and seven mountain moors,' like the Prince in the Gaelic fairy stories.

We return to details. On June 30, 1749, the Prince, still homeless, writes a curious letter to Mademoiselle Ferrand:

'The confidence, Mademoiselle, which I propose to place in you may seem singular, as I have not the good fortune to know you. The Comtesse de Routh, however, will be less surprised.' This lady was the wife of an Irishman commanding a regiment in the French service, one of those stationed on the frontier of Flanders. 'You , who have made a *Relation de Cartouche* , may consent to be the depositary of my letter. I pray you to give this letter to the Comtesse de Routh, and to receive from her all the packets addressed to Monsieur Douglas.' He then requests Madame de Routh not to let the Waterses know that she is the intermediary.

The reason for all this secrecy is obvious. D'Argenson (not the *Bête*, but his brother) had threatened Waters with the loss of his head if he would not tell where the Prince was concealed . The banker did not want to know the dangerous fact, and was able to deny his knowledge with a clear conscience.

On July 23 Charles again wrote to Mademoiselle Ferrand: 'It is very bold of Cartouche to write once more, without knowing whether you wish to be concerned with him, but people of our profession are usually impudent, indeed we must be, if we are to earn our bread. . . . I pray you to have some confidence in this handwriting, and to believe that Cartouche, though he be Cartouche, is a true friend. As for his smuggling business, even if it does not succeed as he hopes, he will be none the less grateful to all who carry his flag, as he will be certain that, if he fails, it is because success is impossible.'

This letter was likely to please a romantic girl, as we may suppose Mademoiselle Ferrand to have been, despite her philosophy.

Stafford and Sheridan now kept writing pitiful appeals for money from Avignon. Charles answers (July 31, 1749):

'I wish I were in a situation at present to relive them I estime, in an exotick cuntry that desiers nothing else but to exercise their arbitrary power in distressing all honest men, even them that most allies to their own Soverain.'

Charles, in fact, was himself very poor: when money came in, either from English adherents or from the Loch Arkaig hoard, he sent large remittances to Avignon.

Money did come in, partly, no doubt, from English adherents. We find the following orders from the Prince to Colonel Goring.

From the Prince to Goring.

'Ye 31st July, 1749.

'I gave you Lately a proof of my Confidence, by our parting together from Avignion, so that you will not be surprized of a New Instance. You are to repair on Receipt of this to London, there to Let know to such friends as you can see, my situation, and Resolutions; all tending to nothing else but the good and relieve of our Poor Country which ever was, and shall be my only thoughts. Take Care of yr.Self, do not think to be on a detachement, but only a simple Minister that is to comback with a distinct account from them parts, and remain assured of my Constant friendship and esteem.

'C. P. R. For GORING.

'P.S. - Cypher.

'I. S h a l. C o n q u e r.

'3 w k y p t d b q x m f.

'My name shall be John Douglas.

'Jean Noé D'Orville & fils. A Frankfort sur Maine, a Banquier of that Town.'

The Prince may have been at Frankfort, but, as a rule, he was hiding in Lorraine when not in Paris or near it, and, as we have seen, was under the protection of various French and fashionable Flora Macdonalds. Of these ladies, 'Madame de Beauregard' and the Princesse de Talmond are apparently the same person. With them, or her (she also appears as *la tante* and *la vieille*), Charles's relations were stormy. He wearied her, he broke with her, he scolded her, and returned to her again. Another protectress, Madame d'Aiguillon, was the mistress of the household most frequented by Montesquieu, *le filosophe*, as Charles calls him. Madame du Deffand has left to us portraits of both the

Princesse de Talmond and Madame d'Aiguillon.

'Madame de Talmond has beauty and wit and vivacity; that turn for pleasantry which is our national inheritance seems natural to her. . . . But her wit deals only with pleasant frivolities; her ideas are the children of her memory rather than of her imagination. French in everything else, she is original in her vanity. Ours is more sociable, inspires the desire to please, and suggests the means. Hers is truly Sarmatian, artless and indolent; she cannot bring herself to flatter those whose admiration she covets. . . . She thinks herself perfect, says so, and expects to be believed. At this price alone does she yield a semblance of friendship: semblance, I say, for her affections are concentrated on herself . . . She is as jealous as she is vain, and so capricious as to make her at once the most unhappy and the most absurd of women. She never knows what she wants, what she fears, whom she loves, or whom she hates. There is no nature in her expression: with her chin in the air she poses eternally as tender or disdainful, absent or haughty; all is affectation. . . . She is feared and hated by all who live in her society. Yet she has truth, courage, and honesty, and is such a mixture of good and evil that no steadfast opinion about her can be entertained. She pleases, she provokes: we love, hate, seek, and avoid her. It is as if she communicated to others the eccentricity of her own caprice.'

Where a character like hers met a nature like the Prince's, peace and quiet were clearly out of the question.

Madame du Deffand is not more favourable to another friend of Charles, Madame d'Aiguillon. This lady gave a supper every Saturday night, where neither her husband, the lover of the Princesse de Conti, nor her son, later the successor of Choiseul as Minister of Louis XV., was expected to appear. 'The most brilliant men, French or foreign, were her guests, attracted by her abundant, active, impetuous, and original intellect, by her elevated conversation, and her kindness of manner.' She was, according to Gustavus III., 'the living gazette of the Court, the town, the provinces, and the academy.' Voltaire wrote to her rhymed epistles. Says Madame du Deffand, 'Her mouth is fallen in, her nose crooked, her glance wild and bold, and in spite of all this she is beautiful. The brilliance of her complexion atones for the irregularity of her features. Her waist is thick, her bust and arms are enormous. yet she has not a heavy air: her energy gives her ease of movement. Her wit is like her face, brilliant and out of drawing. Profusion, activity, impetuosity are her ruling qualities . . . She is like a play which is all *spectacle*, all machines and decorations, applauded by the pit and hissed by the boxes. . . .'

Montesquieu was hardly a spectator in the pit, yet he habitually lived at Madame d'Aiguillon's; 'she is original,' he said, and she, with Madame Dupré de Saint-Maur, watched by the death-bed of the philosopher.

In unravelling the hidden allusions of Charles's correspondence, I at first recognised Madame d'Aiguillon in Charles's friend 'La Grandemain.' The name seemed a suitable *sobriquet*, for a lady with *gros bras*, like Madame d'Aiguillon, might have large hands. The friendship of 'La Grandemain' with the *philosophe*, Montesquieu, also pointed to Madame d'Aiguillon. But Charles, at a later date, makes a memorandum that he has deposited his strong box, with money, at the rooms of La Comtesse de Vassé, in the Rue Saint Dominique, Faubourg St. Germain. That box, again, as he notes, was restored by 'La Grandemain.' This fact, with Grimm's anecdote, identifies 'La Grandemain,' not with Madame d'Aiguillon, but with Madame de Vassé, 'the Comtesse,' as Goring calls her, though Grimm makes her a Marquise. If Montesquieu's private papers and letters in MS. had been published in full, we should probably know more of this matter. His relations with Bulkeley were old and most intimate. Before he died he confessed to Father Routh, an Irish Jesuit, whom Voltaire denounces in 'Candide.' This Routh must have been connected with Colonel Routh, an Irish Jacobite in French service, husband of Charles's friend, 'la Comtesse de Routh.' Montesquieu himself, though he knew, as we shall show, the Prince's secret, was no conspirator. Unluckily, as we learn from M. Vian's life of the philosopher, his successors have been very chary of publishing details of his private existence. It is, of course, conceivable that Helvetius, who told Hume that his house had sheltered Charles, is the *philosophe* mentioned by Mademoiselle Luci and Madame de Vassé. But Charles's proved relations with Montesquieu, and Montesquieu's known habit of frequenting the society of his lady neighbours in the convent of St. Joseph, also his intimacy with Charles's friend Bulkeley, who attended his death-bed, all seem rather to point to the author of 'L'Esprit des Lois.' The *philosophes*, for a moment, seem to have expected to find in Prince Charlie the 'philosopher-king' of Plato's dream!

The Prince's distinguished friends unluckily did not succeed in inspiring him with common sense.

On August 16 he defends the conduct of *cette home*, *ou tête de fer* (himself), and he writes a few aphorisms, *Maximes d'un l'ome sauvage*! He aimed at resembling Charles XII., called 'Dener Bash' by the Turks, for his obstinacy, a nickname also given by Lord Marischal to the Prince. Like Balen, he was termed 'The Wild,' 'by knights whom kings and courts can tame.' He writes to the younger Waters,

To Waters, Junior.

'Ye 21st August, 1749.

‘I receive yrs. of ye 8th. Current with yr two as mentioned and I heve send their Answers for Avignon, plese to Enclose in it a Credit for fifteen thousand Livers, to Relive my family there, at the disposal of Stafford and Sheridan. I am sorry to be obliged oftener to draw upon you, than to remit, and cannot help Reflection on this occasion, on the Misery of that poor Popish Town, and all their Inhabitants not being worth four hundred Louidors. Mr. B. Mistakes as to my taking amis anything of him, on the contrary I am charmed to heve the opinion of everybody, particularly them Like him, as I am shure say nothing but what they think: but as I am so much imbibed in ye English air, where My only Concerns are, I cannot help sometimes differing with ye inhabitants of forain Climats.

‘I remain all yours.

‘15,000 ff. Credit for Stafford and Sheridan at Avignon.’

‘Newton’ kept writing, meanwhile, that Cluny can do nothing till winter, ‘on account of the sheilings,’ the summer habitations of the pastoral Highlanders. There may have been sheilings near the hiding-places of the Loch Arkaig treasure. On September 30 we find Charles professing his *inébranlable amitié* for Madame de Talmond. He bids his courier stop at Lunéville, as she may be at the Court of Stanislas there.

The results of Goring’s mission to England may be gleaned from a cypher letter of ‘Malloch’ (Balhaldie) to James. Balhaldie had been in London; he found the party staunch, ‘but frighted out of their wits.’ The usual names of the official Jacobites are given - Barrymore, Sir William Watkyns Wynne, and Beaufort. But they are all alarmed ‘by Lord Traquair’s silly indiscretion in blabbing to Murray of Broughton of their concerns, wherein he could be of no use.’ They had summoned Balhaldie, and complained of the influence of Kelly, an adviser bequeathed to Charles by his old tutor, Sir Thomas Sheridan, now dead. ‘They saw well that the Insurrection Sir James Harrington was negotiating, to be begun at Litchfield Election and Races, in September ‘47, was incouraged, and when that failed, the Insurrection attempted by Lally’s influence on one Wilson, a smuggler in Sussex, which could serve no end save the extinction of the unhappy men concerned in them; therefore they had taken pains to prevent any. They lamented the last steps the Prince had taken here as scarcely reparable.’

Goring had now been with them, and they had insisted on the Prince’s procuring a reconciliation with the French Court. ‘Goring’s only business was to say that the Prince had parted with Kelly, Lally, Sir James Graeme, and Oxburgh, and the whole, and to assure friends in England that he would never more see any one of them.' Charles was, therefore, provided by his English friends with 15,000*l*., and the King's timid party of men with much to lose won a temporary triumph. He sent 21,000 livres to his Avignon household, adding, 'I received yours with a list of my bookes: I find sumne missing of them. Particularly Fra Paulo and Boccaccio, which are both rare. If you find any let me know it.'

Charles was more of a bibliophile than might be guessed from his orthography.

On November 22, 1749, Charles, from Lunéville, wrote a long letter to a lady, speaking of himself in the third person. All approaches to Avignon are guarded, to prevent his return thither. 'Despite the Guards, they assure me that he is in France, and not far from the capital. The Lieutenant of Police has been heard to say, by a person who informed me, that he knew for certain the Prince had come in secret to Paris, and had been at the house of Monsieur Lally. The King winks at all this, but it is said that M. de Puysieux and the Mistress (Madame de Pompadour) are as ill disposed as ever. I know from a good source that 15,000*l*. has been sent to the Prince from England, on condition of his dismissing his household.'

The spelling of this letter is correct, and possibly the Prince did not write it, but copied it out. That Louis XV. winked at his movements is probable enough; secretive as he was, the King may have known what he concealed even from his Minister, de Puysieux.

On December 19, the Prince, who cannot have been far from Paris, sent Goring thither 'to get my big Muff and portfeul.' I do not know which lady he addressed, on December 10, as 'l'Adorable,' 'avec toute la tendresse possible.' On November 28, 'R. Jackson' writes from England. He saw Dr. King (of St. Mary Hall, Oxford), who had been at Lichfield races, 'and had a list of the 275 gentlemen who were there.' This Mr. Jackson was going to Jamaica, to Henry Dawkins, brother of Jemmy Dawkins, a rich and scholarly planter who played a great part, later, in Jacobite affairs.

In 1750, February found Charles still without a reply to his letter of May 26, in which he made an anonymous appeal for shelter in Imperial territories. Orders to Goring, who had been sent to Lally, bid him 'take care not to get benighted in the woods and dangerous places.' A good deal is said about a marble bust of the Prince at which Lemoine is working, the original, probably, of the plaster busts sold in autumn in Red Lion Square. 'Newton' (January 28) thinks Cluny wilfully dilatory about sending the Loch Arkaig treasure, and Æneas Macdonald, the banker, one of the Seven Men of Moidart, accuses 'Newton' (Kennedy) of losing 800*l*. of the money at Newmarket races! In fact, Young Glengarry and Archibald Cameron had been helping themselves freely to the treasure at this very time, whence came endless trouble and recriminations, as we shall see.

On January 25 the Prince was embroiled with Madame de Talmond. He writes, obviously in answer to remonstrances:

'Nous nous prometons de suivre en tout les volontés et les arrangemens de notre fidèle amie et alliée, L. P. D. T.; nous retirer aux heures qu'il lui conviendra a la ditte P, soit de jour, soit de nuit, soit de ses états, en foy de quoi nous signons. C.'

He had begun to bore the capricious lady.

Important intrigues were in the air. The Prince resembled 'paper-sparing Pope' in his use of scraps of writing material. One piece bears notes both of February and June 1750. On February 16 Charles wrote to Mr. Dormer, an English Jacobite:

'I order you to go to Anvers, and there to execute my instructions without delay.'

Goring carried the letter. Then comes a despatch of June, which will be given under date.

Concerning the fatal hoard of Loch Arkaig, 'Newton' writes thus:-

Tho. Newton to —

'March 18, 1750.

'You have on the other side the melancholy confirmation of what I apprehended. Dr. Cameron is no doubt the person here mentioned that carryd away the horses , for he is lately gone to Rome, as is also young Glengery, those and several others of them, have been very flush of money, so that it seems they took care of themselves. C. in my opinion is more to be blamed than any of them, for if he had a mind to act the honest part he certainly could have given up the whole long since. They will no doubt represent me not in the most advantageous light at Rome, for attempting to carry out of their country what they had to support them. I hope they will one day or other be obliged to give an acct. of this money, if so, least they shd. attempt to Impose upon you, you'l find my receipts to C. will exactly answer what I had already the honour of giving you an acct. of.'

Again 'Newton' writes:

(*Tho. Newton - From G. Waters's Letter*.)

'April 27, 1750.

‘I am honored with yours of the 6th. Inst. and nothing could equal my surprize at the reception of the Letter I sent you. I did not expect C was capable of betraying the confidence you had in him, and he is the more culpable, as I frequently put it in his power to acquit himself of his duty without reproach of any side. Only Cameron is returned from Rome greatly pleased with the reception he met there. I have not seen him, but he has bragged of this to many people here since his return. I never owned to any man alive to have been employed in that affair.’

In spite of Newton, it is not to be credited that Cluny, lurking in many perils on Ben Alder, was unfaithful about the treasure.

Meanwhile, Young Glengarry (whose history we give later), Archibald Cameron (Lochiel’s brother), Sir Hector Maclean, and other Jacobites, were in Rome, probably to explain their conduct about the Loch Arkaig treasure to James. He knew nothing about the matter, and what he said will find its proper place when we come to investigate the history of Young Glengarry. The Prince at this time corresponded a good deal with ‘Mademoiselle Luci,’ that fair philosophical recluse who did little commissions for him in Paris. On April 4 he wants a list of the books he left in Paris, and shows a kind heart.

‘Pray take care of the young surgeon, M. Le Coq, and see that he wants for nothing. As the lad gets no money from his relations, he may be in need.’ Charles, on March 28, writes thus to ‘Madame de Beauregard,’ which appears to be an alias of Madame de Talmond:

The Prince.

March 28, 1750.

‘A Md. Bauregor. Je vois avec Chagrin que vous vous tourmentes et mois aussi bien innutillement, et en tout sans . Ou vous voules me servire, ou vous ne Le voules pas; ou vous voules me protege, ou non; Il n’y a acune autre alternative en raison qui puis etre. Si vous voules me servire il ne faut pas me soutenire toujours que Blan est noire, dans Les Chose Les plus palpable: et jamais Avouer que vous aves tort meme quant vous Le santes. Si vous ne voules pas me servire, il est inutile que je vous parle de ce qui me regarde: si vous voules me protege, il ne faut pas me rendre La Vie plus malheureuse qu’il n’est. Si vous voules m’abandoner il faut me Le dire en bon Francois ou *Latin. Visus solum*’ .

Madame de Talmond sheltered the Prince both in Lorraine and in Paris. They were, unluckily, born to make each other’s lives ‘insupportable.’

Charles wrote this letter, probably to Madame d'Aiguillon, from Paris:

May 12, 1750.

'La Multitude d'affaire de toute Espèce dont j'ai été plus que surchargé, Madame, depuis plus de quatre Mois, Chose que votre Chancelier a du vous attester, ne m' avois permis de vous rappeller Le souvenir de vos Bontés pour Moi; qualque Long qu'ait ete Le Silance que j'ai gardé sur Le Desir que j'ai d'en mériter La Continuation j'espère qu'il ne m'en aura rien fait perdre: j'ose meme presumer Encore asses pour me flater qu'une Longue absence que je projette par raison et par une necessite absolue, ne m'efacera pas totalement de votre souvenir; Daigne Le Conserver, Madame a quelquun qui n'en est pas indigne et qui cherchera toujours a Le meriter par son tendre et respectueux attachement - a Paris Le 12 May, 1750.'

A quaint light is thrown on the Prince's private affairs (May 12) by Waters's note of his inability to get a packet of Scottish tartan, sent by Archibald Cameron, out of the hands of the Custom House. It was confiscated as 'of British manufacture.' Again, on May 18, Charles wrote to Mademoiselle Luci, in Paris. She is requested 'de faire avoire une ouvrage de Mr. Fildings, (auteur de Tom Jones) qui s'apel *Joseph Andrews*, dans sa langue naturelle, et la traduction aussi.' He also wants 'Tom Jones' in French, and we may infer that he is teaching to some fair pupil the language of Fielding. He asks, too, for a razor-case with four razors, a shaving mirror, and a strong pocket-book with a lock. His famous 'chese de post' (post-chaise) is to be painted and repaired.

Business of a graver kind is in view. 'Newton' (April 24) is to get ready to accompany the Prince on a long journey, really to England, it seems. Newton asked for a delay, on account of family affairs. He was only to be known to the bearer as 'Mr. Newton,' of course not his real name.

On May 28, Charles makes a mote about a mysterious lady, really Madame de Talmond.

Project.

'If ye lady abandons me at the last moment, to give her the letter here following for ye F. K. , and even ye original, if she thinks it necessary, but with ye greatest secrecy; apearing to them already in our confidence that I will quit the country, if she does not return to me immediately.'

Drafts of letters to the French King, in connection with Madame de Talmond - to be delivered, apparently, if Charles died in England - will be given later. To England he was now bent on making his way. 'Ye Prince is determined to go over at any rate,' he wrote on a draft of May 3, 1750. 'The person who makes the proposal of coming over assures that he will expose nobody but himself, supposing the worst.' Sir Charles Goring is to send a ship for his brother, Henry Goring, to Antwerp, early in August. 'To visit Mr. P. of D. . . . and to agree where the arms &c. may be most conveniently landed, the grand affair of L. to be attempted at the same time.' There are notes on 'referring the Funds to a free Parliament,' 'The Tory landed interest wished to repudiate the National Debt,' 'To acquaint particular persons that the K. will R - ' (resign), which James had no intention of doing.

In preparation for the insurrection Charles, under extreme secrecy, deposited 186,000 *livres* ('livers!') with Waters. He also ordered little silver counters with his effigy, as the English Government came to know, for distribution, and he commanded a miniature of himself, by Le Brun, 'with all the Orders.' This miniature may have been a parting gift to Madame de Talmond, or one of the other protecting ladies, 'adorable' or quarrelsome. It is constantly spoken of in the correspondence.

The real business in hand is revealed in the following directions for Goring. The Prince certainly makes a large order on Dormer, and it is not probable, though (from the later revelations of James Mohr Macgregor) it is possible, that the weapons demanded were actually procured.

June 8.

Letter and Directions for Goring. - 'Mr. Dutton will go directly to Anvers and there wait Mr. Barton's arrival and asoon as you have received his Directions you'l set out to join me, in the mean time you will concert with Dormer the properest means of procuring *the things* I now order him, in the strictest secrecy, likewise how I could be concealed in case I came to him, and the safest way of travelling to that country?'

For Mr. Dormer. Same Date. Anvers.

'As you have already offered me by ye Bearer, Mr. Goring, to furnish me what Arms necessary for my service I hereby desire you to get me with all ye expedition possible Twenty Thousand Guns, Baionets, Ammunition proportioned, with four thousand sords and Pistols for horces in one ship which is to be ye first, and in ye second six thousand Guns without Baionets but sufficient Amunition and Six thouzand Brode sords; as Mr. Goring has my further Directions to you on them Affaires Leaves me nothing farther to add at present.'

On June 11, Charles remonstrated with Madame de Talmond: if she is tired of him, he will go to 'le Lorain.' 'Enfin, si vous voulez ma vie, il faut changer de tout.' On June 27, Newton repeated his expressions of suspicion about Cluny, and spoke of 'disputes and broils' among the Scotch as to the seizure of the Loch Arkaig money.

On July 2, Charles, in cypher, asked James for a renewal of his commission as Regent. Goring, or Newton, was apparently sent at least as far as Avignon with this despatch. He travelled as Monsieur Fritz, a German, with complicated precautions of secrecy. James sent the warrant to be Regent on parchment - it is in the Queen's Library - but he added that Charles was 'a continual heartbreak,' and warned his son not to expect 'friendship and favours from people, while you do all that is necessary to disgust them.' He 'could not in decency' see Charles's envoy (August 4). On the following day Edgar wrote in a more friendly style, for this excellent man was of an amazing loyalty.

From James Edgar.

'August 5, 1750: Rome.

'Your Royal Highness does me the greatest pleasure in mentioning the desire you have to have the King's head in an intaglio. There is nobody can serve you as well in that respect as I, so I send you by the bearers two, one on a stone like a ruby, but it is a fine *Granata*, and H.M.'s hair and the first letters of his name are on the inside of it. The other head is on an emerald, a big one, but not of a fine colour; it is only set in lead, so you may either set it in a ring, a seal, or a locket, as you please: they are both cut by Costanzia, and very well done.'

These intagli would be interesting relics for collectors of such flotsam and jetsam of a ruined dynasty. On August 25, Charles answered Edgar. He is 'sorry that His Majesty is prevented against the most dutiful of sons.' He sends thanks for the engraved stones and the powers of Regency. This might well have been James's last news of Charles, for he was on his way to London, a perilous expedition.

CHAPTER V - THE PRINCE IN LONDON; AND AFTER. - MADEMOISELLE LUCI (SEPTEMBER 1750-JULY 1751)

The Prince goes to London - Futility of this tour - English Jacobites described by Æneas Macdonald - No chance but in Tearlach - Credentials to Madame de Talmond - Notes of visit to London - Doings in London - Gratifying conversion - Gems and medals - Report by Hanbury Williams - Hume’s legend - Report by a spy - *Billets* to Madame de Talmond - Quarrel - Disappearance - ‘The old aunt’ - Letters to Mademoiselle Luci - Charles in Germany - Happy thought of Hanbury Williams - Marshal Keith’s mistress - Failure of this plan - The English ‘have a clue’ - Books for the Prince - Mademoiselle Luci as a critic - Jealousy of Madame de Talmond - Her letter to Mademoiselle Luci - The young lady replies - Her bad health - Charles’s reflections - Frederick ‘a clever man’ - A new adventure.

The Prince went to London in the middle of September 1750; and why did he run such a terrible risk? Though he had ordered great quantities of arms in June, no real preparations had been made for a rising. His Highlanders - Glengarry, Lochgarry, Archy Cameron, Clanranald - did not know where he was. Scotland was not warned. As for England, we learn the condition of the Jacobite party there from a letter by Æneas Macdonald, the banker, to Sir Hector Maclean - Sir Hector whom, in his examination, he had spoken of as ‘too fond of the bottle.’ Æneas now wrote from Boulogne, in September 1750. He makes it clear that peace, luxury, and constitutionalism had eaten the very heart out of the grandsons of the cavaliers. There was grumbling enough at debt, taxes, a Hanoverian King who at this very hour was in Hanover. Welsh and Cheshire squires and London aldermen drank Jacobite toasts in private. ‘But,’ says Æneas, ‘there are not in England three persons of distinction of the same sentiments as to the method of restoring the Royal family, some being for one way, some for another.’ They have neither heart nor money for an armed assertion of their ideas. In 1745, Sir William Watkins Wynne (who stayed at home in Wales) had not 200*l.* by him in ready money, and money cannot be raised on lands at such moments. Yet this very man was believed to have spent 120,000*l.* in contested elections. ‘It is very probable that six times as much money has been thrown away upon these elections’ - he means in the country generally - ‘as would have restored the King.’ Æneas knew another gentleman who had wasted 40,000*l.* in these constitutional diversions. 'The present scheme,' he goes on, 'is equally weak.' The English Jacobites were to seem to side with Frederick, the Prince of Wales, in opposition, and force him, when crowned, 'to call a free Parliament.' That Parliament would proclaim a glorious Restoration. In fact, the English Jacobites were devoured by luxury, pacific habits, and a desire to save their estates by pursuing 'constitutional methods.' These, as we shall see, Charles despised. If a foreign force cannot be landed (if landed it would scarcely be opposed), then 'there is no method so good as an attempt such as *Terloch* made: if there be arms and money: men, I am sure, he will find enough. . . . One thing you may take for granted, that Terloch's appearance again would be worth 5,000 men, and that without him every attempt will be vain and fruitless.' Æneas, in his examination, talked to a different tune, as the poor timid banker, distrusted and insulted by ferocious chieftains.

'Terloch' was only too eager to 'show himself again'; money and arms he seems to have procured (d'Argenson says 4,000,000 francs!), but why go over secretly to London, where he had no fighting partisans? There are no traces of a serious organised plan, and the Prince probably crossed the water, partly to see how matters really stood, partly from restlessness and the weariness of a tedious solitude in hiding, broken only by daily quarrels and reconciliations with the Princesse de Talmond and other ladies.

We find a curious draft of his written on the eve of starting.

'Credentials given ye 1st. Sept, 1750. *to ye P. T.*' (Princesse de Talmond).

'Je me flate que S.M.T.C. voudra bien avoire tout foi et credi à Madame La P. de T., ma chere Cousine, come si s'etoit mois-meme; particulierement en l'assurant de nouveau come quois j'ai ses veritable interest plus a cour que ses Ministres, etant toujours avec une attachemen veritable et sincere pour sa sacre persone. C. P. R.' (Charles, Prince Regent).

Again,

A Mr. Le Duc de Richelieu.

'Je comte sur votre Amitié, Monsieur, je vous prie d'être persuade de la mienne et de ma reconnaissance.

'All these are deponed, not to be given till farther orders.'

What use the Princesse de Talmond was to make of these documents, on what occasion, is not at all obvious. That the Prince actually went to London, we know from a memorandum in his own hand. 'My full powers and commission of Regency renewed, when I went to England in 1750, and nothing to be said at Rome, for every thing there is known, and my brother, who has got no confidence of my Father, has always acted, as far as his power, against my interest.'

Of Charles's doings in London, no record survives in the Stuart Papers of 1750. We merely find this jotting:

'Parted ye 2d. Sep. Arrived to A. ye 6th. Parted from thence ye 12th. Sept. E. ye 14th, and at L. ye 16th. Parted from L. ye 22d. and arrived at P. ye 24th. From P. parted ye 28th. Arrived here ye 30th Sept. If she does not come, and ye M. agreed on to send back for ye Letters and Procuration ye house here of P. C. and her being either a tretor or a hour, to chuse which, not to send to P. even after her coming unless absolute necessity order, requiring it then at her dor.'

On the back of the paper is:

'The letter to Godie retarded a post; ye Lady's being arrived, or her retard to be little, if she is true stille.'

Then follow some jottings, apparently of the lady's movements. 'N.S. ye 16th. Sept. Either ill counselled or she has made a confidence. M. Lorain's being here ye 12th. Sept. To go ye same day with ye King, speaking to W. ye last day, Madame A. here this last six weeks.'

These scrawls appear to indicate some communication between Madame de Talmond, the Duke of Lorraine, and Louis XV.

In London Charles did little but espouse the Anglican religion. Dr. King, in his 'Anecdotes,' tells how the Prince took the refreshment of tea with him, and how his servant detected a resemblance to the busts sold in Red Lion Square. He also appeared at a party at Lady Primrose's, much to her alarm. He prowled about the Tower with Colonel Brett, and thought a gate might be damaged by a petard. His friends, including Beaufort and Westmoreland, held a meeting in Pall Mall, to no purpose. The tour had no results, except in the harmless region of the fine arts. A medal was struck, by Charles's orders, and we have the following information for collectors of Jacobite trinkets. The English Government, never dreaming that the Prince was in Pall Mall, was well informed about cheap treasonable jewellery.

'Paris: August 31, 1750.

'The Artist who makes the seals with the head of the Pretender's eldest Son, is called le Sieur Malapert, his direction is hereunder, he sells them at 3 Livres apiece, but by the Dozen he takes less.

'It is one Tate, who got the engraving made on metal, from which the Artist takes the impression on his Composition in imitation of fine Stones of all colours. This Tate was a Jeweller at Edinborough, where he went into the Rebellion and having made his escape, has since settled here, but has left his wife and Family at Edinborough. He is put upon the list of the French King's

Bounty for eight hundred Livres yearly, the same as is allowed to those that had a Captain's Commission in the Pretender's Service and are fled hither. It is Sullivan and Ferguson who employ Tate to get the 1,500 Seals done, he being a man that does still Jeweller's business and follows it. The Artist has actually done four dozen of seals, which are disposed of, having but half a dozen left. He expects daily an order for the said quantity more - As there are no Letters or Inscription about it, the Artist may always pretend that it is only a fancy head, though it is in reality very like the Pretender's Eldest Son.'

Oddly enough, we find Waters sealing, with this very intaglio of the Prince, a letter to Edgar, in 1750. It is a capital likeness.

Wise after the event, Hanbury Williams wrote from Berlin (October 13, 1750) that Charles was in England, 'in the heart of the kingdom, in the county of Stafford.' By October 20, Williams knows that the Prince is in Suffolk. All this is probably a mere echo of Charles's actual visit to London, reverberated from the French Embassy at Berlin, and arriving at Hanbury Williams, he says, through an Irishman, who knew a lacquey of the French Ambassador's. In English official circles no more than this was known. Troops were concentrated near Stafford after Charles had returned to Lorraine. Hume told Sir John Pringle a story of how Charles was in London in 1753, how George II. told the fact to Lord Holdernesse, and how the King expressed his good-humoured indifference. But Lord Holdernesse contradicted the tale, as we have already observed. If Hume meant 1750 by 1733 he was certainly wrong. George was then in Hanover. In 1753 I have no proof that Charles was in London, though Young Glengarry told James that the Prince was 'on the coast' in November 1752. If Charles did come to London in 1753, and if George knew it, the information came through Pickle to Henry Pelham, as will appear later. Hume gave the Earl Marischal as his original authority. The Earl was likely to be better informed about events of 1752-1753 than about those of September 1750.

After Charles's departure from London, the English Government received information from Paris (October 5, 1750) to the following effect:

'Paris: October 5, 1750.

'It is supposed that the Pretender's Son keeps at Montl'hery, six leagues from Paris, at Mr. Lumisden's, or at Villeneuve St. Georges, at a small distance from Town, at Lord Nairn's; Sometimes at Sens, with Col. Steward and Mr. Ferguson; when at Paris, at Madme. la Princesse de Talmont's, or the Scotch Seminary; nobody travels with him but Mr. Goring, and a Biscayan recommended to him by *Marshal Saxe*: the young Pretender is disguised in an Abbé's dress, with a black patch upon his eye, and his eyebrows black'd.

‘An Officer of Ogilvie’s Regimt. in this Service listed lately. An Irish Priest, who belonged to the Parish Church of S. Eustache at Paris, has left his Living, reckoned worth 80*l*. St. a year, and is very lately gone to London to be Chaplain to the Sardinian Minister: he has carried with him a quantity of coloured Glass Seals with the Pretender’s Son’s Effigy, as also small heads made of silver gilt about this bigness to be set in rings, as also points for watch cases, with the same head, and this motto round “Look, Love, and follow.”’

On October 30, Walton wrote that James was much troubled by a letter from Charles, doubtless containing the news of his English failure; perhaps notifying his desertion of the Catholic faith. On January 15, 1751, Walton writes that James has confided to the Pope that Charles is at Boulogne-sur-Mer, which he very possibly was. On January 9 and 22, Horace Mann reports, on the information of Cardinal Albani, that James and the Duke of York are ill with grief. ‘Something extraordinary has happened to the Pretender’s eldest son.’ He had turned Protestant, that was all. But Cardinal Albani withdraws his statement, and thinks that nothing unusual has really occurred. In fact, Charles, as we shall see, had absolutely vanished for three months.

Charles returned to France in September 1750, and renewed his *amantium irae* with Madame de Talmond. Among the Stuart Papers of 1750 are a number of tiny *billets*, easily concealed, and doubtless passed to the lady furtively. ‘Si vous ne voulez, Reine de Maroc, pas cet faire, quelle plaisir mourir de chagrin et de desespoire!’

‘Aiez de la Bonté et de confience pour celui qui vous aime et vous adore passionément.’

To some English person:

‘Ask the Channoine where you can by hocks and lines for fishing, and by a few hocks and foure lines.’

The Princess writes:

‘Je partirai dimanche comme j’ai promis au Roy de Pologne’ (Stanislas). ‘Je vous embrasse bien tendrement, si vous êtes tel que vous devez être à mon égard.’ She is leaving for Commercy. On the reverse the Prince has written, ‘Judi. Je comance a ouvrire mes yeux a votre egar, Madame, vous ne voulez pas de mois, ce soire, malgre votre promes, et ma malheureuse situation.’

The quarrels grew more frequent and more embittered. We have marked his suspicious view of the lady’s movements. On September 26, 1750, she had not returned, and he wrote to her in the following terms.

The Prince.

September 26, 1750.

‘Je pars, Madame, dans L’instant, en Sorte que vous feriez reflection, et retourniez au plus vite, tout doit vous Engager, si vous avez de l’amitié pour mois, Car je ne puis pas me dispenser de vous repeter, Combien chaque jour de votre absence faira du tor a mes affaier outre Le desire d’avoire une Coinpagnie si agréable dans une si triste solitude, que ma malheureuse situation m’oblige indispensablement de tenire. J’ai cessé des Ordres positive a *Mlle.* Luci, de ne me pas envoier La Moindre Chose meme une dilligence come aussi de mon cote je n’en veres rien, jusqu’a ce que vous soiez arrive.

‘Quant vous partires alors Mdll. Luci vous remettera tout ce quil aura pour mois, vous rien de votre cote que votre personne.’

On the same paper Charles announces his intention of going instantly to ‘Le Lorain.’ There must have been a great quarrel with Madame de Talmond, outwearied by the exigencies of a Prince doomed to a *triste solitude* after a week of London. On September 30 he announces to Waters that there will be no news of him till January 15, 1751. For three months he disappears beyond even his agent’s ken. On October 20 he writes to Mademoiselle Luci, styling himself ‘Mademoiselle Chevalier,’ and calling Madame de Talmond ‘Madame Le Nord.’ The Princesse de Talmond has left him, is threatening him, and may ruin him.

‘Le October 20, 1750.

‘A Mll. Luci: Mademoiselle Chevalier est tres affligee de voir le peu d’egard que Madame Lenord a pour ses Interest. La Miene du 12 auroit ete La derniere mais cette dame a ecrit une Letre en date du 18 a M. Le Lorrain qui a choqué cette Demoiselle , Et je puis dire avec raison quelle agit come Le plus Grand de ses ennemis par son retard, elle ajoute encor a cela des menaces si on La presse d’avantage, et si l’on se plain de son indigne procedé. Md. Poulain seroit deja partit, et partiroit si cette dame lui en donnoit Les Moiens. Je ne puis trop vous faire connoitre Le Tort que Md. Lenord fait a cette demoiselle en abandonant sa société et La risque qu’elle fait courir a Md. de Lille qui par La pouroit faire banqueroute.

‘A Mdll. La Marre.
Chez M. Lecuyer tapisse .
Grande Rue Garonne, Faubourg
St. Germain à Paris.

‘Vous pouvez accuser La reception de cette Lettre par Le premier Ordinaire a

M. Le Vieux .
‘Adieu Mdll.
‘Je vous embrace de tout mon Cour.’

On November 7 Charles writes again to Mademoiselle Luci: the Princesse de Talmond is here *la vieille tante*: now estranged and perhaps hostile. Madame de la Bruère is probably the wife of M. de la Bruère, whom Montesquieu speaks highly of when, in 1749, he was Chargé d’Affaires in Rome.

’Le 7 Nov. 1750.

‘Mdlle. Luci, - Je suis fort Etone Mademoiselle qu’une fame de cette Age qu’a notre Tante soi si deresonable. Elle se done tout La paine immaginable pour agire contre Les interets de sa niece par son retard du payment dont vous m’avez deja parlé.

‘Voici une lettre que je vous prie de cachete, et d’y mettre son adress, et de l’envoier sur Le Champ a Madame de Labruière. Il est inutile d’hors en avant que vous communiquier aucune Chose de ce qui regard *Mlle.* Chevalier , a Md. la Tante jusqu’a ce que Elle pense otrement, car, il n’est que trop cler ques es procedes sont separés et oposés à ce qui devroit etre son interet. Je vous embrace de tout mon Coeur.’

These embraces are from the supposed Mademoiselle Chevalier. There is no reason to suppose a tender passion between Charles and the girl who was now his Minister of Affairs, Foreign and Domestic. But Madame de Talmond, as we shall learn, became jealous of Mademoiselle Luci.

His deeper seclusion continues.

Madame de Talmond, in the following letter, is as before, *la tante*. The ‘merchandise’ is letters for the Prince, which have reached Mademoiselle Luci, and which she is to return to Waters, the banker.

‘Le 16 Nov. 1750.

‘A Mdll. Luci: Je vous ai écrit Mademoiselle, Le 7, avec une incluse pour Md. de La Bruière, je vous prie de m’en accuser la reception à l’adresse de M. Le Vieux , et de me donner des Nouvelles de M. de Lisle ; pour se que regarde Les Marchandises de modes que vous avez chez vous depuis que j’ai en Le plaisir de vous voire et que cette Tante veut avoire l’indignité d’en differer le paiement, il faut que vous les renvoiez au memes Marchands de qui vous Les avez reçu et leur dire que vous craignez ne pas avoir de longtems une occasion favorable pour Les débiter, ainsi qu’en attendant vous aimez mieux quelles soieut dans leurs mains que dans Les votres. Je vous embrasse de tout mon Coeur.’

By November 19, Charles is indignant even with Mademoiselle Luci, who has rather tactlessly shown the letter of November 7 to Madame de Talmond, *la tante, la vieille Femme*. Oh, the unworthy Prince!

Charles's epistle follows:

19th Nov.

'Je suis tres surprise, Mademoiselle, de votre Lettre du 15, par Laquelle vous dites avoire montres a la tante une Lettre touchant les Affaires de Mdlle. Chevalier, cependant la mienne du 7 dont vous m'accuses La reception vous marquoit positivement Le contraire, Mr. De Lisle ne voulant pas qu'on parlet a cette vieille Femme jesqu'a ce qu'elle changeat de sentiment, et qu'elle paix la somme si necessaire à son Commerce. Ne vous serriez vous pas trompée de l'adresse de l'incluse pour la jeune Marchande de Mdlle. La bruière - Vous devez peut ete La connoitre; si cela est, je vous prie de me le Marquer et d'y remedier au plutot. Enfin Mademoiselle vous me faites tomber des nues et les pauvrétés que vous me marquez sont a mépriser. Elles ne peuvent venir que de cette tante, ce sont des couleurs qui ne peuvent jaimais prendre.

'Adieu Mdlle., n'attendez plus de mes nouvelles jusqu'a ce que le paiement soit fait. Soiez Toujours assurée de ma sincere amitié.'

Charles's whole career, alas! after 1748, was a set of quarrels with his most faithful adherents. This break with his old mistress, Madame de Talmond, is only one of a fatal series. With Mademoiselle Luci he never broke: we shall see the reason for this constancy. His correspondence now includes that of 'John Dixon,' of London, a false name for an adherent who has much to say about 'Mr. Best' and 'Mr. Sadler.' The Prince was apparently at or near Worms; his letters went by Mayence. On December 30 he sends for 'L'Esprit des Lois' and 'Les Amours de *Mlle.* Fanfiche,' and other books of diversified character. On Decemuber 31, his birthday, he wrote to Waters, 'the indisposition of those I employ has occasioned this long silence.' Mr. Dormer was his chief medium of intelligence with England. 'Commerce with Germany' is mentioned; efforts, probably, to interest Frederick the Great. On January 27, 1751, Mademoiselle Luci is informed that *la tante* has paid (probably returned his letters), but with an ill grace. Cluny sends an account of the Loch Arkaig money (only 12,981*l.* is left) and of the loyal clans. Glengarry's contingent is estimated at 3,000 men. In England, 'Paxton' (Sir W. W. Wynne) is dead. On February 28, 1751, Charles is somewhat reconciled to his old mistress. 'Je me flatte qu'en cette Nouvelle Année vous vous corrigerez, en attendant je suis come je serois toujours, avec toutte la tendresse et amitié possible, C. P.'

It is, of course, just possible that, from October 1750 to February 1751, Charles was in Germany, trying to form relations with Frederick the Great. Goring, under the name of 'Stouf,' was certainly working in Germany. Sir Charles Hanbury Williams at Berlin wrote on February 6, 1751, to the Duke of Newcastle:

'Hitherto my labours have been in vain. But I think I have at present hit upon a method which may bring the whole to light. And I will here take the liberty humbly to lay my thoughts and proposals before Your Grace. Feldt Marshal Keith has long had a mistress who is a Livonian, and who has always had an incredible ascendant over the Feldt Marshal, for it was certainly upon her account that his brother, the late Lord Marshal, quitted his house, and that they now live separately. About a week ago (during Feldt Marshal Keith's present illness) the King of Prussia ordered that this woman should be immediately sent out of his dominions. Upon which she quitted Berlin, and is certainly gone directly to Riga, which is the place of her birth. Now, as I am well persuaded that she was in all the Feldt Marshal's secrets, I would humbly submit it to Your Grace, whether it might *not be proper for His Majesty* to order his Ministers at the Court of Petersburgh to make instance to the Empress of Russia, that this woman might be obliged to come to Petersburgh, where, *if proper measures were taken with her*, she may give much light into this, and perhaps into other affairs. The reason why I would have her brought to Petersburgh is, that if she is examined at Riga, that examination would probably be committed to the care of Feldt Marshal Lasci, who commands in Chief, and constantly resides there, and I am afraid, would not take quite so much pains to examine into the bottom of an affair of this nature, as I could wish . . .

'C. HANBURY WILLIAMS.

It is not hard to interpret the words 'proper measures' as understood in the land of the knout. The mistress of Field Marshal Keith could not be got at; she had gone to Sweden, and this chivalrous proposal failed. The woman was not tortured in Russia to discover a Prince who was in or near Paris.

At the very moment when Williams, from Berlin, was making his manly suggestion, Lord Albemarle, from Paris (February 10, 1751), was reporting to his Government that Charles had been in Berlin, and had been received by Frederick 'with great civility.' The King, however, did not accede to Charles's demand for his sister's hand. This report is probably incorrect, for Charles's notes to Mademoiselle Luci at this time indicate no great absence from the

French capital.

On February 17, 1751, the English Government, like the police, 'fancied they had a clue.' The Duke of Bedford wrote to Lord Albemarle, 'His Majesty would have your Excellency inform M. Puysieux that you have it now in your power to have the Young Pretender's motions watched, in such a manner as to be able to point out to him where he may be met with; and that his Majesty doth therefore insist that, in conformity to the treaties now subsisting between the two nations he be immediately obliged to leave France. . . . He must be sent by sea, either into the Ecclesiastical States, or to such other country at a distance from France, as may render it impossible for him to return with the same facility he did before.'

These hopes of Charles's arrest were disappointed.

On March 4, young Waters heard of the Prince at the opera ball in Paris. He sent the Prince a watch from the Abbess of English nuns at Pontoise. Charles was always leaving his watches under his pillow. He certainly was not far from Paris. He scolded Madame de Talmond for returning thither (March 4), and sent to Mademoiselle Luci a commission for books, such as 'Attilie tragedie' ('Athalie') and 'Histoire de Miss Clarisse, Lettres Anglaises '(Richardson's 'Clarissa'), and 'La Chimie de Nicola' (*sic*). Mademoiselle Luci, writing on March 5, tells how the Philosophe (Montesquieu,), their friend, has heard a Monsieur Le Fort boast of knowing the Prince's hiding-place. 'The Philosophe turned the conversation.' The Prince answers that Le Fort is *très galant homme*, but a friend of *la tante* (Madame de Talmond), who must have been blabbing. He was in or near Paris, for he corresponded constantly with Mademoiselle Luci. The young lady assures him that some new philosophical books which he had ordered are worthless trash. 'L'Histoire des Passions' and 'Le Spectacle de l'Homme' are amateur rubbish; 'worse was never printed.'

The Prince now indulged in a new cypher. Walsh (his financial friend) is Legrand, Kennedy is Newton (as before), Dormer at Antwerp (his correspondent with England) is Mr. Blunt, 'Gorge in England' (Gorge!) is Mr. White, and so on. Owing to the death of Frederick, Prince of Wales, there was a good deal of correspondence with 'Dixon' and 'Miss Fines' - certainly Lady Primrose - while Dixon may be James Dawkins, or Dr. King, of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford. On May 16, Charles gave Goring instructions as to 'attempting the Court of Prussia, or any other except France, after their unworthy proceedings.' Goring did not set out till June 21, 1751. From Berlin the poor man was to go to Sweden. In April, Madame de Talmond was kind to Charles 'si malheureux et par votre position et par votre caractère.' Mademoiselle Luci was extremely ill in May and June, indeed till October; this led to a curious correspondence in October between her and *la vieille tante*. Madame de Talmond was jealous of Mademoiselle Luci, a girl whom one cannot help liking. Though out of the due chronological course, the letters of these ladies may be cited here.

From Madame de Beauregard (*Madame de Talmond*) *to Mademoiselle Luci.*

'October 19, 1751.

'The obstinacy of your taste for the country, Mademoiselle, in the most abominable weather, is only equalled by the persistence of your severity towards me. I have written to you from Paris, I have written from Versailles, with equal success - not a word of answer! Whether you want to imitate, or to pay court to our *amie* I know not, but would gladly know, that I may yield everything with a good grace, let it cost what it will. As a rule it would cost me much, nay, all, to sacrifice your friendship. But I have nothing to contest with old friends, who are more lovable than myself. On my side I have only the knowledge and the feeling of your worth, which require but discernment and justice. From such kinds of accomplishments as these, *you* are dispensed. So serious a letter might be tedious without being long, but it is saddened also by the weary weight of my own spirits. Will you kindly give me news of your health and of your return to town? I am sorry that Paris does not interest me; I am going to Fontainebleau at the end of the week.'

Mademoiselle Luci replies with dignity.

'October 22, 1751.

'Madame, - A fever, and many other troubles, have prevented me from answering the three letters with which you have honoured me. Permit me to mingle a few complaints with my thanks! Were I capable of the sentiments which you attribute to me, I could not deserve your flattering esteem. Its expressions I should be compelled to regard merely as an effort of extreme politeness on your side. Assuredly, Madame, I am strongly attached to Madame your friend ; for her I would suffer and do everything short of stooping to an act of baseness. If, Madame, you have not found in me virtues which will assure you of this, at least trust my faults! My character is not supple. The one thing which makes my frankness endurable is, that it renders me incapable of conduct for which I should have to blush. Believe, then, Madame, that I can preserve my friendship for your friend, without falling, as you suspect, into the baseness of paying court to her , in spite of the respect which I owe to *you*.'

The letters of the ladies (in French) are copied by the Prince's hand, nor has he improved the orthography. I therefore translate these epistles.

On July 10, 1751, after a tremendous quarrel with Madame de Talmond, Charles wrote out his political reflections. France must apologise to him before he can enter into any measures with her Court. ‘I have nothing at heart but the interest of my country, and I am always ready to sacrifice everything for it, Life and rest, but the least reflection as to ye point of honour I can never pass over. There is nobody whatsoever I respect more as ye K. of Prussia; not as a K. but as I believe him to be a clever man. Has he intention to serve me? Proofs must be given, and ye only one convincive is his agreeing to a Marriage with his sister, and acknowledging me at Berlin for what I am.’ He adds that he will not be a tool, ‘like my ansisters.’

Such were Charles’s lonely musings, such the hopeless dreams of an exile. He had now entered on his attempt to secure Prussian aid, and on a fresh chapter of extraordinary political and personal intrigues.

CHAPTER VI - INTRIGUES, POLITICAL AND AMATORY. DEATH OF MADEMOISELLE LUCI, 1752

Hopes from Prussia - The Murrays of Elibank - Imprisonment of Alexander Murray - Recommended to Charles - The Elibank plot - Prussia and the Earl Marischal - His early history - Ambassador of Frederick at Versailles - His odd household - Voltaire - The Duke of Newcastle's resentment - Charles's view of Frederick's policy - His alleged avarice - Lady Montagu - His money-box - Goring and the Earl Marischal - Secret meetings - The lace shop - Albemarle's information - Charles at Ghent - Hanbury Williams's mares' nests - Charles and 'La Grandemain' - She and Goring refuse to take his orders - Appearance of Miss Walkinshaw - Her history - Remonstrances of Goring - 'Commissions for the worst of men' - 'The little man' - Lady Primrose - Death of Mademoiselle Luci - November 10, date of postponed Elibank plot - Danger of dismissing an agent.

We have seen that Charles's hopes, in July 1751, were turned towards Prussia and Sweden. To these Courts he had sent Goring in June. Meanwhile a new and strange prospect was opening to him in England. On the right bank of Tweed, just above Ashiesteil, is the ruined shell of the old tower of Elibank, the home of the Murrays. A famous lady of that family was Muckle Mou'd Meg, whom young Harden, when caught while driving Elibank's kye, preferred to the gallows as a bride. In 1751 the owner of the tower on Tweed was Lord Elibank; to all appearance a douce, learned Scots laird, the friend of David Hume, and a customer for the wines of Montesquieu's vineyards at La Brède. He had a younger brother, Alexander Murray, and the politics of the pair, says Horace Walpole, were of the sort which at once kept the party alive, and made it incapable of succeeding. Their measures were so taken that they did not go out in the Forty-five, yet could have proved their loyalty had Charles reached St. James's in triumph. Walpole calls Lord Elibank 'a very prating, impertinent Jacobite.' As for the younger brother, Alexander Murray, Sir Walter Scott writes, in his introduction to 'Redgauntlet,' 'a young Scotchman of rank is said to have stooped so low as to plot the surprisal of St. James's Palace and the assassination of the Royal family.'

This was the Elibank plot, which we shall elucidate later.

In the spring and summer of 1751, Alexander Murray had lain in Newgate, on a charge of brawling at the Westminster election. He was kept in durance because he would not beg the pardon of the House on his knees: he only kneeled to God, he said. He was released by the sheriffs at the close of the session, and was escorted by the populace to Lord Elibank's house in Henrietta Street. He then crossed to France, and, in July 1751, 'Dixon' (Dr. King?) thus reports of him to Charles:

'My lady says that M. is most zealously attached to you, and that he is upon all occasions ready to obey your commands, and to meet you when and where you please . . . He assures my lady that he can raise five hundred men for your service in and about Westminster.'

These men were to be used in a plot for seizing the Royal family in London. This scheme went on simmering, blended with intrigues for Prussian and Swedish help, and, finally, with a plan for a simultaneous rising in the Highlands. And this combination was the last effort of Jacobitism before the general abandonment of Charles by his party.

The hopes, as regarded Prussia, were centred in Frederick's friend, the brother of Marshal Keith, the Earl Marischal. The Earl was by this time an old man. At Queen Anne's death he had held a command in the Guards, and if he had frankly backed Atterbury when the bishop proposed to proclaim King James, the history of England might have been altered, and the Duke of Argyll's regiment, at Kensington, would have had to fight for the Crown. The Earl missed his chance. He fought at Shirramuir (1715), and he with his brother, later Marshal Keith, was in the unlucky Glensheil expedition from Spain (1719). That endeavour failed, leaving hardly a trace, save the ghost of a foreign colonel which haunts the roadside of Glensheil. From that date the Earl was a cheery, contented, philosophic exile, with no high opinion of kings. Spain was often his abode, where he found, as he said, 'his old friend, the sun.' In 1744 he declined to accompany the Prince, in a herring-boat, to Scotland. In the Forty-five he did not cross the Channel, but, as we have seen, endeavoured to wring men and money from d'Argenson. In 1747 the Earl, then at Treviso, declined to be Charles's minister on the score of 'broken health.' Charles, as we saw, vainly asked the Earl for a meeting at Venice in 1749. Indeed, Charles got nothing from his adherent but a mother-of-pearl snuff-box, with the portrait of the old gentleman. The Earl dwelt, not always on the best terms, with his brother, Marshal Keith, at Berlin, and was treated as a real friend, for a marvel, by Frederick.

On July 20 the Earl had seen Goring at Berlin, and wrote to Charles. Nothing, he said, could be done by Swedish aid. If Sweden moved, Russia would attack her, nor could Frederick, in his turn, assail Russia, for Russia and the Empress

Maria Theresa would have him between two fires. Frederick now (August 1751) took a step decidedly unfriendly as regarded his uncle of England. He sent the Earl Marischal as his ambassador to the Court of Versailles. This was precisely as if the United States were to send a banished Fenian as their Minister to Paris. The Earl was proscribed for treason in England, and, as we shall see, his house in Paris became the centre of truly Fenian intrigues. On these the worthy Earl was wont to give the opinion of an impartial friend. All this was known to the English Government, as we shall show, through Pickle, and the knowledge must have strained the relations between George II. and 'our Nephew,' as Horace Walpole calls Frederick of Prussia.

The Earl's household, when he left Potzdam in August 1751 for Paris, is thus described by Voltaire: 'You will see a very pretty little Turkess, whom he carries with him: they took her at the siege of Oczakow, and made a present of her to our Scot, who seems to have no great need of her. She is an excellent Mussalwoman: her master allows her perfect freedom of conscience. He has also a sort of Tartar *Valet de chambre* , who has the honour to be a Pagan.' On October 29, Voltaire writes that he has had a letter from the Earl in Paris. 'He tells me that his Turk girl, whom he took to the play to see *Mahomet* was much scandalised.'

Voltaire was to receive less agreeable news from the friend of Frederick. 'Some big Prussian will box your ears,' said the Earl Marischal, after Voltaire's famous quarrel with his Royal pupil.

The appointment of an attainted rebel to be Ambassador at Versailles naturally offended England. The Duke of Newcastle wrote to Lord Hardwicke:

'One may easily see the views with which the King of Prussia has taken this offensive step: first, for the sake of doing an impertinence to the King; then to deter us from going on with our negotiations in the Empire, for the election of a King of the Romans, and to encourage the Jacobite party, that we may apprehend disturbances from them, if a rupture should ensue in consequence of the measures we are taking abroad.' He therefore proposes a subsidy to Russia, to overawe Frederick.

At Paris, Yorke remonstrated. Hardwicke writes on September 10, 1751:

'I am glad Joe ventured to say what he did to M. Puysieux,' but 'Joe' spoke to no purpose.

James was pleased by the Earl Marischal's promotion and presence in Paris. Charles, at first, was aggrieved. He wrote:

'L. M. coming to Paris is a piece of French politics, on the one side to bully the people of England; on the other hand to hinder our friends from doing the thing by themselves, bambouseling them with hopes. . . . They mean to sell us as usual. . . . The Doctor is to be informed that Goring saw Lord Marischal, but nothing to be got from him.'

The Prince mentions his 'distress for money,' and sends compliments to Dawkins, 'Jemmy Dawkins,' of whom we shall hear plenty. He sends 'a watch for the lady' (Lady Montagu?).

I venture a guess at Lady Montagu, because Dr. King tells, as a proof of Charles's avarice, that he took money from a lady in Paris when he had plenty of his own.

Now, on September 15, 1751, Charles sent to Dormer a receipt for 'One Thousand pounds, which he paid me by orders for account of the Right Honourable Vicecountess of Montagu,' signed 'C. P. R.' Again, on quitting Paris on December 1, 1751, he left, in a coffer, '2,250 *Louidors*, besides what there is in a little bag above, amounting to about 130 guines, and od Zequins or ducats.' These, with 'a big box of books,' were locked up in the house of the Comtesse de Vassé, Rue St. Dominique, Faubourg de St. Germain, in which street Montesquieu lived. The deposit was restored later to Charles by 'Madame La Grandemain,' 'sister' of Mademoiselle Luci. In truth, Charles, for a Prince with an ambition to conquer England, was extremely poor, and a loyal lady did not throw away her guineas, as Dr. King states, on a merely avaricious adventurer. Charles (August 25, 1751) was in correspondence with 'Daniel Macnamara, Esq., at the Grecian Coffee-house, Temple, London,' who later plays a fatal part in the Prince's career.

This is a private interlude: we return to practical politics.

No sooner was the Earl Marischal in Paris than Charles made advances to the old adherent of his family. He sent Goring post-haste to the French capital. Goring, who already knew the Earl, writes (September 20, 1731): 'My instructions are not to let myself be seen by anybody whatever but your Lordship.' The Earl answers on the same day: 'If you yourself know any safe way for both of us, tell it me. There was a garden belonging to a Mousquetaire, famous for fruit, by Pique-price, beyond it some way. I could go there as out of curiosity to see the garden, and meet you to-morrow towards five o'clock; but if you know a better place, let me know it. Remember, I must go with the footmen, and remain in coach as usual, so that the garden is best, because I can say, if it came possibly to be known, that it was by chance I met you.'

'An ambassador,' as Sir Henry Wotton remarked, 'is an honest man sent to lie abroad for his country,' an observation taken very ill by Gentle King Jamie.

Goring replied that the garden was too public. The night would be the surest time. Goring could wear livery, or dress as an Abbé. The Tuileries, when 'literally dark,' might serve. On September 23, the Earl answers, 'One of my servants knows you since Vienna.' Goring, as we know, had been in the Austrian service. 'I will go to the Tuileries when it begins to grow dark, if it does not rain, for it would seem too od that I had choose to walk in rain, and my footman would suspect, and perhaps spye. I shall walk along the step or terrace before the house in the garden.'

So difficult is it for an ambassador to dabble in treasonable intrigue, especially when old, and when the weather is wet. Let us suppose that Goring and the Earl met. Goring's business was to ask if the Earl 'has leave to disclose the secret that was not in his power to do, last time you saw him. I am ready to come myself, and meet him where he pleases.'

Meetings were difficult to arrange. We read, in the Prince's hand:

To Lord M. from Goring.

'18th Oct. 1751.

'Saying he had received an express from the Prince with orders to tell him his place of residence, and making a suggestion of meeting at Waters's House.

'Answer made 18th. Oct. by Lord M.

'You may go to look for Lace as a Hamborough Merchant. I go as recommended to a Lace Shop by Mr. Waters and shall be there as it grows dark, for a pretence of staying some time in the house you may also say you are recommended by Waters.

'Mr Vignier Marchand de Doreure rue du Route, au Soleil D'or. Paris.'

(*Overleaf*.)

'18th Oct 1751.

'I shall be glad to see you when you can find a fit place, but to know where your friend is is necessary unfit. Would Waters's house be a good place? Would Md Talmont's, mine is not, neither can I go privately in a hackney coach, my own footman would dogg me, here Stepan knows you well since Vienna.' (Stepan was the Tartar valet.)

It is clear that Charles was now near Paris, and that the Ambassador of Prussia was in communication with him. What did the English Government know of this from their regular agents?

On October 9, Albemarle wrote from Paris that Charles was believed to have visited the town. His 'disguises make it very difficult' to discover him. Albemarle gives orders to stop a Dr. Kincade at Dover, and seize his papers. He sends a list of traffickers between England and the Prince, including Lochgarry, 'formerly in the King's service, and very well known; *is now in Scotland*.' 'The Young Pretender has travelled through Spain and Italy in the habit of a

Dominican Fryar. He is expected soon at Avignon. He was last at Berlin and Dantzich, and has nobody with him but Mr. Goring.' This valuable information is marked 'Secret!'

On October 10, Albemarle writes that Foley, a Jacobite, is much with the Earl Marischal. On October 30, Dr. Kincaid had not yet set out. But (December 1) Dr. Kincaid did start, and at Dover 'was culled like a flower.' On St. Andrew's Day (November 30) there was a Jacobite meeting at St. Germains. Albemarle had a spy present, who was told by Sullivan, the Prince's Irish friend, that Charles was expected at St. Germains by the New Year. The Earl Marischal would have kept St. Andrew's Day with them, but had to go to Versailles. Later we learn that no papers were found on Dr. Kincaid. On January 5, 1752, Albemarle mentions traffickings with Ireland. On August 4, 1752, Mann learns from a spy of some consequence in Rome that the Prince is in Ireland. His household in Avignon is broken up - which, by accident, is true. 'Something is in agitation' - valuable news!

The English Government, it is plain, was still in the dark. But matters were going ill for Charles. In February 1752, Waters, respectfully but firmly, declined to advance money. Charles dismissed in March all his French servants at Avignon, and sold the coach in which Sheridan and Strafford were wont to take the air. Madame de Talmond was still jealous of Mademoiselle Luci. Money came in by mere driblets. 'Alexander' provided 300*l.*, and 'Dixon,' in England, twice sends a humble ten pounds. Charles transferred his quarters to the Netherlands, residing chiefly at Ghent, where he was known as the Chevalier William Johnson.

The English Government remained unenlightened. The Duke of Newcastle, on January 29, 1752, had 'advice that the Pretender's son is certainly in Silesia,' and requests Sir Charles Hanbury Williams to make inquiries.

On April 23, 1752, when Charles was establishing himself at Ghent, and trying to raise loans in every direction, the egregious Sir Charles hears that the Prince is in Lithuania, with the Radzivils. On April 27, Williams, at Leipzig, is convinced of this, and again proposes to waylay and seize the papers of a certain Bishop Lascaris, as he passes through Austrian territory on his way to Rome. In Lithuania the Prince might safely have been left. He could do the Elector of Hanover no harm anywhere, except by such Fenian enterprises as that which Pickle was presently to reveal. The anxious and always helpless curiosity of George II. and his agents about the Prince seems especially absurd, when they look in the ends of the earth for a man who is in the Netherlands.

At Ghent, May 1752, Charles to all appearances was much less busied with political conspiracies than with efforts to raise the wind. Dormer, at Antwerp, often protests against being drawn upon for money which he does not possess, and Charles treated a certain sum of 200*l.* as if it were the purse of Fortunatus, and inexhaustible. 'Madame La Grandemain' writes on May 5 that she cannot assist him, and *le Philosophe* (Montesquieu), she says, is out of town. On May 12 the Prince partly explains the cause of his need of money. He has taken, at Ghent, 'a preti house, and room in it to lodge a friend,' and he invites Dormer to be his guest. The house was near the Place de l'Empereur, in 'La Rue des Varnsopele' (?). He asks Dormer to send 'two keces of Books:' indeed, literature was his most respectable consolation. Old Waters had died, and young Waters was requested to be careful of Charles's portrait by La Tour, of his 'marble bousto' by Lemoine, and of his 'silver sheald.' To Madame La Grandemain he writes in a peremptory style: 'Malgré toute votre repugnance je vous ordonne d'éxecuter avec toutes les precautions possibles ce dont je vous ai chargé.' What was this commission? It concerned 'la demoiselle.' 'You must overcome your repugnance, and tell a certain person that I cannot see him, and that, if he wishes to be in my good graces, he must show you the best and most efficacious and rapid means of arriving at the end for which I sent him to you. I hope that this letter will not find you in Paris.'

I have little doubt that the 'repugnances' of 'Madame La Grandemain' were concerned with the bringing of Miss Walkinshaw to the Prince. The person who is in danger of losing the Prince's favour is clearly Goring, figuring under the name of 'Stouf,' and, at this moment, with 'Madame La Grandemain' in the country.

The facts about this Miss Walkinshaw, daughter of John Walkinshaw of Barowfield, have long been obscure. We can now offer her own account of her adventures, from the archives of the French Foreign Office. In 1746 (according to a memoir presented to the French Court in 1774 by Miss Walkinshaw's daughter, Charlotte) the Prince first met Clementina Walkinshaw at the house of her uncle, Sir Hugh Paterson, near Bannockburn. The lady was then aged twenty: she was named after Charles's mother, and was a Catholic. The Prince conceived a passion for her, and obtained from her a promise to follow him 'wherever providence might lead him, if he failed in his attempt.' At a date not specified, her uncle, 'General Graeme,' obtained for her a nomination as *chanoinesse* in a *chapitre noble* of the Netherlands. But 'Prince Charles was then incognito in the Low Countries, and a person in his confidence warmly urged Miss Walkinshaw to go and join him, as she had promised, pointing out that in the dreadful state of his affairs, nothing could better soothe his regrets than the presence of the lady whom he most loved. Moved by her passion and her promise given to a hero admired by all Europe, Miss Walkinshaw betook herself to Douay. The Prince, at Ghent, heard news so interesting to his heart, and bade her go to Paris, where he presently joined her. They renewed their promises and returned to Ghent, where she took his name , was treated and regarded as his wife, later travelled with him in Germany, and afterwards was domiciled with him at Liege, where she bore a daughter, Charlotte, baptized on October 29, 1753.'

So runs the memoir presented to the French Court by the Prince's daughter, Charlotte, in 1774. Though no date is assigned, Miss Walkinshaw certainly joined Charles in the summer of 1752. 'Madame La Grandemain' and Goring were very properly indisposed to aid in bringing the lady to Charles. The Prince this replies to the remonstrances of Goring ('Stouf').

To M. Stouf.

'June 6, 1752.

'It is not surprising that I should not care to have one in my Family that pretends to give me Laws in everything I do, you know how you already threatened to quit me If I did not do your will and pleasure. What is passed I shall forget, provided you continue to do yr. Duty, so that there is nothing to be altered as to what was settled. Do not go to Lisle, but stay at Coutray for my farther orders. As to ye little man he need never expect to see me unless he executes ye Orders I gave him. I send you 50 Louisdors so that you may give ye Frenchman what is necessary.

'The little man' is, probably, Beson, who was also recalcitrant. Goring replies in the following very interesting letter. He considered his errand unworthy of a man of honour.

From Stouf.

'I did not apprehend the money you sent by Dormer was for me, but thought, as you write in yours, to furnish the little man for the journey to Cambray, and that very reasonably, for with what he had of me he could not do it. On his refusing to go I sent it back. He says he has done what lays in his power, as Sullivan's letter testifies, that his desires to serve you were sincere, for which you abused him in a severe manner. Believe me, Sir, such commissions are for the worst of men, and such you will find enough for money, but they will likewise betray you for more. Virtue deserves reward and you treat it ill, I can only lament this unfortunate affair, which if possible to prevent, I would give my life with pleasure.

'You say nothing is to be altered in regard to the plan. Pray Sir reflect on

Lady P. who will expect the little man. He was introduced to her, and told her name. What frights will she and all friends be in, when they know you sent him away, for fear he should come over and betray them! I assure you all honest men will act as we have done, and should you propose to all who will enter into yr. service to do such work, they will rather lose their service than consent. Do you believe Sir that Lrd. Marischal, Mr. Campbell, G. Kelly, and others would consent to do it? Why should you think me less virtuous? My family is as ancient, my honour as entire. . . . I from my heart am sorry you do not taste these reasons, and must submit to my bad fortune . . for as to my going to Courtray nobody will know it, and if any accident should happen to you by the young lady's means , I shall be detested and become the horrour of Mankind, but if you are determined to have her, let Mr. Sullivan bring her to you here, or any where himself. The little man will carry your letter to him, as he has done it already I suppose he wont refuse you.

'You sent a message for the pistols yourself, and as you had not given him the watch, he sent it, lest he should be accused of a design to keep it. We have no other Messages to send, since you have forbid us coming near you . . . for God's sake Sir let me have an audience of you; I can say more than I can write.'

Thus, from the beginning, Charles's friends foreboded danger in his *liaison*. Miss Walkinshaw had a sister, 'good Mrs. Catherine Walkinshaw, the Princess dowager's bed-chamber woman.' Lady Louisa Stuart knew her, and described to Scott 'the portly figure with her long lace ruffles, her gold snuff-box, and her double chin.' The English Jacobites believed that Clementina was sent as a spy on Charles, communicating with her sister in London. In fact, Pickle was the spy, but Charles's refusal to desert his mistress broke up the party, and sealed his ruin. So much Goring had anticipated. The 'Lady P.' referred to as 'in a fright' is Lady Primrose. An English note of May 1752 represents 'Miss Fines' as about to go to France, where 'Lady P.' or 'Lady P. R.' actually arrived in June. The Prince answered Goring thus:

The Prince to Stouf in reply.

'I hereby order you to go to Lisle there to see a Certain person in case she has something new to say, and Let her know that Everything is to be as agreed on, except that, on reflection, I think it much better not to send ye French man over, for that will avoid any writing, and Macnamara can be sent, to whom one can say by word of mouth many things further. As I told you already nothing is to be chenged, on your Side, and you are to be anywhere in my Neiborod for to be ready when wanted. . . . Make many kinde Compliments from me to her and all her dear family.

‘Burn this after reading.’

Charles also wrote to ‘Lady P. R.’ in a conciliatory manner. Goring met ‘the Lady’ at Lens: she was indignant at the dismissal of ‘the little Frenchman,’ merely because he was no Englishman. ‘It would be unjust to refuse that name to one who had served you so faithfully.’ Goring was still (June 18) ‘at Madame La Grandemain’s.’ ‘The Lady’ in this correspondence may be Miss Walkinshaw or may be Lady Primrose, probably the latter. Indeed, it is by no means absolutely certain that the errand which Goring considered so dishonourable was connected with Miss Walkinshaw alone. The Elibank plot must have been maturing, though no light is thrown on it by the papers of the summer of 1752. Did Goring regard that plot as ‘wicked,’ or did he object to escorting Miss Walkinshaw?

There were clearly two difficulties. One concerned Miss Walkinshaw, the other, Lady Primrose. She, as a Jacobite conspirator, had been used to seeing ‘the little man,’ a Frenchman, whom Charles threatens to dismiss. If dismissed, he would be dangerous. Charles’s hatred and distrust of the French now extended to ‘the little man.’ It is barely conceivable that Miss Walkinshaw had left England under Lady Primrose’s escort, of course under the pretext of going to join her chapter of canonesses in the Low Countries. If she announced, when once in France, her desire to go to Charles as his mistress, Lady Primrose’s position would be most painful, and Goring might well decline to convoy Miss Walkinshaw. But the political and the amatory plot are here inextricably entangled. As to the wickedness of the Elibank plot, if Goring hesitated over that, Forsyth, in his ‘Letters from Italy,’ tells a curious tale accepted by Lord Stanhope. Charles, on some occasion, went to England in disguise, and was introduced into a room full of conspirators. They proposed some such night attack on the palace as Murray’s, but Charles declined to be concerned in it, unless the personal safety of George II. and his family was guaranteed. Charles certainly always did discountenance schemes of assassination; we shall see a later example. But, if Pickle does not lie, in a letter to be cited later, Lord Elibank, a most reputable man, saw no moral harm in his family plot. Was Goring more sensitive? All this must be left to the judgment of the reader.

In October 1752 a very sad event occurred. ‘Madame La Grandemain’ had to announce the death of her ‘sister:’ the Prince, in a note to a pseudonymous correspondent, expresses his concern for ‘poor Mademoiselle Luci.’ And so this girl, with her girlish mystery and romance, passes into the darkness from which she had scarcely emerged, carrying our regrets, for indeed she is the most sympathetic, of the women who, in these melancholy years, helped or hindered Prince Charles. ‘As long as I have a Bit of Bred,’ Charles writes to an unknown adherent, ‘you know that I am always ready to shere it with a friend.’ In this generous light we may fancy that Mademoiselle Luci regarded the homeless exile whom Goring was obliged to reprove in such uncourtly strains.

Madame La Grandemain, writing on November 5, 1752, expresses her inconsolable sorrow for her ‘sister’s’ death, and says that she has made arrangements, as regards the Prince’s affairs, in case of her own decease. The Prince, on *November* 10, 1752, sends his condolences, and this date is well worth remembering. For, according to Young Glengarry, in a letter to James cited later, November 10 was either the day appointed for the bursting of the Elibank plot, or was the day on which the date of the explosion was settled. As to that plot, the papers of Prince Charles contain no information. Documents so compromising, if they ever existed, have been destroyed.

CHAPTER VII - YOUNG GLENGARRY

Pickle the spy - Not James Mohr Macgregor or Drummond - Pickle was the young chief of Glengarry - Proofs of this - His family history - His part in the Forty-five - Misfortunes of his family - In the Tower of London - Letters to James III. - No cheque! - Barren honours - In London in 1749 - His poverty - Mrs. Murray of Broughton's watch - Steals from the Loch Arkaig hoard - Charges by him against Archy Cameron - Is accused of forgery - Cameron of Torcastle - Glengarry sees James III. in Rome - Was he sold to Cumberland? - Anonymous charges against Glengarry - A friend of Murray of Broughton - His spelling in evidence against him - Mrs. Cameron's accusation against Young Glengarry - Henry Pelham and Campbell of Lochnell - Pickle gives his real name and address - Note on Glengarry family - Highlanders among the Turks.

In November 1752, if not earlier, a new fountain of information becomes open to us, namely, the communications made by Pickle the spy to the English Government. His undated letters to his employers are not always easily attributed to a given month or year, but there can be mo mistake in assigning his first *dated* letter to November 2, 1752.

The spy called Pickle was a descendant of Somerled and the Lords of the Isles. In her roll-call of the clans, Flora MacIvor summons the Macdonalds:

'O sprung from the kings who in Islay held state,
Proud chiefs of *Glengarry*, Clanranald, and Sleat,
Combine like three streams from one mountain of snow,
And resistless in union rush down on the foe!'

Pickle was the heir to the chieftainship of *Glengarry*; he was *Alastair Ruadh Macdonnell* (or Mackdonnell, as he often writes it), son of John Macdonnell, twelfth of Glengarry. Pickle himself, till his father's death in 1754, is always spoken of as 'Young Glengarry.' We shall trace the steps by which Young Glengarry, the high-born chief of the most important Catholic Jacobite clan, became *Pickle*, the treacherous correspondent of the English Government. On first reading his letters in the Additional MSS. of the British Museum, I conceived Pickle to be a traitorous servant in the household of some exiled Jacobite. I then found him asserting his rank as eldest son of the chief of a great clan; and I thought he must be personating his master, for I could not believe in such villainy as the treason of a Highland chief. Next, I met allusions to the death of his father, and the date (September 1, 1754) corresponded with that of the decease of Old Glengarry. Presently I observed the suspicions entertained about Young Glengarry, and the denunciation of him in 1754 by Mrs. Cameron, the widow of the last Jacobite martyr, Archibald Cameron. I also perceived that Pickle and Young Glengarry both invariably spell ‘who’ as ‘how.’ Next, in Pickle’s last extant epistle to the English Government (1760), he directs his letters to be sent to ‘Alexander Macdonnell, Glengarry, Fort William.’ Finally, I compared Pickle’s handwriting, where he gives the name ‘Alexander Macdonnell,’ with examples of Young Glengarry’s signature in legal documents in the library of Edinburgh University. The writing, in my opinion, was the same in both sets of papers. Thus this hideous charge of treachery is not brought heedlessly against a gentleman of ancient, loyal, and honourable family. Young Glengarry died unarmed, at home, on December 23, 1761, leaving directions that his political papers should be burned, and the present representatives of a distinguished House are not the lineal descendants of a traitor.

The grandfather of Alastair Ruadh Macdonnell (*alias* Pickle, *alias* Roderick Random - he was fond of Dr. Smollett’s new novels - *alias* Alexander Jeanson, that is, Alastair, son of Ian), was Alastair Dubh, Black Alister, ‘who, with his ponderous two-handed sword, mowed down two men at every stroke’ at Killiecrankie, and also fought at Shirramuir. At Killiecrankie he lost his brother, and his son Donald Gorm (Donald of the Blue Eyes), who is said to have slain eighteen of the enemy. At Shirramuir, when Clanranald fell, Glengarry tossed his bonnet in the air, crying in Gaelic, ‘Revenge! Revenge! Revenge to-day, and mourning to-morrow.’ He then led a charge, and drove the regular British troops in rout. He received a warrant of a peerage from the King over the water.

This hero seems a strange ancestor for a spy and a traitor, like Pickle. Yet we may trace an element of ‘heredity.’ About 1735 a member of the Balhaldie family, chief of Clan Alpin or Macgregor, wrote the Memoirs of the great Lochiel, published in 1842 for the Abbotsford Club. Balhaldie draws rather in Clarendon’s manner a portrait of the Alastair Macdonnell of 1689 and of 1715. Among other things he writes:

‘Most of his actions might well admitt of a double construction, and what he appeared generally to be was seldome what he really was. . . . Though he was ingaged in every attempt that was made for the Restoration of King James and his family, yet he managed matters so that he lossed nothing in the event. . . . The concerts and ingagements he entered into with his neighbours . . . he observed only in so far as suited with his own particular interest, but still he had the address to make them bear the blame, while he carried the profits and honour. To conclude, he was brave, loyal, and wonderfully sagacious and long-sighted; and was possessed of a great many shineing qualities, blended with a few vices, which, like patches on a beautifull face, seemed to give the greater *éclat* to his character.'

Pickle, it will be discovered, inherited the ancestral 'vices.' 'What he appeared generally to be was seldome what he really was.' His portrait, in Highland dress, displays a handsome, fair, athletic young chief, with a haughty expression. Behind him stands a dark, dubious-looking retainer, like an evil genius.

Alastair Dubh Macdonnell died in 1724, and was succeeded by his son John, twelfth of Glengarry. This John had, by two wives, four sons, of whom the eldest, Alastair Ruadh, was Pickle. Alastair held a captain's commission in the Scots brigade in the French service. In March 1744, he and the Earl Marischal were at Gravelines, meaning to sail with the futile French expedition from Dunkirk. In June 1745, Glengarry went to France with a letter from the Scotch Jacobites, bidding Charles *not* to come without adequate French support. Old Glengarry, in January 1745, had 'disponed' his lands to Alastair his son, for weighty reasons to him known. Such deeds were common in the Highlands, especially before a rising.

From this point the movements of Young Glengarry become rather difficult to trace. If we could believe the information received from Rob Roy's son, James Mohr Macgregor, by Craigie, the Lord Advocate, Young Glengarry came over to Scotland in *La Doutelle*, when Charles landed in Moidart in July 1745. This was not true. Old Glengarry, with Lord George Murray, waited on Cope at Crieff in August, when Cope marched north. Cope writes, 'I saw Glengarry the father at Crieff with the Duke of Athol; 'tis said that none of his followers are yet out, tho' there is some doubt of his youngest son; the eldest, as Glengarry told me, is in France.' On September 14, Forbes of Culloden congratulated Old Glengarry on his return home, and regretted that so many of his clan were out under Lochgarry, a kinsman. Old Glengarry had written to Forbes 'lamenting the folly of his friends.' He, like Lovat, was really 'sitting on the fence.' His clan was out; his second son Æneas led it at Falkirk. Alastair was in France. At the close of 1745, Alastair, conveying a detachment of the Royal Scots, in French service, and a piquet of the Irish brigade to Scotland, was captured on the seas and imprisoned in the Tower of London. In January 1746 we find him writing from the Tower to Waters, the banker in Paris, asking for money. Almost at this very time Young Glengarry's younger brother, Æneas, who led the clan, was accidentally shot in the streets of Falkirk by a Macdonald of

Clanranald's regiment. The poor Macdonald was executed, and the Glengarry leader, by Charles's desire, was buried in the grave of Wallace's companion, Sir John the Graeme, as the only worthy resting-place. Many Macdonalds deserted.

After Culloden (April 1746), an extraordinary event took place in the Glengarry family. Colonel Warren, who, in October 1746, carried off Charles safely to France, arrested, in Scotland, Macdonell of Barrisdale, on charges of treason to King James. Barrisdale had been taken by the English, but was almost instantly released after Culloden. One charge against him, on the Jacobite side, was that he had made several gentlemen of Glengarry's clan believe that their chief meant to deliver them up to the English. Thereon 'information was laid' (by the gentlemen?) against Old Glengarry. Old Glengarry's letters in favour of the Prince were discovered; he was seized, and was only released from Edinburgh Castle in October 1749.

Here then, in 1746, were Old Glengarry in prison, Young Glengarry in the Tower, and Lucas lying in the grave of Sir John the Graeme. Though only nineteen, Æneas was married, and left issue. The family was now in desperate straits, and already a *sough* of treason to the cause was abroad. Young Glengarry says that he lay in the Tower for twenty-two months; he was released in July 1747. The Rev. James Leslie, writing to defend himself against a charge of treachery (Paris, May 27, 1752), quotes a letter, undated, from Glengarry. 'One needs not be a wizard to see that mentioning you was only a feint, and the whole was aimed at me.' If this, like Leslie's letter, was written in 1752, Glengarry was then not unsuspected. We shall now see how he turned his coat.

On January 22, 1748, he writes to James from Paris, protesting loyalty. But 'since I arrived here, after my tedious confinement in the Tower in London, I have not mett with any suitable encouragement.' Glengarry, even as Pickle, constantly complains that his services are not recognised. Both sides were ungrateful! In the list of gratuities to the Scotch from France, *Glengarry l'Ainé* gets 1,800 livres; Young Glengarry is not mentioned. From Amiens, September 20, 1748, Young Glengarry again wrote to James. He means 'to wait any opportunity of going safely to Britain' on his private affairs. These journeys were usually notified by the exiles; their mutual suspicions had to be guarded against. In December, Young Glengarry hoped to succeed to the Colonelcy in the Scoto-French regiment of Albany, vacated by the death of the Gentle Lochiel. Archibald Cameron had also applied for it, as *locum tenens* of his nephew, Lochiel's son, a boy of sixteen. James replied, through Edgar, that he was unable to interfere and assist Glengarry, as he had recommended young Lochiel. What follows explains, perhaps, the circumstance that changed Young Glengarry into Pickle.

‘His Majesty is sorry to find you so low in your circumstances, and reduced to such straits at present as you mention, and he is the more sorry that his own situation, as to money matters, never being so bad as it now is, he is not in a condition to relieve you, as he would incline. But His Majesty being at the same time desirous to do what depends on him for your satisfaction, he, upon your request, sends you here enclosed a duplicate of your grandfather’s warrant to be a Peer. You will see that it is signed by H. M. and I can assure you it is an exact duplicate copie out of the book of entrys of such like papers.’

It is easy to conceive the feelings and to imagine the florid eloquence of Young Glengarry, when he expected a cheque and got a duplicate copy of a warrant (though he had asked for it) to be a Peer - over the water! As he was not without a sense of humour, the absurdity of the Stuart cause must now have become vividly present to his fancy. He must starve or ‘conform,’ that is, take tests and swallow oaths. But it was not necessary that he should sell himself. Many loyal gentlemen were in his position of poverty, but perhaps only James Mohr Macgregor and Samuel Cameron vended themselves as Glengarry presently did.

Glengarry loitered in Paris. On June 9, 1749, he wrote to the Cardinal Duke of York. He explained that, while he was in the Tower, the Court of France had sent him ‘unlimited credit’ as a Highland chief. He understood that he was intended to supply the wants of the poor prisoners, ‘Several of whom, had it not been our timely assistance had starved.’ Sir Hector tells the same tale. From Sir James Graeme, Glengarry learned that the Duke of York had procured for him this assistance. But now the French War Office demanded repayment of the advance, and detained four years of his pay in the French service. He ‘can’t receive his ordinary supply from home, his father being in prison, and his lands entirely destroyed.’ To James’s agent, Lismore, he tells the same story, and adds, ‘I shall be obliged to leave this country, if not relieved.’ Later, in 1749, we learn from Leslie that he accompanied Glengarry to London, where Glengarry ‘did not intend to appear publicly,’ but ‘to have the advice of some counsellors about an act of the Privy Council against his returning to Great Britain.’ At this time Leslie pledged a gold repeater, the property of Mrs. Murray, wife of that other traitor, Murray of Broughton. ‘Glengarry, after selling his sword and shoe-buckles to my certain knowledge was reduced to such straits, that I pledged the repeater for a small sum to relieve him, and wrote to Mr. Murray that I had done so.’ He pledged it to Clanranald. Mrs. Murray was angry, for (contrary to the usual story that she fled after the Prince to France) she was living with her husband at this time.

Here then, in July or August 1749, is Young Glengarry in extreme distress at

London. But Æneas Macdonald, writing to Edgar from Boulogne on October 12, 1751, says, ‘I lent Young Glengarry 50*l*. when he was home in 1744, and I saw him in London just at the time I got out of gaol in 1749, and though in all appearance *he had plenty of cash*, yet’ he never dreamed of paying Æneas his 50*l*! ‘Nothing could have lost him but falling too soon into the hands of bad counsellors.’

I regret to say that the pious Æneas Macdonald was nearly as bad a traitor as any of these few evil Highland gentlemen. His examination in London was held on September 16, 1746. Herein he regaled his examiners with anecdotes of a tavern keeper at Gravelines ‘who threatened to beat the Pretender’s son’; and of how he himself made Lord Sempil drunk, to worm his schemes out of him. It is only fair to add that, beyond tattle of this kind, next to nothing was got out of Æneas, who, in 1751, demands a Jacobite peerage for his family, that of Kinloch Moidart.

So much, at present, for Æneas. If we listen to Leslie, Young Glengarry was starving in July or August 1749; if we believe Æneas, he had ‘plenty of cash’ in December of the same year. Whence came this change from poverty to affluence? We need not assume it to be certain that Glengarry’s gold came out of English secret service money. His father had been released from prison in October 1749, and may have had resources. We have already seen, too, that Young Glengarry was accused of getting, in the winter of 1749, his share of the buried hoard of Loch Arkaig. Lord Elcho, in Paris, puts the money taken by Young Glengarry and Lochgarry (an honest man) at 1,200 louis d’or. We have heard the laments of ‘Thomas Newton’ (Kennedy), who himself is accused of peculation by Æneas Macdonald, and of losing 800*l*. of the Prince’s money at Newmarket. We do not know for certain, then, that Young Glengarry vended his honour when in London in autumn 1749. That he made overtures to England, whether they were accepted or not, will soon be made to seem highly probable. We return to his own letters. In June 1749 he had written, as we saw, from Paris, also to Lismore, and to the Cardinal Duke of York. On September 23, 1749, he again wrote to Lismore from Boulogne. He says he has been in London (as we know from Leslie), where his friends wished him to ‘conform’ to the Hanoverian interest. This he disdains. He has sent a vassal to the North, and finds that the clans are ready to rise. If not relieved from his debt to the French War Office he must return to England.

He did return in the winter of 1749, and he accompanied his cousin, Lochgarry (a truly loyal man), to Scotland, where he helped himself to some of the hoard of gold. On January 16, 1750, he writes to Edgar from Boulogne, reports his Scotch journey, and adds that he is now sent by the clans to lay their sentiments before James, in Rome. He then declares that Archibald Cameron has been damping all hearts in the Highlands. ‘I have prevented the bad consequences that might ensue from such notions; but one thing I could not prevent was his taking 6,000 louis d’ors of the money left in the country by his Royal Highness, which he did without any opposition, as he was privy to where the money was laid, only Cluny Macpherson obliged him to give a receipt for it. . . . I am credibly informed he designs to lay this money in the hands of a merchant in Dunkirk, and enter partners with him. . . .’ He hopes that James will detain Archibald Cameron in Rome, till his own arrival. He protests that it is ‘very disagreeable to him’ to give this information.

As we have already seen, ‘Newton,’ since 1748, had been in England, trying to procure the money from Cluny: we have seen that Archibald Cameron, Young Glengarry, and others, had obtained a large share of the gold in the winter of 1749. Charges of dishonesty were made on all sides, and we have already narrated how Archibald Cameron, Sir Hector Maclean, Lochgarry, and Young Glengarry carried themselves and their disputes to Rome (in the spring of 1750), and how James declined to interfere. The matter, he said, was personal to the Prince. But the following letter of James to Charles deserves attention.

The King to the Prince.

‘March 17, 1750.

‘You will remark that at the end of Archy’s paper, it is mentioned as if a certain person should have made use of my name in S — d, *and have even produced a letter supposed to be mine* to prove that he was acting by commission from me: what there may be in the bottom of all this I know not, but I think it necessary you should know that since your return from S — d I never either employed or authorized the person, or anybody else, to carry any commissions on politick affairs to any of the three kingdoms.’

Now this certain person, accused by ‘Archy’ (Archibald Cameron) of forging a letter from James, with a commission to take part of the hidden hoard, is Young Glengarry. In his letter of October 12, 1751, Æneas Macdonald mentions a report ‘too audacious to be believed; that Glengarry had counterfeited his Majesty’s signature to gett the money that he gott in Scotland.’ Glengarry ‘was very capable of having it happen to him,’ but *he* accused Archibald Cameron, and the charge still clings to his name. Even now Cameron is not wholly cleared. On November 21, 1753, his uncle, Ludovic Cameron of Torcastle, wrote to the Prince from Paris:

‘My nephew, Dr. Cameron, had the misfortune to take away a round sum of your highness's money, and I was told lately that it was thought I should have shared with him in that base and mean undertaking. I declare, on my honour and conscience, that I knew nothing of the taking of the money, until he told it himself in Rome, where I happened to be at the time, and that I never touched one farthing of it, or ever will.'

Cluny, as well as Cameron, was this gentleman's nephew. The character of Archibald Cameron is so deservedly high, the praises given to him by Horace Walpole are so disinterested, that any imputation on him lacks credibility. One is inclined to believe that there is a misunderstanding, and that what money Cameron took was for the Prince's service. Yet we find no proof of this, and Torcastle's letter is difficult to explain on the hypothesis of Cameron's innocence. Glengarry tried to secure himself by a mysterious interview with the King. On May 23, at Rome, he wrote to Edgar. 'As His Majesty comes into town next week, and that I can't, in your absence, have an audience with such safety, not choising to confide myself on that particular to any but you; I beg you'l be so good as contrive, if His Majesty judges it proper, that I have the honour of meeting him, in the duskish, for a few moments.'

No doubt Glengarry was brought to the secret cellar, whence a dark stair led to James's furtive audience chamber.

We must repeat the question, Was Young Glengarry, while with James in Rome, actually sold to the English Government at this time? We have seen that he was in London in the summer of 1749. On August 2 of that year, the Duke of Cumberland wrote to the Duke of Bedford, who, of all men in England, is said by Jacobite tradition to have most frequently climbed James's cellar stair! Cumberland speaks of 'the goodness of the intelligence' now offered to the Government. 'On my part, I bear it witness, for I never knew it fail me in the least trifle, and have had very material and early notices from it. How far the price may agree with our present saving schemes I don't know, but good intelligence ought not to be lightly thrown away.'

Was Glengarry (starving in August 1749) the source of the intelligence which, in that month, Cumberland had already found useful? The first breath of suspicion against Glengarry, not as a forger or thief (these minor charges were in the air), but as a traitor, is met in an anonymous letter forwarded by John Holker to young Waters. A copy had also been sent to Edgar at Rome. Already, on November 30, 1751, some one, sealing with a stag's head gorged, and a stag under a tree in the shield, had written to Waters, denouncing Glengarry's suspected friend, Leslie the priest, as 'to my private knowledge an arrant rogue.' Leslie has been in London, and is now off to Lorraine. 'He is going to discover if he can have any news of the Prince in a country which, it is strongly suspected, His Royal Highness has crossed or bordered on more than once.' In the later anonymous letter we are told of 'a regular correspondence between John Murray and Samuel Cameron' - a spy of whom we shall hear again. 'What surprises people still more is that Mr. Macdonald of Glengarrie, who says that he is charged with the affaires of his Majesty, is known to be in great intimacy with Murray, and to put Confidence in one Leslie, a priest, well known for a very infamous character, and who, I'm authorised to say, imposed upon one of the first personages in England by forging the Prince's name.'

The anonymous accusers were Blair and Holker, men known to Edgar and Waters, but not listened to by Charles. Glengarry, according to his anonymous accuser of February 1752, was in London nominally 'on the King's affaires.' On July (or, as he spells it, 'Jully') 15, 1751, Young Glengarry wrote from London to James and to Edgar. He says, to James, that the English want a Restoration, but have 'lost all martial spirit.' To Edgar he gave warning that, if measures were not promptly taken, the Loch Arkaig hoard would be embezzled to the last six-pence. 'I must drop the politicall,' he says; he will no longer negotiate for James, but 'my sword will be always drawn amongst the first.'

The letter to James is printed by Browne; that to Edgar is not printed. And now appears the value of original documents. In the manuscript Glengarry spells 'who' as 'how': in the printed version the spelling is tacitly corrected. Now Pickle, writing to his English employers, always spells 'who as 'how,' an eccentricity not marked by me in any other writer of the period. This is a valuable trifle of evidence, connecting Pickle with Young Glengarry. In an undated letter to Charles, certainly of 1751, Glengarry announces his approaching marriage with a lady of 'a very Honourable and loyall familie in England,' after which he will pay his share of the Loch Arkaig gold. He ends with pious expressions. When at Rome he had been 'an ardent suitor' to the Cardinal Duke 'for a relick of the precious wood of the Holy Cross, in obtaining which I shall think myself most happy.'

In 1754, two years after the anonymous denunciation, we find a repetition of the charge of treachery against Glengarry. On January 25, 1754, Mrs. Cameron, by that time widow of Archibald, sends to Edgar, in Rome, what she has just told Balhaldie about Young Glengarry. Her letter is most amazing. 'I was telling him what character I heard of Young Glengarry in England,' where she had vainly thrown herself at the feet of George II., praying for her husband's life. 'Particularly Sir Duncan Campbell of Lochnell told me, and others whom he could trust, that in the year 1748, or 1749, I don't remember which, as he, Sir Duncan, was going out of the House of Commons, Mr. Henry Pelham, brother to the Duke of Newcastle, and Secretary of State, called on him, and asked if he knew Glengarry? Sir Duncan answered he knew the old man, but not the young. Pelham replied, it was Young Glengarry he spoke of; for that he came to him offering his most faithful and loyal services to the Government in any shape they thought proper, as he came from feeling the folly of any further concern with the ungrateful family of Stuart, to whom he and his family had been too long attached, to the absolute ruin of themselves and country.'

It is difficult to marvel enough at the folly of Pelham in thus giving away a secret of the most mortal moment. Mrs. Cameron did not hear Lochnell's report till after the mischief was wrought, the great scheme baffled, and her husband traduced, betrayed, and executed. By January 1754, Pickle had done the most of his business, as will appear when we come to study his letters. In these Henry Pelham is always 'my great friend,' with him Pickle communicates till Pelham's death (March 1754), and his letters are marked by the Duke of Newcastle, 'My Brother's Papers.'

All this may be called mere circumstantial evidence. The anonymous denouncer may have been prejudiced. Mrs. Cameron's evidence is not at firsthand. Perhaps other Highland gentlemen spelled 'who' as 'how.' Leslie was not condemned by his ecclesiastical superiors, but sent back to his mission in Scotland. But Pickle, writing as Pickle, describes himself, we shall see, in terms which apply to Young Glengarry, and to Young Glengarry alone. And, in his last letter (1760), Pickle begs that his letters may be addressed 'To Alexander Macdonnell of Glengarry by Fort Augustus.' It has been absurdly alleged that Pickle was James Mohr Macgregor. In 1760, James Mohr had long been dead, and at no time was he addressed as Alexander Macdonnell of Glengarry. Additional evidence of Pickle's identity will occur in his communications with his English employers. He was not likely to adopt the name of Pickle before the publication of Smollett's 'Peregrine Pickle' in 1751, though he may have earlier played his infamous part as spy, traitor, and informer.

*

NOTE.

The Family of Glengarry.

ALASTAIR RUADH MACDONELL, *alias* Pickle, Jeanson, Roderick Random, and so forth, died, as we saw, in 1761. He was succeeded by his nephew Duncan, son of Æneas, accidentally shot. at Falkirk in 1746. Duncan was followed by Alastair, Scott's friend; it was he who gave Maida to Sir Walter. Alastair, the last Glengarry who held the lands of the House, died in

January 1828. Scott devotes a few lines of his journal to the chief (January 21, 1828), who shot a grandson of Flora Macdonald in a duel, and disputed with Clanranald the supremacy of the Macdonalds. Scott says ‘he seems to have lived a century too late, and to exist, in a state of complete law and order, like a Glengarry of old, whose will was law to his Sept. Warm-hearted, generous, friendly, he is beloved by those who knew him . . . To me he is a treasure . . . ‘ He married a daughter of Sir William Forbes, a strong claim on Scott’s affection. He left sons who died without offspring; his daughter Helen married Cunninghame of Balgownie, and is represented by her son, J. Alastair Erskine-Cunninghame, Esq., of Balgownie. If Charles, half brother of Alastair Ruadh (Pickle), who died in America, left no offspring, the House of Glengarry is represented by Æneas Ranald Westrop Macdonnell, Esq., of the Scotus branch of Glengarry. According to a letter written to the Old Chevalier in 1751, by Will Henderson in Moidart, young Scotus had extraordinary adventures after Culloden. The letter follows. I published it first in the *Illustrated London News.*

To the King. From W. Henderson in Moydart.

‘October 5, 1750.

‘Sir, - After making offer to you of my kind compliments, I thought it my indispensable duty to inform you that one Governor Stewart of the Isle of Lemnos on the coast of Ethiopia in ye year 1748 wrot to Scotland a letter for Stewart of Glenbucky concerning Donald McDonell of Scothouse younger, and John Stewart with 20 other prisoners of our countrymen there, to see, if by moyen of ransome they could be relieved. The substance of the Letter, as it came with an Irish Ship this year to Clyde, is as follows:

‘That Donald McDonell of Scothouse, younger, and first cousin german to John McDonell of Glengarry, and with John Stewart of Acharn and other 20 persons mortally wounded in the Battle of Culloden, were by providence preserved, altho without mercy cast aboard of a ship in Cromarty Bay the very night of the Battle, and sailed next morning for Portsmouth, where they were cast again aboard of an Indiaman to be carried, or transported without doom or law to some of the british plantations, but they had the fate to be taken prisoners by a Salle Rover or a Turkish Privatir or Pirat, who, after strangling the captain and crew, keeped the 22 highlanders in their native garb to be admired by the Turks, since they never seed their habit, nor heard their languadgue befor, and as providence would have it, the Turks and Governor Stewart came to see the Rarysho, and being a South country hiland man, that went over on the Darien expedition, and yet extant, being but a very young boy when he went off, seeing his countrymen, spok to them with surprize in their native tong or language, and by comoning but a short time in galick, found in whose's army they served, and how they suffered by the fate of war and disaster, after which he ordered them ashoar, and mitigated their confinement as far as lay'd in his power, but on them landing, by the Turks' gelosie they were deprived of all writting instroments, for fear they sho'd give their friends information of the place they were in, and so it would probably happen them during life: if John Stewart of Acharn had not got his remot cousin Governor Stewart to writt a letter and inclosed one from himself giving particular information of Scothouse, wishing and begging all frinds concerned to procure written orders from the King of France to his Ambassador at Constantinopol for to make all intercession for the relesement of the forsaid Two Gentlemen and other 20 British christians in the King His Majesty's Name, or to recommend their condition to his holyness to see if by ransome they might be relived. And they'll always be gratefull to their Deliverurs, to this pious end. I make chuse of you to inform your Master, who's the capablest person under God to do for them, which will with other infinit titles endear you to your fast friends in Scotland, and especially to your Will Henderson, who lives there 13 years past among the MacDonalds of Clanranald, so I hope you'll make use of what I have wrot, to the end I intend, and God will give the due reward . . . I remain, etc.'

In fact, the younger Scotus was not taken prisoner at Culloden, but remained in the Highlands, and is mentioned by Murray of Broughton, in his account of his expenditure, and of the Loch Arkaig treasure, published by Robert Chambers as an Appendix to his 'History of the Rising of 1745.'

CHAPTER VIII - PICKLE AND THE ELIBANK PLOT

The Elibank plot - George II. to be kidnapped - Murray and Young Glengarry - As Pickle, Glengarry betrays the plot - His revelations - Pickle and Lord Elibank - Pickle meets Charles - Charles has been in Berlin - Glengarry writes to James's secretary - Regrets failure of plot - Speaks of his illness - Laments for Archy Cameron - Hanbury Williams seeks Charles in Silesia - Pickle's 'fit of sickness' - His dealings with the Earl Marischal - Meets the Prince at the masked ball - 'A little piqued' - Marischal criticises the plot to kidnap George II. - 'A night attack' - Other schemes - Charles's poverty - 'The prophet's clothes' - Mr. Carlyle on Frederick the Great - Alleges his innocence of Jacobite intrigues - Contradicts statesmen - Mr. Carlyle in error - Correspondence of Frederick with Earl Marischal - The Earl's account of English plotters - Frederick's advice - Encouragement underhand - Arrest of Archy Cameron - His early history - Plea for clemency - Cameron is hanged - His testimony to Charles's virtues - His forgiveness of his enemies - Samuel Cameron the spy - His fate - Young Edgar on the hidden treasure - The last of the treasure - A *salmo ferox.*

The Stuart Papers, we have said, contain no hints as to the Elibank plot of November 1752, unless Goring's scruples were aroused by it. It was suggested and arranged by Alexander Murray, younger brother of Lord Elibank, whom young Edgar describes as 'having a very light head; he has drunk deep of the Garron' (Garonne?). With a set of officers in the French service, aided by Young Glengarry (who had betrayed the scheme) and 400 Highlanders, Murray was to attack St. James's Palace, and seize the King. If we may believe Young Glengarry (writing to Edgar in Rome), Charles was 'on the coast,' but *not* in London. Pickle's letters to his English employers show that the design was abandoned, much to his chagrin. As Glengarry, he expresses the same regret in a letter to Edgar. We now offer Pickle's letters. He is at Boulogne, November 2, 1752.

Add. B.M. MSS. 32,730.

'Boulogne: November 2, 1752.

My dear Sir, - My friends will be most certainly greatly surprised at my silence, but I have such reasons that I can clear all at meeting. I have been so hurried, what with posting, what with Drinking, and other matters of greater weight than they dream of, that I have not had a moment, as the french says, *Sans temoigne*, till now; thus rendered my writing impracticable. Next Post brings a letter to my friend, and I hope he will not grudge to send Credit to this place, for I am to take a trip for ten days, the Jurny is of importance, it's likewise very expencive, and I must give mony. After this trip, my stay here will be short, for I dare not be explicite on a certain point. I can answer for myself - but how soon my letter is received, I beg remittance. You'll think all this very strange, and confus'd, but I assure you, *there you'l soon hear of a hurly Burly*; but I will see my friend or that can happen. I wish I had the Highland pistoles. If Donald wants mony, pray give him. He is to come with a Shoot of Close to me, when I receive Credit. *I will run at least tow Hundred leagues post*. You'l hear from me when I write to my friend. Aquent them of what I write, and ever believe me

'Yours unalterable
'JEANSON.

'Don't proceed in your jurney, till you have further advice - Direct for me as Johnny directs you.

To the Provost.
Add. 32,730.
'Boulogne: November 4, 1752.

'Dear Sir - By this post I write to my great friend , I hope what I say will prove agreeable, and as I am sure what I write will be communicated to Grand Papa I beg he excuses my not writing. Besides it would be both dangerous and precarious, as I have not a moment to write but after 12 at night, being hurried at all other hours with company. If the credit I demand be sent, I will immediately proceed to Paris - If not, I will return directly. Without a trip to Paris, I can't come at the bottom of matters. I wish I had the Pistoles. I beg you'l give my servt. any little thing he wants, and let him come off by the first ship without faile. Let me hear from you upon recet, and derect for me simply to this place in french or English. I have told friends here that I expect a considerable remittance from Baron Kenady , and that how soon I receve it, I go for a trip to Paris. This admits of no delay. My kind respects to Grand papa and allways believe me, Dr. Sir,

'Your sincere and affte. friend
'ALEXR. JEANSON.

'To Mr. William Blair, at Mr. Brodie's in Lille Street, Near Leister fields -

London.
(marked) 'PICKLE.'

The following letter of November 4 is apparently to Henry Pelham. If Charles was in Berlin, as Pickle says here, about August 1752, the Stuart Papers throw no light on the matter. What we know of Frederick's intrigues with the Jacobites will find its place in the record of the following year, 1753. Pickle here confesses that his knowledge of future intrigues is derived from Frederick's ambassador at Versailles, the Earl Marischal.

The letter to Pelham follows:

'Bologne: November 4, 1752.

'Sir - Tho' I delayd till now aquenting you of my arrival this side of the watter, yet I hope you will not attribute my silence either to neglect or forgetfulness of my friends. I mostly pass my time in company of my old aquentences how have each in theire turn entertaind me handsomely. I am now returning the compliment.

'Notwithstanding my endeavours, I have lost sight of 6 - I took a trip in hopes to meet him, at which time I had a long chatt with 69 , how is in top spirits, and assures me that very soon a scene will be opend that will astonish most of Envoys. Whatever may be in this, I can for certain assure you, that 51 will countenance it, for three months ago 80 was well received there. He has left that part, for he was within these twenty days not the distance of thirty leagues from this town. This depend upon, and was you to credit all he says, it would be justly termd what the french term *Merveille*; whatever is in it they keep all very hush from 8 tho I have some reason to believe that 72 was dispatched to him leatly, for he disappear'd from Paris four days ago. Whatever tune they intend to play of this, Battery 66 is not desir'd to mouve, untill his neibour pulls off the mask. If 0l - 2d countenances 80 , its thro the influence of 51 . I have some reason to believe they dow, for 80 is accompanied by one of that faction. I suspect its 59 but I cant be positive untill I go to Paris, which I think a most necessary chant in this juncture, for if 2 has no finger in the piy, I lost my host of all. When I am a few days at Paris, I take a trip sixty leagues farther South to meet 71 and some other friends, when I will be able to judge of matters by my reception from them and 01-2d , and if the last are concerned I must beg leave not to write upon these topicks, for no precaution can prevent a discovery in this country; should this be the case, and that anything particular cast up, I will make the quickest dispatch to lay before you *in person* all I can learn of these affairs - I only wait here for your orders, and be assur'd whatever they be they will be obeyd with pleasure. I have not had time to write to my worthy old friend , so I beg you'l aquent him that the place he visits ought be looked after with a watchful eye - I doubt not but D. B. has inform'd you of his receving a few lines from me by last post, in which I aquented him that I was necessitated to thro a way some mony, and be at a very considerable expence. I dow not pretend to make a particular demand yet I assure you 200*l*. St. is necessary, and I intirely reffer to yourself to diminish or augment, only I beg you be convinced that no selfish interesting view occasions my making this demand, but only that I would be vext want of cash would disapoint either of us in our expectations, since I dow assure you that I dont look upon anything I tuch upon such journeys as solid, for it does not long stick in my pockets. I will drop this point, being fully perswaded if my correspondence proves anything amusing, such Bagatelle will not be grudged, but if I go forward, I beg credit be sent me either upon this place or Paris, any mony I receve passes for being remitted by the order of Baron Kenady . All this is fully submitted to your better judgement, only I beg you'l be fully perswaded how much I have the honour to remain, Sir,

'Your most obedient and most humble Servt.,

'ALEXR. JEANSON.

P.S. Lord Strathallan left this a few days ago, to meet Lord George some says at the Hague, others at his house near Claves (?).

'(PICKLE.)'

The following undated 'Information' appears to have been written by Pickle on his return from France, early in December. It is amazing to find that, if we can believe a spy, Lord Elibank himself was in the plot. The scene between the political economist and the swaggering Celt, when Pickle probably blustered about the weakness of deferring the attack which he had already betrayed, may be imagined.

Information.

'December 1752.

'The Young Pretender about the latter end of September sent Mr. Murray for Lochgary and Doctor *Archabald Cameron*. They meet him at Menin. He informed them that he hoped he had brought matters to such a bearing, particularly at the King of Prussia's Court, whom he expected in a short time to have a strong alliance with - that he did not desire the Highlanders to rise in Arms untill General Keith was landed in the North of Scotland with some Swedish troops. He likewise assur'd them that some of the greatest weight in England, tho' formerly great opposers to his family, were engaged in this attempt, and that he expected to meet with very little opposition. In consequence of this he gave Lochgary, Doctor Cameron, Blairfety, Robertson of Wood Streat, Skalleter, mony; and sent them to Scotland, so as to meet several highland gentlemen at the Crief Market for Black Cattel. Cameron Cassifairn and Glenevegh were those how were to carry on the Correspondence twixt the Southern Jakobits and Clunie Mackpherson. Lochgary was after the general meeting at Menin with the Young Pretender, for two nights at *Gent* in Flanders. I was at Boulogne when Sir James Harrinton gave me directions to go to Gent, but to my great surprize as I lighted of horseback at Furnes was tipt upon the shoulder by one Morison how desir'd me to stop for a little at the Inn. I was not long there when the Young Pretender enter'd my room. The discourse chiefly turn'd upon the Scheme in England, when he repeated the same assurances as to Lochgary, but in stronger terms, and with the adition that the Swedes were to embark at Gattenburgh , and that Mr. Murray was sent with commissions for me, and full instructions how I was to act in Scotland. The Young Chevalier was so positive of his schemes succeeding, that he told me he expected to be in London very soon himself, and that he was determin'd to give the present Government no quiet until he succeeded or dyed in the attempt. I came over here by his express orders; I waited of Lord Elibank who, after the strong assurances of the Young Pretender, surprised me to the greatest degree, by telling me that all was put off for some time, and that his Brother had repassd the seas in order to aquent the Young Pretender of it, and from him he was to go streight for Paris to Lord Marishal. Its not above nine days since I left the Young Pretender at Furnes. When he was at Menin a French gentleman attended him. Goren has been within these two months twice in England, and Mr. Murray three times since he first went over. Its not above five days since Mr. Murray left London. Probably the landing for England was to be from France, as there is 12,000 troops in Flanders more than the ordinary compliment. This the Comon French takes notice off. But I can say nothing of this with certainty. The Young Chevalier has more than once seen the King of Prussia, but none other of his Court, that I ever could learn, but General Keith.

'Sir John Douglas, Mr. Charteris, and Heparn of Keith, are in the secret. The Young Chevalier has been in close correspondence with England for a year and a halph past. Mr. Carte the Historian has carried frequent messages. They *never commit anything to writing*. Elderman Hethcot is a principall Manager. The very words the Young Pretender told me was that all this schemne was laid and transacted by Whiggers, that no Roman Catholick was concerned, and oblidged me to give my word and honour that I would write nothing concerning him or his plan to Rome. After what I said last night this is all that occurs to me for the present. I will lose no time in my transactions, and I will take care they will allways be conforme to your directions, and as I have throwen myself entirely upon you, I am determined to run all hazards upon this occasion, which I hope will entittle me to your favour and his Majestys protection. Dec. 1752.'

Pickle, of course, broke his 'word and honour' about not writing to Rome. In April 1753, to anticipate a little, he indited the following epistle to Edgar. He can have had no motive, except that of alarming James by the knowledge that his son had been on the eve of a secret and perilous enterprise, in which he was still engaged. Glengarry here confirms the evidence against himself by allusions to his dangerous illness in the spring of 1753. To this he often refers when he corresponds, as Pickle, with his English employers.

MackDonell to Edgar.

'Arras: April 5, 1753.

'Sir, I frequently Intended since my coming to this Country to renew our former corespondence. But as I had nothing to say worth your notice, that I could with prudence comitt to writing, I choise rather to be silent than to trouble you with my Letters: yet I cant perswad myself to leave this Country without returning you many thanks for your former friendship and good offices, and at same time assuring you of the great Value and Estime I allways had, and still have for you.

'I would gladly comunicate to his Majesty the leate Schemes, and those still persuid, upon the same fondation. But as I am hopfull that his Majesty is fully Informed of all that is past, and what is now a Transacting, I will not trouble his Majesty with a repetition of facts, which I am hopfull he has been Informed off from the fountaine head. All I will say is that for my owne parte I will allways make very great difference t'wixt English promasis and Action, and am more fully confirmed in this opinion *since the tenth of Nov. last*, when the Day was fixt; But when matters come to the puish, some frivolous excuses retarded this great and Glorious blow; Thank God the Prince did not venture himself then at London, tho he was upon the Coast ready at a Call to put himself at their head. I wish he may not be brought to venture sow far, upon the stress laid upon a suden blow, to be done by the English; we will see if the Month of May or June will produce something more effective than Novr., and I am sorry to aquent you that the sow great stress laid upon those projects is lick to prove fatal to some, for Lochgary, and Doctor Archibald Cameron, were sent to the Highlands to prepair the Clans to be in readiness: thire beeing sent was much against my opinion, as I allways ensisted, and will allways persist, that no stirr should be done there untill the English would be so farr engaged that they could not draw back. I hope his Majesty will aprove of my Conduct in this. Doctor Cameron was taken by a party of soldiers in Boruder , and is now actually secured in the Castel of Edinr. Loch still remains but what his fate will be is very precarious. The concert in Novr. was that I was to remain in London, as I had above four hundred Brave Highlanders ready at my call, and after matters had broke out there to sett off directly for Scotland as no raising would be made amongst the Clans without my presence. Now I beg in laying this before the King, you'l at same time assure his Majesty of my constant resolution to venture my owne person, let the consequence be what it will and dow everything that can convince his Majesty of my Dutifull attachmt to his sacred person and Royal Cause, for which I am ready to Venture my all, and nothing but the hand I had in those leate and present Schemes and the frequent jants I was oblidged to take in Consequence, Has hindered me from beeing settled in a very advantagious and honorable way, being affraid that Matrimony might Incline me to a less active life than my Prince's affairs now requires. I belive in a few days that I will take a private start to London, tho I am still so weake after my leate Illness at Paris that I am scarse yet able to undergo much fatigue. I have left directions with Mr. Gordon, principal of the Scots Colledge, to forward any letters for me to a friend at Boulogne, *how* has a secure way of forwarding by trading ships any Letters for me.

'I will be very glad to hear from you particularly as I Expect to return in a few weeks back to France. I have one favour to ask of you, and I hope it wont displeace his Majesty; Its, that whatever I write upon this topick, be neither shown or comunicated to any other person, as there are reports that people with you comumicate their Intelligence too freely to the Court of france, which von know may go farther, and prove of dangerous consequence. I hope the freedom with which I express myself will be wholly attributed to the warmth of my zeall for the good of the cause, and it beg you'l forgive the hurry I am in writing this, and I rely upon your friendship to Excuse the same towards his Majesty in case you think Proper to lay this hurried scrawle before him, for what with the fatigue of posting and Other Affairs, I am so Tumbled. I wish with all my heart you may conceve the sincer true and reale sentiments which Induced me to write so freely, and as the Gentilman with whom I send this to Paris is just ready to set off, I beg you'll allow me to conclude, and I hope you'll not faile to lay me at his Majesty's and Royal Emmency's feet and at same time to Believe me Sir

'Your most obedient and most humble Servt

'MACKDONELL.'

Edgar probably did not reply directly. John Gordon, of the Scots College in Paris, writes to Edgar:

‘Paris: 19th August.

‘I had the favour of yours of the 17th. July in Course. I found an opportunity lately to acquaint Glengarie of what you wrot me on his account some time ago in answer to his from Arras; he desires me to thank you for what you say obliging to him, and begs youll accept of his best compliments.’

It will be remarked that Pickle, who had informed the English Government of Archy Cameron’s and Lochgarry’s mission to Scotland in September 1752, in his letter to Edgar laments Archy’s capture! Hypocrisy was never carried so far. To Cameron and his fate we return later.

The Stuart Papers contain nothing of interest about Charles for some time after Mademoiselle Luci’s death and the postponement of the Elibank plot. The news of the Prince’s conversion was spread by himself, in October 1752. Sir James Harrison was charged to inform Lord Denbigh, who thought the change ‘the best and happiest thing.’ Lady Denbigh, ‘a most zealous smart woman,’ saw Mr. Hay at Sens, and received from him some of the Prince’s hair, wherewith ‘she would regale three or four of her acquaintances, and each of them set in heart-form, encircled with diamonds.’ Cardinal Tencin also heard of the conversion. In January 1753, Charles was in Paris. His creditors were clamorous, and he deplores his ‘sad situation.’ On January 24 he was more in funds, thanks to a remittance from Rome. Hanbury Williams, meanwhile, was diligently hunting for him in Silesia! On January 17 and February 11, 1753, Williams wrote long letters from Dresden. He had sent an honest fellow of a spy into Silesia, where the spy got on the tracks of a tall, thin, fair gentleman, a little deaf, travelling with a single servant, who took coffee with him. The master spoke no German, the servant had a little German, and the pair were well provided with gold. As Charles was a little deaf, this enigmatic pair must be the Prince and Goring. Hanbury Williams was energetic, but not well informed. By February 18, 1753, the excellent Williams learned from Count Brühl that Charles was *dead*, ‘in one of the seaports of France.’ Meanwhile the English Government knew, though they did not tell Williams, all that they needed to know, through their friend Pickle. Williams they kept in the dark.

In March 1753, Charles was trafficking with Hussey, lieutenant-colonel of a regiment stationed in Luxembourg. He conceived a plan for sending Goring to Spain, and he put some boxes of his, long kept by ‘La Grandemain,’ into the hands of Waters. He wrote a mutilated letter to Alexander Murray in Flanders, and there our information, as far as the Stuart Papers go, fails us. But Pickle steps in with the following letter. He describes the illness about which, as we saw, he wrote to Edgar in April of this year. Here follows his letter:

Add. 32,843.

‘17th March, 1753.

Dr. Sir, - I receved some time ago your kind favour, and no doubt you’ll be greatly surprised at my long silence which nothing could have occasiond but a violent fitt of sickness, which began with a stich that seasd me as I was coming from the Town of Sence, in fine it threw me into a violent fever that confin’d me to my bed twenty days. I was let blood ten times, which has so reduc’d me, that I am but in a very weake situation still. This with my long stay here, has quite exausted my finances, and oblidg’d me to contract 300 Livres, tow of which I am bound to pay in the month of Aprile, and if I am not suplay’d, I am for ever undon. I beg you’l represent this to Grandpapa, upon whose friendship, I allways relay. The inclosed is for him, and I hope to see him soon in person, tho. I am to make a little tour which will still augment my Debts and think myself very lucky to find credit. Let me heare from you after you see Grandpapa, for there is no time to be lost, but pray don’t sign that fellow’s name you made use of to my Correspondent. It occasions— ‘s speculations, you know he is sharp. I don’t comprehend what you would be at in your last. What regards my cusins I don’t comprehend. I will soon remouve my dr. mistres jelousies, if she has any . . . The old woman you mention is a great tatteler, but knows nothing solid but what regards Court amours and little intrigues. I hope to overtake her in your City, as I believe she will not incline to come so soon over as she leatly recev’d the news of her son’s being kill’d in a dowell by one of the petit masters of this Capitall. The Deer hunting will be dangerous without a good set of hounds which will prove expencive and very trubelsome. If I don’t hear upon recet I will conclude I am entirely neglected and dropt. I beg you’l offer my dutiful respects to Grandpapa, and all friends, and still believe me, Dear Sir,

‘Your sincere and affte. friend

‘ALEXR. PICKLE.

‘To Mr. William Blair, at Mr. Brodie’s in Lille Street, near Leister fields - London.’

This illness of Pickle’s was troublesome: it is to be feared the poor gentleman never quite recovered his health. As usual, he is in straits for money. England was already ungrateful. Here follows another despatch

Add. 32,843.

‘Paris: March 15, 1753.

Dr. Sir, - I had a long letter leatly from Mr. Cromwell contining in chief tow Artickles by way of charge; the first complaining of my long silence - t’other for not keeping a due and regular correspondence . . .What I beg you assure my mistress of, is, that had there been any new mode worth her notice invented since I gave her one exact patron of the last , I would not have neglected to have sent her due patrons. Please aquent my mistress that of leate they have comenced some new fashions in the head dresses, very little varying from the former one, yet they estime it is a masterpiece in its kind, for my part, I have but a slight idea of it, though they bost the people of the first rank of our country will use it. I would have wrot of this sooner, but my illness occasiond my not knowing anything of the matter till very leatly, and I was so very ill, that it was impossible for me to write, as you may see by Mr. Cromwell’s letter. You may remember, dr. Papa, that I was always very desirous that my love intrigues should be secret from all mortalls but those agreed upon, and that my letters might be perus’d by non, but by my mistress and you, now if you have people how were, and a few that still are, at the helme, that don’t act honourably, I can’t be possitive, neither will I mention them at this distance, beeing myself a little credulous, as I have but one under architect’s word for it. Were I to credit some of the managers, some of the fundation stones are pleacd upon a very sandy ground, but our little thin friend, the Embassador , gives it little or no credit, it may be but a puff in hopes to create suspicion, and make one of each other mistrustfull. In consequence of all this the managers have derected our Northern friends to keep their posts. I can answer for such as regards me, and I beg least the Company make banckrout that you proteck my parte of them. I am now pretty well recover’d of my leate illness, tho’ I have been very much afraid of a relapse, having catch’d a violent cold at the Masquerad ball of Lundi Gras, beeing over perswaded to accompany our worthy friend Mr. Murray to that diversion, where I was greatly astonish’d to find Mr. *Strange* whom I imagin’d to be all this time in Germanie, for I took it for granted that he went for Berlin when I meet him at Furnes. I know not how long his stay was at Paris, for I was *a little pickt that he did not inquire after me during my illness*. He left this early Tuesday morning, and our friend Mr. Murray gave him the convoie for some days, and yesterday he returnd to town. I am to dine with him this day, and you may be sure, we will not forget to drink a bumper to our British friends and your health and prosperity in particular.

‘I leave this in a cuple of days, and I must, tho, with reluctance, aquent you, my dear Papa, that my long stay here, together with my illness, has runn me quite aground, which forct me to borow very near 150*l*. St. and Mr. Woulf, Banquier, has my note payable the 5th of Aprile to his correspondent at Boulogne. As for the remaining 50, its not so pressing, as I had it from my Collegian friends , now if I'm not enabled to pay this triffle, my credit, which was always good in this country, will be blown . . . I beg you ly me at my charming Mistress' feet , and assure her how ardent my desires are to preserve her love and affections, which I hope very soon to assure her personally.

'I ever remain, my dear Papa

'Your most obedient, and most oblidged humble servt

'ALEXR. JACKSON.'

'P.S. Tho' I am still very weake, I will endeavour to leave this upon the 18th. Instant, and I stear my course for Imperiall Flanders.'

The following communication is undated, but, from the reference to Pickle's illness, it must be of March or April 1753. In April, Glengarry informed Edgar, as we saw, that he was going to England from Arras. He apparently went over, and handed in this intelligence. If he speaks truth, the Earl Marischal criticised the Elibank plot as a candid friend. There exists evidence of a spy on a spy, who tracked Glengarry to the Earl Marischal's house. 'Swem-rs M. P.' is a Mr. Swymmer.

Add. 33,050.

'Pickle remaind about ten days at Boulogne, where he was frequently in company with Sir J. Harrington who at that instant knew as little as Pickle of the P. Destination. Sir J. H-a-r-t-n was much cast down at the grand affair's being retarded. He wrote to Ld. S-t-ln aquenting him therewith, for Ld. S-t-ln and Young Ga had been sent some time before to sound Ld. George Murray, not knowing how he stood affected, as he had once greatly disoblidgd him. S. J. H-a-r-t-n aquenting them of the disappointment in England, stopt further proceedings, so they return'd back to Boulogne. Pickle went streight from Boulogne to Paris, where he was very intimate with Ld. Marischal; few days past but Pickle was at his lodgings or M-r-l-at Pickle's. Ld. M-r-l-was first aquented with the intended insurrection in England by Goring who waited of him by his master's particular order, a person of distinction spoke very seriously to M-r-l-upon this head. Pickle does not know how this was, M-r-l-declining to mention names, yet he estem'd this person as a man of weight, and good judgement, this person was publick at Paris, but waited of M-r-l at night - Carte has been several times over, he is trusted, and it is by his means chiefly, that the

P. turn’d off Kelly, as Mr. Carte inform’d the P. that persons of note would enter upon no scheme with him whilst that fellow shar’d his confidence. Sir Jo: A-s-ly was over, and Pickle believes he met the P. at Paris. The pretence of Mr. Swem-rs, Memr. of Pt. traveling abroad with his lady, was to settle the English Scheme. Ld. M-r-l has not seen the P. but twice, before Pickle went over. He never saw him at Berlin, *tho’ he believed that he had taken several trips to that Court*. He saw Goring twice at Berlin. M-r-l knew nothing of a foreign Invation, and did not believe there could be any in time of peace. Pickle one day asking his opinion of their affairs, he answer’d that he could say nothing upon the head with certainty, he kept his mind to himself, that when they ask’d his Opinion, he told them he *could not judge so well as they, since he was quite a stranger to London, and to the different posts, and manner of placing their Guards, but that if they executed according to their plan laid before him, he doubted not but they might succeed*, but Pickle making some objections as to the veracity of this plan, told him that he could not positively contradick them, and tell the P. that they impost upon him, for, says he, “what Opinion, Mr. Pickle, can I entertain of people that propos’d that I should abandon my Embassy, and embark headlong with them? what can I answer, when they assure me that B-d-rl, S-dh G-me-ele with others of that party have agreed when once matters break out, to declare themselves? But you need not, Mr. Pickle, be apprehensive, you may safely waite the event, as you are not desir’d to make any appearance untill London and other parts of England pulls off the mask, or untill there is a foreign landing.” This, and matters much of the same nature were the ordinary topicks of Mrl and Pickle’s conversation.

‘Pickle was not above six weeks in France, when he was determin’d to return, but was prevented by M-r-y aquenting him that he would soon see the P. personally. Of this he at once aquented Mr. Cromwell and that it was the only thing that detain’d him, but as Pickle in the interim went to Sens, in his return to Paris, *he was seased with a fluxion de Poitrine* which had very near tript up his hiells. Pickle, when he recover’d, went to the Opera Ball, here to his great surprise he met the P. who received him very kindly, and he still insisted upon foreign assistance, and the great assurances he had from England, and that he expected matters would go well in a very little time, he often mentioned foreign assistance by the Court of Berlin’s influence, from Swedland. His conversation with Pickle was in general terms. Pickle told him that he intended returning to Britain. “Well then,” says he, “I hope soon to send you an agreeable message, as you’l be amongest the very first aquented when matters coms to a Crisis: for my parte I hope to have one bold puish for all;” then after assurances of his friendship, he went off, and Pickle has not seen him since; this was upon Lundie

Gras. He left Paris that very morning, and Capt. Murray gave him the Convoy, and was absent four days. A few days after this, Pickle met, by meare accident, Goring going to Ld. Mrl. Gor was then upon his way to England where he did not tarry above six days. D.K-ns went leatly over, and brought mony for the P. Pickle believes upwards of 4,000*l*. St. There is few weeks but Sir J. H-a-r-t-n leeves messages by means of the Smugglers. *Eldermen Blastus Heth B-n J-r-n-d* Black, with many others, are mannagers in the City. *If anything is to be attempted, its to be executed by a set of resolute daring young fellows, laid on by a set of young Gentlemen, conducted by a few regular Officers*. If ever any attempt is made, it’s to be a Night onset, and if they succeed in ‘scaping the Guards then all will declare. The P. has been tampering with the Scots Dutch, he saw some of them. Pickle cant condescent who they were, his Agents spoke to many of them. No Officers are fitter for such attempts, as they are both brave and experienced. The P. depends upon having many friends in the Army, there being not a few added to their number by the conduct towards many gallant gentlemen and men of property, but whatever steps they have been taking, to sound or gaine over either Officers of the Land or Sea Service, they still keep a dead secret. As for B-r , Ld. W-r-d Sir Jo-s-ps with other of the Cohelric and Pickle is very ready, as he is not accustom’d to such Surnames and titles, to forget them, but assemblys of that nature are pretty publick, members of such meetings can’t escape the vigilancy of the Ministry: Murray, when he came over in Novr. last, brought over several manefestos to England, with a very ample comission for — to raise the Clans and command in Chief untill an Expressd Generall Officer landed, and even then the Clans were to have a particular Commander (a Highlander) this they insisted upon, knowing what tools they have been in times past to Low Country Commanders, no more experienced than the most ordinary amongest themselves. — was pitched upon, as the P. believed he would readily comploy with any reasonable plan that would be concerted by the Commander in Chief, what Pickle asserts as to this, will probably be known by others. *Neith. Drum. Heb*, were pitched upon to try the pulse of D. H. and other nobelmen and gentlemen of the South. Aber-ny with some of the excepted Skulkers were to manadge and concert matters with the North Country Lowlanders, and Menzy of Cul-d-re was to be agent betwixt the Lowlands and bordering Highlands. Several were sent to Scotland by the P. and mony given them in order to prepaire the people.

‘ — can fully answer for the Highlands, for nothing can be transacted there without his knowledge, as his Clan must begin the play, or they can come to no head there. What Pickle knows of English schemes he can’t be so positive, as he was not designed to be an actor upon that Stage, yet in time he may perhaps be more initiated in those misterys, as they now believe that Pickle could have a number of Highlanders even in London to follow him, but whatever may happen, you may always rely upon Pickle's attachment.'

To be 'pick't' (piqued) by the Prince's neglect to inquire about Pickle's precious health is very characteristic of Glengarry. His vanity and pride are alluded to by men of all parties.

Pickle's remarks on Charles's receipt of 4,000*l*. must be erroneous. His Royal Highness was in the very lowest water, and could not afford a new suit of clothes for his servant Daniel, 'the profet,' as he once calls him. This we learn from the following letter to Avignon:

To Sheridan and Stafford. From the Prince.

'April 10, 1753.

'This is to let you know that as I am extremely necessitous for money, it engages me out of economi to send for Daniell's Close which you are to Pack up in his own trunc, and to send it adresed to Mr. Woulfe to Paris, but let there be in ye trunc none of Daniel's Papers or anything else except his Close.'

Meanwhile, on March 20, 1753, Archy Cameron had been arrested. His adventure and his death, with the rumours which flew about in society, bring us into collision with a great authority, that of Mr. Carlyle.

'If you, who have never been in rich Cyrene, know it better than I, who *have*, I much admire your cleverness,' said the Delphian Oracle to an inquiring colonist. Mr. Carlyle had never lived in the Courts of Europe about 1753; none the less, he fancied he knew more of them, and of their secrets, than did their actual inhabitants, kings, courtiers, and diplomatists. We saw that, in September 1752, according to Pickle, Prince Charles sent Archibald Cameron and Lochgarry to Scotland, with a mission to his representative, Cluny Macpherson, and the clans. The English Government, knowing this and a great deal more through Pickle, hanged Cameron, in June 1753, on no new charge, but on the old crime of being out in the Forty-five. Sir Walter Scott was well aware of the circumstances. We have already quoted his remark. 'The ministers thought it prudent to leave Dr. Cameron's new schemes in concealment, lest by divulging them they had indicated the channel of communication which, it is well known, they possessed to all the plots of Charles Edward.'

Mr. Carlyle, however, knew better. After giving a lucid account of the differences which, in 1752-1753, menaced the peaceful relations between England and Prussia; after charging heavily in favour of his hero Frederick, Mr.

Carlyle refers to Archibald Cameron. Cameron, he says, was ‘a very mild species of Jacobite rebel. . . . I believe he had some vague Jacobite errands withal, never would have harmed anybody in the rebel way, and might with all safety have been let live. . . . ‘ But ‘His Grace the Duke of Newcastle and the English had got the strangest notion into their head; . . . what is certain, though now well nigh inconceivable, it was then, in the upper classes and political circles, universally believed that this Dr. Cameron was properly an emissary of the King of Prussia, that Cameron’s errand here was to rally the Jacobite embers into a flame, . . . ‘ and that Frederick would send 15,000 men to aid the clans. These ideas of the political circles Mr. Carlyle thinks ‘about as likely as that the Cham of Tartary had interfered in the Bangorian Controversy.’ Now, Horace Walpole says ‘intelligence had been received some time before of Cameron’s intended journey to Britain, with a commission from Prussia to offer arms to the disaffected Highlanders . . . . That Prussia, who opened her inhospitable doors to every British rebel, should have tampered in such a business, was by no means improbable. . . . Two sloops were stationed to watch, yet Cameron landed.’ Writing to Mann (April 27, 1753), Horace Walpole remarks: ‘What you say you have heard of strange conspiracies fomented by *our nephew* is not entirely groundless.’ He adds that Cameron has been taken while ‘feeling the ground.’

Information as to Frederick’s ‘tampering’ with Jacobitism came to the English Government not only through Pickle, but through Count Kaunitz, the Austrian minister. On December 30, 1753, Mr. Keith wrote to the Duke of Newcastle from the Imperial Court. He had thanked Count Kaunitz for his intelligence, and had expressed the wish of George II. for news as to ‘the place of the Young Pretender’s abode.’ He commented on Frederick’s ‘ill faith and ambition,’ which ‘could not fail to set the English nation against his interest, by showing the dangerous effects of any increase of force, or power, in a Prince capable of such horrid designs.’

As between Mr. Carlyle in 1853, and the diplomatists of Europe in 1753, the game is unequal. The upper classes and political circles knew more of their own business than the sage of Ecclefechan. Frederick, as Walpole said, *was* ‘tampering’ with the Jacobites. He as good as announced his intention of doing so when he sent the Earl Marischal to Paris, where, however, the Earl could *not* wear James’s Green Ribbon of the Thistle! But, to Frederick, the Jacobites were mere cards in his game. If England would not meet his views on a vexed question of Prussian merchant ships seized by British privateers, then he saw that a hand full of Jacobite trumps might be useful. The Earl Marischal had suggested this plan. The Earl wrote from Paris, February 10, 1753: ‘The King of England shows his ill-will in his pretensions on East Frisia, in the affairs of the Empire, and in revoking the guarantee of Silesia. Your Majesty, therefore, may be pleased to know the strength of the party hostile to him at home, in which, and in the person of Prince Edouard you may find him plenty to do, if he pushes you too far.' The Earl then suggests sending a rich English gentleman to Frederick; this was Mr. James Dawkins, of the Over Norton family, the explorer of Palmyra. Pickle mentions him as 'D-k-ns.'

Frederick did not expect a rupture with England, but condescended to see the Earl's friend, Mr. Dawkins. On May 7 the Earl announces his friend's readiness to go to Berlin, and says that there is a project maturing in England. The leaders are Dawkins, Dr. King of Oxford, '*homme d'esprit, vif, agissant*,' and the Earl of Westmoreland, '*homme sage, prudent, d'une bonne tête*, *bon citoyen*, *respectable*, *et respecté*.' They will communicate with Frederick through the Earl Marischal, if at all. 'The Prince knows less of the affair than Dawkins does. The Prince's position, coupled with an intrepidity which never lets him doubt where he desires, causes others to form projects for him, which he is always ready to execute. I have no direct communication with him, not wishing to know his place of concealment: we correspond through others.'

Frederick (May 29, 1753) thinks the plot still crude, and advises the Jacobites to tamper with the British army and navy. 'It will be for my interest to encourage them in their design underhand, and without being observed. You will agree with me that the state of European affairs does not permit me to declare myself openly. If the English throne were vacant, a well conceived scheme might succeed under a Regency.'

Such is the attitude of Frederick. He receives a Jacobite envoy; he listens to tales of conspiracies against his uncle; he offers suggestions; he will encourage treason *sous main*. In fact, Frederick behaves with his usual cold, curious, unscrupulous skill.

Frederick's letters have brought us to May 1753, when Archy Cameron, in the Tower of London, lay expecting his doom. While kings, princes, ambassadors, statesmen, and highland chiefs were shuffling, conspiring, peeping, lying and spying, the sole burden of danger fell on Archibald Cameron, Lochgarry, and Cluny. They were in the Elector's domains; their heads were in the lion's mouth. We have heard Young Glengarry accuse both Archy Cameron and Cluny of embezzling the Prince's money in the Loch Arkaig hoard, but Glengarry's accusations can scarcely have been credited by Charles, otherwise he would not have entrusted the Doctor with an important mission. Cluny's own character, except by Kennedy and Young Glengarry, is unimpeached, and Lochgarry bore the stoutest testimony to his honour.

The early biography of Archibald Cameron is interesting. As the youngest son of old Lochiel, he, with his famous brother 'the gentle Lochiel,' set about reforming the predatory habits of their clan, with considerable success. Archibald went to Glasgow University, and read Moral Philosophy 'under the ingenious Dr. Hutchinson.' He studied Medicine in Edinburgh and in France; then settled in Lochaber, and married a lady of the clan of Campbell. He was remarked for the sweetness of his manners, and was so far from being a violent Jacobite that he dissuaded his brother, Lochiel, from going to see the Prince at his first landing in 1745. This account of his conversion, from 'The Gentleman's Magazine' (June 1753), is *naïf*. 'Dr. Cameron was at last brought to engage by the regard due to a benefactor and a brother, who was besides his Chief as head of his Clan, *and threatened to pistol him if he did not comply*.' Wounded at Falkirk (the ball was never extracted), he served at Culloden, escaped to France with Lochiel, was surgeon in his regiment, and later in Lord Ogilivie's, was guardian of Lochiel's son, and, as we know, came and went from Scotland with Lochgarry and Young Glengarry. His last trip to Scotland was undertaken in September 1752. Of his adventures there in concerting a rising we know nothing. On March 20 he was detected near Inversnaid (possibly through a scoundrel of his own name), and was hunted by a detachment of the Inversnaid garrison. They were long baffled by children set as sentinels, who uttered loud cries as the soldiers approached. At last they caught a boy who had hurt his foot, and from him discovered that Cameron was in a house in a wood. Thence he escaped, but was caught among the bushes and carried to Edinburgh by Bland's dragoons. On April 17 he was examined by the Council at the Cockpit in Whitehall. He was condemned on his attainder for being out in 1745, and his wife in vain besieged George II. and the Royal Family with petitions for his life. 'The Scots Magazine' of May 1753 contains a bold and manly plea for clemency. 'In an age in which commiseration and beneficence is so very conspicuous among all ranks, and on every occasion, we have reason to hope that pity resides in that place where it has the highest opportunity of imitating the divine goodness in saving the distressed.'

They 'sought for grace at a graceless face.' Mrs. Cameron was shut up with her husband to prevent her troubling any of the Royal Family or nobility with petitions in his favour. On June 8, Cameron was hanged and disembowelled, but *not* while alive, as was the custom. A London letter of June 9 says 'he suffered like a brave man, a Christian, and a gentleman. . . . His merit is confessed by all parties, and his death can hardly be called untimely, as his behaviour rendered his last day worth an age of common life.'

‘One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name!’

As Scott remarks, ‘When he lost his hazardous game Dr. Cameron only paid the forfeit which he must have calculated upon.’ The Government, knowing that plots against George II. and his family were hatching daily, desired to strike terror by severity. But Prince Charles, when in England and Scotland, more than once pardoned assassins who snapped pistols in his face, till his clemency excited the murmurs of his followers and the censures of the Cameronians. They wrote thus:

‘We reckon it a great vice in Charles, his foolish pity and lenity in sparing these profane blasphemous Red Coats, that Providence put into his hand, when, by putting then to Death, this poor Land might have been eased of the heavy Burden of these Vermin of Hell.’

Cameron was deprived in prison of writing materials, but he managed to secure a piece of pencil, with which on scraps of paper he wrote his last words to his friends. These were obtained by Mrs. Cameron, and are printed in the ‘State Trials.’ Never was higher testimony borne to man than by Cameron to Prince Charles.

‘As I had the honour from the time of the Royal youth’s setting up his Father’s standard, to be almost constantly about his person, till November 1748 . . . I became more and more captivated with his amiable and princely virtues, which are, indeed, in every instance so eminently great as I want words to describe.

‘I can further affirm (and my present situation, and that of my dear Prince too, can leave no room to suspect me of flattery) that as I have been his companion in the lowest degree of adversity that ever prince was reduced to, so I have beheld him too, as it were, on the highest pinnacle of glory, amidst the continual applauses, and I had almost said, adorations, of the most brilliant Court in Europe; yet he was always the same, ever affable and courteous, giving constant proofs of his great humanity, and of his love for his friends and his country. . . . And as to his courage, none that have ever heard of his glorious attempt in 1745 can, I should think, call it in question.’

Cameron adds that if he himself *was* engaged in a new plot, ‘neither the fear of the worst death their malice could invent, nor much less their flattering promises, could have extorted any discovery of it from me.' He forgives all his enemies, murderers, and false accusers, from 'the Elector of Hanover and his bloody son, down to Samuel Cameron, the basest of their spies.'

As to the Prince's religion, Cameron says (June 1753):

'I likewise declare, on the word of a dying man, that the last time I had the honour to see H.R.H. Charles, Prince of Wales, he told me from his own mouth, and bid me assure his friends from him, that he was a member of the Church of England.'

Who was this Samuel Cameron, who stained by treachery the glorious name of Lochiel's own clan? On this point the following letter, written after Archy's death, casts some light. We have already seen that Samuel Cameron was accused of being in communication with Murray of Broughton, as also was Young Glengarry. Young Edgar, in French service, writes thus to his uncle, James's secretary, from Lille:

'Samuel Cameron, whom Archy mentions in the end of his speech, is the same that Blair and Holker wrote to me about when at Rome, the end of 1751. He has been a constant correspondent of John Murray's, and all along suspected of being a spy. Cameron's remarks leave it without a doubt.' Samuel, Edgar adds, is now a half-pay lieutenant in French service, at Dunkirk. Lord Ogilvie and Lochiel mean to secure him, but Lord Lewis Drummond does not think the evidence sufficient. From 'The Scots Magazine' of September 1753, we learn that a court-martial of Scottish officers was held on Samuel at Lille, and, in April 1754, we are told that, after seven months' detention, he was expelled from France, and was condemned to be shot if he returned. His sentence was read to him on board a ship at Calais, and we meet him no more. Dr. Cameron was buried in a vault of the Savoy Chapel, and, in 1846, her present Majesty, with her well-known sympathy for the brave men who died in the cause of her cousins, permitted a descendant of the Doctor to erect a monument to his memory. This was destroyed in a fire on July 7, 1864, but now a window in stained glass commemorates 'a brave man, a Christian, and a gentleman.'

The one stain on Cameron's memory, thrown, as on Cluny's, by Young Glengarry, may be reckoned as effaced. Whatever really occurred as to the Loch Arkaig treasure, it did not destroy the Prince's confidence in the last man who laid down his life for the White Rose.

Before Archy Cameron's death, young Edgar had written thus from Lille to old Edgar in Rome:

'May 2, 1753.

'We have no account of Cameron except by the Gazete. It is thought that all the others who have been apprehended either had of the Prince's money in their hands, or that the Government expects they can make some discoverys about it; I wish with all my heart the Gov. had got it in the beginning, for it has given the greatest stroke to the cause that can be imagined, it has divided the different clans more than ever, and even those of the same clan and family; so that they are ready to destroy and betray one another. Altho I have not altered my opinion about Mr. M — yet as he may on an occasion be of great use to the cause with the Londoners - I thought it not amiss to write him a line to let him know the regard you had for him, for as I know him to be vastly vain and full of himself I thought this might be a spur to his zeale.'

So practically closes the fatal history of the Loch Arkaig treasure. Cluny later bore back to France, it seems, the slender remains of the 40,000 louis d'or. But this accursed gold had set clan against clan, kinsman against kinsman, had stained honourable names, and, probably, had helped to convert Glengarry into Pickle.

The Highlanders yet remember the Prince's treasure. A few years ago, a Highland clergyman tells me, he was trolling with a long line in Loch Arkaig. He hooked something heavy, which came slowly to hand, with no resistance but that of weight. 'You have caught one of the Prince's money bags,' said the boatman, when suddenly the reel shrieked, and a large *salmo ferox* sped out into the loch. My friend landed him; he weighed fifteen pounds, and that is the latest news of Prince Charles's gold!

CHAPTER IX - DE PROFUNDIS

Charles fears for his own safety - Earl Marischal's advice - Letter from Goring - Charles's danger - Charles at Coblentz - His changes of abode - Information from Pickle - Charles as a friar - Pickle sends to England Lochgarry's memorial - Scottish advice to Charles - List of loyal clans - Pickle on Frederick - On English adherents - 'They drink very hard' - Pickle declines to admit arms - Frederick receives Jemmy Dawkins - His threats against England - Albemarle on Dawkins - Dawkins an archæologist - Explores Palmyra - Charles at feud with Miss Walkinshaw - Goring's Illness - A mark to be put on Charles's daughter - Charles's *objets d'art* - Sells his pistols.

The ill news of Archy Cameron's arrest (March 20, 1753) soon reached Charles. On April 15 he wrote to 'Mr. Giffard' (the Earl Marischal) in Paris. He obviously feared that the intelligence which led to Cameron's capture might throw light on his own place of residence. His friends, at least, believed that if he were discovered his life would be in danger. He says:

To Mr. Giffard (*Earl Marischal*), *from P.*

'April 13, 1763.

'I am extremely unnesi by the accident that has hapened to a Certain person. you Now how much I was against people in that Service. My antipathi, iff possible, increses every day, which makes me absolutely determined whatever hapens never to aproch their Country, or have to do with anibody that comes with them. I have been on ye point of leaving this place, - but thought it better to differ it untill I here from you. My entention was to go to Francfor Sur Main and from thence to Bal in Swise, but without ever trespassing in ye F. Dominions, be pleased to send back by M. Dumon yr opinion of what Town in ye Queen of H. D. would be ye best for me to go to. - would not D's Cuntry House be good: perhaps I may get it for six months . . .

'JOHN DOUGLAS.'

On April 29, misled it seems by a misapprehension of Lord Marischal's meaning, Charles had moved to Cologne, and notified the fact to Stouf (Goring). Goring replied:

From Stouf.

‘Paris: May 8, 1753.

‘The message delivered to you by Mr. Cambell has been falsely represented to you, or not rightly understood; the noble person Mr. Cambell mentions to have sent you a positive message to leave Gand and retire to Cologne, denies to have sent you any positive message at all on that account. He was indeed very anxious for your safety, and of opinion that since the taking of Mr. Cameron your person ran an inevitable danger, if you staid where you then were, and gave as his opinion only, that the dominions of the Elector of Cologne and the Palatinate appeared to be the safest, by reason of those princes being in interests opposite to the Court of Hanover, but was very far from saying you would be safe there, or indeed anywhere. How is it possible a man of his sense could think, much less a prince like you, who have so many powerfull enemies, that any place could guard you from them? No sir, he is of opinion that nothing can save your life but by yr taking just measures and prudent precautions to hyde yourself from them.

‘These are the sentiments of the noble person you mention in yours of the 29th. whose name I do not put on paper, he having desired me never to do it till he gave me leave. He told me further that it would be more for your interest he should not know as yet where you were; and bid me advise you to have a care how you walked out of town near the Rhine, for in your taking such walks it would be easy for five or six men to seise your person and put you in a boat, and Carry you to Holland who have territories but one quarter of an hour distant from ye town. . . .’

The Elibank game can be played by two or more, and princes have been kidnapped in our own day. The Earl Marischal thought Charles’s life in danger from the English.

On May 5, young Edgar noted the safe return of Lochgarry from Scotland. Charles went to Coblentz, but was anxious to return to Ghent. In June he tried Frankfort-on-the-Maine: his letters to ‘La Grandemain’ show him in correspondence with M. St. Germain, whether the General or the famous ‘deathless charlatan’ does not appear. In July he took a house in Liège. He asks Dormer for newspapers: ‘I am a sedentary man: ye gazetes is en amusement to me.’ On August 12 he desires an interview ‘with G’ (Glengarry), and here is Pickle’s account of the interview:

‘Before Pickle set out for France he writt to Loch Gairy, now Lieut. Col. of Lord Ogleby’s Regiment in Garrison at Air, to meet him at Calais. Upon Pickle’s arrivall at Calais, he met Loch Gairy there, and it was agreed between them that Loch Gairy should next morning set out to notify Pickle's arrivall to the Young Pretender, and that Pickle should move forward to see Sir James Harrington at *Simer* near *Bulloighn*, and from thence to come to Ternan in about a week to meet Loch Gairy. Soon after Pickle arrived at Ternan, Loch Gairy came to him, and told him the youth would be there next morning, and he came accordingly without any servant, having with him only a French Gentleman, who has serv'd in the Army, but has of late travell'd about with the Young Pretender; Loch Gairy left them at Ternan and set out for Air. Soon after, the *Young Pretender, the French Gentleman, and Pickle set out for Paris*, the Young Pretender being disguis'd with a *Capouch*. The Young Pretender shew'd Pickle Loch Gairy's report of his late Expedition with Dr. Cameron to Scotland, and also the List hereunto annex'd of the numbers of the disaffected Clans that Doctor Cameron and he had engaged in the Highlands, and also an Extract of a memorial or Scheme sent over to the Pretender from some of his friends in England. The Pretender seem'd fond of Loch Gairy's paper; that he had been of late hunted from place to place all over Flanders by a Jew sent out of England to watch him. The Pretender talked very freely with Pickle of affairs, but did not seem to like the Scheme sent him out of England about the Parliament, that it would be very expensive, and that he expected no good from the Parliament; that Loch Gairy was trusted by him with most of his motions, and how to send to him; that he has been a Rambling from one place to another about Flanders, generally from near Brussells towards Sens, and on the Borders of France down towards Air, except some small excursions he made; once he went to Hamburgh. He told Pickle that another rising in Scotland would not do untill a war broke out in the North, in that case he expected great things from Sweden would be done for him, by giving him Men, Arms and Ammunition: when Pickle talk'd to him of the King of Prussia, he said he expected nothing thence, as the King of Prussia is govern'd by his interest or resentment only - That he had sent Mr. Goring to Sweden, where he had found he had many friends - That Goring had also been at Berlin to propose a Match for the Young Pretender, with the King of Prussia's Sister, and that he had since sent for Sir John Graham to Berlin to make the same proposals, that they were both answer'd very civilly, that it was not a proper time, but they had no encouragement to speak further upon the Subject - The Pretender said that he beleiv'd he had many friends in England, but that he had no fighting friends; the best service his friends in England could do him at present was to supply him with money - The night they arriv'd at Paris, the Pretender went to a Bagnio - Pickle thinks it is call'd Gains' Bagno, and from thence to Sir John Graeme's House, as Pickle believes, but where he went, or how long he staid at Paris, he does not know. The Pretender said he should now get quit of the Jew, as he intended going to Lorain; he ask'd Pickle if he would go with him. Pickle says that Sir John Graeme, Sir James Harrington, and Goring, and Loch Gairy are the Pretender's chief Confidents and Agents, and know of his motions from place to place; that Goring is now ill, having been lately cut for a Fistula. Pickle kept himself as private as he could at Paris, went no where but to *Lord Marshall's*, and once to wait upon Madame Pier Cour, Monsr. D'Argenson's Mistress, who offer'd to recommend him to Monsr. D'Argenson if he inclin'd to return to the French Service. Pickle believes Monsr. D'Argenson and Monsr. Paris Mont Martell are the Pretenders chiefest friends at the Court of France; *he says that Mrs. Walkingshaw is now at Paris big with child*, that the Pretender keeps her well, and seems to be very fond of her - He told Pickle that he hath seen the Paper that was in Lord Marshall's hands, No. 2; which Lord Marshall return'd to Sir John Graeme, declaring that he would not meddle whatever his Brother might do, that Lord Marshall would receive no papers from little people. Pickle believes that the paper was given to Lord Marshall by Mr. Swimmer, or a Knight that has lately been abroad, who is now in Parliament - Pickle has been told that the Pension lately given to the Cardinal out of the Abbey of St. Aman, 'twas for the Young Pretender's behoof, and that Mr. O'brien, commonly call'd Lord Lismore, and Mr. Edgar, are the chief people about the Old Pretender at Rome - Pickle says that all the disaffected people that come over from France call upon Sir James Harrington near Bulloign, but the Young Pretender has a Correspondence with England, by means of one Dormer, a Merchant at Antwerp, who Pickle believes is Brother to a Lord Dormer.'

Pickle, of course, forwarded to the English Government a copy of Lochgarry's report and list of clans. These follow.

'Partly extracted from Loch Gairy's Memorial to the Pretender after his return from Scotland, 1749 or 1750.

'It is the greatest consequence to your R.H. not to delay much longer making at attempt in Scotland. Otherwise it will be hardly possible to bring the Clans to any head, it would be no difficult matter at this instant to engage them once more to draw their swords.

'Because, besides their natural attachment to Your R.H. there is, most undoubtedly such a spirit of revenge still subsisting amongst the Clans who suffer'd, and such a general discontent amongst the others who have been scandalously slighted by the Government, that if made a right use of, before it extinguishes, must unavoidably produce great and good effects.

'In the present situation of your R.H. it is evident that the most simple scheme, and that in which the whole plan is seen at once is most proper for your R.H. to take in hand. It is without doubt that London would be the most proper place for the first scene of action, because it is the Fountain and Source of power, riches and influence. But the eye of the Government is so watchfull at the Fountain head that one can't easily comprehend, what they can be able to shew against six thousand of the best Troops in Britain which can be brought together against them upon the first alarm. That England will do nothing, or rather can do nothing without a foreign Force, or an appearance in Scotland, such as was in 45. In either of these cases there is all the reason to believe that England would do wonders. But am afraid its impossible for your R.H. to procure any Foreign assistance in the present situation of Europe, therefore the following Proposals are most humbly submitted to your R.H.

'That your R.H. emply such persons as will be judg'd most proper to negotiate a sum of money at Paris, London and Madrid, which is very practicable to be accomplish'd by known and skilfull persons, the sum may be suppos'd to be 200,000*l.*, to be directly remitted to one centrical place (suppose Paris), this money to be lodg'd in the hands of *Mons.* De Montmartell, who can easily remitt any sum as demanded to any trading town in Europe. Sufficient quantity of Arms, Ammunition, *etc.* to be purchas'd, which can be done in some of the Hans Towns in the North, which can be done without giving any umbrage, supposing them bought for some Plantation, which is, now a common Transaction, especially in these Towns.

'Two stout ships to be purchas'd which is so common a transaction in Trade, more so now than ever, so much that I am told it might even be done at London, the Ships is absolutely necessary to batter down the small Forts on the Western Coast of the Highlands, which your R.H. knows greatly annoy'd us in 45, and prevented several Clans joining with their whole strength. When every thing is ready, your R.H. to pitch upon a competent number of choice Officers, of whom there are plenty, both in France, Holland, Germany and Spain, all Scots, or of Scots extraction, eminent for their loyalty and military capacity. Your R.H. to land where you landed before, or rather in Lochanuie. Your R.H. will have an army by the management and influence of yourself, and by their Concertion already agreed upon with me before you are twenty days landed, of at least six thousand Men, and there is actually but six Batallions of Foot, and two Regiments of Dragoons in Scotland, and your R.H. can have 2,000 good men ere you are eight and forty hours landed.

'If the enemy take the field they will make but a feint resistance against such a resolute determined set of men. Your R.H. has all advantages over the regular Troops in Scotland, you can always attack them and force them to Battle without ever being forct but when its judg’d advantageous - this is certain you can move your Army across the Country in three or four days, which will take the regular Troops as many weeks. You can make them starve and rot with cold and fluxes, and make them dwindle away to nothing if they were triple your Number, and without striking a stroak, if we take the advantage the Countrey and Climate affords - the renown’d King Robert Bruce, Sir William Wallace, and the late Marquis of Montrose, of which your R.H. is a perfect model, made always use of this advantage with infallible success against their Enemys.

‘It is a truth not disputed by any who knows the nature of the affair, that if your R.H. had oblig’d the regular forces in Scotland in 1746 to make one other Winter Campain without giving then battle (than which nothing was more easy) two thirds of them at least had been destroyed, whilst ten such Campains would have only more and more invigorated our R.H.’s Army. If this project be not long delayed, and that your R.H. persists in putting it into Execution, you will in all human probability drive your Enemys before you like a parcel of Sheep.’

There follows:

‘A List of the Clans given by Loch Gairy to the Pretender in consequence of their agreement with him.

‘Your R.H. arriving with money, Arms, and a few choice Officers, will find the following Clans ready to join, this Computation of them being very moderate, and most of them have been always ready to join the R. Strd under the most palpable disadvantages.

‘The Mackdonells, as matters stand at present, by Young G — concurrence only 2,600

By G — Interest the Bearer can answer for the Mackleans at least 700

There is little doubt but the Mackkenzies would all join G — as related to the most considerable Gentlemen of this Clan, and the Bearer can answer for at least 900

The Bearer having sounded several Gentlemen of the name of MacLeod over whom G — as being nearly connected has great influence, the Bearer can answer for at least . . . 450

The Bearer answers for the MackInnans, MackLeods of Rasa - at least 300

The Bearer answers for the Chisolms . . . 200

The Bearer answers for the Robertsons . . . 250

Camerons . . . 500

Stuart of Alpin . . . 250

McNeals of Barra . . . 150
MackPhersons . . . 350
McIntoshes . . . 350
Frazers . . . 400
MackGregors . . . 200
Athol men, at least . . . 500
Out of Brodulbin 300
Duke of Gordon’s Interest Glenlivat and Strathdon, at least . . . 500
M’Dugalls, McNobbs and McLouchlins . . . 250
The Bearer has tamper’d with the Grants, and if properly managed, at least . . . 500
Good men 9,660

‘Besides the great Dependance on the Low Countreys and of other Clans that in all probability will join your R.H. the above mentioned Clans have not lost a thousand men during the transactions of 45 and 46, and by consequence are most certainly as numerous as they were then, and for the reasons already given they are readier and more capable for action at present than they were in 45. One reason in particular is worth your R.H.’s Observation, that since the end of the late War there has been by an exact Computation, between six and seven thousand men reform’d out of the British and Dutch Service, most of whom were of the Loyal Clans, and are now at home.’

We have provisionally dated this communication of Pickle’s in August or September, when Charles wished to see ‘G.’ A date is given by the reference to Miss Walkinshaw’s condition. Her child, born in Paris, was baptized at Liège in October 1753. So far, according to Pickle, Charles seemed ‘very fond of her.’ This did not last.

It may be observed that Lochgarry’s Memorial shows how great was the influence of Young Glengarry. Nearly 5,000 men await his word. And Young Glengarry, as Pickle, was sending the Memorial to Henry Pelham!

On his return to London, Pickle gave the following information, in part a repetition of what he had already stated:

‘ . . . Pickle, since he has been in England, generally heard of the Young Pretender by Lochgary who requested him by directions from the Young Pretender, to make the last trip that he went upon to France, the intent of which was to communicate to Pickle the scheme that he and Dr. Cameron had concerted in the Highlands, and to offer him some arms to be landed at different times upon any part of his estate that he should appoint, but which Pickle absolutely refus'd to consent to, as he might be ruind by a discovery, and which could hardly be avoided, as the country was so full of Troops, and *nobody as yet knowing in what manner the forfeited estates would be settled*; - Pickle believes that some friends of P. Charles of Lorraine in Hainault, often harbour the Young Pretender, and favor him in his rambles; - that at the Court of France, Monsr. D'Argenson is his chief friend in the Ministry, that Monsr. Puysieux was his enemy, as was also Monsr. St. Contest, who is a creature of Puysieux. Pickle looks upon the Duke of Richlieu, and all that are related to the family of Lorraine, to be friends of the Pretender's that Monsr. Paris Montmartell is the Pretender's great friend, and told Pickle he would contrive to raise 200,000*l*. for his Service, upon a proper occasion. Pickle was told by the Pretender himself, that Madame Pompadour was not his friend, for that she had been gaind over by considerable sums of money from England, and had taken offence at him, for his slighting two Billetts that had been sent by her to him, which he had done for fear of giving umbrage to the Queen of France and her relations; as to the French King, Pickle has had no opportunity of knowing much of his disposition, but does not look upon him as a well wisher to the Pretender's Cause, unless it be at any time to serve his own purpose.

'As to the King of Prussia, Pickle can say but little about him, having never been employd in that Quarter, and knows no more than what he has been told by the Young Pretender, which was, that he had sent Collonel Goring to Berlin to ask the K. of Prussia's Sister in marriage; that Goring had been received very cooly, and had had no favourable answer; that he afterwards had sent Sir John Graeme, whose reception was better, and that he soon went himself to Berlin, where he was well received, but the affair of the marriage was declin'd. That the K. of Prussia advised him to withdraw himself privately from Berlin, and retire to Silesia, and to keep himself conceal'd for some time, in some Convent there. That the K. of Prussia told the Pretender he would assist him in procuring him six thousand Swedes from Gottenburgh, with the Collusion of the Court of France, but Pickle understood that this was to take place in the Event only of a War breaking out.

'Pickle since his return to England, has been but once at a Club in the City, where they drink very hard, but at which, upon account of the expence, *he cannot be as frequently as he would wish to be*, nor can he afford to keep company with people of condition at this end of the Town. The Jacobites in England don't choose to communicate any of their schemes to any of the Irish or Scots, from the latter of whom all that they desire, is a rising upon a proper occasion; - That he does not personally know much of the heads of the Party in

England - only as he has seen lists of their names in the Pretender’s and Ld. Marishall’s hands; - such as he knows of them would certainly introduce him to others were he in a condition of defraying the expence that this would be attended with, which he is not, being already endebted to several people in this Town and has hitherto had no more than his bare expences of going backwards and forwards for these three years past . . .’

It is needless to say that this piece deepens the evidence connecting Pickle with Glengarry. Poor James Mohr had no estates and no seaboard whereon to land arms. At the close of the letter, in autumn 1753, Pickle speaks of his three years’ service. He had, therefore, been a spy since 1750, when he was in Rome. Now James Mohr, off and on, had been a spy since 1745, at least.

We may now pursue the course of intrigues with Prussia. Frederick, on June 6, 1753, the day before Cameron’s execution, wrote to the Earl Marischal. He wished that Jemmy Dawkins’s affair was better organised. But, ‘in my present situation with the King of England, and considering his action against me, it would be for the good of my service that you should secretly aid by your good advice these people’ (the Dawkins conspirators). So the Cham of Tartary *does* interfere in the Bangorian Controversy, despite Mr. Carlyle! It is easy to imagine how this cautious encouragement, *sous main*, would be exaggerated in the inflamed hopes of exiles. The Earl Marischal had in fact despatched Dawkins to Berlin on May 7, not letting him know that Frederick had consented to his coming. Dawkins was to communicate his ideas to Marshal Keith. The Earl did not believe in a scheme proposed by Dawkins, and was convinced that foreign assistance was necessary. This could only come from Prussia, Sweden, France, or Spain. Prussia has no ships, but few are needed, and merchant vessels could be obtained. The Earl would advise no Prussian movement without the concurrence of France. But France is unlikely to assent, and Sweden is divided by party hatreds. He doubts if France was ever well disposed to the House of Stuart. The Spanish have got the ships and got the men, but are hampered by engagements with Austria and Savoy.

Frederick saw Dawkins at Berlin, but did not think his plans well organised. He preferred, in fact, to await events, and to keep up Jacobite hopes by vague encouragement. On June 16, 1753, Frederick writes to his agent, Michell, in London. He does not believe that England will go to war with him for a matter of 150,000 crowns, ‘which they refuse to pay to my subjects,’ on account of captures made by English privateers. But, ‘though the English King can do me much harm, *I can pay him back by means which perhaps he knows nothing of and does not yet believe in* . . . I command you to button yourself up on this head’ (*de vous tenir tout boutonné*), ‘because these people must not see my cards, nor know what, in certain events, I am determined to do.’ He was determined to use the Jacobites if he broke with England. On August 25, 1753, Frederick wrote to Klinggraeffen, at Vienna, that the English Ministry was now of milder mood, but in September relations were perilous again. On July 4, 1753, the Earl told Marshal Keith that a warrant was out against Dawkins. In fact, to anticipate dates a little, the English Government knew a good deal about Jemmy Dawkins, the explorer of Palmyra, and envoy to His Prussian Majesty. Albemarle writes from Paris to Lord Holdernesse (December 12, 1753):

‘As yet my suspicions of an underhand favourer of their cause being come from England, and addressing himself to the late Lord Marshall, can only fall on one person, and that is Mr. Dawkins, who has a considerable property in one of our settlements in the West Indies. This is the gentleman who travelled in Syria with Mr. Bouverie (since dead) and Mr. Wood, who is now with the Duke of Bridgewater, and who are publishing an account of their view of the Antiquities of Palmeyra. Mr. Dawkins came from England to Paris early the last spring (1753), and was almost constantly with the late Lord Marshall. He used sometimes to come to my house too. In May he obtained a pass from this Court to go to Berlin, by the late Lord Marshall’s means, as I have the greatest reason to believe, for he never applied to me to ask for any such, nor ever mentioned to me his intention of taking that journey, and by a mistake, Monsr. de St. Contest put that pass into my hands, as it was for an Englishman, which I have kept, and send it enclosed to your Lordship. But whether Mr. Dawkins never knew that it had been delivered to me, or was ashamed to ask it of me, as it had not been obtained through my Channell, or was afraid of my questioning him about it, or about his journey, I cannot say; however he went away without it, not long after its date, which is the 2d. of May. And he returned from thence to Compiègne, the latter end of July, which was a few days before the Court left that place.

‘Since that he went to England, where, I believe, he now is, having had the Superintendency of the Publication of the work above mentioned . Mr. Dawkins, as well as his Uncle, who lives in Oxfordshire , is warmly attached to the Pretender’s interest, which with the circumstances I have related of him, which agree with most of those hinted at in Your Lordship’s letter, particularly as to times, are very plausible grounds of my mistrusts of him. I shall make the strictest inquiries concerning him, as he is the only person of note, either British or Irish, who to my knowledge came here from England about the time your Lordship mentions - who frequented assiduously the late Lord Marshall who passed from thence to Berlin - and in short whose declared principles in the Jacobite Cause, and whose abilities, made him capable of the commission he may be supposed to be engaged in.

'I shall not be less attentive to get all the intelligence I can, of any other person under this description, who may at any time, frequent the late Lord Marshall, and to give Your Lordship an exact account of what shall come to my knowledge. If, on Your Lordship's part, you could come at any further discovery concerning Mr. Dawkins, I hope you will inform me of so much of it as may be of any service to me in my inquiries. The extreme caution and prudence with which, Your Lordship informs me, the late Lord Marshall conducts himself, for fear of risking the secret, will, I apprehend, make it impossible for me to penetrate into the instruction he may be charged with, in this respect, from his master, or how far he is intrusted with His Prussian Majesty's intentions. I have not the least doubt of the late Lord Marshall's being in correspondence with the Pretender's elder Son, who was lately (as I was informed some time after he left it) at the Abbaye of S. Amand, not far from Lisle, which is most convenient for him, his brother, the Cardinal, being, as I am assured, Abbot of that Monastery. As for the lady described under the character of *la bonne amie de Monsieur de Cambrai*, that is Mrs. Obrian, whose husband is, by the Pretender's favour, the mock Earl of Lismore, a follower of his fortunes, and supposed to have a considerable share in his confidence.'

From the Same.

'Paris: Tuesday, December 18, 1753.

' . . . I must take this opportunity to rectify a small mistake in my last letter, relating to the Abbaye of St. Amand, of which I had been informed that the Pretender's younger Son, the Cardinal, was Abbot. It is the Abbaye of Aucline of which he is Commendatory, and which is at much about the same distance from Lille as the other. It is the more probable that the Pretender's Elder Son was there last autumn, as he might take that opportunity of seeing the Princess of Rohan , an ancient flame of his who went to Lille at the time of the encampment in Flanders, under that Prince's command.'

Apparently the warrant against Jemmy Dawkins was not executed. We shall meet him again. Meanwhile there were comings and goings between Goring and the Earl Marischal in July 1753. In September, Goring was ill, and one Beson was the Prince's messenger (July 2, September 5, 1753). On September 5, Charles made a memorandum for Beson's message to the Earl Marischal. 'I will neither leave this place, nor quit ye L. . I will not trust myself to any K. or P. I will never go to Paris, nor any of the French dominions.' The rest is confused, ill-spelled jottings about money, which Beson had failed to procure in London.

On September 12; Charles scrawls a despairing kind of note to Goring. He writes another, underscored, dismissing his Avignon household, that is, ‘my Papist servants!’ ‘My mistress has behaved so unworthily that she has put me out of patience, and as she is a Papist too, I discard her also! . . . Daniel is charged to conduct her to Paris.’

This was on November 12. On October 29, Miss Walkinshaw’s child, Charlotte, had been baptized at Liège. Charles’s condition was evil. He knew he was being tracked, he knew not by whom. Hope deferred, as to Prussia, made his heart sick. Moreover, on August 19, 1752, Goring had written from Paris that he was paralysed on one side (Pickle says that his malady was a fistula). Goring expressed anxiety as to Charles’s treatment of an invalided servant. ‘You should know by what I have often expressed to you that iff I had but one Lofe of Bred, I would share it with you. The little money that I have deposed on my good friend’s hands you know was at your orders, and you would have been much in ye rong to have let yourself ever want in ye least.’

Again, on November 12, he writes to Goring:

To Mr. Stouf.

‘November 12.

‘I am extremely concerned for yr health, and you cannot do me a greater Cervice than in taking care of yrself for I am not able to spare any of my true friends.’

Dr. King, as we have said, accuses Charles of *avarice*. Charles II., in exile, would not, he says, have left a friend in want. Though distressed for money, the Prince does not display a niggardly temper in these letters to Goring. He had to defray the expenses of many retainers; he intended to dismiss his Popish servants, his household at Avignon, and to part with Dumont. We shall read Goring’s remonstrances. But the affair of Daniel’s ‘close’ proves how hardly Charles was pressed. On December 16, 1752, he indulged in a few books, including Wood and Dawkins’s ‘Ruins of Palmyra,’ a stately folio. One extraordinary note he made at this time: ‘A marque to be put on ye Child, iff i part with it.’ The future ‘Bonny Lass of Albanie’ was to be marked, like a kelt returned to the river in spring. ‘I am pushed to ye last point, and so won’t be cagioled any more.’ He collected his treasures left with Mittie, the surgeon of Stanislas at Lunéville. Among these was a *couteau de chasse*, with a double-barrelled pistol in a handle of jade. D’Argenson reports that the Prince was seen selling his pistols to an armourer in Paris. Who can wonder if he lost temper, and sought easy oblivion in wine!

CHAPTER X - JAMES MOHR MACGREGOR

Another spy - Rob Roy's son, James Mohr Macgregor - A spy in 1745 - At Prestonpans and Culloden - Escape from Edinburgh Castle - Billy Marshall - Visit to Ireland - Balhaldie reports James's discovery of Irish Macgregors - Their loyalty - James Mohr and Lord Albemarle - James Mohr offers to sell himself - And to betray Alan Breck - His sense of honour - His long-winded report on Irish conspiracy - Balhaldie - Mrs. Macfarlane who shot the Captain - Her romance - Pitfirrane Papers - Balhaldie's snuff-boxes - James Mohr's confessions - Balhaldie and Charles - Irish invasion - Arms in Moidart - Arms at the house of Tough - Pickle to play the spy in Ireland - Accompanied by a 'Court Trusty' - Letter from Pickle - Alan Breck spoils James Mohr - Takes his snuff-boxes - Death of James Mohr - Yet another spy - His wild information - Confirmation of Charles's visit to Ireland.

From the deliberate and rejoicing devilry of Glengarry, and from Charles's increasing distress and degradation, it is almost a relief to pass for a moment to the harmless mendacity of a contemporary spy, Rob Roy's son, James Mohr Macgregor, or Drummond. This highland gentleman, with his courage, his sentiment, and his ingrained falseness, is known to the readers of Mr. Stevenson's 'Catriona.' Though unacquainted with the documents which we shall cite, Mr. Stevenson divined James Mohr with the assured certainty of genius. From first to last James was a valiant, plausible, conscienceless, heartless liar, with a keen feeling for the point of honour, and a truly Celtic passion of affection for his native hand.

As early at least as the spring of 1745, James Mohr, while posing as a Jacobite, was in relations with the law officers of the Crown in Scotland. James's desire then was to obtain a commission in a Highland regiment, and as much ready money as possible. Either he was dissatisfied with his pay as a spy, or he expected better things from the Jacobites, for, after arranging his evidence to suit his schemes, he took up arms for the Prince. He captured with a handful of men the fortress of Inversnaid; he fell, severely wounded, at Prestonpans, and called out, as he lay on the ground, 'My lads, I am not dead! By God! I shall see if any of you does not do his duty.' Though he fought at Culloden, James appears to have patched up a peace with the Government, and probably eked out a livelihood by cattle-stealing and spying, till, on December 8, 1750, he helped his brother Robin to abduct a young widow of some property. Soon after he was arrested, tried, and lodged, first in the Tolbooth, next, for more security, in Edinburgh Castle.

On November 16, 1752, James, by aid of his daughter (Mr. Stevenson’s Catriona), escaped from the Castle disguised as a cobbler. It has often been said that the Government connived at James’s escape. If so, they acted rather meanly in sentencing ‘two lieutenants’ of his guard ‘to be broke, the sergeant reduced to a private man, and the porter to be whipped.’

The adventures of James after his escape are narrated by a writer in ‘Blackwood’s Magazine’ for December 1817. This writer was probably a Macgregor, and possessed some of James’s familiar epistles. Overcoming a fond desire to see once more his native hills and his dear ones (fourteen in all), James, on leaving Edinburgh Castle, bent his course towards the Border. In a dark night, on a Cumberland moor, he met the famed Billy Marshall, the gipsy. Mr. Marshall, apologising for the poverty of his temporary abode, remarked that he would be better housed ‘when some ill-will which he had got in Galloway for setting fire to a stackyard would blow over.’ Three days later Billy despatched James in a fishing boat from Whitehaven, whence he reached the Isle of Man. He then made for Ireland, and my next information about James occurs in a letter of Balhaldie, dated August 10, 1753, to the King over the Water. Balhaldie’s letter to Rome, partly in cypher, runs thus, and is creditable to James’s invention:

‘James Drummond Macgregor, Rob Roy’s son, came here some days agoe, and informed me that, having made his escape from Scotland by Ireland, he was addressed to some namesakes of his there, who acquainted him that the clan Macgregor were very numerous in that country, under different names, the greatest bodies of them living together in little towns and villages opposite to the Scottish coast.’ They had left Scotland some one hundred and fifty years before, when their clan was proscribed. James ‘never saw men more zealously loyal and clanish, better looked, or seemingly more intrepid and hardy. . . . No Macgregors in the Scotch highlands are more willing or ready to joyn their clan in your Majesty’s service than they were, and for that end to transport 3,000 of their name and followers to the coast of Argileshyre.’ They will only require twenty-four hours ‘to transport themselves in whirries of their own, even in face of the enemy’s fleet, of which they are not affrayed.’

The King, in answer (September 11, 1753), expressed a tempered pleasure in Mr. Macgregor’s information, which, he said, might interest the Prince. On September 6, 1753, Lord Strathallan, writing to Edgar from Boulogne, vouches only for James’s courage. ‘As to anything else, I would be sorry to answer for him, as he had but an indifferent character as to real honesty.’ On September 20, James Mohr, in Paris, wrote to the Prince, anxious to know where he was, and to communicate important news from Ireland. Probably James got no reply, for on October 18, 1753, Lord Holdernesse wrote from Whitehall to Lord Albemarle, English ambassador in Paris, a letter marked 'Very secret,' acknowledging a note of Lord Albemarle's. Mr. Macgregor had visited Lord Albemarle on October 8th and 10th, with offers of information. Lord Holdernesse, therefore, sends a safe-conduct for Macgregor's return. We now give Macgregor's letter of October 12, 1733, to Lord Albemarle, setting forth his sad case and honourably patriotic designs:

MS. Add. 32,733.

'Paris: October 12, 1753. Mr. James Drummond.

'My Lord, - Tho' I have not the Honour to be much acquainted with Your Lordship, I presume to give you the trouble of this to acquaint your lordship that by a false Information I was taken prisoner in Scotland in November 1751 and by the speat that a certain Faction in Dundas, Scotland, had at me, was trayd by the Justiciary Court at Edinburgh, when I had brought plenty of exculpation which might free any person whatever of what was alledged against me, yet such a Jurie as at Dundas was given me, thought proper to give in a special verdict, finding some parts of the Layable proven, and in other parts found it not proven. It was thought by my friends that I would undergo the Sentence of Banishment, which made me make my escape from Edinburgh Castle in Novr. 1752, and since was forced to come to France for my safety. *I always had in my vew if possable to be concerned in Government's service*, and, *for that purpose*, thought it necessar ever since I came to France to be as much as possable in company with the Pretender's friends, so far as now I think I can be one useful Subject to my King and Country, upon giving me *proper Incouragement.*

'In the first place I think its in my power to bring Allan Breack Stewart, the suposd murdrer of Colin Campbell of Glenouir, late factor of the forfet Estate of Ardsheal, to England and to deliver him in safe custody so as he may be brought to justice, and in that event, I think the delivering of the said murderer merits the getting of a Remission from his Majesty the King, especially as I was not guilty of any acts of treason since the Year 1746, and providing your lordship procures my Remission upon delivering the said murderer, I hereby promise to discover a very grand plott on footing against the Government, which is more effectually carried on than any ever since the Family of Stewart was put off the Throne of Britain, and besides to do all the services that lays in my power to the Government.

'Only with this provision, that I shall be received into the Government's

Service, and that I shall have such reward as my Service shall meritt, I am willing, if your lordship shall think it agreeable, to go to England privily and carry the murderer alongest with me, and deliver him at Dover to the Military, and after waite on such of the King's friends as your lordship shall appoint. If your lordship think this agreeable, I should wish General Campbell would be one of those present as he knows me and my family, and besides that, I think to have some Credit with the General, which I cannot expect with those whom I never had the Honour to know. Either the General or Lieutt. Colln. John Crawford of Poulteney's Regiment would be very agreeable to me, as I know both of these would trust me much, and at the same time, I could be more free to them than to any others there. Your lordship may depend the motive that induces me to make this Offer at present to you, in the Government's name, is both honourable and just, so that I hope no other constructions will be put on it, and for your lordship's further satisfaction, I say nothing in this letter, but what I am determined to perform, and as much more as in my power layes with that, and that all I have said is Trueth, and I shall answer to God.

'JAS. DRUMMOND.'

James was sent over to England, and we now offer the results of his examination in London, on November 6, 1753. The following document deals with the earlier part of Mr. Macgregor's appalling revelations, and describes his own conduct on landing in France, after a tour in the Isle of Man and Ireland, in December 1752. That he communicated his Irish mare's nest to Charles, as he says he did, is very improbable. Like Sir Francis Clavering, as described by the Chevalier Strong, James Mohr 'would rather he than not.' However, he certainly gave a version of his legend to the Old Chevalier in Rome.

Extract of the Examination of Mr. James Drummond.

'That about the 8th. of May following (vizt. May 1753) He (Mr. D.) did set out for France, and arrived at Boulogne on the 16th. where He met with Lord Strathalane, and as He (Mr. D.) was asking after the Young Pretender, His Lordship told Him that He had seen a letter from Him (the Young Pretender) lately to Sir James Harrington, at which time he (the Young Pretender), was lodged at an Abbé's House, about a League and Half from Lisle, whereupon He (Mr. D.) communicated to his Lordship, in the presence of Capt. Wm. Drummond, and Mr. Charles Boyde, the Commission, with which He was charged. That thereupon His Lordship undertook to wait upon the Young Pretender with the Irish Proposal, and advised Him (Mr. D.) to go and stay at Bergue, till He (Lord Strathalane) came to Him there. That on the 20th. June following, His Lordship wrote Him (Mr. D.) a Letter (which is hereunto annexed) to this effect - "That he (Lord Strathalane) had laid Mr. Savage's Proposal before the Young Pretender, who desired, that he, (Mr. D.) would repair to Paris, and that He had sent Him (Mr. D.) a Bill upon Mr. Waters (the Banker) to pay His charges. That He (Mr. D.) did accordingly go to Paris, and that upon His arrival there, He first waited upon Mr. Gordon, Principal of the Scot's College, but that nothing particular passed there. (N.B. There is not one word, in any of Mr. Drummond's papers, of His intending to go to Berlin.) (Official Note.)'

Nobody, of course, can believe a word that James Mohr ever said, but his disclosures, in the following full report of his examination, could only have been made by a person pretty deep in Jacobite plans. For example, Balhaldie, chief of the Macgregors, did really live at Bièvre, as James Mohr says. There was in Edinburgh at this time a certain John Macfarlane, w.s., whose pretty wife, in 1716, shot dead an English captain, nobody ever knew why. She fled to the Swintons of Swinton, who concealed her in their house. One day Sir Walter Scott's aunt Margaret, then a child of eight, residing at Swinton, stayed at home when the family went to church. Peeping into a forbidden parlour she saw there a lovely lady, who fondled her, bade her speak only to her mother, and vanished while the little girl looked out of the window. This appearance was Mrs. Macfarlane, who shot Captain Cayley, and was now lying *perdue* at Swinton.

Now, in 1753 the pretty lady's husband, Mr. Macfarlane, was agent in Scotland for Balhaldie. To him Balhaldie wrote frequently on business, sent him also a 'most curious toy,' a tortoise-shell snuff-box, containing, in a secret receptacle, a portrait of King James VIII. Letters of his, in April 1753, show that James Mohr was so far right; Balhaldie *was* living at Bièvre, in a glen three leagues from Paris, and was amusing himself by the peaceful art of making loyal snuff-boxes in tortoise-shell.

As to Bièvre, then, James Mohr was right. He may or may not have lied in the following paper, when he says that the Prince was coming over, with Lord Marischal, to the Balhaldie faction of Jacobites, who were more in touch with the French Court than his own associates. Mr. Trant, of whom James Mohr speaks, was really with the Prince, as Pickle also asserts, and as the Stuart Papers prove. Probably he was akin to Olive Trant, a pretty intriguer of 1715, mentioned by Bolingbroke in his famous letter to Wyndham. As to Ireland, James Mohr really did take it on his way to France, though his promises in the name of 'the People of Fingal' are Irish moonshine. Were arms, as James Mohr says, lodged in Clanranald's country, Moidart? Pickle refused to let them be landed in Knoydart, his own country, and thought nothing of the kind could be done without his knowledge. James Mohr may really have had news of arms landed at the House of Tough on the Forth, near Stirling, where they would be very convenient. Pickle, I conceive, was not trusted by Clanranald, and Cameron he had traduced. If James Mohr by accident speaks the truth in the following Information, more was done by Lochgarry and Cameron than Pickle wotted of during the autumn of 1752 and the spring of 1753. The arms may have been those ordered by Charles in 1750.

Here is James Mohr's Confession, made in London, November 6, 1753:

'That, in June 1753, the Pretender's Son wrote to Mr. McGregor of Bolheldies, in a most sincere manner, that he wanted He should undertake His Service, as formerly: Bolheldies refused to undertake anything for him, till such time, as He was reconciled with his Father, and make acknowledgements for His Misconduct to the King of France, and then, that He was willing to enter upon His affairs only, in concert with the Earl of Mareschal, and none other, for that He could not trust any about Him: Upon which, the Pretender's Son wrote Him a second time, assuring Bolheldies, that He would be entirely advised by Him, and at the same time, that He expected no see Him soon, when things would be concerted to His Satisfaction.

'About the middle of September, the Pretender's Son arrived in Paris, in company with one Mr. Trent , and Fleetwood, two English Gentlemen, who carried Him from South of Avignon , and when they came thro' Avignon, He was called Mr. Trent's Cousin, and thereafter, upon all their Journey, till they landed at Paris. During his stay at Paris, He stayed at Mr. John Water's House. Immediately upon His arrival at Paris, Bolheldies was sent for, who stay'd with Him only that night: The next day, He went to Baivre , where He lives, Two Leagues South of Paris: How soon Bolheldies went Home, He sent Express to Mr. Butler, the King of France's Master of the Horse, and also a great Favorite: Mr. Butler came upon a Sunday Morning to Baivre, and about 3 o'clock in the Afternoon, the Earl of Marischal sent an Express to Bolheldies; and after Receipt of this Express, Mr. Butler went off to Versailles: That evening, Bolheldies told me, that now He hoped, the Prince, as He called Him, would be advised by His best friends, for that He seems to have a full view of what Folly He had committed, by being advised and misled, by a Parcel of such Fools, as has been about Him, since the year 1745. But now, providing He would stand firm to His promise, to stand by the Earl of Mareschal and His advice, that He hoped His Affairs might soon be brought on a right Footing; He added further, That he was still afraid of His breaking thro' concert; That He was so headstrong, how soon

He saw the least appearance of success, That He might come to ruin His whole Affairs, as He did, when He stole away to Scotland, in the year 1745, by the advice of John Murray, Callie , Sheridan, and such other Fools.

'I then told Bolheldies, that He had been at great pains to get the Restoration of the Family Stuart brought about, and that tho' He succeeded, he might be very ill rewarded, in the Event, and He and His Clan, probably, on the first discontent, be ruined, as that Family had done formerly, to gratify others, for that it seems, He had forgot, that very Family in King Charles's time, persecuted the whole of His Clan, in a most violent manner; and I added farther, that the whole of His Clan would be much better pleased, if He did but procure Liberty from the Government to return Home, and live the remainder of His Days among His Friends. Bolheldies assured me, that He was willing to go Home, providing He had the least consent from the Government; Only, He would not chuse to be put under any Restrictions, than to live as a peaceable Subject.

'He added further, that He was so much afraid of the Pretender's Son being so ill to manage, and also that the Irish would break thro' Secret, That he could heartily wish not to be concerned, could he but fall on a Method to get clear of it; But at present, that He had engaged to enter upon some Business with the Earl of Mareschal; and especially, about those Proposals from Ireland, which He thought very probable, if Matters were carried on by people of sense, that knew how to manage, for that all this affair depended on keeping the Government ignorant of what was doing. Four days after this, there was a meeting held, Two Leagues South from Baivre, by the Pretender's Son, Earl of Mareschal, Bolheldies, Mr. Butler, Mr. Gordon, Principal of the Scots College, Mr. Trent, and Fleetwood, and some other English Gentlemen, whom Bolheldies did not inform me of.

'When Bolheldies returned Home, He told me, the Irish Proposals were accepted of, and for that purpose, that there were some Persons to be sent both to Scotland, and Ireland, and that I was appointed to be one of those for Ireland, to transact the affairs with the People of Fingal, especially as Mr. Savage had desired, that if any should be sent, that I would be the person intrusted in their affair. That Col. and Capt. Browne, Capt. Bagget, were to be sent along with Mr. McDiarmid: Bolheldies also said, that He was afraid, he would be obliged to take a trip to England, some time in winter, for that some certain Great Men there would trust none other to enter on business with them, as Lord Sempil was dead, but that, if could help it, He did not incline to go. That those, that were to be appointed to go to Scotland, were entirely refer'd to him, and Mr. Gordon the Principal. The management of the Scots affairs is entirely refer'd to Stirling of Kear, Mr. Murray of Abercarney, Mr. Smith, and Sr. Hugh Paterson . That Mr.

Charles has promised to manage the Duke of Hamilton, and Friends . . . Bolheldies assured me, that any, that pleased to join from France, would not be hindered: and that there was a Method fallen upon to get Two Ships of War, as also plenty of arms, and ammunition, which would be sent by the Ships, to both Ireland and Scotland. That the Irish propose to raise 14,000 Men , and in two days time, to have them embarked in Wherries from Dublin, Rush, Skeddish, and Drogheda, and from thence transported, in six hours, to North Wales, or, in Twenty-four hours, to Scotland, either of which as the service required; providing always, that the 2 Ships of War were sent to escort them, as also Arms and ammunition and Money. That it was proposed by both the Earl of Mareschal, and Bolheldies, that 11,000 should land in North Wales, and 3,000 in Campbelltown of Kentyre in Argyleshire; for that those in Argyleshire that were well affected to their cause, would have a good opportunity to rise, by leading 3,000 Irish. That McDonald of Largye has proposed that there will rise, from that end of Argyleshire 2,500 Men, including the Duke of Hamilton's Men from Arran; To wit, the McDonalds of Largye, the McNeils, McAlisters, Lamonds, and McLawchlans, with what Sr. James Campbell of Auchinbreck can rise; and those from Campbelltown to march to the Head of Argyleshire, and to Perthshire, where they were to be joind by the North Country Clans, which with the Irish, and those from Argyleshire, was computed to be near 14,000 Men, and to be commanded by the Earl of Mareschal, and Lord George Murray.

'Bolheldies assured me . . . that the Pretender's Son made a proposal to His Father to resign the Crown in his Favor: It was refused; and it was desired of Him not to make any further Proposals of that kind. Bolheldies was desired to go to Rome, to expostulate with the Pretender, which he begged to be excused, for that it was contrary to his Opinion, and that He did not approve of the Proposal, would never desire the Old Gentleman to resign. He told me, that this Proposal proceeded from the English, as the Young Pretender had owned that He was Protestant . . .

'It consists with my knowledge, that there were lodged, in Clanronald's Country, 9,000 Stands of Arms under the care of Ronald McDonald, Brother to the late Kinloch Moydart, Mr. McDonald of Glenaladale, and the Baillie of Egg, and kept still by them, in as good order as possible. That one, John McDonald, who is my own Cousin German, and is also Cousin German to Glenaladale, met with me in the Braes of Argyleshire, in March last ; when He told me, that if there was an Invasion that they had plenty of Arms; and told the way and manner they had then preserved: But immediately before they were lodged in their hands, that Dr. Cameron had taken away, without orders, 250 Stands. That they might be got in Order, in six days time, by very few hands; for that they had sustained very little damage. It's certain, some little pains might find them out. . . . Bolheldies assured me, that Sr. John Graham was sent by the Young Pretender's Orders, to deliver Capt. Ogelvie 8,000 Swords, which had lain at Berlin , since the last affair, that he was to deliver them to Capt. Ogelvie, at or near Dunkirk, concealed into wine Hogsheads; and that Capt. Ogelvie was to land them at Airth, in the Frith of Forth; and to get them conveyed to the house of Tough, where they were to remain under the charge of Mr. Charles Smith, whose Son is married to the Heiress of Tough. The House of Tough is two miles above Stirling. I also saw Mr. Binglie, Under Master of the Horse, sent by Mr. Butler, and met at Bolheldie's House, by young Sheridan, who is always with the Young Pretender. . . .

'That the Irish Proposal, sent by me was thus: In way to France, I came to the Isle of Man, where I had occasion to meet one Mr. Patrick Savage, to whom I was recommended by a Friend in Scotland; This Mr. Savage is an Irishman, and was in Scotland some time before I had seen Him: He was informed by Sir Archibald Stewart of Castle-Milk near Greenock, that Sir Archibald had seen Dr. Cameron in Stirlingshire; who told Him, that He hoped the Restoration would happen soon, for that preparations were a making for it, and that He had been sent to Scotland to transact some affairs for that purpose. Mr. Savage told me, in the year 1745, if the Pretender's son had sent but the least notice to Ireland, that He might have got 10,000 or 12,000 Men, for that they at that time had formed a scheme, for that purpose, expecting to have had a message. . . . Mr. Savage assured me, that there were two Lords concerned, who put it out of his power to let their Names be known, till I came with a commission from the Young Pretender, and then, that they would frankly see me, and take me to their Houses to make up matters . . .'

The pleased reader will observe that Mr. Macgregor's Irish myth (though here sadly curtailed) has swollen to huge proportions since he communicated his tale of long lost Macgregors to the Old Chevalier in August. Whether the Prince was really turning to Balhaldie and official Jacobitism or not, is matter of doubt. Mr. Macgregor's Information having been swallowed and digested by Lord Holdernesse, Pickle was appealed to for confirmation. We have seem his unfriendly report of Mr. Macgregor's character, as a spy mistrusted by both sides. But among other precautions an English official suggested the following:

'That, if it's thought proper, Mr. — should be sent to Ireland forthwith, to know the whole of those concerned in the Irish Plot of the People of Fingal, that He could have a *Trusty* in Company, sent from the Secretary, who would undergo any borrowed name, and was to be Companion in the affair to Mr. — . That particularly those Lords should be known, as also such of the People of Connaght as could be discovered. That Mr. — is willing to undertake whatever in his power lays, to shew the zeal, wherewith He is inclined to serve the Government, but that He will not chuse to go to Ireland, *unless a court Trusty is sent with him*, who will be eye witness to His Transactions with the Irish, as Mr. — will tell that he is a Trusty sent by the Pretender's Son.'

I detect Pickle under 'Mr. — ,' because later he was sent in a precisely similar manner into Scotland, accompanied by a 'Court Trusty,' or secret service man, named Bruce, who, under the style of 'Cromwell,' sent in reports along with those despatched by Pickle himself. Whether Pickle really went to Ireland to verify Mr. Macgregor's legends or not, I am unable to say. The following note of his (December 13, 1753) suggests that he went either on that or a similar errand.

Add. 32,730.
'Grandpapa, - In consequence of what past at our last meeting I have wrot to my Correspondent, fixing the time and place of meeting, and at leatest I ought seet off the 20th. pray then, when and where are we to meet? If not soon, I must undow what I have begun. Excuse my anxiety, and believe me most sincerely with great estime and affection
'Your most oblidged humble Servt.

PICKLE.
'13th December, 1753.
'To the Honble. Quin Vaughan, at his house in Golden Square.'

Here James Mohr Macgregor slips out of our narrative. He was suspected by Balhaldie of having the misfortune to be a double-dyed scoundrel. This impression Mr. Macgregor's letters to 'his dear Chief' were not quite able to destroy. The letters (Dunkirk, April 6, and May 1, 1754) are published in 'Blackwood's Magazine' for December 1817. James tells Balhaldie that he had visited England, and had endeavoured to deliver Alan Breck, 'the murderer of Glenure,' to the Government, and to make interest for his own brother, Robin Oig. But Robin was hanged for abducting the heiress of Edenbelly, and Alan Breck escaped from James Mohr with the *spolia opima*, including 'four snuff-boxes,' made, perhaps, by Balhaldie himself. In England, James Mohr informs

Balhaldie, he was offered 'handsome bread in the Government service' as a spy. But he replied, 'I was born in the character of a gentleman,' and he could only serve 'as a gentleman of honour.'

James, in fact, had sold himself too cheap, and had done the Devil's work without the Devil's wages. Probably the falsehood of his Irish myth was discovered by Pickle, and he was dismissed. James's last letter to Balhaldie is of September 25, 1754 (Paris), and he prays for a loan of the pipes, that he may 'play some melancholy tunes.' And then poor James Mohr Macgregor died, a heart-broken exile. His innocent friend, in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' asks our approbation for James's noble Highland independence and sense of honour!

There was another spy, name unknown, whose information about the Prince, in 1753, was full and minute, whether accurate or not. It is written in French. About the end of June 1753, Charles, according to this informer, passed three months at Lunéville; he came from Prussia, and left in September for Paris. Thence Charles went to Poland and Prussia, then to Strasbourg, back to Paris, thence to Liège, and thence to Scotland. Prussia and Denmark were next visited, and Paris again in January 1754. As a rule, Charles was in Scotland, or Liège, collecting an army of deserters. This valuable news reached the Duke of Newcastle on October 30, 1754.

As to the Irish plot reported by James Mohr, I found, among the papers of the late Comte d'Albanie, a letter from an Irish gentleman, containing record of a family tradition. Charles, it was said, had passed some time near the Giant's Causeway: the date was uncertain, the authority was vague, and there is no other confirmation of James Mohr's preposterous inventions.

CHAPTER XI - ‘A MAN UNDONE.’ 1754

Jacobite hopes - Blighted by the conduct of Charles - His seclusion - His health is affected - His fierce impatience - Miss Walkinshaw - Letter from young Edgar - The Prince easily tracked - Fears of his English correspondents - Remonstrances of Goring - The English demand Miss Walkinshaw’s dismissal - Danger of discarding Dumont - Goring fears the Bastille - Cruelty of dismissing Catholic servants - Charles’s lack of generosity - Has relieved no poor adherents - Will offend both Protestants and Catholics - Opinion of a Protestant - Toleration desired - Goring asks leave to resign - Charles’s answer - Goring’s advice - Charles’s reply - Needs money - Proceedings of Pickle - In London - Called to France - To see the Earl Marischal - Charles detected at Liège - Verbally dismisses Goring - Pickle’s letter to England - ‘Best metal buttons’ - Goring to the Prince - The Prince’s reply - Last letter from Goring - His ill-treatment - His danger in Paris - His death in Prussia - The Earl Marischal abandons the Prince - His distress - ‘The poison.’

The year 1754 saw the practical ruin of Charles, and the destruction of the Jacobite party in England. The death of Henry Pelham, in March, the General Election which followed, the various discontents of the time, and a recrudescence of Jacobite sentiment, gave them hopes, only to be blighted. Charles no longer, as before, reports, ‘My health is perfect.’ The Prince’s habits had become intolerable to his friends. The ‘spleen,’ as he calls it, had marked him for its own. His vigorous body needed air and exercise; unable to obtain these, it is probable that he sought the refuge of despair. Years earlier he had told Mademoiselle Luci that the Princesse de Talmond ‘would not let him leave the house.’ Now he scarcely ventured to take a walk. His mistress was obviously on ill terms with his most faithful adherents; the loyal Goring abandoned his ungrateful service; the Earl Marischal bade him farewell; his English partisans withdrew their support and their supplies. The end had come.

The following chapter is written with regret. Readers of Dickens remember the prolonged degradation of the young hero of ‘Bleak house,’ through hope deferred and the delays of a Chancery suit. Similar causes contributed to the final wreck of Charles. The thought of a Restoration was his Chancery suit. A letter of November 1753, written by the Prince in French, is a mere hysterical outcry of impatience. ‘I suffocate!’ he exclaims, as if in a fever of unrest. He had indulged in hopes from France, from Spain, from Prussia, from a Highland rising, from a London conspiracy. Every hope had deceived him, every Prince had betrayed him, and now he proved false to himself, to his original nature, and to his friends. The venerable Lord Pitsligo, writing during the Scotch campaign of 1745, said: ‘I had occasion to discover the Prince’s humanity, I ought to say tenderness: this is giving myself no great airs, for he shows the same disposition to everybody.’ Now all is changed, and a character naturally tender and pitiful has become careless of others, and even cruel.

The connection with Miss Walkinshaw was the chief occasion of many troubles. On January 14, 1754, young Edgar wrote from Aisse to his uncle, in Rome, saying that Clementina Walkinshaw ‘has got in with the Prince, borne two children to him , and got an extreme ascendant over him. The King’s friends in England are firmly persuaded of this being true, and are vastly uneasy at it, especially as his sister is about Frederick’s widow (the Dowager Princess of Wales), and has but an indifferent character. This story gives me very great concern, and, if true, must be attended with bad consequences, whether she truly be honest or not.’

The fact was that, being now accompanied by a mistress and a child, Charles was easily traced. His personal freedom, if not his life, was endangered, and if he were taken and his papers searched, his correspondents would be in peril. On January 4, 1754, Dormer wrote, warning the Prince that ‘a young gentleman in hiding with a mistress and child’ was being sought for at Liège, and expressing alarm for himself and his comrades. Dormer also reproached Charles for impatiently urging his adherents to instant action. Goring, as ‘Stouf,’ wrote the following explicit letter from Paris on January 13, 1754. As we shall see, he had been forbidden by the French Government to come within fifty leagues of the capital, and the Bastille gaped for him if he was discovered.

Goring, it will be remarked, warns Charles that his party are weary of his demands for money. What did he do with it? His wardrobe, as an inventory shows, was scanty; no longer was he a dandy: seventeen shirts, six collars, three suits of clothes, three pocket-handkerchiefs were the chief of his effects. He did not give much in charity to poor adherents, as Goring bitterly observes. We learn that the English insist on the dismissal of Miss Walkinshaw. To discard Dumont, as Charles proposed, was to provide England with an informer. The heads of English gentlemen would be at the mercy of the executioners of Archy Cameron. To turn adrift Charles’s Catholic servants was impolitic, cruel, and deeply ungrateful. This is the burden of Goring’s necessary but very uncourtly epistle, probably written from ‘La Grandemain’s’ house:

‘You say you are determined to know from your professed friends what you are to depend on. I wish it may answer your desires, you are master, Sir, to take what steps you please, I shall not take upon me to contradict you, I shall only lay before you what I hear and see, if it can be of any service to you, I shall have done my duty in letting you know your true interest, if you think it such. In the first place, I find they were surprized and mortifyed to see the little man arrive with a message from you, only to desire money, so soon after the sum you received from the gentlemen I conducted to you, and some things have been said on the head not much to the advancement of any scheme for your service. Secondly they sent me a paper by Sir James Harrington of which what follows is a copy word for word:

'"Sir, your friend's Mistress is loudly and publickly talked off and all friends look on it as a very dangerous and imprudent step, and conclude reasonably that no Corespondance is to be had in that quarter, without risk of discovery, for we have no opinion in England of female politicians, or of such women's secrecy in general. You are yourself much blamed for not informing our friends at first, that they might take the alarum, and stop any present, or future transactions, with such a person. What we now expect from you, is to let us know if our persuasion can prevail to get rid of her."

'For God's sake, Sir, what shall I say, or do, I am at my wits end, the greif I have for it augments my illness, and I can only wish a speedy end to my life. To make it still worse you discard Dumont; he is a man I have little regard for, His conduct has been bad, but he has kept your secret, now, Sir, to be discarded in such a manner he will certainly complain to Murray and others; it will come to your friends' ears, if he does not go to England and tell them himself. He knows Mac. Mead and D. what will our friends think of you, Sir, for taking so little care of their lives and fortunes by putting a man in dispair who has it in his power to ruin them, and who is not so ignorant as not to know the Government will well reward him. Nay, he can do more: he can find you out yourself, or put your enemies in a way to do it, which will be a very unfortunate adventure.

'As for me it is in his power to have me put into the Bastille when he pleases. Perhaps he may not do this, but sure it is too dangerous to try whether he will or no; they must be men of very tryed Virtue who will suffer poverty and misery when they have a way to prevent it, so easy too, and when they think they only revenge themselves of ingratitude; for you will always find that men generally think their services are too little rewarded, and, when discarded, as he will be if you dont recall ye sentence, what rage will make him do I shall not answer for. If, Sir, you continue in mind to have him sent off I must first advise those gentlemen that they may take propper measures to put themselves in Safety by leaving the Country, or other methods as they shall like best. Now, Sir, whether such a step as this will not tend more to diminish than augment your Credit in England I leave you to determine; I only beg of you, Sir, to give me timely notice that I may get out of the way of that horrid Bastille, and put our friends on their guard, I cannot but lament my poor friend Colonel H. who must be undone by it. Ld M. thinks it too dangerous a tryall of that man's honour: for my part I shall not presume to give my own opinion, only beg of you once again that we may have time to shift for ourselves. I am obliged to you, Sir, for your most gracious Concern for my health; the doctors have advised me to take the air as much as my weakness will permit, are much against confinement, and would certainly advise me against the Bastille as very contrary to my distemper!

'I have one thing more to lay before you of greatest Consequence: you order all your Catholick Servants to be discarded, consider, Sir, the thing well on both sides; first the good that it will produce on the one side, and the ill it may produce on the other; it may indeed please some few biggotted protestants, for all religions have their biggots, but may it not disgust the great number of ye people, to see you discard faithfull men, for some of them went through all dangers with you in Scotland, upon account of their religion - without the least provision made for them. Your saying, Sir, that necessity obliges you to do it, will look a little strange to those people who send you money, and know how far you can do good with it. I assure you, Sir, if you did necessary acts of Generosity now and then, that people may see plainly that you have a real tenderness for those that suffer for you, you would be the richer for it, more people would send money than now do, and they that have sent would send more, when they saw so good use made of it.

'I have been hard put to it when I have been praising your good qualities to some of our friends, they have desired me to produce one single instance of any one man you have had the Compassion to relieve with the tenderness a King owes to a faithfull subject who has served him with the risk of his life and fortune.

'Now Sir, another greater misfortune may happen from sending off these servants in so distinguishing a manner; you will plese to remember that in the Course of your affairs the Protestants employ the Papists; the Papists join with the Protestants in sending you money and in everything that can hasten your restoration, they are a great body of men and if they should once have reason to believe they should be harder used under your government than they are under the Usurper, self preservation would oblige them to maintain the Usurper on the throne, and be assured if they take this once in their heads, they have it in their power to undoe you.

'A man of sense and great riches as well as birth, a great friend of yours, talking with me some time past of your royal qualities (note this man is a most bigotted Protestant), was observing the happyness all ranks of men would have under your reign; he considered you, Sir, as father to the whole nation, that no one set of men would be oppressed, papists, presbyterians, quakers, anabaptists, antitrinitarians, Zwinglians, and forty more that he named, though they differ, in their Creed, under so great and good a prince as you, would all join to love and respect you; that he was sure you would make no distinction between any of them, but let your Royal bounty diffuse itself equally on all. He said further that for you to disgust any of them, as they all together compose the body, so disgusting any one set of men was as if a man in full vigour of health should cut off one of his leggs or arms. He concluded with saying he was sure you was too prudent to do anything of that kind, to summ up all, he said that he looked on you as a prince divested of passions; that the misfortunes and hardships you had undergone had undoubtedly softened your great Mind so far as to be sensible of the misfortunes of others, for which reason he would do all that lay in his power to serve you; these reflections, Sir, really are what creates you the love of your people in general, and gains you more friends than yr Royal Birth.

‘Observe, Sir, what will be the event of your discarding these poor men, all of them diserving better treatment from you: they will come to Paris begging all their way, and show the whole town, English, French, and strangers, an example of your Cruelty, their Religion being all their offence; do you think, Sir, your Protestants will believe you the better protestant for it? If you do, I am affraid you will find yourself mistaken; it will be a handle for your enemies to represent you a hippocrite in your religion and Cruel in your nature, and show the world what those who serve you are to expect.

‘Now, Sir, do as you think fitt, but let me beg of you to give such Comitions to somebody else; as I never could be the author of any such advice, so I am incapable of acting in an affair that will do you, Sir, infinite prejudice, and cover me with dishonour, and am, besides these Considerations, grown so infirm that I beg your R.H. will be graciously pleased to give me leave to retire. . . . I may have been mistaken in some things, which I hope you will pardon, I do not write this as my own opinion, but really to get your affairs in a true light. . . I sware to the great God that what I write is truth, for God’s sake Sir have compassion on yourself . . . you say you “will take your party,” alas, Sir, they will coldly let you take it, don’t let your spleen get the better of your prudence and judgement . . .

‘One reflection more on what you mention about ye papist servants, may not the keeping publickly in employment ye two papist gentlemen do more harm than turning away three or four papist footmen, who can, by their low situation, have no manner of influence over your affairs . . . one of the papist footmen is besides a relation of the poor man who was lately hanged . . . when all this comes to be publick it will much injure your carackter. To summ up all, these commissions you give me, give me such affliction as will certainly end my life, they are surely calculated by you for that very reason. . . . I once more beg you will graciously please to permit me to retire, I will let my family know that my bad health only is the reason, and I don’t doubt they will maintain me.

Charles might have been expected to answer this very frank letter in a fury of anger. He kept his temper, and replied thus:

The Prince to Stouf.

‘January 18, 1754.

‘Sir, - I received yours of ye 13th. Current, and am resolved not to discard any of my Cervants, that is to say, for ye present . . .

‘It is necessary also you should send as soon as possible 300*l.* to be remitted to Stafford and Sheridan . . . you may give out of that sum Morison’s wages for half a year . . . My compliments to Sir J. Harrington, assuring him of my friendship and when you are able remit to him fifty Louis d’ors. . . . It is true I sent to E. six Months ago for Money, but it was not for ye Money alone, that served only for a pretext, however I was extremely scandalized not to have received any since I thought fit to Call for it, it is strenge such proceeding. People should, I think, well know that If it was only Money that I had at hart I would not act as I have done, and will do untill I Compass ye prosperity of My Country, which allways shall be My only Studdy: But you know that without Money one can do nothing, and in my situation the more can be had ye better. I have received nothing since ye profet but Mistress P.’s hundred Pounds given to Woulfe. I forgot to mention fifty pounds sterling to be given to Kely. . . . I am glad you have taken my Pelise, for nothing can do you more good than to keep yourself warm.’

Goring answered on February 26. The English, he said, would not send a farthing if Charles persisted in his sentiments about their ‘duty.’ His repeated despatch of messengers only caused annoyance and alarm. ‘They expect a Prince who will take advice, and rule according to law, and not one that thinks his will is sufficient.’ Charles replied as follows:

Prince to Stouf.

‘March 6, 1754.

‘I received yours tother day and am sory to find by it yr Bad State of Health. You are telling me about Laws, I am shure no one is more willing to submit to ye Laws of my Country than myself, and I have ye Vanity to say I know a little of them . . . All what I want is a definitive answer, and it is much fearer to say “yes” or “no,” than to keep one in suspence, which hinders that distressed person of taking other measures, that might make him perhaps gain his Lawsute. However, I shall neither medle or make in it untill I here from you again, which I hope will be soon, for my friend has lost all patience, and so have I to see him Linger so Long.

‘I wish with all my heart it may mend.’

At this time Pickle was not idle. He wrote to Gwynne Vaughan from London on February 25, 1754. He was going over to Paris, to extract information from the Earl Marischal. He signs ‘Roderick Random,’ and incidentally throws light on his private tastes and morals. His correspondent was, apparently, an old man, ‘Worthy old Vaughan,’ Pickle calls him later. He often addresses him as ‘Grandpapa.’ In this letter he ministers to Mr. Vaughan’s senile vices.

Add. 32,734. ‘Monday. London: February 25, 1754.

‘Dr. Sir, - I have apointed a meeting with Mr. Alexander from whom I recevd a verbal message, by a friend now in town, that came over by Caron that I am desir’d by Monsr. St. Sebastian to go streight to Venice , to settle for this summer every thing relative to his amours with Mrs. Strenge , and that, when we have settled that point, that he is to meet me upon my return from Venice in Imperial Flanders, where he is soon expected. . . . Every thing lays now upon the carpet, and if I go privately to Venice I will be at the bottom of the most minute transactions. Without going to Venice I can dow little or nothing, and *I give you my word of honour*, that I reserv’d out of the last mony not 10*l.* st., but at any rate I cross the watter to save my own credit with *our* Merchants , and if I am suplayd here, without which I can dow nothing, I am certain to learn what can’t be obtained through any other Chanel.

‘I recev’d by old Caron two extraordinary patez, which surprisingly answer Pompadour’s intentions. I have tray’d the experiment, and as I found it so effective, I have sent one of them by a Carrier that left this Saturday last in the morning, and how arrives at Bath to-morrow, Tuesday, 26th. Instant; It’s simply adrest to you at Bath, It operates in the same lively manner upon the faire sex as it does on ours. (The Lord have mercy upon the Lassies at Bath!) The Patez was sent by the Wiltshire Carrier how seets up at the Inn on the Market place at Bath, derected to the Honble. Quine Vaughan. I have had Bucks this day dining upon the relicks of your sister pattez, which is all the apologie I make for this hurried scrawle. I wait your answer with Impatience, but allwaies believe me,

with great sincerity and estime - My Dr. Sir,
'Your most affte, oblidged, humble Servt.
'RODERICK RANDOM.'

From France, when he arrived there, Pickle wrote to Gwynne Vaughan as follows:

Add. 32,735. 'Aprile: Monday 8. 1754. 4 o'clock.

'Dear Sir, - I am still in such agitation after fourteen hours passage, and sitting up with our friends *Alexr.* and *Agent* , how luckly meet me here, that I am scarse able to put pen to paper. I must here confess the difficultys I labour under since the loss of my worthy great friend on whose word I wholly relay'd. But now every thing comes far short of my expectations. I am now to aquent you that *Alexr.* meet me here, by order, to desire my proceeding to Venice as every thing without that trip will be imperfect. All I can say at this distance and in so precarious a situation is that I find they play *Mrs. Strange* hard and fast. They expect a large quantity of the very best *Brasile snuff* from hir, to balance which severl gross of good sparkling *Champagne* is to be smuggled over for hir Ladyship's use. The whole accounts of our Tobacco *and wine trade* I am told, are to be laid before me by my friend at *Venice* . But this being a Chant I can't complay with, without a certain suplay, I must beg, if this proposal be found agreeable, that I have ane imediate pointed answer.

'But if, when I leave *Venice* I go to meet St. Sebastien , the remittance must be more considerable that the sume I mention'd whilest you were at Bath . . .

'Yours most affly
'ALEXR. PICKLE.

'To Mr. Tamas Jones, at Mr. Chelburn's, a Chimmist in Scherwood Street, Golden Square, London.'

Pickle wrote again from France on April 11. His letter follows:

'Dr. Sir, - I hope my last to you upon landing came safe to hand. I will be very uneasy untill you accknowledge the recet of it. Tho' you can't expect an explicite or regular Corespondence from me, least our smuguling so severely punish'd in this country, should be any ways discover'd. Mr. *Davis* was here for a few hours last night, the particulars I reffer till meeting. Great expectations from the *Norwegian fir trade* which Merchants here think will turn out to good account, by offering them ane ample Charter to open a free trade; but *Davis* is not well vers'd in this Business, but I believe my friend at *Venice* is: I am certain that Mr. Oliver and his principal factors would harken to any proposals of St. Sebastien's upon this topick. Mr. *Davis* is of opinion that a quantity of *best mettle buttons* could be readly and cheaply purchas'd: *Mr. Johnson* will make considerable advances, but I believe this can't arrive in time for the Market, as aplication has not yet been made to *Monsr. la force* . I think I can easily divert them from this, as I can convince St. Sebastien in case I see him, that they would leave him in the lurch. This proposal comes from your side the watter. I find *Mrs. Strange* will readly except of any offer from *Rosenberge* as that negotiant can easily evade paying duty for any wine he sends hir. I can answer for *Mrs. Strange's* conduct, as it will wholly depend upon *me*, to promote or discourage this branch of trade. But I can't be answerable for other branches of our trade, as my knowledge in them depends upon others. I will drop this subject till meeting, and if then all my burdens are discharg'd, and done otherwise for, according to my former friend's intentions, and if satisfactory, nothing will be neglected in the power of Dr. Grand Papa

Your oblidged affte, humble Servant

'ALEXR. PICKLE.

'11 Aprile 1754.

'P.S. I can't conclude without declaring once for all that I shant walk but in the old course, that is, not to act now with any other but Mr. *Kenady* and yourself, the moment any other comes in play, I drop all business; But nothing essential can be done without going to Venice .

'To Mr. Tamas Jones, at Mr. Chelburn's a Chymist, in Scherwood Street, Golden Square, London.'

To exaggerate his own importance, Pickle gave here a glowing account of the Prince's prospects. These were really of the most gloomy character. A letter forwarded by Dormer (March 18) had proved that he was tracked down in Liège by the English Government. He tried Lorraine, but found no refuge, and was in Paris on April 14, when he wrote to the Earl Marischal. He thought of settling in Orleans, and asked for advice. But Goring now broke with him for ever, on the strength, apparently, of a verbal dismissal sent in anger by Charles, who believed, or affected to believe, that Goring was responsible for the discovery of his retreat. Goring wrote in these terms:

Stouf to Charles.

'May 5, 1754.

'It is now five years since I had ye honour of waiting on you in a particular manner, having made your interest my only study, neglecting everything that regarded myself. The people I have negotiated your business with, will do me the justice to own what you seem to deny, that I have honourably acquitted myself of my charge. I do not now or ever did desire to be a burthen on you, but I thank God I leave you in a greater affluence of money than I found you, which, though not out of my own purse, has been owing to my industry and trouble, not to mention the dangers I have run to effect it; all I desire now of you for my services is that you will be so gracious as to discharge me from your service, not being able to be of further use to you, yourself having put it out of my power; what I ernestly beg of you, since you let me know that you cannot support me further, to give me at least what I think my services may justly claim, *viz.* a gracious demission, with which I will retire and try in some obscure corner of ye world to gain the favour of God, who will I hope be more just to me than you have been; though I despair of ever serving him so well as I have done you. My prayers and wishes shall ever attend you, and since I am able to do you no more good I will never do you any harm, but remain most faithfully yours

'STOUF.'

Charles answered angrily:

'May 10, 1754.

'Sir, - I have yrs of ye 5th. May Directed "For His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Signed Stouf."

'I shoud *think* since the Begining was write (id est, ye superficial superscription) the *signing might accompani it*, but *Brisons Sur Les Bagatelles*, I must speke French to you, since I am affraid you understand no other Language; for my part I am true English, and want of no Equivocations, or Mental resarvations: will you serve me or not? will you obey me? have you any other Interest? Say yes or no, I shall be yr friend iff you will serve me; Iff you have anybody preferable to me to serve, Let me alone, have you ye Interest of yr Contre at hart, or a particular one, for my part I have but one God and one Country, and Untill I compas ye prosperity of my Poor Cuntry shall never be at rest, or Let any Stone unturned to compas my Ends.'

Goring answered, and here his part of the correspondence closes.

Stouf to the Prince.

'May 16.

'I recd ye most gracious letter you honoured me with dated ye 10th. of this present, and must beg your pardon if I do not rightly understand ye Contents;

first it is so different from ye Orders you were pleased to send me by Mr. Obrien who by your Command told it to Mittie, who Communicated it to me, as well as I can remember in these words, or to this purpose, "that you would neither see me, or write to me neither would you send me any money to Carry me out of this Town" . This very Town I am, as you well know, by a special order from the King of France, under severe penalties never to approach nearer than fifty leagues; for no other crime than adhering to you when Abandoned by every body; this very town that was witness to my zeal and fidelity to you at the utmost hazzard of my life, is the very place where you abandoned me to my ill fortune without one penny of money to get out of the reach of the *lettre de Cachet*, or to subsist here any longer in Case I could keep myself hid. You conceive very well, Sir, ye terrible situation I was in, had I not found a friend who, touched at my misfortunes, supplied me for my present necessities, and I know no reason for the ill usage I have now twice received from you, but that I have served you too well.

'Your friends on the other side of the water, at least those who not long since were so, can, and will when necessary, testifye with what zeal and integrity I have negotiated your affairs with them, and persons of undoubted worth on this side the water have been witness to my conduct here; and when I examine my own breast I have, I thank God, nothing to reproach myself with, nobody has been discovered by any misconduct of mine, nobody taken up, or even suspected by ye Government of having any correspondence with you, whether this has been owing to experience or chance I leave you Sir to determine. Here are Sir no Equivocations, or Mental reservations; I have, I may justly say, the reputation of a man of honour which I will carry with me to ye grave. In spite of malice and detraction, no good man ever did, nor do I believe ever will, tax me with having done an ill thing and what bad men and women say of me is quite indifferent.

'You say, Sir, you will be my friend if I will serve you, and obey you. I have, Sir, served and obeyed you, in everything that was just, at the hazard very often of my life, and to the intire destruction of my health, must I then, Sir, begin again to try to gain your favour? I am affraid, Sir, what five years service has not done, five hundred years will not attain to. I have twice, Sir, been turned off like a Common footman, with most opprobrious language, without money or cloaths. As I am a bad courtier and can't help speaking truth, I am very sure it would not be long before I experienced a third time your friendship for me, if I was unadvized enough to make the tryall. No, Sir, princes are never friends, it would be too much to expect it, but I did believe till now that they had humanity enough to reward Good services, and when a man had served to the utmost of his power, not to try to cast dishonour on him to save the charges of giving him a recompense. Secure in my innocence and Content with a small fortune, having no ambition (nor indeed ever had any but of seeing my Prince great and good) I with your leave, Sir, small retire, and spend the rest of my life in serving God, and wishing you all prosperity, since I unfortuneately cannot be for the future of any use to you. 'STOUF.'

Charles now invited the Lord Marischal to communicate with him through a fresh channel, as Goring was for ever alienated. But the Earl replied in a tone of severe censure. He defended Goring: he rebuked Charles for not attending to English remonstrances about Miss Walkinshaw, and accused him of threatening to publish the names of his English adherents. Charles answered, 'Whoever told you I gave such a message to Ed. as you mention, has told you a damned lie, God forgive them. I would not do the least hurt to my greatest enemy, were he in my power, much less to any one that professes to be mine.' He had already said, 'My heart is broke enough without that you should finish it.'

This was, practically, the end of the Jacobite party. Goring went to Berlin, and presently died in Prussian service. The Scottish adherents, in the following year, made a formal remonstrance in writing, but the end had come. Pickle (May 11) reported the quarrel with Lord Marischal to his employers. Lord Albemarle (May 29) mentioned his hopes of catching Charles by aid of his tailor! This failed, but Charles was so hard driven that he communicated to Walsh his intention to retreat over the Spanish frontier. After various wanderings he settled with Miss Walkinshaw in Basle, where he gave himself out for am English physician in search of health.

There are some curious notes by Charles, dated November 26, 1754. Among them is this:

> 'Cambel: his plot: ye poison, and my forbiding instantly by Cameron.'

Had Mr. Campbell, selected by Goring as a model of probity, proposed to *poison* 'the Elector'? Not once only, or twice, perhaps, had the Prince refused to sanction schemes of assassination. We need not forget these last traces of nobility in this 'man undone.'

CHAPTER XII - PICKLE AS A HIGHLAND CHIEF. 1755-1757

Progress of Pickle - Charles's last resource - Cluny called to Paris - The Loch Arkaig hoard - History of Cluny - Breaks his oath to King George - Jacobite theory of such oaths - Anecdote of Cluny in hiding - Charles gives Pickle a gold snuff-box - 'A northern—' - Asks for a pension - Death of Old Glengarry - Pickle becomes chief - The curse of Lochgarry - Pickle writes from Edinburgh - His report - Wants money - Letter from a 'Court Trusty' - Pickle's pride - Refused a fowling-piece - English account of Pickle - His arrogance and extortion - Charles's hopes from France - Macallester the spy - The Prince's false nose - Pickle still unpaid - His candour - Charles and the Duc de Richelieu - A Scottish deputation - James Dawkins publicly abandons the Prince - Dawkins's character - The Earl Marischal denounces Charles - He will not listen to Cluny - Dismisses his servants - Sir Horace Mann's account of them - 'The boy that is lost' - English rumours - Charles declines to lead attack on Minorca - Information from Macallester - Lord Clancarty's attacks on the Prince - On Lochgarry - Macallester acts as a prison spy - Jesuit conspiracy against Charles.

As the sad star which was born on the Prince's birth-night waned and paled, the sun of Pickle's fortunes climbed the zenith, he came into his estates by Old Glengarry's death in September 1754, while, deprived of the contributions of the Cocoa Tree Club, Charles fell back on his last resource, the poor remains of the Loch Arkaig treasure. On September 4, 1754, being 'in great straits,' he summoned Cluny to Paris, bidding him bring over 'all the effects whatsoever that I left in your hands, also whatever money you can come at.'

Cluny's history was curious. The Culloden Papers prove that, when Charles landed in Moidart, Cluny had recently taken the oaths to the Hanoverian Government. He corresponded with the Lord President, Duncan Forbes of Culloden, and was as loyal to George II. as possible. But, on August 29, 1745, Lady Cluny informed Culloden that her lord had been captured by the Prince's men. A month later, however, Cluny had not yet 'parted with his commission' in a Highland regiment. Hopes were still entertained of his deserting the Prince, 'for if Cluny could have an independent company to guard us from thieves, it's what I know he desires above all things.' Cluny, however, continued faithful to the Jacobite party. Like Lord George Murray, he was a Whig in August, a partisan of the Stuarts in September. They had, these gentlemen, a short way with oaths, thus expressed by one of their own poets:

’Let not the abjuration
Impose upon our nation,
Restrict our hands, whilst *he* commands,
Through false imagination:
For oaths which are imposed
Can never be supposed
To bind a man, say what they can
While justice is opposed.’

Acting on these principles, Cluny joined in the march to Derby, and was distinguished in the fight at Clifton. After Culloden he stayed in Scotland, by Charles’s desire, dwelling in his famous Cage on Ben Alder, so well described by Mr. Stevenson in ‘Kidnapped.’ The loyalty of his clan was beyond praise. A gentleman of Clan Vourich, whose grandfather fought at Culloden, gives me the following anecdote.

The soldiers were, one day, hard on Cluny’s tracks, and they seized a clansman, whom they compelled to act as guide. He pretended an innocence bordering on idiotcy, and affected to be specially pleased with the drum, a thing of which he could not even conceive the use. To humour him, they slung the drum over his shoulders. Presently he thumped it violently. Cluny heard the warning and escaped, while the innocence of the crafty gillie was so well feigned, that he was not even punished.

Cluny came over to France in the autumn of 1754, with what amount of treasure he could collect. In later days, a very poor exile, he gave a most eloquent tribute to Charles’s merits. ‘In deliberations he found him ready, and his opinions generally best; in their execution firm, and in secrecy impenetrable; his humanity and consideration show’d itself in strong light, even to his enemies . . . In application and fatigues none could exceed him.’

While Charles retired in 1755 with Miss Walkinshaw to Basle, where he passed for an English physician in search of health, Pickle was not idle. He had sent in a sheet of notes in April 1754. ‘Colonel Buck was lately in England, he brought Pickle a fine gold stuff-box from the Young Pretender, which Pickle showed me,’ that is, to the official who received his statement. In later years, the family of Glengarry may have been innocently proud of the Prince’s gift. Pickle added that ‘there could be no rising in Scotland without the Macdonnells: he is sure that he shall have the first notice of anything of the kind, and he is sure that the Young Pretender would attempt nothing without him.' At the French Court Pickle only knew the financier, Paris Montmartell, and d'Argenson (not the *Bête*, but his brother), through d'Argenson's mistress, Madame de Pierrecourt. 'Pickle wishes to be admitted to an audience, and so do I,' writes an English official, 'as he grows troublesome, and I don't care to have any correspondence with him or any other northern — !'

To this report is appended an appeal of Pickle's. He asks for a regular annuity of 500*l.*, being out of pocket by his 'chants' - Highland for 'jaunts.' Pickle never got the money; so ungrateful are Governments.

On May 11, Pickle congratulated his employers on having made Charles 'remove his quarters.' He adds that Charles and Lord Marischal have quarrelled. About this time, after Henry Pelham's death in March 1754, Pickle favoured his employers with a copy of an English memorial to Charles. It was purely political; the Prince was advised to purchase seats in Parliament for his friends. But in May, Charles had neither friends nor money, and he never cared for the constitutional measures recommended.

On September 1, 1754, Old Glengarry died, and Pickle, accompanied by a 'Court Trusty,' went North to look after his private affairs, for he was now Chief of the Macdonnells. He wrote from Edinburgh on September 14. Pickle wants money, as usual, and brags as usual: he tells us that Spain had recently supplied Charles with money. The Young Lochgarry of whom he speaks is Lochgarry's son, who took service with England. The Old Lochgarry threw his dirk after the youth, adding a curse on Lochgarry House as long as it sheltered a servant of the Hanoverian usurper. Family legend avers that the house was henceforth haunted by a rapping and knocking ghost, which made the place untenable. Part of Pickle's letter follows:

Add. 32,736. 'Edinburgh: September 14, 1754.

'Dr. Sir, - I have heard fully from Lochgary, who acquaints me that the Young Pretender's affairs *take a very good turn*, and that he has lately sent two Expresses to Lochgary earnestly intreating a meeting with Pickle, and upon Lochgary's acquainting him of the great distance Pickle was off, he commanded Lochgary to a rendezvous, and he set out to meet me the 4th. Instant, and is actually now with me. I shall very soon have a particular account of the present plan of operation. I have now the ball at my foot, and may give it what tune I please, as I am to be allowed largely, if I fairly enter in Co-partnership. The French King is in a very peaceable humour, but very ready to take fire if the Jacobites renew their address, which the Young Pretender assures him of, and he will the readier bestirr himself, as the English Jacobites hourly torment him. Troops, Scotch and Irish, are daily offered to be smuggled over; but I have positively yet refused to admit any. The King of Spain has lately promised to add greatly to the Young Pretender's patrimony, and English Contributors are not wanting on their parts. I suspect that my letters of late to my friends abroad are stopt, *pray enquire, for I think it very unfair dealings.*

'I am in a few weeks to go north to put some order to my affairs. I should have been put to the greatest inconveniency if "21" had not lent his friendly assistance; but as I have been greatly out of pocket by the Jants I took for Mr. Pelham, I shan't be in condition to continue trade, if I am not soon enabled to pay off the Debts then contracted. I have said on former occasions so much upon this head to no effect that I must now be more explicit, and I beg your friendly assistance in properly representing it to the Duke of Newcastle. If he thinks that my services, of which I have given convincing proofs, will answer to his advancing directly eight hundred Pounds, which is the least that can clear the Debts of my former Jants, and fix me to the certain payment yearly of Five hundred at two several terms, he may command anything in my power upon all occasions. I am sorry to be forced to this explanation, in which I always expected to be prevented. I am so far from thinking this extravagant, that I am perswaded it will save them as many thousands, by discarding that swarm of Videts, which never was in the least trusted. If the Duke of Newcastle's constituent was acquainted with this, I daresay he would esteem the demand reasonable, considering what he throws away upon others of no interest or power on either side . . .

'P.S. Pray let me not be denied the Arms I wanted, and I hope in case of accidents, you'll take care of young Lochgary.'

Now comes a letter of the 'Court Trusty' who accompanied Pickle to Scotland, a spy upon a spy. The Trusty's real name was Bruce, and, what with Pickle's pride and General Bland's distrust, he was in a very unpleasant quandary.

Add. 32,737. 'October 10, 1754.

'Dr. Sir, - I have only to acquaint you since my last, that by my keeping company with Pickle, the General has upon several occasions expressed himself very oddly of me, all which might have been prevented by a hint to him. You must perceive what a pleasant pickle I am in; It is really hard that I should suffer for doing my duty. Pickle has promised to write to you this night, if he neglects it I cannot help it. I have done what I judged right by him. I have all the reason in the world to think he will be advised by me, but he now finds his situation altered, and as such must be managed accordingly. You know him well, all therefore I shall say is, that he is naturally proud, and his Father's Death makes him no less so. I wrot you long ago for advice, whether I should go north with him, or not, to which you made me no return. This day he told me that he leaves this on Monday, and insisted for my following him. I did not positively promise, waiting to see if you write me next Post, which if you don't I will follow him, which I hope you'll approve of, as I will be the more able to judge of his affairs. I shall not remain long with him, after which you shall have a faithful Report. The General is best judge of the part he has acted, tho' I could have wished he had acted otherwise for the Interest of the common Cause, but it does not become me to prescribe Rules. I wish he had got a hint. I find the Army people here are piqu'd that I should have Pickle's ear so much, for they all push to make up to him, thinking to make something of him. I know the Governor of Fort Augustus is wrot to, to try his hand upon him, when he goes north, but he is determined to keep at a distance from them, and to keep in the hands he is now in, and I am perswaded he can, and will prove usefull, but there is a particular way of doing it, which you know is the way of the generality benorth Tay. Your Own

'CROMWELL.

'Edinburgh: October 10, 1754.'

Pickle now writes again from Edinburgh, on October 10, 1754. He wants money, and, as becomes a Highland chief, takes a high tone. He has been in service as a spy for four years - that is, since autumn 1750. He asks for 500*l*. a year, and for that will do anything 'honourable.' Young Lochgarry is not well received (he wished to enter the English army), and Pickle is refused a fowling-piece to shoot his own grouse, because he has not 'qualified' or taken the oaths. This, of course, Pickle could not do, as he had, in his capacity of spy, to keep on terms with Prince Charles. Did Young Lochgarry know Pickle to be a traitor?

'When I waited,' says Pickle, 'of General Bland, he did not receve me as I expected, haughtly refusd the use of a fulsie without I should qualifie. I smiling answer'd, if that was the case, I had then a right without his permission, but that he could not take it amiss that I debar'd all under his Comand the pleasure of hunting upon my grounds, or of any firing, which they can't have without my permission, so that I thought favours were reciprocall.'

Oddly enough, we have external testimony to the arrogance of Pickle, now a little Highland prince among his own clan.

On December 13, 1754, the Governor of Fort Augustus, Colonel Trapaud, wrote to Dundas of Arniston, the Lord Advocate:

> ‘Glengarry has behaved, among his clan, since his father’s death, with the utmost arrogance, insolence, and pride. On his first arrival to this country he went to Knoydart, and there took the advantage of his poor ignorant tenants, to oblige them to give up all their wadsetts, and accept of common interest for their money, which they all agreed to. On his return to Invergarry he called a meeting of all his friends and tennants in Glengarry, told them what the Knoydart people had done, threw them a paper and desired they might all voluntarily sign it, else he would oblige them by law, but most of the principal wadsetters refused, on which he ordered them out of his presence. . . . He has declared that no peat out of his estate should come to this fort. . . . His whole behaviour has greatly alienated the affections of his once dearly beloved followers. I shall take all opportunities of improving this happy spirit of rebellion against so great a chieftain, which may in time be productive of some public good.’

Pickle was not only a traitor, but a bully and an oppressor. Thus Pickle, in addition to his other failings, was the very worst type of bad landlord, according to the Governor of Fort Augustus.

We return to the fortunes of the Prince.

The opening of 1755 found Charles still in concealment, probably at Basle. He could only profess to James his determination ‘never to go astray from honour and duty’ (March 12, 1755). James pertinently replied, ‘Do you rightly understand the extensive sense of honour and duty?’ War clouds were gathering. France and England were at issue in America, Africa, and India. Braddock’s disaster occurred; he was defeated and slain by an Indian ambush. Both nations were preparing for strife; the occasion seemed good for fishing in troubled waters. D’Argenson notes that it is a fair opportunity to make use of Charles. Now we scrape acquaintance with a new spy, Oliver Macallester, an Irish Jacobite adventurer. Macallester, after a long prelude, tells us that his ‘private affairs’ brought him to Dunkirk in 1755. On returning to London he was apprehended at Sheerness, an ungrateful caitiff having laid information to the effect that our injured hero ‘had some connection with the Ministers of the French Court, or was upon some dangerous enterprize.’ He was examined at the Secretary of State’s Office (Lord Holland’s), was released, and returned to Dunkirk, uncompensated for all this disturbance. Here he abode, on his private business, living much in the company of the ranting Lord Clancarty. Lord Clare (Comte de Thomond, of the House of Macnamara) was also in Dunkirk at the time, and attached himself to the engaging Macallester, whom he invited to

Paris. Our fleet was then unofficially harassing that of France in America.

Meanwhile, France negotiated the secret treaty with Austria, while Frederick joined hands with England. Dunkirk began to wear a very warlike aspect, in despite of treaties which bound France to keep it dismantled. ‘Je savais que nous avions triché avec les Anglais,’ says d’Argenson. The fortifications were being secretly reconstructed. D’Argenson adds that now is the moment to give an asylum to the wandering Prince Charles. ‘The Duchesse d’Aiguillon, a great friend of the Prince, tells me that some days ago, while she was absent from her house at Ruel, an ill-dressed stranger came, and waited for her till five in the morning. Her servants recognised the Prince.’

The Duchesse d’Aiguillon, Walpole says (‘Letters,’ iv. 390), used to wear a miniature of Prince Charles in a bracelet. On the reverse was a head of Our Lord. People did not understand the connection, so Madame de Rochefort said, ‘The same motto serves for both, *my kingdom is not of this world*.’ But Charles had not been ‘ill-dressed’ in these old days!

As early as April 23, 1755, M. Ruvigny de Cosne, from Paris, wrote to Sir Thomas Robinson to the effect that Charles’s proposals to the French Court in case of war with England had been declined. An Abbé Carraccioli was being employed as a spy on the Prince. Pickle also came into play. We offer a report of his information, given in London on April 23, 1755. He knew that Charles had been at Fontainebleau since preparations for war began, and describes his false nose and other disguises. Charles was acquainted with the Maréchal de Saxe, and may have got the notion of the nose from that warrior.

Here follows Pickle, as condensed by Mr. Roberts:

Add. 32,854. ‘April 24, 1755.

‘Mr. Roberts had a meeting last night with the Scotch gentleman, called *Pickle*. The Young Pretender, he says, has an admirable Genius for skulking, and is provided with so many disguises, that it is not so much to be wondered at, that he has hitherto escaped unobserved, sometimes he wears a long false hose, which they call “*Nez à la Saxe*,” because Marshal Saxe used to give such to his Spies, whom he employed. At other times he blackens his eye brows and beard, and wears a black wig, by which alteration his most intimate Acquaintance could scarce know him: and in these dresses he has mixed often in the companies of English Gentlemen travelling thro’ Flanders, without being suspected.

‘*Pickle* promises to discover whatever shall come to his knowledge, that may be worth knowing, he can be most serviceable, he says, by residing in Scotland, for no applications can be made to any of the Jacobites there, from abroad, but he must receive early notice of them, being now, by his Father’s death, at the head of a great Clan of his name, but he is ready to cross the Sea, whenever it should be thought it worth the while to send him: which he himself is not otherwise desirous of doing, as he declares that those Journies have cost him hitherto double the money that he has received.

'He hopes to have something given him to make up this deficiency, and, if he could have a fixed yearly Allowance, he will do everything that lies in his power to deserve it. He insists upon an inviolable secrecy, without which his opportunities of sending useful Intelligences will be lost.'

Pickle does not come on the public scene again for a whole year, except in the following undated report, where he speaks of Glengarry (himself) in the third person. His account of an envoy sent to make proposals to Charles, like those made to the Prince of Orange in 1688, is an error. Perhaps Pickle was not trusted. The envoy from Scotland to Charles only proposed, as we shall see, that he should forswear sack, and live cleanly and like a gentleman.

Add. 32,861.

'Dear Sir, - I am hopeful you nor friends will take it ill, that I take the freedom to acquaint you, that my patience is quite worn out by hankering upon the same subject, for these years past, and still remaining in suspence without ever coming to a point.

'I beg leave to assure you, that you may do it to others - but, let my inclinations be ever so strong, my intentions ever so upright, my situation will not allow me to remain longer upon this precarious footing; and, as I never heard from you in any manner of way, I might readily take umbrage at your long silence, and from thence naturally conclude it was intended to drop me. But, as I am not of a suspicious temper, and judge of others' candour by my own, and that I always have the highest opinion of yours, and to convince you of mine, I shan't hesitate to acquaint you, that I would have wrot sooner, but that I waited the result of a Gentilman's journey, how at this present juncture has the eyes of this part of the Country fixt upon him - I mean, *Glengary*, into whose confidence I have greatly insinuated myself. This Gentilman is returnd home within these few days, from a great tour round several parts of the Highlands, and had concourse of people from several Clans to wait of him. But this you'll hear from Military channels readly before mine, and what follows, take it as I was informed in the greatest confidence by this Gentilman.

'This Country has been twice tampered with since I have been upon this utstation , and I find it was refer'd to *Glengary*, as the Clans thought he had a better motion of French policy, of which they seem to be greatly diffident. The offers being verbal, and the bearer being non of the greatest consequence, it was prorog'd; upon which the greatest anxiety has been since exprest to have *Glengary* t'other side, at a Conference, that he, in the name of the Clans, should demand his owne terms.

'I am for certain inform'd that a Gentilman of distinction from England went over about two months ago with signatures, Credentials, and assurances, much of the same nature as that formerly sent to the Prince of Orange, only the number mentiond by this person did not amount above sixty. I know nothing of the Person's names, but this from good authority I had for certain told me, and that they offer'd to advance a very considerable sum of mony. It was in consequence of this that proposals were made here. Prudence will not admitt of my enlarging further upon this subject, as I am at so great a distance, I must beg leave to drop it . . .'

On May 20, 1755, James wrote to the Prince. He had heard of an interview between Charles and the Duc de Richelieu, 'and that you had not been much pleased with your conversation with him.' James greatly prefers a peaceful Restoration, but, in the event of war, would not decline foreign aid. The conduct of Charles, he complains, makes it impossible for him to treat with friendly Powers. He is left in the dark, and dare not stir for fear of making a false movement. On July 10, 1755, Ruvigny de Cosne is baffled by Charles's secrecy, and is hunting for traces of Miss Walkinshaw. On July 23, 1755, Ruvigny de Cosne hears that Charles has been with Cluny in Paris. On August 16 he hears of Charles at Parma. Now Charles, on August 15, was really negotiating with his adherents, whose Memorial, written at his request, is in the Stuart Papers. They assure him that he is 'eyed' in his family. If he continues obstinate 'it would but too much confirm the impudent and villainous aspersions of Mr. D's' (James Pawkins), which, it seems, had nearly killed Sir Charles Goring, Henry Goring's brother, 'with real grief.' Dawkins had represented the Prince 'as entirely abandoned to an irregular debauched life, even to excess, which brought his health, and even his life daily in danger,' leaving him 'in some degree devoid of reason,' 'obstinate,' 'ungrateful,' 'unforgiving and revengeful for the very smallest offence.' In brief, Dawkins had described Charles as utterly impossible - 'all thoughts of him must be for ever laid aside' - and Dawkins backed his opinion by citing that of Henry Goring. The memorialists therefore adjure Charles to reform. Their candid document is signed 'C.M.P.' (obviously Cluny MacPherson) and 'H.P.,' probably Sir Hugh Paterson, Clementina Walkinshaw's uncle.

Now there is no reason for disputing this evidence, none for doubting the honesty of Mr. Dawkins in his despairing account of Charles. He was young, wealthy, adventurous, a scholar. In the preface to their joint work on Palmyra, Robert Wood - the well-known archæologist, author of a book on Homer which drew Wolf on to his more famous theory - speaks of Mr. Dawkins in high terms of praise, he gets the name of ‘a good fellow’ in Jacobite correspondence as early as 1748. Writing from Berne on May 28, 1756, Arthur Villettes quotes the Earl Marischal (then Governor of Neufchâtel for Frederick) as making strictures like those of Dawkins on the Prince. At this time the Earl was preparing to gain his pardon from George II., and spoke of Charles ‘with the utmost horror and detestation.’ His life, since 1744, ‘had been one continued scene of falsehood, ingratitude, and villainy, and his father’s was little better.’ As regards James, this is absurd; his letters are those of a heartbroken but kind and honourable parent and Prince. Villettes then cites the Earl’s account of the mission from Scotland (August 1755) urging reform on Charles, through the lips of Cluny. The actual envoy from Scotland cited here is probably not Cluny, but his co-signatory ‘H.P.,’ and he is said to have met Charles at Basle, and to have been utterly disgusted by his reception.

Now the Earl had a private pique at Charles, ever since he refused to sail to Scotland with the Prince in a herring-boat, in 1744. He had also been estranged by Charles’s treatment of Goring in 1754. Moreover, he was playing for a pardon. We might conceivably discount the Lord Marischal, and Dr. King’s censures in his ‘Anecdotes,’ for the bitterness of renegades is proverbial. But we cannot but listen to Dawkins and the loyal Henry Goring. By 1754 the Prince, it is not to be denied, was impossible.

Honourable men like the old Laird of Gask, Bishop Forbes, Lord Nairne, and Andrew Lumisden (later his secretary) were still true to a Prince no longer true to himself. Even Lumisden he was to drive from him; he could keep nobody about him but the unwearied Stuart, a servant of his own name. The play was played out; honour and all was lost. There is, unhappily, no escape from this conclusion.

Charles declined to listen to the deputation headed by Cluny in August 1755. A secretary must have penned his reply; it is well-spelled, and is grammatical. ‘Some unworthy people have had the insolence to attack my character. . . . Conscious of my conduct I despise their low malice. . . . I have long desired a churchman at your hands to attend me, but my expectations have hitherto been disappointed.’

Soon he returned to the Mass, as we learn from Macallester.

He was ill and poor. He finally dismissed his servants, including a companion of his Highland wanderings. He recommends Morrison, his valet, as a good man to shave and coif his father. The poor fellows wandered to Rome, and were sent back to France with money. Here is Sir Horace Mann's letter about these honest lads:

'Florence: December 20, 1755.

' . . . My correspondent at Rome, having given me previous notice of the departure from thence of some Livery Servants belonging to the Pretender's eldest Son, and that they were to pass through Tuscany, I found means to set two English men to watch for their arrival, who pretending to be their friends, insinuated themselves so well into their company, as to pass the whole evening with them. They were five in number, and all Scotch. The names of three were Stuart, Mackdonnel, and Mackenzy. They were dressed alike in the Pretender's livery, and said they had been with his Son in Scotland, upon which the people I employed asked where he was. They answered only, that they were going to Avignon, and should soon know, and in their merriment drank "the health of the Boy that is lost and cannot be found," upon which one of them answered that he would soon be found. Another reproved him, and made signs to him to hold his tongue. They seemed to be in awe of each other.'

There was not much to be got out of the Highlanders, a race of men who can drink and hold their tongues.

On January 30, 1756, Walton, from Florence, reported that Charles was to be taken up by Louis XV., to play *un rôle fort distingué*, and - to marry a daughter of France! On January 31, Mann had the latest French courier's word for it that Charles was in Paris; but Walton added that James denied this. Pickle came to London (April 2, 1756), but only to dun for money. 'Not the smallest artickle has been performed of what was expected and at first promised.' Pickle was useless now in Scotland, and remained unsalaried; so ungrateful are kings. The centre of Jacobite interest now was France. In the 'Testament Politique du Maréchal Duc de Belleisle,' (1762) it is asserted that Charles was offered the leadership of the attack on Minorca (April 1756), and that he declined, saying, 'The English will do me justice, if they think fit, but I will no longer serve as a mere scarecrow' (*épouvantail*). In January 1756, however, Knyphausen, writing to Frederick from Paris, discredited the idea that France meant to employ the Prince.

Turn we to Mr. Macallester for more minute indications.

Macallester was now acting as led captain and henchman to the one-eyed Lord Clancarty, who began to rail in good set terms against all and sundry. For his own purposes, 'for just and powerful reasons,' Macallester kept a journal of these libellous remarks, obviously for use against Clancarty. Living at that nobleman's table, Macallester played his favourite part of spy for the mere love of the profession. He writes:

'Tuesday, January 11, 1757. - When we had drunk hard after supper he broke out, saying, "By God! dear Mac, I'll tell you a secret you don't know; there is not a greater scoundrel on the face of the earth than that same Prince; he is in his heart a coward and a poltroon; would rather live in a garret with some Scotch thieves, to drink and smoak, than serve me, or any of those who have lost our estates for his family and himself. . . . He is so great a scoundrel that he will lie even when drunk: a time when all other men's hearts are most open, and will speak the truth, or what they think . . .

'He damned himself if he did not love an Irish drummer better than any of the breed. "The Prince has no more religion," said this pious enthusiast, "than one of my coach-horses." . . . He asked me if I knew Jemmy Dawkins. I said I did not. "He could give you an account of them," said he, "but Lord Marischal has given the true character of the Prince, and certified under his hand to the people of England what a scoundrel he is . . . The Prince had the *canaille* of Scotland to assist him, thieves, robbers, and the like. . . "'

The Prince had confided to Clancarty the English Jacobites' desire that he would put away Miss Walkinshaw. 'The Prince, swearing, said he would not put away a cat to please such fellows;' but, as Lord Clancarty never opened his mouth without a curse, his evidence is not valuable. On March 8, hearing that Lochgarry was in the neighbourhood, Clancarty called him a 'thief and a cow-stealer,' and bade the footman lock up the plate! The brave Lochgarry, however, came to dinner, as being unaware of his Lordship's sentiments.

Enough of the elegant conversation of this one-eyed, slovenly Irish nobleman, whom we later find passing his Christmas with Prince Charles. Mr. Macallester now made two new friends, the adventurous Dumont and a Mr. Lewis. In July 1757, Lewis and Macallester went to Paris, and were much with Lord Clare (de Thomond). In December, Lord Clancarty came hunting for our spy, 'raging like a madman' after Macallester, much to that hero's discomposure, for, being as silly as he was base, he had let out the secret of his 'Clancarty Elegant Extracts.' His Lordship, in fact, accused Macallester of showing all his letters to Lord Clare, whom Clancarty hated. He then gave Macallester the lie, and next apologised; in fact, he behaved like Sir Francis Clavering. Before publishing his book, Macallester tried to 'blackmail' Clancarty. 'His Lordship is now secretly and fully advertised that this matter is going to the press,' and, indeed, it was matter to make the Irish peer uncomfortable in France, where he had consistently reviled the King.

It is probable that Macallester was now engaged in the French secret police.

He admits that he acted as a *mouton*, or prison spy, and gives a dreadful account of the horrors of Galbanon, where men lay in the dark and dirt for half a lifetime. Macallester next proses endlessly on the alleged Jesuit connection with Damien’s attack on Lous XV., and insists that the Jesuits, nobody knows why, meant to assassinate Prince Charles. He was in very little danger from Jesuits!

CHAPTER XIII - THE LAST HOPE. 1759

Charles asks Louis for money - Idea of employing him in 1757 - Letter from Frederick - Chances in 1759 - French friends - Murray and ‘the Pills’ - Charles at Bouillon - Madame de Pompadour - Charles on Lord George Murray - The night march to Nairn - Manifestoes - Charles will only land in England - Murray wishes to repudiate the National Debt - Choiseul’s promises - Andrew Lumisden - The marshal’s old boots - Clancarty - Internal feuds of Jacobites - Scotch and Irish quarrels - The five of diamonds - Lord Elibank’s views - The expedition starting - Routed in Quiberon Bay - New hopes - Charles will not land in Scotland or Ireland - ‘False subjects’ - Pickle waits on events - His last letter - His ardent patriotism - Still in touch with the Prince - Offers to sell a regiment of Macdonalds - Spy or colonel? - Signs his real name - ‘Alexander Macdonnell of Glengarry’ - Death of Pickle - His services recognised.

After the fatal 10th of December, 1748, Charles had entertained a bitter hatred of France, though he was always careful to blame the Ministers of Louis, not the King himself. He even refused a French pension, but this was an attitude which he could not maintain. In 1756 (July 1) he actually wrote to Louis, asking for money.

‘Monsieur Mon Frère et Cousin,’ he said. ‘With the whole of Europe I admire your virtues . . . and the benefits with which you daily load your subjects . . . Since 1744, when I left Rome, I have run many risks, encountered many perils, and endured many vicissitudes of fortune, unaided by those from whom I had the right to expect assistance, unsuccoured even by My Father. In truth such of his subjects as espoused my cause have given me many proofs of zeal, and of good will, but, since open war broke out between France and England, I have not the same support. I know not what Destiny prepares for me, but I shall put it to the touch.’

For this purpose, then, he needs money.

‘If I knew a Prince more virtuous than you, to him I would appeal.’

Whether Louis was good-natured, and gave some money for Charles to O’Hagarty and Elliot, his envoys, does not appear.

In these dispositions, Charles hoped much from the French project of invading England in 1759. Though he never wholly despaired, and was soliciting Louis XVI. even in the dawn of the Revolution, we may call the invasion of 1759 his last faint chance. Hints had been thrown out of employing him in 1757.

Frederick then wrote from Dresden to Mitchell, the English Ambassador at Berlin:

> ‘I want to let you know that yesterday a person of distinguished rank told me that a friend of his at Court, under promise of the utmost secrecy, told him this: The French intend to make a diversion in Ireland in spring. They will disembark at Cork and at Waterford. They are negotiating with the Young Pretender to put himself at the head of the Expedition, but he will do nothing, unless the Courts of Vienna and St. Petersburg guarantee the proposals made to him by France.’

Charles, in fact, was deeply distrustful of all French offers. As we small see, he later declined to embark with any expedition for Scotland or Ireland. He would go with troops destined for London, and with no others. The year 1759 was spent in playing the game of intrigue. The French Minister, the Duc de Choiseul, was, or affected to be, friendly; friendly, too, were the old Maréchal de Belleisle and the Princesse de Ligne. Louis sent vaguely affectionate messages. In Rome, James was reconciled, and indulged in a gleam of hope. Charles’s agents were Elliot, Alexander Murray (who, I think, is usually styled ‘Campbell’) ‘Holker,’ ‘Goodwin,’ Clancarty, and Mackenzie Douglas. This man, whose real name was Mackenzie, had been a Jesuit, and is said to have acted as a spy in the Dutch service. He had also been, first the secret, and then the avowed, envoy of Louis XV. to St. Petersburg in 1755-1756. On his second visit he was accompanied by the notorious Chevalier d’Eon.

As early as January 2, 1759, Murray (I think; the letters are unsigned) assures Charles of the friendship of the French Court. The King (‘Ellis’) will lend 30,000*l*. On January 8, Murray writes, and a funnier letter of veiled meanings never was penned:

> ‘January 8.
>
> ‘I arrived on Saturday morning, I immediately call’d at Mr. Cambels, not finding him went to Mr. Mansfield and delivered in the pills you sent him . . . I met Cambel at 10 o’clock, delivered him his pills, and drank a serious bottle of Burdeaux . . . delivered a pill to Harrison who with tears of tenderness in his eyes, said from the Bottom of his heart woud do anything in his power to serve that magnanimous Bourton , he brought me along to Mr. Budson’s, who after he had swallowed the pill came and made me a Low reverence, and desired me to assure Bourton of his respect.’

What the ‘pills’ were we can only guess, but their effects are entertaining.

Charles at this time was at Bouillon, the home of his cousin, the Duc de Bouillon, and he made the President Thibault there the guardian of his child, for Miss Walkinshaw did not carry off her daughter to Paris till July 1760. Murray (or Campbell) kept besieging Choiseul, Belleisle, and the Prince de Soubise with appeals in favour of Charles. We have heard how the Prince used to treat Madame de Pompadour, burning her *billets* unanswered. Now his mood was altered. His agent writes:

'February 19.

'*Campbell*, I send copy of Letter to Prince de Soubise.

'I am convinced you will not delay in writting to Madame La Marquise de Pompadour and thereby show her that your politeness and gallantry are not enferiour to your other superior qualifications, notwithstanding that you have lived for these ten years past in a manner shut up from the world. It will be absolutely necessary that you inclosed it to the P. of S. who has given up the command of ye army in Germany in order to conduct the expedition against England.'

Charles answered in this submissive fashion:

Prince to Murray.

'February 24.

'Rien ne me flatterai plus que d'assurer de Bouche Mad. L. M. de P. de l'estime et de La Consideration La plus parfaitte. Vous scavez mes sentiments pour Elle, je Les ay aussy Expliqué a Le P. de Soubise, et je ne dessirres rien tant que trouver Les occasions de lui La prouver.'

He also tried to justify his past conduct to 'Mr. Orry' (his father), especially as regarded Lord George Murray. He declared that, in the futile attempt at a night surprise at Nairn, before Culloden, Clanranald's regiment did encounter Cumberland's sentries, and found that the attempt was feasible, had Lord George not retreated, contrary to his orders.

The obstinate self-will of Charles displayed itself in thwarting all arrangements attempted by the French for employing him in their projected invasion of England. They expected a diversion to be made in their favour by his adherents, but he persistently refused to be landed either in Scotland or Ireland. He was partly justified. The French (as d'Argenson admits) had no idea, even in 1745, of making him King of the Three Kingdoms. To establish him at Holyrood, or in Dublin, and so to create and perpetuate disunion in Great

Britain, was their policy, as far as they had a policy. We may think that Charles was in no position to refuse any assistance, but his reply to Cardinal Tencin, ‘*Point de partage; tout ou rien*,’ was at least patriotic. The Dutch correspondent of the ‘Scots Magazine,’ writing on May 22, 1759, said that a French expedition for Scotland was ready, and that Charles was to sail with it, but the Prince would not lend himself to this scheme. All through the summer he had his agents, Elliot, Holker, and Clancarty, at Dunkirk, Rouen, and Boulogne. They reported on the French preparations, but, writes Charles on July 22, ‘I am not in their secret.’ He corresponded with the Duc de Choiseul and the Maréchal de Belleisle, but they confined themselves to general assurances of friendship. ‘It is impossible for the Duc de Choiseul to tell you the King’s secret, as you would not tell him yours,’ wrote an anonymous correspondent, apparently Alexander Murray.

Charles prepared manifestoes for the Press, and was urged, from England, to include certain arranged words in them, to be taken as a sign that he was actually landed. These words, of course, were to be kept a dead secret. The English Jacobites had no intention of appearing in arms to aid a French invading force, if Charles was not in the midst of it. Alexander Murray wrote suggestions for Charles’s Declaration. He was to be very strong on the *Habeas Corpus* Act, and Murray ruefully recalled his own long imprisonment by order of the House of Commons. He wished also to repudiate the National Debt, but Charles must not propose this. ‘A free Parliament’ must take the burden of the deed. ‘The landed interest can’t be made easy by any other method than by paying that prodigious load by a sponge.’ In a Dutch caricature of ‘Perkin’s Triumph’ (1745), Charles is represented driving in a coach over the bodies of holders of Consols. It is difficult now to believe that Repudiation was the chief aim of the honest squires who toasted ‘the King over the Water.’

In August, Murray reported that Choiseul said ‘nothing should be done except with and for the Prince.’

The manuscript letter-book of Andrew Lumisden, James’s secretary since Edgar’s death, and brother-in-law of Sir Robert Strange, the engraver, illustrates Charles’s intentions. On August 12, 1759, Lumisden is in correspondence with Murray. The Prince, to Lumisden’s great delight, wants his company. Already, in 1759, Lumisden had been on secret expeditions to Paris, Germany, Austria, and Venice. Macallester informs us that Sullivan, who had been in Scotland with Charles in 1745, received a command in the French army mustering at Brest. He also tells a long dull story of Charles’s incognito in Paris at this time: how he lived over a butcher’s shop in the Rue de la Boucherie, seldom went out except at night, and was recognised at Mass by a woman who had attended Miss

Walkinshaw’s daughter. Finally, the Prince went to Brest in disguise, ‘damning the Marshal’s old boots,’ the boots of the Maréchal de Belleisle, which, it seems, ‘were always stuffed full of projects.’ Barbier supposes, in his ‘Mémoires,’ that Charles was to go with Thurot, who was to attack Scotland, while Conflans invaded England. But Charles would not hear of leaving with Thurot and his tiny squadron, which committed some petty larcenies on the coast of the West Highlands.

The Prince was now warned against Clancarty of the one eye, who was bragging, and lying, and showing his letters in the taverns of Dunkirk. The old feud of Scotch and Irish Jacobites went merrily on. Macallester called Murray a card-sharper, and was himself lodged in prison on a *lettre de cachet*. Murray wrote, of the Irish, ‘their bulls and stupidity one can forgive, but the villainy and falsity of their hearts is unpardonable.’ Scotch and Irish bickerings, a great cause of the ruin in 1745, broke out again on the slightest gleam of hope.

Holker sent a curious account of the boats for embarking horses on the expedition. These he illustrated by a diagram on the back of the five of diamonds; a movable slip cut in the card gave an idea of the mechanism. The King of France, on August 27, sent friendly messages by Belleisle, but ‘could not be explicit.’ Elliot reported that Clancarty ‘would stick at no lyes to bring about his schemes.’ On September 5 came an anonymous warning against Murray, who ‘is not trusted by the French Ministry.’ On September 28, Laurence Oliphant of Gask sent verses in praise of Charles written by ‘Madame de Montagu,’ the lady who lent him 1,000*l*. years before. On October 8, Murray still reports the ‘attachment’ of Choiseul and Belleisle. He adds that neither his brother (Lord Elibank) nor any other Scotch Jacobite will stir if an invasion of Scotland is undertaken without a landing in England. On October 21 he declares that Conflans has orders to attack the English fleet lying off Havre. The sailing of Thurot is also announced: ‘I cannot comprehend the object of so small an embarkation.’ As late as October 26, Charles was still left in the dark as to the intentions of France.

Then, obviously while Charles was waiting for orders, came the fatal news in a hurried note. ‘*Conflans beaten, his ship, the “Soleil Royal,” and the “Héros” stranded at Croisic. Seven ships are come in. Ten are flying at sea*.’

Brave Admiral Hawke had routed Conflans in Quiberon Bay. *Afflavit Deus*, and scattered the fleet of France, with the last hope of Charles.

Yet hope never dies in the hearts of exiles, as is proved by the following curious letter from Murray (?). It is impossible to be certain as to the sincerity of Choiseul; the split in the Jacobite party is only too clearly indicated.

From Campbell (probably Murray).

'December 10.

'I delivered your letter this evening and had a long conference with both the Ministers: Mr. Choiseul assured me upon his word of honour that Your R.H. should be inform'd in time before the departure of Mr. de Gouillon, so that you might go with that embarquement if you thought proper, upon which I interrupted him and told him if they were destined for the Kingdom of Ireland that it would be to no manner of purpose, for I was certain you would not go, and that you had at all times expressly ordered me to tell them so; he continued his conversation and said you should be equally informed when the P. of S. embarked. I answered as to every project for England that you would not ballance one moment, but that you would not, nor could not in honour enter into any other project but that of going to London, and if once master of that city both Ireland and Scotland would fall of course, as that town was the fountain of all the riches; he then hinted that Guillion's embarkment was not for Ireland, and talked of Scotland.

'I then told him of the message you had received from my brother and the other leading men of the party, in that country, that not a man of consequence would stir unless the debarkment was made at the same time in England, and that every person who pretended the contrary, ought to be regarded as the enemy of your R.H. as well as of France. He then told me that in case you did not choose to go with Mr. de Guillion that it would be necessary to send one with a declaration in your name; I told him I could make no answers to that proposition, as I had never heard you talk of declarations of any sort before you was landed in England, and that you had settled all that matter, with your friends in England and Scotland. He assured me that the intentions of the King and his Ministers were unalterable as to their fixed resolution to serve you, but that they met with difficulties in regard to the transports and flat-bottomed boats which retarded the affair longer than they imagined, and that though they had already spent twenty four million every thing was not yet ready.

'This is as near as I can recollect the purport of his conversation excepting desiring to see him before my return to Your R.H. I afterwards saw your good friend the Marcel who told me that every thing that depended upon his department was ready, and said pretty near what Mr. de Choiseul had told concerning the delays of the transports, seventeen of which they yet wanted. He assured me it was the thing on earth he desired the most to see you established upon the throne of your Ancestors, and that he would with plesure give you his left arm, rather than it should not succeed: I am perfectly convinced of the sincere intention of the King and Ministers, and that nothing but the interposition of heaven can prevent your success.

'I have not yet seen the P. of S. but shall to-morrow: your Cousin Bethune is greatly attached to you, and has done you great justice in destroying the villanous lyes, and aspersions of some of your false subjects , who by a pretended zeal for you got access to the ministers, and have had the impudence to present memorials as absurd and ridiculous, as their great quality, and immense fortunes they have lost by being attached to your family. I flatter myself you will very soon be convinced of all their infamous low schemes.'

Meanwhile, in all probability, Pickle was waiting to see how matters would fall out. If Conflans beat Hawke, and if Thurot landed in the Western Highlands, *then* Pickle would have rallied to the old flag, *Tandem Triumphans*, and welcomed gloriously His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Then the despised warrant of a peerage would have come forth, and Lord Glengarry, I conceive, would have hurried to seize the Duke of Newcastle's papers, many of which were of extreme personal interest to himself. But matters chanced otherwise, so Pickle wrote his last extant letter to the English Government

Add. 32,902.

'My Lord , - As I am confident your Grace will be at a lose to find out your present Corespondent, it will, I believe, suffice to recall to mind *Pickle,* how some time ago had a conference with the young Gentilman whom honest old Vaughan brought once to Clermont to waite of yr. Grace. I find he still retains the same ardent inclination to serve his King and Country, yet, at same time, he bitterly complains that he has been neglected, and nothing done for him of what was promis'd him in the strongest terms, and which he believes had been strickly perform'd, had your most worthy Brother, his great friend and Patron, surviv'd till now. He desires me aquent your Grace that upon a late criticall juncture he was prepairing to take post for London to lay affaires of the greatest moment before his Majesty, but the suden blow given the enemy by Admiral Hack keept him back for that time. But now that he finds that they are still projecting to execute their first frustrated schem, there present plan of operation differing in nothing from the first, but in what regards North Britain. He has certain information of this by verbal Expresses; writting beeing absolutely dischargd for fear of discovery. He desires me aquent your Grace of this, that you may lay the whole before His Majesty.

'If His Majesty's Enemys should once more faile in their favourite scheme of Envasion, this young gentilman intends to make offer of raising a Regiment of as good men as ever was levied in North Britain, if he gets the Rank of full

Colonell, the nomenation of his Officers, and suitable levie Mony. He can be of infinite service in either capacity mentioned in this letter , that his Majesty is graciously pleasd to employ him. He begs that this may not be delay'd to be laid before the King, as things may soon turn out very serious. He makes a point with your Grace that this be communicated to no mortall but his Majesty, and he is willing to forfite all pretensions to the Royall favour, if his services at this criticall juncture does not meritt his Majesty's aprobation. If your Grace calls upon him at this time, as he was out of pocket upon further Chants, it will be necessary to remit him a bill payable at sight for whatever little sum is judg'd proper for the present, untill he gives proof of his attachment *to the best of Sovereigns*, and of his reale zeale for the service of his King and Country, against a most treacherous and perfidious Enemy. I have now done my duty, my Lord, reffering the whole manadgement to your Grace, and I beg youl pardon the freedom I have taken as I have the honour to remain at all times

'My Lord, your Grace's Most obedient and most oblidged humble Servt.

'PICKLE,

'February 19, 1760.

'Mack mention of *Pickle*. His Majesty will remember Mr. Pelham did, upon former affairs of great consequence.

'Direction - To *Alexander Mackdonell of Glengary* by Foraugustus .'

Pickle, as he remarks in one of his artless letters, 'is not of a suspicious temper, but judges of others' candour by his own.' He now carries this honourable freedom so far as to give his own noble name and address. *Habemus confitentem reum*. Persons more suspicious and less candid will believe that Pickle, in November 1759, was standing to win on both colours. His readiness to sell a regiment of Macdonnells to fight for King George is very worthy of a Highland chief of Pickle's kind.

On December 23, 1761, Alastair Macdonnell of Glengarry died, and Pickle died with him. He had practically ceased to be useful; the world was anticipating Burns's advice:

'Adore the rising sun,
And leave a man undone
  To his fate!'

We have unmasked a character of a kind never popular. Yet, in the government of the world, Pickle served England well. But for him there might have been another highland rising, and more fire and bloodshed. But for him the Royal Family might have perished in a nocturnal brawl. Only one man, Archibald Cameron, died through Pickle’s treasons. The Prince with whom he drank, and whom he betrayed, had become hopeless and worthless. The world knows little of its greatest benefactors, and Pickle did good by stealth. Now his shade may or may not ‘blush to find it fame,’ and to be placed above Murray of Broughton, beside Menteith and Assynt, legendary Ganelons of Scotland.

CHAPTER XIV - CONCLUSION

Conclusion - Charles in 1762 - Flight of Miss Walkinshaw - Charles quarrels with France - Remonstrance from Murray - Death of King James - Charles returns to Rome - His charm - His disappointments - Lochgarry enters the Portuguese service - Charles declines to recognise Miss Walkinshaw - Report of his secret marriage to Miss Walkinshaw - Denied by the lady - Charles breaks with Lumisden - Bishop Forbes - Charles's marriage - The Duchess of Albany' - 'All ends in song - The Princesse de Talmond - The end.

With the death of Pickle, the shabby romance of the last Jacobite struggle finds its natural close.

Of Charles we need say little more. Macallester represents him as hanging about the coasts of England in 1761-1762, looking out for favourable landing-places, or sending his valet, Stuart, to scour Paris in search of Miss Walkinshaw. That luckless lady fled from Charles at Bouillon to Paris in July 1760, with her daughter, and found refuge in a convent. As Lord Elcho reports her conversation, Charles was wont to beat her cruelly. For general circulation she averred that she and James merely wished her daughter to be properly educated.

Charles, in fact, picked a new quarrel with France on the score of his daughter. Louis refused to make Miss Walkinshaw (now styled Countess of Albertroff) resign her child to Charles's keeping. He was very fond of children, and Macallester, who hated him, declares that, when hiding in the Highlands, he would amuse himself by playing with the baby of a shepherd's wife. None the less, his habits made him no proper guardian of his own little girl. In 1762, young Oliphant of Gask, who visited the Prince at Bouillon, reports that he will have nothing to do with France till his daughter is restored to him. He held moodily aloof, and then the Peace came. Lumisden complains that 'Burton' (the Prince) is 'intractable.' He sulked at Bouillon, where he hunted in the forests. Here is a sad and tender admonition from Murray, whose remonstrances were more softly conveyed than those of Goring:

'Thursday.

'When I have the honour of being with you I am miserable, upon seeing you take so little care of a health which is so precious to every honest man, but more so to me in particular, because I know you, and therefore can't help loving, honouring, and esteeming you; but alass! what service can my zeal and attachment be to my dear master, unless he lays down a plan and system, and follows it, such as his subjects and all mankind will, and must approve of.'

Young Gask repeats the same melancholy tale. Charles was hopeless. For some inscrutable reason he was true to Stafford (who had aided his secret flight from Rome in 1744) and to Sheridan, supporting them at Avignon.

'Old Mr. Misfortunate' (King James) died at Rome it 1766; he never saw his 'dearest Carluccio' after the Prince stole out of the city, full of hope, in 1744 -

'A fairy Prince with happy eyes
And lighter-footed than the fox.'

James expired 'without the least convulsion or agony,' says Lumisden, 'but with his usual mild serenity in his countenance. . . . He seemed rather to be asleep than dead.' A proscribed exile from his cradle, James was true to faith and honour. What other defeated and fugitive adventurer ever sent money to the hostile general for the peasants who had suffered from the necessities of war?

On January 23, 1766, Lumisden met Charles on his way to Rome. 'His legs and feet were considerably swelled by the fatigue of the journey. In other respects he enjoys perfect health, and charms every one who approaches him.' The Prince was 'miraculously' preserved when his coach was overturned on a precipice near Bologna. Some jewels and family relics had not been returned by Cluny, and there were difficulties about sending a messenger for them: these occupy much of Lumisden's correspondence.

Charles met only with 'mortifications' at Rome. The Pope dared not treat him on a Royal footing. In April 1766, our old friend, Lochgarry, took service with Portugal. Charles sent congratulations, 'and doubts not your son will be ready to draw the sword in his just Cause.' The sword remained undrawn. Charles had now but an income of 47,000 *livres*; he amused himself as he might with shooting, and playing the French horn! He never forgave Miss Walkinshaw, whom his brother, the Cardinal, maintained, poorly enough. Lumisden writes to the lady (July 14, 1766): 'No one knows the King's temper better than you do. He has never, so far as I can discover, mentioned your name. Nor do I believe that he either knows where you are, nor how you are maintained. His passion must still greatly cool before any application can be made to him in your behalf.'

A report was circulated that Charles was secretly married to Miss Walkinshaw. On February 16, 1767, Lumisden wrote to Waters on 'the dismal consequences of such a rumour,' and, by the Duke of York's desire, bade Waters obtain a denial from the lady. On March 11 the Duke received Miss Walkinshaw's formal affidavit that no marriage existed. 'It has entirely relieved him from the uneasiness the villainous report naturally gave him.' On January 5, 1768, Lumisden had to tell Miss Walkinshaw that 'His Royal Highness insists you shall always remain in a monastery.' Lumisden was always courteous to Miss Walkinshaw. Of her daughter he writes: 'May she ever possess in the highest degree, those elegant charms of body and mind, which you so justly and assiduously cultivate. . . . Did the King know that I had wrote to you, he would never pardon me.'

On December 20, 1768, Charles had broken with Lumisden and the rest of his suite. 'Our behaviour towards him was that of faithful subjects and servants, jealous at all times to preserve his honour and reputation.' They had, in brief, declined to accompany Charles in his carriage when his condition demanded seclusion. Lumisden writes (December 8, 1767), 'His Royal Highness' (the Duke of York) 'thanked us for our behaviour in the strongest terms.'

We need follow no further the story of a consummated degradation. Charles threw off one by one, on grounds of baseless suspicion, Lord George Murray, Kelly (to please Lord Marischal), Goring, and now drove from him his most attached servants. He never suspected Glengarry. But neither time, nor despair, nor Charles's own fallen self could kill the loyalty of Scotland. Bishop Forbes, far away, heard of his crowning folly, and - blamed Lumisden and his companion, Hay of Restalrig! When Charles, on Good Friday, 1772, married Louise of Stolberg, the remnant of the faithful in Scotland drank to 'the fairest Fair,' and to an heir of the Crown.

'L'Écosse ne peut pas te juger: elle t' aime!'

Into the story of an heir, born at Sienna, and entrusted to Captain Allen, R.N., to be brought up in England, we need not enter. In Lord Braye's manuscripts (published by the Historical MSS. Commission) is Charles's solemn statement that, except Miss Walkinshaw's daughter, he had no child. The time has not come to tell the whole strange tale of 'John Stolberg Sobieski Stuart and Charles Edward Stuart,' if, indeed, that tale can ever be told. Nor does space permit an investigation of Charles's married life, of his wife's elopement with Alfieri, and of the last comparatively peaceful years in the society of a daughter who soon followed him to the tomb. The stories about that daughter's marriage to a Swedish Baron Roehenstart, and about their son, merit no attention. In the French Foreign Office archives is a wild plan for marrying the lady, Charlotte

Stuart, to a Stuart - any Stuart, and raising their unborn son's standard in the American colonies! That an offer was made from America to Charles himself, in 1778, was stated by Scott to Washington Irving on the authority of a document in the Stuart Papers at Windsor. That paper could not be found for Lord Stanhope, nor have I succeeded in finding it. The latest Scottish honour done to the King was Burns's 'Birthday Ode' of 1787, and his song for 'The Bonny Lass o' Albany.'

'This lovely maid's of royal blood,
   That rulèd Albion's kingdoms three,
But oh, alas for her bonnie face!
   They hae wrang'd the lass of Albanie!'

Tout finit par des chansons!

Of the Stuart cause we may say, as Callimachus says of his dead friend Heraclitus:

'Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales awake,
For death takes everything away, but these he cannot take.'

A hundred musical notes keep green the memory of the last Prince of Romance, the beloved, the beautiful, the brave Prince Charlie - *everso missus succurrere saeclo*. The overturned age was not to be rescued by charms and virtues which the age itself was to ruin and destroy. Loyal memories are faithful, not to what the Prince became under stress of exile, and treachery, and hope deferred, and death in life, *de vivre et de pas vivre* - but to what he once was, *Tearlach Righ nan Gael*.

Of one character in this woful tale a word may be said. The Princesse de Talmond was visited by Horace Walpole in 1765. He found her in 'charitable apartments in the Luxembourg,' and he tripped over cats and stools (and other things) in the twilight of a bedroom hung with pictures of Saints and Sobieskis. At last, and very late, the hour of her conversion had been granted, by St. François Xavier, to the prayers of her husband. We think of the Baroness Bernstein in her latest days as we read of the end of the Princesse. She had governed Charles 'with fury and folly.' Of all the women who had served him - Flora Macdonald, Madame de Vassé, Mademoiselle Luci, Miss Walkinshaw -

did he remember none when he wrote that he understood men, but despaired of understanding women, ‘they being so much more wicked and impenetrable’?

THE BOOK OF DREAMS AND GHOSTS

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PREFACE

The chief purpose of this book is, if fortune helps, to entertain people interested in the kind of narratives here collected. For the sake of orderly arrangement, the stories are classed in different grades, as they advance from the normal and familiar to the undeniably startling. At the same time an account of the current theories of Apparitions is offered, in language as free from technicalities as possible. According to modern opinion every "ghost" is a "hallucination," a false perception, the perception of something which is not present.

It has not been thought necessary to discuss the psychological and physiological processes involved in perception, real or false. Every "hallucination" is a perception, "as good and true a sensation as if there were a real object there. The object happens *not* to be there, that is all." We are not here concerned with the visions of insanity, delirium, drugs, drink, remorse, or anxiety, but with "sporadic cases of hallucination, visiting people only once in a lifetime, which seems to be by far the most frequent type". "These," says Mr. James, "are on any theory hard to understand in detail. They are often extraordinarily complete; and the fact that many of them are reported as *veridical*, that is, as coinciding with real events, such as accidents, deaths, etc., of the persons seen, is an additional complication of the phenomenon." A ghost, if seen, is undeniably so far a "hallucination" that it gives the impression of the presence of a real person, in flesh, blood, and usually clothes. No such person in flesh, blood, and clothes, is actually there. So far, at least, every ghost is a hallucination, "*that*" in the language of Captain Cuttle, "you may lay to," without offending science, religion, or common-sense. And that, in brief, is the modern doctrine of ghosts.

The old doctrine of "ghosts" regarded them as actual "spirits" of the living or the dead, freed from the flesh or from the grave. This view, whatever else may be said for it, represents the simple philosophy of the savage, which may be correct or erroneous. About the time of the Reformation, writers, especially Protestant writers, preferred to look on apparitions as the work of deceitful devils, who masqueraded in the aspect of the dead or living, or made up phantasms out of "compressed air". The common-sense of the eighteenth century dismissed all apparitions as "dreams" or hoaxes, or illusions caused by real objects misinterpreted, such as rats, cats, white posts, maniacs at large, sleep-walkers, thieves, and so forth. Modern science, when it admits the possibility of occasional hallucinations in the sane and healthy, also admits, of course, the existence of apparitions. These, for our purposes, are hallucinatory appearances occurring in the experience of people healthy and sane. The difficulty begins when we ask whether these appearances ever have any provoking mental cause outside the minds of the people who experience them — any cause arising in the minds of others, alive or dead. This is a question which orthodox psychology does not approach, standing aside from any evidence which may be produced.

This book does not pretend to be a convincing, but merely an illustrative collection of evidence. It may, or may not, suggest to some readers the desirableness of further inquiry; the author certainly does not hope to do more, if as much.

It may be urged that many of the stories here narrated come from remote times, and, as the testimony for these cannot be rigidly studied, that the old unauthenticated stories clash with the analogous tales current on better authority in our own day. But these ancient legends are given, not as evidence, but for three reasons: first, because of their merit as mere stories; next, because several of them are now perhaps for the first time offered with a critical discussion of their historical sources; lastly, because the old legends seem to show how the fancy of periods less critical than ours dealt with such facts as are now reported in a dull undramatic manner. Thus (1) the Icelandic ghost stories have peculiar literary merit as simple dramatic narratives. (2) Every one has heard of the Wesley ghost, Sir George Villiers's spectre, Lord Lyttelton's ghost, the Beresford ghost, Mr. Williams's dream of Mr. Perceval's murder, and so forth. But the original sources have not, as a rule, been examined in the ordinary spirit of calm historical criticism, by aid of a comparison of the earliest versions in print or manuscript. (3) Even ghost stories, as a rule, have some basis of fact, whether fact of hallucination, or illusion, or imposture. They are, at lowest, "human documents". Now, granting such facts (of imposture, hallucination, or what you will), as our dull, modern narratives contain, we can regard these facts, or things like these, as the *nuclei* which our less critical ancestors elaborated into their extraordinary romances. In this way the belief in demoniacal possession (distinguished, as such, from madness and epilepsy) has its nucleus, some contend, in the phenomena of alternating personalities in certain patients. Their characters, ideas, habits, and even voices change, and the most obvious solution of the problem, in the past, was to suppose that a new alien personality — a "devil" — had entered into the sufferer.

Again, the phenomena occurring in "haunted houses" (whether caused, or not, by imposture or hallucination, or both) were easily magnified into such legends as that of Grettir and Glam, and into the monstrosities of the witch trials. Once more the simple hallucination of a dead person's appearance in his house demanded an explanation. This was easily given by evolving a legend that he was a spirit, escaped from purgatory or the grave, to fulfil a definite purpose. The rarity of such purposeful ghosts in an age like ours, so rich in ghost stories, must have a cause. That cause is, probably, a dwindling of the myth-making faculty.

Any one who takes these matters seriously, as facts in human nature, must have discovered the difficulty of getting evidence at first hand. This arises from several causes. First, the cock-sure common-sense of the years from 1660 to 1850, or so, regarded every one who had experience of a hallucination as a dupe, a lunatic, or a liar. In this healthy state of opinion, eminent people like Lord Brougham kept their experience to themselves, or, at most, nervously protested that they "were sure it was only a dream". Next, to tell the story was, often, to enter on a narrative of intimate, perhaps painful, domestic circumstances.

Thirdly, many persons now refuse information as a matter of “principle,” or of “religious principle,” though it is difficult to see where either principle or religion is concerned, if the witness is telling what he believes to be true. Next, some devotees of science aver that these studies may bring back faith by a side wind, and, with faith, the fires of Smithfield and the torturing of witches. These opponents are what Professor Huxley called “dreadful consequences argufiers,” when similar reasons were urged against the doctrine of evolution. Their position is strongest when they maintain that these topics have a tendency to befog the intellect. A desire to prove the existence of “new forces” may beget indifference to logic and to the laws of evidence. This is true, and we have several dreadful examples among men otherwise scientific. But all studies have their temptations. Many a historian, to prove the guilt or innocence of Queen Mary, has put evidence, and logic, and common honesty far from him. Yet this is no reason for abandoning the study of history.

There is another class of difficulties. As anthropology becomes popular, every inquirer knows what customs he *ought* to find among savages, so, of course, he finds them. In the same way, people may now know what customs it is orthodox to find among ghosts, and may pretend to find them, or may simulate them by imposture. The white sheet and clanking chains are forsaken for a more realistic rendering of the ghostly part. The desire of social notoriety may beget wanton fabrications. In short, all studies have their perils, and these are among the dangers which beset the path of the inquirer into things ghostly. He must adopt the stoical maxim: “Be sober and do not believe” — in a hurry.

If there be truth in even one case of “telepathy,” it will follow that the human soul is a thing endowed with attributes not yet recognised by science. It cannot be denied that this is a serious consideration, and that very startling consequences might be deduced from it; such beliefs, indeed, as were generally entertained in the ages of Christian darkness which preceded the present era of enlightenment. But our business in studies of any kind is, of course, with truth, as we are often told, not with the consequences, however ruinous to our most settled convictions, or however pernicious to society.

The very opposite objection comes from the side of religion. These things we learn, are spiritual mysteries into which men must not inquire. This is only a relic of the ancient opinion that he was an impious character who first launched a boat, God having made man a terrestrial animal. Assuredly God put us into a world of phenomena, and gave us inquiring minds. We have as much right to explore the phenomena of these minds as to explore the ocean. Again, if it be said that our inquiries may lead to an undignified theory of the future life (so far they have not led to any theory at all), that, also, is the position of the Dreadful

Consequences Argufier. Lastly, “the stories may frighten children”. For children the book is not written, any more than if it were a treatise on comparative anatomy.

The author has frequently been asked, both publicly and privately: “Do you believe in ghosts?” One can only answer: “How do you define a ghost?” I do believe, with all students of human nature, in hallucinations of one, or of several, or even of all the senses. But as to whether such hallucinations, among the sane, are ever caused by psychical influences from the minds of others, alive or dead, not communicated through the ordinary channels of sense, my mind is in a balance of doubt. It is a question of evidence.

In this collection many stories are given without the real names of the witnesses. In most of the cases the real names, and their owners, are well known to myself. In not publishing the names I only take the common privilege of writers on medicine and psychology. In other instances the names are known to the managers of the Society for Psychical Research, who have kindly permitted me to borrow from their collections.

While this book passed through the press, a long correspondence called “On the Trail of a Ghost” appeared in *The Times*. It illustrated the copious fallacies which haunt the human intellect. Thus it was maintained by some persons, and denied by others, that sounds of unknown origin were occasionally heard in a certain house. These, it was suggested, might (if really heard) be caused by slight seismic disturbances. Now many people argue, “Blunderstone House is not haunted, for I passed a night there, and nothing unusual occurred”. Apply this to a house where noises are actually caused by young earthquakes. Would anybody say: “There are no seismic disturbances near Blunderstone House, for I passed a night there, and none occurred”? Why should a noisy ghost (if there is such a thing) or a hallucinatory sound (if there is such a thing), be expected to be more punctual and pertinacious than a seismic disturbance? Again, the gentleman who opened the correspondence with a long statement on the negative side, cried out, like others, for scientific publicity, for names of people and places. But neither he nor his allies gave their own names. He did not precisely establish his claim to confidence by publishing his version of private conversations. Yet he expected science and the public to believe his anonymous account of a conversation, with an unnamed person, at which he did not and could not pretend to have been present. He had a theory of sounds heard by himself which could have been proved, or disproved, in five minutes, by a simple experiment. But that experiment he does not say that he made.

This kind of evidence is thought good enough on the negative side. It certainly would not be accepted by any sane person for the affirmative side. If what is called psychical research has no other results, at least it enables us to perceive the fallacies which can impose on the credulity of common-sense.

In preparing this collection of tales, I owe much to Mr. W. A. Craigie, who translated the stories from the Gaelic and the Icelandic; to Miss Elspeth Campbell, who gives a version of the curious Argyll tradition of Ticonderoga (rhymed by Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, who put a Cameron where a Campbell should be); to Miss Violet Simpson, who found the Windham MS. about the Duke of Buckingham's story, and made other researches; and to Miss Goodrich Freer, who pointed out the family version of "The Tyrone Ghost".

CHAPTER I

Arbuthnot on Political Lying. Begin with "Great Swingeing Falsehoods". The Opposite Method to be used in telling Ghost Stones. Begin with the more Familiar and Credible. Sleep. Dreams. Ghosts are identical with Waking Dreams. Possibility of being Asleep when we think we are Awake. Dreams shared by several People. Story of the Dog Fanti. The Swithinbank Dream. Common Features of Ghosts and Dreams. Mark Twain's Story. Theory of Common-sense. Not Logical. Fulfilled Dreams. The Pig in the Palace. The Mignonette. Dreams of Reawakened Memory. The Lost Cheque. The Ducks' Eggs. The Lost Key. Drama in Dreams. The Lost Securities. The Portuguese Gold-piece. St. Augustine's Story. The Two Curmas. Knowledge acquired in Dreams. The Assyrian Priest. The Déjà Vu. "I have been here before." Sir Walter's Experience. Explanations. The Knot in the Shutter. Transition to Stranger Dreams.

Arbuthnot, in his humorous work on *Political Lying*, commends the Whigs for occasionally trying the people with "great swingeing falsehoods". When these are once got down by the populace, anything may follow without difficulty. Excellently as this practice has worked in politics (compare the warming-pan lie of 1688), in the telling of ghost stories a different plan has its merits. Beginning with the common-place and familiar, and therefore credible, with the thin end of the wedge, in fact, a wise narrator will advance to the rather unusual, the extremely rare, the undeniably startling, and so arrive at statements which, without this discreet and gradual initiation, a hasty reader might, justly or unjustly, dismiss as "great swingeing falsehoods".

The nature of things and of men has fortunately made this method at once easy, obvious, and scientific. Even in the rather fantastic realm of ghosts, the stories fall into regular groups, advancing in difficulty, like exercises in music or in a foreign language. We therefore start from the easiest Exercises in Belief, or even from those which present no difficulty at all. The defect of the method is that easy stories are dull reading. But the student can "skip". We begin with common every-night dreams.

Sleeping is as natural as waking; dreams are nearly as frequent as every-day sensations, thoughts, and emotions. But dreams, being familiar, are credible; it is admitted that people do dream; we reach the less credible as we advance to the less familiar. For, if we think for a moment, the alleged events of ghostdom —

apparitions of all sorts — are precisely identical with the every-night phenomena of dreaming, except for the avowed element of sleep in dreams.

In dreams, time and space are annihilated, and two severed lovers may be made happy. In dreams, amidst a grotesque confusion of things remembered and things forgot, we *see* the events of the past (I have been at Culloden fight and at the siege of Troy); we are present in places remote; we behold the absent; we converse with the dead, and we may even (let us say by chance coincidence) forecast the future. All these things, except the last, are familiar to everybody who dreams. It is also certain that similar, but yet more vivid, false experiences may be produced, at the word of the hypnotiser, in persons under the hypnotic sleep. A hypnotised man will take water for wine, and get drunk on it.

Now, the ghostly is nothing but the experience, when men are awake, or *apparently* awake, of the every-night phenomena of dreaming. The vision of the absent seen by a waking, or apparently waking, man is called “a wraith”; the waking, or apparently waking, vision of the dead is called “a ghost”. Yet, as St. Augustine says, the absent man, or the dead man, may know no more of the vision, and may have no more to do with causing it, than have the absent or the dead whom we are perfectly accustomed to see in our dreams. Moreover, the comparatively rare cases in which two or more waking people are alleged to have seen the same “ghost,” simultaneously or in succession, have *their* parallel in sleep, where two or more persons simultaneously dream the same dream. Of this curious fact let us give one example: the names only are altered.

THE DOG FANTI

Mrs. Ogilvie of Drumquaigh had a poodle named Fanti. Her family, or at least those who lived with her, were her son, the laird, and three daughters. Of these the two younger, at a certain recent date, were paying a short visit to a neighbouring country house. Mrs. Ogilvie was accustomed to breakfast in her bedroom, not being in the best of health. One morning Miss Ogilvie came down to breakfast and said to her brother, "I had an odd dream; I dreamed Fanti went mad".

"Well, that *is* odd," said her brother. "So did I. We had better not tell mother; it might make her nervous."

Miss Ogilvie went up after breakfast to see the elder lady, who said, "Do turn out Fanti; I dreamed last night that he went mad and bit".

In the afternoon the two younger sisters came home.

"How did you enjoy yourselves?" one of the others asked.

"We didn't sleep well. I was dreaming that Fanti went mad when Mary wakened me, and said she had dreamed Fanti went mad, and turned into a cat, and we threw him into the fire."

Thus, as several people may see the same ghost at once, several people may dream the same dream at once. As a matter of fact, Fanti lived, sane and harmless, "all the length of all his years".

Now, this anecdote is credible, certainly is credible by people who know the dreaming family. It is nothing more than a curiosity of coincidences; and, as Fanti remained a sober, peaceful hound, in face of five dreamers, the absence of fulfilment increases the readiness of belief. But compare the case of the Swithinbanks. Mr. Swithinbank, on 20th May, 1883, signed for publication a statement to this effect: —

During the Peninsular war his father and his two brothers were quartered at Dover. Their family were at Bradford. The brothers slept in various quarters of Dover camp. One morning they met after parade. "O William, I have had a queer dream," said Mr. Swithinbank's father. "So have I," replied the brother, when, to the astonishment of both, the other brother, John, said, "I have had a queer dream as well. I dreamt that mother was dead." "So did I," said each of the other brothers. And the mother had died on the night of this dreaming. Mrs. Hudson, daughter of one of the brothers, heard the story from all three.

The distribution of the fulfilled is less than that of the unfulfilled dream by three to five. It has the extra coincidence of the death. But as it is very common to dream of deaths, some such dreams must occasionally hit the target.

Other examples might be given of shared dreams: they are only mentioned here to prove that all the *waking* experiences of things ghostly, such as visions of the absent and of the dead, and of the non-existent, are familiar, and may even be common simultaneously to several persons, in *sleep*. That men may sleep without being aware of it, even while walking abroad; that we may drift, while we think ourselves awake, into a semi-somnolent state for a period of time perhaps almost imperceptible is certain enough. Now, the peculiarity of sleep is to expand or contract time, as we may choose to put the case. Alfred Maury, the well-known writer on Greek religion, dreamed a long, vivid dream of the Reign of Terror, of his own trial before a Revolutionary Tribunal, and of his execution, in the moment of time during which he was awakened by the accidental fall of a rod in the canopy of his bed, which touched him on the neck. Thus even a prolonged interview with a ghost may *conceivably* be, in real time, a less than momentary dream occupying an imperceptible tenth of a second of somnolence, the sleeper not realising that he has been asleep.

Mark Twain, who is seriously interested in these subjects, has published an experience illustrative of such possibilities. He tells his tale at considerable length, but it amounts to this: —

MARK TWAIN'S STORY

Mark was smoking his cigar outside the door of his house when he saw a man, a stranger, approaching him. Suddenly he ceased to be visible! Mark, who had long desired to see a ghost, rushed into his house to record the phenomenon. There, seated on a chair in the hall, was the very man, who had come on some business. As Mark's negro footman acts, when the bell is rung, on the principle, "Perhaps they won't persevere," his master is wholly unable to account for the disappearance of the visitor, whom he never saw passing him or waiting at his door — except on the theory of an unconscious nap. Now, a disappearance is quite as mystical as an appearance, and much less common.

This theory, that apparitions come in an infinitesimal moment of sleep, while a man is conscious of his surroundings and believes himself to be awake was the current explanation of ghosts in the eighteenth century. Any educated man who "saw a ghost" or "had a hallucination" called it a "dream," as Lord Brougham and Lord Lyttelton did. But, if the death of the person seen coincided with his appearance to them, they illogically argued that, out of the innumerable multitude of dreams, some *must* coincide, accidentally, with facts. They strove to forget that though dreams in sleep are universal and countless, "dreams" in waking hours are extremely rare — unique, for instance, in Lord Brougham's own experience. Therefore, the odds against chance coincidence are very great.

Dreams only form subjects of good dream-stories when the vision coincides with and adequately represents an *unknown* event in the past, the present, or the future. We dream, however vividly, of the murder of Rizzio. Nobody is surprised at that, the incident being familiar to most people, in history and art. But, if we dreamed of being present at an unchronicled scene in Queen Mary's life, and if, *after* the dream was recorded, a document proving its accuracy should be for the first time recovered, then there is matter for a good dream-story. Again, we dream of an event not to be naturally guessed or known by us, and our dream (which should be recorded before tidings of the fact arrive) tallies with the news of the event when it comes. Or, finally, we dream of an event (recording the dream), and that event occurs in the future. In all these cases the actual occurrence of the unknown event is the only addition to the dream's usual power of crumpling up time and space.

As a rule such dreams are only mentioned *after* the event, and so are not worth noticing. Very often the dream is forgotten by the dreamer till he hears of or sees the event. He is then either reminded of his dream by association of ideas or *he has never dreamed at all*, and his belief that he has dreamed is only a form of false memory, of the common sensation of "having been here before," which he attributes to an awakened memory of a real dream. Still more often the dream is unconsciously cooked by the narrator into harmony with facts.

As a rule fulfilled dreams deal with the most trivial affairs, and such as, being usual, may readily occur by chance coincidence. Indeed it is impossible to set limits to such coincidence, for it would indeed be extraordinary if extraordinary coincidences never occurred.

To take examples: —

THE PIG IN THE DINING-ROOM

Mrs. Atlay, wife of a late Bishop of Hereford, dreamed one night that there was a pig in the dining-room of the palace. She came downstairs, and in the hall told her governess and children of the dream, before family prayers. When these were over, nobody who was told the story having left the hall in the interval, she went into the dining-room and there was the pig. It was proved to have escaped from the sty after Mrs. Atlay got up. Here the dream is of the common grotesque type; millions of such things are dreamed. The event, the pig in the palace, is unusual, and the coincidence of pig and dream is still more so. But unusual events must occur, and each has millions of dreams as targets to aim at, so to speak. It would be surprising if no such target were ever hit.

Here is another case — curious because the dream was forgotten till the corresponding event occurred, but there was a slight discrepancy between event and dream.

THE MIGNONETTE

Mrs. Herbert returned with her husband from London to their country home on the Border. They arrived rather late in the day, prepared to visit the garden, and decided to put off the visit till the morrow. At night Mrs. Herbert dreamed that they went into the garden, down a long walk to a mignonette bed near the vinery. The mignonette was black with innumerable bees, and Wilburd, the gardener, came up and advised Mr. and Mrs. Herbert not to go nearer. Next morning the pair went to the garden. The air round the mignonette was dark with *wasps*. Mrs. Herbert now first remembered and told her dream, adding, "but in the dream they were *bees*". Wilburd now came up and advised them not to go nearer, as a wasps' nest had been injured and the wasps were on the warpath.

Here accidental coincidence is probable enough. There is another class of dreams very useful, and apparently not so very uncommon, that are veracious and communicate correct information, which the dreamer did not know that he knew and was very anxious to know. These are rare enough to be rather difficult to believe. Thus: —

THE LOST CHEQUE

Mr. A., a barrister, sat up one night to write letters, and about half-past twelve went out to put them in the post. On undressing he missed a cheque for a large sum, which he had received during the day. He hunted everywhere in vain, went to bed, slept, and dreamed that he saw the cheque curled round an area railing not far from his own door. He woke, got up, dressed, walked down the street and found his cheque in the place he had dreamed of. In his opinion he had noticed it fall from his pocket as he walked to the letter-box, without consciously remarking it, and his deeper memory awoke in slumber.

THE DUCKS’ EGGS

A little girl of the author’s family kept ducks and was anxious to sell the eggs to her mother. But the eggs could not be found by eager search. On going to bed she said, “Perhaps I shall dream of them”. Next morning she exclaimed, “I *did* dream of them, they are in a place between grey rock, broom, and mallow; that must be ‘The Poney’s Field’!” And there the eggs were found.

THE LOST KEY

Lady X., after walking in a wood near her house in Ireland, found that she had lost an important key. She dreamed that it was lying at the root of a certain tree, where she found it next day, and her theory is the same as that of Mr. A., the owner of the lost cheque.

As a rule dreams throw everything into a dramatic form. Some one knocks at our door, and the dream bases a little drama on the noise; it constructs an explanatory myth, a myth to account for the noise, which is acted out in the theatre of the brain.

To take an instance, a disappointing one: —

THE LOST SECURITIES

A lady dreamed that she was sitting at a window, watching the end of an autumn sunset. There came a knock at the front door and a gentleman and lady were ushered in. The gentleman wore an old-fashioned snuff-coloured suit, of the beginning of the century; he was, in fact, an aged uncle, who, during the Napoleonic wars, had been one of the English *détenus* in France. The lady was very beautiful and wore something like a black Spanish mantilla. The pair carried with them a curiously wrought steel box. Before conversation was begun, the maid (still in the dream) brought in the lady's chocolate and the figures vanished. When the maid withdrew, the figures reappeared standing by the table. The box was now open, and the old gentleman drew forth some yellow papers, written on in faded ink. These, he said, were lists of securities, which had been in his possession, when he went abroad in 18 — , and in France became engaged to his beautiful companion.

"The securities," he said, "are now in the strong box of Messrs. — ;" another rap at the door, and the actual maid entered with real hot water. It was time to get up. The whole dream had its origin in the first rap, heard by the dreamer and dramatised into the arrival of visitors. Probably it did not last for more than two or three seconds of real time. The maid's second knock just prevented the revelation of the name of "Messrs. — ," who, like the lady in the mantilla, were probably non-existent people.

Thus dream dramatises on the impulse of some faint, hardly perceived real sensation. And thus either mere empty fancies (as in the case of the lost securities) or actual knowledge which we may have once possessed but have totally forgotten, or conclusions which have passed through our brains as unheeded guesses, may in a dream be, as it were, "revealed" through the lips of a character in the brain's theatre — that character may, in fact, be alive, or dead, or merely fantastical. A very good case is given with this explanation (lost knowledge revived in a dramatic dream about a dead man) by Sir Walter Scott in a note to *The Antiquary*. Familiar as the story is it may be offered here, for a reason which will presently be obvious.

THE ARREARS OF TEIND

“Mr. Rutherford, of Bowland, a gentleman of landed property in the Vale of Gala, was prosecuted for a very considerable sum, the accumulated arrears of teind (or tithe) for which he was said to be indebted to a noble family, the titulars (lay impropriators of the tithes). Mr. Rutherford was strongly impressed with the belief that his father had, by a form of process peculiar to the law of Scotland, purchased these teinds from the titular, and, therefore, that the present prosecution was groundless. But, after an industrious search among his father’s papers, an investigation among the public records and a careful inquiry among all persons who had transacted law business for his father, no evidence could be recovered to support his defence. The period was now near at hand, when he conceived the loss of his law-suit to be inevitable; and he had formed the determination to ride to Edinburgh next day and make the best bargain he could in the way of compromise. He went to bed with this resolution, and, with all the circumstances of the case floating upon his mind, had a dream to the following purpose. His father, who had been many years dead, appeared to him, he thought, and asked him why he was disturbed in his mind. In dreams men are not surprised at such apparitions. Mr. Rutherford thought that he informed his father of the cause of his distress, adding that the payment of a considerable sum of money was the more unpleasant to him because he had a strong consciousness that it was not due, though he was unable to recover any evidence in support of his belief. ‘You are right, my son,’ replied the paternal shade. ‘I did acquire right to these teinds for payment of which you are now prosecuted. The papers relating to the transaction are in the hands of Mr. — , a writer (or attorney), who is now retired from professional business and resides at Inveresk, near Edinburgh. He was a person whom I employed on that occasion for a particular reason, but who never on any other occasion transacted business on my account. It is very possible,’ pursued the vision, ‘that Mr. — may have forgotten a matter which is now of a very old date; but you may call it to his recollection by this token, that when I came to pay his account there was difficulty in getting change for a Portugal piece of gold and we were forced to drink out the balance at a tavern.’

“Mr. Rutherford awoke in the morning with all the words of the vision imprinted on his mind, and thought it worth while to walk across the country to Inveresk instead of going straight to Edinburgh. When he came there he waited on the gentleman mentioned in the dream — a very old man. Without saying anything of the vision he inquired whether he ever remembered having conducted such a matter for his deceased father. The old gentleman could not at first bring the circumstance to his recollection, but on mention of the Portugal piece of gold the whole returned upon his memory. He made an immediate search for the papers and recovered them, so that Mr. Rutherford carried to Edinburgh the documents necessary to gain the cause which he was on the verge of losing."

The story is reproduced because it is clearly one of the tales which come round in cycles, either because events repeat themselves or because people will unconsciously localise old legends in new places and assign old occurrences or fables to new persons. Thus every one has heard how Lord Westbury called a certain man in the Herald's office "a foolish old fellow who did not even know his own foolish old business". Lord Westbury may very well have said this, but long before his time the remark was attributed to the famous Lord Chesterfield. Lord Westbury may have quoted it from Chesterfield or hit on it by accident, or the old story may have been assigned to him. In the same way Mr. Rutherford may have had his dream or the following tale of St. Augustine's (also cited by Scott) may have been attributed to him, with the picturesque addition about the piece of Portuguese gold. Except for the piece of Portuguese gold St. Augustine practically tells the anecdote in his *De Cura pro Mortuis Habenda*, adding the acute reflection which follows.

"Of a surety, when we were at Milan, we heard tell of a certain person of whom was demanded payment of a debt, with production of his deceased father's acknowledgment, which debt, unknown to the son, the father had paid, whereupon the man began to be very sorrowful, and to marvel that his father while dying did not tell him what he owed when he also made his will. Then in this exceeding anxiousness of his, his said father appeared to him in a dream, and made known to him where was the counter acknowledgment by which that acknowledgment was cancelled. Which when the young man had found and showed, he not only rebutted the wrongful claim of a false debt, but also got back his father's note of hand, which the father had not got back when the money was paid.

"Here then the soul of a man is supposed to have had care for his son, and to have come to him in his sleep, that, teaching him what he did not know, he might relieve him of a great trouble. But about the very same time as we heard this, it chanced at Carthage that the rhetorician Eulogius, who had been my disciple in that art, being (as he himself, after our return to Africa, told us the story) in course of lecturing to his disciples on Cicero's rhetorical books, as he looked over the portion of reading which he was to deliver on the following day, fell upon a certain passage, and not being able to understand it, was scarce able to sleep for the trouble of his mind: in which night, as he dreamed, I expounded to him that which he did not understand; nay, not I, but my likeness, while I was unconscious of the thing and far away beyond sea, it might be doing, or it might be dreaming, some other thing, and not in the least caring for his cares. In what way these things come about I know not; but in what way soever they come, why do we not believe it comes in the same way for a person in a dream to see a dead man, as it comes that he sees a living man? both, no doubt, neither knowing nor caring who dreams of their images, or where or when.

"Like dreams, moreover, are some visions of persons awake, who have had their senses troubled, such as phrenetic persons, or those who are mad in any way, for they, too, talk to themselves just as though they were speaking to people verily present, and as well with absent men as with present, whose images they perceive whether persons living or dead. But just as they who live are unconscious that they are seen of them and talk with them (for indeed they are not really themselves present, or themselves make speeches, but through troubled senses these persons are wrought upon by such like imaginary visions), just so they also who have departed this life, to persons thus affected appear as present while they be absent, and are themselves utterly unconscious whether any man sees them in regard of their image."

St. Augustine adds a similar story of a trance.

THE TWO CURMAS

A rustic named Curma, of Tullium, near Hippo, Augustine’s town, fell into a catalepsy. On reviving he said: “Run to the house of Curma the smith and see what is going on”. Curma the smith was found to have died just when the other Curma awoke. “I knew it,” said the invalid, “for I heard it said in that place whence I have returned that not I, Curma of the Curia, but Curma the smith, was wanted.” But Curma of the Curia saw living as well as dead people, among others Augustine, who, in his vision, baptised him at Hippo. Curma then, in the vision, went to Paradise, where he was told to go and be baptised. He said it had been done already, and was answered, “Go and be truly baptised, for *that* thou didst but see in vision”. So Augustine christened him, and later, hearing of the trance, asked him about it, when he repeated the tale already familiar to his neighbours. Augustine thinks it a mere dream, and apparently regards the death of Curma the smith as a casual coincidence. *Un esprit fort*, *le Saint Augustin*!

“If the dead could come in dreams,” he says, “my pious mother would no night fail to visit me. Far be the thought that she should, by a happier life, have been made so cruel that, when aught vexes my heart, she should not even console in a dream the son whom she loved with an only love.”

Not only things once probably known, yet forgotten, but knowledge never *consciously* thought out, may be revealed in a dramatic dream, apparently through the lips of the dead or the never existent. The books of psychology are rich in examples of problems worked out, or music or poetry composed in sleep. The following is a more recent and very striking example: —

THE ASSYRIAN PRIEST

Herr H. V. Hilprecht is Professor of Assyriology in the University of Pennsylvania. That university had despatched an expedition to explore the ruins of Babylon, and sketches of the objects discovered had been sent home. Among these were drawings of two small fragments of agate, inscribed with characters. One Saturday night in March, 1893, Professor Hilprecht had wearied himself with puzzling over these two fragments, which were supposed to be broken pieces of finger-rings. He was inclined, from the nature of the characters, to date them about 1700-1140 B.C.; and as the first character of the third line of the first fragment seemed to read KU, he guessed that it might stand for Kurigalzu, a king of that name.

About midnight the professor went, weary and perplexed, to bed.

"Then I dreamed the following remarkable dream. A tall thin priest of the old pre-Christian Nippur, about forty years of age, and clad in a simple *abba*, led me to the treasure-chamber of the temple, on its south-east side. He went with me into a small low-ceiled room without windows, in which there was a large wooden chest, while scraps of agate and *lapis lazuli* lay scattered on the floor. Here he addressed me as follows: —

"'The two fragments, which you have published separately upon pages 22 and 26, *belong together*'" (this amazing Assyrian priest spoke American!). "'They are not finger-rings, and their history is as follows: —

"'King Kurigalzu (about 1300 B.C.) once sent to the temple of Bel, among other articles of agate and *lapis lazuli*, an inscribed votive cylinder of agate. Then the priests suddenly received the command to make for the statue of the god Nibib a pair of ear-rings of agate. We were in great dismay, since there was no agate as raw material at hand. In order to execute the command there was nothing for us to do but cut the votive cylinder in three parts, thus making three rings, each of which contained a portion of the original inscription. The first two rings served as ear-rings for the statue of the god; the two fragments which have given you so much trouble are parts of them. If you will put the two together, you will have confirmation of my words. But the third ring you have not found yet, and you never will find it.'"

The professor awoke, bounded out of bed, as Mrs. Hilprecht testifies, and was heard crying from his study, "It is so, it is so!" Mrs. Hilprecht followed her lord, "and satisfied myself in the midnight hour as to the outcome of his most interesting dream".

The professor, however, says that he awoke, told his wife the dream, and verified it next day. Both statements are correct. There were two sets of drawings, one in the study (used that night) one used next day in the University Library.

The inscription ran thus, the missing fragment being restored, "by analogy from many similar inscriptions": —

TO THE GOD NIBIB, CHILD
OF THE GOD BEL,
HIS LORD
KURIGALZU,
PONTIFEX OF THE GOD BEL
HAS PRESENTED IT.

But, in the drawings, the fragments were of different colours, so that a student working on the drawings would not guess them to be parts of one cylinder. Professor Hilprecht, however, examined the two actual fragments in the Imperial Museum at Constantinople. They lay in two distinct cases, but, when put together, fitted. When cut asunder of old, in Babylon, the white vein of the stone showed on one fragment, the grey surface on the other.

Professor Romaine Newbold, who publishes this dream, explains that the professor had unconsciously reasoned out his facts, the difference of colour in the two pieces of agate disappearing in the dream. The professor had heard from Dr. Peters of the expedition, that a room had been discovered with fragments of a wooden box and chips of agate and *lapis lazuli*. The sleeping mind "combined its information," reasoned rightly from it, and threw its own conclusions into a dramatic form, receiving the information from the lips of a priest of Nippur.

Probably we do a good deal of reasoning in sleep. Professor Hilprecht, in 1882-83, was working at a translation of an inscription wherein came *Nabû — Kudûrru — usur*, rendered by Professor Delitzsch "Nebo protect my mortar-board". Professor Hilprecht accepted this, but woke one morning with his mind full of the thought that the words should be rendered "Nebo protect my boundary," which "sounds a deal likelier," and is now accepted. I myself, when working at the MSS. of the exiled Stuarts, was puzzled by the scorched appearance of the paper on which Prince Charlie's and the king's letters were often written and by the peculiarities of the ink. I woke one morning with a sudden flash of common-sense. Sympathetic ink had been used, and the papers had been toasted or treated with acids. This I had probably reasoned out in sleep, and, had I dreamed, my mind might have dramatised the idea. Old Mr. Edgar, the king's secretary, might have appeared and given me the explanation. Maury publishes tales in which a forgotten fact was revealed to him in a dream from the lips of a dream-character (*Le Sommeil et les Rêves*, pp. 142-143. The curious may also consult, on all these things, *The Philosophy of Mysticism*, by Karl du Prel, translated by Mr. Massey. The Assyrian Priest is in *Proceedings, S.P.R.*, vol. xii., p. 14).

On the same plane as the dreams which we have been examining is the waking sensation of the *déjà vu.*

"I have been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell."

Most of us know this feeling, all the circumstances in which we find ourselves have already occurred, we have a prophecy of what will happen next "on the tip of our tongues" (like a half-remembered name), and then the impression vanishes. Scott complains of suffering through a whole dinner-party from this sensation, but he had written "copy" for fifty printed pages on that day, and his brain was breaking down. Of course psychology has explanations. The scene *may* have really occurred before, or may be the result of a malady of perception, or one hemisphere of the brain not working in absolute simultaneousness with the other may produce a double impression, the first being followed by the second, so that we really have had two successive impressions, of which one seems much more remote in time than it really was. Or we may have dreamed something like the scene and forgotten the dream, or we may actually, in some not understood manner, have had a "prevision" of what is now actual, as when Shelley almost fainted on coming to a place near Oxford which he had beheld in a dream.

Of course, if this "prevision" could be verified in detail, we should come very near to dreams of the future fulfilled. Such a thing — verification of a detail — led to the conversion of William Hone, the free-thinker and Radical of the early century, who consequently became a Christian and a pessimistic, clear-sighted Tory. This tale of the *déjà vu*, therefore, leads up to the marvellous narratives of dreams simultaneous with, or prophetic of, events not capable of being guessed or inferred, or of events lost in the historical past, but, later, recovered from documents.

Of Hone's affair there are two versions. Both may be given, as they are short. If they illustrate the *déjà vu*, they also illustrate the fond discrepancies of all such narratives.

THE KNOT IN THE SHUTTER

"It is said that a dream produced a powerful effect on Hone's mind. He dreamt that he was introduced into a room where he was an entire stranger, and saw himself seated at a table, and on going towards the window his attention was somehow or other attracted to the window-shutter, and particularly to a knot in the wood, which was of singular appearance; and on waking the whole scene, and especially the knot in the shutter, left a most vivid impression on his mind. Some time afterwards, on going, I think, into the country, he was at some house shown into a chamber where he had never been before, and which instantly struck him as being the identical chamber of his dream. He turned directly to the window, where the same knot in the shutter caught his eye. This incident, to his investigating spirit, induced a train of reflection which overthrew his cherished theories of materialism, and resulted in conviction that there were spiritual agencies as susceptible of proof as any facts of physical science; and this appears to have been one of the links in that mysterious chain of events by which, according to the inscrutable purposes of the Divine will, man is sometimes compelled to bow to an unseen and divine power, and ultimately to believe and live."

"Another of the Christian friends from whom, in his later years, William Hone received so much kindness, has also furnished recollections of him.

" . . . Two or three anecdotes which he related are all I can contribute towards a piece of mental history which, if preserved, would have been highly interesting. The first in point of time as to his taste of mind, was a circumstance which shook his confidence in *materialism*, though it did not lead to his conversion. It was one of those mental phenomena which he saw to be *inexplicable* by the doctrines he then held.

"It was as follows: He was called in the course of business into a part of London quite new to him, and as he walked along the street he noticed to himself that he had never been there; but on being shown into a room in a house where he had to wait some time, he immediately fancied that it was all familiar, that he had seen it before, 'and if so,' said he to himself, 'there is a very peculiar knot in this shutter'. He opened the shutter and found the knot. 'Now then,' thought he, 'here is something I cannot explain on my principles!'"

Indeed the occurrence is not very explicable on any principles, as a detail not visible without search was sought and verified, and that by a habitual mocker at anything out of the common way. For example, Hone published a comic explanation, correct or not, of the famous Stockwell mystery.

Supposing Hone’s story to be true, it naturally conducts us to yet more unfamiliar, and therefore less credible dreams, in which the unknown past, present, or future is correctly revealed.

CHAPTER II

Veracious Dreams. Past, Present and Future unknown Events “revealed”. Theory of “Mental Telegraphy” or “Telepathy” fails to meet Dreams of the unknowable Future. Dreams of unrecorded Past, how alone they can be corroborated. Queen Mary’s Jewels. Story from Brierre de Boismont. Mr. Williams’s Dream before Mr. Perceval’s Murder. Discrepancies of Evidence. Curious Story of Bude Kirk. Mr. Williams’s Version. Dream of a Rattlesnake. Discrepancies. Dream of the Red Lamp. “Illusions Hypnagogiques.” The Scar in the Moustache. Dream of the Future. The Coral Sprigs. Anglo-Saxon Indifference. A Celtic Dream. The Satin Slippers. Waking Dreams. The Dead Shopman. Dreams in Swoons.

Perhaps nothing, not even a ghost, is so staggering to the powers of belief as a well-authenticated dream which strikes the bull’s eye of facts not known to the dreamer nor capable of being guessed by him. If the events beheld in the dream are far away in space, or are remote in time past, the puzzle is difficult enough. But if the events are still in the future, perhaps no kind of explanation except a mere “fluke” can even be suggested. Say that I dream of an event occurring at a distance, and that I record or act on my dream before it is corroborated. Suppose, too, that the event is not one which could be guessed, like the death of an invalid or the result of a race or of an election. This would be odd enough, but the facts of which I dreamed must have been present in the minds of living people. Now, if there is such a thing as “mental telegraphy” or “telepathy,” my mind, in dream, may have “tapped” the minds of the people who knew the facts. We may not believe in “mental telegraphy,” but we can *imagine* it as one of the unknown possibilities of nature. Again, if I dream of an unchronicled event in the past, and if a letter of some historical person is later discovered which confirms the accuracy of my dream, we can at least *conceive* (though we need not believe) that the intelligence was telegraphed to my dreaming mind from the mind of a *dead* actor in, or witness of the historical scene, for the facts are unknown to living man. But even these wild guesses cannot cover a dream which correctly reveals events of the future; events necessarily not known to any finite mind of the living or of the dead, and too full of detail for an explanation by aid of chance coincidence.

In face of these difficulties mankind has gone on believing in dreams of all three classes: dreams revealing the unknown present, the unknown past, and the unknown future. The judicious reasonably set them all aside as the results of fortuitous coincidence, or revived recollection, or of the illusions of a false memory, or of imposture, conscious or unconscious. However, the stories continue to be told, and our business is with the stories.

Taking, first, dreams of the unknown past, we find a large modern collection of these attributed to a lady named "Miss A—". They were waking dreams representing obscure incidents of the past, and were later corroborated by records in books, newspapers and manuscripts. But as these books and papers existed, and were known to exist, before the occurrence of the visions, it is obvious that the matter of the visions *may* have been derived from the books and so forth, or at least, a sceptic will vastly prefer this explanation. What we need is a dream or vision of the unknown past, corroborated by a document *not known to exist* at the time when the vision took place and was recorded. Probably there is no such instance, but the following tale, picturesque in itself, has a kind of shadow of the only satisfactory sort of corroboration.

The author responsible for this yarn is Dr. Gregory, F.R.S., Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh. After studying for many years the real or alleged phenomena of what has been called mesmerism, or electro-biology, or hypnotism, Dr. Gregory published in 1851 his *Letters to a Candid Inquirer on Animal Magnetism.*

Though a F.R.S. and a Professor of Chemistry, the Doctor had no more idea of what constitutes evidence than a baby. He actually mixed up the Tyrone with the Lyttelton ghost story! His legend of Queen Mary's jewels is derived from (1) the note-book, *or* (2) a letter containing, or professing to contain, extracts from the note-book, of a Major Buckley, an Anglo-Indian officer. This gentleman used to "magnetise" or hypnotise people, some of whom became clairvoyant, as if possessed of eyes acting as "double-patent-million magnifiers," permeated by X rays.

"What follows is transcribed," says the Doctor, "from Major Buckley's note-book." We abridge the narrative. Major Buckley hypnotised a young officer, who, on November 15, 1845, fell into "a deeper state" of trance. Thence he awoke into a "clairvoyant" condition and said: —

QUEEN MARY’S JEWELS

“I have had a strange dream about your ring” (a “medallion” of Anthony and Cleopatra); “it is very valuable.”

Major Buckley said it was worth £60, and put the ring into his friend’s hand.

“It belonged to royalty.”

“In what country?”

“I see Mary, Queen of Scots. It was given to her by a man, a foreigner, with other things from Italy. It came from Naples. It is not in the old setting. She wore it only once. The person who gave it to her was a musician.”

The seer then “saw” the donor’s signature, “Rizzio”. But Rizzio spelled his name Riccio! The seer now copied on paper a writing which in his trance he saw on vellum. The design here engraved (p. 32) is only from a rough copy of the seer’s original drawing, which was made by Major Buckley.

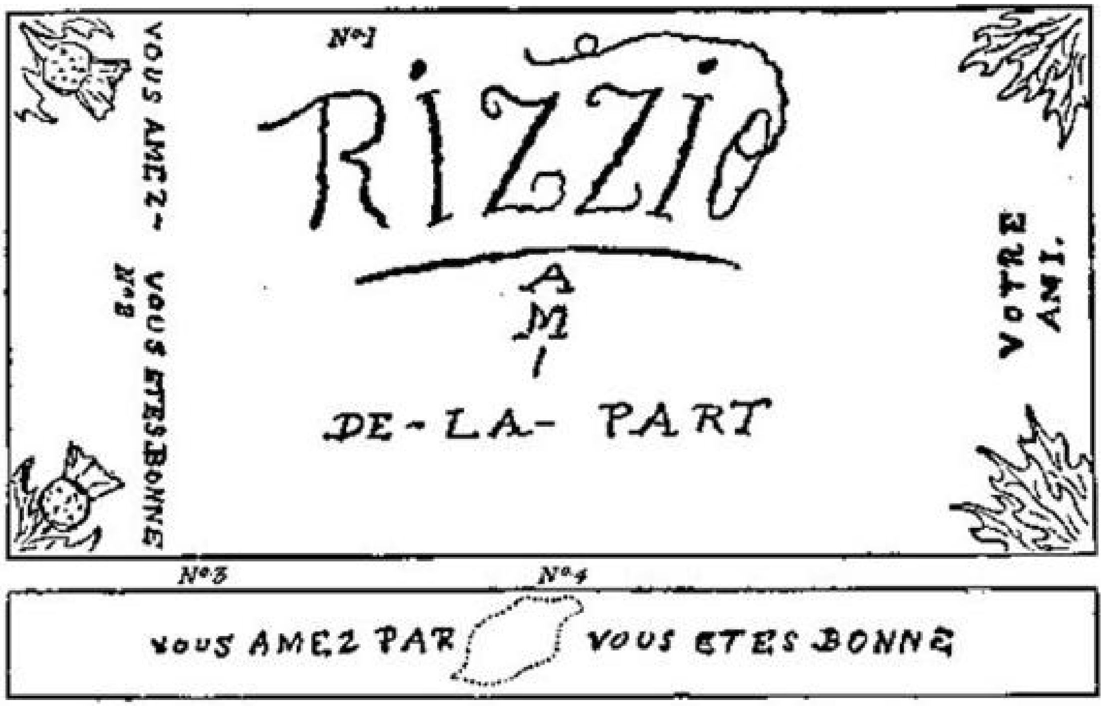

“Here” (pointing to the middle) “I see a diamond cross.” The smallest stone was above the size of one of four carats. “It” (the cross) “was worn out of sight by Mary. The vellum has been shown in the House of Lords.”

“ . . . The ring was taken off Mary’s finger by a man in anger and jealousy: he threw it into the water. When he took it off, she was being carried in a kind of bed with curtains” (a litter).

Just before Rizzio’s murder Mary was *enceinte*, and might well be carried in a litter, though she usually rode.

The seer then had a view of Sizzle’s murder, which he had probably read about.

Three weeks later, in another trance, the seer finished his design of the vellum. The words A
M
DE LA PART

probably stand for *à Marie, de la part de* —

The thistle heads and leaves in gold at the corners were a usual decoration of the period; compare the ceiling of the room in Edinburgh Castle where James VI. was born, four months after Rizzio’s murder. They also occur in documents. Dr. Gregory conjectures that so valuable a present as a diamond cross may have been made not by Rizzio, but through Rizzio by the Pope.

It did not seem good to the doctor to consult Mary’s lists of jewels, nor, if he had done so, would he have been any the wiser. In 1566, just before the birth of James VI., Mary had an inventory drawn up, and added the names of the persons to whom she bequeathed her treasures in case she died in child-bed. But this inventory, hidden among a mass of law-papers in the Record Office, was not discovered till 1854, nine years after the vision of 1845, and three after its publication by Dr. Gregory in 1851. Not till 1863 was the inventory of 1566, discovered in 1854, published for the Bannatyne Club by Dr. Joseph Robertson.

Turning to the inventory we read of a valuable present made by David Rizzio to Mary, a tortoise of rubies, which she kept till her death, for it appears in a list made after her execution at Fotheringay. The murdered David Rizzio left a brother Joseph. Him the queen made her secretary, and in her will of 1566 mentions him thus: — “*A Josef, pour porter à celui qui je luy ay dit,* une emeraude emaille de blanc.

“*A Josef, pour porter à celui qui je luy ai dit, dont il ranvoir quittance.*

“Une bague garnye de vingt cinq diamens tant grands que petis.”

Now the diamond cross seen by the young officer in 1845 was set with diamonds great and small, and was, in his opinion, a gift from or through Rizzio. “The queen wore it out of sight.” Here in the inventory we have a *bague* (which may be a cross) of diamonds small and great, connected with a secret only known to Rizzio’s brother and to the queen. It is “to be carried to one whose name the queen has spoken in her new secretary’s ear” (Joseph’s), “but dare not trust herself to write”. “It would be idle now to seek to pry into the mystery which was thus anxiously guarded,” says Dr. Robertson, editor of the queen’s inventories. The doctor knew nothing of the vision which, perhaps, so nearly pried into the mystery. There is nothing like proof here, but there is just a presumption that the diamonds connected with Rizzio, and secretly worn by the queen, seen in the vision of 1845, are possibly the diamonds which, had Mary died in 1566, were to be carried by Joseph Rizzio to a person whose name might not safely be written.

We now take a dream which apparently reveals a real fact occurring at a distance. It is translated from Brierre de Boismont’s book, *Des Hallucinations* (Paris, 1845). “There are,” says the learned author, “authentic dreams which have revealed an event occurring at the moment, or later.” These he explains by accidental coincidence, and then gives the following anecdote, as within his own intimate knowledge: —

THE DEATHBED

Miss C., a lady of excellent sense, religious but not bigoted, lived before her marriage in the house of her uncle D., a celebrated physician, and member of the Institute. Her mother at this time was seriously ill in the country. One night the girl dreamed that she saw her mother, pale and dying, and especially grieved at the absence of two of her children: one a *curé* in Spain, the other — herself — in Paris. Next she heard her own Christian name called, "Charlotte!" and, in her dream, saw the people about her mother bring in her own little niece and god-child Charlotte from the next room. The patient intimated by a sign that she did not want *this* Charlotte, but her daughter in Paris. She displayed the deepest regret; her countenance changed, she fell back, and died.

Next day the melancholy of Mademoiselle C. attracted the attention of her uncle. She told him her dream; he pressed her to his heart, and admitted that her mother was dead.

Some months later Mademoiselle C., when her uncle was absent, arranged his papers, which he did not like any one to touch. Among these was a letter containing the story of her mother's death, with all the details of her own dream, which D. had kept concealed lest they should impress her too painfully.

Boismont is staggered by this circumstance, and inclined to account for it by "still unknown relations in the moral and physical world". "Mental telegraphy," of course, would explain all, and even chance coincidence is perfectly conceivable.

The most commonly known of dreams prior to, or simultaneous with an historical occurrence represented in the vision, is Mr. Williams's dream of the murder of Mr. Perceval in the lobby of the House of Commons, May 11, 1812. Mr. Williams, of Scorrier House, near Redruth, in Cornwall, lived till 1841. He was interested in mines, and a man of substance. Unluckily the versions of his dream are full of discrepancies. It was first published, apparently, in *The Times* during the "silly season" of 1828 (August 28). According to *The Times*, whose account is very minute, Mr. Williams dreamed of the murder thrice before 2 a.m. on the night of May 11. He told Mrs. Williams, and was so disturbed that he rose and dressed at two in the morning. He went to Falmouth next day (May 12), and told the tale to every one he knew. On the evening of the 13th he told it to Mr. and Mrs. Tucker (his married daughter) of Tremanton Castle. Mr. Williams only knew that the *chancellor* was shot; Mr. Tucker said it must be the

Chancellor of the Exchequer. From the description he recognised Mr. Perceval, with whom he was at enmity. Mr. Williams had never been inside the House of Commons. As they talked, Mr. William's son galloped up from Truro with news of the murder, got from a traveller by coach. Six weeks later, Mr. Williams went to town, and in the House of Commons walked up to and recognised the scene of the various incidents in the murder.

So far *The Times*, in 1828. But two forms of a version of 1832 exist, one in a note to Mr. Walpole's *Life of Perceval* (1874), "an attested statement, drawn up and signed by Mr. Williams in the presence of the Rev. Thomas Fisher and Mr. Charles Prideaux Brune". Mr. Brune gave it to Mr. Walpole. With only verbal differences this variant corresponds to another signed by Mr. Williams and given by him to his grandson, who gave it to Mr. Perceval's great-niece, by whom it was lent to the Society for Psychical Research.

These accounts differ *toto cœlo* from that in *The Times* of 1828. The dream is *not* of May 11, but "about" May 2 or 3. Mr. Williams is *not* a stranger to the House of Commons; it is "a place well known to me". He is *not* ignorant of the name of the victim, but "understood that it was Mr. Perceval". He thinks of going to town to give warning. We hear nothing of Mr. Tucker. Mr. Williams does *not* verify his dream in the House, but from a drawing. A Mr. C. R. Fox, son of one to whom the dream was told *before* the event, was then a boy of fourteen, and sixty-one years later was sure that he himself heard of Mr. Williams's dream *before* the news of the murder arrived. After sixty years, however, the memory cannot be relied upon.

One very curious circumstance in connection with the assassination of Mr. Perceval has never been noticed. A rumour or report of the deed reached Bude Kirk, a village near Annan, on the night of Sunday, May 10, a day before the crime was committed! This was stated in the *Dumfries and Galloway Courier*, and copied in *The Times* of May 25. On May 28, the *Perth Courier* quotes the Dumfries paper, and adds that "the Rev. Mr. Yorstoun, minister of Hoddam (*ob.* 1833), has visited Bude Kirk and has obtained the most satisfactory proof of the rumour having existed" on May 10, but the rumour cannot be traced to its source. Mr. Yorstoun authorises the mention of his name. *The Times* of June 2 says that "the report is without foundation". If Williams talked everywhere of his dream, on May 3, some garbled shape of it may conceivably have floated to Bude Kirk by May 10, and originated the rumour. Whoever started it would keep quiet when the real news arrived for fear of being implicated in a conspiracy as accessory before the fact. No trace of Mr. Williams's dream occurs in the contemporary London papers.

The best version of the dream to follow is probably that signed by Mr.

Williams himself in 1832.

It may, of course, be argued by people who accept Mr. Williams's dream as a revelation of the future that it reached his mind from the *purpose* conceived in Bellingham's mind, by way of "mental telegraphy".

DREAM OF MR. PERCEVAL'S MURDER

"SUNDHILL, *December*, 1832.

"

"Being desired to write out the particulars of a remarkable dream which I had in the year 1812, before I do so I think it may be proper for me to say that at that time my attention was fully occupied with affairs of my own — the superintendence of some very extensive mines in Cornwall being entrusted to me. Thus I had no leisure to pay any attention to political matters, and hardly knew at that time who formed the administration of the country. It was, therefore, scarcely possible that my own interest in the subject should have had any share in suggesting the circumstances which presented themselves to my imagination. It was, in truth, a subject which never occurred to my waking thoughts.

"My dream was as follows: —

"About the second or third day of May, 1812, I dreamed that I was in the lobby of the House of Commons (a place well known to me). A small man, dressed in a blue coat and a white waistcoat, entered, and immediately I saw a person whom I had observed on my first entrance, dressed in a snuff-coloured coat with metal buttons, take a pistol from under his coat and present it at the little man above-mentioned. The pistol was discharged, and the ball entered under the left breast of the person at whom it was directed. I saw the blood issue from the place where the ball had struck him, his countenance instantly altered, and he fell to the ground. Upon inquiry who the sufferer might be, I was informed that he was the chancellor. I understood him to be Mr. Perceval, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer. I further saw the murderer laid hold of by several of the gentlemen in the room. Upon waking I told the particulars above related to my wife; she treated the matter lightly, and desired me to go to sleep, saying it was only a dream. I soon fell asleep again, and again the dream presented itself with precisely the same circumstances. After waking a second time and stating the matter again to my wife, she only repeated her request that I would compose myself and dismiss the subject from my mind. Upon my falling asleep the third time, the same dream without any alteration was repeated, and I awoke, as on the former occasions, in great agitation. So much alarmed and impressed was I with the circumstances above related, that I felt much doubt whether it was not my duty to take a journey to London and communicate upon the subject with the party principally concerned. Upon this point I consulted with some friends whom I met on business at the Godolphin mine on the following day. After having stated to them the particulars of the dream itself and what were my own feelings in relation to it, they dissuaded me from my purpose, saying I might expose myself to contempt and vexation, or be taken up as a fanatic. Upon this I said no more, but anxiously watched the newspapers every evening as the post arrived.

"On the evening of the 13th of May (as far as I recollect) no account of Mr. Perceval's death was in the newspapers, but my second son, returning from Truro, came in a hurried manner into the room where I was sitting and exclaimed: 'O father, your dream has come true! Mr. Perceval has been shot in the lobby of the House of Commons; there is an account come from London to Truro written after the newspapers were printed.'

"The fact was Mr. Percival was assassinated on the evening of the 11th.

"Some business soon after called me to London, and in one of the print-shops I saw a drawing for sale, representing the place and the circumstances which attended Mr. Perceval's death. I purchased it, and upon a careful examination I found it to coincide in all respects with the scene which had passed through my imagination in the dream. The colours of the dresses, the buttons of the assassin's coat, the white waistcoat of Mr. Perceval, the spot of blood upon it, the countenances and attitudes of the parties present were exactly what I had dreamed.

"The singularity of the case, when mentioned among my friends and acquaintances, naturally made it the subject of conversation in London, and in consequence my friend, the late Mr. Rennie, was requested by some of the commissioners of the navy that they might be permitted to hear the circumstances from myself. Two of them accordingly met me at Mr. Rennie's house, and to them I detailed at the time the particulars, then fresh in my memory, which form the subject of the above statement.

"I forbear to make any comment on the above narrative, further than to declare solemnly that it is a faithful account of facts as they actually occurred.

(Signed) "JOHN WILLIAMS."

When we come to dreams of the future, great historical examples are scarce indeed, that is, dreams respectably authenticated. We have to put up with curious trivialities. One has an odd feature.

THE RATTLESNAKE

Dr. Kinsolving, of the Church of the Epiphany in Philadelphia, dreamed that he "came across a rattlesnake," which "when killed had *two* black-looking rattles and a peculiar projection of bone from the tail, while the skin was unusually light in colour". Next day, while walking with his brother, Dr. Kinsolving nearly trod on a rattlesnake, "the same snake in every particular with the one I had had in my mind's eye". This would be very well, but Dr. Kinsolving's brother, who helped to kill the unlucky serpent, says "*he had a single rattle*". The letters of these gentlemen were written without communication to each other. If Mr. Kinsolving is right, the real snake with *one* rattle was *not* the dream snake with *two* rattles. The brothers were in a snaky country, West Virginia.

The following is trivial, but good. It is written by Mr. Alfred Cooper, and attested by the dreamer, the Duchess of Hamilton.

THE RED LAMP

Mr. Cooper says: "A fortnight before the death of the late Earl of L — in 1882, I called upon the Duke of Hamilton, in Hill Street, to see him professionally. After I had finished seeing him, we went into the drawing-room, where the duchess was, and the duke said, 'Oh, Cooper, how is the earl?'

"The duchess said, 'What earl?' and on my answering 'Lord L — ,' she replied: 'That is very odd. I have had a most extraordinary vision. I went to bed, but after being in bed a short time, I was not exactly asleep, but thought I saw a scene as if from a play before me. The actors in it were Lord L — as if in a fit, with a man standing over him with a red beard. He was by the side of a bath, over which a red lamp was distinctly shown.

"I then said: 'I am attending Lord L — at present; there is very little the matter with him; he is not going to die; he will be all right very soon'.

"Well he got better for a week and was nearly well, but at the end of six or seven days after this I was called to see him suddenly. He had inflammation of both lungs.

"I called in Sir William Jenner, but in six days he was a dead man. There were two male nurses attending on him; one had been taken ill. But when I saw the other, the dream of the duchess was exactly represented. He was standing near a bath over the earl, and strange to say, his beard was red. There was the bath with the red lamp over it. It is rather rare to find a bath with a red lamp over it, and this brought the story to my mind. . . ."

This account, written in 1888, has been revised by the late Duke of Manchester, father of the Duchess of Hamilton, who heard the vision from his daughter on the morning after she had seen it.

The duchess only knew the earl by sight, and had not heard that he was ill. She knew she was not asleep, for she opened her eyes to get rid of the vision, and, shutting them, saw the same thing again.

In fact, the "vision" was an *illusion hypnagogique*. Probably most readers know the procession of visions which sometimes crowd on the closed eyes just before sleep. They commonly represent with vivid clearness unknown faces or places, occasionally known faces. The writer has seen his own in this way and has occasionally "opened his eyes to get rid of" the appearances. In his opinion the pictures are unconsciously constructed by the half-sleeping mind out of blurs of light or dark seen with closed eyes. Mr. Cooper's story would be more complete if he had said whether or not the earl, when visited by him, was in a chair as in the vision. But beds are not commonly found in bathrooms.

THE SCAR IN THE MOUSTACHE

This story was told to the writer by his old head-master, the Rev. Dr. Hodson, brother of Hodson, of Hodson's Horse, a person whom I never heard make any other allusion to such topics. Dr. Hodson was staying with friends in Switzerland during the holidays. One morning, as he lay awake, he seemed to see into a room as if the wall of his bedroom had been cut out. In the room were a lady well known to him and a man whom he did not know. The man's back was turned to the looker-on. The scene vanished, and grew again. Now the man faced Dr. Hodson; the face was unfamiliar, and had a deep white scar seaming the moustache. Dr. Hodson mentioned the circumstance to his friends, and thought little of it. He returned home, and, one day, in Perth station, met the lady at the book-stall. He went up to accost her, and was surprised by the uneasiness of her manner. A gentleman now joined them, with a deep white scar through his moustache. Dr. Hodson now recalled, what had slipped his memory, that the lady during his absence from Scotland had eloped with an officer, the man of the vision and the railway station. He did not say, or perhaps know, whether the elopement was prior to the kind of dream in Switzerland.

Here is a dream representing a future event, with details which could not be guessed beforehand.

THE CORAL SPRIGS

Mrs. Weiss, of St. Louis, was in New York in January, 1881, attending a daughter, Mrs. C., who was about to have a child. She writes: —

"On Friday night (Jan. 21) I dreamed that my daughter's time came; that owing to some cause not clearly defined, we failed to get word to Mr. C., who was to bring the doctor; that we sent for the nurse, who came; that as the hours passed and neither Mr. C. nor the doctor came we both got frightened; that at last I heard Mr. C. on the stairs, and cried to him: 'Oh, Chan, for heaven's sake get a doctor! Ada may be confined at any moment'; that he rushed away, and I returned to the bedside of my daughter, who was in agony of mind and body; that suddenly I seemed to know what to do, . . . and that shortly after Mr. C. came, bringing a tall young doctor, having brown eyes, dark hair, ruddy *brun* complexion, grey trousers and grey vest, and wearing a bright blue cravat, picked out with coral sprigs; the cravat attracted my attention particularly. The young doctor pronounced Mrs. C. properly attended to, and left."

Mrs. Weiss at breakfast told the dream to Mr. C. and her daughter; none of them attached any importance to it. However, as a snowstorm broke the telegraph wires on Saturday, the day after the dream, Mrs. Weiss was uneasy. On Tuesday the state of Mrs. C. demanded a doctor. Mrs. Weiss sent a telegram for Mr. C.; he came at last, went out to bring a doctor, and was long absent. Then Mrs. Weiss suddenly felt a calm certainty that *she* (though inexperienced in such cares) could do what was needed. "I heard myself say in a peremptory fashion: 'Ada, don't be afraid, I know just what to do; all will go well'." All did go well; meanwhile Mr. C. ran to seven doctors' houses, and at last returned with a young man whom Mrs. Weiss vaguely recognised. Mrs. C. whispered, "Look at the doctor's cravat". It was blue and coral sprigged, and then first did Mrs. Weiss remember her dream of Friday night.

Mrs. Weiss's story is corroborated by Mr. Blanchard, who heard the story "a few days after the event". Mrs. C. has read Mrs. Weiss's statement, "and in so far as I can remember it is quite correct". Mr. C. remembers nothing about it; "he declares that he has no recollection of it, *or of any matters outside his business*, and knowing him as I do," says Mrs. Weiss, "I do not doubt the assertion".

Mr. C. must be an interesting companion. The nurse remembers that after the birth of the baby Mrs. C. called Mr. C.'s attention to "the doctor's necktie," and heard her say, “Why, I know him by mamma’s description as the doctor she saw in her dreams”.

The only thing even more extraordinary than the dream is Mr. C.’s inability to remember anything whatever “outside of his business”. Another witness appears to decline to be called, “as it would be embarrassing to him in his business”. This it is to be Anglo-Saxon!

We now turn to a Celtic dream, in which knowledge supposed to be only known to a dead man was conveyed to his living daughter.

THE SATIN SLIPPERS

On 1st February, 1891, Michael Conley, a farmer living near Ionia, in Chichasow county, Iowa, went to Dubuque, in Iowa, to be medically treated. He left at home his son Pat and his daughter Elizabeth, a girl of twenty-eight, a Catholic, in good health. On February 3 Michael was found dead in an outhouse near his inn. In his pocket were nine dollars, seventy-five cents, but his clothes, including his shirt, were thought so dirty and worthless that they were thrown away. The body was then dressed in a white shirt, black clothes and satin slippers of a new pattern. Pat Conley was telegraphed for, and arrived at Dubuque on February 4, accompanied by Mr. George Brown, "an intelligent and reliable farmer". Pat took the corpse home in a coffin, and on his arrival Elizabeth fell into a swoon, which lasted for several hours. Her own account of what followed on her recovery may be given in her own words: —

"When they told me that father was dead I felt very sick and bad; I did not know anything. Then father came to me. He had on a white shirt" (his own was grey), "and black clothes and slippers. When I came to, I told Pat I had seen father. I asked Pat if he had brought back father's old clothes. He said 'No,' and asked me why I wanted them. I told him father said he had sewed a roll of bills inside of his grey shirt, in a pocket made of a piece of my old red dress. I went to sleep, and father came to me again. When I awoke I told Pat he must go and get the clothes" — her father's old clothes.

Pat now telephoned to Mr. Hoffman, Coroner of Dubuque, who found the old clothes in the back yard of the local morgue. They were wrapped up in a bundle. Receiving this news, Pat went to Dubuque on February 9, where Mr. Hoffman opened the bundle in Pat's presence. Inside the old grey shirt was found a pocket of red stuff, sewn with a man's long, uneven stitches, and in the pocket notes for thirty-five dollars.

The girl did not see the body in the coffin, but asked about the *old* clothes, because the figure of her father in her dream wore clothes which she did not recognise as his. To dream in a faint is nothing unusual.

THE DEAD SHOPMAN

Swooning, or slight mental mistiness, is not very unusual in ghost seers. The brother of a friend of my own, a man of letters and wide erudition, was, as a boy, employed in a shop in a town, say Wexington. The overseer was a dark, rather hectic-looking man, who died. Some months afterwards the boy was sent on an errand. He did his business, but, like a boy, returned by a longer and more interesting route. He stopped as a bookseller’s shop to stare at the books and pictures, and while doing so felt a kind of mental vagueness. It was just before his dinner hour, and he may have been hungry. On resuming his way, he looked up and found the dead overseer beside him. He had no sense of surprise, and walked for some distance, conversing on ordinary topics with the appearance. He happened to notice such a minute detail as that the spectre’s boots were laced in an unusual way. At a crossing, something in the street attracted his attention; he looked away from his companion, and, on turning to resume their talk, saw no more of him. He then walked to the shop, where he mentioned the occurrence to a friend. He has never during a number of years had any such experience again, or suffered the preceding sensation of vagueness.

This, of course, is not a ghost story, but leads up to the old tale of the wraith of Valogne. In this case, two boys had made a covenant, the first who died was to appear to the other. He *did* appear before news of his death arrived, but after a swoon of his friend’s, whose health (like that of Elizabeth Conley) suffered in consequence.

NOTE

"PERCEVAL MURDER." *Times,* 25*th May,* 1812.

"A Dumfries paper states that on the night of Sunday, the 10th instant, *twenty-four hours before the fatal deed was perpetrated*, a report was brought to Bude Kirk, two miles from Annan, that *Mr. Perceval was shot on his way to the House of Commons, at the door or in the lobby of that House*. This the whole inhabitants of the village are ready to attest, as the report quickly spread and became the topic of conversation. A clergyman investigated the rumour, with the view of tracing it to its source, but without success."

The Times of 2nd June says, "Report without foundation".

Perth Courier, 28th May, quoting from the *Dumfries and Galloway Courier*, repeats above almost verbatim. " . . . The clergyman to whom we have alluded, and who allows me to make use of his name, is Mr. Yorstoun, minister of Hoddam. This gentleman went to the spot and carefully investigated the rumour, but has not hitherto been successful, although he has obtained the most satisfactory proof of its having existed at the time we have mentioned. We forbear to make any comments on this wonderful circumstance, but should anything further transpire that may tend to throw light upon it, we shall not fail to give the public earliest information."

The *Dumfries and Galloway Courier* I cannot find! It is not in the British Museum.

CHAPTER III

Transition from Dreams to Waking Hallucinations. Popular Scepticism about the Existence of Hallucinations in the Sane. Evidence of Mr. Francis Galton, F.R.S. Scientific Disbelief in ordinary Mental Imagery. Scientific Men who do not see in "the Mind's Eye". Ordinary People who do. Frequency of Waking Hallucinations among Mr. Gallon's friends. Kept Private till asked for by Science. Causes of such Hallucinations unknown. Story of the Diplomatist. Voluntary or Induced Hallucinations. Crystal Gazing. Its Universality. Experience of George Sand. Nature of such Visions. Examples. Novelists. Crystal Visions only "Ghostly" when Veracious. Modern Examples. Under the Lamp. The Cow with the Bell Historical Example. Prophetic Crystal Vision. St. Simon The Regent d'Orléans. The Deathbed of Louis XIV. References for other Cases of Crystal Visions.

From dreams, in sleep or swoon, of a character difficult to believe in we pass by way of "hallucinations" to ghosts. Everybody is ready to admit that dreams do really occur, because almost everybody has dreamed. But everybody is not so ready to admit that sane and sensible men and women can have hallucinations, just because everybody has not been hallucinated.

On this point Mr. Francis Galton, in his *Inquiries into Human Faculty* (1833), is very instructive. Mr. Galton drew up a short catechism, asking people how clearly or how dimly they saw things "in their mind's eye".

"Think of your breakfast-table," he said; "is your mental picture of it as clearly illuminated and as complete as your actual view of the scene?" Mr. Galton began by questioning friends in the scientific world, F.R.S.'s and other *savants*. "The earliest results of my inquiry amazed me. . . . The great majority of the men of science to whom I first applied, protested that *mental imagery was unknown to them*, and they looked on me as fanciful and fantastic in supposing that the words 'mental imagery' really expressed what I believed everybody supposed them to mean." One gentleman wrote: "It is only by a figure of speech that I can describe my recollection of a scene as a 'mental image' which I can 'see' with 'my mind's eye'. I do not see it," so he seems to have supposed that nobody else did.

When he made inquiries in general society, Mr. Galton found plenty of people who "saw" mental imagery with every degree of brilliance or dimness, from "quite comparable to the real object" to "I recollect the table, but do not see it"

— my own position.

Mr. Galton was next “greatly struck by the frequency of the replies in which my correspondents” (sane and healthy) “described themselves as subject to ‘visions’”. These varied in degree, “some were so vivid as actually to deceive the judgment”. Finally, “a notable proportion of sane persons have had not only visions, but actual hallucinations of sight at one or more periods of their life. I have a considerable packet of instances contributed by my personal friends.” Thus one “distinguished authoress” saw “the principal character of one of her novels glide through the door straight up to her. It was about the size of a large doll.” Another heard unreal music, and opened the door to hear it better. Another was plagued by voices, which said “Pray,” and so forth.

Thus, on scientific evidence, sane and healthy people may, and “in a notable proportion *do*, experience hallucinations”. That is to say, they see persons, or hear them, or believe they are touched by them, or all their senses are equally affected at once, when no such persons are really present. This kind of thing is always going on, but “when popular opinion is of a matter-of-fact kind, the seers of visions keep quiet; they do not like to be thought fanciful or mad, and they hide their experiences, which only come to light through inquiries such as those that I have been making”.

We may now proceed to the waking hallucinations of sane and healthy people, which Mr. Galton declares to be so far from uncommon. Into the *causes* of these hallucinations which may actually deceive the judgment, Mr. Galton does not enter.

STORY OF THE DIPLOMATIST

For example, there is a living diplomatist who knows men and cities, and has, moreover, a fine sense of humour. "My Lord," said a famous Russian statesman to him, "you have all the qualities of a diplomatist, but you cannot control your smile." This gentleman, walking alone in a certain cloister at Cambridge, met a casual acquaintance, a well-known London clergyman, and was just about shaking hands with him, when the clergyman vanished. Nothing in particular happened to either of them; the clergyman was not in the seer's mind at the moment.

This is a good example of a solitary hallucination in the experience of a very cool-headed observer. The *causes* of such experiences are still a mystery to science. Even people who believe in "mental telegraphy," say when a distant person, at death or in any other crisis, impresses himself as present on the senses of a friend, cannot account for an experience like that of the diplomatist, an experience not very uncommon, and little noticed except when it happens to coincide with some remarkable event. Nor are such hallucinations of an origin easily detected, like those of delirium, insanity, intoxication, grief, anxiety, or remorse. We can only suppose that a past impression of the aspect of a friend is recalled by some association of ideas so vividly that (though we are not *consciously* thinking of him) we conceive the friend to be actually present in the body when he is absent.

These hallucinations are casual and unsought. But between these and the dreams of sleep there is a kind of waking hallucinations which some people can purposely evoke. Such are the visions of *crystal gazing.*

Among the superstitions of almost all ages and countries is the belief that "spirits" will show themselves, usually after magical ceremonies, to certain persons, commonly children, who stare into a crystal ball, a cup, a mirror, a blob of ink (in Egypt and India), a drop of blood (among the Maoris of New Zealand), a bowl of water (Red Indian), a pond (Roman and African), water in a glass bowl (in Fez), or almost any polished surface. The magical ceremonies, which have probably nothing to do with the matter, have succeeded in making this old and nearly universal belief seem a mere fantastic superstition. But occasionally a person not superstitious has recorded this experience. Thus George Sand in her *Histoire de ma Vie* mentions that, as a little girl, she used to see wonderful moving landscapes in the polished back of a screen. These were so vivid that she thought they must be visible to others.

Recent experiments have proved that an unexpected number of people have this faculty. Gazing into a ball of crystal or glass, a crystal or other smooth ring stone, such as a sapphire or ruby, or even into a common ink-pot, they will see visions very brilliant. These are often mere reminiscences of faces or places, occasionally of faces or places sunk deep below the ordinary memory. Still more frequently they represent fantastic landscapes and romantic scenes, as in an historical novel, with people in odd costumes coming, going and acting. Thus I have been present when a lady saw in a glass ball a man in white Oriental costume kneeling beside a leaping fountain of fire. Presently a hand appeared pointing downwards through the flame. The *first* vision seen pretty often represents an invalid in bed. Printed words are occasionally read in the glass, as also happens in the visions beheld with shut eyes before sleeping.

All these kinds of things, in fact, are common in our visions between sleeping and waking (*illusions hypnagogiques*). The singularity is that they are seen by people wide awake in glass balls and so forth. Usually the seer is a person whose ordinary "mental imagery" is particularly vivid. But every "visualiser" is not a crystal seer. A novelist of my acquaintance can "visualise" so well that, having forgotten an address and lost the letter on which it was written, he called up a mental picture of the letter, and so discovered the address. But this very popular writer can see no visions in a crystal ball. Another very popular novelist can see them; little dramas are acted out in the ball for his edification.

These things are as unfamiliar to men of science as Mr. Galton found ordinary mental imagery, pictures in memory, to be. Psychology may or may not include them in her province; they may or may not come to be studied as ordinary dreams are studied. But, like dreams, these crystal visions enter the domain of the ghostly only when they are *veracious*, and contribute information previously unknown as to past, present or future. There are plenty of stories to this effect. To begin with an easy, or comparatively easy, exercise in belief.

UNDER THE LAMP

I had given a glass ball to a young lady, who believed that she could play the “willing game” successfully without touching the person “willed,” and when the person did not even know that “willing” was going on. This lady, Miss Baillie, had scarcely any success with the ball. She lent it to Miss Leslie, who saw a large, square, old-fashioned red sofa covered with muslin, which she found in the next country house she visited. Miss Baillie’s brother, a young athlete (at short odds for the amateur golf championship), laughed at these experiments, took the ball into the study, and came back looking “gey gash”. He admitted that he had seen a vision, somebody he knew “under a lamp”. He would discover during the week whether he saw right or not. This was at 5.30 on a Sunday afternoon. On Tuesday, Mr. Baillie was at a dance in a town some forty miles from his home, and met a Miss Preston. “On Sunday,” he said, “about half-past five you were sitting under a standard lamp in a dress I never saw you wear, a blue blouse with lace over the shoulders, pouring out tea for a man in blue serge, whose back was towards me, so that I only saw the tip of his moustache.”

“Why, the blinds must have been up,” said Miss Preston.

“I was at Dulby,” said Mr. Baillie, as he undeniably was.

This is not a difficult exercise in belief. Miss Preston was not unlikely to be at tea at tea-time.

Nor is the following very hard.

THE COW WITH THE BELL

I had given a glass ball to the wife of a friend, whose visions proved so startling and on one occasion so unholy that she ceased to make experiments. One day my friend's secretary, a young student and golfer, took up the ball.

"I see a field I know very well," he said, "but there is a cow in it that I never saw; brown, with white markings, and, this is odd in Scotland, she has a bell hanging from her neck. I'll go and look at the field."

He went and found the cow as described, bell and all.

In the spring of 1897 I gave a glass ball to a young lady, previously a stranger to me, who was entirely unacquainted with crystal gazing, even by report. She had, however, not infrequent experience of spontaneous visions, which were fulfilled, including a vision of the Derby (Persimmon's year), which enriched her friends. In using the ball she, time after time, succeeded in seeing and correctly describing persons and places familiar to people for whom she "scried," but totally strange to herself. In one case she added a detail quite unknown to the person who consulted her, but which was verified on inquiry. These experiments will probably be published elsewhere. Four people, out of the very small number who tried on these occasions, saw fancy pictures in the ball: two were young ladies, one a man, and one a schoolboy. I must confess that, for the first time, I was impressed by the belief that the lady's veracious visions, however they are to be explained, could not possibly be accounted for by chance coincidence. They were too many (I was aware of five in a few days), too minute, and too remote from the range of ingenious guessing. But "thought transference," tapping the mental wires of another person, would have accounted for every case, with, perhaps, the exception of that in which an unknown detail was added. This confession will, undoubtedly, seem weakly credulous, but not to make it would be unfair and unsportsmanlike. My statement, of course, especially without the details, is not evidence for other people.

The following case is a much harder exercise in belief. It is narrated by the Duc de Saint Simon. The events were described to Saint Simon on the day after their occurrence by the Duc d'Orléans, then starting for Italy, in May, 1706. Saint Simon was very intimate with the duke, and they corresponded by private cypher without secretaries. Owing to the death of the king's son and grandson (not seen in the vision), Orléans became Regent when Louis XIV. died in 1714. Saint Simon is a reluctant witness, and therefore all the better.

THE DEATHBED OF LOUIS XIV.

"Here is a strange story that the Duc d'Orléans told me one day in a *tête-à-tête* at Marly, he having just run down from Paris before he started for Italy; and it may be observed that all the events predicted came to pass, though none of them could have been foreseen at the time. His interest in every kind of art and science was very great, and in spite of his keen intellect, he was all his life subject to a weakness which had been introduced (with other things) from Italy by Catherine de Medici, and had reigned supreme over the courts of her children. He had exercised every known method of inducing the devil to appear to him in person, though, as he has himself told me, without the smallest success. He had spent much time in investigating matters that touched on the supernatural, and dealt with the future.

"Now La Sery (his mistress) had in her house a little girl of eight or nine years of age, who had never resided elsewhere since her birth. She was to all appearance a very ordinary child, and from the way in which she had been brought up, was more than commonly ignorant and simple. One day, during the visit of M. d'Orléans, La Sery produced for his edification one of the charlatans with whom the duke had long been familiar, who pretended that by means of a glass of water he could see the answer to any question that might be put. For this purpose it was necessary to have as a go-between some one both young and innocent, to gaze into the water, and this little girl was at once sent for. They amused themselves by asking what was happening in certain distant places; and after the man had murmured some words over the water, the child looked in and always managed to see the vision required of her.

"M. le duc d'Orléans had so often been duped in matters of this kind that he determined to put the water-gazer to a severe test. He whispered to one of his attendants to go round to Madame de Nancre's, who lived close by, and ascertain who was there, what they were all doing, the position of the room and the way it was furnished, and then, without exchanging a word with any one, to return and let him know the result. This was done speedily and without the slightest suspicion on the part of any person, the child remaining in the room all the time. When M. le duc d'Orléans had learned all he wanted to know, he bade the child look in the water and tell him who was at Madame de Nancre's and what they were all doing. She repeated word for word the story that had been told by the duke's messenger; described minutely the faces, dresses and positions of the assembled company, those that were playing cards at the various tables, those that were sitting, those that were standing, even the very furniture! But to leave nothing in doubt, the Duke of Orléans despatched Nancre back to the house to verify a second time the child's account, and like the valet, he found she had been right in every particular.

"As a rule he said very little to me about these subjects, as he knew I did not approve of them, and on this occasion I did not fail to scold him, and to point out the folly of being amused by such things, especially at a time when his attention should be occupied with more serious matters. 'Oh, but I have only told you half,' he replied; 'that was just the beginning,' and then he went on to say that, encouraged by the exactitude of the little girl's description of Madame de Nancre's room, he resolved to put to her a more important question, namely, as to the scene that would occur at the death of the king. The child had never seen any one who was about the court, and had never even heard of Versailles, but she described exactly and at great length the king's bedroom at Versailles and all the furniture which was in fact there at the date of his death. She gave every detail as to the bed, and cried out on recognising, in the arms of Madame de Ventadour, a little child decorated with an order whom she had seen at the house of Mademoiselle la Sery; and again at the sight of M. le duc d'Orléans. From her account, Madame de Maintenon, Fagon with his odd face, Madame la duchesse d'Orléans, Madame la duchesse, Madame la princesse de Conti, besides other princes and nobles, and even the valets and servants were all present at the king's deathbed. Then she paused, and M. le duc d'Orléans, surprised that she had never mentioned Monseigneur, Monsieur le duc de Bourgogne, Madame la duchesse de Bourgogne, nor M. le duc de Berri, inquired if she did not see such and such people answering to their description. She persisted that she did not, and went over the others for the second time. This astonished M. le duc d'Orléans deeply, as well as myself, and we were at a loss to explain it, but the event proved that the child was perfectly right. This *séance* took place in 1706. These four members of the royal family were then full of health and strength; and they all died before the king. It was the same thing with M. le prince, M. le duc, and M. le prince de Conti, whom she likewise did not see, though she beheld the children of the two last named; M. du Maine, his own (Orléans), and M. le comte de Toulouse. But of course this fact was unknown till eight years after."

Science may conceivably come to study crystal visions, but veracious crystal visions will be treated like veracious dreams. That is to say, they will be explained as the results of a chance coincidence between the unknown fact and the vision, or of imposture, conscious or unconscious, or of confusion of memory, or the fact of the crystal vision will be simply denied. Thus a vast number of well-authenticated cases of veracious visions will be required before science could admit that it might be well to investigate hitherto unacknowledged faculties of the human mind. The evidence can never be other than the word of the seer, with whatever value may attach to the testimony of those for whom he "sees," and describes, persons and places unknown to himself. The evidence of individuals as to their own subjective experiences is accepted by psychologists in other departments of the study.

CHAPTER IV

Veracious Waking Hallucinations not recognised by Science; or explained by Coincidence, Imposture, False Memory. A Veracious Hallucination popularly called a Wraith or Ghost. Example of Unveracious Hallucination. The Family Coach. Ghosts' Clothes and other Properties and Practices; how explained. Case of Veracious Hallucination. Riding Home from Mess. Another Case. The Bright Scar. The Vision and the Portrait. Such Stories not usually believed. Cases of Touch: The Restraining Hand. Of Hearing: The Benedictine's Voices; The Voice in the Bath-room. Other "Warnings". The Maoris. The Man at the Lift. Appearances Coincident with Death. Others not Coincident with Anything.

In "crystal-gazing" anybody can make experiments for himself and among such friends as he thinks he can trust. They are hallucinations consciously sought for, and as far as possible, provoked or induced by taking certain simple measures. Unsought, spontaneous waking hallucinations, according to the result of Mr. Galton's researches, though not nearly so common as dreams, are as much facts of *sane* mental experience. Now every ghost or wraith is a hallucination. You see your wife in the dining-room when she really is in the drawing-room; you see your late great-great-grandfather anywhere. Neither person is really present. The first appearance in popular language is a "wraith"; the second is a "ghost" in ordinary speech. Both are hallucinations.

So far Mr. Galton would go, but mark what follows! Everybody allows the existence of dreams, but comparatively few believe in dream stories of *veracious* dreams. So every scientific man believes in hallucinations, but few believe in *veracious* hallucinations. A veracious hallucination is, for our purpose, one which communicates (as veracious dreams do) information not otherwise known, or, at least, not known to the knower to be known. The communication of the knowledge may be done by audible words, with or without an actual apparition, or with an apparition, by words or gestures. Again, if a hallucination of Jones's presence tallies with a great crisis in Jones's life, or with his death, the hallucination is so far veracious in that, at least, it does not seem meaningless. Or if Jones's appearance has some unwonted feature not known to the seer, but afterwards proved to be correct in fact, that is veracious. Next, if several persons successively in the same place, or simultaneously, have a similar hallucination not to be accounted for physically, that is, if not a veracious, a curious hallucination. Once more, if a hallucinatory figure is afterwards recognised in a living person previously unknown, or a portrait previously unseen, that (if the recognition be genuine) is a veracious hallucination. The vulgar call it a wraith of the living, or a ghost of the dead.

Here follow two cases. The first, *The Family Coach*, gave no verified intelligence, and would be styled a "subjective hallucination". The second contributed knowledge of facts not previously known to the witness, and so the vulgar would call it a ghost. Both appearances were very rich and full of complicated detail. Indeed, any ghost that wears clothes is a puzzle. Nobody but savages thinks that clothes have ghosts, but Tom Sawyer conjectures that ghosts' clothes "are made of ghost stuff".

As a rule, not very much is seen of a ghost; he is "something of a shadowy being". Yet we very seldom hear of a ghost stark naked; that of Sergeant Davies, murdered in 1749, is one of three or four examples in civilised life. Hence arises the old question, "How are we to account for the clothes of ghosts?" One obvious reply is that there is no ghost at all, only a hallucination. We do not see people naked, as a rule, in our dreams; and hallucinations, being waking dreams, conform to the same rule. If a ghost opens a door or lifts a curtain in our sight, that, too, is only part of the illusion. The door did not open; the curtain was not lifted. Nay, if the wrist or hand of the seer is burned or withered, as in a crowd of stories, the ghost's hand did not produce the effect. It was produced in the same way as when a hypnotised patient is told that "his hand is burned," his fancy then begets real blisters, or so we are informed, truly or not. The stigmata of St. Francis and others are explained in the same way. How ghosts pull bedclothes off and make objects fly about is another question: in any case the ghosts are not *seen* in the act.

Thus the clothes of ghosts, their properties, and their actions affecting physical objects, are not more difficult to explain than a naked ghost would be, they are all the "stuff that dreams are made of". But occasionally things are carried to a great pitch, as when a ghost drives off in a ghostly dogcart, with a ghostly horse, whip and harness. Of this complicated kind we give two examples; the first reckons as a "subjective," the second as a veracious hallucination.

THE OLD FAMILY COACH

A distinguished and accomplished country gentleman and politician, of scientific tastes, was riding in the New Forest, some twelve miles from the place where he was residing. In a grassy glade he discovered that he did not very clearly know his way to a country town which he intended to visit. At this moment, on the other side of some bushes a carriage drove along, and then came into clear view where there was a gap in the bushes. Mr. Hyndford saw it perfectly distinctly; it was a slightly antiquated family carriage, the sides were in that imitation of wicker work on green panel which was once so common. The coachman was a respectable family servant, he drove two horses: two old ladies were in the carriage, one of them wore a hat, the other a bonnet. They passed, and then Mr. Hyndford, going through the gap in the bushes, rode after them to ask his way. There was no carriage in sight, the avenue ended in a *cul-de-sac* of tangled brake, and there were no traces of wheels on the grass. Mr. Hyndford rode back to his original point of view, and looked for any object which could suggest the illusion of one old-fashioned carriage, one coachman, two horses and two elderly ladies, one in a hat and one in a bonnet. He looked in vain — and that is all!

Nobody in his senses would call this appearance a ghostly one. The name, however, would be applied to the following tale of

RIDING HOME FROM MESS

In 1854, General Barter, C.B., was a subaltern in the 75th Regiment, and was doing duty at the hill station of Murree in the Punjaub. He lived in a house built recently by a Lieutenant B., who died, as researches at the War Office prove, at Peshawur on 2nd January, 1854. The house was on a spur of the hill, three or four hundred yards under the only road, with which it communicated by a "bridle path," never used by horsemen. That path ended in a precipice; a footpath led into the bridle path from Mr. Barter's house.

One evening Mr. Barter had a visit from a Mr. and Mrs. Deane, who stayed till near eleven o'clock. There was a full moon, and Mr. Barter walked to the bridle path with his friends, who climbed it to join the road. He loitered with two dogs, smoking a cigar, and just as he turned to go home, he heard a horse's hoofs coming down the bridle path. At a bend of the path a tall hat came into view, then round the corner, the wearer of the hat, who rode a pony and was attended by two native grooms. "At this time the two dogs came, and crouching at my side, gave low frightened whimpers. The moon was at the full, a tropical moon, so bright that you could see to read a newspaper by its light, and I saw the party above me advance as plainly as if it were noon-day; they were above me some eight or ten feet on the bridle road. . . . On the party came, . . . and now I had better describe them. The rider was in full dinner dress, with white waistcoat and a tall chimney-pot hat, and he sat on a powerful hill pony (dark-brown, with black mane and tail) in a listless sort of way, the reins hanging loosely from both hands." Grooms led the pony and supported the rider. Mr. Barter, knowing that there was no place they could go to but his own house, cried "*Quon hai*?" (who is it?), adding in English, "Hullo, what the devil do you want here?" The group halted, the rider gathered up the reins with both hands, and turning, showed Mr. Barter the known features of the late Lieutenant B.

He was very pale, the face was a dead man's face, he was stouter than when Mr. Barter knew him and he wore *a dark Newgate fringe.*

Mr. Barter dashed up the bank, the earth thrown up in making the bridle path crumbled under him, he fell, scrambled on, reached the bridle path where the group had stopped, and found nobody. Mr. Barter ran up the path for a hundred yards, as nobody could go *down* it except over a precipice, and neither heard nor saw anything. His dogs did not accompany him.

Next day Mr. Barter gently led his friend Deane to talk of Lieutenant B., who said that the lieutenant "grew very bloated before his death, and while on the sick list he allowed the fringe to grow in spite of all we could say to him, and I believe he was buried with it". Mr. Barter then asked where he got the pony, describing it minutely.

"He bought him at Peshawur, and killed him one day, riding in his reckless fashion down the hill to Trete."

Mr. Barter and his wife often heard the horse's hoofs later, though he doubts if any one but B. had ever ridden the bridle path. His Hindoo bearer he found one day armed with a *lattie*, being determined to waylay the sound, which "passed him like a typhoon". Here the appearance gave correct information unknown previously to General Barter, namely, that Lieutenant B. grew stout and wore a beard before his death, also that he had owned a brown pony, with black mane and tail. Even granting that the ghosts of the pony and lieutenant were present (both being dead), we are not informed that the grooms were dead also. The hallucination, on the theory of "mental telegraphy," was telegraphed to General Barter's mind from some one who had seen Lieutenant B. ride home from mess not very sober, or from the mind of the defunct lieutenant, or, perhaps, from that of the deceased pony. The message also reached and alarmed General Barter's dogs.

Something of the same kind may or may not explain Mr. Hyndford's view of the family coach, which gave no traceable information.

The following story, in which an appearance of the dead conveyed information not known to the seer, and so deserving to be called veracious, is a little ghastly.

THE BRIGHT SCAR

In 1867, Miss G., aged eighteen, died suddenly of cholera in St. Louis. In 1876 a brother, F. G., who was much attached to her, had done a good day's business in St. Joseph. He was sending in his orders to his employers (he is a commercial traveller) and was smoking a cigar, when he became conscious that some one was sitting on his left, with one arm on the table. It was his dead sister. He sprang up to embrace her (for even on meeting a stranger whom we take for a dead friend, we never realise the impossibility in the half moment of surprise) but she was gone. Mr. G. stood there, the ink wet on his pen, the cigar lighted in his hand, the name of his sister on his lips. He had noted her expression, features, dress, the kindness of her eyes, the glow of the complexion, and what he had never seen before, *a bright red scratch on the right side of her face.*

Mr. G. took the next train home to St. Louis, and told the story to his parents. His father was inclined to ridicule him, but his mother nearly fainted. When she could control herself, she said that, unknown to any one, she had accidentally scratched the face of the dead, apparently with the pin of her brooch, while arranging something about the corpse. She had obliterated the scratch with powder, and had kept the fact to herself. "She told me she *knew* at least that I had seen my sister." A few weeks later Mrs. G. died.

Here the information existed in one living mind, the mother's, and if there is any "mental telegraphy," may thence have been conveyed to Mr. F. G.

Another kind of cases which may be called veracious, occurs when the ghost seer, after seeing the ghost, recognises it in a portrait not previously beheld. Of course, allowance must be made for fancy, and for conscious or unconscious hoaxing. You see a spook in Castle Dangerous. You then recognise the portrait in the hall, or elsewhere. The temptation to recognise the spook rather more clearly than you really do, is considerable, just as one is tempted to recognise the features of the Stuarts in the royal family, of the parents in a baby, or in any similar case.

Nothing is more common in literary ghost stories than for somebody to see a spectre and afterwards recognise him or her in a portrait not before seen. There is an early example in Sir Walter Scott's *Tapestried Chamber,* which was told to him by Miss Anna Seward. Another such tale is by Théophile Gautier. In an essay on Illusions by Mr. James Sully, a case is given. A lady (who corroborated the story to the present author) was vexed all night by a spectre in armour. Next morning she saw, what she had not previously observed, a portrait of the spectre in the room. Mr. Sully explains that she had seen the portrait *unconsciously*, and dreamed of it. He adds the curious circumstance that other people have had the same experience in the same room, which his explanation does not cover. The following story is published by the Society for Psychical Research, attested by the seer and her husband, whose real names are known, but not published.

THE VISION AND THE PORTRAIT

Mrs. M. writes (December 15, 1891) that before her vision she had heard nothing about hauntings in the house occupied by herself and her husband, and nothing about the family sorrows of her predecessors there.

"One night, on retiring to my bedroom about 11 o'clock, I thought I heard a peculiar moaning sound, and some one sobbing as if in great distress of mind. I listened very attentively, and still it continued; so I raised the gas in my bedroom, and then went to the window on the landing, drew the blind aside, and there on the grass was a very beautiful young girl in a kneeling posture, before a soldier in a general's uniform, sobbing and clasping her hands together, entreating for pardon, but alas! he only waved her away from him. So much did I feel for the girl that I ran down the staircase to the door opening upon the lawn, and begged her to come in and tell me her sorrow. The figures then disappeared gradually, as in a dissolving view. Not in the least nervous did I feel then; went again to my bedroom, took a sheet of writing-paper, and wrote down what I had seen."

Mrs. M., whose husband was absent, began to feel nervous, and went to another lady's room.

She later heard of an old disgrace to the youngest daughter of the proud family, her predecessors in the house. The poor girl tried in vain to win forgiveness, especially from a near relative, a soldier, Sir X. Y.

"So vivid was my remembrance of the features of the soldier, that some months after the occurrence when I called with my husband at a house where there was a portrait of him, I stepped before it and said, 'Why, look! there is the General!' And sure enough it *was*."

Mrs. M. had not heard that the portrait was in the room where she saw it. Mr. M. writes that he took her to the house where he knew it to be without telling her of its existence. Mrs. M. turned pale when she saw it. Mr. M. knew the sad old story, but had kept it to himself. The family in which the disgrace occurred, in 1847 or 1848, were his relations.

This vision was a veracious hallucination; it gave intelligence not otherwise known to Mrs. M., and capable of confirmation, therefore the appearances would be called "ghosts". The majority of people do not believe in the truth of any such stories of veracious hallucinations, just as they do not believe in veracious dreams. Mr. Galton, out of all his packets of reports of hallucinations, does not even allude to a veracious example, whether he has records of such a thing or not. Such reports, however, are ghost stories, “which we now proceed,” or continue, “to narrate”. The reader will do well to remember that while everything ghostly, and not to be explained by known physical facts, is in the view of science a hallucination, every hallucination is not a ghost for the purposes of story-telling. The hallucination must, for story-telling purposes, be *veracious*.

Following our usual method, we naturally begin with the anecdotes least trying to the judicial faculties, and most capable of an ordinary explanation. Perhaps of all the senses, the sense of touch, though in some ways the surest, is in others the most easily deceived. Some people who cannot call up a clear mental image of things seen, say a saltcellar, can readily call up a mental revival of the feeling of touching salt. Again, a slight accidental throb, or leap of a sinew or vein, may feel so like a touch that we turn round to see who touched us. These familiar facts go far to make the following tale more or less conceivable.

THE RESTRAINING HAND

“About twenty years ago,” writes Mrs. Elliot, “I received some letters by post, one of which contained £15 in bank notes. After reading the letters I went into the kitchen with them in my hands. I was alone at the time. . . . Having done with the letters, I made an effort to throw them into the fire, when I distinctly felt my hand arrested in the act. It was as though another hand were gently laid upon my own, pressing it back. Much surprised, I looked at my hand and then saw it contained, not the letters I had intended to destroy, but the bank notes, and that the letters were in the other hand. I was so surprised that I called out, ‘Who’s here?’”

Nobody will call this “the touch of a vanished hand”. Part of Mrs. Elliot’s mind knew what she was about, and started an unreal but veracious feeling to warn her. We shall come to plenty of Hands not so readily disposed of.

Next to touch, the sense most apt to be deceived is hearing. Every one who has listened anxiously for an approaching carriage, has often heard it come before it came. In the summer of 1896 the writer, with a lady and another companion, were standing on the veranda at the back of a house in Dumfriesshire, waiting for a cab to take one of them to the station. They heard a cab arrive and draw up, went round to the front of the house, saw the servant open the door and bring out the luggage, but wheeled vehicle there was none in sound or sight. Yet all four persons had heard it, probably by dint of expectation.

To hear articulate voices where there are none is extremely common in madness, but not very rare, as Mr. Galton shows, among the sane. When the voices are veracious, give unknown information, they are in the same case as truthful dreams. I offer a few from the experience, reported to me by himself, of a man of learning whom I shall call a Benedictine monk, though that is not his real position in life.

THE BENEDICTINE’S VOICES

My friend, as a lad, was in a strait between the choice of two professions. He prayed for enlightenment, and soon afterwards heard an *internal* voice, advising a certain course. “Did you act on it?” I asked.

“No; I didn’t. I considered that in my circumstances it did not demand attention.”

Later, when a man grown, he was in his study merely idling over some books on the table, when he heard a loud voice from a corner of the room assert that a public event of great importance would occur at a given date. It did occur. About the same time, being abroad, he was in great anxiety as to a matter involving only himself. Of this he never spoke to any one. On his return to England his mother said, “You were very wretched about so and so”.

“How on earth did you know?”

“I heard— ‘s voice telling me.”

Now — had died years before, in childhood.

In these cases the Benedictine’s own conjecture and his mother’s affection probably divined facts, which did not present themselves as thoughts in the ordinary way, but took the form of unreal voices.

There are many examples, as of the girl in her bath who heard a voice say “Open the door” four times, did so, then fainted, and only escaped drowning by ringing the bell just before she swooned.

Of course she might not have swooned if she had not been alarmed by hearing the voices. These tales are dull enough, and many voices, like Dr. Johnson’s mother’s, when he heard her call his name, she being hundreds of miles away, lead to nothing and are not veracious. When they are veracious, as in the case of dreams, it may be by sheer accident.

In a similar class are “warnings” conveyed by the eye, not by the ear. The Maoris of New Zealand believe that if one sees a body lying across a path or oneself on the opposite side of a river, it is wiser to try another path and a different ford.

THE MAN AT THE LIFT

In the same way, in August, 1890, a lady in a Boston hotel in the dusk rang for the lift, walked along the corridor and looked out of a window, started to run to the door of the lift, saw a man in front of it, stopped, and when the lighted lift came up, found that the door was wide open and that, had she run on as she intended, she would have fallen down the well. Here part of her mind may have known that the door was open, and started a ghost (for there was no real man there) to stop her. Pity that these things do not occur more frequently. They do — in New Zealand.

These are a few examples of useful veracious waking dreams. The sort of which we hear most are "wraiths". A, when awake, meets B, who is dead or dying or quite well at a distance. The number of these stories is legion. To these we advance, under their Highland title, *spirits of the living.*

CHAPTER V

"Spirits of the Living." Mistakes of Identity. Followed by Arrival of Real Person. "Arrivals." Mark Twain's Phantom Lady. Phantom Dogcart. Influence of Expectant Attention. Goethe. Shelley. The Wraith of the Czarina. Queen Elizabeth's Wraith. Second Sight. Case at Ballachulish. Experiments in sending Wraiths. An "Astral Body". Evidence discussed. Miss Russell's Case. "Spirits of the Dying." Maori Examples. Theory of Chance Coincidence. In Tavistock Place. The Wynyard Wraith. Lord Brougham's Wraith Story. Lord Brougham's Logic. The Dying Mother. Comparison with the Astral Body. The Vision of the Bride. Animals as affected by the supposed Presence of Apparitions. Examples. Transition to Appearances of the Dead.

"Spirits of the living" is the Highland term for the appearances of people who are alive and well — but elsewhere. The common Highland belief is that they show themselves to second-sighted persons, very frequently before the arrival of a stranger or a visitor, expected or unexpected. Probably many readers have had the experience of meeting an acquaintance in the street. He passes us, and within a hundred yards we again meet and talk with our friend. When he is of very marked appearance, or has any strong peculiarity, the experience is rather perplexing. Perhaps a few bits of hallucination are sprinkled over a real object. This ordinary event leads on to what are called "Arrivals," that is when a person is seen, heard and perhaps spoken to in a place to which he is travelling, but whither he has not yet arrived. Mark Twain gives an instance in his own experience. At a large crowded reception he saw approaching him in the throng a lady whom he had known and liked many years before. When she was near him, he lost sight of her, but met her at supper, dressed as he had seen her in the "levee". At that moment she was travelling by railway to the town in which he was.

A large number of these cases have been printed. In one case a gentleman and lady from their window saw his brother and sister-in-law drive past, with a horse which they knew had not been out for some weeks. The seers were presently joined by the visitors' daughter, who had met the party on the road, she having just left them at their house. Ten minutes later the real pair arrived, horse and all.

This last affair is one of several tales of "Phantom Coaches," not only heard but seen, the coach being a coach of the living. In 1893 the author was staying at a Highland castle, when one of the ladies observed to her nephew, “So you and Susan *did* drive in the dogcart; I saw you pass my window”. “No, we didn’t; but we spoke of doing it.” The lady then mentioned minute details of the dress and attitudes of her relations as they passed her window, where the drive turned from the hall door through the park; but, in fact, no such journey had been made. Dr. Hack Tuke published the story of the “Arrival” of Dr. Boase at his house a quarter of an hour before he came, the people who saw him supposing him to be in Paris.

When a person is seen in “Arrival” cases before he arrives, the affair is not so odd if he is expected. Undoubtedly, expectation does sometimes conjure up phantasms, and the author once saw (as he supposed) a serious accident occur which in fact did not take place, though it seemed unavoidable.

Curiously enough, this creation of phantasms by expectant attention seems to be rare where “ghosts” are expected. The author has slept in several haunted houses, but has never seen what he was led to expect. In many instances, as in “The Lady in Black” (*infra*), a ghost who is a frequent visitor is never seen when people watch for her. Among the many persons who have had delusions as to the presence of the dead, very few have been hoping, praying for and expecting them.

“I look for ghosts, but none will force
  Their way to me: ’Tis falsely said
That there was ever intercourse
  Between the living and the dead,
For surely then I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night
With love and longings infinite.”

The Affliction of Margaret has been the affliction of most of us. There are curious historical examples of these appearances of the living. Goethe declares that he once met himself at a certain place in a certain dress, and several years later found himself there in that costume. Shelley was seen by his friends at Lerici to pass along a balcony whence there was no exit. However, he could not be found there. The story of the wraith of Catherine the Great is variously narrated. We give it as told by an eye-witness, the Comte de Ribaupierre, about 1862 to Lady Napier and Ettrick. The Count, in 1862, was a very old man, and more than thirty years have passed since he gave the tale to Lady Napier, whose memory retains it in the following form: —

THE WRAITH OF THE CZARINA

"In the exercise of his duties as one of the pages-in-waiting, Ribaupierre followed one day his august mistress into the throne-room of the palace. When the Empress, accompanied by the high officers of her court and the ladies of her household, came in sight of the chair of state which she was about to occupy, she suddenly stopped, and to the horror and astonished awe of her courtiers, she pointed to a visionary being seated on the imperial throne. The occupant of the chair was an exact counterpart of herself. All saw it and trembled, but none dared to move towards the mysterious presentment of their sovereign.

"After a moment of dead silence the great Catherine raised her voice and ordered her guard to advance and fire on the apparition. The order was obeyed, a mirror beside the throne was shattered, the vision had disappeared, and the Empress, with no sign of emotion, took the chair from which her semblance had passed away." It is a striking barbaric scene!

"Spirits of the living" of this kind are common enough. In the Highlands "second sight" generally means a view of an event or accident some time before its occurrence. Thus an old man was sitting with a little boy on a felled tree beside a steep track in a quarry at Ballachulish. Suddenly he jerked the boy to one side, and threw himself down on the further side of the tree. While the boy stared, the old man slowly rose, saying, "The spirits of the living are strong to-day!" He had seen a mass of rock dashing along, killing some quarrymen and tearing down the path. The accident occurred next day. It is needless to dwell on second sight, which is not peculiar to Celts, though the Highlanders talk more about it than other people.

These appearances of the living but absent, whether caused by some mental action of the person who appears or not, are, at least, *unconscious* on his part. But a few cases occur in which a living person is said, by a voluntary exertion of mind, to have made himself visible to a friend at a distance. One case is vouched for by Baron von Schrenck-Notzig, a German psychologist, who himself made the experiment with success. Others are narrated by Dr. Gibotteau. A curious tale is told by several persons as follows: —

AN “ASTRAL BODY”

Mr. Sparks and Mr. Cleave, young men of twenty and nineteen, were accustomed to “mesmerise” each other in their dormitory at Portsmouth, where they were students of naval engineering. Mr. Sparks simply stared into Mr. Cleave’s eyes as he lay on his bed till he “went off”. The experiments seemed so curious that witnesses were called, Mr. Darley and Mr. Thurgood. On Friday, 15th January, 1886, Mr. Cleave determined to try to see, when asleep, a young lady at Wandsworth to whom he was in the habit of writing every Sunday. He also intended, if possible, to make *her* see *him*. On awaking, he said that he had seen her in the dining-room of her house, that she had seemed to grow restless, had looked at him, and then had covered her face with her hands. On Monday he tried again, and he thought he had frightened her, as after looking at him for a few minutes she fell back in her chair in a kind of faint. Her little brother was in the room with her at the time. On Tuesday next the young lady wrote, telling Mr. Cleave that she had been startled by seeing him on Friday evening (this is an error), and again on Monday evening, “much clearer,” when she nearly fainted.

All this Mr. Sparks wrote to Mr. Gurney in the same week. He was inviting instructions on hypnotic experiments, and “launched a letter into space,” having read something vague about Mr. Gurney’s studies in the newspapers. The letter, after some adventures, arrived, and on 15th March Mr. Cleave wrote his account, Mr. Darley and Mr. Thurgood corroborating as to their presence during the trance and as to Mr. Cleave’s statement when he awoke. Mr. Cleave added that he made experiments “for five nights running” before seeing the lady. The young lady’s letter of 19th January, 1886, is also produced (postmark, Portsmouth, 20th January). But the lady mentions her *first* vision of Mr. Cleave as on last *Tuesday* (not Friday), and her second, while she was alone with her little brother, at supper on Monday. “I was so frightened that I nearly fainted.”

These are all young people. It may be said that all five were concerned in a complicated hoax on Mr. Gurney. Nor would such a hoax argue any unusual moral obliquity. Surtees of Mainsforth, in other respects an honourable man, took in Sir Walter Scott with forged ballads, and never undeceived his friend. Southey played off a hoax with his book *The Doctor*. Hogg, Lockhart, and Wilson, with Allan Cunningham and many others, were constantly engaged in such mystifications, and a “ghost-hunter” might seem a fair butt.

But the very discrepancy in Miss— ‘s letter is a proof of fairness. Her first vision of Mr. Cleave was on “Tuesday last”. Mr. Cleave’s first impression of success was on the Friday following.

But he had been making the experiment for five nights previous, including the Tuesday of Miss— ‘s letter. Had the affair been a hoax, Miss — would either have been requested by him to re-write her letter, putting Friday for Tuesday, or what is simpler, Mr. Sparks would have adopted her version and written “Tuesday” in place of “Friday” in his first letter to Mr. Gurney. The young lady, naturally, requested Mr. Cleave not to try his experiment on her again.

A similar case is that of Mrs. Russell, who tried successfully, when awake and in Scotland, to appear to one of her family in Germany. The sister corroborates and says, “Pray don’t come appearing to me again”.

These spirits of the living lead to the subject of spirits of the dying. No kind of tale is so common as that of dying people appearing at a distance. Hundreds have been conscientiously published. The belief is prevalent among the Maoris of New Zealand, where the apparition is regarded as a proof of death. Now there is nothing in savage philosophy to account for this opinion of the Maoris. A man’s “spirit” leaves his body in dreams, savages think, and as dreaming is infinitely more common than death, the Maoris should argue that the appearance is that of a man’s spirit wandering in his sleep. However, they, like many Europeans, associate a man’s apparition with his death. Not being derived from their philosophy, this habit may be deduced from their experience.

As there are, undeniably, many examples of hallucinatory appearances of persons in perfect health and ordinary circumstances, the question has been asked whether there are *more* cases of an apparition coinciding with death than, according to the doctrine of chances, there ought to be. Out of about 18,000 answers to questions on this subject, has been deduced the conclusion that the deaths do coincide with the apparitions to an extent beyond mere accident. Even if we had an empty hallucination for every case coinciding with death, we could not set the coincidences down to mere chance. As well might we say that if “at the end of an hour’s rifle practice at long-distance range, the record shows that for every shot that has hit the bull’s eye, another has missed the target, therefore the shots that hit the target did so by accident.” But as empty hallucinations are more likely to be forgotten than those which coincide with a death; as exaggeration creeps in, as the collectors of evidence are naturally inclined to select and question people whom they know to have a good story to tell, the evidence connecting apparitions, voices, and so on with deaths is not likely to be received with favour.

One thing must be remembered as affecting the theory that the coincidence between the wraith and the death is purely an accident. Everybody dreams and out of the innumerable dreams of mankind, a few must hit the mark by a fluke. But *hallucinations* are not nearly so common as dreams. Perhaps, roughly speaking, one person in ten has had what he believes to be a waking hallucination. Therefore, so to speak, compared with dreams, but a small number of shots of this kind are fired. Therefore, bull's eyes (the coincidence between an appearance and a death) are infinitely less likely to be due to chance in the case of waking hallucinations than in the case of dreams, which all mankind are firing off every night of their lives. Stories of these coincidences between appearances and deaths are as common as they are dull. Most people come across them in the circle of their friends. They are all very much alike, and make tedious reading. We give a few which have some picturesque features.

IN TAVISTOCK PLACE

"In the latter part of the autumn of 1878, between half-past three and four in the morning, I was leisurely walking home from the house of a sick friend. A middle-aged woman, apparently a nurse, was slowly following, going in the same direction. We crossed Tavistock Square together, and emerged simultaneously into Tavistock Place. The streets and squares were deserted, the morning bright and calm, my health excellent, nor did I suffer from anxiety or fatigue. A man suddenly appeared, striding up Tavistock Place, coming towards me, and going in a direction opposite to mine. When first seen he was standing exactly in front of my own door (5 Tavistock Place). Young and ghastly pale, he was dressed in evening clothes, evidently made by a foreign tailor. Tall and slim, he walked with long measured strides noiselessly. A tall white hat, covered thickly with black crape, and an eyeglass, completed the costume of this strange form. The moonbeams falling on the corpse-like features revealed a face well known to me, that of a friend and relative. The sole and only person in the street beyond myself and this being was the woman already alluded to. She stopped abruptly, as if spell-bound, then rushing towards the man, she gazed intently and with horror unmistakable on his face, which was now upturned to the heavens and smiling ghastly. She indulged in her strange contemplation but during very few seconds, then with extraordinary and unexpected speed for her weight and age she ran away with a terrific shriek and yell. This woman never have I seen or heard of since, and but for her presence I could have explained the incident: called it, say, subjection of the mental powers to the domination of physical reflex action, and the man's presence could have been termed a false impression on the retina.

"A week after this event, news of this very friend's death reached me. It occurred on the morning in question. From the family I learned that according to the rites of the Greek Church and the custom of the country he resided in, he was buried in his evening clothes made abroad by a foreign tailor, and strange to say, he wore goloshes over his boots, according also to the custom of the country he died in. . . . When in England, he lived in Tavistock Place, and occupied my rooms during my absence."

THE WYNYARD WRAITH

"In the month of November (1785 or 1786), Sir John Sherbrooke and Colonel Wynyard were sitting before dinner in their barrack room at Sydney Cove, in America. It was duskish, and a candle was placed on a table at a little distance. A figure dressed in plain clothes and a good round hat, passed gently between the above people and the fire. While passing, Sir J. Sherbrooke exclaimed, 'God bless my soul, who's that?'

"Almost at the same moment Colonel W. said, 'That's my brother John Wynyard, and I am sure he is dead'. Colonel W. was much agitated, and cried and sobbed a great deal. Sir John said, 'The fellow has a devilish good hat; I wish I had it'. (Hats were not to be got there and theirs were worn out.) They immediately got up (Sir John was on crutches, having broken his leg), took a candle and went into the bedroom, into which the figure had entered. They searched the bed and every corner of the room to no effect; the windows were fastened up with mortar. . . .

"They received no communication from England for about five months, when a letter from Mr. Rush, the surgeon (Coldstream Guards), announced the death of John Wynyard at the moment, as near as could be ascertained, when the figure appeared. In addition to this extraordinary circumstance, Sir John told me that two years and a half afterwards he was walking with Lilly Wynyard (a brother of Colonel W.) in London, and seeing somebody on the other side of the way, he recognised, he thought, the person who had appeared to him and Colonel Wynyard in America. Lilly Wynyard said that the person pointed out was a Mr. Eyre (Hay?), that he and John Wynyard were frequently mistaken for each other, and that money had actually been paid to this Mr. Eyre in mistake."

A famous tale of an appearance is Lord Brougham's. His Lordship was not reckoned precisely a veracious man; on the other hand, this was not the kind of fable he was likely to tell. He was brought up under the *régime* of common-sense. "On all such subjects my father was very sceptical," he says. To disbelieve Lord Brougham we must suppose either that he wilfully made a false entry in his diary in 1799, or that in preparing his *Autobiography* in 1862, he deliberately added a falsehood — and then explained his own marvel away!

LORD BROUGHAM’S STORY

“*December* 19, 1799.

“ . . . At one in the morning, arriving at a decent inn (in Sweden), we decided to stop for the night, and found a couple of comfortable rooms. Tired with the cold of yesterday, I was glad to take advantage of a hot bath before I turned in. And here a most remarkable thing happened to me — so remarkable that I must tell the story from the beginning.

“After I left the High School, I went with G — , my most intimate friend, to attend the classes in the University. . . . We actually committed the folly of drawing up an agreement, written with our blood, to the effect that whichever of us died the first should appear to the other, and thus solve any doubts we had entertained of ‘the life after death’. G — went to India, years passed, and,” says Lord Brougham, “I had nearly forgotten his existence. I had taken, as I have said, a warm bath, and while lying in it and enjoying the comfort of the heat, I turned my head round, looking towards the chair on which I had deposited my clothes, as I was about to get out of the bath. On the chair sat G — , looking calmly at me. How I got out of the bath I know not, but on recovering my senses I found myself sprawling on the floor. The apparition, or whatever it was that had taken the likeness of G — , had disappeared. . . . So strongly was I affected by it that I have here written down the whole history, with the date, 19th December, and all the particulars as they are now fresh before me. No doubt I had fallen asleep” (he has just said that he was awake and on the point of leaving the bath), “and that the appearance presented so distinctly to my eyes was a dream I cannot for a moment doubt. . . .”

On 16th October, 1862, Lord Brougham copied this extract for his *Autobiography*, and says that on his arrival in Edinburgh he received a letter from India, announcing that G — had died on 19th December. He remarks “singular coincidence!” and adds that, considering the vast number of dreams, the number of coincidences is perhaps fewer than a fair calculation of chances would warrant us to expect.

This is a concession to common-sense, and argues an ignorance of the fact that sane and (apparently) waking men may have hallucinations. On the theory that we *may* have inappreciable moments of sleep when we think ourselves awake, it is not an ordinary but an extraordinary coincidence that Brougham should have had that peculiar moment of the “dream” of G — on the day or night of G— ‘s death, while the circumstance that he had made a compact with G — multiplies the odds against accident in a ratio which mathematicians may calculate. Brougham was used to dreams, like other people; he was not shocked by them. This "dream" "produced such a shock that I had no inclination to talk about it". Even on Brougham's showing, then, this dream was a thing unique in his experience, and not one of the swarm of visions of sleep. Thus his including it among these, while his whole language shows that he himself did not really reckon it among these, is an example of the fallacies of common-sense. He completes his fallacy by saying, "It is not much more wonderful than that a person whom we had no reason to expect should appear to us at the very moment we had been thinking or speaking of him". But Lord Brougham had *not* been speaking or thinking of G — ; "there had been nothing to call him to my recollection," he says. To give his logic any value, he should constantly when (as far as he knew) awake, have had dreams that "shocked" him. Then *one* coincidence would have had no assignable cause save ordinary accident.

If Lord Brougham fabled in 1799 or in 1862, he did so to make a "sensation". And then he tried to undo it by arguing that his experience was a thoroughly commonplace affair.

We now give a very old story, "The Dying Mother". If the reader will compare it with Mr. Cleave's case, "An Astral Body," in this chapter, he will be struck by the resemblance. Mr. Cleave and Mrs. Goffe were both in a trance. Both wished to see persons at a distance. Both saw, and each was seen, Mrs. Goffe by her children's nurse; Mr. Cleave by the person whom he wished to see, but *not* by a small boy also present.

THE DYING MOTHER

“Mary, the wife of John Goffe of Rochester, being afflicted with a long illness, removed to her father’s house at West Mulling, about nine miles from her own. There she died on 4th June, this present year, 1691.

“The day before her departure (death) she grew very impatiently desirous to see her two children, whom she had left at home to the care of a nurse. She prayed her husband to ‘hire a horse, for she must go home and die with the children’. She was too ill to be moved, but ‘a minister who lives in the town was with her at ten o’clock that night, to whom she expressed good hopes in the mercies of God and a willingness to die’. ‘But’ said she, ‘it is my misery that I cannot see my children.’

“Between one and two o’clock in the morning, she fell into a trance. One, widow Turner, who watched with her that night, says that her eyes were open and fixed and her jaw fallen. Mrs. Turner put her hand upon her mouth and nostrils, but could perceive no breath. She thought her to be in a fit; and doubted whether she were dead or alive.

“The next morning the dying woman told her mother that she had been at home with her children. . . . ‘I was with them last night when I was asleep.’

“The nurse at Rochester, widow Alexander by name, affirms, and says she will take her oath on’t before a Magistrate and receive the sacrament upon it, that a little before two o’clock that morning she saw the likeness of the said Mary Goffe come out of the next chamber (where the elder child lay in a bed by itself) the door being left open, and stood by her bedside for about a quarter of an hour; the younger child was there lying by her. Her eyes moved and her mouth went, but she said nothing. The nurse, moreover, says that she was perfectly awake; it was then daylight, being one of the longest days in the year. She sat up in bed and looked steadfastly on the apparition. In that time she heard the bridge clock strike two, and a while after said, ‘In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, what art thou?’ Thereupon the apparition removed and went away; she slipped on her clothes and followed, but what became on’t she cannot tell.

“Mrs. Alexander then walked out of doors till six, when she persuaded some neighbours to let her in. She told her adventure; they failed to persuade her that she had dreamed it. On the same day the neighbour’s wife, Mrs. Sweet, went to West Mulling, saw Mrs. Goffe before her death, and heard from Mrs. Goffe’s mother the story of the daughter’s dream of her children, Mrs. Sweet not having mentioned the nurse’s story of the apparition.” That poor Mrs. Goffe walked to Rochester and returned undetected, a distance of eighteen miles is difficult to believe.

Goethe has an *obiter dictum* on the possibility of intercommunion without the aid of the ordinary senses, between the souls of lovers. Something of the kind is indicated in anecdotes of dreams dreamed in common by husband and wife, but, in such cases, it may be urged that the same circumstance, or the same noise or other disturbing cause, may beget the same dream in both. A better instance is

THE VISION OF THE BRIDE

Colonel Meadows Taylor writes, in *The Story of my Life* (vol. ii., p. 32): "The determination (to live unmarried) was the result of a very curious and strange incident that befel me during one of my marches to Hyderabad. I have never forgotten it, and it returns to this day to my memory with a strangely vivid effect that I can neither repel nor explain. I purposely withhold the date of the year. In my very early life I had been deeply and devotedly attached to one in England, and only relinquished the hope of one day winning her when the terrible order came out that no furlough to Europe would be granted.

"One evening I was at the village of Dewas Kudea, after a very long afternoon and evening march from Muktul, and I lay down very weary; but the barking of village dogs, the baying of jackals and over-fatigue and heat prevented sleep, and I was wide awake and restless. Suddenly, for my tent door was wide open, I saw the face and figure so familiar to me, but looking older, and with a sad and troubled expression; the dress was white and seemed covered with a profusion of lace and glistened in the bright moonlight. The arms were stretched out, and a low plaintive cry of 'Do not let me go! Do not let me go!' reached me. I sprang forward, but the figure receded, growing fainter and fainter till I could see it no more, but the low plaintive tones still sounded. I had run barefooted across the open space where my tents were pitched, very much to the astonishment of the sentry on guard, but I returned to my tent without speaking to him. I wrote to my father. I wished to know whether there were any hope for me. He wrote back to me these words: 'Too late, my dear son — on the very day of the vision you describe to me, A. was married'."

The colonel did not keep his determination not to marry, for his *Life* is edited by his daughter, who often heard her father mention the incident, "precisely in the same manner, and exactly as it is in the book".

If thinking of friends and lovers, lost or dead, could bring their forms and voices before the eye and ear of flesh, there would be a world of hallucinations around us. "But it wants heaven-sent moments for this skill," and few bridal nights send a vision and a voice to the bed of a wakeful lover far away.

Stories of this kind, appearances of the living or dying really at a distance, might be multiplied to any extent. They are all capable of explanation, if we admit the theory of telepathy, of a message sent by an unknown process from one living man's mind to another. Where more than one person shares the vision, we may suppose that the influence comes directly from A to B, C and D, or comes from A to B, and is by him unconsciously “wired” on to B and C, or is “suggested” to them by B’s conduct or words.

In that case animals may be equally affected, thus, if B seems alarmed, that may frighten his dog, or the alarm of a dog, caused by some noise or smell, heard or smelt by him, may frighten B, C and D, and make one or all of them see a ghost.

Popular opinion is strongly in favour of beasts seeing ghosts. The people of St. Kilda, according to Martin, held that cows shared the visions of second-sighted milk-maids. Horses are said to shy on the scene of murders. Scott’s horse ran away (home) when Sir Walter saw the bogle near Ashiestiel. In a case given later the dog shut up in a room full of unexplained noises, yelled and whined. The same dog (an intimate friend of my own) bristled up his hair and growled before his master saw the Grey Lady. The Rev. J. G. Wood gives a case of a cat which nearly went mad when his mistress saw an apparition. Jeremy Taylor tells of a dog which got quite used to a ghost that often appeared to his master, and used to follow it. In “The Lady in Black,” a dog would jump up and fawn on the ghost and then run away in a fright. Mr. Wesley’s mastiff was much alarmed by the family ghost. Not to multiply cases, dogs and other animals are easily affected by whatever it is that makes people think a ghost is present, or by the conduct of the human beings on these occasions.

Absurd as the subject appears, there are stories of the ghosts of animals. These may be discussed later; meanwhile we pass from appearances of the living or dying to stories of appearances of the dead.

CHAPTER VI

Transition to Appearances of the Dead. Obvious Scientific Difficulties. Purposeless Character of Modern Ghosts. Theory of Dead Men's Dreams. Illustrated by Sleep-walking House-maid. Purposeful Character of the Old Ghost Stories. Probable Causes of the Difference between Old and New Ghost Stories. Only the most Dramatic were recorded. Or the Tales were embellished or invented. Practical Reasons for inventing them. The Daemon of Spraiton. Sources of Story of Sir George Villier's Ghost. Clarendon. Lilly, Douch. Wyndham. Wyndham's Letter. Sir Henry Wotton. Izaak Walton. Anthony Wood. A Wotton Dream proved Legendary. The Ghost that appeared to Lord Lyttleton. His Lordship's Own Ghost.

APPEARANCES OF THE DEAD

We now pass beyond the utmost limits to which a "scientific" theory of things ghostly can be pushed. Science admits, if asked, that it does not know everything. It is not *inconceivable* that living minds may communicate by some other channel than that of the recognised senses. Science now admits the fact of hypnotic influence, though, sixty years ago, Braid was not allowed to read a paper on it before the British Association. Even now the topic is not welcome. But perhaps only one eminent man of science declares that hypnotism is *all* imposture and malobservation. Thus it is not wholly beyond the scope of fancy to imagine that some day official science may glance at the evidence for "telepathy".

But the stories we have been telling deal with living men supposed to be influencing living men. When the dead are alleged to exercise a similar power, we have to suppose that some consciousness survives the grave, and manifests itself by causing hallucinations among the living. Instances of this have already been given in "The Ghost and the Portrait," "The Bright Scar" and "Riding Home after Mess". These were adduced as examples of *veracity* in hallucinations. Each appearance gave information to the seer which he did not previously possess. In the first case, the lady who saw the soldier and the suppliant did not know of their previous existence and melancholy adventure. In the second, the brother did not know that his dead sister's face had been scratched. In the third, the observer did not know that Lieutenant B. had grown a beard and acquired a bay pony with black mane and tail. But though the appearances were *veracious*, they were *purposeless*, and again, as in each case the information existed in living minds, it *may* have been wired on from them.

Thus the doctrine of telepathy puts a ghost of the dead in a great quandary. If he communicates no verifiable information, he may be explained as a mere empty illusion. If he does yield fresh information, and if that is known to any living mind, he and his intelligence may have been wired on from that mind. His only chance is to communicate facts which are proved to be true, facts which nobody living knew before. Now it is next to impossible to demonstrate that the facts communicated were absolutely unknown to everybody.

Far, however, from conveying unknown intelligence, most ghosts convey none at all, and appear to have no purpose whatever.

It will be observed that there was no traceable reason why the girl with a scar should appear to Mr. G., or the soldier and suppliant to Mrs. M., or Lieutenant B. to General Barker. The appearances came in a vague, casual, aimless way, just as the living and healthy clergyman appeared to the diplomatist. On St. Augustine's theory the dead persons who appeared may have known no more about the matter than did the living clergyman. It is not even necessary to suppose that the dead man was dreaming about the living person to whom, or about the place in which, he appeared. But on the analogy of the tales in which a dream or thought of the living seems to produce a hallucination of their presence in the minds of other and distant living people, so a dream of the dead may (it is urged) have a similar effect if "in that sleep of death such dreams may come". The idea occurred to Shakespeare! In any case the ghosts of our stories hitherto have been so aimless and purposeless as to resemble what we might imagine a dead man's dream to be.

This view of the case (that a "ghost" may be a reflection of a dead man's dream) will become less difficult to understand if we ask ourselves what natural thing most resembles the common idea of a ghost. You are reading alone at night, let us say, the door opens and a human figure glides into the room. To you it pays no manner of attention; it does not answer if you speak; it may trifle with some object in the chamber and then steal quietly out again.

It is the House-maid walking in her Sleep.

This perfectly accountable appearance, in its aimlessness, its unconsciousness, its irresponsiveness, is undeniably just like the common notion of a ghost. Now, if ordinary ghosts are not of flesh and blood, like the sleep-walking house-maid, yet are as irresponsive, as unconscious, and as vaguely wandering as she, then (if the dead are somewhat) a ghost *may* be a hallucination produced in the living by the *unconscious* action of the mind of the dreaming dead. The conception is at least conceivable. If adopted, merely for argument's sake, it would first explain the purposeless behaviour of ghosts, and secondly, relieve people who see ghosts of the impression that they see “spirits”. In the Scotch phrase the ghost obviously “is not all there,” any more than the sleep walker is intellectually “all there”. This incomplete, incoherent presence is just what might be expected if a dreaming disembodied mind could affect an embodied mind with a hallucination.

But the good old-fashioned ghost stories are usually of another type. The robust and earnest ghosts of our ancestors “had their own purpose sun-clear before them,” as Mr. Carlyle would have said. They knew what they wanted, asked for it, and saw that they got it.

As a rule their bodies were unburied, and so they demanded sepulture; or they had committed a wrong, and wished to make restitution; or they had left debts which they were anxious to pay; or they had advice, or warnings, or threats to communicate; or they had been murdered, and were determined to bring their assassins to the gibbet.

Why, we may ask, were the old ghost stories so different from the new? Well, first they were not all different. Again, probably only the more dramatic tales were as a rule recorded. Thirdly, many of the stories may have been either embellished — a fancied purpose being attributed to a purposeless ghost — or they may even have been invented to protect witnesses who gave information against murderers. Who could disobey a ghost?

In any case the old ghost stories are much more dramatic than the new. To them we turn, beginning with the appearances of Mr. and Mrs. Furze at Spraiton, in Devonshire, in 1682. Our author is Mr. Richard Bovet, in his *Pandæmonium, or the Devil’s Cloister opened* (1683). The motive of the late Mr. Furze was to have some small debts paid; his wife’s spectre was influenced by a jealousy of Mr. Furze’s spectre’s relations with another lady.

THE DAEMON OF SPRAITON IN DEVON ANNO 1682

"About the month of November in the year 1682, in the parish of Spraiton, in the county of Devon, one Francis Fey (servant to Mr. Philip Furze) being in a field near the dwelling-house of his said master, there appeared unto him the *resemblance* of an *aged gentleman* like his master's father, with a pole or staff in his hand, resembling that he was wont to carry when living to kill the moles withal. The *spectrum* approached near the young man, whom you may imagin not a little surprized at the *appearance* of one that he knew to be dead, but the *spectrum bid him not be afraid of him, but tell his master* (who was his son) that several *legacies which by his testament he had bequeathed were unpaid, naming ten shillings to one and ten shillings to another*, *both which persons he named* to the young man, who replyed that the party he last named was dead, and so it could not be paid to him. The ghost answered *he knew that, but it must be paid to the next relation*, whom he also named. The spectrum likewise ordered him to carry twenty shillings to a gentlewoman, sister to the deceased, living near Totness in the said county, and promised, if these things were performed, to trouble him no further; but at the same time the *spectrum*, speaking of his *second wife* (who was also dead) *called her wicked woman*, though the gentleman who writ the letter knew her and esteemed her a very good woman. And (having thus related him his mind) the spectrum left the young man, who according to the *direction* of the *spirit* took care to see the small legacies satisfied, and carried the twenty shillings that was appointed to be paid the gentlewoman near Totness, but she utterly refused to receive it, being sent her (as she said) from the devil. The same night the young man lodging at her house, the aforesaid spectrum appeared to him again; whereupon the young man challenged his *promise not to trouble him any more*, saying he had performed all according to his appointment, but that the gentlewoman, his sister, would not receive the money.

"*To which the spectrum replied that was true indeed*; but withal *directed* the young man to ride to *Totness* and buy for her *a ring of that value, which the spirit said she would accept of,* which being provided accordingly, she received. Since the performance of which the ghost or apparition of the old gentleman hath seemed to be at rest, having never given the young man any further trouble.

"But the next day after having delivered the ring, the young man was riding home to his master's house, accompanyed by a servant of the gentlewoman's near *Totness*, and near about the time of their entrance (or a little before they came) into the parish of *Spraiton* aforesaid, there appeared to be upon the horse behind the young man, the resemblance of the *second wife* of the old gentleman spoken of before.

"This daemon often threw the young man off his horse, and cast him with such violence to the ground as was great astonishment, not only to the gentlewoman's servant (with him), but to divers others who were spectators of the frightful action, the ground resounding with great noise by reason of the incredible force with which he was cast upon it. At his coming into his master's yard, the horse which he rid, though very poor and out of case, leaped at one spring twenty-five foot, to the amazement of all that saw it. Soon after the she-spectre shewed herself to divers in the house, *viz.*, the aforesaid young man, *Mistress Thomasin Gidly, Ann Langdon,* born in that parish, and a little child, which, by reason of the troublesomeness of the spirit, they were fain to remove from that house. She appeared sometimes in her own shape, sometimes in forms very horrid; now and then like a monstrous dog belching out fire; at another time it flew out at the window, in the shape of a horse, carrying with it only one pane of glass and a small piece of iron.

"One time the young man's head was thrust into a very strait place betwixt a bed's head and a wall, and forced by the strength of divers men to be removed thence, and that not without being much hurt and bruised, so that much blood appeared about it: upon this it was advised he should be bleeded, to prevent any ill accident that might come of the bruise; after bleeding, the ligature or binder of his arm was removed from thence and conveyed about his middle, where it was strained with such violence that the girding had almost stopp'd his breath and kill'd him, and being cut asunder it made *a strange and dismal noise,* so that the standers by were affrighted at it. At divers other times he hath been in danger to be strangled with cravats and handkerchiefs that he hath worn about his neck, which have been drawn so close that with the sudden violence he hath near been choaked, and hardly escaped death.

"The spectre hath shewed great offence at the perriwigs which the young man used to wear, for they are often torn from his head after a very strange manner; one that he esteemed above the rest he put in a small box, and that box he placed in another, which he set against the wall of his chamber, placing a joint-stool with other weight a top of it, but in short time the boxes were broken in sunder and the perriwig rended into many small parts and tatters. Another time, lying in his master's chamber with his perriwig on his head, to secure it from danger, within a little time it was torn from him and reduced into very small fragments. At another time one of his shoe-strings was observed (without the assistance of any hand) to come of its own accord out of its shoe and fling itself to the other side of the room; the other was crawling after it, but a maid espying that, with her hand drew it out, and it strangely *clasp'd* and *curl'd* about her hand like a living *eel* or *serpent*; this is testified by a lady of considerable quality, too great for exception, who was an eye-witness. The same lady shewed Mr. C. one of the young man's gloves, which was torn in his pocket while she was by, which is so dexterously tatter'd and so artificially torn that it is conceived a cutler could not have contrived an instrument to have laid it abroad so accurately, and all this was done in the pocket in the compass of one minute. It is further observable that if the aforesaid young man, or another person who is a servant maid in the house, do wear their own clothes, they are certainly torn in pieces on their backs, but if the clothes belong to any other, they are not injured after that manner.

"Many other strange and fantastical freaks have been done by the said daemon or spirit in the view of divers persons; a barrel of salt of considerable quantity hath been observed to march from room to room without any human assistance.

"An hand-iron hath seemed to lay itself cross over-thwart a pan of milk that hath been scalding over the fire, and two flitches of bacon have of their own accord descended from the chimney where they were hung, and placed themselves upon the hand-iron.

"When the spectre appears in resemblance of her own person, she seems to be habited in the same cloaths and dress which the gentlewoman of the house (her daughter-in-law) hath on at the same time. Divers times the feet and legs of the young man aforesaid have been so entangled about his neck that he hath been loosed with great difficulty; sometimes they have been so twisted about the frames of chairs and stools that they have hardly been set at liberty. But one of the most considerable instances of the malice of the spirit against the young man happened on Easter Eve, when Mrs. C. the relator, was passing by the door of the house, and it was thus: — "When the young man was returning from his labour, he was taken up by the *skirt* of his *doublet* by this *female daemon*, and carried a height into the air. He was soon missed by his Master and some other servants that had been at labour with him, and after diligent enquiry no news could be heard of him, until at length (near half an hour after) he was heard singing and whistling in a bog or quagmire, where they found him in a kind of trance or *extatick fit*, to which he hath sometimes been accustomed (but whether before the affliction he met with from this spirit I am not certain). He was affected much after such sort, as at the time of those *fits*, so that the people did not give that *attention* and *regard* to what he said as at other times; but when he returned again to himself (which was about an hour after) he solemnly protested to them that the daemon had carried him so high that his master's house seemed to him to be but *as a hay-cock*, and *that during all that time he was in perfect sense, and prayed to Almighty God not to suffer the devil to destroy him*; and that he was suddenly set down in that quagmire.

The workmen found one shoe on one side of his master's house, and the other on the other side, and in the morning espied his perriwig hanging on the top of a tree; by which it appears he had been carried a considerable height, and that what he told them was not a fiction.

"After this it was observed that that part of the young man's body which had been on the mud in the quagmire was somewhat benummbed and seemingly deader than the other, whereupon the following *Saturday*, which was the day before *Low Sunday*, he was carried to *Crediton*, *alias Kirton*, to be bleeded, which being done accordingly, and the company having left him for some little space, at their return they found him in one of his fits, with his *forehead* much *bruised*, and *swoln* to a *great bigness*, none being able to guess how it happened, until his recovery from that *fit*, when upon enquiry he gave them this account of it: *that a bird had with great swiftness and force flown in at the window with a stone in its beak*, *which it had dashed against his forehead*, *which had occasioned the swelling which they saw*.

"The people much wondering at the strangeness of the accident, diligently sought the stone, and under the place where he sat they found not such a stone as they expected but a weight of brass or copper, which it seems the daemon had made use of on that occasion to give the poor young man that hurt in his forehead.

"The persons present were at the trouble to break it to pieces, every one taking a part and preserving it in memory of so strange an accident. After this the spirit continued to molest the young man in a very severe and rugged manner, often handling him with great extremity, and whether it hath yet left its violences to him, or whether the young man be yet alive, I can have no certain account."

I leave the reader to consider of the extraordinary strangeness of the relation.

The reader, considering the exceeding strangeness of the relation, will observe that we have now reached "great swingeing falsehoods," even if that opinion had not hitherto occurred to his mind. But if he thinks that such stories are no longer told, and even sworn to on Bible oath, he greatly deceives himself. In the chapter on "Haunted Houses" he will find statements just as hard narrated of the years 1870 and 1882. In these, however, the ghosts had no purpose but mischief.

We take another "ghost with a purpose".

SIR GEORGE VILLIERS' GHOST.

The variations in the narratives of Sir George Villiers' appearance to an old servant of his, or old *protégé*, and the warning communicated by this man to Villiers' son, the famous Duke of Buckingham, are curious and instructive. The tale is first told in print by William Lilly, the astrologer, in the second part of a large tract called *Monarchy or No Monarchy in England* (London, 1651), twenty-three years after Buckingham's murder. But while prior in publication, Lilly's story was probably written after, though independent of Lord Clarendon's, in the first book of his *History of the Rebellion*, begun on 18th March, 1646, that is within eighteen years of the events. Clarendon, of course, was in a position to know what was talked of at the time. Next, we have a letter of Mr. Douch to Glanvil, undated, but written after the Restoration, and, finally, an original manuscript of 1652.

Douch makes the warning arrive "some few days" before the murder of Buckingham, and says that the ghost of Sir George, "in his morning gown," bade one Parker tell Buckingham to abandon the expedition to La Rochelle or expect to be murdered. On the third time of appearing the vision pulled a long knife from under his gown, as a sign of the death awaiting Buckingham. He also communicated a "private token" to Parker, the "percipient," Sir George's old servant. On each occasion of the appearance, Parker was reading at midnight. Parker, *after* the murder, told one Ceeley, who told it to a clergyman, who told Douch, who told Glanvil.

In Lilly's version the ghost had a habit of walking in Parker's room, and finally bade him tell Buckingham to abstain from certain company, "or else he will come to destruction, and that suddenly". Parker, thinking he had dreamed, did nothing; the ghost reappeared, and communicated a secret "which he (Buckingham) knows that none in the world ever knew but myself and he". The duke, on hearing the story from Parker, backed by the secret, was amazed, but did not alter his conduct. On the third time the spectre produced the knife, but at *this* information the duke only laughed. Six weeks later he was stabbed. Douch makes the whole affair pass immediately before the assassination. "And Mr. Parker died soon after," as the ghost had foretold to him.

Finally, Clarendon makes the appearances set in six months before Felton slew the duke. The percipient, unnamed, was in bed. The narrative now develops new features; the token given on the ghost's third coming obviously concerns Buckingham’s mother, the Countess, the “one person more” who knew the secret communicated. The ghost produces no knife from under his gown; no warning of Buckingham’s death by violence is mentioned. A note in the MS. avers that Clarendon himself had papers bearing on the subject, and that he got his information from Sir Ralph Freeman (who introduced the unnamed percipient to the duke), and from some of Buckingham’s servants, “who were informed of much of it before the murder of the duke”. Clarendon adds that, in general, “no man looked on relations of that sort with less reverence and consideration” than he did. This anecdote he selects out of “many stories scattered abroad at the time” as “upon a better foundation of credit”. The percipient was an officer in the king’s wardrobe at Windsor, “of a good reputation for honesty and discretion,” and aged about fifty. He was bred at a school in Sir George’s parish, and as a boy was kindly treated by Sir George, “whom afterwards he never saw”. On first beholding the spectre in his room, the seer recognised Sir George’s costume, then antiquated. At last the seer went to Sir Ralph Freeman, who introduced him to the duke on a hunting morning at Lambeth Bridge. They talked earnestly apart, observed by Sir Ralph, Clarendon’s informant. The duke seemed abstracted all day; left the field early, sought his mother, and after a heated conference of which the sounds reached the ante-room, went forth in visible trouble and anger, a thing never before seen in him after talk with his mother. She was found “overwhelmed with tears and in the highest agony imaginable”. “It is a notorious truth” that, when told of his murder, “she seemed not in the least degree surprised.”

The following curious manuscript account of the affair is, after the prefatory matter, the copy of a letter dated 1652. There is nothing said of a ghostly knife, the name of the seer is not Parker, and in its whole effect the story tallies with Clarendon’s version, though the narrator knows nothing of the scene with the Countess of Buckingham.

CAVALIER VERSION

“1627. Since William Lilly the Rebells Jugler and Mountebank in his malicious and blaspheamous discourse concerning our late Martyred Soveraigne of ever blessed memory (amongst other lyes and falsehoods) imprinted a relation concerning an Aparition which foretold several Events which should happen to the Duke of Buckingham, wherein he falsifies boeth the person to whom it appeared and ye circumstances; I thought it not amis to enter here (that it may be preserved) the true account of that Aparition as I have receaved it from the hande and under the hande of Mr. Edmund Wyndham, of Kellefford in the County of Somersett. I shall sett it downe (*ipsissimis verbis*) as he delivered it to me at my request written with his own hande.

WYNDHAM'S LETTER

"Sr. According to your desire and my promise I have written down what I remember (divers things being slipt out of my memory) of the relation made me by Mr. Nicholas Towse concerning the Aparition wch visited him. About ye yeare 1627, I and my wife upon an occasion being in London lay att my Brother Pyne's house without Bishopsgate, wch. was ye next house unto Mr. Nicholas Towse's, who was my Kinsman and familiar acquaintance, in consideration of whose Society and friendship he tooke a house in that place, ye said Towse being a very fine Musician and very good company, and for ought I ever saw or heard, a Vurtuous, religious and wel disposed Gentleman. About that time ye said Mr. Towse tould me that one night, being in Bed and perfectly waking, and a Candle burning by him (as he usually had) there came into his Chamber and stood by his bed side an Olde Gentleman in such an habitt as was in fashion in Q: Elizebeth's tyme, at whose first appearance Mr. Towse was very much troubled, but after a little tyme, recollecting himselfe, he demanded of him in ye Name of God what he was, whether he were a Man. And ye Aparition replyed No. Then he asked him if he were a Divell. And ye answer was No. Then Mr. Towse said 'in ye Name of God, what art thou then?' And as I remember Mr. Towse told me that ye Apparition answered him that he was ye Ghost of Sir George Villiers, Father to ye then Duke of Buckingham, whom he might very well remember, synce he went to schoole at such a place in Leicestershire (naming ye place which I have forgotten). And Mr. Towse tould me that ye Apparition had perfectly ye resemblance of ye said Sr George Villiers in all respects and in ye same habitt that he had often seene him weare in his lifetime.

"The said Apparition then tould Mr. Towse that he could not but remember ye much kindness that he, ye said Sr George Villiers, had expressed to him whilst he was a Schollar in Leicestershire, as aforesaid, and that as out of that consideration he believed that he loved him and that therefore he made choyce of him, ye sayde Mr. Towse, to deliver a message to his sonne, ye Duke of Buckingham; thereby to prevent such mischiefe as would otherwise befall ye said Duke whereby he would be inevitably ruined. And then (as I remember) Mr. Towse tould me that ye Apparition instructed him what message he should deliver unto ye Duke. Vnto wch. Mr. Towse replyed that he should be very unwilling to goe to ye Duke of Buckingham upon such an errand, whereby he should gaine nothing but reproach and contempt, and to be esteemed a Madman, and therefore desired to be exscused from ye employment, but ye Apparition pressd him wth. much earnestness to undertake it, telling him that ye Circumstances and secret Discoveries which he should be able to make to ye Duke of such passages in ye course of his life which were known to none but himselfe, would make it appeare that ye message was not ye fancy of a Distempered Brayne, but a reality, and so ye Apparition tooke his leave of him for that night and telling him that he would give him leave to consider till the next night, and then he would come to receave his answer wheather he would undertake to deliver his message or no.

"Mr. Towse past that day wth. much trouble and perplexity, debating and reasoning wth. himselfe wether he should deliver his message or not to ye Duke but, in ye conclusion, he resolved to doe it, and ye next night when ye Apparition came he gave his answer accordingly, and then receaved his full instruction. After which Mr. Towse went and founde out Sr. Thomas Bludder and Sr. Ralph Freeman, by whom he was brought to ye Duke of Buckingham, and had sevarall private and lone audiences of him, I my selfe, by ye favoure of a freinde (Sr. Edward Savage) was once admitted to see him in private conference with ye Duke, where (although I heard not there discourses) I observed much earnestnessse in their actions and gestures. After wch. conference Mr. Towse tould me that ye Duke would not follow ye advice that was given him, which was (as I remember) that he intimated ye casting of, and ye rejecting of some Men who had great interest in him, which was, and as I take it he named, Bp. Laud and that ye Duke was to doe some popular Acts in ye ensuing Parliament, of which Parliament ye Duke would have had Mr. Towse to have been a Burgesse, but he refused it, alleadging that unlesse ye Duke followed his directions, he must doe him hurt if he were of ye Parliament. Mr. Towse then toalde that ye Duke of Buckingham confessed that he had toalde him those things wch. no Creature knew but himself, and that none but God or ye Divell could reveale to him. Ye Duke offered Mr. Towse to have ye King knight him, and to have given him preferment (as he tould me), but that he refused it, saying that vnless he would follow his advice he would receave nothing from him.

"Mr. Towse, when he made me this relation, he tolde me that ye Duke would inevitably be destroyed before such a time (wch. he then named) and accordingly ye Duke's death happened before that time. He likewise tolde that he had written downe all ye severall discourses that he had had wth. ye Apparition, and that at last his coming was so familiar that he was as litle troubled with it as if it had beene a friende or acquayntance that had come to visitt him. Mr. Towse told me further that ye Archbishop of Canterbury, then

Bishop of London, Dr. Laud, should by his Councells be ye authoure of very great troubles to ye Kingdome, by which it should be reduced to ye extremity of disorder and confusion, and that it should seeme to be past all hope of recovery without a miracle, but when all people were in dispayre of seeing happy days agayne, ye Kingdome should suddenly be reduced and resettled agayne in a most happy condition.

"At this tyme my father Pyne was in trouble and comitted to ye Gatehouse by ye Lords of ye Councell about a Quarrel betweene him and ye Lord Powlett, upon which one night I saide to my Cosin Towse, by way of jest, 'I pray aske your Appairition what shall become of my father Pyne's business,' which he promised to doe, and ye next day he tolde me that my father Pyne's enemyes were ashamed of their malicious prosecution, and that he would be at liberty within a week or some few days, which happened according.

"Mr. Towse, his wife, since his death tolde me that her husband and she living at Windsor Castle, where he had an office that Sumer that ye Duke of Buckingham was killed, tolde her that very day that the Duke was sett upon by ye mutinous Mariners att Portesmouth, saying then that ye next attempt agaynst him would be his Death, which accordingly happened. And att ye instant ye Duke was killed (as she vnderstood by ye relation afterwards) Mr. Towse was sitting in his chayre, out of which he suddenly started vp and sayd, 'Wyfe, ye Duke of Buckingham is slayne!'

"Mr. Towse lived not long after that himselfe, but tolde his wife ye tyme of his Death before itt happened. I never saw him after I had seen some effects of his discourse, which before I valued not, and therefore was not curious to enquire after more than he voluntaryly tolde me, which I then entertayned not wth. these serious thoughts which I have synce reflected on in his discourse. This is as much as I can remember on this business which, according to youre desire, is written by

"Sr. Yor., &c.,

"EDMUND WINDHAM.

"BOULOGNE, 5*th August*, 1652."

*

This version has, over all others, the merit of being written by an acquaintance of the seer, who was with him while the appearances were going on. The narrator was also present at an interview between the seer and Buckingham. His mention of Sir Ralph Freeman tallies with Clarendon's, who had the story from Freeman. The ghost predicts the Restoration, and this is recorded before that happy event. Of course Mr. Towse may have been interested in Buckingham's career and may have invented the ghost (after discovering the secret token) as an excuse for warning him.

The reader can now take his choice among versions of Sir George Villiers' ghost. He must remember that, in 1642, Sir Henry Wotton "spent some inquiry whether the duke had any ominous presagement before his end," but found no evidence. Sir Henry told Izaak Walton a story of a dream of an ancestor of his own, whereby some robbers of the University chest at Oxford were brought to justice. Anthony Wood consulted the records of the year mentioned, and found no trace of any such robbery. We now approach a yet more famous ghost than Sir George's. This is Lord Lyttelton's. The ghost had a purpose, to warn that bad man of his death, but nobody knows whose ghost she was!

LORD LYTTELTON'S GHOST

"Sir," said Dr. Johnson, "it is the most extraordinary thing that has happened in my day." The doctor's day included the rising of 1745 and of the Wesleyans, the seizure of Canada, the Seven Years' War, the American Rebellion, the Cock Lane ghost, and other singular occurrences, but "the most extraordinary thing" was — Lord Lyttelton's ghost! Famous as is that spectre, nobody knows what it was, nor even whether there was any spectre at all.

Thomas, Lord Lyttelton, was born in 1744. In 1768 he entered the House of Commons. In 1769 he was unseated for bribery. He then vanishes from public view, probably he was playing the prodigal at home and abroad, till February, 1772, when he returned to his father's house, and married. He then went abroad (with a barmaid) till 1773, when his father died. In January, 1774, he took his seat in the House of Lords. In November, 1779, Lyttelton went into Opposition. On Thursday, 25th November, he denounced Government in a magnificent speech. As to a sinecure which he held, he said, "Perhaps I shall not keep it long!"

Something had Happened!

On the night before his speech, that of Wednesday, 24th November, Lyttelton had seen the ghost, and had been told that he would die in three days. He mentioned this to Rowan Hamilton on the Friday. On the same day, or on Friday, he mentioned it to Captain Ascough, who told a lady, who told Mrs. Thrale. On the Friday he went to Epsom with friends, and mentioned the ghost to them, among others to Mr. Fortescue. About midnight on 28th November, Lord Lyttelton died suddenly in bed, his valet having left him for a moment to fetch a spoon for stirring his medicine. The cause of death was not stated; there was no inquest.

This, literally, is all that is *known* about Lord Lyttelton's ghost. It is variously described as: (1) "a young woman and a robin" (Horace Walpole); (2) "a spirit" (Captain Ascough); (3) a bird in a dream, "which changed into a woman in white" (Lord Westcote's narrative of 13th February, 1780, collected from Lord Lyttelton's guests and servants); (4) "a bird turning into a woman" (Mrs. Delany, 9th December, 1779); (5) a dream of a bird, followed by a woman, Mrs. Amphlett, in white (Pitt Place archives after 1789); (6) "a fluttering noise, as of a bird, followed by the apparition of a woman who had committed suicide after being seduced by Lyttelton" (Lady Lyttelton, 1828); (7) a bird "which vanished when a female spirit in white raiment presented herself" (*Scots Magazine*, November-December, 1779).

Out of seven versions, a bird, or a fluttering noise as of a bird (a common feature in ghost stories), with a woman following or accompanying, occurs in six. The phenomena are almost equally ascribed to dreaming and to waking hallucination, but the common-sense of the eighteenth century called all ghosts "dreams". In the Westcote narrative (1780) Lyttelton explains the dream by his having lately been in a room with a lady, Mrs. Dawson, when a robin flew in. Yet, in the same narrative, Lyttelton says on Saturday morning "that he was very well, and believed he should bilk the *ghost*". He was certainly in bed at the time of the experience, and probably could not be sure whether he was awake or asleep.

Considering the remoteness of time, the story is very well recorded. It is chronicled by Mrs. Thrale before the news of Lyttelton's death reached her, and by Lady Mary Coke two days later, by Walpole on the day after the peer's decease, of which he had heard. Lord Lyttelton's health had for some time been bad; he had made his will a few weeks before, and his nights were horror-haunted. A little boy, his nephew, to whom he was kind, used to find the wicked lord sitting by his bed at night, because he dared not be alone. So Lockhart writes to his daughter, Mrs. Hope Scott. He had strange dreams of being in hell with the cruel murderess, Mrs. Brownrigg, who "whipped three female 'prentices to death and hid them in the coal-hole". Such a man might have strange fancies, and a belief in approaching death might bring its own fulfilment. The hypothesis of a premeditated suicide, with the story of the ghost as a last practical joke, has no corroboration. It occurred to Horace Walpole at once, but he laid no stress on it.

Such is a plain, dry, statistical account of the most extraordinary event that happened in Dr. Johnson's day.

However, the story does not end here. On the fatal night, 27th November, 1779, Mr. Andrews, M.P., a friend of Lyttelton's was awakened by finding Lord Lyttelton drawing his curtains. Suspecting a practical joke, he hunted for his lordship both in his house and in the garden. Of course he never found him. The event was promptly recorded in the next number of the *Scots Magazine*, December, 1779.

CHAPTER VII

More Ghosts With A Purpose

The Slaying of Sergeant Davies in 1749. The Trial. Scott's Theory. Curious recent Corroboration of Sir Walter's Hypothesis. Other Trials involving Ghostly Evidence. Their Want of Authenticity. "Fisher's Ghost" criticised. The Aylesbury Murder. The Dog o' Mause. The Ghosts of Dogs. Peter's Ghost.

Much later in time than the ghost of Sir George Villiers is the ghost of Sergeant Davies, of Guise's regiment. His purpose was, first, to get his body buried; next, to bring his murderers to justice. In this latter desire he totally failed.

THE SLAYING OF SERGEANT DAVIES

We now examine a ghost with a purpose; he wanted to have his bones buried. The Highlands, in spite of Culloden, were not entirely pacified in the year 1749. Broken men, robbers, fellows with wrongs unspeakable to revenge, were out in the heather. The hills that seemed so lonely were not bare of human life. A man was seldom so solitary but that eyes might be on him from cave, corry, wood, or den. The Disarming Act had been obeyed in the usual style: old useless weapons were given up to the military. But the spirit of the clans was not wholly broken. Even the old wife of Donald Ban, when he was "sair hadden down by a Bodach" (ghost) asked the spirit to answer one question, "Will the Prince come again?" The song expressed the feelings of the people: —

The wind has left me bare indeed,
And blawn my bonnet off my heid,
But something's hid in Hieland brae,
The wind's no blawn my sword away!

Traffickers came and went from Prince Charles to Cluny, from Charles in the Convent of St. Joseph to Cluny lurking on Ben Alder. Kilt and tartan were worn at the risk of life or liberty, in short, the embers of the rising were not yet extinct.

At this time, in the summer of 1749, Sergeant Arthur Davies, of Guise's regiment, marched with eight privates from Aberdeen to Dubrach in Braemar, while a corporal's guard occupied the Spital of Glenshee, some eight miles away. "A more waste tract of mountain and bog, rocks and ravines, without habitations of any kind till you reach Glenclunie, is scarce to be met with in Scotland," says Sir Walter.

The sergeant's business was the general surveillance of the country side. He was a kindly prosperous man, liked in the country, fond of children, newly married, and his wife bore witness "that he and she lived together in as great amity and love as any couple could do, and that he never was in use to stay away a night from her".

The sergeant had saved fifteen guineas and a half; he carried the gold in a green silk purse, and was not averse to displaying it. He wore a silver watch, and two gold rings, one with a peculiar knob on the bezel. He had silver buckles to his brogues, silver knee-buckles, two dozen silver buttons on a striped lutestring waistcoat, and he carried a gun, a present from an officer in his regiment. His dress, on the fatal 28th of September, was “a blue surtout coat, with a striped silk vest, and *teiken* breeches and brown stockings”. His hair, of “a dark mouse colour,” was worn in a silk ribbon, his hat was silver laced, and bore his initials cut in the felt. Thus attired, “a pretty man,” Sergeant Davies said good-bye to his wife, who never saw him again, and left his lodgings at Michael Farquharson’s early on 28th September. He took four men with him, and went to meet the patrol from Glenshee. On the way he met John Growar in Glenclunie, who spoke with him “about a tartan coat, which the sergeant had observed him to drop, and after strictly enjoining him not to use it again, dismissed him, instead of making him prisoner”.

This encounter was after Davies left his men, before meeting the patrol, it being his intention to cross the hill and try for a shot at a stag.

The sergeant never rejoined his men or met the patrol! He vanished as if the fairies had taken him. His captain searched the hill with a band of men four days after the disappearance, but to no avail. Various rumours ran about the country, among others a clatter that Davies had been killed by Duncan Clerk and Alexander Bain Macdonald. But the body was undiscovered.

In June, one Alexander Macpherson came to Donald Farquharson, son of the man with whom Davies had been used to lodge. Macpherson (who was living in a sheiling or summer hut of shepherds on the hills) said that he “was greatly troubled by the ghost of Sergeant Davies, who insisted that he should bury his bones, and that, he having declined to bury them, the ghost insisted that he should apply to Donald Farquharson”. Farquharson “could not believe this,” till Macpherson invited him to come and see the bones. Then Farquharson went with the other, “as he thought it might possibly be true, and if it was, he did not know but the apparition might trouble himself”.

The bones were found in a peat moss, about half a mile from the road taken by the patrols. There, too, lay the poor sergeant’s mouse-coloured hair, with rags of his blue cloth and his brogues, without the silver buckles, and there did Farquharson and Macpherson bury them all.

Alexander Macpherson, in his evidence at the trial, declared that, late in May, 1750, “when he was in bed, a vision appeared to him as of a man clothed in blue, who said, ‘*I am Sergeant Davies*!’”. At first Macpherson thought the figure was “a real living man,” a brother of Donald Farquharson’s. He therefore rose and followed his visitor to the door, where the ghost indicated the position of his bones, and said that Donald Farquharson would help to inter them. Macpherson next day found the bones, and spoke to Growar, the man of the tartan coat (as

Growar admitted at the trial). Growar said if Macpherson did not hold his tongue, he himself would inform Shaw of Daldownie. Macpherson therefore went straight to Daldownie, who advised him to bury the bones privily, not to give the country a bad name for a rebel district. While Macpherson was in doubt, and had not yet spoken to Farquharson, the ghost revisited him at night and repeated his command. He also denounced his murderers, Clerk and Macdonald, which he had declined to do on his first appearance. He spoke in Gaelic, which, it seems, was a language not known by the sergeant.

Isobel MacHardie, in whose service Macpherson was, deponed that one night in summer, June, 1750, while she lay at one end of the sheiling (a hill hut for shepherds or neatherds) and Macpherson lay at the other, "she saw something naked come in at the door, which frighted her so much that she drew the clothes over her head. That when it appeared it came in in a bowing posture, and that next morning she asked Macpherson what it was that had troubled them in the night before. To which he answered that she might be easy, for it would not trouble them any more."

All this was in 1750, but Clerk and Macdonald were not arrested till September, 1753. They were then detained in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh on various charges, as of wearing the kilt, till June, 1754, when they were tried, Grant of Prestongrange prosecuting, aided by Haldane, Home and Dundas, while Lockhart and Mackintosh defended. It was proved that Clerk's wife wore Davies's ring, that Clerk, after the murder, had suddenly become relatively rich and taken a farm, and that the two men, armed, were on the hill near the scene of the murder on 28th September, 1749. Moreover, Angus Cameron swore that he saw the murder committed. His account of his position was curious. He and another Cameron, since dead, were skulking near sunset in a little hollow on the hill of Galcharn. There he had skulked all day, "waiting for Donald Cameron, *who was afterwards hanged*, together with some of the said Donald's companions from Lochaber". No doubt they were all honest men who had been "out," and they may well have been on Cluny's business of conveying gold from the Loch Arkaig hoard to Major Kennedy for the prince.

On seeing Clerk and Macdonald strike and shoot the man in the silver-laced hat, Cameron and his companion ran away, nor did Cameron mention the matter till nine months later, and then only to Donald (not he who was hanged). Donald advised him to hold his tongue. This Donald corroborated at the trial. The case against Clerk and Macdonald looked very black, especially as some witnesses fled and declined to appear. Scott, who knew Macintosh, the counsel for the prisoners, says that their advocates and agent "were convinced of their guilt". Yet a jury of Edinburgh tradesmen, moved by Macintosh's banter of the apparition, acquitted the accused solely, as Scott believes, because of the ghost and its newly-learned Gaelic. It is indeed extraordinary that Prestongrange, the patron of David Balfour, allowed his witnesses to say what the ghost said, which certainly "is not evidence". Sir Walter supposes that Macpherson and Mrs. MacHardie invented the apparition as an excuse for giving evidence. "The ghost's commands, according to Highland belief, were not to be disobeyed." Macpherson must have known the facts "by ordinary means". We have seen that Clerk and Macdonald were at once suspected; there was "a clatter" against them. But Angus Cameron had not yet told his tale of what he saw. Then who *did* tell? Here comes in a curious piece of evidence of the year 1896. A friend writes (29th December, 1896): —

"DEAR LANG,

"I enclose a tradition connected with the murder of Sergeant Davies, which my brother picked up lately before he had read the story in your Cock Lane. He had heard of the event before, both in Athole and Braemar, and it was this that made him ask the old lady (see next letter) about it.

"He thinks that Glenconie of your version (p. 256) must be Glenclunie, into which Allt Chriostaidh falls. He also suggests that the person who was chased by the murderers may have got up the ghost, in order to shift the odium of tale-bearing to other shoulders. The fact of being mixed up in the affair lends some support to the story here related."

Here follows my friend's brother's narrative, the name of the witness being suppressed.

CONCERNING THE MURDER OF SERGEANT DAVIES

There is at present living in the neighbourhood of — an old lady, about seventy years of age. Her maiden name is — , and she is a native of Braemar, but left that district when about twenty years old, and has never been back to it even for a visit. On being asked whether she had ever heard the story of Sergeant Davies, she at first persisted in denying all knowledge of it. The ordinary version was then related to her, and she listened quietly until it was finished, when she broke out with: — “That isn’t the way of it at all, for the men *were* seen, and it was a forbear of my own that saw them. He had gone out to try to get a stag, and had his gun and a deer-hound with him. He saw the men on the hill doing something, and thinking they had got a deer, he went towards them. When he got near them, the hound began to run on in front of him, and at that minute *he saw what it was they had*. He called to the dog, and turned to run away, but saw at once that he had made a mistake, for he had called their attention to himself, and a shot was fired after him, which wounded the dog. He then ran home as fast as he could, never looking behind him, and did not know how far the men followed him. Some time afterwards the dog came home, and he went to see whether it was much hurt, whereupon it flew at him, and had to be killed. They thought that it was trying to revenge itself on him for having left it behind.”

At this point the old lady became conscious that she was telling the story, and no more could be got out of her. The name of the lady who keeps a secret of 145 years’ standing, is the name of a witness in the trial. The whole affair is thoroughly characteristic of the Highlanders and of Scottish jurisprudence after Culloden, while the verdict of “Not Guilty” (when “Not Proven” would have been stretching a point) is evidence to the “common-sense” of the eighteenth century.

There are other cases, in Webster, Aubrey and Glanvil of ghosts who tried more successfully to bring their murderers to justice. But the reports of the trials do not exist, or cannot be found, and Webster lost a letter which he once possessed, which would have been proof that ghostly evidence was given and was received at a trial in Durham (1631 or 1632). Reports of old men present were collected for Glanvil, but are entirely too vague.

The case of *Fisher’s Ghost*, which led to evidence being given as to a murder in New South Wales, cannot be wholly omitted. Fisher was a convict settler, a man of some wealth. He disappeared from his station, and his manager (also a convict) declared that he had returned to England. Later, a man returning from market saw Fisher sitting on a rail; at his approach Fisher vanished. Black trackers were laid on, found human blood on the rail, and finally discovered Fisher's body. The manager was tried, was condemned, acknowledged his guilt and was hanged.

The story is told in *Household Words*, where Sir Frederick Forbes is said to have acted as judge. No date is given. In *Botany Bay*, the legend is narrated by Mr. John Lang, who was in Sydney in 1842. He gives no date of the occurrence, and clearly embellishes the tale. In 1835, however, the story is told by Mr. Montgomery Martin in volume iv. of his *History of the British Colonies*. He gives the story as a proof of the acuteness of black trackers. Beyond saying that he himself was in the colony when the events and the trial occurred, he gives no date. I have conscientiously investigated the facts, by aid of the Sydney newspapers, and the notes of the judge, Sir Frederick Forbes. Fisher disappeared at the end of June, 1826, from Campbeltown. Suspicion fell on his manager, Worral. A reward was offered late in September. Late in October the constable's attention was drawn to blood-stains on a rail. Starting thence, the black trackers found Fisher's body. Worral was condemned and hanged, after confession, in February, 1827. Not a word is said about *why* the constable went to, and examined, the rail. But Mr. Rusden, author of a *History of Australia*, knew the medical attendant D. Farley (who saw Fisher's ghost, and pointed out the bloody rail), and often discussed it with Farley. Mr. Souttar, in a work on Colonial traditions, proves the point that Farley told his ghost story *before* the body of Fisher was found. But, for fear of prejudicing the jury, the ghost was kept out of the trial, exactly as in the following case.

THE GARDENER'S GHOST

Perhaps the latest ghost in a court of justice (except in cases about the letting of haunted houses) "appeared" at the Aylesbury Petty Session on 22nd August, 1829. On 25th October, 1828, William Edden, a market gardener, was found dead, with his ribs broken, in the road between Aylesbury and Thame. One Sewell, in August, 1829, accused a man named Tyler, and both were examined at the Aylesbury Petty Sessions. Mrs. Edden gave evidence that she sent five or six times for Tyler "to come and see the corpse. . . . I had some particular reasons for sending for him which I never did divulge. . . . I will tell you my reasons, gentlemen, if you ask me, in the face of Tyler, even if my life should be in danger for it." The reasons were that on the night of her husband's murder, "something rushed over me, and I thought my husband came by me. I looked up, and I thought I heard the voice of my husband come from near my mahogany table. . . . I thought I saw my husband's apparition, and the man that had done it, and that man was Tyler. . . . I ran out and said, 'O dear God! my husband is murdered, and his ribs are broken'."

Lord Nugent— "What made you think your husband's ribs were broken?"

"He held up his hands like this, and I saw a hammer, or something like a hammer, and it came into my mind that his ribs were broken." Sewell stated that the murder was accomplished by means of a hammer.

The prisoners were discharged on 13th September. On 5th March, 1830, they were tried at the Buckingham Lent Assizes, were found guilty and were hanged, protesting their innocence, on 8th March, 1830.

"In the report of Mrs. Edden's evidence (at the Assizes) no mention is made of the vision."

Here end our ghosts in courts of justice; the following ghost gave evidence of a murder, or rather, confessed to one, but was beyond the reach of human laws.

This tale of 1730 is still current in Highland tradition. It has, however, been improved and made infinitely more picturesque by several generations of narrators. As we try to be faithful to the best sources, the contemporary manuscript version is here reprinted from *The Scottish Standard-Bearer*, an organ of the Scotch Episcopalians (October and November, 1894).

THE DOG O’ MAUSE

Account of an apparition that appeared to William Soutar, in the Mause, 1730.

“I have sent you an account of an apparition as remarkable, perhaps, as anything you ever heard of, and which, considered in all its circumstances, leaves, I think, no ground of doubt to any man of common-sense. The person to whom it appeared is one William Soutar, a tenant of Balgowan’s, who lives in Middle Mause, within about half a mile from this place on the other side of the river, and in view from our windows of Craighall House. He is about thirty-seven years of age, as he says, and has a wife and bairns.

“The following is an account from his own mouth; and because there are some circumstances fit to be taken in as you go along, I have given them with reference at the end, that I may not interrupt the sense of the account, or add anything to it. Therefore, it begins: —

“‘In the month of December in the year 1728, about sky-setting, I and my servant, with several others living in the town (farm-steading) heard a scratching (screeching, crying), and I followed the noise, with my servant, a little way from the town (farm-steading throughout). We both thought we saw what had the appearance to be a fox, and hounded the dogs at it, but they would not pursue it.

“‘About a month after, as I was coming from Blair alone, about the same time of the night, a big dog appeared to me, of a dark greyish colour, between the Hilltown and Knockhead of Mause, on a lea rig a little below the road, and in passing by it touched me sonsily (firmly) on the thigh at my haunch-bane (hip-bone), upon which I pulled my staff from under my arm and let a stroke at it; and I had a notion at the time that I hit it, and my haunch was painful all that night. However, I had no great thought of its being anything particular or extraordinary, but that it might be a mad dog wandering. About a year after that, to the best of my memory, in December month, about the same time of the night and in the same place, when I was alone, it appeared to me again as before, and passed by me at some distance; and then I began to think it might be something more than ordinary.

“‘In the month of December, 1730, as I was coming from Perth, from the Claith (cloth) Market a little before sky-setting, it appeared to me again, being alone, at the same place, and passed by me just as before. I had some suspicion of it then likewise, but I began to think that a neighbour of mine in the Hilltown having an ox lately dead, it might be a dog that had been at the carrion, by which I endeavoured to put the suspicion out of my head.

"'On the second Monday of December, 1730, as I was coming from Woodhead, a town (farm) in the ground of Drumlochy, it appeared to me again in the same place just about sky-setting; and after it had passed me as it was going out of my sight, it spoke with a low voice so that I distinctly heard it, these words, "Within eight or ten days do or die," and it thereupon disappeared. No more passed at that time. On the morrow I went to my brother, who dwells in the Nether Aird of Drumlochy, and told him of the last and of all the former appearances, which was the first time I ever spoke of it to anybody. He and I went to see a sister of ours at Glenballow, who was dying, but she was dead before we came. As we were returning home, I desired my brother, whose name is James Soutar, to go forward with me till we should be passed the place where it used to appear to me; and just as we had come to it, about ten o'clock at night, it appeared to me again just as formerly; and as it was passing over some ice I pointed to it with my finger and asked my brother if he saw it, but he said he did not, nor did his servant, who was with us. It spoke nothing at that time, but just disappeared as it passed the ice.

"'On the Saturday after, as I was at my own sheep-cots putting in my sheep, it appeared to me again just after daylight, betwixt day and skylight, and upon saying these words, "Come to the spot of ground within half an hour," it just disappeared; whereupon I came home to my own house, and took up a staff and also a sword off the head of the bed, and went straight to the place where it used formerly to appear to me; and after I had been there some minutes and had drawn a circle about me with my staff, it appeared to me. And I spoke to it saying, "In the name of God and Jesus Christ, what are you that troubles me?" and it answered me, "I am David Soutar, George Soutar's brother. I killed a man more than five-and-thirty years ago, when you was new born, at a bush be-east the road, as you go into the Isle." And as I was going away, I stood again and said, "David Soutar was a man, and you appear like a dog," whereupon it spoke to me again, saying, "I killed him with a dog, and therefore I am made to speak out of the mouth of a dog, and tell you you must go and bury these bones". Upon this I went straight to my brother to his house, and told him what had happened to me. My brother having told the minister of Blair, he and I came to the minister on Monday thereafter, as he was examining in a neighbour's house in the same town where I live. And the minister, with my brother and me and two or three more, went to the place where the apparition said the bones were buried, when Rychalzie met us accidentally; and the minister told Rychalzie the story in the presence of all that were there assembled, and desired the liberty from him to break up the ground to search for the bones. Rychalzie made some scruples to allow us to break up the ground, but said he would go along with us to Glasclune ; and if he advised, he would allow search to be made. Accordingly he went straight along with my brother and me and James Chalmers, a neighbour who lives in the Hilltown of Mause, to Glasclune, and told Glasclune the story as above narrated; and he advised Rychalzie to allow the search to be made, whereupon he gave his consent to it.

"'The day after, being Friday, we convened about thirty or forty men and went to the Isle, and broke up the ground in many places, searching for the bones, but we found nothing.

"'On Wednesday the 23rd December, about twelve o'clock, when I was in my bed, I heard a voice but saw nothing; the voice said, "Come away". Upon this I rose out of my bed, cast on my coat and went to the door, but did not see it. And I said, "In the name of God, what do you demand of me now?" It answered, "Go, take up these bones". I said, "How shall I get these bones?" It answered again, "At the side of a withered bush, and there are but seven or eight of them remaining". I asked, "Was there any more guilty of that action but you?" It answered, "No". I asked again, "What is the reason you trouble me?" It answered, "Because you are the youngest". Then said I to it, "Depart from me, and give me a sign that I may know the particular spot, and give me time". On the morrow, being Thursday, I went alone to the Isle to see if I could find any sign, and immediately I saw both the bush, which was a small bush, the greatest stick in it being about the thickness of a staff, and it was withered about half-way down; and also the sign, which was about a foot from the bush. The sign was an exact cross, thus X; each of the two lines was about a foot and a half in length and near three inches broad, and more than an inch deeper than the rest of the ground, as if it had been pressed down, for the ground was not cut. On the morrow, being Friday, I went and told my brother of the voice that had spoken to me, and that I had gone and seen the bush which it directed me to and the above-mentioned sign at it. The next day, being Saturday, my brother and I went, together with seven or eight men with us, to the Isle. About sun-rising we all saw the bush and the sign at it; and upon breaking up the ground just at the bush, we found the bones, *viz*., the chaft-teeth (jaw-teeth-molars) in it, one of the thigh bones, one of the shoulder blades, and a small bone which we supposed to be a collar bone, which was more consumed than any of the rest, and two other small bones, which we thought to be bones of the sword-arm. By the time we had digged up those bones, there convened about forty men who also saw them. The minister and Rychalzie came to the place and saw them.

"'We immediately sent to the other side of the water, to Claywhat, to a wright that was cutting timber there, whom Claywhat brought over with him, who immediately made a coffin for the bones, and my wife brought linen to wrap them in, and I wrapped the bones in the linen myself and put them in the coffin before all these people, and sent for the mort-cloth and buried them in the churchyard of Blair that evening. There were near an hundred persons at the burial, and it was a little after sunset when they were buried.'"

"This above account I have written down as dictated to me by William Soutar in the presence of Robert Graham, brother to the Laird of Balgowan, and of my two sons, James and John Rattray, at Craighall, 30th December, 1730.

"We at Craighall heard nothing of this history till after the search was over, but it was told us on the morrow by some of the servants who had been with the rest at the search; and on Saturday Glasclune's son came over to Craighall and told us that William Soutar had given a very distinct account of it to his father.

"On St. Andrew's Day, the 1st of December, this David Soutar (the ghost) listed himself a soldier, being very soon after the time the apparition said the murder was committed, and William Soutar declares he had no remembrance of him till that apparition named him as brother to George Soutar; then, he said, he began to recollect that when he was about ten years of age he had seen him once at his father's in a soldier's habit, after which he went abroad and was never more heard of; neither did William ever before hear of his having listed as a soldier, neither did William ever before hear of his having killed a man, nor, indeed, was there ever anything heard of it in the country, and it is not yet known who the person was that was killed, and whose bones are now found.

"My son John and I went within a few days after to visit Glasclune, and had the account from him as William had told him over. From thence we went to Middle Mause to hear it from himself; but he being from home, his father, who also lives in that town, gave us the same account of it which Glasclune had done, and the poor man could not refrain from shedding tears as he told it, as Glasclune told us his son was under very great concern when he spoke of it to him. We all thought this a very odd story, and were under suspense about it because the bones had not been found upon the search.

"(Another account that also seems to have been written by the bishop mentions that the murderer on committing the deed went home, and on looking in at the window he saw William Soutar lying in a cradle — hence it was the ghaist always came to him, and not to any of the other relations.)"

Mr. Hay Newton, of Newton Hall, a man of great antiquarian tastes in the last generation, wrote the following notes on the matter: —

"Widow M'Laren, aged seventy-nine, a native of Braemar, but who has resided on the Craighall estate for sixty years, says that the tradition is that the man was murdered for his money; that he was a Highland drover on his return journey from the south; that he arrived late at night at the Mains of Mause and wished to get to Rychalzie; that he stayed at the Mains of Mause all night, but left it early next morning, when David Soutar with his dog accompanied him to show him the road; but that with the assistance of the dog he murdered the drover and took his money at the place mentioned; that there was a tailor at work in his father's house that morning when he returned after committing the murder (according to the custom at that date by which tailors went out to make up customers' own cloth at their own houses), and that his mother being surprised at his strange appearance, asked him what he had been about, to which inquiry he made no reply; that he did not remain long in the country afterwards, but went to England and never returned. The last time he was seen he went down by the Brae of Cockridge. A man of the name of Irons, a fisherman in Blairgowrie, says that his father, who died a very old man some years ago, was present at the getting of the bones. Mr. Small, Finzyhan, when bringing his daughter home from school in Edinburgh, saw a coffin at the door of a public house near Rychalzie where he generally stopped, but he did not go in as usual, thinking that there was a death in the family. The innkeeper came out and asked him why he was passing the door, and told him the coffin contained the bones of the murdered man which had been collected, upon which he went into the house.

"The Soutars disliked much to be questioned on the subject of the Dog of Mause. Thomas Soutar, who was tenant in Easter Mause, formerly named Knowhead of Mause, and died last year upwards of eighty years of age, said that the Soutars came originally from Annandale, and that their name was Johnston; that there were three brothers who fled from that part of the country on account of their having killed a man; that they came by Soutar's Hill, and having asked the name of the hill, were told 'Soutar,' upon which they said, 'Soutar be it then,' and took that name. One of the brothers went south and the others came north."

The appearance of human ghosts in the form of beasts is common enough; in Shropshire they usually "come" as bulls. (See Miss Burne's *Shropshire Folklore*.) They do not usually speak, like the Dog o' Mause. M. d'Assier, a French Darwinian, explains that ghosts revert "atavistically" to lower forms of animal life!

We now, in accordance with a promise already made, give an example of the ghosts of beasts! Here an explanation by the theory that the consciousness of the beast survives death and affects with a hallucination the minds of living men and animals, will hardly pass current. But if such cases were as common and told on evidence as respectable as that which vouches for appearances of the dead, believers in these would either have to shift their ground, or to grant that

Admitted to that equal sky,
Our faithful dog may bear us company.

We omit such things as the dripping death wraith of a drowned cat who appeared to a lady, or the illused monkey who died in a Chinese house, after which he haunted it by rapping, secreting objects, and, in short, in the usual way. We adduce

PETER’S GHOST

A naval officer visited a friend in the country. Several men were sitting round the smoking-room fire when he arrived, and a fox-terrier was with them. Presently the heavy, shambling footsteps of an old dog, and the metallic shaking sound of his collar, were heard coming up stairs.

“Here’s old Peter!” said his visitor.

“*Peter’s dead*!” whispered his owner.

The sounds passed through the closed door, heard by all; they pattered into the room; the fox-terrier bristled up, growled, and pursued a viewless object across the carpet; from the hearth-rug sounded a shake, a jingle of a collar and the settling weight of a body collapsing into repose.

This pleasing anecdote rests on what is called *nautical evidence*, which, for reasons inexplicable to me, was (in these matters) distrusted by Sir Walter Scott.

CHAPTER VIII

More Ghosts with a Purpose. Ticonderoga. The Beresford Ghost. Sources of Evidence. The Family Version. A New Old-Fashioned Ghost. Half-past One o'clock. Put out the Light!

The ghost in the following famous tale had a purpose. He was a Highland ghost, a Campbell, and desired vengeance on a Macniven, who murdered him. The ghost, practically, "cried *Cruachan*," and tried to rouse the clan. Failing in this, owing to Inverawe's loyalty to his oath, the ghost uttered a prophecy.

The tale is given in the words of Miss Elspeth Campbell, who collected it at Inverawe from a Highland narrator. She adds a curious supplementary tradition in the Argyle family.

TICONDEROGA

It was one evening in the summer of the year 1755 that Campbell of Inverawe was on Cruachan hill side. He was startled by seeing a man coming towards him at full speed; a man ragged, bleeding, and evidently suffering agonies of terror. “The avengers of blood are on my track, Oh, save me!” the poor wretch managed to gasp out. Inverawe, filled with pity for the miserable man, swore “By the word of an Inverawe which never failed friend or foe yet” to save him.

Inverawe then led the stranger to the secret cave on Cruachan hill side.

None knew of this cave but the laird of Inverawe himself, as the secret was most carefully kept and had been handed down from father to son for many generations. The entrance was small, and no one passing would for an instant suspect it to be other than a tod’s hole, but within were fair-sized rooms, one containing a well of the purest spring water. It is said that Wallace and Bruce had made use of this cave in earlier days.

Here Inverawe left his guest. The man was so overcome by terror that he clung on to Inverawe’s plaid, imploring him not to leave him alone. Inverawe was filled with disgust at this cowardly conduct, and already almost repented having plighted his word to save such a worthless creature.

On Inverawe’s return home he found a man in a state of great excitement waiting to see him. This man informed him of the murder of his (Inverawe’s) foster-brother by one Macniven. “We have,” said he, “tracked the murderer to within a short distance of this place, and I am here to warn you in case he should seek your protection.” Inverawe turned pale and remained silent, not knowing what answer to give. The man, knowing the love that subsisted between the foster-brothers, thought this silence arose from grief alone, and left the house to pursue the search for Macniven further.

The compassion Inverawe felt for the trembling man he had left in the cave turned to hate when he thought of his beloved foster-brother murdered; but as he had plighted his word to save him, save him he must and would. As soon, therefore, as night fell he went to the cave with food, and promised to return with more the next day.

Thoroughly worn out, as soon as he reached home he retired to rest, but sleep he could not. So taking up a book he began to read. A shadow fell across the page. He looked up and saw his foster-brother standing by the bedside. But, oh, how changed! His fair hair clotted with blood; his face pale and drawn, and his garments all gory. He uttered the following words: “Inverawe, shield not the murderer; blood must flow for blood,” and then faded away out of sight.

In spite of the spirit’s commands, Inverawe remained true to his promise, and returned next day to Macniven with fresh provisions. That night his foster-brother again appeared to him uttering the same warning: “Inverawe, Inverawe, shield not the murderer; blood must flow for blood”. At daybreak Inverawe hurried off to the cave, and said to Macniven: “I can shield you no longer; you must escape as best you can”. Inverawe now hoped to receive no further visit from the vengeful spirit. In this he was disappointed, for at the usual hour the ghost appeared, and in anger said, “I have warned you once, I have warned you twice; it is too late now. We shall meet again at TICONDEROGA.”

Inverawe rose before dawn and went straight to the cave. Macniven was gone!

Inverawe saw no more of the ghost, but the adventure left him a gloomy, melancholy man. Many a time he would wander on Cruachan hill side, brooding over his vision, and people passing him would see the far-away look in his eyes, and would say one to the other: “The puir laird, he is aye thinking on him that is gone”. Only his dearest friends knew the cause of his melancholy.

In 1756 the war between the English and French in America broke out. The 42nd regiment embarked, and landed at New York in June of that year. Campbell of Inverawe was a major in the regiment. The lieut.-colonel was Francis Grant. From New York the 42nd proceeded to Albany, where the regiment remained inactive till the spring of 1757. One evening when the 42nd were still quartered at this place, Inverawe asked the colonel “if he had ever heard of a place called Ticonderoga”. Colonel Grant replied he had never heard the name before. Inverawe then told his story. Most of the officers were present at the time; some were impressed, others were inclined to look upon the whole thing as a joke, but seeing how very much disturbed Inverawe was about it all, even the most unbelieving refrained from bantering him.

In 1758 an expedition was to be directed against Ticonderoga, on Lake George, a fort erected by the French. The Highlanders were to form part of this expedition. The force was under Major-General Abercromby.

Ticonderoga was called by the French St. Louis , and Inverawe knew it by no other name. One of the officers told Colonel Grant that the Indian name of the place was Ticonderoga. Grant, remembering Campbell’s story, said: “For God’s sake don’t let Campbell know this, or harm will come of it”.

The troops embarked on Lake George and landed without opposition near the extremity of the lake early in July. They marched from there, through woods, upon Ticonderoga, having had one successful skirmish with the enemy, driving them back with considerable loss. Lord Howe was killed in this engagement.

On the 10th of July the assault was directed to be commenced by the picquets. The Grenadiers were to follow, supported by the battalions and reserves. The Highlanders and 55th regiment formed the reserve.

In vain the troops attempted to force their way through the abbatis, they themselves being exposed to a heavy artillery and musket fire from an enemy well under cover. The Highlanders could no longer be restrained, and rushed forward from the reserve, cutting and carving their way through trees and other obstacles with their claymores. The deadly fire still continued from the fort. As no ladders had been provided for scaling the breastwork, the soldiers climbed on to one another's shoulders, and made holes for their feet in the face of the work with their swords and bayonets, but as soon as a man reached the top he was thrown down. Captain John Campbell and a few men succeeded at last in forcing their way over the breastworks, but were immediately cut down.

After a long and desperate struggle, lasting in fact nearly four hours, General Abercromby gave orders for a retreat. The troops could hardly be prevailed upon to retire, and it was not till the order had been given for the third time that the Highlanders withdrew from the hopeless encounter. The loss sustained by the regiment was as follows: eight officers, nine sergeants and 297 men killed; seventeen officers, ten sergeants and 306 men wounded.

Inverawe, after having fought with the greatest courage, received at length his death wound. Colonel Grant hastened to the dying man's side, who looked reproachfully at him, and said: “You deceived me; this is Ticonderoga, for I have seen him”. Inverawe never spoke again. Inverawe's son, an officer in the same regiment, also lost his life at Ticonderoga.

On the very day that these events were happening in far-away America, two ladies, Miss Campbell of Ederein and her sister, were walking from Kilmalieu to Inveraray, and had reached the then new bridge over the Aray. One of them happened to look up at the sky. She gave a call to her sister to look also. They both of them saw in the sky what looked like a siege going on. They saw the different regiments with their colours, and recognised many of their friends among the Highlanders. They saw Inverawe and his son fall, and other men whom they knew. When they reached Inveraray they told all their friends of the vision they had just seen. They also took down the names of those they had seen fall, and the time and date of the occurrence. The well-known Danish physician, Sir William Hart, was, together with an Englishman and a servant, walking round the Castle of Inveraray. These men saw the same phenomena, and confirmed the statements made by the two ladies. Weeks after the gazette corroborated their statements in its account of the attempt made on

Ticonderoga. Every detail was correct in the vision, down to the actual number of the killed and wounded.

But there was sorrow throughout Argyll long before the gazette appeared.

*

We now give the best attainable version of a yet more famous legend, “The Tyrone Ghost”.

The literary history of “The Tyrone Ghost” is curious. In 1802 Scott used the tale as the foundation of his ballad, *The Eve of St. John*, and referred to the tradition of a noble Irish family in a note. In 1858 the subject was discussed in *Notes and Queries*. A reference was given to Lyon’s privately printed *Grand Juries of Westmeath from* 1751. The version from that rare work, a version dated “Dublin, August, 1802,” was published in *Notes and Queries* of 24th July, 1858. In December, 1896, a member of the Beresford family published in *The Nines* (a journal of the Wiltshire regiment), the account which follows, derived from a MS. at Curraghmore, written by Lady Betty Cobbe, granddaughter of the ghost-seer, Lady Beresford. The writer in *The Nines* remembers Lady Betty. The account of 1802 is clearly derived from the Curraghmore MS., but omits dates; calls Sir Tristram Beresford “Sir Marcus “; leaves out the visit to Gill Hall, where the ghost appeared, and substitutes blanks for the names of persons concerned. Otherwise the differences in the two versions are mainly verbal.

THE BERESFORD GHOST

"There is at Curraghmore, the seat of Lord Waterford, in Ireland, a manuscript account of the tale, such as it was originally received and implicitly believed in by the children and grandchildren of the lady to whom Lord Tyrone is supposed to have made the supernatural appearance after death. The account was written by Lady Betty Cobbe, the youngest daughter of Marcus, Earl of Tyrone, and granddaughter of Nicola S., Lady Beresford. She lived to a good old age, in full use of all her faculties, both of body and mind. I can myself remember her, for when a boy I passed through Bath on a journey with my mother, and we went to her house there, and had luncheon. She appeared to my juvenile imagination a very appropriate person to revise and transmit such a tale, and fully adapted to do ample justice to her subject-matter. It never has been doubted in the family that she received the full particulars in early life, and that she heard the circumstances, such as they were believed to have occurred, from the nearest relatives of the two persons, the supposed actors in this mysterious interview, *viz.*, from her own father, Lord Tyrone, who died in 1763, and from her aunt, Lady Riverston, who died in 1763 also.

"These two were both with their mother, Lady Beresford, on the day of her decease, and they, without assistance or witness, took off from their parent's wrist the black bandage which she had always worn on all occasions and times, even at Court, as some very old persons who lived well into the eighteenth century testified, having received their information from eyewitnesses of the fact. There was an oil painting of this lady in Tyrone House, Dublin, representing her with a black ribbon bound round her wrist. This portrait disappeared in an unaccountable manner. It used to hang in one of the drawing-rooms in that mansion, with other family pictures. When Henry, Marquis of Waterford, sold the old town residence of the family and its grounds to the Government as the site of the Education Board, he directed Mr. Watkins, a dealer in pictures, and a man of considerable knowledge in works of art and vertu, to collect the pictures, etc., etc., which were best adapted for removal to Curraghmore. Mr. Watkins especially picked out this portrait, not only as a good work of art, but as one which, from its associations, deserved particular care and notice. When, however, the lot arrived at Curraghmore and was unpacked, no such picture was found; and though Mr. Watkins took great pains and exerted himself to the utmost to trace what had become of it, to this day (nearly forty years), not a hint of its existence has been received or heard of.

"John le Poer, Lord Decies, was the eldest son of Richard, Earl of Tyrone, and of Lady Dorothy Annesley, daughter of Arthur, Earl of Anglesey. He was born 1665, succeeded his father 1690, and died 14th October, 1693. He became Lord Tyrone at his father's death, and is the 'ghost' of the story.

"Nicola Sophie Hamilton was the second and youngest daughter and co-heiress of Hugh, Lord Glenawley, who was also Baron Lunge in Sweden. Being a zealous Royalist, he had, together with his father, migrated to that country in 1643, and returned from it at the Restoration. He was of a good old family, and held considerable landed property in the county Tyrone, near Ballygawley. He died there in 1679. His eldest daughter and co-heiress, Arabella Susanna, married, in 1683, Sir John Macgill, of Gill Hall, in the county Down.

"Nicola S. (the second daughter) was born in 1666, and married Sir Tristram Beresford in 1687. Between that and 1693 two daughters were born, but no son to inherit the ample landed estates of his father, who most anxiously wished and hoped for an heir. It was under these circumstances, and at this period, that the manuscripts state that Lord Tyrone made his appearance after death; and all the versions of the story, without variation, attribute the same cause and reason, *viz.*, a solemn promise mutually interchanged in early life between John le Poer, then Lord Decies, afterwards Lord Tyrone, and Nicola S. Hamilton, that whichever of the two died the first, should, if permitted, appear to the survivor for the object of declaring the approval or rejection by the Deity of the revealed religion as generally acknowledged: of which the departed one must be fully cognisant, but of which they both had in their youth entertained unfortunate doubts.

"In the month of October, 1693, Sir Tristram and Lady Beresford went on a visit to her sister, Lady Macgill, at Gill Hall, now the seat of Lord Clanwilliam, whose grandmother was eventually the heiress of Sir J. Macgill's property. One morning Sir Tristram rose early, leaving Lady Beresford asleep, and went out for a walk before breakfast. When his wife joined the table very late, her appearance and the embarrassment of her manner attracted general attention, especially that of her husband. He made anxious inquiries as to her health, and asked her apart what had occurred to her wrist, which was tied up with black ribbon tightly bound round it. She earnestly entreated him not to inquire more then, or thereafter, as to the cause of her wearing or continuing afterwards to wear that ribbon; 'for,' she added, 'you will never see me without it'. He replied, 'Since you urge it so vehemently, I promise you not to inquire more about it'.

"After completing her hurried breakfast she made anxious inquiries as to whether the post had yet arrived. It had not yet come in; and Sir Tristram asked:

‘Why are you so particularly eager about letters to-day?’ ‘Because I expect to hear of Lord Tyrone’s death, which took place on Tuesday.’ ‘Well,’ remarked Sir Tristram, ‘I never should have put you down for a superstitious person; but I suppose that some idle dream has disturbed you.’ Shortly after, the servant brought in the letters; one was sealed with black wax. ‘It is as I expected,’ she cries; ‘he is dead.’ The letter was from Lord Tyrone’s steward to inform them that his master had died in Dublin, on Tuesday, 14th October, at 4 p.m. Sir Tristram endeavoured to console her, and begged her to restrain her grief, when she assured him that she felt relieved and easier now that she knew the actual fact. She added, ‘I can now give you a most satisfactory piece of intelligence, *viz.*, that I am with child, and that it will be a boy’. A son was born in the following July. Sir Tristram survived its birth little more than six years. After his death Lady Beresford continued to reside with her young family at his place in the county of Derry, and seldom went from home. She hardly mingled with any neighbours or friends, excepting with Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, of Coleraine. He was the principal personage in that town, and was, by his mother, a near relative of Sir Tristram. His wife was the daughter of Robert Gorges, LL.D. (a gentleman of good old English family, and possessed of a considerable estate in the county Meath), by Jane Loftus, daughter of Sir Adam Loftus, of Rathfarnham, and sister of Lord Lisburn. They had an only son, Richard Gorges, who was in the army, and became a general officer very early in life. With the Jacksons Lady Beresford maintained a constant communication and lived on the most intimate terms, while she seemed determined to eschew all other society and to remain in her chosen retirement.

“At the conclusion of three years thus passed, one luckless day “Young Gorges” most vehemently professed his passion for her, and solicited her hand, urging his suit in a most passionate appeal, which was evidently not displeasing to the fair widow, and which, unfortunately for her, was successful. They were married in 1704. One son and two daughters were born to them, when his abandoned and dissolute conduct forced her to seek and to obtain a separation. After this had continued for four years, General Gorges pretended extreme penitence for his past misdeeds, and with the most solemn promises of amendment induced his wife to live with him again, and she became the mother of a second son. The day month after her confinement happened to be her birthday, and having recovered and feeling herself equal to some exertion, she sent for her son, Sir Marcus Beresford, then twenty years old, and her married daughter, Lady Riverston. She also invited Dr. King, the Archbishop of Dublin (who was an intimate friend), and an old clergyman who had christened her, and who had always kept up a most kindly intercourse with her during her whole life, to make up a small party to celebrate the day.

"In the early part of it Lady Beresford was engaged in a kindly conversation with her old friend the clergyman, and in the course of it said: 'You know that I am forty-eight this day'. 'No, indeed,' he replied; 'you are only forty-seven, for your mother had a dispute with me once on the very subject of your age, and I in consequence sent and consulted the registry, and can most confidently assert that you are only forty-seven this day.' 'You have signed my death-warrant, then,' she cried; 'leave me, I pray, for I have not much longer to live, but have many things of grave importance to settle before I die. Send my son and my daughter to me immediately.' The clergyman did as he was bidden. He directed Sir Marcus and his sister to go instantly to their mother; and he sent to the archbishop and a few other friends to put them off from joining the birthday party.

"When her two children repaired to Lady Beresford, she thus addressed them: 'I have something of deep importance to communicate to you, my dear children, before I die. You are no strangers to the intimacy and the affection which subsisted in early life between Lord Tyrone and myself. We were educated together when young, under the same roof, in the pernicious principles of Deism. Our real friends afterwards took every opportunity to convince us of our error, but their arguments were insufficient to overpower and uproot our infidelity, though they had the effect of shaking our confidence in it, and thus leaving us wavering between the two opinions. In this perplexing state of doubt we made a solemn promise one to the other, that whichever died first should, if permitted, appear to the other for the purpose of declaring what religion was the one acceptable to the Almighty. One night, years after this interchange of promises, I was sleeping with your father at Gill Hall, when I suddenly awoke and discovered Lord Tyrone sitting visibly by the side of the bed. I screamed out, and vainly endeavoured to rouse Sir Tristram. "Tell me," I said, "Lord Tyrone, why and wherefore are you here at this time of the night?" "Have you then forgotten our promise to each other, pledged in early life? I died on Tuesday, at four o'clock. I have been permitted thus to appear in order to assure you that the revealed religion is the true and only one by which we can be saved. I am also suffered to inform you that you are with child, and will produce a son, who will marry my heiress; that Sir Tristram will not live long, when you will marry again, and you will die from the effects of childbirth in your forty-seventh year." I begged from him some convincing sign or proof so that when the morning came I might rely upon it, and feel satisfied that his appearance had been real, and that it was not the phantom of my imagination. He caused the hangings of the bed to be drawn in an unusual way and impossible manner through an iron hook. I still was not satisfied, when he wrote his signature in my pocket-book. I wanted, however, more substantial proof of his visit, when he laid his hand, which was cold as marble, on my wrist; the sinews shrunk up, the nerves withered at the touch. "Now," he said, "let no mortal eye, while you live, ever see that wrist," and vanished. While I was conversing with him my thoughts were calm, but as soon as he disappeared I felt chilled with horror and dismay, a cold sweat came over me, and I again endeavoured but vainly to awaken Sir Tristram; a flood of tears came to my relief, and I fell asleep.

"'In the morning your father got up without disturbing me; he had not noticed anything extraordinary about me or the bed-hangings. When I did arise I found a long broom in the gallery outside the bedroom door, and with great difficulty I unhooded the curtain, fearing that the position of it might excite surprise and cause inquiry. I bound up my wrist with black ribbon before I went down to breakfast, where the agitation of my mind was too visible not to attract attention. Sir Tristram made many anxious inquiries as to my health, especially as to my sprained wrist, as he conceived mine to be. I begged him to drop all questions as to the bandage, even if I continued to adopt it for any length of time. He kindly promised me not to speak of it any more, and he kept his promise faithfully. You, my son, came into the world as predicted, and your father died six years after. I then determined to abandon society and its pleasures and not mingle again with the world, hoping to avoid the dreadful predictions as to my second marriage; but, alas! in the one family with which I held constant and friendly intercourse I met the man, whom I did not regard with perfect indifference. Though I struggled to conquer by every means the passion, I at length yielded to his solicitations, and in a fatal moment for my own peace I became his wife. In a few years his conduct fully justified my demand for a separation, and I fondly hoped to escape the fatal prophecy. Under the delusion that I had passed my forty-seventh birthday, I was prevailed upon to believe in his amendment, and to pardon him. I have, however, heard from undoubted authority that I am only forty-seven this day, and I know that I am about to die. I die, however, without the dread of death, fortified as I am by the sacred precepts of Christianity and upheld by its promises. When I am gone, I wish that you, my children, should unbind this black ribbon and alone behold my wrist before I am consigned to the grave.'

"She then requested to be left that she might lie down and compose herself, and her children quitted the apartment, having desired her attendant to watch her, and if any change came on to summon them to her bedside. In an hour the bell rang, and they hastened to the call, but all was over. The two children having ordered every one to retire, knelt down by the side of the bed, when Lady

Riverston unbound the black ribbon and found the wrist exactly as Lady Beresford had described it — every nerve withered, every sinew shrunk.

"Her friend, the Archbishop, had had her buried in the Cathedral of St. Patrick, in Dublin, in the Earl of Cork's tomb, where she now lies."

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The writer now professes his disbelief in any spiritual presence, and explains his theory that Lady Beresford's anxiety about Lord Tyrone deluded her by a vivid dream, during which she hurt her wrist.

Of all ghost stories the Tyrone, or Beresford Ghost, has most variants. Following Monsieur Hauréau, in the *Journal des Savants*, I have tracked the tale, the death compact, and the wound inflicted by the ghost on the hand, or wrist, or brow, of the seer, through Henry More, and Melanchthon, and a mediæval sermon by Eudes de Shirton, to William of Malmesbury, a range of 700 years. Mrs. Grant of Laggan has a rather recent case, and I have heard of another in the last ten years! Calmet has a case in 1625, the spectre leaves

The sable score of fingers four

on a board of wood.

Now for a modern instance of a gang of ghosts with a purpose!

When I narrated the story which follows to an eminent moral philosopher, he remarked, at a given point, "Oh, the ghost *spoke*, did she?" and displayed scepticism. The evidence, however, left him, as it leaves me, at a standstill, not convinced, but agreeably perplexed. The ghosts here are truly old-fashioned.

My story is, and must probably remain, entirely devoid of proof, as far as any kind of ghostly influence is concerned. We find ghosts appearing, and imposing a certain course of action on a living witness, for definite purposes of their own. The course of action prescribed was undeniably pursued, and apparently the purpose of the ghosts was fulfilled, but what that purpose was their agent declines to state, and conjecture is hopelessly baffled.

The documents in the affair have been published by the Society for Psychical Research (*Proceedings*, vol. xi., p. 547), and are here used for reference. But I think the matter will be more intelligible if I narrate it exactly as it came under my own observation. The names of persons and places are all fictitious, and are the same as those used in the documents published by the S.P.R.

HALF-PAST ONE O'CLOCK

In October, 1893, I was staying at a town which we shall call Rapingham. One night I and some kinsfolk dined with another old friend of all of us, a Dr. Ferrier. In the course of dinner he asked *à propos de bottes*: —

"Have you heard of the ghost in Blake Street?" a sunny, pleasant street of respectable but uninteresting antiquity in Rapingham.

We had none of us heard of the ghost, and begged the doctor to enlighten our ignorance. His story ran thus — I have it in his own writing as far as its essence goes: —

"The house," he said, "belongs to my friends, the Applebys, who let it, as they live elsewhere. A quiet couple took it and lived in it for five years, when the husband died, and the widow went away. They made no complaint while tenants. The house stood empty for some time, and all I know personally about the matter is that I, my wife, and the children were in the dining-room one Sunday when we heard unusual noises in the drawing-room overhead. We went through the rooms but could find no cause or explanation of the disturbance, and thought no more about it.

"About six or seven years ago I let the house to a Mr. Buckley, who is still the tenant. He was unmarried, and his family consisted of his mother and sisters. They preceded him to put the place in order, and before his arrival came to me in some irritation complaining that I had let them *a haunted house*! They insisted that there were strange noises, as if heavy weights were being dragged about, or heavy footsteps pacing in the rooms and on the stairs. I said that I knew nothing about the matter. The stairs are of stone, water is only carried up to the first floor, there is an unused system of hot air pipes. Something went wrong with the water-main in the area once, but the noises lasted after it was mended.

"I think Mr. Buckley when he arrived never heard anything unusual. But one evening as he walked upstairs carrying an ink-bottle, he found his hand full of some liquid. Thinking that he had spilt the ink, he went to a window where he found his hand full of water, to account for which there was no stain on the ceiling, or anything else that he could discover. On another occasion one of the young ladies was kneeling by a trunk in an attic, alone, when water was switched over her face, as if from a wet brush. There was a small pool of water on the floor, and the wall beyond her was sprinkled.

"Time went on, and the disturbances were very rare: in fact ceased for two years till the present week, when Mrs. Claughton, a widow accompanied by two of her children, came to stay with the Buckleys. She had heard of the disturbances and the theory of hauntings — I don't know if these things interested her or not.

"Early on Monday, 9th October, Mrs. Claughton came to consult me. Her story was this: About a quarter past one on Sunday night, or Monday morning, she was in bed with one of her children, the other sleeping in the room. She was awakened by footsteps on the stair, and supposed that a servant was coming to call her to Miss Buckley, who was ill. The steps stopped at the door, then the noise was repeated. Mrs. Claughton lit her bedroom candle, opened the door and listened. There was no one there. The clock on the landing pointed to twenty minutes past one. Mrs. Claughton went back to bed, read a book, fell asleep, and woke to find the candle still lit, but low in the socket. She heard a sigh, and saw a lady, unknown to her, her head swathed in a soft white shawl, her expression gentle and refined, her features much emaciated.

"The Appearance said, 'Follow me,' and Mrs. Claughton, taking the bedroom candle, rose and followed out on to the landing, and so into the adjacent drawing-room. She cannot remember opening the door, which the housemaid had locked outside, and she owns that this passage is dreamlike in her memory. Seeing that her candle was flickering out, she substituted for it a pink one taken from a chiffonier. The figure walked nearly to the window, turned three-quarters round, said 'To-morrow!' and was no more seen. Mrs. Claughton went back to her room, where her eldest child asked: —

"'Who is the lady in white?'

"'Only me, mother, go to sleep,' she thinks she answered. After lying awake for two hours, with gas burning, she fell asleep. The pink candle from the drawing-room chiffonier was in her candlestick in the morning.

"After hearing the lady's narrative I told her to try change of air, which she declined as cowardly. So, as she would stay on at Mr. Buckley's, I suggested that an electric alarm communicating with Miss Buckley's room should be rigged up, and this was done."

Here the doctor paused, and as the events had happened within the week, we felt that we were at last on the track of a recent ghost.

"Next morning, about one, the Buckleys were aroused by a tremendous peal of the alarm; Mrs. Claughton they found in a faint. Next morning she consulted me as to the whereabouts of a certain place, let me call it 'Meresby'. I suggested the use of a postal directory; we found Meresby, a place extremely unknown to fame, in an agricultural district about five hours from London in the opposite direction from Rapingham. To this place Mrs. Claughton said she must go, in the interest and by the order of certain ghosts, whom she saw on Monday night, and whose injunctions she had taken down in a note-book. She has left Rapingham for London, and there," said the doctor, "my story ends for the present."

We expected it to end for good and all, but in the course of the week came a communication to the doctor in writing from Mrs. Claughton's governess. This lady, on Mrs. Claughton's arrival at her London house (Friday, 13th October), passed a night perturbed by sounds of weeping, "loud moans," and "a very odd noise overhead, like some electric battery gone wrong," in fact, much like the "warning" of a jack running down, which Old Jeffrey used to give at the Wesley's house in Epworth. There were also heavy footsteps and thuds, as of moving weighty bodies. So far the governess.

This curious communication I read at Rapingham on Saturday, 14th October, or Sunday, 15th October. On Monday I went to town. In the course of the week I received a letter from my kinsman in Rapingham, saying that Mrs. Claughton had written to Dr. Ferrier, telling him that she had gone to Meresby on Saturday; had accomplished the bidding of the ghosts, and had lodged with one Joseph Wright, the parish clerk. Her duty had been to examine the Meresby parish registers, and to compare certain entries with information given by the ghosts and written by her in her note-book. If the entries in the parish register tallied with her notes, she was to pass the time between one o'clock and half-past one, alone, in Meresby Church, and receive a communication from the spectres. All this she said that she had done, and in evidence of her journey enclosed her half ticket to Meresby, which a dream had warned her would not be taken on her arrival. She also sent a white rose from a grave to Dr. Ferrier, a gentleman in no sympathy with the Jacobite cause, which, indeed, has no connection whatever with the matter in hand.

On hearing of this letter from Mrs. Claughton, I confess that, not knowing the lady, I remained purely sceptical. The railway company, however, vouched for the ticket. The rector of Meresby, being appealed to, knew nothing of the matter. He therefore sent for his curate and parish clerk.

"Did a lady pass part of Sunday night in the church?"

The clerk and the curate admitted that this unusual event *had* occurred. A lady had arrived from London on Saturday evening; had lodged with Wright, the parish clerk; had asked for the parish registers; had compared them with her note-book after morning service on Sunday, and had begged leave to pass part of the night in the church. The curate in vain tried to dissuade her, and finally, washing his hands of it, had left her to Wright the clerk. To him she described a Mr. George Howard, deceased (one of the ghosts). He recognised the description, and he accompanied her to the church on a dark night, starting at one o’clock. She stayed alone, without a light, in the locked-up church from 1.20 to 1.45, when he let her out.

There now remained no doubt that Mrs. Claughton had really gone to Meresby, a long and disagreeable journey, and had been locked up in the church alone at a witching hour.

Beyond this point we have only the statements of Mrs. Claughton, made to Lord Bute, Mr. Myers and others, and published by the Society for Psychical Research. She says that after arranging the alarm bell on Monday night (October 9-10) she fell asleep reading in her dressing-gown, lying outside her bed. She wakened, and found the lady of the white shawl bending over her. Mrs. Claughton said: “Am I dreaming, or is it true?” The figure gave, as testimony to character, a piece of information. Next Mrs. Claughton saw a male ghost, “tall, dark, healthy, sixty years old,” who named himself as George Howard, buried in Meresby churchyard, Meresby being a place of which Mrs. Claughton, like most people, now heard for the first time. He gave the dates of his marriage and death, which are correct, and have been seen by Mr. Myers in Mrs. Claughton’s note-book. He bade her verify these dates at Meresby, and wait at 1.15 in the morning at the grave of Richard Harte (a person, like all of them, unknown to Mrs. Claughton) at the south-west corner of the south aisle in Meresby Church. This Mr. Harte died on 15th May, 1745, and missed many events of interest by doing so. Mr. Howard also named and described Joseph Wright, of Meresby, as a man who would help her, and he gave minute local information. Next came a phantom of a man whose name Mrs. Claughton is not free to give; he seemed to be in great trouble, at first covering his face with his hands, but later removing them. These three spectres were to meet Mrs. Claughton in Meresby Church and give her information of importance on a matter concerning, apparently, the third and only unhappy appearance. After these promises and injunctions the phantoms left, and Mrs. Claughton went to the door to look at the clock. Feeling faint, she rang the alarum, when her friends came and found her in a swoon on the floor. The hour was 1.20.

What Mrs. Claughton’s children were doing all this time, and whether they were in the room or not, does not appear.

On Thursday Mrs. Claughton went to town, and her governess was perturbed, as we have seen.

On Friday night Mrs. Claughton *dreamed* a number of things connected with her journey; a page of the notes made from this dream was shown to Mr. Myers. Thus her half ticket was not to be taken, she was to find a Mr. Francis, concerned in the private affairs of the ghosts, which needed rectifying, and so forth. These premonitions, with others, were all fulfilled. Mrs. Claughton, in the church at night, continued her conversation with the ghosts whose acquaintance she had made at Rapingham. She obtained, it seems, all the information needful to settling the mysterious matters which disturbed the male ghost who hid his face, and on Monday morning she visited the daughter of Mr. Howard in her country house in a park, "recognised the strong likeness to her father, and carried out all things desired by the dead to the full, as had been requested. . . . The wishes expressed to her were perfectly rational, reasonable and of natural importance."

The clerk, Wright, attests the accuracy of Mrs. Claughton's description of Mr. Howard, whom he knew, and the correspondence of her dates with those in the parish register and on the graves, which he found for her at her request. Mr. Myers, "from a very partial knowledge" of what the Meresby ghosts' business was, thinks the reasons for not revealing this matter "entirely sufficient". The ghosts' messages to survivors "effected the intended results," says Mrs. Claughton.

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Of this story the only conceivable natural explanation is that Mrs. Claughton, to serve her private ends, paid secret preliminary visits to Meresby, "got up" there a number of minute facts, chose a haunted house at the other end of England as a first scene in her little drama, and made the rest of the troublesome journeys, not to mention the uncomfortable visit to a dark church at midnight, and did all this from a hysterical love of notoriety. This desirable boon she would probably never have obtained, even as far as it is consistent with a pseudonym, if I had not chanced to dine with Dr. Ferrier while the adventure was only beginning. As there seemed to be a chance of taking a ghost "on the half volley," I at once communicated the first part of the tale to the Psychical Society (using pseudonyms, as here, throughout), and two years later Mrs. Claughton consented to tell the Society as much as she thinks it fair to reveal.

This, it will be confessed, is a round-about way of obtaining fame, and an ordinary person in Mrs. Claughton's position would have gone to the Psychical Society at once, as Mark Twain meant to do when he saw the ghost which turned out to be a very ordinary person.

There I leave these ghosts, my mind being in a just balance of agnosticism. If ghosts at all, they were ghosts with a purpose. The species is now very rare.

The purpose of the ghost in the following instance was trivial, but was successfully accomplished. In place of asking people to do what it wanted, the ghost did the thing itself. Now the modern theory of ghosts, namely, that they are delusions of the senses of the seers, caused somehow by the mental action of dead or distant people, does not seem to apply in this case. The ghost produced an effect on a material object.

“PUT OUT THE LIGHT!”

The Rev. D. W. G. Gwynne, M.D., was a physician in holy orders. In 1853 he lived at P — House, near Taunton, where both he and his wife “were made uncomfortable by auditory experiences to which they could find no clue,” or, in common English, they heard mysterious noises. “During the night,” writes Dr. Gwynne, “I became aware of a draped figure passing across the foot of the bed towards the fireplace. I had the impression that the arm was raised, pointing with the hand towards the mantel-piece on which a night-light was burning. Mrs. Gwynne at the same moment seized my arm, *and the light was extinguished*! Notwithstanding, I distinctly saw the figure returning towards the door, and being under the impression that one of the servants had found her way into our room, I leaped out of bed to intercept the intruder, but found and saw nothing. I rushed to the door and endeavoured to follow the supposed intruder, and it was not until I found the door locked, as usual, that I was painfully impressed. I need hardly say that Mrs. Gwynne was in a very nervous state. She asked me what I had seen, and I told her. She had seen the same figure,” “but,” writes Mrs. Gwynne, “I distinctly *saw the hand of the figure placed over the night-light, which was at once extinguished*”. “Mrs. Gwynne also heard the rustle of the ‘tall man-like figure’s’ garments. In addition to the night-light there was moonlight in the room.”

“Other people had suffered many things in the same house, unknown to Dr. and Mrs. Gwynne, who gave up the place soon afterwards.”

In plenty of stories we hear of ghosts who draw curtains or open doors, and these apparent material effects are usually called part of the seer’s delusion. But the night-light certainly went out under the figure’s hand, and was relit by Dr. Gwynne. Either the ghost was an actual entity, not a mere hallucination of two people, or the extinction of the light was a curious coincidence.

CHAPTER IX

Haunted Houses. Antiquity of Haunted Houses. Savage Cases. Ancient Egyptian Cases. Persistence in Modern Times. Impostures. Imaginary Noises. Nature of Noises. The Creaking Stair. Ghostly Effects produced by the Living but Absent. The Grocer's Cough. Difficulty of Belief. My Gillie's Father's Story. "Silverton Abbey." The Dream that Opened the Door. Abbotsford Noises. Legitimate Haunting by the Dead. The Girl in Pink. The Dog in the Haunted Room. The Lady in Black. Dogs Alarmed. The Dead Seldom Recognised. Glamis. A Border Castle. Another Class of Hauntings. A Russian Case. The Dancing Devil. The Little Hands.

Haunted houses have been familiar to man ever since he has owned a roof to cover his head. The Australian blacks possessed only shelters or "leans-to," so in Australia the spirits do their rapping on the tree trunks; a native illustrated this by whacking a table with a book. The perched-up houses of the Dyaks are haunted by noisy routing agencies. We find them in monasteries, palaces, and crofters' cottages all through the Middle Ages. On an ancient Egyptian papyrus we find the husband of the Lady Onkhari protesting against her habit of haunting his house, and exclaiming: "What wrong have I done," exactly in the spirit of the "Hymn of Donald Ban," who was "sair hadden down by a bodach" (noisy bogle) after Culloden.

The husband of Onkhari does not say *how* she disturbed him, but the manners of Egyptian haunters, just what they remain at present, may be gathered from a magical papyrus, written in Greek. Spirits "wail and groan, or laugh dreadfully"; they cause bad dreams, terror and madness; finally, they "practice stealthy theft," and rap and knock. The "theft" (by making objects disappear mysteriously) is often illustrated in the following tales, as are the groaning and knocking. St. Augustine speaks of hauntings as familiar occurrences, and we have a chain of similar cases from ancient Egypt to 1896. Several houses in that year were so disturbed that the inhabitants were obliged to leave them. The newspapers were full of correspondence on the subject.

The usual annoyances are apparitions (rare), flying about of objects (not very common), noises of every kind (extremely frequent), groans, screams, footsteps and fire-raising. Imposture has either been proved or made very probable in ten out of eleven cases of volatile objects between 1883 and 1895. Moreover, it is certain that the noises of haunted houses are not equally audible by all persons present, even when the sounds are at their loudest. Thus Lord St. Vincent, the great admiral, heard nothing during his stay at the house of his sister, Mrs. Ricketts, while that lady endured terrible things. After his departure she was obliged to recall him. He arrived, and slept peacefully. Next day his sister told him about the disturbances, after which he heard them as much as his neighbours, and was as unsuccessful in discovering their cause.

Of course this looks as if these noises were unreal, children of the imagination. Noises being the staple of haunted houses, a few words may be devoted to them. They are usually the *frou-frou* or rustling sweep of a gown, footsteps, raps, thumps, groans, a sound as if all the heavy furniture was being knocked about, crashing of crockery and jingling of money. Of course, as to footsteps, people *may* be walking about, and most of the other noises are either easily imitated, or easily produced by rats, water pipes, cracks in furniture (which the Aztecs thought ominous of death), and other natural causes. The explanation is rather more difficult when the steps pace a gallery, passing and repassing among curious inquirers, or in this instance.

THE CREAKING STAIR

A lady very well known to myself, and in literary society, lived as a girl with an antiquarian father in an old house dear to an antiquary. It was haunted, among other things, by footsteps. The old oak staircase had two creaking steps, numbers seventeen and eighteen from the top. The girl would sit on the stair, stretching out her arms, and count the steps as they passed her, one, two, three, and so on to seventeen and eighteen, *which always creaked*. In this case rats and similar causes were excluded, though we may allow for “expectant attention”. But this does not generally work. When people sit up on purpose to look out for the ghost, he rarely comes; in the case of the “Lady in Black,” which we give later, when purposely waited for, she was never seen at all.

Discounting imposture, which is sometimes found, and sometimes merely fabled (as in the Tedworth story), there remains one curious circumstance. Specially ghostly noises are attributed to the living but absent.

THE GROCER’S COUGH

A man of letters was born in a small Scotch town, where his father was the intimate friend of a tradesman whom we shall call the grocer. Almost every day the grocer would come to have a chat with Mr. Mackay, and the visitor, alone of the natives, had the habit of knocking at the door before entering. One day Mr. Mackay said to his daughter, “There’s Mr. Macwilliam’s knock. Open the door.” But there was no Mr. Macwilliam! He was just leaving his house at the other end of the street. From that day Mr. Mackay always heard the grocer’s knock “a little previous,” accompanied by the grocer’s cough, which was peculiar. Then all the family heard it, including the son who later became learned. He, when he had left his village for Glasgow, reasoned himself out of the opinion that the grocer’s knock did herald and precede the grocer. But when he went home for a visit he found that he heard it just as of old. Possibly some local Sentimental Tommy watched for the grocer, played the trick and ran away. This explanation presents no difficulty, but the boy was never detected.

Such anecdotes somehow do not commend themselves to the belief even of people who can believe a good deal.

But “the spirits of the living,” as the Highlanders say, have surely as good a chance to knock, or appear at a distance, as the spirits of the dead. To be sure, the living do not know (unless they are making a scientific experiment) what trouble they are giving on these occasions, but one can only infer, like St. Augustine, that probably the dead don’t know it either.

Thus,

MY GILLIE’S FATHER’S STORY

Fishing in Sutherland, I had a charming companion in the gillie. He was well educated, a great reader, the best of salmon fishers, and I never heard a man curse William, Duke of Cumberland, with more enthusiasm. His father, still alive, was second-sighted, and so, to a moderate extent and without theory, was my friend. Among other anecdotes (confirmed in writing by the old gentleman) was this: — The father had a friend who died in the house which they both occupied. The clothes of the deceased hung on pegs in the bedroom. One night the father awoke, and saw a stranger examining and handling the clothes of the defunct. Then came a letter from the dead man’s brother, inquiring about the effects. He followed later, and was the stranger seen by my gillie’s father.

Thus the living but absent may haunt a house both noisily and by actual appearance. The learned even think, for very exquisite reasons, that “Silverton Abbey” is haunted noisily by a “spirit of the living”. Here is a case: —

THE DREAM THAT KNOCKED AT THE DOOR

The following is an old but good story. The Rev. Joseph Wilkins died, an aged man, in 1800. He left this narrative, often printed; the date of the adventure is 1754, when Mr. Wilkins, aged twenty-three, was a schoolmaster in Devonshire. The dream was an ordinary dream, and did not announce death, or anything but a journey. Mr. Wilkins dreamed, in Devonshire, that he was going to London. He thought he would go by Gloucestershire and see his people. So he started, arrived at his father's house, found the front door locked, went in by the back door, went to his parents' room, saw his father asleep in bed and his mother awake. He said: "Mother, I am going a long journey, and have come to bid you good-bye". She answered in a fright, "Oh dear son, thou art dead!" Mr. Wilkins wakened, and thought nothing of it. As early as a letter could come, one arrived from his father, addressing him as if he were dead, and desiring him, if by accident alive, or any one into whose hands the letter might fall, to write at once. The father then gave his reasons for alarm. Mrs. Wilkins, being awake one night, heard some one try the front door, enter by the back, then saw her son come into her room and say he was going on a long journey, with the rest of the dialogue. She then woke her husband, who said she had been dreaming, but who was alarmed enough to write the letter. No harm came of it to anybody.

The story would be better if Mr. Wilkins, junior, like Laud, had kept a nocturnal of his dreams, and published his father's letter, with post-marks.

The story of the lady who often dreamed of a house, and when by chance she found and rented it was recognised as the ghost who had recently haunted it, is good, but is an invention!

A somewhat similar instance is that of the uproar of moving heavy objects, heard by Scott in Abbotsford on the night preceding and the night of the death of his furnisher, Mr. Bullock, in London. The story is given in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, and is too familiar for repetition.

On the whole, accepting one kind of story on the same level as the other kind, the living and absent may unconsciously produce the phenomena of haunted houses just as well as the dead, to whose alleged performances we now advance. Actual appearances, as we have said, are not common, and just as all persons do not hear the sounds, so many do not see the appearance, even when it is visible to others in the same room. As an example, take a very mild and lady-like case of haunting.

THE GIRL IN PINK

The following anecdote was told to myself, a few months after the curious event, by the three witnesses in the case. They were connections of my own, the father was a clergyman of the Anglican Church; he, his wife and their daughter, a girl of twenty, were the “percipients”. All are cheerful, sagacious people, and all, though they absolutely agreed as to the facts in their experience, professed an utter disbelief in “ghosts,” which the occurrence has not affected in any way. They usually reside in a foreign city, where there is a good deal of English society. One day they left the town to lunch with a young fellow-countryman who lived in a villa in the neighbourhood. There he was attempting to farm a small estate, with what measure of success the story does not say. His house was kept by his sister, who was present, of course, at the little luncheon party. During the meal some question was asked, or some remark was made, to which the clerical guest replied in English by a reference to “the maid-servant in pink”.

“There is no maid in pink,” said the host, and he asked both his other guests to corroborate him.

Both ladies, mother and daughter, were obliged to say that unless their eyes deceived them, they certainly *had* seen a girl in pink attending on them, or, at least, moving about in the room. To this their entertainers earnestly replied that no such person was in their establishment, that they had no woman servant but the elderly cook and housekeeper, then present, who was neither a girl nor in pink. After luncheon the guests were taken all over the house, to convince them of the absence of the young woman whom they had seen, and assuredly there was no trace of her.

On returning to the town where they reside, they casually mentioned the circumstance as a curious illusion. The person to whom they spoke said, with some interest, “Don’t you know that a girl is said to have been murdered in that house before your friends took it, and that she is reported to be occasionally seen, dressed in pink?”

They had heard of no such matter, but the story seemed to be pretty generally known, though naturally disliked by the occupant of the house. As for the percipients, they each and all remain firm in the belief that, till convinced of the impossibility of her presence, they were certain they had seen a girl in pink, and rather a pretty girl, whose appearance suggested nothing out of the common. An obvious hypothesis is discounted, of course, by the presence of the sister of the young gentleman who farmed the estate and occupied the house.

Here is another case, mild but pertinacious.

THE DOG IN THE HAUNTED ROOM

The author’s friend, Mr. Rokeby, lives, and has lived for some twenty years, in an old house at Hammersmith. It is surrounded by a large garden, the drawing-room and dining-room are on the right and left of the entrance from the garden, on the ground floor. My friends had never been troubled by any phenomena before, and never expected to be. However, they found the house “noisy,” the windows were apt to be violently shaken at night and steps used to be heard where no steps should be. Deep long sighs were audible at all times of day. As Mrs. Rokeby approached a door, the handle would turn and the door fly open. Sounds of stitching a hard material, and of dragging a heavy weight occurred in Mrs. Rokeby’s room, and her hair used to be pulled in a manner for which she could not account. “These sorts of things went on for about five years, when in October, 1875, about three o’clock in the afternoon, I was sitting” (says Mrs. Rokeby) “with three of my children in the dining-room, reading to them. I rang the bell for the parlour-maid, when the door opened, and on looking up I saw the figure of a woman come in and walk up to the side of the table, stand there a second or two, and then turn to go out again, but before reaching the door she seemed to dissolve away. She was a grey, short-looking woman, apparently dressed in grey muslin. I hardly saw the face, which seemed scarcely to be defined at all. None of the children saw her,” and Mrs. Rokeby only mentioned the affair at the time to her husband.

Two servants, in the next two months, saw the same figure, alike in dress at least, in other rooms both by daylight and candle light. They had not heard of Mrs. Rokeby’s experience, were accustomed to the noises, and were in good health. One of them was frightened, and left her place.

A brilliant light in a dark room, an icy wind and a feeling of being “watched” were other discomforts in Mrs. Rokeby’s lot. After 1876, only occasional rappings were heard, till Mr. Rokeby being absent one night in 1883, the noises broke out, “banging, thumping, the whole place shaking”. The library was the centre of these exercises, and the dog, a fine collie, was shut up in the library. Mrs. Rokeby left her room for her daughter’s, while the dog whined in terror, and the noises increased in violence. Next day the dog, when let out, rushed forth with enthusiasm, but crouched with his tail between his legs when invited to re-enter.

This was in 1883. Several years after, Mr. Rokeby was smoking, alone, in the dining-room early in the evening, when the dog began to bristle up his hair, and bark. Mr. Rokeby looked up and saw the woman in grey, with about half her figure passed through the slightly open door. He ran to the door, but she was gone, and the servants were engaged in their usual business.

Our next ghost offered many opportunities to observers.

THE LADY IN BLACK

A ghost in a haunted house is seldom observed with anything like scientific precision. The spectre in the following narrative could not be photographed, attempts being usually made in a light which required prolonged exposure. Efforts to touch it were failures, nor did it speak. On the other hand, it did lend itself, perhaps unconsciously, to one scientific experiment. The story is unromantic; the names are fictitious.

Bognor House, an eligible family residence near a large town, was built in 1860, and occupied, till his death in 1876, by Mr. S. He was twice married, and was not of temperate ways. His second wife adopted his habits, left him shortly before his death, and died at Clifton in 1878. The pair used to quarrel about some jewels which Mr. S. concealed in the flooring of a room where the ghost was never seen.

A Mr L. now took the house, but died six months later. Bognor House stood empty for four years, during which there was vague talk of hauntings. In April, 1882, the house was taken by Captain Morton. This was in April; in June Miss Rose Morton, a lady of nineteen studying medicine (and wearing spectacles), saw the first appearance. Miss Morton did not mention her experiences to her family, her mother being an invalid, and her brothers and sisters very young, but she transmitted accounts to a friend, a lady, in a kind of diary letters. These are extant, and are quoted.

Phenomena of this kind usually begin with noises, and go on to apparitions. Miss Morton one night, while preparing to go to bed, heard a noise outside, thought it was her mother, opened the door, saw a tall lady in black holding a handkerchief to her face, and followed the figure till her candle burned out. A widow’s white cuff was visible on each wrist, the whole of the face was never seen. In 1882-84, Miss Morton saw the figure about six times; it was thrice seen, once through the window from outside, by other persons, who took it for a living being. Two boys playing in the garden ran in to ask who was the weeping lady in black.

On 29th January, 1884, Miss Morton spoke to her inmate, as the lady in black stood beside a sofa. “She only gave a slight gasp and moved towards the door. Just by the door I spoke to her again, but she seemed as if she were quite unable to speak.” In May and June Miss Morton fastened strings at different heights from the stair railings to the wall, where she attached them with glue, but she twice saw the lady pass through the cords, leaving them untouched. When Miss Morton cornered the figure and tried to touch her, or pounce on her, she dodged, or disappeared. But by a curious contradiction her steps were often heard by several of the family, and when she heard the steps, Miss Morton used to go out and follow the figure. There is really no more to tell. Miss Morton's father never saw the lady, even when she sat on a sofa for half an hour, Miss Morton watching her. Other people saw her in the garden crying, and sent messages to ask what was the matter, and who was the lady in distress. Many members of the family, boys, girls, married ladies, servants and others often saw the lady in black. In 1885 loud noises, bumps and turning of door handles were common, and though the servants were told that the lady was quite harmless, they did not always stay. The whole establishment of servants was gradually changed, but the lady still walked. She appeared more seldom in 1887-1889, and by 1892 even the light footsteps ceased. Two dogs, a retriever and a Skye terrier, showed much alarm. "Twice," says Miss Morton, "I saw the terrier suddenly run up to the mat at the foot of the stairs in the hall, wagging its tail, and moving its back in the way dogs do when they expect to be caressed. It jumped up, fawning as it would do if a person had been standing there, but suddenly slunk away with its tail between its legs, and retreated, trembling, under a sofa." Miss Morton's own emotion, at first, was "a feeling of awe at something unknown, mixed with a strong desire to know more about it".

This is a pretty tame case of haunting, as was conjectured, by an unhappy *revenant*, the returned spirit of the second Mrs. S. Here it may be remarked that apparitions in haunted houses are very seldom recognised as those of dead persons, and, when recognised, the recognition is usually dubious. Thus, in February, 1897, Lieutenant Carr Glyn, of the Grenadiers, while reading in the outer room of the Queen's Library in Windsor, saw a lady in black in a kind of mantilla of black lace pass from the inner room into a corner where she was lost to view. He supposed that she had gone out by a door there, and asked an attendant later who she was. There was no door round the corner, and, in the opinion of some, the lady was Queen Elizabeth! She has a traditional habit, it seems, of haunting the Library. But surely, of all people, in dress and aspect Queen Elizabeth is most easily recognised. The seer did not recognise her, and she was probably a mere casual hallucination. In old houses such traditions are common, but vague. In this connection Glamis is usually mentioned. Every one has heard of the Secret Chamber, with its mystery, and the story was known to Scott, who introduces it in *The Betrothed*. But we know when the Secret Chamber was built (under the Restoration), who built it, what he paid the masons, and where it is: under the Charter Room. These cold facts rather take the “weird” effect off the Glamis legend.

The usual process is, given an old house, first a noise, then a hallucination, actual or pretended, then a myth to account for the hallucination. There is a castle on the border which has at least seven or eight distinct ghosts. One is the famous Radiant Boy. He has been evicted by turning his tapestried chamber into the smoking-room. For many years not one ghost has been seen except the lady with the candle, viewed by myself, but, being ignorant of the story, I thought she was one of the maids. Perhaps she was, but she went into an empty set of rooms, and did not come out again. Footsteps are apt to approach the doors of these rooms in mirk midnight, the door handle turns, and that is all.

So much for supposed hauntings by spirits of the dead.

At the opposite pole are hauntings by agencies whom nobody supposes to be ghosts of inmates of the house. The following is an extreme example, as the haunter proceeded to arson. This is not so very unusual, and, if managed by an impostor, shows insane malevolence.

THE DANCING DEVIL

On 16th November, 1870, Mr. Shchapoff, a Russian squire, the narrator, came home from a visit to a country town, Iletski, and found his family in some disarray. There lived with him his mother and his wife's mother, ladies of about sixty-nine, his wife, aged twenty, and his baby daughter. The ladies had been a good deal disturbed. On the night of the 14th, the baby was fractious, and the cook, Maria, danced and played the harmonica to divert her. The baby fell asleep, the wife and Mr. Shchapoff's miller's lady were engaged in conversation, when a shadow crossed the blind on the outside. They were about to go out and see who was passing, when they heard a double shuffle being executed with energy in the loft overhead. They thought Maria, the cook, was making a night of it, but found her asleep in the kitchen. The dancing went on but nobody could be found in the loft. Then raps began on the window panes, and so the miller and gardener patrolled outside. Nobody!

Raps and dancing lasted through most of the night and began again at ten in the morning. The ladies were incommoded and complained of broken sleep. Mr. Shchapoff, hearing all this, examined the miller, who admitted the facts, but attributed them to a pigeon's nest, which he had found under the cornice. Satisfied with this rather elementary hypothesis, Mr. Shchapoff sat down to read Livingstone's *African Travels*. Presently the double shuffle sounded in the loft. Mrs. Shchapoff was asleep in her bedroom, but was awakened by loud raps. The window was tapped at, deafening thumps were dealt at the outer wall, and the whole house thrilled. Mr. Shchapoff rushed out with dogs and a gun, there were no footsteps in the snow, the air was still, the full moon rode in a serene sky. Mr. Shchapoff came back, and the double shuffle was sounding merrily in the empty loft. Next day was no better, but the noises abated and ceased gradually.

Alas, Mr. Shchapoff could not leave well alone. On 20th December, to amuse a friend, he asked Maria to dance and play. Raps, in tune, began on the window panes. Next night they returned, while boots, slippers, and other objects, flew about with a hissing noise. A piece of stuff would fly up and fall with a heavy hard thud, while hard bodies fell soundless as a feather. The performances slowly died away.

On Old Year's Night Maria danced to please them; raps began, people watching on either side of a wall heard the raps on the other side. On 8th January, Mrs. Shchapoff fainted when a large, luminous ball floated, increasing in size, from under her bed. The raps now followed her about by day, as in the case of John Wesley's sisters. On these occasions she felt weak and somnolent. Finally Mr. Shchapoff carried his family to his town house for much-needed change of air.

Science, in the form of Dr. Shustoff, now hinted that electricity or magnetic force was at the bottom of the annoyances, a great comfort to the household, who conceived that the devil was concerned. The doctor accompanied his friends to their country house for a night, Maria was invited to oblige with a dance, and only a few taps on windows followed. The family returned to town till 21st January. No sooner was Mrs. Shchapoff in bed than knives and forks came out of a closed cupboard and flew about, occasionally sticking in the walls.

On 24th January the doctor abandoned the hypothesis of electricity, because the noises kept time to profane but not to sacred music. A Tartar hymn by a Tartar servant, an Islamite, had no accompaniment, but the *Freischütz* was warmly encored.

This went beyond the most intelligent spontaneous exercises of electricity. Questions were asked of the agencies, and to the interrogation, "Are you a devil?" a most deafening knock replied. "We all jumped backwards."

Now comes a curious point. In the Wesley and Tedworth cases, the masters of the houses, like the curé of Cideville (1851), were at odds with local "cunning men".

Mr. Shchapoff's fiend now averred that he was "set on" by the servant of a neighbouring miller, with whom Mr. Shchapoff had a dispute about a mill pond. This man had previously said, "It will be worse; they will drag you by the hair". And, indeed, Mrs. Shchapoff was found in tears, because her hair had been pulled.

Science again intervened. A section of the Imperial Geographical Society sent Dr. Shustoff, Mr. Akutin (a Government civil engineer), and a literary gentleman, as a committee of inquiry appointed by the governor of the province. They made a number of experiments with Leyden jars, magnets, and so forth, with only negative results. Things flew about, both *from,* and *towards* Mrs. Shchapoff. Nothing volatile was ever seen to *begin* its motion, though, in March, 1883, objects were seen, by a policeman and six other witnesses, to fly up from a bin and out of a closed cupboard, in a house at Worksop. Mr. Akutin, in Mrs. Shchapoff's bedroom, found the noises answer questions in French and German, on contemporary politics, of which the lady of the house knew nothing. Lassalle was said to be alive, Mr. Shchapoff remarked, "What nonsense!" but Mr. Akutin corrected him. The bogey was better informed. The success of the French in the great war was predicted.

The family now moved to their town house, and the inquest continued, though the raps were only heard near the lady. A Dr. Dubinsky vowed that she made them herself, with her tongue; then, with her pulse. The doctor assailed, and finally shook the faith of Mr. Akutin, who was to furnish a report. “He bribed a servant boy to say that his mistress made the sounds herself, and then pretended that he had caught her trying to deceive us by throwing things.” Finally Mr. Akutin reported that the whole affair was a hysterical imposition by Mrs. Shchapoff. Dr. Dubinsky attended her, her health and spirits improved, and the disturbances ceased. But poor Mr. Shchapoff received an official warning not to do it again, from the governor of his province. That way lies Siberia.

“Imagine, then,” exclaims Mr. Shchapoff, “our horror, when, on our return to the country in March, the unknown force at once set to work again. And now even my wife’s presence was not essential. Thus, one day, I saw with my own eyes a heavy sofa jump off all four legs (three or four times in fact), and this when my aged mother was lying on it.” The same thing occurred to Nancy Wesley’s bed, on which she was sitting while playing cards in 1717. The picture of a lady of seventy, sitting tight to a bucking sofa, appeals to the brave.

Then the fire-raising began. A blue spark flew out of a wash-stand, into Mrs. Shchapoff’s bedroom. Luckily she was absent, and her mother, rushing forward with a water-jug, extinguished a flaming cotton dress. Bright red globular meteors now danced in the veranda. Mr. Portnoff next takes up the tale as follows, Mr. Shchapoff having been absent from home on the occasion described.

“I was sitting playing the guitar. The miller got up to leave, and was followed by Mrs. Shchapoff. Hardly had she shut the door, when I heard, as though from far off, a deep drawn wail. The voice seemed familiar to me. Overcome with an unaccountable horror I rushed to the door, and there in the passage I saw a literal pillar of fire, in the middle of which, draped in flame, stood Mrs. Shchapoff. . . . I rushed to put it out with my hands, but I found it burned them badly, as if they were sticking to burning pitch. A sort of cracking noise came from beneath the floor, which also shook and vibrated violently.” Mr. Portnoff and the miller “carried off the unconscious victim”.

Mr. Shchapoff also saw a small pink hand, like a child’s, spring from the floor, and play with Mrs. Shchapoff’s coverlet, in bed. These things were too much; the Shchapoffs fled to a cottage, and took a new country house. They had no more disturbances. Mrs. Shchapoff died in child-bed, in 1878, “a healthy, religious, quiet, affectionate woman”.

CHAPTER X

Modern Hauntings

The Shchapoff Story of a Peculiar Type. "Demoniacal Possession." Story of Wellington Mill briefly analysed. Authorities for the Story. Letters. A Journal. The Wesley Ghost. Given Critically and Why. Note on similar Stories, such as the Drummer of Tedworth. Sir Waller Scott's Scepticism about Nautical Evidence. Lord St. Vincent. Scott asks Where are his Letters on a Ghostly Disturbance. The Letters are now Published. Lord St. Vincent's Ghost Story. Reflections.

Cases like that of Mrs. Shchapoff really belong to a peculiar species of haunted houses. Our ancestors, like the modern Chinese, attributed them to diabolical possession, not to an ordinary ghost of a dead person. Examples are very numerous, and have all the same "symptoms," as Coleridge would have said, he attributing them to a contagious nervous malady of observation in the spectators. Among the most notorious is the story of Willington Mill, told by Howitt, and borrowed by Mrs. Crowe, in *The Night Side of Nature*. Mr. Procter, the occupant, a Quaker, vouched to Mrs. Crowe for the authenticity of Howitt's version. (22nd July, 1847.) Other letters from seers are published, and the Society of Psychical Research lately printed Mr. Procter's contemporary journal. A man, a woman, and a monkey were the chief apparitions. There were noises, lights, beds were heaved about: nothing was omitted. A *clairvoyante* was turned on, but could only say that the spectral figures, which she described, "had no brains". After the Quakers left the house there seems to have been no more trouble. The affair lasted for fifteen years.

Familiar as it is, we now offer the old story of the hauntings at Epworth, mainly because a full view of the inhabitants, the extraordinary family of Wesley, seems necessary to an understanding of the affair. The famous and excessively superstitious John Wesley was not present on the occasion.

THE WESLEY GHOST

No ghost story is more celebrated than that of *Old Jeffrey*, the spirit so named by Emily Wesley, which disturbed the Rectory at Epworth, chiefly in the December of 1716 and the spring of 1717. Yet the vagueness of the human mind has led many people, especially journalists, to suppose that the haunted house was that, not of Samuel Wesley, but of his son John Wesley, the founder of the Wesleyan Methodists. For the better intelligence of the tale, we must know who the inmates of the Epworth Rectory were, and the nature of their characters and pursuits. The rector was the Rev. Samuel Wesley, born in 1662, the son of a clergyman banished from his living on "Black Bartholomew Day," 1666. Though educated among Dissenters, Samuel Wesley converted himself to the truth as it is in the Church of England, became a "poor scholar" of Exeter College in Oxford, supported himself mainly by hack-work in literature (he was one of the editors of a penny paper called *The Athenian Mercury*, a sort of *Answers*), married Miss Susanna Annesley, a lady of good family, in 1690-91, and in 1693 was presented to the Rectory of Epworth in Lincolnshire by Mary, wife of William of Orange, to whom he had dedicated a poem on the life of Christ. The living was poor, Mr. Wesley's family multiplied with amazing velocity, he was in debt, and unpopular. His cattle were maimed in 1705, and in 1703 his house was burned down. The Rectory House, of which a picture is given in Clarke's *Memoirs of the Wesleys*, 1825, was built anew at his own expense. Mr. Wesley was in politics a strong Royalist, but having seen James II. shake "his lean arm" at the Fellows of Magdalen College, and threaten them "with the weight of a king's right hand," he conceived a prejudice against that monarch, and took the side of the Prince of Orange. His wife, a very pious woman and a strict disciplinarian, was a Jacobite, would not say "amen" to the prayers for "the king," and was therefore deserted by her husband for a year or more in 1701-1702. They came together again, however, on the accession of Queen Anne.

Unpopular for his politics, hated by the Dissenters, and at odds with the "cunning men," or local wizards against whom he had frequently preached, Mr. Wesley was certainly apt to have tricks played on him by his neighbours. His house, though surrounded by a wall, a hedge, and its own grounds, was within a few yards of the nearest dwelling in the village street.

In 1716, when the disturbances began, Mr. Wesley's family consisted of his wife; his eldest son, Sam, aged about twenty-three, and then absent at his duties as an usher at Westminster; John, aged twelve, a boy at Westminster School; Charles, a boy of eight, away from home, and the girls, who were all at the parsonage. They were Emily, about twenty-two, Mary, Nancy and Sukey, probably about twenty-one, twenty and nineteen, and Hetty, who may have been anything between nineteen and twelve, but who comes after John in Dr. Clarke's list, and is apparently reckoned among "the children". Then there was Patty, who may have been only nine, and little Keziah.

All except Patty were very lively young people, and Hetty, afterwards a copious poet, "was gay and sprightly, full of mirth, good-humour, and keen wit. She indulged this disposition so much that it was said to have given great uneasiness to her parents." The servants, Robin Brown, Betty Massy and Nancy Marshall, were recent comers, but were acquitted by Mrs. Wesley of any share in the mischief. The family, though, like other people of their date, they were inclined to believe in witches and "warnings," were not especially superstitious, and regarded the disturbances, first with some apprehension, then as a joke, and finally as a bore.

The authorities for what occurred are, first, a statement and journal by Mr. Wesley, then a series of letters of 1717 to Sam at Westminster by his mother, Emily and Sukey, next a set of written statements made by these and other witnesses to John Wesley in 1726, and last and worst, a narrative composed many years after by John Wesley for *The Arminian Magazine.*

The earliest document, by a few days, is the statement of Mr. Wesley, written, with a brief journal, between 21st December, 1716, and 1st January, 1717. Comparing this with Mrs. Wesley's letter to Sam of 12th January, 1716 and Sukey's letter of 24th January, we learn that the family for some weeks after 1st December had been "in the greatest panic imaginable," supposing that Sam, Jack, or Charlie (who must also have been absent from home) was dead, "or by some misfortune killed". The reason for these apprehensions was that on the night of 1st December the maid "heard at the dining-room door several dreadful groans, like a person in extremes". They laughed at her, but for the whole of December "the groans, squeaks, tinglings and knockings were frightful enough". The rest of the family (Mr. Wesley always excepted) "heard a strange knocking in divers places," chiefly in the green room, or nursery, where (apparently) Hetty, Patty and Keziah lay. Emily heard the noises later than some of her sisters, perhaps a week after the original groans. She was locking up the house about ten o'clock when a sound came like the smashing and splintering of a huge piece of coal on the kitchen floor. She and Sukey went through the rooms on the ground floor, but found the dog asleep, the cat at the other end of the house, and everything in order. From her bedroom Emily heard a noise of breaking the empty bottles under the stairs, but was going to bed, when Hetty, who had been sitting on the lowest step of the garret stairs beside the nursery door, waiting for her father, was chased into the nursery by a sound as of a man passing her in a loose trailing gown. Sukey and Nancy were alarmed by loud knocks on the outside of the dining-room door and overhead. All this time Mr. Wesley heard nothing, and was not even told that anything unusual was heard. Mrs. Wesley at first held her peace lest he should think it "according to the vulgar opinion, a warning against his own death, which, indeed, we all apprehended". Mr. Wesley only smiled when he was informed; but, by taking care to see all the girls safe in bed, sufficiently showed his opinion that the young ladies and their lovers were the ghost. Mrs. Wesley then fell back on the theory of rats, and employed a man to blow a horn as a remedy against these vermin. But this measure only aroused the emulation of the sprite, whom Emily began to call "Jeffrey".

Not till 21st December did Mr. Wesley hear anything, then came thumpings on his bedroom wall. Unable to discover the cause, he procured a stout mastiff, which soon became demoralised by his experiences. On the morning of the 24th, about seven o'clock, Emily led Mrs. Wesley into the nursery, where she heard knocks on and under the bedstead; these sounds replied when she knocked. Something "like a badger, with no head," says Emily; Mrs. Wesley only says, "like a badger," ran from under the bed. On the night of the 25th there was an appalling *vacarme*. Mr. and Mrs. Wesley went on a tour of inspection, but only found the mastiff whining in terror. "We still heard it rattle and thunder in every room above or behind us, locked as well as open, except my study, where as yet it never came." On the night of the 26th Mr. Wesley seems to have heard of a phenomenon already familiar to Emily— "something like the quick winding up of a jack, at the corner of the room by my bed head". This was always followed by knocks, "hollow and loud, such as none of us could ever imitate". Mr. Wesley went into the nursery, Hetty, Kezzy and Patty were asleep. The knocks were loud, beneath and in the room, so Mr. Wesley went below to the kitchen, struck with his stick against the rafters, and was answered "as often and as loud as I knocked". The peculiar knock which was his own, 1-23456-7, was not successfully echoed at that time. Mr. Wesley then returned to the nursery, which was as *tapageuse* as ever. The children, three, were trembling in their sleep. Mr. Wesley invited the agency to an interview in his study, was answered by one knock outside, "all the rest were within," and then came silence. Investigations outside produced no result, but the latch of the door would rise and fall, and the door itself was pushed violently back against investigators.

"I have been with Hetty," says Emily, "when it has knocked under her, and when she has removed has followed her," and it knocked under little Kezzy, when "she stamped with her foot, pretending to scare Patty."

Mr. Wesley had requested an interview in his study, especially as the Jacobite goblin routed loudly "over our heads constantly, when we came to the prayers for King George and the prince". In his study the agency pushed Mr. Wesley about, bumping him against the corner of his desk, and against his door. He would ask for a conversation, but heard only "two or three feeble squeaks, a little louder than the chirping of a bird, but not like the noise of rats, which I have often heard".

Mr. Wesley had meant to leave home for a visit on Friday, 28th December, but the noises of the 27th were so loud that he stayed at home, inviting the Rev. Mr. Hoole, of Haxey, to view the performances. "The noises were very boisterous and disturbing this night." Mr. Hoole says (in 1726, confirmed by Mrs. Wesley, 12th January, 1717) that there were sounds of feet, trailing gowns, raps, and a noise as of planing boards: the disturbance finally went outside the house and died away. Mr. Wesley seems to have paid his visit on the 30th, and notes, "1st January, 1717. My family have had no disturbance since I went away."

To judge by Mr. Wesley's letter to Sam, of 12th January, there was no trouble between the 29th of December and that date. On the 19th of January, and the 30th of the same month, Sam wrote, full of curiosity, to his father and mother. Mrs. Wesley replied (25th or 27th January), saying that no explanation could be discovered, but "it commonly was nearer Hetty than the rest". On 24th January, Sukey said "it is now pretty quiet, but still knocks at prayers for the king." On 11th February, Mr. Wesley, much bored by Sam's inquiries, says, "we are all now quiet. . . . It would make a glorious penny book for Jack Dunton," his brother-in-law, a publisher of popular literature, such as the *Athenian Mercury*. Emily (no date) explains the phenomena as the revenge for her father's recent sermons "against consulting those that are called cunning men, which our people are given to, and *it had a particular spite at my father*".

The disturbances by no means ended in the beginning of January, nor at other dates when a brief cessation made the Wesleys hope that Jeffrey had returned to his own place. Thus on 27th March, Sukey writes to Sam, remarking that as Hetty and Emily are also writing "so particularly," she need not say much. "One thing I believe you do not know, that is, last Sunday, to my father's no small amazement, his trencher danced upon the table a pretty while, without anybody's stirring the table. . . . Send me some news for we are excluded from the sight or hearing of any versal thing, except Jeffery."

The last mention of the affair, at this time, is in a letter from Emily, of 1st April, to a Mr. Berry.

"Tell my brother the sprite was with us last night, and heard by many of our family." There are no other contemporary letters preserved, but we may note Mrs. Wesley's opinion (25th January) that it was "beyond the power of any human being to make such strange and various noises".

The next evidence is ten years after date, the statements taken down by Jack Wesley in 1726 (1720?). Mrs. Wesley adds to her former account that she "earnestly desired it might not disturb her" (at her devotions) "between five and six in the evening," and it did not rout in her room at that time. Emily added that a screen was knocked at on each side as she went round to the other. Sukey mentioned the noise as, on one occasion, coming gradually from the garret stairs, outside the nursery door, up to Hetty's bed, "who trembled strongly in her sleep. It then removed to the room overhead, where it knocked my father's knock on the ground, as if it would beat the house down." Nancy said that the noise used to follow her, or precede her, and once a bed, on which she sat playing cards, was lifted up under her several times to a considerable height. Robin, the servant, gave evidence that he was greatly plagued with all manner of noises and movements of objects.

John Wesley, in his account published many years after date in his *Arminian Magazine*, attributed the affair of 1716 to his father's broken vow of deserting his mother till she recognised the Prince of Orange as king! He adds that the mastiff "used to tremble and creep away before the noise began".

Some other peculiarities may be noted. All persons did not always hear the noises. It was three weeks before Mr. Wesley heard anything. "John and Kitty Maw, who lived over against us, listened several nights in the time of the disturbance, but could never hear anything." Again, "The first time my mother ever heard any unusual noise at Epworth was long before the disturbance of old Jeffrey . . . the door and windows jarred very loud, and presently several distinct strokes, three by three, were struck. From that night it never failed to give notice in much the same manner, against any signal misfortune or illness of any belonging to the family," writes Jack.

Once more, on 10th February, 1750, Emily (now Mrs. Harper) wrote to her brother John, "that wonderful thing called by us Jeffery, how certainly it calls on me against any extraordinary new affliction".

This is practically all the story of Old Jeffrey. The explanations have been, trickery by servants (Priestley), contagious hallucinations (Coleridge), devilry (Southey), and trickery by Hetty Wesley (Dr. Salmon, of Trinity College, Dublin). Dr. Salmon points out that there is no evidence from Hetty; that she was a lively, humorous girl, and he conceives that she began to frighten the maids, and only reluctantly exhibited before her father against whom, however, Jeffrey developed "a particular spite". He adds that certain circumstances were peculiar to Hetty, which, in fact, is not the case. The present editor has examined Dr. Salmon's arguments in *The Contemporary Review*, and shown reason, in the evidence, for acquitting Hetty Wesley, who was never suspected by her family.

Trickery from without, by "the cunning men," is an explanation which, at least, provides a motive, but how the thing could be managed from without remains a mystery. Sam Wesley, the friend of Pope, and Atterbury, and Lord Oxford, not unjustly said: "Wit, I fancy, might find many interpretations, but wisdom none".

As the Wesley tale is a very typical instance of a very large class, our study of it may exempt us from printing the well-known parallel case of "The Drummer of Tedworth". Briefly, the house of Mr. Mompesson, near Ludgarshal, in Wilts, was disturbed in the usual way, for at least two years, from April, 1661, to April, 1663, or later. The noises, and copious phenomena of moving objects apparently untouched, were attributed to the unholy powers of a wandering drummer, deprived by Mr. Mompesson of his drum. A grand jury presented the drummer for trial, on a charge of witchcraft, but the petty jury would not convict, there being a want of evidence to prove threats, *malum minatum*, by the drummer. In 1662 the Rev. Joseph Glanvil, F.R.S., visited the house, and, in the bedroom of Mr. Mompesson's little girls, the chief sufferers, heard and saw much the same phenomena as the elder Wesley describes in his own nursery. The "little modest girls" were aged about seven and eight. Charles II. sent some gentlemen to the house for one night, when nothing occurred, the disturbances being intermittent. Glanvil published his narrative at the time, and Mr. Pepys found it "not very convincing". Glanvil, in consequence of his book, was so vexed by correspondents "that I have been haunted almost as bad as Mr. Mompesson's house". A report that imposture had been discovered, and confessed by Mr. Mompesson, was set afloat, by John Webster, in a well-known work, and may still be found in modern books. Glanvil denied it till he was "quite tired," and Mompesson gave a formal denial in a letter dated Tedworth, 8th November, 1672. He also, with many others, swore to the facts on oath, in court, at the drummer's trial.

In the Tedworth case, as at Epworth, and in the curious Cideville case of 1851, a quarrel with "cunning men" preceded the disturbances. In Lord St. Vincent's case, which follows, nothing of the kind is reported. As an almost universal rule children, especially girls of about twelve, are centres of the trouble; in the St. Vincent story, the children alone were exempt from annoyance.

LORD ST. VINCENT'S GHOST STORY

Sir Walter Scott, writing about the disturbances in the house occupied by Mrs. Ricketts, sister of the great admiral, Lord St. Vincent, asks: "Who has seen Lord St. Vincent's letters?" He adds that the gallant admiral, after all, was a sailor, and implies that "what the sailor said" (if he said anything) "is not evidence".

The fact of unaccountable disturbances which finally drove Mrs. Ricketts out of Hinton Ampner, is absolutely indisputable, though the cause of the annoyances may remain as mysterious as ever. The contemporary correspondence (including that of Lord St. Vincent, then Captain Jervis) exists, and has been edited by Mrs. Henley Jervis, grand-daughter of Mrs. Ricketts.

There is only the very vaguest evidence for hauntings at Lady Hillsborough's old house of Hinton Ampner, near Alresford, before Mr. Ricketts took it in January, 1765. He and his wife were then disturbed by footsteps, and sounds of doors opening and shutting. They put new locks on the doors lest the villagers had procured keys, but this proved of no avail. The servants talked of seeing appearances of a gentleman in drab and of a lady in silk, which Mrs. Ricketts disregarded. Her husband went to Jamaica in the autumn of 1769, and in 1771 she was so disturbed that her brother, Captain Jervis, a witness of the phenomena, insisted on her leaving the house in August. He and Mrs. Ricketts then wrote to Mr. Ricketts about the affair. In July, 1772, Mrs. Ricketts wrote a long and solemn description of her sufferings, to be given to her children.

We shall slightly abridge her statement, in which she mentions that when she left Hinton she had not one of the servants who came thither in her family, which "evinces the impossibility of a confederacy". Her new, like her former servants, were satisfactory; Camis, her new coachman, was of a yeoman house of 400 years' standing. It will be observed that Mrs. Ricketts was a good deal annoyed even *before* 2nd April, 1771, the day when she dates the beginning of the worst disturbances. She believed that the agency was human — a robber or a practical joker — and but slowly and reluctantly became convinced that the "exploded" notion of an abnormal force might be correct. We learn that while Captain Jervis was not informed of the sounds he never heard them, and whereas Mrs. Ricketts heard violent noises after he went to bed on the night of his vigil, he heard nothing. "Several instances occurred where very loud noises were heard by one or two persons, when those equally near and in the same direction were not sensible of the least impression."

With this preface, Mrs. Ricketts may be allowed to tell her own tale.

"Sometime after Mr. Ricketts left me (autumn, 1769) I — then lying in the bedroom over the kitchen — heard frequently the noise of some one walking in the room within, and the rustling as of silk clothes against the door that opened into my room, sometimes so loud, and of such continuance as to break my rest. Instant search being often made, we never could discover any appearance of human or brute being. Repeatedly disturbed in the same manner, I made it my constant practice to search the room and closets within, and to secure the only door on the inside. . . . Yet this precaution did not preclude the disturbance, which continued with little interruption."

Nobody, in short, could enter this room, except by passing through that of Mrs. Ricketts, the door of which "was always made fast by a drawn bolt". Yet somebody kept rustling and walking in the inner room, which somebody could never be found when sought for.

In summer, 1770, Mrs. Ricketts heard someone walk to the foot of her bed in her own room, "the footsteps as distinct as ever I heard, myself perfectly awake and collected". Nobody could be discovered in the chamber. Mrs. Ricketts boldly clung to her room, and was only now and then disturbed by "sounds of harmony," and heavy thumps, down stairs. After this, and early in 1771, she was "frequently sensible of a hollow murmuring that seemed to possess the whole house: it was independent of wind, being equally heard on the calmest nights, and it was a sound I had never been accustomed to hear".

On 27th February, 1771, a maid was alarmed by "groans and fluttering round her bed": she was "the sister of an eminent grocer in Alresford". On 2nd April, Mrs. Ricketts heard people walking in the lobby, hunted for burglars, traced the sounds to a room whence their was no outlet, and found nobody. This kind of thing went on till Mrs. Ricketts despaired of any natural explanation. After midsummer, 1771, the trouble increased, in broad daylight, and a shrill female voice, answered by two male voices was added to the afflictions. Captain Jervis came on a visit, but was told of nothing, and never heard anything. After he went to Portsmouth, "the most deep, loud tremendous noise seemed to rush and fall with infinite velocity and force on the lobby floor adjoining my room," accompanied by a shrill and dreadful shriek, seeming to proceed from under the spot where the rushing noise fell, and repeated three or four times.

Mrs. Ricketts' "resolution remained firm," but her health was impaired; she tried changing her room, without results. The disturbances pursued her. Her brother now returned. She told him nothing, and he heard nothing, but next day she unbosomed herself. Captain Jervis therefore sat up with Captain Luttrell and his own man. He was rewarded by noises which he in vain tried to pursue. "I should do great injustice to my sister" (he writes to Mr. Ricketts on 9th August, 1771), "if I did not acknowledge to have heard what I could not, after the most diligent search and serious reflection, any way account for." Captain Jervis during a whole week slept by day, and watched, armed, by night. Even by day he was disturbed by a sound as of immense weights falling from the ceiling to the floor of his room. He finally obliged his sister to leave the house.

What occurred after Mrs. Ricketts abandoned Hinton is not very distinct. Apparently Captain Jervis's second stay of a week, when he did hear the noises, was from 1st August to 8th August. From a statement by Mrs. Ricketts it appears that, when her brother joined his ship, the *Alarm* (9th August), she retired to Dame Camis's house, that of her coachman's mother. Thence she went, and made another attempt to live at Hinton, but was "soon after assailed by a noise I never before heard, very near me, and the terror I felt not to be described". She therefore went to the Newbolts, and thence to the old Palace at Winton; later, on Mr. Ricketts' return, to the Parsonage, and then to Longwood (to the *old* house there) near Alresford.

Meanwhile, on 18th September, Lady Hillsborough's agent lay with armed men at Hinton, and, making no discovery, offered £50 (increased by Mr. Ricketts to £100) for the apprehension of the persons who caused the noises. The reward was never claimed. On 8th March, 1772, Camis wrote: "I am very sorry that we cannot find out the reason of the noise"; at other dates he mentions sporadic noises heard by his mother and another woman, including "the murmur". A year after Mrs. Ricketts left a family named Lawrence took the house, and, according to old Lucy Camis, in 1818, Mr. Lawrence very properly threatened to dismiss any servant who spoke of the disturbances. The result of this sensible course was that the Lawrences left suddenly, at the end of the year — and the house was pulled down. Some old political papers of the Great Rebellion, and a monkey's skull, not exhibited to any anatomist, are said to have been discovered under the floor of the lobby, or of one of the rooms. Mrs. Ricketts adds sadly, "The unbelief of Chancellor Hoadley went nearest my heart," as he had previously a high opinion of her veracity. The Bishop of St. Asaph was incredulous, "on the ground that such means were unworthy of the Deity to employ".

Probably a modern bishop would say that there were no noises at all, that every one who heard the sounds was under the influence of "suggestion," caused first in Mrs. Ricketts' own mind by vague tales of a gentleman in drab seen by the servants.

The contagion, to be sure, also reached two distinguished captains in the navy, but not till one of them was told about disturbances which had not previously disturbed him. If this explanation be true, it casts an unusual light on the human imagination. Physical science has lately invented a new theory. Disturbances of this kind are perhaps “seismic,” — caused by earthquakes! (See Professor Milne, in *The Times*, 21st June, 1897.)

CHAPTER XI

A Question for Physicians. Professor William James's Opinion. Hysterical Disease? Little Hands. Domestic Arson. The Wem Case. "The Saucepan began it." The Nurse-maid. Boots Fly Off. Investigation. Emma's Partial Confession. Corroborative Evidence. Question of Disease Repeated. Chinese Cases. Haunted Mrs. Chang. Mr. Niu's Female Slave. The Great Amherst Mystery. Run as a Show. Failure. Later Miracles. The Fire-raiser Arrested. Parallels. A Highland Case. A Hero of the Forty-Five. Donald na Bocan. Donald's Hymn. Icelandic Cases. The Devil of Hjalta-stad. The Ghost at Garpsdal.

MORE HAUNTED HOUSES

A physician, as we have seen, got the better of the demon in Mrs. Shchapoff's case, at least while the lady was under his care. Really these disturbances appear to demand the attention of medical men. If the whole phenomena are caused by imposture, the actors, or actresses, display a wonderful similarity of symptoms and an alarming taste for fire-raising. Professor William James, the well-known psychologist, mentions ten cases whose resemblances "suggest a natural type," and we ask, is it a type of hysterical disease? He chooses, among others, an instance in Dr. Nevius's book on *Demon Possession in China*, and there is another in Peru. He also mentions *The Great Amherst Mystery*, which we give, and the Rerrick case in Scotland (1696), related by Telfer, who prints, on his margins, the names of the attesting witnesses of each event, lairds, clergymen, and farmers. At Rerrick, as in Russia, the *little hand* was seen by Telfer himself, and the fire-raising was endless. At Amherst too, as in a pair of recent Russian cases and others, there was plenty of fire-raising. By a lucky chance an English case occurred at Wem, in Shropshire, in November, 1883. It began at a farm called the Woods, some ten miles from Shrewsbury. First a saucepan full of eggs "jumped" off the fire in the kitchen, and the tea-things, leaping from the table, were broken. Cinders "were thrown out of the fire," and set some clothes in a blaze. A globe leaped off a lamp. A farmer, Mr. Lea, saw all the windows of the upper story "as it were on fire," but it was no such matter. The nurse-maid ran out in a fright, to a neighbour's, and her dress spontaneously combusted as she ran. The people attributed these and similar events, to something in the coal, or in the air, or to electricity. When the nurse-girl, Emma Davies, sat on the lap of the school mistress, Miss Maddox, her boots kept flying off, like the boot laces in *The Daemon of Spraiton.*

All this was printed in the London papers, and, on 15th November, *The Daily Telegraph* and *Daily News* published Emma's confession that she wrought by sleight of hand and foot. On 17th November, Mr. Hughes went from Cambridge to investigate. For some reason investigation never begins till the fun is over. On the 9th the girl, now in a very nervous state (no wonder!) had been put under the care of a Dr. Mackey. This gentleman and Miss Turner said that things had occurred since Emma came, for which they could not account. On 13th November, however, Miss Turner, looking out of a window, spotted Emma throwing a brick, and pretending that the flight of the brick was automatic. Next day Emma confessed to her tricks, but steadfastly denied that she had cheated at Woods Farm, and Weston Lullingfield, where she had also been. Her evidence to this effect was so far confirmed by Mrs. Hampson of Woods Farm, and her servant, Priscilla Evans, when examined by Mr. Hughes. Both were "quite certain" that they saw crockery rise by itself into air off the kitchen table, when Emma was at a neighbouring farm, Mr. Lea's. Priscilla also saw crockery come out of a cupboard, in detachments, and fly between her and Emma, usually in a slanting direction, while Emma stood by with her arms folded. Yet Priscilla was not on good terms with Emma. Unless, then, Mrs. Hampson and Priscilla fabled, it is difficult to see how Emma could move objects when she was "standing at some considerable distance, standing, in fact, in quite another farm".

Similar evidence was given and signed by Miss Maddox, the schoolmistress, and Mr. and Mrs. Lea. On the other hand Mrs. Hampson and Priscilla believed that Emma managed the fire-raising herself. The flames were "very high and white, and the articles were very little singed". This occurred also at Rerrick, in 1696, but Mr. Hughes attributes it to Emma's use of paraffin, which does not apply to the Rerrick case. Paraffin smells a good deal — nothing is said about a smell of paraffin.

Only one thing is certain: Emma was at last caught in a cheat. This discredits her, but a man who cheats at cards *may* hold a good hand by accident. In the same way, if such wonders can happen (as so much world-wide evidence declares), they *may* have happened at Woods Farm, and Emma, "in a very nervous state," *may* have feigned then, or rather did feign them later.

The question for the medical faculty is: Does a decided taste for wilful fire-raising often accompany exhibitions of dancing furniture and crockery, gratuitously given by patients of hysterical temperament? This is quite a normal inquiry. Is there a nervous malady of which the symptoms are domestic arson, and amateur *leger-de-main*? The complaint, if it exists, is of very old standing and wide prevalence, including Russia, Scotland, New England, France, Iceland, Germany, China and Peru.

As a proof of the identity of symptoms in this malady, we give a Chinese case. The Chinese, as to diabolical possession, are precisely of the same opinion as the inspired authors of the Gospels. People are "possessed," and, like the woman having a spirit of divination in the Acts of the Apostles, make a good thing out of it. Thus Mrs. Ku was approached by a native Christian. She became rigid and her demon, speaking through her, acknowledged the Catholic verity, and said that if Mrs. Ku were converted he would have to leave. On recovering her everyday consciousness, Mrs. Ku asked what Tsehwa, her demon, had said. The Christian told her, and perhaps she would have deserted her erroneous courses, but her fellow-villagers implored her to pay homage to the demon. They were in the habit of resorting to it for medical advice (as people do to Mrs. Piper's demon in the United States), so Mrs. Ku decided to remain in the business. The parallel to the case in the Acts is interesting.

HAUNTED MRS. CHANG

Mr. Chang, of that ilk (Chang Chang Tien-ts), was a man of fifty-seven, and a graduate in letters. The ladies of his family having accommodated a demon with a shrine in his house, Mr. Chang said he "would have none of that nonsense". The spirit then entered into Mrs. Chang, and the usual fire-raising began all over the place. The furniture and crockery danced in the familiar way, and objects took to disappearing mysteriously, even when secured under lock and key. Mr. Chang was as unlucky as Mr. Chin. At *his* house "doors would open of their own accord, footfalls were heard, as of persons walking in the house, although no one could be seen. Plates, bowls and the teapot would suddenly rise from the table into the air."

Mrs. Chang now tried the off chance of there being something in Christianity, stayed with a native Christian (the narrator), and felt much better. She could enjoy her meals, and was quite a new woman. As her friend could not go home with her, Mrs. Fung, a native Christian, resided for a while at Mr. Chang's; "comparative quiet was restored," and Mrs. Fung retired to her family.

The symptoms returned; the native Christian was sent for, and found Mr. Chang's establishment full of buckets of water for extinguishing the sudden fires. Mrs. Chang's daughter-in-law was now possessed, and "drank wine in large quantities, though ordinarily she would not touch it". She was staring and tossing her arms wildly; a service was held, and she soon became her usual self.

In the afternoon, when the devils went out of the ladies, the fowls flew into a state of wild excitement, while the swine rushed furiously about and tried to climb a wall.

The family have become Christians, the fires have ceased; Mr. Chang is an earnest inquirer, but opposed, for obvious reasons, to any public profession of our religion.

In Mr. Niu's case "strange noises and rappings were frequently heard about the house. The buildings were also set on fire in different places in some mysterious way." The Christians tried to convert Mr. Niu, but as the devil now possessed his female slave, whose success in fortune-telling was extremely lucrative, Mr. Niu said that he preferred to leave well alone, and remained wedded to his idols.

We next offer a recent colonial case, in which the symptoms, as Mr. Pecksniff said, were "chronic".

THE GREAT AMHERST MYSTERY

On 13th February, 1888, Mr. Walter Hubbell, an actor by profession, “being duly sworn” before a Notary Public in New York, testified to the following story: —

In 1879 he was acting with a strolling company, and came to Amherst, in Nova Scotia. Here he heard of a haunted house, known to the local newspapers as “The Great Amherst Mystery”. Having previously succeeded in exposing the frauds of spiritualism Mr. Hubbell determined to investigate the affair of Amherst. The haunted house was inhabited by Daniel Teed, the respected foreman in a large shoe factory. Under his roof were Mrs. Teed, “as good a woman as ever lived”; little Willie, a baby boy; and Mrs. Teed’s two sisters, Jennie, a very pretty girl, and Esther, remarkable for large grey eyes, pretty little hands and feet, and candour of expression. A brother of Teed’s and a brother of Mrs. Cox made up the family. They were well off, and lived comfortably in a detached cottage of two storys. It began when Jennie and Esther were in bed one night. Esther jumped up, saying that there was a mouse in the bed. Next night, a green band-box began to make a rustling noise, and then rose a foot in the air, several times. On the following night Esther felt unwell, and “was a swelling wisibly before the werry eyes” of her alarmed family. Reports like thunder peeled through her chamber, under a serene sky. Next day Esther could only eat “a small piece of bread and butter, and a large green pickle”. She recovered slightly, in spite of the pickle, but, four nights later, all her and her sister’s bed-clothes flew off, and settled down in a remote corner. At Jennie’s screams, the family rushed in, and found Esther “fearfully swollen”. Mrs. Teed replaced the bed-clothes, which flew off again, the pillow striking John Teed in the face. Mr. Teed then left the room, observing, in a somewhat unscientific spirit, that “he had had enough of it”. The others, with a kindness which did them credit, sat on the edges of the bed, and repressed the desire of the sheets and blankets to fly away. The bed, however, sent forth peels like thunder, when Esther suddenly fell into a peaceful sleep.

Next evening Dr. Carritte arrived, and the bolster flew at his head, *and then went back again under Esther’s*. While paralysed by this phenomenon, unprecedented in his practice, the doctor heard a metal point scribbling on the wall. Examining the place whence the sound proceeded, he discovered this inscription: —

Esther Cox! You are mine
to kill.

Mr. Hubbell has verified the inscription, and often, later, recognised the hand, in writings which "came out of the air and fell at our feet". Bits of plaster now gyrated in the room, accompanied by peels of local thunder. The doctor admitted that his diagnosis was at fault. Next day he visited his patient when potatoes flew at him. He exhibited a powerful sedative, but pounding noises began on the roofs and were audible at a distance of 200 yards, as the doctor himself told Mr. Hubbell.

The clergy now investigated the circumstances, which they attributed to electricity. "Even the most exclusive class" frequented Mr. Teed's house, till December, when Esther had an attack of diphtheria. On recovering she went on to visit friends in Sackville, New Brunswick, where nothing unusual occurred. On her return the phenomena broke forth afresh, and Esther heard a voice proclaim that the house would be set on fire. Lighted matches then fell from the ceiling, but the family extinguished them. The ghost then set a dress on fire, apparently as by spontaneous combustion, and this kind of thing continued. The heads of the local fire-brigade suspected Esther of these attempts at arson, and Dr. Nathan Tupper suggested that she should be flogged. So Mr. Teed removed Esther to the house of a Mr. White.

In about a month "all," as Mrs. Nickleby's lover said, "was gas and gaiters". The furniture either flew about, or broke into flames. Worse, certain pieces of iron placed as an experiment on Esther's lap "became too hot to be handled with comfort," and then flew away.

Mr. Hubbell himself now came on the scene, and, not detecting imposture, thought that "there was money in it". He determined to "run" Esther as a powerful attraction, he lecturing, and Esther sitting on the platform.

It did not pay. The audience hurled things at Mr. Hubbell, and these were the only volatile objects. Mr. Hubbell therefore brought Esther back to her family at Amherst, where, in Esther's absence, his umbrella and a large carving knife flew at him with every appearance of malevolence. A great arm-chair next charged at him like a bull, and to say that Mr. Hubbell was awed "would indeed seem an inadequate expression of my feelings". The ghosts then thrice undressed little Willie in public, in derision of his tears and outcries. Fire-raising followed, and that would be a hard heart which could read the tale unmoved. Here it is, in the simple eloquence of Mr. Hubbell: —

"This was my first experience with Bob, the demon, as a fire-fiend; and I say, candidly, that until I had had that experience I never fully realised what an awful calamity it was to have an invisible monster, somewhere within the atmosphere, going from place to place about the house, gathering up old newspapers into a bundle and hiding it in the basket of soiled linen or in a closet, then go and steal matches out of the match-box in the kitchen or somebody's pocket, as he did out of mine, and after kindling a fire in the bundle, tell Esther that he had started a fire, but would not tell where; or perhaps not tell her at all, in which case the first intimation we would have was the smell of the smoke pouring through the house, and then the most intense excitement, everybody running with buckets of water. I say it was the most truly awful calamity that could possible befall any family, infidel or Christian, that could be conceived in the mind of man or ghost.

"And how much more terrible did it seem in this little cottage, where all were strict members of church, prayed, sang hymns and read the Bible. Poor Mrs. Teed!"

On Mr. Hubbell's remarking that the cat was not tormented, "she was instantly lifted from the floor to a height of five feet, and then dropped on Esther's back. . . . I never saw any cat more frightened; she ran out into the front yard, where she remained for the balance (rest) of the day." On 27th June "a trumpet was heard in the house all day".

The Rev. R. A. Temple now prayed with Esther, and tried a little amateur exorcism, including the use of slips of paper, inscribed with Habakkuk ii. 3. The ghosts cared no more than Voltaire for *ce coquin d'Habacuc.*

Things came to such a pass, matches simply raining all round, that Mr. Teed's landlord, a Mr. Bliss, evicted Esther. She went to a Mr. Van Amburgh's, and Mr. Teed's cottage was in peace.

Some weeks later Esther was arrested for incendiarism in a barn, was sentenced to four months' imprisonment, but was soon released in deference to public opinion. She married, had a family; and ceased to be a mystery.

This story is narrated with an amiable simplicity, and is backed, more or less, by extracts from Amherst and other local newspapers. On making inquiries, I found that opinion was divided. Some held that Esther was a mere impostor and fire-raiser; from other sources I obtained curious tales of the eccentric flight of objects in her neighbourhood. It is only certain that Esther's case is identical with Madame Shchapoff's, and experts in hysteria may tell us whether that malady ever takes the form of setting fire to the patient's wardrobe, and to things in general.

After these modern cases of disturbances, we may look at a few old, or even ancient examples. It will be observed that the symptoms are always of the same type, whatever the date or country. The first is Gaelic, of last century.

DONALD BAN AND THE BOCAN

It is fully a hundred years ago since there died in Lochaber a man named Donald Ban, sometimes called "the son of Angus," but more frequently known as Donald Ban of the Bocan. This surname was derived from the troubles caused to him by a bocan — a goblin — many of whose doings are preserved in tradition.

Donald drew his origin from the honourable house of Keppoch, and was the last of the hunters of Macvic-Ronald. His home was at Mounessee, and later at Inverlaire in Glenspean, and his wife belonged to the MacGregors of Rannoch. He went out with the Prince, and was present at the battle of Culloden. He fled from the field, and took refuge in a mountain shieling, having two guns with him, but only one of them was loaded. A company of soldiers came upon him there, and although Donald escaped by a back window, taking the empty gun with him by mistake, he was wounded in the leg by a shot from his pursuers. The soldiers took him then, and conveyed him to Inverness, where he was thrown into prison to await his trial. While he was in prison he had a dream; he saw himself sitting and drinking with Alastair MacCholla, and Donald MacRonald Vor. The latter was the man of whom it was said that he had two hearts; he was taken prisoner at Falkirk and executed at Carlisle. Donald was more fortunate than his friend, and was finally set free.

It was after this that the bocan began to trouble him; and although Donald never revealed to any man the secret of who the bocan was (if indeed he knew it himself), yet there were some who professed to know that it was a "gillie" of Donald's who was killed at Culloden. Their reason for believing this was that on one occasion the man in question had given away more to a poor neighbour than Donald was pleased to spare. Donald found fault with him, and in the quarrel that followed the man said, "I will be avenged for this, alive or dead".

It was on the hill that Donald first met with the bocan, but he soon came to closer quarters, and haunted the house in a most annoying fashion. He injured the members of the household, and destroyed all the food, being especially given to dirtying the butter (a thing quite superfluous, according to Captain Burt's description of Highland butter). On one occasion a certain Ronald of Aberardair was a guest in Donald's house, and Donald's wife said, "Though I put butter on the table for you tonight, it will just be dirtied". "I will go with you to the butter-keg," said Ronald, "with my dirk in my hand, and hold my bonnet over the keg, and he will not dirty it this night." So the two went together to fetch the butter, but it was dirtied just as usual.

Things were worse during the night and they could get no sleep for the stones and clods that came flying about the house. "The bocan was throwing things out of the walls, and they would hear them rattling at the head of Donald's bed." The minister came (Mr. John Mor MacDougall was his name) and slept a night or two in the house, but the bocan kept away so long as he was there. Another visitor, Angus MacAlister Ban, whose grandson told the tale, had more experience of the bocan's reality. "Something seized his two big toes, and he could not get free any more than if he had been caught by the smith's tongs. It was the bocan, but he did nothing more to him." Some of the clergy, too, as well as laymen of every rank, were witnesses to the pranks which the spirit carried on, but not even Donald himself ever saw him in any shape whatever. So famous did the affair become that Donald was nearly ruined by entertaining all the curious strangers who came to see the facts for themselves.

In the end Donald resolved to change his abode, to see whether he could in that way escape from the visitations. He took all his possessions with him except a harrow, which was left beside the wall of the house, but before the party had gone far on the road the harrow was seen coming after them. "Stop, stop," said Donald; "if the harrow is coming after us, we may just as well go back again." The mystery of the harrow is not explained, but Donald did return to his home, and made no further attempt to escape from his troubles in this way.

If the bocan had a spite at Donald, he was still worse disposed towards his wife, the MacGregor woman. On the night on which he last made his presence felt, he went on the roof of the house and cried, "Are you asleep, Donald Ban?" "Not just now," said Donald. "Put out that long grey tether, the MacGregor wife," said he. "I don't think I'll do that tonight," said Donald. "Come out yourself, then," said the bocan, "and leave your bonnet." The good-wife, thinking that the bocan was outside and would not hear her, whispered in Donald's ear as he was rising, "Won't you ask him when the Prince will come?" The words, however, were hardly out of her mouth when the bocan answered her with, "Didn't you get enough of him before, you grey tether?"

Another account says that at this last visit of the bocan, he was saying that various other spirits were along with him. Donald's wife said to her husband: "I should think that if they were along with him they would speak to us"; but the bocan answered, "They are no more able to speak than the sole of your foot". He then summoned Donald outside as above. "I will come," said Donald, "and thanks be to the Good Being that you have asked me." Donald was taking his dirk with him as he went out, but the bocan said, "leave your dirk inside, Donald, and your knife as well”.

Donald then went outside, and the bocan led him on through rivers and a birch-wood for about three miles, till they came to the river Fert. There the bocan pointed out to Donald a hole in which he had hidden some plough-irons while he was alive. Donald proceeded to take them out, and while doing so the two eyes of the bocan were causing him greater fear than anything else he ever heard or saw. When he had got the irons out of the hole, they went back to Mounessie together, and parted that night at the house of Donald Ban.

Donald, whether naturally or by reason of his ghostly visitant, was a religious man, and commemorated his troubles in some verses which bear the name of “The Hymn of Donald Ban of the Bocan”. In these he speaks of the common belief that he had done something to deserve all this annoyance, and makes mention of the “stones and clods” which flew about his house in the night time. Otherwise the hymn is mainly composed of religious sentiments, but its connection with the story makes it interesting, and the following is a literal translation of it.

THE HYMN OF DONALD BAN

O God that created me so helpless,
Strengthen my belief and make it firm.
Command an angel to come from Paradise,
And take up his abode in my dwelling,
To protect me from every trouble
That wicked folks are putting in my way;
Jesus, that did’st suffer Thy crucifixion,
Restrain their doings, and be with me Thyself.

Little wonder though I am thoughtful —
Always at the time when I go to bed
The stones and the clods will arise —
How could a saint get sleep there?
I am without peace or rest,
Without repose or sleep till the morning;
O Thou that art in the throne of grace,
Behold my treatment and be a guard to me.

Little wonder though I am troubled,
So many stories about me in every place.
Some that are unjust will be saying,
“It is all owing to himself, that affair”.
Judge not except as you know,
Though the Son of God were awaking you;
No one knows if I have deserved more
Than a rich man that is without care.

Although I am in trouble at this time,
Verily, I shall be doubly repaid;
When the call comes to me from my Saviour,
I shall receive mercy and new grace;
I fear no more vexation,

When I ascend to be with Thy saints;
O Thou that sittest on the throne,
Assist my speaking and accept my prayer.

O God, make me mindful
Night and day to be praying,
Seeking pardon richly
For what I have done, on my knees.
Stir with the spirit of Truth
True repentance in my bosom,
That when Thou sendest death to seek me,
Christ may take care of me.

The bocan was not the only inhabitant of the spirit-world that Donald Ban encountered during his lifetime. A cousin of his mother was said to have been carried off by the fairies, and one night Donald saw him among them, dancing away with all his might. Donald was also out hunting in the year of the great snow, and at nightfall he saw a man mounted on the back of a deer ascending a great rock. He heard the man saying, “Home, Donald Ban,” and fortunately he took the advice, for that night there fell eleven feet of snow in the very spot where he had intended to stay.

We now take two modern Icelandic cases, for the purpose of leading up to the famous Icelandic legend of Grettir and Glam the Vampire, from the Grettis Saga. It is plain that such incidents as those in the two modern Icelandic cases (however the effects were produced) might easily be swollen into the prodigious tale of Glam in the course of two or three centuries, between Grettir’s time and the complete formation of his Saga.

THE DEVIL OF HJALTA-STAD

The sheriff writes: “The Devil at Hjalta-stad was outspoken enough this past winter, although no one saw him. I, along with others, had the dishonour to hear him talking for nearly two days, during which he addressed myself and the minister, Sir Grim, with words the like of which ‘eye hath not seen nor ear heard’. As soon as we reached the front of the house there was heard in the door an iron voice saying: ‘So Hans from Eyrar is come now, and wishes to talk with me, the — idiot’. Compared with other names that he gave me this might be considered as flattering. When I inquired who it was that addressed me with such words, he answered in a fierce voice, ‘I was called Lucifer at first, but now I am called Devil and Enemy’. He threw at us both stones and pieces of wood, as well as other things, and broke two windows in the minister’s room. He spoke so close to us that he seemed to be just at our side. There was an old woman there of the name of Opia, whom he called his wife, and a ‘heavenly blessed soul,’ and asked Sir Grim to marry them, with various other remarks of this kind, which I will not recount.

“I have little liking to write about his ongoings, which were all disgraceful and shameful, in accordance with the nature of the actor. He repeated the ‘Pater Noster’ three times, answered questions from the Catechism and the Bible, said that the devils held service in hell, and told what texts and psalms they had for various occasions. He asked us to give him some of the food we had, and a drink of tea, etc. I asked the fellow whether God was good. He said, ‘Yes’. Whether he was truthful. He answered, ‘Not one of his words can be doubted’. Sir Grim asked him whether the devil was good-looking. He answered: ‘He is far better-looking than you, you — ugly snout!’ I asked him whether the devils agreed well with each other. He answered in a kind of sobbing voice: ‘It is painful to know that they never have peace’. I bade him say something to me in German, and said to him *Lass uns Teusc redre* (*sic*), but he answered as if he had misunderstood me.

“When we went to bed in the evening he shouted fiercely in the middle of the floor, ‘On this night I shall snatch you off to hell, and you shall not rise up out of bed as you lay down’. During the evening he wished the minister’s wife good-night. The minister and I continued to talk with him during the night; among other things we asked him what kind of weather it was outside. He answered: ‘It is cold, with a north wind’. We asked if he was cold. He answered: ‘I think I am both hot and cold’. I asked him how loud he could shout. He said, ‘So loud that the roof would go off the house, and you would all fall into a dead faint’. I told him to try it. He answered: ‘Do you think I am come to amuse you, you — idiot?’ I asked him to show us a little specimen. He said he would do so, and gave three shouts, the last of which was so fearful that I have never heard anything worse, and doubt whether I ever shall. Towards daybreak, after he had parted from us with the usual compliments, we fell asleep.

“Next morning he came in again, and began to waken up people; he named each one by name, not forgetting to add some nickname, and asking whether so-and-so was awake. When he saw they were all awake, he said he was going to play with the door now, and with that he threw the door off its hinges with a sudden jerk, and sent it far in upon the floor. The strangest thing was that when he threw anything it went down at once, and then went back to its place again, so it was evident that he either went inside it or moved about with it.

“The previous evening he challenged me twice to come out into the darkness to him, and this in an angry voice, saying that he would tear me limb from limb. I went out and told him to come on, but nothing happened. When I went back to my place and asked him why he had not fulfilled his promise, he said, ‘I had no orders for it from my master’. He asked us whether we had ever heard the like before, and when we said ‘Yes,’ he answered, ‘That is not true: the like has never been heard at any time’. He had sung ‘The memory of Jesus’ after I arrived there, and talked frequently while the word of God was being read. He said that he did not mind this, but that he did not like the ‘Cross-school Psalms,’ and said it must have been a great idiot who composed them. This enemy came like a devil, departed as such, and behaved himself as such while he was present, nor would it befit any one but the devil to declare all that he said. At the same time it must be added that I am not quite convinced that it was a spirit, but my opinions on this I cannot give here for lack of time.”

In another work where the sheriff’s letter is given with some variations and additions, an attempt is made to explain the story. The phenomena were said to have been caused by a young man who had learned ventriloquism abroad. Even if this art could have been practised so successfully as to puzzle the sheriff and others, it could hardly have taken the door off its hinges and thrown it into the room. It is curious that while Jon Espolin in his *Annals* entirely discredits the sheriff’s letter, he yet gives a very similar account of the spirit’s proceedings.

A later story of the same kind, also printed by Jon Arnason (i., 311), is that of the ghost at Garpsdal as related by the minister there, Sir Saemund, and written down by another minister on 7th June, 1808. The narrative is as follows: —

THE GHOST AT GARPSDAL

In Autumn, 1807, there was a disturbance by night in the outer room at Garpsdal, the door being smashed. There slept in this room the minister's men-servants, Thorsteinn Gudmundsson, Magnus Jonsson, and a child named Thorstein. Later, on 16th November, a boat which the minister had lying at the sea-side was broken in broad daylight, and although the blows were heard at the homestead yet no human form was visible that could have done this. All the folks at Garpsdal were at home, and the young fellow Magnus Jonsson was engaged either at the sheep-houses or about the homestead; the spirit often appeared to him in the likeness of a woman. On the 18th of the same month four doors of the sheep-houses were broken in broad daylight, while the minister was marrying a couple in the church; most of his people were present in the church, Magnus being among them. That same day in the evening this woman was noticed in the sheep-houses; she said that she wished to get a ewe to roast, but as soon as an old woman who lived at Garpsdal and was both skilled and wise (Gudrun Jons-dottir by name) had handled the ewe, its struggles ceased and it recovered again. While Gudrun was handling the ewe, Magnus was standing in the door of the house; with that one of the rafters was broken, and the pieces were thrown in his face. He said that the woman went away just then. The minister's horses were close by, and at that moment became so scared that they ran straight over smooth ice as though it had been earth, and suffered no harm.

On the evening of the 20th there were great disturbances, panelling and doors being broken down in various rooms. The minister was standing in the house door along with Magnus and two or three girls when Magnus said to him that the spirit had gone into the sitting-room. The minister went and stood at the door of the room, and after he had been there a little while, talking to the others, a pane of glass in one of the room windows was broken. Magnus was standing beside the minister talking to him, and when the pane broke he said that the spirit had gone out by that. The minister went to the window, and saw that the pane was all broken into little pieces. The following evening, the 21st, the spirit also made its presence known by bangings, thumpings, and loud noises.

On the 28th the ongoings of the spirit surpassed themselves. In the evening a great blow was given on the roof of the sitting-room. The minister was inside at the time, but Magnus with two girls was out in the barn. At the same moment the partition between the weaving-shop and the sitting-room was broken down, and then three windows of the room itself — one above the minister's bed, another above his writing-table, and the third in front of the closet door. A piece of a table was thrown in at one of these, and a spade at another. At this the household ran out of that room into the loft, but the minister sprang downstairs and out; the old woman Gudrun who was named before went with him, and there also came Magnus and some of the others. Just then a vessel of wash, which had been standing in the kitchen, was thrown at Gudrun's head. The minister then ran in, along with Magnus and the girls, and now everything that was loose was flying about, both doors and splinters of wood. The minister opened a room near the outer door intending to go in there, but just then a sledge hammer which lay at the door was thrown at him, but it only touched him on the side and hip, and did him no harm. From there the minister and the others went back to the sitting-room, where everything was dancing about, and where they were met with a perfect volley of splinters of deal from the partitions. The minister then fled, and took his wife and child to Muli, the next farm, and left them there, as she was frightened to death with all this. He himself returned next day.

On the 8th of December, the woman again made her appearance in broad daylight. On this occasion she broke the shelves and panelling in the pantry, in presence of the minister, Magnus, and others. According to Magnus, the spirit then went out through the wall at the minister's words, and made its way to the byre-lane. Magnus and Gudrun went after it, but were received with throwings of mud and dirt. A stone was also hurled at Magnus, as large as any man could lift, while Gudrun received a blow on the arm that confined her to her bed for three weeks.

On the 26th of the month the shepherd, Einar Jonsson, a hardy and resolute fellow, commanded the spirit to show itself to him. Thereupon there came over him such a madness and frenzy, that he had to be closely guarded to prevent him from doing harm to himself. He was taken to the house, and kept in his bed, a watch being held over him. When he recovered his wits, he said that this girl had come above his head and assailed him. When he had completely got over this, he went away from Garpsdal altogether.

Later than this the minister's horse was found dead in the stable at Muli, and the folks there said that it was all black and swollen.

These are the most remarkable doings of the ghost at Garpsdal, according to the evidence of Sir Saemund, Magnus, Gudrun, and all the household at Garpsdal, all of whom will confirm their witness with an oath, and aver that no human being could have been so invisible there by day and night, but rather that it was some kind of spirit that did the mischief. From the story itself it may be seen that neither Magnus nor any other person could have accomplished the like, and all the folk will confirm this, and clear all persons in the matter, so far as they know. In this form the story was told to me, the subscriber, to Samuel Egilsson and Bjarni Oddsson, by the minister himself and his household, at Garpsdal, 28th May, 1808. That this is correctly set down, after what the minister Sir Saemund related to me, I witness here at Stad on Reykjanes, 7th June, 1808.

GISLI OLAFSSON

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Notwithstanding this declaration, the troubles at Garpsdal were attributed by others to Magnus, and the name of the “Garpsdale Ghost” stuck to him throughout his life. He was alive in 1862, when Jon Arnason’s volume was published.

These modern instances lead up to “the best story in the world,” the old Icelandic tale of Glam.

CHAPTER XII

THE STORY OF GLAM

There was a man named Thorhall, who lived at Thorhall-stead in Forsaela-dala, which lies in the north of Iceland. He was a fairly wealthy man, especially in cattle, so that no one round about had so much live-stock as he had. He was not a chief, however, but an honest and worthy yeoman.

“Now this man’s place was greatly haunted, so that he could scarcely get a shepherd to stay with him, and although he asked the opinion of many as to what he ought to do, he could find none to give him advice of any worth.

“One summer at the Althing, or yearly assembly of the people, Thorhall went to the booth of Skafti, the law man, who was the wisest of men and gave good counsel when his opinion was asked. He received Thorhall in a friendly way, because he knew he was a man of means, and asked him what news he had.

“‘I would have some good advice from you,’ said Thorhall.

‘“I am little able to give that,’ said Skafti; ‘but what is the matter?’

“‘This is the way of it,’ said Thorhall, ‘I have had very bad luck with my shepherds of late. Some of them get injured, and others will not serve out their time; and now no one that knows how the case stands will take the place at all.’

“‘Then there must be some evil spirit there,’ said Skafti, ‘when men are less willing to herd your sheep, than those of others. Now since you have asked my advice, I will get a shepherd for you. Glam is his name, he belongs to Sweden, and came out here last summer. He is big and strong, but not very well liked by most people.’

“Thorhall said that he did not mind that, if he looked well after the sheep. Skafti answered that there was no hope of other men doing it, if Glam could not, seeing he was so strong and stout-hearted. Their talk ended there, and Thorhall left the booth.

“This took place just at the breaking up of the assembly. Thorhall missed two of his horses, and went to look for them in person, from which it may be seen that he was no proud man. He went up to the mountain ridge, and south along the fell that is called Armann’s fell. There he saw a man coming down from the wood, leading a horse laden with bundles of brushwood. They soon met each other and Thorhall asked his name. He said he was called Glam. He was tall of body, and of strange appearance; his eyes were blue and staring, and his hair wolf-grey in colour. Thorhall was a little startled when he saw him, and was certain that this was the man he had been told about.

"'What work are you best fitted for?' he asked. Glam said that he was good at keeping sheep in winter.

"'Will you look after *my* sheep?' said Thorhall. 'Skafti has put you into my hands.'

"'On this condition only will I take service with you,' said Glam, 'that I have my own free will, for I am ill-tempered if anything does not please me.'

"'That will not harm me,' said Thorhall, 'and I should like you to come to me.'

"'I will do so,' said Glam; 'but is there any trouble at your place?'

"'It is believed to be haunted,' said Thorhall.

"'I am not afraid of such bug-bears,' said Glam, 'and think that it will be all the livelier for that.'

"'You will need all your boldness,' said Thorhall, 'It is best not to be too frightened for one's self there.'

"After this they made a bargain between them, and Glam was to come when the winter nights began. Then they parted, and Thorhall found his horses where he had just newly looked for them, and rode home, after thanking Skafti for his kindness.

"The summer passed, and Thorhall heard nothing of the shepherd, nor did any one know the least about him, but at the time appointed he came to Thorhall-stead. The yeoman received him well, but the others did not like him, and the good-wife least of all. He began his work among the sheep which gave him little trouble, for he had a loud, hoarse voice, and the flock all ran together whenever he shouted. There was a church at Thorhall-stead, but Glam would never go to it nor join in the service. He was unbelieving, surly, and difficult to deal with, and ever one felt a dislike towards him.

"So time went on till it came to Christmas eve. On that morning Glam rose early and called for his food. The good-wife answered: 'It is not the custom of Christian people to eat on this day, for to-morrow is the first day of Christmas, and we ought to fast to-day'. Glam replied: 'You have many foolish fashions that I see no good in. I cannot see that men are any better off now than they were when they never troubled themselves about such things. I think it was a far better life when men were heathens; and now I want my food, and no nonsense.' The good-wife answered: 'I am sure you will come to sorrow to-day if you act thus perversely'.

"Glam bade her bring his food at once, or it would be the worse for her. She was afraid to refuse, and after he had eaten he went out in a great rage.

“The weather was very bad. It was dark and gloomy all round; snowflakes fluttered about; loud noises were heard in the air, and it grew worse and worse as the day wore on. They heard the shepherd’s voice during the forenoon, but less of him as the day passed. Then the snow began to drift, and by evening there was a violent storm. People came to the service in church, and the day wore on to evening, but still Glam did not come home. There was some talk among them of going to look for him, but no search was made on account of the storm and the darkness.

“All Christmas eve Glam did not return, and in the morning men went to look for him. They found the sheep scattered in the fens, beaten down by the storm, or up on the hills. Thereafter they came to a place in the valley where the snow was all trampled, as if there had been a terrible struggle there, for stones and frozen earth were torn up all round about. They looked carefully round the place, and found Glam lying a short distance off, quite dead. He was black in colour, and swollen up as big as an ox. They were horrified at the sight, and shuddered in their hearts. However, they tried to carry him to the church, but could get him no further than to the edge of a cleft, a little lower down; so they left him there and went home and told their master what had happened.

“Thorhall asked them what had been the cause of Glam’s death. They said that they had traced footprints as large as though the bottom of a cask had been set down in the snow leading from where the trampled place was up to the cliffs at the head of the valley, and all along the track there were huge blood-stains. From this they guessed that the evil spirit which lived there must have killed Glam, but had received so much hurt that it had died, for nothing was ever seen of it after.

“The second day of Christmas they tried again to bring Glam to the church. They yoked horses to him, but after they had come down the slope and reached level ground they could drag him no further, and he had to be left there.

“On the third day a priest went with them, but Glam was not be found, although they searched for him all day. The priest refused to go a second time, and the shepherd was found at once when the priest was not present. So they gave over their attempts to take him to the church, and buried him on the spot.

“Soon after this they became aware that Glam was not lying quiet, and great damage was done by him, for many that saw him fell into a swoon, or lost their reason. Immediately after Yule men believed that they saw him about the farm itself, and grew terribly frightened, so that many of them ran away. After this Glam began to ride on the house-top by night, and nearly shook it to pieces, and then he walked about almost night and day. Men hardly dared to go up into the valley, even although they had urgent business there, and every one in the district thought great harm of the matter.

"In spring, Thorhall got new men, and started the farm again, while Glam's walkings began to grow less frequent as the days grew longer. So time went on, until it was mid-summer. That summer a ship from Norway came into Huna-water (a firth to the north of Thorhall-stead), and had on board a man called Thorgaut. He was foreign by birth, big of body, and as strong as any two men. He was unhired and unmarried, and was looking for some employment, as he was penniless. Thorhall rode to the ship, and found Thorgaut there. He asked him whether he would enter his service. Thorgaut answered that he might well do so, and that he did not care much what work he did.

"'You must know, however,' said Thorhall, 'that it is not good for any faint-hearted man to live at my place, on account of the hauntings that have been of late, and I do not wish to deceive you in any way.'

"'I do not think myself utterly lost although I see some wretched ghosts,' said Thorgaut. 'It will be no light matter for others if *I* am scared, and I will not throw up the place on that account.'

"Their bargain was quickly made, and Thorgaut was to have charge of the sheep during the winter. The summer went past, and Thorgaut began his duties with the winter nights, and was well liked by every one. Glam began to come again, and rode on the house-top, which Thorgaut thought great sport, and said that the thrall would have to come to close quarters before he would be afraid of him. Thorhall bade him not say too much about it. 'It will be better for you,' said he, 'if you have no trial of each other.'

"'Your courage has indeed been shaken out of you,' said Thorgaut, 'but I am not going to fall dead for such talk.'

"The winter went on till Christmas came again, and on Christmas eve the shepherd went out to his sheep. 'I trust,' said the good-wife, 'that things will not go after the old fashion.'

"'Have no fear of that, good-wife,' said Thorgaut; 'there will be something worth talking about if I don't come back.'

"The weather was very cold, and a heavy drift blowing. Thorgaut was in the habit of coming home when it was half-dark, but on this occasion he did not return at his usual time. People came to church, and they now began to think that things were not unlikely to fall out as they had done before. Thorhall wished to make search for the shepherd, but the church-goers refused, saying that they would not risk themselves in the hands of evil demons by night, and so no search was made.

"After their morning meal on Christmas day they went out to look for the shepherd. They first made their way to Glam's cairn, guessing that he was the cause of the man’s disappearance. On coming near to this they saw great tidings, for there they found the shepherd with his neck broken and every bone in his body smashed in pieces. They carried him to the church, and he did no harm to any man thereafter. But Glam began to gather strength anew, and now went so far in his mischief that every one fled from Thorhall-stead, except the yeoman and his wife.

“The same cattleman, however, had been there for a long time, and Thorhall would not let him leave, because he was so faithful and so careful. He was very old, and did not want to go away either, for he saw that everything his master had would go to wreck and ruin, if there was no one to look after it.

“One morning after the middle of winter the good-wife went out to the byre to milk the cows. It was broad daylight by this time, for no one ventured to be outside earlier than that, except the cattleman, who always went out when it began to grow clear. She heard a great noise and fearful bellowing in the byre, and ran into the house again, crying out and saying that some awful thing was going on there. Thorhall went out to the cattle and found them goring each other with their horns. To get out of their way, he went through into the barn, and in doing this he saw the cattleman lying on his back with his head in one stall and his feet in another. He went up to him and felt him and soon found that he was dead, with his back broken over the upright stone between two of the stalls.

“The yeoman thought it high time to leave the place now, and fled from his farm with all that he could remove. All the live-stock that he left behind was killed by Glam, who then went through the whole glen and laid waste all the farms up from Tongue.

“Thorhall spent the rest of the winter with various friends. No one could go up into the glen with horse or dog, for these were killed at once; but when spring came again and the days began to lengthen, Glam’s walkings grew less frequent, and Thorhall determined to return to his homestead. He had difficulty in getting servants, but managed to set up his home again at Thorhall-stead. Things went just as before. When autumn came, the hauntings began again, and now it was the yeoman’s daughter who was most assailed, till in the end she died of fright. Many plans were tried, but all to no effect, and it seemed as if all Water-dale would be laid waste unless some remedy could be found.

“All this befell in the days of Grettir, the son of Asmund, who was the strongest man of his day in Iceland. He had been abroad at this time, outlawed for three years, and was only eighteen years of age when he returned. He had been at home all through the autumn, but when the winter nights were well advanced, he rode north to Water-dale, and came to Tongue, where lived his uncle Jökull. His uncle received him heartily, and he stayed there for three nights. At this time there was so much talk about Glam’s walkings, that nothing was so largely spoken of as these. Grettir inquired closely about all that had happened, and Jökull said that the stories told no more than had indeed taken place; ‘but are you intending to go there, kinsman?’ said he. Grettir answered that he was. Jökull bade him not do so, ‘for it is a dangerous undertaking, and a great risk for your friends to lose you, for in our opinion there is not another like you among the young men, and “ill will come of ill” where Glam is. Far better it is to deal with mortal men than with such evil spirits.’

“Grettir, however, said that he had a mind to fare to Thorhall-stead, and see how things had been going on there. Jökull replied: ‘I see now that it is of no use to hold you back, but the saying is true that “good luck and good heart are not the same’”. Grettir answered: ‘“Woe stands at one man’s door when it has entered another’s house”. Think how it may go with yourself before the end.’

“‘It may be,’ said Jökull, ‘that both of us see some way into the future, and yet neither of us can do anything to prevent it.’

“After this they parted, and neither liked the other’s forebodings.

“Grettir rode to Thorhall-stead, and the yeoman received him heartily. He asked Grettir where he was going, who said that he wished to stay there all night if he would allow him. Thorhall said that he would be very glad if he would stay, ‘but few men count it a gain to be guests here for long. You must have heard how matters stand, and I shall be very unwilling for you to come to any harm on my account. And even although you yourself escape safe and sound, I know for certain that you will lose your horse, for no man that comes here can keep that uninjured.’

“Grettir answered that there were horses enough to be got, whatever might happen to this one. Thorhall was delighted that he was willing to stay, and gave him the heartiest reception. The horse was strongly secured in an out-house; then they went to sleep, and that night passed without Glam appearing.

“‘Your coming here,’ said Thorhall, ‘has made a happy change, for Glam is in the habit of riding the house every night, or breaking up the doors, as you may see for yourself.’

“‘Then one of two things will happen,’ said Grettir; ‘either he will not restrain himself for long, or the hauntings will cease for more than one night. I shall stay for another night, and see how things go.’

“After this they went to look at Grettir’s horse, and found that he had not been meddled with, so the yeoman thought that everything was going on well, Grettir stayed another night, and still the thrall did not come about them. Thorhall thought that things were looking brighter, but when he went to look to Grettir’s horse he found the out-house broken up, the horse dragged outside, and every bone in it broken. He told Grettir what had happened, and advised him to secure his own safety, ‘for your death is certain if you wait for Glam’.

“Grettir answered: ‘The least I can get for my horse is to see the thrall’. Thorhall replied that it would do him no good to see him, ‘for he is unlike anything in human shape; but I am fain of every hour that you are willing to stay here’.

“The day wore on, and when it was bed-time Grettir would not take off his clothes, but lay down on the floor over against Thorhall’s bed-closet. He put a thick cloak above himself, buttoning one end beneath his feet, and doubling the other under his head, while he looked out at the hole for the neck. There was a strong plank in front of the floored space, and against this he pressed his feet. The door-fittings were all broken off from the outer door, but there was a hurdle set up instead, and roughly secured. The wainscot that had once stretched across the hall was all broken down, both above and below the cross-beam. The beds were all pulled out of their places, and everything was in confusion.

“A light was left burning in the hall, and when the third part of the night was past Grettir heard loud noises outside. Then something went up on top of the house, and rode above the hall, beating the roof with its heels till every beam cracked. This went on for a long time; then it came down off the house and went to the door. When this was opened Grettir saw the thrall thrust in his head; ghastly big he seemed, and wonderfully huge of feature. Glam came in slowly, and raised himself up when he was inside the doorway, till he loomed up against the roof. Then he turned his face down the hall, laid his arms on the cross-beam, and glared all over the place. Thorhall gave no sign during all this, for he thought it bad enough to hear what was going on outside.

“Grettir lay still and never moved. Glam saw that there was a bundle lying on the floor, and moved further up the hall and grasped the cloak firmly. Grettir placed his feet against the plank, and yielded not the least. Glam tugged a second time, much harder than before, but still the cloak did not move. A third time he pulled with both his hands, so hard that he raised Grettir up from the floor, and now they wrenched the cloak asunder between them. Glam stood staring at the piece which he held in his hands, and wondering greatly who could have pulled so hard against him. At that moment Grettir sprang in under the monster’s hands, and threw his arms around his waist, intending to make him fall backwards. Glam, however, bore down upon him so strongly that Grettir was forced to give way before him. He then tried to stay himself against the seat-boards, but these gave way with him, and everything that came in their path was broken.

“Glam wanted to get him outside, and although Grettir set his feet against everything that he could, yet Glam succeeded in dragging him out into the porch. There they had a fierce struggle, for the thrall meant to have him out of doors, while Grettir saw that bad as it was to deal with Glam inside the house it would be worse outside, and therefore strove with all his might against being carried out. When they came into the porch Glam put forth all his strength, and pulled Grettir close to him. When Grettir saw that he could not stay himself he suddenly changed his plan, and threw himself as hard as he could against the monster's breast, setting both his feet against an earth-fast stone that lay in the doorway. Glam was not prepared for this, being then in the act of pulling Grettir towards him, so he fell backwards and went crashing out through the door, his shoulders catching the lintel as he fell. The roof of the porch was wrenched in two, both rafters and frozen thatch, and backwards out of the house went Glam, with Grettir above him.

"Outside there was bright moonshine and broken clouds, which sometimes drifted over the moon and sometimes left it clear. At the moment when Glam fell the cloud passed off the moon, and he cast up his eyes sharply towards it; and Grettir himself said that this was the only sight he ever saw that terrified him. Then Grettir grew so helpless, both by reason of his weariness and at seeing Glam roll his eyes so horribly, that he was unable to draw his dagger, and lay well-nigh between life and death.

"But in this was Glam's might more fiendish than that of most other ghosts, that he spoke in this fashion: 'Great eagerness have you shown to meet me, Grettir, and little wonder will it be though you get no great good fortune from me; but this I may tell you, that you have now received only half of the strength and vigour that was destined for you if you had not met with me. I cannot now take from you the strength you have already gained, but this I can see to, that you will never be stronger than you are now, and yet you are strong enough, as many a man shall feel. Hitherto you have been famous for your deeds, but henceforth you shall be a manslayer and an outlaw, and most of your deeds will turn to your own hurt and misfortune. Outlawed you shall be, and ever have a solitary life for your lot; and this, too, I lay upon you, ever to see these eyes of mine before your own, and then you will think it hard to be alone, and that will bring you to your death.'

"When Glam had said this the faintness passed off Grettir, and he then drew his dagger, cut off Glam's head, and laid it beside his thigh. Thorhall then came out, having put on his clothes while Glam was talking, but never venturing to come near until he had fallen. He praised God, and thanked Grettir for overcoming the unclean spirit. Then they set to work, and burned Glam to ashes, which they placed in a sack, and buried where cattle were least likely to pasture or men to tread. When this was done they went home again, and it was now near daybreak.

“Thorhall sent to the next farm for the men there, and told them what had taken place. All thought highly of the exploit that heard of it, and it was the common talk that in all Iceland there was no man like Grettir Asnundarson for strength and courage and all kinds of bodily feats. Thorhall gave him a good horse when he went away, as well as a fine suit of clothes, for the ones he had been wearing were all torn to pieces. The two then parted with the utmost friendship.

“Thence Grettir rode to the Ridge in Water-dale, where his kinsman Thorvald received him heartily, and asked closely concerning his encounter with Glam. Grettir told him how he had fared, and said that his strength was never put to harder proof, so long did the struggle between them last. Thorvald bade him be quiet and gentle in his conduct, and things would go well with him, otherwise his troubles would be many. Grettir answered that his temper was not improved; he was more easily roused than ever, and less able to bear opposition. In this, too, he felt a great change, that he had become so much afraid of the dark that he dared not go anywhere alone after night began to fall, for then he saw phantoms and monsters of every kind. So it has become a saying ever since then, when folk see things very different from what they are, that Glam lends them his eyes, or gives them glam-sight.

“This fear of solitude brought Grettir, at last, to his end.”

Ghosts being seldom dangerous to human life, we follow up the homicidal Glam with a Scottish traditional story of malevolent and murderous sprites.

‘THE FOUL FORDS’ OR THE LONGFORMACUS FARRIER

“About 1820 there lived a Farrier of the name of Keane in the village of Longformacus in Lammermoor. He was a rough, passionate man, much addicted to swearing. For many years he was farrier to the Eagle or Spottiswood troop of Yeomanry. One day he went to Greenlaw to attend the funeral of his sister, intending to be home early in the afternoon. His wife and family were surprised when he did not appear as they expected and they sat up watching for him. About two o’clock in the morning a heavy weight was heard to fall against the door of the house, and on opening it to see what was the matter, old Keane was discovered lying in a fainting fit on the threshold. He was put to bed and means used for his recovery, but when he came out of the fit he was raving mad and talked of such frightful things that his family were quite terrified. He continued till next day in the same state, but at length his senses returned and he desired to see the minister alone.

“After a long conversation with him he called all his family round his bed, and required from each of his children and his wife a solemn promise that they would none of them ever pass over a particular spot in the moor between Longformacus and Greenlaw, known by the name of ‘The Foul Fords’ (it is the ford over a little water-course just east of Castle Shields). He assigned no reason to them for this demand, but the promise was given and he spoke no more, and died that evening.

“About ten years after his death, his eldest son Henry Keane had to go to Greenlaw on business, and in the afternoon he prepared to return home. The last person who saw him as he was leaving the town was the blacksmith of Spottiswood, John Michie. He tried to persuade Michie to accompany him home, which he refused to do as it would take him several miles out of his way. Keane begged him most earnestly to go with him as he said he *must* pass the Foul Fords that night, and he would rather go through hell-fire than do so. Michie asked him why he said he *must* pass the Foul Fords, as by going a few yards on either side of them he might avoid them entirely. He persisted that he *must* pass them and Michie at last left him, a good deal surprised that he should talk of going over the Foul Fords when every one knew that he and his whole family were bound, by a promise to their dead father, never to go by the place.

“Next morning a labouring man from Castle Shields, by name Adam Redpath, was going to his work (digging sheep-drains on the moor), when on the Foul Fords he met Henry Keane lying stone dead and with no mark of violence on his body. His hat, coat, waistcoat, shoes and stockings were lying at about 100 yards distance from him on the Greenlaw side of the Fords, and while his flannel drawers were off and lying with the rest of his clothes, his trousers were on. Mr. Ord, the minister of Longformacus, told one or two persons what John Keane (the father) had said to him on his deathbed, and by degrees the story got abroad. It was this. Keane said that he was returning home slowly after his sister's funeral, looking on the ground, when he was suddenly roused by hearing the tramping of horses, and on looking up he saw a large troop of riders coming towards him two and two. What was his horror when he saw that one of the two foremost was the sister whom he had that day seen buried at Greenlaw! On looking further he saw many relations and friends long before dead; but when the two last horses came up to him he saw that one was mounted by a dark man whose face he had never seen before. He led the other horse, which, though saddled and bridled, was riderless, and on this horse the whole company wanted to compel Keane to get. He struggled violently, he said, for some time, and at last got off by promising that one of his family should go instead of him.

"There still lives at Longformacus his remaining son Robert; he has the same horror of the Foul Fords that his brother had, and will not speak, nor allow any one to speak to him on the subject.

"Three or four years ago a herd of the name of Burton was found dead within a short distance of the spot, without any apparent cause for his death."

CHAPTER XIII

The Marvels at Fródá

The following tale has all the direct simplicity and truth to human nature which mark the ancient literature of Iceland. Defoe might have envied the profusion of detail; “The large chest with a lock, and the small box,” and so on. Some of the minor portents, such as the disturbances among inanimate objects, and the appearance of a glow of mysterious light, “the Fate Moon,” recur in modern tales of haunted houses. The combination of Christian exorcism, then a novelty in Iceland, with legal proceedings against the ghosts, is especially characteristic.

THE MARVELS AT FRÓDÁ

During that summer in which Christianity was adopted by law in Iceland (1000 A.D.), it happened that a ship came to land at Snowfell Ness. It was a Dublin vessel, manned by Irish and Hebrideans, with few Norsemen on board. They lay there for a long time during the summer, waiting for a favourable wind to sail into the firth, and many people from the Ness went down to trade with them. There was on board a Hebridean woman named Thorgunna, of whom her shipmates said that she owned some costly things, the like of which would be difficult to find in Iceland. When Thurid, the housewife at Fródá, heard of this she was very curious to see the articles, for she was a woman that was fond of show and finery. She went to the ship and asked Thorgunna whether she had any woman's apparel that was finer than the common. Thorgunna said that she had nothing of the kind to sell, but had some good things of her own, that she might not be affronted at feasts or other gatherings. Thurid begged a sight of these, and Thorgunna showed her treasures. Thurid was much pleased with them, and thought them very becoming, though not of high value. She offered to buy them, but Thorgunna would not sell. Thurid then invited her to come and stay with her, because she knew that Thorgunna was well provided, and thought that she would get the things from her in course of time.

Thorgunna answered, "I am well pleased to go to stay with you, but you must know that I have little mind to pay for myself, because I am well able to work, and have no dislike to it, though I will not do any dirty work. I must be allowed to settle what I shall pay for myself out of such property as I have."

Although Thorgunna spoke in this fashion, yet Thurid would have her to go with her, and her things were taken out of the ship; these were in a large chest with a lock and a small box, and both were taken home to Fródá. When Thorgunna arrived there she asked for her bed to be shown her, and was given one in the inner part of the hall. Then she opened up the chest, and took bed-clothes out of it: they were all very beautiful, and over the bed she spread English coverlets and a silken quilt. Out of the chest she also brought a bed-curtain and all the hangings that belonged to it, and the whole outfit was so fine that folk thought they had never seen the like of it.

Then said Thurid the housewife: "Name the price of all your bed-clothes and hangings".

Thorgunna answered, "I will not lie among straw for you, although you are so stately, and bear yourself so proudly”.

Thurid was ill pleased at this, and offered no more to buy the things.

Thorgunna worked at cloth-making every day when there was no hay-making, but when the weather was dry she worked among the dry hay in the home field, and had a rake made for herself which she alone was to use. Thorgunna was a big woman, both broad and tall, and very stout; she had dark eyebrows, and her eyes were close set; her hair brown and in great abundance. She was well-mannered in her daily life, and went to church every day before beginning her work, but she was not of a light disposition nor of many words. Most people thought that Thorgunna must be in the sixties, yet she was a very active woman.

At this time one Thorir “wooden-leg” and his wife Thorgrima “charm-cheek” were being maintained at Fródá, and there was little love between them and Thorgunna. The person that she had most ado with was Kjartan, the son of the house; him she loved much, but he was rather cold towards her, and this often vexed her. Kjartan was then fifteen years old, and was both big of body and manly in appearance.

The summer that year was very wet, but in the autumn there came dry days. By this time the hay-work at Fródá was so far advanced that all the home field was mown, and nearly the half of it was quite dry. There came then a fine dry day, clear and bright, with not a cloud to be seen in all the sky. Thorodd, the yeoman, rose early in the morning and arranged the work of each one; some began to cart off the hay, and some to put it into stalks, while the women were set to toss and dry it. Thorgunna also had her share assigned to her, and the work went on well during the day. When it drew near to three in the afternoon, a mass of dark clouds was seen rising in the north which came rapidly across the sky and took its course right above the farm. They thought it certain that there was rain in the cloud and Thorodd bade his people rake the hay together; but Thorgunna continued to scatter hers, in spite of the orders that were given. The clouds came on quickly, and when they were above the homestead at Fródá there came such darkness with them that the people could see nothing beyond the home field; indeed, they could scarcely distinguish their own hands. Out of the cloud came so much rain that all the hay which was lying flat was quite soaked. When the cloud had passed over and the sky cleared again, it was seen that blood had fallen amid the rain. In the evening there was a good draught, and the blood soon dried off all the hay except that which Thorgunna had been working at; it did not dry, nor did the rake that she had been using.

Thurid asked Thorgunna what she supposed this marvel might portend. She said that she did not know, “but it seems to me most likely that it is an evil omen for some person who is present here”. In the evening Thorgunna went home and took off her clothes, which had been stained with the blood; then she lay down in her bed and breathed heavily, and it was found that she was taken with sickness. The shower had not fallen anywhere else than at Fróðá.

All that evening Thorgunna would taste no food. In the morning Thorodd came to her and asked about her sickness, and what end she thought it would have. She answered that she did not expect to have any more illnesses. Then she said: “I consider you the wisest person in the homestead here, and so I shall tell you what arrangements I wish to make about the property that I leave behind me, and about myself, for things will go as I tell you, though you think there is nothing very remarkable about me. It will do you little good to depart from my instructions, for this affair has so begun that it will not pass smoothly off, unless strong measures are taken in dealing with it.”

Thorodd answered: “There seems to me great likelihood that your forebodings will come true; and therefore,” said he, “I shall promise to you not to depart from your instructions”.

“These are my arrangements,” said Thorgunna, “that I will have myself taken to Skálholt if I die of this sickness, for my mind forbodes me that that place will some time or other be the most glorious spot in this land. I know also that by now there are priests there to sing the funeral service over me. So I ask you to have me carried thither, and for that you shall take so much of my property that you suffer no loss in the matter. Of my other effects, Thurid shall have the scarlet cloak that I own, and I give it her so that she may readily consent to my disposing of all the rest as I please. I have a gold ring, and it shall go to the church with me; but as for my bed and bed-hangings, I will have them burned with fire, because they will be of service to no one. I do not say this because I grudge that any one should possess these treasures, if I knew that they would be of use to them; rather am I so earnest in the matter, because I should be sorry for folk to fall into such trouble for me, as I know will be the case if my words are not heeded.”

Thorodd promised to do as she asked him, and after this Thorgunna’s sickness increased, so that she lay but few days before she died. The body was first taken to the church, and Thorodd had a coffin made for it. On the following day Thorodd had all the bed-clothes carried out into the open air, and made a pile of wood beside them. Then Thurid the housewife came up, and asked what he was going to do with the bed-clothes. He answered that he was to burn them with fire, as Thorgunna had directed him. “I will not have such treasures burned,” said Thurid. Thorodd answered: “She declared strongly that it would not do to depart from what she said”. “That was mere jealousy,” said Thurid; “she grudged any other person the use of them, and that was why she gave these orders; but nothing terrible will happen though her words are set aside." "I doubt," said he, "whether it will be well to do otherwise than as she charged me."

Then Thurid laid her arms round his neck, and besought him not to burn the furnishings of the bed, and so much did she press him in this that his heart gave way to her, and she managed it so that Thorodd burned the mattresses and pillows, while she took for herself the quilt and coverlets and all the hangings. Yet neither of them was well pleased.

After this the funeral was made ready; trustworthy men were sent with the body, and good horses which Thorodd owned. The body was wrapped in linen, but not sewed up in it, and then laid in the coffin. After this they held south over the heath as the paths go, and went on until they came to a farm called Lower Ness, which lies in the Tongues of Staf-holt. There they asked leave to stay over night, but the farmer would give them no hospitality. However, as it was close on nightfall, they did not see how they could go on, for they thought it would be dangerous to deal with the White River by night. They therefore unloaded their horses, and carried the body into an out-house, after which they went into the sitting-room and took off their outer clothes, intending to stay there over night without food.

The people of the house were going to bed by daylight, and after they were in bed a great noise was heard in the kitchen. Some went to see whether thieves had not broken in, and when they reached the kitchen they saw there a tall woman. She was quite naked, with no clothes whatever upon her, and was busy preparing food. Those who saw her were so terrified that they dared not go near her at all. When the funeral party heard of this they went thither, and saw what the matter was — Thorgunna had come there, and it seemed advisable to them all not to meddle with her. When she had done all that she wanted, she brought the food into the room, set the tables and laid the food upon them. Then the funeral party said to the farmer: "It may happen in the end, before we part, that you will think it dearly bought that you would show us no hospitality". Both the farmer and the housewife answered: "We will willingly give you food, and do you all other services that you require".

As soon as the farmer had offered them this, Thorgunna passed out of the room into the kitchen, and then went outside, nor did she show herself again. Then a light was kindled in the room, and the wet clothes of the guests were taken off, and dry ones given them in their place. After this they sat down at table, and blessed their food, while the farmer had holy water sprinkled over all the house. The guests ate their food, and it harmed no man, although Thorgunna had prepared it. They slept there that night, and were treated with great hospitality.

In the morning they continued their journey, and things went very smoothly with them; wherever this affair was heard of, most people thought it best to do them all the service that they required, and of their journey no more is to be told. When they came to Skálholt, they handed over the precious things which Thorgunna had sent thither: the ring and other articles, all of which the priests gladly received. Thorgunna was buried there, while the funeral party returned home, which they all reached in safety.

At Fróðá there was a large hall with a fireplace in the midde, and a bed-closet at the inner end of it, as was then the custom. At the outer end were two store-closets, one on each side; dried fish were piled in one of these, and there was meal in the other. In this hall fires were kindled every evening, as was the custom, and folk sat round these fires for a long while before they went to supper. On that evening on which the funeral party came home, while the folk at Fróðá were sitting round the fires, they saw a half-moon appear on the panelling of the hall, and it was visible to all those who were present. It went round the room backwards and against the sun's course, nor did it disappear so long as they sat by the fires. Thorodd asked Thorir Wooden-leg what this might portend. "It is the Moon of Fate," said Thorir, "and deaths will come after it." This went on all that week that the Fate-Moon came in every evening.

The next tidings that happened at Fróðá were that the shepherd came in and was very silent; he spoke little, and that in a frenzied manner. Folk were most inclined to believe that he had been bewitched, because he went about by himself, and talked to himself. This went on for some time, but one evening, when two weeks of winter had passed, the shepherd came home, went to his bed, and lay down there. When they went to him in the morning he was dead, and was buried at the church.

Soon after this there began great hauntings. One night Thorir Wooden-leg went outside and was at some distance from the door. When he was about to go in again, he saw that the shepherd had come between him and the door. Thorir tried to get in, but the shepherd would not allow him. Then Thorir tried to get away from him, but the shepherd followed him, caught hold of him, and threw him down at the door. He received great hurt from this, but was able to reach his bed; there he turned black as coal, took sickness and died. He was also buried at the church there, and after this both the shepherd and Thorir were seen in company, at which all the folk became full of fear, as was to be expected.

This also followed upon the burial of Thorir, that one of Thorodd's men grew ill, and lay three nights before he died; then one died after another, until six of them were gone. By this time the Christmas fast had come, although the fast was not then kept in Iceland. The store-closet, in which the dried fish were kept, was packed so full that the door could not be opened; the pile reached nigh up to the rafters, and a ladder was required to get the fish off the top of it. One evening while the folk were sitting round the fires, the fish were torn, but when search was made no living thing could be found there.

During the winter, a little before Christmas, Thorodd went out to Ness for the fish he had there; there were six men in all in a ten-oared boat, and they stayed out there all night. The same evening that Thorodd went from home, it happened at Fródá, when folk went to sit by the fires that had been made, that they saw a seal's head rise up out of the fireplace. A maid-servant was the first who came forward and saw this marvel; she took a washing-bat which lay beside the door, and struck the seal's head with this, but it rose up at the blow and gazed at Thorgunna's bed-hangings. Then one of the men went up and beat the seal, but it rose higher at every blow until it had come up above the fins; then the man fell into a swoon, and all those who were present were filled with fear. Then the lad Kjartan sprang forward, took up a large iron sledge-hammer and struck at the seal's head; it was a heavy blow, but it only shook its head, and looked round. Then Kjartan gave it stroke after stroke, and the seal went down as though he were driving in a stake. Kjartan hammered away till the seal went down so far that he beat the floor close again above its head, and during the rest of the winter all the portents were most afraid of Kjartan.

Next morning, while Thorodd and the others were coming in from Ness with the fish, they were all lost out from Enni; the boat and the fish drove on shore there, but the bodies were never found. When the news of this reached Fródá, Kjartan and Thurid invited their neighbours to the funeral banquet, and the ale prepared for Christmas was used for this purpose. The first evening of the feast, however, after the folk had taken their seats, there came into the hall Thorodd and his companions, all dripping wet. The folk greeted Thorodd well, thinking this a good omen, for at that time it was firmly believed that drowned men, who came to their own funeral feast, were well received by Rán, the sea-goddess; and the old beliefs had as yet suffered little, though folk were baptised and called Christians.

Thorodd and his fellows went right along the hall where the folk sat, and passed into the one where the fires were, answering no man's greeting. Those of the household who were in the hall ran out, and Thorodd and his men sat down beside the fires, where they remained till they had fallen into ashes; then they went away again. This befel every evening while the banquet lasted, and there was much talk about it among those who were present. Some thought that it would stop when the feast was ended. When the banquet was over the guests went home, leaving the place very dull and dismal.

On the evening after they had gone, the fires were kindled as usual, and after they had burned up, there came in Thorodd with his company, all of them wet. They sat down by the fire and began to wring their clothes; and after they had sat down there came in Thorir Wooden-leg and his five companions, all covered with earth. They shook their clothes and scattered the earth on Thorodd and his fellows. The folk of the household rushed out of the hall, as might be expected, and all that evening they had no light nor any warmth from the fire.

Next evening the fires were made in the other hall, as the dead men would be less likely to come there; but this was not so, for everything happened just as it had done on the previous evening, and both parties came to sit by the fires.

On the third evening Kjartan advised that a large fire should be made in the hall, and a little fire in another and smaller room. This was done, and things then went on in this fashion, that Thorodd and the others sat beside the big fire, while the household contented themselves with the little one, and this lasted right through Christmas-tide.

By this time there was more and more noise in the pile of fish, and the sound of them being torn was heard both by night and day. Some time after this it was necessary to take down some of the fish, and the man who went up on the pile saw this strange thing, that up out of the pile there came a tail, in appearance like a singed ox-tail. It was black and covered with hair like a seal. The man laid hold of it and pulled, and called on the others to come and help him. Others then got up on the heap, both men and women, and pulled at the tail, but all to no purpose. It seemed to them that the tail was dead, but while they tugged at it, it flew out of their hands taking the skin off the palms of those who had been holding it hardest, and no more was ever seen of the tail. The fish were then taken up and every one was found to be torn out of the skin, yet no living thing was to be found in the pile.

Following upon this, Thorgrima Charm-cheek, the wife of Thorir Wooden-leg, fell ill, and lay only a little while before she died, and the same evening that she was buried she was seen in company with her husband Thorir. The sickness then began a second time after the tail had been seen, and now the women died more than the men. Another six persons died in this attack, and some fled away on account of the ghosts and the hauntings. In the autumn there had been thirty in the household, of whom eighteen were dead, and five had run away, leaving only seven behind in the spring.

When these marvels had reached this pitch, it happened one day that Kjartan went to Helga-fell to see his uncle Snorri, and asked his advice as to what should be done. There had then come to Helga-fell a priest whom Gizurr the white had sent to Snorri, and this priest Snorri sent to Fródá along with Kjartan, his son Thord, and six other men. He also gave them this advice, that they should burn all Thorgunna's bed-hangings and hold a law court at the door, and there prosecute all those men who were walking after death. He also bade the priest hold service there, consecrate water, and confess the people. They summoned men from the nearest farms to accompany them, and arrived at Fródá on the evening before Candlemas, just at the time when the fires were being kindled. Thurid the housewife had then taken the sickness after the same fashion as those who had died. Kjartan went in at once, and saw that Thorodd and the others were sitting by the fire as usual. He took down Thorgunna's bed-hangings, went into the hall, and carried out a live coal from the fire: then all the bed-gear that Thorgunna had owned was burned.

After this Kjartan summoned Thorir Wooden-leg, and Thord summoned Thorodd, on the charge of going about the homestead without leave, and depriving men of both health and life; all those who sat beside the fire were summoned in the same way. Then a court was held at the door, in which the charges were declared, and everything done as in a regular law court; opinions were given, the case summed up, and judgment passed. After sentence had been pronounced on Thorir Wooden-leg, he rose up and said: "Now we have sat as long as we can bear". After this he went out by the other door from that at which the court was held. Then sentence was passed on the shepherd, and when he heard it he stood up and said: "Now I shall go, and I think it would have been better before". When Thorgrima heard sentence pronounced on her, she rose up and said: "Now we have stayed while it could be borne". Then one after another was summoned, and each stood up as judgment was given upon him; all of them said something as they went out, and showed that they were loath to part. Finally sentence was passed on Thorodd himself, and when he heard it, he rose and said: "Little peace I find here, and let us all flee now," and went out after that. Then Kjartan and the others entered and the priest carried holy water and sacred relics over all the house. Later on in the day he held solemn service, and after this all the hauntings and ghost-walkings at Fródá ceased, while Thurid recovered from her sickness and became well again.

CHAPTER XIV

Spiritualistic Floating Hands. Hands in Haunted Houses. Jerome Cardan's Tale. "The Cold Hand." The Beach-comber's Tale. "The Black Dogs and the Thumbless Hand." The Pakeha Maori and "The Leprous Hand". "The Hand of the Ghost that Bit."

HANDS ALL ROUND

Nothing was more common, in the *séances* of Home, the “Medium,” than the appearance of “Spirit hands”. If these were made of white kid gloves, stuffed, the idea, at least, was borrowed from ghost stories, in which ghostly hands, with no visible bodies, are not unusual. We see them in the Shchapoff case, at Rerrick, and in other haunted houses. Here are some tales of Hands, old or new.

THE COLD HAND

A story which my father used often to tell: “I was brought up,” he said, “in the house of Joannes Resta, and therein taught Latin to his three sons; when I left them I supported myself on my own means. It chanced that one of these lads, while I was studying medicine, fell deadly sick, he being now a young man grown, and I was called in to be with the youth, partly for my knowledge of medicine, partly for old friendship’s sake. The master of the house happened to be absent; the patient slept in an upper chamber, one of his brothers and I in a lower room, the third brother, Isidore, was not at home. Each of the rooms was next to a turret; turrets being common in that city. When we went to bed on the first night of my visit, I heard a constant knocking on the wall of the room.

“‘What is that?’ I said.

“‘Don’t be afraid, it is only a familiar spirit,’ said my companion. ‘They call them *follets*; it is harmless enough, and seldom so troublesome as it is now: I don’t know what can be the matter with it.’

“The young fellow went to sleep, but I was kept awake for a while, wondering and observing. After half an hour of stillness I felt a thumb press on my head, and a sense of cold. I kept watching; the forefinger, the middle finger, and the rest of the hand were next laid on, the little finger nearly reaching my forehead. The hand was like that of a boy of ten, to guess by the size, and so cold that it was extremely unpleasant. Meantime I was chuckling over my luck in such an opportunity of witnessing a wonder, and I listened eagerly.

“The hand stole with the ring finger foremost over my face and down my nose, it was slipping into my mouth, and two finger-tips had entered, when I threw it off with my right hand, thinking it was uncanny, and not relishing it inside my body. Silence followed and I lay awake, distrusting the spectre more or less. In about half an hour it returned and repeated its former conduct, touching me very lightly, yet very chilly. When it reached my mouth I again drove it away. Though my lips were tightly closed, I felt an extreme icy cold in my teeth. I now got out of bed, thinking this might be a friendly visit from the ghost of the sick lad upstairs, who must have died.

“As I went to the door, the thing passed before me, rapping on the walls. When I was got to the door it knocked outside; when I opened the door, it began to knock on the turret. The moon was shining; I went on to see what would happen, but it beat on the other sides of the tower, and, as it always evaded me, I went up to see how my patient was. He was alive, but very weak.

"As I was speaking to those who stood about his bed, we heard a noise as if the house was falling. In rushed my bedfellow, the brother of the sick lad, half dead with terror.

"'When you got up,' he said, 'I felt a cold hand on my back. I thought it was you who wanted to waken me and take me to see my brother, so I pretended to be asleep and lay quiet, supposing that you would go alone when you found me so sound asleep. But when I did not feel you get up, and the cold hand grew to be more than I could bear, I hit out to push your hand away, and felt your place empty — but warm. Then I remembered the *follet*, and ran upstairs as hard as I could put my feet to the ground: never was I in such a fright!'

"The sick lad died on the following night."

Here Carden the elder stopped, and Jerome, his son, philosophised on the subject.

Miss Dendy, on the authority of Mr. Elijah Cope, an itinerant preacher, gives this anecdote of similar familiarity with a *follet* in Staffordshire.

*

"Fairies! I went into a farmhouse to stay a night, and in the evening there came a knocking in the room as if some one had struck the table. I jumped up. My hostess got up and 'Good-night,' says she, 'I'm off'. 'But what was it?' says I. 'Just a poor old fairy,' says she; 'Old Nancy. She's a poor old thing; been here ever so long; lost her husband and her children; it's bad to be left like that, all alone. I leave a bit o' cake on the table for her, and sometimes she fetches it, and sometimes she don't."

THE BLACK DOG AND THE THUMBLESS HAND

"Have the natives the custom of walking through fire?" said my friend the Beach-comber, in answer to a question of mine. "Not that I know of. In fact the soles of their feet are so thick-skinned that they would think nothing of it."

"Then have they any spiritualistic games, like the Burmans and Maories? I have a lot of yarns about them."

"They are too jolly well frightened of bush spirits to invite them to tea," said the Beach-comber. "I knew a fellow who got a bit of land merely by whistling up and down in it at nightfall. They think spirits whistle. No, I don't fancy they go in for *séances*. But we once had some, we white men, in one of the islands. Not the Oui-ouis" (native name for the French), "real white men. And that led to Bolter's row with me."

"What about?"

"Oh, about his young woman. I told her the story; it was thoughtless, and yet I don't know that I was wrong. After all, Bolter could not have been a comfortable fellow to marry."

In this opinion readers of the Beach-comber's narrative will probably agree, I fancy.

"Bad moral character?"

"Not that I know of. Queer fish; kept queer company. Even if she was ever so fond of dogs, I don't think a girl would have cared for Bolter's kennel. Not in her bedroom anyway."

"But she could surely have got him to keep them outside, however doggy he was?"

"He was not doggy a bit. I don't know that Bolter ever saw the black dogs himself. He certainly never told me so. It is that beastly Thumbless Hand, no woman could have stood it, not to mention the chance of catching cold when it pulled the blankets off."

"What on earth are you talking about? I can understand a man attended by black dogs that nobody sees but himself. The Catholics tell it of John Knox, and of another Reformer, a fellow called Smeaton. Moreover, it is common in delirium tremens. But you say Bolter didn't see the dogs?"

"No, not so far as he told me, but I did, and other fellows, when with Bolter. Bolter was asleep; he didn't see anything. Also the Hand, which was a good deal worse. I don't know if he ever saw it. But he was jolly nervous, and he had heard of it."

The habits of the Beach-comber are absolutely temperate, otherwise my astonishment would have been less, and I should have regarded all these phenomena as subjective.

"Tell me about it all, old cock," I said.

"I'm sure I told you last time I was at home."

"Never; my memory for yarns is only too good. I hate a chestnut."

"Well, here goes! Mind you I don't profess to explain the thing; only I don't think I did wrong in telling the young woman, for, however you account for it, it was not nice."

"A good many years ago there came to the island, as a clerk, *un nommé* Bolter, English or Jew."

"His name is not Jewish."

"No, and I really don't know about his breed. The most curious thing about his appearance was his eyes: they were large, black, and had a peculiar dull dead lustre."

"Did they shine in the dark? I knew a fellow at Oxford whose eyes did. Chairs ran after him."

"I never noticed; I don't remember. 'Psychically,' as you superstitious muffs call it, Bolter was still more queer. At that time we were all gone on spirit-rapping. Bolter turned out a great acquisition, 'medium,' or what not. Mind you, I'm not saying Bolter was straight. In the dark he'd tell you what you had in your hand, exact time of your watch, and so on. I didn't take stock in this, and one night brought some photographs with me, and asked for a description of them. This he gave correctly, winding up by saying, 'The one nearest your body is that of—'"

Here my friend named a person well known to both of us, whose name I prefer not to introduce here. This person, I may add, had never been in or near the island, and was totally unknown to Bolter.

"Of course," my friend went on, "the photographs were all the time inside my pocket. Now, really, Bolter had some mystic power of seeing in the dark."

"Hyperæsthesia!" said I.

"Hypercriticism!" said the Beach-comber.

"What happened next *might* be hyperæsthesia — I suppose you mean abnormal intensity of the senses — but how could hyperæsthesia see through a tweed coat and lining?"

"Well, what happened next?"

"Bolter's firm used to get sheep by every mail from — , and send them regularly to their station, six miles off. One time they landed late in the afternoon, and yet were foolishly sent off, Bolter in charge. I said at the time he would lose half the lot, as it would be dark long before he could reach the station. He didn’t lose them!

“Next day I met one of the niggers who was sent to lend him a hand, and asked results.

“‘Master,’ said the nigger, ‘Bolter is a devil! He sees at night. When the sheep ran away to right or left in the dark, he told us where to follow.’”

“He *heard* them, I suppose,” said I.

“Maybe, but you must be sharp to have sharper senses than these niggers. Anyhow, that was not Bolter’s account of it. When I saw him and spoke to him he said simply, ‘Yes, that when excited or interested to seek or find anything in obscurity the object became covered with a dim glow of light, which rendered it visible’. ‘But things in a pocket.’ ‘That also,’ said he. ‘Curious isn’t it? Probably the Röntgen rays are implicated therein, eh?’”

“Did you ever read Dr. Gregory’s *Letters on Animal Magnetism*?”

“The cove that invented Gregory’s Mixture?”

“Yes.”

“Beast he must have been. No, I never read him.”

“He says that Major Buckley’s hypnotised subjects saw hidden objects in a blue light — mottoes inside a nut, for example.”

“Röntgen rays, for a fiver! But Bolter said nothing about seeing *blue* light. Well, after three or four *séances* Bolter used to be very nervous and unwilling to sleep alone, so I once went with him to his one-roomed hut. We turned into the same bed. I was awakened later by a noise and movement in the room. Found the door open; the full moon streaming in, making light like day, and the place full of great big black dogs — well, anyhow there were four or five! They were romping about, seemingly playing. One jumped on the bed, another rubbed his muzzle on mine! (the bed was low, and I slept outside). Now I never had anything but love for dogs of any kind, and as — *n’est-ce pas*? — love casts out fear, I simply got up, turned them all out, shut the door, and turned in again myself. Of course my idea was that they were flesh and blood, and I allude to physical fear.

“I slept, but was anew awakened by a ghastly feeling that the blanket was being dragged and creeping off the bed. I pulled it up again, but anew began the slow movement of descent.

“Rather surprised, I pulled it up afresh and held it, and must have dozed off, as I suppose. Awoke, to feel it being pulled again; it was slipping, slipping, and then with a sudden, violent jerk it was thrown on the floor. *Il faut dire* that during all this I had glanced several times at Bolter, who seemed profoundly asleep. But now alarmed I tried to wake him. In vain, he slept like the dead; his face, always a pasty white, now like marble in the moonlight. After some hesitation I put the blanket back on the bed and held it fast. The pulling at once began and increased in strength, and I, by this time thoroughly alarmed, put all my strength against it, and hung on like grim death.

"To get a better hold I had taken a turn over my head (or perhaps simply to hide), when suddenly I felt a pressure outside on my body, and a movement like fingers — they gradually approached my head. Mad with fear I chucked off the blanket, grasped a Hand, gazed on it for one moment in silent horror, and threw it away! No wonder, it was attached to no arm or body, it was hairy and dark coloured, the fingers were short, blunt, with long, claw-like nails, and it was minus a thumb! Too frightened to get up I had to stop in bed, and, I suppose, fell to sleep again, after fresh vain attempts to awaken Bolter. Next morning I told him about it. He said several men who had thus passed the night with him had seen this hand. 'But,' added he, 'it's lucky you didn't have the big black dogs also.' *Tableau*!

"I was to have slept again with him next night to look further into the matter, but a friend of his came from — that day, so I could not renew the experiment, as I had fully determined to do. By-the-bye, I was troubled for months after by the same feeling that the clothes were being pulled off the bed.

"And that's the yarn of the Black Dogs and the Thumbless Hand."

"I think," said I, "that you did no harm in telling Bolter's young woman."

"I never thought of it when I told her, or of her interest in the kennel; but, by George, she soon broke off her engagement."

"Did you know Manning, the Pakeha Maori, the fellow who wrote *Old New Zealand*?"

"No, what about him?"

"He did not put it in his book, but he told the same yarn, without the dogs, as having happened to himself. He saw the whole arm, and *the hand was leprous*."

"Ugh!" said the Beach-comber.

"Next morning he was obliged to view the body of an old Maori, who had been murdered in his garden the night before. That old man's hand was the hand he saw. I know a room in an old house in England where plucking off the bed-clothes goes on, every now and then, and has gone on as long as the present occupants have been there. But I only heard lately, and *they* only heard from me, that the same thing used to occur, in the same room and no other, in the last generation, when another family lived there."

"Anybody see anything?"

"No, only footsteps are heard creeping up, before the twitches come off."

“And what do the people do?”

“Nothing! We set a camera once to photograph the spook. He did not sit.”

“It’s rum!” said the Beach-comber. “But mind you, as to spooks, I don’t believe a word of it.”

THE GHOST THAT BIT

The idiot Scotch laird in the story would not let the dentist put his fingers into his mouth, “for I’m feared ye’ll bite me”. The following anecdote proves that a ghost may entertain a better founded alarm on this score. A correspondent of *Notes and Queries* (3rd Sept., 1864) is responsible for the narrative, given “almost *verbatim* from the lips of the lady herself,” a person of tried veracity.

“Emma S — , one of seven children, was sleeping alone, with her face towards the west, at a large house near C — , in the Staffordshire moorlands. As she had given orders to her maid to call her at an early hour, she was not surprised at being awakened between three and four on a fine August morning in 1840 by a sharp tapping at her door, when in spite of a “thank you, I hear,” to the first and second raps, with the third came a rush of wind, which caused the curtains to be drawn up in the centre of the bed. She became annoyed, and sitting up called out, “Marie, what are you about?”

Instead, however, of her servant, she was astonished to see the face of an aunt by marriage peering above and between the curtains, and at the same moment — whether unconsciously she threw forward her arms, or whether they were drawn forward, as it were, in a vortex of air, she cannot be sure — one of her thumbs was sensibly pressed between the teeth of the apparition, though no mark afterwards remained on it. All this notwithstanding, she remained collected and unalarmed; but instantly arose, dressed, and went downstairs, where she found not a creature stirring. Her father, on coming down shortly afterwards, naturally asked what had made her rise so early; rallied her on the cause, and soon afterwards went on to his sister-in-law’s house, where he found that she had just unexpectedly died. Coming back again, and not noticing his daughter’s presence in the room, in consequence of her being behind a screen near the fire, he suddenly announced the event to his wife, as being of so remarkable a character that he could in no way account for it. As may be anticipated, Emma, overhearing this unlooked-for *denouement* of her dream, at once fell to the ground in a fainting condition.

On one of the thumbs of the corpse was found a mark as if it had been bitten in the death agony.

We have now followed the “ghostly” from its germs in dreams, and momentary hallucinations of eye or ear, up to the most prodigious narratives which popular invention has built on bases probably very slight. Where facts and experience, whether real or hallucinatory experience, end, where the mythopœic fancy comes in, readers may decide for themselves.

ARABIAN NIGHTS

This is the title of a collection of Middle Eastern and South Asian stories and folk tales, originally compiled in Arabic during the Islamic Golden Age. The collection is often known in English as *The Arabian Nights*, from the first English language edition published in 1706. The tales were collected over many centuries by various authors, translators and scholars across the Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa. The tales themselves trace their roots back to ancient and medieval Arabic, Persian, Indian, Turkish, Egyptian and Mesopotamian folklore and literature. In particular, many tales were originally folk stories from the Caliphate era, while others, especially the frame story, are most probably drawn from the Pahlavi Persian work.

The collection features some of the most famous adventure stories ever told, including tales of Aladdin, Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves and the Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor.

The main frame story concerns a Persian king and his new bride. He is shocked to discover that his brother’s wife is unfaithful; discovering his own wife’s infidelity has been even more flagrant, he has her executed: but in his bitterness and grief decides that all women are the same. The king, Shahryar, begins to marry a succession of virgins only to execute each one the next morning, before she has a chance to dishonour him. Eventually the vizier, whose duty it is to provide them, cannot find any more virgins. Scheherazade, the vizier’s daughter, offers herself as the next bride and her father reluctantly agrees. On the night of their marriage, Scheherazade begins to tell the king a tale, but does not end it. The king is thus forced to postpone her execution in order to hear the conclusion. The next night, as soon as she finishes the tale, she begins (and only begins) a new one, and the king, eager to hear the conclusion, postpones her execution once again. So it goes on for 1,001 nights.

Lang published this collection of *Arabian Nights* stories in 1898, receiving critical acclaim.

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THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

Preface

The stories in the Fairy Books have generally been such as old women in country places tell to their grandchildren. Nobody knows how old they are, or who told them first. The children of Ham, Shem and Japhet may have listened to them in the Ark, on wet days. Hector’s little boy may have heard them in Troy Town, for it is certain that Homer knew them, and that some of them were written down in Egypt about the time of Moses.

People in different countries tell them differently, but they are always the same stories, really, whether among little Zulus, at the Cape, or little Eskimo, near the North Pole. The changes are only in matters of manners and customs; such as wearing clothes or not, meeting lions who talk in the warm countries, or talking bears in the cold countries. There are plenty of kings and queens in the fairy tales, just because long ago there were plenty of kings in the country. A gentleman who would be a squire now was a kind of king in Scotland in very old times, and the same in other places. These old stories, never forgotten, were taken down in writing in different ages, but mostly in this century, in all sorts of languages. These ancient stories are the contents of the Fairy books.

Now “The Arabian Nights,” some of which, but not nearly all, are given in this volume, are only fairy tales of the East. The people of Asia, Arabia, and Persia told them in their own way, not for children, but for grown-up people. There were no novels then, nor any printed books, of course; but there were people whose profession it was to amuse men and women by telling tales. They dressed the fairy stories up, and made the characters good Mahommedans, living in Bagdad or India. The events were often supposed to happen in the reign of the great Caliph, or ruler of the Faithful, Haroun al Raschid, who lived in Bagdad in 786-808 A.D. The vizir who accompanies the Caliph was also a real person of the great family of the Barmecides. He was put to death by the Caliph in a very cruel way, nobody ever knew why. The stories must have been told in their present shape a good long while after the Caliph died, when nobody knew very exactly what had really happened. At last some storyteller thought of writing down the tales, and fixing them into a kind of framework, as if they had all been narrated to a cruel Sultan by his wife. Probably the tales were written down about the time when Edward I. was fighting Robert Bruce. But changes were made in them at different times, and a great deal that is very dull and stupid was put in, and plenty of verses. Neither the verses nor the dull pieces are given in this book.

People in France and England knew almost nothing about “The Arabian Nights” till the reigns of Queen Anne and George I., when they were translated into French by Monsieur Galland. Grown-up people were then very fond of fairy tales, and they thought these Arab stories the best that they had ever read. They were delighted with Ghouls (who lived among the tombs) and Geni, who seemed to be a kind of ogres, and with Princesses who work magic spells, and with Peris, who are Arab fairies. Sindbad had adventures which perhaps came out of the Odyssey of Homer; in fact, all the East had contributed its wonders, and sent them to Europe in one parcel. Young men once made a noise at Monsieur Galland’s windows in the dead of night, and asked him to tell them one of his marvellous tales. Nobody talked of anything but dervishes and vizirs, rocs and peris. The stories were translated from French into all languages, and only Bishop Atterbury complained that the tales were not likely to be true, and had no moral. The bishop was presently banished for being on the side of Prince Charlie’s father, and had leisure to repent of being so solemn.

In this book “The Arabian Nights” are translated from the French version of Monsieur Galland, who dropped out the poetry and a great deal of what the Arabian authors thought funny, though it seems wearisome to us. In this book the stories are shortened here and there, and omissions are made of pieces only suitable for Arabs and old gentlemen. The translations are by the writers of the tales in the Fairy Books, and the pictures are by Mr. Ford.

I can remember reading “The Arabian Nights” when I was six years old, in dirty yellow old volumes of small type with no pictures, and I hope children who read them with Mr. Ford’s pictures will be as happy as I was then in the company of Aladdin and Sindbad the Sailor.

The Arabian Nights

In the chronicles of the ancient dynasty of the Sassanidae, who reigned for about four hundred years, from Persia to the borders of China, beyond the great river Ganges itself, we read the praises of one of the kings of this race, who was said to be the best monarch of his time. His subjects loved him, and his neighbors feared him, and when he died he left his kingdom in a more prosperous and powerful condition than any king had done before him.

The two sons who survived him loved each other tenderly, and it was a real grief to the elder, Schahriar, that the laws of the empire forbade him to share his dominions with his brother Schahzeman. Indeed, after ten years, during which this state of things had not ceased to trouble him, Schahriar cut off the country of Great Tartary from the Persian Empire and made his brother king.

Now the Sultan Schahriar had a wife whom he loved more than all the world, and his greatest happiness was to surround her with splendour, and to give her the finest dresses and the most beautiful jewels. It was therefore with the deepest shame and sorrow that he accidentally discovered, after several years, that she had deceived him completely, and her whole conduct turned out to have been so bad, that he felt himself obliged to carry out the law of the land, and order the grand-vizir to put her to death. The blow was so heavy that his mind almost gave way, and he declared that he was quite sure that at bottom all women were as wicked as the sultana, if you could only find them out, and that the fewer the world contained the better. So every evening he married a fresh wife and had her strangled the following morning before the grand-vizir, whose duty it was to provide these unhappy brides for the Sultan. The poor man fulfilled his task with reluctance, but there was no escape, and every day saw a girl married and a wife dead.

This behaviour caused the greatest horror in the town, where nothing was heard but cries and lamentations. In one house was a father weeping for the loss of his daughter, in another perhaps a mother trembling for the fate of her child; and instead of the blessings that had formerly been heaped on the Sultan’s head, the air was now full of curses.

The grand-vizir himself was the father of two daughters, of whom the elder was called Scheherazade, and the younger Dinarzade. Dinarzade had no particular gifts to distinguish her from other girls, but her sister was clever and courageous in the highest degree. Her father had given her the best masters in philosophy, medicine, history and the fine arts, and besides all this, her beauty excelled that of any girl in the kingdom of Persia.

One day, when the grand-vizir was talking to his eldest daughter, who was his delight and pride, Scheherazade said to him, “Father, I have a favour to ask of you. Will you grant it to me?”

“I can refuse you nothing,” replied he, “that is just and reasonable.”

“Then listen,” said Scheherazade. “I am determined to stop this barbarous practice of the Sultan’s, and to deliver the girls and mothers from the awful fate that hangs over them.”

“It would be an excellent thing to do,” returned the grand-vizir, “but how do you propose to accomplish it?”

“My father,” answered Scheherazade, “it is you who have to provide the Sultan daily with a fresh wife, and I implore you, by all the affection you bear me, to allow the honour to fall upon me.”

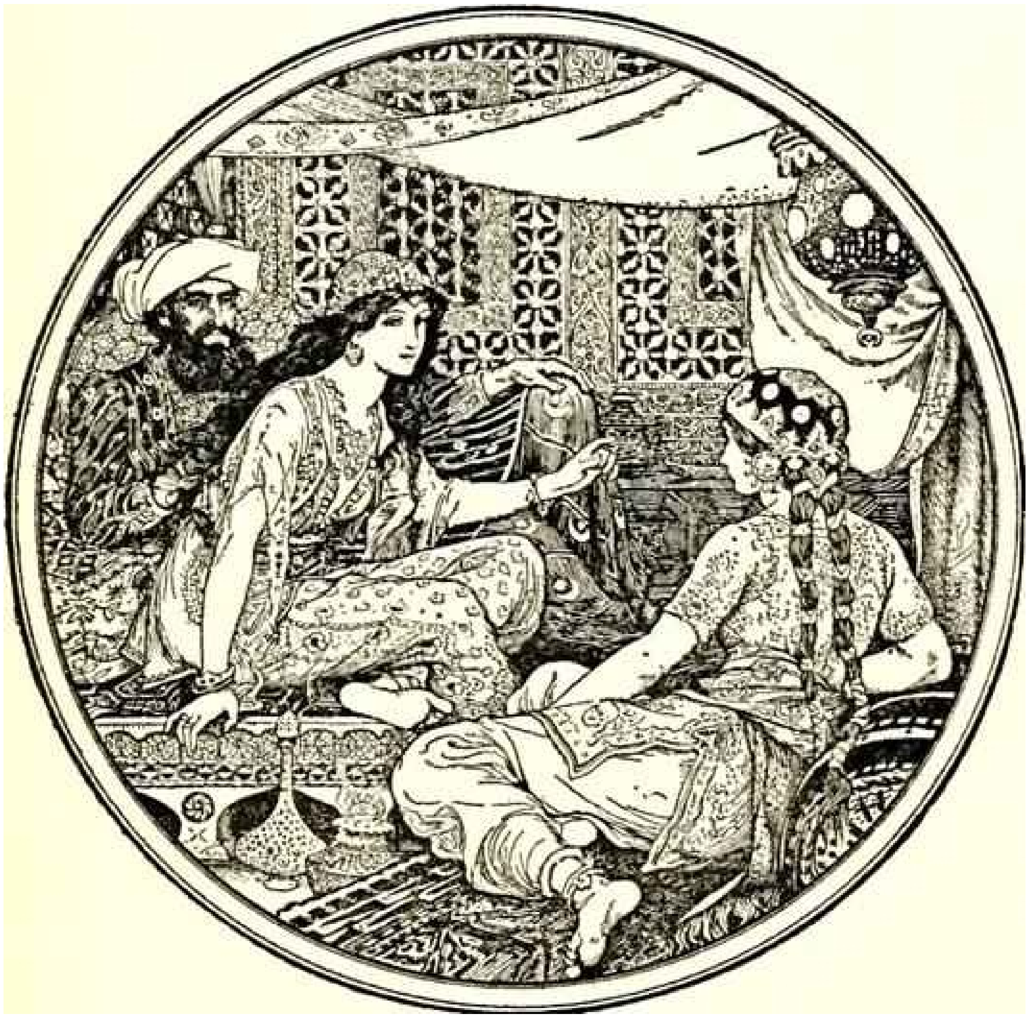

“Have you lost your senses?” cried the grand-vizir, starting back in horror. “What has put such a thing into your head? You ought to know by this time what it means to be the sultan’s bride!”

“Yes, my father, I know it well,” replied she, “and I am not afraid to think of it. If I fail, my death will be a glorious one, and if I succeed I shall have done a great service to my country.”

“It is of no use,” said the grand-vizir, “I shall never consent. If the Sultan was to order me to plunge a dagger in your heart, I should have to obey. What a task for a father! Ah, if you do not fear death, fear at any rate the anguish you would cause me.”

“Once again, my father,” said Scheherazade, “will you grant me what I ask?”

“What, are you still so obstinate?” exclaimed the grand-vizir. “Why are you so resolved upon your own ruin?”

But the maiden absolutely refused to attend to her father’s words, and at length, in despair, the grand-vizir was obliged to give way, and went sadly to the palace to tell the Sultan that the following evening he would bring him Scheherazade.

The Sultan received this news with the greatest astonishment.

“How have you made up your mind,” he asked, “to sacrifice your own daughter to me?”

“Sire,” answered the grand-vizir, “it is her own wish. Even the sad fate that awaits her could not hold her back.”

“Let there be no mistake, vizir,” said the Sultan. “Remember you will have to take her life yourself. If you refuse, I swear that your head shall pay forfeit.”

“Sire,” returned the vizir. “Whatever the cost, I will obey you. Though a father, I am also your subject.” So the Sultan told the grand-vizir he might bring his daughter as soon as he liked.

The vizir took back this news to Scheherazade, who received it as if it had been the most pleasant thing in the world. She thanked her father warmly for yielding to her wishes, and, seeing him still bowed down with grief, told him that she hoped he would never repent having allowed her to marry the Sultan. Then she went to prepare herself for the marriage, and begged that her sister Dinarzade should be sent for to speak to her.

When they were alone, Scheherazade addressed her thus:

“My dear sister; I want your help in a very important affair. My father is going to take me to the palace to celebrate my marriage with the Sultan. When his Highness receives me, I shall beg him, as a last favour, to let you sleep in our chamber, so that I may have your company during the last night I am alive. If, as

I hope, he grants me my wish, be sure that you wake me an hour before the dawn, and speak to me in these words: ‘My sister, if you are not asleep, I beg you, before the sun rises, to tell me one of your charming stories.’ Then I shall begin, and I hope by this means to deliver the people from the terror that reigns over them.” Dinarzade replied that she would do with pleasure what her sister wished.

When the usual hour arrived the grand-vizir conducted Scheherazade to the palace, and left her alone with the Sultan, who bade her raise her veil and was amazed at her beauty. But seeing her eyes full of tears, he asked what was the matter. “Sire,” replied Scheherazade, “I have a sister who loves me as tenderly as I love her. Grant me the favour of allowing her to sleep this night in the same room, as it is the last we shall be together.” Schahriar consented to Scheherazade’s petition and Dinarzade was sent for.

An hour before daybreak Dinarzade awoke, and exclaimed, as she had promised, “My dear sister, if you are not asleep, tell me I pray you, before the sun rises, one of your charming stories. It is the last time that I shall have the pleasure of hearing you.”

Scheherazade did not answer her sister, but turned to the Sultan. “Will your highness permit me to do as my sister asks?” said she.

“Willingly,” he answered. So Scheherazade began.

The Story of the Merchant and the Genius

Sire, there was once upon a time a merchant who possessed great wealth, in land and merchandise, as well as in ready money. He was obliged from time to time to take journeys to arrange his affairs. One day, having to go a long way from home, he mounted his horse, taking with him a small wallet in which he had put a few biscuits and dates, because he had to pass through the desert where no food was to be got. He arrived without any mishap, and, having finished his business, set out on his return. On the fourth day of his journey, the heat of the sun being very great, he turned out of his road to rest under some trees. He found at the foot of a large walnut-tree a fountain of clear and running water. He dismounted, fastened his horse to a branch of the tree, and sat by the fountain, after having taken from his wallet some of his dates and biscuits. When he had finished this frugal meal he washed his face and hands in the fountain.

When he was thus employed he saw an enormous genius, white with rage, coming towards him, with a scimitar in his hand.

“Arise,” he cried in a terrible voice, “and let me kill you as you have killed my son!”

As he uttered these words he gave a frightful yell. The merchant, quite as much terrified at the hideous face of the monster as at his words, answered him tremblingly, “Alas, good sir, what can I have done to you to deserve death?”

“I shall kill you,” repeated the genius, “as you have killed my son.”

“But,” said the merchant, “how can I have killed your son? I do not know him, and I have never even seen him.”

“When you arrived here did you not sit down on the ground?” asked the genius, “and did you not take some dates from your wallet, and whilst eating them did not you throw the stones about?”

“Yes,” said the merchant, “I certainly did so.”

“Then,” said the genius, “I tell you you have killed my son, for whilst you were throwing about the stones, my son passed by, and one of them struck him in the eye and killed him. So I shall kill you.”

“Ah, sir, forgive me!” cried the merchant.

“I will have no mercy on you,” answered the genius.

“But I killed your son quite unintentionally, so I implore you to spare my life.”

“No,” said the genius, “I shall kill you as you killed my son,” and so saying, he seized the merchant by the arm, threw him on the ground, and lifted his sabre to cut off his head.

The merchant, protesting his innocence, bewailed his wife and children, and tried pitifully to avert his fate. The genius, with his raised scimitar, waited till he had finished, but was not in the least touched.

Scheherazade, at this point, seeing that it was day, and knowing that the Sultan always rose very early to attend the council, stopped speaking.

"Indeed, sister," said Dinarzade, "this is a wonderful story."

"The rest is still more wonderful," replied Scheherazade, "and you would say so, if the sultan would allow me to live another day, and would give me leave to tell it to you the next night."

Schahriar, who had been listening to Scheherazade with pleasure, said to himself, "I will wait till to-morrow; I can always have her killed when I have heard the end of her story."

All this time the grand-vizir was in a terrible state of anxiety. But he was much delighted when he saw the Sultan enter the council-chamber without giving the terrible command that he was expecting.

The next morning, before the day broke, Dinarzade said to her sister, "Dear sister, if you are awake I pray you to go on with your story."

The Sultan did not wait for Scheherazade to ask his leave. "Finish," said he, "the story of the genius and the merchant. I am curious to hear the end."

So Scheherazade went on with the story. This happened every morning. The Sultana told a story, and the Sultan let her live to finish it.

When the merchant saw that the genius was determined to cut off his head, he said: "One word more, I entreat you. Grant me a little delay; just a short time to go home and bid my wife and children farewell, and to make my will. When I have done this I will come back here, and you shall kill me."

"But," said the genius, "if I grant you the delay you ask, I am afraid that you will not come back."

"I give you my word of honour," answered the merchant, "that I will come back without fail."

"How long do you require?" asked the genius.

"I ask you for a year's grace," replied the merchant. "I promise you that to-morrow twelvemonth, I shall be waiting under these trees to give myself up to you."

On this the genius left him near the fountain and disappeared.

The merchant, having recovered from his fright, mounted his horse and went on his road.

When he arrived home his wife and children received him with the greatest joy. But instead of embracing them he began to weep so bitterly that they soon guessed that something terrible was the matter.

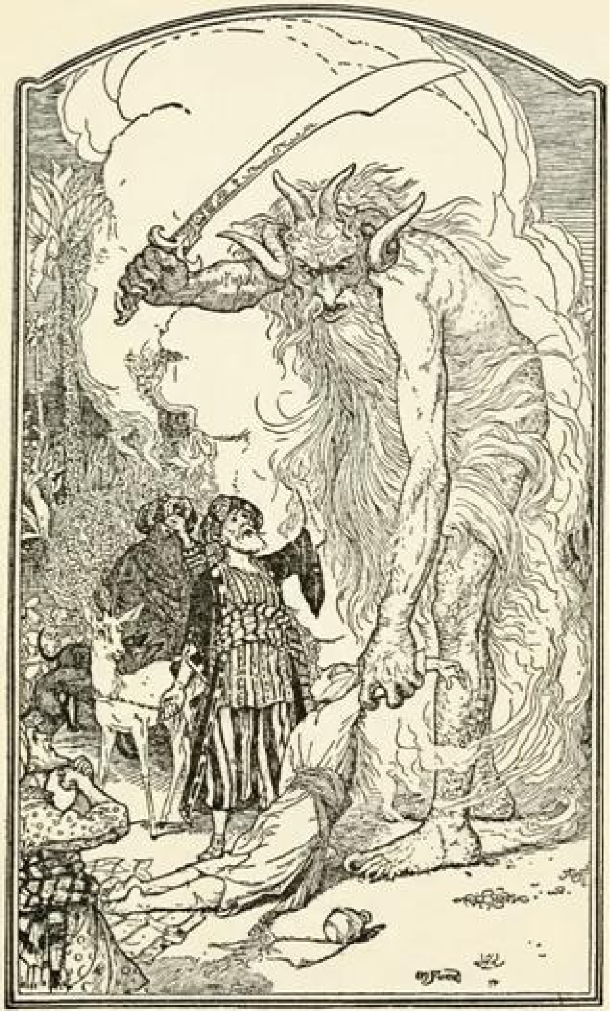

“Tell us, I pray you,” said his wife, “what has happened.”

“Alas!” answered her husband, “I have only a year to live.”

Then he told them what had passed between him and the genius, and how he had given his word to return at the end of a year to be killed. When they heard this sad news they were in despair, and wept much.

The next day the merchant began to settle his affairs, and first of all to pay his debts. He gave presents to his friends, and large alms to the poor. He set his slaves at liberty, and provided for his wife and children. The year soon passed away, and he was obliged to depart. When he tried to say good-bye he was quite overcome with grief, and with difficulty tore himself away. At length he reached the place where he had first seen the genius, on the very day that he had appointed. He dismounted, and sat down at the edge of the fountain, where he awaited the genius in terrible suspense.

Whilst he was thus waiting an old man leading a hind came towards him. They greeted one another, and then the old man said to him, “May I ask, brother, what brought you to this desert place, where there are so many evil genii about? To see these beautiful trees one would imagine it was inhabited, but it is a dangerous place to stop long in.”

The merchant told the old man why he was obliged to come there. He listened in astonishment.

“This is a most marvellous affair. I should like to be a witness of your interview with the genius.” So saying he sat down by the merchant.

While they were talking another old man came up, followed by two black dogs. He greeted them, and asked what they were doing in this place. The old man who was leading the hind told him the adventure of the merchant and the genius. The second old man had not sooner heard the story than he, too, decided to stay there to see what would happen. He sat down by the others, and was talking, when a third old man arrived. He asked why the merchant who was with them looked so sad. They told him the story, and he also resolved to see what would pass between the genius and the merchant, so waited with the rest.

They soon saw in the distance a thick smoke, like a cloud of dust. This smoke came nearer and nearer, and then, all at once, it vanished, and they saw the genius, who, without speaking to them, approached the merchant, sword in hand, and, taking him by the arm, said, “Get up and let me kill you as you killed my son.”

The merchant and the three old men began to weep and groan.

Then the old man leading the hind threw himself at the monster’s feet and said, “O Prince of the Genii, I beg of you to stay your fury and to listen to me. I am going to tell you my story and that of the hind I have with me, and if you find it more marvellous than that of the merchant whom you are about to kill, I hope that you will do away with a third part of his punishment?”

The genius considered some time, and then he said, “Very well, I agree to this.”

The Story of the First Old Man and of the Hind

I am now going to begin my story (said the old man), so please attend.

This hind that you see with me is my wife. We have no children of our own, therefore I adopted the son of a favorite slave, and determined to make him my heir.

My wife, however, took a great dislike to both mother and child, which she concealed from me till too late. When my adopted son was about ten years old I was obliged to go on a journey. Before I went I entrusted to my wife's keeping both the mother and child, and begged her to take care of them during my absence, which lasted a whole year. During this time she studied magic in order to carry out her wicked scheme. When she had learnt enough she took my son into a distant place and changed him into a calf. Then she gave him to my steward, and told him to look after a calf she had bought. She also changed the slave into a cow, which she sent to my steward.

When I returned I inquired after my slave and the child. "Your slave is dead," she said, "and as for your son, I have not seen him for two months, and I do not know where he is."

I was grieved to hear of my slave's death, but as my son had only disappeared, I thought I should soon find him. Eight months, however, passed, and still no tidings of him; then the feast of Bairam came.

To celebrate it I ordered my steward to bring me a very fat cow to sacrifice. He did so. The cow that he brought was my unfortunate slave. I bound her, but just as I was about to kill her she began to low most piteously, and I saw that her eyes were streaming with tears. It seemed to me most extraordinary, and, feeling a movement of pity, I ordered the steward to lead her away and bring another. My wife, who was present, scoffed at my compassion, which made her malice of no avail. "What are you doing?" she cried. "Kill this cow. It is the best we have to sacrifice."

To please her, I tried again, but again the animal's lows and tears disarmed me.

"Take her away," I said to the steward, "and kill her; I cannot."

The steward killed her, but on skinning her found that she was nothing but bones, although she appeared so fat. I was vexed.

"Keep her for yourself," I said to the steward, "and if you have a fat calf, bring that in her stead."

In a short time he brought a very fat calf, which, although I did not know it, was my son. It tried hard to break its cord and come to me. It threw itself at my feet, with its head on the ground, as if it wished to excite my pity, and to beg me not to take away its life.

I was even more surprised and touched at this action than I had been at the tears of the cow.

“Go,” I said to the steward, “take back this calf, take great care of it, and bring me another in its place instantly.”

As soon as my wife heard me speak this she at once cried out, “What are you doing, husband? Do not sacrifice any calf but this.”

“Wife,” I answered, “I will not sacrifice this calf,” and in spite of all her remonstrances, I remained firm.

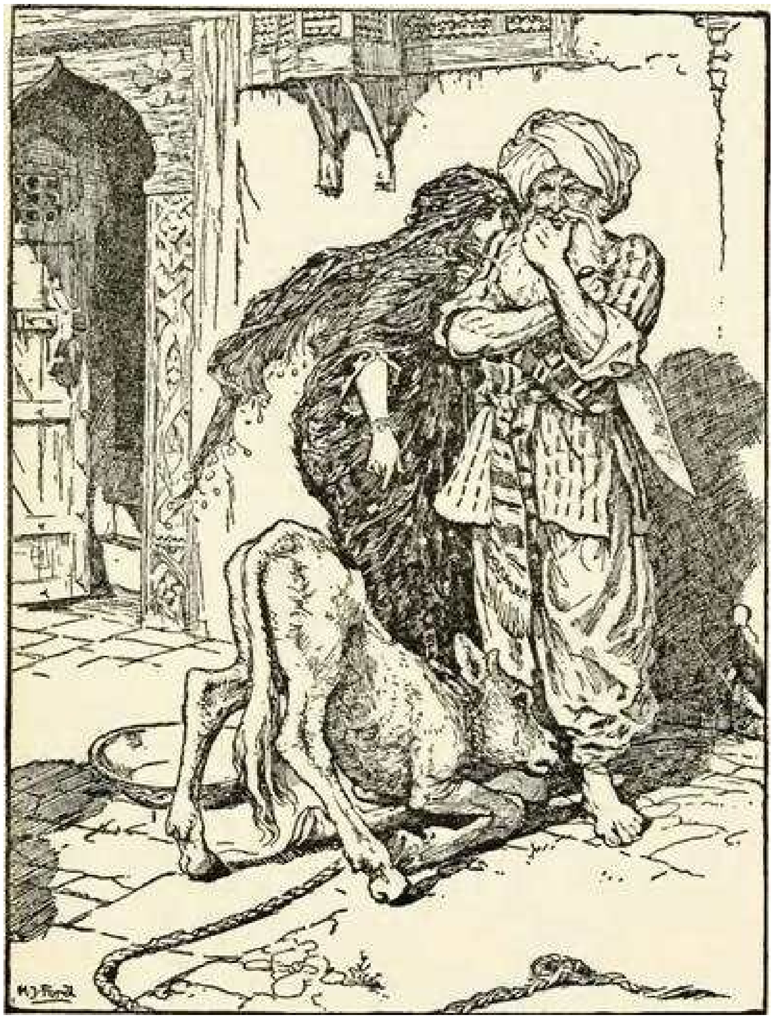

I had another calf killed; this one was led away. The next day the steward asked to speak to me in private.

"I have come," he said, "to tell you some news which I think you will like to hear. I have a daughter who knows magic. Yesterday, when I was leading back the calf which you refused to sacrifice, I noticed that she smiled, and then directly afterwards began to cry. I asked her why she did so."

"Father," she answered, "this calf is the son of our master. I smile with joy at seeing him still alive, and I weep to think of his mother, who was sacrificed yesterday as a cow. These changes have been wrought by our master's wife, who hated the mother and son."

"At these words, of Genius," continued the old man, "I leave you to imagine my astonishment. I went immediately with the steward to speak with his daughter myself. First of all I went to the stable to see my son, and he replied in his dumb way to all my caresses. When the steward's daughter came I asked her if she could change my son back to his proper shape."

"Yes, I can," she replied, "on two conditions. One is that you will give him to me for a husband, and the other is that you will let me punish the woman who changed him into a calf."

"To the first condition," I answered, "I agree with all my heart, and I will give you an ample dowry. To the second I also agree, I only beg you to spare her life."

"That I will do," she replied; "I will treat her as she treated your son."

Then she took a vessel of water and pronounced over it some words I did not understand; then, on throwing the water over him, he became immediately a young man once more.

"My son, my dear son," I exclaimed, kissing him in a transport of joy. "This kind maiden has rescued you from a terrible enchantment, and I am sure that out of gratitude you will marry her."

He consented joyfully, but before they were married, the young girl changed my wife into a hind, and it is she whom you see before you. I wished her to have this form rather than a stranger one, so that we could see her in the family without repugnance.

Since then my son has become a widower and has gone travelling. I am now going in search of him, and not wishing to confide my wife to the care of other people, I am taking her with me. Is this not a most marvellous tale?

"It is indeed," said the genius, "and because of it I grant to you the third part of the punishment of this merchant."

When the first old man had finished his story, the second, who was leading the two black dogs, said to the genius, "I am going to tell you what happened to me, and I am sure that you will find my story even more astonishing than the one to which you have just been listening. But when I have related it, will you grant me also the third part of the merchant’s punishment?”

“Yes,” replied the genius, “provided that your story surpasses that of the hind.”

With this agreement the second old man began in this way.

The Story of the Second Old Man, and of the Two Black Dogs

Great prince of the genii, you must know that we are three brothers — these two black dogs and myself. Our father died, leaving us each a thousand sequins. With this sum we all three took up the same profession, and became merchants. A short time after we had opened our shops, my eldest brother, one of these two dogs, resolved to travel in foreign countries for the sake of merchandise. With this intention he sold all he had and bought merchandise suitable to the voyages he was about to make. He set out, and was away a whole year. At the end of this time a beggar came to my shop. “Good-day,” I said. “Good-day,” he answered; “is it possible that you do not recognise me?” Then I looked at him closely and saw he was my brother. I made him come into my house, and asked him how he had fared in his enterprise.

“Do not question me,” he replied, “see me, you see all I have. It would but renew my trouble to tell of all the misfortunes that have befallen me in a year, and have brought me to this state.”

I shut up my shop, paid him every attention, taking him to the bath, giving him my most beautiful robes. I examined my accounts, and found that I had doubled my capital — that is, that I now possessed two thousand sequins. I gave my brother half, saying: “Now, brother, you can forget your losses.” He accepted them with joy, and we lived together as we had before.

Some time afterwards my second brother wished also to sell his business and travel. My eldest brother and I did all we could to dissuade him, but it was of no use. He joined a caravan and set out. He came back at the end of a year in the same state as his elder brother. I took care of him, and as I had a thousand sequins to spare I gave them to him, and he re-opened his shop.

One day, my two brothers came to me to propose that we should make a journey and trade. At first I refused to go. “You travelled,” I said, “and what did you gain?” But they came to me repeatedly, and after having held out for five years I at last gave way. But when they had made their preparation, and they began to buy the merchandise we needed, they found they had spent every piece of the thousand sequins I had given them. I did not reproach them. I divided my six thousand sequins with them, giving a thousand to each and keeping one for myself, and the other three I buried in a corner of my house. We bought merchandise, loaded a vessel with it, and set forth with a favorable wind.

After two months' sailing we arrived at a seaport, where we disembarked and did a great trade. Then we bought the merchandise of the country, and were just going to sail once more, when I was stopped on the shore by a beautiful though poorly dressed woman. She came up to me, kissed my hand, and implored me to marry her, and take her on board. At first I refused, but she begged so hard and promised to be such a good wife to me, that at last I consented. I got her some beautiful dresses, and after having married her, we embarked and set sail. During the voyage, I discovered so many good qualities in my wife that I began to love her more and more. But my brothers began to be jealous of my prosperity, and set to work to plot against my life. One night when we were sleeping they threw my wife and myself into the sea. My wife, however, was a fairy, and so she did not let me drown, but transported me to an island. When the day dawned, she said to me,

"When I saw you on the sea-shore I took a great fancy to you, and wished to try your good nature, so I presented myself in the disguise you saw. Now I have rewarded you by saving your life. But I am very angry with your brothers, and I shall not rest till I have taken their lives."

I thanked the fairy for all that she had done for me, but I begged her not to kill my brothers.

I appeased her wrath, and in a moment she transported me from the island where we were to the roof of my house, and she disappeared a moment afterwards. I went down, and opened the doors, and dug up the three thousand sequins which I had buried. I went to the place where my shop was, opened it, and received from my fellow-merchants congratulations on my return. When I went home, I saw two black dogs who came to meet me with sorrowful faces. I was much astonished, but the fairy who reappeared said to me,

"Do not be surprised to see these dogs; they are your two brothers. I have condemned them to remain for ten years in these shapes." Then having told me where I could hear news of her, she vanished.

The ten years are nearly passed, and I am on the road to find her. As in passing I met this merchant and the old man with the hind, I stayed with them.

This is my history, O prince of genii! Do you not think it is a most marvellous one?

"Yes, indeed," replied the genius, "and I will give up to you the third of the merchant's punishment."

Then the third old man made the genius the same request as the other two had done, and the genius promised him the last third of the merchant's punishment if his story surpassed both the others.

So he told his story to the genius, but I cannot tell you what it was, as I do not know.

But I do know that it was even more marvellous than either of the others, so that the genius was astonished, and said to the third old man, “I will give up to you the third part of the merchant’s punishment. He ought to thank all three of you for having interested yourselves in his favour. But for you, he would be here no longer.”

So saying, he disappeared, to the great joy of the company. The merchant did not fail to thank his friends, and then each went on his way. The merchant returned to his wife and children, and passed the rest of his days happily with them.

“But, sire,” added Scheherazade, “however beautiful are the stories I have just told you, they cannot compare with the story of the Fisherman.”

The Story of the Fisherman

Sire, there was once upon a time a fisherman so old and so poor that he could scarcely manage to support his wife and three children. He went every day to fish very early, and each day he made a rule not to throw his nets more than four times. He started out one morning by moonlight and came to the sea-shore. He undressed and threw his nets, and as he was drawing them towards the bank he felt a great weight. He though he had caught a large fish, and he felt very pleased. But a moment afterwards, seeing that instead of a fish he only had in his nets the carcase of an ass, he was much disappointed.

Vexed with having such a bad haul, when he had mended his nets, which the carcase of the ass had broken in several places, he threw them a second time. In drawing them in he again felt a great weight, so that he thought they were full of fish. But he only found a large basket full of rubbish. He was much annoyed.

“O Fortune,” he cried, “do not trifle thus with me, a poor fisherman, who can hardly support his family!”

So saying, he threw away the rubbish, and after having washed his nets clean of the dirt, he threw them for the third time. But he only drew in stones, shells, and mud. He was almost in despair.

Then he threw his nets for the fourth time. When he thought he had a fish he drew them in with a great deal of trouble. There was no fish however, but he found a yellow pot, which by its weight seemed full of something, and he noticed that it was fastened and sealed with lead, with the impression of a seal. He was delighted. “I will sell it to the founder,” he said; “with the money I shall get for it I shall buy a measure of wheat.”

He examined the jar on all sides; he shook it to see if it would rattle. But he heard nothing, and so, judging from the impression of the seal and the lid, he thought there must be something precious inside. To find out, he took his knife, and with a little trouble he opened it. He turned it upside down, but nothing came out, which surprised him very much. He set it in front of him, and whilst he was looking at it attentively, such a thick smoke came out that he had to step back a pace or two. This smoke rose up to the clouds, and stretching over the sea and the shore, formed a thick mist, which caused the fisherman much astonishment. When all the smoke was out of the jar it gathered itself together, and became a thick mass in which appeared a genius, twice as large as the largest giant. When he saw such a terrible-looking monster, the fisherman would like to have run away, but he trembled so with fright that he could not move a step.

“Great king of the genii,” cried the monster, “I will never again disobey you!”

At these words the fisherman took courage.

“What is this you are saying, great genius? Tell me your history and how you came to be shut up in that vase.”

At this, the genius looked at the fisherman haughtily. “Speak to me more civilly,” he said, “before I kill you.”

“Alas! why should you kill me?” cried the fisherman. “I have just freed you; have you already forgotten that?”

“No,” answered the genius; “but that will not prevent me from killing you; and I am only going to grant you one favour, and that is to choose the manner of your death.”

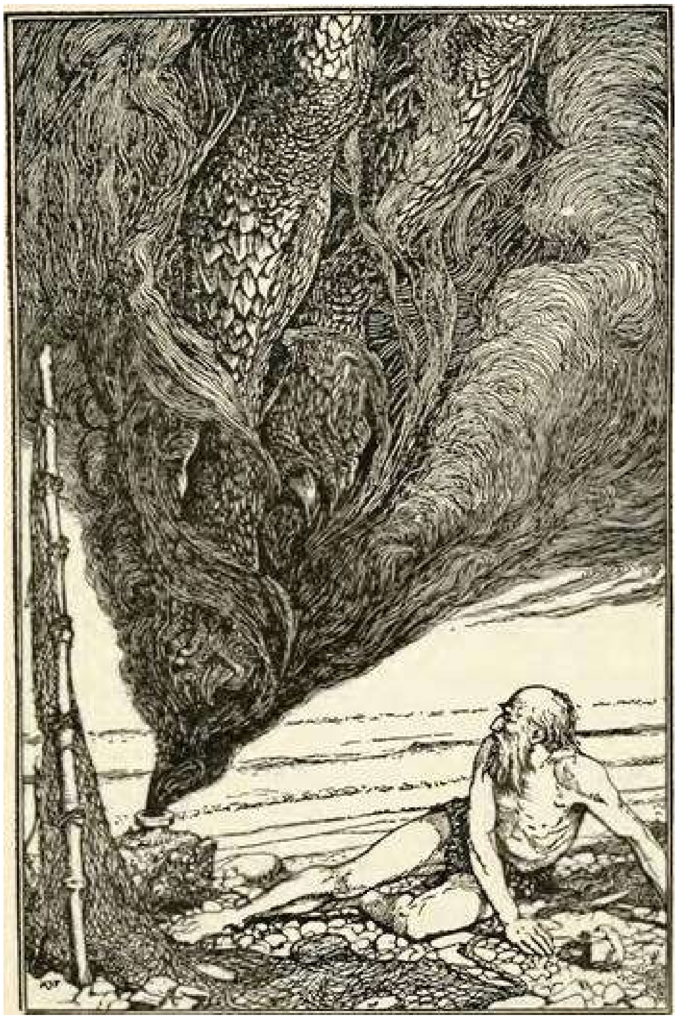

“But what have I done to you?” asked the fisherman.

“I cannot treat you in any other way,” said the genius, “and if you would know why, listen to my story.

“I rebelled against the king of the genii. To punish me, he shut me up in this vase of copper, and he put on the leaden cover his seal, which is enchantment enough to prevent my coming out. Then he had the vase thrown into the sea. During the first period of my captivity I vowed that if anyone should free me before a hundred years were passed, I would make him rich even after his death. But that century passed, and no one freed me. In the second century I vowed that I would give all the treasures in the world to my deliverer; but he never came.

“In the third, I promised to make him a king, to be always near him, and to grant him three wishes every day; but that century passed away as the other two had done, and I remained in the same plight. At last I grew angry at being captive for so long, and I vowed that if anyone would release me I would kill him at once, and would only allow him to choose in what manner he should die. So you see, as you have freed me to-day, choose in what way you will die.”

The fisherman was very unhappy. “What an unlucky man I am to have freed you! I implore you to spare my life.”

“I have told you,” said the genius, “that it is impossible. Choose quickly; you are wasting time.”

The fisherman began to devise a plot.

“Since I must die,” he said, “before I choose the manner of my death, I conjure you on your honour to tell me if you really were in that vase?”

“Yes, I was,” answered the genius.

“I really cannot believe it,” said the fisherman. “That vase could not contain one of your feet even, and how could your whole body go in? I cannot believe it unless I see you do the thing.”

Then the genius began to change himself into smoke, which, as before, spread over the sea and the shore, and which, then collecting itself together, began to go back into the vase slowly and evenly till there was nothing left outside. Then a voice came from the vase which said to the fisherman, “Well, unbelieving fisherman, here I am in the vase; do you believe me now?”

The fisherman instead of answering took the lid of lead and shut it down quickly on the vase.

“Now, O genius,” he cried, “ask pardon of me, and choose by what death you will die! But no, it will be better if I throw you into the sea whence I drew you out, and I will build a house on the shore to warn fishermen who come to cast their nets here, against fishing up such a wicked genius as you are, who vows to kill the man who frees you.”

At these words the genius did all he could to get out, but he could not, because of the enchantment of the lid.

Then he tried to get out by cunning.

“If you will take off the cover,” he said, “I will repay you.”

“No,” answered the fisherman, “if I trust myself to you I am afraid you will treat me as a certain Greek king treated the physician Douban. Listen, and I will tell you.”

The Story of the Greek King and the Physician Douban

In the country of Zouman, in Persia, there lived a Greek king. This king was a leper, and all his doctors had been unable to cure him, when a very clever physician came to his court.

He was very learned in all languages, and knew a great deal about herbs and medicines.

As soon as he was told of the king’s illness he put on his best robe and presented himself before the king. “Sire,” said he, “I know that no physician has been able to cure your majesty, but if you will follow my instructions, I will promise to cure you without any medicines or outward application.”

The king listened to this proposal.

“If you are clever enough to do this,” he said, “I promise to make you and your descendants rich for ever.”

The physician went to his house and made a polo club, the handle of which he hollowed out, and put in it the drug he wished to use. Then he made a ball, and with these things he went the next day to the king.

He told him that he wished him to play at polo. Accordingly the king mounted his horse and went into the place where he played. There the physician approached him with the bat he had made, saying, “Take this, sire, and strike the ball till you feel your hand and whole body in a glow. When the remedy that is in the handle of the club is warmed by your hand it will penetrate throughout your body. The you must return to your palace, bathe, and go to sleep, and when you awake to-morrow morning you will be cured.”

The king took the club and urged his horse after the ball which he had thrown. He struck it, and then it was hit back by the courtiers who were playing with him. When he felt very hot he stopped playing, and went back to the palace, went into the bath, and did all that the physician had said. The next day when he arose he found, to his great joy and astonishment, that he was completely cured. When he entered his audience-chamber all his courtiers, who were eager to see if the wonderful cure had been effected, were overwhelmed with joy.

The physician Douban entered the hall and bowed low to the ground. The king, seeing him, called him, made him sit by his side, and showed him every mark of honour.

That evening he gave him a long and rich robe of state, and presented him with two thousand sequins. The following day he continued to load him with favours.

Now the king had a grand-vizir who was avaricious, and envious, and a very bad man. He grew extremely jealous of the physician, and determined to bring about his ruin.

In order to do this he asked to speak in private with the king, saying that he had a most important communication to make.

“What is it?” asked the king.

“Sire,” answered the grand-vizir, “it is most dangerous for a monarch to confide in a man whose faithfulness is not proved, You do not know that this physician is not a traitor come here to assassinate you.”

“I am sure,” said the king, “that this man is the most faithful and virtuous of men. If he wished to take my life, why did he cure me? Cease to speak against him. I see what it is, you are jealous of him; but do not think that I can be turned against him. I remember well what a vizir said to King Sindbad, his master, to prevent him from putting the prince, his son, to death.”

What the Greek king said excited the vizir’s curiosity, and he said to him, “Sire, I beg your majesty to have the condescension to tell me what the vizir said to King Sindbad.”

“This vizir,” he replied, “told King Sindbad that one ought not believe everything that a mother-in-law says, and told him this story.”

The Story of the Husband and the Parrot

A good man had a beautiful wife, whom he loved passionately, and never left if possible. One day, when he was obliged by important business to go away from her, he went to a place where all kinds of birds are sold and bought a parrot. This parrot not only spoke well, but it had the gift of telling all that had been done before it. He brought it home in a cage, and asked his wife to put it in her room, and take great care of it while he was away. Then he departed. On his return he asked the parrot what had happened during his absence, and the parrot told him some things which made him scold his wife.

She thought that one of her slaves must have been telling tales of her, but they told her it was the parrot, and she resolved to revenge herself on him.

When her husband next went away for one day, she told on slave to turn under the bird’s cage a hand-mill; another to throw water down from above the cage, and a third to take a mirror and turn it in front of its eyes, from left to right by the light of a candle. The slaves did this for part of the night, and did it very well.

The next day when the husband came back he asked the parrot what he had seen. The bird replied, “My good master, the lightning, thunder and rain disturbed me so much all night long, that I cannot tell you what I have suffered.”

The husband, who knew that it had neither rained nor thundered in the night, was convinced that the parrot was not speaking the truth, so he took him out of the cage and threw him so roughly on the ground that he killed him. Nevertheless he was sorry afterwards, for he found that the parrot had spoken the truth.

“When the Greek king,” said the fisherman to the genius, “had finished the story of the parrot, he added to the vizir, “And so, vizir, I shall not listen to you, and I shall take care of the physician, in case I repent as the husband did when he had killed the parrot.” But the vizir was determined. “Sire,” he replied, “the death of the parrot was nothing. But when it is a question of the life of a king it is better to sacrifice the innocent than save the guilty. It is no uncertain thing, however. The physician, Douban, wishes to assassinate you. My zeal prompts me to disclose this to your Majesty. If I am wrong, I deserve to be punished as a vizir was once punished.” “What had the vizir done,” said the Greek king, “to merit the punishment?” “I will tell your Majesty, if you will do me the honour to listen,” answered the vizir.”

The Story of the Vizir Who Was Punished

There was once upon a time a king who had a son who was very fond of hunting. He often allowed him to indulge in this pastime, but he had ordered his grand-vizir always to go with him, and never to lose sight of him. One day the huntsman roused a stag, and the prince, thinking that the vizir was behind, gave chase, and rode so hard that he found himself alone. He stopped, and having lost sight of it, he turned to rejoin the vizir, who had not been careful enough to follow him. But he lost his way. Whilst he was trying to find it, he saw on the side of the road a beautiful lady who was crying bitterly. He drew his horse's rein, and asked her who she was and what she was doing in this place, and if she needed help. "I am the daughter of an Indian king," she answered, "and whilst riding in the country I fell asleep and tumbled off. My horse has run away, and I do not know what has become of him."

The young prince had pity on her, and offered to take her behind him, which he did. As they passed by a ruined building the lady dismounted and went in. The prince also dismounted and followed her. To his great surprise, he heard her saying to some one inside, "Rejoice my children; I am bringing you a nice fat youth." And other voices replied, "Where is he, mamma, that we may eat him at once, as we are very hungry?"

The prince at once saw the danger he was in. He now knew that the lady who said she was the daughter of an Indian king was an ogress, who lived in desolate places, and who by a thousand wiles surprised and devoured passers-by. He was terrified, and threw himself on his horse. The pretended princess appeared at this moment, and seeing that she had lost her prey, she said to him, "Do not be afraid. What do you want?"

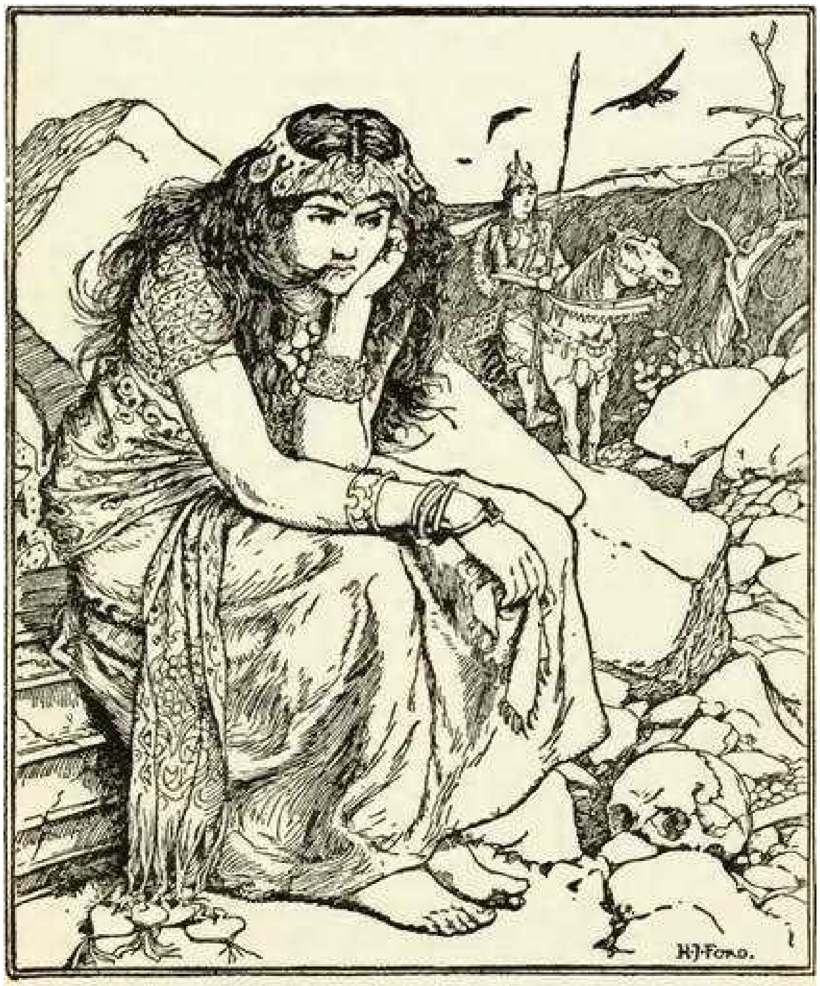

THE PRINCE FALLS IN WITH THE OGRESS

"I am lost," he answered, "and I am looking for the road."

"Keep straight on," said the ogress, "and you will find it."

The prince could hardly believe his ears, and rode off as hard as he could. He found his way, and arrived safe and sound at his father's house, where he told him of the danger he had run because of the grand-vizir's carelessness. The king was very angry, and had him strangled immediately.

"Sire," went on the vizir to the Greek king, "to return to the physician, Douban. If you do not take care, you will repent of having trusted him. Who knows what this remedy, with which he has cured you, may not in time have a bad effect on you?"

The Greek king was naturally very weak, and did not perceive the wicked intention of his vizir, nor was he firm enough to keep to his first resolution.

"Well, vizir," he said, "you are right. Perhaps he did come to take my life. He might do it by the mere smell of one of his drugs. I must see what can be done."

"The best means, sire, to put your life in security, is to send for him at once, and to cut off his head directly he comes," said the vizir.

"I really think," replied the king, "that will be the best way."

He then ordered one of his ministers to fetch the physician, who came at once.

"I have had you sent for," said the king, "in order to free myself from you by taking your life."

The physician was beyond measure astonished when he heard he was to die.

"What crimes have I committed, your majesty?"

"I have learnt," replied the king, "that you are a spy, and intend to kill me. But I will be first, and kill you. Strike," he added to an executioner who was by, "and rid me of this assassin."

At this cruel order the physician threw himself on his knees. "Spare my life," he cried, "and yours will be spared."

The fisherman stopped here to say to the genius: "You see what passed between the Greek king and the physician has just passed between us two. The Greek king," he went on, "had no mercy on him, and the executioner bound his eyes."

All those present begged for his life, but in vain.

The physician on his knees, and bound, said to the king: "At least let me put my affairs in order, and leave my books to persons who will make good use of them. There is one which I should like to present to your majesty. It is very precious, and ought to be kept carefully in your treasury. It contains many curious things the chief being that when you cut off my head, if your majesty will turn to the sixth leaf, and read the third line of the left-hand page, my head will answer all the questions you like to ask it."

The king, eager to see such a wonderful thing, put off his execution to the next day, and sent him under a strong guard to his house. There the physician put his affairs in order, and the next day there was a great crowd assembled in the hall to see his death, and the doings after it. The physician went up to the foot of the throne with a large book in his hand. He carried a basin, on which he spread the covering of the book, and presenting it to the king, said: "Sire, take this book, and when my head is cut off, let it be placed in the basin on the covering of this book; as soon as it is there, the blood will cease to flow. Then open the book, and my head will answer your questions. But, sire, I implore your mercy, for I am innocent."

"Your prayers are useless, and if it were only to hear your head speak when you are dead, you should die."

So saying, he took the book from the physician's hands, and ordered the executioner to do his duty.

The head was so cleverly cut off that it fell into the basin, and directly the blood ceased to flow. Then, to the great astonishment of the king, the eyes opened, and the head said, “Your majesty, open the book.” The king did so, and finding that the first leaf stuck against the second, he put his finger in his mouth, to turn it more easily. He did the same thing till he reached the sixth page, and not seeing any writing on it, “Physician,” he said, “there is no writing.”

“Turn over a few more pages,” answered the head. The king went on turning, still putting his finger in his mouth, till the poison in which each page was dipped took effect. His sight failed him, and he fell at the foot of his throne.

When the physician’s head saw that the poison had taken effect, and that the king had only a few more minutes to live, “Tyrant,” it cried, “see how cruelty and injustice are punished.”

Scarcely had it uttered these words than the king died, and the head lost also the little life that had remained in it.

That is the end of the story of the Greek king, and now let us return to the fisherman and the genius.

“If the Greek king,” said the fisherman, “had spared the physician, he would not have thus died. The same thing applies to you. Now I am going to throw you into the sea.”

“My friend,” said the genius, “do not do such a cruel thing. Do not treat me as Imma treated Ateca.”

“What did Imma do to Ateca?” asked the fisherman.

“Do you think I can tell you while I am shut up in here?” replied the genius. “Let me out, and I will make you rich.”

The hope of being no longer poor made the fisherman give way.

“If you will give me your promise to do this, I will open the lid. I do not think you will dare to break your word.”

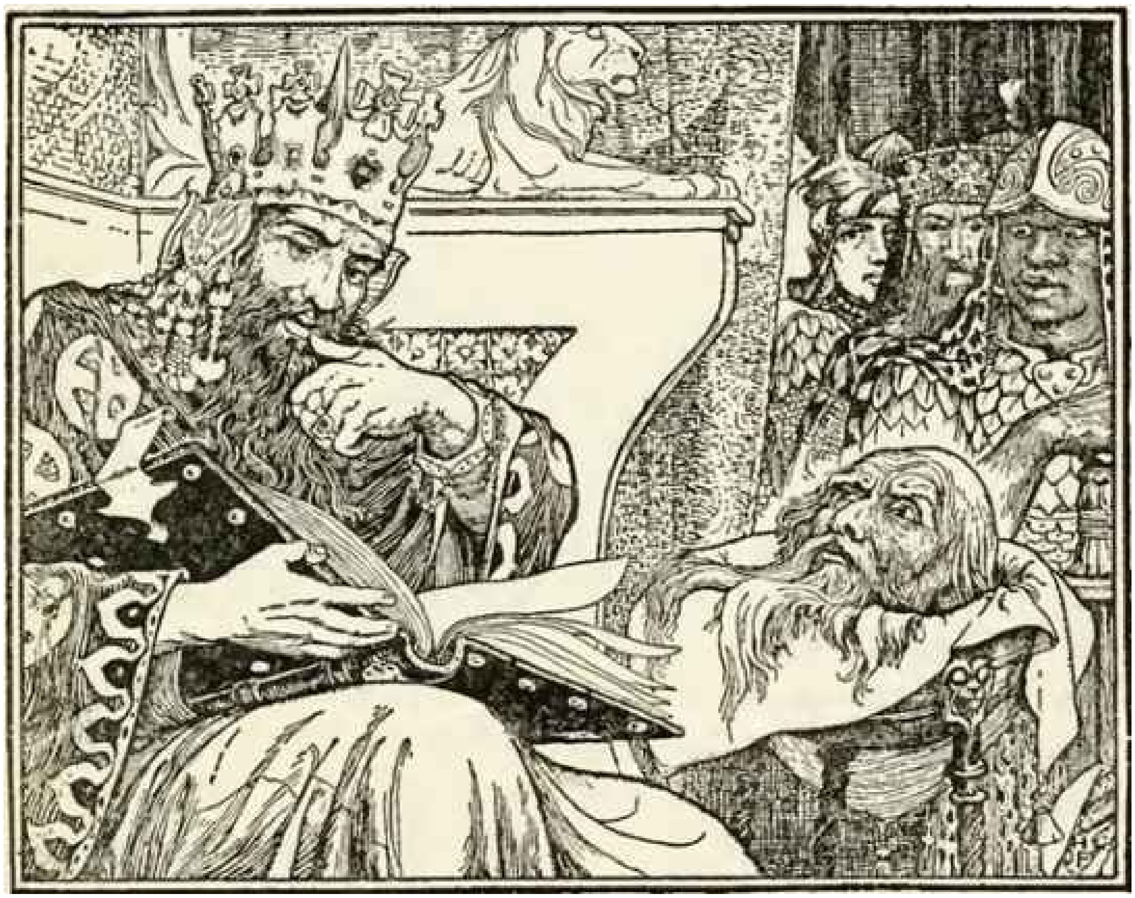

The genius promised, and the fisherman lifted the lid. He came out at once in smoke, and then, having resumed his proper form, the first thing he did was to kick the vase into the sea. This frightened the fisherman, but the genius laughed and said, “Do not be afraid; I only did it to frighten you, and to show you that I intend to keep my word; take your nets and follow me.”

He began to walk in front of the fisherman, who followed him with some misgivings. They passed in front of the town, and went up a mountain and then down into a great plain, where there was a large lake lying between four hills.

When they reached the lake the genius said to the fisherman, “Throw your nets and catch fish.”

The fisherman did as he was told, hoping for a good catch, as he saw plenty of fish. What was his astonishment at seeing that there were four quite different kinds, some white, some red, some blue, and some yellow. He caught four, one of each colour. As he had never seen any like them he admired them very much, and he was very pleased to think how much money he would get for them.

“Take these fish and carry them to the Sultan, who will give you more money for them than you have ever had in your life. You can come every day to fish in this lake, but be careful not to throw your nets more than once every day, otherwise some harm will happen to you. If you follow my advice carefully you will find it good."

Saying these words, he struck his foot against the ground, which opened, and when he had disappeared, it closed immediately.

The fisherman resolved to obey the genius exactly, so he did not cast his nets a second time, but walked into the town to sell his fish at the palace.

When the Sultan saw the fish he was much astonished. He looked at them one after the other, and when he had admired them long enough, "Take these fish," he said to his first vizir, "and given them to the clever cook the Emperor of the Greeks sent me. I think they must be as good as they are beautiful."

The vizir took them himself to the cook, saying, "Here are four fish that have been brought to the Sultan. He wants you to cook them."

Then he went back to the Sultan, who told him to give the fisherman four hundred gold pieces. The fisherman, who had never before possessed such a large sum of money at once, could hardly believe his good fortune. He at once relieved the needs of his family, and made good use of it.

But now we must return to the kitchen, which we shall find in great confusion. The cook, when she had cleaned the fish, put them in a pan with some oil to fry them. When she thought them cooked enough on one side she turned them on the other. But scarcely had she done so when the walls of the kitchen opened, and there came out a young and beautiful damsel. She was dressed in an Egyptian dress of flowered satin, and she wore earrings, and a necklace of white pearls, and bracelets of gold set with rubies, and she held a wand of myrtle in her hand.

She went up to the pan, to the great astonishment of the cook, who stood motionless at the sight of her. She struck one of the fish with her rod, "Fish, fish," said she, "are you doing your duty?" The fish answered nothing, and then she repeated her question, whereupon they all raised their heads together and answered very distinctly, "Yes, yes. If you reckon, we reckon. If you pay your debts, we pay ours. If you fly, we conquer, and we are content."

When they had spoken the girl upset the pan, and entered the opening in the wall, which at once closed, and appeared the same as before.

When the cook had recovered from her fright she lifted up the fish which had fallen into the ashes, but she found them as black as cinders, and not fit to serve up to the Sultan. She began to cry.

"Alas! what shall I say to the Sultan? He will be so angry with me, and I know he will not believe me!"

Whilst she was crying the grand-vizir came in and asked if the fish were ready. She told him all that had happened, and he was much surprised. He sent at once for the fisherman, and when he came said to him, “Fisherman, bring me four more fish like you have brought already, for an accident has happened to them so that they cannot be served up to the Sultan.”

The fisherman did not say what the genius had told him, but he excused himself from bringing them that day on account of the length of the way, and he promised to bring them next day.

In the night he went to the lake, cast his nets, and on drawing them in found four fish, which were like the others, each of a different colour.

He went back at once and carried them to the grand-vizir as he had promised.

He then took them to the kitchen and shut himself up with the cook, who began to cook them as she had done the four others on the previous day. When she was about to turn them on the other side, the wall opened, the damsel appeared, addressed the same words to the fish, received the same answer, and then overturned the pan and disappeared.

The grand-vizir was filled with astonishment. “I shall tell the Sultan all that has happened,” said he. And he did so.

The Sultan was very much astounded, and wished to see this marvel for himself. So he sent for the fisherman, and asked him to procure four more fish. The fisherman asked for three days, which were granted, and he then cast his nets in the lake, and again caught four different coloured fish. The sultan was delighted to see he had got them, and gave him again four hundred gold pieces.

As soon as the Sultan had the fish he had them carried to his room with all that was needed to cook them.

Then he shut himself up with the grand-vizir, who began to prepare them and cook them. When they were done on one side he turned them over on the other. Then the wall of the room opened, but instead of the maiden a black slave came out. He was enormously tall, and carried a large green stick with which he touched the fish, saying in a terrible voice, “Fish, fish, are you doing your duty?” To these words the fish lifting up their heads replied, “Yes, yes. If you reckon, we reckon. If you pay your debts, we pay ours. If you fly, we conquer, and are content.”

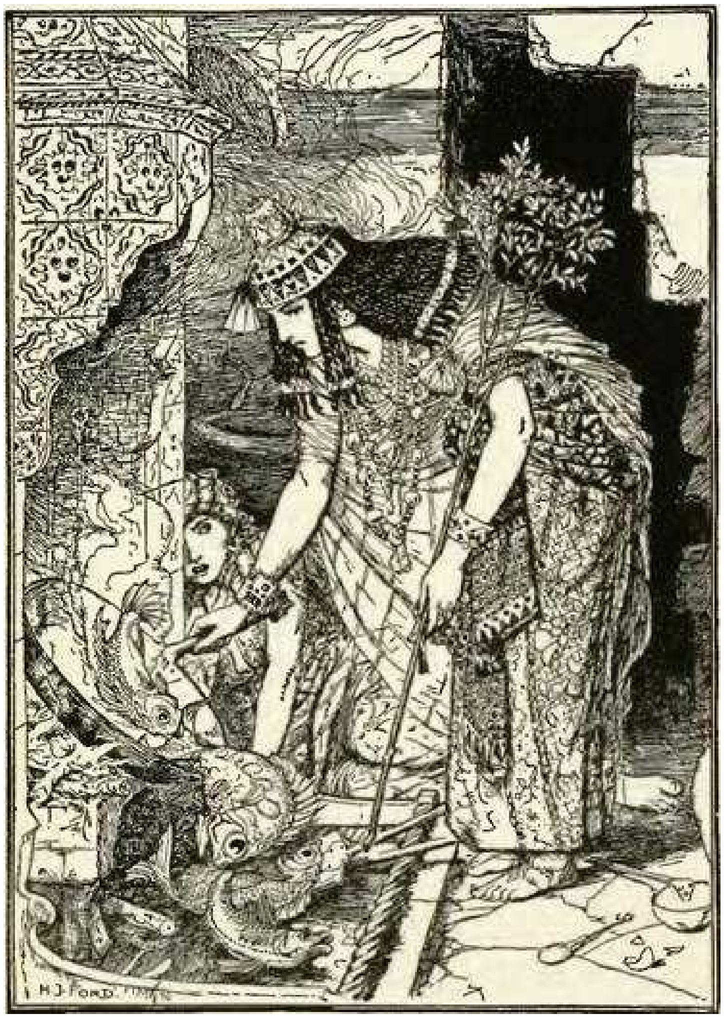

The black slave overturned the pan in the middle of the room, and the fish were turned to cinders. Then he stepped proudly back into the wall, which closed round him.

“After having seen this,” said the Sultan, “I cannot rest. These fish signify some mystery I must clear up.”

He sent for the fisherman. “Fisherman,” he said, “the fish you have brought us have caused me some anxiety. Where did you get them from?”

“Sire,” he answered, “I got them from a lake which lies in the middle of four hills beyond yonder mountains.”

“Do you know this lake?” asked the Sultan of the grand-vizir.

“No; though I have hunted many times round that mountain, I have never heard of it,” said the vizir.

As the fisherman said it was only three hours’ journey away, the sultan ordered his whole court to mount and ride thither, and the fisherman led them.

They climbed the mountain, and then, on the other side, saw the lake as the fisherman had described. The water was so clear that they could see the four kinds of fish swimming about in it. They looked at them for some time, and then the Sultan ordered them to make a camp by the edge of the water.

When night came the Sultan called his vizir, and said to him, “I have resolved to clear up this mystery. I am going out alone, and do you stay here in my tent, and when my ministers come to-morrow, say I am not well, and cannot see them. Do this each day till I return.”

The grand-vizir tried to persuade the Sultan not to go, but in vain. The Sultan took off his state robe and put on his sword, and when he saw all was quiet in the camp he set forth alone.

He climbed one of the hills, and then crossed the great plain, till, just as the sun rose, he beheld far in front of him a large building. When he came near to it he saw it was a splendid palace of beautiful black polished marble, covered with steel as smooth as a mirror.

He went to the gate, which stood half open, and went in, as nobody came when he knocked. He passed through a magnificent courtyard and still saw no one, though he called aloud several times.

He entered large halls where the carpets were of silk, the lounges and sofas covered with tapestry from Mecca, and the hangings of the most beautiful Indian stuffs of gold and silver. Then he found himself in a splendid room, with a fountain supported by golden lions. The water out of the lions’ mouths turned into diamonds and pearls, and the leaping water almost touched a most beautifully-painted dome. The palace was surrounded on three sides by magnificent gardens, little lakes, and woods. Birds sang in the trees, which were netted over to keep them always there.

Still the Sultan saw no one, till he heard a plaintive cry, and a voice which said, “Oh that I could die, for I am too unhappy to wish to live any longer!”

The Sultan looked round to discover who it was who thus bemoaned his fate, and at last saw a handsome young man, richly clothed, who was sitting on a throne raised slightly from the ground. His face was very sad.

The sultan approached him and bowed to him. The young man bent his head very low, but did not rise.

“Sire,” he said to the Sultan, “I cannot rise and do you the reverence that I am sure should be paid to your rank.”

“Sir,” answered the Sultan, “I am sure you have a good reason for not doing so, and having heard your cry of distress, I am come to offer you my help. Whose is this palace, and why is it thus empty?”

Instead of answering the young man lifted up his robe, and showed the Sultan that, from the waist downwards, he was a block of black marble.

The Sultan was horrified, and begged the young man to tell him his story.

“Willingly I will tell you my sad history,” said the young man.

The Story of the Young King of the Black Isles

You must know, sire, that my father was Mahmoud, the king of this country, the Black Isles, so called from the four little mountains which were once islands, while the capital was the place where now the great lake lies. My story will tell you how these changes came about.

My father died when he was sixty-six, and I succeeded him. I married my cousin, whom I loved tenderly, and I thought she loved me too.

But one afternoon, when I was half asleep, and was being fanned by two of her maids, I heard one say to the other, “What a pity it is that our mistress no longer loves our master! I believe she would like to kill him if she could, for she is an enchantress.”

I soon found by watching that they were right, and when I mortally wounded a favourite slave of hers for a great crime, she begged that she might build a palace in the garden, where she wept and bewailed him for two years.

At last I begged her to cease grieving for him, for although he could not speak or move, by her enchantments she just kept him alive. She turned upon me in a rage, and said over me some magic words, and I instantly became as you see me now, half man and half marble.

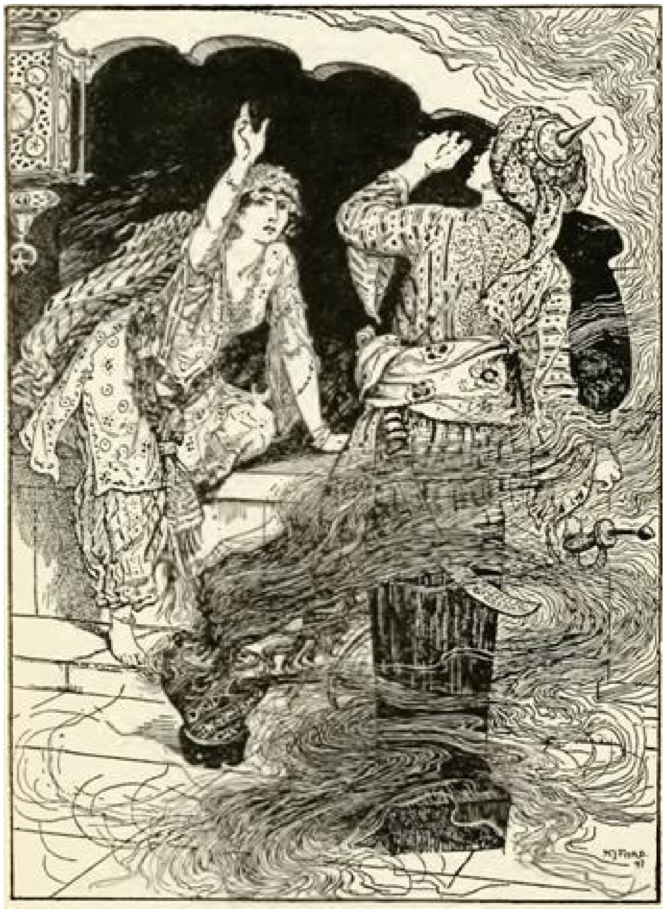

I BECAME HALF MAN AND HALF MARBLE

Then this wicked enchantress changed the capital, which was a very populous and flourishing city, into the lake and desert plain you saw. The fish of four colours which are in it are the different races who lived in the town; the four hills are the four islands which give the name to my kingdom. All this the enchantress told me to add to my troubles. And this is not all. Every day she comes and beats me with a whip of buffalo hide.

When the young king had finished his sad story he burst once more into tears, and the Sultan was much moved.

“Tell me,” he cried, “where is this wicked woman, and where is the miserable object of her affection, whom she just manages to keep alive?”

“Where she lives I do not know,” answered the unhappy prince, “but she goes every day at sunrise to see if the slave can yet speak to her, after she has beaten me.”

“Unfortunate king,” said the Sultan, “I will do what I can to avenge you.”

So he consulted with the young king over the best way to bring this about, and they agreed their plan should be put in effect the next day. The Sultan then rested, and the young king gave himself up to happy hopes of release. The next day the Sultan arose, and then went to the palace in the garden where the black slave was. He drew his sword and destroyed the little life that remained in him, and then threw the body down a well. He then lay down on the couch where the slave had been, and waited for the enchantress.

She went first to the young king, whom she beat with a hundred blows.

Then she came to the room where she thought her wounded slave was, but where the Sultan really lay.

She came near his couch and said, “Are you better to-day, my dear slave? Speak but one word to me.”

“How can I be better,” answered the Sultan, imitating the language of the Ethiopians, “when I can never sleep for the cries and groans of your husband?”

“What joy to hear you speak!” answered the queen. “Do you wish him to regain his proper shape?”

“Yes,” said the Sultan; “hasten to set him at liberty, so that I may no longer hear his cries.”

The queen at once went out and took a cup of water, and said over it some words that made it boil as if it were on the fire. Then she threw it over the prince, who at once regained his own form. He was filled with joy, but the enchantress said, “Hasten away from this place and never come back, lest I kill you.”

So he hid himself to see the end of the Sultan’s plan.

The enchantress went back to the Palace of Tears and said, “Now I have done what you wished.”

“What you have done,” said the Sultan, “is not enough to cure me. Every day at midnight all the people whom you have changed into fish lift their heads out of the lake and cry for vengeance. Go quickly, and give them their proper shape.”

The enchantress hurried away and said some words over the lake.

The fish then became men, women, and children, and the houses and shops were once more filled. The Sultan’s suite, who had encamped by the lake, were not a little astonished to see themselves in the middle of a large and beautiful town.

As soon as she had disenchanted it the queen went back to the palace.

“Are you quite well now?” she said.

“Come near,” said the Sultan. “Nearer still.”

She obeyed. Then he sprang up, and with one blow of his sword he cut her in two.

Then he went and found the prince.

“Rejoice,” he said, “your cruel enemy is dead.”

The prince thanked him again and again.

“And now,” said the Sultan. “I will go back to my capital, which I am glad to find is so near yours.”

“So near mine!” said the King of the Black Isles.

“Do you know it is a whole year’s journey from here? You came here in a few hours because it was enchanted. But I will accompany you on your journey.”

“It will give me much pleasure if you will escort me,” said the Sultan, “and as I have no children, I will make you my heir.”

The Sultan and the prince set out together, the Sultan laden with rich presents from the King of the Black Isles.

The day after he reached his capital the Sultan assembled his court and told them all that had befallen him, and told them how he intended to adopt the young king as his heir.

Then he gave each man presents in proportion to his rank.

As for the fisherman, as he was the first cause of the deliverance of the young prince, the Sultan gave him much money, and made him and his family happy for the rest of their days.

The Story of the Three Calenders, Sons of Kings, and of Five Ladies of Bagdad

In the reign of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid, there lived at Bagdad a porter who, in spite of his humble calling, was an intelligent and sensible man. One morning he was sitting in his usual place with his basket before him, waiting to be hired, when a tall young lady, covered with a long muslin veil, came up to him and said, “Pick up your basket and follow me.” The porter, who was greatly pleased by her appearance and voice, jumped up at once, poised his basket on his head, and accompanied the lady, saying to himself as he went, “Oh, happy day! Oh, lucky meeting!”

The lady soon stopped before a closed door, at which she knocked. It was opened by an old man with a long white beard, to whom the lady held out money without speaking. The old man, who seemed to understand what she wanted, vanished into the house, and returned bringing a large jar of wine, which the porter placed in his basket. Then the lady signed to him to follow, and they went their way.

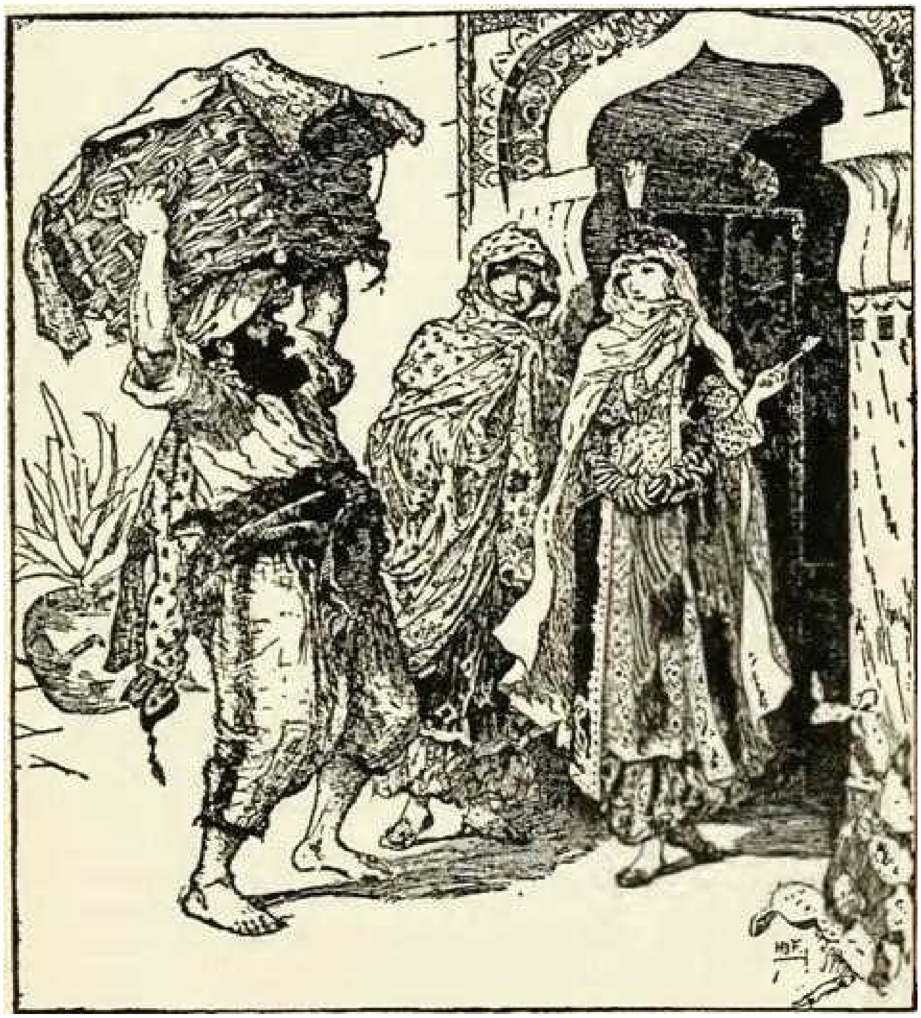

The next place she stopped at was a fruit and flower shop, and here she bought a large quantity of apples, apricots, peaches, and other things, with lilies, jasmine, and all sorts of sweet-smelling plants. From this shop she went to a butcher's, a grocer's, and a poulterer's, till at last the porter exclaimed in despair, "My good lady, if you had only told me you were going to buy enough provisions to stock a town, I would have brought a horse, or rather a camel." The lady laughed, and told him she had not finished yet, but after choosing various kinds of scents and spices from a druggist's store, she halted before a magnificent palace, at the door of which she knocked gently. The porteress who opened it was of such beauty that the eyes of the man were quite dazzled, and he was the more astonished as he saw clearly that she was no slave. The lady who had led him hither stood watching him with amusement, till the porteress exclaimed, "Why don't you come in, my sister? This poor man is so heavily weighed down that he is ready to drop."

When they were both inside the door was fastened, and they all three entered a large court, surrounded by an open-work gallery. At one end of the court was a platform, and on the platform stood an amber throne supported by four ebony columns, garnished with pearls and diamonds. In the middle of the court stood a marble basin filled with water from the mouth of a golden lion.

The porter looked about him, noticing and admiring everything; but his attention was specially attracted by a third lady sitting on the throne, who was even more beautiful than the other two. By the respect shown to her by the others, he judged that she must be the eldest, and in this he was right. This lady's name was Zobeida, the porteress was Sadie, and the housekeeper was Amina. At a word from Zobeida, Sadie and Amina took the basket from the porter, who was glad enough to be relieved from its weight; and when it was emptied, paid him handsomely for its use. But instead of taking up his basket and going away, the man still lingered, till Zobeida inquired what he was waiting for, and if he expected more money. "Oh, madam," returned he, "you have already given me too much, and I fear I may have been guilty of rudeness in not taking my departure at once. But, if you will pardon my saying so, I was lost in astonishment at seeing such beautiful ladies by themselves. A company of women without men is, however, as dull as a company of men without women." And after telling some stories to prove his point, he ended by entreating them to let him stay and make a fourth at their dinner.

The ladies were rather amused at the man's assurances and after some discussion it was agreed that he should be allowed to stay, as his society might prove entertaining. "But listen, friend," said Zobeida, "if we grant your request, it is only on condition that you behave with the utmost politeness, and that you keep the secret of our way of living, which chance has revealed to you." Then they all sat down to table, which had been covered by Amina with the dishes she had bought.

After the first few mouthfuls Amina poured some wine into a golden cup. She first drank herself, according to the Arab custom, and then filled it for her sisters. When it came to the porter's turn he kissed Amina's hand, and sang a song, which he composed at the moment in praise of the wine. The three ladies were pleased with the song, and then sang themselves, so that the repast was a merry one, and lasted much longer than usual.

At length, seeing that the sun was about to set, Sadia said to the porter, "Rise and go; it is now time for us to separate."

"Oh, madam," replied he, "how can you desire me to quit you in the state in which I am? Between the wine I have drunk, and the pleasure of seeing you, I should never find the way to my house. Let me remain here till morning, and when I have recovered my senses I will go when you like."

"Let him stay," said Amina, who had before proved herself his friend. "It is only just, as he has given us so much amusement."

"If you wish it, my sister," replied Zobeida; "but if he does, I must make a new condition. Porter," she continued, turning to him, "if you remain, you must promise to ask no questions about anything you may see. If you do, you may perhaps hear what you don't like."

This being settled, Amina brought in supper, and lit up the hall with a number of sweet smelling tapers. They then sat down again at the table, and began with fresh appetites to eat, drink, sing, and recite verses. In fact, they were all enjoying themselves mightily when they heard a knock at the outer door, which Sadie rose to open. She soon returned saying that three Calenders, all blind in the right eye, and all with their heads, faces, and eyebrows clean shaved, begged for admittance, as they were newly arrived in Bagdad, and night had already fallen. "They seem to have pleasant manners," she added, "but you have no idea how funny they look. I am sure we should find their company diverting."

Zobeida and Amina made some difficulty about admitting the new comers, and Sadie knew the reason of their hesitation. But she urged the matter so strongly that Zobeida was at last forced to consent. "Bring them in, then," said she, "but make them understand that they are not to make remarks about what does not concern them, and be sure to make them read the inscription over the door." For on the door was written in letters of gold, "Whoso meddles in affairs that are no business of his, will hear truths that will not please him."

The three Calenders bowed low on entering, and thanked the ladies for their kindness and hospitality. The ladies replied with words of welcome, and they were all about to seat themselves when the eyes of the Calenders fell on the porter, whose dress was not so very unlike their own, though he still wore all the hair that nature had given him. "This," said one of them, "is apparently one of our Arab brothers, who has rebelled against our ruler."

The porter, although half asleep from the wine he had drunk, heard the words, and without moving cried angrily to the Calender, "Sit down and mind your own business. Did you not read the inscription over the door? Everybody is not obliged to live in the same way."

"Do not be so angry, my good man," replied the Calender; "we should be very sorry to displease you;" so the quarrel was smoothed over, and supper began in good earnest. When the Calenders had satisfied their hunger, they offered to play to their hostesses, if there were any instruments in the house. The ladies were delighted at the idea, and Sadie went to see what she could find, returning in a few moments laden with two different kinds of flutes and a tambourine. Each Calender took the one he preferred, and began to play a well-known air, while the ladies sang the words of the song. These words were the gayest and liveliest possible, and every now and then the singers had to stop to indulge the laughter which almost choked them. In the midst of all their noise, a knock was heard at the door.

Now early that evening the Caliph secretly left the palace, accompanied by his grand-vizir, Giafar, and Mesrour, chief of the eunuchs, all three wearing the dresses of merchants. Passing down the street, the Caliph had been attracted by the music of instruments and the sound of laughter, and had ordered his vizir to go and knock at the door of the house, as he wished to enter. The vizir replied that the ladies who lived there seemed to be entertaining their friends, and he thought his master would do well not to intrude on them; but the Caliph had taken it into his head to see for himself, and insisted on being obeyed.

The knock was answered by Sadie, with a taper in her hand, and the vizir, who was surprised at her beauty, bowed low before her, and said respectfully, “Madam, we are three merchants who have lately arrived from Moussoul, and, owing to a misadventure which befel us this very night, only reached our inn to find that the doors were closed to us till to-morrow morning. Not knowing what to do, we wandered in the streets till we happened to pass your house, when, seeing lights and hearing the sound of voices, we resolved to ask you to give us shelter till the dawn. If you will grant us this favour, we will, with your permission, do all in our power to help you spend the time pleasantly.”

Sadie answered the merchant that she must first consult her sisters; and after having talked over the matter with them, she returned to tell him that he and his two friends would be welcome to join their company. They entered and bowed politely to the ladies and their guests. Then Zobeida, as the mistress, came forward and said gravely, “You are welcome here, but I hope you will allow me to beg one thing of you — have as many eyes as you like, but no tongues; and ask no questions about anything you see, however strange it may appear to you.”

“Madam,” returned the vizir, “you shall be obeyed. We have quite enough to please and interest us without troubling ourselves about that with which we have no concern.” Then they all sat down, and drank to the health of the new comers.

While the vizir, Giafar, was talking to the ladies the Caliph was occupied in wondering who they could be, and why the three Calenders had each lost his right eye. He was burning to inquire the reason of it all, but was silenced by Zobeida’s request, so he tried to rouse himself and to take his part in the conversation, which was very lively, the subject of discussion being the many different sorts of pleasures that there were in the world. After some time the Calenders got up and performed some curious dances, which delighted the rest of the company.

When they had finished Zobeida rose from her seat, and, taking Amina by the hand, she said to her, “My sister, our friends will excuse us if we seem to forget their presence and fulfil our nightly task.” Amina understood her sister’s meaning, and collecting the dishes, glasses, and musical instruments, she carried them away, while Sadie swept the hall and put everything in order. Having done this she begged the Calenders to sit on a sofa on one side of the room, and the Caliph and his friends to place themselves opposite. As to the porter, she requested him to come and help her and her sister.

Shortly after Amina entered carrying a seat, which she put down in the middle of the empty space. She next went over to the door of a closet and signed to the porter to follow her. He did so, and soon reappeared leading two black dogs by a chain, which he brought into the centre of the hall. Zobeida then got up from her seat between the Calenders and the Caliph and walked slowly across to where the porter stood with the dogs. “We must do our duty,” she said with a deep sigh, pushing back her sleeves, and, taking a whip from Sadie, she said to the man, “Take one of those dogs to my sister Amina and give me the other.”

The porter did as he was bid, but as he led the dog to Zobeida it uttered piercing howls, and gazed up at her with looks of entreaty. But Zobeida took no notice, and whipped the dog till she was out of breath. She then took the chain from the porter, and, raising the dog on its hind legs, they looked into each other’s eyes sorrowfully till tears began to fall from both. Then Zobeida took her handkerchief and wiped the dog’s eyes tenderly, after which she kissed it, then, putting the chain into the porter’s hand she said, “Take it back to the closet and bring me the other.”

The same ceremony was gone through with the second dog, and all the while the whole company looked on with astonishment. The Caliph in particular could hardly contain himself, and made signs to the vizir to ask what it all meant. But the vizir pretended not to see, and turned his head away.

Zobeida remained for some time in the middle of the room, till at last Sadie went up to her and begged her to sit down, as she also had her part to play. At these words Amina fetched a lute from a case of yellow satin and gave it to Sadie, who sang several songs to its accompaniment. When she was tired she said to Amina, “My sister, I can do no more; come, I pray you, and take my place.”

Amina struck a few chords and then broke into a song, which she sang with so much ardour that she was quite overcome, and sank gasping on a pile of cushions, tearing open her dress as she did so to give herself some air. To the amazement of all present, her neck, instead of being as smooth and white as her face, was a mass of scars.

The Calenders and the Caliph looked at each other, and whispered together, unheard by Zobeida and Sadie, who were tending their fainting sister.

"What does it all mean?' asked the Caliph.

"We know no more than you," said the Calender to whom he had spoken.

"What! You do not belong to the house?"

"My lord," answered all the Calenders together, "we came here for the first time an hour before you."

They then turned to the porter to see if he could explain the mystery, but the porter was no wiser than they were themselves. At length the Caliph could contain his curiosity no longer, and declared that he would compel the ladies to tell them the meaning of their strange conduct. The vizir, foreseeing what would happen, implored him to remember the condition their hostesses had imposed, and added in a whisper that if his Highness would only wait till morning he could as Caliph summon the ladies to appear before him. But the Caliph, who was not accustomed to be contradicted, rejected this advice, and it was resolved after a little more talking that the question should be put by the porter. Suddenly Zobeida turned round, and seeing their excitement she said, "What is the matter — what are you all discussing so earnestly?"

"Madam," answered the porter, "these gentlemen entreat you to explain to them why you should first whip the dogs and then cry over them, and also how it happens that the fainting lady is covered with scars. They have requested me, Madam, to be their mouthpiece."

"Is it true, gentlemen," asked Zobeida, drawing herself up, "that you have charged this man to put me that question?"

"It is," they all replied, except Giafar, who was silent.

"Is this," continued Zobeida, growing more angry every moment, "is this the return you make for the hospitality I have shown you? Have you forgotten the one condition on which you were allowed to enter the house? Come quickly," she added, clapping her hands three times, and the words were hardly uttered when seven black slaves, each armed with a sabre, burst in and stood over the seven men, throwing them on the ground, and preparing themselves, on a sign from their mistress, to cut off their heads.

The seven culprits all thought their last hour had come, and the Caliph repented bitterly that he had not taken the vizir's advice. But they made up their minds to die bravely, all except the porter, who loudly inquired of Zobeida why he was to suffer for other people's faults, and declared that these misfortunes would never have happened if it had not been for the Calenders, who always brought ill-luck. He ended by imploring Zobeida not to confound the innocent with the guilty and to spare his life.

In spite of her anger, there was something so comic in the groans of the porter that Zobeida could not refrain from laughing. But putting him aside she addressed the others a second time, saying, “Answer me; who are you? Unless you tell me truly you have not another moment to live. I can hardly think you are men of any position, whatever country you belong to. If you were, you would have had more consideration for us.”

The Caliph, who was naturally very impatient, suffered far more than either of the others at feeling that his life was at the mercy of a justly offended lady, but when he heard her question he began to breathe more freely, for he was convinced that she had only to learn his name and rank for all danger to be over. So he whispered hastily to the vizir, who was next to him, to reveal their secret. But the vizir, wiser than his master, wished to conceal from the public the affront they had received, and merely answered, “After all, we have only got what we deserved.”

Meanwhile Zobeida had turned to the three Calenders and inquired if, as they were all blind, they were brothers.

“No, madam,” replied one, “we are no blood relations at all, only brothers by our mode of life.”

“And you,” she asked, addressing another, “were you born blind of one eye?”

“No, madam,” returned he, “I became blind through a most surprising adventure, such as probably has never happened to anybody. After that I shaved my head and eyebrows and put on the dress in which you see me now.”

Zobeida put the same question to the other two Calenders, and received the same answer.

“But,” added the third, “it may interest you, madam, to know that we are not men of low birth, but are all three sons of kings, and of kings, too, whom the world holds in high esteem.”

At these words Zobeida’s anger cooled down, and she turned to her slaves and said, “You can give them a little more liberty, but do not leave the hall. Those that will tell us their histories and their reasons for coming here shall be allowed to leave unhurt; those who refuse—” And she paused, but in a moment the porter, who understood that he had only to relate his story to set himself free from this terrible danger, immediately broke in,

“Madam, you know already how I came here, and what I have to say will soon be told. Your sister found me this morning in the place where I always stand waiting to be hired. She bade me follow her to various shops, and when my basket was quite full we returned to this house, when you had the goodness to permit me to remain, for which I shall be eternally grateful. That is my story.”

He looked anxiously to Zobeida, who nodded her head and said, “You can go; and take care we never meet again.”

“Oh, madam,” cried the porter, “let me stay yet a little while. It is not just that the others should have heard my story and that I should not hear theirs,” and without waiting for permission he seated himself on the end of the sofa occupied by the ladies, whilst the rest crouched on the carpet, and the slaves stood against the wall.

Then one of the Calenders, addressing himself to Zobeida as the principal lady, began his story.

The Story of the First Calender, Son of a King

In order, madam, to explain how I came to lose my right eye, and to wear the dress of a Calender, you must first know that I am the son of a king. My father's only brother reigned over the neighbouring country, and had two children, a daughter and a son, who were of the same age as myself.

As I grew up, and was allowed more liberty, I went every year to pay a visit to my uncle's court, and usually stayed there about two months. In this way my cousin and I became very intimate, and were much attached to each other. The very last time I saw him he seemed more delighted to see me than ever, and gave a great feast in my honour. When we had finished eating, he said to me, "My cousin, you would never guess what I have been doing since your last visit to us! Directly after your departure I set a number of men to work on a building after my own design. It is now completed, and ready to be lived in. I should like to show it to you, but you must first swear two things: to be faithful to me, and to keep my secret."

Of course I did not dream of refusing him anything he asked, and gave the promise without the least hesitation. He then bade me wait an instant, and vanished, returning in a few moments with a richly dressed lady of great beauty, but as he did not tell me her name, I thought it was better not to inquire. We all three sat down to table and amused ourselves with talking of all sorts of indifferent things, and with drinking each other's health. Suddenly the prince said to me, "Cousin, we have no time to lose; be so kind as to conduct this lady to a certain spot, where you will find a dome-like tomb, newly built. You cannot mistake it. Go in, both of you, and wait till I come. I shall not be long."

As I had promised I prepared to do as I was told, and giving my hand to the lady, I escorted her, by the light of the moon, to the place of which the prince had spoken. We had barely reached it when he joined us himself, carrying a small vessel of water, a pickaxe, and a little bag containing plaster.

With the pickaxe he at once began to destroy the empty sepulchre in the middle of the tomb. One by one he took the stones and piled them up in a corner. When he had knocked down the whole sepulchre he proceeded to dig at the earth, and beneath where the sepulchre had been I saw a trap-door. He raised the door and I caught sight of the top of a spiral staircase; then he said, turning to the lady, "Madam, this is the way that will lead you down to the spot which I told you of."

The lady did not answer, but silently descended the staircase, the prince following her. At the top, however, he looked at me. “My cousin,” he exclaimed, “I do not know how to thank you for your kindness. Farewell.”

“What do you mean?” I cried. “I don’t understand.”

“No matter,” he replied, “go back by the path that you came.”

He would say no more, and, greatly puzzled, I returned to my room in the palace and went to bed. When I woke, and considered my adventure, I thought that I must have been dreaming, and sent a servant to ask if the prince was dressed and could see me. But on hearing that he had not slept at home I was much alarmed, and hastened to the cemetery, where, unluckily, the tombs were all so alike that I could not discover which was the one I was in search of, though I spent four days in looking for it.

You must know that all this time the king, my uncle, was absent on a hunting expedition, and as no one knew when he would be back, I at last decided to return home, leaving the ministers to make my excuses. I longed to tell them what had become of the prince, about whose fate they felt the most dreadful anxiety, but the oath I had sworn kept me silent.

On my arrival at my father’s capital, I was astonished to find a large detachment of guards drawn up before the gate of the palace; they surrounded me directly I entered. I asked the officers in command the reason of this strange behaviour, and was horrified to learn that the army had mutinied and put to death the king, my father, and had placed the grand-vizir on the throne. Further, that by his orders I was placed under arrest.

Now this rebel vizir had hated me from my boy-hood, because once, when shooting at a bird with a bow, I had shot out his eye by accident. Of course I not only sent a servant at once to offer him my regrets and apologies, but I made them in person. It was all of no use. He cherished an undying hatred towards me, and lost no occasion of showing it. Having once got me in his power I felt he could show no mercy, and I was right. Mad with triumph and fury he came to me in my prison and tore out my right eye. That is how I lost it.

My persecutor, however, did not stop here. He shut me up in a large case and ordered his executioner to carry me into a desert place, to cut off my head, and then to abandon my body to the birds of prey. The case, with me inside it, was accordingly placed on a horse, and the executioner, accompanied by another man, rode into the country until they found a spot suitable for the purpose. But their hearts were not so hard as they seemed, and my tears and prayers made them waver.

“Forsake the kingdom instantly,” said the executioner at last, “and take care never to come back, for you will not only lose your head, but make us lose ours.” I thanked him gratefully, and tried to console myself for the loss of my eye by thinking of the other misfortunes I had escaped.

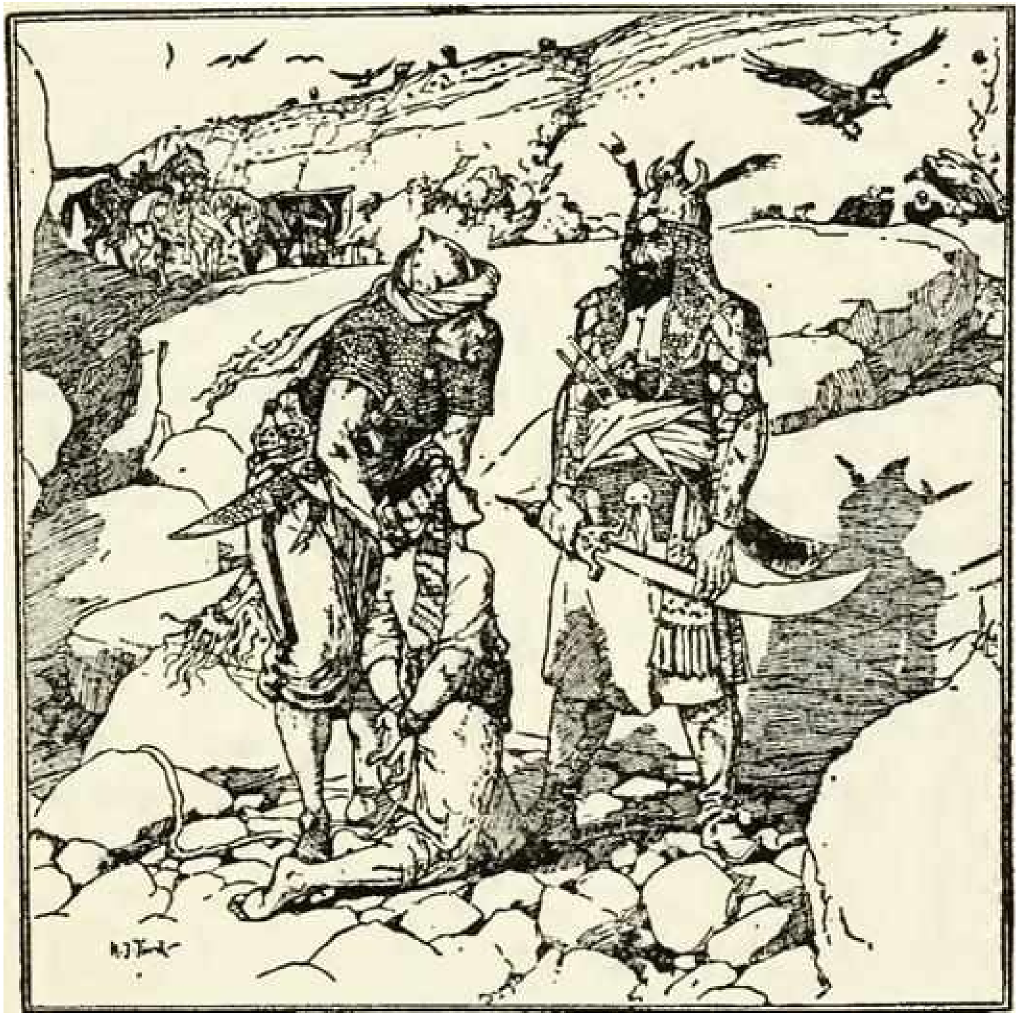

After all I had gone through, and my fear of being recognised by some enemy, I could only travel very slowly and cautiously, generally resting in some out-of-the-way place by day, and walking as far as I was able by night, but at length I arrived in the kingdom of my uncle, of whose protection I was sure.

I found him in great trouble about the disappearance of his son, who had, he said, vanished without leaving a trace; but his own grief did not prevent him sharing mine. We mingled our tears, for the loss of one was the loss of the other, and then I made up my mind that it was my duty to break the solemn oath I had sworn to the prince. I therefore lost no time in telling my uncle everything I knew, and I observed that even before I had ended his sorrow appeared to be lightened a little.

“My dear nephew,” he said, “your story gives me some hope. I was aware that my son was building a tomb, and I think I can find the spot. But as he wished to keep the matter secret, let us go alone and seek the place ourselves.”

He then bade me disguise myself, and we both slipped out of a garden door which opened on to the cemetery. It did not take long for us to arrive at the scene of the prince’s disappearance, or to discover the tomb I had sought so vainly before. We entered it, and found the trap-door which led to the staircase, but we had great difficulty in raising it, because the prince had fastened it down underneath with the plaster he had brought with him.

My uncle went first, and I followed him. When we reached the bottom of the stairs we stepped into a sort of ante-room, filled with such a dense smoke that it was hardly possible to see anything. However, we passed through the smoke into a large chamber, which at first seemed quite empty. The room was brilliantly lighted, and in another moment we perceived a sort of platform at one end, on which were the bodies of the prince and a lady, both half-burned, as if they had been dragged out of a fire before it had quite consumed them.

This horrible sight turned me faint, but, to my surprise, my uncle did not show so much surprise as anger.

“I knew,” he said, “that my son was tenderly attached to this lady, whom it was impossible he should ever marry. I tried to turn his thoughts, and presented to him the most beautiful princesses, but he cared for none of them, and, as you see, they have now been united by a horrible death in an underground tomb.” But, as he spoke, his anger melted into tears, and again I wept with him.

When he recovered himself he drew me to him. “My dear nephew,” he said, embracing me, “you have come to me to take his place, and I will do my best to forget that I ever had a son who could act in so wicked a manner.” Then he turned and went up the stairs.

We reached the palace without anyone having noticed our absence, when, shortly after, a clashing of drums, and cymbals, and the blare of trumpets burst upon our astonished ears. At the same time a thick cloud of dust on the horizon told of the approach of a great army. My heart sank when I perceived that the commander was the vizir who had dethroned my father, and was come to seize the kingdom of my uncle.

The capital was utterly unprepared to stand a siege, and seeing that resistance was useless, at once opened its gates. My uncle fought hard for his life, but was soon overpowered, and when he fell I managed to escape through a secret passage, and took refuge with an officer whom I knew I could trust.

Persecuted by ill-fortune, and stricken with grief, there seemed to be only one means of safety left to me. I shaved my beard and my eyebrows, and put on the dress of a calender, in which it was easy for me to travel without being known. I avoided the towns till I reached the kingdom of the famous and powerful Caliph, Haroun-al-Raschid, when I had no further reason to fear my enemies. It was my intention to come to Bagdad and to throw myself at the feet of his Highness, who would, I felt certain, be touched by my sad story, and would grant me, besides, his help and protection.

After a journey which lasted some months I arrived at length at the gates of this city. It was sunset, and I paused for a little to look about me, and to decide which way to turn my steps. I was still debating on this subject when I was joined by this other calender, who stopped to greet me. “You, like me, appear to be a stranger,” I said. He replied that I was right, and before he could say more the third calender came up. He, also, was newly arrived in Bagdad, and being brothers in misfortune, we resolved to cast in our lots together, and to share whatever fate might have in store.

By this time it had grown late, and we did not know where to spend the night. But our lucky star having guided us to this door, we took the liberty of knocking and of asking for shelter, which was given to us at once with the best grace in the world.

This, madam, is my story.

“I am satisfied,” replied Zobeida; “you can go when you like.”

The calender, however, begged leave to stay and to hear the histories of his two friends and of the three other persons of the company, which he was allowed to do.

The Story of the Second Calender, Son of a King

“Madam,” said the young man, addressing Zobeida, “if you wish to know how I lost my right eye, I shall have to tell you the story of my whole life.”

I was scarcely more than a baby, when the king my father, finding me unusually quick and clever for my age, turned his thoughts to my education. I was taught first to read and write, and then to learn the Koran, which is the basis of our holy religion, and the better to understand it, I read with my tutors the ablest commentators on its teaching, and committed to memory all the traditions respecting the Prophet, which have been gathered from the mouth of those who were his friends. I also learnt history, and was instructed in poetry, versification, geography, chronology, and in all the outdoor exercises in which every prince should excel. But what I liked best of all was writing Arabic characters, and in this I soon surpassed my masters, and gained a reputation in this branch of knowledge that reached as far as India itself.

Now the Sultan of the Indies, curious to see a young prince with such strange tastes, sent an ambassador to my father, laden with rich presents, and a warm invitation to visit his court. My father, who was deeply anxious to secure the friendship of so powerful a monarch, and held besides that a little travel would greatly improve my manners and open my mind, accepted gladly, and in a short time I had set out for India with the ambassador, attended only by a small suite on account of the length of the journey, and the badness of the roads. However, as was my duty, I took with me ten camels, laden with rich presents for the Sultan.

We had been travelling for about a month, when one day we saw a cloud of dust moving swiftly towards us; and as soon as it came near, we found that the dust concealed a band of fifty robbers. Our men barely numbered half, and as we were also hampered by the camels, there was no use in fighting, so we tried to overawe them by informing them who we were, and whither we were going. The robbers, however, only laughed, and declared that was none of their business, and, without more words, attacked us brutally. I defended myself to the last, wounded though I was, but at length, seeing that resistance was hopeless, and that the ambassador and all our followers were made prisoners, I put spurs to my horse and rode away as fast as I could, till the poor beast fell dead from a wound in his side. I managed to jump off without any injury, and looked about to see if I was pursued. But for the moment I was safe, for, as I imagined, the robbers were all engaged in quarrelling over their booty.

I found myself in a country that was quite new to me, and dared not return to the main road lest I should again fall into the hands of the robbers. Luckily my wound was only a slight one, and after binding it up as well as I could, I walked on for the rest of the day, till I reached a cave at the foot of a mountain, where I passed the night in peace, making my supper off some fruits I had gathered on the way.

I wandered about for a whole month without knowing where I was going, till at length I found myself on the outskirts of a beautiful city, watered by winding streams, which enjoyed an eternal spring. My delight at the prospect of mixing once more with human beings was somewhat damped at the thought of the miserable object I must seem. My face and hands had been burned nearly black; my clothes were all in rags, and my shoes were in such a state that I had been forced to abandon them altogether.

I entered the town, and stopped at a tailor’s shop to inquire where I was. The man saw I was better than my condition, and begged me to sit down, and in return I told him my whole story. The tailor listened with attention, but his reply, instead of giving me consolation, only increased my trouble.

“Beware,” he said, “of telling any one what you have told me, for the prince who governs the kingdom is your father’s greatest enemy, and he will be rejoiced to find you in his power.”

I thanked the tailor for his counsel, and said I would do whatever he advised; then, being very hungry, I gladly ate of the food he put before me, and accepted his offer of a lodging in his house.

In a few days I had quite recovered from the hardships I had undergone, and then the tailor, knowing that it was the custom for the princes of our religion to learn a trade or profession so as to provide for themselves in times of ill-fortune, inquired if there was anything I could do for my living. I replied that I had been educated as a grammarian and a poet, but that my great gift was writing.

“All that is of no use here,” said the tailor. “Take my advice, put on a short coat, and as you seem hardy and strong, go into the woods and cut firewood, which you will sell in the streets. By this means you will earn your living, and be able to wait till better times come. The hatchet and the cord shall be my present.”

This counsel was very distasteful to me, but I thought I could not do otherwise than adopt it. So the next morning I set out with a company of poor wood-cutters, to whom the tailor had introduced me. Even on the first day I cut enough wood to sell for a tolerable sum, and very soon I became more expert, and had made enough money to repay the tailor all he had lent me.

I had been a wood-cutter for more than a year, when one day I wandered further into the forest than I had ever done before, and reached a delicious green glade, where I began to cut wood. I was hacking at the root of a tree, when I beheld an iron ring fastened to a trapdoor of the same metal. I soon cleared away the earth, and pulling up the door, found a staircase, which I hastily made up my mind to go down, carrying my hatchet with me by way of protection. When I reached the bottom I discovered that I was in a huge palace, as brilliantly lighted as any palace above ground that I had ever seen, with a long gallery supported by pillars of jasper, ornamented with capitals of gold. Down this gallery a lady came to meet me, of such beauty that I forgot everything else, and thought only of her.

To save her all the trouble possible, I hastened towards her, and bowed low.

“Who are you? Who are you?” she said. “A man or a genius?”

“A man, madam,” I replied; “I have nothing to do with genii.”

“By what accident do you come here?” she asked again with a sigh. “I have been in this place now for five and twenty years, and you are the first man who has visited me.”

Emboldened by her beauty and gentleness, I ventured to reply, “Before, madam, I answer your question, allow me to say how grateful I am for this meeting, which is not only a consolation to me in my own heavy sorrow, but may perhaps enable me to render your lot happier,” and then I told her who I was, and how I had come there.

“Alas, prince,” she said, with a deeper sigh than before, “you have guessed rightly in supposing me an unwilling prisoner in this gorgeous place. I am the daughter of the king of the Ebony Isle, of whose fame you surely must have heard. At my father’s desire I was married to a prince who was my own cousin; but on my very wedding day, I was snatched up by a genius, and brought here in a faint. For a long while I did nothing but weep, and would not suffer the genius to come near me; but time teaches us submission, and I have now got accustomed to his presence, and if clothes and jewels could content me, I have them in plenty. Every tenth day, for five and twenty years, I have received a visit from him, but in case I should need his help at any other time, I have only to touch a talisman that stands at the entrance of my chamber. It wants still five days to his next visit, and I hope that during that time you will do me the honour to be my guest.”

I was too much dazzled by her beauty to dream of refusing her offer, and accordingly the princess had me conducted to the bath, and a rich dress befitting my rank was provided for me. Then a feast of the most delicate dishes was served in a room hung with embroidered Indian fabrics.

Next day, when we were at dinner, I could maintain my patience no longer, and implored the princess to break her bonds, and return with me to the world which was lighted by the sun.

"What you ask is impossible," she answered; "but stay here with me instead, and we can be happy, and all you will have to do is to betake yourself to the forest every tenth day, when I am expecting my master the genius. He is very jealous, as you know, and will not suffer a man to come near me."

"Princess," I replied, "I see it is only fear of the genius that makes you act like this. For myself, I dread him so little that I mean to break his talisman in pieces! Awful though you think him, he shall feel the weight of my arm, and I herewith take a solemn vow to stamp out the whole race."

The princess, who realized the consequences of such audacity, entreated me not to touch the talisman. "If you do, it will be the ruin of both of us," said she; "I know genii much better than you." But the wine I had drunk had confused my brain; I gave one kick to the talisman, and it fell into a thousand pieces.

Hardly had my foot touched the talisman when the air became as dark as night, a fearful noise was heard, and the palace shook to its very foundations. In an instant I was sobered, and understood what I had done. "Princess!" I cried, "what is happening?"

"Alas!" she exclaimed, forgetting all her own terrors in anxiety for me, "fly, or you are lost."

I followed her advice and dashed up the staircase, leaving my hatchet behind me. But I was too late. The palace opened and the genius appeared, who, turning angrily to the princess, asked indignantly,

"What is the matter, that you have sent for me like this?"

"A pain in my heart," she replied hastily, "obliged me to seek the aid of this little bottle. Feeling faint, I slipped and fell against the talisman, which broke. That is really all."

"You are an impudent liar!" cried the genius. "How did this hatchet and those shoes get here?"

"I never saw them before," she answered, "and you came in such a hurry that you may have picked them up on the road without knowing it." To this the genius only replied by insults and blows. I could hear the shrieks and groans of the princess, and having by this time taken off my rich garments and put on those in which I had arrived the previous day, I lifted the trap, found myself once more in the forest, and returned to my friend the tailor, with a light load of wood and a heart full of shame and sorrow.

The tailor, who had been uneasy at my long absence, was, delighted to see me; but I kept silence about my adventure, and as soon as possible retired to my room to lament in secret over my folly. While I was thus indulging my grief my host entered, and said, “There is an old man downstairs who has brought your hatchet and slippers, which he picked up on the road, and now restores to you, as he found out from one of your comrades where you lived. You had better come down and speak to him yourself.” At this speech I changed colour, and my legs trembled under me. The tailor noticed my confusion, and was just going to inquire the reason when the door of the room opened, and the old man appeared, carrying with him my hatchet and shoes.

“I am a genius,” he said, “the son of the daughter of Eblis, prince of the genii. Is not this hatchet yours, and these shoes?” Without waiting for an answer — which, indeed, I could hardly have given him, so great was my fright — he seized hold of me, and darted up into the air with the quickness of lightning, and then, with equal swiftness, dropped down towards the earth. When he touched the ground, he rapped it with his foot; it opened, and we found ourselves in the enchanted palace, in the presence of the beautiful princess of the Ebony Isle. But how different she looked from what she was when I had last seen her, for she was lying stretched on the ground covered with blood, and weeping bitterly.

“Traitress!” cried the genius, “is not this man your lover?”

She lifted up her eyes slowly, and looked sadly at me. “I never saw him before,” she answered slowly. “I do not know who he is.”

“What!” exclaimed the genius, “you owe all your sufferings to him, and yet you dare to say he is a stranger to you!”

“But if he really is a stranger to me,” she replied, “why should I tell a lie and cause his death?”

“Very well,” said the genius, drawing his sword, “take this, and cut off his head.”

“Alas,” answered the princess, “I am too weak even to hold the sabre. And supposing that I had the strength, why should I put an innocent man to death?”

“You condemn yourself by your refusal,” said the genius; then turning to me, he added, “and you, do you not know her?”

“How should I?” I replied, resolved to imitate the princess in her fidelity. “How should I, when I never saw her before?”

“Cut her head off,” then, “if she is a stranger to you, and I shall believe you are speaking the truth, and will set you at liberty.”

“Certainly,” I answered, taking the sabre in my hands, and making a sign to the princess to fear nothing, as it was my own life that I was about to sacrifice, and not hers. But the look of gratitude she gave me shook my courage, and I flung the sabre to the earth.

“I should not deserve to live,” I said to the genius, “if I were such a coward as to slay a lady who is not only unknown to me, but who is at this moment half dead herself. Do with me as you will — I am in your power — but I refuse to obey your cruel command."

"I see," said the genius, "that you have both made up your minds to brave me, but I will give you a sample of what you may expect." So saying, with one sweep of his sabre he cut off a hand of the princess, who was just able to lift the other to wave me an eternal farewell. Then I lost consciousness for several minutes.

When I came to myself I implored the genius to keep me no longer in this state of suspense, but to lose no time in putting an end to my sufferings. The genius, however, paid no attention to my prayers, but said sternly, "That is the way in which a genius treats the woman who has betrayed him. If I chose, I could kill you also; but I will be merciful, and content myself with changing you into a dog, an ass, a lion, or a bird — whichever you prefer."

I caught eagerly at these words, as giving me a faint hope of softening his wrath. "O genius!" I cried, "as you wish to spare my life, be generous, and spare it altogether. Grant my prayer, and pardon my crime, as the best man in the whole world forgave his neighbour who was eaten up with envy of him." Contrary to my hopes, the genius seemed interested in my words, and said he would like to hear the story of the two neighbours; and as I think, madam, it may please you, I will tell it to you also.

The Story of the Envious Man and of Him Who Was Envied

In a town of moderate size, two men lived in neighbouring houses; but they had not been there very long before one man took such a hatred of the other, and envied him so bitterly, that the poor man determined to find another home, hoping that when they no longer met every day his enemy would forget all about him. So he sold his house and the little furniture it contained, and moved into the capital of the country, which was luckily at no great distance. About half a mile from this city he bought a nice little place, with a large garden and a fair-sized court, in the centre of which stood an old well.

In order to live a quieter life, the good man put on the robe of a dervish, and divided his house into a quantity of small cells, where he soon established a number of other dervishes. The fame of his virtue gradually spread abroad, and many people, including several of the highest quality, came to visit him and ask his prayers.

Of course it was not long before his reputation reached the ears of the man who envied him, and this wicked wretch resolved never to rest till he had in some way worked ill to the dervish whom he hated. So he left his house and his business to look after themselves, and betook himself to the new dervish monastery, where he was welcomed by the founder with all the warmth imaginable. The excuse he gave for his appearance was that he had come to consult the chief of the dervishes on a private matter of great importance. “What I have to say must not be overheard,” he whispered; “command, I beg of you, that your dervishes retire into their cells, as night is approaching, and meet me in the court.”

The dervish did as he was asked without delay, and directly they were alone together the envious man began to tell a long story, edging, as they walked to and fro, always nearer to the well, and when they were quite close, he seized the dervish and dropped him in. He then ran off triumphantly, without having been seen by anyone, and congratulating himself that the object of his hatred was dead, and would trouble him no more.

But in this he was mistaken! The old well had long been inhabited (unknown to mere human beings) by a set of fairies and genii, who caught the dervish as he fell, so that he received no hurt. The dervish himself could see nothing, but he took for granted that something strange had happened, or he must certainly have been dashed against the side of the well and been killed. He lay quite still, and in a moment he heard a voice saying, “Can you guess whom this man is that we have saved from death?”

“No,” replied several other voices.

And the first speaker answered, “I will tell you. This man, from pure goodness of heart, forsook the town where he lived and came to dwell here, in the hope of curing one of his neighbours of the envy he felt towards him. But his character soon won him the esteem of all, and the envious man’s hatred grew, till he came here with the deliberate intention of causing his death. And this he would have done, without our help, the very day before the Sultan has arranged to visit this holy dervish, and to entreat his prayers for the princess, his daughter.”

“But what is the matter with the princess that she needs the dervish’s prayers?” asked another voice.

“She has fallen into the power of the genius Maimoum, the son of Dimdim,” replied the first voice. “But it would be quite simple for this holy chief of the dervishes to cure her if he only knew! In his convent there is a black cat which has a tiny white tip to its tail. Now to cure the princess the dervish must pull out seven of these white hairs, burn three, and with their smoke perfume the head of the princess. This will deliver her so completely that Maimoum, the son of Dimdim, will never dare to approach her again.”

The fairies and genii ceased talking, but the dervish did not forget a word of all they had said; and when morning came he perceived a place in the side of the well which was broken, and where he could easily climb out.

The dervishes, who could not imagine what had become of him, were enchanted at his reappearance. He told them of the attempt on his life made by his guest of the previous day, and then retired into his cell. He was soon joined here by the black cat of which the voice had spoken, who came as usual to say good-morning to his master. He took him on his knee and seized the opportunity to pull seven white hairs out of his tail, and put them on one side till they were needed.

The sun had not long risen before the Sultan, who was anxious to leave nothing undone that might deliver the princess, arrived with a large suite at the gate of the monastery, and was received by the dervishes with profound respect. The Sultan lost no time in declaring the object of his visit, and leading the chief of the dervishes aside, he said to him, “Noble scheik, you have guessed perhaps what I have come to ask you?”

“Yes, sire,” answered the dervish; “if I am not mistaken, it is the illness of the princess which has procured me this honour.”

“You are right,” returned the Sultan, “and you will give me fresh life if you can by your prayers deliver my daughter from the strange malady that has taken possession of her."

"Let your highness command her to come here, and I will see what I can do."

The Sultan, full of hope, sent orders at once that the princess was to set out as soon as possible, accompanied by her usual staff of attendants. When she arrived, she was so thickly veiled that the dervish could not see her face, but he desired a brazier to be held over her head, and laid the seven hairs on the burning coals. The instant they were consumed, terrific cries were heard, but no one could tell from whom they proceeded. Only the dervish guessed that they were uttered by Maimoum the son of Dimdim, who felt the princess escaping him.

All this time she had seemed unconscious of what she was doing, but now she raised her hand to her veil and uncovered her face. "Where am I?" she said in a bewildered manner; "and how did I get here?"

The Sultan was so delighted to hear these words that he not only embraced his daughter, but kissed the hand of the dervish. Then, turning to his attendants who stood round, he said to them, "What reward shall I give to the man who has restored me my daughter?"

They all replied with one accord that he deserved the hand of the princess.

"That is my own opinion," said he, "and from this moment I declare him to be my son-in-law."

Shortly after these events, the grand-vizir died, and his post was given to the dervish. But he did not hold it for long, for the Sultan fell a victim to an attack of illness, and as he had no sons, the soldiers and priests declared the dervish heir to the throne, to the great joy of all the people.

One day, when the dervish, who had now become Sultan, was making a royal progress with his court, he perceived the envious man standing in the crowd. He made a sign to one of his vizirs, and whispered in his ear, "Fetch me that man who is standing out there, but take great care not to frighten him." The vizir obeyed, and when the envious man was brought before the Sultan, the monarch said to him, "My friend, I am delighted to see you again." Then turning to an officer, he added, "Give him a thousand pieces of gold out of my treasury, and twenty waggon-loads of merchandise out of my private stores, and let an escort of soldiers accompany him home." He then took leave of the envious man, and went on his way.

Now when I had ended my story, I proceeded to show the genius how to apply it to himself. "O genius," I said, "you see that this Sultan was not content with merely forgiving the envious man for the attempt on his life; he heaped rewards and riches upon him."

But the genius had made up his mind, and could not be softened. "Do not imagine that you are going to escape so easily,” he said. “All I can do is to give you bare life; you will have to learn what happens to people who interfere with me.”

As he spoke he seized me violently by the arm; the roof of the palace opened to make way for us, and we mounted up so high into the air that the earth looked like a little cloud. Then, as before, he came down with the swiftness of lightning, and we touched the ground on a mountain top.

Then he stooped and gathered a handful of earth, and murmured some words over it, after which he threw the earth in my face, saying as he did so, “Quit the form of a man, and assume that of a monkey.” This done, he vanished, and I was in the likeness of an ape, and in a country I had never seen before.

However there was no use in stopping where I was, so I came down the mountain and found myself in a flat plain which was bounded by the sea. I travelled towards it, and was pleased to see a vessel moored about half a mile from shore. There were no waves, so I broke off the branch of a tree, and dragging it down to the water’s edge, sat across it, while, using two sticks for oars, I rowed myself towards the ship.

The deck was full of people, who watched my progress with interest, but when I seized a rope and swung myself on board, I found that I had only escaped death at the hands of the genius to perish by those of the sailors, lest I should bring ill-luck to the vessel and the merchants. “Throw him into the sea!” cried one. “Knock him on the head with a hammer,” exclaimed another. “Let me shoot him with an arrow,” said a third; and certainly somebody would have had his way if I had not flung myself at the captain’s feet and grasped tight hold of his dress. He appeared touched by my action and patted my head, and declared that he would take me under his protection, and that no one should do me any harm.

At the end of about fifty days we cast anchor before a large town, and the ship was immediately surrounded by a multitude of small boats filled with people, who had come either to meet their friends or from simple curiosity. Among others, one boat contained several officials, who asked to see the merchants on board, and informed them that they had been sent by the Sultan in token of welcome, and to beg them each to write a few lines on a roll of paper. “In order to explain this strange request,” continued the officers, “it is necessary that you should know that the grand-vizir, lately dead, was celebrated for his beautiful handwriting, and the Sultan is anxious to find a similar talent in his successor. Hitherto the search has been a failure, but his Highness has not yet given up hope.”

One after another the merchants set down a few lines upon the roll, and when they had all finished, I came forward, and snatched the paper from the man who held it. At first they all thought I was going to throw it into the sea, but they were quieted when they saw I held it with great care, and great was their surprise when I made signs that I too wished to write something.

“Let him do it if he wants to,” said the captain. “If he only makes a mess of the paper, you may be sure I will punish him for it. But if, as I hope, he really can write, for he is the cleverest monkey I ever saw, I will adopt him as my son. The one I lost had not nearly so much sense!”

No more was said, and I took the pen and wrote the six sorts of writing in use among the Arabs, and each sort contained an original verse or couplet, in praise of the Sultan. And not only did my handwriting completely eclipse that of the merchants, but it is hardly too much to say that none so beautiful had ever before been seen in that country. When I had ended the officials took the roll and returned to the Sultan.

As soon as the monarch saw my writing he did not so much as look at the samples of the merchants, but desired his officials to take the finest and most richly caparisoned horse in his stables, together with the most magnificent dress they could procure, and to put it on the person who had written those lines, and bring him to court.

The officials began to laugh when they heard the Sultan’s command, but as soon as they could speak they said, “Deign, your highness, to excuse our mirth, but those lines were not written by a man but by a monkey.”

“A monkey!” exclaimed the Sultan.

“Yes, sire,” answered the officials. “They were written by a monkey in our presence.”

“Then bring me the monkey,” he replied, “as fast as you can.”

The Sultan’s officials returned to the ship and showed the royal order to the captain.

“He is the master,” said the good man, and desired that I should be sent for.

Then they put on me the gorgeous robe and rowed me to land, where I was placed on the horse and led to the palace. Here the Sultan was awaiting me in great state surrounded by his court.

All the way along the streets I had been the object of curiosity to a vast crowd, which had filled every doorway and every window, and it was amidst their shouts and cheers that I was ushered into the presence of the Sultan.

I approached the throne on which he was seated and made him three low bows, then prostrated myself at his feet to the surprise of everyone, who could not understand how it was possible that a monkey should be able to distinguish a Sultan from other people, and to pay him the respect due to his rank. However, excepting the usual speech, I omitted none of the common forms attending a royal audience.

When it was over the Sultan dismissed all the court, keeping with him only the chief of the eunuchs and a little slave. He then passed into another room and ordered food to be brought, making signs to me to sit at table with him and eat. I rose from my seat, kissed the ground, and took my place at the table, eating, as you may suppose, with care and in moderation.

Before the dishes were removed I made signs that writing materials, which stood in one corner of the room, should be laid in front of me. I then took a peach and wrote on it some verses in praise of the Sultan, who was speechless with astonishment; but when I did the same thing on a glass from which I had drunk he murmured to himself, “Why, a man who could do as much would be cleverer than any other man, and this is only a monkey!”

Supper being over chessmen were brought, and the Sultan signed to me to know if I would play with him. I kissed the ground and laid my hand on my head to show that I was ready to show myself worthy of the honour. He beat me the first game, but I won the second and third, and seeing that this did not quite please I dashed off a verse by way of consolation.

The Sultan was so enchanted with all the talents of which I had given proof that he wished me to exhibit some of them to other people. So turning to the chief of the eunuchs he said, “Go and beg my daughter, Queen of Beauty, to come here. I will show her something she has never seen before.”

The chief of the eunuchs bowed and left the room, ushering in a few moments later the princess, Queen of Beauty. Her face was uncovered, but the moment she set foot in the room she threw her veil over her head. “Sire,” she said to her father, “what can you be thinking of to summon me like this into the presence of a man?”

“I do not understand you,” replied the Sultan. “There is nobody here but the eunuch, who is your own servant, the little slave, and myself, yet you cover yourself with your veil and reproach me for having sent for you, as if I had committed a crime.”

“Sire,” answered the princess, “I am right and you are wrong. This monkey is really no monkey at all, but a young prince who has been turned into a monkey by the wicked spells of a genius, son of the daughter of Eblis.”

As will be imagined, these words took the Sultan by surprise, and he looked at me to see how I should take the statement of the princess. As I was unable to speak, I placed my hand on my head to show that it was true.

“But how do you know this, my daughter?” asked he.

“Sire,” replied Queen of Beauty, “the old lady who took care of me in my childhood was an accomplished magician, and she taught me seventy rules of her art, by means of which I could, in the twinkling of an eye, transplant your capital into the middle of the ocean. Her art likewise teaches me to recognise at first sight all persons who are enchanted, and tells me by whom the spell was wrought."

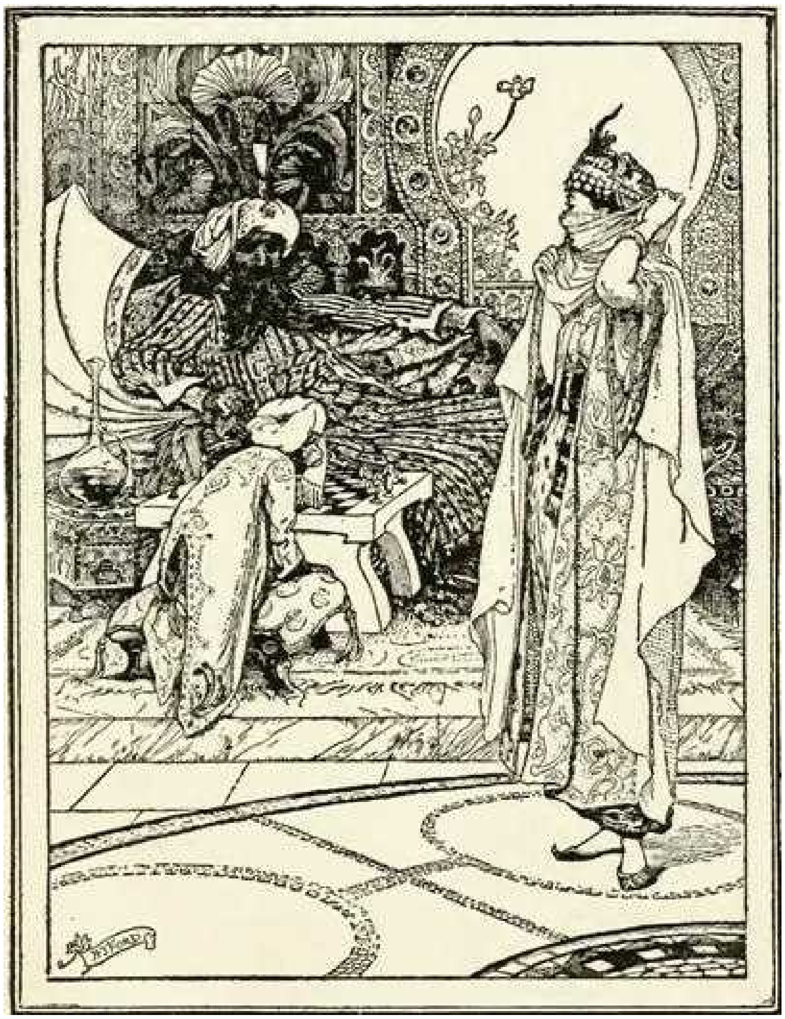

"My daughter," said the Sultan, "I really had no idea you were so clever."

"Sire," replied the princess, "there are many out-of-the-way things it is as well to know, but one should never boast of them."

"Well," asked the Sultan, "can you tell me what must be done to disenchant the young prince?"

"Certainly; and I can do it."

"Then restore him to his former shape," cried the Sultan. "You could give me no greater pleasure, for I wish to make him my grand-vizir, and to give him to you for your husband."

"As your Highness pleases," replied the princess.

Queen of Beauty rose and went to her chamber, from which she fetched a knife with some Hebrew words engraven on the blade. She then desired the Sultan, the chief of the eunuchs, the little slave, and myself to descend into a secret court of the palace, and placed us beneath a gallery which ran all round, she herself standing in the centre of the court. Here she traced a large circle and in it wrote several words in Arab characters.

When the circle and the writing were finished she stood in the middle of it and repeated some verses from the Koran. Slowly the air grew dark, and we felt as if the earth was about to crumble away, and our fright was by no means diminished at seeing the genius, son of the daughter of Eblis, suddenly appear under the form of a colossal lion.

“Dog,” cried the princess when she first caught sight of him, “you think to strike terror into me by daring to present yourself before me in this hideous shape.”

“And you,” retorted the lion, “have not feared to break our treaty that engaged solemnly we should never interfere with each other.”

“Accursed genius!” exclaimed the princess, “it is you by whom that treaty was first broken.”

“I will teach you how to give me so much trouble,” said the lion, and opening his huge mouth he advanced to swallow her. But the princess expected something of the sort and was on her guard. She bounded on one side, and seizing one of the hairs of his mane repeated two or three words over it. In an instant it became a sword, and with a sharp blow she cut the lion’s body into two pieces. These pieces vanished no one knew where, and only the lion’s head remained, which was at once changed into a scorpion. Quick as thought the princess assumed the form of a serpent and gave battle to the scorpion, who, finding he was getting the worst of it, turned himself into an eagle and took flight. But in a moment the serpent had become an eagle more powerful still, who soared up in the air and after him, and then we lost sight of them both.

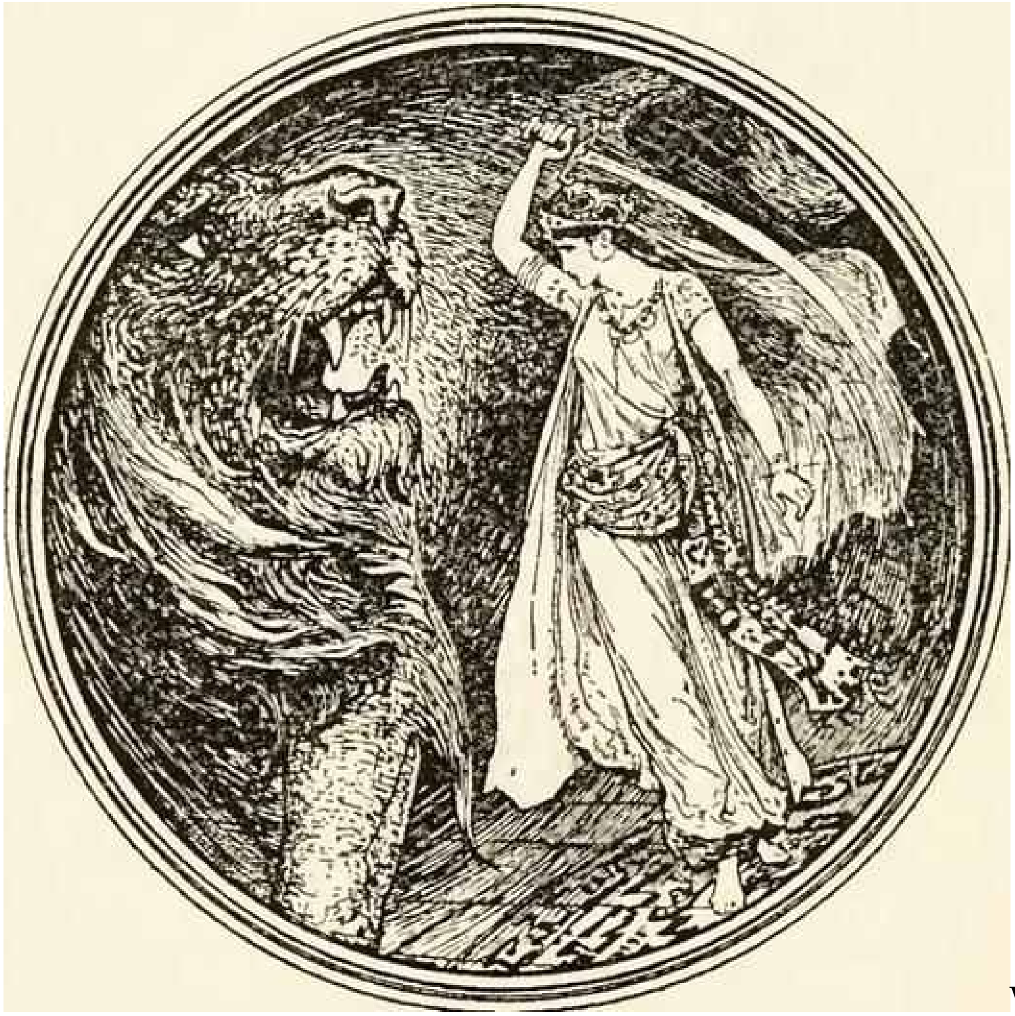

We all remained where we were quaking with anxiety, when the ground opened in front of us and a black and white cat leapt out, its hair standing on end, and miauing frightfully. At its heels was a wolf, who had almost seized it, when the cat changed itself into a worm, and, piercing the skin of a pomegranate which had tumbled from a tree, hid itself in the fruit. The pomegranate swelled till it grew as large as a pumpkin, and raised itself on to the roof of the gallery, from which it fell into the court and was broken into bits. While this was taking place the wolf, who had transformed himself into a cock, began to swallow the seed of the pomegranate as fast as he could. When all were gone he flew towards us, flapping his wings as if to ask if we saw any more, when suddenly his eye fell on one which lay on the bank of the little canal that flowed through the court; he hastened towards it, but before he could touch it the seed rolled into the canal and became a fish. The cock flung himself in after the fish and took the shape of a pike, and for two hours they chased each other up and down under the water, uttering horrible cries, but we could see nothing. At length they rose from the water in their proper forms, but darting such flames of fire from their mouths that we dreaded lest the palace should catch fire. Soon, however, we had much greater cause for alarm, as the genius, having shaken off the princess, flew towards us. Our fate would have been sealed if the princess, seeing our danger, had not attracted the attention of the genius to herself. As it was, the Sultan's beard was singed and his face scorched, the chief of the eunuchs was burned to a cinder, while a spark deprived me of the sight of one eye. Both I and the Sultan had given up all hope of a rescue, when there was a shout of "Victory, victory!" from the princess, and the genius lay at her feet a great heap of ashes.

Exhausted though she was, the princess at once ordered the little slave, who alone was uninjured, to bring her a cup of water, which she took in her hand. First repeating some magic words over it, she dashed it into my face saying, "If you are only a monkey by enchantment, resume the form of the man you were before." In an instant I stood before her the same man I had formerly been, though having lost the sight of one eye.

I was about to fall on my knees and thank the princess but she did not give me time. Turning to the Sultan, her father, she said, "Sire, I have gained the battle, but it has cost me dear. The fire has penetrated to my heart, and I have only a few moments to live. This would not have happened if I had only noticed the last pomegranate seed and eaten it like the rest. It was the last struggle of the genius, and up to that time I was quite safe. But having let this chance slip I was forced to resort to fire, and in spite of all his experience I showed the genius that I knew more than he did. He is dead and in ashes, but my own death is approaching fast." "My daughter," cried the Sultan, "how sad is my condition! I am only surprised I am alive at all! The eunuch is consumed by the flames, and the prince whom you have delivered has lost the sight of one eye." He could say no more, for sobs choked his voice, and we all wept together.

Suddenly the princess shrieked, "I burn, I burn!" and death came to free her from her torments.

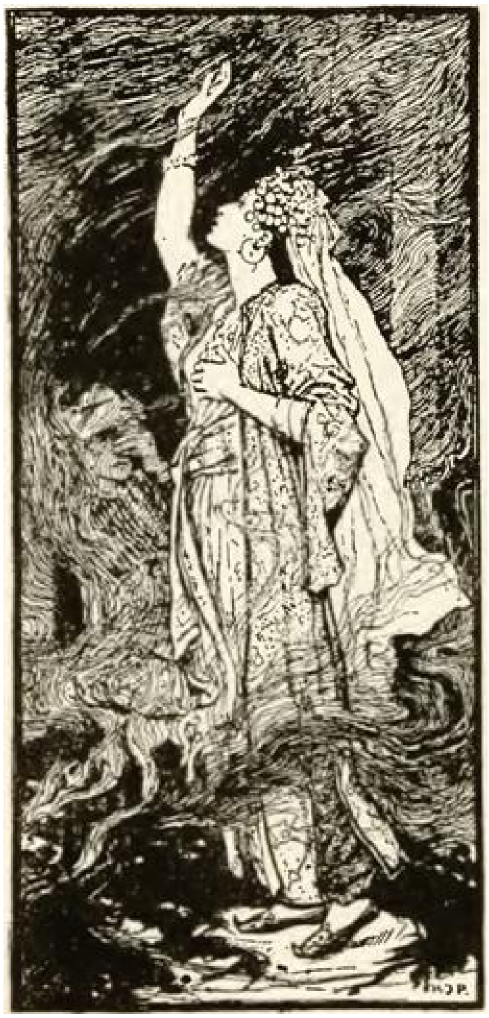

I have no words, madam, to tell you of my feelings at this terrible sight. I would rather have remained a monkey all my life than let my benefactress perish in this shocking manner. As for the Sultan, he was quite inconsolable, and his subjects, who had dearly loved the princess, shared his grief. For seven days the whole nation mourned, and then the ashes of the princess were buried with great pomp, and a superb tomb was raised over her.

As soon as the Sultan recovered from the severe illness which had seized him after the death of the princess he sent for me and plainly, though politely, informed me that my presence would always remind him of his loss, and he begged that I would instantly quit his kingdom, and on pain of death never return to it. I was, of course, bound to obey, and not knowing what was to become of me I shaved my beard and eyebrows and put on the dress of a calender. After wandering aimlessly through several countries, I resolved to come to Bagdad and request an audience of the Commander of the Faithful.

And that, madam, is my story.

The other Calender then told his story.

The Story of the Third Calender, Son of a King

My story, said the Third Calender, is quite different from those of my two friends. It was fate that deprived them of the sight of their right eyes, but mine was lost by my own folly.

My name is Agib, and I am the son of a king called Cassib, who reigned over a large kingdom, which had for its capital one of the finest seaport towns in the world.

When I succeeded to my father’s throne my first care was to visit the provinces on the mainland, and then to sail to the numerous islands which lay off the shore, in order to gain the hearts of my subjects. These voyages gave me such a taste for sailing that I soon determined to explore more distant seas, and commanded a fleet of large ships to be got ready without delay. When they were properly fitted out I embarked on my expedition.

For forty days wind and weather were all in our favour, but the next night a terrific storm arose, which blew us hither and thither for ten days, till the pilot confessed that he had quite lost his bearings. Accordingly a sailor was sent up to the masthead to try to catch a sight of land, and reported that nothing was to be seen but the sea and sky, except a huge mass of blackness that lay astern.

On hearing this the pilot grew white, and, beating his breast, he cried, “Oh, sir, we are lost, lost!” till the ship’s crew trembled at they knew not what. When he had recovered himself a little, and was able to explain the cause of his terror, he replied, in answer to my question, that we had drifted far out of our course, and that the following day about noon we should come near that mass of darkness, which, said he, is nothing but the famous Black Mountain. This mountain is composed of adamant, which attracts to itself all the iron and nails in your ship; and as we are helplessly drawn nearer, the force of attraction will become so great that the iron and nails will fall out of the ships and cling to the mountain, and the ships will sink to the bottom with all that are in them. This it is that causes the side of the mountain towards the sea to appear of such a dense blackness.

As may be supposed — continued the pilot — the mountain sides are very rugged, but on the summit stands a brass dome supported on pillars, and bearing on top the figure of a brass horse, with a rider on his back. This rider wears a breastplate of lead, on which strange signs and figures are engraved, and it is said that as long as this statue remains on the dome, vessels will never cease to perish at the foot of the mountain.

So saying, the pilot began to weep afresh, and the crew, fearing their last hour had come, made their wills, each one in favour of his fellow.

At noon next day, as the pilot had foretold, we were so near to the Black Mountain that we saw all the nails and iron fly out of the ships and dash themselves against the mountain with a horrible noise. A moment after the vessels fell asunder and sank, the crews with them. I alone managed to grasp a floating plank, and was driven ashore by the wind, without even a scratch. What was my joy on finding myself at the bottom of some steps which led straight up the mountain, for there was not another inch to the right or the left where a man could set his foot. And, indeed, even the steps themselves were so narrow and so steep that, if the lightest breeze had arisen, I should certainly have been blown into the sea.

When I reached the top I found the brass dome and the statue exactly as the pilot had described, but was too wearied with all I had gone through to do more than glance at them, and, flinging myself under the dome, was asleep in an instant. In my dreams an old man appeared to me and said, “Hearken, Agib! As soon as thou art awake dig up the ground underfoot, and thou shalt find a bow of brass and three arrows of lead. Shoot the arrows at the statue, and the rider shall tumble into the sea, but the horse will fall down by thy side, and thou shalt bury him in the place from which thou tookest the bow and arrows. This being done the sea will rise and cover the mountain, and on it thou wilt perceive the figure of a metal man seated in a boat, having an oar in each hand. Step on board and let him conduct thee; but if thou wouldest behold thy kingdom again, see that thou takest not the name of Allah into thy mouth.”

Having uttered these words the vision left me, and I woke, much comforted. I sprang up and drew the bow and arrows out of the ground, and with the third shot the horseman fell with a great crash into the sea, which instantly began to rise, so rapidly, that I had hardly time to bury the horse before the boat approached me. I stepped silently in and sat down, and the metal man pushed off, and rowed without stopping for nine days, after which land appeared on the horizon. I was so overcome with joy at this sight that I forgot all the old man had told me, and cried out, “Allah be praised! Allah be praised!”

The words were scarcely out of my mouth when the boat and man sank from beneath me, and left me floating on the surface. All that day and the next night I swam and floated alternately, making as well as I could for the land which was nearest to me. At last my strength began to fail, and I gave myself up for lost, when the wind suddenly rose, and a huge wave cast me on a flat shore. Then, placing myself in safety, I hastily spread my clothes out to dry in the sun, and flung myself on the warm ground to rest.

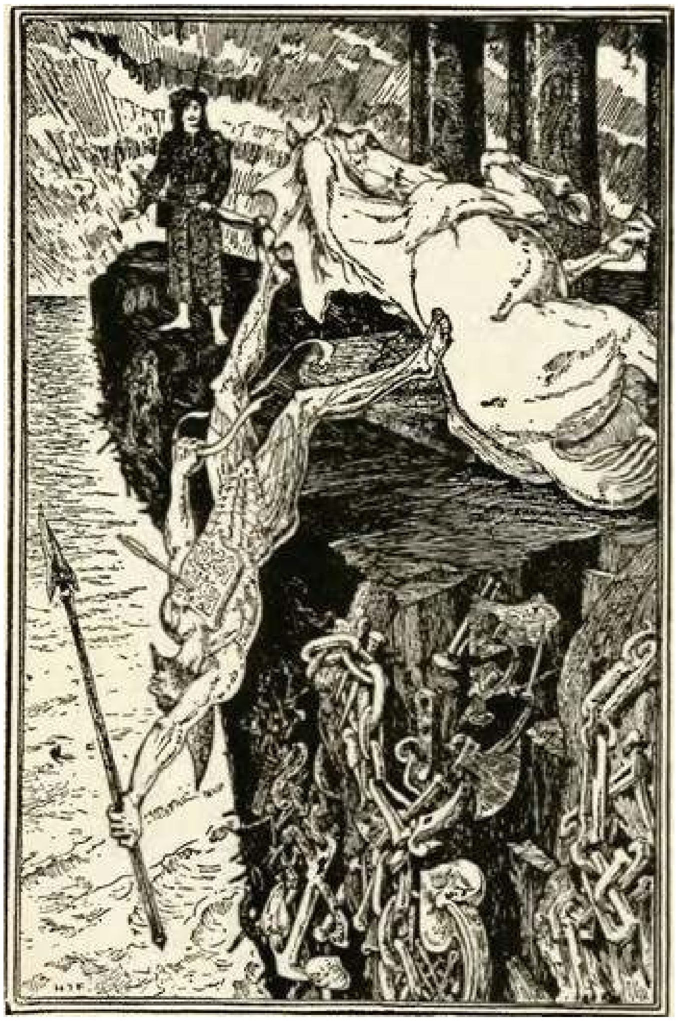

Next morning I dressed myself and began to look about me. There seemed to be no one but myself on the island, which was covered with fruit trees and watered with streams, but seemed a long distance from the mainland which I hoped to reach. Before, however, I had time to feel cast down, I saw a ship making directly for the island, and not knowing whether it would contain friends or foes, I hid myself in the thick branches of a tree.

The sailors ran the ship into a creek, where ten slaves landed, carrying spades and pickaxes. In the middle of the island they stopped, and after digging some time, lifted up what seemed to be a trapdoor. They then returned to the vessel two or three times for furniture and provisions, and finally were accompanied by an old man, leading a handsome boy of fourteen or fifteen years of age. They all disappeared down the trapdoor, and after remaining below for a few minutes came up again, but without the boy, and let down the trapdoor, covering it with earth as before. This done, they entered the ship and set sail.

As soon as they were out of sight, I came down from my tree, and went to the place where the boy had been buried. I dug up the earth till I reached a large stone with a ring in the centre. This, when removed, disclosed a flight of stone steps which led to a large room richly furnished and lighted by tapers. On a pile of cushions, covered with tapestry, sat the boy. He looked up, startled and frightened at the sight of a stranger in such a place, and to soothe his fears, I at once spoke: “Be not alarmed, sir, whoever you may be. I am a king, and the son of a king, and will do you no hurt. On the contrary, perhaps I have been sent here to deliver you out of this tomb, where you have been buried alive.”

Hearing my words, the young man recovered himself, and when I had ended, he said, “The reasons, Prince, that have caused me to be buried in this place are so strange that they cannot but surprise you. My father is a rich merchant, owning much land and many ships, and has great dealings in precious stones, but he never ceased mourning that he had no child to inherit his wealth.

“At length one day he dreamed that the following year a son would be born to him, and when this actually happened, he consulted all the wise men in the kingdom as to the future of the infant. One and all they said the same thing. I was to live happily till I was fifteen, when a terrible danger awaited me, which I should hardly escape. If, however, I should succeed in doing so, I should live to a great old age. And, they added, when the statue of the brass horse on the top of the mountain of adamant is thrown into the sea by Agib, the son of Cassib, then beware, for fifty days later your son shall fall by his hand!

“This prophecy struck the heart of my father with such woe, that he never got over it, but that did not prevent him from attending carefully to my education till I attained, a short time ago, my fifteenth birthday. It was only yesterday that the news reached him that ten days previously the statue of brass had been thrown into the sea, and he at once set about hiding me in this underground chamber, which was built for the purpose, promising to fetch me out when the forty days have passed. For myself, I have no fears, as Prince Agib is not likely to come here to look for me.”

I listened to his story with an inward laugh as to the absurdity of my ever wishing to cause the death of this harmless boy, whom I hastened to assure of my friendship and even of my protection; begging him, in return, to convey me in his father’s ship to my own country. I need hardly say that I took special care not to inform him that I was the Agib whom he dreaded.

The day passed in conversation on various subjects, and I found him a youth of ready wit and of some learning. I took on myself the duties of a servant, held the basin and water for him when he washed, prepared the dinner and set it on the table. He soon grew to love me, and for thirty-nine days we spent as pleasant an existence as could be expected underground.

The morning of the fortieth dawned, and the young man when he woke gave thanks in an outburst of joy that the danger was passed. “My father may be here at any moment,” said he, “so make me, I pray you, a bath of hot water, that I may bathe, and change my clothes, and be ready to receive him.”

So I fetched the water as he asked, and washed and rubbed him, after which he lay down again and slept a little. When he opened his eyes for the second time, he begged me to bring him a melon and some sugar, that he might eat and refresh himself.

I soon chose a fine melon out of those which remained, but could find no knife to cut it with. “Look in the cornice over my head,” said he, “and I think you will see one.” It was so high above me, that I had some difficulty in reaching it, and catching my foot in the covering of the bed, I slipped, and fell right upon the young man, the knife going straight into his heart.

At this awful sight I shrieked aloud in my grief and pain. I threw myself on the ground and rent my clothes and tore my hair with sorrow. Then, fearing to be punished as his murderer by the unhappy father, I raised the great stone which blocked the staircase, and quitting the underground chamber, made everything fast as before.

Scarcely had I finished when, looking out to sea, I saw the vessel heading for the island, and, feeling that it would be useless for me to protest my innocence, I again concealed myself among the branches of a tree that grew near by.

The old man and his slaves pushed off in a boat directly the ship touched land, and walked quickly towards the entrance to the underground chamber; but when they were near enough to see that the earth had been disturbed, they paused and changed colour. In silence they all went down and called to the youth by name; then for a moment I heard no more. Suddenly a fearful scream rent the air, and the next instant the slaves came up the steps, carrying with them the body of the old man, who had fainted from sorrow! Laying him down at the foot of the tree in which I had taken shelter, they did their best to recover him, but it took a long while. When at last he revived, they left him to dig a grave, and then laying the young man’s body in it, they threw in the earth.

This ended, the slaves brought up all the furniture that remained below, and put it on the vessel, and breaking some boughs to weave a litter, they laid the old man on it, and carried him to the ship, which spread its sails and stood out to sea.

So once more I was quite alone, and for a whole month I walked daily over the island, seeking for some chance of escape. At length one day it struck me that my prison had grown much larger, and that the mainland seemed to be nearer. My heart beat at this thought, which was almost too good to be true. I watched a little longer: there was no doubt about it, and soon there was only a tiny stream for me to cross.

Even when I was safe on the other side I had a long distance to go on the mud and sand before I reached dry ground, and very tired I was, when far in front of me I caught sight of a castle of red copper, which, at first sight, I took to be a fire. I made all the haste I could, and after some miles of hard walking stood before it, and gazed at it in astonishment, for it seemed to me the most wonderful building I had ever beheld. While I was still staring at it, there came towards me a tall old man, accompanied by ten young men, all handsome, and all blind of the right eye.

Now in its way, the spectacle of ten men walking together, all blind of the right eye, is as uncommon as that of a copper castle, and I was turning over in my mind what could be the meaning of this strange fact, when they greeted me warmly, and inquired what had brought me there. I replied that my story was somewhat long, but that if they would take the trouble to sit down, I should be happy to tell it them. When I had finished, the young men begged that I would go with them to the castle, and I joyfully accepted their offer. We passed through what seemed to me an endless number of rooms, and came at length into a large hall, furnished with ten small blue sofas for the ten young men, which served as beds as well as chairs, and with another sofa in the middle for the old man. As none of the sofas could hold more than one person, they bade me place myself on the carpet, and to ask no questions about anything I should see.

After a little while the old man rose and brought in supper, which I ate heartily, for I was very hungry. Then one of the young men begged me to repeat my story, which had struck them all with astonishment, and when I had ended, the old man was bidden to “do his duty,” as it was late, and they wished to go to bed. At these words he rose, and went to a closet, from which he brought out ten basins, all covered with blue stuff. He set one before each of the young men, together with a lighted taper.

When the covers were taken off the basins, I saw they were filled with ashes, coal-dust, and lamp-black. The young men mixed these all together, and smeared the whole over their heads and faces. They then wept and beat their breasts, crying, “This is the fruit of idleness, and of our wicked lives.”

This ceremony lasted nearly the whole night, and when it stopped they washed themselves carefully, and put on fresh clothes, and lay down to sleep.

All this while I had refrained from questions, though my curiosity almost seemed to burn a hole in me, but the following day, when we went out to walk, I said to them, “Gentlemen, I must disobey your wishes, for I can keep silence no more. You do not appear to lack wit, yet you do such actions as none but madmen could be capable of. Whatever befalls me I cannot forbear asking, `Why you daub your faces with black, and how it is you are all blind of one eye?'" But they only answered that such questions were none of my business, and that I should do well to hold my peace.

During that day we spoke of other things, but when night came, and the same ceremony was repeated, I implored them most earnestly to let me know the meaning of it all.

"It is for your own sake," replied one of the young men, "that we have not granted your request, and to preserve you from our unfortunate fate. If, however, you wish to share our destiny we will delay no longer."

I answered that whatever might be the consequence I wished to have my curiosity satisfied, and that I would take the result on my own head. He then assured me that, even when I had lost my eye, I should be unable to remain with them, as their number was complete, and could not be added to. But to this I replied that, though I should be grieved to part company with such honest gentlemen, I would not be turned from my resolution on that account.

On hearing my determination my ten hosts then took a sheep and killed it, and handed me a knife, which they said I should by-and-by find useful. "We must sew you into this sheep-skin," said they, "and then leave you. A fowl of monstrous size, called a roc, will appear in the air, taking you to be a sheep. He will snatch you up and carry you into the sky, but be not alarmed, for he will bring you safely down and lay you on the top of a mountain. When you are on the ground cut the skin with the knife and throw it off. As soon as the roc sees you he will fly away from fear, but you must walk on till you come to a castle covered with plates of gold, studded with jewels. Enter boldly at the gate, which always stands open, but do not ask us to tell you what we saw or what befel us there, for that you will learn for yourself. This only we may say, that it cost us each our right eye, and has imposed upon us our nightly penance."

After the young gentlemen had been at the trouble of sewing the sheep-skin on me they left me, and retired to the hall. In a few minutes the roc appeared, and bore me off to the top of the mountain in his huge claws as lightly as if I had been a feather, for this great white bird is so strong that he has been known to carry even an elephant to his nest in the hills.

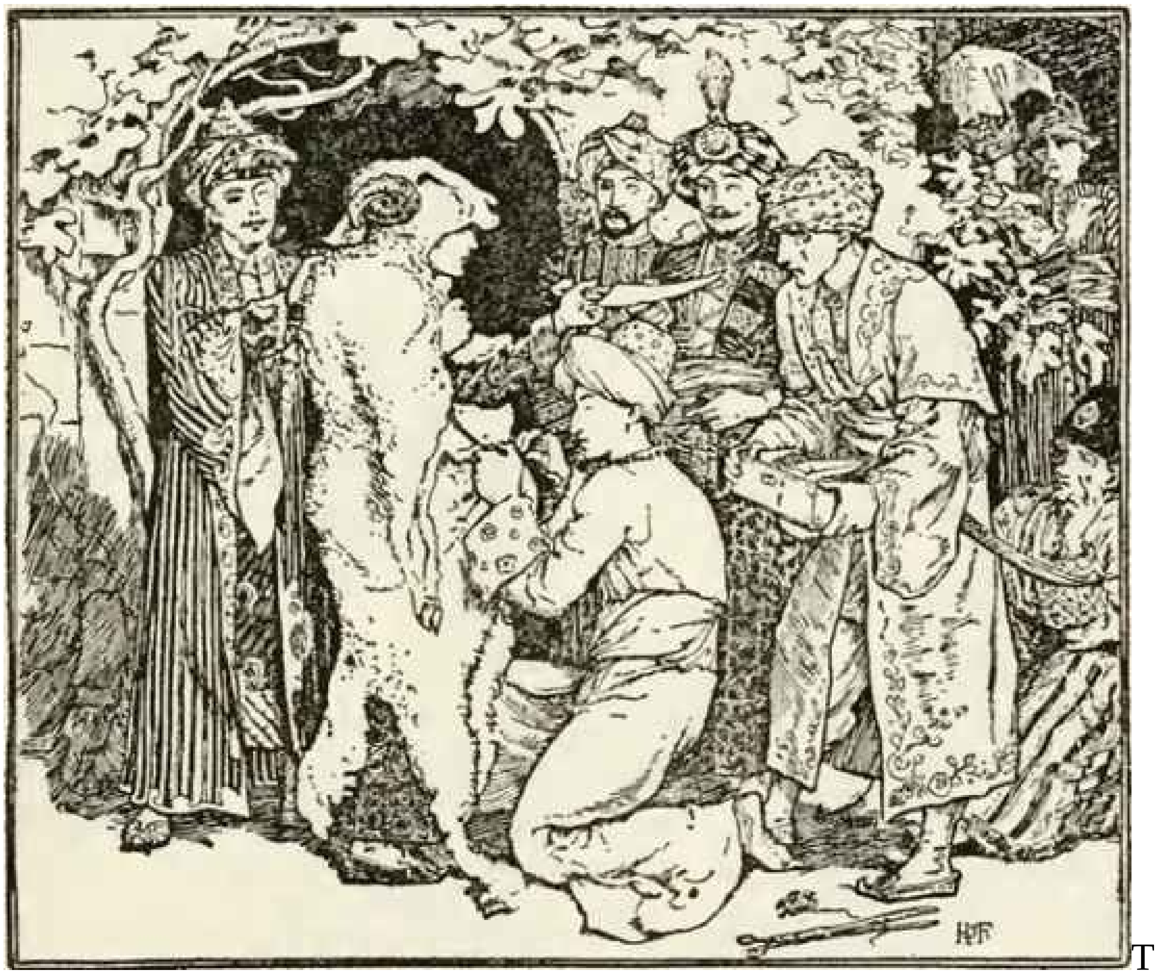

The moment my feet touched the ground I took out my knife and cut the threads that bound me, and the sight of me in my proper clothes so alarmed the roc that he spread his wings and flew away. Then I set out to seek the castle.

I found it after wandering about for half a day, and never could I have imagined anything so glorious. The gate led into a square court, into which opened a hundred doors, ninety-nine of them being of rare woods and one of gold. Through each of these doors I caught glimpses of splendid gardens or of rich storehouses.

Entering one of the doors which was standing open I found myself in a vast hall where forty young ladies, magnificently dressed, and of perfect beauty, were reclining. As soon as they saw me they rose and uttered words of welcome, and even forced me to take possession of a seat that was higher than their own, though my proper place was at their feet. Not content with this, one brought me splendid garments, while another filled a basin with scented water and poured it over my hands, and the rest busied themselves with preparing refreshments. After I had eaten and drunk of the most delicate food and rarest wines, the ladies crowded round me and begged me to tell them all my adventures.

By the time I had finished night had fallen, and the ladies lighted up the castle with such a prodigious quantity of tapers that even day could hardly have been brighter. We then sat down to a supper of dried fruits and sweetmeats, after which some sang and others danced. I was so well amused that I did not notice how the time was passing, but at length one of the ladies approached and informed me it was midnight, and that, as I must be tired, she would conduct me to the room that had been prepared for me. Then, bidding me good-night, I was left to sleep.

I spent the next thirty-nine days in much the same way as the first, but at the close of that time the ladies appeared (as was their custom) in my room one morning to inquire how I had slept, and instead of looking cheerful and smiling they were in floods of tears. “Prince,” said they, “we must leave you, and never was it so hard to part from any of our friends. Most likely we shall never see you again, but if you have sufficient self-command perhaps we may yet look forward to a meeting.”

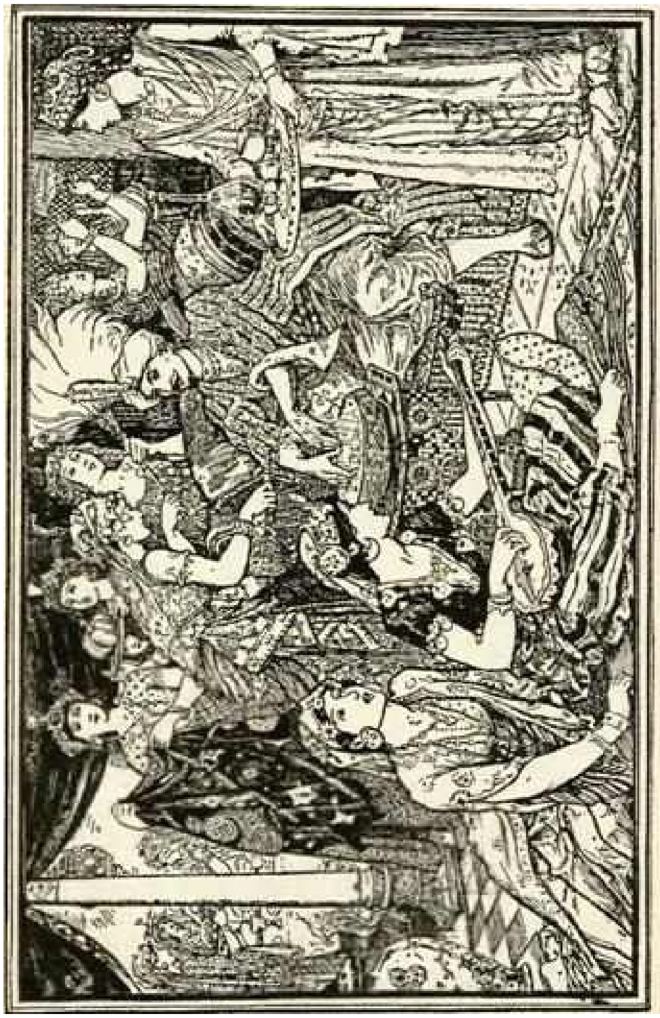

AGIB ENTERTAINED BY THE LADIES

“Ladies,” I replied, “what is the meaning of these strange words — I pray you to tell me?”

“Know then,” answered one of them, “that we are all princesses — each a king’s daughter. We live in this castle together, in the way that you have seen, but at the end of every year secret duties call us away for the space of forty days. The time has now come; but before we depart, we will leave you our keys, so that you may not lack entertainment during our absence. But one thing we would ask of you. The Golden Door, alone, forbear to open, as you value your own peace, and the happiness of your life. That door once unlocked, we must bid you farewell for ever.”

Weeping, I assured them of my prudence, and after embracing me tenderly, they went their ways.

Every day I opened two or three fresh doors, each of which contained behind it so many curious things that I had no chance of feeling dull, much as I regretted the absence of the ladies. Sometimes it was an orchard, whose fruit far exceeded in bigness any that grew in my father’s garden. Sometimes it was a court planted with roses, jessamine, dafeodils, hyacinths and anemones, and a thousand other flowers of which I did not know the names. Or again, it would be an aviary, fitted with all kinds of singing birds, or a treasury heaped up with precious stones; but whatever I might see, all was perfect of its own sort.

Thirty-nine days passed away more rapidly than I could have conceived possible, and the following morning the princesses were to return to the castle. But alas! I had explored every corner, save only the room that was shut in by the Golden Door, and I had no longer anything to amuse myself with. I stood before the forbidden place for some time, gazing at its beauty; then a happy inspiration struck me, that because I unlocked the door it was not necessary that I should enter the chamber. It would be enough for me to stand outside and view whatever hidden wonders might be therein.

Thus arguing against my own conscience, I turned the key, when a smell rushed out that, pleasant though it was, overcame me completely, and I fell fainting across the threshold. Instead of being warned by this accident, directly I came to myself I went for a few moments into the air to shake of the effects of the perfume, and then entered boldly. I found myself in a large, vaulted room, lighted by tapers, scented with aloes and ambergris, standing in golden candle-sticks, whilst gold and silver lamps hung from the ceiling.

Though objects of rare workmanship lay heaped around me, I paid them scant attention, so much was I struck by a great black horse which stood in one corner, the handsomest and best-shaped animal I had ever seen. His saddle and bridle were of massive gold, curiously wrought; one side of his trough was filled with clean barley and sesame, and the other with rose water. I led the animal into the open air, and then jumped on his back, shaking the reins as I did so, but as he never stirred, I touched him lightly with a switch I had picked up in his stable. No sooner did he feel the stroke, than he spread his wings (which I had not perceived before), and flew up with me straight into the sky. When he had reached a prodigious height, he next darted back to earth, and alighted on the terrace belonging to a castle, shaking me violently out of the saddle as he did so, and giving me such a blow with his tail, that he knocked out my right eye.

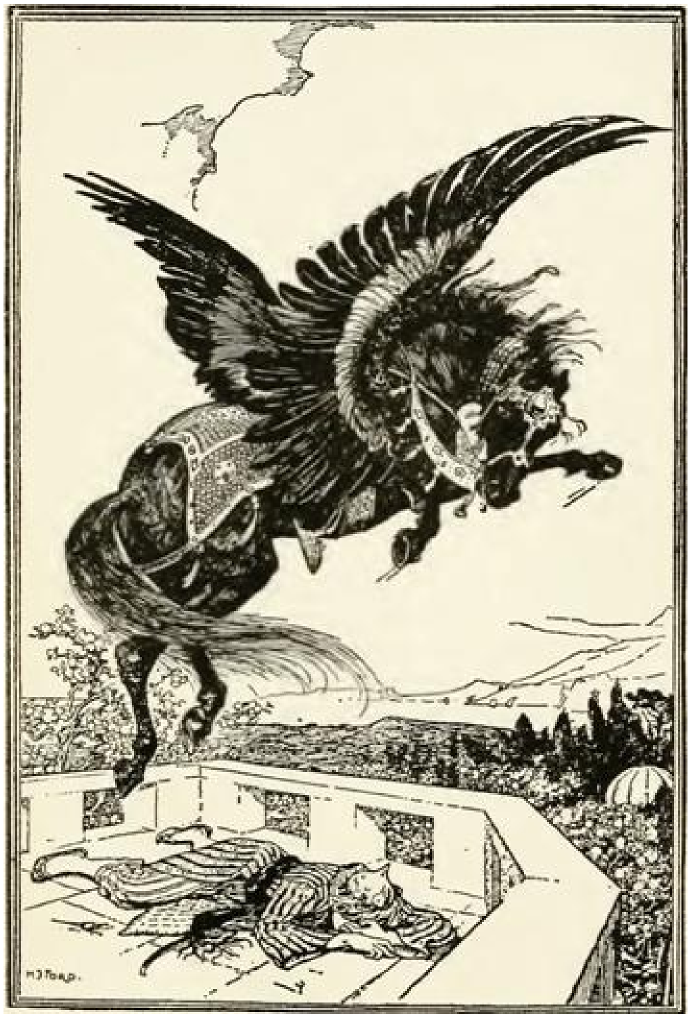

Half-stunned as I was with all that had happened to me, I rose to my feet, thinking as I did so of what had befallen the ten young men, and watching the horse which was soaring into the clouds. I left the terrace and wandered on till I came to a hall, which I knew to have been the one from which the roc had taken me, by the ten blue sofas against the wall.

The ten young men were not present when I first entered, but came in soon after, accompanied by the old man. They greeted me kindly, and bewailed my misfortune, though, indeed, they had expected nothing less. “All that has happened to you,” they said, “we also have undergone, and we should be enjoying the same happiness still, had we not opened the Golden Door while the princesses were absent. You have been no wiser than we, and have suffered the same punishment. We would gladly receive you among us, to perform such penance as we do, but we have already told you that this is impossible. Depart, therefore, from hence and go to the Court of Bagdad, where you shall meet with him that can decide your destiny.” They told me the way I was to travel, and I left them.

On the road I caused my beard and eyebrows to be shaved, and put on a Calender’s habit. I have had a long journey, but arrived this evening in the city, where I met my brother Calenders at the gate, being strangers like myself. We wondered much at one another, to see we were all blind of the same eye, but we had no leisure to discourse at length of our common calamities. We had only so much time as to come hither to implore those favours which you have been generously pleased to grant us.

He finished, and it was Zobeida’s turn to speak: “Go wherever you please,” she said, addressing all three. “I pardon you all, but you must depart immediately out of this house.”

The Seven Voyages of Sindbad the Sailor

In the times of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid there lived in Bagdad a poor porter named Hindbad, who on a very hot day was sent to carry a heavy load from one end of the city to the other. Before he had accomplished half the distance he was so tired that, finding himself in a quiet street where the pavement was sprinkled with rose water, and a cool breeze was blowing, he set his burden upon the ground, and sat down to rest in the shade of a grand house. Very soon he decided that he could not have chosen a pleasanter place; a delicious perfume of aloes wood and pastilles came from the open windows and mingled with the scent of the rose water which steamed up from the hot pavement. Within the palace he heard some music, as of many instruments cunningly played, and the melodious warble of nightingales and other birds, and by this, and the appetising smell of many dainty dishes of which he presently became aware, he judged that feasting and merry making were going on. He wondered who lived in this magnificent house which he had never seen before, the street in which it stood being one which he seldom had occasion to pass. To satisfy his curiosity he went up to some splendidly dressed servants who stood at the door, and asked one of them the name of the master of the mansion.

“What,” replied he, “do you live in Bagdad, and not know that here lives the noble Sindbad the Sailor, that famous traveller who sailed over every sea upon which the sun shines?”

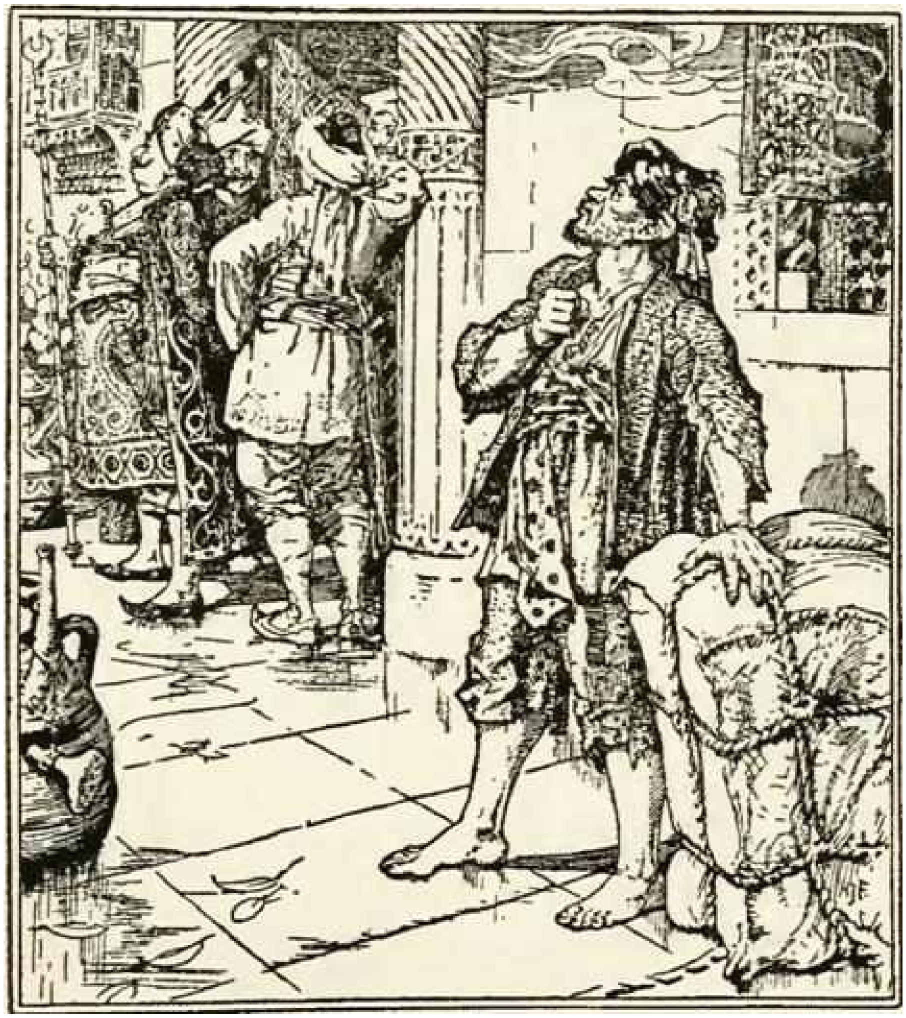

The porter, who had often heard people speak of the immense wealth of Sindbad, could not help feeling envious of one whose lot seemed to be as happy as his own was miserable. Casting his eyes up to the sky he exclaimed aloud,

"Consider, Mighty Creator of all things, the differences between Sindbad's life and mine. Every day I suffer a thousand hardships and misfortunes, and have hard work to get even enough bad barley bread to keep myself and my family alive, while the lucky Sindbad spends money right and left and lives upon the fat of the land! What has he done that you should give him this pleasant life — what have I done to deserve so hard a fate?"

So saying he stamped upon the ground like one beside himself with misery and despair. Just at this moment a servant came out of the palace, and taking him by the arm said, "Come with me, the noble Sindbad, my master, wishes to speak to you."

Hindbad was not a little surprised at this summons, and feared that his unguarded words might have drawn upon him the displeasure of Sindbad, so he tried to excuse himself upon the pretext that he could not leave the burden which had been entrusted to him in the street. However the lackey promised him that it should be taken care of, and urged him to obey the call so pressingly that at last the porter was obliged to yield.

He followed the servant into a vast room, where a great company was seated round a table covered with all sorts of delicacies. In the place of honour sat a tall, grave man whose long white beard gave him a venerable air. Behind his chair stood a crowd of attendants eager to minister to his wants. This was the famous Sindbad himself. The porter, more than ever alarmed at the sight of so much magnificence, tremblingly saluted the noble company. Sindbad, making a sign to him to approach, caused him to be seated at his right hand, and himself heaped choice morsels upon his plate, and poured out for him a draught of excellent wine, and presently, when the banquet drew to a close, spoke to him familiarly, asking his name and occupation.

“My lord,” replied the porter, “I am called Hindbad.”

“I am glad to see you here,” continued Sindbad. “And I will answer for the rest of the company that they are equally pleased, but I wish you to tell me what it was that you said just now in the street.” For Sindbad, passing by the open window before the feast began, had heard his complaint and therefore had sent for him.

At this question Hindbad was covered with confusion, and hanging down his head, replied, “My lord, I confess that, overcome by weariness and ill-humour, I uttered indiscreet words, which I pray you to pardon me.”

“Oh!” replied Sindbad, “do not imagine that I am so unjust as to blame you. On the contrary, I understand your situation and can pity you. Only you appear to be mistaken about me, and I wish to set you right. You doubtless imagine that I have acquired all the wealth and luxury that you see me enjoy without difficulty or danger, but this is far indeed from being the case. I have only reached this happy state after having for years suffered every possible kind of toil and danger.

“Yes, my noble friends,” he continued, addressing the company, “I assure you that my adventures have been strange enough to deter even the most avaricious men from seeking wealth by traversing the seas. Since you have, perhaps, heard but confused accounts of my seven voyages, and the dangers and wonders that I have met with by sea and land, I will now give you a full and true account of them, which I think you will be well pleased to hear.”

As Sindbad was relating his adventures chiefly on account of the porter, he ordered, before beginning his tale, that the burden which had been left in the street should be carried by some of his own servants to the place for which Hindbad had set out at first, while he remained to listen to the story.

First Voyage

I had inherited considerable wealth from my parents, and being young and foolish I at first squandered it recklessly upon every kind of pleasure, but presently, finding that riches speedily take to themselves wings if managed as badly as I was managing mine, and remembering also that to be old and poor is misery indeed, I began to bethink me of how I could make the best of what still remained to me. I sold all my household goods by public auction, and joined a company of merchants who traded by sea, embarking with them at Balsora in a ship which we had fitted out between us.

We set sail and took our course towards the East Indies by the Persian Gulf, having the coast of Persia upon our left hand and upon our right the shores of Arabia Felix. I was at first much troubled by the uneasy motion of the vessel, but speedily recovered my health, and since that hour have been no more plagued by sea-sickness.

From time to time we landed at various islands, where we sold or exchanged our merchandise, and one day, when the wind dropped suddenly, we found ourselves becalmed close to a small island like a green meadow, which only rose slightly above the surface of the water. Our sails were furled, and the captain gave permission to all who wished to land for a while and amuse themselves. I was among the number, but when after strolling about for some time we lighted a fire and sat down to enjoy the repast which we had brought with us, we were startled by a sudden and violent trembling of the island, while at the same moment those left upon the ship set up an outcry bidding us come on board for our lives, since what we had taken for an island was nothing but the back of a sleeping whale. Those who were nearest to the boat threw themselves into it, others sprang into the sea, but before I could save myself the whale plunged suddenly into the depths of the ocean, leaving me clinging to a piece of the wood which we had brought to make our fire. Meanwhile a breeze had sprung up, and in the confusion that ensued on board our vessel in hoisting the sails and taking up those who were in the boat and clinging to its sides, no one missed me and I was left at the mercy of the waves. All that day I floated up and down, now beaten this way, now that, and when night fell I despaired for my life; but, weary and spent as I was, I clung to my frail support, and great was my joy when the morning light showed me that I had drifted against an island.

The cliffs were high and steep, but luckily for me some tree-roots protruded in places, and by their aid I climbed up at last, and stretched myself upon the turf at the top, where I lay, more dead than alive, till the sun was high in the heavens. By that time I was very hungry, but after some searching I came upon some eatable herbs, and a spring of clear water, and much refreshed I set out to explore the island. Presently I reached a great plain where a grazing horse was tethered, and as I stood looking at it I heard voices talking apparently underground, and in a moment a man appeared who asked me how I came upon the island. I told him my adventures, and heard in return that he was one of the grooms of Mihrage, the king of the island, and that each year they came to feed their master's horses in this plain. He took me to a cave where his companions were assembled, and when I had eaten of the food they set before me, they bade me think myself fortunate to have come upon them when I did, since they were going back to their master on the morrow, and without their aid I could certainly never have found my way to the inhabited part of the island.

Early the next morning we accordingly set out, and when we reached the capital I was graciously received by the king, to whom I related my adventures, upon which he ordered that I should be well cared for and provided with such things as I needed. Being a merchant I sought out men of my own profession, and particularly those who came from foreign countries, as I hoped in this way to hear news from Bagdad, and find out some means of returning thither, for the capital was situated upon the sea-shore, and visited by vessels from all parts of the world. In the meantime I heard many curious things, and answered many questions concerning my own country, for I talked willingly with all who came to me. Also to while away the time of waiting I explored a little island named Cassel, which belonged to King Mihrage, and which was supposed to be inhabited by a spirit named Deggial. Indeed, the sailors assured me that often at night the playing of timbals could be heard upon it. However, I saw nothing strange upon my voyage, saving some fish that were full two hundred cubits long, but were fortunately more in dread of us than even we were of them, and fled from us if we did but strike upon a board to frighten them. Other fishes there were only a cubit long which had heads like owls.

One day after my return, as I went down to the quay, I saw a ship which had just cast anchor, and was discharging her cargo, while the merchants to whom it belonged were busily directing the removal of it to their warehouses. Drawing nearer I presently noticed that my own name was marked upon some of the packages, and after having carefully examined them, I felt sure that they were indeed those which I had put on board our ship at Balsora. I then recognised the captain of the vessel, but as I was certain that he believed me to be dead, I went up to him and asked who owned the packages that I was looking at.

“There was on board my ship,” he replied, “a merchant of Bagdad named Sindbad. One day he and several of my other passengers landed upon what we supposed to be an island, but which was really an enormous whale floating asleep upon the waves. No sooner did it feel upon its back the heat of the fire which had been kindled, than it plunged into the depths of the sea. Several of the people who were upon it perished in the waters, and among others this unlucky Sindbad. This merchandise is his, but I have resolved to dispose of it for the benefit of his family if I should ever chance to meet with them.”

“Captain,” said I, “I am that Sindbad whom you believe to be dead, and these are my possessions!”

When the captain heard these words he cried out in amazement, “Lackaday! and what is the world coming to? In these days there is not an honest man to be met with. Did I not with my own eyes see Sindbad drown, and now you have the audacity to tell me that you are he! I should have taken you to be a just man, and yet for the sake of obtaining that which does not belong to you, you are ready to invent this horrible falsehood.”

“Have patience, and do me the favour to hear my story,” said I.

“Speak then,” replied the captain, “I’m all attention.”

So I told him of my escape and of my fortunate meeting with the king’s grooms, and how kindly I had been received at the palace. Very soon I began to see that I had made some impression upon him, and after the arrival of some of the other merchants, who showed great joy at once more seeing me alive, he declared that he also recognised me.

Throwing himself upon my neck he exclaimed, “Heaven be praised that you have escaped from so great a danger. As to your goods, I pray you take them, and dispose of them as you please.” I thanked him, and praised his honesty, begging him to accept several bales of merchandise in token of my gratitude, but he would take nothing. Of the choicest of my goods I prepared a present for King Mihrage, who was at first amazed, having known that I had lost my all. However, when I had explained to him how my bales had been miraculously restored to me, he graciously accepted my gifts, and in return gave me many valuable things. I then took leave of him, and exchanging my merchandise for sandal and aloes wood, camphor, nutmegs, cloves, pepper, and ginger, I embarked upon the same vessel and traded so successfully upon our homeward voyage that I arrived in Balsora with about one hundred thousand sequins. My family received me with as much joy as I felt upon seeing them once more. I bought land and slaves, and built a great house in which I resolved to live happily, and in the enjoyment of all the pleasures of life to forget my past sufferings.

Here Sindbad paused, and commanded the musicians to play again, while the feasting continued until evening. When the time came for the porter to depart, Sindbad gave him a purse containing one hundred sequins, saying, “Take this, Hindbad, and go home, but to-morrow come again and you shall hear more of my adventures.”

The porter retired quite overcome by so much generosity, and you may imagine that he was well received at home, where his wife and children thanked their lucky stars that he had found such a benefactor.

The next day Hindbad, dressed in his best, returned to the voyager’s house, and was received with open arms. As soon as all the guests had arrived the banquet began as before, and when they had feasted long and merrily, Sindbad addressed them thus:

“My friends, I beg that you will give me your attention while I relate the adventures of my second voyage, which you will find even more astonishing than the first.”

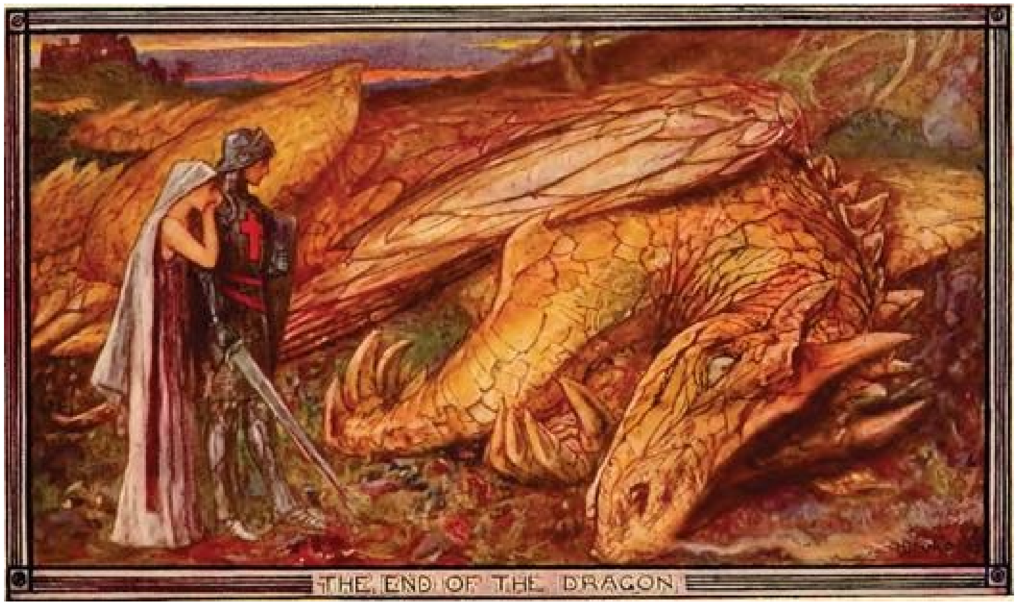

THE END OF THE DRAGON

Second Voyage

I had resolved, as you know, on my return from my first voyage, to spend the rest of my days quietly in Bagdad, but very soon I grew tired of such an idle life and longed once more to find myself upon the sea.

I procured, therefore, such goods as were suitable for the places I intended to visit, and embarked for the second time in a good ship with other merchants whom I knew to be honourable men. We went from island to island, often making excellent bargains, until one day we landed at a spot which, though covered with fruit trees and abounding in springs of excellent water, appeared to possess neither houses nor people. While my companions wandered here and there gathering flowers and fruit I sat down in a shady place, and, having heartily enjoyed the provisions and the wine I had brought with me, I fell asleep, lulled by the murmur of a clear brook which flowed close by.

How long I slept I know not, but when I opened my eyes and started to my feet I perceived with horror that I was alone and that the ship was gone. I rushed to and fro like one distracted, uttering cries of despair, and when from the shore I saw the vessel under full sail just disappearing upon the horizon, I wished bitterly enough that I had been content to stay at home in safety. But since wishes could do me no good, I presently took courage and looked about me for a means of escape. When I had climbed a tall tree I first of all directed my anxious glances towards the sea; but, finding nothing hopeful there, I turned landward, and my curiosity was excited by a huge dazzling white object, so far off that I could not make out what it might be.

Descending from the tree I hastily collected what remained of my provisions and set off as fast as I could go towards it. As I drew near it seemed to me to be a white ball of immense size and height, and when I could touch it, I found it marvellously smooth and soft. As it was impossible to climb it — for it presented no foot-hold — I walked round about it seeking some opening, but there was none. I counted, however, that it was at least fifty paces round. By this time the sun was near setting, but quite suddenly it fell dark, something like a huge black cloud came swiftly over me, and I saw with amazement that it was a bird of extraordinary size which was hovering near. Then I remembered that I had often heard the sailors speak of a wonderful bird called a roc, and it occurred to me that the white object which had so puzzled me must be its egg.

Sure enough the bird settled slowly down upon it, covering it with its wings to keep it warm, and I cowered close beside the egg in such a position that one of the bird’s feet, which was as large as the trunk of a tree, was just in front of me. Taking off my turban I bound myself securely to it with the linen in the hope that the roc, when it took flight next morning, would bear me away with it from the desolate island. And this was precisely what did happen. As soon as the dawn appeared the bird rose into the air carrying me up and up till I could no longer see the earth, and then suddenly it descended so swiftly that I almost lost consciousness. When I became aware that the roc had settled and that I was once again upon solid ground, I hastily unbound my turban from its foot and freed myself, and that not a moment too soon; for the bird, pouncing upon a huge snake, killed it with a few blows from its powerful beak, and seizing it up rose into the air once more and soon disappeared from my view. When I had looked about me I began to doubt if I had gained anything by quitting the desolate island.

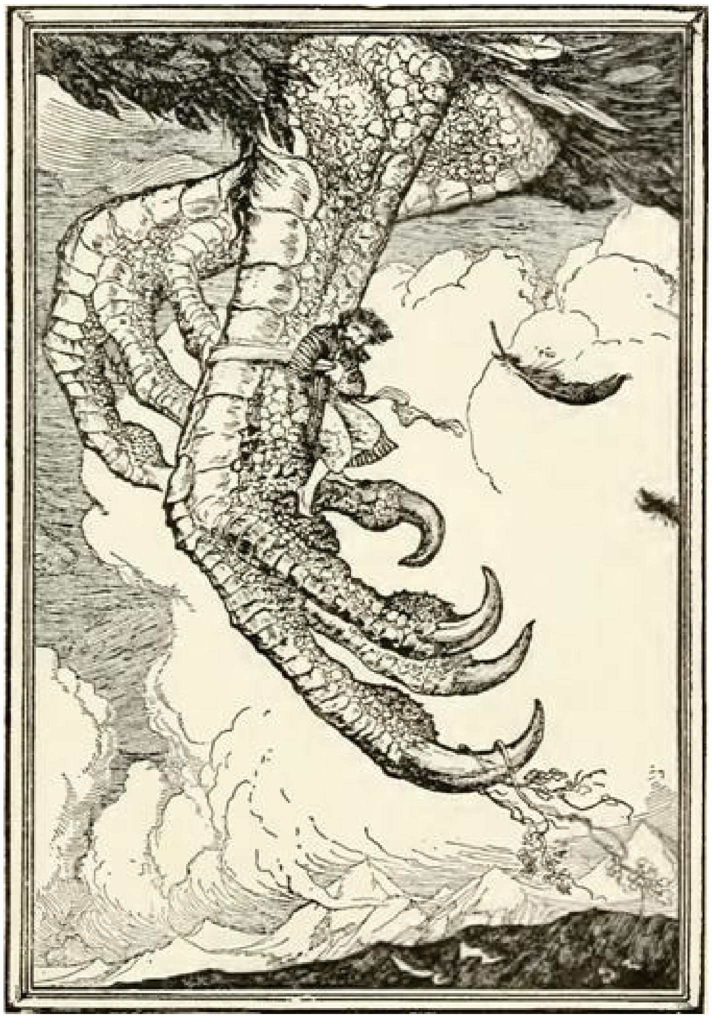

The valley in which I found myself was deep and narrow, and surrounded by mountains which towered into the clouds, and were so steep and rocky that there was no way of climbing up their sides. As I wandered about, seeking anxiously for some means of escaping from this trap, I observed that the ground was strewed with diamonds, some of them of an astonishing size. This sight gave me great pleasure, but my delight was speedily damped when I saw also numbers of horrible snakes so long and so large that the smallest of them could have swallowed an elephant with ease. Fortunately for me they seemed to hide in caverns of the rocks by day, and only came out by night, probably because of their enemy the roc.

All day long I wandered up and down the valley, and when it grew dusk I crept into a little cave, and having blocked up the entrance to it with a stone, I ate part of my little store of food and lay down to sleep, but all through the night the serpents crawled to and fro, hissing horribly, so that I could scarcely close my eyes for terror. I was thankful when the morning light appeared, and when I judged by the silence that the serpents had retreated to their dens I came tremblingly out of my cave and wandered up and down the valley once more, kicking the diamonds contemptuously out of my path, for I felt that they were indeed vain things to a man in my situation. At last, overcome with weariness, I sat down upon a rock, but I had hardly closed my eyes when I was startled by something which fell to the ground with a thud close beside me.

It was a huge piece of fresh meat, and as I stared at it several more pieces rolled over the cliffs in different places. I had always thought that the stories the sailors told of the famous valley of diamonds, and of the cunning way which some merchants had devised for getting at the precious stones, were mere travellers' tales invented to give pleasure to the hearers, but now I perceived that they were surely true. These merchants came to the valley at the time when the eagles, which keep their eyries in the rocks, had hatched their young. The merchants then threw great lumps of meat into the valley. These, falling with so much force upon the diamonds, were sure to take up some of the precious stones with them, when the eagles pounced upon the meat and carried it off to their nests to feed their hungry broods. Then the merchants, scaring away the parent birds with shouts and outcries, would secure their treasures. Until this moment I had looked upon the valley as my grave, for I had seen no possibility of getting out of it alive, but now I took courage and began to devise a means of escape. I began by picking up all the largest diamonds I could find and storing them carefully in the leathern wallet which had held my provisions; this I tied securely to my belt. I then chose the piece of meat which seemed most suited to my purpose, and with the aid of my turban bound it firmly to my back; this done I laid down upon my face and awaited the coming of the eagles. I soon heard the flapping of their mighty wings above me, and had the satisfaction of feeling one of them seize upon my piece of meat, and me with it, and rise slowly towards his nest, into which he presently dropped me. Luckily for me the merchants were on the watch, and setting up their usual outcries they rushed to the nest scaring away the eagle. Their amazement was great when they discovered me, and also their disappointment, and with one accord they fell to abusing me for having robbed them of their usual profit. Addressing myself to the one who seemed most aggrieved, I said: “I am sure, if you knew all that I have suffered, you would show more kindness towards me, and as for diamonds, I have enough here of the very best for you and me and all your company.” So saying I showed them to him. The others all crowded round me, wondering at my adventures and admiring the device by which I had escaped from the valley, and when they had led me to their camp and examined my diamonds, they assured me that in all the years that they had carried on their trade they had seen no stones to be compared with them for size and beauty.

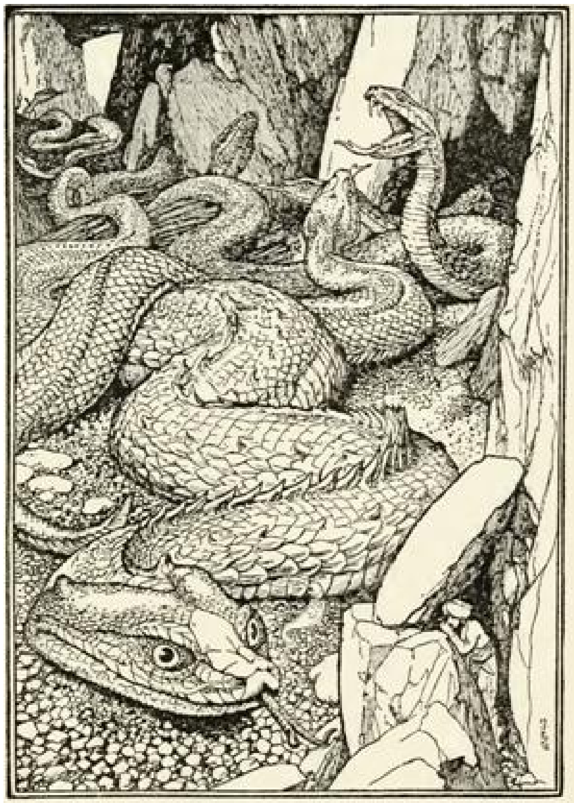

SINDBAD IN THE VALLEY OF SERPENTS

I found that each merchant chose a particular nest, and took his chance of what he might find in it. So I begged the one who owned the nest to which I had been carried to take as much as he would of my treasure, but he contented himself with one stone, and that by no means the largest, assuring me that with such a gem his fortune was made, and he need toil no more. I stayed with the merchants several days, and then as they were journeying homewards I gladly accompanied them. Our way lay across high mountains infested with frightful serpents, but we had the good luck to escape them and came at last to the seashore. Thence we sailed to the isle of Rohat where the camphor trees grow to such a size that a hundred men could shelter under one of them with ease. The sap flows from an incision made high up in the tree into a vessel hung there to receive it, and soon hardens into the substance called camphor, but the tree itself withers up and dies when it has been so treated.

In this same island we saw the rhinoceros, an animal which is smaller than the elephant and larger than the buffalo. It has one horn about a cubit long which is solid, but has a furrow from the base to the tip. Upon it is traced in white lines the figure of a man. The rhinoceros fights with the elephant, and transfixing him with his horn carries him off upon his head, but becoming blinded with the blood of his enemy, he falls helpless to the ground, and then comes the roc, and clutches them both up in his talons and takes them to feed his young. This doubtless astonishes you, but if you do not believe my tale go to Rohat and see for yourself. For fear of wearying you I pass over in silence many other wonderful things which we saw in this island. Before we left I exchanged one of my diamonds for much goodly merchandise by which I profited greatly on our homeward way. At last we reached Balsora, whence I hastened to Bagdad, where my first action was to bestow large sums of money upon the poor, after which I settled down to enjoy tranquilly the riches I had gained with so much toil and pain.

Having thus related the adventures of his second voyage, Sindbad again bestowed a hundred sequins upon Hindbad, inviting him to come again on the following day and hear how he fared upon his third voyage. The other guests also departed to their homes, but all returned at the same hour next day, including the porter, whose former life of hard work and poverty had already begun to seem to him like a bad dream. Again after the feast was over did Sindbad claim the attention of his guests and began the account of his third voyage.

Third Voyage

After a very short time the pleasant easy life I led made me quite forget the perils of my two voyages. Moreover, as I was still in the prime of life, it pleased me better to be up and doing. So once more providing myself with the rarest and choicest merchandise of Bagdad, I conveyed it to Balsora, and set sail with other merchants of my acquaintance for distant lands. We had touched at many ports and made much profit, when one day upon the open sea we were caught by a terrible wind which blew us completely out of our reckoning, and lasting for several days finally drove us into harbour on a strange island.

“I would rather have come to anchor anywhere than here,” quoth our captain. “This island and all adjoining it are inhabited by hairy savages, who are certain to attack us, and whatever these dwarfs may do we dare not resist, since they swarm like locusts, and if one of them is killed the rest will fall upon us, and speedily make an end of us.”

These words caused great consternation among all the ship’s company, and only too soon we were to find out that the captain spoke truly. There appeared a vast multitude of hideous savages, not more than two feet high and covered with reddish fur. Throwing themselves into the waves they surrounded our vessel. Chattering meanwhile in a language we could not understand, and clutching at ropes and gangways, they swarmed up the ship’s side with such speed and agility that they almost seemed to fly.

You may imagine the rage and terror that seized us as we watched them, neither daring to hinder them nor able to speak a word to deter them from their purpose, whatever it might be. Of this we were not left long in doubt. Hoisting the sails, and cutting the cable of the anchor, they sailed our vessel to an island which lay a little further off, where they drove us ashore; then taking possession of her, they made off to the place from which they had come, leaving us helpless upon a shore avoided with horror by all mariners for a reason which you will soon learn.

Turning away from the sea we wandered miserably inland, finding as we went various herbs and fruits which we ate, feeling that we might as well live as long as possible though we had no hope of escape. Presently we saw in the far distance what seemed to us to be a splendid palace, towards which we turned our weary steps, but when we reached it we saw that it was a castle, lofty, and strongly built. Pushing back the heavy ebony doors we entered the courtyard, but upon the threshold of the great hall beyond it we paused, frozen with horror, at the sight which greeted us. On one side lay a huge pile of bones — human bones, and on the other numberless spits for roasting! Overcome with despair we sank trembling to the ground, and lay there without speech or motion. The sun was setting when a loud noise aroused us, the door of the hall was violently burst open and a horrible giant entered. He was as tall as a palm tree, and perfectly black, and had one eye, which flamed like a burning coal in the middle of his forehead. His teeth were long and sharp and grinned horribly, while his lower lip hung down upon his chest, and he had ears like elephant's ears, which covered his shoulders, and nails like the claws of some fierce bird.

At this terrible sight our senses left us and we lay like dead men. When at last we came to ourselves the giant sat examining us attentively with his fearful eye. Presently when he had looked at us enough he came towards us, and stretching out his hand took me by the back of the neck, turning me this way and that, but feeling that I was mere skin and bone he set me down again and went on to the next, whom he treated in the same fashion; at last he came to the captain, and finding him the fattest of us all, he took him up in one hand and stuck him upon a spit and proceeded to kindle a huge fire at which he presently roasted him. After the giant had supped he lay down to sleep, snoring like the loudest thunder, while we lay shivering with horror the whole night through, and when day broke he awoke and went out, leaving us in the castle.

When we believed him to be really gone we started up bemoaning our horrible fate, until the hall echoed with our despairing cries. Though we were many and our enemy was alone it did not occur to us to kill him, and indeed we should have found that a hard task, even if we had thought of it, and no plan could we devise to deliver ourselves. So at last, submitting to our sad fate, we spent the day in wandering up and down the island eating such fruits as we could find, and when night came we returned to the castle, having sought in vain for any other place of shelter. At sunset the giant returned, supped upon one of our unhappy comrades, slept and snored till dawn, and then left us as before. Our condition seemed to us so frightful that several of my companions thought it would be better to leap from the cliffs and perish in the waves at once, rather than await so miserable an end; but I had a plan of escape which I now unfolded to them, and which they at once agreed to attempt.

"Listen, my brothers," I added. "You know that plenty of driftwood lies along the shore. Let us make several rafts, and carry them to a suitable place. If our plot succeeds, we can wait patiently for the chance of some passing ship which would rescue us from this fatal island. If it fails, we must quickly take to our rafts; frail as they are, we have more chance of saving our lives with them than we have if we remain here.”

All agreed with me, and we spent the day in building rafts, each capable of carrying three persons. At nightfall we returned to the castle, and very soon in came the giant, and one more of our number was sacrificed. But the time of our vengeance was at hand! As soon as he had finished his horrible repast he lay down to sleep as before, and when we heard him begin to snore I, and nine of the boldest of my comrades, rose softly, and took each a spit, which we made red-hot in the fire, and then at a given signal we plunged it with one accord into the giant’s eye, completely blinding him. Uttering a terrible cry, he sprang to his feet clutching in all directions to try to seize one of us, but we had all fled different ways as soon as the deed was done, and thrown ourselves flat upon the ground in corners where he was not likely to touch us with his feet.

After a vain search he fumbled about till he found the door, and fled out of it howling frightfully. As for us, when he was gone we made haste to leave the fatal castle, and, stationing ourselves beside our rafts, we waited to see what would happen. Our idea was that if, when the sun rose, we saw nothing of the giant, and no longer heard his howls, which still came faintly through the darkness, growing more and more distant, we should conclude that he was dead, and that we might safely stay upon the island and need not risk our lives upon the frail rafts. But alas! morning light showed us our enemy approaching us, supported on either hand by two giants nearly as large and fearful as himself, while a crowd of others followed close upon their heels. Hesitating no longer we clambered upon our rafts and rowed with all our might out to sea. The giants, seeing their prey escaping them, seized up huge pieces of rock, and wading into the water hurled them after us with such good aim that all the rafts except the one I was upon were swamped, and their luckless crews drowned, without our being able to do anything to help them. Indeed I and my two companions had all we could do to keep our own raft beyond the reach of the giants, but by dint of hard rowing we at last gained the open sea. Here we were at the mercy of the winds and waves, which tossed us to and fro all that day and night, but the next morning we found ourselves near an island, upon which we gladly landed.

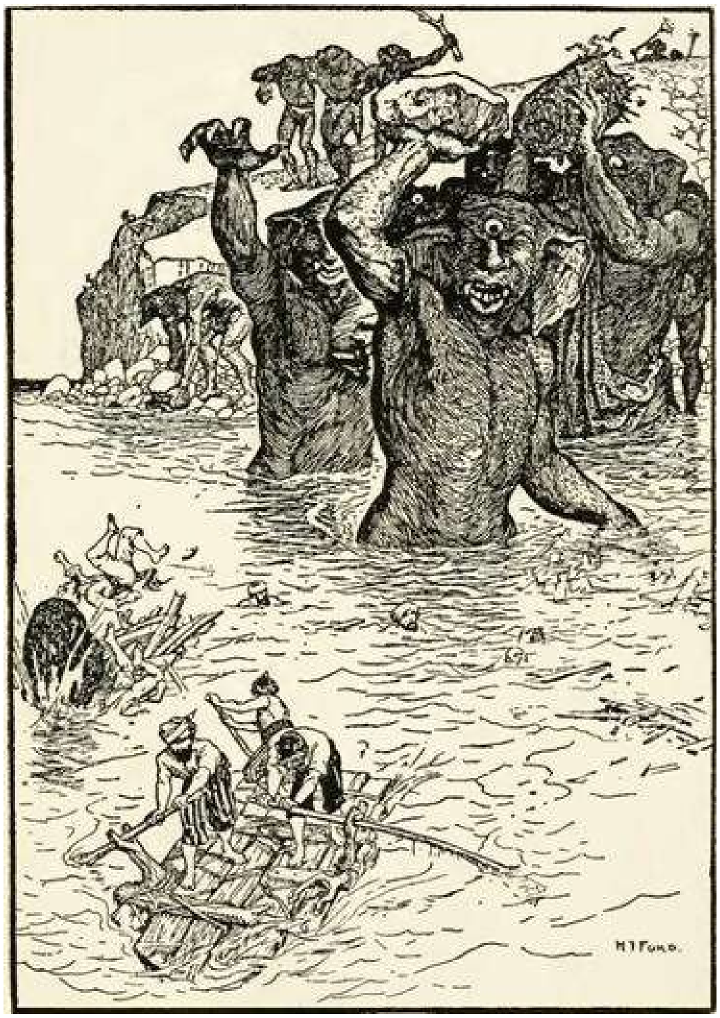

There we found delicious fruits, and having satisfied our hunger we presently lay down to rest upon the shore. Suddenly we were aroused by a loud rustling noise, and starting up, saw that it was caused by an immense snake which was gliding towards us over the sand. So swiftly it came that it had seized one of my comrades before he had time to fly, and in spite of his cries and struggles speedily crushed the life out of him in its mighty coils and proceeded to swallow him. By this time my other companion and I were running for our lives to some place where we might hope to be safe from this new horror, and seeing a tall tree we climbed up into it, having first provided ourselves with a store of fruit off the surrounding bushes. When night came I fell asleep, but only to be awakened once more by the terrible snake, which after hissing horribly round the tree at last reared itself up against it, and finding my sleeping comrade who was perched just below me, it swallowed him also, and crawled away leaving me half dead with terror.

When the sun rose I crept down from the tree with hardly a hope of escaping the dreadful fate which had over-taken my comrades; but life is sweet, and I determined to do all I could to save myself. All day long I toiled with frantic haste and collected quantities of dry brushwood, reeds and thorns, which I bound with faggots, and making a circle of them under my tree I piled them firmly one upon another until I had a kind of tent in which I crouched like a mouse in a hole when she sees the cat coming. You may imagine what a fearful night I passed, for the snake returned eager to devour me, and glided round and round my frail shelter seeking an entrance. Every moment I feared that it would succeed in pushing aside some of the faggots, but happily for me they held together, and when it grew light my enemy retired, baffled and hungry, to his den. As for me I was more dead than alive! Shaking with fright and half suffocated by the poisonous breath of the monster, I came out of my tent and crawled down to the sea, feeling that it would be better to plunge from the cliffs and end my life at once than pass such another night of horror. But to my joy and relief I saw a ship sailing by, and by shouting wildly and waving my turban I managed to attract the attention of her crew.

A boat was sent to rescue me, and very soon I found myself on board surrounded by a wondering crowd of sailors and merchants eager to know by what chance I found myself in that desolate island. After I had told my story they regaled me with the choicest food the ship afforded, and the captain, seeing that I was in rags, generously bestowed upon me one of his own coats. After sailing about for some time and touching at many ports we came at last to the island of Salahat, where sandal wood grows in great abundance. Here we anchored, and as I stood watching the merchants disembarking their goods and preparing to sell or exchange them, the captain came up to me and said,

“I have here, brother, some merchandise belonging to a passenger of mine who is dead. Will you do me the favour to trade with it, and when I meet with his heirs I shall be able to give them the money, though it will be only just that you shall have a portion for your trouble.”

I consented gladly, for I did not like standing by idle. Whereupon he pointed the bales out to me, and sent for the person whose duty it was to keep a list of the goods that were upon the ship. When this man came he asked in what name the merchandise was to be registered.

“In the name of Sindbad the Sailor,” replied the captain.

At this I was greatly surprised, but looking carefully at him I recognised him to be the captain of the ship upon which I had made my second voyage, though he had altered much since that time. As for him, believing me to be dead it was no wonder that he had not recognised me.

“So, captain,” said I, “the merchant who owned those bales was called Sindbad?”

“Yes,” he replied. “He was so named. He belonged to Bagdad, and joined my ship at Balsora, but by mischance he was left behind upon a desert island where we had landed to fill up our water-casks, and it was not until four hours later that he was missed. By that time the wind had freshened, and it was impossible to put back for him.”

“You suppose him to have perished then?” said I.

“Alas! yes,” he answered.

“Why, captain!” I cried, “look well at me. I am that Sindbad who fell asleep upon the island and awoke to find himself abandoned!”

The captain stared at me in amazement, but was presently convinced that I was indeed speaking the truth, and rejoiced greatly at my escape.

“I am glad to have that piece of carelessness off my conscience at any rate,” said he. “Now take your goods, and the profit I have made for you upon them, and may you prosper in future.”

I took them gratefully, and as we went from one island to another I laid in stores of cloves, cinnamon, and other spices. In one place I saw a tortoise which was twenty cubits long and as many broad, also a fish that was like a cow and had skin so thick that it was used to make shields. Another I saw that was like a camel in shape and colour. So by degrees we came back to Balsora, and I returned to Bagdad with so much money that I could not myself count it, besides treasures without end. I gave largely to the poor, and bought much land to add to what I already possessed, and thus ended my third voyage.

When Sindbad had finished his story he gave another hundred sequins to Hindbad, who then departed with the other guests, but next day when they had all reassembled, and the banquet was ended, their host continued his adventures.

Fourth Voyage

Rich and happy as I was after my third voyage, I could not make up my mind to stay at home altogether. My love of trading, and the pleasure I took in anything that was new and strange, made me set my affairs in order, and begin my journey through some of the Persian provinces, having first sent off stores of goods to await my coming in the different places I intended to visit. I took ship at a distant seaport, and for some time all went well, but at last, being caught in a violent hurricane, our vessel became a total wreck in spite of all our worthy captain could do to save her, and many of our company perished in the waves. I, with a few others, had the good fortune to be washed ashore clinging to pieces of the wreck, for the storm had driven us near an island, and scrambling up beyond the reach of the waves we threw ourselves down quite exhausted, to wait for morning.

At daylight we wandered inland, and soon saw some huts, to which we directed our steps. As we drew near their black inhabitants swarmed out in great numbers and surrounded us, and we were led to their houses, and as it were divided among our captors. I with five others was taken into a hut, where we were made to sit upon the ground, and certain herbs were given to us, which the blacks made signs to us to eat. Observing that they themselves did not touch them, I was careful only to pretend to taste my portion; but my companions, being very hungry, rashly ate up all that was set before them, and very soon I had the horror of seeing them become perfectly mad. Though they chattered incessantly I could not understand a word they said, nor did they heed when I spoke to them. The savages now produced large bowls full of rice prepared with cocoanut oil, of which my crazy comrades ate eagerly, but I only tasted a few grains, understanding clearly that the object of our captors was to fatten us speedily for their own eating, and this was exactly what happened. My unlucky companions having lost their reason, felt neither anxiety nor fear, and ate greedily all that was offered them. So they were soon fat and there was an end of them, but I grew leaner day by day, for I ate but little, and even that little did me no good by reason of my fear of what lay before me. However, as I was so far from being a tempting morsel, I was allowed to wander about freely, and one day, when all the blacks had gone off upon some expedition leaving only an old man to guard me, I managed to escape from him and plunged into the forest, running faster the more he cried to me to come back, until I had completely distanced him.

For seven days I hurried on, resting only when the darkness stopped me, and living chiefly upon cocoanuts, which afforded me both meat and drink, and on the eighth day I reached the seashore and saw a party of white men gathering pepper, which grew abundantly all about. Reassured by the nature of their occupation, I advanced towards them and they greeted me in Arabic, asking who I was and whence I came. My delight was great on hearing this familiar speech, and I willingly satisfied their curiosity, telling them how I had been shipwrecked, and captured by the blacks. “But these savages devour men!” said they. “How did you escape?” I repeated to them what I have just told you, at which they were mightily astonished. I stayed with them until they had collected as much pepper as they wished, and then they took me back to their own country and presented me to their king, by whom I was hospitably received. To him also I had to relate my adventures, which surprised him much, and when I had finished he ordered that I should be supplied with food and raiment and treated with consideration.

The island on which I found myself was full of people, and abounded in all sorts of desirable things, and a great deal of traffic went on in the capital, where I soon began to feel at home and contented. Moreover, the king treated me with special favour, and in consequence of this everyone, whether at the court or in the town, sought to make life pleasant to me. One thing I remarked which I thought very strange; this was that, from the greatest to the least, all men rode their horses without bridle or stirrups. I one day presumed to ask his majesty why he did not use them, to which he replied, “You speak to me of things of which I have never before heard!” This gave me an idea. I found a clever workman, and made him cut out under my direction the foundation of a saddle, which I wadded and covered with choice leather, adorning it with rich gold embroidery. I then got a lock-smith to make me a bit and a pair of spurs after a pattern that I drew for him, and when all these things were completed I presented them to the king and showed him how to use them. When I had saddled one of his horses he mounted it and rode about quite delighted with the novelty, and to show his gratitude he rewarded me with large gifts. After this I had to make saddles for all the principal officers of the king’s household, and as they all gave me rich presents I soon became very wealthy and quite an important person in the city.

One day the king sent for me and said, “Sindbad, I am going to ask a favour of you. Both I and my subjects esteem you, and wish you to end your days amongst us. Therefore I desire that you will marry a rich and beautiful lady whom I will find for you, and think no more of your own country.”

As the king’s will was law I accepted the charming bride he presented to me, and lived happily with her. Nevertheless I had every intention of escaping at the first opportunity, and going back to Bagdad. Things were thus going prosperously with me when it happened that the wife of one of my neighbours, with whom I had struck up quite a friendship, fell ill, and presently died. I went to his house to offer my consolations, and found him in the depths of woe.

“Heaven preserve you,” said I, “and send you a long life!”

“Alas!” he replied, “what is the good of saying that when I have but an hour left to live!”

“Come, come!” said I, “surely it is not so bad as all that. I trust that you may be spared to me for many years.”

“I hope,” answered he, “that your life may be long, but as for me, all is finished. I have set my house in order, and to-day I shall be buried with my wife. This has been the law upon our island from the earliest ages — the living husband goes to the grave with his dead wife, the living wife with her dead husband. So did our fathers, and so must we do. The law changes not, and all must submit to it!”

As he spoke the friends and relations of the unhappy pair began to assemble. The body, decked in rich robes and sparkling with jewels, was laid upon an open bier, and the procession started, taking its way to a high mountain at some distance from the city, the wretched husband, clothed from head to foot in a black mantle, following mournfully.

When the place of interment was reached the corpse was lowered, just as it was, into a deep pit. Then the husband, bidding farewell to all his friends, stretched himself upon another bier, upon which were laid seven little loaves of bread and a pitcher of water, and he also was let down-down-down to the depths of the horrible cavern, and then a stone was laid over the opening, and the melancholy company wended its way back to the city.

You may imagine that I was no unmoved spectator of these proceedings; to all the others it was a thing to which they had been accustomed from their youth up; but I was so horrified that I could not help telling the king how it struck me.

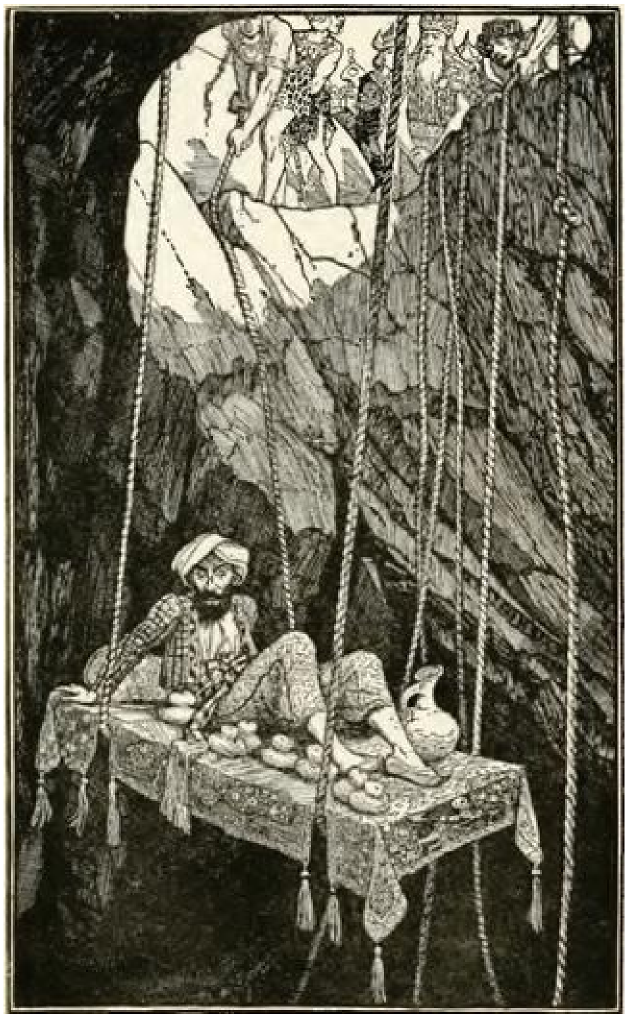

“Sire,” I said, “I am more astonished than I can express to you at the strange custom which exists in your dominions of burying the living with the dead. In all my travels I have never before met with so cruel and horrible a law.”

“What would you have, Sindbad?” he replied. “It is the law for everybody. I myself should be buried with the Queen if she were the first to die.”

“But, your Majesty,” said I, “dare I ask if this law applies to foreigners also?”

“Why, yes,” replied the king smiling, in what I could but consider a very heartless manner, “they are no exception to the rule if they have married in the country.”

When I heard this I went home much cast down, and from that time forward my mind was never easy. If only my wife’s little finger ached I fancied she was going to die, and sure enough before very long she fell really ill and in a few days breathed her last. My dismay was great, for it seemed to me that to be buried alive was even a worse fate than to be devoured by cannibals, nevertheless there was no escape. The body of my wife, arrayed in her richest robes and decked with all her jewels, was laid upon the bier. I followed it, and after me came a great procession, headed by the king and all his nobles, and in this order we reached the fatal mountain, which was one of a lofty chain bordering the sea.

Here I made one more frantic effort to excite the pity of the king and those who stood by, hoping to save myself even at this last moment, but it was of no avail. No one spoke to me, they even appeared to hasten over their dreadful task, and I speedily found myself descending into the gloomy pit, with my seven loaves and pitcher of water beside me. Almost before I reached the bottom the stone was rolled into its place above my head, and I was left to my fate. A feeble ray of light shone into the cavern through some chink, and when I had the courage to look about me I could see that I was in a vast vault, bestrewn with bones and bodies of the dead. I even fancied that I heard the expiring sighs of those who, like myself, had come into this dismal place alive. All in vain did I shriek aloud with rage and despair, reproaching myself for the love of gain and adventure which had brought me to such a pass, but at length, growing calmer, I took up my bread and water, and wrapping my face in my mantle I groped my way towards the end of the cavern, where the air was fresher.

Here I lived in darkness and misery until my provisions were exhausted, but just as I was nearly dead from starvation the rock was rolled away overhead and I saw that a bier was being lowered into the cavern, and that the corpse upon it was a man. In a moment my mind was made up, the woman who followed had nothing to expect but a lingering death; I should be doing her a service if I shortened her misery. Therefore when she descended, already insensible from terror, I was ready armed with a huge bone, one blow from which left her dead, and I secured the bread and water which gave me a hope of life. Several times did I have recourse to this desperate expedient, and I know not how long I had been a prisoner when one day I fancied that I heard something near me, which breathed loudly. Turning to the place from which the sound came I dimly saw a shadowy form which fled at my movement, squeezing itself through a cranny in the wall. I pursued it as fast as I could, and found myself in a narrow crack among the rocks, along which I was just able to force my way. I followed it for what seemed to me many miles, and at last saw before me a glimmer of light which grew clearer every moment until I emerged upon the sea shore with a joy which I cannot describe. When I was sure that I was not dreaming, I realised that it was doubtless some little animal which had found its way into the cavern from the sea, and when disturbed had fled, showing me a means of escape which I could never have discovered for myself. I hastily surveyed my surroundings, and saw that I was safe from all pursuit from the town.

The mountains sloped sheer down to the sea, and there was no road across them. Being assured of this I returned to the cavern, and amassed a rich treasure of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and jewels of all kinds which strewed the ground. These I made up into bales, and stored them into a safe place upon the beach, and then waited hopefully for the passing of a ship. I had looked out for two days, however, before a single sail appeared, so it was with much delight that I at last saw a vessel not very far from the shore, and by waving my arms and uttering loud cries succeeded in attracting the attention of her crew. A boat was sent off to me, and in answer to the questions of the sailors as to how I came to be in such a plight, I replied that I had been shipwrecked two days before, but had managed to scramble ashore with the bales which I pointed out to them. Luckily for me they believed my story, and without even looking at the place where they found me, took up my bundles, and rowed me back to the ship. Once on board, I soon saw that the captain was too much occupied with the difficulties of navigation to pay much heed to me, though he generously made me welcome, and would not even accept the jewels with which I offered to pay my passage. Our voyage was prosperous, and after visiting many lands, and collecting in each place great store of goodly merchandise, I found myself at last in Bagdad once more with unheard of riches of every description. Again I gave large sums of money to the poor, and enriched all the mosques in the city, after which I gave myself up to my friends and relations, with whom I passed my time in feasting and merriment.

Here Sindbad paused, and all his hearers declared that the adventures of his fourth voyage had pleased them better than anything they had heard before. They then took their leave, followed by Hindbad, who had once more received a hundred sequins, and with the rest had been bidden to return next day for the story of the fifth voyage.

When the time came all were in their places, and when they had eaten and drunk of all that was set before them Sindbad began his tale.

Fifth Voyage

Not even all that I had gone through could make me contented with a quiet life. I soon wearied of its pleasures, and longed for change and adventure. Therefore I set out once more, but this time in a ship of my own, which I built and fitted out at the nearest seaport. I wished to be able to call at whatever port I chose, taking my own time; but as I did not intend carrying enough goods for a full cargo, I invited several merchants of different nations to join me. We set sail with the first favourable wind, and after a long voyage upon the open seas we landed upon an unknown island which proved to be uninhabited. We determined, however, to explore it, but had not gone far when we found a roc's egg, as large as the one I had seen before and evidently very nearly hatched, for the beak of the young bird had already pierced the shell. In spite of all I could say to deter them, the merchants who were with me fell upon it with their hatchets, breaking the shell, and killing the young roc. Then lighting a fire upon the ground they hacked morsels from the bird, and proceeded to roast them while I stood by aghast.

Scarcely had they finished their ill-omened repast, when the air above us was darkened by two mighty shadows. The captain of my ship, knowing by experience what this meant, cried out to us that the parent birds were coming, and urged us to get on board with all speed. This we did, and the sails were hoisted, but before we had made any way the rocs reached their despoiled nest and hovered about it, uttering frightful cries when they discovered the mangled remains of their young one. For a moment we lost sight of them, and were flattering ourselves that we had escaped, when they reappeared and soared into the air directly over our vessel, and we saw that each held in its claws an immense rock ready to crush us. There was a moment of breathless suspense, then one bird loosed its hold and the huge block of stone hurtled through the air, but thanks to the presence of mind of the helmsman, who turned our ship violently in another direction, it fell into the sea close beside us, cleaving it asunder till we could nearly see the bottom. We had hardly time to draw a breath of relief before the other rock fell with a mighty crash right in the midst of our luckless vessel, smashing it into a thousand fragments, and crushing, or hurling into the sea, passengers and crew. I myself went down with the rest, but had the good fortune to rise unhurt, and by holding on to a piece of driftwood with one hand and swimming with the other I kept myself afloat and was presently washed up by the tide on to an island. Its shores were steep and rocky, but I scrambled up safely and threw myself down to rest upon the green turf.

When I had somewhat recovered I began to examine the spot in which I found myself, and truly it seemed to me that I had reached a garden of delights. There were trees everywhere, and they were laden with flowers and fruit, while a crystal stream wandered in and out under their shadow. When night came I slept sweetly in a cosy nook, though the remembrance that I was alone in a strange land made me sometimes start up and look around me in alarm, and then I wished heartily that I had stayed at home at ease. However, the morning sunlight restored my courage, and I once more wandered among the trees, but always with some anxiety as to what I might see next. I had penetrated some distance into the island when I saw an old man bent and feeble sitting upon the river bank, and at first I took him to be some ship-wrecked mariner like myself. Going up to him I greeted him in a friendly way, but he only nodded his head at me in reply. I then asked what he did there, and he made signs to me that he wished to get across the river to gather some fruit, and seemed to beg me to carry him on my back. Pitying his age and feebleness, I took him up, and wading across the stream I bent down that he might more easily reach the bank, and bade him get down. But instead of allowing himself to be set upon his feet (even now it makes me laugh to think of it!), this creature who had seemed to me so decrepit leaped nimbly upon my shoulders, and hooking his legs round my neck gripped me so tightly that I was well-nigh choked, and so overcome with terror that I fell insensible to the ground. When I recovered my enemy was still in his place, though he had released his hold enough to allow me breathing space, and seeing me revive he prodded me adroitly first with one foot and then with the other, until I was forced to get up and stagger about with him under the trees while he gathered and ate the choicest fruits. This went on all day, and even at night, when I threw myself down half dead with weariness, the terrible old man held on tight to my neck, nor did he fail to greet the first glimmer of morning light by drumming upon me with his heels, until I perforce awoke and resumed my dreary march with rage and bitterness in my heart.

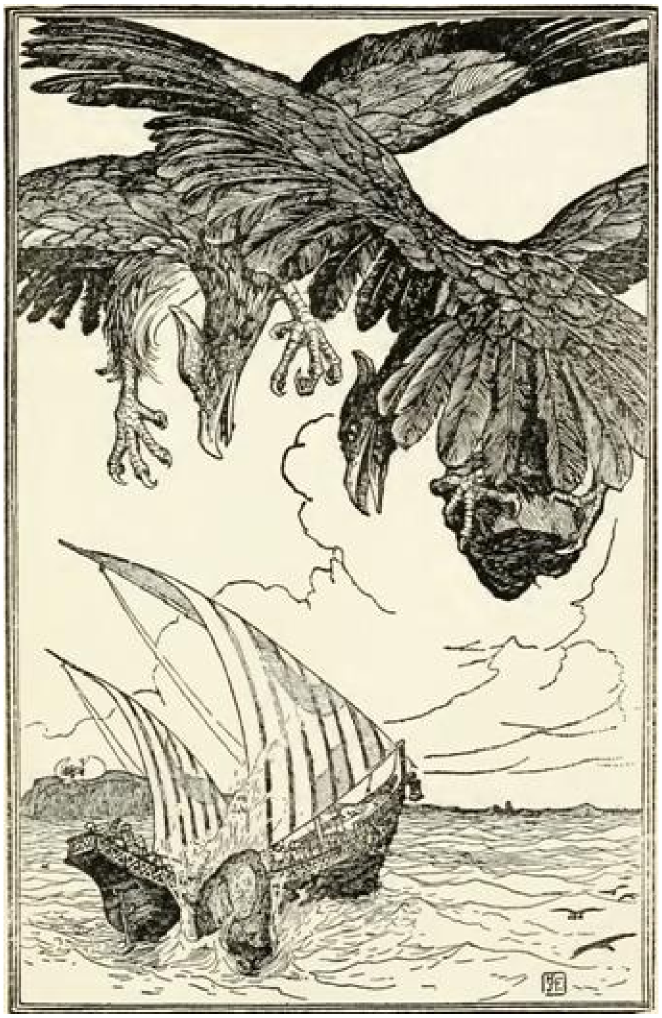

It happened one day that I passed a tree under which lay several dry gourds, and catching one up I amused myself with scooping out its contents and pressing into it the juice of several bunches of grapes which hung from every bush. When it was full I left it propped in the fork of a tree, and a few days later, carrying the hateful old man that way, I snatched at my gourd as I passed it and had the satisfaction of a draught of excellent wine so good and refreshing that I even forgot my detestable burden, and began to sing and caper.

The old monster was not slow to perceive the effect which my draught had produced and that I carried him more lightly than usual, so he stretched out his skinny hand and seizing the gourd first tasted its contents cautiously, then drained them to the very last drop. The wine was strong and the gourd capacious, so he also began to sing after a fashion, and soon I had the delight of feeling the iron grip of his goblin legs unclasp, and with one vigorous effort I threw him to the ground, from which he never moved again. I was so rejoiced to have at last got rid of this uncanny old man that I ran leaping and bounding down to the sea shore, where, by the greatest good luck, I met with some mariners who had anchored off the island to enjoy the delicious fruits, and to renew their supply of water.

They heard the story of my escape with amazement, saying, “You fell into the hands of the Old Man of the Sea, and it is a mercy that he did not strangle you as he has everyone else upon whose shoulders he has managed to perch himself. This island is well known as the scene of his evil deeds, and no merchant or sailor who lands upon it cares to stray far away from his comrades.” After we had talked for a while they took me back with them on board their ship, where the captain received me kindly, and we soon set sail, and after several days reached a large and prosperous-looking town where all the houses were built of stone. Here we anchored, and one of the merchants, who had been very friendly to me on the way, took me ashore with him and showed me a lodging set apart for strange merchants. He then provided me with a large sack, and pointed out to me a party of others equipped in like manner.

“Go with them,” said he, “and do as they do, but beware of losing sight of them, for if you strayed your life would be in danger.”

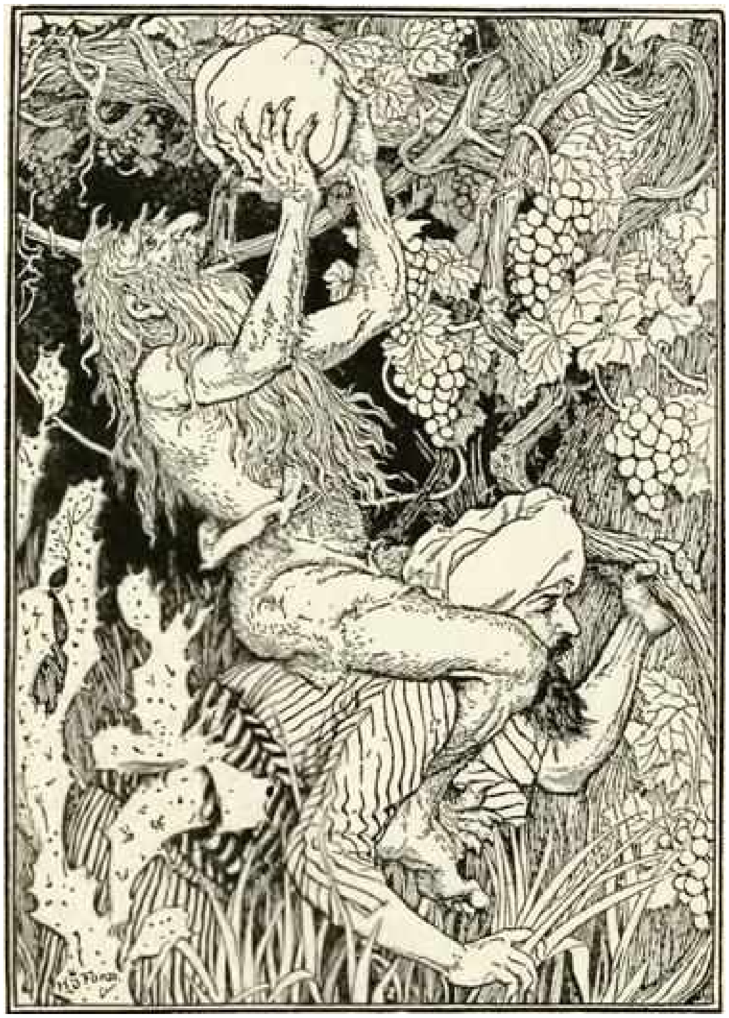

With that he supplied me with provisions, and bade me farewell, and I set out with my new companions. I soon learnt that the object of our expedition was to fill our sacks with cocoanuts, but when at length I saw the trees and noted their immense height and the slippery smoothness of their slender trunks, I did not at all understand how we were to do it. The crowns of the cocoa-palms were all alive with monkeys, big and little, which skipped from one to the other with surprising agility, seeming to be curious about us and disturbed at our appearance, and I was at first surprised when my companions after collecting stones began to throw them at the lively creatures, which seemed to me quite harmless. But very soon I saw the reason of it and joined them heartily, for the monkeys, annoyed and wishing to pay us back in our own coin, began to tear the nuts from the trees and cast them at us with angry and spiteful gestures, so that after very little labour our sacks were filled with the fruit which we could not otherwise have obtained.

As soon as we had as many as we could carry we went back to the town, where my friend bought my share and advised me to continue the same occupation until I had earned money enough to carry me to my own country. This I did, and before long had amassed a considerable sum. Just then I heard that there was a trading ship ready to sail, and taking leave of my friend I went on board, carrying with me a goodly store of cocoanuts; and we sailed first to the islands where pepper grows, then to Comari where the best aloes wood is found, and where men drink no wine by an unalterable law. Here I exchanged my nuts for pepper and good aloes wood, and went a-fishing for pearls with some of the other merchants, and my divers were so lucky that very soon I had an immense number, and those very large and perfect. With all these treasures I came joyfully back to Bagdad, where I disposed of them for large sums of money, of which I did not fail as before to give the tenth part to the poor, and after that I rested from my labours and comforted myself with all the pleasures that my riches could give me.

Having thus ended his story, Sindbad ordered that one hundred sequins should be given to Hindbad, and the guests then withdrew; but after the next day’s feast he began the account of his sixth voyage as follows.

Sixth Voyage

It must be a marvel to you how, after having five times met with shipwreck and unheard of perils, I could again tempt fortune and risk fresh trouble. I am even surprised myself when I look back, but evidently it was my fate to rove, and after a year of repose I prepared to make a sixth voyage, regardless of the entreaties of my friends and relations, who did all they could to keep me at home. Instead of going by the Persian Gulf, I travelled a considerable way overland, and finally embarked from a distant Indian port with a captain who meant to make a long voyage. And truly he did so, for we fell in with stormy weather which drove us completely out of our course, so that for many days neither captain nor pilot knew where we were, nor where we were going. When they did at last discover our position we had small ground for rejoicing, for the captain, casting his turban upon the deck and tearing his beard, declared that we were in the most dangerous spot upon the whole wide sea, and had been caught by a current which was at that minute sweeping us to destruction. It was too true! In spite of all the sailors could do we were driven with frightful rapidity towards the foot of a mountain, which rose sheer out of the sea, and our vessel was dashed to pieces upon the rocks at its base, not, however, until we had managed to scramble on shore, carrying with us the most precious of our possessions. When we had done this the captain said to us:

“Now we are here we may as well begin to dig our graves at once, since from this fatal spot no shipwrecked mariner has ever returned.”

This speech discouraged us much, and we began to lament over our sad fate.

The mountain formed the seaward boundary of a large island, and the narrow strip of rocky shore upon which we stood was strewn with the wreckage of a thousand gallant ships, while the bones of the luckless mariners shone white in the sunshine, and we shuddered to think how soon our own would be added to the heap. All around, too, lay vast quantities of the costliest merchandise, and treasures were heaped in every cranny of the rocks, but all these things only added to the desolation of the scene. It struck me as a very strange thing that a river of clear fresh water, which gushed out from the mountain not far from where we stood, instead of flowing into the sea as rivers generally do, turned off sharply, and flowed out of sight under a natural archway of rock, and when I went to examine it more closely I found that inside the cave the walls were thick with diamonds, and rubies, and masses of crystal, and the floor was strewn with ambergris. Here, then, upon this desolate shore we abandoned ourselves to our fate, for there was no possibility of scaling the mountain, and if a ship had appeared it could only have shared our doom. The first thing our captain did was to divide equally amongst us all the food we possessed, and then the length of each man's life depended on the time he could make his portion last. I myself could live upon very little.

Nevertheless, by the time I had buried the last of my companions my stock of provisions was so small that I hardly thought I should live long enough to dig my own grave, which I set about doing, while I regretted bitterly the roving disposition which was always bringing me into such straits, and thought longingly of all the comfort and luxury that I had left. But luckily for me the fancy took me to stand once more beside the river where it plunged out of sight in the depths of the cavern, and as I did so an idea struck me. This river which hid itself underground doubtless emerged again at some distant spot. Why should I not build a raft and trust myself to its swiftly flowing waters? If I perished before I could reach the light of day once more I should be no worse off than I was now, for death stared me in the face, while there was always the possibility that, as I was born under a lucky star, I might find myself safe and sound in some desirable land. I decided at any rate to risk it, and speedily built myself a stout raft of drift-wood with strong cords, of which enough and to spare lay strewn upon the beach. I then made up many packages of rubies, emeralds, rock crystal, ambergris, and precious stuffs, and bound them upon my raft, being careful to preserve the balance, and then I seated myself upon it, having two small oars that I had fashioned laid ready to my hand, and loosed the cord which held it to the bank. Once out in the current my raft flew swiftly under the gloomy archway, and I found myself in total darkness, carried smoothly forward by the rapid river. On I went as it seemed to me for many nights and days. Once the channel became so small that I had a narrow escape of being crushed against the rocky roof, and after that I took the precaution of lying flat upon my precious bales. Though I only ate what was absolutely necessary to keep myself alive, the inevitable moment came when, after swallowing my last morsel of food, I began to wonder if I must after all die of hunger. Then, worn out with anxiety and fatigue, I fell into a deep sleep, and when I again opened my eyes I was once more in the light of day; a beautiful country lay before me, and my raft, which was tied to the river bank, was surrounded by friendly looking black men. I rose and saluted them, and they spoke to me in return, but I could not understand a word of their language. Feeling perfectly bewildered by my sudden return to life and light, I murmured to myself in Arabic, "Close thine eyes, and while thou sleepest Heaven will change thy fortune from evil to good."

One of the natives, who understood this tongue, then came forward saying:

“My brother, be not surprised to see us; this is our land, and as we came to get water from the river we noticed your raft floating down it, and one of us swam out and brought you to the shore. We have waited for your awakening; tell us now whence you come and where you were going by that dangerous way?”

I replied that nothing would please me better than to tell them, but that I was starving, and would fain eat something first. I was soon supplied with all I needed, and having satisfied my hunger I told them faithfully all that had befallen me. They were lost in wonder at my tale when it was interpreted to them, and said that adventures so surprising must be related to their king only by the man to whom they had happened. So, procuring a horse, they mounted me upon it, and we set out, followed by several strong men carrying my raft just as it was upon their shoulders. In this order we marched into the city of Serendib, where the natives presented me to their king, whom I saluted in the Indian fashion, prostrating myself at his feet and kissing the ground; but the monarch bade me rise and sit beside him, asking first what was my name.

“I am Sindbad,” I replied, “whom men call `the Sailor,’ for I have voyaged much upon many seas.”

“And how come you here?” asked the king.

I told my story, concealing nothing, and his surprise and delight were so great that he ordered my adventures to be written in letters of gold and laid up in the archives of his kingdom.

Presently my raft was brought in and the bales opened in his presence, and the king declared that in all his treasury there were no such rubies and emeralds as those which lay in great heaps before him. Seeing that he looked at them with interest, I ventured to say that I myself and all that I had were at his disposal, but he answered me smiling:

“Nay, Sindbad. Heaven forbid that I should covet your riches; I will rather add to them, for I desire that you shall not leave my kingdom without some tokens of my good will.” He then commanded his officers to provide me with a suitable lodging at his expense, and sent slaves to wait upon me and carry my raft and my bales to my new dwelling place. You may imagine that I praised his generosity and gave him grateful thanks, nor did I fail to present myself daily in his audience chamber, and for the rest of my time I amused myself in seeing all that was most worthy of attention in the city. The island of Serendib being situated on the equinoctial line, the days and nights there are of equal length. The chief city is placed at the end of a beautiful valley, formed by the highest mountain in the world, which is in the middle of the island. I had the curiosity to ascend to its very summit, for this was the place to which Adam was banished out of Paradise. Here are found rubies and many precious things, and rare plants grow abundantly, with cedar trees and cocoa palms. On the seashore and at the mouths of the rivers the divers seek for pearls, and in some valleys diamonds are plentiful. After many days I petitioned the king that I might return to my own country, to which he graciously consented. Moreover, he loaded me with rich gifts, and when I went to take leave of him he entrusted me with a royal present and a letter to the Commander of the Faithful, our sovereign lord, saying, "I pray you give these to the Caliph Haroun al Raschid, and assure him of my friendship."

I accepted the charge respectfully, and soon embarked upon the vessel which the king himself had chosen for me. The king's letter was written in blue characters upon a rare and precious skin of yellowish colour, and these were the words of it: "The King of the Indies, before whom walk a thousand elephants, who lives in a palace, of which the roof blazes with a hundred thousand rubies, and whose treasure house contains twenty thousand diamond crowns, to the Caliph Haroun al Raschid sends greeting. Though the offering we present to you is unworthy of your notice, we pray you to accept it as a mark of the esteem and friendship which we cherish for you, and of which we gladly send you this token, and we ask of you a like regard if you deem us worthy of it. Adieu, brother."

The present consisted of a vase carved from a single ruby, six inches high and as thick as my finger; this was filled with the choicest pearls, large, and of perfect shape and lustre; secondly, a huge snake skin, with scales as large as a sequin, which would preserve from sickness those who slept upon it. Then quantities of aloes wood, camphor, and pistachio-nuts; and lastly, a beautiful slave girl, whose robes glittered with precious stones.

After a long and prosperous voyage we landed at Balsora, and I made haste to reach Bagdad, and taking the king's letter I presented myself at the palace gate, followed by the beautiful slave, and various members of my own family, bearing the treasure.

As soon as I had declared my errand I was conducted into the presence of the Caliph, to whom, after I had made my obeisance, I gave the letter and the king's gift, and when he had examined them he demanded of me whether the Prince of Serendib was really as rich and powerful as he claimed to be.

"Commander of the Faithful," I replied, again bowing humbly before him, "I can assure your Majesty that he has in no way exaggerated his wealth and grandeur. Nothing can equal the magnificence of his palace. When he goes abroad his throne is prepared upon the back of an elephant, and on either side of him ride his ministers, his favourites, and courtiers. On his elephant's neck sits an officer, his golden lance in his hand, and behind him stands another bearing a pillar of gold, at the top of which is an emerald as long as my hand. A thousand men in cloth of gold, mounted upon richly caparisoned elephants, go before him, and as the procession moves onward the officer who guides his elephant cries aloud, `Behold the mighty monarch, the powerful and valiant Sultan of the Indies, whose palace is covered with a hundred thousand rubies, who possesses twenty thousand diamond crowns. Behold a monarch greater than Solomon and Mihrage in all their glory!'"

"Then the one who stands behind the throne answers: 'This king, so great and powerful, must die, must die, must die!'"

"And the first takes up the chant again, `All praise to Him who lives for evermore.'"

"Further, my lord, in Serendib no judge is needed, for to the king himself his people come for justice."

The Caliph was well satisfied with my report.

"From the king's letter," said he, "I judged that he was a wise man. It seems that he is worthy of his people, and his people of him."

So saying he dismissed me with rich presents, and I returned in peace to my own house.

When Sindbad had done speaking his guests withdrew, Hindbad having first received a hundred sequins, but all returned next day to hear the story of the seventh voyage, Sindbad thus began.

Seventh and Last Voyage

After my sixth voyage I was quite determined that I would go to sea no more. I was now of an age to appreciate a quiet life, and I had run risks enough. I only wished to end my days in peace. One day, however, when I was entertaining a number of my friends, I was told that an officer of the Caliph wished to speak to me, and when he was admitted he bade me follow him into the presence of Haroun al Raschid, which I accordingly did. After I had saluted him, the Caliph said:

"I have sent for you, Sindbad, because I need your services. I have chosen you to bear a letter and a gift to the King of Serendib in return for his message of friendship."

The Caliph's commandment fell upon me like a thunderbolt.

"Commander of the Faithful," I answered, "I am ready to do all that your Majesty commands, but I humbly pray you to remember that I am utterly disheartened by the unheard of sufferings I have undergone. Indeed, I have made a vow never again to leave Bagdad."

With this I gave him a long account of some of my strangest adventures, to which he listened patiently.

"I admit," said he, "that you have indeed had some extraordinary experiences, but I do not see why they should hinder you from doing as I wish. You have only to go straight to Serendib and give my message, then you are free to come back and do as you will. But go you must; my honour and dignity demand it."

Seeing that there was no help for it, I declared myself willing to obey; and the Caliph, delighted at having got his own way, gave me a thousand sequins for the expenses of the voyage. I was soon ready to start, and taking the letter and the present I embarked at Balsora, and sailed quickly and safely to Serendib. Here, when I had disclosed my errand, I was well received, and brought into the presence of the king, who greeted me with joy.

"Welcome, Sindbad," he cried. "I have thought of you often, and rejoice to see you once more."

After thanking him for the honour that he did me, I displayed the Caliph's gifts. First a bed with complete hangings all cloth of gold, which cost a thousand sequins, and another like to it of crimson stuff. Fifty robes of rich embroidery, a hundred of the finest white linen from Cairo, Suez, Cufa, and Alexandria. Then more beds of different fashion, and an agate vase carved with the figure of a man aiming an arrow at a lion, and finally a costly table, which had once belonged to King Solomon. The King of Serendib received with satisfaction the assurance of the Caliph's friendliness toward him, and now my task being accomplished I was anxious to depart, but it was some time before the king would think of letting me go. At last, however, he dismissed me with many presents, and I lost no time in going on board a ship, which sailed at once, and for four days all went well. On the fifth day we had the misfortune to fall in with pirates, who seized our vessel, killing all who resisted, and making prisoners of those who were prudent enough to submit at once, of whom I was one. When they had despoiled us of all we possessed, they forced us to put on vile raiment, and sailing to a distant island there sold us for slaves. I fell into the hands of a rich merchant, who took me home with him, and clothed and fed me well, and after some days sent for me and questioned me as to what I could do.

I answered that I was a rich merchant who had been captured by pirates, and therefore I knew no trade.

"Tell me," said he, "can you shoot with a bow?"

I replied that this had been one of the pastimes of my youth, and that doubtless with practice my skill would come back to me.

Upon this he provided me with a bow and arrows, and mounting me with him upon his own elephant took the way to a vast forest which lay far from the town. When we had reached the wildest part of it we stopped, and my master said to me: "This forest swarms with elephants. Hide yourself in this great tree, and shoot at all that pass you. When you have succeeded in killing one come and tell me."

So saying he gave me a supply of food, and returned to the town, and I perched myself high up in the tree and kept watch. That night I saw nothing, but just after sunrise the next morning a large herd of elephants came crashing and trampling by. I lost no time in letting fly several arrows, and at last one of the great animals fell to the ground dead, and the others retreated, leaving me free to come down from my hiding place and run back to tell my master of my success, for which I was praised and regaled with good things. Then we went back to the forest together and dug a mighty trench in which we buried the elephant I had killed, in order that when it became a skeleton my master might return and secure its tusks.

For two months I hunted thus, and no day passed without my securing, an elephant. Of course I did not always station myself in the same tree, but sometimes in one place, sometimes in another. One morning as I watched the coming of the elephants I was surprised to see that, instead of passing the tree I was in, as they usually did, they paused, and completely surrounded it, trumpeting horribly, and shaking the very ground with their heavy tread, and when I saw that their eyes were fixed upon me I was terrified, and my arrows dropped from my trembling hand. I had indeed good reason for my terror when, an instant later, the largest of the animals wound his trunk round the stem of my tree, and with one mighty effort tore it up by the roots, bringing me to the ground entangled in its branches. I thought now that my last hour was surely come; but the huge creature, picking me up gently enough, set me upon its back, where I clung more dead than alive, and followed by the whole herd turned and crashed off into the dense forest. It seemed to me a long time before I was once more set upon my feet by the elephant, and I stood as if in a dream watching the herd, which turned and trampled off in another direction, and were soon hidden in the dense underwood. Then, recovering myself, I looked about me, and found that I was standing upon the side of a great hill, strewn as far as I could see on either hand with bones and tusks of elephants. “This then must be the elephants’ burying place,” I said to myself, “and they must have brought me here that I might cease to persecute them, seeing that I want nothing but their tusks, and here lie more than I could carry away in a lifetime.”

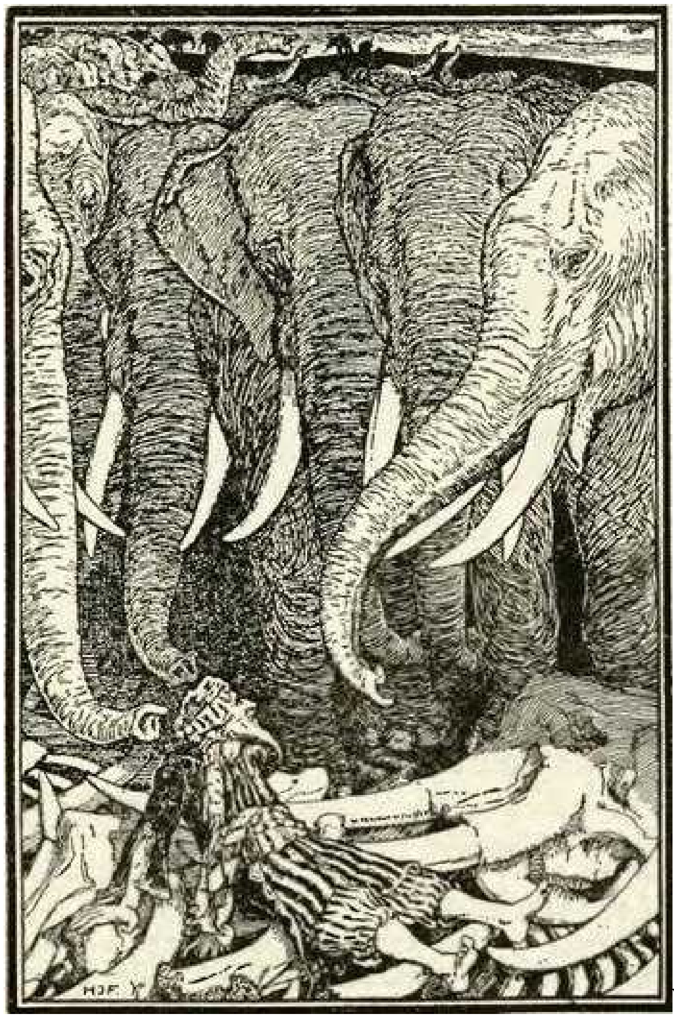

Whereupon I turned and made for the city as fast as I could go, not seeing a single elephant by the way, which convinced me that they had retired deeper into the forest to leave the way open to the Ivory Hill, and I did not know how sufficiently to admire their sagacity. After a day and a night I reached my master's house, and was received by him with joyful surprise.

"Ah! poor Sindbad," he cried, "I was wondering what could have become of you. When I went to the forest I found the tree newly uprooted, and the arrows lying beside it, and I feared I should never see you again. Pray tell me how you escaped death."

I soon satisfied his curiosity, and the next day we went together to the Ivory Hill, and he was overjoyed to find that I had told him nothing but the truth. When we had loaded our elephant with as many tusks as it could carry and were on our way back to the city, he said:

"My brother — since I can no longer treat as a slave one who has enriched me thus — take your liberty and may Heaven prosper you. I will no longer conceal from you that these wild elephants have killed numbers of our slaves every year. No matter what good advice we gave them, they were caught sooner or later. You alone have escaped the wiles of these animals, therefore you must be under the special protection of Heaven. Now through you the whole town will be enriched without further loss of life, therefore you shall not only receive your liberty, but I will also bestow a fortune upon you."

To which I replied, "Master, I thank you, and wish you all prosperity. For myself I only ask liberty to return to my own country."

"It is well," he answered, "the monsoon will soon bring the ivory ships hither, then I will send you on your way with somewhat to pay your passage."

So I stayed with him till the time of the monsoon, and every day we added to our store of ivory till all his ware-houses were overflowing with it. By this time the other merchants knew the secret, but there was enough and to spare for all. When the ships at last arrived my master himself chose the one in which I was to sail, and put on board for me a great store of choice provisions, also ivory in abundance, and all the costliest curiosities of the country, for which I could not thank him enough, and so we parted. I left the ship at the first port we came to, not feeling at ease upon the sea after all that had happened to me by reason of it, and having disposed of my ivory for much gold, and bought many rare and costly presents, I loaded my pack animals, and joined a caravan of merchants. Our journey was long and tedious, but I bore it patiently, reflecting that at least I had not to fear tempests, nor pirates, nor serpents, nor any of the other perils from which I had suffered before, and at length we reached Bagdad. My first care was to present myself before the Caliph, and give him an account of my embassy. He assured me that my long absence had disquieted him much, but he had nevertheless hoped for the best. As to my adventure among the elephants he heard it with amazement, declaring that he could not have believed it had not my truthfulness been well known to him.

By his orders this story and the others I had told him were written by his scribes in letters of gold, and laid up among his treasures. I took my leave of him, well satisfied with the honours and rewards he bestowed upon me; and since that time I have rested from my labours, and given myself up wholly to my family and my friends.

Thus Sindbad ended the story of his seventh and last voyage, and turning to Hindbad he added:

"Well, my friend, and what do you think now? Have you ever heard of anyone who has suffered more, or had more narrow escapes than I have? Is it not just that I should now enjoy a life of ease and tranquillity?"

Hindbad drew near, and kissing his hand respectfully, replied, "Sir, you have indeed known fearful perils; my troubles have been nothing compared to yours. Moreover, the generous use you make of your wealth proves that you deserve it. May you live long and happily in the enjoyment in it.”

Sindbad then gave him a hundred sequins, and hence-forward counted him among his friends; also he caused him to give up his profession as a porter, and to eat daily at his table that he might all his life remember Sindbad the Sailor.

The Little Hunchback

In the kingdom of Kashgar, which is, as everybody knows, situated on the frontiers of Great Tartary, there lived long ago a tailor and his wife who loved each other very much. One day, when the tailor was hard at work, a little hunchback came and sat at the entrance of the shop, and began to sing and play his tambourine. The tailor was amused with the antics of the fellow, and thought he would take him home to divert his wife. The hunchback having agreed to his proposal, the tailor closed his shop and they set off together.

When they reached the house they found the table ready laid for supper, and in a very few minutes all three were sitting before a beautiful fish which the tailor's wife had cooked with her own hands. But unluckily, the hunchback happened to swallow a large bone, and, in spite of all the tailor and his wife could do to help him, died of suffocation in an instant. Besides being very sorry for the poor man, the tailor and his wife were very much frightened on their own account, for if the police came to hear of it the worthy couple ran the risk of being thrown into prison for wilful murder. In order to prevent this dreadful calamity they both set about inventing some plan which would throw suspicion on some one else, and at last they made up their minds that they could do no better than select a Jewish doctor who lived close by as the author of the crime. So the tailor picked up the hunchback by his head while his wife took his feet and carried him to the doctor's house. Then they knocked at the door, which opened straight on to a steep staircase. A servant soon appeared, feeling her way down the dark staircase and inquired what they wanted.

"Tell your master," said the tailor, "that we have brought a very sick man for him to cure; and," he added, holding out some money, "give him this in advance, so that he may not feel he is wasting his time." The servant remounted the stairs to give the message to the doctor, and the moment she was out of sight the tailor and his wife carried the body swiftly after her, propped it up at the top of the staircase, and ran home as fast as their legs could carry them.

Now the doctor was so delighted at the news of a patient (for he was young, and had not many of them), that he was transported with joy.

"Get a light," he called to the servant, "and follow me as fast as you can!" and rushing out of his room he ran towards the staircase. There he nearly fell over the body of the hunchback, and without knowing what it was gave it such a kick that it rolled right to the bottom, and very nearly dragged the doctor after it. "A light! a light!” he cried again, and when it was brought and he saw what he had done he was almost beside himself with terror.

“Holy Moses!” he exclaimed, “why did I not wait for the light? I have killed the sick man whom they brought me; and if the sacred Ass of Esdras does not come to my aid I am lost! It will not be long before I am led to jail as a murderer.”

Agitated though he was, and with reason, the doctor did not forget to shut the house door, lest some passers-by might chance to see what had happened. He then took up the corpse and carried it into his wife’s room, nearly driving her crazy with fright.

“It is all over with us!” she wailed, “if we cannot find some means of getting the body out of the house. Once let the sun rise and we can hide it no longer! How were you driven to commit such a terrible crime?”

“Never mind that,” returned the doctor, “the thing is to find a way out of it.”

For a long while the doctor and his wife continued to turn over in their minds a way of escape, but could not find any that seemed good enough. At last the doctor gave it up altogether and resigned himself to bear the penalty of his misfortune.

But his wife, who had twice his brains, suddenly exclaimed, “I have thought of something! Let us carry the body on the roof of the house and lower it down the chimney of our neighbour the Mussulman.” Now this Mussulman was employed by the Sultan, and furnished his table with oil and butter. Part of his house was occupied by a great storeroom, where rats and mice held high revel.

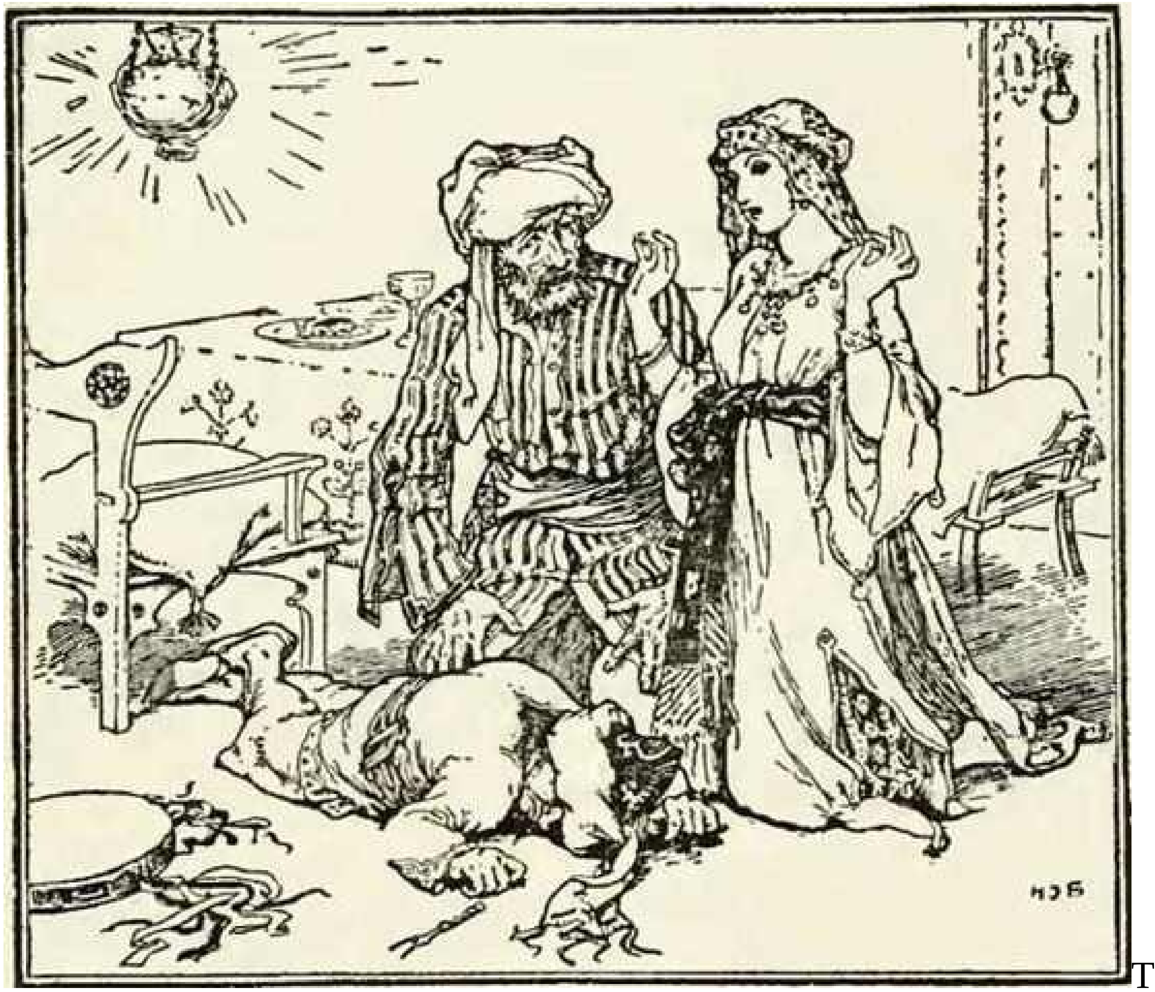

The doctor jumped at his wife’s plan, and they took up the hunchback, and passing cords under his armpits they let him down into the purveyor’s bed-room so gently that he really seemed to be leaning against the wall. When they felt he was touching the ground they drew up the cords and left him.

Scarcely had they got back to their own house when the purveyor entered his room. He had spent the evening at a wedding feast, and had a lantern in his hand. In the dim light it cast he was astonished to see a man standing in his chimney, but being naturally courageous he seized a stick and made straight for the supposed thief. “Ah!” he cried, “so it is you, and not the rats and mice, who steal my butter. I’ll take care that you don’t want to come back!”

So saying he struck him several hard blows. The corpse fell on the floor, but the man only redoubled his blows, till at length it occurred to him it was odd that the thief should lie so still and make no resistance. Then, finding he was quite dead, a cold fear took possession of him. “Wretch that I am,” said he, “I have murdered a man. Ah, my revenge has gone too far. Without the help of Allah I am undone! Cursed be the goods which have led me to my ruin.” And already he felt the rope round his neck.

But when he had got over the first shock he began to think of some way out of the difficulty, and seizing the hunchback in his arms he carried him out into the street, and leaning him against the wall of a shop he stole back to his own house, without once looking behind him.

A few minutes before the sun rose, a rich Christian merchant, who supplied the palace with all sorts of necessaries, left his house, after a night of feasting, to go to the bath. Though he was very drunk, he was yet sober enough to know that the dawn was at hand, and that all good Mussulmen would shortly be going to prayer. So he hastened his steps lest he should meet some one on his way to the mosque, who, seeing his condition, would send him to prison as a drunkard. In his haste he jostled against the hunchback, who fell heavily upon him, and the merchant, thinking he was being attacked by a thief, knocked him down with one blow of his fist. He then called loudly for help, beating the fallen man all the while.

The chief policeman of the quarter came running up, and found a Christian ill-treating a Mussulman. “What are you doing?” he asked indignantly.

“He tried to rob me,” replied the merchant, “and very nearly choked me.”

“Well, you have had your revenge,” said the man, catching hold of his arm. “Come, be off with you!”

As he spoke he held out his hand to the hunchback to help him up, but the hunchback never moved. “Oho!” he went on, looking closer, “so this is the way a Christian has the impudence to treat a Mussulman!” and seizing the merchant in a firm grasp he took him to the inspector of police, who threw him into prison till the judge should be out of bed and ready to attend to his case. All this brought the merchant to his senses, but the more he thought of it the less he could understand how the hunchback could have died merely from the blows he had received.

The merchant was still pondering on this subject when he was summoned before the chief of police and questioned about his crime, which he could not deny. As the hunchback was one of the Sultan’s private jesters, the chief of police resolved to defer sentence of death until he had consulted his master. He went to the palace to demand an audience, and told his story to the Sultan, who only answered,

“There is no pardon for a Christian who kills a Mussulman. Do your duty.”

So the chief of police ordered a gallows to be erected, and sent criers to proclaim in every street in the city that a Christian was to be hanged that day for having killed a Mussulman.

When all was ready the merchant was brought from prison and led to the foot of the gallows. The executioner knotted the cord firmly round the unfortunate man’s neck and was just about to swing him into the air, when the Sultan’s purveyor dashed through the crowd, and cried, panting, to the hangman,

“Stop, stop, don’t be in such a hurry. It was not he who did the murder, it was I.”

The chief of police, who was present to see that everything was in order, put several questions to the purveyor, who told him the whole story of the death of the hunchback, and how he had carried the body to the place where it had been found by the Christian merchant.

“You are going,” he said to the chief of police, “to kill an innocent man, for it is impossible that he should have murdered a creature who was dead already. It is bad enough for me to have slain a Mussulman without having it on my conscience that a Christian who is guiltless should suffer through my fault.”

Now the purveyor’s speech had been made in a loud voice, and was heard by all the crowd, and even if he had wished it, the chief of police could not have escaped setting the merchant free.

“Loose the cords from the Christian’s neck,” he commanded, turning to the executioner, “and hang this man in his place, seeing that by his own confession he is the murderer.”

The hangman did as he was bid, and was tying the cord firmly, when he was stopped by the voice of the Jewish doctor beseeching him to pause, for he had something very important to say. When he had fought his way through the crowd and reached the chief of police,

“Worshipful sir,” he began, “this Mussulman whom you desire to hang is unworthy of death; I alone am guilty. Last night a man and a woman who were strangers to me knocked at my door, bringing with them a patient for me to cure. The servant opened it, but having no light was hardly able to make out their faces, though she readily agreed to wake me and to hand me the fee for my services. While she was telling me her story they seem to have carried the sick man to the top of the staircase and then left him there. I jumped up in a hurry without waiting for a lantern, and in the darkness I fell against something, which tumbled headlong down the stairs and never stopped till it reached the bottom. When I examined the body I found it was quite dead, and the corpse was that of a hunchback Mussulman. Terrified at what we had done, my wife and I took the body on the roof and let it down the chimney of our neighbour the purveyor, whom you were just about to hang. The purveyor, finding him in his room, naturally thought he was a thief, and struck him such a blow that the man fell down and lay motionless on the floor. Stooping to examine him, and finding him stone dead, the purveyor supposed that the man had died from the blow he had received; but of course this was a mistake, as you will see from my account, and I only am the murderer; and although I am innocent of any wish to commit a crime, I must suffer for it all the same, or else have the blood of two Musselmans on my conscience. Therefore send away this man, I pray you, and let me take his place, as it is I who am guilty."

On hearing the declaration of the Jewish doctor, the chief of police commanded that he should be led to the gallows, and the Sultan's purveyor go free. The cord was placed round the Jew's neck, and his feet had already ceased to touch the ground when the voice of the tailor was heard beseeching the executioner to pause one moment and to listen to what he had to say.

"Oh, my lord," he cried, turning to the chief of police, "how nearly have you caused the death of three innocent people! But if you will only have the patience to listen to my tale, you shall know who is the real culprit. If some one has to suffer, it must be me! Yesterday, at dusk, I was working in my shop with a light heart when the little hunchback, who was more than half drunk, came and sat in the doorway. He sang me several songs, and then I invited him to finish the evening at my house. He accepted my invitation, and we went away together. At supper I helped him to a slice of fish, but in eating it a bone stuck in his throat, and in spite of all we could do he died in a few minutes. We felt deeply sorry for his death, but fearing lest we should be held responsible, we carried the corpse to the house of the Jewish doctor. I knocked, and desired the servant to beg her master to come down as fast as possible and see a sick man whom we had brought for him to cure; and in order to hasten his movements I placed a piece of money in her hand as the doctor's fee. Directly she had disappeared I dragged the body to the top of the stairs, and then hurried away with my wife back to our house. In descending the stairs the doctor accidentally knocked over the corpse, and finding him dead believed that he himself was the murderer. But now you know the truth set him free, and let me die in his stead."

The chief of police and the crowd of spectators were lost in astonishment at the strange events to which the death of the hunchback had given rise.

"Loosen the Jewish doctor," said he to the hangman, "and string up the tailor instead, since he has made confession of his crime. Really, one cannot deny that this is a very singular story, and it deserves to be written in letters of gold."

The executioner speedily untied the knots which confined the doctor, and was passing the cord round the neck of the tailor, when the Sultan of Kashgar, who had missed his jester, happened to make inquiry of his officers as to what had become of him.

"Sire," replied they, "the hunchback having drunk more than was good for him, escaped from the palace and was seen wandering about the town, where this morning he was found dead. A man was arrested for having caused his death, and held in custody till a gallows was erected. At the moment that he was about to suffer punishment, first one man arrived, and then another, each accusing themselves of the murder, and this went on for a long time, and at the present instant the chief of police is engaged in questioning a man who declares that he alone is the true assassin."

The Sultan of Kashgar no sooner heard these words than he ordered an usher to go to the chief of police and to bring all the persons concerned in the hunchback's death, together with the corpse, that he wished to see once again. The usher hastened on his errand, but was only just in time, for the tailor was positively swinging in the air, when his voice fell upon the silence of the crowd, commanding the hangman to cut down the body. The hangman, recognising the usher as one of the king's servants, cut down the tailor, and the usher, seeing the man was safe, sought the chief of police and gave him the Sultan's message. Accordingly, the chief of police at once set out for the palace, taking with him the tailor, the doctor, the purveyor, and the merchant, who bore the dead hunchback on their shoulders.

When the procession reached the palace the chief of police prostrated himself at the feet of the Sultan, and related all that he knew of the matter. The Sultan was so much struck by the circumstances that he ordered his private historian to write down an exact account of what had passed, so that in the years to come the miraculous escape of the four men who had thought themselves murderers might never be forgotten.

The Sultan asked everybody concerned in the hunchback's affair to tell him their stories. Among others was a prating barber, whose tale of one of his brothers follows.

The Story of the Barber’s Fifth Brother

As long as our father lived Alnaschar was very idle. Instead of working for his bread he was not ashamed to ask for it every evening, and to support himself next day on what he had received the night before. When our father died, worn out by age, he only left seven hundred silver drachmas to be divided amongst us, which made one hundred for each son. Alnaschar, who had never possessed so much money in his life, was quite puzzled to know what to do with it. After reflecting upon the matter for some time he decided to lay it out on glasses, bottles, and things of that sort, which he would buy from a wholesale merchant. Having bought his stock he next proceeded to look out for a small shop in a good position, where he sat down at the open door, his wares being piled up in an uncovered basket in front of him, waiting for a customer among the passers-by.

In this attitude he remained seated, his eyes fixed on the basket, but his thoughts far away. Unknown to himself he began to talk out loud, and a tailor, whose shop was next door to his, heard quite plainly what he was saying.

“This basket,” said Alnaschar to himself, “has cost me a hundred drachmas — all that I possess in the world. Now in selling the contents piece by piece I shall turn two hundred, and these hundreds I shall again lay out in glass, which will produce four hundred. By this means I shall in course of time make four thousand drachmas, which will easily double themselves. When I have got ten thousand I will give up the glass trade and become a jeweller, and devote all my time to trading in pearls, diamonds, and other precious stones. At last, having all the wealth that heart can desire, I will buy a beautiful country house, with horses and slaves, and then I will lead a merry life and entertain my friends. At my feasts I will send for musicians and dancers from the neighbouring town to amuse my guests. In spite of my riches I shall not, however, give up trade till I have amassed a capital of a hundred thousand drachmas, when, having become a man of much consideration, I shall request the hand of the grand-vizir’s daughter, taking care to inform the worthy father that I have heard favourable reports of her beauty and wit, and that I will pay down on our wedding day 3 thousand gold pieces. Should the vizir refuse my proposal, which after all is hardly to be expected, I will seize him by the beard and drag him to my house.”

When I shall have married his daughter I will give her ten of the best eunuchs that can be found for her service. Then I shall put on my most gorgeous robes, and mounted on a horse with a saddle of fine gold, and its trappings blazing with diamonds, followed by a train of slaves, I shall present myself at the house of the grand-vizir, the people casting down their eyes and bowing low as I pass along. At the foot of the grand-vizir's staircase I shall dismount, and while my servants stand in a row to right and left I shall ascend the stairs, at the head of which the grand-vizir will be waiting to receive me. He will then embrace me as his son-in-law, and giving me his seat will place himself below me. This being done (as I have every reason to expect), two of my servants will enter, each bearing a purse containing a thousand pieces of gold. One of these I shall present to him saying, "Here are the thousand gold pieces that I offered for your daughter's hand, and here," I shall continue, holding out the second purse, "are another thousand to show you that I am a man who is better than his word." After hearing of such generosity the world will talk of nothing else.

I shall return home with the same pomp as I set out, and my wife will send an officer to compliment me on my visit to her father, and I shall confer on the officer the honour of a rich dress and a handsome gift. Should she send one to me I shall refuse it and dismiss the bearer. I shall never allow my wife to leave her rooms on any pretext whatever without my permission, and my visits to her will be marked by all the ceremony calculated to inspire respect. No establishment will be better ordered than mine, and I shall take care always to be dressed in a manner suitable to my position. In the evening, when we retire to our apartments, I shall sit in the place of honour, where I shall assume a grand demeanour and speak little, gazing straight before me, and when my wife, lovely as the full moon, stands humbly in front of my chair I shall pretend not to see her. Then her women will say to me, "Respected lord and master, your wife and slave is before you waiting to be noticed. She is mortified that you never deign to look her way; she is tired of standing so long. Beg her, we pray you, to be seated." Of course I shall give no signs of even hearing this speech, which will vex them mightily. They will throw themselves at my feet with lamentations, and at length I will raise my head and throw a careless glance at her, then I shall go back to my former attitude. The women will think that I am displeased at my wife's dress and will lead her away to put on a finer one, and I on my side shall replace the one I am wearing with another yet more splendid. They will then return to the charge, but this time it will take much longer before they persuade me even to look at my wife. It is as well to begin on my wedding-day as I mean to go on for the rest of our lives.

The next day she will complain to her mother of the way she has been treated, which will fill my heart with joy. Her mother will come to seek me, and, kissing my hands with respect, will say, "My lord" (for she could not dare to risk my anger by using the familiar title of "son-in-law"), "My lord, do not, I implore you, refuse to look upon my daughter or to approach her. She only lives to please you, and loves you with all her soul." But I shall pay no more heed to my mother-in-law's words than I did to those of the women. Again she will beseech me to listen to her entreaties, throwing herself this time at my feet, but all to no purpose. Then, putting a glass of wine into my wife's hand, she will say to her, "There, present that to him yourself, he cannot have the cruelty to reject anything offered by so beautiful a hand," and my wife will take it and offer it to me tremblingly with tears in her eyes, but I shall look in the other direction. This will cause her to weep still more, and she will hold out the glass crying, "Adorable husband, never shall I cease my prayers till you have done me the favour to drink." Sick of her importunities, these words will goad me to fury. I shall dart an angry look at her and give her a sharp blow on the cheek, at the same time giving her a kick so violent that she will stagger across the room and fall on to the sofa.

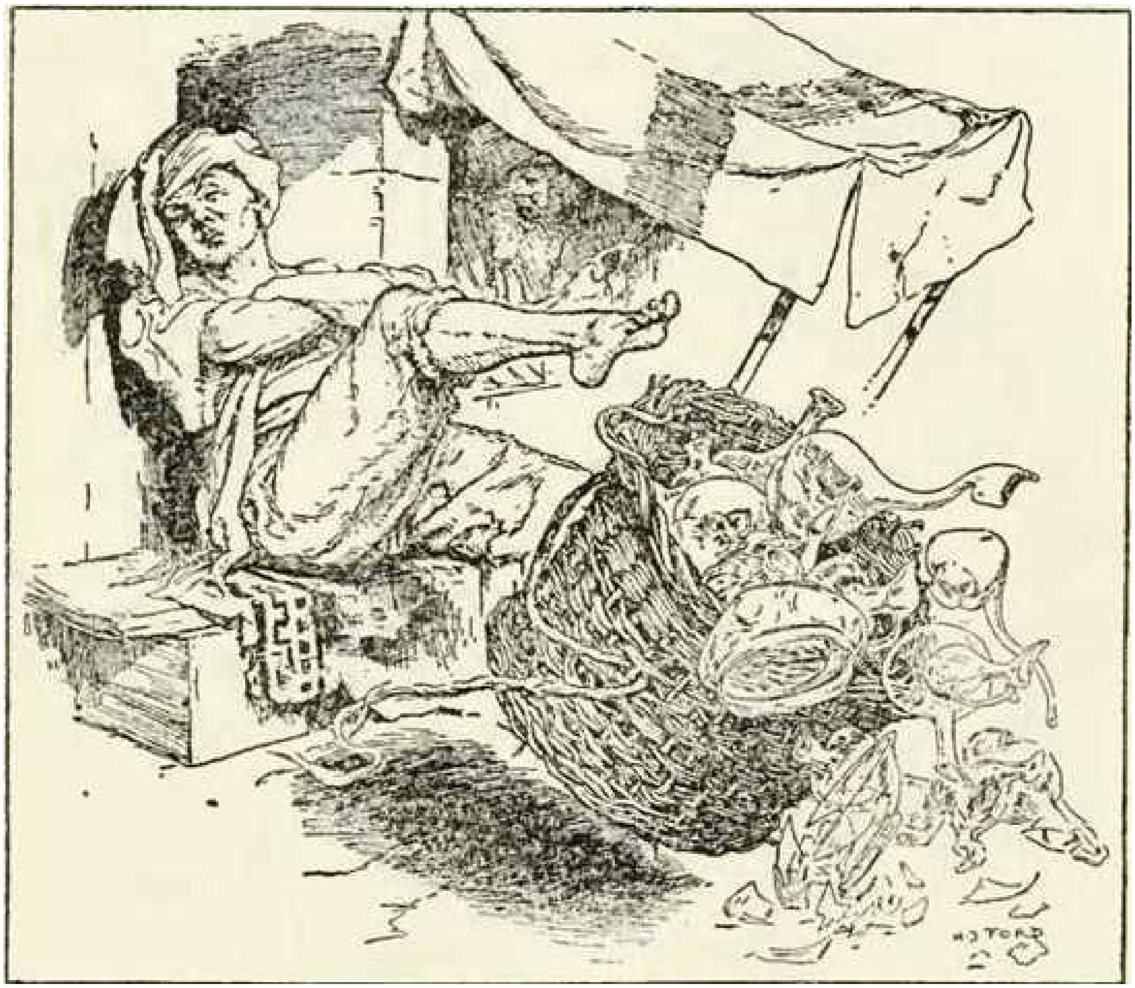

"My brother," pursued the barber, "was so much absorbed in his dreams that he

> actually did give a kick with his foot, which unluckily hit the basket of glass. It fell into the street and was instantly broken into a thousand pieces."

His neighbour the tailor, who had been listening to his visions, broke into a loud fit of laughter as he saw this sight.

"Wretched man!" he cried, "you ought to die of shame at behaving so to a young wife who has done nothing to you. You must be a brute for her tears and prayers not to touch your heart. If I were the grand-vizir I would order you a hundred blows from a bullock whip, and would have you led round the town accompanied by a herald who should proclaim your crimes."

The accident, so fatal to all his profits, had restored my brother to his senses, and seeing that the mischief had been caused by his own insufferable pride, he rent his clothes and tore his hair, and lamented himself so loudly that the passers-by stopped to listen. It was a Friday, so these were more numerous than usual. Some pitied Alnaschar, others only laughed at him, but the vanity which had gone to his head had disappeared with his basket of glass, and he was loudly bewailing his folly when a lady, evidently a person of consideration, rode by on a mule. She stopped and inquired what was the matter, and why the man wept. They told her that he was a poor man who had laid out all his money on this basket of glass, which was now broken. On hearing the cause of these loud wails the lady turned to her attendant and said to him, "Give him whatever you have got with you." The man obeyed, and placed in my brother's hands a purse containing five hundred pieces of gold. Alnaschar almost died of joy on receiving it. He blessed the lady a thousand times, and, shutting up his shop where he had no longer anything to do, he returned home.

He was still absorbed in contemplating his good fortune, when a knock came to his door, and on opening it he found an old woman standing outside.

"My son," she said, "I have a favour to ask of you. It is the hour of prayer and I have not yet washed myself. Let me, I beg you, enter your house, and give me water."

My brother, although the old woman was a stranger to him, did not hesitate to do as she wished. He gave her a vessel of water and then went back to his place and his thoughts, and with his mind busy over his last adventure, he put his gold into a long and narrow purse, which he could easily carry in his belt. During this time the old woman was busy over her prayers, and when she had finished she came and prostrated herself twice before my brother, and then rising called down endless blessings on his head. Observing her shabby clothes, my brother thought that her gratitude was in reality a hint that he should give her some money to buy some new ones, so he held out two pieces of gold. The old woman started back in surprise as if she had received an insult. “Good heavens!” she exclaimed, “what is the meaning of this? Is it possible that you take me, my lord, for one of those miserable creatures who force their way into houses to beg for alms? Take back your money. I am thankful to say I do not need it, for I belong to a beautiful lady who is very rich and gives me everything I want.”

My brother was not clever enough to detect that the old woman had merely refused the two pieces of money he had offered her in order to get more, but he inquired if she could procure him the pleasure of seeing this lady.

“Willingly,” she replied; “and she will be charmed to marry you, and to make you the master of all her wealth. So pick up your money and follow me.”

Delighted at the thought that he had found so easily both a fortune and a beautiful wife, my brother asked no more questions, but concealing his purse, with the money the lady had given him, in the folds of his dress, he set out joyfully with his guide.

They walked for some distance till the old woman stopped at a large house, where she knocked. The door was opened by a young Greek slave, and the old woman led my brother across a well-paved court into a well-furnished hall. Here she left him to inform her mistress of his presence, and as the day was hot he flung himself on a pile of cushions and took off his heavy turban. In a few minutes there entered a lady, and my brother perceived at the first glance that she was even more beautiful and more richly dressed than he had expected. He rose from his seat, but the lady signed to him to sit down again and placed herself beside him. After the usual compliments had passed between them she said, “We are not comfortable here, let us go into another room,” and passing into a smaller chamber, apparently communicating with no other, she continued to talk to him for some time. Then rising hastily she left him, saying, “Stay where you are, I will come back in a moment.”

He waited as he was told, but instead of the lady there entered a huge black slave with a sword in his hand. Approaching my brother with an angry countenance he exclaimed, “What business have you here?” His voice and manner were so terrific that Alnaschar had not strength to reply, and allowed his gold to be taken from him, and even sabre cuts to be inflicted on him without making any resistance. As soon as he was let go, he sank on the ground powerless to move, though he still had possession of his senses. Thinking he was dead, the black ordered the Greek slave to bring him some salt, and between them they rubbed it into his wounds, thus giving him acute agony, though he had the presence of mind to give no sign of life. They then left him, and their place was taken by the old woman, who dragged him to a trapdoor and threw him down into a vault filled with the bodies of murdered men.

At first the violence of his fall caused him to lose consciousness, but luckily the salt which had been rubbed into his wounds had by its smarting preserved his life, and little by little he regained his strength. At the end of two days he lifted the trapdoor during the night and hid himself in the courtyard till daybreak, when he saw the old woman leave the house in search of more prey. Luckily she did not observe him, and when she was out of sight he stole from this nest of assassins and took refuge in my house.

I dressed his wounds and tended him carefully, and when a month had passed he was as well as ever. His one thought was how to be revenged on that wicked old hag, and for this purpose he had a purse made large enough to contain five hundred gold pieces, but filled it instead with bits of glass. This he tied round him with his sash, and, disguising himself as an old woman, he took a sabre, which he hid under his dress.

One morning as he was hobbling through the streets he met his old enemy prowling to see if she could find anyone to decoy. He went up to her and, imitating the voice of a woman, he said, “Do you happen to have a pair of scales you could lend me? I have just come from Persia and have brought with me five hundred gold pieces, and I am anxious to see if they are the proper weight.”

“Good woman,” replied the old hag, “you could not have asked anyone better. My son is a money-changer, and if you will follow me he will weigh them for you himself. Only we must be quick or he will have gone to his shop.” So saying she led the way to the same house as before, and the door was opened by the same Greek slave.

Again my brother was left in the hall, and the pretended son appeared under the form of the black slave. “Miserable crone,” he said to my brother, “get up and come with me,” and turned to lead the way to the place of murder. Alnaschar rose too, and drawing the sabre from under his dress dealt the black such a blow on his neck that his head was severed from his body. My brother picked up the head with one hand, and seizing the body with the other dragged it to the vault, when he threw it in and sent the head after it. The Greek slave, supposing that all had passed as usual, shortly arrived with the basin of salt, but when she beheld Alnaschar with the sabre in his hand she let the basin fall and turned to fly. My brother, however, was too quick for her, and in another instant her head was rolling from her shoulders. The noise brought the old woman running to see what was the matter, and he seized her before she had time to escape. “Wretch!” he cried, “do you know me?”

“Who are you, my lord?” she replied trembling all over. “I have never seen you before.”

“I am he whose house you entered to offer your hypocritical prayers. Don’t you remember now?"

She flung herself on her knees to implore mercy, but he cut her in four pieces.

There remained only the lady, who was quite ignorant of all that was taking place around her. He sought her through the house, and when at last he found her, she nearly fainted with terror at the sight of him. She begged hard for life, which he was generous enough to give her, but he bade her to tell him how she had got into partnership with the abominable creatures he had just put to death.

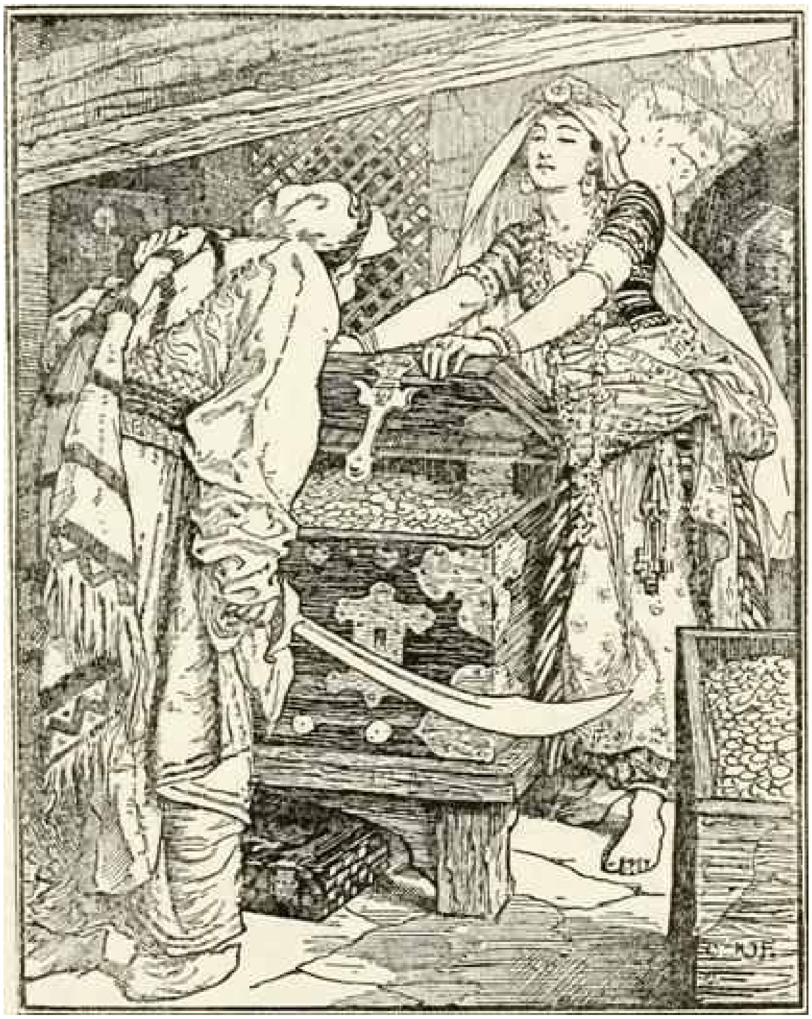

"I was once," replied she, "the wife of an honest merchant, and that old woman, whose wickedness I did not know, used occasionally to visit me. 'Madam,' she said to me one day, 'we have a grand wedding at our house to-day. If you would do us the honour to be present, I am sure you would enjoy yourself.' I allowed myself to be persuaded, put on my richest dress, and took a purse with a hundred pieces of gold. Once inside the doors I was kept by force by that dreadful black, and it is now three years that I have been here, to my great grief."

“That horrible black must have amassed great wealth,” remarked my brother.

“Such wealth,” returned she, “that if you succeed in carrying it all away it will make you rich for ever. Come and let us see how much there is.”

She led Alnaschar into a chamber filled with coffers packed with gold, which he gazed at with an admiration he was powerless to conceal. “Go,” she said, “and bring men to carry them away.”

My brother did not wait to be told twice, and hurried out into the streets, where he soon collected ten men. They all came back to the house, but what was his surprise to find the door open, and the room with the chests of gold quite empty. The lady had been cleverer than himself, and had made the best use of her time. However, he tried to console himself by removing all the beautiful furniture, which more than made up for the five hundred gold pieces he had lost.

Unluckily, on leaving the house, he forgot to lock the door, and the neighbours, finding the place empty, informed the police, who next morning arrested Alnaschar as a thief. My brother tried to bribe them to let him off, but far from listening to him they tied his hands, and forced him to walk between them to the presence of the judge. When they had explained to the official the cause of complaint, he asked Alnaschar where he had obtained all the furniture that he had taken to his house the day before.

“Sir,” replied Alnaschar, “I am ready to tell you the whole story, but give, I pray you, your word, that I shall run no risk of punishment.”

“That I promise,” said the judge. So my brother began at the beginning and related all his adventures, and how he had avenged himself on those who had betrayed him. As to the furniture, he entreated the judge at least to allow him to keep part to make up for the five hundred pieces of gold which had been stolen from him.

The judge, however, would say nothing about this, and lost no time in sending men to fetch away all that Alnaschar had taken from the house. When everything had been moved and placed under his roof he ordered my brother to leave the town and never more to enter it on peril of his life, fearing that if he returned he might seek justice from the Caliph. Alnaschar obeyed, and was on his way to a neighbouring city when he fell in with a band of robbers, who stripped him of his clothes and left him naked by the roadside. Hearing of his plight, I hurried after him to console him for his misfortunes, and to dress him in my best robe. I then brought him back disguised, under cover of night, to my house, where I have since given him all the care I bestow on my other brothers.

The Story of the Barber’s Sixth Brother

There now remains for me to relate to you the story of my sixth brother, whose name was Schacabac. Like the rest of us, he inherited a hundred silver drachmas from our father, which he thought was a large fortune, but through ill-luck, he soon lost it all, and was driven to beg. As he had a smooth tongue and good manners, he really did very well in his new profession, and he devoted himself specially to making friends with the servants in big houses, so as to gain access to their masters.

One day he was passing a splendid mansion, with a crowd of servants lounging in the courtyard. He thought that from the appearance of the house it might yield him a rich harvest, so he entered and inquired to whom it belonged.

“My good man, where do you come from?” replied the servant. “Can’t you see for yourself that it can belong to nobody but a Barmecide?” for the Barmecides were famed for their liberality and generosity. My brother, hearing this, asked the porters, of whom there were several, if they would give him alms. They did not refuse, but told him politely to go in, and speak to the master himself.

My brother thanked them for their courtesy and entered the building, which was so large that it took him some time to reach the apartments of the Barmecide. At last, in a room richly decorated with paintings, he saw an old man with a long white beard, sitting on a sofa, who received him with such kindness that my brother was emboldened to make his petition.

“My lord,” he said, “you behold in me a poor man who only lives by the help of persons as rich and as generous as you.”

Before he could proceed further, he was stopped by the astonishment shown by the Barmecide. “Is it possible,” he cried, “that while I am in Bagdad, a man like you should be starving? That is a state of things that must at once be put an end to! Never shall it be said that I have abandoned you, and I am sure that you, on your part, will never abandon me.”

“My lord,” answered my brother, “I swear that I have not broken my fast this whole day.”

“What, you are dying of hunger?” exclaimed the Barmecide. “Here, slave; bring water, that we may wash our hands before meat!” No slave appeared, but my brother remarked that the Barmecide did not fail to rub his hands as if the water had been poured over them.

Then he said to my brother, “Why don’t you wash your hands too?” and Schacabac, supposing that it was a joke on the part of the Barmecide (though he could see none himself), drew near, and imitated his motion.

When the Barmecide had done rubbing his hands, he raised his voice, and cried, “Set food before us at once, we are very hungry.” No food was brought, but the Barmecide pretended to help himself from a dish, and carry a morsel to his mouth, saying as he did so, “Eat, my friend, eat, I entreat. Help yourself as freely as if you were at home! For a starving man, you seem to have a very small appetite.”

“Excuse me, my lord,” replied Schacabac, imitating his gestures as before, “I really am not losing time, and I do full justice to the repast.”

“How do you like this bread?” asked the Barmecide. “I find it particularly good myself.”

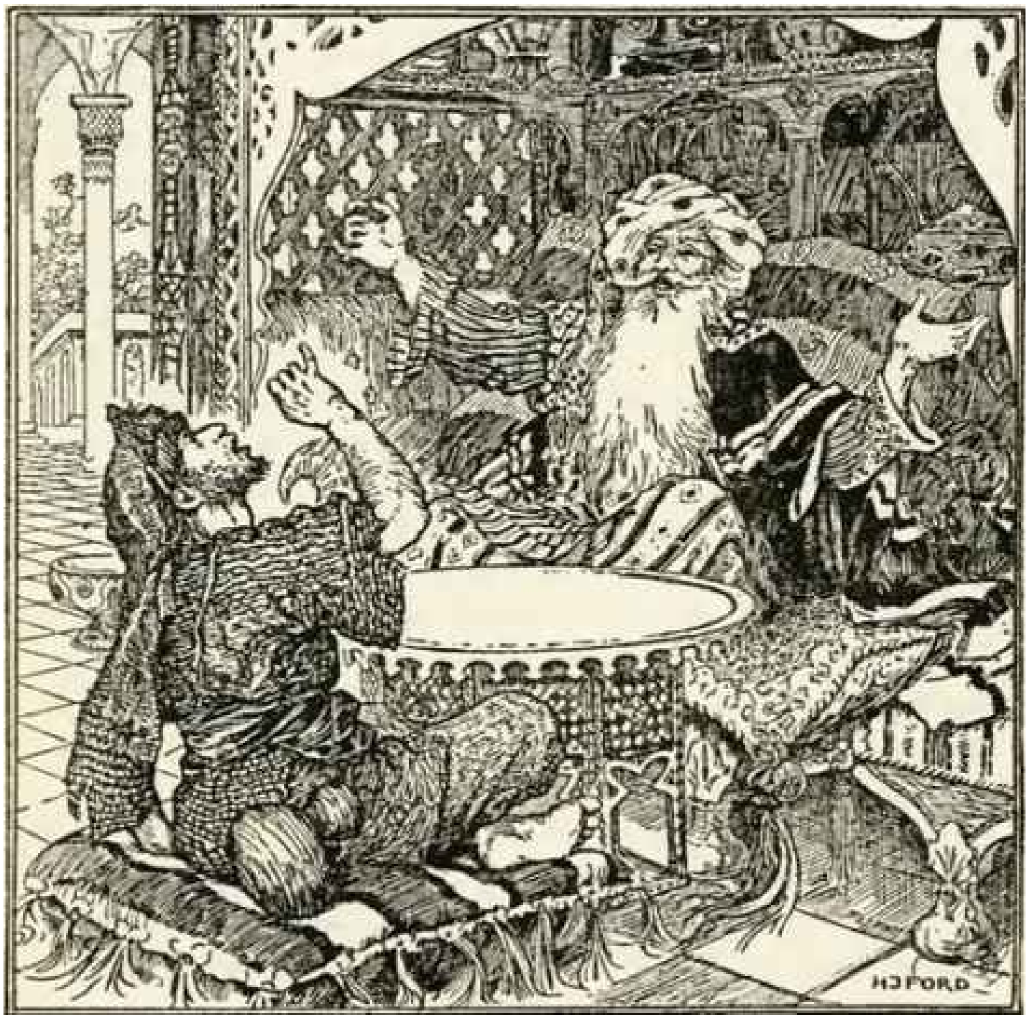

“Oh, my lord,” answered my brother, who beheld neither meat nor bread, “never have I tasted anything so delicious."

"Eat as much as you want," said the Barmecide. "I bought the woman who makes it for five hundred pieces of gold, so that I might never be without it."

After ordering a variety of dishes (which never came) to be placed on the table, and discussing the merits of each one, the Barmecide declared that having dined so well, they would now proceed to take their wine. To this my brother at first objected, declaring that it was forbidden; but on the Barmecide insisting that it was out of the question that he should drink by himself, he consented to take a little. The Barmecide, however, pretended to fill their glasses so often, that my brother feigned that the wine had gone into his head, and struck the Barmecide such a blow on the head, that he fell to the ground. Indeed, he raised his hand to strike him a second time, when the Barmecide cried out that he was mad, upon which my brother controlled himself, and apologised and protested that it was all the fault of the wine he had drunk. At this the Barmecide, instead of being angry, began to laugh, and embraced him heartily. "I have long been seeking," he exclaimed, "a man of your description, and henceforth my house shall be yours. You have had the good grace to fall in with my humour, and to pretend to eat and to drink when nothing was there. Now you shall be rewarded by a really good supper."

Then he clapped his hands, and all the dishes were brought that they had tasted in imagination before and during the repast, slaves sang and played on various instruments. All the while Schacabac was treated by the Barmecide as a familiar friend, and dressed in a garment out of his own wardrobe.

Twenty years passed by, and my brother was still living with the Barmecide, looking after his house, and managing his affairs. At the end of that time his generous benefactor died without heirs, so all his possessions went to the prince. They even despoiled my brother of those that rightly belonged to him, and he, now as poor as he had ever been in his life, decided to cast in his lot with a caravan of pilgrims who were on their way to Mecca. Unluckily, the caravan was attacked and pillaged by the Bedouins, and the pilgrims were taken prisoners. My brother became the slave of a man who beat him daily, hoping to drive him to offer a ransom, although, as Schacabac pointed out, it was quite useless trouble, as his relations were as poor as himself. At length the Bedouin grew tired of tormenting, and sent him on a camel to the top of a high barren mountain, where he left him to take his chance. A passing caravan, on its way to Bagdad, told me where he was to be found, and I hurried to his rescue, and brought him in a deplorable condition back to the town.

"This," — continued the barber,— "is the tale I related to the Caliph, who, when I had finished, burst into fits of laughter.

"Well were you called `the Silent,'" said he; "no name was ever better deserved. But for reasons of my own, which it is not necessary to mention, I desire you to leave the town, and never to come back."

"I had of course no choice but to obey, and travelled about for several years until I heard of the death of the Caliph, when I hastily returned to Bagdad, only to find that all my brothers were dead. It was at this time that I rendered to the young cripple the important service of which you have heard, and for which, as you know, he showed such profound ingratitude, that he preferred rather to leave Bagdad than to run the risk of seeing me. I sought him long from place to place, but it was only to-day, when I expected it least, that I came across him, as much irritated with me as ever" — So saying the tailor went on to relate the story of the lame man and the barber, which has already been told.

"When the barber," he continued, "had finished his tale, we came to the conclusion that the young man had been right, when he had accused him of being a great chatter-box. However, we wished to keep him with us, and share our feast, and we remained at table till the hour of afternoon prayer. Then the company broke up, and I went back to work in my shop.

"It was during this interval that the little hunchback, half drunk already, presented himself before me, singing and playing on his drum. I took him home, to amuse my wife, and she invited him to supper. While eating some fish, a bone got into his throat, and in spite of all we could do, he died shortly. It was all so sudden that we lost our heads, and in order to divert suspicion from ourselves, we carried the body to the house of a Jewish physician. He placed it in the chamber of the purveyor, and the purveyor propped it up in the street, where it was thought to have been killed by the merchant.

"This, Sire, is the story which I was obliged to tell to satisfy your highness. It is now for you to say if we deserve mercy or punishment; life or death?"

The Sultan of Kashgar listened with an air of pleasure which filled the tailor and his friends with hope. "I must confess," he exclaimed, "that I am much more interested in the stories of the barber and his brothers, and of the lame man, than in that of my own jester. But before I allow you all four to return to your own homes, and have the corpse of the hunchback properly buried, I should like to see this barber who has earned your pardon. And as he is in this town, let an usher go with you at once in search of him."

The usher and the tailor soon returned, bringing with them an old man who must have been at least ninety years of age. "O Silent One," said the Sultan, "I am told that you know many strange stories. Will you tell some of them to me?"

"Never mind my stories for the present," replied the barber, "but will your

Highness graciously be pleased to explain why this Jew, this Christian, and this Mussulman, as well as this dead body, are all here?”

“What business is that of yours?” asked the Sultan with a smile; but seeing that the barber had some reasons for his question, he commanded that the tale of the hunchback should be told him.

“It is certainly most surprising,” cried he, when he had heard it all, “but I should like to examine the body.” He then knelt down, and took the head on his knees, looking at it attentively. Suddenly he burst into such loud laughter that he fell right backwards, and when he had recovered himself enough to speak, he turned to the Sultan. “The man is no more dead than I am,” he said; “watch me.” As he spoke he drew a small case of medicines from his pocket and rubbed the neck of the hunchback with some ointment made of balsam. Next he opened the dead man’s mouth, and by the help of a pair of pincers drew the bone from his throat. At this the hunchback sneezed, stretched himself and opened his eyes.

The Sultan and all those who saw this operation did not know which to admire most, the constitution of the hunchback who had apparently been dead for a whole night and most of one day, or the skill of the barber, whom everyone now began to look upon as a great man. His Highness desired that the history of the hunchback should be written down, and placed in the archives beside that of the barber, so that they might be associated in people’s minds to the end of time. And he did not stop there; for in order to wipe out the memory of what they had undergone, he commanded that the tailor, the doctor, the purveyor and the merchant, should each be clothed in his presence with a robe from his own wardrobe before they returned home. As for the barber, he bestowed on him a large pension, and kept him near his own person.

The Adventures of Prince Camaralzaman and the Princess Badoura

Some twenty days' sail from the coast of Persia lies the isle of the children of Khaledan. The island is divided into several provinces, in each of which are large flourishing towns, and the whole forms an important kingdom. It was governed in former days by a king named Schahzaman, who, with good right, considered himself one of the most peaceful, prosperous, and fortunate monarchs on the earth. In fact, he had but one grievance, which was that none of his four wives had given him an heir.

This distressed him so greatly that one day he confided his grief to the grand-vizir, who, being a wise counsellor, said: "Such matters are indeed beyond human aid. Allah alone can grant your desire, and I should advise you, sire, to send large gifts to those holy men who spend their lives in prayer, and to beg for their intercessions. Who knows whether their petitions may not be answered!"

The king took his vizir's advice, and the result of so many prayers for an heir to the throne was that a son was born to him the following year.

Schahzaman sent noble gifts as thank offerings to all the mosques and religious houses, and great rejoicings were celebrated in honour of the birth of the little prince, who was so beautiful that he was named Camaralzaman, or "Moon of the Century."

Prince Camaralzaman was brought up with extreme care by an excellent governor and all the cleverest teachers, and he did such credit to them that when he was grown up, a more charming and accomplished young man was not to be found. Whilst he was still a youth the king, his father, who loved him dearly, had some thoughts of abdicating in his favour. As usual he talked over his plans with his grand-vizir, who, though he did not approve the idea, would not state all his objections.

"Sire," he replied, "the prince is still very young for the cares of state. Your Majesty fears his growing idle and careless, and doubtless you are right. But how would it be if he were first to marry? This would attach him to his home, and your Majesty might give him a share in your counsels, so that he might gradually learn how to wear a crown, which you can give up to him whenever you find him capable of wearing it."

The vizir's advice once more struck the king as being good, and he sent for his son, who lost no time in obeying the summons, and standing respectfully with downcast eyes before the king asked for his commands.

"I have sent for you," said the king, "to say that I wish you to marry. What do you think about it?"

The prince was so much overcome by these words that he remained silent for some time. At length he said: "Sire, I beg you to pardon me if I am unable to reply as you might wish. I certainly did not expect such a proposal as I am still so young, and I confess that the idea of marrying is very distasteful to me. Possibly I may not always be in this mind, but I certainly feel that it will require some time to induce me to take the step which your Majesty desires."

This answer greatly distressed the king, who was sincerely grieved by his objection to marriage. However he would not have recourse to extreme measures, so he said: "I do not wish to force you; I will give you time to reflect, but remember that such a step is necessary, for a prince such as you who will some day be called to rule over a great kingdom."

From this time Prince Camaralzaman was admitted to the royal council, and the king showed him every mark of favour.

At the end of a year the king took his son aside, and said: "Well, my son, have you changed your mind on the subject of marriage, or do you still refuse to obey my wish?"

The prince was less surprised but no less firm than on the former occasion, and begged his father not to press the subject, adding that it was quite useless to urge him any longer.

This answer much distressed the king, who again confided his trouble to his vizir.

"I have followed your advice," he said; "but Camaralzaman declines to marry, and is more obstinate than ever."

"Sire," replied the vizir, "much is gained by patience, and your Majesty might regret any violence. Why not wait another year and then inform the Prince in the midst of the assembled council that the good of the state demands his marriage? He cannot possibly refuse again before so distinguished an assemblage, and in our immediate presence."

The Sultan ardently desired to see his son married at once, but he yielded to the vizir's arguments and decided to wait. He then visited the prince's mother, and after telling her of his disappointment and of the further respite he had given his son, he added: "I know that Camaralzaman confides more in you than he does in me. Pray speak very seriously to him on this subject, and make him realize that he will most seriously displease me if he remains obstinate, and that he will certainly regret the measures I shall be obliged to take to enforce my will."

So the first time the Sultana Fatima saw her son she told him she had heard of his refusal to marry, adding how distressed she felt that he should have vexed his father so much. She asked what reasons he could have for his objections to obey.

"Madam," replied the prince, "I make no doubt that there are as many good, virtuous, sweet, and amiable women as there are others very much the reverse. Would that all were like you! But what revolts me is the idea of marrying a woman without knowing anything at all about her. My father will ask the hand of the daughter of some neighbouring sovereign, who will give his consent to our union. Be she fair or frightful, clever or stupid, good or bad, I must marry her, and am left no choice in the matter. How am I to know that she will not be proud, passionate, contemptuous, and recklessly extravagant, or that her disposition will in any way suit mine?"

"But, my son," urged Fatima, "you surely do not wish to be the last of a race which has reigned so long and so gloriously over this kingdom?"

"Madam," said the prince, "I have no wish to survive the king, my father, but should I do so I will try to reign in such a manner as may be considered worthy of my predecessors."

These and similar conversations proved to the Sultan how useless it was to argue with his son, and the year elapsed without bringing any change in the prince's ideas.

At length a day came when the Sultan summoned him before the council, and there informed him that not only his own wishes but the good of the empire demanded his marriage, and desired him to give his answer before the assembled ministers.

At this Camaralzaman grew so angry and spoke with so much heat that the king, naturally irritated at being opposed by his son in full council, ordered the prince to be arrested and locked up in an old tower, where he had nothing but a very little furniture, a few books, and a single slave to wait on him.

Camaralzaman, pleased to be free to enjoy his books, showed himself very indifferent to his sentence.

When night came he washed himself, performed his devotions, and, having read some pages of the Koran, lay down on a couch, without putting out the light near him, and was soon asleep.

Now there was a deep well in the tower in which Prince Camaralzaman was imprisoned, and this well was a favourite resort of the fairy Maimoune, daughter of Damriat, chief of a legion of genii. Towards midnight Maimoune floated lightly up from the well, intending, according to her usual habit, to roam about the upper world as curiosity or accident might prompt.

The light in the prince's room surprised her, and without disturbing the slave, who slept across the threshold, she entered the room, and approaching the bed was still more astonished to find it occupied.

The prince lay with his face half hidden by the coverlet. Maimoune lifted it a little and beheld the most beautiful youth she had ever seen.

“What a marvel of beauty he must be when his eyes are open!” she thought. “What can he have done to deserve to be treated like this?”

She could not weary gazing at Camaralzaman, but at length, having softly kissed his brow and each cheek, she replaced the coverlet and resumed her flight through the air.

As she entered the middle region she heard the sound of great wings coming towards her, and shortly met one of the race of bad genii. This genie, whose name was Danhasch, recognised Maimoune with terror, for he knew the supremacy which her goodness gave her over him. He would gladly have avoided her altogether, but they were so near that he must either be prepared to fight or yield to her, so he at once addressed her in a conciliatory tone:

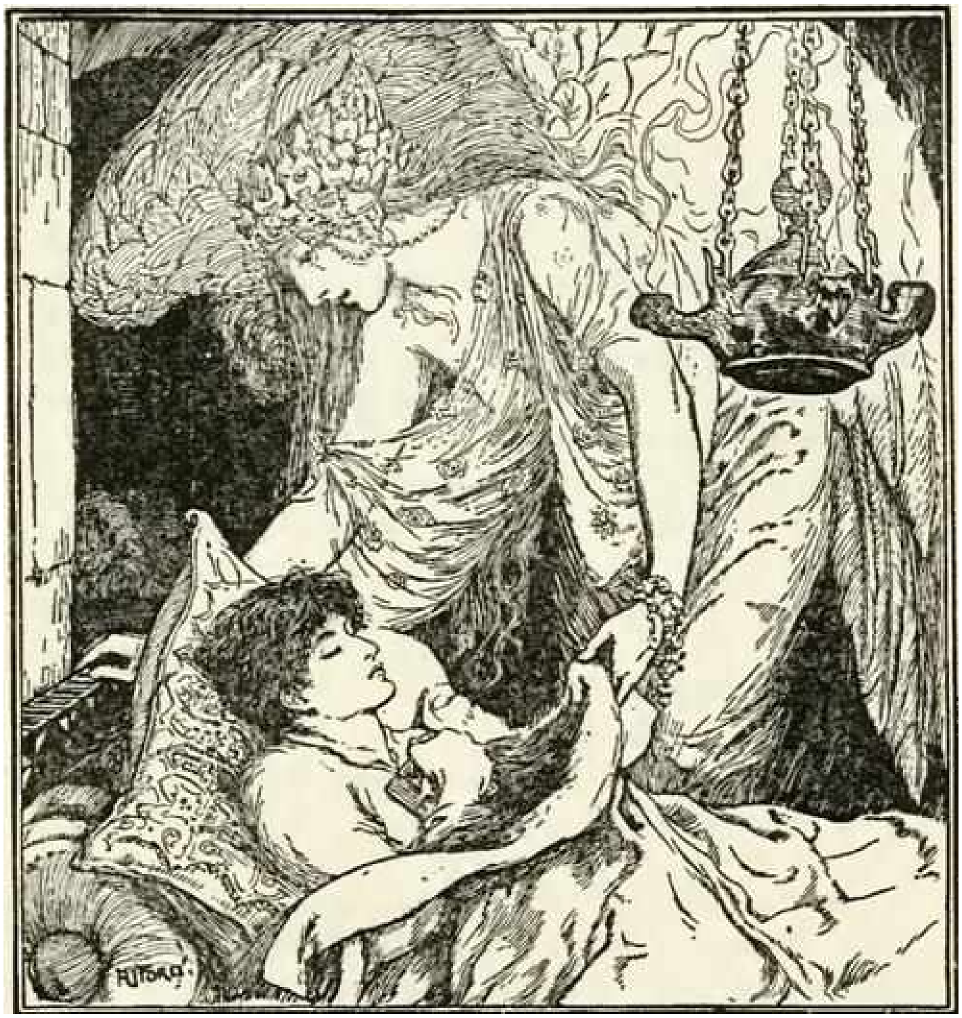

"Good Maimoune, swear to me by Allah to do me no harm, and on my side I will promise not to injure you."

"Accursed genie!" replied Maimoune, "what harm can you do me? But I will grant your power and give the promise you ask. And now tell me what you have seen and done to-night."

"Fair lady," said Danhasch, "you meet me at the right moment to hear something really interesting. I must tell you that I come from the furthest end of China, which is one of the largest and most powerful kingdoms in the world. The present king has one only daughter, who is so perfectly lovely that neither you, nor I, nor any other creature could find adequate terms in which to describe her marvellous charms. You must therefore picture to yourself the most perfect features, joined to a brilliant and delicate complexion, and an enchanting expression, and even then imagination will fall short of the reality.

"The king, her father, has carefully shielded this treasure from the vulgar gaze, and has taken every precaution to keep her from the sight of everyone except the happy mortal he may choose to be her husband. But in order to give her variety in her confinement he has built her seven palaces such as have never been seen before. The first palace is entirely composed of rock crystal, the second of bronze, the third of fine steel, the fourth of another and more precious species of bronze, the fifth of touchstone, the sixth of silver, and the seventh of solid gold. They are all most sumptuously furnished, whilst the gardens surrounding them are laid out with exquisite taste. In fact, neither trouble nor cost has been spared to make this retreat agreeable to the princess. The report of her wonderful beauty has spread far and wide, and many powerful kings have sent embassies to ask her hand in marriage. The king has always received these embassies graciously, but says that he will never oblige the princess to marry against her will, and as she regularly declines each fresh proposal, the envoys have had to leave as disappointed in the result of their missions as they were gratified by their magnificent receptions."

"Sire," said the princess to her father, "you wish me to marry, and I know you desire to please me, for which I am very grateful. But, indeed, I have no inclination to change my state, for where could I find so happy a life amidst so many beautiful and delightful surroundings? I feel that I could never be as happy with any husband as I am here, and I beg you not to press one on me."

"At last an embassy came from a king so rich and powerful that the King of China felt constrained to urge this suit on his daughter. He told her how important such an alliance would be, and pressed her to consent. In fact, he pressed her so persistingly that the princess at length lost her temper and quite forgot the respect due to her father. "Sire," cried she angrily, "do not speak further of this or any other marriage or I will plunge this dagger in my breast and so escape from all these importunities."

"The king of China was extremely indignant with his daughter and replied: "You have lost your senses and you must be treated accordingly." So he had her shut in one set of rooms in one of her palaces, and only allowed her ten old women, of whom her nurse was the head, to wait on her and keep her company. He next sent letters to all the kings who had sued for the princess's hand, begging they would think of her no longer, as she was quite insane, and he desired his various envoys to make it known that anyone who could cure her should have her to wife.

"Fair Maimoune," continued Danhasch, "this is the present state of affairs. I never pass a day without going to gaze on this incomparable beauty, and I am sure that if you would only accompany me you would think the sight well worth the trouble, and own that you never saw such loveliness before."

The fairy only answered with a peal of laughter, and when at length she had control of her voice she cried, "Oh, come, you are making game of me! I thought you had something really interesting to tell me instead of raving about some unknown damsel. What would you say if you could see the prince I have just been looking at and whose beauty is really transcendent? That is something worth talking about, you would certainly quite lose your head.”

“Charming Maimoune,” asked Danhasch, “may I inquire who and what is the prince of whom you speak?”

“Know,” replied Maimoune, “that he is in much the same case as your princess. The king, his father, wanted to force him to marry, and on the prince’s refusal to obey he has been imprisoned in an old tower where I have just seen him.”

“I don’t like to contradict a lady,” said Danhasch, “but you must really permit me to doubt any mortal being as beautiful as my princess.”

“Hold your tongue,” cried Maimoune. “I repeat that is impossible.”

“Well, I don’t wish to seem obstinate,” replied Danhasch, “the best plan to test the truth of what I say will be for you to let me take you to see the princess for yourself.”

“There is no need for that,” retorted Maimoune; “we can satisfy ourselves in another way. Bring your princess here and lay her down beside my prince. We can then compare them at leisure, and decide which is in the right.”

Danhasch readily consented, and after having the tower where the prince was confined pointed out to him, and making a wager with Maimoune as to the result of the comparison, he flew off to China to fetch the princess.

In an incredibly short time Danhasch returned, bearing the sleeping princess. Maimoune led him to the prince’s room, and the rival beauty was placed beside him.

When the prince and princess lay thus side by side, an animated dispute as to their respective charms arose between the fairy and the genius. Danhasch began by saying:

“Now you see that my princess is more beautiful than your prince. Can you doubt any longer?”

“Doubt! Of course I do!” exclaimed Maimoune. “Why, you must be blind not to see how much my prince excels your princess. I do not deny that your princess is very handsome, but only look and you must own that I am in the right.”

“There is no need for me to look longer,” said Danhasch, “my first impression will remain the same; but of course, charming Maimoune, I am ready to yield to you if you insist on it.”

“By no means,” replied Maimoune. “I have no idea of being under any obligation to an accursed genius like you. I refer the matter to an umpire, and shall expect you to submit to his verdict."

Danhasch readily agreed, and on Maimoune striking the floor with her foot it opened, and a hideous, hump-backed, lame, squinting genius, with six horns on his head, hands like claws, emerged. As soon as he beheld Maimoune he threw himself at her feet and asked her commands.

"Rise, Caschcasch," said she. "I summoned you to judge between me and Danhasch. Glance at that couch, and say without any partiality whether you think the youth or the maiden lying there the more beautiful."

Caschcasch looked at the prince and princess with every token of surprise and admiration. At length, having gazed long without being able to come to a decision, he said

"Madam, I must confess that I should deceive you were I to declare one to be handsomer than the other. There seems to me only one way in which to decide the matter, and that is to wake one after the other and judge which of them expresses the greater admiration for the other."

This advice pleased Maimoune and Danhasch, and the fairy at once transformed herself into the shape of a gnat and settling on Camaralzaman's throat stung him so sharply that he awoke. As he did so his eyes fell on the Princess of China. Surprised at finding a lady so near him, he raised himself on one arm to look at her. The youth and beauty of the princess at once awoke a feeling to which his heart had as yet been a stranger, and he could not restrain his delight.

"What loveliness! What charms! Oh, my heart, my soul!" he exclaimed, as he kissed her forehead, her eyes and mouth in a way which would certainly have roused her had not the genie's enchantments kept her asleep.

"How, fair lady!" he cried, "you do not wake at the signs of Camaralzaman's love? Be you who you may, he is not unworthy of you."

It then suddenly occurred to him, that perhaps this was the bride his father had destined for him, and that the King had probably had her placed in this room in order to see how far Camaralzaman's aversion to marriage would withstand her charms.

"At all events," he thought, "I will take this ring as a remembrance of her."

So saying he drew off a fine ring which the princess wore on her finger, and replaced it by one of his own. After which he lay down again and was soon fast asleep.

Then Danhasch, in his turn, took the form of a gnat and bit the princess on her lip.

She started up, and was not a little amazed at seeing a young man beside her. From surprise she soon passed to admiration, and then to delight on perceiving how handsome and fascinating he was.

"Why," cried she, "was it you my father wished me to marry? How unlucky that I did not know sooner! I should not have made him so angry. But wake up! wake up! for I know I shall love you with all my heart."

So saying she shook Camaralzaman so violently that nothing but the spells of Maimoune could have prevented his waking.

"Oh!" cried the princess. "Why are you so drowsy?" So saying she took his hand and noticed her own ring on his finger, which made her wonder still more. But as he still remained in a profound slumber she pressed a kiss on his cheek and soon fell fast asleep too.

Then Maimoune turning to the genie said: "Well, are you satisfied that my prince surpasses your princess? Another time pray believe me when I assert anything."

Then turning to Caschcasch: "My thanks to you, and now do you and Danhasch bear the princess back to her own home."

The two genii hastened to obey, and Maimoune returned to her well.

On waking next morning the first thing Prince Camaralzaman did was to look round for the lovely lady he had seen at night, and the next to question the slave who waited on him about her. But the slave persisted so strongly that he knew nothing of any lady, and still less of how she got into the tower, that the prince lost all patience, and after giving him a good beating tied a rope round him and ducked him in the well till the unfortunate man cried out that he would tell everything. Then the prince drew him up all dripping wet, but the slave begged leave to change his clothes first, and as soon as the prince consented hurried off just as he was to the palace. Here he found the king talking to the grand-vizir of all the anxiety his son had caused him. The slave was admitted at once and cried:

"Alas, Sire! I bring sad news to your Majesty. There can be no doubt that the prince has completely lost his senses. He declares that he saw a lady sleeping on his couch last night, and the state you see me in proves how violent contradiction makes him." He then gave a minute account of all the prince had said and done.

The king, much moved, begged the vizir to examine into this new misfortune, and the latter at once went to the tower, where he found the prince quietly reading a book. After the first exchange of greetings the vizir said:

"I feel really very angry with your slave for alarming his Majesty by the news he brought him."

"What news?" asked the prince.

"Ah!" replied the vizir, "something absurd, I feel sure, seeing how I find you."

"Most likely," said the prince; "but now that you are here I am glad of the opportunity to ask you where is the lady who slept in this room last night?"

The grand-vizir felt beside himself at this question.

“Prince!” he exclaimed, “how would it be possible for any man, much less a woman, to enter this room at night without walking over your slave on the threshold? Pray consider the matter, and you will realise that you have been deeply impressed by some dream.”

But the prince angrily insisted on knowing who and where the lady was, and was not to be persuaded by all the vizir’s protestations to the contrary that the plot had not been one of his making. At last, losing patience, he seized the vizir by the beard and loaded him with blows.

“Stop, Prince,” cried the unhappy vizir, “stay and hear what I have to say.”

The prince, whose arm was getting tired, paused.

“I confess, Prince,” said the vizir, “that there is some foundation for what you say. But you know well that a minister has to carry out his master’s orders. Allow me to go and to take to the king any message you may choose to send.”

“Very well,” said the prince; “then go and tell him that I consent to marry the lady whom he sent or brought here last night. Be quick and bring me back his answer.”

The vizir bowed to the ground and hastened to leave the room and tower.

“Well,” asked the king as soon as he appeared, “and how did you find my son?”

“Alas, sire,” was the reply, “the slave’s report is only too true!”

He then gave an exact account of his interview with Camaralzaman and of the prince’s fury when told that it was not possible for any lady to have entered his room, and of the treatment he himself had received. The king, much distressed, determined to clear up the matter himself, and, ordering the vizir to follow him, set out to visit his son.

The prince received his father with profound respect, and the king, making him sit beside him, asked him several questions, to which Camaralzaman replied with much good sense. At last the king said: “My son, pray tell me about the lady who, it is said, was in your room last night.”

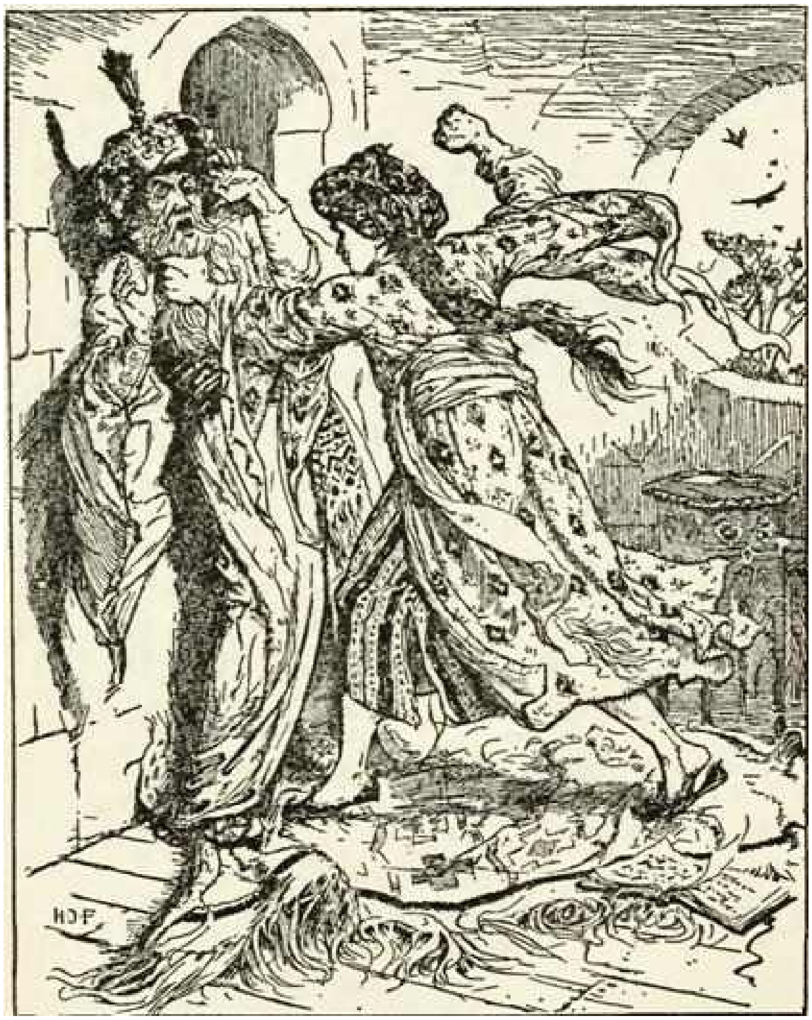

“Sire,” replied the prince, “pray do not increase my distress in this matter, but rather make me happy by giving her to me in marriage. However much I may have objected to matrimony formerly, the sight of this lovely girl has overcome all my prejudices, and I will gratefully receive her from your hands.”

The king was almost speechless on hearing his son, but after a time assured him most solemnly that he knew nothing whatever about the lady in question, and had not connived at her appearance. He then desired the prince to relate the whole story to him.

Camaralzaman did so at great length, showed the ring, and implored his father to help to find the bride he so ardently desired.

“After all you tell me,” remarked the king, “I can no longer doubt your word; but how and whence the lady came, or why she should have stayed so short a time I cannot imagine. The whole affair is indeed mysterious. Come, my dear son, let us wait together for happier days.”

So saying the king took Camaralzaman by the hand and led him back to the palace, where the prince took to his bed and gave himself up to despair, and the king shutting himself up with his son entirely neglected the affairs of state.

The prime minister, who was the only person admitted, felt it his duty at last to tell the king how much the court and all the people complained of his seclusion, and how bad it was for the nation. He urged the sultan to remove with the prince to a lovely little island close by, whence he could easily attend public audiences, and where the charming scenery and fine air would do the invalid so much good as to enable him to bear his father's occasional absence.

The king approved the plan, and as soon as the castle on the island could be prepared for their reception he and the prince arrived there, Schahzaman never leaving his son except for the prescribed public audiences twice a week.

Whilst all this was happening in the capital of Schahzaman the two genii had carefully borne the Princess of China back to her own palace and replaced her in bed. On waking next morning she first turned from one side to another and then, finding herself alone, called loudly for her women.

"Tell me," she cried, "where is the young man I love so dearly, and who slept near me last night?"

"Princess," exclaimed the nurse, "we cannot tell what you allude to without more explanation."

"Why," continued the princess, "the most charming and beautiful young man lay sleeping beside me last night. I did my utmost to wake him, but in vain."

"Your Royal Highness wishes to make game of us," said the nurse. "Is it your pleasure to rise?"

"I am quite in earnest," persisted the princess, "and I want to know where he is."

"But, Princess," expostulated the nurse, "we left you quite alone last night, and we have seen no one enter your room since then."

At this the princess lost all patience, and taking the nurse by her hair she boxed her ears soundly, crying out: "You shall tell me, you old witch, or I'll kill you."

The nurse had no little trouble in escaping, and hurried off to the queen, to whom she related the whole story with tears in her eyes.

"You see, madam," she concluded, "that the princess must be out of her mind. If only you will come and see her, you will be able to judge for yourself."

The queen hurried to her daughter's apartments, and after tenderly embracing her, asked her why she had treated her nurse so badly.

"Madam," said the princess, "I perceive that your Majesty wishes to make game of me, but I can assure you that I will never marry anyone except the charming young man whom I saw last night. You must know where he is, so pray send for him."

The queen was much surprised by these words, but when she declared that she knew nothing whatever of the matter the princess lost all respect, and answered that if she were not allowed to marry as she wished she should kill herself, and it was in vain that the queen tried to pacify her and bring her to reason.

The king himself came to hear the rights of the matter, but the princess only persisted in her story, and as a proof showed the ring on her finger. The king hardly knew what to make of it all, but ended by thinking that his daughter was more crazy than ever, and without further argument he had her placed in still closer confinement, with only her nurse to wait on her and a powerful guard to keep the door.

Then he assembled his council, and having told them the sad state of things, added: "If any of you can succeed in curing the princess, I will give her to him in marriage, and he shall be my heir."

An elderly emir present, fired with the desire to possess a young and lovely wife and to rule over a great kingdom, offered to try the magic arts with which he was acquainted.

"You are welcome to try," said the king, "but I make one condition, which is, that should you fail you will lose your life."

The emir accepted the condition, and the king led him to the princess, who, veiling her face, remarked, "I am surprised, sire, that you should bring an unknown man into my presence."

"You need not be shocked," said the king; "this is one of my emirs who asks your hand in marriage."

"Sire," replied the princess, "this is not the one you gave me before and whose ring I wear. Permit me to say that I can accept no other."

The emir, who had expected to hear the princess talk nonsense, finding how calm and reasonable she was, assured the king that he could not venture to undertake a cure, but placed his head at his Majesty's disposal, on which the justly irritated monarch promptly had it cut off.

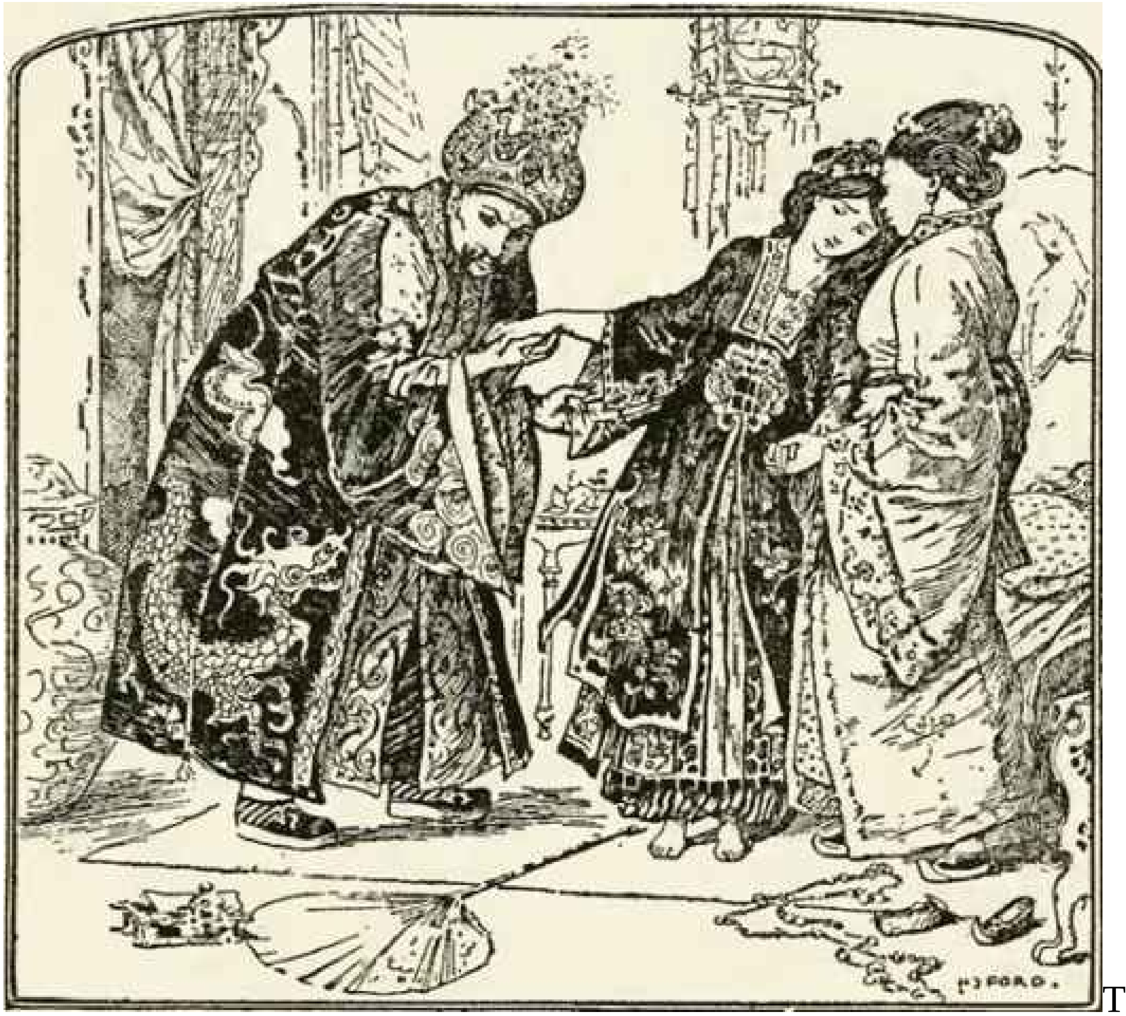

This was the first of many suitors for the princess whose inability to cure her cost them their lives.

Now it happened that after things had been going on in this way for some time the nurse’s son Marzavan returned from his travels. He had been in many countries and learnt many things, including astrology. Needless to say that one of the first things his mother told him was the sad condition of the princess, his foster-sister. Marzavan asked if she could not manage to let him see the princess without the king’s knowledge.

After some consideration his mother consented, and even persuaded the eunuch on guard to make no objection to Marzavan’s entering the royal apartment.

The princess was delighted to see her foster-brother again, and after some conversation she confided to him all her history and the cause of her imprisonment.

Marzavan listened with downcast eyes and the utmost attention. When she had finished speaking he said,

“If what you tell me, Princess, is indeed the case, I do not despair of finding comfort for you. Take patience yet a little longer. I will set out at once to explore other countries, and when you hear of my return be sure that he for whom you sigh is not far off.” So saying, he took his leave and started next morning on his travels.

Marzavan journeyed from city to city and from one island and province to another, and wherever he went he heard people talk of the strange story of the Princess Badoura, as the Princess of China was named.

After four months he reached a large populous seaport town named Torf, and here he heard no more of the Princess Badoura but a great deal of Prince Camaralzaman, who was reported ill, and whose story sounded very similar to that of the Princess Badoura.

Marzavan was rejoiced, and set out at once for Prince Camaralzaman’s residence. The ship on which he embarked had a prosperous voyage till she got within sight of the capital of King Schahzaman, but when just about to enter the harbour she suddenly struck on a rock, and foundered within sight of the palace where the prince was living with his father and the grand-vizir.

Marzavan, who swam well, threw himself into the sea and managed to land close to the palace, where he was kindly received, and after having a change of clothing given him was brought before the grand-vizir. The vizir was at once attracted by the young man’s superior air and intelligent conversation, and perceiving that he had gained much experience in the course of his travels, he said, “Ah, how I wish you had learnt some secret which might enable you to cure a malady which has plunged this court into affliction for some time past!”

Marzavan replied that if he knew what the illness was he might possibly be able to suggest a remedy, on which the vizir related to him the whole history of Prince Camaralzaman.

On hearing this Marzavan rejoiced inwardly, for he felt sure that he had at last discovered the object of the Princess Badoura’s infatuation. However, he said nothing, but begged to be allowed to see the prince.

On entering the royal apartment the first thing which struck him was the prince himself, who lay stretched out on his bed with his eyes closed. The king sat near him, but, without paying any regard to his presence, Marzavan exclaimed, “Heavens! what a striking likeness!” And, indeed, there was a good deal of resemblance between the features of Camaralzaman and those of the Princess of China.

These words caused the prince to open his eyes with languid curiosity, and Marzavan seized this moment to pay him his compliments, contriving at the same time to express the condition of the Princess of China in terms unintelligible, indeed, to the Sultan and his vizir, but which left the prince in no doubt that his visitor could give him some welcome information.

The prince begged his father to allow him the favour of a private interview with Marzavan, and the king was only too pleased to find his son taking an interest in anyone or anything. As soon as they were left alone Marzavan told the prince the story of the Princess Badoura and her sufferings, adding, “I am convinced that you alone can cure her; but before starting on so long a journey you must be well and strong, so do your best to recover as quickly as may be.”

These words produced a great effect on the prince, who was so much cheered by the hopes held out that he declared he felt able to get up and be dressed. The king was overjoyed at the result of Marzavan’s interview, and ordered public rejoicings in honour of the prince’s recovery.

Before long the prince was quite restored to his original state of health, and as soon as he felt himself really strong he took Marzavan aside and said:

“Now is the time to perform your promise. I am so impatient to see my beloved princess once more that I am sure I shall fall ill again if we do not start soon. The one obstacle is my father’s tender care of me, for, as you may have noticed, he cannot bear me out of his sight.”

“Prince,” replied Marzavan, “I have already thought over the matter, and this is what seems to me the best plan. You have not been out of doors since my arrival. Ask the king’s permission to go with me for two or three days’ hunting, and when he has given leave order two good horses to be held ready for each of us. Leave all the rest to me.”

Next day the prince seized a favourable opportunity for making his request, and the king gladly granted it on condition that only one night should be spent out for fear of too great fatigue after such a long illness.

Next morning Prince Camaralzaman and Marzavan were off betimes, attended by two grooms leading the two extra horses. They hunted a little by the way, but took care to get as far from the towns as possible. At night-fall they reached an inn, where they supped and slept till midnight. Then Marzavan awoke and roused the prince without disturbing anyone else. He begged the prince to give him the coat he had been wearing and to put on another which they had brought with them. They mounted their second horses, and Marzavan led one of the grooms’ horses by the bridle.

By daybreak our travellers found themselves where four cross roads met in the middle of the forest. Here Marzavan begged the prince to wait for him, and leading the groom's horse into a dense part of the wood he cut its throat, dipped the prince's coat in its blood, and having rejoined the prince threw the coat on the ground where the roads parted.

In answer to Camaralzaman's inquiries as to the reason for this, Marzavan replied that the only chance they had of continuing their journey was to divert attention by creating the idea of the prince's death. "Your father will doubtless be plunged in the deepest grief," he went on, "but his joy at your return will be all the greater."

The prince and his companion now continued their journey by land and sea, and as they had brought plenty of money to defray their expenses they met with no needless delays. At length they reached the capital of China, where they spent three days in a suitable lodging to recover from their fatigues.

During this time Marzavan had an astrologer's dress prepared for the prince. They then went to the baths, after which the prince put on the astrologer's robe and was conducted within sight of the king's palace by Marzavan, who left him there and went to consult his mother, the princess's nurse.

Meantime the prince, according to Marzavan's instructions, advanced close to the palace gates and there proclaimed aloud:

"I am an astrologer and I come to restore health to the Princess Badoura, daughter of the high and mighty King of China, on the conditions laid down by His Majesty of marrying her should I succeed, or of losing my life if I fail."

It was some little time since anyone had presented himself to run the terrible risk involved in attempting to cure the princess, and a crowd soon gathered round the prince. On perceiving his youth, good looks, and distinguished bearing, everyone felt pity for him.

"What are you thinking of, sir," exclaimed some; "why expose yourself to certain death? Are not the heads you see exposed on the town wall sufficient warning? For mercy's sake give up this mad idea and retire whilst you can."

But the prince remained firm, and only repeated his cry with greater assurance, to the horror of the crowd.

"He is resolved to die!" they cried; "may heaven have pity on him!"

Camaralzaman now called out for the third time, and at last the grand-vizir himself came out and fetched him in.

The prime minister led the prince to the king, who was much struck by the noble air of this new adventurer, and felt such pity for the fate so evidently in store for him, that he tried to persuade the young man to renounce his project.

But Camaralzaman politely yet firmly persisted in his intentions, and at length the king desired the eunuch who had the guard of the princess's apartments to conduct the astrologer to her presence.

The eunuch led the way through long passages, and Camaralzaman followed rapidly, in haste to reach the object of his desires. At last they came to a large hall which was the ante-room to the princess's chamber, and here Camaralzaman said to the eunuch:

"Now you shall choose. Shall I cure the princess in her own presence, or shall I do it from here without seeing her?"

The eunuch, who had expressed many contemptuous doubts as they came along of the newcomer's powers, was much surprised and said:

"If you really can cure, it is immaterial when you do it. Your fame will be equally great."

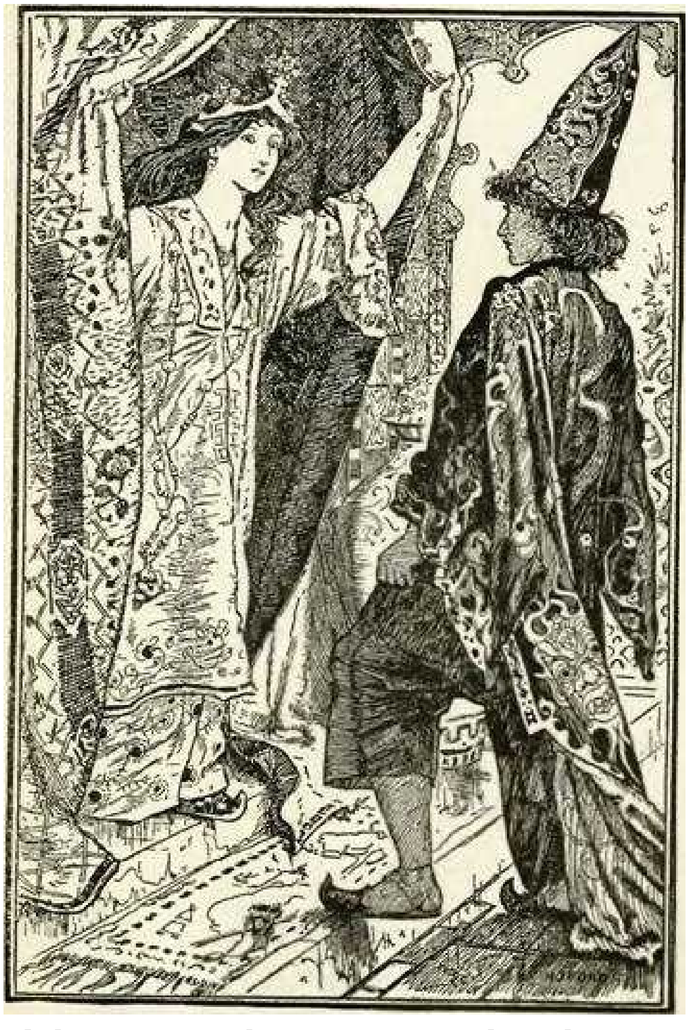

"Very well," replied the prince: "then, impatient though I am to see the princess, I will effect the cure where I stand, the better to convince you of my power." He accordingly drew out his writing case and wrote as follows— "Adorable princess! The enamoured Camaralzaman has never forgotten the moment when, contemplating your sleeping beauty, he gave you his heart. As he was at that time deprived of the happiness of conversing with you, he ventured to give you his ring as a token of his love, and to take yours in exchange, which he now encloses in this letter. Should you deign to return it to him he will be the happiest of mortals, if not he will cheerfully resign himself to death, seeing he does so for love of you. He awaits your reply in your ante-room."

Having finished this note the prince carefully enclosed the ring in it without letting the eunuch see it, and gave him the letter, saying:

"Take this to your mistress, my friend, and if on reading it and seeing its contents she is not instantly cured, you may call me an impudent impostor."

The eunuch at once passed into the princess's room, and handing her the letter said:

"Madam, a new astrologer has arrived, who declares that you will be cured as soon as you have read this letter and seen what it contains."

The princess took the note and opened it with languid indifference. But no sooner did she see her ring than, barely glancing at the writing, she rose hastily and with one bound reached the doorway and pushed back the hangings. Here she and the prince recognised each other, and in a moment they were locked in each other's arms, where they tenderly embraced, wondering how they came to meet at last after so long a separation. The nurse, who had hastened after her charge, drew them back to the inner room, where the princess restored her ring to Camaralzaman.

"Take it back," she said, "I could not keep it without returning yours to you, and I am resolved to wear that as long as I live."

Meantime the eunuch had hastened back to the king. "Sire," he cried, "all the former doctors and astrologers were mere quacks. This man has cured the princess without even seeing her." He then told all to the king, who, overjoyed, hastened to his daughter's apartments, where, after embracing her, he placed her hand in that of the prince, saying:

"Happy stranger, I keep my promise, and give you my daughter to wife, be you who you may. But, if I am not much mistaken, your condition is above what you appear to be."

The prince thanked the king in the warmest and most respectful terms, and added: "As regards my person, your Majesty has rightly guessed that I am not an astrologer. It is but a disguise which I assumed in order to merit your illustrious alliance. I am myself a prince, my name is Camaralzaman, and my father is Schahzaman, King of the Isles of the Children of Khaledan." He then told his whole history, including the extraordinary manner of his first seeing and loving the Princess Badoura.

When he had finished the king exclaimed: “So remarkable a story must not be lost to posterity. It shall be inscribed in the archives of my kingdom and published everywhere abroad.”

The wedding took place next day amidst great pomp and rejoicings. Marzavan was not forgotten, but was given a lucrative post at court, with a promise of further advancement.

The prince and princess were now entirely happy, and months slipped by unconsciously in the enjoyment of each other’s society.

One night, however, Prince Camaralzaman dreamt that he saw his father lying at the point of death, and saying: “Alas! my son whom I loved so tenderly, has deserted me and is now causing my death.”

The prince woke with such a groan as to startle the princess, who asked what was the matter.

“Ah!” cried the prince, “at this very moment my father is perhaps no more!” and he told his dream.

The princess said but little at the time, but next morning she went to the king, and kissing his hand said:

“I have a favour to ask of your Majesty, and I beg you to believe that it is in no way prompted by my husband. It is that you will allow us both to visit my father-in-law King Schahzaman.”

Sorry though the king felt at the idea of parting with his daughter, he felt her request to be so reasonable that he could not refuse it, and made but one condition, which was that she should only spend one year at the court of King Schahzaman, suggesting that in future the young couple should visit their respective parents alternately.

The princess brought this good news to her husband, who thanked her tenderly for this fresh proof of her affection.

All preparations for the journey were now pressed forwards, and when all was ready the king accompanied the travellers for some days, after which he took an affectionate leave of his daughter, and charging the prince to take every care of her, returned to his capital.

The prince and princess journeyed on, and at the end of a month reached a huge meadow interspersed with clumps of big trees which cast a most pleasant shade. As the heat was great, Camaralzaman thought it well to encamp in this cool spot. Accordingly the tents were pitched, and the princess entering hers whilst the prince was giving his further orders, removed her girdle, which she placed beside her, and desiring her women to leave her, lay down and was soon asleep.

When the camp was all in order the prince entered the tent and, seeing the princess asleep, he sat down near her without speaking. His eyes fell on the girdle which, he took up, and whilst inspecting the precious stones set in it he noticed a little pouch sewn to the girdle and fastened by a loop. He touched it and felt something hard within. Curious as to what this might be, he opened the pouch and found a cornelian engraved with various figures and strange characters.

"This cornelian must be something very precious," thought he, "or my wife would not wear it on her person with so much care."

In truth it was a talisman which the Queen of China had given her daughter, telling her it would ensure her happiness as long as she carried it about her.

The better to examine the stone the prince stepped to the open doorway of the tent. As he stood there holding it in the open palm of his hand, a bird suddenly swooped down, picked the stone up in its beak and flew away with it.

Imagine the prince's dismay at losing a thing by which his wife evidently set such store!

The bird having secured its prey flew off some yards and alighted on the ground, holding the talisman it its beak. Prince Camaralzaman advanced, hoping the bird would drop it, but as soon as he approached the thief fluttered on a little further still. He continued his pursuit till the bird suddenly swallowed the stone and took a longer flight than before. The prince then hoped to kill it with a stone, but the more hotly he pursued the further flew the bird.

In this fashion he was led on by hill and dale through the entire day, and when night came the tiresome creature roosted on the top of a very high tree where it could rest in safety.

The prince in despair at all his useless trouble began to think whether he had better return to the camp. "But," thought he, "how shall I find my way back? Must I go up hill or down? I should certainly lose my way in the dark, even if my strength held out." Overwhelmed by hunger, thirst, fatigue and sleep, he ended by spending the night at the foot of the tree.

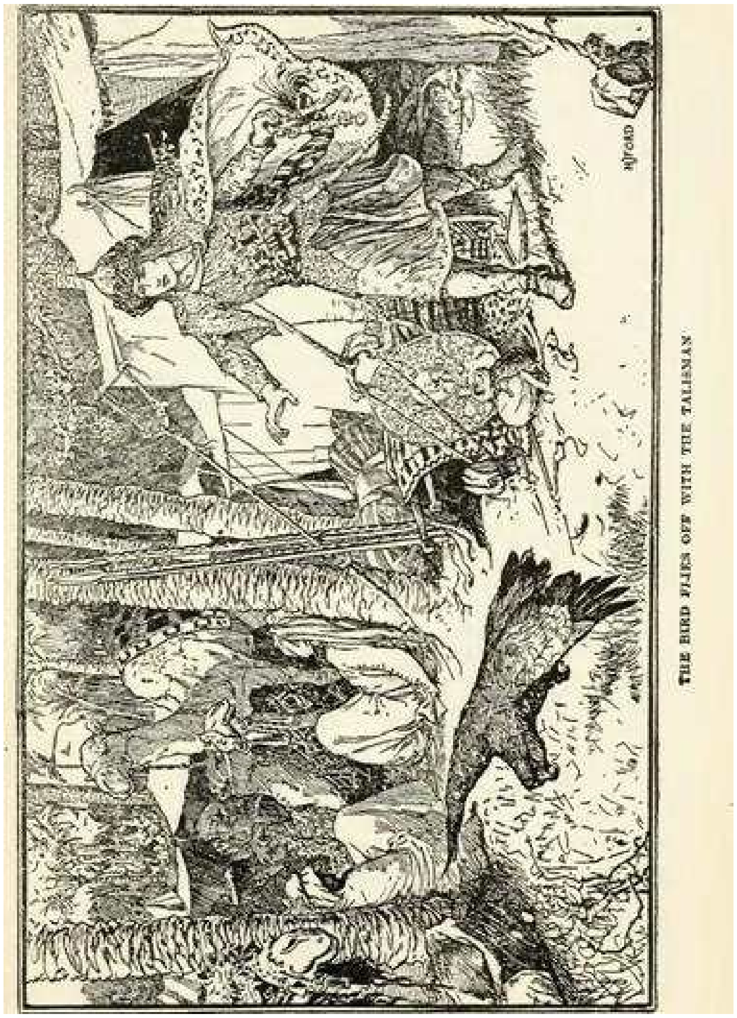

THE BIRD FLIES OFF WITH THE TALISMAN

Next morning Camaralzaman woke up before the bird left its perch, and no sooner did it take flight than he followed it again with as little success as the previous day, only stopping to eat some herbs and fruit he found by the way. In this fashion he spent ten days, following the bird all day and spending the night at the foot of a tree, whilst it roosted on the topmost bough. On the eleventh day the bird and the prince reached a large town, and as soon as they were close to its walls the bird took a sudden and higher flight and was shortly completely out of sight, whilst Camaralzaman felt in despair at having to give up all hopes of ever recovering the talisman of the Princess Badoura.

Much cast down, he entered the town, which was built near the sea and had a fine harbour. He walked about the streets for a long time, not knowing where to go, but at length as he walked near the seashore he found a garden door open and walked in.

The gardener, a good old man, who was at work, happened to look up, and, seeing a stranger, whom he recognised by his dress as a Mussulman, he told him to come in at once and to shut the door.

Camaralzaman did as he was bid, and inquired why this precaution was taken.

"Because," said the gardener, "I see that you are a stranger and a Mussulman, and this town is almost entirely inhabited by idolaters, who hate and persecute all of our faith. It seems almost a miracle that has led you to this house, and I am indeed glad that you have found a place of safety."

Camaralzaman warmly thanked the kind old man for offering him shelter, and was about to say more, but the gardener interrupted him with:

"Leave compliments alone. You are weary and must be hungry. Come in, eat, and rest." So saying he led the prince into his cottage, and after satisfying his hunger begged to learn the cause of his arrival.

Camaralzaman told him all without disguise, and ended by inquiring the shortest way to his father's capital. "For," added he, "if I tried to rejoin the princess, how should I find her after eleven days' separation. Perhaps, indeed, she may be no longer alive!" At this terrible thought he burst into tears.

The gardener informed Camaralzaman that they were quite a year's land journey to any Mahomedan country, but that there was a much shorter route by sea to the Ebony Island, from whence the Isles of the Children of Khaledan could be easily reached, and that a ship sailed once a year for the Ebony Island by which he might get so far as his very home.

"If only you had arrived a few days sooner," he said, "you might have embarked at once. As it is you must now wait till next year, but if you care to stay with me I offer you my house, such as it is, with all my heart."

Prince Camaralzaman thought himself lucky to find some place of refuge, and gladly accepted the gardener's offer. He spent his days working in the garden, and his nights thinking of and sighing for his beloved wife.

Let us now see what had become during this time of the Princess Badoura.

On first waking she was much surprised not to find the prince near her. She called her women and asked if they knew where he was, and whilst they were telling her that they had seen him enter the tent, but had not noticed his leaving it, she took up her belt and perceived that the little pouch was open and the talisman gone.

She at once concluded that her husband had taken it and would shortly bring it back. She waited for him till evening rather impatiently, and wondering what could have kept him from her so long. When night came without him she felt in despair and abused the talisman and its maker roundly. In spite of her grief and anxiety however, she did not lose her presence of mind, but decided on a courageous, though very unusual step.

Only the princess and her women knew of Camaralzaman's disappearance, for the rest of the party were sleeping or resting in their tents. Fearing some treason should the truth be known, she ordered her women not to say a word which would give rise to any suspicion, and proceeded to change her dress for one of her husband’s, to whom, as has been already said, she bore a strong likeness.

In this disguise she looked so like the prince that when she gave orders next morning to break up the camp and continue the journey no one suspected the change. She made one of her women enter her litter, whilst she herself mounted on horseback and the march began.

After a protracted journey by land and sea the princess, still under the name and disguise of Prince Camaralzaman, arrived at the capital of the Ebony Island whose king was named Armanos.

No sooner did the king hear that the ship which was just in port had on board the son of his old friend and ally than he hurried to meet the supposed prince, and had him and his retinue brought to the palace, where they were lodged and entertained sumptuously.

After three days, finding that his guest, to whom he had taken a great fancy, talked of continuing his journey, King Armanos said to him:

“Prince, I am now an old man, and unfortunately I have no son to whom to leave my kingdom. It has pleased Heaven to give me only one daughter, who possesses such great beauty and charm that I could only give her to a prince as highly born and as accomplished as yourself. Instead, therefore, of returning to your own country, take my daughter and my crown and stay with us. I shall feel that I have a worthy successor, and shall cheerfully retire from the fatigues of government.”

The king’s offer was naturally rather embarrassing to the Princess Badoura. She felt that it was equally impossible to confess that she had deceived him, or to refuse the marriage on which he had set his heart; a refusal which might turn all his kindness to hatred and persecution.

All things considered, she decided to accept, and after a few moments silence said with a blush, which the king attributed to modesty:

“Sire, I feel so great an obligation for the good opinion your Majesty has expressed for my person and of the honour you do me, that, though I am quite unworthy of it, I dare not refuse. But, sire, I can only accept such an alliance if you give me your promise to assist me with your counsels.”

The marriage being thus arranged, the ceremony was fixed for the following day, and the princess employed the intervening time in informing the officers of her suite of what had happened, assuring them that the Princess Badoura had given her full consent to the marriage. She also told her women, and bade them keep her secret well.

King Armanos, delighted with the success of his plans, lost no time in assembling his court and council, to whom he presented his successor, and placing his future son-in-law on the throne made everyone do homage and take oaths of allegiance to the new king.

At night the whole town was filled with rejoicings, and with much pomp the Princess Haiatelnefous (this was the name of the king's daughter) was conducted to the palace of the Princess Badoura.

Now Badoura had thought much of the difficulties of her first interview with King Armanos' daughter, and she felt the only thing to do was at once to take her into her confidence.

Accordingly, as soon as they were alone she took Haiatelnefous by the hand and said:

"Princess, I have a secret to tell you, and must throw myself on your mercy. I am not Prince Camaralzaman, but a princess like yourself and his wife, and I beg you to listen to my story, then I am sure you will forgive my imposture, in consideration of my sufferings."

She then related her whole history, and at its close Haiatelnefous embraced her warmly, and assured her of her entire sympathy and affection.

The two princesses now planned out their future action, and agreed to combine to keep up the deception and to let Badoura continue to play a man's part until such time as there might be news of the real Camaralzaman.

Whilst these things were passing in the Ebony Island Prince Camaralzaman continued to find shelter in the gardeners cottage in the town of the idolaters.

Early one morning the gardener said to the prince:

"To-day is a public holiday, and the people of the town not only do not work themselves but forbid others to do so. You had better therefore take a good rest whilst I go to see some friends, and as the time is near for the arrival of the ship of which I told you I will make inquiries about it, and try to bespeak a passage for you." He then put on his best clothes and went out, leaving the prince, who strolled into the garden and was soon lost in thoughts of his dear wife and their sad separation.

As he walked up and down he was suddenly disturbed in his reverie by the noise two large birds were making in a tree.

Camaralzaman stood still and looked up, and saw that the birds were fighting so savagely with beaks and claws that before long one fell dead to the ground, whilst the conqueror spread his wings and flew away. Almost immediately two other larger birds, who had been watching the duel, flew up and alighted, one at the head and the other at the feet of the dead bird. They stood there some time sadly shaking their heads, and then dug up a grave with their claws in which they buried him.

As soon as they had filled in the grave the two flew off, and ere long returned, bringing with them the murderer, whom they held, one by a wing and the other by a leg, with their beaks, screaming and struggling with rage and terror. But they held tight, and having brought him to his victim's grave, they proceeded to kill him, after which they tore open his body, scattered the inside and once more flew away.

The prince, who had watched the whole scene with much interest, now drew near the spot where it happened, and glancing at the dead bird he noticed something red lying near which had evidently fallen out of its inside. He picked it up, and what was his surprise when he recognised the Princess Badoura's talisman which had been the cause of many misfortunes. It would be impossible to describe his joy; he kissed the talisman repeatedly, wrapped it up, and carefully tied it round his arm. For the first time since his separation from the princess he had a good night, and next morning he was up at daybreak and went cheerfully to ask what work he should do.

The gardener told him to cut down an old fruit tree which had quite died away, and Camaralzaman took an axe and fell to vigorously. As he was hacking at one of the roots the axe struck on something hard. On pushing away the earth he discovered a large slab of bronze, under which was disclosed a staircase with ten steps. He went down them and found himself in a roomy kind of cave in which stood fifty large bronze jars, each with a cover on it. The prince uncovered one after another, and found them all filled with gold dust. Delighted with his discovery he left the cave, replaced the slab, and having finished cutting down the tree waited for the gardener's return.

The gardener had heard the night before that the ship about which he was inquiring would start ere long, but the exact date not being yet known he had been told to return next day for further information. He had gone therefore to inquire, and came back with good news beaming in his face.

"My son," said he, "rejoice and hold yourself ready to start in three days' time. The ship is to set sail, and I have arranged all about your passage with the captain.

"You could not bring me better news," replied Camaralzaman, "and in return I have something pleasant to tell you. Follow me and see the good fortune which has befallen you."

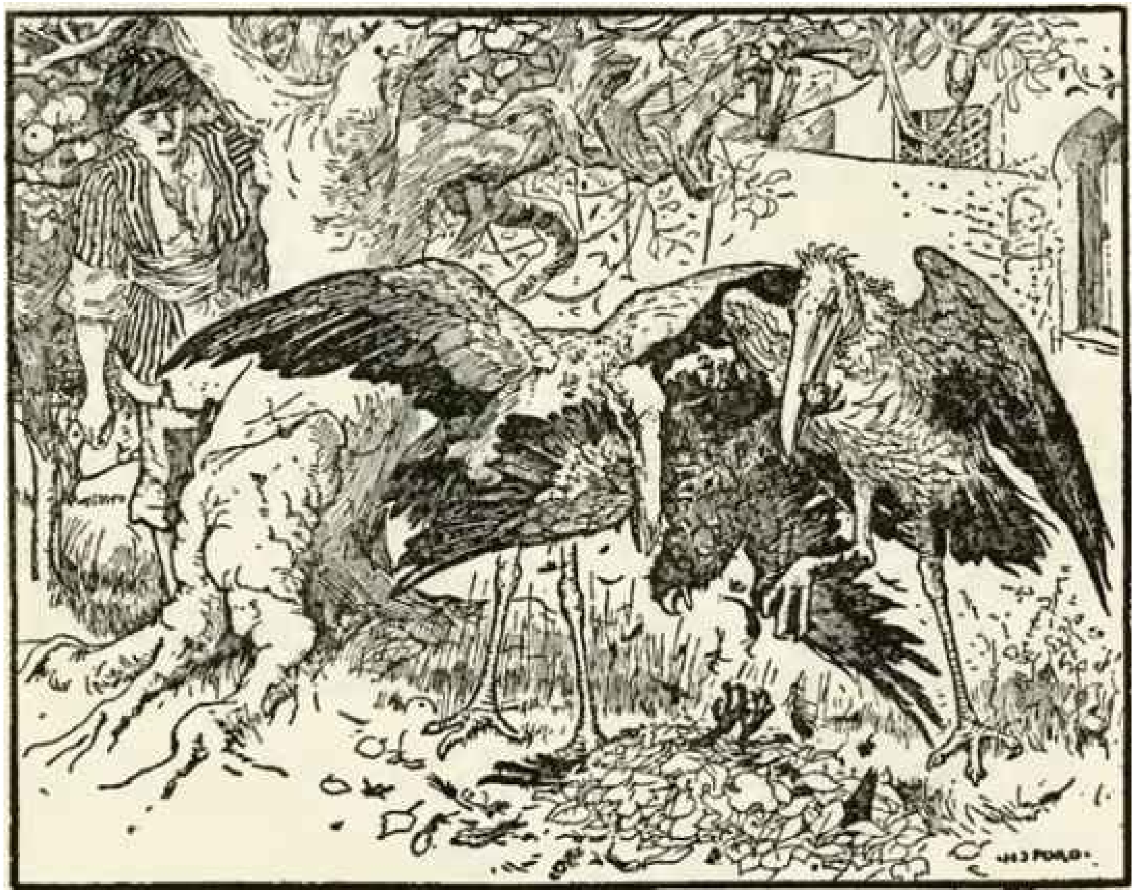

He then led the gardener to the cave, and having shown him the treasure stored up there, said how happy it made him that Heaven should in this way reward his kind host’s many virtues and compensate him for the privations of many years.

“What do you mean?” asked the gardener. “Do you imagine that I should appropriate this treasure? It is yours, and I have no right whatever to it. For the last eighty years I have dug up the ground here without discovering anything. It is clear that these riches are intended for you, and they are much more needed by a prince like yourself than by an old man like me, who am near my end and require nothing. This treasure comes just at the right time, when you are about to return to your own country, where you will make good use of it.”

But the prince would not hear of this suggestion, and finally after much discussion they agreed to divide the gold. When this was done the gardener said:

“My son, the great thing now is to arrange how you can best carry off this treasure as secretly as possible for fear of losing it. There are no olives in the Ebony Island, and those imported from here fetch a high price. As you know, I have a good stock of the olives which grew in this garden. Now you must take fifty jars, fill each half full of gold dust and fill them up with the olives. We will then have them taken on board ship when you embark.”

The prince took this advice, and spent the rest of the day filling the fifty jars, and fearing lest the precious talisman might slip from his arm and be lost again, he took the precaution of putting it in one of the jars, on which he made a mark so as to be able to recognise it. When night came the jars were all ready, and the prince and his host went to bed.

Whether in consequence of his great age, or of the fatigues and excitement of the previous day, I do not know, but the gardener passed a very bad night. He was worse next day, and by the morning of the third day was dangerously ill. At daybreak the ship's captain and some of his sailors knocked at the garden door and asked for the passenger who was to embark.

"I am he," said Camaralzaman, who had opened the door. "The gardener who took my passage is ill and cannot see you, but please come in and take these jars of olives and my bag, and I will follow as soon as I have taken leave of him."

The sailors did as he asked, and the captain before leaving charged Camaralzaman to lose no time, as the wind was fair, and he wished to set sail at once.

As soon as they were gone the prince returned to the cottage to bid farewell to his old friend, and to thank him once more for all his kindness. But the old man was at his last gasp, and had barely murmured his confession of faith when he expired.

Camaralzaman was obliged to stay and pay him the last offices, so having dug a grave in the garden he wrapped the kind old man up and buried him. He then locked the door, gave up the key to the owner of the garden, and hurried to the quay only to hear that the ship had sailed long ago, after waiting three hours for him.

It may well be believed that the prince felt in despair at this fresh misfortune, which obliged him to spend another year in a strange and distasteful country. Moreover, he had once more lost the Princess Badoura's talisman, which he feared he might never see again. There was nothing left for him but to hire the garden as the old man had done, and to live on in the cottage. As he could not well cultivate the garden by himself, he engaged a lad to help him, and to secure the rest of the treasure he put the remaining gold dust into fifty more jars, filling them up with olives so as to have them ready for transport.

Whilst the prince was settling down to this second year of toil and privation, the ship made a rapid voyage and arrived safely at the Ebony Island.

As the palace of the new king, or rather of the Princess Badoura, overlooked the harbour, she saw the ship entering it and asked what vessel it was coming in so gaily decked with flags, and was told that it was a ship from the Island of the Idolaters which yearly brought rich merchandise.

The princess, ever on the look out for any chance of news of her beloved husband, went down to the harbour attended by some officers of the court, and arrived just as the captain was landing. She sent for him and asked many questions as to his country, voyage, what passengers he had, and what his vessel was laden with. The captain answered all her questions, and said that his passengers consisted entirely of traders who brought rich stuffs from various countries, fine muslins, precious stones, musk, amber, spices, drugs, olives, and many other things.

As soon as he mentioned olives, the princess, who was very partial to them, exclaimed:

“I will take all you have on board. Have them unloaded and we will make our bargain at once, and tell the other merchants to let me see all their best wares before showing them to other people.”

“Sire,” replied the captain, “I have on board fifty very large pots of olives. They belong to a merchant who was left behind, as in spite of waiting for him he delayed so long that I was obliged to set sail without him.”

“Never mind,” said the princess, “unload them all the same, and we will arrange the price.”

The captain accordingly sent his boat off to the ship and it soon returned laden with the fifty pots of olives. The princess asked what they might be worth.

“Sire,” replied the captain, “the merchant is very poor. Your Majesty will not overpay him if you give him a thousand pieces of silver.”

“In order to satisfy him and as he is so poor,” said the princess, “I will order a thousand pieces of gold to be given you, which you will be sure to remit to him.”

So saying she gave orders for the payment and returned to the palace, having the jars carried before her. When evening came the Princess Badoura retired to the inner part of the palace, and going to the apartments of the Princess Haiatelnefous she had the fifty jars of olives brought to her. She opened one to let her friend taste the olives and to taste them herself, but great was her surprise when, on pouring some into a dish, she found them all powdered with gold dust. “What an adventure! how extraordinary!” she cried. Then she had the other jars opened, and was more and more surprised to find the olives in each jar mixed with gold dust.

But when at length her talisman was discovered in one of the jars her emotion was so great that she fainted away. The Princess Haiatelnefous and her women hastened to restore her, and as soon as she recovered consciousness she covered the precious talisman with kisses.

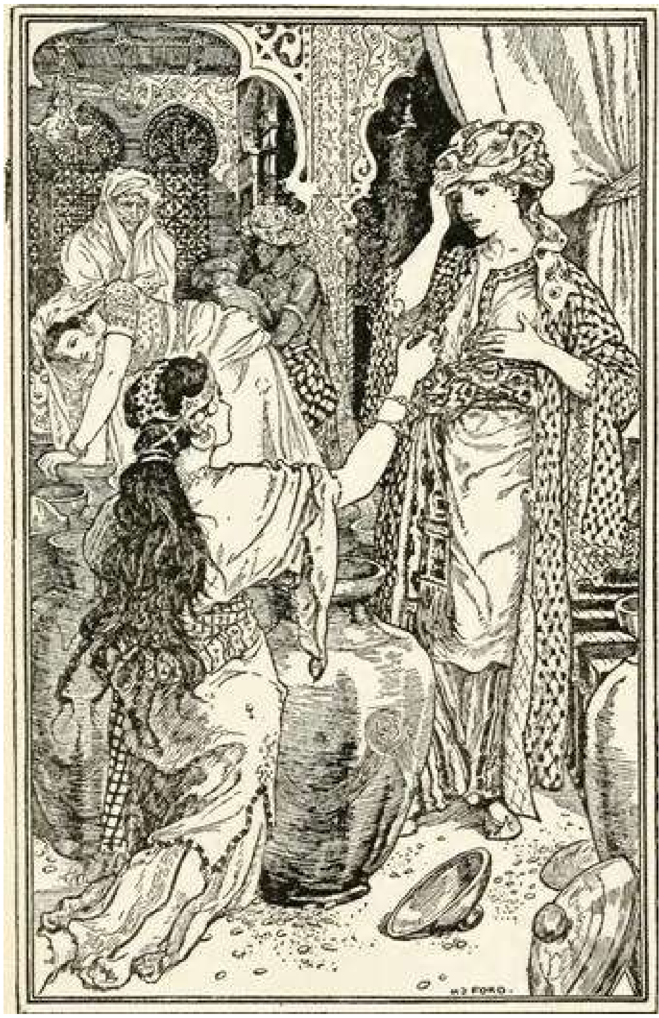

Then, dismissing the attendants, she said to her friend:

“You will have guessed, my dear, that it was the sight of this talisman which has moved me so deeply. This was the cause of my separation from my dear husband, and now, I am convinced, it will be the means of our reunion.”

As soon as it was light next day the Princess Badoura sent for the captain, and made further inquiries about the merchant who owned the olive jars she had bought.

In reply the captain told her all he knew of the place where the young man lived, and how, after engaging his passage, he came to be left behind.

“If that is the case,” said the princess, “you must set sail at once and go back for him. He is a debtor of mine and must be brought here at once, or I will confiscate all your merchandise. I shall now give orders to have all the warehouses where your cargo is placed under the royal seal, and they will only be opened when you have brought me the man I ask for. Go at once and obey my orders.”

The captain had no choice but to do as he was bid, so hastily provisioning his ship he started that same evening on his return voyage.

When, after a rapid passage, he gained sight of the Island of Idolaters, he judged it better not to enter the harbour, but casting anchor at some distance he embarked at night in a small boat with six active sailors and landed near Camaralzaman’s cottage.

The prince was not asleep, and as he lay awake moaning over all the sad events which had separated him from his wife, he thought he heard a knock at the garden door. He went to open it, and was immediately seized by the captain and sailors, who without a word of explanation forcibly bore him off to the boat, which took them back to the ship without loss of time. No sooner were they on board than they weighed anchor and set sail.

Camaralzaman, who had kept silence till then, now asked the captain (whom he had recognised) the reason for this abduction.

“Are you not a debtor of the King of the Ebony Island?” asked the captain.

“I? Why, I never even heard of him before, and never set foot in his kingdom!” was the answer.

“Well, you must know better than I,” said the captain. “You will soon see him now, and meantime be content where you are and have patience.”

The return voyage was as prosperous as the former one, and though it was night when the ship entered the harbour, the captain lost no time in landing with his passenger, whom he conducted to the palace, where he begged an audience with the king.

Directly the Princess Badoura saw the prince she recognised him in spite of his shabby clothes. She longed to throw herself on his neck, but restrained herself, feeling it was better for them both that she should play her part a little longer. She therefore desired one of her officers to take care of him and to treat him well. Next she ordered another officer to remove the seals from the warehouse, whilst she presented the captain with a costly diamond, and told him to keep the thousand pieces of gold paid for the olives, as she would arrange matters with the merchant himself.

She then returned to her private apartments, where she told the Princess Haiatelnefous all that had happened, as well as her plans for the future, and begged her assistance, which her friend readily promised.

Next morning she ordered the prince to be taken to the bath and clothed in a manner suitable to an emir or governor of a province. He was then introduced to the council, where his good looks and grand air drew the attention of all on him.

Princess Badoura, delighted to see him looking himself once more, turned to the other emirs, saying:

“My lords, I introduce to you a new colleague, Camaralzaman, whom I have known on my travels and who, I can assure you, you will find well deserves your regard and admiration.”

Camaralzaman was much surprised at hearing the king — whom he never suspected of being a woman in disguise — asserting their acquaintance, for he felt sure he had never seen her before. However he received all the praises bestowed on him with becoming modesty, and prostrating himself, said:

“Sire, I cannot find words in which to thank your Majesty for the great honour conferred on me. I can but assure you that I will do all in my power to prove myself worthy of it.”

On leaving the council the prince was conducted to a splendid house which had been prepared for him, where he found a full establishment and well-filled stables at his orders. On entering his study his steward presented him with a coffer filled with gold pieces for his current expenses. He felt more and more puzzled by such good fortune, and little guessed that the Princess of China was the cause of it.

After a few days the Princess Badoura promoted Camaralzaman to the post of grand treasurer, an office which he filled with so much integrity and benevolence as to win universal esteem.

He would now have thought himself the happiest of men had it not been for that separation which he never ceased to bewail. He had no clue to the mystery of his present position, for the princess, out of compliment to the old king, had taken his name, and was generally known as King Armanos the younger, few people remembering that on her first arrival she went by another name.

At length the princess felt that the time had come to put an end to her own and the prince’s suspense, and having arranged all her plans with the Princess Haiatelnefous, she informed Camaralzaman that she wished his advice on some important business, and, to avoid being disturbed, desired him to come to the palace that evening.

The prince was punctual, and was received in the private apartment, when, having ordered her attendants to withdraw, the princess took from a small box the talisman, and, handing it to Camaralzaman, said: “Not long ago an astrologer gave me this talisman. As you are universally well informed, you can perhaps tell me what is its use.”

Camaralzaman took the talisman and, holding it to the light, cried with surprise, “Sire, you ask me the use of this talisman. Alas! hitherto it has been only a source of misfortune to me, being the cause of my separation from the one I love best on earth. The story is so sad and strange that I am sure your Majesty will be touched by it if you will permit me to tell it you.”

"I will hear it some other time," replied the princess. "Meanwhile I fancy it is not quite unknown to me. Wait here for me. I will return shortly."

So saying she retired to another room, where she hastily changed her masculine attire for that of a woman, and, after putting on the girdle she wore the day they parted, returned to Camaralzaman.

The prince recognised her at once, and, embracing her with the utmost tenderness, cried, "Ah, how can I thank the king for this delightful surprise?"

"Do not expect ever to see the king again," said the princess, as she wiped the tears of joy from her eyes, "in me you see the king. Let us sit down, and I will tell you all about it."

She then gave a full account of all her adventures since their parting, and dwelt much on the charms and noble disposition of the Princess Haiatelnefous, to whose friendly assistance she owed so much. When she had done she asked to hear the prince's story, and in this manner they spent most of the night.

Next morning the princess resumed her woman's clothes, and as soon as she was ready she desired the chief eunuch to beg King Armanos to come to her apartments.

When the king arrived great was his surprise at finding a strange lady in company of the grand treasurer who had no actual right to enter the private apartment. Seating himself he asked for the king.

"Sire," said the princess, "yesterday I was the king, to-day I am only the Princess of China and wife to the real Prince Camaralzaman, son of King Schahzaman, and I trust that when your Majesty shall have heard our story you will not condemn the innocent deception I have been obliged to practise."

The king consented to listen, and did so with marked surprise.

At the close of her narrative the princess said, "Sire, as our religion allows a man to have more than one wife, I would beg your Majesty to give your daughter, the Princess Haiatelnefous, in marriage to Prince Camaralzaman. I gladly yield to her the precedence and title of Queen in recognition of the debt of gratitude which I owe her."

King Armanos heard the princess with surprise and admiration, then, turning to Camaralzaman, he said, "My son, as your wife, the Princess Badoura (whom I have hitherto looked on as my son-in-law), consents to share your hand and affections with my daughter, I have only to ask if this marriage is agreeable to you, and if you will consent to accept the crown which the Princess Badoura deserves to wear all her life, but which she prefers to resign for love of you."

"Sire," replied Camaralzaman, "I can refuse your Majesty nothing."

Accordingly Camaralzaman was duly proclaimed king, and as duly married with all pomp to the Princess Haiatelnefous, with whose beauty, talents, and affections he had every reason to be pleased.

The two queens lived in true sisterly harmony together, and after a time each presented King Camaralzaman with a son, whose births were celebrated throughout the kingdom with the utmost rejoicing.

Noureddin and the Fair Persian

Balsora was the capital of a kingdom long tributary to the caliph. During the time of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid the king of Balsora, who was his cousin, was called Zinebi. Not thinking one vizir enough for the administration of his estates he had two, named Khacan and Saouy.

Khacan was kind, generous, and liberal, and took pleasure in obliging, as far as in him lay, those who had business with him. Throughout the entire kingdom there was no one who did not esteem and praise him as he deserved.

Saouy was quite a different character, and repelled everyone with whom he came in contact; he was always gloomy, and, in spite of his great riches, so miserly that he denied himself even the necessaries of life. What made him particularly detested was the great aversion he had to Khacan, of whom he never ceased to speak evil to the king.

One day, while the king amused himself talking with his two vizirs and other members of the council, the conversation turned on female slaves. While some declared that it sufficed for a slave to be beautiful, others, and Khacan was among the number, maintained that beauty alone was not enough, but that it must be accompanied by wit, wisdom, modesty, and, if possible, knowledge.

The king not only declared himself to be of this opinion, but charged Khacan to procure him a slave who should fulfil all these conditions. Saouy, who had been of the opposite side, and was jealous of the honour done to Khacan, said, “Sire, it will be very difficult to find a slave as accomplished as your Majesty desires, and, if she is to be found, she will be cheap if she cost less than 10,000 gold pieces.”

“Saouy,” answered the king, “you seem to find that a very great sum. For you it may be so, but not for me.”

And forthwith he ordered his grand treasurer, who was present, to send 10,000 gold pieces to Khacan for the purchase of the slave.

As soon, then, as Khacan returned home he sent for the dealers in female slaves, and charged them directly they had found such a one as he described to inform him. They promised to do their utmost, and no day passed that they did not bring a slave for his inspection but none was found without some defect.

At length, early one morning, while Khacan was on his way to the king’s palace, a dealer, throwing himself in his way, announced eagerly that a Persian merchant, arrived late the previous evening, had a slave to sell whose wit and wisdom were equal to her incomparable beauty.

Khacan, overjoyed at this news, gave orders that the slave should be brought for his inspection on his return from the palace. The dealer appearing at the appointed hour, Khacan found the slave beautiful beyond his expectations, and immediately gave her the name of “The Fair Persian.”

Being a man of great wisdom and learning, he perceived in the short conversation he had with her that he would seek in vain another slave to surpass her in any of the qualities required by the king, and therefore asked the dealer what price the merchant put upon her.

“Sir,” was the answer, “for less than 10,000 gold pieces he will not let her go; he declares that, what with masters for her instruction, and for bodily exercises, not to speak of clothing and nourishment, he has already spent that sum upon her. She is in every way fit to be the slave of a king; she plays every musical instrument, she sings, she dances, she makes verses, in fact there is no accomplishment in which she does not excel.”

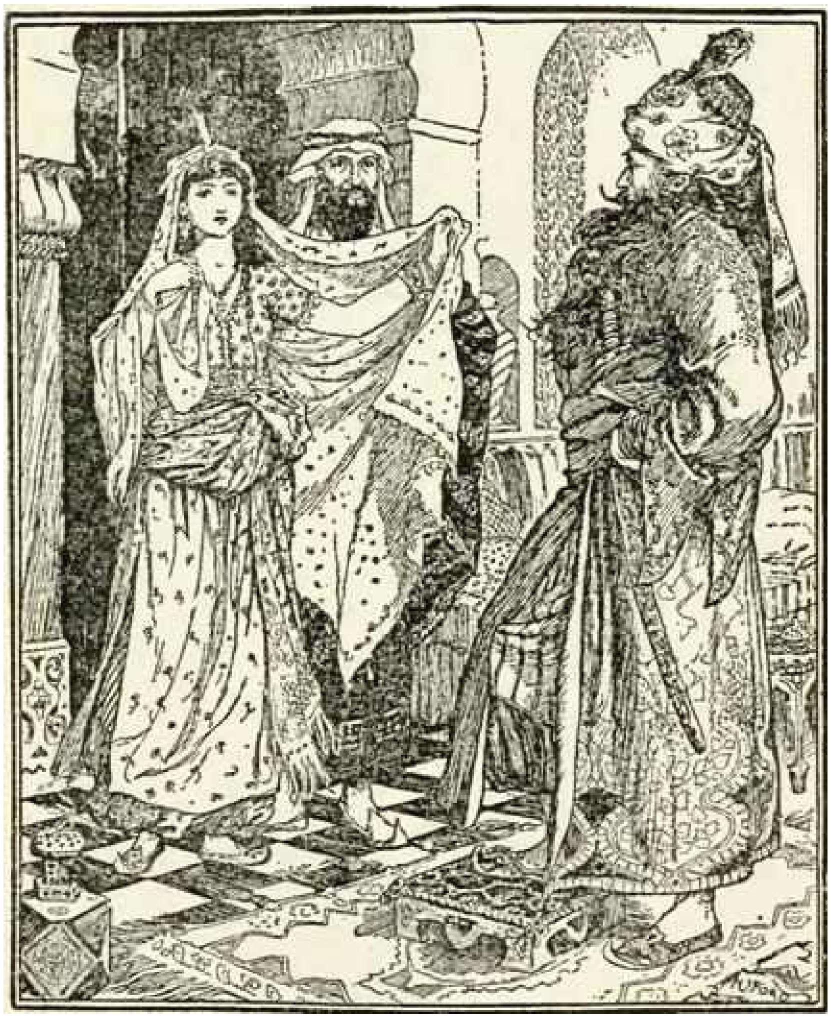

Khacan, who was better able to judge of her merits than the dealer, wishing to bring the matter to a conclusion, sent for the merchant, and said to him, “It is not for myself that I wish to buy your slave, but for the king. Her price, however, is too high.”

“Sir,” replied the merchant, “I should esteem it an honour to present her to his Majesty, did it become a merchant to do such a thing. I ask no more than the sum it has cost me to make her such as she is.”

Khacan, not wishing to bargain, immediately had the sum counted out, and given to the merchant, who before withdrawing said:

“Sir, as she is destined for the king, I would have you observe that she is extremely tired with the long journey, and before presenting her to his Majesty you would do well to keep her a fortnight in your own house, and to see that a little care is bestowed upon her. The sun has tanned her complexion, but when she has been two or three times to the bath, and is fittingly dressed, you will see how much her beauty will be increased.”

Khacan thanked the merchant for his advice, and determined to follow it. He gave the beautiful Persian an apartment near to that of his wife, whom he charged to treat her as befitting a lady destined for the king, and to order for her the most magnificent garments.

Before bidding adieu to the fair Persian, he said to her: “No happiness can be greater than what I have procured for you; judge for yourself, you now belong to the king. I have, however, to warn you of one thing. I have a son, who, though not wanting in sense, is young, foolish, and headstrong, and I charge you to keep him at a distance.”

The Persian thanked him for his advice, and promised to profit by it.

Noureddin — for so the vizir’s son was named — went freely in and out of his mother’s apartments. He was young, well-made and agreeable, and had the gift of charming all with whom he came in contact. As soon as he saw the beautiful Persian, though aware that she was destined for the king, he let himself be carried away by her charms, and determined at once to use every means in his power to retain her for himself. The Persian was equally captivated by Noureddin, and said to herself: “The vizir does me too great honour in buying me for the king. I should esteem myself very happy if he would give me to his son.”

Noureddin availed himself of every opportunity to gaze upon her beauty, to talk and laugh with her, and never would have left her side if his mother had not forced him.

Some time having elapsed, on account of the long journey, since the beautiful Persian had been to the bath, five or six days after her purchase the vizir’s wife gave orders that the bath should be heated for her, and that her own female slaves should attend her there, and afterwards should array her in a magnificent dress that had been prepared for her.

Her toilet completed, the beautiful Persian came to present herself to the vizir’s wife, who hardly recognised her, so greatly was her beauty increased. Kissing her hand, the beautiful slave said: “Madam, I do not know how you find me in this dress that you have had prepared for me; your women assure me that it suits me so well that they hardly knew me. If it is the truth they tell me, and not flattery, it is to you I owe the transformation.”

“My daughter,” answered the vizir’s wife, “they do not flatter you. I myself hardly recognised you. The improvement is not due to the dress alone, but largely to the beautifying effects of the bath. I am so struck by its results, that I would try it on myself.”

Acting forthwith on this decision she ordered two little slaves during her absence to watch over the beautiful Persian, and not to allow Noureddin to enter should he come.

She had no sooner gone than he arrived, and not finding his mother in her apartment, would have sought her in that of the Persian. The two little slaves barred the entrance, saying that his mother had given orders that he was not to be admitted. Taking each by an arm, he put them out of the anteroom, and shut the door. Then they rushed to the bath, informing their mistress with shrieks and tears that Noureddin had driven them away by force and gone in.

This news caused great consternation to the lady, who, dressing herself as quickly as possible, hastened to the apartment of the fair Persian, to find that Noureddin had already gone out. Much astonished to see the vizir's wife enter in tears, the Persian asked what misfortune had happened.

"What!" exclaimed the lady, "you ask me that, knowing that my son Noureddin has been alone with you?"

"But, madam," inquired the Persian, "what harm is there in that?"

"How! Has my husband not told you that you are destined for the king?"

"Certainly, but Noureddin has just been to tell me that his father has changed his mind and has bestowed me upon him. I believed him, and so great is my affection for Noureddin that I would willingly pass my life with him."

"Would to heaven," exclaimed the wife of the vizir, "that what you say were true; but Noureddin has deceived you, and his father will sacrifice him in vengeance for the wrong he has done."

So saying, she wept bitterly, and all her slaves wept with her.

Khacan, entering shortly after this, was much astonished to find his wife and her slaves in tears, and the beautiful Persian greatly perturbed. He inquired the cause, but for some time no answer was forthcoming. When his wife was at length sufficiently calm to inform him of what had happened, his rage and mortification knew no bounds. Wringing his hands and rending his beard, he exclaimed:

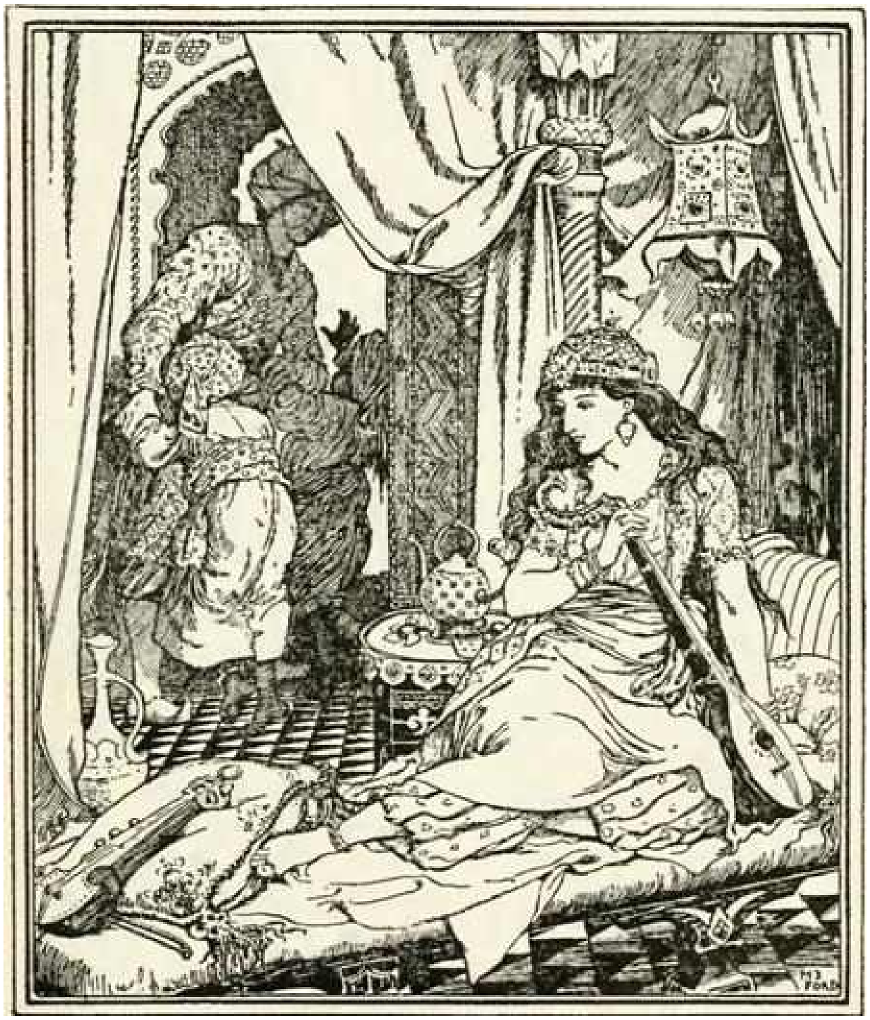

"Wretched son! thou destroyest not only thyself but thy father. The king will shed not only thy blood but mine." His wife tried to console him, saying: "Do not torment thyself. With the sale of my jewels I will obtain 10,000 gold pieces, and with this sum you will buy another slave."

"Do not suppose," replied her husband, "that it is the loss of the money that affects me. My honour is at stake, and that is more precious to me than all my wealth. You know that Saouy is my mortal enemy. He will relate all this to the king, and you will see the consequences that will ensue."

"My lord," said his wife, "I am quite aware of Saouy's baseness, and that he is capable of playing you this malicious trick. But how can he or any one else know what takes place in this house? Even if you are suspected and the king accuses you, you have only to say that, after examining the slave, you did not find her worthy of his Majesty. Reassure yourself, and send to the dealers, saying that you are not satisfied, and wish them to find you another slave."

This advice appearing reasonable, Khacan decided to follow it, but his wrath against his son did not abate. Noureddin dared not appear all that day, and fearing to take refuge with his usual associates in case his father should seek him there, he spent the day in a secluded garden where he was not known. He did not return home till after his father had gone to bed, and went out early next morning before the vizir awoke, and these precautions he kept up during an entire month.

His mother, though knowing very well that he returned to the house every evening, dare not ask her husband to pardon him. At length she took courage and said:

“My lord, I know that a son could not act more basely towards his father than Noureddin has done towards you, but after all will you now pardon him? Do you not consider the harm you may be doing yourself, and fear that malicious people, seeking the cause of your estrangement, may guess the real one?”

“Madam,” replied the vizir, “what you say is very just, but I cannot pardon Noureddin before I have mortified him as he deserves.”

“He will be sufficiently punished,” answered the lady, “if you do as I suggest. In the evening, when he returns home, lie in wait for him and pretend that you will slay him. I will come to his aid, and while pointing out that you only yield his life at my supplications, you can force him to take the beautiful Persian on any conditions you please.” Khacan agreed to follow this plan, and everything took place as arranged. On Noureddin’s return Khacan pretended to be about to slay him, but yielding to his wife’s intercession, said to his son:

“You owe your life to your mother. I pardon you on her intercession, and on the conditions that you take the beautiful Persian for your wife, and not your slave, that you never sell her, nor put her away.”

Noureddin, not hoping for so great indulgence, thanked his father, and vowed to do as he desired. Khacan was at great pains frequently to speak to the king of the difficulties attending the commission he had given him, but some whispers of what had actually taken place did reach Saouy’s ears.

More than a year after these events the minister took a chill, leaving the bath while still heated to go out on important business. This resulted in inflammation of the lungs, which rapidly increased. The vizir, feeling that his end was at hand, sent for Noureddin, and charged him with his dying breath never to part with the beautiful Persian.

Shortly afterwards he expired, leaving universal regret throughout the kingdom; rich and poor alike followed him to the grave. Noureddin showed every mark of the deepest grief at his father’s death, and for long refused to see any one. At length a day came when, one of his friends being admitted, urged him strongly to be consoled, and to resume his former place in society. This advice Noureddin was not slow to follow, and soon he formed little society of ten young men all about his own age, with whom he spent all his time in continual feasting and merry-making.

Sometimes the fair Persian consented to appear at these festivities, but she disapproved of this lavish expenditure, and did not scruple to warn Noureddin of the probable consequences. He, however, only laughed at her advice, saying, that his father had always kept him in too great constraint, and that now he rejoiced at his new-found liberty.

What added to the confusion in his affairs was that he refused to look into his accounts with his steward, sending him away every time he appeared with his book.

“See only that I live well,” he said, “and do not disturb me about anything else.”

Not only did Noureddin’s friends constantly partake of his hospitality, but in every way they took advantage of his generosity; everything of his that they admired, whether land, houses, baths, or any other source of his revenue, he immediately bestowed on them. In vain the Persian protested against the wrong he did himself; he continued to scatter with the same lavish hand.

Throughout one entire year Noureddin did nothing but amuse himself, and dissipate the wealth his father had taken such pains to acquire. The year had barely elapsed, when one day, as they sat at table, there came a knock at the door. The slaves having been sent away, Noureddin went to open it himself. One of his friends had risen at the same time, but Noureddin was before him, and finding the intruder to be the steward, he went out and closed the door. The friend, curious to hear what passed between them, hid himself behind the hangings, and heard the following words:

“My lord,” said the steward, “I beg a thousand pardons for interrupting you, but what I have long foreseen has taken place. Nothing remains of the sums you gave me for your expenses, and all other sources of income are also at end, having been transferred by you to others. If you wish me to remain in your service, furnish me with the necessary funds, else I must withdraw.”

So great was Noureddin’s consternation that he had not a word to say in reply.

The friend, who had been listening behind the curtain, immediately hastened to communicate the news to the rest of the company.

“If this is so,” they said, “we must cease to come here.”

Noureddin re-entering at that moment, they plainly saw, in spite of his efforts to dissemble, that what they had heard was the truth. One by one they rose, and each with a different excuse left the room, till presently he found himself alone, though little suspecting the resolution his friends had taken. Then, seeing the beautiful Persian, he confided to her the statement of the steward, with many expressions of regret for his own carelessness.

“Had I but followed your advice, beautiful Persian,” he said, “all this would not have happened, but at least I have this consolation, that I have spent my fortune in the company of friends who will not desert me in an hour of need. To-morrow I will go to them, and amongst them they will lend me a sum sufficient to start in some business.”

Accordingly next morning early Noureddin went to seek his ten friends, who all lived in the same street. Knocking at the door of the first and chief, the slave who opened it left him to wait in a hall while he announced his visit to his master. “Noureddin!” he heard him exclaim quite audibly. “Tell him, every time he calls, that I am not at home.” The same thing happened at the second door, and also at the third, and so on with all the ten. Noureddin, much mortified, recognised too late that he had confided in false friends, who abandoned him in his hour of need. Overwhelmed with grief, he sought consolation from the beautiful Persian.

“Alas, my lord,” she said, “at last you are convinced of the truth of what I foretold. There is now no other resource left but to sell your slaves and your furniture.”

First then he sold the slaves, and subsisted for a time on the proceeds, after that the furniture was sold, and as much of it was valuable it sufficed for some time. Finally this resource also came to an end, and again he sought counsel from the beautiful Persian.

“My lord,” she said, “I know that the late vizir, your father, bought me for 10,000 gold pieces, and though I have diminished in value since, I should still fetch a large sum. Do not therefore hesitate to sell me, and with the money you obtain go and establish yourself in business in some distant town.”

“Charming Persian,” answered Noureddin, “how could I be guilty of such baseness? I would die rather than part from you whom I love better than my life.”

“My lord,” she replied, “I am well aware of your love for me, which is only equalled by mine for you, but a cruel necessity obliges us to seek the only remedy.”

Noureddin, convinced at length of the truth of her words, yielded, and reluctantly led her to the slave market, where, showing her to a dealer named Hagi Hassan, he inquired her value.

Taking them into a room apart, Hagi Hassan exclaimed as soon as she had unveiled, “My lord, is not this the slave your father bought for 10,000 pieces?”

On learning that it was so, he promised to obtain the highest possible price for her. Leaving the beautiful Persian shut up in the room alone, he went out to seek the slave merchants, announcing to them that he had found the pearl among slaves, and asking them to come and put a value upon her. As soon as they saw her they agreed that less than 4,000 gold pieces could not be asked. Hagi Hassan, then closing the door upon her, began to offer her for sale — calling out: “Who will bid 4,000 gold pieces for the Persian slave?”

Before any of the merchants had bid, Saouy happened to pass that way, and judging that it must be a slave of extraordinary beauty, rode up to Hagi Hassan and desired to see her. Now it was not the custom to show a slave to a private bidder, but as no one dared to disobey the vizir his request was granted.

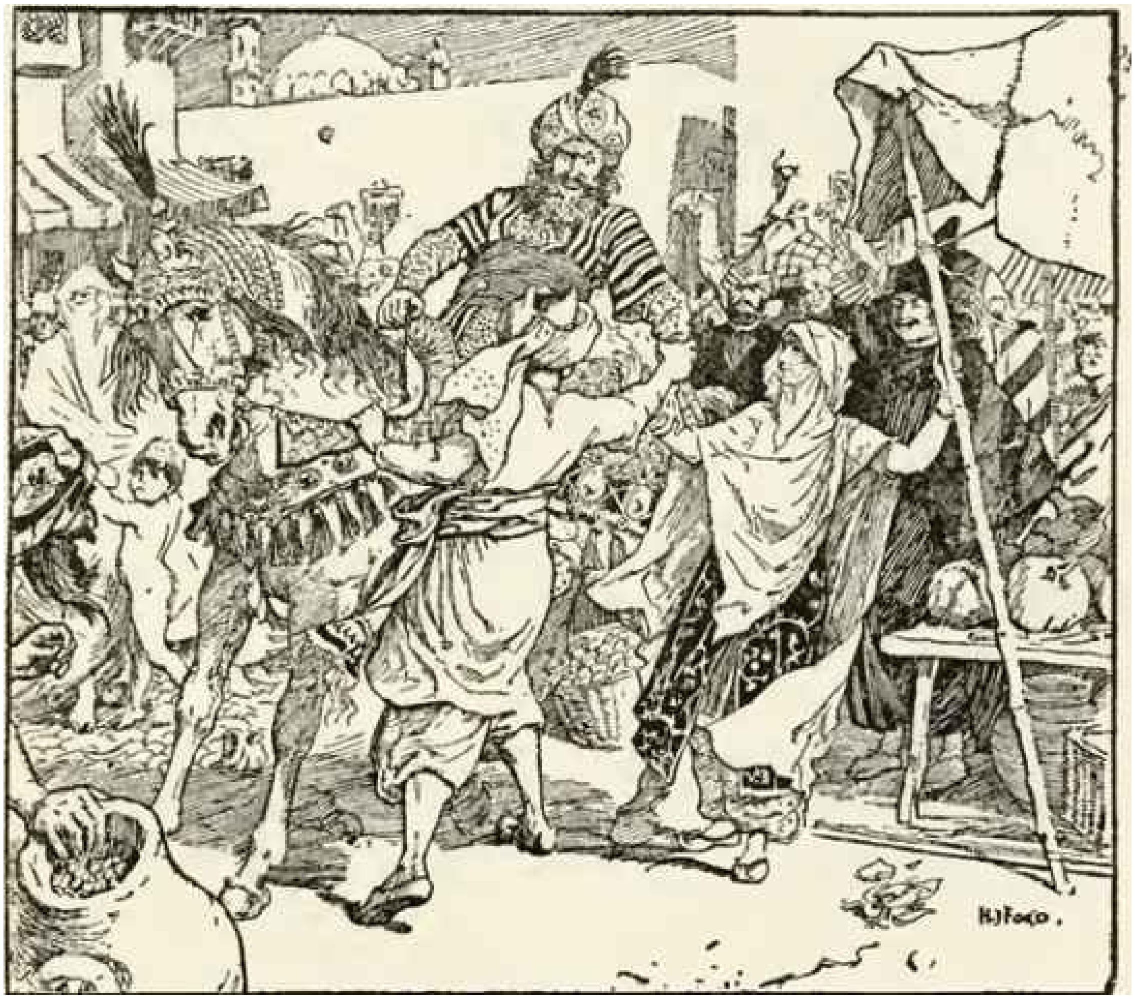

As soon as Saouy saw the Persian he was so struck by her beauty, that he immediately wished to possess her, and not knowing that she belonged to Noureddin, he desired Hagi Hassan to send for the owner and to conclude the bargain at once.

Hagi Hassan then sought Noureddin, and told him that his slave was going far below her value, and that if Saouy bought her he was capable of not paying the money. “What you must do,” he said, “is to pretend that you had no real intention of selling your slave, and only swore you would in a fit of anger against her. When I present her to Saouy as if with your consent you must step in, and with blows begin to lead her away.”

Noureddin did as Hagi Hassan advised, to the great wrath of Saouy, who riding straight at him endeavoured to take the beautiful Persian from him by force. Noureddin letting her go, seized Saouy’s horse by the bridle, and, encouraged by the applause of the bystanders, dragged him to the ground, beat him severely, and left him in the gutter streaming with blood. Then, taking the beautiful Persian, he returned home amidst the acclamations of the people, who detested Saouy so much that they would neither interfere in his behalf nor allow his slaves to protect him.

Covered from head to foot with mire and streaming with blood he rose, and leaning on two of his slaves went straight to the palace, where he demanded an audience of the king, to whom he related what had taken place in these words:

“May it please your Majesty, I had gone to the slave market to buy myself a cook. While there I heard a slave being offered for 4,000 pieces. Asking to see her, I found she was of incomparable beauty, and was being sold by Noureddin, the son of your late vizir, to whom your Majesty will remember giving a sum of 10,000 gold pieces for the purchase of a slave. This is the identical slave, whom instead of bringing to your Majesty he gave to his own son. Since the death of his father this Noureddin has run through his entire fortune, has sold all his possessions, and is now reduced to selling the slave. Calling him to me, I said: “Noureddin, I will give you 10,000 gold pieces for your slave, whom I will present to the king. I will interest him at the same time in your behalf, and this will be worth much more to you than what extra money you might obtain from the merchants.” “Bad old man,” he exclaimed, “rather than sell my slave to you I would give her to a Jew.” “But, Noureddin,” I remonstrated, “you do not consider that in speaking thus you wrong the king, to whom your father owed everything.” This remonstrance only irritated him the more. Throwing himself on me like a madman, he tore me from my horse, beat me to his heart’s content, and left me in the state your Majesty sees.”

So saying Saouy turned aside his head and wept bitterly.

The king’s wrath was kindled against Noureddin. He ordered the captain of the guard to take with him forty men, to pillage Noureddin’s house, to rase it to the ground, and to bring Noureddin and the slave to him. A doorkeeper, named Sangiar, who had been a slave of Khacan’s, hearing this order given, slipped out of the king’s apartment, and hastened to warn Noureddin to take flight instantly with the beautiful Persian. Then, presenting him with forty gold pieces, he disappeared before Noureddin had time to thank him.

As soon, then, as the fair Persian had put on her veil they fled together, and had the good fortune to get out of the town without being observed. At the mouth of the Euphrates they found a ship just about to start for Bagdad. They embarked, and immediately the anchor was raised and they set sail.

When the captain of the guard reached Noureddin’s house he caused his soldiers to burst open the door and to enter by force, but no trace was to be found of Noureddin and his slave, nor could the neighbours give any information about them. When the king heard that they had escaped, he issued a proclamation that a reward of 1,000 gold pieces would be given to whoever would bring him Noureddin and the slave, but that, on the contrary, whoever hid them would be severely punished. Meanwhile Noureddin and the fair Persian had safely reached Bagdad. When the vessel had come to an anchor they paid five gold pieces for their passage and went ashore. Never having been in Bagdad before, they did not know where to seek a lodging. Wandering along the banks of the Tigris, they skirted a garden enclosed by a high wall. The gate was shut, but in front of it was an open vestibule with a sofa on either side. “Here,” said Noureddin, “let us pass the night,” and reclining on the sofas they soon fell asleep.

Now this garden belonged to the Caliph. In the middle of it was a vast pavilion, whose superb saloon had eighty windows, each window having a lustre, lit solely when the Caliph spent the evening there. Only the doorkeeper lived there, an old soldier named Scheih Ibrahim, who had strict orders to be very careful whom he admitted, and never to allow any one to sit on the sofas by the door. It happened that evening that he had gone out on an errand. When he came back and saw two persons asleep on the sofas he was about to drive them out with blows, but drawing nearer he perceived that they were a handsome young man and beautiful young woman, and decided to awake them by gentler means. Noureddin, on being awoke, told the old man that they were strangers, and merely wished to pass the night there. “Come with me,” said Scheih Ibrahim, “I will lodge you better, and will show you a magnificent garden belonging to me.” So saying the doorkeeper led the way into the Caliph’s garden, the beauties of which filled them with wonder and amazement. Noureddin took out two gold pieces, and giving them to Scheih Ibrahim said,

“I beg you to get us something to eat that we may make merry together.” Being very avaricious, Scheih Ibrahim determined to spend only the tenth part of the money and to keep the rest to himself. While he was gone Noureddin and the Persian wandered through the gardens and went up the white marble staircase of the pavilion as far as the locked door of the saloon. On the return of Scheih Ibrahim they begged him to open it, and to allow them to enter and admire the magnificence within. Consenting, he brought not only the key, but a light, and immediately unlocked the door. Noureddin and the Persian entering, were dazzled with the magnificence they beheld. The paintings and furniture were of astonishing beauty, and between each window was a silver arm holding a candle.

Scheih Ibrahim spread the table in front of a sofa, and all three ate together. When they had finished eating Noureddin asked the old man to bring them a bottle of wine.

“Heaven forbid,” said Scheih Ibrahim, “that I should come in contact with wine! I who have four times made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and have renounced wine for ever.”

“You would, however, do us a great service in procuring us some,” said Noureddin. “You need not touch it yourself. Take the ass which is tied to the gate, lead it to the nearest wine-shop, and ask some passer-by to order two jars of wine; have them put in the ass’s panniers, and drive him before you. Here are two pieces of gold for the expenses.”

At sight of the gold, Scheih Ibrahim set off at once to execute the commission. On his return, Noureddin said: “We have still need of cups to drink from, and of fruit, if you can procure us some.” Scheih Ibrahim disappeared again, and soon returned with a table spread with cups of gold and silver, and every sort of beautiful fruit. Then he withdrew, in spite of repeated invitations to remain.

Noureddin and the beautiful Persian, finding the wine excellent, drank of it freely, and while drinking they sang. Both had fine voices, and Scheih Ibrahim listened to them with great pleasure — first from a distance, then he drew nearer, and finally put his head in at the door. Noureddin, seeing him, called to him to come in and keep them company. At first the old man declined, but was persuaded to enter the room, to sit down on the edge of the sofa nearest the door, and at last to draw closer and to seat himself by the beautiful Persian, who urged him so persistently to drink her health that at length he yielded, and took the cup she offered.

Now the old man only made a pretence of renouncing wine; he frequented wine-shops like other people, and had taken none of the precautions Noureddin had proposed. Having once yielded, he was easily persuaded to take a second cup, and a third, and so on till he no longer knew what he was doing. Till near midnight they continued drinking, laughing, and singing together.

About that time the Persian, perceiving that the room was lit by only one miserable tallow candle, asked Scheih Ibrahim to light some of the beautiful candles in the silver arms.

“Light them yourself,” answered the old man; “you are younger than I, but let five or six be enough.”

She did not stop, however, till she had lit all the eighty, but Scheih Ibrahim was not conscious of this, and when, soon after that, Noureddin proposed to have some of the lustres lit, he answered:

“You are more capable of lighting them than I, but not more than three.”

Noureddin, far from contenting himself with three, lit all, and opened all the eighty windows.

The Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid, chancing at that moment to open a window in the saloon of his palace looking on the garden, was surprised to see the pavilion brilliantly illuminated. Calling the grand-vizir, Giafar, he said to him:

“Negligent vizir, look at the pavilion, and tell me why it is lit up when I am not there.”

When the vizir saw that it was as the Caliph said, he trembled with fear, and immediately invented an excuse.

“Commander of the Faithful,” he said, “I must tell you that four or five days ago Scheih Ibrahim told me that he wished to have an assembly of the ministers of his mosque, and asked permission to hold it in the pavilion. I granted his request, but forgot since to mention it to your Majesty.”

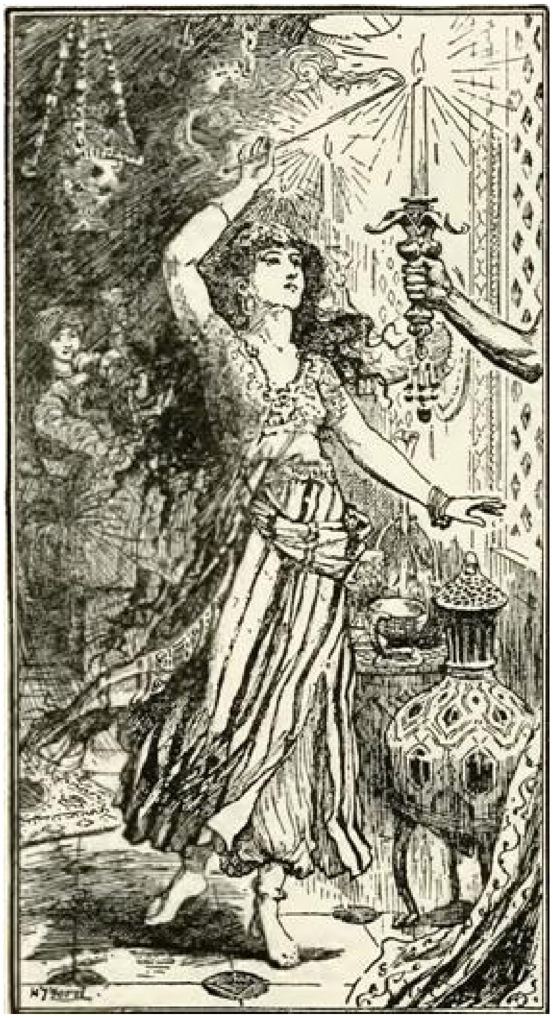

“Giafar,” replied the Caliph, “you have committed three faults — first, in giving the permission; second, in not mentioning it to me; and third, in not investigating the matter more closely. For punishment I condemn you to spend the rest of the night with me in company of these worthy people. While I dress myself as a citizen, go and disguise yourself, and then come with me.”

When they reached the garden gate they found it open, to the great indignation of the Caliph. The door of the pavilion being also open, he went softly upstairs, and looked in at the half-closed door of the saloon. Great was his surprise to see Scheih Ibrahim, whose sobriety he had never doubted, drinking and singing with a young man and a beautiful lady. The Caliph, before giving way to his anger, determined to watch and see who the people were and what they did.

Presently Scheih Ibrahim asked the beautiful Persian if anything were wanting to complete her enjoyment of the evening.

“If only,” she said, “I had an instrument upon which I might play.”

Scheih Ibrahim immediately took a lute from a cup-board and gave it to the Persian, who began to play on it, singing the while with such skill and taste that the Caliph was enchanted. When she ceased he went softly downstairs and said to the vizir:

"Never have I heard a finer voice, nor the lute better played. I am determined to go in and make her play to me."

"Commander of the Faithful," said the vizir, "if Scheih Ibrahim recognises you he will die of fright."

"I should be sorry for that," answered the Caliph, "and I am going to take steps to prevent it. Wait here till I return."

Now the Caliph had caused a bend in the river to form a lake in his garden. There the finest fish in the Tigris were to be found, but fishing was strictly forbidden. It happened that night, however, that a fisherman had taken advantage of the gate being open to go in and cast his nets. He was just about to draw them when he saw the Caliph approaching. Recognising him at once in spite of his disguise, he threw himself at his feet imploring forgiveness.

"Fear nothing," said the Caliph, "only rise up and draw thy nets."

The fisherman did as he was told, and produced five or six fine fish, of which the Caliph took the two largest. Then he desired the fisherman to change clothes with him, and in a few minutes the Caliph was transformed into a fisherman, even to the shoes and the turban. Taking the two fish in his hand, he returned to the vizir, who, not recognising him, would have sent him about his business. Leaving the vizir at the foot of the stairs, the Caliph went up and knocked at the door of the saloon. Noureddin opened it, and the Caliph, standing on the threshold, said:

"Scheih Ibrahim, I am the fisher Kerim. Seeing that you are feasting with your friends, I bring you these fish."

Noureddin and the Persian said that when the fishes were properly cooked and dressed they would gladly eat of them. The Caliph then returned to the vizir, and they set to work in Scheih Ibrahim's house to cook the fish, of which they made so tempting a dish that Noureddin and the fair Persian ate of it with great relish. When they had finished Noureddin took thirty gold pieces (all that remained of what Sangiar had given him) and presented them to the Caliph, who, thanking him, asked as a further favour if the lady would play him one piece on the lute. The Persian gladly consented, and sang and played so as to delight the Caliph.

Noureddin, in the habit of giving to others whatever they admired, said, "Fisherman, as she pleases you so much, take her; she is yours."

The fair Persian, astounded that he should wish to part from her, took her lute, and with tears in her eyes sang her reproaches to its music.

The Caliph (still in the character of fisherman) said to him, "Sir, I perceive that this fair lady is your slave. Oblige me, I beg you, by relating your history."

Noureddin willingly granted this request, and recounted everything from the purchase of the slave down to the present moment.

“And where do you go now?” asked the Caliph.

“Wherever the hand of Allah leads me,” said Noureddin.

“Then, if you will listen to me,” said the Caliph, “you will immediately return to Balsora. I will give you a letter to the king, which will ensure you a good reception from him.”

“It is an unheard-of thing,” said Noureddin, “that a fisherman should be in correspondence with a king.”

“Let not that astonish you,” answered the Caliph; “we studied together, and have always remained the best of friends, though fortune, while making him a king, left me a humble fisherman.”

The Caliph then took a sheet of paper, and wrote the following letter, at the top of which he put in very small characters this formula to show that he must be implicitly obeyed:— “In the name of the Most Merciful God.

“Letter of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid to the King of Balsora.

“Haroun-al-Raschid, son of Mahdi, sends this letter to Mohammed Zinebi, his cousin. As soon as Noureddin, son of the Vizir Khacan, bearer of this letter, has given it to thee, and thou hast read it, take off thy royal mantle, put it on his shoulders, and seat him in thy place without fail. Farewell.”

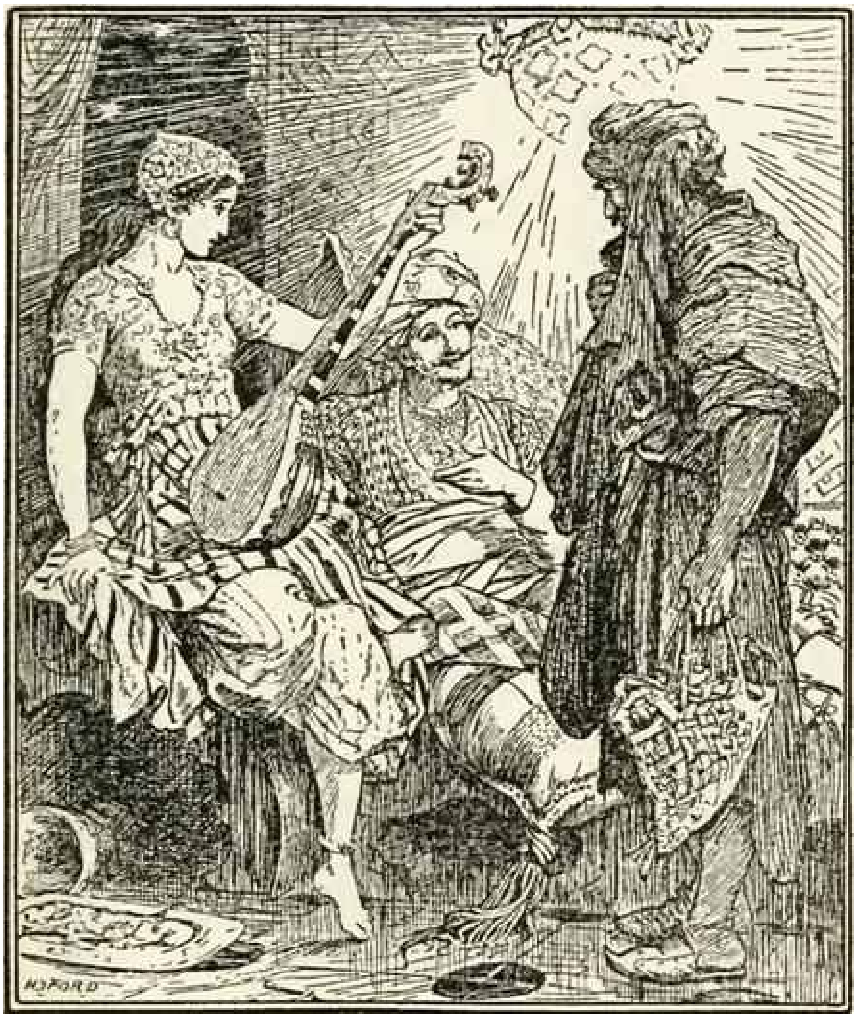

The Caliph then gave this letter to Noureddin, who immediately set off, with only what little money he possessed when Sangiar came to his assistance. The beautiful Persian, inconsolable at his departure, sank on a sofa bathed in tears.

When Noureddin had left the room, Scheih Ibrahim, who had hitherto kept silence, said: “Kerim, for two miserable fish thou hast received a purse and a slave. I tell thee I will take the slave, and as to the purse, if it contains silver thou mayst keep one piece, if gold then I will take all and give thee what copper pieces I have in my purse.”

Now here it must be related that when the Caliph went upstairs with the plate of fish he ordered the vizir to hasten to the palace and bring back four slaves bearing a change of raiment, who should wait outside the pavilion till the Caliph should clap his hands.

Still personating the fisherman, the Caliph answered: “Scheih Ibrahim, whatever is in the purse I will share equally with you, but as to the slave I will keep her for myself. If you do not agree to these conditions you shall have nothing.”

The old man, furious at this insolence as he considered it, took a cup and threw it at the Caliph, who easily avoided a missile from the hand of a drunken man. It hit against the wall, and broke into a thousand pieces. Scheih Ibrahim, still more enraged, then went out to fetch a stick. The Caliph at that moment clapped his hands, and the vizir and the four slaves entering took off the fisherman's dress and put on him that which they had brought.

When Scheih Ibrahim returned, a thick stick in his hand, the Caliph was seated on his throne, and nothing remained of the fisherman but his clothes in the middle of the room. Throwing himself on the ground at the Caliph's feet, he said: "Commander of the Faithful, your miserable slave has offended you, and craves forgiveness."

The Caliph came down from his throne, and said: "Rise, I forgive thee." Then turning to the Persian he said: "Fair lady, now you know who I am; learn also that I have sent Noureddin to Balsora to be king, and as soon as all necessary preparations are made I will send you there to be queen. Meanwhile I will give you an apartment in my palace, where you will be treated with all honour."

At this the beautiful Persian took courage, and the Caliph was as good as his word, recommending her to the care of his wife Zobeida.

Noureddin made all haste on his journey to Balsora, and on his arrival there went straight to the palace of the king, of whom he demanded an audience. It was immediately granted, and holding the letter high above his head he forced his way through the crowd. While the king read the letter he changed colour. He would instantly have executed the Caliph's order, but first he showed the letter to Saouy, whose interests were equally at stake with his own. Pretending that he wished to read it a second time, Saouy turned aside as if to seek a better light; unperceived by anyone he tore off the formula from the top of the letter, put it to his mouth, and swallowed it. Then, turning to the king, he said:

"Your majesty has no need to obey this letter. The writing is indeed that of the Caliph, but the formula is absent. Besides, he has not sent an express with the patent, without which the letter is useless. Leave all to me, and I will take the consequences."

The king not only listened to the persuasions of Saouy, but gave Noureddin into his hands. Such a severe bastinado was first administered to him, that he was left more dead than alive; then Saouy threw him into the darkest and deepest dungeon, and fed him only on bread and water. After ten days Saouy determined to put an end to Noureddin's life, but dared not without the king's authority. To gain this end, he loaded several of his own slaves with rich gifts, and presented himself at their head to the king, saying that they were from the new king on his coronation.

"What!" said the king; "is that wretch still alive? Go and behead him at once. I authorise you."

"Sire," said Saouy, "I thank your Majesty for the justice you do me. I would further beg, as Noureddin publicly affronted me, that the execution might be in front of the palace, and that it might be proclaimed throughout the city, so that no one may be ignorant of it."

The king granted these requests, and the announcement caused universal grief, for the memory of Noureddin's father was still fresh in the hearts of his people. Saouy, accompanied by twenty of his own slaves, went to the prison to fetch Noureddin, whom he mounted on a wretched horse without a saddle. Arrived at the palace, Saouy went in to the king, leaving Noureddin in the square, hemmed in not only by Saouy's slaves but by the royal guard, who had great difficulty in preventing the people from rushing in and rescuing Noureddin. So great was the indignation against Saouy that if anyone had set the example he would have been stoned on his way through the streets. Saouy, who witnessed the agitation of the people from the windows of the king's privy chambers, called to the executioner to strike at once. The king, however, ordered him to delay; not only was he jealous of Saouy's interference, but he had another reason. A troop of horsemen was seen at that moment riding at full gallop towards the square. Saouy suspected who they might be, and urged the king to give the signal for the execution without delay, but this the king refused to do till he knew who the horsemen were.

Now, they were the vizir Giafar and his suite arriving at full speed from Bagdad. For several days after Noureddin's departure with the letter the Caliph had forgotten to send the express with the patent, without which the letter was useless. Hearing a beautiful voice one day in the women's part of the palace uttering lamentations, he was informed that it was the voice of the fair Persian, and suddenly calling to mind the patent, he sent for Giafar, and ordered him to make for Balsora with the utmost speed — if Noureddin were dead, to hang Saouy; if he were still alive, to bring him at once to Bagdad along with the king and Saouy.

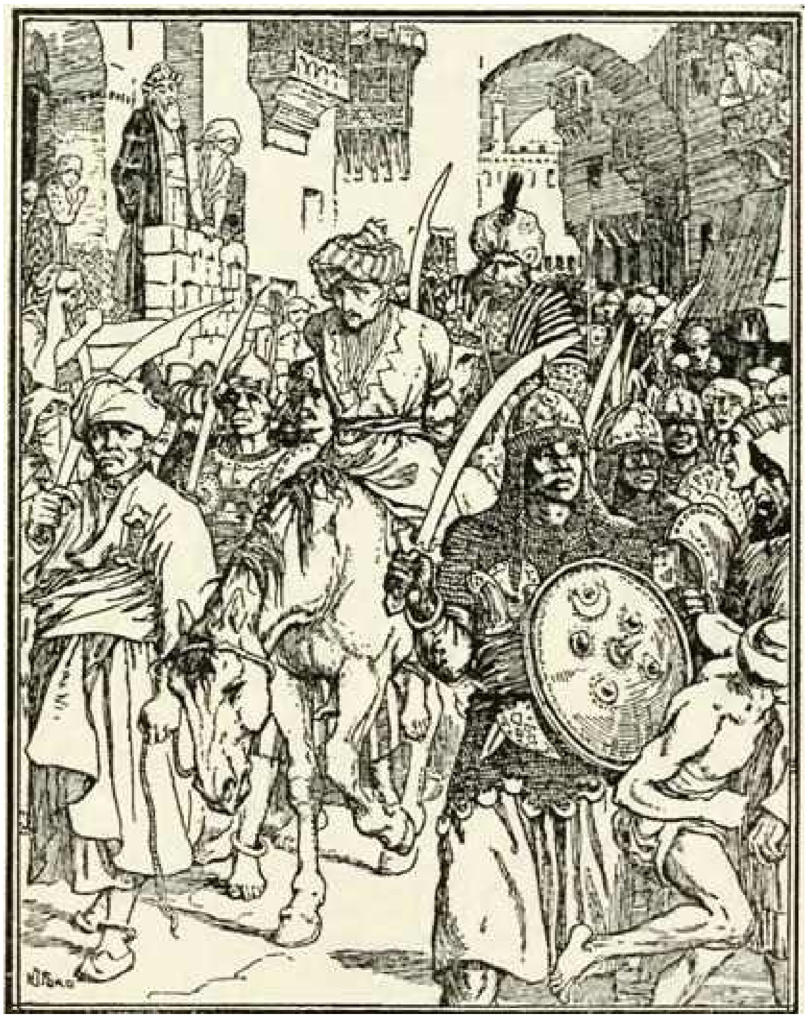

Giafar rode at full speed through the square, and alighted at the steps of the palace, where the king came to greet him. The vizir’s first question was whether Noureddin were still alive. The king replied that he was, and he was immediately led forth, though bound hand and foot. By the vizir’s orders his bonds were immediately undone, and Saouy was tied with the same cords. Next day Giafar returned to Bagdad, bearing with him the king, Saouy, and Noureddin.

When the Caliph heard what treatment Noureddin had received, he authorised him to behead Saouy with his own hands, but he declined to shed the blood of his enemy, who was forthwith handed over to the executioner. The Caliph also desired Noureddin to reign over Balsora, but this, too, he declined, saying that after what had passed there he preferred never to return, but to enter the service of the Caliph. He became one of his most intimate courtiers, and lived long in great happiness with the fair Persian. As to the king, the Caliph contented himself with sending him back to Balsora, with the recommendation to be more careful in future in the choice of his vizir.

Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp

There once lived a poor tailor, who had a son called Aladdin, a careless, idle boy who would do nothing but play all day long in the streets with little idle boys like himself. This so grieved the father that he died; yet, in spite of his mother’s tears and prayers, Aladdin did not mend his ways. One day, when he was playing in the streets as usual, a stranger asked him his age, and if he were not the son of Mustapha the tailor.

“I am, sir,” replied Aladdin; “but he died a long while ago.”

On this the stranger, who was a famous African magician, fell on his neck and kissed him, saying: “I am your uncle, and knew you from your likeness to my brother. Go to your mother and tell her I am coming.”

Aladdin ran home, and told his mother of his newly found uncle.

“Indeed, child,” she said, “your father had a brother, but I always thought he was dead.”

However, she prepared supper, and bade Aladdin seek his uncle, who came laden with wine and fruit. He presently fell down and kissed the place where Mustapha used to sit, bidding Aladdin’s mother not to be surprised at not having seen him before, as he had been forty years out of the country. He then turned to Aladdin, and asked him his trade, at which the boy hung his head, while his mother burst into tears. On learning that Aladdin was idle and would learn no trade, he offered to take a shop for him and stock it with merchandise. Next day he bought Aladdin a fine suit of clothes, and took him all over the city, showing him the sights, and brought him home at nightfall to his mother, who was overjoyed to see her son so fine.

Next day the magician led Aladdin into some beautiful gardens a long way outside the city gates. They sat down by a fountain, and the magician pulled a cake from his girdle, which he divided between them. They then journeyed onwards till they almost reached the mountains. Aladdin was so tired that he begged to go back, but the magician beguiled him with pleasant stories, and led him on in spite of himself.

At last they came to two mountains divided by a narrow valley.

“We will go no farther,” said the false uncle. “I will show you something wonderful; only do you gather up sticks while I kindle a fire.”

When it was lit the magician threw on it a powder he had about him, at the same time saying some magical words. The earth trembled a little and opened in front of them, disclosing a square flat stone with a brass ring in the middle to raise it by. Aladdin tried to run away, but the magician caught him and gave him a blow that knocked him down.

“What have I done, uncle?” he said piteously; whereupon the magician said more kindly: “Fear nothing, but obey me. Beneath this stone lies a treasure which is to be yours, and no one else may touch it, so you must do exactly as I tell you.”

At the word treasure, Aladdin forgot his fears, and grasped the ring as he was told, saying the names of his father and grandfather. The stone came up quite easily and some steps appeared.

“Go down,” said the magician; “at the foot of those steps you will find an open door leading into three large halls. Tuck up your gown and go through them without touching anything, or you will die instantly. These halls lead into a garden of fine fruit trees. Walk on till you come to a niche in a terrace where stands a lighted lamp. Pour out the oil it contains and bring it to me.”

He drew a ring from his finger and gave it to Aladdin, bidding him prosper.

Aladdin found everything as the magician had said, gathered some fruit off the trees, and, having got the lamp, arrived at the mouth of the cave. The magician cried out in a great hurry:

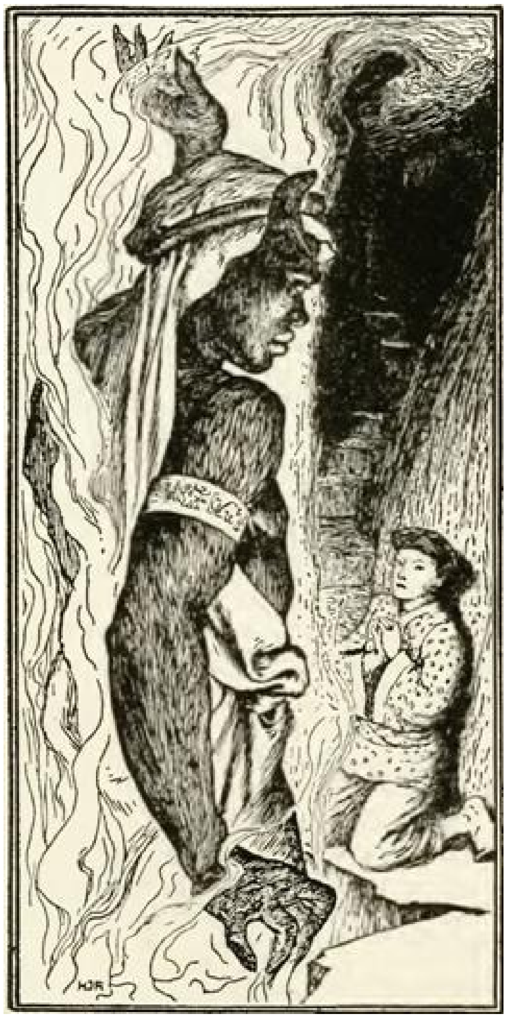

“Make haste and give me the lamp.” This Aladdin refused to do until he was out of the cave. The magician flew into a terrible passion, and throwing some more powder on the fire, he said something, and the stone rolled back into its place.

The magician left Persia for ever, which plainly showed that he was no uncle of Aladdin’s, but a cunning magician who had read in his magic books of a wonderful lamp, which would make him the most powerful man in the world. Though he alone knew where to find it, he could only receive it from the hand of another. He had picked out the foolish Aladdin for this purpose, intending to get the lamp and kill him afterwards.

For two days Aladdin remained in the dark, crying and lamenting. At last he clasped his hands in prayer, and in so doing rubbed the ring, which the magician had forgotten to take from him. Immediately an enormous and frightful genie rose out of the earth, saying:

“What wouldst thou with me? I am the Slave of the Ring, and will obey thee in all things.”

Aladdin fearlessly replied: “Deliver me from this place!” whereupon the earth opened, and he found himself outside. As soon as his eyes could bear the light he went home, but fainted on the threshold. When he came to himself he told his mother what had passed, and showed her the lamp and the fruits he had gathered in the garden, which were in reality precious stones. He then asked for some food.

"Alas! child," she said, "I have nothing in the house, but I have spun a little cotton and will go and sell it."

Aladdin bade her keep her cotton, for he would sell the lamp instead. As it was very dirty she began to rub it, that it might fetch a higher price. Instantly a hideous genie appeared, and asked what she would have. She fainted away, but Aladdin, snatching the lamp, said boldly:

"Fetch me something to eat!"

The genie returned with a silver bowl, twelve silver plates containing rich meats, two silver cups, and two bottles of wine. Aladdin's mother, when she came to herself, said:

"Whence comes this splendid feast?"

"Ask not, but eat," replied Aladdin.

So they sat at breakfast till it was dinner-time, and Aladdin told his mother about the lamp. She begged him to sell it, and have nothing to do with devils.

"No," said Aladdin, "since chance has made us aware of its virtues, we will use it and the ring likewise, which I shall always wear on my finger." When they had eaten all the genie had brought, Aladdin sold one of the silver plates, and so on till none were left. He then had recourse to the genie, who gave him another set of plates, and thus they lived for many years.

One day Aladdin heard an order from the Sultan proclaimed that everyone was to stay at home and close his shutters while the princess, his daughter, went to and from the bath. Aladdin was seized by a desire to see her face, which was very difficult, as she always went veiled. He hid himself behind the door of the bath, and peeped through a chink. The princess lifted her veil as she went in, and looked so beautiful that Aladdin fell in love with her at first sight. He went home so changed that his mother was frightened. He told her he loved the princess so deeply that he could not live without her, and meant to ask her in marriage of her father. His mother, on hearing this, burst out laughing, but Aladdin at last prevailed upon her to go before the Sultan and carry his request. She fetched a napkin and laid in it the magic fruits from the enchanted garden, which sparkled and shone like the most beautiful jewels. She took these with her to please the Sultan, and set out, trusting in the lamp. The grand-vizir and the lords of council had just gone in as she entered the hall and placed herself in front of the Sultan. He, however, took no notice of her. She went every day for a week, and stood in the same place.

When the council broke up on the sixth day the Sultan said to his vizir: “I see a certain woman in the audience-chamber every day carrying something in a napkin. Call her next time, that I may find out what she wants.”

Next day, at a sign from the vizir, she went up to the foot of the throne, and remained kneeling till the Sultan said to her: “Rise, good woman, and tell me what you want.”

She hesitated, so the Sultan sent away all but the vizir, and bade her speak freely, promising to forgive her beforehand for anything she might say. She then told him of her son’s violent love for the princess.

“I prayed him to forget her,” she said, “but in vain; he threatened to do some desperate deed if I refused to go and ask your Majesty for the hand of the princess. Now I pray you to forgive not me alone, but my son Aladdin.”

The Sultan asked her kindly what she had in the napkin, whereupon she unfolded the jewels and presented them.

He was thunderstruck, and turning to the vizir said: “What sayest thou? Ought I not to bestow the princess on one who values her at such a price?”

The vizir, who wanted her for his own son, begged the Sultan to withhold her for three months, in the course of which he hoped his son would contrive to make him a richer present. The Sultan granted this, and told Aladdin’s mother that, though he consented to the marriage, she must not appear before him again for three months.

Aladdin waited patiently for nearly three months, but after two had elapsed his mother, going into the city to buy oil, found everyone rejoicing, and asked what was going on.

“Do you not know,” was the answer, “that the son of the grand-vizir is to marry the Sultan’s daughter to-night?”

Breathless, she ran and told Aladdin, who was overwhelmed at first, but presently bethought him of the lamp. He rubbed it, and the genie appeared, saying: “What is thy will?”

Aladdin replied: “The Sultan, as thou knowest, has broken his promise to me, and the vizir’s son is to have the princess. My command is that to-night you bring hither the bride and bridegroom.”

“Master, I obey,” said the genie.

Aladdin then went to his chamber, where, sure enough at midnight the genie transported the bed containing the vizir’s son and the princess.

“Take this new-married man,” he said, “and put him outside in the cold, and return at daybreak.”

Whereupon the genie took the vizir’s son out of bed, leaving Aladdin with the princess.

“Fear nothing,” Aladdin said to her; “you are my wife, promised to me by your unjust father, and no harm shall come to you.”

The princess was too frightened to speak, and passed the most miserable night of her life, while Aladdin lay down beside her and slept soundly. At the appointed hour the genie fetched in the shivering bridegroom, laid him in his place, and transported the bed back to the palace.

Presently the Sultan came to wish his daughter good-morning. The unhappy vizir’s son jumped up and hid himself, while the princess would not say a word, and was very sorrowful.

The Sultan sent her mother to her, who said: “How comes it, child, that you will not speak to your father? What has happened?”

The princess sighed deeply, and at last told her mother how, during the night, the bed had been carried into some strange house, and what had passed there. Her mother did not believe her in the least, but bade her rise and consider it an idle dream.

The following night exactly the same thing happened, and next morning, on the princess’s refusing to speak, the Sultan threatened to cut off her head. She then confessed all, bidding him ask the vizir’s son if it were not so. The Sultan told the vizir to ask his son, who owned the truth, adding that, dearly as he loved the princess, he had rather die than go through another such fearful night, and wished to be separated from her. His wish was granted, and there was an end of feasting and rejoicing.

When the three months were over, Aladdin sent his mother to remind the Sultan of his promise. She stood in the same place as before, and the Sultan, who had forgotten Aladdin, at once remembered him, and sent for her. On seeing her poverty the Sultan felt less inclined than ever to keep his word, and asked the vizir’s advice, who counselled him to set so high a value on the princess that no man living could come up to it.

The Sultan then turned to Aladdin’s mother, saying: “Good woman, a Sultan must remember his promises, and I will remember mine, but your son must first send me forty basins of gold brimful of jewels, carried by forty black slaves, led by as many white ones, splendidly dressed. Tell him that I await his answer.” The mother of Aladdin bowed low and went home, thinking all was lost.

She gave Aladdin the message, adding: “He may wait long enough for your answer!”

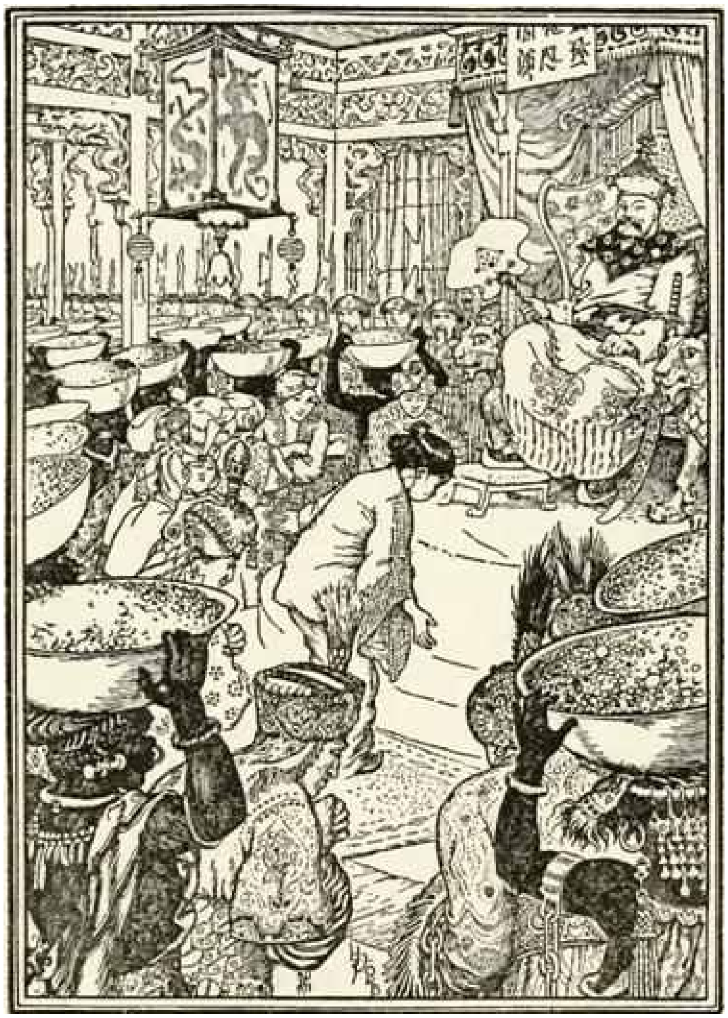

"Not so long, mother, as you think," her son replied "I would do a great deal more than that for the princess."

He summoned the genie, and in a few moments the eighty slaves arrived, and filled up the small house and garden.

Aladdin made them set out to the palace, two and two, followed by his mother. They were so richly dressed, with such splendid jewels in their girdles, that everyone crowded to see them and the basins of gold they carried on their heads.

They entered the palace, and, after kneeling before the Sultan, stood in a half-circle round the throne with their arms crossed, while Aladdin's mother presented them to the Sultan.

He hesitated no longer, but said: "Good woman, return and tell your son that I wait for him with open arms."

She lost no time in telling Aladdin, bidding him make haste. But Aladdin first called the genie.

"I want a scented bath," he said, "a richly embroidered habit, a horse surpassing the Sultan’s, and twenty slaves to attend me. Besides this, six slaves, beautifully dressed, to wait on my mother; and lastly, ten thousand pieces of gold in ten purses.”

No sooner said than done. Aladdin mounted his horse and passed through the streets, the slaves strewing gold as they went. Those who had played with him in his childhood knew him not, he had grown so handsome.

When the Sultan saw him he came down from his throne, embraced him, and led him into a hall where a feast was spread, intending to marry him to the princess that very day.

But Aladdin refused, saying, “I must build a palace fit for her,” and took his leave.

Once home he said to the genie: “Build me a palace of the finest marble, set with jasper, agate, and other precious stones. In the middle you shall build me a large hall with a dome, its four walls of massy gold and silver, each side having six windows, whose lattices, all except one, which is to be left unfinished, must be set with diamonds and rubies. There must be stables and horses and grooms and slaves; go and see about it!”

The palace was finished by next day, and the genie carried him there and showed him all his orders faithfully carried out, even to the laying of a velvet carpet from Aladdin’s palace to the Sultan’s. Aladdin’s mother then dressed herself carefully, and walked to the palace with her slaves, while he followed her on horseback. The Sultan sent musicians with trumpets and cymbals to meet them, so that the air resounded with music and cheers. She was taken to the princess, who saluted her and treated her with great honour. At night the princess said good-bye to her father, and set out on the carpet for Aladdin’s palace, with his mother at her side, and followed by the hundred slaves. She was charmed at the sight of Aladdin, who ran to receive her.

“Princess,” he said, “blame your beauty for my boldness if I have displeased you.”

She told him that, having seen him, she willingly obeyed her father in this matter. After the wedding had taken place Aladdin led her into the hall, where a feast was spread, and she supped with him, after which they danced till midnight.

Next day Aladdin invited the Sultan to see the palace. On entering the hall with the four-and-twenty windows, with their rubies, diamonds, and emeralds, he cried:

“It is a world’s wonder! There is only one thing that surprises me. Was it by accident that one window was left unfinished?”

“No, sir, by design,” returned Aladdin. “I wished your Majesty to have the glory of finishing this palace."

The Sultan was pleased, and sent for the best jewelers in the city. He showed them the unfinished window, and bade them fit it up like the others.

"Sir," replied their spokesman, "we cannot find jewels enough."

The Sultan had his own fetched, which they soon used, but to no purpose, for in a month's time the work was not half done. Aladdin, knowing that their task was vain, bade them undo their work and carry the jewels back, and the genie finished the window at his command. The Sultan was surprised to receive his jewels again and visited Aladdin, who showed him the window finished. The Sultan embraced him, the envious vizir meanwhile hinting that it was the work of enchantment.

Aladdin had won the hearts of the people by his gentle bearing. He was made captain of the Sultan's armies, and won several battles for him, but remained modest and courteous as before, and lived thus in peace and content for several years.

But far away in Africa the magician remembered Aladdin, and by his magic arts discovered that Aladdin, instead of perishing miserably in the cave, had escaped, and had married a princess, with whom he was living in great honour and wealth. He knew that the poor tailor's son could only have accomplished this by means of the lamp, and travelled night and day till he reached the capital of China, bent on Aladdin's ruin. As he passed through the town he heard people talking everywhere about a marvellous palace.

"Forgive my ignorance," he asked, "what is this palace you speak of?"

"Have you not heard of Prince Aladdin's palace," was the reply, "the greatest wonder of the world? I will direct you if you have a mind to see it."

The magician thanked him who spoke, and having seen the palace knew that it had been raised by the genie of the lamp, and became half mad with rage. He determined to get hold of the lamp, and again plunge Aladdin into the deepest poverty.

Unluckily, Aladdin had gone a-hunting for eight days, which gave the magician plenty of time. He bought a dozen copper lamps, put them into a basket, and went to the palace, crying: "New lamps for old!" followed by a jeering crowd.

The princess, sitting in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, sent a slave to find out what the noise was about, who came back laughing, so that the princess scolded her.

"Madam," replied the slave, "who can help laughing to see an old fool offering to exchange fine new lamps for old ones?"

Another slave, hearing this, said: "There is an old one on the cornice there which he can have.”

Now this was the magic lamp, which Aladdin had left there, as he could not take it out hunting with him. The princess, not knowing its value, laughingly bade the slave take it and make the exchange.

She went and said to the magician: “Give me a new lamp for this.”

He snatched it and bade the slave take her choice, amid the jeers of the crowd. Little he cared, but left off crying his lamps, and went out of the city gates to a lonely place, where he remained till nightfall, when he pulled out the lamp and rubbed it. The genie appeared, and at the magician’s command carried him, together with the palace and the princess in it, to a lonely place in Africa.

Next morning the Sultan looked out of the window towards Aladdin’s palace and rubbed his eyes, for it was gone. He sent for the vizir, and asked what had become of the palace. The vizir looked out too, and was lost in astonishment. He again put it down to enchantment, and this time the Sultan believed him, and sent thirty men on horseback to fetch Aladdin in chains. They met him riding home, bound him, and forced him to go with them on foot. The people, however, who loved him, followed, armed, to see that he came to no harm. He was carried before the Sultan, who ordered the executioner to cut off his head. The executioner made Aladdin kneel down, bandaged his eyes, and raised his scimitar to strike.

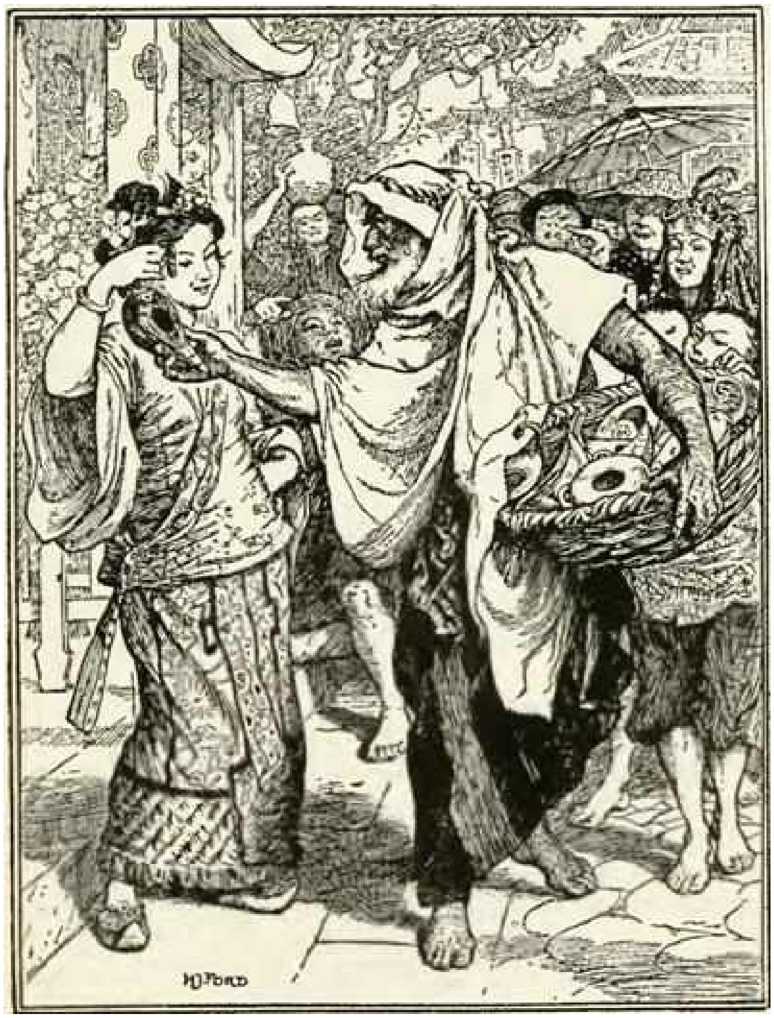

At that instant the vizir, who saw that the crowd had forced their way into the courtyard and were scaling the walls to rescue Aladdin, called to the executioner to stay his hand. The people, indeed, looked so threatening that the Sultan gave way and ordered Aladdin to be unbound, and pardoned him in the sight of the crowd.

Aladdin now begged to know what he had done.

“False wretch!” said the Sultan, “come hither,” and showed him from the window the place where his palace had stood.

Aladdin was so amazed that he could not say a word.

“Where is my palace and my daughter?” demanded the Sultan. “For the first I am not so deeply concerned, but my daughter I must have, and you must find her or lose your head.”

Aladdin begged for forty days in which to find her, promising if he failed to return and suffer death at the Sultan’s pleasure. His prayer was granted, and he went forth sadly from the Sultan’s presence. For three days he wandered about like a madman, asking everyone what had become of his palace, but they only laughed and pitied him. He came to the banks of a river, and knelt down to say his prayers before throwing himself in. In so doing he rubbed the magic ring he still wore.

The genie he had seen in the cave appeared, and asked his will.

“Save my life, genie,” said Aladdin, “and bring my palace back.”

“That is not in my power,” said the genie; “I am only the slave of the ring; you must ask the slave of the lamp.”

“Even so,” said Aladdin “but thou canst take me to the palace, and set me down under my dear wife’s window.” He at once found himself in Africa, under the window of the princess, and fell asleep out of sheer weariness.

He was awakened by the singing of the birds, and his heart was lighter. He saw plainly that all his misfortunes were owing to the loss of the lamp, and vainly wondered who had robbed him of it.

That morning the princess rose earlier than she had done since she had been carried into Africa by the magician, whose company she was forced to endure once a day. She, however, treated him so harshly that he dared not live there altogether. As she was dressing, one of her women looked out and saw Aladdin. The princess ran and opened the window, and at the noise she made Aladdin looked up. She called to him to come to her, and great was the joy of these lovers at seeing each other again.

After he had kissed her Aladdin said: “I beg of you, Princess, in God’s name, before we speak of anything else, for your own sake and mine, tell me what has become of an old lamp I left on the cornice in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, when I went a-hunting.”

“Alas!” she said “I am the innocent cause of our sorrows,” and told him of the exchange of the lamp.

“Now I know,” cried Aladdin, “that we have to thank the African magician for this! Where is the lamp?”

“He carries it about with him,” said the princess, “I know, for he pulled it out of his breast to show me. He wishes me to break my faith with you and marry him, saying that you were beheaded by my father’s command. He is forever speaking ill of you, but I only reply by my tears. If I persist, I doubt not that he will use violence.”

Aladdin comforted her, and left her for a while. He changed clothes with the first person he met in the town, and having bought a certain powder returned to the princess, who let him in by a little side door.

“Put on your most beautiful dress,” he said to her, “and receive the magician with smiles, leading him to believe that you have forgotten me. Invite him to sup with you, and say you wish to taste the wine of his country. He will go for some, and while he is gone I will tell you what to do.”

She listened carefully to Aladdin, and when he left her arrayed herself gaily for the first time since she left China. She put on a girdle and head-dress of diamonds, and seeing in a glass that she looked more beautiful than ever, received the magician, saying to his great amazement: “I have made up my mind that Aladdin is dead, and that all my tears will not bring him back to me, so I am resolved to mourn no more, and have therefore invited you to sup with me; but I am tired of the wines of China, and would fain taste those of Africa.”

The magician flew to his cellar, and the princess put the powder Aladdin had given her in her cup. When he returned she asked him to drink her health in the wine of Africa, handing him her cup in exchange for his as a sign she was reconciled to him.

Before drinking the magician made her a speech in praise of her beauty, but the princess cut him short saying:

“Let me drink first, and you shall say what you will afterwards.” She set her cup to her lips and kept it there, while the magician drained his to the dregs and fell back lifeless.

The princess then opened the door to Aladdin, and flung her arms round his neck, but Aladdin put her away, bidding her to leave him, as he had more to do. He then went to the dead magician, took the lamp out of his vest, and bade the genie carry the palace and all in it back to China. This was done, and the princess in her chamber only felt two little shocks, and little thought she was at home again.

The Sultan, who was sitting in his closet, mourning for his lost daughter, happened to look up, and rubbed his eyes, for there stood the palace as before! He hastened thither, and Aladdin received him in the hall of the four-and-twenty windows, with the princess at his side. Aladdin told him what had happened, and showed him the dead body of the magician, that he might believe. A ten days’ feast was proclaimed, and it seemed as if Aladdin might now live the rest of his life in peace; but it was not to be.

The African magician had a younger brother, who was, if possible, more wicked and more cunning than himself. He travelled to China to avenge his brother’s death, and went to visit a pious woman called Fatima, thinking she might be of use to him. He entered her cell and clapped a dagger to her breast, telling her to rise and do his bidding on pain of death. He changed clothes with her, coloured his face like hers, put on her veil and murdered her, that she might tell no tales. Then he went towards the palace of Aladdin, and all the people thinking he was the holy woman, gathered round him, kissing his hands and begging his blessing. When he got to the palace there was such a noise going on round him that the princess bade her slave look out of the window and ask what was the matter. The slave said it was the holy woman, curing people by her touch of their ailments, whereupon the princess, who had long desired to see Fatima, sent for her. On coming to the princess the magician offered up a prayer for her health and prosperity. When he had done the princess made him sit by her, and begged him to stay with her always. The false Fatima, who wished for nothing better, consented, but kept his veil down for fear of discovery. The princess showed him the hall, and asked him what he thought of it.

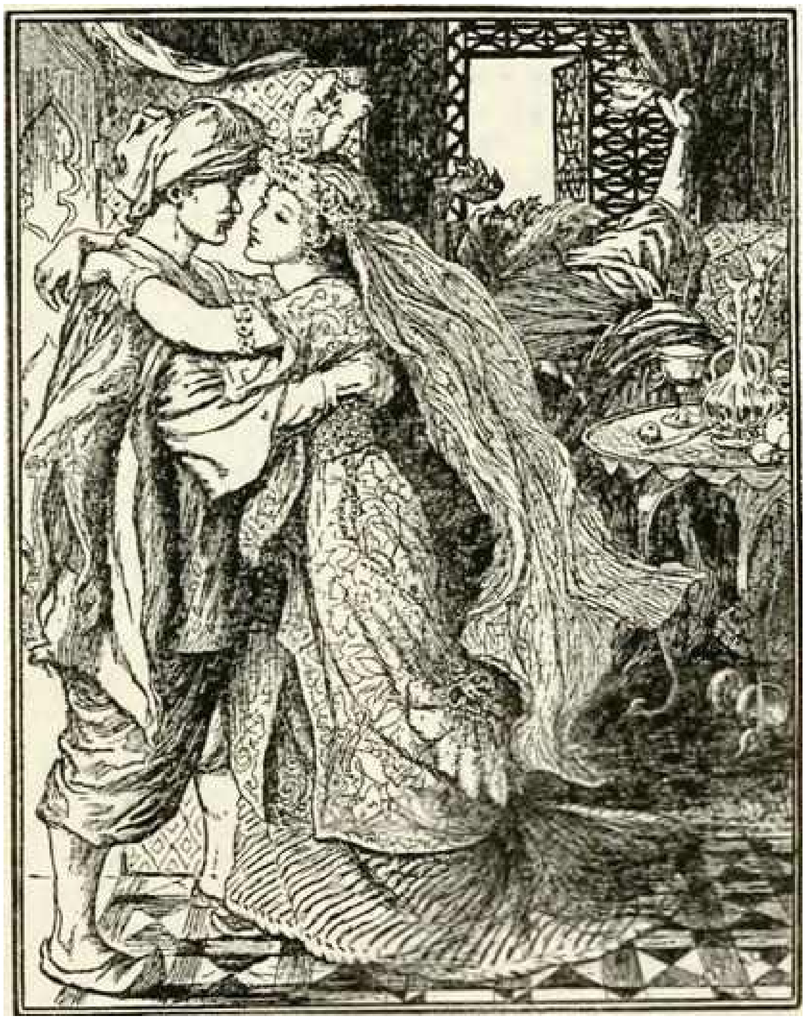

"It is truly beautiful," said the false Fatima. "In my mind it wants but one thing."

"And what is that?" said the princess.

"If only a roc's egg," replied he, "were hung up from the middle of this dome, it would be the wonder of the world."

After this the princess could think of nothing but a roc's egg, and when Aladdin returned from hunting he found her in a very ill humour. He begged to know what was amiss, and she told him that all her pleasure in the hall was spoilt for the want of a roc’s egg hanging from the dome.

“It that is all,” replied Aladdin, “you shall soon be happy.”

He left her and rubbed the lamp, and when the genie appeared commanded him to bring a roc’s egg. The genie gave such a loud and terrible shriek that the hall shook.

“Wretch!” he cried, “is it not enough that I have done everything for you, but you must command me to bring my master and hang him up in the midst of this dome? You and your wife and your palace deserve to be burnt to ashes; but this request does not come from you, but from the brother of the African magician whom you destroyed. He is now in your palace disguised as the holy woman — whom he murdered. He it was who put that wish into your wife’s head. Take care of yourself, for he means to kill you.” So saying the genie disappeared.

Aladdin went back to the princess, saying his head ached, and requesting that the holy Fatima should be fetched to lay her hands on it. But when the magician came near, Aladdin, seizing his dagger, pierced him to the heart.

“What have you done?” cried the princess. “You have killed the holy woman!”

“Not so,” replied Aladdin, “but a wicked magician,” and told her of how she had been deceived.

After this Aladdin and his wife lived in peace. He succeeded the Sultan when he died, and reigned for many years, leaving behind him a long line of kings.

The Adventures of Haroun-al-Raschid, Caliph of Bagdad

The Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid sat in his palace, wondering if there was anything left in the world that could possibly give him a few hours' amusement, when Giafar the grand-vizir, his old and tried friend, suddenly appeared before him. Bowing low, he waited, as was his duty, till his master spoke, but Haroun-al-Raschid merely turned his head and looked at him, and sank back into his former weary posture.

Now Giafar had something of importance to say to the Caliph, and had no intention of being put off by mere silence, so with another low bow in front of the throne, he began to speak.

"Commander of the Faithful," said he, "I have taken on myself to remind your Highness that you have undertaken secretly to observe for yourself the manner in which justice is done and order is kept throughout the city. This is the day you have set apart to devote to this object, and perhaps in fulfilling this duty you may find some distraction from the melancholy to which, as I see to my sorrow, you are a prey."

"You are right," returned the Caliph, "I had forgotten all about it. Go and change your coat, and I will change mine."

A few moments later they both re-entered the hall, disguised as foreign merchants, and passed through a secret door, out into the open country. Here they turned towards the Euphrates, and crossing the river in a small boat, walked through that part of the town which lay along the further bank, without seeing anything to call for their interference. Much pleased with the peace and good order of the city, the Caliph and his vizir made their way to a bridge, which led straight back to the palace, and had already crossed it, when they were stopped by an old and blind man, who begged for alms.

The Caliph gave him a piece of money, and was passing on, but the blind man seized his hand, and held him fast.

"Charitable person," he said, "whoever you may be grant me yet another prayer. Strike me, I beg of you, one blow. I have deserved it richly, and even a more severe penalty."

The Caliph, much surprised at this request, replied gently: "My good man, that which you ask is impossible. Of what use would my alms be if I treated you so ill?" And as he spoke he tried to loosen the grasp of the blind beggar.

“My lord,” answered the man, “pardon my boldness and my persistence. Take back your money, or give me the blow which I crave. I have sworn a solemn oath that I will receive nothing without receiving chastisement, and if you knew all, you would feel that the punishment is not a tenth part of what I deserve.”

Moved by these words, and perhaps still more by the fact that he had other business to attend to, the Caliph yielded, and struck him lightly on the shoulder. Then he continued his road, followed by the blessing of the blind man. When they were out of earshot, he said to the vizir, “There must be something very odd to make that man act so — I should like to find out what is the reason. Go back to him; tell him who I am, and order him to come without fail to the palace to-morrow, after the hour of evening prayer.”

So the grand-vizir went back to the bridge; gave the blind beggar first a piece of money and then a blow, delivered the Caliph’s message, and rejoined his master.

They passed on towards the palace, but walking through a square, they came upon a crowd watching a young and well-dressed man who was urging a horse at full speed round the open space, using at the same time his spurs and whip so unmercifully that the animal was all covered with foam and blood. The Caliph, astonished at this proceeding, inquired of a passer-by what it all meant, but no one could tell him anything, except that every day at the same hour the same thing took place.

Still wondering, he passed on, and for the moment had to content himself with telling the vizir to command the horseman also to appear before him at the same time as the blind man.

The next day, after evening prayer, the Caliph entered the hall, and was followed by the vizir bringing with him the two men of whom we have spoken, and a third, with whom we have nothing to do. They all bowed themselves low before the throne and then the Caliph bade them rise, and ask the blind man his name.

“Baba-Abdalla, your Highness,” said he.

“Baba-Abdalla,” returned the Caliph, “your way of asking alms yesterday seemed to me so strange, that I almost commanded you then and there to cease from causing such a public scandal. But I have sent for you to inquire what was your motive in making such a curious vow. When I know the reason I shall be able to judge whether you can be permitted to continue to practise it, for I cannot help thinking that it sets a very bad example to others. Tell me therefore the whole truth, and conceal nothing.”

These words troubled the heart of Baba-Abdalla, who prostrated himself at the feet of the Caliph. Then rising, he answered: “Commander of the Faithful, I crave your pardon humbly, for my persistence in beseeching your Highness to do an action which appears on the face of it to be without any meaning. No doubt, in the eyes of men, it has none; but I look on it as a slight expiation for a fearful sin of which I have been guilty, and if your Highness will deign to listen to my tale, you will see that no punishment could atone for the crime.”

The Story of the Blind Baba-Abdalla

I was born, Commander of the Faithful, in Bagdad, and was left an orphan while I was yet a very young man, for my parents died within a few days of each other. I had inherited from them a small fortune, which I worked hard night and day to increase, till at last I found myself the owner of eighty camels. These I hired out to travelling merchants, whom I frequently accompanied on their various journeys, and always returned with large profits.

One day I was coming back from Balsora, whither I had taken a supply of goods, intended for India, and halted at noon in a lonely place, which promised rich pasture for my camels. I was resting in the shade under a tree, when a dervish, going on foot towards Balsora, sat down by my side, and I inquired whence he had come and to what place he was going. We soon made friends, and after we had asked each other the usual questions, we produced the food we had with us, and satisfied our hunger.

While we were eating, the dervish happened to mention that in a spot only a little way off from where we were sitting, there was hidden a treasure so great that if my eighty camels were loaded till they could carry no more, the hiding place would seem as full as if it had never been touched.

At this news I became almost beside myself with joy and greed, and I flung my arms round the neck of the dervish, exclaiming: “Good dervish, I see plainly that the riches of this world are nothing to you, therefore of what use is the knowledge of this treasure to you? Alone and on foot, you could carry away a mere handful. But tell me where it is, and I will load my eighty camels with it, and give you one of them as a token of my gratitude.”

Certainly my offer does not sound very magnificent, but it was great to me, for at his words a wave of covetousness had swept over my heart, and I almost felt as if the seventy-nine camels that were left were nothing in comparison.

The dervish saw quite well what was passing in my mind, but he did not show what he thought of my proposal.

“My brother,” he answered quietly, “you know as well as I do, that you are behaving unjustly. It was open to me to keep my secret, and to reserve the treasure for myself. But the fact that I have told you of its existence shows that I had confidence in you, and that I hoped to earn your gratitude for ever, by making your fortune as well as mine. But before I reveal to you the secret of the treasure, you must swear that, after we have loaded the camels with as much as they can carry, you will give half to me, and let us go our own ways. I think you will see that this is fair, for if you present me with forty camels, I on my side will give you the means of buying a thousand more."

I could not of course deny that what the dervish said was perfectly reasonable, but, in spite of that, the thought that the dervish would be as rich as I was unbearable to me. Still there was no use in discussing the matter, and I had to accept his conditions or bewail to the end of my life the loss of immense wealth. So I collected my camels and we set out together under the guidance of the dervish. After walking some time, we reached what looked like a valley, but with such a narrow entrance that my camels could only pass one by one. The little valley, or open space, was shut up by two mountains, whose sides were formed of straight cliffs, which no human being could climb.

When we were exactly between these mountains the dervish stopped.

"Make your camels lie down in this open space," he said, "so that we can easily load them; then we will go to the treasure."

I did what I was bid, and rejoined the dervish, whom I found trying to kindle a fire out of some dry wood. As soon as it was alight, he threw on it a handful of perfumes, and pronounced a few words that I did not understand, and immediately a thick column of smoke rose high into the air. He separated the smoke into two columns, and then I saw a rock, which stood like a pillar between the two mountains, slowly open, and a splendid palace appear within.

But, Commander of the Faithful, the love of gold had taken such possession of my heart, that I could not even stop to examine the riches, but fell upon the first pile of gold within my reach and began to heap it into a sack that I had brought with me.

The dervish likewise set to work, but I soon noticed that he confined himself to collecting precious stones, and I felt I should be wise to follow his example. At length the camels were loaded with as much as they could carry, and nothing remained but to seal up the treasure, and go our ways.

Before, however, this was done, the dervish went up to a great golden vase, beautifully chased, and took from it a small wooden box, which he hid in the bosom of his dress, merely saying that it contained a special kind of ointment. Then he once more kindled the fire, threw on the perfume, and murmured the unknown spell, and the rock closed, and stood whole as before.

The next thing was to divide the camels, and to charge them with the treasure, after which we each took command of our own and marched out of the valley, till we reached the place in the high road where the routes diverge, and then we parted, the dervish going towards Balsora, and I to Bagdad. We embraced each other tenderly, and I poured out my gratitude for the honour he had done me, in singling me out for this great wealth, and having said a hearty farewell we turned our backs, and hastened after our camels.

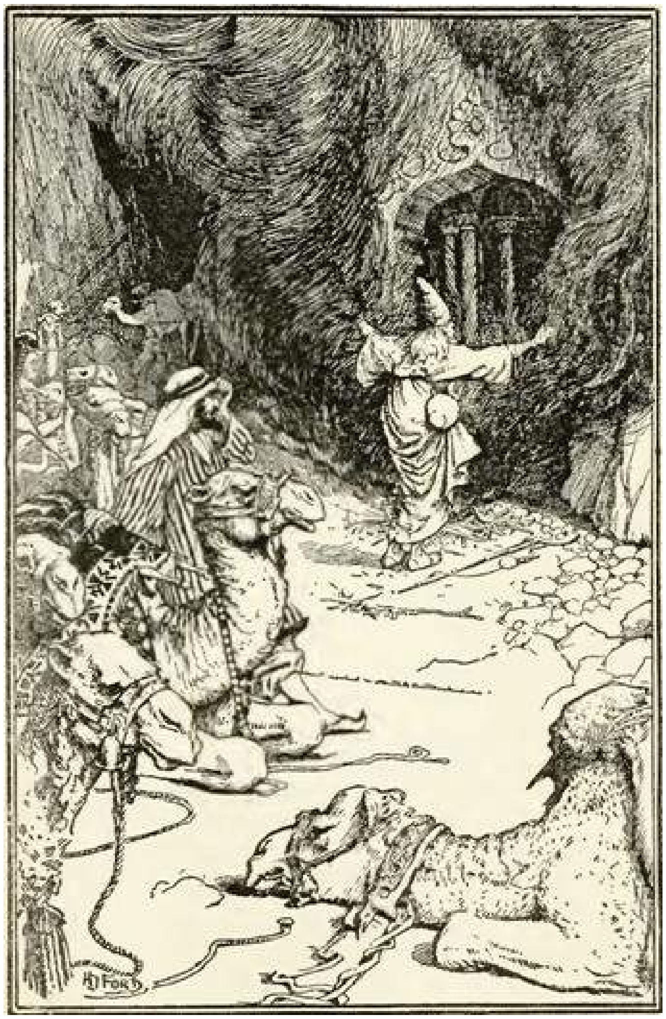

I had hardly come up with mine when the demon of envy filled my soul. “What does a dervish want with riches like that?” I said to myself. “He alone has the secret of the treasure, and can always get as much as he wants,” and I halted my camels by the roadside, and ran back after him.

I was a quick runner, and it did not take me very long to come up with him. “My brother,” I exclaimed, as soon as I could speak, “almost at the moment of our leave-taking, a reflection occurred to me, which is perhaps new to you. You are a dervish by profession, and live a very quiet life, only caring to do good, and careless of the things of this world. You do not realise the burden that you lay upon yourself, when you gather into your hands such great wealth, besides the fact that no one, who is not accustomed to camels from his birth, can ever manage the stubborn beasts. If you are wise, you will not encumber yourself with more than thirty, and you will find those trouble enough."

"You are right," replied the dervish, who understood me quite well, but did not wish to fight the matter. "I confess I had not thought about it. Choose any ten you like, and drive them before you."

I selected ten of the best camels, and we proceeded along the road, to rejoin those I had left behind. I had got what I wanted, but I had found the dervish so easy to deal with, that I rather regretted I had not asked for ten more. I looked back. He had only gone a few paces, and I called after him.

"My brother," I said, "I am unwilling to part from you without pointing out what I think you scarcely grasp, that large experience of camel-driving is necessary to anybody who intends to keep together a troop of thirty. In your own interest, I feel sure you would be much happier if you entrusted ten more of them to me, for with my practice it is all one to me if I take two or a hundred."

As before, the dervish made no difficulties, and I drove off my ten camels in triumph, only leaving him with twenty for his share. I had now sixty, and anyone might have imagined that I should be content.

But, Commander of the Faithful, there is a proverb that says, "the more one has, the more one wants." So it was with me. I could not rest as long as one solitary camel remained to the dervish; and returning to him I redoubled my prayers and embraces, and promises of eternal gratitude, till the last twenty were in my hands.

"Make a good use of them, my brother," said the holy man. "Remember riches sometimes have wings if we keep them for ourselves, and the poor are at our gates expressly that we may help them."

My eyes were so blinded by gold, that I paid no heed to his wise counsel, and only looked about for something else to grasp. Suddenly I remembered the little box of ointment that the dervish had hidden, and which most likely contained a treasure more precious than all the rest. Giving him one last embrace, I observed accidentally, "What are you going to do with that little box of ointment? It seems hardly worth taking with you; you might as well let me have it. And really, a dervish who has given up the world has no need of ointment!"

Oh, if he had only refused my request! But then, supposing he had, I should have got possession of it by force, so great was the madness that had laid hold upon me. However, far from refusing it, the dervish at once held it out, saying gracefully, "Take it, my friend, and if there is anything else I can do to make you happy you must let me know."

Directly the box was in my hands I wrenched off the cover. "As you are so kind," I said, "tell me, I pray you, what are the virtues of this ointment?"

"They are most curious and interesting," replied the dervish. "If you apply a little of it to your left eye you will behold in an instant all the treasures hidden in the bowels of the earth. But beware lest you touch your right eye with it, or your sight will be destroyed for ever."

His words excited my curiosity to the highest pitch. "Make trial on me, I implore you," I cried, holding out the box to the dervish. "You will know how to do it better than I! I am burning with impatience to test its charms."

The dervish took the box I had extended to him, and, bidding me shut my left eye, touched it gently with the ointment. When I opened it again I saw spread out, as it were before me, treasures of every kind and without number. But as all this time I had been obliged to keep my right eye closed, which was very fatiguing, I begged the dervish to apply the ointment to that eye also.

"If you insist upon it I will do it," answered the dervish, "but you must remember what I told you just now — that if it touches your right eye you will become blind on the spot."

Unluckily, in spite of my having proved the truth of the dervish's words in so many instances, I was firmly convinced that he was now keeping concealed from me some hidden and precious virtue of the ointment. So I turned a deaf ear to all he said.

"My brother," I replied smiling, "I see you are joking. It is not natural that the same ointment should have two such exactly opposite effects."

"It is true all the same," answered the dervish, "and it would be well for you if you believed my word."

But I would not believe, and, dazzled by the greed of avarice, I thought that if one eye could show me riches, the other might teach me how to get possession of them. And I continued to press the dervish to anoint my right eye, but this he resolutely declined to do.

"After having conferred such benefits on you," said he, "I am loth indeed to work you such evil. Think what it is to be blind, and do not force me to do what you will repent as long as you live."

It was of no use. "My brother," I said firmly, "pray say no more, but do what I ask. You have most generously responded to my wishes up to this time, do not spoil my recollection of you for a thing of such little consequence. Let what will happen I take it on my own head, and will never reproach you."

"Since you are determined upon it," he answered with a sigh, "there is no use talking," and taking the ointment he laid some on my right eye, which was tight shut. When I tried to open it heavy clouds of darkness floated before me. I was as blind as you see me now!

"Miserable dervish!" I shrieked, "so it is true after all! Into what a bottomless pit has my lust after gold plunged me. Ah, now that my eyes are closed they are really opened. I know that all my sufferings are caused by myself alone! But, good brother, you, who are so kind and charitable, and know the secrets of such vast learning, have you nothing that will give me back my sight?”

“Unhappy man,” replied the dervish, “it is not my fault that this has befallen you, but it is a just chastisement. The blindness of your heart has wrought the blindness of your body. Yes, I have secrets; that you have seen in the short time that we have known each other. But I have none that will give you back your sight. You have proved yourself unworthy of the riches that were given you. Now they have passed into my hands, whence they will flow into the hands of others less greedy and ungrateful than you.”

The dervish said no more and left me, speechless with shame and confusion, and so wretched that I stood rooted to the spot, while he collected the eighty camels and proceeded on his way to Balsora. It was in vain that I entreated him not to leave me, but at least to take me within reach of the first passing caravan. He was deaf to my prayers and cries, and I should soon have been dead of hunger and misery if some merchants had not come along the track the following day and kindly brought me back to Bagdad.

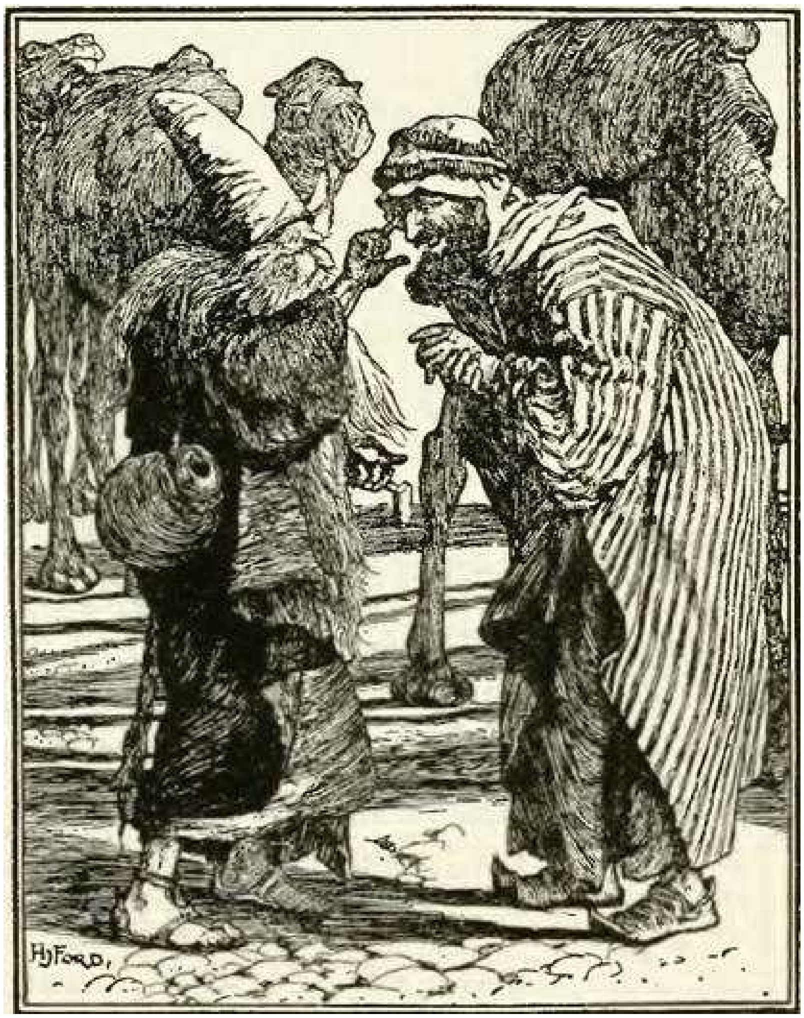

From a rich man I had in one moment become a beggar; and up to this time I have lived solely on the alms that have been bestowed on me. But, in order to expiate the sin of avarice, which was my undoing, I oblige each passer-by to give me a blow.

This, Commander of the Faithful, is my story.

When the blind man had ended the Caliph addressed him: “Baba-Abdalla, truly your sin is great, but you have suffered enough. Henceforth repent in private, for I will see that enough money is given you day by day for all your wants.”

At these words Baba-Abdalla flung himself at the Caliph’s feet, and prayed that honour and happiness might be his portion for ever.

The Story of Sidi-Nouman

The Caliph, Haroun-al-Raschid, was much pleased with the tale of the blind man and the dervish, and when it was finished he turned to the young man who had ill-treated his horse, and inquired his name also. The young man replied that he was called Sidi-Nouman.

"Sidi-Nouman," observed the Caliph, "I have seen horses broken all my life long, and have even broken them myself, but I have never seen any horse broken in such a barbarous manner as by you yesterday. Every one who looked on was indignant, and blamed you loudly. As for myself, I was so angry that I was very nearly disclosing who I was, and putting a stop to it at once. Still, you have not the air of a cruel man, and I would gladly believe that you did not act in this way without some reason. As I am told that it was not the first time, and indeed that every day you are to be seen flogging and spurring your horse, I wish to come to the bottom of the matter. But tell me the whole truth, and conceal nothing."

Sidi-Nouman changed colour as he heard these words, and his manner grew confused; but he saw plainly that there was no help for it. So he prostrated himself before the throne of the Caliph and tried to obey, but the words stuck in his throat, and he remained silent.

The Caliph, accustomed though he was to instant obedience, guessed something of what was passing in the young man's mind, and sought to put him at his ease. "Sidi-Nouman," he said, "do not think of me as the Caliph, but merely as a friend who would like to hear your story. If there is anything in it that you are afraid may offend me, take courage, for I pardon you beforehand. Speak then openly and without fear, as to one who knows and loves you."

Reassured by the kindness of the Caliph, Sidi-Nouman at length began his tale.

"Commander of the Faithful," said he, "dazzled though I am by the lustre of your Highness' presence, I will do my best to satisfy your wishes. I am by no means perfect, but I am not naturally cruel, neither do I take pleasure in breaking the law. I admit that the treatment of my horse is calculated to give your Highness a bad opinion of me, and to set an evil example to others; yet I have not chastised it without reason, and I have hopes that I shall be judged more worthy of pity than punishment."

Commander of the Faithful, I will not trouble to describe my birth; it is not of sufficient distinction to deserve your Highness' attention. My ancestors were careful people, and I inherited enough money to enable me to live comfortably, though without show.

Having therefore a modest fortune, the only thing wanting to my happiness was a wife who could return my affection, but this blessing I was not destined to get; for on the very day after my marriage, my bride began to try my patience in every way that was most hard to bear.

Now, seeing that the customs of our land oblige us to marry without ever beholding the person with whom we are to pass our lives, a man has of course no right to complain as long as his wife is not absolutely repulsive, or is not positively deformed. And whatever defects her body may have, pleasant ways and good behaviour will go far to remedy them.

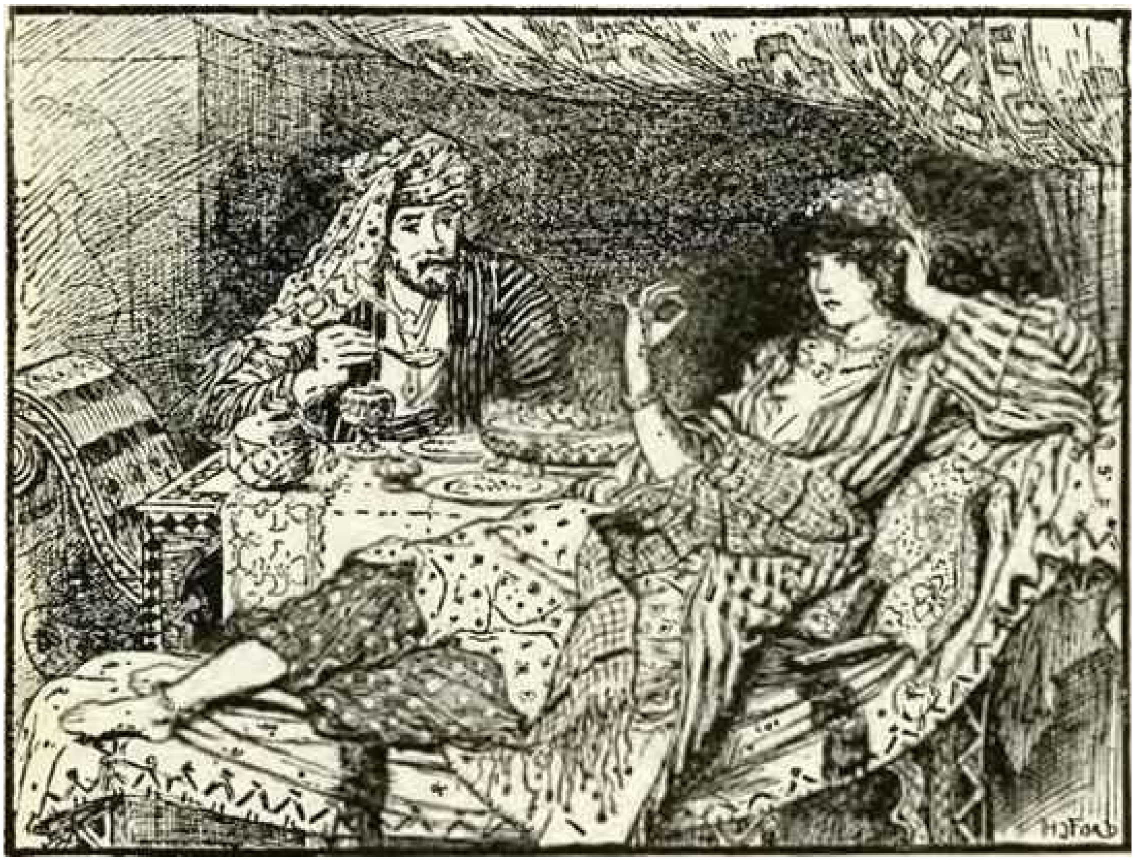

The first time I saw my wife unveiled, when she had been brought to my house with the usual ceremonies, I was enchanted to find that I had not been deceived in regard to the account that had been given me of her beauty. I began my married life in high spirits, and the best hopes of happiness.

The following day a grand dinner was served to us but as my wife did not appear, I ordered a servant to call her. Still she did not come, and I waited impatiently for some time. At last she entered the room, and she took our places at the table, and plates of rice were set before us.

I ate mine, as was natural, with a spoon, but great was my surprise to notice that my wife, instead of doing the same, drew from her pocket a little case, from which she selected a long pin, and by the help of this pin conveyed her rice grain by grain to her mouth.

"Amina," I exclaimed in astonishment, "is that the way you eat rice at home? And did you do it because your appetite was so small, or did you wish to count the grains so that you might never eat more than a certain number? If it was from economy, and you are anxious to teach me not to be wasteful, you have no cause for alarm. We shall never ruin ourselves in that way! Our fortune is large enough for all our needs, therefore, dear Amina, do not seek to check yourself, but eat as much as you desire, as I do!"

In reply to my affectionate words, I expected a cheerful answer; yet Amina said nothing at all, but continued to pick her rice as before, only at longer and longer intervals. And, instead of trying the other dishes, all she did was to put every now and then a crumb, of bread into her mouth, that would not have made a meal for a sparrow.

I felt provoked by her obstinacy, but to excuse her to myself as far as I could, I suggested that perhaps she had never been used to eat in the company of men, and that her family might have taught her that she ought to behave prudently and discreetly in the presence of her husband. Likewise that she might either have dined already or intend to do so in her own apartments. So I took no further notice, and when I had finished left the room, secretly much vexed at her strange conduct.

The same thing occurred at supper, and all through the next day, whenever we ate together. It was quite clear that no woman could live upon two or three bread-crumbs and a few grains of rice, and I determined to find out how and when she got food. I pretended not to pay attention to anything she did, in the hope that little by little she would get accustomed to me, and become more friendly; but I soon saw that my expectations were quite vain.

One night I was lying with my eyes closed, and to, all appearance sound asleep, when Amina arose softly, and dressed herself without making the slightest sound. I could not imagine what she was going to do, and as my curiosity was great I made up my mind to follow her. When she was fully dressed, she stole quietly from the room.

The instant she had let the curtain fall behind her, I flung a garment on my shoulders and a pair of slippers on my feet. Looking from a lattice which opened into the court, I saw her in the act of passing through the street door, which she carefully left open.

It was bright moonlight, so I easily managed to keep her in sight, till she entered a cemetery not far from the house. There I hid myself under the shadow of the wall, and crouched down cautiously; and hardly was I concealed, when I saw my wife approaching in company with a ghoul — one of those demons which, as your Highness is aware, wander about the country making their lairs in deserted buildings and springing out upon unwary travellers whose flesh they eat. If no live being goes their way, they then betake themselves to the cemeteries, and feed upon the dead bodies.

I was nearly struck dumb with horror on seeing my wife with this hideous female ghoul. They passed by me without noticing me, began to dig up a corpse which had been buried that day, and then sat down on the edge of the grave, to enjoy their frightful repast, talking quietly and cheerfully all the while, though I was too far off to hear what they said. When they had finished, they threw back the body into the grave, and heaped back the earth upon it. I made no effort to disturb them, and returned quickly to the house, when I took care to leave the door open, as I had previously found it. Then I got back into bed, and pretended to sleep soundly.

A short time after Amina entered as quietly as she had gone out. She undressed and stole into bed, congratulating herself apparently on the cleverness with which she had managed her expedition.

As may be guessed, after such a scene it was long before I could close my eyes, and at the first sound which called the faithful to prayer, I put on my clothes and went to the mosque. But even prayer did not restore peace to my troubled spirit, and I could not face my wife until I had made up my mind what future course I should pursue in regard to her. I therefore spent the morning roaming about from one garden to another, turning over various plans for compelling my wife to give up her horrible ways; I thought of using violence to make her submit, but felt reluctant to be unkind to her. Besides, I had an instinct that gentle means had the best chance of success; so, a little soothed, I turned towards home, which I reached about the hour of dinner.

As soon as I appeared, Amina ordered dinner to be served, and we sat down together. As usual, she persisted in only picking a few grains of rice, and I resolved to speak to her at once of what lay so heavily on my heart.

“Amina,” I said, as quietly as possible, “you must have guessed the surprise I felt, when the day after our marriage you declined to eat anything but a few morsels of rice, and altogether behaved in such a manner that most husbands would have been deeply wounded. However I had patience with you, and only tried to tempt your appetite by the choicest dishes I could invent, but all to no purpose. Still, Amina, it seems to me that there be some among them as sweet to the taste as the flesh of a corpse?”

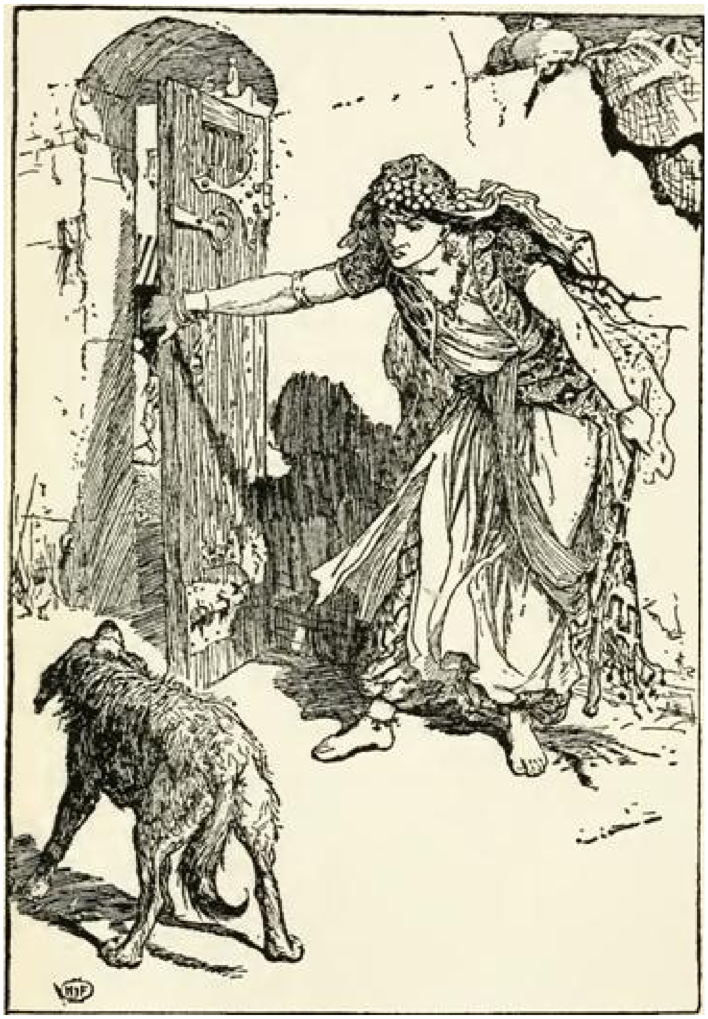

I had no sooner uttered these words than Amina, who instantly understood that I had followed her to the grave-yard, was seized with a passion beyond any that I have ever witnessed. Her face became purple, her eyes looked as if they would start from her head, and she positively foamed with rage.

I watched her with terror, wondering what would happen next, but little thinking what would be the end of her fury. She seized a vessel of water that stood at hand, and plunging her hand in it, murmured some words I failed to catch. Then, sprinkling it on my face, she cried madly:

“Wretch, receive the reward of your prying, and become a dog.”

The words were not out of her mouth when, without feeling conscious that any change was passing over me, I suddenly knew that I had ceased to be a man. In the greatness of the shock and surprise — for I had no idea that Amina was a magician — I never dreamed of running away, and stood rooted to the spot, while Amina grasped a stick and began to beat me. Indeed her blows were so heavy, that I only wonder they did not kill me at once. However they succeeded in rousing me from my stupor, and I dashed into the court-yard, followed closely by Amina, who made frantic dives at me, which I was not quick enough to dodge. At last she got tired of pursuing me, or else a new trick entered into her head, which would give me speedy and painful death; she opened the gate leading into the street, intending to crush me as I passed through. Dog though I was, I saw through her design, and stung into presence of mind by the greatness of the danger, I timed my movements so well that I contrived to rush through, and only the tip of my tail received a squeeze as she banged the gate.

I was safe, but my tail hurt me horribly, and I yelped and howled so loud all along the streets, that the other dogs came and attacked me, which made matters no better. In order to avoid them, I took refuge in a cookshop, where tongues and sheep’s heads were sold.

At first the owner showed me great kindness, and drove away the other dogs that were still at my heels, while I crept into the darkest corner. But though I was safe for the moment, I was not destined to remain long under his protection, for he was one of those who hold all dogs to be unclean, and that all the washing in the world will hardly purify you from their contact. So after my enemies had gone to seek other prey, he tried to lure me from my corner in order to force me into the street. But I refused to come out of my hole, and spent the night in sleep, which I sorely needed, after the pain inflicted on me by Amina.

I have no wish to weary your Highness by dwelling on the sad thoughts which accompanied my change of shape, but it may interest you to hear that the next morning my host went out early to do his marketing, and returned laden with the sheep’s heads, and tongues and trotters that formed his stock in trade for the day. The smell of meat attracted various hungry dogs in the neighbourhood, and they gathered round the door begging for some bits. I stole out of my corner, and stood with them.

In spite of his objection to dogs, as unclean animals, my protector was a kind-hearted man, and knowing I had eaten nothing since yesterday, he threw me bigger and better bits than those which fell to the share of the other dogs. When I had finished, I tried to go back into the shop, but this he would not allow, and stood so firmly at the entrance with a stout stick, that I was forced to give it up, and seek some other home.

A few paces further on was a baker’s shop, which seemed to have a gay and merry man for a master. At that moment he was having his breakfast, and though I gave no signs of hunger, he at once threw me a piece of bread. Before gobbling it up, as most dogs are in the habit of doing, I bowed my head and wagged my tail, in token of thanks, and he understood, and smiled pleasantly. I really did not want the bread at all, but felt it would be ungracious to refuse, so I ate it slowly, in order that he might see that I only did it out of politeness. He understood this also, and seemed quite willing to let me stay in his shop, so I sat down, with my face to the door, to show that I only asked his protection. This he gave me, and indeed encouraged me to come into the house itself, giving me a corner where I might sleep, without being in anybody's way.

The kindness heaped on me by this excellent man was far greater than I could ever have expected. He was always affectionate in his manner of treating me, and I shared his breakfast, dinner and supper, while, on my side, I gave him all the gratitude and attachment to which he had a right.

I sat with my eyes fixed on him, and he never left the house without having me at his heels; and if it ever happened that when he was preparing to go out I was asleep, and did not notice, he would call "Rufus, Rufus," for that was the name he gave me.

Some weeks passed in this way, when one day a woman came in to buy bread. In paying for it, she laid down several pieces of money, one of which was bad. The baker perceived this, and declined to take it, demanding another in its place. The woman, for her part, refused to take it back, declaring it was perfectly good, but the baker would have nothing to do with it. "It is really such a bad imitation," he exclaimed at last, "that even my dog would not be taken in. Here Rufus! Rufus!" and hearing his voice, I jumped on to the counter. The baker threw down the money before me, and said, "Find out if there is a bad coin." I looked at each in turn, and then laid my paw on the false one, glancing at the same time at my master, so as to point it out.

The baker, who had of course been only in joke, was exceedingly surprised at my cleverness, and the woman, who was at last convinced that the man spoke the truth, produced another piece of money in its place. When she had gone, my master was so pleased that he told all the neighbours what I had done, and made a great deal more of it than there really was.

The neighbours, very naturally, declined to believe his story, and tried me several times with all the bad money they could collect together, but I never failed to stand the test triumphantly.

Soon, the shop was filled from morning till night, with people who on the pretence of buying bread came to see if I was as clever as I was reported to be. The baker drove a roaring trade, and admitted that I was worth my weight in gold to him.

Of course there were plenty who envied him his large custom, and many was the pitfall set for me, so that he never dared to let me out of his sight. One day a woman, who had not been in the shop before, came to ask for bread, like the rest. As usual, I was lying on the counter, and she threw down six coins before me, one of which was false. I detected it at once, and put my paw on it, looking as I did so at the woman. “Yes,” she said, nodding her head. “You are quite right, that is the one.” She stood gazing at me attentively for some time, then paid for the bread, and left the shop, making a sign for me to follow her secretly.

Now my thoughts were always running on some means of shaking off the spell laid on me, and noticing the way in which this woman had looked at me, the idea entered my head that perhaps she might have guessed what had happened, and in this I was not deceived. However I let her go on a little way, and merely stood at the door watching her. She turned, and seeing that I was quite still, she again beckoned to me.

The baker all this while was busy with his oven, and had forgotten all about me, so I stole out softly, and ran after the woman.

When we came to her house, which was some distance off, she opened the door and then said to me, “Come in, come in; you will never be sorry that you followed me.” When I had entered she fastened the door, and took me into a large room, where a beautiful girl was working at a piece of embroidery. “My daughter,” exclaimed my guide, “I have brought you the famous dog belonging to the baker which can tell good money from bad. You know that when I first heard of him, I told you I was sure he must be really a man, changed into a dog by magic. To-day I went to the baker’s, to prove for myself the truth of the story, and persuaded the dog to follow me here. Now what do you say?”

“You are right, mother,” replied the girl, and rising she dipped her hand into a vessel of water. Then sprinkling it over me she said, “If you were born dog, remain dog; but if you were born man, by virtue of this water resume your proper form.” In one moment the spell was broken. The dog’s shape vanished as if it had never been, and it was a man who stood before her.

Overcome with gratitude at my deliverance, I flung myself at her feet, and kissed the hem of her garment. “How can I thank you for your goodness towards a stranger, and for what you have done? Henceforth I am your slave. Deal with me as you will!”

Then, in order to explain how I came to be changed into a dog, I told her my whole story, and finished with rendering the mother the thanks due to her for the happiness she had brought me.

“Sidi-Nouman,” returned the daughter, “say no more about the obligation you are under to us. The knowledge that we have been of service to you is ample payment. Let us speak of Amina, your wife, with whom I was acquainted before her marriage. I was aware that she was a magician, and she knew too that I had studied the same art, under the same mistress. We met often going to the same baths, but we did not like each other, and never sought to become friends. As to what concerns you, it is not enough to have broken your spell, she must be punished for her wickedness. Remain for a moment with my mother, I beg," she added hastily, "I will return shortly."

Left alone with the mother, I again expressed the gratitude I felt, to her as well as to her daughter.

"My daughter," she answered, "is, as you see, as accomplished a magician as Amina herself, but you would be astonished at the amount of good she does by her knowledge. That is why I have never interfered, otherwise I should have put a stop to it long ago." As she spoke, her daughter entered with a small bottle in her hand.

"Sidi-Nouman," she said, "the books I have just consulted tell me that Amina is not home at present, but she should return at any moment. I have likewise found out by their means, that she pretends before the servants great uneasiness as to your absence. She has circulated a story that, while at dinner with her, you remembered some important business that had to be done at once, and left the house without shutting the door. By this means a dog had strayed in, which she was forced to get rid of by a stick. Go home then without delay, and await Amina's return in your room. When she comes in, go down to meet her, and in her surprise, she will try to run away. Then have this bottle ready, and dash the water it contains over her, saying boldly, "Receive the reward of your crimes." That is all I have to tell you."

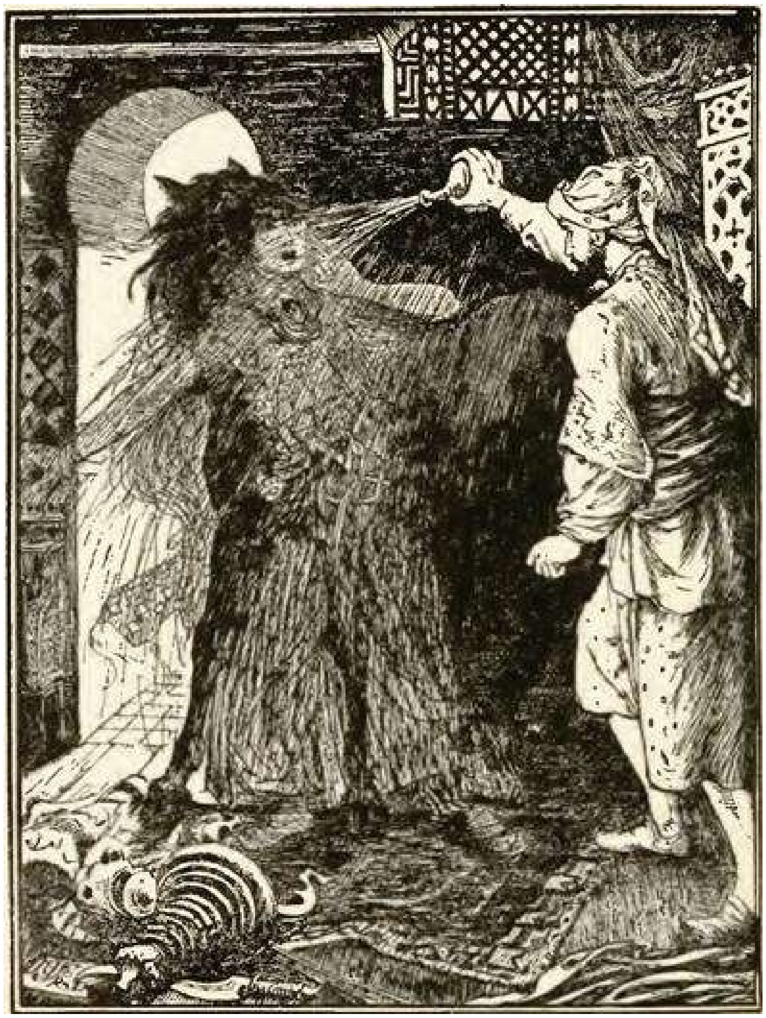

Everything happened exactly as the young magician had foretold. I had not been in my house many minutes before Amina returned, and as she approached I stepped in front of her, with the water in my hand. She gave one loud cry, and turned to the door, but she was too late. I had already dashed the water in her face and spoken the magic words. Amina disappeared, and in her place stood the horse you saw me beating yesterday.

This, Commander of the Faithful, is my story, and may I venture to hope that, now you have heard the reason of my conduct, your Highness will not think this wicked woman too harshly treated?

“Sidi-Nouman,” replied the Caliph, “your story is indeed a strange one, and there is no excuse to be offered for your wife. But, without condemning your treatment of her, I wish you to reflect how much she must suffer from being changed into an animal, and I hope you will let that punishment be enough. I do not order you to insist upon the young magician finding the means to restore your wife to her human shape, because I know that when once women such as she begin to work evil they never leave off, and I should only bring down on your head a vengeance far worse than the one you have undergone already.”

The Story of Ali Colia, Merchant of Bagdad

In the reign of Haroun-al-Raschid, there lived in Bagdad a merchant named Ali Cogia, who, having neither wife nor child, contented himself with the modest profits produced by his trade. He had spent some years quite happily in the house his father had left him, when three nights running he dreamed that an old man had appeared to him, and reproached him for having neglected the duty of a good Mussulman, in delaying so long his pilgrimage to Mecca.

Ali Cogia was much troubled by this dream, as he was unwilling to give up his shop, and lose all his customers. He had shut his eyes for some time to the necessity of performing this pilgrimage, and tried to atone to his conscience by an extra number of good works, but the dream seemed to him a direct warning, and he resolved to put the journey off no longer.

The first thing he did was to sell his furniture and the wares he had in his shop, only reserving to himself such goods as he might trade with on the road. The shop itself he sold also, and easily found a tenant for his private house. The only matter he could not settle satisfactorily was the safe custody of a thousand pieces of gold which he wished to leave behind him.

After some thought, Ali Cogia hit upon a plan which seemed a safe one. He took a large vase, and placing the money in the bottom of it, filled up the rest with olives. After corking the vase tightly down, he carried it to one of his friends, a merchant like himself, and said to him:

“My brother, you have probably heard that I am staffing with a caravan in a few days for Mecca. I have come to ask whether you would do me the favour to keep this vase of olives for me till I come back?”

The merchant replied readily, “Look, this is the key of my shop: take it, and put the vase wherever you like. I promise that you shall find it in the same place on your return.”

A few days later, Ali Cogia mounted the camel that he had laden with merchandise, joined the caravan, and arrived in due time at Mecca. Like the other pilgrims he visited the sacred Mosque, and after all his religious duties were performed, he set out his goods to the best advantage, hoping to gain some customers among the passers-by.

Very soon two merchants stopped before the pile, and when they had turned it over, one said to the other:

“If this man was wise he would take these things to Cairo, where he would get a much better price than he is likely to do here.”

Ali Cogia heard the words, and lost no time in following the advice. He packed up his wares, and instead of returning to Bagdad, joined a caravan that was going to Cairo. The results of the journey gladdened his heart. He sold off everything almost directly, and bought a stock of Egyptian curiosities, which he intended selling at Damascus; but as the caravan with which he would have to travel would not be starting for another six weeks, he took advantage of the delay to visit the Pyramids, and some of the cities along the banks of the Nile.

Now the attractions of Damascus so fascinated the worthy Ali, that he could hardly tear himself away, but at length he remembered that he had a home in Bagdad, meaning to return by way of Aleppo, and after he had crossed the Euphrates, to follow the course of the Tigris.

But when he reached Mossoul, Ali had made such friends with some Persian merchants, that they persuaded him to accompany them to their native land, and even as far as India, and so it came to pass that seven years had slipped by since he had left Bagdad, and during all that time the friend with whom he had left the vase of olives had never once thought of him or of it. In fact, it was only a month before Ali Cogia’s actual return that the affair came into his head at all, owing to his wife’s remarking one day, that it was a long time since she had eaten any olives, and would like some.

“That reminds me,” said the husband, “that before Ali Cogia went to Mecca seven years ago, he left a vase of olives in my care. But really by this time he must be dead, and there is no reason we should not eat the olives if we like. Give me a light, and I will fetch them and see how they taste.”

“My husband,” answered the wife, “beware, I pray, of your doing anything so base! Supposing seven years have passed without news of Ali Cogia, he need not be dead for all that, and may come back any day. How shameful it would be to have to confess that you had betrayed your trust and broken the seal of the vase! Pay no attention to my idle words, I really have no desire for olives now. And probably after all this while they are no longer good. I have a presentiment that Ali Cogia will return, and what will he think of you? Give it up, I entreat.”

The merchant, however, refused to listen to her advice, sensible though it was. He took a light and a dish and went into his shop.

“If you will be so obstinate,” said his wife, “I cannot help it; but do not blame me if it turns out ill.”

When the merchant opened the vase he found the topmost olives were rotten, and in order to see if the under ones were in better condition he shook some out into the dish. As they fell out a few of the gold pieces fell out too.

The sight of the money roused all the merchant’s greed. He looked into the vase, and saw that all the bottom was filled with gold. He then replaced the olives and returned to his wife.

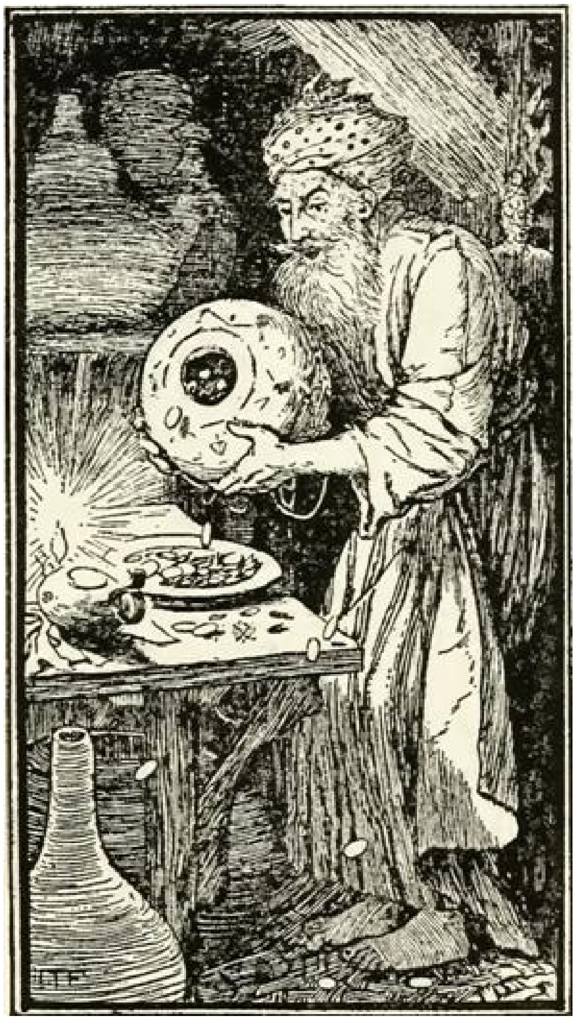

“My wife,” he said, as he entered the room, “you were quite right; the olives are rotten, and I have recorked the vase so well that Ali Cogia will never know it has been touched.”

“You would have done better to believe me,” replied the wife. “I trust that no harm will come of it.”

These words made no more impression on the merchant than the others had done; and he spent the whole night in wondering how he could manage to keep the gold if Ali Cogia should come back and claim his vase. Very early next morning he went out and bought fresh new olives; he then threw away the old ones, took out the gold and hid it, and filled up the vase with the olives he had bought. This done he recorked the vase and put it in the same place where it had been left by Ali Cogia.

A month later Ali Cogia re-entered Bagdad, and as his house was still let he went to an inn; and the following day set out to see his friend the merchant, who received him with open arms and many expressions of surprise. After a few moments given to inquiries Ali Cogia begged the merchant to hand him over the vase that he had taken care of for so long.

"Oh certainly," said he, "I am only glad I could be of use to you in the matter. Here is the key of my shop; you will find the vase in the place where you put it."

Ali Cogia fetched his vase and carried it to his room at the inn, where he opened it. He thrust down his hand but could feel no money, but still was persuaded it must be there. So he got some plates and vessels from his travelling kit and emptied out the olives. To no purpose. The gold was not there. The poor man was dumb with horror, then, lifting up his hands, he exclaimed, "Can my old friend really have committed such a crime?"

In great haste he went back to the house of the merchant. "My friend," he cried, "you will be astonished to see me again, but I can find nowhere in this vase a thousand pieces of gold that I placed in the bottom under the olives. Perhaps you may have taken a loan of them for your business purposes; if that is so you are most welcome. I will only ask you to give me a receipt, and you can pay the money at your leisure."

The merchant, who had expected something of the sort, had his reply all ready. "Ali Cogia," he said, "when you brought me the vase of olives did I ever touch it?"

"I gave you the key of my shop and you put it yourself where you liked, and did you not find it in exactly the same spot and in the same state? If you placed any gold in it, it must be there still. I know nothing about that; you only told me there were olives. You can believe me or not, but I have not laid a finger on the vase."

Ali Cogia still tried every means to persuade the merchant to admit the truth. "I love peace," he said, "and shall deeply regret having to resort to harsh measures. Once more, think of your reputation. I shall be in despair if you oblige me to call in the aid of the law."

"Ali Cogia," answered the merchant, "you allow that it was a vase of olives you placed in my charge. You fetched it and removed it yourself, and now you tell me it contained a thousand pieces of gold, and that I must restore them to you! Did you ever say anything about them before? Why, I did not even know that the vase had olives in it! You never showed them to me. I wonder you have not demanded pearls or diamonds. Retire, I pray you, lest a crowd should gather in front of my shop."

By this time not only the casual passers-by, but also the neighbouring merchants, were standing round, listening to the dispute, and trying every now and then to smooth matters between them. But at the merchant's last words Ali Cogia resolved to lay the cause of the quarrel before them, and told them the whole story. They heard him to the end, and inquired of the merchant what he had to say.

The accused man admitted that he had kept Ali Cogia's vase in his shop; but he denied having touched it, and swore that as to what it contained he only knew what Ali Cogia had told him, and called them all to witness the insult that had been put upon him.

"You have brought it on yourself," said Ali Cogia, taking him by the arm, "and as you appeal to the law, the law you shall have! Let us see if you will dare to repeat your story before the Cadi."

Now as a good Mussulman the merchant was forbidden to refuse this choice of a judge, so he accepted the test, and said to Ali Cogia, "Very well; I should like nothing better. We shall soon see which of us is in the right."

So the two men presented themselves before the Cadi, and Ali Cogia again repeated his tale. The Cadi asked what witnesses he had. Ali Cogia replied that he had not taken this precaution, as he had considered the man his friend, and up to that time had always found him honest.

The merchant, on his side, stuck to his story, and offered to swear solemnly that not only had he never stolen the thousand gold pieces, but that he did not even know they were there. The Cadi allowed him to take the oath, and pronounced him innocent.

Ali Cogia, furious at having to suffer such a loss, protested against the verdict, declaring that he would appeal to the Caliph, Haroun-al-Raschid, himself. But the Cadi paid no attention to his threats, and was quite satisfied that he had done what was right.

Judgment being given the merchant returned home triumphant, and Ali Cogia went back to his inn to draw up a petition to the Caliph. The next morning he placed himself on the road along which the Caliph must pass after mid-day prayer, and stretched out his petition to the officer who walked before the Caliph, whose duty it was to collect such things, and on entering the palace to hand them to his master. There Haroun-al-Raschid studied them carefully.

Knowing this custom, Ali Cogia followed the Caliph into the public hall of the palace, and waited the result. After some time the officer appeared, and told him that the Caliph had read his petition, and had appointed an hour the next morning to give him audience. He then inquired the merchant's address, so that he might be summoned to attend also.

That very evening, the Caliph, with his grand-vizir Giafar, and Mesrour, chief of the eunuchs, all three disguised, as was their habit, went out to take a stroll through the town.

Going down one street, the Caliph’s attention was attracted by a noise, and looking through a door which opened into a court he perceived ten or twelve children playing in the moonlight. He hid himself in a dark corner, and watched them.

“Let us play at being the Cadi,” said the brightest and quickest of them all; “I will be the Cadi. Bring before me Ali Cogia, and the merchant who robbed him of the thousand pieces of gold.”

The boy’s words recalled to the Caliph the petition he had read that morning, and he waited with interest to see what the children would do.

The proposal was hailed with joy by the other children, who had heard a great deal of talk about the matter, and they quickly settled the part each one was to play. The Cadi took his seat gravely, and an officer introduced first Ali Cogia, the plaintiff, and then the merchant who was the defendant.

Ali Cogia made a low bow, and pleaded his cause point by point; concluding by imploring the Cadi not to inflict on him such a heavy loss.

The Cadi having heard his case, turned to the merchant, and inquired why he had not repaid Ali Cogia the sum in question.

The false merchant repeated the reasons that the real merchant had given to the Cadi of Bagdad, and also offered to swear that he had told the truth.

“Stop a moment!” said the little Cadi, “before we come to oaths, I should like to examine the vase with the olives. Ali Cogia,” he added, “have you got the vase with you?” and finding he had not, the Cadi continued, “Go and get it, and bring it to me.”

So Ali Cogia disappeared for an instant, and then pretended to lay a vase at the feet of the Cadi, declaring it was his vase, which he had given to the accused for safe custody; and in order to be quite correct, the Cadi asked the merchant if he recognised it as the same vase. By his silence the merchant admitted the fact, and the Cadi then commanded to have the vase opened. Ali Cogia made a movement as if he was taking off the lid, and the little Cadi on his part made a pretence of peering into a vase.

“What beautiful olives!” he said, “I should like to taste one,” and pretending to put one in his mouth, he added, “they are really excellent!

“But,” he went on, “it seems to me odd that olives seven years old should be as good as that! Send for some dealers in olives, and let us hear what they say!”

Two children were presented to him as olive merchants, and the Cadi addressed them. “Tell me,” he said, “how long can olives be kept so as to be pleasant eating?”

"My lord," replied the merchants, "however much care is taken to preserve them, they never last beyond the third year. They lose both taste and colour, and are only fit to be thrown away."

"If that is so," answered the little Cadi, "examine this vase, and tell me how long the olives have been in it."

The olive merchants pretended to examine the olives and taste them; then reported to the Cadi that they were fresh and good.

"You are mistaken," said he, "Ali Cogia declares he put them in that vase seven years ago."

"My lord," returned the olive merchants, "we can assure you that the olives are those of the present year. And if you consult all the merchants in Bagdad you will not find one to give a contrary opinion."

The accused merchant opened his mouth as if to protest, but the Cadi gave him no time. "Be silent," he said, "you are a thief. Take him away and hang him." So the game ended, the children clapping their hands in applause, and leading the criminal away to be hanged.

Haroun-al-Raschid was lost in astonishment at the wisdom of the child, who had given so wise a verdict on the case which he himself was to hear on the morrow. "Is there any other verdict possible?" he asked the grand-vizir, who was as much impressed as himself. "I can imagine no better judgment."

"If the circumstances are really such as we have heard," replied the grand-vizir, "it seems to me your Highness could only follow the example of this boy, in the method of reasoning, and also in your conclusions."

"Then take careful note of this house," said the Caliph, "and bring me the boy to-morrow, so that the affair may be tried by him in my presence. Summon also the Cadi, to learn his duty from the mouth of a child. Bid Ali Cogia bring his vase of olives, and see that two dealers in olives are present." So saying the Caliph returned to the palace.

The next morning early, the grand-vizir went back to the house where they had seen the children playing, and asked for the mistress and her children. Three boys appeared, and the grand-vizir inquired which had represented the Cadi in their game of the previous evening. The eldest and tallest, changing colour, confessed that it was he, and to his mother's great alarm, the grand-vizir said that he had strict orders to bring him into the presence of the Caliph.

"Does he want to take my son from me?" cried the poor woman; but the grand-vizir hastened to calm her, by assuring her that she should have the boy again in an hour, and she would be quite satisfied when she knew the reason of the summons. So she dressed the boy in his best clothes, and the two left the house.

When the grand-vizir presented the child to the Caliph, he was a little awed and confused, and the Caliph proceeded to explain why he had sent for him. “Approach, my son,” he said kindly. “I think it was you who judged the case of Ali Cogia and the merchant last night? I overheard you by chance, and was very pleased with the way you conducted it. To-day you will see the real Ali Cogia and the real merchant. Seat yourself at once next to me.”

The Caliph being seated on his throne with the boy next him, the parties to the suit were ushered in. One by one they prostrated themselves, and touched the carpet at the foot of the throne with their foreheads. When they rose up, the Caliph said: “Now speak. This child will give you justice, and if more should be wanted I will see to it myself.”

Ali Cogia and the merchant pleaded one after the other, but when the merchant offered to swear the same oath that he had taken before the Cadi, he was stopped by the child, who said that before this was done he must first see the vase of olives.

At these words, Ali Cogia presented the vase to the Caliph, and uncovered it. The Caliph took one of the olives, tasted it, and ordered the expert merchants to do the same. They pronounced the olives good, and fresh that year. The boy informed them that Ali Cogia declared it was seven years since he had placed them in the vase; to which they returned the same answer as the children had done.

The accused merchant saw by this time that his condemnation was certain, and tried to allege something in his defence. The boy had too much sense to order him to be hanged, and looked at the Caliph, saying, “Commander of the Faithful, this is not a game now; it is for your Highness to condemn him to death and not for me.”

Then the Caliph, convinced that the man was a thief, bade them take him away and hang him, which was done, but not before he had confessed his guilt and the place in which he had hidden Ali Cogia’s money. The Caliph ordered the Cadi to learn how to deal out justice from the mouth of a child, and sent the boy home, with a purse containing a hundred pieces of gold as a mark of his favour.

The Enchanted Horse

It was the Feast of the New Year, the oldest and most splendid of all the feasts in the Kingdom of Persia, and the day had been spent by the king in the city of Schiraz, taking part in the magnificent spectacles prepared by his subjects to do honour to the festival. The sun was setting, and the monarch was about to give his court the signal to retire, when suddenly an Indian appeared before his throne, leading a horse richly harnessed, and looking in every respect exactly like a real one.

“Sire,” said he, prostrating himself as he spoke, “although I make my appearance so late before your Highness, I can confidently assure you that none of the wonders you have seen during the day can be compared to this horse, if you will deign to cast your eyes upon him.”

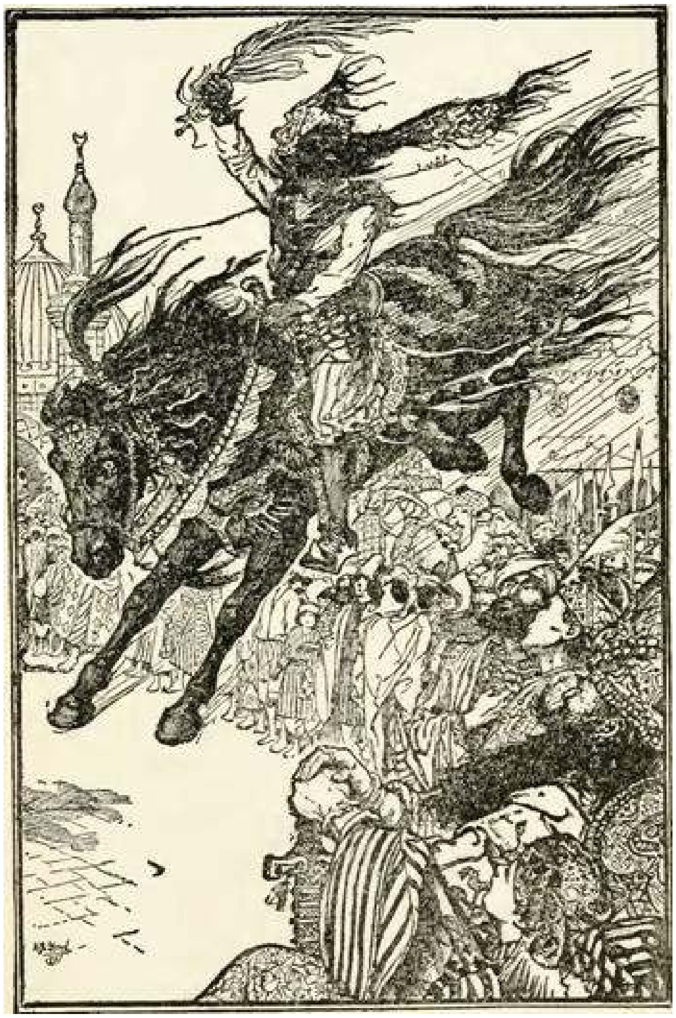

“I see nothing in it,” replied the king, “except a clever imitation of a real one; and any skilled workman might do as much.”

“Sire,” returned the Indian, “it is not of his outward form that I would speak, but of the use that I can make of him. I have only to mount him, and to wish myself in some special place, and no matter how distant it may be, in a very few moments I shall find myself there. It is this, Sire, that makes the horse so marvellous, and if your Highness will allow me, you can prove it for yourself.”

The King of Persia, who was interested in every thing out of the common, and had never before come across a horse with such qualities, bade the Indian mount the animal, and show what he could do. In an instant the man had vaulted on his back, and inquired where the monarch wished to send him.

“Do you see that mountain?” asked the king, pointing to a huge mass that towered into the sky about three leagues from Schiraz; “go and bring me the leaf of a palm that grows at the foot.”

The words were hardly out of the king’s mouth when the Indian turned a screw placed in the horse’s neck, close to the saddle, and the animal bounded like lightning up into the air, and was soon beyond the sight even of the sharpest eyes. In a quarter of an hour the Indian was seen returning, bearing in his hand the palm, and, guiding his horse to the foot of the throne, he dismounted, and laid the leaf before the king.

Now the monarch had no sooner proved the astonishing speed of which the horse was capable than he longed to possess it himself, and indeed, so sure was he that the Indian would be quite ready to sell it, that he looked upon it as his own already.

“I never guessed from his mere outside how valuable an animal he was,” he remarked to the Indian, “and I am grateful to you for having shown me my error,” said he. “If you will sell it, name your own price.”

“Sire,” replied the Indian, “I never doubted that a sovereign so wise and accomplished as your Highness would do justice to my horse, when he once knew its power; and I even went so far as to think it probable that you might wish to possess it. Greatly as I prize it, I will yield it up to your Highness on one condition. The horse was not constructed by me, but it was given me by the inventor, in exchange for my only daughter, who made me take a solemn oath that I would never part with it, except for some object of equal value.”

“Name anything you like,” cried the monarch, interrupting him. “My kingdom is large, and filled with fair cities. You have only to choose which you would prefer, to become its ruler to the end of your life.”

“Sire,” answered the Indian, to whom the proposal did not seem nearly so generous as it appeared to the king, “I am most grateful to your Highness for your princely offer, and beseech you not to be offended with me if I say that I can only deliver up my horse in exchange for the hand of the princess your daughter.”

A shout of laughter burst from the courtiers as they heard these words, and Prince Firouz Schah, the heir apparent, was filled with anger at the Indian’s presumption. The king, however, thought that it would not cost him much to part from the princess in order to gain such a delightful toy, and while he was hesitating as to his answer the prince broke in.

“Sire,” he said, “it is not possible that you can doubt for an instant what reply you should give to such an insolent bargain. Consider what you owe to yourself, and to the blood of your ancestors.”

“My son,” replied the king, “you speak nobly, but you do not realise either the value of the horse, or the fact that if I reject the proposal of the Indian, he will only make the same to some other monarch, and I should be filled with despair at the thought that anyone but myself should own this Seventh Wonder of the World. Of course I do not say that I shall accept his conditions, and perhaps he may be brought to reason, but meanwhile I should like you to examine the horse, and, with the owner's permission, to make trial of its powers."

The Indian, who had overheard the king's speech, thought that he saw in it signs of yielding to his proposal, so he joyfully agreed to the monarch's wishes, and came forward to help the prince to mount the horse, and show him how to guide it: but, before he had finished, the young man turned the screw, and was soon out of sight.

They waited some time, expecting that every moment he might be seen returning in the distance, but at length the Indian grew frightened, and prostrating himself before the throne, he said to the king, "Sire, your Highness must have noticed that the prince, in his impatience, did not allow me to tell him what it was necessary to do in order to return to the place from which he started. I implore you not to punish me for what was not my fault, and not to visit on me any misfortune that may occur."

"But why," cried the king in a burst of fear and anger, "why did you not call him back when you saw him disappearing?"

"Sire," replied the Indian, "the rapidity of his movements took me so by surprise that he was out of hearing before I recovered my speech. But we must hope that he will perceive and turn a second screw, which will have the effect of bringing the horse back to earth."

"But supposing he does!" answered the king, "what is to hinder the horse from descending straight into the sea, or dashing him to pieces on the rocks?"

"Have no fears, your Highness," said the Indian; "the horse has the gift of passing over seas, and of carrying his rider wherever he wishes to go."

"Well, your head shall answer for it," returned the monarch, "and if in three months he is not safe back with me, or at any rate does not send me news of his safety, your life shall pay the penalty." So saying, he ordered his guards to seize the Indian and throw him into prison.

Meanwhile, Prince Firouz Schah had gone gaily up into the air, and for the space of an hour continued to ascend higher and higher, till the very mountains were not distinguishable from the plains. Then he began to think it was time to come down, and took for granted that, in order to do this, it was only needful to turn the screw the reverse way; but, to his surprise and horror, he found that, turn as he might, he did not make the smallest impression. He then remembered that he had never waited to ask how he was to get back to earth again, and understood the danger in which he stood. Luckily, he did not lose his head, and set about examining the horse's neck with great care, till at last, to his intense joy, he discovered a tiny little peg, much smaller than the other, close to the right ear. This he turned, and found himself dropping to the earth, though more slowly than he had left it.

It was now dark, and as the prince could see nothing, he was obliged, not without some feeling of disquiet, to allow the horse to direct his own course, and midnight was already passed before Prince Firouz Schah again touched the ground, faint and weary from his long ride, and from the fact that he had eaten nothing since early morning.

The first thing he did on dismounting was to try to find out where he was, and, as far as he could discover in the thick darkness, he found himself on the terraced roof of a huge palace, with a balustrade of marble running round. In one corner of the terrace stood a small door, opening on to a staircase which led down into the palace.

Some people might have hesitated before exploring further, but not so the prince. “I am doing no harm,” he said, “and whoever the owner may be, he will not touch me when he sees I am unarmed,” and in dread of making a false step, he went cautiously down the staircase. On a landing, he noticed an open door, beyond which was a faintly lighted hall.

Before entering, the prince paused and listened, but he heard nothing except the sound of men snoring. By the light of a lantern suspended from the roof, he perceived a row of black guards sleeping, each with a naked sword lying by him, and he understood that the hall must form the ante-room to the chamber of some queen or princess.

Standing quite still, Prince Firouz Schah looked about him, till his eyes grew accustomed to the gloom, and he noticed a bright light shining through a curtain in one corner. He then made his way softly towards it, and, drawing aside its folds, passed into a magnificent chamber full of sleeping women, all lying on low couches, except one, who was on a sofa; and this one, he knew, must be the princess.

Gently stealing up to the side of her bed he looked at her, and saw that she was more beautiful than any woman he had ever beheld. But, fascinated though he was, he was well aware of the danger of his position, as one cry of surprise would awake the guards, and cause his certain death.

So sinking quietly on his knees, he took hold of the sleeve of the princess and drew her arm lightly towards him. The princess opened her eyes, and seeing before her a handsome well-dressed man, she remained speechless with astonishment.

This favourable moment was seized by the prince, who bowing low while he knelt, thus addressed her:

“You behold, madame, a prince in distress, son to the King of Persia, who, owing to an adventure so strange that you will scarcely believe it, finds himself here, a suppliant for your protection. But yesterday, I was in my father's court, engaged in the celebration of our most solemn festival; to-day, I am in an unknown land, in danger of my life."

Now the princess whose mercy Prince Firouz Schah implored was the eldest daughter of the King of Bengal, who was enjoying rest and change in the palace her father had built her, at a little distance from the capital. She listened kindly to what he had to say, and then answered:

"Prince, be not uneasy; hospitality and humanity are practised as widely in Bengal as they are in Persia. The protection you ask will be given you by all. You have my word for it." And as the prince was about to thank her for her goodness, she added quickly, "However great may be my curiosity to learn by what means you have travelled here so speedily, I know that you must be faint for want of food, so I shall give orders to my women to take you to one of my chambers, where you will be provided with supper, and left to repose."

By this time the princess's attendants were all awake, and listening to the conversation. At a sign from their mistress they rose, dressed themselves hastily, and snatching up some of the tapers which lighted the room, conducted the prince to a large and lofty room, where two of the number prepared his bed, and the rest went down to the kitchen, from which they soon returned with all sorts of dishes. Then, showing him cupboards filled with dresses and linen, they quitted the room.

During their absence the Princess of Bengal, who had been greatly struck by the beauty of the prince, tried in vain to go to sleep again. It was of no use: she felt broad awake, and when her women entered the room, she inquired eagerly if the prince had all he wanted, and what they thought of him.

"Madame," they replied, "it is of course impossible for us to tell what impression this young man has made on you. For ourselves, we think you would be fortunate if the king your father should allow you to marry anyone so amiable. Certainly there is no one in the Court of Bengal who can be compared with him."

These flattering observations were by no means displeasing to the princess, but as she did not wish to betray her own feelings she merely said, "You are all a set of chatterboxes; go back to bed, and let me sleep."

When she dressed the following morning, her maids noticed that, contrary to her usual habit, the princess was very particular about her toilette, and insisted on her hair being dressed two or three times over. "For," she said to herself, "if my appearance was not displeasing to the prince when he saw me in the condition I was, how much more will he be struck with me when he beholds me with all my charms."

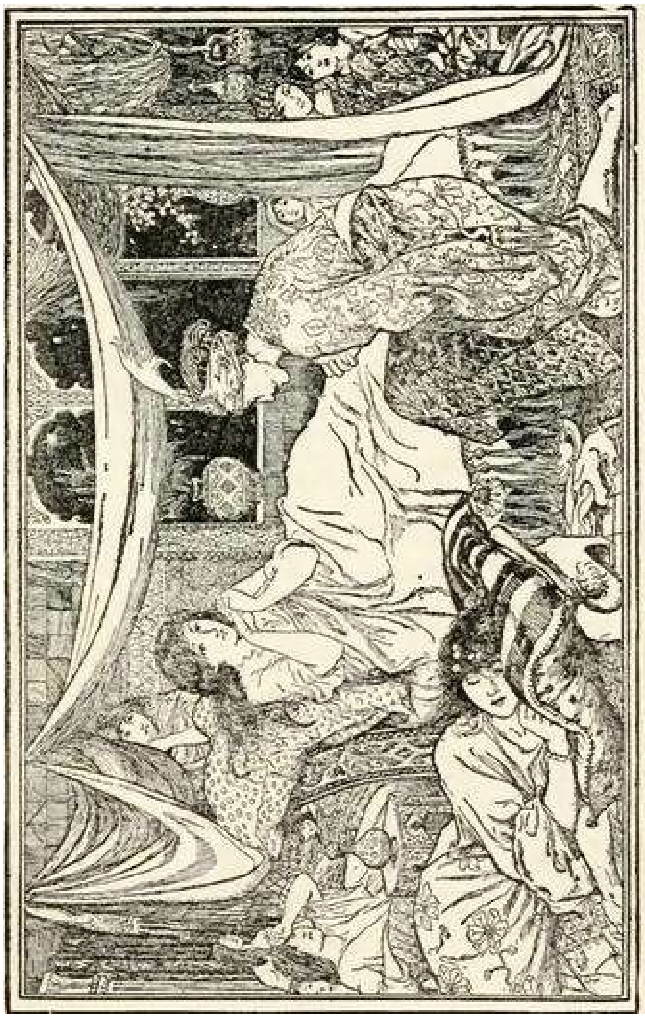

PRINCE FIROUZ SCHAH IN THE CHAMBER OF THE PRINCESS OF BENGAL

Then she placed in her hair the largest and most brilliant diamonds she could find, with a necklace, bracelets and girdle, all of precious stones. And over her shoulders her ladies put a robe of the richest stuff in all the Indies, that no one was allowed to wear except members of the royal family. When she was fully dressed according to her wishes, she sent to know if the Prince of Persia was awake and ready to receive her, as she desired to present herself before him.

When the princess's messenger entered his room, Prince Firouz Schah was in the act of leaving it, to inquire if he might be allowed to pay his homage to her mistress: but on hearing the princess's wishes, he at once gave way. "Her will is my law," he said, "I am only here to obey her orders."

In a few moments the princess herself appeared, and after the usual compliments had passed between them, the princess sat down on a sofa, and began to explain to the prince her reasons for not giving him an audience in her own apartments. "Had I done so," she said, "we might have been interrupted at any hour by the chief of the eunuchs, who has the right to enter whenever it pleases him, whereas this is forbidden ground. I am all impatience to learn the wonderful accident which has procured the pleasure of your arrival, and that is why I have come to you here, where no one can intrude upon us. Begin then, I entreat you, without delay.”

So the prince began at the beginning, and told all the story of the festival of Nedrouz held yearly in Persia, and of the splendid spectacles celebrated in its honour. But when he came to the enchanted horse, the princess declared that she could never have imagined anything half so surprising. “Well then,” continued the prince, “you can easily understand how the King my father, who has a passion for all curious things, was seized with a violent desire to possess this horse, and asked the Indian what sum he would take for it.

“The man’s answer was absolutely absurd, as you will agree, when I tell you that it was nothing less than the hand of the princess my sister; but though all the bystanders laughed and mocked, and I was beside myself with rage, I saw to my despair that my father could not make up his mind to treat the insolent proposal as it deserved. I tried to argue with him, but in vain. He only begged me to examine the horse with a view (as I quite understood) of making me more sensible of its value.”

“To please my father, I mounted the horse, and, without waiting for any instructions from the Indian, turned the peg as I had seen him do. In an instant I was soaring upwards, much quicker than an arrow could fly, and I felt as if I must be getting so near the sky that I should soon hit my head against it! I could see nothing beneath me, and for some time was so confused that I did not even know in what direction I was travelling. At last, when it was growing dark, I found another screw, and on turning it, the horse began slowly to sink towards the earth. I was forced to trust to chance, and to see what fate had in store, and it was already past midnight when I found myself on the roof of this palace. I crept down the little staircase, and made directly for a light which I perceived through an open door — I peeped cautiously in, and saw, as you will guess, the eunuchs lying asleep on the floor. I knew the risks I ran, but my need was so great that I paid no attention to them, and stole safely past your guards, to the curtain which concealed your doorway.

“The rest, Princess, you know; and it only remains for me to thank you for the kindness you have shown me, and to assure you of my gratitude. By the law of nations, I am already your slave, and I have only my heart, that is my own, to offer you. But what am I saying? My own? Alas, madame, it was yours from the first moment I beheld you!”

The air with which he said these words could have left no doubt on the mind of the princess as to the effect of her charms, and the blush which mounted to her face only increased her beauty.

“Prince,” returned she as soon as her confusion permitted her to speak, “you have given me the greatest pleasure, and I have followed you closely in all your adventures, and though you are positively sitting before me, I even trembled at your danger in the upper regions of the air! Let me say what a debt I owe to the chance that has led you to my house; you could have entered none which would have given you a warmer welcome. As to your being a slave, of course that is merely a joke, and my reception must itself have assured you that you are as free here as at your father’s court. As to your heart,” continued she in tones of encouragement, “I am quite sure that must have been disposed of long ago, to some princess who is well worthy of it, and I could not think of being the cause of your unfaithfulness to her.”

Prince Firouz Schah was about to protest that there was no lady with any prior claims, but he was stopped by the entrance of one of the princess’s attendants, who announced that dinner was served, and, after all, neither was sorry for the interruption.

Dinner was laid in a magnificent apartment, and the table was covered with delicious fruits; while during the repast richly dressed girls sang softly and sweetly to stringed instruments. After the prince and princess had finished, they passed into a small room hung with blue and gold, looking out into a garden stocked with flowers and arbutus trees, quite different from any that were to be found in Persia.

“Princess,” observed the young man, “till now I had always believed that Persia could boast finer palaces and more lovely gardens than any kingdom upon earth. But my eyes have been opened, and I begin to perceive that, wherever there is a great king he will surround himself with buildings worthy of him.”

“Prince,” replied the Princess of Bengal, “I have no idea what a Persian palace is like, so I am unable to make comparisons. I do not wish to depreciate my own palace, but I can assure you that it is very poor beside that of the King my father, as you will agree when you have been there to greet him, as I hope you will shortly do.”

Now the princess hoped that, by bringing about a meeting between the prince and her father, the King would be so struck with the young man’s distinguished air and fine manners, that he would offer him his daughter to wife. But the reply of the Prince of Persia to her suggestion was not quite what she wished.

“Madame,” he said, “by taking advantage of your proposal to visit the palace of the King of Bengal, I should satisfy not merely my curiosity, but also the sentiments of respect with which I regard him. But, Princess, I am persuaded that you will feel with me, that I cannot possibly present myself before so great a sovereign without the attendants suitable to my rank. He would think me an adventurer."

"If that is all," she answered, "you can get as many attendants here as you please. There are plenty of Persian merchants, and as for money, my treasury is always open to you. Take what you please."

Prince Firouz Schah guessed what prompted so much kindness on the part of the princess, and was much touched by it. Still his passion, which increased every moment, did not make him forget his duty. So he replied without hesitation:

"I do not know, Princess, how to express my gratitude for your obliging offer, which I would accept at once if it were not for the recollection of all the uneasiness the King my father must be suffering on my account. I should be unworthy indeed of all the love he showers upon me, if I did not return to him at the first possible moment. For, while I am enjoying the society of the most amiable of all princesses, he is, I am quite convinced, plunged in the deepest grief, having lost all hope of seeing me again. I am sure you will understand my position, and will feel that to remain away one instant longer than is necessary would not only be ungrateful on my part, but perhaps even a crime, for how do I know if my absence may not break his heart?

"But," continued the prince, "having obeyed the voice of my conscience, I shall count the moments when, with your gracious permission, I may present myself before the King of Bengal, not as a wanderer, but as a prince, to implore the favour of your hand. My father has always informed me that in my marriage I shall be left quite free, but I am persuaded that I have only to describe your generosity, for my wishes to become his own."

The Princess of Bengal was too reasonable not to accept the explanation offered by Prince Firouz Schah, but she was much disturbed at his intention of departing at once, for she feared that, no sooner had he left her, than the impression she had made on him would fade away. So she made one more effort to keep him, and after assuring him that she entirely approved of his anxiety to see his father, begged him to give her a day or two more of his company.

In common politeness the prince could hardly refuse this request, and the princess set about inventing every kind of amusement for him, and succeeded so well that two months slipped by almost unnoticed, in balls, spectacles and in hunting, of which, when unattended by danger, the princess was passionately fond. But at last, one day, he declared seriously that he could neglect his duty no longer, and entreated her to put no further obstacles in his way, promising at the same time to return, as soon as he could, with all the magnificence due both to her and to himself.

"Princess," he added, "it may be that in your heart you class me with those false lovers whose devotion cannot stand the test of absence. If you do, you wrong me; and were it not for fear of offending you, I would beseech you to come with me, for my life can only be happy when passed with you. As for your reception at the Persian Court, it will be as warm as your merits deserve; and as for what concerns the King of Bengal, he must be much more indifferent to your welfare than you have led me to believe if he does not give his consent to our marriage."

The princess could not find words in which to reply to the arguments of the Prince of Persia, but her silence and her downcast eyes spoke for her, and declared that she had no objection to accompanying him on his travels.

The only difficulty that occurred to her was that Prince Firouz Schah did not know how to manage the horse, and she dreaded lest they might find themselves in the same plight as before. But the prince soothed her fears so successfully, that she soon had no other thought than to arrange for their flight so secretly, that no one in the palace should suspect it.

This was done, and early the following morning, when the whole palace was wrapped in sleep, she stole up on to the roof, where the prince was already awaiting her, with his horse's head towards Persia. He mounted first and helped the princess up behind; then, when she was firmly seated, with her hands holding tightly to his belt, he touched the screw, and the horse began to leave the earth quickly behind him.

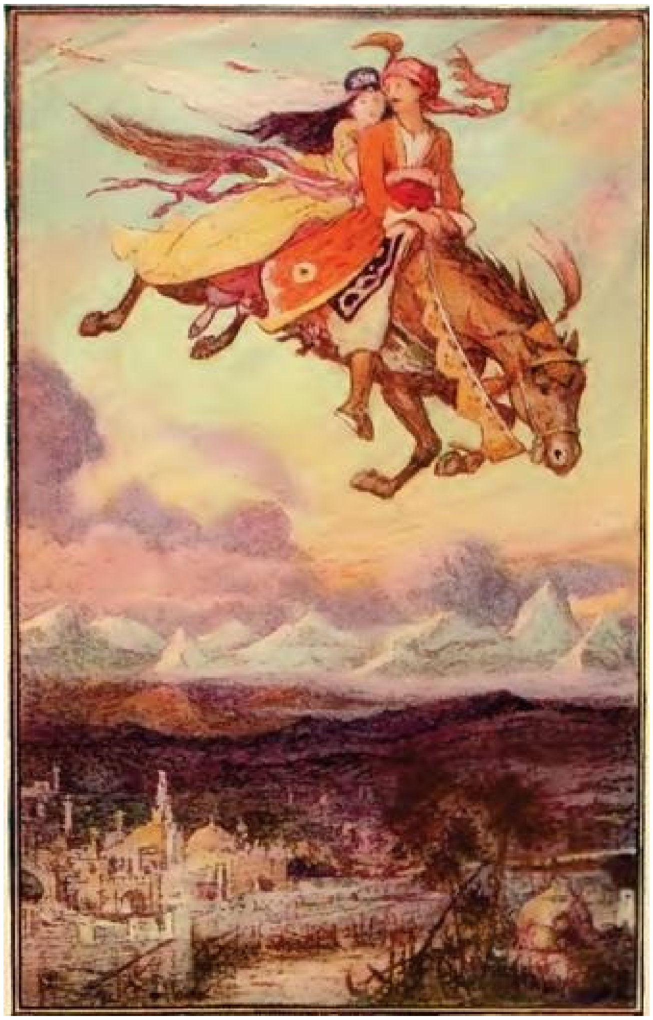

He travelled with his accustomed speed, and Prince Firouz Schah guided him so well that in two hours and a half from the time of starting, he saw the capital of Persia lying beneath him. He determined to alight neither in the great square from which he had started, nor in the Sultan's palace, but in a country house at a little distance from the town. Here he showed the princess a beautiful suite of rooms, and begged her to rest, while he informed his father of their arrival, and prepared a public reception worthy of her rank. Then he ordered a horse to be saddled, and set out.

All the way through the streets he was welcomed with shouts of joy by the people, who had long lost all hope of seeing him again. On reaching the palace, he found the Sultan surrounded by his ministers, all clad in the deepest mourning, and his father almost went out of his mind with surprise and delight at the mere sound of his son's voice. When he had calmed down a little, he begged the prince to relate his adventures.

The prince at once seized the opening thus given him, and told the whole story of his treatment by the Princess of Bengal, not even concealing the fact that she had fallen in love with him. “And, Sire,” ended the prince, “having given my royal word that you would not refuse your consent to our marriage, I persuaded her to return with me on the Indian’s horse. I have left her in one of your Highness’s country houses, where she is waiting anxiously to be assured that I have not promised in vain.”

As he said this the prince was about to throw himself at the feet of the Sultan, but his father prevented him, and embracing him again, said eagerly:

“My son, not only do I gladly consent to your marriage with the Princess of Bengal, but I will hasten to pay my respects to her, and to thank her in my own person for the benefits she has conferred on you. I will then bring her back with me, and make all arrangements for the wedding to be celebrated to-day.”

So the Sultan gave orders that the habits of mourning worn by the people should be thrown off and that there should be a concert of drums, trumpets and cymbals. Also that the Indian should be taken from prison, and brought before him.

His commands were obeyed, and the Indian was led into his presence, surrounded by guards. “I have kept you locked up,” said the Sultan, “so that in case my son was lost, your life should pay the penalty. He has now returned; so take your horse, and begone for ever.”

The Indian hastily quitted the presence of the Sultan, and when he was outside, he inquired of the man who had taken him out of prison where the prince had really been all this time, and what he had been doing. They told him the whole story, and how the Princess of Bengal was even then awaiting in the country palace the consent of the Sultan, which at once put into the Indian’s head a plan of revenge for the treatment he had experienced. Going straight to the country house, he informed the doorkeeper who was left in charge that he had been sent by the Sultan and by the Prince of Persia to fetch the princess on the enchanted horse, and to bring her to the palace.

The doorkeeper knew the Indian by sight, and was of course aware that nearly three months before he had been thrown into prison by the Sultan; and seeing him at liberty, the man took for granted that he was speaking the truth, and made no difficulty about leading him before the Princess of Bengal; while on her side, hearing that he had come from the prince, the lady gladly consented to do what he wished.

The Indian, delighted with the success of his scheme, mounted the horse, assisted the princess to mount behind him, and turned the peg at the very moment that the prince was leaving the palace in Schiraz for the country house, followed closely by the Sultan and all the court. Knowing this, the Indian deliberately steered the horse right above the city, in order that his revenge for his unjust imprisonment might be all the quicker and sweeter.

When the Sultan of Persia saw the horse and its riders, he stopped short with astonishment and horror, and broke out into oaths and curses, which the Indian heard quite unmoved, knowing that he was perfectly safe from pursuit. But mortified and furious as the Sultan was, his feelings were nothing to those of Prince Firouz Schah, when he saw the object of his passionate devotion being borne rapidly away. And while he was struck speechless with grief and remorse at not having guarded her better, she vanished swiftly out of his sight. What was he to do? Should he follow his father into the palace, and there give reins to his despair? Both his love and his courage alike forbade it; and he continued his way to the palace.

The sight of the prince showed the doorkeeper of what folly he had been guilty, and flinging himself at his master's feet, implored his pardon. "Rise," said the prince, "I am the cause of this misfortune, and not you. Go and find me the dress of a dervish, but beware of saying it is for me."

At a short distance from the country house, a convent of dervishes was situated, and the superior, or scheih, was the doorkeeper's friend. So by means of a false story made up on the spur of the moment, it was easy enough to get hold of a dervish's dress, which the prince at once put on, instead of his own. Disguised like this and concealing about him a box of pearls and diamonds he had intended as a present to the princess, he left the house at nightfall, uncertain where he should go, but firmly resolved not to return without her.

Meanwhile the Indian had turned the horse in such a direction that, before many hours had passed, it had entered a wood close to the capital of the kingdom of Cashmere. Feeling very hungry, and supposing that the princess also might be in want of food, he brought his steed down to the earth, and left the princess in a shady place, on the banks of a clear stream.

At first, when the princess had found herself alone, the idea had occurred to her of trying to escape and hide herself. But as she had eaten scarcely anything since she had left Bengal, she felt she was too weak to venture far, and was obliged to abandon her design. On the return of the Indian with meats of various kinds, she began to eat voraciously, and soon had regained sufficient courage to reply with spirit to his insolent remarks. Goaded by his threats she sprang to her feet, calling loudly for help, and luckily her cries were heard by a troop of horsemen, who rode up to inquire what was the matter.

Now the leader of these horsemen was the Sultan of Cashmere, returning from the chase, and he instantly turned to the Indian to inquire who he was, and whom he had with him. The Indian rudely answered that it was his wife, and there was no occasion for anyone else to interfere between them.

The princess, who, of course, was ignorant of the rank of her deliverer, denied altogether the Indian’s story. “My lord,” she cried, “whoever you may be, put no faith in this impostor. He is an abominable magician, who has this day torn me from the Prince of Persia, my destined husband, and has brought me here on this enchanted horse.” She would have continued, but her tears choked her, and the Sultan of Cashmere, convinced by her beauty and her distinguished air of the truth of her tale, ordered his followers to cut off the Indian’s head, which was done immediately.

But rescued though she was from one peril, it seemed as if she had only fallen into another. The Sultan commanded a horse to be given her, and conducted her to his own palace, where he led her to a beautiful apartment, and selected female slaves to wait on her, and eunuchs to be her guard. Then, without allowing her time to thank him for all he had done, he bade her repose, saying she should tell him her adventures on the following day.

The princess fell asleep, flattering herself that she had only to relate her story for the Sultan to be touched by compassion, and to restore her to the prince without delay. But a few hours were to undeceive her.

When the King of Cashmere had quitted her presence the evening before, he had resolved that the sun should not set again without the princess becoming his wife, and at daybreak proclamation of his intention was made throughout the town, by the sound of drums, trumpets, cymbals, and other instruments calculated to fill the heart with joy. The Princess of Bengal was early awakened by the noise, but she did not for one moment imagine that it had anything to do with her, till the Sultan, arriving as soon as she was dressed to inquire after her health, informed her that the trumpet blasts she heard were part of the solemn marriage ceremonies, for which he begged her to prepare. This unexpected announcement caused the princess such terror that she sank down in a dead faint.

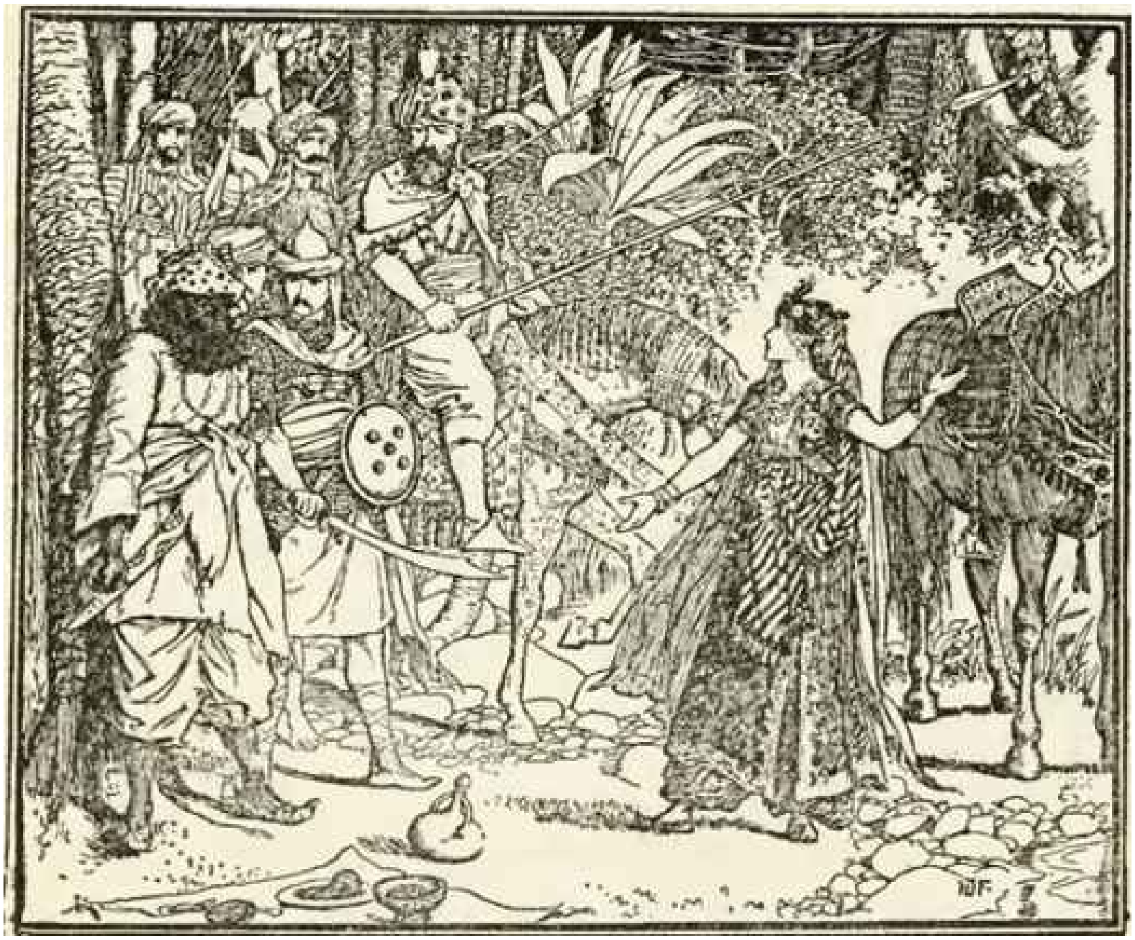

The slaves that were in waiting ran to her aid, and the Sultan himself did his best to bring her back to consciousness, but for a long while it was all to no purpose. At length her senses began slowly to come back to her, and then, rather than break faith with the Prince of Persia by consenting to such a marriage, she determined to feign madness. So she began by saying all sorts of absurdities, and using all kinds of strange gestures, while the Sultan stood watching her with sorrow and surprise. But as this sudden seizure showed no sign of abating, he left her to her women, ordering them to take the greatest care of her. Still, as the day went on, the malady seemed to become worse, and by night it was almost violent.

Days passed in this manner, till at last the Sultan of Cashmere decided to summon all the doctors of his court to consult together over her sad state. Their answer was that madness is of so many different kinds that it was impossible to give an opinion on the case without seeing the princess, so the Sultan gave orders that they were to be introduced into her chamber, one by one, every man according to his rank.

This decision had been foreseen by the princess, who knew quite well that if once she allowed the physicians to feel her pulse, the most ignorant of them would discover that she was in perfectly good health, and that her madness was feigned, so as each man approached, she broke out into such violent paroxysms, that not one dared to lay a finger on her. A few, who pretended to be cleverer than the rest, declared that they could diagnose sick people only from sight, ordered her certain potions, which she made no difficulty about taking, as she was persuaded they were all harmless.

When the Sultan of Cashmere saw that the court doctors could do nothing towards curing the princess, he called in those of the city, who fared no better. Then he had recourse to the most celebrated physicians in the other large towns, but finding that the task was beyond their science, he finally sent messengers into the other neighbouring states, with a memorandum containing full particulars of the princess's madness, offering at the same time to pay the expenses of any physician who would come and see for himself, and a handsome reward to the one who should cure her. In answer to this proclamation many foreign professors flocked into Cashmere, but they naturally were not more successful than the rest had been, as the cure depended neither on them nor their skill, but only on the princess herself.

It was during this time that Prince Firouz Schah, wandering sadly and hopelessly from place to place, arrived in a large city of India, where he heard a great deal of talk about the Princess of Bengal who had gone out of her senses, on the very day that she was to have been married to the Sultan of Cashmere. This was quite enough to induce him to take the road to Cashmere, and to inquire at the first inn at which he lodged in the capital the full particulars of the story. When he knew that he had at last found the princess whom he had so long lost, he set about devising a plan for her rescue.

The first thing he did was to procure a doctor's robe, so that his dress, added to the long beard he had allowed to grow on his travels, might unmistakably proclaim his profession. He then lost no time in going to the palace, where he obtained an audience of the chief usher, and while apologising for his boldness in presuming to think that he could cure the princess, where so many others had failed, declared that he had the secret of certain remedies, which had hitherto never failed of their effect.

The chief usher assured him that he was heartily welcome, and that the Sultan would receive him with pleasure; and in case of success, he would gain a magnificent reward.

When the Prince of Persia, in the disguise of a physician, was brought before him, the Sultan wasted no time in talking, beyond remarking that the mere sight of a doctor threw the princess into transports of rage. He then led the prince up to a room under the roof, which had an opening through which he might observe the princess, without himself being seen.

The prince looked, and beheld the princess reclining on a sofa with tears in her eyes, singing softly to herself a song bewailing her sad destiny, which had deprived her, perhaps for ever, of a being she so tenderly loved. The young man's heart beat fast as he listened, for he needed no further proof that her madness was feigned, and that it was love of him which had caused her to resort to this species of trick. He softly left his hiding-place, and returned to the Sultan, to whom he reported that he was sure from certain signs that the princess's malady was not incurable, but that he must see her and speak with her alone.

The Sultan made no difficulty in consenting to this, and commanded that he should be ushered in to the princess's apartment. The moment she caught sight of his physician's robe, she sprang from her seat in a fury, and heaped insults upon him. The prince took no notice of her behaviour, and approaching quite close, so that his words might be heard by her alone, he said in a low whisper, "Look at me, princess, and you will see that I am no doctor, but the Prince of Persia, who has come to set you free."

At the sound of his voice, the Princess of Bengal suddenly grew calm, and an expression of joy overspread her face, such as only comes when what we wish for most and expect the least suddenly happens to us. For some time she was too enchanted to speak, and Prince Firouz Schah took advantage of her silence to explain to her all that had occurred, his despair at watching her disappear before his very eyes, the oath he had sworn to follow her over the world, and his rapture at finally discovering her in the palace at Cashmere. When he had finished, he begged in his turn that the princess would tell him how she had come there, so that he might the better devise some means of rescuing her from the tyranny of the Sultan.

It needed but a few words from the princess to make him acquainted with the whole situation, and how she had been forced to play the part of a mad woman in order to escape from a marriage with the Sultan, who had not had sufficient politeness even to ask her consent. If necessary, she added, she had resolved to die sooner than permit herself to be forced into such a union, and break faith with a prince whom she loved.

The prince then inquired if she knew what had become of the enchanted horse since the Indian's death, but the princess could only reply that she had heard nothing about it. Still she did not suppose that the horse could have been forgotten by the Sultan, after all she had told him of its value.

To this the prince agreed, and they consulted together over a plan by which she might be able to make her escape and return with him into Persia. And as the first step, she was to dress herself with care, and receive the Sultan with civility when he visited her next morning.

The Sultan was transported with delight on learning the result of the interview, and his opinion of the doctor's skill was raised still higher when, on the following day, the princess behaved towards him in such a way as to persuade him that her complete cure would not be long delayed. However he contented himself with assuring her how happy he was to see her health so much improved, and exhorted her to make every use of so clever a physician, and to repose entire confidence in him. Then he retired, without awaiting any reply from the princess.

The Prince of Persia left the room at the same time, and asked if he might be allowed humbly to inquire by what means the Princess of Bengal had reached Cashmere, which was so far distant from her father's kingdom, and how she came to be there alone. The Sultan thought the question very natural, and told him the same story that the Princess of Bengal had done, adding that he had ordered the enchanted horse to be taken to his treasury as a curiosity, though he was quite ignorant how it could be used.

"Sire," replied the physician, "your Highness's tale has supplied me with the clue I needed to complete the recovery of the princess. During her voyage hither on an enchanted horse, a portion of its enchantment has by some means been communicated to her person, and it can only be dissipated by certain perfumes of which I possess the secret. If your Highness will deign to consent, and to give the court and the people one of the most astonishing spectacles they have ever witnessed, command the horse to be brought into the big square outside the palace, and leave the rest to me. I promise that in a very few moments, in presence of all the assembled multitude, you shall see the princess as healthy both in mind and body as ever she was in her life. And in order to make the spectacle as impressive as possible, I would suggest that she should be richly dressed and covered with the noblest jewels of the crown."

The Sultan readily agreed to all that the prince proposed, and the following morning he desired that the enchanted horse should be taken from the treasury, and brought into the great square of the palace. Soon the rumour began to spread through the town, that something extraordinary was about to happen, and such a crowd began to collect that the guards had to be called out to keep order, and to make a way for the enchanted horse.

When all was ready, the Sultan appeared, and took his place on a platform, surrounded by the chief nobles and officers of his court. When they were seated, the Princess of Bengal was seen leaving the palace, accompanied by the ladies who had been assigned to her by the Sultan. She slowly approached the enchanted horse, and with the help of her ladies, she mounted on its back. Directly she was in the saddle, with her feet in the stirrups and the bridle in her hand, the physician placed around the horse some large braziers full of burning coals, into each of which he threw a perfume composed of all sorts of delicious scents. Then he crossed his hands over his breast, and with lowered eyes walked three times round the horse, muttering the while certain words. Soon there arose from the burning braziers a thick smoke which almost concealed both the horse and princess, and this was the moment for which he had been waiting. Springing lightly up behind the lady, he leaned forward and turned the peg, and as the horse darted up into the air, he cried aloud so that his words were heard by all present, "Sultan of Cashmere, when you wish to marry princesses who have sought your protection, learn first to gain their consent."

It was in this way that the Prince of Persia rescued the Princess of Bengal, and returned with her to Persia, where they descended this time before the palace of the King himself. The marriage was only delayed just long enough to make the ceremony as brilliant as possible, and, as soon as the rejoicings were over, an ambassador was sent to the King of Bengal, to inform him of what had passed, and to ask his approbation of the alliance between the two countries, which he heartily gave.

The Story of Two Sisters Who Were Jealous of Their Younger Sister

Once upon a time there reigned over Persia a Sultan named Kosrouschah, who from his boyhood had been fond of putting on a disguise and seeking adventures in all parts of the city, accompanied by one of his officers, disguised like himself. And no sooner was his father buried and the ceremonies over that marked his accession to the throne, than the young man hastened to throw off his robes of state, and calling to his vizir to make ready likewise, stole out in the simple dress of a private citizen into the less known streets of the capital.

Passing down a lonely street, the Sultan heard women's voices in loud discussion; and peeping through a crack in the door, he saw three sisters, sitting on a sofa in a large hall, talking in a very lively and earnest manner. Judging from the few words that reached his ear, they were each explaining what sort of men they wished to marry.

"I ask nothing better," cried the eldest, "than to have the Sultan's baker for a husband. Think of being able to eat as much as one wanted, of that delicious bread that is baked for his Highness alone! Let us see if your wish is as good as mine."

"I," replied the second sister, "should be quite content with the Sultan's head cook. What delicate stews I should feast upon! And, as I am persuaded that the Sultan's bread is used all through the palace, I should have that into the bargain. You see, my dear sister, my taste is as good as yours."

It was now the turn of the youngest sister, who was by far the most beautiful of the three, and had, besides, more sense than the other two. "As for me," she said, "I should take a higher flight; and if we are to wish for husbands, nothing less than the Sultan himself will do for me."

The Sultan was so much amused by the conversation he had overheard, that he made up his mind to gratify their wishes, and turning to the grand-vizir, he bade him note the house, and on the following morning to bring the ladies into his presence.

The grand-vizir fulfilled his commission, and hardly giving them time to change their dresses, desired the three sisters to follow him to the palace. Here they were presented one by one, and when they had bowed before the Sultan, the sovereign abruptly put the question to them:

"Tell me, do you remember what you wished for last night, when you were making merry? Fear nothing, but answer me the truth."

These words, which were so unexpected, threw the sisters into great confusion, their eyes fell, and the blushes of the youngest did not fail to make an impression on the heart of the Sultan. All three remained silent, and he hastened to continue: "Do not be afraid, I have not the slightest intention of giving you pain, and let me tell you at once, that I know the wishes formed by each one. You," he said, turning to the youngest, "who desired to have me for an husband, shall be satisfied this very day. And you," he added, addressing himself to the other two, "shall be married at the same moment to my baker and to my chief cook."

When the Sultan had finished speaking the three sisters flung themselves at his feet, and the youngest faltered out, "Oh, sire, since you know my foolish words, believe, I pray you, that they were only said in joke. I am unworthy of the honour you propose to do me, and I can only ask pardon for my boldness."

The other sisters also tried to excuse themselves, but the Sultan would hear nothing.

"No, no," he said, "my mind is made up. Your wishes shall be accomplished."

So the three weddings were celebrated that same day, but with a great difference. That of the youngest was marked by all the magnificence that was customary at the marriage of the Shah of Persia, while the festivities attending the nuptials of the Sultan's baker and his chief cook were only such as were suitable to their conditions.

This, though quite natural, was highly displeasing to the elder sisters, who fell into a passion of jealousy, which in the end caused a great deal of trouble and pain to several people. And the first time that they had the opportunity of speaking to each other, which was not till several days later at a public bath, they did not attempt to disguise their feelings.

"Can you possibly understand what the Sultan saw in that little cat," said one to the other, "for him to be so fascinated by her?"

"He must be quite blind," returned the wife of the chief cook. "As for her looking a little younger than we do, what does that matter? You would have made a far better Sultana than she."

"Oh, I say nothing of myself," replied the elder, "and if the Sultan had chosen you it would have been all very well; but it really grieves me that he should have selected a wretched little creature like that. However, I will be revenged on her somehow, and I beg you will give me your help in the matter, and to tell me anything that you can think of that is likely to mortify her."

In order to carry out their wicked scheme the two sisters met constantly to talk over their ideas, though all the while they pretended to be as friendly as ever towards the Sultana, who, on her part, invariably treated them with kindness. For a long time no plan occurred to the two plotters that seemed in the least likely to meet with success, but at length the expected birth of an heir gave them the chance for which they had been hoping.

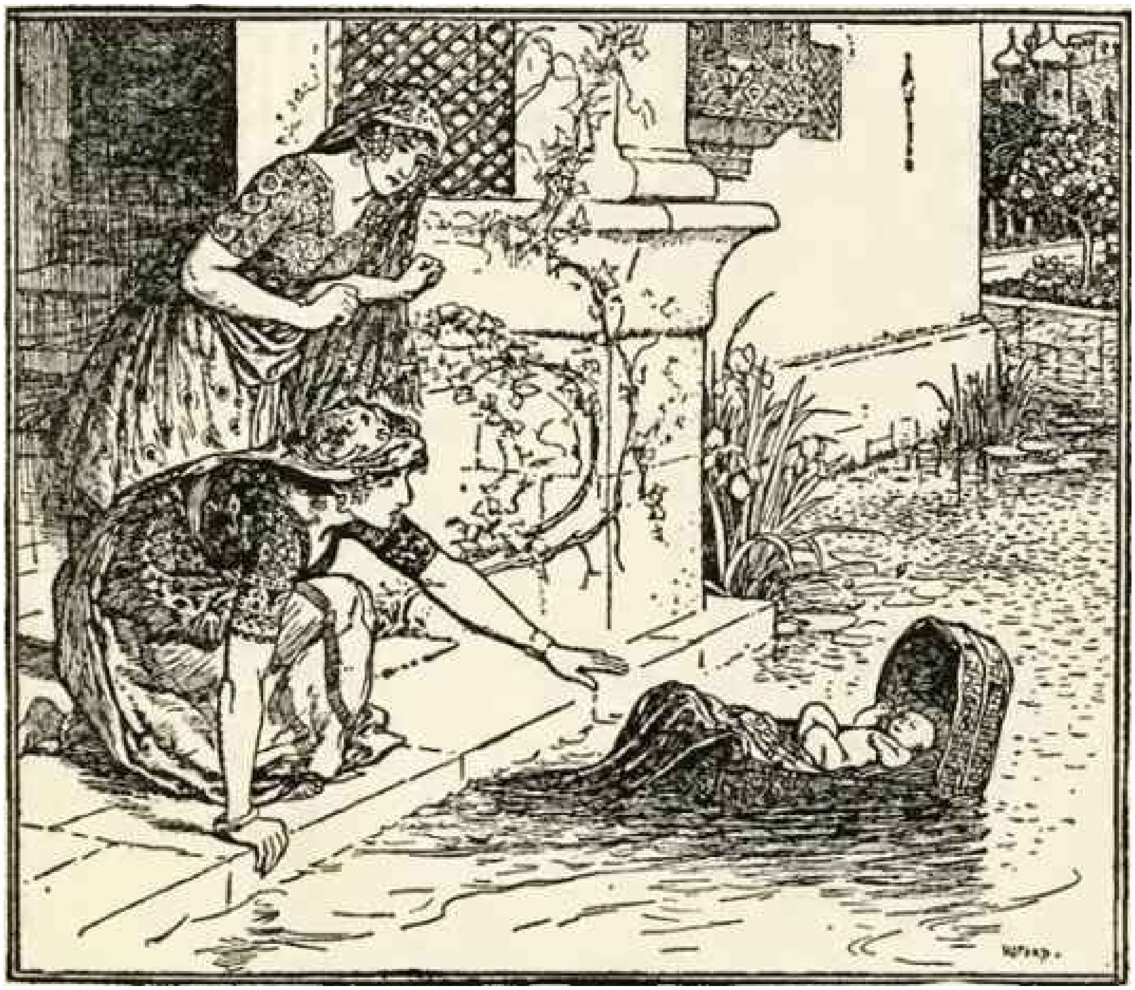

They obtained permission of the Sultan to take up their abode in the palace for some weeks, and never left their sister night or day. When at last a little boy, beautiful as the sun, was born, they laid him in his cradle and carried it down to a canal which passed through the grounds of the palace. Then, leaving it to its fate, they informed the Sultan that instead of the son he had so fondly desired the Sultana had given birth to a puppy. At this dreadful news the Sultan was so overcome with rage and grief that it was with great difficulty that the grand-vizir managed to save the Sultana from his wrath.

Meanwhile the cradle continued to float peacefully along the canal till, on the outskirts of the royal gardens, it was suddenly perceived by the intendant, one of the highest and most respected officials in the kingdom.

“Go,” he said to a gardener who was working near, “and get that cradle out for me.”

The gardener did as he was bid, and soon placed the cradle in the hands of the intendant.

The official was much astonished to see that the cradle, which he had supposed to be empty, contained a baby, which, young though it was, already gave promise of great beauty. Having no children himself, although he had been married some years, it at once occurred to him that here was a child which he could take and bring up as his own. And, bidding the man pick up the cradle and follow him, he turned towards home.

“My wife,” he exclaimed as he entered the room, “heaven has denied us any children, but here is one that has been sent in their place. Send for a nurse, and I will do what is needful publicly to recognise it as my son.”

The wife accepted the baby with joy, and though the intendant saw quite well that it must have come from the royal palace, he did not think it was his business to inquire further into the mystery.

The following year another prince was born and sent adrift, but happily for the baby, the intendant of the gardens again was walking by the canal, and carried it home as before.

The Sultan, naturally enough, was still more furious the second time than the first, but when the same curious accident was repeated in the third year he could control himself no longer, and, to the great joy of the jealous sisters, commanded that the Sultana should be executed. But the poor lady was so much beloved at Court that not even the dread of sharing her fate could prevent the grand-vizir and the courtiers from throwing themselves at the Sultan’s feet and imploring him not to inflict so cruel a punishment for what, after all, was not her fault.

“Let her live,” entreated the grand-vizir, “and banish her from your presence for the rest of her days. That in itself will be punishment enough.”

His first passion spent, the Sultan had regained his self-command. “Let her live then,” he said, “since you have it so much at heart. But if I grant her life it shall only be on one condition, which shall make her daily pray for death. Let a box be built for her at the door of the principal mosque, and let the window of the box be always open. There she shall sit, in the coarsest clothes, and every Mussulman who enters the mosque shall spit in her face in passing. Anyone that refuses to obey shall be exposed to the same punishment himself. You, vizir, will see that my orders are carried out.”

The grand-vizir saw that it was useless to say more, and, full of triumph, the sisters watched the building of the box, and then listened to the jeers of the people at the helpless Sultana sitting inside. But the poor lady bore herself with so much dignity and meekness that it was not long before she had won the sympathy of those that were best among the crowd.

But it is now time to return to the fate of the third baby, this time a princess. Like its brothers, it was found by the intendant of the gardens, and adopted by him and his wife, and all three were brought up with the greatest care and tenderness.

As the children grew older their beauty and air of distinction became more and more marked, and their manners had all the grace and ease that is proper to people of high birth. The princes had been named by their foster-father Bahman and Perviz, after two of the ancient kings of Persia, while the princess was called Parizade, or the child of the genii.

The intendant was careful to bring them up as befitted their real rank, and soon appointed a tutor to teach the young princes how to read and write. And the princess, determined not to be left behind, showed herself so anxious to learn with her brothers, that the intendant consented to her joining in their lessons, and it was not long before she knew as much as they did.

From that time all their studies were done in common. They had the best masters for the fine arts, geography, poetry, history and science, and even for sciences which are learned by few, and every branch seemed so easy to them, that their teachers were astonished at the progress they made. The princess had a passion for music, and could sing and play upon all sorts of instruments she could also ride and drive as well as her brothers, shoot with a bow and arrow, and throw a javelin with the same skill as they, and sometimes even better.

In order to set off these accomplishments, the intendant resolved that his foster children should not be pent up any longer in the narrow borders of the palace gardens, where he had always lived, so he bought a splendid country house a few miles from the capital, surrounded by an immense park. This park he filled with wild beasts of various sorts, so that the princes and princess might hunt as much as they pleased.

When everything was ready, the intendant threw himself at the Sultan’s feet, and after referring to his age and his long services, begged his Highness’s permission to resign his post. This was granted by the Sultan in a few gracious words, and he then inquired what reward he could give to his faithful servant. But the intendant declared that he wished for nothing except the continuance of his Highness’s favour, and prostrating himself once more, he retired from the Sultan’s presence.

Five or six months passed away in the pleasures of the country, when death attacked the intendant so suddenly that he had no time to reveal the secret of their birth to his adopted children, and as his wife had long been dead also, it seemed as if the princes and the princess would never know that they had been born to a higher station than the one they filled. Their sorrow for their father was very deep, and they lived quietly on in their new home, without feeling any desire to leave it for court gaieties or intrigues.

One day the princes as usual went out to hunt, but their sister remained alone in her apartments. While they were gone an old Mussulman devotee appeared at the door, and asked leave to enter, as it was the hour of prayer. The princess sent orders at once that the old woman was to be taken to the private oratory in the grounds, and when she had finished her prayers was to be shown the house and gardens, and then to be brought before her.

Although the old woman was very pious, she was not at all indifferent to the magnificence of all around her, which she seemed to understand as well as to admire, and when she had seen it all she was led by the servants before the princess, who was seated in a room which surpassed in splendour all the rest.

“My good woman,” said the princess pointing to a sofa, “come and sit beside me. I am delighted at the opportunity of speaking for a few moments with so holy a person.” The old woman made some objections to so much honour being done her, but the princess refused to listen, and insisted that her guest should take the best seat, and as she thought she must be tired ordered refreshments.

While the old woman was eating, the princess put several questions to her as to her mode of life, and the pious exercises she practiced, and then inquired what she thought of the house now that she had seen it.

“Madam,” replied the pilgrim, “one must be hard indeed to please to find any fault. It is beautiful, comfortable and well ordered, and it is impossible to imagine anything more lovely than the garden. But since you ask me, I must confess that it lacks three things to make it absolutely perfect.”

“And what can they be?” cried the princess. “Only tell me, and I will lose no time in getting them.”

“The three things, madam,” replied the old woman, “are, first, the Talking Bird, whose voice draws all other singing birds to it, to join in chorus. And second, the Singing Tree, where every leaf is a song that is never silent. And lastly the Golden Water, of which it is only needful to pour a single drop into a basin for it to shoot up into a fountain, which will never be exhausted, nor will the basin ever overflow.”

“Oh, how can I thank you,” cried the princess, “for telling me of such treasures! But add, I pray you, to your goodness by further informing me where I can find them.”

“Madam,” replied the pilgrim, “I should ill repay the hospitality you have shown me if I refused to answer your question. The three things of which I have spoken are all to be found in one place, on the borders of this kingdom, towards India. Your messenger has only to follow the road that passes by your house, for twenty days, and at the end of that time, he is to ask the first person he meets for the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water.” She then rose, and bidding farewell to the princess, went her way.

The old woman had taken her departure so abruptly that the Princess Parizade did not perceive till she was really gone that the directions were hardly clear enough to enable the search to be successful. And she was still thinking of the subject, and how delightful it would be to possess such rarities, when the princes, her brothers, returned from the chase.

“What is the matter, my sister?” asked Prince Bahman; “why are you so grave? Are you ill? Or has anything happened?”

Princess Parizade did not answer directly, but at length she raised her eyes, and replied that there was nothing wrong.

“But there must be something,” persisted Prince Bahman, “for you to have changed so much during the short time we have been absent. Hide nothing from us, I beseech you, unless you wish us to believe that the confidence we have always had in one another is now to cease.”

“When I said that it was nothing,” said the princess, moved by his words, “I meant that it was nothing that affected you, although I admit that it is certainly of some importance to me. Like myself, you have always thought this house that our father built for us was perfect in every respect, but only to-day I have learned that three things are still lacking to complete it. These are the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water.” After explaining the peculiar qualities of each, the princess continued: “It was a Mussulman devotee who told me all this, and where they might all be found. Perhaps you will think that the house is beautiful enough as it is, and that we can do quite well without them; but in this I cannot agree with you, and I shall never be content until I have got them. So counsel me, I pray, whom to send on the undertaking.”

“My dear sister,” replied Prince Bahman, “that you should care about the matter is quite enough, even if we took no interest in it ourselves. But we both feel with you, and I claim, as the elder, the right to make the first attempt, if you will tell me where I am to go, and what steps I am to take.”

Prince Perviz at first objected that, being the head of the family, his brother ought not to be allowed to expose himself to danger; but Prince Bahman would hear nothing, and retired to make the needful preparations for his journey.

The next morning Prince Bahman got up very early, and after bidding farewell to his brother and sister, mounted his horse. But just as he was about to touch it with his whip, he was stopped by a cry from the princess.

“Oh, perhaps after all you may never come back; one never can tell what accidents may happen. Give it up, I implore you, for I would a thousand times rather lose the Talking Bird, and the Singing Tree and the Golden Water, than that you should run into danger.”

“My dear sister,” answered the prince, “accidents only happen to unlucky people, and I hope that I am not one of them. But as everything is uncertain, I promise you to be very careful. Take this knife,” he continued, handing her one that hung sheathed from his belt, “and every now and then draw it out and look at it. As long as it keeps bright and clean as it is to-day, you will know that I am living; but if the blade is spotted with blood, it will be a sign that I am dead, and you shall weep for me.”

So saying, Prince Bahman bade them farewell once more, and started on the high road, well mounted and fully armed. For twenty days he rode straight on, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, till he found himself drawing near the frontiers of Persia. Seated under a tree by the wayside he noticed a hideous old man, with a long white moustache, and beard that almost fell to his feet. His nails had grown to an enormous length, and on his head he wore a huge hat, which served him for an umbrella.

Prince Bahman, who, remembering the directions of the old woman, had been since sunrise on the look-out for some one, recognised the old man at once to be a dervish. He dismounted from his horse, and bowed low before the holy man, saying by way of greeting, “My father, may your days be long in the land, and may all your wishes be fulfilled!”

The dervish did his best to reply, but his moustache was so thick that his words were hardly intelligible, and the prince, perceiving what was the matter, took a pair of scissors from his saddle pockets, and requested permission to cut off some of the moustache, as he had a question of great importance to ask the dervish. The dervish made a sign that he might do as he liked, and when a few inches of his hair and beard had been pruned all round the prince assured the holy man that he would hardly believe how much younger he looked. The dervish smiled at his compliments, and thanked him for what he had done.

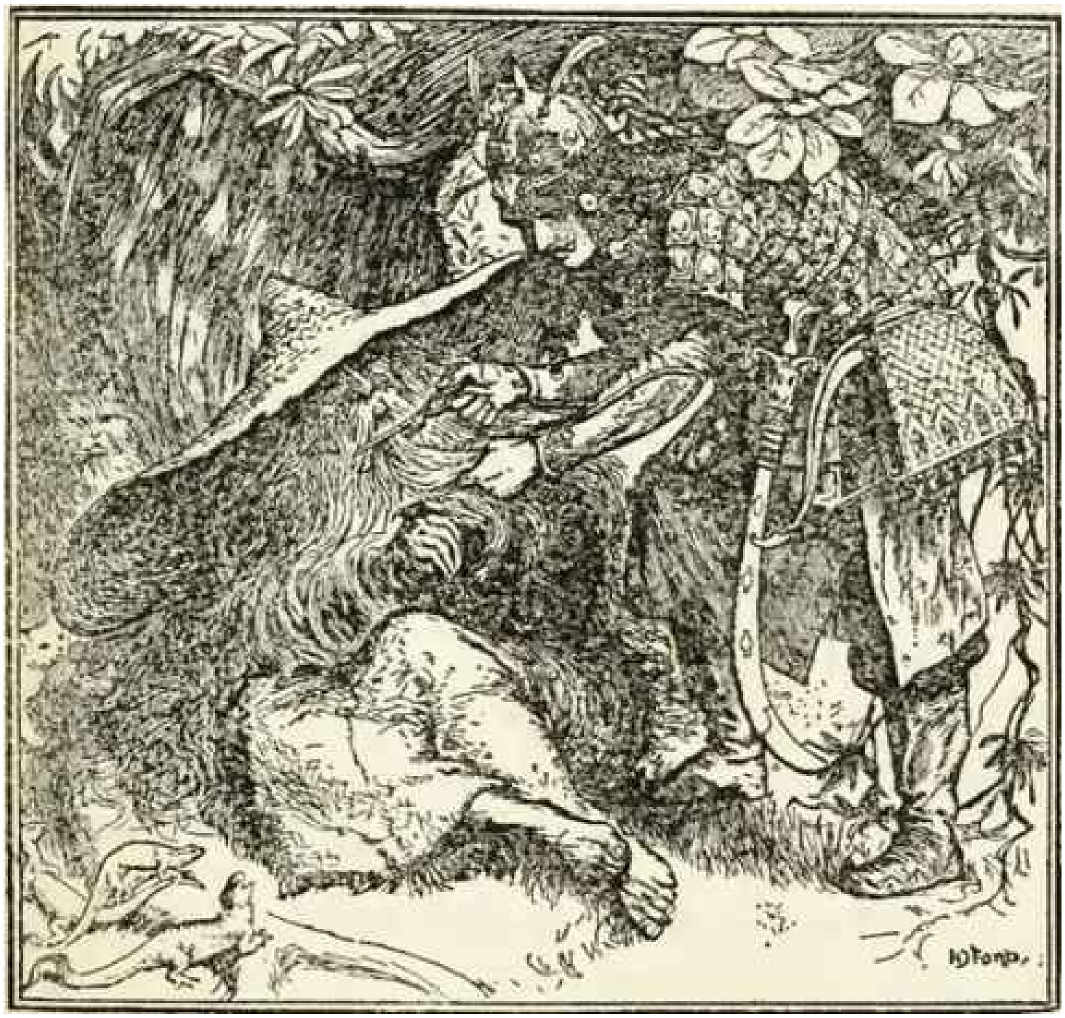

"Let me," he said, "show you my gratitude for making me more comfortable by telling me what I can do for you."

"Gentle dervish," replied Prince Bahman, "I come from far, and I seek the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water. I know that they are to be found somewhere in these parts, but I am ignorant of the exact spot. Tell me, I pray you, if you can, so that I may not have travelled on a useless quest." While he was speaking, the prince observed a change in the countenance of the dervish, who waited for some time before he made reply.

"My lord," he said at last, "I do know the road for which you ask, but your kindness and the friendship I have conceived for you make me loth to point it out."

"But why not?" inquired the prince. "What danger can there be?"

"The very greatest danger," answered the dervish. "Other men, as brave as you, have ridden down this road, and have put me that question. I did my best to turn them also from their purpose, but it was of no use. Not one of them would listen to my words, and not one of them came back. Be warned in time, and seek to go no further.”

“I am grateful to you for your interest in me,” said Prince Bahman, “and for the advice you have given, though I cannot follow it. But what dangers can there be in the adventure which courage and a good sword cannot meet?”

“And suppose,” answered the dervish, “that your enemies are invisible, how then?”

“Nothing will make me give it up,” replied the prince, “and for the last time I ask you to tell me where I am to go.”

When the dervish saw that the prince’s mind was made up, he drew a ball from a bag that lay near him, and held it out. “If it must be so,” he said, with a sigh, “take this, and when you have mounted your horse throw the ball in front of you. It will roll on till it reaches the foot of a mountain, and when it stops you will stop also. You will then throw the bridle on your horse’s neck without any fear of his straying, and will dismount. On each side you will see vast heaps of big black stones, and will hear a multitude of insulting voices, but pay no heed to them, and, above all, beware of ever turning your head. If you do, you will instantly become a black stone like the rest. For those stones are in reality men like yourself, who have been on the same quest, and have failed, as I fear that you may fail also. If you manage to avoid this pitfall, and to reach the top of the mountain, you will find there the Talking Bird in a splendid cage, and you can ask of him where you are to seek the Singing Tree and the Golden Water. That is all I have to say. You know what you have to do, and what to avoid, but if you are wise you will think of it no more, but return whence you have come.”

The prince smilingly shook his head, and thanking the dervish once more, he sprang on his horse and threw the ball before him.

The ball rolled along the road so fast that Prince Bahman had much difficulty in keeping up with it, and it never relaxed its speed till the foot of the mountain was reached. Then it came to a sudden halt, and the prince at once got down and flung the bridle on his horse’s neck. He paused for a moment and looked round him at the masses of black stones with which the sides of the mountain were covered, and then began resolutely to ascend. He had hardly gone four steps when he heard the sound of voices around him, although not another creature was in sight.

“Who is this imbecile?” cried some, “stop him at once.” “Kill him,” shrieked others, “Help! robbers! murderers! help! help!” “Oh, let him alone,” sneered another, and this was the most trying of all, “he is such a beautiful young man; I am sure the bird and the cage must have been kept for him.”

At first the prince took no heed to all this clamour, but continued to press forward on his way. Unfortunately this conduct, instead of silencing the voices, only seemed to irritate them the more, and they arose with redoubled fury, in front as well as behind. After some time he grew bewildered, his knees began to tremble, and finding himself in the act of falling, he forgot altogether the advice of the dervish. He turned to fly down the mountain, and in one moment became a black stone.

As may be imagined, Prince Perviz and his sister were all this time in the greatest anxiety, and consulted the magic knife, not once but many times a day. Hitherto the blade had remained bright and spotless, but on the fatal hour on which Prince Bahman and his horse were changed into black stones, large drops of blood appeared on the surface. “Ah! my beloved brother,” cried the princess in horror, throwing the knife from her, “I shall never see you again, and it is I who have killed you. Fool that I was to listen to the voice of that temptress, who probably was not speaking the truth. What are the Talking Bird and the Singing Tree to me in comparison with you, passionately though I long for them!”

Prince Perviz’s grief at his brother’s loss was not less than that of Princess Parizade, but he did not waste his time on useless lamentations.

“My sister,” he said, “why should you think the old woman was deceiving you about these treasures, and what would have been her object in doing so! No, no, our brother must have met his death by some accident, or want of precaution, and to-morrow I will start on the same quest.”

Terrified at the thought that she might lose her only remaining brother, the princess entreated him to give up his project, but he remained firm. Before setting out, however, he gave her a chaplet of a hundred pearls, and said, “When I am absent, tell this over daily for me. But if you should find that the beads stick, so that they will not slip one after the other, you will know that my brother’s fate has befallen me. Still, we must hope for better luck.”

Then he departed, and on the twentieth day of his journey fell in with the dervish on the same spot as Prince Bahman had met him, and began to question him as to the place where the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree and the Golden Water were to be found. As in the case of his brother, the dervish tried to make him give up his project, and even told him that only a few weeks since a young man, bearing a strong resemblance to himself, had passed that way, but had never come back again.

“That, holy dervish,” replied Prince Perviz, “was my elder brother, who is now dead, though how he died I cannot say.”

“He is changed into a black stone,” answered the dervish, “like all the rest who have gone on the same errand, and you will become one likewise if you are not more careful in following my directions.” Then he charged the prince, as he valued his life, to take no heed of the clamour of voices that would pursue him up the mountain, and handing him a ball from the bag, which still seemed to be half full, he sent him on his way.

When Prince Perviz reached the foot of the mountain he jumped from his horse, and paused for a moment to recall the instructions the dervish had given him. Then he strode boldly on, but had scarcely gone five or six paces when he was startled by a man’s voice that seemed close to his ear, exclaiming: “Stop, rash fellow, and let me punish your audacity.” This outrage entirely put the dervish’s advice out of the prince’s head. He drew his sword, and turned to avenge himself, but almost before he had realised that there was nobody there, he and his horse were two black stones.

Not a morning had passed since Prince Perviz had ridden away without Princess Parizade telling her beads, and at night she even hung them round her neck, so that if she woke she could assure herself at once of her brother’s safety. She was in the very act of moving them through her fingers at the moment that the prince fell a victim to his impatience, and her heart sank when the first pearl remained fixed in its place. However she had long made up her mind what she would do in such a case, and the following morning the princess, disguised as a man, set out for the mountain.

As she had been accustomed to riding from her childhood, she managed to travel as many miles daily as her brothers had done, and it was, as before, on the twentieth day that she arrived at the place where the dervish was sitting. “Good dervish,” she said politely, “will you allow me to rest by you for a few moments, and perhaps you will be so kind as to tell me if you have ever heard of a Talking Bird, a Singing Tree, and some Golden Water that are to be found somewhere near this?”

“Madam,” replied the dervish, “for in spite of your manly dress your voice betrays you, I shall be proud to serve you in any way I can. But may I ask the purpose of your question?”

“Good dervish,” answered the princess, “I have heard such glowing descriptions of these three things, that I cannot rest till I possess them.”

“Madam,” said the dervish, “they are far more beautiful than any description, but you seem ignorant of all the difficulties that stand in your way, or you would hardly have undertaken such an adventure. Give it up, I pray you, and return home, and do not ask me to help you to a cruel death.”

“Holy father,” answered the princess, “I come from far, and I should be in despair if I turned back without having attained my object. You have spoken of difficulties; tell me, I entreat you, what they are, so that I may know if I can overcome them, or see if they are beyond my strength.”

So the dervish repeated his tale, and dwelt more firmly than before on the clamour of the voices, the horrors of the black stones, which were once living men, and the difficulties of climbing the mountain; and pointed out that the chief means of success was never to look behind till you had the cage in your grasp.

"As far as I can see," said the princess, "the first thing is not to mind the tumult of the voices that follow you till you reach the cage, and then never to look behind. As to this, I think I have enough self-control to look straight before me; but as it is quite possible that I might be frightened by the voices, as even the boldest men have been, I will stop up my ears with cotton, so that, let them make as much noise as they like, I shall hear nothing."

"Madam," cried the dervish, "out of all the number who have asked me the way to the mountain, you are the first who has ever suggested such a means of escaping the danger! It is possible that you may succeed, but all the same, the risk is great."

"Good dervish," answered the princess, "I feel in my heart that I shall succeed, and it only remains for me to ask you the way I am to go."

Then the dervish said that it was useless to say more, and he gave her the ball, which she flung before her.

The first thing the princess did on arriving at the mountain was to stop her ears with cotton, and then, making up her mind which was the best way to go, she began her ascent. In spite of the cotton, some echoes of the voices reached her ears, but not so as to trouble her. Indeed, though they grew louder and more insulting the higher she climbed, the princess only laughed, and said to herself that she certainly would not let a few rough words stand between her and the goal. At last she perceived in the distance the cage and the bird, whose voice joined itself in tones of thunder to those of the rest: "Return, return! never dare to come near me."

At the sight of the bird, the princess hastened her steps, and without vexing herself at the noise which by this time had grown deafening, she walked straight up to the cage, and seizing it, she said: "Now, my bird, I have got you, and I shall take good care that you do not escape." As she spoke she took the cotton from her ears, for it was needed no longer.

"Brave lady," answered the bird, "do not blame me for having joined my voice to those who did their best to preserve my freedom. Although confined in a cage, I was content with my lot, but if I must become a slave, I could not wish for a nobler mistress than one who has shown so much constancy, and from this moment I swear to serve you faithfully. Some day you will put me to the proof, for I know who you are better than you do yourself. Meanwhile, tell me what I can do, and I will obey you."

"Bird," replied the princess, who was filled with a joy that seemed strange to herself when she thought that the bird had cost her the lives of both her brothers, "bird, let me first thank you for your good will, and then let me ask you where the Golden Water is to be found."

The bird described the place, which was not far distant, and the princess filled a small silver flask that she had brought with her for the purpose. She then returned to the cage, and said: "Bird, there is still something else, where shall I find the Singing Tree?"

"Behind you, in that wood," replied the bird, and the princess wandered through the wood, till a sound of the sweetest voices told her she had found what she sought. But the tree was tall and strong, and it was hopeless to think of uprooting it.

"You need not do that," said the bird, when she had returned to ask counsel. "Break off a twig, and plant it in your garden, and it will take root, and grow into a magnificent tree."

When the Princess Parizade held in her hands the three wonders promised her by the old woman, she said to the bird: "All that is not enough. It was owing to you that my brothers became black stones. I cannot tell them from the mass of others, but you must know, and point them out to me, I beg you, for I wish to carry them away."

For some reason that the princess could not guess these words seemed to displease the bird, and he did not answer. The princess waited a moment, and then continued in severe tones, "Have you forgotten that you yourself said that you are my slave to do my bidding, and also that your life is in my power?"

"No, I have not forgotten," replied the bird, "but what you ask is very difficult. However, I will do my best. If you look round," he went on, "you will see a pitcher standing near. Take it, and, as you go down the mountain, scatter a little of the water it contains over every black stone and you will soon find your two brothers."

Princess Parizade took the pitcher, and, carrying with her besides the cage the twig and the flask, returned down the mountain side. At every black stone she stopped and sprinkled it with water, and as the water touched it the stone instantly became a man. When she suddenly saw her brothers before her her delight was mixed with astonishment.

"Why, what are you doing here?" she cried.

"We have been asleep," they said.

"Yes," returned the princess, "but without me your sleep would probably have lasted till the day of judgment. Have you forgotten that you came here in search of the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water, and the black stones that were heaped up along the road? Look round and see if there is one left. These gentlemen, and yourselves, and all your horses were changed into these stones, and I have delivered you by sprinkling you with the water from this pitcher. As I could not return home without you, even though I had gained the prizes on which I had set my heart, I forced the Talking Bird to tell me how to break the spell."

On hearing these words Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz understood all they owed their sister, and the knights who stood by declared themselves her slaves and ready to carry out her wishes. But the princess, while thanking them for their politeness, explained that she wished for no company but that of her brothers, and that the rest were free to go where they would.

So saying the princess mounted her horse, and, declining to allow even Prince Bahman to carry the cage with the Talking Bird, she entrusted him with the branch of the Singing Tree, while Prince Perviz took care of the flask containing the Golden Water.

Then they rode away, followed by the knights and gentlemen, who begged to be permitted to escort them.

It had been the intention of the party to stop and tell their adventures to the dervish, but they found to their sorrow that he was dead, whether from old age, or whether from the feeling that his task was done, they never knew.

As they continued their road their numbers grew daily smaller, for the knights turned off one by one to their own homes, and only the brothers and sister finally drew up at the gate of the palace.

The princess carried the cage straight into the garden, and, as soon as the bird began to sing, nightingales, larks, thrushes, finches, and all sorts of other birds mingled their voices in chorus. The branch she planted in a corner near the house, and in a few days it had grown into a great tree. As for the Golden Water it was poured into a great marble basin specially prepared for it, and it swelled and bubbled and then shot up into the air in a fountain twenty feet high.

The fame of these wonders soon spread abroad, and people came from far and near to see and admire.

After a few days Prince Bahman and Prince Perviz fell back into their ordinary way of life, and passed most of their time hunting. One day it happened that the Sultan of Persia was also hunting in the same direction, and, not wishing to interfere with his sport, the young men, on hearing the noise of the hunt approaching, prepared to retire, but, as luck would have it, they turned into the very path down which the Sultan was coming. They threw themselves from their horses and prostrated themselves to the earth, but the Sultan was curious to see their faces, and commanded them to rise.

The princes stood up respectfully, but quite at their ease, and the Sultan looked at them for a few moments without speaking, then he asked who they were and where they lived.

“Sire,” replied Prince Bahman, “we are sons of your Highness’s late intendant of the gardens, and we live in a house that he built a short time before his death, waiting till an occasion should offer itself to serve your Highness.”

“You seem fond of hunting,” answered the Sultan.

“Sire,” replied Prince Bahman, “it is our usual exercise, and one that should be neglected by no man who expects to comply with the ancient customs of the kingdom and bear arms.”

The Sultan was delighted with this remark, and said at once, “In that case I shall take great pleasure in watching you. Come, choose what sort of beasts you would like to hunt.”

The princes jumped on their horses and followed the Sultan at a little distance. They had not gone very far before they saw a number of wild animals appear at once, and Prince Bahman started to give chase to a lion and Prince Perviz to a bear. Both used their javelins with such skill that, directly they arrived within striking range, the lion and the bear fell, pierced through and through. Then Prince Perviz pursued a lion and Prince Bahman a bear, and in a very few minutes they, too, lay dead. As they were making ready for a third assault the Sultan interfered, and, sending one of his officials to summon them, he said smiling, “If I let you go on, there will soon be no beasts left to hunt. Besides, your courage and manners have so won my heart that I will not have you expose yourselves to further danger. I am convinced that some day or other I shall find you useful as well as agreeable.”

He then gave them a warm invitation to stay with him altogether, but with many thanks for the honour done them, they begged to be excused, and to be suffered to remain at home.

The Sultan who was not accustomed to see his offers rejected inquired their reasons, and Prince Bahman explained that they did not wish to leave their sister, and were accustomed to do nothing without consulting all three together.

“Ask her advice, then,” replied the Sultan, “and to-morrow come and hunt with me, and give me your answer.”

The two princes returned home, but their adventure made so little impression on them that they quite forgot to speak to their sister on the subject. The next morning when they went to hunt they met the Sultan in the same place, and he inquired what advice their sister had given. The young men looked at each other and blushed. At last Prince Bahman said, “Sire, we must throw ourselves on your Highness’s mercy. Neither my brother nor myself remembered anything about it.”

"Then be sure you do not forget to-day," answered the Sultan, "and bring me back your reply to-morrow."

When, however, the same thing happened a second time, they feared that the Sultan might be angry with them for their carelessness. But he took it in good part, and, drawing three little golden balls from his purse, he held them out to Prince Bahman, saying, "Put these in your bosom and you will not forget a third time, for when you remove your girdle to-night the noise they will make in falling will remind you of my wishes."

It all happened as the Sultan had foreseen, and the two brothers appeared in their sister's apartments just as she was in the act of stepping into bed, and told their tale.

The Princess Parizade was much disturbed at the news, and did not conceal her feelings. "Your meeting with the Sultan is very honourable to you," she said, "and will, I dare say, be of service to you, but it places me in a very awkward position. It is on my account, I know, that you have resisted the Sultan's wishes, and I am very grateful to you for it. But kings do not like to have their offers refused, and in time he would bear a grudge against you, which would render me very unhappy. Consult the Talking Bird, who is wise and far-seeing, and let me hear what he says."

So the bird was sent for and the case laid before him.

"The princes must on no account refuse the Sultan's proposal," said he, "and they must even invite him to come and see your house."

"But, bird," objected the princess, "you know how dearly we love each other; will not all this spoil our friendship?"

"Not at all," replied the bird, "it will make it all the closer."

"Then the Sultan will have to see me," said the princess.

The bird answered that it was necessary that he should see her, and everything would turn out for the best.

The following morning, when the Sultan inquired if they had spoken to their sister and what advice she had given them, Prince Bahman replied that they were ready to agree to his Highness's wishes, and that their sister had reproved them for their hesitation about the matter. The Sultan received their excuses with great kindness, and told them that he was sure they would be equally faithful to him, and kept them by his side for the rest of the day, to the vexation of the grand-vizir and the rest of the court.

When the procession entered in this order the gates of the capital, the eyes of the people who crowded the streets were fixed on the two young men, strangers to every one.

"Oh, if only the Sultan had had sons like that!" they murmured, "they look so distinguished and are about the same age that his sons would have been!”

The Sultan commanded that splendid apartments should be prepared for the two brothers, and even insisted that they should sit at table with him. During dinner he led the conversation to various scientific subjects, and also to history, of which he was especially fond, but whatever topic they might be discussing he found that the views of the young men were always worth listening to. “If they were my own sons,” he said to himself, “they could not be better educated!” and aloud he complimented them on their learning and taste for knowledge.

At the end of the evening the princes once more prostrated themselves before the throne and asked leave to return home; and then, encouraged by the gracious words of farewell uttered by the Sultan, Prince Bahman said: “Sire, may we dare to take the liberty of asking whether you would do us and our sister the honour of resting for a few minutes at our house the first time the hunt passes that way?”

“With the utmost pleasure,” replied the Sultan; “and as I am all impatience to see the sister of such accomplished young men you may expect me the day after to-morrow.”

The princess was of course most anxious to entertain the Sultan in a fitting way, but as she had no experience in court customs she ran to the Talking Bird, and begged he would advise her as to what dishes should be served.

“My dear mistress,” replied the bird, “your cooks are very good and you can safely leave all to them, except that you must be careful to have a dish of cucumbers, stuffed with pearl sauce, served with the first course.”

“Cucumbers stuffed with pearls!” exclaimed the princess. “Why, bird, who ever heard of such a dish? The Sultan will expect a dinner he can eat, and not one he can only admire! Besides, if I were to use all the pearls I possess, they would not be half enough.”

“Mistress,” replied the bird, “do what I tell you and nothing but good will come of it. And as to the pearls, if you go at dawn to-morrow and dig at the foot of the first tree in the park, on the right hand, you will find as many as you want.”

The princess had faith in the bird, who generally proved to be right, and taking the gardener with her early next morning followed out his directions carefully. After digging for some time they came upon a golden box fastened with little clasps.

These were easily undone, and the box was found to be full of pearls, not very large ones, but well-shaped and of a good colour. So leaving the gardener to fill up the hole he had made under the tree, the princess took up the box and returned to the house.

The two princes had seen her go out, and had wondered what could have made her rise so early. Full of curiosity they got up and dressed, and met their sister as she was returning with the box under her arm.

“What have you been doing?” they asked, “and did the gardener come to tell you he had found a treasure?”

“On the contrary,” replied the princess, “it is I who have found one,” and opening the box she showed her astonished brothers the pearls inside. Then, on the way back to the palace, she told them of her consultation with the bird, and the advice it had given her. All three tried to guess the meaning of the singular counsel, but they were forced at last to admit the explanation was beyond them, and they must be content blindly to obey.

The first thing the princess did on entering the palace was to send for the head cook and to order the repast for the Sultan When she had finished she suddenly added, “Besides the dishes I have mentioned there is one that you must prepare expressly for the Sultan, and that no one must touch but yourself. It consists of a stuffed cucumber, and the stuffing is to be made of these pearls.”

The head cook, who had never in all his experience heard of such a dish, stepped back in amazement.

“You think I am mad,” answered the princess, who perceived what was in his mind. “But I know quite well what I am doing. Go, and do your best, and take the pearls with you.”

The next morning the princes started for the forest, and were soon joined by the Sultan. The hunt began and continued till mid-day, when the heat became so great that they were obliged to leave off. Then, as arranged, they turned their horses’ heads towards the palace, and while Prince Bahman remained by the side of the Sultan, Prince Perviz rode on to warn his sister of their approach.

The moment his Highness entered the courtyard, the princess flung herself at his feet, but he bent and raised her, and gazed at her for some time, struck with her grace and beauty, and also with the indefinable air of courts that seemed to hang round this country girl. “They are all worthy one of the other,” he said to himself, “and I am not surprised that they think so much of her opinions. I must know more of them.”

By this time the princess had recovered from the first embarrassment of meeting, and proceeded to make her speech of welcome.

“This is only a simple country house, sire,” she said, “suitable to people like ourselves, who live a quiet life. It cannot compare with the great city mansions, much less, of course, with the smallest of the Sultan’s palaces.”

“I cannot quite agree with you,” he replied; “even the little that I have seen I admire greatly, and I will reserve my judgment until you have shown me the whole.”

The princess then led the way from room to room, and the Sultan examined everything carefully. “Do you call this a simple country house?” he said at last. “Why, if every country house was like this, the towns would soon be deserted. I am no longer astonished that you do not wish to leave it. Let us go into the gardens, which I am sure are no less beautiful than the rooms.”

A small door opened straight into the garden, and the first object that met the Sultan’s eyes was the Golden Water.

“What lovely coloured water!” he exclaimed; “where is the spring, and how do you make the fountain rise so high? I do not believe there is anything like it in the world.” He went forward to examine it, and when he had satisfied his curiosity, the princess conducted him towards the Singing Tree.

As they drew near, the Sultan was startled by the sound of strange voices, but could see nothing. “Where have you hidden your musicians?” he asked the princess; “are they up in the air, or under the earth? Surely the owners of such charming voices ought not to conceal themselves!”

“Sire,” answered the princess, “the voices all come from the tree which is straight in front of us; and if you will deign to advance a few steps, you will see that they become clearer.”

The Sultan did as he was told, and was so wrapt in delight at what he heard that he stood some time in silence.

“Tell me, madam, I pray you,” he said at last, “how this marvellous tree came into your garden? It must have been brought from a great distance, or else, fond as I am of all curiosities, I could not have missed hearing of it! What is its name?”

“The only name it has, sire,” replied she, “is the Singing Tree, and it is not a native of this country. Its history is mixed up with those of the Golden Water and the Talking Bird, which you have not yet seen. If your Highness wishes I will tell you the whole story, when you have recovered from your fatigue.”

“Indeed, madam,” returned he, “you show me so many wonders that it is impossible to feel any fatigue. Let us go once more and look at the Golden Water; and I am dying to see the Talking Bird.”

The Sultan could hardly tear himself away from the Golden Water, which puzzled him more and more. “You say,” he observed to the princess, “that this water does not come from any spring, neither is brought by pipes. All I understand is, that neither it nor the Singing Tree is a native of this country.”

“It is as you say, sire,” answered the princess, “and if you examine the basin, you will see that it is all in one piece, and therefore the water could not have been brought through it. What is more astonishing is, that I only emptied a small flaskful into the basin, and it increased to the quantity you now see.”

“Well, I will look at it no more to-day,” said the Sultan. “Take me to the Talking Bird.”

On approaching the house, the Sultan noticed a vast quantity of birds, whose voices filled the air, and he inquired why they were so much more numerous here than in any other part of the garden.

“Sire,” answered the princess, “do you see that cage hanging in one of the windows of the saloon? that is the Talking Bird, whose voice you can hear above them all, even above that of the nightingale. And the birds crowd to this spot, to add their songs to his.”

The Sultan stepped through the window, but the bird took no notice, continuing his song as before.

“My slave,” said the princess, “this is the Sultan; make him a pretty speech.”

The bird stopped singing at once, and all the other birds stopped too.

“The Sultan is welcome,” he said. “I wish him long life and all prosperity.”

“I thank you, good bird,” answered the Sultan, seating himself before the repast, which was spread at a table near the window, “and I am enchanted to see in you the Sultan and King of the Birds.”

The Sultan, noticing that his favourite dish of cucumber was placed before him, proceeded to help himself to it, and was amazed to and that the stuffing was of pearls. “A novelty, indeed!” cried he, “but I do not understand the reason of it; one cannot eat pearls!”

“Sire,” replied the bird, before either the princes or the princess could speak, “surely your Highness cannot be so surprised at beholding a cucumber stuffed with pearls, when you believed without any difficulty that the Sultana had presented you, instead of children, with a dog, a cat, and a log of wood.”

“I believed it,” answered the Sultan, “because the women attending on her told me so.”

“The women, sire,” said the bird, “were the sisters of the Sultana, who were devoured with jealousy at the honour you had done her, and in order to revenge themselves invented this story. Have them examined, and they will confess their crime. These are your children, who were saved from death by the intendant of your gardens, and brought up by him as if they were his own.”

Like a flash the truth came to the mind of the Sultan. “Bird,” he cried, “my heart tells me that what you say is true. My children,” he added, “let me embrace you, and embrace each other, not only as brothers and sister, but as having in you the blood royal of Persia which could flow in no nobler veins.”

When the first moments of emotion were over, the Sultan hastened to finish his repast, and then turning to his children he exclaimed: “To-day you have made acquaintance with your father. To-morrow I will bring you the Sultana your mother. Be ready to receive her."

The Sultan then mounted his horse and rode quickly back to the capital. Without an instant's delay he sent for the grand-vizir, and ordered him to seize and question the Sultana's sisters that very day. This was done. They were confronted with each other and proved guilty, and were executed in less than an hour.

But the Sultan did not wait to hear that his orders had been carried out before going on foot, followed by his whole court to the door of the great mosque, and drawing the Sultana with his own hand out of the narrow prison where she had spent so many years, "Madam," he cried, embracing her with tears in his eyes, "I have come to ask your pardon for the injustice I have done you, and to repair it as far as I may. I have already begun by punishing the authors of this abominable crime, and I hope you will forgive me when I introduce you to our children, who are the most charming and accomplished creatures in the whole world. Come with me, and take back your position and all the honour that is due to you."

This speech was delivered in the presence of a vast multitude of people, who had gathered from all parts on the first hint of what was happening, and the news was passed from mouth to mouth in a few seconds.

Early next day the Sultan and Sultana, dressed in robes of state and followed by all the court, set out for the country house of their children. Here the Sultan presented them to the Sultana one by one, and for some time there was nothing but embraces and tears and tender words. Then they ate of the magnificent dinner which had been prepared for them, and after they were all refreshed they went into the garden, where the Sultan pointed out to his wife the Golden Water and the Singing Tree. As to the Talking Bird, she had already made acquaintance with him.

In the evening they rode together back to the capital, the princes on each side of their father, and the princess with her mother. Long before they reached the gates the way was lined with people, and the air filled with shouts of welcome, with which were mingled the songs of the Talking Bird, sitting in its cage on the lap of the princess, and of the birds who followed it.

And in this manner they came back to their father's palace.

THE DISENTANGLERS

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PREFACE

It has been suggested to the Author that the incident of the Berbalangs, in The Adventure of the Fair American, is rather improbable. He can only refer the sceptical to the perfectly genuine authorities cited in his footnotes.

I. THE GREAT IDEA

The scene was a dusky shabby little room in Ryder Street. To such caves many repair whose days are passed, and whose food is consumed, in the clubs of the adjacent thoroughfare of cooperative palaces, Pall Mall. The furniture was battered and dingy; the sofa on which Logan sprawled had a certain historic interest: it was covered with cloth of horsehair, now seldom found by the amateur. A bookcase with glass doors held a crowd of books to which the amateur would at once have flown. They were in ‘boards’ of faded blue, and the paper labels bore alluring names: they were all First Editions of the most desirable kind. The bottles in the liqueur case were antique; a coat of arms, not undistinguished, was in relief on the silver stoppers. But the liquors in the flasks were humble and conventional. Merton, the tenant of the rooms, was in a Zingari cricketing coat; he occupied the arm-chair, while Logan, in evening dress, maintained a difficult equilibrium on the slippery sofa. Both men were of an age between twenty-five and twenty-nine, both were pleasant to the eye. Merton was, if anything, under the middle height: fair, slim, and active. As a freshman he had coxed his College Eight, later he rowed Bow in that vessel. He had won the Hurdles, but been beaten by his Cambridge opponent; he had taken a fair second in Greats, was believed to have been ‘runner up’ for the Newdigate prize poem, and might have won other laurels, but that he was found to do the female parts very fairly in the dramatic performances of the University, a thing irreconcilable with study. His father was a rural dean. Merton’s most obvious vice was a thirst for general information. ‘I know it is awfully bad form to know anything,’ he had been heard to say, ‘but everyone has his failings, and mine is occasionally useful.’

Logan was tall, dark, athletic and indolent. He was, in a way, the last of an historic Scottish family, and rather fond of discoursing on the ancestral traditions. But any satisfaction that he derived from them was, so far, all that his birth had won for him. His little patrimony had taken to itself wings. Merton was in no better case. Both, as they sat together, were gloomily discussing their prospects.

In the penumbra of smoke, and the malignant light of an ill trimmed lamp, the Great Idea was to be evolved. What consequences hung on the Great Idea! The peace of families insured, at a trifling premium. Innocence rescued. The defeat of the subtlest criminal designers: undreamed of benefits to natural science! But

I anticipate. We return to the conversation in the Ryder Street den.

‘It is a case of emigration or the workhouse,’ said Logan.

‘Emigration! What can you or I do in the Colonies? They provide even their own ushers. My only available assets, a little Greek and less Latin, are drugs in the Melbourne market,’ answered Merton; ‘they breed their own dominies. Protection!’

‘In America they might pay for lessons in the English accent . . . ‘ said Logan.

‘But not,’ said Merton, ‘in the Scotch, which is yours; oh distant cousin of a marquis! Consequently by rich American lady pupils “you are not one to be desired.”’

‘Tommy, you are impertinent,’ said Logan. ‘Oh, hang it, where is there an opening, a demand, for the broken, the stoney broke? A man cannot live by casual paragraphs alone.’

‘And these generally reckoned “too high-toned for our readers,”’ said Merton.

‘If I could get the secretaryship of a golf club!’ Logan sighed.

‘If you could get the Chancellorship of the Exchequer! I reckon that there are two million applicants for secretaryships of golf clubs.’

‘Or a land agency,’ Logan murmured.

‘Oh, be practical!’ cried Merton. ‘Be inventive! Be modern! Be up to date! Think of something *new*! Think of a felt want, as the Covenanting divine calls it: a real public need, hitherto but dimly present, and quite a demand without a supply.’

‘But that means thousands in advertisements,’ said Logan, ‘even if we ran a hair-restorer. The ground bait is too expensive. I say, I once knew a fellow who ground-baited for salmon with potted shrimps.’

‘Make a paragraph on him then,’ said Merton.

‘But results proved that there was no felt want of potted shrimps — or not of a fly to follow.’

‘Your collaboration in the search, the hunt for money, the quest, consists merely in irrelevancies and objections,’ growled Merton, lighting a cigarette.

‘Lucky devil, Peter Nevison. Meets an heiress on a Channel boat, with 4,000*l*. a year; and there he is.’ Logan basked in the reflected sunshine.

‘Cut by her people, though — and other people. I could not have faced the row with her people,’ said Merton musingly.

‘I don’t wonder they moved heaven and earth, and her uncle, the bishop, to stop it. Not eligible, Peter was not, however you took him,’ Logan reflected. ‘Took too much of this,’ he pointed to the heraldic flask.

‘Well, *she* took him. It is not much that parents, still less guardians, can do now, when a girl’s mind is made up.’

‘The emancipation of woman is the opportunity of the indigent male struggler. Women have their way,’ Logan reflected.

‘And the youth of the modern aged is the opportunity of our sisters, the girls “on the make,”’ said Merton. ‘What a lot of old men of title are marrying young women as hard up as we are!’

‘And then,’ said Logan, ‘the offspring of the deceased marchionesses make a fuss. In fact marriage is always the signal for a family row.’

‘It is the infernal family row that I never could face. I had a chance—’

Merton seemed likely to drop into autobiography.

‘I know,’ said Logan admonishingly.

‘Well, hanged if I could take it, and she — she could not stand it either, and both of us—’

‘Do not be elegiac,’ interrupted Logan. ‘I know. Still, I am rather sorry for people’s people. The unruly affections simply poison the lives of parents and guardians, aye, and of the children too. The aged are now so hasty and imprudent. What would not Tala have given to prevent his Grace from marrying Mrs. Tankerville?’

Merton leapt to his feet and smote his brow.

‘Wait, don’t speak to me — a great thought flushes all my brain. Hush! I have it,’ and he sat down again, pouring seltzer water into a half empty glass.

‘Have what?’ asked Logan.

‘The Felt Want. But the accomplices?’

‘But the advertisements!’ suggested Logan.

‘A few pounds will cover *them*. I can sell my books,’ Merton sighed.

‘A lot of advertising your first editions will pay for. Why, even to launch a hair-restorer takes—’

‘Oh, but,’ Merton broke in, ‘*this* want is so widely felt, acutely felt too: hair is not in it. But where are the accomplices?’

‘If it is gentleman burglars I am not concerned. No Raffles for me! If it is venal physicians to kill off rich relations, the lives of the Logans are sacred to me.’

‘Bosh!’ said Merton, ‘I want “lady friends,” as Tennyson says: nice girls, well born, well bred, trying to support themselves.’

‘What do you want *them* for? To support them?’

‘I want them as accomplices,’ said Merton. ‘As collaborators.’

‘Blackmail?’ asked Logan. ‘Has it come to this? I draw the line at blackmail. Besides, they would starve first, good girls would; or marry Lord Methusalem, or a beastly South African *richard*.’

‘Robert Logan of Restalrig, that should be’ — Merton spoke impressively—

‘you know me to be incapable of practices, however lucrative, which involve taint of crime. I do not prey upon the society which I propose to benefit. But where are the girls?’

‘Where are they not?’ Logan asked. ‘Dawdling, as jesters, from country house to country house. In the British Museum, verifying references for literary gents, if they can get references to verify. Asking leave to describe their friends’ parties in *The Leidy’s News*. Trying for places as golfing governesses, or bridge governesses, or gymnastic mistresses at girls’ schools, or lady laundresses, or typewriters, or lady teachers of cookery, or pegs to hang costumes on at dress-makers’. The most beautiful girl I ever saw was doing that once; I met her when I was shopping with my aunt who left her money to the Armenians.’

‘You kept up her acquaintance? The girl’s, I mean,’ Merton asked.

‘We have occasionally met. In fact—’

‘Yes, I know, as you said lately,’ Merton remarked. ‘That’s one, anyhow, and there is Mary Willoughby, who got a second in history when I was up. *She* would do. Better business for her than the British Museum. I know three or four.’

‘I know five or six. But what for?’ Logan insisted.

‘To help us in supplying the widely felt want, which is my discovery,’ said Merton.

‘And that is?’

‘Disentanglers — of both sexes. A large and varied staff, calculated to meet every requirement and cope with every circumstance.’ Merton quoted an unwritten prospectus.

‘I don’t follow. What the deuce is your felt want?’

‘What we were talking about.’

‘Ground bait for salmon?’ Logan reverted to his idea.

‘No. Family rows about marriages. Nasty letters. Refusals to recognise the choice of a son, a daughter, or a widowed but youthful old parent, among the upper classes. Harsh words. Refusals to allow meetings or correspondence. Broken hearts. Improvident marriages. Preaching down a daughter’s heart, or an aged parent’s heart, or a nephew’s, or a niece’s, or a ward’s, or anybody’s heart. Peace restored to the household. Intended marriage off, and nobody a penny the worse, unless—’

‘Unless what?’ said Logan.

‘Practical difficulties,’ said Merton, ‘will occur in every enterprise. But they won’t be to our disadvantage, the reverse — if they don’t happen too often. And we can guard against *that* by a scientific process.’

‘Now will you explain,’ Logan asked, ‘or shall I pour this whisky and water down the back of your neck?’

He rose to his feet, menace in his eye.

‘Bear fighting barred! We are no longer boys. We are men — broken men. Sit down, don’t play the bear,’ said Merton.

‘Well, explain, or I fire!’

‘Don’t you see? The problem for the family, for hundreds of families, is to get the undesirable marriage off without the usual row. Very few people really like a row. Daughter becomes anæmic; foreign cures are expensive and no good. Son goes to the Devil or the Cape. Aged and opulent, but amorous, parent leaves everything he can scrape together to disapproved of new wife. Relations cut each other all round. Not many people really enjoy that kind of thing. They want a pacific solution — marriage off, no remonstrances.’

‘And how are you going to do it?’

‘Why,’ said Merton, ‘by a scientific and thoroughly organised system of disengaging or disentangling. We enlist a lot of girls and fellows like ourselves, beautiful, attractive, young, or not so young, well connected, intellectual, athletic, and of all sorts of types, but all *broke*, all without visible means of subsistence. They are people welcome in country houses, but travelling third class, and devilishly perplexed about how to tip the servants, how to pay if they lose at bridge, and so forth. We enlist them, we send them out on demand, carefully selecting our agents to meet the circumstances in each case. They go down and disentangle the amorous by — well, by entangling them. The lovers are off with the old love, the love which causes all the worry, without being on with the new love — our agent. The thing quietly fizzles out.’

‘Quietly!’ Logan snorted. ‘I like “quietly.” They would be on with the new love. Don’t you see, you born gomeral, that the person, man or woman, who deserts the inconvenient A. — I put an A. B. case — falls in love with your agent B., and your B. is, by the nature of the thing, more ineligible than A. — too poor. A babe could see that. You disappoint me, Merton.’

‘You state,’ said Merton, ‘one of the practical difficulties which I foresaw. Not that it does not suit *us* very well. Our comrade and friend, man or woman, gets a chance of a good marriage, and, Logan, there is no better thing. But parents and guardians would not stand much of that: of people marrying our agents.’

‘Of course they wouldn’t. Your idea is crazy.’

‘Wait a moment,’ said Merton. ‘The resources of science are not yet exhausted. You have heard of the epoch-making discovery of Jenner, and its beneficent results in checking the ravages of smallpox, that scourge of the human race?’

‘Oh don’t talk like a printed book,’ Logan remonstrated. ‘Everybody has heard of vaccination.’

‘And you are aware that similar prophylactic measures have been adopted, with more or less of success, in the case of other diseases?’

‘I am aware,’ said Logan, ‘that you are in danger of personal suffering at my hands, as I already warned you.’

‘What is love but a disease?’ Merton asked dreamily. ‘A French *savant*, Monsieur Janet, says that nobody ever falls in love except when he is a little bit off colour: I forget the French equivalent.’

‘I am coming for you,’ Logan arose in wrath.

‘Sit down. Well, your objection (which it did not need the eyes of an Argus to discover) is that the patients, the lovers young, whose loves are disapproved of by the family, will fall in love with our agents, insist on marrying *them*, and so the last state of these afflicted parents — or children — will be worse than the first. Is that your objection?’

‘Of course it is; and crushing at that,’ Logan replied.

‘Then science suggests prophylactic measures: something akin to vaccination,’ Merton explained. ‘The agents must be warranted “immune.” Nice new word!’

‘How?’

‘The object,’ Merton answered, ‘is to make it impossible, or highly improbable, that our agents, after disentangling the affections of the patients, curing them of one attack, will accept their addresses, offered in a second fit of the fever. In brief, the agents must not marry the patients, or not often.’

‘But how can you prevent them if they want to do it?’

‘By a process akin, in the emotional region of our strangely blended nature, to inoculation.’

‘Hanged if I understand you. You keep on repeating yourself. You dodder!’

‘Our agents must have got the disease already, the pretty fever; and be safe against infection. There must be on the side of the agent a prior attachment. Now, don’t interrupt, there always *is* a prior attachment. You are in love, I am in love, he, she, and they, all of the broken brigade, are in love; all the more because they have not a chance. “Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth.” So, you see, our agents will be quite safe not to crown the flame of the patients, not to accept them, if they do propose, or expect a proposal. “Every security from infection guaranteed.” There is the felt want. Here is the remedy; not warranted absolutely painless, but salutary, and tending to the amelioration of the species. So we have only to enlist the agents, and send a few advertisements to the papers. My first editions must go. Farewell Shelley, Tennyson, Keats, uncut Waverleys, Byron, *The Waltz*, early Kiplings (at a vast reduction on account of the overflooded state of the market). Farewell Kilmarnock edition of Burns, and Colonel Lovelace, his *Lucasta*, and *Tamerlane* by Mr. Poe, and the rest. The money must be raised.' Merton looked resigned.

'I have nothing to sell,' said Logan, 'but an entire set of clubs by Philp. Guaranteed unique, and in exquisite condition.'

'You must part with them,' said Merton. 'We are like Palissy the potter, feeding his furnace with the drawing-room furniture.'

'But how about the recruiting?' Logan asked. 'It's like one of these novels where you begin by collecting desperados from all quarters, and then the shooting commences.'

'Well, we need not ransack the Colonies,' Merton replied. 'Patronise British industries. We know some fellows already and some young women.'

'I say,' Logan interrupted, 'what a dab at disentangling Lumley would have been if he had not got that Professorship of Toxicology at Edinburgh, and been able to marry Miss Wingan at last!'

'Yes, and Miss Wingan would have been useful. What a lively girl, ready for everything,' Merton replied.

'But these we can still get at,' Logan asked: 'how are you to be sure that they are — vaccinated?'

'The inquiry is delicate,' Merton admitted, 'but the fact may be almost taken for granted. We must give a dinner (a preliminary expense) to promising collaborators, and champagne is a great promoter of success in delicate inquiries. *In vino veritas*.'

'I don't know if there is money in it, but there is a kind of larkiness,' Logan admitted.

'Yes, I think there will be larks.'

'About the dinner? We are not to have Johnnies disguised as hansom cabbies driving about, and picking up men and women that look the right sort, in the streets, and compelling them to come in?'

'Oh no, *that* expense we can cut. It would not do with the women, obviously: heavens, what queer fishes that net would catch! The flag of the Disentanglers shall never be stained by — anything. You know some likely agents: I know some likely agents. They will suggest others, as our field of usefulness widens. Of course there is the oath of secrecy: we shall administer that after dinner to each guest apart.'

'Jolly difficult for those that are mixed up with the press to keep an oath of secrecy!' Logan spoke as a press man.

'We shall only have to do with gentlemen and ladies. The oath is not going to sanction itself with religious terrors. Good form — we shall appeal to a “sense of form” — now so widely diffused by University Extension Lectures on the Beautiful, the Fitting, the—’

‘Oh shut up!’ cried Logan. ‘You always haver after midnight. For, look here, here is an objection; this precious plan of yours, parents and others could work it for themselves. I dare say they do. When they see the affections of a son, or a daughter, or a bereaved father beginning to stray towards A., they probably invite B. to come and stay and act as a lightning conductor. They don’t need us.’

‘Oh, don’t they? They seldom have an eligible and satisfactory lightning conductor at hand, somebody to whom they can trust their dear one. Or, if they have, the dear one has already been bored with the intended lightning conductor (who is old, or plain, or stupid, or familiar, at best), and they won’t look at him or her. Now our Disentanglers are not going to be plain, or dull, or old, or stale, or commonplace — we’ll take care of that. My dear fellow, don’t you know how dismal the *parti* selected for a man or girl invariably is? Now *we* provide a different and superior article, a *fresh* article too, not a familiar bore or a neighbour.’

‘Well, there is a good deal in that, as you say,’ Logan admitted. ‘But decent people will think the whole speculation shady. How are you to get round that? There is something you have forgotten.’

‘What?’ Merton asked.

‘Why it stares you in the face. References. Unexceptionable references; people will expect them all round.’

‘Please don’t say “unexceptionable”; say “references beyond the reach of cavil.”’ Merton was a purist. ‘It costs more in advertisements, but my phrase at once enlists the sympathy of every liberal and elegant mind. But as to references (and I am glad that you have some common sense, Logan), there is, let me see, there is the Dowager.’

‘The divine Althæa — Marchioness of Bowton?’

‘The same,’ said Merton. ‘The oldest woman, and the most recklessly up-to-date in London. She has seen *bien d’autres*, and wants to see more.’

‘She will do; and my aunt,’ Logan said.

‘Not, oh, of course not, the one who left her money to the Armenians?’ Merton asked.

‘No, another. And there’s old Lochmaben’s young wife, my cousin, widely removed, by marriage. She is American, you know, and perhaps you know her book, *Social Experiments*?’

‘Yes, it is not half bad,’ Merton conceded, ‘and her heart will be in what I fear she will call “the new departure.” And she is pretty, and highly respected in the parish.’

‘And there’s my aunt I spoke of, or great aunt, Miss Nicky Maxwell. The best old thing: a beautiful monument of old gentility, and she would give her left hand to help any one of the clan.’

‘She will do. And there’s Mrs. Brown-Smith, Lord Yarrow’s daughter, who married the patent soap man. *Elle est capable de tout*. A real good woman, but full of her fun.’

‘That will do for the lady patronesses. We must secure them at once.’

‘But won’t the clients blab?’ Logan suggested.

‘They can’t,’ Merton said. ‘They would be laughed at consumedly. It will be their interest to hold their tongues.’

‘Well, let us hope that they will see it in that light.’ Logan was not too sanguine.

Merton had a better opinion of his enterprise.

‘People, if they come to us at all for assistance in these very delicate and intimate affairs, will have too much to lose by talking about them. They may not come, we can only try, but if they come they will be silent as the grave usually is.’

‘Well, it is late, and the whisky is low,’ said Logan in mournful tones. ‘May the morrow’s reflections justify the inspiration of — the whisky. Good night!’

‘Good night,’ said Merton absently.

He sat down when Logan had gone, and wrote a few notes on large sheets of paper. He was elaborating the scheme. ‘If collaboration consists in making objections, as the French novelist said, Logan is a rare collaborator,’ Merton muttered as he turned out the pallid lamp and went to bed.

Next morning, before dressing, he revolved the scheme. It bore the change of light and survived the inspiration of alcohol. Logan looked in after breakfast. He had no new objections. They proceeded to action.

II. FROM THE HIGHWAYS AND HEDGES

The first step towards Merton’s scheme was taken at once. The lady patronesses were approached. The divine Althæa instantly came in. She had enjoyed few things more since the Duchess of Richmond’s ball on the eve of Waterloo. Miss Nicky Maxwell at first professed a desire to open her coffers, ‘only anticipating,’ she said, ‘an event’ — which Logan declined in any sense to anticipate. Lady Lochmaben said that they would have a lovely time as experimental students of society. Mrs. Brown-Smith instantly offered her own services as a Disentangler, her lord being then absent in America studying the negro market for detergents.

‘I think,’ she said, ‘he expects Brown-Smith’s brand to make an Ethiopian change his skin, and then means to exhibit him as an advertisement.’

‘And settle the negro question by making them all white men,’ said Logan, as he gracefully declined the generous but compromising proposal of the lady. ‘Yet, after all,’ thought he, ‘is she not right? The prophylactic precautions would certainly be increased, morally speaking, if the Disentanglers were married.’ But while he pigeon-holed this idea for future reference, at the moment he could not see his way to accepting Mrs. Brown-Smith’s spirited idea. She reluctantly acquiesced in his view of the case, but, like the other dames, promised to guarantee, if applied to, the absolute respectability of the enterprise. The usual vows of secrecy were made, and (what borders on the supernatural) they were kept.

Merton’s first editions went to Sotheby’s, ‘Property of a gentleman who is changing his objects of collection.’ A Russian archduke bought Logan’s unique set of golf clubs by Philp. Funds accrued from other sources. Logan had a friend, dearer friend had no man, one Trevor, a pleasant bachelor whose sister kept house for him. His purse, or rather his cheque book, gaped with desire to be at Logan’s service, but had gaped in vain. Finding Logan grinning one day over the advertisement columns of a paper at the club, his prophetic soul discerned a good thing, and he wormed it out ‘in dern privacy.’ He slapped his manly thigh and insisted on being in it — as a capitalist. The other stoutly resisted, but was overcome.

‘You need an office, you need retaining fees, you need outfits for the accomplices, and it is a legitimate investment. I’ll take interest and risks,’ said Trevor.

So the money was found.

The inaugural dinner, for the engaging of accomplices, was given in a private room of a restaurant in Pall Mall.

The dinner was gay, but a little pathetic. Neatness, rather than the gloss of novelty (though other gloss there was), characterised the garments of the men. The toilettes of the women were modest; that amount of praise (and it is a good deal) they deserved. A young lady, Miss Maskelyne, an amber-hued beauty, who practically lived as a female jester at the houses of the great, shone resplendent, indeed, but magnificence of apparel was demanded by her profession.

‘I am *so* tired of it,’ she said to Merton. ‘Fancy being more and more anxious for country house invitations. Fancy an artist’s feelings, when she knows she has not been a success. And then when the woman of the house detests you! She often does. And when they ask you to give your imitation of So-and-so, and forget that his niece is in the room! Do you know what they would have called people like me a hundred years ago? Toad-eaters! There is one of us in an old novel I read a bit of once. She goes about, an old maid, to houses. Once she arrived in a snow storm and a hearse. Am I to come to that? I keep learning new drawing-room tricks. And when you fall ill, as I did at Eckford, and you can’t leave, and you think they are tired to death of you! Oh, it is I who am tired, and time passes, and one grows old. I am a hag!’

Merton said ‘what he ought to have said,’ and what, indeed, was true. He was afraid she would tell him what she owed her dress-makers. Therefore he steered the talk round to sport, then to the Highlands, then to Knoydart, then to Alastair Macdonald of Craigiecorrichan, and then Merton knew, by a tone in the voice, a drop of the eyelashes, that Miss Maskelyne was — vaccinated. Prophylactic measures had been taken: this agent ran no risk of infection. There was Alastair.

Merton turned to Miss Willoughby, on his left. She was tall, dark, handsome, but a little faded, and not plump: few of the faces round the table were plump and well liking. Miss Willoughby, in fact, dwelt in one room, in Bloomsbury, and dined on cocoa and bread and butter. These were for her the rewards of the Higher Education. She lived by copying crabbed manuscripts.

‘Do you ever go up to Oxford now?’ said Merton.

‘Not often. Sometimes a St. Ursula girl gets a room in the town for me. I have coached two or three of them at little reading parties. It gets one out of town in autumn: Bloomsbury in August is not very fresh. And at Oxford one can “tout,” or “cadge,” for a little work. But there are so many of us.’

‘What are you busy with just now?’

‘Vatican transcripts at the Record Office.’

‘Any exciting secrets?’

‘Oh no, only how much the priests here paid to Rome for their promotions. Secrets then perhaps: not thrilling now.’

‘No schemes to poison people?’

‘Not yet: no plots for novels, and oh, such long-winded pontifical Latin, and such awful crabbed hands.’

‘It does not seem to lead to much?’

‘To nothing, in no way. But one is glad to get anything.’

‘Jephson, of Lincoln, whom I used to know, is doing a book on the Knights of St. John in their Relations to the Empire,’ said Merton.

‘Is he?’ said Miss Willoughby, after a scarcely distinguishable but embarrassed pause, and she turned from Merton to exhibit an interest in the very original scheme of mural decoration behind her.

‘It is quite a new subject to most people,’ said Merton, and he mentally ticked off Miss Willoughby as safe, for Jephson, whom he had heard that she liked, was a very poor man, living on his fellowship and coaching. He was sorry: he had never liked or trusted Jephson.

‘It is a subject sure to create a sensation, isn’t it?’ asked Miss Willoughby, a little paler than before.

‘It might get a man a professorship,’ said Merton.

‘There are so many of us, of them, I mean,’ said Miss Willoughby, and Merton gave a small sigh. ‘Not much larkiness here,’ he thought, and asked a transient waiter for champagne.

Miss Willoughby drank a little of the wine: the colour came into her face.

‘By Jove, she’s awfully handsome,’ thought Merton.

‘It was very kind of you to ask me to this festival,’ said the girl. ‘Why have you asked us, me at least?’

‘Perhaps for many besides the obvious reason,’ said Merton. ‘You may be told later.’

‘Then there is a reason in addition to that which most people don’t find obvious? Have you come into a fortune?’

‘No, but I am coming. My ship is on the sea and my boat is on the shore.’

‘I see faces that I know. There is that tall handsome girl, Miss Markham, with real gold hair, next Mr. Logan. We used to call her the Venus of Milo, or Milo for short, at St. Ursula’s. She has mantles and things tried on her at Madame Claudine’s, and stumpy purchasers argue from the effect (neglecting the cause) that the things will suit *them*. Her people were ruined by Australian gold mines. And there is Miss Martin, who does stories for the penny story papers at a shilling the thousand words. The fathers have backed horses, and the children’s teeth are set on edge. Is it a Neo-Christian dinner? We are all so poor. You have sought us in the highways and hedges.’

‘Where the wild roses grow,’ said Merton.

‘I don’t know many of the men, though I see faces that one used to see in the High. There is Mr. Yorker, the athletic man. What is he doing now?’

‘He is sub-vice-secretary of a cricket club. His income depends on his bat and his curl from leg. But he has a rich aunt.’

‘Cricket does not lead to much, any more than my ability to read the worst handwritings of the darkest ages. Who is the man that the beautiful lady opposite is making laugh so?’ asked Miss Willoughby, without moving her lips.

Merton wrote ‘Bulstrode of Trinity’ on the back of the menu.

‘What does *he* do?’

‘Nothing,’ said Merton in a low voice. ‘Been alligator farming, or ostrich farming, or ranching, and come back shorn; they all come back. He wants to be an ecclesiastical “chucker out,” and cope with Mr. Kensitt and Co. New profession.’

‘He ought not to be here. He can ride and shoot.’

‘He is the only son of his mother and she is a widow.’

‘He ought to go out. My only brother is out. I wish I were a man. I hate dawdlers.’ She looked at him: her eyes were large and grey under black lashes, they were dark and louring.

‘Have you, by any chance, a spark of the devil in you?’ asked Merton, taking a social header.

‘I have been told so, and sometimes thought so,’ said Miss Willoughby. ‘Perhaps this one will go out by fasting if not by prayer. Yes, I *have* a spark of the Accuser of the Brethren.’

‘*Tant mieux*,’ thought Merton.

All the people were talking and laughing now. Miss Maskelyne told a story to the table. She did a trick with a wine glass, forks, and a cork. Logan interviewed Miss Martin, who wrote tales for the penny fiction people, on her methods. Had she a moral aim, a purpose? Did she create her characters first, and let them evolve their fortunes, or did she invent a plot, and make her characters fit in?

Miss Martin said she began with a situation: ‘I wish I could get one somewhere as secretary to a man of letters.’

‘They can’t afford secretaries,’ said Logan. ‘Besides they are family men, married men, and so—’

‘And so what?’

‘Go look in any glass, and say,’ said Logan, laughing. ‘But how do you begin with a situation?’

‘Oh, anyhow. A lot of men in a darkened room. Pitch dark.’

‘A séance?’

‘No, a conspiracy. They are in the dark that when arrested they may swear they never saw each other.’

‘They could swear that anyhow.’

‘Conspirators have consciences. Then there comes a red light shining between the door and the floor. Then the door breaks down under a hammer, the light floods the room. There is a man in it whom the others never saw enter.’

‘How did he get in?’

‘He was there before they came. Then the fighting begins. At the end of it where is the man?’

‘Well, where is he? What was he up to?’

‘I don’t know yet,’ said Miss Martin, ‘it just comes as I go on. It has just got to come. It is a fourteen hours a day business. All writing. I crib things from the French. Not whole stories. I take the opening situation; say the two men in a boat on the river who hook up a sack. I don’t read the rest of the Frenchman, I work on from the sack, and guess what was in it.’

‘What was in the sack?’

‘*In the Sack*! A name for a story! Anything, from the corpse of a freak (good idea, corpse of a freak with no arms and legs, or with too many) to a model of a submarine ship, or political papers. But I am tired of corpses. They pervade my works. They give “a *bouquet*, a fragrance,” as Mr. Talbot Twysden said about his cheap claret.’

‘You read the old Masters?’

‘The obsolete Thackeray? Yes, I know him pretty well.’

‘What are you publishing just now?’

‘This to an author? Don’t you know?’

‘I blush,’ said Logan.

‘Unseen,’ said Miss Martin, scrutinising him closely.

‘Well, you do not read the serials to which I contribute,’ she went on. ‘I have two or three things running. There is *The Judge’s Secret*.’

‘What was that?’

‘He did it himself.’

‘Did what?’

‘Killed the bishop. He is not a very plausible judge in English: in French he would be all right, a *juge d’instruction*, the man who cross-examines the prisoners in private, you know.’

‘Judges don’t do that in England,’ said Logan.

‘No, but this case is an exception. The judge was such a very old friend, a college friend, of the murdered bishop. So he takes advantage of his official position, and steals into the cell of the accused. My public does not know any better, and, of course, I have no reviewers. I never come out in a book.'

'And why did the judge assassinate the prelate?'

'The prelate knew too much about the judge, who sat in the Court of Probate and Divorce.'

'Satan reproving sin?' asked Logan.

'Yes, exactly; and the bishop being interested in the case—'

'No scandal about Mrs. Proudie?'

'No, not that exactly, still, you see the motive?'

'I do,' said Logan. 'And the conclusion?'

'The bishop was not really dead at all. It takes some time to explain. The *corpus delicti* — you see I know my subject — was somebody else. And the bishop was alive, and secretly watching the judge, disguised as Mr. Sherlock Holmes. Oh, I know it is too much in Dickens's manner. But my public has not read Dickens.'

'You interest me keenly' said Logan.

'I am glad to hear it. And the penny public take freely. Our circulation goes up. I asked for a rise of three pence on the thousand words.'

'Now this *is* what I call literary conversation,' said Logan. 'It is like reading *The British Weekly Bookman*. Did you get the threepence? if the inquiry is not indelicate.'

'I got twopence. But, you see, there are so many of us.'

'Tell me more. Are you serialising anything else?'

'Serialising is the right word. I see you know a great deal about literature. Yes, I am serialising a featured tale.'

'A featured tale?'

'You don't know what that is? You do not know everything yet! It is called *Myself*.'

'Why *Myself*?'

'Oh, because the narrator did it — the murder. A stranger is found in a wood, hung to a tree. Nobody knows who he is. But he and the narrator had met in Paraguay. He, the murdered man, came home, visited the narrator, and fell in love with the beautiful being to whom the narrator was engaged. So the narrator lassoed him in a wood.'

'Why?'

'Oh, the old stock reason. He knew too much.'

'What did he know?'

'Why, that the narrator was living on a treasure originally robbed from a church in South America.’

‘But, if it *was* a treasure, who would care?’

‘The girl was a Catholic. And the murdered man knew more.’

‘How much more?’

‘This: to find out about the treasure, the narrator had taken priest’s orders, and, of course, could not marry. And the other man, being in love with the girl, threatened to tell, and so the lasso came in handy. It is a Protestant story and instructive.’

‘Jolly instructive! But, Miss Martin, you are the Guy Boothby of your sex!’

At this supreme tribute the girl blushed like dawn upon the hills.

‘My word, she is pretty!’ thought Logan; but what he said was, ‘You know Mr. Tierney, your neighbour? Out of a job as a composition master. Almost reduced to University Extension Lectures on the didactic Drama.’

Tierney was talking eagerly to his neighbour, a fascinating lady laundress, *la belle blanchisseuse*, about starch.

Further off a lady instructress in cookery, Miss Frere, was conversing with a tutor of bridge.

‘Tierney,’ said Logan, in a pause, ‘may I present you to Miss Martin?’ Then he turned to Miss Markham, formerly known at St. Ursula’s as Milo. She had been a teacher of golf, hockey, cricket, fencing, and gymnastics, at a very large school for girls, in a very small town. Here she became society to such an alarming extent (no party being complete without her, while the colonels and majors never left her in peace), that her connection with education was abruptly terminated. At present raiment was draped on her magnificent shoulders at Madame Claudine’s. Logan, as he had told Merton, ‘occasionally met her,’ and Logan had the strongest reasons for personal conviction that she was absolutely proof against infection, in the trying circumstances to which a Disentangler is professionally exposed. Indeed she alone of the women present knew from Logan the purpose of the gathering.

Cigarettes had replaced the desire of eating and drinking. Merton had engaged a withdrawing room, where he meant to be closeted with his guests, one by one, administer the oath, and prosecute delicate inquiries on the important question of immunity from infection. But, after a private word or two with Logan, he deemed these conspicuous formalities needless. ‘We have material enough to begin with,’ said Logan. ‘We knew beforehand that some of the men were safe, and certain of the women.’

There was a balcony. The providence of nature had provided a full moon, and a night of balm. The imaginative maintained that the scent of hay was breathed, among other odours, over Pall Mall the Blest. Merton kept straying with one guest or another into a corner of the balcony. He hinted that there was a thing in prospect. Would the guest hold himself, or herself, ready at need? Next morning, if the promise was given, the guest might awake to peace of conscience. The scheme was beneficent, and, incidentally, cheerful.

To some he mentioned retainers; money down, to speak grossly. Most accepted on the strength of Merton's assurances that their services must always be ready. There were difficulties with Miss Willoughby and Miss Markham. The former lady (who needed it most) flatly refused the arrangement. Merton pleaded in vain. Miss Markham, the girl known to her contemporaries as Milo, could not hazard her present engagement at Madame Claudine's. If she was needed by the scheme in the dead season she thought that she could be ready for whatever it was.

Nobody was told exactly what the scheme was. It was only made clear that nobody was to be employed without the full and exhaustive knowledge of the employers, for whom Merton and Logan were merely agents. If in doubt, the agents might apply for counsel to the lady patronesses, whose very names tranquilised the most anxious inquirers. The oath was commuted for a promise, on honour, of secrecy. And, indeed, little if anything was told that could be revealed. The thing was not political: spies on Russia or France were not being recruited. That was made perfectly clear. Anybody might withdraw, if the prospect, when beheld nearer, seemed undesirable. A mystified but rather merry gathering walked away to remote lodgings, Miss Maskelyne alone patronising a hansom.

On the day after the dinner Logan and Merton reviewed the event and its promise, taking Trevor into their counsels. They were not ill satisfied with the potential recruits.

'There was one jolly little thing in white,' said Trevor. 'So pretty and flowering! "Cherries ripe themselves do cry," a line in an old song, that's what her face reminded me of. Who was she?'

'She came with Miss Martin, the penny novelist,' said Logan. 'She is stopping with her. A country parson's daughter, come up to town to try to live by typewriting.'

'She will be of no use to us,' said Merton. 'If ever a young woman looked fancy-free it is that girl. What did you say her name is, Logan?'

'I did not say, but, though you won't believe it, her name is Miss Blossom, Miss Florry Blossom. Her godfathers and godmothers must bear the burden of her appropriate Christian name; the other, the surname, is a coincidence — designed or not.'

'Well, she is not suitable,' said Merton sternly. 'Misplaced affections she might distract, but then, after she had distracted them, she might reciprocate them. As a conscientious manager I cannot recommend her to clients.'

'But,' said Trevor, 'she may be useful for all that, as well as decidedly ornamental. Merton, you'll want a typewriter for your business correspondence, and Miss Blossom typewrites: it is her profession.'

'Well,' said Merton, 'I am not afraid. I do not care too much for "that garden in her face," for your cherry-ripe sort of young person. If a typewriter is necessary I can bear with her as well as another.'

'I admire your courage and resignation,' said Trevor, 'so now let us go and take rooms for the Society.'

They found rooms, lordly rooms, which Trevor furnished in a stately manner, hanging a selection of his mezzotints on the walls — ladies of old years, after Romney, Reynolds, Hoppner, and the rest. A sober opulence and comfort characterised the chambers; a well-selected set of books in a Sheraton bookcase was intended to beguile the tedium of waiting clients. The typewriter (Miss Blossom accepted the situation) occupied an inner chamber, opening out of that which was to be sacred to consultations.

The firm traded under the title of Messrs. Gray and Graham. Their advertisement — in all the newspapers — addressed itself 'To Parents, Guardians, Children and others.' It set forth the sorrows and anxieties which beset families in the matter of undesirable matrimonial engagements and entanglements. The advertisers proposed, by a new method, to restore domestic peace and confidence. 'No private inquiries will, in any case, be made into the past of the parties concerned. The highest references will in every instance be given and demanded. Intending clients must in the first instance apply by letter to Messrs. Gray and Graham. No charge will be made for a first interview, which can only be granted after satisfactory references have been exchanged by letter.'

'If *that* does not inspire confidence,' said Merton, 'I don't know what will.'

'Nothing short of it will do,' said Logan.

'But the mezzotints will carry weight,' said Trevor, 'and a few good cloisonnés and enamelled snuff-boxes and bronzes will do no harm.'

So he sent in some weedings of his famous collection.

III. ADVENTURE OF THE FIRST CLIENTS

Merton was reading the newspaper in the office, expecting a client. Miss Blossom was typewriting in the inner chamber; the door between was open. The office boy knocked at Merton's outer door, and the sound of that boy's strangled chuckling was distinctly audible to his employer. There is something irritating in the foolish merriment of a youthful menial. No conduct could be more likely than that of the office boy to irritate the first client, arriving on business of which it were hard to exaggerate the delicate and anxious nature.

These reflections flitted through Merton's mind as he exclaimed 'Come in,' with a tone of admonishing austerity.

The office boy entered. His face was scarlet, his eyes goggled and ran water. Hastily and loudly exclaiming 'Mr. and Miss Apsley' (which ended with a crow) he stuffed his red pocket handkerchief into his mouth and escaped. At the sound of the names, Merton had turned towards the inner door, open behind him, whence came a clear and piercing trill of feminine laughter from Miss Blossom. Merton angrily marched to the inner door, and shut his typewriter in with a bang. His heart burned within him. Nothing could be so insulting to clients; nothing so ruinous to a nascent business. He wheeled round to greet his visitors with a face of apology; his eyes on the average level of the human countenance divine. There was no human countenance divine. There was no human countenance at that altitude. His eyes encountered the opposite wall, and a print of 'Mrs. Pelham Feeding Chickens.'

In a moment his eyes adjusted themselves to a lower elevation. In front of him were standing, hand in hand, a pair of small children, a boy of nine in sailor costume, but with bare knees not usually affected by naval officers, and a girl of seven with her finger in her mouth.

The boy bowed gravely. He was a pretty little fellow with a pale oval face, arched eyebrows, promise of an aquiline nose, and two large black eyes. 'I think, sir,' said the child, 'I have the pleasure of redressing myself to Mr. Gray or Mr. Graham?'

'Graham, at your service,' said Merton, gravely; 'may I ask you and Miss Apsley to be seated?'

There was a large and imposing arm-chair in green leather; the client's chair. Mr. Apsley lifted his little sister into it, and sat down beside her himself. She threw her arms round his neck, and laid her flaxen curls on his shoulder. Her blue eyes looked shyly at Merton out of her fleece of gold. The four shoes of the clients dangled at some distance above the carpet.

'You are the author of this article, I think, Mr. Graham?' said Mr. Apsley, showing his hand, which was warm, and holding out a little crumpled ball of paper, not precisely fresh.

Merton solemnly unrolled it; it contained the advertisement of his firm.

'Yes,' he said, 'I wrote that.'

'You got our letters, for you answered them,' said Mr. Apsley, with equal solemnity. 'Why do you want Bats and me?'

'The lady's name is Bats?' said Merton, wondering why he was supposed to 'want' either of the pair.

'My name is Batsy. I like you: you are pretty,' said Miss Apsley.

Merton positively blushed: he was unaccustomed to compliments so frank from a member of the sex at an early stage of a business interview. He therefore kissed his fair client, who put up a pair of innocent damp lips, and then allowed her attention to be engrossed by a coin on his watch-chain.

'I don't quite remember your case, sir, or what you mean by saying I wanted you, though I am delighted to see you,' he said to Mr. Apsley. 'We have so many letters! With your permission I shall consult the letter book.'

'The article says "To Parents, Guardians, Children, and others." It was in print,' remarked Mr. Apsley, with a heavy stress on "children," 'and she said you wanted *us*.'

The mystified Merton, wondering who 'she' was, turned the pages of the letter book, mumbling, 'Abernethy, Applecombe, Ap. Davis, Apsley. Here we are,' he began to read the letter aloud. It was typewritten, which, when he saw his clients, not a little surprised him.

'Gentlemen,' the letter ran, 'having seen your advertisement in the *Daily Diatribe* of to-day, May 17, I desire to express my wish to enter into communication with you on a matter of pressing importance. — I am, in the name of my sister, Miss Josephine Apsley, and myself,

'Faithfully yours,
'Thomas Lloyd Apsley.'

'That's the letter,' said Mr. Apsley, 'and you wrote to us.'

'And what did I say?' asked Merton.

'Something about preferences, which we did not understand.'

'References, perhaps,' said Merton. 'Mr. Apsley, may I ask whether you wrote this letter yourself?'

‘No; None-so-pretty printed it on a kind of sewing machine. *She* told us to come and see you, so we came. I called her None-so-pretty, out of a fairy story. She does not mind. Gran says she thinks she rather likes it.’

‘I shouldn’t wonder if she did,’ said Merton. ‘But what is her real name?’

‘She made me promise not to tell. She was staying at the Home Farm when we were staying at Gran’s.’

‘Is Gran your grandmother?’

‘Yes,’ replied Mr. Apsley.

Hereon Bats remarked that she was ‘velly hungalee.’

‘To be sure,’ said Merton. ‘Luncheon shall be brought at once.’ He rang the bell, and, going out, interpellated the office boy.

‘Why did you laugh when my friends came to luncheon? You must learn manners.’

‘Please, sir, the kid, the young gentleman I mean, said he came on business,’ answered the boy, showing apoplectic symptoms.

‘So he did; luncheon is his business. Go and bring luncheon for — five, and see that there are chicken, cutlets, tartlets, apricots, and ginger-beer.’

The boy departed and Merton reflected. ‘A hoax, somebody’s practical joke,’ he said to himself. ‘I wonder who Miss None-so-pretty is.’ Then he returned, assured Batsy that luncheon was even at the doors, and leaving her to look at *Punch*, led Mr. Apsley aside. ‘Tommy,’ he said (having seen his signature), ‘where do you live?’

The boy named a street on the frontiers of St. John’s Wood.

‘And who is your father?’

‘Major Apsley, D.S.O.’

‘And how did you come here?’

‘In a hansom. I told the man to wait.’

‘How did you get away?’

‘Father took us to Lord’s, with Miss Limmer, and there was a crowd, and Bats and I slipped out; for None-so-pretty said we ought to call on you.’

‘Who is Miss Limmer?’

‘Our governess.’

‘Have you a mother?’

The child’s brown eyes filled with tears, and his cheeks flushed. ‘It was in India that she—’

‘Yes, be a man, Tommy. I am looking the other way,’ which Merton did for some seconds. ‘Now, Tommy, is Miss Limmer kind to you?’

The child’s face became strangely set and blank; his eyes looking vacant. ‘Miss Limmer is very kind to us. She loves us and we love her dearly. Ask

Batsy,' he said in a monotonous voice, as if he were repeating a lesson. 'Batsy, come here,' he said in the same voice. 'Is Miss Limmer kind to us?'

Batsy threw up her eyes — it was like a stage effect, 'We love Miss Limmer dearly, and she loves us. She is very, very kind to us, like our dear mamma.' Her voice was monotonous too. 'I never can say the last part,' said Tommy. 'Batsy knows it; about dear mamma.'

'Indeed!' said Merton. 'Tommy, *why* did you come here?'

'I don't know. I told you that None-so-pretty told us to. She did it after she saw *that* when we were bathing.' Tommy raised one of his little loose breeks that did not cover the knee.

That was not pleasant to look on: it was on the inside of the right thigh.

'How did you get hurt *there*?' asked Merton.

The boy's monotonous chant began again: his eyes were fixed and blank as before. 'I fell off a tree, and my leg hit a branch on the way down.'

'Curious accident,' said Merton; 'and None-so-pretty saw the mark?'

'Yes.'

'And asked you how you got it?'

'Yes, and she saw blue marks on Batsy, all over her arms.'

'And you told None-so-pretty that you fell off a tree?'

'Yes.'

'And she told you to come here?'

'Yes, she had read your printed article.'

'Well, here is luncheon,' said Merton, and bade the office boy call Miss Blossom from the inner chamber to share the meal. Batsy had as low a chair as possible, and was disposing her napkin to do the duty of a pinafore.

Miss Blossom entered from within with downcast eyes.

'None-so-pretty!'

'None-so-pretty!' shouted the children, while Tommy rushed to throw his arms round her neck, to meet which she stooped down, concealing a face of blushes. Batsy descended from her chair, waddled up, climbed another chair, and attacked the girl from the rear. The office boy was arranging luncheon. Merton called him to the writing-table, scribbled a note, and said, 'Take that to Dr. Maitland, with my compliments.'

Maitland had been one of the guests at the inaugural dinner. He was entirely devoid of patients, and was living on the anticipated gains of a great work on Clinical Psychology.

'Tell Dr. Maitland he will find me at luncheon if he comes instantly,' said Merton as the boy fled on his errand. 'I see that I need not introduce you to my young friends, Miss Blossom,' said Merton. 'May I beg you to help Miss

Apsley to arrange her tucker?'

Miss Blossom, almost unbecomingly brilliant in her complexion, did as she was asked. Batsy had cold chicken, new potatoes, green peas, and two helpings of apricot tart. Tommy devoted himself to cutlets. A very mild shandygaff was compounded for him in an old Oriel pewter. Both children made love to Miss Blossom with their eyes. It was not at all what Merton felt inclined to do; the lady had entangled him in a labyrinth of puzzledom.

'None-so-pretty,' exclaimed Tommy, 'I am glad you told us to come here. Your friends are nice.'

Merton bowed to Tommy, 'I am glad too,' he said. 'Miss Blossom knew that we were kindred souls, same kind of chaps, I mean, you and me, you know, Tommy!'

Miss Blossom became more and more like the fabled peony, the crimson variety. Luckily the office boy ushered in Dr. Maitland, who, exchanging glances of surprise with Merton, over the children's heads, began to make himself agreeable. He had nearly as many tricks as Miss Maskelyne. He was doing the short-sighted man eating celery, and unable to find the salt because he is unable to find his eyeglass.

Merton, seeing his clients absorbed in mirth, murmured something vague about 'business,' and spirited Miss Blossom away to the inner chamber.

'Sit down, pray, Miss Blossom. There is no time to waste. What do you know about these children? Why did you send them here?'

The girl, who was pale enough now, said, 'I never thought they would come.'

'They are here, however. What do you know about them?'

'I went to stay, lately, at the Home Farm on their grandmother's place. We became great friends. I found out that they were motherless, and that they were being cruelly ill-treated by their governess.'

'Miss Limmer?'

'Yes. But they both said they loved her dearly. They always said that when asked. I gathered from their grandmother, old Mrs. Apsley, that their father would listen to nothing against the governess. The old lady cried in a helpless way, and said he was capable of marrying the woman, out of obstinacy, if anybody interfered. I had your advertisement, and I thought you might disentangle him. It was a kind of joke. I only told them that you were a kind gentleman. I never dreamed of their really coming.'

'Well, you must take them back again presently, there is the address. You must see their father; you must wait till you see him. And how are you to explain this escapade? I can't have the children taught to lie.'

'They have been taught *that* lesson already.'

‘I don’t think they are aware of it,’ said Merton.

Miss Blossom stared.

‘I can’t explain, but you must find a way of keeping them out of a scrape.’

‘I think I can manage it,’ said Miss Blossom demurely.

‘I hope so. And manage, if you please, to see this Miss Limmer and observe what kind of person she is,’ said Merton, with his hand on the door handle, adding, ‘Please ask Dr. Maitland to come here, and do you keep the children amused for a moment.’

Miss Blossom nodded and left the room; there was laughter in the other chamber. Presently Maitland joined Merton.

‘Look here,’ said Merton, ‘we must be rapid. These children are being cruelly ill-treated and deny it. Will you get into talk with the boy, and ask him if he is fond of his governess, say “Miss Limmer,” and notice what he says and how he says it? Then we must pack them away.’

‘All right,’ said Maitland.

They returned to the children. Miss Blossom retreated to the inner room. Bats simplified matters by falling asleep in the client’s chair. Maitland began by talking about schools. Was Tommy going to Eton?

Tommy did not know. He had a governess at home.

‘Not at a preparatory school yet? A big fellow like you?’

Tommy said that he would like to go to school, but they would not send him.

‘Why not?’

Tommy hesitated, blushed, and ended by saying that they didn’t think it safe, as he walked in his sleep.

‘You will soon grow out of that,’ said Maitland, ‘but it is not very safe at school. A boy I knew was found sound asleep on the roof at school.’

‘He might have fallen off,’ said Tommy.

‘Yes. That’s why your people keep you at home. But in a year or two you will be all right. Know any Latin yet?’

Tommy said that Miss Limmer taught him Latin.

‘Are you and she great friends?’

Tommy’s face and voice altered as before, while he mechanically repeated the tale of the mutual affection which linked him with Miss Limmer.

‘*That’s* all very jolly,’ said Maitland.

‘Now, Tommy,’ said Merton, ‘we must waken Batsy, and Miss Blossom is going to take you both home. Hope we shall often meet.’

He called Miss Blossom; Batsy kissed both of her new friends. Merton conducted the party to the cab, and settled, in spite of Tommy’s remonstrances, with the cabman, who made a good thing of it, and nodded when told to drive away as soon as he had deposited his charges at their door. Then Merton led Maitland upstairs and offered him a cigar.

‘What do you think of it?’ he asked.

‘Common post-hypnotic suggestion by the governess,’ said Maitland.

‘I guessed as much, but can it really be worked like that? You are not chaffing?’

‘Simplest thing to work in the world,’ said Maitland. ‘A lot of nonsense, however, that the public believes in can’t be done. The woman could not sit down in St. John’s Wood, and “will” Tommy to come to her if he was in the next room. At least she might “will” till she was black in the face, and he would know nothing about it. But she can put him to sleep, and make him say what he does not want to say, in answer to questions, afterwards, when he is awake.’

‘You’re sure of it?’

‘It is as certain as anything in the world up to a certain point.’

‘The girl said something that the boy did not say, more gushing, about his dead mother.’

‘The hypnotised subject often draws a line somewhere.’

‘The woman must be a fiend,’ said Merton.

‘Some of them are, now and then,’ said the author of *Clinical Psychology*.

*

Miss Blossom’s cab, the driver much encouraged by Tommy, who conversed with him through the trap in the roof, dashed up to the door of a house close to Lord’s. The horse was going fast, and nearly cannoned into another cab-horse, also going fast, which was almost thrown on its haunches by the driver. Inside the other hansom was a tall man with a pale face under the tan, who was nervously gnawing his moustache. Miss Blossom saw him, Tommy saw him, and cried ‘Father!’ Half-hidden behind a blind of the house Miss Blossom beheld a woman’s face, expectant. Clearly she was Miss Limmer. All the while that they were driving Miss Blossom’s wits had been at work to construct a story to account for the absence and return of the children. Now, by a flash of invention, she called to her cabman, ‘Drive on — fast!’ Major Apsley saw his lost children with their arms round the neck of a wonderfully pretty girl; the pretty girl waved her parasol to him with a smile, beckoning forwards; the children waved their arms, calling out ‘A race! a race!’

What could a puzzled parent do but bid his cabman follow like the wind? Miss Blossom’s cab flew past Lord’s, dived into Regent’s Park, leading by two lengths; reached the Zoological Gardens, and there its crew alighted, demurely waiting for the Major. He leaped from his hansom, and taking off his hat, strode up to Miss Blossom, as if he were leading a charge. The children captured him by the legs. 'What does this mean, Madam? What are you doing with my children? Who are you?'

'She's None-so-pretty,' said Tommy, by way of introduction.

Miss Blossom bowed with grace, and raising her head, shot two violet rays into the eyes of the Major, which were of a bistre hue. But they accepted the message, like a receiver in wireless telegraphy. No man, let be a Major, could have resisted None-so-pretty at that moment. 'Come into the gardens,' she said, and led the way. 'You would like a ride on the elephant, Tommy?' she asked Master Apsley. 'And you, Batsy?'

The children shouted assent.

'How in the world does she know them?' thought the bewildered officer.

The children mounted the elephant.

'Now, Major Apsley,' said Miss Blossom, 'I have found your children.'

'I owe you thanks, Madam; I have been very anxious, but—'

'It is more than your thanks I want. I want you to do something for me, a very little thing,' said Miss Blossom, with the air of a supplicating angel, the violet eyes dewy with tears.

'I am sure I shall be delighted to do anything you ask, but—'

'Will you *promise*? It is a very little thing indeed!' and her hands were clasped in entreaty. 'Please promise!'

'Well, I promise.'

'Then keep your word: it is a little thing! Take Tommy home this instant, let nobody speak to him or touch him — and — make him take a bath, and see him take it.'

'Take a bath!'

'Yes, at once, in your presence. Then ask him . . . any questions you please, but pay extreme attention to his answers and his face, and the sound of his voice. If that is not enough do the same with Batsy. And after that I think you had better not let the children out of your sight for a short time.'

'These are very strange requests.'

'And it was by a strange piece of luck that I met you driving home to see if the lost children were found, and secured your attention before it could be pre-engaged.'

'But where did you find them and why?'

Miss Blossom interrupted him, 'Here is the address of Dr. Maitland, I have written it on my own card; he can answer some questions you may want to ask. Later I will answer anything. And now in the name of God,' said the girl reverently, with sudden emotion, ‘you will keep your promise to the letter?’

‘I will,’ said the Major, and Miss Blossom waved her parasol to the children. ‘You must give the poor elephant a rest, he is tired,’ she cried, and the tender-hearted Batsy needed no more to make her descend from the great earth-shaking beast. The children attacked her with kisses, and then walked off, looking back, each holding one of the paternal hands, and treading, after the manner of childhood, on the paternal toes.

Miss Blossom walked till she met an opportune omnibus.

About an hour later a four-wheeler bore a woman with blazing eyes, and a pile of trunks gaping untidily, from the Major’s house in St. John’s Wood Road.

The Honourable Company had won its first victory: Major Apsley, having fulfilled Miss Blossom’s commands, had seen what she expected him to see, and was disentangled from Miss Limmer.

The children still call their new stepmother None-so-pretty.

IV. ADVENTURE OF THE RICH UNCLE

‘His God is his belly, Mr. Graham,’ said the client, ‘and if the text strikes you as disagreeably unrefined, think how it must pain me to speak thus of an uncle, if only by marriage.’

The client was a meagre matron of forty-five, or thereabouts. Her dark scant hair was smooth, and divided down the middle. Acerbity spoke in every line of her face, which was of a dusky yellow, where it did not rather verge on the faint hues of a violet past its prime. She wore thread gloves, and she carried a battered reticule of early Victorian days, in which Merton suspected that tracts were lurking. She had an anxious peevish mouth; in truth she was not the kind of client in whom Merton’s heart delighted.

And yet he was sorry for her, especially as her rich uncle’s cook was the goddess of the gentleman whose god had just been denounced in scriptural terms by the client, a Mrs. Gisborne. She was sad, as well she might be, for she was a struggler, with a large family, and great expectations from the polytheistic uncle who adored his cook and one of his nobler organs.

‘What has his history been, this gentleman’s — Mr. Fulton, I think you called him?’

‘He was a drysalter in the City, sir,’ and across Merton’s mind flitted a vision of a dark shop with Finnan haddocks, bacon, and tongues in the window, and smelling terribly of cheese.

‘Oh, a drysalter?’ he said, not daring to display ignorance by asking questions to corroborate his theory of the drysalting business.

‘A drysalter, sir, and isinglass importer.’

Merton was conscious of vagueness as to isinglass, and was distantly reminded of a celebrated racehorse. However, it was clear that Mr. Fulton was a retired tradesman of some kind. ‘He went out of isinglass — before the cheap scientific substitute was invented (it is made out of old quill pens) — with seventy-five thousand pounds. And it *ought* to come to my children. He has not another relation living but ourselves; he married my aunt. But we never see him: he said that he could not stand our Sunday dinners at Hampstead.’

A feeling not remote from sympathy with Mr. Fulton stole over Merton’s mind as he pictured these festivals. ‘Is his god very — voluminous?’

Mrs. Gisborne stared.

‘Is he a very portly gentleman?’

‘No, Mr. Graham, he is next door to a skeleton, though you would not expect it, considering.’

‘Considering his devotion to the pleasures of the table?’

‘Gluttony, shameful waste *I* call it. And he is a stumbling block and a cause of offence to others. He is a patron of the City and Suburban College of Cookery, and founded two scholarships there, for scholars learning how to pamper the—’

‘The epicure,’ said Merton. He knew the City and Suburban College of Cookery. One of his band, a Miss Frere, was a Fellow and Tutor of that academy.

‘And about what age is your uncle?’ he asked.

‘About sixty, and not a white hair on his head.’

‘Then he may marry his cook?’

‘He will, sir.’

‘And is very likely to have a family.’

Mrs. Gisborne sniffed, and produced a pocket handkerchief from the early Victorian reticule. She applied the handkerchief to her eyes in silence. Merton observed her with pity. ‘We need the money so; there are so many of us,’ said the lady.

‘Do you think that Mr. Fulton is — passionately in love, with his domestic?’

‘He only loves his meals,’ said Mrs. Gisborne; ‘*he* does not want to marry her, but she has a hold over him through — his—’

‘Passions, not of the heart,’ said Merton hastily. He dreaded an anatomical reference.

‘He is afraid of losing her. He and his cronies give each other dinners, jealous of each other they are; and he actually pays the woman two hundred a year.’

‘And beer money?’ said Merton. He had somewhere read or heard of beer money as an item in domestic finance.

‘I don’t know about that. The cruel thing is that she is a woman of strict temperance principles. So am I. I am sure it is an awful thing to say, Mr. Graham, but Satan has sometimes put it into my heart to wish that the woman, like too, too many of her sort, was the victim of alcoholic temptations. He has a fearful temper, and if once she was not fit for duty at one of his dinners, this awful gnawing anxiety would cease to ride my bosom. He would pack her off.’

‘Very natural. She is free from the besetting sin of the artistic temperament?’

‘If you mean drink, she is; and that is one reason why he values her. His last cook, and his last but one—’ Here Mrs. Gisborne narrated at some length the tragic histories of these artists.

‘Providential, I thought it, but now,’ she said despairingly.

‘She certainly seems a difficult woman to dislodge,’ said Merton. ‘A dangerous entanglement. Any followers allowed? Could anything be done through the softer emotions? Would a guardsman, for instance — ?’

‘She hates the men. Never one of them darkens her kitchen fire. Offers she has had by the score, but they come by post, and she laughs and burns them. Old Mr. Potter, one of his cronies, tried to get her away *that* way, but he is over seventy, and old at that, and she thought she had another chance to better herself. And she’ll take it, Mr. Graham, if you can’t do something: she’ll take it.’

‘Will you permit me to say that you seem to know a good deal about her! Perhaps you have some sort of means of intelligence in the enemy’s camp?’

‘The kitchen maid,’ said Mrs. Gisborne, purpling a little, ‘is the sister of our servant, and tells her things.’

‘I see,’ said Merton. ‘Now can you remember any little weakness of this, I must frankly admit, admirable artist and exemplary woman?’

‘You are not going to take her side, a scheming red-faced hussy, Mr. Graham?’

‘I never betrayed a client, Madam, and if you mean that I am likely to help this person into your uncle’s arms, you greatly misconceive me, and the nature of my profession.’

‘I beg your pardon, sir, but I will say that your heart does not seem to be in the case.’

‘It is not quite the kind of case with which we are accustomed to deal,’ said Merton. ‘But you have not answered my question. Are there any weak points in the defence? To Venus she is cold, of Bacchus she is disdainful.’

‘I never heard of the gentlemen I am sure, sir, but as to her weaknesses, she has the temper of a—’ Here Mrs. Gisborne paused for a comparison. Her knowledge of natural history and of mythology, the usual sources of parallels, failed to provide a satisfactory resemblance to the cook’s temper.

‘The temper of a Megæra,’ said Merton, admitting to himself that the word was not, though mythological, what he could wish.

‘Of a Megæra as you know that creature, sir, and impetuous! If everything is not handy, if that poor girl is not like clockwork with the sauces, and herbs, and things, if a saucepan boils over, or a ham falls into the fire, if the girl treads on the tail of one of the cats — and the woman keeps a dozen — then she flies at her with anything that comes handy.’

‘She is fond of cats?’ said Merton; ‘really this lady has sympathetic points:’ and he patted the grey Russian puss, Kutuzoff, which was a witness to these interviews.

‘She dotes on the nasty things: and you may well say “lady!” Her Siamese cat, a wild beast he is, took the first prize at the Crystal Palace Show. The papers said “Miss Blowser’s *Rangoon*, bred by the exhibitor.” Miss Blowser! I don’t know what the world is coming to. He stands on the doorsteps, the cat, like a lynx, and as fierce as a lion. Why he got her into the police-court: flew at a dog, and nearly tore his owner, a clergyman, to pieces. There were articles about it in the papers.’

‘I seem to remember it,’ said Merton. ‘*Christianos ad Leones*’. In fact he had written this humorous article himself. ‘But is there nothing else?’ he asked. ‘Only a temper, so natural to genius disturbed or diverted in the process of composition, and a passion for the *felidae*, such as has often been remarked in the great. There was Charles Baudelaire, Mahomet—’

‘I don’t know what you mean, sir, and,’ said Mrs. Gisborne, rising, and snapping her reticule, ‘I think I was a fool for answering your advertisement. I did not come here to be laughed at, and I think common politeness—’

‘I beg a thousand pardons,’ said Merton. ‘I am most distressed at my apparent discourtesy. My mind was preoccupied by the circumstances of this very difficult case, and involuntarily glided into literary anecdote on the subject of cats and their owners. They are my passion — cats — and I regret that they inspire you with antipathy.’ Here he picked up Kutuzoff and carried him into the inner room.

‘It is not that I object to any of Heaven’s creatures kept in their place,’ said Mrs. Gisborne somewhat mollified, ‘but you must make allowances, sir, for my anxiety. It sours a mother of nine. Friday is one of his gorging dinner-parties, and who knows what may happen if she pleases him? The kitchen maid says, I mean I hear, that she wears an engaged ring already.’

‘That is very bad,’ said Merton, with sympathy. ‘The dinner is on Friday, you say?’ and he made a note of the date.

‘Yes, 15 Albany Grove, on the Regent’s Canal.’

‘You can think of nothing else — no weakness to work on?’

‘No, sir, just her awful temper; I would save him from it, for *he* has another as bad. And besides hopes from him have kept me up so long, his only relation, and times are so hard, and schooling and boots, and everything so dear, and we so many in family.’ Tears came into the poor lady’s eyes.

‘I’ll give the case my very best attention,’ he said, shaking hands with the client. To Merton’s horror she tried, Heaven help her, to pass a circular packet, wrapped in paper, into his hand. He evaded it. It was a first interview, for which no charge was made. ‘What can be done shall be done, though I confess that I do not see my way,’ and he accompanied her downstairs to the street.

‘I behaved like a cad with my chaff,’ he said to himself, ‘but hang me if I see how to help her. And I rather admire that cook.’

He went into the inner room, wakened the sleeping partner, Logan, on the sofa, and unfolded the case with every detail. ‘What can we do, *que faire*!’

‘There’s an exhibition of modern, mediæval, ancient, and savage cookery at Earl’s Court, the Cookeries,’ said Logan. ‘Couldn’t we seduce an artist like Miss Blowser there, I mean *thither* of course, the night before the dinner, and get her up into the Great Wheel and somehow stop the Wheel — and make her too late for her duties?’

‘And how are you going to stop the Wheel?’

‘Speak to the Man at the Wheel. Bribe the beggar.’

‘Dangerous, and awfully expensive. Then think of all the other people on the Wheel! Logan, *vous chassez de race*. The old Restalrig blood is in your veins.’

‘My ancestors nearly nipped off with a king, and why can’t I carry off a cook? Hustle her into a hansom—’

‘Oh, bah! these are not modern methods.’

‘*Il n’y a rien tel que d’enlever*,’ said Logan.

‘I never shall stain the cause with police-courts,’ said Merton. ‘It would be fatal.’

‘I’ve heard of a cook who fell on his sword when the fish did not come up to time. Now a raid on the fish? She might fall on her carving knife when they did not arrive, or leap into the flames of the kitchen fire, like Œnone, don’t you know.’

‘Bosh. Vatel was far from the sea, and he had not a fish-monger’s shop round the corner. Be modern.’

Logan rumpled his hair, ‘Can’t I get her to lunch at a restaurant and ply her with the wines of Eastern France? No, she is Temperance personified. Can’t we send her a forged telegram to say that her mother is dying? Servants seem to have such lots of mothers, always inconveniently, or conveniently, moribund.’

‘I won’t have forgery. Great heavens, how obsolete you are! Besides, that would not put her employer in a rage.’

‘Could I go and consult — ?’ he mentioned a specialist. ‘He is a man of ideas.’

‘He is a man of the purest principles — and an uncommonly hard hitter.’

‘It is his purity I want. My own mind is hereditarily lawless. I want something not immoral, yet efficacious. There was that parson, whom you say the woman’s cat nearly devoured. Like Paul with beasts he fought the cat. Now, I wonder if that injured man is not meditating some priestly revenge that would do our turn and get rid of Miss Blowser?’

Merton shook his head impatiently. His own invention was busy, but to no avail. Miss Blowser seemed impregnable. Kutuzoff Hedzoff, the puss, stalked up to Logan and leaped on his knees. Logan stroked him, Kutuzoff purred and blinked, Logan sought inspiration in his topaz eyes. At last he spoke: 'Will you leave this affair to me, Merton? I think I have found out a way.'

'What way?'

'That's my secret. You are so beastly moral, you might object. One thing I may tell you — it does not compromise the Honourable Company of Disentanglers.'

'You are not going to try any detective work; to find out if she is a woman with a past, with a husband living? You are not going to put a live adder among the eels? I daresay drysalters eat eels. It is the reading of sensational novels that ruins our youth.'

'What a suspicious beggar you are. Certainly I am neither a detective nor a murderer *à la Montépin*!

'No practical jokes with the victuals?'

'Of course not.'

'No kidnapping Miss Blowser?'

'Certainly no kidnapping — Miss Blowser.'

'Now, honour bright, is your plan within the law? No police-court publicity?'

'No, the police will have no say or show in the matter; at least,' said Logan, 'as far as my legal studies inform me, they won't. But I can take counsel's opinion if you insist on it.'

'Then you are sailing near the wind?'

'Really I don't think so: not really what you call near.'

'I am sorry for that unlucky Mrs. Gisborne,' said Merton, musingly. 'And with two such tempers as the cook's and Mr. Fulton's the match could not be a happy one. Well, Logan, I suppose you won't tell me what your game is?'

'Better not, I think, but, I assure you, honour is safe. I am certain that nobody can say anything. I rather expect to earn public gratitude, on the whole. *You* can't appear in any way, nor the rest of us. By-the-bye do you remember the address of the parson whose dog was hurt?'

'I think I kept a cutting of the police case; it was amusing,' said Merton, looking through a kind of album, and finding presently the record of the incident.

'It may come in handy, or it may not,' said Logan. He then went off, and had Merton followed him he might not have been reassured. For Logan first walked to a chemist's shop, where he purchased a quantity of a certain drug. Next he went to the fencing rooms which he frequented, took his fencing mask and glove, borrowed a fencing glove from a left-handed swordsman whom he knew, and drove to his rooms with this odd assortment of articles. Having deposited them, he paid a call at the dwelling of a fair member of the Disentanglers, Miss Frere, the lady instructress in the culinary art, at the City and Suburban College of Cookery, whereof, as we have heard, Mr. Fulton, the eminent drysalter, was a patron and visitor. Logan unfolded the case and his plan of campaign to Miss Frere, who listened with intelligent sympathy.

'Do you know the man by sight?' he asked.

'Oh yes, and he knows me perfectly well. Last year he distributed the prizes at the City and Suburban School of Cookery, and paid me the most extraordinary compliments.'

'Well deserved, I am confident,' said Logan; 'and now you are sure that you know exactly what you have to do, as I have explained?'

'Yes, I am to be walking through Albany Grove at a quarter to four on Friday.'

'Be punctual.'

'You may rely on me,' said Miss Frere.

Logan next day went to Trevor's rooms in the Albany; he was the capitalist who had insisted on helping to finance the Disentanglers. To Trevor he explained the situation, unfolded his plan, and asked leave to borrow his private hansom.

'Delighted,' said Trevor. 'I'll put on an old suit of tweeds, and a seedy bowler, and drive you myself. It will be fun. Or should we take my motor car?'

'No, it attracts too much attention.'

'Suppose we put a number on my cab, and paint the wheels yellow, like pirates, you know, when they are disguising a captured ship. It won't do to look like a private cab.'

'These strike me as judicious precautions, Trevor, and worthy of your genius. That is, if we are not caught.'

'Oh, we won't be caught,' said Trevor. 'But, in the meantime, let us find that place you mean to go to on a map of London, and I'll drive you there now in a dog-cart. It is better to know the lie of the land.'

Logan agreed and they drove to his objective in the afternoon; it was beyond the border of known West Hammersmith. Trevor reconnoitred and made judicious notes of short cuts.

On the following day, which was Thursday, Logan had a difficult piece of diplomacy to execute. He called at the rooms of the clergyman, a bachelor and a curate, whose dog and person had suffered from the assaults of Miss Blowser's Siamese favourite. He expected difficulties, for a good deal of ridicule, including Merton’s article, *Christianos ad Leones*, had been heaped on this martyr. Logan looked forward to finding him crusty, but, after seeming a little puzzled, the holy man exclaimed, ‘Why, you must be Logan of Trinity?’

‘The same,’ said Logan, who did not remember the face or name (which was Wilkinson) of his host.

‘Why, I shall never forget your running catch under the scoring-box at Lord’s,’ exclaimed Mr. Wilkinson, ‘I can see it now. It saved the match. I owe you more than I can say,’ he added with deep emotion.

‘Then be grateful, and do me a little favour. I want — just for an hour or two — to borrow your dog,’ and he stooped to pat the animal, a fox-terrier bearing recent and glorious scars.

‘Borrow Scout! Why, what can you want with him?’

‘I have suffered myself through an infernal wild beast of a cat in Albany Grove,’ said Logan, ‘and I have a scheme — it is unchristian I own — of revenge.’

The curate’s eyes glittered vindictively: ‘Scout is no match for the brute,’ he said in a tone of manly regret.

‘Oh, Scout will be all right. There is not going to be a fight. He is only needed to — give tone to the affair. You will be able to walk him safely through Albany Grove after to-morrow.’

‘Won’t there be a row if you kill the cat? He is what they think a valuable animal. I never could stand cats myself.’

‘The higher vermin,’ said Logan. ‘But not a hair of his whiskers shall be hurt. He will seek other haunts, that’s all.’

‘But you don’t mean to steal him?’ asked the curate anxiously. ‘You see, suspicion might fall on me, as I am known to bear a grudge to the brute.’

‘I steal him! Not I,’ said Logan. ‘He shall sleep in his owner’s arms, if she likes. But Albany Grove shall know him no more.’

‘Then you may take Scout,’ said Mr. Wilkinson. ‘You have a cab there, shall I drive to your rooms with you and him?’

‘Do,’ said Logan, ‘and then dine at the club.’ Which they did, and talked much cricket, Mr. Wilkinson being an enthusiast.

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Next day, about 3.40 P.M., a hansom drew up at the corner of Albany Grove. The fare alighted, and sauntered past Mr. Fulton’s house. Rangoon, the Siamese puss, was sitting in a scornful and leonine attitude, in a tree of the garden above the railings, outside the open kitchen windows, whence came penetrating and hospitable smells of good fare. The stranger passed, and as he returned, dropped something here and there on the pavement. It was valerian, which no cat can resist.

Miss Blowser was in a culinary crisis, and could not leave the kitchen range. Her face was of a fiery complexion; her locks were in a fine disorder. ‘Is Rangoon in his place, Mary?’ she inquired of the kitchen maid.

‘Yes, ma’am, in his tree,’ said the maid.

In this tree Rangoon used to sit like a Thug, dropping down on dogs who passed by.

Presently the maid said, ‘Ma’am, Rangoon has jumped down, and is walking off to the right, after a gentleman.’

‘After a sparrow, I dare say, bless him,’ said Miss Blowser. Two minutes later she asked, ‘Has Rangy come back?’

‘No, ma’am.’

‘Just look out and see what he is doing, the dear.’

‘He’s walking along the pavement, ma’am, sniffing at something. And oh! there’s that curate’s dog.’

‘Yelping little brute! I hope Rangy will give him snuff,’ said Miss Blowser.

‘He’s flown at him,’ cried the maid ambiguously, in much excitement. ‘Oh, ma’am, the gentleman has caught hold of Rangoon. He’s got a wire mask on his face, and great thick gloves, not to be scratched. He’s got Rangoon: he’s putting him in a bag,’ but by this time Miss Blowser, brandishing a saucepan with a long handle, had rushed out of the kitchen, through the little garden, cannoned against Mr. Fulton, who happened to be coming in with flowers to decorate his table, knocked him against a lamp-post, opened the garden gate, and, armed and bareheaded as she was, had rushed forth. You might have deemed that you beheld Bellona speeding to the fray.

What Miss Blowser saw was a man disappearing into a hansom, whence came the yapping of a dog. Another cab was loitering by, empty; and this cabman had his orders. Logan had seen to *that*. To hail that cab, to leap in, to cry, ‘Follow the scoundrel in front: a sovereign if you catch him,’ was to the active Miss Blowser the work of a moment. The man whipped up his horse, the pursuit began, ‘there was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,’ Marylebone rang with the screams of female rage and distress. Mr. Fulton, he also, leaped up and rushed in pursuit, wringing his hands. He had no turn of speed, and stopped panting. He only saw Miss Blowser whisk into her cab, he only heard her yells that died in the distance. Mr. Fulton sped back into his house. He shouted for Mary: ‘What’s the matter with your mistress, with my cook?’ he raved.

‘Somebody’s taken her cat, sir, and is off, in a cab, and her after him.’

‘After her cat! D — her cat,’ cried Mr. Fulton. ‘My dinner will be ruined! It is the last she shall touch in *this* house. Out she packs — pack her things, Mary; no, don’t — do what you can in the kitchen. I *must* find a cook. Her cat!’ and with language unworthy of a drysalter Mr. Fulton clapped on his hat, and sped into the street, with a vague idea of hurrying to Fortnum and Mason’s, or some restaurant, or a friend’s house, indeed to any conceivable place where a cook might be recruited *impromptu*. ‘She leaves this very day,’ he said aloud, as he all but collided with a lady, a quiet, cool-looking lady, who stopped and stared at him.

‘Oh, Miss Frere!’ said Mr. Fulton, raising his hat, with a wild gleam of hope in the trouble of his eyes, ‘I have had such a misfortune!’

‘What has happened, Mr. Fulton?’

‘Oh, ma’am, I’ve lost my cook, and me with a dinner-party on to-day.’

‘Lost your cook? Not by death, I hope?’

‘No, ma’am, she has run away, in the very crisis, as I may call it.’

‘With whom?’

‘With nobody. After her cat. In a cab. I am undone. Where can I find a cook? You may know of some one disengaged, though it is late in the day, and dinner at seven. Can’t you help me?’

‘Can you trust me, Mr. Fulton?’

‘Trust you; how, ma’am?’

‘Let me cook your dinner, at least till your cook catches her cat,’ said Miss Frere, smiling.

‘You, don’t mean it, a lady!’

‘But a professed cook, Mr. Fulton, and anxious to help so nobly generous a patron of the art . . . if you can trust me.’

‘Trust you, ma’am!’ said Mr. Fulton, raising to heaven his obsecrating hands. ‘Why, you’re a genius. It is a miracle, a mere miracle of good luck.’

By this time, of course, a small crowd of little boys and girls, amateurs of dramatic scenes, was gathering.

‘We have no time to waste, Mr. Fulton. Let us go in, and let me get to work. I dare say the cook will be back before I have taken off my gloves.’

‘Not her, nor does she cook again in my house. The shock might have killed a man of my age,’ said Mr. Fulton, breathing heavily, and leading the way up the steps to his own door. ‘Her cat, the hussy!’ he grumbled.

Mr. Fulton kept his word. When Miss Blowser returned, with her saucepan and Rangoon, she found her trunks in the passage, corded by Mr. Fulton’s own trembling hands, and she departed for ever.

Her chase had been a stern chase, a long chase, the cab driven by Trevor had never been out of sight. It led her, in the western wilds, to a Home for Decayed and Destitute Cats, and it had driven away before she entered the lane leading to the Home. But there she found Rangoon. He had just been deposited there, in a seedy old traveller's fur-lined sleeping bag, the matron of the Home averred, by a very pleasant gentleman, who said he had found the cat astray, lost, and thinking him a rare and valuable animal had deemed it best to deposit him at the Home. He had left money to pay for advertisements. He had even left the advertisement, typewritten (by Miss Blossom).

'FOUND. A magnificent Siamese Cat. Apply to the Home for Destitute and Decayed Cats, Water Lane, West Hammersmith.'

'Very thoughtful of the gentleman,' said the matron of the Home. 'No; he did not leave any address. Said something about doing good by stealth.'

'Stealth, why he stole my cat!' exclaimed Miss Blowser. 'He must have had the advertisement printed like that ready beforehand. It's a conspiracy,' and she brandished her saucepan.

The matron, who was prejudiced in favour of Logan, and his two sovereigns, which now need not be expended in advertisements, was alarmed by the hostile attitude of Miss Blowser. 'There's your cat,' she said drily; 'it ain't stealing a cat to leave it, with money for its board, and to pay for advertisements, in a well-conducted charitable institution, with a duchess for president. And he even left five shillings to pay for the cab of anybody as might call for the cat. There is your money.'

Miss Blowser threw the silver away.

'Take your old cat in the bag,' said the matron, slamming the door in the face of Miss Blowser.

*

After the trial for breach of promise of marriage, and after paying the very considerable damages which Miss Blowser demanded and received, old Mr. Fulton hardened his heart, and engaged a male *chef*.

The gratitude of Mrs. Gisborne, now free from all anxiety, was touching. But Merton assured her that he knew nothing whatever of the stratagem, scarcely a worthy one, he thought, as she reported it, by which her uncle was disentangled.

It was Logan's opinion, and it is mine, that he had not been guilty of theft, but perhaps of the wrongous detention or imprisonment of Rangoon. 'But,' he said, 'the Habeas Corpus Act has no clause about cats, and in Scottish law, which is good enough for *me*, there is no property in cats. You can't, legally, *steal* them.'

'How do you know?' asked Merton.

‘I took the opinion of an eminent sheriff substitute.’

‘What is that?’

‘Oh, a fearfully swagger legal official: *you* have nothing like it.’

‘Rum country, Scotland,’ said Merton.

‘Rum country, England,’ said Logan, indignantly. ‘*You* have no property in corpses.’

Merton was silenced.

Neither could foresee how momentous, to each of them, the question of property in corpses was to prove. *O pectora cæca*!

*

Miss Blowser is now Mrs. Potter. She married her aged wooer, and Rangoon still wins prizes at the Crystal Palace.

V. THE ADVENTURE OF THE OFFICE SCREEN

It is not to be supposed that all the enterprises of the Company of Disentanglers were fortunate. Nobody can command success, though, on the other hand, a number of persons, civil and military, are able to keep her at a distance with surprising uniformity. There was one class of business which Merton soon learned to renounce in despair, just as some sorts of maladies defy our medical science.

‘It is curious, and not very creditable to our chemists,’ Merton said, ‘that love philtres were once as common as seidlitz powders, while now we have lost that secret. The wrong persons might drink love philtres, as in the case of Tristram and Iseult. Or an unskilled rural practitioner might send out the wrong drug, as in the instance of Lucretius, who went mad in consequence.’

‘Perhaps,’ remarked Logan, ‘the chemist was voting at the Comitia, and it was his boy who made a mistake about the mixture.’

‘Very probably, but as a rule, the love philtres *worked*. Now, with all our boasted progress, the secret is totally lost. Nothing but a love philtre would be of any use in some cases. There is Lord Methusalem, eighty if he is a day.’

‘Methusalem has been unco “wastefu’ in wives”!’ said Logan.

‘His family have been consulting me — the women in tears. He *will* marry his grandchildren’s German governess, and there is nothing to be done. In such cases nothing is ever to be done. You can easily distract an aged man’s volatile affections, and attach them to a new charmer. But she is just as ineligible as the first; marry he *will*, always a young woman. Now if a respectable virgin or widow of, say, fifty, could hand him a love philtre, and gain his heart, appearances would, more or less, be saved. But, short of philtres, there is nothing to be done. We turn away a great deal of business of that sort.’

The Society of Disentanglers, then, reluctantly abandoned dealings in this class of affairs.

In another distressing business, Merton, as a patriot, was obliged to abandon an attractive enterprise. The Marquis of Seakail was serving his country as a volunteer, and had been mentioned in despatches. But, to the misery of his family, he had entangled himself, before his departure, with a young lady who taught in a high school for girls. Her character was unimpeachable, her person graceful; still, as her father was a butcher, the duke and duchess were reluctant to assent to the union. They consulted Merton, and assured him that they would not flinch from expense. A great idea flashed across Merton's mind. He might send out a stalwart band of Disentanglers, who, disguised as the enemy, might capture Seakail, and carry him off prisoner to some retreat where the fairest of his female staff (of course with a suitable chaperon), would await him in the character of a daughter of the hostile race. The result would probably be to detach Seakail's heart from his love in England. But on reflection, Merton felt that the scheme was unworthy of a patriot.

Other painful cases occurred. One lady, a mother, of resolute character, consulted Merton on the case of her son. He was betrothed to an excitable girl, a neighbour in the country, who wrote long literary letters about Mr. George Meredith's novels, and (when abroad) was a perfect Baedeker, or Murray, or Mr. Augustus Hare: instructing through correspondence. So the matron complained, but this was not the worst of it. There was an unhappy family history, of a kind infinitely more common in fiction than in real life. To be explicit, even according to the ideas of the most abject barbarians, the young people, unwittingly, were too near akin for matrimony.

'There is nothing for it but to tell both of them the truth,' said Merton. 'This is not a case in which we can be concerned.'

The resolute matron did not take his counsel. The man was told, not the girl, who died in painful circumstances, still writing. Her letters were later given to the world, though obviously not intended for publication, and only calculated to waken unavailing grief among the sentimental, and to make the judicious tired. There was, however, a case in which Merton may be said to have succeeded by a happy accident. Two visitors, ladies, were ushered into his consulting room; they were announced as Miss Baddeley and Miss Crofton.

Miss Baddeley was attired in black, wore a thick veil, and trembled a good deal. Miss Crofton, whose dress was a combination of untoward but decisive hues, and whose hat was enormous and flamboyant, appeared to be the other young lady's *confidante*, and conducted the business of the interview.

'My dear friend, Miss Baddeley,' she began, when Miss Baddeley took her hand, and held it, as if for protection and sympathy. 'My dear friend,' repeated Miss Crofton, 'has asked me to accompany her, and state her case. She is too highly strung to speak for herself.'

Miss Baddeley wrung Miss Crofton's hand, and visibly quivered.

Merton assumed an air of sympathy. 'The situation is grave?' he asked.

'My friend,' said Miss Crofton, thoroughly enjoying herself, 'is the victim of passionate and unavailing remorse, are you not, Julia?' Julia nodded.

'Deeply as I sympathise,' said Merton, 'it appears to me that I am scarcely the person to consult. A mother now—'

'Julia has none.'

'Or a father or sister?'

'But for me, Julia is alone in the world.'

'Then,' said Merton, 'there are many periodicals especially intended for ladies. There is *The Woman of the World*, *The Girl's Guardian Angel*, *Fashion and Passion*, and so on. The Editors, in their columns, reply to questions in cases of conscience. I have myself read the replies to *Correspondents*, and would especially recommend those published in a serial conducted by Miss Annie Swan.'

Miss Crofton shook her head.

'Miss Baddeley's social position is not that of the people who are answered in periodicals.'

'Then why does she not consult some discreet and learned person, her spiritual director? Remorse (entirely due, no doubt, to a conscience too delicately sensitive) is not in our line of affairs. We only advise in cases of undesirable matrimonial engagements.'

'So we are aware,' said Miss Crofton. 'Dear Julia *is* engaged, or rather entangled, in — how many cases, dear?'

Julia shook her head and sobbed behind her veil.

'Is it one, Julia — nod when I come to the exact number — two? three? four?'

At the word 'four' Julia nodded assent.

Merton very much wished that Julia would raise her veil. Her figure was excellent, and with so many sins of this kind on her remorseful head, her face, Merton thought, must be worth seeing. The case was new. As a rule, clients wanted to disentangle their friends and relations. *This* client wanted to disentangle herself.

'This case,' said Merton, 'will be difficult to conduct, and the expenses would be considerable. I can hardly advise you to incur them. Our ordinary method is to throw in the way of one or other of the engaged, or entangled persons, some one who is likely to distract their affections; of course,' he added, 'to a more eligible object. How can I hope to find an object more eligible, Miss Crofton, than I must conceive your interesting friend to be?'

Miss Crofton caressingly raised Julia's veil. Before the victim of remorse could bury her face in her hands, Merton had time to see that it was a very pretty one. Julia was dark, pale, with 'eyes like billiard balls' (as a celebrated amateur once remarked), with a beautiful mouth, but with a somewhat wildly enthusiastic expression.

'How can I hope?' Merton went on, 'to find a worthier and more attractive object? Nay, how can I expect to secure the services not of one, but of *four*—'

‘Three would do, Mr. Merton,’ explained Miss Crofton. ‘Is it not so, Julia dearest?’

Julia again nodded assent, and a sob came from behind the veil, which she had resumed.

‘Even three,’ said Merton, gallantly struggling with a strong inclination to laugh, ‘present difficulties. I do not speak the idle language of compliment, Miss Crofton, when I say that our staff would be overtaxed by the exigencies of this case. The expense also, even of three—’

‘Expense is no object,’ said Miss Crofton.

‘But would it not, though I seem to speak against my own interests, be the wisest, most honourable, and infinitely the least costly course, for Miss Baddeley openly to inform her suitors, three out of the four at least, of the actual posture of affairs? I have already suggested that, as the lady takes the matter so seriously to heart, she should consult her director, or, if of the Anglican or other Protestant denomination, her clergyman, who I am sure will agree with me.’

Miss Crofton shook her head. ‘Julia is unattached,’ she said.

‘I had gathered that to one of the four Miss Baddeley was — not indifferent,’ said Merton.

‘I meant,’ said Miss Crofton severely, ‘that Miss Baddeley is a Christian unattached. My friend is sensitive, passionate, and deeply religious, but not a member of any recognised denomination. The clergy—’

‘They never leave one alone,’ said Julia in a musical voice. It was the first time that she had spoken. ‘Besides—’ she added, and paused.

‘Besides, dear Julia *is* — entangled with a young clergyman whom, almost in despair, she consulted on her case — at a picnic,’ said Miss Crofton, adding, ‘he is prepared to seek a martyr’s fate, but he insists that she must accompany him.’

‘How unreasonable!’ murmured Merton, who felt that this recalcitrant clergyman was probably not the favourite out of the field of four.

‘That is what *I* say,’ remarked Miss Crofton. ‘It is unreasonable to expect Julia to accompany him when she has so much work to overtake in the home field. But that is the way with all of them.’

‘All of them!’ exclaimed Merton. ‘Are all the devoted young men under vows to seek the crown of martyrdom? Does your friend act as recruiting sergeant, if you will pardon the phrase, for the noble army of martyrs?’

‘*Three* of them have made the most solemn promises.’

‘And the fourth?’

‘*He* is not in holy orders.’

‘Am I to understand that all the three admirers about whom Miss Baddeley suffers remorse are clerics?’

‘Yes. Julia has a wonderful attraction for the Church,’ said Miss Crofton, ‘and that is what causes her difficulties. She *can’t* write to *them*, or communicate to *them* in personal interviews (as you advised), that her heart is no longer—’

‘Theirs,’ said Merton. ‘But why are the clergy more privileged than the laity? I have heard of such things being broken to laymen. Indeed it has occurred to many of us, and we yet live.’

‘I have urged the same facts on Julia myself,’ said Miss Crofton. ‘Indeed I *know*, by personal experience, that what you say of the laity is true. They do not break their hearts when disappointed. But Julia replies that for her to act as you and I would advise might be to shatter the young clergymen’s ideals.’

‘To shatter the ideals of three young men in holy orders!’ said Merton.

‘Yes, for Julia *is* their ideal — Julia and Duty,’ said Miss Crofton, as if she were naming a firm. ‘She lives only,’ here Julia twisted the hand of Miss Crofton, ‘she lives only to do good. Her fortune, entirely under her own control, enables her to do a great deal of good.’

Merton began to understand that the charms of Julia were not entirely confined to her *beaux yeux*.

‘She is a true philanthropist. Why, she rescued *me* from the snares and temptations of the stage,’ said Miss Crofton.

‘Oh, *now* I understand,’ said Merton; ‘I knew that your face and voice were familiar to me. Did you not act in a revival of *The Country Wife*?’

‘Hush,’ said Miss Crofton.

‘And Lady Teazle at an amateur performance in the Canterbury week?’

‘These are days of which I do not desire to be reminded,’ said Miss Crofton. ‘I was trying to explain to you that Julia lives to do good, and has a heart of gold. No, my dear, Mr. Merton will much misconceive you unless you let me explain everything.’ This remark was in reply to the agitated gestures of Julia. ‘Thrown much among the younger clergy in the exercise of her benevolence, Julia naturally awakens in them emotions not wholly brotherly. Her sympathetic nature carries her off her feet, and she sometimes says “Yes,” out of mere goodness of heart, when it would be wiser for her to say “No”; don’t you, Julia?’

Merton was reminded of one of M. Paul Bourget’s amiable married heroines, who erred out of sheer goodness of heart, but he only signified his intelligence and sympathy.

‘Then poor Julia,’ Miss Crofton went on hurriedly, ‘finds that she has misunderstood her heart. Recently, ever since she met Captain Lestrange — of the Guards—’

‘The fourth?’ asked Merton.

Miss Crofton nodded. ‘She has felt more and more certain that she *had* misread her heart. But on each occasion she *has* felt this — after meeting the — well, the next one.'

'I see the awkwardness,' murmured Merton.

'And then Remorse has set in, with all her horrors. Julia has wept, oh! for nights, on my shoulder.'

'Happy shoulder,' murmured Merton.

'And so, as she *dare* not shatter their ideals, and perhaps cause them to plunge into excesses, moral or doctrinal, this is what she has done. She has said to each, that what the Church, any Church, needs is martyrs, and that if they will go to benighted lands, where the crown of martyrdom may still be won, *then*, if they return safe in five years, then she — will think of naming a day. You will easily see the attractions of this plan for Julia, Mr. Merton. No ideals were shattered, the young men being unaware of the circumstances. They *might* forget her—'

'Impossible,' cried Merton.

'They might forget her, or, perhaps they—'

Miss Crofton hesitated.

'Perhaps they might never — ?' asked Merton.

'Yes,' said Miss Crofton; 'perhaps they might *not*. That would be all to the good for the Church; no ideals would be shattered — the reverse — and dear Julia would—'

'Cherish their pious memories,' said Merton.

'I see that you understand me,' said Miss Crofton.

Merton did understand, and he was reminded of the wicked lady, who, when tired of her lovers, had them put into a sack, and dropped into the Seine.

'But,' he asked, 'has this ingenious system failed to work? I should suppose that each young man, on distant and on deadly shores, was far from causing inconvenience.'

'The defect of the system,' said Miss Crofton, 'is that none of them has gone, or seems in a hurry to go. The first — that was Mr. Bathe, Julia?'

Julia nodded.

'Mr. Bathe was to have gone to Turkey during the Armenian atrocities, and to have *forced* England to intervene by taking the Armenian side and getting massacred. Julia was intensely interested in the Armenians. But Mr. Bathe first said that he must lead Julia to the altar before he went; and then the massacres fell off, and he remains at Cheltenham, and is very tiresome. And then there is Mr. Clancy, *he* was to go out to China, and denounce the gods of the heathen Chinese in the public streets. But *he* insisted that Julia should first be his, and he is at Leamington, and not a step has he taken to convert the Boxers.'

Merton knew the name of Clancy. Clancy had been his fag at school, and

Merton thought it extremely improbable that the Martyr's crown would ever adorn his brow.

'Then — and this is the last of them, of the clergy, at least — Mr. Brooke: he was to visit the New Hebrides, where the natives are cannibals, and utterly unawakened. He is as bad as the others. He won't go alone. Now, Julia is obliged to correspond with all of them in affectionate terms (she keeps well out of their way), and this course of what she feels to be duplicity is preying terribly on her conscience.'

Here Julia sobbed hysterically.

'She is afraid, too, that by some accident, though none of them know each other, they may become aware of the state of affairs, or Captain Lestrange, to whom she is passionately attached, may find it out, and then, not only may their ideals be wrecked, but—'

'Yes, I see,' said Merton; 'it is awkward, very.'

The interview, an early one, had lasted for some time. Merton felt that the hour of luncheon had arrived, and, after luncheon, it had been his intention to go up to the University match. He also knew, from various sounds, that clients were waiting in the ante-chamber. At this moment the door opened, and the office boy, entering, laid three cards before him.

'The gentlemen asked when you could see them, sir. They have been waiting some time. They say that their appointment was at one o'clock, and they wish to go back to Lord's.'

'So do I,' thought Merton sadly. He looked at the cards, repressed a whistle, and handed them silently to Miss Crofton, bidding the boy go, and return in three minutes.

Miss Crofton uttered a little shriek, and pressed the cards on Julia's attention. Raising her veil, Julia scanned them, wrung her hands, and displayed symptoms of a tendency to faint. The cards bore the names of the Rev. Mr. Bathe, the Rev. Mr. Brooke, and the Rev. Mr. Clancy.

'What is to be done?' asked Miss Crofton in a whisper. 'Can't you send them away?'

'Impossible,' said Merton firmly.

'If we go out they will know me, and suspect Julia.'

Miss Crofton looked round the room with eyes of desperate scrutiny. They at once fell on a large old-fashioned screen, covered with engravings, which Merton had picked up for the sake of two or three old mezzotints, barbarously pasted on to this article of furniture by some ignorant owner.

'Saved! we are saved! Hist, Julia, hither!' said Miss Crofton in a stage whisper. And while Merton murmured 'Highly unprofessional,' the skirts of the two ladies vanished behind the screen.

Miss Crofton had not played Lady Teazle for nothing.

‘Ask the gentlemen to come in,’ said Merton, when the boy returned.

They entered: three fair young curates, nervous and inclined to giggle. Shades of difference of ecclesiastical opinion declared themselves in their hats, costume, and jewellery.

‘Be seated, gentlemen,’ said Merton, and they sat down on three chairs, in identical attitudes.

‘We hope,’ said the man on the left, ‘that we are not here inconveniently. We would have waited, but, you see, we have all come up for the match.’

‘How is it going?’ asked Merton anxiously.

‘Cambridge four wickets down for 115, but—’ and the young man stared, ‘it must be, it is Pussy Merton!’

‘And you, Clancy Minor, why are you not converting the Heathen Chinee? You deserve a death of torture.’

‘Goodness! How do you know that?’ asked Clancy.

‘I know many things,’ answered Merton. ‘I am not sure which of you is Mr. Bathe.’

Clancy presented Mr. Bathe, a florid young evangelist, who blushed.

‘Armenia is still suffering, Mr. Bathe; and Mr. Brooke,’ said Merton, detecting him by the Method of Residues, ‘the oven is still hot in the New Hebrides. What have you got to say for yourselves?’

The curates shifted nervously on their chairs.

‘We see, Merton,’ said Clancy, ‘that you know a good deal which we did not know ourselves till lately. In fact, we did not know each other till the Church Congress at Leamington. Then the other men came to tea at my rooms, and saw —’

‘A portrait of a lady; each of you possessed a similar portrait,’ said Merton.

‘How the dev — I mean, how do you know *that*?’

‘By a simple deductive process,’ said Merton. ‘There were also letters,’ he said. Here a gurgle from behind the screen was audible to Merton.

‘We did not read each others’ letters,’ said Clancy, blushing.

‘Of course not,’ said Merton.

‘But the handwriting on the envelopes was identical,’ Clancy went on.

‘Well, and what can our Society do for you?’

‘Why, we saw your advertisements, never guessed they were *yours*, of course, Pussy, and — none of us is a man of the world—’

‘I congratulate you,’ said Merton.

‘So we thought we had better take advice: it seemed rather a lark, too, don’t you know? The fact is — you appear to have divined it somehow — we find that we are all engaged to the same lady. We can't fight, and we can't all marry her.'

'In Thibet it might be practicable: martyrdom might also be secured there,' said Merton.

'Martyrdom is not good enough,' said Clancy.

'Not half,' said Bathe.

'A man has his duties in his own country,' said Brooke.

'May I ask whether in fact your sorrows at this discovery have been intense?' asked Merton.

'I was a good deal cut up at first,' said Clancy, 'I being the latest recruit. Bathe had practically given up hope, and had seen some one else.' Mr. Bathe drooped his head, and blushed. 'Brooke laughed. Indeed we *all* laughed, though we felt rather foolish. But what are we to do? Should we write her a Round Robin? Bathe says he ought to be the man, because he was first man in, and I say *I* ought to be the man, because I am not out.'

'I would not build much on *that*,' said Merton, and he was sure that he heard a rustle behind the screen, and a slight struggle. Julia was trying to emerge, restrained by Miss Crofton.

'I knew,' said Clancy, 'that there was *something* — that there were other fellows. But that I learned, more or less, under the seal of confession, so to speak.'

'At a picnic,' said Merton.

At this moment the screen fell with a crash, and Julia emerged, her eyes blazing, while Miss Crofton followed, her hat somewhat crushed by the falling screen. The three young men in Holy Orders, all of them desirable young men, arose to their feet, trembling visibly.

'Apostates!' cried Julia, who had by far the best of the dramatic situation and pressed her advantage. 'Recreants! was it for such as *you* that I pointed to the crown of martyrdom? Was it for *your* shattered ideals that I have wept many a night on Serena's faithful breast?' She pointed to Miss Crofton, who enfolded her in an embrace. 'You!' Julia went on, aiming at them the finger of conviction. 'I am but a woman, weak I may have been, wavering I may have been, but I took you for men! I chose you to dare, perhaps to perish, for a Cause. But now, triflers that you are, boys, mere boys, back with you to your silly games, back to the thoughtless throng. I have done.'

Julia, attended by Miss Crofton, swept from the chamber, under her indignation (which was quite as real as any of her other emotions) the happiest woman in London. She had no more occasion for remorse, no ideals had she sensibly injured. Her entanglements were disentangled. She inhaled the fragrance of orange blossoms from afar, and heard the marriage music in the chapel of the Guards. Meanwhile the three curates and Merton felt as if they had been whipped.

‘Trust a woman to have the best of it,’ muttered Merton admiringly. ‘And now, Clancy, may I offer a hasty luncheon to you and your friends before we go to Lord’s? Your business has been rather rapidly despatched.’

The conversation at luncheon turned exclusively on cricket.

VI. A LOVER IN COCKY

It cannot be said that the bearers of the noblest names in the land flocked at first to the offices of Messrs. Gray and Graham. In fact the reverse, in the beginning, was the case. Members even of the more learned professions held aloof: indeed barristers and physicians never became eager clients. On the other hand, Messrs. Gray and Graham received many letters in such handwritings, such grammar, and such orthography, that they burned them without replying. A common sort of case was that of the young farmer whose widowed mother had set her heart on marriage with ‘a bonny labouring boy,’ a ploughman.

‘We can do nothing with these people,’ Merton remarked. ‘We can’t send down a young and elegant friend of ours to distract the affections of an elderly female agriculturist. The bonny labouring boy would punch the fashionable head; or, at all events, would prove much more attractive to the widow than our agent.

‘Then there are the members of the Hebrew community. They hate mixed marriages, and quite right too. I deeply sympathise. But if Leah has let her affections loose on young Timmins, an Anglo-Saxon and a Christian, what can we do? How stop the mésalliance? We have not, in our little regiment, one fair Hebrew boy to smile away her maiden blame among the Hebrew mothers of Maida Vale, and to cut out Timmins. And of course it is as bad with the men. If young Isaacs wants to marry Miss Julia Timmins, I have no Rebecca to slip at him. The Semitic demand, though large and perhaps lucrative, cannot be met out of a purely Aryan supply.’

Business was pretty slack, and so Merton rather rejoiced over the application of a Mrs. Nicholson, from The Laburnums, Walton-on-Dove, Derbyshire. Mrs. Nicholson’s name was not in Burke’s ‘Landed Gentry,’ and The Laburnums could hardly be estimated as one of the stately homes of England. Still, the lady was granted an interview. She was what the Scots call ‘a buddy;’ that is, she was large, round, attired in black, between two ages, and not easily to be distinguished, by an unobservant eye, from buddies as a class. After greetings, and when enthroned in the client’s chair, Mrs. Nicholson stated her case with simplicity and directness.

‘It is my ward,’ she said, ‘Barbara Monypenny. I must tell you that she was left in my charge till she is twenty-six. I and her lawyers make her an allowance out of her property, which she is to get when she marries with my consent, at whatever age.’

‘May I ask how old the lady is at present?’ said Merton.

‘She is twenty-two.’

‘Your kindness in taking charge of her is not not wholly uncompensated?’

‘No, an allowance is made to me out of the estate.’

‘An allowance which ends on her marriage, if she marries with your consent?’

‘Yes, it ends then. Her uncle trusted me a deal more than he trusted Barbara. She was strange from a child. Fond of the men,’ as if that were an unusual and unbecoming form of philanthropy.

‘I see, and she being an heiress, the testator was anxious to protect her youth and innocence?’

Mrs. Nicholson merely sniffed, but the sniff was affirmative, though sarcastic.

‘Her property, I suppose, is considerable? I do not ask from impertinent curiosity, nor for exact figures. But, as a question of business, may we call the fortune considerable?’

‘Most people do. It runs into six figures.’

Merton, who had no mathematical head, scribbled on a piece of paper. The result of his calculations (which I, not without some fever of the brow, have personally verified) proved that ‘six figures’ might be anything between 100,000*l*. and 999,000*l*. 19*s*. 11¾*d*.

‘Certainly it is very considerable,’ Merton said, after a few minutes passed in arithmetical calculation. ‘Am I too curious if I ask what is the source of this opulence?’

‘“Wilton’s Panmedicon, or Heal All,” a patent medicine. He sold the patent and retired.’

Merton shuddered.

‘It would be Pammedicum if it could be anything,’ he thought, ‘but it can’t, linguistically speaking.’

‘Invaluable as a subterfuge,’ said Mrs. Nicholson, obviously with an indistinct recollection of the advertisement and of the properties of the drug.

Merton construed the word as ‘febrifuge,’ silently, and asked: ‘Have you taken the young lady much into society: has she had many opportunities of making a choice? You are dissatisfied with the choice, I understand, which she has made?’

‘I don’t let her see anybody if I can help it. Fire and powder are better kept apart, and she is powder, a minx! Only a fisher or two comes to the Perch, that’s the inn at Walton-on-Dove, and *they* are mostly old gentlemen, pottering with their rods and things. If a young man comes to the inn, I take care to trapes after her through the nasty damp meadows.’

‘Is the young lady an angler?’

‘She is — most unwomanly I call it.’

Merton’s idea of the young lady rose many degrees. ‘You said the young lady was “strange from a child, very strange. Fond of the men.” Happily for our sex, and for the world, it is not so very strange or unusual to take pity on us.’

‘She has always been queer.’

‘You do not hint at any cerebral disequilibrium?’ asked Merton.

‘Would you mind saying that again?’ asked Mrs. Nicholson.

‘I meant nothing wrong *here*?’ Merton said, laying his finger on his brow.

‘No, not so bad as that,’ said Mrs. Nicholson; ‘but just queer. Uncommon. Tells odd stories about — nonsense. She is wearing with her dreams. She reads books on, I don’t know how to call it — Tipsy-cake, Tipsicakical Search. Histories, *I* call it.’

‘Yes, I understand,’ said Merton; ‘Psychical Research.’

‘That’s it, and Hyptonism,’ said Mrs. Nicholson, as many ladies do.

‘Ah, Hyptonism, so called from its founder, Hypton, the eminent Anglo-French chemist; he was burned at Rome, one of the latest victims of the Inquisition,’ said Merton.

‘I don’t hold with Popery, sir, but it served *him* right.’

‘That is all the queerness then!’

‘That and general discontentedness.’

‘Girls will be girls,’ said Merton; ‘she wants society.’

‘Want must be her master then,’ said Mrs. Nicholson stolidly.

‘But about the man of her choice, have you anything against him?’

‘No, but nothing *for* him: I never even saw him.’

‘Then where did Miss Monypenny make his acquaintance?’

‘Well, like a fool, I let her go to pass Christmas with some distant cousins of my own, who should have known better. They stupidly took her to a dance, at Tutbury, and there she met him: just that once.’

‘And they became engaged on so short an acquaintance?’

‘Not exactly that. She was not engaged when she came home, and did not seem to mean to be. She did talk of him a lot. He had got round her finely: told her that he was going out to the war, and that they were sister spirits. He had dreamed of meeting her, he said, and that was why he came to the ball, for he did not dance. He said he believed they had met in a state of pre — something; meaning, if you understand me, before they were born, which could not be the case: she not being a twin, still less *his* twin.’

‘That would be the only way of accounting for it, certainly,’ said Merton. ‘But what followed? Did they correspond?’

‘He wrote to her, but she showed me the letter, and put it in the fire unopened. He had written his name, Marmaduke Ingles, on a corner of the envelope.’

‘So far her conduct seems correct, even austere,’ said Merton.

‘It was at first, but then he wrote from South Africa, where he volunteered as a doctor. He was a doctor at Tutbury.’

‘She opened that letter?’

‘Yes, and showed it to me. He kept on with his nonsense, asking her never to forget him, and sending his photograph in cocky.’

‘Pardon!’ said Merton.

‘In uniform. And if he fell, she would see his ghost, in cocky, crossing her room, he said. In fact he knew how to get round the foolish girl. I believe he went out there just to make himself interesting.’

‘Did you try to find out what sort of character he had at home?’

‘Yes, there was no harm in it, only he had no business to speak of, everybody goes to Dr. Younghusband.’

‘Then, really, if he is an honest young man, as he seems to be a patriotic fellow, are you certain that you are wise in objecting?’

‘I *do* object,’ said Mrs. Nicholson, and indeed her motives for refusing her consent were only too obvious.

‘Are they quite definitely engaged?’ asked Merton.

‘Yes they are now, by letter, and she says she will wait for him till I die, or she is twenty-six, if I don’t give my consent. He writes every mail, from places with outlandish names, in Africa. And she keeps looking in a glass ball, like the labourers’ women, some of them; she’s sunk as low as *that*; so superstitious; and sometimes she tells me that she sees what he is doing, and where he is; and now and then, when his letters come, she shows me bits of them, to prove she was right. But just as often she’s wrong; only she won’t listen to *me*. She says it’s Telly, Tellyopathy. I say it’s flat nonsense.’

‘I quite agree with you,’ said Merton, with conviction. ‘After all, though, honest, as far as you hear. . . .’

‘Oh yes, honest enough, but that’s all,’ interrupted Mrs. Nicholson, with a hearty sneer.

‘Though he bears a good character, from what you tell me he seems to be a very silly young man.’

‘Silly Johnny to silly Jenny,’ put in Mrs. Nicholson.

‘A pair with ideas so absurd could not possibly be happy.’ Merton reasoned. ‘Why don’t you take her into the world, and show her life? With her fortune and with *you* to take her about, she would soon forget this egregiously foolish romance.’

‘And me to have her snapped up by some whipper-snapper that calls himself a lord? Not me, Mr. Graham,’ said Mrs. Nicholson. ‘The money that her uncle made by the Panmedicon is not going to be spent on horses, and worse, if I can help it.’

‘Then,’ said Merton, ‘all I can do for you is by our ordinary method — to throw some young man of worth and education in the way of your ward, and attempt to — divert her affections.’

‘And have *him* carry her off under my very nose? Not much, Mr. Graham. Why where do *I* come in, in this pretty plan?’

‘Do not suppose me to suggest anything so — detrimental to your interests, Mrs. Nicholson. Is your ward beautiful?’

‘A toad!’ said Mrs. Nicholson with emphasis.

‘Very well. There is no danger. The gentleman of whom I speak is betrothed to one of the most beautiful girls in England. They are deeply attached, and their marriage is only deferred for prudential reasons.’

‘I don’t trust one of them,’ said Mrs. Nicholson.

‘Very well, madam,’ answered Merton severely; ‘I have done all that experience can suggest. The gentleman of whom I speak has paid especial attention to the mental delusions under which your ward is labouring, and has been successful in removing them in some cases. But as you reject my suggestion’ — he rose, so did Mrs. Nicholson— ‘I have the honour of wishing you a pleasant journey back to Derbyshire.’

‘A bullet may hit him,’ said Mrs. Nicholson with much acerbity. ‘That’s my best hope.’

Then Merton bowed her out.

‘The old woman will never let the girl marry anybody, except some adventurer, who squares her by giving her the full value of her allowance out of the estate,’ thought Merton, adding ‘I wonder how much it is! Six figures is anything between a hundred thousand and a million!’

The man he had thought of sending down to divert Miss Monypenny’s affections from the young doctor was Jephson, the History coach, at that hour waiting for a professorship to enable him to marry Miss Willoughby.

However, he dismissed Mrs. Nicholson and her ward from his mind. About a fortnight later Merton received a letter directed in an uneducated hand. ‘Another of the agricultural classes,’ he thought, but, looking at the close of the epistle, he saw the name of Eliza Nicholson. She wrote:

‘Sir, — Barbara has been at her glass ball, and seen him being carried on board a ship. If she is right, and she is not always wrong, he is on his way home. Though I will never give my consent, this spells botheration for me. You can send down your young man that cures by teleopathy, a thing that has come up since my time. He can stay at the Perch, and take a fishing rod, then they are safe to meet. I trust him no more than the rest, but she may fall between two stools, if the doctor does come home.

‘Your obedient servant,

‘Eliza Nicholson.’

‘Merely to keep one’s hand in,’ thought Merton, ‘in the present disappointing slackness of business, I’ll try to see Jephson. I don’t like or trust him. I don’t think he is the man for Miss Willoughby. So, if he ousts the doctor, and catches the heiress, why “there was more lost at Shirramuir,” as Logan says.’

Merton managed to go up to Oxford, and called on Jephson. He found him anxious about a good, quiet, cheap place for study.

‘Do you fish?’ asked Merton.

‘When I get the chance,’ said Jephson.

He was a dark, rather clumsy, but not unprepossessing young don, with a very slight squint.

‘If you fish did you ever try the Perch — I mean an inn, not the fish of the same name — at Walton-on-Dove? A pretty quiet place, two miles of water, local history perhaps interesting. It is not very far from Tutbury, where Queen Mary was kept, I think.’

‘It sounds well,’ said Jephson; ‘I’ll write to the landlord and ask about terms.’

‘You could not do better,’ said Merton, and he took his leave.

‘Now, am I,’ thought Merton as he walked down the Broad, ‘to put Jephson up to it? If I don’t, of course I can’t “reap the benefit of one single pin” for the Society: Jephson not being a member. But the money, anyhow, would come from that old harpy out of the girl’s estate. *Olet*! I don’t like the fragrance of that kind of cash. But if the girl really is plain, “a toad,” nothing may happen. On the other hand, Jephson is sure to hear about her position from local gossip — that she is rich, and so on. Perhaps she is not so very plain. They are sure to meet, or Mrs. Nicholson will bring them together in her tactful way. She has not much time to lose if the girl’s glass ball yarn is true, and it *may* be true by a fluke. Jephson is rather bitten by a taste for all that “teleopathy” business, as the old Malaprop calls it. On the whole, I shall say no more to him, but let him play the game, if he goes to Walton, off his own bat.’

Presently Merton received a note from Jephson dated ‘The Perch, Walton-on-Dove.’ Jephson expressed his gratitude; the place suited his purpose very well. He had taken a brace and a half of trout, ‘bordering on two pounds’ (‘one and a quarter,’ thought Merton). ‘And, what won’t interest *you*,’ his letter said, ‘I have run across a curiously interesting subject, what *you* would call *hysterical*. But what, after all, is hysteria?’ &c., &c.

‘*L’affaire est dans le sac*!’ said Merton to himself. ‘Jephson and Miss Monypenny have met!’

Weeks passed, and one day, on arriving at the office, Merton found Miss Willoughby there awaiting his arrival. She was the handsome Miss Willoughby, Jephson’s betrothed, a learned young lady who lived but poorly by verifying references and making researches at the Record Office.

Merton at once had a surmise, nor was it mistaken. The usual greetings had scarcely passed, when the girl, with cheeks on fire and eyes aflame, said:

‘Mr. Merton, do you remember a question, rather unconventional, which you put to me at the dinner party you and Mr. Logan gave at the restaurant?’

‘I ought not to have said it,’ said Merton, ‘but then it was an unconventional gathering. I asked if you—’

‘Your words were “Had I a spark of the devil in me?” Well, I have! Can I—’

‘Turn it to any purpose? You can, Miss Willoughby, and I shall have the honour to lay the method before you, of course only for your consideration, and under seal of secrecy. Indeed I was just about to write to you asking for an interview.’

Merton then laid the circumstances in which he wanted Miss Willoughby’s aid before her, but these must be reserved for the present. She listened, was surprised, was clearly ready for more desperate adventures; she came into his views, and departed.

‘Jephson *has* played the game off his own bat — and won it,’ thought Merton to himself. ‘What a very abject the fellow is! But, after all, I have disentangled Miss Willoughby; she was infinitely too good for the man, with his squint.’

As Merton indulged in these rather Pharisaical reflections, Mrs. Nicholson was announced. Merton greeted her, and gave orders that no other client was to be admitted. He was himself rather nervous. Was Mrs. Nicholson in a rage? No, her eyes beamed friendly; geniality clothed her brow.

‘He has squared her,’ thought Merton.

Indeed, the lady had warmly grasped his hand with both of her own, which were imprisoned in tight new gloves, while her bonnet spoke of regardlessness of expense and recent prodigality. She fell back into the client’s chair.

‘Oh, sir,’ she said, ‘when first we met we did not part, or *I* did not — *you* were quite the gentleman — on the best of terms. But now, how can I speak of your wise advice, and how much don’t I owe you?’

Merton answered very gravely: ‘You do not owe me anything, Madam. Please understand that I took absolutely no professional steps in your affair.’

‘What?’ cried Mrs. Nicholson. ‘You did not send down that blessed young man to the Perch?'

'I merely suggested that the inn might suit a person whom I knew, who was looking for country quarters. Your name never crossed my lips, nor a word about the business on which you did me the honour to consult me.'

'Then I owe you nothing?'

'Nothing at all.'

'Well, I do call this providential,' said Mrs. Nicholson, with devout enthusiasm.

'You are not in my debt to the extent of a farthing, but if you think I have accidentally been—'

'An instrument?' said Mrs. Nicholson.

'Well, an unconscious instrument, perhaps you can at least tell me why you think so. What has happened?'

'You really don't know?'

'I only know that you are pleased, and that your anxieties seem to be relieved.'

'Why, he saved her from being burned, and the brave,' said Mrs. Nicholson, 'deserve the fair, not that *she* is a beauty.'

'Do tell me all that happened.'

'And tell you I can, for that precious young man took me into his confidence. First, when I heard that he had come to the Perch, I trampled about the damp riverside with Barbara, and sure enough they met, he being on the Perch's side of the fence, and Barbara's line being caught high up in a tree on ours, as often happens. Well, I asked him to come over the fence and help her to get her line clear, which he did very civilly, and then he showed her how to fish, and then I asked him to tea and left them alone a bit, and when I came back they were talking about teleopathy, and her glass ball, and all that nonsense. And he seemed interested, but not to believe in it quite. I could not understand half their tipsycakical lingo. So of course they often met again at the river, and he often came to tea, and she seemed to take to him — she was always one for the men. And at last a very queer thing happened, and gave him his chance.

'It was a very hot day in July, and she fell asleep on a seat under a tree with her glass ball in her lap; she had been staring at it, I suppose. Any way she slept on, till the sun went round and shone full on the ball; and just as he, Mr. Jephson, that is, came into the gate, the glass ball began to act like a burning glass and her skirt began to smoke. Well, he waited a bit, I think, till the skirt blazed a little, and then he rushed up and threw his coat over her skirt, and put the fire out. And so he saved her from being a Molochaust, like you read about in the bible.'

Merton mentally disengaged the word 'Molochaust' into 'Moloch' and ‘holocaust.’

‘And there she was, when I happened to come by, a-crying and carrying on, with her head on his shoulder.’

‘A pleasing group, and so they were engaged on the spot?’ asked Merton.

‘Not she! She held off, and thanked her preserver; but she would be true, she said, to her lover in cocky. But before that Mr. Jephson had taken me into his confidence.’

‘And you made no objection to his winning your ward, if he could?’

‘No, sir, I could trust that young man: I could trust him with Barbara.’

‘His arguments,’ said Merton, ‘must have been very cogent?’

‘He understood my situation if she married, and what I deserved,’ said Mrs. Nicholson, growing rather uncomfortable, and fidgeting in the client’s chair.

Merton, too, understood, and knew what the sympathetic arguments of Jephson must have been.

‘And, after all,’ Merton asked, ‘the lover has prospered in his suit?’

‘This is how he got round her. He said to me that night, in private: “Mrs. Nicholson,” said he, “your niece is a very interesting historical subject. I am deeply anxious, apart from my own passion for her, to relieve her from a singular but not very uncommon delusion.”

‘“Meaning her lover in cocky,” I said.

‘“There is no lover in cocky,” says he.

‘“No Dr. Ingles!” said I.

‘“Yes, there *is* a Dr. Ingles, but he is not her lover, and your niece never met him. I bicycled to Tutbury lately, and, after examining the scene of Queen Mary’s captivity, I made a few inquiries. What I had always suspected proved to be true. Dr. Ingles was not present at that ball at the Bear at Tutbury.”

‘Well,’ Mrs. Nicholson went on, ‘you might have knocked me down with a feather! I had never asked my second cousins the question, not wanting them to guess about my affairs. But down I sat, and wrote to Maria, and got her answer. Barbara never saw Dr. Ingles! only heard the girls mention him, and his going to the war. And then, after that, by Mr. Jephson’s advice, I went and gave Barbara my mind. She should marry Mr. Jephson, who saved her life, or be the laughing stock of the country. I showed her up to herself, with her glass ball, and her teleopathy, and her sham love-letters, that she wrote herself, and all her humbug. She cried, and she fainted, and she carried on, but I went at her whenever she could listen to reason. So she said “Yes,” and I am the happy woman.’

‘And Mr. Jephson is to be congratulated on so sensible and veracious a bride,’ said Merton.

‘Oh, he says it is by no means an uncommon case, and that he has effected a complete cure, and they will be as happy as idiots,’ said Mrs. Nicholson, as she rose to depart.

She left Merton pensive, and not disposed to overrate human nature. ‘But there can’t be many fellows like Jephson,’ he said. ‘I wonder how much the six figures run to?’ But that question was never answered to his satisfaction.

VII. THE ADVENTURE OF THE EXEMPLARY EARL

I. The Earl’s Long-Lost Cousin

‘A jilt in time saves nine,’ says the proverbial wisdom of our forefathers, adding, ‘One jilt makes many.’ In the last chapter of the book of this chronicle, we told how the mercenary Mr. Jephson proved false to the beautiful Miss Willoughby, who supported existence by her skill in deciphering and transcribing the manuscript records of the past. We described the consequent visit of Miss Willoughby to the office of the Disentanglers, and how she reminded Merton that he had asked her once ‘if she had a spark of the devil in her.’ She had that morning received, in fact, a letter, crawling but explicit, from the unworthy Jephson, her lover. Retired, he said, to the rural loneliness of Derbyshire, he had read in his own heart, and what he there deciphered convinced him that, as a man of honour, he had but one course before him: he must free Miss Willoughby from her engagement. The lady was one of those who suffer in silence. She made no moan, and no reply to Jephson’s letter; but she did visit Merton, and, practically, gave him to understand that she was ready to start as a Corsair on the seas of amorous adventure. She had nailed the black flag to the mast: unhappy herself, she was apt to have no mercy on the sentiments and affections of others.

Merton, as it chanced, had occasion for the services of a lady in this mood; a lady at once attractive, and steely-hearted; resolute to revenge, on the whole of the opposite sex, the baseness of a Fellow of his College. Such is the frenzy of an injured love — illogical indeed (for we are not responsible for the errors of isolated members of our sex), but primitive, natural to women, and even to some men, in Miss Willoughby’s position.

The occasion for such services as she would perform was provided by a noble client who, on visiting the office, had found Merton out and Logan in attendance. The visitor was the Earl of Embleton, of the North. Entering the rooms, he fumbled with the string of his eyeglass, and, after capturing it, looked at Logan with an air of some bewilderment. He was a tall, erect, slim, and well-preserved patrician, with a manner really shy, though hasty critics interpreted it as arrogant. He was ‘between two ages,’ a very susceptible period in the history of the individual.

‘I think we have met before,’ said the Earl to Logan. ‘Your face is not unfamiliar to me.’

‘Yes,’ said Logan, ‘I have seen you at several places;’ and he mumbled a number of names.

‘Ah, I remember now — at Lady Lochmaben’s,’ said Lord Embleton. ‘You are, I think, a relation of hers. . . .’

‘A distant relation: my name is Logan.’

‘What, of the Restalrig family?’ said the Earl, with excitement.

‘A far-off kinsman of the Marquis,’ said Logan, adding, ‘May I ask you to be seated?’

‘This is really very interesting to me — surprisingly interesting,’ said the Earl. ‘What a strange coincidence! How small the world is, how brief are the ages! Our ancestors, Mr. Logan, were very intimate long ago.’

‘Indeed?’ said Logan.

‘Yes. I would not speak of it to everybody; in fact, I have spoken of it to no one; but recently, examining some documents in my muniment-room, I made a discovery as interesting to me as it must be to you. Our ancestors three hundred years ago — in 1600, to be exact — were fellow conspirators.’

‘Ah, the old Gowrie game, to capture the King?’ asked Logan, who had once kidnapped a cat.

His knowledge of history was mainly confined to that obscure and unexplained affair, in which his wicked old ancestor is thought to have had a hand.

‘That is it,’ said the visitor— ‘the Gowrie mystery! You may remember that an unknown person, a friend of your ancestor, was engaged?’

‘Yes,’ said Logan; ‘he was never identified. Was his name Harris?’

The peer half rose to his feet, flushed a fine purple, twiddled the obsolete little grey tuft on his chin, and sat down again.

‘I think I said, Mr. Logan, that the hitherto unidentified associate of your ancestor was *a member of my own family*. Our name is *not* Harris — a name very honourably borne — our family name is Guevara. My ancestor was a cousin of the brave Lord Willoughby.’

‘Most interesting! You must pardon me, but as nobody ever knew what you have just found out, you will excuse my ignorance,’ said Logan, who, to be sure, had never heard of the brave Lord Willoughby.

‘It is I who ought to apologise,’ said the visitor. ‘Your mention of the name of Harris appeared to me to indicate a frivolity as to matters of the past which, I must confess, is apt to make me occasionally forget myself. *Noblesse oblige*, you know: we respect ourselves — in our progenitors.’

‘Unless he wants to prevent someone from marrying his great-grandmother, I wonder what he is doing with his Tales of a Grandfather *here*,’ thought Logan, but he only smiled, and said, ‘Assuredly — my own opinion. I wish I could respect *my* ancestor!’

‘The gentleman of whom I speak, the associate of your own distant progenitor, was the founder of our house, as far as mere titles are concerned. We were but squires of Northumbria, of ancient Celtic descent, before the time of Queen Elizabeth. My ancestor at that time—’

‘Oh bother his pedigree!’ thought Logan.

‘ — was a young officer in the English garrison of Berwick, and *he*, I find, was *your* ancestor’s unknown correspondent. I am not skilled in reading old hands, and I am anxious to secure a trustworthy person — really trustworthy — to transcribe the manuscripts which contain these exciting details.’

Logan thought that the office of the Disentanglers was hardly the place to come to in search of an historical copyist. However, he remembered Miss Willoughby, and said that he knew a lady of great skill and industry, of good family too, upon whom his client might entirely depend. ‘She is a Miss Willoughby,’ he added.

‘Not one of the Willoughbys of the Wicket, a most worthy, though unfortunate house, nearly allied, as I told you, to my own, about three hundred years ago?’ said the Earl.

‘Yes, she is a daughter of the last squire.’

‘Ruined in the modern race for wealth, like so many!’ exclaimed the peer, and he sat in silence, deeply moved; his lips formed a name familiar to Law Courts.

‘Excuse my emotion, Mr. Logan,’ he went on. ‘I shall be happy to see and arrange with this lady, who, I trust will, as my cousin, accept my hospitality at Rookchester. I shall be deeply interested, as you, no doubt, will also be, in the result of her researches into an affair which so closely concerns both you and me.’

He was silent again, musing deeply, while Logan marvelled more and more what his real original business might be. All this affair of the documents and the muniment-room had arisen by the merest accident, and would not have arisen if the Earl had found Merton at home. The Earl obviously had a difficulty in coming to the point: many clients had. To approach a total stranger on the most intimate domestic affairs (even if his ancestor and yours were in a big thing together three hundred years ago) is, to a sensitive patrician, no easy task. In fact, even members of the middle class were, as clients, occasionally affected by shyness.

‘Mr. Logan,’ said the Earl, ‘I am not a man of to-day. The cupidity of our age, the eagerness with which wealthy aliens are welcomed into our best houses and families, is to me, I may say, distasteful. Better that our coronets were dimmed than that they should be gilded with the gold eagles of Chicago or blazing with the diamonds of Kimberley. My feelings on this point are unusually — I do not think that they are unduly — acute.'

Logan murmured assent.

'I am poor,' said the Earl, with all the expansiveness of the shy; 'but I never held what is called a share in my life.'

'It is long,' said Logan, with perfect truth, 'since anything of that sort was in my own possession. In that respect my 'scutcheon, so to speak, is without a stain.'

'How fortunate I am to have fallen in with one of sentiments akin to my own, unusual as they are!' said the Earl. 'I am a widower,' he went on, 'and have but one son and one daughter.'

'He is coming to business *now*,' thought Logan.

'The former, I fear, is as good almost as affianced — is certainly in peril of betrothal — to a lady against whom I have not a word to say, except that she is inordinately wealthy, the sole heiress of—' Here the Earl gasped, and was visibly affected. 'You may have heard, sir,' the patrician went on, 'of a commercial transaction of nature unfathomable to myself — I have not sought for information,' he waved his hand impatiently, 'a transaction called a Straddle?'

Logan murmured that he was aware of the existence of the phrase, though unconscious of its precise meaning.

'The lady's wealth is based on a successful Straddle, operated by her only known male ancestor, in — Bristles — Hogs' Bristles and Lard,' said the Earl.

'Miss Bangs!' exclaimed Logan, knowing the name, wealth, and the source of the wealth of the ruling Chicago heiress of the day.

'I am to be understood to speak of Miss Bangs — as her name has been pronounced between us — with all the respect due to youth, beauty, and an amiable disposition,' said the peer; 'but Bristles, Mr. Logan, Hogs' Bristles and Lard. And a Straddle!'

'Lucky devil, Scremerston,' thought Logan, for Scremerston was the only son of Lord Embleton, and he, as it seemed, had secured that coveted prize of the youth of England, the heart of the opulent Miss Bangs. But Logan only sighed and stared at the wall as one who hears of an irremediable disaster.

'If they really were betrothed,' said Lord Embleton, 'I would have nothing to say or do in the way of terminating the connection, however unwelcome. A man's word is his word. It is in these circumstances of doubt (when the fortunes of a house ancient, though titularly of mere Tudor *noblesse*, hang in the balance) that, despairing of other help, I have come to you.'

'But,' asked Logan, 'have things gone so very far? Is the disaster irremediable? I am acquainted with your son, Lord Scremerston; in fact, he was my fag at school. May I speak quite freely?'

'Certainly; you will oblige me.'

'Well, by the candour of early friendship, Scremerston was called the Arcadian, an allusion to a certain tenderness of heart allied with — h'm — a rather confident and sanguine disposition. I think it may console you to reflect that perhaps he rather overestimates his success with the admirable young lady of whom we spoke. You are not certain that she has accepted him?'

'No,' said the Earl, obviously relieved. 'I am sure that he has not positively proposed to her. He knows my opinion: he is a dutiful son, but he did seem very confident — seemed to think that his honour was engaged.'

'I think we may discount that a little,' said Logan, 'and hope for the best.'

'I shall try to take that view,' said the Earl. 'You console me infinitely, Mr. Logan.'

Logan was about to speak again, when his client held up a gently deprecating hand.

'That is not all, Mr. Logan. I have a daughter—'

Logan chanced to be slightly acquainted with the daughter, Lady Alice Guevara, a very nice girl.

'Is she attached to a South African Jew?' Logan thought.

'In this case,' said the client, 'there is no want of blood; Royal in origin, if it comes to that. To the House of Bourbon I have no objection, in itself, that would be idle affectation.'

Logan gasped.

Was this extraordinary man anxious to reject a lady 'multimillionaire' for his son, and a crown of some sort or other for his daughter?

'But the stain of ill-gotten gold — silver too — is ineffaceable.'

'It really cannot be Bristles this time,' thought Logan.

'And a dynasty based on the roulette-table, . . .'

'Oh, the Prince of Scalastro!' cried Logan.

'I see that you know the worst,' said the Earl.

Logan knew the worst fairly well. The Prince of Scalastro owned a percentage of two or three thousand which Logan had dropped at the tables licensed in his principality.

'To the Prince, personally, I bear no ill-will,' said the Earl. 'He is young, brave, scientific, accomplished, and this unfortunate attachment began before he inherited his — h’m — dominions. I fear it is, on both sides, a deep and passionate sentiment. And now, Mr. Logan, you know the full extent of my misfortunes: what course does your experience recommend? I am not a harsh father. Could I disinherit Scremerston, which I cannot, the loss would not be felt by him in the circumstances. As to my daughter—’

The peer rose and walked to the window. When he came back and resumed his seat, Logan turned on him a countenance of mournful sympathy. The Earl silently extended his hand, which Logan took. On few occasions had a strain more severe been placed on his gravity, but, unlike a celebrated diplomatist, he ‘could command his smile.’

‘Your case,’ he said, ‘is one of the most singular, delicate, and distressing which I have met in the course of my experience. There is no objection to character, and poverty is not the impediment: the reverse. You will permit me, no doubt, to consult my partner, Mr. Merton; we have naturally no secrets between us, and he possesses a delicacy of touch and a power of insight which I can only regard with admiring envy. It was he who carried to a successful issue that difficult case in the family of the Sultan of Mingrelia (you will observe that I use a fictitious name). I can assure you, Lord Embleton, that polygamy presents problems almost insoluble; problems of extreme delicacy — or indelicacy.’

‘I had not heard of that affair,’ said the Earl. ‘Like Eumæus in Homer and in Mr. Stephen Phillips, I dwell among the swine, and come rarely to the city.’

‘The matter never went beyond the inmost diplomatic circles,’ said Logan. ‘The Sultan’s favourite son, the Jam, or Crown Prince, of Mingrelia (*Jamreal*, they called him), loved four beautiful Bollachians, sisters — again I disguise the nationality.’

‘Sisters!’ exclaimed the peer; ‘I have always given my vote against the Deceased Wife’s Sister Bill; but *four*, and all alive!’

‘The law of the Prophet, as you are aware, is not monogamous,’ said Logan; ‘and the Eastern races are not averse to connections which are reprobated by our Western ideas. The real difficulty was that of religion.

‘Oh, why from the heretic girl of my soul
Should I fly, to seek elsewhere an orthodox kiss?’

hummed Logan, rather to the surprise of Lord Embleton. He went on: ‘It is not so much that the Mingrelians object to mixed marriages in the matter of religion, but the Bollachians, being Christians, do object, and have a horror of polygamy. It was a cruel affair. All four girls, and the Jamreal himself, were passionately attached to each other. It was known, too, that, for political reasons, the maidens had received a dispensation from the leading Archimandrite, their metropolitan, to marry the proud Paynim. The Mingrelian Sultan is suzerain of Bollachia; his native subjects are addicted to massacring the Bollachians from religious motives, and the Bollachian Church (Nestorians, as you know) hoped that the four brides would convert the Jamreal to their creed, and so solve the Bollachian question. The end, they said, justified the means.'

'Jesuitical,' said the Earl, shaking his head sadly.

'That is what my friend and partner, Mr. Merton, thought,' said Logan, 'when we were applied to by the Sultan. Merton displayed extraordinary tact and address. All was happily settled, the Sultan and the Jamreal were reconciled, the young ladies met other admirers, and learned that what they had taken for love was but a momentary infatuation.'

The Earl sighed, '*Renovare dolorem*! My family,' said he, 'is, and has long been — ever since the Gunpowder Plot — firmly, if not passionately, attached to the Church of England. The Prince of Scalastro is a Catholic.'

'Had we a closer acquaintance with the parties concerned!' murmured Logan.

'You must come and visit us at Rookchester,' said the Earl. 'In any case I am most anxious to know better one whose ancestor was so closely connected with my own. We shall examine my documents under the tuition of the lady you mentioned, Miss Willoughby, if she will accept the hospitality of a kinsman.'

Logan murmured acquiescence, and again asked permission to consult Merton, which was granted. The Earl then shook hands and departed, obviously somewhat easier in his mind.

This remarkable conversation was duly reported by Logan to Merton.

'What are we to do next?' asked Logan.

'Why you can do nothing but reconnoitre. Go down to Rookchester. It is in Northumberland, on the Coquet — a pretty place, but there is no fishing just now. Then we must ask Lord Embleton to meet Miss Willoughby. The interview can be here: Miss Willoughby will arrive, chaperoned by Miss Blossom, after the Earl makes his appearance.'

'That will do, as far as his bothering old manuscripts are concerned; but how about the real business — the two undesirable marriages?'

'We must first see how the land lies. I do not know any of the lovers. What sort of fellow is Scremerston?'

'Nothing remarkable about him — good, plucky, vain little fellow. I suppose he wants money, like the rest of the world: but his father won't let him be a director of anything, though he is in the House and his name would look well on a list.'

‘So he wants to marry dollars?’

‘I suppose he has no objection to them; but have you seen Miss Bangs?’

‘I don’t remember her,’ said Merton.

‘Then you have not seen her. She is beautiful, by Jove; and, I fancy, clever and nice, and gives herself no airs.’

‘And she has all that money, and yet the old gentleman objects!’

‘He can not stand the bristles and lard,’ said Logan.

‘Then the Prince of Scalastro — him I have come across. You would never take him for a foreigner,’ said Merton, bestowing on the Royal youth the highest compliment which an Englishman can pay, but adding, ‘only he is too intelligent and knows too much.’

‘No; there is nothing the matter with *him*,’ Logan admitted— ‘nothing but happening to inherit a gambling establishment and the garden it stands in. He is a scientific character — a scientific soldier. I wish we had a few like him.’

‘Well, it is a hard case,’ said Merton. ‘They all seem to be very good sort of people. And Lady Alice Guevara? I hardly know her at all; but she is pretty enough — tall, yellow hair, brown eyes.’

‘And as good a girl as lives,’ added Logan. ‘Very religious, too.’

‘She won’t change her creed?’ asked Merton.

‘She would go to the stake for it,’ said Logan. ‘She is more likely to convert the Prince.’

‘That would be one difficulty out of the way,’ said Merton. ‘But the gambling establishment? There is the rub! And the usual plan won’t work. You are a captivating person, Logan, but I do not think that you could attract Lady Alice’s affections and disentangle her in that way. Besides, the Prince would have you out. Then Miss Bangs’ dollars, not to mention herself, must have too strong a hold on Scremerston. It really looks too hard a case for us on paper. You must go down and reconnoitre.’

Logan agreed, and wrote asking Lord Embleton to come to the office, where he could see Miss Willoughby and arrange about her visit to him and his manuscripts. The young lady was invited to arrive rather later, bringing Miss Blossom as her companion.

On the appointed day Logan and Merton awaited Lord Embleton. He entered with an air unwontedly buoyant, and was introduced to Merton. The first result was an access of shyness. The Earl hummed, began sentences, dropped them, and looked pathetically at Logan. Merton understood. The Earl had taken to Logan (on account of their hereditary partnership in an ancient iniquity), and it was obvious that he would say to him what he would not say to his partner. Merton therefore withdrew to the outer room (they had met in the inner), and the

Earl delivered himself to Logan in a little speech.

‘Since we met, Mr. Logan,’ said he, ‘a very fortunate event has occurred. The Prince of Scalastro, in a private interview, has done me the honour to take me into his confidence. He asked my permission to pay his addresses to my daughter, and informed me that, finding his ownership of the gambling establishment distasteful to her, he had determined not to renew the lease to the company. He added that since his boyhood, having been educated in Germany, he had entertained scruples about the position which he would one day occupy, that he had never entered the rooms (that haunt of vice), and that his acquaintance with my daughter had greatly increased his objections to gambling, though his scruples were not approved of by his confessor, a very learned priest.’

‘That is curious,’ said Logan.

‘Very,’ said the Earl. ‘But as I expect the Prince and his confessor at Rookchester, where I hope you will join us, we may perhaps find out the reasons which actuate that no doubt respectable person. In the meantime, as I would constrain nobody in matters of religion, I informed the Prince that he had my permission to — well, to plead his cause for himself with Lady Alice.’

Logan warmly congratulated the Earl on the gratifying resolve of the Prince, and privately wondered how the young people would support life, when deprived of the profits from the tables.

It was manifest, however, from the buoyant air of the Earl, that this important question had never crossed his mind. He looked quite young in the gladness of his heart, ‘he smelled April and May,’ he was clad becomingly in summer raiment, and to Logan it was quite a pleasure to see such a happy man. Some fifteen years seemed to have been taken from the age of this buxom and simple-hearted patrician.

He began to discuss with Logan all conceivable reasons why the Prince’s director had rather discouraged his idea of closing the gambling-rooms for ever.

‘The Father, Father Riccoboni, is a Jesuit, Mr. Logan,’ said the Earl gravely. ‘I would not be uncharitable, I hope I am not prejudiced, but members of that community, I fear, often prefer what they think the interests of their Church to those of our common Christianity. A portion of the great wealth of the Scalastros was annually devoted to masses for the souls of the players — about fifteen per cent. I believe — who yearly shoot themselves in the gardens of the establishment.’

‘No more suicides, no more subscriptions, I suppose,’ said Logan; ‘but the practice proved that the reigning Princes of Scalastro had feeling hearts.’

While the Earl developed this theme, Miss Willoughby, accompanied by Miss Blossom, had joined Merton in the outer room. Miss Blossom, being clad in white, with her blue eyes and apple-blossom complexion, looked like the month of May. But Merton could not but be struck by Miss Willoughby. She was tall and dark, with large grey eyes, a Greek profile, and a brow which could, on occasion, be thunderous and lowering, so that Miss Willoughby seemed to all a remarkably fine young woman; while the educated spectator was involuntarily reminded of the beautiful sister of the beautiful Helen, the celebrated Clytemnestra. The young lady was clad in very dark blue, with orange points, so to speak, and compared with her transcendent beauty, Miss Blossom, as Logan afterwards remarked, seemed a

‘Wee modest crimson-tippit beastie,’

he intending to quote the poet Burns.

After salutations, Merton remarked to Miss Blossom that her well-known discretion might prompt her to take a seat near the window while he discussed private business with Miss Willoughby. The good-humoured girl retired to contemplate life from the casement, while Merton rapidly laid the nature of Lord Embleton’s affairs before the other lady.

‘You go down to Rookchester as a kinswoman and a guest, you understand, and to do the business of the manuscripts.’

‘Oh, I shall rather like that than otherwise,’ said Miss Willoughby, smiling.

‘Then, as to the regular business of the Society, there is a Prince who seems to be thought unworthy of the daughter of the house; and the son of the house needs disentangling from an American heiress of great charm and wealth.’

‘The tasks might satisfy any ambition,’ said Miss Willoughby. ‘Is the idea that the Prince and the Viscount should *both* neglect their former flames?’

‘And burn incense at the altar of Venus Verticordia,’ said Merton, with a bow.

‘It is a large order,’ replied Miss Willoughby, in the simple phrase of a commercial age: but as Merton looked at her, and remembered the vindictive feeling with which she now regarded his sex, he thought that she, if anyone, was capable of executing the commission. He was not, of course, as yet aware of the moral resolution lately arrived at by the young potentate of Scalastro.

‘The manuscripts are the first thing, of course,’ he said, and, as he spoke, Logan and Lord Embleton re-entered the room.

Merton presented the Earl to the ladies, and Miss Blossom soon retired to her own apartment, and wrestled with the correspondence of the Society and with her typewriting-machine.

The Earl proved not to be nearly so shy where ladies were concerned. He had not expected to find in his remote and long-lost cousin, Miss Willoughby, a magnificent being like Persephone on a coin of Syracuse, but it was plain that he was prepossessed in her favour, and there was a touch of the affectionate in his courtesy. After congratulating himself on recovering a kinswoman of a long-separated branch of his family, and after a good deal of genealogical disquisition, he explained the nature of the lady's historical tasks, and engaged her to visit him in the country at an early date. Miss Willoughby then said farewell, having an engagement at the Record Office, where, as the Earl gallantly observed, she would 'make a sunshine in a shady place.'

When she had gone, the Earl observed, '*Bon sang ne peut pas mentir*! To think of that beautiful creature condemned to waste her lovely eyes on faded ink and yellow papers! Why, she is, as the modern poet says, "a sight to make an old man young."'

He then asked Logan to acquaint Merton with the new and favourable aspect of his affairs, and, after fixing Logan's visit to Rookchester for the same date as Miss Willoughby's, he went off with a juvenile alertness.

'I say,' said Logan, 'I don't know what will come of this, but *something* will come of it. I had no idea that girl was such a paragon.'

'Take care, Logan,' said Merton. 'You ought only to have eyes for Miss Markham.'

Miss Markham, the precise student may remember, was the lady once known as the Venus of Milo to her young companions at St. Ursula's. Now mantles were draped on her stately shoulders at Madame Claudine's, and Logan and she were somewhat hopelessly attached to each other.

'Take care of yourself at Rookchester,' Merton went on, 'or the Disentangler may be entangled.'

'I am not a viscount and I am not an earl,' said Logan, with a reminiscence of an old popular song, 'nor I am not a prince, but a shade or two *wuss*; and I think that Miss Willoughby will find other marks for the artillery of her eyes.'

'We shall have news of it,' said Merton.

II. The Affair of the Jesuit

Trains do not stop at the little Rookchester station except when the high and puissant prince the Earl of Embleton or his visitors, or his ministers, servants, solicitors, and agents of all kinds, are bound for that haven. When Logan arrived at the station, a bowery, flowery, amateur-looking depot, like one of the 'model villages' that we sometimes see off the stage, he was met by the Earl, his son Lord Scremerston, and Miss Willoughby. Logan's baggage was spirited away by menials, who doubtless bore it to the house in some ordinary conveyance, and by the vulgar road. But Lord Embleton explained that as the evening was warm, and the woodland path by the river was cool, they had walked down to welcome the coming guest.

The walk was beautiful indeed along the top of the precipitous red sandstone cliffs, with the deep, dark pools of the Coquet sleeping far below. Now and then a heron poised, or a rock pigeon flew by, between the river and the cliff-top. The opposite bank was embowered in deep green wood, and the place was very refreshing after the torrid bricks and distressing odours of the July streets of London.

The path was narrow: there was room for only two abreast. Miss Willoughby and Scremerston led the way, and were soon lost to sight by a turn in the path. As for Lord Embleton, he certainly seemed to have drunk of that fountain of youth about which the old French poet Pontus de Tyard reports to us, and to be going back, not forward, in age. He looked very neat, slim, and cool, but that could not be the only cause of the miracle of rejuvenescence. Closely regarding his host in profile, Logan remarked that he had shaved off his moustache and the little, obsolete, iron-grey chin-tuft which, in moments of perplexity, he had been wont to twiddle. Its loss was certainly a very great improvement to the clean-cut features of this patrician.

'We are a very small party,' said Lord Embleton, 'only the Prince, my daughter, Father Riccoboni, Miss Willoughby, my sister, Scremerston, and you and I. Miss Willoughby came last week. In the mornings she and I are busy with the manuscripts. We have found most interesting things. When their plot failed, your ancestor and mine prepared a ship to start for the Western seas and attack the treasure-ships of Spain. But peace broke out, and they never achieved that adventure. Miss Willoughby is a cousin well worth discovering, so intelligent, and so wonderfully attractive.'

‘So Scremerston seems to think,’ was Logan’s idea, for the further he and the Earl advanced, the less, if possible, they saw of the pair in front of them; indeed, neither was visible again till the party met before dinner.

However, Logan only said that he had a great esteem for Miss Willoughby’s courage and industry through the trying years of poverty since she left St. Ursula’s.

‘The Prince we have not seen very much of,’ said the Earl, ‘as is natural; for you will be glad to know that everything seems most happily arranged, except so far as the religious difficulty goes. As for Father Riccoboni, he is a quiet intelligent man, who passes most of his time in the library, but makes himself very agreeable at meals. And now here we are arrived.’

They had reached the south side of the house — an eighteenth-century building in the red sandstone of the district, giving on a grassy terrace. There the host’s maiden sister, Lady Mary Guevara, was seated by a tea-table, surrounded by dogs — two collies and an Aberdeenshire terrier. Beside her were Father Riccoboni, with a newspaper in his hand, Lady Alice, with whom Logan had already some acquaintance, and the Prince of Scalastro. Logan was presented, and took quiet notes of the assembly, while the usual chatter about the weather and his journey got itself transacted, and the view of the valley of the Coquet had justice done to its charms.

Lady Mary was very like a feminine edition of the Earl, refined, shy, and with silvery hair. Lady Alice was a pretty, quiet type of the English girl who is not up to date, with a particularly happy and winning expression. The Prince was of a Teutonic fairness; for the Royal caste, whatever the nationality, is to a great extent made in Germany, and retains the physical characteristics of that ancient forest people whom the Roman historian (never having met them) so lovingly idealised. The Prince was tall, well-proportioned, and looked ‘every inch a soldier.’ There were a great many inches.

As for Father Riccoboni, the learned have remarked that there are two chief clerical types: the dark, ascetic type, to be found equally among Unitarians, Baptists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Catholics, and the burly, well-fed, genial type, which ‘cometh eating and drinking.’ The Father was of this second kind; a lusty man — not that you could call him a sensual-looking man, still less was he a noisy humourist; but he had a considerable jowl, a strong jaw, a wide, firm mouth, and large teeth, very white and square. Logan thought that he, too, had the makings of a soldier, and also felt almost certain that he had seen him before. But where? — for Logan’s acquaintance with the clergy, especially the foreign clergy, was not extensive. The Father spoke English very well, with a slight German accent and a little hoarseness; his voice, too, did not sound unfamiliar to Logan. But he delved in his subconscious memory in vain; there was the Father, a man with whom he certainly had some associations, yet he could not place the man.

A bell jangled somewhere without as they took tea and tattled; and, looking towards the place whence the sound came, Logan saw a little group of Italian musicians walking down the avenue which led through the park to the east side of the house and the main entrance. They entered, with many obeisances, through the old gate of floreated wrought iron, and stopping there, about forty yards away, they piped, while a girl, in the usual *contadina* dress, clashed her cymbals and danced not ungracefully. The Father, who either did not like music or did not like it of that sort, sighed, rose from his seat, and went into the house by an open French window. The Prince also rose, but he went forward to the group of Italians, and spoke to them for a few minutes. If he did not like that sort of music, he took the more excellent way, for the action of his elbow indicated a movement of his hand towards his waistcoat-pocket. He returned to the party on the terrace, and the itinerant artists, after more obeisances, walked slowly back by the way they had come.

‘They are Genoese,’ said the Prince, ‘tramping north to Scotland for the holiday season.’

‘They will meet strong competition from the pipers,’ said Logan, while the Earl rose, and walked rapidly after the musicians.

‘I do not like the pipes myself,’ Logan went on, ‘but when I hear them in a London street my heart does warm to the skirl and the shabby tartans.’

‘I feel with you,’ said the Prince, ‘when I see the smiling faces of these poor sons of the South among — well, your English faces are not usually joyous — if one may venture to be critical.’

He looked up, and, his eyes meeting those of Lady Alice, he had occasion to learn that every rule has its exceptions. The young people rose and wandered off on the lawn, while the Earl came back and said that he had invited the foreigners to refresh themselves.

‘I saw Father Riccoboni in the hall, and asked him to speak to them a little in their own lingo,’ he added, ‘though he does not appear to be partial to the music of his native land.’

‘He seems to be of the Romansch districts,’ Logan said; ‘his accent is almost German.’

‘I daresay he will make himself understood,’ said the Earl. ‘Do you understand this house, Mr. Logan? It looks very modern, does it not?’

‘Early Georgian, surely?’ said Logan.

‘The shell, at least on this side, is early Georgian — I rather regret it; but the interior, northward, except for the rooms in front here, is of the good old times. We have secret stairs — not that there is any secret about them — and odd cubicles, in the old Border keep, which was re-faced about 1750; and we have a priest's hole or two, in which Father Riccoboni might have been safe, but would have been very uncomfortable, three hundred years ago. I can show you the places to-morrow; indeed, we have very little in the way of amusement to offer you. Do you fish?'

'I always take a trout rod about with me, in case of the best,' said Logan, 'but this is "soolky July," you know, and the trout usually seem sound asleep.'

'Their habits are dissipated here,' said Lord Embleton. 'They begin to feed about ten o'clock at night. Did you ever try night fishing with the bustard?'

'The bustard?' asked Logan.

'It is a big fluffy fly, like a draggled mayfly, fished wet, in the dark. I used to be fond of it, but age,' sighed the Earl, 'and fear of rheumatism have separated the bustard and me.'

'I should like to try it very much,' said Logan. 'I often fished Tweed and Whitadder, at night, when I was a boy, but we used a small dark fly.'

'You must be very careful if you fish at night here,' said Lady Mary. 'It is so dark in the valley under the woods, and the Coquet is so dangerous. The flat sandstone ledges are like the floor of a room, and then a step may land you in water ten feet deep, flowing in a narrow channel. I am always anxious when anyone fishes here at night. You can swim?'

Logan confessed that he was not destitute of that accomplishment, and that he liked, of all things, to be by a darkling river, where you came across the night side of nature in the way of birds, beasts, and fishes.

'Mr. Logan can take very good care of himself, I am sure,' said Lord Embleton, 'and Fenwick knows every inch of the water, and will go with him. Fenwick is the water-keeper, Mr. Logan, and represents man in the fishing and shooting stage. His one thought is the destruction of animal life. He is a very happy man.'

'I never knew but one keeper who was not,' said Logan. 'That was in Galloway. He hated shooting, he hated fishing. My impression is that he was what we call a "Stickit Minister."'

'Nothing of that about Fenwick,' said the Earl. 'I daresay you would like to see your room?'

Thither Logan was conducted, through a hall hung with pikes, and guns, and bows, and clubs from the South Seas, and Zulu shields and assegais, while a few empty figures in tilting armour, lance in hand, stood on pedestals. Thence up a broad staircase, along a little gallery, up a few steps of an old 'turnpike' staircase, Logan reached his room, which looked down through the trees of the cliff to the Coquet.

Dinner passed in the silver light of the long northern day, that threw strange blue reflections, softer than sapphire, on the ancient plate — the ambassadorial plate of a Jacobean ancestor.

‘It should all have gone to the melting-pot for King Charles’s service,’ said the Earl, with a sigh, ‘but my ancestor of that day stood for the Parliament.’

Logan’s position at dinner was better for observation than for entertainment. He sat on the right hand of Lady Mary, where the Prince ought to have been seated, but Lady Alice sat on her father’s left, and next her, of course, the Prince. ‘Love rules the camp, the court, the grove,’ and Love deranged the accustomed order, for the Prince sat between Lady Alice and Logan. Opposite Logan, and at Lady Mary’s left, was the Jesuit, and next him, Scremerston, beside whom was Miss Willoughby, on the Earl’s right. Inevitably the conversation of the Prince and Lady Alice was mainly directed to each other — so much so that Logan did not once perceive the princely eyes attracted to Miss Willoughby opposite to him, though it was not easy for another to look at anyone else. Logan, in the pauses of his rather conventional entertainment by Lady Mary, *did* look, and he was amazed no less by the beauty than by the spirits and gaiety of the young lady so recently left forlorn by the recreant Jephson. This flower of the Record Office and of the British Museum was obviously not destined to blush unseen any longer. She manifestly dazzled Scremerston, who seemed to remember Miss Bangs, her charms, and her dollars no more than Miss Willoughby appeared to remember the treacherous Don.

Scremerston was very unlike his father: he was a small, rather fair man, with a slight moustache, a close-clipped beard, and little grey eyes with pink lids. His health was not good: he had been invalided home from the Imperial Yeomanry, after a slight wound and a dangerous attack of enteric fever, and he had secured a pair for the rest of the Session. He was not very clever, but he certainly laughed sufficiently at what Miss Willoughby said, who also managed to entertain the Earl with great dexterity and *aplomb*. Meanwhile Logan and the Jesuit amused the excellent Lady Mary as best they might, which was not saying much. Lady Mary, though extremely amiable, was far from brilliant, and never having met a Jesuit before, she regarded Father Riccoboni with a certain hereditary horror, as an animal of a rare species, and, of habits perhaps startling and certainly perfidious. However, the lady was philanthropic in a rural way, and Father Riccoboni enlightened her as to the reasons why his enterprising countrymen leave their smiling land, and open small ice-shops in little English towns, or, less ambitious, invest their slender capital in a monkey and a barrel-organ.

‘I don’t so very much mind barrel-organs myself,’ said Logan; ‘I don’t know anything prettier than to see the little girls dancing to the music in a London side street.’

‘But do not the musicians all belong to that dreadful Camorra?’ asked the lady.

‘Not if they come from the North, madam,’ said the Jesuit. ‘And do not all your Irish reapers belong to that dreadful Land League, or whatever it is called?’

‘They are all Pap—’ said Lady Mary, who then stopped, blushed, and said, with some presence of mind, ‘paupers, I fear, but they are quite safe and well-behaved on this side of the Irish Channel.’

‘And so are our poor people,’ said the Jesuit. ‘If they occasionally use the knife a little — *naturam expellas furca*, Mr. Logan, but the knife is a different thing — it is only in a homely war among themselves that they handle it in the East-end of London.’

‘*Cœlum non animum*,’ said Logan, determined not to be outdone in classical felicities; and, indeed, he thought his own quotation the more appropriate.

At this moment a great silvery-grey Persian cat, which had sat hitherto in a stereotyped Egyptian attitude on the arm of the Earl’s chair, leaped down and sprang affectionately on the shoulder of the Jesuit. He shuddered strongly and obviously repressed an exclamation with difficulty, as he gently removed the cat.

‘Fie, Meriamoun!’ said the Earl, as the puss resumed her Egyptian pose beside him. ‘Shall I send the animal out of the room? I know some people cannot endure a cat,’ and he mentioned the gallant Field Marshal who is commonly supposed to share this infirmity.

‘By no means, my lord,’ said the Jesuit, who looked strangely pale. ‘Cats have an extraordinary instinct for caressing people who happen to be born with exactly the opposite instinct. I am like the man in Aristotle who was afraid of the cat.’

‘I wish we knew more about that man,’ said Miss Willoughby, who was stroking Meriamoun. ‘Are *you* afraid of cats, Lord Scremerston? — but you, I suppose, are afraid of nothing.’

‘I am terribly afraid of all manner of flying things that buzz and bite,’ said Scremerston.

‘Except bullets,’ said Miss Willoughby — Beauty rewarding Valour with a smile and a glance so dazzling that the good little Yeoman blushed with pleasure.

‘It is a shame!’ thought Logan. ‘I don’t like it now I see it.’

‘As to horror of cats,’ said the Earl, ‘I suppose evolution can explain it. I wonder how they would work it out in *Science Jottings*. There is a great deal of electricity in a cat.'

'Evolution can explain everything,' said the Jesuit demurely, 'but who can explain evolution?'

'As to electricity in the cat,' said Logan, 'I daresay there is as much in the dog, only everybody has tried stroking a cat in the dark to see the sparks fly, and who ever tried stroking a dog in the dark, for experimental purposes? — did you, Lady Mary?'

Lady Mary never had tried, but the idea was new to her, and she would make the experiment in winter.

'Deer skins, stroked, do sparkle,' said Logan, 'I read that in a book. I daresay horses do, only nobody tries. I don't think electricity is the explanation of why some people can't bear cats.'

'Electricity is the modern explanation of everything — love, faith, everything,' remarked the Jesuit; 'but, as I said, who shall explain electricity?'

Lady Mary, recognising the orthodoxy of these sentiments, felt more friendly towards Father Riccoboni. He might be a Jesuit, but he was *bien pensant*.

'What I am afraid of is not a cat, but a mouse,' said Miss Willoughby, and the two other ladies admitted that their own terrors were of the same kind.

'What I am afraid of,' said the Prince, 'is a banging door, by day or night. I am not, otherwise, of a nervous constitution, but if I hear a door bang, I *must* go and hunt for it, and stop the noise, either by shutting the door, or leaving it wide open. I am a sound sleeper, but, if a door bangs, it wakens me at once. I try not to notice it. I hope it will leave off. Then it does leave off — that is the artfulness of it — and, just as you are falling asleep, *knock* it goes! A double knock, sometimes. Then I simply *must* get up, and hunt for that door, upstairs or downstairs—'

'Or in my—' interrupted Miss Willoughby, and stopped, thinking better of it, and not finishing the quotation, which passed unheard.

'That research has taken me into some odd places,' the Prince ended; and Logan reminded the Society of the Bravest of the Brave. What *he* was afraid of was a pair of tight boots.

These innocent conversations ended, and, after dinner, the company walked about or sat beneath the stars in the fragrant evening air, the Earl seated by Miss Willoughby, Scremerston smoking with Logan; while the white dress of Lady Alice flitted ghost-like on the lawn, and the tip of the Prince's cigar burned red in the neighbourhood. In the drawing-room Lady Mary was tentatively conversing with the Jesuit, that mild but probably dangerous animal. She had the curiosity which pious maiden ladies feel about the member of a community which they only know through novels. Certainly this Jesuit was very unlike Aramis.

‘And who *is* he like?’ Logan happened to be asking Scremerston at that moment. ‘I know the face — I know the voice; hang it! — where have I seen the man?’

‘Now you mention it,’ said Scremerston, ‘*I* seem to remember him too. But I can’t place him. What do you think of a game of billiards, father?’ he asked, rising and addressing Lord Embleton. ‘Rosamond — Miss Willoughby, I mean —’

‘Oh, we are cousins, Lord Embleton says, and you may call me Rosamond. I have never had any cousins before,’ interrupted the young lady.

‘Rosamond,’ said Scremerston, with a gulp, ‘is getting on wonderfully well for a beginner.’

‘Then let us proceed with her education: it is growing chilly, too,’ said the Earl; and they all went to billiards, the Jesuit marking with much attention and precision. Later he took a cue, and was easily the master of every man there, though better acquainted, he said, with the foreign game. The late Pope used to play, he said, nearly as well as Mr. Herbert Spencer. Even for a beginner, Miss Willoughby was not a brilliant player; but she did not cut the cloth, and her arms were remarkably beautiful — an excellent but an extremely rare thing in woman. She was rewarded, finally, by a choice between bedroom candles lit and offered by her younger and her elder cousins, and, after a momentary hesitation, accepted that of the Earl.

‘How is this going to end?’ thought Logan, when he was alone. ‘Miss Bangs is out of the running, that is certain: millions of dollars cannot bring her near Miss Willoughby with Scremerston. The old gentleman ought to like that — it relieves him from the bacon and lard, and the dollars, and the associations with a Straddle; and then Miss Willoughby’s family is all right, but the girl is reckless. A demon has entered into her: she used to be so quiet. I’d rather marry Miss Bangs without the dollars. Then it is all very well for Scremerston to yield to Venus Verticordia, and transfer his heart to this new enchantress. But, if I am not mistaken, the Earl himself is much more kind than kin. The heart has no age, and he is a very well-preserved peer. You might take him for little more than forty, though he quite looked his years when I saw him first. Well, *I* am safe enough, in spite of Merton’s warning: this new Helen has no eyes for me, and the Prince has no eyes for her, I think. But who is the Jesuit?’

Logan fought with his memory till he fell asleep, but he recovered no gleam of recollection about the holy man.

It did not seem to Logan, next day, that he was in for a very lively holiday.

His host carried off Miss Willoughby to the muniment-room after breakfast; that was an advantage he had over Scremerston, who was decidedly restless and ill at ease. He took Logan to see the keeper, and they talked about fish and examined local flies, and Logan arranged to go and try the trout with the bustard some night; and then they pottered about, and ate cherries in the garden, and finally the Earl found them half asleep in the smoking-room. He routed the Jesuit out of the library, where he was absorbed in a folio containing the works of the sainted Father Parsons, and then the Earl showed Logan and Father Riccoboni over the house. From a window of the gallery Scremerston could be descried playing croquet with Miss Willoughby, an apparition radiant in white.

The house was chiefly remarkable for queer passages, which, beginning from the roof of the old tower, above the Father's chamber, radiated about, emerging in unexpected places. The priests' holes had offered to the persecuted clergy of old times the choice between being grilled erect behind a chimney, or of lying flat in a chamber about the size of a coffin near the roof, where the martyr Jesuits lived on suction, like the snipe, absorbing soup from a long straw passed through a wall into a neighbouring garret.

'Those were cruel times,' said Father Riccoboni, who presently, at luncheon, showed that he could thoroughly appreciate the tender mercies of the present or Christian era. Logan watched him, and once when, something that interested him being said, the Father swept the table with his glance without raising his head, a memory for a fraction of a moment seemed to float towards the surface of Logan's consciousness. Even as when an angler, having hooked a salmon, a monster of the stream, long the fish bores down impetuous, seeking the sunken rocks, disdainful of the steel, and the dark wave conceals him; then anon is beheld a gleam of silver, and again is lost to view, and the heart of the man rejoices — even so fugitive a glimpse had Logan of what he sought in the depths of memory. But it fled, and still he was puzzled.

Logan loafed out after luncheon to a seat on the lawn in the shade of a tree. They were all to be driven over to an Abbey not very far away, for, indeed, in July, there is little for a man to do in the country. Logan sat and mused. Looking up he saw Miss Willoughby approaching, twirling an open parasol on her shoulder. Her face was radiant; of old it had often looked as if it might be stormy, as if there were thunder behind those dark eyebrows. Logan rose, but the lady sat down on the garden seat, and he followed her example.

'This is better than Bloomsbury, Mr. Logan, and cocoa *pour tout potage*: singed cocoa usually.'

'The *potage* here is certainly all that heart can wish,' said Logan.

'The chrysalis,' said Miss Willoughby, 'in its wildest moments never dreamed of being a butterfly, as the man said in the sermon; and I feel like a butterfly that remembers being a chrysalis. Look at me now!'

'I could look for ever,' said Logan, 'like the sportsman in Keats's *Grecian Urn*: "For ever let me look, and thou be fair!"'

'I am so sorry for people in town,' said Miss Willoughby. 'Don't you wish dear old Milo was here?'

Milo was the affectionate nickname — a tribute to her charms — borne by Miss Markham at St. Ursula's.

'How can I wish that anyone was here but you?' asked Logan. 'But, indeed, as to her being here, I should like to know in what capacity she was a guest.'

The Clytemnestra glance came into Miss Willoughby's grey eyes for a moment, but she was not to be put out of humour.

'To be here as a kinswoman, and an historian, with a maid — fancy me with a maid! — and everything handsome about me, is sufficiently excellent for me, Mr. Logan; and if it were otherwise, do you disapprove of the proceedings of your own Society? But there is Lord Scremerston calling to us, and a four-in-hand waiting at the door. And I am to sit on the box-seat. Oh, this is better than the dingy old Record Office all day.'

With these words Miss Willoughby tripped over the sod as lightly as the Fairy Queen, and Logan slowly followed. No; he did *not* approve of the proceedings of his Society as exemplified by Miss Willoughby, and he was nearly guilty of falling asleep during the drive to Winderby Abbey. Scremerston was not much more genial, for his father was driving and conversing very gaily with his fair kinswoman.

'Talk about a distant cousin!' thought Logan, who in fact felt ill-treated. However deep in love a man may be, he does not like to see a fair lady conspicuously much more interested in other members of his sex than in himself.

The Abbey was a beautiful ruin, and Father Riccoboni did not conceal from Lady Mary the melancholy emotions with which it inspired him.

'When shall our prayers be heard?' he murmured. 'When shall England return to her Mother's bosom?'

Lady Mary said nothing, but privately trusted that the winds would disperse the orisons of which the Father spoke. Perhaps nuns had been bricked up in these innocent-looking mossy walls, thought Lady Mary, whose ideas on this matter were derived from a scene in the poem of *Marmion*. And deep in Lady Mary's heart was a half-formed wish that, if there was to be any bricking up, Miss Willoughby might be the interesting victim. Unlike her brother the Earl, she was all for the Bangs alliance.

Scremerston took the reins on the homeward way, the Earl being rather fatigued; and, after dinner, *two* white robes flitted ghost-like on the lawn, and the light which burned red beside one of them was the cigar-tip of Scremerston. The Earl had fallen asleep in the drawing-room, and Logan took a lonely stroll, much regretting that he had come to a house where he felt decidedly 'out of it.' He wandered down to the river, and stood watching. He was beside the dark-brown water in the latest twilight, beside a long pool with a boat moored on the near bank. He sat down in the boat pensively, and then — what was that? It was the sound of a heavy trout rising. '*Plop, plop*!' They were feeding all round him.

'By Jove! I'll try the bustard to-morrow night, and then I'll go back to town next day,' thought Logan. 'I am doing no good here, and I don't like it. I shall tell Merton that I have moral objections to the whole affair. Miserable, mercenary fraud!' Thus, feeling very moral and discontented, Logan walked back to the house, carefully avoiding the ghostly robes that still glimmered on the lawn, and did not re-enter the house till bedtime.

The following day began as the last had done; Lord Embleton and Miss Willoughby retiring to the muniment-room, the lovers vanishing among the walks. Scremerston later took Logan to consult Fenwick, who visibly brightened at the idea of night-fishing.

'You must take one of those long landing-nets, Logan,' said Scremerston. 'They are about as tall as yourself, and as stout as lance-shafts. They are for steadying you when you wade, and feeling the depth of the water in front of you.'

Scremerston seemed very pensive. The day was hot; they wandered to the smoking-room. Scremerston took up a novel, which he did not read; Logan began a letter to Merton — a gloomy epistle.

'I say, Logan,' suddenly said Scremerston, 'if your letter is not very important, I wish you would listen to me for a moment.'

Logan turned round. 'Fire away,' he said; 'my letter can wait.'

Scremerston was in an attitude of deep dejection. Logan lit a cigarette and waited.

'Logan, I am the most miserable beggar alive.'

'What is the matter? You seem rather in-and-out in your moods,' said Logan.

'Why, you know, I am in a regular tight place. I don't know how to put it. You see, I can't help thinking that — that — I have rather committed myself — it seems a beastly conceited thing to say — that there's a girl who likes me, I'm afraid.'

'I don't want to be inquisitive, but is she in this country?' asked Logan.

'No; she's at Homburg.'

'Has it gone very far? Have you *said* anything?' asked Logan.

‘No; my father did not like it. I hoped to bring him round.’

‘Have you *written* anything? Do you correspond?’

‘No, but I’m afraid I have *looked* a lot.’

As the Viscount Scremerston’s eyes were by no means fitted to express with magnetic force the language of the affections, Logan had to command his smile.

‘But why have you changed your mind, if you liked her?’ he asked.

‘Oh, *you* know very well! Can anybody see her and not love her?’ said Scremerston, with a vagueness in his pronouns, but referring to Miss Willoughby.

Logan was inclined to reply that he could furnish, at first hand, an exception to the rule, but this appeared tactless.

‘No one, I daresay, whose affections were not already engaged, could see her without loving her; but I thought yours had been engaged to a lady now at Homburg?’

‘So did I,’ said the wretched Scremerston, ‘but I was mistaken. Oh, Logan, you don’t know the difference! *This* is genuine biz,’ remarked the afflicted nobleman with much simplicity. He went on: ‘Then there’s my father — you know him. He was against the other affair, but, if he thinks I have committed myself and then want to back out, why, with his ideas, he’d rather see me dead. But I can’t go on with the other thing now: I simply can *not*. I’ve a good mind to go out after rabbits, and pot myself crawling through a hedge.’

‘Oh, nonsense!’ said Logan; ‘that is stale and superfluous. For all that I can see, there is no harm done. The young lady, depend upon it, won’t break her heart. As a matter of fact, they don’t — *we* do. You have only to sit tight. You are no more committed than I am. You would only make both of you wretched if you went and committed yourself now, when you don’t want to do it. In your position I would certainly sit tight: don’t commit yourself — either here or there, so to speak; or, if you can’t sit tight, make a bolt for it. Go to Norway. I am very strongly of opinion that the second plan is the best. But, anyhow, keep up your pecker. You are all right — I give you my word that I think you are all right.’

‘Thanks, old cock,’ said Scremerston. ‘Sorry to have bored you, but I *had* to speak to somebody.’

‘Best thing you could do,’ said Logan. ‘You’ll feel ever so much better. That kind of worry comes of keeping things to oneself, till molehills look mountains. If you like I’ll go with you to Norway myself.’

‘Thanks, awfully,’ said Scremerston, but he did not seem very keen. Poor little Scremerston!

Logan 'breasted the brae' from the riverside to the house. His wading-boots were heavy, for he had twice got in over the tops thereof; heavy was his basket that Fenwick carried behind him, but light was Logan's heart, for the bustard had slain its dozens of good trout. He and the keeper emerged from the wood on the level of the lawn. All the great mass of the house lay dark before them. Logan was to let himself in by the locked French window; for it was very late — about two in the morning. He had the key of the window-door in his pocket. A light moved through the long gallery: he saw it pass each window and vanish. There was dead silence: not a leaf stirred. Then there rang out a pistol-shot, or was it two pistol-shots? Logan ran for the window, his rod, which he had taken down after fishing, in his hand.

'Hurry to the back door, Fenwick!' he said; and Fenwick, throwing down the creel, but grasping the long landing-net, flew to the back way. Logan opened the drawing-room window, took out his matchbox, with trembling ringers lit a candle, and, with the candle in one hand, the rod in the other, sped through the hall, and along a back passage leading to the gunroom. He had caught a glimpse of the Earl running down the main staircase, and had guessed that the trouble was on the ground floor. As he reached the end of the long dark passage, Fenwick leaped in by the back entrance, of which the door was open. What Logan saw was a writhing group — the Prince of Scalastro struggling in the arms of three men: a long white heap lay crumpled in a corner. Fenwick, at this moment, threw the landing-net over the head of one of the Prince's assailants, and with a twist, held the man half choked and powerless. Fenwick went on twisting, and, with the leverage of the long shaft of the net, dragged the wretch off the Prince, and threw him down. Another of the men turned on Logan with a loud guttural oath, and was raising a pistol. Logan knew the voice at last — knew the Jesuit now. '*Rien ne va plus*!' he cried, and lunged, with all the force and speed of an expert fencer, at the fellow's face with the point of the rod. The metal joints clicked and crashed through the man's mouth, his pistol dropped, and he staggered, cursing through his blood, against the wall. Logan picked up the revolver as the Prince, whose hands were now free, floored the third of his assailants with an upper cut. Logan thrust the revolver into the Prince's hand. 'Keep them quiet with that,' he said, and ran to where the Earl, who had entered unseen in the struggle, was kneeling above the long, white, crumpled heap.

It was Scremerston, dead, in his night dress: poor plucky little Scremerston.

Afterwards, before the trial, the Prince told Logan how matters had befallen. 'I was wakened,' he said— 'you were very late, you know, and we had all gone to bed — I was wakened by a banging door. If you remember, I told you all, on the night of your arrival at Rookchester, how I hated that sound. I tried not to think of it, and was falling asleep when it banged again — a double knock. I was nearly asleep, when it clashed again. There was no wind, my window was open and I looked out: I only heard the river murmuring and the whistle of a passing train. The stillness made the abominable recurrent noise more extraordinary. I dressed in a moment in my smoking-clothes, lit a candle, and went out of my room, listening. I walked along the gallery—'

'It was your candle that I saw as I crossed the lawn,' said Logan.

'When a door opened,' the Prince went on— 'the door of one of the rooms on the landing — and a figure, all in white, — it was Scremerston, — emerged and disappeared down the stairs. I followed at the top of my speed. I heard a shot, or rather two pistols that rang out together like one. I ran through the hall into the long back passage at right-angles to it, down the passage to the glimmer of light through the partly glazed door at the end of it. Then my candle was blown out and three men set on me. They had nearly pinioned me when you and Fenwick took them on both flanks. You know the rest. They had the boat unmoored, a light cart ready on the other side, and a steam-yacht lying off Warkworth. The object, of course, was to kidnap me, and coerce or torture me into renewing the lease of the tables at Scalastro. Poor Scremerston, who was a few seconds ahead of me, not carrying a candle, had fired in the dark, and missed. The answering fire, which was simultaneous, killed him. The shots saved me, for they brought you and Fenwick to the rescue. Two of the fellows whom we damaged were—'

'The Genoese pipers, of course,' said Logan.

'And you guessed, from the cry you gave, who my confessor (*he* banged the door, of course to draw me) turned out to be?'

'Yes, the head croupier at Scalastro years ago; but he wore a beard and blue spectacles in the old time, when he raked in a good deal of my patrimony,' said Logan. 'But how was he planted on *you*?'

'My old friend, Father Costa, had died, and it is too long a tale of forgery and fraud to tell you how this wretch was forced on me. He *had* been a Jesuit, but was unfrocked and expelled from Society for all sorts of namable and unnamable offences. His community believed that he was dead. So he fell to the profession in which you saw him, and, when the gambling company saw that I was disinclined to let that hell burn any longer on my rock, ingenious treachery did the rest.'

'By Jove!' said Logan.

*

The Prince of Scalastro, impoverished by his own generous impulse, now holds high rank in the Japanese service. His beautiful wife is much admired in Yokohama.

The Earl was nursed through the long and dangerous illness which followed the shock of that dreadful July night, by the unwearying assiduity of his kinswoman, Miss Willoughby. On his recovery, the bride (for the Earl won her heart and hand) who stood by him at the altar looked fainter and more ghostly than the bridegroom. But her dark hour of levity was passed and over. There is no more affectionate pair than the Earl and Countess of Embleton. Lady Mary, who lives with them, is once more an aunt, and spoils, it is to be feared, the young Viscount Scremerston, a fine but mischievous little boy. On the fate of the ex-Jesuit we do not dwell: enough to say that his punishment was decreed by the laws of our country, not of that which he had disgraced.

The manuscripts of the Earl have been edited by him and the Countess for the Roxburghe Club.

VIII. THE ADVENTURE OF THE LADY PATRONESS

‘I cannot bring myself to refuse my assent. It would break the dear child’s heart. She has never cared for anyone else, and, oh, she is quite wrapped up in him. I have heard of your wonderful cures, Mr. Merton, I mean successes, in cases which everyone has given up, and though it seems a very strange step to me, I thought that I ought to shrink from no remedy’ —

‘However unconventional,’ said Merton, smiling. He felt rather as if he were being treated like a quack doctor, to whom people (if foolish enough) appeal only as the last desperate resource.

The lady who filled, and amply filled, the client’s chair, Mrs. Malory, of Upwold in Yorkshire, was a widow, obviously, a widow indeed. ‘In weed’ was an unworthy *calembour* which flashed through Merton’s mind, since Mrs. Malory’s undying regret for her lord (a most estimable man for a coal owner) was explicitly declared, or rather was blazoned abroad, in her costume. Mrs. Mallory, in fact, was what is derisively styled ‘Early Victorian’— ‘Middle’ would have been, historically, more accurate. Her religion was mildly Evangelical; she had been brought up on the Memoirs of the Fairchild Family, by Mrs. Sherwood, tempered by Miss Yonge and the Waverley Novels. On these principles she had trained her family. The result was that her sons had not yet brought the family library, and the family Romneys and Hoppners, to Christie’s. Not one of them was a director of any company, and the name of Malory had not yet been distinguished by decorating the annals of the Courts of Bankruptcy or of Divorce. In short, a family more deplorably not ‘up to date,’ and more ‘out of the swim’ could scarcely be found in England.

Such, and of such connections, was the lady, fair, faded, with mildly aquiline features, and an aspect at once distinguished and dowdy, who appealed to Merton. She sought him in what she, at least, regarded as the interests of her eldest daughter, an heiress under the will of a maternal uncle. Merton had met the young lady, who looked like a portrait of her mother in youth. He knew that Miss Malory, now ‘wrapped up in’ her betrothed lover, would, in a few years, be equally absorbed in ‘her boys.’ She was pretty, blonde, dull, good, and cast by Providence for the part of one of the best of mothers, and the despair of what man soever happened to sit next her at a dinner party. Such women are the safeguards of society — though sneered at by the frivolous as ‘British Matrons.’

‘I have laid the case before the — where I always take my troubles,’ said Mrs. Malory, ‘and I have not felt restrained from coming to consult you. When I permitted my daughter’s engagement (of course after carefully examining the young man’s worldly position) I was not aware of what I know now. Matilda met him at a visit to some neighbours — he really is very attractive, and very attentive — and it was not till we came to London for the season that I heard the stories about him. Some of them have been pointed out to me, in print, in the dreadful French newspapers, others came to me in anonymous letters. As far as a mother may, I tried to warn Matilda, but there are subjects on which one can hardly speak to a girl. The Vidame, in fact,’ said Mrs. Malory, blushing, ‘is celebrated — I should say infamous — both in France and Italy, Poland too, as what they call *un homme aux bonnes fortunes*. He has caused the break-up of several families. Mr. Merton, he is a rake,’ whispered the lady, in some confusion.

‘He is still young; he may reform,’ said Merton, ‘and no doubt a pure affection will be the saving of him.’

‘So Matilda believes, but, though a Protestant — his ancestors having left France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nancy — Nantes I mean — I am certain that he is *not* under conviction.’

‘Why does he call himself Vidame, “the Vidame de la Lain”?’ asked Merton.

‘It is an affectation,’ said Mrs. Malory. ‘None of his family used the title in England, but he has been much on the Continent, and has lands in France; and, I suppose, has romantic ideas. He is as much French as English, more I am afraid. The wickedness of that country! And I fear it has affected ours. Even now — I am not a scandal-monger, and I hope for the best — but even last winter he was talked about,’ Mrs. Malory dropped her voice, ‘with a lady whose husband is in America, Mrs. Brown-Smith.’

‘A lady for whom I have the very highest esteem,’ said Merton, for, indeed, Mrs. Brown-Smith was one of his references or Lady Patronesses; he knew her well, and had a respect for her character, *au fond*, as well as an admiration for her charms.

‘You console me indeed,’ said Mrs. Malory. ‘I had heard—’

‘People talk a great deal of ill-natured nonsense,’ said Merton warmly. ‘Do you know Mrs. Brown-Smith?’

‘We have met, but we are not in the same set; we have exchanged visits, but that is all.’

‘Ah!’ said Merton thoughtfully. He remembered that when his enterprise was founded Mrs. Brown-Smith had kindly offered her practical services, and that he had declined them for the moment. ‘Mrs. Malory,’ he went on, after thinking awhile, ‘may I take your case into my consideration — the marriage is not till October, you say, we are in June — and I may ask for a later interview? Of course you shall be made fully aware of every detail, and nothing shall be done without your approval. In fact all will depend on your own co-operation. I don’t deny that there may be distasteful things, but if you are quite sure about this gentleman’s—’

‘Character?’ said Mrs. Malory. ‘I am *so* sure that it has cost me many a wakeful hour. You will earn my warmest gratitude if you can do anything.’

‘Almost everything will depend on your own energy, and tolerance of our measures.’

‘But we must not do evil that good may come,’ said Mrs. Malory nervously.

‘No evil is contemplated,’ said Merton. But Mrs. Malory, while consenting, so far, did not seem quite certain that her estimate of ‘evil’ and Merton’s would be identical.

She had suffered poignantly, as may be supposed, before she set the training of a lifetime aside, and consulted a professional expert. But the urbanity and patience of Merton, with the high and unblemished reputation of his Association, consoled her. ‘We must yield where we innocently may,’ she assured herself, ‘to the changes of the times. Lest one good order’ (and ah, how good the Early Victorian order had been!) ‘should corrupt the world.’ Mrs. Malory knew that line of poetry. Then she remembered that Mrs. Brown-Smith was on the list of Merton’s references, and that reassured her, more or less.

As for Merton, he evolved a plan in his mind, and consulted Bradshaw’s invaluable Railway Guide.

On the following night Merton was fortunate or adroit enough to find himself seated beside Mrs. Brown-Smith in a conservatory at a party given by the Montenegrin Ambassador. Other occupants of the fairy-like bower of blossoms, musical with all the singing of the innumerable fountains, could not but know (however preoccupied) that Mrs. Brown-Smith was being amused. Her laughter ‘rang merry and loud,’ as the poet says, though not a word of her whispered conversation was audible. Conservatories (in novels) are dangerous places for confidences, but the pale and angry face of Miss Malory did *not* suddenly emerge from behind a grove of gardenias, and startle the conspirators. Indeed, Miss Malory was not present; she and her sister had no great share in the elegant frivolities of the metropolis.

‘It all fits in beautifully,’ said Mrs. Brown-Smith. ‘Just let me look at the page of Bradshaw again.’ Merton handed to her a page of closely printed matter. ‘9.17 P.M., 9.50 P.M.’ read Mrs. Brown-Smith aloud; ‘it gives plenty of time in case of delays. Oh, this is too delicious! You are sure that these trains won’t be altered. It might be awkward.'

'I consulted Anson,' said Merton. Anson was famous for his mastery of time-tables, and his prescience as to railway arrangements.

'Of course it depends on the widow,' said Mrs. Brown-Smith, 'I shall see that Johnnie is up to time. He hopes to undersell the opposition soap' (Mr. Brown-Smith was absent in America, in the interests of that soap of his which is familiar to all), 'and he is in the best of humours. Then their grouse! We have disease on our moors in Perthshire; I was in despair. But the widow needs delicate handling.'

'You won't forget — I know how busy you are — her cards for your party?'

'They shall be posted before I sleep the sleep of conscious innocence.'

'And real benevolence,' said Merton.

'And revenge,' added Mrs. Brown-Smith. 'I have heard of his bragging, the monster. He has talked about *me*. And I remember how he treated Violet Lebas.'

At this moment the Vidame de la Lain, a tall, fair young man, vastly too elegant, appeared, and claimed Mrs. Brown-Smith for a dance. With a look at Merton, and a sound which, from less perfect lips, might have been described as a suppressed giggle, Mrs. Brown-Smith rose, then turning, 'Post the page to me, Mr. Merton,' she said. Merton bowed, and, folding up the page of the time-table, he consigned it to his cigarette case.

Mrs. Malory received, with a blending of emotions, the invitation to the party of Mrs. Brown-Smith. The social popularity and the wealth of the hostess made such invitations acceptable. But the wealth arose from trade, in soap, not in coal, and coal (like the colza bean) is 'a product of the soil,' the result of creative forces which, in the geological past, have worked together for the good of landed families. Soap, on the other hand, is the result of human artifice, and is certainly advertised with more of emphasis and of ingenuity than of delicacy. But, by her own line of descent, Mrs. Brown-Smith came from a Scottish house of ancient standing, historically renowned for its assassins, traitors, and time-servers. This partly washed out the stain of soap. Again, Mrs. Malory had heard the name of Mrs. Brown-Smith taken in vain, and that in a matter nearly affecting her Matilda's happiness. On the other side, Merton had given the lady a valuable testimonial to character. Moreover, the Vidame would be at her party, and Mrs. Malory told herself that she could study the ground. Above all, the girls were so anxious to go: they seldom had such a chance. Therefore, while the Early Victorian moralist hesitated, the mother accepted.

They were all glad that they went. Susan, the younger Miss Malory, enjoyed herself extremely. Matilda danced with the Vidame as often as her mother approved. The conduct of Mrs. Brown-Smith was correctness itself. She endeared herself to the girls: invited them to her place in Perthshire, and warmly congratulated Mrs. Malory on the event approaching in her family. The eye of maternal suspicion could detect nothing amiss. Thanks mainly to Mrs. Brown-Smith, the girls found the season an earthly Paradise: and Mrs. Malory saw much more of the world than she had ever done before. But she remained vigilant, and on the alert. Before the end of July she had even conceived the idea of inviting Mrs. Brown-Smith, fatigued by her toils, to inhale the bracing air of Upwold in the moors. But she first consulted Merton, who expressed his warm approval.

‘It is dangerous, though she has been so kind,’ sighed Mrs. Malory. ‘I have observed nothing to justify the talk which I have heard, but I am in doubt.’

‘Dangerous! it is safety,’ said Merton.

‘How?’

Merton braced himself for the most delicate and perilous part of his enterprise.

‘The Vidame de la Lain will be staying with you?’

‘Naturally,’ said Mrs. Malory. ‘And if there *is* any truth in what was whispered—’

‘He will be subject to temptation,’ said Merton.

‘Mrs. Brown-Smith is so pretty and so amusing, and dear Matilda; she takes after my dear husband’s family, though the best of girls, Matilda has not that flashing manner.’

‘But surely no such thing as temptation should exist for a man so fortunate as de la Lain! And if it did, would his conduct not confirm what you have heard, and open the eyes of Miss Malory?’

‘It seems so odd to be discussing such things with — so young a man as you — not even a relation,’ sighed Mrs. Malory.

‘I can withdraw at once,’ said Merton.

‘Oh no, please don’t speak of that! I am not really at all happy yet about my daughter’s future.’

‘Well, suppose the worst by way of argument; suppose that you saw, that Miss Malory saw—’

‘Matilda has always refused to see or to listen, and has spoken of the reforming effects of a pure affection. She would be hard, indeed, to convince that anything was wrong, but, once certain — I know Matilda’s character — she would never forgive the insult, never.’

‘And you would rather that she suffered some present distress?’

‘Than that she was tied for life to a man who could cause it? Certainly I would.’

‘Then, Mrs. Malory, as it *is* awkward to discuss these intimate matters with me, might I suggest that you should have an interview with Mrs. Brown-Smith herself? I assure you that you can trust her, and I happen to know that her view of the man about whom we are talking is exactly your own. More I could say as to her reasons and motives, but we entirely decline to touch on the past or to offer any opinion about the characters of our patients — the persons about whose engagements we are consulted. He might have murdered his grandmother or robbed a church, but my lips would be sealed.’

‘Do you not think that Mrs. Brown-Smith would be very much surprised if I consulted her?’

‘I know that she takes a sincere interest in Miss Malory, and that her advice would be excellent — though perhaps rather startling,’ said Merton.

‘I dislike it very much. The world has altered terribly since I was Matilda’s age,’ said Mrs. Malory; ‘but I should never forgive myself if I neglected any precaution, and I shall take your advice. I shall consult Mrs. Brown-Smith.’

Merton thus retreated from what even he regarded as a difficult and delicate affair. He fell back on his reserves; and Mrs. Brown-Smith later gave an account of what passed between herself and the representative of an earlier age:

‘She first, when she had invited me to her dreary place, explained that we ought not, she feared, to lead others into temptation. “If you think that man, de la Lain’s temptation is to drag my father’s name, and my husband’s, in the dust,” I answered, “let me tell you that *I* have a temptation also.”

‘“Dear Mrs. Brown-Smith,” she answered, “this is indeed honourable candour. Not for the world would I be the occasion—”

‘I interrupted her, “*My* temptation is to make him the laughing stock of his acquaintance, and, if he has the impudence to give me the opportunity, I *will*!” And then I told her, without names, of course, that story about this Vidame Potter and Violet Lebas.’

‘I did *not,’* said Merton. ‘But why Vidame Potter?’

‘His father was a Mr. Potter; his grandfather married a Miss Lalain — I know all about it — and this creature has wormed out, or invented, some story of a Vidameship, or whatever it is, hereditary in the female line, and has taken the title. And this is the man who has had the impertinence to talk about *me,* a Ker of Graden.’

‘But did not the story you speak of make her see that she must break off her daughter’s engagement?’

‘No. She was very much distressed, but said that her daughter Matilda would never believe it.'

'And so you are to go to Upwold?'

'Yes, it is a mournful place; I never did anything so good-natured. And, with the widow's knowledge, I am to do as I please till the girl's eyes are opened. I think it will need that stratagem we spoke of to open them.'

'You are sure that you will be in no danger from evil tongues?'

'They say, What say they? Let them say,' answered Mrs. Brown-Smith, quoting the motto of the Keiths.

The end of July found Mrs. Brown-Smith at Upwold, where it is to be hoped that the bracing qualities of the atmosphere made up for the want of congenial society. Susan Malory had been discreetly sent away on a visit. None of the men of the family had arrived. There was a party of local neighbours, who did not feel the want of anything to do, but lived in dread of flushing the Vidame and Matilda out of a window seat whenever they entered a room.

As for the Vidame, being destitute of all other entertainment, he made love in a devoted manner.

But at dinner, after Mrs. Brown-Smith's arrival, though he sat next Matilda, Mrs. Malory saw that his eyes were mainly bent on the lady opposite. The ping-pong of conversation, even, was played between him and Mrs. Brown-Smith across the table: the county neighbours were quite lost in their endeavours to follow the flight of the ball. Though the drawing-room window, after dinner, was open on the fragrant lawn, though Matilda sat close by it, in her wonted place, the Vidame was hanging over the chair of the visitor, and later, played billiards with her, a game at which Matilda did not excel. At family prayers next morning (the service was conducted by Mrs. Malory) the Vidame appeared with a white rosebud in his buttonhole, Mrs. Brown-Smith wearing its twin sister. He took her to the stream in the park where she fished, Matilda following in a drooping manner. The Vidame was much occupied in extracting the flies from the hair of Mrs. Brown-Smith, in which they were frequently entangled. After luncheon he drove with the two ladies and Mrs. Malory to the country town, the usual resource of ladies in the country, and though he sat next Matilda, Mrs. Brown-Smith was beaming opposite, and the pair did most of the talking. While Mrs. Malory and her daughter shopped, it was the Vidame who took Mrs. Brown-Smith to inspect the ruins of the Abbey. The county neighbours had left in the morning, a new set arrived, and while Matilda had to entertain them, it was Mrs Brown-Smith whom the Vidame entertained.

This kind of thing went on; when Matilda was visiting her cottagers it was the Vidame and Mrs. Brown-Smith whom visitors flushed in window seats. They wondered that Mrs. Malory had asked so dangerous a woman to the house: they marvelled that she seemed quite radiant and devoted to her lively visitor. There was a school feast: it was the Vidame who arranged hurdle-races for children of both sexes (so improper!), and who started the competitors.

Meanwhile Mrs. Malory, so unusually genial in public, held frequent conventicles with Matilda in private. But Matilda declined to be jealous; they were only old friends, she said, these flagitious two; Dear Anne (that was the Vidame's Christian name) was all that she could wish.

'You know the place is *so* dull, mother,' the brave girl said. 'Even grandmamma, who was a saint, says so in her *Domestic Outpourings*' (religious memoirs privately printed in 1838). 'We cannot amuse Mrs. Brown-Smith, and it is so kind and chivalrous of Anne.'

'To neglect you?'

'No, to do duty for Tom and Dick,' who were her brothers, and who would not greatly have entertained the fair visitor had they been present.

Matilda was the kind of woman whom we all adore as represented in the characters of Fielding's Amelia and Sophia. Such she was, so gracious and yielding, in her overt demeanour, but, alas, poor Matilda's pillow was often wet with her tears. She was loyal; she would not believe evil: she crushed her natural jealousy 'as a vice of blood, upon the threshold of the mind.'

Mrs. Brown-Smith was nearly as unhappy as the girl. The more she hated the Vidame — and she detested him more deeply every day — the more her heart bled for Matilda. Mrs. Brown-Smith also had her secret conferences with Mrs. Malory.

'Nothing will shake her belief in that man,' said Mrs. Malory.

'Your daughter is the best girl I ever met,' said Mrs. Brown-Smith. 'The best tempered, the least suspicious, the most loyal. And I am doing my worst to make her hate me. Oh, I can't go on!' Here Mrs. Brown-Smith very greatly surprised her hostess by bursting into tears.

'You must not desert us now,' said the elder lady. 'The better you think of poor Matilda — and she *is* a good girl — the more you ought to help her.'

It was the 8th of August, no other visitors were at the house, a shooting party was expected to arrive on the 11th. Mrs. Brown-Smith dried her tears. 'It must be done,' she said, 'though it makes me sick to think of it.'

Next day she met the Vidame in the park, and afterwards held a long conversation with Mrs. Malory. As for the Vidame, he was in feverish high spirits, he devoted himself to Matilda, in fact Mrs. Brown-Smith had insisted on such dissimulation, as absolutely necessary at this juncture of affairs. So Matilda bloomed again, like a rose that had been 'washed, just washed, in a shower.' The Vidame went about humming the airs of the country which he had honoured by adopting it as the cradle of his ancestry.

On the morning of the following day, while the Vidame strayed with Matilda in the park, Mrs. Brown-Smith was closeted with Mrs. Malory in her boudoir.

‘Everything is arranged,’ said Mrs. Brown-Smith. ‘I, guilty and reckless that I am, have only to sacrifice my character, and all my things. But I am to retain Methven, my maid. That concession I have won from his chivalry.’

‘How do you mean?’ asked Mrs. Malory.

‘At seven he will get a telegram summoning him to Paris on urgent business. He will leave in your station brougham in time to catch the 9.50 up train at Wilkington. Or, rather, so impatient is he, he will leave half an hour too early, for fear of accidental delays. I and my maid will accompany him. I have thought honesty the best policy, and told the truth, like Bismarck, “and the same,”’ said Mrs. Brown-Smith hysterically, ‘“with intent to deceive.” I have pointed out to him that my best plan is to pretend to you that I am going to meet my husband, who really arrives at Wilkington from Liverpool by the 9.17, though the Vidame thinks that is an invention of mine. So, you see, I leave without any secrecy, or fuss, or luggage, and, when my husband comes here, he will find me flown, and will have to console himself with my luggage and jewels. He — this Frenchified beast, I mean — has written a note for your daughter, which he will give to her maid, and, of course, the maid will hand it to *you*. So he will have burned his boats. And then you can show it to Matilda, and so,’ said Mrs. Brown-Smith, ‘the miracle of opening her eyes will be worked. Johnnie, my husband, and I will be hungry when we return about half-past ten. And I think you had better telegraph that there is whooping cough, or bubonic plague, or something in the house, and put off your shooting party.’

‘But that would be an untruth,’ said Mrs. Malory.

‘And what have I been acting for the last ten days?’ asked Mrs. Brown-Smith, rather tartly. ‘You must settle your excuse with your conscience.’

‘The cook’s mother really is ill,’ said Mrs. Malory, ‘and she wants dreadfully to go and see her. That would do.’

‘All things work together for good. The cook must have a telegram also,’ said Mrs. Brown-Smith.

The day, which had been extremely hot, clouded over. By five it was raining: by six there was a deluge. At seven, Matilda and the Vidame were evicted from their dusky window seat by the butler with a damp telegraph envelope. The Vidame opened it, and handed it to Matilda. His presence at Paris was instantly demanded. The Vidame was desolated, but his absence could not be for more than five days. Bradshaw was hunted for, and found: the 9.50 train was opportune. The Vidame’s man packed his clothes. Mrs. Brown-Smith was apprised of these occurrences in the drawing-room before dinner.

‘I am very sorry for dear Matilda,’ she cried. ‘But it is an ill wind that blows nobody good. I will drive over with the Vidame and astonish my Johnnie by greeting him at the station. I must run and change my dress.’

She ran, she returned in morning costume, she heard from Mrs. Malory of the summons by telegram calling the cook to her moribund mother. ‘I must send her over to the station in a dog-cart,’ said Mrs. Malory.

‘Oh no,’ cried Mrs. Brown-Smith, with impetuous kindness, ‘not on a night like this; it is a cataclysm. There will be plenty of room for the cook as well as for Methven and me, and the Vidame, in the brougham. Or *he* can sit on the box.’

The Vidame really behaved very well. The introduction of the cook, to quote an old novelist, ‘had formed no part of his profligate scheme of pleasure.’ To elope from a hospitable roof, with a married lady, accompanied by her maid, might be an act not without precedent. But that a cook should come to form *une partie carrée*, on such an occasion, that a lover should be squeezed with three women in a brougham, was a trying novelty.

The Vidame smiled, ‘An artist so excellent,’ he said, ‘deserves a far greater sacrifice.’

So it was arranged. After a tender and solitary five minutes with Matilda, the Vidame stepped, last, into the brougham. The coachman whipped up the horses, Matilda waved her kerchief from the porch, the guilty lovers drove away. Presently Mrs. Malory received, from her daughter’s maid, the letter destined by the Vidame for Matilda. Mrs. Malory locked it up in her despatch box.

The runaways, after a warm and uncomfortable drive of three-quarters of an hour, during which the cook wept bitterly and was very unwell, reached the station. Contrary to the Vidame’s wish, Mrs. Brown-Smith, in an ulster and a veil, insisted on perambulating the platform, buying the whole of Mr. Hall Caine’s works as far as they exist in sixpenny editions. Bells rang, porters stationed themselves in a line, like fielders, a train arrived, the 9.17 from Liverpool, twenty minutes late. A short stout gentleman emerged from a smoking carriage, Mrs. Brown-Smith, starting from the Vidame’s side, raised her veil, and threw her arms round the neck of the traveller.

‘You didn’t expect *me* to meet you on such a night, did you, Johnnie?’ she cried with a break in her voice.

‘Awfully glad to see you, Tiny,’ said the short gentleman. ‘On such a night!’

After thus unconsciously quoting the *Merchant of Venice*, Mr. Brown-Smith turned to his valet. ‘Don’t forget the fishing-rods,’ he said.

‘I took the opportunity of driving over with a gentleman from Upwold,’ said

Mrs. Brown-Smith. ‘Let me introduce him. Methven,’ to her maid, ‘where is the Vidame de la Lain?’

‘I heard him say that he must help Mrs. Andrews, the cook, to find a seat, Ma’am,’ said the maid.

‘He really *is* kind,’ said Mrs. Brown-Smith, ‘but I fear we can’t wait to say good-bye to him.’

Three-quarters of an hour later, Mr. Brown-Smith and his wife were at supper at Upwold.

Next day, as the cook’s departure had postponed the shooting party, they took leave of their hostess, and returned to their moors in Perthshire.

Weeks passed, with no message from the Vidame. He did not answer a letter which Mrs. Malory allowed Matilda to write. The mother never showed to the girl the note which he had left with her maid. The absence and the silence of the lover were enough. Matilda never knew that among the four packed in the brougham on that night of rain, one had been eloping with a married lady — who returned to supper.

The papers were ‘requested to state that the marriage announced between the Vidame de la Lain and Miss Malory will not take place.’ Why it did not take place was known only to Mrs. Malory, Mrs. Brown-Smith, and Merton.

Matilda thought that her lover had been kidnapped and arrested, by the Secret Police of France, for his part in a scheme to restore the Royal House, the White Flag, the Lilies, the children of St. Louis. At Mrs. Brown-Smith’s place in Perthshire, in the following autumn, Matilda met Sir Aylmer Jardine. Then she knew that what she had taken for love (in the previous year) had been,

‘Not love, but love’s first flush in youth.’

They always do make that discovery, bless them! Lady Jardine is now wrapped up in her baby boy. The mother of the cook recovered her health.

IX. ADVENTURE OF THE LADY NOVELIST AND THE VACCINATIONIST

‘Mr. Frederick Warren’ — so Merton read the card presented to him on a salver of Limoges enamel by the office-boy.

‘Show the gentleman in.’

Mr. Warren entered. He was a tall and portly person, with a red face, red whiskers, and a tightly buttoned frock-coat, which more expressed than hid his goodly and prominent proportions. He bowed, and Merton invited him to be seated. It struck Merton as a singular circumstance that his visitor wore on each arm the crimson badge of the newly vaccinated.

Mr. Warren sat down, and, taking a red silk handkerchief out of the crown of his hat, he wiped his countenance. The day was torrid, and Mr. Merton hospitably offered an effervescent draught.

‘Without the whisky, if you please, sir,’ said Mr. Warren, in a provincial accent. He pointed to a blue ribbon in the buttonhole of his coat, indicating that he was conscientiously opposed to the use of alcoholic refreshment in all its forms.

‘Two glasses of Apollinaris water,’ said Merton to the office-boy; and the innocent fluid was brought, while Merton silently admired his client’s arrangement in blue and crimson. When the thirst of that gentleman had been assuaged, he entered upon business thus:

‘Sir, I am a man of principle!’

Merton congratulated him; the age was lax, he said, and principle was needed. He wondered internally what he was going to be asked to subscribe to, or whether his vote only was required.

‘Sir, have you been vaccinated?’ asked the client earnestly.

‘Really,’ said Merton, ‘I do not quite understand your interest in a matter so purely personal.’

‘Personal, sir? Not at all. It is the first of public duties — the debt that every man, woman, and child owes to his or her country. Have you been vaccinated, sir?’

‘Why, if you insist on knowing,’ said Merton, ‘I have, though I do not see—’

‘Recently?’ asked the visitor.

‘Yes, last month; but I cannot conjecture why—’

‘Enough, sir,’ said Mr. Warren. ‘I am a man of principle. Had you not done your duty in this matter by your country, I should have been compelled to seek some other practitioner in your line.'

'I was not aware that my firm had any competitors in our line of business,' said Merton. 'But perhaps you have come here under some misapprehension. There is a firm of family solicitors on the floor above, and next them are the offices of a company interested in a patent explosive. If your affairs, or your political ideas, demand a legal opinion, or an outlet in an explosive which is widely recommended by the Continental Press—'

'For what do you take me, sir?' asked Mr. Warren.

'For a Temperance Anarchist,' Merton would have liked to reply, 'judging by your colours'; but he repressed this retort, and mildly answered, 'Perhaps it would be as much to the purpose to ask, for what do you take *me*?'

'For the representative of Messrs. Gray & Graham, the specialists in matrimonial affairs,' answered the client; and Merton said that he would be happy if Mr. Warren would enter into the details of his business.

'I am the ex-Mayor of Bulcester,' said Mr. Warren, 'and, as I told you, a man of principle. My attachment to the Temperance cause' — and he fingered his blue ribbon— 'procured for me the honour of a defeat at the last general election, but endeared me to the consciences of the Nonconformist element in the constituency. Yet, sir, I am at this moment the most unpopular man in Bulcester; but I shall fight it out — I shall fight it to my latest breath.'

'Is Bulcester, then, such an intemperate constituency? I had understood that the Nonconformist interest was strong there,' said Merton.

'So it is, sir, so it is; but the interest is now bound to the chariot wheels of the truckling Toryism of our time — to the sycophants who basely made vaccination permissive, and paltered with the Conscientious Objector. These badges, sir' — the client pointed to his own crimson decorations— 'proclaim that I have been vaccinated on *both* arms, as a testimony to the immortal though, in Bulcester, maligned discovery of the great Jenner. Sir, I am hooted in the public streets of my native town, where Anti-vaccinationism is a frenzy. Mr. Rider Haggard, the author of *Dr. Therne*, has been burned in effigy for his thrilling and manly protest to which I owe my own conversion.'

'Then the conversion is relatively recent?' asked Merton.

'It dates since my reading of that powerful argument, sir; that appeal to reason which overcame my prejudice, for I was a prominent A. V.'

'*Ave*?' asked Merton.

'A. V., sir — Anti-Vaccinationist. A. C. D. A. too, and always,' he added proudly; but Merton did not think it prudent to ask for further explanations.

'An A. V. I was, an A. V. I am no longer; and I defy popular clamour, accompanied by brickbats, to shake my principles.'

'*Justum et tinacem propositi virum,*' murmured Merton, adding, 'All that is very interesting, but, my dear sir, while I admire the tenacity of your principles, will you permit me to ask, what has vaccination to do with the special business of our firm?'

'Why, sir, I have a family, and my eldest son—'

'Does he decline to be vaccinated?' asked Merton, in a sympathetic voice.

'No, sir, or he would never darken my doorway,' exclaimed this more than Roman father. 'But he is engaged, and I can never give my consent; and if he marries that girl, the firm ceases to be "Warren & Son, wax-cloth manufacturers." That's all, sir — that's all.'

Mr. Warren again applied his red handkerchief to his glowing features.

'And what, may I ask, are the grounds of your objection to this engagement? Social inequality?' asked Merton.

'No, the young lady is the daughter of one of our leading ministers, Mr. Truman — author of *The Bishops to the Block* — but principles are concerned.'

'You cannot mean that the young lady is excessively addicted to the — wine cup?' asked Merton gravely. 'In melancholy cases of that kind Mr. Hall Caine, in a romance, has recommended hypnotic treatment, but we do not venture to interfere.'

'You misunderstand me, sir,' replied Mr. Warren, frowning. 'The young woman, on principle, as they call it, has never been vaccinated. Like most of our prominent citizens, her father (otherwise an excellent man) objects to what he calls "The Worship of the Calf" on grounds of conscience.'

'Conscience! It is a hard thing to constrain the conscience,' murmured Merton, quoting a remark of Queen Mary to John Knox.

'What is conscience without knowledge, sir?' asked the client, using — without knowing it — the very argument of Mr. Knox to the Queen.

'You have no other objections to the alliance?' asked Merton.

'None whatever, sir. She is a good and good-looking girl. On most important points we are thoroughly agreed. She won a prize essay on Bacon's authorship of Shakespeare's plays. Of course Shakespeare could not have written them — a thoroughly uneducated man, who never could have passed the fourth standard. But look at the plays! There are things in them that, with all our modern advantages, are beyond me. I admit they are beyond me. "To be, and to do, and to suffer,"' declaimed Mr. Warren, apparently under the impression that this is part of Hamlet's soliloquy— 'Shakespeare could never have written *that*. Where did *he* learn grammar?'

'Where, indeed?' replied Merton. 'But as the lady is in all other respects so suitable a match, cannot this one difficulty be got over?'

'Impossible, sir; my son could not slice the sleeve in her dress and inflict this priceless boon on her with affectionate violence. Even the hero of *Dr. Therne* failed there—'

'And rather irritated his pretty Jane,' added Merton, who remembered this heroic adventure. 'It is a very hard case,' he went on, 'but I fear that our methods are powerless. The only chance would be to divert young Mr. Warren's affections into some other more enlightened channel. That expedient has often been found efficacious. Is he very deeply enamoured? Would not the society of another pretty and intelligent girl perhaps work wonders?'

'Perhaps it might, sir, but I don't know where to find any one that would attract my James. Except for political meetings, and a literary lecture or two, with a magic-lantern and a piano, we have not much social relaxation at Bulcester. We object to promiscuous dancing, on grounds of conscience. Also, of course, to the stage.'

'Ah, so you *do* allow for the claims of conscience, do you?'

'For what do you take me, sir? Only, of course the conscience must be enlightened,' said Mr. Warren, as other earnest people usually do.

'Certainly, certainly,' said Merton; 'nothing so dangerous as the unenlightened conscience. Why, in this very matter of marriage the conscience of the Mormons leads them to singular aberrations, while that of the Arunta tribe — but I should only pain you if I pursued the subject. You said that your Society indulged in literary lectures: is your programme for the season filled up?'

'I am President of the Bulcester Literary Society,' said Mr. Warren, 'and I ought to know. We have a vacancy for Friday week; but why do you inquire? In fact I want a lecturer on "The Use and Abuse of Novels," now you ask. Our people, somehow, always want their literary lectures to be about novels. I try to make the lecturers take a lofty moral tone, and usually entertain them at my house, where I probe their ideas, and warn them that we must have nothing loose. Once, sir, we had a lecturer on "The Oldest Novel in the World." He gave us a terrible shock, sir! I never saw so many red cheeks in a Bulcester audience. And the man seemed quite unaware of the effect he was producing.'

'Short-sighted, perhaps?' said Merton.

'Ever since we have been very careful. But, sir, we seem to have got away from the subject.'

'It is only seeming,' said Merton. 'I have an idea which may be of service to you.'

'Thank you, most kindly,' said Mr. Warren. 'But as how?'

‘Does your Society ever employ lady lecturers?’

‘We prefer them; we are all for enlarging the sphere of woman’s activity — virtuous activity, I mean.’

‘That is fortunate,’ remarked Merton. ‘You said just now that to try the plan of a counter-attraction was difficult, because there was little of social relaxation in your Society, and you knew no lady who had the opportunities necessary for presenting an agreeable alternative to the charms of Miss Truman. A young man’s fancy is often caught merely by the juxtaposition of a single member of the opposite sex, with whom he contracts a custom of walking home from chapel.’

‘That’s mostly the way at Bulcester,’ said Mr. Warren.

‘Well,’ Merton went on, ‘you are in the habit of entertaining the lecturers at your house. Now, I know a young lady — one of our staff, in fact — who is very well qualified to lecture on “The Use and Abuse of Novels.” She is a novelist herself; one of the most serious and improving of our younger writers. In her works virtue (after struggles) is always rewarded, and vice (especially if gilded) is held up to execration, though never allowed to display itself in colours which would bring a blush to the cheek of — a white rabbit. Here is her portrait,’ said Merton, taking up a family periodical, *The Young Girl*. This blameless journal was publishing a serial story by Miss Martin, one of the ladies who had been enlisted at the dinner given by Logan and Merton when they founded their Society. A photograph of Miss Martin, in white and in a large shadowy hat, was published in *The Young Girl*, and certainly no one could have recognised in this conscientiously innocent and domestic portrait the fair author of romances of social adventure and unimagined crime. ‘There you see our young friend,’ said Merton; ‘and the magazine, to which she is a regular contributor, is a voucher for her character as an author.’

Mr. Warren closely scrutinised the portrait, which displayed loveliness and candour in a very agreeable way, and arranged in the extreme of modest simplicity.

‘That is a young woman who bears her testimonials in her face,’ said Mr. Warren. ‘She is one whom a father can trust — but has she been vaccinated?’

‘Early and often,’ answered Merton reassuringly. ‘Girls with faces like hers do not care to run any risks.’

‘Jane Truman does, though my son has put it to her, I know, on the ground of her looks. “*Nothing*,” she said, “will ever induce me to submit to that filthy, that revolting operation.”’

‘“Conscience doth make cowards of us all,” as Bacon says,’ replied Merton, ‘or at least of such of us as are unenlightened. But to come to business. What do you think of asking our young friend down to lecture — on Friday week, I think you said — on the Use and Abuse of Novels? You could easily persuade her, I dare say, to stay over Sunday — longer if necessary — and then young Mr. Warren would at least find out that there is more than one young woman in the world.'

'I shall be delighted to see your friend,' answered Mr. Warren. 'At Bulcester we welcome intellect, and a real novelist of moral tendencies would make quite a sensation in our midst.'

'They are but too scarce at present,' Merton answered— 'novelists of high moral tone.'

'She is not a Christian Scientist?' asked Mr. Warren anxiously. 'They reject vaccination, like all other means appointed, and rely on miracles, which ceased with the Apostolic age, being no longer necessary.'

'The lady, I can assure you, is not a Christian Scientist,' said Merton 'but comes of an Evangelical family. Shall I give you her address? In my opinion it would be best to write to her from Bulcester, on the official paper of the Literary Society.' For Merton wished to acquaint Miss Martin with the nature of her mission, lecturing being an art which she had never cultivated.

'There is just one thing,' remarked Mr. Warren hesitatingly. 'This young lady, if our James lets his affections loose on her — how would *that* be, sir?'

Merton smiled.

'Why, no great harm would be done, Mr. Warren. You need not fear any complication: any new matrimonial difficulty. The affection would be all on one side, and that side would not be the lady lecturer's. I happen to know that she has a prior attachment.'

'Vaccinated!' cried Mr. Warren, letting a laugh out of him.

'Exactly,' said Merton.

Mr. Warren now gladly concurred in the plan of his adviser, after which the interview was concerned with financial details. Merton usually left these vague, but in Mr. Warren he saw a client who would feel more confidence if everything was put on a strictly business footing. The client retired in a hopeful frame of mind, and Merton went to look for Miss Martin at her club, where she was usually to be found at the hour of tea.

He was fortunate enough to find her, dressed by no means after the style of her portrait in *The Young Girl*, but still very well dressed. She offered him the refreshment of tea and toast — very good toast, Merton thought — and he asked how her craft as a novelist was prospering. Friends of Miss Martin were obliged to ask, for they did not read *The Young Girl*, or the other and less domestic serials in which her works appeared.

‘I am doing very well, thank you,’ said Miss Martin. ‘My tale *The Curate’s Family* has raised the circulation of *The Young Girl*; and, mind you, it is no easy thing for a novelist to raise the circulation of any periodical. For example, if *The Quarterly Review* published a new romance, even by Mr. Thomas Hardy, I doubt if the end would justify the proceedings.’

‘It would take about four years to get finished in a quarterly,’ said Merton.

‘And the nonagenarians who read quarterlies,’ said Miss Martin, with the flippancy of youth, ‘would go to their graves without knowing whether the heroine found a lenient jury or not. I have six heroines in *The Curate’s Family*, and I own their love affairs tend to get a little mixed. I have rigged up a small stage, with puppets in costume to represent the characters, and keep them straight in my mind; but Ethelinda, who is engaged to the photographer, as nearly as possible eloped with the baronet last week.’

‘Anything else on?’ asked Merton.

‘An up-to-date story, all heredity and evolution,’ said Miss Martin. ‘The father has his legs bitten off by a shark, and it gets on the nerves of his wife, the Marchioness, and two of the girls are born like mermaids. They have immense popularity at bathing-places on the French coast, but it is not easy for them to go into general society.’

‘What nonsense!’ exclaimed Merton.

‘Not worse than other stuff that is highly recommended by eminent reviewers,’ said Miss Martin.

‘Anything else?’

‘Oh, yes; there is “The Pope’s Poisoner, a Tale of the Borgias.” That is a historical romance, I got it up out of Histories of the Renaissance. The hero (Lionardo da Vinci) is the Pope’s bravo, and in love with Lucrezia Borgia.’

‘Are the dates all right?’ asked Merton.

‘Oh, bother the dates! Of course he is a bravo *pour le bon motif*, and frustrates the pontifical designs.’

‘I want you,’ said Merton, ‘you have such a fertile imagination, to take part in a little plot of our own. Beneficent, of course, but I admit that my fancy is baffled. Could we find a room less crowded? This is rather private business.’

‘There is never anybody in the smoking-room at the top of the house,’ said Miss Martin, ‘because — to let out a secret — none of us ever smoke, except at public dinners to give tone. But *you* may.’

She led Merton to a sepulchral little chamber upstairs, and he told her all the story of Mr. Warren, his son, and the daughter of the minister.

‘Why don’t they elope?’ asked Miss Martin.

‘The Nonconformist conscience is unfriendly to elopements, and the young man has no accomplishment by which he could support his bride except the art of making oilcloth.'

'Well, what do you want me to do?'

Merton unfolded the scheme of the lady lecturer, and prepared Miss Martin to receive an invitation from Mr. Warren.

'Can you write a lecture on "The Use and Abuse of Novels" before Friday week?' he asked.

'Say seven thousand words? I could do it by to-morrow morning,' said Miss Martin.

'You know you must be very careful?'

'Style of answers to correspondents in *The Young Girl*,' said Miss Martin. 'I know my way about.'

'Then you really will essay the adventure?'

'Like a bird,' answered the lady. 'It will be great fun. I shall pick up copy about the habits of the middle classes in the Midlands.'

'They won't recognise you as the author of your more criminal romances?'

'How can they? I sign them "Passion Flower" and "Nightshade," and "La Tofana," and so on.'

'You will dress as in your photograph in *The Young Girl*?'

'I will, and take a *fichu* to wear in the evening. They always wear *fichus* in evening dress. But, look here, do you want a happy ending to this romance?'

'How can it be happy if you are to be successful? Miss Jane Truman will be miserable, and Mr. James Warren will die of remorse and a broken heart, when you—'

'Fail to crown his flame, and Jane has too much pride to welcome back the wanderer?'

'I'm afraid that, or something like that, will be the end of it,' said Merton, 'and, perhaps, on reflection, we had better drop the affair.'

'But suppose I could manage a happy ending? Suppose I reconcile Mr. Warren to the union? I am all for happy endings myself. I drink to King Charles II., who declared that while *he* was king all tragedies should end happily.'

'You don't mean that you can persuade Jane to be vaccinated?'

'One never knows till one tries. You'll find that I shall make a happy conclusion to my Borgia novel, and *that* is not so easy. You see Lionardo goes to the Pope's jeweller and exchanges the—'

Miss Martin paused and remained absorbed in thought.

Suddenly she danced round the room with much grace and *abandon*, while Merton, smoking in an arm-chair that had lost a castor, gently applauded the performance.

‘You have your idea?’ he asked.

‘I have it. Happy ending! Hurrah!’

Miss Martin spun round like a dancing Dervish, and finally fell into another arm-chair, overcome by the heat and the intoxication of genius.

‘We owe a candle to Saint Alexander Borgia!’ she said, when she recovered her breath.

‘Miss Martin,’ said Merton gravely, ‘this is a serious matter. You are not going, I trust, to poison the lemons for the elder Mr. Warren’s lemon squash? He is strictly Temperance, you know.’

‘Poison the lemons? With a hypodermic syringe?’ asked Miss Martin. ‘No; that is good business. I have made one of my villains do *that*, but that is not my idea. Perfectly harmless, my idea.’

‘But sensational, I fear?’ asked Merton.

‘Some very cultured critics might think so,’ the lady admitted. ‘But I am sure to succeed, and I hear the merry, merry wedding bells of the Bulcester tabernacle ringing a peal for the happy pair.’

‘Well, what is the plan?’

‘That is my secret.’

‘But I *must* know. I am responsible. Tell me, or I telegraph to Mr. Warren: “Lecturer never vaccinated; sorry for my mistake.”’

‘That would not be true,’ said Miss Martin.

‘A noble falsehood,’ said Merton.

‘But I assure you that if my plan fails no harm can possibly be caused or suspected. And if it succeeds then the thing is done: either Mr. Warren is reconciled to the marriage, or — the marriage is broken off, as he desires.’

‘By whom?’

‘By the Conscientious Objectrix, if that is the feminine of Objector — by Miss Jane Truman.’

‘Why should Jane break it off if the old gentleman agrees?’

‘Because Jane would be a silly girl. Mr. Merton, I will promise you one thing. The plan shall not be tried without the approval of the lover himself. None but he shall be concerned in the affair.’

‘You won’t hypnotise the girl and let him vaccinate her when she is in the hypnotic sleep?’

‘No, nor even will I give her a post-hypnotic suggestion to vaccinate herself, or go to the doctor’s and have it done when she is awake; though,’ said Miss Martin, ‘that is not bad business either. I must make a note of that. But I can’t hypnotise anybody. I tried lots of girls when I was at St. Ursula’s and nothing ever came of it. Thank you for the idea all the same. By the way, I first must sterilise the pontifical—' She paused.

'The what?'

'That is my secret! Don't you see how safe it is? None but the lover shall have his and her fate in his hands. *C'est à prendre ou à laisser*.'

Merton was young and adventurous.

'You give me your word that your idea is absolutely safe and harmless? It involves no crime?'

'None; and if you like,' said Miss Martin, 'I will bring you the highest professional opinion,' and she mentioned an eminent name in the craft of healing. 'He was our doctor when we were children,' said the lady, 'and we have always been friends.'

'Well,' Merton said, 'what is good enough for Sir Josiah Wilkinson is good enough for me. But you will bring me the document?'

'The day after to-morrow,' said Miss Martin, and with that assurance Merton had to be content.

Sir Josiah was almost equally famous in the world as a physician and, in a smaller but equally refined circle, as a virtuoso and collector of objects of art. His opinions about the beneficent effects of vaccination were known to be at the opposite pole from those of the intelligent population of Bulcester.

On the next day but one Miss Martin again entertained Merton at her club, and demurely presented him with three documents. These were Mr. Warren's invitation, her reply in acceptance, and a formal signed statement by Sir Josiah that her scheme was perfectly harmless, and commanded his admiring approval.

'Now!' said Miss Martin.

'I own that I don't like it,' said Merton. 'Logan thinks that it is all right, but Logan is a born conspirator. However, as you are set on it, and as Sir Josiah's opinion carries great weight, you may go. But be very careful. Have you written your lecture?'

'Here is the scenario,' said Miss Martin, handing a typewritten synopsis to Merton.

'USE AND ABUSE OF NOVELS.

'All good things capable of being abused. Alcohol not one of these; alcohol *always* pernicious. Fiction, on the other hand, a good thing. Antiquity of fiction. In early days couched in verse. Civilisation prefers prose. Fiction, from the earlier ages, intended to convey Moral Instruction. Opinion of Aristotle defended against that of Plato. Morality in mediæval Romance. Criticism of Mr. Frederic Harrison. Opinion of Molière. Yet French novels usually immoral, and why. Remarks on Popery. To be avoided. Morality of Richardson and of Sir Walter Scott. Impropriety re-introduced by Charlotte Brontë. Unwillingness of Lecturer to dwell on this Topic. The Novel is now the whole of Literature. The people have no time to read anything else. Responsibilities of the Novelist as a Teacher. The Novel the proper vehicle of Theological, Scientific, Social, and Political Instruction. Mr. Hall Caine, Miss Corelli. Fallacy of thinking that the Novel should Amuse. Abuse of the Novel as a source of mischievous and false Opinions. Case of *The Woman Who Did*. Sacredness of Marriage. Study of the Novel becomes an abuse if it leads to the Neglect of the Morning and Evening Newspapers. Sir Walter Besant on the Novel. None but the newest Novels ought to be read. Mr. W. D. Howells on this subject. Experience of the Lecturer as a Novelist. Gratifying letters from persons happily influenced by the Lecturer. Anecdotes. Case of Miss A — C — . Case of Mr. J — R — . Unhappy Endings demoralising. Marriage the true End of the Novel, but the beginning of the happy life. Lecturer wishes her audience happy Endings and true Beginnings. Conclusion.'

'Will *that* do?' asked Miss Martin anxiously.

'Yes, if you don't exceed your plan, or run into chaff.'

'I won't,' said Miss Martin. 'It is all chaff, but they won't see it.'

'I think I would drop that about Popery,' said Merton— 'it may lead to letters in the newspapers; and *do* be awfully careful about impropriety in novels.'

'I'll put in "Vice to be Condemned, not Described,"' said Miss Martin, pencilling a note on the margin of her paper.

'That seems safe,' said Merton. 'But it cuts out some of our most powerful teachers.'

'Serve them right!' said Miss Martin. 'Teachers! the arrant humbugs.'

'You will report at once on your return?' said Merton. 'I shall be on tenterhooks till I see you again. If I knew what you are really about, I'd take counsel's opinion. Medical opinion does not satisfy me: I want legal.'

'How nervous you are!' said Miss Martin. 'Counsel would be rather stuck up, I think; it is a new kind of case,' and the lady laughed in an irritating way. 'I'll tell you what I'll do,' she said. 'I'll telegraph to you on the Monday morning after the lecture. If everything goes well, I'll telegraph, "Happy ending." If anything goes wrong — but it can't — I'll telegraph, "Unhappy ending."'

'If you do, I shall be off to Callao.

'*On no condition*
Is Extradition
Allowed in Callao!'

said Merton.

‘But if there is any uncertainty — and there *may* be,’ said Miss Martin, ‘I’ll telegraph, “Will report.”’

*

Merton passed a miserable week of suspense and perplexity of mind. Never had he been so imprudent; he felt sure of that, and it was the only thing of which he did feel sure. The newspapers contained bulletins of an epidemic of smallpox at Bulcester. How would that work into the plot? Then the high animal spirits and daring fancy of Miss Martin might carry her into undreamed-of adventures.

‘But they won’t let her have even a glass of champagne,’ reflected Merton. ‘One glass makes her reckless.’

It was with a trembling hand that Merton, about ten on the Monday morning, took the telegraphic envelope of Fate.

‘I can’t face it,’ he said to Logan. ‘Read the message to me.’ Merton was unmanned!

Logan carelessly opened the envelope and read:

‘*Happy ending, but awfully disappointed. Will call at one o’clock.*’

‘Oh, thanks to all gracious Powers,’ said Merton falling limply on to a sofa. ‘Ring, Logan, and order a small whisky-and-soda.’

‘I won’t,’ said Logan. ‘Horrid bad habit. Would you like me to send out for smelling-salts? Be a man, Merton! Pull yourself together!’

‘You don’t know that awful girl,’ said Merton, slowly recovering self-control. ‘However, as she is disappointed though the ending is happy, her infernal plan must have been miscarried, whatever it was. It *must* be all right, though I sha’n’t be quite happy till I see her. I am no coward, Logan’ (and Merton was later to prove that he possessed coolness and audacity in no common measure), ‘but it is the awful sense of responsibility. She is quite capable of getting us into the newspapers.’

‘You funk being laughed at,’ said Logan.

Merton lay on the sofa, smoking too many cigarettes, till, punctually at one o’clock, a peal at the bell announced the arrival of Miss Martin. She entered, radiant, smiling, and in her costume of innocence she looked like a sylph.

‘It is all right — they are engaged, with Mr. Warren’s full approval,’ she exclaimed.

‘Were we on the stage, I should embrace you!’ exclaimed Merton rapturously.

‘We are not on the stage,’ replied Miss Martin demurely. ‘And *I* have no occasion to congratulate myself. My plot did not come off; never had a look in. Do you want to be vaccinated? If so, shake hands,’ and Miss Martin extended her own hands ungloved.

‘I do not want to be vaccinated,’ said Merton.

‘Then don’t shake hands,’ said Miss Martin.

‘What on earth do you mean?’ asked Merton.

‘Look there!’ said the lady, lifting her hand to his eyes. Merton kissed it.

‘Oh, *take care*!’ shrieked Miss Martin. ‘It would be awkward — on the lips. Do you see my ring?’

Merton and Logan examined her ring. It was a beautiful *cinque cento* jewel in white and blue enamel, with a high gold top containing a pointed ruby.

‘It’s very pretty,’ said Merton— ‘quite of the best period. But what is the mystery?’

‘It is a poison ring of the Borgias,’ said Miss Martin. ‘I borrowed it from Sir Josiah Wilkinson. If it scratched you’ (here she exhibited the mechanism of the jewel), ‘why, there you are!’

‘Where? Poisoned?’

‘No! Vaccinated!’ said Miss Martin. ‘It is full of the stuff they vaccinate you with, but it is quite safe as far as the old poison goes. Sir Josiah sterilised it, in case of accidents, before he put in the glycerinated lymph. My own idea! He was delighted. Shall I shake hands with the office-boy? — it might do him good — or would Kutuzoff give a paw?’

Kutuzoff was the Russian cat.

‘By no means — not for worlds,’ said Merton. ‘Kutuzoff is a Conscientious Objector. But were you going to shake hands with Miss Truman with that horrible ring? Sacred emblems enamelled on it,’ said Merton, gingerly examining the jewel.

‘No; I was not going to do that,’ replied Miss Martin. ‘My idea was to acquire the confidence of the lover — the younger Mr. Warren — explain to him how the thing works, lend it to him, and then let him press his Jane’s wrist with it in some shady arbour. Then his Jane would have been all that the heart of Mr. Warren *père* could desire. But it did not come off.’

‘Thank goodness!’ ejaculated Merton. ‘There might have been an awful row. I don’t know what the offence would have been in the eye of the law. Vaccinating a Conscientious Objector, without consent, yet without violence, — what would the law say to *that*?’

‘We might make it *hamesucken under trust* in Scotland,’ said Logan, ‘if it was done on the premises of the young lady’s domicile.’

‘We have not that elegant phrase in England,’ said Merton. ‘Perhaps it would have been a common assault; but, anyhow, it would have got into the newspapers. Never again be officer of mine, Miss Martin.’

‘But how did all end happily?’ asked Logan.

‘Why, *you* may call it happily and so may the lovers, but *I* call it very disappointing,’ said Miss Martin.

‘Tell us all about it!’ cried Logan.

‘Well, I went down, simple as you see me.’

‘*Simplex munditiis*!’ said Merton.

‘And was met at the station by young Mr. Warren. His father, with the wisdom of a Nonconformist serpent, had sent him alone to make my acquaintance and be fascinated. My things were put on a four-wheeler. I was all young enthusiasm in the manner of *The Young Girl*. He was a good-looking boy enough, though in a bowler hat, with turn-down collar. But he was gloomy. I was curious about the public buildings, ecstatic about the town hall, and a kind of Moeso-Gothic tabernacle (if it was not Moeso-Gothic in style I don’t know what it was) where the Rev. Mr. Truman holds forth. But I could not waken him up, he seemed miserable. I soon found out the reason. The placards of the local newspapers shrieked in big type with

Spread Of Smallpox.
135 Cases.

When I saw that I took young Mr. Warren’s hand.’

‘Were you wearing the ring?’ asked Merton.

‘No; it was in my dressing-bag. I said, “Mr. Warren, I know what care clouds your brow. You are brooding over the fate of the young, the fair, the beloved — the unvaccinated. I know the story of your heart.”

‘“How the D — I mean, how do you know, Miss Martin, about my private affairs?”

‘“A little bird has told me,” I said (style of *The Young Girl*, you know). “I have friends in Bulcester who esteem you. No, I must not mention names, but I come, not too late, I hope, to bring you security. She shall be preserved from this awful scourge, and you shall be her preserver.” He wanted to know how it was to be done, of course, and after taking his word of honour for secrecy, I told him that the remedy would lie in his own hands, showed him the ring, and taught him how to work it. Mr. Squeers,’ went on Miss Martin, ‘had never wopped a boy in a cab before, and I had never beheld a scene of passionate emotion before — in a four-wheeler. He called me his preserver, he said that I was an angel, he knelt at my feet, and, if we had been on the stage — as Mr. Merton said—’

‘And were you on the stage?’ asked Merton.

‘That is neither here nor there. It was an instructive experience, and you little know the treasures of passion that may lie concealed in the heart of a young oilcloth manufacturer.'

'Happy young oilcloth manufacturer!' murmured Merton.

'They are both happy, but I did not manage my fortunate conclusion in my own way. When young Mr. Warren had moderated the transports of his gratitude we were in the suburbs of Bulcester, where the mill-owners live in houses of the most promiscuous architecture: Tudor, Jacobean, Queen Anne, Bedford Park Queen Anne, *chalets*, Chineseries, "all standing naked in the open air," for the trees have not grown up round them yet. Then we came to a gate without a lodge, the cabman got down and opened it, and we were in the visible presence of Mr. Warren's villa. The style is the Scottish Baronial; all pepper-pots, gables and crowsteps.

'"What a lovely old place!" I said to my companion. "Have you secret passages and sliding panels and dark turnpike stairs? What a house for conspiracies! There is a real turret window; can't you fancy it suddenly shot up and the king's face popped out, very red, and bellowing, 'Treason!'"

'At that moment, when my imagination was in full career, the turret window *was* shot up, and a face, very red, with red whiskers, was popped out.

'"That is my father," said young Mr. Warren; and we alighted, and a very small maidservant opened the portals of the baronial hall, while the cabman carried up my trunk, and Mr. Warren, senior, greeted me in the hall.

'"Welcome to Bulcester!" he said, with a florid air, and "hoped James and I had made friends on the way," and then he actually winked! He is a widower, and I was dying for tea, but there we sat, and when the little maid came in, it was to say that a gentleman wanted to see Mr. Warren in the study. So he went out, and then, James being the victim of gratitude, I took my courage in both hands and asked if I might have tea. James said that they usually had it after the lecture was over, which would not be till nine, and that some people had been asked to meet me. Then I knew that I was got among a strange, outlandish race who eat strange meats and keep High Teas, and my spirit fainted within me.

'"Oh, Mr. James!" I said, "if you love me have a cup of tea and some bread-and-butter sent up to my room, and tell the maid to show me the way to it."

'So he sent for her, and she showed me to the best spare room, with oleographs of Highland scenery on the walls, and coloured Landseer prints, and tartan curtains, and everything made of ormolu that can be made of ormolu. In about twenty minutes the girl returned with tea and poached eggs and toast, and jam and marmalade. So I dressed for the lecture, which was to begin at eight — just when people ought to be dining — and came down into the drawing-room. The elder Mr. Warren was sitting alone, reading the *Daily News*, and he rose with an air of happy solemnity and shook hands again.

'"You can let James alone now, Miss Martin," he said, and he winked again, rubbed his hands, and grinned all over his expansive face.

'"Let James alone!" I said.

'"Yes; don't go upsetting the lad — he's not used to young ladies like you. You leave James to himself. James will do very well. I have a little surprise for James."

'He certainly had a considerable surprise for me, but I merely asked if it was James's birthday, which it was not.

'Luckily James entered. All his gloom was gone, thanks to me, and he was remarkably smiling and particularly attentive to myself. Mr. Warren seemed perplexed.

'"James, have you heard any good news?" he asked. "You seem very gay all of a sudden."

'James caught my eye.

'"No, father," he said. "What news do you mean? Anything in business? A large order from Sarawak?"

'Mr. Warren was silent, but presently took me into a corner on the pretence of showing me some horrible *objet d'art* — a treacly bronze.

'"I say," he said, "you must have made great play in the cab coming from the station. James looks a new man. I never would have guessed him to be so fickle. But, mind you, no more of it! Let James be — he will do very well."

'How was James to do very well? Why were my fascinations not to be exercised, as per contract? I began to suspect the worst, and I was thinking of nothing else while we drove to the premises of the Bulcester Literary Society. Could Jane have drowned herself out of the way, or taken smallpox, which might ruin her charms? Well, I had not a large audience, on account of fear of infection, I suppose, and all the people present wore the red badge, like Mr. Warren, only he wore one on each arm. This somewhat amazed me, but as I had never spoken in public before I was rather in a flutter. However, I conquered my girlish shyness, and if the audience was not large it was enthusiastic. When I came to the peroration about wishing them all happy endings and real beginnings of true life, don't you know, the audience actually rose at me, and cheered like anything. Then someone proposed, "Three cheers for young Warren," and they gave them like mad; I did not know why, nor did he: he looked quite pale. Then his father, with tears in his voice, proposed a vote of thanks to me, and said that he and the brave hearts of old Bulcester, his old friends and brothers in arms, were once more united; and the people stormed the platform and shook his hand and slapped him on the back. At last we got out by a back way, where our cab was waiting. Young Mr. Warren was as puzzled as myself, and his father was greatly overcome and sobbing in a corner. We got into the house, where people kept arriving, and at last a fine old clerical-looking bird entered with a red badge on one arm and a very pretty girl in white on the other. She had a red badge too.

‘Young Mr. Warren, who was near me when they came in, gave a queer sort of cry, and then *I* understood! The girl was his Jane, and she *had* been vaccinated, also her father, that afternoon, owing to the awful panic the old man got into after reading the evening papers about the smallpox. The gentleman whom Mr. Warren went to see in the study, just after my arrival, had brought him this gratifying intelligence, and he had sent the gentleman back to ask the Trumans to a High Tea of reconciliation. The people at the lecture had heard of this, and that was why they cheered so for young Warren, because his affair was as commonly known to all Bulcester as that of Romeo and Juliet at Verona. They are hearty people at Bulcester, and not without elements of old English romance.

‘Old Mr. Warren publicly embraced Jane Truman, and then brought her and presented her to me as James’s bride. We both cried a little, I think, and then we all sat down to High Tea, and I am scarcely yet the woman I used to be. It was a height! And a weight! And a length! After tea Mr. Warren made a speech, and said that Bulcester had come back to him, and I was afraid that he would brag dreadfully, but he did not; he was too happy, I think. And then Mr. Truman made a speech and said that though they felt obliged to own that they had come to the conclusion that though Anti-vaccination was a holy thing, still (in the circumstances) vaccination was good enough. But they yet clung to principles for which Hampden died on the field, and Russell on the scaffold, and many of their own citizens in bed! There must be no Coercion. Everyone who liked must be allowed to have smallpox as much as he pleased. All other issues were unimportant except that of freedom!

‘Here I rose — I was rather excited — and said that I hoped the reverend speaker was not deserting the sacred principle of compulsory temperance? Would the speaker allow people freedom to drink? All other issues were unimportant compared with that of freedom, *except* the interest of depriving a poor man of his beer. To catch smallpox was a Briton’s birthright, but not to take a modest quencher. No freedom to drink! “Down with the drink!” I cried, and drained my tea-cup, and waved it, amidst ringing cheers. Mr. Truman admitted that there were exceptions — one exception, at least. Disease must be free to all, not alcohol nor Ritualism. He thanked his young friend the gifted lecturer for recalling him to his principles.

‘The principles of the good old cause, the Puritan cause, were as pure as glycerinated lymph, and he proposed to found a Liberal Vaccinationist League. They are great people for leagues at Bulcester, and they like the initials L. V. L. There was no drinking of toasts, for there was nothing to drink them in, and — do you know, Mr. Merton? — I think it must be nearly luncheon time.'

'Champagne appears to me to be indicated,' said Merton, who rang the bell and then summoned Miss Blossom from her typewriting.

'We have done nothing,' Merton said, 'but heaven only knows what we have escaped in the adventure of the Lady Novelist and the Vaccinationist.'

On taking counsel's opinion, Merton learned, with a shudder, that if young Warren had used the Borgia ring, and if Jane had resented it, he might have been indicted for a common assault, under 24 and 25 Victoria, ca, sec. 24, for 'unlawfully and maliciously administering a noxious thing with intent to annoy.'

'I don't think she could have proved the intent to annoy,' said the learned counsel.

'You don't know a Bulcester jury as it was before the epidemic,' said Merton. 'And I might have been an accessory before the fact, and, anyhow, we should all have got into the newspapers.'

Miss Martin was the most admired of the bridesmaids at the Warren-Truman marriage.

X. ADVENTURE OF THE FAIR AMERICAN

I. The Prize of a Lady's Hand

'Yes, I guess that Pappa *was* reckoned considerable of a crank. A great educational reformer, and a progressive Democratic stalwart, *that* is the kind of hair-pin Pappa was! But it is awkward for me, some.'

These remarks, though of an obsolete and exaggerated transatlantic idiom, were murmured in the softest of tones, in the most English of silken accents, by the most beautiful of young ladies. She occupied the client's chair in Merton's office, and, as she sat there and smiled, Merton acknowledged to himself that he had never met a client so charming and so perplexing.

Miss McCabe had been educated, as Merton knew, at an aristocratic Irish convent in Paris, a sanctuary of old names and old creeds. This was the plan of her late father (spoken of by her as Pappa), an educational reformer of eccentric ideas, who, though of ancient (indeed royal) Irish descent, was of American birth. The young lady had thus acquired abroad, much against her will, that kind of English accent which some of her countrywomen reckon 'affected.' But her intense patriotism had induced her to study, in the works of American humourists, and to reproduce in her discourse, the flowers of speech of which a specimen has been presented. The national accent was beyond her, but at least she could be true to what she (erroneously) believed to be the national idiom.

'Your case is peculiar,' said Merton thoughtfully, 'and scarcely within our province. As a rule our clients are the parents, guardians, or children of persons entangled in undesirable engagements. But you, I understand, are dissatisfied with the matrimonial conditions imposed by the will of the late Mr. McCabe?'

'I want to take my own pick out of the crowd—' said Miss McCabe.

'I can readily understand,' said Merton, bowing, 'that the throng of wooers is enormous,' and he vaguely thought of Penelope.

'The scheme will be popular. It will hit our people right where they live,' said Miss McCabe, not appropriating the compliment. 'You see Pappa struck ile early, and struck it often. He was what our Howells calls a "multimillionaire," and I'm his only daughter. Pappa loved *me*, but he loved the people better. Guess Pappa was not mean, not worth a cent. He was a white man!'

Miss McCabe, with a glow of lovely enthusiasm, contemplated the unprecedented whiteness of the paternal character.

'"What the people want," Pappa used to say, "is education. They want it short, and they want it striking." That was why he laid out five millions on his celebrated Museum of Freaks, with a staff of competent professors and lecturers. “The McCabe Museum of Natural Varieties, lectures and all, is open gratuitously to the citizens of our Republic, and to intelligent foreigners.” That was how Pappa put it. *I* say that he dead-headed creation!’

‘Truly Republican munificence,’ said Merton, ‘worthy of your great country.’

‘Well, I should smile,’ said Miss McCabe.

‘But — excuse my insular ignorance — I do not exactly understand how a museum of freaks, admirably organised as no doubt it is, contributes to the cause of popular education.’

‘You have museums even in London?’ asked Miss McCabe.

Merton assented.

‘Are they not educational?’

‘The British Museum is mainly used by the children of the poor, as a place where they play a kind of subdued hide-and-seek,’ said Merton.

‘That’s because they are not interested in tinned Egyptian corpses and broken Greek statuary ware,’ answered the fair Republican. ‘Now, Mr. Merton, did you ever see or hear of a *popular* museum, a museum that the People would give its cents to see?’

‘I have heard of Mr. Barnum’s museum,’ said Merton.

‘That’s the idea: it is right there,’ said Miss McCabe. ‘But old man Barnum was not scientific. He saw what our people wanted, but he did not see, Pappa said, how to educate them through their natural instincts. Barnum’s mermaid was not genuine business. It confused the popular mind, and fostered superstition — and got found out. The result was scepticism, both religious and scientific. Now, Pappa used to argue, the lives of our citizens are monotonous. They see yellow dogs, say, but each yellow dog has only one tail. They see men and women, but almost all of them have only one head: and even a hand with six fingers is not common. This is why the popular mind runs into grooves. This causes what they call “the dead level of democracy.” Even our men of genius, Pappa allowed (for he was a very fair-minded man), do not go ahead of the European ticket, but rather the reverse. Your Tennyson has the inner tracks of our Longfellow: your Thackeray gives our Bertha Runkle his dust. The papers called Pappa unpatriotic, and a bad American. But he was *not*: he was a white man. When he saw his country’s faults he put his finger on them, right there, and tried to cure them.’

‘A noble policy,’ murmured Merton.

Miss McCabe was really so pretty and unusual, that he did not care how long she was in coming to the point.

‘Well, Pappa argued that there was more genius, or had been since the

Declaration of Independence, even in England, than in the States. “And why?” he asked. “Why, because they have more *variety* in England. Things are not all on one level there—”’

‘Our dogs have only one tail apiece,’ said Merton, ‘in spite of the proverb “*as proud as a dog with two tails*,” and a plurality of heads is unusual even among British subjects.’

‘Yes,’ answered Miss McCabe, ‘but you have varieties among yourselves. You have a King and a Queen; and your peerage is rich in differentiated species. A Baronet is not a Marquis, nor is a Duke an Earl.’

‘He may be both,’ said Merton, but Miss McCabe continued to expose the parental philosophy.

‘Now Pappa would not hear of aristocratic distinctions in our country. He was a Hail Columbia man, on the Democratic ticket. But *something* is wanted, he said, to get us out of grooves, and break the monotony. That something, said Pappa, Nature has mercifully provided in Freaks. The citizens feel this, unconsciously: that’s why they spend their money at Barnum’s. But Barnum was not scientific, and Barnum was not straight about his mermaid. So Pappa founded his Museum of Natural Varieties, all of them honest Injun. Here the lecturers show off the freaks, and explain how Nature works them, and how she can always see them and go one better. We have the biggest gold nugget and the weeniest cunning least gold nugget; the biggest diamond and the smallest diamond; the tallest man and the smallest man; the whitest negro and the yellowest red man in the world. We have the most eccentric beasts, and the queerest fishes, and everything is explained by lecturers of world-wide reputation, on the principles of evolution, as copyrighted by our Asa Gray and our Agassiz. *That* is what Pappa called popular education, and it hits our citizens right where they live.’

Miss McCabe paused, in a flush of filial and patriotic enthusiasm. Merton inwardly thought that among the queerest fishes the late Mr. McCabe must have been pre-eminent. But what he said was, ‘The scheme is most original. Our educationists (to employ a term which they do not disdain), such as Mr. Herbert Spencer, Sir Joshua Fitch, and others, have I thought out nothing like this. Our capitalists never endow education on this more than imperial scale.’

‘Guess they are scaly varmints!’ interposed Miss McCabe.

Merton bowed his acquiescence in the sentiment.

‘But,’ he went on, ‘I still do not quite understand how your own prospects in life are affected by Mr. McCabe’s most original and, I hope, promising experiment?’

‘Pappa loved me, but he loved his country better, and taught me to adore her, and be ready for any sacrifice.’ Miss McCabe looked straight at Merton, like an Iphigenia blended with a Joan of Arc.

‘I do sincerely trust that no sacrifice is necessary,’ said Merton. ‘The circumstances do not call for so — unexampled a victim.’

‘I am to be Lady Principal of the museum when I come to the age of twenty-five: that is, in six years,’ said Miss McCabe proudly. ‘You don’t call *that* a sacrifice?’

Merton wanted to say that the most magnificent of natural varieties would only be in its proper place. But the *man of business* and the manager of a great and beneficent association overcame the mere amateur of beauty, and he only said that the position of Lady Principal was worthy of the ambition of a patriot, and a friend of the species.

‘Well, I reckon! But a clause in Pappa’s will is awkward for me, some. It is about my marriage,’ said Miss McCabe bravely.

Merton assumed an air of grave interest.

‘Pappa left it in his will that I was to marry the man (under the age of five-and-thirty, and of unimpeachable character and education) who should discover, and add to the museum, the most original and unheard-of natural variety, whether found in the Old or the New World.’

Merton could scarcely credit the report of his ears.

‘Would you oblige me by repeating that statement?’ he said, and Miss McCabe repeated it in identical terms, obviously quoting textually from the will.

‘Now I understand your unhappy position,’ said Merton, thoroughly agreeing with the transatlantic critics who had pronounced the late Mr. McCabe ‘considerable of a crank.’ ‘But this is far too serious a matter for me — for our Association. I am no legist, but I am convinced that, at least British, and I doubt not American, law would promptly annul a testatory clause so utterly unreasonable and unprecedented.’

‘Unreasonable!’ exclaimed Miss McCabe, rising to her feet with eyes of flame, ‘I am my father’s daughter, and his wish is my law, whatever the laws that men make may say.’

Her affectation of slang had fallen off; she was absolutely natural now, and entirely in earnest.

Merton rose also.

‘One moment,’ he said. ‘It would be impertinence in me to express my admiration of you — of what you say. As the question is not a legal one (in such I am no fit adviser) I shall think myself honoured if you will permit me to be of any service in the circumstances. They are less unprecedented than I hastily supposed. History records many examples of fathers, even of royal rank, who have attached similar conditions to the disposal of their daughters' hands.'

Merton was thinking of the kings in the treatises of Monsieur Charles Perrault, Madame d'Aulnoy, and other historians of Fairyland; of monarchs who give their daughters to the bold adventurers that bring the smallest dog, or the singing rose, or the horse magical.

'What you really want, I think,' he went on, as Miss McCabe resumed her seat, 'is to have your choice, as you said, among the competitors?'

'Yes,' replied the fair American, 'that is only natural.'

'But then,' said Merton, 'much depends on who decides as to the merits of the competitors. With whom does the decision rest?'

'With the people.'

'With the people?'

'Yes, with the popular vote, as expressed through the newspaper that my father founded — *The Yellow Flag*. The public is to see the exhibits, the new varieties of nature, and the majority of votes is to carry the day. "Trust the people!" that was Pappa's word.'

'Then anyone who chooses, of the age, character, and education stipulated under the clause in the will, may go and bring in whatever variety of nature he pleases and take his chance?'

'That is it all the time,' said the client. 'There is a trust, and the trustees, friends of Pappa's, decide on the qualifications of the young men who enter for the competition. If the trustees are satisfied they allot money for expenses out of the exploration fund, so that nobody may be stopped because he is poor.'

'There will be an enormous throng of competitors in these conditions — and with such a prize,' Merton could not help adding.

'I reckon the trustees are middling particular. They'll weed them out.'

'Is there any restriction on the nationality of the competitors?' asked Merton, on whom an idea was dawning.

'Only members of the English speaking races need apply,' said Miss McCabe. 'Pappa took no stock in Spaniards or Turks.'

'The voters will be prejudiced in favour of their own fellow citizens?' asked Merton. 'That is only natural.'

'Trust the people,' said Miss McCabe. 'The whole thing is to be kept as dark as a blind coloured person hunting in a dark cellar for a black cat that is not there.'

'A truly Miltonic illustration,' said Merton.

'The advertisement for competitors will be carefully worded, so as to attract only young men of science. The young men are not to be told about *me*: the prize is in dollars, "with other advantages to be later specified." The varieties found are to be conveyed to a port abroad, not yet named, and shipped for New York in a steamer belonging to the McCabe Trust.'

'Then am I to understand that the conditions affecting your marriage are still an entire secret?'

'That is so,' said Miss McCabe, 'and I guess from what the marchioness told me, your reference, that you can keep a secret.'

'To keep secrets is the very essential of my vocation,' said Merton.

But *this* secret, as will be seen, he did not absolutely keep.

'The arrangements,' he added, 'are most judicious.'

'Guess Pappa was 'cute,' said Miss McCabe, relapsing into her adopted mannerisms.

'I think I now understand the case in all its bearings,' Merton went on. 'I shall give it my serious consideration. Perhaps I had better say no more at present, but think over the matter. You remain in town for the season?'

'Guess we've staked out a claim in Berkeley Square,' said Miss McCabe, 'an agreeable location.' She mentioned the number of the house.

'Then we are likely to meet now and then,' said Merton, 'and I trust that I may be permitted to wait on you occasionally.'

Miss McCabe graciously assented; her chaperon, Lady Rathcoffey, was summoned by her from the inner chamber and the society of Miss Blossom, the typewriter; the pair drove away, and Merton was left to his own reflections.

'I do not know what can be done for her,' he thought, 'except to see that there is at least one eligible man, a gentleman, among the crowd of competitors, and that he is a likely man to win the beautiful prize. And that man is Bude, by Jove, if he wants to win it.'

The Earl of Bude, whose name at once occurred to Merton, was a remarkable personage. The world knew him as rich, handsome, happy, and a mighty hunter of big game. They knew not the mysterious grief that for years had gnawed at his heart. Why did not Bude marry? No woman could say. The world, moreover, knew not, but Merton did, that Lord Bude was the mysterious Mr. Jones Harvey, who contributed the most original papers to the Proceedings of the Geographical and Zoological Societies, and who had conferred many strange beasts on the Gardens of the latter learned institution. The erudite papers were read, the eccentric animals were conferred, in the name of Mr. Jones Harvey. They came from outlandish addresses in the ends of the earth, but, in the flesh, Jones Harvey had been seen by no man, and his secret had been confided to Merton only, to Logan, and two other school friends. He did good to science by stealth, and blushed at the idea of being a F.R.S. There was no show of science about Bude, and nothing exotic, except the singular circumstance that, however he happened to be dressed, he always wore a ring, or pin, or sleeve links set with very ugly and muddy looking pearls. From these ornaments Lord Bude was inseparable; to chaff about presents from dusky princesses on undiscovered shores he was impervious. Even Merton did not know the cause of his attachment to these ungainly jewels, or the dark memory of mysterious loss with which they were associated.

Merton's first care was to visit the divine Althæa, Mrs. Brown-Smith, and other ladies of his acquaintance. Their cards were deposited at the claim staked out by Miss McCabe in Berkeley Square, and that young lady soon 'went everywhere,' and publicly confessed that she 'was having a real lovely time.' By a little diplomacy Lord Bude was brought acquainted with Miss McCabe. She consented to overlook his possession of a coronet; titles were, to this heroine, not marvels (as to some of her countrywomen and ours), but rather matters of indifference, scarcely even suggesting hostile prejudice. The observers in society, mothers and maids, and the chroniclers of fashion, soon perceived that there was at least a marked *camaraderie* between *the elegant aristocrat*, hitherto indifferent to woman, untouched, as was deemed, by love, and the lovely Child of Freedom. Miss McCabe sat by him while he drove his coach; on the roof of his drag at Lord's; and of his houseboat at Henley, where she fainted when the crew of Johns Hopkins University, U. S., was defeated by a length by Balliol (where Lord Bude had been the favourite pupil of the great Master). Merton remarked these tokens of friendship with approval. If Bude could be induced to enter for the great competition, and if he proved successful, there seemed no reason to suppose that Miss McCabe would be dissatisfied with the People's choice.

Towards the end of the season, and in Bude's smoking-room, about five in the July morning after a ball at Eglintoun House, Merton opened his approaches. He began, cautiously, from talk of moors and forests; he touched on lochs, he mentioned the Highland traditions of water bulls (which haunt these meres); he spoke of the *Beathach mòr Loch Odha*, a legendary animal of immeasurable length. The *Beathach* has twelve feet; he has often been heard crashing through the ice in the nights of winter. These tales the narrator has gleaned from the lips of the Celtic peasantry of Letter Awe.

'I daresay he does break the ice,' said Bude. 'In the matter of cryptic survivals of extinct species I can believe a good deal.'

'The sea serpent?' asked Merton.

'Seen him thrice,' said Bude.

'Then why did not Jones Harvey weigh in with a letter to *Nature*?'

'Jones Harvey has a scientific reputation to look after, and knows he would be laughed at. That's the kind of hair-pin *he* is,' said Bude, quoting Miss McCabe. 'By Jove, Merton, that girl—' and he paused.

'Yes, she is pretty,' said Merton.

'Pretty! I have seen the women of the round world — before I went to — well, never mind where, I used to think the Poles the most magnificent, but *she* —'

'Whips creation,' said Merton. 'But I,' he went on, 'am rather more interested in these other extraordinary animals. Do you seriously believe, with your experience, that some extinct species are — not extinct?'

'To be sure I do. The world is wide. But they are very shy. I once stalked a Bunyip, in Central Australia, in a lagoon. The natives said he was there: I watched for a week, squatting in the reeds, and in the grey of the seventh dawn I saw him.'

'Did you shoot?'

'No, I observed him through a field glass first.'

'What is the beggar like?'

'Much like some of the Highland water cattle, as described, but it is his ears they take for horns. Australia has no indigenous horned animal. He is, I should say, about nine feet long, marsupial (he rose breast high), and web-footed. I saw that when he dived. Other white men have seen him — Buckley, the convict, for one, when he lived among the blacks.'

'Buckley was not an accurate observer.'

'Jones Harvey is.'

'Any other queer beasts?'

'Of course, plenty. You have heard of the Mylodon, the gigantic Sloth? His bones, skin, and hair were lately found in a cave in Patagonia, with a lot of his fodder. You can see them at the British Museum in South Kensington. Primitive Patagonian man used the female of the species as a milch-cow. He was a genial friendly kind of brute, accessible to charm of manner and chopped hay. They fed him on that, in a domesticated state.'

'But he is extinct. Hesketh Pritchard went to look for a live Mylodon, and did not find him.'

'Did not know where to look,' said Bude.

'But you do?' asked Merton.

'Yes, I think so.'

'Then why don't you bring one over to the Zoo?'

'I may some day.'

'Are there any more survivors of extinct species?'

'Merton, is this an interview? Are you doing Mr. Jones Harvey at home for a picture paper?’

‘No, I’ve dropped the Press,’ said Merton, ‘I ask in a spirit of scientific curiosity.’

‘Well, there is the Dinornis, the Moa of New Zealand. A bird as big as the Roc in the “Arabian Nights.”’

‘Have you seen *him*?’

‘No, but I have seen *her*, the hen bird. She was sitting on eggs. No man knows her nest but myself, and old Te-iki-pa, the chief medicine-man, or Tohunga, of the Maori King. The Moa’s eyrie is in the King’s country. It is a difficult country, and a dangerous business, if the cock Moa chances to come home.’

‘Bude, is this worthy of an old friend, this *blague*?’

‘Do you doubt my word?’

‘If you give me your word I must believe — that you dreamed it.’

Then a strange thing happened.

Bude walked to a small case of instruments that stood on a table in the smoking-room. He unlocked it, took out a lancet, brought a Rhodian bowl from a shelf, and bared his arm.

‘Do you want proof?’

‘Proof that you saw a hen Moa sitting?’ asked Merton in amazement.

‘Not exactly, but proof that Te-iki-pa knew a thing or two, quite as out of the way as the habitat of the Moa.’

‘What do you want me to do?’

‘Bare your arm, and hold it over the bowl.’

The room was full of the yellow dusky light of an early summer morning in London. Outside the heavy carts were rolling by: in full civilisation the scene was strange.

‘The Blood Covenant?’ asked Merton.

Bude nodded.

Merton turned up his cuff, Bude let a little blood drop into the bowl, then performed the same operation on his own arm.

‘This is all rot,’ he said, ‘but without this I cannot show you, by virtue of my oath to Te-iki-pa, what I mean to show you. Now repeat after me what I am going to say.’

He spoke a string of words, among which Merton, as he repeated them, could only recognise *mana* and *atua*. The vowel sounds were as in Italian.

‘Now these words you must never report to any one, without my permission.’

‘Not likely,’ said Merton, ‘I only remember two of them, and these I knew before.’

‘All right,’ said Bude.

He then veiled his face in a piece of silk that lay on a sofa, and rapidly, in a low voice, chanted a kind of hymn in a tongue unknown to Merton. All this he did with a bored air, as if he thought the performance a superfluous mummery.

‘Now what shall I show you? Something simple. Look at the bookcase, and think of any book you may want to consult.’

Merton thought of the volume in M. of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The volume slowly slid from the shelf, glided through the air to Merton, and gently subsided on the table near him, open at the word *Moa*.

Merton walked across to the bookcase, took all the volumes from the shelf, and carefully examined the backs and sides for springs and mechanical advantages. There were none.

‘Not half bad!’ he said, when he had completed his investigation.

‘You are satisfied that Te-iki-pa knew something? If you had seen what I have seen, if you had seen the three days dead—’ and Bude shivered slightly.

‘I have seen enough. Do you know how it is done?’

‘No.’

‘Well, a miracle is not what you call logical proof, but I believe that you did see the Moa, and a still more extraordinary bird, Te-iki-pa.’

‘Yes, they talk of strange beasts, but “nothing is stranger than man.” Did you ever hear of the Berbalangs of Cagayan Sulu?’

‘Never in my life,’ said Merton.

‘Heaven preserve me from *them,*’ said Bude, and he gently stroked the strange muddy pearls in the sleeve-links on his loose shirt-cuff. ‘Angels and ministers of grace defend us,’ he exclaimed, crossing himself (he was of the old faith), and he fell silent.

It was a moment of emotion. Six silvery strokes were sounded from a little clock on the chimney-piece. The hour of confidences had struck.

‘Bude, you are serious about Miss McCabe?’ asked Merton.

‘I mean to put it to the touch at Goodwood.’

‘No use!’ said Merton.

Bude changed colour.

‘Are *you*?’

‘No,’ interrupted Merton. ‘But she is not free.’

‘There is somebody in America? Nobody here, I think.’

‘It is hardly that,’ said Merton. ‘Can you listen to rather a long story? I’ll cut it as much as possible. You must remember that I am practically breaking my word of honour in telling you this. My honour is in your hands.’

‘Fire away,’ said Bude, pouring a bottle of Apollinaris water into a long tumbler, and drinking deep.

Merton told the tale of Miss McCabe’s extraordinary involvement, and of the wild conditions on which her hand was to be won. ‘And as to her heart, I think,’ he added, ‘if you pull off the prize —

If my heart by signs can tell,
Lordling, I have marked her daily,
And I think she loves thee well.’

‘Thank you for that, old cock,’ replied the peer, shaking Merton’s hand. He had recovered from his emotion.

‘I’m on,’ he added, after a moment’s silence, ‘but I shall enter as Jones Harvey.’

‘His name and his celebrated papers will impress the trustees,’ said Merton. ‘Now what variety of nature shall you go for? Wild *men* count. Shall you fetch a Berbalang of what do you call it?’

Bude shuddered. ‘Not much,’ he said. ‘I think I shall fetch a Moa.’

‘But no steamer could hold that gigantic denizen of the forests.’

‘You leave that to Jones Harvey. Jones is ‘cute, some,’ he said, reminiscent of the adored one, and he fell into a lover’s reverie.

He was aroused by Merton’s departure: he finished the Apollinaris water, took a bath, and went to bed.

II. The Adventure of the Muddy Pearls

The Earl of Bude had meant to lay his heart, coronet, and other possessions, real and personal, before the tiny feet of the fair American at Goodwood. But when he learned from Merton the involvements of this heiress and paragon, that her hand depended on the choice of the people, that the choice of the people was to settle on the adventurer who brought to New York the rarest of nature's varieties, the earl honourably held his peace. Yet he and the object of his love were constantly meeting, on the yachts and in the country houses of their friends, the aristocracy, and, finally, at shooting lodges in the Highlands. Their position, as the Latin Delectus says concerning the passion of love in general, was 'a strange thing, and full of anxious fears.' Bude could not declare himself, and Miss McCabe, not knowing that he knew her situation, was constantly wondering why he did not speak. Between fear of letting her secret show itself in a glance or a blush and hope of listening to the words which she desired to hear, even though she could not answer them as her heart prompted, she was unhappy. Bude could not resist the temptation to be with her — indeed he argued to himself that, as her suitor and an adventurer about to risk himself in her cause, he had a right to be near her. Meanwhile Merton was the confidant of both of the perplexed lovers; at least Miss McCabe (who, of course, told him nothing about Bude) kept him apprised as to the conduct of her trustees.

They had acted with honourable caution and circumspection. Their advertisements guardedly appealed to men of daring and of scientific distinction under the age of thirty-five. A professorship might have been in view for all that the world could see, if the world read the advertisements. Perhaps it was something connected with the manufacture of original explosives, for daring is not usually required in the learned. The testimonials and printed works of applicants were jealously scrutinised. At personal interviews with competitors similar caution was observed. During three weeks in August the papers announced that Lord Bude was visiting the States; arrangements about a yachting match in the future were his pretence. He returned, he came to Scotland, and it was in a woodland path beside the Lochy that his resolution failed, and that he spoke to Miss McCabe. They were walking home together from the river in the melancholy and beautiful close of a Highland day in September. Behind them the gillies, at a respectful distance, were carrying the rods and the fish. The wet woods were fragrant, the voice of the stream was deepening, strange lights came and went on moor and hills and the distant loch. It was then that Bude opened his heart. He first candidly explained that his heart, he had supposed, was dead — buried on a distant and a deadly shore.

'I reckon there's a lost Lenore most times,' Miss McCabe had replied to this confession.

But, though never to be forgotten, the memory of the lost one, Bude averred, was now merged in the light of a living love; his heart was no longer tenanted only by a shadow.

The heart of Miss McCabe stood still for a moment, her cheek paled, but the gallant girl was true to herself, to her father's wish, to her native land, to the flag. She understood her adorer.

'Guess *I*'m bespoke,' said Miss McCabe abruptly.

'You are another's! Oh, despair!' exclaimed the impassioned earl.

'Yes, I reckon I'm the Bride of Seven, like the girl in the poem.'

'The Bride of Seven?' said Bude.

'One out of *that* crowd will call me his,' said Miss McCabe, handing to her adorer the list, which she had received by mail a day or two earlier, of the accepted competitors. He glanced over the names.

1. Dr. Hiram P. Dodge, of the Smithsonian Institute.
2. Alfred Jenkins, F.R.S., All Souls College, Oxford.
3. Dr. James Rustler, Columbia University.
4. Howard Fry, M.A., Ph.D., Trinity College, Cambridge.
5. Professor Potter, F.R.S., University of St. Andrews.
6. Professor Wilkinson, University of Harvard.
7. Jones Harvey, F.G.S., London, England.

'In Heaven's name,' asked the earl, 'what means this mystification? Miss McCabe, Melissa, do not trifle with me. Is this part of the great American Joke? You are playing it pretty low down on me, Melissa!' he ended, the phrase being one of those with which she had made him familiar.

She laughed hysterically: 'It's honest Injun,' she said, and in the briefest terms she told him (what he knew very well) the conditions on which her future depended.

'They are a respectable crowd, I don't deny it,' she went on, 'but, oh, how dull! That Mr. Jenkins, I saw him at your Commemoration. He gave us luncheon, and showed us dry old bones of beasts and savage notions at the Museum. I *druther* have been on the creek,' by which name she intended the classical river Isis.

'Dr. Hiram P. Dodge is one of our rising scientists, a boss of the Smithsonian Institute. Well, Washington is a finer location than Oxford! Dr. Rustler is a crank; he thinks he can find a tall talk mummy that speaks an unknown tongue.'

'A Toltec mummy? Ah,' said Bude, 'I know where to find one of *them*.'

'Find it then, Alured!' exclaimed Miss McCabe, blushing scarlet and turning aside. 'But you are not on the list. You are an idler, and not scientific, not worth a red cent. There, I've given myself away!' She wept.

They were alone, beneath the walls of a crumbling fortalice of Lochiel. The new risen moon saw Bude embrace her and dry her tears. A nameless blissful hope awakened in the fair American; help there *must* be, she thought, with these strong arms around her.

She rapidly disposed of the remaining names: of Howard Fry, who had a red beard; of Professor Potter of St. Andrews, whose accent was Caledonian; of Wilkinson, an ardent but unalluring scientist. 'As for Jones Harvey,' she said, 'I've canvassed everywhere, and I can't find anybody that ever saw him. I am more afraid of him than of all the other galoots; I don't know why.'

'He is reckoned very learned,' said Bude, 'and has not been thought ill-looking.'

'Do tell!' said Miss McCabe.

'Oh, Melissa, can you even *dream* of another in an hour like this?'

'Did you ever see Jones Harvey?'

'Yes, I have met him.'

'Do you know him well?'

'No man knows him better.'

'Can't you get him to stand out, and, Alured, can't you — fetch along that old tall talk mummy? He would hit our people, being American himself.'

'It is impossible. Jones Harvey will never stand out,' and Bude smiled.

By the telepathy of the affections Miss McCabe was slowly informed, especially as Bude's smile widened almost unbecomingly, while he gazed into the deeps of her golden eyes.

'Alured,' she exclaimed, '*that's* why you went to the States. *You* — are — Jones Harvey!'

'Secret for secret,' whispered the earl. 'We have both given ourselves away. Unknown to the world I *am* Jones Harvey; to live for you: to love you: to dare; if need be, to die for you.'

'Well, you surprise me!' said Miss McCabe.

*

The narrator is unwilling to dilate on the delights of a privileged affection. In this love affair neither of the lovers could feel absolutely certain that their affection *was* privileged. The fair American had her own secret scheme if her hopes were blighted. She *could* not then obey the paternal will: she would retire into the life religious, and, as Sister Anna, would strive to forget the sorrows of Melissa McCabe. Bude had his own hours of gloom.

‘It is a six-to-one chance,’ he said to Merton when they met.

‘Better than that, I think,’ said Merton. ‘First, you know exactly what you are entered for. Do the others? When you saw the trustees in the States, did they tell you about the prize?’

‘Not they. They spoke of a pecuniary reward which would be eminently satisfactory, and of the opportunity for research and distinction, and all expenses found. I said that I preferred to pay my own way, which surprised and pleased them a good deal.’

‘Well, then, knowing the facts, and the lady, you have a far stronger motive than the other six.’

‘That’s true,’ said Bude.

‘Again, though the others are good men (not that I like Jenkins of All Souls), none of them has your experience and knowledge. Jones Harvey’s testimonials would carry it if it were a question of election to a professorship.’

‘You flatter me,’ answered Bude.

‘*Lastly, did the trustees ask you if you were a married man*?’

‘No, by Jove, they didn’t.’

‘Well, nothing about the competitors being unmarried men occurs in the clause of McCabe’s last will and testament. He took it for granted, the prize being what it is, that only bachelors were eligible. But he forgot to say so, in so many words, and the trustees did not go beyond the deed. Now, Dodge is married; Fry of Trinity is a married don; Rustler (I happen to know) is an engaged man, who can’t afford to marry a charming girl in Detroit, Michigan; and Professor Potter has buried one wife, and wedded another. If Rustler is loyal to his plighted word, you have nobody against you but Wilkinson and old Jenkins of All Souls — a tough customer, I admit, though what a Stinks man like him has to do at All Souls I don’t know.’

‘I say, this is hard on the other sportsmen! What ought I to do? Should I tell them?’

‘You can’t: you have no official knowledge of their existence. You only know through Miss McCabe. You have just to sit tight.’

‘It seems beastly unsportsmanlike,’ said Bude.

‘Wills are often most carelessly drafted,’ answered Merton, ‘and the usual consequences follow.’

‘It is not cricket,’ said Bude, and really he seemed much more depressed than elated by the reduction of the odds against him from 6 to 1 to 2 to 1.

This is the magnificent type of character produced by our British system of athletic sports, though it is not to be doubted that the spirit of Science, in the American gentlemen, would have been equally productive of the sense of fair play.

A year, by the terms of McCabe's will, was allotted to the quest. Candidates were to keep the trustees informed as to their whereabouts. Six weeks before the end of the period the competitors would be instructed as to the port of rendezvous, where an ocean liner, chartered by the trustees, was to await them. Bude, as Jones Harvey, had obtained leave to sail his own steam yacht of 800 tons.

The earl's preparations were simple. He carried his usual stock of scientific implements, his usual armament, including two Maxim guns, and a package of considerable size and weight, which was stored in the hold. As to the preparations of the others he knew nothing, but Miss McCabe became aware that Rustler had not left the American continent. Concerning Jenkins, and the probable aim of his enterprise, the object of his quest, she gleaned information from a junior Fellow of All Souls, who was her slave, was indiscreet, and did not know how deeply concerned she was in the expeditions. But she never whispered a word of what she knew to her lover, not even in the hour of parting.

It was in an unnamed creek of the New Zealand coast, six weeks before the end of the appointed year, that Bude received a telegram in cipher from the trustees. Bearded, and in blue spectacles, clad rudely as a mariner, Bude was to all, except Logan, who had accompanied him, plain Jones Harvey. None could have recognised in his rugged aspect the elegant aristocrat of Mayfair.

Bude took the message from the hands of the Maori bearer. As he deciphered it his fingers trembled with eagerness. 'Oh, Heaven! Here is the Hand of Destiny!' he exclaimed, when he had read the message; and with pallid face he dropped into a deck-chair.

'No bad news?' asked Logan with anxiety.

'The port of rendezvous,' said Bude, much agitated. 'Come down to my cabin.'

Entering the sumptuous cabin, Bude opened the locked door of a state-room, and uttered some words in an unknown tongue. A tall and very ancient Maori, tatooed with the native 'Moka' on every inch of his body, emerged. The snows of some eighty winters covered his broad breast and majestic head. His eyes were full of the secrets of primitive races. For clothing he wore two navy revolvers stuck in a waist-cloth.

‘Te-iki-pa,’ said Bude, in the Maori language, ‘watch by the door, we must have no listeners, and your ears are keen as those of the youngest Rangatira’ (warrior).

The august savage nodded, and, lying down on the floor, applied his ear to the chink at its foot.

‘The port of tryst,’ whispered Bude to Logan, as they seated themselves at the remotest extremity of the cabin, ‘is in Cagayan Sulu.’

‘And where may that be?’ asked Logan, lighting a cigarette.

‘It is a small volcanic island, the most southerly of the Philippines.’

‘American territory now,’ said Logan. ‘But what about it? If it was anybody but you, Bude, I should say he was in a funk.’

‘I *am* in a funk,’ answered Bude simply.

‘Why?’

‘I have been there before and left — a blood-feud.’

‘What of it? We have one here, with the Maori King, about you know what. Have we not the Maxims, and any quantity of Lee-Metfords? Besides, you need not go ashore at Cagayan Sulu.’

‘But they can come aboard. Bullets won’t stop *them*.’

‘Stop whom? The natives?’

‘The Berbalangs: you might as well try to stop mosquitoes with Maxims.’

‘Who are the Berbalangs then?’

Bude paced the cabin in haggard anxiety. ‘Least said, soonest mended,’ he muttered.

‘Well, I don’t want your confidence,’ said Logan, hurt.

‘My dear fellow,’ said Bude affectionately, ‘you are likely to know soon enough. In the meantime, please accept this.’

He opened a strong box, which appeared to contain jewellery, and offered Logan a ring. Between two diamonds of the finest water it contained a bizarre muddy coloured pearl. ‘Never let that leave your finger,’ said Bude. ‘Your life may hang on it.’

‘It is a pretty talisman,’ said Logan, placing the jewel on the little finger of his right hand. ‘A token of some friendly chief, I suppose, at Cagayan — what do you call it?’

‘Let us put it at that,’ answered Bude; ‘I must take other precautions.’

It seemed to Logan that these consisted in making similar presents to the officers and crew, all of whom were Englishmen. Te-iki-pa displaced his nose-ring and inserted his pearl in the orifice previously occupied by that ornament. A little chain of the pearls was hung on the padlock of the huge packing-case, which was the special care of Te-iki-pa.

'Luckily I had the yacht's painting altered before leaving England,' said Bude. 'I'll sail her under Spanish colours, and perhaps they won't spot her. Any way, with the pearls — lucky I bought a lot — we ought to be safe enough. But if any one of the competitors has gone for specimens of the Berbalangs, I fear, I sadly fear, the consequences.' His face clouded; he fell into a reverie.

Logan made no reply, but puffed rings of cigarette smoke into the still blue air. There was method in Bude's apparent madness, but Logan suspected that there was madness in his method.

A certain coolness had not ceased to exist between the friends when, after their long voyage, they sighted the volcanic craters of the lonely isle of Cagayan Sulu and beheld the Stars and Stripes waving from the masthead of the *George Washington* (Captain Noah P. Funkal).

Logan landed, and noted the harmless but well-armed half-Mahometan natives of the village. He saw the other competitors, whose 'exhibits,' as Miss McCabe called them, were securely stored in the *George Washington* — strange spoils of far-off mysterious forests, and unplumbed waters of the remotest isles. Occasionally a barbaric yap, or a weird yell or hoot, was wafted on the air at feeding time. Jenkins of All Souls (whom he knew a little) Logan did not meet on the beach; he, like Bude, tarried aboard ship. The other adventurers were civil but remote, and there was a jealous air of suspicion on every face save that of Professor Potter. He, during the day of waiting on the island, played golf with Logan over links which he had hastily improvised. Beyond admitting, as they played, that *his* treasure was in a tank, 'and as well as could be expected, poor brute, but awful noisy,' Professor Potter offered no information.

'Our find is quiet enough,' said Logan.

'Does he give you trouble about food?' asked Mr. Potter.

'Takes nothing,' said Logan, adding, as he holed out, 'that makes me dormy two.'

From the rest of the competitors not even this amount of information could be extracted, and as for Captain Noah Funkal, he was taciturn, authoritative, and, Logan thought, not in a very good temper.

The *George Washington* and the *Pendragon* (so Jones Harvey had christened the yacht which under Bude's colours sailed as *The Sabrina*) weighed anchor simultaneously. If possible they were not to lose sight of each other, and they corresponded by signals and through the megalophone.

The hours of daylight on the first day of the return voyage passed peacefully at deck-cricket, as far as Logan, Bude, and such of the officers and men as could be spared were concerned. At last night came 'at one stride,' and the vast ocean plain was only illuminated by the pale claritude that falls from the stars. Logan and Bude (they had not dressed for dinner, but wore yachting suits) were smoking on deck, when, quite suddenly, a loud, almost musical, roar or hum was heard from the direction of the distant island.

‘What’s that?’ asked Logan, leaping up and looking towards Cagayan Sulu.

‘The Berbalangs,’ said Bude coolly. ‘You are wearing the ring I gave you?’

‘Yes, always do,’ said Logan, looking at his hand.

‘All the men have their pearls; I saw to that,’ said Bude.

‘Why, the noise is dwindling,’ said Logan. ‘That is odd; it seemed to be coming this way.’

‘So it is,’ said Bude; ‘the nearer they approach the less you hear them. When they have come on board you won’t hear them at all.’

Logan stared, but asked no more questions.

The musical boom as it approached had died to a whisper, and then had fallen into perfect silence. At the very moment when the mysterious sound ceased, a swarm of things like red fire-flies, a host of floating specks of ruby light, invaded the deck in a cluster. The red points then scattered, approached each man on board, and paused when within a yard of his head or breast. Then they vanished. A queer kind of chill ran down Logan’s spine; then the faint whispered musical moan tingled in each man’s ears, and the sounds as they departed eastwards gathered volume and force till, in a moment, there fell perfect stillness.

Stillness, broken only by a sudden and mysterious chorus of animal cries from the *George Washington*. A kind of wail, high, shrieking, strenuous, ending in a noise as of air escaping from a pipe; a torrent of barks such as no known beast could utter, subsiding into moans that chilled the blood; a guttural scream, broken by heavy sounds as if of water lapping on a rock at uncertain intervals; a human cry, human words, with unfamiliar vowel sounds, soon slipping into quiet — these were among the horrors that assailed the ears of the voyagers in the *Pendragon*. Such a discord of laments has not tingled to the indifferent stars since the ice-wave swept into their last retreats, and crushed among the rocks that bear their fossil forms, the fauna of the preglacial period, the Ichthyosaurus, the Brontosaurus, the Guyas Cutis (or Ring-tailed Roarer), the Mastodon, and the Mammoth.

‘What a row in the menagerie!’ said Logan.

He was not answered.

Bude had fallen into a deck-chair, his face buried in his hands, his arms rocking convulsively.

‘I say, old cock, pull yourself together,’ said Logan, and rushing down the companion stairs, he reappeared with a bottle of champagne. To extract the cork (how familiar, how reassuring, sounded the *cloop*!), and to pour the foaming beverage into two long tumblers, was, to the active Logan, the work of a moment. Shaking Bude, he offered him the beaker; the earl drained it at a draught. He shuddered, but rose to his feet.

‘Not a man alive on that doomed vessel,’ he was saying, when anew the still air was rent by the raucous notes of a megalophone:

‘Is *your* exhibit all right?’

‘Fit as a fiddle,’ answered Logan through a similar instrument.

‘Our exhibits are gone bust,’ answered Captain Noah Funkal. ‘Our professors are in fits. Our darkeys are all dead. Can your skipper come aboard?’

‘Just launching a boat,’ cried Logan.

Bude gave the necessary orders. His captain stepped up to him and saluted.

‘Do you know what these red fire-flies were that come aboard, sir?’ he asked.

‘Fire-flies? Oh, *musæ volitantes sonoræ*, a common phenomenon in these latitudes,’ answered Bude.

Logan rejoiced to see that the earl was himself again.

‘The other gentlemen’s scientific beasts don’t seem to like them, sir?’

‘So Captain Funkal seems to imply,’ said Bude, and, taking the ropes, with Logan beside him, while the *Pendragon* lay to, he steered the boat towards the *George Washington*.

The captain welcomed them on deck in a scene of unusual character. He himself had a revolver in one hand, and a belaying pin in the other; he had been quelling, by the tranquillising methods of Captain Kettle, a mutiny caused by the terror of the crew. The sailors had attempted to leap overboard in the alarm caused by the invasion of the Berbalangs.

‘You will excuse my friend and myself for not being in evening dress, during a visit at this hour,’ said Bude in the silkiest of tones.

‘Glad to see you shipshape, gentlemen,’ answered the American mariner. ‘My dudes of professors were prancing round in Tuxedos and Prince Alberts when the darned fire-flies came aboard.’

Bude bowed. Study of Miss McCabe had taught him that Tuxedos and Prince Alberts mean evening dress and frock-coats.

‘Did *your* men have fits?’ asked the captain.

‘My captain, Captain Hardy, made a scientific inquiry about the — insects,’ said Bude. ‘The crew showed no emotion.’

‘I guess our fire-bugs were more on business than yours,’ said Captain Funkal; ‘they’ve wrecked the exhibits, and killed the darkeys with fright: except two, and *they* were exhibits themselves. Will you honour me by stepping into my cabin, gentlemen. I am glad to see sane white men to-night.’

Bude and Logan followed him through a scene of melancholy interest. Beside the mast, within a shattered palisade, lay huddled the vast corpse of the Mylodon of Patagonia, couchant amidst his fodder of chopped hay. The expression of the huge animal was placid and urbane in death. He was the victim of the ceaseless curiosity of science. Two of the five-horned antelope giraffes of Central Africa lay in a confused heap of horns and hoofs. Beside an immense tank couched a figure in evening dress, swearing in a subdued tone. Logan recognised Professor Potter. He gently laid his hand on the Professor’s shoulder. The Scottish savant looked up:

‘It is a dommed mismanaged affair,’ he said. ‘I could have brought the poor beast safe enough from the Clyde to New York, but the Americans made me harl him round by yon island of camstairy deevils,’ and he shook his fist in the direction of Cagayan Sulu.

‘What had you got?’ asked Logan.

‘The *Beathach na Loch na bheiste*,’ said Potter. ‘I drained the Loch to get him. Fortunately,’ he added, ‘it was at the expense of the Trust.’

After a few words of commonplace but heartfelt condolence, Logan descended the companion, and followed Bude and Captain Funkal into the cabin of that officer. The captain placed refreshments on the table.

‘Now, gentlemen,’ he said, ‘you have seen the least riled of my professors, and you can guess what the rest are like. Professor Rustler is weeping in his cabin over a shrivelled old mummy. “Never will he speak again,” says he, and I am bound to say that I *hev* heard the critter discourse once. The mummy let some awful yells out of him when the fire-bugs came aboard.’

‘Yes, we heard a human cry,’ said Bude.

‘I had thought the talk was managed with a concealed gramophone,’ said the captain, ‘but it wasn’t. The Bunyip from Central Australia has gone to his long home. That was Professor Wilkinson’s pet. There is nothing left alive out of the lot but the natives that Professor Jenkins of England brought in irons from Cagayan Sulu. I reckon them two niggers are somehow at the bottom of the whole ruction.’

‘Indeed, and why?’ asked Bude.

‘Why, sir — I am addressing Professor Jones Harvey?’

Bude bowed. ‘Harvey, captain, but not professor — simple amateur seaman and explorer.’

‘Sir, your hand,’ said the captain. ‘Your friend is not a professor?’

‘Not I,’ said Logan, smiling.

The captain solemnly shook hands. ‘Gentlemen, you have sand,’ he said, a supreme tribute of respect. ‘Well, about these two natives. I never liked taking them aboard. They are, in consequence of the triumph of our arms, American subjects, natives of the conquered Philippines. I am no lawyer, and they may be citizens, they may have votes. They are entitled, anyway, to the protection of the Flag, and I would have entered them as steerage passengers. But that Professor Jenkins (and the other professors agreed) would have it that they came under the head of scientific exhibits. And they did allow that the critters were highly dangerous. I guess they were right.’

‘Why, what could they do?’

‘Well, gentlemen, I heard stories on shore that I took no stock in. I am not a superstitious man, but they allowed that these darkeys are not of a common tribe, but what the papers call “highly developed mediums.” And I guess they are at the bottom of the stramash.’

‘Captain Funkal, may I be frank with you?’ asked Bude.

‘I am hearing you,’ said the captain.

‘Then, to put it shortly, I have been at Cagayan Sulu before, on an exploring cruise. That was in 1897. I never wanted to go back to it. Logan, did I not regret the choice of that port when the news reached us in New Zealand?’

Logan nodded. ‘You funked it,’ he said.

‘When I was at Cagayan Sulu in 1897 I heard from the natives of a singular tribe in the centre of the island. This tribe is the Berbalangs.’

‘That’s what Professor Jenkins called them,’ said the captain.

‘The Berbalangs are subject to neither of the chiefs in the island. No native will approach their village. They are cannibals. The story is that they can throw themselves into a kind of trance. They then project a something or other — spirit, astral body, influence of some kind — which flies forth, making a loud noise when distant.’

‘That’s what we heard,’ said the captain.

‘But is silent when they are close at hand.’

‘Silent they were,’ said the captain.

‘They then appear as points of red flame.’

‘That’s so,’ interrupted the captain.

‘And cause death to man and beast, apparently by terror. I have seen,’ said Bude, shuddering, ‘the face of a dead native of high respectability, into whose house, before my own eyes, these points of flame had entered. I had to force the door, it was strongly barred within. I never mentioned the fact before, knowing that I could not expect belief.’

‘Well, sir, I believe you. You are a white man.’

Bude bowed, and went on. ‘The circumstances, though not generally known, have been published, captain, by a gentleman of reputation, Mr. Edward Forbes Skertchley, of Hong Kong. His paper indeed, in the *Journal* of a learned association, the Asiatic Society of Bengal, induced me, most unfortunately, to visit Cagayan Sulu, when it was still nominally in the possession of the Spaniards. My experience was similar to that of Mr. Skertchley, but, for personal reasons, was much more awful and distressing. One of the most beautiful of the island girls, a person of most amiable and winning character, not, alas! of my own faith' — Bude's voice broke— 'was one of the victims of the Berbalangs. . . . I loved her.'

He paused, and covered his face with his hands. The others respected and shared his emotion. The captain, like all sailors, sympathetic, dashed away a tear.

'One thing I ought to add,' said Bude, recovering himself, 'I am no more superstitious than you are, Captain Funkal, and doubtless science will find a simple, satisfactory, and normal explanation of the facts, the existence of which we are both compelled to admit. I have heard of no well authenticated instance in which the force, whatever it is, has been fatal to Europeans. The superstitious natives, much as they dread the Berbalangs, believe that they will not attack a person who wears a cocoa-nut pearl. Why this should be so, if so it is, I cannot guess. But, as it is always well to be on the safe side, I provided myself five years ago with a collection of these objects, and when I heard that we were ordered to Cagayan Sulu I distributed them among my crew. My friend, you may observe, wears one of the pearls. I have several about my person.' He disengaged a pin from his necktie, a muddy pearl set with burning rubies. 'Perhaps, Captain Funkal, you will honour me by accepting this specimen, and wearing it while we are in these latitudes? If it does no good, it can do no harm. We, at least, have not been molested, though we witnessed the phenomena.'

'Sir,' said the captain, 'I appreciate your kindness, and I value your gift as a memorial of one of the most singular experiences in a seafaring life. I drink your health and your friend's. Mr. Logan, to *you*.' The captain pledged his guests.

'And now, gentlemen, what am I to do?'

'That, captain, is for your own consideration.'

'I'll carpet that lubber, Jenkins,' said the captain, and leaving the cabin, he returned with the Fellow of All Souls. His shirt front was ruffled, his white neckcloth awry, his pallid countenance betrayed a sensitive second-rate mind, not at unity with itself. He nodded sullenly to Logan: Bude he did not know.

'Professor Jenkins, Mr. Jones Harvey,' said the captain. 'Sit down, sir. Take a drink; you seem to need one.' Jenkins drained the tumbler, and sat with downcast eyes, his finger drumming nervously on the table.

‘Professor Jenkins, sir, I reckon you are the cause of the unparalleled disaster to this exploring expedition. Why did you bring these two natives of our territory on board, you well and duly knowing that the end would not justify the proceedings?’ A furtive glance from Jenkins lighted on the diamonds that sparkled in Logan’s ring. He caught Logan’s hand.

‘Traitor!’ he cried. ‘What will not scientific jealousy dare, that meanest of the passions!’

‘What the devil do you mean?’ said Logan angrily, wrenching his hand away.

‘You leave Mr. Logan alone, sir,’ said the captain. ‘I have two minds to put you in irons, Mr. Professor Jenkins. If you please, explain yourself.’

‘I denounce this man and his companion,’ said Jenkins, noticing a pearl ring on Bude’s finger; ‘I denounce them of conspiracy, mean conspiracy, against this expedition, and against the American flag.’

‘As how?’ inquired the captain, lighting a cigar with irritating calmness.

‘They wear these pearls, in which I had trusted for absolute security against the Berbalangs.’

‘Well, I wear one too,’ said the captain, pointing to the pin in his necktie. ‘Are you going to tell me that *I* am a traitor to the flag, sir? I warn you Professor, to be careful.’

‘What am I to think?’ asked Jenkins.

‘It is rather more important what you *say*,’ replied the captain. ‘What is this fine conspiracy?’

‘I had read in England about the Berbalangs.’

‘Probably in Mr. Skertchley’s curious paper in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal?’ asked Bude with suavity.

Jenkins merely stared at him.

‘I deemed that specimens of these American subjects, dowered with their strange and baneful gift, were well worthy of the study of American savants; and I knew that the pearls were a certain prophylactic.’

‘What’s that?’ asked the captain.

‘A kind of Universal Pain-Killer,’ said Jenkins.

‘Well, you surprise me,’ said the captain, ‘a man of your education. Pain-Killer!’ and he expectorated dexterously.

‘I mean that the pearls keep off the Berbalangs,’ said Jenkins.

‘Then why didn’t you lay in a stock of the pearls?’ asked the captain.

‘Because these conspirators had been before me. These men, or their agents, had bought up, just before our arrival, every pearl in the island. They had wormed out my secret, knew the object of my adventure, knew how to ruin us all, and I denounce them.'

'A corner in pearls. Well, it was darned 'cute,' said the captain impartially. 'Now, Mr. Jones Harvey, and Mr. Logan, sir, what have *you* to say?'

'Did Mr. Jenkins — I think you said that this gentleman's name is Jenkins? — see the agent engaged in making this corner in pearls, or learn his name?' asked Bude.

'He was an Irish American, one McCarthy,' answered Jenkins sullenly.

'I am unacquainted with the gentleman,' said Bude, 'and I never employed any one for any such purpose. My visit to Cagayan Sulu was some years ago, just after that of Mr. Skertchley. Captain Funkal, I have already acquainted you with the facts, and you were kind enough to say that you accepted my statement.'

'I did, sir, and I do,' answered the captain. 'As for *you*,' he went on, 'Mr. Professor Jenkins, when you found that your game was dangerous, indeed likely to be ruinous, to this scientific expedition, and to the crew of the *George Washington* — damn you, sir — you should have dropped it. I don't know that I ever swore at a passenger before, and I beg your pardon, you two English gentlemen, for so far forgetting myself. I don't know, and these gentlemen don't know, who made the corner, but I don't think our citizens want either you or your exhibits. The whole population of the States, sir, not to mention the live stock, cannot afford to go about wearing cocoa-nut pearls, a precaution which would be necessary if I landed these venomous Berbalangs of yours on our shores: man and wife too, likely to have a family of young Berbalangs. Snakes are not a patch on these darkeys, and our coloured population, at least, would be busted up.'

The captain paused, perhaps attracted by the chance of thus solving the negro problem.

'So, I'll tell you what it is, gentlemen; and, Professor Jenkins, I'll turn back and land these two native exhibits, and I'll put *you* on shore, Professor Jenkins, at Cagayan Sulu. Perhaps before a steamer touches there — which is not once in a blue moon — you'll have had time to write an exhaustive monograph on the Berbalangs, their manners and customs.'

Jenkins (who knew what awaited him) threw himself on the floor at the feet of Captain Funkal. Horrified by the abject distress of one who, after all, was their countryman, Bude and Logan induced the captain to seclude Jenkins in his cabin. They then, by their combined entreaties, prevailed on the officer to land the Berbalangs on their own island, indeed, but to drop Jenkins later on civilised shores. Dawn saw the *George Washington* and the *Pendragon* in the port of Cagayan Sulu, where the fetters of the two natives, ill looking people enough, were knocked off, and they themselves deposited on the quay, where, not being popular, they were received by a hostile demonstration. The two vessels then resumed their eastward course. The taxidermic appliances without which Jones Harvey never sailed, and the services of his staff of taxidermists, were placed at the disposal of his brother savants. By this means a stuffed Mylodon, a stuffed Beathach, stuffed five-horned antelopes and a stuffed Bunyip, with a common gorilla and the Toltec mummy, now forever silent, were passed through the New York Custom House, and consigned to the McCabe Museum of Natural Varieties.

The immense case that contained the discovery of Jones Harvey was also carefully conveyed to an apartment prepared for it in the same repository. The competitors sought their hotels, Te-iki-pa marching beside Logan and Jones Harvey. But, by special arrangement, either Jones Harvey or his Maori ally always slept beside their mysterious case, which they watched with passionate attention. Two or three days were spent in setting up the stuffed exhibits. Then the trustees, through *The Yellow Flag* (the paper founded by the late Mr. McCabe), announced to the startled citizens the nature of the competition. On successive days the vast theatre of the McCabe Museum would be open, and each competitor, in turn, would display to the public his contribution, and lecture on his adventures and on the variety of nature which he had secured.

While the death of the animals was deplored, nothing was said, for obvious reasons, about the causes of the catastrophe.

The general excitement was intense. Interviewers scoured the city, and flocked, to little purpose, around the officials of the McCabe Museum. Special trains were run from all quarters. The hotels were thronged. ‘America,’ it was announced, ‘had taken hold of science, and was just going to make science hum.’

On the first day of the exhibition, Dr. Hiram Dodge displayed the stuffed Mylodon. The agitation was unprecedented. America had bred, in ancient days, and an American citizen had discovered, the monstrous yet amiable animal whence prehistoric Patagonia drew her milk supplies and cheese stuffs. Mr. Dodge’s adventures, he modestly said, could only be adequately narrated by Mr. Rider Haggard. Unluckily the Mylodon had not survived the conditions of the voyage, the change of climates. The applause was thunderous. Mr. Dodge gracefully expressed his obligations to his fair and friendly rival, Mr. Jones Harvey, who had loaned his taxidermic appliances. It did not appear to the public that the Mylodon could be excelled in interest. The Toltec mummy, as he could no longer talk, was flat on a falling market, nor was Mr. Rustler’s narrative of its conversational powers accepted by the scepticism of the populace, though it was corroborated by Captain Funkal, Professor Dodge, and Professor Wilkinson, who swore affidavits before a notary, within the hearing of the multitude. The Beathach, exhibited by Professor Potter, was reckoned of high anatomical interest by scientific characters, but it was not of American habitat, and left the people relatively cold. On the other hand, all the Macleans and Macdonnells of Canada and Nova Scotia wept tears of joy at the corroboration of their tribal legends, and the popularity of Professor Potter rivalled even that of Mr. Ian Maclaren. He was at once engaged by Major Pond for a series of lectures. The adventures of Howard Fry, in the taking of his gorilla, were reckoned interesting, as were those of the captor of the Bunyip, but both animals were now undeniably dead. The people could not feed them with waffles and hominy cakes in the gardens of the institute. The savants wrangled on the anatomical differences and resemblances of the Bunyip and the Beathach; still the critters were, to the general mind, only stuffed specimens, though unique. The African five-horned brutes (though in quieter times they would have scored a triumph) did not now appeal to the heart of the people.

At last came the day when, in the huge crowded amphitheatre, with Te-iki-pa by his side, Jones Harvey addressed the congregation. First he exhibited a skeleton of a dinornis, a bird of about twenty-five feet in height.

‘Now,’ he went on, ‘thanks to the assistance of a Maori gentleman, my friend the Tohunga Te-iki-pa’ — (cheers, Te-iki bows his acknowledgments)— ‘I propose to exhibit to you *this*.’

With a touch on the mechanism he unrolled the valves of a gigantic incubator. Within, recumbent on cotton wool, the almost frenzied spectators perceived two monstrous eggs, like those of the Roc of Arabian fable. Te-iki-pa now chanted a brief psalm in his own language. One of the eggs rolled gently in its place; then the other. A faint crackling noise was heard, first from one, then from the other egg. From each emerged the featherless head of a fowl — the species hitherto unknown to the American continent. The necks pushed forth, then the shoulders, then both shells rolled away in fragments, and the spectators gazed on two fledgling Moas. Te-iki-pa, on inspection, pronounced them to be cock and hen, and in healthy condition. The breed, he said, could doubtless be acclimatised.

The professors of the museum, by Jones Harvey’s request, then closely examined the chickens. There could be no doubt of it, they unanimously asserted: these specimens were living deinornithe (which for scientific men, is not a bad shot at the dual of deinornis). The American continent was now endowed, through the enterprise of Mr. Jones Harvey, not only with living specimens, but with a probable breed of a species hitherto thought extinct.

The cheering was led by Captain Funkal, who waved the Stars and Stripes and the Union Jack. Words cannot do justice to the scene. Women fainted, strong men wept, enemies embraced each other. For details we must refer to the files of *The Yellow Flag*. A *plébiscite* to select the winner of the McCabe Prize was organised by that Journal. The Moas (bred and exhibited by Mr, Jones Harvey) simply romped in, by 1,732,901 votes, the Mylodon being a bad second, thanks to the Irish vote.

Bude telegraphed 'Victory,' and Miss McCabe by cable answered 'Bully for us.'

The secret of these lovers was well kept. None who watches the fascinating Countess of Bude as she moves through the gilded saloons of Mayfair guesses that her hand was once the prize of success in a scientific exploration. The identity of Jones Harvey remains a puzzle to the learned. For the rest, a letter in which Jenkins told the story of the Berbalangs was rejected by the Editor of *Nature*, and has not yet passed even the Literary Committee of the Society for Psychical Research. The classical authority on the Berbalangs is still the paper by Mr. Skertchley in the *Journal* of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. The scientific gentlemen who witnessed the onslaught of the Berbalangs have convinced themselves (except Jenkins) that nothing of the sort occurred in their experience. The evidence of Captain Funkal is rejected as 'marine.'

Te-iki-pa decided to remain in New York as custodian of the Moas. He occasionally obliges by exhibiting a few feats of native conjuring, when his performances are attended by the *élite* of the city. He knows that his countrymen hold him in feud, but he is aware that they fear even more than they hate the ex-medicine man of his Maori Majesty.

The generosity of Bude and his Countess heaped rewards on Merton, who vainly protested that his services had not been professional.

The frequent appearance of new American novelists, whose works sell 250,000 copies in their first month, demonstrate that Mr. McCabe's scheme for raising the level of genius has been as satisfactory as it was original. Genius is riz.

But who 'cornered' the muddy pearls in Cagayan Sulu?

That secret is only known to Lady Bude, her confessor, and the Irish-American agent whom she employed. For she, as we saw, had got at the nature of poor Jenkins's project and had acquainted herself with the wonderful properties of the pearls, which she cornered.

As a patriot, she consoles herself for the loss of the other exhibits to her country, by the reflection that Berbalangs would have been the most mischievous of pauper immigrants. But of all this Bude knows nothing.

XI. ADVENTURE OF THE MISERLY MARQUIS

I. The Marquis consults Gray and Graham

Few men were, and perhaps no marquis was so unpopular as the Marquis of Restalrig, Logan's maternal Scotch cousin, widely removed. He was the last of his family, in the direct line, and on his death almost all his vast wealth would go to nobody knew where. To be sure Logan himself would succeed to the title of Fastcastle, which descends to heirs general, but nothing worth having went with the title. Logan had only the most distant memory of seeing the marquis when he himself was a little boy, and the marquis gave him two sixpences. His relationship to his opulent though remote kinsman had been of no service to him in the struggle for social existence. It carried no 'expectations,' and did not afford the most shadowy basis for a post obit. There was no entail, the marquis could do as he liked with his own.

'The Jews *may* have been credulous in the time of Horace,' Logan said, 'but now they insist on the most drastic evidence of prospective wealth. No, they won't lend me a shekel.'

Events were to prove that other financial operators were better informed than the chosen people, though to be sure their belief was displayed in a manner at once grotesque and painfully embarrassing.

Why the marquis was generally disliked we might explain, historically, if we were acquainted with the tale of his infancy, early youth, and adolescence. Perhaps he had been betrayed in his affections, and was 'taking it out' of mankind in general. But this notion implies that the marquis once had some affections, a point not hitherto substantiated by any evidence. Perhaps heredity was to blame, some unhappy blend of parentage. An ancestor at an unknown period may have bequeathed to the marquis the elements of his unalluring character. But the only ancestor of marked temperament was the festive Logan of Restalrig, who conspired over his cups to kidnap a king, laid out his plot on the lines of an Italian novel, and died without being detected. This heroic ancestor admitted that he hated 'arguments derived from religion,' and, so far, the Marquis of Restalrig was quite with him, if the arguments bore on giving to the poor, or, indeed, to any one.

In fact the marquis was that unpopular character, a miser. Your miser may be looked up to, in a way, as an ideal votary of Mammon, but he is never loved. On his vast possessions, mainly in coal-fields, he was even more detested than the ordinary run of capitalists. The cottages and farmhouses on his estates were dilapidated and insanitary beyond what is endurable. Of his many mansions, some were kept in decent repair, because he drew many shillings from tourists admitted to view them. But his favourite abode was almost as ruinous as his cottages, and an artist in search of a model for the domestic interior of the Master of Ravenswood might have found what he wanted at Kirkburn, the usual lair of this avaricious nobleman. It was a keep of the sixteenth century, and looked as if it had never been papered or painted since Queen Mary's time. But it was near the collieries; and within its blackened walls, and among its bleak fields and grimy trees, Lord Restalrig chose to live alone, with an old man and an old woman for his attendants. The woman had been his nurse; it was whispered in the district that she was also his illegal-aunt, or perhaps even, so to speak, his illegal stepmother. At all events, she endured more than anybody but a Scotch woman who had been his nurse in childhood would have tolerated. To keep her in his service saved him the cost of a pension, which even the marquis, people thought, could hardly refuse to allow her. The other old servitor was her husband, and entirely under her domination. Both might be reckoned staunch, in the old fashion, 'to the name,' which Logan only bore by accident, his grandmother having wedded a kinless Logan who had no demonstrable connection with the house of Restalrig. Any mortal but the marquis would probably have brought Logan up as his heir, for the churlish peer had no nearer connection. But the marquis did more than sympathise with the Roman emperor who quoted 'after me the Last Day.' The emperor only meant that, after his time, he did not care how soon earth and fire were mingled. The marquis, on the other hand, gave the impression that, he once out of the way, he ardently desired the destruction of the whole human race. He was not known ever to have consciously benefited man or woman. He screwed out what he might from everybody in his power, and made no returns which the law did not exact; even these, as far as the income tax went, he kept at the lowest figure possible.

Such was the distinguished personage whose card was handed to Merton one morning at the office. There had been no previous exchange of letters, according to the rules of the Society, and yet Merton could not suppose that the marquis wished to see him on any but business matters. 'He wants to put a spoke in somebody's wheel,' thought Merton, 'but whose?'

He hastily scrawled a note for Logan, who, as usual, was late, put it in an envelope, and sealed it. He wrote: '*On no account come in. Explanation later*! Then he gave the note to the office boy, impressed on him the necessity of placing it in Logan's hands when he arrived, and told the boy to admit the visitor.

The marquis entered, clad in rusty black not unlike a Scotch peasant's best raiment as worn at funerals. He held a dripping umbrella; his boots were muddy, his trousers had their frayed ends turned up. He wore a hard, cruel red face, with keen grey eyes beneath penthouses where age had touched the original tawny red with snow. Merton, bowing, took the umbrella and placed it in a stand.

‘You’ll not have any snuff?’ asked the marquis.

Trevor had placed a few enamelled snuff-boxes of the eighteenth century among the other costly *bibelots* in the rooms, and, by an unusual chance, one of them actually did contain what the marquis wanted. Merton opened it and handed it to the peer, who, after trying a pinch on his nostrils, poured a quantity into his hand and thence into a little black mull made of horn, which he took from his breast pocket. ‘It’s good,’ he said. ‘Better than I get at Kirkburn. You’ll know who I am?’ His accent was nearly as broad as that of one of his own hinds, and he sometimes used Scottish words, to Merton’s perplexity.

‘Every one has heard of the Marquis of Restalrig,’ said Merton.

‘Ay, and little to his good, I’ll be bound?’

‘I do not listen to gossip,’ said Merton. ‘I presume, though you have not addressed me by letter, that your visit is not unconnected with business?’

‘No, no, no letters! I never was wasteful in postage stamps. But as I was in London, to see the doctor, for the Edinburgh ones can make nothing of the case — a kind of dwawming — I looked in at auld Nicky Maxwell’s. She gave me a good character of you, and she is one to lippen to. And you make no charge for a first interview.’

Merton vaguely conjectured that to ‘lippen’ implied some sort of caress; however, he only said that he was obliged to Miss Maxwell for her kind estimate of his firm.

‘Gray and Graham, good Scots names. You’ll not be one of the Grahams of Netherby, though?’

‘The name of the firm is merely conventional, a trading title,’ said Merton; ‘if you want to know my name, there it is,’ and he handed his card to the marquis, who stared at it, and (apparently from motiveless acquisitiveness) put it into his pocket.

‘I don’t like an alias,’ he said. ‘But it seems you are to lippen to.’

From the context Merton now understood that the marquis probably wished to signify that he was to be trusted. So he bowed, and expressed a hope that he was ‘all that could be desired in the lippening way.’

‘You’re laughing at my Doric?’ asked the nobleman. ‘Well, in the only important way, it’s not at my *expense*. Ha! Ha!’ He shook a lumbering laugh out of himself.

Merton smiled — and was bored.

‘I’m come about stopping a marriage,’ said the marquis, at last arriving at business.

‘My experience is at your service,’ said Merton.

‘Well,’ went on the marquis, ‘ours is an old name.’

Merton remarked that, in the course of historical study, he had made himself acquainted with the achievements of the house.

‘Auld warld tales! But I wish I could tell where the treasure is that wily auld Logan quarrelled over with the wizard Laird of Merchistoun. Logan would not implement the contract — half profits. But my wits are wool gathering.’

He began to wander round the room, looking at the mezzotints. He stopped in front of one portrait, and said ‘My Aunt!’ Merton took this for an exclamation of astonishment, but later found that the lady (after Lawrence) really had been the great aunt of the marquis.

Merton conceived that the wits of his visitor were worse than ‘wool gathering,’ that he had ‘softening of the brain.’ But circumstances presently indicated that Lord Restalrig was actually suffering from a much less common disorder — softening of the heart.

He returned to his seat, and helped himself to snuff out of the enamelled gold box, on which Merton deemed it politic to keep a watchful eye.

‘Man, I’m sweir’ (reluctant) ‘to come to the point,’ said Lord Restalrig.

Merton erroneously understood him to mean that he was under oath or vow to come to the point, and showed a face of attention.

‘I’m not the man I was. The doctors don’t understand my case — they take awful fees — but I see they think ill of it. And that sets a body thinking. Have you a taste of brandy in the house?’

As the visitor’s weather-beaten ruddiness had changed to a ghastly ashen hue, rather bordering on the azure, Merton set forth the liqueur case, and drew a bottle of soda water.

‘No water,’ said the peer; ‘it’s just ma twal’ ours, an auld Scotch fashion,’ and he took without winking an orthodox dram of brandy. Then he looked at the silver tops of the flasks.

‘A good coat!’ he said. ‘Yours?’

Merton nodded.

‘Ye quarter the Douglas Heart. A good coat. Dod, I’ll speak plain. The name, Mr. Merton, when ye come to the end o’ the furrow, the name is all ye have left. We brought nothing into the world but the name, we take out nothing else. A sore dispensation. I’m not the man I was, not this two years. I must dispone, I know it well. Now the name, that I thought that I cared not an empty whistle for, is worn to a rag, but I cannot leave it in the mire. There’s just one that bears it, one Logan by name, and true Logan by the mother’s blood. The mother’s mother, my cousin, was a bonny lass.’

He paused; his enfeebled memory was wandering, no doubt, in scenes more vivid to him than those of yesterday.

Merton was now attentive indeed. The miserly marquis had become, to him, something other than a curious survival of times past. There was a chance for Logan, his friend, the last of the name, but Logan was firmly affianced to Miss Markham, of the cloak department at Madame Claudine’s. And the marquis, as he said, ‘had come about stopping a marriage,’ and Merton was to help him in stopping it, in disentangling Logan!

The old man aroused himself. ‘I have never seen the lad but once, when he was a bairn. But I’ve kept eyes on him. He *has* nothing, and since I came to London I hear that he has gone gyte, I mean — ye’ll not understand me — he is plighted to a long-legged shop-lass, the daughter of a ne’er-do-well Australian land-louper, a doctor. This must not be. Now I’ll speak plain to you, plainer than to Tod and Brock, my doers — ye call them lawyers. *They* did not make my will.’

Merton prevented himself, by an effort, from gasping. He kept a countenance of cold attention. But the marquis was coming to the point.

‘I have left all to the name, lands and rents, and mines, and money. But, unless the lad marries in his own rank, I’ll change my will. It’s in the hidie hole at Kirkburn, that Logan built to keep King Jamie in, when he caught him. But the fool Ruthvens marred that job, and got their kail through the reek. I’m wandering.’ He helped himself to another dram, and went on, ‘Ye see what I want, ye must stop that marriage.’

‘But,’ said Merton, ‘as you are so kindly disposed towards your kinsman, this Mr. Logan, may I ask whether it would not be wise to address him yourself, as the head of his house? He may, surely he will, listen to your objections.’

‘Ye do not know the Logans.’

Merton concealed his smile.

‘Camstairy deevils! It’s in the blood. Never once has he asked me for a pound, never noticed me by word or letter. Faith, I wish all the world had been as considerate to auld Restalrig! For me to say a word, let be to make an offer, would just tie him faster to the lass. “Tyne troth, tyne a’,” that is the old bye-word.’

Merton recognised his friend in this description, but he merely shook a sympathetic head. ‘Very unusual,’ he remarked. ‘You really have no hope by this method?’

‘None at all, or I would not be here on this daft ploy. There’s no fool like an auld fool, and, faith, I hardly know the man I was. But they cannot dispute the will. I drew doctors to witness that I was of sound and disponing mind, and I've since been thrice to kirk and market. Lord, how they stared to see auld Restalrig in his pew, that had not smelt appleringie these forty years.'

Merton noted these words, which he thought curious and obscure. 'Your case interests me deeply,' he said, 'and shall receive my very best attention. You perceive, of course, that it is a difficult case, Mr. Logan's character and tenacity being what you describe. I must make careful inquiries, and shall inform you of progress. You wish to see this engagement ended?'

'And the lad on with a lass of his rank,' said the marquis.

'Probably that will follow quickly on the close of his present affection. It usually does in our experience,' said Merton, adding, 'Am I to write to you at your London address?'

'No, sir; these London hotels would ruin the cunzie' (the Mint).

Merton wondered whether the Cunzie was the title of some wealthy Scotch peer.

'And I'm off for Kirkburn by the night express. Here's wishing luck,' and the old sinner finished the brandy.

'May I call a cab for you — it still rains?'

'No, no, I'll travel,' by which the economical peer meant that he would walk.

He then shook Merton by the hand, and hobbled downstairs attended by his adviser.

'Did Mr. Logan call?' Merton asked the office boy when the marquis had trotted off.

'Yes, sir; he said you would find him at the club.'

'Call a hansom,' said Merton, 'and put up the notice, "out."' He drove to the club, where he found Logan ordering luncheon.

'Hullo, shall we lunch together?' Logan asked.

'Not yet: I want to speak to you.'

'Nothing gone wrong? Why did you shut me out of the office?'

'Where can we talk without being disturbed?'

'Try the smoking-room on the top storey,' said Logan, 'Nobody will have climbed so high so early.'

They made the ascent, and found the room vacant: the windows looked out over swirling smoke and trees tossing in a wind of early spring.

'Quiet enough,' said Logan, taking an arm-chair. 'Now out with it! You make me quite nervous.'

'A client has come with what looks a promising piece of business. We are to disentangle—'

‘A royal duke?’

‘No. *You*!’

‘A practical joke,’ said Logan. ‘Somebody pulling your leg, as people say, a most idiotic way of speaking. What sort of client was he, or she? We’ll be even with them.’

‘The client’s card is here,’ said Merton, and he handed to Logan that of the Marquis of Restalrig.

‘You never saw him before; are you sure it was the man?’ asked Logan, staggered in his scepticism.

‘A very good imitation. Dressed like a farmer at a funeral. Talked like all the kailyards. Snuffed, and asked for brandy, and went and came, walking, in this weather.’

‘By Jove, it is my venerated cousin. And he had heard about me and Miss—’

‘He was quite well informed.’

Logan looked very grave. He rose and stared out of the window into the mist. Then he came back, and stood beside Merton’s chair. He spoke in a low voice:

‘This can only mean one thing.’

‘Only that one thing,’ said Merton, dropping his own voice.

‘What did you say to him?’

‘I told him that his best plan, as the head of the house, was to approach you himself.’

‘And he said?’

‘That it was of no use, and that I do not know the Logans.’

‘But you do?’

‘I think so.’

‘You think right. No, not for all his lands and mines I won’t.’

‘Not for the name?’

‘Not for the kingdoms of the earth,’ said Logan.

‘It is a great refusal.’

‘I have really no temptation to accept,’ said Logan. ‘I am not built that way. So what next? If the old boy could only see her—’

‘I doubt if that would do any good, though, of course, if I were you I should think so. He goes north to-night. You can’t take the lady to Kirkburn. And you can’t write to him.’

‘Of course not,’ said Logan; ‘of course it would be all up if he knew that I know.’

‘There is this to be said — it is not a very pleasant view to take — he can’t live long. He came to see some London specialist — it is his heart, I think—’

‘*His* heart!

How Fortune aristophanises
And how severe the fun of Fate!’

quoted Logan.

‘The odd thing is,’ said Merton, ‘that I do believe he has a heart. I rather like him. At all events, I think, from what I saw, that a sudden start might set him off at any moment, or an unusual exertion. And he may go off before I tell him that I can do nothing with you—’

‘Oh, hang that,’ said Logan, ‘you make me feel like a beastly assassin!’

‘I only want you to understand how the land lies.’ Merton dropped his voice again, ‘He has made a will leaving you everything.’

‘Poor old cock! Look here, I believe I had better write, and say that I’m awfully touched and obliged, but that I can’t come into his views, or break my word, and then, you know, he can just make another will. It would be a swindle to let him die, and come into his property, and then go dead against his wishes.’

‘But it would be all right to give me away, I suppose, and let him understand that I had violated professional confidence?’

‘Only with a member of the firm. That is no violation.’

‘But then I should have told him that you *were* a member of the firm.’

‘I’m afraid you should.’

‘Logan, you have the ideas of a schoolboy. I *had* to be certain as to how you would take it, though, of course, I had a very good guess. And as to what you say about the chances of his dying and leaving everything where he would not have left it if he had been sure you would act against his wishes — I believe you are wrong. What he really cares about is “the name.” His ghost will put up with your disobedience if the name keeps its old place. Do you see?’

‘Perhaps you are right,’ said Logan.

‘Anyhow, there is no such pressing hurry. One *may* bring him round with time. A curious old survival! I did not understand all that he said. There was something about having been thrice at kirk and market since he made his will; and something about not having smelled appleringie for forty years. What is appleringie?’

Logan laughed.

‘It is a sacred Presbyterian herb. The people keep it in their Bibles and it perfumes the churches. But look here—’

He was interrupted by the entrance of a page, who handed to him a letter. Logan read it and laughed. ‘I knew it; they are sharp!’ he said, and handed the letter to Merton. It was from a famous, or infamous, money-lender, offering princely accommodation on terms which Mr. Logan would find easy and reasonable.

‘They have nosed the appleringie, you see,’ he said.

‘But I don’t see,’ said Merton.

‘Why the hounds have heard that the old nobleman has been thrice to kirk lately. And as he had not been there for forty years, they have guessed that he has been making his will. Scots law has, or used to have, something in it about going thrice to kirk and market after making a will — disponing they call it — as a proof of bodily and mental soundness. So they have spotted the marquis’s pious motives for kirk-going, and guessed that I am his heir. I say—’ Logan began to laugh wildly.

‘What do you say?’ asked Merton, but Logan went on hooting.

‘I say,’ he repeated, ‘it must never be known that the old lord came to consult us,’ and here he was again convulsed.

‘Of course not,’ said Merton. ‘But where is the joke?’

‘Why, don’t you see — oh, it is too good — he has taken every kind of precaution to establish his sanity when he made his will.’

‘He told me that he had got expert evidence,’ said Merton.

‘And then he comes and consults US!’ said Logan, with a crow of laughter. ‘If any fellow wants to break the will on the score of insanity, and knows, knows he came to us, a jury, when they find he consulted us, will jolly well upset the cart.’ Merton was hurt.

‘Logan,’ he said, ‘it is you who ought to be in an asylum, an Asylum for Incurable Children. Don’t you see that he made the will long *before* he took the very natural and proper step of consulting Messrs. Gray and Graham?’

‘Let us pray that, if there is a suit, it won’t come before a Scotch jury,’ said Logan. ‘Anyhow, nobody knows that he came except you and me.’

‘And the office boy,’ said Merton.

‘Oh, we’ll square the office boy,’ said Logan. ‘Let’s lunch!’

They lunched, and Logan, as was natural, though Merton urged him to abstain, hung about the doors of Madame Claudine’s emporium at the hour when the young ladies returned to their homes. He walked home with Miss Markham. He told her about his chances, and his views, and no doubt she did not think him a person of schoolboy ideas, but a Bayard.

Two days passed, and in the afternoon of the third a telegram arrived for Logan from Kirkburn.

‘*Come at once, Marquis very ill. Dr. Douglas, Kirkburn.*’

There was no express train North till 8.45 in the evening. Merton dined with Logan at King’s Cross, and saw him off. He would reach his cousin’s house at about six in the morning if the train kept time.

About nine o’clock on the morning following Logan’s arrival at Kirkburn Merton was awakened: the servant handed to him a telegram.

‘*Come instantly. Highly important. Logan, Kirkburn.*’

Merton dressed himself more rapidly than he had ever done, and caught the train leaving King’s Cross at 10 a.m.

II. The Emu’s Feathers

The landscape through which Merton passed on his northward way to Kirkburn, whither Logan had summoned him, was blank with snow. The snow was not more than a couple of inches deep where it had not drifted, and, as frost had set in, it was not likely to deepen. There was no fear of being snowed up.

Merton naturally passed a good deal of his time in wondering what had occurred at Kirkburn, and why Logan needed his presence. ‘The poor old gentleman has passed away suddenly, I suppose,’ he reflected, ‘and Logan may think that I know where he has deposited his will. It is in some place that the marquis called “the hidie hole,” and that, from his vagrant remarks, appears to be a secret chamber, as his ancestor meant to keep James VI. there. I wish he had cut the throat of that prince, a bad fellow. But, of course, I don’t know where the chamber is: probably some of the people about the place know, or the lawyer who made the will.’

However freely Merton’s consciousness might play round the problem, he could get no nearer to its solution. At Berwick he had to leave the express, and take a local train. In the station, not a nice station, he was accosted by a stranger, who asked if he was Mr. Merton? The stranger, a wholesome, red-faced, black-haired man, on being answered in the affirmative, introduced himself as Dr. Douglas, of Kirkburn. ‘You telegraphed to my friend Logan the news of the marquis’s illness,’ said Merton. ‘I fear you have no better news to give me.’

Dr. Douglas shook his head.

A curious little crowd was watching the pair from a short distance. There was an air of solemnity about the people, which was not wholly due to the chill grey late afternoon, and the melancholy sea.

‘We have an hour to wait, Mr. Merton, before the local train starts, and afterwards there is a bit of a drive. It is cold, we would be as well in the inn as here.’

The doctor beat his gloved hands together to restore the circulation.

Merton saw that the doctor wished to be with him in private, and the two walked down into the town, where they got a comfortable room, the doctor ordering boiling water and the other elements of what he called ‘a cheerer.’ When the cups which cheer had been brought, and the men were alone, the doctor said:

‘It is as you suppose, Mr. Merton, but worse.’

‘Great heaven, no accident has happened to Logan?’ asked Merton.

‘No, sir, and he would have met you himself at Berwick, but he is engaged in making inquiries and taking precautions at Kirkburn.’

‘You do not mean that there is any reason to suspect foul play? The marquis, I know, was in bad health. You do not suspect — murder?’

‘No, sir, but — the marquis is gone.’

‘I *know* he is gone, your telegram and what I observed of his health led me to fear the worst.’

‘But his body is gone — vanished.’

‘You suppose that it has been stolen (you know the American and other cases of the same kind) for the purpose of extracting money from the heir?’

‘That is the obvious view, whoever the heir may be. So far, no will has been found,’ the doctor added some sugar to his cheerer, and some whisky to correct the sugar. ‘The neighbourhood is very much excited. Mr. Logan has telegraphed to London for detectives.’

Merton reflected in silence.

‘The obvious view is not always the correct one,’ he said. ‘The marquis was, at least I thought that he was, a very eccentric person.’

‘No doubt about *that,*’ said the doctor.

‘Very well. He had reasons, such reasons as might occur to a mind like his, for wanting to test the character and conduct of Mr. Logan, his only living kinsman. What I am going to say will seem absurd to you, but — the marquis spoke to me of his malady as a kind of “dwawming,” I did not know what he meant, at the time, but yesterday I consulted the glossary of a Scotch novel: to *dwawm*, I think, is to lose consciousness?’

The doctor nodded.

‘Now you have read,’ said Merton, ‘the case published by Dr. Cheyne, of a gentleman, Colonel Townsend, who could voluntarily produce a state of “dwawm” which was not then to be distinguished from death?’

‘I have read it in the notes to Aytoun’s *Scottish Cavaliers,*’ said the doctor.

‘Now, then, suppose that the marquis, waking out of such a state, whether voluntarily induced (which is very improbable) or not, thought fit to withdraw himself, for the purpose of secretly watching, from some retreat, the behaviour of his heir, if he has made Mr. Logan his heir? Is that hypothesis absolutely out of keeping with his curious character?’

‘No. It’s crazy enough, if you will excuse me, but, for these last few weeks, at any rate, I would have swithered about signing a fresh certificate to the marquis’s sanity.’

‘You did, perhaps, sign one when he made his will, as he told me?’

‘I, and Dr. Gourlay, and Professor Grant,’ the doctor named two celebrated Edinburgh specialists. ‘But just of late I would not be so certain.’

‘Then my theory need not necessarily be wrong?’

‘It can’t but be wrong. First, I saw the man dead.’

‘Absolute tests of death are hardly to be procured, of course you know that better than I do,’ said Merton.

‘Yes, but I am positive, or as positive as one can be, in the circumstances. However, that is not what I stand on. *There was a witness who saw the marquis go*.’

‘Go — how did he go?’

‘He disappeared.’

‘The body disappeared?’

‘It did, but you had better hear the witness’s own account; I don’t think a second-hand story will convince you, especially as you have a theory.’

‘Was the witness a man or a woman?’

‘A woman,’ said the doctor.

‘Oh!’ said Merton.

‘I know what you mean,’ said the doctor. ‘You think, it suits your theory, that the marquis came to himself and—’

‘And squared the female watcher,’ interrupted Merton; ‘she would assist him in his crazy stratagem.’

‘Mr. Merton, you’ve read ower many novels,’ said the doctor, lapsing into the vernacular. ‘Well, your notion is not unthinkable, nor pheesically impossible. She’s a queer one, Jean Bower, that waked the corpse, sure enough. However, you’ll soon be on the spot, and can examine the case for yourself. Mr. Logan has no idea but that the body was stolen for purposes of blackmail.’ He looked at his watch. ‘We must be going to catch the train, if she’s anything like punctual.’

The pair walked in silence to the station, were again watched curiously by the public (who appeared to treat the station as a club), and after three-quarters of an hour of slow motion and stoppages, arrived at their destination, Drem.

The doctor’s own man with a dog-cart was in waiting.

‘The marquis had neither machine nor horse,’ the doctor explained.

Through the bleak late twilight they were driven, past two or three squalid mining villages, along a road where the ruts showed black as coal through the freezing snow. Out of one village, the lights twinkling in the windows, they turned up a steep road, which, after a couple of hundred yards, brought them to the old stone gate posts, surmounted by heraldic animals.

‘The late marquis sold the worked-iron gates to a dealer,’ said the doctor.

At the avenue gates, so steep was the ascent, both men got out and walked.

‘You see the pits come up close to the house,’ said the doctor, as they reached the crest. He pointed to some tall chimneys on the eastern slope, which sank quite gradually to the neighbouring German Ocean, but ended in an abrupt rocky cliff.

‘Is that a fishing village in the cleft of the cliffs? I think I see a red roof,’ said Merton.

‘Ay, that’s Strutherwick, a fishing village,’ replied the doctor.

‘A very easy place, on your theory, for an escape with the body by boat,’ said Merton.

‘Ay, that is just it,’ acquiesced the doctor.

‘But,’ asked Merton, as they reached the level, and saw the old keep black in front of them, ‘what is that rope stretched about the lawn for? It seems to go all round the house, and there are watchers.’ Dark figures with lanterns were visible at intervals, as Merton peered into the gathering gloom. The watchers paced to and fro like sentinels.

The door of the house opened, and a man’s figure stood out against the lamp light within.

‘Is that you, Merton?’ came Logan’s voice from the doorway.

Merton answered; and the doctor remarked, ‘Mr. Logan will tell you what the rope’s for.’

The friends shook hands; the doctor, having deposited Merton’s baggage, pleaded an engagement, and said ‘Good-bye,’ among the thanks of Logan. An old man, a kind of silent Caleb Balderstone, carried Merton’s light luggage up a black turnpike stair.

‘I’ve put you in the turret; it is the least dilapidated room,’ said Logan. ‘Now, come in here.’

He led the way into a hall on the ground-floor. A great fire in the ancient hearth, with its heavy heraldically carved stone chimney-piece, lit up the desolation of the chamber.

‘Sit down and warm yourself,’ said Logan, pushing forward a ponderous oaken chair, with a high back and short arms.

‘I know a good deal,’ said Merton, his curiosity hurrying him to the point; ‘but first, Logan, what is the rope on the stakes driven in round the house for?’

‘That was my first precaution,’ said Logan. ‘I heard of the — of what has happened — about four in the morning, and I instantly knocked in the stakes — hard work with the frozen ground — and drew the rope along, to isolate the snow about the house. When I had done that, I searched the snow for footmarks.'

'When had the snow begun to fall?'

'About midnight. I turned out then to look at the night before going to bed.'

'And there was nothing wrong then?'

'He lay on his bed in the laird's chamber. I had just left it. I left him with the watcher of the dead. There was a plate of salt on his breast. The housekeeper, Mrs. Bower, keeps up the old ways. Candles were burning all round the bed. A fearful waste he would have thought it, poor old man. The devils! If I could get on their track!' said Logan, clenching his fist.

'You have found no tracks, then?'

'None. When I examined the snow there was not a footmark on the roads to the back door or the front — not a footmark on the whole area.'

'Then the removal of the body from the bedroom was done from within. Probably the body is still in the house.'

'Certainly it has been taken out by no known exit, if it *has* been taken out, as I believe. I at once arranged relays of sentinels — men from the coal-pits. But the body is gone; I am certain of it. A fishing-boat went out from the village, Strutherwick, before the dawn. It came into the little harbour after midnight — some night-wandering lover saw it enter — and it must have sailed again before dawn.'

'Did you examine the snow near the harbour?'

'I could not be everywhere at once, and I was single-handed; but I sent down the old serving-man, John Bower. He is stupid enough, but I gave him a note to any fisherman he might meet. Of course these people are not detectives.'

'And was there any result?'

'Yes; an odd one. But it confirms the obvious theory of body-snatching. Of course, fishers are early risers, and they went trampling about confusedly. But they did find curious tracks. We have isolated some of them, and even managed to carry off a couple. We dug round them, and lifted them. A neighbouring laird, Mr. Maitland, lent his ice-house for storing these, and I had one laid down on the north side of this house to show you, if the frost held. No ice-house or refrigerator *here*, of course.'

'Let me see it now.'

Logan took a lighted candle — the night was frosty, without a wind — and led Merton out under the black, ivy-clad walls. Merton threw his greatcoat on the snow and knelt on it, peering at the object. He saw a large flat clod of snow and earth. On its surface was the faint impress of a long oval, longer than the human foot; feathery marks running in both directions from the centre could be descried. Looking closer, Merton detected here and there a tiny feather and a flock or two of down adhering to the frozen mass.

'May I remove some of these feathery things?' Merton asked.

'Certainly. But why?'

'We can't carry the clod indoors, it would melt; and it *may* melt if the weather changes; and by bad luck there may be no feathers or down adhering to the other clods — those in the laird's ice-house.'

'You think you have a clue?'

'I think,' said Merton, 'that these are emu's feathers; but, whether they are or not, they look like a clue. Still, I *think* they are emu's feathers.'

'Why? The emu is not an indigenous bird.'

As he spoke, an idea — several ideas — flashed on Merton. He wished that he had held his peace. He put the little shreds into his pocket-book, rose, and donned his greatcoat. 'How cold it is!' he said. 'Logan, would you mind very much if I said no more just now about the feathers? I really have a notion — which may be a good one, or may be a silly one — and, absurd as it appears, you will seriously oblige me by letting me keep my own counsel.'

'It is damned awkward,' said Logan testily.

'Ah, old boy, but remember that "damned awkward" is a damned awkward expression.'

'You are right,' said Logan heartily; 'but I rose very early, I'm very tired, I'm rather savage. Let's go in and dine.'

'All right,' said Merton.

'I don't think,' said Logan, as they were entering the house, 'that I need keep these miners on sentry go any longer. The bird — the body, I mean — has flown. Whoever the fellows were that made these tracks, and however they got into and out of the house, they have carried the body away. I'll pay the watchers and dismiss them.'

'All right,' said Merton. 'I won't dress. I must return to town by the night train. No time to be lost.'

'No train to be caught,' said Logan, 'unless you drive or walk to Berwick from here — which you can't. You can't walk to Dunbar, to catch the 10.20, and I have nothing that you can drive.'

'Can I send a telegram to town?'

'It is four miles to the nearest telegraph station, but I dare say one of the sentinels would walk there for a consideration.'

'No use,' said Merton. 'I should need to wire in a cipher, when I come to think of it, and cipher I have none. I must go as early as I can to-morrow. Let us consult Bradshaw.'

They entered the house. Merton had a Bradshaw in his dressing-bag. They found that he could catch a train at 10.49 A.M., and be in London about 9 P.M.

‘How are you to get to the station?’ asked Logan. ‘I’ll tell you how,’ he went on. ‘I’ll send a note to the inn at the place, and order a trap to be here at ten. That will give you lots of time. It is about four miles.’

‘Thank you,’ said Merton; ‘I see no better way.’ And while Logan went to pay and dismiss the sentries and send a messenger, a grandson of the old butler with the note to the innkeeper, Merton toiled up the narrow turnpike stair to the turret chamber. A fire had been burning all day, and in firelight almost any room looks tolerable. There was a small four-poster bed, with slender columns, a black old wardrobe, and a couple of chairs, one of the queer antiquated little dressing-tables, with many drawers, and boxes, and a tiny basin, and there was a perfectly new tub, which Logan had probably managed to obtain in the course of the day. Merton’s evening clothes were neatly laid out, the shutters were closed, curtains there were none; in fact, he had been in much worse quarters.

As he dressed he mused. ‘Cursed spite,’ thought he, ‘that ever I was born to be an amateur detective! And cursed be my confounded thirst for general information! Why did I ever know what *Kurdaitcha* and *Interlinia* mean? If I turn out to be right, oh, shade of Sherlock Holmes, what a pretty kettle of fish there will be! Suppose I drop the whole affair! But I’ve been ass enough to let Logan know that I have an idea. Well, we shall see how matters shape themselves. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.’

Merton descended the turnpike stair, holding on to the rope provided for that purpose in old Scotch houses. He found Logan standing by the fire in the hall. They were waited on by the old man, Bower. By tacit consent they spoke, while he was present, of anything but the subject that occupied their minds. They had quite an edible dinner — cock-a-leekie, brandered haddocks, and a pair of roasted fowls, with a mysterious sweet which was called a ‘Hattit Kit.’

‘It is an historical dish in this house,’ said Logan. ‘A favourite with our ancestor, the conspirator.’

The wine was old and good, having been laid down before the time of the late marquis.

‘In the circumstances, Logan,’ said Merton, when the old serving man was gone, ‘you have done me very well.’

‘Thanks to Mrs. Bower, our butler’s wife,’ said Logan. ‘She is a truly remarkable woman. She and her husband, they are cousins, are members of an ancient family, our hereditary retainers. One of them, Laird Bower, was our old conspirator’s go-between in the plot to kidnap the king, of which you have heard so much. Though he was an aged and ignorant man, he kept the secret so well that our ancestor was never even suspected, till his letters came to light after his death, and after Laird Bower's death too, luckily for both of them. So you see we can depend on it that this pair of domestics, and their family, were not concerned in this new abomination; so far, the robbery was not from within.'

'I am glad to hear that,' said Merton. 'I had invented a theory, too stupid to repeat, and entirely demolished by the footmarks in the snow, a theory which hypothetically implicated your old housekeeper. To be sure it did not throw any doubt on her loyalty to the house, quite the reverse.'

'What was your theory?'

'Oh, too silly for words; that the marquis had been only in a trance, had come to himself when alone with the old lady, who, the doctor said, was watching in the room, and had stolen away, to see how you would conduct yourself. Childish hypothesis! The obvious one, body-snatching, is correct. This is very good port.'

'If things had been as you thought possible, Jean Bower was not the woman to balk the marquis,' said Logan. 'But you must see her and hear her tell her own story.'

'Gladly,' said Merton, 'but first tell me yours.'

'When I arrived I found the poor old gentleman unconscious. Dr. Douglas was in attendance. About noon he pronounced life extinct. Mrs. Bower watched, or "waked" the corpse. I left her with it about midnight, as I told you; about four in the morning she aroused me with the news that the body had vanished. What I did after that you know. Now you had better hear the story from herself.'

Logan rang a handbell, there were no other bells in the keep, and asked the old serving-man, when he came, to send in Mrs. Bower.

She entered, a very aged woman, dressed in deep mourning. She was tall, her hair of an absolutely pure white, her aquiline face was drawn, her cheeks hollow, her mouth almost toothless. She made a deep courtesy, repeating it when Logan introduced 'my friend, Mr. Merton.'

'Mrs. Bower,' Logan said, 'Mr. Merton is my oldest friend, and the marquis saw him in London, and consulted him on private business a few days ago. He wishes to hear you tell what you saw the night before last.'

'Maybe, as the gentleman is English, he'll hardly understand me, my lord. I have a landward tongue,' said Mrs. Bower.

'I can interpret if Mr. Merton is puzzled, Mrs. Bower, but I think he will understand better if we go to the laird's chamber.'

Logan took two lighted candles, handing two to Merton, and the old woman led them upstairs to a room which occupied the whole front of the ancient 'peel,' or square tower, round which the rest of the house was built. The room was nearly bare of furniture, except for an old chair or two, a bureau, and a great old bed of state, facing the narrow deep window, and standing on a kind of daïs, or platform of three steps. The heavy old green curtains were drawn all round it. Mrs. Bower opened them at the front and sides. At the back against the wall the curtains, embroidered with the arms of Restalrig, remained closed.

‘I sat here all the night,’ said Mrs. Bower, ‘watching the corp that my hands had streikit. The candles were burning a’ about him, the saut lay on his breast, only aefold o’ linen covered him. My back was to the window, my face to his feet. I was crooning the auld dirgie; if it does nae guid, it does nae harm.’ She recited in a monotone:

‘When thou frae here away art past —
   Every nicht and all —
To Whinny-muir thou comest at last,
   And Christ receive thy saul.

‘If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon —
   Every nicht and all —
Sit thee down and put them on,
   And Christ receive thy saul

‘Alas, he never gave nane, puir man,’ said the woman with a sob.

At this moment the door of the chamber slowly opened. The woman turned and gazed at it, frowning, her lips wide apart.

Logan went to the door, looked into the passage, closed the door and locked it; the key had to be turned twice, in the old fashion, and worked with a creaking jar.

‘I had crooned thae last words,

And Christ receive thy saul,

when the door opened, as ye saw it did the now. It is weel kenned that a corp canna lie still in a room with the door hafflins open. I rose to lock it, the catch is crazy. I was backing to the door, with my face to the feet o’ the corp. I saw them move backwards, slow they moved, and my heart stood still in my breist. Then I saw’ — here she stepped to the head of the bed and drew apart the curtains, which opened in the middle— ‘I saw the curtain was open, and naething but blackness ahint it. Ye see, my Lord, ahint the bed-heid is the entrance o’ the auld secret passage. The stanes hae lang syne fallen in, and closed it, but my Lord never would have the hole wa’ed up. “There’s nae draught, Jean, or nane to mention, and I never was wastefu’ in needless repairs,” he aye said. Weel, when I looked that way, his face, down to the chafts, was within the blackness, and aye draw, drawing further ben. Then, I shame to say it, a sair dwawm cam ower me, I gae a bit chokit cry, and I kenned nae mair till I cam to mysel, a' the candles were out, and the chamber was mirk and lown. I heard the skirl o' a passing train, and I crap to the bed, and the skirl kind o' reminded me o' living folk, and I felt a' ower the bed wi' my hands. There was nae corp. Ye ken that the Enemy has power, when a corp lies in a room, and the door is hafflins closed. Whiles they sit up, and grin and yammer. I hae kenned that. Weel, how long I had lain in the dwawm I canna say. The train that skirled maun hae been a coal train that rins by about half-past three in the morning. There was a styme o' licht that streeled in at the open door, frae a candle your lordship set on a table in the lobby; the auld lord would hae nae lichts in the house after the ten hours. Sae I got to the door, and grippit to the candle, and flew off to your lordship's room, and the rest ye ken.'

'Thank you, very much, Mrs. Bower,' said Logan. 'You quite understand, Merton, don't you?'

'I thoroughly understand your story, Mrs. Bower,' said Merton.

'We need not keep you any longer, Mrs. Bower,' said Logan. 'Nobody need sit up for us; you must be terribly fatigued.'

'You wunna forget to rake out the ha' fire, my lord?' said the old lady, 'I wush your Lordship a sound sleep, and you, sir,' so she curtsied and went, Logan unlocking the door.

'And I was in London this morning!' said Merton, drawing a long breath.

'You're over Tweed, now, old man,' answered Logan, with patriotic satisfaction.

'Don't go yet,' said Merton. 'You examined the carpet of the room; no traces there of these odd muffled foot-coverings you found in the snow?'

'Not a trace of any kind. The salt was spilt, some of it lay on the floor. The plate was not broken.'

'If they came in, it would be barefoot,' said Merton.

'Of course the police left traces of official boots,' said Logan. 'Where are they now — the policemen, I mean?'

'Two are to sleep in the kitchen.'

'They found out nothing?'

'Of course not.'

'Let me look at the hole in the wall.' Merton climbed on to the bed and entered the hole. It was about six feet long by four wide. Stones had fallen in, at the back, and had closed the passage in a rough way, indeed what extent of the floor of the passage existed was huddled with stones. Merton examined the sides of the passage, which were mere rubble.

‘Have you looked at the floor beneath those fallen stones?’ Merton asked.

‘No, by Jove, I never thought of that,’ said Logan.

‘How could they have been stirred without the old woman hearing the noise?’

‘How do you know they were there before the marquis’s death?’ asked Merton, adding, ‘this hole was not swept and dusted regularly. Either the entrance is beneath me, or— “the Enemy had power” — as Mrs. Bower says.’

‘You must be right,’ said Logan. ‘I’ll have the stones removed to-morrow. The thing is clear. The passage leads to somewhere outside of the house. There’s an abandoned coal mine hard by, on the east. Nothing can be simpler.’

‘When once you see it,’ said Merton.

‘Come and have a whisky and soda,’ said Logan.

III. A Romance of Bradshaw

Merton slept very well in the turret room. He was aroused early by noises which he interpreted as caused by the arrival of the London detectives. But he only turned round, like the sluggard, and slumbered till Logan aroused him at eight o'clock. He descended about a quarter to nine, breakfast was at nine, and he found Logan looking much disturbed.

'They don't waste time,' said Logan, handing to Merton a letter in an opened envelope. Logan's hand trembled.

'Typewritten address, London postmark,' said Merton. 'To Robert Logan, Esq., at Kirkburn Keep, Drem, Scotland.'

Merton read the letter aloud; there was no date of place, but there were the words:

'March 6, 2.45 p.m.
'Sir, — Perhaps I ought to say my Lord—'

'What a fool the fellow is,' said Merton.

'Why?'

'Shows he is an educated man.'

'You may obtain news as to the mortal remains of your kinsman, the late Marquis of Restalrig, and as to his Will, by walking in the Burlington Arcade on March 11, between the hours of three and half-past three p.m. You must be attired in full mourning costume, carrying a glove in your left hand, and a black cane, with a silver top, in your right. A lady will drop her purse beside you. You will accost her.'

Here the letter, which was typewritten, ended.

'You won't?' said Merton. 'Never meet a black-mailer halfway.'

'I wouldn't,' said Logan. 'But look here!'

He gave Merton another letter, in outward respect exactly similar to the first, except that the figure 2 was typewritten in the left corner. The letter ran thus:

'March 6, 4.25 p.m.

'Sir, — I regret to have to trouble you with a second communication, but my former letter was posted before a change occurred in the circumstances. You will be pleased to hear that I have no longer the affliction of speaking of your noble kinsman as "*the late* Marquis of Restalrig."'

'Oh my prophetic soul!' said Merton, 'I guessed at first that he was not dead after all! Only catalepsy.' He went on reading: 'His Lordship recovered consciousness in circumstances which I shall not pain you by describing. He is now doing as well as can be expected, and may have several years of useful life before him. I need not point out to you that the conditions of the negotiation are now greatly altered. On the one hand, my partners and myself may seem to occupy the position of players who work a double ruff at whist. We are open to the marquis's offers for release, and to yours for his eternal absence from the scene of life and enjoyment. But it is by no means impossible that you may have scruples about outbidding your kinsman, especially as, if you did, you would, by the very fact, become subject to perpetual "black-mailing" at our hands. I speak plainly, as one man of the world to another. It is also a drawback to our position that you could attain your ends without blame or scandal (your ends being, of course, if the law so determines, immediate succession to the property of the marquis), by merely pushing us, with the aid of the police, to a fatal extreme. We are, therefore reluctantly obliged to conclude that we cannot put the marquis's life up to auction between you and him, as my partners, in the first flush of triumph, had conceived. But any movement on your side against us will be met in such a way that the consequences, both to yourself and your kinsman, will prove to the last degree prejudicial. For the rest, the arrangements specified in my earlier note of this instant (dated 2.45 P. M.) remain in force.'

Merton returned the letter to Logan. Their faces were almost equally blank.

'Let me think!' said Merton. He turned, and walked to the window. Logan re-read the letters and waited. Presently Merton came back to the fireside. 'You see, after all, this resolves itself into the ordinary dilemma of brigandage. We do not want to pay ransom, enormous ransom probably, if we can rescue the marquis, and destroy the gang. But the marquis himself—'

'Oh, *he* would never offer terms that they would accept,' said Logan, with conviction. 'But I would stick at no ransom, of course.'

'But suppose that I see a way of defeating the scoundrels, would you let me risk it?'

'If you neither imperil yourself nor him too much.'

'Never mind me, I like it. And, as for him, they will be very loth to destroy their winning card.'

'You'll be cautious?'

'Naturally, but, as this place and the stations are sure to be watched, as the trains are slow, local, and inconvenient, and as, thanks to the economy of the marquis, you have no horses, it will be horribly difficult for me to leave the house and get to London and to work without their spotting me. It is absolutely essential to my scheme that I should not be known to be in town, and that I should be supposed to be here. I'll think it out. In the meantime we must do what we can to throw dust in the eyes of the enemy. Wire an identical advertisement to all the London papers; I'll write it.'

Merton went to a table on which lay some writing materials, and wrote: —

'BURLINGTON ARCADE. SILVER-TOPPED EBONY STICK. Any offer made by the other party will be doubled on receipt of that consignment uninjured. Will meet the lady. Traps shall be kept here till after the date you mention. CHURCH BROOK.'

'Now,' said Merton, 'he will see that Church Brook is Kirkburn, and that you will be liberal. And he will understand that the detectives are not to return to London. You did not show them the letters?'

'Of course not till you saw them, and I won't.'

'And, if nothing can be done before the eleventh, why you must promenade in the Burlington Arcade.'

'You see one weak point in your offers, don't you?'

'Which?'

'Why, suppose they do release the marquis, how am I to get the money to pay double his offer? He won't stump up and recoup me.'

Merton laughed. 'We must risk it,' he said. 'And, in the changed circumstances, the tin might be raised on a post-obit. But *he* won't bid high; you may double safely enough.'

On considering these ideas Logan looked relieved. 'Now,' he asked, 'about your plan; is it following the emu's feather?'

Merton nodded. 'But I must do it alone. The detectives must stay here. Now if I leave, dressed as I am, by the 10.49, I'll be tracked all the way. Is there anybody in the country whom you can absolutely trust?'

'Yes, there's Bower, the gardener, the son of these two feudal survivals, and there is *his* son.'

'What is young Bower?'

'A miner in the collieries; the mine is near the house.'

'Is he about my size? Have you seen him?'

'I saw him last night; he was one of the watchers.'

'Is he near my size?'

'A trifle broader, otherwise near enough.'

'What luck!' said Merton, adding, 'well, I can't start by the 10.49. I'm ill. I'm in bed. Order my breakfast in bed, send Mrs. Bower, and come up with her yourself.'

Merton rushed up the turnpike stair; in two minutes he was undressed, and between the sheets. There he lay, reading Bradshaw, pages 670, 671.

Presently there was a knock at the door, and Logan entered, followed by Mrs. Bower with the breakfast tray.

Merton addressed her at once.

‘Mrs. Bower, we know that we can trust you absolutely.’

‘To the death, sir — me and mine.’

‘Well, I am not ill, but people must think I am ill. Is your grandson on the night shift or the day shift?’

‘Laird is on the day shift, sir.’

‘When does he leave his work?’

‘About six, sir.’

‘That is good. As soon as he appears—’

‘I’ll wait for him at the pit’s mouth, sir.’

‘Thank you. You will take him to his house; he lives with your son?’

‘Yes, sir, with his father.’

‘Make him change his working clothes — but he need not wash his face much — and bring him here. Mr. Logan, I mean Lord Fastcastle, will want him. Now, Mrs. Bower — you see I trust you absolutely — what he is wanted for is *this*. I shall dress in your grandson’s clothes, I shall blacken my hands and face slightly, and I must get to Drem. Have I time to reach the station by ten minutes past seven?’

‘By fast walking, sir.’

‘Mr. Logan and your grandson — your grandson in my clothes — will walk later to your son’s house, as they find a chance, unobserved, say about eleven at night. They will stay there for some time. Then they will be joined by some of the police, who will accompany Mr. Logan home again. Your grandson will go to his work as usual in the morning. That is all. You quite understand? You have nothing to do but to bring your grandson here, dressed as I said, as soon as he leaves his work. Oh, wait a moment! Is your grandson a teetotaller?’

‘He’s like the other lads, sir.’

‘All the better. Does he smoke?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘Then pray bring me a pipe of his and some of his tobacco. And, ah yes, does he possess such a thing as an old greatcoat?’

‘His auld ane’s sair worn, sir.’

‘Never mind, he had better walk up in it. He has a better one?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘I think that is all,’ said Merton. ‘You understand, Mrs. Bower, that I am going away dressed as your grandson, while your grandson, dressed as myself, returns to his house to-night, and to work to-morrow. But it is not to be known that I *have* gone away. I am to be supposed ill in bed here for a day or two. You will bring my meals into the room at the usual hours, and Logan — of course you can trust Dr. Douglas?'

'I do.'

'Then he had better be summoned to my sick bed here to-morrow. I may be so ill that he will have to call twice. That will keep up the belief that I am here.'

'Good idea,' said Logan, as the old woman left the room. 'What had I better do now?'

'Oh, send your telegrams — the advertisements — to the London papers. They can go by the trap you ordered for me, that I am too ill to go in. Then you will have to interview the detectives, take them into the laird's chamber, and, if they start my theory about the secret entrance being under the fallen stones, let them work away at removing them. If they don't start it, put them up to it; anything to keep them employed and prevent them from asking questions in the villages.'

'But, Merton, I understand your leaving in disguise; still, why go first to Edinburgh?'

'The trains from your station to town do not fit. You can look.' And Merton threw Bradshaw to Logan, who caught it neatly.

When he had satisfied himself, Logan said, 'The shops will be closed in Edinburgh, it will be after eight when you arrive. How will you manage about getting into decent clothes?'

'I have my idea; but, as soon as you can get rid of the detectives, come back here; I want you to coach me in broad Scots words and pronunciation. I shall concoct imaginary dialogues. I say, this is great fun.'

'Dod, man, aw 'm the lad that'll lairn ye the pronoonciation,' said Logan, and he was going.

'Wait,' said Merton, 'sign me a paper giving me leave to treat about the ransom. And promise that, if I don't reappear by the eleventh, you won't negotiate at all.'

'Not likely I will,' said Logan.

Merton lay in bed inventing imaginary dialogues to be rendered into Scots as occasion served. Presently Logan brought him a little book named *Mansie Waugh*.

'That is our lingo here,' he said; and Merton studied the work carefully, marking some phrases with a pencil.

In about an hour Logan reported that the detectives were at work in the secret passage. The lesson in the Scots of the Lothians began, accompanied by sounds of muffled laughter. Not for two or three centuries can the turret chamber at

Kirkburn have heard so much merriment.

The afternoon passed in this course of instruction. Merton was a fairly good mimic, and Logan felt at last that he could not readily be detected for an Englishman. Six o'clock had scarcely struck when Mrs. Bower's grandson was ushered into the bedroom. The exchange of clothes took place, Merton dressing as the young Bower undressed. The detectives, who had found nothing, were being entertained by Mrs. Bower at dinner.

'I know how the trap in the secret passage is worked,' said Merton, 'but you keep them hunting for it.'

Had the worthy detectives been within earshot the yells of laughter echoing in the turret as the men dressed must have suggested strange theories to their imaginations.

'Larks!' said Merton, as he blackened his face with coal dust.

Dismissing young Bower, who was told to wait in the hall, Merton made his final arrangements. 'You will communicate with me under cover to Trevor,' he said. He took a curious mediæval ring that he always wore from his ringer, and tied it to a piece of string, which he hung round his neck, tucking all under his shirt. Then he arranged his thick comforter so as to hide the back of his head and neck (he had bitten his nails and blackened them with coal).

'Logan, I only want a bottle of whisky, the cork drawn and loose in the bottle, and a few dirty Scotch one pound notes; and, oh! has Mrs. Bower a pack of cards?'

Having been supplied with these properties, and said farewell to Logan, Merton stole downstairs, walked round the house, entered the kitchen by the back door, and said to Mrs. Bower, 'Grannie, I maun be ganging.'

'My grandson, gentlemen,' said Mrs. Bower to the detectives. Then to her grandson, she remarked, 'Hae, there's a jeely piece for you'; and Merton, munching a round of bread covered with jam, walked down the steep avenue. He knew the house he was to enter, the gardener's lodge, and also that he was to approach it by the back way, and go in at the back door. The inmates expected him and understood the scheme; presently he went out by the door into the village street, still munching at his round of bread.

To such lads and lassies as hailed him in the waning light he replied gruffly, explaining that he had 'a sair hoast,' that is, a bad cough, from which he had observed that young Bower was suffering. He was soon outside of the village, and walking at top speed towards the station. Several times he paused, in shadowy corners of the hedges, and listened. There was no sound of pursuing feet. He was not being followed, but, of course, he might be dogged at the station. The enemy would have their spies there: if they had them in the village his disguise had deceived them. He ran, whenever no passer-by was in sight; through the villages he walked, whistling 'Wull ye no come back again!' He reached the station with three minutes to spare, took a third-class ticket, and went on to the platform. Several people were waiting, among them four or five rough-looking miners, probably spies. He strolled towards the end of the platform, and when the train entered, leaped into a third-class carriage which was nearly full. Turning at the door, he saw the rough customers making for the same carriage. 'Come on,' cried Merton, with a slight touch of intoxication in his voice; 'come on billies, a' freens here!' and he cast a glance of affection behind him at the other occupants of the carriage. The roughs pressed in.

'I won't have it,' cried a testy old gentleman, who was economically travelling by third-class, 'there are only three seats vacant. The rest of the train is nearly empty. Hi, guard! station-master, hi!'

'A' *freens* here,' repeated Merton stolidly, taking his whisky bottle from his greatcoat pocket. Two of the roughs had entered, but the guard persuaded the other two that they must bestow themselves elsewhere. The old gentleman glared at Merton, who was standing up, the cork of the bottle between his teeth, as the train began to move. He staggered and fell back into his seat.

'We are na fou, we're no *that* fou,'

Merton chanted, directing his speech to the old gentleman,

'But just a wee drap in oor 'ee!'

'The curse of Scotland,' muttered the old gentleman, whether with reference to alcohol or to Robert Burns, is uncertain.

'The Curse o' Scotland,' said Merton, 'that's the nine o' diamonds. I hae the cairts on me, maybe ye'd take a hand, sir, at Beggar ma Neebour, or Catch the Ten? Ye needna be feared, a can pay gin I lose.' He dragged out his cards, and a handful of silver.

The rough customers between whom Merton was sitting began to laugh hoarsely. The old gentleman frowned.

'I shall change my carriage at the next station,' he said, 'and I shall report you for gambling.'

'A' freens!' said Merton, as if horrified by the austere reception of his cordial advances. 'Wha's gaumlin'? We mauna play, billies, till he's gane. An unco pernicketty auld carl, thon ane,' he remarked, *sotto voce*. 'But there's naething in the Company's by-laws again refraishments,' Merton added. He uncorked his bottle, made a pretence of sucking at it, and passed it to his neighbours, the rough customers. They imbibed with freedom.

The carriage was very dark, the lamp 'moved like a moon in a wane,' as Merton might have quoted in happier circumstances. The rough customers glared at him, but his cap had a peak, and he wore his comforter high.

'Man, ye're the kind o' lad I like,' said one of the rough customers.

'A' freens!' said Merton, again applying himself to the bottle, and passing it. 'Ony ither gentleman tak' a sook?' asked Merton, including all the passengers in his hospitable glance. 'Nane o' ye dry?

'Oh! fill yer ain glass,
And let the jug pass,
Hoo d'ye ken but yer neighbour's dry?'

Merton carolled.

'Thon's no a Scotch lilt,' remarked one of the roughs.

'A ken it's Irish,' said Merton. 'But, billie, the whusky's Scotch!'

The train slowed and the old gentleman got out. From the platform he stormed at Merton.

'Ye're no an awakened character, ma freend,' answered Merton. 'Gude nicht to ye! Gie ma love to the gude wife and the weans!'

The train pursued her course.

'Aw 'm saying, billie, aw 'm saying,' remarked one of the roughs, thrusting his dirty beard into Merton's face.

'Weel, *be* saying,' said Merton.

'You're no Lairdie Bower, ye ken, ye haena the neb o' him.'

'And wha the deil said a *was* Lairdie Bower? Aw 'm a Lanerick man. Lairdie's at hame wi' a sair hoast,' answered Merton.

'But ye're wearing Lairdie Bower's auld big coat.'

'And what for no? Lairdie has anither coat, a brawer yin, and he lent me the auld yin because the nichts is cauld, and I hae a hoast ma'sel! Div *ye* ken Lairdie Bower? I've been wi' his auld faither and the lasses half the day, but speakin's awfu' dry work.'

Here Merton repeated the bottle trick, and showed symptoms of going to sleep, his head rolling on to the shoulder of the rough.

'Haud up, man!' said the rough, withdrawing the support.

'A' freens here,' remarked Merton, drawing a dirty clay pipe from his pocket. 'Hae ye a spunk?'

The rough provided him with a match, and he killed some time, while Preston Pans was passed, in filling and lighting his pipe.

'Ye're a Lanerick man?' asked the inquiring rough.

'Ay, a Hamilton frae Moss End. But I'm taking the play. Ma auld tittie has dee'd and left me some siller,' Merton dragged a handful of dirty notes out of his trousers pocket. ‘I’ve been to see the auld Bowers, but Lairdie was on the shift.’

‘And ye’re ganging to Embro?’

‘When we cam’ into Embro Toon
  We were a seemly sicht to see;
Ma luve was in the —

I dinna mind what ma luve was in —
‘And I ma’sel in cramoisie,’

sang Merton, who had the greatest fear of being asked local questions about Moss End and Motherwell. ‘I dinna ken what cramoisie is, ma’sel’,’ he added. ‘Hae a drink!’

‘Man, ye’re a bonny singer,’ said the rough, who, hitherto, had taken no hand in the conversation.

‘Ma faither was a precentor,’ said Merton, and so, in fact, Mr. Merton *père* had, for a short time, been — of Salisbury Cathedral.

They were approaching Portobello, where Merton rushed to the window, thrust half of his body out and indulged in the raucous and meaningless yells of the festive artisan. Thus he tided over a rather prolonged wait, but, when the train moved on, the inquiring rough returned to the charge. He was suspicious, and also was drunk, and obstinate with all the brainless obstinacy of intoxication.

‘Aw ‘m sayin’,’ he remarked to Merton, ‘you’re no Lairdie Bower.’

‘Hear till the man! Aw ‘m Tammy Hamilton, o’ Moss End in Lanerick. Aw ‘m ganging to see ma Jean.

    ’For day or night
    Ma fancy’s flight
  Is ever wi’ ma Jean —
Ma bonny, bonny, flat-footed Jean,’

sang Merton, gliding from the strains of Robert Burns into those of Mr. Boothby. ‘Jean’s a Lanerick wumman,’ he added, ‘she’s in service in the Pleasance. Aw ‘m ganging to my Jo. Ye’ll a’ hae Jos, billies?’

‘Aw ‘m sayin’,’ the intoxicated rough persisted, ‘ye’re no a Lanerick man. Ye’re the English gentleman birkie that cam’ to Kirkburn yestreen. Or else ye’re ane o’ the polis’ (police).

‘*Me* ane o’ the polis! Aw ‘m askin’ the company, *div* a look like a polisman? *Div* a look like an English birkie, or ane o’ the gentry?’

The other passengers, decent people, thus appealed to, murmured negatives, and shook their heads. Merton certainly did not resemble a policeman, an

Englishman, or a gentleman.

‘Ye see naebody lippens to ye,’ Merton went on. ‘Man, if we were na a’ freens, a wad gie ye a jaud atween yer twa een! But ye’ve been drinking. Tak anither sook!’

The rough did not reject the conciliatory offer.

‘The whiskey’s low,’ said Merton, holding up the bottle to the light, ‘but there’s mair at Embro’ station.’

They were now drawing up at the station. Merton floundered out, threw his arms round the necks of each of the roughs, yelled to their companions in the next carriage to follow, and staggered into the third-class refreshment room. Here he leaned against the counter and feebly ogled the attendant nymph.

‘Ma lonny bassie, a mean ma bonny lassie,’ he said, ‘gie’s five gills, five o’ the Auld Kirk’ (whisky).

‘Hoots man!’ he heard one of the roughs remark to another. ‘This falla’s no the English birkie. English he canna be.’

‘But aiblins he’s ane o’ oor ain polis,’ said the man of suspicions.

‘Nane o’ oor polis has the gumption; and him as fou as a fiddler.’

Merton, waving his glass, swallowed its contents at three gulps. He then fell on the floor, scrambled to his feet, tumbled out, and dashed his own whisky bottle through the window of the refreshment room.

‘Me ane o’ the polis!’ he yelled, and was staggering towards the exit, when he was collared by two policemen, attracted by the noise. He embraced one of them, murmuring ‘ma bonny Jean!’ and then doubled up, his head lolling on his shoulder. His legs and arms jerked convulsively, and he had at last to be carried off, in the manner known as ‘The Frog’s March,’ by four members of the force. The roughs followed, like chief mourners, Merton thought, at the head of the attendant crowd.

‘There’s an end o’ your clash about the English gentleman,’ Merton heard the quieter of his late companions observe to the obstinate inquirer. ‘But he’s a bonny singer. And noo, wull ye tell me hoo we’re to win back to Drem the nicht?’

‘Dod, we’ll make a nicht o’t,’ said the other, as Merton was carried into the police-station.

He permitted himself to be lifted into one of the cells, and then remarked, in the most silvery tones:

‘Very many thanks, my good men. I need not give you any more trouble, except by asking you, if possible, to get me some hot water and soap, and to invite the inspector to favour me with his company.’

The men nearly dropped Merton, but, finding his feet, he stood up and smiled blandly.

‘Pray make no apologies,’ he said. ‘It is rather I who ought to apologise.’

‘He’s no drucken, and he’s no Scotch,’ remarked one of the policemen.

‘But he’ll pass the nicht here, and maybe apologise to the Baillie in the morning,’ said another.

‘Oh, pardon me, you mistake me,’ said Merton. ‘This is not a stupid practical joke.’

‘It’s no a very gude ane,’ said the policeman.

Merton took out a handful of gold. ‘I wish to pay for the broken window at once,’ he said. ‘It was a necessary part of the *mise en scène*, of the stage effect, you know. To call your attention.’

‘Ye’ll settle wi’ the Baillie in the morning,’ said the policeman.

Things were looking untoward.

‘Look here,’ said Merton, ‘I quite understand your point of view, it does credit to your intelligence. You take me for an English tourist, behaving as I have done by way of a joke, or for a bet?’

‘That’s it, sir,’ said the spokesman.

‘Well, it does look like that. But which of you is the senior officer here?’

‘Me, sir,’ said the last speaker.

‘Very well, if you can be so kind as to call the officer in charge of the station, or even one of senior standing — the higher the better — I can satisfy him as to my identity, and as to my reasons for behaving as I have done. I assure you that it is a matter of the very gravest importance. If the inspector, when he has seen me, permits, I have no objections to you, or to all of you hearing what I have to say. But you will understand that this is a matter for his own discretion. If I were merely playing the fool, you must see that I have nothing to gain by giving additional annoyance and offence.’

‘Very well, sir, I will bring the officer in charge,’ said the policeman.

‘Just tell him about my arrest and so on,’ said Merton.

In a few minutes he returned with his superior.

‘Well, my man, what’s a’ this aboot?’ said that officer sternly.

‘If you can give me an interview, alone, for five minutes, I shall enlighten you,’ said Merton.

The officer was a huge and stalwart man. He threw his eye over Merton. ‘Wait in the yaird,’ he said to his minions, who retreated rather reluctantly. ‘Weel, speak up,’ said the officer.

‘It is the body snatching case at Kirkburn,’ said Merton.

‘Do ye mean that ye’re an English detective?’

‘No, merely a friend of Mr. Logan’s who left Kirkburn this evening. I have business to do for him in London in connection with the case — business that nobody can do but myself — and the house was watched. I escaped in the disguise which you see me wearing, and had to throw off a gang of ruffians that accompanied me in the train by pretending to be drunk. I could only shake them off and destroy the suspicions which they expressed by getting arrested.'

'It's a queer story,' said the policeman.

'It *is* a queer story, but, speaking without knowledge, I think your best plan is to summon the chief of your detective department, I need his assistance. And I can prove my identity to him — to *you*, if you like, but you know best what is official etiquette.'

'I'll telephone for him, sir.'

'You are very obliging. All this is confidential, you know. Expense is no object to Mr. Logan, and he will not be ungrateful if strict secrecy is preserved. But, of all things, I want a wash.'

'All right, sir,' said the policeman, and in a few minutes Merton's head, hands, and neck, were restored to their pristine propriety.

'No more kailyard talk for me,' he thought, with satisfaction.

The head of the detective department arrived in no long time. He was in evening dress. Merton rose and bowed.

'What's your story, sir?' the chief asked; 'it has brought me from a dinner party at my own house.'

'I deeply regret it,' said Merton, 'though, for my purpose, it is the merest providence.'

'What do you mean, sir?'

'Your subordinate has doubtless told you all that I told him?'

The chief nodded.

'Do you — I mean as an official — believe me?'

'I would be glad of proof of your personal identity.'

'That is easily given. You may know Mr. Lumley, the Professor of Toxicology in the University here?'

'I have met him often on matters of our business.'

'He is an old college friend of mine, and can remove any doubts you may entertain. His wife is a tall woman luckily,' added Merton to himself, much to the chief's bewilderment.

'Mr. Lumley's word would quite satisfy me,' said the chief.

'Very well, pray lend me your attention. This affair—'

'The body snatching at Kirkburn?' asked the chief.

'Exactly,' said Merton. 'This affair is very well organised. Your house is probably being observed. Now what I propose is *this*. I can go nowhere dressed as I am. You will, if you please, first send a constable, in uniform, to your house with orders to wait till you return. Next, I shall dress, by your permission, in any spare uniform you may have here and in that costume I shall leave this office and accompany you to your house in a closed cab. You will enter it, bring out a hat and cloak, come into the cab, and I shall put them on, leaving my policeman's helmet in the cab, which will wait. Then, minutes later, the constable will come out, take the cab, and drive to any police office you please. Once within your house, I shall exchange my uniform for any old evening suit you may be able to lend me, and, when your guests have departed, you and I will drive together to Professor Lumley's, where he will identify me. After that, my course is perfectly clear, and I need give you no further trouble.'

'It is too complicated, sir,' said the chief, smiling. 'I don't know your name?'

'Merton,' said our hero, 'and yours?'

'Macnab. I can lend you a plain suit of morning clothes from here, and we don't want the stratagem of the constable. You don't even need the extra trouble of putting on evening dress in my house.'

'How very fortunate,' said Merton, and in a quarter of an hour he was attired as a simple citizen, and was driving to the house of Mr. Macnab. Here he was merely introduced to the guests — it was a men's party — as a gentleman from England on business. The guests had too much tact to tarry long, and by eleven o'clock the chief and Merton were ringing at the door bell of Professor Lumley. The servant knew both of them, and ushered them into the professor's study. He was reading examination papers. Mrs. Lumley had not returned from a party. Lumley greeted Merton warmly.

'I am passing through Edinburgh, and thought I might find you at home,' Merton said.

'Mr. Macnab,' said Lumley, shaking hands with the chief, 'you have not taken my friend into custody?'

'No, professor; Mr. Merton will tell you that he is released, and I'll be going home.'

'You won't stop and smoke?'

'No, I should be *de trop*,' answered the chief; 'good night, professor; good night, Mr. Merton.'

'But the broken window?'

'Oh, we'll settle that, and let you have the bill.'

Merton gave his club address, and the chief shook hands and departed.

'Now, what *have* you been doing, Merton?' asked Lumley.

Merton briefly explained the whole set of circumstances, and added, 'Now, Lumley, you are my sole hope. You can give me a bed to-night?'

‘With all the pleasure in the world.’

‘And lend me a set of Mrs. Lumley’s raiment and a lady’s portmanteau?’

‘Are you quite mad?’

‘No, but I must get to London undiscovered, and, for certain reasons, with which I need not trouble you, that is absolutely the only possible way. You remember, at Oxford, I made up fairly well for female parts.’

‘Is there absolutely no other way?’

‘None, I have tried every conceivable plan, mentally. Mourning is best, and a veil.’

At this moment Mrs. Lumley’s cab was heard, returning from her party.

‘Run down and break it to Mrs. Lumley,’ said Merton. ‘Luckily we have often acted together.’

‘Luckily you are a favourite of hers,’ said Lumley.

In ten minutes the pair entered the study. Mrs. Lumley, a tall lady, as Merton had said, came in, laughing and blushing.

‘I shall drive with you myself to the train. My maid must be in the secret,’ she said.

‘She is an old acquaintance of mine,’ said Merton. ‘But I think you had better not come with me to the station. Nobody is likely to see me, leaving your house about nine, with my veil down. But, if any one *does* see me, he must take me for you.’

‘Oh, it is I who am running up to town incognita?’

‘For a day or two — you will lend me a portmanteau to give local colour?’

‘With pleasure,’ said Mrs. Lumley.

‘And Lumley will telegraph to Trevor to meet you at King’s Cross, with his brougham, at 6.15 P. M.?’

This also was agreed to, and so ended this romance of Bradshaw.

IV. Greek meets Greek

At about twenty-five minutes to seven, on March 7, the express entered King’s Cross. A lady of fashionable appearance, with her veil down, gazed anxiously out of the window of a reserved carriage. She presently detected the person for whom she was looking, and waved her parasol. Trevor, lifting his hat, approached; the lady had withdrawn into the carriage, and he entered.

‘Mum’s the word!’ said the lady.

‘Why, it’s — hang it all, it’s Merton!’

‘Your sister is staying with you?’ asked Merton eagerly.

‘Yes; but what on earth—’

‘I’ll tell you in the brougham. But you take a weight off my bosom! I am going to stay with you for a day or two; and now my reputation (or Mrs. Lumley’s) is safe. Your servants never saw Mrs. Lumley?’

‘Never,’ said Trevor.

‘All right! My portmanteau has her initials, S. M. L., and a crimson ticket; send a porter for it. Now take me to the brougham.’

Trevor offered his arm and carried the dressing-bag; the lady was led to his carriage. The portmanteau was recovered, and they drove away.

‘Give me a cigarette,’ said Merton, ‘and I’ll tell you all about it.’

He told Trevor all about it — except about the emu’s feathers.

‘But a male disguise would have done as well,’ said Trevor

‘Not a bit. It would not have suited what I have to do in town. I cannot tell you why. The affair is complex. I have to settle it, if I can, so that neither Logan nor any one else — except the body-snatcher and polite letter-writer — shall ever know how I managed it.’

Trevor had to be content with this reply. He took Merton, when they arrived, into the smoking-room, rang for tea, and ‘squared his sister,’ as he said, in the drawing-room. The pair were dining out, and after a solitary dinner, Merton (in a tea-gown) occupied himself with literary composition. He put his work in a large envelope, sealed it, marked it with a St. Andrew’s cross, and, when Trevor returned, asked him to put it in his safe. ‘Two days after to-morrow, if I do not appear, you must open the envelope and read the contents,’ he said.

After luncheon on the following day — a wet day — Miss Trevor and Merton (who was still arrayed as Mrs. Lumley) went out shopping. Miss Trevor then drove off to pay a visit (Merton could not let her know his next move), and he himself, his veil down, took a four-wheeled cab, and drove to Madame Claudine's. He made one or two purchases, and then asked for the head of the establishment, an Irish lady. To her he confided that he had to break a piece of distressing family news to Miss Markham, of the cloak department; that young lady was summoned; Madame Claudine, with a face of sympathy, ushered them into her private room, and went off to see a customer. Miss Markham was pale and trembling; Merton himself felt agitated.

'Is it about my father, or—' the girl asked.

'Pray be calm,' said Merton. 'Sit down. Both are well.'

The girl started. 'Your voice—' she said.

'Exactly,' said Merton; 'you know me.' And taking off his glove, he showed a curious mediæval ring, familiar to his friends. 'I could get at you in no other way than this,' he said, 'and it was absolutely necessary to see you.'

'What is it? I know it is about my father,' said the girl.

'He has done us a great service,' said Merton soothingly. He had guessed what the 'distressing circumstances' were in which the marquis had been restored to life. Perhaps the reader guesses? A discreet person, who has secretly to take charge of a corpse of pecuniary value, adopts certain measures (discovered by the genius of ancient Egypt), for its preservation. These measures, doubtless, had revived the marquis, who thus owed his life to his kidnapper.

'He has, I think, done us a great service,' Merton repeated; and the girl's colour returned to her beautiful face, that had been of marble.

'Yet there are untoward circumstances,' Merton admitted. 'I wish to ask you two or three questions. I must give you my word of honour that I have no intention of injuring your father. The reverse; I am really acting in his interests. Now, first, he has practised in Australia. May I ask if he was interested in the Aborigines?'

'Yes, very much,' said the girl, entirely puzzled. 'But,' she added, 'he was never in the Labour trade.'

'Blackbird catching?' said Merton. 'No. But he had, perhaps, a collection of native arms and implements?'

'Yes; a very fine one.'

'Among them were, perhaps, some curious native shoes, made of emu's feathers — they are called *Interlinia* or, by white men, *Kurdaitcha* shoes?'

'I don't remember the name,' said Miss Markham, 'but he had quite a number of them. The natives wear them to conceal their tracks when they go on a revenge party.'

Merton's guess was now a certainty. The marquis had spoken of Miss

Markham's father as a 'landlouping' Australian doctor. The footmarks of the feathered shoes in the snow at Kirkburn proved that an article which only an Australian (or an anthropologist) was likely to know of had been used by the body-snatchers.

Merton reflected. Should he ask the girl whether she had told her father what, on the night of the marquis's appearance at the office, Logan had told her? He decided that this was superfluous; of course she had told her father, and the doctor had taken his measures (and the body of the marquis) accordingly. To ask a question would only be to enlighten the girl.

'That is very interesting,' said Merton. 'Now, I won't pretend that I disguised myself in this way merely to ask you about Australian curiosities. The truth is that, in your father's interests, I must have an interview with him.'

'You don't mean to do him any harm?' asked the girl anxiously.

'I have given you my word of honour. As things stand, I do not conceal from you that I am the only person who can save him from a situation which might be disagreeable, and that is what I want to do.'

'He will be quite safe if he sees you?' asked the girl, wringing her hands.

'That is the only way in which he can be safe, I am afraid.'

'You would not use a girl against her own father?'

'I would sooner die where I sit,' said Merton earnestly. 'Surely you can trust a friend of Mr. Logan's — who, by the bye, is very well.'

'Oh, oh,' cried the girl, 'I read that story of the stolen corpse in the papers. I understand!'

'It was almost inevitable that you should understand,' said Merton.

'But then,' said the girl, 'what did you mean by saying that my father has done you a great service. You are deceiving me. I have said too much. This is base!' Miss Markham rose, her eyes and cheeks burning.

'What I told you is the absolute and entire truth,' said Merton, nearly as red as she was.

'Then,' exclaimed Miss Markham, 'this is baser yet! You must mean that by doing what you think he has done my father has somehow enabled Robert — Mr. Logan — to come into the marquis's property. Perhaps the marquis left no will, or the will — is gone! And do you believe that Mr. Logan will thank you for acting in this way?' She stood erect, her hand resting on the back of a chair, indignant and defiant.

'In the first place, I have a written power from Mr. Logan to act as I think best. Next, I have not even informed myself as to how the law of Scotland stands in regard to the estate of a man who dies leaving no will. Lastly, Miss Markham, I am extremely hampered by the fact that Mr. Logan has not the remotest suspicion of what I suspected — and now know — to be the truth as to the disappearance of his cousin’s body. I successfully concealed my idea from Mr. Logan, so as to avoid giving pain to him and you. I did my best to conceal it from you, though I never expected to succeed. And now, if you wish to know how your father has conferred a benefit on Mr. Logan, I must tell you, though I would rather be silent. Mr. Logan is aware of the benefit, but will never, if you can trust yourself, suspect his benefactor.’

‘I can never, never see him again,’ the girl sobbed.

‘Time is flying,’ said Merton, who was familiar, in works of fiction, with the situation indicated by the girl. ‘Can you trust me, or not?’ he asked, ‘My single object is secrecy and your father’s safety. I owe that to my friend, to you, and even, as it happens, to your father. Can you enable me, dressed as I am, to have an interview with him?’

‘You will not hurt him? You will not give him up? You will not bring the police on him?’

‘I am acting as I do precisely for the purpose of keeping the police off him. They have discovered nothing.’

The girl gave a sigh of relief.

‘Your father’s only danger would lie in my — failure to return from my interview with him. Against *that* I cannot safeguard him; it is fair to tell you so. But my success in persuading him to adopt a certain course would be equally satisfactory to Mr. Logan and to himself.’

‘Mr. Logan knows nothing?’

‘Absolutely nothing. I alone, and now you, know anything.’

The girl walked up and down in agony.

‘Nobody will ever know if I do not tell you how to find him,’ she said.

‘Unhappily that is not the case. I only ask *you*, so that it may not be necessary to take other steps, tardy, but certain, and highly undesirable.’

‘You will not go to him armed?’

‘I give you my word of honour,’ said Merton. ‘I have risked myself unarmed already.’

The girl paused with fixed eyes that saw nothing. Merton watched her. Then she took her resolve.

‘I do not know where he is living. I know that on Wednesdays, that is, the day after to-morrow, he is to be found at Dr. Fogarty’s, a private asylum, a house with a garden, in Water Lane, Hammersmith.’

It was the lane in which stood the Home for Destitute and Decayed Cats, whither Logan had once abducted Rangoon, the Siamese puss.

‘Thank you,’ said Merton simply. ‘And I am to ask for?’

‘Ask first for Dr. Fogarty. You will tell him that you wish to see the *Ertwa Oknurcha*.’

‘Ah, Australian for “The Big Man,”’ said Merton.

‘I don’t know what it means,’ said Miss Markham. ‘Dr. Fogarty will then ask, “Have you the *churinga*?”’

The girl drew out a slim gold chain which hung round her neck and under her dress. At the end of it was a dark piece of wood, shaped much like a large cigar, and decorated with incised concentric circles, stained red.

‘Take that and show it to Dr. Fogarty,’ said Miss Markham, detaching the object from the chain.

Merton returned it to her. ‘I know where to get a similar *churinga,’* he said. ‘Keep your own. Its absence, if asked for, might lead to awkward questions.’

‘Thank you, I can trust you,’ said Miss Markham, adding, ‘You will address my father as Dr. Melville.’

‘Again thanks, and good-bye,’ said Merton. He bowed and withdrew.

‘She is a good deal upset, poor girl,’ Merton remarked to Madame Claudine, who, on going to comfort Miss Markham with tea, found her weeping. Merton took another cab, and drove to Trevor’s house.

After dinner (at which there were no guests), and in the smoking-room, Trevor asked whether he had made any progress.

‘Everything succeeded to a wish,’ said Merton. ‘You remember Water Lane?’

‘Where Logan carried the Siamese cat in my cab,’ said Trevor, grinning at the reminiscence. ‘Rather! I reconnoitred the place with Logan.’

‘Well, on the day after to-morrow I have business there.’

‘Not at the Cats’ Home?’

‘No, but perhaps you might reconnoitre again. Do you remember a house with high walls and spikes on them?’

‘I do,’ said Trevor; ‘but how do you know? You never were there. You disapproved of Logan’s method in the case of the cat.’

‘I never was there; I only made a guess, because the house I am interested in is a private asylum.’

‘Well, you guessed right. What then?’

‘You might reconnoitre the ground to-morrow — the exits, there are sure to be some towards waste land or market gardens.’

‘Jolly!’ said Trevor. ‘I’ll make up as a wanderer from Suffolk, looking for a friend in the slums; semi-bargee kind of costume.’

‘That would do,’ said Merton. ‘But you had better go in the early morning.’

‘A nuisance. Why?’

‘Because, later, you will have to get a gang of fellows to be about the house the day after, when I pay my visit.’

‘Fellows of our own sort, or the police?’

‘Neither. I thought of fellows of our own sort. They would talk and guess.’

‘Better get some of Ned Mahony’s gang?’ asked Trevor.

Mr. Mahony was an ex-pugilist, and a distinguished instructor in the art of self-defence. He also was captain of a gang of ‘chuckers out.’

‘Yes,’ said Merton, ‘that is my idea. *They* will guess, too; but when they know the place is a private lunatic asylum their hypothesis is obvious.’

‘They’ll think that a patient is to be rescued?’

‘That will be their idea. And the old trick is a good trick. Cart of coals blocked in the gateway, or with another cart — the bigger the better — in the lane. The men will dress accordingly. Others will have stolen to the back and sides of the house; you will, in short, stop the earths after I enter. Your brougham, after setting me down, will wait in Hammersmith Road, or whatever the road outside is.’

‘I may come?’ asked Trevor.

‘In command, as a coal carter.’

‘Hooray!’ said Trevor, ‘and I’ll tell you what, I won’t reconnoitre as a bargee, but as a servant out of livery sent to look for a cat at the Home. And I’ll mistake the asylum for the Home for Cats, and try to scout a little inside the gates.’

‘Capital,’ said Merton. ‘Then, later, I want you to go to a curiosity shop near the Museum’ (he mentioned the street), ‘and look into the window. You’ll see a little brown piece of wood like *this*.’ Merton sketched rapidly the piece of wood which Miss Markham wore under her dress. ‘The man has several. Buy one about the size of a big cigar for me, and buy one or two other trifles first.’

‘The man knows me,’ said Trevor, ‘I have bought things from him.’

‘Very good, but don’t buy it when any other customer is in the shop. And, by the way, take Mrs. Lumley’s portmanteau — the lock needs mending — to Jones’s in Sloane Street to be repaired. One thing more, I should like to add a few lines to that manuscript I gave you to keep in your safe.’

Trevor brought the sealed envelope. Merton added a paragraph and resealed it. Trevor locked it up again.

On the following day Trevor started early, did his scouting in Water Lane, and settled with Mr. Mahony about his gang of muscular young prize-fighters. He also brought the native Australian curiosity, and sent Mrs. Lumley’s portmanteau to have the lock repaired.

Merton determined to call at Dr. Fogarty’s asylum at four in the afternoon. The gang, under Trevor, was to arrive half an hour later, and to surround and enter the premises if Merton did not emerge within half an hour.

At four o'clock exactly Trevor's brougham was at the gates of the asylum. The footman rang the bell, a porter opened a wicket, and admitted a lady of fashionable aspect, who asked for Dr. Fogarty. She was ushered into his study, her card ('Louise, 13 — Street') was taken by the servant, and Dr. Fogarty appeared. He was a fair, undecided looking man, with blue wandering eyes, and long untidy, reddish whiskers. He bowed and looked uncomfortable, as well he might.

'I have called to see the *Ertwa Oknurcha,* Dr. Fogarty,' said Merton.

'Oh Lord,' said Dr. Fogarty, and murmured, 'Another of his lady friends!' adding, 'I must ask, Miss, have you the *churinga*?'

Merton produced, out of his muff, the Australian specimen which Trevor had bought.

The doctor inspected it. 'I shall take it to the *Ertwa Oknurcha*,' he said, and shambled out. Presently he returned. 'He will see you, Miss.'

Merton found the redoubtable Dr. Markham, an elderly man, clean shaven, prompt-looking, with very keen dark eyes, sitting at a writing table, with a few instruments of his profession lying about. The table stood on an oblong space of uncarpeted and polished flooring of some extent. Dr. Fogarty withdrew, the other doctor motioned Merton to a chair on the opposite side of the table. This chair was also on the uncarpeted space, and Merton observed four small brass plates in the parquet. Arranging his draperies, and laying aside his muff, Merton sat down, slightly shifting the position of the chair.

'Perhaps, Dr. Melville,' he said, 'it will be more reassuring to you if I at once hold my hands up,' and he sat there and smiled, holding up his neatly gloved hands.

The doctor stared, and *his* hand stole towards an instrument like an unusually long stethoscope, which lay on his table.

Merton sat there 'hands up,' still smiling. 'Ah, the blow-tube?' he said. 'Very good and quiet! Do you use *urali*? Infinitely better, at close quarters, than the noisy old revolver.'

'I see I have to do with a cool hand, sir,' said the doctor.

'Ah,' said Merton. 'Then let us talk as between man and man.' He tilted his chair backwards, and crossed his legs. 'By the way, as I have no Aaron and Hur to help me to hold up my hands, may I drop them? The attitude, though reassuring, is fatiguing.'

'If you won't mind first allowing me to remove your muff,' said the doctor. It lay on the table in front of Merton.

'By all means, no gun in my muff,' said Merton. 'In fact I think the whole pistol business is overdone, and second rate.'

‘I presume that I have the honour to speak to Mr. Merton?’ asked the doctor. ‘You slipped through the cordon?’

‘Yes, I was the intoxicated miner,’ said Merton. ‘No doubt you have received a report from your agents?’

‘Stupid fellows,’ said the doctor.

‘You are not flattering to me, but let us come to business. How much?’

‘I need hardly ask,’ said the doctor, ‘it would be an insult to your intelligence, whether you have taken the usual precautions?’

Merton, whose chair was tilted, threw himself violently backwards, upsetting his chair, and then scrambled nimbly to his feet. Between him and the table yawned a square black hole of unknown depth.

‘Hardly fair, Dr. Melville,’ said he, picking up the chair, and placing it on the carpet, ‘besides, I *have* taken the ordinary precautions. The house is surrounded — Ned Mahony’s lambs — the usual statement is in the safe of a friend. We must really come to the point. Time is flying,’ and he looked at his watch. ‘I can give you twenty minutes.’

‘Have you anything in the way of terms to propose?’ asked the doctor, filling his pipe.

‘Well, first, absolute secrecy. I alone know the state of the case.’

‘Has Mr. Logan no guess?’

‘Not the faintest suspicion. The detectives, when I left Kirkburn, had not even found the trap door, you understand. You hit on its discovery through knowing the priest’s hole at Oxburgh Hall, I suppose?’

The doctor nodded.

‘You can guarantee absolute secrecy?’ he asked.

‘Naturally, the knowledge is confined to me, you, and your partners. I want the secrecy in Mr. Logan’s interests, and you know why.’

‘Well,’ said the doctor, ‘that is point one. So far I am with you.’

‘Then, to enter on odious details,’ said Merton, ‘had you thought of any terms?’

‘The old man was stiff,’ said the doctor, ‘and your side only offered to double him in your advertisement, you know.’

‘That was merely a way of speaking,’ said Merton. ‘What did the marquis propose?’

‘Well, as his offer is not a basis of negotiation?’

‘Certainly not,’ said Merton.

‘Five hundred he offered, out of which we were to pay his fare back to Scotland.’

Both men laughed.

‘But you have your own ideas?’ said Merton.

‘I had thought of 15,000*l.* and leaving England. He is a multimillionaire, the marquis.’

‘It is rather a pull,’ said Merton. ‘Now speaking as a professional man, and on honour, how *is* his lordship?’ Merton asked.

‘Speaking as a professional man, he *may* live a year; he cannot live eighteen months, I stake my reputation on that.’

Merton mused.

‘I’ll tell you what we can do,’ he said. ‘We can guarantee the interest, at a fancy rate, say five per cent, during the marquis’s life, which you reckon as good for a year and a half, at most. The lump sum we can pay on his decease.’

The doctor mused in his turn.

‘I don’t like it. He may alter his will, and then — where do I come in?’

‘Of course that is an objection,’ said Merton. ‘But where do you come in if you refuse? Logan, I can assure you (I have read up the Scots law since I came to town), is the heir if the marquis dies intestate. Suppose that I do not leave this house in a few minutes, Logan won’t bargain with you; we settled *that*; and really you will have taken a great deal of trouble to your own considerable risk. You see the usual document, my statement, is lodged with a friend.’

‘There is certainly a good deal in what you say,’ remarked the doctor.

‘Then, to take a more cheerful view,’ said Merton, ‘I have medical authority for stating that any will made now, or later, by the marquis, would probably be upset, on the ground of mental unsoundness, you know. So Logan would succeed, in spite of a later will.’

The doctor smiled. ‘That point I grant. Well, one must chance something. I accept your proposals. You will give me a written agreement, signed by Mr. Logan, for the arrangement.’

‘Yes, I have power to act.’

‘Then, Mr. Merton, why in the world did you not let your friend walk in Burlington Arcade, and see the lady? He would have been met with the same terms, and could have proposed the same modifications.’

‘Well, Dr. Melville, first, I was afraid that he might accidentally discover the real state of the case, as I surmised that it existed — that might have led to family inconveniences, you know.’

‘Yes,’ the doctor admitted, ‘I have felt that. My poor daughter, a good girl, sir! It wrung my heartstrings, I assure you.’

‘I have the warmest sympathy with you,’ said Merton, going on. ‘Well, in the second place, I was not sure that I could trust Mr. Logan, who has rather a warm temper, to conduct the negotiations. Thirdly, I fear I must confess that I did what I have done — well, “for human pleasure.”’

‘Ah, you are young,’ said the doctor, sighing.

‘Now,’ said Merton, ‘shall I sign a promise? We can call Dr. Fogarty up to witness it. By the bye, what about “value received”? Shall we say that we purchase your ethnological collection?’

The doctor grinned, and assented, the deed was written, signed, and witnessed by Dr. Fogarty, who hastily retreated.

‘Now about restoring the marquis,’ said Merton. ‘He’s here, of course; it was easy enough to get him into an asylum. Might I suggest a gag, if by chance you have such a thing about you? To be removed, of course, when once I get him into the house of a friend. And the usual bandage over his eyes: he must never know where he has been.’

‘You think of everything, Mr. Merton,’ said the doctor. ‘But, how are you to account for the marquis’s reappearance alive?’ he asked.

‘Oh *that* — easily! My first theory, which I fortunately mentioned to his medical attendant, Dr. Douglas, in the train, before I reached Kirkburn, was that he had recovered from catalepsy, and had secretly absconded, for the purpose of watching Mr. Logan’s conduct. We shall make him believe that this is the fact, and the old woman who watched him—’

‘Plucky old woman,’ said the doctor.

‘Will swear to anything that he chooses to say.’

‘Well, that is your affair,’ said the doctor.

‘Now,’ said Merton, ‘give me a receipt for 750*l.*; we shall tell the marquis that we had to spring 250*l.* on his original offer.’

The doctor wrote out, stamped, and signed the receipt. ‘Perhaps I had better walk in front of you down stairs?’ he asked Merton.

‘Perhaps it really would be more hospitable,’ Merton acquiesced.

Merton was ushered again into Dr. Fogarty’s room on the ground floor. Presently the other doctor reappeared, leading a bent and much muffled up figure, who preserved total silence — for excellent reasons. The doctor handed to Merton a sealed envelope, obviously the marquis’s will. Merton looked closely into the face of the old marquis, whose eyes, dropping senile tears, showed no sign of recognition.

Dr. Fogarty next adjusted a silken bandage, over a wad of cotton wool, which he placed on the eyes of the prisoner.

Merton then took farewell of Dr. Melville (*alias* Markham); he and Dr. Fogarty supported the tottering steps of Lord Restalrig, and they led him to the gate.

‘Tell the porter to call my brougham,’ said Merton to Dr. Fogarty.

The brougham was called and came to the gate, evading a coal-cart which was about to enter the lane. Merton aided the marquis to enter, and said ‘Home.’ A few rough fellows, who were loitering in the lane, looked curiously on. In half an hour the marquis, his gag and the bandage round his eyes removed, was sitting in Trevor’s smoking-room, attended to by Miss Trevor.

It is probably needless to describe the simple and obvious process (rather like that of the Man, the Goose, and the Fox) by which Mrs. Lumley, with her portmanteau, left Trevor’s house that evening to pay another visit, while Merton himself arrived, in evening dress, to dinner at a quarter past eight. He had telegraphed to Logan: ‘Entirely successful. Come up by the 11.30 to-night, and bring Mrs. Bower.’

The marquis did not appear at dinner. He was in bed, and, thanks to a sleeping potion, slumbered soundly. He awoke about nine in the morning to find Mrs. Bower by his bedside.

‘Eh, marquis, finely we have jinked them,’ said Mrs. Bower; and she went on to recount the ingenious measures by which the marquis, recovering from his ‘dwawm,’ had secretly withdrawn himself.

‘I mind nothing of it, Jeanie, my woman,’ said the marquis. ‘I thought I wakened with some deevil running a knife into me; he might have gone further, and I might have fared worse. He asked for money, but, faith, we niffered long and came to no bargain. And a woman brought me away. Who was the woman?’

‘Oh, dreams,’ said Mrs. Bower. ‘Ye had another sair fit o’ the dwawming, and we brought you here to see the London doctors. Hoo could ony mortal speerit ye away, let be it was the fairies, and me watching you a’ the time! A fine gliff ye gie’d me when ye sat up and askit for sma’ yill’ (small beer).

‘I mind nothing of it,’ replied the marquis. However, Mrs. Bower stuck to her guns, and the marquis was, or appeared to be, resigned to accept her explanation. He dozed throughout the day, but next day he asked for Merton. Their interview was satisfactory; Merton begged leave to introduce Logan, and the marquis, quite broken down, received his kinsman with tears, and said nothing about his marriage.

‘I’m a dying man,’ he remarked finally, ‘but I’ll live long enough to chouse the taxes.’

His sole idea was to hand over (in the old Scottish fashion) the main part of his property to Logan, *inter vivos*, and then to live long enough to evade the death-duties. Merton and Logan knew well enough the unsoundness of any such proceedings, especially considering the mental debility of the old gentleman. However, the papers were made out. The marquis retired to one of his English seats, after which event his reappearance was made known to the world. In his English home Logan sedulously nursed him. A more generous diet than he had ever known before did wonders for the marquis, though he peevishly remonstrated against every bottle of wine that was uncorked. He did live for the span which he deemed necessary for his patriotic purpose, and peacefully expired, his last words being ‘Nae grand funeral.’

Public curiosity, of course, was keenly excited about the mysterious reappearance of the marquis in life. But the interviewers could extract nothing from Mrs. Bower, and Logan declined to be interviewed. To paragraphists the mystery of the marquis was ‘a two months’ feast,’ like the case of Elizabeth Canning, long ago.

Logan inherited under the marquis’s original will, and, of course, the Exchequer benefitted in the way which Lord Restalrig had tried to frustrate.

Miss Markham (whose father is now the distinguished head of the ethnological department in an American museum) did not persist in her determination never to see Logan again. The beautiful Lady Fastcastle never allows her photograph to appear in the illustrated weekly papers. Logan, or rather Fastcastle, does not unto this day, know the secret of the Emu’s feathers, though, later, he sorely tried the secretiveness of Merton, as shall be shown in the following narrative.

XII. ADVENTURE OF THE CANADIAN HEIRESS

I. At Castle Skrae

‘How vain a thing is wealth,’ said Merton. ‘How little it can give of what we really desire, while of all that is lost and longed for it can restore nothing — except churches — and to do *that* ought to be made a capital offence.’

‘Why do you contemplate life as a whole, Mr. Merton? Why are you so moral? If you think it is amusing you are very much mistaken! Isn’t the scenery, isn’t the weather, beautiful enough for you? *I* could gaze for ever at the “unquiet bright Atlantic plain,” the rocky isles, those cliffs of basalt on either hand, while I listened to the crystal stream that slips into the sea, and waves the yellow fringes of the seaweed. Don’t be melancholy, or I go back to the castle. Try another line!’

‘Ah, I doubt that I shall never wet one here,’ said Merton.

‘As to the crystal stream, what business has it to be crystal? That is just what I complain of. Salmon and sea-trout are waiting out there in the bay and they can’t come up! Not a drop of rain to call rain for the last three weeks. That is what I meant by moralising about wealth. You can buy half a county, if you have the money; you can take half a dozen rivers, but all the millions of our host cannot purchase us a spate, and without a spate you might as well break the law by fishing in the Round Pond as in the river.’

‘Luckily for me Alured does not much care for fishing,’ said Lady Bude, who was Merton’s companion. The Countess had abandoned, much to her lord’s regret, the coloured and figurative language of her maiden days, the American slang. Now (as may have been observed) her style was of that polished character which can only be heard to perfection in circles socially elevated and intellectually cultured— ‘in that Garden of the Souls’ — to quote Tennyson.

The spot where Merton and Lady Bude were seated was beautiful indeed. They reclined on the short sea grass above a shore where long tresses of saffron-hued seaweed clothed the boulders, and the bright sea pinks blossomed. On their right the Skrae, now clearer than amber, mingled its waters with the sea loch. On their left was a steep bank clad with bracken, climbing up to perpendicular cliffs of basalt. These ended abruptly above the valley and the cove, and permitted a view of the Atlantic, in which, far away, the isle of the Lewis lay like a golden shield in the faint haze of the early sunset. On the other side of the sea loch, whose restless waters ever rushed in or out like a rapid river, with the change of tides, was a small village of white thatched cottages, the homes of fishermen and crofters. The neat crofts lay behind, in oblong strips, on the side of the hill. Such was the scene of a character common on the remote west coast of Sutherland.

‘Alured is no maniac for fishing, luckily,’ Lady Bude was saying. ‘To-day he is cat-hunting.’

‘I regret it,’ said Merton; ‘I profess myself the friend of cats.’

‘He is only trying to photograph a wild cat at home in the hills; they are very scarce.’

‘In fact he is Jones Harvey, the naturalist again, for the nonce, not the sportsman,’ said Merton.

‘It was as Jones Harvey that he—’ said Lady Bude, and, blushing, stopped.

‘That he grasped the skirts of happy chance,’ said Merton.

‘Why don’t *you* grasp the skirts, Mr. Merton?’ asked Lady Bude. ‘Chance, or rather Lady Fortune, who wears the skirts, would, I think, be happy to have them grasped.’

‘Whose skirts do you allude to?’

‘The skirts, short enough in the Highlands, of Miss Macrae,’ said Lady Bude; ‘she is a nice girl, and a pretty girl, and a clever girl, and, after all, there are worse things than millions.’

Miss Emmeline Macrae was the daughter of the host with whom the Budes and Merton were staying at Skrae Castle, on Loch Skrae, only an easy mile and a half from the sea and the cove beside which Merton and Lady Bude were sitting.

‘There is a seal crawling out on to the shore of the little island!’ said Merton. ‘What a brute a man must be who shoots a seal! I could watch them all day — on a day like this.’

‘That is not answering my question,’ said Lady Bude. ‘What do you think of Miss Macrae? I *know* what you think!’

‘Can a humble person like myself aspire to the daughter of the greatest living millionaire? Our host can do almost anything but bring a spate, and even *that* he could do by putting a dam with a sluice at the foot of Loch Skrae: a matter of a few thousands only. As for the lady, her heart it is another’s, it never can be mine.’

‘Whose it is?’ asked Lady Bude.

‘Is it not, or do my trained instincts deceive me, that of young Blake, the new poet? Is she not “the girl who gives to song what gold could never buy”? He is as handsome as a man has no business to be.’

‘He uses belladonna for his eyes,’ said Lady Bude. ‘I am sure of it.’

‘Well, she does not know, or does not mind, and they are pretty inseparable the last day or two.’

‘That is your own fault,’ said Lady Bude; ‘you banter the poet so cruelly. She pities him.’

‘I wonder that our host lets the fellow keep staying here,’ said Merton. ‘If Mr. Macrae has a foible, except that of the pedigree of the Macraes (who were here before the Macdonalds or Mackenzies, and have come back in his person), it is scientific inventions, electric lighting, and his new toy, the wireless telegraph box in the observatory. You can see the tower from here, and the pole with box on top. I don’t care for that kind of thing myself, but Macrae thinks it Paradise to get messages from the Central News and the Stock Exchange up here, fifty miles from a telegraph post. Well, yesterday Blake was sneering at the whole affair.’

‘What is this wireless machine? Explain it to me,’ said Lady Bude.

‘How can you be so cruel?’ asked Merton.

‘Why cruel?’

‘Oh, you know very well how your sex receives explanations. You have three ways of doing it.’

‘Explain *them*!’

‘Well, the first way is, if a man tries to explain what “per cent” means, or the difference of “odds on,” or “odds against,” that is, if they don’t gamble, they cast their hands desperately abroad, and cry, “Oh, don’t, I never *can* understand!” The second way is to sit and smile, and look intelligent, and think of their dressmaker, or their children, or their young man, and then to say, “Thank you, you have made it all so clear!”’

‘And the third way?’

‘The third way is for you to make it plain to the explainer that he does not understand what he is explaining.’

‘Well, try me; how does the wireless machine work?’

‘Then, to begin with a simple example in ordinary life, you know what telepathy is?’

‘Of course, but tell me.’

‘Suppose Jones is thinking of Smith, or rather of Smith’s sister. Jones is dying, or in a row, in India. Miss Smith is in Bayswater. She sees Jones in her drawing-room. The thought of Jones has struck a receiver of some sort in the brain, say, of Miss Smith. *But* Miss Smith may not see him, somebody else may, say her aunt, or the footman. That is because the aunt or the footman has the properly tuned receiver in her or his brain, and Miss Smith has not.’

‘I see, so far — but the machine?’

‘That is an electric apparatus charged with a message. The message is not conducted by wires, but is merely carried along on a new sort of waves, “Hertz waves,” I think, but that does not matter. They roam through space, these waves, and wherever they meet another machine of the same kind, a receiver, they communicate it.’

‘Then everybody who has such a machine as Mr. Macrae’s gets all Mr. Macrae’s messages for nothing?’ asked Lady Bude.

‘They would get them,’ said Merton. ‘But that is where the artfulness comes in. Two Italian magicians, or electricians, Messrs. Gianesi and Giambresi, have invented an improvement suggested by a dodge of the Indians on the Amazon River. They make machines which are only in tune with each other. Their machine fires off a message which no other machine can receive or tap except that of their customer, say Mr. Macrae. The other receivers all over the world don’t get it, they are not in tune. It is as if Jones could only appear as a wraith to Miss Smith, and *vice versa*.’

‘How is it done?’

‘Oh, don’t ask me! Besides, I fancy it is a trade secret, the tuning. There’s one good thing about it, you know how Highland landscape is spoiled by telegraph posts?’

‘Yes, everywhere there is always a telegraph post in the foreground.’

‘Well, Mr. Macrae had them when he was here first, but he has had them all cut down, bless him, since he got the new dodge. He was explaining it all to Blake and me, and Blake only scoffed, would not understand, showed he was bored.’

‘I think it delightful! What did Mr. Blake say?’

‘Oh, his usual stuff. Science is an expensive and inadequate substitute for poetry and the poetic gifts of the natural man, who is still extant in Ireland. *He* can flash his thoughts, and any trifles of news he may pick up, across oceans and continents, with no machinery at all. What is done in Khartoum is known the same day in Cairo.’

‘What did Mr. Macrae say?’

‘He asked why the Cairo people did not make fortunes on the Stock Exchange.’

‘And Mr. Blake?’

‘He looked a great deal, but he said nothing. Then, as I said, he showed that he was bored when Macrae exhibited to us the machine and tried to teach us how it worked, and the philosophy of it. Blake did not understand it, nor do I, really, but of course I displayed an intelligent interest. He didn’t display any. He said that the telegraph thing only brought us nearer to all that a child of nature—’

‘*He* a child of nature, with his belladonna!’

‘To all that a child of nature wanted to forget. The machine emitted a serpent of tape, news of Surrey *v*. Yorkshire, and something about Kaffirs, and Macrae was enormously pleased, for such are the simple joys of the millionaire, really a child of nature. Some of them keep automatic hydraulic organs and beastly machines that sing. Now Macrae is not a man of that sort, and he has only one motor up here, and only uses *that* for practical purposes to bring luggage and supplies, but the wireless thing is the apple of his eye. And Blake sneered.'

'He is usually very civil indeed, almost grovelling, to the father,' said Lady Bude. 'But I tell you for your benefit, Mr. Merton, that he has no chance with the daughter. I know it for certain. He only amuses her. Now here, you are clever.'

Merton bowed.

'Clever, or you would not have diverted me from my question with all that science. You are not ill looking.'

'Spare my blushes,' said Merton; adding, 'Lady Bude, if you must be answered, *you* are clever enough to have found me out.'

'That needed less acuteness than you suppose,' said the lady.

'I am very sorry to hear it,' said Merton. 'You know how utterly hopeless it is.'

'There I don't agree with you,' said Lady Bude.

Merton blushed. 'If you are right,' he said, 'then I have no business to be here. What am I in the eyes of a man like Mr. Macrae? An adventurer, that is what he would think me. I did think that I had done nothing, said nothing, looked nothing, but having the chance — well, I could not keep away from her. It is not honourable. I must go. . . . I love her.'

Merton turned away and gazed at the sunset without seeing it.

Lady Bude put forth her hand and laid it on his. 'Has this gone on long?' she asked.

'Rather an old story,' said Merton. 'I am a fool. That is the chief reason why I was praying for rain. She fishes, very keen on it. I would have been on the loch or the river with her. Blake does not fish, and hates getting wet.'

'You might have more of her company, if you would not torment the poet so. The green-eyed monster, jealousy, is on your back.'

Merton groaned. 'I bar the fellow, anyhow,' he said. 'But, in any case, now that I know *you* have found me out, I must be going. If only she were as poor as I am!'

'You can't go to-morrow, to-morrow is Sunday,' said Lady Bude. 'Oh, I am sorry for you. Can't we think of something? Cannot you find an opening? Do something great! Get her upset on the loch, and save her from drowning! Mr. Macrae dotes on her; he would be grateful.'

‘Yes, I might take the pin out of the bottom of the boat,’ said Merton. ‘It is an idea! But she swims at least as well as I do. Besides — hardly sportsmanlike.’

Lady Bude tried to comfort him; it is the mission of young matrons. He must not be in such a hurry to go away. As to Mr. Blake, she could entirely reassure him. It was a beautiful evening, the lady was fair and friendly; Nature, fragrant of heather and of the sea, was hushed in a golden repose. The two talked long, and the glow of sunset was fading; the eyes of Lady Bude were a little moist, and Merton was feeling rather consoled when they rose and walked back towards Skrae Castle. It had been an ancient seat of the Macraes, a clan in relatively modern times, say 1745, rather wild, impoverished, and dirty; but Mr. Macrae, the great Canadian millionaire, had bought the old place, with many thousands of acres ‘where victual never grew.’

Though a landlord in the Highlands he was beloved, for he was the friend of crofters, as rent was no object to him, and he did not particularly care for sport. He accepted the argument, dear to the Celt, that salmon are ground game, and free to all, while the natives were allowed to use ancient flint-locked fusils on his black cocks. Mr. Macrae was a thoroughly generous man, and a tall, clean-shaved, graceful personage. His public gifts were large. He had just given 500,000*l.* to Oxford to endow chairs and students of Psychical Research, while the rest of the million was bestowed on Cambridge, to supply teaching in Elementary Logic. His way of life was comfortable, but simple, except where the comforts of science and modern improvements were concerned. There were lifts, or elevators, now in the castle of Skrae, though Blake always went by the old black corkscrew staircases, holding on by the guiding rope, after the poetical manner of our ancestors.

On a knowe which commanded the castle, in a manner that would have pained Sir Dugald Dalgetty, Mr. Macrae had erected, not a ‘sconce,’ but an observatory, with a telescope that ‘licked the Lick thing,’ as he said. Indeed it was his foible ‘to see the Americans and go one better,’ and he spoke without tolerance of the late boss American millionaire, the celebrated J. P. van Huytens, recently deceased.

Duke Humphrey greater wealth computes,
And sticks, they say, at nothing,

sings the poet. Mr. Macrae computed greater wealth than Mr. van Huytens, though avoiding ostentation; he did not

Wear a pair of golden boots,
And silver underclothing.

The late J. P. van Huytens he regarded with moral scorn. This rival millionaire had made his wealth by the process (apparently peaceful and horticultural) of ‘watering stocks,’ and by the seemingly misplaced generosity of overcapitalising enterprises, and ‘grabbing side shows.’ The nature of these and other financial misdemeanours Merton did not understand. But he learned from Mr. Macrae that thereby J. P. van Huytens had scooped in the widow, the orphan, the clergyman, and the colonel. The two men had met in the most exclusive circles of American society; with the young van Huytenses the daughter of the millionaire had even been on friendly terms, but Mr. Macrae retired to Europe, and put a stop to all that. To do so, indeed, was one of his motives for returning to the home of his ancestors, the remote and inaccessible Castle Skrae. *The Sportsman’s Guide to Scotland* says, as to Loch Skrae: ‘Railway to Lairg, then walk or hire forty-five miles.’ The young van Huytenses were not invited to walk or hire.

Van Huytens had been ostentatious, Mr. Macrae was the reverse. His costume was of the simplest, his favourite drink (of which he took little) was what humorists call ‘the light wine of the country,’ drowned in Apollinaris water. His establishment was refined, but not gaudy or luxurious, and the chief sign of wealth at Skrae was the great observatory with the laboratory, and the surmounting ‘pole with box on top,’ as Merton described the apparatus for the new kind of telegraphy. In the basement of the observatory was lodged the hugest balloon known to history, and a skilled expert was busied with novel experiments in aerial navigation. Happily he could swim, and his repeated descents into Loch Skrae did not daunt his soaring genius.

Above the basement of the observatory were rooms for bachelors, a smoking-room, a billiard-room, and a scientific library. The wireless telegraphy machine (looking like two boxes, one on the top of the other, to the eye of ignorance) was installed in the smoking-room, and a wire to Mr. Macrae’s own rooms informed him, by ringing a bell (it also rang in the smoking-room), when the machine began to spread itself out in tape conveying the latest news. The machine communicated with another in the establishment of its vendors, Messrs. Gianesi, Giambresi & Co., in Oxford Street. Thus the millionaire, though residing nearly fifty miles from the nearest station at Lairg, was as well and promptly informed as if he dwelt in Fleet Street, and he could issue, without a moment’s procrastination, his commands to sell and buy, and to do such other things as pertain to the nature of millionaires. When we add that a steam yacht of great size and comfort, doing an incredible number of knots an hour on the turbine system, lay at anchor in the sea loch, we have indicated the main peculiarities of Mr. Macrae's rural establishment. Wealth, though Merton thought so poorly of it, had supplied these potentialities of enjoyment; but, alas! disease had 'decimated' the grouse on the moors (of course to decimate now means almost to extirpate), and the crofters had increased the pleasures of stalking by making the stags excessively shy, thus adding to the arduous enjoyment of the true sportsman.

To Castle Skrae, being such as we have described, Lady Bude and Merton returned from their sentimental prowl. They found Miss Macrae, in a very short skirt of the Macrae tartan, trying to teach Mr. Blake to play ping-pong in the great hall.

We must describe the young lady, though her charms outdo the powers of the vehicle of prose. She was tall, slim, and graceful, light of foot as a deer on the corrie. Her hair was black, save when the sun shone on it and revealed strands of golden brown; it was simply arrayed, and knotted on the whitest and shapeliest neck in Christendom. Her eyebrows were dark, her eyes large and lucid,

The greyest of things blue,
The bluest of things grey.

Her complexion was of a clear pallor, like the white rose beloved by her ancestors; her features were all but classic, with the charm of romance; but what made her unique was her mouth. It was faintly upturned at the corners, as in archaic Greek art; she had, in the slightest and most gracious degree, what Logan, describing her once, called 'the Æginetan grin.' This gave her an air peculiarly gay and winsome, brilliant, joyous, and alert. In brief, to use Chaucer's phrase,

She was as wincy as a wanton colt,
Sweet as a flower, and upright as a bolt.

She was the girl who was teaching the poet the elements of ping-pong. The poet usually missed the ball, for he was averse to and unapt for anything requiring quickness of eye and dexterity of hand. On a seat lay open a volume of the *Poetry of the Celtic Renascence*, which Blake had been reading to Miss Macrae till she used the vulgar phrase 'footle,' and invited him to be educated in ping-pong. Of these circumstances she cheerfully informed the new-comers, adding that Lord Bude had returned happy, having photographed a wild cat in its lair.

‘Did he shoot it?’ asked Blake.

‘No. He’s a sportsman!’ said Miss Macrae.

‘That is why I supposed he must have shot the cat,’ answered Blake.

‘What is Gaelic for a wild cat, Blake?’ asked Merton unkindly.

Like other modern Celtic poets Mr. Blake was entirely ignorant of the melodious language of his ancestors, though it had often been stated in the literary papers that he was ‘going to begin’ to take lessons.

‘*Sans purr*,’ answered Blake; ‘the Celtic wild cat has not the servile accomplishment of purring. The words, a little altered, are the motto of the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders. This is the country of the wild cat.’

‘I thought the “wild cat” was a peculiarly American financial animal,’ said Merton.

Miss Macrae laughed, and, the gong sounding (by electricity, the wire being connected with the Greenwich Observatory), she ran lightly up the central staircase. Lady Bude had hurried to rejoin her lord; Merton and Blake sauntered out to their rooms in the observatory, Blake with an air of fatigue and languor.

‘Learning ping-pong easily?’ asked Merton.

‘I have more hopes of teaching Miss Macrae the essential and intimate elements of Celtic poetry,’ said Blake. ‘One box of books I brought with me, another arrived to-day. I am about to begin on my Celtic drama of “Con of the Hundred Battles.”’

‘Have you the works of the ancient Sennachie, Macfootle?’ asked Merton. He was jealous, and his usual urbanity was sorely tried by the Irish bard. In short, he was rude; stupid, too.

However, Blake had his revenge after dinner, on the roof of the observatory, where the ladies gathered round him in the faint silver light, looking over the sleeping sea. ‘Far away to the west,’ he said, ‘lies the Celtic paradise, the Isle of Apples!’

‘American apples are excellent,’ said Merton, but the beauty of the scene and natural courtesy caused Miss Macrae to whisper ‘Hush!’

The poet went on, ‘May I speak to you the words of the emissary from the lovely land?’

‘The mysterious female?’ said Merton brutally. ‘Dr. Hyde calls her “a mysterious female.” It is in his *Literary History of Ireland*.’

‘Pray let us hear the poem, Mr. Merton,’ said Miss Macrae, attuned to the charm of the hour and the scene.

‘She came to Bran’s Court,’ said Blake, ‘from the Isle of Apples, and no man knew whence she came, and she chanted to them.'

'Twenty-eight quatrains, no less, a hundred and twelve lines,' said the insufferable Merton. 'Could you give us them in Gaelic?'

The bard went on, not noticing the interruption, 'I shall translate

'There is a distant isle
Around which sea horses glisten,
A fair course against the white swelling surge,
Four feet uphold it.'

'Feet of white bronze under it.'

'White bronze, what's that, eh?' asked the practical Mr. Macrae.

'Glittering through beautiful ages!
Lovely land through the world's age,
On which the white blossoms drop.'

'Beautiful!' said Miss Macrae.

'There are twenty-six more quatrains,' said Merton.

The bard went on,

'A beautiful game, most delightful
They play—'

'Ping-pong?' murmured Merton.

'Hush!' said Lady Bude.

Miss Macrae turned to the poet.

'They play, sitting at the luxurious wine,
Men and gentle women under a bush,
Without sin, without crime.'

'They are playing still,' Blake added. 'Unbeheld, undisturbed! I verily believe there is no Gael even now who would not in his heart of hearts let drift by him the Elysiums of Virgil, Dante, and Milton, to grasp at the Moy Mell, the Apple Isle, of the unknown Irish pagan! And then to play sitting at the luxurious wine,

'Men and gentle women under a bush!'

'It really cannot have been ping-pong that they played at, *sitting*. Bridge, more likely,' said Merton. 'And "good wine needs no bush!"'

The bard moved away, accompanied by his young hostess, who resented

‘Tell me more of that lovely poem, Mr. Blake,’ she said.

‘I am jangled and out of tune,’ said Blake wildly. ‘The Sassenach is my torture! Let me take your hand, it is cool as the hands of the foam-footed maidens of — of — what’s the name of the place?’

‘Was it Clonmell?’ asked Miss Macrae, letting him take her hand.

He pressed it against his burning brow.

‘Though you laugh at me,’ said Blake, ‘sometimes you are kind! I am upset — I hardly know myself. What is yonder shape skirting the lawn? Is it the Daoine Sidh?’

‘Why do you call her “the downy she”? She is no more artful than other people. She is my maid, Elspeth Mackay,’ answered Miss Macrae, puzzled. They were alone, separated from the others by the breadth of the roof.

‘I said the *Daoine Sidh,*’ replied the poet, spelling the words. ‘It means the People of Peace.’

‘Quakers?’

‘No, the fairies,’ groaned the misunderstood bard. ‘Do you know nothing of your ancestral tongue? Do you call yourself a Gael?’

‘Of course I call myself a girl,’ answered Miss Macrae. ‘Do you want me to call myself a young lady?’

The poet sighed. ‘I thought *you* understood me,’ he said. ‘Ah, how to escape, how to reach the undiscovered West!’

‘But Columbus discovered it,’ said Miss Macrae.

‘The undiscovered West of the Celtic heart’s desire,’ explained the bard; ‘the West below the waters! Thither could we twain sail in the magic boat of Bran! Ah see, the sky opens like a flower!’

Indeed, there was a sudden glow of summer lightning.

‘That looks more like rain,’ said Merton, who was standing with the Budes at an opposite corner of the roof.

‘I say, Merton,’ asked Bude, ‘how can you be so uncivil to that man? He took it very well.’

‘A rotter,’ said Merton. ‘He has just got that stuff by heart, the verse and a lot of the prose, out of a book that I brought down myself, and left in the smoking-room. I can show you the place if you like.’

‘Do, Mr. Merton. But how foolish you are! *do* be civil to the man,’ whispered Lady Bude, who shared his disbelief in Blake; and at that moment the tinkle of an electric bell in the smoking-room below reached the expectant ears of Mr. Macrae.

‘Come down, all of you,’ he said. ‘The wireless telegraphy is at work.’

He waited till they were all in the smoking-room, and feverishly examined the tape.

‘Escape of De Wet,’ he read. ‘Disasters to the Imperial Yeomanry. Strike of Cigarette Makers. Great Fire at Hackney.’

‘There!’ he exclaimed triumphantly. ‘We might have gone to bed in London, and not known all that till we got the morning papers to-morrow. And here we are fifty miles from a railway station or a telegraph office — no, we’re nearer Inchnadampf.’

‘Would that I were in the Isle of Apples, Mell Moy, far, far from civilisation!’ said Blake.

“There shall be no grief there or sorrow,” so sings the minstrel of *The Wooing of Etain*.

“Fresh flesh of swine, banquets of new milk and ale shalt thou have with me then, fair lady,” Merton read out from the book he had been speaking of to the Budes.

‘Jolly place, the Celtic Paradise! Fresh flesh of swine, banquets of ale and new milk. *Quel luxe*!’

‘Is that the kind of entertainment you were offering me, Mr. Blake?’ asked Miss Macrae gaily. ‘Mr. Blake,’ she went on, ‘has been inviting me to fly to the undiscovered West beneath the waters, in the magic boat of Bran.’

‘Did Bran invent the submarine?’ asked Mr. Macrae, and then the company saw what they had never seen before, the bard blushing. He seemed so discomposed that Miss Macrae took compassion on him.

‘Never mind my father, Mr. Blake,’ she said, ‘he is a very good Highlander, and believes in Eachain of the Hairy Arm as much as the crofters do. Have you heard of Eachain, Mr. Blake? He is a spectre in full Highland costume, attached to our clan. When we came here first, to look round, we had only horses hired from Edinburgh, and a Lowlander — mark you, a *Lowlander* — to drive. He was in the stable one afternoon — the old stable, we have pulled it down — when suddenly the horses began to kick and rear. He looked round to the open door, and there stood a huge Highlander in our tartans, with musket, pistols, claymore, dirk, skian, and all, and soft brogues of untanned leather on his feet. The coachman, in a panic, made a blind rush at the figure, but behold, there was nobody, and a boy outside had seen no man. The horses were trembling and foaming. Now it was a Lowlander from Teviotdale that saw the man, and the crofters were delighted. They said the figure was the chief that fell at Culloden, come to welcome us back. So you must not despair of us, Mr. Blake, and you, that have “the sight,” may see Eachain yourself, who knows?’

This happy turn of the conversation exactly suited Blake. He began to be very amusing about magic, and brownies, and ‘the downy she,’ as Miss Macrae called the People of Peace. The ladies presently declared that they were afraid to go to bed; so they went, Miss Macrae indicating her displeasure to Merton by the coldness of her demeanour.

The men, who were rather dashed by the pleasant intelligence which the telegraph had communicated, sat up smoking for a while, and then retired in a subdued state of mind.

Next morning, which was Sunday, Merton appeared rather late at breakfast, late and pallid. After a snatch of disturbed slumber, he had wakened, or seemed to waken, fretting a good deal over the rusticity of his bearing towards Blake, and over his hopeless affair of the heart. He had vexed his lady. ‘If he is good enough for his hosts, he ought to be good enough for their guests,’ thought Merton. ‘What a brute, what a fool I am; I ought to go. I will go! I ought not to take coffee after dinner, I know I ought not, and I smoke too much,’ he added, and finally he went to breathe the air on the roof.

The night was deadly soft and still, a slight mist hid the furthest verges of the sea’s horizon. Behind it, the summer lightning seemed like portals that opened and shut in the heavens, revealing a glory without form, and closing again.

‘I don’t wonder that these Irish poets dreamed of Isles of Paradise out there:

‘Lands undiscoverable in the unheard-of West,
Round which the strong stream of a sacred sea
Runs without wind for ever.’

thought Merton. ‘Chicago is the realisation of their dream. Hullo, there are the lights of a big steamer, and a very low one behind it! Queer craft!’

Merton watched the lights that crossed the sea, when either the haze deepened or the fainter light on the smaller vessel vanished, and the larger ship steamed on in a southerly direction. ‘Magic boat of Bran!’ thought Merton. He turned and entered the staircase to go back to his room. There was a lift, of course, but, equally of course, there was nobody to manage it. Merton, who had a lighted bedroom-candle in his hand, descended the spiral staircase; at a turning he thought he saw, ‘with the tail of his eye,’ a plaid, draping a tall figure of a Highlander, disappear round the corner. Nobody in the castle wore the kilt except the piper, and he had not rooms in the observatory. Merton ran down as fast as he could, but he did not catch another view of the plaid and its wearer, or hear any footsteps. He went to the bottom of the staircase, opened the outer door, and looked forth. Nobody! The electric light from the open door of his own room blazed across the landing on his return. All was perfectly still, and

Merton remembered that he had not heard the footsteps of the appearance. ‘Was it Eachain?’ he asked himself. ‘Do I sleep, do I dream?’

He went back to bed and slumbered uneasily. He seemed to be awake in his room, in broad light, and to hear a slow drip, drip, on the floor. He looked up; the roof was stained with a great dark splash of a crimson hue. He got out of bed, and touched the wet spot on the floor under the blotch on the ceiling.

His fingers were reddened with blood! He woke at the horror of it: found himself in bed in the dark, pressed an electric knob, and looked at the ceiling. It was dry and white. ‘I certainly have been smoking too much lately,’ thought Merton, and, switching off the light, he slumbered again, so soundly that he did not hear the piper playing round the house, or the man who brought his clothes and hot water, or the gong for breakfast.

When he did wake, he was surprised at the lateness of the hour, and dressed as rapidly as possible. ‘I wonder if I was dreaming when I thought that I went out on the roof, and saw mountains and marvels,’ said Merton to himself. ‘A queer thing, the human mind,’ he reflected sagely. It occurred to him to enter the smoking-room on his way downstairs. He routed two maids who perhaps had slept too late, and were hurriedly making the room tidy. The sun was beating in at the window, and Merton noticed some tiny glittering points of white metallic light on the carpet near the new telegraphic apparatus. ‘I don’t believe these lazy Highland Maries have swept the room properly since the electric machine was put up,’ Merton thought. He hastily seized, and took to his chamber, his book on old Irish literature, which was too clearly part of Blake’s Celtic inspiration. Merton wanted no more quatrains, but he did mean to try to be civil. He then joined the party at breakfast; he admitted that he had slept ill, but, when asked by Blake, disclaimed having seen Eachain of the Hairy Arm, and did not bore or bewilder the company with his dreams.

Miss Macrae, in sabbatical raiment, was fresher than a rose and gay as a lark. Merton tried not to look at her; he failed in this endeavour.

II. Lost

The day was Sunday, and Merton, who had a holy horror of news, rejoiced to think that the telegraphic machine would probably not tinkle its bell for twenty-four hours. This was not the ideal of the millionaire. Things happen, intelligence arrives from the limits of our vast and desirable empire, even on the Day of Rest. But the electric bell was silent. Mr. Macrae, from patriotic motives, employed a Highland engineer and mechanician, so there was nothing to be got out of him in the way of work on the sabbath day. The millionaire himself did not quite understand how to work the thing. He went to the smoking-room where it dwelt and looked wistfully at it, but was afraid to try to call up his correspondents in London. As for the usual manipulator, Donald McDonald, he had started early for the distant Free Kirk. An 'Unionist' minister intended to try to preach himself in, and the majority of the congregation, being of the old Free Kirk rock, and averse to union with the United Presbyterians, intended to try to keep him out. They 'had a lad with the gift who would do the preaching fine,' and as there was no police-station within forty miles it seemed fairly long odds on the Free Kirk recalcitrants. However, there was a resolute minority of crofters on the side of the minister, and every chance of an ecclesiastical battle royal. Accompanied by the stalker, two keepers, and all the gardeners, armed with staves, the engineer had early set out for the scene of brotherly amity, and Mr. Macrae had reluctantly to admit that he was cut off from his communications.

Merton, who was with him in the smoking-room, mentally absolved the Highland housemaids. If they had not swept up the tiny glittering metallic points on the carpet before, they had done so now. Only two or three caught his eye.

Mr. Macrae, avid of news, accommodated himself in an arm-chair with newspapers of two or three days old, from which he had already sucked the heart by aid of his infernal machine. The Budes and Blake, with Miss Macrae (an Anglican), had set off to walk to the Catholic chapel, some four miles away, for crofting opinion was resolute against driving on the Lord's Day. Merton, self-denying and resolved, did not accompany his lady; he read a novel, wrote letters, and felt desolate. All was peace, all breathed of the Sabbath calm.

'Very odd there's no call from the machine,' said Mr. Macrae anxiously.

'It is Sunday,' said Merton.

'Still, they might send us something.'

‘They scarcely favoured us last Sunday,’ said Merton.

‘No, and now I think of it, not at all on the Sunday before,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘I dare say it is all right.’

‘Would a thunder-storm further south derange it?’ asked Merton, adding, ‘There was a lot of summer lightning last night.’

‘That might be it; these things have their tempers. But they are a great comfort. I can’t think how we ever did without them,’ said Mr. Macrae, as if these things were common in every cottage. ‘Wonderful thing, science!’ he added, in an original way, and Merton, who privately detested science, admitted that it was so.

‘Shall we go to see the horses?’ suggested Mr. Macrae, and they did go and stare, as is usual on Sunday in the country, at the hind-quarters of these noble animals. Merton strove to be as much interested as possible in Mr. Macrae’s stories of his fleet American trotters. But his heart was otherwhere. ‘They will soon be an extinct species,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘The motor has come to stay.’

Merton was not feeling very well, he was afraid of a cigarette, Mr. Macrae’s conversation was not brilliant, and Merton still felt as if he were under the wrath, so well deserved, of his hostess. She did not usually go to the Catholic chapel; to be sure, in the conditions prevailing at the Free Kirk place of worship, she had no alternative if she would not abstain wholly from religious privileges. But Merton felt sure that she had really gone to comfort and console the injured feelings of Blake. Probably she would have had a little court of lordlings, Merton reflected (not that Mr. Macrae had any taste for them), but everybody knew that, what with the weather, and the crofters, and the grouse disease, the sport at Castle Skrae was remarkably bad. So the party was tiny, though a number of people were expected later, and Merton and the heiress had been on what, as he ruefully reflected, were very kind terms — rather more than kind, he had hoped, or feared, now and then. Merton saw that he had annoyed her, and thrown her, metaphorically speaking, into the arms of the Irish minstrel. All the better, perhaps, he thought, ruefully. The poet was handsome enough to be one that ‘limners loved to paint, and ladies to look upon.’ He generally took chaff well, and could give it, as well as take it, and there were hours when his sentiment and witchery had a chance with most women. ‘But Lady Bude says there is nothing in it, and women usually know,’ he reflected. Well, he must leave the girl, and save his self-respect.

When nothing more in the way of pottering could be done at the stables, when its proprietor had exhausted the pleasure of staring at the balloon in its hall, and had fed the fowls, he walked with Merton down the avenue, above the shrunken burn that whispered among its ferns and alders, to meet the returning church-goers. The Budes came first, together; they were still, they were always, honeymooning. Mr. Macrae turned back with Lady Bude; Merton walked with Bude, Blake and Miss Macrae were not yet in sight. He thought of walking on to meet them — but no, it must not be.

'Blake owes you a rare candle, Merton,' said Bude, adding, 'A great deal may be done, or said, in a long walk by a young man with his advantages. And if you had not had your knife in him last night I do not think she would have accompanied us this morning to attend the ministrations of Father McColl. He preached in Gaelic.'

'That must have been edifying,' said Merton, wincing.

'The effect, when one does not know the language, and is within six feet of an energetic Celt in the pulpit, is rather odd,' said Bude. 'But you have put your foot in it, not a doubt of that.'

This appeared only too probable. The laggards arrived late for luncheon, and after luncheon Miss Macrae allowed Blake to read his manuscript poems to her in the hall, and to discuss the prospects of the Celtic drama. Afterwards, fearing to hurt the religious sentiments of the Highland servants by playing ping-pong on Sunday in the hall, she instructed him elsewhere, and clandestinely, in that pastime till the hour of tea arrived.

Merton did not appear at the tea-table. Tired of this Castle of Indolence, loathing Blake, afraid of more talk with Lady Bude, eating his own heart, he had started alone after luncheon for a long walk round the loch. The day had darkened, and was deadly still; the water was like a mirror of leaden hue; the air heavy and sulphurous.

These atmospheric phenomena did not gladden the heart of Merton. He knew that rain was coming, but he would not be with *her* by the foaming stream, or on the black waves of the loch. Climbing to the top of the hill, he felt sure that a storm was at hand. On the east, far away, Clibrig, and Suilvean of the double peak, and the round top of Ben More, stood shadowy above the plain against the lurid light. Over the sea hung 'the ragged rims of thunder' far away, veiling in thin shadow the outermost isles, whose mountain crests looked dark as indigo. A few hot heavy drops of rain were falling as Merton began to descend. He was soaked to the skin when he reached the door of the observatory, and rushed up stairs to dress for dinner. A covered way led from the observatory to the Castle, so that he did not get drenched again on his return, which he accomplished punctually as the gong for dinner sounded.

In the drawing-room were the Budes, and Mr. Macrae was nervously pacing the length and breadth of the room.

'They must have taken refuge from the rain somewhere,' Lady Bude was saying, and ‘they’ were obviously Blake and the daughter of the house. Where were they? Merton’s heart sank with a foolish foreboding.

‘I know,’ the lady went on, ‘that they were only going down to the cove — where you and I were yesterday evening, Mr. Merton. It is no distance.’

‘A mile and a half is a good deal in this weather, said Merton, ‘and there is no cottage on this side of the sea loch. But they must have taken shelter,’ he added; he must not seem anxious.

At this moment came a flash of lightning, followed by a crack like that of a cosmic whip-lash, and a long reverberating roar of thunder.

‘It is most foolish to have stayed out so late,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘Any one could see that a storm was coming. I told them so, I am really annoyed.’

Every one was silent, the rain fell straight and steady, the gravel in front of the window was a series of little lakes, pale and chill in the wan twilight.

‘I really think I must send a couple of men down with cloaks and umbrellas,’ said the nervous father, pressing an electric knob.

The butler appeared.

‘Are Donald and Sandy and Murdoch about?’ asked Mr. Macrae.

‘Not returned from church, sir;’ said the butler.

‘There was likely to be a row at the Free Kirk,’ said Mr. Macrae, absently.

‘You must go yourself, Benson, with Archibald and James. Take cloaks and umbrellas, and hurry down towards the cove. Mr. Blake and Miss Macrae have probably found shelter on the way somewhere.’

The butler answered, ‘Yes, sir;’ but he cannot have been very well pleased with his errand. Merton wanted to offer to go, anything to be occupied; but Bude said nothing, and so Merton did not speak.

The four in the drawing-room sat chatting nervously: ‘There was nothing of course to be anxious about,’ they told each other. The bolt of heaven never strikes the daughters of millionaires; Miss Macrae was indifferent to a wetting, and nobody cared tremulously about Blake. Indeed the words ‘confound the fellow’ were in the minds of the three men.

The evening darkened rapidly, the minutes lagged by, the clock chimed the half-hour, three-quarters, nine o’clock.

Mr. Macrae was manifestly growing more and more nervous, Merton forgot to grow more and more hungry. His tongue felt dry and hard; he was afraid of he knew not what, but he bravely tried to make talk with Lady Bude.

The door opened, letting the blaze of electric light from the hall into the darkling room. They all turned eagerly towards the door. It was only one of the servants. Merton’s heart felt like lead. ‘Mr. Benson has returned, sir; he would be glad if he might speak to you for a moment.’

‘Where is he?’ asked Mr. Macrae.

‘At the outer door, sir, in the porch. He is very wet.’

Mr. Macrae went out; the others found little to say to each other.

‘Very awkward,’ muttered Bude. ‘They cannot have been climbing the cliffs, surely.’

‘The bridge is far above the highest water-mark of the burn, in case they crossed the water,’ said Merton.

Lady Bude was silent.

Mr. Macrae returned. ‘Benson has come back,’ he said, ‘to say that he can find no trace of them. The other men are still searching.’

‘Can they have had themselves ferried across the sea loch to the village opposite?’ asked Merton.

‘Emmiline had not the key of our boat,’ said Mr. Macrae, ‘I have made sure of that; and not a man in the village would launch a boat on Sunday.’

‘We must go and help to search for them,’ said Merton; he only wished to be doing something, anything.

‘I shall not be a minute in changing my dress.’

Bude also volunteered, and in a few minutes, having drunk a glass of wine and eaten a crust of bread, they and Mr. Macrae were hurrying towards the cove. The storm was passing; by the time when they reached the sea-side there were rifts of clear light in the sky above them. They had walked rapidly and silently, the swollen stream roaring beneath them. It had rained torrents in the hills. There was nothing to be said, but the mind of each man was busy with the gloomiest conjectures. These had to be far-fetched, for in a country so thinly peopled, and so honest and friendly, within a couple of miles at most from home, on a Sunday evening, what conceivable harm could befall a man and a maid?

‘Can we trust the man?’ was in Merton’s mind. ‘If they have been ferried across to the village, they would have set out to return before now,’ he said aloud; but there was no boat on the faint silver of the sea loch. ‘The cliffs are the likeliest place for an accident, if there *was* an accident,’ he considered, with a pang. The cliffs might have tempted the light-footed girl. In fancy he saw her huddled, a ghastly heap, the faint wind fluttering the folds of her dress, at the bottom of the rocks. She had been wearing a long skirt, not her wont in the Highlands; it would be dangerous to climb in that; she might have forgotten, climbed, and caught her foot, and fallen.

‘Blake may have snatched at her, and been dragged down with her,’ Merton thought. All the horrid fancies of keen anxiety flitted across his mind’s eye. He paused, and made an effort over himself. There *must* be some other harmless explanation, an adventure to laugh at — for Blake and the girl. Poor comfort, that!

The men who had been searching were scattered about the sides of the cove, and, distinguishing the new-comers, gathered towards them.

‘No,’ they said, ‘they had found nothing except a little book that seemed to belong to Mr. Blake.’

It had been discovered near the place where Merton and Lady Bude were sitting on the previous evening. When found it was lying open, face downwards. In the faint light Merton could see that the book was full of manuscript poems, the lines all blotted and run together by the tropical rain. He thrust it into the pocket of his ulster.

Merton took the most intelligent of the gillies aside. ‘Show me where you have searched,’ he said. The man pointed to the shores of the cove; they had also examined the banks of the burn, and under all the trees, clearly fearing that the lost pair might have been lightning-struck, like the nymph and swain in Pope’s poem. ‘You have not searched the cliffs?’ asked Merton.

‘No, sir,’ said the man.

Merton then went to Mr. Macrae, and suggested that the boat should be sent across the sea ferry, to try if anything could be learned in the village. Mr. Macrae agreed, and himself went in the boat, which was presently unmoored, and pulled by two gillies across the loch, that ran like a river with the outgoing tide.

Merton and Bude began to search the cliffs; Merton could hear the hoarse pumping of his own heart. The cliff’s base was deep in flags and bracken, then the rocks began climbing to the foot of the perpendicular basaltic crag. The sky, fortunately, was now clear in the west, and lent a wan light to the seekers. Merton had almost reached the base of the cliff, when, in the deep bracken, he stumbled over something soft. He stooped and held back the tall fronds of bracken.

It was the body of a man; the body did not stir. Merton glanced to see the face, but the face was bent round, leaning half on the earth. It was Blake. Merton’s guess seemed true. They had fallen from the cliffs! But where was that other body? Merton yelled to Bude. Blake seemed dead or insensible.

Merton (he was ashamed of it presently) left the body of Blake alone; he plunged wildly in and out of the bracken, still shouting to Bude, and looking for that which he feared to find. She could not be far off. He stumbled over rocks, into rabbit holes, he dived among the soaked bracken. Below and around he hunted, feverishly panting, then he set his face to the sheer cliff, to climb; she might be lying on some higher ledge, the shadow on the rocks was dark. At this moment Bude hailed him.

‘Come down!’ he cried, ‘she cannot be there!’

‘Why not?’ he gasped, arriving at the side of Bude, who was stooping, with a lantern in his hand, over the body of Blake, which faintly stirred.

‘Look!’ said Bude, lowering the lantern.

Then Merton saw that Blake’s hands were bound down beside his body, and that the cords were fastened by pegs to the ground. His feet were fastened in the same way, and his mouth was stuffed full of wet seaweed. Bude pulled out the improvised gag, cut the ropes, turned the face upwards, and carefully dropped a little whisky from his flask into the mouth. Blake opened his eyes.

‘Where are my poems?’ he asked.

‘Where is Miss Macrae?’ shrieked Merton in agony.

‘Damn the midges,’ said Blake (his face was hardly recognisable from their bites). ‘Oh, damn them all!’ He had fainted again.

‘She has been carried off,’ groaned Merton. Bude and he did all that they knew for poor Blake. They rubbed his ankles and wrists, they administered more whisky, and finally got him to sit up. He scratched his hands over his face and moaned, but at last he recovered full consciousness. No sense could be extracted from him, and, as the boat was now visible on its homeward track, Bude and Merton carried him down to the cove, anxiously waiting Mr. Macrae.

He leaped ashore.

‘Have you heard anything?’ asked Bude.

‘They saw a boat on the loch about seven o’clock,’ said Mr. Macrae, ‘coming from the head of it, touching here, and then pulling west, round the cliff. They thought the crew Sabbath-breakers from the lodge at Alt Garbh. What’s that,’ he cried, at last seeing Blake, who lay supported against a rock, his eyes shut.

Merton rapidly explained.

‘It is as I thought,’ said Mr. Macrae resolutely. ‘I knew it from the first. They have kidnapped her for a ransom. Let us go home.’

Merton and Bude were silent; they, too, had guessed, as soon as they discovered Blake. The girl was her father’s very life, and they admired his resolution, his silence. A gate was taken from its hinges, cloaks were strewn on it, and Blake was laid on this ambulance.

Merton ventured to speak.

‘May I take your boat, sir, across to the ferry, and send the fishermen from the village to search each end of the loch on their side? It is after midnight,’ he added grimly. ‘They will not refuse to go; it is Monday.’

‘I will accompany them,’ said Bude, ‘with your leave, Mr. Macrae, Merton can search our side of the loch, he can borrow another boat at the village in addition to yours. You, at the Castle, can organise the measures for to-morrow.’

‘Thank you both,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘I should have thought of that. Thank you, Mr. Merton, for the idea. I am a little dazed. There is the key of the boat.’

Merton snatched it, and ran, followed by Bude and four gillies, to the little pier where the boat was moored. He must be doing something for her, or go mad. The six men crowded into the boat, and pulled swiftly away, Merton taking the stroke oar. Meanwhile Blake was carried by four gillies towards the Castle, the men talking low to each other in Gaelic. Mr. Macrae walked silently in front.

Such was the mournful procession that Lady Bude ran out to meet. She passed Mr. Macrae, whose face was set with an expression of deadly rage, and looked for Bude. He was not there, a gillie told her what they knew, and, with a convulsive sob, she followed Mr. Macrae into the Castle.

‘Mr. Blake must be taken to his room,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘Benson, bring something to eat and drink. Lady Bude, I deeply regret that this thing should have troubled your stay with me. She has been carried off, Mr. Blake has been rendered unconscious; your husband and Mr. Merton are trying nobly to find the track of the miscreants. You will excuse me, I must see to Mr. Blake.’

Mr. Macrae rose, bowed, and went out. He saw Blake carried to a bathroom in the observatory; they undressed him and put him in the hot water. Then they put him to bed, and brought him wine and food. He drank the wine eagerly.

‘We were set on suddenly from behind by fellows from a boat,’ he said. ‘We saw them land and go up from the cove; they took us in the rear: they felled me and pegged me out. Have you my poems?’

‘Mr. Merton has the poems,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘What became of my daughter?’

‘I don’t know, I was unconscious.’

‘What kind of boat was it?’

‘An ordinary coble, a country boat.’

‘What kind of looking men were they?’

‘Rough fellows with beards. I only saw them when they first passed us at some distance. Oh, my head! Oh damn, how these bites do sting! Get me some ammonia; you’ll find it in a bottle on the dressing-table.’

Mr. Macrae brought him the bottle and a handkerchief. ‘That is all you know?’ he asked.

But Blake was babbling some confusion of verse and prose: his wits were wandering.

Mr. Macrae turned from him, and bade one of the men watch him. He himself passed downstairs and into the hall, where Lady Bude was standing at the window, gazing to the north.

‘Indeed you must not watch, Lady Bude,’ said the millionaire. ‘Let me persuade you to take something and go to bed. I forget myself; I do not believe that you have dined.’ He himself sat down at the table, he ate and drank, and induced Lady Bude to join him. ‘Now, do let me persuade you to go back and to try to sleep,’ said Mr. Macrae gently. ‘Your husband is well accompanied.’

‘It is not for him that I am afraid,’ said the lady, who was in tears.

‘I must arrange for the day’s work,’ said the millionaire, and Lady Bude sighed and left him.

‘First,’ he said aloud, ‘we must get the doctor from Lairg to see Blake. Over forty miles.’ He rang. ‘Benson,’ he said to the butler, ‘order the tandem for seven. The yacht to have steam up at the same hour. Breakfast at half-past six.’

The millionaire then went to his own study, where he sat lost in thought. Morning had come before the sound of voices below informed him that Bude and Merton had returned. He hurried down; their faces told him all. ‘Nothing?’ he asked calmly.

Nothing! They had rowed along the loch sides, touching at every cottage and landing-place. They had learned nothing. He explained his ideas for the day.

‘If you will allow me to go in the yacht, I can telegraph from Lochinver in all directions to the police,’ said Bude.

‘We can use the wireless thing,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘But if you would be so good, you could at least see the local police, and if anything occurred to you, telegraph in the ordinary way.’

‘Right,’ said Bude, ‘I shall now take a bath.’

‘You will stay with me, Mr. Merton,’ said Mr. Macrae.

‘It is a dreadful country for men in our position,’ said Merton, for the sake of saying something. ‘Police and everything so remote.’

‘It gave them their chance; they have waited for it long enough, I dare say. Have you any ideas?’

‘They must have a steamer somewhere.’

‘That is why I have ordered the balloon, to reconnoitre the sea from,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘But they have had all the night to escape in. I think they will take her to America, to some rascally southern republic, probably.’

‘I have thought of the outer islands,’ said Merton, ‘out behind the Lewis and the Long Island.’

‘We shall have them searched,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘I can think of no more at present, and you are tired.’

Merton had slept ill and strangely on the night of Saturday; on Sunday night, of course, he had never lain down. Unshaven, dirty, with haggard eyes, he looked as wretched as he felt.

‘I shall have a bath, and then please employ me, it does not matter on what, as long as I am at work for — you,’ said Merton. He had nearly said ‘for her.’

Mr. Macrae looked at him rather curiously. ‘You are dying of fatigue,’ he said. ‘All your ideas have been excellent, but I cannot let you kill yourself. Ideas are what I want. You must stay with me to-day: I shall be communicating with London and other centres by the Giambresi machine; I shall need your advice, your suggestions. Now, do go to bed: you shall be called if you are needed.’

He wrung Merton’s hand, and Merton crept up to his bedroom. He took a bath, turned in, and was wrapped in all the blessedness of sleep.

Before five o’clock the house was astir. Bude, in the yacht, steamed down the coast, touching at Lochinver, and wherever there seemed a faint hope of finding intelligence. But he learned nothing. Yachts and other vessels came and went (on Sundays, of course, more seldom), and if the heiress had been taken straight to sea, northwards or west, round the Butt of Lewis, by night, there could be no chance of news of her. Returning, Bude learned that the local search parties had found nothing but the black ashes of a burned boat in a creek on the south side of the cliffs. There the captors of Miss Macrae must have touched, burned their coble, and taken to some larger and fleeter vessel. But no such vessel had been seen by shepherd, fisher, keeper, or gillie. The grooms arrived from Lairg, in the tandem, with the doctor and a rural policeman. Bude had telegraphed to Scotland Yard from Lochinver for detectives, and to Glasgow, Oban, Tobermory, Salen, in fact to every place he thought likely, with minute particulars of Miss Macrae’s appearance and dress. All this Merton learned from Bude, when, long after luncheon time, our hero awoke suddenly, refreshed in body, but with the ghastly blank of misery and doubt before the eyes of his mind.

‘I wired,’ said Bude, ‘on the off chance that yesterday’s storm might have deranged the wireless machine, and, by Jove, it is lucky I did. The wireless machine won’t work, not a word of message has come through; it is jammed or something. I met Donald Macdonald, who told me.’

‘Have you seen our host yet?’

‘No,’ said Bude, ‘I was just going to him.’

They found the millionaire seated at a table, his head in his hands. On their approach he roused himself.

‘Any news?’ he asked Bude, who shook his head. He explained how he had himself sent various telegrams, and Mr. Macrae thanked him.

‘You did well,’ he said. ‘Some electric disturbance has cut us off from our London correspondent. We sent messages in the usual way, but there has been no reply. You sent to Scotland Yard for detectives, I think you said?'

'I did.'

'But, unluckily, what can London detectives do in a country like this?' said Mr. Macrae.

'I told them to send one who had the Gaelic,' said Bude.

'It was well thought of,' said Mr. Macrae, 'but this was no local job. Every man for miles round has been examined, and accounted for.'

'I hope you have slept well, Mr. Merton?' he asked.

'Excellently. Can you not put me on some work if it is only to copy telegraphic despatches? But, by the way, how is Blake?'

'The doctor is still with him,' said Mr. Macrae; 'a case of concussion of the brain, he says it is. But you go out and take the air, you must be careful of yourself.'

Bude remained with the millionaire, Merton sauntered out to look at the river: running water drew him like a magnet. By the side of the stream, on a woodland path, he met Lady Bude. She took his hand silently in her right, and patted it with her left. Merton turned his head away.

'What can I say to you?' she asked. 'Oh, this is too horrible, too cruel.'

'If I had listened to you and not irritated her I might have been with her, not Blake,' said Merton, with keen self-respect.

'I don't quite see that you would be any the better for concussion of the brain,' said Lady Bude, smiling. 'Oh, Mr. Merton, you *must* find her, I know how you have worked already. You must rescue her. Consider, this is your chance, this is your opportunity to do something great. Take courage!'

Merton answered, with a rather watery smile, 'If I had Logan with me.'

'With or without Lord Fastcastle, you *must do it*!' said Lady Bude.

They saw Mr. Macrae approaching them deep in thought and advanced to meet him.

'Mr. Macrae,' asked Lady Bude suddenly, 'have you had Donald with you long?'

'Ever since he was a lad in Canada,' answered the millionaire. 'I have every confidence in Donald's ability, and he was for half a year with Gianesi and Giambresi, learning to work their system.'

Donald's honesty, it was clear, he never dreamed of suspecting. Merton blushed, as he remembered that a doubt as to whether the engineer had been 'got at' had occurred to his own mind. For a heavy bribe (Merton had fancied) Donald might have been induced, perhaps by some Stock Exchange operator, to tamper with the wireless centre of communication. But, from Mr. Macrae's perfect confidence, he felt obliged to drop this attractive hypothesis.

They dined at the usual hour, and not long after dinner Lady Bude said good-night, while her lord, who was very tired, soon followed her example. Merton and the millionaire paid a visit to Blake, whom they found asleep, and the doctor, having taken supper and accepted an invitation to stay all night, joined the two other men in the smoking-room. In answer to inquiries about the patient, Dr. MacTavish said, ‘It’s jist concussion, slight concussion, and nervous shoke. No that muckle the maiter wi’ him but a clour on the hairnspan, and midge bites, forbye the disagreeableness o’ being clamped doon for a wheen hours in a wat tussock o’ bracken.’

This diagnosis, though not perfectly intelligible to Merton, seemed to reassure Mr. Macrae.

‘He’s a bit concetty, the chiel,’ added the worthy physician, ‘and it may be a day or twa or he judges he can leave his bed. Jist nervous collapse. But, bless my soul, what’s thon?’

‘Thon’ had brought Mr. Macrae to his feet with a bound. It was the thrill of the electric bell which preluded to communications from the wireless communicator! The instrument began to tick, and to emit its inscribed tape.

‘Thank heaven,’ cried the millionaire, ‘now we shall have light on this mystery.’ He read the message, stamped his foot with an awful execration, and then, recovering himself, handed the document to Merton. ‘The message is a disgusting practical joke,’ he said. ‘Some one at the central agency is playing tricks with the instrument.’

‘Am I to read the message aloud?’ asked Merton.

It was rather a difficult question, for the doctor was a perfect stranger to all present, and the matters involved were of an intimate delicacy, affecting the most sacred domestic relations.

‘Dr. MacTavish,’ said Mr. Macrae, ‘speaking as Highlander to Highlander, these are circumstances, are they not, under the seal of professional confidence?’

The big doctor rose to his feet.

‘They are, sir, but, Mr. Macrae, I am a married man. This sad business of yours, I say it with sorrow, will be the talk of the world to-morrow, as it is of the country side to-day. If you will excuse me, I would rather know nothing, and be able to tell nothing, so I’ll take my pipe outside with me.’

‘Not alone, don’t go alone, Dr. MacTavish,’ said Merton; ‘Mr. Macrae will need his telegraphic operator probably. Let me play you a hundred up at billiards.’

The doctor liked nothing better; soon the balls were rattling, while the millionaire was closeted alone with Donald Macdonald and the wireless thing.

After one game, of which he was the winner, the doctor, with much delicacy, asked leave to go to bed. Merton conducted him to his room, and, returning, was hailed by Mr. Macrae.

‘Here is the pleasant result of our communications,’ he said, reading aloud the message which he had first received.

‘The Seven Hunters. August 9, 7.47 p.m.

‘Do not be anxious about Miss Macrae. She is in perfect health, and accompanied by three chaperons accustomed to move in the first circles. The one question is How Much? Sorry to be abrupt, but the sooner the affair is satisfactorily concluded the better. A reply through your Gianesi machine will reach us, and will meet with prompt attention.’

‘A practical joke,’ said Merton. ‘The melancholy news has reached town through Bude’s telegrams, and somebody at the depôt is playing tricks with the instrument.’

‘I have used the instrument to communicate that opinion to the manufacturers,’ said Mr. Macrae, ‘but I have had no reply.’

‘What does the jester mean by heading his communication “The Seven Hunters”?’ asked Merton.

‘The name of a real or imaginary public-house, I suppose,’ said Mr. Macrae.

At this moment the electric bell gave its signal, and the tape began to exude. Mr. Macrae read the message aloud; it ran thus:

‘No good wiring to Gianesi and Giambresi at headquarters. You are hitched on to us, and to nobody else. Better climb down. What are your terms?’

‘This is infuriating,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘It *must* be a practical joke, but how to reach the operators?’

‘Let me wire to-morrow by the old-fashioned way,’ said Merton; ‘I hear that one need not go to Lairg to wire. One can do that from Inchnadampf, much nearer. That is quicker than steaming to Loch Inver.’

‘Thank you very much, Mr. Merton; I must be here myself. You had better take the motor — trouble dazes a man — I forgot the motor when I ordered the tandem this morning.’

‘Very good,’ said Merton. ‘At what hour shall I start?’

‘We all need rest; let us say at ten o’clock.’

‘All right,’ replied Merton. ‘Now do, pray, try to get a good night of sleep.’

Mr. Macrae smiled wanly: ‘I mean to force myself to read *Emma*, by Miss Austen, till the desired effect is produced.’

Merton went to bed, marvelling at the self-command of the millionaire. He himself slept ill, absorbed in regret and darkling conjecture.

After writing out several telegrams for Merton to carry, the smitten victim of enormous opulence sought repose. But how vainly! Between him and the pages which report the prosings of Miss Bates and Mr. Woodhouse intruded visions of his daughter, a captive, perhaps crossing the Atlantic, perhaps hidden, who knew, in a shieling or a cavern in the untrodden wastes of Assynt or of Lord Reay’s country. At last these appearances were merged in sleep.

III. Logan to the Rescue!

As Merton sped on the motor next day to the nearest telegraph station, with Mr. Macrae's sheaf of despatches, Dr. MacTavish found him a very dull companion. He named the lochs and hills, Quinag, Suilvean, Ben Mór, he dwelt on the merits of the trout in the lochs; he showed the melancholy improvements of the old Duke; he spoke of duchesses and of crofters, of anglers and tourists; he pointed to the ruined castle of the man who sold the great Montrose — or did not sell him. Merton was irresponsive, trying to think. What was this mystery? Why did the wireless machine bring no response from its headquarters; or how could practical jokers have intruded into the secret chambers of Messrs. Gianesi and Giambresi? These dreams or visions of his own on the night before Miss Macrae was taken — were they wholly due to tobacco and the liver?

'I thought I was awake,' said Merton to himself, 'when I was only dreaming about the crimson blot on the ceiling. Was I asleep when I saw the tartans go down the stairs? I used to walk in my sleep as a boy. It is very queer!'

'Frae the top o' Ben Mór,' the doctor was saying, 'on a fine day, they tell me, with a glass you can pick up "The Seven Hunters."'

'Eh, what? I beg your pardon, I am so confused by this wretched affair. What did you say you can pick up?'

'Just "The Seven Hunters,"' said the doctor rather sulkily.

'And what are "The Seven Hunters"?'

'Just seven wee sma' islandies ahint the Butt of Lewis. The maps ca' them the Flanan Islands.'

Merton's heart gave a thump. The first message from the Gianesi invention was dated 'The Seven Hunters.' Here was a clue.

'Are the islands inhabited?' asked Merton.

'Just wi' wild goats, and, maybe, fishers drying their fish. And three men in a lighthouse on one of them,' said the doctor.

They now rushed up to the hotel and telegraph office of Inchnadampf. The doctor, after visiting the bar, went on in the motor to Lairg; it was to return for Merton, who had business enough on hand in sending the despatches. He was thinking over 'The Seven Hunters.' It might be, probably was, a blind, or the kidnappers, having touched there, might have departed in any direction — to Iceland, for what he knew. But the name, 'the Seven Hunters,' was not likely to have been invented by a practical joker in London. If not, the conspirators had really captured and kept to themselves Mr. Macrae's line of wireless communications. How could that have been done? Merton bitterly regretted that his general information did not include electrical science.

However, he had first to send the despatches. In one Mr. Macrae informed Gianesi and Giambresi of the condition of their instrument, and bade them send another at once with a skilled operator, and to look out for probable tamperers in their own establishment. This despatch was in a cypher which before he got the new invention, and while he used the old wires, Mr. Macrae had arranged with the electricians. The words of the despatch were, therefore, peculiar, and the Highland lass who operated, a girl of great beauty and modesty, at first declined to transmit the message.

'It's maybe no proper, for a' that I ken,' she urged, and only by invoking a local person of authority, and using the name of Mr. Macrae very freely, could Merton obtain the transmission of the despatch.

In another document Mr. Macrae ordered 'more motors' and a dozen bicycles, as the Nabob of old ordered 'more curricles.' He also telegraphed to the Home Office, the Admiralty, the Hereditary Lord High Admiral of the West Coast, to Messrs. McBrain, of the steamers, and to every one who might have any access to the control of marine police or information. He wired to the police at New York, bidding them warn all American stations, and to the leading New York newspapers, knowing the energy and inquiring, if imaginative, character of their reporters. Bude ought to have done all this on the previous day, but Bude's ideas were limited. Nothing, however, was lost, as America is not reached in forty-eight hours. The millionaire instructed Scotland Yard to warn all foreign ports, and left them *carte-blanche* as to the offer of a reward for the discovery of his missing daughter. He also put off all the guests whom he had been expecting at Castle Skrae.

Merton was amazed at the energy and intelligence of a paternal mind smitten by sudden grief. Mr. Macrae had even telegraphed to every London newspaper, and to the leading Scottish and provincial journals, 'No Interviewers need Apply.' Several hours were spent, as may be imagined, in getting off these despatches from a Highland rural office, and Merton tried to reward the fair operator. But she declined to accept a present for doing her duty, and expressed lively sympathy for the poor young lady who was lost. In a few days a diamond-studded watch and chain arrived for Miss MacTurk.

Merton himself wired to Logan, imploring him, in the name of friendship, to abandon all engagements, and come to Inchnadampf. Where kidnapping was concerned he knew that Logan must be interested, and might be useful; but, of course, he could not invite him to Castle Skrae. Meanwhile he secured rooms for Logan at the excellent inn. Lady Fastcastle, he knew, was in England, brooding over her first-born, the Master of Fastcastle.

Before these duties were performed the motor returned from Lairg, bearing the two London detectives, one disguised as a gillie (he was the detective who had the Gaelic), the other as a clergyman of the Church of England. To Merton he whispered that he was to be an early friend of Mr. Macrae, come to comfort him on the first news of his disaster. As to the other, the gillie, Mr. Macrae was known to have been in want of an assistant to the stalker, and Duncan Mackay (of Scotland Yard) had accepted the situation. Merton approved of these arrangements; they were such as he would himself have suggested.

‘But I don’t see what we can do, sir,’ said the clerical detective (the Rev. Mr. Williams), ‘except perhaps find out if it was a put up thing from within.’

Merton gave him a succinct sketch of the events, and he could see that Mr. Williams already suspected Donald Macdonald, the engineer. Merton, Mr. Williams, and the driver now got into the motor, and were followed by the gillie-detective and a man to drive in a dog-cart hired from the inn. Merton ordered all answers to telegrams to be sent by boys on bicycles.

It was late ere he returned to Castle Skrae. There nothing of importance had occurred, except the arrival of more messages from the wireless machine. They insisted that Miss Macrae was in perfect health, but implored the millionaire to settle instantly, lest anxiety for a father’s grief should undermine her constitution.

Mr. Williams had a long interview with Mr. Macrae. It was arranged that he should read family prayers in the morning and evening. He left *The Church Quarterly Review* and numbers of *The Expositor*, *The Guardian*, and *The Pilot* in the hall with his great coat, and on the whole his entry was very well staged. Duncan Mackay occupied a room at the keeper’s, who had only eight children.

Mr. Williams asked if he might see Mr. Blake; he could impart religious consolation. Merton carried this message, in answer to which Blake, who was in bed very sulky and sleepy, merely replied, ‘Kick out the hell-hound.’

Merton was obliged to soften this rude message, saying that unfortunately Mr. Blake was of the older faith, though he had expressed no wish for the ministrations of Father McColl.

On hearing this Mr. Williams merely sighed, as the Budes were present. He had been informed as to their tenets, and had even expressed a desire to labour for their enlightenment, by way of giving local colour. He had, he said, some stirring Protestant tracts among his clerical properties. Mr. Macrae, however, had gently curbed this zeal, so on hearing of Blake’s religious beliefs the sigh of Mr. Williams was delicately subdued.

Dinner-time arrived. Blake did not appear; the butler said that he supported existence solely on dried toast and milk and soda-water. He was one of the people who keep a private clinical thermometer, and he sent the bulletin that his temperature was 103. He hoped to come downstairs to-morrow. Mr. Williams gave the party some news of the outer world. He had brought the *Scotsman*, and Mr. Macrae had the gloomy satisfaction of reading a wildly inaccurate report of his misfortune. Correct news had not reached the press, but deep sympathy was expressed. The melancholy party soon broke up, Mr. Williams conducting family prayers with much unction, after the Budes had withdrawn.

In a private interview with the millionaire Merton told him how he had discovered the real meaning of ‘The Seven Hunters,’ whence the first telegram of the kidnappers was dated. Neither man thought the circumstance very important.

‘They would hardly have ventured to name the islands if they had any idea of staying there,’ the millionaire said, ‘besides any heartless jester could find the name on a map.’

This was obvious, but as Lady Bude was much to be pitied, alone, in the circumstances, Mr. Macrae determined to send her and Bude on the yacht, the *Flora Macdonald*, to cruise round the Butt of Lewis and examine the islets. Both Bude and his wife were devoted to yachting, and the isles might yield something in the way of natural history.

Next day (Wednesday) the Budes steamed away, and there came many answers to the telegrams of Mr. Macrae, and one from Logan to Merton. Logan was hard by, cruising with his cousin, Admiral Chirnside, at the naval manœuvres on the northeast coast. He would come to Inchnadampf at once. Mr. Macrae heard from Gianesi and Giambresi. Gianesi himself was coming with a fresh machine. Mr. Macrae wished it had been Giambresi, whom he knew; Gianesi he had never met. Condolences, of course, poured in from all quarters, even the most exalted. The Emperor of Germany was most sympathetic. But there was no news of importance. Several yachting parties had been suspected and examined; three young ladies at Oban, Applecross, and Tobermory, had established their identity and proved that they were not Miss Macrae.

All day the wireless machine was silent. Mr. Williams was shown all the rooms in the castle, and met Blake, who appeared at luncheon. Blake was most civil. He asked for a private interview with Mr. Macrae, who inquired whether his school friend, Mr. Williams, might share it? Blake was pleased to give them both all the information he had, though his head, he admitted, still rang with the cowardly blow that had stunned him. He was told of the discovery of the burned boat, and was asked whether it had approached from east or west, from the side of the Atlantic, or from the head of the sea loch.

‘From Kinlocharty,’ he said, ‘from the head of the loch, the landward side.’ This agreed with the evidence of the villagers on the other side of the sea loch.

Would he recognise the crew? He had only seen them at a certain distance, when they landed, but in spite of the blow on his head he remembered the black beard of one man, and the red beard of another. To be sure they might shave off their beards, yet these two he thought he could identify. Speaking to Miss Macrae as the men passed them, he had called one Donald Dubh, or ‘black,’ and the other Donald Ban, or ‘fair.’ They carried heavy shepherds’ crooks in their hands. Their dress was Lowland, but they wore unusually broad bonnets of the old sort, drooping over the eyes. Blake knew no more, except his anguish from the midges.

He expressed his hope to be well enough to go away on Friday; he would retire to the inn at Scourie, and try to persevere with his literary work. Mr. Macrae would not hear of this; as, if the miscreants were captured, Blake alone could have a chance of identifying them. To this Blake replied that, as long as Mr. Macrae thought that he might be useful, he was at his service.

To Merton, Blake displayed himself in a new light. He said that he remembered little of what occurred after he was found at the foot of the cliff. Probably he was snappish and selfish; he was suffering very much. His head, indeed, was still bound up, and his face showed how he had suffered. Merton shook hands with him, and said that he hoped Blake would forget his own behaviour, for which he was sincerely sorry.

‘Oh, the chaff?’ said Blake. ‘Never mind, I dare say I played the fool. I have been thinking, when my brain would give me leave, as I lay in bed. Merton, you are a trifle my senior, and you know the world much better. I have lived in a writing and painting set, where we talked nonsense till it went to our heads, and we half believed it. And, to tell you the truth, the presence of women always sets me off. I am a humbug; I do *not* know Gaelic, but I mean to work away at my drama for all that. This kind of shock against the realities of life sobers a fellow.’

Blake spoke simply, in an unaffected, manly way.

‘*Semel in saninivimus omnes*!’ said Merton.

‘*Nec lusisse pudet*!’ said Blake, ‘and the rest of it. I know there’s a parallel in the *Greek Anthology*, somewhere. I’ll go and get my copy.’

He went into the observatory (they had been sitting on a garden seat outside), and Merton thought to himself:

‘He is not such a bad fellow. Not many of your young poets know anything but French.’

Blake seemed to have some difficulty in finding his Anthology. At last he came out with rather a ‘carried’ look, as the Scots say, rather excited.

‘Here it is,’ he said, and handed Merton the little volume, of a Tauchnitz edition, open at the right page. Merton read the epigram. ‘Very neat and good,’ he said.

‘Now, Merton,’ said Blake, ‘it is not usual, is it, for ministers of the Anglican sect to play the spy?’

‘What in the world do you mean?’ asked Merton. ‘Oh, I guess, the Rev. Mr. Williams! Were you not told that his cure of souls is in Scotland Yard? I ought to have told you, I thought our host would have done so. What was the holy man doing?’

‘I was not told,’ said Blake, ‘I suppose Mr. Macrae was too busy. So I was rather surprised, when I went into my room for my book, to find the clergyman examining my things and taking books out of one of my book boxes.’

‘Good heavens!’ exclaimed Merton. ‘What did you do?’

‘I locked the door of the room, and handed Mr. Williams the key of my despatch box. “I have a few private trifles there,” I said, “the key may save you trouble.” Then I sat down and wrote a note to Mr. Macrae, and rang the bell and asked the servant to carry the note to his master. Mr. Macrae came, and I explained the situation and asked him to be kind enough to order the motor, if he could spare it, or anything to carry me to the nearest inn.’

‘I shall order it, Mr. Blake,’ said Mr. Macrae, ‘but it will be to remove this person, whom I especially forbade to molest any of my guests. I don’t know how I forgot to tell you who he is, a detective; the others were told.’

‘He confounded himself in excuses; it was horribly awkward.’

‘Horribly!’ said Merton.

‘He rated the man for visiting his guests’ rooms without his knowledge. I dare say the parson has turned over all *your* things.’

Merton blenched. He had some of the correspondence of the Disentanglers with him, rather private matter, naturally.

‘He had not the key of my despatch box,’ said Merton.

‘He could open it with a quill, I believe,’ said Blake. ‘They do — in novels.’

Merton felt very uneasy. ‘What was the end of it?’ he asked.

‘Oh, I said that if the man was within his duty the accident was only one of those which so singular a misfortune brings with it. I would stay while Mr. Macrae wanted me. I handed over my keys, and insisted that all my luggage and drawers and things should be examined. But Mr. Macrae would not listen to me, and forbade the fellow to enter any of — the bedrooms.’

‘Begad, I’ll go and look at my own despatch box,’ said Merton.

‘I shall sit in the shade,’ said Blake.

Merton did examine his box, but could not see that any of the papers had been disarranged. Still, as the receptacle was full of family secrets he did not feel precisely comfortable. Going out on the lawn he met Mr. Macrae, who took him into a retired place and told him what had occurred.

‘I had given the man the strictest orders not to invade the rooms of any of my guests,’ he said; ‘it is too odious.’

The Rev. Mr. Williams being indisposed, dined alone in his room that night; so did Blake, who was still far from well.

The only other incident was that Donald Macdonald and the new gillie, Duncan Mackay, were reported to be ‘lying around in a frightfully dissolute state.’ Donald was a sober man, but Mackay, he explained next morning, proved to be his long lost cousin, hence the revel. Mackay, separately, stated that he had made Donald intoxicated for the purpose of eliciting any guilty secret which he might possess. But whisky had elicited nothing.

On the whole the London detectives had not been entirely a success. Mr. Macrae therefore arranged to send both of them back to Lairg, where they would strike the line, and return to the metropolis.

Merton had casually talked of Logan (Lord Fastcastle) to Mr. Macrae on the previous evening, and mentioned that he was now likely to be at Inchnadampf. Mr. Macrae knew something of Logan, and before he sped the parting detectives, asked Merton whether he thought that he might send a note to Inchnadampf inviting his friend to come and bear him company? Merton gravely said that in such a crisis as theirs he thought that Logan would be extremely helpful, and that he was a friend of the Budes. Perhaps he himself had better go and pick up Logan and inform him fully as to the mysterious events? As Mr. Gianesi was also expected from London on that day (Thursday) to examine the wireless machine, which had been silent, Mr. Macrae sent off several vehicles, as well as the motor that carried the detectives. Merton drove the tandem himself.

Merton found Logan, with his Spanish bull-dog, Bouncer, loafing outside the hotel door at Inchnadampf. He greeted Merton in a state of suppressed glee; the whole adventure was much to the taste of the scion of Rostalrig. Merton handed him Mr. Macrae’s letter of invitation.

‘Come, won’t I come, rather!’ said Logan.

‘Of course we must wait to rest the horses,’ said Merton. ‘The motor has gone on to Lairg, carrying two detectives who have made a pretty foozle of it, and it will bring back an electrician.’

‘What for?’ asked Logan.

‘I must tell you the whole story,’ said Merton. ‘Let us walk a little way — too many gillies and people loafing about here.’

They walked up the road and sat down by little Loch Awe, the lochan on the way to Alt-na-gealgach. Merton told all the tale, beginning with his curious experiences on the night before the disappearance of Miss Macrae, and ending with the dismissal of the detectives. He also confided to Logan the importance of the matter to himself, and entreated him to be serious.

Logan listened very attentively.

When Merton had ended, Logan said, ‘Old boy, you were the making of me: you may trust me. Serious it is. A great deal of capital must have been put into this business.’

‘A sprat to catch a whale,’ said Merton. ‘You mean about nobbling the electric machine? How could *that* be done?’

‘That — and other things. I don’t know *how* the machine was nobbled, but it could not be done cheap. Would you mind telling me your dreams again?’

Merton repeated the story.

Logan was silent.

‘Do you see your way?’ asked Merton.

‘I must have time to think it out,’ said Logan. ‘It is rather mixed. When was Bude to return from his cruise to “The Seven Hunters”?’

‘Perhaps to-night,’ said Merton. ‘We cannot be sure. She is a very swift yacht, the *Flora Macdonald*.’

‘I’ll think it all over, Bude may give us a tip.’

No more would Logan say, beyond asking questions, which Merton could not answer, about the transatlantic past of the vanished heiress.

They loitered back towards the hotel and lunched. The room was almost empty, all the guests of the place were out fishing. Presently the motor returned from Lairg, bringing Mr. Gianesi and a large box of his electrical appliances. Merton rapidly told him all that he did not already know through Mr. Macrae’s telegrams. He was a reserved man, rather young, and beyond thanking Merton, said little, but pushed on towards Castle Skrae in the motor. ‘Some other motors,’ he said, ‘had arrived, and were being detained at Lairg.’ They came later.

Merton and Logan followed in the tandem, Logan driving; they had handed to Gianesi a sheaf of telegrams for the millionaire. As to the objects of interest on the now familiar road, Merton enlightened Logan, who seemed as absent-minded as Merton had been, when instructed by Dr. MacTavish. As they approached the Castle, Merton observed, from a height, the *Flora Macdonald* steaming into the sea loch.

‘Let us drive straight down to the cove and meet them,’ he said.

They arrived at the cove just as the boat from the yacht touched the shore. The Budes were astonished and delighted to see their old friend, Logan, and his dog, Bouncer, a tawny black muzzled, bow-legged hero, was admired by Lady Bude.

Merton rapidly explained. ‘Now, what tidings?’ he asked.

The party walked aside on the shore, and Bude swiftly narrated what he had discovered.

‘They *have* been there,’ he said. ‘We drew six of the islets blank, including the islet of the lighthouse. The men there had seen a large yacht, two ladies and a gentleman from it had visited them. They knew no more. Desert places, the other isles are, full of birds. On the seventh isle we found some Highland fishermen from the Lewis in a great state of excitement. They had only landed an hour before to pick up some fish they had left to dry on the rocks. They had no English, but one of our crew had the Gaelic, and interpreted in Scots. Regular Gaels, they did not want to speak, but I offered money, gold, let them see it. Then they took us to a cave. Do you know Mackinnon’s cave in Mull, opposite Iona?’

‘Yes, drive on!’ said Merton, much interested.

‘Well, inside it was pitched an empty corrugated iron house, quite new, and another, on the further side, outside the cave.’

‘I picked up this in the interior of the cave,’ said Lady Bude.

‘This’ was a golden hair-pin of peculiar make.

‘That’s the kind of hair-pin she wears,’ said Lady Bude.

‘By Jove!’ said Merton and Logan in one voice.

‘But that was all,’ said Bude. ‘There was no other trace, except that plainly people had been coming and going, and living there. They had left some empty bottles, and two intact champagne bottles. We tasted it, it was excellent! The Lewis men, who had not heard of the affair, could tell nothing more, except, what is absurd, that they had lately seen a dragon flying far off over the sea. A *dragon volant*, did you ever hear such nonsense? The interpreter pronounced it “draigon.” He had not too much English himself.’

‘The Highlanders are so delightfully superstitious,’ said Lady Bude.

Logan opened his lips to speak, but said nothing.

‘I don’t think we should keep Mr. Macrae waiting,’ said Lady Bude.

‘If Bude will take the reins,’ said Merton, ‘you and he can be at the Castle in no time. We shall walk.’

‘Excuse me a moment,’ said Logan. ‘A word with you, Bude.’

He took Bude aside, uttered a few rapid sentences, and then helped Lady Bude into the tandem. Bude followed, and drove away.

'Is your secret to be kept from me?' asked Merton.

'Well, old boy, you never told *me* the mystery of the Emu's feathers! Secret for secret, out with it; how did the feathers help you, if they *did* help you, to find out my uncle, the Marquis? *Gifgaff*, as we say in Berwickshire. Out with your feathers! and I'll produce my *dragon volant*, tail and all.'

Merton was horrified. The secret of the Emu's feathers involved the father of Lady Fastcastle, of his old friend's wife, in a very distasteful way. Logan, since his marriage, had never shown any curiosity in the matter. His was a joyous nature; no one was less of a self-tormentor.

'Well, old fellow,' said Merton, 'keep your dragon, and I'll keep my Emu.'

'I won't keep him long, I assure you,' said Logan. 'Only for a day or two, I dare say; then you'll know; sooner perhaps. But, for excellent reasons, I asked Bude and Lady Bude to say nothing about the hallucination of these second-sighted Highland fishers. I have a plan. I think we shall run in the kidnappers; keep your pecker up. You shall be in it!'

With this promise, and with Logan's jovial confidence (he kept breaking into laughter as he went) Merton had to be satisfied, though in no humour for laughing.

'I'm working up to my *dénouement*.' Logan said. 'Tremendously dramatic! You shall be on all through; I am keeping the fat for you, Merton. It is no bad thing for a young man to render the highest possible services to a generous millionaire, especially in the circumstances.'

'You're rather patronising,' said Merton, a little hurt.

'No, no,' said Logan. 'I have played second fiddle to you often, do let me take command this time — or, at all events, wait till you see my plot unfolded. Then you can take your part, or leave it alone, or modify to taste. Nothing can be fairer.'

Merton admitted that these proposals were loyal, and worthy of their old and tried friendship.

'*Un dragon volant*, flying over the empty sea!' said Logan. 'The Highlanders beat the world for fantastic visions, and the Islanders beat the Highlanders. But, look here, am I too inquisitive? The night when we first thought of the Disentanglers you said there was — somebody. But I understood that she and you were of one mind, and that only parents and poverty were in the way. And now, from what you told me this morning at Inchnadampf, it seems that there is no understanding between you and *this* lady, Miss Macrae.'

'There is none,' said Merton. 'I tried to keep my feelings to myself — I'm ashamed to say that I doubt if I succeeded.'

'Any chance?' asked Logan, putting his arm in Merton's in the old schoolboy way.

'I would rather not speak about it,' said Merton. 'I had meant to go myself on the Monday. Then came the affair of Sunday night,' and he sighed.

'Then the somebody before was another somebody?'

'Yes,' said Merton, turning rather red.

'Men have died and the worms have eaten them, but not for love,' muttered Logan.

IV. The Adventure of Eachain of the Hairy Arm

On arriving at the Castle Logan and Merton found poor Mr. Macrae comparatively cheerful. Bude and Lady Bude had told what they had gleaned, and the millionaire, recognising his daughter’s hair-pin, had all but broken down. Lady Bude herself had wept as he thanked her for this first trace, this endearing relic, of the missing girl, and he warmly welcomed Merton, who had detected the probable meaning of the enigmatic ‘Seven Hunters.’

‘It is to *you*,’ he said, ‘Mr. Merton, that I owe the intelligence of my daughter’s life and probable comfort.’

Lady Bude caught Merton’s eye; one of hers was slightly veiled by her long lashes.

The telegrams of the day had only brought the usual stories of the fruitless examination of yachts, and of hopes unfulfilled and clues that led to nothing. The outermost islets were being searched, and a steamer had been sent to St. Kilda. At home Mr. Gianesi had explained to Mr. Macrae that he and his partner were forced, reluctantly, by the nature of the case, to suspect treason within their own establishment in London, a thing hitherto unprecedented. They had therefore installed a new machine in a carefully locked chamber at their place, and Mr. Gianesi was ready at once to set up a corresponding recipient engine at Castle Skrae. Mr. Macrae wished first to remove the machine in the smoking-room, but Blake ventured to suggest that it had better be left where it was.

‘The conspirators,’ he said, ‘have made one blunder already, by mentioning “The Seven Hunters,” unless, indeed, that was intentional; they *may* have meant to lighten our anxiety, without leaving any useful clue. They may make another mistake: in any case it is as well to be in touch with them.’

At this moment the smoking-room machine began to tick and emitted a message. It ran, ‘Glad you visited the Hunters. You see we do ourselves very well. Hope you drank our health, we left some bottles of champagne on purpose. No nasty feeling, only a matter of business. Do hurry up and come to terms.’

‘Impudent dogs!’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘But I think you are right, Mr. Blake; we had better leave these communications open.’

Mr. Gianesi agreed that Blake had spoken words of wisdom. Merton felt surprised at his practical common sense. It was necessary to get another pole to erect on the roof of the observatory, with another box at top for the new machine, but a flagstaff from the Castle leads was found to serve the purpose, and the rest of the day was passed in arranging the installation, the new machine being placed in Mr. Merton's own study. Before dinner was over, Mr. Gianesi, who worked like a horse, was able to announce that all was complete, and that a brief message, 'Yours received, all right,' had passed through from his firm in London.

Soon after dinner Blake retired to his room; his head was still suffering, and he could not bear smoke. Gianesi and Mr. Macrae were in the Castle, Mr. Macrae feverishly reading the newspaper speculations on the melancholy affair: leading articles on Science and Crime, the potentialities of both, the perils of wealth, and such other thoughts as occurred to active minds in Fleet Street. Gianesi's room was in the observatory, but he remained with Mr. Macrae in case he might be needed. Merton and Logan were alone in the smoking-room, where Bude left them early.

'Now, Merton,' said Logan, 'you are going to come on in the next scene. Have you a revolver?'

'Heaven forbid!' said Merton.

'Well, I have! Now this is what you are to do. We shall both turn in about twelve, and make a good deal of clatter and talk as we do so. You will come with me into my room. I'll hand you the revolver, loaded, silently, while we talk fishing shop with the door open. Then you will go rather noisily to your room, bang the door, take off your shoes, and slip out again — absolutely noiselessly — back into the smoking-room. You see that window in the embrasure here, next the door, looking out towards the loch? The curtain is drawn already, you will go on the window-seat and sit tight! Don't fall asleep! I shall give you my portable electric lamp for reading in the train. You may find it useful. Only don't fall asleep. When the row begins I shall come on.'

'I see,' said Merton. 'But look here! Suppose you slip out of your own room, locking the door quietly, and into mine, where you can snore, you know — I snore myself — in case anybody takes a fancy to see whether I am asleep? Leave your dog in your own room, *he* snores, all Spanish bull-dogs do.'

'Yes, that will serve,' said Logan. 'Merton, your mind is not wholly inactive.'

They had some whisky and soda-water, and carried out the manœuvres on which they had decided.

Merton, unshod, silently re-entered the smoking-room, his shoes in his hand; Logan as tactfully occupied Merton's room, and then they waited. Presently, the smoking-room door being slightly ajar, Merton heard Logan snoring very naturally; the Spanish bull-dog was yet more sonorous. Gianesi came in, walked upstairs to his bedroom, and shut his door; in half an hour he also was snoring; it was a nasal trio.

Merton 'drove the night along,' like Dr. Johnson, by repeating Latin and other verses. He dared not turn on the light of his portable electric lamp and read; he was afraid to smoke; he heard the owls towhitting and towhooing from the woods, and the clock on the Castle tower striking the quarters and the hours.

One o'clock passed, two o'clock passed, a quarter after two, then the bell of the wireless machine rang, the machine began to tick; Merton sat tight, listening. All the curtains of the windows were drawn, the room was almost perfectly dark; the snorings had sometimes lulled, sometimes revived. Merton lay behind the curtains on the window-seat, facing the door. He knew, almost without the help of his ears, that the door was slowly, slowly opening. Something entered, something paused, something stole silently towards the wireless machine, and paused again. Then a glow suffused the further end of the room, a disc of electric light, clearly from a portable lamp. A draped form, in deep shadow, was exposed to Merton's view. He stole forward on tiptoe with noiseless feet; he leaped on the back of the figure, threw his left arm round its neck, caught its right wrist in a grip of steel, and yelled:

'Mr. Eachain of the Hairy Arm, if I am not mistaken!'

At the same moment there came a click, the electric light was switched on, Logan bounced on to the figure, tore away a revolver from the right hand of which Merton held the wrist, and the two fell on the floor above a struggling Highland warrior in the tartans of the Macraes. The figure was thrown on its face.

'Got you now, Mr. Blake!' said Logan, turning the head to the light. 'D — n!' he added; 'it is Gianesi! I thought we had the Irish minstrel.'

The figure only snarled, and swore in Italian.

'First thing, anyhow, to tie him up,' said Logan, producing a serviceable cord.

Both Logan and Merton were muscular men, and presently had the intruder tightly swathed in inextricable knots and gagged in a homely but sufficient fashion.

'Now, Merton,' said Logan, 'this is a bitter disappointment! From your dream, or vision, of Eachain of the Hairy Arm, it was clear to me that somebody, the poet for choice, had heard the yarn of the Highland ghost, and was masquerading in the kilt for the purpose of tampering with the electric dodge and communicating with the kidnappers. Apparently I owe the bard an apology. You'll sit on this fellow's chest while I go and bring Mr. Macrae.'

'A message has come in on the machine,' said Merton.

'Well, he can read it; it is not our affair.'

Logan went off; Merton poured out a glass of Apollinaris water, added a little whisky, and lit a cigarette. The figure on the floor wriggled; Merton put the revolver which the man had dropped and Logan's pistol into a drawer of the writing-table, which he locked.

'I do detest all that cheap revolver business,' said Merton.

The row had awakened Logan's dog, which was howling dolefully in the neighbouring room.

'Queer situation, eh?' said Merton to the prostrate figure.

Hurrying footsteps climbed the stairs; Mr. Macrae (with a shot-gun) and Logan entered.

Mr. Macrae all but embraced Merton. 'Had I a son, I could have wished him to be like you,' he said; 'but my poor boy—' his voice broke. Merton had not known before that the millionaire had lost a son. He did understand, however, that the judicious Logan had given *him* the whole credit of the exploit, for reasons too obvious to Merton.

'Don't thank *me*,' he was saying, when Logan interrupted:

'Don't you think, Mr. Macrae, you had better examine the message that has just come in?'

Mr. Macrae read, 'Glad they found the hair-pin, it will console the old boy. Do not quite see how to communicate, if Gianesi, who, you say, has arrived, removes the machine.'

'Look here,' cried Merton, 'excuse my offering advice, but we ought, I think, to send for Donald Macdonald *at once*. We must flash back a message to those brutes, so they may think they are still in communication with the traitor in our camp. That beast on the floor could work it, of course, but he would only warn *them*; we can't check him. We must use Donald, and keep them thinking that they are sending news to the traitor.'

'But, by Jove,' said Logan, 'they have heard from *him*, whoever he is, since Bude came back, for they know about the finding of the hair-pin. You,' he said to the wretched captive, 'have you been at this machine?'

The man, being gagged, only gasped.

'There's this, too,' said Merton, 'the senders of the last message clearly think that Gianesi is against them. If Gianesi removes the machine, they say—'

Merton did not finish his sentence, he rushed out of the room. Presently he hurried back. 'Mr. Macrae,' he said, 'Blake's door is locked. I can't waken him, and, if he were in his room, the noise we have made must have wakened him already. Logan, ungag that creature!'

Logan removed the gag.

'Who are *you*?' he asked.

The captive was silent.

‘Mr. Macrae,’ said Merton, ‘may I run and bring Donald and the other servants here? Donald must work the machine at once, and we must break in Blake’s door, and, if he is off, we must rouse the country after him.’

Mr. Macrae seemed almost dazed, the rapid sequence of unusual circumstances being remote from his experience. In spite of the blaze of electric light, the morning was beginning to steal into the room; the refreshments on the table looked oddly dissipated, there was a heavy stale smell of tobacco, and of whisky from a bottle that had been upset in the struggle. Mr. Macrae opened a window and inhaled the fresh air from the Atlantic.

This revived him. ‘I’ll ring the alarm bell,’ he said, and, putting a small key to an unnoticed keyhole in a panel, he opened a tiny door, thrust in his hand, and pressed a knob. Instantly from the Castle tower came the thunderous knell of the alarm. ‘I had it put in in case of fire or burglars,’ explained the millionaire, adding automatically, ‘every modern improvement.’

In a few minutes the servants and gillies had gathered, hastily clad; they were met by Logan, who briefly bade some bring hammers, and the caber, or pine-tree trunk that is tossed in Highland sports. It would make a good battering-ram. Donald Macdonald he sent at once to Mr. Macrae. He met Bude and Lady Bude, and rapidly explained that there was no danger of fire. The Countess went back to her rooms, Bude returned with Logan into the observatory. Here they found Donald telegraphing to the conspirators, by the wireless engine, a message dictated by Merton:

‘Don’t be alarmed about communications. I have got them to leave our machine in its place on the chance that you might say something that would give you away. Gianesi suspects nothing. Wire as usual, at about half-past two in the morning, when you mean it for me.’

‘That ought to be good enough,’ said Logan approvingly, while the hammers and the caber, under Mr. Macrae’s directions, were thundering on the door of Blake’s room. The door, which was very strong, gave way at last with a crash; in they burst. The room was empty, a rope fastened to the ironwork of the bedstead showed the poet’s means of escape, for a long rope-ladder swung from the window. On the table lay a letter directed to

Thomas Merton, Esq.,
care of Ronald Macrae, Esq.,
Castle Skrae.

Mr. Macrae took the letter, bidding Benson, the butler, search the room, and conveyed the epistle to Merton, who opened it. It ran thus: —

‘Dear Merton, — As a man of the world, and slightly my senior, you must have expected to meet me in the smoking-room to-night, or at least Lord Fastcastle probably entertained that hope. I saw that things were getting a little too warm, and made other arrangements. It is a little hard on the poor fellow whom you have probably mauled, if you have not shot each other. As he has probably informed you, he is not Mr. Gianesi, but a dismissed *employé*, whom we enlisted, and whom I found it desirable to leave behind me. These discomforts will occur; I myself did not look for so severe an assault as I suffered down at the cove on Sunday evening. The others carried out their parts only too conscientiously in my case. You will not easily find an opportunity of renewing our acquaintance, as I slit and cut the tyres of all the motors, except that on which I am now retiring from hospitable Castle Skrae, having also slit largely the tyres of the bicycles. Mr. Macrae’s new wireless machine has been rendered useless by my unfortunate associate, and, as I have rather spiked all the wheeled conveyances (I could not manage to scuttle the yacht), you will be put to some inconvenience to re-establish communications. By that time my trail will be lost. I enclose a banknote for 10*l*., which pray, if you would oblige me, distribute among the servants at the Castle. Please thank Mr. Macrae for all his hospitality. Among my books you may find something to interest you. You may keep my manuscript poems.

Very faithfully yours,
Gerald Blake.’

‘P. S. — The genuine Gianesi will probably arrive at Lairg to-morrow. My unfortunate associate (whom I cannot sufficiently pity), relieved him of his ingenious machine *en route*, and left him, heavily drugged, in a train bound for Fort William. Or perhaps Gianesi may come by sea to Loch Inver. G.B.’

When Merton had read this elegant epistle aloud, Benson entered, bearing electrical apparatus which had been found in the book boxes abandoned by Blake. What he had done was obvious enough. He had merely smuggled in, in his book boxes, a machine which corresponded with that of the kidnappers, and had substituted its mechanism for that supplied to Mr. Macrae by Gianesi and Giambresi. This he must have arranged on the Saturday night, when Merton saw the kilted appearance of Eachain of the Hairy Arm. A few metallic atoms from the coherer on the floor of the smoking-room had caught Merton’s eye before breakfast on Sunday morning. Now it was Friday morning! And still no means of detecting and capturing the kidnappers had been discovered.

Out of the captive nothing could be extracted. The room had been cleared, save for Mr. Macrae, Logan, and Bude, and the man had been interrogated. He refused to answer any questions, and demanded to be taken before a magistrate. Now, where was there a magistrate?

Logan lighted the smoking-room fire, thrust the poker into it, and began tying hard knots in a length of cord, all this silently. His brows were knit, his lips were set, in his eye shone the wild light of the blood of Restalrig. Bude and Mr. Macrae looked on aghast.

‘What *are* you about?’ asked Merton.

‘There are methods of extracting information from reluctant witnesses,’ snarled Logan.

‘Oh, bosh!’ said Merton. ‘Mr. Macrae cannot permit you to revive your ancestral proceedings.’

Logan threw down his knotted cord. ‘I beg your pardon, Mr. Macrae,’ he said, ‘but if I had that dog in my house of Kirkburn—’ he then went out.

‘Lord Fastcastle is a little moved,’ said Merton. ‘He comes of a wild stock, but I never saw him like this.’

Mr. Macrae allowed that the circumstances were unusual.

A horrible thought occurred to Merton. ‘Mr. Macrae,’ he exclaimed, ‘may I speak to you privately? Bude, I dare say, will be kind enough to remain with that person.’

Mr. Macrae followed Merton into the billiard-room.

‘My dear sir,’ said the pallid Merton, ‘Logan and I have made a terrible blunder! We never doubted that, if we caught any one, our captive would be Blake. I do not deny that this man is his accomplice, but we have literally no proof. He may persist, if taken before a magistrate, that he is Gianesi. He may say that, being in your employment as an electrician, he naturally entered the smoking-room when the electric bell rang. He can easily account for his possession of a revolver, in a place where a mysterious crime has just been committed. As to the Highland costume, he may urge that, like many Southrons, he had bought it to wear on a Highland tour, and was trying it on. How can you keep him? You have no longer the right of Pit and Gallows. Before what magistrate can you take him, and where? The sheriff-substitute may be at Golspie, or Tongue, or Dingwall, or I don’t know where. What can we do? What have we against the man? “Loitering with intent”? And here Logan and I have knocked him down, and tied him up, and Logan wanted to torture him.’

‘Dear Mr. Merton,’ replied Mr. Macrae, with paternal tenderness, ‘you are overwrought. You have not slept all night. I must insist that you go to bed, and do not rise till you are called. The man is certainly guilty of conspiracy, that will be proved when the real Gianesi comes to hand. If not, I do not doubt that I can secure his silence. You forget the power of money. Make yourself easy, go to sleep; meanwhile I must re-establish communications. Good-night, golden slumbers!'

He wrung Merton's hand, and left him admiring the calm resolution of one whose conversation, 'in the mad pride of intellectuality,' he had recently despised. The millionaire, Merton felt, was worthy to be his daughter's father.

'The power of money!' mused Mr. Macrae; 'what is it in circumstances like mine? Surrounded by all the resources of science, I am baffled by a clever rogue and in a civilised country the aid of the law and the police is as remote and inaccessible as in the Great Sahara! But to business!'

He sent for Benson, bade him, with some gillies, carry the prisoner into the dungeon of the old castle, loose his bonds, place food before him, and leave him in charge of the stalker. He informed Bude that breakfast would be ready at eight, and then retired to his study, where he matured his plans.

The yacht he would send to Lochinver to await the real Gianesi there, and to send telegrams descriptive of Blake in all directions. Giambresi must be telegraphed to again, and entreated to come in person, with yet another electric machine, for that brought by the false Gianesi had been, by the same envoy, rendered useless. A mounted man must be despatched to Lairg to collect vehicles and transport there, and to meet the real Gianesi if he came that way. Thus Mr. Macrae, with cool patience and forethought, endeavoured to recover his position, happy in the reflection that treachery had at last been eliminated. He did not forget to write telegrams to remote sheriff-substitutes and procurators fiscal.

As to the kidnappers, he determined to amuse them with protracted negotiations on the subject of his daughter's ransom. These would be despatched, of course, by the wireless engine which was in tune and touch with their own. During the parleyings the wretches might make some blunder, and Mr. Macrae could perhaps think out some plan for their detection and capture, without risk to his daughter. If not, he must pay ransom.

Having written out his orders and telegrams, Mr. Macrae went downstairs to visit the stables. He gave his commands to his servants, and, as he returned, he met Logan, who had been on the watch for him.

'I am myself again, Mr. Macrae,' said Logan, smiling. 'After all, we are living in the twentieth century, not the sixteenth, worse luck! And now can you give me your attention for a few minutes?'

'Willingly,' said Mr. Macrae, and they walked together to a point in the garden where they were secure from being overheard.

'I must ask you to lend me a horse to ride to Lairg and the railway at once,' said Logan.

‘Must you leave us? You cannot, I fear, catch the 12.50 train south.’

‘I shall take a special train if I cannot catch the one I want,’ said Logan, adding, ‘I have a scheme for baffling these miscreants and rescuing Miss Macrae, while disappointing them of the monstrous ransom which they are certain to claim. If you can trust me, you will enter into protracted negotiations with them on the matter through the wireless machine.’

‘That I had already determined to do,’ said the millionaire. ‘But may I inquire what is your scheme?’

‘Would it be asking too much to request you to let me keep it concealed, even from you? Everything depends on the most absolute secrecy. It must not appear that you are concerned — must not be suspected. My plan has been suggested to me by trifling indications which no one else has remarked. It is a plan which, I confess, appears wild, but what is *not* wild in this unhappy affair? Science, as a rule beneficent, has given birth to potentialities of crime which exceed the dreams of oriental romance. But science, like the spear of Achilles, can cure the wounds which herself inflicts.’

Logan spoke calmly, but eloquently, as every reader must observe. He was no longer the fierce Border baron of an hour agone, but the polished modern gentleman. The millionaire marked the change.

‘Any further mystery cannot but be distasteful, Lord Fastcastle,’ said Mr. Macrae.

‘The truth is,’ said Logan, ‘that if my plan takes shape important persons and interests will be involved. I myself will be involved, and, for reasons both public and private, it seems to me to the last degree essential that you should in no way appear; that you should be able, honestly, to profess entire ignorance. If I fail, I give you my word of honour that your position will be in no respect modified by my action. If I succeed—’

‘Then you will, indeed, be my preserver,’ said the millionaire.

‘Not I, but my friend, Mr. Merton,’ said Logan, ‘who, by the way, ought to accompany me. In Mr. Merton’s genius for success in adventures entailing a mystery more dark, and personal dangers far greater, than those involved by my scheme (which is really quite safe), I have confidence based on large experience. To Merton alone I owe it that I am a married, a happy, and, speaking to any one but yourself, I might say an affluent man. This adventure must be achieved, if at all, *auspice Merton*.’

‘I also have much confidence in him, and I sincerely love him,’ said Mr. Macrae, to the delight of Logan. He then paced silently up and down in deep thought. ‘You say that your scheme involves you in no personal danger?’ he asked.

‘In none, or only in such as men encounter daily in several professions. Merton and I like it.’

‘And you will not suffer in character if you fail?’

‘Certainly not in character; no gentleman of my coat ever entered on enterprise so free from moral blame,’ said Logan, ‘since my ancestor and namesake, Sir Robert, fell at the side of the good Lord James of Douglas, above the Heart of Bruce.’

He thrilled and changed colour as he spoke.

‘Yet it would not do for *me* to be known to be connected with the enterprise?’ asked Mr. Macrae.

‘Indeed it would not! Your notorious opulence would arouse ideas in the public mind, ideas false, indeed, but fatally compromising.’

‘I may not even subsidise the affair — put a million to Mr. Merton’s account?’

‘In no sort! Afterwards, *after* he succeeds, then I don’t say, if Merton will consent; but that is highly improbable. I know my friend.’

Mr. Macrae sighed deeply and remained pensive. ‘Well,’ he answered at last, ‘I accept your very gallant and generous proposal.’

‘I am overjoyed!’ said Logan. He had never been in such a big thing before.

‘I shall order my two best horses to be saddled after breakfast,’ said Mr. Macrae. ‘You will bait at Inchnadampf.’

‘Here is my address; this will always find me,’ said Logan, writing rapidly on a leaf of his note-book.

‘You will wire all news of your negotiations with the pirates to me, by the new wireless machine, when Giambresi brings it, and his firm in town will telegraph it on to me, at the address I gave you, *in cypher*. To save time, we must use a book cypher, we can settle it in the house in ten minutes,’ said Logan, now entirely in his element.

They chose *The Bonnie Brier Bush*, by Mr. Ian Maclaren — a work too popular to excite suspicion; and arranged the method of secret correspondence with great rapidity. Logan then rushed up to Merton’s room, hastily communicated the scheme to him, and overcame his objections, nay, awoke in him, by his report of Mr. Macrae’s words, the hopes of a lover. They came down to breakfast, and arranged that their baggage should be sent after them as soon as communications were restored.

Merton contrived to have a brief interview with Lady Bude. Her joyous spirit shone in her eyes.

‘I do not know what Lord Fastcastle’s plan is,’ she said, ‘but I wish you good fortune. You have won the *father’s* heart, and now I am about to be false to my sex' — she whispered— 'the daughter's is all but your own! I can help you a little,' she added, and, after warmly clasping both her hands in his, Merton hurried to the front of the house, where the horses stood, and sprang into the saddle. No motors, no bicycles, no scientific vehicles to-day; the clean wind piped to him from the mountains; a good steed was between his thighs! Logan mounted, after entrusting Bouncer to Lady Bude, and they galloped eastwards.

V. The Adventure of the Flora Macdonald

‘This is the point indicated, latitude so and so, longitude so and so,’ said Mr Macrae. ‘But I do not see a sail or a funnel on the western horizon. Nothing since we left the Fleet behind us, far to the East. Yet it is the hour. It is strange!’

Mr. Macrae was addressing Bude. They stood together on the deck of the *Flora Macdonald*, the vast yacht of the millionaire. She was lying to on a sea as glassy and radiant, under a blazing August sun, as the Atlantic can show in her mildest moods. On the quarter-deck of the yacht were piled great iron boxes containing the millions in gold with which the millionaire had at last consented to ransom his daughter. He had been negotiating with her captors through the wireless machine, and, as Logan could not promise any certain release, Mr. Macrae had finally surrendered, while informing Logan of the circumstances and details of his rendezvous with the kidnappers. The amassing of the gold had shaken the exchanges of two worlds. Banks trembled, rates were enormous, but the precious metal had been accumulated. The pirates would not take Mr. Macrae’s cheque; bank notes they laughed at, the millions must be paid in gold. Now at last the gold was on the spot of ocean indicated by the kidnappers, but there was no sign of sail or ship, no promise of their coming. Men with telescopes in the rigging of the *Flora* were on the outlook in vain. They could pick up one of the floating giants of our fleet, far off to the East, but North, West and South were empty wastes of water.

‘Three o’clock has come and gone. I hope there has been no accident,’ said Mr. Macrae nervously. ‘But where are those thieves?’ He absently pressed his repeater, it tingled out the half-hour.

‘It *is* odd,’ said Bude. ‘Hullo, look there, what’s *that*?’

That was a slim spar, which suddenly shot from the plain of ocean, at a distance of a hundred yards. On its apex a small black hood twisted itself this way and that like a living thing; so tranquil was the hour that the spar with its dull hood was distinctly reflected in the mirror-like waters of the ocean.

‘By gad, it is the periscope of a submarine!’ said Bude.

There could not be a doubt of it. The invention of Napier of Merchistoun and of M. Jules Verne, now at last an actual engine of human warfare, had been employed by the kidnappers of the daughter of the millionaire!

A light flashed on the mind, steady and serviceable, but not brilliantly ingenious, of Mr. Macrae. ‘This,’ he exclaimed rather superfluously, ‘accounts for the fiendish skill with which these miscreants took cover when pursued by the Marine Police. *This* explains the subtle art with which they dodged observation. Doubtless they had always, somewhere, a well-found normal yacht containing their supplies. Do you not agree with me, my lord?’

‘In my opinion,’ said Bude, ‘you have satisfactorily explained what has so long puzzled us. But look! The periscope, having reconnoitred us, is sinking again!’

It was true. The slim spar gracefully descended to the abyss. Again ocean smiled with innumerable laughters (as the Athenian sings), smiled, empty, azure, effulgent! The *Flora Macdonald* was once more alone on a wide, wide sea!

Two slight jars were now just felt by the owner, skipper, and crew of the *Flora Macdonald*. ‘What’s that?’ asked Mr. Macrae sharply. ‘A reef?’

‘In my opinion,’ said the captain, ‘the beggars in the submarine have torpedoed us. Attached torpedoes to our keel, sir,’ he explained, respectfully touching his cap and shifting the quid in his cheek. He was a bluff tar of the good old school.

‘Merciful heavens!’ exclaimed Mr. Macrae, his face paling. ‘What can this new outrage mean? Here on our deck is the gold; if they explode their torpedoes the bullion sinks to join the exhaustless treasures of the main!’

‘A bit of bluff and blackmail on their part I fancy,’ said Bude, lighting a cigarette.

‘No doubt! No doubt!’ said Mr. Macrae, rather unsteadily. ‘They would never be such fools as to blow up the millions. Still, an accident might have awful results.’

‘Look there, sir, if you please,’ said the captain of the *Flora Macdonald*, ‘there’s that spar of theirs up again.’

It was so. The spar, the periscope, shot up on the larboard side of the yacht. After it had reconnoitred, the mirror of ocean was stirred into dazzling circling waves, and the deck of a submarine slowly emerged. The deck was long and flat, and of a much larger area than submarines in general have. It would seem to indicate the presence below the water of a body or hull of noble proportions. A voice hailed the yacht from the submarine, though no speaker was visible.

‘You have no consort?’ the voice yelled.

‘For ten years I have been a widower,’ replied Mr. Macrae, his voice trembling with emotion.

‘Most sorry to have unintentionally awakened unavailing regrets,’ came the voice. ‘But I mean, honour bright, you have no attendant armed vessel?’

‘None, I promised you so,’ said Mr. Macrae; ‘I am a man of my word. Come on deck if you doubt me and look for yourself.'

'Not me, and get shot by a rifleman,' said the voice.

'It is very distressing to be distrusted in this manner,' replied Mr. Macrae. 'Captain McClosky,' he said to the skipper, 'pray request all hands to oblige me by going below.'

The captain issued this order, which the yacht's crew rather reluctantly obeyed. Their interest and curiosity were strongly excited by a scene without precedent in the experience of the oldest mariner.

When they had disappeared Mr. Macrae again addressed the invisible owner of the voice. 'All my crew are below. Nobody is on deck but Captain McClosky, the Earl of Bude, and myself. We are entirely unarmed. You can see for yourself.'

The owner of the voice replied: 'You have no torpedoes?'

'We have only the armament agreed upon by you to protect this immense mass of bullion from the attacks of the unscrupulous,' said Mr. Macrae. 'I take heaven to witness that I am honourably observing every article of our agreement, as *per* yours of August 21.'

'All right,' answered the voice. 'I dare say you are honest. But I may as well tell you *this*, that while passing under your yacht we attached two slabs of gun-cotton to her keel. The knob connected with them is under my hand. We placed them where they are, not necessarily for publication — explosion, I mean — but merely as a guarantee of good faith. You understand?'

'Perfectly,' said Mr. Macrae, 'though I regard your proceeding as a fresh and unmerited insult.'

'Merely a precaution usual in business,' said the voice. 'And now,' it went on, 'for the main transaction. You will lower your gold into boats, row it across, and land it here on my deck. When it is all there, *and* has been inspected by me, you will send one boat rowed by *two men only*, into which Miss Macrae shall be placed and sent back to you. When that has been done we shall part, I hope, on friendly terms and with mutual respect.'

'Captain McClosky,' said Mr. Macrae, 'will you kindly pipe all hands on board to discharge cargo?' The captain obeyed.

Mr. Macrae turned to Bude. 'This is a moment,' he said, 'which tries a father's heart! Presently I must see Emmeline, hear her voice, clasp her to my breast.' Bude mutely wrung the hand of the millionaire, and turned away to conceal his emotion. Seldom, perhaps never, has a father purchased back an only and beloved child at such a cost as Mr. Macrae was now paying without a murmur.

The boats of the *Flora Macdonald* were lowered and manned, the winches slowly swung each huge box of the precious metal aboard the boats. Mr. Macrae entrusted the keys of the gold-chests to his officers.

‘Remember,’ cried the voice from the submarine, ‘we must have the gold on board, inspected, and weighed, before we return Miss Macrae.’

‘Mean to the last,’ whispered the millionaire to the earl; but aloud he only said, ‘Very well; I regret, for your own sake, your suspicious character, but, in the circumstances, I have no choice.’

To Bude he added: ‘This is terrible! When he has secured the bullion he may submerge his submarine and go off without returning my daughter.’

This was so manifestly true that Bude could only shake his head and mutter something about ‘honour among thieves.’

The crew got the gold on board the boats, and, after several journeys, had the boxes piled on the deck of the submarine.

When they had placed the boxes on board they again retired, and one of the men of the submarine, who seemed to be in command, and wore a mask, coolly weighed the glittering metal on the deck, returning each package, after weighing and inspection, to its coffer. The process was long and tedious; at length it was completed.

Then at last the form of Miss Macrae, in an elegant and tasteful yachting costume, appeared on the deck of the submarine. The boat’s crew of the *Flora Macdonald* (to whom she was endeared) lifted their oars and cheered. The masked pirate in command handed her into a boat of the *Flora’s* with stately courtesy, placing in her hand a bouquet of the rarest orchids. He then placed his hand on his heart, and bowed with a grace remarkable in one of his trade. This man was no common desperado.

The crew pulled off, and at that moment, to the horror of all who were on the *Flora’s* deck, two slight jars again thrilled through her from stem to stern.

Mr. Macrae and Bude gazed on each other with ashen faces. What had occurred? But still the boat’s crew pulled gallantly towards the *Flora*, and, in a few moments, Miss Macrae stepped on deck, and was in her father’s arms. It was a scene over which art cannot linger. Self-restraint was thrown to the winds; the father and child acted as if no eyes were regarding them. Miss Macrae sobbed convulsively, her sire was shaken by long-pent emotion. Bude had averted his gaze, he looked towards the submarine, on the deck of which the crew were busy, beginning to lower the bullion into the interior.

To Bude’s extreme and speechless amazement, another periscope arose from ocean at about fifty yards from the further side of the submarine! Bude spoke no word; the father and daughter were absorbed in each other; the crew had no eyes but for them.

Presently, unmarked by the busy seamen of the hostile submarine, the platform and look-out hood of *another* submarine appeared. The new boat seemed to be pointing directly for the middle of the hostile submarine and at right angles to it.

‘*Hands up*!’ pealed a voice from the second submarine.

It was the voice of Merton!

At the well-known sound Miss Macrae tore herself from her father’s embrace and hurried below. She deemed that a fond illusion of the senses had beguiled her.

Mr. Macrae looked wildly towards the two submarines.

The masked captain of the hostile vessel, leaping up, shook his fist at the *Flora Macdonald* and yelled, ‘Damn your foolish treachery, you money-grubbing hunks! You *have* a consort.’

‘I assure you that nobody is more surprised than myself,’ cried Mr. Macrae.

‘One minute more and you, your ship, and your crew will be sent to your own place!’ yelled the masked captain.

He vanished below, doubtless to explode the mines under the *Flora*.

Bude crossed himself; Mr. Macrae, folding his arms, stood calm and defiant on his deck. One sailor (the cook) leaped overboard in terror, the others hastily drew themselves up in a double line, to die like Britons.

A minute passed, a minute charged with terror. Mr. Macrae took out his watch to mark the time. Another minute passed, and no explosion.

The captain of the pirate vessel reappeared on her deck. He cast his hands desperately abroad; his curses, happily, were unheard by Miss Macrae, who was below.

‘Hands up!’ again rang out the voice of Merton, adding, ‘if you begin to submerge your craft, if she stirs an inch, I send you skyward at least as a preliminary measure. My diver has detached your mines from the keel of the *Flora Macdonald* and has cut the wires leading to them; my bow-tube is pointing directly for you, if I press the switch the torpedo must go home, and then heaven have mercy on your souls!’

A crow of laughter arose from the yachtsmen of the *Flora Macdonald*, who freely launched terms of maritime contempt at the crew of the pirate submarine, with comments on the probable future of the souls to which Merton had alluded.

On his desk the masked captain stood silent. ‘We have women on board!’ he answered Merton at last.

‘You may lower them in a collapsible boat, if you have one,’ answered Merton. ‘But, on the faintest suspicion of treachery — the faintest surmise, mark you, I switch on my torpedo.’

‘What are your terms?’ asked the pirate captain.

‘The return of the bullion, that is all,’ replied the voice of Merton. ‘I give you two minutes to decide.’

Before a minute and a half had passed the masked captain had capitulated. ‘I climb down,’ he said.

‘The boats of the *Flora* will come for it,’ said Merton; ‘your men will help load it in the boats. Look sharp, and be civil, or I blow you out of the water!’

The pirates had no choice; rapidly, if sullenly, they effected the transfer.

When all was done, when the coffers had been hoisted aboard the *Flora Macdonald*, Merton, for the first time, hailed the yacht.

‘Will you kindly send a boat round here for me, Mr. Macrae, if you do not object to my joining you on the return voyage?’

Mr. Macrae shouted a welcome, the yacht’s crew cheered as only Britons can. Mr. Macrae’s piper struck up the march of the clan, ‘*A’ the wild McCraws are coming*!’

‘If any of you scoundrels shoot,’ cried Merton to his enemies, ‘up you will all go. You shall stay here, after we depart, in front of that torpedo, just as long as the skipper of my vessel pleases.’

Meanwhile the boat of the *Flora* approached the friendly submarine; Merton stepped aboard, and soon was on the deck of the *Flora Macdonald*.

Mr. Macrae welcomed him with all the joy of a father re-united to his daughter, of a capitalist restored to his millions.

Bude shook Merton’s hand warmly, exclaiming, ‘Well played, old boy!’

Merton’s eyes eagerly searched the deck for one beloved form. Mr. Macrae drew him aside. ‘Emmeline is below,’ he whispered; ‘you will find her in the saloon.’ Merton looked steadfastly at the millionaire, who smiled with unmistakable meaning. The lover hurried down the companion, while the *Flora*, which had rapidly got up steam, sped eastward.

Merton entered the saloon, his heart beating as hard as when he had sought his beloved among the bracken beneath the cliffs at Castle Skrae. She rose at his entrance; their eyes met, Merton’s dim with a supreme doubt, Emmeline’s frank and clear. A blush rose divinely over the white rose of her face, her lips curved in the resistless Æginetan smile, and, without a word spoken, the twain were in each other’s arms.

Half an hour later Mr. Macrae, heralding his arrival with a sonorous hem! entered the saloon. Smiling, he embraced his daughter, who hid her head on his ample shoulder, while with his right hand the father grasped that of Merton.

‘My daughter is restored to me — and my son,’ said the millionaire softly.

There was silence. Mr. Macrae was the first to recover his self-possession. ‘Sit down, dear,’ he said, gently disengaging Emmeline, ‘and tell me all about it. Who were the wretches? I can forgive them now.’

Miss Macrae’s eyes were bent on the carpet; she seemed reluctant to speak. At last, in timid and faltering accents, she whispered, ‘It was the Van Huytens boy.’

‘Rudolph Van Huytens! I might have guessed it,’ cried the millionaire. ‘His motive is too plain! His wealth did not equal mine by several millions. The ransom which he demanded, and but for Tom here’ (he indicated Merton) ‘would now possess, exactly reversed our relative positions. Carrying on his father’s ambition, he would, but for Tom, have held the world’s record for opulence. The villain!’

‘You do not flatter *me*, father,’ said Miss Macrae, ‘and you are unjust to Mr. Van Huytens. He had another, *he* said a stronger, motive. Me!’ she murmured, blushing like a red rose, and adding, ‘he really was rather nice. The submarine was comfy; the yacht delightful. His sisters and his aunt were very kind. But—’ and the beautiful girl looked up archly and shyly at Merton.

‘In fact if it had not been for Tom,’ Mr. Macrae was exclaiming, when Emmeline laid her lily hand on his lips, and again hid her burning blushes on his shoulder.

‘So Rudolph had no chance?’ asked Mr. Macrae gaily.

‘I used rather to like him, long ago — before—’ murmured Emmeline.

A thrill of happy pride passed through Merton. He also, he remembered of old, had thought that he loved. But now he privately registered an oath that he would never make any confessions as to the buried past (a course which the chronicler earnestly recommends to young readers).

‘Now tell us all about your adventures, Emmie,’ said Mr. Macrae, sitting down and taking his daughter’s hand in his own.

The narrative may have been anticipated. After Blake was felled, Miss Macrae, screaming and struggling, had been carried to the boat. The crew had rapidly pulled round the cliff, the submarine had risen, to the captive’s horrified amazement, from the deep, she had been taken on board, and, yet more to her surprise, had been welcomed by the Misses Van Huytens and their aunt. The brother had always behaved with respect, till, finding that his suit was hopeless, he had avoided her presence as much as possible, and —

‘Had gone for the dollars,’ said Macrae.

They had wandered from rocky desert isle to desert isle, in the archipelago of the Hebrides, meeting at night with a swift attendant yacht. Usually they had slept on shore under canvas; the corrugated iron houses had been left behind at 'The Seven Hunters,' with the champagne, to alleviate the anxiety of Mr. Macrae. Ample supplies of costume and other necessaries for Miss Macrae had always been at hand.

'They really did me very well,' she said, smiling, 'but I was miserable about *you*,' and she embraced her father.

'Only about *me*?' asked Mr. Macrae.

'I did not know, I was not sure,' said Emmeline, crying a little, and laughing rather hysterically.

'You go and lie down, my dear,' said Mr. Macrae. 'Your maid is in your cabin,' and thither he conducted the overwrought girl, Merton anxiously following her with his eyes.

'We are neglecting Lord Bude,' said Mr. Macrae. 'Come on deck, Tom, and tell us how you managed that delightful surprise.'

'Oh, pardon me, sir,' said Merton, 'I am under oath, I am solemnly bound to Logan and others never to reveal the circumstances. It was necessary to keep you uninformed, that you might honourably make your arrangement to meet Mr. Van Huytens without being aware that you had a submarine consort. Logan takes any dishonour on himself, and he wished to offer Mr. Van Huytens — as that is his name — every satisfaction, but I dissuaded him. His connection with the affair cannot be kept too secret. Though Logan put me forward, you really owe all to *him*.'

'But without *you*, I should never have had his aid,' said Mr. Macrae: 'Where *is* Lord Fastcastle?' he asked.

'In the friendly submarine,' said Merton.

'Oh, I think I can guess!' said Mr. Macrae, smiling. 'I shall ask no more questions. Let us join Lord Bude.'

If the reader is curious as to how the rescue was managed, it is enough to say that Logan was the cousin and intimate friend of Admiral Chirnside, that the Admiral was commanding a fleet engaged in naval manœuvres around the North coast, that he had a flotilla of submarines, and that the point of ocean where the pirates met the *Flora Macdonald* was not far west of the Orkneys.

On deck Bude asked Merton how Logan (for he knew that Logan was the guiding spirit) had guessed the secret of the submarine.

'Do you remember,' said Merton, 'that when you came back from "The Seven Hunters," you reported that the fishermen had a silly story of seeing a dragon flying above the empty sea?'

'I remember, *un dragon volant*,' said Bude.

'And Logan asked you not to tell Mr. Macrae?'

‘Yes, but I don’t understand.’

‘A dragon is the Scotch word for a kite — not the bird — a boy’s kite. You did not know; *I* did not know, but Mr. Macrae would have known, being a Scot, and Logan wanted to keep his plan dark, and the kite had let him into the secret of the submarine.’

‘I still don’t see how.’

‘Why the submarine must have been flying a kite, with a pendent wire, to catch messages from Blake and the wireless machine at Castle Skrae. How else could a kite— “a dragon,” the sailor said — have been flying above the empty sea?’

‘Logan is rather sharp,’ said Bude.

‘But, Mr. Macrae,’ asked Merton, ‘how about the false Gianesi?’

‘Oh, when Gianesi came of course we settled *his* business. We had him tight, as a conspirator. He had been met, when expelled for misdeeds from Gianesi’s and Giambresi’s, by a beautiful young man, to whom he sold himself. He believed the beautiful young man to be the devil, but, of course, it was our friend Blake. *He*, in turn, must have been purchased by Van Huytens while he was lecturing in America as a poet-Fenian. In fact, he really had a singular genius for electric engineering; he had done very well at some German university. But he was a fellow of no principle! We are well quit of a rogue. I turned his unlucky victim, the false Gianesi, loose, with money enough for life to keep him honest if he chooses. His pension stops if ever a word of the method of rescue comes out. The same with my crew. They shall all be rich men, for their station, *till* the tale is whispered and reaches my ears. In that case — all pensions stop. I think we can trust the crew of the friendly submarine to keep their own counsel.’

‘Certainly!’ said Merton. ‘Wealth has its uses after all,’ he thought in his heart.

Merton and Logan gave a farewell dinner in autumn to the Disentanglers — to such of them as were still unmarried. In her napkin each lady of the Society found a cheque on Coutts for 25,000*l.* signed with the magic name Ronald Macrae.

The millionaire had insisted on being allowed to perform this act of munificence, the salvage for the recovered millions, he said.

Miss Martin, after dinner, carried Mr. Macrae’s health in a toast. In a humorous speech she announced her own approaching nuptials, and intimated that she had the permission of the other ladies present to make the same general confession for all of them.

‘Like every novel of my own,’ said Miss Martin, smiling, ‘this enterprise of the Disentanglers has a HAPPY ENDING.’

THE RED TRUE STORY BOOK

Illustrated by Henry J. Ford

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INTRODUCTION

The Red True Story Book needs no long Introduction. The Editor, in presenting *The Blue True Story Book*, apologised for offering tales so much less thrilling and romantic than the legends of the Fairies, but he added that even real facts were, sometimes, curious and interesting. Next year he promises something quite as true as History, and quite as entertaining as Fairies!

For this book, Mr. Rider Haggard has kindly prepared a narrative of 'Wilson's Last Fight,' by aid of conversations with Mr. Burnham, the gallant American scout. But Mr. Haggard found, while writing his chapter, that Mr. Burnham had already told the story in an 'Interview' published by the *Westminster Gazette*. The courtesy of the proprietor of that journal, and of Mr. Burnham, has permitted Mr. Haggard to incorporate the already printed narrative with his own matter.

'The Life and Death of Joan the Maid' is by the Editor, who has used M. Quicherat's *Procès* (five volumes, published for the Historical Society of France), with M. Quicherat's other researches. He has also used M. Wallon's Biography, the works of Father Ayroles, S.J., the *Jeanne d'Arc à Domremy* of M. Siméon Luce, the works of M. Sepet, of Michelet, of Henri Martin, and, generally, all printed documents to which he has had access. Of unprinted contemporary matter perhaps none is known to exist, except the Venetian Correspondence, now being prepared for publication by Father Ayroles.

'How the Bass was held for King James' is by the Editor, mainly from Blackadder's *Life*.

'The Crowning of Ines de Castro' is by Mrs. Lang, from Schäfer. 'Orthon,' from Froissart, 'Gustavus Vasa,' 'Monsieur de Bayard's Duel' (Brantôme), are by the same lady; also 'Gaston de Foix,' from Froissart, and 'The White Man,' from Mile. Aïssé's Letters.

Mrs. McCunn has told the story of the Prince's Scottish Campaign, from the contemporary histories of the Rising of 1745, contemporary tracts, *The Lyon in Mourning*, Chambers, Scott, Maxwell of Kirkconnel, and other sources.

The short Sagas are translated from the Icelandic by the Rev. W. C. Green, translator of *Egil Skalagrim's Saga*.

Mr. S. R. Crockett, Author of *The Raiders*, told the tales of 'The Bull of Earlstoun' and 'Grisell Baillie.'

Miss May Kendall and Mrs. Bovill are responsible for the seafarings and shipwrecks; the Australian adventures are by Mrs. Bovill.

Miss Minnie Wright compiled ‘The Conquest of Peru,’ from Prescott’s celebrated History.

Miss Agnes Repplier, that famed essayist of America, wrote the tale of Molly Pitcher.

‘The Adventures of General Marbot’ are from the translation of his Autobiography by Mr. Butler.

With this information the Editor leaves the book to children, assuring them that the stories are *true*, except perhaps that queer tale of ‘Orthon’; and some of the Sagas also may have been a little altered from the real facts before the Icelanders became familiar with writing.

WILSON’S LAST FIGHT

‘They were men whose fathers were men’

TO make it clear how Major Wilson and his companions came to die on the banks of the Shangani on December 4, 1893, it will be necessary, very briefly, to sketch the events which led to the war between the English settlers in Mashonaland in South Africa and the Matabele tribe, an offshoot of the Zulu race.

In October 1889, at the instance of Mr. Cecil Rhodes and others interested, the Chartered Company of British South Africa was incorporated, with the sanction of Her Majesty’s Government.

In 1890 Mashonaland was occupied, a vast and fertile territory nominally under the rule of Lobengula, king of the Matabele, which had been ceded by him to the representatives of the Company in return for certain valuable considerations. It is, however, an easier task for savage kings to sign concessions than to ensure that such concessions will be respected by their subjects, especially when those ‘Subjects’ are warriors by nature, tradition, and practice, as in the present case, and organised into regiments, kept from year to year in perfect efficiency and readiness for attack. Whatever may have been Lobengula’s private wishes and opinions, it soon became evident that the gathering of the white men upon their borders, and in a country which they claimed by right of conquest if they did not occupy it, was most distasteful to the more warlike sections of the Matabele.

Mashonaland takes its name from the Mashona tribes who inhabit it, a peaceful and, speaking by comparison, an industrious race, whom, ever since they first settled in the neighbourhood, it had been the custom of the subjects of Lobengula and of his predecessor, Mosilikatze, ‘the lion,’ to attack with every cruelty conceivable, raiding their cattle, slaughtering their men, and sweeping their maidens and young children into captivity. Terrified, half exterminated indeed, as they were by these constant and unprovoked onslaughts, the Mashonas welcomed with delight the occupation of their country by white men, and thankfully placed themselves under the protection of the Chartered Company.

The Matabele regiments, however, took a different view of the question, for now their favourite sport was gone: they could no longer practise rapine and murder, at least in this direction, whenever the spirit moved them. Presently the force of habit overcame their fear of the white men and their respect for treaties, and towards the end of 1891 the chief Lomaghondi, who lived under the protection of the Company, was killed by them. Thereon Dr. Jameson, the Administrator of Mashonaland, remonstrated with Lobengula, who expressed regret, saying that the incident had happened by mistake.

This repudiation notwithstanding, an impi, or armed body of savages, again crossed the border in 1892, and raided in the Victoria district. Encouraged by the success of these proceedings, in July 1893 Lobengula sent a picked company to harry in the neighbourhood of Victoria itself, writing to Dr. Jameson that he made no excuse for so doing, claiming as he did the right to raid when, where, and whom he chose. The ‘indunas,’ or captains, in command of this force were instructed not to kill white men, but to fall particularly upon those tribes who were in their employ. On July 9, 1893, and the following days came the climax, for then the impi began to slaughter every Mashona whom they could find. Many of these unfortunates were butchered in the presence of their masters, who were bidden to ‘stand upon one side as the time of the white men had not yet come.’

Seeing that it was necessary to take action, Dr. Jameson summoned the head indunas of the impi, and ordered them to cross the border within an hour or to suffer the consequences of their disobedience. The majority obeyed, and those who defied him were attacked by Captain Lendy and a small force while in the act of raiding a kraal, some of them being killed and the rest driven away.

From this moment war became inevitable, for the question lay between the breaking of the power of Lobengula and the evacuation of Mashonaland. Into the details of that war it is not proposed to enter; they are outside the scope of this narrative. It is enough to say that it was one of the most brilliant and successful ever carried out by Englishmen. The odds against the little force of a thousand or twelve hundred white men who invaded Matabeleland were almost overwhelming, and when it is remembered that the Imperial troops did not succeed in their contest against Cetywayo, the Zulu king, until nearly as many soldiers were massed in the country as there were able-bodied Zulus left to oppose them, the brilliancy of the achievement of these colonists led by a civilian, Dr. Jameson, can be estimated. The Matabele were beaten in two pitched battles: that of the Shangani on October 25, and that of the Imbembezi on November 1. They fought bravely, even with desperation, but their valour was broken by the skill and the cool courage of the white man. Those terrible engines of war, the Maxim guns and the Hotchkiss shells, contributed largely to our success on these occasions. The Matabele, brave as they were, could not face the incessant fire of the Maxims, and as to the Hotchkiss they developed a curious superstition. Seeing that men fell dead in all directions after the explosion of a shell, they came to believe that as it burst out of each missile numbers of tiny and invisible imps ran forth carrying death and destruction to the white men’s foes, and thus it happened that to their minds moral terrors were added to the physical dangers of warfare. So strong was this belief among them, indeed, that whenever a shell struck they would turn and fire at it in the hope that thus they might destroy the ‘live devils’ who dwelt within it.

After these battles Lobengula, having first set fire to it, fled from his chief place, Buluwayo, which was occupied by the white men within a month of the commencement of the campaign.

In reply to a letter sent to him by Dr. Jameson, demanding his surrender and guaranteeing his safety, Lobengula wrote that he ‘would come in.’

The promised period of two days’ grace having gone by, however, and there being no sign of his appearance, a force was despatched from Buluwayo to follow and capture him. This force, which was under the leadership of Major Patrick W. Forbes, consisted of ninety men of the Salisbury Column, with Captains Heany and Spreckley and a mule Maxim gun under Lieutenant Biscoe, R.N.; sixty men of the Victoria Column commanded by Major Wilson, with a horse Maxim under Captain Lendy; sixty men of the Tuli Column, and ninety men of the Bechuanaland Border Police, commanded by Captain Raaf, C.M.G., accompanied by two horse Maxims and a mule seven-pounder, commanded by Captain Tancred.

The column, which started on or about November 14, took with it food for three days only, carried by natives, and a hundred rounds of ammunition per man. After several days’ journeying northward the patrol reached the Bubye River, where dissensions arose between Captain Raaf and Major Forbes, the former being of opinion, rightly enough as the issue showed, that the mission was too dangerous to be pursued by a small body of men without supplies of food, and having no reserve of ammunition and no means of carrying the wounded. The upshot was that Major Forbes decided to return, but was prevented from doing so by a letter received from Dr. Jameson, stating that he was sending forward a reinforcement of dismounted men under Captain Napier with food, ammunition, and wagons, also sixteen mounted men under Captain Borrow. The force then proceeded to a deserted Mission Station known as Shiloh. On November 25 the column, three hundred strong and carrying with it three-quarter rations for twelve days, took up the King’s wagon spoor about one mile from Shiloh, and followed it through much discomfort, caused by the constant rain and the lack of roads, till, on December S, a point was reached on the Shangani River, N.N.W. of Shiloh and distant from it about eighty miles.

On November 29, however, Major Forbes, finding that he could make small progress with the wagons, sent them away, and proceeded with the best mounted men and two Maxims only, so that the actual force which reached the Shangani on the 3rd consisted of about one hundred and sixty men and a couple of machine guns.

At this time the information in possession of the leaders of the column was to the effect that the King was just in front of them across the river, accompanied only by a few of his followers. Under these circumstances Major Forbes instructed Major Wilson and eighteen men to go forward and reconnoitre along Lobengula’s spoor; the understanding seeming to have been that the party was to return by sundown, but that if it did not return it was, if necessary, to be supported by the whole column. With this patrol went Mr. Burnham, the American scout, one of the three surviving white men who were eye-witnesses of that eventful night’s work, which ended so tragically at dawn.

What followed is best told as he narrated it by word of mouth to the compiler of this true story, and to a reporter of the ‘Westminster Gazette,’ the editor of which paper has courteously given permission for the reproduction of the interview. Indeed, it would be difficult to tell it so well in words other than Mr. Burnham’s own.

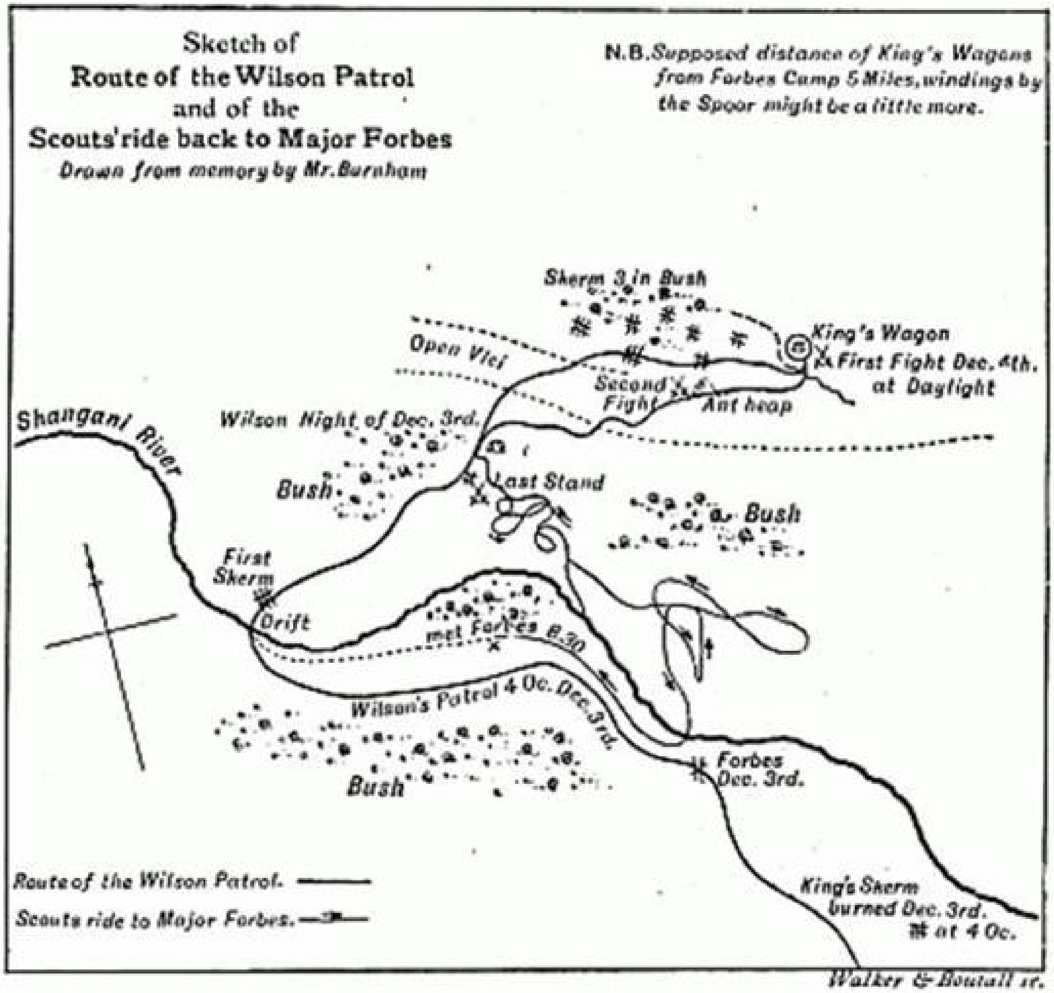
Sketch of
Route of the Wilson Patrol
and of the
Scouts' ride back to Major Forbes
Drawn from memory by Mr. Burnham
N.B. Supposed distance of King's Wagons from Forbes Camp 5 Miles, windings by the Spoor might be a little more.
Sherm 3 in Bush
King's Wagon
First Fight Dec. 4th. at Daylight
Open Vlei
Second Fight
Ant heap
Wilson Night of Dec. 3rd.
Shangani River
Bush
Last Stand
Bush
First Sherm
Drift
met Forbes 8.30
Wilson's Patrol 4 Oc. Dec. 3rd.
Bush
Forbes Dec. 3rd.
Route of the Wilson Patrol.
Scouts ride to Major Forbes.
King's Sherm burned Dec. 3rd. at 4 Oc.

Walker & Boutall sc.

‘In the afternoon of December 8,’ says Mr. Burnham, ‘I was scouting ahead of the column with Colenbrander, when in a strip of bush we lit on two Matabele boys driving some cattle, one of whom we caught and brought in. He was a plucky boy, and when threatened he just looked us sullenly in the face. He turned out to be a sort of grandson or grand-nephew of Lobengula himself. He said the King’s camp was just ahead, and the King himself near, with very few men, and these sick, and that he wanted to give himself up. He represented that the King had been back to this place that very day to get help because his wagons were stuck in a bog. The column pushed on through the strip of bush, and there, near by, was the King’s camp — quite deserted. We searched the huts, and in one lay a Maholi slave-boy, fast asleep. (The Maholis are the slaves of the Matabele.) We pulled him out, and were questioning him, when the other boy, the sulky Matabele, caught his eye, and gave him a ferocious look, shouting across to him to take care what he told.

‘The slave-boy agreed with the others that the King had only left this camp the day before; but as it was getting dark, Major Forbes decided to reconnoitre before going on with the column. I learnt of the decision to send forward Major Wilson and fifteen men on the best horses when I got my orders to accompany them, and, along with Bayne, to do their scouting. My horse was exhausted with the work he had done already; I told Major Forbes, and he at once gave me his. It was a young horse, rather skittish, but strong and fairly fresh by comparison.

‘Ingram, my fellow-scout, remained with the column, and so got some hours’ rest; thanks to which he was able not only to do his part of tracking for the twenty men afterwards sent on to us through the bush at night, but also, when he and I got through after the smash, to do the long and dangerous ride down country to Buluwayo with the despatches — a ride on which he was accompanied by Lynch.

‘So we set off along the wagon track, while the main body of the column went into laager.

‘Close to the river the track turned and led down stream along the west bank. Two miles down was a drift’ (they call a fordable dip a drift in South Africa), ‘and here the track crossed the Shangani. We splashed through, and the first thing we scouts knew on the other side was that we were riding into the middle of a lot of Matabele among some scherms, or temporary shelters. There were men, and some women and children. The men were armed. We put a bold face on it, and gave out the usual announcement that we did not want to kill anybody, but must have the King. The natives seemed surprised and undecided; presently, as Major Wilson and the rest of the patrol joined us, one of them volunteered to come along with us and guide us to the King. He was only just ahead, the man said. How many men were with him? we asked. The man put up his little finger — dividing it up, so. Five fingers mean an impi; part of the little finger, like that, should mean fifty to one hundred men. Wilson said to me, “Go on ahead, taking that man beside your saddle; cover him, fire if necessary, but don’t you let him slip.”

‘So we started off again at a trot, for the light was failing, the man running beside my horse, and I keeping a sharp eye on him. The track led through some thick bush. We passed several scherms. Five miles from the river we came to a long narrow vlei , which lay across our path. It was now getting quite dark. Coming out of the bush on the near edge of the vlei, before going down into it, I saw fires lit, and scherms and figures showing dark against the fires right along the opposite edge of the vlei. We skirted the vlei to our left, got round the end of it, and at once rode through a lot of scherms containing hundreds of people. As we went, Captain Napier shouted the message about the King wherever there was a big group of people. We passed scherm after scherm, and still more Matabele, more fires, and on we rode. Instead of the natives having been scattering from the King, they had been gathering. But it was too late to turn. We were hard upon our prize, and it was understood among the Wilson patrol that they were going to bring the King in if man could do it. The natives were astonished: they thought the whole column was on them: men jumped up, and ran hither and thither, rifle in hand. We went on without stopping, and as we passed more and more men came running after us. Some of them were crowding on the rearmost men, so Wilson told off three fellows to “keep those niggers back.” They turned, and kept the people in check. At last, nearly at the other end of the vlei, having passed five sets of scherms, we came upon what seemed to be the King’s wagons, standing in a kind of enclosure, with a saddled white horse tethered by it. Just before this, in the crowd and hurry, my man slipped away, and I had to report to Wilson that I had lost him. Of course it would not have done to fire. One shot would have been the match in the powder magazine. We had ridden into the middle of the Matabele nation.

‘At this enclosure we halted and sang out again, making a special appeal to the King and those about him. No answer came. All was silence. A few drops of rain fell. Then it lightened, and by the flashes we could just see men getting ready to fire on us, and Napier shouted to Wilson, “Major, they are about to attack.” I at the same-time saw them closing in on us rapidly from the right. The next thing to this fifth scherm was some thick bush; the order was given to get into that, and in a moment we were out of sight there. One minute after hearing us shout, the natives with the wagons must have been unable to see a sign of us. Just then it came on to rain heavily; the sky, already cloudy, got black as ink; the night fell so dark that you could not see your hand before you.

‘We could not stay the night where we were, for we were so close that they would hear our horses’ bits. So it was decided to work down into the vlei, creep along close to the other edge of it to the end we first came round, farthest from the King’s camp, and there spend the night. This, like all the other moves, was taken after consultation with the officers, several of whom were experienced Kaffir campaigners. It was rough going; we were unable to see our way, now splashing through the little dongas that ran down into the belly of the vlei, now working round them, through bush and soft bottoms. At the far end, in a clump of thick bush, we dismounted, and Wilson sent off Captain Napier, with a man of his called Robinson, and the Victoria scout, Bayne, to go back along the wagon-track to the column, report how things stood, and bring the column on, with the Maxims, as sharp as possible. Wilson told Captain Napier to tell Forbes if the bush bothered the Maxim carriages to abandon them and put the guns on horses, but to bring the Maxims without fail. We all understood — and we thought the message was this — that if we were caught there at dawn without the

Maxims we were done for. On the other hand was the chance of capturing the King and ending the campaign at a stroke.

‘The spot we had selected to stop in until the arrival of Forbes was a clump of heavy bush not far from the King’s spoor — and yet so far from the Kaffir camps that they could not hear us if we kept quiet. We dismounted, and on counting it was found that three of the men were missing. They were Hofmeyer, Bradburn and Colquhoun. Somewhere in winding through the bush from the King’s wagons to our present position these men were lost. Not a difficult thing, for we only spoke in whispers, and, save for the occasional click of a horse’s hoof, we could pass within ten feet of each other and not be aware of it.

‘Wilson came to me and said, “Burnham, can you follow back along the vlei where we’ve just come?” I doubted it very much as it was black and raining; I had no coat, having been sent after the patrol immediately I came in from firing the King’s huts, and although it was December, or midsummer south of the line, the rain chilled my fingers. Wilson said, “Come, I must have those men back.” I told him I should need some one to lead my horse so as to feel the tracks made in the ground by our horses. He replied, “I will go with you. I want to see how you American fellows work.”

‘Wilson was no bad hand at tracking himself, and I was put on my mettle at once. We began, and I was flurried at first, and did not seem to get on to it somehow; but in a few minutes I picked up the spoor and hung to it.

‘So we started off together, Wilson and I, in the dark. It was hard work, for one could see nothing; one had to feel for the traces with one’s fingers. Creeping along, at last we stood close to the wagons, where the patrol had first retreated into the bush.

‘“If we only had the force here now,” said Wilson, “we would soon finish.”

‘But there was still no sign of the three men, so there was nothing for it but to shout. Retreating into the vlei in front of the King’s camp, we stood calling and cooeying for them, long and low at first, then louder. Of course there was a great stir along the lines of the native scherms, for they did not know what to make of it. We heard afterwards that the natives were greatly alarmed as the white men seemed to be everywhere at once, and the indunas went about quieting the men, and saying “Do you think the white men are on you, children? Don’t you know a wolf’s howl when you hear it?”

‘After calling for a bit, we heard an answering call away down the vlei, and the darkness favouring us, the lost men soon came up and we arrived at the clump of bushes where the patrol was stationed. We all lay down in the mud to rest, for we were tired out. It had left off raining, but it was a miserable night, and the hungry horses had been under saddle, some of them twenty hours, and were quite done.

‘So we waited for the column.

‘During the night we could hear natives moving across into the bush which lay between us and the river. We heard the branches as they pushed through. After a while Wilson asked me if I could go a little way around our position and find out what the Kaffirs were doing. I always think he heard something, but he did not say so. I slipped out and on our right heard the swirl of boughs and the splash of feet. Circling round for a little time I came on more Kaffirs. I got so close to them I could touch them as they passed, but it was impossible to say how many there were, it was so dark. This I reported to Wilson. Raising his head on his hand he asked me a few questions, and made the remark that if the column failed to come up before daylight, “we are in a hard hole,” and told me to go out on the King’s spoor and watch for Forbes, so that by no possibility should he pass us in the darkness. It was now, I should judge, 1 a.m. on the 4th of December.

‘I went, and for a long, long time I heard only the dropping of the rain from the leaves and now and then a dog barking in the scherms, but at last, just as it got grey in the east, I heard a noise, and placing my ear close to the ground, made it out to be the tramp of horses. I ran back to Wilson and said “The column is here.”

‘We all led our horses out to the King’s spoor. I saw the form of a man tracking. It was Ingram. I gave him a low whistle; he came up, and behind him rode — not the column, not the Maxims, but just twenty men under Captain Borrow. It was a terrible moment— “*If* we were caught there at dawn” — and already it was getting lighter every minute.

‘One of us asked “Where is the column?” to which the reply was, “You see all there are of us.” We answered, “Then you are only so many more men to die.”

‘Wilson went aside with Borrow, and there was earnest talk for a few moments. Presently all the officers’ horses’ heads were together; and Captain Judd said in my hearing, “Well, this is the end.” And Kurten said quite quietly, “We shall never get out of this.”

‘Then Wilson put it to the officers whether we should try and break through the impis which were now forming up between us and the river, or whether we would go for the King and sell our lives in trying to get hold of him. The final decision was for this latter.

‘So we set off and walked along the vlei back to the King’s wagons. It was quite light now and they saw us from the scherms all the way, but they just looked at us and we at them, and so we went along. We walked because the horses hadn’t a canter in them, and there was no hurry anyway.

‘At the wagons we halted and shouted out again about not wanting to kill anyone. There was a pause, and then came shouts and a volley. Afterwards it was said that somebody answered, “If you don’t want to kill, we do.” My horse jumped away to the right at the volley, and took me almost into the arms of some natives who came running from that side. A big induna blazed at me, missed me, and then fumbled at his belt for another cartridge. It was not a proper bandolier he had on, and I saw him trying to pluck out the cartridge instead of easing it up from below with his finger. As I got my horse steady and threw my rifle down to cover him, he suddenly let the cartridge be and lifted an assegai. Waiting to make sure of my aim, just as his arm was poised I fired and hit him in the chest; he dropped. All happened in a moment. Then we retreated. Seeing two horses down, Wilson shouted to somebody to cut off the saddle pockets which carried extra ammunition. Ingram picked up one of the dismounted men behind him, Captain Fitzgerald the other. The most ammunition anyone had, by the way, was a hundred and ten rounds. There was some very stiff fighting for a few minutes, the natives having the best of the position; indeed they might have wiped us out but for their stupid habit of firing on the run, as they charged. Wilson ordered us to retire down the vlei; some hundred yards further on we came to an ant-heap and took our second position on that, and held it for some time. Wilson jumped on the top of the ant-heap and shouted— “Every man pick his nigger.” There was no random firing, I would be covering a man when he dropped to somebody’s rifle, and I had to choose another.

‘Now *we* had the best of the position. The Matabele came on furiously down the open. Soon we were firing at two hundred yards and less; and the turned-up shields began to lie pretty thick over the ground. It got too hot for them; they broke and took cover in the bush. We fired about twenty rounds per man at this ant-heap. Then the position was flanked by heavy reinforcements from among the timbers; several more horses were knocked out and we had to quit. We retreated in close order into the bush on the opposite side of the vlei — the other side from the scherms. We went slowly on account of the disabled men and horses.

‘There was a lull, and Wilson rode up to me and asked if I thought I could rush through to the main column. A scout on a good horse might succeed, of course, where the patrol as a whole would not stand a chance. It was a forlorn hope, but I thought it was only a question of here or there, and I said I’d try, asking for a man to be sent with me. A man called Gooding said he was willing to come, and I picked Ingram also because we had been through many adventures together, and I thought we might as well see this last one through together.

‘So we started, and we had not gone five hundred yards when we came upon the horn of an impi closing in from the river. We saw the leading men, and they saw us and fired. As they did so I swerved my horse sharp to the left, and shouting to the others, “Now for it!” we thrust the horses through the bush at their best pace. A bullet whizzed past my eye, and leaves, cut by the firing, pattered down on us; but as usual the natives fired too high.

‘So we rode along, seeing men, and being fired at continually, but outstripping the enemy. The peculiar chant of an advancing impi, like a long, monotonous baying or growling, was loud in our ears, together with the noise they make drumming on their hide shields with the assegai — you must hear an army making those sounds to realise them. As soon as we got where the bush was thinner, we shook off the niggers who were pressing us, and, coming to a bit of hard ground, we turned on our tracks and hid in some thick bush. We did this more than once and stood quiet, listening to the noise they made beating about for us on all sides. Of course we knew that scores of them must have run gradually back upon the river to cut us off, so we doubled and waited, getting so near again to the patrol that once during the firing which we heard thickening back there, the spent bullets pattered around us. Those waiting moments were bad. We heard firing soon from the other side of the river too, and didn’t know but that the column was being wiped out as well as the patrol.

‘At last, after no end of doubling and hiding and riding in a triple loop, and making use of every device known to a scout for destroying a spoor — it took us about three hours and a half to cover as many miles — we reached the river, and found it a yellow flood two hundred yards broad. In the way African rivers have, the stream, four feet across last night, had risen from the rain. We did not think our horses could swim it, utterly tired as they now were; but we were just playing the game through, so we decided to try. With their heads and ours barely above the water, swimming and drifting, we got across and crawled out on the other side. Then for the first time, I remember, the idea struck me that we might come through it after all, and with that the desire of life came passionately back upon me.

We topped the bank, and there, five hundred yards in front to the left, stood several hundred Matabele! They stared at us in utter surprise, wondering, I suppose, if we were the advance guard of some entirely new reinforcement. In desperation we walked our horses quietly along in front of them, paying no attention to them. We had gone some distance like this, and nobody followed behind, till at last one man took a shot at us; and with that a lot more of them began to blaze away. Almost at the same moment Ingram caught sight of horses only four or five hundred yards distant; so the column still existed — and there it was. We took the last gallop out of our horses then, and — well, in a few minutes I was falling out of the saddle, and saying to Forbes: “It’s all over; we are the last of that party!” Forbes only said, “Well, tell nobody else till we are through with our own fight,” and next minute we were just firing away along with the others, helping to beat off the attack on the column.’

Here Mr. Burnham’s narrative ends.

What happened to Wilson and his gallant companions, and the exact manner of their end after Burnham and his two comrades left them, is known only through the reports of natives who took part in the fight. This, however, is certain: since the immortal company of Greeks died at Thermopylæ, few, if any, such stands have been made in the face of inevitable death. They knew what the issue must be; for them there was no possibility of escape; the sun shone upon them for the last time, and for the last time the air of heaven blew upon their brows. Around them, thousand upon thousand, were massed their relentless foes, the bush echoed with war-cries, and from behind every tree and stone a ceaseless fire was poured upon their circle. But these four-and-thirty men never wavered, never showed a sign of fear. Taking shelter behind the boles of trees, or the bodies of their dead horses, they answered the fire shot for shot, coolly, with perfect aim, without haste or hurry.

The bush around told this tale of them in after days, for the bark of every tree was scored with bullets, showing that wherever an enemy had exposed his head there a ball had been sent to seek him. Also there was another testimony — that of the bones of the dead Matabele, the majority of whom had clearly fallen shot through the brain. The natives themselves state that for every white man who died upon that day, there perished at least ten of their own people, picked off, be it remembered, singly as they chanced to expose themselves. Nor did the enemy waste life needlessly, for their general ordered up the King’s elephant hunters, trained shots, every one of them, to compete with the white man’s fire.

For two long hours or more that fight went on. Now and again a man was killed, and now and again a man was wounded, but the wounded still continued to load the rifles that they could not fire, handing them to those of their companions who were as yet unhurt. At some period during the fray, so say the Matabele, the white men began to ‘sing.’ What is meant by the singing we can never know, but probably they cheered aloud after repelling a rash of the enemy. At length their fire grew faint and infrequent, till by degrees it flickered away, for men were lacking to handle the rifles. One was left, however, who stood alone and erect in the ring of the dead, no longer attempting to defend himself, either because he was weak with wounds, or because his ammunition was exhausted. There he stood silent and solitary, presenting one of the most pathetic yet splendid sights told of in the generation that he adorned. There was no more firing now, but the natives stole out of their cover and came up to the man quietly, peering at him half afraid. Then one of them lifted his assegai and drove it through his breast. Still he did not fall; so the soldier drew out the spear and, retreating a few yards, he hurled it at him, transfixing him. Now, very slowly, making no sound, the white man sank forward upon his face, and so lay still.

There seems to be little doubt but that this man was none other than Major Allan Wilson, the commander of the patrol. Native reports of his stature and appearance suggest this, but there is a stronger piece of evidence. The Matabele told Mr. Burnham who repeated it to the present writer, that this man wore a hat of a certain shape and size, fastened up at the side in a peculiar fashion; a hat similar to that which Mr. Burnham wore himself. Now, these hats were of American make, and Major Wilson was the only man in that party who possessed one of them, for Mr. Burnham himself had looped it up for him in the American style, if indeed he had not presented it to him.

The tragedy seemed to be finished, but it was not so, for as the natives stood and stared at the fallen white men, from among the dead a man rose up, to all appearance unharmed, holding in each hand a revolver, or a ‘little Maxim’ as they described it. Having gained his feet he walked slowly and apparently aimlessly away towards an ant-heap that stood at some distance. At the sight the natives began to fire again, scores, and even hundreds, of shots being aimed at him, but, as it chanced, none of them struck him. Seeing that he remained untouched amidst this hail of lead, they cried out that he was ‘tagati,’ or magic-guarded, but the indunas ordered them to continue their fire. They did so, and a bullet passing through his hips, the Englishman fell down paralysed. Then finding that he could not turn they ran round him and stabbed him, and he died firing with either hand back over his shoulders at the slaughterers behind him.

So perished the last of the Wilson patrol. He seems to have been Alexander Hay Robertson — at least Mr. Burnham believes that it was he, and for this reason. Robertson, he says, was the only man of the party who had grey hair, and at a little distance from the other skeletons was found a skull to which grey hair still adhered.

It is the custom among savages of the Zulu and kindred races, for reasons of superstition, to rip open and mutilate the bodies of enemies killed in war, but on this occasion the Matabele general, having surveyed the dead, issued an order: ‘Let them be,’ he said; ‘they were men who died like men, men whose fathers were men.’

No finer epitaph could be composed in memory of Wilson and his comrades.

In truth the fame of this death of theirs has spread far and wide throughout the native races of Southern Africa, and Englishmen everywhere reap the benefit of its glory. They also who lie low, they reap the benefit of it, for their story is immortal, and it will be told hundreds of years hence when it matters no more to them whether they died by shot and steel on the banks of the Shangani, or elsewhere in age and sickness. At least through the fatal storm of war they have attained to peace and honour, and there within the circle of the ruins of Zimbabwe they sleep their sleep, envied of some and revered by all. Surely it is no small thing to have attained to such a death, and England may be proud of her sons who won it.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OFJOAN THE MAID

I

THE FAIRIES’ TREE

FOUR hundred and seventy years ago, the children of Domremy, a little village near the Meuse, on the borders of France and Lorraine, used to meet and dance and sing beneath a beautiful beech-tree, ‘lovely as a lily.’ They called it ‘The Fairy Tree,’ or ‘The Good Ladies’ Lodge,’ meaning the fairies by the words ‘Good Ladies.’ Among these children was one named Jeanne (born 1412), the daughter of an honest farmer, Jacques d’Arc. Jeanne sang more than she danced, and though she carried garlands like the other boys and girls, and hung them on the boughs of the Fairies’ Tree, she liked better to take the flowers into the parish church, and lay them on the altars of St. Margaret and St. Catherine. It was said among the villagers that Jeanne’s godmother had once seen the fairies dancing; but though some of the older people believed in the Good Ladies, it does not seem that Jeanne and the other children had faith in them or thought much about them. They only went to the tree and to a neighbouring fairy well to eat cakes and laugh and play. Yet these fairies were destined to be fatal to Jeanne d’Arc, Joan the Maiden, and her innocent childish sports were to bring her to the stake and the death by fire. For she was that famed Jeanne la Pucelle, the bravest, kindest, best, and wisest of women, whose tale is the saddest, the most wonderful, and the most glorious page in the history of the world. It is a page which no good Englishman and no true Frenchman can read without sorrow and bitter shame, for the English burned Joan with the help of bad Frenchmen, and the French of her party did not pay a *sou*, or write a line, or strike a stroke to save her. But the Scottish, at least, have no share in the disgrace. The Scottish archers fought on Joan’s side; the only portrait of herself that Joan ever saw belonged to a Scottish man-at-arms; their historians praised her as she deserved; and a Scottish priest from Fife stood by her to the end.

To understand Joan’s history it is necessary to say, first, how we come to know so much about one who died so many years ago, and, next, to learn how her country chanced to be so wretched before Joan came to deliver it and to give her life for France.

We know so much about her, not from poets and writers of books who lived in her day, but because she was tried by French priests (1431), and all her answers on everything that she ever did in all her life were written down in Latin. These answers fill most of a large volume. Then, twenty years later (1550-1556), when the English had been driven out of France, the French king collected learned doctors, who examined witnesses from all parts of the country, men and women who had known Joan as a child, and in the wars, and in prison, and they heard her case again, and destroyed the former unjust judgment. The answers of these witnesses fill two volumes, and thus we have all the Maid's history, written during her life, or not long after her death, and sworn to on oath. We might expect that the evidence of her friends, after they had time to understand her, and perhaps were tempted to overpraise her, would show us a picture different from that given in the trial by her mortal enemies. But though the earlier account, put forth by her foes, reads like a description by the Scribes and Pharisees of the trial of Our Lord, yet the character of Joan was so noble that the versions by her friends and her enemies practically agree in her honour. Her advocates cannot make us admire her more than we must admire her in the answers which she gave to her accusers. The records of these two trials, then, with letters and poems and histories written at the time, or very little later, give us all our information about Joan of Arc.

Next, as to 'the great pitifulness that was in France' before Joan of Arc came to deliver her country, the causes of the misery are long to tell and not easy to remember. To put it shortly, in Joan's childhood France was under a mad king, Charles VI., and was torn to pieces by two factions, the party of Burgundy and the party of Armagnac. The English took advantage of these disputes, and overran the land. France was not so much one country, divided by parties, as a loose knot of states, small and great, with different interests, obeying greedy and selfish chiefs rather than the king. Joan cared only for her country, not for a part of it. She fought not for Orleans, or Anjou, or Britanny, or Lorraine, but for France. In fact, she made France a nation again. Before she appeared everywhere was murder, revenge, robbery, burning of towns, slaughter of peaceful people, wretchedness, and despair. It was to redeem France from this ruin that Joan came, just when, in 1429, the English were besieging Orleans. Had they taken the strong city of Orleans, they could have overrun all southern and central France, and would have driven the natural king of France, Charles the Dauphin, into exile. From this ruin Joan saved her country; but if you wish to know more exactly how matters stood, and who the people were with whom Joan had to do, you must read what follows. If not, you can 'skip' to Chapter III.

II

A PAGE OF HISTORY

AS you know, Edward III. had made an unjust claim to the French crown, and, with the Black Prince, had supported it by the victories of Creçy and Poictiers. But Edward died, and the Black Prince died, and his son, Richard II., was the friend of France, and married a French princess. Richard, too, was done to death, but Henry IV., who succeeded him, had so much work on his hands in England that he left France alone. Yet France was wretched, because when the wise Charles V. died in 1380, he left two children, Charles the Dauphin, and his brother, Louis of Orleans. They were only little boys, and the Dauphin became weak-minded; moreover, they were both in the hands of their uncles. The best of these relations, Philip, Duke of Burgundy, died in 1404. His son, John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy, was the enemy of his own cousin, Louis of Orleans, brother of the Dauphin Charles, who was now king, under the title of Charles VI. John the Fearless had Louis of Orleans murdered, yet Paris, the capital of France, was on the side of the murderer. He was opposed by the Count of Armagnac. Now, the two parties of Armagnac and Burgundy divided France; the Armagnacs professing to be on the side of Charles the Dauphin. They robbed, burned, and murdered on all sides. Meanwhile, in England, Henry V. had succeeded to his father, and the weakness of France gave him a chance to assert his unjust claim to its throne. He defeated the French at Agincourt in 1415, he carried the Duke of Orleans a prisoner to London, he took Rouen, and overran Normandy. The French now attempted to make peace among themselves. The Duke of Burgundy had the mad Charles VI. in his power. The Dauphin was with the opposite faction of Armagnac. But, if the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy became friends, the Armagnacs would lose all their importance. The power would be with the Duke of Burgundy. The Armagnacs, therefore, treacherously murdered the duke, in the name of the Dauphin, at a meeting on the Bridge of Montereau (1419). The son of the duke, Philip the Good, now became Duke of Burgundy, and was determined to revenge his murdered father. He therefore made friends with Henry V. and the English. The English being now so strong in the Burgundian alliance, their terms were accepted in the Peace of Troyes (1420). The Dauphin was to be shut out from succeeding to the French crown, and was called a Pretender. Henry V. married the Dauphin’s sister Catherine, and when the mad Charles VI. died, Henry and Catherine were to be King and Queen of England and France. Meantime, Henry V. was to punish the Dauphin and the Armagnacs. But Henry V. died first, and, soon after, the mad Charles died. Who, then, was to be King of France? The Armagnacs held for the Dauphin, the rightful heir. The English, of course, and the Burgundians, were for Henry VI., a baby of ten months old. He, like other princes, had uncles, one of them, the Duke of Gloucester, managed affairs in England; another, the Duke of Bedford, the Regent, was to keep down France. The English possessed Paris and the North; the Dauphin retained the Centre of France, and much of the South, holding his court at Bourges. It is needless to say that the uncles of the baby Henry VI., the Dukes of Gloucester and Bedford, were soon on bad terms, and their disputes made matters easier for the Dauphin. He lost two great battles, however, Crevant and Verneuil, where his Scottish allies were cut to pieces. The hearts of good Frenchmen were with him, but he was indolent, selfish, good-humoured, and governed by a fat, foolish favourite, La Tremouille. The Duke of Bedford now succeeded in patching up the quarrels among the English, and then it was determined (but not by Bedford’s advice) to cross the Loire, to invade Southern France, to crush the Dauphin, and to conquer the whole country. But, before he could do all this, Bedford had to take the strong city of Orleans, on the Loire. And against the walls of Orleans the tide of English victory was broken, for there the flag of England went down before the peasant girl who had danced below the Fairy Tree of Domremy, before Joan the Maiden.

III

THE CHILDHOOD OF JOAN THE MAIDEN

THE English were besieging Orleans; Joan the Maid drove them from its walls. How did it happen that a girl of seventeen, who could neither read nor write, became the greatest general on the side of France? How did a woman defeat the hardy English soldiers who were used to chase the French before them like sheep?

We must say that France could only be saved by a miracle, and by a miracle she was saved. This is a mystery; we cannot understand it. Joan the Maiden was not as other men and women are. But, as a little girl, she was a child among children, though better, kinder, stronger than the rest, and, poor herself, she was always good and helpful to those who were poorer still.

Joan’s parents were not indigent; they had lands and cattle, and a little money laid by in case of need. Her father was, at one time, *doyen*, or head-man, of Domremy. Their house was hard by the church, and was in the part of the hamlet where the people were better off, and had more freedom and privileges than many of their neighbours. They were devoted to the Royal House of France, which protected them from the tyranny of lords and earls further east. As they lived in a village under the patronage of St. Remigius, they were much interested in Reims, his town, where the kings of France were crowned, and were anointed with Holy Oil, which was believed to have been brought in a sacred bottle by an angel.

In the Middle Ages, the king was not regarded as really king till this holy oil had been poured on his head. Thus we shall see, later, how anxious Joan was that Charles VII., then the Dauphin, should be crowned and anointed in Reims, though it was still in the possession of the English. It is also necessary to remember that Joan had once an elder sister named Catherine, whom she loved dearly. Catherine died, and perhaps affection for her made Joan more fond of bringing flowers to the altar of her namesake, St. Catherine, and of praying often to that saint.

Joan was brought up by her parents, as she told her judges, to be industrious, to sew and spin. She did not fear to match herself at spinning and sewing, she said, against any woman in Rouen. When very young she sometimes went to the fields to watch the cattle, like the goose-girl in the fairy tale. As she grew older, she worked in the house, she did not any longer watch sheep and cattle. But the times were dangerous, and, when there was an alarm of soldiers or robbers in the neighbourhood, she sometimes helped to drive the flock into a fortified island, or peninsula, for which her father was responsible, in the river near her home. She learned her creed, she said, from her mother. Twenty years after her death, her neighbours, who remembered her, described her as she was when a child. Jean Morin said that she was a good industrious girl, but that she would often be praying in church when her father and mother did not know it. Beatrix Estellin, an old widow of eighty, said Joan was a good girl. When Domremy was burned, Joan would go to church at Greux, ‘and there was not a better girl in the two towns.’ A priest, who had known her, called her ‘a good, simple, well-behaved girl.’ Jean Waterin, when he was a boy, had seen Joan in the fields; ‘and when they were all playing together, she would go apart, and pray to God, as he thought, and he and the others used to laugh at her. She was good and simple, and often in churches and holy places. And when she heard the church bell ring, she would kneel down in the fields.’ She used to bribe the sexton to ring the bells (a duty which he rather neglected) with presents of knitted wool.

All those who had seen Joan told the same tale: she was always kind, simple, industrious, pious, and yet merry and fond of playing with the others round the Fairy Tree. They say that the singing birds came to her, and nestled in her breast.

Thus, as far as anyone could tell, Joan was a child like other children, but more serious and more religious. One of her friends, a girl called Mengette, whose cottage was next to that of Joan’s father, said: ‘Joan was so pious that we other children told her she was too good.’

In peaceful times Joan would have lived and married and died and been forgotten. But the times were evil. The two parties of Burgundy and Armagnac divided town from town and village from village. It was as in the days of the Douglas Wars in Scotland, when the very children took sides for Queen Mary and King James, and fought each other in the streets. Domremy was for the Armagnacs — that is, against the English and for the Dauphin, the son of the mad Charles VI. But at Maxey, on the Meuse, a village near Domremy, the people were all for Burgundy and the English. The boys of Domremy would go out and fight the Maxey boys with fists and sticks and stones. Joan did not remember having taken part in those battles, but she had often seen her brothers and the Domremy boys come home all bruised and bleeding.

THE RAID OF DOMREMY

Once Joan saw more of war than these schoolboy bickers. It was in 1425, when she was a girl of thirteen. There was a kind of robber chief on the English side, a man named Henri d’Orly, from Savoy, who dwelt in the castle of Doulevant. There he and his band of armed men lived and drank and plundered far and near. One day there galloped into Domremy a squadron of spearmen, who rode through the fields driving together the cattle of the villagers, among them the cows of Joan’s father. The country people could make no resistance; they were glad enough if their houses were not burned. So off rode Henri d’Orly’s men, driving the cattle with their spear-points along the track to the castle of Doulevant. But cows are not fast travellers, and when the robbers had reached a little village called Dommartin le France they rested, and went to the tavern to make merry. But by this time a lady, Madame d’Ogévillier, had sent in all haste to the Count de Vaudemont to tell him how the villagers of Domremy had been ruined. So he called his squire, Barthélemy de Clefmont, and bade him summon his spears and mount and ride. It reminds us of the old Scottish ballad, where

Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead has seen all his cattle driven out of his stalls by the English; and he runs to Branxholme and warns the water, and they with Harden pursue the English, defeat them, and recover Telfer’s kye, with a great spoil out of England. Just so Barthélemy de Clefmont, with seven or eight lances, galloped down the path to Dommartin le France. There they found the cattle, and d’Orly’s men fled like cowards. So Barthélemy with his comrades was returning very joyously, when Henri d’Orly rode up with a troop of horse and followed hard after Barthélemy. He was wounded by a lance, but he cut his way through d’Orly’s men, and also brought the cattle back safely — a very gallant deed of arms. We may fancy the delight of the villagers when ‘the kye cam’ hame.’ It may have been now that an event happened, of which Joan does not tell us herself, but which was reported by the king’s seneschal, in June 1429, when Joan had just begun her wonderful career. The children of the village, says the seneschal, were running races and leaping in wild joy about the fields; possibly their gladness was caused by the unexpected rescue of their cattle. Joan ran so much more fleetly than the rest, and leaped so far, that the children believed she actually *flew*, and they told her so! Tired and breathless, ‘out of herself,’ says the seneschal, she paused, and in that moment she heard a Voice, but saw no man; the Voice bade her go home, because her mother had need of her. And when she came home the Voice said many things to her about the great deeds which God bade her do for France. We shall later hear Joan’s own account of how her visions and Voices first came to her.

Three years later there was an alarm, and the Domremy people fled to Neufchâteau, Joan going with her parents. Afterwards her enemies tried to prove that she had been a servant at an inn in Neufchâteau, had lived roughly with grooms and soldiers, and had learned to ride. But this was absolutely untrue. An ordinary child would have thought little of war and of the sorrows of her country in the flowery fields of Domremy and Vaucouleurs; but Joan always thought of the miseries of *France la belle*, fair France, and prayed for her country and her king. A great road, on the lines of an old Roman way, passed near Domremy, so Joan would hear all the miserable news from travellers. Probably she showed what was in her mind, for her father dreamed that she ‘had gone off with soldiers,’ and this dream struck him so much, that he told his sons that he, or they, must drown Joan if she so disgraced herself. For many girls of bad character, lazy and rude, followed the soldiers, as they always have done, and always will. Joan’s father thought that his dream meant that Joan would be like these women. It would be interesting to know whether he was in the habit of dreaming true dreams. For Joan, his child, dreamed when wide awake, dreamed dreams immortal, which brought her to her glory and her doom.

THE CALLING OF JOAN THE MAID

When Joan was between twelve and thirteen, a wonderful thing befell her. We have already heard one account of it, written when Joan was in the first flower of her triumph, by the seneschal of the King of France. A Voice spoke to her and prophesied of what she was to do. But about all these marvellous things it is more safe to attend to what Joan always said herself. She told the same story both to friends and foes; to the learned men who, by her king’s desire, examined her at Poictiers, before she went to war (April 1429); and to her deadly foes at Rouen. No man can read her answers to them and doubt that she spoke what she believed. And she died for this belief. Unluckily the book that was kept of what she said at Poictiers is lost. Before her enemies at Rouen there were many things which she did not think it right to say. On one point, after for long refusing to speak, she told her foes a kind of parable, which we must not take as part of her real story.

When Joan was between twelve and thirteen (1424), so she swore, ‘a *Voice came to her from God for her guidance*, but when first it came, she was in great fear. And it came, that Voice, about noonday, in the summer season, she being in her father’s garden. And Joan had not fasted the day before that, but was fasting when the Voice came. And she heard the Voice on her right side, towards the church, and rarely did she hear it but she also saw a great light.’ These are her very words. They asked her if she heard these Voices there, in the hall of judgment, and she answered, ‘If I were in a wood, I should well hear these Voices coming to me.’ The Voices at first only told her ‘to be a good girl, and go to church.’ She thought it was a holy Voice, and that it came from God; and the third time she heard it she knew it was the voice of an angel. The Voice told her of ‘the great pity there was in France,’ and that one day she must go into France and help the country. She had visions with the Voices; visions first of St. Michael, and then of St. Catherine and St. Margaret. She hated telling her hypocritical judges anything about these heavenly visions, but it seems that she really believed in their appearance, believed that she had embraced the knees of St. Margaret and St. Catherine, and she did reverence to them when they came to her. ‘I saw them with my bodily eyes, as I see you,’ she said to her judges, ‘and when they departed from me I wept, and well I wished that they had taken me with them.’

What are we to think about these visions and these Voices which were with Joan to her death?

Some have thought that she was mad; others that she only told the story to win a hearing and make herself important; or, again, that a trick was played on her to win her aid. The last idea is impossible. The French Court did not want her. The second, as everyone will admit who reads Joan's answers, and follows her step by step from childhood to victory, to captivity, to death, is also impossible. She was as truthful as she was brave and wise. But was she partially insane? It is certain that mad people do hear voices which are not real, and believe that they come to them from without. But these mad voices say mad things. Now, Joan's Voices never said anything but what was wise beyond her own wisdom, and right and true. She governed almost all her actions by their advice. When she disobeyed 'her counsel,' as she called it, the result was evil, and once, as we shall see, was ruinous. Again, Joan was not only healthy, but wonderfully strong, ready, and nimble. In all her converse with princes and priests and warriors, she spoke and acted like one born in their own rank. In mind, as in body, she was a marvel, none such has ever been known. It is impossible, then, to say that she was mad.

In the whole history of the world, as far as we know it, there is only one example like that of Joan of Arc. Mad folk hear voices; starved nuns, living always with their thoughts bent on heaven, women of feeble body, accustomed to faints and to fits, have heard voices and seen visions. Some of them have been very good women; none have been strong, good riders, skilled in arms, able to march all day long with little food, and to draw the arrow from their own wound and mount horse and charge again, like Joan of Arc. Only one great man, strong, brave, wise, and healthy, has been attended by a Voice, which taught him what to do, or rather what *not* to do. That man was Socrates, the most hardy soldier, the most unwearied in the march, and the wisest man of Greece. Socrates was put to death for this Voice of his, on the charge of 'bringing in new gods.' Joan of Arc died for her Voices, because her enemies argued that she was no saint, but a witch! These two, the old philosopher and the untaught peasant girl of nineteen, stand alone in the endless generations of men, alone in goodness, wisdom, courage, strength, combined with a mysterious and fatal gift. More than this it is now forbidden to us to know. But, when we remember that such a being as Joan of Arc has only appeared once since time began, and *that* once just when France seemed lost beyond all hope, we need not wonder at those who say that France was saved by no common good fortune and happy chance, but by the will of Heaven.

In one respect, Joan's conduct after these Voices and visions began, was perhaps, as regarded herself, unfortunate. She did not speak of them to her parents, nor tell about them to the priest when she confessed. Her enemies were thus able to say, later, that they could not have been holy visions or Voices, otherwise she would not have concealed them from her father, her mother, and the priest, to whom she was bound to tell everything, and from whom she should have sought advice. Thus, long afterwards, St. Theresa had visions, and, in obedience to her priest, she at first distrusted these, as perhaps a delusion of evil, or a temptation of spiritual pride. Joan, however, was afraid that her father would interfere with her mission, and prevent her from going to the king. She believed that she must not be ‘disobedient to the heavenly vision.’

HOW JOAN THE MAID WENT TO VAUCOULEURS

It was in 1424 that the Voices first came to Joan the Maid. The years went on, bringing more and more sorrow to France. In 1428 only a very few small towns in the east still held out for the Dauphin, and these were surrounded on every side by enemies. Meanwhile the Voices came more frequently, urging Joan to go into France, and help her country. She asked how she, a girl, who could not ride or use sword and lance, could be of any help? Rather would she stay at home and spin beside her dear mother. At the same time she was encouraged by one of the vague old prophecies which were as common in France as in Scotland. A legend ran ‘that France was to be saved by a Maiden from the Oak Wood,’ and there was an Oak Wood, *le bois chènu*, near Domremy. Some such prophecy had an influence on Joan, and probably helped people to believe in her. The Voices, moreover, instantly and often commanded her to go to Vaucouleurs, a neighbouring town which was loyal, and there meet Robert de Baudricourt, who was captain of the French garrison. Now, Robert de Baudricourt was not what is called a romantic person. Though little over thirty, he had already married, one after the other, two rich widows. He was a gallant soldier, but a plain practical man, very careful of his own interest, and cunning enough to hold his own among his many enemies, English, Burgundian, and Lorrainers. It was to him that Joan must go, a country girl to a great noble, and tell him that she, and she alone, could save France! Joan knew what manner of man Robert de Baudricourt was, for her father had been obliged to visit him, and speak for the people of Domremy when they were oppressed. She could hardly hope that he would listen to her, and it was with a heavy heart that she found a good reason for leaving home to visit Vaucouleurs. Joan had a cousin, a niece of her mother’s, who was married to one Durand Lassois, at Burey en Vaux, a village near Vaucouleurs. This cousin invited Joan to visit her for a week. At the end of that time she spoke to her cousin’s husband. There was an old saying, as we saw, that France would be rescued by a Maid, and she, as she told Lassois, was that Maid. Lassois listened, and, whatever he may have thought of her chances, he led her to Robert de Baudricourt.

Joan came, on May 18, 1423, in her simple red dress, and walked straight up to the captain among his men. She knew him, she said, by what her Voices had told her, but she may also have heard him described by her father. She told him that the Dauphin must keep quiet, and risk no battle, for before the middle of Lent next year (1429) God would send him succour. She added that the kingdom belonged, not to the Dauphin, but to her Master, who willed that the Dauphin should be crowned, and she herself would lead him to Reims, to be anointed with the holy oil.

‘And who is your Master?’ said Robert.

‘The King of Heaven!’

Robert, very naturally, thought that Joan was crazed, and shrugged his shoulders. He bluntly told Lassois to box her ears, and take her back to her father. So she had to go home; but here new troubles awaited her. The enemy came down on Domremy and burned it; Joan and her family fled to Neufchâteau, where they stayed for a few days. It was perhaps about this time that a young man declared that Joan had promised to marry him, and he actually brought her before a court of justice, to make her fulfil her promise.

Joan was beautiful, well-shaped, dark-haired, and charming in her manner.

We have a letter which two young knights, André and Guy de Laval, wrote to their mother in the following year. ‘The Maid was armed from neck to heel,’ they say, ‘but unhelmeted; she carried a lance in her hand. Afterwards, when we lighted down from our horses at Selles, I went to her lodging to see her, and she called for wine for me, saying she would soon make me drink wine in Paris’ (then held by the English), ‘and, indeed, she seems a thing wholly divine, both to look on her and to hear her sweet voice.’

It is no wonder that the young man of Domremy wanted to marry Joan; but she had given no promise, and he lost his foolish law-suit. She and her parents soon went back to Domremy.

HOW JOAN THE MAID WENT AGAIN TO VAUCOULEURS

In Domremy they found that the enemy had ruined everything. Their cattle were safe, for they had been driven to Neufchâteau, but when Joan looked from her father’s garden to the church, she saw nothing but a heap of smoking ruins. She had to go to say her prayers now at the church of Greux. These things only made her feel more deeply the sorrows of her country. The time was drawing near when she had prophesied that the Dauphin was to receive help from heaven — namely, in the Lent of 1429. On that year the season was held more than commonly sacred, for Good Friday and the Annunciation fell on the same day.

So, early in January, 1429, Joan the Maid turned her back on Domremy, which she was never to see again. Her cousin Lassois came and asked leave for Joan to visit him again; she said good-bye to her father and mother, and to her friend Mengette, but to her dearest friend Hauvette she did not even say good-bye, for she could not bear it. She went to her cousin's house at Burey, and there she stayed for six weeks, hearing bad news of the siege of Orleans by the English. Meanwhile, Robert de Baudricourt, in Vaucouleurs, was not easy in his mind, for he was likely to lose the protection of René of Anjou, the Duc de Bar, who was on the point of joining the English. Thus Robert may have been more inclined to listen to Joan than when he bade her cousin box her ears and take her back to her father. A squire named Jean de Nouillompont met Joan one day.

'Well, my lass,' said he, 'is our king to be driven from France, and are we all to become English?'

'I have come here,' said Joan, 'to bid Robert de Baudricourt lead me to the king, but he will not listen to me. And yet to the king I must go, even if I walk my legs down to the knees; for none in all the world — king, nor duke, nor the King of Scotland's daughter — can save France, but myself only. *Certes*, I would rather stay and spin with my poor mother, for to fight is not my calling; but I must go and I must fight, for so my Lord will have it.'

'And who is your Lord?' said Jean de Nouillompont.

'He is God,' said the Maiden.

'Then, so help me God, I shall take you to the king,' said Jean, putting her hands in his. 'When do we start?'

'To-day is better than to-morrow,' said the Maid.

Joan was now staying in Vaucouleurs with Catherine le Royer. One day, as she and Catherine were sitting at their spinning-wheels, who should come in but Robert de Baudricourt with the *curé* of the town. Robert had fancied that perhaps Joan was a witch! He told the priest to perform some rite of the Church over her, so that if she were a witch she would be obliged to run away. But when the words were spoken, Joan threw herself at the knees of the priest, saying, 'Sir, this is ill done of you, for you have heard my confession and know that I am not a witch.'

Robert was now half disposed to send her to the king and let her take her chance. But days dragged on, and when Joan was not working she would be on her knees in the crypt or underground chapel of the Chapel Royal in Vaucouleurs. Twenty-seven years later a chorister boy told how he often saw her praying there for France. Now people began to hear of Joan, and the Duke of Lorraine asked her to visit him at Nancy, where she bade him lead a better life. He is said to have given her a horse and some money. On February 12 the story goes that she went to Robert de Baudricourt.

'You delay too long,' she said. 'On this very day, at Orleans, the gentle Dauphin has lost a battle.'

'Sir, this is ill done of you'

This was, in fact, the Battle of Herrings, so called because the English defeated and cut off a French and Scottish force which attacked them as they were bringing herrings into camp for provisions in Lent. If this tale is true, Joan cannot have known of the battle by any common means; but though it is vouched for by the king's secretary, Joan has told us nothing about it herself.

Now the people of Vaucouleurs bought clothes for Joan to wear on her journey to the Dauphin. They were such clothes as men wear — doublet, hose, surcoat, boots, and spurs — and Robert de Baudricourt gave Joan a sword.

In the end this man's dress, which henceforth she always wore, proved the ruin of Joan. Her enemies, the English and false French, made it one of their chief charges against her that she dressed, as they chose to say, immodestly. It is not very clear how she came to wear men's garments. Jean de Nouillompont, her first friend, asked her if she would go to the king (a ten days' journey on horseback) dressed as she was, in her red frock. She answered 'that she would gladly have a man's dress,' which he says that he provided. Her reason was that she would have to be living alone among men-at-arms, and she thought that it was more modest to wear armour like the rest. Also her favourite saint, St. Margaret, had done this once when in danger. St. Marina had worn a monk's clothes when obliged to live in a monastery. The same thing is told of St. Eugenia. Besides, in all the romances of chivalry, and the favourite poems of knights and ladies, we find fair maidens fighting in arms like men, or travelling dressed as pages, and nobody ever thought the worse of them. Therefore this foolish charge of the English against Joan the Maid was a mere piece of cruel hypocrisy.

HOW JOAN THE MAID RODE TO CHINON

On February 23, 1429, the gate of the little castle of Vaucouleurs, 'the Gate of France,' which is still standing, was thrown open. Seven travellers rode out, among them two squires, Jean de Nouillompont and Bertrand de Poulengy, with their attendants, and Joan the Maid. 'Go, and let what will come of it come!' said Robert de Baudricourt. He did not expect much to come of it. It was a long journey — they were eleven days on the road — and a dangerous. But Joan laughed at danger. 'God will clear my path to the king, for to this end I was born.' Often they rode by night, stopping at monasteries when they could. Sometimes they slept out under the sky. Though she was so young and so beautiful, with the happiness of her long desire in her eyes, and the glory of her future shining on her, these two young gentlemen never dreamed of paying their court to her and making love, as in romances they do, for they regarded her 'as if she had been an angel.' 'They were in awe of her,' they said, long afterwards, long after the angels had taken Joan to be with their company in heaven. And all the knights who had seen her said the same. Dunois and d'Aulon and the beautiful Duc d'Alençon, '*le beau Duc*' as Joan called him, they all said that she was 'a thing enskied and sainted.' So on they rode, six men and a maid, through a country full of English and Burgundian soldiery. There were four rivers to cross, Marne, Aube, Seine, and Yonne, and the rivers were 'great and mickle o' spate,' running red with the rains from bank to bank, so that they could not ford the streams, but must go by unfriendly towns, where alone there were bridges. Joan would have liked to stay and go to church in every town, but this might not be. However, she heard mass thrice at the church of her favourite saint, Catherine de Fierbois, between Loches and Chinon, in a friendly country. And a strange thing happened later in that church.

From Fierbois Joan made some clerk write to the king that she was coming to help him, and that she would know him among all his men. Probably it was here that she wrote to beg her parents' pardon, and they forgave her, she says. Meanwhile news reached the people then besieged in Orleans that a marvellous Maiden was riding to their rescue. On March 6 Joan arrived in Chinon, where for two or three days the king's advisers would not let him see her. At last they yielded, and she went straight up to him, and when he denied that he was the king, she told him that she knew well who he was.

'There is the king,' said Charles, pointing to a richly dressed noble.

'No, fair sire. You are he!'

Still, it was not easy to believe. Joan stayed at Chinon in the house of a noble lady. The young Duc d'Alençon was on her side from the first, bewitched by her noble horsemanship, which she had never learned. Great people came to see her, but, when she was alone, she wept and prayed. The king sent messengers to inquire about her at Domremy, but time was going on, and Orleans was not relieved.

HOW JOAN THE MAID SHOWED A SIGN TO THE KING

Joan was weary of being asked questions. One day she went to Charles and said, 'Gentle Dauphin, why do you delay to believe me? I tell you that God has taken pity on you and your people, at the prayer of St. Louis and St. Charlemagne. And I will tell you, by your leave, something which will show you that you should believe me.’

Then she told him secretly something which, as he said, none could know but God and himself. A few months later, in July, a man about the court wrote a letter, in which he declares that none knows what Joan told the king, but he was plainly as glad as if something had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit. We have three witnesses of this, one of them is the famous Dunois, to whom the king himself told what happened.

What did Joan say to the king, and what was the sign? About this her enemies later examined her ten times. She told them from the very first that she would never let them know; that, if they made her speak, what she spoke would not be the truth. At last she told them a kind of parable about an angel and a crown, which neither was nor was meant to be taken as true. It was the king’s secret, and Joan kept it.

We learn the secret in this way. There was a man named Pierre Sala in the service of Louis XI. and Charles VIII. of France. In his youth, Pierre Sala used to hunt with M. de Boisy, who, in his youth, had been gentleman of the bedchamber to Charles VII., Joan’s king. To de Boisy Charles VII. told the secret, and de Boisy told it to Pierre Sala. At this time of his misfortunes (1429), when his treasurer had only four crowns in his coffers, Charles went into his oratory to pray alone, and he made his prayer to God secretly, not aloud, but in his mind.

Now, what Joan told the king was the secret prayer which he had made in his own heart when alone. And, ten years later, when Joan was long dead, an impostor went about saying that *she* was the Maid, who had come to life again. She was brought to Charles, who said, ‘Maiden, my Maid, you are welcome back again if you can tell me the secret that is between you and me.’ But the false Maid, falling on her knees, confessed all her treason.

This is the story of the sign given to the king, which is not the least strange of the things done by Joan the Maid. But there is a thing stranger yet, though not so rare.

The king to whom Joan brought this wonderful message, the king whom she loved so loyally, and for whom she died, spoiled all her plans. He, with his political advisers, prevented her from driving the English quite out of France. These favourites, men like the fat La Tremouille, found their profit in dawdling and delaying, as politicians generally do. Thus, in our own time, they hung off and on, till our soldiers were too late to rescue Gordon from the Arabs. Thus, in Joan’s time, she had literally to goad them into action, to drag them on by constant prayers and tears. They were lazy, comfortable, cowardly, disbelieving; in their hearts they hated the Maid, who put them to so much trouble. As for Charles, to whom the Maid was so loyal, had he been a man like the Black Prince, or even like Prince Charlie, Joan would have led him into Paris before summer was ended. ‘I shall only last one year and little more,’ she often said to the king. The Duc d’Alençon heard her, and much of that precious year was wasted. Charles, to tell the truth, never really believed in her; he never quite trusted her; he never led a charge by her side; and, in the end, he shamefully deserted her, and left the Maid to her doom.

HOW JOAN THE MAID WAS EXAMINED AT POICTIERS

Weeks had passed, and Joan had never yet seen a blow struck in war. She used to exercise herself in horsemanship, and knightly sports of tilting, and it is wonderful that a peasant girl became, at once, one of the best riders among the chivalry of France. The young Duc d’Alençon, lately come from captivity in England, saw how gallantly she rode, and gave her a horse. He and his wife were her friends from the first, when the politicians and advisers were against her. But, indeed, whatever the Maid attempted, she did better than others, at once, without teaching or practice. It was now determined that Joan should be taken to Poictiers, and examined before all the learned men, bishops, doctors, and higher clergy who still were on the side of France. There was good reason for this delay. It was plain to all, friends and foes, that the wonderful Maid was not like other men and women, with her Voices, her visions, her prophecies, and her powers. All agreed that she had some strange help given to her; but who gave it? This aid must come, people thought then, either from heaven or hell — either from God and his saints, or from the devil and his angels. Now, if any doubt could be thrown on the source whence Joan’s aid came, the English might argue (as of course they did), that she was a witch and a heretic. If she was a heretic and a witch, then her king was involved in her wickedness, and so he might be legally shut out from his kingdom. It was necessary, therefore, that Joan should be examined by learned men. They must find out whether she had always been good, and a true believer, and whether her Voices always agreed in everything with the teachings of the Church. Otherwise her angels must be devils in disguise. For these reasons Joan was carried to Poictiers. During three long weeks the learned men asked her questions, and, no doubt, they wearied her terribly. But they said it was wonderful how wisely this girl, who ‘did not know A from B,’ replied to their puzzling inquiries. She told the story of her visions, of the command laid upon her to rescue Orleans. Said Guillaume Aymeri, ‘You ask for men-at-arms, and you say that God will have the English to leave France and go home. If that is true, no men-at-arms are needed; God’s pleasure can drive the English out of the land.’

‘In a better language than yours,’ said Joan

‘In God’s name,’ said the Maid, ‘the men-at-arms will fight, and God will give the victory.’ Then came the learned Seguin; ‘a right sour man was he,’ said those who knew him.

Seguin was a Limousin, and the Limousins spoke in a queer accent at which the other French were always laughing.

‘In what language do your Voices speak?’ asked he.

‘In a better language than *yours,*’ said Joan, and the bishops smiled at the country quip.

‘We may not believe in you,’ said Seguin, ‘unless you show us a sign.’

‘I did not come to Poictiers to work miracles,’ said Joan; ‘take me to Orleans, and I shall show you the signs that I am sent to do.’ And show them she did.

Joan never pretended to work miracles. Though, in that age, people easily believed in miracles, it is curious that none worth mentioning were invented about Joan in her own time. She knew things in some strange way sometimes, but the real miracle was her extraordinary wisdom, genius, courage, and power of enduring hardship.

At last, after examining witnesses from Domremy, and the Queen of Sicily and other great ladies to whom Joan was entrusted, the clergy found nothing in her but ‘goodness, humility, frank maidenhood, piety, honesty, and simplicity.’ As for her wearing a man’s dress, the Archbishop of Embrun said to the king, ‘It is more becoming to do these things in man’s gear, since they have to be done amongst men.’

The king therefore made up his mind at last. Jean and Pierre, Joan’s brothers, were to ride with her to Orleans; her old friends, her first friends, Jean de Nouillompont and Bertrand de Poulengy, had never left her. She was given a squire, Jean d’Aulon, a very good man, and a page, Louis de Coutes, and a chaplain. The king gave Joan armour and horses, and offered her a sword. But her Voices told her that, behind the altar of St. Catherine de Fierbois, where she heard mass on her way to Chinon, there was an old sword, with five crosses on the blade, buried in the earth. That sword she was to wear. A man whom Joan did not know, and had never seen, was sent from Tours, and found the sword in the place which she described. The sword was cleaned of rust, and the king gave her two sheaths, one of velvet, one of cloth of gold, but Joan had a leather sheath made for use in war. She also commanded a banner to be made, with the Lilies of France on a white field. There was also a picture of God, holding the round world, and two angels at the sides, with the sacred words, Jhesu Maria. On another flag was the Annunciation, the Virgin holding a lily, and the angel coming to her. In battle, when she led a charge, Joan always carried her standard, that she might not be able to use her sword. She wished to kill nobody, and said ‘she loved her banner forty times more than her sword.’ Joan afterwards broke St. Catherine’s sword, when slapping a girl (who richly deserved to be slapped) with the flat of the blade. Her enemies, at her trial, wished to prove that her flag was a kind of magical talisman, but Joan had no belief in anything of that kind. What she believed in was God, her Voices, and her just cause. When once it was settled that she was to lead an army to relieve Orleans, she showed her faith by writing a letter addressed to the King of England; Bedford, the Regent; and the English generals at Orleans. This letter was sent from Blois, late in April. It began Jhesu Maria. Joan had no ill-will against the English. She bade them leave France, ‘and if you are reasonable, you yet may ride in the Maid’s company, where the French will do the fairest feat of arms that ever yet was done for Christentie.’ Probably she had in her mind some Crusade. But, before France and England can march together, ‘do ye justice to the King of Heaven and the Blood Royal of France. Yield to the Maid the keys of all the good towns which ye have taken and assailed in France.’ If they did not yield to the Maid and the king, she will come on them to their sorrow. ‘Duke of Bedford, the Maid prays and entreats you not to work your own destruction!’

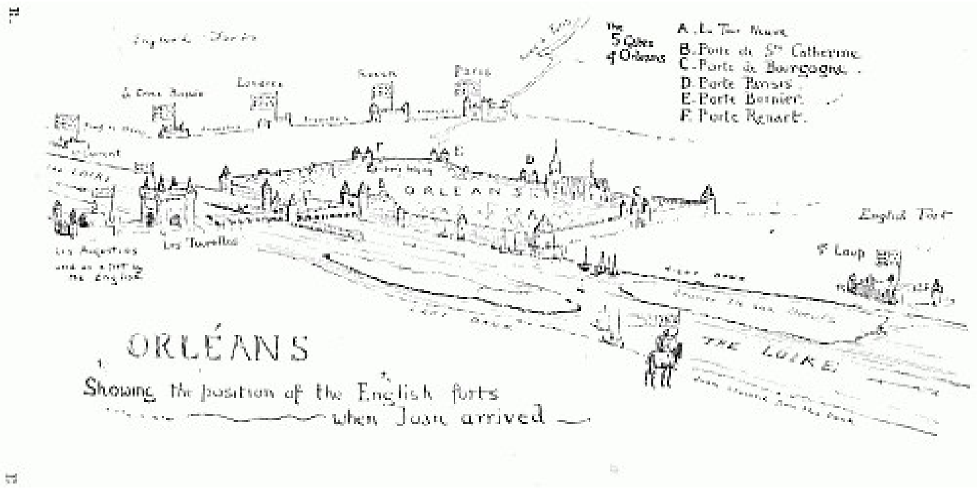
The 5 Gates of Orleans
A. La Tour Neuve
B. Porte de St Catherine
C. Porte de Bourgogne
D. Porte Parisis
E. Porte Bernier
F. Porte Renart
Paris
Rouen
Londres
St Laurent
The Loire
Les Augustins
Les Tourelles
ORLEANS
English Fort
St Loup
THE LOIRE
ORLÉANS
Showing the position of the English forts when Joan arrived

We may imagine how the English laughed and swore when they received this letter. They threw the heralds of the Maid into prison, and threatened to burn them as heretics. From the very first, the English promised to burn Joan as a witch and a heretic. This fate was always before her eyes. But she went where her Voices called her.

HOW JOAN THE MAID RODE TO RELIEVE ORLEANS

At last the men-at-arms who were to accompany Joan were ready. She rode at their head, as André de Laval and Guy de Laval saw her, and described her in a letter to their mother. She was armed in white armour, but unhelmeted, a little axe in her hand, riding a great black charger, that reared at the door of her lodging and would not let her mount.

‘Lead him to the Cross!’ cried she

‘“Lead him to the Cross!” cried she, for a Cross stood on the roadside, by the church. There he stood as if he had been stone, and she mounted. Then she turned to the church, and said, in her girlish voice, “You priests and churchmen, make prayers and processions to God.” Then she cried, “Forwards, Forwards!” and on she rode, a pretty page carrying her banner, and with her little axe in her hand.’ And so Joan went to war. She led, she says, ten or twelve thousand soldiers. Among the other generals were Xaintrailles and La Hire. Joan made her soldiers confess themselves; as for La Hire, a brave rough soldier, she forbade him to swear, as he used to do, but, for his weakness, she permitted him to say, *By my bâton!* This army was to defend a great convoy of provisions, of which the people of Orleans stood in sore need. Since November they had been besieged, and now it was late April. The people in Orleans were not yet starving, but food came in slowly, and in small quantities. From the first the citizens had behaved well; a Scottish priest describes their noble conduct. They had burned all the outlying suburbs, beyond the wall, that they might not give shelter to the English. They had plenty of cannon, which carried large rough stone balls, and usually did little harm. But a gun was fired, it is said by a small boy, which killed Salisbury, the English general, as he looked out of an arrow-slit in a fort that the English had taken.

The French general-in-chief was the famous Dunois, then called the Bastard of Orleans. On the English side was the brave Talbot, who fought under arms for sixty years, and died fighting when he was over eighty. There were also Suffolk, Pole, and Glasdale, whom the French called ‘Classidas.’ The English had not soldiers enough to surround and take so large a town, of 30,000 people, in ordinary war. But as Dunois said, ‘two hundred English could then beat a thousand French’ — that is, as the French were before the coming of the Maid.

The position of Orleans was this; it may be most easily understood from the map.

Looking *down* the river Loire, Orleans lies on your right hand. It had strong walls in an irregular square; it had towers on the wall, and a bridge of many arches crossing to the left side of the river. At the further end of this bridge were a fort and rampart called Les Tourelles, and this fort had already been taken by the English, so that no French army could cross the bridge to help Orleans. Indeed, the bridge was broken. The rampart and the fort of Les Tourelles were guarded by another strong work, called Les Augustins. All round the outside of the town, on the right bank, the English had built strong redoubts, which they called *bastilles*. ‘Paris’ was the bastille which blocked the road from Paris, ‘London’ and ‘Rouen’ were bastilles on the western side, but on the east, above the town, and on the Orleans bank of the Loire, the English had only one bastille, St. Loup. Now, as Joan’s army mustered at Blois, south of Orleans, further down the river, she might march on the *left* side of the river, cross it by boats above Orleans, and enter the town where the English were weakest and had only one fort, St. Loup. Or she might march up the *right* bank, and attack the English where they were strongest, and had many bastilles. The Voices bade the Maid act on the boldest plan, and enter Orleans where the English were strongest, on the right bank of the river. The English would not move, said the Voices. She was certain that they would not even sally out against her. But Dunois in Orleans, and the generals with the Maid, thought this plan very perilous, as, indeed, it was. They therefore deceived her, caused her to think that Orleans was on the *left* bank of the Loire, and led her thither. When she arrived, she saw that they had not played her fair, that the river lay between her and the town, and the strongest force of the enemy.

The most astonishing thing about Joan is that, though she had never yet seen a sword-stroke dealt in anger, she understood the great operations of war better than seasoned generals. It was not only that she, like old Blücher, always cried *Forwards!* Audacity, to fight on every chance, carries men far in battle. Prince Charlie, who was no great general, saw that, and while his flag went forward he never lost a fight. But Joan ‘was most expert in war,’ said the Duc d’Alençon, ‘both with the lance and in massing an army, and arraying battle, and in the management of artillery. For all men marvelled how far-sighted and prudent she was in war, as if she had been a captain of thirty years’ standing, and, above all, in the service of the artillery, for in that she was right well skilled.’

This girl of seventeen saw that, if a large convoy of provisions was to be thrown into a besieged town, the worst way was to try to ferry the supplies across a river under the enemy’s fire. But Dunois and the other generals had brought her to this pass, and the Maid was sore ill-pleased. Now we shall see what happened, as it is reported in the very words of Dunois, the French general in Orleans. Joan had been brought, as we said, to the wrong bank of the Loire; it ran between her and the town where she would be. The wind was blowing in her teeth; boats could not cross with the troops and provisions. There she sat her horse and chafed till Dunois came out and crossed the Loire to meet her. This is what he says about Joan and her conduct.

HOW JOAN THE MAID ENTERED ORLEANS

They were on the wrong side of the Loire, opposite St. Loup, where the English held a strong fort. ‘I did not think, and the other generals did not think,’ says Dunois, ‘that the men-at-arms with the Maid were a strong enough force to bring the provisions into the town. Above all, it was difficult to get boats and ferry over the supplies, for both wind and stream were dead against us. Then Joan spoke to me thus:

‘Then spurred she her horse . . . and put out the flame’

‘“Are you the Bastard of Orleans?”

‘“That am I, and glad of your coming.”

‘“Is it you who gave counsel that I should come hither by that bank of the stream, and not go straight where Talbot and the English are?”

‘“I myself, and others wiser than I, gave that advice, and we think it the better way and the surer.”

‘“In God’s name, the counsel of our God is wiser and surer than yours. You thought to deceive me, and you have deceived yourselves, for I bring you a better rescue than ever shall come to soldier or city — that is, the help of the King of Heaven. . . .”

‘Then instantly, and as it were in one moment, the wind changed that had been dead against us, and had hindered the boats from carrying the provisions into Orleans, and the sails filled.’

Dunois now wished Joan to cross by boat and enter the town, but her army could not cross, and she was loth to leave them, lest they fell into sin, for she had made them all confess at Blois. However, the army returned to Blois, to cross by the bridge there, and come upon the Orleans bank, as Joan had intended from the first. Then Joan crossed in the boat, holding in her hand the lily standard. So she and La Hire and Dunois rode into Orleans, where the people crowded round her, blessing her, and trying to kiss her hand. Night had fallen, there were torches flaring in the wind, and, as the people thronged about her, a torch set fire to the fringe of her banner. ‘Then spurred she her horse, and turned him gracefully and put out the flame, as if she had long followed the wars, which the men-at-arms beheld with wonder, and the folk of Orleans.’ So they led her with great joy to the Regnart Gate, and the house of Jacques Boucher, treasurer of the Duke of Orleans, and there was she gladly received, with her two brothers and her gentlemen, her old friends, Nouillompont and Poulengy.

Next day, without leave from Joan, La Hire led a sally gainst the English, fought bravely, but failed, and Joan wished once more to bid the English go in peace. The English, of course, did not obey her summons, and it is said that they answered with wicked words which made her weep. For she wept readily, and blushed when she was moved. In her anger she went to a rampart, and, crying aloud, bade the English begone; but they repeated their insults, and threatened yet again to burn her. Next day (May 1), Dunois went off to bring the troops from Blois, and Joan rode round and inspected the English position. They made no attempt to take her. A superstitious fear of her 'witchcraft' had already fallen on them; they had lost heart and soon lost all. On May 4 the army returned from Blois. Joan rode out to meet them, priests marched in procession, singing hymns, but the English never stirred. They were expecting fresh troops under Fastolf. 'If you do not let me know when Fastolf comes,' cried the Maid merrily to Dunois, 'I will have your head cut off.' But for some reason, probably because they did not wish her to run risk, they did not tell Joan when the next fight began. She had just lain down to sleep when she leaped up with a noise, wakening her squire. 'My Voices tell me,' she said, 'that I must go against the English, but whether to their forts or against Fastolf I know not.'

There was a cry in the street; Joan armed herself; her page came in.

'Wretched boy!' she said. 'French blood is flowing, and you never told me!'

In a moment she was in the street, the page handed to her the lily flag from the upper window. Followed by her squire, d'Aulon, she galloped to the Burgundy Gate. They met wounded men. 'Never do I see French blood but my hair stands up on my head,' said Joan. She rode out of the gate to the English fort of St. Loup, which the Orleans men were attacking. Joan leaped into the fosse, under fire, holding her banner, and cheering on her men. St. Loup was taken by the French, in spite of a gallant defence, and Joan wept for the dead English, fearing that they had died unconfessed. Next day was Ascension Day. Joan, thinking 'the better the day the better the deed,' was for fighting. There was no battle, but she again summoned the English to withdraw, and again was insulted, and wept.

The French generals now conceived a plan to make a feint, or a sham attack, on the English forts where they were strongest, on the Orleans side of the river. The English on the left side would cross to help their countrymen, and then the French would take the forts beyond the bridge. Thus they would have a free path across the river, and would easily get supplies, and weary out the English. They only told Joan of the first part of their plan, but she saw that they were deceiving her. When the plan was explained she agreed to it, her one wish was to strike swiftly and strongly. However, they did not carry out the plan, they only assailed the forts on the left bank.

The French attacked the English fort of Les Augustins, beyond the river, but suddenly they fled to their bridge of boats; while the English sallied out, yelling their insults at Joan. She turned, she gathered a few men, and charged. The English ran before her like sheep; she planted her banner again in the ditch. The French hurried back to her, a great Englishman, who guarded the breach, was shot; two French knights leaped in, the others followed, and the English took refuge in the redoubt of Les Tourelles, their strong fort at the bridge-head.

The Maid returned to Orleans, and, though it was a Friday, and she always fasted on Fridays, she was so weary that she ate some supper. A bit of bread, her page reports, was all that she usually ate. Now the generals sent to Joan and said that enough had been done. They had food, and could wait for another army from the king. ‘You have been with your council,’ she said, ‘I have been with mine. The wisdom of God is greater than yours. Rise early to-morrow, do better than your best, keep close by me; for to-morrow have I much to do, and more than ever yet I did, and to-morrow shall my blood flow from a wound above my breast.’

Joan had always said at Chinon that she would be wounded at Orleans. From a letter by a Flemish ambassador, written three weeks before the event happened, we know that this is true.

Next morning Joan’s host had got a fine fish for breakfast. ‘Keep it till evening, and I will bring you a God-damn’ (an Englishman) ‘to eat his share,’ said the Maid, ‘and I will return by the bridge;’ which was broken.

The generals did not wish to attack the bridge-tower, but Joan paid them no attention. They were glad enough to follow, lest she took the fort without them.

Joan is wounded by the arrow

About half-past six in the morning the fight began. The French and Scottish leaped into the fosse, they set ladders against the walls, they reached the battlements, and were struck down by English swords and axes. Cannon-balls and great stones and arrows rained on them. ‘Fight on!’ cried the Maid; ‘the place is ours.’ At one o’clock she set a ladder against the wall with her own hands, but was deeply wounded by an arrow, which pierced clean through between neck and shoulder. Joan wept, but seizing the arrow with her own hands she dragged it out. The men-at-arms wished to say magic spells over the wound to ‘charm’ it, but this the Maid forbade as witchcraft. ‘Yet,’ says Dunois, ‘she did not withdraw from the battle, nor took any medicine for the wound; and the onslaught lasted from morning till eight at night, so that there was no hope of victory. Then I desired that the army should go back to the town, but the Maid came to me and bade me wait a little longer. Next she mounted her horse and rode into a vineyard, and there prayed for the space of seven minutes or eight.

Then she returned, took her banner, and stood on the brink of the fosse. The English trembled when they saw her, but our men returned to the charge and met with no resistance. The English fled or were slain, and Glasdale, who had insulted the Maid, was drowned' (by the burning of the drawbridge between the redoubt and Les Tourelles. The Maid in vain besought him, with tears, to surrender and be ransomed), 'and we returned gladly into Orleans.' The people of Orleans had a great share in this victory. Seeing the English hard pressed, they laid long beams across the broken arches of the bridge, and charged by this perilous way. The triumph was even more that of the citizens than of the army. Homer tells us how Achilles, alone and unarmed, stood by the fosse and shouted, and how all the Trojans fled. But here was a greater marvel; and the sight of the wounded girl, bowed beneath the weight of her banner, frighted stouter hearts than those of the men of Troy.

Joan returned, as she had prophesied, by the bridge, but she did not make her supper off the fish: she took a little bread dipped in wine and water, her wound was dressed, and she slept. Next day the English drew up their men in line of battle. The French went out to meet them, and would have begun the attack. Joan said that God would not have them fight.

'If the English attack, we shall defeat them; we are to let them go in peace if they will.'

Mass was then said before the French army.

When the rite was done, Joan asked: 'Do they face us, or have they turned their backs?'

It was the English backs that the French saw that day: Talbot's men were in full retreat on Meun.

From that hour May 8 is kept a holiday at Orleans in honour of Joan the Maiden. Never was there such a deliverance. In a week the Maid had driven a strong army, full of courage and well led, out of forts like Les Tourelles. The Duc d'Alençon visited it, and said that with a few men-at-arms he would have felt certain of holding it for a week against any strength however great. But Joan not only gave the French her spirit: her extraordinary courage in leading a new charge after so terrible a wound, 'six inches deep,' says d'Alençon, made the English think that they were fighting a force not of this world. And that is exactly what they were doing.

HOW JOAN THE MAID TOOK JARGEAU FROM THE ENGLISH

The Maid had shown her sign, as she promised; she had rescued Orleans. Her next desire was to lead Charles to Reims, through a country occupied by the

English, and to have him anointed there with the holy oil. Till this was done she could only regard him as Dauphin — king, indeed, by blood, but not by consecration.

After all that Joan had accomplished, the king and his advisers might have believed in her. She went to the castle of Loches, where Charles was: he received her kindly, but still he did not seem eager to go to Reims. It was a dangerous adventure, for which he and his favourites like La Tremouille had no taste. It seems that more learned men were asked to give their opinion. Was it safe and wise to obey the Maid? On May 14, only six days after the relief of Orleans, the famous Gerson wrote down his ideas. He believed in the Maid. The king had already trusted her without fear of being laughed at; she and the generals did not rely on the saints alone, but on courage, prudence, and skill. Even if, by ill fortune, she were to fail on a later day, the fault would not be hers, but would be God's punishment of French ingratitude. 'Let us not harm, by our unbelief or injustice, the help which God has given us so wonderfully.' Unhappily the French, or at least the Court, were unbelieving, ungrateful, unjust to Joan, and so she came to die, leaving her work half done. The Archbishop of Embrun said that Joan should always be consulted in great matters, as her wisdom was of God. And as long as the French took this advice they did well; when they distrusted and neglected the Maid they failed, and were defeated and dishonoured. Councils were now held at Tours, and time was wasted as usual. As usual, Joan was impatient. With Dunois, who tells the story, she went to see Charles at the castle of Loches. Some nobles and clergy were with him; Joan entered, knelt, and embraced his knees.

'Noble Dauphin,' she said, 'do not hold so many councils, and such weary ones, but come to Reims and receive the crown.'

Harcourt asked her if her Voices, or 'counsel' (as she called it) gave this advice.

She blushed and said: 'I know what you mean, and will tell you gladly.'

The king asked her if she wished to speak before so many people.

Yes, she would speak. When they doubted her she prayed, 'and then she heard a Voice saying to her:

'"*Fille Dé, va, va, va, je serai à ton aide, va!*"'

'And when she heard this Voice she was right glad, and wished that she could always be as she was then; and as she spoke,' says Dunois, 'she rejoiced strangely, lifting her eyes to heaven.' And still she repeated: 'I will last for only one year, or little more; use me while you may.'

Joan stirred the politicians at last. They would go to Reims, but could they leave behind them English garrisons in Jargeau, where Suffolk commanded, in Meun, where Talbot was, and in other strong places? Already, without Joan, the French had attacked Jargeau, after the rescue of Orleans, and had failed. Joan agreed to assail Jargeau. Her army was led by the ‘fair duke,’ d’Alençon. He had but lately come from prison in England, and his young wife was afraid to let him go to war. ‘Madame,’ said Joan, ‘I will bring him back safe, and even better than he is now.’ We shall see how she saved his life. It was now that Guy and André de Laval saw her, and wrote the description of her black horse and white armour. They followed with her gladly, believing that with her glory was to be won.

Let us tell what followed in the words of the Duc d’Alençon.

‘Now arose a dispute among the captains’

‘We were about six hundred lances, who wished to go against the town of Jargeau, then held by the English. That night we slept in a wood, and next day came Dunois and Florence d’Illiers and some other captains. When we were all met we were about twelve hundred lances; and now arose a dispute among the captains, some thinking that we should attack the city, others not so, for they said that the English were very strong, and had many men. Seeing this difference, Jeanne bade us have no fear of any numbers, nor doubt about attacking the English, because God was guiding us. She herself would rather be herding sheep than fighting, if she were not certain that God was with us. Thereon we rode to Jargeau, meaning to occupy the outlying houses, and there pass the night; but the English knew of our approach, and drove in our skirmishers. Seeing this, Jeanne took her banner and went to the front, bidding our men be in good heart. And they did so much that they held the suburbs of Jargeau that night. . . . Next morning we got ready our artillery, and brought guns up against the town. After some days a council was held, and I, with others, was ill content with La Hire, who was said to have parleyed with Lord Suffolk. La Hire was sent for, and came. Then it was decided to storm the town, and the heralds cried, “To the attack!” and Jeanne said to me, “Forward, gentle duke.” I thought it was too early, but she said, “Doubt not; the hour is come when God pleases. Ah, gentle duke, are you afraid? Know you not that I promised your wife to bring you back safe and sound?” as indeed she had said. As the onslaught was given, Jeanne bade me leave the place where I stood, “or yonder gun,” pointing to one on the walls, “will slay you.” Then I withdrew, and a little later de Lude was slain in that very place. And I feared greatly, considering the prophecy of the Maid. Then we both went together to the onslaught; and Suffolk cried for a parley, but no man marked him, and we pressed on. Jeanne was climbing a ladder, banner in hand, when her flag was struck by a stone, and she also was struck on her head, but her light helmet saved her. She leaped up again, crying, “Friends, friends, on, on! Our Lord has condemned the English. They are ours; be of good heart.” In that moment Jargeau was taken, and the English fled to the bridges, we following, and more than eleven hundred of them were slain.’

One Englishman at least died well. He stood up on the battlements, and dashed down the ladders till he was shot by a famous marksman of Lorraine.

Suffolk and his brother were taken prisoners. According to one account, written at the time, Suffolk surrendered to the Maid, as ‘the most valiant woman in the world.’ And thus the Maid stormed Jargeau.

HOW THE MAID DEFEATED THE ENGLISH AT PATHAY, AND OF THE STRANGE GUIDE

The French slew some of their prisoners at Jargeau. Once Joan saw a man-at-arms strike down a prisoner. She leaped from her horse, and laid the wounded Englishman’s head on her breast, consoling him, and bade a priest come and hear his confession. Cruel and cowardly deeds are done in all wars, but when was there ever such a general as the Maid, to comfort the dying?

From Jargeau the Maid rode back to Orleans, where the people could not look on her enough, and made great festival. Many men came in to fight under her flag, among them Richemont, who had been on bad terms with Charles, the uncrowned king. Then Joan took the bridge-fort at Meun, which the English held; next she drove the English at Beaugency into the citadel, and out of the town.

One Englishman at least died well

As to what happened next, we have the story of Wavrin, who was fighting on the English side under Fastolf. The garrison of the English in Beaugency, he says, did not know whether to hold out or to yield. Talbot reported all this to Bedford, at Paris, and large forces were sent to relieve Beaugency. Wavrin rode with his captain, Fastolf, to Senville, where Talbot joined them, and a council was held. Fastolf said that the English had lost heart, and that Beaugency should be left to its fate, while the rest held out in strong places and waited for reinforcements. But Talbot cried that, if he had only his own people, he would fight the French, with the help of God and St. George. Next morning Fastolf repeated what he had said, and declared that they would lose all King Henry had won, But Talbot was for fighting. So they marched to a place between Meun and Beaugency, and drew up in order of battle. The French saw them, and occupied a strong position on a little hill. The English then got ready, and invited the French to come down and fight on the plain. But Joan was not so chivalrous as James IV. at Flodden.

‘Go you to bed to-night, for it is late; to-morrow, so please God and Our Lady, we will see you at close quarters.’

The English then rode to Meun, and cannonaded the bridge-fort, which was held by the French. They hoped to take the bridge, cross it, march to Beaugency, and relieve the besieged there. But that very night Beaugency surrendered to the Maid! She then bade her army march on the English, who were retreating to Paris as soon as they heard how Beaugency had yielded. But how was the Maid to find the English? ‘Ride forward,’ she cried, ‘and you shall have a sure guide.’ They had a guide, and a strange one.

The English were marching towards Paris, near Pathay, when their *éclaireurs* (who beat the country on all sides) came in with the news that the French were following. But the French knew not where the English were, because the deserted and desolate country was overgrown with wood.

Talbot decided to do what the English did at Creçy, where they won so glorious a victory. He lined the hedges in a narrow way with five hundred archers of his best, and he sent a galloper to bring thither the rest of his army. On came the French, not seeing the English in ambush. In a few minutes they would have been shot down, and choked the pass with dying men and horses. But now was the moment for the strange guide.

A stag was driven from cover by the French, and ran blindly among the ambushed English bowmen. Not knowing that the French were so near, and being archers from Robin Hood’s country, who loved a deer, they raised a shout, and probably many an arrow flew at the stag. The French *éclaireurs* heard the cry, they saw the English, and hurried back with the news.

‘Forward!’ cried the Maid; ‘if they were hung to the clouds we have them. To-day the gentle king will gain such a victory as never yet did he win.’

The French dashed into the pass before Talbot had secured it. Fastolf galloped up, but the English thought that he was in flight; the captain of the advanced guard turned his horse about and made off. Talbot was taken, Fastolf fled, ‘making more sorrow than ever yet did man.’ The French won a great victory. They needed their spurs, as the Maid had told them that they would, to follow their flying foes. The English lost some 3,000 men. In the evening Talbot, as a prisoner, was presented to the Duc d’Alençon.

‘You did not expect this in the morning?’ said the duke.

‘Fortune of war!’ said Talbot.

So ended the day of Pathay, and the adventure of the Strange Guide.

HOW THE MAID HAD THE KING CROWNED AT REIMS

Here are the exploits which the Maid and the loyal French did in one week. She took Jargeau on June 11; on June 15 she seized the bridge of Meun; Beaugency yielded to her on June 17; on June 18 she defeated the English army at Pathay. Now sieges were long affairs in those days, as they are even to-day, when cannon are so much more powerful than they were in Joan’s time. Her success seemed a miracle to the world.

This miracle, like all miracles, was wrought by faith. Joan believed in herself, in her country, and in God. It was not by visions and by knowing things strangely that she conquered, but by courage, by strength (on one occasion she never put off her armour for six days and six nights), and by inspiring the French with the sight of her valour. Without her visions, indeed, she would never have gone to war. She often said so. But, being at war, her word was ‘Help yourselves, and God will help you.’ Who could be lazy or a coward when a girl set such an example?

The King of France and his favourites could be indolent and cowards. Had Charles VII. been such a man as Charles Stuart was in 1745, his foot would have been in the stirrup, and his lance in rest. In three months the English would have been driven into the sea. But the king loitered about the castles of the Loire with his favourite, La Tremouille, and his adviser, the Archbishop of Reims. They wasted the one year of Joan. There were jealousies against the Constable de Richemont of Brittany who had come with all his lances to follow the lily flag. If once Charles were king indeed and the English driven out, La Tremouille would cease to be powerful. This dastard sacrificed the Maid in the end, as he was ready to sacrifice France to his own private advantage.

At last, with difficulty, Charles was brought to visit Reims, and consent to be crowned like his ancestors. Seeing that he was never likely to move, Joan left the town where he was and went off into the country. This retreat brought Charles to his senses. The towns which he passed by yielded to him; Joan went and summoned each. ‘Now she was with the king in the centre, now with the rearguard, now with the van.’ The town of Troyes, where there was an English garrison, did not wish to yield. There was a council in the king’s army: they said they could not take the place.

‘In two days it shall be yours, by force or by good will,’ said the Maid.

‘Six days will do,’ said the chancellor, ‘if you are sure you speak truth.’

Joan made ready for an attack. She was calling ‘Forward!’ when the town surrendered. Reims, after some doubts, yielded also, on July 16, and all the people, with shouts of ‘*Noel!*’ welcomed the king. On July 17 the king was crowned and anointed with the Holy Oil by that very Archbishop of Reims who always opposed Joan. The Twelve Peers of France were not all present — some were on the English side — but Joan stood by Charles, her banner in her hand. ‘It bore the brunt, and deserved to share the renown,’ she said later to her accusers.

When the ceremony was ended, and the Dauphin Charles was a crowned and anointed king, the Maid knelt weeping at his feet.

‘Gentle king,’ she said, ‘now is accomplished the will of God, who desired that you should come to Reims to be consecrated, and to prove that you are the true king and the kingdom is yours.’

Then all the knights wept for joy.

The king bade Joan choose her reward. Already horses, rich armour, jewelled daggers, had been given to her. These, adding to the beauty and glory of her aspect, had made men follow her more gladly, and for that she valued them. She, too, made gifts to noble ladies, and gave much to the poor. She only wanted money to wage the war with, not for herself. Her family was made noble; on their shield, between two lilies, a sword upholds the crown. Her father was at Reims, and saw her in her glory. What reward, then, was Joan to choose? She chose nothing for herself, but that her native village of Domremy should be free from taxes. This news her father carried home from the splendid scene at Reims.

Would that we could leave the Maiden here, with Orleans saved, and her king crowned! Would that she, who wept when her saints left her in her visions, and who longed to follow them, could have been carried by them to their Paradise!

But Joan had another task; she was to be foiled by the cowardice of her king; she was to be captured, possibly by treachery; she was to be tried with the most cruel injustice; she was to die by fire; and was to set, through months of agony, such an example of wisdom, courage, and loyal honour as never was shown by man.

Did Joan look forward to her end, did she know that her days were numbered? On the journey to Reims she met some Domremy people at Chalons, and told them that she ‘feared nothing but treachery.’ Perhaps she already suspected the political enemies, the Archbishop of Reims and La Tremouille, who were to spoil her mission.

As they went from Reims after the coronation, Dunois and the archbishop were riding by her rein. The people cheered and cried *Noel*.

‘They are a good people,’ said Joan. ‘Never saw I any more joyous at the coming of their king. Ah, would that I might be so happy when I end my days as to be buried here!’

Said the archbishop:

‘Oh, Jeanne, in what place do you hope to die?’

Then she said:

‘Where it pleases God; for I know not that hour, nor that place, more than ye do. But would to God, my maker, that now I might depart, and lay down my arms, and help my father and mother, and keep their sheep with my brothers and my sister, who would rejoice to see me!’

Some writers have reported Joan’s words as if she meant that she wished the king to let her go home and leave the wars. In their opinion Joan was only acting under heavenly direction till the consecration of Charles. Afterwards, like Hal of the Wynd, she was ‘fighting for her own hand,’ they think, and therefore she did not succeed. But from the first Joan threatened to drive the English quite out of France, and she also hoped to bring the Duc d’Orléans home from captivity in England. If her Voices had told her *not* to go on after the coronation, she would probably have said so at her trial, when she mentioned one or two acts of disobedience to her Voices. Again, had she been anxious to go home, Charles VII. and his advisers would have been only too glad to let her go. They did not wish her to lead them into dangerous places, and they hated obeying her commands.

Some French authors have, very naturally, wished to believe that the Maid could make no error, and could not fail; they therefore draw a line between what she did up to the day of Reims, and what she did afterwards. They hold that she was divinely led till the coronation, and not later. But it is difficult to agree with them here. As we saw, Gerson told the French that by injustice and ingratitude they might hinder the success of the Maid. His advice was a prophecy.

IV

HOW THE MAID RODE TO PARIS

WHAT was to be done after the crowning of the king? Bedford, the regent for the child Henry VI., expected to see Joan under the walls of Paris. He was waiting for the troops which the Cardinal of Winchester had collected in England as a crusading army against the Hussite heretics, a kind of Protestants who were giving trouble. Bedford induced Winchester to bring his men to France, but they had not arrived. The Duke of Burgundy, the head of the great French party which opposed Charles, had been invited by the Maid to Reims. Again she wrote to him: ‘Make a firm, good peace with the King of France,’ she said; ‘forgive each other with kind hearts’ — for the Duke’s father had been murdered by the friends of Charles. ‘I pray and implore you, with joined hands, fight not against France. Great pity it would be of the great battle and bloodshed if your men come against us.’

The Duke of Burgundy, far from listening to Joan’s prayer, left Paris and went to raise men for the English. Meanwhile Charles was going from town to town, and all received him gladly. But Joan soon began to see that, instead of marching west from Reims to Paris, the army was being led south-west towards the Loire. There the king would be safe among his dear castles, where he could live indoors, ‘in wretched little rooms,’ and take his ease. Thus Bedford was able to throw 5,000 men of Winchester’s into Paris, and even dared to come out and hunt for the French king. The French should have struck at Paris at once as Joan desired. The delays were excused, because the Duke of Burgundy had promised to surrender Paris in a fortnight. But this he did merely to gain time. Joan knew this, and said there would be no peace but at the lance-point.

Here we get the best account of what happened from Perceval de Cagny, a knight in the household of the Duc d’Alençon. He wrote his book in 1436, only five years after Joan was burned, and he spoke of what he knew well, as a follower of Joan’s friend, ‘the fair duke.’ The French and English armies kept watching each other, and there were skirmishes near Senlis. On August 15 the Maid and d’Alençon hoped for a battle. But the English had fortified their position in the night with ditches, palisades, and a ‘laager’ of wagons. Come out they would not, so Joan rode up to their fortification, standard in hand, struck the palisade, and challenged them to sally forth. She even offered to let them march out and draw themselves up in line of battle. La Tremouille thought this a fine opportunity of distinguishing himself. He rode into the skirmish, his horse fell with him, but, by evil luck, he was rescued. We do not hear that La Tremouille risked himself again. The Maid stayed on the field all night, and next day made a retreat, hoping to draw the English out of their fort. But they were too wary, and went back to Paris.

More towns came in to Charles. Beauvais yielded, and the Bishop of Beauvais, Pierre Cauchon, had to fly to the English. He revenged himself by managing Joan’s trial and having her burned. Compiègne, an important place north of Paris, yielded, and was handed to Guillaume de Flavy as governor. In rescuing this fatal place later, Joan was taken prisoner. Now the fortnight was over, after which the Duke of Burgundy was to surrender Paris. But he did nothing of the kind, and there were more ‘long weary councils,’ and a truce was arranged with Burgundy till Christmas. But the Maid was weary of words. She called the Duc d’Alençon and said: ‘My fair duke, array your men, for, by my staff, I would fain see Paris more closely than I have seen it yet.’

On August 23 the Maid and d’Alençon left the king at Compiègne and rode to St. Denis, where were the tombs of the kings of France. ‘And when the king heard that they were at St. Denis, he came, very sore against his will, as far as Senlis, and it seems that his advisers were contrary to the will of the Maid, of the Duc d’Alençon, and of their company.’

The great captains, Dunois, Xaintrailles, d’Alençon, were soldiers, and the king’s advisers and favourites were clergymen, like the Archbishop of Reims, or indolent men of peace, like La Tremouille. They declared, after the Maid was captured, that she ‘took too much on herself,’ and they were glad of her fall. But she had shown that nobody but herself and her soldiers and captains were of any use to France.

The king was afraid to go near Paris, but Bedford was afraid to stay in the town. He went to Rouen, the strongest English hold in Normandy, leaving the Burgundian army and 2,000 English in Paris.

Every day the Maid and d’Alençon rode from St. Denis and insulted the gates of Paris, and observed the best places for an attack in force. And still Charles dallied and delayed, still the main army did not come up. Meanwhile Paris was strengthened by the English and Burgundians. The people of the city were told that Charles intended to plunder the place and utterly destroy it, ‘which is difficult to believe,’ says the Clerk of Parliament, who was in the city at that time. It was ‘difficult to believe,’ but the Paris people believed it, and, far from rising for their king and country, they were rather in arms against the Maid. They had no wish to fall in a general massacre, as the English and Burgundians falsely told them would be their fate.

Thus the delay of the king gave the English time to make Paris almost impregnable, and to frighten the people, who, had Charles marched straight from Reims, would have yielded as Reims did.

D’Alençon kept going to Senlis urging Charles to come up with the main army. He went on September 1 — the king promised to start next day. D’Alençon returned to the Maid, the king still loitered. At last d’Alençon brought him to St. Denis on September 7, and there was a skirmish that day.

HOW THE MAID WAS WOUNDED IN ATTACKING PARIS, AND HOW THE KING WOULD NOT LET THE ASSAULT BEGIN AGAIN

In all descriptions of battles different accounts are given, each man telling what he himself saw, or what he remembers. As to the assault on Paris on September 8, the Maid herself said a few words at her trial. Her Voices had neither commanded her to attack nor to abstain from attacking. Her opinion was that the captains and leaders on her side only meant to skirmish in force, and to do deeds of chivalry. But her own intention was to press onwards, and, by her example, to make the army follow her. It was thus that she took Les Tourelles at Orleans. This account scarcely agrees with what we read in the book of Perceval de Cagny, who was with his lord, the Duc d'Alençon. He says that about eight on the morning of September 8, the day of Our Lady, the army set forth; some were to storm the town; another division was to remain under cover and protect the former if a sally was made by the English. The Maid, the Marshal de Rais, and De Gaucourt led the attack on the Porte St. Honoré. Standard in hand, the Maid leaped into the fosse near the pig market. 'The assault was long and fierce, and it was marvel to hear the noise of cannons and culverins from the walls, and to see the clouds of arrows. Few of those in the fosse with the Maid were struck, though many others on horse and foot were wounded with arrows and stone cannon-balls, but by God's grace and the Maid's good fortune, there was none of them but could return to camp unhelped. The assault lasted from noon till dusk, say eight in the evening. After sunset the Maid was struck by a crossbow bolt in the thigh; and, after she was hurt, she cried but the louder that all should attack, and that the place was taken. But as night had now fallen, and she was wounded, and the men-at-arms were weary with the long attack, De Gaucourt and others came and found her, and, against her will, brought her forth from the fosse. And so ended that onslaught. But right sad she was to leave, and said, "By my bâton, the place would have been taken." They put her on horseback, and led her to her quarters, and all the rest of the king's company who that day had come from St. Denis.'

So Cagny tells the story. He was, we may believe, with d'Alençon and the party covering the attack. Jean Chartier, who was living at the time, adds that the Maid did not know that the inner moats were full of water. When she reached the water, she had faggots and other things thrown in to fill up a passage. At nightfall she would not retreat, and at last d'Alençon came and forced her to return. The Clerk of Parliament, who, of course, was within the walls, says that the attack lasted till ten or eleven o'clock at night, and that, in Paris, there was a cry that all was lost.

Joan behaved as gallantly as she did at Les Tourelles. Though wounded she was still pressing on, still encouraging her men, but she was not followed. She was not only always eager to attack, but she never lost heart, she never lost grip. An army of men as brave as Joan would have been invincible.

'Next day,' says Cagny, 'in spite of her wound, she was first in the field. She went to d'Alençon and bade him sound the trumpets for the charge. D'Alençon and the other captains were of the same mind as the Maid, and Montmorency with sixty gentlemen and many lances came in, though he had been on the English side before. So they began to march on Paris, but the king sent messengers, the Duc de Bar, and the Comte de Clermont, and compelled the Maid and the captains to return to St. Denis. Right sorry were they, yet they must obey the king. They hoped to take Paris from the other side, by a bridge which the Duc d'Alençon had made across the Seine. But the king knew the duke's and the Maid's design, and caused the bridge to be broken down, and a council was held, and the king desired to depart and go to the Loire, to the great grief of the Maid. When she saw that they would go, she dedicated her armour, and hung it up before the statue of Our Lady at St. Denis, and so right sadly went away in company with the king. And thus were broken the will of the Maid and the army of the king.'

The politicians had triumphed. They had thwarted the Maid, they had made her promise to take Paris of no avail. They had destroyed the confidence of men in the banner that had never gone back. Now they might take their ease, now they might loiter in the gardens of the Loire. The Maid had failed, by their design, and by their cowardice. The treachery that she, who feared nothing else, had long dreaded, was accomplished now. 'The will of the Maid and the army of the king were broken.'

HOW THE MAID AND HER FAIR DUKE WERE SEPARATED FROM EACH OTHER

The king now went from one pleasant tower on the Loire to another, taking the Maid with him. Meanwhile, the English took and plundered some of the cities which had yielded to Charles, and they carried off the Maid's armour from the chapel in Saint Denis, where she had dedicated it, 'because *Saint Denis!* is the cry of France.' Her Voices had bidden her stay at Saint Denis, but this she was not permitted to do, and now she must hear daily how the loyal towns that she had won were plundered by the English. The French garrisons also began to rob, as they had done before she came. There was 'great pity in France' again, and all her work seemed wasted. The Duc d'Alençon went to his own place of Beaumont, but he returned, and offered to lead an army against the English in Normandy, if the Maid might march with him. Then he would have had followers in plenty, for the people had not wholly lost faith. 'But La Tremouille, and Gaucourt, and the Archbishop of Reims, who managed the king and the war, would not consent, nor suffer the Maid and the duke to be together, nor ever again might they meet.' So says Cagny, and he adds that the Maid loved the fair duke above other men, ‘and did for him what she would do for no other.’ She had saved his life at Jargeau, but where was the duke when Joan was a prisoner? We do not know, but we may believe that he, at least, would have helped her if he could. They were separated by the jealousy of cowards, who feared that the duke might win too much renown and become too powerful.

HOW MARVELLOUSLY THE MAID TOOK SAINT-PIERRE-LE-MOUSTIER

Even the banks of Loire, where the king loved to be, were not free from the English. They held La Charité and Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier. Joan wanted to return to Paris, but the council sent her to take La Charité and Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier. This town she attacked first. Her squire, a gentleman named d’Aulon, was with her, and described what he saw. ‘When they had besieged the place for some time, an assault was commanded, but, for the great strength of the forts and the numbers of the enemy, the French were forced to give way. At that hour, I who speak was wounded by an arrow in the heel, and could not stand or walk without crutches. But I saw the Maid holding her ground with a handful of men, and, fearing ill might come of it, I mounted a horse and rode to her, asking what she was doing there alone, and why she did not retreat like the others. She took the *salade* from her head, and answered that she was not alone, but had in her company fifty thousand of her people; and that go she would not till she had taken that town.

‘But, whatever she said, I saw that she had with her but four men or five, as others also saw, wherefore I bade her retreat. Then she commanded me to have faggots brought, and planks to bridge fosses. And, as she spoke to me, she cried in a loud voice, “All of you, bring faggots to fill the fosse.” And this was done, whereat I greatly marvelled, and instantly that town was taken by assault with no great resistance. And all that the Maid did seemed to me rather deeds divine than natural, and it was impossible that so young a maid should do such deeds without the will and guidance of Our Lord.’

This was the last great feat of arms wrought by the Maid. As at Les Tourelles she won by sheer dint of faith and courage, and so might she have done at Paris, but for the king. At this town the soldiers wished to steal the sacred things in the church, and the goods laid up there. ‘But the Maid right manfully forbade and hindered them, nor ever would she permit any to plunder.’ So says Reginald Thierry, who was with her at this siege. Once a Scottish man-at-arms let her know that her dinner was made of a stolen calf, and she was very angry, wishing to strike that Scot. He came from a land where ‘lifting cattle’ was thought rather a creditable action.

HOW THE MAID WAITED WEARILY AT COURT

From her latest siege the Maid rode to attack La Charité. But, though the towns helped her as well as they might with money and food, her force was too small, and was too ill provided with everything, for the king did not send supplies. She raised the siege and departed in great displeasure. The king was not unkind, he ennobled her and her family, and permitted the dignity to descend through daughters as well as sons; no one else was ever so honoured. Her brothers called themselves Du Lys, from the lilies of their crest, but Joan kept her name and her old banner. She was trailed after the Court from place to place; for three weeks she stayed with a lady who describes her as very devout and constantly in church. People said to Joan that it was easy for her to be brave, as she knew she would not be slain, but she answered that she had no more assurance of safety than any one of them. Thinking her already a saint, people brought her things to touch.

‘Touch them yourselves,’ she said; ‘your touch is as good as mine.’

She wore a little cheap ring, which her father and mother had given her, inscribed jhesu maria, and she believed that with this ring she had touched the body of St. Catherine. But she was humble, and thought herself no saint, though surely there never was a better. She gave great alms, saying that she was sent to help the poor and needy. Such was the Maid in peace.

HOW THE MAID MET AN IMPOSTOR

There was a certain woman named Catherine de la Rochelle, who gave out that she had visions. A beautiful lady, dressed in cloth of gold, came to her by night, and told her who had hidden treasures. These she offered to discover that there might be money for the wars, which Joan needed sorely. A certain preacher, named Brother Richard, wished to make use of this pretender, but Joan said that she must first herself see the fair lady in cloth of gold. So she sat up with Catherine till midnight, and then fell asleep, when the lady appeared, so Catherine said. Joan slept next day, and watched all the following night. Of course the fair lady never came. Joan bade Catherine go back to her family; she needed money for the war, but not money got by false pretences. So she told the king that the whole story was mere folly. This woman afterwards lied against the Maid when she was a prisoner.

HOW THE MAID’S VOICES PROPHESIED OF HER TAKING

Winter melted into spring; the truce with Burgundy was prolonged, but the Burgundians fought under English colours. The king did nothing, but in Normandy La Hire rode in arms to the gates of Rouen. Paris became doubtfully loyal to the English. The Maid could be idle no longer. Without a word to the king she rode to Lagny, ‘for there they had fought bravely against the English.’ These men were Scots, under Sir Hugh Kennedy. In mid-April she was at Melun. There ‘she heard her Voices almost every day, and many a time they told her that she would presently be taken prisoner.’ Her year was over, and as the Voices prophesied her wound at Orleans, now they prophesied her captivity. She prayed that she might die as soon as she was taken, without the long sorrow of imprisonment. Then her Voices told her to bear graciously whatever befell her, for so it must be. But they told her not the hour of her captivity. ‘If she had known the hour she would not then have gone to war. And often she prayed them to tell her of that hour, but they did not answer.’

These words are Joan’s. She spoke them to her judges at Rouen.

Among all her brave deeds this was the bravest. Whatever the source of her Voices was, she believed in what they said. She rode to fight with far worse than death under shield before her eyes, knowing certainly that her English foes would take her, they who had often threatened to burn her.

HOW THE MAID TOOK FRANQUET D’ARRAS

There was in these parts a robber chief on the Burgundian side named Franquet d’Arras. The Maid had been sent, as she said, to help the poor who were oppressed by these brigands. Hearing that Franquet, with three or four hundred men-at-arms, was near Lagny-sur-Marne, the Maid rode out to seek him with four hundred French and Scots. The fight is described in one way by Monstrelet, in another by Cagny and Joan herself. Monstrelet, being a Burgundian writer, says that Franquet made a gallant resistance till he was overwhelmed by numbers, as the Maid called out the garrison of Lagny. Cagny says that Franquet’s force was greater than that of the Maid who took him. However this may be, Franquet was a knight, and so should have been kept prisoner till he paid his ransom. Monstrelet tells us that Joan had his head cut off. She herself told her judges that Franquet confessed to being a traitor, robber, and murderer; that the magistrates of Senlis and Lagny claimed him as a criminal; that she tried to exchange him for a prisoner of her own party, but that her man died, that Franquet had a fair trial, and that then she allowed justice to take its course. She was asked if she paid money to the captor of Franquet.

‘I am not treasurer of France, to pay such moneys,’ she answered haughtily.

Probably Franquet deserved to die, but a trial by his enemies was not likely to be a fair trial.

At Lagny the Maid left a gentler memory. She was very fond of children, and had a girl’s love of babies. A boy of three days old was dying or seemed dead, and the girls of Lagny carried it to the statue of Our Lady in their church, and there prayed over it. For three days, ever since its birth, the baby had lain in a trance without sign of life, so that they dared not christen it. ‘It was black as my doublet,’ said Joan at her trial, where she wore mourning. Joan knelt with the other girls and prayed; colour came back into the child’s face, it gasped thrice, was baptised, then died, and was buried in holy ground. So Joan said at her trial. She claimed no share in this good fortune, and never pretended that she worked miracles.

HOW THE MAID FOUGHT HER LAST FIGHT

The name of Joan was now such a terror to the English that men deserted rather than face her in arms. At this time the truce with Burgundy ended, and the duke openly set out to besiege the strong town of Compiègne, held by de Flavy for France. Joan hurried to Compiègne, whence she made two expeditions which were defeated by treachery. Perhaps she thought of this, perhaps of the future, when in the church of Compiègne she declared one day to a crowd of children whom she loved that she knew she was sold and betrayed. Old men who had heard her told this tale long afterwards.

Burgundy had invested Compiègne, when Joan, with four hundred men, rode into the town secretly at dawn. That day Joan led a sally against the Burgundians. Her Voices told her nothing, good or bad, she says. The Burgundians were encamped at Margny and at Clairoix, the English at Venette, villages on a plain near the walls. Joan crossed the bridge on a grey charger, in a surcoat of crimson silk, rode through the redoubt beyond the bridge, and attacked the Burgundians. Flavy in the town was to prevent the English from attacking her in the rear. He had boats on the river to secure Joan’s retreat if necessary.

Joan swept through Margny, driving the Burgundians before her; the garrison of Clairoix came to their help; the battle was doubtful. Meanwhile the English came up; they could not have reached the Burgundians, to aid them, but some of the Maid’s men, seeing the English standards, fled. The English followed them under the walls of Compiègne; the gate of the redoubt was closed to prevent the English from entering with the runaways. Like Hector under Troy, the Maid was shut out from the town which she came to save.

Joan was with her own foremost line when the rear fled. They told her of her danger, she heeded not. For the last time rang out in that girlish voice: ‘*Allez avant! Forward, they are ours!*’

Her men seized her bridle and turned her horse’s head about. The English held the entrance from the causeway; Joan and a few men (her brother was one of them) were driven into a corner of the outer wall. A rush was made at Joan. ‘Yield I yield! give your faith to me!’ each man cried.

‘I have given my faith to Another,’ she said, ‘and I will keep my oath.’

Her enemies confess that on this day Joan did great feats of arms, covering the rear of her force when they had to fly.

Some French historians hold that the gates were closed by treason that the Maid might be taken. We may hope that this was not so; the commander of Compiègne held his town successfully for the king, and was rescued by Joan’s friend, the brave Pothon de Xaintrailles.

HOW THE MAID LEAPED FROM THE TOWER OF BEAUREVOIR

The sad story that is still to tell shall be shortly told. There is no word nor deed of the Maid’s, in captivity as in victory, that is not to her immortal honour. But the sight of the wickedness of men, their cowardice, cruelty, greed, ingratitude, is not a thing to linger over.

The Maid, as a prisoner of the Bastard of Wandomme, himself a man of Jean de Luxembourg, was led to Margny, where the Burgundian and English captains rejoiced over her. They had her at last, the girl who had driven them from fort and field. Luxembourg claimed her and carried her to Beaulieu. Not a French lance was laid in rest to rescue her; not a sou did the king send to ransom her. Where were Dunois and d’Alençon, Xaintrailles and La Hire? The bold Buccleugh, who carried Kinmont Willie out of Carlisle Castle, would not have left the Maid unrescued at Beaulieu. ‘What is there that a man does *not* dare?’ he said to the angry Queen Elizabeth. But Dunois, d’Alençon, Xaintrailles, La Hire, dared all things. Something which we do not know of must have held these heroes back, and, being ignorant, it does not become us to blame them.

Joan was the very spirit of chivalry, but in that age of chivalry she was shamefully deserted. As a prisoner of war she should properly have been held to ransom. But, within two days of her capture, the Vicar-General of the Inquisition in France claimed her as a heretic and a witch. The English knights let the priests and the University of Paris judge and burn the girl whom they seldom dared to face in war. The English were glad enough to use French priests and doctors who would sell themselves to the task of condemning and burning their maiden enemy. She was the enemy of the English, and they did actually believe in witchcraft. The English were hideously cruel and superstitious: we may leave the French to judge Jean de Luxembourg, who sold the girl to England; Charles, who moved not a finger to help her; Bishop Cauchon and the University of Paris, who judged her lawlessly and condemned her to the stake; and the Archbishop of Reims, who said that she had deserved her fall. There is dishonour in plenty; let these false Frenchmen of her time divide their shares among themselves.

From Beaulieu, where she lay from May to August, Luxembourg carried his precious prize to Beaurevoir, near Cambrai, further from the French armies. He need not have been alarmed, not a French sword was drawn to help the Maid. At Beaurevoir, Joan was kindly treated by the ladies of the Castle. These ladies alone upheld the honour of the great name of France. They knelt and wept before Jean de Luxembourg, imploring him not to sell Joan to Burgundy, who sold her again to England. May their names ever be honoured! One of the gentlemen of the place, on the other hand, was rude to Joan, as he confessed thirty years later.

Joan was now kept in a high tower at Beaurevoir, and was allowed to walk on the leads. She knew she was sold to England, she had heard that the people of Compiègne were to be massacred. She would rather die than fall into English hands, ‘rather give her soul to God, than her body to the English.’ But she hoped to escape and relieve Compiègne. She, therefore, prayed for counsel to her Saints; might she leap from the top of the tower? Would they not bear her up in their hands? St. Catherine bade her not to leap; God would help her and the people of Compiègne.

Then, for the first time as far as we know, the Maid wilfully disobeyed her Voices. She leaped from the tower. They found her, not wounded, not a limb was broken, but stunned. She knew not what had happened; they told her she had leaped down. For three days she could not eat, ‘yet was she comforted by St. Catherine, who bade her confess and seek pardon of God, and told her that, without fail, they of Compiègne should be relieved before Martinmas.’ This prophecy was fulfilled. Joan was more troubled about Compiègne, than about her own coming doom. She was already sold to the English, like a sheep to the slaughter; they bought their French bishop Cauchon, he summoned his shavelings, the doctors of the University and of the Inquisition.

The chivalry of England locked up the Maid in an iron cage at Rouen. The rest was easy to men of whom all, or almost all, were the slaves of superstition, fear, and greed. They were men like ourselves, and no worse, if perhaps no better, but their especial sins and temptations were those to which few of us are inclined. We, like Charles, are very capable of deserting, or at least of delaying to rescue, our bravest and best, like Gordon in Khartoum. But, as we are not afraid of witches, we do not cage and burn girls of nineteen. If we were as ignorant as our ancestors on this point, no doubt we should be as cowardly and cruel.

V

HOW THE MAID WAS TRIED AND CONDEMNED, AND HOW BRAVELY SHE DIED

ABOUT the trial and the death of the Maid, I have not the heart to write a long story. Some points are to be remembered. The person who conducted the trial, itself illegal, was her deadly enemy, the false Frenchman, the Bishop of Beauvais, Cauchon, whom she and her men had turned out of his bishoprick. It is most unjust and unheard of, that any one should be tried by a judge who is his private enemy. Next, Joan was kept in strong irons day and night, and she, the most modest of maidens, was always guarded by five brutal English soldiers of the lowest rank. Again, she was not allowed to receive the Holy Communion as she desired with tears. Thus weakened by long captivity and ill usage, she, an untaught girl, was questioned repeatedly for three months, by the most cunning and learned doctors in law of the Paris University. Often many spoke at once, to perplex her mind. But Joan always showed a wisdom which confounded them, and which is at least as extraordinary as her skill in war. She would never swear an oath to answer *all* their questions. About herself, and all matters bearing on her own conduct, she would answer. About the king and the secrets of the king, she would not answer. If they forced her to reply about these things, she frankly said, she would not tell them the truth. The whole object of the trial was to prove that she dealt with powers of evil, and that her king had been crowned and aided by the devil. Her examiners, therefore, attacked her day by day, in public and in her dungeon, with questions about these visions which she held sacred, and could only speak of with a blush among her friends. Had she answered (as a lawyer said at the time), '*it seemed to me* I saw a saint,' no man could have condemned her. Probably she did not know this, for she was not allowed to have an advocate of her own party, and she, a lonely girl, was opposed to the keenest and most learned lawyers of France. But she maintained that she certainly did see, hear, and touch her Saints, and that they came to her by the will of God. This was called blasphemy and witchcraft. And now came in the fatal Fairies! She was accused of dealing with devils under the Tree of Domremy.

Most was made of her refusal to wear woman’s dress. For this she seems to have had two reasons; first, that to give up her old dress would have been to acknowledge that her mission was ended; next, for reasons of modesty, she being alone in prison among ruffianly men. She would wear woman’s dress if they would let her take the Holy Communion, but this they refused. To these points she was constant, she would not deny her visions; she would not say one word against her king, ‘the noblest Christian in the world’ she called him, who had deserted her. She would not wear woman’s dress in prison. We must remember that, as she was being tried by churchmen, she should have been, as she often prayed to be, in a prison of the church, attended by women. They set a spy on her, a caitiff priest named L’Oyseleur, who pretended to be her friend, and who betrayed her. The English soldiers were allowed to bully, threaten, and frighten away every one who gave her any advice. They took her to the torture-chamber, and threatened her with torture, but from this even these priests shrunk, except a few more cruel and cowardly than the rest. Finally, they put her up in public, opposite a pile of wood ready for burning, and then set a priest to preach at her. All through her trial, her Voices bade her ‘answer boldly,’ in three months she would give her last answer, in three months ‘she would be free with great victory, and come into the Kingdom of Paradise.’ In three months from the first day of her trial she went free through the gate of fire. Boldly she answered, and wisely. She would submit the truth of her visions to the Church, that is, to God, and the Pope. But she would *not* submit them to ‘the Church,’ if that meant the clergy round her. At last, in fear of the fire, and the stake before her, and on promise of being taken to a kindlier prison among women, and released from chains, she promised to ‘abjure,’ to renounce her visions, and submit to the Church, that is to Cauchon, and her other priestly enemies. Some little note on paper she now signed with a cross, and repeated ‘with a smile,’ poor child, a short form of words. By some trick this signature was changed for a long document, in which she was made to confess all her visions false. It is certain that she did not understand her words in this sense.

Cauchon had triumphed. The blame of heresy and witchcraft was cast on Joan, and on her king as an accomplice. But the English were not satisfied; they made an uproar, they threatened Cauchon, for Joan’s life was to be spared. She was to be in prison all her days, on bread and water, but, while she lived, they dared scarcely stir against the French. They were soon satisfied.

Joan’s prison was not changed. There soon came news that she had put on man’s dress again. The judges went to her. She told them (they say), that she put on this dress of her own free will. In confession, later, she told her priest that she had been refused any other dress, and had been brutally treated both by the soldiers and by an English lord. In self-defence, she dressed in the only attire within her reach. In any case, the promises made to her had been broken. The judge asked her if her Voices had been with her again?

‘Yes.’

‘What did they say?’

‘God told me by the voices of St. Catherine and St. Margaret of the great sorrow of my treason, when I abjured to save my life; that I was damning myself for my life’s sake.’

‘Do you believe the Voices come from St. Margaret and St. Catherine?’

‘Yes, and that they are from God.’

She added that she had never meant to deny this, had not understood that she had denied it.

All was over now; she was a ‘relapsed heretic.’

The judges said that they visited Joan again on the morning of her death, and that she withdrew her belief in her Voices; or, at least, left it to the Church to decide whether they were good or bad, while she still maintained that they were *real*. She had expected release, and, for the first time, had been disappointed. At the stake she understood her Voices: they had foretold her martyrdom, ‘great victory’ over herself, and her entry into rest. But the document of the judges is not signed by the clerks, as all such documents must be. One of them, Manchon, who had not been present, was asked to sign it; he refused. Another, Taquel, is said to have been present, but he did not sign. The story is, therefore, worth nothing.

Enough. They burned Joan the Maid. She did not suffer long. Her eyes were fixed on a cross which a priest, Martin L’Advenu, held up before her. She maintained, he says, to her dying moment, the truth of her Voices. With a great cry of Jesus! she gave up her breath, and her pure soul was with God.

Even the English wept, even a secretary of the English king said that they had burned a Saint. One of the three great crimes of the world’s history had been committed, and, of the three, this was the most cowardly and cruel. It profited the English not at all. ‘Though they ceased not to be brave,’ says Patrick Abercromby, a Scot, ‘yet they were almost on all occasions defeated, and within the short space of twenty-two years, lost not only all the conquests made by them in little less than a hundred, but also the inheritances which they had enjoyed for above three centuries bypast. It is not my part to follow them, as the French and my countrymen did, from town to town, and from province to province; I take much more pleasure in relating the glories than the disgraces of England.’

This disgrace the English must, and do, most sorrowfully confess, and, that it may never be forgotten while the civilised world stands, there lives, among the plays of Shakspeare, whether he wrote or did not write it, that first part of ‘Henry VI.,’ which may pair with the yet more abominable poem of the Frenchman, Voltaire.

Twenty years after her death, as we saw, Charles VII., in his own interest, induced the Pope and the Inquisition, to try the case of Joan over again. It was as certain that the clergy would find her innocent, now, as that they would find her guilty before. But, happily, they collected the evidence of most of the living people who had known her. Thus we have heard from the Domremy peasants how good she was as a child, from Dunois, d’Alençon, d’Aulon, how she was beautiful, courteous, and brave, from Isambart and L’Advenu, how nobly she died, and how she never made one complaint, but forgave all her enemies freely. All these old Latin documents were collected, edited, and printed, in 1849, by Monsieur Jules Quicherat, a long and noble labour. After the publication of this book, there has been, and can be, no doubt about the perfect goodness of Joan of Arc. The English long believed silly stories against her, as a bad woman, stories which were not even mentioned by her judges. The very French, at different times, have mocked at her memory, in ignorance and disbelief. They said she was a tool of politicians, who, on the other hand, never wanted her, or that she was crazy. Men mixed up with her glorious history the adventures of the false Maid, who pretended to be Joan come again, and people doubted as to whether she really died at Rouen. In modern times, some wiseacres have called the strongest and healthiest of women ‘hysterical,’ which is their way of accounting for her Voices. But now, thanks mainly to Monsieur Quicherat, and other learned Frenchmen, the world, if it chooses, may know Joan as she was; the stainless Maid, the bravest, gentlest, kindest, and wisest woman who ever lived. Her country people, in her lifetime, called her ‘the greatest of Saints, after the Blessed Virgin,’ and, at least, she is the greatest concerning whose deeds and noble sufferings history preserves a record. And her Voices we leave to Him who alone knows all truth.

HOW THE BASS WAS HELD FOR KING JAMES

THE Bass Rock is a steep black mass of stone, standing about two miles out to sea, off the coast of Berwickshire. The sheer cliffs, straight as a wall, are some four hundred feet in height. At the top there is a sloping grassy shelf, on which a few sheep are kept, but the chief inhabitants of the rock are innumerable hosts of sea-birds. Far up the rock, two hundred years ago, was a fortress, with twenty cannons and a small garrison. As a boat can only touch at the little island in very fine weather, the fortress was considered by the Government of Charles II. an excellent prison for Covenanters. There was a house for the governor, and a chapel where powder was kept, but where no clergyman officiated. As the covenanting prisoners were nearly all ministers, and a few of them prophets, it was thought, no doubt, that they could attend to their own devotions for themselves. They passed a good deal of their time in singing psalms. One prisoner looked into the cell of another late at night, and saw a shining white figure with him, which was taken for an angel by the spectator. Another prisoner, a celebrated preacher, named Peden, once told a merry girl that a ‘sudden surprising judgment was waiting for her,’ and instantly a gust of wind blew her off the rock into the sea. The Covenanters, one of whom had shot at the Archbishop of St. Andrews, and hit the Bishop of Orkney, were very harshly treated. ‘They were obliged to drink the twopenny ale of the governor’s brewing, scarcely worth a half-penny the pint,’ an inconvenience which they probably shared with the garrison. They were sometimes actually compelled to make their own beds, a cruel hardship, when their servants had been dismissed, probably for plotting their escape. They had few pleasures except writing accounts of their sufferings, and books on religion; or studying Greek and Hebrew.

When King James II. was driven from his throne, in 1688, by the Prince of Orange, these sufferers found release, they being on the Orange side. But the castle of the Bass did not yield to William till 1690; it was held for King James by Charles Maitland till his ammunition and stores were exhausted. The Whigs, who were now in power, used the Bass for a prison, as their enemies had done, and four Cavalier prisoners were shut up in the cold, smoky, unwholesome jail, just as the Covenanters had been before. These men, Middleton, Halyburton, Roy, and Dunbar, all of them young, had been in arms for King James, and were taken when his Majesty’s forces were surprised and defeated by Livingstone at

Cromdale Haugh. Middleton was a lieutenant; his friends were junior in rank, and were only ensigns.

These four lads did not devote their leisure to the composition of religious treatises, nor to the learning of Latin and Greek. On the other hand they reckoned it more worthy of their profession to turn the Whig garrison out of the Bass, and to hold it for King James. For three years they held it against all comers, and the Royal flag, driven out of England and Scotland, still floated over this little rock in the North Sea.

This is how the Four took the Bass. They observed that when coals were landed all the garrison except three or four soldiers went down to the rocky platform where there was a crane for raising goods. When they went, they locked three of the four gates on the narrow rocky staircase behind them.

On June 15, 1691, the soldiers went on this duty, leaving, to guard the Cavaliers, La Fosse, the sergeant, Swan, the gunner, and one soldier. These men were overpowered, or won over, by Middleton, Roy, Dunbar, and Halyburton, who then trained a gun on the garrison below, and asked them whether they would retire peacefully, or fight? They preferred to sail away in the coal vessel, and very foolish they must have felt, when they carried to the Whigs in Edinburgh the news that four men had turned them out of an impregnable castle, and held it for King James.

Next night young Crawford of Ardmillan, with his servant and two Irish sailors, seized a long-boat on the beach, sailed over, and joined the brave little garrison of the Bass. Crawford had been lurking in disguise for some time, and the two Irishmen had escaped from prison in Edinburgh, and were not particularly well disposed to the government of William.

When the news reached King James, in France, he sent a ship, laden with provisions and stores of all kinds, and two boats, one of them carrying two light guns. The Whigs established a force on the shore opposite, and their boats cruised about to intercept supplies, but in this they failed, the Cavaliers being too quick and artful to be caught easily.

On August 15, however, the enemy seized the large boat at night. Now Ardmillan and Middleton were absent in search of supplies, and, being without their leader, Roy and Dunbar thought of surrendering. But just as they were about signing articles of surrender, Middleton returned with a large boat and plenty of provisions, and he ran his boat under the guns of his fort, whence he laughed at the enemies of his king. Dunbar, however, who was on shore engaged in the business of the surrender, was held as a prisoner. The Whigs were not much nearer taking the Bass. On September 3 they sent a sergeant and a drummer to offer a free pardon to the Cavaliers. They were allowed to land on the rock, but Middleton merely laughed at the promise of a free pardon, and he kept the sergeant and drummer, whom he afterwards released. A Danish ship, sailing between the Bass and shore, had a gun fired across her bows, and was made prize of; they took out everything that they needed, and then let her go.

The Cavaliers lived a gay life: they had sheep on the Bass, plenty of water, meat, biscuits, beer and wine. Cruising in their boats they captured several ships, supplied themselves with what they wanted, and held the ships themselves to ransom. When food ran short they made raids on the shore, lifted cattle, and, generally, made war support war.

The government of the Prince of Orange was driven beyond its patience, and vowed that the Bass should be taken, if it cost all the revenue of the country. But Middleton had plenty of powder, he had carefully collected more than five hundred balls fired at his fort by the English, and he calmly awaited the arrival of hostile men-of-war. The ‘Sheerness’ (Captain Roope) and the ‘London Merchant’ (Captain Orton) were sent with orders to bombard the Bass and destroy the fort. After two days of heavy firing, these vessels had lost a number of men, their rigging was cut to pieces, and the ships were so damaged that they were glad to slink off to harbour.

A close watch was now set, the ‘Lion’ (Captain Burd), a dogger of six guns, and a long-boat cruised constantly in the neighbourhood. Captain Burd is described as ‘a facetious and intelligent man,’ and a brave officer, but his intelligence and courage were no match for Middleton. In August 1693 a French frigate of twelve guns sailed under the Bass and landed supplies. But the Cavaliers were so few that they had to borrow ten French sailors to help in the landing of the provisions. At this moment the ‘Lion’ bore down on the French vessel, which was obliged to cut her cables to avoid being run down. The garrison of the Bass was thus left with ten more mouths to feed, and with only the small supplies that had been landed. They were soon reduced to two ounces of raw rusk dough for each man, every day. Halyburton was caught and condemned to be hanged, and a Mr. Trotter, who had helped the Cavaliers, was actually hanged on shore, within sight of the Bass. Middleton fired a shot and scattered the crowd, but that did not save poor Trotter.

Middleton had now only a few pounds of meal left. He therefore sent in a flag of truce, and announced that he would surrender, but upon his own terms. Very good terms they were. Envoys were dispatched by the Whigs: Middleton gave them an excellent luncheon out of provisions kept for the purpose, and choice French wines. He had also set coats and caps on the muzzles of guns, above, on the rocks, so that the Whig envoys believed he had plenty of men, and no scarcity of provisions. Their lordships returned, and told the Privy Council that the Bass was in every respect well provisioned and well manned. Middleton’s terms were, therefore, gladly accepted.

He got a full pardon for every one then in the garrison, and for every one who had ever been in it (including Halyburton, now under sentence, of death), ‘and none hereafter shall call them to account.’ They were to depart with all the honours of war, with swords and baggage, in their own boat. They were to be at liberty to come or go, whenever they pleased, till May 15, 1694; and a ship, properly supplied, was to be ready to carry them to France, if they preferred to join Dundee’s gallant officers in the French service. Finally, *all their expenses were to be paid*! The ‘aliment’ formerly granted to them, and unpaid when they seized the Bass, was to be handed over to them. On these terms Middleton took leave of the fortress which he could not have held for a week longer. There have been greater deeds of arms, but there never was one so boyish, so gallant, and so gay.

THE CROWNING OF INES DE CASTRO

ABOUT the year 1340, when Edward III. was King of England, a young Spanish lady set out from Castile on the long journey to the Court of Portugal. She was the only daughter of John Manuel, Duke of Villena, a very rich and powerful noble, much dreaded by the King of Castile for his boldness and restlessness. Not many years before he had suddenly left his post as Warden of the French Marches, to fight against the Moors in the province of Murcia, and though the King was very angry at his conduct, he did not dare to punish him, for fear that in some way he himself would suffer. Villena’s daughter Constance had passed much of her time at the Castilian Court, where she lived in the state that was expected of a great lady of those days, but when the treaty was made which decided that she was to marry Dom Pedro, Crown Prince of Portugal, her household was increased, and special attendants appointed to do honour to her rank.

Now among the ladies chosen to form part of Constance’s court, was a distant cousin of her own, the beautiful and charming Ines de Castro. Like Henry II. at the sight of Fair Rosamond, the young Dom Pedro, who was not more than twenty years of age, fell passionately in love with her. He did all in his power to hide his feelings from his bride, the Infanta Constance, but did not succeed, and in a few years she died, it was said of grief at her husband’s coldness, after giving birth to the Infant, Dom Fernando (1345). After her death, Dom Pedro’s father King Alfonso was anxious that he should marry again, but he refused all the brides proposed for him, and people whispered among themselves that he was already secretly wedded to Ines de Castro. Time went on, and they had four children, but Ines preferred to live quietly in a convent in the country, and never took her place as Dom Pedro’s wife. Still, however secluded she might be, large numbers of her fellow Castilians, weary of the yoke of their own King, Pedro the Cruel, flocked into Portugal, and looked to her for protection, which Dom Pedro for her sake always gave them, and chief among these foreign favourites were Ines’ two brothers, Fernando and Alvaro Perez de Castro. This state of things was very bitter to the old Portuguese courtiers, who complained to the King that in future the country would only be governed by Spaniards. These rumours grew so loud that in time they even reached the ears of the Queen, and she, with the Archbishop of Braga, gave Dom Pedro solemn warning that some plot was assuredly forming which would end in his ruin. But Dom Pedro, naturally fearless, had faith in his father’s goodwill towards him, and looked on these kindly warnings as mere empty threats, so proceeded gaily on his path. Thus in silence was prepared the bloody deed.

When the courtiers thought all was ready they went in a deputation to Alfonso IV., and pointed out what might be expected in the future if Ines de Castro was allowed to remain the fountainhead for honours and employments to all her countrymen who were attracted to Portugal by the hopes of better pay. They enlarged on the fact that the national laws and customs would be changed, and Portugal become a mere province of Spain; worse than all, that the life of the Infant Dom Fernando was endangered, as upon the death of the King, the Castros would naturally desire to secure the succession to the children of Ines. If Ines were only out of the way, Dom Pedro would forget her, and consent to make a suitable marriage. So things went on, working together for the end of Ines.

At last the King set forth, surrounded by many of his great nobles and high officials, for Coimbra, a small town in which was situated the Convent of Santa Clara, where Ines de Castro quietly dwelt, with her three surviving children. On seeing the sudden arrival of Alfonso with this great company of armed knights, the soul of Ines shrank with a horrible fear. She could not fly, as every avenue was closed, and Dom Pedro was away on the chase, as the nobles very well knew. Pale as an image of death, Ines clasped her children in her arms, and flung herself at the feet of the King. ‘My lord,’ she cried, ‘have I given you cause to wish my death? Your son is the Prince; I can refuse him nothing. Have pity on me, wife as I am. Kill me not without reason. And if you have no compassion left for me, find a place in your heart for your grandchildren, who are of your own blood.’

The innocence and beauty of the unfortunate woman, who indeed had harmed no one, moved the King, and he withdrew to think better what should be done. But the envy and hatred of the courtiers would not suffer Ines to triumph, and again they brought forward their evil counsels.

‘Do what you will,’ at length said the King. And they did it.

A nameless pain filled the soul of Dom Pedro when on his return he stood before the bloody corpse of Ines, whom he had loved so well. But soon another feeling took possession of him, which shut out everything else — the desire to revenge himself on her murderers. Hastily calling together the brothers of Ines and some followers who were attached to his person, he took counsel with them, and then collecting all the men-at-arms within his reach, he fell upon the neighbouring provinces and executed a fearful vengeance, both with fire and sword, upon the innocent inhabitants. How long this rage for devastation might have lasted cannot be told, but Dom Pedro was at length brought to a better mind by Gonçalo Pereira, Archbishop of Braga, who, by the help of the Queen, succeeded in establishing peace between father and son.

So a parchment deed was drawn up between the King and the Infant, in which Dom Pedro undertook to pardon all who had been engaged in the murder of Ines, and Alfonso promised to forgive those who had taken his son's side, and borne arms against himself. And for his part Dom Pedro vowed to perform the duties of a faithful vassal, and to banish from his presence all turbulent and restless spirits. So peace was made.

Two years had hardly passed after this event before King Alfonso lay on his death-bed in Lisbon, and then, thinking over what would happen when he was dead, the feeling gradually came over him that in spite of Dom Pedro's solemn oath the murderers of Ines would not be safe from his revenge. Therefore he sent for the three knights, Diogo Lopez Pacheco, Alvaro Gonçalves, and Pedro Coelho, who had counselled him to do the dreadful deed and had themselves struck the blow, and bade them leave their property and all they had, and fly while there was yet time to foreign lands for refuge. The knights saw the wisdom of the advice, and sought shelter in Castile. Then Alfonso prepared himself to die, the murder of Ines lying heavy on his soul in his last days (1357).

King Pedro was thirty-seven years old when he ascended the throne, and his first care was to secure peace to his kingdom. To this end he sent several embassies to the King of Castile, who made a compact with Alfonso 'to be the friend of his friends, and the enemy of his enemies.' The results of this treaty may be easily guessed at. The King of Portugal engaged to send back to Castile all who had fled to his dominions from the tyranny of Pedro the Cruel, the ally of the Black Prince, and was to receive in return the murderers of Ines, two of whom he put to a horrible death. The third, Pacheco, was more fortunate. A beggar to whom he had been accustomed to give alms discovered his danger, and hastened to warn the knight, who was away from the city on a hunting expedition. By his advice Pacheco changed clothes with the beggar, and made his way through Aragon to the borders of France, where he took refuge with Henry of Trastamara, half-brother of the King of Castile. Here he remained, a poor knight without friends or property, till the year 1367, when on his death-bed the King of Portugal suddenly remembered that when dying the other two knights had sworn that Pacheco was guiltless of the murder of Ines, and ordered his son to recall him from exile and to restore all his possessions. Which Dom Fernando joyfully did.

That, however, happened several years after the time we are speaking of, when Dom Pedro had only just ascended the throne. Having satisfied his feelings of revenge against the murderers of Ines, a nobler desire filled his heart. He resolved that she who had been so ill-spoken of during her life, and had died such a shameful death, should be acknowledged openly as his wife and queen before his Court and his people. So he assembled all the great nobles and officers, and, laying his hand on the sacred books, swore solemnly that seven years before he had taken Ines de Castro to wife, and had lived with her in happiness till her death, but that through dread of his father the marriage had been kept secret; and he commanded the Lord High Chamberlain to prepare a deed recording his oath. And in case there should still be some who did not believe, three days later the Bishop of Guarda and the Keeper of the King's Wardrobe bore witness before the great lords gathered together in Coimbra that they themselves had been present at the secret marriage, which had taken place at Braganza, in the royal apartments, according to the rites of the Church.

This solemn function being over, the last act in the history of Ines was begun. By command of the King her body was taken from the convent of Santa Clara, where it had lain in peace for many years, and was clad in royal garments: a crown was placed on her head and a sceptre in her hand, and she was seated on a throne for the subjects, who during her life had despised her, to kneel and kiss the hem of her robe. One by one the knights and the nobles and the great officers of the Crown did homage to the dead woman, and when all had bowed before what was left of the beautiful Ines they placed her in a splendid coffin, which was borne by knights over the seven leagues that lay between Coimbra and Alcobaça, the royal burying-place of the Portuguese. In this magnificent cloister a tomb had been prepared carved in white marble, and at the head stood a statue of Ines in the pride of her beauty, crowned a queen. Bishops and soldiers, nobles and peasants, lined the road to watch the coffin pass, and thousands with lighted torches followed the dead woman to her resting place, till the whole long road from Coimbra to Alcobaça was lit up with brightness. So, solemnly, Ines de Castro was laid in her grave, and the honours which had been denied her in life were heaped around her tomb.

THE STORY OF ORTHON

GREAT marvel it is to think and consider of a thing that I will tell you, and that was told to me in the house of the Comte de Foix at Orthez, by him who gave me to know concerning the battle of Juberot. And I will tell you of this matter, what it was, for since the Squire told me this tale, whereof you shall presently have knowledge, certes I have thought over it a hundred times, and shall think as long as I live.

‘Certain it is,’ quoth the Squire, ‘that the day after the fight at Juberot the Comte de Foix knew of it, whereat men marvelled much how this might be. And all day, on the Sunday and the Monday and the Tuesday following, he made in his castle of Orthez such dull and simple cheer that none could drag a word out of him. All these three days he would not leave his chamber, nor speak to knight or squire, howsoever near him they might be. And when it came to Tuesday at evening, he called his brother, Sir Ernault Guillaume, and said to him in a low voice:

‘“Our men have fought, whereat I am grieved; for that has befallen them of their journey which I told them before they set out.”

‘Sir Ernault, who is a right wise knight and of good counsel, knowing well the manner and ways of his brother the Count, held his peace for a little while. Then the Count, willing to show his heart, and weary of his long sadness, spoke again, and louder than before, saying:

‘“By God, Sir Ernault, it is as I tell you, and shortly we shall have news; for never did the land of Béarn lose so much in one day — no, not these hundred years — as it has lost this time in Portugal.”

‘Many knights and squires standing round who heard the Count noted these words, and in ten days learned the truth from them who had been in the fight, and who brought tidings, first to the Court, and afterwards to all who would hear them, of what befell at Juberot. Thereby was the Count’s grief renewed, and that of all in the country who had lost brothers and fathers, sons and friends, in the fray.’

‘Marry!’ said I to the Squire, who was telling me his tale, ‘and how could the Count know or guess what befell? Gladly would I learn this.’

‘By my faith,’ said the Squire, ‘he knew it well, as appeared.’

‘Is he a prophet, or has he messengers who ride at night with the wind? Some art he must have.’

Then the Squire began to laugh.

‘Truly he must learn by some way of necromancy; we know not here truly how he does it, save by phantasies.’

‘Ah, good sir, of these fancies prithee tell me, and I will be grateful. If it is a matter to keep silent, silent will I keep it, and never, while I am in this country, will I open my mouth thereon.’

‘I pray you do not, for I would not that any should know I had spoken. Yet others talk of it quietly when they are among their friends.’

Thereon he drew me apart into a corner of the castle chapel, and then began his tale, and spoke thus:

‘It may be twenty years since there reigned here a baron named Raymond, lord of Corasse, a town and castle seven leagues from Orthez. Now, the lord of Corasse, at the time of which I speak, held a plea at Avignon before the Pope against a clerk of Catalonia who laid claim to the tithes of his town, the said clerk belonging to a powerful order, and claiming the right of the tithes of Corasse, which, indeed, amounted to a yearly sum of one hundred florins. This right he set forth and proved before all men, for in his judgment, given in the Consistory General, Pope Urban V. declared that the clerk had won his case, and that the Chevalier had no ground for his claim. The sentence once delivered, letters were given to the clerk enabling him to take possession, and he rode so hard that in a very short time he reached Béarn, and by virtue of the papal bull appropriated the tithes. The Sieur de Corasse was right wroth with the clerk and his doings, and came to him and said:

‘“Master Martin, or Master Pierre, or whatever your name may be, do you think that I am going to give up my rights just because of those letters of yours? I scarce fancy you are bold enough to lay hands on property of mine, for you will risk your life in the doing. Go elsewhere to seek a benefice, for of my rights you shall have none, and this I tell you, once and for all.”

‘The mind of the clerk misgave him, for he knew that the Chevalier cared not for men’s lives, and he dared not persevere. So he dropped his claims, and betook himself to his own country or to Avignon. And when the moment had come that he was to depart, he entered into the presence of the Sieur de Corasse, and said:

‘“Sir, it is by force and not by right that you lay hands on the property of the Church, of which you make such ill-use. In this land you are stronger than I, but know that as soon as I may I will send you a champion whom you will fear more than you fear me.”

‘The Sieur de Corasse, who did not heed his words, replied:

‘“Go, do as you will; I fear you as little alive as dead. For all your talk, I will never give up my rights.”

‘Thus parted the clerk and the Sieur de Corasse, and the clerk returned to his own country, but whether that was Avignon or Catalonia I know not. But he did not forget what he had told the Sieur de Corasse when he bade him farewell; for three months after, when he expected it least, there came to the castle of Corasse, while the Chevalier was quietly sleeping, certain invisible messengers, who began to throw about all that was in the castle, till it seemed as if, truly, nothing would be left standing. The Chevalier heard it all, but he said nought, for he would not be thought a coward, and indeed he had courage enough for any adventure that might befall.

‘These sounds of falling weights continued for a long space, then ceased suddenly.

‘When the morning came, the servants all assembled, and their lord having arisen from bed they came to him and said, “Sir, have you also heard that which we have heard this night?” And the Sieur de Corasse hid it in his heart and answered, “No; what have you heard?” And they told him how that all the furniture was thrown down, and all the kitchen pots had been broken. But he began to laugh, and said it was a dream, and that the wind had caused it. “Ah no,” sighed his wife; “I also have heard.”

‘When the next night arrived, the noise-makers arrived too, and made more disturbance than before, and gave great knocks at the doors, and likewise at the windows of the Sieur de Corasse. And the Chevalier leaped out of his bed and demanded, “Who is it that rocks my bed at this hour of the night?”.

‘And answer was made him, “That which I am, I am.”

‘Then asked the Chevalier, “By whom are you sent here?”

‘“By the clerk of Catalonia, to whom you have done great wrong, for you have taken from him his rights and his heritage. Hence you will never be suffered to dwell in peace till you have given him what is his due, and he is content.”

‘“And you, who are so faithful a messenger,” inquired the Chevalier, “what is your name?”

‘“They call me Orthon.”

‘“Orthon,” said the knight, “the service of a clerk is worth nothing, and if you trust him, he will work you ill. Leave me in peace, I pray you, and take service with me, and I shall be grateful.”

‘Now, the knight was pleasing to Orthon, so he answered, “Is this truly your will?”

‘“Yes,” replied the Sieur de Corasse. “Do no ill unto those that dwell here, and I will cherish you, and we shall be as one.”

‘“No,” spoke Orthon. “I have no power save to wake you and others, and to disturb you when you fain would sleep.”

‘“Do as I say,” said the Chevalier; “we shall agree well, if only you will abandon this wicked clerk. With him there is nothing but pain, and if you serve me — —”

‘“Since it is your will,” replied Orthon, “it is mine also.”

‘The Sieur de Corasse pleased Orthon so much that he came often to see him in his sleep, and pulled away his pillow or gave great knocks against the window of the room where he lay. And when the Chevalier was awakened he would exclaim, “Let me sleep, I pray you, Orthon!”

‘“Not so,” said Orthon; “I have news to give you.”

“And what news will you give me? Whence come you?”

‘Then said Orthon, “I come from England, or Germany, or Hungary, or some other country, which I left, yesterday, and such-and-such things have happened.”

‘Thus it was that the Sieur de Corasse knew so much when he went into the world; and this trick he kept up for five or six years. But in the end he could not keep silence, and made it known to the Comte de Foix in the way I shall tell you.

‘The first year, whenever the Sieur de Corasse came into the presence of the Count at Ortais or elsewhere, he would say to him: “Monseigneur, such-and-such a thing has happened in England, or in Scotland, or in Germany, or in Flanders, or in Brabant, or in some other country,” and the Comte de Foix marvelled greatly at these things. But one day he pressed the Sieur de Corasse so hard that the knight told him how it was he knew all that passed in the world and who told him. When the Comte de Foix knew the truth of the matter, his heart leapt with joy, and he said: “Sieur de Corasse, bind him to you in love. I would I had such a messenger. He costs you nothing, and knows all that passes throughout the world.”

‘“Monseigneur,” said the Chevalier, “thus will I do.”

‘Thus the Sieur de Corasse was served by Orthon, and that for long. I know not if Orthon had more than one master, but certain it is that every week he came, twice or thrice during the night, to tell to the Sieur de Corasse the news of all the countries that he had visited, which the Sieur wrote at once to the Comte de Foix, who was of all men most joyed in news from other lands. One day when the Sieur de Corasse was with the Comte de Foix, the talk fell upon Orthon, and suddenly the Count inquired, “Sieur de Corasse, have you never seen your messenger?”

‘He answered, “No, by my faith, Monseigneur, and I have never even asked to.”

‘“Well,” he replied, “it is very strange. If he had been as friendly to me as he is to you, I should long ago have begged him to show me who and what he is.

And I pray that you will do all you can, so that I may know of what fashion he may be. You tell me that his speech is Gascon, such as yours or mine.”

‘“By my faith,” said the Sieur de Corasse, “it is only the truth. His Gascon is as good as the best; and, since you advise it, I will spare myself no trouble to see what he is like.”

‘Two or three nights after came Orthon, and finding the Sieur de Corasse sleeping soundly, he pulled the pillow, so as to wake him. So the Sieur de Corasse awoke with a start and inquired, “Who is there?”

‘He answered, “I am Orthon.”

‘“And whence do you come?”

‘“From Prague in Bohemia. The Emperor of Rome is dead.”

‘“And when did he die?”

‘“The day before yesterday.”

‘“And how far is it from Prague to this?”

‘“How far?” he answered. “Why, it is sixty days’ journey.”

‘“And you have come so quickly?”

‘“But, by my faith, I travel more quickly than the wind.”

‘“And have you wings?”

‘“By my faith, no.”

‘“How, then, do you fly so fast?”

‘Said Orthon, “That does not concern you.”

‘“No,” he replied; “but I would gladly see of what form you are.”

‘Said Orthon, “My form does not concern you. Content you with what I tell you and that my news is true.”

‘“Now, as I live,” cried the Sieur de Corasse, “I should love you better if I had but seen you.”

‘Said Orthon, “Since you have such burning desire to see me, the first thing you behold to-morrow morning on getting out of bed will be I.”

‘“It is enough,” answered the Sieur de Corasse. “Go. I take leave of you for this night.”

‘When the day dawned, the Sieur de Corasse arose from his bed, but his wife was filled with such dread of meeting Orthon that she feigned to be ill, and protested she would lie abed all day; for she said, “Suppose I were to see him?”

‘“Now,” cried the Sieur de Corasse, “see what I do,” and he jumped from his bed and sat upon the edge, and looked about for Orthon; but he saw nothing. Then he threw back the windows so that he could note more clearly all that was in the room, but again he saw nought of which he could say, “That is Orthon.”

‘The day passed and night came. Hardly had the Sieur de Corasse climbed up into his bed than Orthon arrived, and began to talk to him, as his custom was.

'"Go to, go to," said the Sieur de Corasse; "you are but a bungler. You promised to show yourself to me yesterday, and you never appeared."

'"Never appeared," said he. "But I did, by my faith."

'"You did not."

'"And did you see nothing," said Orthon, "when you leapt from your bed?"

'The Sieur de Corasse thought for a little; then he answered. "Yes," he replied; "as I was sitting on my bed and thinking of you, I noticed two long straws on the floor twisting about and playing together."

'"That was I," said Orthon. "That was the form I had taken upon me."

'Said the Sieur de Corasse: "That is not enough. You must take another form, so that I may see you and know you."

'"You ask so much that I shall become weary of you and you will lose me," replied Orthon.

'"You will never become weary of me and I shall never lose you," answered the Sieur de Corasse; "if only I see you once, I shall be content."

'"So be it," said Orthon; "to-morrow you shall see me, and take notice that the first thing you see as you leave your room will be I."

'"It is enough," spoke the Sieur de Corasse; "and now go, for I fain would sleep."

'So Orthon went; and when it was the third hour next morning the Sieur de Corasse rose and dressed as was his custom, and, leaving his chamber, came out into a gallery that looked into the central court of the castle. He glanced down, and the first thing he saw was a sow, larger than any he had ever beheld, but so thin that it seemed nothing but skin and bone. The Sieur de Corasse was troubled at the sight of the pig, and said to his servants: "Set on the dogs, and let them chase out that sow."

'The varlets departed and loosened the dogs, and urged them to attack the sow, which uttered a great cry and looked at the Sieur de Corasse, who stood leaning against one of the posts of his chamber. They saw her no more, for she vanished, and no man could tell whither she had gone.

'Then the Sieur de Corasse entered into his room, pondering deeply, for he remembered the words of Orthon and said to himself: "I fear me that I have seen my messenger. I repent me that I have set my dogs upon him, and the more that perhaps he will never visit me again, for he has told me, not once but many times, that if I angered him he would depart from me."

'And in this he said well; for Orthon came no more to the castle of Corasse, and in less than a year its lord himself was dead.'

HOW GUSTAVUS VASA WON HIS KINGDOM

NEARLY four hundred years ago, on May 12, 1496, Gustavus Vasa was born in an old house in Sweden. His father was a noble of a well-known Swedish family, and his mother could claim as her sister one of the bravest and most unfortunate women of her time. Now, it was the custom in those days that both boys and girls should be sent when very young to the house of some great lord to be taught their duties as pages or ladies-in-waiting, and to be trained in all sorts of accomplishments. So when Gustavus Vasa had reached the age of six or seven, he was taken away from all his brothers and sisters and placed in the household of his uncle by marriage, whose name was Sten Sture. At that time Sweden had had no king of her own for a hundred years, when the kingdom had become united with Norway and Denmark in the reign of Queen Margaret by a treaty that is known in history as the Union of Calmar (1397). As long as Queen Margaret lived the three kingdoms were well-governed and happy; but her successors were by no means as wise as she, and at the period we are writing of the Danish stewards of King Hans and his son, Christian II., oppressed and ill-treated the Swedes in every possible way, and Sten Sture, regent though he was, had no power to protect them. From time to time the Danish kings came over to Sweden to look after their own interests, and on one of these visits King Hans saw little Gustavus Vasa at the house of Sten Sture in Stockholm. He is said to have taken notice of the boy, and to have exclaimed grimly that Gustavus would be a great man if he lived; and the Regent, thinking that the less attention the King paid to his unwilling subjects the safer their heads would be, at once sent the boy back to his father.

For some years Gustavus lived at home and had a merry time, learning to shoot by hitting a mark with his arrows before he was allowed any breakfast, and roaming all over the woods in his little coat of scarlet cloth. At thirteen he was sent for a time to school at Upsala, where he learned music as well as other things, and even taught himself to make musical instruments. One day, however, the Danish schoolmaster spoke scornfully of the Swedes, and Gustavus, dashing the sword which he carried through the book before him, vowed vengeance on all Danes, and walked out of the school for good.

As far as we know, Gustavus probably remained with his father for the next few years, and we next hear of him in 1514 at the Court of Sten Sture the younger. Already he had obtained a reputation among his friends both for boldness and caution, and though so young had learned experience by carefully watching all that was going on around him. His enemies, too, even the wicked Archbishop Trolle of Upsala, had begun to fear him without knowing exactly why, and he had already made a name for himself by his courage at the Swedish victory of Bränkyrka, when the standard was borne by Gustavus through the thickest of the fight. This battle dashed to the ground the King's hopes of getting Sten Sture, the Regent, into his power by fair means, so he tried treachery to persuade the Swede to enter his ship. But the men of Stockholm saw through his wiles and declined this proposal, and the King was driven to offer the Swedes a meeting in a church, on condition that Gustavus Vasa and five other distinguished nobles should be sent first on board as hostages. This was agreed to; but no sooner had the young men put off in their boat than a large Danish vessel cut off their retreat, and they were at once carried off to Denmark as prisoners.

For one moment it seemed likely that Gustavus would be hanged, and Sweden remain in slavery for many years longer, and indeed, if his life was spared, it was only because Christian thought it might be to his own advantage. Still, spared it was, and the young man was delivered to the care of a distant relation in Jutland, who was to forfeit 400l. in case of his escape. Here things were made as pleasant to him as possible, and he was allowed to hunt and shoot, though always attended by keepers.

One day, after he had behaved with such prudence that his keepers had almost given up watching him, he managed, while strolling in the great park, to give them the slip, and to hide himself where there was no chance of anyone finding him. He contrived somehow to get hold of a pilgrim's dress; then that of a cattle-driver, and in this disguise he made his way to the free city of Lübeck, and threw himself on the mercy of the burgomaster or mayor. By this time his enemies were on his track, and his noble gaoler, Sir Eric Bauer, claimed him as an escaped prisoner. But the people of Lübeck, who at that moment had a trade quarrel with Denmark, declared that the fugitive was not a prisoner who had broken his parole, but a hostage who had been carried off by treachery, and refused to give him up, though perhaps their own interest had more to do with their steadfastness than right and justice. As it was, Gustavus was held fast in Lübeck for eight months before they would let him go, and it was not until May 1520 that he crossed the Baltic in a little fishing-smack, and sailed for Stockholm, then besieged by Danish ships and defended by the widow of the Regent. But finding the town closely invested, he made for Calmar, and after a short stay in the castle he found his way into the heart of the country, learning sadly at every step how the worst enemies of Sweden were the Swedes themselves, who betrayed each other to their Danish foes for jealousy and gold. Like Prince Charlie, however, he was soon to find faithful hearts among his countrymen, and for every traitor there were at least a hundred who were true. While hiding on his father’s property, he sent some of his tenants to Stockholm, to find out the state of affairs there. The news they brought was terrible. A fearful massacre, known in history as the Blood Bath, had taken place by order of the King. Citizens, bishops, nobles, and even servants had been executed in the public market, and the King’s thirst for blood was not satisfied until some hundreds of Swedes had laid down their lives. Among those who fell on the first day was the father of Gustavus Vasa, who is said to have indignantly rejected the pardon offered him by the King for his fidelity to his country. ‘No,’ he exclaimed; ‘let me die with all these honest men.’ So he died, and his son-in-law after him, and his wife, her mother, sister, and three daughters were thrown into prison, where some of them were starved to death. To crown all, a price was set on the head of Gustavus.

On hearing this last news Gustavus resolved to take refuge in the province of Dalecarlia, and to trust to the loyalty of the peasants. By this time it was the end of November (1520), and the snow lay thick upon the ground; but this was rather in his favour, as his enemies would be less likely to pursue him. So he cut his hair short and put on the dress of a peasant, which in those days consisted of a short, thick jacket, breeches with huge buttons, and a low soft hat. Then he bought an axe and plunged into the forest. Here he soon made a friend for life in a very tall, strong woodcutter, known to his neighbours by the name of the ‘Bear-slayer.’ This woodcutter was employed by a rich man, Petersen by name, who had a large property near by, and had been at school with Gustavus Vasa at Upsala. But hearing that Danish spies were lurking around, Gustavus would not confide even in him, but patiently did what work was given him like a common servant. An accident betrayed him. A maid-servant happened one day to see the golden collar that Gustavus wore next his skin, and told her master. Petersen then recognised his old schoolfellow; but knowing that he would lose his own head if he gave him shelter, he advised the young noble to leave his hiding-place, and take shelter with another old friend, Arendt, who had once served under him. Here he was received with open arms; but this hospitality only concealed treachery, for his old comrade had formed a close friendship with the Danish stewards who ruled the land, and only wanted an opportunity to deliver Gustavus up to them. However, he was careful not to let his guest see anything of his plan, and even pretended to share his schemes for ridding the country of the enemy. So he hid Gustavus in an attic, where he assured him he would be perfectly safe, and left him, saying he would go round to all the neighbouring estates to enlist soldiers for their cause. But of course he was only going to give information about Gustavus, and to gain the reward.

Now, it was only an accident that prevented his treachery being successful. The first man he applied to, though a friend to the Danes, scorned to take a mean advantage of anyone, and told the traitor to go elsewhere.

Furiously angry, but greedy and determined as ever, the traitor set forth for the house of the Danish steward who lived nearest, well knowing that from him he would receive nothing but gratitude.

But the traitor's wife happened to be standing at her own door as her husband drove by, and guessed what had occurred and where he was going. She was an honest woman, who despised all that was base and underhand, so she stole out to one of her servants whom she could trust, and ordered him to make ready a sledge, for he would have to go on a journey. Then, in order that no one should know of Gustavus's escape until it was too late to overtake him, she let him down out of the window into the sledge, which drove off at once, across a frozen lake and past the copper-mines of Fahlun, to a little village at the far end, where Gustavus left his deliverer, giving him a beautiful silver dagger as a parting gift.

Sheltered by one person after another, and escaping many dangers on the way, Gustavus found himself at last in the cottage of one of the royal foresters, where he received a hospitable welcome from the man and his wife. But unknown to himself, Danish spies had been for some time on his track, and no sooner had Gustavus sat down to warm his tired limbs before the fire where the forester's wife was baking bread, than they entered and inquired if Gustavus Vasa had been seen to pass that way. Another moment and they might have become curious about the stranger sitting at the hearth, when the woman hastily turned round, and struck him on the shoulder with the huge spoon she held in her hand. 'Lazy loon!' she cried. 'Have you no work to do? Off with you at once and see to your threshing.' The Danes only saw before them a common Swedish servant bullied by his mistress, and it never entered their heads to ask any questions; so once again Gustavus was saved.

Next day the forester hid him under a load of hay, and prepared to drive him through the forest to the houses of some friends — foresters like himself — who lived in a distant village. But Gustavus was not to reach even this place without undergoing a danger different from those he had met with before; for while they were jogging peacefully along the road they came across one of the numerous parties of Danes who were for ever scouring the country, and on seeing the cart a man stepped up, and thrust through the hay with his spear. Gustavus, though wounded, managed not to cry out, but reached, faint with loss of blood, his next resting-place.

After spending several days hidden among the boughs of a fir-tree, till the Danes began to think that their information must be false and Gustavus be looked for elsewhere, the fugitive was guided by one peasant after another through the forests till he found himself at the head of a large lake, and in the centre of many thickly-peopled villages. Here he assembled the dwellers in the country round, and spoke to them in the churchyard, telling of the wrongs that Sweden had suffered and of her children that had been slain. The peasants were moved by his words, but they did not wish to plunge into a war till they were sure of being successful, so they told Gustavus that they must find out something more before they took arms; meantime he was driven to seek a fresh hiding-place.

Gustavus was terribly dejected at the downfall of his hopes, for he had thought, with the help of the peasants, to raise at once the standard of rebellion; still he saw that flight was the only chance just now, and Norway seemed his best refuge. However, some fresh acts of tyranny on the part of their Danish masters did what Gustavus's own words had failed to do, and suddenly the peasants took their resolve and sent for Gustavus to be their leader.

The messengers found him at the foot of the Dovre-Fjeld Mountains between Norway and Sweden, and he joyfully returned with them, rousing the people as he went, till at last he had got together a force that far outnumbered the army which was sent to meet it.

Gustavus was not present at the first battle, which was fought on the banks of the Dale River, for he was travelling about preaching a rising among the Swedes of the distant provinces, but he arrived just after, to find that the peasants had gained an overwhelming victory. The fruits of this first victory were far-reaching. It gave the people confidence, thousands flocked to serve under Gustavus's banner, and within a few months the whole country, excepting Stockholm and Calmar, was in his hands. Then the nobles, in gratitude to their deliverer, sought to proclaim him king, but this he refused as long as a single Swedish castle remained beneath the Danish yoke, so for two more years he ruled Sweden under the title of Lord Protector. Then in 1523, when Stockholm and Calmar at last surrendered, Gustavus Vasa was crowned king.

MONSIEUR DE BAYARD’S DUEL

NOW, when Monsieur de Bayard was fighting in the kingdom of Naples, he made prisoner a valiant Spanish captain, Don Alonzo de Soto-Mayor by name, who, not liking his situation, complained of the treatment he received, which he said was unworthy of his dignity as a knight. This was, however, quite absurd, and against all reason, for, as all the world knows, there never was a man more courteous than Monsieur de Bayard. At length, Monsieur de Bayard, wearied with the continued grumblings of the Spaniard, sent him a challenge. This was at once accepted, whether the duel should be fought on foot or on horseback, for Don Alonzo refused to withdraw anything that he had said of the French knight.

When the day arrived, Monsieur de la Palisse, accompanied by two hundred gentlemen, appeared on the ground, escorting their champion Monsieur de Bayard, mounted on a beautiful horse, and dressed all in white, as a mark of humility, the old chronicler tells us. But Don Alonzo, to whom belonged the choice of arms, declared that he preferred to fight on foot, because (he pretended) he was not so skilful a horseman as Monsieur de Bayard, but really because he knew that his adversary had that day an attack of malarial fever, and he hoped to find him weakened, and so to get the better of him. Monsieur de la Palisse and Bayard’s other supporters advised him, from the fact of his fever, to excuse himself, and to insist on fighting on horseback; but Monsieur de Bayard, who had never trembled before any man, would make no difficulties, and agreed to everything, which astonished Don Alonzo greatly, as he had expected a refusal. An enclosure was formed by a few large stones piled roughly one on another. Monsieur de Bayard placed himself at one end of the ground, accompanied by several brave captains, who all began to offer up prayers for their champion. Don Alonzo and his friends took up a position at the other end, and sent Bayard the weapons that they had chosen — namely, a short sword and a poignard, with a gorget and coat of mail. Monsieur de Bayard did not trouble himself enough about the matter to raise any objection. For second he had an old brother-at-arms, Bel-Arbre by name, and for keeper of the ground Monsieur de la Palisse, who was very well skilled in all these things. The Spaniard also chose a second and a keeper of the ground. So when the combatants had taken their places, they both sank on their knees and prayed to God; but Monsieur de Bayard fell on his face and kissed the earth, then, rising, made the sign of the cross, and went straight for his enemy, as calmly, says the old chronicler, as if he were in a palace, and leading out a lady to the dance.

Don Alonzo on his side came forward to meet him, and asked, ‘Señor Bayardo, what do you want of me?’ He answered, ‘To defend my honour,’ and without more words drew near; and each thrust hard with the sword, Don Alonzo getting a slight wound on his face. After that, they thrust at each other many times more, without touching. Monsieur de Bayard soon discovered the ruse of his adversary, who no sooner delivered his thrusts than he at once covered his face so that no hurt could be done him; and he bethought himself of a way to meet it. So, the moment Don Alonzo raised his arm to give a thrust, Monsieur de Bayard also raised his; but he kept his sword in the air, without striking a blow, and when his enemy’s weapon had passed harmlessly by him, he could strike where he chose, and gave such a fearful blow at the throat that, in spite of the thickness of the gorget, the sword entered to the depth of four whole fingers, and he could not pull it out. Don Alonzo, feeling that he had got his death-blow, dropped his sword and grasped Monsieur de Bayard round the body, and thus wrestling they both fell to the ground. But Monsieur de Bayard, quick to see and to do, seized his sword, and, holding it to the nostrils of his enemy, he cried, ‘Surrender, Don Alonzo, or you are a dead man;’ but he got no answer, for Don Alonzo was dead already. Then his second, Don Diego de Guignonnes, came forward and said, ‘Señor Bayardo, you have conquered him,’ which everyone could see for himself. But Monsieur de Bayard was much grieved, for, says the chronicler, he would have given a hundred thousand crowns, if he had had them, to have made Don Alonzo surrender. Still, he was grateful to God for having given him the victory, and gave thanks, and, kneeling down, kissed the earth three times. And after the body of Don Alonzo was carried from the ground, he said to the second, ‘Don Diego, my lord, have I done enough?’ And Don Diego answered sadly, ‘Enough and too much, Señor Bayardo, for the honour of Spain.’ ‘You know,’ said Monsieur de Bayard, ‘that as the victor the body is mine to do as I will, but I yield it to you; and truly, I would that, my honour satisfied, it had fallen out otherwise.’ So the Spaniards bore away their champion with sobs and tears, and the French led off the conqueror with shouts of joy, and the noise of trumpets and clarions, to the tent of Monsieur de la Palisse, after which Monsieur de Bayard went straight to the church to give thanks in that he had gained the victory. Thus it happened to the greater renown of Monsieur de Bayard, who was esteemed not only by the French, his countrymen, but by the Spaniards of the kingdom of Naples, to be a peerless knight, who had no equal look where you may.

STORY OF GUDBRAND OF THE DALES

THERE was a man named Gudbrand of the Dales, who was as good as king over the Dales though he had but the title of duke. He had one son, of whom this story makes mention. Now when Gudbrand heard that King Olaf was come to Loa and was compelling men to receive Christianity, he cut the war-arrow and summoned all the dalesmen to meet him at the village called Houndthorpe. Thither came they all in countless numbers, for the lake Lögr lies near, and they could come by water as well as by land.

There Gudbrand held an assembly with them, and said: ‘There is a man come to Loa named Olaf; he would fain offer us a faith other than we had before, and break all our gods in sunder. And he says that he has a God far greater and mightier. A wonder it is that the earth does not burst in sunder beneath him who dares to say such things; a wonder that our gods let him any longer walk thereon. And I expect that if we carry Thor out of our temple, wherein he stands and hath alway helped us, and he see Olaf and his men, then will Olaf’s God and Olaf himself and all his men melt away and come to nought.’

At this they all at once shouted loud, and said that Olaf should never escape alive if he came to meet them. ‘Never will he dare to go further south by the Dales,’ said they. Then they appointed seven hundred men to go and reconnoitre northwards to Breida. This force was commanded by Gudbrand’s son, then eighteen years old, and many other men of renown with him; and they came to the village called Hof and were there for three nights, where they were joined by much people who had fled from Lesja Loa and Vagi, not being willing to submit to Christianity.

But King Olaf and Bishop Sigurd, after appointing teachers of religion at Loa and Vagi, crossed over the channel between Vagi and the land and came to Sil, and were there for the night; and they heard the tidings that a large force was before them. And the people of the country who were at Breida heard of the King’s movements, and prepared for battle against him. But when the King rose in the morn, then he clad him for war, and marched south by Silfield, nor stayed till he came to Breida, where he saw a large army arrayed for battle.

Then the King set his men in array and rode himself before them, and, addressing the country-folk, bade them embrace Christianity.

They answered: ‘Thou wilt have other work to do to-day than to mock us.’

And they shouted a war-shout and smote their shields with their weapons.

Then the King’s men ran forward and hurled their spears; but the country-folk turned and fled, few of them standing their ground. Gudbrand’s son was there taken prisoner; but King Olaf gave him quarter and kept him near himself. Three nights the King was there. Then spake he with Gudbrand’s son, saying: ‘Go thou back now to thy father and tell him that I shall come there soon.’

Whereupon he went back home and told his father the ill tidings, how they had met the King and fought with him; ‘but our people all fled at the very first,’ said he, ‘and I was taken prisoner. The King gave me quarter, and bade me go and tell thee that he would come here soon. Now have we left no more than two hundred men out of that force with which we met him, and I advise thee, father, not to fight with that man.’

‘One may hear,’ said Gudbrand, ‘that all vigour is beaten out of thee. Ill luck went with thee, and long will thy journey be spoken of. Thou believest at once those mad fancies which that man brings who hath wrought foul shame on thee and thine.’

In the following night Gudbrand dreamed a dream. A man came to him, a shining one, from whom went forth great terror. And thus he spake: ‘Thy son went not on a path of victory against King Olaf; and far worse wilt thou fare if thou resolvest to do battle with the King, for thou wilt fall, thyself and all thy people, and thee and thine will wolves tug and ravens rend.’

Much afraid was Gudbrand at this terror, and told it to Thord Fat-paunch, a chief man of the Dales.

He answered: ‘Just the same vision appeared to me.’

And on the morrow they bade the trumpet-blast summon an assembly, and said that they thought it good counsel to hold a conference with that man who came from the north with new doctrine, and to learn what proofs he could bring.

After this Gudbrand said to his son: ‘Thou shalt go to the King who spared thy life, and twelve men shall go with thee.’ And so it was done.

And they came to the King and told him their errand — that the country-folk would fain hold a conference with him, and would have a truce between them. The King liked that well, and they settled it so by a treaty between them till the appointed meeting should be; and this done they went back and told Gudbrand and Thord of the truce. The King then went to the village called Lidsstadir, and stayed there five nights. Then he went to meet the country-folk, and held a conference with them; but the day was very wet.

As soon as the conference was met, the King stood up and said that the dwellers in Lesja Loa and Vagi had accepted Christianity and broken down their heathen house of worship, and now believed in the true God who made heaven and earth and knew all things. Then the King sat down; but Gudbrand answered:

‘We know not of whom thou speakest. Thou callest him God whom neither thou seest nor anyone else. But we have that god who may be seen every day, though he is not out to-day because the weather is wet: and terrible will he seem to you, and great fear will, I expect, strike your hearts if he come into our assembly. But since thou sayest that your God is so powerful, then let Him cause that to-morrow the weather be cloudy but without rain, and meet we here again.’

Thereafter the King went home to his lodging, and with him Gudbrand’s son as a hostage, while the King gave them another man in exchange. In the evening the King asked Gudbrand’s son how their god was made. He said that he was fashioned to represent Thor: he had a hammer in his hand, and was tall of stature, hollow within, and there was a pedestal under him on which he stood when out-of-doors; nor was there lack of gold and silver upon him. Four loaves of bread were brought to him every day, and flesh-meat therewith. After this talk they went to bed. But the King was awake all night and at his prayers.

With dawn of day the King went to mass, then to meat, then to the assembly. And the weather was just what Gudbrand had bargained for. Then stood up the bishop in his gown, with mitre on head and crozier in hand; and he spoke of the faith before the country-folk, and told of the many miracles which God had wrought, and brought his speech to an eloquent conclusion.

Then answered Thord Fat-paunch: ‘Plenty of words has that horned one who holds a staff in his hand crooked at the top like a wether’s horn. But seeing that you, my good fellows, claim that your God works so many miracles, bespeak of Him for to-morrow that He let it be bright sunshine; and meet we then, and do one of the twain, either agree on this matter or do battle.’

And with that they broke up the assembly for the time.

There was a man with King Olaf named Kolbein Strong; he was from the Firths by kin. He had ever this gear, that he was girded with a sword, and had a large cudgel or club in his hand. The King bade Kolbein be close to him on the morrow. And then he said to his men:

‘Go ye to-night where the country-folk’s ships are, and bore holes in them all, and drive away from their farm-buildings their yoke-horses.’ And they did so.

But the King spent the night in prayer, praying God that He would solve this difficulty of His goodness and mercy. And when service times were over (and that was towards daybreak) then went he to the assembly. When he came there but few of the country-folk had come. But soon they saw a great multitude coming to the assembly; and they bare among them a huge image of a man, all glittering with gold and silver; which when those who were already at the assembly saw, they all leapt up and bowed before this monster. Then was it set up in the middle of the place of assembly: on the one side sat the folk of the country, on the other the King and his men.

Then up stood Gudbrand of the Dales and spake: ‘Where is now thy God, O King? Methinks now He boweth His beard full low; and, as I think, less is now thy bragging and that of the horned one whom ye call bishop, and who sits beside thee yea, less than it was yesterday. For now is come our god who rules all, and he looks at you with keen glance, and I see that ye are now full of fear and hardly dare to lift your eyes. Lay down now your superstition and believe in our god, who holds all your counsel in his hand.’ And so his words were ended.

The King spake with Kolbein Strong, so that the country-folk knew it not: ‘If it so chance while I am speaking that they look away from their god, then strike him the strongest blow thou canst with thy club.’

Then the King stood up and spake: ‘Plenty of words hast thou spoken to us this morning. Thou thinkest it strange that thou canst not see our God; but we expect that He will soon come to us. Thou goest about to terrify us with thy god, who is blind and deaf and can neither help himself nor others, and can in no way leave his place unless he be carried; and I expect now that evil is close upon him. Nay, look now and see toward the east, there goeth now our God with great light.’

Just then up sprang the sun, and toward the sun looked the country-folk all. But in that moment Kolbein dealt such a blow on their god that he burst all asunder, and thereout leapt rats as big as cats, and vipers and snakes.

But the country-folk fled in terror, some to their ships, which when they launched, the water poured in and filled them, nor could they so get away, and some who ran for their horses found them not. Then the King had them called back and said he would fain speak with them; whereupon the country-folk turned back and assembled.

Then the King stood up and spake.

‘I know not,’ said he, ‘what means this tumult and rushing about that ye make. But now may well be seen what power your god has, whom ye load with gold and silver, meat and food, and now ye see what creatures have enjoyed all this — rats and snakes, vipers and toads. And worse are they who believe in such things, and will not quit their folly. Take ye your gold and jewels that are here now on the field and carry them home to your wives, and never put them again on stocks or stones. But now there are two choices for us: that you accept Christianity or do battle with me to-day. And may those win victory to whom it is willed by the God in whom we believe.’

Then stood up Gudbrand of the Dales and spake: ‘Much scathe have we gotten now in our god; but, as he cannot help himself, we will now believe in the God in whom thou believest.’ And so they all accepted Christianity.

Then did the bishop baptize Gudbrand and his son. King Olaf and Bishop Sigurd left religious teachers there, and they parted friends who before were foes. And Gudbrand had a church built there in the Dales.

SIR RICHARD GRENVILLE

SIR RICHARD GRENVILLE, of Bideford, in Devon, was one of the most noted admirals in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Although he had large estates, and was very rich, he liked better to go abroad to the new countries just then discovered, or to fight for his country, than to stay at home.

From his wonderful courage and determination never to fly from an enemy, however great the odds might be against him, he had the good fortune to win glory in the most glorious sea-fight that has ever been fought.

In 1591 he was vice-admiral of a small fleet consisting of six line of battle ships, six victuallers, and two or three pinnaces, under the command of Lord Thomas Howard. In the month of August in that year, they lay at anchor off the island of Flores, where they had put in for a fresh supply of water, and to take in ballast, as well as to refresh the crew, for many of them were sick.

Half of the crew of Grenville’s ship were disabled and were on shore, when news was brought that a Spanish Armada, consisting of fifty-three ships, was near at hand.

When the admiral heard it, knowing himself to be at a disadvantage, he instantly signalled to the rest of the fleet to cut or weigh their anchors and to follow him out to sea.

All the commanders obeyed his summons but Sir Richard Grenville, whose duty as vice-admiral was to follow at the rear of the fleet; he also waited until his men who were on shore could rejoin him.

Meanwhile he had everything set in readiness to fight, and all the sick were carried to the lower hold.

The rest of the English ships were far away, hull down on the horizon, and the Spaniards, who had come up under cover of the island, were already bearing down in two divisions on his weatherbow before the ‘Revenge’ was ready to sail. Then the master and others, seeing the hopelessness of their case, begged Sir Richard to trust to the good sailing of his ship, ‘to cut his maine saile and cast about, and to follow the admiral.’

But Sir Richard flew into a terrible passion, and swore he would hang any man who should then show himself to be a coward. ‘That he would rather choose to dye than to dishonour himselfe, his countrie, and her maiestie’s shippe.’

He boldly told his men that he feared no enemy, that he would yet pass through the squadron and *force* them to give him way.

Then were the hundred men on the ‘Revenge’ who were able to fight and to work the ship, fired with the spirit of their commander, and they sailed out to meet the foe with a cheer.

All went well for a little time, and the ‘Revenge’ poured a broadside into those ships of the enemy that she passed. But presently a great ship named ‘San Felipe’ loomed over her path and took the wind out of her sails, so that she could no longer answer to her helm.

While she lay thus helplessly, all her sails of a sudden slack and sweeping the yards, she fired her lower tier, charged with crossbar shot, into the ‘San Felipe.’ Then the unwieldy galleon of a thousand and five hundred tons, which bristled with cannon from stem to stern, had good reason to repent her of her temerity, and ‘shifted herselfe with all dilligence from her sides, utterly misliking her entertainment.’ It is said she foundered shortly afterwards.

Meanwhile four more Spanish vessels had come up alongside the ‘Revenge,’ and lay two on her larboard and two on her starboard. Then a hand to hand fight began in terrible earnest. As those soldiers in the ships alongside were repulsed or thrown back into the sea, yet were their places filled with more men from the galleons around, who brought fresh ammunition and arms. The Spanish ships were filled with soldiers, in some were two hundred besides mariners, in some five hundred, in others eight hundred.

‘And a dozen times we shook ’em off as a dog that shakes his ears when he leaps from the water to the land.’

Grenville was severely hurt at the beginning of the fight, but he paid no heed to his wound, and stayed on the upper decks to cheer and encourage his men. Two of the Spanish ships were sunk by his side, yet two more came in their places, and ever and ever more as their need might be.

Darkness fell upon the scene, and through the silence the musketry fire crackled unceasingly, and the heavy artillery boomed from time to time across the sea. About an hour before midnight Grenville was shot in the body, and while his wound was being dressed, the surgeon who attended him was killed, and at the same time Grenville was shot again in the head.

Still he cried to his men, ‘Fight on, fight on!’

Before dawn the Spaniards, weary of the fight that had raged for fifteen hours, that had cost them fifteen ships and fifteen hundred men, had drawn off to a little distance, and lay around her in a ring.

Daylight discovered the little ‘Revenge’ a mere water-logged hulk, with rigging and tackle shot away, her masts overboard, her upper works riddled, her pikes broken, all her powder spent, and forty of her best men slain.

The glow that heralded sunrise shot over the sky and stained the placid waters beneath to crimson. In this sea of blood the wreck lay, her decks ruddy with the stain of blood sacrificed for honour.

She lay alone at the mercy of the waves, and unable to move save by their rise and fall, alone with her wounded and dying and her dead to whom could come no help.

Then Sir Richard Grenville called for the master gunner, whom he knew to be both brave and trusty, and told him to sink the ship, so that the Spaniards might have no glory in their conquest. He besought his sailors to trust themselves to the mercy of God, and not to the mercy of men, telling them that for the honour of their country the greater glory would be theirs if they would consent to die with him.

The gunner and many others cried, ‘Ay, ay, sir,’ and consented to the sinking of the ship.

But the captain and master would not agree to it: they told Sir Richard that the Spanish admiral would be glad to listen to a composition, as themselves were willing to do. Moreover there were still some men left who were not mortally wounded, and who might yet live to do their country good service. They told him too that the Spaniard could never glory in having taken the ship, for she had six feet of water in the hold already, as well as three leaks from shot under water, that could not be stopped to resist a heavy sea.

But Sir Richard would not listen to any of their reasoning. Meanwhile the master had gone to the general of the Armada, Don Alfonso Baffan, who, knowing Grenville’s determination to fight to the last, was afraid to send any of his men on board the ‘Revenge’ again, lest they should be blown up or sink on board of her.

The general yielded that ‘all their lives should be saved, the companie sent for England, and the better sorte to pay such reasonable ransome as their estate would beare, and in the meane season to be free from galley or imprisonment.’

After the men had heard what the captain said they became unwilling to die, and with these honourable terms for surrender they drew back from Sir Richard and the master gunner. ‘The maister gunner, finding himselfe prevented and maistered by the greater number, would have slaine himselfe with a sword had he not beene by force withhold and locked into his cabben.’

Then the Spanish general sent to the ‘Revenge’ to bring Sir Richard to his own ship; for he greatly admired his wonderful courage.

Sir Richard told him they might do what they chose with his body, for he did not care for it; and as he was being carried from his ship in a fainting state, he asked those of his men near him to pray for him.

He only lived for three days after this, but was treated with the greatest courtesy and kindness by the Spaniards. He did not speak again until he was dying, when he said:

‘Here am I, Richard Grenville, with a joyful and quiet mind, for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought to do, that hath fought for his country, Queen, religion, and honour. Whereby my soul most joyfully departeth out of this body, and shall always leave behind it an everlasting fame of a valiant and true soldier, that hath done his dutie as he was bound to do.’

THE STORY OF MOLLY PITCHER

IT is a strange and interesting thing to see how history repeats itself in a series of noble and picturesque incidents which are so much alike that they might be easily mistaken for one another. Perhaps in the years to come they will be mistaken for one another, and then those learned scholars who love to deny all the things that are worth believing will say, as they say now of William Tell and the apple: 'Whenever an event is represented as happening in different countries and among different nations, we may be sure that it never happened at all.' Yet to Spain belongs Augustina, the Maid of Saragossa; to England, brave Mary Ambree; and to America, Molly Pitcher, the stout-hearted heroine of Monmouth; and these three women won for themselves honour and renown by the same valorous exploits. Augustina is the most to be envied, for her praises have been sung by a great poet; Mary Ambree has a noble ballad to perpetuate her fame; Molly Pitcher is still without the tribute of a verse to remind her countrymen occasionally of her splendid courage in the field.

The Spanish girl was of humble birth, young, poor, and very handsome. When Saragossa was besieged by the French during the Peninsular War, she carried food every afternoon to the soldiers who were defending the batteries. One day the attack was so fierce, and the fire so deadly, that by the gate of Portillo not a single man was left alive to repulse the terrible enemy. When Augustina reached the spot with her basket of coarse and scanty provisions, she saw the last gunner fall bleeding on the walls. Not for an instant did she hesitate; but springing over a pile of dead bodies, she snatched the match from his stiffening fingers and fired the gun herself. Then calling on her countrymen to rally their broken ranks, she led them back so unflinchingly to the charge that the French were driven from the gate they had so nearly captured, and the honour of Spain was saved. When the siege was lifted and the city free a pension was settled on Augustina, together with the daily pay of an artilleryman, and she was permitted to wear upon her sleeve an embroidered shield bearing the arms of Saragossa. Lord Byron, in his poem 'Childe Harold,' has described her beauty her heroism, and the desperate courage with which she defended the breach:

'Who can avenge so well a leader's fall?
What maid retrieve when man's flushed hope is lost!
Who hang so fiercely on the flying Gaul,
Foiled by a woman's hand before a battered wall?'

For the story of Mary Ambree we must leave the chroniclers — who to their own loss and shame never mention her at all — and take refuge with the poets. From them we learn all we need to know, and it is quickly told. Her lover was slain treacherously in the war between Spain and Holland, the English being then allies of the Dutch; and, vowing to avenge his death, she put on his armour and marched to the siege of Ghent, where she fought with reckless courage on its walls. Fortune favours the brave, and wherever the maiden turned her arms the enemy was repulsed, until at last the gallant Spanish soldiers vied with the English in admiration of this valorous foe:

‘If England doth yield such brave lassies as thee.
Full well may she conquer, faire Mary Ambree.’

Even the Great Prince of Parma desired to see this dauntless young girl, and finding her as chaste as she was courageous and beautiful, he permitted her to sail for home without any molestation from his army.

‘Then to her own country she back did returne,
Still holding the foes of faire England in scorne;
Therefore English captaines of every degree
Sing forth the brave valours of Mary Ambree.’

And now for Molly Pitcher, who, unsung and almost unremembered, should nevertheless share in the honours heaped so liberally upon the Spanish and English heroines. ‘A red-haired, freckled-faced young Irishwoman,’ without beauty and without distinction, she was the newly-wedded wife of an artilleryman in Washington’s little army. On June 28, 1778, was fought the battle of Monmouth, famous for the admirable tactics by which Washington regained the advantages lost through the negligence of General Charles Lee, and also for the splendid charge and gallant death of Captain Moneton, an officer of the English grenadiers. It was a Sunday morning, close and sultry. As the day advanced, the soldiers on both sides suffered terribly from that fierce, unrelenting heat in which America rivals India. The thermometer stood at 96 in the shade. Men fell dead in their ranks without a wound, smitten by sunstroke, and the sight of them filled their comrades with dismay. Molly Pitcher, regardless of everything save the anguish of the sweltering, thirsty troops, carried buckets of water from a neighbouring spring, and passed them along the line. Back and forward she trudged, this strong, brave, patient young woman, while the sweat poured down her freckled face, and her bare arms blistered in the sun. She was a long time in reaching her husband — so many soldiers begged for drink as she toiled by — but at last she saw him, parched, grimy, spent with heat, and she quickened her lagging steps. Then suddenly a ball whizzed past, and he fell dead by the side of his gun before ever the coveted water had touched his blackened lips. Molly dropped her bucket, and for one dazed moment stood staring at the bleeding corpse. Only for a moment, for, amid the turmoil of battle, she heard the order given to drag her husband's cannon from the field. The words roused her to life and purpose. She seized the rammer from the trodden grass, and hurried to the gunner's post. There was nothing strange in the work to her. She was too well versed in the ways of war for either ignorance or alarm. Strong, skilful, and fearless, she stood by the weapon and directed its deadly fire until the fall of Moneton turned the tide of victory. The British troops under Clinton were beaten back after a desperate struggle, the Americans took possession of the field, and the battle of Monmouth was won.

On the following day, poor Molly, no longer a furious Amazon, but a sad-faced widow, with swollen eyes, and a scanty bit of crape pinned on her broad young bosom, was presented to Washington, and received a sergeant's commission with half-pay for life. It is said that the French officers, then fighting for the freedom of the colonies, that is, against the English, were so delighted with her courage that they added to this reward a cocked hat full of gold pieces, and christened her 'La Capitaine.' What befell her in after-years has never been told. She lived and died obscurely, and her name has well-nigh been forgotten in the land she served. But the memory of brave deeds can never wholly perish, and Molly Pitcher has won for herself a little niche in the temple of Fame, where her companions are fair Mary Ambree and the dauntless Maid of Saragossa.

THE VOYAGES, DANGEROUS ADVENTURES, AND IMMINENT ESCAPES OF CAPTAIN RICHARD FALCONER

I WAS born at a town called Bruton, in Somersetshire, and my parents were well-to-do people. My mother died when I was very young; my father, who had been a great traveller in his days, often told me of his adventures, which gave me a strong desire for a roving life. I used to beg my father to let me go to sea with some captain of his acquaintance; but he only warned me solemnly against the dangers to which sailors were exposed, and told me I should soon wish to be at home again.

But at last, through my father's misfortunes, my wish was gratified, for he was robbed of a large sum of money, and found himself unable to provide for me as he wished. Disaster followed disaster till he was compelled to recommend to me the very life he had warned me against. I left him for Bristol, carrying with me a letter he had written to a captain there, begging him to give me all the help in his power, and never saw him again. But Captain Pultney, his friend, welcomed me like a son, and before long got me a berth on the 'Albion' frigate, in which I set sail for Jamaica on May 2, 1699.

When we were in the Bay of Biscay a terrible storm came on; the billows ran mountains high, and our vessel was the sport of the waves. A ship that had overtaken and followed us the day before seemed to be in yet worse distress, and signalled to us for aid; but we could not get very near them without danger to ourselves. We sent out our long-boat, with two of our men; but the rope that held her to the ship broke with the violence of the waves, and she was carried away, nor did we ever hear what became of our unhappy comrades. Very soon, in spite of the labour of the crew, the vessel we were trying to help went down, and out of fifty-four men, only four were saved who had the good fortune to catch the ropes we threw out to them. When they told us their story, however, we could not help wondering at the escape we had had, for the lost ship belonged to a pirate, who had only been waiting till the storm was over to attack us, and the men we had saved had, according to their own account, been compelled against their will to serve the pirates.

Very soon the storm abated, and we continued our voyage. It was not long before we had another adventure with pirates, and the next time they caught us at midnight, and, hailing us, commanded us to come on board their ship with our captain. We answered that we had no boat, and asked them to wait till the morning. At this, the pirate captain threatened to sink us, and therewith fired a gun at our vessel.

But we, being on our guard, had already mustered our guns and our forces, thirty-eight men, counting the passengers, who were as ready to fight as any of us. So we sent them back a broadside, which surprised them and did them some damage. Then we tacked about, and with six of our guns raked the enemy fore and aft; but we were answered very quickly with a broadside that killed two of our men and wounded a third. Presently they boarded us with about fourscore men, and we found all our resistance idle, for they drove us into the forecastle, where we managed to barricade ourselves, and threatened to turn our own guns against us if we did not surrender immediately. But our captain being resolute, ordered us to fire on them with our small-arms. Now close to our steerage was a large cistern lined with tin, where several cartridges of powder happened to be; and, happily for us, in the tumult of the firing this powder took fire, and blew part of the quarter-deck and at least thirty of the enemy into the air. On this we sallied out, and drove the rest into their own vessel again with our cutlasses, killing several. But, alas! with the explosion and the breach of the quarter-deck our powder-room was quite blocked up, and we had to go on fighting with what powder we had by us. Fight we did, nevertheless, for at least four hours, when dawn broke, and to our great joy we saw another ship not far away, and distinguished English colours. At this sight we gave a great shout and fired our small-arms again; but our enemies very quickly cut away their grappling irons, and did their best to make off. Their rigging, however, was so shattered that they could not hoist sail, and in the meantime up came the English ship, and without so much as hailing the pirate, poured a broadside into her. Then followed a desperate fight. As for us, we steered off, to clear away the lumber from our powder-room, as we had nothing left to charge our guns with. In half-an-hour we had loaded again, and returned to the fight; but as we approached we saw the pirate sinking. The English ship had torn a hole in her between wind and water, so that she sank in an instant, and only eight men were saved. They told us that their captain was a pirate from Guadaloupe, and when they sank they had not more than twenty men left out of a hundred and fifty. On board our ship seven sailors and two passengers were killed, while the Guernsey frigate that rescued us had lost sixteen men and three wounded.

I need now relate no more of our adventures on the voyage till I come to a very sad one which befell me in October. We were sailing towards Jamaica, and one day I went into the boat astern which had been hoisted overboard in the morning to look after a wreck we had seen on the water. I pulled a book out of my pocket and sat reading in the boat; but before I was aware, a storm began to rise, so that I could not get up the ship side as usual, but called for the ladder of ropes in order to get back that way. Now, whether the ladder was not properly fastened above, or whether, being seldom used, it broke through rottenness, I cannot tell, but down I fell into the sea, and though, as I heard afterwards, the ship tacked about to take me up, I lost sight of it in the dusk of the evening and the gathering storm.

Now my condition was terrible. I was forced to drive with the wind and current, and after having kept myself above water for about four hours, as near as I could guess in my fright, I felt my feet touch ground every now and then, and at last a great wave flung me upon the sand. It was quite dark, and I knew not what to do; but I got up and walked as well as my tired limbs would carry me. For I could discover no trace of firm land, and supposed I was on some sandbank which the sea would overflow at high tide. But by-and-by I had to sit down out of sheer exhaustion, though I only looked for death. All my sins came before me, and I prayed earnestly, and at last recovered calm and courage.

In spite of all my efforts to keep awake, I fell fast asleep before dawn came.

In the morning I was amazed to find myself among four or five very low sandy islands, all separated half-a-mile or more, as I guessed, by the sea. With that I became more cheerful, and walked about to see if I could find anything eatable. To my grief I found nothing but a few eggs, that I was obliged to eat raw, and this almost made me wish that the sea had engulfed me rather than thrown me on this desert island, which seemed to me inhabited only by rats and several kinds of birds.

A few bushes grew upon it, and under these I had to shelter at night, but though I searched through the island, I could not find a drop of fresh water. Nor could I have continued to live, having only the eggs I found, if I had not succeeded in knocking down some birds with a stick, which made me a grand banquet. This gave me heart to try to make a fire after the fashion of the blacks by rubbing two sticks together, and I managed to do this after a while, and cooked my birds on the fire I had lit.

That night came a great storm, with the reddest lightning I had ever seen, and rain that drenched me through. But in the morning I had the joy of finding several pools of rain-water; and this put it into my mind to make a kind of well, that I might keep a supply of water by me.

With my hands and a stick I dug a hollow place, large enough to hold a hogshead of water, and when it was dug I paved it with stones, and, getting in, stamped them down hard, and beat the sides close with my stick so that the well would hold water a long time. But how to get it there was a difficulty, till by soaking my shirt, which was pretty fine, in water, I found that I could make it fairly water-tight, and with this holland bucket carry two gallons at a time, which only leaked out about a pint in two hundred yards. By this contrivance, in two days I had filled my well.

I next made myself a cupboard of earth by mixing water with it; but unhappily it lasted only four days, the sun drying it so fast that it cracked.

I had a small Ovid, printed by Elzevir, which fortunately I had put in my pocket as I was going up the ladder of ropes. This was a great solace, for I could entertain myself with it under a bush till I fell asleep. Moreover, I had good health, though at first I was troubled with headache for want of my hat, which I had lost in the water. But I made myself a wooden cap of green sprigs, and lined it with one of the sleeves of my shirt.

The island I was upon seemed about two miles round, and perfectly deserted. Often did I wish to have companions in my misfortune, and even — Heaven forgive me! — hoped for a wreck. I fancied that if I stayed there long alone I should lose the power of speech, so I talked aloud, asked myself questions, and answered them. If anybody had been by to hear they would certainly have thought me bewitched, I used to ask myself such odd questions!

But one morning a violent storm arose, which continued till noon, when I caught sight of a ship labouring with the waves. At last, with the fury of the tempest, it was completely thrown out of the water upon the shore, a quarter of a mile from the place where I was watching. I ran to see if there was anyone I could help, and found four men, all who were in the vessel, trying to save what they could out of her. When I came up and hailed them in English they were mightily surprised, and asked me how I came there. I told them my story, and they were greatly distressed for themselves as well as for me, since they found there was no hope of getting their vessel off the sands; so we began to bemoan each other’s misfortunes. But I must confess that I was never more rejoiced in my whole life, for they had on board plenty of everything for a twelvemonth, and nothing spoiled. We worked as hard as we could, and got out whatever would be useful to us before night. Then, taking off the sails, we built a tent big enough to hold twenty men, and now I thought myself in a palace.

The names of my four companions were Thomas Randal, Richard White, William Musgrave, and Ralph Middleton. When we had been together some time we began to be very easy, and to wait contentedly till we should get out of this strait. But at last it came into our minds that a determined effort might free us, and at once we set to work to clear the sand from the ship. We laboured at the task for sixteen days, resting only on Sundays, and by that time we had thrown up the sand on each side, making a passage for our vessel right to the surface of the water where it was lowest. We next got poles to put under the vessel to launch her out, and resolved on the day following, God willing, to thrust her into the water. But we were prevented by the illness of Mr. Randal, who had been the guide and counsellor of our whole party. It soon became evident that he could not recover, and the week after he died.

After this we succeeded in launching our vessel, but again a terrible misfortune happened. We had made the ship fast with two anchors the night before we intended to begin our voyage, and my companions resolved to stay on shore, while I, as for some nights had been my custom, slept on board.

I rested very contentedly, and in the morning went on deck ready to call my companions. To my horror the sea surrounded the vessel; there was not a glimpse of land! The shock was so terrible that I fell down on the deck unconscious. How long I continued so I know not, but when I came to myself a little reflection told me what had happened. A hurricane had risen and torn away the vessel while I slept heavily, for the night before we had all drunk too freely, and my remorse was the more bitter for remembering Mr. Randal, the good man whose warnings, had he lived, would have prevented this misfortune.

But fate was kinder to me than I deserved. For a fortnight I was tossed upon the sea without discovering land, and with only the company of the dog that had been poor Mr. Randal’s. But three days later I saw land right ahead, to my great joy, though joy was not unmixed with fear, as I did not know into whose hands I might fall. It was on January 30 that I reached the bay and town of Campeche, where I was met by two canoes, with a Spaniard and six Indians, who, on learning something of my story, I speaking in broken French, which the Spaniard understood, immediately took me on shore to the Governor. He, on hearing of my arrival, sent for me where he sat at dinner, and received me with the utmost kindness.

These generous Spaniards not only feasted me while I remained there, but soon collected among themselves money enough to fit out my vessel ready to go and rescue my poor companions left on the desert island. On February 15 we sailed from Campeche Bay, after I, having nothing else to give, had offered my Ovid to the Governor. He took it kindly, saying that he should prize it very highly, not only for its own sake, but in memory of my misfortunes.

Fifteen days after we reached the island, and found my three companions, but in a miserable condition. For they were left without provisions and with hardly any fresh water, every necessary being on board the ship; and when we arrived they had been five days without eating or drinking, and were too weak to crawl in search of food. But now, for the time being, their misfortunes were ended, and I cannot describe the joy with which they welcomed us after having almost despaired of any human help.

We soon set out again in the Spanish ship, and by-and-by, not without a number of adventures on the way, we reached Jamaica, where I met with my old shipmates, who were very much surprised to see me, thinking that I had been lost in the sea many months ago. The ship had hung lights out for several hours that I might know where to swim, but all to no purpose, as I could see nothing through the darkness of the storm. I found that the captain was very ill, and went to visit him on shore. He told me that he did not expect to live long, and was glad I had come to take charge of the ship, which would have sailed before if he had been fit to command her. A week after he died, entrusting me with the management of his affairs, and messages to his wife, who lived at Bristol.

We set sail for England on June 1, 1700, and on August 21 we discovered the Land's End. How rejoiced I was to see England once more, let them judge that have escaped so many perils as I had done. My first task when I reached Bristol was to inquire for my father; but a bitter disappointment awaited me. He was dead, broken down before his time by grief and misfortune. I could not bear to stay on shore, where everything reminded me of him, and, for all my delight in coming back to England, it was not long before I set sail again in quest of fresh adventures.

MARBOT’S MARCH

I HAVE now reached one of the most terrible experiences of my military career. Marshal Lannes had just won a great victory, and the next day, after having received the reports of the generals, he wrote his despatch for one of our officers to take to the Emperor. Napoleon’s practice was to give a step to the officer who brought him the news of an important success, and the marshals on their side entrusted such tasks to officers for whose speedy promotion they were anxious. It was a form of recommendation which Napoleon never failed to recognise. Marshal Lannes did me the honour of appointing me to carry the news of the victory of Tudela, and I could indulge the hope of being major before long. But, alas! I had yet much blood to lose before I reached that rank.

The high road from Bayonne to Madrid by Vittoria, Miranda del Ebro, Burgos, and Aranda forks off at Miranda from that leading to Saragossa by Logroño. A road from Tudela to Aranda across the mountains about Soria forms the third side of a great triangle. While Lannes was reaching Tudela the Emperor had advanced from Burgos to Aranda. It was, therefore, much shorter for me to go from Tudela to Aranda than by way of Miranda del Ebro. The latter road, however, had the advantage of being covered by the French armies; while the other, no doubt, would be full of Spanish fugitives who had taken refuge after Tudela in the mountains. The Emperor, however, had informed Lannes that he was sending Ney’s corps direct from Aranda to Tudela; so thinking Ney to be at no great distance, and that an advanced force which he had pushed on the day after the battle to get touch of him at Taragona would secure me from attack as far as Aranda, Lannes ordered me to take the shortest road. I may frankly admit that if I had had my choice I should have preferred to make the round by Miranda and Burgos; but the marshal’s orders were positive, and how could I express any fear for my own person in the presence of a man who knew no more fear for others than he did for himself?

The duties of marshal’s aide-de-camp in Spain were terrible. During the revolutionary wars the generals had couriers paid by the state to carry their despatches; but the Emperor, finding that these men were not capable of giving any intelligible account of what they had seen, did away with them, and ordered that in future despatches should be carried by aides-de-camp. This was all very well as long as we were at war among the good Germans, to whom it never occurred to attack a French messenger; but the Spaniards waged fierce war against them. This was of great advantage to the insurgents, for the contents of our despatches informed them of the movements of our armies. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that more than two hundred staff officers were killed or captured during the Peninsular War. One may regret the death of an ordinary courier, but it is less serious than the loss of a promising officer, who, moreover, is exposed to the risks of the battlefield in addition to those of a posting journey. A great number of vigorous men well skilled in their business begged to be allowed to do this duty, but the Emperor never consented.

Just as I was starting from Tudela, Major Saint-Mars hazarded a remark intended to dissuade Lannes from sending me over the mountains. The marshal, however, answered, ‘Oh, he will meet Ney’s advance guard to-night, and find troops echelonned all the way to the Emperor’s head-quarters.’ This was too decided for any opposition, so I left Tudela November 4, at nightfall, with a detachment of cavalry, and got without any trouble as far as Taragona, at the foot of the mountains. In this little town I found Lannes’ advance guard. The officer in command, hearing nothing of Ney, had pushed an infantry post six leagues forward towards Agreda. But as this body was detached from its supports, it had been ordered to fall back on Taragona if the night passed without Ney’s scouts appearing.

After Taragona there is no more high road. The way lies entirely over mountain paths covered with stones and splinters of rock. The officer commanding our advanced guard had, therefore, only infantry and a score of hussars of the 2nd (Chamborant) Regiment. He gave me a troop horse and two orderlies, and I went on my way in brilliant moonlight. When we had gone two or three leagues we heard several musket-shots, and bullets whistled close past us. We could not see the marksmen, who were hidden among the rocks. A little farther on we found the corpses of two French infantry soldiers, recently killed. They were entirely stripped, but their shakoes were near them, by the numbers on which I could see that they belonged to one of the regiments in Ney’s corps. Some little distance farther we saw a horrible sight. A young officer of the 10th Mounted Chasseurs, still wearing his uniform, was nailed by his hands and feet, head downwards, to a barn door. A small fire had been lighted beneath him. Happily, his tortures had been ended by death; but as the blood was still flowing from his wounds, it was clear that the murderers were not far off. I drew my sword; my two hussars handled their carbines. It was just as well that we were on our guard, for a few moments later seven or eight Spaniards, two of them mounted, fired upon us from behind a bush. We were none of us wounded, and my two hussars replied to the fire, and killed each his man. Then, drawing their swords, they dashed at the rest. I should have been very glad to follow them, but my horse had lost a shoe among the stones and was limping, so that I could not get him into a gallop. I was the more vexed because I feared that the hussars might let themselves be carried away in the pursuit and get killed in some ambush. I called them for five minutes; then I heard the voice of one of them saying, in a strong Alsatian accent, ‘Ah! you thieves! you don’t know the Chamborant Hussars yet. You shall see that they mean business.’ My troopers had knocked over two more Spaniards, a Capuchin mounted on the horse of the poor lieutenant, whose haversack he had put over his own neck, and a peasant on a mule, with the clothes of the slaughtered soldiers on his back. It was quite clear that we had got the murderers. The Emperor had given strict orders that every Spanish civilian taken in arms should be shot on the spot; and, moreover, what could we do with these two brigands, who were already seriously wounded, and who had just killed three Frenchmen so barbarously? I moved on, therefore, so as not to witness the execution, and the hussars shot the monk and the peasant, repeating, ‘Ah, you don’t know the Chamborant!’ I could not understand how an officer and two privates of Ney’s corps could be so near Taragona when their regiments had not come that way; but most probably they had been captured elsewhere, and were being taken to Saragossa, when their escort learned the defeat of their countrymen at Tudela, and massacred their prisoners in revenge for it.

After this not very encouraging start I continued my journey. We had gone for some hours, when we saw a bivouac fire of the detachment belonging to the advance guard which I had left at Taragona. The sub-lieutenant in command, having no tidings of Ney, was prepared to return to Taragona at daybreak, in pursuance of his orders. He knew that we were barely two leagues from Agreda, but did not know of which side that town was in possession. This was perplexing for me. The infantry detachment would return in a few hours, and if I went back with it, when it might be that in another league I should fall in with Ney’s column, I should be giving a poor display of courage, and laying myself open to reproach from Lannes. On the other hand, if Ney was still a day or two’s march away, it was almost certain that I should be murdered by the peasants of the mountains or by fugitive soldiers. What was more, I had to travel alone, for my two brave hussars had orders to return to Taragona when we had found the infantry detachment. No matter; I determined to push on; but then came the difficulty of finding a mount. There was no farm or village in this deserted place where I could procure a horse. That which I was riding was dead lame; and even if the hussars had been able, without incurring severe punishment, to lend me one of theirs, theirs were much fatigued. The horse that had belonged to the officer of chasseurs had received a bullet in the thigh during the fighting. There was only the peasant’s mule left. This was a handsome beast, and, according to the laws of war, belonged to the two hussars, who, no doubt, reckoned on selling her when they got back to the army. Still the good fellows made no demur about lending her to me, and put my saddle on her back. But the infernal beast, more accustomed to the pack than to the saddle, was so restive that directly I tried to get her away from the group of horses and make her go alone she fell to kicking, until I had to choose between being sent over a precipice and dismounting.

So I decided to set out on foot. After I had taken farewell of the infantry officer, this excellent young man, M. Tassin by name — he had been a friend of my poor brother Felix at the military school — came running after me, and said that he could not bear to let me thus expose myself all alone, and that though he had no orders, and his men were raw recruits, with little experience in war, he must send one with me, so that I might at least have a musket and some cartridges in case of an attack. We agreed that I should send the man back with Ney’s corps; and I went off, with the soldier accompanying me. He was a slow-speaking Norman, with plenty of slyness under an appearance of good nature. The Normans are for the most part brave, as I learnt when I commanded the 23rd Chasseurs, where I had five or six hundred of them. Still, in order to know how far I could rely on my follower, I chatted with him as we went along, and asked if he would stand his ground if we were attacked. He said neither yes nor no, but answered, ‘Well, sir, we shall see.’ Whence I inferred that when the moment of danger arrived my new companion was not unlikely to go and see how things were getting on in the rear.

The moon had just set, and as yet daylight had not appeared. It was pitch-dark, and at every step we stumbled over the great stones with which these mountain paths are covered. It was an unpleasant situation, but I hoped soon to come upon Ney’s troops, and the fact of having seen the bodies of soldiers belonging to his corps increased the hope. So I went steadily on, listening for diversion to the Norman’s stories of his country. Dawn appeared at last, and I saw the first houses of a large village. It was Agreda. I was alarmed at finding no outposts, for it showed that not only did no troops of the marshal’s occupy the place, but that his army corps must be at least half a day further on. The map showed no village within five or six leagues of Agreda, and it was impossible that the regiments could be quartered in the mountains, far from any inhabited place. So I kept on my guard, and before going any farther reconnoitred the position.

Agreda stands in a rather broad valley. It is built at the foot of a lofty hill, deeply escarped on both sides. The southern slope, which reaches the village, is planted with large vineyards. The ridge is rough and rocky, and the northern slope covered with thick coppice, a torrent flowing at the foot. Beyond are seen lofty mountains, uncultivated and uninhabited. The principal street of Agreda runs through the whole length of the place, with narrow lanes leading to the vineyards opening into it. As I entered the village I had these lanes and the vineyards on my right. This is important to the understanding of my story.

Everybody was asleep in Agreda; the moment was favourable for going through it. Besides, I had some hope — feeble, it is true — that when I reached the farther end I might perhaps see the fires of Marshal Ney's advance guard. So I went forward, sword in hand, bidding my soldier cock his musket. The main street was covered with a thick bed of damp leaves, which the people placed there to make manure; so that our footsteps made no sound, of which I was glad. I walked in the middle of the street, with the soldier on my right; but, finding himself no doubt in a too conspicuous position, he gradually sheered off to the houses, keeping close to the walls so that he might be less visible in case of an attack, or better placed for reaching one of the lanes which open into the country. This showed me how little I could rely on the man; but I made no remark to him. The day was beginning to break. We passed the whole of the main street without meeting any one. Just as I was congratulating myself on reaching the last houses of the village, I found myself at twenty-five paces' distance, face to face with four Royal Spanish Carabineers on horseback with drawn swords. Under any other circumstances I might have taken them for French gendarmes, their uniforms being exactly similar, but the gendarmes never march with the extreme advanced guard. These men, therefore, could not belong to Ney's corps, and I at once perceived they were the enemy. In a moment I faced about, but just as I had turned round to the direction from which I had come I saw a blade flash six inches from my face. I threw my head sharply back, but nevertheless got a severe sabre-cut on the forehead, of which I carry the scar over my left eyebrow to this day. The man who had wounded me was the corporal of the carabineers, who, having left his four troopers outside the village, had according to military practice gone forward to reconnoitre. That I had not met him was probably due to the fact that he had been in some side lane, while I had passed through the main street. He was now coming back through the street to rejoin his troopers, when, seeing me, he had come up noiselessly over a layer of leaves and was just going to cleave my head from behind, when, by turning round, I presented to him my face and received his blow on my forehead. At the same moment the four carabineers, who seeing that their corporal was all ready for me had not stirred, trotted up to join him, and all five dashed upon me. I ran mechanically towards the houses on the right in order to get my back against a wall; but by good luck I found, two paces off, one of the steep and narrow lanes, which went up to the vineyards. The soldier had already reached it. I flew up there too with the five carabineers after me; but at any rate they could not attack me all at once, for there was only room for one horse to pass. The brigadier went in front; the other four filed after him. My position, although not as unfavourable as it would have been in the street, where I should have been surrounded, still remained alarming; the blood flowing freely from my wound had in a moment covered my left eye, with which I could not see at all, and I felt that it was coming towards my right eye, so that I was compelled by fear of getting blinded to keep my head bent over the left shoulder so as to bring the blood to that side. I could not staunch it, being obliged to defend myself against the corporal, who was cutting at me heavily. I parried as well as I could, going up backwards all the time. After getting rid of my scabbard and my busby, the weight of which hampered me, not daring to turn my head for fear of losing sight of my adversary, whose sword was crossed with mine, I told the light infantry man, whom I believed to be behind me, to place his musket on my shoulder, and fire at the Spanish corporal. Seeing no barrel, however, I leapt a pace back and turned my head quickly. Lo and behold, there was my scoundrel of a Norman soldier flying up the hill as fast as his legs would carry him. The corporal thereupon attacked with redoubled vigour, and, seeing that he could not reach me, made his horse rear so that his feet struck me more than once on the breast. Luckily, as the ground went on rising the horse had no good hold with his hind legs, and every time that he came down again I landed a sword cut on his nose with such effect that the animal presently refused to rear at me any more. Then the brigadier, losing his temper, called out to the trooper behind him, ‘Take your carbine: I will stoop down, and you can aim at the Frenchman over my shoulders.’ I saw that this order was my death-signal; but as in order to execute it the trooper had to sheathe his sword and unhook his carbine, while all this time the corporal never ceased thrusting at me, leaning right over his horse’s neck, I determined on a desperate action, which would be either my salvation or my ruin. Keeping my eye fixed on the Spaniard, and seeing in his that he was on the point of again stooping over his horse to reach me, I did not move until the very instant when he was lowering the upper part of his body towards me; then I took a pace to the right, and leaning quickly over to that side, I avoided my adversary’s blow, and plunged half my sword-blade into his left flank. With a fearful yell the corporal fell back on the croup of his horse; he would probably have fallen to the ground if the trooper behind him had not caught him in his arms. My rapid movement in stooping had caused the despatch which I was carrying to fall out of the pocket of my pelisse. I picked it up quickly, and at once hastened to the end of the lane where the vines began. There I turned round and saw the carabineers busy round their wounded corporal, and apparently much embarrassed with him and with their horses in the steep and narrow passage.

This fight took less time than I have taken to relate it. Finding myself rid, at least for the moment, of my enemies, I went through the vines and reached the edge of the hill. Then I considered that it would be impossible for me to accomplish my errand and reach the Emperor at Aranda. I resolved, therefore, to return to Marshal Lannes, regaining first the place where I had left M. Tassin and his picket of infantry. I did not hope to find them still there; but at any rate the army which I had left the day before was in that direction. I looked for my soldier in vain, but I saw something that was of more use to me — a spring of clear water. I halted there a moment, and, tearing off a corner of my shirt, I made a compress which I fastened over my wound with my handkerchief. The blood spurting from my forehead had stained the despatches which I held in my hand, but I was too much occupied with my awkward position to mind that.

The agitations of the past night, my long walk over the stony paths in boots and spurs, the fight in which I had just been engaged, the pain in my head, and the loss of blood had exhausted my strength. I had taken no food since leaving Tudela, and here I had nothing but water to refresh myself with. I drank long draughts of it, and should have rested longer by the spring had I not perceived three of the Spanish carabineers riding out of Agreda and coming towards me through the vines. If they had been sharp enough to dismount and take off their long boots, they would probably have succeeded in reaching me; but their horses, unable to pass between the vine stocks, ascended the steep and rocky paths with difficulty. Indeed, when they reached the upper end of the vineyards they found themselves brought up by the great rocks, on the top of which I had taken refuge, and unable to climb any farther. Then the troopers, passing along the bottom of the rocks, marched parallel with me a long musket-shot off. They called to me to surrender, saying that as soldiers they would treat me as a prisoner of war, while if the peasants caught me I should infallibly be murdered. This reasoning was sound, and I admit that if I had not been charged with despatches for the Emperor, I was so exhausted that I should perhaps have surrendered.

However, wishing to preserve to the best of my ability the precious charge which had been entrusted to me, I marched on without answering. Then the three troopers, taking their carbines, opened fire upon me. Their bullets struck the rocks at my feet but none touched me, the distance being too great for a correct aim. I was alarmed, not at the fire, but at the notion that the reports would probably attract the peasants who would be going to their work in the morning, and I quite expected to be attacked by these fierce mountaineers. My presentiment seemed to be verified, for I perceived some fifteen men half a league away in the valley advancing towards me at a run. They held in their hands something that flashed in the sun. I made no doubt that they were peasants armed with their spades, and that it was the iron of these that shone thus. I gave myself up for lost, and in my despair I was on the point of letting myself slide down over the rocks on the north side of the hill to the torrent, crossing it as best I could, and hiding myself in some chasm of the great mountains which arose on the farther side of the gorge. Then, if I was not discovered, and if I still had the strength, I should set out when night came in the direction of Taragona.

This plan, though offering many chances of failure, was my last hope. Just as I was about to put it into execution, I perceived that the three carabineers had given up firing on me, and gone forward to reconnoitre the group which I had taken for peasants. At their approach the iron instruments which I had taken for spades or mattocks were lowered, and I had the inexpressible joy of seeing a volley fired at the Spanish carabineers. Instantly turning, they took flight towards Agreda, as it seemed, with two of their number wounded. ‘The newcomers, then, are French!’ I exclaimed. ‘Here goes to meet them!’ and, regaining a little strength from the joy of being delivered, I descended, leaning on my sword. The French had caught sight of me; they climbed the hill, and I found myself in the arms of the brave Lieutenant Tassin.

This providential rescue had come about as follows. The soldier who had deserted me while I was engaged with the carabineers in the streets of Agreda had quickly reached the vines; thence, leaping across the vine stocks, ditches, rocks, and hedges, he had very quickly run the distance which lay between him and the place where we had left M. Tassin’s picket. The detachment was on the point of starting for Taragona, and was eating its soup, when my Norman came up all out of breath. Not wishing, however, to lose a mouthful, he seated himself by a cooking-pot and began to make a very tranquil breakfast, without saying a word about what had happened at Agreda. By great good luck he was noticed by M. Tassin, who, surprised at seeing him returned, asked him where he had quitted the officer whom he had been told off to escort. ‘Good Lord, sir,’ replied the Norman, ‘I left him in that big village with his head half split open, and fighting with Spanish troopers, and they were cutting away at him with their swords like anything.’ At these words Lieutenant Tassin ordered his detachment to arms, picked the fifteen most active, and went off at the double towards Agreda. The little troop had gone some way when they heard shots, and inferred from them that I was still alive but in urgent need of succour. Stimulated by the hope of saving me, the brave fellows doubled their pace, and finally perceived me on the ridge of the hill, serving as a mark for three Spanish troopers.

M. Tassin and his men were tired, and I was at the end of my strength. We halted, therefore, for a little, and meanwhile you may imagine that I expressed my warmest gratitude to the lieutenant and his men, who were almost as glad as I was. We returned to the bivouac where M. Tassin had left the rest of his people. The *cantinière* of the company was there with her mule carrying two skins of wine, bread, and ham. I bought the lot and gave them to the soldiers, and we breakfasted, as I was very glad to do, the two hussars whom I had left there the night before sharing in the meal. One of these mounted the monk's mule and lent me his horse, and so we set out for Taragona. I was in horrible pain, because the blood had hardened over my wound. At Taragona I rejoined Lannes' advance guard: the general in command had my wound dressed, and gave me a horse and an escort of two hussars. I reached Tudela at midnight, and was at once received by the marshal, who, though ill himself, seemed much touched by my misfortune. It was necessary, however, that the despatch about the battle of Tudela should be promptly forwarded to the Emperor, who must be impatiently awaiting news from the army on the Ebro. Enlightened by what had befallen me in the mountains, the marshal consented that the officer bearing it should go by Miranda and Burgos, where the presence of French troops on the roads made the way perfectly safe. I should have liked very much to be the bearer, but I was in such pain and so tired that it would have been physically impossible for me to ride hard. The marshal therefore entrusted the duty to his brother-in-law, Major Guéhéneuc. I handed him the despatches stained with my blood. Major Saint-Mars, the secretary, wished to re-copy them and change the envelope. 'No, no,' cried the marshal, 'the Emperor ought to see how valiantly Captain Marbot has defended them.' So he sent off the packet just as it was, adding a note to explain the reason of the delay, eulogising me, and asking for a reward to Lieutenant Tassin and his men, who had hastened so zealously to my succour, without reckoning the danger to which they might have been exposed if the enemy had been in force.

The Emperor did, as a matter of fact, a little while after, grant the Cross both to M. Tassin and to his sergeant, and a gratuity of 100 francs to each of the men who had accompanied them. As for the Norman soldier, he was tried by court martial for deserting his post in the presence of the enemy, and condemned to drag a shot for two years, and to finish his time of service in a pioneer company.

EYLAU. THE MARE LISETTE

GENERAL MARBOT, one of Napoleon’s most distinguished soldiers, thus describes his adventures at the battle of Eylau. ‘To enable you to understand my story, I must go back to the autumn of 1805, when the officers of the Grand Army, among their preparations for the battle of Austerlitz, were completing their outfits. I had two good horses, the third, for whom I was looking, my charger, was to be better still. It was a difficult thing to find, for though horses were far less dear than now, their price was pretty high, and I had not much money; but chance served me admirably. I met a learned German, Herr von Aister, whom I had known when he was a professor at Sorèze. He had become tutor to the children of a rich Swiss banker, M. Scherer, established at Paris in partnership with M. Finguerlin. He informed me that M. Finguerlin, a wealthy man, living in fine style, had a large stud, in the first rank of which figured a lovely mare, called Lisette, easy in her paces, as light as a deer, and so well broken that a child could lead her. But this mare, when she was ridden, had a terrible fault, and fortunately a rare one: she bit like a bulldog, and furiously attacked people whom she disliked, which decided M. Finguerlin to sell her. She was bought for *Mme.* de Lauriston whose husband, one of the Emperor’s aides-de-camp, had written to her to get his campaigning outfit ready. When selling the mare M. Finguerlin had forgotten to mention her fault, and that very evening a groom was found disembowelled at her feet. *Mme.* de Lauriston, reasonably alarmed, brought an action to cancel the bargain; not only did she get her verdict, but, in order to prevent further disasters, the police ordered that a written statement should be placed in Lisette’s stall to inform purchasers of her ferocity, and that any bargain with regard to her should be void unless the purchaser declared in writing that his attention had been called to the notice. You may suppose that with such a character as this the mare was not easy to dispose of, and thus Herr von Aister informed me that her owner had decided to let her go for what anyone would give. I offered 1,000 francs, and M. Finguerlin delivered Lisette to me, though she had cost him 5,000. This animal gave me a good deal of trouble for some months. It took four or five men to saddle her, and you could only bridle her by covering her eyes and fastening all four legs; but once you were on her back, you found her a really incomparable mount.

‘However, since while in my possession she had already bitten several people, and had not spared me, I was thinking of parting with her. But I had meanwhile engaged in my service Francis Woirland, a man who was afraid of nothing, and he, before going near Lisette, whose bad character had been mentioned to him, armed himself with a good hot roast leg of mutton. When the animal flew at him to bite him, he held out the mutton; she seized it in her teeth, and burning her gums, palate, and tongue, gave a scream, let the mutton drop, and from that moment was perfectly submissive to Woirland, and did not venture to attack him again. I employed the same method with a like result. Lisette became as docile as a dog, and allowed me and my servant to approach her freely. She even became a little more tractable towards the stablemen of the staff, whom she saw every day, but woe to the strangers who passed near her! I could quote twenty instances of her ferocity, but I will confine myself to one. While Marshal Augereau was staying at the château of Bellevue, near Berlin, the servants of the staff, having observed that when they went to dinner someone stole the sacks of corn that were left in the stable, got Woirland to unfasten Lisette and leave her near the door. The thief arrived, slipped into the stable, and was in the act of carrying off a sack, when the mare seized him by the nape of the neck, dragged him into the middle of the yard, and trampled on him till she broke two of his ribs. At the shrieks of the thief people ran up, but Lisette would not let him go till my servant and I compelled her, for in her fury she would have flown at anyone else. She had become still more vicious ever since the Saxon hussar officer, of whom I have told you, had treacherously laid open her shoulder with a sabre-cut on the battlefield of Jena.

‘Such was the mare which I was riding at Eylau at the moment when the fragments of Augereau’s army corps, shattered by a hail of musketry and cannon-balls, were trying to rally near the great cemetery. You will remember how the 14th of the line had remained alone on a hillock, which it could not quit except by the Emperor’s order. The snow had ceased for the moment; we could see how the intrepid regiment, surrounded by the enemy, was waving its eagle in the air to show that it still held its ground and asked for support. The Emperor, touched by the grand devotion of these brave men, resolved to try to save them, and ordered Augereau to send an officer to them with orders to leave the hillock, form a small square, and make their way towards us, while a brigade of cavalry should march in their direction and assist their efforts. This was before Murat’s great charge. It was almost impossible to carry out the Emperor’s wishes, because a swarm of Cossacks was between us and the 14th, and it was clear that any officer who was sent towards the unfortunate regiment would be killed or captured before he could get to it. But the order was positive, and the marshal had to comply.

‘It was customary in the Imperial army for the aides-de-camp to place themselves in file a few paces from their general, and for the one who was in front to go on duty first: then, when he had performed his mission, to return and place himself last, in order that each might carry orders in his turn, and dangers might be shared equally. A brave captain of engineers named Froissard, who, though not an aide-de-camp, was on the marshal's staff, happened to be nearest to him, and was bidden to carry the order to the 14th. M. Froissard galloped off; we lost sight of him in the midst of the Cossacks, and never saw him again nor heard what had become of him. The marshal, seeing that the 14th did not move, sent an officer named David; he had the same fate as Froissard: we never heard of him again. Probably both were killed and stripped, and could not be recognised among the many corpses which covered the ground. For the third time the marshal called, "The officer for duty." It was my turn.

'Seeing the son of his old friend, and I venture to say his favourite aide-de-camp, come up, the kind marshal's face changed and his eyes filled with tears, for he could not hide from himself that he was sending me to almost certain death. But the Emperor must be obeyed. I was a soldier; it was impossible to make one of my comrades go in my place, nor would I have allowed it; it would have been disgracing me. So I dashed off. But though ready to sacrifice my life I felt bound to take all necessary precautions to save it. I had observed that the two officers who went before me had gone with swords drawn, which led me to think that they had purposed to defend themselves against any Cossacks who might attack them on the way. Such defence, I thought, was ill-considered, since it must have compelled them to halt in order to fight a multitude of enemies, who would overwhelm them in the end. So I went otherwise to work, and leaving my sword in the scabbard, I regarded myself as a horseman who is trying to win a steeplechase, and goes as quickly as possible and by the shortest line towards the appointed goal, without troubling himself with what is to right or left of his path. Now, as my goal was the hillock occupied by the 14th, I resolved to get there without taking any notice of the Cossacks, whom in thought I abolished. This plan answered perfectly. Lisette, lighter than a swallow and flying rather than running, devoured the intervening space, leaping the piles of dead men and horses, the ditches, the broken gun-carriages, the half-extinguished bivouac fires. Thousands of Cossacks swarmed over the plain. The first who saw me acted like sportsmen who, when beating, start a hare, and announce its presence to each other by shouts of "Your side! Your side!" but none of the Cossacks tried to stop me, first, on account of the extreme rapidity of my pace, and also probably because, their numbers being so great, each thought that I could not avoid his comrades farther on; so that I escaped them all, and reached the 14th regiment without either myself or my excellent mare having received the slightest scratch.

‘I found the 14th formed in square on the top of the hillock, but as the slope was very slight the enemy’s cavalry had been able to deliver several charges. These had been vigorously repulsed, and the French regiment was surrounded by a circle of dead horses and dragoons, which formed a kind of rampart, making the position by this time almost inaccessible to cavalry; as I found, for in spite of the aid of our men, I had much difficulty in passing over this horrible entrenchment. At last I was in the square. Since Colonel Savary’s death at the passage of the Wkra, the 14th had been commanded by a major. While I imparted to this officer, under a hail of balls, the order to quit his position and try to rejoin his corps, he pointed out to me that the enemy’s artillery had been firing on the 14th for an hour, and had caused it such loss that the handful of soldiers which remained would inevitably be exterminated as they went down into the plain, and that, moreover, there would not be time to prepare to execute such a movement, since a Russian column was marching on him, and was not more than a hundred paces away. “I see no means of saving the regiment,” said the major; “return to the Emperor, bid him farewell from the 14th of the line, which has faithfully executed his orders, and bear to him the eagle which he gave us, and which we can defend no longer: it would add too much to the pain of death to see it fall into the hands of the enemy.” Then the major handed me his eagle, saluted for the last time by the glorious fragment of the intrepid regiment with cries of “Vive l’Empereur!” they were going to die for him. It was the *Cæsar morituri te salutant* of Tacitus, but in this case the cry was uttered by heroes. The infantry eagles were very heavy, and their weight was increased by a stout oak pole on the top of which they were fixed. The length of the pole embarrassed me much, and as the stick without the eagle could not constitute a trophy for the enemy, I resolved with the major’s consent to break it and only carry off the eagle. But at the moment when I was leaning forward from my saddle in order to get a better purchase to separate the eagle from the pole, one of the numerous cannon-balls which the Russians were sending at us went through the hinder peak of my hat, less than an inch from my head. The shock was all the more terrible since my hat, being fastened on by a strong leather strap under the chin, offered more resistance to the blow. I seemed to be blotted out of existence, but I did not fall from my horse; blood flowed from my nose, my ears, and even my eyes; nevertheless I still could hear and see, and I preserved all my intellectual faculties, although my limbs were paralysed to such an extent that I could not move a single finger.

‘Meanwhile the column of Russian infantry which we had just perceived was mounting the hill; they were grenadiers wearing mitre-shaped caps with metal ornaments. Soaked with spirits, and in vastly superior numbers, these men hurled themselves furiously on the feeble remains of the unfortunate 14th, whose soldiers had for several days been living only on potatoes and melted snow; that day they had not had time to prepare even this wretched meal. Still our brave Frenchmen made a valiant defence with their bayonets, and when the square had been broken, they held together in groups and sustained the unequal fight for a long time.

‘During this terrible struggle several of our men, in order not to be struck from behind, set their backs against my mare’s flanks, she, contrary to her practice, remaining perfectly quiet. If I had been able to move I should have urged her forward to get away from this field of slaughter. But it was absolutely impossible for me to press my legs so as to make the animal I rode understand my wish. My position was the more frightful since, as I have said, I retained the power of sight and thought. Not only were they fighting all round me, which exposed me to bayonet-thrusts, but a Russian officer with a hideous countenance kept making efforts to run me through. As the crowd of combatants prevented him from reaching me, he pointed me out to the soldiers around him, and they, taking me for the commander of the French, as I was the only mounted man, kept firing at me over their comrades’ heads, so that bullets were constantly whistling past my ear. One of them would certainly have taken away the small amount of life that was still in me had not a terrible incident led to my escape from the *mêlée*.

‘Among the Frenchmen who had got their flanks against my mare’s near flank was a quartermaster-sergeant, whom I knew from having frequently seen him at the marshal’s, making copies for him of the “morning states.” This man, having been attacked and wounded by several of the enemy, fell under Lisette’s belly, and was seizing my leg to pull himself up, when a Russian grenadier, too drunk to stand steady, wishing to finish him by a thrust in the breast, lost his balance, and the point of his bayonet went astray into my cloak, which at that moment was puffed out by the wind. Seeing that I did not fall, the Russian left the sergeant and aimed a great number of blows at me. These were at first fruitless, but one at last reached me, piercing my left arm, and I felt with a kind of horrible pleasure my blood flowing hot. The Russian grenadier with redoubled fury made another thrust at me, but, stumbling with the force which he put into it, drove his bayonet into my mare’s thigh. Her ferocious instincts being restored by the pain, she sprang at the Russian, and at one mouthful tore off his nose, lips, eyebrows, and all the skin of his face, making of him a living death’s-head, dripping with blood. Then hurling herself with fury among the combatants, kicking and biting, Lisette upset everything that she met on her road. The officer who had made so many attempts to strike me tried to hold her by the bridle; she seized him by his belly, and carrying him off with ease, she bore him out of the crush to the foot of the hillock, where, having torn out his entrails and mashed his body under her feet, she left him dying on the snow. Then, taking the road by which she had come, she made her way at full gallop towards the cemetery of Eylau. Thanks to the hussar's saddle on which I was sitting, I kept my seat. But a new danger awaited me. The snow had begun to fall again, and great flakes obscured the daylight when, having arrived close to Eylau, I found myself in front of a battalion of the Old Guard, who, unable to see clearly at a distance, took me for an enemy's officer leading a charge of cavalry. The whole battalion at once opened fire on me; my cloak and my saddle were riddled, but I was not wounded nor was my mare. She continued her rapid course, and went through the three ranks of the battalion as easily as a snake through a hedge. But this last spurt had exhausted Lisette's strength; she had lost much blood, for one of the large veins in her thigh had been divided, and the poor animal collapsed suddenly and fell on one side, rolling me over on the other.

'Stretched on the snow among the piles of dead and dying, unable to move in any way, I gradually and without pain lost consciousness. I felt as if I was being gently rocked to sleep. At last I fainted quite away without being revived by the mighty clatter which Murat's ninety squadrons advancing to the charge must have made in passing close to me and perhaps over me. I judge that my swoon lasted four hours, and when I came to my senses I found myself in this horrible position. I was completely naked, having nothing on but my hat and my right boot. A man of the transport corps, thinking me dead, had stripped me in the usual fashion, and wishing to pull off the only boot that remained, was dragging me by one leg with his foot against my body. The jerks which the man gave me no doubt had restored me to my senses. I succeeded in sitting up and spitting out the clots of blood from my throat. The shock caused by the wind of the ball had produced such an extravasation of blood, that my face, shoulders, and chest were black, while the rest of my body was stained red by the blood from my wound. My hat and my hair were full of bloodstained snow, and as I rolled my haggard eyes I must have been horrible to see. Anyhow, the transport man looked the other way, and went off with my property without my being able to say a single word to him, so utterly prostrate was I. But I had recovered my mental faculties, and my thoughts turned towards God and my mother.

'The setting sun cast some feeble rays through the clouds. I took what I believed to be a last farewell of it. "If," thought I, "I had only not been stripped, some one of the numerous people who pass near me would notice the gold lace on my pelisse, and, recognising that I am a marshal's aide-de-camp, would perhaps have carried me to the ambulance. But seeing me naked, they do not distinguish me from the corpses with which I am surrounded, and, indeed, there soon will be no difference between them and me. I cannot call help, and the approaching night will take away all hope of succour. The cold is increasing: shall I be able to bear it till to-morrow, seeing that I feel my naked limbs stiffening already?” So I made up my mind to die, for if I had been saved by a miracle in the midst of the terrible *mêlée* between the Russians and the 14th, could I expect that there would be a second miracle to extract me from my present horrible position? The second miracle did take place in the following manner. Marshal Augereau had a valet named Pierre Dannel, a very intelligent and very faithful fellow, but somewhat given to arguing. Now it happened during our stay at La Houssaye that Dannel, having answered his master, got dismissed. In despair, he begged me to plead for him. This I did so zealously that I succeeded in getting him taken back into favour. From that time the valet had been devotedly attached to me. The outfit having been all left behind at Landsberg, he had started all out of his own head on the day of battle to bring provisions to his master. He had placed these in a very light waggon which could go everywhere, and contained the articles which the marshal most frequently required. This little waggon was driven by a soldier belonging to the same company of the transport corps as the man who had just stripped me. This latter, with my property in his hands, passed near the waggon, which was standing at the side of the cemetery, and, recognising the driver, his old comrade, he hailed him, and showed him the splendid booty which he had just taken from a dead man.

‘Now you must know that when we were in cantonments on the Vistula the marshal happened to send Dannel to Warsaw for provisions, and I commissioned him to get the trimming of black astrachan taken from my pelisse, and have it replaced by grey, this having recently been adopted by Prince Berthier’s aides-de-camp, who set the fashion in the army. Up to now, I was the only one of Augereau’s officers who had grey astrachan. Dannel, who was present when the transport man made his display, quickly recognised my pelisse, which made him look more closely at the other effects of the alleged dead man. Among these he found my watch, which had belonged to my father and was marked with his cypher. The valet had no longer any doubt that I had been killed, and while deploring my loss, he wished to see me for the last time. Guided by the transport man he reached me and found me living. Great was the joy of this worthy man, to whom I certainly owed my life. He made haste to fetch my servant and some orderlies, and had me carried to a barn, where he rubbed my body with rum. Meanwhile someone went to fetch Dr. Raymond, who came at length, dressed the wound in my arm, and declared that the release of blood due to it would be the saving of me.

‘My brother and my comrades were quickly round me; something was given to the transport soldier who had taken my clothes, which he returned very willingly, but as they were saturated with water and with blood, Marshal Augereau had me wrapped in things belonging to himself. The Emperor had given the marshal leave to go to Landsberg, but as his wound forbad him to ride, his aides-de-camp had procured a sledge, on which the body of a carriage had been placed. The marshal, who could not make up his mind to leave me, had me fastened up beside him, for I was too weak to sit upright.

‘Before I was removed from the field of battle I had seen my poor Lisette near me. The cold had caused the blood from her wound to clot, and prevented the loss from being too great. The creature had got on to her legs and was eating the straw which the soldiers had used the night before for their bivouacs. My servant, who was very fond of Lisette, had noticed her when he was helping to remove me, and cutting up into bandages the shirt and hood of a dead soldier, he wrapped her leg with them, and thus made her able to walk to Landsberg. The officer in command of the small garrison there had had the forethought to get quarters ready for the wounded, so the staff found places in a large and good inn.

‘In this way, instead of passing the night without help, stretched naked on the snow, I lay on a good bed surrounded by the attention of my brother, my comrades, and the kind Dr. Raymond. The doctor had been obliged to cut off the boot which the transport man had not been able to pull off, and which had become all the more difficult to remove owing to the swelling of my foot. You will see presently that this very nearly cost me my leg, and perhaps my life.

‘We stayed thirty-six hours at Landsberg. This rest, and the good care taken of me, restored me to the use of speech and senses, and when on the second day after the battle Marshal Augereau started for Warsaw I was able to be carried in the sledge. The journey lasted eight days. Gradually I recovered strength, but as strength returned I began to feel a sensation of icy cold in my right foot. At Warsaw I was lodged in the house that had been taken for the marshal, which suited me the better that I was not able to leave my bed. Yet the wound in my arm was doing well, the extravasated blood was becoming absorbed, my skin was recovering its natural colour. The doctor knew not to what he could ascribe my inability to rise, till, hearing me complaining of my leg, he examined it, and found that my foot was gangrened. An accident of my early days was the cause of this new trouble. At Sorèze I had my right foot wounded by the unbuttoned foil of a schoolfellow with whom I was fencing. It seemed that the muscles of the part had become sensitive, and had suffered much from cold while I was lying unconscious on the field of Eylau; thence had resulted a swelling which explained the difficulty experienced by the soldier in dragging off my right boot.

The foot was frost-bitten, and as it had not been treated in time, gangrene had appeared in the site of the old wound from the foil. The place was covered with an eschar as large as a five-franc piece. The doctor turned pale when he saw the foot: then, making four servants hold me, and taking his knife, he lifted the eschar, and dug the mortified flesh from my foot just as one cuts the damaged part out of an apple. The pain was great, but I did not complain. It was otherwise, however, when the knife reached the living flesh, and laid bare the muscles and bones till one could see them moving. Then the doctor, standing on a chair, soaked a sponge in hot sweetened wine, and let it fall drop by drop into the hole which he had just dug in my foot. The pain became unbearable. Still, for eight days I had to undergo this torture morning and evening, but my leg was saved.

‘Nowadays, when promotions and decorations are bestowed so lavishly, some reward would certainly be given to an officer who had braved danger as I had done in reaching the 14th regiment; but under the Empire a devoted act of that kind was thought so natural that I did not receive the cross, nor did it ever occur to me to ask for it. A long rest having been ordered for the cure of Marshal Augereau’s wound, the Emperor wrote to bid him return for treatment to France, and sent to Italy for Masséna, to whom my brother, Bro, and several of my comrades were attached. Augereau took me with him, as well as Dr. Raymond and his secretary. I had to be lifted in and out of the carriage; otherwise I found my health coming back as I got away from those icy regions towards a milder climate. My mare passed the winter in the stables of M. de Launay, head of the forage department. Our road lay through Silesia. So long as we were in that horrible Poland, it required twelve, sometimes sixteen, horses to draw the carriage at a walk through the bogs and quagmires; but in Germany we found at length civilisation and real roads.

‘After a halt at Dresden, and ten or twelve days’ stay at Frankfort, we reached Paris about March 15. I walked very lame, wore my arm in a sling, and still felt the terrible shaking caused by the wind of the cannon-ball; but the joy of seeing my mother again, and her kind care of me, together with the sweet influences of the spring, completed my cure. Before leaving Warsaw I had meant to throw away the hat which the ball had pierced, but the marshal kept it as a curiosity and gave it to my mother. It still exists in my possession, and should be kept as a family relic.’

HOW MARBOT CROSSED THE DANUBE

AFTER crossing the Traun, burning the bridge at Mauthhausen, and passing the Enns, the army advanced to Mölk, without knowing what had become of General Hiller. Some spies assured us that the archduke had crossed the Danube and joined him, and that we should on the morrow meet the whole Austrian army, strongly posted in front of Saint-Pölten. In that case, we must make ready to fight a great battle; but if it were otherwise, we had to march quickly on Vienna in order to get there before the enemy could reach it by the other bank. For want of positive information the Emperor was very undecided. The question to be solved was, Had General Hiller crossed the Danube, or was he still in front of us, masked by a swarm of light cavalry, which, always flying, never let us get near enough to take a prisoner from whom one might get some enlightenment?

Still knowing nothing for certain, we reached, on May 7, the pretty little town of Mölk, standing on the bank of the Danube, and overhung by an immense rock, on the summit of which rises a Benedictine convent, said to be the finest and richest in Christendom. From the rooms of the monastery a wide view is obtained over both banks of the Danube. There the Emperor and many marshals, including Lannes, took up their quarters, while our staff lodged with the parish priest. Much rain had fallen during the week, and it had not ceased for twenty-four hours, and still was falling, so that the Danube and its tributaries were over their banks. That night, as my comrades and I, delighted at being sheltered from the bad weather, were having a merry supper with the parson, a jolly fellow, who gave us an excellent meal, the aide-de-camp on duty with the marshal came to tell me that I was wanted, and must go up to the convent that moment. I was so comfortable where I was that I found it annoying to have to leave a good supper and good quarters to go and get wet again, had but I to obey.

All the passages and lower rooms of the monastery were full of soldiers, forgetting the fatigues of the previous days in the monks' good wine. On reaching the dwelling-rooms, I saw that I had been sent for about some serious matter, for generals, chamberlains, orderly officers, said to me repeatedly, 'The Emperor has sent for you.' Some added, 'It is probably to give you your commission as major.' This I did not believe, for I did not think I was yet of sufficient importance to the sovereign for him to send for me at such an hour to give me my commission with his own hands. I was shown into a vast and handsome gallery, with a balcony looking over the Danube; there I found the

Emperor at dinner with several marshals and the abbot of the convent, who has the title of bishop. On seeing me, the Emperor left the table, and went towards the balcony, followed by Lannes. I heard him say in a low tone, ‘The execution of this plan is almost impossible; it would be sending a brave officer for no purpose to almost certain death.’ ‘He will go, sir,’ replied the marshal; ‘I am certain he will go, at any rate we can but propose it to him.’ Then, taking me by the hand, the marshal opened the window of the balcony over the Danube. The river at this moment, trebled in volume by the strong flood, was nearly a league wide; it was lashed by a fierce wind, and we could hear the waves roaring. It was pitch-dark, and the rain fell in torrents, but we could see on the other side a long line of bivouac fires. Napoleon, Marshal Lannes, and I, being alone on the balcony, the marshal said, ‘On the other side of the river, you see an Austrian camp. Now, the Emperor is keenly desirous to know whether General Hiller’s corps is there, or still on this bank. In order to make sure he wants a stout-hearted man, bold enough to cross the Danube, and bring away some soldier of the enemy’s, and I have assured him that you will go.’ Then Napoleon said to me, ‘Take notice that I am not giving you an order; I am only expressing a wish. I am aware that the enterprise is as dangerous as it can be, and you can decline it without any fear of displeasing me. Go, and think it over for a few moments in the next room; come back and tell us frankly your decision.’

I admit that when I heard Marshal Lannes’ proposal I had broken out all over in a cold sweat; but at the same moment, a feeling, which I cannot define, but in which a love of glory and of my country was mingled, perhaps, with a noble pride, raised my ardour to the highest point, and I said to myself, ‘The Emperor has here an army of 150,000 devoted warriors, besides 25,000 men of his guard, all selected from the bravest. He is surrounded with aides-de-camp and orderly officers, and yet when an expedition is on foot, requiring intelligence no less than boldness, it is I whom the Emperor and Marshal Lannes choose.’ ‘I will go, sir,’ I cried without hesitation. ‘I will go; and if I perish, I leave my mother to your Majesty’s care.’ The Emperor pulled my ear to mark his satisfaction; the marshal shook my hand, ‘I was quite right to tell your Majesty that he would go. There’s what you may call a brave soldier.’

My expedition being thus decided on, I had to think about the means of executing it. The Emperor called General Bertrand, his aide-de-camp, General Dorsenne, of the guard, and the commandant of the imperial head-quarters, and ordered them to put at my disposal whatever I might require. At my request an infantry picket went into the town to find the burgomaster, the syndic of the boatmen, and five of his best hands. A corporal and five grenadiers of the old guard who could all speak German, and had still to earn their decoration, were also summoned, and voluntarily agreed to go with me. The Emperor had them brought in first, and promised that on their return they should receive the Cross at once. The brave men replied by a ‘Vive l’Empereur!’ and went to get ready. As for the five boatmen, on its being explained to them through the interpreter that they had to take a boat across the Danube, they fell on their knees and began to weep. The syndic declared that they might just as well be shot at once, as sent to certain death. The expedition was absolutely impossible, not only from the strength of the current, but because the tributaries had brought into the Danube a great quantity of fir trees recently cut down in the mountains, which could not be avoided in the dark, and would certainly come against the boat and sink it. Besides, how could one land on the opposite bank among willows which would scuttle the boat, and with a flood of unknown extent? The syndic concluded, then, that the operation was physically impossible. In vain did the Emperor tempt them with an offer of 6,000 francs per man; even this could not persuade them, though, as they said, they were poor boatmen with families, and this sum would be a fortune to them. But, as I have already said, some lives must be sacrificed to save those of the greater number, and the knowledge of this makes commanders sometimes pitiless. The Emperor was inflexible, and the grenadiers received orders to take the poor men, whether they would or not, and we went down to the town.

The corporal who had been assigned to me was an intelligent man. Taking him for my interpreter, I charged him as we went along to tell the syndic of the boatmen that as he had got to come along with us, he had better in his own interest show us his best boat, and point out everything that we should require for her fitting. The poor man obeyed; so we got an excellent vessel, and we took all that we wanted from the others. We had two anchors, but as I did not think we should be able to make use of them, I had sewn to the end of each cable a piece of canvas with a large stone wrapped in it. I had seen in the south of France the fishermen use an apparatus of this kind to hold their boats by throwing the cord over the willows at the water’s edge. I put on a cap, the grenadiers took their forage caps, we had provisions, ropes, axes, saws, a ladder, — everything, in short, which I could think of to take.

Our preparations ended, I was going to give the signal to start, when the five boatmen implored me with tears to let the soldiers escort them to their houses, to take perhaps the last farewell of their wives and children; but, fearing that a tender scene of this kind would further reduce their small stock of courage, I refused. Then the syndic said, ‘Well, as we have only a short time to live, allow us five minutes to commend our souls to God, and do you do the same, for you also are going to your death.’ They all fell on their knees, the grenadiers and I following their example, which seemed to please the worthy people much. When their prayer was over, I gave each man a glass of the monks' excellent wine, and we pushed out into the stream.

I had bidden the grenadiers follow in silence all the orders of the syndic who was steering; the current was too strong for us to cross over straight from Mölk: we went up, therefore, along the bank under sail for more than a league, and although the wind and the waves made the boat jump, this part was accomplished without accident. But when the time came to take to our oars and row out from the land, the mast, on being lowered, fell over to one side, and the sail, dragging in the water, offered a strong resistance to the current and nearly capsized us. The master ordered the ropes to be cut and the masts to be sent overboard: but the boatmen, losing their heads, began to pray without stirring. Then the corporal, drawing his sword, said, 'You can pray and work too; obey at once, or I will kill you.' Compelled to choose between possible and certain death, the poor fellows took up their hatchets, and with the help of the grenadiers, the mast was promptly cut away and sent floating. It was high time, for hardly were we free from this dangerous burden when we felt a fearful shock. A pine-stem borne down by the stream had struck the boat. We all shuddered, but luckily the planks were not driven in this time. Would the boat, however, resist more shocks of this kind? We could not see the stems, and only knew that they were near by the heavier tumble of the waves. Several touched us, but no serious accident resulted. Meantime the current bore us along, and as our oars could make very little way against it to give us the necessary slant, I feared for a moment that it would sweep us below the enemy's camp, and that my expedition would fail. By dint of hard rowing, however, we had got three-quarters of the way over, when I saw an immense black mass looming over the water. Then a sharp scratching was heard, branches caught us in the face, and the boat stopped. To our questions the owner replied that we were on an island covered with willows and poplars, of which the flood had nearly reached the top. We had to grope about with our hatchets to clear a passage through the branches, and when we had succeeded in passing the obstacle, we found the stream much less furious than in the middle of the river, and finally reached the left bank in front of the Austrian camp. This shore was bordered with very thick trees, which, overhanging the bank like a dome, made the approach difficult no doubt, but at the same time concealed our boat from the camp. The whole shore was lighted up by the bivouac fires, while we remained in the shadow thrown by the branches of the willows. I let the boat float downwards, looking for a suitable landing-place. Presently I perceived that a sloping path had been made down the bank by the enemy to allow the men and horses to get to the water. The corporal adroitly threw into the willows one of the stones that I had made ready, the cord caught in a tree, and the boat brought up against the land a foot or two from the slope. It must have been just about midnight. The Austrians, having the swollen Danube between them and the French, felt themselves so secure that except the sentry the whole camp was asleep.

It is usual in war for the guns and the sentinels always to face towards the enemy, however far off he may be. A battery placed in advance of the camp was therefore turned towards the river, and sentries were walking on the top of the bank. The trees prevented them from seeing the extreme edge, while from the boat I could see through the branches a great part of the bivouac. So far my mission had been more successful than I had ventured to hope, but in order to make the success complete I had to bring away a prisoner, and to execute such an operation fifty paces away from several thousand enemies, whom a single cry would rouse, seemed very difficult. Still, I had to do something. I made the five sailors lie down at the bottom of the boat under guard of two grenadiers, another grenadier I posted at the bow of the boat which was close to the bank, and myself disembarked, sword in hand, followed by the corporal and two grenadiers. The boat was a few feet from dry land; we had to walk in the water, but at last we were on the slope. We went up, and I was making ready to rush on the nearest sentry, disarm him, gag him, and drag him off to the boat, when the ring of metal and the sound of singing in a low voice fell on my ears. A man, carrying a great tin pail, was coming to draw water, humming a song as he went; we quickly went down again to the river to hide under the branches, and as the Austrian stooped to fill his pail my grenadiers seized him by the throat, put a handkerchief full of wet sand over his mouth, and placing their sword-points against his body threatened him with death if he resisted or uttered a sound. Utterly bewildered, the man obeyed, and let us take him to the boat; we hoisted him into the hands of the grenadiers posted there, who made him lie down beside the sailors. While this Austrian was lying captured, I saw by his clothes that he was not strictly speaking a soldier, but an officer’s servant. I should have preferred to catch a combatant, who could have given me more precise information; but I was going to content myself with this capture for want of a better, when I saw at top of the slope two soldiers carrying a cauldron between them, on a pole. They were only a few paces off. It was impossible for us to re-embark without being seen. I therefore signed to my grenadiers to hide themselves again, and as soon as the two Austrians stooped to fill their vessel, powerful arms seized them from behind, and plunged their heads under water. We had to stupefy them a little, since they had their swords, and I feared that they might resist. Then they were picked up in turn, their mouths covered with a handkerchief full of sand, and sword-points against their breasts constrained them to follow us. They were shipped as the servant had been, and my men and I got on board again.

So far all had gone well. I made the sailors get up and take their oars, and ordered the corporal to cast loose the rope which held us to the bank. It was, however, so wet, and the knot had been drawn so tight by the force of the stream, that it was impossible to unfasten. We had to saw the rope, which took us some minutes. Meanwhile, the rope, shaking with our efforts, imparted its movement to the branches of the willow round which it was wrapped, and the rustling became loud enough to attract the notice of the sentry. He drew near, unable to see the boat, but perceiving that the agitation of the branches increased, he called out, ‘Who goes there?’ No answer. Further challenge from the sentry. We held our tongues, and worked away. I was in deadly fear; after facing so many dangers, it would have been too cruel if we were wrecked in sight of port. At last, the rope was cut and the boat pushed off. But hardly was it clear of the overhanging willows than the light of the bivouac fires made it visible to the sentry, who, shouting, ‘To arms,’ fired at us. No one was hit but at the sound the whole camp was astir in a moment, and the gunners, whose pieces were ready loaded and trained on the river, honoured my boat with some cannon-shots. At the report my heart leapt for joy, for I knew that the Emperor and marshal would hear it. I turned my eyes towards the convent, with its lighted windows, of which I had, in spite of the distance, never lost sight. Probably all were open at this moment, but in one only could I perceive any increase of brilliancy; it was the great balcony window, which was as large as the doorway of a church, and sent from afar a flood of light over the stream. Evidently it had just been opened at the thunder of the cannon, and I said to myself, ‘The Emperor and the marshals are doubtless on the balcony; they know that I have reached the enemy’s camp, and are making vows for my safe return.’ This thought raised my courage, and I heeded the cannon-balls not a bit. Indeed, they were not very dangerous, for the stream swept us along at such a pace that the gunners could not aim with any accuracy, and we must have been very unlucky to get hit. One shot would have done for us, but all fell harmless into the Danube. Soon I was out of range, and could reckon a successful issue to my enterprise. Still, all danger was not yet at an end; We had still to cross among the floating pine-stems, and more than once we struck on submerged islands, and were delayed by the branches of the poplars. At last we reached the right bank, more than two leagues below Mölk, and a new terror assailed me. I could see bivouac fires, and had no means of learning whether they belonged to a French regiment. The enemy had troops on both banks, and I knew that on the right bank Marshal Lannes’ outposts were not far from Mölk, facing an Austrian corps, posted at Saint-Pölten.

Our army would doubtless go forward at daybreak, but was it already occupying this place? And were the fires that I saw those of friends or enemies? I was afraid that the current had taken me too far down, but the problem was solved by French cavalry trumpets sounding the reveillé. Our uncertainty being at an end, we rowed with all our strength to the shore, where in the dawning light we could see a village. As we drew near, the report of a carbine was heard, and a bullet whistled by our ears. It was evident that the French sentries took us for a hostile crew. I had not foreseen this possibility, and hardly knew how we were to succeed in getting recognised, till the happy thought struck me of making my six grenadiers shout, ‘Vive l’Empereur Napoléon!’ This was, of course, no certain evidence that we were French, but it would attract the attention of the officers, who would have no fear of our small numbers, and would no doubt prevent the men from firing on us before they knew whether we were French or Austrians. A few moments later I came ashore, and I was received by Colonel Gautrin and the 9th Hussars, forming part of Lannes’ division. If we had landed half a league lower down we should have tumbled into the enemy’s pickets. The colonel lent me a horse, and gave me several wagons, in which I placed the grenadiers, the boatmen, and the prisoners, and the little cavalcade went off towards Mölk. As we went along, the corporal, at my orders, questioned the three Austrians, and I learnt with satisfaction that the camp whence I had brought them away belonged to the very division, General Killer’s, the position of which the Emperor was so anxious to learn. There was, therefore, no further doubt that that general had joined the archduke on the other side of the Danube. There was no longer any question of a battle on the road which we held, and Napoleon, having only the enemy’s cavalry in front of him, could in perfect safety push his troops forward towards Vienna, from which we were but three easy marches distant. With this information I galloped forward, in order to bring it to the Emperor with the least possible delay.

When I reached the gate of the monastery, it was broad day. I found the approach blocked by the whole population of the little town of Mölk, and heard among the crowd the cries of the wives, children, and friends of the sailors whom I had carried off. In a moment I was surrounded by them, and was able to calm their anxiety by saying, in very bad German, ‘Your friends are alive, and you will see them in a few moments.’ A great cry of joy went up from the crowd, bringing out the officer in command of the guard at the gate. On seeing me he ran off in pursuance of orders to warn the aides-de-camp to let the Emperor know of my return. In an instant the whole palace was up. The good

Marshal Lannes came to me, embraced me cordially, and carried me straight off to the Emperor, crying out, ‘Here he is, sir; I knew he would come back. He has brought three prisoners from General Hiller’s division.’ Napoleon received me warmly, and though I was wet and muddy all over, he laid his hand on my shoulder, and did not forget to give his greatest sign of satisfaction by pinching my ear. I leave you to imagine how I was questioned! The Emperor wanted to know every incident of the adventure in detail, and when I had finished my story said, ‘I am very well pleased with you, “Major” Marbot.’ These words were equivalent to a commission, and my joy was full. At that moment, a chamberlain announced that breakfast was served, and as I was calculating on having to wait in the gallery until the Emperor had finished, he pointed with his finger towards the dining-room, and said, ‘You will breakfast with me.’ As this honour had never been paid to any officer of my rank, I was the more flattered. During breakfast I learnt that the Emperor and the marshal had not been to bed all night, and that when they heard the cannon on the opposite bank they had all rushed on to the balcony. The Emperor made me tell again the way in which I had surprised the three prisoners, and laughed much at the fright and surprise which they must have felt.

At last, the arrival of the wagons was announced, but they had much difficulty in making their way through the crowd, so eager were the people to see the boatmen. Napoleon, thinking this very natural, gave orders to open the gates, and let everybody come into the court. Soon after, the grenadiers, the boatmen, and the prisoners were led into the gallery. The Emperor, through his interpreter, first questioned the three Austrian soldiers, and learning with satisfaction that not only General Hiller’s corps, but the whole of the archduke’s army, were on the other bank, he told Berthier to give the order for the troops to march at once on Saint-Pölten. Then, calling up the corporal and the five soldiers, he fastened the Cross on their breast, appointed them knights of the Empire, and gave them an annuity of 1,200 francs apiece. All the veterans wept for joy. Next came the boatmen’s turn. The Emperor told them that, as the danger they had run was a good deal more than he had expected, it was only fair that he should increase their reward; so, instead of the 6,000 francs promised, 12,000 in gold were given to them on the spot. Nothing could express their delight; they kissed the hands of the Emperor and all present, crying, ‘Now we are rich!’ Napoleon laughingly asked the syndic if he would go the same journey for the same price the next night. But the man answered that, having escaped by miracle what seemed certain death, he would not undertake such a journey again even if his lordship, the abbot of Mölk, would give him the monastery and all its possessions. The boatmen withdrew, blessing the generosity of the French Emperor, and the grenadiers, eager to show off their decoration before their comrades, were about to go off with their three prisoners, when Napoleon perceived that the Austrian servant was weeping bitterly. He reassured him as to his safety, but the poor lad replied, sobbing, that he knew the French treated their prisoners well, but that, as he had on him a belt, containing nearly all his captain’s money, he was afraid that the officer would accuse him of deserting in order to rob him, and he was heart-broken at the thought. Touched by the worthy fellow’s distress, the Emperor told him that he was free, and as soon as we were before Vienna, he would be passed through the outposts, and be able to return to his master. Then, taking a rouleau of 1,000 francs, he put it in the man’s hand, saying, ‘One must honour goodness wherever it is shown.’ Lastly, the Emperor gave some pieces of gold to each of the other two prisoners, and ordered that they too should be sent back to the Austrian outposts, so that they might forget the fright which we had caused them, and that it might not be said that any soldiers, even enemies, had spoken to the Emperor of the French without receiving some benefit.

THE PITEOUS DEATH OF GASTON, SON OF THE COUNT OF FOIX

MORE than five hundred years ago, on St. Catherine’s Day, 1388, Master Jean Froissart, a priest of Hainault, rode into the little town of Orthez. He was in search of information about battles and tournaments, for he was writing his famous ‘History and Chronicle.’ To get news of all kinds he rode gaily about, with a white greyhound in a leash, and carrying a novel which he had begun for the entertainment of ladies and princes. Arriving at Orthez (where, long afterwards, the Duke of Wellington fought the French on the borders of Spain), Master Froissart alighted at the hotel with the sign of the Moon. Meanwhile a knight who had travelled with Froissart went up to the castle, and paid his court to Gaston Phœbus, Count of Foix. He found the Count in the gallery of the palace just after dinner, for this prince always went to bed at midday and took supper at midnight. He was a great and powerful noble, of stately and beautiful presence, though now he was nearly sixty years old. A wise knight he was, bold in enterprise, and of good counsel. Never did he suffer any unbeliever in his company, and he was very pious, every day making many and long prayers, and giving alms to the poor folk at his gate. He took much delight in minstrelsy, and at his midnight supper songs and virelays were chanted to him. Till about three o’clock in the morning he listened while Master Froissart read aloud his poems, tales, or histories, while the courtiers yawned, no doubt, and wished for bedtime. But it was the good Count’s manner to turn night into day. He was sometimes melancholy, and, as is told in the story of Orthon, men believed that he saw and knew events far distant, but in what manner none could tell. This great prince dwelt at peace while the wars of France, England, Portugal, and Spain raged outside his dominions. Rich, powerful, handsome, and deeply religious, he seemed to have everything that could make him happy, but he had no son and heir; his lands, on his death, would go to a distant cousin. Nor did the lady his wife live with the Count of Foix. Concerning this, and the early death of the Count’s one son, Gaston, Master Froissart was very curious, but he found that people did not care to speak of the matter. At length an old squire told him the story of the death of Gaston.

The Countess of Foix was the sister of the King of Navarre, and between the Count her husband, and the King her brother, a quarrel arose on a question of money. The Count therefore sent his wife to her brother at Pampeluna, that she might arrange the matter; but the end of it was that she stayed in Navarre, and did not return to her lord. Meanwhile her son Gaston grew up at Orthez, and married a daughter of the Count of Armagnac, being now a lad of sixteen, a good squire, and in all things very like his father. He had a desire to see his mother, and so rode into Navarre, hoping to bring home his mother, the Countess of Foix. But she would not leave Navarre for all that he could say, and the day came when he and the young squires of his company must return. Then the King of Navarre led him apart into a secret chamber, and there gave him a little purse. Now the purse was full of a powder of such sort that no living creature could taste of it and live, but must die without remedy.

‘Gaston, fair nephew,’ said the King, ‘you see how your father, the Count, holds your mother in bitter hate — a sore grief to me and to you also. Now to change all this, and bring your father and mother back to their ancient love, you must watch your chance and sprinkle a little of this powder on any food that your father is about to eat, taking good care that no man sees you. And the powder is a charm so strong that your father, as soon as he has tasted it, will desire nothing so much as to be friends with your mother again, and never will they leave each other. But you must take heed that no man knows of this purpose, or all is lost.’

The young Count, believing, in his innocence, what his uncle said, made answer that he would gladly do as he was bidden. Then he rode back to Orthez, and showed his father all the presents and jewels that had been given to him in Navarre, except the little purse.

Now it was the custom of the young Count to be much in the company of his brother by another mother, and, as they played together one day, this boy, named Yvain, caught hold of the little purse which Gaston wore about his neck under his coat, and asked him what it was. But Gaston made no answer. Three days later the lads quarrelled over a stroke at tennis, and Gaston struck Yvain a blow. Yvain ran weeping to his father, the Count, who asked what ailed him.

‘Gaston struck me,’ said he, ‘but it is Gaston, not I, who deserves a blow.’

‘What has he done?’ asked the Count.

‘Ever since he came from his mother’s in Navarre he carries about his neck a little purse full of a powder. But I only know that he says you and his mother will soon be good friends once more.’

‘Ha!’ cried the Count, ‘do you be silent.’

That day at dinner, as Gaston served the meats, for this was his duty, the Count called to him, seized his coat, opened it, and, with his knife, cut the purse from the boy’s neck. Gaston said no word, but grew pale and trembled. The Count opened the purse, spread the powder on a piece of bread, and threw it to a dog. No sooner had the dog eaten the bread than his eyes turned round, and he fell dead.

The Count leaped up, a knife in his hand, and would have slain his son as a traitor, but the knights and esquires, kneeling, prayed him to hold his hand.

‘Perchance,’ said they, ‘Gaston knew not the nature of that which was in the purse, and is guiltless in this matter.’

‘So be it,’ said the Count. ‘Hold him prisoner in the tower at your own peril.’

Then he seized all the companions and friends of Gaston, for they must have known, he said, that his son carried a purse secretly. Fifteen of the fairest and noblest of the boys he put to death with horrible tortures, but they knew nothing and could tell nothing. Then he called together all his nobles and bishops, and told them that Gaston also must die. But they prayed for his life, because they loved him dearly, and he was the heir of all the Count’s lands. So the Count decided to keep Gaston in prison for some months, and then send him to travel for two or three years. The Pope sent a cardinal to the Count, bidding him spare Gaston, but, before the Cardinal reached Orthez, Gaston was dead.

One day the servant who took meat and drink into the boy’s dark dungeon saw that he had not tasted food for many days. All the dishes lay full of mouldering meat in a row along the wall. Then the servant ran and warned the Count that Gaston was starving himself to death. The Count was trimming his nails with a little knife, and he sped in great anger to the dungeon.

‘Traitor, why dost thou not eat?’ he cried, dealt the boy a cuff, and rushed out again, and so went to his chamber.

But the point of the little knife, which was in his hand, had cut a vein in Gaston’s neck, and, being weak with hunger and grief, Gaston died, for the vein could not be staunched. Then the Count made great lament, and had his head shaven, and wore mourning for many days.

Thus it chanced that the Count of Foix lived without an heir, turning night into day, praying much, and listening to minstrels, giving alms, and hearkening to strange messages of death and war that were borne to him how no man knew. And his brother, Pierre, was a good knight and wise by day, yet at night madness fell on him, and he raved, beating the air with a naked sword. And this had been his manner ever since he fought with and slew a huge bear on the hills. Now when his wife saw that bear brought home dead she fainted, and in three days she fled with her children, and came back no more. For her father had once pursued that bear, which cried to him: ‘Thou huntest me who wish thee no harm, but thou shalt die an ill death.’ He then left off pursuing the bear; but the Count’s brother slew the beast on another day, and thereafter he went mad in the night, though by day he was wise enough.

These tales were told to Master Froissart by the old squire at Orthez.

ROLF STAKE

There was once a king in Denmark named Rolf Stake; right famous is he among the kings of yore, foremost for liberality, daring, and courtesy. Of his courtesy one proof celebrated in story is this.

A poor little boy named Vögg came into King Rolf’s hall: the King was then young and slender of build. Vögg went near and looked up at him. Then said the King: ‘What wouldst thou say, boy, that thou lookest at me so?’

Vögg answered: ‘When I was at home, I heard tell that King Rolf at Hleidr was the tallest man in Northland; but now here sits in the high seat a thin stake, and they call him their king.’

Then answered the King: ‘Thou, boy, hast given me a name to be known by — Rolf Stake to wit. ’Tis custom to follow a naming with a gift. But now I see that thou hast not with the naming any gift to give me such as would beseem me to accept, wherefore he of us who hath must give to the other.’ With that the King drew a gold ring from his own hand and gave it to him.

Then said Vögg: ‘Blessed above all kings be thou who givest! And by this vow I bind me to be that man’s bane who shall be thine.’

Then said the King with a laugh: ‘With small gain is Vögg fain.’

Further, this proof is told of Rolf Stake’s daring.

There ruled over Upsala a king named Adils, who had to wife Yrsa, Rolf Stake’s mother. He was at war with Ali, the king who then ruled Norway. They appointed to meet in battle upon the ice of the lake called Venir. King Adils sent a message to Rolf Stake, his stepson, that he should come to help him, and promised pay to all his force so long as they should be on the campaign, but the King himself was to receive for his own three costly things from Sweden, whatsoever he should choose. King Rolf could not go himself by reason of a war that he had against the Saxons; but he sent to Adils his twelve Berserks, of whom were Bödvar Bjarki, Hjalti Stoutheart, Whiteserk Bold, Vött, Vidseti, and the brothers Svipdag and Beigud.

In the battle then fought fell King Ali and a great part of his host. And King Adils took from the dead prince the helmet Battleboar and his horse Raven. Then the Berserks of Rolf Stake asked for their wage, three pounds of gold apiece; and further they asked to carry to Rolf Stake those costly things which they in his behalf should choose. These were the helmet Battleboar, and the corslet Finnsleif, which no weapon could pierce, and the gold ring called Sviagriss, an heirloom from Adils’ forefathers. But the King denied them all the costly things, nor did he even pay their wage.

The Berserks went away ill-content with their lot, and told Rolf Stake what had been done.

At once he started for Upsala, and when he came with his ships into the river Fyri he then rode to Upsala, and with him his twelve Berserks, without any truce guaranteed. Yrsa, his mother, welcomed him, and led him, not to the King’s hall, but to a lodging. There fires were lighted for them and ale given them to drink.

‘He fleeth not the flame
Who leapeth o’er the same’

Then some men of King Adils came in and threw billets of wood on the fire, and made such a blaze that it scorched the clothes of Rolf’s company. And they said: ‘Is it true that Rolf Stake and his Berserks flee neither fire nor iron?’ Then up leapt Rolf and all his twelve, and he crying,

‘Heap we yet higher
Adils’ house-fire,’

took his shield and cast it on the fire, and leapt thereover, crying yet again,

‘He fleeth not the flame
Who leapeth o’er the same.’

Likewise one after the other did all his men. Then they seized those who had heaped up the fire, and cast them thereon.

And now came Yrsa and gave to Rolf Stake a deer’s horn filled with gold, and therewith the ring Sviagriss, and bade them ride away to their fleet. They leapt on their horses and rode down to Fyris-field. Soon they saw that King Adils rode after them with his force fully armed, purposing to slay them. Whereupon Rolf Stake, plunging his right hand into the horn, took of the gold and sowed it all over the path. But when the Swedes saw that, they leapt from their saddles and gathered each what he could get; but King Adils bade them ride on, and himself rode at speed. Slungnir his horse was named, of all horses the fleetest.

Then Rolf Stake, when he saw that King Adils rode near him, took the ring Sviagriss and threw it to him, and bade him accept the gift. King Adils rode to the ring, and lifting it on his lowered spear-point slid it up along the shaft. Then did Rolf Stake turn him back, and, seeing how he louted low, cried: ‘Now have I made Sweden’s greatest grovel swine-wise.’

So they parted.

For this reason gold is by poets called ‘the seed of Stake’ or ‘of Fyris-field.’

THE WRECK OF THE ‘WAGER’

THE Honourable John Byron, grandfather of the poet, was a celebrated British Admiral who in almost all his voyages fell in with such rough weather that his sailors nicknamed him ‘Foul-weather Jack.’

When he was seventeen years old he served as midshipman in the ‘Wager,’ a vessel attached to the squadron under the command of Commodore Anson which sailed out to the Spanish Settlements in the Pacific in 1740.

From the set-out the expedition was unfortunate. Almost all the ships were ill-fitted and ill-provisioned for so long a voyage. Moreover they were delayed until long after the proper season for their departure was past, which was regarded by the soldiers and sailors as an evil omen. This neglect affected the ‘Wager’ more than any other ship, as she was an old East Indiaman, and had been bought into the service for the voyage, and fitted out for it as a man-of-war.

Besides this, when under sail she listed to one side, as she was top-laden with heavy military gear and stores for the use of the other vessels, while the lower holds were filled with light merchandise for bartering with the Indians.

Her crew were men who had been pressed on their return from long voyages, and the marines a small troop of invalids from the Chelsea Hospital, who were all alike very miserably depressed at the prospect of the long voyage which lay before them.

Even Captain Kid, under whose command the ‘Wager’ sailed out of port, when on his death-bed shortly after, foretold her ill-success.

Upon his death Captain Cheap took command, and was able to keep with the squadron until they were about to enter the Straits la Marie, where the wind shifted to the south, and with the turn of the tide the ‘Wager’ was separated from the other ships, and very narrowly escaped being wrecked off Staten Island.

However, she regained her station with the rest of the fleet until a few days later, when they were caught by a deep roll of a hollow sea, and lost their mizzen mast, and all the windward chain plates were broken.

They tried to rig up a substitute for the mizzen mast, but failed, as hard westerly gales set in with a tremendous short chopping swell, which raised the waves to a mountainous height, while from time to time a heavy sea broke over the ship. The boats on the davits were cast from their lashings, and filled with water, and the ship in all parts was soon in a most shattered and crazy state.

They had now lost sight of the squadron, and from the numbers of birds, and the drifting seaweed in the waters, they found they were being borne on to a lee shore. The heavy clouds that lowered above them, or the blinding sleet and snow, hid the sun and prevented the officers from taking sights; and at night no moon or stars by which they could steer their course were visible in the wild gloom through which they tossed.

When the officers at last found they were out of their bearings, they tried to persuade the captain to alter the course, but this he refused to do, as he believed he was making directly for the Island of Socoro, which was the place arranged for the squadron to meet, and whence it was intended they should make their first attack upon the Spaniards.

At this time, when all but twelve men on the ‘Wager’ were disabled by fatigue or sickness, there loomed against the dull clouds a yet heavier cloud, which was that of mountainous masses of land. Then Captain Cheap at last realised their danger, and gave orders to wear ship to the southward, hoping that they might crowd her off the land.

But the fury of the gale increased as night fell upon them, while to add to their dismay, as each sail was set with infinite labour, it was set only to be blown or rent immediately from the yard.

At four o’clock in the morning the ship struck, then again for the second time more violently; and presently she lay helpless on her beam ends — while the sea every now and then broke over her.

Everyone who could move rushed to the quarter-deck, but those who were dying of scurvy and who could not leave their hammocks were drowned in them.

In the uncertain light of dawn they could see nothing around them but leaden breakers from whose foam-crested manes the wind swept the blinding spray. The ship lay in this terrible plight for some little time, while every soul on board counted each moment as his last.

In this scene of wild disorder the men lost all reason and restraint, some gave themselves up to death like logs, and were rolled hither and thither with each jerk and roll of the shivering ship.

One man in the exaltation of his despair stalked about the deck, and flourished a cutlass over his head, and struck at anyone who came near him with it — meanwhile shouting that he was the ‘king of the country.’

Another, and a brave man, was so overcome by the fury of the seething waters, that he tried to throw himself from the rails at the quarter-deck, and to end in death a scene he felt too shocking to look upon.

The man at the helm still kept his post, though both rudder and tiller had been carried away; and applied himself to his duty with the same respect and coolness as though the ship were in the greatest safety.

Then Mr. Jones, the mate, spoke to the men, saying, ‘My friends! have you never seen a ship amongst breakers before? Lend a hand, boys, and lay on to the sheets and braces. I have no fear but that we shall stick her near enough to the land to save our lives.’

Although he said these gallant words without hope of saving a single soul, he gave courage to many of the men, and they set to work in earnest.

They steered as best they could by the sheets and braces, and presently ran her in between an opening in the breakers, and soon found themselves wedged fast between two great rocks.

With the break of day the weather cleared sufficiently to give them a glimpse of the land. They then set to work to get out the boats. The first one that was launched was so overladen by those anxious to save themselves, that they were almost swamped before they reached the shore.

On the day before the ship was wrecked, the captain had had his shoulder dislocated by a fall, and was lying in his berth when John Byron, whose duty it was to keep him informed of all that passed on deck, went to ask if he would not like to land. But the captain refused to leave the ship until everyone else had gone.

Throughout the ship, the scene was now greatly changed. The men who but a few moments before had been on their knees praying for mercy, when they found themselves not in immediate danger, became very riotous, rushed to the cabins and stores, and broke open every chest and box they could find, as well as casks of wine and brandy. And by drinking it some of them were rendered so helpless that they were drowned on board by the seas that continually swept over them.

The boatswain and five other men refused to leave the ship while there was any liquor to be got; then at last the captain consented to be helped from his bed, and to be taken on shore.

Although they were thankful to escape from the wreck, when they reached the land they found themselves in a scene desolate enough to quell the bravest soul.

The bay in which they had been cast away was open to the full force of the ocean, and was formed by rocky headlands and cliffs with here and there a stretch of beach, while rising abruptly from the sea a rock-bound steep frowned above them, which they afterwards named Mount Misery. Stretching back from the beach lay stagnant lagoons and dreary flats of morass and swamp, the edges of which were drained by the roots of heavy forest trees whose impenetrable gloom clothed the intervening country and hillsides.

And out before them in the tempestuous waters the wreck lay, from whose stores must come their only present chance of life.

With nightfall presently at hand, though they were cold and wet and hungry, they had to try to find a shelter, and at last chanced upon an Indian hut at a little distance from the beach. Into this poor refuge the men packed themselves in a voluntary imprisonment, while, to add to their distress, they were afraid of being attacked by Indians.

One of the officers died in this miserable place during the night, and of those left outside who were unable from want of room to press in, two more perished from cold.

The next morning found them cramped with starvation and cold, with no food but some fragments of biscuit, a solitary seagull someone had killed, and the stalks of wild celery that grew upon the beach. This they made into soup, and served as far as it would go to the hundred and forty men who clamoured for food.

The men who had remained on the wreck were now anxious to be brought on shore, and repeatedly made signals to that effect; but the sea was running high and it was not possible at once to set out to their relief. In their rage at the delay they fired one of the quarter-deck guns upon the camp, while on board they destroyed everything they could lay hands on. In his brutality and greed for spoil, a man named James Mitchell murdered one of their number. When at last they were brought to land they came dressed in laced clothes and officers’ suits which they had put on over their own dirty clothes.

These men Captain Cheap instantly had stripped of their finery and arms, and enforced the most strict discipline upon them and all the crew.

In a few days they had a shelter made with boats turned keel upwards, and placed on props, while the sides were lined with canvas and boughs.

Then followed five weary months, during which these hunger-driven men roamed the wretched island rocks both night and day, searching for shell-fish for food — men who were even thankful at the times when they were able to kill and eat the carrion crows that fed upon the flesh of their drowned comrades cast up by the tide. Some Indians surprised them by a visit, and stayed for several days, and with them they were able to barter cloth and beads for some dogs, and these they killed and ate.

The Indians were very short and black, and had long coarse hair that hung over their faces, and were almost without clothing of any kind.

The shipwrecked men grew more and more discontented as the months went by, and several of them threatened to take the life of the captain, whose strict discipline and guard over the stores made them very angry.

James Mitchell, who had murdered a man on the wreck, and had since committed another murder on Mount Misery, where his victim was found shockingly stabbed and mangled, was amongst this set. They had determined to leave the others, and on the night before their departure had placed a barrel of gunpowder close to the captain's hut, intending to blow it up, but were dissuaded from doing this by one of their number. After wandering about the island for some time they went up one of the lagoons on a punt they had made, and were never heard of again.

Captain Cheap was very jealous of his authority, and hasty in suspecting both officers and men of a desire to mutiny, and this suspicion on his part led to the unfortunate shooting by him of a midshipman named Mr. Cozens, whom he heard one day disputing with the purser as to the disposal of some stores he was at the time receiving from the wreck. The captain already had a personal dislike to Mr. Cozens, and hearing high words immediately rushed out of his hut and shot him. Mr. Cozens did not die until several days after, but the captain would not allow him to be attended to by the surgeon, or to have any care from the other men, though they begged to be allowed to carry him to their tent, but ordered that he should be left upon the ground, under a bit of canvas thrown over some bushes, until he died. This inhumanity on the part of Captain Cheap much embittered the men against him.

Their numbers were now lessened, chiefly by famine, to one hundred souls; the weather was still tempestuous and rainy, and the difficulty of finding food daily increased.

They had saved the long-boat from the wreck, and about this time John Bulkely, who had been a gunner on the 'Wager,' formed a plan of trying to make the voyage home through the Straits of Magellan. The plan was proposed to the captain, and though he thought it wiser to pretend to fall in with it, he had no intention of doing so. And when Bulkely and his followers suggested that there should be some restrictions on his command, or that at least he should do nothing without consulting his officers, the captain refused to consent to this; whereupon they imprisoned him, intending to take him to England on the charge of having murdered Mr. Cozens.

But when the boats were ready for sailing they found there would not be enough room for everybody. So the captain, Mr. Hamilton, and the doctor were left on the island.

John Byron did not know they were going to do this until the last moment. There were eighty-one men who left the island, who were distributed in the long-boat, the cutter, and the barge.

After they had been out about two days it was thought necessary to send back to the old station for some spare canvas. John Byron was sent back with the barge on this errand. When he was well away from the long-boat he told those with him he did not mean to return, but to rejoin Captain Cheap; and they agreed to do so too.

Although they were welcomed by those left on the island, there was little food for so many mouths, as almost everything had been carried off by the voyagers, and for a considerable time they were forced to live upon a kind of seaweed called slaugh, which with the stalks of wild celery they fried in the tallow of some candles they had saved.

This poor food reduced them to a terrible condition of weakness.

At last a really fair day broke upon them, when they went out to the remains of the wreck, and had the good fortune to hook up out of the bottom, three casks of beef which they brought safely to shore. The good food gave them renewed strength and energy, and again they became very anxious to leave the island.

Accordingly they launched both boats on December 15. The captain, Lieutenant Hamilton, and John Byron were in the barge with nine men, and Mr. Campbell in the yawl with six. And thus they set out on their journey northward.

Then followed weary days, during which they rowed over high seas, and weary nights of exposure and cold, when they landed on some barren shore for rest and to wait for daylight.

On Christmas Eve they found themselves tossing on a wide bay, and unable by the force of the currents to double the rocky headlands that lay in front of them. Unable, too, by the fury of the breakers to make the land or to find harbour, they were forced to lie outside all that night upon their oars.

They were so hungry then that they ate their shoes, which were made of raw sealskin.

On Christmas Day some of them landed, and had the good fortune to kill a seal. Though the two men who were left in each boat to take care of it could see their companions on shore eating seal, they were unable to have any themselves, as again when night came on the wind blew very hard, and the mighty breakers beat with pulse-like regularity on the shore.

John Byron, who had fallen into a comfortless sleep in the boat, was suddenly awakened by a shriek, and saw the yawl turned bottom upwards and go down.

One man was drowned, the other was thrown up by the breakers on the beach and saved by the people there.

At this place Mr. Hamilton, who was with the shore party, shot at a large sealion, which he hit with two balls; and when the brute presently charged at him with open mouth, he thrust his bayonet down its throat, as well as a great part of the barrel of his gun. But the sealion bit this in two with the greatest ease, and in spite of all its wounds, and all other efforts to kill it, got away.

As they had lost the yawl there was not enough of room to take all the men away from this place, therefore four of the marines agreed to remain and to try to make their way on foot to a more habitable country.

The captain gave them guns and food, and as the boat put off, they stood upon the beach and gave three cheers, and shouted ‘God bless the King.’

The others made another attempt to double the cape, but the wind, the sea, and currents were too strong for them, and again they failed. So disheartened were they now, that caring little for life, they agreed to return to their original station on Wager’s Island, and to end their days in miserable existence there.

They went back to the place where they had left the four marines in order to try to get some seal for their return passage and to take these men back with them, but when they searched all traces of them had gone.

It was here that the surgeon found in a curious cave the bodies of several Indians that were stretched out on a kind of platform. The flesh on the bodies had become perfectly dry and hard, and it was thought that it must be the kind of burial given to the great men or Caciques of the Indians.

After a terrible journey back to Wager’s Island they reached it alive, though again worn out by hunger and fatigue.

The first thing they did on reaching their old station was to bury the corpse of the man who had been murdered on Mount Misery by James Mitchell, for the men thought that all their misfortunes had arisen from the neglect of this proper duty to the dead, and they were sure that the restless spirit of this person haunted the waters around them at night, as they heard strange and unearthly cries from the sea. And one night, in bright moonlight, they saw and heard something which looked like a human being swimming near the shore.

Inconsistent as this may seem, they were soon so terribly driven by hunger that the last dreadful suggestion for food was beginning to be whispered amongst them, when fortunately some Indians from the island of Chiloc appeared. It was supposed they had heard of the wreck from those first Indians who had visited them, and had come to collect old iron and nails, which they value very much.

They were able to persuade the Cacique, who was a Christian named Martini, to promise to show them the safest and best way to some of the Spanish Settlements. Once more the barge was launched, with the fifteen souls on board who now remained on the island of the shipwrecked crew.

They followed their Indian guide by day for some time, during which their sufferings were so terrible that it was no unusual thing for one of their number to fall back dying from the oars, meanwhile beseeching his comrades for two or three mouthfuls of food which they had not.

Captain Cheap, who was always well provided with seal by the Indians, again showed how regardless he could be of the sufferings of others, and often though he could have relieved his men by giving up a small portion of his own food when he heard their heartrending appeals for it, let them die at their posts unheedful of their want and misery.

They were rather taken in by their Christian Indian Martini. He made them row the heavy barge a very long way up a river and then deserted them for several days. They found he wished to secure the barge here, which was to be a part of his reward, and which was too heavy to be carried over the rocks of the headlands in the way they carried their own canoes — and by which they escaped the heavy seas that ran round those places.

However, the Cacique returned again, and after a time he consented to take the captain with John Byron to row his canoe on to another part of the coast where there were more Indians.

They reached this camp late one evening, and while the captain was at once taken by Martini to a wigwam, Byron was left outside to shift for himself as best he could. He was so exhausted that all he could do was to creep into the shelter of a wigwam, and chance what fate might bring him.

These wigwams were built of branches of trees placed in a circle, which are bound at the top by a kind of creeper called supple-jack. The frame of the wigwam is covered with boughs and bark. The fire is lit in the very centre, round which the Indians lie. As there is no outlet for the smoke, it is not a very comfortable place to sleep in.

There were only two Indian women in the wigwam into which John Byron crept, who were very astonished to see him. However, they were kind to him and made up a good fire, and presently, when he made them understand that he was hungry, they gave him some fish to eat. But when he had finished it he was still so hungry that he made signs for more. Then they went out into the night, taking their dogs with them, and came back in an hour or two shivering and with water dripping from their hair. They had caught two more fish, which after they had cooked slightly they gave him to eat.

These people live only on what they can take from the sea, and train their dogs to dive for fish and their women for sea-eggs. While collecting these the women stay under water a wonderfully long time; they have really the hardest work to do, as they have to provide food for their husbands and children. They are not allowed to touch any food themselves until the husband is satisfied, when he gives them a very small portion, generally that which he does not care to eat himself.

Martini then told them that they would have to return in the canoe by which they had come to their companions, and that the Indians they were leaving would join them in a few days, after which they would all set out together on the journey northwards. They found Mr. Elliot, the surgeon, very ill, and Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Campbell were almost starved, having had only a few sea-eggs to eat since they had left.

About the middle of March they re-embarked with the other Indians, and soon afterwards Mr. Elliot died. He had been one of the strongest of the party, and one of the most useful and self-denying, and had never spared himself in trying to provide food for the others. He was also one of the best shots of the party.

Most of them were now reduced to rags and without shoes, and when they had to cross the stony headlands and swamps, and to carry heavy burdens, their feet were often terribly torn.

The Cacique had now become a very hard master to all but the captain, and forced them to row like galley slaves when they were in the boats. Indeed, the captain seemed to encourage the Indian in this conduct. He had become more selfish and cunning in keeping all the food he could lay hands on for himself, and was accustomed to sleep with his head pillowed on a dirty piece of canvas in which he wrapped portions of seal or sea-eggs. Thorough cleanliness had become an impossibility to them: they were now terribly emaciated and covered by vermin. The captain particularly was a most shocking sight. His legs had become tremendously swelled, probably from the disease known as ‘beri-beri,’ while his body was almost a skeleton, his beard had grown very long, and his face was covered with train oil and dirt.

When at last they were within a few miles of the island of Chiloc, they found they had to cross a most dangerous bay. After waiting for two days for fair weather they started, although the Cacique even then seemed terrified, and there was every reason for it, as the sea ran so strong and their boat was most crazy, the bottom plank having opened, and ceaseless bailing had to be carried on all the time. It was early in June when they reached this place.

Directly the Cacique landed he buried all the things he had brought from the wreck, for he knew that the Spaniards would take everything from him.

That same evening, as they drew near to a settlement of Chiloc Indians the Cacique asked them to load their one remaining gun with the last charge of powder, and to show him how to fire it off. Holding the gun as far away from his head as he could he fired, and fell back into the bottom of the canoe.

When the Chiloc Indians found out who they were, they brought fish and potatoes for them to eat, and this was the nicest meal they had had for more than a year.

These Indians are very strong and nice-looking people; they are extremely neat in their dress. The men wear what is called a puncho, which is a square piece of cloth in stripes of different colours, with a slit in the centre wide enough to put their heads through, and it hangs from their shoulders.

After a little time the shipwrecked men were sent on by these people to the Spaniards at Castro. There they were met by a number of soldiers, with three or four officers, who surrounded them fiercely as though they were a most formidable enemy instead of the four poor helpless creatures left of the fifteen men that had set out from Wager’s Island.

Though they had had much better food since they had been with the kindly Indians, they were so weak that they could hardly walk up the hill to the shed in which they were to be lodged.

Numbers of people came to look at them in this place, as though they were wild beasts or curiosities; and when they heard they had been starved for more than a year, they brought quantities of chicken and all kinds of good things for them to eat.

John Byron then began to feel more comfortable. He was always ready to make a meal, and used to carry food in his pockets so that he need not wait a second for it if he felt hungry. Even the captain owned that he ate so much that he felt quite ashamed of himself.

In a little time an old Jesuit priest came to see them. He did not come because he was sorry for them, but because he had heard from the Indian Cacique that they had things of great value about them. The priest began by producing a bottle of brandy, and gave them all some to open their hearts.

Captain Cheap told him he had nothing, not remembering that Martini had seen his gold repeater watch; but at the same time he said that Mr. Campbell had a silver watch, which he at once ordered him to make a present of to the priest.

Soon after the Spanish governor sent for them to be brought to Chaco, where they were very well treated by the people. Whilst here John Byron was asked to marry the niece of a very rich old priest.

The lady made the suggestion through her uncle, saying that first she wished him to be converted, and then he might marry her.

When the old priest made the offer, he took John Byron into a room where there were several large chests full of clothes. Taking from one of them a large piece of linen, he told him it should be made up into shirts for him at once if he would marry the lady.

The thought of new shirts was a great temptation to John Byron, as he had only the one in which he had lived ever since he had been wrecked.

However, he denied himself this luxury, and excused himself for not being able to accept the honour of the lady’s hand.

On *this* occasion he managed to speak Spanish sufficiently well to make himself understood.

In January 1742 they were sent on to Valparaiso as English prisoners. Only Captain Cheap and Mr. Campbell were recognised as officers, as they had saved their commissions, and they were sent to St. Jago, while John Byron and Mr. Hamilton were kept in prison. However, when they were released they were permitted to rejoin the others at St. Jago, and found them living with a Scotch physician named Don Patricio Gedd.

When Dr. Gedd heard of the four English prisoners, he had begged the President to allow them to live at his house.

This was granted, and during the two years they lived there with him, he treated them most hospitably, and would hear of no return being made for his kindness.

Mr. Campbell changed his religion while they were at St. Jago, and left his companions.

At the end of two years the President sent for them, and told them that they were at liberty to leave the country in a French ship bound for Spain.

Accordingly, in the end of December 1744, they sailed in the frigate bound for Conception, where she was to join three more French ships that were homeward bound.

On October 27 they reached Cape Ortegal, and after lying at anchor there for several days they were taken to Landernan, where they lived on parole for three months, until an order came from the Court of Spain to allow them to return home by the first ship that sailed. After arranging with the captain of a Dutch lugger to land them at Dover they embarked in her and had a very uncomfortable passage.

When they got well up Channel they found the Dutchman had no intention of landing them at Dover, as he was making his way up off the coast of France. In the midst of their indignation at this breach of faith, an English man-of-war appeared to windward, and bore down upon them. This was the ‘Squirrel,’ commanded by Captain Masterton. He at once sent them off in one of his cutters, and they arrived at Dover that afternoon.

They agreed to start for London the next morning. Captain Cheap and Mr. Hamilton were to drive in a post-chaise, and John Byron was to ride. But when they came to divide the little money they had left, it was found there would be barely enough to pay for horses. There was not a farthing left for John Byron to buy any food he might want on the way, nothing even to pay for the turnpikes. However, he boldly cheated these by riding as hard as he could through them all, and paid no attention to the shouts of the men when they tried to stop him. The want of food he had to put up with.

When he got to the Borough he took a coach and drove to Marlborough Street, where his people had lived before he left England. But when he came to the house he found it shut up. He had been away for five years, and had not heard a word from home all that time, therefore he was at a loss to know what to do for a few minutes until he remembered a linen draper’s shop near by which his family had used. He drove there, and told them who he was. They paid his coachman for him, and told him that his sister was married to Lord Carlisle, and was living in Soho Square.

He went at once to her house; but the porter would not admit him for a long time. He was strangely dressed; half in Spanish, and half in French clothing, and besides, he wore very large and very mud-bespattered boots. The porter was about to shut the door in his face when John Byron persuaded him to let him in.

Then at last his troubles were over. His sister was delighted to see him, and at once gave him money with which to buy new clothes. And until he looked like an Englishman again, he did not feel he had come to the end of all the strange scenes and adventures that he had experienced for more than five years.

PETER WILLIAMSON

I WAS born in Hirulay, in the county of Aberdeen. My parents, though not rich, were respectable, and so long as I was under their care all went well with me. Unhappily, I was sent to stay with an aunt at Aberdeen, where, at eight years old, when playing on the quay, I was noticed as a strong, active little fellow by two men belonging to a vessel in the harbour. Now this vessel was in the employ of certain merchants of Aberdeen, who used her for the villainous purpose of kidnapping — that is, stealing young children from their parents, and selling them as slaves in the plantations abroad.

These impious monsters, marking me out for their prey, tempted me on board the ship, which I had no sooner entered than they led me between the decks to some other boys whom they had kidnapped in like manner. Not understanding what a fate was in store for me, I passed the time in childish amusement with the other lads in the steerage, for we were never allowed to go on deck while the vessel stayed in the harbour, which it did till they had imprisoned as many luckless boys as they needed.

Then the ship set sail for America. I cannot remember much of the voyage, being a mere child at the time, but I shall never forget what happened when it was nearly ended. We had reached the American coast when a hard gale of wind sprang up from the south-east, and about midnight the ship struck on a sandbank off Cape May, near Delaware. To the terror of all on board, it was soon almost full of water. The boat was then hoisted out, and the captain and his fellow-villains, the crew, got into it, leaving me and my deluded companions, as they supposed, to perish. The cries, shrieks, and tears of a throng of children had no effect on these merciless wretches.

But happily for us the wind abated, and the ship being on a sandbank, which did not give way to let her deeper, we lay here till morning, when the captain, unwilling to lose all his cargo, sent some of the crew in a boat to the ship's side to bring us ashore. A sort of camp was made, and here we stayed till we were taken in by a vessel bound to Philadelphia.

At Philadelphia people soon came to buy us. We were sold for 16*l.* apiece. I never knew what became of my unhappy companions, but I was sold for seven years to one of my countrymen, Hugh Wilson, who in his youth had suffered the same fate as myself in being kidnapped from his home.

Happy was my lot in falling into his power, for he was a humane, worthy man.

Having no children of his own, and pitying my sad condition, he took great care of me till I was fit for business, and at twelve years old set me about little things till I could manage harder work. Meanwhile, seeing my fellow-servants often reading and writing, I felt a strong desire to learn, and told my master that I should be glad to serve a year longer than the bond obliged me if he would let me go to school. To this he readily agreed, and I went every winter for five years, also learning as much as I could from my fellow-servants.

With this good master I stayed till I was seventeen years old, when he died, leaving me a sum of money, about 120*l.* sterling, his best horse, and all his wearing apparel.

I now maintained myself by working about the country, for anyone who would employ me, for nearly seven years, when I determined to settle down. I applied to the daughter of a prosperous planter, and found my suit was acceptable both to her and her father, so we married. My father-in-law wishing to establish us comfortably, gave me a tract of land which lay, unhappily for me, as it has since proved, on the frontiers of Pennsylvania. It contained about two hundred acres, with a good house and barn.

I was now happy in my home with a good wife; but my peace did not last long, for about 1754 the Indians in the French interest, who had formerly been very troublesome in our province, began to renew their old practices. Even many of the Indians whom we supposed to be in the English interest joined the plundering bands; it was no wonder, for the French did their utmost, to win them over, promising to pay 15*l.* for every scalp of an Englishman!

Hardly a day passed but some unhappy family fell a victim to French bribery and savage cruelty. As for me, though now in comfortable circumstances, with an affectionate and amiable wife, it was not long before I suddenly became the most pitiable of mankind. I can never bear to think of the last time I saw my dear wife, on the fatal 2nd of October, 1754. That day she had left home to visit some of her relations, and, no one being in the house but myself, I stayed up later than usual, expecting her return. How great was my terror when, at eleven o’clock at night, I heard the dismal war-whoop of the savages, and, flying to the window, saw a band of them outside, about twelve in number.

They made several attempts to get in, and I asked them what they wanted. They paid no attention, but went on beating at the door, trying to get it open. Then, having my gun loaded in my hand, I threatened them with death if they would not go away. But one of them, who could speak a little English, called out in return that if I did not come out they would burn me alive in the house. They told me further — what I had already found out — that they were no friends to the English, but that if I would surrender myself prisoner they would not kill me.

My horror was beyond all words. I could not depend on the promises of such creatures, but I must either accept their offer or be burnt alive. Accordingly I went out of my house with my gun in my hand, not knowing what I did or that I still held it. Immediately, like so many tigers, they rushed on me and disarmed me. Having me now completely in their power, the merciless villains bound me to a tree near the door, and then went into the house and plundered what they could. Numbers of things which they were unable to carry away were set fire to with the house and consumed before my eyes. Then they set fire to my barn, stable, and outhouses, where I had about two hundred bushels of wheat, and cows, sheep, and horses. My agony as I watched all this havoc it is impossible to describe.

When the terrible business was over, one of the monsters came to me, a tomahawk in his hand, threatening me with a cruel death if I would not consent to go with them. I was forced to agree, promising to do all that was in my power for them, and trusting to Providence to deliver me out of their hands. On this they untied me, and gave me a great load to carry on my back, under which I travelled all that night with them, full of the most terrible fear lest my unhappy wife should likewise have fallen into their clutches. At daybreak my master ordered me to lay down my load, when, tying my hands round a tree with a small cord, they forced the blood out of my finger ends. They then kindled a fire near the tree to which I was bound, which redoubled my agony, for I thought they were going to sacrifice me there.

When the fire was made, they danced round me after their manner, with all kinds of antics, whooping and crying out in the most horrible fashion. Then they took the burning coals and sticks, flaming with fire at the ends; and held them near my face, head, hands and feet, with fiendish delight, at the same time threatening to burn me entirely if I called out or made the least noise. So, tortured as I was, I could make no sign of distress but shedding silent tears, which, when they saw, they took fresh coals, and held them near my eyes, telling me my face was wet, and they would dry it for me. I have often wondered how I endured these tortures; but at last they were satisfied, and sat down round the fire and roasted the meat which they had brought from my dwelling!

When they had prepared it they offered some to me, and though it may be imagined that I had not much heart to eat, I was forced to seem pleased, lest if I refused it they should again begin to torture me. What I could not eat I contrived to get between the bark and the tree — my foes having unbound my hands till they supposed I had eaten all they gave me. But then they bound me as before, and so I continued all day. When the sun was set they put out the fire, and covered the ashes with leaves, as is their custom, that the white people may find no signs of their having been there.

Travelling thence, by the river, for about six miles, I being loaded heavily, we reached a spot near the Blue Hills, where the savages hid their plunder under logs of wood. Thence, shocking to relate, they went to a neighbouring house, that of Jacob Snider, his wife, five children, and a young man, a servant. They soon forced their way into the unhappy man's dwelling, slew the whole family, and set fire to the house.

The servant's life was spared for a time, since they thought he might be of use to them, and forthwith loaded him with plunder. But he could not bear the cruel treatment that we suffered; and though I tried to console him with a hope of deliverance, he continued to sob and moan. One of the savages, seeing this, instantly came up, struck him to the ground, and slew him.

The family of John Adams next suffered. All were here put to death except Adams himself, a good old man, whom they loaded with plunder, and day after day continued to treat with the most shocking cruelty, painting him all over with various colours, plucking the white hairs from his beard, and telling him he was a fool for living so long, and many other tortures which he bore with wonderful composure, praying to God.

One night after he had been tortured, when he and I were sitting together, pitying each other's misfortunes, another party of Indians arrived, bringing twenty scalps and three prisoners, who gave us terrible accounts of what tragedies had passed in their parts, on which I cannot bear to dwell.

These three prisoners contrived to escape, but unhappily, not knowing the country, they were recaptured and brought back. They were then all put to death, with terrible tortures.

A great snow now falling, the savages began to be afraid that the white people would follow their tracks upon it and find out their skulking retreats, and this caused them to make their way to their winter quarters, about two hundred miles further from any plantations or English inhabitants. There, after a long and tedious journey, in which I was almost starved, I arrived with this villainous crew. The place where we had to stay, in their tongue, was called Alamingo, and there I found a number of wigwams full of Indian women and children. Dancing, singing, and shooting were their general amusements, and they told what successes they had had in their expeditions, in which I found myself part of their theme. The severity of the cold increasing, they stripped me of my own clothes and gave me what they usually wear themselves — a blanket, a piece of coarse cloth, and a pair of shoes made of deer-skin.

The better sort of Indians have shirts of the finest linen they can get; and with these some wear ruffles, but they never put them on till they have painted them different colours, and do not take them off to wash, but wear them till they fall into pieces. They are very proud, and delight in trinkets, such as silver plates round their wrists and necks, with several strings of *wampum*, which is made of cotton, interwoven with pebbles, cockle-shells, &c. From their ears and noses they have rings and beads, which hang dangling an inch or two.

The hair of their heads is managed in different ways: some pluck out and destroy all except a lock hanging from the crown of the head, which they interweave with wampum and feathers. But the women wear it very long, twisted down their backs, with beads, feathers, and wampum, and on their heads they carry little coronets of brass or copper.

No people have a greater love of liberty or affection for their relations, yet they are the most revengeful race on earth, and inhumanly cruel. They generally avoid open fighting in war, yet they are brave when taken, enduring death or torture with wonderful courage. Nor would they at any time commit such outrages as they do, if they were not tempted by drink and money by those who call themselves civilised.

At Alamingo I was kept nearly two months, till the snow was off the ground — a long time to be among such creatures! I was too far from any plantations or white people to try to escape; besides, the bitter cold made my limbs quite benumbed. But I contrived to defend myself more or less against the weather by building a little wigwam with the bark of the trees, covering it with earth, which made it resemble a cave, and keeping a good fire always near the door.

Seeing me outwardly submissive, the savages sometimes gave me a little meat, but my chief food was Indian corn. Having liberty to go about was, indeed, more than I had expected; but they knew well it was impossible for me to escape.

At length they prepared for another expedition against the planters and white people, but before they set out they were joined by many other Indians from Fort Duquesne, well stored with powder and ball that they had received from the French.

As soon as the snow was quite gone, so that no trace of their footsteps could be found, they set out on their journey towards Pennsylvania, to the number of nearly a hundred and fifty. Their wives and children were left behind in the wigwams. My duty was to carry whatever they entrusted to me; but they never gave me a gun. For several days we were almost famished for want of proper provisions: I had nothing but a few stalks of Indian corn, which I was glad to eat dry, and the Indians themselves did not fare much better.

When we again reached the Blue Hills, a council of war was held, and we agreed to divide into companies of about twenty men each, after which every captain marched with his party where he thought proper. I still belonged to my old masters, but was left behind on the mountains with ten Indians, to stay till the rest returned, as they did not think it safe to carry me nearer to the plantations.

Here being left, I began to meditate on my escape, for I knew the country round very well, having often hunted there. The third day after the great body of the Indians quitted us my keepers visited the mountains in search of game, leaving me bound in such a way that I could not get free. When they returned at night they unbound me, and we all sat down to supper together, feasting on two polecats which they had killed. Then, being greatly tired with their day's excursion, they lay down to rest as usual.

Seeing them apparently fast asleep, I tried different ways of finding out whether it was a pretence to see what I should do. But after making a noise and walking about, sometimes touching them with my feet, I found that they really slept. My heart exulted at the hope of freedom, but it sank again when I thought how easily I might be recaptured. I resolved, if possible, to get one of their guns, and if discovered to die in self-defence rather than be taken; and I tried several times to take one from under their heads, where they always secure them. But in vain; I could not have done so without rousing them.

So, trusting myself to the divine protection, I set out defenceless. Such was my terror, however, that at first I halted every four or five yards, looking fearfully towards the spot where I had left the Indians, lest they should wake and miss me. But when I was about two hundred yards off I mended my pace, and made all the haste I could to the foot of the mountains.

Suddenly I was struck with the greatest terror and dismay, hearing behind me the fearful cries and howlings of the savages, far worse than the roaring of lions or the shrieking of hyænas; and I knew that they had missed me. The more my dread increased the faster I hurried, scarce knowing where I trod, sometimes falling and bruising myself, cutting my feet against the stones, yet, faint and maimed as I was, rushing on through the woods. I fled till daybreak, then crept into a hollow tree, where I lay concealed, thanking God for so far having favoured my escape. I had nothing to eat but a little corn.

But my repose did not last long, for in a few hours I heard the voices of the savages near the tree in which I was hid threatening me with what they would do if they caught me, which I already guessed too well. However, at last they left the spot where I heard them, and I stayed in my shelter the rest of that day without any fresh alarms.

At night I ventured out again, trembling at every bush I passed, and thinking each twig that touched me a savage. The next day I concealed myself in the same manner, and at night travelled forward, keeping off the main road, used by the Indians, as much as possible, which made my journey far longer, and more painful than I can express.

But how shall I describe my terror when, on the fourth night, a party of Indians lying round a small fire which I had not seen, hearing the rustling I made among the leaves, started from the ground, seizing their arms, and ran out into the wood? I did not know in my agony of fear whether to stand still or rush on. I expected nothing but a terrible death; but at that very moment a troop of swine made towards the place where the savages were. They, seeing the hogs, guessed that their alarm had been caused by them, and returned merrily to their fire and lay down to sleep again. As soon as this happened I pursued my way more cautiously and silently, but in a cold perspiration with terror at the peril I had just escaped. Bruised, cut, and shaken, I still held on my path till break of day, when I lay down under a huge log, and slept undisturbed till noon. Then, getting up, I climbed a great hill, and, scanning the country round, I saw, to my unspeakable joy, some habitations of white people, about ten miles distant.

My pleasure was somewhat damped by not being able to get among them that night. But they were too far off; therefore, when evening fell, I again commended myself to Heaven, and lay down, utterly exhausted. In the morning, as soon as I woke, I made towards the nearest of the cleared lands which I had seen the day before; and that afternoon I reached the house of John Bull, an old acquaintance. I knocked at the door, and his wife, who opened it, seeing me in such a frightful condition, flew from me like lightning, screaming, into the house.

This alarmed the whole family, who immediately seized their arms, and I was soon greeted by the master with his gun in his hand. But when I made myself known — for at first he took me for an Indian — he and all his family welcomed me with great joy at finding me alive; since they had been told I was murdered by the savages some months ago.

No longer able to bear up, I fainted and fell to the ground. When they had recovered me, seeing my weak and famished state, they gave me some food, but let me at first partake of it very sparingly. Then for two days and nights they made me welcome, and did their utmost to bring back my strength, with the kindest hospitality. Finding myself once more able to ride, I borrowed a horse and some clothes of these good people, and set out for my father-in-law’s house in Chester county, about a hundred and forty miles away. I reached it on January 4, 1755; but none of the family could believe their eyes when they saw me, having lost all hope on hearing that I had fallen a prey to the Indians.

They received me with great joy; but when I asked for my dear wife I found she had been dead two months, and this fatal news greatly lessened the delight I felt at my deliverance.

A WONDERFUL VOYAGE

THIS is a story of a man who, when in command of his ships and when everything went prosperously with him, was so overbearing and cruel that some of his men, in desperation at the treatment they received, mutinied against him. But the story shows another side of his character in adversity which it is impossible not to admire.

In 1787 Captain Bligh was sent from England to Otaheite in charge of the ‘Bounty,’ a ship which had been specially fitted out to carry young plants of the breadfruit tree, for transplantation to the West Indies.

‘The breadfruit grows on a spreading tree, about the size of a large apple tree; the fruit is round, and has a thick tough rind. It is gathered when it is full-grown, and while it is still green and hard; it is then baked in an oven until the rind is black and scorched. This is scraped off, and the inside is soft and white like the crumb of a penny loaf.’

The Otaheitans use no other bread but the fruit kind. It is, therefore, little wonder that the West Indian planters were anxious to grow this valuable fruit in their own islands, as, if it flourished there, food would be provided with little trouble for their servants and slaves.

In the passage to Otaheite, Captain Bligh had several disturbances with his men. He had an extremely irritable temper, and would often fly into a passion and make most terrible accusations, and use most terrible language to his officers and sailors.

On one occasion he ordered the crew to eat some decayed pumpkins, instead of their allowance of cheese, which he said they had stolen from the ship’s stores.

The pumpkin was to be given to the men at the rate of one pound of pumpkin to two pounds of biscuits.

The men did not like accepting the substitute on these terms. When the captain heard this, he was infuriated, and ordered the first man of each mess to be called by name, at the same time saying to them, ‘I’ll see who will dare refuse the pumpkin or anything else I may order to be served out.’ Then, after swearing at them in a shocking way, he ended by saying, ‘I’ll make you eat grass, or anything else you can catch before I have done with you,’ and threatened to flog the first man who dared to complain again.

While they were at Otaheite several of the sailors were flogged for small offences, or without reason, and on the other hand, during the seven months they stayed at the island, both officers and men were allowed to spend a great deal of time on shore, and were given the greatest possible liberty.

Therefore, when the breadfruit plants were collected, and they weighed anchor on April 4 in 1787, it is not unlikely they were loth to return to the strict discipline of the ship, and to leave an island so lovely, and where it was possible to live in the greatest luxury without any kind of labour.

From the time they sailed until April 27, Christian, the third officer, had been in constant hot water with Captain Bligh. On the afternoon of that day, when the captain came on deck, he missed some cocoanuts that had been heaped up between the guns. He said at once that they had been stolen, and that it could not have happened without the officers knowing of it. When they told him they had not seen any of the crew touch them, he cried, ‘Then you must have taken them yourselves!’ After this he questioned them separately; when he came to Christian, he answered, ‘I do not know, sir, but I hope you do not think me so mean as to be guilty of stealing yours.’

The captain swore terribly, and said, ‘You must have stolen them from me, or you would be able to give a better account of them!’ He turned to the others with much more abuse, and saying, ‘D — n you! you scoundrels, you are all thieves alike, and combine with the men to rob me. I suppose you’ll steal my yams next, but I’ll sweat you for it, you rascals! I’ll make half of you jump overboard before you get through Endeavour Straits!’

Then he turned to the clerk, giving the order to ‘stop the villains’ grog, and to give them but half a pound of yams to-morrow: if they steal *them*, I’ll reduce them to a quarter.’

That night Christian, who was hardly less passionate and resentful than the captain, told two of the midshipmen, Stewart and Hayward, that he intended to leave the ship on a raft, as he could no longer endure the captain’s suspicion and insults. He was very angry and excited, and made some preparations for carrying out his plan, though these had to be done with the greatest secrecy and care.

It was his duty to take the morning watch, which is from four to eight o’clock, and this time he thought would he a good opportunity to make his escape. He had only just fallen into a restless slumber when he was called to take his turn.

He got up with his brain still alert with the sense of injury and wrong, and most curiously alive to seize any opportunity which might lead to an escape from so galling a service.

On reaching the deck, he found the mate of the watch had fallen asleep, and that the other midshipman was not to be seen.

Then he made a sudden determination to seize the ship, and rushing down the gangway ladder, whispered his intention to Matthew Quintal and Isaac Martin, seamen, both of whom had been flogged. They readily agreed to join him, and several others of the watch were found to be quite as willing.

Someone went to the armourer for the keys of the arm chest, telling him they wanted to fire at a shark alongside.

Christian then armed those men whom he thought he could trust, and putting a guard at the officers' cabins, went himself with three other men to the captain's cabin.

It was just before sunrise when they dragged him from his bed, and tying his hands behind his back, threatened him with instant death if he should call for help or offer any kind of resistance. He was taken up to the quarter deck in his nightclothes, and made to stand against the mizzen mast with four men to guard him.

Christian then gave orders to lower the boat in which he intended to cast them adrift, and one by one the men were allowed to come up the hatchways, and made to go over the side of the ship into it. Meanwhile no heed was given to the remonstrances, reasoning, and prayers of the captain, saving threats of death unless he was quiet.

Some twine, canvas, sails, a small cask of water, and a quadrant and compass were put into the boat, also some bread and a small quantity of rum and wines. When this was done the officers were brought up one by one and forced over the side. There was a great deal of rough joking at the captain's expense, who was still made to stand by the mizzen-mast, and much bad language was used by everybody.

When all the officers were out of the ship, Christian said, 'Come, Captain Bligh, your officers and men are now in the boat, and you must go with them; if you make the least resistance you will be instantly put to death.'

He was lowered over the side with his hands still fastened behind his back, and directly after the boat was veered astern with a rope.

Someone with a little pity for them threw in some pieces of pork and some clothes, as well as two or three cutlasses; these were the only arms given.

There were altogether nineteen men in this pitiful strait. Although much of the conduct of the mutineers is easily understood with regard to the captain, the wholesale crime of thrusting so many innocent persons out on to the mercy of the winds and waves, or out to the death from hunger and thirst which they must have believed would inevitably overtake them, is incomprehensible.

As the 'Bounty' sailed away, leaving them to their fate, those in the boat cast anxious looks to the captain as wondering what should then be done. At a time when his mind must have been full of the injury he had received, and the loss of his ship at a moment when his plans were so flourishing and he had every reason to congratulate himself as to the ultimate success of the undertaking, it is much in his favour that he seems to have realised their unfortunate position and to have been determined to make the best of it.

His first care was to see how much food they had. On examining it they found there was a hundred and fifty pounds of bread, thirty-two pounds of pork, six quarts of rum, six bottles of wine, and twenty-eight gallons of water.

As they were so near Tofoa they determined to put in there for a supply of breadfruit and water, so that they might keep their other provisions. But after rowing along the coast for some time, they only discovered some cocoanut trees on the top of a stony cliff, against which the sea beat furiously. After several attempts they succeeded in getting about twenty nuts. The second day they failed to get anything at all.

However, some natives came down to the boat and made inquiries about the ship; but the captain unfortunately told the men to say she had been lost, and that only they were saved.

This proved most disastrous; for the treacherous natives, finding they were defenceless, at first brought them presents of breadfruit, plantains and cocoanuts, rendering them all more hopeful and cheerful by their kindness. But towards night their numbers increased in a most alarming manner, and soon the whole beach was lined by them.

Presently they began knocking stones together, by which the men knew they intended to make an attack upon them. They made haste to get all the things into the boat, and all but one, named John Norton, succeeded in reaching it. The natives rushed upon this poor man and stoned him to death.

Those in the boat put to sea with all haste, but were again terribly alarmed to find themselves followed by natives in canoes from which they renewed the attack.

Many of the sailors were a good deal hurt by stones, and they had no means at all with which to protect themselves. At last they threw some clothes overboard; these tempted the enemy to stop to pick them up, and as soon as night came on they gave up the chase and returned to the shore.

All the men now begged Captain Bligh to take them towards England; but he told them there could be no hope of relief until they reached Timor, a distance of full twelve hundred leagues; and that, if they wished to reach it, they would have to content themselves with one ounce of bread and a quarter of a pint of water a day. They all readily agreed to this allowance of food, and made a most solemn oath not to depart from their promise to be satisfied with the small quantity. This was about May 2. After the compact was made, the boat was put in order, the men divided into watches, and they bore away under a reefed lug-foresail.

A fiery sun rose on the 3rd, which is commonly a sign of rough weather, and filled the almost hopeless derelicts with a new terror.

In an hour or two it blew very hard, and the sea ran so high that their sail was becalmed between the waves; they did not dare to set it when on the top of the sea, for the water rushed in over the stern of the boat, and they were obliged to bale with all their might.

The bread was in bags, and in the greatest danger of being spoiled by the wet. They were obliged to throw some rope and the spare sails overboard, as well as all the clothes but what they wore, to lighten the boat, then the carpenter's tool-chest was cleared and the bread put into it.

They were all very wet and cold, and a teaspoonful of rum was served to each man, with a quarter of a breadfruit which was so bad that it could hardly be eaten; but the captain was determined at all risks to keep to the compact they had entered into, and to make their provisions last eight weeks.

In the afternoon the sea ran even higher, and at night it became very cold; but still they did not dare to leave off baling for an instant, though their legs and arms were numb with fatigue and wet.

In the morning a teaspoonful of rum was served to all, and five small cocoanuts divided for their dinner, and everyone was satisfied.

When the gale had subsided they examined the bread, and found a great deal of it had become mouldy and rotten; but even this was carefully kept and used. The boat was now near some islands, but they were afraid to go on shore, as the natives might attack them; while being in sight of land, where they might replenish their poor stock of provisions and rest themselves, added to their misery. One morning they hooked a fish, and were overjoyed at their good fortune; but in trying to get it into the boat it was lost, and again they had to content themselves with the damaged bread and small allowance of water for their supper.

They were dreadfully cramped for room, and were obliged to manage so that half their number should lie down in the bottom of the boat or upon a chest, while the others sat up and kept watch: their limbs became so stiff from being constantly wet, and from want of space to stretch them in, that after a few hours' sleep they were hardly able to move.

About May 7 they passed what the captain supposed must be the Fiji Islands, and two large canoes put off and followed them for some time, but in the afternoon they gave up the chase. It rained heavily that day, and everyone in the boat did his best to catch some water, and they succeeded in increasing their stock to thirty-four gallons, besides having had enough to drink for the first time since they had been east adrift; but the rain made them very cold and miserable, and as they had no dry things their shiverings were terrible.

The next morning they had an ounce and a half of pork, a teaspoonful of rum, half a pint of cocoanut milk, and an ounce of bread for breakfast, which was quite a large meal for them. The rum, though (or because) in such small quantities, is said to have been of the greatest service to them.

Through fifteen weary days and nights of ceaseless rain they toiled, sometimes through fierce storms of thunder and lightning, and before terrific seas lashed into foam and fury by swift and sudden squalls, with only their miserable pittance of bread and water to keep body and soul together. Now and then a little rum was given after any extra fatigue of baling, but only at the times set apart for meals.

In this rain and storm the little sleep they got only added to their discomfort, save for the brief forgetfulness it brought; for they had to lie down in water in the bottom of the boat, and with no covering but the streaming clouds above them.

The captain then advised them to wring their clothes through sea-water, which they found made them feel much warmer for a time.

On May 17 everyone was ill and complaining of great pain, and begging for more food; but the captain refused to increase their allowance, though he gave them all a small quantity of rum.

Until the 24th they flew before the wild seas that swept over stem and stern of their boat, and kept them constantly baling.

Some of them now looked more than half dead from starvation, but no one suffered from thirst, as they had absorbed so much water through the skin.

A fine morning dawned on the 25th, when they saw the sun for the first time for fifteen days, and were able to eat their scanty allowance in more comfort and warmth. In the afternoon there were numbers of birds called boobies and noddies near, which are never seen far from land.

The captain took this opportunity to look at the state of their bread, and found if they did not exceed their allowance there was enough to last for twenty-nine days, when they hoped to reach Timor. That afternoon some noddies came so near the boat that one was caught. These birds are about the size of a small pigeon; it was divided into eighteen parts and given by lot. The men were much amused when they saw the beak and claws fall to the lot of the captain. The bird was eaten, bones and all, with bread and water, for dinner.

Now they were in calmer seas they were overtaken by a new trouble. The heat of the sun became so great that many of them were overcome by faintness, and lay in the bottom of the boat in an apathetic state all day, only rousing themselves towards evening, when the catching of birds was attempted.

On the morning of the 28th the sound of breakers could be heard plainly; they had reached the Great Barrier Beef, which runs up much of the east coast of Australia.

After some little time a passage nearly a quarter of a mile in width was discovered through the reef, and they were carried by a strong current into the peaceful waters which lie within the Barrier.

For a little time they were so overjoyed that their past troubles were forgotten. The dull blue-grey lines of the mainland, with its white patches of glaring sandhills, could be seen in the distance, and that afternoon they landed on an island.

They found the rocks around it were covered with oysters and huge clams, which could easily be got at low tide. Some of their party sent out to reconnoitre returned greatly pleased at having found plenty of fresh water.

A fire was made by help of a small magnifying-glass. Among the things thrown into the boat from the ship was a small copper pot; and thus with a mixture of oysters, bread, and pork a stew was made, and everyone had plenty to eat.

The day after they landed was the 29th of May, the anniversary of the restoration of King Charles II., and as the captain thought it applied to their own renewed health and strength, he named it Restoration Island.

After a few days' rest, which did much to revive the men, and when they had filled all their vessels with water and had gathered a large supply of oysters, they were ready to go on again.

As they were about to start everybody was ordered to attend prayers, and as they were embarking about twenty naked savages came running and shouting towards them, each carrying a long barbed spear, but the English made all haste to put to sea.

For several days they sailed over the lake-like stillness of the Barrier reef-bound waters, and past the bold desolations of the Queensland coast, every headland and bay there bearing the names Cook gave them only a few years before, and which still tell us by that nomenclature each its own story of disappointment and hope.

Still making way to the north, they passed many more islands and keys, the onward passage growing hot and hotter, until on June 3, when they doubled Cape York, the peninsula which is all but unique in its northward bend, they were again in the open sea.

By this time many of them were ill with malaria, then for the first time some of the wine which they had with them was used.

But the little boat still bravely made its way with its crew, whose faces were so hollow and ghastly that they looked like a crew of spectres, sailing beneath the scorching sun that beat down from the pale blue of the cloudless sky upon a sea hardly less blue in its greater depths. Only the hope that they would soon reach Timor seemed to rouse them from a state of babbling delirium or fitful slumber.

On the 11th the captain told them they had passed the meridian of the east of Timor; and at three o’clock on the next morning they sighted the land.

It was on Sunday, June 14, when they arrived at Company Bay, and were received with every kindness by the people.

Thus ended one of the most remarkable voyages that has ever been made. They had been sent out with provisions only sufficient for their number for *five* days, and Captain Bligh had, by his careful calculation, and determination to give each man only that equal portion they had agreed to accept, made it last for *fifty* days, during which time they had come three thousand six hundred and eighteen nautical miles.

There had been days when the men were so hunger-driven that they had besought him with pitiful prayers for more to eat, and when it was his painful duty to refuse it; and times, as they passed those islands where plentiful food could be got, when he had to turn a deaf ear to their longings to land. He had to endure the need of food, the cramped position, the uneasy slumber, as did his men; as well as the more perfect knowledge of their dangers. There had been days and nights while he worked out their bearings when he had to be propped up as he took the stars or sun.

It was, therefore, Captain Bligh’s good seamanship, his strict discipline and fairness in the method of giving food and wine to those who were sick, that enabled them to land at Timor with the whole of their number alive, with the exception of the one man who was stoned to death by the savages at Tofoa.

THE PITCAIRN ISLANDERS

IT will be remembered that nothing had been heard of the ‘Bounty’ since she was seen off Point Venus on the morning of September 22, 1789.

In 1809, just twenty years after, when Captain Folger, of the American ship ‘Topaz,’ landed at Pitcairn Island, one of the most remote of the islands in the Pacific, he found there a solitary Englishman and five Otaheitan women and nineteen children. The man, who gave his name as Alexander Smith, said he was the only remaining person of the nine who had escaped in the ‘Bounty.’

Although this information was given to the Admiralty shortly after, it was not until the year 1814, when the ‘Briton,’ under the command of Sir Thomas Staines, and the ‘Tagus,’ under that of Captain Pipon, were cruising in the Pacific, that one day on which the ships were sailing in the same direction about six leagues apart, both commanders were greatly surprised to see an island in lat. 24° 40’ and long. 130° 24’ W.

They were puzzled to know what it could be, as Pitcairn Island (named after a son of Major Pitcairn who was lost in the ‘Aurora’), the only one known in the neighbourhood, was marked on their charts as in long. 133° 24’ W., more than three degrees out.

They thought they had made a new discovery, and as they ran in for the land they were astonished to see some neatly-built huts surrounded by gardens and plantations.

Some people were seen coming down the cliff with canoes on their shoulders. Presently one was launched and made off through the heavy surf towards the ships. They were more surprised than ever when one of the young men in it cried out in English as they came alongside, ‘Won’t you heave us a rope, now?’

He sprang up the side of the ship swiftly. When on deck he told Sir Thomas Staines and Captain Pipon, when they asked him who he was, that his name was Thursday October Christian, and that he was the son of the late Fletcher Christian by an Otaheitan mother; that he was the first born on the island, and his name was given him as he had been born on a Thursday in October. He was now twenty-four years of age, and had a fine muscular figure, dark hair, and a brownish complexion, and ‘in his good-natured and benevolent countenance he had all the features of an honest English face.’ He wore no clothing except a small piece of cloth about his loins and a straw hat trimmed with cock’s feathers. He spoke English correctly and pleasantly both as to grammar and pronunciation. He also told them he was married to a woman much older than himself, one of those who had come with his father from Otaheite. His companion was a fine boy of about seventeen or eighteen years, named George Young, son of Young the midshipman.

The islanders were much surprised at the many things new to them in the ship, at the guns, and everything around them. They were greatly entertained at the sight of a little dog. ‘Oh, what a pretty little thing it is!’ exclaimed Young. ‘I know it is a dog, for I have heard of such an animal.’

The young men told the captains of many of the events that had happened among the first settlers; but said that John Adams, now an old man, could tell them much more. He was the only surviving Englishman that came away in the ‘Bounty,’ and at that time he was called Alexander Smith.

The captains determined to go on shore to see Adams, and to hear from him the true story of Christian’s fate, and of that of his companions.

Adams, who had been concealed since the arrival of the ships, when he found that the two captains had landed and were not armed, and that they did not intend to take him prisoner, came to the beach to meet them, and brought his wife with him, who was a very old woman and nearly blind.

After so many years the sight of the King’s uniform no doubt brought back the scene of the ‘Bounty’ to Adams, for at first he was very nervous and ill at ease.

However, when Sir Thomas Staines assured him they were not there with any intention of taking him away, that they were not even aware that such a person as himself existed, he regained confidence, and then told them he had taken the name of John Adams since the sole care of the women and children on the island had fallen upon him. He pretended he had not taken any great share in the mutiny, that he was sick in bed when it took place, and that he had been roused up and compelled to take a musket in his hand. He said he was now ready and willing to go back to England in one of the ships.

When the islanders heard him say this, all the women and children wept bitterly, and the young men stood motionless and absorbed in grief. When the officers again assured them that he should on no account be molested, the people were overcome with joy and gratitude. Adams then told them of the fate of the ‘Bounty’ and of the rest of the mutineers.

It is easy to suppose that when Christian sailed for the last time from Otaheite his mind was full of misgiving; that he bitterly repented the rash act by which the ship had fallen into his hands and by which in all probability nineteen men had lost their lives, and also the wrecked and criminal lives of his followers. The picture of the derelict crew in their little boat was ever in his mind as he had last seen them watching with despairing eyes their ship sail away; and again as distance blurred all form, and it lay a blot on the sunny waters, immediately before it was hidden by the horizon line.

That blot became ever blacker and heavier to his mental vision as one by one his projects failed. A sullen and morose outcast for ever from civilisation, he sailed out into the unknown seas with his little band of desperate followers, to find if possible some solitary island, some unknown spot, where they might be lost for ever from the world.

Curiously, the place which he pictured, the object for which he sought, was soon after given to him to find.

Its steep cliffs rise from the sea precipitously, and beyond and above them a ridge of rocky hills runs from north to south, from which, again, two mountainous peaks of a thousand feet and more in height stand up like sentinels.

At a little distance from the coast-line a white wall of surf lashes itself into fury, and breaks everlastingly over the hidden reefs that raise so formidable a guard around the island as to render safe landing impossible save only at particular places and times.

Encouraged by this forbidding coast-line, after they had sailed all round the island they effected a landing, and finding it uninhabited, they decided to make it their home. The ‘Bounty’ was run into an inlet between the cliffs, and after she had been dismantled and her materials used for building houses, in 1790 they burnt her, as they feared she might attract the notice of any ship that should chance to pass.

The first thing they did after their arrival was to divide the land into nine equal parts, giving none to the Otaheitan men, who it is said had been carried off from their own island by force. At first they were kindly treated by the white men; but afterwards they made them their slaves.

When they had been on the island a few weeks Christian became more gloomy and taciturn, and his conduct to the others grew more overbearing and unreasonable day by day.

Fear entered into his soul, and he looked with dislike and suspicion upon all around him, shunned their companionship and sought a place where he could be alone with his dark thoughts. Up at the extreme end of the ridge of hills that runs across the island the almost inaccessible cave may still be seen to which he carried a store of provisions and ammunition, and thus shut himself off from the others, and with only the sound of the roaring breakers as they beat on the shore below to disturb his solitude, the madman dwelt alone with his terrible history of the past.

One story is that in a fit of maniacal insanity he flung himself over the rocks into the sea. Another that he was shot by one of the mutineers whilst digging in a plantation.

The accounts are contradictory. But whether from suicide or murder, his death happened within a year after he landed at Pitcairn Island.

For about two years, while they all worked at the building of the houses and at cultivating the ground, the Otaheitan men toiled without a murmur. But when Williams, who had lost his wife, insisted that he would take one of theirs or leave the island in one of the ‘Bounty’s’ boats, the other Englishmen, who did not want to part with him, compelled one of the Otaheitans to give his wife to him.

From this time the Otaheitans became discontented, until the man whose wife had been taken away was murdered in the woods; then things went on more quietly for a year or two longer, when two of the most desperate and cruel of the mutineers, Quintal and M’Koy, at last drove them to form a plot to destroy their oppressors. A day was fixed by them to attack and put to death all the Englishmen when they were at work in the yam plots.

They killed Martin and Brown, one with a maul, the other with a musket, while Adams made his escape, though he was wounded in the shoulder by a bullet.

Young, who was a great favourite with the women, was hidden by them during the attack, while M’Koy and Quintal fled to the woods.

That night all the native men were murdered by the widows of the Europeans. This happened in 1793. From that time till 1798 the colonists went on quietly, until M’Koy, who had once been employed in a Scotch distillery, and had for some time been making experiments on the *ti* root, succeeded in extracting from it an intoxicating liquor.

After this Quintal also gave his whole time to making the spirit, and in consequence the two men were constantly drunk, and in one of his fits of delirium M’Koy threw himself from a cliff, and was instantly killed. Quintal became more and more unmanageable, and frequently threatened to destroy Adams and Young — who, knowing that he would carry out his threat, determined to kill him. This they did by felling him with an axe as they would an ox.

Thus it was that at last only two men were left on the island, Adams and Young. The latter, who was of a quiet and studious nature, resolved to have prayers every morning and evening, and regular services on Sunday, and to teach the children, of whom there were nineteen, several of them then being between the ages of seven and nine years. Young, however, did not live long, but died of asthma about a year after the murder of Quintal.

In their beautiful island of the sea, where the lordly banyans grow, and where the feathery cocoanut palms stand boldly along the cliffs, or here and there fringe the rocky beach — for in this temperate climate just without the tropics there are but few trees and vegetables that will not grow — there, unknown for many years to the world, and far away from its busy jar and fret, the simple and kindly natures that these children of Pitcairn Island must have inherited from their Otaheitan mothers were trained to an almost perfect sense of duty and piety by old John Adams.

With a Bible and Prayer-book to aid him he persevered with his self-imposed task. It was a task that must often have cost him much labour and patient study, for though he could read he was not able to write until he was a very old man.

Though in the eyes of the law his crime can never be wiped out, in the eyes of humanity, his sincere repentance and long and tender devotion to his charge — a charge that ended only on the day of his death — will for ever render the last of the mutineers a character to be remembered with admiration and respect.

A RELATION OF THREE YEARS' SUFFERING OF ROBERT EVERARD UPON THE ISLAND OF ASSADA, NEAR MADAGASCAR, IN A VOYAGE TO INDIA, IN THE YEAR 1686

WHEN I was a boy, my father, Mr. William Everard, apprenticed me to the captain of a ship bound for Bombay in India, and thence to Madagascar, for blacks. I left London on August 5, 1686, and after different adventures on the voyage, of which I need not here speak, our ship reached Madagascar.

The King of Madagascar received us kindly enough, and promised in about a month to furnish the captain with as many negroes as he desired. This satisfied us very well, and, mooring the ship, we stayed some days, trading with the negroes for rice and hens and bananas.

Now one day the supercargo and six of the men and myself went ashore, taking guns and powder, and knives and scissors to trade with, and the ship's dog went with us. And, carrying our chest of goods to the house of one of the natives, we traded, and the negroes brought us such things as they had in exchange.

But presently we heard a great noise, and a crowd began to gather, so that we thought the King was coming. But, alas! we soon found that the people of the town had risen against us, and ten or twelve broke in with their lances, and killed five of the boat's crew and the man who took care of the boat! The supercargo, running out of the house to get to the King, was thrust through by one of these murderous natives, and died immediately. I myself, being knocked down by the fall of the others, lay among the dead like one dead.

When the blacks took them up, however, they saw I was alive, and did not kill me in cold blood, but carried me to the King's house, which was just by the house where they had killed our men, whose bodies I saw them carrying down to fling into the sea as I looked out at the King's door.

He bade me sit down, and ordered the women to bring me some boiled rice on a plantain leaf, but in my terrible condition I could not eat. At night the King's men showed me my lodging in a small hut among the slaves, where I remained till the morning.

That morning our ship sailed. All the night as she lay there she had kept firing her great guns, and one shot came into the middle of the King's house, and went through it.

But when she had sailed I saw some of the blacks with bottles of wine taken out of the great cabin, which I myself had filled the morning I went ashore. They had also the captain’s sword and the ship’s compass, and some great pieces of the flag tied round their waists. So I asked those negroes who understood a little English if they had killed any on board. They said ‘Yes,’ and told me that the blacks in a canoe that went to our ship to trade had lances hidden, and fell upon the captain and the mate, who suspected nothing, and killed them and some others of our men, but the rest had time to arm themselves, and so drove the blacks away.

I asked them also why they killed our men, and they told the King, who answered that an English ship had been before, and played the rogue with them, and killed some of the natives, and they had therefore taken revenge.

After this the King went to visit his towns, and bid me go along with him; and I went first to one place and then another, to be shown to the people. But the women when they saw me shrieked and ran away in a fright — never having seen a white man, and thinking I was a spirit.

Then the King and his army went to the other side of the island, and carried me with them and our dog, and there he began mustering together a greater army, taking more men out of every town he visited. As soon as the women saw the King and his army coming, they got their sticks and came dancing for joy. And when he came into a town a mat was laid on the ground for him to sit on. When he sat down the wife of the chief of the town came out with some white stuff upon a stone, and dipped her finger in it, and put one spot on the King’s forehead, and one on each cheek, and one on his chin; and so they did to his four wives who went with him. Then, when the women had done spotting them, the captain of the town and all his men came before the King, some with great calabashes full of liquor, and he bid the captain get his men ready to go along with the army, which was done in a day’s time. Thus he went from town to town.

The dog belonging to our ship went too, and when he saw any hogs, he ran and barked at them till the negroes came and killed them with their lances. And sometimes he would fetch a young pig and bring it to me.

It was six or seven weeks before they reached the town of the enemy, and rushed into it, firing and striking with their lances, and killing or taking prisoners all who did not run away. Then marching further up the country they met with the enemy’s whole army; and for about a month they fought with them day after day, our side nearly always getting the better of it.

When as many prisoners had been taken as the King needed for slaves, we marched back again through the towns, and the people brought great parcels of rice made up in plantain leaves, and pots of boiled fish for the King and his men to eat with their rice. They used to sit four, and six, or eight together; they also gave me some by myself, on a plantain leaf. This they did at every town where the King came. But as I was coming back with them I was taken lightheaded, so that sometimes I fell down, and could not stir without extreme pain.

About a week after we reached our own town the King asked me if I could make powder. I told him ‘No;’ he then asked if I could make shot. I said ‘Yes;’ and he told his men to fetch some lead, and clay for the moulds, and as well as I could I made three or four hundred shot. The King was pleased with these, and while I was making them I had victuals given me, and some of their best drink.

But afterwards the King bid me go about the island with some of his men to find flint stones; and when I could find none he took no more notice of me, but turned me out of his house, and would not let me come into it any more. Then I had to seek for my own food to save myself from being starved, and it pleased God that I found such food as the natives eat — yams and potatoes, which I dug out of the earth with a piece of sharp stone, having neither knife nor any other tool. And I made fire as the natives did, rubbing together two pieces of stick, and roasted my yams, and gathered bananas and oranges and other fruit. Then sometimes I caught fish with a small, sharp-pointed stick, and crabs, and now and then a turtle. I also found turtles’ eggs. I used to keep yams and potatoes by me to serve five or six days, and when they were gone I hunted for more.

My lodging was under a tree on the hard ground, where I slept for two years and nine months and sometimes in the year it would rain for three months together, or only become fine for an hour or so — yet for all that I lay under the tree still. I always had a fire on each side of me to keep me warm, because I had no covering but the branches and leaves of the tree. Sometimes in the night I crept outside the cottage of one of the natives for shelter, but I was forced to be gone before they were up for fear they would do me harm.

When I wanted water I went almost a mile for a drink, and had nothing to bring back a little water in to keep by me and drink whenever I was thirsty. Also, I had to see that there were no blacks near the water, lest they should set upon me.

Two years after I had come to the country I suffered terrible pain with sores that broke out upon me, but finding some honey in a rock by the seaside, I made a kind of salve which gave me a little ease. But now the time of my worst distress was drawing to an end.

For when I had been three years in the island there came Arabs to buy negroes, and I pleaded with them to take me away, telling them how it was that

I, an English boy, was left in this condition. Then the chief merchant of the Arabs said he could not carry me away without the King’s leave, for it would spoil their trade; but he would try to get me clear, and as long as the Arabian vessel lay there I might come to his house and get food and drink.

About six weeks after the merchant sent for me, and told me he had bought me of the King for twenty dollars, and that he would carry me to my own country people again.

The ship lay there about ten weeks, and when they had got all their negroes we sailed from Madagascar. But all the history of my voyaging with the Arabs, who treated me with much kindness, and sold me at last to Englishmen, would be too long to relate. When I first saw my own countrymen I had forgotten English, so that I could only speak to them in the language of Madagascar; but by the time I had been among them six or seven days my English came back, and I could tell them my story.

At last I was taken on board an English ship called the ‘Diana,’ and, sailing in this, I reached Yarmouth and afterwards Blackwall, where I met my father, to the great joy of us both. Thus I conclude my narrative, with humble thanks to God for His wonderful preservation of me through so many hardships and dangers.

THE FIGHT AT SVOLDER ISLAND (a.d. 1000)

OLAF TRYGGVASON, King of Norway, had sailed with a large fleet eastwards to Wendland, passing through the Danish king’s dominion without his goodwill, and was now returning thence. He sailed with a light breeze and fair weather for Denmark, the smaller ships going before, and the larger ships following behind because they needed more wind.

At an island off Wendland were gathered many great chiefs: the island is called Svolder. In this fleet was Sweyn, King of the Danes, who had many charges against King Olaf — one being that Olaf had taken to wife Sweyn’s sister without his leave; another that he had established himself in Norway, a land tributary to Sweyn and subdued by King Harold his father. Earl Sigvaldi was there with the Danish king because he was his earl. And in this combined fleet was a mighty chief, Olaf the Swede, King of the Swedes, who deemed he had to avenge on King Olaf of Norway great dishonour; for he had broken betrothals with, and smitten with his glove, Olaf the Swede’s mother. This same woman Sigridr Sweyn, the Danish king, had now to wife, and she was strongly urging on Sweyn to do King Olaf hurt or dishonour. With this fleet, too, was Earl Eric, Hacon’s son, who deemed he had very great charges against King Olaf and his men, because they had been present at the slaying of his father, Earl Hacon, and had driven out of the land all his sons; and Olaf had established himself in the kingdom afterwards.

These chiefs had an overwhelming host, and lay in a harbour on the inner side of the island; but King Olaf’s ships were sailing past outside, and the chiefs were on the high ground of the island, and saw where the fleet was sailing from the east. They saw that the small craft sailed in front.

Soon they saw a ship large and splendid. Then said King Sweyn: ‘Get we to our ships with all speed; there sails Long Snake from the east.’

Answered Earl Eric: ‘Bide we awhile, sire; they have more big ships than Long Snake alone.’

And so it was. This ship belonged to Styrkar of Gimsa.

Now saw they yet another ship, large and well-equipped, a ship with a figure-head.

Said King Sweyn: ‘Now here will be sailing Long Snake; and take we heed that we be not too late in meeting them.’

Then answered Earl Eric: ‘That will not be Long Snake; few of their big ships have passed as yet; there are many more to come.’

And it was even as the Earl said.

Now sailed a ship with striped sails, a long-ship built for speed, and much larger than the others that had gone by. And when King Sweyn saw that this ship had no figure-head on her, then stood he up and said, laughing the while: ‘Olaf Tryggvason is afraid now; he dares not to sail with his dragon’s head; go we and attack him.’

Answered then Earl Eric: ‘That is not Olaf Tryggvason. I know the ship, for I have often seen it; it belongs to Erling Skjalgsson. And ’tis better that we go astern of him to this battle. Brave wights are on board there, as we shall surely know if we meet Olaf Tryggvason. Better is a gap in the King’s fleet than a ship thus well-manned.’

Then said Olaf, the Swedish king, to the Earl: ‘We ought not to fear joining battle with Olaf, though he have many ships. And it is great shame and disgrace for men to hear in other lands, if we lie by with an overwhelming host while he sails the high road of the seas outside.’

Earl Eric answered: ‘Sire, let this swift long-ship pass if she will. I can tell you good tidings: that Olaf Tryggvason has not sailed by us, and this day you will have the chance of fighting with him. There are here now many chiefs, and I expect of this bout that we shall all have plenty of work.’

Still they said, when this long-ship and many craft had gone by: ‘That must have been Long Snake. And Earl Eric,’ said the Danes, ‘will never fight to avenge his father if he do not so now.’

The Earl answered much in wrath, and said that the Danes would not be found less loath to fight than himself and his men.

They waited not long ere three ships came sailing, whereof one, by far the largest, bore a golden dragon’s head. Then all said that the Earl had spoken truth, and there now was Long Snake.

Earl Eric answered: ‘That is not Long Snake.’ But he bade them attack if they would.

And at once Sigvaldi took his long-ship and rowed out to the ships, holding up a white shield; they, on the other hand, lowered their sails and waited. But that large ship was the Crane, steered by Thorkell Dydrill, the King’s kinsman. They asked of Sigvaldi what tidings he had to tell them. He declared he could tell them tidings of Sweyn, the Danish king, which it were right Olaf Tryggvason should know — he was setting a snare for him if he were not on his guard. Then Thorkell and his men let their ship float, and waited for the King.

Then saw King Sweyn four ships of great size sailing, and one by far the largest, and on it a dragon’s head conspicuous, all of gold. And they all at once said: ‘A wondrous big ship and a beautiful one is the Long Snake. There will be no long-ship in the world to match her for beauty, and much glory is there in causing to be made such a treasure.’

Then said Sweyn, the Danish king, out loud: ‘The Long Snake shall bear me; I shall steer it this evening before set of sun.’

Whereat Earl Eric said, but so that few men heard: ‘Though Olaf Tryggvason had no more ships than may now be seen, never will Danish king steer this ship if they two and their forces have dealings together.’

Sigvaldi, when he saw where the ships were sailing, bade Thorkell Dydrill draw his ship under the island; but Thorkell said the wind sat better for them to sail out at sea than to keep under the land with large ships and light breeze. But they gathered them under the island, these last four, because they saw some of their ships rowing under the island, and suspected that there might be some new tidings; so they tacked and stood in close to the island, and lowered their sails and took to their oars. The large ship of this group was named Short Snake.

And now the chiefs saw three very large ships sailing, and a fourth last of all. Then said Earl Eric to King Sweyn and to Olaf, the Swedish king: ‘Now stand ye up and to your ships; none will now deny that Long Snake sails by, and there ye may meet Olaf Tryggvason.’

Whereat silence fell on the chiefs, and none spake; and great fear was on the crews, and many a one there dreaded his bane.

Olaf Tryggvason saw where his men had laid them under the island, and, feeling sure that they must have heard some tidings, he also turned these ships inwards to the island, and they lowered sail. Earl Sigvaldi steered his ship inwards along the island to meet the fleet of the other kings that was coming out from the harbour inside. Therefore sang Stefnir about Sigvaldi, the foul traitor who drew Tryggvason into a trap.

Sweyn, the Danish king, and Olaf, the Swedish king, and Earl Eric had made this agreement between them, that, if they slew Olaf Tryggvason, he of them who should be nearest at the time should own the ship and all the share of booty taken in the battle; but of the realm of the Norse king they should each have a third.

Then saw Olaf Tryggvason and all his men that they were betrayed, for lo the whole sea about them was covered with ships; but Olaf had a small force, as his fleet had sailed on before him. And now lay in his place each one of those three chiefs, Sweyn, King of Danes, with his force; Olaf, King of Swedes, with his host; while in the third place Earl Eric set his men in array.

Then talked with King Olaf a wise man, Thorkell Dydrill, and said: ‘Here are overwhelming odds to fight against. Hoist we our sails, and sail we after our fleet out to sea; for in no man is it cowardice to know his own measure.’

King Olaf answered with loud voice: ‘Bind we our ships together with ropes, and let men don their war apparel and draw their swords; my men must not think of flight.’

And Olaf Tryggvason asked his men: ‘Who is chief over this force that lies here nearest to us?’

They answered:

‘We think it be Sweyn, King of Danes.’

Then said King Olaf: ‘We need not fear that force; never did Danes win victory in battle when fighting on shipboard against Norsemen.’

Again asked King Olaf: ‘Who lies there out beyond with so many ships?’

He was told that it was Olaf Ericsson, King of Swedes.

Then answered King Olaf: ‘We need not fear Swedish horse-eaters; they will be more eager to lick up what is in their sacrificial bowls than to board Long Snake under our weapons.’

And yet again asked King Olaf Tryggvason: ‘Who owns those large ships that lie out beyond the other squadrons?’

He was told that it was Earl Eric, Hacon’s son, with the Iron Earn, of all ships the largest.

Then said King Olaf: ‘Many high-born men are arrayed against us in that host, and with that force we may expect a stubborn battle: they are Norsemen as are we, and have often seen bloody swords and exchange of blows, and they will think they meet their match in us, as in truth they do.’

So these four chiefs, two kings and two earls, joined battle with Olaf Tryggvason. Sigvaldi indeed took little part in the fight, but Skuli Thorsteinsson in his short poem says that Sigvaldi was there. Very sharp and bloody was this contest, and the Danes fell most because they were nearest the Norsemen. Soon they did not hold their ground, but withdrew out of shot range; and this fleet, as Olaf had said, came off with no glory. But none the less the battle raged fierce and long, and numbers fell on either side — of the Swedes, however, most — till it came about that Olaf the Swede saw this to be the best counsel for himself and his fleet, to make as if they shunned the fight. And so he bade his ships drop away sternwards; and then Earl Eric lay broadside on.

King Olaf Tryggvason had laid the Long Snake between Short Snake and the Crane, and the smallest ships outside them. But Earl Eric, as each of these was disabled, caused it to be cut away, and pressed on to those that were behind. Now, when the small ships of King Olaf were cleared, the men leapt from them and went up on the larger ships. There was in this bout much loss of life in either party; but ever, as men fell in Earl Eric’s ships, others took their place, Swedes and Danes; whereas none took the place of the men who fell on Olaf’s side. All his ships were cleared presently except Long Snake; this held out because it was highest inboard and best manned. And while there were men to do so, they had gone thither aboard, and though some of the crew had perished, the ship had maintained its full numbers. But when Short Snake and Crane were disabled, then Earl Eric had them cut away, and thereafter Iron Ram lay broadside to broadside with Long Snake.

This battle was so stubborn as to stir wonder, first for the brave attack, but still more for the defence. When ships made at the Snake from all sides yet the defenders so hasted to meet them that they even stepped over the bulwarks into the sea and sank with their weapons, heedless of all else save, as in a land fight, to press ever forwards.

The men fell there first in the ship’s waist, where the board was lowest, while forward about the prow and aft in the space next the poop they held out longest. And when Earl Eric saw that the Snake was defenceless amidships he boarded it with fifteen men. But when Wolf the Red and other forecastlemen saw that, then they advanced from the forecastle and charged so fiercely on where the Earl was that he had to fall back to his ship. And when he came on board the Ram the Earl roused his men to attack bravely; and they boarded the Snake a second time with a large force.

By this time Wolf and all the forecastlemen had come to the poop, and all the foreship was disabled, Earl Eric’s force attacking King Olaf’s on every side. Earl Eric with his men then charged aft on the space next the poop, and a stubborn resistance was there. King Olaf had been all that day on the poop of the Snake; he bare a golden shield and helm, heavy ring-mail, strong so that nought could pierce it, though ’tis said that there was no stint of missiles showered on the poop, for all men knew the King, as his armour was easily recognised and he stood high on the stern-castle. And by him stood Kolbjorn, his marshal, clad in armour like to the King’s.

Now, this battle went as might be looked for when brave men on both sides met: those lost who were fewer in numbers. And when all King Olaf’s force had fallen, then leapt he overboard himself, holding his shield above his head; and so did Kolbjorn, his marshal, but his shield was under him on the sea, and he could not manage to dive, wherefore the men who were in the small ships took him, but he received quarter from the Earl. And after this all leapt overboard who yet lived; but most of these were wounded, and those who received quarter were taken as they swam: these were Thorkell Netja, Karlshead, Thorstein, and Einar Bowstring-shaker.

But after the battle was ended Earl Eric took for his own Long Snake and the other ships of King Olaf, and the weapons of many men who had wielded them manfully to the death.

Most famous has been this battle in Northland; first by reason of the brave defence, next for the attack and victory, wherein that ship was overcome on the deep sea which all had deemed invincible, but chiefly because there fell a chief famous beyond any of the Danish tongue. So greatly did men admire King Olaf and seek his friendship, that many would not hear of his being dead, but declared that he was yet alive in Wendland or in the south region. And about that many stories have been made.

THE DEATH OF HACON THE GOOD (a.d. 961)

KING HACON, Athelstan's foster-son, long ruled over Norway; but in the latter part of his life Eric's sons came to Norway, and strove with him for the kingdom. They had battles together, wherein Hacon ever won the victory. The last battle was fought in Hordaland, on Stord Island, at Fitjar: there Hacon won the victory, but also got his death-wound.

And this battle came about in this wise. Gunnhilda's sons sailed northward from Denmark, taking the outer way, nor came they to land oftener than for men to get knowledge of their goings, while they also got knowledge of the public banquets given to King Hacon. They had ships well-found in men and weapons; and in their company was a mighty viking named Eyvind Skreyja; he was a brother of Queen Gunnhilda.

Hacon was at a banquet at Fitjar on Stord Island when they came thither; but he and all his men were unaware of their coming till the ships were sailing up from the south and had now gotten close to the island. King Hacon was even then sitting at table.

Now came a rumour to the King's guard that ships were seen sailing; wherefore some who were keenest of sight went out to look. And each said to his fellows that this would be an enemy, and each bade other to tell the King; but for this task none was found save Eyvind Finnsson, who was nicknamed Skald-spoiler.

He went in before the King, and spake thus: 'Fleeting hour is short, sire, but meal-time long.'

Said the King: 'Skald, what news?'

Eyvind answered:

'Vengers ('tis said) of Bloodaxe crave
The battle-shock of belted glaive;
Our sitting-time is done.
Hard task, but 'tis thine honour, King,
I seek, who here war tidings bring.
Arm swiftly, every one!'

Then answered the King: 'Eyvind, thou art a brave wight and a wise; thou wouldst not tell war tidings unless they were true.' Whereupon all said that this was true, that ships were sailing that way, and within short space of the island.

And at once the tables were taken up, and the King went out to see the fleet.

But when he had seen it he called to him his counsellors, and asked what should be done.

‘Here be sailing many ships from the south: we have a force small but goodly. Now, I wish not to lead my best friends into overwhelming danger; but surely would be willing to flee, if wise men should not deem that this were great shame or folly.’

Then made answer each to other that everyone would rather fall dead across his fellow than flee before Danes.

Whereat the King said: ‘Well spoken for heroes as ye are! And let each take his weapons, nor care how many Danes there be to one Norseman.’

Thereafter the King took his shield, and donned his coat of ring-mail, and girded him with the sword Millstone-biter, and set a golden helm on his head. Then did he marshal his force, putting together his bodyguard and the guests of the feast.

Gunnhilda’s sons now came up on land, and they likewise marshalled their force, and it was by far the larger. The day was hot and sunny; so King Hacon slipped off his mail coat and raised his helm, and egged on his men to the onset laughing, and thus cheered his warriors by his blithe bearing. Then the fight began, and it was most stubborn. When the missiles were all thrown, King Hacon drew sword and stood in front under the banner, and hewed right and left; never did he miss, or, if he missed his man, the sword bit another.

Eyvind Skreyja went fiercely forward in the battle, challenging the Norsemen’s courage. And chiefly pressed he on where Hacon’s banner was, crying, ‘Where is the Norsemen’s king? Why doth he hide him? Why dares he not come forth and show himself? Who can point me to him?’

Then answered King Hacon: ‘Hold thou on forward, if thou wilt find the Norsemen’s king.’

And Hacon cast his shield by his side, and gripped his sword’s mid-hilt with both hands, and ran forth from under the banner.

But Thoralf Skumsson said, ‘Suffer me, sire, to go against Eyvind.’

The King answered: ‘Me he wished to find; wherefore me he shall first meet.’ But when the King came where Eyvind was, he hewed on either side of him, and then, with Millstone-biter in both hands, hewed at Eyvind’s head, and clove him through helm and head right down to the shoulders.

This battle was not good for men weak in strength, weapons, or courage. Nor was it long after the fall of Eyvind Skreyja ere the whole Danish force turned and fled to their ships. Great numbers fell on the side of Eric’s sons; but they themselves escaped.

King Hacon’s men followed them far that day, and slew all whom they might; but the King bade his swift ship be launched, and rowed northwards along the coast, meaning to seek his house at Alrekstead, for he had gotten a wound by an arrow that pierced his arm while he drove before him the flying foe. And he lost so much blood that he swooned away. And when he came to the place called Hacon’s Stone (it was where he was born), there he stayed for the night, bidding his land tent be set up and himself be carried ashore.

And as soon as King Hacon knew that his wound was mortal, he called to him his counsellors, and talked at large with his friends about those things that had been done in his days. And of this he then repented, that he had done much against God and Christian men’s laws during his rule.

His friends offered to convey his body westwards to England, and bury it there in Church ground.

But the King answered: ‘Of this I am not worthy; I lived as heathen men live, so, too, shall ye bury me.’

He bewailed the quarrels of himself and his kin; and having but one daughter, a child, and no son, he sent a letter to Gunnhilda’s sons, wherein it was written that he gave to his kinsman Harold Grayfell his guard and his kingdom.

After this King Hacon died: he had ruled Norway for twenty-six years. He was mourned both by friends and foes. As Eyvind Skald-spoiler says:

‘The King is born in blessed day
Such love who gains:
Of his fair age ever and aye
Good fame remains.’

His men carried his body to Sœheim in North Hordaland, and raised a mound over it.

PRINCE CHARLIE’S WAR

I

THE BOYHOOD OF PRINCE CHARLIE

IN 1734 the city of Gaeta, in the kingdom of Naples, was held by an Austrian force, and was besieged by a mixed army of French, Walloons, Spaniards, and Italians, commanded by the Duke of Liria. Don Carlos, a Spanish prince, was doing his best, by their aid, to conquer the kingdom of Naples for himself. There is now no kingdom of Naples: there are no Austrian forces in Italy, and there is certainly, in all the armies of Europe, no such officer as was fighting under the Duke of Liria. This officer, in the uniform of a general of artillery, was a slim, fair-haired, blue-eyed boy of thirteen. He seemed to take a pleasure in the sound of the balls that rained about the trenches. When the Duke of Liria’s quarters had been destroyed by five cannon shots, this very young officer was seen to enter the house, and the duke entreated, but scarcely commanded, him to leave. The boy might be heard shouting to the men of his very mixed force in all their various languages. He was the darling of the camp, and the favourite of the men, for his courage and pleasant manners.

This pretty boy with a taste for danger, Charles Edward Stuart, was called by his friends ‘the Prince of Wales.’ He was, indeed, the eldest son of James VIII. of Scotland and Third of England, known to his enemies as ‘the Pretender.’ James, again, was the son of James II., and was a mere baby when, in 1688, his father fled from England before the Prince of Orange.

The child (the son of James II.) grew up in France: he charged the English armies in Flanders, and fought not without distinction. He invaded Scotland in 1715, where he failed, and now, for many years, he had lived in Rome, a pensioner of the Pope. James was an unfortunate prince, but is so far to be praised that he would not change his creed to win a crown. He was a devout Catholic — his enemies said ‘a bigoted Papist’ — he was the child of bad luck from his cradle; he had borne many disappointments, and he was never the man to win back a kingdom by the sword. He had married a Polish princess, of the gallant House of Sobieski, and at Gaeta his eldest son, though only a boy, showed that he had the courage of the Sobieskis and the charm of the Stuarts. The spies of the English Government confessed that the boy was more dangerous than the man, Prince Charles than King James.

While Charles, at Gaeta, was learning the art of war, and causing his cousin, the Duke of Liria, to pass some of the uneasiest moments of his life, at home in Rome his younger brother Henry, Duke of York, aged nine, was so indignant with his parents for not allowing him to go to the war with his brother, that he flung away his little sword in a temper. From their cradle these boys had thought and heard of little else but the past glories of their race; it was the dream of their lives to be restored to their own country. In all he did, the thought was always uppermost with Charles. On the way from Gaeta to Naples, leaning over the ship's side, the young Prince lost his hat; immediately a boat was lowered in the hope of saving it, but Charles stopped the sailors, saying with a peculiar smile, 'I shall be obliged before long to go and fetch myself a hat in England.'

Every thought, every study, every sport that occupied the next few years of Charles' life in Rome, had the same end, namely, preparing himself in every way for the task of regaining his kingdom. Long days of rowing on the lake of Albano, and boar-hunting at Cisterna, made him strong and active. He would often make marches in shoes without stockings, hardening his feet for the part he played afterwards on many a long tramp in the Highlands. Instead of enjoying the ordinary effeminate pleasures of the Roman nobility, he shot and hunted; and in the Borghese Gardens practised that royal game of golf, which his ancestors had played long before on the links at St. Andrews and the North Inch of Perth. His more serious studies were, perhaps, less ardently pursued. Though no prince ever used a sword more gallantly and to more purpose, it cannot be denied that he habitually spelled it 'sord,' and though no son ever wrote more dutiful and affectionate letters to a father, he seldom got nearer the correct spelling of his parent's name than 'Gems. In lonely parts of Rome the handsome lad and his melancholy father might often have been seen talking eagerly and confidentially, planning, and for ever planning, that long-talked-of descent upon their lost kingdom.

If his thoughts turned constantly to Britain, many hearts in that country were thinking of him with anxious prayers and hopes. In England, in out-of-the-way manor-houses and parsonages, old-fashioned, high-church squires and clergymen still secretly toasted the exiled family. But in the fifty years that had passed since the Revolution, men had got used to peace and the blessings of a settled government. Jacobitism in England was a sentiment, hereditary in certain

Tory families; it was not a passion to stir the hearts of the people and engage them in civil strife. It was very different with the Scots. The Stuarts were, after all, their old race of kings; once they were removed and unfortunate, their tyranny was forgotten, and the old national feeling centred round them. The pride of the people had suffered at the Union (1707); the old Scots nobility felt that they had lost in importance; the people resented the enforcement of new taxes. The Presbyterians of the trading classes were Whigs; but the persecuted Episcopalians and Catholics, with the mob of Edinburgh, were for ‘the auld Stuarts back again.’ This feeling against the present Government and attachment to the exiled family were especially strong among the fierce and faithful people of the Highlands. Among families of distinction, like the Camerons of Lochiel, the Oliphants of Gask, and many others, Jacobitism formed part of the religion of gallant, simple-minded gentlemen and of high-spirited, devoted women. In many a sheiling and farmhouse old broadswords and muskets, well-hidden from the keen eye of the Government soldiers, were carefully cherished against the brave day when ‘the king should have his own again.’

In 1744 that day seemed to have dawned to which Charles had all his life been looking forward. France, at war with England, was preparing an invasion of that country, and was glad enough to use the claims of the Stuarts for her own purposes. A fleet was actually on the point of starting, and Charles, in the highest spirits, was already on shipboard, but the English admiral was alert. A storm worked havoc among the French ships, and it suited the French Government to give up the expedition. Desperate with disappointment, Charles proposed to his father’s friend, the exiled Lord Marischall, to sail for Scotland by himself in a herring-boat, and was hurt and indignant when the old soldier refused to sanction such an audacious plan.

Charles had seen enough of hanging about foreign courts and depending on their wavoring policy; he was determined to strike a blow for himself. In Paris he was surrounded by restless spirits like his own; Scots and Irish officers in the French service, and heart-broken exiles like old Tullibardine, eager for any chance that would restore them to their own country. Even prudent men of business lent themselves to Charles’s plans. His bankers in Paris advanced him 180,000 livres for the purchase of arms, and of two Scottish merchants at Nantes, Walsh and Routledge, one undertook to convey him to Scotland in a brig of eighteen guns, the ‘Doutelle,’ while the other chartered a French man-of-war, the ‘Elizabeth,’ to be the convoy, and to carry arms and ammunition. To provide these Charles had pawned his jewels, jewels which ‘on *this* side I could only wear with a very sad heart,’ he wrote to his father; for the same purpose he would gladly have pawned his shirt. On June 22 he started from the mouth of the

Loire in all haste and secrecy, only writing for his father’s blessing and sanction when he knew it would be too late for any attempt to be made to stop him. The companions of his voyage were the old Marquis of Tullibardine, who had been deprived of his dukedom of Athol in the ‘15; the Prince’s tutor and cousin, Sir Thomas Sheridan, a rather injudicious Irishman; two other Irishmen in the French and Spanish services; Kelly, a young English divine; and Æneas Macdonald, a banker in Paris, and younger brother of the chieftain Macdonald of Kinloch Moidart, a prudent young man, who saw himself involved in the Prince’s cause very much against his will and better judgment.

II

PRINCE CHARLIE’S LANDING

England and France being at war at this time, the Channel was constantly swept by English men-of-war. The ‘Doutelle’ and her convoy were hardly four days out before the ‘Elizabeth’ was attacked by an English frigate, the ‘Lion.’ Knowing *who* it was he had on board, Walsh, the prudent master of the ‘Doutelle,’ would by no means consent to join in the fray, and sheered off to the north in spite of the commands and remonstrances of the Prince. The unfortunate ‘Elizabeth’ was so much disabled that she had to return to Brest, taking with her most of the arms and ammunition for the expedition. At night the ‘Doutelle’ sailed without a light and kept well out to sea, and so escaped further molestation. The first land they sighted was the south end of the Long Island. Gazing with eager eyes on the Promised Land, old Lord Tullibardine was the first to notice a large Hebridean eagle which flew above the ship as they approached. ‘Sir,’ he said, ‘it is a good omen; the king of birds has come to welcome your royal highness to Scotland.’

Charles had need of all happy auguries, for on his arrival in Scotland things did not seem very hopeful. With his usual rash confidence he had very much exaggerated the eagerness of his friends and supporters to welcome him in whatever guise he might come. Never had fallen kings more faithful and unselfish friends than had the exiled Stuarts in the Highland chiefs and Jacobite lairds of Scotland, but even they were hardly prepared to risk life and property with a certainty of failure and defeat. Let the Prince appear with 5,000 French soldiers and French money and arms, and they would gather round him with alacrity, but they were prudent men and knew too well the strength of the existing Government to think that they could overturn it unaided.

The first man to tell the Prince this unwelcome truth was Macdonald of Boisdale, to whom he sent a message as soon as he landed in Uist. This Boisdale was brother of the old Clanranald, chief of the loyal clan Macdonald of Clanranald. If these, his stoutest friends, hesitated to join his expedition Charles should have felt that his cause was desperate indeed. But his mind was made up with all the daring of his five-and-twenty years, and all the ill-fated obstinacy of his race. For hours he argued with the old Highlander as the ship glided over the waters of the Minch. He enumerated the friends he could count on, among them the two most powerful chiefs of the North, Macdonald of Sleat, and the Macleod. ‘They have both declared for the existing Government,’ was the sad reply. Before taking leave of the Prince, Boisdale again urged his returning ‘home.’ ‘I am come *home*,’ replied Charles passionately, ‘and can entertain no notion of returning. I am persuaded that my faithful Highlanders will stand by me.’

On July 19 the ‘Doutelle’ cast anchor in Loch na-Nuagh, in the country of the loyal Macdonalds. The first thing Charles did was to send a letter to the young Clanranald to beg his immediate presence. The next day four of the chief men of the clan waited on Charles, Clanranald, Kinloch Moidart, Glenaladale, and another who has left us a lively picture of the meeting. For three hours, in a private interview, Clanranald tried in vain to dissuade the Prince. Then Charles — still preserving his incognito — appeared among the assembled gentlemen on deck. ‘At his first appearance I found my heart swell to my very throat ‘writes the honest gentleman who narrates the story. His emotion was fully shared by a younger brother of Kinloch Moidart’s who stood on deck silent from youth and modesty, but with his whole heart looking out of his eyes. His brother and the other chiefs walked up and down the deck arguing and remonstrating with Charles, proving the hopelessness of the undertaking. As he listened to their talk the boy’s colour came and went, his hand involuntarily tightened on his sword. Charles caught sight of the eager young face, and, turning suddenly towards him cried, ‘Will *you* not assist me?’ ‘I will, I will; though not another man in the Highlands should draw a sword, I will die for you.’ Indeed, years after all had failed, young Clanranald prepared a new rising, and had 9,000 stand of arms concealed in the caves of Moidart.

The boy’s words were like flint to tinder. Before they left the ship the hesitating chieftains had pledged themselves to risk property, influence, freedom, and life itself in the Prince’s cause. These gallant Macdonalds were now willing to run all risks in receiving the Prince even before a single other clan had declared for him. Old Macdonald of Boisdale entertained Charles as an honoured guest in his bare but hospitable Highland house. All the people of the district crowded to see him as he sat at dinner. The young Prince delighted all present by his geniality and the interest he showed in everything Highland, and when he insisted on learning enough Gaelic to propose the king’s health in their native language, the hearts of the simple and affectionate people were completely gained.

Meanwhile young Clanranald had gone to Skye to try and persuade Macleod and Sir Alexander Macdonald to join the Prince. It was all in vain; these two powerful chiefs were too deeply committed to the Government. Next to these two, the most influential man in the Highlands was Cameron of Locheil. Indeed, such was the respect felt by all his neighbours for his gentle and chivalrous character, that there was no one whose example would carry such weight. It was all-important to gain him to the cause. No one saw more clearly than Locheil the hopelessness of the undertaking, no one was more unwilling to lead his clansmen to what he knew was certain destruction. He would see the Prince, he said, and warn him of the danger and entreat him to return. ‘Write to him,’ urged Locheil’s brother, ‘but do not see him. I know you better than you know yourself. If this Prince once sets eyes on you he will make you do whatever he pleases.’ It was but too true a prophecy. When all argument had failed to move Locheil’s prudent resolution, Charles exclaimed passionately, ‘In a few days, with a few friends, I will raise the Royal Standard and proclaim to the people of Britain that Charles Stuart is come over to claim the crown of his ancestors, to win it or perish in the attempt. Locheil, who, my father has often told me, was our firmest friend, may stay at home and learn from the newspapers the fate of his Prince.’ It was more than the proud, warm heart of the chief could stand. ‘No,’ he cried with emotion, ‘I will share the fate of my Prince, and so shall every man over whom nature and fortune has given me any power.’

Even before the Royal Standard was raised an unexpected success crowned the rebel arms. The Government had troops stationed both at Fort Augustus and Fort William. The latter being in the heart of the disaffected district, the commanding officer at Fort Augustus despatched two companies of newly-raised men to its assistance. This body, under a Captain Scott, was approaching the narrow bridge which crossed the Spean some seven miles from Fort William; all at once a body of Highlanders appeared, occupying the bridge and barring further passage. Had the troops plucked up courage enough to advance they would have found only some dozen Macdonalds; but the wild sound of the pipes, the yells of the Highlanders, and their constant movement which gave the effect of a large body, struck terror into the hearts of the recruits; they wavered and fell back, and their officer, though himself a brave man, had to order a retreat. But the sound of firing had attracted other bodies of Macdonalds and Camerons in the neighbourhood. All at once the steep, rough hillside seemed alive with armed Highlanders; from rock and bush they sprung up, startling the echoes by their wild shouts. In vain the disordered troops hurried along the road and rushed across the isthmus to the further side of the lakes; there a new party of Macdonalds, led by Keppoch, met them in front, and the whole body surrendered with hardly a blow struck. They were carried prisoners to Locheil’s house, Achnacarry. In default of medical aid, the wounded captain was sent to

Fort William, in that spirit of generous courtesy which characterised all Charles’s behaviour to his defeated enemies.

On August 19 the Royal Standard was raised at Glenfinnan, a deep rocky valley between Loch Eil and Loch Sheil, where the Prince’s monument now stands. Charles, with a small body of Macdonalds, was the first to arrive, early in the morning. He and his men rowed up the long narrow Loch Sheil. The valley was solitary — not a far-off bagpipe broke the silence, not a figure appeared against the skyline of the hills. With sickening anxiety the small party waited, while the minutes dragged out their weary length. At last, when suspense was strained to the utmost, about two in the afternoon, a sound of pipes was heard, and a body of Camerons under Lochiel appeared over the hill, bringing with them the prisoners made at the Bridge of Spean. Others followed: Stewarts of Appin, Macdonalds of Glencoe and Keppoch, till at least 1,500 were present. Then the honoured veteran of the party, old Tullibardine, advanced in solemn silence and unfurled the royal banner, with the motto *Tandem Triumphans*. As its folds of white, blue, and red silk blew out on the hill breeze, huzzas rent the air, and the sky was darkened by the bonnets that were flung up. An English officer, a prisoner taken at Spean, stood by, an unwilling spectator of the scene. ‘Go, sir,’ cried the Prince in exultation, ‘go to your general; tell him what you have seen, and say that I am coming to give him battle.’

III

THE MARCH SOUTH

For a full month Prince Charles had been in Scotland. During that time a body of men, amounting to a small army, had collected round him; his manifestoes had been scattered all over the country (some were even printed in Edinburgh), and yet the Government had taken no steps to oppose him. News travelled slowly from the Highlands; it was August 9 before any *certain* account of the Prince's landing was received in Edinburgh. One bad fruit of the Union was that Scotch questions had to be settled in London, and London was three days further away. Moreover, at that greater distance, men had more difficulty in realising the gravity of the situation. Conflicting rumours distracted the authorities in Edinburgh; now it was declared that the Prince had landed with 10,000 French soldiers, at another time men ridiculed the idea of his getting a single man to rise for him. Those who knew the country best took the matter most seriously. The question of defence was not an easy one. At that time almost all the available British troops were in Flanders, fighting the French; the soldiers that were left in Scotland were either old veterans, fit only for garrison duty, newly raised companies whose mettle was untried, or local militias which were not to be trusted in all cases. If the great lords who had raised and who commanded them chose to declare for the Stuarts, they would carry their men with them.

The commander-in-chief, Sir John Cope, was not the man to meet so sudden and so peculiar a crisis. He had nothing of a real general's love of responsibility and power of decision. To escape blame and to conduct a campaign according to the laws of war was all the old campaigner cared for. When it was decided that he was to march with all the available forces in Scotland into the Highlands he willingly obeyed, little guessing what a campaign in the Highlands meant. Almost at once it was found that it would be impossible to provide food for horses as well as men. So the dragoons under Colonel Gardiner were left at Stirling. We shall hear of them again. But his 1,500 infantry were weighted heavily enough; a small herd of black cattle followed the army to provide them with food, and more than 100 horses carried bread and biscuit. Confident that the loyal clans would come in hundreds to join his standard, Cope carried 700 stand of arms. By the time he reached Crieff, however, not a single volunteer had come in, and the stand of arms was sent back. Cope followed one of the great military roads which led straight to Fort Augustus, and had been made thirty years before by General Wade. Now across that road, some ten miles short of the fort, lies a high precipitous hill, called Corryarack. Up this mountain wall the road is carried in seventeen sharp zigzags; so steep is it that the country people call it the 'Devil's Staircase.' Any army holding the top of the pass would have an ascending enemy at its mercy, let alone an army of Highlanders, accustomed to skulk behind rock and shrub, and skilled to rush down the most rugged hillsides with the swiftness and surefootedness of deer.

While still some miles distant, Cope learned that the Highlanders were already in possession of Corryarack. The rumour was premature, but it thoroughly alarmed the English general. He dared not attempt the ascent; to return south was against his orders. A council of war, hastily summoned, gave him the advice he wished for, and on the 28th the army had turned aside and was in full retreat on Inverness.

Meanwhile, the Prince's army was pressing forward to meet Cope. The swiftest-footed soldiers that ever took the field, the Highlanders were also the least heavily-weighted. A bag of oatmeal on his back supplied each man's need, Charles himself burned his baggage and marched at the head of his men as light of foot and as stout of heart as the best of them. On the morning of the 27th they were to ascend Corryarack. The Prince was in the highest spirits. As he laced his Highland brogues he cried, 'Before I take these off I shall have fought with Mr. Cope!' Breathless the Highland army reached the top of the hill; they had gained *that* point of vantage. Eagerly they looked down the zigzags on the further side; to their amazement not a man was to be seen, their road lay open before them! When they learned from deserters the course Cope's army had taken, they were as much disappointed as triumphant.

A body of Highlanders was despatched to try and take the barracks at Ruthven, where twelve soldiers, under a certain Sergeant Molloy, held the fort for the Government. This man showed a spirit very different from that of his superior officer's. This is his own straightforward account of the attack and repulse:

'Noble General, — They summoned me to surrender, but I told him I was too old a soldier to part with so strong a place without bloody noses. They offered me honourable terms of marching out bag and baggage, which I refused. They threatened to hang me and my party. I said I would take my chance. They set fire to the sally-port which I extinguished; and failing therein, went off asking leave to take their dead man, which I granted.’

Honour to Molloy, whatever the colour of his cockade!

Though unsuccessful at Ruthven, some members of this party, before rejoining the Prince’s army at Dalwhinnie, made an important capture. Macpherson of Cluny was one of the most distinguished chiefs in the Highlands, ruling his clan with a firm hand, and repressing all thieving amongst them. As captain of an independent company, he held King George’s commission; his honour kept him faithful to the Government, but his whole heart was on the other side. He was taken prisoner in his own house by a party ‘hardly big enough to take a cow,’ and once a prisoner in the Highland army, it was no difficult task to persuade him to take service with the Prince.

The army now descended into the district of Athol. With curious emotion old Tullibardine approached his own house of Blair from which he had been banished thirty years before. The brother who held his titles and properties fled before the Highland army, and the noble old exile had the joy of entertaining his Prince in his own halls. The Perthshire lairds were almost all Jacobites. Here at Blair, and later at Perth, gentlemen and their following flocked to join the Prince.

One of the most important of these was Tullibardine’s brother, Lord George Murray, an old soldier who had been ‘out in the ‘15.’ He had real genius for generalship, and moreover understood the Highlanders and their peculiar mode of warfare. He was no courtier, and unfortunately his blunt, hot-tempered, plain speaking sometimes ruffled the Prince, too much accustomed to the complacency of his Irish followers. But all that was to come later. On the march south there were no signs of divided counsels. The command of the army was gladly confided to Lord George.

Another important adherent who joined at this time was the Duke of Perth, a far less able man than Lord George, but endeared to all his friends by his gentleness and courage and modesty. Brought up in France by a Catholic mother, he was an ardent Jacobite, and the first man to be suspected by the authorities. As soon as the news spread that the Prince had landed in the West, the Government sent an officer to arrest the young duke. There was a peculiar treachery in the way this was attempted. The officer, a Mr. Campbell of Inverawe, invited himself to dinner at Drummond Castle, and, after being hospitably entertained, produced his warrant. The duke retained his presence of mind, appeared to acquiesce, and, with habitual courtesy, bowed his guest first out of the room; then suddenly shut the door, turned the key and made his escape through an ante-room, a backstairs, and a window, out into the grounds. Creeping from tree to tree he made his way to a paddock where he found a horse, without a saddle but with a halter. He mounted, and the animal galloped off. In this fashion he reached the house of a friend, where he lay hid till the time he joined the Prince.

No Jacobite family had a nobler record of services rendered to the Stuarts than the Oliphants of Gask. The laird had been 'out in the '15,' and had suffered accordingly, but he did not hesitate a moment to run the same risks in the '45. He brought with him to Blair his high-spirited boy, young Lawrence, who records his loyal enthusiasm in a journal full of fine feeling and bad spelling! Indeed, one may say that bad spelling was, like the 'white rose,' a badge of the Jacobite party. Mistress Margaret Oliphant, who with her mother and sisters donned the white cockade and waited on their beloved Prince at her aunt's, Lady Nairne's, house, also kept a journal wherein she regrets in ill-spelt, fervent words that being 'only a woman' she cannot carry the Prince's banner. This amiable and honourable family were much loved among their own people. 'Oliphant is king to us' was a by-word among retainers who had lived on their land for generations. But at this crisis the shrewd, prosperous Perthshire farmers refused to follow their landlord on such a desperate expedition. Deeply mortified and indignant, the generous, hot-tempered old laird forbade his tenants to gather in the harvest which that year was early and abundant. As Charles rode through the Gask fields he noticed the corn hanging over-ripe and asked the cause. As soon as he was told, he jumped from his horse, cut a few blades with his sword and, in his gracious princely way, exclaimed 'There, *I* have broken the inhibition! Now every man may gather in his own.' It was acts like this that gained the hearts of gentle and simple alike, and explain that passionate affection for Charles that remained with many to the end of their days as part of their religion. The strength of this feeling still touches our hearts in many a Jacobite song. 'I pu'ed my bonnet ower my eyne, For weel I loued Prince Charlie,' and the yearning refrain, 'Better loued ye canna be, Wull ye no come back again?' On the 3rd Charles entered Perth, at the head of a body of troops, in a handsome suit of tartan, but with his last guinea in his pocket! However, requisitions levied on Perth and the neighbouring towns did much to supply his exchequer, and it was with an army increased in numbers and importance, as well as far better organised — thanks to Lord G. Murray — that Charles a week later continued his route to Edinburgh. Having no artillery the Highland army avoided Stirling, crossed the Forth at the Fords of Frew entirely unopposed, and marched to Linlithgow, where they expected to fight with Gardiner's dragoons. That body however did not await their arrival, but withdrew to Corstorphine, a village two miles from Edinburgh.

The next halt of the Prince's army was at Kirkliston. In the neighbourhood lay the house of New Liston, the seat of Lord Stair, whose father was so deeply and disgracefully implicated in the massacre of Glencoe. It was remembered that a grandson of the murdered Macdonald was in the army with the men of his clan. Fearing that they would seize this opportunity of avenging their cruel wrong, the general proposed placing a guard round the house. Macdonald hearing this proposal, went at once to the Prince. ‘It is right,’ he said, ‘that a guard should be placed round the house of New Liston, but that guard must be furnished by the Macdonalds of Glencoe. If they are not thought worthy of this trust they are not fit to bear arms in your Royal Highness’ cause, and I must withdraw them from your standard.’ The passion for revenge may be strong in the heart of the Highlander, but the love of honour and the sense of loyalty are stronger still. The Macdonalds, as we shall see, carried their habit of taking their own way to a fatal extent.

IV

EDINBURGH

Meanwhile nothing could exceed the panic that had taken possession of the town of Edinburgh. The question of the hour was, could the city be defended *at all*, and if so, could it, in case of siege, hold out till Cope might be expected with his troops? That dilatory general, finding nothing to do in the North, was returning to Edinburgh by sea, and might be looked for any day. There could be no question of the strength of the Castle. It was armed and garrisoned, and no army without large guns need attempt to attack it. But with the town it was different. The old town of Edinburgh, as everybody knows, is built along the narrow ridge of a hill running from the hollow of Holyrood, in constant ascent, up to the Castle rock. On each side narrow wynds and lanes descend down steep slopes, on the south side to the Grassmarket and the Cowgate, on the north — at the time of which we write — the sides of the city sloped down to a lake called the Norloch, a strong position, had the city been properly fortified. More than two hundred years before, in the desolate and anxious days that followed Flodden, the magistrates of the city, hourly expecting to be invaded, had hastily built a high wall round the whole city as it then was. For the time the defence was sufficient. But the wall had been built without reference to artillery, it had neither towers nor embrasures for mounting cannons. It was simply a very high, solid, park wall, as may be seen to this day by the curious who care to visit the last remnants of it, in an out-of-the-way corner near the Grassmarket.

If the material defences were weak, the human defenders were weaker still. The regular soldiers were needed for the Castle; Hamilton’s dragoons, stationed at Leith, were of no use in the defence of a city, the town guard was merely a body of rather inefficient policemen, the trained bands mere ornamental volunteers who shut their eyes if they had to let off a firearm in honour of the king’s birthday. As soon as it seemed certain that the Highland army was approaching Edinburgh, preparations, frantic but spasmodic, were made to put the city in a state of defence.

The patriotic and spirited Maclaurin, professor of mathematics, alone and unaided, tried to mount cannons on the wall, but not with much success. The city determined to raise a regiment of volunteers; funds were not lacking; it was more difficult to find the men. Even when companies were formed, their ardour was not very great. Rumour and ignorance had exaggerated the numbers and fierceness of the Highland army; quiet citizens, drawn from desk or shop, might well shrink from encountering them in the field. Parties were divided in the town; the Prince had many secret friends among the citizens. In back parlours of taverns 'douce writers,' and advocates of Jacobite sympathies, discussed the situation with secret triumph; in many a panelled parlour high up in those wonderful old closes, spirited old Jacobite ladies recalled the adventures of the '15, and bright-eyed young ones busied themselves making knots of white satin. 'One-third of the men are Jacobite,' writes a Whig citizen, 'and two-thirds of the ladies.'

On Saturday, 14th, the news reached Edinburgh that the Prince had arrived at Linlithgow, and that Gardiner had retired on Corstorphine, a village two miles from Edinburgh. Consternation was general; advice was sought from the law officers of the Crown, and it was found that they had all retired to Dunbar. The Provost was not above suspicion. His surname was Stuart; no Scotsman could believe that he really meant to oppose the chief of his name.

On Sunday, as the townsfolk were at church about eleven o'clock, the firebell rang out its note of alarm, scattering the congregation into the streets. It was the signal for the mustering of the volunteers. The officer in command at the Castle was sending the dragoons from Leith to reinforce Gardiner at Corstorphine, and the volunteers were ordered to accompany them. They were standing in rank in the High Street, when the dragoons rattled up the Canongate at a hard trot; as they passed they saluted their brothers in arms with drawn swords and loud huzzas, then swept down the West Bow and out at the West Port. For a moment military ardour seized the volunteers, but the lamentations and tears of their wives and children soon softened their mood again. A group of Jacobite ladies in a balcony mocked and derided the civic warriors, but had finally to close their windows to prevent stones being hurled at them.

One of the volunteer companies was composed of University students. Among them was, doubtless, more than one stout young heart, eager for fame and fighting, but most were more at home with their books than their broadswords. 'Oh, Mr. Hew, Mr. Hew,' whispered one youth to his comrade, 'does not this remind you of the passage in Livy where the Gens of the Fabii marched out of the city, and the matrons and maids of Rome were weeping and wringing their hands?' 'Hold your tongue,' said Mr. Hew, affecting a braver spirit, 'you'll discourage the men.' 'Recollect the end, Mr. Hew,' persisted his trembling comrade; '*they all perished to a man!*' This was not destined to be the fate of the Edinburgh volunteers. On the march down the West Bow, one by one they stole off, up the narrow wynds and doorways, till by the time they reached the West Port, only the student corps remained, and even its ranks were sadly thinned. The remnant were easily persuaded that their lives were too precious to their country to be rashly thrown away, and quietly marched back to the college yards.

There was no alarm that night. At one o'clock the Provost, accompanied by a few of the city guard, carrying a lantern before him, visited the outposts and found all at their places. In the narrow streets of Edinburgh the people were accustomed to transact all their business out of doors. Next morning (Monday, 16th), the streets were already crowded at an early hour with an anxious, vociferous crowd. At 10 o'clock a man arrived with a message from the Prince, which he incautiously proclaimed in the street. If the town would surrender it should be favourably treated; if it resisted it must expect to be dealt with according to the usages of war. Greatly alarmed, the people clamoured for a meeting, but the Provost refused; he trusted to the dragoons to defend the city. A little after noon, the citizens looking across from the Castle and the northern windows of their houses, saw the dragoons in retreat from Coltbridge As they watched the moving figures, the pace quickened and became a regular flight; by the time the dragoons were opposite the city on the other side of the Norloch, they were running like hares. They made at first for their barracks at Leith, but the distance still seemed too short between them and the terrifying Highlanders; they never drew rein till they had reached Prestonpans, nor did they rest there longer than an hour or two, but galloped on, and were at Dunbar before nightfall. And yet they had not exchanged a blow with their foes! At the first sight of a reconnoitring party of horsemen, panic had seized them and they had fled. This was the celebrated 'Canter of Coltbridge.'

The effect on the city was disturbing in the extreme. A tumultuous meeting was held in the council chamber, the volunteers were drawn up in the streets. As they stood uncertain what to do a man on horseback — it was never known who he was — galloped up the Bow, and as he passed along the ranks, shouted 'The Highlanders are coming, sixteen thousand strong.'

It was too much for the volunteers, they marched up to the Castle and gave in their arms! Meanwhile, a packet was handed into the council chamber signed C. P., and offering the same terms as in the morning, only adding that the town must open its gates by two o'clock next morning. The cry was unanimous to surrender, but to gain time deputies were sent to the Prince at Gray's Mill, two miles from Edinburgh, to ask for further delay. Hardly had the deputies gone when, in through the opposite gate galloped a messenger from Dunbar, to say that Cope had landed there with his troops. Opinion now swung round the other way, and men's courage rose to the point of *speaking* about resistance. The deputies returned at ten at night; Charles, they said, was inexorable and stuck to his conditions. To cause a delay, a new set of deputies were sent forth at a very late hour, and went out by the West Bow *in a hackney coach*.

To gain time, and then steal another march on Cope, was even more important to the Prince than to his enemies. There were weak points in the wall that might be attacked. The chief gate of the city, the Netherbow, lay midway up the High Street, dividing the real borough of Edinburgh from the Canongate; on each side of this gate the wall descended sharply down hill, running along Leith Wynd on the north side and St. Mary's Wynd on the south. The houses of the latter — Edinburgh houses numbering their ten or twelve stories — were actually built on to the wall. By entering one of these, active and determined men might clear the wall by a fire of musketry from the upper windows, and then make an escalade. Another weak point was at the foot of Leith Wynd, where the wall met the Norloch. About midnight Locheil and five hundred of his men started to make a night attack. They were guided by Mr. Murray of Broughton (the Prince's secretary, afterwards a traitor), who had been a student in Edinburgh and knew the town well. To avoid chance shots from the guns of the Castle, they made a wide circle round the town, but so still was the night that across the city they could hear the watches called in the distant fortress. Swift and silent as Red Indians, the Highlanders marched in the shadow cast by the high, dark houses of the suburbs without arousing the sleeping inmates. They could see cannons on the walls, but no sentinels were visible. They determined to try fraud before resorting to force. Twenty Camerons placed themselves in hiding on each side of the gate, sixty stood in the dark recess of the Wynd, the rest were at the bottom of the slope. One of the number, disguised as the servant of an English officer of dragoons, knocked loudly at the gate, demanding admission. The watch refused to open and threatened to fire. So this stratagem was not successful. Already the dawn was beginning to break, and a council was held among the leaders of the band in low hurried whispers. They were deliberating whether they should not retreat, when all at once a heavy rumbling noise from within the city broke the silence of the night. The hackney coach before mentioned had deposited its load of deputies at the council chamber and was returning to its stable-yard in the Canongate. A word to the watchmen within and the gates swung on their heavy hinges. In rushed the body of Camerons, secured the bewildered watchmen, and in a few minutes had seized the city guard-house and disarmed the soldiers. Then they struck up the wild pibroch 'We'll awa' to Sheriffmuir to haud the Whigs in order,' and startled citizens rushing to their windows saw in the dim twilight the streets filled with plaids and bonnets. The conquerors visited all the outposts as quietly as if they were troops relieving guard. A citizen strolling along by the wall early next morning found a Highland soldier astride on one of the cannons, 'Surely you are not the same soldiers who were here yesterday?' 'Och no!' was the answer with a grave twinkle, 'she be relieved.'

At noon Prince Charles rode to Holyrood by way of Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crags. He was on foot as he approached the ancient home of his race, but the large and enthusiastic crowd which came out to meet him pressed so closely upon him in their eagerness to kiss his hand, that he had to mount a horse, and rode the last half mile between the Duke of Perth and Lord Elcho. A gallant young figure he must have appeared at that moment — tall and straight and fresh-coloured, in a tartan coat and blue bonnet, with the cross of St. Andrew on his breast. As he was about to enter the old palace of Holyrood, out of the crowd stepped the noble and venerable figure of Mr. Hepburn of Keith. He drew his sword, and, holding it aloft, with grave enthusiasm marshalled the Prince up the stairs. It was surely a good omen; no man in Scotland bore a higher character for learning, goodness, and patriotism than Mr. Hepburn; he was hardly less respected by the Whigs than the Jacobites.

That same afternoon, at the old Cross in the High Street, with pomp of heralds and men-at-arms, James VIII. was proclaimed king, and his son's commission as regent was read aloud to the listening crowd. Loud huzzas almost drowned the wild music of the bagpipes, the Highlanders in triumph let off their pieces in the air, and from every window in the high houses on each side ladies fluttered their white handkerchiefs. Beside the Cross, beautiful Mrs. Murray of Broughton sat on horseback, a drawn sword in one hand, while with the other she distributed white cockades to the crowd. Even grave Whig statesmen like the Lord President Forbes were disturbed by the enthusiastic Jacobitism that possessed all the Scotch ladies. More than one followed the example of the high-spirited Miss Lumsden, who let her lover clearly understand that she would have nothing more to say to him unless he took up arms for the Prince, and doubtless more young gallants than Robert Strange joined the rebels for no better reason than their ladies' command.

A ball was given at Holyrood that same evening, and surrounded by all that was bravest and most beautiful and brilliant in Scottish society, it was no wonder that Charles felt that this was but the beginning of a larger and more complete triumph.

V

PRESTONPANS

In less than a month Prince Charles had marched through a kingdom, and gained a capital, but he felt his triumph insecure till he had met his enemies in fair fight. Nor were his followers less eager for battle. In a council of war held at Holyrood, Charles declared his intention of leading the army against Cope, and of charging in person at its head. *That*, however, the chiefs would not hear of; the Prince's life was all-important to their cause, and must not be rashly exposed to danger. The arms that the Edinburgh trained bands had used to so little purpose — about a thousand muskets — had fallen into the hands of their enemies; but even with this addition, the Highland soldiers were insufficiently accoutred. The gentlemen, who marched in the front ranks, were, it is true, completely armed with broadsword, musket, pistol, and dirk, but in the rank and file many an unkempt, half-clothed, ill-fed cateran carried merely a bill-hook or scytheblade fixed into a long pole. It was the swiftness and splendid daring of their onset that made these ill-armed, untrained clansmen the equals or more than the equals of the regular army that opposed them.

In the meantime Cope, with his army of 2,000 foot, reinforced by the fugitive dragoons, some 600 men under Gardiner, were marching from Dunbar. Gardiner, as brave a soldier as he was a good and devout Christian, was full of foreboding. The 'canter of Coltbridge' had broken his heart; a 'most foul flight,' he called it, and added, to a friend who tried to comfort him, that there were not ten men in his troop whom he could trust not to run away at the first fire. No such misgiving seems to have disturbed Sir John Cope. On Friday the 20th the Hanoverian army reached Prestonpans, and formed its ranks on a plain between the sea on the north and the ridge of Carberry Hill on the south. The road from Edinburgh to Haddington passed through this plain, and the simple old general argued that the advancing army would be sure to take the easiest road. Fortunately Lord George Murray knew better where the peculiar strength of the Highlanders lay.

Early on Friday morning the Prince's army broke up from their camp at

Duddingstone. Charles himself was the first man on the field. As the troops began their march, he drew his sword and cried: ‘Gentlemen, I have thrown away the scabbard;’ high-spirited words which found an echo in the hearts of all the brave men present.

The army marched in column, three abreast, the various clans holding together under their own chiefs. Two miles short of Prestonpans Lord George learned the position of Cope’s army, and at once led his light-footed soldiers up the slopes that commanded the plain. The English general was hourly expecting to see his enemies approach from the west by the road, and he was fully prepared to meet them at that point. At two in the afternoon, to his amazement, they suddenly appeared from the south, marching over the ridge of the hill.

The Hanoverian soldiers had enough spirit to receive them with cheers, to which the Highlanders responded by wild yells. They longed ardently to sweep down the slope and give instant battle, but the nature of the ground made this impossible even to a Highland army. Intersecting the hillside were high stone walls, which would have to be scaled under a hot fire from below, and at the bottom was a swamp, a wide ditch, and a high hedge. A certain gentleman in the Prince’s army — Mr. Ker of Gordon — rode over the ground on his pony to examine its possibilities. He went to work as coolly as if he were on the hunting-field, making breaches in the wall and leading his pony through, in spite of a dropping fire from the Hanoverians. He reported that to charge over such ground was impossible. The Highlanders were bitterly disappointed; their one fear was that Cope should again slip away under cover of darkness. To prevent this Lord Nairne and 600 Perthshire men were sent to guard the road to Edinburgh. Seeing that nothing more could be done that night, both armies settled down to rest; General Cope lay in comfort at Cockenzie, Prince Charles on the field; a bundle of peastraw served for his pillow; a long white cloak thrown over his plaid for a covering.

Among the volunteers who had recently joined the Prince was an East Lothian laird called Anderson. He had often shot over the fields about Prestonpans. During the night he suddenly remembered a path which led from the heights, down through the morass on to the plain, slightly to the east of Cope’s army. He sought out Lord George and told him of this path, and he, struck with the possibility of making immediate use of the information, took him without delay to the Prince. Charles was alert on the instant, entered into the plan proposed, and the next moment the word of command was passed along the sleeping lines. A few moments later the whole army was moving along the ridge in the dim starlight. But here a difficulty occurred. At Bannockburn, and in all great battles afterwards, except Killiekrankie, the Macdonalds had held the place of honour on the right wing of the army. They claimed that position now with haughty tenacity. The other clans, equally brave and equally proud, disputed the claim. It was decided to draw lots to settle the question. Lots were drawn, and the place of honour fell to the Camerons and Stewarts. An ominous cloud gathered on the brows of the Macdonald chiefs, but Locheil, as sagacious as he was courteous, induced the other chiefs to waive their right, and, well content, the clan Macdonald marched on in the van.

Up on the hill the sky was clear, but a thick white mist covered the plain. Under cover of this the Highlanders passed the morass in the one fordable place. In the darkness the Prince missed a stepping-stone and slipped into the bog, but recovered so quickly that no one had time to draw a bad omen from the accident. A Hanoverian dragoon, standing sentinel near this point, heard the march of the soldiers while they were still invisible in the dusk, and galloped off to give the alarm, but not before the Highland army was free from the swamp and had formed in two lines on the plain. Macdonalds and Camerons and Stewarts were in the first line; behind, at a distance of fifty yards, the Perthshiremen and other regiments led by Charles himself.

Learning that the enemy was now approaching from the east side of the plain, Cope drew up his men to face their approach. In the centre was the infantry — the steadiest body in his army — on his left, near the sea and opposite the Macdonalds, Hamilton’s dragoons, on the right, the other dragoons under Gardiner, and in front of these the battery of six cannon. This should have been a formidable weapon against the Highlanders, who, unfamiliar with artillery, had an almost superstitious fear of the big guns, but they were merely manned by half-a-dozen feeble old sailors. There was a brief pause as the two armies stood opposite each other in the sea of mist. The Highlanders muttered a short prayer, drew their bonnets down on their eyes, and moved forward at a smart pace. At that moment a wind rose from the sea and rolled away the curtain of mist from between the two armies. In front of them the Highlanders saw their enemy drawn up like a hedge of steel. With wild yells they came on, their march quickening to a run, each clan charging in a close compact body headed by its own chief. Even while they rushed on, as resistless as a torrent, each man fired his musket deliberately and with deadly aim, then flung it away and swept on, brandishing his broadsword. A body of Stewarts and Camerons actually stormed the battery, rushing straight on the muzzles of the guns. The old men who had them in charge had fled at the first sight of the Highlanders; even the brave Colonel Whiteford, who alone and unassisted stood to his guns, had to yield to their furious onset. Gardiner’s dragoons standing behind the battery were next seized by the panic; they made one miserable attempt to advance, halted, and then wheeling round, dashed wildly in every direction. Nor could Hamilton’s dragoons on the other wing stand the heavy rolling fire of the advancing Macdonalds. Mad with terror, man and horse fled in blind confusion, some backwards, confounding their own ranks, some along the shore, some actually through the ranks of the enemy.

Only the infantry in the centre stood firm and received the onset of the Highlanders with a steady fire. A small band of Macgregors, armed only with scytheblades, charged against this hedge of musketry. This curious weapon was invented by James More, a son of Rob Roy Macgregor. He was the leader of this party, and fell, pierced by five bullets. With undaunted courage he raised himself on his elbow, and shouted, ‘Look ye, my lads, I’m not dead; by Heaven I shall see if any of you does not do his duty.’ In that wild charge, none of the clansmen failed to ‘do his duty.’ Heedless of the rain of bullets, they rushed to close quarters with the Hanoverian infantry, who, deserted by the dragoons, were now attacked on both sides as well as in front. A few stood firm, and the gallant Colonel Gardiner put himself at their head. A blow from a scytheblade in the hands of a gigantic Macgregor ended his life, and spared him the shame and sorrow of another defeat. The Park walls at their back prevented the infantry from seeking ignoble security in flight, after the fashion of the dragoons, and they were forced to lay down their weapons and beg for quarter. Some 400 of them fell, struck down by the broadswords and dirks of their enemy, more than 700 were taken prisoners, and only a few hundreds escaped.

The battle was won in less than five minutes. Charles himself commanded the second column, which was only fifty yards behind the first, but, by the time he arrived on the scene of action, there was nothing left to be done. Nothing, that is, in securing the victory, but Charles at once occupied himself in stopping the carnage and protecting the wounded and prisoners. ‘Sir,’ cried one of his staff, riding up to him, ‘there are your enemies at your feet.’ ‘They are my father’s subjects,’ answered Charles sadly, turning away.

In vain did Sir John Cope and the Earl of Home try to rally the dragoons. Holding pistols to the men’s heads, they succeeded in collecting a body in a field near Clement’s Wells, and tried to form a squadron; but the sound of a pistol-shot renewed the panic and off they started again at the gallop. There was nothing for it but for the officers to put themselves at the head of as many fugitives as they could collect, and conduct the flight. Hardly did they draw rein till they were safe at Berwick. There the unfortunate general was received by Lord Mark Ker with the well-known sarcasm— ‘Sir, I believe you are the first general in Europe who has brought the first news of his own defeat.’

In the meantime, the wounded they had left on the field were being kindly cared for by the victorious army. Charles despatched a messenger to bring medical aid — an errand not without danger to a single horseman on roads covered with straggling bodies of dragoons. But the adventure just suited the gallant spirit of young Lawrence Oliphant. At Tranent the sight of him and his servant at their heels sent off a body of dragoons at the gallop. Single fugitives he disarmed and dismounted, sending the horses back to the Prince by the hands of country lads. Once he had to discharge his pistol after a servant and pony, but for the most part the terrified soldiers yielded at a word.

Entering the Netherbow, he galloped up the streets of Edinburgh shouting, ‘Victory! victory!’ From every window in the High Street and Luckenbows white caps looked out, while the streets were crowded with eager citizens, and joyful hurrahs were heard on every side. At Lucky Wilson’s, in the Lawn Market, the young gentleman alighted, called for breakfast, and sent for the magistrates to deliver his orders that the gates were to be closed against any fugitive dragoons. Hat in hand, the magistrates waited on the Prince’s aide-de-camp, but at that moment the cry arose that dragoons and soldiers were coming up the street. Up jumps Mr. Oliphant and out into the street, faces eight or nine dragoons, and commands them to dismount in the Prince’s name. This the craven Hanoverians were quite prepared to do. Only one presented his piece at the young officer. Mr. Oliphant snapped his pistol at him, forgetting that it was empty. Immediately half a dozen shots were fired at him, but so wildly that none did him any harm beyond shattering his buckle, and he retreated hastily up one of the dark steep lanes that led into a close.

The commander of the Castle refused to admit the fugitives, threatened even to fire on them as deserters, and they had to gallop out at the West Port and on to Stirling. Another of the Prince’s officers, Colquhoun Grant, drove a party of dragoons before him all the way into Edinburgh, and stuck his bloody dirk into the Castle gates as a defiance.

Sadder was the fate of another Perthshire gentleman, as young and as daring as Lawrence Oliphant. David Thriepland, with a couple of servants, had followed the dragoons for two miles from the field; they had fled before him, but, coming to a halt, they discovered that their pursuers numbered no more than three. They turned on them and cut them down with their swords. Many years afterwards, when the grass was rank and green on Mr. Thriepland’s grave, a child named Walter Scott, sitting on it, heard the story from an old lady who had herself seen the death of the young soldier.

The next day (Sunday) the Prince held his triumphant entry up the High Street of Edinburgh. Clan after clan marched past, with waving plaids and brandished weapons; the wild music of the pipes sounded as full of menace as of triumph.

From every window in the dark, high houses on each side, fair faces looked down, each adorned with the white cockade. In their excitement the Highlanders let off their pieces into the air. By an unfortunate accident one musket thus fired happened to be loaded, and the bullet grazed the temple of a Jacobite lady, Miss Nairne, inflicting a slight wound. ‘Thank God that this happened to *me*, whose opinions are so well known,’ cried the high-spirited girl. ‘Had a Whig lady been wounded, it might have been thought that the deed had been intentional.’

VI

THE MARCH TO DERBY

A successful army, especially an insurgent army, should never pause in its onward march. If Prince Charles could have followed the flying dragoons over the Border into England he would have found no preparations made to resist him in the Northern counties. Even after the King and Government were alarmed by the news of the battle of Preston, a full month was allowed to pass before an army under General Wade arrived at Newcastle on the 29th of October. Dutch, Hessian, and English troops were ordered home from Flanders and regiments were raised in the country, though at first no one seems to have seriously believed in anything so daring as an invasion of England by Prince Charles and his Highlanders.

So far there had come no word of encouragement from the English Jacobites. Still, Charles never doubted but that they would hasten to join him as soon as he crossed the Border. On the very morrow of Prestonpans he sent messengers to those whom he considered his friends in England, telling of his success and bidding them be ready to join him. In the meantime he waited in Edinburgh till his army should be large and formidable enough to undertake the march South. After the battle numbers of his soldiers had deserted. According to their custom, as soon as any clansman had secured as much booty as he could conveniently carry, he started off home to his mountains to deposit his spoil. A stalwart Highlander was seen staggering along the streets of Edinburgh with a pier glass on his back, and ragged boys belonging to the army adorned themselves with gold-laced hats, or any odd finery they could pick up.

Many new adherents flocked to join the Prince. Among these was the simple-minded old Lord Pitsligo. He commanded a body of horse, though at his age he could hardly bear the fatigues of a campaign. In Aberdeenshire — always Jacobite and Episcopalian — Lord Lewis Gordon collected a large force; in Perthshire Lord Ogilvy raised his clan, though neither of these arrived in time to join the march South. Even a Highland army could not start in mid-winter to march through a hostile country without any preparations. Tents and shoes were provided by the city of Edinburgh, and all the horses in the neighbourhood were pressed for the Prince’s service.

On the first day of November the army, numbering 6,000 men, started for the Border. Lord George led one division, carrying the supplies by Moffat and Annandale to the West Border. Charles himself commanded the other division. They pretended to be moving on Newcastle, marched down Tweedside and then turned suddenly westward and reached England through Liddesdale.

On the 8th they crossed the Border. The men unsheathed their swords and raised a great shout. Unfortunately, as he drew his claymore, Locheil wounded his hand, and his men, seeing the blood flow, declared it to be a bad omen.

But fortune still seemed to follow the arms of the Adventurer. Carlisle was the first strong town on the English Border, and though insufficiently garrisoned, was both walled and defended by a Castle. The mayor, a vain-glorious fellow, was ambitious of being the first man to stay the victorious army, and published a proclamation saying that he was not ‘Patterson, a Scotchman, but Pattieson, a true-hearted Englishman, who would defend his town against all comers.’

A false report that Wade was advancing from the West made Charles turn aside and advance to Brampton in the hope of meeting him, but the roads were rough, the weather was wild and cold, the Hanoverian general was old, and again, as at Corryarack, Charles prepared to meet an enemy that never appeared.

In the meantime a division of the army had returned to Carlisle and was laying siege to it with great vigour. Lord George Murray and the Duke of Perth worked in the trenches in their shirt sleeves. The sound of bullets in their ears, the sight of formidable preparations for an assault, were too much for the mayor and his citizens; on the 13th, the ‘true-hearted Englishmen’ hung out a white flag, and the Prince’s army marched in and took possession. It was another success, as sudden and complete as any of the former ones. But there were ominous signs even at this happy moment. The command of the siege of Carlisle had been given to the Duke of Perth, and Lord George Murray, the older and abler general, resented the slight. He sent in his resignation of the command of the forces, but with proud magnanimity offered to serve as a volunteer. Charles accepted the resignation, but the idea of losing the one general of any experience they had, created consternation among the chiefs. The crisis would have become serious but for the generous good sense and modesty of the Duke of Perth, who sent in his resignation also to the Prince. A more ominous fact was that they had been almost a week in England and no one had declared for them. Charles refused to let anything damp his hopefulness. Lancashire was the stronghold of Jacobitism. Once in Lancashire, gentlemen and their following would flock to join him.

The road between Carlisle and Preston lies over bare, stony heights, an inhospitable country in the short, bleak days and long nights of November. Charles shared every hardship with his soldiers. He had a carriage but he never used it, and it was chiefly occupied by Lord Pitsligo. With his target on his shoulder he marched alongside of the soldiers, keeping up with their rapid pace, and talking to them in his scanty Gaelic. He seldom dined, had one good meal at night, lay down with his clothes on, and was up again at four next morning. No wonder that the Highlanders were proud of ‘a Prince who could eat a dry crust, sleep on pease-straw, dine in four minutes, and win a battle in five.’ Once going over Shap Fell he was so overcome by drowsiness and cold that he had to keep hold of one of the Ogilvies by the shoulderbelt and walked some miles half asleep. Another time the sole of his boot was quite worn out, and at the next village he got the blacksmith to nail a thin iron plate to the boot. ‘I think you are the first that ever shod the son of a king,’ he said, laughing as he paid the man.

Still entire silence on the part of the English Jacobites. The people in the villages and towns through which they passed looked on the uncouth strangers with ill-concealed aversion and fear. Once going to his quarters in some small town the ‘gentle Locheil’ found that the good woman of the house had hidden her children in a cupboard, having heard that the Highlanders were cannibals and ate children!

The town of Preston was a place of ill omen to the superstitious Highlanders. There, thirty years before, their countrymen had been disastrously defeated. They had a presentiment that they too would never get beyond that point. To destroy this fear, Lord George Murray marched half his army across the river and encamped on the further side.

Manchester was the next halting-place, and there the prospects were rather brighter. An enterprising Sergeant Dickson hurried on in front of the army with a girl and a drummer boy at his side. He marched about the streets recruiting, and managed to raise some score of recruits. In Manchester society there was a certain Jacobite element; on Sunday the church showed a crowd of ladies in tartan cloaks and white cockades, and a nonjuring clergyman preached in favour of the Prince’s cause. Among the officers who commanded the handful of men calling itself the Manchester Regiment, were three brothers of the name of Deacon, whose father, a nonjuring clergyman, devoted them all gladly to the cause. Another, Syddel, a wig-maker, had as a lad of eleven seen his father executed as a Jacobite in the ‘15, and had vowed undying vengeance against the house of Hanover. Manchester was the only place in England that had shown any zeal in the Prince’s cause, and it only contributed some few hundred men and 3,000*l.* of money.

The situation seemed grave to the leaders of the Prince’s army. He himself refused to recognise any other fact than that every day brought him nearer to London. On October 31 the army left Manchester. At Stockport they crossed the Mersey, the Prince wading up to the middle. Here occurred a very touching incident. A few Cheshire gentlemen met Charles at this point, and with them came an aged lady, Mrs. Skyring. As a child she remembered her mother lifting her up to see Charles II. land at Dover. Her parents were devoted Cavaliers, and despite the ingratitude of the royal family, loyalty was an hereditary passion with their daughter. For years she had laid aside half her income and had sent it to the exiled family, only concealing the name of the donor, as being of no interest to them. Now, she had sold all her jewels and plate, and brought the money in a purse as an offering to Charles. With dim eyes, feeble hands, and feelings too strong for her frail body, she clasped Charles’s hand, and gazing at his face said, ‘Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace.’

The Highland forces were in the very centre of England and had not yet encountered an enemy, but now they were menaced on two sides. General Wade — ‘Grandmother Wade’ the Jacobite soldiers called him — by slow marches through Yorkshire had arrived within three days’ march of them on one side, while, far more formidable, in front of them at Stafford lay the Duke of Cumberland with 10,000 men. He was a brave leader, and the troops under him were seasoned and experienced. At last the English Government had wakened up to the seriousness of the danger which they had made light of as long as it only affected Scotland. When news came that the Scots had got beyond Manchester, a most unmanly panic prevailed in London. Shops were shut, there was a run on the Bank, it has even been asserted that George II. himself had many of his valuables removed on to yachts in the Thames, and held himself in readiness to fly at any moment.

The Duke of Cumberland and his forces were the only obstacle between the Prince’s army and London. Lord George Murray, with his usual sagacity, determined to slip past this enemy also, as he had already slipped past Wade. While the Prince, with one division of the army, marched straight for Derby, he himself led the remaining troops apparently to meet the Duke of Cumberland. That able general fell into the snare and marched up his men to meet the Highlanders at Congleton. Then Lord George broke up his camp at midnight (of December 2), and, marching across country in the darkness, joined the Prince at Leek, a day’s journey short of Derby. By this clever stratagem the Highland army got a start of at least a day’s march on their way to London.

On the 4th, the Highland army entered Derby, marching in all day in detachments. Here Charles learned the good news from Scotland that Lord John

Drummond had landed at Montrose with 1,000 French soldiers and supplies of money and arms. Never had fortune seemed to shine more brightly on the young Prince. He was sure now of French assistance, he shut his eyes to the fact that the English people were either hostile or indifferent; if it came to a battle he was confident that hundreds of the enemy would desert to his standard. The road to London and to a throne lay open before him! That night at mess he seriously discussed how he should enter London in triumph. Should it be in Highland or English dress? On horseback or on foot? Did he notice, one wonders, that his gay anticipations were received in ominous silence by the chiefs? At least the private soldiers of his army shared his hopes. On the afternoon of the 5th many had their broadswords and dirks sharpened, and some partook of the Sacrament in the churches. They all felt that a battle was imminent.

Next morning a council of war was held. Charles was eager to arrange for an immediate advance on London. Success seemed to lie within his grasp. Lord George Murray rose as spokesman for the rest. He urged immediate retreat to Scotland! Two armies lay one on either hand, a third was being collected to defend London. Against 30,000 men what could 5,000 avail? He had no faith in a French invasion, he was convinced that nothing was to be looked for from the English Jacobites. ‘Rather than go back, I would I were twenty feet underground,’ Charles cried in passionate disappointment. He argued, he commanded, he implored; the chiefs were inexorable, and it was decided that the retreat should begin next morning before daybreak. This decision broke the Prince’s heart and quenched his spirit; never again did his buoyant courage put life into his whole army. Next morning he rose sullen and enraged, and marched in gloomy silence in the rear.

All the private soldiers and many of the officers believed that they were being led against the Duke of Cumberland. When returning daylight showed that they were retreating by the same road on which they had marched so hopefully two days before, they were filled with grief and rage. ‘Would God,’ writes a certain brave Macdonald, ‘we had pushed on though we had all been cut to pieces, when we were in a condition for fighting and doing honour to our noble Prince and the glorious cause we had taken in hand.’ The distrust caused in the Prince’s mind by Lord George’s action had, later, the most fatal effect.

VII

THE RETREAT

Never, perhaps, in any history was there a march more mournful than that of the Highland army from Derby. These soldiers had never known defeat, and yet there they were, in full retreat through a hostile country. So secret and rapid were their movements that they had gained two full days' march before the Duke of Cumberland had any certain news of their retreat. Though he started at once in pursuit, mounting a body of infantry on horses that they might keep up with the cavalry, and though all were fresh and in good condition, it was not till the 18th that he overtook the Prince's army in the wilds of Cumberland. Lord George Murray, looking upon himself as responsible for the safety of the army, had sent on the first division under the Prince, and himself brought up the rear with the baggage and artillery. In the hilly country of the North of England, it was no light task to travel with heavy baggage. The big wagons could not be dragged up the steep ill-made roads, and the country people were sullenly unwilling to lend their carts. The general was reduced to paying sixpence for every cannon ball that could be carried up the hills. The Prince was already at Penrith on the 17th, but Lord George had been obliged to stop six miles short of that point. Marching before daybreak on the 18th, he reached a village called Clifton as the sun rose. A body of horsemen stood guarding the village; the Highlanders, exhilarated at meeting a foe again, cast their plaids and rushed forward. On this the Hanoverians — a mere body of local yeomanry — fled. Among a few stragglers who were taken prisoner was a footman of the Duke of Cumberland, who told his captors that his master with 4,000 cavalry was following close behind them. Lord George resolved to make a stand, knowing that nothing would be more fatal than allowing the dragoons to fall suddenly on his troops when they had their backs turned. He had a body of Macdonalds and another of Stuarts with him; he found also some two hundred Macphersons, under their brave commander Cluny, guarding a bridge close to the village. The high road here ran between a wall on one side, and fields enclosed by high hedges and ditches on the other. On either side he could thus place his soldiers under cover. As evening fell he learned that the Hanoverian soldiers were drawn up on the moor, about a mile distant. He sent some of his men to a point where they should be partly visible to the enemy over a hedge; these he caused to pass and repass, so as to give a delusive idea of numbers. When the night fell the Highland soldiers were drawn up along the wall on the road, and in the enclosures behind the hedges; Lord George and Cluny stood with drawn swords on the highway. Every man stood at his post on the alert, in the breathless silence. Though the moon was up, the night was cloudy and dark, but in a fitful gleam the watchful general saw dark forms approaching in a mass behind a hedge. In a rapid whisper he asked Cluny what was to be done. ‘I will charge sword in hand if you order me,’ came the reply, prompt and cheery. A volley from the advancing troops decided the question. ‘There is no time to be lost; we must charge,’ cried Lord George, and raising the Highland war cry, ‘Claymore, Claymore,’ he was the first to dash through the hedge (he lost his hat and wig among the thorns, and fought the rest of the night bareheaded!). The dragoons were forced back on to the moor, while another body of horse was similarly driven back along the high road by the Stuarts and Macdonells of Glengarry. About a dozen Highlanders, following too eagerly in pursuit, were killed on this moor, but the loss on the other side was far greater. Nor did the Duke of Cumberland again attack the retreating enemy; he had learned, like the other generals before him, the meaning of a Highland onset.

A small garrison of Highlanders had been left in Carlisle, but these rejoined the main army as it passed through the town. There was an unwillingness among the soldiers to hold a fort that was bound to be taken by the enemy. Finally the Manchester regiment consented to remain, probably arguing, in the words of one of the English volunteers, that they ‘might as well be hanged in England as starved in Scotland.’

The Esk was at this time in flood, running turbid and swift. But the Highlanders have a peculiar way of crossing deep rivers. They stand shoulder to shoulder, with their arms linked, and so pass in a continuous chain across. As Charles was fording the stream on horseback, one man was swept away from the rest and was being rapidly carried down. The Prince caught him by the hair, shouting in Gaelic, ‘Cohear, cohear!’ ‘Help, help!’

They were now again on Scottish ground, and the question was, whither were they to go next? Edinburgh, immediately after the Prince’s departure, had gladly reverted to her Whig allegiance. She was garrisoned and defended; any return thither was practically out of the question. It was resolved that the army should retire to the Highlands through the West country.

Dumfries, in the centre of the Covenanting district, had always been hostile to the Stuarts. Two months before, when the Highland army marched south, some of her citizens had despoiled them of tents and baggage. To revenge this injury, Charles marched to Dumfries and levied a large fine on the town. The Provost, Mr. Carson, was noted for his hostility to the Jacobites. He was warned that his house was to be burned, though the threat was not carried out. He had a little daughter of six years old at the time; when she was quite an old lady she told Sir Walter Scott that she remembered being carried out of the house in the arms of a Highland officer. She begged him to point out the *Pretender* to her. This he consented to do, after the little girl had solemnly promised always to call him the *Prince* in future.

An army which had been on the road continuously for more than two winter months, generally presents a sufficiently dilapidated appearance; still more must this have been the case with the Highland army, ill-clad and ill-shod to begin with. The soldiers — hardly more than 4,000 now — who on Christmas day marched into Glasgow, had scarcely a whole pair of boots or a complete suit of tartans among them. This rich and important town was even more hostile than Dumfries to the Jacobites, but it was necessity more than revenge that forced the Prince to levy a heavy sum on the citizens, and exact besides 12,000 shirts, 6,000 pairs of stockings, and 6,000 pairs of shoes.

At Stirling, whither the Prince next led his army, the prospects were much brighter. Here he was joined by the men raised in Aberdeenshire under Lord Lewis Gordon, Lord Strathallan’s Perthshire regiment, and the French troops under Lord John Drummond. The whole number of his army must have amounted to not much less than 9,000 men.

The Duke of Cumberland had given up the pursuit of the Highland army after Carlisle; an alarm of a French invasion having sent him hurrying back to London. In his stead General Hawley had been sent down to Scotland and was now in Edinburgh at the head of 8,000 men. He was an officer trained in the Duke of Cumberland’s school, severe to his soldiers and relentlessly cruel to his enemies. A vain and boastful man, he looked with contempt on the Highland army, in spite of the experience of General Cope. On the 16th he marched out of Edinburgh with all his men, anticipating an easy victory. Lord George Murray was at Linlithgow, and slowly retreated before the enemy, but not before he had obtained full information of their numbers and movements. On the nights of January 15 and 16, the two armies lay only seven miles apart, the Prince’s at Bannockburn and General Hawley’s at Falkirk. From the one camp the lights of the other were visible. The Highland army kept on the alert, expecting every hour to be attacked.

All the day of the 16th they waited, but there was no movement on the part of the English forces. On the 17th the Prince’s horse reconnoitred and reported perfect inactivity in Hawley’s camp. The infatuated general thought so lightly of the enemy that he was giving himself up to amusement.

The fair and witty Lady Kilmarnock lived in the neighbourhood at Callender House. Her husband was with the Prince, and she secretly favoured the same cause. By skilful flattery and hospitality, she so fascinated the English general that he recklessly spent his days in her company, forgetful of the enemy and entirely neglectful of his soldiers.

Charles knew that the strength of his army lay in its power of attack, and so resolved to take the offensive. The high road between Bannockburn and Falkirk runs in a straight line in front of an old and decaying forest called Torwood. Along this road, in the face of the English camp, marched Lord John Drummond, displaying all the colours in the army, and making a brave show with the cavalry and two regiments. Their advance was only a feint. The main body of the army skirted round to the south of the wood, then marched across broken country — hidden at first by the trees and later by the inequalities of the ground — till they got to the back of a ridge called Falkirk Muir, which overlooked the English camp. Their object was to gain the top of this ridge before the enemy, and then to repeat the manœuvres of Prestonpans.

Meanwhile, the English soldiers were all unconscious, and their general was enjoying himself at Callender House. At eleven o’clock General Huske, the second in command, saw Lord John Drummond’s advance, and sent an urgent message to his superior officer. He, however, refused to take alarm, sent a message that the men might put on their accoutrements, and sat down to dinner with his fascinating hostess. At two o’clock, General Huske, looking anxiously through his spy-glass, saw the bulk of the Highland army sweeping round to the back of the ridge.

A messenger was instantly despatched to Callender House. At last Hawley was aroused to the imminence of the danger. Leaving the dinner table, he leaped on his horse and arrived in the camp at a gallop, breathless and bareheaded. He trusted to the rapidity of his cavalry to redeem the day. He placed himself at the head of the dragoons, and up the ridge they rode at a smart trot. It was a race for the top. The dragoons on their horses were the first to arrive, and stood in their ranks on the edge of the hill. From the opposite side came the Highlanders in three lines; first the clans (the Macdonalds, of course, on the right), then the Aberdeenshire and Perthshire regiments, lastly cavalry and Lord John Drummond’s Frenchmen. Undismayed, nay, rather exhilarated by the sight of the three regiments of dragoons drawn up to receive them, they advanced at a rapid pace. The dragoons, drawing their sabres, rode on at full trot to charge the Highlanders. With the steadiness of old soldiers, the clans came on in their ranks, till within ten yards of the enemy. Then Lord George gave the signal by presenting his own piece, and at once a withering volley broke the ranks of the dragoons. About 400 fell under this deadly fire and the rest fled, fled as wildly and ingloriously as their fellows had done at Coltbridge or Prestonpans. A wild storm of rain dashing straight in their faces during the attack added to the confusion and helplessness of the dragoons. The right and centre of Hawley’s infantry were at the same instant driven back by the other clans, Camerons and Stewarts and Macphersons. The victory would have been complete but for the good behaviour of three regiments at the right of Hawley’s army, Price’s, Ligonier’s, and Barrel’s. From a point of vantage on the edge of a ravine they poured such a steady fire on the left wing of the Highlanders, that they drove them back and forced them to fly in confusion. Had the victorious Macdonalds only attacked these three steady regiments, the Highland army would have been victorious all along the line. Unfortunately they had followed their natural instinct instead of the word of command, and flinging away their guns, were pursuing the fugitive dragoons down the ridge. The flight of the Hanoverians was so sudden that it caused suspicion of an ambush. The Prince was lost in the darkness and rain. The pipers had thrown their pipes to their boys, had gone in with the claymore, and could not sound the rally. It was not a complete victory for Charles, but it was a sufficiently complete defeat for General Hawley, who lost his guns. The camp at Falkirk was abandoned after the tents had been set on fire, and the general with his dismayed and confused followers retired first to Linlithgow and then to Edinburgh. Hawley tried to make light of his defeat and to explain it away, though to Cumberland he said that his heart was broken; but the news of the battle spread consternation all over England, and it was felt that no one but the Duke of Cumberland was fit to deal with such a stubborn and daring enemy.

The Prince’s army did not reap so much advantage from their victory as might have been expected; their forces were in too great confusion to pursue the English general, and on the morrow of the battle many deserted to their own homes, carrying off their booty. A more serious loss was the defection of the clan Glengarry. The day after the battle a young Macdonald, a private soldier of Clanranald’s company, was withdrawing the charge from a gun he had taken on the field. He had abstracted the bullet, and, to clean the barrel, fired off the piece. Unfortunately it had been double loaded, and the remaining bullet struck Glengarry’s second son, Æneas, who was in the street at the time. The poor boy fell, mortally wounded, in the arms of his comrades, begging with his last breath that no vengeance should be exacted for what was purely accidental. It was asking too much from the feelings of the clansmen. They indignantly demanded that blood should atone for blood. Clanranald would gladly have saved his clansman, but dared not risk a feud which would have weakened the Prince’s cause. So another young life as innocent as the first was sacrificed to clan jealousy. The young man’s own father was the first to fire on his son, to make sure that death should be instantaneous. Young Glengarry was buried with all military honours, Charles himself being chief mourner; but nothing could appease the angry pride of the clan, and the greater part of them returned to their mountains without taking any leave.

VIII

IN THE HIGHLANDS

On January 30 the Duke of Cumberland arrived in Edinburgh. His reception was a curious parody of Charles's brilliant entry four months before. The fickle mob cheered the one as well as the other; the Duke occupied the very room at Holyrood that had been Charles's; where the one had danced with Jacobite beauties, the other held a reception of Whig ladies. Both were fighting their father's battle; both were young men of five-and-twenty. But here likeness gives way to contrast; Charles was graceful in person, and of dignified and attractive presence; his cousin, Cumberland, was already stout and unwieldy, and his coarse and cruel nature had traced unpleasant lines on his face. He was a poor general but a man of undoubted courage. Yet he had none of that high sense of personal honour that we associate with a good soldier. In Edinburgh he found many of the English officers who had been taken prisoner at Prestonpans. They had been left at large on giving their word not to bear arms against the Prince. Cumberland declared that this 'parole' or promise was not binding, and ordered them to return to their regiments. A small number — it is right that we should know and honour their names — Sir Peter Halket, Mr. Ross, Captain Lucy Scott, and Lieutenants Farquharson and Cumming, thereupon sent in their resignations, saying that the Duke was master of their commissions but not of their honour.

On the 30th the Duke and his soldiers were at Linlithgow, and hoped to engage the Highland army next day near Falkirk. But on the next day's march they learned from straggling Highlanders that the enemy had already retired beyond the Forth. They had been engaged in a futile siege of Stirling Castle. The distant sound of an explosion which was heard about midday on the 1st, proved to be the blowing up of the powder magazine, the last act of the Highlanders before withdrawing from Stirling. This second, sudden retreat was as bitter to the Prince as the return from Derby. After the battle at Falkirk he looked forward eagerly and confidently to fighting Cumberland on the same ground. But there was discontent and dissension in the camp. Since Derby the Prince had held no councils, and consulted with no one but Secretary Murray and his Irish officers.

The chiefs were dispirited and deeply hurt, and, as usual, the numbers dwindled daily from desertion. In the midst of his plans for the coming battle, Charles was overwhelmed by a resolution on the part of the chiefs to break up the camp and to retire without delay to the Highlands. Again he saw his hopes suddenly destroyed, again he had to yield with silent rage and bitter disappointment.

The plan of the chiefs was to withdraw on Inverness, there to attack Lord Loudon (who held the fort for King George); to rest and recruit, each clan in its own country, till in the spring they could take the field again with a fresher and larger army. Lord George Murray led one division by the east coast and Aberdeen, to the rendezvous near Inverness, Charles led the other by General Wade’s road through Badenoch and Athol. Cumberland with his heavy troops and baggage could not overtake the light-footed Highlanders; by the time he reached Perth he was six days’ march behind them. He sent old Sir Andrew Agnew to garrison the house of Blair, and other small companies to occupy all the chief houses in Athol. He himself retired with the main body to Aberdeen, and there waited for milder weather.

In the neighbourhood of Inverness lies the country of the Mackintoshes. The laird of that ilk was a poor-spirited, stupid man. It was his simple political creed that that king was the right one who was willing and able ‘to give a half-guinea to-day and another to-morrow.’ That was probably the pay he drew as officer in one of King George’s Highland companies. Of a very different spirit was his wife. Lady Mackintosh was a Farquharson of Invercauld; in her husband’s absence she raised a body of mixed Farquharsons and Mackintoshes, several hundred strong, for the Prince. These she commanded herself, riding at their head in a tartan habit with pistols at her saddle. Her soldiers called her ‘Colonel Anne.’ Once in a fray between her irregular troops and the militia, her husband was taken prisoner and brought before his own wife. She received him with a military salute, ‘Your servant, captain;’ to which he replied equally shortly, ‘Your servant, colonel.’

This high-spirited woman received Charles as her guest on February 16 at the castle of Moy, twelve miles from Inverness.

Having learnt that Charles was staying there with a small guard, Lord Loudon conceived the bold plan of capturing the Prince, and so putting an end to the war once for all. On Sunday the 16th, at nightfall, he started with 1,500 men with all secrecy and despatch. Still the secret had oozed out, and the dowager Lady Mackintosh sent a boy to warn her daughter-in-law and the Prince. The boy was both faithful and sagacious. Finding the high road already full of soldiers, he skulked in a ditch till they were past, then, by secret ways, over moor and moss, running at the top of his pace, he sped on, till, faint and exhausted, he reached the house at five o’clock in the morning, and panted out the news that Loudon’s men were not a mile away! The Prince was instantly aroused, and in a few minutes was out of the house and off to join Lochiel not more than a mile distant. As it happened, Lord Loudon’s troops had already been foiled and driven back by a bold manœuvre of some of ‘Colonel Anne’s’ men. A blacksmith with some half-dozen men — two pipers amongst them — were patrolling the woods near the high road, when in the dim morning twilight they saw a large body of the enemy approaching. They separated, planted themselves at intervals under cover, fired rapidly and simultaneously, shouted the war cries of the various clans, Lochiel, Keppoch, Glengarry, while the pipers blew up their pipes furiously behind. The advancing soldiers were seized with panic, and flying wildly back, upset the ranks of the rear and filled them with the same consternation. The ‘Rout of Moy’ was hardly more creditable to the Hanoverian arms than the ‘Canter of Coltbridge.’ In this affair only one man fall, MacRimmon, the hereditary piper of the Macleods. Before leaving Skye he had prophesied his own death in the lament, ‘Macleod shall return, but MacRimmon shall never.’

The next day, February 18, Charles, at the head of a body of troops, marched out to besiege Inverness. He found that town already evacuated: Lord Loudon had too little faith in his men to venture another meeting with the enemy. Two days later Fort George also fell into the Prince’s hands.

During the next six weeks the Highland army was employed in detachments against the enemies who surrounded them on all sides. Lord John Drummond took Fort Augustus, Lochiel and others besieged — but in vain — the more strongly defended Fort William. Lord Cromarty pursued Lord Loudon into Sutherland. But the most notable and gallant feat of arms was performed by Lord George Murray. He marched a body of his own Athol men, and another of Macphersons under Cluny — 700 men in all — down into his native district of Athol. At nightfall they started from Dalwhinnie, before midnight they were at Dalnaspidal, no one but the two leaders having any idea of the object of the expedition. It was the middle of March; at that season they might count on five hours of darkness before daybreak. It was then explained to the men that they were to break up into some thirty small companies, and each was to march to attack one of the English garrisons placed in all the considerable houses in the neighbourhood. It was necessary that each place should be attacked at the same time, that the alarm might not spread. By daybreak all were to reassemble at the Falls of Bruar, within a mile or two of Castle Blair. One after the other the small parties moved off swiftly and silently in the darkness, one marching some ten miles off to the house of Faskally, others attacking Lude, Kinnachin, Blairfettie, and many other houses where the English garrisons were sleeping in security. Meanwhile Lord George and Cluny, with five-and-twenty men and a few elderly gentlemen, went straight to the Falls of Bruar. In the grey of the morning a man from the village of Blair came up hastily with the news that Sir Andrew Agnew had got the alarm, and with several hundred men was scouring the neighbourhood and was now advancing towards the Falls! Lord George might easily have escaped up the pass, but if he failed to be at the rendezvous, each small body as it came in would be surrounded and overpowered by the enemy. The skilful general employed precisely the same ruse as had been so successful at the Rout of Moy.

He put his followers behind a turf wall at distant intervals, displayed the colours in a conspicuous place, and placed his pipers to advantage. As Sir Andrew came in sight, the sun rose, and was flashed back by brandished broadswords behind the turf wall. All along the line plaids seemed to be waving, and heads appeared and disappeared as if a large body of men were behind; while the pipes blew up a clamorous pibroch, and thirty men shouted for three hundred. Sir Andrew fell into the snare, and promptly marched his men back again. One by one the other parties came in: some thirty houses had yielded to them, and they brought three hundred prisoners with them.

After this success Lord George actually attempted to take the House of Blair. It was a hopeless enterprise; the walls of the house were seven feet thick, and Lord George had only two small cannons. ‘I daresay the man’s mad, knocking down his own brother’s house,’ said the stout old commander, Sir Andrew, watching how little effect the shot had on the walls. Lord George sent to Charles for reinforcements when it began to seem probable that he could reduce the garrison by famine, but Charles, embittered and resentful, and full of unjust suspicion against his general, refused any help, and on March 31 Lord George had to abandon the siege and withdraw his men. The Prince’s suspicions, though unjust, were not unnatural. Lord George had twice advised retreat, where audacity was the only way to success.

IX

CULLODEN

In the meantime the weeks were rolling on. The grey April of the North, if it brought little warmth, was at least lengthening the daylight, and melting the snow from the hills, and lowering the floods that had made the rivers impassable. Since the middle of February the Duke of Cumberland and his army of at least eight thousand men — horse and infantry — had been living at free quarters in Aberdeen. He bullied the inhabitants, but he made careful provision for his army. English ships keeping along the coast were ready to supply both stores and ammunition as soon as the forces should move. With the savage content of a wild animal that knows that his prey cannot escape, the duke was in no hurry to force on an engagement till the weather should be more favourable.

To the Highland army every week's delay was a loss. Many of the clansmen had scattered to their homes in search of subsistence, for funds were falling lower and lower at Inverness. Fortune was treating Charles harshly at this time. Supplies had been sent once and again from France, but the ships that had brought them had either fallen into the enemy's hands, or had been obliged to return with their errand unaccomplished. His soldiers had now to be paid in meal, and that in insufficient quantities. There was thus discontent in the ranks, and among the chiefs there was a growing feeling of discouragement. Charles treated with reserve and suspicion the men who were risking property and life for his cause, and consulted only with Secretary Murray and his Irish officers.

On April 8 the Duke of Cumberland began his march from Aberdeen. Between the two armies lay the river Spey, always deep and rapid, almost impassable when the floods were out. A vigilant body of men commanding the fords from either bank would have any army at its mercy that might try to cross the stream under fire. Along the west bank Lord John Drummond and his men had built a long, low barrack of turf and stone. From this point of vantage they had hoped to pour their fire on the Hanoverian soldiers in mid-stream, but the vigilant Duke of Cumberland had powerful cannons in reserve on the opposite bank, and Lord John and his soldiers drew off before the enemy got across.

On Monday the 15th this retreating party arrived at Inverness, bringing the news that the Duke was already at Nairne, and would probably next day approach to give battle. Prince Charles was in the highest spirits at the news. In the streets of Inverness the pipers blew the gatherings of the various clans, the drums beat, and with colours flying the whole army marched out of the town and encamped on the plain of Culloden.

The Prince expected to be attacked next morning, Tuesday the 16th, and at six o'clock the soldiers were drawn up in order of battle. There was an ominous falling away in numbers. The Macphersons with Cluny had scattered to their homes in distant Badenoch; the Frasers were also absent. The Keppoch Macdonalds and some other detachments only came in next morning.

By the most fatal mismanagement no provision had been made for feeding the soldiers that day, though there was meal and to spare at Inverness. A small loaf of the driest and coarsest bread was served out to each man. By the afternoon, the starving soldiers had broken their ranks and were scattering in search of food. Lord Elcho had reconnoitred in the direction of Nairne, twelve miles off, and reported that the English army would not move that day; they were resting in their camp and celebrating their commander's birthday. Charles called a council of war at three in the afternoon. Lord George Murray gave the daring counsel that instead of waiting to be attacked they should march through the night to Nairne, and while it was still dark surprise and overwhelm the sleeping enemy. By dividing the Highland forces before reaching Nairne they might attack the camp in front and rear at the same moment; no gun was to be fired which might spread the alarm; the Highlanders were to fall on with dirk and broadsword. The Prince had meant to propose this very plan: he leaped up and embraced Lord George. It was a dangerous scheme; but with daring, swiftfooted, enterprising men it did not seem impossible. Yes! but with men faint and dispirited by hunger? At the review that morning the army had numbered about 7,000 men, but hardly more than half that number assembled in the evening on the field, the rest were still scattered in search of food. By eight o'clock it was dark enough to start. The attack on the enemy's camp was timed for two in the morning, six hours was thus allowed for covering the twelve miles. The army was to march in three columns, the clans first in two divisions, Lochiel and Lord George at the head with 30 of the Mackintoshes as guides. The Prince himself commanded the third column, the Lowland troops, and the French and Irish regiments. The utmost secrecy was necessary; the men marched in dead silence. Not only did they avoid the high roads, but wherever a light showed the presence of a house or sheiling they had to make a wide circuit round it. The ground they had to go over was rough and uneven; every now and then the men splashed into unexpected bogs or stumbled over hidden stones. Add to this that the night was unusually dark. Instead of marching in three clear divisions, the columns got mixed in the darkness and mutually kept each other back. Soon the light-footed clansmen got ahead of the Lowland and French and Irish regiments unused to such heavy walking. Every few minutes messengers from the rear harassed the leaders of the van by begging them to march more slowly. It was a cruel task to restrain the pace while the precious hours of darkness were slipping past. At Kilravock House the van halted. This was the point where it was arranged that the army was to divide, one part marching straight on the English camp, the other crossing the river so as to fall on the enemy from the opposite side. The rear had fallen far behind, and there was more than one wide gap between the various troops. The Duke of Perth galloped up from behind and told Lord George that it was necessary that the van should wait till the others came up; other officers reported that the men were dropping out of their ranks, and falling asleep by the roadside. Watches were now consulted. It was already two o'clock and there were still four miles to be covered. Some of the officers begged that, at all risks, the march might be continued. As they stood consulting an aide-de-camp rode up from the rear saying that the Prince desired to go forward, but was prepared to yield to Lord George's judgment. Just then through the darkness there came from the distance the rolling of drums! All chance of surprising the English camp was at an end. With a heavy heart Lord George gave the order to march back. This affair increased the Prince's suspicions of Lord George, which were fostered by his Irishry.

In the growing light the retreat was far more rapid than the advance had been. It was shortly after five that the army found themselves in their old quarters at Culloden. Many fell down where they stood, overpowered with sleep; others dispersed in search of food. Charles himself and his chief officers found nothing to eat and drink at Culloden House but a little dry bread and whisky. Instead of holding a council of war, each man lay down to sleep where he could, on table or floor.

But the sleep they were able to snatch was but short. At about eight a patrol coming in declared that the Duke of Cumberland was already advancing, his main body was within four miles, his horse even nearer.

In the utmost haste the chiefs and officers of the Highland army tried to collect their men. Many had straggled off as far as Inverness, many were still overpowered with sleep; all were faint for lack of food. When the ranks were arrayed in order of battle, their numbers only amounted to 5,000 men. They were drawn up on the open plain; on the right, high turf walls, enclosing a narrow field, protected their flank (though, as it proved, quite ineffectually), on their left lay Culloden House. In spite of hunger and fatigue, the old fighting instinct was so strong in the clans that they took up their positions in the first line with all their old fire and enthusiasm, *all but the Macdonalds*. By extraordinary mismanagement the clans Glengarry, Keppoch, and Clanranald — they who had so nobly led the right wing at Prestonpans and Falkirk — were placed on the left. It was a slight that bitterly hurt their pride; it was also, to their superstitious minds, a fatal omen. Who was the cause of the blunder? This does not seem to be certainly known. On the right, where the Macdonalds should have been, were the Athol men, the Camerons, the Stewarts of Appin, Macleans, Mackintoshes, and other smaller clans, each led by their own chiefs, and all commanded by Lord George. At the extremities of the two wings the guns were placed, four on each side, the only artillery on the Prince's side. The second line consisted of the French, Irish, and Lowland regiments. The Prince and his guards occupied a knoll at the rear, from which the whole action of the fight was visible. His horse was later covered with mud from the cannon balls striking the wet moor, and a man was killed behind him. By one o'clock the Hanoverian army was drawn up within five hundred paces of their enemies. The fifteen regiments of foot were placed in three lines, so arranged that the gaps in the first line were covered by the centres of the regiments in the second line. Between each regiment in the first line two powerful cannons were placed, and the three bodies of horse were drawn up, flanking either wing. The men were fresh, well fed, confident in their general, and eager to retrieve the dishonour of Prestonpans and Falkirk.

A little after one, the day clouded over, and a strong north-easterly wind drove sudden showers of sleet in the faces of the Highland army. They were the first to open fire, but their guns were small, and the firing ill-directed; the balls went over the heads of the enemy and did little harm. Then the great guns on the other side poured out the return fire, raking the ranks of the Highlanders, clearing great gaps, and carrying destruction even into the second line. For half an hour the Highlanders stood exposed to this fire while comrade after comrade fell at their side. It was all they could do to keep their ranks; their white, drawn faces and kindling eyes spoke of the hunger for revenge that possessed their hearts. Lord George was about to give the word to charge, when the Mackintoshes impatiently rushed forward, and the whole of the centre and left wing followed them. On they dashed blindly, through the smoke and snow and rattling bullets. So irresistible was the onset that they actually swept through two regiments in the first line, though almost all the chiefs and front rank men had fallen in the charge. The regiment in the second rank — Sempill's — was drawn up three deep — the first rank kneeling, the third upright — all with bayonets fixed. They received the onrushing Highlanders with a sharp fire. This brought the clansmen to a halt, a few were forced back, more perished, flinging themselves against the bayonets. Their bodies were afterwards found in heaps three or four deep.

While the right and centre perished in this wild charge, the Macdonalds on the left remained sullenly in their ranks, rage and angry pride in their souls. In vain the Duke of Perth urged them to charge. ‘Your courage,’ he cried, ‘will turn the left into the right, and I will henceforth call myself Macdonald.’

In vain Keppoch, with some of his kin, charged alone. ‘My God! have the children of my tribe forsaken me?’ he cried, looking back to where his clansmen stood stubborn and motionless. The stout old heart was broken by this dishonour. A few minutes later he fell pierced by many bullets.

In the meantime the second line had been thrown into confusion. A detachment of the Hanoverians — the Campbells, in fact — had broken down the turf walls on the Prince’s right. Through the gaps thus made, there rode a body of dragoons, who fell on the rear and flanks of the Lowland and French regiments, and scattered them in flight. Gillie MacBane held a breach with the claymore, and slew fourteen men before he fell. But the day was lost. All that courage, and pride, and devotion, and fierce hate could do had been done, and in vain.

Charles had, up to the last, looked for victory. He offered to lead on the second line in person; but his officers told him that Highlanders would never return to such a charge. Two Irish officers dragged at his reins; his army was a flying mob, and so he left his latest field, unless, as was said, he fought at Laffen as a volunteer, when the Scots Brigade nearly captured Cumberland. He had been eager to give up Holyrood to the wounded of Prestonpans; *his* wounded were left to die, or were stabbed on the field. He had refused to punish fanatics who tried to murder him; his faithful followers were tortured to extract information which they never gave. He lost a throne, but he won hearts, and, while poetry lives and romance endures, the Prince Charles of the Forty-Five has a crown more imperishable than gold. This was the ending of that Jacobite cause, for which men had fought and died, for which women had been content to lose homes and husbands and sons.

It was the end of that gifted race of Stuart kings who, for three centuries and more of varying fortunes, had worn the crown of Scotland.

But it was not the end of the romance of the Highland clans. Crushed down, scattered, and cruelly treated as these were in the years that followed Culloden, nothing could break their fiery spirit nor kill their native aptitude for war. In the service of that very government which had dealt so harshly with them, they were to play a part in the world’s history, wider, nobler, and not less romantic than that of fiercely faithful adherents to a dying cause. The pages of that history have been written in imperishable deeds on the hot plains of India, in the mountain passes of Afghanistan, in Egypt, in the Peninsula, on the fields of Waterloo and Quatre Bras, and among the snows of the Crimea. And there may be other pages of this heroic history of the Highland regiments that our children and our children’s children shall read with proud emotion in days that are to be.

THE BURKE AND WILLS EXPLORING EXPEDITION

ON August 21, 1860, in the most lovely season of the year — that of early spring — the citizens of Melbourne crowded to the Royal Park to witness the departure of the most liberally equipped exploring party that had yet set out to penetrate the unknown regions of Australia. Their object was to cross the land from the South to the Northern Seas, a task which had never before been accomplished, as well as to add to the scientific knowledge of the interior.

The expedition started under the leadership of Robert O’Hara Burke, who began his career as a cadet at Woolwich, but left at an early age to enter a regiment of Hussars in the Austrian service, in which he subsequently held a captaincy.

When this regiment was disbanded, in 1848, he obtained an appointment in the Irish Constabulary, which he exchanged for the Police Force of Victoria in 1853, and in this he was at once made an inspector.

A Mr. Landells, in charge of the camels, went as second in command, and William John Wills, an astronomer and surveyor, as third.

Wills was the son of Dr. William Wills, and was born at Totnes, in Devonshire, in 1834; he was cousin to Lieutenant Le Viscomte, who perished with Sir John Franklin in the ‘Erebus.’

In 1852 the news of the wonderful gold discoveries induced him to try his fortune in Victoria; but he soon became attached to the staff of the Melbourne Observatory, where he remained until selected for the post of observer and surveyor to the exploring expedition.

From the time that the expedition first took shape the names of these leaders were associated in the minds of the people with those of other brave men who had toiled to solve the mystery that lay out in the great thirsty wilderness of the interior. Some of them had tried, and, failing, had returned broken in health by the terrible privations they had met with. Others, having failed, had tried again; but the seasons and years had rolled on since, and had brought back no story of their fate.

Therefore, as late in the afternoon Burke, mounted on a pretty grey, rode forth at the head of the caravan, cheer after cheer rang out from either side of the long lane formed by the thousands of sympathetic colonists who were eager to get a last glimpse of the adventurers.

Immediately following the leader came a number of pack horses led by the European servants on foot; then Landells and Dr. Beckler mounted on camels; and in their train sepoys, leading two by two twenty-four camels, each heavily burdened with forage and provisions, and a mounted sepoy brought up the rear.

At intervals after these several wagons rolled past, and finally when nearly dusk, Wills and Fergusson, the foreman, rode out to their first camping-ground at the village of Essendon, about seven miles distant.

Before the evening star, following close the crescent moon, had dropped below the dark and distant hill range, the green near the church was crowded by the picturesque confusion of the camp.

Above the fires of piled gum-tree bark and sticks rose soft plumes of white smoke that scented the air fragrantly, and the red light of the flames showed, as they would show many times again, the explorers’ tents in vivid relief against the coming night.

The horses and camels were unloaded and picketed, and the men sat at the openings of their tents eating their supper, or stood in groups talking to those anxious friends who had come out from Melbourne to say the last good speed, or to repeat fears, to which imagination often lent the wildest colouring, of perils that awaited the adventurers in the great unknown land.

The wet weather which set in soon after their start made travelling very slow as they crossed Victoria, though at that time all seemed to go well with the party.

On fine days Wills found he was able to write his journal and do much of his work whilst riding his camel; he sat behind the hump, and had his instruments packed in front of it; thus he only needed to stop when the bearings had to be carefully taken.

They halted for several days at Swan Hill, which was their last resting-place before leaving the Colony. They were very hospitably entertained there by the people.

This may have had something to do with the ill-content of some of the party when on the march again, as at Balranald, beyond the Murray, Burke found himself obliged to discharge the foreman, Fergusson.

The plan of their route had to be changed here, as they were told that all along the Lower Darling, where they intended to travel, there was absolutely no food for their horses, but a plant called the Darling Pea, which made the animals that ate it mad.

Burke was at this time constantly irritated by Landells refusing to allow the camels to travel the distance of a day’s march, or to carry their proper burden; he was naturally full of anxiety to push on while the season was favourable, and impatient and hasty when anything occurred to hinder their progress.

Landells insisted upon taking a quantity of rum for the use of the camels, as he had heard of an officer who took two camels through a two years' campaign in Cabul, the Punjab, and Scind by allowing them arrack. He had also been sowing dissension in the camp for some time; and, in short, the camels and the officer in charge of them seemed likely to disorganise the whole of the enterprise.

Complaints were now continually reaching Burke from the managers of the sheep stations through which they passed, that their shearers had got drunk on some of the camels' rum, which had been obtained from the wagons. He therefore, at last, determined to leave the rum behind. Landells, of course, would not agree to this, and in the end sent in his resignation.

In the course of the same day Dr. Beckler followed his example, giving as his reason that he did not like the manner in which Burke spoke to Landells, and that he did not consider the party safe without him to manage the camels. Burke did not, however, accept the Doctor's resignation.

This happened shortly before they left Menindie, the last station of the settled districts, and it was impossible to find anyone to take Landells' place. Wills was, however, at once promoted to be second in charge.

Burke now divided the expedition into two parts — one to act with him as an exploring party to test the safety of the route to Cooper's Creek, which was about four hundred miles farther on; the other to remain at Menindie with the heavy stores, under the care of Dr. Beckler, until arrangements were made to establish a permanent depôt in the interior.

The advance party of eight started on October 29, under the guidance of a man named Wright, who was said to have practical knowledge of the 'back country.'

They were Burke, Wills, Brahé, Patten, M'Donough, King, Gray, and Dost Mahomet, with fifteen horses and sixteen camels.

When this journey was made it was immediately after one of those wonderful seasons that transform these parts of Central Australia from a treeless and grassless desert to a land where the swelling plains that stretch from bound to bound of the horizon are as vast fields of ripening corn in their yellow summertide.

Riding girth high through the lovely natural grass, from which the ripe seed scattered as they passed, or camping at night surrounded by it, the horses and camels improved in condition each day, and were never at a loss for water. Sometimes they found a sufficiency in a natural well or claypan; or again they struck for some creek towards the west or north, whose irregular curves were outlined on the plain by the gum-trees growing closely on its banks.

Nowhere did they experience great difficulty or serious obstacle on their northward way, though sometimes, as they crossed the rough ironstone ranges which crop up now and then on this great and ever rising table-land, there was little feed, and the sharp stones cut the feet of the animals as they trod with faltering footsteps down the precipitous gulleys, out of which the floods had for ages torn a path. As they followed the dry bed of such a path leading to rich flats, they would come upon quiet pools deeply shaded by gums and marsh mallow, that had every appearance of being permanent.

After they had been out ten days and had travelled over two hundred miles, Burke had formed so good an opinion of Wright that he made him third in charge, and sent him back to Menindie to replace Dr. Beckler — whose resignation was now accepted — in command of the portion of the expedition at that place. Wright took with him despatches to forward to Melbourne, and his instructions were to follow up the advance party with the heavy stores immediately.

Burke now pushed on to Cooper’s Creek; and though the last part of their journey led them over many of those tracts of country peculiar to Australia where red sandy ridges rise and fall for many miles in rigid uniformity, and are clothed for the most part in the monotonous grey of salt and cotton-bush leafage, yet they saw before them what has since proved to be one of the finest grazing lands in the world.

Still, as they went on, though the creeks and watercourses were more frequent, everywhere they showed signs of rapid drying up.

The party reached the Cooper on November 11, and after resting for a day, they set about preparing the depôt. For about a fortnight from this point Burke or Wills made frequent short journeys to the north or north-east, to feel their way before starting for the northern coast.

On one occasion Wills went out taking with him M’Donough and three camels, and when about ninety miles from the head camp he walked to a rising ground at some distance from where they intended to stop to make some observations, leaving M’Donough in charge of the camels and to prepare tea.

On his return he found that the man had fallen asleep, and that the camels had gone. Night closing in almost directly prevented any search for the missing animals.

Next morning nothing could be seen of them, though their tracks were followed for many miles, and though Wills went to some distant hills and searched the landscape on all sides with his field-glasses.

With a temperature of 112° in the shade, and the dazzling sun-rays beating from a pallid and cloudless sky, they started on their homeward walk of eighty miles, with only a little bread and a few johnny cakes to eat, each carrying as much water as he could.

They feared to light a fire even at night, as it might have attracted the blacks; therefore they took it in turn to sleep and watch when the others rested; while the dingoes sneaked from their cover in the belts of scrub, and howled dismally around them.

They reached the depôt in three days, having found only one pool of stagnant water, from which they drank a great deal and refilled the goatskin bag.

Wills was obliged to return afterwards with King to recover the saddles and things that were left when the camels strayed.

For some time Wright had been expected to arrive with the caravan from Menindie; yet a whole month passed and he did not come.

Burke who had now become very impatient at the loss of opportunity and time, determined to make a dash across the continent to the sea.

He therefore left Brahé, a man who could travel by compass and observation, in charge at Cooper's Creek depôt until Wright should arrive, giving him positive instructions to remain there until the return of the exploring party from the Gulf of Carpentaria, which he thought would be in about three or four months.

Burke started northwards on December 16, in company with Wills, King, and Gray, taking with them six camels, one horse, and provisions for three months, while Brahé, three men, and a native were left at the Creek with the rest of the horses and camels.

The expedition was now in three parts, and Wright, who perhaps knew more about the uncertainty of the seasons and the terrible consequences of drought than any of the party, still delayed leaving Menindie with his contingent, though he well knew that as the summer advanced the greater would be the difficulty to travel.

He had become faint-hearted, and every day invented some new excuse for not leaving. One day it was that there were not enough camels and horses to carry the necessary provision; the next, that the country through which they must pass was infested by blacks; the next, that he waited for his appointment to be confirmed by the authorities at Melbourne; and all this time he knew that Burke depended solely upon him to keep up communication with the depôt from the Darling.

Finally he started at the end of January (summer in Australia), more than a month after his appointment was officially confirmed, and more than two months after his return from Menindie.

For the first few days after Burke and Wills set off they followed up the creek, and though the banks were rugged and stony, there was plenty of grass and soft bush near. They soon fell in with a large tribe of blacks, the first they had seen, who followed them for some time, and constantly tried to entice them to their camp to dance. When they refused to go the natives became very troublesome, until they threatened to shoot them.

They were fine-looking men, but easily frightened, and only carried as a means of defence a shield and a large kind of boomerang.

The channel of the Creek was often quite dry for a great distance; then a chain of magnificent water-holes followed, from whose shady pools pelicans, black swans, and many species of duck flew up in flocks at the approach of the travellers.

After a few days they reached what seemed to be the end of Cooper's Creek, and, steering a more north-easterly course, they journeyed for some time over great plains covered by dry grass-stalks or barren sandy ridges, on the steep sides of which grew scant tufts of porcupine grass; sometimes following the lines of a creek, or, again, travelling along the edge of a splendid lagoon that stretched its placid waters for miles over the monotonous landscape.

Even the stony desert they found far from bad travelling ground, and but little different from much of what they had already crossed.

Yet ever before them there, from the sunrise to its setting, the spectral illusive shapes of the mirage floated like restless spirit betwixt heaven and earth on the quivering heat-haze.

On January 7 they crossed the Tropic of Capricorn, and their way beyond it soon began to improve.

In the excitement of exploring fine country Burke rushed on with almost headlong feverishness, travelling in every available hour of the day, and often by night, even grudging the necessary time for food and rest. He walked with Wills in front, taking it in turn with him to steer by a pocket compass.

Before they left each camp its number was cut deeply into the bark of some prominent tree. Wills kept the little record there is of their journey, and as they went it was the duty of King or Gray to blaze a tree to mark their route.

They passed now over many miles of the richly grassed slopes of a beautiful open forest, intersected by frequent watercourses where the land trended gradually upward to the distant mountain-range. Sometimes they had to go out of their course in order to avoid the tangle of tropic jungle; but onward north by east they went, beneath the shade of heavy-fruited palms, their road again made difficult by the large and numerous anthills that give these northern latitudes so strange a solemnity and appearance of desolation.

After leaving Cooper’s Creek they often crossed the paths the blacks made for themselves, but had hitherto seen nothing of the natives. One day Golah, one of the camels (who were all now beginning to show great signs of fatigue), had gone down into the bed of a creek to drink, and could not be made to climb its steep sides again.

After several unsuccessful attempts to get him up, they determined to try bringing him down until an easier ascent could be found. King thereupon went on alone with him, and had great difficulty in getting him through some of the deeper water-holes.

But after going in this way for two or three miles they were forced to leave him behind, as it separated King from the rest of the party, and they found that a number of blacks were hiding in the box-trees on the banks, watching, and following them with stealthy footsteps.

It now became a very difficult matter for the camels to travel as the heavy rains that had fallen made the land so wet and boggy that with every footstep they sank several inches into it.

At Camp 119 Burke left them in charge of Gray and King, and walked on to the shores of Carpentaria with Wills, and took only the horse Billy to carry their provisions.

They followed the banks of a river which Burke named the Cloncurry. A few hundred yards below the camp Billy got bogged in a quicksand bank so deeply as to be unable to stir, and they had to undermine him on the creek side and pull him into the water. About five miles farther on he bogged again, and afterwards was so weak that he could hardly crawl.

After floundering along in this way for some time they came upon a native path which led through a forest; following it, they reached a large patch of sandy ground where the blacks had been digging yams and had left numbers lying on the surface; and these the explorers were glad enough to eat.

A little farther on they saw a black lying coiled round his camp fire, and by him squatted his lubra and piccaninny yabbering at a great rate. They stopped to take out their pistols in case of need before disturbing them; almost immediately the black got up to stretch his limbs, and presently saw the intruders.

He stared at them for some time, as if he thought he must be dreaming, then, signing to the others, they all dropped on their haunches, and shuffled off in the quietest manner.

Near their fire was a worley (native hut) large enough to shelter a dozen blacks; it was on the northern outskirt of the forest, and looked out across a marsh which is sometimes flooded by sea-water. Upon this were hundreds of wild geese, plover, and pelicans. After they crossed it they reached a channel through which the sea-water enters, and there passed three blacks, who silently and unasked pointed out the best way to go.

Next day, Billy being completely tired, they short-hobbled and left him, going forward again at daybreak in the hope of at last reaching the open sea. After following the Flinders (this country had already been explored by Gregory) for about fifteen miles, and finding that the tide ebbed and flowed regularly, and that the water was quite salt, they decided to go back, having successfully accomplished one great object of their mission, by crossing the Australian continent from south to north.

After rejoining Gray and King on February 13, the whole party began the return march. The incessant and heavy rains that had set in rendered travelling very difficult; but the provisions were running short, and it was necessary to try to get back to the depôt without delay.

The damp and suffocating heat that brooded in the air overpowered both man and beast, who were weak and weary from want of rest; and to breast the heavy rains and to swim the rapid creeks in flood well-nigh exhausted all their strength.

Day after day they stumbled listlessly onward; while the poor camels, sweating, bleeding, and groaning from fear, had their feet at almost every step entangled by the climbing plants that clung to the rank grasses, which had rushed in magical growth to a height of eight or ten feet.

If for a moment they went to windward of their camp fires they were maddened by swarms of mosquitoes, and everywhere were pestered by ants.

Wonderful green and scarlet ants dropped upon them from the trees as they passed; from every log or stick gathered for the fires a new species crept; inch-long black or brown ‘bulldogs’ showed fight at them underfoot: midgets lurked in the cups of flowers; while the giant white ant ate its stealthy way in swarms through the sap of the forest trees from root to crown.

Every night fierce storms of thunder crashed and crackled overhead, and the vivid lightning flaring across the heavens overpowered the moonlight.

Gray, who had been ailing for some time, grew worse, though probably, as they were all in such evil plight, they did not think him really ill.

One night Wills, returning to a camp to bring back some things that had been left, found him hiding behind a tree eating skilligolee. He explained he was suffering from dysentery, and had taken the flour without leave.

It had already been noticed that the provisions disappeared in an unaccountable way; therefore Wills ordered him back to report himself to Burke. But Gray was afraid to tell, and got King to do so for him. When Burke heard of it, he was very angry, and flogged him.

On March 20 they overhauled the packs, and left all they could do without behind, as the camels were so exhausted.

Soon after this they were again beyond the line of rainfall, and once more toiling over the vast plains and endless stony rises of the interior.

At the camp called Boocha’s Rest they killed the camel Boocha, and spent the whole day cutting up and jerking the flesh — that is, removing all bone and fat and drying the lean parts in the sun; they also now made use of a plant called portulac as a vegetable, and found it very good, and a great addition to their food.

For more than a week it had become very troublesome to get Gray to walk at all; he was still in such bad odour from his thieving that the rest of the party thought he pretended illness, and as they had to halt continually to wait for him when marching, he was always in mischief.

The faithful Billy had to be sacrificed in the Stony Desert, as he was so reduced and knocked up that there seemed little chance of his reaching the other side; and another day was taken to cut up and jerk his flesh.

At dawn on the fourth day before they reached the depôt, when they were preparing to start they were shocked to find poor Gray was dying.

His companions, full of remorse for bygone harshness, their better natures stirred to the depths of humanity by his pitiful case, knelt around to support him in those last moments as he lay stretched speechless on his desolate sand bed. Thus comforted, his fading eyes closed for ever as the red sun rose above the level plain.

The party remained in camp that day to bury him, though they were so weak that they were hardly able to dig a grave in the sand sufficiently deep for the purpose.

They had lived on the flesh of the worn-out horse for fifteen days, and once or twice were forced to camp without water. Though the sun was always hot, at night a gusty wind blew from the south with an edge like a razor, which made their fire so irregular as to be of little use to them. The sudden and cruel extremes of heat and cold racked the exhausted frames of the explorers with pain, and Burke and King were hardly able to walk. They pushed on, only sustained by the thought that but a few hours, a few miles, now separated them from the main party, where the first felicitations on the success of their exploit awaited them, and, what was of greater importance to men shattered by hardships and privation, wholesome food, fresh clothing, and the comfort of a properly organised camp.

On the morning of April 21, with every impatient nerve strung to its utmost tension, and full of hope, they urged their two remaining camels forward for the last thirty miles; and Burke, who rode a little in advance of the others, shouted for joy when they struck Cooper’s Creek at the exact spot where Brahé had been left in charge of the depôt.

‘I think I see their tents,’ he cried, and putting his weary camel to its best speed, he called out the names of the men he had left there.

‘There they are! There they are!’ he shouted eagerly, and with a last spurt left the others far behind.

When Wills and King reached the depôt they saw Burke standing by the side of his camel in a deserted camp, *alone*.

He was standing, lost in amazement, staring vacantly around. Signs of recent departure, of a final packing-up, everywhere met the eye: odd nails and horseshoes lay about, with other useful things that would not have been left had the occupants merely decamped to some other spot. Then, as one struck by some terrible blow, Burke reeled and fell to the ground, overcome by the revulsion of feeling from exultant hope to sudden despair.

Wills, who had ever the greater control of himself, now walked in all directions to make a careful examination, followed at a little distance by King.

Presently he stopped, and pointing to a tree, into the bark of which had been newly cut the words —

‘Dig.
‘April 21, 1861’

he said: —

‘*King, they are gone!* They have only gone to-day — there are the things they have left!’

The two men immediately set to work to uncover the earth, and found a few inches below the surface a box containing provisions and a bottle.

In the bottle was a note, which was taken to Burke at once, who read it aloud: —

‘Depôt, Cooper’s Creek,
‘April 21, 1861.

‘The depôt party of the Victorian Exploring Expedition leaves this camp to-day to return to the Darling.

‘I intend to go S.E. from Camp 60, to get into our old track near Bulloo. Two of my companions and myself are quite well; the third — Patten — has been unable to walk for the last eighteen days, as his leg has been severely hurt when thrown by one of the horses.

‘No person has been up here from the Darling.

‘We have six camels and twelve horses in good working condition.

‘William Brahé.’

When the leader had finished reading it, he turned to the others and asked if they would start next day to try to overtake Brahé’s party.

They replied that they could not. With the slightest exertion all felt the indescribable languor and terrible aching in back and legs that had proved fatal to poor Gray. And, indeed, it was as much as any one of them could do to crawl to the side of the creek for a billy of water.

They were not long in getting out the stores Brahé had left, and in making themselves a good supper of oatmeal porridge and sugar.

This and the excitement of their unexpected position did much to revive them. Burke presently decided to make for a station on the South Australian side which he believed was only one hundred and twenty miles from the Cooper. Both Wills and King wanted to follow down their old track to the Darling, but afterwards gave in to Burke’s idea. Therefore it was arranged that after they had rested they would proceed by gentle stages towards the Mount Hopeless sheeprun.

Accordingly, on the next day Burke wrote and deposited in the cache a letter giving a sketch of the exploration, and added the following postscript:

‘The camels cannot travel, and we cannot walk, or we should follow the other party. We shall move very slowly down the Creek.’

The cache was again covered with earth, and left as they had found it, though nothing was added to the word ‘Dig,’ or to the date on the tree; which curious carelessness on the part of men accustomed to note every camping-ground in this way seems unaccountable.

A few days after their return they started with the month’s supply of provisions that had been left.

They had every reason to hope, with the help of the camels, they might easily reach Mount Hopeless in time to preserve their lives and to reap the reward of their successful exertions.

It will be remembered that when Burke formally appointed Brahé as officer in command of the depôt until Wright should arrive, he was told to await his leader’s return to Cooper’s Creek, *or not to leave it until obliged by absolute necessity*. Day after day, week after week passed, and Wright, with the rest of the stores from Menindie, never came. It was more than four months since Burke’s party went north, and every day for the last six weeks Brahé had looked out anxiously for their return.

On one hand he was worried by Patten, who was dying, and who wanted to go back to the Darling for advice; on the other, by M'Donough's continually pouring into his ears the assurance that Burke would not return that way, but had doubtless by this time made for some port on the Queensland coast, and had returned to Melbourne by sea; and that if they stayed at the depôt they would all get scurvy, and in the end die of starvation. Though they had sufficient provisions to keep them for another month, they decided to start on the morning of April 21, leaving the box of stores and the note hidden in the earth which the explorers found on their return.

Following their former route towards the Darling, they fell in with Wright's party at Bulloo, where they had been stationary for several weeks, and where three of the men had died of scurvy.

Brahé at once put himself under Wright's orders; but he did not rest until Wright consented to go to Cooper's Creek with him, so that before abandoning the expedition he might feel assured that the explorers had not returned.

Wright and Brahé reached the depôt on May 8, a fortnight after the others had left, and Brahé seeing nothing above ground in the camp to lead him to think anyone had been there, did not trouble to disturb the box which he had originally planted — as Wright suggested the blacks would be more likely to find it; therefore, running their horses several times over the spot, they completed by their thoughtless stupidity the most terrible blunder the explorers had begun.

Wright and Brahé then rejoined the camp at Bulloo, when all moved back to Menindie, and reached that place on June 18.

Brahé at once set off for Melbourne, and by this time everyone there seemed to be alive to the necessity of sending out to look for the explorers.

Two steamers were despatched to the Gulf of Carpentaria, and a relief party, in charge of Alfred Howitt, up to the Cooper.

From South Australia an organised expedition of twenty-six men, with McKinlay as leader, was already engaged in the search, as well as several smaller parties from the neighbouring colonies.

* * *

Burke, Wills, and King, much revived with the rest of a few days and the food they had found at the depôt, left for Mount Hopeless, with the intention of following as nearly as possible the route taken by Gregory many years before.

Shortly after their departure Landa, one of the camels, bogged at the side of a water-hole and sank rapidly, as the ground beneath was a bottomless quicksand;

all their efforts to dig him out were useless, and they had to shoot him where he lay, and cut off what flesh they could get at to jerk.

They made a fresh start next day with the last camel, Rajah, only loaded with the most useful and necessary articles; and each of the men now carried his own swag of bed and clothing.

In addition to these misfortunes they had now to contend with the blast of drought that lay over the land; with the fiery sun, that streamed from cloudless skies, beneath which the very earth shrunk from itself in gaping fissures; with the wild night wind, that shrieked and skirled with devastating breath over the wilderness beneath the cold light of the crowding stars.

For a few days they followed the Creek, but found that it split up into sandy channels which became rapidly smaller as they advanced, and sent off large billabongs (or backwaters) to the south, slightly changing the course of the Creek each time, until it disappeared altogether in a north-westerly direction. Burke and Wills went forward alone to reconnoitre, and found that the land as far as they could see stretched away in great earthy plains intersected by lines of trees and empty watercourses.

Next day they retraced their steps to the last camp, and realised that their rations were rapidly diminishing and their boots and clothing falling to pieces.

Rajah was very ill and on the point of dying, when Burke ordered him to be shot, his flesh being afterwards dried in the usual manner.

Some friendly blacks, whom they amused by lighting fires with matches, gave them some fish and a kind of bread called nardoo.

At various times they had tried to learn from the blacks how to procure the nardoo grain, which is the seed of a small clover-like plant, but had failed to make them understand what they wanted.

Then Wills went out alone to look for it; but as he expected to find it growing on a tree, was of course unsuccessful, and the blacks had again moved off to some other branch of the Creek.

The terrible fate of death from starvation awaited them if they could not obtain this knowledge, and for several days they all persevered with the search, until quite by chance King at last caught sight of some seeds which proved to be nardoo lying at the foot of a sandhill, and they soon found the plain beyond was black with it.

With the reassurance that they could now support themselves they made another attempt to reach Mount Hopeless. Burke and King each carried a billy of water, and the last of the provisions was packed up in their swags; but after travelling for three days they found no water, and were forced to turn back to the Creek, at a point where — though they knew it not — scarce fifty miles remained to be accomplished, and just as Mount Hopeless would have appeared above the horizon had they continued their route for even another day.

Wearily they retraced their footsteps to the water and to the prospect of existence. They at once set about collecting nardoo; two of them were employed in gathering it, while one stayed in camp to clean and crush it.

In a few days Burke sent Wills back to the depôt to bury the field-books of their journey north in the cache, and another letter to tell of their present condition.

When Wills reached the spot he could see no trace of anyone having been there but natives, and that the hiding-place had not been touched.

Having deposited the field-books and a note, with an account of their sufferings and a pitiful and useless appeal for food and clothing, he started back to rejoin Burke, terribly fatigued and weak from his long walk.

It had taken him eleven days to cover the seventy miles to and fro, and he had had very little to eat.

However, to his surprise, one morning, on his way back he heard a cooee from the opposite bank of the Creek, and saw Pitchery, the chief of the friendly blacks, beckoning to him to come to their camp. Pitchery made him sit down by a fire, upon which a large pile of fish was cooking.

This he thought was to provide a breakfast for the half-dozen natives who sat around; but to his astonishment they made him eat the whole lot, while they sat by extracting the bones.

Afterwards a supply of nardoo was given him; at which he ate until he could eat no more. The blacks then asked him to stay the night with them; but as he was anxious to rejoin Burke and King, he went on.

In his absence Burke, while frying some fish that the natives had given him, had set fire to the mia-mia (a shelter made by the blacks of bushes and trees).

It burnt so quickly that every remnant of their clothing was destroyed, and nothing saved but a gun.

In a few days they all started back towards the depôt, in the hope that they could live with the blacks; but they found they had again disappeared.

On again next morning to another of the native camps; but, finding it empty, the wanderers took possession of the best mia-mia, and Wills and King were sent out to collect nardoo.

This was now absolutely their only food, with the exception of two crows which King shot; he alone seemed to be uninjured by the nardoo. Wills had at last suddenly collapsed, and could only lie in the mia-mia, and philosophically contemplate the situation.

He strongly advised Burke and King to leave him, as the only chance for the salvation of any one of them now was to find the blacks.

Very reluctantly at last Burke consented to go; and after placing a large supply of nardoo, wood, and water within easy reach, Burke said again:

‘I will not leave you, Wills, under any other circumstance than that of your own wish.’

And Wills, again repeating ‘It is our only chance,’ gave him a letter and his watch for his father.

King had already buried the rest of the field-books near the mia-mia.

The first day after they left Wills Burke was very weak, and complained sadly of great pain in his back and legs. Next day he was a little better, and walked for about two miles, then lay down and said he could go no farther.

King managed to get him up, but as he went he dropped his swag and threw away everything he had to carry.

When they halted he said he felt much worse, and could not last many hours longer, and he gave his pocket-book to King, saying: —

‘I hope you will remain with me till I am quite dead — it is a comfort to know someone is by; but when I am dying, it is my wish that you should place the pistol in my right hand, and that you leave me unburied as I lie.’

Doubtless he thought of King’s weak state, and wished to spare him the labour of digging a grave.

The last of the misfortunes that had followed the enterprise from the outset, misfortunes in many cases caused by the impatient zeal of its leader, was drawing to its close.

Tortured by disappointment and despair, racked by starvation and disease, he lay in the desert dying.

Flinging aside the last poor chance of succour, renouncing all hope that he might yet live to reap the reward of his brilliant dash across the continent, he met death

‘With the pistol clenched in his failing hand,
With the death mist spread o’er his fading eyes
He saw the sun go down on the sand,
And he slept — and never saw it rise.’

King lingered near the spot for a few hours; but at last, feeling it to be useless, he went on up the Creek to look for the natives.

In one of their deserted mia-mias he found a large store of the nardoo seed, and, carrying it with him, returned to Wills.

On his way back he shot three crows. This addition to their food would, he felt, give them a chance of tiding over their difficulties until the blacks could again be found. But as he drew near the mia-mia where he and poor Burke had left Wills a few days before, and saw his lonely figure in the distance lying much as they had left him, a sudden fear came upon him.

Hitherto the awful quiet of these desolate scenes had little impressed him, and now it came upon him heavily. The shrilling of a solitary locust somewhere in the gums, the brisk crackle of dry bark and twigs as he trod, the melancholy sighing of the wind-stirred leafage, offered him those inexplicable contrasts that give stress to silence.

Anxious to escape thoughts so little comprehended, King hurried on, and essayed a feeble ‘cooee’ when a few yards from the sleeper. No answering sound or gesture greeted him.

Wills had fallen peacefully asleep for ever.

Footprints on the sand showed that the blacks had already been there, and after King had buried the corpse with sand and rushes as well as he was able, he started to follow their tracks.

Feeling desperately lonely and ill, he went on, and as he went he shot some more crows. The blacks, hearing the report of the gun, came to meet him, and taking him to their camp gave him food.

The next day they talked to him by signs, putting one finger in the ground and covering it with sand, at the same time pointing up the Creek, saying ‘White fellow.’

By this they meant that one white man was dead.

King, by putting two fingers in the sand and covering them, made them understand that his second companion was also dead.

Finding he was now quite alone, they seemed very sorry for him, and gave him plenty to eat. However, in a few days they became tired of him, and by signs told him they meant to go up the Creek, pointing in the opposite direction to show that that must be his way. But when he shot some more crows for them they were very pleased. One woman to whom he gave a part of a crow gave him a ball of nardoo, and, showing him a wound on her arm, intimated that she would give him more, but she was unable to pound it. When King saw the wound he boiled some water in his billy and bathed it. While the whole tribe sat round, watching and yabbering excitedly, he touched it with some lunar caustic; she shrieked and ran off, crying ‘mokow! mokow!’ (fire! fire!) She was, however, very grateful for his kindness, and from that time she and her husband provided him with food.

About two months later the relief party reached the depôt, where they found the letters and journals the explorers had placed in the cache. They at once set off down the Creek, in the hope still of finding Burke and Wills. They met a black who directed them to the native camp. Here they found King sitting alone in the mia-mia the natives had made for him, wasted and worn to a shadow, almost imbecile from the terrible hardships he had suffered.

He turned his hopeless face upon the new-comers, staring vacantly at them, muttering indistinctly words which his lips refused to articulate. Only the remnants of his clothing marked him as a civilised being. The blacks who had fed him sat round to watch the meeting with most gratified and delighted expressions.

Howitt waited for a few days to give King an opportunity of recovering his strength, that he might show them where the bodies of his unfortunate leaders lay, that the last sad duty to the dead might be performed before they left the place.

Burke’s body had been dragged a short distance from where it originally lay, and was partly eaten by the dingoes (wild dogs). The remains were carefully collected, wrapped in a Union Jack, and placed in a grave dug close to the spot.

A few weeks later the citizens of Melbourne, once again aroused to extravagant enthusiasm, lined the streets through which the only survivor of the only Victorian Exploration Expedition was to pass.

‘Here he comes! Here he comes!’ rang throughout the crowd as King was driven to the Town Hall to tell his narrative to the company assembled there.

‘There is a man!’ shouted one— ‘There is a man who has lived in hell.’

A few months later Howitt was again sent to Cooper’s Creek to exhume the bodies of Burke and Wills and bring them to Melbourne. They were honoured by a public funeral, and a monument was erected to their memory —

‘A statue tall, on a pillar of stone,
Telling its story to great and small
Of the dust reclaimed from the sand-waste lone.’

THE STORY OF EMUND (a.d. 1020)

THERE was a man named Emund of Skara; lawman in Western Gautland, and very wise and eloquent. Of high birth he was, had a numerous kin, and was very wealthy. Men deemed him cunning, and not very trusty. He passed for the man of most weight in West Gautland now that the Earl was gone away.

At the time when Earl Rognvald left Gautland the Gauts held assemblies, and often murmured among themselves about what the Swedish king was intending. They heard that he was wroth with them for having made a friendship with Olaf, King of Norway, rather than quarrel. He also charged with crime those men who had accompanied his daughter Astridr to Norway's king. And some said that they should seek protection of the Norse king and offer him their service; while others were against this, and said that the West Gauts had no strength to maintain a quarrel against the Swedes, 'and the Norse king is far from us,' they said, 'because the main power of his land is far: and this is the first thing we must do, send men to the Swedish king and try to make agreement with him; but if that cannot be done, then take we the other choice of seeking the protection of the Norse king.'

So the landowners asked Emund to go on this mission, to which he assented, and went his way with thirty men, and came to East Gautland. There he had many kinsmen and friends, and was well received. He had there some talk with the wisest men about this difficulty, and they were quite agreed in thinking that what the King was doing with them was against use and law. Then Emund went on to Sweden, and there talked with many great men; and there too all were of the same mind. He then held on his way till he came on the evening of a day to Upsala. There they found them good lodging and passed the night. The next day Emund went before the King as he sat in council with many around him. Emund went up to the King, and bowed down before him, and greeted him. The King looked at him, returned his greeting, and asked him what tidings he brought.

Emund answered: 'Little tidings are there with us Gauts. But this we deem a novelty: Atti the Silly in Vermaland went in the winter up to the forest with his snowshoes and bow; we call him a mighty hunter. On the fell he got such store of grey fur that he had filled his sledge with as much as he could manage to draw after him. He turned him homeward from the forest; but then he saw a squirrel in the wood, and shot at him and missed. Then was he wroth, and, loosing from him his sledge, he ran after the squirrel. But the squirrel went ever where the wood was thickest, sometimes near the tree roots, sometimes high among the boughs, and passed among the boughs from tree to tree. But when Atti shot at him, the arrow always flew above or below him, while the squirrel never went so that Atti could not see him. So eager was he in this chase that he crept after him for the whole day, but never could he get this squirrel. And when darkness came on, he lay down in the snow, as he was wont, and so passed the night; ’twas drifting weather. Next day Atti went to seek his sledge, but he never found it again; and so he went home. Such are my tidings, sire.’

Said the King: ‘Little tidings these, if there be no more to say.’

Emund answered: ‘Yet further a while ago happened this, which one may call tidings. Gauti Tofason went out with five warships by the river Gaut Elbe; but when he lay by the Eikr Isles, some Danes came there with five large merchant ships. Gauti and his company soon captured four of the merchant ships without losing a man, and took great store of wealth; but the fifth ship escaped out to sea by sailing. Gauti went after that one ship, and at first gained on it; but soon, as the wind freshened, the merchant ship went faster. They had got far out to sea, and Gauti wished to turn back; but a storm came on, and his ship was wrecked on an island, and all the wealth lost and the more part of the men. Meanwhile his comrades had had to stay at the Eikr Isles. Then attacked them fifteen Danish merchant ships, and slew them all, and took all the wealth which they had before gotten. Such was the end of this covetousness.’

The King answered: ‘Great tidings these, and worth telling; but what is thy errand hither?’

Emund answered: ‘I come, sire, to seek a solution in a difficulty where our law and Upsala law differ.’

The King asked: ‘What is it of which thou wouldst complain?’

Emund answered: ‘There were two men, nobly born, equal in family, but unequal in possessions and disposition. They quarrelled about lands, and each wrought harm on the other, and he wrought the more who was the more powerful, till their dispute was settled and judged at the general assembly. He who was the more powerful was condemned to pay; but at the first repayment he paid wildgoose for goose, little pig for old swine, and for a mark of gold he put down half a mark of gold, the other half-mark of clay and mould, and yet further threatened with rough treatment the man to whom he was paying this debt. What is thy judgment herein, sire?’

The King answered: ‘Let him pay in full what was adjudged, and to his King thrice that amount. And if it be not paid within the year, then let him go an outlaw from all his possessions, let half his wealth come into the King’s treasury, and half to the man to whom he owed redress.’

Emund appealed to all the greatest men there, and to the laws valid at Upsala Thing in witness of this decision. Then he saluted the King and went out. Other men brought their complaints before the King, and he sat long time over men’s suits.

But when the King came to table he asked where was lawman Emund.

He was told that he was at home in his lodging.

Then said the King: ‘Go after him, he shall be my guest to-day.’

Just then came in the viands, and afterwards players with harps and fiddles and other music, and then drink was served. The King was very merry, and had many great men as his guests, and thought no more of Emund. He drank for the rest of the day, and slept that night.

But in the morning, when the King waked, then he bethought him of what Emund had talked of the day before. And so soon as he was dressed he had his wise men summoned to him. King Olaf had ever about him twelve of the wisest men; they sate with him over judgments and counselled him in difficulties; and that was no easy task, for while the King liked it ill if judgment was perverted, he yet would not hear any contradiction of himself. When they were met thus in council, the King took the word, and bade Emund be called thither.

But the messenger came back and said: ‘Sire, Emund the lawman rode away yesterday immediately after he had supped.’

Then spake the King: ‘Tell me this, noble lords, whereto pointed that law question of which Emund asked yesterday?’

They answered: ‘Sire, thou wilt have understood it, if it meant more than his mere words.’

The King said: ‘By those two nobly-born men of whom he told the story that they disputed, the one more powerful than the other, and each wrought the other harm, he meant me and Olaf Stout.’

‘It is even so, sire,’ said they, ‘as thou sayest.’

The King went on: ‘Judgment there was in our cause at the Upsala Thing. But what did that mean which he said about the under-payment, wildgoose for goose, little pig for old swine, half clay for gold?’

Arnvid the Blind answered: ‘Sire,’ said he, ‘very unlike are red gold and clay, but more different are king and thrall. Thou didst promise to Olaf Stout thy daughter Ingigerdr, who is of royal birth on both sides, and of Up-Swedish family, the highest in the North, for it derives from the gods themselves. But now King Olaf has gotten to wife Astridr. And though she is a king’s child, yet her mother is a bondwoman and a Wendlander.’

There were three brothers then in the council; Arnvid the Blind, whose sight was so dim that he could scarce bear arms, but he was very eloquent; the second was Thorvid the Stammerer, who could not speak more than two words together, he was most bold and sincere; the third was called Freyvid the Deaf, he was hard of hearing. These brothers were all powerful men, wealthy, of noble kin, prudent, and all were dear to the King.

Then said King Olaf: ‘What means that which Emund told of Atti the Silly?’

None answered, but they looked at one another.

Said the King, ‘Speak now.’

Then said Thorvid the Stammerer: ‘Atti quarrelsome, covetous, ill-willed, silly, foolish.’

Then asked the King, ‘Against whom is aimed this cut?’

Then answered Freyvid the Deaf: ‘Sire, men will speak more openly, if that may be with thy permission.’

Said the King: ‘Speak now, Freyvid, with permission what thou wilt.’

Freyvid then took the word: ‘Thorvid my brother, who is called the wisest of us, calls the man Atti quarrelsome, silly, and foolish. He calls him so because, ill-content with peace, he hunts eagerly after small things, and yet gets them not, while for their sake he throws away great and good things. I am deaf, but now so many have spoken that I have been able to understand that men both great and small like it ill that thou, sire, keepest not thy word with the King of Norway. And still worse like they this: that thou makest of none effect the judgment of the General Assembly at Upsala. Thou hast no need to fear King of Norway or of Danes, nor anyone else, while the armies of Sweden will follow thee. But if the people of the land turn against thee with one consent, then we thy friends see no counsel that is sure to avail.’

The King asked: ‘Who are the leading men in this counsel to take the land from me?’

Freyvid answered: ‘All the Swedes wish to have old law and their full right. Look now, sire, how many of thy nobles sit in council here with thee. I think we be here but six whom thou callest thy counsellors; all the others have ridden away, and are gone into the provinces, and are holding meetings with the people of the land; and, to tell thee the truth, the war-arrow is cut, and sent round all the land, and a high court appointed. All we brothers have been asked to take part in this counsel, but not one of us will bear this name and be called traitor to his king, for our fathers were never such.’

Then said the King: ‘What expedient can we find? A great difficulty is upon us: give ye counsel, noble sirs, that I may keep the kingdom and my inheritance from my fathers; I wish not to contend against all the host of Sweden.’

Arnvid the Blind answered: ‘Sire, this seems to me good counsel: that thou ride down to Aros with such as will follow thee, take ship there, and go out to the lake; there appoint a meeting with the people. Behave not with hardness, but offer men law and land right; put down the war-arrow, it will not have gone far round the land in so short a time; send men of thine whom thou canst trust to meet those men who have this business in hand, and try if this tumult can be quieted.’

The King said that he would accept this counsel. ‘I will,’ said he, ‘that ye brothers go on this mission, for I trust you best of my men.’

Then said Thorvid the Stammerer: ‘I will remain behind, but let thy son Jacob go; this is needful.’

And Freyvid said: ‘Let us do, sire, even as Thorvid says; he will not leave thee in this peril; but I and Arnvid will go.’

So this counsel was followed. King Olaf went to his ships and stood out to the lake, and many men soon joined him there. But the brothers Freyvid and Arnvid rode out to Ullar-acre, taking with them Jacob, the King’s son, but his going they kept secret. They soon got to know that there was a gathering and rush to arms, and the country people held meetings both by day and night.

But when Freyvid and his party met their kinsmen and friends they said that they would join their company, and this offer all accepted joyfully.

At once the deliberation was referred to the two brothers, and numbers followed them, yet all were at one in saying that they would no longer have Olaf king over them, and would not endure his breaches of law and his arrogance, for he would hear no man’s cause, even though great chiefs told him the truth.

But when Freyvid found the vehemence of the people, then he saw into what danger matters had come, and he held a meeting with the chiefs, and thus spoke before them: ‘It seems to me that if this great measure is to be taken, to remove Olaf Ericsson from the kingdom, we Up-Swedes ought to have the ruling of it; it has always been so, that what the chiefs of the Up-Swedes have resolved among them, to this the other men of the land have listened. Our fathers needed not to receive advice from the West Gauts about their ruling of the land. Now are we not so degenerate that Emund need teach us counsel; I would have us bind our counsel together, kinsmen and friends.’

To this all agreed, and thought it well said. After that the whole multitude of the people turned to join this union of the Up-Swedish chiefs; so then Freyvid and Arnvid became chiefs over the people. But when Emund found this, he guessed how the matter would end. So he went to meet these brothers, and they had a talk together; and Freyvid asked Emund: ‘What mean ye to do if Olaf Ericsson is killed; what king will ye have?’

Emund answered; ‘Whosoever suits us best, whether of royal family or not.’

Freyvid answered: ‘We Up-Swedes will not that the kingdom in our days go out of the family who from father to son have long held it, while such good means may be taken to shun that as now can be. King Olaf has two sons, and we will have one of them for king. There is, however, a great difference between them; one is nobly born and Swedish on both sides, the other is a bondwoman's son and half Wendish.'

At this decision there was great acclaim, and all would have Jacob for king.

Then said Emund: 'You Up-Swedes have power to rule this for the time; but I warn you that hereafter some of those who will not hear now of anything else but that the kingdom of Sweden go in the royal line, will themselves live to consent that the kingdom pass into other families, and that will turn out better.'

After this the brothers Freyvid and Arnvid caused Jacob the King's son to be led before the assembly, and there they gave him the title of king, and therewith the Swedes gave him the name Onund, and henceforth he was so called. He was then ten or twelve years old.

Then King Onund took to him guards, and chose chiefs with such force of men about them as seemed needful; and he gave the common people of the land leave to go home. Thereafter messengers passed between the kings, and soon they met and made their agreement. Olaf was to be king over the land while he lived; he was to hold to peace and agreement with the King of Norway, as also with all those men who had been implicated in this counsel. Onund was also to be king, and have so much of the land as father and son might think fit; but was to be bound to follow the landowners if King Olaf did any of those things which they would not tolerate.

After this messengers went to Norway to seek King Olaf with this errand, that he should come with a fleet to Konunga Hella (Kings' Stone) to meet the Swedish king, and that the Swedish king wished that they should there ratify their treaty. King Olaf was still, as before, desirous of peace, and came with his fleet as proposed. The Swedish king also came, and when father-in-law and son-in-law met, they bound them to agreement and peace. Olaf the Swedish king showed him affable and gentle.

Thorstein the Learned says that there was in Hising a portion of land that had sometimes belonged to Norway, sometimes to Gautland. The kings agreed between them that for this possession they would casts lots with dice; he was to have it who should cast the higher throw. The Swedish king threw two sixes, and said that King Olaf need not cast.

He answered, while shaking the dice in his hand: 'There are yet two sixes on the dice, and it is but a little thing for God to let them turn up.' He cast, and turned up two sixes. Then Olaf the Swedish king cast, and again two sixes. Then cast Olaf, King of Norway, and there was six on one die, but the other split in two, and there were then seven. So he got the portion of land. We have heard no more tidings of that meeting. The kings parted reconciled.

THE MAN IN WHITE

‘A LITTLE while ago,’ writes Mademoiselle Aïssé, the Greek captive who was such a charming figure in Paris during the opening years of Louis XV.’s reign, ‘a little while ago a strange thing happened here, which caused a great deal of talk. It cannot be more than six weeks since Bessé the surgeon received a note, begging him to come without fail that afternoon at six o’clock to the Rue au Fer, near the Luxembourg Palace. Punctually at the hour named the surgeon arrived on the spot, where he found a man awaiting him. This man conducted the surgeon to a house a few steps further on, and motioning him to enter through the open door, promptly closed it, and remained himself outside. Bessé was surprised to find himself alone, and wondered why he had been brought there; but he had not to wait long, for the housekeeper soon appeared, who informed him that he was expected, and that he was to go up to the first story. The surgeon did as he was told, and opened the door of an anteroom all hung with white. Here he was met by an elegant lackey, dressed also in white, frizzed and powdered, with his white hair tied in a bag wig, carrying two torches in his hand, who requested the bewildered doctor to wipe his shoes. Bessé replied that this was quite unnecessary, as he had only just stepped out of his sedan chair and was not in the least muddy, but the lackey rejoined that everything in the house was so extraordinarily clean that it was impossible to be too careful.

‘His shoes being wiped, Bessé was next led into another room, hung with white like the first. A second lackey, in every respect similar to the other, made his appearance; again the doctor was forced to wipe his shoes, and for the third time he was conducted into a room, where carpets, chairs, sofas, and bed were all as white as snow. A tall figure dressed in a white dressing-gown and nightcap, and having its face covered by a white mask, sat by the fire. The moment this ghostly object perceived Bessé, he observed, “My body is possessed by the devil,” and then was silent. For three-quarters of an hour they remained thus, the white figure occupying himself with incessantly putting on and taking off six pairs of white gloves, which were placed on a white table beside him. The strangeness of the whole affair made Bessé feel very uncomfortable, but when his eyes fell on a variety of firearms in one corner of the room he became so frightened that he was obliged to sit down, lest his legs should give way.

‘At last the dead silence grew more than he could bear, and he turned to the white figure and asked what they wanted of him, and begged that his orders might be given him as soon as possible, as his time belonged to the public and he was needed elsewhere. To this the white figure only answered coldly, “What does that matter, as long as you are well paid?” and again was silent. Another quarter of an hour passed, and then the white figure suddenly pulled one of the white bell-ropes. When the summons was answered by the two white lackeys, the figure desired them to bring some bandages, and commanded Bessé to bleed him, and to take from him five pounds of blood. The surgeon, amazed at the quantity, inquired what doctor had ordered such extensive blood-letting. “I myself,” replied the white figure. Bessé felt that he was too much upset by all he had gone through to trust himself to bleed in the arm without great risk of injury, so he decided to perform the operation on the foot, which is far less dangerous. Hot water was brought, and the white phantom removed a pair of white thread stockings of wonderful beauty, then another and another, up to six, and took off a slipper of beaver lined with white. The leg and foot thus left bare were the prettiest in the world; and Bessé began to think that the figure before him must be that of a woman. At the second basinful the patient showed signs of fainting, and Bessé wished to loosen the mask, in order to give him more air. This was, however, prevented by the lackeys, who stretched him on the floor, and Bessé bandaged the foot before the patient had recovered from his fainting fit. Directly he came to himself, the white figure ordered his bed to be warmed, and as soon as it was done he lay down in it. The servants left the room, and Bessé, after feeling his pulse, walked over to the fireplace to clean his lancet, thinking all the while of his strange adventure. Suddenly he heard a noise behind him, and, turning his head, he saw reflected in the mirror the white figure coming hopping towards him. His heart sank with terror, but the figure only took five crowns from the chimneypiece, and handed them to him, asking at the same time if he would be satisfied with that payment. Trembling all over, Bessé replied that he was. “Well, then, be off as fast as you can,” was the rejoinder. Bessé did not need to be told twice, but made the best of his way out. As before the lackeys were awaiting him with lights, and as they walked he noticed that they looked at each other and smiled. At length Bessé, provoked at this behaviour, inquired what they were laughing at. “Ah, Monsieur,” was their answer, “what cause have you to complain? Has anyone done you any harm, and have you not been well paid for your services?” So saying they conducted him to his chair, and truly thankful he was to be out of the house. He rapidly made up his mind to keep silence about his adventures, but the following day someone sent to inquire how he was feeling after having bled the Man in White. Bessé saw that it was useless to make a mystery of the affair, and related exactly what had happened, and it soon came to the ears of the King. But who was the Man in White? Echo answers “Who?”’

THE ADVENTURES OF ‘THE BULL OF EARLSTOUN’

THIS is the story of the life of Alexander Gordon, of Earlstoun in Galloway. Earlstoun is a bonny place, sitting above the waterside of the Ken in the fair strath of the Glenkens, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright. The grey tower stands ruinous and empty to-day, but once it was a pleasant dwelling, and dear to the hearts of those that had dwelt in it when they were in foreign lands or hiding out on the wild wide moors. It was the time when Charles II. wished to compel the most part of the people of Scotland to change their religion and worship as he bade them. Some obeyed the King; but most hated the new order of things, and cleaved in their hearts to their old ways and to their old ministers, who had been put out of their kirks and manses at the coming of the King. Many even set themselves to resist the King in open battle rather than obey him in the matter of their consciences. It was only in this that they were rebellious, for many of them had been active in bringing him again to the throne.

Among those who thus went out to fight were William Gordon and his son Alexander. William Gordon was a grave, courteous, and venerable man, and his estate was one of the best in all the province of Galloway. Like nearly all the lairds in the south and west he was strongly of the Presbyterian party, and resolved to give up life and lands rather than his principles. Now the King was doubtless ill-advised, and his councillors did not take the kindly or the wise way with the people at this time; for a host of wild Highlanders had been turned into the land, who plundered in cotter’s hut and laird’s hall without much distinction between those that stood for the Covenants and those that held for the King. So in the year 1679 Galloway was very hot and angry, and many were ready to fight the King’s forces wherever they could be met with.

So, hearing news of a revolt in the West, William Gordon rode away, with many good riders at his back, to take his place in the ranks of the rebels. His son Alexander, whose story we are to tell, was there before him. The Covenanting army had gained one success in Drumclog, which gave them some hope, but at Bothwell Bridge their forces were utterly broken, largely through their own quarrels, by the Duke of Monmouth and the disciplined troops of the Government.

Alexander Gordon had to flee from the field of Bothwell. He came home to Earlstoun alone, for his father had been met about six miles from the battle-field by a troop of horse, and as he refused to surrender, he was slain there and buried in the parish of Glassford.

Immediately after Bothwell, Alexander Gordon was compelled to go into hiding with a price upon his head. Unlike his father, he was very ready-witted, free with his tongue, even boisterous upon occasion, and of very great bodily strength. These qualities stood him in good stead during the long period of his wandering and when lying in concealment among the hills.

The day after Bothwell he was passing through the town of Hamilton, when he was recognised by an old retainer of the family.

‘Save us, Maister Alexander,’ said the man, who remembered the ancient kindnesses of his family, ‘do you not know that it is death for you to be found here?’

So saying he made his young master dismount, and carried away all his horseman’s gear and his arms, which he hid in a heap of field-manure behind the house. Then he took Earlstoun to his own house, and put upon him a long dress of his wife’s. Hardly had he been clean-shaven, and arrayed in a clean white mutch (cap), when the troopers came clattering into the town. They had heard that he and some others of the prominent rebels had passed that way; and they went from door to door, knocking and asking, ‘Saw ye anything of Sandy Gordon of Earlstoun?’

So going from house to house they came to the door of the ancient Gordon retainer, and Earlstoun had hardly time to run to the corner and begin to rock the cradle with his foot before the soldiers came to ask the same question there. But they passed on without suspicion, only saying one to the other as they went out, ‘My certes, Billy, but yon was a sturdy hizzie!’

After that there was nothing but the heather and the mountain cave for Alexander Gordon for many a day. He had wealth of adventures, travelling by night, hiding and sleeping by day. Sometimes he would venture to the house of one who sympathised with the Covenanters, only to find that the troopers were already in possession. Sometimes, in utter weariness, he slept so long that when he awoke he would find a party searching for him quite close at hand; then there was nothing for it but to lie close like a hare in a covert till the danger passed by.

Once when he came to his own house of Earlstoun he was only an hour or two there before the soldiers arrived to search for him. His wife had hardly time to stow him in a secret recess behind the ceiling of a room over the kitchen, in which place he abode several days, having his meals passed to him from above, and breathing through a crevice in the wall.

After this misadventure he was sometimes in Galloway and sometimes in Holland for three or four years. He might even have remained in the Low

Countries, but his services were so necessary to his party in Scotland that he was repeatedly summoned to come over into Galloway and the West to take up the work of organising resistance to the Government.

During most of this time the Tower of Earlstoun was a barracks of the soldiers, and it was only by watching his opportunity that Alexander Gordon could come home to see his wife, and put his hand upon his bairns' heads as they lay a-row in their cots. Yet come he sometimes did, especially when the soldiers of the garrison were away on duty in the more distant parts of Galloway. Then the wanderer would steal indoors in the gloaming, soft-footed like a thief, into his own house, and sit talking with his wife and an old retainer or two who were fit to be trusted with the secret. Yet while he sat there one was ever on the watch, and at the slightest signs of King's men in the neighbourhood Alexander Gordon rushed out and ran to the great oak tree, which you may see to this day standing in sadly-diminished glory in front of the great house of Earlstoun.

Now it stands alone, all the trees of the forest having been cut away from around it during the subsequent poverty which fell upon the family. A rope ladder lay snugly concealed among the ivy that clad the trunk of the tree. Up this Alexander Gordon climbed. When he arrived at the top he pulled the ladder after him, and found himself upon an ingeniously constructed platform built with a shelter over it from the rain, high among the branchy tops of the great oak. His faithful wife, Jean Hamilton, could make signals to him out of one of the top windows of Earlstoun whether it was safe for him to approach the house, or whether he had better remain hidden among the leaves. If you go now to look for the tree, it is indeed plain and easy to be seen. But though now so shorn and lonely, there is no doubt that two hundred years ago it stood undistinguished among a thousand others that thronged the woodland about the Tower of Earlstoun.

Often, in order to give Alexander Gordon a false sense of security, the garrison would be withdrawn for a week or two, and then in the middle of some mirky night or early in the morning twilight the house would be surrounded and the whole place ransacked in search of its absent master.

On one occasion, the man who came running along the narrow river path from Dairy had hardly time to arouse Gordon before the dragoons were heard clattering down through the wood from the high-road. There was no time to gain the great oak in safety, where he had so often hid in time of need. All Alexander Gordon could do was to put on the rough jerkin of a labouring man, and set to cleaving firewood in the courtyard with the scolding assistance of a maid-servant. When the troopers entered to search for the master of the house, they heard the maid vehemently 'flyting' the great hulking lout for his awkwardness, and threatening to ‘draw a stick across his back’ if he did not work to a better tune.

The commander ordered him to drop his axe, and to point out the different rooms and hiding-places about the castle. Alexander Gordon did so with an air of indifference, as if hunting Whigs were much the same to him as cleaving firewood. He did his duty with a stupid unconcern which successfully imposed on the soldiers; and as soon as they allowed him to go, he fell to his wood-chopping with the same stolidity and rustic boorishness that had marked his conduct.

Some of the officers came up to him and questioned him as to his master’s hiding-place in the woods. But as to this he gave them no satisfaction.

‘My master,’ he said, ‘has no hiding-place that I know of. I always find him here when I have occasion to seek for him, and that is all I care about. But I am sure that if he thought you were seeking him he would immediately show himself to you, for that is ever his custom.’

This was one of the answers with a double meaning that were so much in the fashion of the time and so characteristic of the people.

On leaving, the commander of the troop said, ‘Ye are a stupid kindly nowt, man. See that ye get no harm in such a rebel service.’

Sometimes, however, searching waxed so hot and close that Gordon had to withdraw himself altogether out of Galloway and seek quieter parts of the country. On one occasion he was speeding up the Water of Æ when he found himself so weary that he was compelled to lie down under a bush of heather and rest before proceeding on his journey. It so chanced that a noted King’s man, Dalyell of Glenæ, was riding homewards over the moor. His horse started back in astonishment, having nearly stumbled over the body of a sleeping man. It was Alexander Gordon. Hearing the horse’s feet he leaped up, and Dalyell called upon him to surrender. But that was no word to say to a Gordon of Earlstoun. Gordon instantly drew his sword, and, though unmounted, his lightness of foot on the heather and moss more than counterbalanced the advantages of the horseman, and the King’s man found himself matched at all points; for the Laird of Earlstoun was in his day a famous sworder.

Soon the Covenanter’s sword seemed to wrap itself about Dalyell’s blade and sent it twirling high in the air. In a little he found himself lying on the heather at the mercy of the man whom he had attacked. He asked for his life, and Alexander Gordon granted it to him, making him promise by his honour as a gentleman that whenever he had the fortune to approach a conventicle he would retire, if he saw a white flag elevated in a particular manner upon a flagstaff. This seemed but a little condition to weigh against a man’s life, and Dalyell agreed.

Now the Cavalier was an exceedingly honourable man and valued his spoken word. So on the occasion of a great conventicle at Mitchelslacks, in the parish of Closeburn, he permitted a great field meeting to disperse, drawing off his party in another direction, because the signal streaming from a staff told him that the man who had spared his life was amongst the company of worshippers.

After this, the white signal was frequently used in the neighbourhood over which Dalyell’s jurisdiction extended, and to the great credit of the Cavalier it is recorded that on no single occasion did he violate his plighted word, though he is said to have remarked bitterly that the Whig with whom he fought must have been the devil, ‘for ever going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.’

But Alexander Gordon was too great a man in the affairs of the Praying Societies to escape altogether. He continually went and came from Holland, and some of the letters that he wrote from that country are still in existence. At last, in 1683, having received many letters and valuable papers for delivery to people in refuge in Holland, he went secretly to Newcastle, and agreed with the master of a ship for his voyage to the Low Countries. But just as the vessel was setting out from the mouth of the Tyne, it was accidentally stopped. Some watchers for fugitives came on board, and Earlstoun and his companion were challenged. Earlstoun, fearing the taking of his papers, threw the box that contained them overboard; but it floated, and was taken along with himself.

Then began a long series of misfortunes for Alexander Gordon. He was five times tried, twice threatened with torture — which he escaped, in the judgment hall itself, by such an exhibition of his great strength as terrified his judges. He simulated madness, foamed at the mouth, and finally tore up the benches in order to attack the judges with the fragments. He was sent first to the castle of Edinburgh and afterwards to the Bass, ‘for a change of air’ as the record quaintly says. Finally, he was despatched to Blackness Castle, where he remained close in hold till the revolution. Not till June 5, 1689, were his prison doors thrown open, but even then Alexander Gordon would not go till he had obtained signed documents from the governor and officials of the prison to the effect that he had never altered any of his opinions in order to gain privilege or release.

Alexander Gordon returned to Earlstoun, and lived there quietly far into the next century, taking his share in local and county business with Grierson of Lag and others who had hunted him for years — which is a strange thing to think on, but one also very characteristic of those times.

On account of his great strength and the power of his voice he was called ‘the Bull of Earlstoun,’ and it is said that when he was rebuking his servants, the bellowing of the Bull could plainly be heard in the clachan of Dalry, which is two miles away across hill and stream.

THE STORY OF GRISELL BAILLIE'S SHEEP'S HEAD

THE Lady Grisell Baillie, as she was called after her marriage, was the daughter of a very eminent Covenanter, Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth. Grisell was born in 1665, and during all the years of her girlhood her father was seldom able to come home to his house of Polwarth, for fear of the officers of the Government seizing him. On one occasion he was taken and cast into prison in Dumbarton Castle for full fifteen months. Grisell was but a little girl at the time, but she had a wisdom and a quaint discretion beyond her years. Often she was entrusted with a letter to carry to him past the guard, and succeeded in the attempt where an elder person would certainly have been suspected and searched.

When her father was set at liberty, it was not many weeks till the soldiers again came seeking him; for new troubles had arisen, and the suspicion of the King was against all men that were not active in his service.

Parties of soldiers were continually searching the house in pursuit of him. But this occasioned no alarm to his family, for they all, with three exceptions, thought him far from home.

Only Sir Patrick's wife, his little daughter Grisell, and a carpenter named James Winter were trusted with the secret. The servants were frequently put to the oath as to when they saw their master; but as they knew nothing, all passed off quite well.

With James Winter's assistance the Lady Polwarth got a bed and bed-clothes carried in the night to the burying-place, a vault under the ground at Polwarth Church, a mile from the house. Here Sir Patrick was concealed a whole month, never venturing out. For all light he had only an open slit at one end, through which nobody could see what was below.

To this lonely place little Grisell went every night by herself at midnight, to carry her father victuals and drink, and stayed with him as long as she could with a chance of returning home before the morning. Here in this dismal habitation did they often laugh heartily at the incidents of the day, for they were both of that cheerful disposition which is a continual feast.

Grisell had ordinarily a terror of the churchyard, especially in the dark, for being but a girl, and having been frightened with nursery stories, she thought to see ghosts behind every tomb. But when she came to help her father, she had such anxious care for him that all fear of ghosts went away from her. She stumbled among the graves every night alone, being only in dread that the stirring of a leaf or the barking of a dog betokened the coming of a party of soldiers to carry away her father to his death. The minister's house was near the church. The first night she went, his dogs kept up such a barking that it put her in the utmost fear of a discovery. The next day the Lady Polwarth sent for the curate, and, on pretext of a mad dog, got him to send away all his dogs. A considerate curate, in sooth!

There was great difficulty in getting victuals to carry to Sir Patrick without the servants, who were not in the secret, suspecting for what purpose they were taken. The only way that it could be done was for Grisell to slip things off her plate into her lap as they sat at dinner.

Many a diverting story is told about this. Sir Patrick above all things was fond of sheep's head. One day while the children were eating their broth, Grisell had conveyed a whole sheep's head into her lap. Her brother Sandy (who was afterwards Lord Marchmont) looked up as soon as he had finished, and cried out with great astonishment, 'Mother, will ye look at our Grisell. While we have been supping our broth, she has eaten up the whole sheep's head!'

For indeed she needed to be looked to in these circumstances. This occasioned great merriment when she told her father of it in his hiding-place at night. And he desired that the next time there was sheep's head Sandy should have a double share of it.

His great comfort and constant entertainment while in this dreary abode (for he had no light to read by) was to repeat over and over to himself Buchanan's Latin Psalms. And to his dying day, nearly forty years after, he would give the book to his wife, and ask her to try him at any place to see if he minded his Psalms as well as he had done in the hiding-hole among the bones of his ancestors in Polwarth Kirkyard.

After this, James Winter and the Lady Polwarth made a hole in the ground under a bed that drew out of a recess in the wall. They lifted the boards and took turns at digging out the earth, scratching it with their hands till they were all rough and bleeding, for only so could they prevent a noise being heard. Grisell and her mother helped James Winter to carry the earth in bags and sheets to the garden at the back. He then made a box bed at his own house, large enough for Sir Patrick to lie in, with bed and bed-clothes, and bored holes in the boards for air. But in spite of all this, the difficulty of their position was so great, and the danger so certainly increasing, that it was judged better that Sir Patrick should attempt to escape to Holland.

It was necessary to tell the grieve, John Allen, who was so much astonished to hear that his master had been all the time about the house, that he fainted away.

However, he made up willingly enough a story that he was going to Morpeth Fair to sell horses, and Sir Patrick having got forth from a window of the stables, they set out in the dark. Sir Patrick, being absent-minded, let his horse carry him whither it would, and in the morning found himself at Tweedside, far out of his way, at a place not fordable and without his servant.

But this also was turned to good. For after waiting a while he found means to get over to the other side, where with great joy he met his servant. Then the grieve told him that he had never missed him till, looking about, he heard a great galloping of horses, and a party of soldiers who had just searched the house for Sir Patrick, surrounded him and strictly examined him. He looked about everywhere and could not see his master, for he was in much fear, thinking him to be close behind. But in this manner, by his own absent-mindedness, Sir Patrick was preserved, and so got safely first to London and afterwards to Holland.

Thence Sir Patrick sent home for his wife and family. They came to him in a ship, and on the way had an adventure. The captain was a sordid and brutal man, and agreed with them and with several other people to give them a bed on the passage. So when there arose a dispute who would have the bed, the Lady Polwarth said nothing. But a gentleman coming to her said, ‘Let them be doing. You will see how it will end.’ So two of the other gentlewomen lay on the bed, the Lady Polwarth with Grisell and a little sister lying on the floor, with a cloak-bag of books she was taking to Sir Patrick for their only pillow.

Then in came the captain, and first ate up all their provisions with a gluttony incredible. Then he said to the women in the bed, ‘Turn out, turn out!’ and laid himself down in place of them. But Providence was upsides with him, for a terrible storm came on, and he had to get up immediately and go out to try to save the ship. And so he got no more sleep that night, which pleased the gentlewomen greatly in spite of all their own fears and pains. They never saw more of him till they landed at the Brill. From that they set out on foot for Rotterdam with one of the gentlemen that had been kind to them on the crossing to Holland.

It was a cold, wet, dirty night. Grisell’s little sister, a girl not well able to walk, soon lost her shoes in the dirt. Whereupon the Lady Polwarth took her upon her back, the gentlemen carrying all their baggage, and Grisell going through the mire at her mother’s side.

At Rotterdam they found their eldest brother and Sir Patrick himself waiting to conduct them to Utrecht, where their house was. No sooner were they met again than they forgot everything, and felt nothing but happiness and contentment.

And even after their happy and prosperous return to Scotland they looked back on these years in Holland, when they were so poor, and often knew not whence was to come the day's dinner, as the happiest and most delightful of their lives. Yet the years of Grisell Baillie's after-life were neither few nor evil.

THE CONQUEST OF PERU

THE YOUTH OF PIZARRO

AT the time when the news of the conquest of Mexico by Cortés, and the report of its marvellous stores of treasure, were inflaming the minds of the men of Spain with an ardent desire for fresh discoveries, there happened to be living in the Spanish colony of Panamá a man named Francisco Pizarro, to whose lot it fell to discover and conquer the great and flourishing empire of Peru. He was a distant kinsman of Hernando Cortés, but had from his childhood been neglected and left to make his living as best he might. He could neither read nor write, and had chiefly been employed as a swineherd near the city of Truxillo, where he was born. But as he grew older and heard the strange and fascinating stories of adventure in the New World which were daily more widely circulated, he took the first opportunity of escaping to Seville, from which port he, with other Spanish adventurers, embarked to seek their fortunes in the West, the town being at this time left almost entirely to the women, so great was the tide of emigration. Thenceforward he lived a stirring life. We hear of him in Hispaniola, and serving as lieutenant in a colonising expedition under Alonzo de Ojeda. After this he was associated with Vasco Nunez de Balboa in establishing a settlement at Darien, and from Balboa he may first have heard rumours of Peru itself, for it was to Balboa that an Indian chief had said concerning some gold which had been collected from the natives: ‘If this is what you prize so much that you are willing to leave your homes and risk even life itself for it, I can tell you of a land where they eat and drink out of golden vessels, and gold is as common as iron with you.’ Later, Pizarro was sent to traffic with the natives on the Pacific side of the isthmus for gold and pearls, and presently from the south came Andagoya, bringing accounts of the wealth and grandeur of the countries which lay beyond, and also of the hardships and difficulties endured by the few navigators who had sailed in that direction. Thus the southern expeditions became a common subject of talk among the colonists of Panamá.

Pizarro does not at first seem to have shown any special interest in the matter, nor was he rich enough to do anything without assistance; but there were two people in the colony who were to help him. One of them was a soldier of fortune named Diego Almagro, an older man than Pizarro, who in his early life had been equally neglected; the other was a Spanish ecclesiastic, Hernando de Luque, a man of great prudence and worldly wisdom, who had, moreover, control of the necessary funds. Between these three, then, a compact was made, most of the money being supplied by De Luque, Pizarro taking command of the expedition, and Almagro undertaking the equipment of the ships. Only about a hundred men could be persuaded to join the explorers, and those but the idle hangers-on in the colony, who were eager to do anything to mend their fortunes. Everything being ready, Pizarro set sail with these in the larger of the two ships, in the month of November 1524, leaving Almagro to follow as soon as the second vessel could be fitted out. With such slender means did Pizarro begin his attack on a great people, and invade the mysterious empire of the Children of the Sun.

THE EMPIRE OF THE INCAS

At this time the Peruvian Empire stretched along the Pacific from about the second degree north to the thirty-seventh degree of south latitude; its breadth varied, but was nowhere very great. The country was most remarkable, and seemed peculiarly unfitted for cultivation. The great range of mountains ran parallel to the coast, sometimes in a single line, sometimes in two or three, either side by side or running obliquely to each other, broken here and there by the towering peaks of huge volcanoes, white with perpetual snows, and descending towards the coast in jagged cliffs and awful precipices. Between the rocks and the sea lay a narrow strip of sandy soil, where no rain ever fell, and which was insufficiently watered by the few scanty streams that flow down the western side of the Cordilleras. Nevertheless, by the patient industry of the Peruvians, these difficulties had all been overcome; by means of canals and subterranean aqueducts the waste places of the coast were watered and made fertile, the mountain sides were terraced and cultivated, every form of vegetation finding the climate suited to it at a different height, while over the snowy wastes above wandered the herds of llamas, or Peruvian sheep, under the care of their herdsmen. The Valley of Cuzco, the central region of Peru, was the cradle of their civilisation. According to tradition among the Peruvians, there had been a time, long past, when the land was held by many tribes, all plunged in barbarism, who worshipped every object in nature, made war as a pastime, and feasted upon the flesh of their slaughtered captives. The Sun, the great parent of mankind, pitying their degraded condition, sent two of his children, Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo Huaco, to govern and teach them. They bore with them as they advanced from the neighbourhood of Lake Titicaca a golden wedge, and were directed to take up their abode at the spot where this sacred emblem should sink easily into the ground. This happened in the Valley of Cuzco; the wedge of gold sank into the earth and disappeared for ever, and Manco Capac settled down to teach the men of the land the arts of agriculture, while Mama Ocllo showed the women how to weave and spin. Under these wise and benevolent rulers the community grew and spread, absorbing into itself the neighbouring tribes, and overrunning the whole tableland. The city of Cuzco was founded, and, under the successors of the Children of the Sun, became the capital of a great and flourishing monarchy. In the middle of the fifteenth century the famous Topa Inca Yupanqui led his armies across the terrible desert of Atacama, and, penetrating to the southern region of Chili, made the river Maule the boundary of his dominions, while his son, Huayna Capac, who succeeded him, pushed his conquests northward, and added the powerful kingdom of Quito to the empire of Peru. The city of Cuzco was the royal residence of the Incas, and also the ‘Holy City,’ for there stood the great Temple of the Sun, the most magnificent structure in the New World, to which came pilgrims from every corner of the empire.

Cuzco was defended on the north by a high hill, a spur of the Cordilleras, upon which was built a wonderful fortress of stone, with walls, towers, and subterranean galleries, the remains of which exist to this day and amaze the traveller by their size and solidity, some of the stones being thirty-eight feet long by eighteen broad, and six feet thick, and so exactly fitted together that, though no cement was used, it would be impossible to put the blade of a knife between them. As the Peruvians had neither machinery, beasts of burden, nor iron tools, and as the quarry from which these huge blocks were hewn lay forty-five miles from Cuzco, over river and ravine, it is easy to imagine the frightful labour which this building must have cost; indeed, it is said to have employed twenty thousand men for fifty years, and was, after all, but one of the many fortifications established by the Incas throughout their dominions. Their government was absolutely despotic, the sovereign being held so far above his subjects that even the proudest of the nobles only ventured into his presence barefooted, and carrying upon his shoulders a light burden in token of homage. The title of Inca was borne by all the nobility who were related to the king, or who, like himself, claimed descent from the Children of the Sun; but the crown passed from father to son, the heir being the eldest son of the ‘coya,’ or queen. From his earliest years he was educated by the ‘amautas,’ or wise men of the kingdom, in the ceremonial of their religion, as well as in military matters and all manly exercises, that he might be fitted to reign in his turn.

At the age of sixteen the prince, with the young Inca nobles who had shared his studies, underwent a kind of public examination, their proficiency as warriors being tested by various athletic exercises and by mimic combats which, though fought with blunted weapons, generally resulted in wounds, and sometimes in death. During this trial, which lasted thirty days, the young prince fared no better than his comrades, wearing mean attire, going barefoot, and sleeping upon the ground — a mode of life which was supposed to give him sympathy with the destitute. At the end of that time, the candidates considered worthy of the honours of this barbaric chivalry were presented to the sovereign, who reminded them of the responsibilities of their birth and station, and exhorted them, as Children of the Sun, to imitate the glorious career of their ancestor. He then, as they knelt before him one by one, pierced their ears with a golden bodkin, which they continued to wear until the hole was made large enough to contain the enormous pendants worn by the Incas, which made the Spaniards call them ‘Orejones.’ Indeed, as one of the conquerors remarked, ‘The larger the hole, the more of a gentleman,’ and the sovereign wore so massive an ornament that the cartilage of his ear was distended by it nearly to the shoulder. After this ceremony the feet of the candidates were dressed in the sandals of the order, and girdles, and garlands of flowers were given them. The head of the prince was then encircled with a tasselled fringe of a yellow colour, which distinguished him as the heir apparent, and he at once received the homage of all the Inca nobility; and then the whole assembly proceeded to the great square of the capital, where with songs, dances, and other festivities the ceremony was brought to an end. After this the prince was deemed worthy to sit in the councils of his father, and to serve under distinguished generals in time of war, and finally himself to carry the rainbow banner of his house upon distant campaigns.

The Inca lived with great pomp and show. His dress was of the finest vicuña wool, richly dyed, and ornamented with gold and jewels. Round his head was a many-coloured turban and a fringe like that worn by the prince, but of a scarlet colour, and placed upright in it were two feathers of a rare and curious bird called the coraquenque, which was found in a desert country among the mountains. It was death to take or destroy one of these birds; they were reserved exclusively to supply the king’s headgear. In order to communicate with their people, the Incas were in the habit of making a stately progress through their land once in every few years. The litter in which they travelled was richly decorated with gold and emeralds, and surrounded by a numerous escort. The men who bore it on their shoulders were provided by two cities specially appointed for the purpose, and the service was no enviable one, since a fall was punished by death. Halts were made at the ‘tambos,’ or inns regularly kept up by the Government along all the principal roads, and the people assembled all along the line, clearing stones from the road and strewing it with flowers, and vying with one another in carrying the baggage from village to village. Here and there the Inca halted to listen to the grievances of his subjects, or to decide points referred to him by the ordinary tribunals, and these spots were long held in reverence as consecrated by his presence. Everywhere the people flocked to catch a glimpse of their ruler, and to greet him with acclamations and blessings.

The royal palaces were on a magnificent scale, and were scattered over all the provinces of the great empire. The buildings were low, covering a large space, the rooms not communicating with each other, but opening upon a common square. The walls were of stone rough hewn, and the roofs of rushes; but inside all was splendour. Gold, silver, and richly-coloured stuffs abounded, covering the walls, while in niches stood images of animals and plants curiously wrought in the precious metals. Even the commonest household utensils were of gold. The favourite residence of the Incas was the delicious valley of Yucay, about twelve miles from Cuzco; there they loved to retreat to enjoy their exquisite gardens, and luxurious baths replenished with clear water, which flowed through subterranean channels of silver into basins of gold. The gardens were full of flowers and plants, which flourished in this temperate climate of the tropics; but strangest of all were those borders which glowed with various forms of vegetable life, cunningly fashioned in gold and silver. Among these is specially recorded the beautiful Indian corn, its golden grain set off by broad silver leaves, and crowned with a light tassel of silver. But all the wealth displayed by the Inca belonged to himself alone. When he died, or, as they put it, ‘was called home to the mansions of his father the Sun,’ his palaces were abandoned, and all his treasures and possessions were suffered to remain as he left them, lest his soul should at any time return to its body, and require again the things it had used before. The body itself was skilfully embalmed and removed to the great Temple of the Sun at Cuzco, where were the bodies of all the former Incas and their queens, ranged in opposite files. Clothed in their accustomed attire, they sat in chairs of gold, their heads bent, their hands crossed upon their breasts, their dusky faces and black, or sometimes silver, hair retaining a perfectly natural look. On certain festivals they were brought out into the great square of Cuzco, invitations were issued in their names to all the nobles’ and officers of the Court, and magnificent entertainments were held, when the display of plate, gold, and jewels was such as no other city in the world ever witnessed. The banquets were served by the retainers of the respective houses, and the same forms of courtly etiquette were used as if the living monarch had presided, instead of his mummy. The nobility of Peru consisted of two Orders — the Incas or relatives of the sovereign, and the Curacas, or chiefs of the conquered nations. The former enjoyed many privileges; they wore a peculiar dress, and spoke a peculiar dialect. Most of them lived at Court, sharing the counsels of the king, and dining at his table. They alone were admissible to the great offices of the priesthood, and had the command of armies and the government of distant provinces.

The whole territory of the empire was divided into three parts: one for the Sun, another for the Inca, and the last for the people. The revenue from the lands assigned to the Sun supported the numerous priests, and provided for the maintenance of the temples and their costly ceremonial. The land of the people was parted equally among them, every man when he was married receiving enough to support himself and his wife, together with a house. An additional piece was granted for every child, the portion for a son being double that for a daughter. The division of the soil was renewed every year, and the possession of the tenant increased or diminished according to the number of his family. The country was wholly cultivated by the people. First the lands of the Sun were tilled; then those of the old or sick, the widow and orphan, and soldiers on active service; after this each man was free to attend to his own, though he was still obliged to help any neighbour who might require it. Lastly, they cultivated the land of the Inca. This was done with great ceremony by all the people in a body. At break of day they were called together, and men, women, and children appeared in their gayest apparel as if decked for some festival, and sang as they worked their popular ballads, which told the heroic deeds of the Inca. The flocks of llamas belonged exclusively to the Sun and the Inca, they were most carefully tended and managed, and their number was immense. Under the care of their shepherds they moved to different pastures according to the climate. Every year some were killed as sacrifices at the religious festivals or for the consumption of the Court, and at appointed seasons all were sheared and their wool stored in the public magazines. Thence it was given out to each family, and when the women had spun and woven enough coarse garments to supply their husbands and children they were required to labour for the Inca. Certain officers decided what was to be woven, gave out the requisite material, and saw that the work was faithfully done. In the lower and hotter regions cotton, given out in the same way, took the place of wool. Occupation was found for all, from the child of five years to the oldest woman who could hold a distaff. Idleness was held to be a crime in Peru, and was severely punished, while industry was publicly commended and rewarded. In the same way all the mines in the kingdom belonged to the Inca, and were worked for his benefit by men familiar with the service, and there were special commissioners whose duty it was to know the nature of the country and the capabilities of its inhabitants, so that whatever work was required, it might be given into competent hands, the different employments generally descending from father to son. All over the country stood spacious stone storehouses, divided between the Sun and the Inca, in which were laid up maize, coca, woollen and cotton stuffs, gold, silver, and copper, and beside these were yet others designed to supply the wants of the people in times of dearth. Thus in Peru, though no man who was not an Inca could become rich, all had enough to eat and to wear.

To this day the ruins of temples, palaces, aqueducts, and, above all, the great roads, remain to bear witness to the industry of the Peruvians. Of these roads the most remarkable were two which ran from Quito to Cuzco, diverging again thence in the direction of Chili. One ran through the low lands by the sea, the other over the great plateau, through galleries cut for leagues from the living rock, over pathless sierras buried in snow. Rivers were crossed by filling up the ravines through which they flowed with solid masses of masonry which remain to this day, though the mountain torrents have in the course of ages worn themselves a passage through, leaving solid arches to span the valleys. Over some of the streams they constructed frail swinging bridges of osiers, which were woven into cables the thickness of a man’s body. Several of these laid side by side were secured at either end to huge stone buttresses, and covered with planks. As these bridges were sometimes over two hundred feet long they dipped and oscillated frightfully over the rapidly-flowing stream far below, but the Peruvians crossed them fearlessly, and they are still used by the Spaniards. The wider and smoother rivers were crossed on ‘balsas,’ or rafts with sails. The whole length of this road was about two thousand miles, its breadth did not exceed twenty feet, and it was paved with heavy flags of freestone, in parts covered with a cement which time has made harder than stone itself. The construction of the lower road must have presented other difficulties. For the most part the causeway was raised on a high embankment of earth, with a wall of clay on either side. Trees and sweet-smelling shrubs were planted along the margin, and where the soil was so light and sandy as to prevent the road from being continued, huge piles were driven into the ground to mark the way. All along these highways the ‘tambos,’ or inns, were erected at a distance of ten or twelve miles from each other, and some of them were on an extensive scale, consisting of a fortress and barracks surrounded by a stone parapet. These were evidently intended as a shelter for the Imperial armies when on the march.

The communication throughout the country was by means of runners, each of whom carried the message entrusted to him with great swiftness for five miles, and then handed it over to another. These runners were specially trained to their work and wore a particular dress; their stations were small buildings erected five miles apart along all the roads. The messages might be verbal, or conveyed by means of the ‘quipus.’ A quipu was a cord two feet long, composed of differently coloured threads twisted together, from which were hung a number of smaller threads, also differently coloured and tied in knots. Indeed, the word ‘quipu’ means ‘a knot.’ By means of the colours and the various knots the Peruvians expressed ideas — it was their method of writing — but the quipus were chiefly used for arithmetical purposes. In every district officers were stationed who were called ‘keepers of the quipus’; their duty was to supply the Government with information as to the revenues, births, deaths, and marriages, number of population, and so on. These records — in skeins of many-coloured thread — were inspected at headquarters and carefully preserved, the whole collection constituting what might be call the national archives. In like manner the wise men recorded the history of the empire, and chronicled the great deeds of the reigning Inca or his ancestors. The Peruvians had some acquaintance with geography and astronomy, and showed a decided talent for theatrical exhibitions, but it was in agriculture that they really excelled. The mountains were regularly hewn into stone-faced terraces, varying in width from hundreds of acres at the base to a few feet near the snows. Water was conveyed in stone-built aqueducts for hundreds of miles, from some snow-fed lake in the mountains, fertilising all the dry and sandy places through which it passed. In some of the arid valleys they dug great pits twenty feet deep and more than an acre in extent, and, after carefully preparing the soil, planted grain or vegetables. Their method of ploughing was primitive indeed. Six or eight men were attached by ropes to a strong stake, to which was fastened a horizontal piece of wood upon which the ploughman might set his foot to force the sharp point into the earth as it was dragged along, while women followed after to break up the clods as they were turned.

Much of the wealth of the country consisted in the huge flocks of llamas and alpacas, and the wild huanacos and vicuñas which roamed freely over the frozen ranges of the Cordilleras. Once a year a great hunt took place under the superintendence of the Inca or some of his officers. Fifty or sixty thousand men encircled the part of the country that was to be hunted over, and drove all the wild animals by degrees towards some spacious plain. The beasts of prey they killed, and also the deer, the flesh of the latter being dried in strips and distributed among the people. This preparation, called ‘charqui,’ was the only animal food of the lower classes in Peru. The huanacos and vicuñas were only captured and shorn, being afterwards allowed to escape and go back to their haunts among the mountains. No district was hunted over more than once in four years. The Peruvians showed great skill in weaving the vicuña wool into robes for the Inca and carpets and hangings for his palaces. The texture was as delicate as silk, and the brilliancy of the dyes unequalled even in Europe. They also were expert in the beautiful feather-work for which Mexico was famous, but they held it of less account than the Mexicans did. In spite of some chance resemblances in their customs, it seems certain that the Mexicans and Peruvians were unaware of each other’s existence. They differed in nothing more utterly than in their treatment of the tribes they conquered. While the Mexicans kept them in subjection by force and cruelty, the Peruvians did everything they possibly could to make the conquered people one with the rest of the nation.

RELIGION OF THE PERUVIANS

In religion the Peruvians acknowledged one Supreme Being as creator and ruler of the universe, whom they called Pachacamac, or Viracocha. In all the land there was only one temple dedicated to him, and this had existed before the Incas began to rule. They also worshipped many other gods, but the Sun was held far above the rest. In every town and village were temples dedicated to him, and his worship was taught first of all to every conquered tribe. His temple at Cuzco was called ‘the Place of Gold,’ and the interior was a wonderful sight. On the western wall was a representation of the Sun-god, a human face surrounded by numberless rays of light. This was engraved upon a huge and massive plate of gold, thickly powdered with emeralds and other precious stones. The beams of the morning sun striking first upon this, and being reflected again upon all the plates and studs of burnished gold with which the walls and ceiling were entirely covered, lighted the whole temple with a more than natural radiance. Even the cornices were of gold, and outside the temple a broad belt of the precious metal was let into the stonework. Adjoining this building were several smaller chapels. One consecrated to the Moon, held next in reverence as the mother of the Incas, was decorated in an exactly similar way, but with silver instead of gold, those of the Stars, the Thunder and Lightning, and the Rainbow were equally beautiful and gorgeous. Every vessel used in the temple services was of gold or silver, and there were beside many figures of animals, and copies of plants and flowers The greatest Sun festival was called ‘Raymi;’ at it a llama was sacrificed, and from the appearance of its body the priest sought to read the future. A fire was then kindled by focussing the sun’s rays with a mirror of polished metal upon a quantity of dried cotton, or when the sky was clouded over, by means of friction; but this was considered a bad omen. The sacred flame was entrusted to the care of the Virgins of the Sun, and if by any chance it went out it was considered to bode some great calamity to the nation. The festival ended with a great banquet to all the people, who were regaled upon the flesh of llamas, from the flocks of the Sun, while at the table of the Inca and his nobles were served fine cakes kneaded of maize flour by the Virgins of the Sun. These young maidens were chosen for their beauty from the families of the Curacas and inferior nobles, and brought up in the great convent-like establishments under the care of certain elderly matrons, who instructed them in their religious duties, and taught them to spin and embroider, and weave the vicuña wool for the temple hangings and for the use of the Inca. They were entirely cut off from their own people and from the world at large, only the Inca and the queen having the right to enter those sacred precincts. From them the brides of the Inca were chosen, for the law of the land allowed him to have as many wives as he pleased. They lived in his various palaces throughout the country, and at his death many of them sacrificed themselves willingly that they might accompany him into his new existence. In this wonderful monarchy each successive Inca seems to have been content with the policy of his father, to have carried out his schemes and continued his enterprises, so that the State moved steadily forward, as if under one hand, in its great career of civilisation and conquest.

PIZARRO’S EXPEDITION

This, then, was the country which Pizarro with a mere handful of followers had set out to discover and subdue. He had sailed at a most unfavourable time of year, for it was the rainy season, and the coast was swept by violent tempests. He steered first for the Puerto de Piñas, a headland which marked the limit of Andagoya’s voyage. Passing this, Pizarro sailed up a little river and came to anchor, and then landed with his whole force to explore the country; but after most toilful wanderings in dismal swamps and steaming forests they were forced to return exhausted and half-starved to their vessel, and proceed again on their voyage to the southward. Now they met with a succession of terrific storms, their frail ship leaked, and their stock of food and water was nearly gone, two ears of Indian corn a day being all that could be allowed to each man. In this strait they were glad to turn back and anchor once more a few leagues from their first halting-place. But they soon found that they had gained very little; neither bird nor beast was to be seen in the forest, and they could not live upon the few unwholesome berries which were all the woods afforded. Pizarro felt that to give up at this juncture would be utter ruin. So to pacify his complaining followers he sent an officer back in the ship to the Isle of Pearls, which was only a few leagues from Panamá, to lay in a fresh stock of provisions, while he himself with half the company made a further attempt to explore the country. For some time their efforts were vain; more than twenty men died from unwholesome food and the wretched climate, but at last they spied a distant opening in the woods, and Pizarro with a small party succeeded in reaching the clearing beyond it, where stood a small Indian village. The Spaniards rushed eagerly forward and seized upon such poor stores of food as the huts contained, while the astonished natives fled to the woods; but finding presently that no violence was offered to them they came back, and conversed with Pizarro as well as they could by signs. It was cheering to the adventurers to hear that these Indians also knew of a rich country lying to the southward, and to see that the large ornaments of clumsy workmanship which they wore were of gold. When after six weeks the ship returned, those on board were horrified at the wild and haggard faces of their comrades, so wasted were they by hunger and disease; but they soon revived, and, embarking once more, they joyfully left behind them the dismal scene of so much suffering, which they had named the Port of Famine. After a short run to the southward they again landed, and found another Indian settlement. The inhabitants fled, and the Spaniards secured a good store of maize and other food, and gold ornaments of considerable value; but they retreated to their ship in horror when they discovered human flesh roasting before a fire in one of the huts.

Once more they set sail, and encountered a furious storm, which so shattered their vessel that they were glad to gain the shore at the first possible landing-place. There they found a considerable town, the inhabitants of which were a warlike race who speedily attacked them. After some fighting the Spaniards were victorious, but they had lost two of their number, and many were wounded. It was necessary that the ship should be sent back to Panamá for repairs, but Pizarro did not consider that this place, which they had named Pueblo Quemado, would be a safe resting-place for those who were left behind; so he embarked again for Chicamá, and when he was settled there his treasurer started for Panamá with the gold that had been collected, and instructions to lay before Pedrarias, the governor, a full account of the expedition. Meanwhile Almagro had succeeded in equipping a small caravel, and started with about seventy men. He steered in the track of his comrade, and by a previously concerted signal of notches upon the trees he was able to recognise the places where Pizarro had landed. At Pueblo Quemado the Indians received him ill, though they did not venture beyond their palisades. This enraged Almagro, who stormed and took the place, driving the natives into the woods. He paid dearly for his victory, however, as a wound from a javelin deprived him of the sight of one eye. Pursuing his voyage, he discovered several new places upon the coast, and collected from them a considerable store of gold; but being anxious as to the fate of Pizarro, of whom he had lost all trace for some time, he turned back at the mouth of the San Juan River, and sailed straight to the Isle of Pearls. Here he gained tidings of his friend and proceeded at once to Chicamá, where the two commanders at length met, and each recounted his adventures.

After much consultation over what was next to be done, Pizarro decided to remain where he was while Almagro returned to Panamá for fresh supplies, and so ended the first expedition. But when Almagro reached Panamá he found the Governor anything but inclined to favour him and his schemes, and but for the influence of De Luque there would have been an end to their chance of discovering Peru. Fortunately, however, he was able to settle the difficulties with Pedrarias, who for about 2,500*l.* gave up all claim to any of the treasures they might discover, and ceased to oppose their plans. A memorable contract was then entered into by Father De Luque, Pizarro, and Almagro, by which the two last solemnly bound themselves to pursue the undertaking until it was accomplished, all the lands, gold, jewels, or treasures of any kind that they might secure to be divided between the three, in consideration of the funds which De Luque was to provide for the enterprise. Should they fail altogether, he was to be repaid with every morsel of property they might possess. This being arranged, two vessels were bought, larger and stronger than the ones with which they had started before, and a greater supply of stores put on board, and then a proclamation was made of ‘an expedition to Peru.’ But the citizens of Panamá showed no great readiness to join it, which was, perhaps, not surprising, seeing that of those who had volunteered before only three-fourths had returned, and those half-starved. However, in the end about one hundred and sixty men were mustered, with a few horses and a small supply of ammunition, of which there was probably very little to spare in the colony. The two captains, each in his own vessel, sailed once more, and this time having with them an experienced pilot named Ruiz, they stood boldly out to sea, steering direct for the San Juan River. This was reached without misadventure, and from the villages on its banks Pizarro secured a considerable store of gold and one or two natives. Much encouraged by this success, the two chiefs felt confident that if this rich spoil, so soon acquired, could be exhibited in Panamá it would draw many adventurers to their standard, as a larger number of men was absolutely necessary to cope with the thickening population of the country. Almagro therefore took the treasure and went back for reinforcements. Pizarro landed to seek for a place of encampment, while Ruiz, with the second ship, sailed southward.

Coasting along with fair winds he reached what is now called the Bay of St. Matthew, having seen by the way many densely-populated villages in a well-cultivated land. Here the people showed no signs of fear or hostility, but stood gazing upon the ship of the white men as it floated on the smooth waters of the bay, fancying it to be some mysterious being descended from the skies. Without waiting to undeceive them, Ruiz once more headed for the open sea, and was soon amazed to see what appeared to be a caravel of considerable size, advancing slowly, with one large sail hoisted. The old navigator was convinced that his was the first European vessel that had ever penetrated into these latitudes, and no Indian nation yet discovered was acquainted with the use of sails. But as he drew near he saw it was one of the huge rafts, called ‘balsas,’ made of logs and floored with reeds, with a clumsy rudder and movable keel of planks. Coming alongside, Ruiz found several Indians, themselves wearing rich ornaments, who were carrying articles of wrought gold and silver for traffic along the coast. But what attracted his attention even more was the woollen cloth of which their robes were made. It was of fine texture, dyed in brilliant colours, and embroidered with figures of birds and flowers. They also had a pair of balances for weighing the gold and silver — a thing unknown even in Mexico.

From these Indians he learned that two of their number came from Tumbez, a Peruvian port further to the south; that their fields were full of large flocks of the animals from which the wool was obtained; and that in the palaces of their king gold and silver were as common as wood. Ruiz only half believed their report, but he took several of them on board to repeat the tale to his commander, and also to learn Castilian, that they might serve as interpreters. Without touching at any other port, Ruiz then sailed southward as far as Punta de Pasado, being the first European who, sailing in this direction, had crossed the equinoctial line, after which he returned to the place where he had left Pizarro.

He did not reach it too soon. The little band had met with nothing but disaster. Instead of being able to reach the open country of which they had heard, they had been lost in dense forests of gigantic tropical vegetation. Hill rose behind hill, barring their progress, alternating with ravines of frightful depth. Monkeys chattered above their heads, hideous snakes and alligators infested the swamps. Many of the Spaniards were miserably killed by them, while others were waylaid by lurking natives, who on one occasion cut off fourteen men whose canoe had unhappily stranded on the bank of a stream. Their provisions gave out, and they could barely sustain life on the few cocoa-nuts or wild potatoes they found. On the shore life was even less tolerable, for the swarms of mosquitoes compelled the wretched wanderers to bury themselves up to their very faces in the sand. Worn-out with suffering, their one wish was to return to Panamá. This was far from being the desire of Pizarro, and luckily for him at this crisis Ruiz returned, and very soon after Almagro sailed into port with a fresh supply of provisions and a band of eighty military adventurers, who had but lately come to Panamá, and were burning to make their fortunes in the New World. The enthusiasm of these new recruits, and the relief of their own immediate miseries, speedily revived the spirits of Pizarro’s men, and they eagerly called upon their commander to go forward; but the season of favouring winds was past, and it was only after many days of battling with fearful storms and contrary currents that they reached the Bay of St. Matthew, and anchored opposite the port of Tacamez. This was a large town, swarming with people who wore many ornaments of gold and jewels, for they belonged to the recently annexed province of Quito, and had not yet been forced to reserve all such things for the Inca, as the Peruvians did. Moreover, this part of the country was specially rich in gold, and through it flowed the River of Emeralds, so called from the quarries on its banks, from which quantities of those gems were dug. The Spaniards longed to possess themselves of all these treasures, but the natives were too numerous, and showed no fear of the white men. On the contrary, they were quite ready to attack them; and Pizarro, who had landed with some of his followers in the hope of a conference with the chiefs, found himself surrounded by at least ten thousand men, and would have fared but ill had not one of the cavaliers chanced to fall from his horse. This sudden division into two parts of what they had looked upon as one creature so astonished the Indians that they fell back, and left a way open for the Spaniards to regain their vessels. Here a council of war was held, and once again Almagro proposed to go back for more men while Pizarro waited in some safe spot. But the latter commander had grown rather weary of the part always assigned to him, and replied that it was all very well for Almagro, who passed his time sailing pleasantly to and fro, or living in plenty at Panamá, but that for those who remained behind to starve in a poisonous climate it was quite another matter. Almagro retorted angrily that he was quite willing to be the one to stay if Pizarro declined, and the quarrel would soon have become serious had not Ruiz interposed. Almagro's plan was adopted, and the little island of Gallo, which they had lately passed, was chosen as Pizarro's headquarters.

This decision caused great discontent among the men, who complained that they were being dragged to this obscure spot to die of hunger, and many of them wrote to their friends bewailing their deplorable condition, but Almagro did his best to seize all these letters, and only one escaped him. This was concealed in a ball of cotton sent as a present to the wife of the Governor; it was signed by several of the soldiers, and begged that a ship might be sent to rescue them from this dismal place before they all perished, and it warned others from joining the expedition. This letter fell into the Governor's hands, and caused great dismay in Panamá. Almagro's men looked sufficiently haggard and dejected to make it generally believed that the few ill-fated survivors were being detained against their will by Pizarro, to end their days on his desolate island. The Governor was so enraged at the number of lives which this unsuccessful expedition had cost the colony, that he utterly refused the applications of Almagro and De Luque for further help, and sent off two ships, under a cavalier named Tafur, to bring back every Spaniard from Gallo.

Meanwhile Pizarro and his men were suffering great misery from the inclement weather, for the rainy season had set in, and for lack of proper food, such crabs and shell-fish as they could pick up along the shore being all that they had. Therefore the arrival of Tafur with two well-provisioned ships was greeted with rapture, and the only thought of the soldiers was to embark as soon as possible, and leave for ever that dismal island. But the ships had brought letters from Almagro and De Luque to Pizarro, imploring him to hold fast to his original purpose, and solemnly promising to send him the means for going forward in a short time.

THE CHOICE OF PIZARRO

For Pizarro a very little hope was enough, but knowing that he could probably influence such of his followers as he cared to retain more by example than by word, he merely announced his own purpose in the briefest way possible. Drawing his sword, he traced a line upon the sand from east to west.

‘Friends and comrades,’ said he, turning to the south, ‘on this side are toil, hunger, the drenching storm, desertion, and death; on that side ease and pleasure. There lies Peru with its riches, here Panamá and its poverty. Choose each man what best becomes a brave Castilian. For my part I go to the south.’

So saying he stepped across the line, followed by Ruiz, Pedro de Candia, and eleven others, and Tafur, after vainly trying to persuade them to return, reluctantly departed, leaving them part of his store of provisions. Ruiz sailed with him to help Almagro and De Luque in their preparations. Not long after Pizarro and his men constructed a raft, and transported themselves to an island which lay further north. It was uninhabited, and being partly covered with wood afforded more shelter. There was also plenty of good water, and pheasants and a species of hare were fairly numerous. The rain fell incessantly, and the Spaniards built rude huts to keep themselves dry, but from the swarms of venomous insects they could find no protection. Pizarro did all he could to keep up the spirits of his men in this dreary place. Morning prayers were duly said, the evening hymn chanted, the Church festivals carefully observed, and, above all, a keen look-out was kept across the ocean for the expected sail; but seven months had passed before one small vessel appeared. The Governor had at last allowed De Luque and Almagro to fit out this ship; but she carried no more men than were needed to work her, and Pizarro was commanded to report himself in Panamá within six months, whatever might be happening.

Taking with him his faithful followers and the natives of Tumbez, Pizarro speedily embarked, and under the guidance of Ruiz sailed to the south for twenty days, and reached at length the Gulf of Guayaquil. Here the voyagers were abreast of some of the grandest heights of the Cordilleras. Far above them in the still air rose the snowy crests of Cotopaxi and Chimborazo, while only a narrow strip of green and fertile land lay between the mountains and the sea. Tumbez proved to be a large town, and the inhabitants received the Spaniards well, supplying them plentifully with fruit and vegetables, game and fish, and sending on board their ship a number of llamas, which Pizarro then saw for the first time.

The ‘little camel,’ as the Spaniards called it, was an object of much interest to them, and they greatly admired its mixture of wool and hair, from which the beautiful native fabrics were woven. The Indians were much astonished to find two of their own countrymen on board the strange vessel, but through their favourable report of the harmless intentions of the Spaniards, and by their help as interpreters, Pizarro was able to collect much valuable information. At that time there happened to be an Inca noble in Tumbez, distinguished by his rich dress, the huge gold ornaments in his ears, and the deference paid him by the citizens. Pizarro received him on board his ship, showing him everything, and answering his numerous questions as well as he could. He also took the opportunity of asserting the lawful supremacy of the King of Spain over the empire of Peru, and of expounding some of the doctrines of his own religion, to all of which the chief listened in silence. Several parties of the Spaniards landed at different times, and came back with wondrous tales of all they had seen: the temples blazing with silver and gold, and the convent of the Virgins of the Sun, the gardens of which glowed with imitations of fruits and flowers in the same metals. The natives greatly admired one of the Spaniards, a man named Alonso de Molina, who was of fair complexion and wore a long beard. They even invited him to settle among them, promising him a beautiful wife; and on his homeward voyage Pizarro actually left him there, with one or two others, thinking that at some future time it might be useful to him that some of his own men should understand the Indian language. In return he took on board his ship several of the Peruvians, and one of them, named by the Spaniards Felipillo, played an important part in after-events.

Having now learnt all he could, Pizarro pursued his voyage, touching at all the principal points as he coasted along, and being everywhere received by the people with kindness and much curiosity, for the news of the coming of the white men spread rapidly, and all were eager to see the ‘Children of the Sun,’ as they began to be called from their fair complexions, their shining armour, and their firearms, which were looked upon as thunderbolts.

Having gone as far south as the port of Santa, and having heard enough to make the existence and position of the empire of Peru an absolute certainty, Pizarro turned and sailed to the northward, landing once or twice by the way, and being hospitably entertained by an Indian princess, and after an absence of more than eighteen months anchored again off Panamá. Great was the joy caused by their arrival, for all supposed them to have perished; yet even now, in spite of all they had discovered, the Governor refused his aid, and the confederates, being by this time without funds, had no alternative but to apply directly to the King of Spain. The mission was entrusted to Pizarro, who set out in the spring of 1528, taking with him some of the natives, two or three llamas, and specimens of the cloth and of the gold and silver ornaments, to attest the truth of his wonderful story.

PIZARRO GOES TO SPAIN AND RETURNS

It would take too long to tell how Pizarro fared in his native country, but the matter ended in the King’s being convinced of the importance of his discoveries, and bestowing many honours and rewards upon him. He was also empowered to conquer and take possession of Peru, and expressly enjoined to preserve the existing regulations for the government and protection of the Indians, and to take with him many priests to convert them. All being settled to Pizarro’s satisfaction, he found time to revisit his own town, where, his fortunes having somewhat mended since he turned his back upon it, he found friends and eager followers, and among these his own four half-brothers, Hernando, Gonzalo, and Juan Pizarro, and Francisco de Alcántara. It was not without many difficulties that Francisco Pizarro got together the two hundred and fifty men he had agreed to raise, and escaped from the delays and intrigues of the Spanish Court; but it was done at last, and the adventurers in three vessels started from Seville, and after a prosperous voyage reached Nombre de Dios, and there met De Luque and Almagro. Disagreements speedily arose, for the latter naturally felt aggrieved that Pizarro should have secured for himself such an unfair share of the riches and honours as the King had bestowed on him without putting forward the claims of his comrade, and matters were made worse by the insolent way in which Hernando Pizarro treated the old soldier, whom he looked upon as an obstacle in the path of his brother. Matters got to such a pass that Almagro was actually preparing ships to prosecute the expedition on his own account, but De Luque at last succeeded in reconciling the two commanders — at least for the moment — and the united band started for the third time. Though the number of men in the three ships did not exceed one hundred and eighty, yet they had twenty-seven horses, and were now much better provided with arms and ammunition. Pizarro’s intention was to steer for Tumbez, but the wind being contrary he anchored instead in the Bay of St. Matthew, where the troops disembarked and advanced along the coast, while the vessels proceeded in the same direction, keeping as close inshore as possible. When Pizarro and his men reached a town of some importance they rushed in upon it sword in hand, and the inhabitants, without offering any resistance, fled to the woods, leaving the invaders to rifle their dwellings, from which they collected an unexpectedly large store of gold, silver, and emeralds, some of the stones being of great size. Pizarro sent the treasure back to Panamá in the ships, and continued his march, his soldiers suffering terribly in crossing the sandy wastes under the burning sun, which beat upon their iron mail or quilted cotton doublets till they were nearly suffocated. Here, too, they were attacked by a dreadful disease, terrible warts of great size breaking out upon them, of which several died. This plague, which was quite unknown before, attacked the natives also, spreading over the whole country. Everywhere as they advanced the Indians fled before them; the land was poor, and the Spaniards began to grumble and wish to retreat; but at this juncture one of the ships appeared, and the march along the coast was continued. Reaching the Gulf of Guayaquil, Pizarro persuaded the friendly natives of Tumbez to transport himself and his men to the island of Puná, where he encamped for the rainy season; but the islanders resented the presence of their enemies the men of Tumbez, a suspicion of treachery arose, and Pizarro allowed ten or twelve prisoners, men of Puná, to be massacred. Then the whole tribe fell upon the Spaniards and there was a great battle, in which the white men were victorious; but after this their position was a most uncomfortable one, the enemy being ever on the watch to cut off stragglers and destroy provisions, besides making night attacks upon the camp. Fortunately the other two ships came back at this juncture, bringing a hundred volunteers and some more horses, and with them Pizarro felt strong enough to cross to the mainland and resume his march. He had lately learned something of the state of affairs in the country, which he thought he might be able to turn to his own advantage. It seemed that the Inca Huayna Capac, who conquered Quito, had left three sons — Huascar the heir, the son of the Queen, Manco Capac his half-brother, and Atahuallpa, son of the Princess of Quito, who had been married to Huayna Capac after the conquest. To Atahuallpa the Inca at his death left the kingdom of Quito, enjoining him to live at peace with his brother Huascar, who succeeded to the empire of Peru. This happened about seven years before Pizarro reached Puná. For five years the brothers ruled their respective kingdoms without dispute. Huascar was of a gentle and peaceable disposition, but Atahuallpa was warlike, ambitious, and daring, and constantly endeavouring to enlarge his territory. His restless spirit at length excited alarm at Cuzco, and Huascar sent to remonstrate with him, and to require him to render homage for the kingdom of Quito. This at once provoked hostilities. A great battle took place at Ambato, in which Atahuallpa was victorious, and he marched on in the direction of Cuzco, carrying all before him, and only experiencing a slight check from the islanders of Puná. After more desperate encounters, in one of which Huascar was taken prisoner, Atahuallpa possessed himself of Cuzco, and, assuming the diadem of the Incas, received the homage of the whole country.

But his triumph was not to be for long.

We left Pizarro preparing to leave Puná and cross to Tumbez. His surprise when he did so was great, for he found only the ruins of what had been a flourishing town; moreover, some of his men were treacherously attacked by the natives, whom he had supposed to be quite friendly to him. The Spaniards were much disappointed, as they had looked forward confidently to securing the golden treasures of Tumbez of which they had heard so much; nor could Pizarro believe the explanation of this state of affairs given by the Curaca, who was caught lurking in the woods. However, it was his policy to remain friendly with the natives if possible, so no further notice was taken. No true account could be gathered of the fate of the two men who had been left there from the last expedition, though it was evident that both had perished. An Indian gave Pizarro a scroll left by one of them, upon which was written: ‘Know, whoever you may be that may chance to set foot in this country, that it contains more silver and gold than there is iron in Biscay.’ But when this was shown to the soldiers they only thought it was a device of their captain to give them fresh hope. Pizarro, seeing that nothing but incessant activity could keep down the rising spirit of discontent, now spent some weeks in exploring the country, and finally assembling all his men at a spot some thirty leagues south of Tumbez, he built there a considerable town, which he named San Miguel. The site afterwards proved to be unhealthy, and was abandoned for another on the banks of the river Piura, where a town still stands. Presently the news reached San Miguel that Atahuallpa was encamped within twelve days’ journey, and Pizarro after much consideration resolved to present himself in his camp, trusting doubtless that when he got there circumstances would arise which he could turn to his own advantage.

PIZARRO MARCHES TO MEET THE INCA

Placing himself at the head of his troops, he struck boldly into the heart of the country, received everywhere by the natives with confiding hospitality. The Spaniards were careful to give no offence, being aware that their best chance of success lay in conciliating the people by whom they were surrounded. After five days’ marching, Pizarro halted in a pleasant valley to rest his company, and finding that some few among them showed discontent and were unwilling to proceed, he called them all together, and told them that they had now reached a crisis which it would require all their courage to meet, and no man should go forward who had any misgivings as to the success of the expedition. He added that the garrison left in San Miguel was by no means as strong as he would like it to be, and that if any of them wished to return there instead of going forward with him they were quite free to do so, and their share in the profits of the expedition should be just the same as that of the men originally left there. Nine of the soldiers availed themselves of this permission to turn back, and having thus got rid of the elements of discontent, which might have become dangerous, Pizarro resumed his march, halting again at Zaran while he sent an officer forward to obtain more certain tidings of the position of Atahuallpa. After eight days the cavalier returned, bringing with him an envoy from the Inca, who bore a present for the Spanish commander, and invited him to visit Atahuallpa’s camp among the mountains. Pizarro quite understood that the Inca’s object was to learn the strength and condition of the white men, but he hospitably entertained his guest, giving him all the information he demanded by means of the two interpreters, who had by his forethought been taught Castilian, and were now of inestimable service. When the Peruvian departed, Pizarro presented him with a few trifling gifts, and bade him tell Atahuallpa that he would meet him as soon as possible. After sending an account of their proceedings back to San Miguel the adventurers continued their journey towards Caxamalca, and having crossed a deep and rapid river, fell in with some natives, who gave such contrary reports of Atahuallpa’s position and intentions that Pizarro sent one of the Indians who accompanied him ostensibly to bear a friendly greeting to the Inca, but really to find out all he could of the state of affairs.

After a further march of three days the little army reached the foot of the huge mountain barrier, and entered upon the labyrinth of passes which were to lead them to Atahuallpa’s camp. The difficulties of the way were enough to have appalled the stoutest heart. The path was in many places so steep that the men had to dismount and scramble up as best they could, dragging their horses after them; often some huge crag so overhung the track that they could scarcely creep round the narrow ledge of rock, while a false step would have plunged them into a fearful precipice. In several of the passes huge stone fortresses had been built, and places abounded where a handful of men might have barred the way successfully against an army, but to the relief of the Spaniards they found all quiet and deserted, the only living things visible being an occasional condor or vicuña. Finding that their passage was not to be disputed, Pizarro, who had led the way with one detachment, encamped for the night, sending word back to his brother to bring up the remainder of the force without delay. Another toilful day brought him to the crest of the Cordillera, a bleak tract where the only vegetation was a dry, yellow grass which grew up to the snow-line. Here he was met by one of his Indian messengers, who reported that the path was clear, and an envoy from the Inca was on his way to the Castilian camp. Very soon the Peruvians appeared, bringing a welcome present of llamas and a message from their master, who desired to know when the Spaniards would reach Caxamalca, that he might provide suitably for their reception. The ambassador vaunted the power and the triumphs of Atahuallpa; but Pizarro was not to be outdone, and did not hesitate to declare that the Inca was as much inferior to the King of Spain as the petty chiefs of the country were to the Inca. After another march of two days the Spaniards began the descent of the eastern side of the Cordillera, meeting by the way another and more important envoy, and seven days later the valley of Caxamalca lay before them, the vapour of its hot springs rising in the still air, and the slope of the further hillside white with the tents of the Inca’s encampment for a space of several miles — a sight which filled the Spaniards with a dismay they could hardly conceal. Putting on a bold front they marched into the town, which was quite deserted, but seemed large enough to hold ten thousand people, and then Pizarro despatched an embassy consisting of his brother Hernando, another cavalier, and thirty-five horsemen, to the camp of Atahuallpa. The party galloped along the causeway, and, fording a shallow stream, made their way through a guard of Indians to the open courtyard in the midst of which the Inca’s pavilion stood. The buildings were covered with a shining plaster, both white and coloured, and there was a spacious stone reservoir in the courtyard, which remains to this day, and is called ‘The Inca’s Bath.’ The Court was filled with Indian nobles, and Atahuallpa himself sat upon a low stool, distinguished from the rest by the crimson fringe upon his forehead, which he had worn since the defeat of his brother Huascar. Hernando Pizarro rode up to him and, addressing him ceremoniously, informed him by the aid of

Felipillo that he came as an ambassador from his brother to acquaint the Inca with the arrival of the white men in Caxamalca, and to explain that they were the subjects of a mighty prince across the waters, who, attracted by the report of his great victories, had come to offer their services, and to impart to him the doctrines of the true faith which they professed, and he brought an invitation from the general to beg Atahuallpa to visit them in their present quarters. To all this the Inca listened with his eyes fixed upon the ground, and answered never a word, but one of the nobles standing by said, ‘It is well.’ Hernando Pizarro then respectfully begged the Inca to speak to them himself and inform them of his pleasure, upon which Atahuallpa smiled faintly and replied: ‘Tell your captain that I am keeping a fast, which will end to-morrow morning; I will then visit him. In the meantime let him occupy the public buildings on the square, and no other, till I come and order what shall be done.’

PIZARRO AND THE INCA

One of the cavaliers who was mounted upon a fiery steed, seeing that Atahuallpa looked at it with some interest, caused it to rear and curvet, and then dashed out over the plain in a wild gallop, and returning checked it in full career close beside the Inca. But the face of Atahuallpa never for an instant lost its marble composure, though several of his soldiers shrank back in manifest terror as the strange creature passed them; and it is said that they paid dearly for their timidity, as Atahuallpa caused them to be put to death for thus showing fear in the presence of the strangers. Wine was now brought, and offered to the Spaniards in golden goblets of extraordinary size, and then they took their leave and rode gloomily back to Caxamalca. Pizarro alone was not discouraged by the news they brought. He saw that matters had now come to a climax, and determined upon making a bold stroke. To encounter the Inca in the open field was manifestly impossible, but could his person be secured when he entered the city with comparatively few of his followers the rest might be intimidated, and all might yet be well. To this end, therefore, he laid his plans. The building in which the Spaniards were encamped occupied three sides of a square, and consisted of spacious halls opening upon it with wide doors. In these halls the general stationed his men, and there they were to remain under cover till the Inca should have entered the square, when at a given signal, the firing of a gun, they were to rush out uttering their battle-cries, and, putting the Peruvians to the sword, possess themselves of the person of Atahuallpa. After a quiet night and a careful inspection of their arms and equipments, the Spaniards took up their respective positions, but it was late in the day before a great stir was visible in the Peruvian camp. The Inca sent word to Pizarro that he was coming armed, as the Spaniards had come to him. To which the general replied that, come as he might, he would be received as a friend and a brother. At last the procession was seen approaching. First came a large body of attendants, sweeping every particle of rubbish from the road. Then high above the crowd the Inca appeared, carried in a gorgeous litter and surrounded by his nobles, who wore such quantities of golden ornaments that they blazed like the sun. The road was lined with Peruvian troops, who also covered the level meadows as far as the eye could reach. When the company had arrived within half a mile of the city gate Pizarro observed with dismay that they halted, and seemed to be preparing to encamp, and word was brought him that the Inca would enter the city on the following morning. This was far from suiting the general’s plans; his men had been under arms since daylight, and to prolong the suspense at this critical moment would he felt be fatal. He returned an answer, therefore, to Atahuallpa, deprecating his change of purpose, and saying that everything was provided for his entertainment and he expected him that night to sup with him. This message turned the Inca from his purpose, his tents were struck again, and the procession re-formed. Only he sent Pizarro word that he should prefer to pass the night at Caxamalca, and so would bring into the town with him only a few unarmed men. It was near sunset when the Peruvians, chanting their triumphant songs, entered the city gate. According to their different ranks their robes were of various colours, some chequered in white and red, some pure white, while the guards and attendants of the Inca were distinguished by their gay blue uniform and the profusion of their ornaments. Atahuallpa sat in an open litter, lined with the brilliantly coloured plumes of tropical birds and studded with burnished plates of gold and silver. His dress was far richer than on the preceding evening; round his neck hung a collar of large and brilliant emeralds, and his short hair was decorated with golden ornaments. He was at this time about thirty years old, and was taller and stronger than most of his countrymen. His head was large, and he might have been called handsome but for his fierce and bloodshot eyes. His bearing was calm and dignified, and he gazed upon the multitudes about him like one accustomed to command. Not a Spaniard was to be seen as the procession, in admirable order, entered the great square of the building that had been assigned to them, and when the place was occupied by some six thousand of his people Atahuallpa halted, and asked, ‘Where are the strangers?’ Upon this Father Valverde, Pizarro’s chaplain, came forward Bible in hand, and proceeded to expound to him the doctrines of his faith, declaring finally that the Pope had commissioned the Spanish Emperor to conquer and convert the inhabitants of the western world, and beseeching the Inca to embrace the Christian faith and acknowledge himself a tributary of the Emperor Charles, who would aid and protect him as a loyal vassal. The eyes of Atahuallpa flashed fire as he answered: ‘I will be no man’s tributary; I am greater than any prince upon earth. Your Emperor may be a great prince. I do not doubt it when I see that he has sent his subjects so far across the waters, and I am willing to hold him as a brother. As for the Pope of whom you speak, he must be crazy to talk of giving away countries which do not belong to him. For my faith, I will not change it. Your own God, you say, was put to death by the very men whom he created, but mine’ — and here he pointed to the setting sun— ‘my god still lives in the heavens and looks down upon his children.’ He then demanded of Valverde by what authority he had said these things. The friar pointed to the book he held. Atahuallpa took it, looked at it for an instant, and then threw it violently down, exclaiming: ‘Tell your comrades they shall give an account of their doings in my land. I will not go from here till they have made me full satisfaction for all the wrongs they have committed.’

The friar thereupon rushed to Pizarro crying: ‘Do you not see that while we stand here wasting our breath in talking with this dog — full of pride as he is — the fields are filling with Indians? Set on at once; I absolve you.’

Pizarro saw that the hour had come. He waved a white scarf, the fatal gun was fired, and from every opening the Spaniards poured into the great square, sword in hand, shouting their old battle-cry, ‘St. Jago, and at them!’ The Indians, unarmed, taken by surprise, stunned by the noise of the artillery, and blinded with smoke, knew not which way to fly. Nobles and soldiers were ruthlessly cut down, or trampled underfoot by the horses, the entrance to the square was choked with the fallen bodies of men, but the desperate struggles of the masses of natives driven together by their fierce assailants actually broke down the wall of clay and stone for a space of a hundred paces, through which the wretched fugitives endeavoured to reach the open country, hotly pursued by the cavalry and struck down in all directions.

THE CAPTIVITY OF THE INCA

Meanwhile, a desperate struggle was going on for the person of the Inca. His nobles surrounded and faithfully strove to defend him; as fast as one was cut down another took his place, and with their dying grasp they clung to the bridles of the cavaliers, trying to force them back. Atahuallpa sat as one stunned in his swaying litter, forced this way and that by the pressure of the throng. The Spaniards grew tired at last of the work of destruction, and, fearing that in the gathering darkness the Inca might after all escape them, they made an attempt to end the fray at once by taking his life. But Pizarro, seeing this, cried out in a mighty voice, ‘Let no man who values his life strike at the Inca,’ and, stretching out his arm to shield him, received a wound on the hand from one of his own men — the only wound received by any Spaniard in the action. The strife now became fiercer round the litter, and several of the nobles who bore it having been slain, it was overturned, and the Inca would have come violently to the ground had not Pizarro and some of his men caught him in their arms. A soldier instantly snatched the crimson fringe from his forehead, and the unhappy monarch was taken into the nearest building and carefully guarded. All attempt at resistance now ceased. The news of the Inca’s fate spread over town and country, and the only thing which had held them together being gone, each man thought only of his own safety. The Spaniards pursued the fugitives till night fell and the sound of the trumpet recalled them to the square of Caxamalca. That night the Inca supped with Pizarro as he had said, while ten thousand of his faithful followers lay dead about the city.

He seemed like one in a dream, not understanding the calamity that had fallen upon him. He even commended the adroit way in which the Spaniards had entrapped him, adding that since the landing of the white men he had been made aware of all their doings, but had felt sure of being easily able to overpower them as soon as he thought fit to do so, and had allowed them to reach Caxamalca unmolested because he desired to see them for himself, and to obtain possession of their arms and horses. This, at least, was the interpretation of what the Inca said given by Felipillo; but he was a malicious youth, who bore Atahuallpa no good will, and the Spaniards were only too ready to believe anything that seemed to justify their cruel deeds. Pizarro replied that the fate of the Inca was the lot that fell to all who resisted the white men, but he bade Atahuallpa take courage, for the Spaniards were a generous race, warring only against those who would not submit themselves. That same night the general reviewed his men, congratulating them upon the success of their stratagem, but warning them to be strictly upon their guard, since they were but a handful of strangers in the heart of a mighty kingdom, encompassed by foes who were deeply attached to their own sovereign. Next morning, the prisoners, of whom there were many in the camp, were employed in burying the dead and removing all traces of the massacre, while a troop of Spaniards was despatched to spoil the camp of Atahuallpa and scatter the remnant of the Peruvian forces. At noon this party returned, bringing the wives and attendants of the Inca, and a rich booty in gold, silver, emeralds, and other treasures, beside droves of llamas.

Pizarro would now have liked to march directly upon the capital, but the distance was great and his force was small. So after sending a message to San Miguel for reinforcements, he set his men to work at rebuilding the walls of Caxamalca, and fitting up a church, in which mass was celebrated daily. Atahuallpa soon discovered that gold was what the Spaniards chiefly coveted, and he determined to try and buy his freedom, for he greatly feared that Huascar might win back his liberty and his kingdom if the news once reached him of his brother’s captivity. So he one day promised Pizarro to fill with gold the room in which they stood, not merely covering the floor, but piling it up to a line drawn round the walls as high as he could reach, if he would in return set him free. The general hardly knew how to answer. All he had seen confirmed the rumours of the wealth of the country, and if it could be collected thus by the Inca’s order, he might really hope to secure it, whereas if he trusted to being able to seize it for himself the chances were that most of it would disappear for ever, hidden by the natives beyond recovery. At all events he decided it would be safe to agree to Atahuallpa’s proposal; when the gold was collected it would be time enough to think about setting the captive at liberty. The room to be filled was seventeen feet broad by twenty-two feet long, and the line upon the wall was drawn nine feet from the ground. A smaller room which adjoined it the Inca offered to fill with silver twice over, and he demanded two months’ time to accomplish all this.

As soon as the arrangement was made, Atahuallpa sent couriers to Cuzco and all the other chief places in the kingdom, with orders to strip the royal palaces of their treasures and send them without delay to Caxamalca. Meanwhile he lived in the Spanish quarters, treated with consideration, and allowed to see his subjects freely, but at the same time strictly guarded.

THE INCA'S RANSOM

The news of Atahuallpa's capture and the immense ransom he had offered soon reached the ears of Huascar, who was encouraged by the tidings to make vigorous efforts to regain his own liberty, and sent a message to the Spanish commander saying that he would pay a much larger ransom than that promised by Atahuallpa, who, never having lived in Cuzco, could not know the quantity of treasure there, or where it was stored. This was told to Atahuallpa, who also knew that Pizarro had said that Huascar should be brought to Caxamalca, that he himself might determine which of the two brothers had the better right to the sceptre of the Incas. Furiously jealous, and fearing that the decision would surely be in favour of the more docile Huascar, Atahuallpa ordered secretly that he should be put to death by his guards, and he was accordingly drowned in the river of Andamarca, declaring with his dying breath that the white men would avenge his murder, and that his rival would not long survive him. Week by week the treasure poured in from all quarters of the realm, borne on the shoulders of the Indian porters, and consisting mainly of massive pieces of plate, some of them weighing seventy-five pounds; but as the distances were great, and the progress necessarily slow, the Spaniards became impatient, and believed, or pretended to believe, that the Inca was planning some treachery, and wilfully delaying till he could arrange a general rising of the Peruvians against the white men. This charge the Inca indignantly denied, and to prove his good faith offered to give a safe-conduct to a party of Spaniards, that they might visit Cuzco for themselves and see that the work of collecting the treasure was really going on. Pizarro gladly accepted this offer, and three cavaliers started for the capital. Meanwhile, Hernando Pizarro with a small troop had set out to make sure that the country round was really quiet, and, finding that it was, he continued his march to the town of Pachacamac, to secure the treasures of its famous temple before they could be hidden by its priests. The city was a hundred leagues from Caxamalca, and the way lay across the tableland of the Cordilleras; but after weeks of severe labour the Spaniards reached it, and, breaking into the temple, in spite of the remonstrances of the priests, they dragged forth and destroyed the hideous idol it contained, and secured the greater part of the treasure of gold and jewels, though the priests, having had warning of his approach, had managed to conceal a good deal, some of which the Spaniards afterwards discovered buried in the surrounding land. The people, seeing that their god was unable to defend himself against the wonderful strangers, now came and tendered their homage, and Hernando Pizarro, hearing that one of the Inca’s two great generals, a chief named Challcuchima, was lying with a considerable force in the town of Xanxa, resolved to march there and attack him in his own quarters. The road across the mountains was even rougher and more difficult than the one by which he had come, and, to add to his troubles, the shoes of the horses were all worn out, and they suffered severely on the rough and stony ground. Iron there was none, but silver and gold abounded, so Pizarro ordered the Indian smiths to make horseshoes of silver, with which the horses of the troop were shod. On reaching Xanxa the Spaniards found it a large and populous place, and the Indian general with five-and-thirty thousand men was encamped at a distance of a few miles; but, nothing daunted, Hernando Pizarro sent messages to him, and when he at last consented to an interview, informed him that the Inca demanded his presence in Caxamalca. Having been utterly bewildered since the capture of the Inca, and uncertain as to what course to take, Challcuchima obeyed at once, and accompanied by a numerous retinue journeyed back with the Spaniards. He was everywhere received by the natives with the deepest respect, yet he entered the presence of the Inca barefooted and with a burden laid upon his back, and kneeling before his master he kissed his hands and feet, exclaiming, ‘Would that I had been here! This would not then have happened.’

Atahuallpa himself showed no emotion, only coldly bade him welcome: even in his present state of captivity he was immeasurably above the proudest of his vassals. The Spaniards still treated him with all respect, and with his own people he kept up his usual state and ceremony, being attended upon by his wives, while a number of Indian nobles waited always in the antechamber, but never entered his presence unless sent for, and then only with every mark of humility. His dress, which he often changed, was sometimes made of vicuña wool, sometimes of bats’ skins, sleek as velvet. Nothing which he had worn could be used by another; when he laid it aside it was burned. To while away the time the Spaniards taught him to play chess, at which he became expert, spending upon it many of the tedious hours of his imprisonment. Soon after the return of Hernando Pizarro the three cavaliers came back from Cuzco. They had travelled six hundred miles in the greatest luxury, carried in litters by the natives, and received everywhere with awe and respect. Their accounts of the wealth of the capital confirmed all that Pizarro had heard, and though they had stayed a week there, they had not seen all. They had seen the royal mummies in their golden chairs, and had left them untouched by the Inca’s orders; but they had caused the plates of pure gold to be stripped from the Temple of the Sun — seven hundred of them, compared in size to the lid of a chest ten or twelve inches wide. The cornice was so firmly embedded in the stonework that it defied their efforts to remove it. But they brought with them full two hundred loads of gold, beside much silver, all hastily collected, for the arrogant behaviour of the emissaries had greatly exasperated the people of Cuzco, who were glad to get rid of them as soon as possible. About this time Almagro reached San Miguel, having, after many difficulties, succeeded in collecting a few more adventurers, and heard with amazement of Pizarro's successes and of the change in his fortunes. In spite of the feelings of rivalry and distrust that existed between himself and his old comrade, Pizarro was delighted to hear of his arrival, as the additional troops he brought with him made it possible to go forward with the conquest of the country. So when Almagro reached Caxamalca in the middle of February 1533, he and his men were received with every mark of joy. Only Atahuallpa looked on sadly, seeing the chances of regaining his freedom, or maintaining it if he did regain it, lessened by the increased number of his enemies, and to add to his dejection a comet just then made its appearance in the heavens. As one had been seen shortly before the death of the Inca's father, Huayna Capac, he looked upon it as a warning of evil to come, and a dread of the future took possession of him.

The Spaniards now began to clamour for a division of the gold which had been already collected: several of them were disposed to return home with the share that would fall to them, but by far the greater number only wished to make sure of the spoil and then hurry on to Cuzco, where they believed as much more awaited them. For various reasons Pizarro agreed to their demands; the gold — all but a few particularly beautiful specimens of the Indian goldsmith's work, which were sent to Castile as part of the royal fifth — was melted down into solid bars, and when weighed was found to be worth nearly three and a half millions of pounds sterling. This was divided amongst Pizarro and his men, the followers of Almagro not being considered to be entitled to a share, though a small sum was handed over to them to induce them to give up their claim. The division being completed, there seemed to be no further obstacle to their resuming active operations; but then the question arose what was to become of Atahuallpa, who was loudly demanding his freedom. He had not, indeed, paid the whole of his promised ransom; but an immense amount had been received, and it would have been more, as he urged, but for the impatience of the Spaniards. Pizarro, telling no one of the dark purposes he was brooding over in his own mind, issued a proclamation to the effect that the ransom was considered to be completely paid, but that the safety of the Spaniards required that the Inca should be held captive until they were still further reinforced. Soon rumours began to be spread, probably by Felipillo, who hated the Inca, that an immense army was mustering at Quito, and that thirty thousand Caribs, of whom the

Spaniards had a peculiar horror, were on their way to join it. Both Atahuallpa and his general Challcuchima denied all knowledge of any rising, but their protestations of innocence did them little good. The soldiers clamoured against the unhappy Inca, and Pizarro, taking advantage of the temporary absence of some of the cavaliers who would have defended him, ordered him to be brought to instant trial. The evidence of Indian witnesses, as interpreted by Felipillo, sealed his doom, and in spite of the efforts of a few Spaniards he was found guilty by the majority on the charge, among other things, of having assassinated his brother Huascar and raised up insurrection against the Spaniards, and was sentenced to be burnt alive. When Atahuallpa was told of his approaching fate his courage gave way for a moment. ‘What have I or my children done,’ he said to Pizarro, ‘that I should meet such a doom? And from your hands, too! — you who have met with nothing but friendship and kindness from my people, with whom I have shared my treasures, who have received nothing but benefits from my hands.’ Then in most piteous tones he begged that his life might be spared, offering to answer for the safety of every Spaniard, and promising to pay double the ransom he had already given. But it was all of no avail. He was not, however, burnt to death; for at the last moment, on his consenting to abjure his own religion and be baptized, he was executed in the usual Spanish manner — by strangulation.

A day or two after, the other cavaliers returned, and found Pizarro making a show of great sorrow for what had happened. They reproached and blamed him, saying that there was no truth in the story of treachery — all was quiet, and the people showed nothing but goodwill. Then Pizarro accused his treasurer and Father Valverde of having deceived him in the matter and brought about the catastrophe; and they in their turn exculpated themselves, and upbraided Pizarro as the only one responsible for the deed, and the quarrel was fierce between them. Meanwhile, the death of the Inca, whose power over his people had been so great, caused the breaking-up of all the ancient institutions. The Indians broke out into great excesses; villages were burnt and temples plundered; gold and silver acquired a new importance in their eyes, and were eagerly seized and hidden in caves and forests; the remote provinces threw off their allegiance to the Incas; the great captains at the head of distant armies set up for themselves — one named Ruminavi sought to detach Quito from the Peruvian Empire and assert its independence. Pizarro, still in Caxamalca, looked round for a successor to Atahuallpa, and chose his young brother Toparca, who was crowned with the usual ceremonies; and then the Spaniards set out for Cuzco, taking the new Inca with them, and after a toilful journey and more than one encounter with hostile natives reached Xanxa in safety. Here Pizarro remained for a time, sending one of his captains, named Hernando de Soto, forward with a small body of men to reconnoitre. This cavalier found villages burnt, bridges destroyed, and heavy rocks and trees placed in the path to impede his cavalry, and realised at length that the natives had risen to resistance. As he neared the Sierra of Vilcaconga he heard that a considerable body of Indians lay in wait for him in its dangerous passes; but though his men and horses were weary, he rashly determined to push on and pass it before nightfall if possible. No sooner had they fairly entered the narrow way than he was attacked by a multitude of armed warriors, who seemed to spring from every bush and cavern, and rushed down like a mountain torrent upon the Spaniards as they struggled up the steep and rocky pathway. Men and horses were overthrown, and it was only after a severe struggle that they succeeded in reaching a level spot upon which it was possible to face the enemy. Night fell while the issue of the fight was still uncertain, but fortunately Pizarro, when he heard of the unsettled state of the country, had despatched Almagro to the support of De Soto. He, hearing that there was the chance of a fight, had pushed on hastily, and now advanced under cover of the darkness, sounding his trumpets, which were joyfully answered by the bugles of De Soto.

When morning broke and the Peruvians saw that their white enemies had been mysteriously reinforced in the night, they hastily retreated, leaving the passes open, and the two cavaliers continued their march through the mountains, and took up a secure position in the open country beyond, to await Pizarro. Their losses had not been very great, but they were quite unprepared to meet with any resistance; and as this seemed a well-organised attack, suspicion fell upon Challcuchima, who was accused by Pizarro of conspiring with Quizquiz, the other great general, against the young Inca, and was told that if he did not at once compel the Peruvians to lay down their arms he should be burnt alive. Challcuchima denied the charge, and declared that, captive as he was, he had no power to bring his countrymen to submission. Nevertheless, he was put in irons and strongly guarded. Unfortunately for him, the young Toparca died just at this time, and suspicion at once fell on the hapless general, who, after the mockery of a trial, was burnt to death as soon as Pizarro reached Almagro’s camp — his own followers piling up the faggots. Soon after this Pizarro was surprised by a friendly visit from the young brother of Huascar, Manco Capac, and seeing that this prince was likely to be a useful instrument in his hands, Pizarro acknowledged his claim to be the Inca, and, keeping him with him, resumed the march to Cuzco, which they entered on November 15, 1533. The suburbs were thronged with people, who came from far and near to gaze upon the white faces and the shining armour of the ‘Children of the Sun.’ The Spaniards rode directly to the great square, and took up their quarters in the palaces of the Incas. They were greatly struck by the beauty and order of the city, and though Pizarro on entering it had issued an order that the dwellings of the inhabitants were not to be plundered or injured, the soldiers soon stripped the palaces and temples of the valuables they contained, even taking the golden ornaments of the royal mummies and rifling the Peruvian graves, which often contained precious treasures. Believing that the natives had buried their wealth, they put some of them to the torture, to induce them to disclose their hiding-places, and by seeking everywhere they occasionally stumbled upon mines of wealth. In one cave near the city the soldiers found a number of vases of pure gold, embossed with figures of animals, serpents, and locusts. Also there were four life-sized figures of llamas, and ten or twelve statues of women, some of gold and some of silver. The magazines were stored with robes of cotton and featherwork, gold sandals and slippers, and dresses composed entirely of beads of gold. The stores of grain and other food the conquerors utterly despised, though the time was to come when they would have been of far greater value to them than all the treasure. On the whole, the riches of the capital did not come up to the expectation of the Spaniards, but they had collected much plunder on the way to it, securing in one place ten bars of solid silver, each twenty feet in length, one foot in breadth, and two or three inches thick.

The natural consequence followed the sudden acquisition of so much wealth. The soldiers, as soon as they had received their share, squandered it recklessly, or lost it over dice or cards. A man who had for his portion one of the great golden images of the Sun taken from the chief temple, lost it in a single night’s gaming, whence came the proverb common to this day in Spain, ‘He plays away the sun before sunrise.’ Another effect of such a superfluity of gold and silver was the instant rise in the prices of all ordinary things, till gold and silver seemed to be the only things in Cuzco that were not wealth. Yet very few indeed of the Spaniards were wise enough to be contented and return to enjoy their spoils in their native country. After the division of the treasure, Pizarro’s first care was to place the Inca Manco upon the throne, and demand for him the recognition of his countrymen. All the coronation ceremonies were duly observed. The people acquiesced readily, and there were the usual feastings and rejoicings, at which the royal mummies were paraded according to custom, decked with such ornaments as remained to them. Pizarro then organised a government for the city of Cuzco after the fashion of his own country, and turned the temples into churches and monasteries. He himself was henceforward styled the Governor. Having heard that Atahuallpa’s general Quizquiz was stationed not far from Cuzco with a large force of the men of Quito, Pizarro sent Almagro and the Inca Manco to dislodge him, which they did after some sharp fighting. The general fled to the plains of Quito, where, after holding out gallantly for a long time, he was massacred by his own soldiers, weary of the ineffectual struggle.

About this time, Don Pedro de Alvarado, with five hundred well-equipped men, landed at the Bay of Caraques and marched upon Quito, affecting to believe that it was a separate kingdom, and not part of that conquered by Pizarro. This Alvarado was the celebrated cavalier who had been with Cortés in the conquest of Mexico, and earned from the Aztecs the title of ‘Tonatiuh,’ or ‘Child of the Sun.’ He had been made Governor of Guatemala, but his avarice being aroused by the reports of Pizarro’s conquests, he turned in the direction of Quito a large fleet which he had intended for the Spice Islands. The Governor was much disturbed by the news of his landing, but as matters turned out he need not have been, for Alvarado, having set out to cross the sierra in the direction of Quito, was deserted in the midst of the snowy passes by his Indian guide. His unhappy followers, fresh from the warm climate of Guatemala, were perished with the cold, and still further distressed by suffocating clouds of dust and ashes from the volcano of Cotopaxi. After days of incredible suffering they emerged at last, but leaving behind them at least a fourth of their number, beside two thousand Indians, who had died of cold and hunger. When, after all, he did reach Quito, he found it in the hands of Benalcazah, a cavalier who had been left by Pizarro at San Miguel, and who had deserted his post in order to take possession of Quito, tempted by the reports of the treasure it contained, which, however, he failed to find. Almagro, too, had reached the city before Alvarado got there; moreover, his men had heard so much of the riches of Cuzco that they were inclined to desert him and join Pizarro. On the whole, Alvarado judged it expedient to give up all claim to Quito, and for a sum of money which, though large, did not cover his expenses, to hand over to the Governor his fleet, forces, stores, and munitions. This being settled, he went to Pachacamac to meet Pizarro, who had left his brother Juan in charge of Cuzco, and was inspecting the defences of the coast. There being now no question of rivalry, the two cavaliers met in all courtesy, and Alvarado was hospitably entertained by the Governor, after which he sailed for Guatemala. Peru might now in a manner be considered as conquered; some of the tribes in the interior still held out, but an able officer had been told off to subdue them. Quito and Cuzco had submitted, the army of Atahuallpa had been beaten and dispersed, the Inca was the mere shadow of a king, ruled by the conqueror.

The Governor now turned his attention to building a city which should be the capital of this new colonial empire. Cuzco lay too far inland, San Miguel too far to the north. Pizarro fixed upon a spot near the mouth of a wide river which flowed through the Valley of Rimac, and here soon arose what was then called the ‘City of the Kings,’ but is now known as Lima. Meanwhile, Hernando Pizarro returned to Castile with the royal fifth, as the Spanish Emperor’s share of the treasure was called; he also took with him all the Spaniards who had had enough of the life of adventure and wished to settle in their native land to enjoy their ill-gotten spoils. Pizarro judged rightly that the sight of the gold would bring him ten recruits for every one who thus returned. And so it was, for when he again sailed for Peru it was at the head of the most numerous and the best-appointed fleet that had yet set out. But as so often happened, disaster pursued him, and only a broken remnant finally reached the Peruvian shore. Quarrels now arose between Almagro and Pizarro, the former claiming to be Governor of Cuzco; and when after many difficulties peace was again made, and Almagro, withdrawing his claim, had led his partisans off to conquer Chili, a new trouble began. The Inca Manco, under pretext of showing Hernando Pizarro a hidden treasure, managed to make his escape; the Peruvians flocked to his banner, and the party of Spaniards under Juan Pizarro who were sent out to recapture him returned to Cuzco weary and wounded after many unsuccessful struggles with the enemy, only to find the city closely surrounded by a mighty host of Indians. They were, however, allowed to enter the capital, and then began a terrible siege which lasted for more than five months. Day and night the Spaniards were harassed by showers of missiles. Sometimes the flights of burning arrows or red-hot stones wrapped in some inflammable substance would cause fearful fires in all quarters of the town at once; three times in one day did the flames attack the very building which sheltered the Spaniards, but fortunately they were extinguished without doing much harm. In vain did the besieged make desperate sallies; the Indians planted stakes to entangle their horses, and took the riders prisoners by means of the lasso, which they used with great skill. To add to their distress the great citadel which dominated the town had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and though after a gallant struggle it was retaken, yet it was at the cost of Juan Pizarro’s life. As for the Inca noble who defended it, when he saw that the citadel must fall, he cast away his war-club, and, folding his mantle about him, threw himself headlong from the battlements. Famine now began to be felt sharply, and it added horror to the situation of the besieged when, after they had heard no tidings of their countrymen for months, the blood-stained heads of eight or ten Spaniards were one day rolled into the market place, leading them to believe that the rising of the Indians had been simultaneous all over the country, and that their friends were faring no better than themselves. Things were not, however, quite so desperate as they imagined, for Francisco Pizarro when attacked in the City of the Kings had sallied forth and inflicted such a severe chastisement upon the Peruvians that they afterwards kept their distance from him, contenting themselves with cutting off his communication with the interior. Several detachments of soldiers whom he sent to the relief of his brothers in Cuzco were, however, enticed by the natives into the mountain passes and there slain, as also were some solitary settlers on their own estates.

At last, in the month of August, the Inca drew off his forces, and intrenching himself in Tambo, not far from Cuzco, with a considerable body of men, and posting another force to keep watch upon Cuzco and intercept supplies, he dismissed the remainder to the cultivation of their lands. The Spaniards thereupon made frequent forays, and on one occasion the starving soldiers joyfully secured two thousand Peruvian sheep, which saved them from hunger for a time. Once Pizarro desperately attacked Tambo itself, but was driven off with heavy loss, and hunted back ignominiously into Cuzco; but this was the last triumph of the Inca. Soon afterwards Almagro appeared upon the scene, and sent an embassy to the Inca, with whom he had formerly been friendly. Manco received him well, but his suspicions being aroused by a secret conference between Almagro's men and the Spaniards in Cuzco, he fell suddenly upon the former, and a great battle ensued in which the Peruvians were decidedly beaten and the power of the Inca was broken. He died some few years later, leaving the Spaniards still fighting among themselves for the possession of the country. Almagro after some years of strife and adventure was put to death by Hernando Pizarro when he was nearly seventy years old. His son, a gallant and well-beloved youth, who succeeded him, met the same fate in the same place — the great square of Cuzco — a few years later. Hernando himself suffered a long imprisonment in Spain for the murder of Almagro, with serene courage, and even lived some time after his release, being a hundred years old when he died. Gonzola Pizarro was beheaded in Peru, at the age of forty-two, for rebelling against the authority of the Spanish Emperor. Francisco Pizarro was murdered in his own house in the City of the Kings, in the month of June 1541, by the desperate adherents of the young Almagro, or the 'Men of Chili' as they were called, and was buried hastily and secretly by a few faithful servants in an obscure corner of the cathedral. Such was the miserable end of the conqueror of Peru. 'There was none even,' says an old chronicler, 'to cry "God forgive him!"'

TALES OF TROY AND GREECE

Illustrated by H. J. Ford

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ULYSSES THE SACKER OF CITIES

I

THE BOYHOOD AND PARENTS OF ULYSSES

Long ago, in a little island called Ithaca, on the west coast of Greece, there lived a king named Laertes. His kingdom was small and mountainous. People used to say that Ithaca 'lay like a shield upon the sea,' which sounds as if it were a flat country. But in those times shields were very large, and rose at the middle into two peaks with a hollow between them, so that Ithaca, seen far off in the sea, with her two chief mountain peaks, and a cloven valley between them, looked exactly like a shield. The country was so rough that men kept no horses, for, at that time, people drove, standing up in little light chariots with two horses; they never rode, and there was no cavalry in battle: men fought from chariots. When Ulysses, the son of Laertes, King of Ithaca grew up, he never fought from a chariot, for he had none, but always on foot.

If there were no horses in Ithaca, there was plenty of cattle. The father of Ulysses had flocks of sheep, and herds of swine, and wild goats, deer, and hares lived in the hills and in the plains. The sea was full of fish of many sorts, which men caught with nets, and with rod and line and hook.

Thus Ithaca was a good island to live in. The summer was long, and there was hardly any winter; only a few cold weeks, and then the swallows came back, and the plains were like a garden, all covered with wild flowers — violets, lilies, narcissus, and roses. With the blue sky and the blue sea, the island was beautiful. White temples stood on the shores; and the Nymphs, a sort of fairies, had their little shrines built of stone, with wild rose-bushes hanging over them.

Other islands lay within sight, crowned with mountains, stretching away, one behind the other, into the sunset. Ulysses in the course of his life saw many rich countries, and great cities of men, but, wherever he was, his heart was always in the little isle of Ithaca, where he had learned how to row, and how to sail a boat, and how to shoot with bow and arrow, and to hunt boars and stags, and manage his hounds.

The mother of Ulysses was called Anticleia: she was the daughter of King Autolycus, who lived near Parnassus, a mountain on the mainland. This King Autolycus was the most cunning of men. He was a Master Thief, and could steal a man's pillow from under his head, but he does not seem to have been thought worse of for this. The Greeks had a God of Thieves, named Hermes, whom Autolycus worshipped, and people thought more good of his cunning tricks than harm of his dishonesty. Perhaps these tricks of his were only practised for amusement; however that may be, Ulysses became as artful as his grandfather; he was both the bravest and the most cunning of men, but Ulysses never stole things, except once, as we shall hear, from the enemy in time of war. He showed his cunning in stratagems of war, and in many strange escapes from giants and man-eaters.

Soon after Ulysses was born, his grandfather came to see his mother and father in Ithaca. He was sitting at supper when the nurse of Ulysses, whose name was Eurycleia, brought in the baby, and set him on the knees of Autolycus, saying, ‘Find a name for your grandson, for he is a child of many prayers.’

‘I am very angry with many men and women in the world,’ said Autolycus, ‘so let the child’s name be *A Man of Wrath*,’ which, in Greek, was Odysseus. So the child was called Odysseus by his own people, but the name was changed into Ulysses, and we shall call him Ulysses.

We do not know much about Ulysses when he was a little boy, except that he used to run about the garden with his father, asking questions, and begging that he might have fruit trees ‘for his very own.’ He was a great pet, for his parents had no other son, so his father gave him thirteen pear trees, and forty fig trees, and promised him fifty rows of vines, all covered with grapes, which he could eat when he liked, without asking leave of the gardener. So he was not tempted to steal fruit, like his grandfather.

When Autolycus gave Ulysses his name, he said that he must come to stay with him, when he was a big boy, and he would get splendid presents. Ulysses was told about this, so, when he was a tall lad, he crossed the sea and drove in his chariot to the old man’s house on Mount Parnassus. Everybody welcomed him, and next day his uncles and cousins and he went out to hunt a fierce wild boar, early in the morning. Probably Ulysses took his own dog, named Argos, the best of hounds, of which we shall hear again, long afterwards, for the dog lived to be very old. Soon the hounds came on the scent of a wild boar, and after them the men went, with spears in their hands, and Ulysses ran foremost, for he was already the swiftest runner in Greece.

He came on a great boar lying in a tangled thicket of boughs and bracken, a dark place where the sun never shone, nor could the rain pierce through. Then the noise of the men’s shouts and the barking of the dogs awakened the boar, and up he sprang, bristling all over his back, and with fire shining from his eyes. In rushed Ulysses first of all, with his spear raised to strike, but the boar was too quick for him, and ran in, and drove his sharp tusk sideways, ripping up the thigh of Ulysses. But the boar’s tusk missed the bone, and Ulysses sent his sharp spear into the beast’s right shoulder, and the spear went clean through, and the boar fell dead, with a loud cry. The uncles of Ulysses bound up his wound carefully, and sang a magical song over it, as the French soldiers wanted to do to Joan of Arc when the arrow pierced her shoulder at the siege of Orleans. Then the blood ceased to flow, and soon Ulysses was quite healed of his wound. They thought that he would be a good warrior, and gave him splendid presents, and when he went home again he told all that had happened to his father and mother, and his nurse, Eurycleia. But there was always a long white mark or scar above his left knee, and about that scar we shall hear again, many years afterwards.

II

HOW PEOPLE LIVED IN THE TIME OF ULYSSES

When Ulysses was a young man he wished to marry a princess of his own rank. Now there were at that time many kings in Greece, and you must be told how they lived. Each king had his own little kingdom, with his chief town, walled with huge walls of enormous stone. Many of these walls are still standing, though the grass has grown over the ruins of most of them, and in later years, men believed that those walls must have been built by giants, the stones are so enormous. Each king had nobles under him, rich men, and all had their palaces, each with its courtyard, and its long hall, where the fire burned in the midst, and the King and Queen sat beside it on high thrones, between the four chief carved pillars that held up the roof. The thrones were made of cedar wood and ivory, inlaid with gold, and there were many other chairs and small tables for guests, and the walls and doors were covered with bronze plates, and gold and silver, and sheets of blue glass. Sometimes they were painted with pictures of bull hunts, and a few of these pictures may still be seen. At night torches were lit, and placed in the hands of golden figures of boys, but all the smoke of fire and torches escaped by a hole in the roof, and made the ceiling black. On the walls hung swords and spears and helmets and shields, which needed to be often cleaned from the stains of the smoke. The minstrel or poet sat beside the King and Queen, and, after supper he struck his harp, and sang stories of old wars. At night the King and Queen slept in their own place, and the women in their own rooms; the princesses had their chambers upstairs, and the young princes had each his room built separate in the courtyard.

There were bath rooms with polished baths, where guests were taken when they arrived dirty from a journey. The guests lay at night on beds in the portico, for the climate was warm. There were plenty of servants, who were usually slaves taken in war, but they were very kindly treated, and were friendly with their masters. No coined money was used; people paid for things in cattle, or in weighed pieces of gold. Rich men had plenty of gold cups, and gold-hilted swords, and bracelets, and brooches. The kings were the leaders in war and judges in peace, and did sacrifices to the Gods, killing cattle and swine and sheep, on which they afterwards dined.

They dressed in a simple way, in a long smock of linen or silk, which fell almost to the feet, but was tucked up into a belt round the waist, and worn longer or shorter, as they happened to choose. Where it needed fastening at the throat, golden brooches were used, beautifully made, with safety pins. This garment was much like the plaid that the Highlanders used to wear, with its belt and brooches. Over it the Greeks wore great cloaks of woollen cloth when the weather was cold, but these they did not use in battle. They fastened their breastplates, in war, over their smocks, and had other armour covering the lower parts of the body, and leg armour called ‘greaves’; while the great shield which guarded the whole body from throat to ankles was carried by a broad belt slung round the neck. The sword was worn in another belt, crossing the shield belt. They had light shoes in peace, and higher and heavier boots in war, or for walking across country.

The women wore the smock, with more brooches and jewels than the men; and had head coverings, with veils, and mantles over all, and necklaces of gold and amber, earrings, and bracelets of gold or of bronze. The colours of their dresses were various, chiefly white and purple; and, when in mourning, they wore very dark blue, not black. All the armour, and the sword blades and spearheads were made, not of steel or iron, but of bronze, a mixture of copper and tin. The shields were made of several thicknesses of leather, with a plating of bronze above; tools, such as axes and ploughshares, were either of iron or bronze; and so were the blades of knives and daggers.

To us the houses and way of living would have seemed very splendid, and also, in some ways, rather rough. The palace floors, at least in the house of Ulysses, were littered with bones and feet of the oxen slain for food, but this happened when Ulysses had been long from home. The floor of the hall in the house of Ulysses was not boarded with planks, or paved with stone: it was made of clay; for he was a poor king of small islands. The cooking was coarse: a pig or sheep was killed, roasted and eaten immediately. We never hear of boiling meat, and though people probably ate fish, we do not hear of their doing so, except when no meat could be procured. Still some people must have liked them; for in the pictures that were painted or cut in precious stones in these times we see the half-naked fisherman walking home, carrying large fish.

The people were wonderful workers of gold and bronze. Hundreds of their golden jewels have been found in their graves, but probably these were made and buried two or three centuries before the time of Ulysses. The dagger blades had pictures of fights with lions, and of flowers, inlaid on them, in gold of various colours, and in silver; nothing so beautiful is made now. There are figures of men hunting bulls on some of the gold cups, and these are wonderfully life-like. The vases and pots of earthenware were painted in charming patterns: in short, it was a splendid world to live in.

The people believed in many Gods, male and female, under the chief God, Zeus. The Gods were thought to be taller than men, and immortal, and to live in much the same way as men did, eating, drinking, and sleeping in glorious palaces. Though they were supposed to reward good men, and to punish people who broke their oaths and were unkind to strangers, there were many stories told in which the Gods were fickle, cruel, selfish, and set very bad examples to men. How far these stories were believed is not sure; it is certain that ‘all men felt a need of the Gods,’ and thought that they were pleased by good actions and displeased by evil. Yet, when a man felt that his behaviour had been bad, he often threw the blame on the Gods, and said that they had misled him, which really meant no more than that ‘he could not help it.’

There was a curious custom by which the princes bought wives from the fathers of the princesses, giving cattle and gold, and bronze and iron, but sometimes a prince got a wife as the reward for some very brave action. A man would not give his daughter to a wooer whom she did not love, even if he offered the highest price, at least this must have been the general rule, for husbands and wives were very fond of each other, and of their children, and husbands always allowed their wives to rule the house, and give their advice on everything. It was thought a very wicked thing for a woman to like another man better than her husband, and there were few such wives, but among them was the most beautiful woman who ever lived.

III

THE WOOING OF HELEN OF THE FAIR HANDS

This was the way in which people lived when Ulysses was young, and wished to be married. The worst thing in the way of life was that the greatest and most beautiful princesses might be taken prisoners, and carried off as slaves to the towns of the men who had killed their fathers and husbands. Now at that time one lady was far the fairest in the world: namely, Helen, daughter of King Tyndarus. Every young prince heard of her and desired to marry her; so her father invited them all to his palace, and entertained them, and found out what they would give. Among the rest Ulysses went, but his father had a little kingdom, a rough island, with others near it, and Ulysses had not a good chance. He was not tall; though very strong and active, he was a short man with broad shoulders, but his face was handsome, and, like all the princes, he wore long yellow hair, clustering like a hyacinth flower. His manner was rather hesitating, and he seemed to speak very slowly at first, though afterwards his words came freely. He was good at everything a man can do; he could plough, and build houses, and make ships, and he was the best archer in Greece, except one, and could bend the great bow of a dead king, Eurytus, which no other man could string. But he had no horses, and had no great train of followers; and, in short, neither Helen nor her father thought of choosing Ulysses for her husband out of so many tall, handsome young princes, glittering with gold ornaments. Still, Helen was very kind to Ulysses, and there was great friendship between them, which was fortunate for her in the end.

Tyndarus first made all the princes take an oath that they would stand by the prince whom he chose, and would fight for him in all his quarrels. Then he named for her husband Menelaus, King of Lacedaemon. He was a very brave man, but not one of the strongest; he was not such a fighter as the gigantic Aias, the tallest and strongest of men; or as Diomede, the friend of Ulysses; or as his own brother, Agamemnon, the King of the rich city of Mycenae, who was chief over all other princes, and general of the whole army in war. The great lions carved in stone that seemed to guard his city are still standing above the gate through which Agamemnon used to drive his chariot.

The man who proved to be the best fighter of all, Achilles, was not among the lovers of Helen, for he was still a boy, and his mother, Thetis of the silver feet, a goddess of the sea, had sent him to be brought up as a girl, among the daughters of Lycomedes of Scyros, in an island far away. Thetis did this because Achilles was her only child, and there was a prophecy that, if he went to the wars, he would win the greatest glory, but die very young, and never see his mother again. She thought that if war broke out he would not be found hiding in girl’s dress, among girls, far away.

So at last, after thinking over the matter for long, Tyndarus gave fair Helen to Menelaus, the rich King of Lacedaemon; and her twin sister Clytaemnestra, who was also very beautiful, was given to King Agamemnon, the chief over all the princes. They all lived very happily together at first, but not for long.

In the meantime King Tyndarus spoke to his brother Icarius, who had a daughter named Penelope. She also was very pretty, but not nearly so beautiful as her cousin, fair Helen, and we know that Penelope was not very fond of her cousin. Icarius, admiring the strength and wisdom of Ulysses, gave him his daughter Penelope to be his wife, and Ulysses loved her very dearly, no man and wife were ever dearer to each other. They went away together to rocky Ithaca, and perhaps Penelope was not sorry that a wide sea lay between her home and that of Helen; for Helen was not only the fairest woman that ever lived in the world, but she was so kind and gracious and charming that no man could see her without loving her. When she was only a child, the famous prince Theseus, whose story is to be told later, carried her away to his own city of Athens, meaning to marry her when she grew up, and, even at that time, there was a war for her sake, for her brothers followed Theseus with an army, and fought him, and brought her home.

She had fairy gifts: for instance, she had a great red jewel, called ‘the Star,’ and when she wore it red drops seemed to fall from it and vanished before they touched and stained her white breast — so white that people called her ‘the Daughter of the Swan.’ She could speak in the very voice of any man or woman, so folk also named her Echo, and it was believed that she could neither grow old nor die, but would at last pass away to the Elysian plain and the world’s end, where life is easiest for men. No snow comes thither, nor great storm, nor any rain; but always the river of Ocean that rings round the whole earth sends forth the west wind to blow cool on the people of King Rhadamanthus of the fair hair. These were some of the stories that men told of fair Helen, but Ulysses was never sorry that he had not the fortune to marry her, so fond he was of her cousin, his wife, Penelope, who was very wise and good.

When Ulysses brought his wife home they lived, as the custom was, in the palace of his father, King Laertes, but Ulysses, with his own hands, built a chamber for Penelope and himself. There grew a great olive tree in the inner court of the palace, and its stem was as large as one of the tall carved pillars of the hall. Round about this tree Ulysses built the chamber, and finished it with close-set stones, and roofed it over, and made close-fastening doors. Then he cut off all the branches of the olive tree, and smoothed the trunk, and shaped it into the bed-post, and made the bedstead beautiful with inlaid work of gold and silver and ivory. There was no such bed in Greece, and no man could move it from its place, and this bed comes again into the story, at the very end.

Now time went by, and Ulysses and Penelope had one son called Telemachus; and Eurycleia, who had been his father's nurse, took care of him. They were all very happy, and lived in peace in rocky Ithaca, and Ulysses looked after his lands, and flocks, and herds, and went hunting with his dog Argos, the swiftest of hounds.

IV

THE STEALING OF HELEN

This happy time did not last long, and Telemachus was still a baby, when war arose, so great and mighty and marvellous as had never been known in the world. Far across the sea that lies on the east of Greece, there dwelt the rich King Priam. His town was called Troy, or Ilios, and it stood on a hill near the seashore, where are the straits of Hellespont, between Europe and Asia; it was a great city surrounded by strong walls, and its ruins are still standing. The kings could make merchants who passed through the straits pay toll to them, and they had allies in Thrace, a part of Europe opposite Troy, and Priam was chief of all princes on his side of the sea, as Agamemnon was chief king in Greece. Priam had many beautiful things; he had a vine made of gold, with golden leaves and clusters, and he had the swiftest horses, and many strong and brave sons; the strongest and bravest was named Hector, and the youngest and most beautiful was named Paris.

There was a prophecy that Priam's wife would give birth to a burning torch, so, when Paris was born, Priam sent a servant to carry the baby into a wild wood on Mount Ida, and leave him to die or be eaten by wolves and wild cats. The servant left the child, but a shepherd found him, and brought him up as his own son. The boy became as beautiful, for a boy, as Helen was for a girl, and was the best runner, and hunter, and archer among the country people. He was loved by the beautiful Œnone, a nymph — that is, a kind of fairy — who dwelt in a cave among the woods of Ida. The Greeks and Trojans believed in these days that such fair nymphs haunted all beautiful woodland places, and the mountains, and wells, and had crystal palaces, like mermaids, beneath the waves of the sea. These fairies were not mischievous, but gentle and kind. Sometimes they married mortal men, and Œnone was the bride of Paris, and hoped to keep him for her own all the days of his life.

It was believed that she had the magical power of healing wounded men, however sorely they were hurt. Paris and Œnone lived most happily together in the forest; but one day, when the servants of Priam had driven off a beautiful bull that was in the herd of Paris, he left the hills to seek it, and came into the town of Troy. His mother, Hecuba, saw him, and looking at him closely, perceived that he wore a ring which she had tied round her baby's neck when he was taken away from her soon after his birth. Then Hecuba, beholding him so beautiful, and knowing him to be her son, wept for joy, and they all forgot the prophecy that he would be a burning torch of fire, and Priam gave him a house like those of his brothers, the Trojan princes.

The fame of beautiful Helen reached Troy, and Paris quite forgot unhappy Œnone, and must needs go to see Helen for himself. Perhaps he meant to try to win her for his wife, before her marriage. But sailing was little understood in these times, and the water was wide, and men were often driven for years out of their course, to Egypt, and Africa, and far away into the unknown seas, where fairies lived in enchanted islands, and cannibals dwelt in caves of the hills.

Paris came much too late to have a chance of marrying Helen; however, he was determined to see her, and he made his way to her palace beneath the mountain Taygetus, beside the clear swift river Eurotas. The servants came out of the hall when they heard the sound of wheels and horses' feet, and some of them took the horses to the stables, and tilted the chariots against the gateway, while others led Paris into the hall, which shone like the sun with gold and silver. Then Paris and his companions were led to the baths, where they were bathed, and clad in new clothes, mantles of white, and robes of purple, and next they were brought before King Menelaus, and he welcomed them kindly, and meat was set before them, and wine in cups of gold. While they were talking, Helen came forth from her fragrant chamber, like a Goddess, her maidens following her, and carrying for her an ivory distaff with violet-coloured wool, which she span as she sat, and heard Paris tell how far he had travelled to see her who was so famous for her beauty even in countries far away.

Then Paris knew that he had never seen, and never could see, a lady so lovely and gracious as Helen as she sat and span, while the red drops fell and vanished from the ruby called the Star; and Helen knew that among all the princes in the world there was none so beautiful as Paris. Now some say that Paris, by art magic, put on the appearance of Menelaus, and asked Helen to come sailing with him, and that she, thinking he was her husband, followed him, and he carried her across the wide waters of Troy, away from her lord and her one beautiful little daughter, the child Hermione. And others say that the Gods carried Helen herself off to Egypt, and that they made in her likeness a beautiful ghost, out of flowers and sunset clouds, whom Paris bore to Troy, and this they did to cause war between Greeks and Trojans. Another story is that Helen and her bower maiden and her jewels were seized by force, when Menelaus was out hunting. It is only certain that Paris and Helen did cross the seas together, and that Menelaus and little Hermione were left alone in the melancholy palace beside the Eurotas.

Penelope, we know for certain, made no excuses for her beautiful cousin, but hated her as the cause of her own sorrows and of the deaths of thousands of men in war, for all the Greek princes were bound by their oath to fight for Menelaus against any one who injured him and stole his wife away. But Helen was very unhappy in Troy, and blamed herself as bitterly as all the other women blamed her, and most of all Œnone, who had been the love of Paris. The men were much more kind to Helen, and were determined to fight to the death rather than lose the sight of her beauty among them.

The news of the dishonour done to Menelaus and to all the princes of Greece ran through the country like fire through a forest. East and west and south and north went the news: to kings in their castles on the hills, and beside the rivers and on cliffs above the sea. The cry came to ancient Nestor of the white beard at Pylos, Nestor who had reigned over two generations of men, who had fought against the wild folk of the hills, and remembered the strong Heracles, and Eurytus of the black bow that sang before the day of battle.

The cry came to black-bearded Agamemnon, in his strong town called ‘golden Mycenae,’ because it was so rich; it came to the people in Thisbe, where the wild doves haunt; and it came to rocky Pytho, where is the sacred temple of Apollo and the maid who prophesies. It came to Aias, the tallest and strongest of men, in his little isle of Salamis; and to Diomede of the loud war-cry, the bravest of warriors, who held Argos and Tiryns of the black walls of huge stones, that are still standing. The summons came to the western islands and to Ulysses in Ithaca, and even far south to the great island of Crete of the hundred cities, where Idomeneus ruled in Cnossos; Idomeneus, whose ruined palace may still be seen with the throne of the king, and pictures painted on the walls, and the King’s own draught-board of gold and silver, and hundreds of tablets of clay, on which are written the lists of royal treasures. Far north went the news to Pelasgian Argos, and Hellas, where the people of Peleus dwelt, the Myrmidons; but Peleus was too old to fight, and his boy, Achilles, dwelt far away, in the island of Scyros, dressed as a girl, among the daughters of King Lycomedes. To many another town and to a hundred islands went the bitter news of approaching war, for all princes knew that their honour and their oaths compelled them to gather their spearmen, and bowmen, and slingers from the fields and the fishing, and to make ready their ships, and meet King Agamemnon in the harbour of Aulis, and cross the wide sea to besiege Troy town.

Now the story is told that Ulysses was very unwilling to leave his island and his wife Penelope, and little Telemachus; while Penelope had no wish that he should pass into danger, and into the sight of Helen of the fair hands. So it is said that when two of the princes came to summon Ulysses, he pretended to be mad, and went ploughing the sea sand with oxen, and sowing the sand with salt. Then the prince Palamedes took the baby Telemachus from the arms of his nurse, Eurycleia, and laid him in the line of the furrow, where the ploughshare would strike him and kill him. But Ulysses turned the plough aside, and they cried that he was not mad, but sane, and he must keep his oath, and join the fleet at Aulis, a long voyage for him to sail, round the stormy southern Cape of Maleia.

Whether this tale be true or not, Ulysses did go, leading twelve black ships, with high beaks painted red at prow and stern. The ships had oars, and the warriors manned the oars, to row when there was no wind. There was a small raised deck at each end of the ships; on these decks men stood to fight with sword and spear when there was a battle at sea. Each ship had but one mast, with a broad lugger sail, and for anchors they had only heavy stones attached to cables. They generally landed at night, and slept on the shore of one of the many islands, when they could, for they greatly feared to sail out of sight of land.

The fleet consisted of more than a thousand ships, each with fifty warriors, so the army was of more than fifty thousand men. Agamemnon had a hundred ships, Diomede had eighty, Nestor had ninety, the Cretans with Idomeneus, had eighty, Menelaus had sixty; but Aias and Ulysses, who lived in small islands, had only twelve ships apiece. Yet Aias was so brave and strong, and Ulysses so brave and wise, that they were ranked among the greatest chiefs and advisers of Agamemnon, with Menelaus, Diomede, Idomeneus, Nestor, Menestheus of Athens, and two or three others. These chiefs were called the Council, and gave advice to Agamemnon, who was commander-in-chief. He was a brave fighter, but so anxious and fearful of losing the lives of his soldiers that Ulysses and Diomede were often obliged to speak to him very severely. Agamemnon was also very insolent and greedy, though, when anybody stood up to him, he was ready to apologise, for fear the injured chief should renounce his service and take away his soldiers.

Nestor was much respected because he remained brave, though he was too old to be very useful in battle. He generally tried to make peace when the princes quarrelled with Agamemnon. He loved to tell long stories about his great deeds when he was young, and he wished the chiefs to fight in old-fashioned ways.

For instance, in his time the Greeks had fought in clan regiments, and the princely men had never dismounted in battle, but had fought in squadrons of chariots, but now the owners of chariots fought on foot, each man for himself, while his squire kept the chariot near him to escape on if he had to retreat. Nestor wished to go back to the good old way of chariot charges against the crowds of foot soldiers of the enemy. In short, he was a fine example of the old-fashioned soldier.

Aias, though so very tall, strong, and brave, was rather stupid. He seldom spoke, but he was always ready to fight, and the last to retreat. Menelaus was weak of body, but as brave as the best, or more brave, for he had a keen sense of honour, and would attempt what he had not the strength to do. Diomede and Ulysses were great friends, and always fought side by side, when they could, and helped each other in the most dangerous adventures.

These were the chiefs who led the great Greek armada from the harbour of Aulis. A long time had passed, after the flight of Helen, before the large fleet could be collected, and more time went by in the attempt to cross the sea to Troy. There were tempests that scattered the ships, so they were driven back to Aulis to refit; and they fought, as they went out again, with the peoples of unfriendly islands, and besieged their towns. What they wanted most of all was to have Achilles with them, for he was the leader of fifty ships and 2,500 men, and he had magical armour made, men said, for his father, by Hephaestus, the God of armour-making and smithy work.

At last the fleet came to the Isle of Scyros, where they suspected that Achilles was concealed. King Lycomedes received the chiefs kindly, and they saw all his beautiful daughters dancing and playing at ball, but Achilles was still so young and slim and so beautiful that they did not know him among the others. There was a prophecy that they could not take Troy without him, and yet they could not find him out. Then Ulysses had a plan. He blackened his eyebrows and beard and put on the dress of a Phoenician merchant. The Phoenicians were a people who lived near the Jews, and were of the same race, and spoke much the same language, but, unlike the Jews, who, at that time were farmers in Palestine, tilling the ground, and keeping flocks and herds, the Phoenicians were the greatest of traders and sailors, and stealers of slaves. They carried cargoes of beautiful cloths, and embroideries, and jewels of gold, and necklaces of amber, and sold these everywhere about the shores of Greece and the islands.

Ulysses then dressed himself like a Phoenician pedlar, with his pack on his back: he only took a stick in his hand, his long hair was turned up, and hidden under a red sailor’s cap, and in this figure he came, stooping beneath his pack, into the courtyard of King Lycomedes. The girls heard that a pedlar had come, and out they all ran, Achilles with the rest, to watch the pedlar undo his pack. Each chose what she liked best: one took a wreath of gold; another a necklace of gold and amber; another earrings; a fourth a set of brooches, another a dress of embroidered scarlet cloth; another a veil; another a pair of bracelets; but at the bottom of the pack lay a great sword of bronze, the hilt studded with golden nails. Achilles seized the sword. ‘This is for me!’ he said, and drew the sword from the gilded sheath, and made it whistle round his head.

‘You are Achilles, Peleus’ son!’ said Ulysses; ‘and you are to be the chief warrior of the Achaeans,’ for the Greeks then called themselves Achaeans. Achilles was only too glad to hear these words, for he was quite tired of living among maidens. Ulysses led him into the hall where the chiefs were sitting at their wine, and Achilles was blushing like any girl.

‘Here is the Queen of the Amazons,’ said Ulysses — for the Amazons were a race of warlike maidens— ‘or rather here is Achilles, Peleus’ son, with sword in hand.’ Then they all took his hand, and welcomed him, and he was clothed in man’s dress, with the sword by his side, and presently they sent him back with ten ships to his home. There his mother, Thetis, of the silver feet, the goddess of the sea, wept over him, saying, ‘My child, thou hast the choice of a long and happy and peaceful life here with me, or of a brief time of war and undying renown. Never shall I see thee again in Argos if thy choice is for war.’ But Achilles chose to die young, and to be famous as long as the world stands. So his father gave him fifty ships, with Patroclus, who was older than he, to be his friend, and with an old man, Phoenix, to advise him; and his mother gave him the glorious armour that the God had made for his father, and the heavy ashen spear that none but he could wield, and he sailed to join the host of the Achaeans, who all praised and thanked Ulysses that had found for them such a prince. For Achilles was the fiercest fighter of them all, and the swiftest-footed man, and the most courteous prince, and the gentlest with women and children, but he was proud and high of heart, and when he was angered his anger was terrible.

The Trojans would have had no chance against the Greeks if only the men of the city of Troy had fought to keep Helen of the fair hands. But they had allies, who spoke different languages, and came to fight for them both from Europe and from Asia. On the Trojan as well as on the Greek side were people called Pelasgians, who seem to have lived on both shores of the sea. There were Thracians, too, who dwelt much further north than Achilles, in Europe and beside the strait of Hellespont, where the narrow sea runs like a river. There were warriors of Lycia, led by Sarpedon and Glaucus; there were Carians, who spoke in a strange tongue; there were Mysians and men from Alybe, which was called ‘the birthplace of silver,’ and many other peoples sent their armies, so that the war was between Eastern Europe, on one side, and Western Asia Minor on the other. The people of Egypt took no part in the war: the Greeks and Islesmen used to come down in their ships and attack the Egyptians as the Danes used to invade England. You may see the warriors from the islands, with their horned helmets, in old Egyptian pictures.

The commander-in-chief, as we say now, of the Trojans was Hector, the son of Priam. He was thought a match for any one of the Greeks, and was brave and good. His brothers also were leaders, but Paris preferred to fight from a distance with bow and arrows. He and Pandarus, who dwelt on the slopes of Mount Ida, were the best archers in the Trojan army. The princes usually fought with heavy spears, which they threw at each other, and with swords, leaving archery to the common soldiers who had no armour of bronze. But Teucer, Meriones, and Ulysses were the best archers of the Achaeans. People called Dardanians were led by Aeneas, who was said to be the son of the most beautiful of the goddesses. These, with Sarpedon and Glaucus, were the most famous of the men who fought for Troy.

Troy was a strong town on a hill: Mount Ida lay behind it, and in front was a plain sloping to the sea shore. Through this plain ran two beautiful clear rivers, and there were scattered here and there what you would have taken for steep knolls, but they were really mounds piled up over the ashes of warriors who had died long ago. On these mounds sentinels used to stand and look across the water to give warning if the Greek fleet drew near, for the Trojans had heard that it was on its way. At last the fleet came in view, and the sea was black with ships, the oarsmen pulling with all their might for the honour of being the first to land. The race was won by the ship of the prince Protesilaus, who was first of all to leap on shore, but as he leaped he was struck to the heart by an arrow from the bow of Paris. This must have seemed a good omen to the Trojans, and to the Greeks evil, but we do not hear that the landing was resisted in great force, any more than that of Norman William was, when he invaded England.

The Greeks drew up all their ships on shore, and the men camped in huts built in front of the ships. There was thus a long row of huts with the ships behind them, and in these huts the Greeks lived all through the ten years that the siege of Troy lasted. In these days they do not seem to have understood how to conduct a siege. You would have expected the Greeks to build towers and dig trenches all round Troy, and from the towers watch the roads, so that provisions might not be brought in from the country. This is called ‘investing’ a town, but the Greeks never invested Troy. Perhaps they had not men enough; at all events the place remained open, and cattle could always be driven in to feed the warriors and the women and children.

Moreover, the Greeks for long never seem to have tried to break down one of the gates, nor to scale the walls, which were very high, with ladders. On the other hand, the Trojans and allies never ventured to drive the Greeks into the sea; they commonly remained within the walls or skirmished just beneath them. The older men insisted on this way of fighting, in spite of Hector, who always wished to attack and storm the camp of the Greeks. Neither side had machines for throwing heavy stones, such as the Romans used later, and the most that the Greeks did was to follow Achilles and capture small neighbouring cities, and take the women for slaves, and drive the cattle. They got provisions and wine from the Phoenicians, who came in ships, and made much profit out of the war.

It was not till the tenth year that the war began in real earnest, and scarcely any of the chief leaders had fallen. Fever came upon the Greeks, and all day the camp was black with smoke, and all night shone with fire from the great piles of burning wood, on which the Greeks burned their dead, whose bones they then buried under hillocks of earth. Many of these hillocks are still standing on the plain of Troy. When the plague had raged for ten days, Achilles called an assembly of the whole army, to try to find out why the Gods were angry. They thought that the beautiful God Apollo (who took the Trojan side) was shooting invisible arrows at them from his silver bow, though fevers in armies are usually caused by dirt and drinking bad water. The great heat of the sun, too, may have helped to cause the disease; but we must tell the story as the Greeks told it themselves. So Achilles spoke in the assembly, and proposed to ask some prophet why Apollo was angry. The chief prophet was Calchas. He rose and said that he would declare the truth if Achilles would promise to protect him from the anger of any prince whom the truth might offend.

Achilles knew well whom Calchas meant. Ten days before, a priest of Apollo had come to the camp and offered ransom for his daughter Chryseis, a beautiful girl, whom Achilles had taken prisoner, with many others, when he captured a small town. Chryseis had been given as a slave to Agamemnon, who always got the best of the plunder because he was chief king, whether he had taken part in the fighting or not. As a rule he did not. To Achilles had been given another girl, Briseis, of whom he was very fond. Now when Achilles had promised to protect Calchas, the prophet spoke out, and boldly said, what all men knew already, that Apollo caused the plague because Agamemnon would not return Chryseis, and had insulted her father, the priest of the God.

On hearing this, Agamemnon was very angry. He said that he would send Chryseis home, but that he would take Briseis away from Achilles. Then Achilles was drawing his great sword from the sheath to kill Agamemnon, but even in his anger he knew that this was wrong, so he merely called Agamemnon a greedy coward, ‘with face of dog and heart of deer,’ and he swore that he and his men would fight no more against the Trojans. Old Nestor tried to make peace, and swords were not drawn, but Briseis was taken away from Achilles, and Ulysses put Chryseis on board of his ship and sailed away with her to her father’s town, and gave her up to her father. Then her father prayed to Apollo that the plague might cease, and it did cease — when the Greeks had cleansed their camp, and purified themselves and cast their filth into the sea.

We know how fierce and brave Achilles was, and we may wonder that he did not challenge Agamemnon to fight a duel. But the Greeks never fought duels, and Agamemnon was believed to be chief king by right divine. Achilles went alone to the sea shore when his dear Briseis was led away, and he wept, and called to his mother, the silver-footed lady of the waters. Then she arose from the grey sea, like a mist, and sat down beside her son, and stroked his hair with her hand, and he told her all his sorrows. So she said that she would go up to the dwelling of the Gods, and pray Zeus, the chief of them all, to make the Trojans win a great battle, so that Agamemnon should feel his need of Achilles, and make amends for his insolence, and do him honour.

Thetis kept her promise, and Zeus gave his word that the Trojans should defeat the Greeks. That night Zeus sent a deceitful dream to Agamemnon. The dream took the shape of old Nestor, and said that Zeus would give him victory that day. While he was still asleep, Agamemnon was full of hope that he would instantly take Troy, but, when he woke, he seems not to have been nearly so confident, for in place of putting on his armour, and bidding the Greeks arm themselves, he merely dressed in his robe and mantle, took his sceptre, and went and told the chiefs about his dream. They did not feel much encouraged, so he said that he would try the temper of the army. He would call them together, and propose to return to Greece; but, if the soldiers took him at his word, the other chiefs were to stop them. This was a foolish plan, for the soldiers were wearying for beautiful Greece, and their homes, and wives and children. Therefore, when Agamemnon did as he had said, the whole army rose, like the sea under the west wind, and, with a shout, they rushed to the ships, while the dust blew in clouds from under their feet. Then they began to launch their ships, and it seems that the princes were carried away in the rush, and were as eager as the rest to go home.

But Ulysses only stood in sorrow and anger beside his ship, and never put hand to it, for he felt how disgraceful it was to run away. At last he threw down his mantle, which his herald Eurybates of Ithaca, a round-shouldered, brown, curly-haired man, picked up, and he ran to find Agamemnon, and took his sceptre, a gold-studded staff, like a marshal’s baton, and he gently told the chiefs whom he met that they were doing a shameful thing; but he drove the common soldiers back to the place of meeting with the sceptre. They all returned, puzzled and chattering, but one lame, bandy-legged, bald, round-shouldered, impudent fellow, named Thersites, jumped up and made an insolent speech, insulting the princes, and advising the army to run away. Then Ulysses took him and beat him till the blood came, and he sat down, wiping away his tears, and looking so foolish that the whole army laughed at him, and cheered Ulysses when he and

Nestor bade them arm and fight. Agamemnon still believed a good deal in his dream, and prayed that he might take Troy that very day, and kill Hector. Thus Ulysses alone saved the army from a cowardly retreat; but for him the ships would have been launched in an hour. But the Greeks armed and advanced in full force, all except Achilles and his friend Patroclus with their two or three thousand men. The Trojans also took heart, knowing that Achilles would not fight, and the armies approached each other. Paris himself, with two spears and a bow, and without armour, walked into the space between the hosts, and challenged any Greek prince to single combat. Menelaus, whose wife Paris had carried away, was as glad as a hungry lion when he finds a stag or a goat, and leaped in armour from his chariot, but Paris turned and slunk away, like a man when he meets a great serpent on a narrow path in the hills. Then Hector rebuked Paris for his cowardice, and Paris was ashamed and offered to end the war by fighting Menelaus. If he himself fell, the Trojans must give up Helen and all her jewels; if Menelaus fell, the Greeks were to return without fair Helen. The Greeks accepted this plan, and both sides disarmed themselves to look on at the fight in comfort, and they meant to take the most solemn oaths to keep peace till the combat was lost and won, and the quarrel settled. Hector sent into Troy for two lambs, which were to be sacrificed when the oaths were taken.

In the meantime Helen of the fair hands was at home working at a great purple tapestry on which she embroidered the battles of the Greeks and Trojans. It was just like the tapestry at Bayeux on which Norman ladies embroidered the battles in the Norman Conquest of England. Helen was very fond of embroidering, like poor Mary, Queen of Scots, when a prisoner in Loch Leven Castle. Probably the work kept both Helen and Mary from thinking of their past lives and their sorrows.

When Helen heard that her husband was to fight Paris, she wept, and threw a shining veil over her head, and with her two bower maidens went to the roof of the gate tower, where king Priam was sitting with the old Trojan chiefs. They saw her and said that it was small blame to fight for so beautiful a lady, and Priam called her ‘dear child,’ and said, ‘I do not blame you, I blame the Gods who brought about this war.’ But Helen said that she wished she had died before she left her little daughter and her husband, and her home: ‘Alas! shameless me!’ Then she told Priam the names of the chief Greek warriors, and of Ulysses, who was shorter by a head than Agamemnon but broader in chest and shoulders. She wondered that she could not see her own two brothers, Castor and Polydeuces, and thought that they kept aloof in shame for her sin; but the green grass covered their graves, for they had both died in battle, far away in Lacedaemon, their own country.

Then the lambs were sacrificed, and the oaths were taken, and Paris put on his brother’s armour: helmet, breastplate, shield, and leg-armour. Lots were drawn to decide whether Paris or Menelaus should throw his spear first, and, as Paris won, he threw his spear, but the point was blunted against the shield of Menelaus. But when Menelaus threw his spear it went clean through the shield of Paris, and through the side of his breastplate, but only grazed his robe. Menelaus drew his sword, and rushed in, and smote at the crest of the helmet of Paris, but his bronze blade broke into four pieces. Menelaus caught Paris by the horsehair crest of his helmet, and dragged him towards the Greeks, but the chin-strap broke, and Menelaus turning round threw the helmet into the ranks of the Greeks. But when Menelaus looked again for Paris, with a spear in his hand, he could see him nowhere! The Greeks believed that the beautiful goddess Aphrodite, whom the Romans called Venus, hid him in a thick cloud of darkness and carried him to his own house, where Helen of the fair hands found him and said to him, ‘Would that thou hadst perished, conquered by that great warrior who was my lord! Go forth again and challenge him to fight thee face to face.’ But Paris had no more desire to fight, and the Goddess threatened Helen, and compelled her to remain with him in Troy, coward as he had proved himself. Yet on other days Paris fought well; it seems that he was afraid of Menelaus because, in his heart, he was ashamed of himself.

Meanwhile Menelaus was seeking for Paris everywhere, and the Trojans, who hated him, would have shown his hiding place. But they knew not where he was, and the Greeks claimed the victory, and thought that, as Paris had the worst of the fight, Helen would be restored to them, and they would all sail home.

V

TROJAN VICTORIES

The war might now have ended, but an evil and foolish thought came to Pandarus, a prince of Ida, who fought for the Trojans. He chose to shoot an arrow at Menelaus, contrary to the sworn vows of peace, and the arrow pierced the breastplate of Menelaus through the place where the clasped plates meet, and drew his blood. Then Agamemnon, who loved his brother dearly, began to lament, saying that, if he died, the army would all go home and Trojans would dance on the grave of Menelaus. ‘Do not alarm all our army,’ said Menelaus, ‘the arrow has done me little harm;’ and so it proved, for the surgeon easily drew the arrow out of the wound.

Then Agamemnon hastened here and there, bidding the Greeks arm and attack the Trojans, who would certainly be defeated, for they had broken the oaths of peace. But with his usual insolence he chose to accuse Ulysses and Diomede of cowardice, though Diomede was as brave as any man, and Ulysses had just prevented the whole army from launching their ships and going home. Ulysses answered him with spirit, but Diomede said nothing at the moment; later he spoke his mind. He leaped from his chariot, and all the chiefs leaped down and advanced in line, the chariots following them, while the spearmen and bowmen followed the chariots. The Trojan army advanced, all shouting in their different languages, but the Greeks came on silently. Then the two front lines clashed, shield against shield, and the noise was like the roaring of many flooded torrents among the hills. When a man fell he who had slain him tried to strip off his armour, and his friends fought over his body to save the dead from this dishonour.

Ulysses fought above a wounded friend, and drove his spear through head and helmet of a Trojan prince, and everywhere men were falling beneath spears and arrows and heavy stones which the warriors threw. Here Menelaus speared the man who built the ships with which Paris had sailed to Greece; and the dust rose like a cloud, and a mist went up from the fighting men, while Diomede stormed across the plain like a river in flood, leaving dead bodies behind him as the river leaves boughs of trees and grass to mark its course. Pandarus wounded Diomede with an arrow, but Diomede slew him, and the Trojans were being driven in flight, when Sarpedon and Hector turned and hurled themselves on the Greeks;

and even Diomede shuddered when Hector came on, and charged at Ulysses, who was slaying Trojans as he went, and the battle swayed this way and that, and the arrows fell like rain.

But Hector was sent into the city to bid the women pray to the goddess Athênê for help, and he went to the house of Paris, whom Helen was imploring to go and fight like a man, saying: ‘Would that the winds had wafted me away, and the tides drowned me, shameless that I am, before these things came to pass!’

Then Hector went to see his dear wife, Andromache, whose father had been slain by Achilles early in the siege, and he found her and her nurse carrying her little boy, Hector’s son, and like a star upon her bosom lay his beautiful and shining golden head. Now, while Helen urged Paris to go into the fight, Andromache prayed Hector to stay with her in the town, and fight no more lest he should be slain and leave her a widow, and the boy an orphan, with none to protect him. The army, she said, should come back within the walls, where they had so long been safe, not fight in the open plain. But Hector answered that he would never shrink from battle, ‘yet I know this in my heart, the day shall come for holy Troy to be laid low, and Priam and the people of Priam. But this and my own death do not trouble me so much as the thought of you, when you shall be carried as a slave to Greece, to spin at another woman’s bidding, and bear water from a Grecian well. May the heaped up earth of my tomb cover me ere I hear thy cries and the tale of thy captivity.’

Then Hector stretched out his hands to his little boy, but the child was afraid when he saw the great glittering helmet of his father and the nodding horsehair crest. So Hector laid his helmet on the ground and dandled the child in his arms, and tried to comfort his wife, and said good-bye for the last time, for he never came back to Troy alive. He went on his way back to the battle, and Paris went with him, in glorious armour, and soon they were slaying the princes of the Greeks.

The battle raged till nightfall, and in the night the Greeks and Trojans burned their dead; and the Greeks made a trench and wall round their camp, which they needed for safety now that the Trojans came from their town and fought in the open plain.

Next day the Trojans were so successful that they did not retreat behind their walls at night, but lit great fires on the plain: a thousand fires, with fifty men taking supper round each of them, and drinking their wine to the music of flutes. But the Greeks were much discouraged, and Agamemnon called the whole army together, and proposed that they should launch their ships in the night and sail away home. Then Diomede stood up, and said: ‘You called me a coward lately. You are the coward! Sail away if you are afraid to remain here, but all the rest of us will fight till we take Troy town.’

Then all shouted in praise of Diomede, and Nestor advised them to send five hundred young men, under his own son, Thrasymedes, to watch the Trojans, and guard the new wall and the ditch, in case the Trojans attacked them in the darkness. Next Nestor counselled Agamemnon to send Ulysses and Aias to Achilles, and promise to give back Briseis, and rich presents of gold, and beg pardon for his insolence. If Achilles would be friends again with Agamemnon, and fight as he used to fight, the Trojans would soon be driven back into the town.

Agamemnon was very ready to beg pardon, for he feared that the whole army would be defeated, and cut off from their ships, and killed or kept as slaves. So Ulysses and Aias and the old tutor of Achilles, Phoenix, went to Achilles and argued with him, praying him to accept the rich presents, and help the Greeks. But Achilles answered that he did not believe a word that Agamemnon said; Agamemnon had always hated him, and always would hate him. No; he would not cease to be angry, he would sail away next day with all his men, and he advised the rest to come with him. ‘Why be so fierce?’ said tall Aias, who seldom spoke. ‘Why make so much trouble about one girl? We offer you seven girls, and plenty of other gifts.’

Then Achilles said that he would not sail away next day, but he would not fight till the Trojans tried to burn his own ships, and there he thought that Hector would find work enough to do. This was the most that Achilles would promise, and all the Greeks were silent when Ulysses delivered his message. But Diomede arose and said that, with or without Achilles, fight they must; and all men, heavy at heart, went to sleep in their huts or in the open air at their doors.

Agamemnon was much too anxious to sleep. He saw the glow of the thousand fires of the Trojans in the dark, and heard their merry flutes, and he groaned and pulled out his long hair by handfuls. When he was tired of crying and groaning and tearing his hair, he thought that he would go for advice to old Nestor. He threw a lion skin, the coverlet of his bed, over his shoulder, took his spear, went out and met Menelaus — for he, too, could not sleep — and Menelaus proposed to send a spy among the Trojans, if any man were brave enough to go, for the Trojan camp was all alight with fires, and the adventure was dangerous. Therefore the two wakened Nestor and the other chiefs, who came just as they were, wrapped in the fur coverlets of their beds, without any armour. First they visited the five hundred young men set to watch the wall, and then they crossed the ditch and sat down outside and considered what might be done. ‘Will nobody go as a spy among the Trojans?’ said Nestor; he meant would none of the young men go. Diomede said that he would take the risk if any other man would share it with him, and, if he might choose a companion, he would take Ulysses.

‘Come, then, let us be going,’ said Ulysses, ‘for the night is late, and the dawn is near.’ As these two chiefs had no armour on, they borrowed shields and leather caps from the young men of the guard, for leather would not shine as bronze helmets shine in the firelight. The cap lent to Ulysses was strengthened outside with rows of boars’ tusks. Many of these tusks, shaped for this purpose, have been found, with swords and armour, in a tomb in Mycenae, the town of Agamemnon. This cap which was lent to Ulysses had once been stolen by his grandfather, Autolycus, who was a Master Thief, and he gave it as a present to a friend, and so, through several hands, it had come to young Meriones of Crete, one of the five hundred guards, who now lent it to Ulysses. So the two princes set forth in the dark, so dark it was that though they heard a heron cry, they could not see it as it flew away.

While Ulysses and Diomede stole through the night silently, like two wolves among the bodies of dead men, the Trojan leaders met and considered what they ought to do. They did not know whether the Greeks had set sentinels and outposts, as usual, to give warning if the enemy were approaching; or whether they were too weary to keep a good watch; or whether perhaps they were getting ready their ships to sail homewards in the dawn. So Hector offered a reward to any man who would creep through the night and spy on the Greeks; he said he would give the spy the two best horses in the Greek camp.

Now among the Trojans there was a young man named Dolon, the son of a rich father, and he was the only boy in a family of five sisters. He was ugly, but a very swift runner, and he cared for horses more than for anything else in the world. Dolon arose and said, ‘If you will swear to give me the horses and chariot of Achilles, son of Peleus, I will steal to the hut of Agamemnon and listen and find out whether the Greeks mean to fight or flee.’ Hector swore to give these horses, which were the best in the world, to Dolon, so he took his bow and threw a grey wolf’s hide over his shoulders, and ran towards the ships of the Greeks.

Now Ulysses saw Dolon as he came, and said to Diomede, ‘Let us suffer him to pass us, and then do you keep driving him with your spear towards the ships, and away from Troy.’ So Ulysses and Diomede lay down among the dead men who had fallen in the battle, and Dolon ran on past them towards the Greeks. Then they rose and chased him as two greyhounds course a hare, and, when Dolon was near the sentinels, Diomede cried ‘Stand, or I will slay you with my spear!’ and he threw his spear just over Dolon’s shoulder. So Dolon stood still, green with fear, and with his teeth chattering. When the two came up, he cried, and said that his father was a rich man, who would pay much gold, and bronze, and iron for his ransom.

Ulysses said, ‘Take heart, and put death out of your mind, and tell us what you are doing here.’ Dolon said that Hector had promised him the horses of Achilles if he would go and spy on the Greeks. ‘You set your hopes high,’ said Ulysses, ‘for the horses of Achilles are not earthly steeds, but divine; a gift of the Gods, and Achilles alone can drive them. But, tell me, do the Trojans keep good watch, and where is Hector with his horses?’ for Ulysses thought that it would be a great adventure to drive away the horses of Hector.

‘Hector is with the chiefs, holding council at the tomb of Ilus,’ said Dolon; ‘but no regular guard is set. The people of Troy, indeed, are round their watch fires, for they have to think of the safety of their wives and children; but the allies from far lands keep no watch, for their wives and children are safe at home.’ Then he told where all the different peoples who fought for Priam had their stations; but, said he, ‘if you want to steal horses, the best are those of Rhesus, King of the Thracians, who has only joined us to-night. He and his men are asleep at the furthest end of the line, and his horses are the best and greatest that ever I saw: tall, white as snow, and swift as the wind, and his chariot is adorned with gold and silver, and golden is his armour. Now take me prisoner to the ships, or bind me and leave me here while you go and try whether I have told you truth or lies.’

‘No,’ said Diomede, ‘if I spare your life you may come spying again,’ and he drew his sword and smote off the head of Dolon. They hid his cap and bow and spear where they could find them easily, and marked the spot, and went through the night to the dark camp of King Rhesus, who had no watch-fire and no guards. Then Diomede silently stabbed each sleeping man to the heart, and Ulysses seized the dead by the feet and threw them aside lest they should frighten the horses, which had never been in battle, and would shy if they were led over the bodies of dead men. Last of all Diomede killed King Rhesus, and Ulysses led forth his horses, beating them with his bow, for he had forgotten to take the whip from the chariot. Then Ulysses and Diomede leaped on the backs of the horses, as they had not time to bring away the chariot, and they galloped to the ships, stopping to pick up the spear, and bow, and cap of Dolon. They rode to the princes, who welcomed them, and all laughed for glee when they saw the white horses and heard that King Rhesus was dead, for they guessed that all his army would now go home to Thrace. This they must have done, for we never hear of them in the battles that followed, so Ulysses and Diomede deprived the Trojans of thousands of men. The other princes went to bed in good spirits, but Ulysses and Diomede took a swim in the sea, and then went into hot baths, and so to breakfast, for rosy-fingered Dawn was coming up the sky.

VI

BATTLE AT THE SHIPS

With dawn Agamemnon awoke, and fear had gone out of his heart. He put on his armour, and arrayed the chiefs on foot in front of their chariots, and behind them came the spearmen, with the bowmen and slingers on the wings of the army. Then a great black cloud spread over the sky, and red was the rain that fell from it. The Trojans gathered on a height in the plain, and Hector, shining in armour, went here and there, in front and rear, like a star that now gleams forth and now is hidden in a cloud.

The armies rushed on each other and hewed each other down, as reapers cut their way through a field of tall corn. Neither side gave ground, though the helmets of the bravest Trojans might be seen deep in the ranks of the Greeks; and the swords of the bravest Greeks rose and fell in the ranks of the Trojans, and all the while the arrows showered like rain. But at noon-day, when the weary woodman rests from cutting trees, and takes his dinner in the quiet hills, the Greeks of the first line made a charge, Agamemnon running in front of them, and he speared two Trojans, and took their breastplates, which he laid in his chariot, and then he speared one brother of Hector and struck another down with his sword, and killed two more who vainly asked to be made prisoners of war. Footmen slew footmen, and chariot men slew chariot men, and they broke into the Trojan line as fire falls on a forest in a windy day, leaping and roaring and racing through the trees. Many an empty chariot did the horses hurry madly through the field, for the charioteers were lying dead, with the greedy vultures hovering above them, flapping their wide wings. Still Agamemnon followed and slew the hindmost Trojans, but the rest fled till they came to the gates, and the oak tree that grew outside the gates, and there they stopped.

But Hector held his hands from fighting, for in the meantime he was making his men face the enemy and form up in line and take breath, and was encouraging them, for they had retreated from the wall of the Greeks across the whole plain, past the hill that was the tomb of Ilus, a king of old, and past the place of the wild fig-tree. Much ado had Hector to rally the Trojans, but he knew that when men do turn again they are hard to beat. So it proved, for when the Trojans had rallied and formed in line, Agamemnon slew a Thracian chief who had come to fight for Troy before King Rhesus came. But the eldest brother of the slain man smote Agamemnon through the arm with his spear, and, though Agamemnon slew him in turn, his wound bled much and he was in great pain, so he leaped into his chariot and was driven back to the ships.

Then Hector gave the word to charge, as a huntsman cries on his hounds against a lion, and he rushed forward at the head of the Trojan line, slaying as he went. Nine chiefs of the Greeks he slew, and fell upon the spearmen and scattered them, as the spray of the waves is scattered by the wandering wind.

Now the ranks of the Greeks were broken, and they would have been driven among their ships and killed without mercy, had not Ulysses and Diomede stood firm in the centre, and slain four Trojan leaders. The Greeks began to come back and face their enemies in line of battle again, though Hector, who had been fighting on the Trojan right, rushed against them. But Diomede took good aim with his spear at the helmet of Hector, and struck it fairly. The spear-point did not go through the helmet, but Hector was stunned and fell; and, when he came to himself, he leaped into his chariot, and his squire drove him against the Pylians and Cretans, under Nestor and Idomeneus, who were on the left wing of the Greek army. Then Diomede fought on till Paris, who stood beside the pillar on the hillock that was the tomb of old King Ilus, sent an arrow clean through his foot. Ulysses went and stood in front of Diomede, who sat down, and Ulysses drew the arrow from his foot, and Diomede stepped into his chariot and was driven back to the ships.

Ulysses was now the only Greek chief that still fought in the centre. The Greeks all fled, and he was alone in the crowd of Trojans, who rushed on him as hounds and hunters press round a wild boar that stands at bay in a wood. ‘They are cowards that flee from the fight,’ said Ulysses to himself; ‘but I will stand here, one man against a multitude.’ He covered the front of his body with his great shield, that hung by a belt round his neck, and he smote four Trojans and wounded a fifth. But the brother of the wounded man drove a spear through the shield and breastplate of Ulysses, and tore clean through his side. Then Ulysses turned on this Trojan, and he fled, and Ulysses sent a spear through his shoulder and out at his breast, and he died. Ulysses dragged from his own side the spear that had wounded him, and called thrice with a great voice to the other Greeks, and Menelaus and Aias rushed to rescue him, for many Trojans were round him, like jackals round a wounded stag that a man has struck with an arrow. But Aias ran and covered the wounded Ulysses with his huge shield till he could climb into the chariot of Menelaus, who drove him back to the ships.

Meanwhile, Hector was slaying the Greeks on the left of their battle, and Paris struck the Greek surgeon, Machaon, with an arrow; and Idomeneus bade Nestor put Machaon in his chariot and drive him to Nestor’s hut, where his wound might be tended. Meanwhile, Hector sped to the centre of the line, where Aias was slaying the Trojans; but Eurypylus, a Greek chief, was wounded by an arrow from the bow of Paris, and his friends guarded him with their shields and spears.

Thus the best of the Greeks were wounded and out of the battle, save Aias, and the spearmen were in flight. Meanwhile Achilles was standing by the stern of his ship watching the defeat of the Greeks, but when he saw Machaon being carried past, sorely wounded, in the chariot of Nestor, he bade his friend Patroclus, whom he loved better than all the rest, to go and ask how Machaon did. He was sitting drinking wine with Nestor when Patroclus came, and Nestor told Patroclus how many of the chiefs were wounded, and though Patroclus was in a hurry Nestor began a very long story about his own great deeds of war, done when he was a young man. At last he bade Patroclus tell Achilles that, if he would not fight himself, he should at least send out his men under Patroclus, who should wear the splendid armour of Achilles. Then the Trojans would think that Achilles himself had returned to the battle, and they would be afraid, for none of them dared to meet Achilles hand to hand.

So Patroclus ran off to Achilles; but, on his way, he met the wounded Eurypylus, and he took him to his hut and cut the arrow out of his thigh with a knife, and washed the wound with warm water, and rubbed over it a bitter root to take the pain away. Thus he waited for some time with Eurypylus, but the advice of Nestor was in the end to cause the death of Patroclus. The battle now raged more fiercely, while Agamemnon and Diomede and Ulysses could only limp about leaning on their spears; and again Agamemnon wished to moor the ships near shore, and embark in the night and run away. But Ulysses was very angry with him, and said: ‘You should lead some other inglorious army, not us, who will fight on till every soul of us perish, rather than flee like cowards! Be silent, lest the soldiers hear you speaking of flight, such words as no man should utter. I wholly scorn your counsel, for the Greeks will lose heart if, in the midst of battle, you bid them launch the ships.’

Agamemnon was ashamed, and, by Diomede’s advice, the wounded kings went down to the verge of the war to encourage the others, though they were themselves unable to fight. They rallied the Greeks, and Aias led them and struck Hector full in the breast with a great rock, so that his friends carried him out of the battle to the river side, where they poured water over him, but he lay fainting on the ground, the black blood gushing up from his mouth. While Hector lay there, and all men thought that he would die, Aias and Idomeneus were driving back the Trojans, and it seemed that, even without Achilles and his men, the Greeks were able to hold their own against the Trojans. But the battle was never lost while Hector lived. People in those days believed in ‘omens:’ they thought that the appearance of birds on the right or left hand meant good or bad luck. Once during the battle a Trojan showed Hector an unlucky bird, and wanted him to retreat into the town. But Hector said, ‘One omen is the best: to fight for our own country.’ While Hector lay between death and life the Greeks were winning, for the Trojans had no other great chief to lead them. But Hector awoke from his faint, and leaped to his feet and ran here and there, encouraging the men of Troy. Then the most of the Greeks fled when they saw him; but Aias and Idomeneus, and the rest of the bravest, formed in a square between the Trojans and the ships, and down on them came Hector and Aeneas and Paris, throwing their spears, and slaying on every hand. The Greeks turned and ran, and the Trojans would have stopped to strip the armour from the slain men, but Hector cried: ‘Haste to the ships and leave the spoils of war. I will slay any man who lags behind!’

On this, all the Trojans drove their chariots down into the ditch that guarded the ships of the Greeks, as when a great wave sweeps at sea over the side of a vessel; and the Greeks were on the ship decks, thrusting with very long spears, used in sea fights, and the Trojans were boarding the ships, and striking with swords and axes. Hector had a lighted torch and tried to set fire to the ship of Aias; but Aias kept him back with the long spear, and slew a Trojan, whose lighted torch fell from his hand. And Aias kept shouting: ‘Come on, and drive away Hector; it is not to a dance that he is calling his men, but to battle.’

The dead fell in heaps, and the living ran over them to mount the heaps of slain and climb the ships. Hector rushed forward like a sea wave against a great steep rock, but like the rock stood the Greeks; still the Trojans charged past the beaks of the foremost ships, while Aias, thrusting with a spear more than twenty feet long, leaped from deck to deck like a man that drives four horses abreast, and leaps from the back of one to the back of another. Hector seized with his hand the stern of the ship of Protesilaus, the prince whom Paris shot when he leaped ashore on the day when the Greeks first landed; and Hector kept calling: ‘Bring fire!’ and even Aias, in this strange sea fight on land, left the decks and went below, thrusting with his spear through the portholes. Twelve men lay dead who had brought fire against the ship which Aias guarded.

VII

THE SLAYING AND AVENGING OF PATROCLUS

At this moment, when torches were blazing round the ships, and all seemed lost, Patroclus came out of the hut of Eurypylus, whose wound he had been tending, and he saw that the Greeks were in great danger, and ran weeping to Achilles. ‘Why do you weep,’ said Achilles, ‘like a little girl that runs by her mother’s side, and plucks at her gown and looks at her with tears in her eyes, till her mother takes her up in her arms? Is there bad news from home that your father is dead, or mine; or are you sorry that the Greeks are getting what they deserve for their folly?’ Then Patroclus told Achilles how Ulysses and many other princes were wounded and could not fight, and begged to be allowed to put on Achilles’ armour and lead his men, who were all fresh and unwearied, into the battle, for a charge of two thousand fresh warriors might turn the fortune of the day.

Then Achilles was sorry that he had sworn not to fight himself till Hector brought fire to his own ships. He would lend Patroclus his armour, and his horses, and his men; but Patroclus must only drive the Trojans from the ships, and not pursue them. At this moment Aias was weary, so many spears smote his armour, and he could hardly hold up his great shield, and Hector cut off his spearhead with the sword; the bronze head fell ringing on the ground, and Aias brandished only the pointless shaft. So he shrank back and fire blazed all over his ship; and Achilles saw it, and smote his thigh, and bade Patroclus make haste. Patroclus armed himself in the shining armour of Achilles, which all Trojans feared, and leaped into the chariot where Automedon, the squire, had harnessed Xanthus and Balius, two horses that were the children, men said, of the West Wind, and a led horse was harnessed beside them in the side traces. Meanwhile the two thousand men of Achilles, who were called Myrmidons, had met in armour, five companies of four hundred apiece, under five chiefs of noble names. Forth they came, as eager as a pack of wolves that have eaten a great red deer and run to slake their thirst with the dark water of a well in the hills.

So all in close array, helmet touching helmet and shield touching shield, like a moving wall of shining bronze, the men of Achilles charged, and Patroclus in the chariot led the way. Down they came at full speed on the flank of the Trojans, who saw the leader, and knew the bright armour and the horses of the terrible Achilles, and thought that he had returned to the war. Then each Trojan looked round to see by what way he could escape, and when men do that in battle they soon run by the way they have chosen. Patroclus rushed to the ship of Protesilaus, and slew the leader of the Trojans there, and drove them out, and quenched the fire; while they of Troy drew back from the ships, and Aias and the other unwounded Greek princes leaped among them, smiting with sword and spear. Well did Hector know that the break in the battle had come again; but even so he stood, and did what he might, while the Trojans were driven back in disorder across the ditch, where the poles of many chariots were broken and the horses fled loose across the plain.

The horses of Achilles cleared the ditch, and Patroclus drove them between the Trojans and the wall of their own town, slaying many men, and, chief of all, Sarpedon, king of the Lycians; and round the body of Sarpedon the Trojans rallied under Hector, and the fight swayed this way and that, and there was such a noise of spears and swords smiting shields and helmets as when many woodcutters fell trees in a glen of the hills. At last the Trojans gave way, and the Greeks stripped the armour from the body of brave Sarpedon; but men say that Sleep and Death, like two winged angels, bore his body away to his own country. Now Patroclus forgot how Achilles had told him not to pursue the Trojans across the plain, but to return when he had driven them from the ships. On he raced, slaying as he went, even till he reached the foot of the wall of Troy. Thrice he tried to climb it, but thrice he fell back.

Hector was in his chariot in the gateway, and he bade his squire lash his horses into the war, and struck at no other man, great or small, but drove straight against Patroclus, who stood and threw a heavy stone at Hector; which missed him, but killed his charioteer. Then Patroclus leaped on the charioteer to strip his armour, but Hector stood over the body, grasping it by the head, while Patroclus dragged at the feet, and spears and arrows flew in clouds around the fallen man. At last, towards sunset, the Greeks drew him out of the war, and Patroclus thrice charged into the thick of the Trojans. But the helmet of Achilles was loosened in the fight, and fell from the head of Patroclus, and he was wounded from behind, and Hector, in front, drove his spear clean through his body. With his last breath Patroclus prophesied: ‘Death stands near thee, Hector, at the hands of noble Achilles.’ But Automedon was driving back the swift horses, carrying to Achilles the news that his dearest friend was slain.

After Ulysses was wounded, early in this great battle, he was not able to fight for several days, and, as the story is about Ulysses, we must tell quite shortly how Achilles returned to the war to take vengeance for Patroclus, and how he slew Hector. When Patroclus fell, Hector seized the armour which the Gods had given to Peleus, and Peleus to his son Achilles, while Achilles had lent it to

Patroclus that he might terrify the Trojans. Retiring out of reach of spears, Hector took off his own armour and put on that of Achilles, and Greeks and Trojans fought for the dead body of Patroclus. Then Zeus, the chief of the Gods, looked down and said that Hector should never come home out of the battle to his wife, Andromache. But Hector returned into the fight around the dead Patroclus, and here all the best men fought, and even Automedon, who had been driving the chariot of Patroclus. Now when the Trojans seemed to have the better of the fight, the Greeks sent Antilochus, a son of old Nestor, to tell Achilles that his friend was slain, and Antilochus ran, and Aias and his brother protected the Greeks who were trying to carry the body of Patroclus back to the ships.

Swiftly Antilochus came running to Achilles, saying: ‘Fallen is Patroclus, and they are fighting round his naked body, for Hector has his armour.’ Then Achilles said never a word, but fell on the floor of his hut, and threw black ashes on his yellow hair, till Antilochus seized his hands, fearing that he would cut his own throat with his dagger, for very sorrow. His mother, Thetis, arose from the sea to comfort him, but he said that he desired to die if he could not slay Hector, who had slain his friend. Then Thetis told him that he could not fight without armour, and now he had none; but she would go to the God of armour-making and bring from him such a shield and helmet and breastplate as had never been seen by men.

Meanwhile the fight raged round the dead body of Patroclus, which was defiled with blood and dust, near the ships, and was being dragged this way and that, and torn and wounded. Achilles could not bear this sight, yet his mother had warned him not to enter without armour the battle where stones and arrows and spears were flying like hail; and he was so tall and broad that he could put on the arms of no other man. So he went down to the ditch as he was, unarmed, and as he stood high above it, against the red sunset, fire seemed to flow from his golden hair like the beacon blaze that soars into the dark sky when an island town is attacked at night, and men light beacons that their neighbours may see them and come to their help from other isles. There Achilles stood in a splendour of fire, and he shouted aloud, as clear as a clarion rings when men fall on to attack a besieged city wall. Thrice Achilles shouted mightily, and thrice the horses of the Trojans shuddered for fear and turned back from the onslaught, and thrice the men of Troy were confounded and shaken with terror. Then the Greeks drew the body of Patroclus out of the dust and the arrows, and laid him on a bier, and Achilles followed, weeping, for he had sent his friend with chariot and horses to the war; but home again he welcomed him never more. Then the sun set and it was night.

Now one of the Trojans wished Hector to retire within the walls of Troy, for certainly Achilles would to-morrow be foremost in the war. But Hector said, ‘Have ye not had your fill of being shut up behind walls? Let Achilles fight; I will meet him in the open field.’ The Trojans cheered, and they camped in the plain, while in the hut of Achilles women washed the dead body of Patroclus, and Achilles swore that he would slay Hector.

In the dawn came Thetis, bearing to Achilles the new splendid armour that the God had made for him. Then Achilles put on that armour, and roused his men; but Ulysses, who knew all the rules of honour, would not let him fight till peace had been made, with a sacrifice and other ceremonies, between him and Agamemnon, and till Agamemnon had given him all the presents which Achilles had before refused. Achilles did not want them; he wanted only to fight, but Ulysses made him obey, and do what was usual. Then the gifts were brought, and Agamemnon stood up, and said that he was sorry for his insolence, and the men took breakfast, but Achilles would neither eat nor drink. He mounted his chariot, but the horse Xanthus bowed his head till his long mane touched the ground, and, being a fairy horse, the child of the West Wind, he spoke (or so men said), and these were his words: ‘We shall bear thee swiftly and speedily, but thou shalt be slain in fight, and thy dying day is near at hand.’ ‘Well I know it,’ said Achilles, ‘but I will not cease from fighting till I have given the Trojans their fill of war.’

So all that day he chased and slew the Trojans. He drove them into the river, and, though the river came down in a red flood, he crossed, and slew them on the plain. The plain caught fire, the bushes and long dry grass blazed round him, but he fought his way through the fire, and drove the Trojans to their walls. The gates were thrown open, and the Trojans rushed through like frightened fawns, and then they climbed to the battlements, and looked down in safety, while the whole Greek army advanced in line under their shields.

But Hector stood still, alone, in front of the gate, and old Priam, who saw Achilles rushing on, shining like a star in his new armour, called with tears to Hector, ‘Come within the gate! This man has slain many of my sons, and if he slays thee whom have I to help me in my old age?’ His mother also called to Hector, but he stood firm, waiting for Achilles. Now the story says that he was afraid, and ran thrice in full armour round Troy, with Achilles in pursuit. But this cannot be true, for no mortal men could run thrice, in heavy armour, with great shields that clanked against their ankles, round the town of Troy: moreover Hector was the bravest of men, and all the Trojan women were looking down at him from the walls.

We cannot believe that he ran away, and the story goes on to tell that he asked Achilles to make an agreement with him. The conqueror in the fight should give back the body of the fallen to be buried by his friends, but should keep his armour. But Achilles said that he could make no agreement with Hector, and threw his spear, which flew over Hector’s shoulder. Then Hector threw his spear, but it could not pierce the shield which the God had made for Achilles. Hector had no other spear, and Achilles had one, so Hector cried, ‘Let me not die without honour!’ and drew his sword, and rushed at Achilles, who sprang to meet him, but before Hector could come within a sword-stroke Achilles had sent his spear clean through the neck of Hector. He fell in the dust and Achilles said, ‘Dogs and birds shall tear your flesh unburied.’ With his dying breath Hector prayed him to take gold from Priam, and give back his body to be burned in Troy. But Achilles said, ‘Hound! would that I could bring myself to carve and eat thy raw flesh, but dogs shall devour it, even if thy father offered me thy weight in gold.’ With his last words Hector prophesied and said, ‘Remember me in the day when Paris shall slay thee in the Scaean gate.’ Then his brave soul went to the land of the Dead, which the Greeks called Hades. To that land Ulysses sailed while he was still a living man, as the story tells later.

Then Achilles did a dreadful deed; he slit the feet of dead Hector from heel to ankle, and thrust thongs through, and bound him by the thongs to his chariot and trailed the body in the dust. All the women of Troy who were on the walls raised a shriek, and Hector’s wife, Andromache, heard the sound. She had been in an inner room of her house, weaving a purple web, and embroidering flowers on it, and she was calling her bower maidens to make ready a bath for Hector when he should come back tired from battle. But when she heard the cry from the wall she trembled, and the shuttle with which she was weaving fell from her hands. ‘Surely I heard the cry of my husband’s mother,’ she said, and she bade two of her maidens come with her to see why the people lamented.

She ran swiftly, and reached the battlements, and thence she saw her dear husband’s body being whirled through the dust towards the ships, behind the chariot of Achilles. Then night came over her eyes and she fainted. But when she returned to herself she cried out that now none would defend her little boy, and other children would push him away from feasts, saying, ‘Out with you; no father of thine is at our table,’ and his father, Hector, would lie naked at the ships, unclad, unburned, unlamented. To be unburned and unburied was thought the greatest of misfortunes, because the dead man unburned could not go into the House of Hades, God of the Dead, but must always wander, alone and comfortless, in the dark borderland between the dead and the living.

VIII

THE CRUELTY OF ACHILLES, AND THE RANSOMING OF HECTOR

When Achilles was asleep that night the ghost of Patroclus came, saying, ‘Why dost thou not burn and bury me? for the other shadows of dead men suffer me not to come near them, and lonely I wander along the dark dwelling of Hades.’ Then Achilles awoke, and he sent men to cut down trees, and make a huge pile of fagots and logs. On this they laid Patroclus, covered with white linen, and then they slew many cattle, and Achilles cut the throats of twelve Trojan prisoners of war, meaning to burn them with Patroclus to do him honour. This was a deed of shame, for Achilles was mad with sorrow and anger for the death of his friend. Then they drenched with wine the great pile of wood, which was thirty yards long and broad, and set fire to it, and the fire blazed all through the night and died down in the morning. They put the white bones of Patroclus in a golden casket, and laid it in the hut of Achilles, who said that, when he died, they must burn his body, and mix the ashes with the ashes of his friend, and build over it a chamber of stone, and cover the chamber with a great hill of earth, and set a pillar of stone above it. This is one of the hills on the plain of Troy, but the pillar has fallen from the tomb, long ago.

Then, as the custom was, Achilles held games — chariot races, foot races, boxing, wrestling, and archery — in honour of Patroclus. Ulysses won the prize for the foot race, and for the wrestling, so now his wound must have been healed.

But Achilles still kept trailing Hector’s dead body each day round the hill that had been raised for the tomb of Patroclus, till the Gods in heaven were angry, and bade Thetis tell her son that he must give back the dead body to Priam, and take ransom for it, and they sent a messenger to Priam to bid him redeem the body of his son. It was terrible for Priam to have to go and humble himself before Achilles, whose hands had been red with the blood of his sons, but he did not disobey the Gods. He opened his chests, and took out twenty-four beautiful embroidered changes of raiment; and he weighed out ten heavy bars, or talents, of gold, and chose a beautiful golden cup, and he called nine of his sons, Paris, and Helenus, and Deiphobus, and the rest, saying, ‘Go, ye bad sons, my shame; would that Hector lived and all of you were dead!’ for sorrow made him angry; ‘go, and get ready for me a wain, and lay on it these treasures.’ So they harnessed mules to the wain, and placed in it the treasures, and, after praying, Priam drove through the night to the hut of Achilles. In he went, when no man looked for him, and kneeled to Achilles, and kissed his terrible death-dealing hands. ‘Have pity on me, and fear the Gods, and give me back my dead son,’ he said, ‘and remember thine own father. Have pity on me, who have endured to do what no man born has ever done before, to kiss the hands that slew my sons.’

Then Achilles remembered his own father, far away, who now was old and weak: and he wept, and Priam wept with him, and then Achilles raised Priam from his knees and spoke kindly to him, admiring how beautiful he still was in his old age, and Priam himself wondered at the beauty of Achilles. And Achilles thought how Priam had long been rich and happy, like his own father, Peleus, and now old age and weakness and sorrow were laid upon both of them, for Achilles knew that his own day of death was at hand, even at the doors. So Achilles bade the women make ready the body of Hector for burial, and they clothed him in a white mantle that Priam had brought, and laid him in the wain; and supper was made ready, and Priam and Achilles ate and drank together, and the women spread a bed for Priam, who would not stay long, but stole away back to Troy while Achilles was asleep.

All the women came out to meet him, and to lament for Hector. They carried the body into the house of Andromache and laid it on a bed, and the women gathered around, and each in turn sang her song over the great dead warrior. His mother bewailed him, and his wife, and Helen of the fair hands, clad in dark mourning raiment, lifted up her white arms, and said: ‘Hector, of all my brethren in Troy thou wert the dearest, since Paris brought me hither. Would that ere that day I had died! For this is now the twentieth year since I came, and in all these twenty years never heard I a word from thee that was bitter and unkind; others might upbraid me, thy sisters or thy mother, for thy father was good to me as if he had been my own; but then thou wouldst restrain them that spoke evil by the courtesy of thy heart and thy gentle words. Ah! woe for thee, and woe for me, whom all men shudder at, for there is now none in wide Troyland to be my friend like thee, my brother and my friend!’

So Helen lamented, but now was done all that men might do; a great pile of wood was raised, and Hector was burned, and his ashes were placed in a golden urn, in a dark chamber of stone, within a hollow hill.

IX

HOW ULYSSES STOLE THE LUCK OF TROY

After Hector was buried, the siege went on slowly, as it had done during the first nine years of the war. The Greeks did not know at that time how to besiege a city, as we saw, by way of digging trenches and building towers, and battering the walls with machines that threw heavy stones. The Trojans had lost courage, and dared not go into the open plain, and they were waiting for the coming up of new armies of allies — the Amazons, who were girl warriors from far away, and an Eastern people called the Khita, whose king was Memnon, the son of the Bright Dawn.

Now everyone knew that, in the temple of the Goddess Pallas Athênê, in Troy, was a sacred image, which fell from heaven, called the Palladium, and this very ancient image was the Luck of Troy. While it remained safe in the temple people believed that Troy could never be taken, but as it was in a guarded temple in the middle of the town, and was watched by priestesses day and night, it seemed impossible that the Greeks should ever enter the city secretly and steal the Luck away.

As Ulysses was the grandson of Autolycus, the Master Thief, he often wished that the old man was with the Greeks, for if there was a thing to steal Autolycus could steal it. But by this time Autolycus was dead, and so Ulysses could only puzzle over the way to steal the Luck of Troy, and wonder how his grandfather would have set about it. He prayed for help secretly to Hermes, the God of Thieves, when he sacrificed goats to him, and at last he had a plan.

There was a story that Anius, the King of the Isle of Delos, had three daughters, named Œno, Spermo, and Elais, and that Œno could turn water into wine, while Spermo could turn stones into bread, and Elais could change mud into olive oil. Those fairy gifts, people said, were given to the maidens by the Wine God, Dionysus, and by the Goddess of Corn, Demeter. Now corn, and wine, and oil were sorely needed by the Greeks, who were tired of paying much gold and bronze to the Phoenician merchants for their supplies. Ulysses therefore went to Agamemnon one day, and asked leave to take his ship and voyage to Delos, to bring, if he could, the three maidens to the camp, if indeed they could do these miracles. As no fighting was going on, Agamemnon gave Ulysses leave to depart, so he went on board his ship, with a crew of fifty men of Ithaca, and away they sailed, promising to return in a month.

Two or three days after that, a dirty old beggar man began to be seen in the Greek camp. He had crawled in late one evening, dressed in a dirty smock and a very dirty old cloak, full of holes, and stained with smoke. Over everything he wore the skin of a stag, with half the hair worn off, and he carried a staff, and a filthy tattered wallet, to put food in, which swung from his neck by a cord. He came crouching and smiling up to the door of the hut of Diomede, and sat down just within the doorway, where beggars still sit in the East. Diomede saw him, and sent him a loaf and two handfuls of flesh, which the beggar laid on his wallet, between his feet, and he made his supper greedily, gnawing a bone like a dog.

After supper Diomede asked him who he was and whence he came, and he told a long story about how he had been a Cretan pirate, and had been taken prisoner by the Egyptians when he was robbing there, and how he had worked for many years in their stone quarries, where the sun had burned him brown, and had escaped by hiding among the great stones, carried down the Nile in a raft, for building a temple on the seashore. The raft arrived at night, and the beggar said that he stole out from it in the dark and found a Phoenician ship in the harbour, and the Phoenicians took him on board, meaning to sell him somewhere as a slave. But a tempest came on and wrecked the ship off the Isle of Tenedos, which is near Troy, and the beggar alone escaped to the island on a plank of the ship. From Tenedos he had come to Troy in a fisher’s boat, hoping to make himself useful in the camp, and earn enough to keep body and soul together till he could find a ship sailing to Crete.

He made his story rather amusing, describing the strange ways of the Egyptians; how they worshipped cats and bulls, and did everything in just the opposite of the Greek way of doing things. So Diomede let him have a rug and blankets to sleep on in the portico of the hut, and next day the old wretch went begging about the camp and talking with the soldiers. Now he was a most impudent and annoying old vagabond, and was always in quarrels. If there was a disagreeable story about the father or grandfather of any of the princes, he knew it and told it, so that he got a blow from the baton of Agamemnon, and Aias gave him a kick, and Idomeneus drubbed him with the butt of his spear for a tale about his grandmother, and everybody hated him and called him a nuisance. He was for ever jeering at Ulysses, who was far away, and telling tales about Autolycus, and at last he stole a gold cup, a very large cup, with two handles, and a dove sitting on each handle, from the hut of Nestor. The old chief was fond of this cup, which he had brought from home, and, when it was found in the beggar’s dirty wallet, everybody cried that he must be driven out of the camp and well whipped. So Nestor’s son, young Thrasymedes, with other young men, laughing and shouting, pushed and dragged the beggar close up to the Scaean gate of Troy, where Thrasymedes called with a loud voice, ‘O Trojans, we are sick of this shameless beggar. First we shall whip him well, and if he comes back we shall put out his eyes and cut off his hands and feet, and give him to the dogs to eat. He may go to you, if he likes; if not, he must wander till he dies of hunger.’

The young men of Troy heard this and laughed, and a crowd gathered on the wall to see the beggar punished. So Thrasymedes whipped him with his bowstring till he was tired, and they did not leave off beating the beggar till he ceased howling and fell, all bleeding, and lay still. Then Thrasymedes gave him a parting kick, and went away with his friends. The beggar lay quiet for some time, then he began to stir, and sat up, wiping the tears from his eyes, and shouting curses and bad words after the Greeks, praying that they might be speared in the back, and eaten by dogs.

At last he tried to stand up, but fell down again, and began to crawl on hands and knees towards the Scaean gate. There he sat down, within the two side walls of the gate, where he cried and lamented. Now Helen of the fair hands came down from the gate tower, being sorry to see any man treated so much worse than a beast, and she spoke to the beggar and asked him why he had been used in this cruel way?

At first he only moaned, and rubbed his sore sides, but at last he said that he was an unhappy man, who had been shipwrecked, and was begging his way home, and that the Greeks suspected him of being a spy sent out by the Trojans. But he had been in Lacedaemon, her own country, he said, and could tell her about her father, if she were, as he supposed, the beautiful Helen, and about her brothers, Castor and Polydeuces, and her little daughter, Hermione.

‘But perhaps,’ he said, ‘you are no mortal woman, but some goddess who favours the Trojans, and if indeed you are a goddess then I liken you to Aphrodite, for beauty, and stature, and shapeliness.’ Then Helen wept; for many a year had passed since she had heard any word of her father, and daughter, and her brothers, who were dead, though she knew it not. So she stretched out her white hand, and raised the beggar, who was kneeling at her feet, and bade him follow her to her own house, within the palace garden of King Priam.

Helen walked forward, with a bower maiden at either side, and the beggar crawling after her. When she had entered her house, Paris was not there, so she ordered the bath to be filled with warm water, and new clothes to be brought, and she herself washed the old beggar and anointed him with oil. This appears very strange to us, for though Saint Elizabeth of Hungary used to wash and clothe beggars, we are surprised that Helen should do so, who was not a saint. But long afterwards she herself told the son of Ulysses, Telemachus, that she had washed his father when he came into Troy disguised as a beggar who had been sorely beaten.

You must have guessed that the beggar was Ulysses, who had not gone to Delos in his ship, but stolen back in a boat, and appeared disguised among the Greeks. He did all this to make sure that nobody could recognise him, and he behaved so as to deserve a whipping that he might not be suspected as a Greek spy by the Trojans, but rather be pitied by them. Certainly he deserved his name of ‘the much-enduring Ulysses.’

Meanwhile he sat in his bath and Helen washed his feet. But when she had done, and had anointed his wounds with olive oil, and when she had clothed him in a white tunic and a purple mantle, then she opened her lips to cry out with amazement, for she knew Ulysses; but he laid his finger on her lips, saying ‘Hush!’ Then she remembered how great danger he was in, for the Trojans, if they found him, would put him to some cruel death, and she sat down, trembling and weeping, while he watched her.

‘Oh thou strange one,’ she said, ‘how enduring is thy heart and how cunning beyond measure! How hast thou borne to be thus beaten and disgraced, and to come within the walls of Troy? Well it is for thee that Paris, my lord, is far from home, having gone to guide Penthesilea, the Queen of the warrior maids whom men call Amazons, who is on her way to help the Trojans.’

Then Ulysses smiled, and Helen saw that she had said a word which she ought not to have spoken, and had revealed the secret hope of the Trojans. Then she wept, and said, ‘Oh cruel and cunning! You have made me betray the people with whom I live, though woe is me that ever I left my own people, and my husband dear, and my child! And now if you escape alive out of Troy, you will tell the Greeks, and they will lie in ambush by night for the Amazons on the way to Troy and will slay them all. If you and I were not friends long ago, I would tell the Trojans that you are here, and they would give your body to the dogs to eat, and fix your head on the palisade above the wall. Woe is me that ever I was born.’

Ulysses answered, ‘Lady, as you have said, we two are friends from of old, and your friend I will be till the last, when the Greeks break into Troy, and slay the men, and carry the women captives. If I live till that hour no man shall harm you, but safely and in honour you shall come to your palace in Lacedaemon of the rifted hills. Moreover, I swear to you a great oath, by Zeus above, and by Them that under earth punish the souls of men who swear falsely, that I shall tell no man the thing which you have spoken.’

So when he had sworn and done that oath, Helen was comforted and dried her tears. Then she told him how unhappy she was, and how she had lost her last comfort when Hector died. ‘Always am I wretched,’ she said, ‘save when sweet sleep falls on me. Now the wife of Thon, King of Egypt, gave me this gift when we were in Egypt, on our way to Troy, namely, a drug that brings sleep even to the most unhappy, and it is pressed from the poppy heads of the garland of the God of Sleep.’ Then she showed him strange phials of gold, full of this drug: phials wrought by the Egyptians, and covered with magic spells and shapes of beasts and flowers. ‘One of these I will give you,’ she said, ‘that even from Troy town you may not go without a gift in memory of the hands of Helen.’ So Ulysses took the phial of gold, and was glad in his heart, and Helen set before him meat and wine. When he had eaten and drunk, and his strength had come back to him, he said:

‘Now I must dress me again in my old rags, and take my wallet, and my staff, and go forth, and beg through Troy town. For here I must abide for some days as a beggar man, lest if I now escape from your house in the night the Trojans may think that you have told me the secrets of their counsel, which I am carrying to the Greeks, and may be angry with you.’ So he clothed himself again as a beggar, and took his staff, and hid the phial of gold with the Egyptian drug in his rags, and in his wallet also he put the new clothes that Helen had given him, and a sword, and he took farewell, saying, ‘Be of good heart, for the end of your sorrows is at hand. But if you see me among the beggars in the street, or by the well, take no heed of me, only I will salute you as a beggar who has been kindly treated by a Queen.’

So they parted, and Ulysses went out, and when it was day he was with the beggars in the streets, but by night he commonly slept near the fire of a smithy forge, as is the way of beggars. So for some days he begged, saying that he was gathering food to eat while he walked to some town far away that was at peace, where he might find work to do. He was not impudent now, and did not go to rich men’s houses or tell evil tales, or laugh, but he was much in the temples, praying to the Gods, and above all in the temple of Pallas Athênê. The Trojans thought that he was a pious man for a beggar.

Now there was a custom in these times that men and women who were sick or in distress, should sleep at night on the floors of the temples. They did this hoping that the God would send them a dream to show them how their diseases might be cured, or how they might find what they had lost, or might escape from their distresses.

Ulysses slept in more than one temple, and once in that of Pallas Athênê, and the priests and priestesses were kind to him, and gave him food in the morning when the gates of the temple were opened.

In the temple of Pallas Athênê, where the Luck of Troy lay always on her altar, the custom was that priestesses kept watch, each for two hours, all through the night, and soldiers kept guard within call. So one night Ulysses slept there, on the floor, with other distressed people, seeking for dreams from the Gods. He lay still all through the night till the turn of the last priestess came to watch. The priestess used to walk up and down with bare feet among the dreaming people, having a torch in her hand, and muttering hymns to the Goddess. Then Ulysses, when her back was turned, slipped the gold phial out of his rags, and let it lie on the polished floor beside him. When the priestess came back again, the light from her torch fell on the glittering phial, and she stooped and picked it up, and looked at it curiously. There came from it a sweet fragrance, and she opened it, and tasted the drug. It seemed to her the sweetest thing that ever she had tasted, and she took more and more, and then closed the phial and laid it down, and went along murmuring her hymn.

But soon a great drowsiness came over her, and she sat down on the step of the altar, and fell sound asleep, and the torch sunk in her hand, and went out, and all was dark. Then Ulysses put the phial in his wallet, and crept very cautiously to the altar, in the dark, and stole the Luck of Troy. It was only a small black mass of what is now called meteoric iron, which sometimes comes down with meteorites from the sky, but it was shaped like a shield, and the people thought it an image of the warlike shielded Goddess, fallen from Heaven. Such sacred shields, made of glass and ivory, are found deep in the earth in the ruined cities of Ulysses’ time. Swiftly Ulysses hid the Luck in his rags and left in its place on the altar a copy of the Luck, which he had made of blackened clay. Then he stole back to the place where he had lain, and remained there till dawn appeared, and the sleepers who sought for dreams awoke, and the temple gates were opened, and Ulysses walked out with the rest of them.

He stole down a lane, where as yet no people were stirring, and crept along, leaning on his staff, till he came to the eastern gate, at the back of the city, which the Greeks never attacked, for they had never drawn their army in a circle round the town. There Ulysses explained to the sentinels that he had gathered food enough to last for a long journey to some other town, and opened his bag, which seemed full of bread and broken meat. The soldiers said he was a lucky beggar, and let him out. He walked slowly along the waggon road by which wood was brought into Troy from the forests on Mount Ida, and when he found that nobody was within sight he slipped into the forest, and stole into a dark thicket, hiding beneath the tangled boughs. Here he lay and slept till evening, and then took the new clothes which Helen had given him out of his wallet, and put them on, and threw the belt of the sword over his shoulder, and hid the Luck of Troy in his bosom. He washed himself clean in a mountain brook, and now all who saw him must have known that he was no beggar, but Ulysses of Ithaca, Laertes' son.

So he walked cautiously down the side of the brook which ran between high banks deep in trees, and followed it till it reached the river Xanthus, on the left of the Greek lines. Here he found Greek sentinels set to guard the camp, who cried aloud in joy and surprise, for his ship had not yet returned from Delos, and they could not guess how Ulysses had come back alone across the sea. So two of the sentinels guarded Ulysses to the hut of Agamemnon, where he and Achilles and all the chiefs were sitting at a feast. They all leaped up, but when Ulysses took the Luck of Troy from within his mantle, they cried that this was the bravest deed that had been done in the war, and they sacrificed ten oxen to Zeus.

'So you were the old beggar,' said young Thrasymedes.

'Yes,' said Ulysses, 'and when next you beat a beggar, Thrasymedes, do not strike so hard and so long.'

That night all the Greeks were full of hope, for now they had the Luck of Troy, but the Trojans were in despair, and guessed that the beggar was the thief, and that Ulysses had been the beggar. The priestess, Theano, could tell them nothing; they found her, with the extinguished torch drooping in her hand, asleep, as she sat on the step of the altar, and she never woke again.

X

THE BATTLES WITH THE AMAZONS AND MEMNON — THE DEATH OF ACHILLES

Ulysses thought much and often of Helen, without whose kindness he could not have saved the Greeks by stealing the Luck of Troy. He saw that, though she remained as beautiful as when the princes all sought her hand, she was most unhappy, knowing herself to be the cause of so much misery, and fearing what the future might bring. Ulysses told nobody about the secret which she had let fall, the coming of the Amazons.

The Amazons were a race of warlike maids, who lived far away on the banks of the river Thermodon. They had fought against Troy in former times, and one of the great hill-graves on the plain of Troy covered the ashes of an Amazon, swift-footed Myrinê. People believed that they were the daughters of the God of War, and they were reckoned equal in battle to the bravest men. Their young Queen, Penthesilea, had two reasons for coming to fight at Troy: one was her ambition to win renown, and the other her sleepless sorrow for having accidentally killed her sister, Hippolytê, when hunting. The spear which she threw at a stag struck Hippolytê and slew her, and Penthesilea cared no longer for her own life, and desired to fall gloriously in battle. So Penthesilea and her bodyguard of twelve Amazons set forth from the wide streams of Thermodon, and rode into Troy. The story says that they did not drive in chariots, like all the Greek and Trojan chiefs, but rode horses, which must have been the manner of their country.

Penthesilea was the tallest and most beautiful of the Amazons, and shone among her twelve maidens like the moon among the stars, or the bright Dawn among the Hours which follow her chariot wheels. The Trojans rejoiced when they beheld her, for she looked both terrible and beautiful, with a frown on her brow, and fair shining eyes, and a blush on her cheeks. To the Trojans she came like Iris, the Rainbow, after a storm, and they gathered round her cheering, and throwing flowers and kissing her stirrup, as the people of Orleans welcomed Joan of Arc when she came to deliver them. Even Priam was glad, as is a man long blind, when he has been healed, and again looks upon the light of the sun. Priam held a great feast, and gave to Penthesilea many beautiful gifts: cups of gold, and embroideries, and a sword with a hilt of silver, and she vowed that she would slay Achilles. But when Andromache, the wife of Hector, heard her she said within herself, ‘Ah, unhappy girl, what is this boast of thine! Thou hast not the strength to fight the unconquerable son of Peleus, for if Hector could not slay him, what chance hast thou? But the piled-up earth covers Hector!’

In the morning Penthesilea sprang up from sleep and put on her glorious armour, with spear in hand, and sword at side, and bow and quiver hung behind her back, and her great shield covering her side from neck to stirrup, and mounted her horse, and galloped to the plain. Beside her charged the twelve maidens of her bodyguard, and all the company of Hector’s brothers and kinsfolk. These headed the Trojan lines, and they rushed towards the ships of the Greeks.

Then the Greeks asked each other, ‘Who is this that leads the Trojans as Hector led them, surely some God rides in the van of the charioteers!’ Ulysses could have told them who the new leader of the Trojans was, but it seems that he had not the heart to fight against women, for his name is not mentioned in this day’s battle. So the two lines clashed, and the plain of Troy ran red with blood, for Penthesilea slew Molios, and Persinoos, and Eilissos, and Antiphates, and Lernos high of heart, and Hippalmos of the loud warcry, and Haemonides, and strong Elasippus, while her maidens Derinoê and Cloniê slew each a chief of the Greeks. But Cloniê fell beneath the spear of Podarkes, whose hand Penthesilea cut off with the sword, while Idomeneus speared the Amazon Bremousa, and Meriones of Crete slew Evadrê, and Diomede killed Alcibiê and Derimacheia in close fight with the sword, so the company of the Twelve were thinned, the bodyguard of Penthesilea.

The Trojans and Greeks kept slaying each other, but Penthesilea avenged her maidens, driving the ranks of Greece as a lioness drives the cattle on the hills, for they could not stand before her. Then she shouted, ‘Dogs! to-day shall you pay for the sorrows of Priam! Where is Diomede, where is Achilles, where is Aias, that, men say, are your bravest? Will none of them stand before my spear?’ Then she charged again, at the head of the Household of Priam, brothers and kinsmen of Hector, and where they came the Greeks fell like yellow leaves before the wind of autumn. The white horse that Penthesilea rode, a gift from the wife of the North Wind, flashed like lightning through a dark cloud among the companies of the Greeks, and the chariots that followed the charge of the Amazon rocked as they swept over the bodies of the slain. Then the old Trojans, watching from the walls, cried: ‘This is no mortal maiden but a Goddess, and to-day she will burn the ships of the Greeks, and they will all perish in Troyland, and see Greece never more again.’

Now it so was that Aias and Achilles had not heard the din and the cry of war, for both had gone to weep over the great new grave of Patroclus. Penthesilea and the Trojans had driven back the Greeks within their ditch, and they were hiding here and there among the ships, and torches were blazing in men's hands to burn the ships, as in the day of the valour of Hector: when Aias heard the din of battle, and called to Achilles to make speed towards the ships.

So they ran swiftly to their huts, and armed themselves, and Aias fell smiting and slaying upon the Trojans, but Achilles slew five of the bodyguard of Penthesilea. She, beholding her maidens fallen, rode straight against Aias and Achilles, like a dove defying two falcons, and cast her spear, but it fell back blunted from the glorious shield that the God had made for the son of Peleus. Then she threw another spear at Aias, crying, 'I am the daughter of the God of War,' but his armour kept out the spear, and he and Achilles laughed aloud. Aias paid no more heed to the Amazon, but rushed against the Trojan men; while Achilles raised the heavy spear that none but he could throw, and drove it down through breastplate and breast of Penthesilea, yet still her hand grasped her sword-hilt. But, ere she could draw her sword, Achilles speared her horse, and horse and rider fell, and died in their fall.

There lay fair Penthesilea in the dust, like a tall poplar tree that the wind has overthrown, and her helmet fell, and the Greeks who gathered round marvelled to see her lie so beautiful in death, like Artemis, the Goddess of the Woods, when she sleeps alone, weary with hunting on the hills. Then the heart of Achilles was pierced with pity and sorrow, thinking how she might have been his wife in his own country, had he spared her, but he was never to see pleasant Phthia, his native land, again. So Achilles stood and wept over Penthesilea dead.

Now the Greeks, in pity and sorrow, held their hands, and did not pursue the Trojans who had fled, nor did they strip the armour from Penthesilea and her twelve maidens, but laid the bodies on biers, and sent them back in peace to Priam. Then the Trojans burned Penthesilea in the midst of her dead maidens, on a great pile of dry wood, and placed their ashes in a golden casket, and buried them all in the great hill-grave of Laomedon, an ancient King of Troy, while the Greeks with lamentation buried them whom the Amazon had slain.

The old men of Troy and the chiefs now held a council, and Priam said that they must not yet despair, for, if they had lost many of their bravest warriors, many of the Greeks had also fallen. Their best plan was to fight only with arrows from the walls and towers, till King Memnon came to their rescue with a great army of Aethiopes. Now Memnon was the son of the bright Dawn, a beautiful Goddess who had loved and married a mortal man, Tithonus. She had asked Zeus, the chief of the Gods, to make her lover immortal, and her prayer was granted. Tithonus could not die, but he began to grow grey, and then white haired, with a long white beard, and very weak, till nothing of him seemed to be left but his voice, always feebly chattering like the grasshoppers on a summer day.

Memnon was the most beautiful of men, except Paris and Achilles, and his home was in a country that borders on the land of sunrising. There he was reared by the lily maidens called Hesperides, till he came to his full strength, and commanded the whole army of the Aethiopes. For their arrival Priam wished to wait, but Polydamas advised that the Trojans should give back Helen to the Greeks, with jewels twice as valuable as those which she had brought from the house of Menelaus. Then Paris was very angry, and said that Polydamas was a coward, for it was little to Paris that Troy should be taken and burned in a month if for a month he could keep Helen of the fair hands.

At length Memnon came, leading a great army of men who had nothing white about them but the teeth, so fiercely the sun burned on them in their own country. The Trojans had all the more hopes of Memnon because, on his long journey from the land of sunrising, and the river Oceanus that girdles the round world, he had been obliged to cross the country of the Solymi. Now the Solymi were the fiercest of men and rose up against Memnon, but he and his army fought them for a whole day, and defeated them, and drove them to the hills. When Memnon came, Priam gave him a great cup of gold, full of wine to the brim, and Memnon drank the wine at one draught. But he did not make great boasts of what he could do, like poor Penthesilea, ‘for,’ said he, ‘whether I am a good man at arms will be known in battle, where the strength of men is tried. So now let us turn to sleep, for to wake and drink wine all through the night is an ill beginning of war.’

Then Priam praised his wisdom, and all men betook them to bed, but the bright Dawn rose unwillingly next day, to throw light on the battle where her son was to risk his life. Then Memnon led out the dark clouds of his men into the plain, and the Greeks foreboded evil when they saw so great a new army of fresh and unwearied warriors, but Achilles, leading them in his shining armour, gave them courage. Memnon fell upon the left wing of the Greeks, and on the men of Nestor, and first he slew Ereuthus, and then attacked Nestor’s young son, Antilochus, who, now that Patroclus had fallen, was the dearest friend of Achilles. On him Memnon leaped, like a lion on a kid, but Antilochus lifted a huge stone from the plain, a pillar that had been set on the tomb of some great warrior long ago, and the stone smote full on the helmet of Memnon, who reeled beneath the stroke. But Memnon seized his heavy spear, and drove it through shield and corselet of Antilochus, even into his heart, and he fell and died beneath his father’s eyes. Then Nestor in great sorrow and anger strode across the body of Antilochus and called to his other son, Thrasymedes, ‘Come and drive afar this man that has slain thy brother, for if fear be in thy heart thou art no son of mine, nor of the race of Periclymenus, who stood up in battle even against the strong man Heracles!’

But Memnon was too strong for Thrasymedes, and drove him off, while old Nestor himself charged sword in hand, though Memnon bade him begone, for he was not minded to strike so aged a man, and Nestor drew back, for he was weak with age. Then Memnon and his army charged the Greeks, slaying and stripping the dead. But Nestor had mounted his chariot and driven to Achilles, weeping, and imploring him to come swiftly and save the body of Antilochus, and he sped to meet Memnon, who lifted a great stone, the landmark of a field, and drove it against the shield of the son of Peleus. But Achilles was not shaken by the blow; he ran forward, and wounded Memnon over the rim of his shield. Yet wounded as he was Memnon fought on and struck his spear through the arm of Achilles, for the Greeks fought with no sleeves of bronze to protect their arms.

Then Achilles drew his great sword, and flew on Memnon, and with sword-strokes they lashed at each other on shield and helmet, and the long horsehair crests of the helmets were shorn off, and flew down the wind, and their shields rang terribly beneath the sword strokes. They thrust at each others’ throats between shield and visor of the helmet, they smote at knee, and thrust at breast, and the armour rang about their bodies, and the dust from beneath their feet rose up in a cloud around them, like mist round the falls of a great river in flood. So they fought, neither of them yielding a step, till Achilles made so rapid a thrust that Memnon could not parry it, and the bronze sword passed clean through his body beneath the breast-bone, and he fell, and his armour clashed as he fell.

Then Achilles, wounded as he was and weak from loss of blood, did not stay to strip the golden armour of Memnon, but shouted his warcry, and pressed on, for he hoped to enter the gate of Troy with the fleeing Trojans, and all the Greeks followed after him. So they pursued, slaying as they went, and the Scaean gate was choked with the crowd of men, pursuing and pursued. In that hour would the Greeks have entered Troy, and burned the city, and taken the women captive, but Paris stood on the tower above the gate, and in his mind was anger for the death of his brother Hector. He tried the string of his bow, and found it frayed, for all day he had showered his arrows on the Greeks; so he chose a new bowstring, and fitted it, and strung the bow, and chose an arrow from his quiver, and aimed at the ankle of Achilles, where it was bare beneath the greave, or leg-guard of metal, that the God had fashioned for him. Through the ankle flew the arrow, and Achilles wheeled round, weak as he was, and stumbled, and fell, and the armour that the God had wrought was defiled with dust and blood.

Then Achilles rose again, and cried: ‘What coward has smitten me with a secret arrow from afar? Let him stand forth and meet me with sword and spear!’ So speaking he seized the shaft with his strong hands and tore it out of the wound, and much blood gushed, and darkness came over his eyes. Yet he staggered forward, striking blindly, and smote Orythaon, a dear friend of Hector, through the helmet, and others he smote, but now his force failed him, and he leaned on his spear, and cried his warcry, and said, ‘Cowards of Troy, ye shall not all escape my spear, dying as I am.’ But as he spoke he fell, and all his armour rang around him, yet the Trojans stood apart and watched; and as hunters watch a dying lion not daring to go nigh him, so the Trojans stood in fear till Achilles drew his latest breath. Then from the wall the Trojan women raised a great cry of joy over him who had slain the noble Hector: and thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Hector, that Achilles should fall in the Scaean gateway, by the hand of Paris.

Then the best of the Trojans rushed forth from the gate to seize the body of Achilles, and his glorious armour, but the Greeks were as eager to carry the body to the ships that it might have due burial. Round the dead Achilles men fought long and sore, and both sides were mixed, Greeks and Trojans, so that men dared not shoot arrows from the walls of Troy lest they should kill their own friends. Paris, and Aeneas, and Glaucus, who had been the friend of Sarpedon, led the Trojans, and Aias and Ulysses led the Greeks, for we are not told that Agamemnon was fighting in this great battle of the war. Now as angry wild bees flock round a man who is taking their honeycombs, so the Trojans gathered round Aias, striving to stab him, but he set his great shield in front, and smote and slew all that came within reach of his spear. Ulysses, too, struck down many, and though a spear was thrown and pierced his leg near the knee he stood firm, protecting the body of Achilles. At last Ulysses caught the body of Achilles by the hands, and heaved it upon his back, and so limped towards the ships, but Aias and the men of Aias followed, turning round if ever the Trojans ventured to come near, and charging into the midst of them. Thus very slowly they bore the dead Achilles across the plain, through the bodies of the fallen and the blood, till they met Nestor in his chariot and placed Achilles therein, and swiftly Nestor drove to the ships.

There the women, weeping, washed Achilles’ comely body, and laid him on a bier with a great white mantle over him, and all the women lamented and sang dirges, and the first was Briseis, who loved Achilles better than her own country, and her father, and her brothers whom he had slain in war. The Greek princes, too, stood round the body, weeping and cutting off their long locks of yellow hair, a token of grief and an offering to the dead.

Men say that forth from the sea came Thetis of the silver feet, the mother of Achilles, with her ladies, the deathless maidens of the waters. They rose up from their glassy chambers below the sea, moving on, many and beautiful, like the waves on a summer day, and their sweet song echoed along the shores, and fear came upon the Greeks. Then they would have fled, but Nestor cried: ‘Hold, flee not, young lords of the Achaeans! Lo, she that comes from the sea is his mother, with the deathless maidens of the waters, to look on the face of her dead son.’ Then the sea nymphs stood around the dead Achilles and clothed him in the garments of the Gods, fragrant raiment, and all the Nine Muses, one to the other replying with sweet voices, began their lament.

Next the Greeks made a great pile of dry wood, and laid Achilles on it, and set fire to it, till the flames had consumed his body except the white ashes. These they placed in a great golden cup and mingled with them the ashes of Patroclus, and above all they built a tomb like a hill, high on a headland above the sea, that men for all time may see it as they go sailing by, and may remember Achilles. Next they held in his honour foot races and chariot races, and other games, and Thetis gave splendid prizes. Last of all, when the games were ended, Thetis placed before the chiefs the glorious armour that the God had made for her son on the night after the slaying of Patroclus by Hector. ‘Let these arms be the prize of the best of the Greeks,’ she said, ‘and of him that saved the body of Achilles out of the hands of the Trojans.’

Then stood up on one side Aias and on the other Ulysses, for these two had rescued the body, and neither thought himself a worse warrior than the other. Both were the bravest of the brave, and if Aias was the taller and stronger, and upheld the fight at the ships on the day of the valour of Hector; Ulysses had alone withstood the Trojans, and refused to retreat even when wounded, and his courage and cunning had won for the Greeks the Luck of Troy. Therefore old Nestor arose and said: ‘This is a luckless day, when the best of the Greeks are rivals for such a prize. He who is not the winner will be heavy at heart, and will not stand firm by us in battle, as of old, and hence will come great loss to the Greeks. Who can be a just judge in this question, for some men will love Aias better, and some will prefer Ulysses, and thus will arise disputes among ourselves. Lo! have we not here among us many Trojan prisoners, waiting till their friends pay their ransom in cattle and gold and bronze and iron? These hate all the Greeks alike, and will favour neither Aias nor Ulysses. Let *them* be the judges, and decide who is the best of the Greeks, and the man who has done most harm to the Trojans.’

Agamemnon said that Nestor had spoken wisely. The Trojans were then made to sit as judges in the midst of the Assembly, and Aias and Ulysses spoke, and told the stories of their own great deeds, of which we have heard already, but Aias spoke roughly and discourteously, calling Ulysses a coward and a weakling. ‘Perhaps the Trojans know,’ said Ulysses quietly, ‘whether they think that I deserve what Aias has said about me, that I am a coward; and perhaps Aias may remember that he did not find me so weak when we wrestled for a prize at the funeral of Patroclus.’

Then the Trojans all with one voice said that Ulysses was the best man among the Greeks, and the most feared by them, both for his courage and his skill in stratagems of war. On this, the blood of Aias flew into his face, and he stood silent and unmoving, and could not speak a word, till his friends came round him and led him away to his hut, and there he sat down and would not eat or drink, and the night fell.

Long he sat, musing in his mind, and then rose and put on all his armour, and seized a sword that Hector had given him one day when they two fought in a gentle passage of arms, and took courteous farewell of each other, and Aias had given Hector a broad sword-belt, wrought with gold. This sword, Hector’s gift, Aias took, and went towards the hut of Ulysses, meaning to carve him limb from limb, for madness had come upon him in his great grief. Rushing through the night to slay Ulysses he fell upon the flock of sheep that the Greeks kept for their meat. And up and down among them he went, smiting blindly till the dawn came, and, lo! his senses returned to him, and he saw that he had not smitten Ulysses, but stood in a pool of blood among the sheep that he had slain. He could not endure the disgrace of his madness, and he fixed the sword, Hector’s gift, with its hilt firmly in the ground, and went back a little way, and ran and fell upon the sword, which pierced his heart, and so died the great Aias, choosing death before a dishonoured life.

XI

ULYSSES SAILS TO SEEK THE SON OF ACHILLES. — THE VALOUR OF EURYPYLUS

When the Greeks found Aias lying dead, slain by his own hand, they made great lament, and above all the brother of Aias, and his wife Tecmessa bewailed him, and the shores of the sea rang with their sorrow. But of all no man was more grieved than Ulysses, and he stood up and said: ‘Would that the sons of the Trojans had never awarded to me the arms of Achilles, for far rather would I have given them to Aias than that this loss should have befallen the whole army of the Greeks. Let no man blame me, or be angry with me, for I have not sought for wealth, to enrich myself, but for honour only, and to win a name that will be remembered among men in times to come.’ Then they made a great fire of wood, and burned the body of Aias, lamenting him as they had sorrowed for Achilles.

Now it seemed that though the Greeks had won the Luck of Troy and had defeated the Amazons and the army of Memnon, they were no nearer taking Troy than ever. They had slain Hector, indeed, and many other Trojans, but they had lost the great Achilles, and Aias, and Patroclus, and Antilochus, with the princes whom Penthesilea and Memnon slew, and the bands of the dead chiefs were weary of fighting, and eager to go home. The chiefs met in council, and Menelaus arose and said that his heart was wasted with sorrow for the death of so many brave men who had sailed to Troy for his sake. ‘Would that death had come upon me before I gathered this host,’ he said, ‘but come, let the rest of us launch our swift ships, and return each to our own country.’

He spoke thus to try the Greeks, and see of what courage they were, for his desire was still to burn Troy town and to slay Paris with his own hand. Then up rose Diomede, and swore that never would the Greeks turn cowards. No! he bade them sharpen their swords, and make ready for battle. The prophet Calchas, too, arose and reminded the Greeks how he had always foretold that they would take Troy in the tenth year of the siege, and how the tenth year had come, and victory was almost in their hands. Next Ulysses stood up and said that, though Achilles was dead, and there was no prince to lead his men, yet a son had been born to Achilles, while he was in the isle of Scyros, and that son he would bring to fill his father’s place.

‘Surely he will come, and for a token I will carry to him those unhappy arms of the great Achilles. Unworthy am I to wear them, and they bring back to my mind our sorrow for Aias. But his son will wear them, in the front of the spearmen of Greece and in the thickest ranks of Troy shall the helmet of Achilles shine, as it was wont to do, for always he fought among the foremost.’ Thus Ulysses spoke, and he and Diomede, with fifty oarsmen, went on board a swift ship, and sitting all in order on the benches they smote the grey sea into foam, and Ulysses held the helm and steered them towards the isle of Scyros.

Now the Trojans had rest from war for a while, and Priam, with a heavy heart, bade men take his chief treasure, the great golden vine, with leaves and clusters of gold, and carry it to the mother of Eurypylus, the king of the people who dwell where the wide marshlands of the river Caycus clang with the cries of the cranes and herons and wild swans. For the mother of Eurypylus had sworn that never would she let her son go to the war unless Priam sent her the vine of gold, a gift of the gods to an ancient King of Troy.

With a heavy heart, then, Priam sent the golden vine, but Eurypylus was glad when he saw it, and bade all his men arm, and harness the horses to the chariots, and glad were the Trojans when the long line of the new army wound along the road and into the town. Then Paris welcomed Eurypylus who was his nephew, son of his sister Astyochê, a daughter of Priam; but the grandfather of Eurypylus was the famous Heracles, the strongest man who ever lived on earth. So Paris brought Eurypylus to his house, where Helen sat working at her embroideries with her four bower maidens, and Eurypylus marvelled when he saw her, she was so beautiful. But the Khita, the people of Eurypylus, feasted in the open air among the Trojans, by the light of great fires burning, and to the music of pipes and flutes. The Greeks saw the fires, and heard the merry music, and they watched all night lest the Trojans should attack the ships before the dawn. But in the dawn Eurypylus rose from sleep and put on his armour, and hung from his neck by the belt the great shield on which were fashioned, in gold of many colours and in silver, the Twelve Adventures of Heracles, his grandfather; strange deeds that he did, fighting with monsters and giants and with the Hound of Hades, who guards the dwellings of the dead. Then Eurypylus led on his whole army, and with the brothers of Hector he charged against the Greeks, who were led by Agamemnon.

In that battle Eurypylus first smote Nireus, who was the most beautiful of the Greeks now that Achilles had fallen. There lay Nireus, like an apple tree, all covered with blossoms red and white, that the wind has overthrown in a rich man’s orchard. Then Eurypylus would have stripped off his armour, but Machaon rushed in, Machaon who had been wounded and taken to the tent of Nestor, on the day of the Valour of Hector, when he brought fire against the ships. Machaon drove his spear through the left shoulder of Eurypylus, but Eurypylus struck at his shoulder with his sword, and the blood flowed; nevertheless, Machaon stooped, and grasped a great stone, and sent it against the helmet of Eurypylus. He was shaken, but he did not fall, he drove his spear through breastplate and breast of Machaon, who fell and died. With his last breath he said, ‘Thou, too, shalt fall,’ but Eurypylus made answer, ‘So let it be! Men cannot live for ever, and such is the fortune of war.’

Thus the battle rang, and shone, and shifted, till few of the Greeks kept steadfast, except those with Menelaus and Agamemnon, for Diomede and Ulysses were far away upon the sea, bringing from Scyros the son of Achilles. But Teucer slew Polydamas, who had warned Hector to come within the walls of Troy; and Menelaus wounded Deiphobus, the bravest of the sons of Priam who were still in arms, for many had fallen; and Agamemnon slew certain spearmen of the Trojans. Round Eurypylus fought Paris, and Aeneas, who wounded Teucer with a great stone, breaking in his helmet, but he drove back in his chariot to the ships. Menelaus and Agamemnon stood alone and fought in the crowd of Trojans, like two wild boars that a circle of hunters surrounds with spears, so fiercely they stood at bay. There they would both have fallen, but Idomeneus, and Meriones of Crete, and Thrasymedes, Nestor’s son, ran to their rescue, and fiercer grew the fighting. Eurypylus desired to slay Agamemnon and Menelaus, and end the war, but, as the spears of the Scots encompassed King James at Flodden Field till he ran forward, and fell within a lance’s length of the English general, so the men of Crete and Pylos guarded the two princes with their spears.

There Paris was wounded in the thigh with a spear, and he retreated a little way, and showered his arrows among the Greeks; and Idomeneus lifted and hurled a great stone at Eurypylus which struck his spear out of his hand, and he went back to find it, and Menelaus and Agamemnon had a breathing space in the battle. But soon Eurypylus returned, crying on his men, and they drove back foot by foot the ring of spears round Agamemnon, and Aeneas and Paris slew men of Crete and of Mycenae till the Greeks were pushed to the ditch round the camp; and then great stones and spears and arrows rained down on the Trojans and the people of Eurypylus from the battlements and towers of the Grecian wall. Now night fell, and Eurypylus knew that he could not win the wall in the dark, so he withdrew his men, and they built great fires, and camped upon the plain.

The case of the Greeks was now like that of the Trojans after the death of Hector. They buried Machaon and the other chiefs who had fallen, and they remained within their ditch and their wall, for they dared not come out into the open plain. They knew not whether Ulysses and Diomede had come safely to

Scyros, or whether their ship had been wrecked or driven into unknown seas. So they sent a herald to Eurypylus, asking for a truce, that they might gather their dead and burn them, and the Trojans and Khita also buried their dead.

Meanwhile the swift ship of Ulysses had swept through the sea to Scyros, and to the palace of King Lycomedes. There they found Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, in the court before the doors. He was as tall as his father, and very like him in face and shape, and he was practising the throwing of the spear at a mark. Right glad were Ulysses and Diomede to behold him, and Ulysses told Neoptolemus who they were, and why they came, and implored him to take pity on the Greeks and help them.

‘My friend is Diomede, Prince of Argos,’ said Ulysses, ‘and I am Ulysses of Ithaca. Come with us, and we Greeks will give you countless gifts, and I myself will present you with the armour of your father, such as it is not lawful for any other mortal man to wear, seeing that it is golden, and wrought by the hands of a God. Moreover, when we have taken Troy, and gone home, Menelaus will give you his daughter, the beautiful Hermione, to be your wife, with gold in great plenty.’

Then Neoptolemus answered: ‘It is enough that the Greeks need my sword. To-morrow we shall sail for Troy.’ He led them into the palace to dine, and there they found his mother, beautiful Deidamia, in mourning raiment, and she wept when she heard that they had come to take her son away. But Neoptolemus comforted her, promising to return safely with the spoils of Troy, ‘or, even if I fall,’ he said, ‘it will be after doing deeds worthy of my father’s name.’ So next day they sailed, leaving Deidamia mournful, like a swallow whose nest a serpent has found, and has killed her young ones; even so she wailed, and went up and down in the house. But the ship ran swiftly on her way, cleaving the dark waves till Ulysses showed Neoptolemus the far off snowy crest of Mount Ida; and Tenedos, the island near Troy; and they passed the plain where the tomb of Achilles stands, but Ulysses did not tell the son that it was his father’s tomb.

Now all this time the Greeks, shut up within their wall and fighting from their towers, were looking back across the sea, eager to spy the ship of Ulysses, like men wrecked on a desert island, who keep watch every day for a sail afar off, hoping that the seamen will touch at their isle and have pity upon them, and carry them home, so the Greeks kept watch for the ship bearing Neoptolemus.

Diomede, too, had been watching the shore, and when they came in sight of the ships of the Greeks, he saw that they were being besieged by the Trojans, and that all the Greek army was penned up within the wall, and was fighting from the towers. Then he cried aloud to Ulysses and Neoptolemus, ‘Make haste, friends, let us arm before we land, for some great evil has fallen upon the

Greeks. The Trojans are attacking our wall, and soon they will burn our ships, and for us there will be no return.’

Then all the men on the ship of Ulysses armed themselves, and Neoptolemus, in the splendid armour of his father, was the first to leap ashore. The Greeks could not come from the wall to welcome him, for they were fighting hard and hand-to-hand with Eurypylus and his men. But they glanced back over their shoulders and it seemed to them that they saw Achilles himself, spear and sword in hand, rushing to help them. They raised a great battle-cry, and, when Neoptolemus reached the battlements, he and Ulysses, and Diomede leaped down to the plain, the Greeks following them, and they all charged at once on the men of Eurypylus, with levelled spears, and drove them from the wall.

Then the Trojans trembled, for they knew the shields of Diomede and Ulysses, and they thought that the tall chief in the armour of Achilles was Achilles himself, come back from the land of the dead to take vengeance for Antilochus. The Trojans fled, and gathered round Eurypylus, as in a thunderstorm little children, afraid of the lightning and the noise, run and cluster round their father, and hide their faces on his knees.

But Neoptolemus was spearing the Trojans, as a man who carries at night a beacon of fire in his boat on the sea spears the fishes that flock around, drawn by the blaze of the flame. Cruelly he avenged his father’s death on many a Trojan, and the men whom Achilles had led followed Achilles’ son, slaying to right and left, and smiting the Trojans, as they ran, between the shoulders with the spear. Thus they fought and followed while daylight lasted, but when night fell, they led Neoptolemus to his father’s hut, where the women washed him in the bath, and then he was taken to feast with Agamemnon and Menelaus and the princes. They all welcomed him, and gave him glorious gifts, swords with silver hilts, and cups of gold and silver, and they were glad, for they had driven the Trojans from their wall, and hoped that to-morrow they would slay Eurypylus, and take Troy town.

But their hope was not to be fulfilled, for though next day Eurypylus met Neoptolemus in the battle, and was slain by him, when the Greeks chased the Trojans into their city so great a storm of lightning and thunder and rain fell upon them that they retreated again to their camp. They believed that Zeus, the chief of the Gods, was angry with them, and the days went by, and Troy still stood unconquered.

XII

THE SLAYING OF PARIS

When the Greeks were disheartened, as they often were, they consulted Calchas the prophet. He usually found that they must do something, or send for somebody, and in doing so they diverted their minds from their many misfortunes. Now, as the Trojans were fighting more bravely than before, under Deiphobus, a brother of Hector, the Greeks went to Calchas for advice, and he told them that they must send Ulysses and Diomede to bring Philoctetes the bowman from the isle of Lemnos. This was an unhappy deserted island, in which the married women, some years before, had murdered all their husbands, out of jealousy, in a single night. The Greeks had landed in Lemnos, on their way to Troy, and there Philoctetes had shot an arrow at a great water dragon which lived in a well within a cave in the lonely hills. But when he entered the cave the dragon bit him, and, though he killed it at last, its poisonous teeth wounded his foot. The wound never healed, but dripped with venom, and Philoctetes, in terrible pain, kept all the camp awake at night by his cries.

The Greeks were sorry for him, but he was not a pleasant companion, shrieking as he did, and exuding poison wherever he came. So they left him on the lonely island, and did not know whether he was alive or dead. Calchas ought to have told the Greeks not to desert Philoctetes at the time, if he was so important that Troy, as the prophet now said, could not be taken without him. But now, as he must give some advice, Calchas said that Philoctetes must be brought back, so Ulysses and Diomede went to bring him. They sailed to Lemnos, a melancholy place they found it, with no smoke rising from the ruinous houses along the shore. As they were landing they learned that Philoctetes was not dead, for his dismal old cries of pain, *otototototoi, ai, ai; pheu, pheu; otototototoi*, came echoing from a cave on the beach. To this cave the princes went, and found a terrible-looking man, with long, dirty, dry hair and beard; he was worn to a skeleton, with hollow eyes, and lay moaning in a mass of the feathers of sea birds. His great bow and his arrows lay ready to his hand: with these he used to shoot the sea birds, which were all that he had to eat, and their feathers littered all the floor of his cave, and they were none the better for the poison that dripped from his wounded foot.

When this horrible creature saw Ulysses and Diomede coming near, he seized his bow and fitted a poisonous arrow to the string, for he hated the Greeks, because they had left him in the desert isle. But the princes held up their hands in sign of peace, and cried out that they had come to do him kindness, so he laid down his bow, and they came in and sat on the rocks, and promised that his wound should be healed, for the Greeks were very much ashamed of having deserted him. It was difficult to resist Ulysses when he wished to persuade any one, and at last Philoctetes consented to sail with them to Troy. The oarsmen carried him down to the ship on a litter, and there his dreadful wound was washed with warm water, and oil was poured into it, and it was bound up with soft linen, so that his pain grew less fierce, and they gave him a good supper and wine enough, which he had not tasted for many years.

Next morning they sailed, and had a fair west wind, so that they soon landed among the Greeks and carried Philoctetes on shore. Here Podaleirius, the brother of Machaon, being a physician, did all that could be done to heal the wound, and the pain left Philoctetes. He was taken to the hut of Agamemnon, who welcomed him, and said that the Greeks repented of their cruelty. They gave him seven female slaves to take care of him, and twenty swift horses, and twelve great vessels of bronze, and told him that he was always to live with the greatest chiefs and feed at their table. So he was bathed, and his hair was cut and combed and anointed with oil, and soon he was eager and ready to fight, and to use his great bow and poisoned arrows on the Trojans. The use of poisoned arrow-tips was thought unfair, but Philoctetes had no scruples.

Now in the next battle Paris was shooting down the Greeks with his arrows, when Philoctetes saw him, and cried: ‘Dog, you are proud of your archery and of the arrow that slew the great Achilles. But, behold, I am a better bowman than you, by far, and the bow in my hands was borne by the strong man Heracles!’ So he cried and drew the bowstring to his breast and the poisoned arrowhead to the bow, and the bowstring rang, and the arrow flew, and did but graze the hand of Paris. Then the bitter pain of the poison came upon him, and the Trojans carried him into their city, where the physicians tended him all night. But he never slept, and lay tossing in agony till dawn, when he said: ‘There is but one hope. Take me to Œnone, the nymph of Mount Ida!’

Then his friends laid Paris on a litter, and bore him up the steep path to Mount Ida. Often had he climbed it swiftly, when he was young, and went to see the nymph who loved him; but for many a day he had not trod the path where he was now carried in great pain and fear, for the poison turned his blood to fire. Little hope he had, for he knew how cruelly he had deserted Œnone, and he saw that all the birds which were disturbed in the wood flew away to the left hand, an omen of evil.

At last the bearers reached the cave where the nymph Œnone lived, and they smelled the sweet fragrance of the cedar fire that burned on the floor of the cave, and they heard the nymph singing a melancholy song. Then Paris called to her in the voice which she had once loved to hear, and she grew very pale, and rose up, saying to herself, ‘The day has come for which I have prayed. He is sore hurt, and has come to bid me heal his wound.’ So she came and stood in the doorway of the dark cave, white against the darkness, and the bearers laid Paris on the litter at the feet of Œnone, and he stretched forth his hands to touch her knees, as was the manner of suppliants. But she drew back and gathered her robe about her, that he might not touch it with his hands.

Then he said: ‘Lady, despise me not, and hate me not, for my pain is more than I can bear. Truly it was by no will of mine that I left you lonely here, for the Fates that no man may escape led me to Helen. Would that I had died in your arms before I saw her face! But now I beseech you in the name of the Gods, and for the memory of our love, that you will have pity on me and heal my hurt, and not refuse your grace and let me die here at your feet.’

Then Œnone answered scornfully: ‘Why have you come here to me? Surely for years you have not come this way, where the path was once worn with your feet. But long ago you left me lonely and lamenting, for the love of Helen of the fair hands. Surely she is much more beautiful than the love of your youth, and far more able to help you, for men say that she can never know old age and death. Go home to Helen and let her take away your pain.’

Thus Œnone spoke, and went within the cave, where she threw herself down among the ashes of the hearth and sobbed for anger and sorrow. In a little while she rose and went to the door of the cave, thinking that Paris had not been borne away back to Troy, but she found him not; for his bearers had carried him by another path, till he died beneath the boughs of the oak trees. Then his bearers carried him swiftly down to Troy, where his mother bewailed him, and Helen sang over him as she had sung over Hector, remembering many things, and fearing to think of what her own end might be. But the Trojans hastily built a great pile of dry wood, and thereon laid the body of Paris and set fire to it, and the flame went up through the darkness, for now night had fallen.

But Œnone was roaming in the dark woods, crying and calling after Paris, like a lioness whose cubs the hunters have carried away. The moon rose to give her light, and the flame of the funeral fire shone against the sky, and then Œnone knew that Paris had died — beautiful Paris — and that the Trojans were burning his body on the plain at the foot of Mount Ida. Then she cried that now Paris was all her own, and that Helen had no more hold on him: ‘And though when he was living he left me, in death we shall not be divided,’ she said, and she sped down the hill, and through the thickets where the wood nymphs were wailing for Paris, and she reached the plain, and, covering her head with her veil like a bride, she rushed through the throng of Trojans. She leaped upon the burning pile of wood, she clasped the body of Paris in her arms, and the flame of fire consumed the bridegroom and the bride, and their ashes mingled. No man could divide them any more, and the ashes were placed in a golden cup, within a chamber of stone, and the earth was mounded above them. On that grave the wood nymphs planted two rose trees, and their branches met and plaited together.

This was the end of Paris and Œnone.

XIII

HOW ULYSSES INVENTED THE DEVICE OF THE HORSE OF TREE

After Paris died, Helen was not given back to Menelaus. We are often told that only fear of the anger of Paris had prevented the Trojans from surrendering Helen and making peace. Now Paris could not terrify them, yet for all that the men of the town would not part with Helen, whether because she was so beautiful, or because they thought it dishonourable to yield her to the Greeks, who might put her to a cruel death. So Helen was taken by Deiphobus, the brother of Paris, to live in his own house, and Deiphobus was at this time the best warrior and the chief captain of the men of Troy.

Meanwhile, the Greeks made an assault against the Trojan walls and fought long and hardily; but, being safe behind the battlements, and shooting through loopholes, the Trojans drove them back with loss of many of their men. It was in vain that Philoctetes shot his poisoned arrows, they fell back from the stone walls, or stuck in the palisades of wood above the walls, and the Greeks who tried to climb over were speared, or crushed with heavy stones. When night fell, they retreated to the ships and held a council, and, as usual, they asked the advice of the prophet Calchas. It was the business of Calchas to go about looking at birds, and taking omens from what he saw them doing, a way of prophesying which the Romans also used, and some savages do the same to this day. Calchas said that yesterday he had seen a hawk pursuing a dove, which hid herself in a hole in a rocky cliff. For a long while the hawk tried to find the hole, and follow the dove into it, but he could not reach her. So he flew away for a short distance and hid himself; then the dove fluttered out into the sunlight, and the hawk swooped on her and killed her.

The Greeks, said Calchas, ought to learn a lesson from the hawk, and take Troy by cunning, as by force they could do nothing. Then Ulysses stood up and described a trick which it is not easy to understand. The Greeks, he said, ought to make an enormous hollow horse of wood, and place the bravest men in the horse. Then all the rest of the Greeks should embark in their ships and sail to the Isle of Tenedos, and lie hidden behind the island. The Trojans would then come out of the city, like the dove out of her hole in the rock, and would wander about the Greek camp, and wonder why the great horse of tree had been made, and why it had been left behind. Lest they should set fire to the horse, when they would soon have found out the warriors hidden in it, a cunning Greek, whom the Trojans did not know by sight, should be left in the camp or near it. He would tell the Trojans that the Greeks had given up all hope and gone home, and he was to say that they feared the Goddess Pallas was angry with them, because they had stolen her image that fell from heaven, and was called the Luck of Troy. To soothe Pallas and prevent her from sending great storms against the ships, the Greeks (so the man was to say) had built this wooden horse as an offering to the Goddess. The Trojans, believing this story, would drag the horse into Troy, and, in the night, the princes would come out, set fire to the city, and open the gates to the army, which would return from Tenedos as soon as darkness came on.

The prophet was much pleased with the plan of Ulysses, and, as two birds happened to fly away on the right hand, he declared that the stratagem would certainly be lucky. Neoptolemus, on the other hand, voted for taking Troy, without any trick, by sheer hard fighting. Ulysses replied that if Achilles could not do that, it could not be done at all, and that Epeius, a famous carpenter, had better set about making the horse at once.

Next day half the army, with axes in their hands, were sent to cut down trees on Mount Ida, and thousands of planks were cut from the trees by Epeius and his workmen, and in three days he had finished the horse. Ulysses then asked the best of the Greeks to come forward and go inside the machine; while one, whom the Greeks did not know by sight, should volunteer to stay behind in the camp and deceive the Trojans. Then a young man called Sinon stood up and said that he would risk himself and take the chance that the Trojans might disbelieve him, and burn him alive. Certainly, none of the Greeks did anything more courageous, yet Sinon had not been considered brave. Had he fought in the front ranks, the Trojans would have known him; but there were many brave fighters who would not have dared to do what Sinon undertook.

Then old Nestor was the first that volunteered to go into the horse; but Neoptolemus said that, brave as he was, he was too old, and that he must depart with the army to Tenedos. Neoptolemus himself would go into the horse, for he would rather die than turn his back on Troy. So Neoptolemus armed himself and climbed into the horse, as did Menelaus, Ulysses, Diomede, Thrasymedes (Nestor’s son), Idomeneus, Philoctetes, Meriones, and all the best men except Agamemnon, while Epeius himself entered last of all. Agamemnon was not allowed by the other Greeks to share their adventure, as he was to command the army when they returned from Tenedos. They meanwhile launched their ships and sailed away.

But first Menelaus had led Ulysses apart, and told him that if they took Troy (and now they must either take it or die at the hands of the Trojans), he would owe to Ulysses the glory. When they came back to Greece, he wished to give Ulysses one of his own cities, that they might always be near each other. Ulysses smiled and shook his head; he could not leave Ithaca, his own rough island kingdom. ‘But if we both live through the night that is coming,’ he said, ‘I may ask you for one gift, and giving it will make you none the poorer.’ Then Menelaus swore by the splendour of Zeus that Ulysses could ask him for no gift that he would not gladly give; so they embraced, and both armed themselves and went up into the horse. With them were all the chiefs except Nestor, whom they would not allow to come, and Agamemnon, who, as chief general, had to command the army. They swathed themselves and their arms in soft silks, that they might not ring and clash, when the Trojans, if they were so foolish, dragged the horse up into their town, and there they sat in the dark waiting. Meanwhile, the army burned their huts and launched their ships, and with oars and sails made their way to the back of the isle of Tenedos.

XIV

THE END OF TROY AND THE SAVING OF HELEN

From the walls the Trojans saw the black smoke go up thick into the sky, and the whole fleet of the Greeks sailing out to sea. Never were men so glad, and they armed themselves for fear of an ambush, and went cautiously, sending forth scouts in front of them, down to the seashore. Here they found the huts burned down and the camp deserted, and some of the scouts also caught Sinon, who had hid himself in a place where he was likely to be found. They rushed on him with fierce cries, and bound his hands with a rope, and kicked and dragged him along to the place where Priam and the princes were wondering at the great horse of tree. Sinon looked round upon them, while some were saying that he ought to be tortured with fire to make him tell all the truth about the horse. The chiefs in the horse must have trembled for fear lest torture should wring the truth out of Sinon, for then the Trojans would simply burn the machine and them within it.

But Sinon said: ‘Miserable man that I am, whom the Greeks hate and the Trojans are eager to slay!’ When the Trojans heard that the Greeks hated him, they were curious, and asked who he was, and how he came to be there. ‘I will tell you all, oh King!’ he answered Priam. ‘I was a friend and squire of an unhappy chief, Palamedes, whom the wicked Ulysses hated and slew secretly one day, when he found him alone, fishing in the sea. I was angry, and in my folly I did not hide my anger, and my words came to the ears of Ulysses. From that hour he sought occasion to slay me. Then Calchas — —’ here he stopped, saying: ‘But why tell a long tale? If you hate all Greeks alike, then slay me; this is what Agamemnon and Ulysses desire; Menelaus would thank you for my head.’

The Trojans were now more curious than before. They bade him go on, and he said that the Greeks had consulted an Oracle, which advised them to sacrifice one of their army to appease the anger of the Gods and gain a fair wind homewards. ‘But who was to be sacrificed? They asked Calchas, who for fifteen days refused to speak. At last, being bribed by Ulysses, he pointed to me, Sinon, and said that I must be the victim. I was bound and kept in prison, while they built their great horse as a present for Pallas Athênê the Goddess. They made it so large that you Trojans might never be able to drag it into your city; while, if you destroyed it, the Goddess might turn her anger against you. And now they have gone home to bring back the image that fell from heaven, which they had sent to Greece, and to restore it to the Temple of Pallas Athênê, when they have taken your town, for the Goddess is angry with them for that theft of Ulysses.’

The Trojans were foolish enough to believe the story of Sinon, and they pitied him and unbound his hands. Then they tied ropes to the wooden horse, and laid rollers in front of it, like men launching a ship, and they all took turns to drag the horse up to the Scaean gate. Children and women put their hands to the ropes and hauled, and with shouts and dances, and hymns they toiled, till about nightfall the horse stood in the courtyard of the inmost castle.

Then all the people of Troy began to dance, and drink, and sing. Such sentinels as were set at the gates got as drunk as all the rest, who danced about the city till after midnight, and then they went to their homes and slept heavily.

Meanwhile the Greek ships were returning from behind Tenedos as fast as the oarsmen could row them.

One Trojan did not drink or sleep; this was Deiphobus, at whose house Helen was now living. He bade her come with them, for he knew that she was able to speak in the very voice of all men and women whom she had ever seen, and he armed a few of his friends and went with them to the citadel. Then he stood beside the horse, holding Helen’s hand, and whispered to her that she must call each of the chiefs in the voice of his wife. She was obliged to obey, and she called Menelaus in her own voice, and Diomede in the voice of his wife, and Ulysses in the very voice of Penelope. Then Menelaus and Diomede were eager to answer, but Ulysses grasped their hands and whispered the word ‘Echo!’ Then they remembered that this was a name of Helen, because she could speak in all voices, and they were silent; but Anticlus was still eager to answer, till Ulysses held his strong hand over his mouth. There was only silence, and Deiphobus led Helen back to his house. When they had gone away Epeius opened the side of the horse, and all the chiefs let themselves down softly to the ground. Some rushed to the gate, to open it, and they killed the sleeping sentinels and let in the Greeks. Others sped with torches to burn the houses of the Trojan princes, and terrible was the slaughter of men, unarmed and half awake, and loud were the cries of the women. But Ulysses had slipped away at the first, none knew where. Neoptolemus ran to the palace of Priam, who was sitting at the altar in his courtyard, praying vainly to the Gods, for Neoptolemus slew the old man cruelly, and his white hair was dabbled in his blood. All through the city was fighting and slaying; but Menelaus went to the house of Deiphobus, knowing that Helen was there.

In the doorway he found Deiphobus lying dead in all his armour, a spear standing in his breast. There were footprints marked in blood, leading through the portico and into the hall. There Menelaus went, and found Ulysses leaning, wounded, against one of the central pillars of the great chamber, the firelight shining on his armour.

‘Why hast thou slain Deiphobus and robbed me of my revenge?’ said Menelaus. ‘You swore to give me a gift,’ said Ulysses, ‘and will you keep your oath?’ ‘Ask what you will,’ said Menelaus; ‘it is yours and my oath cannot be broken.’ ‘I ask the life of Helen of the fair hands,’ said Ulysses; ‘this is my own life-price that I pay back to her, for she saved my life when I took the Luck of Troy, and I swore that hers should be saved.’

Then Helen stole, glimmering in white robes, from a recess in the dark hall, and fell at the feet of Menelaus; her golden hair lay in the dust of the hearth, and her hands moved to touch his knees. His drawn sword fell from the hands of Menelaus, and pity and love came into his heart, and he raised her from the dust and her white arms were round his neck, and they both wept. That night Menelaus fought no more, but they tended the wound of Ulysses, for the sword of Deiphobus had bitten through his helmet.

When dawn came Troy lay in ashes, and the women were being driven with spear shafts to the ships, and the men were left unburied, a prey to dogs and all manner of birds. Thus the grey city fell, that had lorded it for many centuries. All the gold and silver and rich embroideries, and ivory and amber, the horses and chariots, were divided among the army; all but a treasure of silver and gold, hidden in a chest within a hollow of the wall, and this treasure was found, not very many years ago, by men digging deep on the hill where Troy once stood. The women, too, were given to the princes, and Neoptolemus took Andromache to his home in Argos, to draw water from the well and to be the slave of a master, and Agamemnon carried beautiful Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, to his palace in Mycenae, where they were both slain in one night. Only Helen was led with honour to the ship of Menelaus.

THE WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES

I

THE SLAYING OF AGAMEMNON AND THE SORROWS OF ULYSSES

The Greeks left Troy a mass of smouldering ashes; the marks of fire are still to be seen in the ruins on the hill which is now called Hissarlik. The Greeks had many troubles on their way home, and years passed before some of the chiefs reached their own cities. As for Agamemnon, while he was at Troy his wife, Clytaemnestra, the sister of Helen, had fallen in love with a young man named Aegisthus, who wished to be king, so he married Clytaemnestra, just as if Agamemnon had been dead. Meanwhile Agamemnon was sailing home with his share of the wealth of Troy, and many a storm drove him out of his course. At last he reached the harbour, about seven miles from his city of Mycenae, and he kissed the earth when he landed, thinking that all his troubles were over, and that he would find his son and daughter, Orestes and Electra, grown up, and his wife happy because of his return.

But Aegisthus had set, a year before, a watchman on a high tower, to come with the news as soon as Agamemnon landed, and the watchman ran to Mycenae with the good news. Aegisthus placed twenty armed men in a hidden place in the great hall, and then he shouted for his chariots and horses, and drove down to meet Agamemnon, and welcome him, and carry him to his own palace. Then he gave a great feast, and when men had drunk much wine, the armed men, who had been hiding behind curtains, rushed out, with sword and spear, and fell on Agamemnon and his company. Though taken by surprise they drew their swords, and fought so well for their lives that none were left alive, not one, neither of the company of Agamemnon nor of the company of Aegisthus; they were all slain in the hall except Aegisthus, who had hidden himself when the fray began. The bodies lay round the great mixing bowl of wine, and about the tables, and the floor ran with blood. Before Agamemnon died he saw Clytaemnestra herself stab Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, whom he had brought from Troy.

In the town of Agamemnon, Mycenae, deep down in the earth, have been found five graves, with bones of men and women, and these bones were all covered with beautiful ornaments of gold, hundreds of them, and swords and daggers inlaid with gold, and golden cups, and a sceptre of gold and crystal, and two gold breastplates. There were also golden masks that had been made to cover the faces of the dead kings, and who knows but that one of these masks may show us the features of the famous Agamemnon?

Ulysses, of course, knew nothing about these murders at the time, for he was being borne by the winds into undiscovered seas. But later he heard all the story from the ghost of a dead prophet, in the Land of the Dead, and he determined to be very cautious if ever he reached his own island, for who knew what the young men might do, that had grown up since he sailed to Troy?

Of the other Greeks Nestor soon and safely arrived at his town of Pylos, but Menelaus and Helen were borne by the winds to Egypt and other strange countries, and the ship of the brother of Aias was wrecked on a rock, and there he was drowned, and Calchas the prophet died on land, on his way across Greece.

When Ulysses left Troy the wind carried him to the coast of Thrace, where the people were allies of the Trojans. It was a king of the Thracians that Diomede killed when he and Ulysses stole into the camp of the Trojans in the night, and drove away the white horses of the king, as swift as the winds. Ismarus was the name of the Thracian town where Ulysses landed, and his men took it and plundered it, yet Ulysses allowed no one to harm the priest of Apollo, Maron, but protected him and his wife and child, in their house within the holy grove of the God. Maron was grateful, and gave Ulysses twelve talents, or little wedges, of gold, and a great bowl of silver, and twelve large clay jars, as big as barrels, full of the best and strongest wine. It was so strong that men put into the mixing bowl but one measure of wine to twenty measures of water. These presents Ulysses stored up in his ship, and lucky for him it was that he was kind to Maron.

Meanwhile his men, instead of leaving the town with their plunder, sat eating and drinking till dawn. By that time the people of the town had warned their neighbours in the country farms, who all came down in full armour, and attacked the men of Ulysses. In this fight he lost seventy-two men, six from each of his twelve ships, and it was only by hard fighting that the others were able to get on board their ships and sail away.

A great storm arose and beat upon the ships, and it seems that Ulysses and his men were driven into Fairyland, where they remained for ten years. We have heard that King Arthur and Thomas the Rhymer were carried into Fairyland, but what adventures they met with there we do not know. About Ulysses we have the stories which are now to be told. For ten days his ships ran due south, and, on the tenth, they reached the land of the Lotus Eaters, who eat food of flowers. They went on shore and drew water, and three men were sent to try to find the people of that country, who were a quiet, friendly people, and gave the fruit of the lotus to the strange sailors. Now whoever tastes of that fruit has no mind ever to go home, but to sit between the setting sun and the rising moon, dreaming happy dreams, and forgetting the world. The three men ate the lotus, and sat down to dream, but Ulysses went after them, and drove them to the ships, and bound their hands and feet, and threw them on board, and sailed away. Then he with his ships reached the coast of the land of the Cyclopes, which means the round-eyed men, men with only one eye apiece, set in the middle of their foreheads. They lived not in houses, but in caves among the hills, and they had no king and no laws, and did not plough or sow, but wheat and vines grew wild, and they kept great flocks of sheep.

There was a beautiful wild desert island lying across the opening of a bay; the isle was full of wild goats, and made a bar against the waves, so that ships could lie behind it safely, run up on the beach, for there was no tide in that sea. There Ulysses ran up his ships, and the men passed the time in hunting wild goats, and feasting on fresh meat and the wine of Maron, the priest of Apollo. Next day Ulysses left all the ships and men there, except his own ship, and his own crew, and went to see what kind of people lived on the mainland, for as yet none had been seen. He found a large cave close to the sea, with laurels growing on the rocky roof, and a wall of rough stones built round a court in front. Ulysses left all his men but twelve with the ship; filled a goat skin with the strong wine of Maron, put some corn flour in a sack, and went up to the cave. Nobody was there, but there were all the things that are usually in a dairy, baskets full of cheese, pails and bowls full of milk and whey, and kids and lambs were playing in their folds.

All seemed very quiet and pleasant. The men wanted to take as much cheese as they could carry back to the ship, but Ulysses wished to see the owner of the cave. His men, making themselves at home, lit a fire, and toasted and ate the cheeses, far within the cave. Then a shadow thrown by the setting sun fell across the opening of the cave, and a monstrous man entered, and threw down a dry trunk of a tree that he carried for firewood. Next he drove in the ewes of his flock, leaving the rams in the yard, and he picked up a huge flat stone, and set it so as to make a shut door to the cave, for twenty-four yoke of horses could not have dragged away that stone. Lastly the man milked his ewes, and put the milk in pails to drink at supper. All this while Ulysses and his men sat quiet and in great fear, for they were shut up in a cave with a one-eyed giant, whose cheese they had been eating.

Then the giant, when he had lit the fire, happened to see the men, and asked them who they were. Ulysses said that they were Greeks, who had taken Troy, and were wandering lost on the seas, and he asked the man to be kind to them in the name of their chief God, Zeus.

‘We Cyclopes,’ said the giant, ‘do not care for Zeus or the Gods, for we think that we are better men than they. Where is your ship?’ Ulysses answered that it had been wrecked on the coast, to which the man made no answer, but snatched up two of the twelve, knocked out their brains on the floor, tore the bodies limb from limb, roasted them at his fire, ate them, and, after drinking many pailfuls of milk, lay down and fell asleep. Now Ulysses had a mind to drive his sword-point into the giant’s liver, and he felt for the place with his hand. But he remembered that, even if he killed the giant, he could not move the huge stone that was the door of the cave, so he and his men would die of hunger, when they had eaten all the cheeses.

In the morning the giant ate two more men for breakfast, drove out his ewes, and set the great stone in the doorway again, as lightly as a man would put a quiverlid on a quiver of arrows. Then away he went, driving his flock to graze on the green hills.

Ulysses did not give way to despair. The giant had left his stick in the cave: it was as large as the mast of a great ship. From this Ulysses cut a portion six feet long, and his men cut and rubbed as if they were making a spear shaft: Ulysses then sharpened it to a point, and hardened the point in the fire. It was a thick rounded bar of wood, and the men cast lots to choose four, who should twist the bar in the giant’s eye when he fell asleep at night. Back he came at sunset, and drove his flocks into the cave, rams and all. Then he put up his stone door, milked his ewes, and killed two men and cooked them.

Ulysses meanwhile had filled one of the wooden ivy bowls full of the strong wine of Maron, without putting a drop of water into it. This bowl he offered to the giant, who had never heard of wine. He drank one bowl after another, and when he was merry he said that he would make Ulysses a present. ‘What is your name?’ he asked. ‘My name is *Nobody*,’ said Ulysses. ‘Then I shall eat the others first and Nobody last,’ said the giant. ‘That shall be your gift.’ Then he fell asleep.

Ulysses took his bar of wood, and made the point red-hot in the fire. Next his four men rammed it into the giant’s one eye, and held it down, while Ulysses twirled it round, and the eye hissed like red-hot iron when men dip it into cold water, which is the strength of iron. The Cyclops roared and leaped to his feet, and shouted for help to the other giants who lived in the neighbouring caves. ‘Who is troubling you, Polyphemus,’ they answered. ‘Why do you wake us out of our sleep?’ The giant answered, ‘Nobody is killing me by his cunning, not at all in fair fight.’ ‘Then if nobody is harming you nobody can help you,’ shouted a giant. ‘If you are ill pray to your father, Poseidon, who is the god of the sea.’ So the giants all went back to bed, and Ulysses laughed low to see how his cunning had deceived them. Then the giant went and took down his door and sat in the doorway, stretching out his arms, so as to catch his prisoners as they went out.

But Ulysses had a plan. He fastened sets of three rams together with twisted withies, and bound a man to each ram in the middle, so that the blind giant’s hands would only feel the two outside rams. The biggest and strongest ram Ulysses seized, and held on by his hands and feet to its fleece, under its belly, and then all the sheep, went out through the doorway, and the giant felt them, but did not know that they were carrying out the men. ‘Dear ram!’ he said to the biggest, which carried Ulysses, ‘you do not come out first, as usual, but last, as if you were slow with sorrow for your master, whose eye Nobody has blinded!’

Then all the rams went out into the open country, and Ulysses unfastened his men, and drove the sheep down to his ship and so on board. His crew wept when they heard of the death of six of their friends, but Ulysses made them row out to sea. When he was just so far away from the cave as to be within hearing distance he shouted at the Cyclops and mocked him. Then that giant broke off the rocky peak of a great hill and threw it in the direction of the sound. The rock fell in front of the ship, and raised a wave that drove it back to shore, but Ulysses punted it off with a long pole, and his men rowed out again, far out. Ulysses again shouted to the giant, ‘If any one asks who blinded you, say that it was Ulysses, Laertes’ son, of Ithaca, the stormer of cities.’

Then the giant prayed to the Sea God, his father, that Ulysses might never come home, or if he did, that he might come late and lonely, with loss of all his men, and find sorrow in his house. Then the giant heaved and threw another rock, but it fell at the stern of the ship, and the wave drove the ship further out to sea, to the shore of the island. There Ulysses and his men landed, and killed some of the giant’s sheep, and took supper, and drank wine.

But the Sea God heard the prayer of his son the blind giant.

Ulysses and his men sailed on, in what direction and for how long we do not know, till they saw far off an island that shone in the sea. When they came nearer they found that it had a steep cuff of bronze, with a palace on the top. Here lived Aeolus, the King of the Winds, with his six sons and six daughters. He received Ulysses kindly on his island, and entertained him for a whole month. Then he gave him a leather bag, in which he had bound the ways of all the noisy winds. This bag was fastened with a silver cord, and Aeolus left no wind out except the West Wind, which would blow Ulysses straight home to Ithaca. Where he was we cannot guess, except that he was to the west of his own island.

So they sailed for nine days and nights towards the east, and Ulysses always held the helm and steered, but on the tenth day he fell asleep. Then his men said to each other, ‘What treasure is it that he keeps in the leather bag, a present from King Aeolus? No doubt the bag is full of gold and silver, while we have only empty hands.’ So they opened the bag when they were so near Ithaca that they could see people lighting fires on the shore. Then out rushed all the winds, and carried the ship into unknown seas, and when Ulysses woke he was so miserable that he had a mind to drown himself. But he was of an enduring heart, and he lay still, and the ship came back to the isle of Aeolus, who cried, ‘Away with you! You are the most luckless of living men: you must be hated by the Gods.’

Thus Aeolus drove them away, and they sailed for seven days and nights, till they saw land, and came to a harbour with a narrow entrance, and with tall steep rocks on either side. The other eleven ships sailed into the haven, but Ulysses did not venture in; he fastened his ship to a rock at the outer end of the harbour. The place must have been very far north, for, as it was summer, the sun had hardly set till dawn began again, as it does in Norway and Iceland, where there are many such narrow harbours within walls of rock. These places are called *fiords*. Ulysses sent three men to spy out the country, and at a well outside the town they met a damsel drawing water; she was the child of the king of the people, the Laestrygonians. The damsel led them to her father’s house; he was a giant and seized one of the men of Ulysses, meaning to kill and eat him. The two other men fled to the ships, but the Laestrygonians ran along the tops of the cliffs and threw down great rocks, sinking the vessels and killing the sailors. When Ulysses saw this he drew his sword and cut the cable that fastened his ship to the rock outside the harbour, and his crew rowed for dear life and so escaped, weeping for the death of their friends. Thus the prayer of the blind Cyclops was being fulfilled, for now out of twelve ships Ulysses had but one left.

II

THE ENCHANTRESS CIRCE, THE LAND OF THE DEAD, THE SIRENS

On they sailed till they came to an island, and there they landed. What the place was they did not know, but it was called Aeaea, and here lived Circe, the enchantress, sister of the wizard king Æêtes, who was the Lord of the Fleece of Gold, that Jason won from him by help of the king’s daughter, Medea. For two days Ulysses and his men lay on land beside their ship, which they anchored in a bay of the island. On the third morning Ulysses took his sword and spear, and climbed to the top of a high hill, whence he saw the smoke rising out of the wood where Circe had her palace. He thought of going to the house, but it seemed better to return to his men and send some of them to spy out the place. Since the adventure of the Cyclops Ulysses did not care to risk himself among unknown people, and for all that he knew there might be man-eating giants on the island. So he went back, and, as he came to the bank of the river, he found a great red deer drinking under the shadow of the green boughs. He speared the stag, and, tying his feet together, slung the body from his neck, and so, leaning on his spear, he came to his fellows. Glad they were to see fresh venison, which they cooked, and so dined with plenty of wine.

Next morning Ulysses divided his men into two companies, Eurylochus led one company and he himself the other. Then they put two marked pieces of wood, one for Eurylochus, one for Ulysses, in a helmet, to decide who should go to the house in the wood. They shook the helmet, and the lot of Eurylochus leaped out, and, weeping for fear, he led his twenty-two men away into the forest. Ulysses and the other twenty-two waited, and, when Eurylochus came back alone, he was weeping, and unable to speak for sorrow. At last he told his story: they had come to the beautiful house of Circe, within the wood, and tame wolves and lions were walking about in front of the house. They wagged their tails, and jumped up, like friendly dogs, round the men of Ulysses, who stood in the gateway and heard Circe singing in a sweet voice, as she went up and down before the loom at which she was weaving. Then one of the men of Ulysses called to her, and she came out, a beautiful lady in white robes covered with jewels of gold. She opened the doors and bade them come in, but Eurylochus hid himself and watched, and saw Circe and her maidens mix honey and wine for the men, and bid them sit down on chairs at tables, but, when they had drunk of her cup, she touched them with her wand. Then they were all changed into swine, and Circe drove them out and shut them up in the styes.

When Ulysses heard that he slung his sword-belt round his shoulders, seized his bow, and bade Eurylochus come back with him to the house of Circe; but Eurylochus was afraid. Alone went Ulysses through the woods, and in a dell he met a most beautiful young man, who took his hand and said, ‘Unhappy one! how shalt thou free thy friends from so great an enchantress?’ Then the young man plucked a plant from the ground; the flower was as white as milk, but the root was black: it is a plant that men may not dig up, but to the Gods all things are easy, and the young man was the cunning God Hermes, whom Autolycus, the grandfather of Ulysses, used to worship. ‘Take this herb of grace,’ he said, ‘and when Circe has made thee drink of the cup of her enchantments the herb will so work that they shall have no power over thee. Then draw thy sword, and rush at her, and make her swear that she will not harm thee with her magic.’

Then Hermes departed, and Ulysses went to the house of Circe, and she asked him to enter, and seated him on a chair, and gave him the enchanted cup to drink, and then smote him with her wand and bade him go to the styes of the swine. But Ulysses drew his sword, and Circe, with a great cry, fell at his feet, saying, ‘Who art thou on whom the cup has no power? Truly thou art Ulysses of Ithaca, for the God Hermes has told me that he should come to my island on his way from Troy. Come now, fear not; let us be friends!’

Then the maidens of Circe came to them, fairy damsels of the wells and woods and rivers. They threw covers of purple silk over the chairs, and on the silver tables they placed golden baskets, and mixed wine in a silver bowl, and heated water, and bathed Ulysses in a polished bath, and clothed him in new raiment, and led him to the table and bade him eat and drink. But he sat silent, neither eating nor drinking, in sorrow for his company, till Circe called them out from the styes and disenchanted them. Glad they were to see Ulysses, and they embraced him, and wept for joy.

So they went back to their friends at the ship, and told them how Circe would have them all to live with her; but Eurylochus tried to frighten them, saying that she would change them into wolves and lions. Ulysses drew his sword to cut off the head of Eurylochus for his cowardice, but the others prayed that he might be left alone to guard the ship. So Ulysses left him; but Eurylochus had not the courage to be alone, and slunk behind them to the house of Circe. There she welcomed them all, and gave them a feast, and there they dwelt for a whole year, and then they wearied for their wives and children, and longed to return to Ithaca. They did not guess by what a strange path they must sail.

When Ulysses was alone with Circe at night he told her that his men were home-sick, and would fain go to Ithaca. Then Circe said, ‘There is no way but this: you must sail to the last shore of the stream of the river Oceanus, that girdles round the world. There is the Land of the Dead, and the House of Hades and Persephone, the King and Queen of the ghosts. There you must call up the ghost of the blind prophet, Tiresias of Thebes, for he alone has knowledge of your way, and the other spirits sweep round shadow-like.’

Then Ulysses thought that his heart would break, for how should he, a living man, go down to the awful dwellings of the dead? But Circe told him the strange things that he must do, and she gave him a black ram and a black ewe, and next day Ulysses called his men together. All followed him to the ship, except one, Elpenor. He had been sleeping, for the sake of the cool air, on the flat roof of the house, and, when suddenly wakened, he missed his foothold on the tall ladder, and fell to the ground and broke his neck. They left him unburned and unburied, and, weeping, they followed Ulysses, as follow they must, to see the homes of the ghosts and the house of Hades. Very sorrowfully they all went on board, taking with them the black ram and the black ewe, and they set the sails, and the wind bore them at its will.

Now in mid-day they sailed out of the sunlight into darkness, for they had come to the land of the Cimmerian men, which the sun never sees, but all is dark cloud and mist. There they ran the ship ashore, and took out the two black sheep, and walked along the dark banks of the river Oceanus to a place of which Circe had told Ulysses. There the two rivers of the dead meet, where a rock divides the two dark roaring streams. There they dug a trench and poured out mead, and wine, and water, and prayed to the ghosts, and then they cut the throat of the black ewe, and the grey ghosts gathered to smell the blood. Pale spectres came, spirits of brides who died long ago, and youths unwed, and old unhappy men; and many phantoms were there of men who fell in battle, with shadowy spears in their hands, and battered armour. Then Ulysses sacrificed the black ram to the ghost of the prophet Tiresias, and sat down with his sword in his hand, that no spirit before Tiresias might taste the blood in the trench.

First the spirit of Elpenor came, and begged Ulysses to burn his body, for till his body was burned he was not allowed to mingle with the other souls of dead men. So Ulysses promised to burn and bury him when he went back to Circe’s island. Then came the shadow of the mother of Ulysses, who had died when he was at Troy, but, for all his grief, he would not allow the shadow to come near the blood till Tiresias had tasted it. At length came the spirit of the blind prophet, and he prayed Ulysses to sheathe his sword and let him drink the blood of the black sheep.

When he had tasted it he said that the Sea God was angry because of the blinding of his son, the Cyclops, and would make his voyaging vain. But if the men of Ulysses were wise, and did not slay and eat the sacred cattle of the Sun God, in the isle called Thrinacia, they might all win home. If they were unwise, and if Ulysses did come home, lonely and late he would arrive, on the ship of strangers, and he would find proud men wasting his goods and seeking to wed his wife, Penelope. Even if Ulysses alone could kill these men his troubles would not be ended. He must wander over the land, as he had wandered over the waters, carrying an oar on his shoulder, till he came to men who had never heard of the sea or of boats. When one of these men, not knowing what an oar was, came and told him that he carried a fan for winnowing corn, then Ulysses must fix the oar in the ground, and offer a sacrifice to the Sea God, and go home, where he would at last live in peace. Ulysses said, ‘So be it!’ and asked how he could have speech with the ghosts. Tiresias told him how this might be done, and then his mother told him how she died of sorrow for him, and Ulysses tried to embrace and kiss her, but his arms only clasped the empty air.

Then came up the beautiful spirits of many dead, unhappy ladies of old times, and then came the souls of Agamemnon, and of Achilles, and of Aias. Achilles was glad when he heard how bravely his young son had fought at Troy, but he said it was better to be the servant of a poor farmer on earth than to rule over all the ghosts of the dead in the still grey land where the sun never shone, and no flowers grew but the mournful asphodel. Many other spirits of Greeks slain at Troy came and asked for news about their friends, but Aias stood apart and silent, still in anger because the arms of Achilles had been given to Ulysses. In vain Ulysses told him that the Greeks had mourned as much for him as for Achilles; he passed silently away into the House of Hades. At last the legions of the innumerable dead, all that have died since the world began, flocked, and filled the air with their low wailing cries, and fear fell on Ulysses, and he went back along that sad last shore of the world’s end to his ship, and sailed again out of the darkness into the sunlight, and to the isle of Circe. There they burned the body of Elpenor, and piled a mound over it, and on the mound set the oar of the dead man, and so went to the palace of Circe.

Ulysses told Circe all his adventures, and then she warned him of dangers yet to come, and showed him how he might escape them. He listened, and remembered all that she spoke, and these two said good-bye for ever. Circe wandered away alone into the woods, and Ulysses and his men set sail and crossed the unknown seas. Presently the wind fell, and the sea was calm, and they saw a beautiful island from which came the sound of sweet singing. Ulysses knew who the singers were, for Circe had told him that they were the Sirens, a kind of beautiful Mermaids, deadly to men. Among the flowers they sit and sing, but the flowers hide the bones of men who have listened and landed on the island, and died of that strange music, which carries the soul away.

Ulysses now took a great cake of bees’ wax and cut it up into small pieces, which he bade his men soften and place in their ears, that they might not hear that singing. But, as he desired to hear it and yet live, he bade the sailors bind him tightly to the mast with ropes, and they must not unbind him, however much he might implore them to set him free. When all this was done the men sat down on the benches, all orderly, and smote the grey sea with their oars, and the ship rushed along through the clear still water, and came opposite the island.

Then the sweet singing of the Sirens was borne over the sea,

‘Hither, come hither, renowned Ulysses, Great glory of the Achaean name. Here stay thy ship, that thou mayest listen to our song. Never has any man driven his ship past our island Till he has heard our voices, sweet as the honeycomb; Gladly he has heard, and wiser has he gone on his way. Hither, come hither, for we know all things, All that the Greeks wrought and endured in Troyland, All that shall hereafter be upon the fruitful earth.’

Thus they sang, offering Ulysses all knowledge and wisdom, which they knew that he loved more than anything in the world. To other men, no doubt, they would have offered other pleasures. Ulysses desired to listen, and he nodded to his men to loosen his bonds. But Perimedes and Eurylochus arose, and laid on him yet stronger bonds, and the ship was driven past that island, till the song of the Sirens faded away, and then the men set Ulysses free and took the wax out of their ears.

III

THE WHIRLPOOL, THE SEA MONSTER, AND THE CATTLE OF THE SUN

They had not sailed far when they heard the sea roaring, and saw a great wave, over which hung a thick shining cloud of spray. They had drifted to a place where the sea narrowed between two high black rocks: under the rock on the left was a boiling whirlpool in which no ship could live; the opposite rock showed nothing dangerous, but Ulysses had been warned by Circe that here too lay great peril. We may ask, Why did Ulysses pass through the narrows between these two rocks? why did he not steer on the outer side of one or the other? The reason seems to have been that, on the outer side of these cliffs, were the tall reefs which men called the Rocks Wandering. Between them the sea water leaped in high columns of white foam, and the rocks themselves rushed together, grinding and clashing, while fire flew out of the crevices and crests as from a volcano.

Circe had told Ulysses about the Rocks Wandering, which do not even allow flocks of doves to pass through them; even one of the doves is always caught and crushed, and no ship of men escapes that tries to pass that way, and the bodies of the sailors and the planks of the ships are confusedly tossed by the waves of the sea and the storms of ruinous fire. Of all ships that ever sailed the sea only ‘Argo,’ the ship of Jason, has escaped the Rocks Wandering, as you may read in the story of the Fleece of Gold. For these reasons Ulysses was forced to steer between the rock of the whirlpool and the rock which seemed harmless. In the narrows between these two cliffs the sea ran like a rushing river, and the men, in fear, ceased to hold the oars, and down the stream the oars plashed in confusion. But Ulysses, whom Circe had told of this new danger, bade them grasp the oars again and row hard. He told the man at the helm to steer under the great rocky cliff, on the right, and to keep clear of the whirlpool and the cloud of spray on the left. Well he knew the danger of the rock on the left, for within it was a deep cave, where a monster named Scylla lived, yelping with a shrill voice out of her six hideous heads. Each head hung down from a long, thin, scaly neck, and in each mouth were three rows of greedy teeth, and twelve long feelers, with claws at the ends of them, dropped down, ready to catch at men. There in her cave Scylla sits, fishing with her feelers for dolphins and other great fish, and for men, if any men sail by that way. Against this deadly thing none may fight, for she cannot be slain with the spear.

All this Ulysses knew, for Circe had warned him. But he also knew that on the other side of the strait, where the sea spray for ever flew high above the rock, was a whirlpool, called Charybdis, which would swallow up his ship if it came within the current, while Scylla could only catch some of his men. For this reason he bade the helmsman to steer close to the rock of Scylla, and he did not tell the sailors that she lurked there with her body hidden in her deep cave. He himself put on his armour, and took two spears, and went and stood in the raised half deck at the front of the ship, thinking that, at least, he would have a stroke at Scylla. Then they rowed down the swift sea stream, while the wave of the whirlpool now rose up, till the spray hid the top of the rock, and now fell, and bubbled with black sand. They were watching the whirlpool, when out from the hole in the cliff sprang the six heads of Scylla, and up into the air went six of Ulysses' men, each calling to him, as they were swept within her hole in the rock, where she devoured them. 'This was the most pitiful thing,' Ulysses said, 'that my eyes have seen, of all my sorrows in searching out the paths of the sea.'

The ship swept through the roaring narrows between the rock of Scylla and the whirlpool of Charybdis, into the open sea, and the men, weary and heavy of heart, bent over their oars, and longed for rest.

Now a place of rest seemed near at hand, for in front of the ship lay a beautiful island, and the men could hear the bleating of sheep and the lowing of cows as they were being herded into their stalls. But Ulysses remembered that, in the Land of the Dead, the ghost of the blind prophet had warned him of one thing. If his men killed and ate the cattle of the Sun, in the sacred island of Thrinacia, they would all perish. So Ulysses told his crew of this prophecy, and bade them row past the island. Eurylochus was angry and said that the men were tired, and could row no further, but must land, and take supper, and sleep comfortably on shore. On hearing Eurylochus, the whole crew shouted and said that they would go no further that night, and Ulysses had no power to compel them. He could only make them swear not to touch the cattle of the Sun God, which they promised readily enough, and so went ashore, took supper, and slept.

In the night a great storm arose: the clouds and driving mist blinded the face of the sea and sky, and for a whole month the wild south wind hurled the waves on the coast, and no ship of these times could venture out in the tempest. Meanwhile the crew ate up all the stores in the ship, and finished the wine, so that they were driven to catch sea birds and fishes, of which they took but few, the sea being so rough upon the rocks. Ulysses went up into the island alone, to pray to the Gods, and when he had prayed he found a sheltered place, and there he fell asleep.

Eurylochus took the occasion, while Ulysses was away, to bid the crew seize and slay the sacred cattle of the Sun God, which no man might touch, and this they did, so that, when Ulysses wakened, and came near the ship, he smelled the roast meat, and knew what had been done. He rebuked the men, but, as the cattle were dead, they kept eating them for six days; and then the storm ceased, the wind fell, the sun shone, and they set the sails, and away they went. But this evil deed was punished, for when they were out of sight of land, a great thunder cloud overshadowed them, the wind broke the mast, which crushed the head of the helmsman, the lightning struck the ship in the centre; she reeled, the men fell overboard, and the heads of the crew floated a moment, like cormorants, above the waves.

But Ulysses had kept hold of a rope, and, when the vessel righted, he walked the deck till a wave stripped off all the tackling, and loosened the sides from the keel. Ulysses had only time to lash the broken mast with a rope to the keel, and sit on this raft with his feet in the water, while the South Wind rose again furiously, and drove the raft back till it came under the rock where was the whirlpool of Charybdis. Here Ulysses would have been drowned, but he caught at the root of a fig tree that grew on the rock, and there he hung, clinging with his toes to the crumbling stones till the whirlpool boiled up again, and up came the timbers. Down on the timbers Ulysses dropped, and so sat rowing with his hands, and the wind drifted him at last to a shelving beach of an island.

Here dwelt a kind of fairy, called Calypso, who found Ulysses nearly dead on the beach, and was kind to him, and kept him in her cave, where he lived for seven long years, always desiring to leave the beautiful fairy and return to Ithaca and his wife Penelope. But no ship of men ever came near that isle, which is the central place of all the seas, and he had no ship, and no men to sail and row. Calypso was very kind, and very beautiful, being the daughter of the wizard Atlas, who holds the two pillars that keep earth and sea asunder. But Ulysses was longing to see if it were but the smoke going up from the houses of rocky Ithaca, and he had a desire to die.

IV

HOW TELEMACHUS WENT TO SEEK HIS FATHER

When Ulysses had lived nearly seven years in the island of Calypso, his son Telemachus, whom he had left in Ithaca as a little child, went forth to seek for his father. In Ithaca he and his mother, Penelope, had long been very unhappy. As Ulysses did not come home after the war, and as nothing was heard about him from the day when the Greeks sailed from Troy, it was supposed that he must be dead. But Telemachus was still but a boy of twelve years old, and the father of Ulysses, Laertes, was very old, and had gone to a farm in the country, where he did nothing but take care of his garden. There was thus no King in Ithaca, and the boys, who had been about ten years old when Ulysses went to Troy, were now grown up, and, as their fathers had gone to the war, they did just as they pleased. Twelve of them wanted to marry Penelope, and they, with about a hundred others as wild as themselves, from the neighbouring islands, by way of paying court to Penelope ate and drank all day at her house. They killed the cattle, sheep, and swine; they drank the wine, and amused themselves with Penelope’s maidens, of whom she had many. Nobody could stop them; they would never go away, they said, till Penelope chose one of them to be her husband, and King of the island, though Telemachus was the rightful prince.

Penelope at last promised that she would choose one of them when she had finished a great shroud of linen, to be the death shroud of old Laertes when he died. All day she wove it, but at night, when her wooers had gone (for they did not sleep in her house), she unwove it again. But one of her maidens told this to the wooers, so she had to finish the shroud, and now they pressed her more than ever to make her choice. But she kept hoping that Ulysses was still alive, and would return, though, if he did, how was he to turn so many strong young men out of his house?

The Goddess of Wisdom, Athênê, had always favoured Ulysses, and now she spoke up among the Gods, where they sat, as men say, in their holy heaven. Not by winds is it shaken, nor wet with rain, nor does the snow come thither, but clear air is spread about it cloudless, and the white light floats over it. Athênê told how good, wise, and brave Ulysses was, and how he was kept in the isle of Calypso, while men ruined his wealth and wooed his wife. She said that she would herself go to Ithaca, and make Telemachus appeal to all the people of the country, showing how evilly he was treated, and then sail abroad to seek news of his father. So Athênê spoke, and flashed down from Olympus to Ithaca, where she took the shape of a mortal man, Mentes, a chief of the Taphians. In front of the doors she found the proud wooers playing at draughts and other games while supper was being made ready. When Telemachus, who was standing apart, saw the stranger, he went to him, and led him into the house, and treated him kindly, while the wooers ate and drank, and laughed noisily.

Then Telemachus told Athênê (or, as he supposed, the stranger), how evilly he was used, while his father's white bones might be wasting on an unknown shore or rolling in the billows of the salt sea. Athênê said, or Mentes said, that he himself was an old friend of Ulysses, and had touched at Ithaca on his way to Cyprus to buy copper. 'But Ulysses,' he said, 'is not dead; he will certainly come home, and that speedily. You are so like him, you must be his son.' Telemachus replied that he was, and Mentes was full of anger, seeing how the wooers insulted him, and told him first to complain to an assembly of all the people, and then to take a ship, and go seeking news of Ulysses.

Then Athênê departed, and next day Telemachus called an assembly, and spoke to the people, but though they were sorry for him they could not help him. One old man, however, a prophet, said that Ulysses would certainly come home, but the wooers only threatened and insulted him. In the evening Athênê came again, in the appearance of Mentor, not the same man as Mentes, but an Ithacan, and a friend of Ulysses. She encouraged Telemachus to take a ship, with twenty oarsmen, and he told the wooers that he was going to see Menelaus and Nestor, and ask tidings of his father. They only mocked him, but he made all things ready for his voyage without telling his mother. It was old Eurycleia, who had been his nurse and his father's nurse, that brought him wine and food for his journey; and at night, when the sea wind wakens in summer, he and Mentor went on board, and all night they sailed, and at noon next day they reached Pylos on the sea sands, the city of Nestor the Old.

Nestor received them gladly, and so did his sons, Pisistratus and Thrasymedes, who fought at Troy, and next day, when Mentor had gone, Pisistratus and Telemachus drove together, up hill and down dale, a two days' journey, to Lacedaemon, lying beneath Mount Taygetus on the bank of the clear river Eurotas.

Not one of the Greeks had seen Ulysses since the day when they all sailed from Troy, yet Menelaus, in a strange way, was able to tell Telemachus that his father still lived, and was with Calypso on a lonely island, the centre of all the seas. We shall see how Menelaus knew this. When Telemachus and Pisistratus came, he was giving a feast, and called them to his table. It would not have been courteous to ask them who they were till they had been bathed and clothed in fresh raiment, and had eaten and drunk. After dinner, Menelaus saw how much Telemachus admired his house, and the flashing of light from the walls, which were covered with bronze panels, and from the cups of gold, and the amber and ivory and silver. Such things Telemachus had never seen in Ithaca. Noticing his surprise, Menelaus said that he had brought many rich things from Troy, after eight years wandering to Cyprus, and Phoenicia, and Egypt, and even to Libya, on the north coast of Africa. Yet he said that, though he was rich and fortunate, he was unhappy when he remembered the brave men who had died for his sake at Troy. But above all he was miserable for the loss of the best of them all, Ulysses, who was so long unheard of, and none knew whether, at that hour, he was alive or dead. At these words Telemachus hid his face in his purple mantle and shed tears, so that Menelaus guessed who he was, but he said nothing.

Then came into the hall, from her own fragrant chamber, Helen of the fair hands, as beautiful as ever she had been, her bower maidens carrying her golden distaff, with which she span, and a silver basket to hold her wool, for the white hands of Helen were never idle.

Helen knew Telemachus by his likeness to his father, Ulysses, and when she said this to Menelaus, Pisistratus overheard her, and told how Telemachus had come to them seeking for news of his father. Menelaus was much moved in his heart, and Helen no less, when they saw the son of Ulysses, who had been the most trusty of all their friends. They could not help shedding tears, for Pisistratus remembered his dear brother Antilochus, whom Memnon slew in battle at Troy, Memnon the son of the bright Dawn. But Helen wished to comfort them, and she brought a drug of magical virtue, which Polydamna, the wife of Thon, King of Egypt had given to her. This drug lulls all pain and anger, and brings forgetfulness of every sorrow, and Helen poured it from a golden vial into the mixing bowl of gold, and they drank the wine and were comforted.

Then Helen told Telemachus what great deeds Ulysses did at Troy, and how he crept into the town disguised as a beggar, and came to her house, when he stole the Luck of Troy. Menelaus told how Ulysses kept him and the other princes quiet in the horse of tree, when Deiphobus made Helen call to them all in the very voices of their own wives, and to Telemachus it was great joy to hear of his father’s courage and wisdom.

Next day Telemachus showed to Menelaus how hardly he and his mother were treated by the proud wooers, and Menelaus prayed that Ulysses might come back to Ithaca, and slay the wooers every one. ‘But as to what you ask me,’ he said, ‘I will tell you all that I have heard about your father. In my wanderings after I sailed from Troy the storm winds kept me for three weeks in the island called

Pharos, a day’s voyage from the mouth of the river “Ægyptus”’ (which is the old name of the Nile). ‘We were almost starving, for our food was done, and my crew went round the shores, fishing with hook and line. Now in that isle lives a goddess, the daughter of Proteus, the Old Man of the Sea. She advised me that if I could but catch her father when he came out of the sea to sleep on the shore he would tell me everything that I needed to know. At noonday he was used to come out, with all his flock of seals round him, and to sleep among them on the sands. If I could seize him, she said, he would turn into all manner of shapes in my hands: beasts, and serpents, and burning fire; but at last he would appear in his own shape, and answer all my questions.

‘So the goddess spoke, and she dug hiding places in the sands for me and three of my men, and covered us with the skins of seals. At noonday the Old Man came out with his seals, and counted them, beginning with us, and then he lay down and fell asleep. Then we leaped up and rushed at him and gripped him fast. He turned into the shapes of a lion, and of a leopard, of a snake, and a huge boar; then he was running water, and next he was a tall, blossoming tree. But we held him firmly, and at last he took his own shape, and told me that I should never have a fair wind till I had sailed back into the river Ægyptus and sacrificed there to the gods in heaven. Then I asked him for news about my brother, Agamemnon, and he told me how my brother was slain in his own hall, and how Aias was drowned in the sea. Lastly, he told me about Ulysses: how he was kept on a lonely island by the fairy Calypso, and was unhappy, and had no ship and no crew to escape and win home.’

This was all that Menelaus could tell Telemachus, who stayed with Menelaus for a month. All that time the wooers lay in wait for him, with a ship, in a narrow strait which they thought he must sail through on his way back to Ithaca. In that strait they meant to catch him and kill him.

V

HOW ULYSSES ESCAPED FROM THE ISLAND OF CALYPSO

Now the day after Menelaus told Telemachus that Ulysses was still a living man, the Gods sent Hermes to Calypso. So Hermes bound on his feet his fair golden sandals, that wax not old, and bear him, alike over wet sea and dry land, as swift as the wind. Along the crests of the waves he flew, like the cormorant that chases fishes through the sea deeps, with his plumage wet in the sea brine. He reached the island, and went up to the cave of Calypso, wherein dwelt the nymph of the braided tresses, and he found her within. And on the hearth there was a great fire burning, and from afar, through the isle, was smelt the fragrance of cleft cedar blazing, and of sandal wood. And the nymph within was singing with a sweet voice as she fared to and fro before the loom, and wove with a shuttle of gold. All round about the cave there was a wood blossoming, alder and poplar and sweet smelling cypress. Therein roosted birds long of wing — owls and falcons and chattering sea-crows, which have their business in the waters. And lo! there, about the hollow cave, trailed a gadding garden vine, all rich with clusters. And fountains, four set orderly, were running with clear water hard by one another, turned each to his own course. Around soft meadows bloomed of violets and parsley; yea, even a deathless God who came thither might wonder at the sight and be glad at heart.

There the messenger, the slayer of Argos, stood and wondered. Now when he had gazed at all with wonder, he went into the wide cave; nor did Calypso, that fair Goddess, fail to know him when she saw him face to face; for the Gods use not to be strange one to another, not though one have his habitation far away. But he found not Ulysses, the great-hearted, within the cave, who sat weeping on the shore even as aforetime, straining his soul with tears and groans and griefs, and as he wept he looked wistfully over the unharvested deep. And Calypso, that fair Goddess, questioned Hermes, when she had made him sit on a bright shining star:

‘Wherefore, I pray thee, Hermes of the golden wand, hast thou come hither, worshipful and welcome, whereas as of old thou wert not wont to visit me? Tell me all thy thought; my heart is set on fulfilling it, if fulfil it I may, and if it hath been fulfilled in the counsel of fate. But now follow me further, that I may set before thee the entertainment of strangers.’

Therewith the goddess spread a table with ambrosia and set it by him, and mixed the ruddy nectar. So the messenger, the slayer of Argos, did eat and drink. Now after he had supped and comforted his soul with food, at the last he answered, and spake to her on this wise:

‘Thou makest question of me on my coming, a Goddess of a God, and I will tell thee this my saying truly, at thy command. ’Twas Zeus that bade me come hither, by no will of mine; nay, who of his free will would speed over such a wondrous space of sea whereby is no city of mortals that do sacrifice to the gods. He saith that thou hast with thee a man most wretched beyond his fellows, beyond those men that round the city of Priam for nine years fought, and in the tenth year sacked the city and departed homeward. Yet on the way they sinned against Athênê, and she raised upon them an evil blast and long waves of the sea. Then all the rest of his good company was lost, but it came to pass that the wind bare and the wave brought him hither. And now Zeus biddeth thee send him hence with what speed thou mayest, for it is not ordained that he die away from his friends, but rather it is his fate to look on them even yet, and to come to his high-roofed home and his own country.’

So spake he, and Calypso, that fair Goddess, shuddered and spake unto him: ‘Hard are ye Gods and jealous exceeding, who ever grudge Goddesses openly to mate with men. Him I saved as he went all alone bestriding the keel of a bark, for that Zeus had crushed and cleft his swift ship with a white bolt in the midst of the wine-dark deep. There all the rest of his good company was lost, but it came to pass that the wind bare and the wave brought him hither. And him have I loved and cherished, and I said that I would make him to know not death and age for ever. But I will give him no despatch, not I, for I have no ships by me with oars, nor company to bear him on his way over the broad back of the sea. Yet will I be forward to put this in his mind, and will hide nought, that all unharmed he may come to his own country.’

Then the messenger, the slayer of Argos, answered her: ‘Yea, speed him now upon his path and have regard unto the wrath of Zeus, lest haply he be angered and bear hard on thee hereafter.’

Therewith the great slayer of Argos departed, but the lady nymph went on her way to the great-hearted Ulysses, when she had heard the message of Zeus. And there she found him sitting on the shore, and his eyes were never dry of tears, and his sweet life was ebbing away as he mourned for his return. In the daytime he would sit on the rocks and on the beach, straining his soul with tears, and groans, and griefs, and through his tears he would look wistfully over the unharvested deep. So, standing near him, that fair goddess spake to him:

‘Hapless man, sorrow no more I pray thee in this isle, nor let thy good life waste away, for even now will I send thee hence with all my heart. Nay, arise and cut long beams, and fashion a wide raft with the axe, and lay deckings high thereupon, that it may bear thee over the misty deep. And I will place therein bread and water, and red wine to thy heart's desire, to keep hunger far away. And I will put raiment upon thee, and send a fair gale, that so thou mayest come all unharmed to thine own country, if indeed it be the good pleasure of the gods who hold wide heaven, who are stronger than I am both to will and to do.'

Then Ulysses was glad and sad: glad that the Gods took thought for him, and sad to think of crossing alone the wide unsailed seas. Calypso said to him:

'So it is indeed thy wish to get thee home to thine own dear country even in this hour? Good fortune go with thee even so! Yet didst thou know in thine heart what thou art ordained to suffer, or ever thou reach thine own country, here, even here, thou wouldst abide with me and keep this house, and wouldst never taste of death, though thou longest to see thy wife, for whom thou hast ever a desire day by day. Not, in sooth, that I avow me to be less noble than she in form or fashion, for it is in no wise meet that mortal women should match them with immortals in shape and comeliness.'

And Ulysses of many counsels answered, and spake unto her: 'Be not wroth with me, goddess and queen. Myself I know it well, how wise Penelope is meaner to look upon than thou in comeliness and stature. But she is mortal, and thou knowest not age nor death. Yet, even so, I wish and long day by day to fare homeward and see the day of my returning. Yea, and if some god shall wreck me in the wine-dark deep, even so I will endure, with a heart within me patient of affliction. For already have I suffered full much, and much have I toiled in perils of waves and war; let this be added to the tale of those.'

Next day Calypso brought to Ulysses carpenters' tools, and he felled trees, and made a great raft, and a mast, and sails out of canvas. In five days he had finished his raft and launched it, and Calypso placed in it skins full of wine and water, and flour and many pleasant things to eat, and so they kissed for that last time and took farewell, he going alone on the wide sea, and she turning lonely to her own home. He might have lived for ever with the beautiful fairy, but he chose to live and die, if he could, with his wife Penelope.

VI

HOW ULYSSES WAS WRECKED, YET REACHED PHAEACIA

As long as the fair wind blew Ulysses sat and steered his raft, never seeing land or any ship of men. He kept his eye at night on the Great Bear, holding it always on his left hand, as Calypso taught him. Seventeen days he sailed, and on the eighteenth day he saw the shadowy mountain peaks of an island called Phaeacia. But now the Sea god saw him, and remembered how Ulysses had blinded his son the Cyclops. In anger he raised a terrible storm: great clouds covered the sky, and all the winds met. Ulysses wished that he had died when the Trojans gathered round him as he defended the dead body of Achilles. For, had he died then, he would have been burned and buried by his friends, but if he were now drowned his ghost would always wander alone on the fringes of the Land of the Dead, like the ghost of Elpenor.

As he thought thus, the winds broke the mast of his raft, and the sail and yardarm fell into the sea, and the waves dragged him deep down. At last he rose to the surface and swam after his raft, and climbed on to it, and sat there, while the winds tossed the raft about like a feather. The Sea goddess, Ino, saw him and pitied him, and rose from the water as a seagull rises after it has dived. She spoke to him, and threw her bright veil to him, saying, ‘Wind this round your breast, and throw off your clothes. Leap from the raft and swim, and, when you reach land, cast the veil back into the sea, and turn away your head.’

Ulysses caught the veil, and wound it about his breast, but he determined not to leave the raft while the timbers held together. Even as he thought thus, the timbers were driven asunder by the waves, and he seized a plank, and sat astride it as a man rides a horse. Then the winds fell, all but the north wind, which drifted Ulysses on for two days and nights. On the third day all was calm, and the land was very near, and Ulysses began to swim towards it, through a terrible surf, which crashed and foamed on sheer rocks, where all his bones would be broken. Thrice he clasped a rock, and thrice the back wash of the wave dragged him out to sea. Then he swam outside of the breakers, along the line of land, looking for a safe place, and at last he came to the mouth of the river. Here all was smooth, with a shelving beach, and his feet touched bottom. He staggered out of the water and swooned away as soon as he was on dry land. When he came to himself he unbound the veil of Ino, and cast it into the sea, and fell back, quite spent, among the reeds of the river, naked and starving. He crept between two thick olive trees that grew close together and made a shelter against the wind, and he covered himself all over thickly with fallen dry leaves, till he grew warm again and fell into a deep sleep.

While Ulysses slept, alone and naked in an unknown land, a dream came to beautiful Nausicaa, the daughter of the King of that country, which is called Phaeacia. The dream was in the shape of a girl who was a friend of Nausicaa, and it said: ‘Nausicaa, how has your mother such a careless daughter? There are many beautiful garments in the house that need to be washed, against your wedding day, when, as is the custom, you must give mantles and tunics to the guests. Let us go a washing to the river to-morrow, taking a car to carry the raiment.’

When Nausicaa wakened next day she remembered the dream, and went to her father, and asked him to lend her a car to carry the clothes. She said nothing about her marriage day, for though many young princes were in love with her, she was in love with none of them. Still, the clothes must be washed, and her father lent her a waggon with a high frame, and mules to drive. The clothes were piled in the car, and food was packed in a basket, every sort of dainty thing, and Nausicaa took the reins and drove slowly while many girls followed her, her friends of her own age. They came to a deep clear pool, that overflowed into shallow paved runs of water, and there they washed the clothes, and trod them down in the runlets. Next they laid them out to dry in the sun and wind on the pebbles, and then they took their meal of cakes and other good things.

When they had eaten they threw down their veils and began to play at ball, at a game like rounders. Nausicaa threw the ball at a girl who was running, but missed her, and the ball fell into the deep swift river. All the girls screamed and laughed, and the noise they made wakened Ulysses where he lay in the little wood. ‘Where am I?’ he said to himself; ‘is this a country of fierce and savage men? A sound of girls at play rings round me. Can they be fairies of the hill tops and the rivers, and the water meadows?’ As he had no clothes, and the voices seemed to be voices of women, Ulysses broke a great leafy bough which hid all his body, but his feet were bare, his face was wild with weariness, and cold, and hunger, and his hair and beard were matted and rough with the salt water.

The girls, when they saw such a face peering over the leaves of the bough, screamed, and ran this way and that along the beach. But Nausicaa, as became the daughter of the King, stood erect and unafraid, and as Ulysses dared not go near and kneel to her, he spoke from a distance and said:

‘I pray thee, O queen, whether thou art a goddess or a mortal! If indeed thou art a goddess of them that keep the wide heaven, to Artemis, then, the daughter of great Zeus, I mainly liken thee for beauty and stature and shapeliness. But if thou art one of the daughters of men who dwell on earth, thrice blessed are thy father and thy lady mother, and thrice blessed thy brethren. Surely their souls ever glow with gladness for thy sake each time they see thee entering the dance, so fair a flower of maidens. But he is of heart the most blessed beyond all other who shall prevail with gifts of wooing, and lead thee to his home. Never have mine eyes beheld such an one among mortals, neither man nor woman; great awe comes upon me as I look on thee. Yet in Delos once I saw as goodly a thing: a young sapling of a palm tree springing by the altar of Apollo. For thither, too, I went, and much people with me, on that path where my sore troubles were to be. Yea! and when I looked thereupon, long time I marvelled in spirit — for never grew there yet so goodly a shoot from ground — even in such wise as I wonder at thee, lady, and am astonished and do greatly fear to touch thy knees, though grievous sorrow is upon me.

‘Yesterday, on the twentieth day, I escaped from the wine-dark deep, but all that time continually the wave bare me, and the vehement winds drave from the isle Ogygia. And now some god has cast me on this shore that here too, methinks, some evil may betide me; for I think not that trouble will cease; the gods ere that time will yet bring many a thing to pass. But, queen, have pity on me, for, after many trials and sore, to thee first of all am I come, and of the other folk, who hold this city and land, I know no man. Nay, show me the town; give me an old garment to cast about me, if thou hadst, when thou camest here, any wrap for the linen. And may the gods grant thee all thy heart’s desire: a husband and a home, and a mind at one with his may they give — a good gift, for there is nothing mightier and nobler than when man and wife are of one heart and mind in a house, a grief to their foes, and to their friends great joy, but their own hearts know it best.’

Then Nausicaa of the white arms, answered him, and said:

‘Stranger, as thou seemest no evil man nor foolish — and it is Olympian Zeus himself that giveth weal to men, to the good and to the evil, to each one as he will, and this thy lot doubtless is of him, and so thou must in anywise endure it — now, since thou hast come to our city and our land, thou shalt not lack raiment nor aught else that is the due of a hapless suppliant when he has met them who can befriend him. And I will show thee the town, and name the name of the people. The Phaeacians hold this city and land, and I am the daughter of Alcinous, great of heart, on whom all the might and force of the Phaeacians depend.’

Thus she spake, and called to her maidens of the fair tresses: ‘Halt, my maidens, whither flee ye at the sight of a man? Ye surely do not take him for an enemy? That mortal breathes not, and never will be born, who shall come with war to the land of the Phaeacians, for they are very dear to the gods. Far apart we live in the wash of the waves, the outermost of men, and no other mortals are conversant with us. Nay, but this man is some helpless one come hither in his wanderings, whom now we must kindly entreat, for all strangers and beggars are from Zeus, and a little gift is dear. So, my maidens, give the stranger meat and drink, and bathe him in the river, where there is a shelter from the winds.'

So she spake, but they halted and called each to the other, and they brought Ulysses to the sheltered place, and made him sit down, as Nausiaca bade them, the daughter of Alcinous, high of heart. Beside him they laid a mantle and a doublet for raiment, and gave him soft olive oil in the golden cruse, and bade him wash in the streams of the river. Then goodly Ulysses spake among the maidens, saying: 'I pray you stand thus apart while I myself wash the brine from my shoulders, and anoint me with olive oil, for truly oil is long a stranger to my skin. But in your sight I will not bathe, for I am ashamed to make me naked in the company of fair-tressed maidens.'

Then they went apart and told all to their lady. But with the river water the goodly Ulysses washed from his skin the salt scurf that covered his back and broad shoulders, and from his head he wiped the crusted brine of the barren sea. But when he had washed his whole body, and anointed him with olive oil, and had clad himself in the raiment that the unwedded maiden gave him, then Athênê, the daughter of Zeus, made him greater and more mighty to behold, and from his head caused deep curling locks to flow, like the hyacinth flower. And, as when some skilful man overlays gold upon silver — one that Hephaestus and Pallas Athênê have taught all manner of craft, and full of grace is his handiwork — even so did Athênê shed grace about his head and shoulders.

Then to the shore of the sea went Ulysses apart, and sat down, glowing in beauty and grace, and the princess marvelled at him, and spake among her fair-tressed maidens, saying:

'Listen, my white-armed maidens, and I will say somewhat. Not without the will of all the gods who hold Olympus has this man come among the godlike Phaeacians. Erewhile he seemed to me uncomely, but now he is like the gods that keep the wide heaven. Would that such an one might be called my husband, dwelling here, and that it might please him here to abide! But come, my maidens, give the stranger meat and drink.'

Thus she spake, and they gave ready ear and hearkened, and set beside Ulysses meat and drink, and the steadfast goodly Ulysses did eat and drink eagerly, for it was long since he had tasted food.

Now Nausicaa of the white arms had another thought. She folded the raiment and stored it in the goodly wain, and yoked the mules, strong of hoof, and herself climbed into the car. Then she called on Ulysses, and spake and hailed him: ‘Up now, stranger, and rouse thee to go to the city, that I may convey thee to the house of my wise father, where, I promise thee, thou shalt get knowledge of all the noblest of the Phaeacians. But do thou even as I tell thee, and thou seemest a discreet man enough. So long as we are passing along the fields and farms of men, do thou fare quickly with the maidens behind the mules and the chariot, and I will lead the way. But when we set foot within the city, whereby goes a high wall with towers, and there is a fair haven on either side of the town, and narrow is the entrance, and curved ships are drawn up on either hand of the mole, thou shalt find a fair grove of Athênê, a poplar grove, near the road, and a spring wells forth therein, and a meadow lies all around.

There is my father’s land, and his fruitful close, within the sound of a man’s shout from the city. Sit thee down there and wait until such time as we may have come into the city, and reached the house of my father. But when thou deemest that we are got to the palace, then go up to the city of the Phaeacians, and ask for the house of my father, Alcinous, high of heart. It is easily known, and a young child could be thy guide, for nowise like it are builded the houses of the Phaeacians, so goodly is the palace of the hero Alcinous. But when thou art within the shadow of the halls and the court, pass quickly through the great chamber till thou comest to my mother, who sits at the hearth in the light of the fire, weaving yarn of sea-purple stain, a wonder to behold. Her chair is leaned against a pillar, and her maidens sit behind her. And there my father’s throne leans close to hers, wherein he sits and drinks his wine, like an immortal. Pass thou by him, and cast thy hands about my mother’s knees that thou mayest see quickly and with joy the day of thy returning, even if thou art from a very far country. If but her heart be kindly disposed towards thee, then is there hope that thou shalt see thy friends, and come to thy well-builded house, and to thine own country.’

She spake and smote the mules with the shining whip, and quickly they left behind them the streams of the river; and well they trotted and well they paced, and she took heed to drive in such wise that the maidens and Ulysses might follow on foot, and cunningly she plied the lash. Then the sun set, and they came to the famous grove, the sacred place of Athênê; so there the goodly Ulysses sat him down. Then straightway he prayed to the daughter of mighty Zeus: ‘Listen to me, child of Zeus, lord of the aegis, unwearied maiden; hear me even now, since before thou heardest not when I was smitten on the sea, when the renowned earth-shaker smote me. Grant me to come to the Phaeacians as one dear and worthy of pity.’

So he spake in prayer, and Pallas Athênê heard him; but she did not yet appear to him face to face, for she had regard unto her father’s brother, who furiously raged against the godlike Ulysses till he should come to his own country.

While Nausicaa and her maidens went home, Ulysses waited near the temple till they should have arrived, and then he rose and walked to the city, wondering at the harbour, full of ships, and at the strength of the walls. The Goddess Athênê met him, disguised as a mortal girl, and told him again how the name of the king was Alcinous, and his wife’s name was Arete: she was wise and kind, and had great power in the city. The Goddess caused Ulysses to pass unseen among the people till he reached the palace, which shone with bronze facings to the walls, while within the hall were golden hounds and golden statues of young men holding torches burning to give light to those who sat at supper. The gardens were very beautiful, full of fruit trees, and watered by streams that flowed from two fountains. Ulysses stood and wondered at the beauty of the gardens, and then walked, unseen, through the hall, and knelt at the feet of Queen Arete, and implored her to send him in a ship to his own country.

A table was brought to him, and food and wine were set before him, and Alcinous, as his guests were going home, spoke out and said that the stranger was to be entertained, whoever he might be, and sent safely on his way. The guests departed, and Arete, looking at Ulysses, saw that the clothes he wore were possessions of her house, and asked him who he was, and how he got the raiment? Then he told her how he had been shipwrecked, and how Nausicaa had given him food, and garments out of those which she had been washing. Then Arete said that Nausicaa should have brought Ulysses straight to her house; but Ulysses answered: ‘Chide not, I pray you, the blameless damsel,’ and explained that he himself was shy, and afraid that Nausicaa’s parents might not like to see her coming with an unknown stranger. King Alcinous answered that he was not jealous and suspicious. To a stranger so noble as Ulysses he would very gladly see his daughter married, and would give him a house and plenty of everything. But if the stranger desired to go to his own country, then a ship should be made ready for him. Thus courteous was Alcinous, for he readily saw that Ulysses, who had not yet told his name, was of noble birth, strong and wise. Then all went to bed, and Ulysses had a soft bed and a warm, with blankets of purple.

Next day Alcinous sent two-and-fifty young men to prepare a ship, and they moored her in readiness out in the shore water; but the chiefs dined with Alcinous, and the minstrel sang about the Trojan war, and so stirred the heart of Ulysses, that he held his mantle before his face and wept. When Alcinous saw that, he proposed that they should go and amuse themselves with sports in the open air; races, wrestling, and boxing. The son of Alcinous asked Ulysses if he would care to take part in the games, but Ulysses answered that he was too heavy at heart. To this a young man, Euryalus, said that Ulysses was probably a captain of a merchant ship, a tradesman, not a sportsman.

At this Ulysses was ill pleased, and replied that while he was young and happy, he was well skilled in all sports, but now he was heavy and weak with war and wandering. Still, he would show what he could do. Then he seized a heavy weight, much heavier than any that the Phaeacians used in putting the stone. He whirled it up, and hurled it far — far beyond the furthest mark that the Phaeacians had reached when putting a lighter weight. Then he challenged any man to run a race with him or box with him, or shoot at a mark with him. Only his speed in running did he doubt, for his limbs were stiffened by the sea. Perhaps Alcinous saw that it would go ill with any man who matched himself against the stranger, so he sent for the harper, who sang a merry song, and then he made the young men dance and play ball, and bade the elder men go and bring rich presents of gold and garments for the wanderer. Alcinous himself gave a beautiful coffer and chest, and a great golden cup, and Arete tied up all the gifts in the coffer, while the damsels took Ulysses to the bath, and bathed him and anointed him with oil.

As he left the bath he met Nausicaa, standing at the entrance of the hall. She bade him good-bye, rather sadly, saying: ‘Farewell, and do not soon forget me in your own country, for to me you owe the ransom of your life.’ ‘May God grant to me to see my own country, lady,’ he answered, ‘for there I will think of you with worship, as I think of the blessed Gods, all my days, for to you, lady, I owe my very life.’ These were the last words they spoke to each other, for Nausicaa did not sit at meat in the hall with the great company of men. When they had taken supper, the blind harper sang again a song about the deeds of Ulysses at Troy, and again Ulysses wept, so that Alcinous asked him: ‘Hast thou lost a dear friend or a kinsman in the great war?’ Then Ulysses spoke out: ‘I am Ulysses, Laertes’ son, of whom all men have heard tell.’ While they sat amazed, he began, and told them the whole story of his adventures, from the day when he left Troy till he arrived at Calypso’s island; he had already told them how he was shipwrecked on his way thence to Phaeacia.

All that wonderful story he told to their pleasure, and Euryalus made amends for his rude words at the games, and gave Ulysses a beautiful sword of bronze, with an ivory hilt set with studs of gold. Many other gifts were given to him, and were carried and stored on board the ship which had been made ready, and then Ulysses spoke good-bye to the Queen, saying: ‘Be happy, oh Queen, till old age and death come to you, as they come to all. Be joyful in your house with your children and your people, and Alcinous the King.’ Then he departed, and lay down on sheets and cloaks in the raised deck of the ship, and soundly he slept while the fifty oars divided the waters of the sea, and drove the ship to Ithaca.

VII

HOW ULYSSES CAME TO HIS OWN COUNTRY, AND FOR SAFETY DISGUISED HIMSELF AS AN OLD BEGGAR MAN

When Ulysses awoke, he found himself alone, wrapped in the linen sheet and the bright coverlet, and he knew not where he was. The Phaeacians had carried him from the ship as he slept, and put him on shore, and placed all the rich gifts that had been given him under a tree, and then had sailed away. There was a morning mist that hid the land, and Ulysses did not know the haven of his own island, Ithaca, and the rock whence sprang a fountain of the water fairies that men call Naiads. He thought that the Phaeacians had set him in a strange country, so he counted all his goods, and then walked up and down sadly by the seashore. Here he met a young man, delicately clad, like a king’s son, with a double mantle, such as kings wear, folded round his shoulders, and a spear in his hand. ‘Tell me pray,’ said Ulysses, ‘what land is this, and what men dwell here?’

The young man said: ‘Truly, stranger, you know little, or you come from far away. This isle is Ithaca, and the name of it is known even in Troyland.’

Ulysses was glad, indeed, to learn that he was at home at last; but how the young men who had grown up since he went away would treat him, all alone as he was, he could not tell. So he did not let out that he was Ulysses the King, but said that he was a Cretan. The stranger would wonder why a Cretan had come alone to Ithaca, with great riches, and yet did not know that he was there. So he pretended that, in Crete, a son of Idomeneus had tried to rob him of all the spoil he took at Troy, and that he had killed this prince, and packed his wealth and fled on board a ship of the Phoenicians, who promised to land him at Pylos. But the wind had borne them out of their way, and they had all landed and slept on shore, here; but the Phoenicians had left him asleep and gone off in the dawn.

On this the young man laughed, and suddenly appeared as the great Goddess, Pallas Athênê. ‘How clever you are,’ she said; ‘yet you did not know me, who helped you in Troyland. But much trouble lies before you, and you must not let man or woman know who you really are, your enemies are so many and powerful.’

‘You never helped me in my dangers on the sea,’ said Ulysses, ‘and now do you make mock of me, or is this really mine own country?’

‘I had no mind,’ said the Goddess, ‘to quarrel with my brother the Sea God, who had a feud against you for the blinding of his son, the Cyclops. But come, you shall see this is really Ithaca,’ and she scattered the white mist, and Ulysses saw and knew the pleasant cave of the Naiads, and the forests on the side of the mountain called Neriton. So he knelt down and kissed the dear earth of his own country, and prayed to the Naiads of the cave. Then the Goddess helped him to hide all his gold, and bronze, and other presents in a secret place in the cavern; and she taught him how, being lonely as he was, he might destroy the proud wooers of his wife, who would certainly desire to take his life.

The Goddess began by disguising Ulysses, so that his skin seemed wrinkled, and his hair thin, and his eyes dull, and she gave him dirty old wraps for clothes, and over all a great bald skin of a stag, like that which he wore when he stole into Troy disguised as a beggar. She gave him a staff, too, and a wallet to hold scraps of broken food. There was not a man or a woman that knew Ulysses in this disguise. Next, the Goddess bade him go across the island to his own swineherd, who remained faithful to him, and to stay there among the swine till she brought home Telemachus, who was visiting Helen and Menelaus in Lacedaemon. She fled away to Lacedaemon, and Ulysses climbed the hills that lay between the cavern and the farm where the swineherd lived.

When Ulysses reached the farmhouse, the swineherd, Eumaeus, was sitting alone in front of his door, making himself a pair of brogues out of the skin of an ox. He was a very honest man, and, though he was a slave, he was the son of a prince in his own country. When he was a little child some Phoenicians came in their ship to his father’s house and made friends with his nurse, who was a Phoenician woman. One of them, who made love to her, asked her who she was, and she said that her father was a rich man in Sidon, but that pirates had carried her away and sold her to her master. The Phoenicians promised to bring her back to Sidon, and she fled to their ship, carrying with her the child whom she nursed, little Eumaeus; she also stole three cups of gold. The woman died at sea, and the pirates sold the boy to Laertes, the father of Ulysses, who treated him kindly. Eumaeus was fond of the family which he served, and he hated the proud wooers for their insolence.

When Ulysses came near his house the four great dogs rushed out and barked at him; they would have bitten, too, but Eumaeus ran up and threw stones at them, and no farm dog can face a shower of stones. He took Ulysses into his house, gave him food and wine, and told him all about the greed and pride of the wooers. Ulysses said that the master of Eumaeus would certainly come home, and told a long story about himself. He was a Cretan, he said, and had fought at Troy, and later had been shipwrecked, but reached a country called Thesprotia, where he learned that Ulysses was alive, and was soon to leave Thesprotia and return to Ithaca.

Eumaeus did not believe this tale, and supposed that the beggar man only meant to say what he would like to hear. However, he gave Ulysses a good dinner of his own pork, and Ulysses amused him and his fellow slaves with stories about the Siege of Troy, till it was bedtime.

In the meantime Athênê had gone to Lacedaemon to the house of Menelaus, where Telemachus was lying awake. She told him that Penelope, his mother, meant to marry one of the wooers, and advised him to sail home at once, avoiding the strait between Ithaca and another isle, where his enemies were lying in wait to kill him. When he reached Ithaca he must send his oarsmen to the town, but himself walk alone across the island to see the swineherd. In the morning Telemachus and his friend, Pisistratus, said good-bye to Menelaus and Helen, who wished to make him presents, and so went to their treasure house. Now when they came to the place where the treasures were stored, then Atrides took a double cup, and bade his son, Megapenthes, to bear a mixing-bowl of silver. And Helen stood by the coffers, wherein were her robes of curious needlework which she herself had wrought. So Helen, the fair lady, lifted one and brought it out — the widest and most beautifully embroidered of all — and it shone like a star, and lay far beneath the rest.

Then they went back through the house till they came to Telemachus; and Menelaus, of the fair hair, spake to him, saying:

‘Telemachus, may Zeus the thunderer, and the lord of Hera, in very truth bring about thy return according to the desire of thy heart. And of the gifts, such as are treasures stored in my house, I will give thee the goodliest and greatest of price. I will give thee a mixing-bowl beautifully wrought; it is all of silver, and the lips thereof are finished with gold, the work of Hephaestus; and the hero Phaedimus, the king of the Sidonians, gave it to me when his house sheltered me, on my coming thither. This cup I would give to thee.’

Therewith the hero Atrides set the double cup in his hands. And the strong Megapenthes bare the shining silver bowl and set it before him. And Helen came up, beautiful Helen, with the robe in her hands, and spake and hailed him:

‘Lo! I, too, give thee this gift, dear child, a memorial of the hands of Helen, against the day of thy desire, even of thy bridal, for thy bride to wear it. But, meanwhile, let it lie by thy dear mother in her chamber. And may joy go with thee to thy well-builded house and thine own country.’

Just when Telemachus was leaving her palace door, an eagle stooped from the sky and flew away with a great white goose that was feeding on the grass, and the farm servants rushed out shouting, but the eagle passed away to the right hand, across the horses of Pisistratus.

Then Helen explained the meaning of this omen. ‘Hear me, and I will prophesy as the immortals put it into my heart, and as I deem it will be accomplished. Even as yonder eagle came down from the hill, the place of his birth and kin, and snatched away the goose that was fostered in the house, even so shall Ulysses return home after much trial and long wanderings and take vengeance; yea! or even now is he at home and sowing the seeds of evil for all the wooers.’ We are told no more about Helen of the fair hands, except that she and Menelaus never died, but were carried by the Gods to the beautiful Elysian plain, a happy place where war and trouble never came, nor old age, nor death. After that she was worshipped in her own country as if she had been a Goddess, kind, gentle, and beautiful.

Telemachus thanked Helen for prophesying good luck, and he drove to the city of Nestor, on the sea, but was afraid to go near the old king, who would have kept him and entertained him, while he must sail at once for Ithaca. He went to his own ship in the harbour, and, while his crew made ready to sail, there came a man running hard, and in great fear of the avenger of blood. This was a second-sighted man, called Theoclymenus, and he implored Telemachus to take him to Ithaca, for he had slain a man in his own country, who had killed one of his brothers, and now the brothers and cousins of that man were pursuing him to take his life. Telemachus made him welcome, and so sailed north to Ithaca, wondering whether he should be able to slip past the wooers, who were lying in wait to kill him. Happily the ship of Telemachus passed them unseen in the night, and arrived at Ithaca. He sent his crew to the town, and was just starting to walk across the island to the swineherd’s house, when the second-sighted man asked what *he* should do. Telemachus told Piraeus, one of his friends, to take the man home and be kind to him, which he gladly promised to do, and then he set off to seek the swineherd.

The swineherd, with Ulysses, had just lit a fire to cook breakfast, when they saw the farm dogs frolicking round a young man who was walking towards the house. The dogs welcomed him, for he was no stranger, but Telemachus. Up leaped the swineherd in delight, and the bowl in which he was mixing wine and water fell from his hands. He had been unhappy for fear the wooers who lay in wait for Telemachus should kill him, and he ran and embraced the young man as gladly as a father welcomes a son who has long been in a far country. Telemachus, too, was anxious to hear whether his mother had married one of the wooers, and glad to know that she still bore her troubles patiently.

When Telemachus stepped into the swineherd’s house Ulysses arose from his seat, but Telemachus bade the old beggar man sit down again, and a pile of brushwood with a fleece thrown over it was brought for himself. They breakfasted on what was ready, cold pork, wheaten bread, and wine in cups of ivy wood, and Eumaeus told Telemachus that the old beggar gave himself out as a wanderer from Crete. Telemachus answered that he could not take strangers into his mother’s house, for he was unable to protect them against the violence of the wooers, but he would give the wanderer clothes and shoes and a sword, and he might stay at the farm. He sent the swineherd to tell his mother, Penelope, that he had returned in safety, and Eumaeus started on his journey to the town.

At this moment the farm dogs, which had been taking their share of the breakfast, began to whine, and bristle up, and slunk with their tails between their legs to the inmost corner of the room. Telemachus could not think why they were afraid, or of what, but Ulysses saw the Goddess Athênê, who appeared to him alone, and the dogs knew that something strange and terrible was coming to the door. Ulysses went out, and Athênê bade him tell Telemachus who he really was, now that they were alone, and she touched Ulysses with her golden wand, and made him appear like himself, and his clothes like a king’s raiment.

Telemachus, who neither saw nor heard Athênê, wondered greatly, and thought the beggar man must be some God, wandering in disguise. But Ulysses said, ‘No God am I, but thine own father,’ and they embraced each other and wept for joy.

At last Ulysses told Telemachus how he had come home in a ship of the Phaeacians, and how his treasure was hidden in the cave of the Naiads, and asked him how many the wooers were, and how they might drive them from the house. Telemachus replied that the wooers were one hundred and eight, and that Medon, a servant of his own, took part with them; there was also the minstrel of the house, whom they compelled to sing at their feasts. They were all strong young men, each with his sword at his side, but they had with them no shields, helmets, and breastplates. Ulysses said that, with the help of the Goddess, he hoped to get the better of them, many as they were. Telemachus must go to the house, and Ulysses would come next day, in the disguise of an old beggar. However ill the wooers might use him, Telemachus must take no notice, beyond saying that they ought to behave better. Ulysses, when he saw a good chance, would give Telemachus a sign to take away the shields, helmets, and weapons that hung on the walls of the great hall, and to hide them in a secret place. If the wooers missed them, he must say — first, that the smoke of the fire was spoiling them; and, again, that they were better out of the reach of the wooers, in case they quarrelled over their wine. Telemachus must keep two swords, two spears, and two shields for himself and Ulysses to use, if they saw a chance, and he must let neither man nor woman know that the old beggar man was his father.

While they were talking, one of the crew of Telemachus and the swineherd went to Penelope and told her how her son had landed. On hearing this the wooers held a council as to how they should behave to him: Antinous was for killing him, but Amphinomus and Eurymachus were for waiting, and seeing what would happen. Before Eumaeus came back from his errand to Penelope, Athênê changed Ulysses into the dirty old beggar again.

VIII

ULYSSES COMES DISGUISED AS A BEGGAR TO HIS OWN PALACE

Next morning Telemachus went home, and comforted his mother, and told her how he had been with Nestor and Menelaus, and seen her cousin, Helen of the fair hands, but this did not seem to interest Penelope, who thought that her beautiful cousin was the cause of all her misfortunes. Then Theoclymenus, the second-sighted man whom Telemachus brought from Pylos, prophesied to Penelope that Ulysses was now in Ithaca, taking thought how he might kill the wooers, who were then practising spear-throwing at a mark, while some of them were killing swine and a cow for breakfast.

Meanwhile Ulysses, in disguise, and the swineherd were coming near the town, and there they met the goatherd, Melanthius, who was a friend of the wooers, and an insolent and violent slave. He insulted the old beggar, and advised him not to come near the house of Ulysses, and kicked him off the road. Then Ulysses was tempted to slay him with his hands, but he controlled himself lest he should be discovered, and he and Eumaeus walked slowly to the palace. As they lingered outside the court, lo! a hound raised up his head and pricked his ears, even where he lay: Argos, the hound of Ulysses, of the hardy heart, which of old himself had bred. Now in time past the young men used to lead the hound against wild goats and deer and hares; but, as then, he lay despised (his master being afar) in the deep dung of mules and kine, whereof an ample bed was spread before the doors till the slaves of Ulysses should carry it away to dung therewith his wide demesne. There lay the dog Argos, full of vermin. Yet even now, when he was aware of Ulysses standing by, he wagged his tail and dropped both his ears, but nearer to his master he had not now the strength to draw. But Ulysses looked aside and wiped away a tear that he easily hid from Eumaeus, and straightway he asked him, saying:

‘Eumaeus, verily this is a great marvel: this hound lying here in the dung. Truly he is goodly of growth, but I know not certainly if he have speed with this beauty, or if he be comely only, like men’s trencher dogs that their lords keep for the pleasure of the eye.’

Then answered the swineherd Eumaeus: ‘In very truth this is the dog of a man that has died in a far land. If he were what once he was in limb and in the feats of the chase, when Ulysses left him to go to Troy, soon wouldst thou marvel at the sight of his swiftness and his strength. There was no beast that could flee from him in the deep places of the wood when he was in pursuit; for even on a track he was the keenest hound. But now he is holden in an evil case, and his lord hath perished far from his own country, and the careless women take no charge of him.’

Therewith he passed within the fair-lying house, and went straight to the hall, to the company of the proud wooers. But upon Argos came death even in the hour that he beheld Ulysses again, in the twentieth year.

Thus the good dog knew Ulysses, though Penelope did not know him when she saw him, and tears came into Ulysses’ eyes as he stood above the body of the hound that loved him well. Eumaeus went into the house, but Ulysses sat down where it was the custom for beggars to sit, on the wooden threshold outside the door of the hall. Telemachus saw him, from his high seat under the pillars on each side of the fire, in the middle of the room, and bade Eumaeus carry a loaf and a piece of pork to the beggar, who laid them in his wallet between his feet, and ate. Then he thought he would try if there were one courteous man among the wooers, and he entered the hall and began to beg among them. Some gave him crusts and bones, but Antinous caught up a footstool and struck him hard on the shoulder. ‘May death come upon Antinous before his wedding day!’ said Ulysses, and even the other wooers rebuked him for striking a beggar.

Penelope heard of this, and told Eumaeus to bring the beggar to her; she thought he might have news of her husband. But Ulysses made Eumaeus say that he had been struck once in the hall, and would not come to her till after sunset, when the wooers left the house. Then Eumaeus went to his own farmhouse, after telling Telemachus that he would come next day, driving swine for the wooers to eat.

Ulysses was the new beggar in Ithaca: he soon found that he had a rival, an old familiar beggar, named Irus. This man came up to the palace, and was angry when he saw a newcomer sitting in the doorway, ‘Get up,’ he said, ‘I ought to drag you away by the foot: begone before we quarrel!’ ‘There is room enough for both of us,’ said Ulysses, ‘do not anger me.’ Irus challenged him to fight, and the wooers thought this good sport, and they made a ring, and promised that the winner should be beggar-in-chief, and have the post to himself. Ulysses asked the wooers to give him fair play, and not to interfere, and then he stripped his shoulders, and kilted up his rags, showing strong arms and legs. As for Irus he began to tremble, but Antinous forced him to fight, and the two put up their hands. Irus struck at the shoulder of Ulysses, who hit him with his right fist beneath the ear, and he fell, the blood gushing from his mouth, and his heels drumming in the ground, and Ulysses dragged him from the doorway and propped him against the wall of the court, while the wooers laughed. Then Ulysses spoke gravely to Amphinomus, telling him that it would be wise in him to go home, for that if Ulysses came back it might not be so easy to escape his hands.

After sunset Ulysses spoke so fiercely to the maidens of Penelope, who insulted him, that they ran to their own rooms, but Eurymachus threw a footstool at him. He slipped out of the way, and the stool hit the cupbearer and knocked him down, and all was disorder in the hall. The wooers themselves were weary of the noise and disorder, and went home to the houses in the town where they slept. Then Telemachus and Ulysses, being left alone, hid the shields and helmets and spears that hung on the walls of the hall in an armoury within the house, and when this was done Telemachus went to sleep in his own chamber, in the courtyard, and Ulysses waited till Penelope should come into the hall.

Ulysses sat in the dusky hall, where the wood in the braziers that gave light had burned low, and waited to see the face of his wife, for whom he had left beautiful Calypso. The maidens of Penelope came trooping, laughing, and cleared away the food and the cups, and put faggots in the braziers. They were all giddy girls, in love with the handsome wooers, and one of them, Melantho, bade Ulysses go away, and sleep at the blacksmith’s forge, lest he should be beaten with a torch. Penelope heard Melantho, whom she had herself brought up, and she rebuked her, and ordered a chair to be brought for Ulysses. When he was seated, she asked him who he was, and he praised her beauty, for she was still very fair, but did not answer her question. She insisted that he should tell her who he was, and he said that he was a Cretan prince, the younger brother of Idomeneus, and that he did not go to fight in Troyland. In Crete he stayed, and met Ulysses, who stopped there on his way to Troy, and he entertained Ulysses for a fortnight. Penelope wept when she heard that the stranger had seen her husband, but, as false stories were often told to her by strangers who came to Ithaca, she asked how Ulysses was dressed, and what manner of men were with him.

The beggar said that Ulysses wore a double mantle of purple, clasped with a gold brooch fastened by two safety pins (for these were used at that time), and on the face of the brooch was a figure of a hound holding a struggling fawn in his forepaws. (Many such brooches have been found in the graves in Greece). Beneath his mantle Ulysses wore a shining smock, smooth and glittering like the skin of an onion. Probably it was made of silk: women greatly admired it. With him was a squire named Eurybates, a brown, round-shouldered man.

On hearing all this Penelope wept again and said that she herself had given

Ulysses the brooch and the garments. She now knew that the beggar had really met Ulysses, and he went on to tell her that, in his wanderings, he had heard how Ulysses was still alive, though he had lost all his company, and that he had gone to Dodona in the west of Greece to ask for advice from the oak tree of Zeus, the whispering oak tree, as to how he should come home, openly or secretly. Certainly, he said, Ulysses would return that year.

Penelope was still unable to believe in such good news, but she bade Eurycleia, the old nurse, wash the feet of the beggar in warm water, so a foot bath was brought. Ulysses turned his face away from the firelight, for the nurse said that he was very like her master. As she washed his legs she noticed the long scar of the wound made by the boar, when he hunted with his cousins, long ago, before he was married. The nurse knew him now, and spoke to him in a whisper, calling him by his name. But he caught her throat with his hand, and asked why she would cause his death, for the wooers would slay him if they knew who he was. Eurycleia called him her child, and promised that she would be silent, and then she went to fetch more hot water, for she had let his foot fall into the bath and upset it when she found the scar.

When she had washed him, Penelope told the beggar that she could no longer refuse to marry one of the wooers. Ulysses had left a great bow in the house, the old bow of King Eurytus, that few could bend, and he had left twelve iron axes, made with a round opening in the blade of each. Axes of this shape have been found at Lacedaemon, where Helen lived, so we know what the axes of Ulysses were like. When he was at home he used to set twelve of them in a straight line, and shoot an arrow through the twelve holes in the blades. Penelope therefore intended, next day, to bring the bow and the axes to the wooers, and to marry any one of them who could string the bow, and shoot an arrow through the twelve axes.

‘I think,’ said the beggar, ‘that Ulysses will be here before any of the wooers have bent his bow.’ Then Penelope went to her upper chamber, and Ulysses slept in an outer gallery of the house on piled-up sheep skins.

There Ulysses lay, thinking how he might destroy all the wooers, and the Goddess Athênê came and comforted him, and, in the morning, he rose and made his prayer to Zeus, asking for signs of his favour. There came, first a peal of thunder, and then the voice of a woman, weak and old, who was grinding corn to make bread for the wooers. All the other women of the mill had done their work and were asleep, but she was feeble and the round upper stone of the quern, that she rolled on the corn above the under stone, was too heavy for her.

She prayed, and said, ‘Father Zeus, King of Gods and men, loudly hast thou thundered. Grant to me my prayer, unhappy as I am. May this be the last day of the feasting of the wooers in the hall of Ulysses: they have loosened my knees with cruel labour in grinding barley for them: may they now sup their last!’ Hearing this prayer Ulysses was glad, for he thought it a lucky sign. Soon the servants were at work, and Eumaeus came with swine, and was as courteous to the beggar as Melanthius, who brought some goats, was insolent. The cowherd, called Philoetius, also arrived; he hated the wooers, and spoke friendly to the beggar. Last appeared the wooers, and went in to their meal, while Telemachus bade the beggar sit on a seat just within the hall, and told the servants to give him as good a share of the food as any of them received. One wooer, Ctesippus, said: ‘His fair share this beggar man has had, as is right, but I will give him a present over and above it!’ Then he picked up the foot of an ox, and threw it with all his might at Ulysses, who merely moved aside, and the ox foot struck the wall.

Telemachus rebuked him, and the wooers began to laugh wildly and to weep, they knew not why, but Theoclymenus, the second-sighted man, knew that they were all fey men, that is, doomed to die, for such men are gay without reason. ‘Unhappy that you are,’ cried Theoclymenus, ‘what is coming upon you? I see shrouds covering you about your knees and about your faces, and tears are on your cheeks, and the walls and the pillars of the roof are dripping blood, and in the porch and the court are your fetches, shadows of yourselves, hurrying hellward, and the sun is darkened.’

On this all the wooers laughed, and advised him to go out of doors, where he would see that the sun was shining. ‘My eyes and ears serve me well,’ said the second-sighted man, ‘but out I will go, seeking no more of your company, for death is coming on every man of you.’ Then he arose and went to the house of Piraeus, the friend of Telemachus. The wooers laughed all the louder, as fey men do, and told Telemachus that he was unlucky in his guests: one a beggar, the other a madman. But Telemachus kept watching his father while the wooers were cooking a meal that they did not live to enjoy.

Through the crowd of them came Penelope, holding in her hand the great bow of Eurytus, and a quiver full of arrows, while her maidens followed, carrying the chest in which lay the twelve iron axes. She stood up, stately and scornful, among the wooers, and told them that, as marry she must, she would take the man who could string the bow and shoot the arrow through the axes. Telemachus said that he would make the first trial, and that, if he succeeded, he would not allow any man of the wooers to take his mother away with him from her own house. Then thrice he tried to string the bow, and the fourth time he would have strung it, but Ulysses made a sign to him, and he put it down. ‘I am too weak,’ he said, ‘let a stronger man achieve this adventure.’ So they tried each in turn, beginning with the man who sat next the great mixing-bowl of wine, and so each rising in his turn.

First their prophet tried, Leiodes the Seer, who sat next the bowl, but his white hands were too weak, and he prophesied, saying that the bow would be the death of all of them. Then Antinous bade the goatherd light a fire, and bring grease to heat the bow, and make it more supple. They warmed and greased the bow, and one after another tried to bend it. Eumaeus and the cowherd went out into the court, and Ulysses followed them. ‘Whose side would you two take,’ he asked, ‘if Ulysses came home? Would you fight for him or for the wooers?’ ‘For Ulysses!’ they both cried, ‘and would that he was come indeed!’ ‘He is come, and I am he!’ said Ulysses. Then he promised to give them lands of their own if he was victorious, and he showed them the scar on his thigh that the boar dealt with his white tusk, long ago. The two men kissed him and shed tears of joy, and Ulysses said that he would go back first into the hall, and that they were to follow him. He would ask to be allowed to try to bend the bow, and Eumaeus, whatever the wooers said, must place it in his hands, and then see that the women were locked up in their own separate hall. Philoetius was to fasten the door leading from the courtyard into the road. Ulysses then went back to his seat in the hall, near the door, and his servants followed.

Eurymachus was trying in vain to bend the bow, and Antinous proposed to put off the trial till next day, and then sacrifice to the God Apollo, and make fresh efforts. They began to drink, but Ulysses asked to be allowed to try if he could string the bow. They told him that wine had made him impudent, and threatened to put him in a ship and send him to King Echetus, an ogre, who would cut him to pieces. But Penelope said that the beggar must try his strength; not that she would marry him, if he succeeded. She would only give him new clothes, a sword, and a spear, and send him wherever he wanted to go. Telemachus cried out that the bow was his own; he would make a present of it to the beggar if he chose; and he bade his mother join her maidens, and work at her weaving. She was amazed to hear her son speak like the master of the house, and she went upstairs with her maidens to her own room.

Eumaeus was carrying the bow to Ulysses, when the wooers made such an uproar that he laid it down, in fear for his life. But Telemachus threatened to punish him if he did not obey his master, so he placed the bow in the hands of Ulysses, and then went and told Eurycleia to lock the women servants up in their own separate hall. Philoetius slipped into the courtyard, and made the gates fast with a strong rope, and then came back, and watched Ulysses, who was turning the bow this way and that, to see if the horns were still sound, for horns were then used in bow making. The wooers were mocking him, but suddenly he bent and strung the great bow as easily as a harper fastens a new string to his harp. He tried the string, and it twanged like the note of a swallow. He took up an arrow that lay on the table (the others were in the quiver beside him), he fitted it to the string, and from the chair where he sat he shot it through all the twelve axe heads. ‘Your guest has done you no dishonour, Telemachus,’ he said, ‘but surely it is time to eat,’ and he nodded. Telemachus drew his sword, took a spear in his left hand, and stood up beside Ulysses.

IX

THE SLAYING OF THE WOOERS

Ulysses let all his rags fall down, and with one leap he reached the high threshold, the door being behind him, and he dropped, the arrows from the quiver at his feet. ‘Now,’ he said, ‘I will strike another mark that no man yet has stricken!’ He aimed the arrow at Antinous, who was drinking out of a golden cup. The arrow passed clean through the throat of Antinous; he fell, the cup rang on the ground, and the wooers leaped up, looking round the walls for shields and spears, but the walls were bare.

‘Thou shalt die, and vultures shall devour thee,’ they shouted, thinking the beggar had let the arrow fly by mischance.

‘Dogs!’ he answered, ‘ye said that never should I come home from Troy; ye wasted my goods, and insulted my wife, and had no fear of the Gods, but now the day of death has come upon you! Fight or flee, if you may, but some shall not escape!’

‘Draw your blades!’ cried Eurymachus to the others; ‘draw your blades, and hold up the tables as shields against this man’s arrows. Have at him, and drive him from the doorway.’ He drew his own sword, and leaped on Ulysses with a cry, but the swift arrow pierced his breast, and he fell and died. Then Amphinomus rushed towards Ulysses, but Telemachus sent his spear from behind through his shoulders. He could not draw forth the spear, but he ran to his father, and said, ‘Let me bring shields, spears, and helmets from the inner chamber, for us, and for the swineherd and cowherd.’ ‘Go!’ said Ulysses, and Telemachus ran through a narrow doorway, down a gallery to the secret chamber, and brought four shields, four helmets, and eight spears, and the men armed themselves, while Ulysses kept shooting down the wooers. When his arrows were spent he armed himself, protected by the other three. But the goatherd, Melanthius, knew a way of reaching the armoury, and he climbed up, and brought twelve helmets, spears, and shields to the wooers.

ULYSSES SHOOTS THE FIRST ARROW AT THE WOOERS.

Ulysses thought that one of the women was showering down the weapons into the hall, but the swineherd and cowherd went to the armoury, through the doorway, as Telemachus had gone, and there they caught Melanthius, and bound him like a bundle, with a rope, and, throwing the rope over a rafter, dragged him up, and fastened him there, and left him swinging. Then they ran back to Ulysses, four men keeping the doorway against all the wooers that were not yet slain. But the Goddess Athênê appeared to Ulysses, in the form of Mentor, and gave him courage. He needed it, for the wooers, having spears, threw them in volleys, six at a time, at the four. They missed, but the spears of the four slew each his man. Again the wooers threw, and dealt two or three slight wounds, but the spears of the four were winged with death. They charged, striking with spear and sword, into the crowd, who lost heart, and flew here and there, crying for mercy and falling at every blow. Ulysses slew the prophet, Leiodes, but Phemius, the minstrel, he spared, for he had done no wrong, and Medon, a slave, crept out from beneath an ox hide, where he had been lying, and asked Telemachus to pity him, and Ulysses sent him and the minstrel into the courtyard, where they sat trembling. All the rest of the wooers lay dead in heaps, like heaps of fish on the sea shore, when they have been netted, and drawn to land.

Then Ulysses sent Telemachus to bring Eurycleia, who, when she came and saw the wooers dead, raised a scream of joy, but Ulysses said ‘it is an unholy thing to boast over dead men.’ He bade Telemachus and the servants carry the corpses into the courtyard, and he made the women wash and clean the hall, and the seats, and tables, and the pillars. When all was clean, they took Melanthius and slew him, and then they washed themselves, and the maidens who were faithful to Penelope came out of their rooms, with torches in their hands, for it was now night, and they kissed Ulysses with tears of joy. These were not young women, for Ulysses remembered all of them.

Meanwhile old Eurycleia ran to tell Penelope all the good news: up the stairs to her chamber she ran, tripping, and falling, and rising, and laughing for joy. In she came and awakened Penelope, saying:

‘Come and see what you have long desired: Ulysses in his own house, and all the wicked wooers slain by the sword.’ ‘Surely you are mad, dear nurse,’ said Penelope, ‘to waken me with such a wild story. Never have I slept so sound since Ulysses went to that ill Ilios, never to be named. Angry would I have been with any of the girls that wakened me with such a silly story; but you are old: go back to the women’s working room.’ The good nurse answered: ‘Indeed, I tell you no silly tale. Indeed he is in the hall; he is that poor guest whom all men struck and insulted, but Telemachus knew his father.’

Then Penelope leaped up gladly, and kissed the nurse, but yet she was not sure that her husband had come, she feared that it might be some God disguised as a man, or some evil man pretending to be Ulysses. ‘Surely Ulysses has met his death far away,’ she said, and though Eurycleia vowed that she herself had seen the scar dealt by the boar, long ago, she would not be convinced. ‘None the less,’ she said, ‘let us go and see my son, and the wooers lying dead, and the man who slew them.’ So they went down the stairs and along a gallery on the ground floor that led into the courtyard, and so entered the door of the hall, and crossed the high stone threshold on which Ulysses stood when he shot down Antinous. Penelope went up to the hearth and sat opposite Ulysses, who was leaning against one of the four tall pillars that supported the roof; there she sat and gazed at him, still wearing his rags, and still not cleansed from the blood of battle. She did not know him, and was silent, though Telemachus called her hard of belief and cold of heart.

‘My child,’ she said, ‘I am bewildered, and can hardly speak, but if this man is Ulysses, he knows things unknown to any except him and me.’ Then Ulysses bade Telemachus go to the baths and wash, and put on fresh garments, and bade the maidens bring the minstrel to play music, while they danced in the hall. In the town the friends and kinsfolk of the wooers did not know that they were dead, and when they heard the music they would not guess that anything strange had happened. It was necessary that nobody should know, for, if the kinsfolk of the dead men learned the truth, they would seek to take revenge, and might burn down the house. Indeed, Ulysses was still in great danger, for the law was that the brothers and cousins of slain men must slay their slayers, and the dead were many, and had many clansmen.

Now Eurynome bathed Ulysses himself, and anointed him with oil, and clad him in new raiment, so that he looked like himself again, full of strength and beauty. He sat down on his own high seat beside the fire, and said: ‘Lady, you are the fairest and most cruel Queen alive. No other woman would harden her heart against her husband, come home through many dangers after so many years. ‘Nurse,’ he cried to Eurycleia, ‘strew me a bed to lie alone, for her heart is hard as iron.’

Now Penelope put him to a trial. ‘Eurycleia,’ she said, ‘strew a bed for him outside the bridal chamber that he built for himself, and bring the good bedstead out of that room for him.’

‘How can any man bring out that bedstead?’ said Ulysses, ‘did I not make it with my own hands, with a standing tree for the bedpost? No man could move that bed unless he first cut down the tree trunk.’

Then at last Penelope ran to Ulysses and threw her arms round his neck, kissing him, and said: ‘Do not be angry, for always I have feared that some strange man of cunning would come and deceive me, pretending to be my lord. But now you have told me the secret of the bed, which no mortal has ever seen or knows but you and I, and my maiden whom I brought from my own home, and who kept the doors of our chamber.’ Then they embraced, and it seemed as if her white arms would never quite leave their hold on his neck.

Ulysses told her many things, all the story of his wanderings, and how he must wander again, on land, not on the sea, till he came to the country of men who had never seen salt. ‘The Gods will defend you and bring you home to your rest in the end,’ said Penelope, and then they went to their own chamber, and Eurynome went before them with lighted torches in her hands, for the Gods had brought them to the haven where they would be.

X

THE END

With the coming of the golden dawn Ulysses awoke, for he had still much to do. He and Telemachus and the cowherd and Eumaeus put on full armour, and took swords and spears, and walked to the farm where old Laertes, the father of Ulysses, lived among his servants and worked in his garden. Ulysses sent the others into the farmhouse to bid the old housekeeper get breakfast ready, and he went alone to the vines, being sure that his father was at work among them.

There the old man was, in his rough gardening clothes, with leather gloves on, and patched leather leggings, digging hard. His servants had gone to gather loose stones to make a rough stone dyke, and he was all alone. He never looked up till Ulysses went to him, and asked him whose slave he was, and who owned the garden. He said that he was a stranger in Ithaca, but that he had once met the king of the island, who declared that one Laertes was his father.

Laertes was amazed at seeing a warrior all in mail come into his garden, but said that he was the father of Ulysses, who had long been unheard of and unseen. ‘And who are you?’ he asked. ‘Where is your own country?’ Ulysses said that he came from Sicily, and that he had met Ulysses five years ago, and hoped that by this time he had come home.

Then the old man sat down and wept, and cast dust on his head, for Ulysses had not arrived from Sicily in five long years; certainly he must be dead. Ulysses could not bear to see his father weep, and told him that he was himself, come home at last, and that he had killed all the wooers.

But Laertes asked him to prove that he really was Ulysses, so he showed the scar on his leg, and, looking round the garden, he said: ‘Come, I will show you the very trees that you gave me when I was a little boy running about after you, and asking you for one thing or another, as children do. These thirteen pear trees are my very own; you gave them to me, and mine are these fifty rows of vines, and these forty fig trees.’

Then Laertes was fainting for joy, but Ulysses caught him in his arms and comforted him. But, when he came to himself, he sighed, and said: ‘How shall we meet the feud of all the kin of the slain men in Ithaca and the other islands?’ ‘Be of good courage, father,’ said Ulysses. ‘And now let us go to the farmhouse and breakfast with Telemachus.’

So Laertes first went to the baths, and then put on fresh raiment, and Ulysses wondered to see him look so straight and strong. ‘Would I were as strong as when I took the castle of Nericus, long ago,’ said the old man, ‘and would that I had been in the fight against the wooers!’ Then all the old man’s servants came in, overjoyed at the return of Ulysses, and they breakfasted merrily together.

By this time all the people in the town knew that the wooers had been slain, and they crowded to the house of Ulysses in great sorrow, and gathered their dead and buried them, and then met in the market place. The father of Antinous, Eupeithes, spoke, and said that they would all be dishonoured if they did not slay Ulysses before he could escape to Nestor’s house in Pylos. It was in vain that an old prophet told them that the young men had deserved their death. The most of the men ran home and put on armour, and Eupeithes led them towards the farm of Laertes, all in shining mail. But the Gods in heaven had a care for Ulysses, and sent Athênê to make peace between him and his subjects.

She did not come too soon, for the avengers were drawing near the farmhouse, which had a garrison of only twelve men: Ulysses, Laertes, Telemachus, the swineherd, the cowherd, and servants of Laertes. They all armed themselves, and not choosing to defend the house, they went boldly out to meet their enemies. They encouraged each other, and Laertes prayed to Athênê, and then threw his spear at Eupeithes. The spear passed clean through helmet and through head, and Eupeithes fell with a crash, and his armour rattled as he fell. But now Athênê appeared, and cried: ‘Hold your hands, ye men of Ithaca, that no more blood may be shed, and peace may be made.’ The foes of Ulysses, hearing the terrible voice of the Goddess, turned and fled, and Ulysses uttered his war-cry, and was rushing among them, when a thunderbolt fell at his feet, and Athênê bade him stop, lest he should anger Zeus, the Lord of Thunder. Gladly he obeyed, and peace was made with oaths and with sacrifice, peace in Ithaca and the islands.

Here ends the story of Ulysses, Laertes’ son, for we do not know anything about his adventures when he went to seek a land of men who never heard of the sea, nor eat meat savoured with salt.

THE FLEECE OF GOLD

I

THE CHILDREN OF THE CLOUD

While Troy still stood fast, and before King Priam was born, there was a king called Athamas, who reigned in a country beside the Grecian sea. Athamas was a young man, and was unmarried; because none of the princesses who then lived seemed to him beautiful enough to be his wife. One day he left his palace and climbed high up into a mountain, following the course of a little river. He came to a place where a great black rock stood on one side of the river, jutting into the stream. Round the rock the water flowed deep and dark. Yet, through the noise of the river, the king thought he heard laughter and voices like the voices of girls. So he climbed very quietly up the back of the rock, and, looking over the edge, there he saw three beautiful maidens bathing in a pool, and splashing each other with the water. Their long yellow hair covered them like cloaks and floated behind them on the pool. One of them was even more beautiful than the others, and as soon as he saw her the king fell in love with her, and said to himself, ‘This is the wife for me.’

As he thought this, his arm touched a stone, which slipped from the top of the rock where he lay, and went leaping, faster and faster as it fell, till it dropped with a splash into the pool below. Then the three maidens heard it, and were frightened, thinking some one was near. So they rushed out of the pool to the grassy bank where their clothes lay, lovely soft clothes, white and gray, and rosy-coloured, all shining with pearl drops, and diamonds like dew.

In a moment they had dressed, and then it was as if they had wings, for they rose gently from the ground, and floated softly up and up the windings of the brook. Here and there among the green tops of the mountain-ash trees the king could just see the white robes shining and disappearing, and shining again, till they rose far off like a mist, and so up and up into the sky, and at last he only followed them with his eyes, as they floated like clouds among the other clouds across the blue. All day he watched them, and at sunset he saw them sink, golden and rose-coloured and purple, and go down into the dark with the setting sun.

The king went home to his palace, but he was very unhappy, and nothing gave him any pleasure. All day he roamed about among the hills, and looked for the beautiful girls, but he never found them, and all night he dreamed about them, till he grew thin and pale and was like to die.

Now, the way with sick men then was that they made a pilgrimage to the temple of a god, and in the temple they offered sacrifices. Then they hoped that the god would appear to them in a dream, or send them a true dream at least, and tell them how they might be made well again. So the king drove in his chariot a long way, to the town where this temple was. When he reached it, he found it a strange place. The priests were dressed in dogs' skins, with the heads of the dogs drawn down over their faces, and there were live dogs running all about the shrines, for they were the favourite beasts of the god, whose name was Asclepius. There was an image of him, with a dog crouched at his feet, and in his hand he held a serpent, and fed it from a bowl.

The king sacrificed before the god, and when night fell he was taken into the temple, and there were many beds strewn on the floor and many people lying on them, both rich and poor, hoping that the god would appear to them in a dream, and tell them how they might be healed. There the king lay, like the rest, and for long he could not close his eyes. At length he slept, and he dreamed a dream. But it was not the god of the temple that he saw in his dream; he saw a beautiful lady, she seemed to float above him in a chariot drawn by doves, and all about her was a crowd of chattering sparrows, and he knew that she was Aphrodite, the Queen of Love. She was more beautiful than any woman in the world, and she smiled as she looked at the king, and said, 'Oh, King Athamas, you are sick for love! Now this you must do: go home and on the first night of the new moon, climb the hills to that place where you saw the Three Maidens. In the dawn they will come again to the river, and bathe in the pool. Then do you creep out of the wood, and steal the clothes of her you love, and she will not be able to fly away with the rest, and she will be your wife.'

Then she smiled again, and her doves bore her away, and the king woke, and remembered the dream, and thanked the lady in his heart, for he knew that she was a goddess, the Queen of Love.

Then he drove home, and did all that he had been told to do. On the first night of the new moon, when she shines like a thin gold thread in the sky, he left his palace, and climbed up through the hills, and hid in the wood by the edge of the pool. When the dawn began to shine silvery, he heard voices, and saw the three girls come floating through the trees, and alight on the river bank, and undress, and run into the water. There they bathed, and splashed each other with the water, laughing in their play. Then he stole to the grassy bank, and seized the clothes of the most beautiful of the three; and they heard him move, and rushed out to their clothes. Two of them were clad in a moment, and floated away up the glen, but the third crouched sobbing and weeping under the thick cloak of her yellow hair. Then she prayed the king to give her back her soft gray and rose-coloured raiment, but he would not till she had promised to be his wife. And he told her how long he had loved her, and how the goddess had sent him to be her husband, and at last she promised, and took his hand, and in her shining robes went down the hill with him to the palace. But he felt as if he walked on the air, and she scarcely seemed to touch the ground with her feet. She told him that her name was Nephele, which meant 'a cloud,' in their language, and that she was one of the Cloud Fairies who bring the rain, and live on the hilltops, and in the high lakes, and water springs, and in the sky.

So they were married, and lived very happily, and had two children, a boy called Phrixus, and a daughter named Helle. The two children had a beautiful pet, a Ram with a fleece all of gold, which was given them by the young god called Hermes, a beautiful god, with wings on his shoon, — for these were the very Shoon of Swiftness, that he lent afterwards to the boy, Perseus, who slew the Gorgon, and took her head. This Ram the children used to play with, and they would ride on his back, and roll about with him on the flowery meadows.

They would all have been happy, but for one thing. When there were clouds in the sky, and when there was rain, then their mother, Nephele, was always with them; but when the summer days were hot and cloudless, then she went away, they did not know where. The long dry days made her grow pale and thin, and, at last, she would vanish altogether, and never come again, till the sky grew soft and gray with rain.

King Athamas grew weary of this, for often his wife would be long away. Besides there was a very beautiful girl called Ino, a dark girl, who had come in a ship of Phœnician merchantmen, and had stayed in the city of the king when her friends sailed from Greece. The king saw her, and often she would be at the palace, playing with the children when their mother had disappeared with the Clouds, her sisters.

This Ino was a witch, and one day she put a drug into the king's wine, and when he had drunk it, he quite forgot Nephele, his wife, and fell in love with Ino. At last he married her, and they had two children, a boy and a girl, and Ino wore the crown, and was queen, and gave orders that Nephele should never be allowed to enter the palace any more. So Phrixus and Helle never saw their mother, and they were dressed in ragged old skins of deer, and were ill fed, and were set to do hard work in the house, while the children of Ino wore gold crowns in their hair, and were dressed in fine raiment, and had the best of everything.

One day when Phrixus and Helle were in the field, herding the sheep (for now they were treated like peasant children, and had to work for their bread), they met an old woman, all wrinkled, and poorly clothed, and they took pity on her, and brought her home with them. Queen Ino saw her, and as she wanted a nurse for her own children, she took her in to be the nurse, and the old woman had charge of the children, and lived in the house, and she was kind to Phrixus and Helle. But neither of them knew that she was their own mother, Nephele, who had disguised herself as an old woman and a servant, that she might be with her children.

Phrixus and Helle grew strong and tall, and more beautiful than Ino's children, so she hated them, and determined, at last, to kill them. They all slept at night in one room, but Ino's children had gold crowns in their hair, and beautiful coverlets on their beds. One night, Phrixus was half awake, and he heard the old nurse come, in the dark, and put something on his head, and on his sister's, and change their coverlets. But he was so drowsy that he half thought it was a dream, and he lay and fell asleep. In the dead of night, the wicked stepmother, Ino, crept into the room with a dagger in her hand, and she stole up to the bed of Phrixus, and felt his hair, and his coverlet. Then she went softly to the bed of Helle, and felt her coverlet, and her hair with the gold crown on it. So she supposed these to be her own children, and she kissed them in the dark, and went to the beds of the other two children. She felt their heads, and they had no crowns on, so she killed them, supposing that they were Phrixus and Helle. Then she crept downstairs and went back to bed.

In the morning, there lay the stepmother Ino's children cold and dead, and nobody knew who had killed them. Only the wicked queen knew, and she, of course, would not tell of herself, but if she hated Phrixus and Helle before, now she hated them a hundred times worse than ever. But the old nurse was gone; nobody ever saw her there again, and everybody but the queen thought that *she* had killed the two children. Everywhere the king sought for her, to burn her alive, but he never found her, for she had gone back to her sisters, the Clouds.

And the Clouds were gone, too! For six long months, from winter to harvest time, the rain never fell. The country was burned up, the trees grew black and dry, there was no water in the streams, the corn turned yellow and died before it was come into the ear. The people were starving, the cattle and sheep were perishing, for there was no grass. And every day the sun rose hot and red, and went blazing through the sky without a cloud.

Here the wicked stepmother, Ino, saw her chance. The king sent messengers to Pytho, to consult the prophetess, and to find out what should be done to bring back the clouds and the rain. Then Ino took the messengers, before they set out on their journey, and gave them gold, and threatened also to kill them, if they did not bring the message she wished from the prophetess. Now this message was that Phrixus and Helle must be burned as a sacrifice to the gods.

So the messengers went, and came back dressed in mourning. And when they were brought before the king, at first they would tell him nothing. But he commanded them to speak, and then they told him, not the real message from the prophetess, but what Ino had bidden them to say: that Phrixus and Helle must be offered as a sacrifice to appease the gods.

The king was very sorrowful at this news, but he could not disobey the gods. So poor Phrixus and Helle were wreathed with flowers, as sheep used to be when they were led to be sacrificed, and they were taken to the altar, all the people following and weeping, and the Golden Ram went between them, as they walked to the temple. Then they came within sight of the sea, which lay beneath the cliff where the temple stood, all glittering in the sun, and the happy white sea-birds flying over it.

Here the Ram stopped, and suddenly he spoke to Phrixus, for the god gave him utterance, and said: ‘Lay hold of my horn, and get on my back, and let Helle climb up behind you, and I will carry you far away.’

Then Phrixus took hold of the Ram’s horn, and Helle mounted behind him, and grasped the golden fleece, and suddenly the Ram rose in the air, and flew above the people’s heads, far away over the sea.

Far away to the eastward he flew, and deep below them they saw the sea, and the islands, and the white towers and temples, and the fields, and ships. Eastward always he went, toward the sun-rising, and Helle grew dizzy and weary. At last a deep sleep came over her, and she let go her hold of the Fleece, and fell from the Ram’s back, down and down, into the narrow seas, that run between Europe and Asia, and there she was drowned. And that strait is called Helle’s Ford, or Hellespont, to this day.

But Phrixus and the Ram flew on up the narrow seas, and over the great sea which the Greeks called the Euxine and we call the Black Sea, till they reached a country named Colchis. There the Ram alighted, so tired and weary that he died, and Phrixus had his beautiful Golden Fleece stripped off, and hung on an oak tree in a dark wood. And there it was guarded by a monstrous Dragon, so that nobody dared to go near it. And Phrixus married the king’s daughter, and lived long, till he died also, and a king called Æêtes, the brother of the enchantress, Circe, ruled that country. Of all the things he had, the rarest was the Golden Fleece, and it became a proverb that nobody could take that Fleece away, nor deceive the Dragon who guarded it.

II

THE SEARCH FOR THE FLEECE

Some years after the Golden Ram died in Colchis, far across the sea, a certain king reigned in Iolcos in Greece, and his name was Pelias. He was not the rightful king, for he had turned his stepbrother, King Æson, from the throne, and taken it for himself. Now, Æson had a son, a boy called Jason, and he sent him far away from Pelias, up into the mountains. In these hills there was a great cave, and in that cave lived Chiron the Wise, who, the story says, was half a horse. He had the head and breast of a man, but a horse's body and legs. He was famed for knowing more about everything than anyone else in all Greece. He knew about the stars, and the plants of earth, which were good for medicine and which were poisonous. He was the best archer with the bow, and the best player of the harp; he could sing songs and tell stories of old times, for he was the last of a people, half horse and half man, who had dwelt in ancient days on the hills. Therefore the kings in Greece sent their sons to him to be taught shooting, singing, and telling the truth, and that was all the teaching they had then, except that they learned to hunt, fish, and fight, and throw spears, and toss the hammer and the stone. There Jason lived with Chiron and the boys in the cave, and many of the boys became famous.

There was Orpheus who played the harp so sweetly that wild beasts followed his minstrelsy, and even the trees danced after him, and settled where he stopped playing. There was Mopsus who could understand what the birds say to each other; and there was Butes, the handsomest of men; and Tiphys, the best steersman of a ship; and Castor, with his brother Polydeuces, the boxer. Heracles, too, the strongest man in the whole world, was there; and Lynceus, whom they called Keen-eye, because he could see so far, and could see even the dead men in their graves under the earth. There was Ephemus, so swift and light-footed that he could run upon the gray sea and never wet his feet; and there were Calais and Zetes, the two sons of the North Wind, with golden wings upon their feet. There also was Peleus, who later married Thetis of the silver feet, goddess of the sea foam, and was the father of Achilles. Many others were there whose names it would take too long to tell. They all grew up together in the hills good friends, healthy, and brave, and strong. And they all went out to their own homes at last; but Jason had no home to go to, for his uncle, Pelias, had taken it, and his father was a wanderer.

So at last he wearied of being alone, and he said good-bye to his teacher, and went down through the hills toward Iolcos, his father’s old home, where his wicked uncle Pelias was reigning. As he went, he came to a great, flooded river, running red from bank to bank, rolling the round boulders along. And there on the bank was an old woman sitting.

‘Cannot you cross, mother?’ said Jason; and she said she could not, but must wait until the flood fell, for there was no bridge.

‘I’ll carry you across,’ said Jason, ‘if you will let me carry you.’

So she thanked him, and said it was a kind deed, for she was longing to reach the cottage where her little grandson lay sick.

Then he knelt down, and she climbed upon his back, and he used his spear for a staff, and stepped into the river. It was deeper than he thought, and stronger, but at last he staggered out on the farther bank, far below where he went in. And then he set the old woman down.

‘Bless you, my lad, for a strong man and a brave!’ she said, ‘and my blessing go with you to the world’s end.’

Then he looked and she was gone he did not know where, for she was the greatest of the goddesses, Hera, the wife of Zeus, who had taken the shape of an old woman, to try Jason, whether he was kind and strong, or rude and churlish. From this day her grace went with him, and she helped him in all dangers.

Then Jason went down limping to the city, for he had lost one shoe in the flood. And when he reached the town he went straight up to the palace, and through the court, and into the open door, and up the hall, where the king was sitting at his table among his men. There Jason stood, leaning on his spear.

When the king saw him he turned white with terror. For he had been told by the prophetess of Pytho that a man with only one shoe would come some day and take away his kingdom. And here was the half-shod man of whom the prophecy had spoken.

But Pelias still remembered to be courteous, and he bade his men lead the stranger to the baths, and there the attendants bathed him, pouring hot water over him. And they anointed his head with oil, and clothed him in new raiment, and brought him back to the hall, and set him down at a table beside the king, and gave him meat and drink.

When he had eaten and was refreshed, the king said: ‘Now it is time to ask the stranger who he is, and who his parents are, and whence he comes to Iolcos?’

And Jason answered, ‘I am Jason, son of the rightful king, Æson, and I am come to take back my kingdom.’

The king grew pale again, but he was cunning, and he leaped up and embraced the lad, and made much of him, and caused a gold circlet to be twisted in his hair. Then he said he was old, and weary of judging the people. ‘And weary work it is,’ he said, ‘and no joy therewith shall any king have. For there is a curse on the country, that shall not be taken away till the Fleece of Gold is brought home, from the land of the world’s end. The ghost of Phrixus stands by my bedside every night, wailing and will not be comforted, till the Fleece is brought home again.’

When Jason heard that he cried, ‘I shall take the curse away, for by the splendour of Lady Hera’s brow, I shall bring the Fleece of Gold from the land of the world’s end before I sit on the throne of my father.’

Now this was the very thing that the king wished, for he thought that if once Jason went after the Fleece, certainly he would never come back living to Iolcos. So he said that it could never be done, for the land was far away across the sea, so far that the birds could not come and go in one year, so great a sea was that and perilous. Also, there was a dragon that guarded the Fleece of Gold, and no man could face it and live.

But the idea of fighting a dragon was itself a temptation to Jason, and he made a great vow by the water of Styx, an oath the very gods feared to break, that certainly he would bring home that Fleece to Iolcos. And he sent out messengers all over Greece, to all his old friends, who were with him in the Centaur’s cave, and bade them come and help him, for that there was a dragon to kill, and that there would be fighting. And they all came, driving in their chariots down dales and across hills: Heracles, the strong man, with the bow that none other could bend; and Orpheus with his harp, and Castor and Polydeuces, and Zetes and Calais of the golden wings, and Tiphys, the steersman, and young Hylas, still a boy, and as fair as a girl, who always went with Heracles the strong.

These came, and many more, and they set shipbuilders to work, and oaks were felled for beams, and ashes for oars, and spears were made, and arrows feathered, and swords sharpened. But in the prow of the ship they placed a bough of an oak tree from the forest of Zeus in Dodona where the trees can speak, and that bough spoke, and prophesied things to come. They called the ship ‘Argo,’ and they launched her, and put bread, and meat, and wine on board, and hung their shields outside the bulwarks. Then they said good-bye to their friends, went aboard, sat down at the oars, set sail, and so away eastward to Colchis, in the land of the world’s end.

All day they rowed, and at night they beached the ship, as was then the custom, for they did not sail at night, and they went on shore, and took supper, and slept, and next day to the sea again. And old Chiron, the man-horse, saw the swift ship from his mountain heights, and ran down to the beach; there he stood with the waves of the gray sea breaking over his feet, waving with his mighty hands, and wishing his boys a safe return. And his wife stood beside him, holding in her arms the little son of one of the ship's company, Achilles, the son of Peleus of the Spear, and of Thetis the goddess of the Sea Foam.

So they rowed ever eastward, and ere long they came to a strange isle where dwelt men with six hands apiece, unruly giants. And these giants lay in wait for them on cliffs above the river's mouth where the ship was moored, and before the dawn they rolled down great rocks on the crew. But Heracles drew his huge bow, the bow for which he slew Eurytus, king of Oechalia, and wherever a giant showed hand or shoulder above the cliff, he pinned him through with an arrow, till all were slain. After that they still held eastward, passing many islands, and towns of men, till they reached Mysia, and the Asian shore. Here they landed, with bad luck. For while they were cutting reeds and grass to strew their beds on the sands, young Hylas, beautiful Hylas, went off with a pitcher in his hand to draw water. He came to a beautiful spring, a deep, clear, green pool, and there the water-fairies lived, whom men called Nereids. There were Eunis, and Nycheia with her April eyes, and when they saw the beautiful Hylas, they longed to have him always with them, to live in the crystal caves beneath the water, for they had never seen anyone so beautiful. As he stooped with his pitcher and dipped it into the stream, they caught him softly in their arms, and drew him down below, and no man ever saw him any more, but he dwelt with the water-fairies.

But Heracles the strong, who loved him like a younger brother, wandered all over the country crying '*Hylas! Hylas!*' and the boy's voice answered so faintly from below the stream that Heracles never heard him. So he roamed alone in the forests, and the rest of the crew thought he was lost.

Then the sons of the North Wind were angry, and bade them set sail without him, and sail they did, leaving the strong man behind. Long afterward, when the Fleece was won, Heracles met the sons of the North Wind, and slew them with his arrows. And he buried them, and set a great stone on each grave, and one of these is ever stirred, and shakes when the North Wind blows. There they lie, and their golden wings are at rest.

Still they sped on, with a west wind blowing, and they came to a country whose king was strong, and thought himself the best boxer then living, so he came down to the ship and challenged anyone of that crew; and Polydeuces, the boxer, took up the challenge. All the rest, and the people of the country, made a ring, and Polydeuces and huge King Amycus stepped into the midst, and put up their hands. First they moved round each other cautiously, watching for a chance, and then, as the sun shone forth in the Giant's face, Polydeuces leaped in and struck him between the eyes with his left hand, and, strong as he was, the Giant staggered and fell. Then his friends picked him up, and sponged his face with water, and all the crew of ‘Argo’ shouted with joy. He was soon on his feet again, and rushed at Polydeuces, hitting out so hard that he would have killed him if the blow had gone home. But Polydeuces just moved his head a little on one side, and the blow went by, and, as the Giant slipped, Polydeuces planted one in his mouth and another beneath his ear, and was away before the Giant could recover.

There they stood, breathing heavily, and glaring at each other, till the Giant made another rush, but Polydeuces avoided him, and struck him several blows quickly in the eyes, and now the Giant was almost blind. Then Polydeuces at once ended the combat by a right-hand blow on the temple. The Giant fell, and lay as if he were dead. When he came to himself again, he had no heart to go on, for his knees shook, and he could hardly see. So Polydeuces made him swear never to challenge strangers again as long as he lived, and then the crew of ‘Argo’ crowned Polydeuces with a wreath of poplar leaves, and they took supper, and Orpheus sang to them, and they slept, and next day they came to the country of the unhappiest of kings.

His name was Phineus, and he was a prophet; but, when he came to meet Jason and his company, he seemed more like the ghost of a beggar than a crowned king. For he was blind, and very old, and he wandered like a dream, leaning on a staff, and feeling the wall with his hand. His limbs all trembled, he was but a thing of skin and bone, and foul and filthy to see. At last he reached the doorway of the house where Jason was, and sat down, with his purple cloak fallen round him, and he held up his skinny hands, and welcomed Jason, for, being a prophet, he knew that now he should be delivered from his wretchedness.

He lived, or rather lingered, in all this misery because he had offended the gods, and had told men what things were to happen in the future beyond what the gods desired that men should know. So they blinded him, and they sent against him hideous monsters with wings and crooked claws, called Harpies, which fell upon him at his meat, and carried it away before he could put it to his mouth. Sometimes they flew off with all the meat; sometimes they left a little, that he might not quite starve, and die, and be at peace, but might live in misery. Yet what they left was made so foul, and of such evil savour, that even a starving man could scarcely take it within his lips. Thus this king was the most miserable of all men living.

He welcomed the heroes, and, above all, Zetes and Calais, the sons of the North Wind, for they, he knew, would help him. And they all went into his wretched, naked hall, and sat down at the tables, and the servants brought meat and drink and placed it before them, the latest and last supper of the Harpies. Then down on the meat swooped the Harpies, like lightning or wind, with clanging brazen wings, and iron claws, and the smell of a battlefield where men lie dead; down they swooped, and flew shrieking away with the food. But the two sons of the North Wind drew their short swords, and rose in the air on their golden wings, and followed where the Harpies fled, over many a sea and many a land, till they came to a distant isle, and there they slew the Harpies with their swords. And that isle was called ‘Turn Again,’ for there the sons of the North Wind turned, and it was late in the night when they came back to the hall of Phineus, and to their companions.

Here Phineus was telling Jason and his company how they might win their way to Colchis and the world’s end, and the wood of the Fleece of Gold. ‘First,’ he said, ‘you shall come in your ship to the Rocks Wandering, for these rocks wander like living things in the sea, and no ship has ever sailed between them. They open, like a great mouth, to let ships pass, and when she is between their lips they clash again, and crush her in their iron jaws. By this way even winged things may never pass; nay, not even the doves that bear ambrosia to Father Zeus, the lord of Olympus, but the rocks ever catch one even of these. So, when you come near them, you must let loose a dove from the ship, and let her go before you to try the way. And if she flies safely between the rocks from one sea to the other sea, then row with all your might when the rocks open again. But if the rocks close on the bird, then return, and do not try the adventure. But, if you win safely through, then hold right on to the mouth of the River Phasis, and there you shall see the towers of Æêtes, the king, and the grove of the Fleece of Gold. And then do as well as you may.’

So they thanked him, and the next morning they set sail, till they came to a place where the Rocks Wandering wallowed in the water, and all was foam; but when the Rocks leaped apart the stream ran swift, and the waves roared beneath the rocks, and the wet cliffs bellowed. Then Euphemus took the dove in his hands, and set her free, and she flew straight at the pass where the rocks met, and sped right through, and the rocks gnashed like gnashing teeth, but they caught only a feather from her tail.

Then slowly the rocks opened again, like a wild beast’s mouth that opens, and Tiphys, the helmsman, shouted, ‘Row on, hard all!’ and he held the ship straight for the pass. Then the oars bent like bows in the hands of men, and the good ship leaped at the stroke. Three strokes they pulled, and at each the ship leaped, and now they were within the black jaws of the rocks, the water boiling round them, and so dark it was that overhead they could see the stars, but the oarsmen could not see the daylight behind them, and the steersman could not see the daylight in front. Then the great tide rushed in between the rocks like a rushing river, and lifted the ship as if it were lifted by a hand, and through the strait she passed like a bird, and the rocks clashed, and only broke the carved wood of the ship's stern. And the ship reeled into the seething sea beyond, and all the men of Jason bowed their heads over their oars, half dead with the fierce rowing.

Then they set all sail, and the ship sped merrily on, past the shores of the inner sea, past bays and towns, and river mouths, and round green hills, the tombs of men slain long ago. And, behold, on the top of one mound stood a tall man, clad in rusty armour, and with a broken sword in his hand, and on his head a helmet with a blood-red crest. Thrice he waved his hand, and thrice he shouted aloud, and was no more seen, for this was the ghost of Sthenelus, Actæon's son, whom an arrow had slain there long since, and he had come forth from his tomb to see men of his own blood, and to greet Jason and his company. So they anchored there, and slew sheep in sacrifice, and poured blood and wine on the grave of Sthenelus. There Orpheus left a harp, placing it in the bough of a tree, that the wind might sing in the chords, and make music to Sthenelus below the earth.

Then they sailed on, and at evening they saw above their heads the snowy crests of Mount Caucasus, flushed in the sunset; and high in the air they saw, as it were, a black speck that grew greater and greater, and fluttered black wings, and then fell sheer down like a stone. Then they heard a dreadful cry from a valley of the mountain, for there Prometheus was fastened to the rock, and the eagles fed upon him, because he stole fire from the gods, and gave it to men. All the heroes shuddered when they heard his cry; but not long after Heracles came that way, and he slew the eagle with his bow, and set Prometheus free.

But at nightfall they came into the wide mouth of the River Phasis, that flows through the land of the world's end, and they saw the lights burning in the palace of Æêtes the king. So now they were come to the last stage of their journey, and there they slept, and dreamed of the Fleece of Gold.

III

THE WINNING OF THE FLEECE

Next morning the heroes awoke, and left the ship moored in the river’s mouth, hidden by tall reeds, for they took down the mast, lest it should be seen. Then they walked toward the city of Colchis, and they passed through a strange and horrible wood. Dead men, bound together with cords, were hanging from the branches, for the Colchis people buried women, but hung dead men from the branches of trees. Then they came to the palace, where King Æêtes lived, with his young son Absyrtus, and his daughter Chalciope, who had been the wife of Phrixus, and his younger daughter, Medea, who was a witch, and the priestess of Brimo, a dreadful goddess. Now Chalciope came out and welcomed Jason, for she knew the heroes were of her dear husband’s country. And beautiful Medea, the dark witch-girl, came forth and saw Jason, and as soon as she saw him she loved him more than her father and her brother and all her father’s house. For his bearing was gallant, and his armour golden, and long yellow hair fell over his shoulders, and over the leopard skin that he wore above his armour. Medea turned white and then red, and cast down her eyes, but Chalciope took the heroes to the baths, and gave them food, and they were brought to Æêtes, who asked them why they came, and they told him that they desired the Fleece of Gold, and he was very angry, and told them that only to a better man than himself would he give up that Fleece. If any wished to prove himself worthy of it he must tame two bulls which breathed flame from their nostrils, and must plough four acres with these bulls, and next he must sow the field with the teeth of a dragon, and these teeth when sown would immediately grow up into armed men. Jason said that, as it must be, he would try this adventure, but he went sadly enough back to the ship and did not notice how kindly Medea was looking after him as he went.

Now, in the dead of night, Medea could not sleep, because she was so sorry for the stranger, and she knew that she could help him by her magic. But she remembered how her father would burn her for a witch if she helped Jason, and a great shame, too, came on her that she should prefer a stranger to her own people. So she arose in the dark, and stole just as she was to her sister’s room, a white figure roaming like a ghost in the palace. At her sister’s door she turned back in shame, saying, ‘No, I will never do it,’ and she went back again to her chamber, and came again, and knew not what to do; but at last she returned to her own bower, and threw herself on her bed, and wept. Her sister heard her weeping, and came to her and they cried together, but softly, that no one might hear them. For Chalciope was as eager to help the Greeks for love of Phrixus, her dead husband, as Medea was for the love of Jason.

At last Medea promised to carry to the temple of the goddess of whom she was a priestess, a drug that would tame the bulls which dwelt in the field of that temple. But still she wept and wished that she were dead, and had a mind to slay herself; yet, all the time, she was longing for the dawn, that she might go and see Jason, and give him the drug, and see his face once more, if she was never to see him again. So, at dawn she bound up her hair, and bathed her face, and took the drug, which was pressed from a flower. That flower first blossomed when the eagle shed the blood of Prometheus on the earth. The virtue of the juice of the flower was this, that if a man anointed himself with it, he could not that day be wounded by swords, and fire could not burn him. So she placed it in a vial beneath her girdle, and she went with other girls, her friends, to the temple of the goddess. Now Jason had been warned by Chalciope to meet her there, and he was coming with Mopsus who knew the speech of birds. But Mopsus heard a crow that sat on a poplar tree speaking to another crow, saying:

‘Here comes a silly prophet, and sillier than a goose. He is walking with a young man to meet a maid, and does not know that, while he is there to hear, the maid will not say a word that is in her heart. Go away, foolish prophet; it is not you she cares for.’

Then Mopsus smiled, and stopped where he was; but Jason went on, where Medea was pretending to play with the girls, her companions. When she saw Jason she felt as if she could neither go forward, nor go back, and she was very pale. But Jason told her not to be afraid, and asked her to help him, but for long she could not answer him; however, at the last, she gave him the drug, and taught him how to use it. ‘So shall you carry the fleece to Iolcos, far away, but what is it to me where you go when you have gone from here? Still remember the name of me, Medea, as I shall remember you. And may there come to me some voice, or some bird bearing the message, whenever you have quite forgotten me.’

But Jason answered, ‘Lady, let the winds blow what voice they will, and what that bird will, let him bring. But no wind or bird shall ever bear the news that I have forgotten you, if you will cross the sea with me, and be my wife.’

Then she was glad, and yet she was afraid, at the thought of that dark voyage, with a stranger, from her father’s home and her own. So they parted, Jason to the ship, and Medea to the palace. But in the morning Jason anointed himself and his armour with the drug, and all the heroes struck at him with spears and swords, but the swords would not bite on him nor on his armour. He felt so strong and light that he leaped in the air with joy, and the sun shone on his glittering shield. Now they all went up together to the field where the bulls were breathing flame. There already was Æêtes, with Medea, and all the Colchians had come to see Jason die. A plough had been brought to which he was to harness the bulls. Then he walked up to them, and they blew fire at him that flamed all round him, but the magic drug protected him. He took a horn of one bull in his right hand, and a horn of the other in his left, and dashed their heads together so mightily that they fell.

When they rose, all trembling, he yoked them to the plough, and drove them with his spear, till all the field was ploughed in straight ridges and furrows. Then he dipped his helmet in the river, and drank water, for he was weary; and next he sowed the dragon’s teeth on the right and left. Then you might see spear points, and sword points, and crests of helmets break up from the soil like shoots of corn, and presently the earth was shaken like sea waves, as armed men leaped out of the furrows, all furious for battle, and all rushed to slay Jason. But he, as Medea had told him to do, caught up a great rock, and threw it among them, and he who was struck by the rock said to his neighbour, ‘You struck me; take that!’ and ran his spear through that man’s breast, but before he could draw it out another man had cleft his helmet with a stroke, and so it went: an hour of striking and shouting, while the sparks of fire sprang up from helmet and breastplate and shield. The furrows ran red with blood, and wounded men crawled on hands and knees to strike or stab those that were yet standing and fighting. So axes and sword and spear flashed and fell, till now all the men were down but one, taller and stronger than the rest. Round him he looked, and saw only Jason standing there, and he staggered toward him, bleeding, and lifting his great axe above his head. But Jason only stepped aside from the blow which would have cloven him to the waist, the last blow of the Men of the Dragon’s Teeth, for he who struck fell, and there he lay and died.

Then Jason went to the king, where he sat looking darkly on, and said, ‘O King, the field is ploughed, the seed is sown, the harvest is reaped. Give me now the Fleece of Gold, and let me be gone.’ But the king said, ‘Enough is done. To-morrow is a new day. To-morrow shall you win the Fleece.’

Then he looked sidewise at Medea, and she knew that he suspected her, and she was afraid.

Æêtes went and sat brooding over his wine with the captains of his people; and his mood was bitter, both for loss of the Fleece, and because Jason had won it not by his own prowess, but by the magic aid of Medea. As for Medea herself, it was the king’s purpose to put her to a cruel death, and this she needed not her witchery to know, and a fire was in her eyes, and terrible sounds were ringing in her ears, and it seemed she had but two choices: to drink poison and die, or to flee with the heroes in the ship ‘Argo.’ But at last flight seemed better than death. So she hid all her engines of witchcraft in the folds of her gown, and she kissed her bed where she would never sleep again, and the posts of the door, and she caressed the very walls with her hand in that last farewell. And she cut a long lock of her yellow hair, and left it in the room, a keepsake to her mother dear, in memory of her maiden days. ‘Good-bye, my mother,’ she said, ‘this long lock I leave thee in place of me; good-bye, a long good-bye, to me who am going on a long journey; good-bye, my sister Chalciope, good-bye! dear house, good-bye!’

Then she stole from the house, and the bolted doors leaped open at their own accord at the swift spell Medea murmured. With her bare feet she ran down the grassy paths, and the daisies looked black against the white feet of Medea. So she sped to the temple of the goddess, and the moon overhead looked down on her. Many a time had she darkened the moon’s face with her magic song, and now the Lady Moon gazed white upon her, and said, ‘I am not, then, the only one that wanders in the night for love, as I love Endymion the sleeper, who sleeps on the crest of the Latmian hill, and beholds me in his dreams. Many a time hast thou darkened my face with thy songs, and made night black with thy sorceries, and now thou too art in love! So go thy way, and bid thy heart endure, for a sore fate is before thee!’

But Medea hastened on till she came to the high river bank, and saw the heroes, merry at their wine in the light of a blazing fire. Thrice she called aloud, and they heard her, and came to her, and she said, ‘Save me, my friends, for all is known, and my death is sure. And I will give you the Fleece of Gold for the price of my life.’

Then Jason swore that she should be his wife, and more dear to him than all the world. So she went aboard their boat, and swiftly they rowed up stream to the dark wood where the dragon who never sleeps lay guarding the Fleece of Gold. There she landed, and Jason, and Orpheus with his harp, and through the wood they went, but that old serpent saw them coming, and hissed so loud that women wakened in Colchis town, and children cried to their mothers. But Orpheus struck softly on his harp, and he sang a hymn to Sleep, bidding him come and cast a slumber on the dragon’s wakeful eyes. This was the song he sang:

Sleep! King of Gods and men! Come to my call again, Swift over field and fen, Mountain and deep; Come, bid the waves be still; Sleep, streams on height and hill; Beasts, birds, and snakes, thy will Conquereth, Sleep! Come on thy golden wings, Come ere the swallow sings, Lulling all living things, Fly they or creep! Come with thy leaden wand, Come with thy kindly hand, Soothing on sea or land Mortals that weep. Come from the cloudy west, Soft over brain and breast, Bidding the Dragon rest, Come to me, Sleep!

This was Orpheus’s song, and he sang so sweetly that the bright, small eyes of the dragon closed, and all his hard coils softened and uncurled. Then Jason set his foot on the dragon’s neck and hewed off his head, and lifted down the Golden Fleece from the sacred oak tree, and it shone like a golden cloud at dawn. He waited not to wonder at it, but he and Medea and Orpheus hurried through the wet wood-paths to the ship, and threw it on board, cast a cloak over it, and bade the heroes sit down to the oars, half of them, but the others to take their shields and stand each beside the oarsmen, to guard them from the arrows of the Colchians. Then he cut the stern cables with his sword, and softly they rowed, under the bank, down the dark river to the sea. But the hissing of the dragon had already awakened the Colchians, and lights were flitting by the palace windows, and Æêtes was driving in his chariot with all his men down to the banks of the river. Then their arrows fell like hail about the ship, but they rebounded from the shields of the heroes, and the swift ship sped over the bar, and leaped as she felt the first waves of the salt sea.

And now the Fleece was won. But it was weary work bringing it home to Greece, and Medea and Jason did a deed which angered the gods. They slew her brother Absyrtus, who followed after them with a fleet, and cut him limb from limb, and when Æêtes came with his ships, and saw the dead limbs, he stopped, and went home, for his heart was broken. The gods would not let the Greeks return by the way they had come, but by strange ways where never another ship has sailed. Up the Ister (the Danube) they rowed, through countries of savage men, till the ‘Argo’ could go no farther, by reason of the narrowness of the stream. Then they hauled her overland, where no man knows, but they launched her on the Elbe at last, and out into a sea where never sail had been seen. Then they were driven wandering out into Ocean, and to a fairy, far-off isle where Lady Circe dwelt. Circe was the sister of King Æêtes, both were children of the Sun God, and Medea hoped that Circe would be kind to her, as she could not have heard of the slaying of Absyrtus. Medea and Jason went up through the woods of the isle to the house of Circe, and had no fear of the lions and wolves and bears that guarded the house. These knew that Medea was an enchantress, and they fawned on her and Jason and let them pass. But in the house they found Circe clad in dark mourning raiment, and all her long black hair fell wet and dripping to her feet, for she had seen visions of terror and sin, and therefore she had purified herself in salt water of the sea. The walls of her chamber, in the night, had shone as with fire, and dripped as with blood, and a voice of wailing had broken forth, and the spirit of dead Absyrtus had cried in her ears.

When Medea and Jason entered her hall, Circe bade them sit down, and called her bower maidens, fairies of woods and waters, to strew a table with a cloth of gold, and set on it food and wine. But Jason and Medea ran to the hearth, the sacred place of the house to which men that have done murder flee, and there they are safe, when they come in their flight to the house of a stranger. They cast ashes from the hearth on their heads, and Circe knew that they had slain Absyrtus. Yet she was of Medea’s near kindred, and she respected the law of the hearth. Therefore she did the rite of purification, as was the custom, cleansing blood with blood, and she burned in the fire a cake of honey, and meal, and oil, to appease the Furies who revenge the deaths of kinsmen by the hands of kinsmen.

When all was done, Jason and Medea rose from their knees, and sat down on chairs in the hall, and Medea told Circe all her tale, except the slaying of Absyrtus.

‘More and worse than you tell me you have done,’ said Circe, ‘but you are my brother’s daughter.’

Then she advised them of all the dangers of their way home to Greece, how they must shun the Sirens, and Scylla and Charybdis, and she sent a messenger, Iris, the goddess of the Rainbow, to bid Thetis help them through the perils of the sea, and bring them safe to Phæacia, where the Phæacians would send them home.

‘But you shall never be happy, nor know one good year in all your lives,’ said Circe, and she bade them farewell.

They went by the way that Ulysses went on a later day; they passed through many perils, and came to Iolcos, where Pelias was old, and made Jason reign in his stead.

But Jason and Medea loved each other no longer, and many stories, all different from each other, are told concerning evil deeds that they wrought, and certainly they left each other, and Jason took another wife, and Medea went to Athens. Here she lived in the palace of Ægeus, an unhappy king who had been untrue to his own true love, and therefore the gods took from him courage and strength. But about Medea at Athens the story is told in the next tale, the tale of Theseus, Ægeus’s son.

THESEUS

I

THE WEDDING OF ÆTHRA

Long before Ulysses was born, there lived in Athens a young king, strong, brave, and beautiful, named Ægeus. Athens, which later became so great and famous, was then but a little town, perched on the top of a cliff which rises out of the plain, two or three miles from the sea. No doubt the place was chosen so as to be safe against pirates, who then used to roam all about the seas, plundering merchant ships, robbing cities, and carrying away men, women, and children, to sell as slaves. The Athenians had then no fleet with which to put the pirates down, and possessed not so much land as would make a large estate in England: other little free towns held the rest of the surrounding country.

King Ægeus was young, and desired to take a wife, indeed a wife had been found for him. But he wanted to be certain, if he could, that he was to have sons to succeed him: so many misfortunes happen to kings who have no children. But how was he to find out whether he should have children or not? At that time, and always in Greece before it was converted to Christianity, there were temples of the gods in various places, at which it was supposed that men might receive answers to their questions. These temples were called oracles, or places where oracles were given, and the most famous of them was the temple of Apollo at Pytho, or Delphi, far to the north-west of Athens. Here was a deep ravine of a steep mountain, where the god Apollo was said to have shot a monstrous dragon with his arrows. He then ordered that a temple should be built here, and in this temple a maiden, being inspired by the god, gave her prophecies. The people who came to consult her made the richest presents to the priests, and the temple was full of cups and bowls of gold and silver, and held more wealth in its chambers than the treasure houses of the richest kings.

Ægeus determined to go to Delphi to ask his question: would he have sons to come after him? He did not tell his people where he was going; he left the kingdom to be governed by his brother Pallas, and he set out secretly at night, taking no servant. He did not wear royal dress, and he drove his own chariot, carrying for his offering only a small cup of silver, for he did not wish it to be known that he was a king, and told the priests that he was a follower of Peleus, King of Phthia. In answer to his question, the maiden sang two lines of verse, for she always prophesied in verse. Her reply was difficult to understand, as oracles often were, for the maiden seldom spoke out clearly, but in a kind of riddle that might be understood in more ways than one; so that, whatever happened, she could not be proved to have made a mistake.

Ægeus was quite puzzled by the answer he got. He did not return to Athens, but went to consult the prince of Troezene, named Pittheus, who was thought the wisest man then living. Pittheus did not know who Ægeus was, but saw that he seemed of noble birth, tall and handsome, so he received him very kindly, and kept him in his house for some time, entertaining him with feasts, dances, and hunting parties. Now Pittheus had a very lovely daughter, named Æthra. She and Ægeus fell in love with each other, so deeply that they desired to be married. It was the custom that the bridegroom should pay a price, a number of cattle, to the father of the bride, and Ægeus, of course, had no cattle to give. But it was also the custom, if the lover did some very brave and useful action, to reward him with the hand of his lady, and Ægeus had his opportunity. A fleet of pirates landed at Troezene and attacked the town, but Ægeus fought so bravely and led the men of Pittheus so well, that he not only slew the pirate chief, and defeated his men, but also captured some of his ships, which were full of plunder, gold, and bronze, and iron, and slaves. With this wealth Ægeus paid the bride price, as it was called, for Æthra, and they were married. Pittheus thought himself a lucky man, for he had no son, and here was a son-in-law who could protect his little kingdom, and wear the crown when he himself was dead.

Though Pittheus was believed to be very wise, in this matter he was very foolish. He never knew who Ægeus really was, that is the king of Athens, nor did poor Æthra know. In a short time Ægeus wearied of beautiful Æthra, who continued to love him dearly. He was anxious also to return to his kingdom, for he heard that his brother Pallas and his many sons were governing badly; and he feared that Pallas might keep the crown for himself, so he began to speak mysteriously to Æthra, talking about a long and dangerous journey which he was obliged to make, for secret reasons, and from which he might never return alive. Æthra wept bitterly, and sometimes thought, as people did in these days, that the beautiful stranger might be no man, but a god, and that he might return to Olympus, the home of the gods, and forget her; for the gods never tarried long with the mortal women who loved them.

At last Ægeus took Æthra to a lonely glen in the woods, where, beside a little mountain stream, lay a great moss-grown boulder that an earthquake, long ago, had shaken from the rocky cliff above. ‘The time is coming,’ said Ægeus ‘when you and I must part, and only the gods can tell when we shall meet again! It may be that you will bear a child, and, if he be a boy, when he has come to his strength you must lead him to this great stone, and let no man or woman be there but you two only. You must then bid him roll away the stone, and, if he has no strength to raise it, so must it be. But if he can roll it away, then let him take such things as he finds there, and let him consider them well, and do what the gods put into his heart.'

Thus Ægeus spoke, and on the dawn of the third night after this day, when Æthra awoke from sleep, she did not find him by her side. She arose, and ran through the house, calling his name, but there came no answer, and from that time Ægeus was never seen again in Troezene, and people marvelled, thinking that he, who came whence no man knew, and was so brave and beautiful, must be one of the immortal gods. 'Who but a god,' they said, 'would leave for no cause a bride, the flower of Greece for beauty, young, and loving; and a kingdom to which he was not born? Truly he must be Apollo of the silver bow, or Hermes of the golden wand.'

So they spoke among each other, and honoured Æthra greatly, but she pined and drooped with sorrow, like a tall lily flower, that the frost has touched in a rich man's garden.

II

THE BOYHOOD OF THESEUS

Time went by, and Æthra had a baby, a son. This was her only comfort, and she thought that she saw in him a likeness to his father, whose true name she did not know. Certainly he was a very beautiful baby, well formed and strong, and, as soon as he could walk he was apt to quarrel with other children of his own age, and fight with them in a harmless way. He never was an amiable child, though he was always gentle to his mother. From the first he was afraid of nothing, and when he was about four or five he used to frighten his mother by wandering from home, with his little bow and arrows, and staying by himself in the woods. However, he always found his own way back again, sometimes with a bird or a snake that he had shot, and once dragging the body of a fawn that was nearly as heavy as himself. Thus his mother, from his early boyhood, had many fears for him, that he might be killed by some fierce wild boar in the woods, for he would certainly shoot at whatever beast he met; or that he might kill some other boy in a quarrel, when he would be obliged to leave the country. The other boys, however, soon learned not to quarrel with Theseus (so Æthra had named her son), for he was quick of temper, and heavy of hand, and, as for the wild beasts, he was cool as well as eager, and seemed to have an untaught knowledge of how to deal with them.

Æthra was therefore very proud of her son, and began to hope that when he was older he would be able to roll away the great stone in the glen. She told him nothing about it when he was little, but, in her walks with him in the woods or on the sea shore, she would ask him to try his force in lifting large stones. When he succeeded she kissed and praised him, and told him stories of the famous strong man, Heracles, whose name was well known through all Greece. Theseus could not bear to be beaten at lifting any weight, and, if he failed, he would rise early and try again in the morning, for many men, as soon as they rise from bed, can lift weights which are too heavy for them later in the day.

When Theseus was seven years old, Æthra found for him a tutor, named Connidas, who taught him the arts of netting beasts and hunting, and how to manage the dogs, and how to drive a chariot, and wield sword and shield, and to throw the spear. Other things Connidas taught him which were known to few men in Greece, for Connidas came from the great rich island of Crete. He had killed a man there in a quarrel, and fled to Troezene to escape the revenge of the man’s brothers and cousins. In Crete many people could read and write, which in Greece, perhaps none could do, and Connidas taught Theseus this learning.

When he was fifteen years old, Theseus went, as was the custom of young princes, to the temple of Delphi, not to ask questions, but to cut his long hair, and sacrifice it to the god, Apollo. He cut the forelock of his hair, so that no enemy, in battle, might take hold of it, for Theseus intended to fight at close quarters, hand to hand, in war, not to shoot arrows and throw spears from a distance. By this time he thought himself a man, and was always asking where his father was, while Æthra told him how her husband had left her soon after their marriage, and that she had never heard of him since, but that some day Theseus might find out all about him for himself, which no other person would ever be able to do.

Æthra did not wish to tell Theseus too soon the secret of the great stone, which hid she knew not what. She saw that he would leave her and go to seek his father, if he was able to raise the stone and find out the secret, and she could not bear to lose him, now that day by day he grew more like his father, her lost lover. Besides, she wanted him not to try to raise the stone till he came to his strength. But when he was in his nineteenth year, he told her that he would now go all over Greece and the whole world seeking for his father. She saw that he meant what he said, and one day she led him alone to the glen where the great stone lay, and sat down with him there, now talking, and now silent as if she were listening to the pleasant song of the burn that fell from a height into a clear deep pool. Really she was listening to make sure that no hunter and no lovers were near them in the wood, but she only heard the songs of the water and the birds, no voices, or cry of hounds, or fallen twig cracking under a footstep.

At last, when she was quite certain that nobody was near, she whispered, and told Theseus how her husband, before he disappeared, had taken her to this place, and shown her the great moss-grown boulder, and said that, when his son could lift that stone away, he would find certain tokens, and that he must then do what the gods put into his heart. Theseus listened eagerly, and said, ‘If my father lifted that stone, and placed under it certain tokens, I also can lift it, perhaps not yet, but some day I shall be as strong a man as my father.’ Then he set himself to move the stone, gradually putting out all his force, but it seemed rooted in the earth, though he tried it now on one side and now on another. At last he flung himself at his mother’s feet, with his head in the grass, and lay without speaking. His breath came hard and quick, and his hands were bleeding. Æthra laid her hand on his long hair, and was silent. ‘I shall not lose my boy this year,’ she thought.

They were long in that lonely place, but at last Theseus rose, and kissed his mother, and stretched his arms. ‘Not to-day!’ he said, but his mother thought in her heart, ‘Not for many a day, I hope!’ Then they walked home to the house of Pittheus, saying little, and when they had taken supper, Theseus said that he would go to bed and dream of better fortune. So he arose, and went to his own chamber, which was built apart in the court of the palace, and soon Æthra too went to sleep, not unhappy, for her boy, she thought, would not leave her for a long time.

But in the night Theseus arose, and put on his shoes, and his smock, and a great double mantle. He girt on his sword of bronze, and went into the housekeeper’s chamber, where he took a small skin of wine, and some food. These he placed in a wallet which he slung round his neck by a cord, and, lastly he stole out of the court, and walked to the lonely glen, and to the pool in the burn near which the great stone lay. Here he folded his purple mantle of fine wool round him, and lay down to sleep in the grass, with his sword lying near his hand.

When he awoke the clear blue morning light was round him, and all the birds were singing their song to the dawn. Theseus arose, threw off his mantle and smock, and plunged into the cold pool of the burn, and then he drank a little of the wine, and ate of the bread and cold meat, and set himself to move the stone. At the first effort, into which he put all his strength, the stone stirred. With the second he felt it rise a little way from the ground, and then he lifted with all the might in his heart and body, and rolled the stone clean over.

Beneath it there was nothing but the fresh turned soil, but in a hollow of the foot of the rock, which now lay upper-most, there was a wrapping of purple woollen cloth, that covered something. Theseus tore out the packet, unwrapped the cloth, and found within it a wrapping of white linen. This wrapping was in many folds, which he undid, and at last he found a pair of shoon, such as kings wear, adorned with gold, and also the most beautiful sword that he had ever seen. The handle was of clear rock crystal, and through the crystal you could see gold, inlaid with pictures of a lion hunt done in different shades of gold and silver. The sheath was of leather, with patterns in gold nails, and the blade was of bronze, a beautiful pattern ran down the centre to the point, the blade was straight, and double edged, supple, sharp, and strong. Never had Theseus seen so beautiful a sword, nor one so well balanced in his hand.

He saw that this was a king’s sword; and he thought that it had not been wrought in Greece, for in Greece was no sword-smith that could do such work. Examining it very carefully he found characters engraved beneath the hilt, not letters such as the Greeks used in later times, but such Cretan signs as Connidas had taught him to read, for many a weary hour, when he would like to have been following the deer in the forest.

Theseus pored over these signs till he read:

Icmalius me made. Of Ægeus of Athens am I.

Now he knew the secret. His father was Ægeus, the king of Athens. Theseus had heard of him and knew that he yet lived, a sad life full of trouble. For Ægeus had no child by his Athenian wife, and the fifty sons of his brother, Pallas (who were called the Pallantidæ) despised him, and feasted all day in his hall, recklessly and fiercely, robbing the people, and Ægeus had no power in his own kingdom.

'Methinks that my father has need of me!' said Theseus to himself. Then he wrapped up the sword and shoon in the linen and the cloth of wool, and walked home in the early morning to the palace of Pittheus.

When Theseus came to the palace, he went straight to the upper chamber of his mother, where she was spinning wool with a distaff of ivory. When he laid before her the sword and the shoon, the distaff fell from her hand, and she hid her head in a fold of her robe. Theseus kissed her hands and comforted her, and she dried her eyes, and praised him for his strength. 'These are the sword and the shoon of your father,' she said, 'but truly the gods have taken away his strength and courage. For all men say that Ægeus of Athens is not master in his own house; his brother's sons rule him, and with them Medea, the witch woman, that once was the wife of Jason.'

'The more he needs his son!' said Theseus. 'Mother, I must go to help him, and be the heir of his kingdom, where you shall be with me always, and rule the people of Cecrops that fasten the locks of their hair with grasshoppers of gold.'

'So may it be, my child,' said Æthra, 'if the gods go with you to protect you. But you will sail to Athens in a ship with fifty oarsmen, for the ways by land are long, and steep, and dangerous, beset by cruel giants and monstrous men.'

'Nay, mother,' said Theseus, 'by land must I go, for I would not be known in Athens, till I see how matters fall out; and I would destroy these giants and robbers, and give peace to the people, and win glory among men. This very night I shall set forth.'

He had a sore and sad parting from his mother, but under cloud of night he went on his way, girt with the sword of Ægeus, his father, and carrying in his wallet the shoon with ornaments of gold.

III

ADVENTURES OF THESEUS

Theseus walked through the night, and slept for most of the next day at a shepherd's hut. The shepherd was kind to him, and bade him beware of one called the Maceman, who guarded a narrow path with a sheer cliff above, and a sheer precipice below. 'No man born may deal with the Maceman,' said the shepherd, 'for his great club is of iron, that cannot be broken, and his strength is as the strength of ten men, though his legs have no force to bear his body. Men say that he is the son of the lame god, Hephaestus, who forged his iron mace; there is not the like of it in the world.'

'Shall I fear a lame man?' said Theseus, 'and is it not easy, even if he be so terrible a fighter, for me to pass him in the darkness, for I walk by night?'

The shepherd shook his head. 'Few men have passed Periphetes the Maceman,' said he, 'and wiser are they who trust to swift ships than to the upland path.'

'You speak kindly, father,' said Theseus, 'but I am minded to make the upland paths safe for all men.'

So they parted, and Theseus walked through the sunset and the dusk, always on a rising path, and the further he went the harder it was to see the way, for the path was overgrown with grass, and the shadows were deepening. Night fell, and Theseus hardly dared to go further, for on his left hand was a wall of rock, and on his right hand a cliff sinking sheer and steep to the sea. But now he saw a light in front of him, a red light flickering, as from a great fire, and he could not be content till he knew why that fire was lighted. So he went on, slowly and warily, till he came in full view of the fire which covered the whole of a little platform of rock; on one side the blaze shone up the wall of cliff on his left hand, on the other was the steep fall to the sea. In front of this fire was a great black bulk; Theseus knew not what it might be. He walked forward till he saw that the black bulk was that of a monstrous man, who sat with his back to the fire. The man nodded his heavy head, thick with red unshorn hair, and Theseus went up close to him.

'Ho, sir,' he cried, 'this is my road, and on my road I must pass!'

The seated man opened his eyes sleepily.

'Not without my leave,' he said, 'for I keep this way, I and my club of iron.'

‘Get up and begone!’ said Theseus.

‘That were hard for me to do,’ said the monstrous man, ‘for my legs will not bear the weight of my body, but my arms are strong enough.’

‘That is to be seen!’ said Theseus, and he drew his sword, and leaped within the guard of the iron club that the monster, seated as he was, swung lightly to this side and that, covering the whole width of the path. The Maceman swung the club at Theseus, but Theseus sprang aside, and in a moment, before the monster could recover his stroke, drove through his throat the sword of Ægeus, and he fell back dead.

‘He shall have his rights of fire, that his shadow may not wander outside the House of Hades,’ said Theseus to himself, and he toppled the body of the Maceman into his own great fire. Then he went back some way, and wrapping himself in his mantle, he slept till the sun was high in heaven, while the fire had sunk into its embers, and Theseus lightly sprang over them, carrying with him the Maceman’s iron club. The path now led downwards, and a burn that ran through a green forest kept him company on the way, and brought him to pleasant farms and houses of men.

They marvelled to see him, a young man, carrying the club of the Maceman. ‘Did you find him asleep?’ they asked, and Theseus smiled and said, ‘No, I found him awake. But now he sleeps an iron sleep, from which he will never waken, and his body had due burning in his own watchfire.’ Then the men and women praised Theseus, and wove for him a crown of leaves and flowers, and sacrificed sheep to the gods in heaven, and on the meat they dined, rejoicing that now they could go to Troezene by the hill path, for they did not love ships and the sea.

When they had eaten and drunk, and poured out the last cup of wine on the ground, in honour of Hermes, the God of Luck, the country people asked Theseus where he was going? He said that he was going to walk to Athens, and at this the people looked sad. ‘No man may walk across the neck of land where Ephyre is built,’ they said, ‘because above it Sinis the Pine-Bender has his castle, and watches the way.’

‘And who is Sinis, and why does he bend pine trees?’ asked Theseus.

‘He is the strongest of men, and when he catches a traveller, he binds him hand and foot, and sets him between two pine trees. Then he bends them down till they meet, and fastens the traveller to the boughs of each tree, and lets them spring apart, so that the man is riven asunder.’

‘Two can play at that game,’ said Theseus, smiling, and he bade farewell to the kind country people, shouldered the iron club of Periphetes, and went singing on his way. The path led him over moors, and past farm-houses, and at last rose towards the crest of the hill whence he would see the place where two seas would have met, had they not been sundered by the neck of land which is now called the Isthmus of Corinth. Here the path was very narrow, with thick forests of pine trees on each hand, and ‘here,’ thought Theseus to himself, ‘I am likely to meet the Pine-Bender.’

Soon he knew that he was right, for he saw the ghastly remains of dead men that the pine trees bore like horrible fruit, and presently the air was darkened overhead by the waving of vultures and ravens that prey upon the dead. ‘I shall fight the better in the shade,’ said Theseus, and he loosened the blade of the sword in its sheath, and raised the club of Periphetes aloft in his hand.

Well it was for him that he raised the iron club, for, just as he lifted it, there flew out from the thicket something long, and slim, and black, that fluttered above his head for a moment, and then a loop at the end of it fell round the head of Theseus, and was drawn tight with a sudden jerk. But the loop fell also above and round the club, which Theseus held firm, pushing away the loop, and so pushed it off that it did not grip his neck. Drawing with his left hand his bronze dagger, he cut through the leather lasso with one stroke, and bounded into the bushes from which it had flown. Here he found a huge man, clad in the skin of a lion, with its head fitting to his own like a mask. The man lifted a club made of the trunk of a young pine tree, with a sharp-edged stone fastened into the head of it like an axe-head. But, as the monster raised his long weapon it struck on a strong branch of a tree above him, and was entangled in the boughs, so that Theseus had time to thrust the head of the iron club full in his face, with all his force, and the savage fell with a crash like a falling oak among the bracken. He was one of the last of an ancient race of savage men, who dwelt in Greece before the Greeks, and he fought as they had fought, with weapons of wood and stone.

Theseus dropped with his knees on the breast of the Pine-Bender, and grasped his hairy throat with both his hands, not to strangle him, but to hold him sure and firm till he came to himself again. When at last the monster opened his eyes, Theseus gripped his throat the harder, and spoke, ‘Pine-Bender, for thee shall pines be bent. But I am a man and not a monster, and thou shalt die a clean death before thy body is torn in twain to be the last feast of thy vultures.’ Then, squeezing the throat of the wretch with his left hand, he drew the sword of Ægeus, and drove it into the heart of Sinis the Pine-Bender, and he gave a cry like a bull’s, and his soul fled from him. Then Theseus bound the body of the savage with his own leather cord, and, bending down the tops of two pine trees, he did to the corpse as Sinis had been wont to do to living men.

Lastly he cleaned the sword-blade carefully, wiping it with grass and bracken, and thrusting it to the hilt through the soft fresh ground under the trees, and so went on his way till he came to a little stream that ran towards the sea from the crest of the hill above the town of Ephyre, which is now called Corinth. But as he cleansed himself in the clear water, he heard a rustle in the boughs of the wood, and running with sword drawn to the place whence the sound seemed to come, he heard the whisper of a woman. Then he saw a strange sight. A tall and very beautiful girl was kneeling in a thicket, in a patch of asparagus thorn, and was weeping, and praying, in a low voice, and in a childlike innocent manner, to the thorns, begging them to shelter and defend her.

Theseus wondered at her, and, sheathing his sword, came softly up to her, and bade her have no fear. Then she threw her arms about his knees, and raised her face, all wet with tears, and bade him take pity upon her, for she had done no harm.

‘Who are you, maiden? You are safe with me,’ said Theseus. ‘Do you dread the Pine-Bender?’

‘Alas, sir,’ answered the girl, ‘I am his daughter, Perigyne, and his blood is on your hands.’

‘Yet I do not war with women,’ said Theseus, ‘though that has been done which was decreed by the gods. If you follow with me, you shall be kindly used, and marry, if you will, a man of a good house, being so beautiful as you are.’

When she heard this, the maiden rose to her feet, and would have put her hand in his. ‘Not yet,’ said Theseus, kindly, ‘till water has clean washed away that which is between thee and me. But wherefore, maiden, being in fear as you were, did you not call to the gods in heaven to keep you, but to the asparagus thorns that cannot hear or help?’

‘My father, sir,’ she said, ‘knew no gods, but he came of the race of the asparagus thorns, and to them I cried in my need.’

Theseus marvelled at these words, and said, ‘From this day you shall pray to Zeus, the Lord of Thunder, and to the other gods.’ Then he went forth from the wood, with the maiden following, and wholly cleansed himself in the brook that ran by the way.

So they passed down to the rich city of Ephyre, where the king received him gladly, when he heard of the slaying of the Maceman, Periphetes, and of Sinis the Pine-Bender. The Queen, too, had pity on Perigyne, so beautiful she was, and kept her in her own palace. Afterwards Perigyne married a prince, Deiones, son of Eurytus, King of Œchalia, whom the strong man Heracles slew for the sake of his bow, the very bow with which Ulysses, many years afterwards, destroyed the Wooers in his halls. The sons of Perigyne and Deiones later crossed the seas to Asia, and settled in a land called Caria, and they never burned or harmed the asparagus thorn to which Perigyne had prayed in the thicket.

Greece was so lawless in these days that all the road from Troezene northward to Athens was beset by violent and lawless men. They loved cruelty even more than robbery, and each of them had carefully thought out his particular style of being cruel. The cities were small, and at war with each other, or at war among themselves, one family fighting against another for the crown. Thus there was no chance of collecting an army to destroy the monstrous men of the roads, which it would have been easy enough for a small body of archers to have done. Later Theseus brought all into great order, but now, being but one man, he went seeking adventures.

On the border of a small country called Megara, whose people were much despised in Greece, he found a chance of advancing himself, and gaining glory. He was walking in the middle of the day along a narrow path at the crest of a cliff above the sea, when he saw the flickering of a great fire in the blue air, and steam going up from a bronze caldron of water that was set on the fire. On one side of the fire was a foot-bath of glittering bronze. Hard by was built a bower of green branches, very cool on that hot day, and from the door of the bower stretched a great thick hairy pair of naked legs.

Theseus guessed, from what he had been told, that the owner of the legs was Sciron the Kicker. He was a fierce outlaw who was called the Kicker because he made all travellers wash his feet, and, as they were doing so, kicked them over the cliff. Some say that at the foot of the cliff dwelt an enormous tortoise, which ate the dead and dying when they fell near his lair, but as tortoises do not eat flesh, generally, this may be a mistake. Theseus was determined not to take any insolence from Sciron, so he shouted —

‘Slave, take these dirty legs of yours out of the way of a Prince.

‘Prince!’ answered Sciron, ‘if my legs are dirty, the gods are kind who have sent you to wash them for me.’

Then he got up, lazily, laughing and showing his ugly teeth, and stood in front of his bath with his heavy wooden club in his hand. He whirled it round his head insultingly, but Theseus was quicker than he, and again, as when he slew the Pine-Bender, he did not strike, for striking is slow compared to thrusting, but like a flash he lunged forward and drove the thick end of his iron club into the breast of Sciron. He staggered, and, as he reeled, Theseus dealt him a blow across the thigh, and he fell. Theseus seized the club which dropped from the hand of Sciron, and threw it over the cliff; it seemed long before the sound came up from the rocks on which it struck. ‘A deep drop into a stony way, Sciron,’ said Theseus, ‘now wash my feet! Stand up, and turn your back to me, and be ready when I tell you.’ Sciron rose, slowly and sulkily, and stood as Theseus bade him do.

Now Theseus was not wearing light shoes or sandals, like the golden sandals of Ægeus, which he carried in his wallet. He was wearing thick boots, with bronze nails in the soles, and the upper leathers were laced high up his legs, for the Greeks wore such boots when they took long walks on mountain roads. As soon as Theseus had trained Sciron to stand in the proper position, he bade him stoop to undo the lacings of his boots. As Sciron stooped, Theseus gave him one tremendous kick, that lifted him over the edge of the cliff, and there was an end of Sciron.

Theseus left the marches of Megara, and walked singing on his way, above the sea, for his heart was light, and he was finding adventures to his heart's desire. Being so young and well trained, his foot and hand, in a combat, moved as swift as lightning, and his enemies were older than he, and, though very strong, were heavy with full feeding, and slow to move. Now it is speed that wins in a fight, whether between armies or single men, if strength and courage go with it.

At last the road led Theseus down from the heights to a great fertile plain, called the Thriasian plain, not far from Athens. There, near the sea, stands the famous old city of Eleusis. When Hades, the God of the Dead, carried away beautiful Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, the Goddess of corn and all manner of grain, to his dark palace beside the stream of Ocean, it was to Eleusis that Demeter wandered. She was clad in mourning robes, and she sat down on a stone by the way, like a weary old woman. Now the three daughters of the king who then reigned in Eleusis came by, on the way to the well, to fetch water, and when they saw the old woman they set down their vessels and came round her, asking what they could do for her, who was so tired and poor. They said that they had a baby brother at home, who was the favourite of them all, and that he needed a nurse. Demeter was pleased with their kindness, and they left their vessels for water beside her, and ran home to their mother. Their long golden hair danced on their shoulders as they ran, and they came, out of breath, to their mother the Queen, and asked her to take the old woman to be their brother's nurse. The Queen was kind, too, and the old woman lived in their house, till Zeus, the chief God, made the God of the Dead send back Persephone, to be with her mother through spring, and summer, and early autumn, but in winter she must live with her husband in the dark palace beside the river of Ocean.

Then Demeter was glad, and she caused the grain to grow abundantly for the people of Eleusis, and taught them ceremonies, and a kind of play in which all the story of her sorrows and joy was acted. It was also taught that the souls of men do not die with the death of their bodies, any more than the seed of corn dies when it is buried in the dark earth, but that they live again in a world more happy and beautiful than ours. These ceremonies were called the Mysteries of

Eleusis, and were famous in all the world.

Theseus might have expected to find Eleusis a holy city, peaceful and quiet. But he had heard, as he travelled, that in Eleusis was a strong bully, named Cercyon; he was one of the rough Highlanders of Arcadia, who lived in the hills of the centre of Southern Greece, which is called Peloponnesus. He is said to have taken the kingship, and driven out the descendants of the king whose daughters were kind to Demeter. The strong man used to force all strangers to wrestle with him, and, when he threw them, for he had never been thrown, he broke their backs.

Knowing this, and being himself fond of wrestling, Theseus walked straight to the door of the king’s house, though the men in the town warned him, and the women looked at him with sad eyes. He found the gate of the courtyard open, with the altar of Zeus the high God smoking in the middle of it, and at the threshold two servants welcomed him, and took him to the polished bath, and women washed him, and anointed him with oil, and clothed him in fresh raiment, as was the manner in kings’ houses. Then they led him into the hall, and he walked straight up to the high seats between the four pillars beside the hearth, in the middle of the hall.

There Cercyon sat, eating and drinking, surrounded by a score of his clan, great, broad, red-haired men, but he himself was the broadest and the most brawny. He welcomed Theseus, and caused a table to be brought, with meat, and bread, and wine, and when Theseus had put away his hunger, began to ask him who he was and whence he came. Theseus told him that he had walked from Troezene, and was on his way to the court of King Peleus (the father of Achilles), in the north, for he did not want the news of his coming to go before him to Athens.

‘You walked from Troezene?’ said Cercyon. ‘Did you meet or hear of the man who killed the Maceman and slew the Pine-Bender, and kicked Sciron into the sea?’

‘I walk fast, but news flies faster,’ said Theseus.

‘The news came through my second-sighted man,’ said Cercyon, ‘there he is, in the corner,’ and Cercyon threw the leg bone of an ox at his prophet, who just managed to leap out of the way. ‘He seems to have foreseen that the bone was coming at him,’ said Cercyon, and all his friends laughed loud. ‘He told us this morning that a stranger was coming, he who had killed the three watchers of the way. From your legs and shoulders, and the iron club that you carry, methinks you are that stranger?’

Theseus smiled, and nodded upwards, which the Greeks did when they meant ‘Yes!’

‘Praise be to all the gods!’ said Cercyon. ‘It is long since a good man came my way. Do they practise wrestling at Troezene?’

‘Now and then,’ said Theseus.

‘Then you will try a fall with me? There is a smooth space strewn with sand in the courtyard.’

Theseus answered that he had come hoping that the king would graciously honour him by trying a fall. Then all the wild guests shouted, and out they all went and made a circle round the wrestling-place, while Theseus and Cercyon threw down their clothes and were anointed with oil over their bodies. To it they went, each straining forward and feeling for a grip, till they were locked, and then they swayed this way and that, their feet stamping the ground; and now one would yield a little, now the other, while the rough guests shouted, encouraging each of them. At last they rested and breathed, and now the men began to bet; seven oxen to three was laid on Cercyon, and taken in several places. Back to the wrestle they went, and Theseus found this by far the hardest of his adventures, for Cercyon was heavier than he, and as strong, but not so active. So Theseus for long did little but resist the awful strain of the arms of Cercyon, till, at last, for a moment Cercyon weakened. Then Theseus slipped his hip under the hip of Cercyon, and heaved him across and up, and threw him on the ground. He lighted in such a way that his neck broke, and there he lay dead.

‘Was it fairly done?’ said Theseus.

‘It was fairly done!’ cried the Highlanders of Arcadia; and then they raised such a wail for the dead that Theseus deemed it wise to put on his clothes and walk out of the court; and, leaping into a chariot that stood empty by the gate, for the servant in the chariot feared the club of iron, he drove away at full speed.

Though Cercyon was a cruel man and a wild, Theseus was sorry for him in his heart.

The groom in the chariot tried to leap out, but Theseus gripped him tight. ‘Do not hurry, my friend,’ said Theseus, ‘for I have need of you. I am not stealing the chariot and horses, and you shall drive them back after we reach Athens.’

‘But, my lord,’ said the groom, ‘you will never reach Athens.’

‘Why not?’ asked Theseus.

‘Because of the man Procrustes, who dwells in a strong castle among the hills on the way. He is the maimer of all mortals, and has at his command a company of archers and spearmen, pirates from the islands. He meets every traveller, and speaks to him courteously, praying him to be his guest, and if any refuses the archers leap out of ambush and seize and bind him. With them no one man can contend. He has a bed which he says is a thing magical, for it is of the same length as the tallest or the shortest man who sleeps in it, so that all are fitted.

Now the manner of it is this — there is an engine with ropes at the head of the bed, and a saw is fitted at the bed foot. If a man is too short, the ropes are fastened to his hands, and are strained till he is drawn to the full length of the bed. If he is too long the saw shortens him. Such a monster is Procrustes.

‘Verily, my lord, King Cercyon was to-morrow to lead an army against him, and the King had a new device, as you may see, by which two great shields are slung along the side of this chariot, to ward off the arrows of the men of Procrustes.’

‘Then you and I will wear the shields when we come near the place where Procrustes meets travellers by the way, and I think that to-night his own bed will be too long for him,’ said Theseus.

To this the groom made no answer, but his body trembled.

Theseus drove swiftly on till the road began to climb the lowest spur of Mount Parnes, and then he drew rein, and put on one of the great shields that covered all his body and legs, and he bade the groom do the like. Then he drove slowly, watching the bushes and underwood beside the way. Soon he saw the smoke going up from the roof of a great castle high in the woods beside the road; and on the road there was a man waiting. Theseus, as he drove towards him, saw the glitter of armour in the underwood, and the setting sun shone red on a spear-point above the leaves. ‘Here is our man,’ he said to the groom, and pulled up his horses beside the stranger. He loosened his sword in the sheath, and leaped out of the chariot, holding the reins in his left hand, and bowed courteously to the man, who was tall, weak-looking, and old, with grey hair and a clean-shaven face, the colour of ivory. He was clad like a king, in garments of dark silk, with gold bracelets, and gold rings that clasped the leather gaiters on his legs, and he smiled and smiled, and rubbed his hands, while he looked to right and left, and not at Theseus.

‘I am fortunate, fair sir,’ said he to Theseus, ‘for I love to entertain strangers, with whom goes the favour and protection of Zeus. Surely strangers are dear to all men, and holy! You, too, are not unlucky, for the night is falling, and the ways will be dark and dangerous. You will sup and sleep with me, and to-night I can give you a bed that is well spoken of, for its nature is such that it fits all men, the short and the tall, and you are of the tallest.’

‘To-night, fair sir,’ quoth Theseus, ‘your own bed will be full long for you.’ And, drawing the sword of Ægeus, he cut sheer through the neck of Procrustes at one blow, and the head of the man flew one way, and his body fell another way.

Then with a swing of his hand Theseus turned his shield from his front to his back, and leaped into the chariot. He lashed the horses forward with a cry, while the groom also turned his own shield from front to back; and the arrows of the bowmen of Procrustes rattled on the bronze shields as the chariot flew along, or struck the sides and the seat of it. One arrow grazed the flank of a horse, and the pair broke into a wild gallop, while the yells of the bowmen grew faint in the distance. At last the horses slackened in their pace as they climbed a hill, and from the crest of it Theseus saw the lights in the city of Aphidnæ.

‘Now, my friend,’ he said to the groom, ‘the way is clear to Athens, and on your homeward road with the horses and the chariot you shall travel well guarded. By the splendour of Lady Athênê’s brow, I will burn that raven’s nest of Procrustes!’

So they slept that night on safe beds at the house of the sons of Phytalus, who bore rule in Aphidnæ. Here they were kindly welcomed, and the sons of Phytalus rejoiced when they heard how Theseus had made safe the ways, and slain the beasts that guarded them. ‘We are your men,’ they said, ‘we and all our people, and our spears will encircle you when you make yourself King of Athens, and of all the cities in the Attic land.’

IV

THESEUS FINDS HIS FATHER

Next day Theseus said farewell to the sons of Phytalus, and drove slowly through the pleasant green woods that overhung the clear river Cephisus. He halted to rest his horses in a glen, and saw a very beautiful young man walking in a meadow on the other side of the river. In his hand he bore a white flower, and the root of it was black; in the other hand he carried a golden wand, and his upper lip was just beginning to darken, he was of the age when youth is most gracious. He came towards Theseus, and crossed the stream where it broke deep, and swift, and white, above a long pool, and it seemed to Theseus that his golden shoon did not touch the water.

‘Come, speak with me apart,’ the young man said; and Theseus threw the reins to the groom, and went aside with the youth, watching him narrowly, for he knew not what strange dangers might beset him on the way.

‘Whither art thou going, unhappy one,’ said the youth, ‘thou that knowest not the land? Behold, the sons of Pallas rule in Athens, fiercely and disorderly. Thy father is of no force, and in the house with him is a fair witch woman from a far country. Her name is Medea, the daughter of Æêtes, the brother of Circe the Sorceress. She wedded the famous Jason, and won for him the Fleece of Gold, and slew her own brother Absyrtus. Other evils she wrought, and now she dwells with Ægeus, who fears and loves her greatly. Take thou this herb of grace, and if Medea offers you a cup of wine, drop this herb in the cup, and so you shall escape death. Behold, I am Hermes of the golden wand.’

Then he gave to Theseus the flower, and passed into the wood, and Theseus saw him no more; so then Theseus knelt down, and prayed, and thanked the gods. The flower he placed in the breast of his garment, and, returning to his chariot, he took the reins, and drove to Athens, and up the steep narrow way to the crest of the rock where the temple of Athênê stood and the palace of King Ægeus.

Theseus drove through to the courtyard, and left his chariot at the gate. In the court young men were throwing spears at a mark, while others sat at the house door, playing draughts, and shouting and betting. They were heavy, lumpish, red-faced young men, all rather like each other. They looked up and stared, but said nothing. Theseus knew that they were his cousins, the sons of Pallas, but as they said nothing to him he walked through them, iron club on shoulder, as if he did not see them, and as one tall fellow stood in his way, the tall fellow spun round from a thrust of his shoulder. At the hall door Theseus stopped and shouted, and at his cry two or three servants came to him.

‘Look to my horses and man,’ said Theseus; ‘I come to see your master.’ And in he went, straight up to the high chairs beside the fire in the centre. The room was empty, but in a high seat sat, fallen forward and half-asleep, a man in whose grey hair was a circlet of gold and a golden grasshopper. Theseus knew that it was his father, grey and still, like the fallen fire on the hearth. As the king did not look up, Theseus touched his shoulder, and then knelt down, and put his arms round the knees of the king. The king aroused himself with a start. ‘Who? What want you?’ he said, and rubbed his red, bloodshot eyes.

‘A suppliant from Troezene am I, who come to your knees, oh, king, and bring you gifts.’

‘From Troezene!’ said the king sleepily, as if he were trying to remember something.

‘From Æthra, your wife, your son brings your sword and your shoon,’ said Theseus; and he laid the sword and the shoon at his father’s feet.

The king rose to his feet with a great cry. ‘You have come at last,’ he cried, ‘and the gods have forgiven me and heard my prayers. But gird on the sword, and hide the shoon, and speak not the name of “wife,” for there is one that hears.’

‘One that has heard,’ said a sweet silvery voice; and from behind a pillar came a woman, dark and pale, but very beautiful, clothed in a rich Eastern robe that shone and shifted from colour to colour. Lightly she threw her white arms round the neck of Theseus, lightly she kissed his cheeks, and a strange sweet fragrance hung about her. Then, holding him apart, with her hands on his shoulders, she laughed, and half-turning to Ægeus, who had fallen back into his chair, she said: ‘My lord, did you think that you could hide anything from me?’ Then she fixed her great eyes on the eyes of Theseus. ‘We are friends?’ she said, in her silvery voice.

‘Lady, I love you even as you love my father, King Ægeus,’ said Theseus.

‘Even so much?’ said the lady Medea. ‘Then we must both drink to him in wine.’ She glided to the great golden mixing-cup of wine that stood on a table behind Ægeus, and with her back to Theseus she ladled wine into a cup of strange coloured glass. ‘Pledge me and the king,’ she said, bringing the cup to Theseus. He took it, and from his breast he drew the flower of black root and white blossom that Hermes had given him, and laid it in the wine. Then the wine bubbled and hissed, and the cup burst and broke, and the wine fell on the floor, staining it as with blood.

Medea laughed lightly. ‘Now we are friends indeed, for the gods befriend you,’ she said, ‘and I swear by the Water of Styx that your friends are my friends, and your foes are my foes, always, to the end. The gods are with you; and by the great oath of the gods I swear, which cannot be broken; for I come of the kin of the gods who live for ever.’

Now the father of the father of Medea was the Sun God.

Theseus took both her hands. ‘I also swear,’ he said, ‘by the splendour of Zeus, that your friends shall be my friends, and that your foes shall be my foes, always, to the end.’

Then Medea sat by the feet of Ægeus, and drew down his head to her shoulder, while Theseus took hold of his hand, and the king wept for joy. For the son he loved, and the woman whom he loved and feared, were friends, and they two were stronger than the sons of Pallas.

While they sat thus, one of the sons of Pallas — the Pallantidæ they were called — slouched into the hall to see if dinner was ready. He stared, and slouched out again, and said to his brothers: ‘The old man is sitting in the embraces of the foreign woman, and of the big stranger with the iron club!’ Then they all came together, and growled out their threats and fears, kicking at the stones in the courtyard, and quarrelling as to what it was best for them to do.

Meanwhile, in the hall, the servants began to spread the tables with meat and drink, and Theseus was taken to the bath, and clothed in new raiment.

While Theseus was at the bath Medea told Ægeus what he ought to do. So when Theseus came back into the hall, where the sons of Pallas were eating and drinking noisily, Ægeus stood up, and called to Theseus to sit down at his right hand. He added, in a loud voice, looking all round the hall: ‘This is my son, Theseus, the slayer of monsters, and his is the power in the house!’

The sons of Pallas grew pale with fear and anger, but not one dared to make an insolent answer. They knew that they were hated by the people of Athens, except some young men of their own sort, and they did not dare to do anything against the man who had slain Periphetes and Sinis, and Cercyon, and Sciron, and, in the midst of his paid soldiers, had struck off the head of Procrustes. Silent all through dinner sat the sons of Pallas, and, when they had eaten, they walked out silently, and went to a lonely place, where they could make their plans without being overheard.

Theseus went with Medea into her fragrant chamber, and they spake a few words together. Then Medea took a silver bowl, filled it with water, and, drawing her dark silken mantle over her head, she sat gazing into the bowl. When she had gazed silently for a long time she said: ‘Some of them are going towards Sphettus, where their father dwells, to summon his men in arms, and some are going to Gargettus on the other side of the city, to lie in ambush, and cut us off when they of Sphettus assail us. They will attack the palace just before the dawn. Now I will go through the town, and secretly call the trusty men to arm and come to defend the palace, telling them that the son of Ægeus, the man who cleared the ways, is with us. And do you take your chariot, and drive speedily to the sons of Phytalus, and bring all their spears, chariot men and foot men, and place them in ambush around the village of Gargettus, where one band of the Pallantidæ will lie to-night till dawn. The rest you know.'

Theseus nodded and smiled. He drove at full speed to Aphidnæ, where the sons of Phytalus armed their men, and by midnight they lay hidden in the woods round the village of Gargettus. When the stars had gone onward, and the second of the three watches of the night was nearly past, they set bands of men to guard every way from the little town, and Theseus with another band rushed in, and slew the men of the sons of Pallas around their fires, some of them awake, but most of them asleep. Those who escaped were taken by the bands who watched the ways, and when the sky was now clear at the earliest dawn, Theseus led his companions to the palace of Ægeus, where they fell furiously upon the rear of the men from Sphettus, who were besieging the palace of Ægeus.

The Sphettus company had broken in the gate of the court, and were trying to burn the house, while arrows flew thick from the bows of the trusty men of Athens on the palace roof. The Pallantids had set no sentinels, for they thought to take Theseus in the palace, and there to burn him, and win the kingdom for themselves. Then silently and suddenly the friends of Theseus stole into the courtyard, and, leaving some to guard the gate, they drew up in line, and charged the confused crowd of the Pallantids. Their spears flew thick among the enemy, and then they charged with the sword, while the crowd, in terror, ran this way and that way, being cut down at the gate, and dragged from the walls, when they tried to climb them. The daylight found the Pallantidæ and their men lying dead in the courtyard, all the sort of them.

Then Theseus with the sons of Phytalus and their company marched through the town, proclaiming that the rightful prince was come, and that the robbers and oppressors were fallen, and all honest men rejoiced. They burned the dead, and buried their ashes and bones, and for the rest of that day they feasted in the hall of Ægeus. Next day Theseus led his friends back to Aphidnæ, and on the next day they attacked and stormed the castle of Procrustes, and slew the pirates, and Theseus divided all the rich plunder among the sons of Phytalus and their company, but the evil bed they burned to ashes.

V

HERALDS COME FOR TRIBUTE

The days and weeks went by, and Theseus reigned with his father in peace. The chief men came to Athens from the little towns in the country, and begged Theseus to be their lord, and they would be his men, and he would lead their people if any enemy came up against them. They would even pay tribute to be used for buying better arms, and making strong walls, and providing ships, for then the people of Athens had no navy. Theseus received them courteously, and promised all that they asked, for he did not know that soon he himself would be sent away as part of the tribute which the Athenians paid every nine years to King Minos of Crete.

Though everything seemed to be peaceful and happy through the winter, yet Theseus felt that all was not well. When he went into the houses of the town's people, where all had been merry and proud of his visits, he saw melancholy, silent mothers, and he missed the young people, lads and maidens. Many of them were said to have gone to visit friends in far-away parts of Greece. The elder folk, and the young people who were left, used to stand watching the sea all day, as if they expected something strange to come upon them from the sea, and Ægeus sat sorrowful over the fire, speaking little, and he seemed to be in fear.

Theseus was disturbed in his mind, and he did not choose to put questions to Ægeus or to the townsfolk. He and Medea were great friends, and one day when they were alone in her chamber, where a fragrant fire of cedar wood burned, he told her what he had noticed. Medea sighed, and said: 'The curse of the sons of Pallas is coming upon the people of Athens — such a curse and so terrible that not even you, Prince Theseus, can deal with it. The enemy is not one man or one monster only, but the greatest and most powerful king in the world.'

'Tell me all,' said Theseus, 'for though I am but one man, yet the ever-living gods protect and help me.'

'The story of the curse is long,' said Medea. 'When your father Ægeus was young, after he returned to Athens from Troezene, he decreed that games should be held every five years, contests in running, boxing, wrestling, foot races, and chariot races. Not only the people of Athens, but strangers were allowed to take part in the games, and among the strangers came Androgeos, the eldest son of great Minos, King of Cnossos, in the isle of Crete of the Hundred Cities, far away in the southern sea. Minos is the wisest of men, and the most high god, even Zeus, is his counsellor, and speaks to him face to face. He is the richest of men, and his ships are without number, so that he rules all the islands, and makes war, when he will, even against the King of Egypt. The son of Minos it was who came to the sports with three fair ships, and he was the strongest and swiftest of men. He won the foot race, and the prizes for boxing and wrestling, and for shooting with the bow, and throwing the spear, and hurling the heavy weight, and he easily overcame the strongest of the sons of Pallas.

‘Then, being unjust men and dishonourable, they slew him at a feast in the hall of Ægeus, their own guest in the king’s house they slew, a thing hateful to the gods above all other evil deeds. His ships fled in the night, bearing the news to King Minos, and, a year after that day, the sea was black with his countless ships. His men landed, and they were so many, all glittering in armour of bronze, that none dared to meet them in battle. King Ægeus and all the elder men of the city went humbly to meet Minos, clad in mourning, and bearing in their hands boughs of trees, wreathed with wool, to show that they came praying for mercy. “Mercy ye shall have when ye have given up to me the men who slew my son,” said Minos. But Ægeus could not give up the sons of Pallas, for long ago they had fled in disguise, and were lurking here and there, in all the uttermost parts of Greece, in the huts of peasants. Such mercy, then, the Athenians got as Minos was pleased to give. He did not burn the city, and slay the men, and carry the women captives. But he made Ægeus and the chief men swear that every nine years they would choose by lot seven of the strongest youths, and seven of the fairest maidens, and give them to his men, to carry away to Crete. Every nine years he sends a ship with dark sails, to bear away the captives, and this is the ninth year, and the day of the coming of the ship is at hand. Can you resist King Minos?’

‘His ship we could burn, and his men we could slay,’ said Theseus; and his hand closed on the hilt of his sword.

‘That may well be,’ said Medea, ‘but in a year Minos would come with his fleet and his army, and burn the city; and the other cities of Greece, fearing him and not loving us, would give us no aid.’

‘Then,’ said Theseus, ‘we must even pay the tribute for this last time; but in nine years, if I live, and the gods help me, I shall have a fleet, and Minos must fight for his tribute. For in nine years Athens will be queen of all the cities round about, and strong in men and ships. Yet, tell me, how does Minos treat the captives from Athens, kindly or unkindly?’

‘None has ever come back to tell the tale,’ said Medea, ‘but the sailors of Minos say that he places the captives in a strange prison called the Labyrinth. It is full of dark winding ways, cut in the solid rock, and therein the captives are lost and perish of hunger, or live till they meet a Thing called the Minotaur. This monster has the body of a strong man, and a man's legs and arms, but his head is the head of a bull, and his teeth are the teeth of a lion, and no man may deal with him. Those whom he meets he tosses, and gores, and devours. Whence this evil beast came I know, but the truth of it may not be spoken. It is not lawful for King Minos to slay the Horror, which to him is great shame and grief; neither may he help any man to slay it. Therefore, in his anger against the Athenians he swore that, once in every nine years, he would give fourteen of the Athenian men and maidens to the Thing, and that none of them should bear sword or spear, dagger or axe, or any other weapon. Yet, if one of the men, or all of them together, could slay the monster, Minos made oath that Athens should be free of him and his tribute.'

Theseus laughed and stood up. 'Soon,' he said, 'shall King Minos be free from the Horror, and Athens shall be free from the tribute, if, indeed, the gods be with me. For me need no lot be cast; gladly I will go to Crete of my free will.'

'I needed not to be a prophetess to know that you would speak thus,' said Medea. 'But one thing even I can do. Take this phial, and bear it in your breast, and, when you face the Minotaur, do as I shall tell you.' Then she whispered some words to Theseus, and he marked them carefully.

He went forth from Medea's bower; he walked to the crest of the hill upon which Athens is built, and there he saw all the people gathered, weeping, and looking towards the sea. Swiftly a ship with black sails was being rowed towards the shore, and her sides shone with the bronze shields of her crew, that were hung on the bulwarks.

'My friends,' cried Theseus, 'I know that ship, and wherefore she comes, and with her I shall sail to Crete and slay the Minotaur. Did I not slay Sinis and Sciron, Cercyon and Procrustes, and Periphetes? Let there be no drawing of lots. Where are seven men and seven maidens who will come with me, and meet these Cretans when they land, and sail back with them, and see this famous Crete, for the love of Theseus?'

Then there stepped forth seven young men of the best of Athens, tall, and strong, and fair, the ancestors of them who smote, a thousand years afterwards, the Persians at Marathon and in the strait of Salamis. 'We will live or die with you, Prince Theseus,' they said.

Next, one by one, came out of the throng, blushing, but with heads erect and firm steps, the seven maidens whom the seven young men loved. They, too, were tall, and beautiful, and stately, like the stone maidens called Caryatides who bear up the roofs of temples.

‘We will live and die with you, Prince Theseus, and with our lovers,’ they cried; and all the people gave such a cheer that King Ægeus heard it, and came from his palace, leaning on his staff, and Medea walked beside him.

‘Why do you raise a glad cry, my children?’ said Ægeus. ‘Is not that the Ship of Death, and must we not cast lots for the tribute to King Minos?’

‘Sir,’ said Theseus, ‘we rejoice because we go as free folk, of our own will, these men and maidens and I, to take such fortune as the gods may give us, and to do as well as we may. Nay, delay us not, for from this hour shall Athens be free, without master or lord among Cretan men.’

‘But, my son, who shall defend me, who shall guide me, when I have lost thee, the light of mine eyes, and the strength of my arm?’ whimpered Ægeus.

‘Is the king weeping alone, while the fathers and mothers of my companions have dry eyes?’ said Theseus. ‘The gods will be your helpers, and the lady who is my friend, and who devised the slaying of the sons of Pallas. Hers was the mind, if the hand was my own, that wrought their ruin. Let her be your counsellor, for no other is so wise. But that ship is near the shore, and we must go.’

Then Theseus embraced Ægeus, and Medea kissed him, and the young men and maidens kissed their fathers and mothers, and said farewell. With Theseus at their head they marched down the hill, two by two; but Medea sent after them chariots laden with changes of raiment, and food, and skins of wine, and all things of which they had need. They were to sail in their own hired ship, for such was the custom, and the ship was ready with her oarsmen. But Theseus and the Seven, by the law of Minos, might carry no swords or other weapons of war. The ship had a black sail, but Ægeus gave to the captain a sail dyed scarlet with the juice of the scarlet oak, and bade him hoist it if he was bringing back Theseus safe, but, if not, to return under the black sail.

The captain, and the outlook man, and the crew, and the ship came all from the isle of Salamis, for as yet the Athenians had no vessels fit for long voyages — only fishing-boats. As Theseus and his company marched along they met the herald of King Minos, bearing a sacred staff, for heralds were holy, and to slay a herald was a deadly sin. He stopped when he met Theseus, and wondered at his beauty and strength. ‘My lord,’ said he, ‘wherefore come you with the Fourteen? Know you to what end they are sailing?’

‘That I know not, nor you, nor any man, but they and I are going to one end, such as the gods may give us,’ answered Theseus. ‘Speak with me no more, I pray you, and go no nearer Athens, for there men’s hearts are high to-day, and they carry swords.’

The voice and the eyes of Theseus daunted the herald, and he with his men turned and followed behind, humbly, as if they were captives and Theseus were conqueror.

VI

THESEUS IN CRETE

After many days' sailing, now through the straits under the beautiful peaks of the mountains that crowned the islands, and now across the wide sea far from sight of land, they beheld the crest of Mount Ida of Crete, and ran into the harbour, where a hundred ships lay at anchor, and a great crowd was gathered. Theseus marvelled at the ships, so many and so strong, and at the harbour with its huge walls, while he and his company landed. A hundred of the guardsmen of Minos, with large shields, and breastplates made of ribs of bronze, and helmets of bronze with horns on them, were drawn up on the pier. They surrounded the little company of Athenians, and they all marched to the town of Cnossos, and the palace of the king.

If Theseus marvelled at the harbour he wondered yet more at the town. It was so great that it seemed endless, and round it went a high wall, and at every forty yards was a square tower with small square windows high up. These towers were exactly like those which you may see among the hills and beside the burns in the Border country, the south of Scotland and the north of England; towers built when England and Scotland were at war. But when they had passed through the gateway in the chief tower, the town seemed more wonderful than the walls, for in all things it was quite unlike the cities of Greece. The street, paved with flat paving stones, wound between houses like our own, with a ground floor (in this there were no windows) and with two or three stories above, in which there were windows, with sashes, and with so many panes to each window, the panes were coloured red. Each window opened on a balcony, and the balconies were crowded with ladies in gay dresses like those which are now worn. Under their hats their hair fell in long plaits over their shoulders: they had very fine white blouses, short jackets, embroidered in bright coloured silk, and skirts with flounces. Laughing merrily they looked down at the little troop of prisoners, chatting, and some saying they were sorry for the Athenian girls. Others, seeing Theseus marching first, a head taller than the tallest guardsman, threw flowers that fell at his feet, and cried, 'Go on, brave Prince!' for they could not believe that he was one of the prisoners.

The crowd in the street being great, the march was stopped under a house taller than the rest; in the balcony one lady alone was seated, the others stood round her as if they were her handmaidens. This lady was most richly dressed, young, and very beautiful and stately, and was, indeed, the king’s daughter, Ariadne. She looked grave and full of pity, and, as Theseus happened to glance upwards, their eyes met, and remained fixed on each other. Theseus, who had never thought much about girls before, grew pale, for he had never seen so beautiful a maiden: Ariadne also turned pale, and then blushed and looked away, but her eyes glanced down again at Theseus, and he saw it, and a strange feeling came into his heart.

The guards cleared the crowd, and they all marched on till they came to the palace walls and gate, which were more beautiful even than the walls of the town. But the greatest wonder of all was the palace, standing in a wide park, and itself far greater than such towns as Theseus had seen, Troezene, or Aphidnae, or Athens. There was a multitude of roofs of various heights, endless roofs, endless windows, terraces, and gardens: no king’s palace of our times is nearly so great and strong. There were fountains and flowers and sweet-smelling trees in blossom, and, when the Athenians were led within the palace, they felt lost among the winding passages and halls.

The walls of them were painted with pictures of flying fishes, above a clear white sea, in which fish of many kinds were swimming, with the spray and bubbles flying from their tails, as the sea flows apart from the rudder of a ship. There were pictures of bull fights, men and girls teasing the bull, and throwing somersaults over him, and one bull had just tossed a girl high in the air. Ladies were painted in balconies, looking on, just such ladies as had watched Theseus and his company; and young men bearing tall cool vases full of wine were painted on other walls; and others were decorated with figures of bulls and stags, in hard plaster, fashioned marvellously, and standing out from the walls ‘in relief,’ as it is called. Other walls, again, were painted with patterns of leaves and flowers.

The rooms were full of the richest furniture, chairs inlaid with ivory, gold, and silver, chests inlaid with painted porcelain in little squares, each square containing a separate bright coloured picture. There were glorious carpets, and in some passages stood rows of vases, each of them large enough to hold a man, like the pots in the story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves in the Arabian Nights. There were tablets of stone brought from Egypt, with images carved of gods and kings, and strange Egyptian writing, and there were cups of gold and silver — indeed, I could not tell you half the beautiful and wonderful things in the palace of Minos. We know that this is true, for the things themselves, all of them, or pictures of them, have been brought to light, dug out from under ground; and, after years of digging, there is still plenty of this wonderful palace to be explored.

The Athenians were dazzled, and felt lost and giddy with passing through so many rooms and passages, before they were led into the great hall named the Throne Room, where Minos was sitting in his gilded throne that is still standing. Around him stood his chiefs and princes, gloriously clothed in silken robes with jewels of gold; they left a lane between their ranks, and down this lane was led Theseus at the head of his little company. Minos, a dark-faced man, with touches of white in his hair and long beard, sat with his elbow on his knee, and his chin in his hand, and he fixed his eyes on the eyes of Theseus. Theseus bowed and then stood erect, with his eyes on the eyes of Minos.

‘You are fifteen in number,’ said Minos at last, ‘my law claims fourteen.’

‘I came of my own will,’ answered Theseus, ‘and of their own will came my company. No lots were cast.’

‘Wherefore?’ asked Minos.

‘The people of Athens have a mind to be free, O king.’

‘There is a way,’ said Minos. ‘Slay the Minotaur and you are free from my tribute.’

‘I am minded to slay him,’ said Theseus, and, as he spoke, there was a stir in the throng of chiefs, and priests, and princes, and Ariadne glided through them, and stood a little behind her father’s throne, at one side. Theseus bowed low, and again stood erect, with his eyes on the face of Ariadne.

‘You speak like a king’s son that has not known misfortune,’ said Minos.

‘I have known misfortune, and my name is Theseus, Ægeus’ son,’ said Theseus.

‘This is a new thing. When I saw King Ægeus he had no son, but he had many nephews.’

‘No son that he wotted of,’ said Theseus, ‘but now he has no nephews, and one son.’

‘Is it so?’ asked Minos, ‘then you have avenged me on the slayers of my own son, fair sir, for it was your sword, was it not, that delivered Ægeus from the sons of Pallas?’

‘My sword and the swords of my friends, of whom seven stand before you.’

‘I will learn if this be true,’ said Minos.

‘True!’ cried Theseus, and his hand flew to the place where his sword-hilt should have been, but he had no sword.

King Minos smiled. ‘You are young,’ he said, ‘I will learn more of these matters. Lead these men and maidens to their own chambers in the palace,’ he cried to his guard. ‘Let each have a separate chamber, and all things that are fitting for princes. To-morrow I will take counsel.’

Theseus was gazing at Ariadne. She stood behind her father, and she put up her right hand as if to straighten her veil, but, as she raised her hand, she swiftly made the motion of lifting a cup to the lips; and then she laid on her lips the fingers of her left hand, closing them fast. Theseus saw the token, and he bowed, as did all his company, to Minos and to the princess, and they were led upstairs and along galleries, each to a chamber more rich and beautiful than they had seen before in their dreams. Then each was taken to a bath, they were washed and clothed in new garments, and brought back to their chambers, where meat was put before them, and wine in cups of gold. At the door of each chamber were stationed two guards, but four guards were set at the door of Theseus. At nightfall more food was brought, and, for Theseus, much red wine, in a great vessel adorned with ropes and knobs of gold.

Theseus ate well, but he drank none, and, when he had finished, he opened the door of his chamber, and carried out all the wine and the cup. ‘I am one,’ he said, ‘who drinks water, and loves not the smell of wine in his chamber.’

The guards thanked him, and soon he heard them very merry over the king’s best wine, next he did not hear them at all, next — he heard them snoring!

Theseus opened the door gently and silently: the guards lay asleep across and beside the threshold. Something bright caught his eye, he looked up, a lamp was moving along the dark corridor, a lamp in the hand of a woman clad in a black robe; the light fell on her white silent feet, and on the feet of another woman who followed her.

Theseus softly slipped back into his chamber. The light, though shaded by the girl’s hand, showed in the crevice between the door and the door-post. Softly entered Ariadne, followed by an old woman that had been her nurse. ‘You guessed the token?’ she whispered. ‘In the wine was a sleepy drug.’

Theseus, who was kneeling to her, nodded.

‘I can show you the way to flee, and I bring you a sword.’

‘I thank you, lady, for the sword, and I pray you to show me the way — to the Minotaur.’

Ariadne grew pale, and her hand flew to her heart.

‘I pray you make haste. Flee I will not, nor, if the king have mercy on us, will I leave Crete till I have met the Minotaur: for he has shed the blood of my people.’

Ariadne loved Theseus, and knew well in her heart that he loved her. But she was brave, and she made no more ado; she beckoned to him, and stepped across the sleeping guardsmen that lay beside the threshold. Theseus held up his hand, and she stopped, while he took two swords from the men of the guard. One was long, with a strong straight narrow blade tapering to a very sharp point; the other sword was short and straight, with keen cutting double edges. Theseus slung them round his neck by their belts, and Ariadne walked down the corridor, Theseus following her, and the old nurse following him. He had taken the swords from the sleeping men lest, if Ariadne gave him one, it might be found out that she had helped him, and she knew this in her heart, for neither of them spoke a word.

Swiftly and silently they went, through galleries and corridors that turned and wound about, till Ariadne came to the door of her own chamber. Here she held up her hand, and Theseus stopped, till she came forth again, thrusting something into the bosom of her gown. Again she led the way, down a broad staircase between great pillars, into a hall, whence she turned, and passed down a narrower stair, and then through many passages, till she came into the open air, and they crossed rough ground to a cave in a hill. In the back of the cave was a door plated with bronze which she opened with a key. Here she stopped and took out of the bosom of her gown a coil of fine strong thread.

‘Take this,’ she said, ‘and enter by that door, and first of all make fast the end of the coil to a stone, and so walk through the labyrinth, and, when you would come back, the coil shall be your guide. Take this key also, to open the door, and lock it from within. If you return place the key in a cleft in the wall within the outer door of the palace.’

She stopped and looked at Theseus with melancholy eyes, and he threw his arms about her, and they kissed and embraced as lovers do who are parting and know not if they may ever meet again.

At last she sighed and said, ‘The dawn is near — farewell; the gods be with you. I give you the watchword of the night, that you may pass the sentinels if you come forth alive,’ and she told him the word. Then she opened the door and gave him the key, and the old nurse gave him the lamp which she carried, and some food to take with him.

VII

THE SLAYING OF THE MINOTAUR

Theseus first fastened one end of his coil of string to a pointed rock, and then began to look about him. The labyrinth was dark, and he slowly walked, holding the string, down the broadest path, from which others turned off to right or left. He counted his steps, and he had taken near three thousand steps when he saw the pale sky showing in a small circle cut in the rocky roof, above his head, and he saw the fading stars. Sheer walls of rock went up on either hand of him, a roof of rock was above him, but in the roof was this one open place, across which were heavy bars. Soon the daylight would come.

Theseus set the lamp down on a rock behind a corner, and he waited, thinking, at a place where a narrow dark path turned at right angles to the left. Looking carefully round he saw a heap of bones, not human bones, but skulls of oxen and sheep, hoofs of oxen, and shank bones. ‘This,’ he thought, ‘must be the place where the food of the Minotaur is let down to him from above. They have not Athenian youths and maidens to give him every day! Beside his feeding place I will wait.’ Saying this to himself, he rose and went round the corner of the dark narrow path cut in the rock to the left. He made his own breakfast, from the food that Ariadne had given him, and it occurred to his mind that probably the Minotaur might also be thinking of breakfast time.

He sat still, and from afar away within he heard a faint sound, like the end of the echo of a roar, and he stood up, drew his long sword, and listened keenly. The sound came nearer and louder, a strange sound, not deep like the roar of a bull, but more shrill and thin. Theseus laughed silently. A monster with the head and tongue of a bull, but with the chest of a man, could roar no better than that! The sounds came nearer and louder, but still with the thin sharp tone in them. Theseus now took from his bosom the phial of gold that Medea had given him in Athens when she told him about the Minotaur. He removed the stopper, and held his thumb over the mouth of the phial, and grasped his long sword with his left hand, after fastening the clue of thread to his belt.

The roars of the hungry Minotaur came nearer and nearer; now his feet could be heard padding along the echoing floor of the labyrinth. Theseus moved to the shadowy corner of the narrow path, where it opened into the broad light passage, and he crouched there; his heart was beating quickly. On came the Minotaur, up leaped Theseus, and dashed the contents of the open phial in the eyes of the monster; a white dust flew out, and Theseus leaped back into his hiding place. The Minotaur uttered strange shrieks of pain; he rubbed his eyes with his monstrous hands; he raised his head up towards the sky, bellowing and confused; he stood tossing his head up and down; he turned round and round about, feeling with his hands for the wall. He was quite blind. Theseus drew his short sword, crept up, on naked feet, behind the monster, and cut through the back sinews of his legs at the knees. Down fell the Minotaur, with a crash and a roar, biting at the rocky floor with his lion's teeth, and waving his hands, and clutching at the empty air. Theseus waited for his chance, when the clutching hands rested, and then, thrice he drove the long sharp blade of bronze through the heart of the Minotaur. The body leaped, and lay still.

Theseus kneeled down, and thanked all the gods, and promised rich sacrifices, and a new temple to Pallas Athênê, the Guardian of Athens. When he had finished his prayer, he drew the short sword, and hacked off the head of the Minotaur. He sheathed both his swords, took the head in his hand, and followed the string back out of the daylit place, to the rock where he had left his lamp. With the lamp and the guidance of the string he easily found his way to the door, which he unlocked. He noticed that the thick bronze plates of the door were dinted and scarred by the points of the horns of the Minotaur, trying to force his way out.

He went out into the fresh early morning; all the birds were singing merrily, and merry was the heart of Theseus. He locked the door, and crossed to the palace, which he entered, putting the key in the place which Ariadne had shown him. She was there, with fear and joy in her eyes. 'Touch me not,' said Theseus, 'for I am foul with the blood of the Minotaur.' She brought him to the baths on the ground floor, and swiftly fled up a secret stair. In the bathroom Theseus made himself clean, and clad himself in fresh raiment which was lying ready for him. When he was clean and clad he tied a rope of byblus round the horns of the head of the Minotaur, and went round the back of the palace, trailing the head behind him, till he came to a sentinel. 'I would see King Minos,' he said, 'I have the password, *Androgeos*!'

The sentinel, pale and wondering, let him pass, and so he went through the guards, and reached the great door of the palace, and there the servants wrapped the bleeding head in cloth, that it might not stain the floors. Theseus bade them lead him to King Minos, who was seated on his throne, judging the four guardsmen, that had been found asleep.

When Theseus entered, followed by the serving men with their burden, the king never stirred on his throne, but turned his grey eyes on Theseus. 'My lord,' said Theseus, ‘that which was to be done is done.’ The servants laid their burden at the feet of King Minos, and removed the top fold of the covering.

The king turned to the captain of his guard. ‘A week in the cells for each of these four men,’ said he, and the four guards, who had expected to die by a cruel death, were led away. ‘Let that head and the body also be burned to ashes and thrown into the sea, far from the shore,’ said Minos, and his servants silently covered the head of the Minotaur, and bore it from the throne room.

Then, at last, Minos rose from his throne, and took the hand of Theseus, and said, ‘Sir, I thank you, and I give you back your company safe and free; and I am no more in hatred with your people. Let there be peace between me and them. But will you not abide with us awhile, and be our guests?’

Theseus was glad enough, and he and his company tarried in the palace, and were kindly treated. Minos showed Theseus all the splendour and greatness of his kingdom and his ships, and great armouries, full of all manner of weapons: the names and numbers of them are yet known, for they are written on tablets of clay, that were found in the storehouse of the king. Later, in the twilight, Theseus and Ariadne would walk together in the fragrant gardens where the nightingales sang, and Minos knew it, and was glad. He thought that nowhere in the world could he find such a husband for his daughter, and he deemed it wise to have the alliance of so great a king as Theseus promised to be. But, loving his daughter, he kept Theseus with him long, till the prince was ashamed of his delay, knowing that his father, King Ægeus, and all the people of his country, were looking for him anxiously.

Therefore he told what was in his heart to Minos, who sighed, and said, ‘I knew what is in your heart, and I cannot say you nay. I give to you my daughter as gladly as a father may.’ Then they spoke of things of state, and made firm alliance between Cnossos and Athens while they both lived; and the wedding was done with great splendour, and, at last, Theseus and Ariadne and all their company went aboard, and sailed from Crete. One misfortune they had: the captain of their ship died of a sickness while they were in Crete, but Minos gave them the best of his captains. Yet by reason of storms and tempests they had a long and terrible voyage, driven out of their course into strange seas. When at length they found their bearings, a grievous sickness fell on beautiful Ariadne. Day by day she was weaker, till Theseus, with a breaking heart, stayed the ship at an isle but two days’ sail from Athens. There Ariadne was carried ashore, and laid in a bed in the house of the king of that island, and the physicians and the wise women did for her what they could. But she died with her hands in the hands of Theseus, and his lips on her lips. In that isle she was buried, and Theseus went on board his ship, and drew his cloak over his head, and so lay for two days, never moving nor speaking, and tasting neither meat nor drink. No man dared to speak to him, but when the vessel stopped in the harbour of Athens, he arose, and stared about him.

The shore was dark with people all dressed in mourning raiment, and the herald of the city came with the news that Ægeus the King was dead. For the Cretan captain did not know that he was to hoist the scarlet sail if Theseus came home in triumph, and Ægeus, as he watched the waters, had descried the dark sail from afar off, and, in his grief, had thrown himself down from the cliff, and was drowned. This was the end of the voyaging of Theseus.

Theseus wished to die, and be with Ariadne, in the land of Queen Persephone. But he was a strong man, and he lived to be the greatest of the Kings of Athens, for all the other towns came in, and were his subjects, and he ruled them well. His first care was to build a great fleet in secret harbours far from towns and the ways of men, for, though he and Minos were friends while they both lived, when Minos died the new Cretan king might oppress Athens.

Minos died, at last, and his son picked a quarrel with Theseus, who refused to give up a man that had fled to Athens because the new king desired to slay him, and news came to Theseus that a great navy was being made ready in Crete to attack him. Then he sent heralds to the king of a fierce people, called the Dorians, who were moving through the countries to the north-west of Greece, seizing lands, settling on them, and marching forward again in a few years. They were wild, strong, and brave, and they are said to have had swords of iron, which were better than the bronze weapons of the Greeks. The heralds of Theseus said to them, ‘Come to our king, and he will take you across the sea, and show you plunder enough. But you shall swear not to harm his kingdom.’

This pleased the Dorians well, and the ships of Theseus brought them round to Athens, where Theseus joined them with many of his own men, and they did the oath. They sailed swiftly to Crete, where, as they arrived in the dark, the Cretan captains thought that they were part of their own navy, coming in to join them in the attack on Athens; for that Theseus had a navy the Cretans knew not; he had built it so secretly. In the night he marched his men to Cnossos, and took the garrison by surprise, and burned the palace, and plundered it. Even now we can see that the palace has been partly burned, and hurriedly robbed by some sudden enemy.

The Dorians stayed in Crete, and were there in the time of Ulysses, holding part of the island, while the true Cretans held the greater part of it. But Theseus returned to Athens, and married Hippolyte, Queen of the Amazons. The story of their wedding festival is told in Shakespeare’s play, ‘A Midsummer Night’s

Dream.’ And Theseus had many new adventures, and many troubles, but he left Athens rich and strong, and in no more danger from the kings of Crete. Though the Dorians, after the time of Ulysses, swept all over the rest of Greece, and seized Mycenæ and Lacedæmon, the towns of Agamemnon and Menelaus, they were true to their oath to Theseus, and left Athens to the Athenians.

PERSEUS

I

THE PRISON OF DANAE

Many years before the Siege of Troy there lived in Greece two princes who were brothers and deadly enemies. Each of them wished to be king both of Argos (where Diomede ruled in the time of the Trojan war), and of Tiryns. After long wars one of the brothers, Proetus, took Tiryns, and built the great walls of huge stones, and the palace; while the other brother, Acrisius, took Argos, and he married Eurydice, a princess of the Royal House of Lacedæmon, where Menelaus and Helen were King and Queen in later times.

Acrisius had one daughter, Danae, who became the most beautiful woman in Greece, but he had no son. This made him very unhappy, for he thought that, when he grew old, the sons of his brother Proetus would attack him, and take his lands and city, if he had no son to lead his army. His best plan would have been to find some brave young prince, like Theseus, and give Danae to him for his wife, and their sons would be leaders of the men of Argos. But Acrisius preferred to go to the prophetic maiden of the temple of Apollo at Delphi (or Pytho, as it was then called), and ask what chance he had of being the father of a son.

The maiden seldom had good news to give any man; but at least this time it was easy to understand what she said. She went down into the deep cavern below the temple floor, where it was said that a strange mist or steam flowed up out of the earth, and made her fall into a strange sleep, in which she could walk and speak, but knew not what she was singing, for she sang her prophecies. At last she came back, very pale, with her laurel wreath twisted awry, and her eyes open, but seeing nothing. She sang that Acrisius would never have a son; but that his daughter would bear a son, who would kill him.

Acrisius mounted his chariot, sad and sorry, and was driven homewards. On the way he never spoke a word, but was thinking how he might escape from the prophecy, and baffle the will of Zeus, the chief of the gods. He did not know that Zeus himself had looked down upon Danae and fallen in love with her, nor did Danae know.

The only sure way to avoid the prophecy was to kill Danae, and Acrisius thought of doing this; but he loved her too much; and he was afraid that his people would rise against him, if he slew his daughter, the pride of their hearts. Still another fear was upon Acrisius, which will be explained later in the story. He could think of nothing better than to build a house all of bronze, in the court of his palace, a house sunk deep in the earth, but with part of the roof open to the sky, as was the way in all houses then; the light came in from above, and the smoke of the fire went out in the same way. This chamber Acrisius built, and in it he shut up poor Danae with the woman that had been her nurse. They saw nothing, hills or plains or sea, men or trees, they only saw the sun at midday, and the sky, and the free birds flitting across it. There Danae lay, and was weary and sad, and she could not guess why her father thus imprisoned her. He used to visit her often and seemed kind and sorry for her, but he would never listen when she implored him to sell her for a slave into a far country, so that, at least, she might see the world in which she lived.

Now on a day a mysterious thing happened; the old poet Pindar, who lived long after, in the time of the war between the Greeks and the King of Persia, says that a living stream of gold flowed down from the sky and filled the chamber of Danae. Some time after this Danae bore a baby, a son, the strongest and most beautiful of children. She and her nurse kept it secret, and the child was brought up in an inner chamber of the house of bronze. It was difficult to prevent so lively a child from making a noise in his play, and one day, when Acrisius was with Danae, the boy, now three or four years old, escaped from his nurse, and ran from her room, laughing and shouting. Acrisius rushed out, and saw the nurse catch the child, and throw her mantle over him. Acrisius seized the boy, who stood firm on his little legs, with his head high, frowning at his grandfather, and gazing in anger out of his large blue eyes. Acrisius saw that this child would be dangerous when he became a man, and in great anger he bade his guards take the nurse out, and strangle her with a rope, while Danae knelt weeping at his feet.

When they were alone he said to Danae: ‘Who is the father of this child?’ but she, with her boy on her arm, slipped past Acrisius, and out of the open door, and up the staircase, into the open air. She ran to the altar of Zeus, which was built in the court, and threw her arms round it, thinking that there no man dared to touch her. ‘I cry to Zeus that is throned in the highest, the Lord of Thunder,’ she said: ‘for he and no other is the father of my boy, even Perseus.’ The sky was bright and blue without a cloud, and Danae cried in vain. There came no flash of lightning nor roll of thunder.

‘Is it even so?’ said Acrisius, ‘then let Zeus guard his own.’ He bade his men drag Danae from the altar; and lock her again in the house of bronze; while he had a great strong chest made. In that chest he had the cruelty to place Danae and her boy, and he sent them out to sea in a ship, the sailors having orders to let the chest down into the waters when they were far from shore. They dared not disobey, but they put food and a skin of wine, and two skins of water in the chest, and lowered it into the sea, which was perfectly calm and still. It was their hope that some ship would come sailing by, perhaps a ship of Phœnician merchant-men, who would certainly save Danae and the child, if only that they might sell them for slaves.

King Acrisius himself was not ignorant that this might happen, and that his grandson might live to be the cause of his death. But the Greeks believed that if any man killed one of his own kinsfolk, he would be pursued and driven mad by the Furies called the Erinyes, terrible winged women with cruel claws. These winged women drove Orestes, the son of Agamemnon, fleeing like a madman through the world, because he slew his own mother, Clytaemnestra, to avenge his father, whom she and Ægisthus had slain. Nothing was so much dreaded as these Furies, and therefore Acrisius did not dare to slay his daughter and his grandson, Perseus, but only put them in the way of being drowned. He heard no more of them, and hoped that both of their bodies were rolling in the waves, or that their bones lay bleaching on some unknown shore. But he could not be certain — indeed, he soon knew better — and as long as he lived, he lived in fear that Perseus had escaped, and would come and slay him, as the prophetess had said in her song.

The chest floated on the still waters, and the sea birds swooped down to look at it, and passed by, with one waft of their wings. The sun set, and Danae watched the stars, the Bear and Orion with his belt, and wrapped her boy up warm, and he slept sound, for he never knew fear, in his mother’s arms. The Dawn came in her golden throne, and Danae saw around her the blue sharp crests of the mountains of the islands that lay scattered like water lilies on the seas of Greece. If only the current would drift her to an island, she thought, and prayed in her heart to the Gods of Good Help, Pallas Athênê, and Hermes of the Golden Wand. Soon she began to hope that the chest was drawing near an island. She turned her head in the opposite direction for a long while, and then looked forward again. She was much nearer the island, and could see the smoke going up from cottages among the trees. But she drifted on and drifted past the end of the isle, and on with the current, and so all day.

A weary day she had, for the boy was full of play, and was like to capsize the chest. She gave him some wine and water, and presently he fell asleep, and Danae watched the sea and the distant isles till night came again. It was dark, with no moon, and the darker because the chest floated into the shadow of a mountain, and the current drew it near the shore. But Danae dared not hope again; men would not be abroad, she thought, in the night. As she lay thus helpless, she saw a light moving on the sea, and she cried as loud as she could cry. Then the light stopped, and a man's shout came to her over the water, and the light moved swiftly towards her. It came from a brazier set on a pole in a boat, and now Danae could see the bright sparks that shone in the drops from the oars, for the boat was being rowed towards her, as fast as two strong men could pull.

Being weak from the heat of the sun that had beaten on her for two days, and tired out with hopes and fears, Danae fainted, and knew nothing till she felt cold water on her face. Then she opened her eyes, and saw kind eyes looking at her own, and the brown face of a bearded man, in the light of the blaze that fishermen carry in their boats at night, for the fish come to wonder at it, and the fishermen spear them. There were many dead fish in the boat, into which Danae and the child had been lifted, and a man with a fish spear in his hand was stooping over her.

Then Danae knew that she and her boy were saved, and she lay, unable to speak, till the oarsmen had pulled their boat to a little pier of stone. There the man with the fish spear lifted her up lightly and softly set her on her feet on land, and a boatman handed to him the boy, who was awake, and was crying for food.

'You are safe, lady!' said the man with the spear, 'and I have taken fairer fish than ever swam the sea. I am called Dictys; my brother, Polydectes, is king of this island, and my wife is waiting for me at home, where she will make you welcome, and the boy thrice welcome, for the gods have taken our only son.'

He asked no questions of Danae; it was reckoned ill manners to put questions to strangers and guests, but he lighted two torches at the fire in the boat, and bade his two men walk in front, to show the way, while he supported Danae, and carried the child on his shoulder. They had not far to go, for Dictys, who loved fishing of all things, had his house near the shore. Soon they saw the light shining up from the opening in the roof of the hall; and the wife of Dictys came running out, crying: 'Good sport?' when she heard their voices and footsteps.

'Rare sport,' shouted Dictys cheerily, and he led in Danae, and gave the child into the arms of his wife. Then they were taken to the warm baths, and dressed in fresh raiment. Food was set before them, and presently Danae and Perseus slept on soft beds, with coverlets of scarlet wool.

Dictys and his wife never asked Danae any questions about how and why she came floating on the sea through the night. News was carried quickly enough from the mainland to the islands by fishers in their boats and merchant men, and pedlars. Dictys heard how the king of Argos had launched his daughter and her son on the sea, hoping that both would be drowned. All the people knew in the island, which was called Seriphos, and they hated the cruelty of Acrisius, and many believed that Perseus was the son of Zeus.

If the news from Argos reached Seriphos, we may guess that the news from Seriphos reached Argos, and that Acrisius heard how a woman as beautiful as a goddess, with a boy of the race of the gods, had drifted to the shore of the little isle. Acrisius knew, and fear grew about his heart, fear that was sharper as the years went on, while Perseus was coming to his manhood. Acrisius often thought of ways by which he might have his grandson slain; but none of them seemed safe. By the time when Perseus was fifteen, Acrisius dared not go out of doors, except among the spears of his armed guards, and he was so eaten up by fear that it would have been happier for him if he had never been born.

II

THE VOW OF PERSEUS

It was fortunate for Perseus that Dictys treated him and taught him like his own son, and checked him if he was fierce and quarrelsome, as so strong a boy was apt to be. He was trained in all the exercises of young men, the use of spear and sword, shield and bow; and in running, leaping, hunting, rowing, and the art of sailing a boat. There were no books in Seriphos, nobody could read or write; but Perseus was told the stories of old times, and of old warriors who slew monsters by sea and land. Most of the monsters had been killed, as Perseus was sorry to hear, for he desired to try his own luck with them when he came to be a man. But the most terrible of all, the Gorgons, who were hated by men and gods, lived still, in an island near the Land of the Dead; but the way to that island was unknown. These Gorgons were two sisters, and a third woman; the two were hideous to look on, with hair and wings and claws of bronze, and with teeth like the white tusks of swine. Swinish they were, ugly and loathsome, feeding fearfully on the bodies of unburied men. But the third Gorgon was beautiful save for the living serpents that coiled in her hair. She alone of the three Gorgons was mortal, and could be slain, but who could slay her? So terrible were her eyes that men who had gone up against her were changed into pillars of stone.

This was one of the stories that Perseus heard when he was a boy; and there was a proverb that this or that hard task was ‘as difficult to do as to slay the Gorgon.’ Perseus, then, ever since he was a little boy, was wondering how he could slay the Gorgon and become as famous as the strong man Heracles, or the good knight Bellerophon, who slew the Chimaera. Perseus was always thinking of such famous men as these, and especially loved the story of Bellerophon, which is this:

In the city of Ephyre, now called Corinth, was a king named Glaucus, who had a son, Bellerophon. He was brought up far from home, in Argos, by King Proetus (the great-uncle of Perseus), who was his foster-father, and loved him well. Proetus was an old man, but his wife, Anteia, was young and beautiful, and Bellerophon also was beautiful and young, and, by little and little, Anteia fell in love with him, and could not be happy without him, but no such love was in Bellerophon’s heart for her, who was his foster-mother. At last Anteia, forgetting all shame, told Bellerophon that she loved him, and hated her husband; and she asked him to fly with her to the seashore, where she had a ship lying ready, and they two would sail to some island far away, and be happy together.

Bellerophon knew not what to say; he could not wrong King Proetus, his foster-father. He stood speechless, his face was red with shame, but the face of Anteia grew white with rage.

‘Dastard!’ she said, ‘thou shalt not live long in Argos to boast of my love and your own virtue!’ She ran from him, straight to King Proetus, and flung herself at his feet. ‘What shall be done, oh king,’ she cried, ‘to the man who speaks words of love dishonourable to the Queen of Argos?’

‘By the splendour of Zeus,’ cried Proetus, ‘if he were my own foster-son he shall die!’

‘Thou hast named him!’ said Anteia, and she ran to her own upper chamber, and locked the door, and flung herself on the bed, weeping for rage as if her heart would break. Proetus followed her, but she would not unlock her door, only he heard her bitter weeping, and he went apart, alone, and took thought how he should be revenged on Bellerophon. He had no desire to slay him openly, for then the King of Ephyre would make war against him. He could not bring him to trial before the judges, for there was no witness against him except Anteia; and he did not desire to make his subjects talk about the queen, for it was the glory of a woman, in those days, not to be spoken of in the conversation of men.

Therefore Proetus, for a day or two, seemed to favour Bellerophon more kindly than ever. Next he called him into his chamber, alone, and said that it was well for young men to see the world, to cross the sea and visit foreign cities, and win renown. The eyes of Bellerophon brightened at these words, not only because he desired to travel, but because he was miserable in Argos, where he saw every day the angry eyes of Anteia. Then Proetus said that the King of Lycia, in Asia far across the sea, was his father-in-law, and his great friend. To him he would send Bellerophon, and Proetus gave him a folded tablet, in which he had written many deadly signs. Bellerophon took the folded tablet, not looking, of course, at what was written in it, and away he sailed to Lycia. The king of that country received him well, and on the tenth day after his arrival asked him if he brought any token from King Proetus.

Bellerophon gave him the tablet, which he opened and read. The writing said that Bellerophon must die. Now at that time Lycia was haunted by a monster of no human birth; her front was the front of a lion, in the middle of her body she was a goat, she tapered away to a strong swift serpent, and she breathed flame from her nostrils. The King of Lycia, wishing to get rid of Bellerophon, had but to name this curse to his guest, who vowed that he would meet her if he might find her. So he was led to the cavern where she dwelt, and there he watched for her all night till the day dawned.

He was cunning as well as brave, and men asked him why he took with him no weapon but his sword, and two spears with heavy heads, not of bronze, but of soft lead. Bellerophon told his companions that he had his own way of fighting, and bade them go home, and leave him alone, while his charioteer stood by the horses and chariot in a hollow way, out of sight. Bellerophon himself watched, lying on his face, hidden behind a rock in the mouth of the cavern. The moment that the rising sun touched with a red ray the dark mouth of the cave, forth came the Chimaera, and, setting her fore paws on the rock, looked over the valley. The moment that she opened her mouth, breathing flame, Bellerophon plunged his leaden spears deep down her throat, and sprang aside. On came the Chimaera, her serpent tail lashing the stones, but Bellerophon ever kept on the further side of a great tall rock. The Chimaera ceased to pursue him, she rolled on the earth, uttering screams of pain, for the lead was melting in the fire that was within her, and at last the molten lead burned through her, and she died. Bellerophon hacked off her head, and several feet of her tail, stowed them in his chariot, and drove back to the palace of the King of Lycia, while the people followed him with songs of praise.

The king set him three other terrible tasks, but he achieved each of the adventures gloriously, and the king gave him his daughter to be his bride, and half of all the honours of his kingdom. This is the story of Bellerophon (there were other ways of telling it), and Perseus was determined to do as great deeds as he. But Perseus was still a boy, and he did not know, and no man could tell him, the way to the island of the Gorgons.

When Perseus was about sixteen years old, the King of Seriphos, Polydectes, saw Danae, fell in love with her, and wanted to take her into his palace, but he did not want Perseus. He was a bad and cruel man, but Perseus was so much beloved by the people that he dared not kill him openly. He therefore made friends with the lad, and watched him carefully to see how he could take advantage of him. The king saw that he was of a rash, daring and haughty spirit, though Dictys had taught him to keep himself well in hand, and that he was eager to win glory. The king fell on this plan: he gave a great feast on his birthday, and invited all the chief men and the richest on the island; Perseus, too, he asked to the banquet. As the custom was, all the guests brought gifts, the best that they had, cattle, women-slaves, golden cups, wedges of gold, great vessels of bronze, and other splendid things, and the king met the guests at the door of his hall, and thanked them graciously.

Last came Perseus: he had no gift to give, for he had nothing of his own. The others began to sneer at him, saying, ‘Here is a birthday guest without a birthday gift!’ ‘How should No Man’s son have a present fit for a king.’ ‘This lad is lazy, tied to his mother; he should long ago have taken service with the captain of a merchant ship.’ ‘He might at least watch the town’s cows on the town’s fields,’ said another. Thus they insulted Perseus, and the king, watching him with a cruel smile, saw his face grow red, and his blue eyes blaze, as he turned from one to another of the mockers, who pointed their fingers at him and jeered.

At last Perseus spoke: ‘Ye farmers and fishers, ye ship-captains and slave dealers of a little isle, I shall bring to your master such a present as none of you dare to seek. Farewell. Ye shall see me once again and no more. I go to slay the Gorgon, and bring such a gift as no king possesses — the Head of the Gorgon.’

They laughed and hooted, but Perseus turned away, his hand on his sword hilt, and left them to their festival, while the king rejoiced in his heart. Perseus dared not see his mother again, but he spoke to Dictys, saying that he knew himself now to be of an age when he must seek his fortune in other lands; and he bade Dictys guard his mother from wrong, as well as he might. Dictys promised that he would find a way of protecting Danae, and he gave Perseus three weighed wedges of gold (which were called ‘talents,’ and served as money), and lent him a ship, to take him to the mainland of Greece, there to seek his fortune.

In the dawn Perseus secretly sailed away, landed at Malea, and thence walked and wandered everywhere, seeking to learn the way to the island of the Gorgons. He was poorly clad, and he slept at night by the fires of smithies, where beggars and wanderers lay: listening to the stories they told, and asking old people, when he met them, if they knew any one who knew the way to the island of the Gorgons. They all shook their heads. ‘Yet I should be near knowing,’ said one old man, ‘if that isle be close to the Land of the Dead, for I am on its borders. Yet I know nothing. Perchance the dead may know; or the maid that prophesies at Pytho, or the Selloi, the priests with unwashen feet, who sleep on the ground below the sacred oaks of Zeus in the grove of Dodona far away.’

Perseus could learn no more than this, and he wandered on and on. He went to the cave that leads down to the Land of the Dead, where the ghosts answer questions in their thin voices, like the twittering of bats. But the ghosts could not tell him what he desired to know. He went to Pytho, where the maid, in her song, bade him seek the land of men who eat acorns instead of the yellow grain of Demeter, the goddess of harvest. Thence he wandered to Epirus, and to the Selloi who dwell in the oak forest of Zeus, and live on the flour ground from acorns. One of them lay on the ground in the wood, with his head covered up in his mantle, and listened to what the wind says, when it whispers to the forest leaves. The leaves said, ‘We bid the young man be of good hope, for the gods are with him.’

This answer did not tell Perseus where the isle of the Gorgons lay, but the words put hope in his heart, weary and footsore as he was. He ate of the bread made of the acorns, and of the flesh of the swine that the Selloi gave him, and he went alone, and, far in the forest, he laid his head down on the broad mossy root of an old oak tree. He did not sleep, but watched the stars through the boughs, and he heard the cries of the night-wandering beasts in the woodland.

‘If the gods be with me, I shall yet do well,’ he said, and, as he spoke, he saw a white clear light moving through the darkness. That clear white light shone from a golden lamp in the hand of a tall and beautiful woman, clad in armour, and wearing, hung by a belt from her neck, a great shield of polished bronze. With her there came a young man, with winged shoon of gold on his feet, and belted with a strange short curved sword: in his hand was a golden wand, with wings on it, and with golden serpents twisted round it.

Perseus knew that these beautiful folk were the Goddess Athênê, and Hermes, who brings all fortunate things. He fell upon his face before them, but Athênê spoke in a sweet grave voice, saying, ‘Arise, Perseus, and speak to us face to face, for we are of your kindred, we also are children of Zeus, the Father of gods and men.’

Then Perseus arose and looked straight into their eyes.

‘We have watched you long, Perseus, to learn whether you have the heart of a hero, that can achieve great adventures; or whether you are an idle dreaming boy. We have seen that your heart is steadfast, and that you have sought through hunger, and long travel to know the way wherein you must find death or win glory. That way is not to be found without the help of the gods. First you must seek the Three Grey Women, who dwell beyond the land that lies at the back of the North Wind. They will tell you the road to the three Nymphs of the West, who live in an island of the sea that never knew a sail; for it is beyond the pillars that Heracles set up when he wearied in his journey to the Well of the World’s End, and turned again. You must go to these nymphs, where never foot of man has trod, and they will show you the measure of the way to the Isle of the Gorgons. If you see the faces of the Gorgons, you will be turned to stone. Yet you have vowed to bring the head of the youngest of the three, she who was not born a Gorgon but became one of them by reason of her own wickedness. If you slay her, you must not see even her dead head, but wrap it round in this goat-skin which hangs beside my shield; see not the head yourself, and let none see it but your enemies.’

‘This is a great adventure,’ said Perseus, ‘to slay a woman whom I may not look upon, lest I be changed into stone.’

‘I give you my polished shield,’ said Athênê. ‘Let it never grow dim, if you would live and see the sunlight.’ She took off her shield from her neck, with the goat-skin cover of the shield, and hung them round the neck of Perseus. He knelt and thanked her for her grace, and, looking up through a clear space between the forest boughs, he said, ‘I see the Bear, the stars of the North that are the guide of sailors. I shall walk towards them even now, by your will, for my heart burns to find the Three Grey Women, and learn the way.’

Hermes smiled, and said, ‘An old man and white-bearded would you be, ere you measured out that way on foot! Here, take my winged sandals, and bind them about your feet. They know all the paths of the air, and they will bring you to the Three Grey Women. Belt yourself, too, with my sword, for this sword needs no second stroke, but will cleave through that you set it to smite.’

So Perseus bound on the Shoes of Swiftness, and the Sword of Sharpness, the name of it was Herpê; and when he rose from binding on the shoon, he was alone. The gods had departed. He drew the sword, and cut at an oak tree trunk, and the blade went clean through it, while the tree fell with a crash like thunder. Then Perseus rose through the clear space in the wood, and flew under the stars, towards the constellation of the Bear. North of Greece he flew, above the Thracian mountains, and the Danube (which was then called the Ister) lay beneath him like a long thread of silver. The air grew cold as he crossed lands then unknown to the Greeks, lands where wild men dwelt, clad in the skins of beasts, and using axe-heads and spear-heads made of sharpened stones. He passed to the land at the back of the North Wind, a sunny warm land, where the people sacrifice wild asses to the God Apollo. Beyond this he came to a burning desert of sand, but far away he saw trees that love the water, poplars and willows, and thither he flew.

He came to a lake among the trees, and round and round the lake were flying three huge grey swans, with the heads of women, and their long grey hair flowed down below their bodies, and floated on the wind. They sang to each other as they flew, in a voice like the cry of the swan. They had but one eye among them, and but one tooth, which they passed to each other in turn, for they had arms and hands under their wings. Perseus dropped down in his flight, and watched them. When one was passing the eye to the other, none of them could see him, so he waited for his chance and took it, and seized the eye.

‘Where is our eye? Have *you* got it?’ said the Grey Woman from whose hand Perseus took it. ‘I have it not.’

‘I have it not!’ cried each of the others, and they all wailed like swans.

‘I have it,’ said Perseus, and hearing his voice they all flew to the sound of it but he easily kept out of their way. ‘The eye will I keep,’ said Perseus, ‘till you tell me what none knows but you, the way to the Isle of the Gorgons.’

‘We know it not,’ cried the poor Grey Women. ‘None knows it but the Nymphs of the Isle of the West: give us our eye!’

‘Then tell me the way to the Nymphs of the Isle of the West,’ said Perseus.

‘Turn your back, and hold your course past the isle of Albion, with the white cliffs, and so keep with the land on your left hand, and the unsailed sea on your right hand, till you mark the pillars of Heracles on your left, then take your course west by south, and a curse on you! Give us our eye!’

Perseus gave them their eye, and she who took it flew at him, but he laughed, and rose high above them and flew as he was told. Over many and many a league of sea and land he went, till he turned to his right from the Pillars of Heracles (at Gibraltar), and sailed along, west by south, through warm air, over the lonely endless Atlantic waters. At last he saw a great blue mountain, with snow feathering its crests, in a far-off island, and on that island he alighted. It was a country of beautiful flowers, and pine forests high on the hill, but below the pines all was like a garden, and in that garden was a tree bearing apples of gold, and round the tree were dancing three fair maidens, clothed in green, and white, and red.

‘These must be the Nymphs of the Isle of the West,’ said Perseus, and he floated down into the garden, and drew near them.

As soon as they saw him they left off dancing, and catching each other by the hands they ran to Perseus laughing, and crying, ‘Hermes, our playfellow Hermes has come!’ The arms of all of them went round Perseus at once, with much laughing and kissing. ‘Why have you brought a great shield, Hermes?’ they cried, ‘here there is no unfriendly god or man to fight against you.’

Perseus saw that they had mistaken him for the god whose sword and winged shoon he wore, but he did not dislike the mistake of the merry maidens.

‘I am not Hermes,’ he said, ‘but a mortal man, to whom the god has graciously lent his sword and shoon, and the shield was lent to me by Pallas Athênê. My name is Perseus.’

The girls leaped back from him, blushing and looking shy. The eldest girl answered, ‘We are the daughters of Hesperus, the God of the Evening Star. I am Æglê, this is my sister Erytheia, and this is Hesperia. We are the keepers of this island, which is the garden of the gods, and they often visit us; our cousins, Dionysus, the young god of wine and mirth, and Hermes of the Golden Wand come often; and bright Apollo, and his sister Artemis the huntress. But a mortal man we have never seen, and wherefore have the gods sent you hither?’

‘The two gods sent me, maidens, to ask you the way to the Isle of the Gorgons, that I may slay Medusa of the snaky hair, whom gods and men detest.’

‘Alas!’ answered the nymphs, ‘how shall you slay her, even if we knew the way to that island, which we know not?'

Perseus sighed: he had gone so far, and endured so much, and had come to the Nymphs of the Isle of the West, and even they could not tell how to reach the Gorgons' island.

'Do not fear,' said the girl, 'for if we know not the way we know one that knows it: Atlas is his name — the Giant of the Mountain. He dwells on the highest peak of the snow-crested hill, and it is he who holds up the heavens, and keeps heaven and earth asunder. He looks over all the world, and over the wide western sea: him we must ask to answer your question. Take off your shield, which is so heavy, and sit down with us among the flowers, and let us think how you may slay the Gorgon.'

Perseus gladly unslung his heavy shield, and sat down among the white and purple wind flowers. Æglê, too, sat down; but young Erytheia held the shield upright, while beautiful Hesperia admired herself, laughing, in the polished surface.

Perseus smiled as he watched them, and a plan came into his mind. In all his wanderings he had been trying hard to think how, if he found the Gorgon, he might cut off her head, without seeing the face which turned men into stone. Now his puzzle was ended. He could hold up the shield above the Gorgon, and see the reflection of her face, as in a mirror, just as now he saw the fair reflected face of Hesperia. He turned to Æglê, who sat silently beside him: 'Maiden,' he said, 'I have found out the secret that has perplexed me long, how I may strike at the Gorgon without seeing her face that turns men to stone. I will hang above her in the air, and see her face reflected in the mirror of the shield, and so know where to strike.' The two other girls had left the shield on the grass, and they clapped their hands when Perseus said this, but Æglê still looked grave.

'It is much that you should have found this cunning plan; but the Gorgons will see you, and two of them are deathless and cannot be slain, even with the sword Herpé. These Gorgons have wings almost as swift as the winged shoon of Hermes, and they have claws of bronze that cannot be broken.'

Hesperia clapped her hands. 'Yet I know a way,' she said, 'so that this friend of ours may approach the Gorgons, yet not be seen by them. You must be told,' she said, turning to Perseus, 'that we three sisters were of the company of the Fairy Queen, Persephone, daughter of Demeter, the Goddess of the Harvest. We were gathering flowers with her, in the plain of Enna, in a spring morning, when there sprang up a new flower, fragrant and beautiful, the white narcissus. No sooner had Persephone plucked that flower than the earth opened beside her, and up came the chariot and horses of Hades, the King of the Dead, who caught Persephone into his chariot, and bore her down with him to the House of Hades.

We wept and were in great fear, but Zeus granted to Persephone to return to earth with the first snowdrop, and remain with her mother, Demeter, till the last rose had faded. Now I was the favourite of Persephone, and she carried me with her to see her husband, who is kind to me for her sake, and can refuse me nothing, and he has what will serve your turn. To him I will go, for often I go to see my playmate, when it is winter in your world: it is always summer in our isle. To him I will go, and return again, when I will so work that you may be seen of none, neither by god, or man, or monster. Meanwhile my sisters will take care of you, and to-morrow they will lead you to the mountain top, to speak with the Giant.'

'It is well spoken,' said tall, grave Æglê, and she led Perseus to their house, and gave him food and wine, and at night he slept full of hope, in a chamber in the courtyard.

Next morning, early, Perseus and Æglê and Erytheia floated up to the crest of the mountain, for Hesperia had departed in the night, to visit Queen Persephone. Perseus took a hand of each of the Nymphs, and they had no weary climbing; they all soared up together, so great was the power of the winged shoon of Hermes. They found the good giant Atlas, kneeling on a black rock above the snow, holding up the vault of heaven with either hand. When Æglê had spoken to him, he bade his girls go apart, and said to Perseus, 'Yonder, far away to the west, you see an island with a mountain that rises to a flat top, like a table. There dwell the Gorgons.'

Perseus thanked him eagerly, but Atlas sighed and said, 'Mine is a weary life. Here have I knelt and done my task, since the Giants fought against the gods, and were defeated. Then, for my punishment, I was set here by Zeus to keep sky and earth asunder. But he told me that after hundreds of years I should have rest, and be changed to a stone. Now I see that the day of rest appointed is come, for you shall show me the head of the Gorgon when you have slain her, and my body shall be stone, but my spirit shall be with the ever living gods.'

Perseus pitied Atlas; he bowed to the will of Zeus, and to the prayer of the giant, and gave his promise. Then he floated to Æglê and Erytheia, and they all three floated down again to the garden of the golden apples. Here as they walked on the soft grass, and watched the wind toss the white and red and purple bells of the wind flowers, they heard a low laughter close to them, the laughter of Hesperia, but her they saw not. 'Where are you, Hesperia, where are you hiding?' cried Æglê, wondering, for the wide lawn was open, without bush or tree where the girl might be lurking.

'Find me if you can,' cried the voice of Hesperia, close beside them, and handfuls of flowers were lightly tossed to them, yet they saw none who threw them. ‘This place is surely enchanted,’ thought Perseus, and the voice of Hesperia answered:

‘Come follow, follow me. I will run before you to the house, and show you my secret.’

Then they all saw the flowers bending, and the grass waving, as if a light-footed girl were running through it, and they followed to the house the path in the trodden grass. At the door, Hesperia met them: ‘You could not see me,’ she said, ‘nor will the Gorgons see Perseus. Look, on that table lies the Helmet of Hades, which mortal men call the Cap of Darkness. While I wore it you could not see me, nay, a deathless god cannot see the wearer of that helmet.’ She took up a dark cap of hard leather, that lay on a table in the hall, and raised it to her head, and when she had put it on, she was invisible. She took it off, and placed it on the brows of Perseus. ‘We cannot see you, Perseus,’ cried all the girls. ‘Look at yourself in your shining shield: can you see yourself?’

Perseus turned to the shield, which he had hung on a golden nail in the wall. He saw only the polished bronze, and the faces of the girls who were looking over his shoulder. He took off the Helmet of Hades and gave a great sigh. ‘Kind are the gods,’ he said. ‘Methinks that I shall indeed keep my vow, and bring to Polydectes the Gorgon’s head.’

They were merry that night, and Perseus told them his story, how he was the son of Zeus, and the girls called him ‘cousin Perseus.’ ‘We love you very much, and we could make you immortal, without old age and death,’ said Hesperia. ‘You might live with us here for ever — it is lonely, sometimes, for three maidens in the garden of the gods. But you must keep your vow, and punish your enemies, and cherish your mother, and do not forget your cousins three, when you have married the lady of your heart’s desire, and are King of Argos.’

The tears stood in the eyes of Perseus. ‘Cousins dear,’ he said, ‘never shall I forget you, not even in the House of Hades. You will come thither now and again, Hesperia? But I love no woman.’

‘I think you will not long be without a lady and a love, Perseus,’ said Erytheia; ‘but the night is late, and to-morrow you have much to do.’

So they parted, and next morning they bade Perseus be of good hope. He burnished and polished the shield, and covered it with the goat’s skin, he put on the Shoes of Swiftness, and belted himself with the Sword of Sharpness, and placed on his head the Cap of Darkness. Then he soared high in the air, till he saw the Gorgons’ Isle, and the table-shaped mountain, a speck in the western sea.

The way was long, but the shoes were swift, and, far aloft, in the heat of the noon-day, Perseus looked down on the top of the table-mountain. There he could dimly see three bulks of strange shapeless shape, with monstrous limbs that never stirred, and he knew that the Gorgons were sleeping their midday sleep. Then he held the shield so that the shapes were reflected in its polished face, and very slowly he floated down, and down, till he was within striking distance. There they lay, two of them uglier than sin, breathing loud in their sleep like drunken men. But the face of her who lay between the others was as quiet as the face of a sleeping child; and as beautiful as the face of the goddess of Love, with long dark eyelashes veiling the eyes, and red lips half open. Nothing stirred but the serpents in the hair of beautiful Medusa; they were never still, but coiled and twisted, and Perseus loathed them as he watched them in the mirror. They coiled and uncoiled, and left bare her ivory neck, and then Perseus drew the sword Herpê, and struck once.

In the mirror he saw the fallen head, and he seized it by the hair, and wrapped it in the goat-skin, and put the goat-skin in his wallet. Then he towered high in the air, and, looking down, he saw the two sister Gorgons turning in their sleep; they woke, and saw their sister dead. They seemed to speak to each other; they looked this way and that, into the bright empty air, for Perseus in the Cap of Darkness they could not see. They rose on their mighty wings, hunting low, and high, and with casts behind their island and in front of it, but Perseus was flying faster than ever he flew before, stooping and rising to hide his scent. He dived into the deep sea, and flew under water as long as he could hold his breath, and then rose and fled swiftly forward. The Gorgons were puzzled by each double he had made, and, at the place where he dived they lost the scent, and from far away Perseus heard their loud yelps, but soon these faded in the distance. He often looked over his shoulder as he flew straight towards the far-off blue hill of the giant Atlas, but the sky was empty behind him, and the Gorgons he never saw again. The mountain turned from blue to clear grey and red and gold, with pencilled rifts and glens, and soon Perseus stood beside the giant Atlas. ‘You are welcome and blessed,’ said the giant. ‘Show me the head that I may be at rest.’

Then Perseus took the bundle from the wallet, and carefully unbound the goat-skin, and held up the head, looking away from it, and the Giant was a great grey stone. Down sailed Perseus, and stood in the garden of the gods, and laid the Cap of Darkness on the grass. The three Nymphs who were sitting there, weaving garlands of flowers, leaped up, and came round him, and kissed him, and crowned him with the flowery chaplets. That night he rested with them, and in the morning they kissed and said farewell.

‘Do not forget us,’ said Æglê, ‘nor be too sorry for our loneliness. To-day Hermes has been with us, and to-morrow he comes again with Dionysus, the god of the vine, and all his merry company. Hermes left a message for you, that you are to fly eastward, and south, to the place where your wings shall guide you, and there, he said, you shall find your happiness. When that is won, you shall turn north and west, to your own country. We say, all three of us, that our love is with you always, and we shall hear of your gladness, for Hermes will tell us; then we too shall be glad. Farewell!’

So the three maidens embraced him with kind faces and smiling eyes, and Perseus, too, smiled as well as he might, but in his eastward way he often looked back, and was sad when he could no longer see the kindly hill above the garden of the gods.

III

PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA

Perseus flew where the wings bore him, over great mountains, and over a wilderness of sand. Below his feet the wind woke the sand storms, and beneath him he saw nothing but a soft floor of yellow grey, and when that cleared he saw islands of green trees round some well in the waste, and long trains of camels, and brown men riding swift horses, at which he wondered; for the Greeks in his time drove in chariots, and did not ride. The red sun behind him fell, and all the land was purple, but, in a moment, as it seemed, the stars rushed out, and he sped along in the starlight till the sky was grey again, and rosy, and full of fiery colours, green and gold and ruby and amethyst. Then the sun rose, and Perseus looked down on a green land, through which was flowing north a great river, and he guessed that it was the river Ægyptus, which we now call the Nile. Beneath him was a town, with many white houses in groves of palm trees, and with great temples of the gods, built of red stone. The shoes of swiftness stopped above the wide market-place, and there Perseus hung poised, till he saw a multitude of men pour out of the door of a temple.

At their head walked the king, who was like a Greek, and he led a maiden as white as snow wreathed with flowers and circlets of wool, like the oxen in Greece, when men sacrifice them to the gods. Behind the king and the maid came a throng of brown men, first priests and magicians and players on harps, and women shaking metal rattles that made a wild mournful noise, while the multitude lamented.

Slowly, while Perseus watched, they passed down to the shore of the great river, so wide a river as Perseus had never seen. They went to a steep red rock, like a wall, above the river; at its foot was a flat shelf of rock — the water just washed over it. Here they stopped, and the king kissed and embraced the white maiden. They bound her by chains of bronze to rings of bronze in the rock; they sang a strange hymn; and then marched back to the town, throwing their mantles over their heads. There the maiden stood, or rather hung forward supported by the chains. Perseus floated down, and, the nearer he came, the more beautiful seemed the white maid, with her soft dark hair falling to her white feet. Softly he floated down, till his feet were on the ledge of rock. She did not hear him coming, and when he gently touched her she gave a cry, and turned on him her large dark eyes, wild and dry, without a tear. ‘Is it a god?’ she said, clasping her hands.

‘No god, but a mortal man am I, Perseus the slayer of the Gorgon. What do you here? What cruel men have bound you?’

‘I am Andromeda, the daughter of Cepheus, king of a strange people. The lot fell on me, of all the maidens in the city, to be offered to the monster fish that walks on feet, who is their god. Once a year they give to him a maiden.’

Perseus thereon drew the sword Herpê, and cut the chains of bronze that bound the girl as if they had been ropes of flax, and she fell at his feet, covering her eyes with her hands. Then Perseus saw the long reeds on the further shore of the river waving and stirring and crashing, and from them came a monstrous fish walking on feet, and slid into the water. His long sharp black head showed above the stream as he swam, and the water behind him showed like the water in the wake of a ship.

‘Be still and hide your eyes!’ whispered Perseus to the maiden.

He took the goat-skin from his wallet, and held up the Gorgon’s head, with the back of it turned towards him, and he waited till the long black head was lifted from the river’s edge, and the forefeet of that fish were on the wet ledge of rock. Then he held the head before the eyes of the monster, and from the head downward it slowly stiffened. The head and forefeet and shoulders were of stone before the tail had ceased to lash the water. Then the tail stiffened into a long jagged sharp stone, and Perseus, wrapping up the head in the goat-skin, placed it in his wallet. He turned his back to Andromeda, while he did this lest by mischance her eyes should open and see the head of the Gorgon. But her eyes were closed, and Perseus found that she had fainted, from fear of the monster, and from the great heat of the sun. Perseus put the palms of his hands together like a cup, and stooping to the stream he brought water, and threw it over the face and neck of Andromeda, wondering at her beauty. Her eyes opened at last, and she tried to rise to her feet, but she dropped on her knees, and clung with her fingers to the rock. Seeing her so faint and weak Perseus raised her in his arms, with her beautiful head pillowed on his shoulder, where she fell asleep like a tired child. Then he rose in the air and floated over the sheer wall of red stone above the river, and flew slowly towards the town.

There were no sentinels at the gate; the long street was empty, for all the people were in their houses, praying and weeping. But a little girl stole out of a house near the gate. She was too young to understand why her father and mother and elder brothers were so sad, and would not take any notice of her. She thought she would go out and play in the street, and when she looked up from her play, she saw Perseus bearing the king’s daughter in his arms. The child stared, and then ran into her house, crying aloud, for she could hardly speak, and pulled so hard at her mother’s gown that her mother rose and followed her to the house door. The mother gave a joyful cry, her husband and her children ran forth, and they, too, shouted aloud for pleasure. Their cries reached the ears of people in other houses, and presently all the folk, as glad as they had been sorrowful, were following Perseus to the palace of the king. Perseus walked through the empty court, and stood at the door of the hall, where the servants came to him, both men and women, and with tears of joy the women bore Andromeda to the chamber of her mother, Queen Cassiopeia.

Who can tell how happy were the king and queen, and how gladly they welcomed Perseus! They made a feast for him, and they sent oxen and sheep to all the people, and wine, that all might rejoice and make merry. Andromeda, too, came, pale but smiling, into the hall, and sat down beside her mother’s high seat, listening while Perseus told the whole story of his adventures. Now Perseus could scarcely keep his eyes from Andromeda’s face while he spoke, and she stole glances at him. When their eyes met, the colour came into her face again, which glowed like ivory that a Carian woman has lightly tinged with rose colour, making an ornament for some rich king. Perseus remembered the message of Hermes, which Æglê had given him, that if he flew to the east and south he would find his happiness. He knew that he had found it, if this maiden would be his wife, and he ended his tale by repeating the message of Hermes.

‘The gods speak only truth,’ he said, ‘and to have made you all happy is the greatest happiness to Perseus of Argos.’ Yet he hoped in his heart to see a yet happier day, when the rites of marriage should be done between Andromeda and him, and the young men and maidens should sing the wedding song before their door.

Andromeda was of one mind with him, and, as Perseus must needs go home, her parents believed that she could not live without him who had saved her from such a cruel death. So with heavy hearts they made the marriage feast, and with many tears Andromeda and her father and mother said farewell. Perseus and his bride sailed down the great river Ægyptus in the king’s own boat; and at every town they were received with feasts, and songs, and dances. They saw all the wonderful things of Egypt, palaces and pyramids and temples and tombs of kings, and at last they found a ship of the Cretans in the mouth of the Nile. This they hired, for they carried with them great riches, gold, and myrrh, and ivory, gifts of the princes of Egypt.

IV

HOW PERSEUS AVENGED DANAE

With a steady south wind behind them they sailed to Seriphos, and landed, and brought their wealth ashore, and went to the house of Dictys. They found him lonely and sorrowful, for his wife had died, and his brother, King Polydectes, had taken Danae, and set her to grind corn in his house, among his slave women. When Perseus heard that word, he asked, ‘Where is King Polydectes?’

‘It is his birthday, and he holds his feast among the princes,’ said Dictys.

‘Then bring me,’ said Perseus, ‘the worst of old clothes that any servant of your house can borrow from a beggar man, if there be a beggar man in the town.’ Such a man there was — he came limping through the door of the courtyard, and up to the threshold of the house, where he sat whining, and asking for alms. They gave him food and wine, and Perseus cried, ‘New clothes for old, father, I will give you, and new shoes for old.’ The beggar could not believe his ears, but he was taken to the baths, and washed, and new clothes were given to him, while Perseus clad himself in the beggar’s rags, and Dictys took charge of the winged shoon of Hermes and the sword Herpê, and the burnished shield of Athênê. Then Perseus cast dust and wood ashes on his hair, till it looked foul and grey, and placed the goat-skin covering and the Gorgon’s head in his wallet, and with the beggar’s staff in his hand he limped to the palace of Polydectes. On the threshold he sat down, like a beggar, and Polydectes saw him and cried to his servants, ‘Bring in that man; is it not the day of my feast? Surely all are welcome.’ Perseus was led in, looking humbly at the ground, and was brought before the king.

‘What news, thou beggar man?’ said the king.

‘Such news as was to be looked for,’ whined Perseus. ‘Behold, I am he who brought no present to the king’s feast, seven long years agone, and now I come back, tired and hungry, to ask his grace.’

‘By the splendour of Zeus,’ cried Polydectes, ‘it is none but the beggar brat who bragged that he would fetch me such a treasure as lies in no king’s chamber! The beggar brat is a beggar man; how time and travel have tamed him! Ho, one of you, run and fetch his mother who is grinding at the mill, that she may welcome her son.’

A servant ran from the hall, and the chiefs of Seriphos mocked at Perseus.

‘This is he who called us farmers and dealers in slaves. Verily he would not fetch the price of an old cow in the slave market.’ Then they threw at him crusts of bread, and bones of swine, but he stood silent.

Then Danae was led in, clad in vile raiment, but looking like a queen, and the king cried, ‘Go forward, woman: look at that beggar man; dost thou know thy son?’ She walked on, her head high, and Perseus whispered, ‘Mother, stand thou beside me, and speak no word!’

‘My mother knows me not, or despises me,’ said Perseus, ‘yet, poor as I am, I do not come empty-handed. In my wallet is a gift, brought from very far away, for my lord the king.’

He swung his wallet round in front of him; he took off the covering of goat-skin, and he held the Gorgon’s head on high, by the hair, facing the king and the chiefs. In one moment they were all grey stones, all along the hall, and the chairs whereon they sat crashed under the weight of them, and they rolled on the hard clay floor. Perseus wrapped the head in the goat-skin, and shut it in the wallet carefully, and cried, ‘Mother, look round, and see thy son and thine own revenge.’

Then Danae knew her son, by the sound of his voice, if not by her eyesight, and she wept for joy. So they two went to the house of Dictys, and Perseus was cleansed, and clad in rich raiment, and Danae, too, was apparelled like a free woman, and embraced Andromeda with great joy.

Perseus made the good Dictys king of Seriphos; and he placed the winged shoes in the temple of Hermes, with the sword Herpê, and the Gorgon’s head, in its goat-skin cover; but the polished shield he laid on the altar in the temple of Athênê. Then he bade all who served in the temples come forth, both young and old, and he locked the doors, and he and Dictys watched all night, with the armed Cretans, the crew of his ship, that none might enter. Next day Perseus alone went into the temple of Athênê. It was as it had been, but the Gorgon’s head and the polished shield were gone, and the winged shoon and the sword Herpê had vanished from the temple of Hermes.

With Danae and Andromeda Perseus sailed to Greece, where he learned that the sons of King Proetus had driven King Acrisius out of Argos, and that he had fled to Phthia in the north, where the ancestor of the great Achilles was king. Thither Perseus went, to see his grandfather, and he found the young men holding games and sports in front of the palace. Perseus thought that his grandfather might love him better if he showed his strength in the games, which were open to strangers, so he entered and won the race, and the prize for leaping, and then came the throwing of the disc of bronze. Perseus threw a great cast, far beyond the rest, but the disc swerved, and fell among the crowd. Then Perseus was afraid, and ran like the wind to the place where the disc fell. There lay an old man, smitten sorely by the disc, and men said that he had killed King Acrisius.

Thus the word of the prophetess and the will of Fate were fulfilled. Perseus went weeping to the King of Phthia, and told him all the truth, and the king, who knew, as all Greece knew, how Acrisius had tried to drown his daughter and her child, believed the tale, and said that Perseus was guiltless. He and Danae and Andromeda dwelt for a year in Phthia, with the king, and then Perseus with an army of Pelasgians and Myrmidons, marched south to Argos, and took the city, and drove out his cousins, the sons of Proetus. There in Argos Perseus, with his mother and beautiful Andromeda, dwelt long and happily, and he left the kingdom to his son when he died.

The story of Ulysses is taken mainly from the Iliad, the Odyssey, and the Post Homerica *of Quintus Smyrnæus. As we have no detailed account of the stealing of the Palladium by Ulysses, use has been made of Helen’s tale about his entry into Troy in the disguise of a beaten beggar.*

The chief source of ‘The Fleece of Gold’ is tradition, with the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius; the fight between Polydeuces and the Giant is best reported by Theocritus.

No epic or tragedy concerning the early fortunes of Theseus and the history of Perseus has reached us: summaries in Plutarch and Apollodorus provide the outlines of the legends.

The descriptions of costume, arms, and mode of life are derived from Homer and from the ‘Mycenæan’ relics discovered in the last thirty years by Dr. Schliemann, Mr. A. J. Evans, and many other explorers.

‘The Fleece of Gold,’ first published in an American magazine, has also appeared in America in a little volume (Henry Altemus & Co.). It is here reprinted by permission of Messrs. Altemus, with some changes and corrections.

THE ANIMAL STORY BOOK

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OWLS AND MARMOTS
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To

MASTER FREDERICK LONGMAN

This year our Book for Christmas varies, Deals not with History nor Fairies (I can’t help thinking, children, you Prefer a book which is *not* true). We leave these intellectual feasts, To talk of Fishes, Birds, and Beasts. These — though his aim is hardly steady — These are, I think, a theme for Freddy! Trout, though he is not up to fly, He soon will catch — as well as I! So, Freddy, take this artless rhyme, And be a Sportsman in your time!

PREFACE

Children who have read our Fairy Books may have noticed that there are not so very many fairies in the stories after all. The most common characters are birds, beasts, and fishes, who talk and act like Christians. The reason of this is that the first people who told the stories were not very clever, or, if they were clever, they had never been taught to read and write, or to distinguish between Vegetable, Animal, and Mineral. They took it that all things were ‘much of a muchness:’ they were not proud, and held that beast and bird could talk like themselves, only, of course, in a different language.

After offering, then, so many Fairy Books (though the stories are not all told yet), we now present you (in return for a coin or two) with a book about the friends of children and of fairies — the beasts. The stories are all true, more or less, but it is possible that Monsieur Dumas and Monsieur Théophile Gautier rather improved upon their tales. I own that I have my doubts about the bears and serpents in the tales by the Baron Wogan. This gentleman’s ancestors were famous Irish people. One of them held Cromwell’s soldiers back when they were pursuing Charles II. after Worcester fight. He also led a troop of horse from Dover to the Highlands, where he died of a wound, after fighting for the King. The next Wogan was a friend of Pope and Swift; he escaped from prison after Preston fight, in 1715, and, later, rescued Prince Charlie’s mother from confinement in Austria, and took her to marry King James. He next became Governor of Don Quixote’s province, La Mancha, in Spain, and was still alive and merry in 1752. Baron Wogan, descended from these heroes, saw no longer any king to fight for, so he went to America and fought bears. No doubt he was as brave as his ancestors, but whether all his stories of serpents are absolutely correct I am not so certain. People have also been heard to express doubts about Mr. Waterton and the Cayman. The terrible tale of Mr. Gully and his deeds of war I know to be accurate, and the story of Oscar, the sentimental tyke, is believed in firmly by the lady who wrote it. As for the stories about Greek and Roman beasts, Pliny, who tells them, is a most respectable author. On the whole, then, this is more or less of a true story-book.

There ought to be a moral; if so, it probably is that we should be kind to all sorts of animals, and, above all, knock trout on the head when they are caught, and don’t let the poor things jump about till they die. A chapter of a very learned sort was written about the cleverness of beasts, proving that there must have been great inventive geniuses among beasts long ago, and that now they have rather got into a habit (which I think a very good one) of being content with the discoveries of their ancestors. This led naturally to some observations on Instinct and Reason; but there may be children who are glad that there was no room for this chapter.

The longer stories from Monsieur Dumas were translated from the French by Miss Cheape.

‘A Rat Tale’ is by Miss Evelyn Grieve, who knew the rats.

‘Mr. Gully’ is by Miss Elspeth Campbell, to whom Mr. Gully belonged.

‘The Dog of Montargis,’ ‘More Faithful than Favoured,’ and ‘Androcles’ are by Miss Eleanor Sellar.

Snakes, Bears, Ants, Wolves, Monkeys, and some Lions are by Miss Lang.

‘Two Highland Dogs’ is by Miss Goodrich Freer.

‘Fido’ and ‘Oscar’ and ‘Patch’ are by Miss A. M. Alleyne.

‘Djijam’ is by his master.

‘The Starling of Segringen’ and ‘Grateful Dogs’ are by Mr. Bartells.

‘Tom the Bear,’ ‘The Frog,’ ‘Jacko the Monkey’ and ‘Gazelle’ are from Dumas by Miss Blackley.

All the rest are by Mrs. Lang.

‘TOM’ AN ADVENTURE IN THE LIFE OF A BEAR IN PARIS

From Alexandre Dumas.

Some sixty years ago and more, a well-known artist named Décamps lived in Paris. He was the intimate friend of some of the first authors, artists, and scientific men of the day, and was devotedly fond of animals of all sorts. He loved to paint them, and he kept quite a small ménagerie in his studio where a bear, a monkey, a tortoise, and a frog lived (more or less) in peace and harmony together.

The bear’s name was ‘Tom,’ the monkey was called ‘Jacko I.,’ the frog was ‘Mademoiselle Camargo,’ and the tortoise ‘Gazelle.’

To distinguish him from Jacko II., a monkey belonging to Tony Johannot, the painter.

Here follows the story of Tom, the bear.

It was the night of Shrove Tuesday in the year 1832. Tom had as yet only spent six months in Paris, but he was really one of the most attractive bears you could wish to meet.

He ran to open the door when the bell rang, he mounted guard for hours together, halberd in hand, standing on his hind legs, and he danced a minuet with infinite grace, holding a broomstick behind his head.

He had spent the whole day in the exercise of these varied accomplishments, to the great delight of the frequenters of his master’s studio, and had just retired to the press which did duty as his hutch, to seek a little repose, when there was a knock at the street door. Jacko instantly showed such signs of joy that Décamps made a shrewd guess that the visitor could be no other than Fan, the self-elected tutor in chief to the two animals — nor was he mistaken. The door opened, Fan appeared, dressed as a clown, and Jacko flung himself in rapture into his arms.

‘Very good, very good,’ said Fan, placing the monkey on the table and handing him a cane. ‘You’re really a charming creature. Carry arms, present arms, make ready, fire! Capital!’

‘I’ll have a complete uniform made for you, and you shall mount guard instead of me. But I haven’t come for you to-night; it’s your friend Tom I want. Where may he be?’

‘Why, in his hutch, I suppose,’ said Décamps.

‘Tom! here, Tom!’ cried Fan.

Tom gave a low growl, just to show that he knew very well who they were talking of, but that he was in no hurry to show himself.

‘Well!’ exclaimed Fan, ‘is this how my orders are obeyed? Tom, my friend, don’t force me to resort to extreme measures.’

Tom stretched one great paw beyond the cupboard without allowing any more of his person to be seen, and began to yawn plaintively like a child just wakened from its first sleep.

‘Where is the broomstick?’ inquired Fan in threatening tones, and rattling the collection of Indian bows, arrows, and spears which stood behind the door.

‘Ready!’ cried Décamps, pointing to Tom, who, on hearing these well known sounds, had roused himself without more ado, and advanced towards his tutor with a perfectly innocent and unconscious air.

‘That’s right,’ said Fan: ‘now be a good fellow, particularly as one has come all this way on purpose to fetch you.’

Tom waved his head up and down.

‘So, so — now shake hands with your friends: — first rate!’

‘Do you mean to take him with you?’ asked Décamps.

‘Rather!’ replied Fan; ‘and give him a good time into the bargain.’

‘And where are you going?’

‘To the Carnival Masked Ball, nothing less! Now then Tom, my friend, come along. We’ve got a cab outside waiting by the hour.’

As though fully appreciating the force of this argument, Tom trundled down stairs four steps at a time followed by his friend. The driver opened the cab door, and Tom, under Fan’s guidance, stepped in as if he had done nothing else all his life.

‘My eye! that’s a queer sort of a fancy dress,’ said cabby; ‘anyone might take him for a real bear. Where to, gentlemen?’

‘Odéon Theatre,’ said Fan.

‘Grrrooonnn,’ observed Tom.

‘All right,’ said the cabman. ‘Keep your temper. It’s a good step from here, but we shall get there all in good time.’

Half an hour later the cab drew up at the door of the theatre. Fan got down first, paid the driver, handed out Tom, took two tickets, and passed in without exciting any special attention.

At the second turn they made round the crush-room people began to follow Fan. The perfection with which the newcomer imitated the walk and movements of the animal whose skin he wore attracted the notice of some lovers of natural history. They pressed closer and closer, and anxious to find out whether he was equally clever in imitating the bear’s voice, they began to pull his hairs and prick his ears— ‘Grrrooonnn,’ said Tom.

A murmur of admiration ran through the crowd — nothing could be more lifelike.

Fan led Tom to the buffet and offered him some little cakes, to which he was very partial, and which he proceeded to swallow with so admirable a pretence of voracity that the bystanders burst out laughing. Then the mentor poured out a tumbler full of water, which Tom took gingerly between his paws, as he was accustomed to whenever Décamps did him the honour of permitting him to appear at table, and gulped down the contents at one draught. Enthusiasm knew no bounds! Indeed such was the delight and interest shown that when, at length, Fan wished to leave the buffet, he found they were hemmed in by so dense a crowd that he felt nervous lest Tom should think of clearing the road with claws and teeth. So he promptly led his bear to a corner, placed him with his back against the wall, and told him to stay there till further orders.

As has been already mentioned, this kind of drill was quite familiar to Tom, and was well suited to his natural indolence, and when a harlequin offered his hat to complete the picture, he settled himself comfortably, gravely laying one great paw on his wooden gun.

‘Do you happen to know,’ said Fan to the obliging harlequin, ‘*who* you have lent your hat to?’

‘No,’ replied harlequin.

‘You mean to say you don’t guess?’

‘Not in the least.’

‘Come, take a good look at him. From the grace of all his movements, from the manner in which he carries his head, slightly on one side, like Alexander the Great — from the admirable imitations of the bear’s voice — you don’t mean to say you don’t recognise him?’

‘Upon my word I don’t.’

‘Odry!’ whispered Fan mysteriously; ‘Odry, in his costume from “The Bear and the Pacha”!’

A well-known actor of the time.

‘Oh, but he acts a *white* bear, you know.’

‘Just so; that’s why he has chosen a brown bear’s skin as a disguise.’

‘Ho, ho! You’re a good one,’ cried harlequin.

‘Grrooonnn,’ observed Tom.

‘Well, now you mention it, I *do* recognise his voice. Really, I wonder it had not struck me before. Do ask him to disguise it better.’

‘Yes, yes,’ said Fan, moving towards the ball-room, ‘but it will never do to worry him. However, I’ll try to persuade him to dance a minuet presently.’

‘Oh, could you really?’

‘He promised to do so. Just give a hint to your friends and try to prevent their teasing him.’

‘All right.’

Tom made his way through the crowd, whilst the delighted harlequin moved from one mask to another, telling his news with warnings to be discreet, which were well received. Just then, too, the sounds of a lively galop were heard, and a general rush to the ball-room took place, harlequin only pausing to murmur in Tom’s ear: ‘I know you, my fine mask.’

‘Grroooonnn,’ replied Tom.

‘Ah, it’s all very well to growl, but you’ll dance a minuet, won’t you, old fellow?’

Tom waved his head up and down as his way was when anyone asked him a question, and harlequin, satisfied with this silent consent, ran off to find a columbine and to dance the galop.

Meanwhile, Tom remained alone with the waiters; motionless at his post, but with longing eyes turned towards the counter on which the most tempting piles of cake were heaped on numerous dishes. The waiters, remarking his rapt attention, and pleased to tempt a customer, stretched out a dish, Tom extended his paw and gingerly took a cake — then a second — then a third: the waiters seemed never tired of offering, or Tom of accepting these delicacies, and so, when the galop ended and the dancers returned to the crush-room, he had made short work of some dozens of little cakes.

Harlequin had recruited a columbine and a shepherdess, and he introduced these ladies as partners for the promised minuet. With all the air of an old friend he whispered a few words to Tom, who, in the best of humours after so many cakes, replied with his most gracious growl. The harlequin, turning towards the gallery, announced that his lordship had much pleasure in complying with the universal request, and amidst loud applause, the shepherdess took one of Tom’s paws and the columbine the other. Tom, for his part, like an accomplished cavalier, walked between his two partners, glancing at them by turns with looks of some surprise, and soon found himself with them in the middle of the pit of the theatre which was used as a ball-room. All took their places, some in the boxes, others in the galleries, the greater number forming a circle round the dancers. The band struck up.

The minuet was Tom’s greatest triumph and Fan’s masterpiece, and with the very first steps success was assured and went on increasing with each movement, till at the last figure the applause became delirious. Tom was swept off in triumph to a stage box where the shepherdess, removing her wreath of roses, crowned him with it, whilst the whole theatre resounded with the applause of the spectators.

Tom leant over the front of the box with a grace all his own; at the same time the strains of a fresh dance were heard, and everyone hurried to secure partners except a few courtiers of the new star who hovered round in hope of extracting an order for the play from him, but Tom only replied to their broadest hints with his perpetual ‘Grroonnn.’

By degrees this became rather monotonous, and gradually Tom’s court dwindled away, people murmuring that, though his dancing powers were certainly unrivalled, his conversation was a trifle insipid. An hour later Tom was alone! So fleeting is public favour.

And now the hour of departure drew near. The pit was thinning and the boxes empty, and pale rays of morning light were glinting into the hall when the box-opener, who was going her rounds, heard sounds of snoring proceeding from one of the stage boxes. She opened the door, and there was Tom, who, tired out after his eventful night, had fallen fast asleep on the floor. The box-opener stepped in and politely hinted that it was six o’clock and time to go home.

‘Grrooonnn,’ said Tom.

‘I hear you,’ said the box-opener; ‘you’re asleep, my good man, but you’ll sleep better still in your own bed. Come, come, your wife must be getting quite anxious! Upon my word I don’t believe he hears a word I say. How heavily he sleeps!’ And she shook him by the shoulder.

‘Grrrooonnn!’

‘All right, all right! This isn’t a time to make believe. Besides, we all know you. There now, they’re putting out the lights. Shall I send for a cab for you?’

‘Grrroooonnn.’

‘Come, come, the Odéon Theatre isn’t an inn; come, be off! Oh, *that’s* what you’re after, is it? Fie, Monsieur Odry, fie! I shall call the guard; the inspector hasn’t gone to bed yet. Ah, indeed! You won’t obey rules! You are trying to beat me, are you? You would beat a woman — and a former artiste to M. Odry, would you? For shame! But we shall see. Here, help — police — inspector — help!’

‘What’s the matter?’ cried the fireman on duty.

‘Help!’ screamed the box-opener, ‘help!’

‘What’s the matter?’ asked the sergeant commanding the patrol.

‘Oh, it’s old mother what’s her name, shrieking for help in one of the stage boxes.’

‘Coming!’ shouted the sergeant.

‘This way, Mr. Sergeant, this way,’ cried the box-opener.

‘All right, my dear, here I am. But where are you?’

‘Don’t be afraid; there are no steps — straight on this way — he’s in the corner. Oh, the rascal, he’s as strong as a Turk!’

‘Grrrooonnn,’ said Tom.

‘There, do you hear him? Is that to be called a Christian language?’

‘Come, come, my friend,’ said the sergeant, who had at last managed to distinguish Tom in the faint twilight. ‘We all know what it is to be young — no one likes a joke better than I do — but rules are rules, and the hour for going home has struck, so right about face, march! and quick step too.’

‘Grrrooonnn’ —

‘Very pretty; a first-rate imitation. But suppose we try something else now for a change. Come, old fellow, step out with a good will. Ah! you won’t. You’re going to cut up rough, are you? Here, my man, lay hold and turn him out.’

‘He won’t walk, sergeant.’

‘Well, what are the butt ends of your muskets for? Come, a tap or two will do no harm.’

‘Grrrooonnn — Grrrooonnn — Grrrooonnn—’

‘Go on, give it him well!’

‘I say, sergeant,’ said one of the men, ‘it strikes me he’s a *real* bear. I caught hold of him by the collar just now, and the skin seems to grow on the flesh.’

‘Oh, if he’s a real bear treat him with every consideration. His owner might claim damages. Go and fetch the fireman’s lantern.’

‘Grrrooonnn.’

‘Here’s the lantern,’ said a man; ‘now then, throw some light on the prisoner.’

The soldier obeyed.

‘It is certainly a real snout,’ declared the sergeant.

‘Goodness gracious me!’ shrieked the box-opener as she took to her heels, ‘a real live bear!’

‘Well, yes, a real live bear. Let’s see if he has any name or address on him and take him home. I expect he has strayed, and being of a sociable disposition, came in to the Masked Ball.’

‘Grrrooonnn.’

‘There, you see, he agrees.’

‘Hallo!’ exclaimed one of the soldiers.

‘What’s the matter?’

‘He has a little bag hung round his neck.’

‘Open the bag.’

‘A card.’

‘Read the card.’

The soldier took it and read:

'My name is Tom. I live at No. 109 Rue Faubourg St.-Denis. I have five francs in my purse. Two for a cab, and three for whoever takes me home.'

'True enough; there are the five francs,' cried the sergeant. 'Now then, two volunteers for escort duty.'

'Here!' cried the guard in chorus.

'Don't all speak at once! Let the two seniors have the benefit of the job; off with you, my lads.'

Two of the municipal guards advanced towards Tom, slipped a rope round his neck and, for precaution's sake, gave it a twist or two round his snout. Tom offered no resistance — the butt ends of the muskets had made him as supple as a glove. When they were fifty yards from the theatre, 'Bah!' said one of the soldiers, ''tis a fine morning. Suppose we don't take a cab. The walk will do him good.'

'Besides,' remarked the other, 'we should each have two and a half francs instead of only one and a half.'

'Agreed.'

Half an hour later they stood at the door of 109. After some knocking, a very sleepy portress looked out.

'Look here, Mother Wideawake,' said one of the guard; 'here's one of your lodgers. Do you recognise him?'

'Why, I should rather think so. It's Monsieur Décamps' bear!'

The same day, Odry the actor received a bill for little cakes, amounting to seven francs and a half.

SAÏ THE PANTHER

From Loudon’s *Magazine of Natural History*.

About seventy or eighty years ago two little panthers were deserted by their mother in one of the forests of Ashantee. They were too young to get food for themselves, and would probably have died had they not been found by a passing traveller, and by him taken to the palace as a present to the king. Here they lived and played happily for several weeks, when one day the elder and larger, whose name was Saï, gave his brother, in fun, such a dreadful squeeze that, without meaning it, he suffocated him. This frightened the king, who did not care to keep such a powerful pet about him, and he gave him away to Mr. Hutchison, an English gentleman, who was a sort of governor for the English traders settled in that part of Africa.

Mr. Hutchison and Saï took a great fancy to each other, and spent a great deal of time together, and when, a few months later, Mr. Hutchison returned to Cape Coast he brought Saï with him. The two friends always had dinner at the same time, Saï sitting at his master’s side and eating quietly whatever was given him. In general he was quite content with his portion, but once or twice, when he was hungrier than usual, he managed to steal a fowl out of the dish. For the sake of his manners the fowl was always taken from him, although he was invariably given some other food to satisfy his hunger.

At first the inhabitants of the castle and the children were much afraid of him, but he soon became very tame, and his teeth and claws were filed so that he should not hurt anyone, even in play. When he got a little accustomed to the place, he was allowed to go where he liked within the castle grounds, and a boy was told off to look after him. Sometimes the boy would go to sleep when he ought to have been watching his charge, and then Saï, who knew perfectly well that this was not at all right, would steal quietly away and amuse himself till he thought his keeper would be awake again. One day, when he returned from his wanderings, he found the boy, as usual, comfortably curled up in a cool corner of the doorstep sound asleep. Saï looked at him for a moment, and then, thinking that it was full time for him to be taught his duty, he gave him one pat on his head, which sent the boy over like a ninepin and gave him a good fright, though it did not do him any harm.

Saï was very popular with everybody, but he had his own favourites, and the chief of these was the governor, whom he could not bear to let out of his sight.

When his master went out he would station himself at the drawing-room window, where he could watch all that was going on, and catch the first sight of his returning friend. Being by this time nearly grown up, Saï's great body took up all the space, to the great disgust of the children, who could see nothing. They tried to make him move, first by coaxings and then by threats, but as Saï did not pay the smallest attention to either one or the other, they at last all took hold of his tail and pulled so hard that he was forced to move.

Strange to say, the black people were a great deal more afraid of Saï than any of the white ones, and one of his pranks nearly caused the death of an old woman who was the object of it. It was her business to sweep out and keep clean the great hall of the castle, and one morning she was crouching down on all fours with a short broom in her hand, thinking of nothing but how to get the dust out of the floor, when Saï, who had hidden himself under a sofa, and was biding his time, suddenly sprang on to her back, where he stood triumphantly. The old woman believed her last hour had come, and the other servants all ran away shrieking, lest it should be their turn next. Saï would not budge from his position till the governor, who had been alarmed by the terrible noise, came to see what was the matter, and soon made Master Saï behave himself.

At this time it was settled that Saï was to travel to England under the care of one of his Cape Coast friends and be presented to the Duchess of York, who was very fond of animals. In those days, of course, journeys took much longer than they do now, and there were other dangers than any which might arise from storms and tempests. While the strong cage of wood and iron was being built which was to form Saï's house on the way to England, his lady keeper thought it would be a good opportunity to make friends with him, and used to spend part of every day talking to him and playing with him; for this, as everyone knows, is the only way to gain the affection of bird or beast. It was very easy to love Saï; he was so gentle and caressing, especially with children; and he was very handsome besides in his silky yellow coat with black spots, which, as the French say, does not spoil anything. Many creatures and many men might have made a great fuss at being shut into a cage instead of being allowed to walk about their own house and grounds, but everyone had always been kind to Saï, so he took for granted it was all right, and made himself as comfortable as he could, and was quite prepared to submit to anything disagreeable that he thought reasonable. But it very nearly happened that poor Saï had no voyage at all, for while he was being hauled from the canoe which had brought him from the shore into the ship, the men were so afraid to come near him that they let his cage fall into the sea, and if the sailors from the vessel had not been very quick in lowering a boat it would have been too late to save him. As it was, for many days he would not look up or eat or speak, and his friend was quite unhappy about him, although the same symptoms have sometimes been shown by human beings who have only been *on* the sea instead of *in* it. At last he was roused from his sad condition by hearing the lady's voice. He raised his head and cocked his ears, first a little, then more; and when she came up to the cage he rolled over and over with delight, and howled and cried and tried to reach her. When he got a little calmer she told him to put his paws through the bars and shake hands, and from that moment Saï was himself again.

Now it was a very strange taste on the part of a panther whose fathers and grandfathers had lived and died in the heart of African forests, but Saï loved nothing so much as lavender water, which white people use a great deal in hot countries. If anyone took out a handkerchief which had been sprinkled with lavender water, Saï would instantly snatch it away, and in his delight would handle it so roughly that it was soon torn to atoms. His friend in charge knew of this odd fancy, and on the voyage she amused herself regularly twice a week with making a little cup of paper, which she filled with the scent and passed through the bars, taking care never to give it him till he had drawn back his claws into their sheaths. Directly he got hold of the cup Saï would roll over and over it, and would pay no attention to anyone as long as the smell lasted. It almost seemed as if he liked it better than his food!

For some reason or other the vessel lay at anchor for nearly two months in the river Gaboon, and Saï might have been allowed to leave his cage if he had not been an animal of such very strong prejudices. Black people he could not endure, and, of course, they came daily in swarms with food for the ship. Pigs, too, he hated, and they ran constantly past his cage, while as for an orang-outang monkey about three feet high, which a black trader once tried to sell to the sailors, Saï showed such mad symptoms at the very sight of it that the poor beast rushed in terror to the other end of the vessel, knocking down everything that came in its way. If the monkey took some time to recover from his fright, it was very long before Saï could forget the shock he had received. Day and night he watched and listened, and sometimes, when he fancied his enemy was near, he would give a low growl and arch his back and set up his tail; yet, as far as we know, he had never from his babyhood killed anything.

But when at last the winds were favourable, and the ship set sail for the open sea, other adventures were in store for the passengers. Pirates infested the coast of Africa in those days, and they came on board and carried off everything of value, including the stores of provisions. The only things they did not think worth removing were the parrots, of which three hundred had been brought by the sailors, and as these birds could not stand the cold, and died off fast as the ship steered north, Saï was allowed one a day, which just managed to keep him alive. Still, there is very little nourishment to be got out of a parrot, especially when you eat it with the feathers on, and Saï soon became very ill and did not care even for parrots. His keeper felt his nose and found it dry and feverish, so she begged that she might take him out of his cage and doctor him herself. A little while before, Saï would have been enchanted to be free, but now he was too ill to enjoy anything, and he just stretched himself out on deck, with his head on his mistress's feet. Luckily she had some fever medicine with her, good for panthers as well as men and women, and she made up three large pills which she hoped might cure Saï. Of course it was not to be expected that he would take them of his own free will, so she got the boy who looked after him to hold open his mouth, while she pushed down the pills. Then he was put back into his cage, the boy insisting on going with him, and both slept comfortably together. In a few days, with the help of better food than he had been having, he got quite well, and on his arrival in England won the admiration of the Duchess of York, his new mistress, by his beauty and gentle ways. As his country house was not quite ready for him, he was left for a few weeks with a man who understood animals, and seemed contented and happy, and was allowed to walk about as he liked. Here the Duchess of York used constantly to visit him and play with him, even going to see him the very day before he — and she — were to move into the country. He was in excellent spirits, and appeared perfectly well, but he must somehow have taken a chill, for when, on the following day, the Duchess's coachman came to fetch him, he found poor Saï had died after a few hours' illness from inflammation of the lungs.

After all he is not so much to be pitied. He had had a very happy life, with plenty of fun and plenty of kindness, and he had a very rapid and painless death.

THE BUZZARD AND THE PRIEST

Bingley’s *Animal Biography*.

About one hundred and forty years ago a French priest received a present of a large brown and grey bird, which had been taken in a snare intended for some other creature, and was very wild and savage. The man who brought it was quite ignorant what kind of bird it was, but the priest knew it to be the common buzzard, and made up his mind to try to tame it. He began by keeping it shut up, and allowing it to take no food except out of his hand, and after about six weeks of this treatment it grew much quieter, and had learnt to know its master. The priest then thought it would be safe to give the buzzard a little more freedom, and after carefully tying its wings, so that it could not fly away, he turned it out into the garden. Of course it was highly delighted to find itself in the sun once more, and hopped about with joy, and the time passed quickly till it began to get hungry, when it was glad to hear its master calling it to come in to dinner. Indeed, the bird always seemed so fond of the priest, that in a few days he thought he might leave it quite free, so he unfastened its wings and left them loose, merely hanging a label with his own name round its neck, and putting a little bell round its leg. But what was the poor man’s disgust, to see the buzzard instantly spread out its great wings and make for the neighbouring forest, deaf to all his calls! He naturally expected that, in spite of his trouble and precautions, the bird had flown away for ever, and sat sadly down to prepare his next day’s sermon. Now sermons are things that take up a great deal of attention, and he had almost forgotten his lost favourite when he was startled by a tremendous noise in the hall outside his study, and on opening the door to see what was the matter, he saw his buzzard rushing about, followed by five others, who were so jealous of its copper plate and bell, that they had tried to peck them off, and the poor thing had flown as fast as it could to its master’s house, where it knew it was safe.

After this it took care not to wander too far from home, and came back every night to sleep on the priest’s window sill. Soon it grew bolder still, and would sit on the corner of the table when he was at dinner, and now and then would rub his head against his shoulder, uttering a low cry of affection and pleasure. Sometimes it would even do more, and follow him for several miles when he happened to be riding.

But the buzzard was not the only pet the priest had to look after. There were ducks, and chickens, and dogs, and four large cats. The ducks and chickens it did not mind, at least those that belonged to the house, and it would even take its bath at the same time with the ducklings, and never trod upon them when they got in its way, or got cross and pecked them. And if hawks or any such birds tried to snap up the little ones who had left their mother's wing to take a peep at the world, the buzzard would instantly fly to their help, and never once was beaten in the battle. Curiously enough, however, it seemed to think it might do as it liked with the fowls and ducks that belonged to other people, and so many were the complaints of cocks and hens lamed and killed, that the priest was obliged to let it be known that he would pay for all such damage, in order to save his favourite's life. As to dogs and cats, it always got the better of *them*; in any experiment which it amused the priest to make. One day he threw a piece of raw meat into the garden where the cats were collected, to be scrambled for. A young and active puss instantly seized it and ran away with her prize, with all the other cats after her. But quick as she was, the buzzard, who had been watching her movements from the bough of a tree, was quicker still. Down it pounced on her back, squeezed her sides with its claws, and bit her ears so sharply, that she was forced to let go. In one moment another cat had picked the morsel up in its teeth, but it did not hold it long. The process that had answered for one cat would answer for a second, as the buzzard very well knew. Down he swooped again, and even when the whole four cats, who saw in him a common enemy, attacked the bird at once, they proved no match for him, and in the end they were clever enough to find that out.

It is not easy to know what buzzards in general think about things, but this one hated scarlet as much as any bull. Whenever he saw a red cap on any of the peasants' heads, he would hide himself among the thick boughs overhanging the road where the man had to pass, and would nip it off so softly that the peasant never felt his loss. He would even manage to take off the wigs which every one wore then, and that was cleverer still, and off he would carry both wigs and caps to a tall tree in a park near by, and hang them all over it, like a new kind of fruit.

As may be imagined, a bird so bold made many enemies, and was often shot at by the keepers, but for a long time it appeared to bear a charmed life, and nothing did it any harm. However, one unlucky day a keeper who was going his rounds in the forest, and who did not know what a strange and clever bird this buzzard was, saw him on the back of a fox which he had attacked for want of something better to do, and fired two shots at them. One shot killed the fox; the other broke the wing of the buzzard, but he managed to fly out of reach of the keeper, and hid himself. Meanwhile the tinkling of the bell made the keeper guess that this must be the priest's pet, of which he had so often heard; and being anxious to do what he could to repair the damage he had done, he at once told the priest what had happened. The priest went out directly to the forest, and gave his usual whistle, but neither on that evening nor on several others was there any reply. At last on the seventh night he heard a low answer, and on searching narrowly all through the wood, the priest found the poor buzzard, which had hopped nearly two miles towards its old home, dragging its broken wing after it. The bird was very thin, but was enchanted to see his old master, who carried him home and nursed him for six weeks, when he got quite well, and was able to fly about as boldly as ever.

COWPER AND HIS HARES

From Bingley’s *British Quadrupeds*.

No one was fonder of animals, or kinder to them, than Cowper the poet, who lived towards the end of the last century; but of all creatures he loved hares best, perhaps because he, like them, was timid and easily frightened. He has left a very interesting account of three hares that were given to him when he was living in the country in the year 1774, and as far as possible the poet shall tell his own story of the friendship between himself and his pets — Puss, Tiney, and Bess, as he called them.

Cowper was not at all a strong man, and suffered terribly from fits of low spirits, and at these times he could not read, and disliked the company of people, who teased him by giving him advice or asking him questions. It was during one of these seasons of solitude and melancholy that he noticed a poor little hare belonging to the children of one of his neighbours, who, without meaning really to be unkind, had worried the little thing almost to death. Soon they got tired even of playing with it, and the poor hare was in danger of being starved to death, when their father, whose heart was more tender than theirs, proposed that it should be given to their neighbour Mr. Cowper.

Now Cowper, besides feeling pity for the poor little creature, felt that he should like to teach and train it, and as just then he was too unhappy to care for his usual occupations, he gladly accepted the present. In a very short time Puss was given two companions, Tiney and Bess, and could have had dozens more if Cowper had wanted them, for the villagers offered to catch him enough to have filled the whole countryside if he would only give the order.

However, Cowper decided that three would be ample for his purposes, and as he wished them to learn nice clean habits, he began with his own hands to build them a house. The house contained a large hall and three bedrooms, each with a separate bed, and it was astonishing how soon every hare knew its own bedroom, and how careful he was (for in spite of their names they were all males) never to go into those of his friends.

Very soon all three made themselves much at home in their comfortable quarters, and Puss, the first comer, would jump on his master’s lap and, standing up on his hind legs, would bite the hair on his temples. He enjoyed being carried about like a baby, and would even go to sleep in Cowper’s arms, which is a very strange thing for a hare to do. Once Puss got ill, and then the poet took care to keep him apart from the other two, for animals have a horror of their sick companions, and are generally very unkind to them. So he nursed Puss himself, and gave him all sorts of herbs and grasses as medicine, and at last Puss began to get better, and took notice of what was going on round him. When he was strong enough to take his first little walk, his pleasure knew no bounds; and in token of his gratitude he licked his master's hand, first back, then front, and then between every finger. As soon as he felt himself quite strong again, he went with the poet every day, after breakfast, into the garden, where he lay all the morning under a trailing cucumber, sometimes asleep, but every now and then eating a leaf or two by way of luncheon. If the poet was ever later than usual in leaving the house, Puss would down on his knees and look up into his eyes with a pleading expression, or, if these means failed, he would seize his master's coat between his teeth, and pull as hard as he could towards the window. Puss was, perhaps, the pleasantest of all the hares, but Bess, who died young, was the cleverest and most amusing. He had his little tempers, and when he was not feeling very well, he was glad to be petted and made much of; but no sooner had he recovered than he resented any little attentions, and would growl and run away or even bite if you attempted to touch him. It was impossible really to tame Tiney, but there was something so serious and solemn in all he did, that it made you laugh even to watch him.

Bess, the third, was very different from the other two. He did not need taming, for he was tame from the beginning, as it never entered into his head that anyone could be unkind to him. In many things he had the same tastes as his friends. All three loved lettuces, dandelions, and oats; and every night little dishes were placed in their bedrooms, in case they might feel hungry. One day their master was clearing out a birdcage while his three hares were sitting by, and he placed on the floor a pot containing some white sand, such as birds use instead of a carpet. The moment they saw the sand, they made a rush for it and ate it up greedily. Cowper took the hint, and always saw, after that, that sand was placed where the hares could get at it.

After supper they all spent the evenings in the parlour, and would tumble over together, and jump over each other's backs, and see which could spring the farthest, just like a set of kittens. But the cleverest of them all was Bess, and he was also the strongest.

Poor Bess! he was the first to die, soon after he was grown up, and Tiney and Puss had to get on as best they could without him, which was not half as much fun. There was no one now to invent queer games, or to keep the cat in order when it tried to take liberties; and no one, too, to prevent Tiney from bullying Puss, as he was rather fond of doing. Tiney lived to be nine, quite a respectable age for a hare, and died at last from the effects of a fall. Puss went on for another three years, and showed no signs of decay, except that he was a little less playful, which was only to be expected. His last act was to make friends with a dog called Marquis, to whom he was introduced by his master; and though the spaniel could not take the place of Puss's early companions, he was better than nobody, and the two got on quite happily together, till the sad day (March 9, 1796) when Puss stretched himself at his master's feet and died peacefully and without pain, aged eleven years and eleven months.

A RAT TALE

Huggy was an old rat when he died — very old indeed. He was born in the middle of a corn-rick, and there he might have lived his little life had not the farmer who owned the rick caused it to be pulled down. That was Huggy's first experience of flitting, and it was done in such a hurry that he had hardly time to be sorry. It was pitch dark when his mother shook him up roughly and told him to 'come along, or he would be killed by the farmer,' and poor Huggy, blinking his sleepy eyes, struggled out of his snug little bed into the cold black night.

Several old rats met him at the entrance, and sternly bade him stay where he was and make no noise, for the leader was about to speak. Huggy was wide-awake by this time. The rat spirit of adventure was roused within him by the scent of coming danger, and eagerly he listened to the shrill, clear voice of the leader:

'Friends, old and young, this is not a time for many words, but I want you all to know the cause of this sudden disturbance. Last night I was scavenging round the farmer's kitchen, seeking what I might devour, when in came the stable-boy tapping an empty corn-sieve which he had in his hand. He said a few words to the farmer, who rose hastily, and together they left the kitchen, I following at a convenient distance. They went straight to the stable, and talked for some time with their backs to the corn-bin, which was standing open in the window. After a while I managed to scramble up and peer into it, only to confirm what I dreaded most — the corn-bin was empty! To-morrow they will pull down this rick, thresh the corn, and replenish the empty bin. So, my friends, unless we mean to die by dog, stick, or fork, we had better be off as soon as it is daylight.'

There was a shuffle of feet all round, and a general rush of anxious mothers into the rick to fetch out their young. Huggy was waiting at the entrance; so, as soon as he caught sight of his mother, he raced off with her to join the fast-assembling crowd at the back of the rick. The leader ranged them in lines of ten abreast, and, after walking up and down to see that all were in their places, he gave a shrill squeak, and the column started. They marched steadily for about two miles — slowly, of course, because of the young ones. Nothing proved an obstacle to them. Sometimes a high wall crossed their path, but they merely ran up one side and down the other, as if it was level road. Sometimes it was a broad river which confronted them, but that they swam without hesitation — rats will not stop at such trifles.

At length they came to a field where a man with a pair of horses was ploughing. His coat, in which his dinner was wrapt, lay on the wall some little distance from him. Seeing such a number of rats, he left his horses and ran for his life, and hid behind a knoll, whence he could view the proceedings without himself being seen. To his great disgust, he saw the creatures first crowd round his coat, then run over it, and finally eat out of his pocket the bread and cheese his wife had provided for his dinner!

That was a stroke of luck for the rats. They had not counted on so early a breakfast; so it was with lightsome hearts they performed the rest of their journey.

Huggy was very glad when it was over. He had never been so far in his life — he was only three weeks old. Their new home proved to be a cellar, which communicated on one side with sundry pipes running straight to the kitchen, and on the other with a large ventilator opening to the outside air. A paradise for rats! and as to the inhabitants of the house — we shall see.

It was early in the afternoon when they arrived, so they had plenty of time to settle down before night. Huggy, having selected his corner, left his mother to make it comfortable for him, and scampered off for ‘a poke round,’ as he called it. First he went to the kitchen, peeped up through a hole in the floor, and, seeing no one about, cautiously crept out and sniffed into all the cupboards. As he was emerging from the last he beheld a sight which made his little heart turn sick. There, in a corner which Huggy had not noticed before, lay a huge dog half asleep! And so great was Huggy’s fright that he squeaked, very faintly indeed, yet loud enough to set Master Dog upon his feet. Next minute they were both tearing across the kitchen. Huggy was a wee bit in front, but so little that he could feel the dog’s hot breath behind him. There was the hole — bump — scrabble, scrabble — Huggy was safe! Safe! yes — but oh, so frightened! — and what made him smart so dreadfully? Why, his tail ... was gone — bitten off by the dog! Ah, Huggy, my poor little rat, if it had not been for that foolish little squeak of fright you might have been as other rats are — but now! Huggy almost squeaked again, it was so very sad — and painful. Slowly he crept back to the cellar, where he had to endure the jeers of his young companions and the good advice of his elders.

It was some weeks before Huggy fully recovered himself, and more weeks still before he could screw up his courage to appear among his companions as the ‘tailless rat;’ but at long and at last he did crawl out, and, because he looked so shy and frightened, the other rats were merciful, and let him alone. The old rat, too — the leader — took a great fancy to him, and used to allow Huggy to accompany him on his various exploits, which was considered a great privilege among the older rats, and Huggy was very proud of it. One night he and the leader were out together, when their walk happened to take them (as it generally did) round by the pantry. As a matter of course, they went in, and had a good meal off a loaf which the careless table-maid had left standing on the shelf. Beside the loaf was a box of matches, and Huggy could not be happy till he had found out what was inside. First he gnawed the box a little, then he dragged it up and down, then he gnawed a little more, and, finding it was not very good to eat, he began to play with it. Suddenly, without any warning, there was a splutter and a flare. Huggy and the leader were outside in a twinkling, leaving the pantry in a blaze. Luckily no great damage was done, for the flames were seen and put out in time.

So, little by little, Huggy was led on. In vain did his mother plead with him to be careful. He was 'a big rat now, and could look after himself,' he said. The following week the leader organised a party to invade the hen-house. Of course Huggy was among the number chosen. It required no little skill to creep noiselessly up the broken ladder, visiting the various nests ranged along each side of the walls; for laying hens are nervous ladies, and, if startled, make enough noise to waken a town. But the leader had selected his party well, and not a sound was made till the proper time came. Once up the ladder, each rat took it in turn to slip in behind the hen, and gently roll one egg at a time from under her. The poor birds rarely resisted; experience had taught them long since the futility of such conduct. It was the young and ignorant fowls who gave all the trouble; they fluttered about in a fright and disturbed the whole house. But the rats knew pretty well which to go to; so they worked on without interruption. When they had collected about a dozen eggs, the next move was to take them safely down the ladder into the cellar. This was very soon done. Huggy lay down on his back, nestled an egg cosily between himself and his two front paws; a feather was put through his mouth, by which means a rat on either side dragged him along. Huggy found it rather rough on his back going down the ladder, but, with a good supper in view, he could bear most things. The eggs having been brought thus to the level of the ground, the rats dragged them in the same way slowly and carefully down to the cellar.

So time went on. Night after night parties of rats went out, and each morning they returned with tales of adventure and cunning — all more or less daring. But the leader was getting old. Huggy had noticed for some time how grey and feeble he was becoming; nor was he much surprised when, one day, the leader told him that he (Huggy) would have to take his place as leader of the rats. Two days after this the old rat died, leaving Huggy to succeed him; and a fine lot of scrapes did that rat and his followers get into.

The larder was their favourite haunt, where joints of meat were hung on hooks ‘quite out o’ reach o’ them rats,’ as the cook said. But Huggy thought differently, and in a trice ten large rats had run up the wall and down the hook, and were gobbling the meat as fast as they could. But there was one hook in the centre of the ceiling which Huggy could not reach; from this hook a nice fat duck was suspended by a string. ‘If only I could get on to that hook I should gnaw the string, and the duck would fall, and — —’

Huggy got no further. An idea had come to him which he communicated quickly to the others. The plan seemed to be appreciated, for they all ran to an old chair, which was standing just under this difficult centre hook. The strongest rat went first, climbed up the back of the chair, and balanced himself on the top; Number 2 followed, and carefully balanced on Number 1; Number 1 then squeaked, which meant he could bear no more. It was a pity he could not stand *one* more; for, as they were, the topmost rat could just reach the prize, and though he nibbled all round as far as he could, it was not what might be called ‘a square meal.’ The cook was indeed amazed when, next morning, she found only three-fourths of her precious duck remaining. ‘Ah!’ she said, ‘I’ll be even with you yet, you cunning beasts!’ And that night she sliced up part of a duck with some cheese, and put it in a plate on the larder floor. At his usual hour, when all was dark and quiet, Huggy and his followers arrived, and, seeing their much-coveted prize under their very noses, were cautious. But Huggy was up to the trick. ‘To-night and to-morrow night you may eat it,’ he said, ‘but beware of the third.’ So they partook of the duck, and enjoyed it that night and the next, but the third the dish was left untouched.

The cook was up betimes that morning, so that she might bury the corpses before breakfast. Her dog (the same who had robbed Huggy of his tail), according to his custom, followed her into the larder. On seeing the plate just as she had left it the night before, the cook, in her astonishment, forgot the dog, who, finding no one gainsay him, licked the dish with infinite relish. Poor dog! In spite of all efforts to save him he died ten minutes afterwards; and the cook learnt her lesson also, for she never tried poisoning rats again.

Here end the chief events of Huggy’s life — all, at least, that are worth recording.

Some years after the death of the dog I was sitting in the gloaming close to a steep path which led from the cellar down to the river, when what should I see but three large rats coming slowly towards me. The middle one was the largest, and evidently blind, for he had in his mouth a long straw, by which the other two led him carefully down the path. As the trio passed I recognised the centre one to be Huggy the Tailless.

Next morning my little Irish terrier, Jick, brought him to me in his mouth, dead; and I buried him under a Gloire de Dijon in a sunny corner of the garden.

Fantastic as some of the incidents may sound, they are, nevertheless, true, having been collected mainly from an old rat-catcher living in the town of Hawick.

SNAKE STORIES

In 1850 Baron de Wogan, a French gentleman, left his native land and set sail for North America, to seek his fortune and adventures. He was descended from two noble adventurers, the Wogan who led a cavalry troop from Dover to the Highlands, to fight for Charles II., and the Wogan who rescued Queen Clementina, wife of James III., from prison in Innspruck. In 1850 adventures, wild beasts, and Red Indians were more plentiful than now, and Wogan had some narrow escapes from snakes and bears. Soon after coming to North America he had his first adventure with a rattlesnake; he was then camping at the gold fields of California, seeking for gold in order to have money enough to start on his voyages of discovery. His house was a log hut, built by himself, and his bed a sack filled with dry oak leaves.

One day, finding that his mattress required renewing, he went out with the sack and his gun. Having filled the sack with leaves, he went off with his gun in search of game for his larder, and only came home at nightfall. After having cooked and eaten his supper, he threw himself on his new mattress, and soon was asleep. He awoke about three, and would soon have fallen asleep again, but he felt something moving in the sack. His first thought was that it was a rat, but he soon felt by the way it moved that it was no quadruped, but a reptile, no rat, but a snake! He must have put it in the sack with the leaves, as might easily happen in winter when these creatures are torpid from the cold, and sleep all curled up. With one leap the Baron was out of its reach, but wishing to examine it more closely, he took his gun to protect him in case of danger, and came near the bed again; but the ungrateful beast, forgetting that they had been bedfellows, threw itself on the gun and began to bite the muzzle. Fearing that it might turn and bite him next the Baron pulled the trigger, and hitting the serpent, literally cut it in two. It measured two feet long, and when the Baron cut off its tail, he found a quantity of scales which made the rattling sound from which this serpent gets its name.

As soon as the Baron had found enough gold, he bought a mule whom he called Cadi, and whom he became very fond of, and set off into the backwoods in search of sport and adventure. (Poor Cadi eventually met a terrible end, but that is a Bear story.) He soon added another companion, a young Indian girl, Calooa by name. She was the daughter of a chief of the Utah tribe, and had been taken prisoner, with several other women, by a tribe of hostile Indians whom the

Baron fell in with. She would have been tortured and then burnt with the other prisoners had the Baron not saved her life by buying her for a silk handkerchief, a knife and fork, and some coloured pictures. She wandered with him and shared all his adventures, till she was found again by her tribe and taken back to them. One hot day they had been marching together about thirty miles through a country infested with panthers and pumas. The Baron was heading the little procession, when suddenly a cry from Calooa that she only used in moments of danger made him turn round. Then he saw that what he had taken to be a huge rotten branch of a tree, and had even thought of taking with him for their camp fire, that evening, was in reality an enormous serpent. It lay across the path asleep, its head resting on the trunk of a tree. The Baron raised his gun to his shoulder, and came nearer the monster to get a good aim. He fired, but missed. The horrid creature reared itself nearly on end and looked at him with that fixed stare by which the serpent fascinates and paralyses its victim. The Baron felt all the fascination, but conquering it, he fired a second time, and this time wounded the creature without killing it outright. Though mortally wounded, the snake's dying struggles were so violent that the young trees all round were levelled as if they had been cut with a scythe. As soon as they were sure that life was extinct, Calooa and the Baron came nearer to examine the snake's dead body. Though part of his tail was missing, he measured nevertheless five yards long and eighteen inches round. Thinking that it seemed of unusual girth, the Baron cut it open with an axe, and found inside the body of a young prairie wolf, probably about a week old. The peculiarity of this snake was that it gave out a strong odour of musk, like the sea serpent in Mr. Kipling's book.

The most horrible serpent that the Baron encountered and slew was the horned snake; he learned afterwards from the Indians that it is the most deadly of all the snakes of North America, for not only is its bite venomous, but its tail has a sting which contains the same poison. It crawls like other snakes, but when it attacks it forms itself into a circle, and then suddenly unbending itself flings itself like a lion on its victim, head forward and tail raised, thus attacking with both ends at once. If by chance it misses its aim and its tail strikes a young tree and penetrates the bark, that tree immediately begins to droop, and before long withers and dies. On the occasion when the Baron encountered it, Calooa and he had been fleeing all night fearing an attack of hostile Indians. About daylight they ventured to stop to take rest and food. While Calooa lit the fire the Baron took his gun and went in search of game. In about half an hour he returned with a wild turkey. When they had cooked and eaten it, he lay down and fell asleep, but had only slept two hours when he awoke, feeling his hand touched. It was Calooa, who woke him with a terror-stricken face. Looking in the direction she pointed, he saw about fifty yards away an enormous horned snake wound round a branch of sassafras. It was lying in wait for a poor little squirrel, that cowered in the hollow of an oak. As soon as the squirrel dared to show even the tip of its nose, the serpent flung itself at it, but in vain, as its great head could not get into the hole.

‘Fortunately,’ the Baron says, ‘my gun was by my side. I rose and went to the rescue of the defenceless little creature. When the serpent saw me he knew he had another sort of enemy to deal with, and hissing furiously hurled himself in my direction, though without quitting his branch. I stopped and took aim. The serpent evidently understood my attitude perfectly, for unwinding himself he began to crawl with all his speed towards me. Between us there was fortunately an obstacle, a fallen chestnut tree; to reach me he must either climb over it or go round, and he was too furious to put up with any delay. Ten paces from the tree I waited for him to appear, one knee on the ground, my gun at my shoulder, and the other elbow resting on my knee to steady my aim. At last I saw his horrid head appear above the fallen tree, at the same moment I fired, and the ball pierced his head through and through, though without instantly killing him. Quick as lightning he wound himself round a branch, lashing out with his tail in all directions. It was his dying struggle; slowly his fury subsided, and uncoiling himself he fell dead alongside the tree. I measured him and found he was eight feet long, and seven or eight inches round. He was dark brown, and his head had two horns, or rather hard knobs. Wishing to carry away some souvenir to remember him by when I should be at home again in France, I tried to cut off his horns, but found it impossible. Out of curiosity I then took an axe and cut him open, when I found inside a little bird, dazed but living. Presently it revived and began to flutter about, and soon flew away among the bushes and was lost to sight. I did not then know that this is a common occurrence, and that when the Indians find a serpent asleep, as is generally the case after the creature has gorged itself, they hit it on the head with a stick, which makes it throw up what it has swallowed whole, and its victims are often still living.’

Calooa on one occasion had a narrow escape. She had put her hand into a hollow in a branch of a cherry-tree where was a blue jay’s nest, to take eggs as she thought. Hardly had she put in her hand when she screamed with pain; a rattlesnake that had taken possession of the nest had stung her. The Baron, much alarmed, expected to see Calooa die before his eyes. He did not know of the remedy the Indians use for snake bites. Calooa herself was quite undisturbed, and hunted about among the bushes till she found the plant she knew of, then crushing some of the leaves between two stones, she applied them to the bite, and in a couple of hours was completely cured.

Besides these snakes the Baron learned from the Indians that there is another even more dangerous, not from its sting, which is not poisonous, but because it winds itself round its victim, and strangles him to death. Fortunately the Baron never met one, or he would probably not have lived to tell his snake stories.

WHAT ELEPHANTS CAN DO

Long, long ago the earth was very different from what it is now, and was covered with huge forests made up of enormous trees, and in these forests there roamed immense beasts, whose skeletons may sometimes be seen in our museums.

Of all these beasts there is only one remaining, and that is the elephant. Now the elephant is so big and shapeless that he makes one think he has been turned out by a child who did not know how to finish his work properly. He seems to need some feet badly and to want pinching about his body. He would also be the better for a more imposing tail; but such as he is, the elephant is more useful and interesting than many creatures of ten times his beauty. Large and clumsy though he may be, he alone of all animals has 'between his eyes a serpent for a hand,' and he turns his trunk to better account than most men do their two hands.

Ever since we first read about elephants in history they were just the same as they are now. They have not learnt, from associating with men, fresh habits which they hand down from father to son; each elephant, quick though he is to learn, has to be taught everything over again.

Yet there is no beast who has lived in such unbroken contact with man for so many thousands of years. We do not know when he first began to be distinguished for his qualities from the other wild animals, but as far back as we can trace the sculptures which adorn the Indian temples the elephant has a place. Several hundred years before Christ, the Greek traveller Herodotus was passing through Babylon and found a large number of elephants employed in the daily life of the city, and from time to time we catch glimpses of them in Eastern warfare, though it was not till the third century B.C. that they were introduced into Europe by Alexander the Great. The Mediterranean nations were quick to see the immense profit to which the elephant could be put, both in respect to the great weights he could carry, and also for his extraordinary teachableness. In India at the present day he performs all kinds of varied duties, and many are the stories told about his cleverness, for he is the only animal that can be taught to push as well as pull.

Most of us have seen elephants trained to perform in a circus, and there is something rather sad in watching their great clumsy bodies gambolling about in a way that is unnatural as well as ungraceful. But there is no question as to the amount that elephants can be taught, particularly by kindness, or how skilfully they will revenge themselves for any ill-treatment.

In the early part of this century an elephant was sent by a lady in India as a present to the Duke of Devonshire, who had a large villa at Chiswick.

This lucky captive had a roomy house of its own, built expressly for it in the park, a field to walk about in, and a keeper to look after it, and to do a little light gardening besides. This man treated the elephant (a female) with great kindness, and they soon became the best of friends. The moment he called out she stopped, and at his bidding would take a broom in her trunk and sweep the dead leaves off the grass; after which she would carefully carry after him a large pail of water for him to re-fill his watering pot — for in those days the garden-hose was not invented. When the tidying up was all done, the elephant was given a carrot and some of the water, but very often the keeper would amuse himself with handing her a soda-water bottle tightly corked, and telling her to empty it. This she did by placing the bottle in an inclined position on the ground and holding it at the proper angle with her foot, while she twisted the cork out with her trunk. This accomplished, she would empty all the water into her trunk without spilling a drop, and then hand the bottle back to her keeper.

In India small children are often given into the charge of an elephant, and it is wonderful to see what care the animals take of them. One elephant took such a fancy to a small baby, that it used to stand over its cradle, and drive away the flies that teased it while it slept. When it grew restless the elephant would rock the cradle, or gently lift it to the floor and let it crawl about between its legs, till the child at last declined to take any food unless her friend was by to see her eat it.

Amazing tales have been told of what elephants can be trained to do, but none is stranger than a story related by a missionary named Caunter, about some wild elephants in Ceylon. Some native soldiers who had been set to guard a large storehouse containing rice, were suddenly ordered off to put down a rising in a village a little distance away. Hardly were their backs turned when a wild elephant was seen advancing to the storehouse, which was situated in a lonely place, and after walking carefully round it, he returned whence he came. In a short time he was noticed advancing for the second time, accompanied by a whole herd of elephants, all marching in an orderly and military manner.

Now in order to secure the granary as much as possible, the only entrance had been made in the roof, and had to be reached by a ladder. This was soon found out by the elephants, who examined the whole building attentively, and being baffled in their designs, retired to consult as to what they should do next. Finally one of the largest among them began to attack one of the corners with his tusks, and some of the others followed his example. When the first relay was tired out, another set took its place, but all their efforts seemed useless; the building was too strong for them. At length a third elephant came forward and attacked the place at which the others had laboured with such ill-success, and, by a prodigious effort, he managed to loosen one brick. After this it did not take long to dig a hole big enough to let the whole herd pass through, and soon the two spectators, hidden in a banyan-tree, saw little companies of three or four enter the granary and take their fill of rice until they all were satisfied. The last batch were still eating busily, when a shrill noise from the sentinel they had set on guard caused them to rush out. From afar they could perceive the white dress of the soldiers who had subdued the unruly villagers and were returning to their post, and the elephants, trunks in air, took refuge in the jungle, and only wagged their tails mockingly at the bullets sent after them by the discomfited soldiers.

THE DOG OF MONTARGIS

For three days Aubrey de Montdidier had not been seen by his friends and comrades in arms. On Sunday morning he had attended mass in the Church of Our Lady, but it was noticed that in the afternoon he was absent from the great tournament which was held at Saint Katherine’s. This astonished his friend the young Sieur de Narsac, who had appointed to meet him there, that they might watch together the encounter between a Burgundian knight and a gentleman from Provence, both renowned in tilting, who were to meet together for the first time that day in Paris. It was unlike Aubrey to fail to be present on such an occasion, and when for three successive days he did not appear at his accustomed haunts, his friends grew anxious, and began to question among themselves whether some accident might not have befallen him. Early on the morning of the fourth day De Narsac was awakened by a continuous sound, as of something scratching against his door. Starting up to listen, he heard, in the intervals of the scratching, a low whine, as of a dog in pain. Thoroughly aroused, he got up and opened the door. Stretched before it, apparently too weak to stand, was a great, gaunt greyhound, spent with exhaustion and hunger. His ribs stood out like the bars of a gridiron beneath his smooth coat; his tongue hung down between his jaws, parched and stiff; his eyes were bloodshot, and he trembled in every limb.

On seeing De Narsac the poor creature struggled to his feet, feebly wagged his tail, and thrust his nose into the young man’s hands. Then only did De Narsac recognise in the half-starved skeleton before him the favourite dog and constant companion of his friend, Aubrey de Montdidier. It was clear from the poor animal’s emaciated appearance that it was in the last stage of exhaustion. Summoning his servant, De Narsac ordered food and water to be brought at once, and the dog devoured the huge meal set before it. From his starved appearance, and from the voracity with which he devoured the food set before him, it was evident that he had had nothing to eat for some days. No sooner was his hunger appeased than he began to move uneasily about the room. Uttering low howls of distress from time to time, he approached the door; then, returning to De Narsac’s side, he looked up in his face and gently tugged at his mantle, as if to attract attention. There was something at once so appealing and peculiar in the dog’s behaviour that De Narsac’s curiosity was aroused, and he became convinced that there was some connection between the dog’s starved appearance and strange manner and the unaccountable disappearance of his master. Perhaps the dog might supply the clue to Aubrey’s place of concealment. Watching the dog’s behaviour closely, De Narsac became aware that the dumb beast was inviting him to accompany him. Accordingly he yielded to the dog’s apparent wish, and, leaving the house, followed him out into the streets of Paris.

Looking round from time to time to see that De Narsac was coming after him, the greyhound pursued its way through the narrow, tortuous streets of the ancient city, over the Bridge, and out by the Porte St.-Martin, into the open country outside the gates of the town. Then, continuing on its track, the dog headed for the Forest of Bondy, a place of evil fame in those far-off days, as its solitudes were known to be infested by bands of robbers. Stopping suddenly in a deep and densely wooded glade of the wood, the dog uttered a succession of low, angry growls; then, tugging at De Narsac’s mantle, it led him to some freshly turned-up earth, beneath a wide-spreading oak-tree. With a piteous whine the dog stretched himself on the spot, and could not be induced by De Narsac to follow him back to Paris, where he straightway betook himself, as he at once suspected foul play. A few hours later a party of men, guided to the spot by the young Sieur de Narsac, removed the earth and dead leaves and ferns from the hole into which they had been hastily flung, and discovered the murdered body of Aubrey de Montdidier. Hurriedly a litter was constructed of boughs of trees, and, followed by the dog, the body was borne into Paris, where it was soon afterwards buried.

From that hour the greyhound attached himself to the Sieur de Narsac. It slept in his room, ate from his table, and followed close at his heels when he went out of doors. One morning, as the two were threading their way through the crowded Rue St.-Martin, De Narsac was startled by hearing a low, fierce growl from the greyhound. Looking down he saw that the creature was shaking in every limb; his smooth coat was bristling, his tail was straight and stiff, and he was showing his teeth. In another moment he had made a dart from De Narsac’s side, and had sprung on a young gentleman named Macaire, in the uniform of the king’s bodyguard, who, with several comrades in arms, was sauntering along on the opposite side of the street. There was something so sudden in the attack that the Chevalier Macaire was almost thrown on the ground. With their walking-canes he and his friends beat off the dog, and on De Narsac coming up, it was called away, and, still trembling and growling, followed its master down the street.

A few days later the same thing occurred. De Narsac and the Chevalier Macaire chanced to encounter each other walking in the royal park. In a moment the dog had rushed at Macaire, and, with a fierce spring at his throat, had tried to pull him to the ground. De Narsac and some officers of the king’s bodyguard came to Macaire’s assistance, and the dog was called off. The rumour of this attack reached the ears of the king, and mixed with the rumour were whisperings of a long-standing quarrel between Macaire and Aubrey de Montdidier. Might not the dog’s strange and unaccountable hatred for the young officer be a clue to the mysterious murder of his late master? Determined to sift the matter to the bottom, the king summoned De Narsac and the dog to his presence at the Hôtel St.-Pol. Following close on his master’s heels, the greyhound entered the audience-room, where the king was seated, surrounded by his courtiers. As De Narsac bowed low before his sovereign, a short, fierce bark was heard from the dog, and, before he could be held back, he had darted in among the startled courtiers, and had sprung at the throat of the Chevalier Macaire, who, with several other knights, formed a little group behind the king’s chair.

It was impossible longer to doubt that there was some ground for the surmises that had rapidly grown to suspicion, and that had received sudden confirmation from the fresh evidence of the dog’s hatred.

The king decided that there should be a trial by the judgment of God, and that a combat should take place between man, the accused, and dog, the accuser. The place chosen for the combat was a waste, uninhabited plot of ground, frequently selected as a duelling-ground by the young gallants of Paris.

In the presence of the king and his courtiers the strange unnatural combat took place that afternoon. The knight was armed with a short thick stick; the dog was provided with an empty barrel, as a retreating ground from the attacks of his adversary. At a given signal the combatants entered the lists. The dog seemed quite to understand the strange duel on which it was engaged. Barking savagely, and darting round his opponent, he made attempts to leap at his throat; now on this side, now on that he sprang, jumping into the air, and then bounding back out of reach of the stick. There was such swiftness and determination about his movements, and something so unnatural in the combat, that Macaire’s nerve failed him. His blows beat the air, without hitting the dog; his breath came in quick short gasps; there was a look of terror on his face, and for a moment, overcome by the horror of the situation, his eye quailed and sought the ground. At that instant the dog sprang at his throat and pinned him to the earth. In his terror, he called out and acknowledged his crime, and implored the king’s mercy. But the judgment of God had decided. The dog was called off before it had strangled its victim, but the man was hurried away to the place of execution, and atoned that evening for the murder of the faithful greyhound’s master.

The dog has been known to posterity as the Dog of Montargis, as in the Castle of Montargis there stood for many centuries a sculptured stone mantelpiece, on which the combat was carved.

HOW A BEAVER BUILDS HIS HOUSE

Bingley’s *Animal Biography*.

If we could look back and see England and Wales as they were about a thousand years ago, we should most likely think that the best houses and most prosperous villages were the work not of the Saxon or British natives, but of the little beavers, which were then to be found in some of the rivers, though they have long ceased to exist there. Those who want to see what beavers can do, must look to America, and there, either in Canada or even as far south as Louisiana, they will find the little creatures as busy as ever and as clever at house-building as when they taught our forefathers a lesson in the time of Athelstan or Canute.

A beaver is a small animal measuring about three feet, and has fine glossy dark brown hair. Its tail, which is its trowel, and call bell, and many other things besides, is nearly a foot long, and has no hair at all, and is divided into little scales, something like a fish. Beavers cannot bear to live by themselves, and are never happy unless they have two or three hundred friends close at hand whom they can visit every day and all day, and they are the best and most kindly neighbours in the world, always ready to help each other either in building new villages or in repairing old ones.

Of course the first thing to be done when you wish to erect a house or a village is to fix on a suitable site, and the spot which every beaver of sense thinks most desirable is either a large pond or, if no pond is to be had, a flat low plain with a stream running through, out of which a pond can be made.

It must be a very, very long while since beavers first found out that the way to make a pond out of a stream was to build a dam across it so strong that the water could not break through. To begin with, they have to know which way the stream runs, and in this they never make a mistake. Then they gather together stakes about five feet long, and fix them in rows tight into the ground on each side of the stream; and while the older and more experienced beavers are doing this — for the safety of the village depends on the strength of the foundation — the younger and more active ones are fetching and heaping up green branches of trees. These branches are plaited in and out of the rows of stakes, which by this time stretch right across the river, and form a dam often as much as a hundred feet from end to end. When the best workmen among them declare the foundation solid, the rest form a large wall over the whole, of stones, clay, and sand, which gradually tapers up from ten or twelve feet at the bottom, where it has to resist the pressure of the stream, to two or three at the top, so that the beavers can, if necessary, pass each other in comfort. And when the dam is pronounced finished, the overseer or head beaver goes carefully over every part, to see that it is the proper shape and exactly smooth and even, for beavers cannot bear bad work, and would punish any of their tribe who were lazy or careless.

The dam being ready and the pond made, they can now begin to think about their houses, and as all beavers have a great dislike to damp floors and wet beds, they have to raise their dwellings quite six or eight feet above the level of the stream, so that no sudden swelling of the river during the rainy season shall make them cold and uncomfortable. Beavers are always quite clear in their minds as to what they want, and how to get it, and they like to keep things distinct. When they are in the water they are perfectly happy, but when they are out of it they like to be dry, and in order to keep their houses warm and snug they wait till the water is low during the summer, and then they can drive piles into the bed of the stream with more safety and less trouble than if the river is running hard. It generally takes two or three months before the village is finished, and the bark and shoots of young trees, which is their favourite food, collected and stored up. But the little round huts, not unlike beehives, are only intended for winter homes, as no beaver would think of sleeping indoors during the summer, or, indeed, of staying two days in the same place. So every three or four years they spend the long days in making their village of earth, stones, and sticks, plastered together with some kind of mortar which they carry about on their tails, to spread neatly over the inside of their houses. All that a beaver does is beautifully finished as well as substantial. The walls of his house are usually about two feet thick, and sometimes he has as many as three stories to his house, when he has a large family or a number of friends to live with him. One thing is quite certain: no beaver will ever set up housekeeping alone; but sometimes he will be content with one companion, and sometimes he will have as many as thirty. But however full the hut may be, there is never any confusion; each beaver has his fixed place on the floor, which is covered with dried leaves and moss, and as they manage to keep open a door right below the surface of the stream, where their food is carefully stored up, there is no fear that they will ever be starved out. And there they lie all through the winter, and get very fat.

Once a French gentleman who was travelling through Louisiana, was very anxious to see the little beaver colony at work, so he hid himself with some other men close to a dam, and in the night they cut a channel about a foot wide right through, and very hard labour they found it.

The men had made no noise in breaking the dam, but the rush of the water aroused one beaver who slept more lightly than the rest, and he instantly left his hut and swam to the dam to examine what was wrong. He then struck four loud blows with his tail, and at the sound of his call every beaver left his bed and came rushing to see what was the matter. No sooner did they reach the dam and see the large hole made in it, than they took counsel, and then the one in whom they put the most trust gave orders to the rest, and they all went to the bank to make mortar. When they had collected as much as they could carry, they formed a procession, two and two, each pair loading each others' tails, and so travelling they arrived at the dam, where a relay of fresh labourers were ready to load. The mortar was then placed in the hole and bound tight by repeated blows from the beavers' tails. So hard did they work and so much sense did they show, that in a short time all was as firm as ever. Then one of the leading spirits clapped his tail twice, and in a moment all were in bed and asleep again.

Beavers are very hard-working, but they know how to make themselves comfortable too, and if they are content with bark and twigs at home, they appreciate nicer food if they can get it. A gentleman once took a beaver with him to New York, and it used to wander about the house like a dog, feeding chiefly upon bread, with fish now and then for a treat. Not being able to find any moss or leaves for a bed, it used to seize upon all the soft bits of stuff that came in its way, and carry them off to its sleeping corner. One day a cat discovered its hiding place, and thought it would be a nice comfortable place for her kittens to sleep, and when the beaver came back from his walk he found, like the three bears, that someone was sleeping in his bed. He had never seen things of that kind before, but they were small and he was big, so he said nothing and lay down somewhere else. Only, if ever their mother was away, he would go and hold one of them to his breast to warm it, and keep it there till its mother came back.

THE WAR HORSE OF ALEXANDER

Part of the story of Bucephalus is taken from Plutarch.

There are not so many stories about horses as there are about dogs and cats, yet almost every great general has had his favourite horse, who has gone with him through many campaigns and borne him safe in many battle-fields. At a town in Sicily called Agrigentum, they set such store by their horses, that pyramids were raised over their burial-place, and the Emperor Augustus built a splendid monument over the grave of an old favourite.

The most famous horse, perhaps, who ever lived, was one belonging to Alexander the Great, and was called Bucephalus. When the king was a boy, Bucephalus was brought before Philip, King of Macedon, Alexander’s father, by Philonicus the Thessalian, and offered for sale for the large sum of thirteen talents. Beautiful though he was, Philip wisely declined to buy him before knowing what manner of horse he was, and ordered him to be led into a neighbouring field, and a groom to mount him. But it was in vain that the best and most experienced riders approached the horse; he reared up on his hind legs, and would suffer none to come near him. So Philonicus the Thessalian was told to take his horse back whence he came, for the king would have none of him.

Now the boy Alexander stood by, and his heart went out to the beautiful creature. And he cried out, ‘What a good horse do we lose for lack of skill to mount him!’ Philip the king heard these words, and his soul was vexed to see the horse depart, but yet he knew not what else to do. Then he turned to Alexander and said: ‘Do you think that you, young and untried, can ride this horse better than those who have grown old in the stables?’ To which Alexander made answer, ‘This horse I know I could ride better than they.’ ‘And if you fail,’ asked Philip, ‘what price will you pay for your good conceit of yourself?’ And Alexander laughed out and said gaily, ‘I will pay the price of the horse.’ And thus it was settled.

So Alexander drew near to the horse, and took him by the bridle, turning his face to the sun so that he might not be frightened at the movements of his own shadow, for the prince had noticed that it scared him greatly. Then Alexander stroked his head and led him forwards, feeling his temper all the while, and when the horse began to get uneasy, the prince suddenly leapt on his back, and gradually curbed him with the bridle. Suddenly, as Bucephalus gave up trying to throw his rider, and only pawed the ground impatient to be off, Alexander shook the reins, and bidding him go, they flew like lightning round the course. This was Alexander’s first conquest, and as he jumped down from the horse, his father exclaimed, ‘Go, my son, and seek for a kingdom that is worthy, for Macedon is too small for such as thee.’

Henceforth Bucephalus made it clear that he served Alexander and no one else. He would submit quietly to having the gay trappings of a king’s steed fastened on his head, and the royal saddle put on, but if any groom tried to mount him, back would go his ears and up would go his heels, and none dared come near him. For ten years after Alexander succeeded his father on the throne of Macedon (B.C. 336), Bucephalus bore him through all his battles, and was, says Pliny, ‘of a passing good and memorable service in the wars,’ and even when wounded, as he once was at the taking of Thebes, would not suffer his master to mount another horse. Together these two swam rivers, crossed mountains, penetrated into the dominions of the Great King, and farther still into the heart of Asia, beyond the Caspian and the river Oxus, where never European army had gone before. Then turning sharp south, he crossed the range of the Hindoo Koosh, and entering the country of the Five Rivers, he prepared to attack Porus, king of India. But age and the wanderings of ten years had worn Bucephalus out. One last victory near the Hydaspes or Jelum, and the old horse sank down and died, full of years and honours (B.C. 326). Bitter were the lamentations of the king for the friend of his childhood, but his grief did not show itself only in weeping. The most splendid funeral Alexander could devise was given to Bucephalus, and a gorgeous tomb erected over his body. And more than that, Alexander resolved that the memory of his old horse should be kept green in these burning Indian deserts, thousands of miles from the Thessalian plains where he was born, so round his tomb the king built a city, and it was called

‘Bucephalia.’

STORIES ABOUT BEARS

Baron de Wogan, a French gentleman, whose adventures with snakes are also curious, was the hero of some encounters with the grizzly bear of North America. First, I would have you understand what sort of a creature he had for an opponent. Imagine a monster measuring when standing upright eight or nine feet, weighing 900 lbs., of a most terrifying appearance, in agility and strength surpassing all other animals, and cruel in proportion. Like his cousin the brown bear, whom he resembles in shape, he is a hermit and lives alone in the immense trackless forests which covered the Rocky Mountains, and indeed (at least in olden times) the greater part of North America. During the day he sleeps in the depths of some mountain cavern, and wakes up at dusk to go out in search of prey. All the beasts of the forest live in terror of him — even the white bear flies before him. He would go down to the valleys and attack the immense herds of buffaloes which grazed there, and which were powerless against him, in spite of their numbers and their great horns. They join themselves closely together and form one compact rank, but the grizzly bear hurls himself at them, breaks their ranks, scatters them, and then pursuing them till he catches them up, flings himself on the back of one, hugs it in his iron embrace, breaks its skull with his teeth, and so goes slaying right and left before he eats one. Before the Baron's first, so to say, hand-to-hand encounter with a grizzly, he had been long enough in the country to know something of their ways, and how worse than useless a shot is unless in a fatal spot.

After the return to her tribe of Calooa, a young Indian girl, who had been his one human companion in many days of wandering, the Baron was left with only his mule Cadi for friend and companion, and naturally felt very lonely. He set his heart on getting to the top of the Rocky Mountains, at the foot of which he then happened to be. Their glittering summits had so irresistible an attraction for him, that he did not stay to consider the difficulties which soon beset him at every step. No sooner did he conquer one than another arose, added to which the cold of these high regions was intense, and it constantly snowed. After three days he had to declare himself not only beaten, but so worn out that he must take a week's rest if he did not want to fall ill. First it was necessary to have some sort of a shelter, and by great good luck he found just at hand a cavern in the rock, which, without being exactly a palace, seemed as if it would answer his purpose.

Upon closer examination he found that it had more drawbacks than he cared about. All round were scattered gnawed bones of animals, and the prints of bear's claws on the ground left no doubt as to who the last inmate had been. The Baron, however, preferred to risk an invasion rather than seek another abode, and prepared for probable inroads by making across the entrance to the cave a barricade of branches of oak tied together with flax, a quantity of which grew near. He then lit a good fire inside the cave, but as the last tenant had not considered a chimney necessary; the dense smoke soon obliged him to beat a hasty retreat. Besides he had to go out to get supplies for his larder, at present as bare as Mother Hubbard's. With his usual good luck the Baron found, first, a large salmon flapping wildly in its effort to get out of a pool, where the fallen river had left it. This he killed, and next he shot a young deer about a mile away and carried it to camp on his back. In order to preserve these eatables he salted some of them with salt that he had previously found in a lake near, and had carefully preserved for future use. He then dug a hole in a corner of the cave, putting a thick layer of dry hay at the bottom, and buried his provisions Indian fashion, in order to preserve them.

As it was still only twelve o'clock, the Baron thought he would spend the rest of the day in exploring the neighbourhood; first he examined the cave, which he found to be formed of big blocks of rock firmly joined together; above the cave rose the cliff, and in front of it grew a fir-tree, which served at the same time to defend the entrance, and as a ladder to enable him to mount the cliff. As he could not take Cadi with him, he fastened him to the fir-tree by his halter and girth joined together, so as to leave him plenty of room to graze. Then he put some eatables in his game bag, and set off on a tour of discovery. When he had walked about three hours, and had reached a rocky point from which he had a fine view of the surrounding country, he sat down to rest under an oak-tree. He knew nothing more till the cold awoke him — it was now six o'clock, and he had slept three hours. He started with all the haste he could to get back to his cave and Cadi before dark, but so tired and footsore was he that he was obliged to give in and camp where he was, for night was coming on fast. It was bitterly cold and snow fell constantly, so he lit a large fire, which at the same time warmed him, and kept away the bears whom he heard wandering round the camp most of the night. As soon as the sun was up in the morning, he set off with all his speed to see what had become of Cadi; but though fifteen miles is not much to bears balked of their prey, it is much to a weary and footsore man, and when he had hobbled to within half a mile of the camp, he saw that it was too late: the bears, whom he had driven away from his camp in the night with fire-brands, had scented poor Cadi, and four of them were now devouring him — father, mother, and two cubs. Imagine his rage and grief at seeing his only friend and companion devoured piecemeal before his very eyes!

His first impulse was to fire, but he reflected in time that they were four to one, and that, instead of avenging Cadi, he would only share his fate. He decided to wait on a high rock till the meal was ended. It lasted an hour, and then he saw the whole family set off to climb the mountain, from the top of which he had been watching them. They seemed to be making straight for him, and as it would be certain death to sit and wait for them, he slipped into a cranny in the rock, hoping that he might not be perceived; even if he was, he could only be attacked by one at a time. He had not long to wait: soon all four bears passed in single file, without smelling him or being aware of him; for this he had to thank poor Cadi: their horrid snouts and jaws being smeared with his blood prevented their scenting fresh prey.

When he had seen them at a safe distance, he ventured to go down to the cave he could no longer call his own. Of Cadi, nothing remained but his head, still fastened to the tree by his halter. The barricade was gone, too, and from the cave came low but unmistakable growls. With one bound the Baron was up the tree, and from the tree on to the cliff. From there he threw stones down before the entrance to the cave, to induce the present inmate to come out, in order that he might take possession again. The bear soon came out, and, perceiving him, made for the fir-tree. By its slow and languid movements the Baron saw that it was curiosity more than anger that prompted it, and, moreover, it was evidently a very old bear, probably a grandfather, whose children and grandchildren had been to pay it a visit. Curiosity or not, the Baron had no wish to make a closer acquaintance, and fired a shot at the brute by way of a hint to that effect. This immediately turned his curiosity into wrath. Seizing the fir-tree, which he was going to use as a ladder, he began to climb up. A second shot hit him in the shoulder. He fell mortally wounded, but even after a third shot, which took him in the flank, his dying struggles lasted twenty minutes, during which he tore at the roots of the fir-trees with his terrific claws. The Baron did not care to waste any of his bullets, now getting scarce, in putting out of his pain one of Cadi’s murderers. When finally the bear was dead, the Baron came down to take possession of his cave, and at the same time of the bear’s skin. On penetrating into the cave, he found that the rascal had paid him out in his own coin, and, in revenge for the Baron taking his cave, had eaten his provisions. The Baron was quits in the end, however, as the bear’s carcase furnished him meat enough for several days. The Baron cut off pounds of steak, which he salted and dried over the fire. The useless remains he threw over the nearest precipice, so that they should not attract wild beasts, to keep him awake all night with their cries. Then, having made a huge fire in front of the entrance, which, moreover, he barricaded with branches, he threw himself on his bed of dry leaves to sleep the sleep of exhaustion.

Some time passed before the Baron’s next encounter with a bear. He was camping one night in a dense forest, sleeping, as usual, with one eye and one ear open, and his weapon at hand, all ready loaded. His rest was broken by the usual nightly sounds of the forest, of leaves crunched and branches broken, showing that many of the inmates of the woods were astir; but he did not let these usual sounds disturb him, till he heard in the distance the hoarse and unmistakable cry of the bear; then he thought it time to change the shot in his gun for something more worthy of such a foe. This preparation made, he set off at dawn on his day’s march, which up to midday led him along the bank of a large river. He thought no more of the blood-curdling howls of the night, till suddenly he heard from a distance terror-stricken cries. He put his ear to the ground, Indian fashion, to listen better, and as the danger, whatever it was, seemed to be coming nearer, he jumped into a thicket of wild cherry and willow trees, and waited there in ambush, gun in hand. In a few minutes, a band of Indians with their squaws appeared on the opposite bank of the river, and straightway leaped into the water, like so many frogs jumping into an undisturbed swamp. At first he thought he was being attacked, but soon saw it was the Indians who were being pursued, and that they all, men and women, were swimming for dear life; moreover, the women were laden with their children, one, and sometimes two, being strapped to their backs in a sort of cradle of birch bark. This additional weight made them swim slower than the men, who soon reached the opposite shore, and then took to their heels helter-skelter, except three, who remained behind to encourage the women.

The Baron at first thought it was an attack of other Indians, and that it would be prudent to beat a retreat, when suddenly the same terrible cry that had kept him awake in the latter part of the night resounded through the forest, and at the same time there appeared on a high bank on the other shore a huge mass of a dirty grey colour, which hurled itself downhill, plunged into the river, and began to swim across at a terrific speed. It was a grizzly bear of tremendous size. So fast did it swim, that in no time it had nearly caught up with the last of the squaws, a young woman with twin babies at her back, whose cries, often interrupted by the water getting into their mouths, would have melted the heart of a stone. The three Indians who had remained on the bank did their utmost to stop the bear by shooting their poisoned arrows at it; but the distance was too great, and the huge animal came on so fast that in another minute mother and children would be lost. The Baron could not remain a spectator of so terrible a scene. He came out of the thicket where he was hidden, and frightened the Indians almost as much as if he had been another bear. Resting his gun on the trunk of a tree, he fired at the distance of 125 yards, and hit the animal right on the head. It dived several times, and the water all round was dyed red with blood; but the wound was not mortal, and it continued on its way, only more slowly. After urging the Indian, who seemed to be the unhappy woman’s husband, to go into the water to help her — for, through terror and fatigue, she could no longer swim — the Baron took deliberate aim again and fired. The second shot, like the first, hit the bear on the head, but again without killing it. It stopped the brute, however, long enough to let the poor woman get to shore, where she fainted, and was carried away by the men to the forest, leaving the Baron and the bear to fight out their duel alone. The Baron had barely time to reload and climb to the top of one of the trees, when the bear was already at the foot of it. So near was he when he stood upright, that the Baron could feel his horrid breath. Up to then the Baron thought that all bears could climb like squirrels; fortunately for him he was mistaken. Expecting to be taken by storm, he fired straight in the creature’s face. The two balls took a different course: one went through the jaw and came out by the neck, the other went into the chest. The bear uttered a terrific roar, stiffened itself in a last effort to reach him, and fell heavily on its back at the foot of the tree. The Baron might have thought him dead had he not already seen such wonderful resurrections on the part of bears; but the four shots, though at first they dazed and troubled the beast, seemed afterwards to act as spurs, and he rose furious and returned to the charge. The Baron tried to use his revolver, but, finding it impossible, he drew out his axe from his belt, and dealt a violent blow at the bear’s head, which nearly split it in two, and sent the blood splashing in all directions. The bear again fell to the ground, this time to rise no more. The Baron being now convinced that the grizzly bear is no tree-climber, took his time to draw out his revolver, to take aim and fire. The shot put out one of the bear’s eyes, the axe had already taken out the other. This finished him, but his death struggles lasted twenty minutes, during which the tree was nearly uprooted. When all was at an end the Baron came down; he cut off the formidable claws, and broke off the teeth with an axe to make a trophy in imitation of the Indians, and then proceeded to skin him and cut him up. The Indians, who had been watching the combat at a safe distance, now came back, enthusiastic. They surrounded them, the victor and the vanquished, and danced a wardance, singing impromptu words. The Baron, seated on the bear’s carcase, joined in the chorus; but the Indians, not content with that, insisted on his joining in the dance as well. The rejoicing over, the Baron divided among the twenty Indians the flesh of the bear — about 15 lb. or

20 lb. fell to each. The skin he kept to himself, and the claws, of which the Indians made him a warrior’s necklace, hanging it round his neck like an order of knighthood.

The young reader must no longer expect such adventures as the Baron de Wogan achieved.

STORIES ABOUT ANTS

If any one will watch an ant-hill on a fine day in April, he will see the little inhabitants begin to rouse themselves from their winter’s sleep, which lasts from the month of October, with the red ant at all events. Groups of them come out to the top of the ant-hill to warm and thaw themselves in the rays of the sun. Some, more active and robust, run in and out, waking up the lazy, hurrying the laggards, and rousing all the little community to begin their summer habits. But this activity does not last long; they are as yet only half awake, and still numb and torpid from the winter’s cold, and the little throng increases or diminishes as the sun shines or disappears behind a cloud. As two, half-past two, and three o’clock arrive, they have nearly all disappeared inside the ant-heap, leaving only a few warriors, of a larger make and tried courage, to watch over the well-being of the little republic and to close up all openings with tiny chips of wood, dry leaves, and shreds of moss, so as to hide the entrances from human eye. Two or three sentinels wander round to see that all is secure. And then they enter, and all is still.

If we come back again in about a week, we shall find the ants in the middle of their regular migration to their summer quarters, not far from their winter ones. This takes place, with the red ant, at all events, with great regularity every April and October. The red ant is beyond doubt a slave-owner; the slaves may be easily recognised from their masters by being of a smaller make and light yellow colour. As soon as the masters have fixed the day of their ‘flitting,’ they begin probably to ensure the consent of the slaves by violently seizing them, and rolling them into a ball, and then grasping them firmly they set off towards the summer quarters at full gallop, if an ant can be said to gallop. The master ant is in a great hurry to get rid of his living burden; he goes straight ahead in spite of all obstacles, avoiding all interruptions and delays, and as soon as he arrives at the summer ant-heap, plunges in, deposits the slave all breathless and terrified from his forced journey, and sets off back for another.

Darwin, who closely studied the migrations of the ant, says that they differ in their means of transport: one sort is carried by the slaves; the other, our friend the red ant, scientifically called ‘formica sanguinea,’ carries his property carefully in his mouth. It seems strange to us that the master should carry the slave, but no stranger than it would appear to the ants if they should begin to study our habits, that some of us should sit in a carriage and be driven by the coachman. The slave, once installed in his summer quarters, seldom appears again before the autumn exodus, unless in the event of some disturbance in the camp, or its invasion by some ants of a hostile tribe, when the slaves take part in the defence and especially watch over the young ones. The slaves seem to be carpenters and miners, and warriors when necessary. They build the dwelling, repair it, of which it has constant need, and defend it in case of attack with dauntless courage. But their principal duties seem to be to take charge of the development of the young, and to feed the masters — no small task, as there seem to be ten masters to one slave, and they seem incapable of eating unless fed. Experiments have been tried of removing the slaves from them, and though sugar and every sort of tempting food is put down beside them, they will starve rather than help themselves. In fact, one wonders what the masters can be left for but to drive the slaves, which they do with great ardour. A French gentleman who spent years studying the habits of the ants, tried one day, by way of experiment, to take a slave away from its master; he had great difficulty in removing it from its bearer, who struggled furiously and clung to its burden. When at last the slave was set free, instead of profiting by its liberty, it turned round and round in a circle as if dazed, then hid itself under a dead leaf. A master ant presently came along, an animated conversation took place, and the slave ant was seized upon and borne off again to bondage. The same gentleman another day observed a slave ant venture out to the entrance to the ant-hill to enjoy the warmth of the sun. A great master ant spied it and set to with blows of its horns (antennæ they are called) to persuade it that that was not its place. Finding the slave persisted in not understanding, the master resorted to force, and seizing it by its head, without taking the trouble to roll it up, as they are generally carried, he hurled it into the ant-hill, where no doubt it received the punishment it deserved.

If we came back to the ant-heap a week after our last visit, we should find the migration finished if the weather has been fine; but ants, especially after their first awaking, are extremely sensitive to wind and rain, and only work well in fine weather. They are equally affected by weather before a storm: even though the sun may be shining, they will remain in the ant-heap with closed doors. If it is shut before midday, the storm will burst before evening; if it is shut before eight or nine in the morning, the rain will fall before noon.

All this time we have been speaking only of the red ant; but there are any number of different kinds in Europe, not to mention the enormous ants of the tropics, who march in such armies that the people fly before them, deserting their villages. Different species differ totally in their habits and ways of building and living. The greater number of species live apart, and not in a community with an elaborately constructed house like the red ant. The little black ant is the commonest in this country, and the busiest and most active. She is the first to awake, in March, sometimes in February, and the last to sleep, sometimes not till November. Their instincts and habits of activity, however, are apt to deceive them, and they get up too soon. The French gentleman already mentioned observed an instance of the kind. On February 24, after an unusually mild winter, the sun shone as if it were already summer, and it was difficult to persuade oneself that it was not, except that there were no leaves on the trees, no birds singing in the branches, and no insects humming in the air. First our friend went to examine the red-ant heap, which was closed as usual, all the inhabitants being still plunged in their winter sleep. The black ants, on the contrary, were all awake and lively, and seemed persuaded that the fine weather had come to stay. Their instincts deceived them, for that night it froze; rain, snow, and fog succeeded each other in turn, and when next he visited the ant-heap he found them lying in masses, stiff and dead, before the entrance to their dwelling.

Between the red and black ants there is great enmity, and terrible combats take place. When they fight they grasp each other like men wrestling, and each tries to throw the other down, and break his back. The conquered remain on the battlefield, nearly broken in two, and feebly waving their paws, till they slowly expire in agonies. The conqueror, on the other hand, carries away his dead to burial and his wounded to the camp, and then, entering triumphantly himself, closes the doors after him. The gentleman already quoted witnessed the funeral of an ant. He had passed the ant-heap about a quarter of an hour, and left, as he thought, all the inhabitants behind him, when he saw what appeared to be an enormous red ant making for home. On stooping to look more closely, he saw that it was one ant carrying another. He succeeded in separating them from each other, and then saw that the burden was neither a slave nor a prisoner, but a dead comrade being carried back to the ant-heap for a decent burial; for if ants fall into the hands of the enemy, they are subjected if alive to the most cruel tortures and if dead to mutilations. Usually, when an ant is relieved of anything it is carrying — whether it be a slave, a wounded ant, or some eatable — it will set off at full speed and let the burden be picked up by the next passing ant; but this one made no attempt to run away, and only turned round and round in a perplexed and irresolute way, till its dead friend was put down beside it, then it seized its precious burden and set off homewards with it. Travellers even tell that in Algeria there are ant cemeteries near the ant-heaps.

No lover of animals doubts that they have a language of their own, which we are too stupid or deaf to understand. Anyone who studies the ways of the ants sees, beyond a doubt, that they too have a way of communicating with each other. For instance, an ant was one day seen at some distance from the ant-hill, and evidently in no hurry to go back to it. In the middle of the path she perceived a large dead snail. She began by going round and round it, then climbed on its back, and walked all over it. Having satisfied herself that it was a choice morsel, but too large for her to carry home alone, she set off at once to seek help. On the way she met one of her companions; she ran at once to her; they rubbed their antennæ together, and evidently an animated conversation took place, for the second ant set off immediately in the direction of the snail. The first one continued on her way home, communicating with every ant she met in the same way; by the time she disappeared inside the ant-heap, an endless file of busy little ants were on their way to take their share of the spoil. In ten minutes the snail was completely covered by the little throng, and by the evening every trace of it had vanished.

Recent observations have proved that the time-honoured idea of the ant storing up provision for the winter is a delusion, a delusion which La Fontaine’s famous fable, ‘Le Fourmis et la Cigale,’ has done much to spread and confirm. It is now known, as we have already seen, that ants sleep all winter, and that the food which we constantly see them laden with is for immediate consumption in the camp. They eat all kinds of insects — hornets and cockchafers are favourite dishes — but the choicest morsel is a fine fat green caterpillar, caught alive. They seize it, some by its head, some by its tail; it struggles, it writhes, and sometimes succeeds in freeing itself from its enemies; but they do not consider themselves beaten, and attack it again. Little by little it becomes stupefied from the discharges of formic acid the ants throw out from their bodies, and presently it succumbs to their renewed forces. Finally, though the struggle may last an hour or more, it is borne to the ant-heap and disappears, to be devoured by the inmates. Perhaps these short ‘Stories about Ants’ may induce some of you to follow the advice of the Preacher, and ‘go to the ant’ yourselves for more.

THE TAMING OF AN OTTER

From Bingley’s *British Quadrupeds*.

Otters used once to be very common in England in the neighbourhood of rivers, and even in some instances of the sea, but in many places where they once lived in great numbers they have now ceased to exist. They destroy large quantities of fish, though they are so dainty that they only care for the upper parts of the body. If the rivers are frozen and no fish are to be had, they will eat poultry, or even lambs; and if these are not to be found, they can get on quite well for a long time on the bark of trees or on young branches.

Fierce though otters are when brought to bay, they can easily be tamed if they are caught young enough. More than a hundred years ago the monks of Autun, in France, found a baby otter only a few weeks old, and took it back to the convent, and fed it upon milk for nearly two months, when it was promoted to soup and fish and vegetables, the food of the good monks. It was not very sociable with strange animals, but it made great friends with a dog and cat who had known it from a baby, and they would play together half the day. At night it had a bed in one of the rooms, but in the day it always preferred a heap of straw when it was tired of running about. Curious to say, this otter was not at all fond of the water, and it was very seldom that it would go near a basin of water that was always carefully left near its bed. When it did, it was only to wash its face and front paws, after which it would go for a run in the court-yard, or curl itself to sleep in the sun. Indeed it seemed to have such an objection to water of all kinds, that the monks wondered whether it knew how to swim. So one day, when they were not so busy as usual, some of the brothers took it off to a good-sized pond, and waited to see what it would do. The otter smelt about cautiously for a little, and then, recognising that here was something it had seen before, ducked its head and wetted its feet as it did in the mornings. This did not satisfy the monks, who threw it right in, upon which it instantly swam to the other shore, and came round again to its friends.

All tame otters are not, however, as forgetful of the habits and manners of their race as this one was, and in some parts they have even been taught to fish for their masters instead of themselves. Careful directions are given for their proper teaching, and a great deal of patience is needful, because if an animal is once frightened or made angry, there is not much hope of training it afterwards. To begin with, it must be fed while it is very young on milk or soup, and when it gets older, on bread and the heads of fishes, and it must get its food from one person only, to whom it will soon get accustomed and attached. The next step is to have a sort of leather bag made, stuffed with wool and shaped like a fish, large enough for the animal to take in its mouth. Finally, he must wear a collar formed on the principle of a slip noose, which can tighten when a long string that is fastened to it, is pulled. This is, of course, to teach the otter to drop the fish after he has caught it.

The master then leads the otter slowly behind him, till by this means he has learned how to follow, and then he has to be made to understand the meanings of certain words and tones. So the man says to him, ‘Come here,’ and pulls the cord; and after this has been repeated several times, the otter gradually begins to connect the words with the action. Then the string is dropped, and the otter trots up obediently without it. After that, the sham fish is placed on the ground, and the collar, which seems rather like a horse’s bit, is pulled so as to force the mouth open, while the master exclaims ‘Take it!’ and when the otter is quite perfect in this (which most likely will not happen for a long time) the collar is loosened, and he is told to ‘drop it.’

Last of all, he is led down to a river with clear shallow water, where a small dead fish is thrown in. This he catches at once, and then the cord which has been fastened to his neck is gently pulled, and he gives up his prize to his master. Then live fish are put in instead of the dead one, and when they are killed, the otter is given the heads as a reward.

Of course some masters have a special talent for teaching these things, and some otters are specially apt pupils. This must have been the case with the otter belonging to a Mr. Campbell who lived near Inverness. It would sometimes catch eight or ten salmon in a day, and never attempted to eat them; while a man in Sweden, called Nilsson, and his family, lived entirely on the fish that was caught for them by their otter. When he is in his wild state, the otter lives in holes in the rocks, or among the roots of trees, though occasionally he has been known to burrow under ground, having his door in the water, and only a very tiny window opening landwards, so that he may not die of suffocation.

THE STORY OF ANDROCLES AND THE LION

Many hundred years ago, there lived in the north of Africa a poor Roman slave called Androcles. His master held great power and authority in the country, but he was a hard, cruel man, and his slaves led a very unhappy life. They had little to eat, had to work hard, and were often punished and tortured if they failed to satisfy their master's caprices. For long Androcles had borne with the hardships of his life, but at last he could bear it no longer, and he made up his mind to run away. He knew that it was a great risk, for he had no friends in that foreign country with whom he could seek safety and protection; and he was aware that if he was overtaken and caught he would be put to a cruel death. But even death, he thought, would not be so hard as the life he now led, and it was possible that he might escape to the sea-coast, and somehow some day get back to Rome and find a kinder master.

So he waited till the old moon had waned to a tiny gold thread in the skies, and then, one dark night, he slipped out of his master's house, and, creeping through the deserted forum and along the silent town, he passed out of the city into the vineyards and corn-fields lying outside the walls. In the cool night air he walked rapidly. From time to time he was startled by the sudden barking of a dog, or the sound of voices coming from some late revellers in the villas which stood beside the road along which he hurried. But as he got further into the country these sounds ceased, and there was silence and darkness all round him. When the sun rose he had already gone many miles away from the town in which he had been so miserable. But now a new terror oppressed him — the terror of great loneliness. He had got into a wild, barren country, where there was no sign of human habitation. A thick growth of low trees and thorny mimosa bushes spread out before him, and as he tried to thread his way through them he was severely scratched, and his scant garments torn by the long thorns. Besides the sun was very hot, and the trees were not high enough to afford him any shade. He was worn out with hunger and fatigue, and he longed to lie down and rest. But to lie down in that fierce sun would have meant death, and he struggled on, hoping to find some wild berries to eat, and some water to quench his thirst. But when he came out of the scrub-wood, he found he was as badly off as before. A long, low line of rocky cliffs rose before him, but there were no houses, and he saw no hope of finding food. He was so tired that he could not wander further, and seeing a cave which looked cool and dark in the side of the cliffs, he crept into it, and, stretching his tired limbs on the sandy floor, fell fast asleep.

Suddenly he was awakened by a noise that made his blood run cold. The roar of a wild beast sounded in his ears, and as he started trembling and in terror to his feet, he beheld a huge, tawny lion, with great glistening white teeth, standing in the entrance of the cave. It was impossible to fly, for the lion barred the way. Immovable with fear, Androcles stood rooted to the spot, waiting for the lion to spring on him and tear him limb from limb.

But the lion did not move. Making a low moan as if in great pain, it stood licking its huge paw, from which Androcles now saw that blood was flowing freely. Seeing the poor animal in such pain, and noticing how gentle it seemed, Androcles forgot his own terror, and slowly approached the lion, who held up its paw as if asking the man to help it. Then Androcles saw that a monster thorn had entered the paw, making a deep cut, and causing great pain and swelling. Swiftly but firmly he drew the thorn out, and pressed the swelling to try to stop the flowing of the blood. Relieved of the pain, the lion quietly lay down at Androcles' feet, slowly moving his great bushy tail from side to side as a dog does when it feels happy and comfortable.

From that moment Androcles and the lion became devoted friends. After lying for a little while at his feet, licking the poor wounded paw, the lion got up and limped out of the cave. A few minutes later it returned with a little dead rabbit in its mouth, which it put down on the floor of the cave beside Androcles. The poor man, who was starving with hunger, cooked the rabbit somehow, and ate it. In the evening, led by the lion, he found a place where there was a spring, at which he quenched his dreadful thirst.

And so for three years Androcles and the lion lived together in the cave; wandering about the woods together by day, sleeping together at night. For in summer the cave was cooler than the woods, and in winter it was warmer.

At last the longing in Androcles' heart to live once more with his fellow-men became so great that he felt he could remain in the woods no longer, but that he must return to a town, and take his chance of being caught and killed as a runaway slave. And so one morning he left the cave, and wandered away in the direction where he thought the sea and the large towns lay. But in a few days he was captured by a band of soldiers who were patrolling the country in search of fugitive slaves, and he was put in chains and sent as a prisoner to Rome.

Here he was cast into prison and tried for the crime of having run away from his master. He was condemned as a punishment to be torn to pieces by wild beasts on the first public holiday, in the great circus at Rome.

When the day arrived Androcles was brought out of his prison, dressed in a simple, short tunic, and with a scarf round his right arm. He was given a lance with which to defend himself — a forlorn hope, as he knew that he had to fight with a powerful lion which had been kept without food for some days to make it more savage and bloodthirsty. As he stepped into the arena of the huge circus, above the sound of the voices of thousands on thousands of spectators he could hear the savage roar of the wild beasts from their cages below the floor on which he stood.

Of a sudden the silence of expectation fell on the spectators, for a signal had been given, and the cage containing the lion with which Androcles had to fight had been shot up into the arena from the floor below. A moment later, with a fierce spring and a savage roar, the great animal had sprung out of its cage into the arena, and with a bound had rushed at the spot where Androcles stood trembling. But suddenly, as he saw Androcles, the lion stood still, wondering. Then quickly but quietly it approached him, and gently moved its tail and licked the man’s hands, and fawned upon him like a great dog. And Androcles patted the lion’s head, and gave a sob of recognition, for he knew that it was his own lion, with whom he had lived and lodged all those months and years.

And, seeing this strange and wonderful meeting between the man and the wild beast, all the people marvelled, and the emperor, from his high seat above the arena, sent for Androcles, and bade him tell his story and explain this mystery. And the emperor was so delighted with the story that he said Androcles was to be released and to be made a free man from that hour. And he rewarded him with money, and ordered that the lion was to belong to him, and to accompany him wherever he went.

And when the people in Rome met Androcles walking, followed by his faithful lion, they used to point at them and say, ‘That is the lion, the guest of the man, and that is the man, the doctor of the lion.’

Apparently this nice lion did not bite anybody, when he took his walks abroad. Or, possibly, he was muzzled. — Ed.

MONSIEUR DUMAS AND HIS BEASTS

I

Most people have heard of Alexandre Dumas, the great French novelist who wrote ‘The Three Musketeers’ and many other delightful historical romances. Besides being a great novelist, M. Dumas was a most kind and generous man — kind both to human beings and to animals. He had a great many pets, of which he gives us the history in one of his books. Here are some of the stories about them in his own words.

I was living, he says, at Monte Cristo (this was the name of his villa at St.-Germains); I lived there alone, except for the visitors I received. I love solitude, for solitude is necessary to anyone who works much. However, I do not like complete loneliness; what I love is that of the Garden of Eden, a solitude peopled with animals. Therefore, in my wilderness at Monte Cristo, without being quite like Adam in every way, I had a kind of small earthly paradise.

This is the list of my animals. I had a number of dogs, of which the chief was Pritchard. I had a vulture named Diogenes; three monkeys, one of which bore the name of a celebrated translator, another that of a famous novelist, and the third, which was a female, that of a charming actress. We will call the writer Potich, the novelist the Last of the Laidmanoirs, and the lady Mademoiselle Desgarcins. I had a great blue and yellow macaw called Buvat, a green and yellow parroquet called Papa Everard, a cat called Mysouff, a golden pheasant called Lucullus, and finally, a cock called Cæsar. Let us give honour where honour is due, and begin with the history of Pritchard.

I had an acquaintance named M. Lerat, who having heard me say I had no dog to take out shooting, said, ‘Ah! how glad I am to be able to give you something you will really like! A friend of mine who lives in Scotland has sent me a pointer of the very best breed. I will give him to you. Bring Pritchard,’ he added to his two little girls.

How could I refuse a present offered so cordially? Pritchard was brought in.

He was an odd-looking dog to be called a pointer! He was long-haired, grey and white, with ears nearly erect, mustard-coloured eyes, and a beautifully feathered tail. Except for the tail, he could scarcely be called a handsome dog.

M. Lerat seemed even more delighted to give the present than I was to receive it, which showed what a good heart he had.

‘The children call the dog Pritchard,’ he said; ‘but if you don’t like the name, call him what you please.’

I had no objection to the name; my opinion was that if anyone had cause to complain, it was the dog himself. Pritchard, therefore, continued to be called Pritchard. He was at this time about nine or ten months old, and ought to begin his education, so I sent him to a gamekeeper named Vatrin to learn his duties. But, two hours after I had sent Pritchard to Vatrin, he was back again at my house. He was not made welcome; on the contrary, he received a good beating from Michel, who was my gardener, porter, butler, and confidential servant all in one, and who took Pritchard back to Vatrin. Vatrin was astonished; Pritchard had been shut up with the other dogs in the kennel, and he must have jumped over the enclosure, which was a high one. Early the next morning, when the housemaid had opened my front door, there was Pritchard sitting outside. Michel again beat the dog, and again took him back to Vatrin, who this time put a collar round his neck and chained him up. Michel came back and informed me of this severe but necessary measure. Vatrin sent a message to say that I should not see Pritchard again until his education was finished. The next day, while I was writing in a little summer-house in my garden, I heard a furious barking. It was Pritchard fighting with a great Pyrenean sheepdog which another of my friends had just given me. This dog was named Mouton, because of his white woolly hair like a sheep’s, not on account of his disposition, which was remarkably savage. Pritchard was rescued by Michel from Mouton’s enormous jaws, once more beaten, and for the third time taken back to Vatrin. Pritchard, it appears, had eaten his collar, though how he managed it Vatrin never knew. He was now shut up in a shed, and unless he ate the walls or the door, he could not possibly get out. He tried both, and finding the door the more digestible, he ate the door; and the next day at dinner-time, Pritchard walked into the dining-room wagging his plumy tail, his yellow eyes shining with satisfaction. This time Pritchard was neither beaten nor taken back; we waited till Vatrin should come to hold a council of war as to what was to be done with him. The next day Vatrin appeared.

‘Did you *ever* see such a rascal?’ he began. Vatrin was so excited that he had forgotten to say ‘Good morning’ or ‘How do you do?’

‘I tell you,’ said he, ‘that rascal Pritchard puts me in such a rage that I have crunched the stem of my pipe three times between my teeth and broken it, and my wife has had to tie it up with string. He’ll ruin me in pipes, that brute — that vagabond!’

‘Pritchard, do you hear what is said about you?’ said I.

Pritchard heard, but perhaps did not think it mattered much about Vatrin’s pipes, for he only looked at me affectionately and beat upon the ground with his tail.

‘I don’t know what to do with him,’ said Vatrin. ‘If I keep him he’ll eat holes in the house, I suppose; yet I don’t like to give him up — he’s only a dog. It’s humiliating for a man, don’t you know?’

‘I’ll tell you what, Vatrin,’ said I. ‘We will take him down to Vésinet, and go for a walk through your preserves, and then we shall see whether it is worth while to take any more trouble with this vagabond, as you call him.’

‘I call him by his name. It oughtn’t to be Pritchard; it should be Bluebeard, it should be Blunderbore, it should be Judas Iscariot!’

Vatrin enumerated all the greatest villains he could think of at the moment.

I called Michel.

‘Michel, give me my shooting shoes and gaiters; we will go to Vésinet to see what Pritchard can do.’

‘You will see, sir,’ said Michel, ‘that you will be better pleased than you think.’ For Michel always had a liking for Pritchard.

We went down a steep hill to Vésinet, Michel following with Pritchard on a leash. At the steepest place I turned round. ‘Look there upon the bridge in front of us, Michel,’ I said, ‘there is a dog very like Pritchard.’ Michel looked behind him. There was nothing but the leather straps in his hand; Pritchard had cut it through with his teeth, and was now standing on the bridge amusing himself by looking at the water through the railing.

‘He *is* a vagabond!’ said Vatrin. ‘Look! where is he off to now?’

‘He has gone,’ said I, ‘to see what my neighbour Corrège has got for luncheon.’ Sure enough, the next moment Pritchard was seen coming out of M. Corrège’s back door, pursued by a maid servant with a broom. He had a veal cutlet in his mouth, which he had just taken out of the frying-pan.

‘Monsieur Dumas!’ cried the maid, ‘Monsieur Dumas! stop your dog!’

We tried; but Pritchard passed between Michel and me like a flash of lightning.

‘It seems,’ said Michel, ‘that he likes his veal underdone.’

‘My good woman,’ I said to the cook, who was still pursuing Pritchard, ‘I fear that you are losing time, and that you will never see your cutlet again.’

‘Well, then, let me tell you, sir, that you have no right to keep and feed a thief like that.’

‘It is you, my good woman, who are feeding him to-day, not I.’

‘Me!’ said the cook, ‘it’s — it’s M. Corrège. And what will M. Corrège say, I should like to know?'

'He will say, like Michel, that it seems Pritchard likes his veal underdone.'

'Well, but he'll not be pleased — he will think it's my fault.'

'Never mind, I will invite your master to luncheon with me.'

'All the same, if your dog goes on like that, he will come to a bad end. That is all I have to say — he will come to a bad end.' And she stretched out her broom in an attitude of malediction towards the spot where Pritchard had disappeared.

We three stood looking at one another. 'Well,' said I, 'we have lost Pritchard.'

'We'll soon find him,' said Michel.

We therefore set off to find Pritchard, whistling and calling to him, as we walked on towards Vatrin's shooting ground. This search lasted for a good half-hour, Pritchard not taking the slightest notice of our appeals. At last Michel stopped.

'Sir,' he said, 'look there! Just come and look.'

'Well, what?' said I, going to him.

'Look!' said Michel, pointing. I followed the direction of Michel's finger, and saw Pritchard in a perfectly immovable attitude, as rigid as if carved in stone.

'Vatrin,' said I, 'come here.' Vatrin came. I showed him Pritchard.

'I think he is making a point,' said Vatrin. Michel thought so too.

'But what is he pointing at?' I asked. We cautiously came nearer to Pritchard, who never stirred.

'He certainly is pointing,' said Vatrin. Then making a sign to me— 'Look there!' he said. 'Do you see anything?'

'Nothing.'

'What! you don't see a rabbit sitting? If I only had my stick, I'd knock it on the head, and it would make a nice stew for your dinner.'

'Oh!' said Michel, 'if that's all, I'll cut you a stick.'

'Well, but Pritchard might leave off pointing.'

'No fear of him — I'll answer for him — unless, indeed, the rabbit goes away.'

Vatrin proceeded to cut a stick. Pritchard never moved, only from time to time he turned his yellow eyes upon us, which shone like a topaz.

'Have patience,' said Michel. 'Can't you see that M. Vatrin is cutting a stick?' And Pritchard seemed to understand as he turned his eye on Vatrin.

'You have still time to take off the branches,' said Michel.

When the branches were taken off and the stick was quite finished, Vatrin approached cautiously, took a good aim, and struck with all his might into the middle of the tuft of grass where the rabbit was sitting. He had killed it!

Pritchard darted in upon the rabbit, but Vatrin took it from him, and Michel slipped it into the lining of his coat. This pocket had already held a good many rabbits in its time!

Vatrin turned to congratulate Pritchard, but he had disappeared.

‘He’s off to find another rabbit,’ said Michel.

And accordingly, after ten minutes or so, we came upon Pritchard making another point. This time Vatrin had a stick ready cut; and after a minute, plunging his hands into a brier bush, he pulled out by the ears a second rabbit.

‘There, Michel,’ he said, ‘put that into your other pocket.’

‘Oh,’ said Michel, ‘there’s room for five more in this one.’

‘Hallo, Michel! people don’t say those things before a magistrate.’ And turning to Vatrin I added, ‘Let us try once more, Vatrin — the number three is approved by the gods.’

‘May be,’ said Vatrin, ‘but perhaps it won’t be approved by M. Guérin.’

M. Guérin was the police inspector.

Next time we came upon Pritchard pointing, Vatrin said, ‘I wonder how long he would stay like that;’ and he pulled out his watch.

‘Well, Vatrin,’ said I, ‘you shall try the experiment, as it is in your own vocation; but I am afraid I have not the time to spare.’

Michel and I then returned home. Vatrin followed with Pritchard an hour afterwards.

‘Five-and-twenty minutes!’ he called out as soon as he was within hearing. ‘And if the rabbit had not gone away, the dog would have been there now.’

‘Well, Vatrin, what do you think of him?’

‘Why, I say he is a good pointer; he has only to learn to retrieve, and that you can teach him yourself. I need not keep him any longer.’

‘Do you hear, Michel?’

‘Oh, sir,’ said Michel, ‘he can do that already. He retrieves like an angel!’

This failed to convey to me an exact idea of the way in which Pritchard retrieved. But Michel threw a handkerchief, and Pritchard brought it back. He then threw one of the rabbits that Vatrin carried, and Pritchard brought back the rabbit. Michel then fetched an egg and placed it on the ground. Pritchard retrieved the egg as he had done the rabbit and the handkerchief.

‘Well,’ said Vatrin, ‘the animal knows all that human skill can teach him. He wants nothing now but practice. And when one thinks,’ he added, ‘that if the rascal would only come in to heel, he would be worth twenty pounds if he was worth a penny.’

‘True,’ said I with a sigh, ‘but you may give up hope, Vatrin; that is a thing he will never consent to.’

II

I think that the time has now come to tell my readers a little about Mademoiselle Desgarcins, Potich, and the Last of the Laidmanoirs. Mademoiselle Desgarcins was a tiny monkey; I do not know the place of her birth, but I brought her from Havre, where I had gone — I don't know why — perhaps to look at the sea. But I thought I must bring something home with me from Havre. I was walking there on the quay, when at the door of a bird-fancier's shop I saw a green monkey and a blue and yellow macaw. The monkey put its paw through the bars of its cage and caught hold of my coat, while the blue parrot turned its head and looked at me in such an affectionate manner that I stopped, holding the monkey's paw with one hand, and scratching the parrot's head with the other. The little monkey gently drew my hand within reach of her mouth, the parrot half shut its eyes and made a little purring noise to express its pleasure.

'Monsieur Dumas,' said the shopman, coming out with the air of a man who was more decided to sell than I was to buy; 'Monsieur Dumas, may I accommodate you with my monkey and my parrot?' It would have been more to the purpose if he had said, 'Monsieur Dumas, may I *incommode* you with my monkey and my parrot?' However, after a little bargaining, I bought both animals, as well as a cage for the monkey and a perch for the parrot; and as soon as I arrived at home, I introduced them to Michel.

'This,' said Michel, 'is the green monkey of Senegal — *Cercopithecus sabœa*.'

I looked at Michel in the greatest astonishment. 'Do you know Latin, Michel?'

'I don't know Latin, but I know my "Dictionary of Natural History."'

'Oh, indeed! And do you know what bird this is?' I asked, showing him the parrot.

'To be sure I know it,' said Michel. 'It is the blue and yellow macaw — *Macrocercus arararanna*. Oh, sir, why did you not bring a female as well as a male?'

'What is the use, Michel, since parrots will not breed in this country?'

'There you make a mistake, sir; the blue macaw will breed in France.'

'In the south, perhaps?'

'It need not be in the south, sir.'

'Where then?'

‘At Caen.’

‘At Caen? I did not know Caen had a climate which permits parrots to rear their young. Go and fetch my gazetteer.’

‘You will soon see,’ said Michel as he brought it. I read: ‘Caen, capital of the department of Calvados, upon the Orne and the Odon: 223 kilomètres west of Paris, 41,806 inhabitants.’

‘You will see,’ said Michel, ‘the parrots are coming.’

‘Great trade in plaster, salt, wood — taken by English in 1346 — retaken by the French &c., &c. — never mind the date — That is all, Michel.’

‘What! Your dictionary never says that the ararararanna, otherwise called the blue macaw, produces young at Caen?’

‘No, Michel, it does not say that here.’

‘What a dictionary! Just wait till I fetch you mine and you will see.’

Michel returned in a few minutes with his book of Natural History.

‘You will soon see, sir,’ he said, opening his dictionary in his turn. ‘Parrot — here it is — parrots are monogamous.’

‘As you know Latin, Michel, of course you know what monogamous means.’

‘That means that they can sing scales — gamut, I suppose?’

‘Well, no, Michel, not exactly. It means that they have only one “wife.”’

‘Indeed, sir? That is because they talk like us most likely. Now, I have found the place: “It was long believed that parrots were incapable of breeding in Europe, but the contrary has been proved on a pair of blue macaws which lived at Caen. M. Lamouroux furnishes the details of these results.”’

‘Let us hear the details which M. Lamouroux furnishes.’

‘“These macaws, from March 1818 until August 1822, including a period of four years and a half, laid, in all, sixty-two eggs.”’

‘Michel, I never said they did not lay eggs; what I said was—’

‘“Out of this number,”’ continued Michel in a loud voice, ‘“twenty-five young macaws were hatched, of which only ten died. The others lived and continued perfectly healthy.”’

‘Michel, I confess to having entertained false ideas on the subject of macaws.’

‘“They laid at all seasons of the year,”’ continued Michel, ‘“and more eggs were hatched in the latter than in the former years.”’

‘Michel, I have no more to say.’

‘“The number of eggs in the nest varied. There have been as many as six at a time.”’

‘Michel, I yield, rescue or no rescue!’

‘Only,’ said Michel, shutting the book, ‘you must be careful not to give them bitter almonds or parsley.’

‘Not bitter almonds,’ I answered, ‘because they contain prussic acid; but why not parsley?’

Michel, who had kept his thumb in the page, reopened the book. ‘“Parsley and bitter almonds,”’ he read, ‘“are a violent poison to parrots.”’

‘All right, Michel, I shall remember.’

I remembered so well, that some time after, hearing that M. Persil had died suddenly (persil being the French for parsley), I exclaimed, much shocked: ‘Ah! poor man, how unfortunate! He must have been eating parrot!’ However, the news was afterwards contradicted.

The next day I desired Michel to tell the carpenter to make a new cage for Mademoiselle Desgarcins, who would certainly die of cramp if left in her small travelling cage. But Michel, with a solemn face, said it was unnecessary. ‘For,’ said he, ‘I am sorry to tell you, sir, that a misfortune has happened. A weasel has killed the golden pheasant. You will, however, have it for your dinner to-day.’

I did not refuse, though the prospect of this repast caused me no great pleasure. I am very fond of game, but somehow prefer pheasants which have been shot to those killed by weasels.

‘Then,’ said I, ‘if the cage is empty, let us put in the monkey.’ We brought the little cage close to the big cage, and opened both doors. The monkey sprang into her new abode, bounded from perch to perch, and then came and looked at me through the bars, making grimaces and uttering plaintive cries.

‘She is unhappy without a companion,’ said Michel.

‘Suppose we give her the parrot?’

‘You know that little boy, an Auvergnat, who comes here with his monkey asking for pennies. If I were you, sir, I would buy that monkey.’

‘And why that monkey rather than another?’

‘He has been so well educated and is so gentle. He has a cap with a feather, and he takes it off when you give him a nut or a bit of sugar.’

‘Can he do anything else?’

‘He can fight a duel.’

‘Is that all?’

‘No, he can also catch fleas on his master.’

‘But, Michel, do you think that that youth would part with so useful an animal?’

‘We can but ask him, and there he is at this moment!’ And he called to the boy to come in. The monkey was sitting on a box which the little boy carried on his back, and when his master took off his cap, the monkey did the same. It had a nice gentle little face, and I remarked to Michel that it was very like a well-known translator of my acquaintance.

‘If I have the happiness to become the owner of this charming animal,’ I continued, ‘we will call it Potich.’ And giving Michel forty francs, I left him to make his bargain with the little Auvergnat.

III

I had not entered my study since my return from Havre, and there is always a pleasure in coming home again after an absence. I was glad to come back, and looked about me with a pleased smile, feeling sure that the furniture and ornaments of the room, if they could speak, would say they were glad to see me again. As I glanced from one familiar object to another, I saw, upon a seat by the fire, a thing like a black and white muff, which I had never seen before. When I came closer, I saw that the muff was a little cat, curled up, half asleep, and purring loudly. I called the cook, whose name was Madame Lamarque. She came in after a minute or two.

‘So sorry to have kept you waiting, but you see, sir, I was making a white sauce, and you, who can cook yourself, know how quickly those sauces curdle if you are not looking after them.’

‘Yes, I know that, Madame Lamarque; but what I do not know is, where this new guest of mine comes from.’ And I pointed to the cat.

‘Ah, sir!’ said Madame Lamarque in a sentimental tone, ‘that is an antony.’

‘An antony, Madame Lamarque! What is that?’

‘In other words, an orphan — a foundling, sir.’

‘Poor little beast!’

‘I felt sure that would interest you, sir.’

‘And where did you find it, Madame Lamarque?’

‘In the cellar — I heard a little cry — miaow, miaow, miaow! and I said to myself, “That *must* be a cat!”’

‘No! did you actually say that?’

‘Yes, and I went down myself, sir, and found the poor little thing behind the sticks. Then I recollected how you had once said, “We ought to have a cat in the house.”’

‘Did I say so? I think you are making a mistake, Madame Lamarque.’

‘Indeed, sir, you did say so. Then I said to myself, “Providence has sent us the cat which my master wishes for.” And now there is one question I must ask you, sir. What shall we call the cat?’

‘We will call it Mysouff, if you have no objection. And please be careful, Madame Lamarque, that it does not eat my quails and turtle-doves, or any of my little foreign birds.’

‘If M. Dumas is afraid of that,’ said Michel, coming in, ‘there is a method of preventing cats from eating birds.’

‘And what is the method, my good friend?’

‘You have a bird in a cage. Very well. You cover three sides of the cage, you make a gridiron red-hot, you put it against the uncovered side of the cage, you let out the cat, and you leave the room. The cat, when it makes its spring, jumps against the hot gridiron. The hotter the gridiron is the better the cat is afterwards.’

‘Thank you, Michel. And what of the troubadour and his monkey?’

‘To be sure; I was coming to tell you about that. It is all right, sir; you are to have Potich for forty francs, only you must give the boy two white mice and a guinea-pig in return.’

‘But where am I to find two white mice and a guinea-pig?’

‘If you will leave the commission to me, I will see that they are found.’

I left the commission to Michel.

‘If you won’t think me impertinent, sir,’ said Madame Lamarque, ‘I should so like to know what *Mysouff* means.’

‘Mysouff just means Mysouff, Madame Lamarque.’

‘It is a cat’s name, then?’

‘Certainly, since Mysouff the First was so-called. It is true, Madame Lamarque, you never knew Mysouff.’ And I became so thoughtful that Madame Lamarque was kind enough to withdraw quietly, without asking any questions about Mysouff the First.

That name had taken me back to fifteen years ago, when my mother was still living. I had then the great happiness of having a mother to scold me sometimes. At the time I speak of, I had a situation in the service of the Duc d’Orléans, with a salary of 1,500 francs. My work occupied me from ten in the morning until five in the afternoon. We had a cat in those days whose name was Mysouff. This cat had missed his vocation — he ought to have been a dog. Every morning I started for my office at half-past nine, and came back every evening at half-past five. Every morning Mysouff followed me to the corner of a particular street, and every evening I found him in the same street, at the same corner, waiting for me. Now the curious thing was that on the days when I had found some amusement elsewhere, and was not coming home to dinner, it was no use to open the door for Mysouff to go and meet me. Mysouff, in the attitude of the serpent with its tail in its mouth, refused to stir from his cushion. On the other hand, the days I did come, Mysouff would scratch at the door until someone opened it for him. My mother was very fond of Mysouff; she used to call him her barometer.

A remarkable instance of telepathy in the Cat. — A. L.

'Mysouff marks my good and my bad weather,' my dear mother would say; 'the days you come in are my days of sunshine; my rainy days are when you stay away.'

When I came home, I used to see Mysouff at the street corner, sitting quite still and gazing into the distance. As soon as he caught sight of me, he began to move his tail; then as I drew nearer, he rose and walked backwards and forwards across the pavement with his back arched and his tail in the air. When I reached him, he jumped up upon me as a dog would have done, and bounded and played round me as I walked towards the house; but when I was close to it he dashed in at full speed. Two seconds after, I used to see my mother at the door.

Never again in this world, but in the next perhaps, I shall see her standing waiting for me at the door.

That is what I was thinking of, dear readers, when the name of Mysouff brought back all these recollections; so you understand why I did not answer Madame Lamarque's questions.

Henceforth Mysouff II. enjoyed the same privileges that Mysouff I. had done, although, as will be seen later, he was not distinguished by similar virtues, but was, in fact, a very different sort of cat.

IV

The following Sunday, when my son Alexandre and one or two intimate friends were assembled in my room, a second Auvergnat boy, with a second monkey, demanded admittance, and said that a friend having told him that M. Dumas had bought his monkey for forty francs, two white mice, and a guinea-pig, he was prepared to offer his for the same price. My friends urged me to buy the second monkey.

'Do buy this charming creature,' said my artist friend Giraud.

'Yes, do buy this ridiculous little beast,' said Alexandre.

'Buy him, indeed,' said I; 'have I forty francs to give away every day, to say nothing of a guinea-pig and two white mice?'

'Gentlemen,' said Alexandre, 'I am sorry to tell you that my father is, without exception, the most avaricious man living.'

My guests exclaimed, but Alexandre said that one day he would prove the truth of his assertion. I was now called upon to admire the monkey, and to remark how like he was to a friend of ours. Giraud, who was painting a portrait of this gentleman, said that if I would let the monkey sit to him, it would help him very much in his work, and Maquet, another of my guests, offered, amidst general applause, to make me a present of it. This decided me.

Maquet. The immortal Augustus MacKeat.

'You see,' said Alexandre, 'he accepts.'

'Come, young man,' said I to the Auvergnat, 'embrace your monkey for the last time, and if you have any tears to shed, shed them without delay.'

When the full price was paid, the boy made an attempt to do as I told him, but the Last of the Laidmanoirs refused to be embraced by his former master, and as soon as the latter had gone away, he seemed delighted and began to dance, while Mademoiselle Desgarcins in her cage danced, too, with all her might.

'Look!' said Maquet, 'they like each other. Let us complete the happiness of these interesting animals.'

We shut them up in the cage together, to the great delight of Mademoiselle Desgarcins, who did not care for Potich, and much preferred her new admirer. Potich, indeed, showed signs of jealousy, but, not being armed with the sword which he used to have when he fought duels, he could not wash out his affronts in the blood of his rival, but became a prey to silent melancholy and wounded affection.

While we were still looking at the monkeys, a servant came in bringing a tray with wine and seltzer water.

‘I say,’ said Alexandre, ‘let us make Mademoiselle Desgarcins open the seltzer-water bottle!’ and he put the bottle inside the cage on the floor. No sooner had he done so, than all three monkeys surrounded it and looked at it with the greatest curiosity. Mademoiselle Desgarcins was the first to understand that something would happen if she undid the four crossed wires which held down the cork. She accordingly set to work, first with her fingers, and then with her teeth, and it was not long before she undid the first three. She next attacked the fourth, while the whole company, both men and monkeys, watched her proceedings with breathless attention. Presently a frightful explosion was heard: Mademoiselle Desgarcins was knocked over by the cork and drenched with seltzer water, while Potich and the Last of the Laidmanoirs fled to the top of their cage, uttering piercing cries.

‘Oh!’ cried Alexandre, ‘I’ll give my share of seltzer water to see her open another bottle!’ Mademoiselle Desgarcins had got up, shaken herself, and gone to rejoin her companions, who were still howling lamentably.

‘You don’t suppose she’ll let herself be caught a second time,’ said Giraud.

‘Do you know,’ said Maquet, ‘I should not wonder if she would. I believe her curiosity would still be stronger than her fear.’

‘Monkeys,’ said Michel, who had come in on hearing their cries, ‘are more obstinate than mules. The more seltzer-water bottles you give them, the more they will uncork.’

‘Do you think so, Michel?’

‘You know, of course, how they catch them in their own country.’

‘No, Michel.’

‘What! you don’t know *that*, gentlemen?’ said Michel, full of compassion for our ignorance. ‘You know that monkeys are very fond of Indian corn. Well, you put some Indian corn into a bottle, the neck of which is just large enough to admit a monkey’s paw. He sees the Indian corn through the glass — —’

‘Well, Michel?’

‘He puts his hand inside, and takes a good handful of the Indian corn. At that moment the hunter shows himself. They are so obstinate — the monkeys, I mean — that they won’t let go what they have in their hand, but as they can’t draw their closed fist through the opening, there they are, you see, caught.’

‘Well, then, Michel, if ever our monkeys get out, you will know how to catch them again.’

‘Oh! no fear, sir, that is just what I shall do.’

The seltzer-water experiment was successfully repeated, to the triumph of Michel and the delight of Alexandre, who wished to go on doing it; but I forbade him, seeing that poor Mademoiselle Desgarcins’ nose was bleeding from the blow of the cork.

‘It is not that,’ said Alexandre; ‘it is because you grudge your seltzer water. I have already remarked, gentlemen, that my father is, I regret to say, an exceedingly avaricious man.’

V

It is now my painful duty to give my readers some account of the infamous conduct of Mysouff II. One morning, on waking rather late, I saw my bedroom door gently opened, and the head of Michel thrust in, wearing such a concerned expression that I knew at once that something was wrong.

‘What has happened, Michel?’

‘Why, sir, those villains of monkeys have managed to twist a bar of their cage, I don’t know how, until they have made a great hole, and now they have escaped.’

‘Well — but, Michel, we foresaw that that might occur, and now you have only to buy your Indian corn, and procure three bottles the right size.’

‘Ah! you are laughing, sir,’ said Michel, reproachfully, ‘but you won’t laugh when you know all. They have opened the door of the aviary — —’

‘And so my birds have flown away?’

‘Sir, your six pairs of turtle doves, your fourteen quails, and all your little foreign birds, are eaten up!’

Let the reader compare the conduct of Mr. Gully, later!

‘But monkeys won’t eat birds!’

‘No, but Master Mysouff will, and he has done it!’

‘The deuce he has! I must see for myself.’

‘Yes, go yourself, sir; you will see a sight — a field of battle — a massacre of St. Bartholomew!’

As I was coming out, Michel stopped me to point to Potich, who had hung himself by the tail to the branch of a maple, and was swinging gracefully to and fro. Mademoiselle Desgarcins was bounding gaily about in the aviary, while the Last of the Laidmanoirs was practising gymnastics on the top of the greenhouse. ‘Well, Michel, we must catch them. I will manage the Last of the Laidmanoirs if you will get hold of Mademoiselle Desgarcins. As to poor little Potich, he will come of his own accord.’

‘I wouldn’t trust him, sir; he is a hypocrite. He has made it up with the other one — just think of that!’

‘What! he has made friends with his rival in the affections of Mademoiselle Desgarcins?’

‘Just so, sir.’

‘That is sad indeed, Michel; I thought only human beings could be guilty of so mean an action.’

‘You see, sir, these monkeys have frequented the society of human beings.’

I now advanced upon the Last of the Laidmanoirs with so much precaution that I contrived to shut him into the greenhouse, where he retreated into a corner and prepared to defend himself, while Potich, from the outside, encouraged his friend by making horrible faces at me through the glass. At this moment piercing shrieks were heard from Mademoiselle Desgarcins; Michel had just caught her. These cries so enraged the Last of the Laidmanoirs that he dashed out upon me; but I parried his attack with the palm of my hand; with which he came in contact so forcibly that he lost breath for a minute, and I then picked him up by the scruff of the neck.

‘Have you caught Mademoiselle Desgarcins?’ I shouted to Michel.

‘Have you caught the Last of the Laidmanoirs?’ returned he.

‘Yes!’ we both replied in turn. And each bearing his prisoner, we returned to the cage, which had in the meantime been mended, and shut them up once more, whilst Potich, with loud lamentations, fled to the top of the highest tree in the garden. No sooner, however, did he find that his two companions were unable to get out of their cage, than he came down from his tree, approached Michel in a timid and sidelong manner, and with clasped hands and little plaintive cries, entreated to be shut up again with his friends.

‘Just see what a hypocrite he is!’ said Michel.

But I was of opinion that the conduct of Potich was prompted by devotion rather than hypocrisy; I compared it to that of Regulus, who returned to Carthage to keep his promised word, or to King John of France, who voluntarily gave himself up to the English for the Countess of Salisbury’s sake.

Michel continued to think Potich a hypocrite, but on account of his repentance he was forgiven. He was put back into the cage, where Mademoiselle Desgarcins took very little notice of him.

All this time Mysouff, having been forgotten, calmly remained in the aviary, and continued to crunch the bones of his victims with the most hardened indifference. It was easy enough to catch *him*. We shut him into the aviary, and held a council as to what should be his punishment. Michel was of opinion that he should be shot forthwith. I was, however, opposed to his immediate execution, and resolved to wait until the following Sunday, and then to cause Mysouff to be formally tried by my assembled friends. The condemnation was therefore postponed. In the meantime Mysouff remained a prisoner in the very spot where his crimes had been committed. He continued, however, to refresh himself with the remains of his victims without apparent remorse, but Michel removed all the bodies, and confined him to a diet of bread and water.

Next Sunday, having convoked a council of all my friends, the trial was proceeded with. Michel was appointed Chief Justice and Nogent Saint-Laurent was counsel for the prisoner. I may remark that the jury were inclined to find a verdict of guilty, and after the first speech of the Judge, the capital sentence seemed almost certain. But the skilful advocate, in a long and eloquent speech, brought clearly before us the innocence of Mysouff, the malice of the monkeys, their quickness and incessant activity compared with the less inventive minds of cats. He showed us that Mysouff was incapable of contemplating such a crime; he described him wrapped in peaceful sleep, then, suddenly aroused from this innocent slumber by the abandoned creatures who, living as they did opposite the aviary, had doubtless long harboured their diabolical designs. We saw Mysouff but half awake, still purring innocently, stretching himself, opening his pink mouth, from which protruded a tongue like that of a heraldic lion. He shakes his ears, a proof that he rejects the infamous proposal that is being made to him; he listens; at first he refuses — the advocate insisted that the prisoner had begun by refusing — then, naturally yielding, hardly more than a kitten, corrupted as he had been by the cook, who instead of feeding him on milk or a little weak broth, as she had been told to do, had recklessly excited his carnivorous appetite by giving him pieces of liver and parings of raw chops; the unfortunate young cat yields little by little, prompted more by good nature and weakness of mind than by cruelty or greed, and, only half awake, he does the bidding of the villainous monkeys, the real instigators of the crime. The counsel here took the prisoner in his arms, showed us his paws, and defied any anatomist to say that with paws so made, an animal could possibly open a door that was bolted. Finally, he borrowed Michel’s Dictionary of Natural History, opened it at the article ‘Cat,’ ‘Domestic Cat,’ ‘Wild Cat’; he proved that Mysouff was no wild cat, seeing that nature had robed him in white, the colour of innocence; then smiting the book with vehemence, ‘Cat!’ he exclaimed, ‘Cat! You shall now hear, gentlemen, what the illustrious Buffon, the man with lace sleeves, has to say about the cat.

‘“The cat,” says M. de Buffon, “is not to be trusted, but it is kept to rid the house of enemies which cannot otherwise be destroyed. Although the cat, especially when young, is pleasing, nature has given it perverse and untrustworthy qualities which increase with age, and which education may conceal, but will not eradicate.” Well, then,’ exclaimed the orator, after having read this passage, ‘what more remains to be said? Did poor Mysouff come here with a false character seeking a situation? Was it not the cook herself who found him — who took him by force from the heap of sticks behind which he had sought refuge? It was merely to interest and touch the heart of her master that she described him mewing in the cellar. We must reflect also, that those unhappy birds, his victims — I allude especially to the quails, which are eaten by man — though their death is doubtless much to be deplored, yet they must have felt themselves liable to death at any moment, and are now released from the terrors they experienced every time they saw the cook approaching their retreat. Finally, gentlemen, I appeal to your justice, and I think you will now admit that the interesting and unfortunate Mysouff has but yielded, not only to incontrollable natural instincts, but also to foreign influence. I claim for my client the plea of extenuating circumstances.’

The counsel’s pleading was received with cries of applause, and Mysouff, found guilty of complicity in the murder of the quails, turtle-doves, and other birds of different species, but with extenuating circumstances, was sentenced only to five years of monkeys.

VI

The next winter, certain circumstances, with which I need not trouble my readers, led to my making a journey to Algiers. I seldom make any long journey without bringing home some animal to add to my collection, and accordingly I returned from Africa accompanied by a vulture, which I bought from a little boy who called himself a Beni-Mouffetard. I paid ten francs for the vulture, and made the Beni-Mouffetard a present of two more, in return for which he warned me that my vulture was excessively savage, and had already bitten off the thumb of an Arab and the tail of a dog. I promised to be very careful, and the next day I became the possessor of a magnificent vulture, whose only fault consisted in a strong desire to tear in pieces everybody who came near him. I bestowed on him the name of his compatriot, Jugurtha. He had a chain fastened to his leg, and had for further security been placed in a large cage made of spars. In this cage he travelled quite safely as far as Philippeville, without any other accident than that he nearly bit off the finger of a passenger who had tried to make friends with him. At Philippeville a difficulty arose. It was three miles from Stora, the port where we were to embark, and the diligence did not go on so far. I and several other gentlemen thought that we would like to walk to Stora, the scenery being beautiful and the distance not very great; but what was I to do about Jugurtha? I could not ask a porter to carry the cage; Jugurtha would certainly have eaten him through the spars. I thought of a plan: it was to lengthen his chain eight or ten feet by means of a cord; and then to drive him in front of me with a long pole. But the first difficulty was to induce Jugurtha to come out of his cage; none of us dared put our hands within reach of his beak. However, I managed to fasten the cord to his chain, then I made two men armed with pickaxes break away the spars. Jugurtha finding himself free, spread out his wings to fly away, but he could of course only fly as far as his cord would permit.

Now Jugurtha was a very intelligent creature; he saw that there was an obstacle in the way of his liberty, and that I was that obstacle; he therefore turned upon me with fury, in the hope of putting me to flight, or devouring me in case of resistance. I, however, was no less sagacious than Jugurtha; I had foreseen the attack, and provided myself with a good switch made of dogwood, as thick as one's forefinger, and eight feet long. With this switch I parried Jugurtha's attack, which astonished but did not stop him; however, a second blow, given with all my force, made him stop short, and a third caused him to fly in the opposite direction, that is, towards Stora. Once launched upon this road, I had only to use my switch adroitly to make Jugurtha proceed at about the same pace as we did ourselves, to the great admiration of my fellow-travellers, and of all the people whom we met on the road. On our arrival at Stora Jugurtha made no difficulty about getting on board the steamer, and when tied to the mast, waited calmly while a new cage was made for him. He went into it of his own accord, received with gratitude the pieces of meat which the ship's cook gave him, and three days after his embarkation he became so tame that he used to present me with his head to scratch, as a parrot does. I brought Jugurtha home without further adventure, and committed him to the charge of Michel.

It was not until my return from Algiers on this occasion that I went to live at Monte Cristo, the building of which had been finished during my absence. Up to this time I had lived in a smaller house called the Villa Medicis, and while the other was building, Michel made arrangements for the proper lodging of all my animals, for he was much more occupied about their comfort than he was about mine or even his own. They had all plenty of room, particularly the dogs, who were not confined by any sort of enclosure, and Pritchard, who was naturally generous, kept open house with a truly Scottish hospitality. It was his custom to sit in the middle of the road and salute every dog that passed with a little not unfriendly growl; smelling him, and permitting himself to be smelt in a ceremonious manner. When a mutual sympathy had been produced by this means, a conversation something like this would begin:

'Have you a good master?' asked the strange dog.

'Not bad,' Pritchard would reply.

'Does your master feed you well?'

'Well, one has porridge twice a day, bones at breakfast and dinner, and anything one can pick up in the kitchen besides.'

The stranger licked his lips.

'You are not badly off,' said he.

'I do not complain,' replied Pritchard. Then, seeing the strange dog look pensive, he added, 'Would you like to dine with us?'

The invitation was accepted at once, for dogs do not wait to be pressed, like some foolish human beings.

At dinner-time Pritchard came in, followed by an unknown dog, who, like Pritchard, placed himself beside my chair, and scratched my knee with his paw in such a confiding way that I felt sure that Pritchard must have been commending my benevolence. The dog, after spending a pleasant evening, found that it was rather too late to return home, so slept comfortably on the grass after his good supper. Next morning he took two or three steps as if to go away, then changing his mind, he inquired of Pritchard, ‘Should I be much in the way if I stayed on here?’

Pritchard replied, ‘You could quite well, with management, make them believe you are the neighbour’s dog, and after two or three days, nobody would know you did not belong to the house. You might live here just as well as those idle useless monkeys, who do nothing but amuse themselves, or that greedy vulture, who eats tripe all day long, or that idiot of a macaw, who is always screaming about nothing.’

The dog stayed, keeping in the background at first, but in a day or two he jumped up upon me and followed me everywhere, and there was another guest to feed, that was all. Michel asked me one day if I knew how many dogs there were about the place. I answered that I did not.

‘Sir,’ said Michel, ‘there are thirteen.’

‘That is an unlucky number, Michel; you must see that they do not all dine together, else one of them is sure to die first.’

‘It is not that, though,’ said Michel, ‘it is the expense I am thinking of. Why, they would eat an ox a day, all those dogs; and if you will allow me, sir, I will just take a whip and put the whole pack to the door, to-morrow morning.’

‘But, Michel, let us do it handsomely. These dogs, after all, do honour to the house by staying here. So give them a grand dinner to-morrow; tell them that it is the farewell banquet, and then, at dessert, put them all to the door.’

‘But after all, sir, I cannot put them to the door, because there isn’t a door.’

‘Michel,’ said I, ‘there are certain things in this world that one must just put up with, to keep up one’s character and position. Since all these dogs have come to me, let them stay with me. I don’t think they will ruin me, Michel. Only, on their own account, you should be careful that there are not thirteen.’

‘I will drive away one,’ suggested Michel, ‘and then there will only be twelve.’

‘On the contrary, let another come, and then there will be fourteen.’

Michel sighed.

‘It’s a regular kennel,’ he murmured.

It was, in fact, a pack of hounds, though rather a mixed one. There was a Russian wolfhound, there was a poodle, a water spaniel, a spitz, a dachshund with crooked legs, a mongrel terrier, a mongrel King Charles, and a Turkish dog which had no hair on its body, only a tuft upon its head and a tassel at the end of its tail. Our next recruit was a little Maltese terrier, named Lisette, which raised the number to fourteen. After all, the expense of these fourteen amounted to rather over two pounds a month. A single dinner given to five or six of my own species would have cost me three times as much, and they would have gone away dissatisfied; for, even if they had liked my wine, they would certainly have found fault with my books. Out of this pack of hounds, one became Pritchard's particular friend and Michel's favourite. This was a dachshund with short crooked legs, a long body, and, as Michel said, the finest voice in the department of Seine-et-Oise. Portugo — that was his name — had in truth a most magnificent bass voice. I used to hear it sometimes in the night when I was writing, and think how that deep-toned majestic bark would please St. Hubert if he heard it in his grave. But what was Portugo doing at that hour, and why was he awake while the other dogs slumbered? This mystery was revealed one day, when a stewed rabbit was brought me for dinner. I inquired where the rabbit came from.

'You thought it good, sir?' Michel asked me with a pleased face.

'Excellent.'

'Well, then, you can have one just the same every day, sir, if you like.'

'Every day, Michel? Surely that is almost too much to promise. Besides, I should like, before consuming so many rabbits, to know where they come from.'

'You shall know that this very night, if you don't mind coming out with me.'

'Ah! Michel, I have told you before that you are a poacher!'

'Oh, sir, as to that, I am as innocent as a baby — and, as I was saying, if you will only come out with me to-night—'

'Must I go far, Michel?'

'Not a hundred yards, sir.'

'At what o'clock?'

'Just at the moment when you hear Portugo's first bark.'

'Very well, Michel, I will be with you.'

I had nearly forgotten this promise, and was writing as usual, when Michel came into my study. It was about eleven o'clock, and a fine moonlight night.

'Hallo!' said I, 'Portugo hasn't barked yet, has he?'

'No, but I was just thinking that if you waited for that, you would miss seeing something curious.'

'What should I miss, Michel?'

'The council of war which is held between Pritchard and Portugo.'

I followed Michel, and sure enough, among the fourteen dogs, which were mostly sleeping in different attitudes, Portugo and Pritchard were sitting up, and seemed to be gravely debating some important question. When the debate was ended, they separated; Portugo went out at the gate to the high road, turned the corner, and disappeared, while Pritchard began deliberately, as if he had plenty of time before him, to follow the little path which led up to a stone quarry. We followed Pritchard, who took no notice of us, though he evidently knew we were there. He went up to the top of the quarry, examined and smelt about over the ground with great care, and when he had found a scent and assured himself that it was fresh, he lay down flat and waited. Almost at the same moment, Portugo's first bark was heard some two hundred yards off. Now the plan the two dogs had laid was clear to us. The rabbits came out of their holes in the quarry every evening to go to their feeding ground; Pritchard found the scent of one; Portugo then made a wide circuit, found and chased the rabbit, and, as a rabbit or a hare always comes back upon its former track, Pritchard, lying in ambush, awaited its return. Accordingly, as the sound of Portugo's barking came closer, we saw Pritchard's yellow eyes light up and flame like a topaz; then all of a sudden he made a spring, and we heard a cry of fright and distress.

'They've done it!' said Michel, and he went to Pritchard, took out of his mouth a nice plump rabbit, gave it a blow behind the ears to finish it, and, opening it on the spot, gave the inside to the two dogs, who shared their portion contentedly, although they probably regretted Michel's interference. As Michel told me, I could have eaten a stewed rabbit every day for dinner, if such had been my desire.

But after this, events of a different kind were taking place, which obliged me to leave my country pursuits, and I spent about two months in Paris. The day before I returned to St.-Germains I wrote and told Michel to expect me, and found him waiting for me on the road half way from the station.

'I must tell you, sir,' he said, as soon as I was within hearing, 'that two important events have happened at Monte Cristo since you went away.'

'Well, Michel, let me hear.'

'In the first place, Pritchard got his hind foot into a snare and instead of staying where he was as any other dog would have done, he bit off his foot with his teeth, and so he came home upon three legs.'

'But,' said I, much shocked, 'is the poor beast dead after such an accident?'

'Dead, sir? Was not I there to doctor him?'

'And what did you do to him then?'

'I cut off the foot properly at the joint with a pruning knife. I then sewed the skin neatly over it, and now you would never know it was off! Look there, the rascal has smelt you and is coming to meet you.'

And at that moment Pritchard appeared, coming at full gallop, so that, as Michel had said, one would hardly have noticed that he had only three feet. My meeting with Pritchard was, as may be supposed, full of deep emotion on both sides. I was sorry for the poor animal. When I had recovered a little, I asked Michel what his other piece of news was.

‘The latest news, sir, is that Jugurtha’s name is no longer Jugurtha.’

‘What is it then?’

‘It is Diogenes.’

‘And why?’

‘Look, sir!’

We had now reached the little avenue of ash-trees which formed the entrance to the villa. To the left of the avenue the vulture was seen walking proudly to and fro in an immense tub, which Michel had made into a house for him.

‘Ah! now I understand,’ said I. ‘Of course, directly he lives in a tub — —’

‘That’s it!’ said Michel. ‘Directly he lives in a tub, he cannot be Jugurtha any more; he *must* be Diogenes.’

I admired Michel’s historical learning no less than I did his surgical skill, just as the year before, I had bowed before his superior knowledge of natural history.

VII

In order to lead to more incidents in the life of Pritchard I must now tell my readers that I had a friend called Charpillon, who had a passion for poultry, and kept the finest hens in the whole department of Yonne. These hens were chiefly Cochins and Brahmapootras; they laid the most beautiful brown eggs, and Charpillon surrounded them with every luxury and never would allow them to be killed. He had the inside of his hen-house painted green, in order that the hens, even when shut up, might fancy themselves in a meadow. In fact, the illusion was so complete, that when the hen-house was first painted, the hens refused to go in at night, fearing to catch cold; but after a short time even the least intelligent among them understood that she had the good fortune to belong to a master who knew how to combine the useful with the beautiful. Whenever these hens ventured out upon the road, strangers would exclaim with delight, ‘Oh! what beautiful hens!’ to which some one better acquainted with the wonders of this fortunate village would reply, ‘I should think so! These are M. Charpillon’s hens.’ Or, if the speaker were of an envious disposition, he might add, ‘Yes indeed! hens that *nothing* is thought too good for!’

When my friend Charpillon heard that I had returned from Paris, he invited me to come and stay with him to shoot, adding as a further inducement that he would give me the best and freshest eggs I had ever eaten in my life. Though I did not share Charpillon’s great love of poultry, I am very fond of fresh eggs, and the nankeen-coloured eggs laid by his Brahma hens had an especially delicate flavour. But all earthly pleasures are uncertain. The next morning Charpillon’s hens were found to have only laid three eggs instead of eight. Such a thing had never happened before, and Charpillon did not know whom to suspect; however he suspected every one rather than his hens, and a sort of cloud began to obscure the confidence he had hitherto placed in the security of his enclosures. While these gloomy doubts were occupying us, I observed Michel hovering about as if he had something on his mind, and asked him if he wanted to speak to me.

‘I should be glad to have a few words with you, sir.’

‘In private?’

‘It would be better so, for the honour of Pritchard.’

‘Ah, indeed? What has the rascal been doing now?’

‘You remember, sir, what your solicitor said to you one day when I was in the room?’

‘What did he say, Michel? My solicitor is a clever man, and says many sensible things; still it is difficult for me to remember them all.’

‘Well, sir,’ he said, ‘find out whom the crime benefits, and you will find the criminal.’

‘I remember that axiom perfectly, Michel. Well?’

‘Well, sir, whom can this crime of stolen eggs benefit more than Pritchard?’

‘Pritchard? You think it is he who steals the eggs? Pritchard, who brings home eggs without breaking them!’

‘You mean who *used* to bring them. Pritchard is an animal who has vicious instincts, sir, and if he does not come to a bad end some day, I shall be surprised, that’s all.’

‘Does Pritchard eat eggs, then?’

‘He does; and it is only right to say, sir, that that is *your* fault.’

‘What! my fault? My fault that Pritchard eats eggs?’

Michel shook his head sadly, but nothing could shake his opinion.

‘Now really, Michel, this is too much! Is it not enough that critics tell me that I pervert everybody’s mind with my corrupt literature, but you must join my detractors and say that my bad example corrupts Pritchard?’

‘I beg pardon, sir, but do you remember how one day, at the Villa Medicis, while you were eating an egg, M. Rusconi who was there said something so ridiculous that you let the egg fall upon the floor?’

‘I remember that quite well.’

‘And do you remember calling in Pritchard, who was scraping up a bed of fuchsias in the garden, and making him lick up the egg?’

‘I do not remember him scraping up a bed of fuchsias, but I do recollect that he licked up my egg.’

‘Well, sir, it is that and nothing else that has been his ruin. Oh! he is quick enough to learn what is wrong; there is no need to show it him twice.’

‘Michel, you are really extremely tedious. How have I shown Pritchard what is wrong?’

‘By making him eat an egg. You see, sir, before that he was as innocent as a new-born babe; he didn’t know what an egg was — he thought it was a badly made golf ball. But as soon as you make him eat an egg, he learns what it is. Three days afterwards, M. Alexandre came home, and was complaining to me of his dog — that he was rough and tore things with his teeth in carrying them. “Ah! look at Pritchard,” I said to him, “how gentle *he* is! you shall see the way he carries an egg.” So I fetched an egg from the kitchen, placed it on the ground, and said, “Fetch, Pritchard!” Pritchard didn’t need to be told twice, but what do you think the cunning rascal did? You remember, some days before, Monsieur —— the gentleman who had such a bad toothache, you know. You recollect his coming to see you?’

‘Yes, of course I remember.’

‘Well, Pritchard pretended not to notice, but those yellow eyes of his notice everything. Well, all of a sudden he pretended to have the same toothache that that gentleman had, and crack! goes the egg. Then he pretends to be ashamed of his awkwardness — he swallows it in a hurry, shell and all! I believed him — I thought it was an accident and fetched another egg. Scarcely did he make three steps with the egg in his mouth than the toothache comes on again, and crack! goes the second egg. I began then to suspect something — I went and got a third, but if I hadn’t stopped then he’d have eaten the whole basketful. So then M. Alexandre, who likes his joke, said, “Michel, you may possibly make a good musician of Pritchard, or a good astronomer, but he’ll never be a good incubator!”’

‘How is it that you never told me this before, Michel?’

‘Because I was ashamed, sir; for this is not the worst.’

‘What! not the worst?’

Michel shook his head.

‘He has developed an unnatural craving for eggs; he got into M. Acoyer’s poultry-yard and stole all his. M. Acoyer came to complain to me. How do you suppose he lost his foot?’

‘You told me yourself — in somebody’s grounds where he had forgotten to read the notice about trespassing.’

‘You are joking, sir — but I really believe he can read.’

‘Oh! Michel, Pritchard is accused of enough sins without having *that* vice laid to his charge! But about his foot?’

‘I think he caught it in some wire getting out of a poultry-yard.’

‘But you know it happened at night, and the hens are shut up at night. How could he get into the hen-house?’

‘He doesn’t need to get into the hen-house after eggs; he can charm the hens. Pritchard is what one may call a charmer.’

‘Michel, you astonish me more and more!’

‘Yes, indeed, sir. I knew that he used to charm the hens at the Villa Medicis; only M. Charpillon has such wonderful hens, I did not think they would have allowed it. But I see now all hens are alike.’

‘Then you think it is Pritchard who — —’

‘I think he charms M. Charpillon’s hens, and that is the reason they don’t lay

— at least, that they only lay for Pritchard.'

'Indeed, Michel, I should much like to know how he does it!'

'If you are awake very early to-morrow, sir, just look out of your window — you can see the poultry-yard from it, and you will see a sight that you have never seen before!'

'I have seen many things, Michel, including sixteen changes of governments, and to see something I have never seen before I would gladly sit up the whole night!'

'There is no need for that — I can wake you at the right time.'

The next day at early dawn, Michel awoke me.

'I am ready, Michel,' said I, coming to the window.

'Wait, wait! let me open it very gently. If Pritchard suspects that he is watched, he won't stir; you have no idea how deceitful he is.'

Michel opened the window with every possible precaution. From where I stood, I could distinctly see the poultry-yard, and Pritchard lying in his couch, his head innocently resting upon his two fore-paws. At the slight noise which Michel made in opening the window, Pritchard pricked up his ears and half opened his yellow eye, but as the sound was not repeated he did not move. Ten minutes afterwards we heard the newly wakened hens begin to cluck. Pritchard immediately opened both eyes, stretched himself and stood upright upon his three feet. He then cast a glance all round him, and seeing that all was quiet, disappeared into a shed, and the next moment we saw him coming out of a sort of little window on the other side. From this window Pritchard easily got upon the sloping roof which overhung one side of the poultry-yard. He had now only to jump down about six feet, and having got into the inclosure he lay down flat in front of the hen-house, giving a little friendly bark. A hen looked out at Pritchard's call, and instead of seeming frightened she went to him at once and received his compliments with apparent complacency. Nor did she seem at all embarrassed, but proceeded to lay her egg, and that within such easy reach of Pritchard that we had not time to see the egg — it was swallowed the same instant. She then retired cackling triumphantly, and her place was taken by another hen.

'Well, now, sir,' said Michel, when Pritchard had swallowed his fourth egg, 'you see it is no wonder that Pritchard has such a clear voice. You know great singers always eat raw eggs the first thing in the morning.'

'I know that, Michel, but what I don't know is how Pritchard proposes to get out of the poultry-yard.'

'Just wait and see what the scoundrel will do.'

Pritchard having finished his breakfast, or being a little alarmed at some noise in the house, stood up on his hind leg, and slipping one of his fore-paws through the bars of the gate, he lifted the latch and went out.

‘And when one thinks,’ said Michel, ‘that if anybody asked him why the yard door was left open, he would say it was because Pierre had forgotten to shut it last night!’

‘You think he would have the wickedness to say *that*, Michel?’

‘Perhaps not to-day, nor yet to-morrow, because he is not come to his full growth, but some day, mind you, I should not be surprised to hear him speak.’

VIII

Before going out to shoot that day, I thought it only right to give M. Charpillon an account of Pritchard's proceedings. He regarded him, therefore with mingled feelings, in which admiration was more prominent than sympathy, and it was agreed that on our return the dog should be shut up in the stable, and that the stable-door should be bolted and padlocked. Pritchard, unsuspicious of our designs, ran on in front with a proud step and with his tail in the air.

'You know,' said Charpillon, 'that neither men nor dogs are allowed to go into the vineyards. I ought as a magistrate to set an example, and Gaignez still more, as he is the mayor. So mind you keep in Pritchard.'

'All right,' said I, 'I will keep him in.'

But Michel, approaching, suggested that I should send Pritchard home with him. 'It would be safer,' he said. 'We are quite near the house, and I have a notion that he might get us into some scrape by hunting in the vineyards.'

'Don't be afraid, Michel; I have thought of a plan to prevent him.'

Michel touched his hat. 'I know you are clever, sir — very clever; but I don't think you are as clever as that!'

'Wait till you see.'

'Indeed, sir, you will have to be quick, for there is Pritchard hunting already.'

We were just in time to see Pritchard disappear into a vineyard, and a moment afterwards he raised a covey of partridges.

'Call in your dog,' cried Gaignez.

I called Pritchard, who, however, turned a deaf ear.

'Catch him,' said I to Michel.

Michel went, and returned in a few minutes with Pritchard in a leash. In the meantime I had found a long stake, which I hung crosswise round his neck, and let him go loose with this ornament. Pritchard understood that he could no longer go through the vineyards, but the stake did not prevent his hunting, and he only went a good deal further off on the open ground.

From this moment there was only one shout all along the line.

'Hold in your dog, confound him!'

'Keep in your Pritchard, can't you! He's sending all the birds out of shot!'

'Look here! Would you mind my putting a few pellets into your brute of a dog? How can anybody shoot if he won't keep in?'

‘Michel,’ said I, ‘catch Pritchard again.’

‘I told you so, sir. Luckily we are not far from the house; I can still take him back.’

‘Not at all. I have a second idea. Catch Pritchard.’

‘After all,’ said Michel, ‘this is nearly as good fun as if we were shooting.’

And by-and-bye he came back, dragging Pritchard by his stake. Pritchard had a partridge in his mouth.

‘Look at him, the thief!’ said Michel. ‘He has carried off M. Gaignez’s partridge — I see him looking for it.’

‘Put the partridge in your game-bag, Michel; we will give him a surprise.’

Michel hesitated. ‘But,’ said he, ‘think of the opinion this rascal will have of you!’

‘What, Michel? do you think Pritchard has a bad opinion of me?’

‘Oh, sir! a shocking opinion.’

‘But what makes you think so?’

‘Why, sir, do you not think that Pritchard knows in his soul and conscience that when he brings you a bird that another gentleman has shot, he is committing a theft?’

‘I think he has an idea of it, certainly, Michel.’

‘Well, then, sir, if he knows he is a thief, he must take you for a receiver of stolen goods. Look at the articles of the Code; it is said there that receivers are equally guilty with thieves, and should be similarly punished.’

‘Michel, you open my eyes to a whole vista of terrors. But we are going to try to cure Pritchard of hunting. When he is cured of hunting, he will be cured of stealing.’

‘Never, sir! You will never cure Pritchard of his vices.’

Still I pursued my plan, which was to put Pritchard’s fore-leg through his collar. By this means, his right fore-foot being fastened to his neck, and his left hind-foot being cut off, he had only two to run with, the left fore-foot and the right hind-foot.

‘Well, indeed,’ said Michel, ‘if he can hunt now, the devil is in it.’

He loosed Pritchard, who stood for a moment as if astonished, but once he had balanced himself he began to walk, then to trot; then, as he found his balance better, he succeeded in running quicker on his two legs than many dogs would have done on four.

‘Where are we now, sir?’ said Michel.

‘It’s that beast of a stake that balances him!’ I replied, a little disappointed. ‘We ought to teach him to dance upon the tight-rope — he would make our fortunes as an acrobat.’

‘You are joking again, sir. But listen! do you hear that?’

The most terrible imprecations against Pritchard were resounding on all sides. The imprecations were followed by a shot, then by a howl of pain.

‘That is Pritchard’s voice,’ said Michel. ‘Well, it is no more than he deserves.’

Pritchard reappeared the next moment with a hare in his mouth.

‘Michel, you said that was Pritchard that howled.’

‘I would swear to it, sir.’

‘But how could he howl with a hare in his mouth?’

Michel scratched his head. ‘It was he all the same,’ he said, and he went to look at Pritchard.

‘Oh, sir!’ he said, ‘I was right. The gentleman he took the hare from has shot him. His hind-leg is all over blood. Look! there is M. Charpillon running after his hare.’

‘You know that I have just put some pellets into your Pritchard?’ Charpillon called out as soon as he saw me.

‘You did quite right.’

‘He carried off my hare.’

‘There! You see,’ said Michel, ‘it is impossible to cure him.’

‘But when he carried away your hare, he must have had it in his mouth?’

‘Of course. Where else would he have it?’

‘But how could he howl with a hare in his mouth?’

‘He put it down to howl, then he took it up again and made off.’

‘There’s deceit for you, gentlemen!’ exclaimed Michel.

Pritchard succeeded in bringing the hare to me, but when he reached me he had to lie down.

‘I say,’ said Charpillon, ‘I hope I haven’t hurt him more than I intended — it was a long shot.’ And forgetting his hare, Charpillon knelt down to examine Pritchard’s wound. It was a serious one; Pritchard had received five or six pellets about the region of his tail, and was bleeding profusely.

‘Oh, poor beast!’ cried Charpillon. ‘I wouldn’t have fired that shot for all the hares in creation if I had known.’

‘Bah!’ said Michel; ‘he won’t die of it.’ And, in fact, Pritchard, after spending three weeks with the vet. at St.-Germains, returned to Monte Cristo perfectly cured, and with his tail in the air once more.

IX

Soon after the disastrous event which I have just related the revolution of 1848 occurred in France, in which King Louis Philippe was dethroned and a republic established. You will ask what the change of government had to do with my beasts? Well, although, happily, they do not trouble their heads about politics, the revolution did affect them a good deal; for the French public, being excited by these occurrences, would not buy my books, preferring to read the ‘Guillotine,’ the ‘Red Republic,’ and such like corrupt periodicals; so that I became for the time a very much poorer man. I was obliged greatly to reduce my establishment. I sold my three horses and two carriages for a quarter of their value, and I presented the Last of the Laidmanoirs, Potich, and Mademoiselle Desgarcins to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris. I had to move into a smaller house, but my monkeys were lodged in a palace; this is a sort of thing that sometimes happens after a revolution. Mysouff also profited by it, for he regained his liberty on the departure of the monkeys.

As to Diogenes, the vulture, I gave him to my worthy neighbour Collinet, who keeps the restaurant Henri IV., and makes such good cutlets à la Béarnaise. There was no fear of Diogenes dying of hunger under his new master’s care; on the contrary, he improved greatly in health and beauty, and, doubtless as a token of gratitude to Collinet, he laid an egg for him every year, a thing he never dreamt of doing for me. Lastly, we requested Pritchard to cease to keep open house, and to discontinue his daily invitations to strange dogs to dine and sleep. I was obliged to give up all thoughts of shooting that year. It is true that Pritchard still remained to me, but then Pritchard, you must recollect, had only three feet; he had been badly hurt when he was shot by Charpillon, and the revolution of February had occasioned the loss of one eye.

It happened one day during that exciting period, that Michel was so anxious to see what was going on that he forgot to give Pritchard his dinner. Pritchard therefore invited himself to dine with the vulture, but Diogenes, being of a less sociable turn, and not in a humour to be trifled with, dealt poor Pritchard such a blow with his beak as to deprive him of one of his mustard-coloured eyes. Pritchard’s courage was unabated; he might be compared to that brave field marshal of whom it was said that Mars had left nothing of him whole except his heart. But it was difficult, you see, to make much use of a dog with so many infirmities. If I had wished to sell him I could not have found a purchaser, nor would he have been considered a handsome present had I desired to give him away. I had no choice, then, but to make this old servant, badly as he had sometimes served me, a pensioner, a companion, in fact a friend. Some people told me that I might have tied a stone round his neck and flung him into the river; others, that it was easy enough to replace him by buying a good retriever from Vatrin; but although I was not yet poor enough to drown Pritchard, neither was I rich enough to buy another dog. However, later in that very year, I made an unexpected success in literature, and one of my plays brought me in a sufficient sum to take a shooting in the department of Yonne. I went to look at this shooting, taking Pritchard with me. In the meantime my daughter wrote to tell me that she had bought an excellent retriever for five pounds, named Catinat, and that she was keeping him in the stable until my return. As soon as I arrived, my first care was to make Catinat's acquaintance. He was a rough, vigorous dog of three or four years old, thoughtless, violent, and quarrelsome. He jumped upon me till he nearly knocked me down, upset my daughter's work-table, and dashed about the room to the great danger of my china vases and ornaments. I therefore called Michel and informed him that the superficial acquaintance which I had made with Catinat would suffice for the time, and that I would defer the pleasure of his further intimacy until the shooting season began at Auxerre.

Poor Michel, as soon as he saw Catinat, had been seized with a presentiment of evil.

'Sir,' he said, 'that dog will bring some misfortune upon us. I do not know yet what, but something will happen, I know it will!'

'In the meantime, Michel,' I said, 'you had better take Catinat back to the stable.' But Catinat had already left the room of his own accord and rushed downstairs to the dining-room, where I had left Pritchard. Now Pritchard never could endure Catinat from the first moment he saw him; the two dogs instantly flew at one another with so much fury that Michel was obliged to call me to his assistance before we could separate them. Catinat was once more shut up in the stable, and Pritchard conducted to his kennel in the stable-yard, which, in the absence of carriages and horses, was now a poultry-yard, inhabited by my eleven hens and my cock Cæsar. Pritchard's friendship with the hens continued to be as strong as ever, and the household suffered from a scarcity of eggs in consequence. That evening, while my daughter and I were walking in the garden, Michel came to meet us, twisting his straw hat between his fingers, a sure sign that he had something important to say.

'Well, what is it, Michel?' I asked.

'It came into my mind, sir,' he answered, 'while I was taking Pritchard to his kennel, that we never have any eggs because Pritchard eats them; and he eats them because he is in direct communication with the hens.'

'It is evident, Michel, that if Pritchard never went into the poultry-yard, he would not eat the eggs.'

'Then, do you not think, sir,' continued Michel, 'that if we shut up Pritchard in the stable and put Catinat into the poultry-yard, it would be better? Catinat is an animal without education, so far as I know; but he is not such a thief as Pritchard.'

'Do you know what will happen if you do that, Michel?' I said. 'Catinat will not eat the eggs, perhaps, but he will eat the hens.'

'If a misfortune like that were to occur, I know a method of curing him of eating hens.'

'Well — but in the meantime the hens would be eaten.'

Scarcely had I uttered these words, when a frightful noise was heard in the stable-yard, as loud as that of a pack of hounds in full cry, but mingled with howls of rage and pain which indicated a deadly combat.

'Michel!' I cried, 'do you hear that?'

'Oh yes, I hear it,' he answered, 'but those must be the neighbours' dogs fighting.'

'Michel, those are Catinat and Pritchard killing each other!'

'Impossible, sir — I have separated them.'

'Well, then, they have met again.'

'It is true,' said Michel, 'that scoundrel Pritchard can open the stable-door as well as any one.'

'Then, you see, Pritchard is a dog of courage; he'll have opened the stable-door for Catinat on purpose to fight him. Be quick, Michel, I am really afraid one of them will be killed.'

Michel darted into the passage which led to the stable, and no sooner had he disappeared than I knew from the lamentations which I heard that some misfortune had happened. In a minute or two Michel reappeared sobbing bitterly and carrying Pritchard in his arms.

'Look, sir! just look!' he said; 'this is the last we shall see of Pritchard — look what your fine sporting dog has done to him. Catinat, indeed! it is Catilina he should be called!'

I ran up to Pritchard, full of concern — I had a great love for him, though he had often made me angry. He was a dog of much originality, and the unexpected things he did were only a proof of genius.

'What do you think is the matter?' I asked Michel.

'The matter? — the matter is that he is dead!'

‘Oh no, surely not!’

‘Anyhow, he’ll never be good for anything again.’ And he laid him on the ground at my feet.

‘Pritchard, my poor Pritchard!’ I cried.

At the sound of my voice, Pritchard opened his yellow eye and looked sorrowfully at me, then stretched out his four legs, gave one sigh, and died. Catinat had bitten his throat quite through, so that his death was almost immediate.

‘Well, Michel,’ said I, ‘it is not a good servant, it is a good friend that we have lost. You must wash him carefully — you shall have a towel to wrap him in — you shall dig his grave in the garden and we will have a tombstone made for him on which shall be engraved this epitaph:

‘Like conquering Rantzau, of courage undaunted, Pritchard, to thee Mars honour has granted, On each field of fight of a limb he bereft thee, Till nought but thy gallant heart scatheless was left thee.’

As my habit was, I sought consolation for my grief in literary labours. Michel endeavoured to assuage his with the help of two bottles of red wine, with which, mingled with his tears, he watered the grave of the departed. I know this because when I came out early next morning to see if my wishes with regard to Pritchard’s burial had been carried out, I found Michel stretched upon the ground, still in tears, and the two bottles empty by his side.

THE ADVENTURES OF PYRAMUS

Pyramus was a large brown dog, born of a good family, who had been given, when a mere pup, to Alexandre Dumas, the great French novelist, then quite a young man. Now the keeper to whom Pyramus first belonged had also a tiny little fox-cub without any relations about the place, so both fox-cub and dog-pup were handed over to the same mother, who brought them up side by side, until they were able to do for themselves. So when the keeper made young Dumas a present of Pyramus, he thought he had better bestow Cartouche on him as well.

Of course it is hardly necessary to say that these fine names were not invented by the keeper, who had never heard of either Pyramus or Cartouche, but were given to his pets by Dumas, after he had spent a little time in observing their characters.

Certainly it was a very curious study. Here were two animals, who had never been apart since they were born, and were now living together in two kennels side by side in the court-yard of the house, and yet after the first three or four months, when they were mere babies, every day showed some difference, and soon they ceased to be friends at all and became open enemies.

The earliest fight known to have taken place between them happened in this way. One day some bones were thrown by accident within the bounds of Cartouche’s territory, and though if they belonged to anybody, it was clearly Cartouche, Pyramus resolved most unfairly to get hold of them. The first time Pyramus tried secretly to commit this act of piracy, Cartouche growled; the second time he showed his teeth; the third time he bit.

It must be owned that Cartouche had shown some excuse for his violent behaviour, because he always remained chained up, whereas Pyramus was allowed certain hours of liberty; and it was during one of these that he made up his mind to steal the bones from Cartouche, whose chain (he thought) would prevent any attempt at reprisals. Indeed, he even tried to make out to his conscience that probably the bones were not dainty enough for Cartouche, who loved delicate food, whereas anything was good enough for him, Pyramus. However, whether he wanted to eat the bones or not, Cartouche had no intention of letting them be stolen from him, and having managed to drive off Pyramus on the first occasion, he determined to get safely hold of the bones before his enemy was unchained again.

Now the chains of each were the same length, four feet, and in addition to that, Pyramus had a bigger head and longer nose than Cartouche, who was much smaller altogether. So it follows that when they were both chained up, Pyramus could stretch farther towards any object that lay at an equal distance between their kennels. Pyramus knew this, and so he counted on always getting the better of Cartouche.

But Cartouche had not been born a fox for nothing, and he watched with a scornful expression the great Pyramus straining at his chain with his eyes nearly jumping out of his head with greed and rage. ‘Really,’ said Cartouche to himself, ‘if he goes on like that much longer, I shall have a mad dog for a neighbour before the day is out. Let me see if *I* can’t manage better.’ But as we know, being a much smaller animal than Pyramus, his nose did not come nearly so close to the bones; and after one or two efforts to reach the tempting morsel which was lying about six feet from each kennel, he gave it up, and retired to his warm bed, hoping that he might somehow hit upon some idea which would enable him to reach the ‘bones of contention.’

All at once he jumped up, for after hard thought he had got what he wanted. He trotted merrily to the length of his chain, and now it was Pyramus’s turn to look on and to think with satisfaction: ‘Well, if *I* can’t get them, *you* can’t either, which is a comfort.’

But gradually his grin of delight changed into a savage snarl, as Cartouche turned himself round when he had got to the end of his chain, and stretching out his paw, hooked the bone which he gradually drew within reach, and before Pyramus had recovered from his astonishment, Cartouche had got possession of all the bones and was cracking them with great enjoyment inside his kennel.

It may seem very unjust that Cartouche was always kept chained up, while Pyramus was allowed to roam about freely, but the fact was that Pyramus only ate or stole when he was really hungry, while Cartouche was by nature the murderer of everything he came across. One day he broke his chain and ran off to the fowl-yard of Monsieur Mauprivez, who lived next door. In less than ten minutes he had strangled seventeen hens and two cocks: nineteen corpses in all! It was impossible to find any ‘extenuating circumstances’ in his favour. He was condemned to death and promptly executed.

Henceforth Pyramus reigned alone, and it is sad to think that he seemed to enjoy it, and even that his appetite grew bigger.

It is bad enough for any dog to have an appetite like Pyramus when he was at home, but when he was out shooting, and should have been doing his duty as a retriever, this fault became a positive vice. Whatever might be the first bird shot by his master, whether it happened to be partridge or pheasant, quail or snipe, down it would go into Pyramus’s wide throat. It was seldom, indeed, that his master arrived in time to see even the last feathers.

A smart blow from a whip kept him in order all the rest of the day, and it was very rarely that he sinned twice in this way while on the same expedition, but unluckily before the next day’s shooting came round, he had entirely forgotten all about his previous caning, and justice had to be done again.

On two separate occasions, however, Pyramus’s greediness brought its own punishment. One day his master was shooting with a friend in a place where a small wood had been cut down early in the year, and after the low shrubs had been sawn in pieces and bound in bundles, the grass was left to grow into hay, and this hay was now in process of cutting. The shooting party reached the spot just at the time that the reapers were having their dinner and taking their midday rest, and one of the reapers had laid his scythe against a little stack of wood about three feet high. At this moment a snipe got up, and M. Dumas fired and killed it. It fell on the other side of the stack of wood against which the scythe was leaning.

As it was the first bird he had killed that day, he knew of course that it would become the prey of Pyramus, so he did not hurry himself to go after it, but watched with amusement, Pyramus tearing along, even jumping over the stack in his haste.

But when after giving the dog the usual time to swallow his fat morsel, Monsieur did not see Pyramus coming back to him as usual in leaps and bounds, he began to wonder what could have happened, and made hastily for the stack of wood behind which he had disappeared. There he found the unlucky Pyramus lying on the ground, with the point of the scythe right through his neck. The blood was pouring from the wound, and he lay motionless, with the snipe dead on the ground about six inches from his nose.

The two men raised him as gently as possible, and carried him to the river, and here they bathed the wound with water. They then folded a pocket-handkerchief into a band, and tied it tightly round his neck to staunch the blood, and when this was done, and they were wondering how to get him home, a peasant fortunately passed driving a donkey with two panniers, and he was laid in one of the panniers and taken to the nearest village, where he was put safely into a carriage.

For eight days Pyramus lay between life and death. For a whole month his head hung on one side, and it was only after six weeks (which seems like six years to a dog) that he was able to run about as usual, and appeared to have forgotten his accident.

Only, whenever he saw a scythe he made a long round to avoid coming in contact with it.

Some time afterwards he returned to the house with his body as full of holes as a sieve. On this occasion he was taking a walk through the forest, and, seeing a goat feeding, jumped at its throat. The goat screamed loudly, and the keeper, who was smoking at a little distance off, ran to his help; but before he could come up the goat was half dead. On hearing the steps of the keeper, and on listening to his strong language, Pyramus understood very well that this stout man dressed in blue would have something very serious to say to him, so he stretched his legs to their fullest extent, and started off like an arrow from a bow. But, as Man Friday long ago remarked, ‘My little ball of lead can run faster than thou,’ the keeper’s little ball of lead ran faster than Pyramus, and that is how he came home with all the holes in his body.

There is no denying that Pyramus was a very bad dog, and as his master was fond of him, it is impossible to believe that he can *always* have been hungry, as, for instance, when he jumped up in a butcher’s shop to steal a piece of meat and got the hook on which it was hung through his own jaws, so that someone had to come and unhook him. But hungry or not, Monsieur Dumas had no time to be perpetually getting him out of scrapes, and when a few months later an Englishman who wanted a sporting dog took a fancy to Pyramus, his master was not altogether sorry to say good-bye.

THE STORY OF A WEASEL

Bingley’s *Animal Biography*.

Weasels are so sharp and clever and untiring, that their activity has been made into a proverb; and, like many other sharp and clever creatures, they are very mischievous, and fond of killing rabbits and chickens, and even of sucking their eggs, which they do so carefully that they hardly ever break one.

A French lady, called Mademoiselle de Laistre, a friend of the great naturalist, Monsieur de Buffon, once found a weasel when he was very young indeed, and, as she was fond of pets, she thought she would bring him up. Now a weasel is a little creature, and very pretty. It has short legs and a long tail, and its skin is reddish brown above and white below. Its eyes are black and its ears are small, and its body is about seven inches in length. But this weasel was much smaller than that when it went to live with Mademoiselle de Laistre.

Of course it had to be taught: all young things have, and this weasel knew nothing. The good lady first began with pouring some milk into the hollow of her hand and letting it drink from it. Very soon, being a weasel of polite instincts, it would not take milk in any other way. After its dinner, when a little fresh meat was added to the milk, it would run to a soft quilt that was spread in its mistress’s bedroom, and, having soon discovered that it could get inside the quilt at a place where the stitches had given way, it proceeded to tuck itself up comfortably for an hour or two. This was all very well in the day, but Mademoiselle de Laistre did not feel at all safe in leaving such a mischievous creature loose during the night, so whenever she went to bed, she shut the weasel up in a little cage that stood close by. If she happened to wake up early, she would unfasten the cage, and then the weasel would come into her bed, and, nestling up to her, go to sleep again. If she was already dressed when he was let out, he would jump all about her, and would never once miss alighting on her hands, even when they were held out three feet from him.

All his ways were pretty and gentle. He would sit on his mistress’s shoulder and give little soft pats to her chin, or would run over a whole room full of people at the mere sound of her voice. He was very fond of the sun, too, and would tumble about and murmur with delight whenever it shone on him. The little weasel was rather a thirsty animal, but he would not drink much at a time, and, when he had once tasted milk, could not be persuaded to touch rain-water. Baths were quite new to him, too, and he could not make up his mind to them, even in the heat, from which he suffered a good deal. His nearest approach to bathing was a wet cloth wrapped round him, and this evidently gave him great pleasure.

Cats and dogs about the place condescended to make friends with him, and they never quarrelled nor hurt each other. Indeed, in many of their instincts and ways, weasels are not very unlike cats, and one quality they have in common is their curiosity. Nothing was dull or uninteresting to this little weasel. It was impossible to open a drawer or take out a paper without his little sharp nose being thrust round the corner, and he would even jump on his mistress's hands, the better to read her letters. He was also very fond of attracting attention, and in the midst of his play would always stop to see if anyone was watching. If he found that no one was troubling about him, he would at once leave off, and, curling himself up, go off into a sleep so sound that he might be taken up by the head and swung backwards and forwards quite a long time before he would wake up and be himself again.

STORIES ABOUT WOLVES

Wolves are found in the colder and more northern parts of Asia and North America, and over the whole of Europe, except the British Isles, where they were exterminated long ago. Some say Lochiel killed the last wolf in Scotland, some say a gamekeeper was the hero. The wolf very much resembles the dog in appearance, except that his eyes are set in obliquely, and nearer his nose. His coat is commonly of a tawny grey colour, but sometimes black or white, and he varies in size according to the climate. Some wolves only measure two and a half feet in length, not counting the tail, others are much larger. They have remarkably keen sight, hearing, and sense of smell, and such a stealthy gait, that their way of slinking along has passed into a proverb in countries where wolves are common. They live in rocky caverns in the forest, sleep by day like other beasts of prey, and go out at night to forage for food. They eat small birds, reptiles, the smaller animals, such as rats and mice, some fruits, grapes among others, and rotten apples; they do not disdain even dead bodies, nor garbage of any sort. But in times of famine or prolonged snow, when all these provisions fail them, and they feel the pinch of hunger, then woe betide the flocks of sheep or the human beings they may encounter. In 1450 wolves actually came into Paris and attacked the citizens. Even so lately as the long and severe winter of 1894-5, the wolves came down into the plains of Piedmont and the lower Alpes Maritimes in such numbers that the soldiery had to be called out to destroy them. In such times a wolf in broad daylight will steal up to a flock of sheep peacefully feeding, seize on a fine fat one, and make away with it, unseen and unsuspected even by the watchful sheep dog. Should a first attempt prove successful, he will return again and again, till, finding he can no longer rob that flock unmolested, he will look out for another one still unsuspicious. If he once gets inside a sheep-fold at night, he massacres and mangles right and left. When he has slain to his heart’s content, he goes off with a victim and devours it, then comes back for a second, a third, and a fourth carcase, which he carries away to hide under a heap of branches or dead leaves. When dawn breaks, he returns gorged with food to his lair, leaving the ground strewn with the bodies of the slain. The wolf even contrives to get the better of his natural enemy, the dog, using stratagem and cleverness in the place of strength. If he spies a gawky long-legged puppy swaggering about his own farmyard, he will come closer and entice him out to play by means of every sort of caper and gambol. When the young simpleton has been induced to come out beyond the farmyard, the wolf, throwing off his disguise of amiable playfulness, falls upon the dog and carries him away to make a meal of. In the case of a dog stronger and more capable of making resistance the stratagem requires two wolves; one appears to the dog in its true character of wolf, and then disappears into an ambush, where the other lies hidden. The dog, following its natural instinct, pursues the wolf into the ambush, where the two conspirators soon make an end of it.

So numerous have wolves always been in the rural districts of France, that from the earliest times there has been an institution called the *Louveterie*, for their extermination. Since the French Revolution this has been very much modified, but there is still a reward of so much per head for every wolf killed. Under ordinary circumstances the wolf will not only not attack man, but will flee from him, for he is as cowardly as he is crafty. But if driven by hunger he will pursue, or rather he will follow a solitary traveller for miles, dogging his footsteps, and always keeping near, sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, till the man, harassed and worn out by fatigue and fright, is compelled to halt; then the wolf, who had been waiting for this opportunity, springs on him and devours him.

Audubon, in his ‘Quadrupeds of America,’ tells a story of two young negroes who lived on a plantation on the banks of the Ohio in the State of Kentucky, about the year 1820. They each had a sweetheart, whom they used to go to visit every evening after their work was done. These negresses lived on another plantation about four miles away, but a short cut led across a large cane brake. When winter set in with its long dark nights no ray of light illuminated this dismal swamp. But the negroes continued their nightly expeditions notwithstanding, arming themselves by way of precaution with their axes. One dark night they set off over a thin crust of snow, the reflection from which afforded all the light they had to guide them on their way. Hardly a star appeared through the dense masses of cloud that nearly covered the sky, and menaced more snow. About half way to their destination the negroes’ blood froze at the sound of a long and fearful howl that rent the air; they knew it could only come from a pack of hungry and perhaps desperate wolves. They paused to listen, and only a dismal silence succeeded. In the impenetrable darkness nothing was visible a few feet beyond them; grasping their axes they went on their way though with quaking hearts. Suddenly, in single file, out of the darkness sprang several wolves, who seized on the first man, inflicting terrible wounds with their fangs on his legs and arms; others as ravenous leapt on his companion, and dragged him to the ground. Both negroes fought manfully, but soon one had ceased to move, and the other, despairing of aiding his companion, threw down his axe and sprang on to the branch of a tree, where he found safety and shelter for the rest of that miserable night. When day broke, only the bones of his friend lay scattered on the blood-stained, trampled snow; three dead wolves lay near, but the rest of the pack had betaken themselves to their lair, to sleep away the effects of their night's gorge.

A sledge journey through the plains of Siberia in winter is a perilous undertaking. If a pack of hungry wolves get on the track of a sledge, the travellers know, as soon as they hear the horrid howls and see the grey forms stealing swiftly across the snow, that their chances of escape are small. If the sledge stops one instant men and horses are lost; the only safety is in flight at utmost speed. It is indeed a race for life! The horses, mad with terror, seem to have wings; the wolves, no less swift, pursue them, their cruel eyes gleaming with the lust for blood. From time to time a shot is fired, and a wolf falls dead in the snow; bolder than the others, he has tried to climb into the sledge and has met his reward. This incident gives a momentary respite to the pursued, for the murderous pack will pause to tear in pieces and devour their dead comrade; then, further inflamed with the taste of blood, they will continue the headlong pursuit with redoubled vigour.

Should the travellers be able to reach a village or friendly farmhouse before the horses are completely exhausted, the wolves, frightened by the lights, will slink away into the forest, balked this time of their prey. On the other hand, should no refuge be near, the wolves will keep up with the horses till the poor beasts stumble and fall from fatigue, when the whole pack will instantly spring upon men and horses, and in a few moments the blood-stained snow alone tells the tale.

There have been instances, but fortunately few, of wolves with a perfect craving for human flesh. Such was the notorious Bête (or beast) du Gévaudan, that from the year 1764 and onwards ravaged the district of that name, in Auvergne, to the south of the centre of France. This wolf was of enormous size, measuring six feet from the point of its nose to the tip of its tail. It devoured eighty-three persons, principally women and children, and seriously wounded twenty-five or thirty others. It was attacked from first to last by between *two and three hundred thousand* hunters, probably not all at once. With half a dozen wolves, each equal to 200,000 men, a country could afford to do without an army. But the wolf of Gévaudan was no common wolf. He never married, having no leisure, fortunately for the human race. The whole of France was in a state of alarm on its account; the peasants dared no longer go to their work in the fields alone and unarmed. Every day brought tidings of some fresh trouble; in the morning he would spread terror and confusion in some village in the plains, in the evening he would carry off some hapless victim from some mountain hamlet fifteen or twenty leagues away. Five little shepherd boys, feeding their flocks on the mountain-side, were attacked suddenly by the ferocious beast, who made off with the youngest of them; the others, armed only with sticks, pursued the wolf, and attacked it so valiantly that they compelled it to drop its prey and slink off into the wood. A poor woman was sitting at her cottage door with her three children, when the wolf came down on them and attempted to carry off each of the children in turn. The mother fought so courageously in defence of her little ones that she succeeded in putting the wolf to flight, but in so doing was terribly bitten herself, and the youngest child died of his wounds.

Sometimes twenty or thirty parishes joined forces to attack the beast, led by the most experienced huntsmen and the chief *louvetier* of the kingdom. On one occasion twenty thousand hunters surrounded the forest of Preinières, where it lay concealed; but on this, as well as every other occasion, the wolf escaped in the most surprising — one might almost say miraculous — manner, disappearing as if he had been turned into smoke. Some hunters declared that their bullets had rebounded off him, flattened and harmless. Others alleged that when he had been shot, like the great Dundee, with a silver bullet (a well-known charm against sorcery) at such close quarters that it appeared impossible he should not be mortally wounded, in a day or two some fresh horror would announce that the creature was still uninjured. The very dogs refused at length to go after him, and fled howling in the opposite direction. The belief became general that it was no ordinary wolf of flesh and blood, but the Fiend himself in beast shape. Prayers were put up in the churches, processions took place, and the Host remained exhibited as in the times of plague and public calamity.

The State offered a reward of 2,000 francs to whosoever should slay the monster; the syndics of two neighbouring towns added 500 francs, making a total of 100*l.* English money, a large sum in those days. The young Countess de Mercoire, an orphan, and châtelaine of one of the finest estates of the district, offered her hand and fortune in marriage to whoever should rid the country of the scourge. This inspired the young Count Léonce de Varinas, who, though no sportsman by nature, was so deeply in love with the Countess that he determined to gain the reward or perish in the attempt. Assisted by a small band of well-trained hunters, and by two formidable dogs, a bloodhound and a mastiff, he began a systematic attack on the wolf. After many fruitless attempts they succeeded one day in driving the creature into an abandoned quarry of vast size, the sides of which were twenty or thirty feet high and quite precipitous, and the only entrance a narrow cart track blasted out of the rock. The young Count, determined to do or die alone, sternly refused to allow his men to accompany him into the quarry, and left them posted at the entrance with orders only to fire on the beast should it attempt to force its way out. Taking only the dogs with him, and having carefully seen to the state of his weapons, he went bravely to the encounter. The narrow defile was so completely hemmed in on every side that, to the vanquished, there was no escape nor alternative but death. Here and there, on patches of half-melted snow, were footprints, evidently recent, of the huge beast; but the creature remained invisible, and for nearly ten minutes the Count had wandered among the rocks and bushes before the dogs began to give sign of the enemy's presence.

About a hundred yards from where he stood was a frozen pool, on the edge of which grew a clump of bulrushes. Among their dry and yellow stalks Léonce suddenly caught a glimpse of a pair of fiery eyes — nothing more; but it was enough to let him know that the longed-for moment had at length arrived. Léonce advanced cautiously, his gun cocked and ready to fire, and the dogs close at his heels, growling with rage and fear. Still the wolf did not stir, and Léonce, determining to try other tactics, stopped, raised his gun to his shoulder, and aimed between the gleaming eyes, nothing more being yet visible. Before he could fire the beast dashed from among the crackling reeds and sprang straight at him. Léonce, nothing daunted, waited till it was within ten paces and then fired. With a howl of anguish the wolf fell as if dead. Before Léonce had time to utter a shout of joy, it was on its feet again. Streaming with blood and terrible in its rage it fell on the young man. He attempted to defend himself with his bayonet, which, though of tempered steel, was broken as if it had been glass; his gun, too, was bent, and he himself was hurled to the ground. But for his faithful dogs it would soon have been all over with him. They flew at the wolf's throat, who quickly made an end of the bloodhound; one crunch broke his back, while one stroke of the ruthless paw disembowelled him. Castor, the mastiff, had, however, the wolf by the throat, and a fearful struggle ensued over the prostrate body of Léonce. They bit, they tore, they worried, they rolled over and over each other, the wolf, in spite of its wounds, having always the advantage. Half stunned by the fall, suffocated by the weight of the combatants, and blinded by the dust and snow they scattered in the fray, Léonce had just sufficient strength to make one last effort in self-defence. Drawing his hunting-knife, he plunged it to the hilt in the shaggy mass above him. From a distance he seemed to hear shouts of 'Courage, Monsieur! Courage, Castor! We are coming!' then conscious only of an overwhelming weight above him, and of iron claws tearing at his chest, he fainted away. When he came to himself he was lying on the ground, surrounded by his men. Starting up, he exclaimed, 'The beast! where is the beast?'

'Dead, Monsieur! stone dead!' answered the head-keeper, showing him the horrid creature, all torn and bloody, stretched out on the snow beside the dead bloodhound. Castor, a little way off, lay panting and bruised, licking his wound. The Count's knife was firmly embedded in the beast's ribs; it had gone straight to the heart and death had been instantaneous. A procession was formed to carry the carcase of the wolf in triumph to the castle of the Countess. The news had flown in advance, and she was waiting on the steps to welcome the conquering hero. It was not long before the Countess and the gallant champion were married; and, as the wolf left no family, the country was at peace. Are you not rather sorry for the poor wolf?

TWO HIGHLAND DOGS

I

Righ and Speireag were two Highland dogs who lived in a beautiful valley not far from the west coast of Scotland, where high hills slope down to the shores of a blue loch, and the people talk a strange language quite different from English, or even from French, or German, or Latin, which is called Gaelic.

The name 'Righ,' means a king, and 'Speireag' means a sparrow-hawk, but they are words no one, except a Highlander, can pronounce properly. However, the dogs had a great many friends who could not talk Gaelic, and when English-speaking people called them 'Ree' and 'Spearah,' they would always answer.

Righ was a great tawny deerhound, tall and slender, very stately, as a king should be, and as gentle as he was strong. He had a rough coat and soft brown eyes, set rather near together, and very bright and watchful. His chief business in life was to watch the faces of his friends, and to obey their wishes quickly, to take his long limbs away from the drawing-room hearth-rug when the butler came in to put on the coals, not to get in the way more than so big a dog could help, and not to get too much excited when anything in the conversation suggested the likelihood of a walk. But his father and all his ancestors had led very different lives; they had been trained to go out on the mountains with men who hunted the wild deer, and to help them in the chase, for the deerhounds run with long bounds and are as fleet as the stag himself. Then, when the beautiful creature had been killed, it was their duty to guard the body, and to see that carrion crows, and eagles, and other wild birds should not molest it. But Righ's master was a Bishop, who, though he lived quite near to a great deer forest, and often took his dogs over the hills to where the deer lived, never killed anything, but loved to see all his fellow-creatures happy among the things they liked best.

Speireag was a very little dog, of the kind that is called a Skye terrier, though the island of Skye is one of the few places in which a long-haired terrier is very rare. He was quite small, what his Highland friends called 'a wee bit doggie;' he was very full of life and courage, wonderfully plucky for his size, like the fierce little bird whose name he bore. Like a good many little people he lacked the dignity and repose of his big companion, and, though very good-tempered among his friends, was quite ready to bite if beaten, and did not take a scolding with half the gentleness and humility with which Righ would submit to punishment, perhaps because he needed it oftener, for he was so busy and active that he sometimes got into scrapes. He was only three years old at the time of this story and Righ was seven, so it was perhaps natural that Righ should be the wiser of the two.

They lived in a beautiful house quite near the loch, and they had a large garden to play in, and they could go in and out of the house and do just as they liked so long as they came when they were called and did as they were bid, and did not climb on the sofa cushions when their feet were muddy. There were very few houses on their side the water, and as their friends went about in boats as often as other people go out in carriages, the dogs were used to the water, and could swim as easily as walk, and what is more, knew how to sit still in a boat, so that they were allowed to go everywhere with their friends because they gave no trouble.

They had a very happy life, for there was always something going on, which is what dogs like, and plenty of people to go walks with. Their young masters sometimes went out with guns, and a dog, a country dog, loves a gun better than anything in the world, because he knows it means business in which he can help. Sometimes their mistress took them for a walk, and then they knew that they must be on their best behaviour, and not wander too far away from the road and have to be whistled back, and not fight with the collies at the cottage doors, nor chase cats, nor be tiresome in any way; they generally kept close beside her, Righ walking very slowly so as to accommodate his big strides to the progress of a poor human thing with only two legs, and Speireag trotting along with tiny little footsteps that seemed to make a great fuss and to be in a great hurry about nothing at all.

There was nothing, however, so delightful as going for walks with their own master, the Bishop. For one thing, they generally knew he really meant to do something worth while. Pottering about with a gun or escorting a lady is pleasant enough, but it generally means coming home to lunch or tea, and the real joy of a dog’s walk is to feel that you are getting further and further away from home, and that there are miles of heather and pine-wood behind you, and yet you are still going on and on, with chances of more hares and more squirrels to run after. Sometimes the Bishop would stop at a shepherd’s hut or a lonely cottage under the lee of a hill, and sometimes he would sit down to examine a flower he had gathered in the wood, but they forgave him very good-temperedly, and could always find something to interest them while they waited.

Righ generally sat down beside his master and stretched out his great limbs on the heather, for he liked to think he was taking care of somebody or something. Speireag would lie down for a minute, panting, with his little red tongue hanging out and his hairy little paws all wet and muddy; but he never rested for long, but would dart off, pretending to have found a rat or a squirrel, even if none really existed.

It was in December, 1887, the weather was raw and cold, there was ice floating about on the loch, and the sea gulls used to come up to the garden terrace to be fed. The young masters were away, and mistress could only take walks along the road, there was nothing to tempt her to a mountain scramble or a saunter in the woods. The Bishop was very busy, and day after day the dogs would start up from the rug at the sound of the opening of his study door upstairs, and after a minute's anxious listening, with ears cocked and heads erect, they would lie down again with a sigh of disappointment, for there was no sound of approach to the hat-stand nor of whistled invitation for a walk.

Finally came a sad day when the Bishop went away, and dog-life threatened to become monotonous. Then, one Saturday, hope revived, for a visitor came to the house, an old friend whom they loved and trusted as a good dog always loves what is trustworthy. He was a frequent visitor, and had, in fact, left the house but three weeks before. He was there for a holiday rest, and had leisure to bestow on dogs and on long walks, which they always shared.

He was very thoughtful for them, not the sort of man who would set off on a whole afternoon's ramble and say, when half a mile on his way, 'I wish I'd remembered Righ and Speireag!' He always remembered them, and thought for them; and when he fed them after dinner, would always give big bits of biscuit to the big dog, and little bits to the little dog, and it is not every one who has the sense for that!

Every day, and often twice a day, he took them out, down to the church or the pier, or across the lake and up to the Pass of Glencoe, where stern grey hills and hovering eagles and a deep silent valley still seem to whisper together of a sad true story that happened there in just such weather as this two hundred years ago.

These were very happy days for dogs, for they did not mind the cold, it was only an excuse for wild scampering and racing, and they were very grateful for their friend's return. He had been ill, but was able to enjoy his walks and though about sixty years of age he had all those qualities of youth which endear a man to a dog or a child. He was brave and unselfish, and strong to love and to endure, and they loved him without knowing why; without knowing that he had lost his health from overwork in the service of the poor and suffering, and among outcasts so low as to be beyond the sympathy of any heart less loving than that of a dog or of a very good man. 'Father' Mackonochie he was always called, and though he had never had wife or children of his own, many a fatherless child, and many a lonely grown-up man or woman, felt that it was quite easy and natural to call him by a name so sacred.

On the Wednesday after he came, he took Righ and Speireag for a glorious walk through the shrubberies and out through a gate on to the road at the foot of the hills behind, a road that winds on and on for many miles, the mountains rising steeply above, the lake being cold and grey below; the bank, that slopes away from the road to the water, in places covered with gorse and low bushes and heather, where an enterprising dog may hunt for rats and rabbits, or rush headlong after a pee-wit or moor-fowl as it rises with a scream at his approach and flutters off high into the air, and then descending to within a few feet of him, skims low before him, hopelessly far, yet tantalisingly near.

The way was familiar to them by land or by water. Often had they sailed up the loch in the same direction, further and further into the heart of the mountains, the valley becoming more and more narrow, the shores of the lake nearer and nearer to each other, till, had they gone far enough, they would have reached the Dog’s Ferry, a spot where the water is so narrow that a dog may easily swim across. Righ, strong swimmer that he was, had often crossed the loch near his master’s house, where the ferry boats ply, and needed no Dog’s Ferry, but few dogs made such powerful strokes in the water as he.

This day, however, they did not reach the Dog’s Ferry. The afternoon was closing in, there were streaks of gold in the dull grey sky, and it was, the good Father thought, time to return. ‘Never mind, little man,’ he said as Speireag looked reproachfully at him with wistful brown eyes gleaming through overhanging silvery locks, ‘we’ll do it to-morrow, only we must set off earlier.’

This was good news, and the little dog started home gaily, running, as little dogs will, ten miles, at least, to every one of the road, and tired enough when home was reached at last. Dinner was a welcome feast, and Righ and Speireag slept sound till it was time for evening service. They always attended chapel night and morning, and took their places at the foot of the steps, half-way, when both were present, between mistress in her seat and master at the place of his sacred office. To-night, as usual, they remained perfectly quiet and apparently indifferent to what was going on till, at the words ‘Lighten our darkness,’ bed-time came into immediate prospect, and they started into expectant attitudes, awaiting the final ‘Amen.’

II

The next morning, though cold, was fine and fairly bright, and the dogs watched eagerly for signs of the promised walk. The service in chapel was rather long this morning, for, as it was Advent, the ‘Benedicite’ was read, and though Righ and Speireag noticed only that they had time for a longer nap than usual, there were some present who will never forget, as the season comes round again each year, the special significance of part of that song of praise —

O ye frost and cold — O ye ice and snow — O ye nights and days O ye light and darkness, O ye mountains and hills, O ye beasts and cattle, O ye holy and humble men of heart, Bless ye the Lord, praise Him and magnify Him for ever!

But at last the service was over and the dogs trotted out into the hall, and followed mistress and their friend to the front door to see ‘what the weather was like.’ It was not a specially pleasant morning, but it would do for a walk, and after waiting a few minutes to have some sandwiches cut, the only detention that could be endured with patience, the three set out. After about six miles they were on new ground, but on they went, the lake to the right of the road getting narrower — on past the Dog’s Ferry and still on, till the loch had become a river, and could be crossed by a bridge.

Righ and Speireag knew, by a more certain method than looking at clocks, that it was lunch time, half past one at least, and they never thought of doubting that they would cross the bridge and turn homewards along the other side the loch, and so get in about tea-time; or, for their friend was enterprising, by a longer way also on the further side, either of which would involve a delightful long walk, but with just that hint of a homeward turn which, even to dogs, is acceptable when breakfast has become a mere memory.

They accordingly followed the road on to the bridge, but as Father Mackonochie did not overtake them, Righ, ever watchful of his friends, turned to look back and saw him speaking to a girl, after which, to their surprise, he whistled them back, and instead of continuing along the road as it turned off to the right, kept straight on, though there was now only a rough track leading through a gate into the wood beyond.

When they had advanced a few paces into the wood, he sat down under a tree and took out his packet of sandwiches. Righ and Speireag, sitting close beside him, had their share, or perhaps more, for their wistful brown eyes hungrily reminded him that they had multiplied the distance many times over, and that an unexpected luncheon out of doors is a joy in a dog's day, of a kind for which a man may well sacrifice a part of his minor pleasure.

Starting off again was a fresh delight. On they went, further and further, always climbing higher and getting deeper into the wood. To the left, the steep mountain-side rose abruptly above them; to the right, below the path, the river tore its way between steep banks down, down to its home in the lake. Now and then the trees parted and made way for a wild mountain torrent leaping from rock to rock down the hill side, and rushing across their path to join the river below. As they climbed further these became more frequent. Their friend could stride across, setting an occasional foot upon a stepping-stone, and Righ, too, could cross safely enough, long-limbed as he was, though now and then he had to swim, and the streams were so rapid that it needed all his strength to cross the current. Sometimes he helped Speireag, for the brave little dog would always try to follow his big companion, and sometimes, with an anxious bark, would give warning that help was needed, and then the kind Father would turn back to pick up the little dog and carry him till they were in safety.

It was very hard work, they were always climbing, and in many places the road was polished with a thin coating of ice, but the dogs feared nothing and kept on bravely.

The path dwindled to a mere track, and the climbing became steeper still. The streams crossed their road still oftener, and the stones were slippery with ice. The wood became thinner, and as they had less shelter from the trees, great flakes of half-frozen snow were driven against their faces. There was no thought now of hares or stags, Righ and Speireag had no energies left for anything but patient following. Poor little Speireag's long coat was very wet, and as it dried a little, it became hard and crisp with frost. The long hair falling over his eyes was matted together and tangled with briers, and his little feet were sore and heavy with the mud that had caked in the long tassels of silky hair. Even Righ was very weary, and he followed soberly now instead of bounding along in front, his ears and tail drooped, and each time he crossed the ice-cold water he seemed more and more dejected.

As they left the wood behind them, the snow fell thick and blinding, but just at first, as they came out into the open, it seemed not quite so dark as under the trees. There was nothing to be seen but grey sky and grey moor, even the river had been left behind, and only blackened patches remained to show where, in summer, the ground was spread with a gay carpet of purple heather and sweet bog-myrtle. They got deeper at each step into half-frozen marsh; there was no sound or sign of life. The dogs felt hungry and weary, and they ached with the cold and wet. But they were following a friend, and they trusted him wholly. Well they knew that each step was taking them farther from home, and farther into the cold and darkness. But dog-wisdom never asserts itself, and in trustful humility they followed still, and the snow came down closer and closer around them, and even the grey sky and the grey moor were blotted out — and the darkness fell.

III

It was a disappointing home-coming for the Bishop that Thursday evening! There was no hearty handshake from waiting friend, no rejoicing bay of big dog or extravagant excitement of little dog to welcome him. The three had been out the whole day, he was told, and had not yet reappeared. A long walk had been projected, but they had been expected home long before this. When dinner-time came, and they did not appear, two servants had been sent out with lanterns to meet them, as the road, though not one to be missed, was dark, and some small accident might have happened. The men were not back yet, but doubtless the missing party would soon return.

The night was dark and stormy, and Father Mackonochie had been for some time somewhat invalided, and as time passed the Bishop became increasingly anxious. At length he ordered a carriage, and with the gardener set off towards Kinloch, the head of the loch, thinking that accident or weariness might have detained his friend, and the carriage might be useful. On the way they met the first messengers returning with the news that nothing could be heard at Kinloch of the missing three, except that they had passed there between one and two o’clock in the afternoon. The Bishop and his men sought along the road, and inquired for tidings at the very few houses within reach, but in vain. The night was dark and little could be done, and there was always the hope that on their return they might find that some tidings had been heard, that the lost friends might have come back by the other side of the lake.

So at last they turned back, reaching home about four o’clock in the morning. No news had been heard, and all felt anxious and perplexed, but most believed that some place of shelter had been reached, as the dogs had not come home. They could find their way home from anywhere, and there seemed little doubt that, overtaken by darkness, all three had found shelter in a shepherd’s or gamekeeper’s hut, perhaps on the other side of the lake, as they had almost certainly crossed the bridge, no one having met them on the road by which they had started.

Nevertheless all that was possible must be done in case of the worst, and as soon as daylight returned four parties of men were despatched in different directions, the Bishop himself choosing that which his friend and his dogs were known to have taken the day before.

A whole day of search over miles and miles of the desolate wintry mountains revealed but one fact, that the party had eaten their luncheon under a tree in the wood, beyond the bridge. The squirrels had left the sandwich paper there to tell the tale, and for the first time it seemed likely that they had not turned homewards on reaching the head of the lake, either by the same road they had come, or by that on the other side of the water and through Glencoe.

One by one, the search parties came home with no tidings. No trace of the wanderers had been seen, no bark of dogs had been heard, no help had been found towards the discovery of the sad secret. Weary and heartsick as all felt, no time was to be lost, every hour made the anxiety greater, and all were ready in a very short time to start afresh.

Again, for the second time, all through the long night they wandered over the mountains, through the wood, and across the deer-forest beyond. It was an awful night. Again and again were their lights blown out; the snow lay deep in all the hollows; where the streams had overflowed their banks, the path was a sheet of solid ice; the rocks, polished and slippery, were climbed with utmost difficulty. At every opening in the hills an ice-cold wind whirled down glen and corrie, sleet and hail-stones beat against their faces, the frozen pools in the marshes gave way beneath their feet. The night was absolutely dark, not a star shone out to give them courage. The silence and the sounds were alike awful. Sometimes they could hear each other’s laboured breathing as they tottered on the ice or waded through the snow, sometimes all other sounds were lost in the shrieking of the whirlwinds, the crackling of the ice, and the roaring of the swollen, angry streams.

What could have happened? Even if accident had occurred, either or both of the dogs would surely have returned, and how could even a Highland dog, hungry and shelterless, live through such a night as this?

Morning came again, and returning to the point, near the bridge at which the carriage had been left, two of the parties met, and drove home for food and dry clothing, and to learn what others might have to tell.

There was no news, and again the same earnest friends, with many more kind helpers, set out on their almost hopeless journey. The trackless wilds of the deer-forest seemed the most likely field for search, and all now, in various groups, set off in this direction.

Hour after hour passed without any gleam of hope, and even the Bishop began to feel that everything possible had been done, and was turning sadly homewards. A second party, a few hundreds yards behind, had almost come to the same resolve, many of the men had been without rest since Thursday, and even the dog, who with one of the keepers of the deer-forest had joined the party, was limping wearily and was exhausted by the cold and the rough walking.

Suddenly he stopped, and, with ears pricked and head erect, listened. No one knows better than a Highlander the worth of a collie's opinion, and more than one stopped to listen too. Not far away, and yet faint, came the bark of a dog! Among the men was Sandy, one of the Bishop's stablemen, who knew and loved Righ and Speireag, and his heart leapt up as he recognised the deerhound's bay!

Away, to their left, the mountains were cleft by a narrow glen, the sound came from the bank on the hither side. The Bishop and his party had climbed to the further side, but a shout reached them, alert and watchful as they were.

They turned back wondering, scarcely daring to hope. The men who had called to them were hastening to a given point, the dog, nose to ground, preceding them. There is no mistaking the air of a dog on business. The collie's intentness was as different from his late dejection as was the present haste of the men from the anxious watchful plodding of their long search.

In another moment they came in sight of something which made them hold back the dog, and which arrested their own footsteps. The Bishop himself must be the first to tread on what all felt was holy ground.

There, on the desolate hillside, lay the body of Father Mackonochie, wreathed about with the spotless snow, a peaceful expression on his face. One on either side sat the dogs, watching still, as they had watched through the two long nights of storm and darkness. Even the approach of friends did not tempt them to forsake their duty. With hungry, weary faces they looked towards the group which first came near them, but not till their own master knelt down beside all that remained of his old friend, did they yield up their trust, and rise, numbed and stiff, from the posts they had taken up, who knows how long before?

To say a few words of prayer and thanksgiving was the Bishop's first thought, his second to take from his pocket the sandwiches he carried, and to give all to Righ and Speireag.

A bier was contrived of sticks from a rough fence that marked the boundary of the deer-forest, and the body was lifted from the frozen ground on which it lay. The return to Kinloch, where the carriage waited, was very difficult, and the bearers had to change places very often.

Slow as was their progress, it was as rapid as Righ could manage, numbed with cold, and exhausted with hunger. The little dog was easily carried, and for once little Speireag was content to rest.

No one will ever know what those faithful dogs felt and endured during those two days and nights of storm and loneliness. Those who sought them in the darkness of that second awful night must have passed very near the spot where they lay, sleeping perhaps, or deafened by the storm, or even, possibly, listening anxiously with beating hearts to the footsteps which came so near, and yet turned away, leaving them, faithful to their post, in the night.

They in their degree, like the man whose last sleep they guarded, were ‘true and faithful servants.’

It is pleasant to know that Righ and Speireag did not suffer permanently for all they had undergone! They lived for five years and a half after, and had many and many a happy ramble when the sun was bright and the woods were green, and squirrels and hares were merry. They could not be better cared for than they had always been, but, if possible, they were more indulged. If they contrived to get a dinner in the kitchen as well as in the dining-room, their friends remembered the days when they had none, and nobody told tales. If they lay in the sun quite across the front door, or took up the whole of the rug before the winter fire, everyone felt that there were arrears of warmth to be made up to them. Their portraits were painted, and in the sculpture which in his own church commemorates Father Mackonochie’s death, the dogs have not been forgotten.

Righ was the elder of the two, and towards the end of his thirteen years showed signs of old age and became rheumatic and feeble, but Speireag, though three years younger, did not long survive him.

They rest now under a cairn in the beautiful garden they loved so well; dark green fir trees shelter their grave, a gentle stream goes merrily by on its way to the lake below, and in the crannies of the stones of which the cairn is built, foxgloves and primroses and little ferns grow fresh and green.

On the cairn is this inscription:

In Memory Of

15th December, 1887.

Righ died 19th January, 1893.

Speireag died 28th August, 1893.

MONKEY TRICKS AND SALLY AT THE ZOO

Naturalist’s Note-book.

Some monkeys are cleverer and more civilised than others, and the chiefs have their followers well in hand; every monkey having his own especial duties, which he is very careful to fulfil. When the stores of food which have been collected are getting low, the elders of the tribe — grey beards with long manes — meet together and decide where they shall go to lay in fresh supplies. This important point being settled, the whole body of monkeys, even down to the very little ones, leave the woods or mountain ravine where they live, and form into regular order. First scouts are posted; some being sent on to places in advance, others being left to guard the rear, while the main body, made up of the young and helpless monkeys, follow the chiefs, who march solemnly in front and carefully survey every precipice or doubtful place before they suffer anyone to pass over it.

It is not at all easy, even for an elderly and experienced monkey, to keep order among the host of lively chattering creatures for whose safety he is responsible, and indeed it would often be an impossible task if it were not for the help of the rear-guard. These much-tried animals have to make up quarrels which often break out by the way; to prevent the greedy ones from stopping to eat every scrap of fruit or berry that hangs from the trees as they pass, and to scold the mothers who try to linger behind in order to dress their children’s hair and to make them smart for the day.

Under these conditions, it takes a long time even for monkeys to reach their destination, which is generally a corn-field, but, once there, scouts are sent out to every rock or rising ground, so as to guard against any surprise. Then the whole tribe fall to, and after filling their cheek pouches with ears of corn, they make up bundles to tuck under their arms. After the long march and the hasty picking, they begin to get thirsty as well as hungry, and the next thing is to find some water. This is very soon done, as they seem able to detect it under the sand, however deep down it may be, and by dint of taking regular turns at digging, it does not take long before they have laid bare a well that is large enough for everybody.

Monkeys love by nature to imitate what they see, and have been known to smoke a pipe, and to pretend to read a book that they have seen other people reading. But sometimes they can do a great deal more than this, and show that they can calculate and reason better than many men. A large Abyssinian monkey was one day being taken round Khartoum by its master, and made to perform all sorts of tricks for the amusement of the bystanders. Among these was a date-seller, who was squatting on the ground beside his fruit. Now the monkey was passionately fond of dates, but being very cunning was careful not to let this appear, and went on performing his tricks as usual, drawing little by little nearer to the date basket as he did so. When he thought he was near enough for his purpose, he first pretended to die, slowly and naturally, and then, after lying for a moment on the sand as stiff as a corpse, suddenly bounded up with a scream straight in front of the date-seller's face, and stared at him with his wild eyes. The man looked back at him spell-bound, quite unaware that one of the monkey's hind feet was in the date basket, clawing up as much fruit as its long toes could hold. By some such trick as this the monkey managed to steal enough food daily to keep him fat and comfortable.

No cleverer monkey ever lived than the ugly old Sally, who died at the Zoological Gardens of London only a few years ago. Her keeper had spent an immense deal of time and patience in training her up, and it was astonishing what she was able to do. 'Sally,' he would say, putting a tin cup full of milk into her hands, with a spoon hanging from it, 'show us how you used to drink when you were in the woods,' upon which Sally stuck all her fingers into the milk and sucked them greedily. 'Now,' he continued, 'show us how you drink since you became a lady,' and then Sally took the spoon and drank her milk in dainty little sips. Next he picked up a handful of straw from the bottom of the cage, and remarked carelessly, 'Here, just tear those into six, will you, all the same length.' Sally took the straws, and in half a minute the thing was done. But she had not come to the end of her surprises yet. 'You're very fond of pear, I know,' said the keeper, producing one out of his pocket and cutting it with his knife; 'well, I'm going to put some on my hand, but you're not to touch it until I've cut two short pieces and three long ones, and then you may take the second long one, but you aren't to touch any of the rest.' The man went on cutting his slices without stopping, and was quite ready to begin upon a sixth, when Sally stretched out her hand, and took the fourth lying along the row, which she had been told she might have. Very likely she might have accomplished even more wonderful things than this, but one cold day she caught a chill, and died in a few hours of bronchitis.

HOW THE CAYMAN WAS KILLED

Waterton’s *Wanderings in S. America*.

In the year 1782 there was born in the old house of Walton, near Pontefract, in Yorkshire, a boy named Charles Waterton, who afterwards became very famous as a traveller and a naturalist. As soon as he could walk, he was always to be found poking about among trees, or playing with animals, and both at home and at school he got into many a scrape through his love of adventure. He was only about ten when some other boys dared him to ride on a cow, and of course he was not going to be beaten. So up he got while the cow was only thinking how good the grass tasted, but the moment she felt a strange weight on her back, she flung her heels straight into the air, and off flew Master Waterton over her head.

Many years after this, Waterton was travelling in South America, seeing and doing many curious things. For a long time he had set his heart on catching a cayman, a kind of alligator that is found in the rivers of Guiana. For this purpose he took some Indians with him to the Essequibo, which falls into the sea not far from Demerara, and was known to be a famous place for caymans. It was no good attempting to go after them during the long, bright day. They were safely in hiding, and never thought of coming out till the sun was below the horizon.

So Waterton and his Indians waited in patience till the moon rose, and everything was still, except that now and then a huge fish would leap into the air and plunge again under water. Suddenly there broke forth a fearful noise, unlike the cry of any other creature. As one cayman called another answered; and although caymans are not very common anywhere, that night you would have thought that the world was full of them.

The three men stopped eating their supper of turtle and turned and looked over the river. Waterton could see nothing, but the Indian silently pointed to a black log that lay in the stream, just over the place where they had baited a hook with a large fish, and bound it on a board. At the end of the board a rope was fastened, and this was also made fast to a tree on the bank. By-and-bye the black log began to move, and in the bright moonlight he was clearly seen to open his long jaws and to take the bait inside them. But the watchers on shore pulled the rope too soon, and the cayman dropped the bait at once. Then for an hour he lay quite still, thinking what he should do next, but feeling cross at having lost his supper, he made up his mind to try once more, and cautiously took the bait in his mouth. Again the rope was pulled, and again the bait was dropped into the river; but in the end the cayman proved more cunning than the Indians, for after he had played this trick for three or four times he managed to get the fish without the hook, and when the sun rose again, Waterton knew that cayman hunting was over for that day.

For two or three nights they watched and waited, but did not ever get so near success as before. Let them conceal a hook in the bait ever so cleverly, the cayman was sure to be cleverer than they, and when morning came, the bait was always gone and the hook always left. The Indians, however, had no intention of allowing the cayman to beat them in the long run, and one of them invented a new hook, which this time was destined to better luck. He took four or five pieces of wood about a foot long, barbed them at each end, and tied them firmly to the end of a rope, thirty yards long. Above the barb was baited the flesh of an acouri, a creature the size of a rabbit. The whole was then fastened to a post driven into the sand, and the attention of the cayman aroused to what was going on by some sharp blows on an empty tortoiseshell, which served as a drum.

About half-past five the Indian got up and stole out to look, and then he called triumphantly to the rest to come up at once, for on the hook was a cayman, ten feet and a half long.

But hard as it had been to secure him, it was nothing to the difficulty of getting him out alive, and with his scales uninjured, especially as the four Indians absolutely refused to help, and that left only two white men and a negro, to grapple with the huge monster. Of these, too, the negro showed himself very timid, and it was not easy to persuade him to be of any use.

The position was certainly puzzling. If the Indians refused their help, the cayman could not be taken alive at all, and if they gave it, it was only at the price of injuring the animal and spoiling its skin. At length a compromise occurred to Waterton. He would take the mast of the canoe, which was about eight feet long, and would thrust it down the cayman’s throat, if it showed any signs of attacking him. On this condition, the Indians agreed to give their aid.

Matters being thus arranged, Waterton then placed his men — about seven in all — at the end of the rope and told them to pull till the cayman rose to the surface, while he himself knelt down with the pole about four yards from the bank, ready for the cayman, should he appear, roaring. Then he gave the signal, and slowly the men began to pull. But the cayman was not to be caught without a struggle. He snorted and plunged violently, till the rope was slackened, when he instantly dived below. Then the men braced all their strength for another effort, and this time out he came and made straight for Waterton.

The naturalist was so excited by his capture, that he lost all sense of the danger of his position. He waited till the cayman was within a few feet of him, when he flung away his pole, and with a flying leap landed on the cayman’s back, twisting up the creature’s feet and holding tightly on to them. The cayman, very naturally, could not in the least understand what had happened, but he began to plunge and struggle, and to lash out behind with his thick scaly tail, while the Indians looked on from afar, and shouted in triumph.

To Waterton the only fear was, lest the rope should prove too weak for the strain, in which case he and the cayman would promptly disappear into the depths of the Essequibo. But happily the rope was strong, and after being dragged by the Indians for forty yards along the sand, the cayman gave in, and Waterton contrived to tie his jaws together, and to lash his feet on to his back. Then he was put to death, and so ended the chase of the cayman.

THE STORY OF FIDO

Fido’s master had to go a long journey across the country to a certain town, and he was carrying with him a large bag of gold to deposit at the bank there. This bag he carried on his saddle, for he was riding, as in those days there were no trains, and he had to travel as quickly as he could.

Fido scampered cheerfully along at the horse’s heels, and every now and then the man would call out to her, and Fido would wag her tail and bark back an answer.

The sun was hot and the road dusty, and poor Fido’s little legs grew more and more tired. At last they came to a cool, shady wood, and the master stopped, dismounted, and tied his horse to a tree, and took his heavy saddle-bags from the saddle.

He laid them down very carefully, and pointing to them, said to Fido, ‘Watch them.’

Then he drew his cloak about him, lay down with his head on the bags, and soon was fast asleep.

Little Fido curled herself up close to her master’s head, with her nose over one end of the bags, and went to sleep too. But she did not sleep very soundly, for her master had told her to watch, and every few moments she would open her eyes and prick up her ears, in case anyone were coming.

Her master was tired and slept soundly and long — much longer than he had intended. At last he was awakened by Fido’s licking his face. The dog saw that the sun was nearly setting, and knew that it was time for her master to go on his journey.

The man patted Fido and then jumped up, much troubled to find he had slept so long. He snatched up his cloak, threw it over his horse, untied the bridle, sprang into the saddle, and calling Fido, started off in great haste. But Fido did not seem ready to follow him. She ran after the horse and bit at his heels, and then ran back again to the woods, all the time barking furiously. This she did several times, but her master had no time to heed her and galloped away, thinking she would follow him.

At last the little dog sat down by the roadside, and looked sorrowfully after her master, until he had turned a bend in the road. When he was no longer in sight she sprang up with a wild bark, and ran after him again. She overtook him just as he had stopped to water his horse at a brook that flowed across the road.

She stood beside the brook and barked so savagely that her master rode back and called her to him; but instead of coming she darted off down the road still barking.

Her master did not know what to think, and began to fear that his dog was going mad. Mad dogs are afraid of water, and act in a strange way when they see it. While the man was thinking of this, Fido came running back again, and dashed at him furiously. She leapt at the legs of his horse, and even jumped up and bit the toe of her master’s boot. Then she ran down the road again, barking with all her might.

Her master was now sure that she was mad, and, taking out his pistol he shot her. He rode away quickly, for he loved her dearly and could not bear to see her die.

He had not ridden very far when he stopped suddenly. He felt under his coat for his saddle-bags. They were not there!

Could he have dropped them, or had he left them behind in the wood where he had rested? He felt sure they must be in the wood, for he could not remember having picked them up or fastening them to his saddle.

He turned his horse and rode back again as hard as he could.

When he came to the brook he sighed and said, ‘Poor Fido!’ but though he looked about he could see nothing of her. When he crossed the brook he saw some drops of blood on the ground, and all along the road he still saw drops of blood. Tears came into his eyes, and he felt very sad and guilty, for now he understood why little Fido had acted so strangely. She knew that her master had left behind his precious bags of gold, and so she had tried to tell him in the only way she could.

All the way to the wood lay the drops of blood. At last he reached the wood, and there, all safe, lay the bags of gold, and beside them, with her little nose lying over one end of them, lay faithful Fido, who, you will be pleased to hear, recovered from her wound, and lived to a great age.

BEASTS BESIEGED

Adapted from Théophile Gautier.

Twenty-five years ago (in the winter of 1870-1871) Paris was closely besieged by the Germans, who had beaten one French army after another on the frontier, and had now advanced into the very heart of the country. The cold was frightful, and no wood could be got, and as if this was not enough, food began to give out, and the people inside the city soon learned to know the tortures of hunger. There was no hay or corn for the horses; after sheep and oxen they were the first animals to be eaten, and then whispers were heard about elephants and camels and other beasts in the Jardin des Plantes, which is the French name for their Zoological Gardens.

Now it is quite bad enough to be taken from the forests and deserts where you never did anything but just what you chose, and to be shut up in a small cage behind bars; but it is still worse not to have enough food to eat, and worst of all to be made into food for other people. Luckily the animals did not know what was being talked about in the world outside, or they would have been more uncomfortable than they were already.

Any visitor to the Jardin des Plantes about Christmas time in 1870, and for many weeks later, would have seen a strange sight. Some parts of the Gardens were set aside for hospitals, and rows of beds occupied every sheltered building. Passing through these, the visitor found himself in the kingdom of the beasts, who were often much more gentle than their gaolers.

After coming from the streets where nothing was the same as it had been six months before, and everything was topsy-turvy, it was almost soothing to watch the animals going on in their usual way, quite regardless of what men might be doing outside. There was the white bear swinging himself from side to side and rubbing his nose against the bars, just as he had done on the day that he had first taken up his abode there. There was a camel still asking for cakes, and an elephant trumpeting with fury because he didn’t get any. Nobody had cakes for themselves, and it would have been far easier to place a gold piece in the twirling proboscis. An elephant who is badly fed is not a pretty spectacle. Its skin is so large that it seems as if it would take in at least three or four extra bodies, and having only one shrunken skeleton to cover, it shrivels up into huge wrinkles and looks like the earth after a dry summer. On the whole, certain kinds of bears come off best, for they can sleep all the winter through, and when they wake up, the world will seem the same as when they last shut their eyes, and unless their friend the white bear tells them in bear language all that has happened they will never be any the wiser.

Still it is not all the bears who are lucky enough to have the gift of sleep. Some remained broad awake, and stood idly about in the corners of their dens, not knowing how to get rid of the time that hung so heavily on their paws. What was the use for the big brown marten to go up to the top of his tree, when there was no one to tickle his nose with a piece of bread at the end of a string? Why should his brother take the trouble to stand up on his hind legs when there was nobody to laugh and clap him? Only one very young bear indeed, with bright eyes and a yellow skin, went on his own way, regardless of spectators, and he was busily engaged in looking at himself in a pail of water and putting on all sorts of little airs and graces, from sheer admiration of his own beauty.

Perhaps the most to be pitied of all were the lions, for they do not know how to play, and could only lie about and remember the days when towards sunset they crept towards the cool hill, and waited till the antelopes came down for their evening drink. And then, ah *then*! but that is only a memory, while stretched out close by is the poor lioness in the last stage of consumption, and looking more like those half-starved fighting lions you see on royal coats of arms than a real beast. At such times most children would give anything to catch up the Zoological Gardens and carry them right away into the centre of Africa, and let out the beasts and make them happy and comfortable once more. But that was not the feeling of the little boy who had been taken by his mother to see the beasts as a treat for his birthday. At each cage they passed he came to a standstill, and gazing at the animal with greedy eyes, he said, ‘Mother, wouldn’t you like to eat that?’ Every time his mother answered him, ‘No one eats these beasts, my boy; they are brought from countries a long way off, and cost a great deal of money.’ The child was silent for a moment, but at the sight of the zebra, the elk, or the little hyæna, his face brightened again, and his voice might be heard piping forth its old question, ‘Mother, wouldn’t you like to eat that?’

It is a comfort to think that the horrid greedy boy was disappointed in his hopes. Whatever else he may have eaten, the taste of lions and of bears is still strange to him, for the siege of Paris came to an end at last, and the animals were made happy as of old with their daily portions.

MR. GULLY

He was a herring gull, and one of the largest I have ever seen. He was beautiful to look at with his soft grey plumage, never a feather of which was out of place. Of his character I will say nothing; that can be best judged by reading the following truthful biography of my ‘dove of the waters.’

I cannot begin at the beginning. Of his youth, which doubtless, in every sense of the word, was a stormy one, I know nothing. He had already acquired the wisdom, or perhaps in his case slyness is a better word, of years by the time that he came to us.

Gully was found one day in a field near our house in a very much exhausted condition. He had probably come a long distance, which he must have accomplished on foot, as he was unable to fly owing to his wing having been pinioned.

He was very hungry and greedily bolted a small fish that we offered him, and screamed for more. We then turned him into the garden, where he soon found a sheltered corner by our dining-room window and went to sleep standing on one leg. The other one he always kept tucked away so that was quite invisible.

Next morning I came out to look for Gully and feed him. He had vanished! I thought of the pond where I kept my goldfish, forty beautiful goldfish. There sure enough was Mr. Gully swimming about contentedly, but where were the goldfish? Instead of the crystal clear pond, was a pool of muddy water; instead of forty goldfish, all that I could make out, when Mr. Gully had been chased away and the water given time to settle, was one miserable little half-dead fish, the only survivor of the forty.

This was the first of Gully’s misdeeds. To look at Gully, no one could believe him to be capable of hurting a fly. He had the most lovely gentle brown eyes you ever saw, and seemed more like a benevolent old professor than anything else. He generally appeared to be half asleep or else sunning himself with a contented smile on his thoughtful countenance.

Gully next took to killing the sparrows; he was very clever at this. When he had finished eating, the sparrows were in the habit of appropriating the remnants of the feast. This Gully strongly disapproved of, so when he had eaten as much as he wanted, he retired behind a chair and waited till the sparrows were busy feasting, then he would make a rush and seize the nearest offender. He sometimes used to kill as many as from two to four sparrows a day in this manner. The pigeons then took to coming too near his reach. At first he was afraid of them and left them alone; but the day came when a young fan-tail was foolish enough to take his airing on the terrace, close to Mr. Gully's nose. This was too much for Mr. Gully, who pounced upon the unfortunate 'squeaker' and slew him. *L'appétit vient en mangeant*, and after this Mr. Gully took the greatest delight in hunting these unfortunate birds and murdering them. No pigeon was too large for him to attack. I only just succeeded in saving the cock-pouter, a giant among pigeons, from an untimely death, by coming up in time to drive Mr. Gully away from his victim.

After this we decided to shut Mr. Gully up. We thought he would make a charming companion for the guinea-pigs. At that time I used to keep about fifty of various species in a hen-run. So to the guinea-pigs Gully was banished. At first the arrangement answered admirably, Gully behaved as nicely as possible for about a month, and we were all congratulating ourselves on having found such a good way out of our difficulty, when all at once his thirst for blood was roused afresh. One day he murdered four guinea-pigs and the next day three more of these unfortunate little beasts.

We then let him join the hens and ducks. He at once constituted himself the leader of the latter; every morning he would lead them down to a pond at the bottom of the fields, a distance of about a quarter of a mile; and every evening he would summon them round him and lead them home. At his cry the ducks and drakes would come waddling up to him with loud quacks; he used always to march in the most stately manner about two yards ahead of them. Of the cocks and hens Gully deigned to take no notice. On two occasions he made an exception to this rule of conduct. On the first, he and a hen had a dispute over the possession of a worm. This dispute led to a fight of which Gully was getting the best when the combatants were separated. On the second occasion Gully was accused of decapitating a hen. No one saw him do it, but it looked only too like his work. He had a neat clean style.

One day he led his ducks to the pond as usual, but in the evening they returned by themselves. We came to the conclusion that the poor old bird must be dead. We quite gave him up for lost, and had mourned him for two or three weeks, when what should we see one day but Mr. Gully leading his ducks as usual to his favourite pond, as if he had never been away.

Where he had spent all the time he was absent remains a mystery to this day. After this he remained with us some time, during which he performed no new feat of valour with the exception of one fight which he had with a cat. In this fight he had some feathers pulled out, but ultimately succeeded in driving her off after giving her leg such a bite that she was lame for many a long day.

Since then he has again disappeared. Will he ever return? Mysterious was his coming and mysterious his going.

STORIES FROM PLINY

HOW DOGS LOVE

Now there was living at Rome, under the Emperors Vespasian and Titus (A.D. 69-81) a man called Pliny, who gave up his life to the study of animals and plants. He not only watched their habits for himself, but he listened eagerly to all that travellers would tell him, and sometimes happened to believe too much, and wrote in his book things that were not true. Still there were a great many facts which he had found out for himself, and the stories he tells about animals are of interest to every one, partly because it seems strange to think that dogs and horses and other creatures were just the same then as they are now.

The dogs that Pliny writes about lived in all parts of the Roman Empire, and were as faithful and devoted to their masters as our dogs are to us. One dog called Hyrcanus, belonging to King Lysimachus, one of the successors of Alexander the Great, jumped on to the funeral pyre on which lay burning the dead body of his master. And so did another dog at the burial of Hiero of Syracuse. But during the lifetime of Pliny himself, a dog's devotion in the heart of Rome had touched even the Roman citizens, ashamed though they generally were of showing their feelings. It had happened that a plot against the life of Nero had been discovered, and the chief conspirator, Titus Sabinus by name, was put to death, together with some of his servants. One of these men had a dog of which he was very fond, and from the moment the man was thrown into prison, the dog could not be persuaded to move away from the door. At last there came a day when the man suffered the cruel death common in Rome for such offences, and was thrown down a steep flight of stairs, where he broke his neck. A crowd of Romans had gathered round the place of execution, in order to see the sight, and in the midst of them all the dog managed to reach his master's side, and lay there, howling piteously. Then one of the crowd, moved with pity, threw the dog a piece of meat, but he only took it, and laid it across his master's mouth. By-and-bye, the men came for the body in order to throw it into the river Tiber, and even then the dog followed and swam after it, and held it up and tried to bring it to land, till the people came out in multitudes from the houses round about, to see what it was to be faithful unto death — and beyond it.

THE STRANGE HISTORY OF CAGNOTTE

Ménagerie Intime.

In the early part of this century, a little boy of three years old, named Théophile Gautier, travelled with his parents from Tarbes, in the south of France, to Paris. He was so small that he could not speak any proper French, but talked like the country people; and he divided the world into those who spoke like him and were his friends, and those who did not, and were strangers.

But though he was only three, and a great baby in many ways, he loved his home dearly, and everything about it, and it nearly broke his heart to come away. His parents tried to comfort him by giving him the most beautiful chocolates and little cakes, and when that failed they tried what drums and trumpets would do. But drums and trumpets succeeded no better than cakes and chocolates, for the greater part of poor Théophile's tears were shed for the 'dog he had left behind him,' called Cagnotte, which his father had given away to a friend, as he did not think that any dog who had been accustomed to run along the hills and valleys above Tarbes, could ever make himself happy in Paris.

Théophile, however, did not understand this, but cried for Cagnotte all day long; and one morning he could bear it no longer. His nurse had put out all his tin soldiers neatly on the table, with a little German village surrounded by stiff green trees just in front of them, hoping Théophile might play at a battle or a siege, and she had also placed his fiddle (which was painted bright scarlet) quite handy, so that he might play the triumphal march of the victor. Nothing was of any use. As soon as Josephine's back was turned Théophile threw soldiers and village and fiddle out of the window, and then prepared to jump after them, so that he might take the shortest way back to Tarbes and Cagnotte. Luckily, just as his foot was on the sill, Josephine came back from the next room, and saw what he was about. She rushed after him and caught him by the jacket, and then took him on her knee, and asked him why he was going to do anything so naughty and dangerous. When Théophile explained that it was Cagnotte whom he wanted and must have, and that nobody else mattered at all, Josephine was so afraid he would try to run away again, that she told him that if he would only have patience and wait a little Cagnotte would come to him.

All day long Théophile gave Josephine no peace. Every few minutes he came running to his nurse to know if Cagnotte had arrived, and he was only quieted when Josephine went out and returned carrying a little dog, which in some ways was very like his beloved Cagnotte. Théophile was not quite satisfied at first, till he remembered that Cagnotte had travelled a long, long way, and it was not to be expected that he should look the same dog as when he started; so he put aside his doubts, and knelt down to give Cagnotte a great hug of welcome. The new Cagnotte, like the old, was a lovely black poodle, and had excellent manners, besides being full of fun. He licked Théophile on both cheeks, and was altogether so friendly that he was ready to eat bread and butter off the same plate as his little master.

The two got on beautifully, and were perfectly happy for some time, and then gradually Cagnotte began to lose his spirits, and instead of jumping and running about the world, he moved slowly, as if he was in pain. He breathed shortly and heavily, and refused to eat anything, and even Théophile could see he was feeling ill. One day Cagnotte was lying stretched out on his master's lap, and Théophile was softly stroking his skin, when suddenly his hand caught in what seemed to be string, or strong thread. In great surprise, Josephine was at once called, to explain the strange matter. She stooped down, and peered closely at the dog's skin, then took her scissors and cut the thread. Cagnotte stretched himself, gave a shake, and jumped down from Théophile's lap, leaving a sort of black sheep-skin behind him.

Some wicked men had sewn him up in this coat, so that they might get more money for him; and without it he was not a poodle at all, but just an ugly little street dog, without beauty of any kind.

After helping to eat Théophile's bread and butter and soup for some weeks, Cagnotte began to grow fatter, and his outside skin became too tight for him, and he was nearly suffocated. Once delivered from it, he shook his ears for joy, and danced a waltz of his own round the room, not caring a straw how ugly he might be as long as he was comfortable. A very few weeks spent in the society of Cagnotte made the memory of Tarbes and its mountains grow dim in the mind of Théophile. He learnt French, and forgot the way the country people talked, and soon he had become, thanks to Cagnotte, such a thorough little Parisian, that he would not have understood what his old friends said, if one of them had spoken to him.

STILL WATERS RUN DEEP; OR THE DANCING DOG

Ménagerie Intime.

When Little Théophile became Big Théophile, he was as fond as ever of dogs and cats, and he knew more about them than anybody else. After the death of a large white spaniel called Luther, he filled the vacant place on his rug by another of the same breed, to whom he gave the name of Zamore. Zamore was a little dog, as black as ink, except for two yellow patches over his eyes, and a stray patch on his chest. He was not in the least handsome, and no stranger would ever have given him a second thought. But when you came to know him, you found Zamore was not a common dog at all. He despised all women, and absolutely refused to obey them or to follow them, and neither Théophile's mother nor his sisters could get the smallest sign of friendship from him. If they offered him cakes or sugar, he would accept them in a dignified manner, but never dreamed of saying 'thank you,' still less of wagging his tail on the floor, or giving little yaps of delight and gratitude, as well-brought-up dogs should do. Even to Théophile's father, whom he liked better than anyone else, he was cold and respectful, though he followed him everywhere, and never left his master's heels when they took a walk. And when they were fishing together, Zamore would sit silent on the bank for hours together, and only allowed himself one bark when the fish was safely hooked.

Now no one could possibly have guessed that a dog of such very quiet and reserved manners was at heart as gay and cheerful as the silliest kitten that ever was born, but so he was, and this was how his family found it out.

One day he was walking as seriously as usual through a broad square in the outskirts of Paris, when he was surprised at meeting a large grey donkey, with two panniers on its back, and in the panniers a troop of dogs, some dressed as Swiss shepherdesses, some as Turks, some in full court costume. The owner of the animals stopped the donkey close to where Zamore was standing, and bade the dogs jump down. Then he cracked his whip; the fife and drum struck up a merry tune, the dogs steadied themselves on their hind legs, and the dance began.

Zamore looked on as if he had been turned into stone. The sight of these dogs, dressed in bright colours, this one with his head covered by a feathered hat, and that one by a turban, but all moving about in time to the music, and making pirouettes and little bows; were they really *dogs* he was watching or some new kind of men? Anyway he had never seen anything so enchanting or so beautiful, and if it was true that they were only dogs — well, *he* was a dog too!

With that thought, all that had lain hidden in Zamore's soul burst forth, and when the dancers filed gracefully before him, he raised himself on his hind legs, and in spite of staggering a little, prepared to join the ring, to the great amusement of the spectators.

The dog-owner, however, whose name was Monsieur Corri, did not see matters in the same light. He raised his whip a second time, and brought it down with a crack on the sides of Zamore, who ran out of the ring, and with his tail between his legs and an air of deep thought, he returned home.

All that day Zamore was more serious and more gloomy than ever. Nothing would tempt him out, hardly even his favourite dinner, and it was quite plain that he was turning over something in his mind. But during the night his two young mistresses were awakened by a strange noise that seemed to come from an empty room next theirs, where Zamore usually slept. They both lay awake and listened, and thought it was like a measured stamping, and that the mice might be giving a ball. But could little mice feet tread so heavily as that? Supposing a thief had got in? So the bravest of the two girls got up, and stealing to the door softly opened it and looked into the room. And what do you think she saw? Why, Zamore, on his hind legs, his paws in the air, practising carefully the steps that he had been watching that morning!

This was not, as one might have expected, a mere fancy of the moment, which would be quite forgotten the next day. Zamore was too serious a dog for that, and by dint of hard study he became in time a beautiful dancer. As often as the fife and drum were heard in the streets, Zamore rushed out of the house, glided softly between the spectators, and watched with absorbed attention the dancing dogs who were doing their steps: but remembering the blow he had had from the whip, he took care not to join them. He noted their positions, the figures, and the way they held their bodies, and in the night he copied them, though by day he was just as solemn as ever. Soon he was not contented with merely copying what he saw, he invented for himself, and it is only just to say that, in stateliness of step, few dogs could come up to him. Often his dances were witnessed (unknown to himself) by Théophile and his sisters, who watched him through the crack of the door; and so earnest was he, that at length, worn out by dancing, he would drink up the whole of a large basin of water, which stood in the corner of the room.

When Zamore felt himself the equal of the best of the dancing dogs, he began to wish that like them he might have an audience.

Now in France the houses are not always built in a row as they are in England, but sometimes have a square court-yard in front, and in the house where Zamore lived, this court was shut in on one side by an iron railing, which was wide enough to let dogs of a slim figure squeeze through.

One fine morning there met in this court-yard fifteen or twenty dogs, friends of Zamore, to whom the night before he had sent letters of invitation. The object of the party was to see Zamore make his *début* in dancing, and the ball-room was to be the court-yard, which Zamore had carefully swept with his tail. The dance began, and the spectators were so delighted, that they could not wait for the end to applaud, as people ought always to do, but uttered loud cries of ‘Ouah, ouah,’ that reminded you of the noises you hear at a theatre. Except one old water spaniel who was filled with envy at Zamore’s talents, and declared that no decent dog would ever make an exhibition of himself like that, they all vowed that Zamore was the king of dancers, and that nothing had ever been seen to equal his minuet, jig, and waltz for grace and beauty.

It was only during his dancing moments that Zamore unbent. At all other times he was as gloomy as ever, and never cared to stir from the rug unless he saw his old master take up his hat and stick for a walk. Of course, if he had chosen, he might have joined Monsieur Corri’s *troupe*, of which he would have made the brightest ornament; but the love of his master proved greater than his love of his art, and he remained unknown, except of his family. In the end he fell a victim to his passion for dancing, and he died of brain fever, which is supposed to have been caused by the fatigue of learning the schottische, the fashionable dance of the day.

THEO AND HIS HORSES; JANE, BETSY, AND BLANCHE

From *Ménagerie Intime*.

After Théophile grew to be a man, he wrote a great many books, which are all delightful to read, and everybody bought them, and Théophile got rich and thought he might give himself a little carriage with two horses to draw it.

And first he fell in love with two dear little Shetland ponies who were so shaggy and hairy that they seemed all mane and tail, and whose eyes looked so affectionately at him, that he felt as if he should like to bring them into the drawing-room instead of sending them to the stable. They were charming little creatures, not a bit shy, and they would come and poke their noses into Théophile's pockets in search for sugar, which was always there. Indeed their only fault was, that they were so very, very small, and that, after all, was *not* their fault. Still, they looked more suited to an English child of eight years old, or to Tom Thumb, than to a French gentleman of forty, not so thin as he once was, and as they all passed through the streets, everybody laughed, and drew pictures of them, and declared that Théophile could easily have carried a pony on each arm, and the carriage on his back.

Now Théophile did not mind being laughed at, but still he did not always want to be stared at all through the streets, whenever he went out. So he sold his ponies and began to look out for something nearer his own size. After a short search he found two of a dapple grey colour, stout and strong, and as like each other as two peas, and he called them Jane and Betsy. But although, to look at, no one could ever tell one from the other, their characters were totally different, as Jane was very bold and spirited, and Betsy was terribly lazy. While Jane did all the pulling, Betsy was quite contented just to run by her side, without troubling herself in the least, and, as was only natural, Jane did not think this at all fair, and took a great dislike to Betsy, which Betsy heartily returned. At last matters became so bad that, in their efforts to get at each other, they half kicked the stable to pieces, and would even rear themselves upon their hind legs in order to bite each other's faces. Théophile did all he could to make them friends, but nothing was of any use, and at last he was forced to sell Betsy. The horse he found to replace her was a shade lighter in colour, and therefore not quite so good a match, but luckily Jane took to her at once, and lost no time in doing the honours of the stable. Every day the affection between the two became greater:

Jane would lay her head on Blanche's shoulder — she had been called Blanche because of her fair skin — and when they were turned out into the stable-yard, after being rubbed down, they played together like two kittens. If one was taken out alone, the other became sad and gloomy, till the well-known tread of its friend's hoofs was heard from afar, when it would give a joyful neigh, which was instantly answered.

Never once was it necessary for the coachman to complain of any difficulty in harnessing them. They walked themselves into their proper places, and behaved in all ways as if they were well brought up, and ready to be friendly with everybody. They had all kinds of pretty little ways, and if they thought there was a chance of getting bread or sugar or melon rind, which they both loved, they would make themselves as caressing as a dog.

Nobody who has lived much with animals can doubt that they talk together in a language that man is too stupid to understand; or, if anyone *had* doubted it, they would soon have been convinced of the fact by the conduct of Jane and Blanche when in harness. When Jane first made Blanche's acquaintance, she was afraid of nothing, but after they had been together a few months, her character gradually changed, and she had sudden panics and nervous fits, which puzzled her master greatly. The reason of this was that Blanche, who was very timid and easily frightened, passed most of the night in telling Jane ghost stories, till poor Jane learnt to tremble at every sound. Often, when they were driving in the lonely alleys of the Bois de Boulogne after dark, Blanche would come to a dead stop or shy to one side as if a ghost, which no one else could see, stood before her. She breathed loudly, trembled all over with fear, and broke out into a cold perspiration. No efforts of Jane, strong though she was, could drag her along. The only way to move her was for the coachman to dismount, and to lead her, with his hand over her eyes for a few steps, till the vision seemed to have melted into air. In the end, these terrors affected Jane just as if Blanche, on reaching the stable, had told her some terrible story of what she had seen, and even her master had been known to confess that when, driving by moonlight down some dark road, where the trees cast strange shadows, Blanche would suddenly come to a dead halt and begin to tremble, he did not half like it himself.

With this one drawback, never were animals so charming to drive. If Théophile held the reins, it was really only for the look of the thing, and not in the least because it was necessary. The smallest click of the tongue was enough to direct them, to quicken them, to make them go to the right or to the left, or even to stop them. They were so clever that in a very short time they had learned all their master's habits, and knew his daily haunts as well as he did himself. They would go of their own accord to the newspaper office, to the printing office, to the publisher’s, to the Bois de Boulogne, to certain houses where he dined on certain days in the week, so very punctually that it was quite provoking; and if it ever happened that Théophile spent longer than usual at any particular place, they never failed to call his attention by loud neighs, or by pawing the ground, sounds of which he quite well knew the meaning.

But alas, the time came when a Revolution broke out in Paris. People had no time to buy books or to read them; they were far too busy in building barricades across the streets, or in tearing up the paving stones to throw at each other. The newspaper in which Théophile wrote, and which paid him enough money to keep his horses, did not appear any more, and sad though he was at parting, the poor man thought he was lucky to find some one to buy horses, carriage, and harness, for a fourth part of their worth. Tears stood in his eyes as they were led away to their new stable; but he never forgot them, and they never forgot him. Sometimes, as he sat writing at his table, he would hear from afar a light quick step, and then a sudden stop under the windows.

And their old master would look up and sigh and say to himself, ‘Poor Jane, poor Blanche, I hope they are happy.’

MADAME THÉOPHILE AND THE PARROT

Ménagerie Intime.

After the death of Cagnotte, whose story you may have read, Théophile was so unhappy that he would not have another dog, but instead, determined to fill the empty place in his heart with cats. One of those that he loved the best was a big yellowy-red puss, with a white chest, a pink nose, and blue eyes, that went by the name of Madame Théophile, because, when he was in the house, it never left his side for a single instant. It slept on his bed, dreamed while sitting on the arm of Théophile’s chair while he was writing (for Théophile was by this time almost a grown-up man), walked after him when he went into the garden, sat by his side while he had his dinner, and sometimes took, gently and politely, the food he was conveying to his own mouth.

One day, a friend of Théophile’s, who was leaving Paris for a few days, brought a parrot, which he begged Théophile to take care of while he was away. The bird not feeling at home in this strange place, climbed up to the top of his cage and looked round him with his funny eyes, that reminded you of the nails in a sofa. Now Madame Théophile had never seen a parrot, and it was plain that this curious creature gave her a shock. She sat quite still, staring quietly at the parrot, and trying to think if she had ever seen anything like it among the gardens and roofs of the houses, where she got all her ideas of the world. At last she seemed to make up her mind:

‘Of course, it must be a kind of green chicken.’

Having set the question at rest, Madame Théophile jumped down from the table where she had been seated while she made her observations, and walked quickly to the corner of the room, where she laid herself flat down, with her head bent and her paws stretched out, like a panther watching his prey.

The parrot followed all her movements with his round eyes, and felt that they meant no good to him. He ruffled his feathers, pulled at his chain, lifted one of his paws in a nervous way, and rubbed his beak up and down his food tin. All the while the cat’s blue eyes were talking in a language the parrot clearly understood, and they said: ‘Although it is green, that fowl would make a nice dinner.’

But Madame Théophile had not lain still all this while. Slowly, without even appearing to move, she had drawn closer and closer. Her pink nostrils trembled, her eyes were half shut, her claws were pushed out and pulled into their sheaths, and little shivers ran down her back.

Suddenly her back rounded itself like a bent bow, and with one bound she leapt on the cage. The parrot knew his danger, and was too frightened to move; then, calling up all his courage, he looked his enemy full in the face, and, in a low and deep voice he put the question: ‘Jacky, did you have a good breakfast?’

This simple phrase struck terror into the heart of the cat, who made a spring backwards. If a cannon had been fired close to her ear, or a shopful of glass had been broken, she could not have been more alarmed. Never had she dreamed of anything like this.

‘And what did you have — some of the king’s roast beef?’ continued the parrot.

‘It is not a chicken, it is a man that is speaking,’ thought the cat with amazement, and looking at her master, who was standing by, she retired under the bed. Madame Théophile knew when she was beaten.

THE BATTLE OF THE MULLETS AND THE DOLPHINS

Many singular stories may be found in Pliny, but the most interesting is how men and dolphins combine together on the coast of France, near Narbonne, to catch the swarms of mullet that come into those waters at certain seasons of the year.

‘In Languedoc, within the province of Narbonne, there is a standing pool or dead water called Laterra, wherein men and dolphins together used to fish; for at one certain time of the year an infinite number of fishes called mullets, taking the vantage of the tide when the water doth ebb, at certain narrow weirs and passages with great force break forth of the said pool into the sea; and by reason of that violence no nets can be set and pitched against them strong enough to abide and bear their huge weight and the stream of the water together, if so be men were not cunning and crafty to wait and espie their time and lay for them and to entrap them. In like manner the mullets for their part immediately make speed to recover the deep, which they do very soon by reason that the Channel is near at hand; and their only haste is for this, to escape and pass that narrow place which affordeth opportunities to the fishers to stretch out and spread their nets. The fishermen being ware thereof and all the people besides (for the multitude knowing when fishing time is come, run thither, and the rather for to see the pleasant sport), cry as loud as ever they can to the dolphins for aid, and call “Simo, Simo,” to help to make an end of this their game and pastime of fishing. The dolphins soon get the ear of their cry and know what they would have, and the better if the north winds blow and carry the sound unto them; for if it be a southern wind it is later ere the voice be heard, because it is against them. Howbeit, be the wind in what quarter soever, the dolphins resort thither flock-meal, sooner than a man would think, for to assist them in their fishing. And a wondrous pleasant sight it is to behold the squadrons as it were of those dolphins, how quickly they take their places and be arranged in battle array, even against the very mouth of the said pool, where the mullets are to shoot into the sea, to see (I say) how from the sea they oppose themselves and fight against them and drive the mullets (once affrighted and scared) from the deep on the shelves. Then come the fishers and beset them with net and toile, which they bear up and fortify with strong forks; howbeit, for all that, the mullets are so quick and nimble that a number of them whip over, get away, and escape the nets. But the dolphins are ready to receive them; who, contenting themselves for the present to kill only, make foul work and havoc among them, and put off the time of preying and feeding upon, until they have ended the battle and achieved the victory. And now the skirmish is hot, for the dolphins, perceiving also the men at work, are the more eager and courageous in fight, taking pleasure to be enclosed within the nets, and so most valiantly charging upon the mullets; but for fear lest the same should give an occasion unto the enemies and provoke them to retire and fly back between the boats, the nets, and the men there swimming, they glide by so gently and easily that it cannot be seen where they get out. And albeit they take great delight in leaping, and have the cast of it, yet none essayeth to get forth but where the nets lie under them, but no sooner are they out, but presently a man shall see brave pastime between them as they scuffle and skirmish as it were under the ramparts. And so the conflict being ended and all the fishing sport done, the dolphins fall to spoil and eat those which they killed in the first shock and encounter. But after this service performed, the dolphins retire not presently into the deep again, from whence they were called, but stay until to-morrow, as if they knew very well they had so carried themselves as that they deserved a better reward than one day’s refection and victuals; and therefore contented they are not and satisfied unless to their fish they have some sops and crumbs of bread given them soaked in wine, and had their bellies full.’

MONKEY STORIES

Before telling you more stories about monkeys, we must tell you some dry facts about them, in order that you may understand the stories. There are three different kinds of monkeys — apes, baboons, and monkeys proper. The difference is principally in their tails, so that when you see them at the Zoo (for there are none wild in Europe, except at Gibraltar), you will know them by the apes having no tails and walking upright; baboons have short tails and go on all fours; and monkeys have tails sometimes longer than their whole bodies, by which they can swing themselves from tree to tree. Apes and monkeys are so ready to imitate everything which men do, that the negroes believe that they are a lazy race of men, who will not be at the trouble to work. Baboons, on the contrary, can be taught almost nothing.

There are two kinds of apes, called oran otans and chimpanzees. They are both very wild and fierce, and difficult to catch, but, when caught, become not only tame, but very affectionate, and can be taught anything. Nearly two hundred years ago, in 1698, one was brought to London that had been caught in Angola. On board ship he became very fond of the people who took care of him, and was very gentle and affectionate, but would have nothing to do with some monkeys who were on the same ship. He had had a suit of clothes made for him, probably to keep him warm. As the ship got into colder regions he took great pleasure in dressing himself in them, and anything he could not put on for himself he used to bring in his paw to one of the sailors, and seem to ask him to dress him. He had a bed to sleep in, and at night used to put his head on the pillow and tuck himself in like a human being. His story is unfortunately a short one, for he died soon after coming to London. He could not long survive the change from his native forests to the cage of a menagerie.

Another, a female, was brought to Holland nearly a hundred years later, in 1776, but she, too, pined and died after seven months’ captivity. She was very gentle and affectionate, and became so fond of her keeper that when they left her alone, she used to throw herself on the ground screaming, and tearing in pieces anything in her reach, just like a naughty child. She could behave as well as any lady in the land when she liked. When asked out to tea, she used to bring a cup and saucer, put sugar in the cup, pour out the tea, and leave it to cool; and at dinner her manners were just as good. She used her knife and fork, table napkin, and even toothpick, as if she had been accustomed to them all her life, which, of course, in her native forest was far from being the case. She learnt all her nice habits either from watching people at table, or from her keeper's orders. She was fond of strawberries, which she ate very daintily, on a fork, holding the plate in the other hand. She was particularly fond of wine, and drank it like a human being, holding the glass in her hand. She was better behaved than two other oran otans, who, though they could behave as well at table as any lady, and could use their knives and forks and glasses, and could make the cabin boy (for it was on board ship) understand what they wanted, yet, if he did not attend to them at once, they used to throw him down, seize him by the arm, and bite him.

A French priest had an oran otan that he had brought up from a baby, and who was so fond of his master that he used to follow him about like a dog. When the priest went to church he used to lock the oran otan up in a room; but one day he got out, and, as sometimes happens with dogs, who cannot get reconciled to Sunday, he followed his master to church. He managed, without the priest's seeing him, to climb on the sounding board above the pulpit, where he lay quite still till the sermon began. He then crept forward till he could see his master in the pulpit below, and imitated every one of his movements, till the congregation could not keep from laughing. The priest thought they were making fun of him, and was naturally very angry. The more angry he became the more gestures he used, every one of which the ape overhead repeated. At last a friend of the priest stood up in the congregation, and pointed out the real culprit. When the priest looked up and saw the imitation of himself, he could not keep from laughing either, and the service could not go on till the disturber had been taken down and locked up again at home.

Another kind is called the Barbary ape, because they are found in such numbers in Barbary that the trees in places seem nearly covered with them, though there are quantities as well in India and Arabia. They are very mischievous and great fighters. In India the natives sometimes amuse themselves by getting up a fight among them. They put down at a little distance from each other baskets of rice, with stout sticks by each basket, and then they go off and hide themselves among the trees to watch the fun. The apes come down from the trees in great numbers, and make as though they were going to attack the baskets, but lose courage and draw back grinning at each other. The females are generally the boldest, and the first to seize on the food; but as soon as they put their heads down to eat, some of the males set-to to drive them off. Others attack them in their turn. They all seize on the sticks, and soon a free fight begins, which ends in the weakest being driven off into the woods, and the conquerors enjoying the spoil. They are not only fierce but revengeful, and will punish severely any person who kills one of them. Some English people who were driving through a country full of these apes in the East Indies, wished, out of sheer wantonness, to have one shot. The native servants, knowing what the consequences would be, were afraid; but, as their masters insisted, they had to obey, and shot a female whose little ones were clinging to her neck. She fell dead from the branches, and the little ones, falling with her, were killed too. Immediately all the other apes, to the number of about sixty, came down and attacked the carriage. They would certainly have killed the travellers if the servants, of whom there was fortunately a number, had not driven the apes off; and though the carriage set off as fast as the horses could lay legs to the ground, the apes followed for three miles.

Baboons are as ugly, revolting creatures as you could wish to see, and very fierce, so they can seldom be tamed nor even caught. There are, of course, few stories about them. When people try to catch them, they let their pursuers come so near that they think they have them, and then they bound away ten paces at once, and look down defiantly from the tree-top as much as to say, ‘Don’t you wish you may get me?’ One baboon had so wearied his pursuers by his antics that they pointed a gun at him, though with no intention of firing. He had evidently seen a gun before, and knew its consequences, and was so frightened at the bare idea, that he fell down senseless and was easily captured. When he came to himself again he struggled so fiercely that they had to tie his paws together, and then he bit so that they had to tie his jaws up.

Baboons are great thieves, and come down from the mountains in great bodies to plunder gardens. They cram as much fruit as they possibly can into their cheek pouches to take away and eat afterwards at their leisure. They always set a sentinel to give the alarm. When he sees anyone coming, he gives a yell that lasts a minute, and then the whole troop sets off helter-skelter.

They will rob anyone they come upon alone in the most impudent way. They come softly up behind, snatch away anything they can lay their hands on, and then run off a little way and sit down. Very often it is the poor man’s dinner that they devour before his eyes. Sometimes they will hold it out in their hands and pretend they are going to give it back, in such a comic way that I would defy you not to laugh, though it were your own dinner that had been snatched away and then offered to you.

Monkeys live in the tree-tops of the forests of India and South Africa, where they keep up a constant chattering and gambolling, all night as well as all day, playing games and swinging by their tails from tree to tree. One kind, the four-fingered monkey, can pass from one high tree-top to another, too far even for a monkey to jump, by making themselves into a chain, joined to each other by their tails. They can even cross rivers in this way. There are any number of different kinds of monkeys, as you can see any day in the monkey house at the Zoo. One kind is well named the howling monkey, because they howl in chorus every morning two hours before daylight, and again at nightfall. The noise they make is so fearful that, if you did not know, you would think it was a forest full of ferocious beasts quite near, thirsting for their prey, instead of harmless monkeys a mile or two away. There is always a leader of the chorus, who sits on a high branch above the others. He first howls a solo, and then gives a signal for the others to join in; then they all howl together, till he gives another signal to stop.

The egret monkeys are great thieves. When they set to work to rob a field of millet, they put as many stalks as they can carry in their mouths, in each paw, and under each arm, and then go off home on their hind legs. If pursued, and obliged for greater speed to go on all their four legs, they drop what they carry in their paws, but never let go what they have in their mouths. The Chinese monkey is also a great thief, and even cleverer about carrying away his booty. They always set a sentinel on a high tree; when he sees anyone coming, he screams ‘Houp, houp, houp!’ The others then seize as much as they can carry in their right arm, and set off on three legs. They are called Chinese, not because they come from China, but because the way the hair grows on their heads is like a Chinese cap. It is long and parts in the middle, spreading out all round.

In many parts of India monkeys are worshipped by the natives, and temples are erected for them. But monkeys of one tribe are never allowed to come into any of these sanctuaries when another tribe is already in possession. A large strong monkey was once seen by some travellers to steal into one of these temples; as soon as the inhabitants saw that he did not belong to their tribe, they set on him to drive him out. As he was only one against many, though bigger and stronger than the others, he saw that he had no chance, and bounded up to the top, eleven stories high. As the temple ended in a little round dome just big enough for himself, he was master of the situation, and every monkey that ventured to climb up he flung down to the bottom. When this had happened three or four times, his enemies thought it best to let him alone, and he stayed there in peace till it was dark and he could slip away unseen.

ECCENTRIC BIRD BUILDERS

From Jones' *Glimpses of Animal Life*.

Everybody knows how fond birds are of building their nests in church, and if we come to think of it, it is a very reasonable and sensible proceeding. Churches are so quiet, and have so many dark out-of-the-way corners, where no one would dream of poking, certainly not the woman whose business it is to keep the church clean. So the birds have the satisfaction of feeling that their young are kept safe and warm while they are collecting food for them, and there is always some open door or window to enable the parents to fly in or out.

But all birds have not the wisdom of the robins, and swallows, and sparrows that have selected the church for a home, and some of them have chosen very odd places indeed wherein to build their nests and lay their eggs. Hinges of doors, turning lathes, even the body of a dead owl hung to a ring, have all been used as nurseries; but perhaps the oddest spot of all to fix upon for a nest is the outside of a railway carriage, especially when we remember how often railway stations are the abode of cats, who move safely about the big wheels, and even travel by train when they think it necessary.

Yet, in spite of all the drawbacks, railway carriages remain a favourite place for nesting birds, and there is a curious story of a pair of water-wagtails which built a snug home underneath a third-class carriage attached to a train which ran four times daily between Cosham and Havant. The father does not seem to have cared about railway travelling, which, to be sure, must appear a wretched way of getting about to anything that has wings; for he never went with the family himself, but spent the time of their absence fluttering restlessly about the platform to which the train would return. He was so plainly anxious and unhappy about them, that one would have expected that he would have insisted on some quieter and safer place the following year when nesting time came round again; but the mother apparently felt that the situation had some very distinct advantages, for she deliberately passed over every other spot that her mate pointed out, and went back to her third-class carriage.

Yet a railway carriage seems safety itself in comparison with a London street lamp, where a fly-catcher's nest was found a few years ago. Composed as it was of moss, hair, and dried grass, it is astonishing that it never caught fire, but no doubt the great heat of the gas was an immense help in hatching the five eggs which the birds had laid.

Those fly-catchers had built in a hollow iron ornament on the top of the lamp, but some tomtits are actually known to have chosen such a dangerous place as the spot close to the burner of a paraffin street lamp. And even when the paraffin was exchanged for gas, the birds did not seem to mind, and would sit quite calmly on the nest, while the lamplighter thrust his long stick past them to put out the light.

Birds reason in a different way from human beings, for a letter-box would not commend itself to us as being a very good place to bring up a family, with letters and packages tumbling on to their heads every instant. A pair of Scotch tomtits, however, thought otherwise, and they made a comfortable little nest at the back of a private letter-box, nailed on to the trunk of a tree in Dumfriesshire. The postman soon found out what was going on, but he took great pains not to disturb them, for he was fond of birds, and was very curious to see what the tomtits would do. What the tomtits did was to go peacefully on with their nest, minding their own business, and by-and-bye eight little eggs lay in the nest. By this time the mother had got so used to the postman, that she never even moved when he unlocked the door, only giving his hand a friendly peck when he put it in to take out the letters, and occasionally accepting some crumbs which he held out to it. But no sooner did the little birds break through their shells than the parents became more difficult to deal with. They did not mind knocks from letters for themselves, but they grew furiously angry if the young ones ever were touched by so much as a corner, and one day, when a letter happened to fall plump on top of the nest, they tore it right to pieces. In fact, it was in such a condition, that when the postman came as usual to make his collection, he was obliged to take the letter back to the people who had written it, for no Post Office would have sent it off in such a state.

THE SHIP OF THE DESERT

From Burckhardt’s *Travels in Nubia*.

Of all animals under the sun, perhaps the very ugliest is the camel; but life in the deserts of Africa and Arabia could not go on at all without the constant presence of this clumsy-looking creature. Some African tribes keep camels entirely for the use of their milk and flesh; and it is noticeable that these animals are much shyer and more timid than their brothers in Syria and Arabia, who will instantly come trotting up to any fresh camel that appears on the scene, or obey the call of any Bedouin, even if he is a stranger.

In general, the camel is merely employed as a beast of burden, and from this he gets his name of the ‘ship of the desert.’ Like other ships, he sways from side to side, and his awkward motion is apt to make his rider feel very sick, till he gets accustomed to this way of travelling. Camels are wonderfully strong and enduring animals, and can stow up water within them for several days, besides having an extraordinary power of smelling any water or spring that is far beyond the reach of man’s eyes. These qualities are naturally very valuable in the burning deserts which stretch unbroken for hundreds of miles, where everything looks alike, and the sun as he passes across the heavens is the traveller’s only guide.

Partly from fear of warlike tribes, which wander through the deserts of Arabia and Nubia, and partly from the help and protection which a large body can give, the one to the other, it is the custom for merchants and travellers to band together and travel in great caravans of men and camels. They try, if possible, to find some well by which they can encamp, and every man fills his own skins with water before starting afresh on his journey. More quarrels arise about water than people who live in countries with plenty of streams and rivers can have any idea of. One man will sell his skinful to another at a very high price, while if a traveller thinks he will be very prudent and lay in a large store, the rest are certain to take it from him directly their own supply runs short. Foods they can do without on those burning plains, but not water.

Some of these misfortunes befel a traveller of the name of Burckhardt, who left Switzerland in the opening years of this century, to pass several years in Africa and the East. After going through Syria, he began to make his way up the Nile, and even penetrated as far as Nubia, joining for that purpose a caravan of traders under the leadership of a Ababde — an Arab race who from the earliest days have been acknowledged to be the best guides across the desert.

Owing to the intense heat which prevails in those countries, the marches always take place in the small hours of the morning, and midnight seems to have been the usual hour for the start. Very commonly the march would continue for eleven hours, during which time the men were only allowed to drink twice, while the asses, who with the camels formed part of the caravan, were put on half their allowance. Sometimes a detachment was sent on to wells that were known to lie along the route, to get everything ready for the rest when they came up; but it often happened that the springs were so choked up by drifting sand that no amount of digging would free them. Then there was nothing for it but to go on again.

It was in the month of March that Burckhardt and his companions had their hardest experience of the dreadful desert thirst. The year had been drier than was common even in Nubia, and even in the little oases or fertile spots, most of the trees and acacias were withered and dead. Hour after hour the travellers toiled on, and soon the asses gave out, and their riders were forced to walk over the scorching sand. Burckhardt had been a little more careful of his stock of water than the other members of the caravan, and for some days had cooked no food or eaten anything but biscuits, so that he had been able to spare a draught every now and then for his own ass, and still had enough to last both of them for another day. However, it was quite clear that unless water was quickly found they must all die together, and a council was held as to what was best to be done. The Ababde chief's advice was — and always had been — to send out a company of ten or twelve of the strongest camels, to try to make their way secretly to the Nile, through the ranks of unfriendly Arab tribes encamped all along its eastern shore.

This was agreed upon; and about four in the afternoon the little band set out, loaded with all the skins in the caravan. The river was a ride of five or six hours distant; so that many hours of dreadful suspense must pass before the watchers left behind could know what was to be their fate. Soon after sunset a few stragglers came in, who had strayed from the principal band; but they had not reached the river, and could give no news of the rest. As the night wore on, several of the traders came to Burckhardt to beg for a taste of the water he was believed to have stored up; but he had carefully hidden what remained, and only showed them his skins which were empty. Then the camp gradually grew silent, and all sat and waited under the stars for the verdict of life or death. It was three in the morning when shouts were heard, and the camels, refreshed by deep draughts of the Nile water, came along at their utmost speed, bearing skins full enough for many days' journey. Only one man was missing; but traders are a cruel race, and these cared nothing about his fate, giving themselves up to feasting and song, and joy at their deliverance.

Yet only a year later, the fate that had almost overtaken them befel a small body of merchants who set out with their camels from Berber to Daraou. The direct road, which led past the wells of Nedjeym, was known to be haunted at that date by the celebrated robber Naym, who waylaid every caravan from Berber; so the merchants hired an Ababde guide to take them by a longer and more easterly road, where there was another well at which they could water. Unluckily the guide knew nothing of the country that lay beyond, and the whole party soon lost themselves in the mountains. For five days they wandered about, not seeing a creature who could give them help, or even direct them to the right path. Then, their water being quite exhausted, they turned steadily westwards, hoping by this means soon to reach the Nile. But the river at this point takes a wide bend, and was, if they had known it, further from them than before; and after two days of dreadful agony, fifteen slaves and one merchant died. In desperation, another merchant, who was an Ababde, and owner of ten camels, had himself lashed firmly on to the back of the strongest beast, lest in his weakness he should fall off, and then ordered the whole herd to be turned loose, thinking that perhaps the instinct of the animals would succeed where the knowledge of man had failed. But neither the Ababde nor his camels were ever seen again.

The merchants struggled forwards, and eight days after leaving the well of Owareyk they arrived in sight of some mountains which they knew; but it was too late, and camels and merchants sank down helpless where they lay. They had just strength to gasp out orders for two of their servants to make their way on camels to the mountains where water would be found, but long before the mountains were reached, one of the men dropped off his camel and, unable to speak, waved his hands in farewell to his comrade. The other mechanically rode on, but his eyes grew dim and his head dizzy, and well though he knew the road, he suffered his camel to wander from it. After straying aimlessly about for some time, he dismounted and lay down in the shade of a tree to rest, first tying his camel to one of the branches. But a sudden puff of wind brought the smell of the water to the camel’s nostrils, and with a furious bound, he broke the noose and galloped violently forward, and in half an hour was sucking in deep draughts from a clear spring. The man, understanding the meaning of the camel’s rush, rose up and staggered a few steps after him, but fell to the ground from sheer weakness. Just at that moment a wandering Bedouin from a neighbouring camp happened to pass that way, and seeing that the man still breathed, dashed water in his face, and soon revived him. Then, laden with skins of water, the two men set out for those left behind, and hopeless though their search seemed to be, they found they had arrived in time, and were able to save them from a frightful death.

‘HAME, HAME, HAME, WHERE I FAIN WAD BE’

Nothing in nature is more curious or more difficult of explanation than the stories recorded of animals conveyed to one place, finding their way back to their old home, often many hundreds of miles away. Not very long ago, a lady at St. Andrews promised to make a present to a friend who lived somewhere north of Perth, of a fine cat which she wished to part with. When the day arrived, the cat was tied safely up in a hamper, put in charge of the guard, and sent on its way. It was met at the station by its new mistress, who drove it home, and gave it an excellent supper and a comfortable bed. This was on Friday. All Saturday it poked about, examining everything as cats will, but apparently quite happy and content with its quarters. About seven on Sunday morning, as the lady drew up her blind to let in the sunshine, she saw the new puss trotting down the avenue. She did not pay much attention to the fact till the day went on, and the cat, who generally had a good appetite, did not come in to its meals. When Monday came, but the puss did not, the lady wrote to her friend at St. Andrews saying she feared that the cat had wandered away, but she would make inquiries at all the houses round, and still hoped to find it. On Tuesday evening loud mews were heard outside the kitchen door of the St. Andrews house, and when it was opened, in walked the cat, rather dirty and very hungry, but otherwise not at all the worse for wear. Now as anybody can see if he looks at the map, it is a long way from St. Andrews to Perth, even as the crow flies. There are also two big rivers which *must* be crossed, the Tay and the Eden, or if the cat preferred coming by train, at least two changes have to be made. So you have to consider whether, granting it an instinct of *direction*, which is remarkable enough in itself, the animal was sufficiently strong to swim such large streams; or whether it was so clever that it managed to find out the proper trains for it to take, and the places where it must get out. Any way, home it came, and was only two days on the journey, and there it is still in St. Andrews, for its mistress had not the heart to give it away a second time.

Trains seem to have a special fascination for cats, and they are often to be seen about stations. For a long while one was regularly to be seen travelling on the Metropolitan line, between St. James’s Park and Charing Cross, and a whole family of half-wild kittens are at this moment making a play-ground of the lines and platforms at Paddington. One will curl up quite comfortably on the line right under the wheel of a carriage that is just going to start, and on being disturbed bolts away and hides itself in some recess underneath the platform. Occasionally you see one with part of its tail cut off, but as a rule they take wonderfully good care of themselves. The porters are very kind to them, and they somehow contrive to get along, for they all look fat and well-looking, and quite happy in their strange quarters.

Of course cats are not the only animals who have what is called the ‘homing instinct.’ Sheep have been known to find their way back from Yorkshire to the moors north of the Cheviots where they were born and bred, although sheep are not clever beasts and they had come a roundabout journey by train. But there are many such stories of dogs, and one of the most curious is told by an English officer who was in Paris in the year 1815. One day, as the officer was walking hastily over the bridge, he was annoyed by a muddy poodle dog rubbing up against him, and dirtying his beautifully polished boots. Now dirty boots were his abhorrence, so he hastily looked round for a shoe-black, and seeing one at a little distance off, at once went up to him to have his boots re-blacked. A few days later the officer was again crossing the bridge, when a second time the poodle brushed against him and spoilt his boots. Without thinking he made for the nearest shoe-black, just as he had done before, and went on his way; but when the same thing happened a third time, his suspicions were aroused, and he resolved to watch. In a few minutes he saw the dog run down to the river-side and roll himself in the mud, and then come back to the bridge and keep a sharp look-out for the first well-dressed man who would be likely to repay his trouble. The officer was so delighted with the poodle’s cleverness, that he went at once to the shoe-black, who confessed that the dog was his and that he had taught him this trick for the good of trade. The officer then proposed to buy the dog, and offered the shoe-black such a large sum that he agreed to part with his ‘bread-winner.’

So the officer, who was returning at once to England, carried the dog, by coach and steamer to London, where he tied him up for some time, in order that he should forget all about his old life, and be ready to make himself happy in the new one. When he was set free, however, the poodle seemed restless and ill at ease, and after two or three days he disappeared entirely. What he did then, nobody knows, but a fortnight after he had left the London house, he was found, steadily plying his old trade, on the Pont Henri Quatre.

A Northumbrian pointer showed a still more wonderful instance of the same sagacity. He was the property of one Mr. Edward Cook, who after paying a visit to his brother, the owner of a large property in Northumberland, set sail for America, taking the dog with him. They travelled south together as far as Baltimore, where excellent shooting was to be got; but after one or two days’ sport the dog disappeared, and was supposed to have lost itself in the woods. Months went by without anything being known of the dog, when one night a dog was heard howling violently outside the quiet Northumberland house. It was admitted by the owner, Mr. Cook, who to his astonishment recognised it as the pointer which his brother had taken to America. They took care of him till his master came back, and then they tried to trace out his journey. But it was of no use. How the pointer made its way through the forest, from what port it started, and where it landed, remain a mystery to this day.

NESTS FOR DINNER

However wonderful and beautiful nests may be, very few English people would like to eat them; yet in China the nest of a particular variety of swallow is prized as a great delicacy.

These nests are chiefly gathered from Java, Sumatra, and other islands of the Malay Archipelago, and are carried thence to China, where they fetch a large price. Although, within certain limits, they are very plentiful, they are very difficult and dangerous to get, for the swallows build in the depths of large and deep caverns, mostly on the seashore, and the men have to be let down from above by ropes, or descend on ladders of bamboo. In Java, so many men have lost their lives in nest gathering, that in some parts a regular religious ceremony is held, twice or three times a year, before the expedition is undertaken; prayers are said, and a bull is sacrificed.

It is not easy to know what the nests are really made of, because from the time that Europeans first noticed the trade — about two hundred years ago — they have differed among themselves in their accounts of the jelly-like substance used by the swallows. Some naturalists have thought it is the spawn of the fish, which floats thickly on the surface of these seas; others, that it is a kind of deposit of dried sea foam gathered by the birds from the beach, while others again think that the substance is formed of sea plants chewed by the birds into a jelly; but, whatever it may be, the Chinese infinitely prefer nests to oysters or anything else, and are willing to pay highly for them.

The nests, which take about two months to build, are always found to be of two sorts: an oblong one just fitted to the body of the male bird, and a rounder one for the mother and her eggs. The most valuable nests are those which are whitest, and these generally belong to the male; they are very thin, and finely worked. The birds are small and feed chiefly on insects, which are abundant on these islands; their colour is grey, and they are wonderfully quick in their movements, like the humming birds, which are about their own size. They are sociable, and build in swarms, but they seldom lay more than two eggs, which take about a fortnight to hatch.

FIRE-EATING DJIJAM

Some curious notes about walking unharmed through fire, in the November (1894) number of ‘Longman’s Magazine,’ under the heading ‘At the Sign of the Ship,’ suggested that a record might be kept of Djijam’s eccentricities, especially as they differed somewhat from those of most other dogs. Anyone accustomed to animals knows, and anyone who is not can imagine, that dogs differ as much in their behaviour and ways as human beings. Djijam was as unlike any dog I have ever had, seen, or heard of, as could be. My wife, who is a patient and successful instructor of animals, never managed to teach him anything, any attempt to impart usual or unusual accomplishments being met with the most absolute, impenetrable idiocy, which no perseverance could conquer or diminish in the least degree. That this extreme stupidity was really assumed is now pretty clear, though at the time it was attributed to natural density.

It was at Christmas-tide, about two years ago, that my wife and I drove over to a village some few miles away, to choose one of a litter of four fox-terrier pups, which we heard were on sale at a livery stable. We found the mother of the lively litter almost overpowered by her boisterous progeny, who though nearly three months old had not yet found other homes. Without any particular objection on the part of the parent we examined the pups, and selected and brought away one which seemed to have better points than the rest, whom we left to continue their gambols in the straw, unconscious probably that any other means of warming themselves were possible. The journey home was accomplished with the customary puppish endeavors to escape restraint. The same evening, after the servants had retired to bed, Master Djijam was placed in the kitchen, out of harm’s way as it was thought. The last thing at night we went to inspect the little animal, and could not at first discover his whereabouts. When a thing is lost it is customary to hunt about in unlikely places, so we looked into the high cinder-box under the kitchener, and found the object of our search comfortably curled up directly under the red-hot fire. It was fairly warm work fishing him out.

For another reason, not connected with heat, he was subsequently christened Djijam, a truly oriental name, which some of our friends think may have helped to develop his original taste for fire.

When Djijam was about six months old we observed that he frequently jumped up to people who were seated smoking. This induced a humorous friend one day to offer him the lighted end of a cigarette, which Djijam promptly seized in his mouth and extinguished. After that triumph Djijam usually watched for, and plainly demanded the lighted fag ends of cigarettes and cigars, so that his might be the satisfaction of finishing them off. This led to lighted matches being offered to him, which he eagerly took in his mouth, and if wax vestas, swallowed as a welcome addition to his ordinary diet. From matches to lighted candles was an easy step, and these he rapidly extinguished with great gusto as often as they were presented to him. He would also attack lighted oil lamps if placed on the floor, but they puzzled him, and defied his efforts to bite or breathe them out. A garden bonfire used to drive him wild with delight, and snatching brands from the fire, indoors or out, was a delirious joy. My wife discovered him once in the full enjoyment of a large lighted log on the dining-room carpet. Red-hot cinders he highly relished, though in obtaining them he frequently singed off his moustaches. Perhaps the oddest of his fiery tricks was performed one day when he wished the cook to hand him some dainty morsel on which she chanced to be operating. This was against the rules, as he well knew, so she declined to accept the hint. Djijam was at once provoked to anger and cast round for some way of obtaining compensation, at the same time hoping, perhaps, to retaliate. He naturally went for the kitchen fire, out of which he drew a red-hot cinder and carried it in his mouth across the kitchen, through a small lobby into the scullery, to his box-bed, into the straw of which he must have speedily dropped the live coal, and jumped in after it. Soon after, the cook smelt wood burning and searched the lower part of the house lest anything were afire. Finding nothing wrong, she last of all visited the scullery, and found Djijam enjoying the warmth of his smouldering straw bed and wooden box.

Alas, Djijam grew snappish even to his best friends, and although it was suggested that he might be found an engagement on the Variety stage of the Westminster Aquarium, as a fire-eating hound, it was reluctantly decided that he should go the way of all flesh. I am sure if he had been asked, he would in some way have indicated that he preferred cremation to any other mode of disposal. But it was not to be, yet it was a melancholy satisfaction to learn that his end was peaceful though commonplace.

THE STORY OF THE DOG OSCAR

In the north-west of Scotland there is a very pretty loch which runs far up into the land. On one side great hills — almost mountains — slope down into the water, while on the opposite side there is a little village, with the road along which the houses straggle, almost part of the loch shore. At low tide, banks of beautiful golden seaweed are left at the edges of the water, and on this seaweed huge flocks of sea-gulls come and feed.

A few years ago there lived in this village a minister who had a collie-dog named Oscar. He lived all alone in his little cottage, and as Jean, the woman who looked after him, was a very talkative person, by no means congenial to him. Oscar was his constant companion and friend.

He seemed to understand all that was said to him, and in his long, lonely walks across the hills, it cheered him to have Oscar trotting quietly and contentedly beside him. And when he came home from visiting sick people, and going to places where he could not take Oscar, he would look forward to seeing the soft brown head thrust out of the door, peering into the darkness, ready to welcome him as soon as he should come in sight.

One of Oscar’s favourite games was to go down to the shore when the tide was low, and with his head thrown up and his tail straight out, he would run at the flocks of gulls feeding on the seaweed, and scatter them in the air, making them look like a cloud of large white snow-flakes. In a minute or two the gulls would settle down again to their meal, and again Oscar would charge and rout them.

This little manœuvre of his would be repeated many times, till a long clear whistle was heard from the road by the loch. Then the gulls might finish their supper in peace, for Oscar’s master had called him, and now he was walking quietly along by his side, looking as if there were no such things in the world as gulls.

‘No, Oscar, lad! Not to-day! not to-day!’ said the minister one afternoon, as he put on his hat and coat and took his stick from the dog who always fetched it when he saw preparations being made for a walk.

‘I can’t take you with me; you must stay in the paddock. No run by the loch this afternoon, lad. ’Tis too long, and you are not so strong as you were. We are growing old together, Oscar.’

The dog watched his master till he disappeared over the little bridge and up the glen, and then he went and lay down by the paling which surrounded the bit of field. Jean soon went out to a friend’s house to have a little gossip, and Oscar was left alone.

He felt rather forlorn. Across the road he heard the distant splashing of the waves as they ran angrily up the beach of the loch, and the whistling of the wind down the glen.

He watched the grey clouds scudding away overhead, and he envied the children he heard playing in the street, or racing after the tourist coach on its way up the Pass.

He began to feel drowsy.

‘The gulls will be feeding on the banks now! How I wish ...’ and his eyes closed, and he dreamt a nice dream, that he was dashing along through shallow pools of water towards the white chattering flock, when — what was this in front of him? White feathers! Two gulls! Was he dreaming still? No the gulls were real! What luck! He could not go to the gulls, so the gulls had come to him.

In a moment he was wide awake, and made a rush at the two birds who were gazing at him inquiringly with their heads on one side. But after two or three rushes, ‘What stupid gulls these are!’ thought Oscar. ‘They can scarcely fly.’

And, indeed, the birds seemed to have great difficulty in lifting themselves off the ground, and appeared to grow more and more feeble after each of Oscar’s onslaughts. At last one of them fell.

‘Lazy creature! you have had too much dinner! Up you get!’

But the gull lay down gasping.

Oscar made for the other. Why, that was lying down too! He went to the first one. It was quite still and motionless, and after one or two more gasps its companion was the same.

Oscar felt rather frightened. Was it possible that he had killed them? What would his master say? How was he to tell him it was quite a mistake? That he had only been in fun? He must put the gulls out of sight.

He dragged them to one side of the cottage where the minister used to try every year to grow a few cherished plants, and there in the loose earth he dug a grave for the birds.

Then he went back to his old place, and waited for his master’s return.

When the minister came back, for the first time in his life, Oscar longed to be able to speak and tell him all that had happened. How could he without speech explain that the death of the birds was an accident — an unfortunate accident?

He felt that without an explanation it was no use unearthing the white forms in the border.

‘Sir, sir!’ cried Jean, putting her head in at the door. ‘Here’s Widow McInnes come to see you. She’s in sore trouble.’

The minister rose and went to the door.

‘Stay here, Oscar,’ he said, for Widow McInnes was not fond of Oscar.

In a few minutes the minister came back.

He patted Oscar’s soft head.

‘She wanted to accuse thee, Oscar lad, of killing the two white pigeons which her son sent her yesterday from the south, and which escaped this afternoon from their cage. As if you would touch the bairnies, as the poor woman calls them! Eh, lad?’

Oscar wagged his tail gratefully. Then in a sudden flash it came upon him that he *had* killed the pigeons. Now he saw the birds were pigeons, not gulls, and, worse than killing them, he had, all unknowingly, told his master a lie; and he could not undo it. He whined a little as if in pain, and moved slowly out of the room. The minister sat on, deep in thought, and then went outside the house to see the sunset. Great bands of thick grey cloud wrapped the hill-tops in their folds, and lay in long bands across the slopes, while here and there in the rifts were patches of pale lemon-coloured sky. The loch waters heaved sullenly against the shore. The minister looked away from the sunset, and his eye fell on a little mound in the bed by the cottage.

‘What did I plant there?’ he thought, and began poking it with his stick.

‘Oscar, Oscar!’

Oscar was bounding down the path. He had just determined to unbury the pigeons and bring them to his master, and, even if he received a beating, his master would know he had not meant to deceive.

But now, hearing the call, and the tone of the minister’s voice, he knew it was too late. He stopped, and then crept slowly towards that tall black figure standing in the twilight, with the two white pigeons lying at his feet.

‘Oh, Oscar, Oscar lad, what *have* you done?’

At that moment a boy came running to the gate.

‘Ye’ll be the minister that Sandy Johnston is speiring after. He says, “Fetch the minister, and bid him come quick.”’

The minister gave a few directions to Jean, and in a moment or two was ready to go with the boy. It was a long row to the head of the loch, and a long walk to reach the cottage where Sandy Johnston lay dying. The minister stayed with him for two nights, till he seemed to need his help no more, and then started off to come home. But while he was being rowed along the loch, a fierce snowstorm came on. The boat made but little way, and they were delayed two or three hours. Cold and tired, the minister thought with satisfaction of his warm fireside, with Oscar lying down beside his cosy chair. Then, for the first time since it had happened, he thought of the pigeons, and he half smiled as he recalled Oscar’s downcast face as he came up the path.

With quick steps he hurried along the street from the landing-place. The snow was being blown about round him, and the night was fast closing in. He was quite near his own gate now, and he looked up, expecting to see the familiar brown head peering out of the door for him; but there was no sign of it.

He opened the gate and strode in. Still no Oscar to welcome him.

‘Jean, Jean!’ he called. Jean appeared from the kitchen, and even in the firelight he could see traces of tears on her rough face.

‘Where is Oscar?’

‘Ah, sir, after ye were gone wi’ the lad, he wouldna’ come into the house, and wouldna’ touch a morsel o’ food. He lay quite still in the garden, and last night he died. An’ it’s my belief, sir, he died of a broken heart, because ye did na’ beat him after killing the pigeons, and he couldna’ make it up wi’ ye.’

And the minister thought so, too; and when Jean was gone, he sat down by his lonely fireside and buried his face in his hands.

DOLPHINS AT PLAY

For some reason or other, dolphins, those queer great fish that always seem to be at play, have been subjects for many stories. Pliny himself has told several, and his old translator’s words are so strange, that, as far as possible, we will tell the tale as he tells it.

‘In the days of Augustus Cæsar, the Emperor,’ says Pliny, ‘there was a dolphin entered the gulf or pool Lucrinus, which loved wondrous well a certain boy, a poor man’s son; who using to go every day to school from Baianum to Puteoli, was wont also about noon-tide to stay at the water side and call unto the dolphin, “Simo, Simo,” and many times would give him fragments of bread, which of purpose he ever brought with him, and by this means allured the dolphin to come ordinarily unto him at his call. Well, in process of time, at what hour soever of the day this boy lured for him and called “Simo,” were the dolphin never so close hidden in any secret and blind corner, out he would and come abroad, yea, and scud amain to this lad, and taking bread and other victuals at his hand, would gently offer him his back to mount upon, and then down went the sharp-pointed prickles of his fins, which he would put up as it were within a sheath for fear of hurting the boy. Thus, when he once had him on his back, he would carry him over the broad arm of the sea as far as Puteoli to school, and in like manner convey him back again home; and thus he continued for many years together, so long as the child lived. But when the boy was fallen sick and dead yet the dolphin gave not over his haunt, but usually came to the wonted place, and missing the lad seemed to be heavy and mourn again, until for very grief and sorrow he also was found dead upon the shore.’

THE STARLING OF SEGRINGEN

Translated from the German of Johann Peter Hebel.

In a little German village in Suabia, there lived a barber, who combined the business of hair-cutting and shaving with that of an apothecary; he also sold good brandy, so that he had no lack of customers, not to speak of those who merely wished to pass an hour in gossiping.

Not the least of the attractions, however, was a tame starling, named Hansel, who had been taught to speak, and had learnt many sayings which he overheard, either from his master, the barber, or from the idlers who gathered about the shop. His master especially had some favourite sayings, or catchwords, such as, ‘Truly, I am the barber of Segringen’ — for this is the name of the village— ‘As heaven will,’ ‘By keeping bad company,’ and the like; and these were most familiar to the starling.

Everybody for miles round had at least heard of Hansel, and many came on purpose to see him and hear him talk, for Hansel would often interpose a word into the conversation, which came in very aptly.

But it happened one day, Hansel’s wings — which had been cut — having grown again, that he thought to himself: ‘I have now learnt so much, I may go out and see the world.’ And when nobody was looking, whirr! — away he went out of the window.

Seeing a flock of birds, he joined them, thinking: ‘They know the country better than I.’

But alas! this knowledge availed them little, for all of them, with Hansel, fell into a snare which had been laid by a fowler, who soon came to see what was in his net. Putting in his hand, he drew out one prisoner after another, callously wringing their necks one by one.

But suddenly, when he was stretching out his murderous fingers to seize another victim, this one cried out: ‘I am the barber of Segringen!’

The man almost fell backwards with astonishment and fright, believing he had to do with a sorcerer at least; but presently recovering himself a little, he remembered the starling, and said: ‘Eh, Hansel, is it you! How did you come into the net?’

‘By keeping bad company,’ replied Hansel.

‘And shall I carry you home again?’

‘As heaven will,’ replied the starling.

Then the fowler took him back to the barber, and related the manner of his capture, receiving a good reward.

The barber also reaped a fine harvest, for more people came to his shop on purpose to see the clever bird, who had saved his life by his ready tongue.

GRATEFUL DOGS

From ‘Das Echo,’ June 8, 1895. Letter to the editor, signed G. M., Mexico, purporting to be an extract from a letter of his brother in Nebraska. I have translated and recast it.

A farmer in Nebraska — one of the Western States of North America — possessed two dogs, a big one called Fanny, and a small one who was named Jolly. One winter day the farmer went for a walk and took with him his two pets; they came to a brook that ran through the farm, and was now frozen up.

Fanny crossed it without much ado, but Jolly, who was always afraid of water, distrusted the ice, and refused to follow. Fanny paused at the other side, and barked loudly to induce her companion to come, but Jolly pretended not to understand.

Then Fanny ran back to him, and tried to explain that it was quite safe, but in vain, Jolly only looked after his master, and whimpered; upon which, Fanny, losing patience, seized him by the collar, and dragged him over.

For this kindness Jolly showed himself grateful some time afterwards.

Fanny, greedy creature, was fond of fresh eggs. When she heard a hen cackle she always ran to look for the nest, and one day she discovered one under the fruit-shed. But, alas! she could not get the beloved dainty because she was too large to go under the shed. Looking very pensive and thoughtful, she went away, and soon returned with Jolly, bringing him just before the hole.

Jolly, however, was stupid and did not understand; Fanny put her head in, and then her paws, without being able, with all her efforts, to reach the egg; the smaller dog, seeing that there was something in the hole, went in to look, but not caring for eggs, came out empty-handed.

Thereupon Fanny looked at him in such a sad and imploring way, that her master, who was watching them, could scarcely suppress his laughter.

At last Jolly seemed to understand what was wanted; he went under the shed again, brought out the egg, and put it before Fanny, who ate it with great satisfaction, and then both dogs trotted off together.

GAZELLE

PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF A TORTOISE

Alexandre Dumas, in whose book, as I told you, I read the story of Tom the Bear, as well as those of other animals, was one day walking past the shop of a large fishmonger in Paris. As he glanced through the window he saw an Englishman in the shop holding a tortoise, which he was turning about in his hands. Dumas felt an instant conviction that the Englishman proposed to make the tortoise into turtle soup, and he was so touched by the air of patient resignation of the supposed victim that he entered the shop, and with a sign to the shopwoman asked whether she had kept the tortoise for him which he had bespoken.

The shopwoman (who had known Dumas for many years) understood with half a word, and gently slipping the tortoise out of the Englishman's grasp, she handed it to Dumas, saying, 'Pardon, milord, the tortoise was sold to this gentleman this morning.'

The Englishman seemed surprised, but left the shop without remonstrating, and Dumas had nothing left for it but to pay for his tortoise and take it home.

As he carried his purchase up to his rooms on the third floor he wondered what could have possessed him to buy it, and what on earth he was to do with it now he had got it. It was certainly a remarkable tortoise, for the moment he put it down on the floor of his bedroom it started off for the fireplace at such a pace as to earn for itself the name of 'Gazelle.'

Once near the fire, Gazelle settled herself in the warmest corner she could find, and went to sleep.

Dumas, who wished to go out again and was afraid of his new possession coming to any harm, called his servant and said: 'Joseph, whilst I am out you must look after this creature.'

Joseph approached with some curiosity. 'Ah!' he remarked, 'why, it's a tortoise; that creature could bear a carriage on its back.'

'Yes, yes, no doubt it might, but I beg you won't try any experiments with it.'

'Oh, it wouldn't hurt it,' assured Joseph, who enjoyed showing off his information. 'The Lyons diligence might drive over it without hurting it.'

'Well,' replied his master, 'I believe the great sea turtle *might* bear such a weight, but I doubt whether this small variety — —'

'Oh, *that's* of no consequence,' interrupted Joseph; 'it's as strong as a horse, and small though it is, a cartload of stones might pass — —'

‘Very good, very good; never mind that now. Just buy the creature a lettuce and some snails.’

‘Snails! why, is its chest delicate?’

‘No, why on earth do you ask such a thing?’

‘Well, my last master used to take an infusion of snails for his chest — not that it prevented — —’

Dumas left the room without waiting for the end. Before he was half-way downstairs he found that he had forgotten his handkerchief, and on returning surprised Joseph standing on Gazelle’s back, gracefully poised on one leg, with the other out-stretched behind him in such a way that not an ounce of his eleven-stone weight was lost on the poor creature.

‘Idiot! what are you about?’

‘There, sir, didn’t I say so?’ rejoined Joseph, proudly.

‘There, there, give me a handkerchief and mind you don’t touch that creature again.’

‘There, sir,’ said the irrepressible Joseph, bringing the handkerchief. ‘But indeed you need not be at all afraid; a waggon could drive over — —’

Dumas fled.

He returned rather late at night, and no sooner took a step into his room than he felt something crack under his boot. He hastily raised his foot and took a further step with the same result: he thought he must be treading on eggs. He lowered his candlestick — the carpet was covered with snails.

Joseph had obeyed orders literally. He had bought the lettuces and the snails, had placed them all in a basket and Gazelle on the top, and then put the basket in the middle of his master’s bedroom. Ten minutes later the warmth of the fire thawed the snails into animation, and the entire caravan set forth on a voyage of discovery round the room, leaving silvery tracks behind them on carpet and furniture.

As for Gazelle, she was quietly reposing at the bottom of the basket, where a few empty shells proved that all the fugitives had not been brisk enough to make their escape.

Dumas, feeling no fancy for a possible procession of snails over his bed, carefully picked up the stragglers one by one, popped them back into the basket, and shut down the lid. But in five minutes’ time he realised that sleep would be out of the question with the noise going on, which sounded like a dozen mice in a bag of nuts. He decided to move the basket to the kitchen.

On the way there it occurred to him that if Gazelle went on at this rate she would certainly die of indigestion before morning. He remembered that the owner of the restaurant on the ground floor had a tank in the back yard where he often put fish to keep till wanted, and it struck him that the tank would be the very place for his tortoise. He at once put his idea into execution, got back to his room and to bed, and slept soundly till morning.

Joseph woke him early.

‘Oh, sir, such a joke!’ he exclaimed, standing at the foot of the bed.

‘What joke?’

‘Why, what your tortoise has been up to!’

‘What on earth do you mean?’

‘Well, sir, could you believe that it got out of your room — goodness knows how — and walked downstairs and right into the tank?’

‘You owl! you might have guessed I put it there myself.’

‘Did you indeed, sir? Well, you certainly *have* made a mess of it then.’

‘How so?’

‘Why the tortoise has eaten up a tench — a superb tench weighing three pounds — which the master of the restaurant put into the tank only last night. The waiter has just been telling me about it.’

‘Go at once and fetch me Gazelle and the scales.’

During Joseph’s absence his master took down a volume of Buffon, and consulted that eminent authority on the subject of tortoises and turtles. There seemed to be no doubt, according to the celebrated naturalist, that these creatures did eat fish voraciously when they got the chance.

‘Dear, dear,’ thought Dumas, ‘I fear the owner of the tank has Buffon on his side.’

Just then Joseph returned with the accused in one hand and the kitchen scales in the other.

‘You see,’ began the irrepressible valet, ‘these sort of creatures eat a lot. They need it to keep up their strength, and fish is particularly nourishing. Only see how strong sailors are, and they live so much on fish — —’

His master cut him short.

‘How much did you say that tench weighed?’

‘Three pounds. The waiter asks nine francs for it.’

‘And Gazelle ate it all?’

‘Every bit except the head, the back-bone, and the inside.’

‘Quite correct, Monsieur Buffon had said as much. Very well — but still — three pounds seems a good deal.’

He put Gazelle in the scale. She weighed exactly two pounds and a half! The deduction was simple. Either Gazelle had been falsely accused or the theft had been much smaller than was represented. Indeed the waiter readily took this view of the matter, and was quite satisfied with five francs as an indemnity.

The varied adventures of Gazelle had become rather a bore, and her owner felt that he must try to find some other home for her. She spent the following night in his room, but thanks to the absence of snails all went well. When Joseph came in next morning, his first act as usual was to roll up the hearth-rug, and, opening the window, to shake it well out in the air. Suddenly he uttered an exclamation and flung himself half out of the window.

'What's the matter, Joseph?' asked his master, only half awake.

'Oh, sir — it's your tortoise. It was on the rug, and I never saw it — and — —'

'Well! and —— ?'

'And I declare, before I knew what I was about, I shook it out of the window.'

'Imbecile!' shouted Dumas, springing out of bed.

'Ah!' cried Joseph with a sigh of relief. 'See, she's eating a cabbage!'

And so she was. Her fall had been broken by a rubbish heap, and after a few seconds in which to recover her equanimity, she had ventured to thrust her head out, when finding a piece of cabbage near, she at once began her breakfast.

'Didn't I say so, sir?' cried Joseph, delighted. 'Nothing hurts those creatures. There now, whilst she's eating that cabbage a coach-and-four might drive over her — —'

'Never mind, never mind; just run down and fetch her up quick.'

Joseph obeyed, and as soon as his master was dressed he called a cab, and taking Gazelle with him, drove off to No. 109 in the Faubourg St.-Denis. Here he climbed to the fifth floor and walked straight into the studio of his friend, who was busy painting a delightful little picture of performing dogs. He was surrounded by a bear, who was playing with a log as he lay on his back, a monkey, busy pulling a paint brush to pieces, and a frog, who was half-way up a little ladder in a glass jar. You will, I dare say, have guessed already that the painter's name was Décamps, the bear's Tom, the monkey's Jacko I., and the frog's Mademoiselle Camargo, and you will not wonder that Dumas felt that he could not better provide for Gazelle than by leaving her as an addition to the menagerie in his friend's studio.

See p. 375.

COCKATOO STORIES

Naturalist's Note-Book. Reeves & Turner: 1868.

About thirty years ago a gentleman, who was fond of birds and beasts, took into his head to try if parrots could not be persuaded to make themselves at home among the trees in his garden. For a little while everything seemed going beautifully, and the experimenter was full of hope. The parrots built their nests in the woods, and in course of time some young ones appeared, and gradually grew up to their full size. Then, unluckily, they became tired of the grounds which they knew by heart, and set off to see the world. The young parrots were strong upon the wing, and their beautiful bright bodies would be seen flashing in the sun, as much as fifteen miles away, and, then, of course, some boy or gamekeeper with a gun in his hand was certain to see them, and covet them for the kitchen mantel-shelf or a private collection.

The cockatoos however did not always care to choose trees for their building places. One little pair, whose grandparents had whisked about in the heat of a midsummer day in Australia, found the climate of England cold and foggy, and looked about for a warm cover for their new nest. They had many conversations on the subject, and perhaps one of these may have been overheard by a jackdaw, who put into their minds a brilliant idea, for the very next morning the cockatoos were seen carrying their materials to one of the chimneys, and trying to fasten them together half-way up. But cockatoos are not as clever as jackdaws about this kind of thing, and before the nest had grown to be more than a shapeless mass, down it came, and such a quantity of soot with it, that the poor cockatoos were quite buried, and lay for a day and night nearly smothered in soot, till they happened to be found by a housemaid who had entered the room. But in spite of this mishap they were not disheartened, and as soon as their eyes and noses had recovered from their soot bath, they began again to search for a more suitable spot. To the great delight of their master, they fixed upon a box which he had nailed for this very purpose under one of the gables, and this time they managed to build a nest that was as good as any nest in the garden. Still, they had no luck, for though the female laid two eggs, and sat upon them perseveringly, never allowing them to get cold for a single instant, it was all of no use, for the eggs turned out to be both bad!

Some cousins of theirs, a beautiful white cockatoo and his lovely rose-coloured wife, were more prosperous in their arrangements. They scooped out a most comfortable nest with their claws and bills in the rotten branch of an acacia tree, and there they brought up two young families, all of them white as snow, with flame-coloured crests. The eldest son, unhappily for himself, got weary of his brothers and sisters, and the little wood on the outskirts of the garden, where he was born, and one winter day took a flight towards the town. His parents never quite knew what occurred, but the poor young cockatoo came back severely wounded, to the great fury of all his family, who behaved very unkindly to him. It is a curious fact that no animals and very few birds can bear the sight of illness, and these cockatoos were no better than the rest. They did not absolutely ill-treat him, but they refused to let him enter their nest, and insisted that he should live by himself in a distant bush. At last his master took pity on him, and brought him into the garden, but this so enraged the cockatoos who were already in possession, that they secretly murdered him. However it is only just to the race of cockatoos to observe that they are not always so bad as this, for during the very same season an unlucky young bird, whose wing and leg were broken by an accident, was adopted by an elderly cockatoo who did not care for what her neighbours said, and treated him as her own son. The following year, when nesting time came round, the white cockatoos went back to their acacia branch, but were very much disgusted to find a pair of grey parrots there before them, and a little pair of bald round heads peeping over the edge. These little parrots grew up with such very bad tempers that no one would have anything to do with them, and as for their own relations, they looked upon them with the contempt that a cat often shows to a man. To be sure these relations were considered to be rather odd themselves, for they did not care to be troubled with a family of their own, so had taken under their protection two little kittens, who had been born in one of the boxes originally set apart for the parrots. The two birds could not endure to see the old cat looking after her little ones, and whenever she went out for a walk or to get her food, one of the parrots always took her place in the box. It would have been nice to know how long this went on, and if the kittens adopted any parrot-like ways. Luckily, there was one peculiarity of the parrots which it was beyond their power to imitate, and that was the horrible voice which renders the society of a parrot, and still more of a cockatoo, unendurable to most people.

THE OTTER WHO WAS REARED BY A CAT

Naturalist's Note-Book.

There is still living in the kingdom of Galloway a wonderful cat who is so completely above all the instincts and prejudices of her race, that she can remain on friendly terms with young rabbits, and wile away a spare hour by having a game with a mouse. A *real* game, where the fun is not all on one side, but which is enjoyed by the mouse as much as by the cat.

Hardly less strange, from the opposite point of view, is the friendship that existed between two cats and an otter, which had been taken from its mother when only a few hours old, to be brought up by hand by a gentleman. This was not a very easy thing to manage. It was too young to suck milk out of a spoon, which was the first thing thought of, but a quill passed through a cork and stuck into a baby's bottle proved a success, and through this the little otter had its milk five times every day, until he was more than five weeks old. Then he was introduced to a cat who had lately lost a kitten, and though not naturally very good-tempered, the puss took to him directly, evidently thinking it was her own kitten grown a little bigger. In general this cat, which was partly Persian, and, as I have said, very cross, did not trouble herself much about her young ones, which had to take care of themselves as well as they could; but she could not make enough of the little otter, and when he was as big as herself she would walk with him every day to the pond in the yard, where he had his bath, watching his splashings and divings with great anxiety, and never happy till he got out safe.

But, like human children, the baby otter would have been very dull without someone to play with, and as there were no little otters handy, he made friends with a young cat called Tom.

All through the long winter, when the pond was frozen, and diving and swimming were no longer possible, he and Tom used to spend happy mornings playing hide and seek among the furniture in the dining-room, till Tom began to feel that the otter was getting rather rough, and that his teeth were very sharp, and that it would be a good thing to get out of his reach, on the top of a high cupboard or chimney piece.

But at last the snow melted, and the ice became water again, and the first day the sun shone, the otter and the old cat went out for a walk in the yard. After the little fellow had had his dive, which felt delicious after all the weeks that he had done without it, he wandered carelessly into a shed where he had never been before, and to his astonishment he suddenly heard a flutter of wings, and became conscious of a sharp pain in his neck. This was produced by the beak of a falcon, who always lived in the shed, and seeing the strange creature enter his door, at once made up his mind that it was its duty to kill it. The cat and the gentleman who happened to come in at the same moment rushed forward and beat off the bird, and then, blinded by excitement, like a great many other people, and not knowing friends from foes, the cat rushed at her master. In one moment she had severely bitten the calf of his leg, given his thigh a fearful scratch, and picked up the otter and carried him outside. Then, not daring to trust him out of her sight, she marched him sternly up the hill, keeping him all the while between her legs, so that no danger should come near him.

As the otter grew bigger the cats became rather afraid of his claws and teeth, which grew bigger too, and inflicted bites and scratches without his knowing it. But if the cats tired of him, he never tired of the cats, and was always dull and unhappy when they were out of his way. Sometimes, when his spirits were unusually good (and his teeth unusually sharp), the poor playfellows were obliged to seek refuge in the bedrooms of the house, or even upon the roof, but the little otter had not lived so long with cats for nothing, and could climb nearly as well as they. When he had had enough of teasing, he told them so (for, of course, he knew the cat language), and they would come down, and he would stretch himself out lazily in front of the fire, with his arms round Tom’s neck.

It would be nice to know what happened to him when he really grew up, whether the joys of living in a stream made him forget his old friends at the farm, or whether he would leave the chase of the finest trout at the sound of a mew or a whistle. But we are not told anything about it, so everybody can settle it as they like.

STORIES ABOUT LIONS

The lion in its wild state is a very different animal from the lion of menageries and wild-beast shows. The latter has probably been born in captivity, reared by hand, and kept a prisoner in a narrow cage all its life, deprived not only of liberty and exercise, but of its proper food. The result is a weak, thin, miserable creature, with an unhappy furtive expression, and a meagre mane, more like a poodle than the king of beasts in a savage state.

The lion of South Africa differs in many points from that of Algeria, of whom we are going to speak. In Algeria there are three kinds of lions — the black, the tawny, and the grey. The black lion, more rarely met with than the two others, is rather smaller, but stronger in build. He is so called from the colour of his mane, which falls to his shoulder in a heavy black mass. The rest of his coat is the colour of a bay horse. Instead of wandering like the other two kinds, he makes himself a comfortable dwelling, and remains there probably all his life, which may last thirty or forty years, unless he falls a victim to the hunter. He rarely goes down to the plains in search of prey, but lies in ambush in the evening and attacks the cattle on their way down from the mountain, killing four or five to drink their blood. In the long summer twilights he waits on the edge of a forest-path for some belated traveller, who seldom escapes to tell the tale.

The tawny and grey lion differ from each other only in the colour of their mane; all three have the same habits and characteristics, except those peculiar to the black lion just described. They all turn night into day, and go out at dusk to forage for prey, returning to their lair at dawn to sleep and digest in peace and quiet. Should a lion, for any reason, shift his camp during the day, it is most unlikely that he will attack, unprovoked, any creature, whether human or otherwise, whom he may chance to meet; for during the day he is ‘full inside,’ and the lion kills not for the sake of killing, but to satisfy his hunger. The lion is a devoted husband; when a couple go out on their nightly prowl, it is always the lioness who leads the way; when she stops he stops too, and when they arrive at the fold where they hope to procure their supper, she lies down, while he leaps into the midst of the enclosure, and brings back to her the pick of the flock. He watches her eat with great anxiety lest anything should disturb her, and never begins his own meal till she has finished hers. As a father he is less devoted; the old lion being of a serious disposition, the cubs weary him with their games, and while the family is young the father lives by himself, but at a short distance, so as to be at hand in case of danger. When the cubs are about three months old, and have finished teething (a process which often proves fatal to little lionesses), their mother begins to accustom them to eat meat by bringing them mutton to eat, which she carefully skins, and chews up small before giving to them. Between three and four months old they begin to follow their mother at night to the edge of the forest, where their father brings them their supper. At six months the whole family change their abode, choosing for the purpose a very dark night. Between eight months and a year old they begin to attack the flocks of sheep and goats that feed by day in the neighbourhood of their lair, and sometimes venture to attack oxen, but being still young and awkward, they often wound ten for one killed, and the father lion is obliged to interfere. At the age of two years they can slay with one blow an ox, horse, or camel, and can leap the hedges two yards high that surround the folds for protection. This period in the history of the lion is the most disastrous to the shepherds and their flocks, for then the lion goes about killing for the sake of learning to kill. At three years they leave their parents and set up families of their own, but it is only at the age of eight that they attain their full size and strength, and, in the case of the male, his full mane.

The question is sometimes asked, why does the lion roar? The answer is, for the same reason that the bird sings. When a lion and lioness go out together at night, the lioness begins the duet by roaring when she leaves her den, then the lion roars in answer, and they roar in turn every quarter of an hour, till they have found their supper; while they are eating they are silent, and begin roaring as soon as satisfied, and roar till morning. In summer they roar less and sometimes not at all. The Arabs, who have good reason to know and dread this fearsome sound, have the same word for it as for the thunder. The herds being constantly exposed to the ravages of the lion, the natives are obliged to take measures to protect them, but, the gun in their unskilled hands proving often as fatal to themselves as to their enemy, they are forced to resort to other means. Some tribes dig a pit, about ten yards deep, four or five wide, and narrower at the mouth than the base. The tents of the little camp surround it, and round them again is a hedge two or three yards high, made of branches of trees interlaced; a second smaller hedge divides the tents from the pit in order to prevent the flocks from falling into it. The lion prowling in search of food scents his prey, leaps both hedges at one bound, and falls roaring with anger into the pit digged for him. The whole camp is aroused, and so great is the rejoicing that no one sleeps all night. Guns are let off and fires lit to inform the whole district, and in the morning all the neighbours arrive, not only men, but women, children, and even dogs. When it is light enough to see, the hedge surrounding the pit is removed in order to look at the lion, and to judge by its age and sex what treatment it is to receive, according to what harm it may have done. If it is a young lion or a lioness the first spectators retire from the sight disgusted, to make room for others whose raptures are equally soon calmed. But if it is a full-grown lion with abundant mane, then it is a very different scene; frenzied gestures and appropriate cries spread the joyful news from one to another, and the spectators crowd in such numbers that they nearly edge each other into the pit. When everyone has thrown his stone and hurled his imprecation, men armed with guns come to put an end to the noble animal’s torture; but often ten shots have been fired before, raising his majestic head to look contemptuously on his tormentors, he falls dead. Not till long after this last sign of life do the bravest venture to let themselves down into the pit, by means of ropes, to pass a net under the body of the lion, and to hoist it up to the surface by means of a stake planted there for the purpose. When the lion is cut up, the mothers of the tribe receive each a small piece of his heart, which they give to their sons to eat to make them strong and courageous; with the same object they make themselves amulets of hairs dragged out from his mane.

Other tribes make use of the ambush, which may be either constructed underground or on a tree. If underground a hole is dug, about one yard deep, and three or four wide, near a path frequented by the lion; it is covered with branches weighted down by heavy stones, and loose earth is thrown over all. Four or five little openings are left to shoot through, and a larger one to serve as a doorway, which may be closed from within by a block of stone. In order to ensure a good aim the Arabs kill a boar and lay it on the path opposite the ambush; the lion inevitably stops to sniff this bait, and then they all fire at once. Nevertheless he is rarely killed on the spot, but frantically seeking his unseen enemies, who are beneath his feet, he makes with frenzied bounds for the nearest forest, there sometimes to recover from his wounds, sometimes to die in solitude. The ambush in a tree is conducted on the same lines as the other, except that the hunters are above instead of below their quarry, from whom they are screened by the branches.

There are, however, in the province of Constantine some tribes of Arabs who hunt the lion in a more sportsmanlike manner. When a lion has made his presence known, either by frequent depredations or by roarings, a hunting party is formed. Some men are sent in advance to reconnoitre the woods, and when they return with such information as they have been able to gather as to the age, sex, and whereabouts of the animal, a council of war is held, and a plan of campaign formed. Each hunter is armed with a gun, a pistol, and a yataghan, and then five or six of the younger men are chosen to ascend the mountain, there to take their stand on different commanding points, in order to watch every movement of the lion, and to communicate them to their companions below by a pre-arranged code of signals. When they are posted the general advance begins; the lion, whose hearing is extremely acute, is soon aware of the approach of enemies, who in their turn are warned by the young men on the look-out. Finally, when the lion turns to meet the hunters the watchers shout with all their might ‘Aoulikoum!’ ‘Look out!’ At this signal the Arabs draw themselves up in battle array, if possible with their backs to a rock, and remain motionless till the lion has approached to within twenty or thirty paces; then the word of command is given, and each man, taking the best aim he can, fires, and then throws down his rifle to seize his pistol or yataghan. The lion is generally brought to the ground by this hail of bullets, but unless the heart or the brain have been pierced he will not be mortally wounded; the hunters therefore throw themselves upon him before he can rise, firing, stabbing right and left, blindly, madly, without aim, in the rage to kill. Sometimes in his mortal agony the lion will seize one of the hunters, and, drawing him under his own body, will torture him, almost as a cat does a mouse before killing it. Should this happen, the nearest relation present of the unhappy man will risk his own life in the attempt to rescue him, and at the same time to put an end to the lion. This is a perilous moment; when the lion sees the muzzle of the avenger’s rifle pointed at his ear he will certainly crush in the head of his victim, even if he has not the strength left to spring on his assailant before the latter gives him the *coup de grâce*.

The Arabs in the neighbourhood of Constantine used, about fifty years ago, to send there for a famous French lion-hunter, Jules Gérard by name, to rid them of some unusually formidable foe. They never could understand his way of going to work — alone and by night — which certainly presented a great contrast to their methods. On one occasion a family of five — father, mother, and three young lions — were the aggressors. The Arab sheik, leading Monsieur Gérard to the river, showed him by their footprints on the banks where this fearful family were in the habit of coming to drink at night, but begged him not to sacrifice himself to such fearful odds, and either to return to the camp, or to take some of the tribe with him. Gérard declining both suggestions, the sheik was obliged to leave, as night was at hand, and the lions might appear at any moment. First he came near the hunter, and spoke these words low: ‘Listen, I have a counsel to give thee. Be on thy guard against the Lord of the Mighty Head; he will lead the way. If thy hour has come, he will kill thee, and the others will eat thee.’ Coming still nearer the sheik whispered: ‘*He* has stolen my best mare and ten oxen.’ ‘Who? who has stolen them?’ asked Monsieur Gérard. ‘*He*,’ and the sheik pointed for further answer to the mountain. ‘But name him, name the thief.’ The answer was so low as to be barely audible: ‘The Lord of the Mighty Head,’ and with this ominous counsel the sheik departed, leaving Gérard to his vigil.

As the night advanced the moon appeared, and lit up the narrow ravine. Judging by its position in the heavens it might be eleven o’clock, when the tramp of many feet was heard approaching, and several luminous points of reddish light were seen glittering through the thicket. The lions were advancing in single file, and the lights were their gleaming eyes. Instead of five there were only three, and the leader, though of formidable dimensions, did not come up to the description of the Lord of the Mighty Head. All three stopped to gaze in wonder at the man who dared to put himself in their path. Gérard took aim at the shoulder of the leader and fired. A fearful roar announced that the shot had told, and the wounded lion began painfully dragging himself towards his assailant, while the other two slunk away into the wood. He had got to within three paces when a second shot sent him rolling down into the bed of the stream. Again he returned to the charge, but a third ball right in the eye laid him dead. It was a fine, large, young lion of three years, with formidable teeth and claws. As agreed upon with the sheik, Monsieur Gérard immediately lit a bonfire in token of his victory, in answer to which shots were fired to communicate the good news to all the surrounding district. At break of day two hundred Arabs arrived to insult their fallen enemy, the sheik being the first to appear, with his congratulations, but also with the information that at the same hour that the young lion had been shot, the Lord of the Mighty Head had come down and taken away an ox. These devastations went on unchecked for more than a year, one man alone, Lakdar by name, being robbed of forty-five sheep, a mare, and twenty-nine oxen. Finally he lost heart, and sent to beg Monsieur Gérard to come back and deliver him if possible of his tormentor. For some nights the lion made no sign, but on the thirteenth evening Lakdar arrived at the lion-hunter’s camp, saying: ‘The black bull is missing from the herd; to-morrow morning I shall find his remains and thou wilt slay the lion for me.’

Accordingly next morning at dawn Lakdar returned to announce that he had found the dead bull. Gérard rose and, taking his gun, followed the Arab. Through the densest of the forest they went, till at the foot of a narrow rocky ravine, close to some large olive trees, they found the partially devoured carcase. Monsieur Gérard cut some branches the better to conceal himself, and took up his position under one of the olive trees, there to await the approach of night, and with it the return of the lion to the spoil. Towards eight o’clock, when the feeble light of the new moon barely penetrated into the little glade, a branch was heard to crack at some distance. The lion-hunter rose and, shouldering his weapon, prepared to do battle. From about thirty paces distant came a low growl, and then a guttural sound, a sign of hunger with the lion, then silence, and presently an enormous lion stalked from the thicket straight towards the bull, and began licking it. At this moment Monsieur Gérard fired, and struck the lion within about an inch of his left eye. Roaring with pain, he reared himself up on end, when a second bullet right in the chest laid him on his back, frantically waving his huge paws in the air. Quickly reloading, Monsieur Gérard came close to the helpless monster, and while he was raising his great head from the ground fired two more shots, which laid the lion stone dead, and thus brought to an end the career of the ‘Lord of the Mighty Head.’

BUILDERS AND WEAVERS

No one can examine birds and their ways for long together without being struck by the wonderful neatness and cleverness of their proceedings. They make use of a great many different kinds of materials for their nests, and manage somehow to turn out a nest which not only will hold eggs, but is strong and of a pretty shape. Rotten twigs are, curiously enough, what they love best for the outside, and upon the twigs various substances are laid, according to the species and taste of the builder. The jay, for instance, collects roots and twists them into a firm mass, which he lays upon the twigs; the American starling uses tough wet rushes and coarse grass, and after they are matted together, somehow ties the nest on to reeds or a bush; while the missel thrush lines the casing of twigs with tree moss, or even hay. To these they often add tufts of wool, and lichen, and the whole is fastened together by a kind of clay. The favourite spot chosen by the missel thrush is the fork of a tree in an orchard, where lichens are large and plentiful enough to serve as a covering for the nests.

Still, if the account given by Vaillant and Paterson is true, the sociable grosbeaks surpass all the other birds in skill and invention. They have been known to cover the trunks of trees with a huge kind of fluted umbrella, made of dry, fine grass, with the boughs of the trees poking through in various places. No doubt in the beginning the nest was not so large, but it is the custom of these birds to live together in clans, and each year fresh ‘rooms’ have to be added. When examined, the bird city was found to have many gates and regular streets of nests, each about two inches distant from the other. The structure was made of ‘Boshman’s’ grass alone, but so tightly woven together that no rain could get through. The nests were all tucked in under the roof, which, by projecting, formed eaves, thus keeping the birds warm and dry. Sometimes the umbrella has been known to contain as many as three hundred separate nests, so it is no wonder that the tree at last breaks down with the weight, and the city has to be founded again elsewhere.

Now in the nests of all these birds there has been a good deal of what we called ‘building’ and ‘carpentry’ when we are talking of our own houses and our own trades. But there are a whole quantity of birds spread over the world, who are almost exclusively weavers, and can form nests which hang down from the branch of a tree without any support. To this class belongs the Indian sparrow, which prefers to build in the tops of the very highest trees (especially on the

Indian fig) and particularly on those growing by the river-side. He weaves together tough grass in the form of a bottle, and hangs it from a branch, so that it rocks to and fro, like a hammock. The Indian sparrow, which is easily tamed, does not like always to live with his family, so he divides his nest into two or three parts, and is careful to place its entrance underneath, so that it may not attract the notice of the birds of prey. In these nests glow-worms have frequently been found, carefully fastened into a piece of fresh clay, but whether the bird deliberately tries in this way to light up his dark nest, or whether he has some other use for the glow-worm, has never been found out. But it seems quite certain that he does not *eat* it, as Sir William Jones once supposed.

The Indian sparrow is a very clever little bird, and can be taught to do all sorts of tricks. He will catch a ring that is dropped into one of the deep Indian wells, before it reaches the water. He can pick the gold ornament neatly off the forehead of a young Hindu woman, or carry a note to a given place like a carrier pigeon. At least so it is said; but then very few people have even a bowing acquaintance with the Indian sparrow.

‘MORE FAITHFUL THAN FAVOURED’

There never was a more faithful watch-dog than the great big-limbed, heavy-headed mastiff that guarded Sir Harry Lee’s Manor-house, Ditchley, in Oxfordshire. The sound of his deep growl was the terror of all the gipsies and vagrants in the county, and there was a superstition among the country people, that he was never known to sleep. Even if he was seen stretched out on the stone steps leading up to the front entrance of the house, with his massive head resting on his great fore-paws, at the sound of a footfall, however distant, his head would be raised, his ears fiercely cocked, and an ominous stiffening of the tail would warn a stranger that his movements were being closely watched, and that on the least suspicion of anything strange or abnormal in his behaviour, he would be called to account by Leo. Strangely enough, the mastiff had never been a favourite of his master’s. The fact that dogs of his breed are useless for purposes of sport, owing to their unwieldy size and defective sense of smell, had prevented Sir Harry from taking much notice of him. He looked upon the mastiff merely as a watch-dog. The dog would look after him, longing to be allowed to join him in his walk, or to follow him when he rode out, through the lanes and fields round his house, but poor Leo’s affection received little encouragement. So long as he guarded the house faithfully by day and night, that was all that was expected of him: and as in doing this he was only doing his duty, and fulfilling the purpose for which he was there, little notice was taken of him by any of the inmates of the house. His meals were supplied to him with unfailing regularity, for his services as insuring the safety of the house were fully recognised; but as Sir Harry had not shown him any signs of favour, the servants did not think fit to bestow unnecessary attention on him. So he lived his solitary neglected life, in summer and winter, by night and day, zealous in his master’s interests, but earning little reward in the way of notice or affection.

More about this gentleman and his dog may be read in *Woodstock*, by Sir Walter Scott.

One night, however, something occurred that suddenly altered the mastiff’s position in the household, and from being a faithful slave, he all at once became the beloved friend and constant companion of Sir Harry Lee. It was in winter, and Sir Harry was going up to his bedroom as usual, about eleven o’clock. Great was his astonishment on opening the library door, to find the mastiff stretched in front of it. At sight of his master Leo rose, and, wagging his tail and rubbing his great head against Sir Harry’s hand, he looked up at him as if anxious to attract his attention. With an impatient word Sir Harry turned away, and went up the oak-panelled staircase, Leo following closely behind him. When he reached his bedroom door, the dog tried to follow him into the room, and if Sir Harry had been a more observant man, he must have noticed a curious look of appeal in the dog’s eyes, as he slammed the door in his face, ordering him in commanding tones to ‘Go away!’ an order which Leo did not obey. Curling himself up on the mat outside the door, he lay with his small deep-sunk eyes in eager watchfulness, fixed on the door, while his heavy tail from time to time beat an impatient tattoo upon the stone floor of the passage.

Antonio, the Italian valet, whom Sir Harry had brought home with him from his travels, and whom he trusted absolutely, was waiting for his master, and was engaged in spreading out his things on the toilet table.

‘That dog is getting troublesome, Antonio,’ said Sir Harry. ‘I must speak to the keeper to-morrow, and tell him to chain him up at night outside the hall. I cannot have him disturbing me, prowling about the corridors and passages all night. See that you drive him away, when you go downstairs.’

‘Yes, signor,’ replied Antonio, and began to help his master to undress. Then, having put fresh logs of wood on the fire, he wished Sir Harry good-night, and left the room. Finding Leo outside the door, the valet whistled and called gently to him to follow him; and, as the dog took no notice, he put out his hand to take hold of him by the collar. But a low growl and a sudden flash of the mastiff’s teeth, warned the Italian of the danger of resorting to force. With a muttered curse he turned away, determined to try bribery where threats had failed. He thought that if he could secure a piece of raw meat from the kitchen, he would have no difficulty in inducing the dog to follow him to the lower regions of the house, where he could shut him up, and prevent him from further importuning his master.

Scarcely had Antonio’s figure disappeared down the passage, when the mastiff began to whine in an uneasy manner, and to scratch against his master’s door. Disturbed by the noise, and astonished that his faithful valet had disregarded his injunctions, Sir Harry got up and opened the door, on which the mastiff pushed past him into the room, with so resolute a movement that his master could not prevent his entrance. The instant he got into the room, the dog’s uneasiness seemed to disappear. Ceasing to whine, he made for the corner of the room where the bed stood in a deep alcove, and, crouching down, he slunk beneath it, with an evident determination to pass the night there. Much astonished, Sir Harry was too sleepy to contest the point with the dog, and allowed him to remain under the bed, without making any further attempt to dislodge him from the strange and unfamiliar resting-place he had chosen.

When the valet returned shortly after with the piece of meat with which he hoped to tempt the mastiff downstairs, he found the mat deserted. He assumed that the dog had abandoned his caprice of being outside his master's door, and had betaken himself to his usual haunts in the basement rooms and passages of the house.

Whether from the unaccustomed presence of the dog in his room, or from some other cause, Sir Harry Lee was a long time in going to sleep that night. He heard the different clocks in the house strike midnight, and then one o'clock; and as he lay awake watching the flickering light of the fire playing on the old furniture and on the dark panels of the wainscot, he felt an increasing sense of irritation against the dog, whose low, regular breathing showed that he, at any rate, was sleeping soundly. Towards two in the morning Sir Harry must have fallen into a deep sleep, for he was quite unconscious of the sound of stealthy steps creeping along the stone corridor and pausing a moment on the mat outside his room. Then the handle of the door was softly turned, and the door itself, moving on its well-oiled hinges, was gently pushed inward. In another moment there was a tremendous scuffle beneath the bed, and with a great bound the mastiff flung himself on the intruder, and pinned him to the floor. Startled by the unexpected sounds, and thoroughly aroused, Sir Harry jumped up, and hastily lit a candle. Before him on the floor lay Antonio, with the mastiff standing over him, uttering his fierce growls, and showing his teeth in a dangerous manner. Stealthily the Italian stole out his hand along the floor, to conceal something sharp and gleaming that had fallen from him, on the dog's unexpected onslaught, but a savage snarl from Leo warned him to keep perfectly still. Calling off the mastiff, who instantly obeyed the sound of his master's voice, though with bristling hair and stiffened tail he still kept his eyes fixed on the Italian, Sir Harry demanded from the valet the cause of his unexpected intrusion into his bedroom at that hour, and in that way. There was so much embarrassment and hesitation in Antonio's reply, that Sir Harry's suspicions were aroused. In the meantime the unusual sounds at that hour of the night had awakened the household. Servants came hurrying along the passage to their master's room. Confronted by so many witnesses, the Italian became terrified and abject, and stammered out such contradictory statements, that it was impossible to get at the truth of his story, and Sir Harry saw that the only course open to him was to have the man examined and tried by the magistrate.

At the examination the wretched valet confessed that he had entered his master's room with the intention of murdering and robbing him, and had only been prevented by the unexpected attack of the mastiff.

Among the family pictures in the possession of the family of the Earls of Lichfield, the descendants of Sir Harry Lee, there is a full-length portrait of the knight with his hand on the head of the mastiff, and beneath this legend, ‘More faithful than favoured.’

DOLPHINS, TURTLES, AND COD

Stories from Audubon

From *Audubon's Life,* by Robert Buchanan. Sampson Low & Co.

In the excellent life of Mr. Audubon, the American naturalist (published in 1868 by Sampson Low, Marston & Co.), some curious stories are to be found respecting the kinds of fish that he met with in his voyages both through the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico. Audubon's remarks about the habits of dolphins are especially interesting, and will be read with pleasure by everybody who cares for 'the sea and all that in them is.'

Dolphins abound in the Gulf of Mexico and the neighbouring seas, and are constantly to be seen chasing flying fish, which are their food. Flying fish can swim more rapidly than the dolphins, which of course are far larger creatures; but if they find themselves much outnumbered, and in danger of being surrounded, they spread the fins that serve them for wings, and fly through the air for a short distance. At first this movement throws out the dolphins, who are unable to follow the example of their prey, but they soon contrive to keep up with the flying fish by giving great bounds into the air; and as the flying fish's powers are soon exhausted, it is not long before the hunt comes to an end and the dolphins seize the fish as they tumble into the sea.

Sailors are fond of catching dolphins, and generally bait their hooks with a piece of shark's flesh. When the fish is taken, its friends stay round it till the last moment, only swimming away as the dolphin is hauled on board. For its size, which is generally about three feet long and has rarely been known to exceed four feet, the dolphin has a remarkably good appetite, and sometimes he eats so much that he is unable to escape from his enemy, the bottle-nosed porpoise. A dolphin that was caught in the Gulf of Mexico was opened by the sailors, and inside him were counted twenty-two flying fish, each one six or seven inches long, and all arranged quite neatly with their tails foremost. Before they have their dinner they are full of fun, and their beautiful blue and gold bodies may often be seen leaping and bounding and diving about the ship — a sight which the sailors always declare portends a gale. Indeed, the stories to which dolphins give rise are many and strange. The negroes believe that a silver coin, fried or boiled in the same water as the fish, will turn into copper if the dolphin is in a state unfit for food; but as no one can swear that he has ever seen the transmutation of the metal, it may be suspected that the tale was invented by the cook for the sake of getting an extra dollar.

About eighty miles from the Peninsula of Florida are a set of low, sandy banks known as the *Tortuga* or *Turtle Islands*, from the swarms of turtles which lay their eggs in the sand, and are eagerly sought for by traders.

Turtles are of many sorts, but the green turtle is considered the best, and is boiled down into soup, which is both rich and strengthening. They are cautious creatures, and never approach the shore in the daylight, or without watching carefully for some time to see if the coast is indeed clear. They may be seen on quiet moonlight nights in the months of May and June, lying thirty or forty yards from the beach, listening intently, and every now and then making a loud hissing noise intended to frighten any enemies that may be lurking near. If their quick ears detect any sound, however faint, they instantly dive and swim to some other place; but if nothing is stirring, they land on the shore, and crawl slowly about with the aid of their flappers, until they find a spot that seems suitable for the hatching of their eggs, which often number two hundred, laid at one time. The operations are begun by the turtle scooping out a hole in the burning sand by means of her hind flappers, using them each by turns, and throwing up the sand into a kind of rampart behind her. This is done so quickly that in less than ten minutes she will often have dug a hole varying from eighteen inches to two feet. When the eggs are carefully placed in separate layers, the loose sand is laid over them, and the hole not only completely hidden but made to look exactly like the rest of the beach, so that no one could ever tell that the surface had been disturbed at all. Then the turtle goes away and leaves the hot sand to do the rest.

In course of time the young turtles, hardly bigger than a five-shilling piece, leave their shells, and make their way to the water, unless, before they are hatched, their nest has been discovered by men, or by the cougars and other wild animals, who feed greedily on them. If they belong to the tribe of the green turtles, they will at once begin to seek for sea plants, and especially a kind of grass, which they bite off near the roots, so as to get the tenderest parts. If they are young hawk-bills, they will nibble the seaweed, and soon go on to crabs and shell-fish, and even little fishes. The loggerheads grow a sharp beak, which enables them to crack the great conch shells, and dig out the fish that lives inside, while the trunk turtle, which is often of an immense size but with a very soft body, loves sea-urchins and shell-fish. All of them can swim so fast that they often seem to be flying, and it needs much quickness of eye and hand to spear them in the water. Even to catch them on shore is a matter of great difficulty, and in general more than one man is required for the service. The turtle is raised up from behind by a man on his knee, pushing with all his might against her shoulder; but this has to be done with great caution, or else the hunter may get badly bitten. When the turtle is fully raised up, she is thrown over on her back, and, like a sheep in a similar position, can seldom recover herself without help. The turtles, when caught, are put into an enclosure of logs with a sandy or muddy bottom through which the tide flows, and here they are kept and fed by their captors till they are ready for the market. Unlike most creatures, their price is out of all proportion to their weight, and a loggerhead turtle weighing seven hundred pounds has been known to cost no more than a green turtle of thirty.

Early in May, and well into June, the seas extending northwards from Maine to Labrador are alive with ships just starting for the cod fishing. Their vessels are mostly small but well stocked, and a large part of the space below is filled with casks, some full of salt and others empty. These empty ones are reserved for the oil that is procured from the cod.

Every morning, as soon as it is light, some of the crew of each ship enters a small boat, which can be sailed or rowed as is found necessary. When they reach the cod banks every man boards up part of his boat for the fish when caught, and then takes his stand at the end with two lines, baited at the opening of the season with salted mussels, and later with gannets or capelings. These lines are dropped into the sea on either side of the boat, and when the gunwale is almost touching the water and it is dangerous to put in any more fish, they give up work for the morning and return to the harbour. In general, fishing is a silent occupation, but cod fishers are rather a talkative race, and have bets with each other as to the amount of the ‘takes’ of the respective crews. When they get back to their vessels, often anchored eight or ten miles away, they find that the men who have been left behind have set up long tables on deck, carried the salt barrels on shore, placed all ready the casks for the livers, and cleared the hold of everything but a huge wedge of salt for the salting. Then, after dinner, some of the men row back to the cod banks, while the others set about cleaning, salting, and packing the fish, so as to be quite finished when the men return from their second journey. It is almost always midnight before the work is done, and the men can turn in for their three hours’ sleep.

If, as often happens, the hauls have been very large, the supply soon threatens to become exhausted, so on Sunday the captain sails off for a fresh bank. Then, the men who are the laziest or most unskilful in the matter of fishing take out the cargo that has been already salted, and lay it out on scaffolds which have been set up on the rocks. When the sun has dried the fish for some time, they are turned over; and this process is repeated several times in the day. In the evening they are piled up into large stacks, and protected from the rain and wind. In July the men’s work is in one way less hard than before, for this is the season when the capelings arrive to spawn upon the shores, and where capelings are, cod are sure to follow. Now great nets are used, with one end fastened to the land, and these nets will sometimes produce twenty or thirty thousand fish at a haul.

With so many men engaged in the cod fishing, and considering the number of diseases to which cod are subject, it is perhaps quite as well that each fish should lay such a vast supply of eggs, though out of the eight million laid by one fish which have been counted, it is calculated that, from various causes, only about a hundred thousand come to maturity.

MORE ABOUT ELEPHANTS

From *The Wild Elephant*. Sir J. Emerson Tennent.

Long, long ago, when the moon was still young, and some of the stars that we know best were only gradually coming into sight, the earth was covered all over with a tangle of huge trees and gigantic ferns, which formed the homes of all sorts of enormous beasts. There were no men, only great animals and immense lizards, whose skeletons may still be found embedded in rocks or frozen deep down among the Siberian marshes; for, after the period of fearful heat, when everything grew rampant, even in the very north, there came a time of equally intense cold, when every living creature perished in many parts of the world.

When the ice which crushed down life on the earth began to melt, and the sun once more had power to pierce the thick cold mists that had shrouded the world, animals might have been seen slowly creeping about the young trees and fresh green pastures, but their forms were no longer the same as they once were. The enormous frames of all sorts of huge monsters, and the great lizard called the ichthyosaurus, had been replaced by smaller and more graceful creatures, who could move lightly and easily through this new world. But changed though it seemed to be, one beast still remained to tell the story of those strange old times, and that was the elephant.

Now anybody who has ever stood behind a big, clumsy cart-horse going up a hill cannot fail to have been struck with its likeness to an elephant; and it is quite true that elephants and horses are nearly related. Of course in the East, where countries are so big and marches are so long, it is necessary to have an animal to ride of more strength and endurance than a horse, and so elephants, who are, when well treated, as gentle as they are strong, were very early trained as beasts of burden, or even as ‘men-of-war.’

In their wild condition they have a great many curious habits. They roam about the forests of India or Africa in herds, and each herd is a real family, who have had a common grandfather. The elephants are very particular as to the number of their herd; it is never less than ten, or more than twenty-one, but being very sociable they easily get on terms of civility with other herds, and several of these groups may be seen moving together towards some special pond or feeding ground. But friendly as they often are, each clan keeps itself as proudly distinct from the rest as if they were all Highlanders. Any unlucky elephant who has lost his own herd, and tries to attach himself to a new one, is scouted and beaten away by every member of the tribe, till, like a man who is punished and scorned for misfortunes he cannot help, the poor animal grows desperate, and takes to evil courses, and is hunted down under the name of ‘a rogue.’

Elephants have a great idea of law and order, and carefully choose a leader who is either strong enough or clever enough to protect the herd against its enemies. Even a female has sometimes been chosen, if her wisdom has been superior to that of the rest; but male or female, the leader once fixed upon, the herd never fails to give him absolute obedience, and will suffer themselves to be killed in their efforts to save his life.

As everyone knows, during the dry season in India water becomes very scarce, and even the artificial tanks that have been built for reservoirs are very soon empty. About the middle of this century, an English officer, Major Skinner by name, had drawn up to rest on the embankment of a small Indian tank, which, low though it was, contained the only water to be found for a great distance. On three sides of the tank there was a clearing, but on the fourth lay a very thick wood, where the herd lay encamped all day, waiting for darkness to fall, so that they might all go to drink. Major Skinner knew the habits of elephants well, and what to expect of them, so he sent all his natives to sleep, and climbed himself into a large tree that sheltered the tank at one corner. However, it appeared that the elephants were unusually cautious that night, for he sat in his tree for two hours before a sound was heard, though they had been lively enough as long as the sun was shining.

Suddenly a huge elephant forced his way through the thickest part of the forest, and advanced slowly to the tank, his ears at full cock, and his eyes glancing stealthily round. He gazed longingly at the water for some minutes, but did not attempt to drink — perhaps he felt it would be a mean advantage to take of his comrades — and then he quietly retraced his steps backwards till he had put about a hundred yards between himself and the water, when five elephants came out of the jungle and joined him. These he led forward, listening carefully as before, and placed them at certain spots where they could command a view both of the open country and the forest. This done, and the safety of the others provided for, he went to fetch the main body of the herd, which happened to be four or five times as large as usual. Silently, as if preparing for an assault, the whole of this immense body marched up to where the scouts were standing, when a halt was signalled, so that the leader might for the last time make sure that no hidden danger, in the shape of man, lion, or tiger, awaited them. Then permission was given, and with a joyful toss of their trunks in the air, in they dashed, drinking, wallowing, and rolling over with delight, till one would have thought it had been years since they had tasted a drop of water, or known the pleasures of a bath.

From his perch in the tree Major Skinner had been watching with interest the movements of the herd, and when he saw that they had really had their fill, he gently broke a little twig and threw it on the ground. It seemed hardly possible that such a tiny sound could reach the ears of those great tumbling, sucking bodies, but in one instant they were all out of the tank, and tearing towards the forest, almost carrying the little ones between them.

Of course it is not always that elephants can find tanks without travelling many hundreds of miles after them, and on these occasions their wonderful sagacity comes to their aid. They will pause on the banks of some dried-up river, now nothing but a sandy tract, and feel instinctively that underneath that sand is the water for which they thirst. But then, how to get at it? The elephants know as well as any engineer that if they tried to dig a hole straight down, the weight of their bodies would pull down the whole side of the pit with them, so that is of no use. In order to get round this difficulty, long experience has taught them that they must make one side to their well a gentle slope, and when this is done they can wait with perfect comfort for the water, whose appearance on the surface is only a question of time.

Much might be written about the likes and dislikes of elephants, which seem as a rule to be as motiveless as the likes and dislikes of human beings. Till they are tamed and treated kindly by some particular person, elephants show a decided objection to human beings, and in Ceylon have a greater repugnance to a white skin than to a brown one. In fact, they are shy of anything new or strange, but will put up with any animal to which they are accustomed. Elks, pigs, deer, and buffaloes are their feeding companions, and the elephants take no more notice of their presence than if they were so many canaries. Indeed, as far as can be gathered, the elephant is much more afraid of the little domestic animals with which it is quite unacquainted than of the huge vegetable-eating beasts with which both it and its forefathers were on intimate terms. Goats and sheep it eyes with annoyance; they are new creatures, and were never seen in jungles or forests; but, bad as they might be, dogs, the shadows of men, were worse still. They were so quick, so lively, and had such hideous high voices, which they were always using, not keeping them for special occasions like any self-respecting quadruped. Really they might almost as well be parrots with their incessant chatter. But of all kinds of dogs, surely the one called a Scotch terrier was the most alarming and detestable. One day an animal of this species actually seized the trunk of an elephant in its teeth, and the elephant was so surprised and frightened that it fell on its knees at once. At this the dog was a little frightened too, and let go, but recovered itself again as the elephant rose slowly to its feet, and prepared to charge afresh. The elephant, not knowing what to make of it, backed in alarm, hitting out at the dog with its front paws, but taking care to keep his wounded trunk well beyond its reach. At last, between fright and annoyance he lost his head completely, and would have fairly run away if the keeper had not come in and put a stop to the dog’s fun.

If Æsop had known elephants — or Scotch terriers — he might have made a fable out of this; but they had not visited Greece in his day.

BUNGEY

From Jesse’s *British Dogs*.

During the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James, there lived a brave and accomplished knight called Sir John Harington, who had been knighted on the field of battle by the famous Earl of Essex, and had translated into English a long poem, by an Italian called Ariosto. But busy though he was in so many ways, Sir John still had time to spare for his ‘raw dogge’ Bungey, and in the year 1608 he writes a long letter to Prince Henry, elder brother of Charles I., full of the strange doings of his favourite. Bungey seems to have been used by Sir John as a sort of carrier pigeon, and he tells how he would go from Bath to Greenwich Palace, to ‘deliver up to the cowrte there such matters as were entrusted to his care.’ The nobles of the court made much of him, and sometimes gave him errands of their own, and it was never told to their ‘Ladie Queen, that this messenger did ever blab ought concerning his highe truste, as others have done in more special matters.’ More wonderful even than this was his behaviour concerning two sacks of wheat which Bungey had been commissioned by Sir John’s servant Combe, to carry from Bath to his own house at Kelston, a few miles distant. The sacks were tied round the dog’s body by cords, but on the way the cords got loose, and Bungey, clever though he was, could not tie them up again. However he was not to be beaten, and hiding one ‘flasket’ in some bushes that grew near by, he bore the other in his teeth to Kelston, and then returning, fetched the hidden one out of the rushes and arrived with it in good time for dinner. Sir John is plainly rather afraid that Prince Henry may not quite believe this instance of sagacity, for he adds, ‘Hereat your Highnesse may perchance marvell and doubte; but we have living testimonie of those who wroughte in the fields, and espied his work, and now live to tell they did muche long to plaie the dogge, and give stowage to the wine themselves, but they did refraine, and watchede the passinge of this whole business.’

As may be well guessed, the fame of Bungey’s talents soon spread, and then, as now, there were many dog stealers in the country. On one occasion, as Sir John was riding from Bath to London, Bungey was tempted to leave his side by the sight of a pond swarming with wild duck or mallard. Unluckily other people besides Bungey thought it good sport to hunt wild fowl, and did not mind seizing valuable dogs, so poor Bungey was caught and bound, till it could be settled who would give the highest price for him.

At last his captors decided that they would take him to London, which was not very far off, and trust to chance for finding a buyer. As it happened, the Spanish Ambassador was on the look out for a dog of that very kind, and he was so pleased with Bungey, that he readily agreed to give the large sum asked by the men who brought him. Now Bungey was a dog who always made the best of things, and as Sir John tells the Prince, ‘suche was the courte he did pay to the Don, that he was no lesse in good likinge there than at home.’ In fact, everybody grew so fond of him, that when after six weeks Sir John discovered where he was and laid claim to him, no one in the house could be prevailed on to give him up. Poor Sir John, who, as we know, was very much attached to Bungey, was at his wit’s end what to do, when it suddenly occurred to him to let the dog himself prove who was his real master. So, having the Ambassador’s leave to what he wished in the matter, he called all the company together at dinner-time and bade Bungey go into the hall where dinner was already served, and bring a pheasant from the dish. This, as Sir John says, ‘created much mirthe; but much more, when he returned at my commandment to the table, and put it again in the same cover.’ After such a proof there was no more to be said, and Sir John was allowed to be the dog’s master. But Bungey’s life was not destined to be a very long one, and his death was strange and sudden. As he and his master were once more on the road from London to Bath on their return journey, he began jumping up on the horse’s neck, and ‘was more earneste in fawninge and courtinge my notice, than what I had observed for time backe; and after my chidinge his disturbing my passinge forwardes, he gave me some glances of such affection as moved me to cajole him; but alas! he crept suddenly into a thorny brake, and died in a short time.’

It is impossible to guess what kind of illness caused the death of poor Bungey, but it is pleasant to think that Sir John never forgot him, and also loved to talk of him to his friends. ‘Now let Ulysses praise his dogge Argus,’ he writes to Prince Henry, ‘or Tobit be led by that dogge whose name doth not appear; yet could I say such things of my Bungey as might shame them both, either for good faith, clear wit, or wonderful deedes; to say no more than I have said of his bearing letters to London and Greenwich, more than a hundred miles. As I doubt not but your Highness would love my dogge, if not myselfe, I have been thus tedious in his storie; and again saie, that of all the dogges near your father’s courte, not one hathe more love, more diligence to please, or less paye for pleasinge, than him I write of.’

LIONS AND THEIR WAYS

Bingley's *Animal Biography*.

Although it would not be safe to put one's self into the power of a lion, trusting to its generosity to make friends, there are a great many stories of the kindness of lions to other creatures which are perfectly true. One day, more than a hundred years ago, a lion cub only three months old was caught in one of the great forests near the river Senegal, and brought to a Frenchman as a gift. The Frenchman, who was fond of animals, undertook to train it, and as the cub was very gentle and quiet this was easily done. He soon grew very fond of his master, and enjoyed being petted both by him and his friends, and what was more strange in a beast whose forefathers had passed all their lives in solitude, the lion hated being by himself. The more the merrier was clearly *his* motto, and whether the company consisted of dogs, cats, ducks, sheep, geese, or monkeys (which were his bedfellows), or men and women, did not matter to him; and you may imagine his joy, when one night as he went to bed he found two little new-born pups in his straw. He was quite as pleased as if he had been their mother; indeed he would hardly let the mother go near them, and when one of them died, he showed his grief in every possible way, and became still more attached to its brother.

After six months the lion, now more than a year old, was sent off to France, still with the little pup for company. At first his keepers thought that the strangeness of everything would make him frightened and savage, but he took it quite calmly and was soon allowed to roam about the ship as he pleased. Even when he landed at Havre, he only had a rope attached to his collar, and so he was brought to Versailles, the pup trotting happily by his side. Unfortunately, however, the climate of Europe did not agree with the dog as with the lion, for he gradually wasted away and died, to the terrible grief of his friend. Indeed he was so unhappy that another dog was put into the cage to make up for the lost one, but this dog was not used to lions, and only knew that they were said to be savage beasts, so he tried to hide himself. The lion, whose sorrow, as often happens, only made him irritable and cross, was provoked by the dog's want of confidence in his kindness, and just gave him one pat with his paw which killed him on the spot. But he still continued so sad, that the keepers made another effort, and this time the dog behaved with more sense, and coaxed the lion into making friends. The two lived happily together for many years, and the lion recovered some of his spirits, but he never forgot his first companion, or was quite the same lion again.

Many hundreds of miles south of Senegal a Hottentot who lived in Namaqualand was one evening driving down a herd of his master's cattle, to drink in a pool of water, which was fenced in by two steep walls of rock. It had been a particularly hot summer, and water was scarce, so the pool was lower than usual, and it was not until the whole herd got close to the brink, that the Hottentot noticed a huge lion, lying right in the water, preparing to spring. The Hottentot, thinking as well as his fright would let him think at all, that anything would serve as supper for the lion, dashed straight through the herd, and made as fast as he could for some trees at a little distance. But a low roar behind him told him that he had been wrong in his calculations, and that the lion was of opinion that man was nicer than bull. So he fled along as quickly as his trembling legs would let him, and just reached one of the tree aloes in which some steps had been cut by the natives, as the lion bounded into the air. However the man swung himself out of his enemy's range, and the lion fell flat upon the ground. Now the branches of the tree were covered with hundreds of nests of a kind of bird called the Sociable Grosbeak, and it was to get these nests that the natives had cut in the smooth trunk the steps which had proved the salvation of the Hottentot. Behind the shelter of the nests the Hottentot cowered, hoping that when he was no longer seen, the lion would forget him and go in search of other prey. But the lion seemed inclined to do nothing of the sort. For a long while he walked round and round the tree, and when he got tired of that he lay down, resolved to tire the man out. The Hottentot hearing no sound, peeped cautiously out, to see if his foe was still there, and almost tumbled down in terror to meet the eyes of the lion glaring into his. So the two remained all through the night and through the next day, but when sunset came again the lion could bear his dreadful thirst no longer, and trotted off to the nearest spring to drink. Then the Hottentot saw his chance, and leaving his hiding place he ran like lightning to his home, which was only a mile distant. But the lion did not yield without a struggle; and traces were afterwards found of his having returned to the tree, and then scented the man to within three hundred yards of his hut.

THE HISTORY OF JACKO I.

The ship ‘Roxalana’ of Marseilles lay anchored in the Bay of Loando, which as we all know is situated in South Guinea. The ‘Roxalana’ was a merchant vessel, and a brisk traffic had been going on for some time with the exchange of the European goods with which the ship had been laden, for ivory and other native produce. All hands were very busy getting on board the various provisions and other stores needed for a long voyage, for it was in the days of sailing vessels only, and it would be some time before they could hope to return to Marseilles.

Now the captain of the ‘Roxalana’ was a mighty hunter, and seeing that all was going on well under the first officer’s direction, he took his gun and a holiday and went up country for one more day’s sport.

He was as successful as he was brave, and he had the great good luck to meet a tiger, a young hippopotamus, and a boa constrictor. All these terrible creatures fell before the unerring aim of the Provençal Nimrod, and after so adventurous a morning’s work the captain naturally began to feel tired and hungry, so he sat down under the shade of some trees to rest and have some lunch.

He drew a flask of rum out of one pocket, and having uncorked it placed it on his right side; from his other pocket he produced a huge guava, which he laid on his left side, and finally he drew a great wedge of ship biscuit from his game bag and put it between his knees. Then he took out his tobacco pouch and began to fill his pipe so as to have it ready at hand when he had finished his meal.

Imagine his surprise when, having filled his pipe, he found the flask had been upset and the guava had disappeared!

I am afraid the captain made use of some very strong language, but there was nothing for it but to make the best of the biscuit, the sole relic of his feast. As he munched it he warily turned his head from side to side, watching for the thief, when all of a sudden something fell upon his head. The captain put up his hand and found — the skin of his guava. Then he raised his eyes and saw a monkey dancing for joy at his own pranks in the tree just above him.

As I have already shown the captain was an excellent shot. Without stirring from his seat, he took up his gun and with a shot snapped the end of the branch on which his persecutor was sitting.

Down came branch and monkey, and the captain at once captured the latter before it had time to recover from the surprise of its rapid fall.

He was small and quite young, only half grown, but of a rather rare kind, as the captain, who had an ever-ready eye to the main chance, at once perceived.

‘Ah ha!’ said he, ‘this little fellow will be worth fifty francs if he’s worth a farthing by the time we get back to Marseilles.’

So saying he popped the monkey into his game-bag and buttoned it carefully up. Then, feeling that a piece of biscuit was not quite a sufficient lunch after the fatigues of his morning’s sports, he retraced his steps and returned to his ship in company with his monkey, whom he named ‘Jacko.’

Before leaving Loando the captain, who was fond of pets, bought a beautiful white cockatoo with a saffron crest and jet black beak. ‘Cataqua’ (that was his harmonious name) was indeed a lovely creature and extremely accomplished into the bargain. He spoke French, English, and Spanish equally well, and sang ‘God save the King,’ the ‘Marseillaise,’ and the Spanish National Anthem with great perfection.

The aptitude for languages made him a ready pupil, and his vocabulary was largely increased by daily association with the crew of the ‘Roxalana,’ so that before they had been very long at sea Cataqua swore freely in the purest Provençal, to the delight and admiration of his captain.

The captain was very fond of his two pets, and every morning, after inspecting the crew and giving each man his orders for the day, he would go up to Cataqua’s cage, followed by Jacko, and give the cockatoo a lesson. When this was well said he would reward his pupil by sticking a lump of sugar between the wires of the cage, a reward which delighted Cataqua whilst it filled Jacko with jealousy.

He too loved sugar, and the moment the captain’s back was turned he would draw near the cage and pull and pinch till the lump of sugar generally changed its destination, to the despair of Cataqua, who, crest erect and with brandished claw, rent the air with shrieks of rage mingled with angry oaths.

Jacko meanwhile stood by affecting an innocent air and gently sucking the sugar which he had stowed away in one of his pouches. Unluckily none of Cataqua’s owners had taught him to cry ‘stop thief’ and he soon realised that if Jacko were to be punished he must see to it himself.

So one day, when the monkey after safely abstracting the sugar pushed a paw between the bars of the cage to gather up some remaining crumbs, Cataqua, who was gently swinging, head down, and apparently unconscious of what was going on, suddenly caught Jacko’s thumb in his beak and bit it to the bone.

Jacko uttered a piercing shriek, rushed to the rigging and climbed as far as he could, when he paused, clinging on by three paws and piteously brandishing the fourth in the air.

Dinner-time came, and the captain whistled for Jacko, but contrary to all customs no Jacko came. The captain whistled again, and this time he thought he heard an answering sound which seemed to come from the sky. He raised his eyes and beheld Jacko still waving his injured paw. Then began an exchange of signals, with the result that Jacko firmly refused to come down. Now the captain had trained his crew to habits of implicit obedience and had no notion of having his orders resisted by a monkey, so he took his speaking trumpet and called for Double Mouth.

Double Mouth was the cook's boy, and he had well earned his nickname by the manner in which he took advantage of his culinary position to make one meal before the usual dinner hour without its interfering in the least with his enjoyment of a second at the proper time. At the captain's call Double Mouth climbed on deck from the cook's galley and timidly approached his chief.

The captain, who never wasted words on his subordinates, pointed to Jacko, and Double Mouth at once began to give chase with an activity which proved that the captain had chosen well. As a matter of fact Jacko and Double Mouth were dear friends, the bond of sympathy which united them being one of greediness, for many a nice morsel Jacko had to thank the cook's boy for. So when the monkey saw who was coming, instead of trying to escape him he ran to meet him, and in a few minutes the two friends, one in the other's arms, returned to the deck where the captain awaited them.

The captain's one treatment for wounds of all kinds consisted of a *compress* steeped in some spirit, so he at once dipped a piece of rag in rum and bandaged the patient's thumb with it. The sting of the alcohol on the wound made Jacko dance with pain, but noticing that the moment the captain's back was turned Double Mouth rapidly swallowed the remains of the liquid in which the rag had been dipped, he realised that however painful as a dressing it might possibly be agreeable to the palate. He stretched out his tongue and very delicately touched the bandage with its tip. It was certainly rather nice, and he licked more boldly. By degrees the taste grew on him, and he ended by putting his thumb, bandage and all, into his mouth and sucking it bodily.

The result was that (the captain having ordered the bandage to be wetted every ten minutes) by the end of a couple of hours Jacko began to blink and to roll his head, and as the treatment continued he had at length to be carried off by Double Mouth, who laid him on his own bed.

Jacko slept without stirring for some hours. When he woke the first thing which met his eyes was Double Mouth busy plucking a fowl. This was a new sight, but Jacko seemed to be particularly struck by it on this occasion. He got up from the bed and came near, his eyes steadily fixed on the fowl, and carefully watched how the whole operation proceeded. When it was ended, feeling his head a little heavy still, he went on deck to take the air.

The weather was so settled and the wind so favourable that the captain thought it only a waste to keep the poultry on board alive too long, so he gave orders that a bird should be served daily for his dinner in addition to his usual rations. Soon after a great cackling was heard amongst the hencoops and Jacko climbed down from the yard where he was perched at such a rate that one might have thought he was hastening to the rescue. He tore into the kitchen, where he found Double Mouth already plucking a newly killed fowl, till not an atom of down was left on it.

Jacko showed the deepest interest in the process, and on returning to deck he, for the first time since his accident, approached Cataqua's cage, carefully keeping beyond range of his beak however. After strolling several times round, he at last seized a favourable moment and clutching hold of one of Cataqua's tail feathers, pulled hard till it came out regardless of the cockatoo's screams and flappings. This trifling experiment caused Jacko the greatest delight, and he fell to dancing on all fours, jumping up and falling back on the same spot which all his life was the way in which he showed his supreme content about anything.

Meantime the ship had long lost sight of land and was in full sail in mid ocean. It appeared unnecessary to the captain, therefore, to keep his cockatoo shut up in a cage, so he opened the door and released the prisoner, there being no means of escaping beyond the ship. Cataqua instantly took advantage of his freedom to climb to the top of one of the masts, where, with every appearance of rapture, he proceeded to regale the ship's company with his entire large and varied vocabulary, making quite as much noise by himself as all the five-and-twenty sailors who formed his audience.

Whilst this exhibition was taking place on deck a different scene was being enacted below. Jacko had as usual approached Double Mouth at plucking time, but this time the lad, who had noticed the extreme attention with which the monkey watched him, thought that possibly there might be some latent talent in him which it was a pity not to develop.

Double Mouth was one of those prompt and energetic persons who waste no time between an idea and its execution. Accordingly he quietly closed the door, put a whip into his pocket in case of need, and handed Jacko the duck he was about to pluck, adding a significant touch to the handle of the whip as a hint.

But Jacko needed neither hint nor urging. Without more ado he took the duck, placed it between his knees as he had seen his tutor do, and fell to with a will. As he found the feathers giving place to down and the down to skin, he became quite enthusiastic, so much so that when his task was done he fell to dancing for joy exactly as he had done the day before by Cataqua's cage.

Double Mouth was overjoyed for his part. He only regretted not having utilised Jacko’s talents sooner, but he determined to do so regularly in the future. Next day the same operation took place, and on the third day, Double Mouth, recognising Jacko’s genius, took off his own apron and tied it round his pupil, to whom from that moment he resigned the charge of preparing the poultry for the spit. Jacko showed himself worthy of the confidence placed in him, and by the end of a week he had quite distanced his teacher in skill and quickness.

Meantime the ship was nearing the Equator. It was a peculiarly sultry day, when the very sky seemed to sink beneath its own weight; not a creature was on deck but the man at the helm and Cataqua in the shrouds. The captain had flung himself into his hammock and was smoking his pipe whilst Double Mouth fanned him with a peacock’s tail. Even Jacko seemed overcome by the heat, and instead of plucking his fowl as usual, he had placed it on a chair, taken off his apron, and appeared lost in slumber or meditation.

His reverie, however, did not last long. He opened his eyes, glanced round him, picked up a feather which he first stuck carelessly in his mouth and then dropped, and at length began to slowly climb the ladder leading on deck, pausing and loitering at each step. He found the deck deserted, which apparently pleased him, as he gave two or three little jumps whilst he glanced about to look for Cataqua, who with much gesticulation was singing ‘God save the King’ at the top of his voice.

Then Jacko seemed to forget his rival’s existence altogether, and began lazily to climb the rigging on the opposite side, where he indulged in various exercises, swinging by his tail head down, and generally appearing to have only come with a view to gymnastics. At length, seeing that Cataqua took no notice of him, he quietly sidled that way, and at the very moment that the performance of the English National Anthem was at its height, he seized the singer firmly with his left hand just where the wings join the body.

Cataqua uttered a wild note of terror, but no one was sufficiently awake to hear it.

‘By all the winds of heaven!’ exclaimed the captain suddenly. ‘Here’s a phenomenon — snow under the Equator!’

‘No,’ said Double Mouth, ‘that’s not snow, that’s — ah, you rascal!’ and he rushed towards the companion.

‘Well, what is it then?’ asked the captain, rising in his hammock.

‘What is it?’ cried Double Mouth from the top of the ladder. ‘It’s Jacko plucking Cataqua!’

The captain was on deck in two bounds, and with a shout of rage roused the whole crew from their slumbers.

‘Well!’ he roared to Double Mouth, ‘what are you about, standing there? Come, be quick!’

Double Mouth did not wait to be told twice, but was up the rigging like a squirrel, only the faster he climbed the faster Jacko plucked, until when the rescuer reached the spot it was a sadly bare bird which he tore from Jacko’s vindictive hands and carried back to his master.

Needless to say that Jacko was in dire disgrace after this exploit. However, in time he was forgiven and often amused the captain and crew with his pranks.

When the ‘Roxalana’ reached Marseilles after a quick and prosperous voyage, he was sold for seventy-five francs to Eugène Isabey the painter, who gave him to Flero for a Turkish hookah, who in his turn exchanged him for a Greek gun with Décamps.

SIGNORA AND LORI

Translated from *Deutsche Blätter*, 1867. No. 10.

A gentleman living at Güstrow, in Mecklenburg, who was very fond of animals, possessed a fine parrot, which had beautiful plumage, and could talk better than most of his kind. Besides the parrot, he had a poodle, called Signora Patti, after the great singer, whom the gentleman had once heard when he was upon a visit to Rostock; after his return home he bestowed the name upon his dear poodle.

Under the tuition of her master, the poodle began to be an artist in her way. There was no trick performed by dogs too difficult for her to learn. The parrot, whose name was Lori, paid the greatest attention whilst the Signora's lessons were going on, and he soon had all the vocabulary, which the Signora carried in her head, not only in his memory, but on his tongue.

When the dog was told by her master to 'go to the baker,' then Lori could croak out the words also. Signora Patti would hasten to fetch the little basket, seat herself before her master, and, looking up at him with her wise eyes, scrape gently upon the floor with her paw, which signified: 'Please put in the money.' Her master dropped in a few coins, the Signora ran quickly to the baker with the basket, and brought it back filled with little cakes; placing it before her master, she awaited her reward, a good share of the dainties.

Often, for a variety in the lessons, she had to go to the baker without money; then her master simply gave the order, 'on tick!' and the Signora, who knew that the cakes would be sent, obeyed the command at once.

The parrot made a droll use of these practisings, turning to account his knowledge of speech in the slyest way. If he found himself alone with the poodle, who was perhaps comfortably stretched on her cushion, Lori would cry — imitating his master's voice — as if he quite understood the joke: 'Go out!' Poor Patti would get up in obedience to the order and slink out of the door with her ears drooping. And immediately Lori would whistle, just in the tone used by his master, and the Signora then returned joyfully into the room.

But it was not only for pastime that Lori exercised his gift; the cunning bird used it for the benefit of his greedy beak. It began to happen often to the master to find that his private account-book, carefully kept in the smallest details, did not agree well with that of his neighbour the baker. The Signora, declared the baker, had become most accomplished in the art of running up a long bill, and always, of course, at her master's orders. Only he, the master, when he looked over the reckoning, growled to himself: ‘My neighbour is a rogue; he chalks up the amount double.’

How very much was he astonished, then, and how quickly were his suspicions turned into laughter, when he beheld, through a half-open door, the following absurd scene.

It was one fine morning, and Lori sat upon the top of his cage, calling out in his shrillest tones: ‘Signora, Signora!’ The poodle hastened to present herself before him, wagging her tail, and Lori continued, ‘Go to the baker.’ The Signora fetched the little basket from its place, and put it before her tyrant, scratching her paw on the floor to ask for money.

‘On tick!’ was Lori’s prompt and brief remark; the Signora seized the basket, and rushed out of the door. Before long she returned, laid the basket, full of the little cakes, before the parrot, and looked with a beseeching air for the reward of her toil.

But the wicked Lori received her with a sharp ‘get out,’ putting her to flight, and proceeded to enjoy his ill-gotten gains in solitude.

OF THE LINNET, POPINJAY, OR PARROT, AND OTHER BIRDS THAT CAN SPEAK

The linnets be in manner the best birds of all others, howbeit, they be very docible. Do they will whatsoever they are taught and bidden, not only with their voice, but also with their feet and bills, as if they were hands. In the territory about Arelate (Arles) there is a bird called Taurus (because it loweth like a bull or cow, for otherwise a small bird it is). There is another also named Anthus, which likewise resembleth the neighing of horses; and if haply by the approach of horses they be driven from their grass whereof they feed, they will seem to neigh, and flying unto them, chase them away, and to be revenged of them again. But above all other birds of the air, the parrots pass for counterfeiting a man’s voice, insomuch as they will seem to parle and prate our very speech. This fowl cometh out of the Indies; it is all the body over green, only it hath a collar about the neck of vermilion red, different from the rest of her feathers. The parrot can skill to salute emperors, and bid good-morrow: yea, and to pronounce what words she heareth. She loveth wine well, and when she hath drunk freely, is very pleasant and playful. She hath an head as hard as is her beak. When she learns to speak, she must be beaten about the head with a rod of iron; for otherwise she careth for no blows. When she taketh her flight down from any place, she lighteth upon her bill, and resteth thereupon, and by that means saveth her feet, which by nature are but weak and feeble, and so carrieth her own weight more lightly.

There is a certain pie, of nothing so great reckoning and account as the parrot, because she is not far set, but here by near at hand: howbeit, she pronounces that which is taught her more plainly and distinctly than the other. These take a love to the words that they speak; for they not only learn them as a lesson, but they learn them with a delight and pleasure, insomuch that a man shall find them studying thereupon, and conning the said lesson; and by their careful thinking upon that which they learn they show plainly how mindful and intentive they be thereto. It is for certain known that they have died for very anger and grief that they could not learn to pronounce some hard words; as also unless they hear the same words repeated often unto them, their memory is so shittle, they will soon forget the same again. If they miss a word and have lost it, they will seek to call it again to remembrance; and if they fortune to hear the same word in the meantime, they will wonderfully joy thereat. As for their beauty, it is not ordinary, although it be not very lovely. But surely amiable enough are they in this, that they can so well resemble man’s speech. It is said that none of their kind are good to be made scholars, but such only as feed upon mast; and among them, those that have five toes to their feet. But even these also are not fit for that purpose, after the first two years of their age. And their tongue is broader than ordinary; like as they be all that counterfeit man’s voice, each one in their kind, although it be in manner general to birds whatsoever to be broad-tongued.

Agrippina the Empress, wife to Claudius Cæsar, had a black-bird or a throstle at what time I compiled this book, which could counterfeit man’s speech; a thing never seen or known before. The two Cæsars also, the young princes (to wit, Germanicus and Drusus,) had one stare, and sundry nightingales, taught to parle Greek and Latin. Moreover, they would study upon their lessons, and meditate all day long; and from day to day come out with new words still, yea, and are now able to continue a long speech and discourse. Now for to teach them the better, these birds must be in a secret place apart by themselves, when they can hear no other voice; and one is to sit over them, who must repeat often that which he would have them to learn; yea, and please them also with giving them such meat as they best love.

PATCH AND THE CHICKENS

On a farm up in Durham, there were six little chickens who were deserted by the mother hen as soon as they were hatched. So the farmer’s wife put them in a basket and carried them into the cottage to keep them warm by the fire.

There they were discovered by a smooth-coated terrier, named Patch, who was at that time very sad because her little puppy had just died, and she began to look after the chickens as if they were her own children. The little chicks also turned to her quite naturally for care and protection.

She used to treat them very gently, and would sit and watch them feed with the greatest interest. She would curl herself up, and then let them climb about her, and go to sleep between her paws. Sometimes she did not seem to consider the floor comfortable enough for her adopted family, and would jump on to a wooden settle which stood in the kitchen, and then with her feet she would pat the cushions into a cosy bed, and very carefully would take one chicken after another in her mouth, and place them on the softest part.

Soon the time came for the chickens to be sent out into the world.

One day when Patch was out for a walk they were taken to the farmyard.

When the poor little dog returned she was quite broken-hearted, and ran whining about the cottage. Then, as if seized with a sudden thought, she walked out of the door, and in a very short time she reappeared, followed by her feathered family, and again they took up their abode in the cottage. Every morning Patch used to take them out for a walk, and it was a most amusing sight to see the little terrier followed by a procession of six stately hens.

At last their living in the house became such an inconvenience to the farmer’s wife that poor Patch’s children had to be killed.

For some time Patch was very unhappy, and would still go into the farmyard to look for her six chickens.

THE FIERCE FALCON

From *Wild Sports of the Highlands*. By C. St. John.

There are not nearly so many stories about birds as about dogs and cats, because birds can fly away, and it is more difficult to know what becomes of them. Perhaps, properly speaking, stories about birds have no business in a ‘Beast Book,’ but as long as the story is interesting, it does not do to be too particular.

A good many years ago, a gentleman named St. John was exploring the high hills near the source of the Findhorn, in Inverness-shire, when he found a young falcon which was being reared as a pet by a shepherd boy, who gave her trout to eat. There was not much beauty about the falcon when Mr. St. John first saw her, for her plumage was dark-brown, with long-shaped spots on the breast, but in spite of that he took a fancy to her, and persuaded her master to sell her to him. When, however, she had passed her second birthday, and might be considered grown up, she put on all her finest feathers, and was very much admired by everyone. Her throat became a lovely soft cream colour, and the brown on her back changed into a lovely dark grey, while on her bosom, each little feather was crossed by a bar. But lovely though she was, Mr. St. John felt her to be a great care, for she was very strong as well as very brave, and would never think twice about attacking dogs or even people, if they offended her. As for the fowls, she soon made such short work of *them*, that her master was obliged to chain her up in the kitchen garden, which had hitherto formed the property of a tame owl. Luckily for the owl, the falcon at once made friends with him, and he was even allowed to finish up any of the falcon’s dinner which she did not want herself.

Matters went quite smoothly for some weeks, and Mr. St. John was beginning to flatter himself that his pet was quieting down, and becoming quite a home bird, when one day a duck, tempted by the sight of the garden, whose gate had been carelessly left open, advanced a few steps along the path. Seeing nothing and nobody (for being daylight, the owl was asleep and the falcon too cunning to move) the duck became bolder, and walked merrily on, pecking at anything that took her fancy, and making funny little noises of satisfaction, unconscious of a pair of bright eyes that were watching her from behind a bush. Indeed, so absorbed was the duck in her afternoon tea, that she never even saw the falcon steal softly out and soar a little way up into the air, and suddenly swoop down with great force, and before the victim had time to be frightened she was dead, and her body was carried away in the falcon’s claws, to serve for her supper.

Now the duck was the mother of a large family, all newly hatched, and it would have fared very badly with them in their babyhood, had it not been for the kindness of a guinea-fowl, who adopted them as her own, directly she heard that they were left orphans and helpless. The guinea-fowl, indeed, was quite glad of the chance, because she had a warm heart, and had mourned sadly for her husband, who had been lately condemned to death on account of a series of horrible murders he had committed among the young chickens. So the good creature thought the duck’s sad accident quite providential, and at once set about filling her place. Like many other mothers, instead of making the little ducklings fall into *her* ways, *she* fell into theirs, and never left their sides, except on urgent business. And they had, even then, only to call to her if they saw great clumsy animals such as dogs or children coming their way, and down she would rush in a frightful hurry, half scrambling, half flying over bushes and palings, and making furious pecks at the children’s legs, if they ventured too close to her little ones.

Still, not all her love nor all her courage would have prevented the guinea-fowl falling a victim to the falcon, if once the bird had got loose, and as it was, the falcon continued to do a good deal of damage to the creatures about the farmyard. A cock, who had hitherto crowed very loudly and declared himself king of the birds, was foolish enough to give battle to our falcon. An hour after, a few feathers were all that remained of *him*, and as to the pigeons, if they ever happened to get within the length of her chain, their doom was certain. At last the gaps in the poultry yard became so serious that Mr. St. John made up his mind that the falcon must be fastened up in a still more out-of-the-way place, and while he was altering her chain away she flew. Of course he thought she was gone for ever, and he watched her circling about the house with a very sad heart, for he still was fond of her, though she was such a very bad bird, and gave him so much trouble; but as it was getting dark, he had to go in, and stealing a last look at her as he entered the house, he saw her settling down for the night, in the top of a tall tree.

For five days no more was seen or heard of the wanderer, and it was not until the fifth morning that Mr. St. John observed her, high in the air, fighting fiercely with some hooded crows. He stood out on the grass, where there was nothing to hide him, and whistled loudly. In an instant the falcon heard him, busily engaged though she was, and wheeled down to her old master, perching on his arm, and rubbing her beak against him. She did not seem to have been softened or improved by her taste of liberty, for she showed herself quite as ready as of old to attack everything within reach of her chain, first killing them, and then pulling off their hair or plucking out their feathers, before she began her meal. The only animal which she could not swallow was a mole, and one day she swooped down on a Skye terrier, and it would certainly not have escaped alive, had not its master come to the rescue. But it is time we thought of something nicer than this dreadful bird.

MR. BOLT, THE SCOTCH TERRIER

Jesse’s *British Dogs*.

All children who know anything of dogs or cats will have found out very soon that the ugly ones are generally far cleverer and more sensible than the pretty ones, who are very apt to think too much of themselves, and will spend a long time admiring themselves in the glass, just as if they were vain men and women. Perhaps it is not altogether their fault if they are stupid, for when they are shaped well, and have fine glossy coats, their masters and mistresses spoil them, and give them too much to eat, so they grow lazy and greedy and disobedient, and like better to lie on the hearth-rug than to do tricks or jump over fences.

Now, luckily for himself, Mr. Bolt, the hero of this story, was quite a plain dog. There could be no doubt about it; and those who loved him did so because he was useful and good company, and not because he was elegant or graceful. Bolt was a large Scotch terrier, rough and hairy, with a thick sort of grey fringe, and great dark eyes looking out from underneath the fringe. His tail and his legs were very short, and his back was very long, so long that he reminded one of a furniture van more than anything else.

But, clever though he was, Bolt had his faults, and the worst of them was that he was very apt to take offence when none was intended, and was far too ready to pick a quarrel, and to hit out with all his might. He probably owed some of this love of fighting to the country in which he was born; for, although a Scotch dog by descent, he was Irish by birth, and his earliest home was near Dublin. As everybody knows, the happiest moment of an Irishman’s life is when he is fighting something or somebody, and Bolt in his youth was as reckless as any Irishman of them all. He was hardly a year old when he turned upon his own mother, who had done something to displease him when they were chained together in a stable, and never let her throat go until she was stone dead. Cats, too, were his natural enemies, whom he fought and conquered when no dogs were at hand, and sometimes he would steal out at night from his master’s bed, where he always slept, and go for a chase by the light of the moon. Early one morning a fearful noise was heard in the house, and when his master, unable to bear it any longer, got out of bed to see what had happened, he found a strange cat lying on the stairs quite dead, and the house-cat, with which Bolt was barely on speaking terms, sitting in a friendly manner by the side of the conqueror. It is supposed that the strange cat had been led either by motives of curiosity or robbery to enter by some open window, and that the house-cat, unable to drive him out, had welcomed Bolt's ready help for the purpose. Fighter though he was by nature, Bolt had inherited enough Scotch caution not to begin a quarrel unless he had a fair chance of victory; but he was generous, and seldom attacked dogs smaller than himself, unless he was forced into it, or really had nothing better to do. He always began by seizing his enemy's hind leg, which no other dog had been known to do before, and he had such a dislike to dogs whose skins were yellow, that not even the company of ladies, and the responsibility weighing upon him as their escort, would stop Bolt's wild rush at his yellow foe. He hated being shut up too, and showed amazing cleverness in escaping from prison. If that was *quite* impossible, he did the next best thing, which was to gnaw and destroy every article he could in any way reach. One day when he had behaved so oddly that his family feared he must be going mad (children have been known to frighten their parents in a similar way), he was chained up in a little room, and, feeling too angry to sleep, he amused himself all night with tearing a Bible, several shoes, and a rug, while he gnawed a hole through the door, and bit through the leg of a table. In the morning, when his master came to look at him, he seemed quite recovered, and very well pleased with himself.

As you will see, Bolt had plenty of faults, but he also had some very good qualities, and when he did not think himself insulted by somebody's behaviour, he could show a great deal of sense. One night the cook had been sitting up very late, baking bread for the next day, and being very tired, she fell asleep by the kitchen fire, and a spark fell out on her woollen dress. As there was no blaze, and the girl was a heavy sleeper, she would most likely never have waked at all till it was too late, only luckily for her, the smell reached Bolt's nose as he was lying curled up on his master's bed, near the door which always stood open. Before rousing the house, and giving them all a great fright, he thought he had better make sure exactly what was wrong, so he ran first down to the kitchen from which the smell seemed to come, and finding the cook half stupefied by the smoke, he rushed back to call his master. This he managed to do by tearing up and down the room, leaping on the bed, and pulling off all the clothes, so that the poor man was quite cold. His master was much astonished at the state of excitement Bolt was in, and feared at first that he had gone mad, but after a few minutes he decided that he would get up and see what was the matter. Bolt went carefully before him into the kitchen and sat down by the side of the sleeping girl, turning his face anxiously to the door, to make sure that his master should make no mistake. So in a few seconds the fire was put out, and the girl escaped with nothing worse than a slight scorching.

I might tell you many stories of Bolt and his funny ways, but I have only room for one now. After some time his mistress and her daughter left the house in which Bolt had spent so many years, and took lodgings in Dublin. Bolt went with them, but when they all arrived, the landlady declared she did not like dogs, and Bolt must be placed elsewhere. Now this was very awkward; of course it was out of the question that Bolt could be left behind, yet it was too late to make other arrangements, so after some consideration he was sent back to some lodgings near by, where his master had formerly lived, and where they promised to take great care of him. His young mistress called every day to carry him off for a walk, and she often tried to get him to enter the house she herself was living in, but nothing would persuade the offended Bolt to go inside the door. He would sit on the step for some time, hoping she would be persuaded to return with *him*, but when he found *that* was hopeless, he walked proudly back to his own rooms. His mistresses stayed in that house for nearly a year, and in all that time Bolt never forgot or forgave the slight put upon him, or could be induced to enter the house. Indeed, his feelings were so bitterly hurt, that even when they all set up house again, it was months before Bolt could be got to do anything more than pay his family a call now and then, and sometimes dine with them. So you see it is a serious thing to offend a dog, and he needs to be as delicately handled as a human being.

A RAVEN’S FUNERAL

In the days of Tiberius the Emperor, there was a young raven hatched in a nest upon the church of Castor and Pollux; which to make a trial how he could fly, took his first flight into a shoemaker’s shop just over against the said church. The master of the shop was well enough content to receive this bird, as commended to him from so sacred a place, and in that regard set great store by it. This raven in short time being acquainted to man’s speech, began to speak, and every morning would fly up to the top of the Rostra, or public pulpit for orations, when, turning to the open Forum or market place, he would salute and bid good-morrow to Tiberius Cæsar, and after him to Germanicus and Drusus, the young princes, every one by their names: and anon the people of Rome also that passed by. And when he had so done, afterwards would fly again to the shoemaker’s shop aforesaid. This duty practised, yea and continued for many years together, to the great wonder and admiration of all men.

Now it fell out so, that another shoemaker who had taken the next shop unto him, either upon a malicious envy or some sudden spleen and passion of anger, killed the raven. Whereat the people took such indignation, that they, rising in an uproar, first drove him out of that street, and made that quarter of the city too hot for him; and not long after murdered him for it. But contrariwise, the carcase of this raven was solemnly interred, and the funeral performed with all the ceremonial obsequies that could be devised. For the corpse of this bird was bestowed in a coffin, couch, or bed, and the same bedecked with chaplets of fresh flowers of all sorts, carried upon the shoulders of two blackamoors, with minstrels before, sounding the haut-boys, and playing on the fife, as far as the funeral fire, which was piled and made in the right hand of the causey Appia, in a certain plain or open field.

So highly reputed the people of Rome that ready wit and apt disposition in a bird, as they thought it a sufficient cause to ordain a sumptuous burial therefore.

A STRANGE TIGER

Bingley’s *Animal Biography*.

In the year 1790, a baby tiger only six weeks old, whose skin was most beautifully marked in black and yellow, and whose figure was as perfectly modelled as the figure of any tiger could be, was put on board a large East India Company’s ship called the ‘Pitt,’ to be brought to London as a present to George III. Of course, in those days, no one ever thought of coming through the Red Sea, but all vessels sailed all the way round by the Atlantic, so the voyage naturally took many months, especially if the winds were unfavourable. Under these circumstances it was as well to choose your fellow-passengers carefully, as you had to live such a long time with them.

Unlike most of its tribe, the little tiger soon made itself at home on board ship, and as it was too small to do much harm, it was allowed to run about loose and played with anybody who had time for a game. It generally liked to sleep with the sailors in their hammocks, and they would often pretend to use it for a pillow, as it lay at full length on the deck. Partly out of fun, and partly because it was its nature so to do, the tiger would every now and then steal a piece of meat, if it found one handy. One day it was caught red-handed by the carpenter, who took the beef right out of its mouth, and gave it a good beating, but instead of the man getting bitten for his pains, as he might have expected, the tiger took his punishment quite meekly, and bore the carpenter no grudge after. One of its favourite tricks was to run out to the very end of the bowsprit, and stand there looking over the sea, and there was no place in the whole ship to which it would not climb when the fancy took it. But on the whole, the little tiger preferred to have company in its gambols, and was especially fond of dogs, of which there were several on board. They would chase each other and roll over together just like two puppies, and during the ten months or so that the voyage from China lasted, they had time enough to become fast friends. When the vessel reached London, the tiger was at once taken to the Tower, which was the Zoological Gardens of those days. The little fellow did not mind, for he was always ready to take what came and make the best of it, and all the keepers grew as fond of him as the sailors had been.

No more is known about him for eleven months, when he was quite grown up, and then one day, just after he had had his dinner, a black rough-haired terrier pup was put into his cage. Most tigers would have eaten it at once, but not this one, who still remembered his early friends on board ship. He used to watch for the pup every day, and lick it all over, taking care never to hurt it with his rough tongue. In general, the terrier had its food outside the cage, but sometimes it was forgotten, and then it would try to snatch a bit of the tiger's meat; but this the tiger thought impertinent, and made the dog understand that it was the one thing he would not stand.

After several months of close companionship, the terrier was for some reason taken away, and one day, when the tiger awakened from his after-dinner nap, he found the terrier gone, and a tiny Dutch mastiff in its place. He was surprised, but as usual made no fuss, and proceeded to give it a good lick, much to the alarm of the little mastiff. However, its fright soon wore off, and in a day or two it might be seen barking round him and even biting his feet, which the tiger never objected to, perhaps because he could hardly have felt it.

Two years after the tiger had been settled in the Tower, the very same carpenter who had beaten him for stealing the beef came back to England and at once paid a visit to his old friend. The tiger was enchanted to see him, and rushing to the grating, began rubbing himself against it with delight. The carpenter begged to be let into the cage, and though the keepers did not like it, he declared there was no danger, and at last they opened the door. In a moment the tiger was by his side, nearly knocking him down with joy and affection, licking his hands and rubbing his head on his shoulders, and when, after two or three hours, the carpenter got up to go, the tiger would hardly let him leave the den, for he wanted to keep him there for ever.

But all tigers cannot be judged by this tiger.

HALCYONS AND THEIR BIOGRAPHERS

Some of the old writers, such as Pliny, Plutarch, Ovid, and Aristotle, tell a pretty story about a bird called the halcyon, which flew sporting over the seas, and in midwinter, when the days were shortest, sat on its nest and brooded over its eggs. And Neptune, who loved these small, gay-plumaged creatures, took pity on them, and kept the waves still during the time of their sitting, so that by-and-bye the days in a man’s life that were free from storm and tempest became known as his ‘halcyon days,’ by which name you will still hear them called.

Now after a careful comparison of the descriptions of the ancient writers, modern naturalists have come to the conclusion that the ‘halcyon’ of Pliny and the rest was no other than our beautiful kingfisher, which flashes its lovely green and blue along the rivers and cascades both of the Old World and the New. It is now known that the kingfisher is one of the burrowing birds, and that it scoops out in the sand or soft earth of the river banks a passage which is often as much as four feet long and grows wider as it recedes from the water. It feeds upon fish, and fish bones may be found in large numbers on the floor of the kingfisher’s house, which, either from laziness or a dislike to change, he inhabits for years together. His eyes are wonderfully quick, and he can detect a fish even in turbulent waters from the bough of a tree. Then he makes a rapid dart, and rarely misses his prey. No bird has been the subject of so many superstitions and false stories as the kingfisher, which attracted much attention from its great beauty. Ovid changes the king of Magnesia and his wife Alcyone into kingfishers, Pliny talks of the bird’s sweet voice (whereas its note is particularly harsh and ugly), and Plutarch mistakes the sea-urchin’s shell for that of the halcyon. Even the Tartars have a story to tell of this bird, and assure us that a feather plucked from a kingfisher and then cast into the water will gain the love of every woman it afterwards touches, while the Ostiacs held that the possession of the skin, bill, and claws of the kingfisher will ensure the owner a life made up of ‘halcyon days.’

THE STORY OF A FROG

PART I

Everyone knows what excitement the approach of the shooting season causes to a certain class of people in Paris. One is perpetually meeting some of them on their way back from the canal where they have been ‘getting their hands in’ by popping at larks and sparrows, dragging a dog after them, and stopping each acquaintance to ask: ‘Do you like quails and partridges?’ ‘Certainly.’ ‘Ah, well, I’ll send you some about the second or third of next month.’ ‘Many thanks.’ ‘By the way I hit five sparrows out of eight shots just now. Not bad, was it?’ ‘First rate indeed!’

Well, towards the end of August, 1830, one of these sportsmen called at No. 109, in the Faubourg St.-Denis, and on being told that Décamps was at home, climbed to the fifth floor, dragging his dog up step by step, and knocking his gun against every corner till he reached the studio of that eminent painter. However, he only found his brother Alexandre, one of those brilliant and original persons whose inherent laziness alone prevented his bringing his great natural gifts to perfection.

He was universally voted a very good fellow, for his easy good nature made him ready to do or give whatever anyone asked. It was not surprising, therefore, that the new comer soon managed to persuade Alexandre that nothing could be more delightful than to attend the opening of the shooting season on the plains of St.-Denis, where, according to general report, there were swarms of quails, clouds of partridges, and troops of hares.

As a result of this visit, Alexandre Décamps ordered a shooting coat from his tailor, a gun from the first gun-maker’s in Paris, and a pair of gaiters from an equally celebrated firm; all of which cost him 660 francs, not to mention the price of his licence.

On August 31 Alexandre discovered that one important item was still wanting to his outfit — a dog. He went at once to a man who had supplied various models to his brother Eugène’s well-known picture of ‘performing dogs,’ and asked if he happened to have any sporting dogs.

The man declared he had the very thing, and going to the kennel promptly whipped off the three-cornered hat and little coat worn by a black and white mongrel whom he hastened to present to his customer as a dog of the purest breed. Alexandre hinted that it was not usual for a pointer to have such sharp-pointed ears, but the dealer replied that 'Love' was an English dog, and that it was considered the very best form for English dogs to have pointed ears. As this statement *might* be true, Alexandre made no further objections, but paid for the dog and took Love home with him.

At five o'clock next morning Alexandre was roused up by his sporting friend, who, scolding him well for not being ready earlier, hurried him off as fast as possible, declaring the whole plain would be shot before they could get there.

It was certainly a curious sight; not a swallow, not even the meanest little sparrow, could rise without a volley of shots after it, and everyone was anxiously on the look-out for any and every sort of bird that could possibly be called game.

Alexandre's friend was soon bitten by the general fever and threw himself energetically amidst the excited crowd, whilst Alexandre strolled along more calmly, dutifully followed by Love. Now everyone knows that the first duty of any sporting dog is to scour the field and *not* to count the nails in his master's boots. This thought naturally occurred to Alexandre, and he accordingly made a sign to Love and said: 'Seek!'

Love promptly stood up on his hind legs and began to dance.

'Dear me,' said Alexandre, as he lowered his gun and contemplated his dog: 'It appears that Love unites the lighter accomplishments to his more serious education. I seem to have made rather a good bargain.' However, having bought Love to point and not to dance, he waited till the dance was over and repeated in firm tones: 'Seek!'

Love stretched himself out at full length and appeared to be dead.

Alexandre put his glass into his eye and inspected Love. The intelligent creature was perfectly immovable; not a hair on his body stirred, he might have been dead for twenty-four hours.

'This is all very pretty,' said Alexandre, 'but, my friend, this is not the time for these jokes. We are here to shoot — let us shoot. Come! get up.'

Love did not stir an inch.

'Wait a bit,' remarked Alexandre, as he picked up a stick from the ground and took a step towards Love, intending to stir him up with it: 'Wait a bit.' But no sooner did Love see the stick in his master's hand than he sprang to his feet and eagerly watched his movements. Alexandre thinking the dog was at last going to obey, held the stick towards him, and for the third time ordered him to 'seek.'

Love took a run and sprang gracefully over the stick.

Love could do three things to perfection — dance on his hind legs, sham dead, and jump for the king!

Alexandre, however, who did not appreciate the third accomplishment any more than he had done the two others, broke the stick over Love's back, which sent him off howling to his master's friend.

As fate would have it the friend fired at that very moment, and an unfortunate lark fell right into Love's jaws. Love thankfully accepted this windfall, and made but one mouthful of the lark. The infuriated sportsman threw himself on the dog, and seizing him by the throat to force open his jaws, thrust in his hand and drew out — three tail feathers: the bird itself was not to be thought of.

Bestowing a vicious kick on the unhappy Love, he turned on Alexandre, exclaiming: 'Never again do you catch me shooting with you. Your brute of a dog has just devoured a superb quail. Ah! come here if you dare, you rascal!'

Poor Love had not the least wish to go near him. He ran as fast as he could to his master, a sure proof that he preferred blows to kicks.

However, the lark seemed to have whetted Love's appetite: and perceiving creatures of apparently the same kind rise now and then from the ground, he took to scampering about in hopes of some second piece of good luck.

Alexandre had some difficulty in keeping up with him, for Love hunted his game after a fashion of his own, that is to say with his head up and his tail down. This would seem to prove that his sight was better than his scent, but it was particularly objectionable to his master, for he put up the birds before they were within reach, and then ran barking after them. This went on nearly all day.

Towards five o'clock Alexandre had walked about fifteen miles and Love at least fifty; the former was exhausted with calling and the latter with barking, when, all of a sudden Love began to point, so firmly and steadily that he seemed changed to stone.

At this surprising sight Alexandre, forgetful of all his fatigues and disappointments, hurried up, trembling lest Love should break off before he could get within reach. No fear; Love might have been glued to the spot. Alexandre came up to him, noted the direction of his eyes and saw that they were fixed on a tuft of grass, and that under this grass there appeared to be some greyish object. Thinking it must be a young bird which had strayed from its covey, he laid down his gun, took his cap in his hand, and cautiously creeping near, like a child about to catch a butterfly, he flung the cap over the unknown object, put in his hand and drew out — a frog!

Anyone else would have flung the frog away, but Alexandre philosophically reflected that there must certainly be some great future in store for this, the sole result of his day's sport; so he accordingly put the frog carefully into his game bag and brought it home, where he transferred it to an empty glass jam jar and poured the contents of his water-bottle on its head.

So much care and trouble for a frog may appear excessive; but Alexandre knew what this particular frog had cost him, and he treated it accordingly.

It had cost him 660 francs, without counting his licence.

PART II

‘Ah, ah!’ cried Dr. Thierry as he entered the studio next day, ‘so you’ve got a new inmate.’ And without paying any attention to Tom’s friendly growls or to Jacko’s engaging grimaces, he walked straight up to the jar which contained Mademoiselle Camargo — as she had already been named.

A fashionable dancer in Paris.

Mademoiselle Camargo, unaware that Thierry was not only a learned doctor, but also a most intellectual and delightful person, fell to swimming round and round her jar as fast as she could go, which however did not prevent her being seized by one of her hind legs.

‘Dear me,’ said Thierry, as he turned the little creature about, ‘a specimen of the *Rana temporaria*. See, there are the two black spots near the eyes which give it the name. Now if you only had a few dozens of this species, I should advise you to have a fricassée made of their hind legs, to send for a couple of bottles of good claret, and to ask me to dinner. But as you only happen to have one, we will, with your leave, content ourselves with making a barometer.

‘Now,’ said Thierry, opening a drawer, ‘let us attend to the prisoner’s furniture.’ Saying which he took out two cartridges, a gimlet, a penknife, two paint-brushes, and four matches. Décamps watched him without in the least understanding the object of all these preparations, which the doctor was making with as much care as though for some surgical operation.

First he emptied the powder out of the cartridges into a tray and kept the bullets. Then he threw the brushes and ties to Jacko and kept the handles.

‘What the deuce are you about?’ cried Décamps, snatching his two best paint-brushes from Jacko. ‘Why you’re ruining my establishment!’

‘I’m making a ladder,’ gravely replied Thierry.

And true enough, having bored holes in the bullets, he fixed the brush handles into them so as to form the sides of the ladder, using the matches to make the rungs. Five minutes later the ladder was completed and placed in the jar, where the weight of the bullets kept it firmly down.

No sooner did Mademoiselle Camargo find herself the owner of this article of furniture than she prepared to test it by climbing up to the top rung.

‘We shall have rain,’ said Thierry.

‘You don’t say so,’ replied Décamps, ‘and there’s my brother who wanted to go out shooting again to-day.’

‘Mademoiselle Camargo does not advise his doing so,’ remarked the doctor.

‘How so?’

‘My dear friend, I have been providing you with an inexpensive but reliable barometer. Each time you see Mademoiselle Camargo climb to the top of her ladder it’s a sure sign of rain; when she remains at the bottom you may count on fine weather, and if she goes up half-way, don’t venture out without your umbrella; changeable, changeable.’

‘Dear me, dear me,’ said Décamps.

During the next six months Mademoiselle Camargo continued to foretell the weather with perfect and unerring regularity. But for painful reasons into which we need not inquire too closely, Mademoiselle’s useful career soon closed, and she left a blank in the ménagerie.

THE WOODPECKER TAPPING ON THE HOLLOW OAK TREE

Most children who were taught music forty or fifty years ago, learnt as one of their first tunes an air called ‘The Woodpecker Tapping on the Hollow Oak Tree.’ Oak trees are not the only ones that woodpeckers, and especially American woodpeckers, ‘tap’ on. There is hardly any old tree which they disdain to work upon, sometimes for food, sometimes for nesting purposes, sometimes it would seem merely for the sake of employment and of keeping their bills in order.

For the woodpecker’s bill is a very powerful instrument, and can get through a great deal of work. In the case of the ‘ivory-billed woodpecker,’ it is not only white, and hard, and strong, but it has a ribbed surface, which tends to prevent its breaking, and even if he does not form one of this class, the woodpecker is as clever in his own line as any carpenter, and more industrious than many. The moment that he notices symptoms of decay in any tree, he flies off to make a careful examination of it, and when he has decided on the best mode of attack, he loses no time, and has even been known to strip all the bark off a dead pine tree of thirty feet long in less than twenty minutes. And this not in little bits, but in sheets five or six feet long, and as whole as the fleece of a sheep when it is sheared.

Of course different varieties of woodpeckers have little differences in their habits, in the same way that habits differ in different families; but certain customs and ways of digging are common to them all. Every woodpecker, for instance, when placed in a wooden cage, will instantly set to work to dig himself out of it, and to keep him safe, he needs to be surrounded by wire, against which his bill is utterly useless. In general the male and female work by turns at the hole, which is always begun by the male, and is as perfectly round as if it had been measured and drawn from one point to another. For a while the boring is quite straight, and then it takes a sloping direction, so as to provide a partial shelter against the rain. Sometimes the bird will begin by a slope, and end in a direct line, but the hole is never straight all through, and the depth varies from two to five feet, according to the kind of woodpecker that is digging. The inside of the nest and the passage to it are as smooth as if they had been polished with a plane, and the chips of wood are often thrown down in a careless manner, at some distance, in order that attention may not be attracted to the spot. Often the bird’s labours have to begin, especially in orchards, which are favourite nesting places with them, with having to turn out swarms of insects, nestling comfortably between the bark and the tree. These he either kills or eats; anyhow he never rests until they are safely got rid of.

The woodpecker is never still, and, in many respects, is like a mischievous boy; so, as can be imagined, he is not very easy to make a pet of. One adventurous person, however, captured a woodpecker in America, and has left us a history of its performances during the three days it lived in captivity. The poor bird was very miserable in its prison, and cried so like a child that many persons were completely taken in. Left alone for a short time in the room while his captor had gone to look after his horse, he examined the room carefully to see where lay his best chance of escape. His quick eye soon detected the plaster between the window and the ceiling, and he began at once to attack the weak place. He worked so hard that when his master returned he had laid bare the laths, and had bored a hole bigger than his own head, while the bed was strewn with big fragments of plaster. A very little while longer and he would have been free, and what a pity that he was disturbed in his work! But his master was most anxious to keep him a little longer, to observe his ways, so he tied him to the leg of the table, and went off to get him some food. By the time the man came back the mahogany table was lying in bits about the floor, and the woodpecker was looking eagerly round to see what other mischief he could do. He would not eat food of any kind, and died in three days, to the great regret of his captor.

DOGS OVER THE WATER

No animal, not even the horse, has made itself so many friends as the dog. A whole library might be filled with stories about what dogs have done, and men could learn a great deal from the sufferings dogs have gone through for masters that they love.

Whatever differences there may be between foreigners and Englishmen, there is at any rate none in the behaviour of British and foreign dogs. ‘Love me, love my dog,’ the proverb runs, but in general it would be much more to the point to say ‘love my dog, love me.’ We do not know anything of the Austrian officer of whose death I am going to tell you, but after hearing what his dog did, we should all have been pleased to make the master’s acquaintance.

In the early years of this century, when nearly every country in Europe was turned into a battlefield by Napoleon, there was a tremendous fight between the French and the Austrians at Castiglione in Lombardy, which was then under the Austrian yoke. The battle was hard fought and lasted several hours, but at length the Austrian ranks were broken and they had to retreat, after frightful losses on both sides. After the field had been won, Napoleon, as his custom was, walked round among the dead and dying, to see for himself how the day had gone. Not often had he performed this duty amidst a greater scene of blood and horror, and as he came to a spot where the dead were lying thickest, he saw to his surprise a small long-eared spaniel standing with his feet on the breast of an Austrian officer, and his eyes fixed on his face, waiting to detect the slightest movement. Absorbed in his watch, the dog never heard the approach of the Emperor and his staff, but Napoleon called to one of his attendants and pointed out the spaniel. At the sound of his voice the spaniel turned round, and looked at the Emperor, as if he knew that to him only he must appeal for help. And the prayer was not in vain, for Napoleon was very seldom needlessly cruel. The officer was dead and beyond any aid from him, but the Emperor did what he could, and gave orders that the dog should be looked after by one of his own men, and the wounded Austrians carefully tended. *He* knew what it was to be loved as blindly by men as that officer was loved by his dog.

Nearly two years before this time, France was trembling in the power of a set of bloody ruffians, and in Paris especially no man felt his head to be safe from one hour to the other. Hundreds of harmless people were clapped into prison on the most paltry charges, and if they were not torn to pieces by infuriated crowds, they ended their lives on the guillotine.

Among the last of the victims before the fall of Robespierre, which finished the Reign of Terror, was a magistrate in one of the departments in the North of France whom everyone looked up to and respected. It may be thought that it would not have been easy to find a pretext for throwing into prison a man of such an open and honourable life, but when other things failed, a vague accusation of conspiracy against the Government was always possible, and accordingly the magistrate was arrested in his own house. No one was there to help him or to share his confinement. He had long sent away his children to places of safety; some of his relations were in gaol like himself, and his friends dared not come forward. They could have done him no good, and would only have shared his fate. In those dark days every man had to suffer alone, and nobly they did it. Only one friend the magistrate had who ventured openly to show his affection, and even *he* might go no farther than the prison doors, namely, his spaniel, who for twelve years had scarcely left his side; but though dogs were not yet proscribed, the spaniel's whinings availed nothing, and the gates were shut against him. At first he refused to believe that his master would never come back, and returned again and again with the hopes of meeting the magistrate on his way home. At last the dog's spirits gave way, and he went to the house of a friend of the family who knew him well, and received him kindly. Even here, however, he had to be carefully hidden lest his protector should be charged with sheltering the dog of an accused person, and have to pay the penalty on the guillotine. The animal seemed to know what was expected of him, and never barked or growled as dogs love to do; and indeed he was too sad to take any interest in what was going on around him. The only bright spot in his day was towards evening when he was secretly let out, and he made straight for the gate of the prison. The gate was never opened, but he always hoped that *this* time it would be, and sat on and on till he felt that his chance was gone for that day. All the prison officials knew him by sight, and were sorry for him, and one day the gaoler's heart was softened, and he opened the doors, and led him to his master's cell. It would be difficult to say which of the two was the happier, and when the time came for the prisoners to be locked up for the night, the man could scarcely tear away the dog, so closely did he cling to his master. However, there was no help for it, he had to be put outside, lest it should occur to some one in authority to make a visit of inspection to the prison. Next evening the dog returned at the same hour and was again admitted, and when his time was up, he went home with a light heart, sure that by sunset next day he would be with his beloved master.

This went on for several weeks, and the dog, at any rate, would have been quite satisfied if it had gone on for ever. But one morning the magistrate was told that he was to be brought before his judges to make answer to his charge and receive his sentence. In the midst of a vast crowd, which dared not show sympathy even if it felt it, the magistrate pleaded for the last time, without a friend to give him courage except his dog, which had somehow forced himself through guards and crowd, and lay crouched between his legs, happy at this unexpected chance of seeing his master.

Sentence of death was pronounced, as was inevitable, and the hour of execution was not long delayed. In the wonderful way that animals always *do* know when something out of the common is passing, the spaniel was sitting outside the door when his master walked out for the last time, although it was long before the hour of his daily visit. Alone, of all the friends that he had known and loved, his dog went with him, and stood beside him on the steps of the guillotine, and sat at his feet when his head fell. Vaguely the spaniel was aware that something terrible had happened; his master, who had never failed him before, would not speak to him now. It was in vain to lick his hand: he got no pat in answer. But if his master was asleep, and his bed was underground, then he too must sleep by his side till the morning came and the world awoke again.

So two nights passed, and three. Then his friend, who had sheltered him during these long weeks, came to look for him, and, after much coaxing and caressing, persuaded him to return to his old hiding-place. With great difficulty he was induced to swallow some food, but the moment his protector’s back was turned, he rushed out and fought his way to his master’s grave.

This lasted for three months, and every day the dog looked sadder and thinner than the day before. At length his friend thought he would try a new plan with him, and tied him firmly up. But in the morning he found that the dog had, like Samson, broken through his bonds, and was lying on the grave, which he never left again. Food was brought to him — he never came to seek it himself, and in time he refused even what was lying there before him. One day his friends found him trying to scratch up the earth where his master lay; and all at once his strength gave way, and with one howl he died, showing the two men who stood around of love that was stronger than death, and fidelity that lasted beyond the grave.

From *Observations in Natural History*.

One more story of a little dog — this time an English one — and I have done.

It was on February 8, 1587, that Mary Queen of Scots ended her eighteen years of weary captivity upon a scaffold at Fotheringay. Carefully dressed in a robe of black velvet, with a long mantle of satin floating above it, and her head covered with a white crape veil, Mary ascended the platform, where the executioner was awaiting her. Some English nobles, sent by Queen Elizabeth to see that her orders were carried out, were standing by, and some of Queen Mary’s faithful women. But besides these was one whose love for her was hardly less — the Queen’s little dog, who had been her constant companion in the prison. ‘He was sitting there the whole time,’ says an eye-witness, ‘keeping very quiet, and never stirring from her side; but as soon as the head was stricken off and placed upon the seat, he began to bestir himself and cry out; afterwards he took up a position between the body and the head, which he kept until some one came and removed him, and this had to be done by violence.’ We are not told who took him away and tenderly washed off the blood of Mary which was staining his coat, but we may be sure that it was one of the Queen’s ladies who cherished everything that belonged to her, and in memory of her mistress would care for her little dog to the end of its days.

THE CAPOCIER AND HIS MATE

When Vaillant the traveller was in Africa, he made the acquaintance of a bird to which he gave the name of capocier. It was a small creature, which was in the habit of coming with its mate several times a day into Vaillant’s tent; a proceeding which he thought arose from pure friendship, but which he soon found sprang from interested motives. Vaillant was making a collection of birds, and his table was strewn about with moss, wool, and such things as he used for stuffing. The capocier, with more sense than might have been expected of him, found out very soon that it was much easier to steal Vaillant’s soft material than to collect it laboriously for himself, and the naturalist used to shut his eyes with amusement while the birds flew off with a parcel of stuffing as big as themselves.

He followed them, and tracked them to a bush which grew by a spring in the corner of a deserted garden. Here they had placed a thick layer of moss, in a fork of one of the branches, and were now engaged in weaving in grass, cotton, and flax. The whole of the second day the little pair worked hard, the male making in all forty-six journeys to Vaillant’s room, for thieving purposes. The spoil was always laid either on the nest itself, or within the reach of the female, and when enough had been collected, they both trampled it in, and pressed it down with their bodies.

At last the male got tired, and tried to prevail on his wife to play a game. She declined, and said she had no time for such things; so, to revenge himself, the male proceeded to pull to pieces her work. Seeing that he would have his own way, the female at length consented to play for a little, and fluttered from bush to bush, while her mate flew after her, but she always managed to keep just out of his reach. When he had had enough, he let her go back to her work, while he sang a song for a little, and then made ready to help build the nest. He found, or stole, the materials necessary, and carried them back to his wife, who packed them firmly in and made all tidy. But her husband was much more idle than she, and he soon tired of steady labour. He complained of the heat, and laughed at her for being in such a hurry, and said there was plenty of time before them, and he wanted a little fun. So eight times during that one morning the poor wife had to leave off her building, and hide her impatience, and pretend to play, when she would much rather have been doing something else, and it was three days before the bottom was finished and the sides begun.

Certainly the making of the bottom *was* rather a troublesome business; for the birds had to roll over every part of it, so as to get it firm and hard. Then, when all was right, they made a border, which they first trimmed round, and next overlaid with cotton, pressing it all together with their breasts and shoulders. The twigs of the bush in which the nest was built were interlaced into the sides to prevent the whole structure being blown down, and particular care was taken that none of them should stick out in the inside of the nest, which was absolutely smooth and solid. After seven days it was done, and very pretty it was. It was perfectly white in colour, and about nine inches high on the outside where it had been made very thick, and not more than five inches within. However that was quite big enough for two such little people.

OWLS AND MARMOTS

It is curious, when we come to think of it, how very few of the creatures that live upon the earth ever take the trouble to build any kind of house to live in. For the most part, they are contented to find out some cave or hole or convenient place where they can be hidden, and from which they can steal forth to get their food, but as for collecting materials from the outside to make their dwelling place stronger or more beautiful, as do the beavers, for instance, why, we might all look for many years before we should find a horse or a tiger employing himself like that!

Yet we all know that all the birds that live (the cuckoo excepted) manage to build some kind of a nest, and so do some fishes and many insects. It would take too long to write about them all, but we will just see how some of the cleverest among them go to work.

One of the first things that struck Europeans travelling sixty or seventy years ago in the wild country beyond the great Mississippi, was the fact that whole districts, sometimes several acres in extent and sometimes several miles, were covered with little mounds of the shape of a pyramid, about two feet wide at the bottom, and at the most eighteen inches high. These are the houses of the marmots or prairie dogs, and when deserted as they often are by their original inhabitants, they become the homes of burrowing owls.

Now a neat, comfortable, well-built house is really quite necessary for the marmot, as he goes fast to sleep when the weather begins to get cold, and does not wake up till the sun is shining warmly again on the earth above him. Then he sets to work, either to repair the walls of his house which have been damaged by the heavy rains and hard frosts, or if that seems useless labour, to dig a fresh one somewhere else. But industrious as he is, the hard work does not make the marmot at all a ‘dull boy,’ and he can still spare time for a good game now and then.

Of course, as we are talking about birds, perhaps we ought not to be describing marmots, which are naturally not birds at all; but as they build for the burrowing owls to inhabit, a description of the houses may not be out of place.

The entrance to the marmot’s house is either at the top or on the side of the little mound above ground. Then he hollows out a passage straight down for one, or sometimes two feet, and this passage is continued in a sloping direction for some distance further, when it leads, like a story in the ‘Arabian Nights,’ into a large warm room, built of soft dry grass, which has been packed into a tight, firm mass. In general the outside of the little mounds is covered with small plants and grasses, so that the marmot always has his food near at hand, but occasionally they prefer to make their villages in barren spots, as being safer from enemies. Still, wherever they are, the sociable little colony of marmots are said to be haunted by at least one burrowing owl, a bird about nine inches long, and from a distance not very unlike the marmot itself, when it is sitting up, listening for the approach of danger. If no burrow seems likely to be vacant at the time he wants one, the owl does not scruple to turn out the owner, who has to begin all his labour over again. Sometimes, when affairs above ground are more than usually disturbed, and foes of all kinds are prowling about, seeking whom they may devour, owls and marmots and rattlesnakes, and lizards rush helter-skelter into the underground city, taking refuge from the dangers of the upper world. It would be a strange sight if we could see it, and it would be stranger still if the fugitives manage to separate without some of the party having gone to make the dinners of the rest.

EAGLES’ NESTS

Eagles, as a rule, build their nests on the shelves of rocks, high out of reach of any but the boldest climbers. There are, however, some species among them who prefer the tops of trees, at a height varying from fifteen to fifty feet. These nests are constructed of long sticks, grass, and even reeds, and are often as much as five or six feet high, and at least four broad. Soft pine tops form the lining, and a bed for the young. Many eagles are clever divers, and like the excitement of catching their own fish, instead of merely forcing the fish-hawks to give up their prey, and an American naturalist gives an interesting account of the sporting proceedings of two eagles on the Green River in Kentucky. The naturalist had been lying hidden among the rocks on the bank of the river for about two hours, when suddenly far above his head where the eagle had built his nest, he heard a loud hissing, and on looking up, saw that the little eaglets had crawled to the edge of the nest, and were dancing with hope and excitement at the idea of a good dinner. In a few moments the parent eagle reached the rock and balancing himself on the edge by the help of his wings and tail, handed over his spoil to the young ones. The little eagles seemed in luck that day, for soon their mother appeared in sight carrying in her claws a perch. But either the watcher below made some movement, or else her eyes were far sharper than her mate’s, for with a loud cry she dropped her fish, and hovered over the nest to protect it in case of an attack. When all was quiet again, the naturalist went out cautiously to examine the perch, which he found to weigh as much as 5½ lbs. You do not catch such big perch in England.

THE END

THE BOOK OF ROMANCE

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THE STORY OF GRETTIR THE STRONG

PREFACE

It is to be supposed that children do not read Prefaces; these are Bluebeard’s rooms, which they are not curious to unlock. A few words may therefore be said about the Romances contained in this book. In the editor’s opinion, romances are only fairy tales grown up. The whole mass of the plot and incident of romance was invented by nobody knows who, nobody knows when, nobody knows where. Almost every people has the Cinderella story, with all sorts of variations: a boy hero in place of a girl heroine, a beast in place of a fairy godmother, and so on. The Zuñis, an agricultural tribe of New Mexico, have a version in which the moral turns out to be against poor Cinderella, who comes to an ill end. The Red Indians have the tale of Orpheus and Eurydice, told in a very touching shape, but without the music. On the other hand, the negroes in the States have the Orpheus tale, adapted to plantation life, in a form which is certainly borrowed from Europeans. This version was sent to me some years ago, by Mr. Barnet Phillips, Brooklyn, New York, and I give it here for its curiosity. If the proper names, Jim Orpus and Dicey, had not been given, we might not feel absolutely certain that the story was borrowed. It is a good example of adaptation from the heroic age of Greece to the servile age of Africans.

Dicey and Orpus

Dat war eber so long ago, ‘cause me granmammy tell me so. It h’aint no white-folks yarn — no Sah. Gall she war call Dicey, an’ she war borned on de plantation. Whar Jim Orpus kum from, granmammy she disremember. He war a boss-fiddler, he war, an’ jus’ that powerful, dat when de mules in de cotton field listen to um, dey no budge in de furrer. Orpus he neber want no mess of fish, ketched wid a angle. He just take him fiddle an’ fool along de branch, an’ play a tune, an’ up dey comes, an’ he cotch ’em in he hans. He war mighty sot on Dicey, an’ dey war married all proper an’ reg’lar. Hit war so long ago, dat de railroad war a bran-new spick an’ span ting in dose days. Dicey once she lounge ‘round de track, ‘cause she tink she hear Orpus a fiddlin’ in de fur-fur-away. Onyways de hengine smash her. Den Jim Orpus he took on turrible, an’ when she war buried, he sot him down on de grave, an’ he fiddle an’ he fiddle till most yo’ heart was bruk.

An’ he play so long dat de groun’ crummle (crumble) an’ sink, an’ nex’ day, when de peoples look for Jim Orpus, dey no find um; oney big-hole in de lot, an’ nobody never see Jim Orpus no mo’. An’ dey do say, dat ef yo’ go inter a darky’s burial-groun’, providin’ no white man been planted thar, an’ yo’ clap yo’ ear to de groun’, yo’ can hear Jim’s fiddle way down deep belo’, a folloin’ Dicey fru’ de lan’ of de Golden Slippah.

Mr. Phillips, writing in 1896, says that the tale was told him by a plantation hand, thirty years ago, ‘long before the Uncle Remus period.’

The original touch, the sound of Orpus’s fiddle heard only in the graveyards of the negroes (like the fairy music under the fairy hill at Ballachulish), is very remarkable. Now the Red Indian story has no harper, and no visit by the hero to the land of the dead. His grief brings his wife back to him, and he loses her again by breaking a taboo, as Orpheus did by looking back, a thing always forbidden. Thus we do not know whether or not the Red Indian version is borrowed from the European myth, probably enough it is not. But in no case — not even when the same plot and incidents occur among Egyptians and the Central Australian tribes, or among the frosty Samoyeds and Eskimo, the Samoans, the Andamanese, the Zulus, and the Japanese, as well as among Celts and ancient Greeks — can we be absolutely certain that the story has not been diffused and borrowed, in the backward of time. Thus the date and place of origin of these eternal stories, the groundwork of ballads and popular tales, can never be ascertained. The oldest known version may be found in the literature of Egypt or Chaldæa, but it is an obvious fallacy to argue that the place of origin must be the place where the tale was first written down in hieroglyph or cuneiform characters.

There the stories are: they are as common among the remotest savages as among the peasants of Hungary, France, or Assynt. They bear all the birth-marks of an early society, with the usual customs and superstitions of man in such a stage of existence. Their oldest and least corrupted forms exist among savages, and people who do not read and write. But when reading and writing and a class of professional minstrels and tellers of tales arose, these men invented no new plots, but borrowed the plots and incidents of the world-old popular stories. They adapted these to their own condition of society, just as the plantation negroes adapted Orpheus and Eurydice. They elevated the nameless heroes and heroines into Kings, Queens, and Knights, Odysseus, Arthur, Charlemagne, Diarmid, and the rest. They took an ancient popular tale, known all over the earth, and attributed the adventures of the characters to historical persons, like Charlemagne and his family, or to Saints, for the legends of early Celtic Saints are full of fairy-tale materials. Characters half historic, half fabulous, like Arthur, were endowed with fairy gifts, and inherited the feats of nameless imaginary heroes.

The results of this uncritical literary handling of elements really popular were the national romances of Arthur, of Charlemagne, of Sigurd, or of Etzel. The pagan legends were Christianised, like that of Beowulf; they were expanded into measureless length, whole cycles were invented about the heroic families; poets altered the materials each in his own way and to serve his own purpose, and often to glorify his own country. If the Saracens told their story of Roland at Roncevalles, it would be very different from that of the old Frankish *chansons de geste*. Thus the romances are a mixture of popular tales, of literary invention, and of history as transmitted in legend. To the charm of fairy tale they add the fascination of the age of chivalry, yet I am not sure but that children will prefer the fairy tale pure and simple, nor am I sure that their taste would be wrong, if they did.

In the versions here offered, the story of Arthur is taken mainly from Malory’s compilation, from sources chiefly French, but the opening of the Graal story is adapted from Mr. Sebastian Evans’s ‘High History of the Holy Graal,’ a masterpiece of the translator’s art. For permission to adapt this chapter I have to thank the kindness of Mr. Evans.

The story of Roland is from the French Epic, probably of the eleventh century, but resting on earlier materials, legend and ballad. William Short Nose is also from the *chanson de geste* of that hero.

The story of Diarmid, ancient Irish and also current among the Dalriadic invaders of Argyle, is taken from the translations in the Transactions of the Ossianic Society.

The story of Robin Hood is from the old English ballads of the courteous outlaw, whose feast, in Scotland, fell in the early days of May. His alleged date varies between the ages of Richard I. and Edward II., but all the labours of the learned have thrown no light on this popular hero.

A child can see how *English* Robin is, how human, and possible and good-humoured are his character and feats, while Arthur is half Celtic, half French and chivalrous, and while the deeds of the French Roland, and of the Celtic Diarmid, are exaggerated beyond the possible. There is nothing of the fairylike in Robin, and he has no thirst for the Ideal. Had we given the adventures of Sir William Wallace, from Blind Harry, it would have appeared that the Lowland Scots could exaggerate like other people.

The story of Wayland the Smith is very ancient. An ivory in the British Museum, apparently of the eighth century, represents Wayland making the cups out of the skulls. As told here the legend is adapted from the amplified version by Oehlenschläger. Scott's use of the story in 'Kenilworth' will be remembered.

All the romances are written by Mrs. Lang, except the story of Grettir the Strong, done by Mr. H. S. C. Everard from the saga translated by Mr. William Morris.

A. Lang.

TALES OF THE ROUND TABLE

THE DRAWING OF THE SWORD

Long, long ago, after Uther Pendragon died, there was no King in Britain, and every Knight hoped to seize the crown for himself. The country was like to fare ill when laws were broken on every side, and the corn which was to give the poor bread was trodden underfoot, and there was none to bring the evildoer to justice. Then, when things were at their worst, came forth Merlin the magician, and fast he rode to the place where the Archbishop of Canterbury had his dwelling. And they took counsel together, and agreed that all the lords and gentlemen of Britain should ride to London and meet on Christmas Day, now at hand, in the Great Church. So this was done. And on Christmas morning, as they left the church, they saw in the churchyard a large stone, and on it a bar of steel, and in the steel a naked sword was held, and about it was written in letters of gold, 'Whoso pulleth out this sword is by right of birth King of England.' They marvelled at these words, and called for the Archbishop, and brought him into the place where the stone stood. Then those Knights who fain would be King could not hold themselves back, and they tugged at the sword with all their might; but it never stirred. The Archbishop watched them in silence, but when they were faint from pulling he spoke: 'The man is not here who shall lift out that sword, nor do I know where to find him. But this is my counsel — that two Knights be chosen, good and true men, to keep guard over the sword.'

Thus it was done. But the lords and gentlemen-at-arms cried out that every man had a right to try to win the sword, and they decided that on New Year's Day a tournament should be held, and any Knight who would, might enter the lists.

So on New Year's Day, the Knights, as their custom was, went to hear service in the Great Church, and after it was over they met in the field to make ready for the tourney. Among them was a brave Knight called Sir Ector, who brought with him Sir Kay, his son, and Arthur, Kay's foster-brother. Now Kay had unbuckled his sword the evening before, and in his haste to be at the tourney had forgotten to put it on again, and he begged Arthur to ride back and fetch it for him. But when Arthur reached the house the door was locked, for the women had gone out to see the tourney, and though Arthur tried his best to get in he could not. Then he rode away in great anger, and said to himself, 'Kay shall not be without a sword this day. I will take that sword in the churchyard, and give it to him'; and he galloped fast till he reached the gate of the churchyard. Here he jumped down and tied his horse tightly to a tree, then, running up to the stone, he seized the handle of the sword, and drew it easily out; afterwards he mounted his horse again, and delivered the sword to Sir Kay. The moment Sir Kay saw the sword he knew it was not his own, but the sword of the stone, and he sought out his father Sir Ector, and said to him, 'Sir, this is the sword of the stone, therefore I am the rightful King.' Sir Ector made no answer, but signed to Kay and Arthur to follow him, and they all three went back to the church. Leaving their horses outside, they entered the choir, and here Sir Ector took a holy book and bade Sir Kay swear how he came by that sword. 'My brother Arthur gave it to me,' replied Sir Kay. 'How did you come by it?' asked Sir Ector, turning to Arthur. 'Sir,' said Arthur, 'when I rode home for my brother's sword I found no one to deliver it to me, and as I resolved he should not be swordless I thought of the sword in this stone, and I pulled it out.' 'Were any Knights present when you did this?' asked Sir Ector. 'No, none,' said Arthur. 'Then it is you,' said Sir Ector, 'who are the rightful King of this land.' 'But why am I the King?' inquired Arthur. 'Because,' answered Sir Ector, 'this is an enchanted sword, and no man could draw it but he who was born a King. Therefore put the sword back into the stone, and let me see you take it out.' 'That is soon done,' said Arthur replacing the sword, and Sir Ector himself tried to draw it, but he could not. 'Now it is your turn,' he said to Sir Kay, but Sir Kay fared no better than his father, though he tugged with all his might and main. 'Now you, Arthur,' and Arthur pulled it out as easily as if it had been lying in its sheath, and as he did so Sir Ector and Sir Kay sank on their knees before him. 'Why do you, my father and brother, kneel to me?' asked Arthur in surprise. 'Nay, nay, my lord,' answered Sir Ector, 'I was never your father, though till to-day I did not know who your father really was. You are the son of Uther Pendragon, and you were brought to me when you were born by Merlin himself, who promised that when the time came I should know from whom you sprang. And now it has been revealed to me.' But when Arthur heard that Sir Ector was not his father, he wept bitterly. 'If I am King,' he said at last, 'ask what you will, and I shall not fail you. For to you, and to my lady and mother, I owe more than to anyone in the world, for she loved me and treated me as her son.' 'Sir,' replied Sir Ector, I only ask that you will make your foster-brother, Sir Kay, Seneschal of all your lands.' 'That I will readily,' answered Arthur, 'and while he and I live no other shall fill that office.'

'Seneschal' means steward.

Sir Ector then bade them seek out the Archbishop with him, and they told him all that had happened concerning the sword, which Arthur had left standing in the stone. And on the Twelfth Day the Knights and Barons came again, but none could draw it out but Arthur. When they saw this, many of the Barons became angry and cried out that they would never own a boy for King whose blood was no better than their own. So it was agreed to wait till Candlemas, when more Knights might be there, and meanwhile the same two men who had been chosen before watched the sword night and day; but at Candlemas it was the same thing, and at Easter. And when Pentecost came, the common people who were present, and saw Arthur pull out the sword, cried with one voice that he was their King, and they would kill any man who said differently. Then rich and poor fell on their knees before him, and Arthur took the sword and offered it upon the altar where the Archbishop stood, and the best man that was there made him Knight. After that the crown was put on his head, and he swore to his lords and commons that he would be a true King, and would do them justice all the days of his life.

THE QUESTING BEAST

But Arthur had many battles to fight and many Kings to conquer before he was acknowledged lord of them all, and often he would have failed had he not listened to the wisdom of Merlin, and been helped by his sword Excalibur, which in obedience to Merlin’s orders he never drew till things were going ill with him. Later it shall be told how the King got the sword Excalibur, which shone so bright in his enemies’ eyes that they fell back, dazzled by the brightness. Many Knights came to his standard, and among them Sir Ban, King of Gaul beyond the sea, who was ever his faithful friend. And it was in one of these wars, when King Arthur and King Ban and King Bors went to the rescue of the King of Cameliard, that Arthur saw Guenevere, the King’s daughter, whom he afterwards wedded. By and by King Ban and King Bors returned to their own country across the sea, and the King went to Carlion, a town on the river Usk, where a strange dream came to him.

He thought that the land was over-run with gryphons and serpents which burnt and slew his people, and he made war on the monsters, and was sorely wounded, though at last he killed them all. When he awoke the remembrance of his dream was heavy upon him, and to shake it off he summoned his Knights to hunt with him, and they rode fast till they reached a forest. Soon they spied a hart before them, which the King claimed as his game, and he spurred his horse and rode after him. But the hart ran fast and the King could not get near it, and the chase lasted so long that the King himself grew heavy and his horse fell dead under him. Then he sat under a tree and rested, till he heard the baying of hounds, and fancied he counted as many as thirty of them. He raised his head to look, and, coming towards him, saw a beast so strange that its like was not to be found throughout his kingdom. It went straight to the well and drank, making as it did so the noise of many hounds baying, and when it had drunk its fill the beast went its way.

While the King was wondering what sort of a beast this could be, a Knight rode by, who, seeing a man lying under a tree, stopped and said to him: ‘Knight full of thought and sleepy, tell me if a strange beast has passed this way?’

‘Yes, truly,’ answered Arthur, ‘and by now it must be two miles distant. What do you want with it?’

‘Oh sir, I have followed that beast from far,’ replied he, ‘and have ridden my horse to death. If only I could find another I would still go after it.’ As he spoke a squire came up leading a fresh horse for the King, and when the Knight saw it he prayed that it might be given to him, ‘for,’ said he, ‘I have followed this quest this twelvemonth, and either I shall slay him or he will slay me.’

‘Sir Knight,’ answered the King, ‘you have done your part; leave now your quest, and let me follow the beast for the same time that you have done.’ ‘Ah, fool!’ replied the Knight, whose name was Pellinore, ‘it would be all in vain, for none may slay that beast but I or my next of kin’; and without more words he sprang into the saddle. ‘You may take my horse by force,’ said the King, ‘but I should like to prove first which of us two is the better horseman.’

‘Well,’ answered the Knight, ‘when you want me, come to this spring. Here you will always find me,’ and, spurring his horse, he galloped away. The King watched him till he was out of sight, then turned to his squire and bade him bring another horse as quickly as he could. While he was waiting for it the wizard Merlin came along in the likeness of a boy, and asked the King why he was so thoughtful.

‘I may well be thoughtful,’ replied the King, ‘for I have seen the most wonderful sight in all the world.’

‘That I know well,’ said Merlin, ‘for I know all your thoughts. But it is folly to let your mind dwell on it, for thinking will mend nothing. I know, too, that Uther Pendragon was your father, and your mother was the Lady Igraine.’

‘How can a boy like you know that?’ cried Arthur, growing angry; but Merlin only answered, ‘I know it better than any man living,’ and passed, returning soon after in the likeness of an old man of fourscore, and sitting down by the well to rest.

‘What makes you so sad?’ asked he.

‘I may well be sad,’ replied Arthur, ‘there is plenty to make me so. And besides, there was a boy here who told me things that he had no business to know, and among them the names of my father and mother.’

‘He told you the truth,’ said the old man, ‘and if you would have listened he could have told you still more; how that your sister shall have a child who shall destroy you and all your Knights.’

‘Who are you?’ asked Arthur, wondering.

‘I am Merlin, and it was I who came to you in the likeness of a boy. I know all things; how that you shall die a noble death, being slain in battle, while my end will be shameful, for I shall be put alive into the earth.’

There was no time to say more, for the man brought up the King’s horse, and he mounted, and rode fast till he came to Carlion.

THE SWORD EXCALIBUR

King Arthur had fought a hard battle with the tallest Knight in all the land, and though he struck hard and well, he would have been slain had not Merlin enchanted the Knight and cast him into a deep sleep, and brought the King to a hermit who had studied the art of healing, and cured all his wounds in three days. Then Arthur and Merlin waited no longer, but gave the hermit thanks and departed.

As they rode together Arthur said, ‘I have no sword,’ but Merlin bade him be patient and he would soon give him one. In a little while they came to a large lake, and in the midst of the lake Arthur beheld an arm rising out of the water, holding up a sword. ‘Look!’ said Merlin, ‘that is the sword I spoke of.’ And the King looked again, and a maiden stood upon the water. ‘That is the Lady of the Lake,’ said Merlin, ‘and she is coming to you, and if you ask her courteously she will give you the sword.’ So when the maiden drew near Arthur saluted her and said, ‘Maiden, I pray you tell me whose sword is that which an arm is holding out of the water? I wish it were mine, for I have lost my sword.’

‘That sword is mine, King Arthur,’ answered she, ‘and I will give it to you, if you in return will give me a gift when I ask you.’

‘By my faith,’ said the King, ‘I will give you whatever gift you ask.’ ‘Well,’ said the maiden, ‘get into the barge yonder, and row yourself to the sword, and take it and the scabbard with you.’ For this was the sword Excalibur. ‘As for *my* gift, I will ask it in my own time.’ Then King Arthur and Merlin dismounted from their horses and tied them up safely, and went into the barge, and when they came to the place where the arm was holding the sword Arthur took it by the handle, and the arm disappeared. And they brought the sword back to land. As they rode the King looked lovingly on his sword, which Merlin saw, and, smiling, said, ‘Which do you like best, the sword or the scabbard?’ ‘I like the sword,’ answered Arthur. ‘You are not wise to say that,’ replied Merlin, ‘for the scabbard is worth ten of the sword, and as long as it is buckled on you you will lose no blood, however sorely you may be wounded.’ So they rode into the town of Carlion, and Arthur’s Knights gave them a glad welcome, and said it was a joy to serve under a King who risked his life as much as any common man.

THE STORY OF SIR BALIN

In those days many Kings reigned in the Islands of the Sea, and they constantly waged war upon each other, and on their liege lord, and news came to Arthur that Ryons, King of North Wales, had collected a large host and had ravaged his lands and slain some of his people. When he heard this, Arthur rose in anger, and commanded that all lords, Knights, and gentlemen of arms should meet him at Camelot, where he would call a council, and hold a tourney.

From every part the Knights flocked to Camelot, and the town was full to overflowing of armed men and their horses. And when they were all assembled, there rode in a damsel, who said she had come with a message from the great Lady Lile of Avelion, and begged that they would bring her before King Arthur. When she was led into his presence she let her mantle of fur slip off her shoulders, and they saw that by her side a richly wrought sword was buckled. The King was silent with wonder at the strange sight, but at last he said, ‘Damsel, why do you wear this sword? for swords are not the ornaments of women.’ ‘Oh, my lord,’ answered she, ‘I would I could find some Knight to rid me of this sword, which weighs me down and causes me much sorrow. But the man who will deliver me of it must be one who is mighty of his hands, and pure in his deeds, without villainy, or treason. If I find a Knight such as this, he will draw this sword out of its sheath, and he only. For I have been at the Court of

King Ryons, and he and his Knights tried with all their strength to draw the sword and they could not.’

‘Let me see if I can draw it,’ said Arthur, ‘not because I think myself the best Knight, for well I know how far I am outdone by others, but to set them an example that they may follow me.’ With that the King took the sword by the sheath and by the girdle, and pulled at it with all his force, but the sword stuck fast. ‘Sir,’ said the damsel, ‘you need not pull half so hard, for he that shall pull it out shall do it with little strength.’ ‘It is not for me,’ answered Arthur, ‘and now, my Barons, let each man try his fortune.’ So most of the Knights of the Round Table there present pulled, one after another, at the sword, but none could stir it from its sheath. ‘Alas! alas!’ cried the damsel in great grief, ‘I thought to find in this Court Knights that were blameless and true of heart, and now I know not where to look for them.’ ‘By my faith,’ said Arthur, ‘there are no better Knights in the world than these of mine, but I am sore displeased that they cannot help me in this matter.’

Now at that time there was a poor Knight at Arthur’s Court who had been kept prisoner for a year and a half because he had slain the King’s cousin. He was of high birth and his name was Balin, and after he had suffered eighteen months the punishment of his misdeed the Barons prayed the King to set him free, which Arthur did willingly. When Balin, standing apart beheld the Knights one by one try the sword, and fail to draw it, his heart beat fast, yet he shrank from taking his turn, for he was meanly dressed, and could not compare with the other Barons. But after the damsel had bid farewell to Arthur and his Court, and was setting out on her journey homewards, he called to her and said, ‘Damsel, I pray you to suffer me to try your sword, as well as these lords, for though I am so poorly clothed, my heart is as high as theirs.’ The damsel stopped and looked at him, and answered, ‘Sir, it is not needful to put you to such trouble, for where so many have failed it is hardly likely that you will succeed.’ ‘Ah! fair damsel,’ said Balin, ‘it is not fine clothes that make good deeds.’ ‘You speak truly,’ replied the damsel, ‘therefore do what you can.’ Then Balin took the sword by the girdle and sheath, and pulled it out easily, and when he looked at the sword he was greatly pleased with it. The King and the Knights were dumb with surprise that it was Balin who had triumphed over them, and many of them envied him and felt anger towards him. ‘In truth,’ said the damsel, ‘this is the best Knight that I ever found, but, Sir, I pray you give me the sword again.’

‘No,’ answered Balin, ‘I will keep it till it is taken from me by force.’ ‘It is for your sake, not mine, that I ask for it,’ said the damsel, ‘for with that sword you shall slay the man you love best, and it shall bring about your own ruin.’ ‘I will take what befalls me,’ replied Balin, ‘but the sword I will not give up, by the faith of my body.’ So the damsel departed in great sorrow. The next day Sir Balin left the Court, and, armed with his sword, set forth in search of adventures, which he found in many places where he had not thought to meet with them. In all the fights that he fought, Sir Balin was the victor, and Arthur, and Merlin his friend, knew that there was no Knight living of greater deeds, or more worthy of worship. And he was known to all as Sir Balin le Savage, the Knight of the two swords.

One day he was riding forth when at the turning of a road he saw a cross, and on it was written in letters of gold, ‘Let no Knight ride towards this castle.’ Sir Balin was still reading the writing when there came towards him an old man with white hair, who said, ‘Sir Balin le Savage, this is not the way for you, so turn again and choose some other path.’ And so he vanished, and a horn blew loudly, as a horn is blown at the death of a beast. ‘That blast,’ said Balin, ‘is for me, but I am still alive,’ and he rode to the castle, where a great company of knights and ladies met him and welcomed him, and made him a feast. Then the lady of the castle said to him, ‘Knight with the two swords, you must now fight a Knight that guards an island, for it is our law that no man may leave us without he first fight a tourney.’

‘That is a bad custom,’ said Balin, ‘but if I must I am ready; for though my horse is weary my heart is strong.’

‘Sir,’ said a Knight to him, ‘your shield does not look whole to me; I will lend you another’; so Balin listened to him and took the shield that was offered, and left his own with his own coat of arms behind him. He rode down to the shore, and led his horse into a boat, which took them across. When he reached the other side, a damsel came to him crying, ‘O Knight Balin, why have you left your own shield behind you? Alas! you have put yourself in great danger, for by your shield you should have been known. I grieve over your doom, for there is no man living that can rival you for courage and bold deeds.’

‘I repent,’ answered Balin, ‘ever having come into this country, but for very shame I must go on. Whatever befalls me, either for life or death, I am ready to take it.’ Then he examined his armour, and saw that it was whole, and mounted his horse.

As he went along the path he beheld a Knight come out of a castle in front, clothed in red, riding a horse with red trappings. When this red Knight looked on the two swords, he thought for a moment it was Balin, but the shield did not bear Balin’s device. So they rode at each other with their spears, and smote each other’s shields so hard that both horses and men fell to the ground with the shock, and the Knights lay unconscious on the ground for some minutes. But soon they rose up again and began the fight afresh, and they fought till the place was red with their blood, and they had each seven great wounds. 'What Knight are you?' asked Balin le Savage, pausing for breath, 'for never before have I found any Knight to match me.' 'My name,' said he, 'is Balan, brother to the good Knight Balin.'

'Alas!' cried Balin, 'that I should ever live to see this day,' and he fell back fainting to the ground. At this sight Balan crept on his feet and hands, and pulled off Balin's helmet, so that he might see his face. The fresh air revived Balin, and he awoke and said: 'O Balan, my brother, you have slain me, and I you, and the whole world shall speak ill of us both.'

'Alas,' sighed Balan, 'if I had only known you! I saw your two swords, but from your shield I thought you had been another knight.'

'Woe is me!' said Balin, 'all this was wrought by an unhappy knight in the castle, who caused me to change my shield for his. If I lived, I would destroy that castle that he should not deceive other men.'

'You would have done well,' answered Balan, 'for they have kept me prisoner ever since I slew a Knight that guarded this island, and they would have kept you captive too.' Then came the lady of the castle and her companions, and listened as they made their moan. And Balan prayed that she would grant them the grace to lie together, there where they died, and their wish was given them, and she and those that were with her wept for pity.

So they died; and the lady made a tomb for them, and put Balan's name alone on it, for Balin's name she knew not. But Merlin knew, and next morning he came and wrote it in letters of gold, and he ungirded Balin's sword, and unscrewed the pommel, and put another pommel on it, and bade a Knight that stood by handle it, but the Knight could not. At that Merlin laughed. 'Why do you laugh?' asked the Knight. 'Because,' said Merlin, 'no man shall handle this sword but the best Knight in the world, and that is either Sir Lancelot or his son Sir Galahad. With this sword Sir Lancelot shall slay the man he loves best, and Sir Gawaine is his name.' And this was later done, in a fight across the seas.

All this Merlin wrote on the pommel of the sword. Next he made a bridge of steel to the island, six inches broad, and no man could pass over it that was guilty of any evil deeds. The scabbard of the sword he left on this side of the island, so that Galahad should find it. The sword itself he put in a magic stone, which floated down the stream to Camelot, that is now called Winchester. And the same day Galahad came to the river, having in his hand the scabbard, and he saw the sword and pulled it out of the stone, as is told in another place.

HOW THE ROUND TABLE BEGAN

It was told in the story of the Questing Beast that King Arthur married the daughter of Leodegrance, King of Cameliard, but there was not space there to say how it came about. And as the tales of the Round Table are full of this lady, Queen Guenevere, it is well that anybody who reads this book should learn how she became Queen.

After King Arthur had fought and conquered many enemies, he said one day to Merlin, whose counsel he took all the days of his life, ‘My Barons will let me have no rest, but bid me take a wife, and I have answered them that I shall take none, except you advise me.’

‘It is well,’ replied Merlin, ‘that you should take a wife, but is there any woman that you love better than another?’ ‘Yes,’ said Arthur, ‘I love Guenevere, daughter of Leodegrance, King of Cameliard, in whose house is the Round Table that my father gave him. This maiden is the fairest that I have ever seen, or ever shall see.’ ‘Sir,’ answered Merlin, ‘what you say as to her beauty is true, but, if your heart was not set on her, I could find you another as fair, and of more goodness, than she. But if a man’s heart is once set it is idle to try to turn him.’ Then Merlin asked the King to give him a company of knights and esquires, that he might go to the Court of King Leodegrance and tell him that King Arthur desired to wed his daughter, which Arthur did gladly. Therefore Merlin rode forth and made all the haste he could till he came to the Castle of Cameliard, and told King Leodegrance who had sent him and why.

‘That is the best news I have ever had,’ replied Leodegrance, ‘for little did I think that so great and noble a King should seek to marry my daughter. As for lands to endow her with, I would give whatever he chose; but he has lands enough of his own, so I will give him instead something that will please him much more, the Round Table which Uther Pendragon gave me, where a hundred and fifty Knights can sit at one time. I myself can call to my side a hundred good Knights, but I lack fifty, for the wars have slain many, and some are absent.’ And without more words King Leodegrance gave his consent that his daughter should wed King Arthur. And Merlin returned with his Knights and esquires, journeying partly by water and partly by land, till they drew near to London.

When King Arthur heard of the coming of Merlin and of the Knights with the Round Table he was filled with joy, and said to those that stood about him, ‘This news that Merlin has brought me is welcome indeed, for I have long loved this fair lady, and the Round Table is dearer to me than great riches.’ Then he ordered that Sir Lancelot should ride to fetch the Queen, and that preparations for the marriage and her coronation should be made, which was done. ‘Now, Merlin,’ said the King, ‘go and look about my kingdom and bring fifty of the bravest and most famous Knights that can be found throughout the land.’ But no more than eight and twenty Knights could Merlin find. With these Arthur had to be content, and the Bishop of Canterbury was fetched, and he blessed the seats that were placed by the Round Table, and the Knights sat in them. ‘Fair Sirs,’ said Merlin, when the Bishop had ended his blessing, ‘arise all of you, and pay your homage to the King.’ So the Knights arose to do his bidding, and in every seat was the name of the Knight who had sat on it, written in letters of gold, but two seats were empty. After that young Gawaine came to the King, and prayed him to make him a Knight on the day that he should wed Guenevere. ‘That I will gladly,’ replied the King, ‘for you are my sister’s son.’

As the King was speaking, a poor man entered the Court, bringing with him a youth about eighteen years old, riding on a lean mare, though it was not the custom for gentlemen to ride on mares. ‘Where is King Arthur?’ asked the man. ‘Yonder,’ answered the Knights. ‘Have you business with him?’ ‘Yes,’ said the man, and he went and bowed low before the King: ‘I have heard, O King Arthur, flower of Knights and Kings, that at the time of your marriage you would give any man the gift he should ask for.’

‘That is truth,’ answered the King, ‘as long as I do no wrong to other men or to my kingdom.’

‘I thank you for your gracious words,’ said the poor man; ‘the boon I would ask is that you would make my son a Knight.’ ‘It is a great boon to ask,’ answered the King. ‘What is your name?’

‘Sir, my name is Aries the cowherd.’

‘Is it you or your son that has thought of this honour?’

‘It is my son who desires it, and not I,’ replied the man. ‘I have thirteen sons who tend cattle, and work in the fields if I bid them; but this boy will do nothing but shoot and cast darts, or go to watch battles and look on Knights, and all day long he beseeches me to bring him to you, that he may be knighted also.’

‘What is your name?’ said Arthur, turning to the young man.

‘Sir, my name is Tor.’

‘Where is your sword that I may knight you?’ said the King.

‘It is here, my lord.’

‘Take it out of its sheath,’ said the King, ‘and require me to make you a Knight.’ Then Tor jumped off his mare and pulled out his sword, and knelt before the King, praying that he might be made a Knight and a Knight of the Round Table.

‘As for a Knight, that I will make you,’ said Arthur, smiting him in the neck with the sword, ‘and if you are worthy of it you shall be a Knight of the Round Table.’ And the next day he made Gawaine Knight also.

THE PASSING OF MERLIN.

Sir Tor proved before long by his gallant deeds that he was worthy to sit in one of the two empty seats of the Round Table. Many of the other Knights went out also in search of adventures, and one of them, Sir Pellinore, brought a damsel of the lake to Arthur’s Court, and when Merlin saw her he fell in love with her, so that he desired to be always in her company. The damsel laughed in secret at Merlin, but made use of him to tell her all she would know, and the wizard had no strength to say her nay, though he knew what would come of it. For he told King Arthur that before long he should be put into the earth alive, for all his cunning. He likewise told the King many things that should befall him, and warned him always to keep the scabbard as well as the sword Excalibur, and foretold that both sword and scabbard should be stolen from him by a woman whom he most trusted. ‘You will miss my counsel sorely,’ added Merlin, ‘and would give all your lands to have me back again.’ ‘But since you know what will happen,’ said the King, ‘you may surely guard against it.’ ‘No,’ answered Merlin, ‘that will not be.’ So he departed from the King, and the maiden followed him whom some call Nimue and others Vivien, and wherever she went Merlin went also.

They journeyed together to many places, both at home and across the seas, and the damsel was wearied of him, and sought by every means to be rid of him, but he would not be shaken off. At last these two wandered back to Cornwall, and one day Merlin showed Vivien a rock under which he said great marvels were hidden. Then Vivien put forth all her powers, and told Merlin how she longed to see the wonders beneath the stone, and, in spite of all his wisdom, Merlin listened to her and crept under the rock to bring forth the strange things that lay there. And when he was under the stone she used the magic he had taught her, and the rock rolled over him, and buried him alive, as he had told King Arthur. But the damsel departed with joy, and thought no more of him: now that she knew all the magic he could teach her.

HOW MORGAN LE FAY TRIED TO KILL KING ARTHUR

King Arthur had a sister called Morgan le Fay, who was skilled in magic of all sorts, and hated her brother because he had slain in battle a Knight whom she loved. But to gain her own ends, and to revenge herself upon the King, she kept a smiling face, and let none guess the passion in her heart.

One day Morgan le Fay went to Queen Guenevere, and asked her leave to go into the country. The Queen wished her to wait till Arthur returned, but Morgan le Fay said she had had bad news and could not wait. Then the Queen let her depart without delay.

Early next morning at break of day Morgan le Fay mounted her horse and rode all day and all night, and at noon next day reached the Abbey of nuns where King Arthur had gone to rest, for he had fought a hard battle, and for three nights had slept but little. ‘Do not wake him,’ said Morgan le Fay, who had come there knowing she would find him, ‘I will rouse him myself when I think he has had enough sleep,’ for she thought to steal his sword Excalibur from him. The nuns dared not disobey her, so Morgan le Fay went straight into the room where King Arthur was lying fast asleep in his bed, and in his right hand was grasped his sword Excalibur. When she beheld that sight, her heart fell, for she dared not touch the sword, knowing well that if Arthur waked and saw her she was a dead woman. So she took the scabbard, and went away on horseback.

When the King awoke and missed his scabbard, he was angry, and asked who had been there; and the nuns told him that it was his sister Morgan le Fay, who had gone away with a scabbard under her mantle. ‘Alas!’ said Arthur, ‘you have watched me badly!’

‘Sir,’ said they, ‘we dared not disobey your sister.’

‘Saddle the best horse that can be found,’ commanded the King, ‘and bid Sir Ontzlake take another and come with me.’ And they buckled on their armour and rode after Morgan le Fay.

They had not gone far before they met a cowherd, and they stopped to ask if he had seen any lady riding that way. ‘Yes,’ said the cowherd, ‘a lady passed by here, with forty horses behind her, and went into the forest yonder.’ Then they galloped hard till Arthur caught sight of Morgan le Fay, who looked back, and, seeing that it was Arthur who gave chase, pushed on faster than before. And when she saw she could not escape him, she rode into a lake that lay in the plain on the edge of the forest, and, crying out, ‘Whatever may befall me, my brother shall not have the scabbard,’ she threw the scabbard far into the water, and it sank, for it was heavy with gold and jewels. After that she fled into a valley full of great stones, and turned herself and her men and her horses into blocks of marble. Scarcely had she done this when the King rode up, but seeing her nowhere thought some evil must have befallen her in vengeance for her misdeeds. He then sought high and low for the scabbard, but could not find it, so he returned unto the Abbey. When Arthur was gone, Morgan le Fay turned herself and her horses and her men back into their former shapes and said, ‘Now, Sirs, we may go where we will.’ And she departed into the country of Gore, and made her towns and castles stronger than before, for she feared King Arthur greatly. Meanwhile King Arthur had rested himself at the Abbey, and afterwards he rode to Camelot, and was welcomed by his Queen and all his Knights. And when he told his adventures and how Morgan le Fay sought his death they longed to burn her for her treason.

The next morning there arrived a damsel at the Court with a message from Morgan le Fay, saying that she had sent the King her brother a rich mantle for a gift, covered with precious stones, and begged him to receive it and to forgive her in whatever she might have offended him. The King answered little, but the mantle pleased him, and he was about to throw it over his shoulders when the lady of the lake stepped forward, and begged that she might speak to him in private. ‘What is it?’ asked the King. ‘Say on here, and fear nothing.’ ‘Sir,’ said the lady, ‘do not put on this mantle, or suffer your Knights to put it on, till the bringer of it has worn it in your presence.’ ‘Your words are wise,’ answered the King, ‘I will do as you counsel me. Damsel, I desire you to put on this mantle that you have brought me, so that I may see it.’ ‘Sir,’ said she, ‘it does not become me to wear a King’s garment.’ ‘By my head,’ cried Arthur, ‘you shall wear it before I put it on my back, or on the back of any of my Knights,’ and he signed to them to put it on her, and she fell down dead, burnt to ashes by the enchanted mantle. Then the King was filled with anger, more than he was before, that his sister should have dealt so wickedly by him.

WHAT BEAUMAINS ASKED OF THE KING

As Pentecost drew near King Arthur commanded that all the Knights of the Round Table should keep the feast at a city called Kin-Kenadon, hard by the sands of Wales, where there was a great castle. Now it was the King’s custom that he would eat no food on the day of Pentecost, which we call Whit Sunday, until he had heard or seen some great marvel. So on that morning Sir Gawaine was looking from the window a little before noon when he espied three men on horseback, and with them a dwarf on foot, who held their horses when they alighted. Then Sir Gawaine went to the King and said, ‘Sir, go to your food, for strange adventures are at hand.’ And Arthur called the other Kings that were in the castle, and all the Knights of the Round Table that were a hundred and fifty, and they sat down to dine. When they were seated there entered the hall two men well and richly dressed, and upon their shoulders leaned the handsomest young man that ever was seen of any of them, higher than the other two by a cubit. He was wide in the chest and large handed, but his great height seemed to be a burden and a shame to him, therefore it was he leaned on the shoulders of his friends. As soon as Arthur beheld him he made a sign, and without more words all three went up to the high daïs, where the King sat. Then the tall young man stood up straight, and said: ‘King Arthur, God bless you and all your fair fellowship, and in especial the fellowship of the Table Round. I have come hither to pray you to give me three gifts, which you can grant me honourably, for they will do no hurt to you or to anyone.’ ‘Ask,’ answered Arthur, ‘and you shall have your asking.’

‘Sir, this is my petition for this feast, for the other two I will ask after. Give me meat and drink for this one twelvemonth.’ ‘Well,’ said the king, ‘you shall have meat and drink enough, for that I give to every man, whether friend or foe. But tell me your name!’

‘I cannot tell you that,’ answered he. ‘That is strange,’ replied the King, ‘but you are the goodliest young man I ever saw,’ and, turning to Sir Kay, the steward, charged him to give the young man to eat and drink of the best, and to treat him in all ways as if he were a lord’s son. ‘There is little need to do that,’ answered Sir Kay, ‘for if he had come of gentlemen and not of peasants he would have asked of you a horse and armour. But as the birth of a man is so are his requests. And seeing he has no name I will give him one, and it shall be Beaumains, or Fair-hands, and he shall sit in the kitchen and eat broth, and at the end of a year he shall be as fat as any pig that feeds on acorns.’ So the young man was left in charge of Sir Kay, that scorned and mocked him.

Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawaine were wroth when they heard what Sir Kay said, and bade him leave off his mocking, for they believed the youth would turn out to be a man of great deeds; but Sir Kay paid no heed to them, and took him down to the great hall, and set him among the boys and lads, where he ate sadly. After he had finished eating both Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawaine bade him come to their room, and would have had him eat and drink there, but he refused, saying he was bound to obey Sir Kay, into whose charge the King had given him. So he was put into the kitchen by Sir Kay, and slept nightly with the kitchen boys. This he bore for a whole year, and was always mild and gentle, and gave hard words to no one. Only, whenever the Knights played at tourney he would steal out and watch them. And Sir Lancelot gave him gold to spend, and clothes to wear, and so did Gawaine. Also, if there were any games held whereat he might be, none could throw a bar nor cast a stone as far as he by two good yards.

Thus the year passed by till the feast of Whitsuntide came again, and this time the king held it at Carlion. But King Arthur would eat no meat at Whitsuntide till some adventures were told him, and glad was he when a squire came and said to him, ‘Sir you may go to your food, for here is a damsel with some strange tales.’ At this the damsel was led into the hall, and bowed low before the King, and begged he would give her help. ‘For whom?’ asked the King, ‘and what is the adventure?’ ‘Sir,’ answered she, ‘my sister is a noble lady of great fame, who is besieged by a tyrant, and may not get out of her castle. And it is because your Knights are said to be the noblest in all the world that I came to you for aid.’ ‘What is your sister’s name, and where does she dwell? And who is the man that besieges her, and where does he come from?’ ‘Sir King,’ answered she, ‘as for my sister’s name, I cannot tell it you now, but she is a lady of great beauty and goodness, and of many lands. As for the tyrant who besieges her, he is called the Red Knight of the Red Lawns.’ ‘I know nothing of him,’ said the King. ‘But I know him,’ cried Sir Gawaine, ‘and he is one of the most dangerous Knights in the world. Men say he has the strength of seven, and once when we had crossed swords I hardly escaped from him with my life.’ ‘Fair damsel,’ then said the King, ‘there are many Knights here who would go gladly to the rescue of your lady, but none of them shall do so with my consent unless you will tell us her name, and the place of her castle.’ ‘Then I must speak further,’ said the damsel. But before she had made answer to the King up came Beaumains, and spoke to Arthur, saying, ‘Sir King, I thank you that for this whole year I have lived in your kitchen, and had meat and drink, and now I will ask you for the two gifts that you promised me on this day.’ ‘Ask them,’ answered the King. ‘Sir, this shall be my two gifts. First grant me the adventure of this damsel, for it is mine by right.’ ‘You shall have it,’ said the King. ‘Then, Sir, you shall bid Sir Lancelot du Lake to make me Knight, for I will receive Knighthood at the hands of no other.’ ‘All this shall be done,’ said the King. ‘Fie on you,’ cried the damsel, ‘will you give me none but a kitchen boy to rescue my lady?’ and she went away in a rage, and mounted her horse.

No sooner had she left the hall than a page came to Beaumains and told him that a horse and fair armour had been brought for him, also there had arrived a dwarf carrying all things that a Knight needed. And when he was armed there were few men that were handsomer than he, and the Court wondered greatly whence these splendid trappings had come. Then Beaumains came into the hall, and took farewell of the King, and Sir Gawaine and Sir Lancelot, and prayed Sir Lancelot that he would follow after him. So he departed, and rode after the damsel. Many looked upon him and marvelled at the strength of his horse, and its golden trappings, and envied Beaumains his shining coat of mail; but they noted that he had neither shield nor spear. ‘I will ride after him,’ laughed Sir Kay, ‘and see if my kitchen boy will own me for his better.’ ‘Leave him and stay at home,’ said Sir Gawaine and Sir Lancelot, but Sir Kay would not listen and sprang upon his horse. Just as Beaumains came up with the damsel, Sir Kay reached Beaumains, and said, ‘Beaumains, do you not know me?’

Beaumains turned and looked at him, and answered, ‘Yes, I know you for an ill-mannered Knight, therefore beware of me.’ At this Sir Kay put his spear in rest and charged him, and Beaumains drew his sword and charged Sir Kay, and dashed aside the spear, and thrust him through the side, till Sir Kay fell down as if he had been dead, and Beaumains took his shield and spear for himself. Then he sprang on his own horse, bidding first his dwarf take Sir Kay’s horse, and rode away. All this was seen by Sir Lancelot, who had followed him, and also by the damsel. In a little while Beaumains stopped, and asked Sir Lancelot if he would tilt with him, and they came together with such a shock that both the horses and their riders fell to the earth and were bruised sorely. Sir Lancelot was the first to rise, and he helped Beaumains from his horse, and Beaumains threw his shield from him, and offered to fight on foot. And they rushed together like wild boars, turning and thrusting and parrying for the space of an hour, and Sir Lancelot marvelled at the young man’s strength, and thought he was more like a giant than a Knight, and dreading lest he himself should be put to shame, he said: ‘Beaumains, do not fight so hard, we have no quarrel that forbids us to leave off.’ ‘That is true,’ answered Beaumains, laying down his arms, ‘but it does me good, my lord, to feel your might.’ ‘Well,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘I promise you I had much ado to save myself from you unshamed, therefore have no fear of any other Knight.’ ‘Do you think I could really stand against a proved Knight?’ asked Beaumains. ‘Yes,’ said Lancelot, ‘if you fight as you have fought to-day I will be your warrant against anyone.’ ‘Then I pray you,’ cried Beaumains, ‘give me the order of knighthood.’ ‘You must first tell me your name,’ replied Lancelot, ‘and who are your kindred.’ ‘You will not betray me if I do?’ asked Beaumains. ‘No, that I will never do, till it is openly known,’ said Lancelot. ‘Then, Sir, my name is Gareth, and Sir Gawaine is my brother.’ ‘Ah, Sir,’ cried Lancelot, ‘I am gladder of you than ever I was, for I was sure you came of good blood, and that you did not come to the Court for meat and drink only.’ And he bade him kneel, and gave him the order of knighthood.

After that Sir Gareth wished to go his own ways, and departed. When he was gone, Sir Lancelot went back to Sir Kay and ordered some men that were by to bear him home on a shield, and in time his wounds were healed; but he was scorned of all men, and especially of Sir Gawaine and Sir Lancelot, who told him it was no good deed to treat any young man so, and no one could tell what his birth might be, or what had brought him to the Court.

Then Beaumains rode after the damsel, who stopped when she saw him coming. ‘What are you doing here?’ said she. ‘Your clothes smell of the grease and tallow of the kitchen! Do you think to change my heart towards you because of yonder Knight whom you slew? No, truly! I know well who you are, you turner of spits! Go back to King Arthur’s kitchen, which is your proper place.’ ‘Damsel,’ replied Beaumains, ‘you may say to me what you will, but I shall not quit you whatever you may do, for I have vowed to King Arthur to relieve the lady in the castle, and I shall set her free or die fighting for her.’ ‘Fie on you, Scullion,’ answered she. ‘You will meet with one who will make you such a welcome that you would give all the broth you ever cooked never to have seen his face.’ ‘I shall do my best to fight him,’ said Beaumains, and held his peace.

Soon they entered the wood, and there came a man flying towards them, galloping with all his might. ‘Oh, help! help! lord,’ cried he, ‘for my master lies in a thicket, bound by six thieves, and I greatly fear they will slay him.’ ‘Show me the way,’ said Sir Beaumains, and they rode together till they reached the place where the Knight lay bound. Then Sir Beaumains charged the six thieves, and struck one dead, and another, and another still, and the other three fled, not liking the battle. Sir Beaumains pursued them till they turned at bay, and fought hard for their lives; but in the end Sir Beaumains slew them, and returned to the Knight and unbound him. The Knight thanked Beaumains heartily for his deliverance, and prayed him to come to his castle, where he would reward him. ‘Sir,’ said Beaumains, ‘I was this day made Knight by noble Sir Lancelot, and that is reward enough for anything I may do. Besides, I must follow this damsel.’ But when he came near her she reviled him as before, and bade him ride far from her. ‘Do you think I set store by what you have done? You will soon see a sight that will make you tell a very different tale.’ At this the Knight whom Beaumains had rescued rode up to the damsel, and begged that she would rest in his castle that night, as the sun was now setting. The damsel agreed, and the Knight ordered a great supper, and gave Sir Beaumains a seat above the seat of the damsel, who rose up in anger. ‘Fie! fie! Sir Knight,’ cried she, ‘you are uncourteous to set a mere kitchen page before me; he is not fit to be in the company of high-born people.’ Her words struck shame into the Knight, and he took Beaumains and set him at a side table, and seated himself before him.

In the early morning Sir Beaumains and the damsel bade farewell to the Knight, and rode through the forest till they came to a great river, where stood two Knights on the further side, guarding the passage. ‘Well, what do you say now?’ asked the damsel. ‘Will you fight them or turn back?’ ‘I would not turn if there were six more of them,’ answered Sir Beaumains, and he rushed into the water and so did one of the Knights. They came together in the middle of the stream, and their spears broke in two with the force of the charge, and they drew their swords, hitting hard at each other. At length Sir Beaumains dealt the other Knight such a blow that he fell from his horse, and was drowned in the river. Then Beaumains put his horse at the bank, where the second Knight was waiting for him, and they fought long together, till Sir Beaumains clave his helmet in two. So he left him dead, and rode after the damsel. ‘Alas!’ she cried, ‘that even a kitchen page should have power to destroy two such Knights! You think you have done mighty things, but you are wrong! As to the first Knight, his horse stumbled, and he was drowned before you ever touched him. And the other you took from behind, and struck him when he was defenceless.’ ‘Damsel!’ answered Beaumains, ‘you may say what you will, I care not what it is, so I may deliver this lady.’ ‘Fie, foul kitchen knave, you shall see Knights that will make you lower your crest.’ ‘I pray you be more civil in your language,’ answered Beaumains, ‘for it matters not to me what Knights they be, I will do battle with them.’ ‘I am trying to turn you back for your own good,’ answered she, ‘for if you follow me you are certainly a dead man, as well I know all you have won before has been by luck.’ ‘Say what you will, damsel,’ said he, ‘but where you go I will follow you,’ and they rode together till eventide, and all the way she chid him and gave him no rest.

At length they reached an open space where there was a black lawn, and on the lawn a black hawthorn, whereon hung a black banner on one side, and a black shield and spear, big and long, on the other. Close by stood a black horse covered with silk, fastened to a black stone. A Knight, covered with black armour, sat on the horse, and when she saw him the damsel bade him ride away, as his horse was not saddled. But the Knight drew near and said to her, ‘Damsel, have you brought this Knight from King Arthur’s Court to be your champion?’ ‘No, truly,’ answered she, ‘this is but a kitchen boy, fed by King Arthur for charity.’ ‘Then why is he clad in armour?’ asked the Knight; ‘it is a shame that he should even bear you company.’ ‘I cannot be rid of him,’ said she, ‘he rides with me against my will. I would that you were able to deliver me from him! Either slay him or frighten him off, for by ill fortune he has this day slain the two Knights of the passage.’ ‘I wonder much,’ said the Black Knight, ‘that any man who is well born should consent to fight with him.’ ‘They do not know him,’ replied the damsel, ‘and they think he must be a famous Knight because he rides with me.’ ‘That may be,’ said the Black Knight, ‘but he is well made, and looks likely to be a strong man; still I promise you I will just throw him to the ground, and take away his horse and armour, for it would be a shame to me to do more.’ When Sir Beaumains heard him talk thus he looked up and said, ‘Sir Knight, you are lightly disposing of my horse and armour, but I would have you know that I will pass this lawn, against your will or not, and you will only get my horse and armour if you win them in fair fight. Therefore let me see what you can do.’ ‘Say you so?’ answered the Knight, ‘now give up the lady at once, for it ill becomes a kitchen page to ride with a lady of high degree.’ ‘It is a lie,’ said Beaumains, ‘I am a gentleman born, and my birth is better than yours, as I will prove upon your body.’

With that they drew back their horses so as to charge each other hotly, and for the space of an hour and a half they fought fiercely and well, but in the end a blow from Beaumains threw the Knight from his horse, and he swooned and died. Then Beaumains jumped down, and seeing that the Knight’s horse and armour were better than his own, he took them for himself, and rode after the damsel. While they were thus riding together, and the damsel was chiding him as ever she did, they saw a Knight coming towards them dressed all in green. ‘Is that my brother the Black Knight who is with you?’ asked he of the damsel. ‘No, indeed,’ she replied, ‘this unhappy kitchen knave has slain your brother, to my great sorrow.’ ‘Alas!’ sighed the Green Knight, ‘that my brother should die so meanly at the hand of a kitchen knave. Traitor!’ he added, turning to Beaumains, ‘thou shalt die for slaying my brother, for he was a noble Knight, and his name was Sir Percard.’ ‘I defy you,’ said Beaumains, ‘for I slew him as a good Knight should.’

Then the Green Knight seized a horn which hung from a horn tree, and blew three notes upon it, and two damsels came and armed him, and fastened on him a green shield and a green spear. So the fight began and raged long, first on horseback and then on foot, till both were sore wounded. At last the damsel came and stood beside them, and said, ‘My lord the Green Knight, why for very shame do you stand so long fighting a kitchen knave? You ought never to have been made a Knight at all!’ These scornful words stung the heart of the Green Knight, and he dealt a mighty stroke which cleft asunder the shield of Beaumains. And when Beaumains saw this, he struck a blow upon the Knight’s helmet which brought him to his knees, and Beaumains leapt on him, and dragged him to the ground. Then the Green Knight cried for mercy, and offered to yield himself prisoner unto Beaumains. ‘It is all in vain,’ answered Beaumains, ‘unless the damsel prays me for your life,’ and therewith he unlaced his helmet as though he would slay him. ‘Fie upon thee, false kitchen page!’ said the damsel, ‘I will never pray to save his life, for I am sure he is in no danger.’ ‘Suffer me not to die,’ entreated the Knight, ‘when a word may save me!’ ‘Fair Knight,’ he went on, turning to Beaumains, ‘save my life, and I will forgive you the death of my brother, and will do you service for ever, and will bring thirty of my Knights to serve you likewise.’ ‘It is a shame,’ cried the damsel, ‘that such a kitchen knave should have you and thirty Knights besides.’ ‘Sir Knight,’ said Beaumains, ‘I care nothing for all this, but if I am to spare your life the damsel must ask for it,’ and he stepped forward as if to slay him. ‘Let be, foul knave,’ then said the damsel, ‘do not slay him. If you do, you will repent it.’ ‘Damsel,’ answered Beaumains, ‘it is a pleasure to me to obey you, and at your wish I will save his life. Sir Knight with the green arms, I release you at the request of this damsel, and I will fulfil all she charges me.’

Then the Green Knight kneeled down, and did him homage with his sword. ‘I am sorry,’ said the damsel, ‘for the wounds you have received, and for your brother’s death, for I had great need of you both, and have much dread of passing the forest.’ ‘Fear nothing,’ answered the Green Knight, ‘for this evening you shall lodge in my house, and to-morrow I will show you the way through the forest.’ And they went with the Green Knight. But the damsel did not mend her ways with Beaumains, and ever more reviled him, till the Green Knight rebuked her, saying Beaumains was the noblest Knight that held a spear, and that in the end she would find he had sprung from some great King. And the Green Knight summoned the thirty Knights who did him service, and bade them henceforth do service to Beaumains, and keep him from treachery, and when he had need of them they would be ready to obey his orders. So they bade each other farewell, and Beaumains and the damsel rode forth anew. In like manner did Sir Beaumains overcome the Red Knight, who was the third brother, and the Red Knight cried for mercy, and offered to bring sixty Knights to do him service, and Beaumains spared his life at the request of the damsel, and likewise it so happened to Sir Persant of Inde.

And this time the damsel prayed Beaumains to give up the fight, saying, ‘Sir, I wonder who you are and of what kindred you have come. Boldly you speak, and boldly you have done; therefore I pray you to depart and save yourself while you may, for both you and your horse have suffered great fatigues, and I fear we delay too long, for the besieged castle is but seven miles from this place, and all the perils are past save this one only. I dread sorely lest you should get some hurt; yet this Sir Persant of Inde is nothing in might to the Knight who has laid siege to my lady.’ But Sir Beaumains would not listen to her words, and vowed that by two hours after noon he would have overthrown him, and that it would still be daylight when they reached the castle. ‘What sort of a man can you be?’ answered the damsel, looking at him in wonder, ‘for never did a woman treat a Knight as ill and shamefully as I have done you, while you have always been gentle and courteous to me, and no one bears himself like that save he who is of noble blood.’ ‘Damsel,’ replied Beaumains, ‘your hard words only drove me to strike the harder, and though I ate in King Arthur’s kitchen, perhaps I might have had as much food as I wanted elsewhere. But all I have done was to make proof of my friends, and whether I am a gentleman or not, fair damsel, I have done you gentleman’s service, and may perchance, do you greater service before we part from each other.’ ‘Alas, fair Beaumains, forgive me all that I have said and done against you.’ ‘With all my heart,’ he answered, ‘and since you are pleased now to speak good words to me, know that I hear them gladly, and there is no Knight living but I feel strong enough to meet him.’

So Beaumains conquered Sir Persant of Inde, who brought a hundred Knights to be sworn into his service, and the next morning the damsel led him to the castle, where the Red Knight of the Red Lawn held fast the lady. ‘Heaven defend you,’ cried Sir Persant, when they told him where they were going; ‘that is the most perilous Knight now living, for he has the strength of seven men. He has done great wrong to that lady, who is one of the fairest in all the world, and it seems to me as if this damsel must be her sister. Is not her name Linet?’ ‘Yes, Sir,’ answered she, ‘and my lady my sister’s name is dame Lyonesse.’ ‘The Red Knight has drawn out the siege for two years,’ said Sir Persant, ‘though he might have forced an entrance many a time, but he hoped that Sir Lancelot du Lake or Sir Tristram or Sir Gawaine should come to do battle with him.’ ‘My Lord Sir Persant of Inde,’ said the damsel, ‘I bid you knight this gentleman before he fight with the Red Knight.’ ‘That I will gladly,’ replied Sir Persant, ‘if it please him to take the order of knighthood from so simple a man as I am.’ ‘Sir,’ answered Beaumains, ‘I thank you for your goodwill, but at the beginning of this quest I was made a Knight by Sir Lancelot. My name is Sir Gareth of Orkney and Sir Gawaine is my brother, though neither he nor King Arthur, whose sister is my mother, knows of it. I pray you to keep it close also.’

Now word was brought unto the besieged lady by the dwarf that her sister was coming to her with a Knight sent by King Arthur. And when the lady heard all that Beaumains had done, and how he had overthrown all who stood in his way, she bade her dwarf take baked venison, and fat capons, and two silver flagons of wine and a gold cup, and put them into the hands of a hermit that dwelt in a hermitage close by. The dwarf did so, and the lady then sent him to greet her sister and Sir Beaumains, and to beg them to eat and drink in the hermit’s cell, and rest themselves, which they did. When they drew near the besieged castle

Sir Beaumains saw full forty Knights, with spurs on their heels and swords in their hands, hanging from the tall trees that stood upon the lawn. ‘Fair Sir,’ said the damsel, ‘these Knights came hither to rescue my sister, dame Lyonesse; and if you cannot overthrow the Knight of the Red Lawn, you will hang there too.’

‘Truly,’ answered Beaumains, ‘it is a marvel that none of King Arthur’s Knights has dealt with the Knight of the Red Lawn ere this’; and they rode up to the castle, which had round it high walls and deep ditches, till they came to a great sycamore tree, where hung a horn. And whoso desired to do battle with the Red Knight must blow that horn loudly.

‘Sir, I pray you,’ said Linet, as Beaumains bent forward to seize it, ‘do not blow it till it is full noontide, for during three hours before that the Red Knight’s strength so increases that it is as the strength of seven men; but when noon is come, he has the might of one man only.’

‘Ah! for shame, damsel, to say such words. I will fight him as he is, or not at all,’ and Beaumains blew such a blast that it rang through the castle. And the Red Knight buckled on his armour, and came to where Beaumains stood. So the battle began, and a fierce one it was, and much ado had Beaumains to last out till noon, when the Red Knight’s strength began to wane; they rested, and came on again, and in the end the Red Knight yielded to Sir Beaumains, and the lords and barons in the castle did homage to the victor, and begged that the Red Knight’s life might be spared on condition they all took service with Beaumains. This was granted to them, and Linet bound up his wounds and put ointment on them, and so she did likewise to Sir Beaumains. But the Red Knight was sent to the Court of King Arthur, and told him all that Sir Beaumains had done. And King Arthur and his Knights marvelled.

Now Sir Beaumains had looked up at the windows of Castle Perilous before the fight, and had seen the face of the Lady Lyonesse, and had thought it the fairest in all the world. After he had subdued the Red Knight, he hasted into the castle, and the Lady Lyonesse welcomed him, and he told her he had bought her love with the best blood in his body. And she did not say him nay, but put him off for a time. Then the King sent letters to her to bid her, and likewise Sir Gareth, come to his Court, and by the counsel of Sir Gareth she prayed the King to let her call a tournament, and to proclaim that the Knight who bore himself best should, if he was unwedded, take her and all her lands. But if he had a wife already he should be given a white ger-falcon, and for his wife a crown of gold, set about with precious stones.

So the Lady Lyonesse did as Sir Gareth had counselled her, and answered King Arthur that where Sir Gareth was she could not tell, but that if the King would call a tourney he might be sure that Sir Gareth would come to it. ‘It is well thought of,’ said Arthur, and the Lady Lyonesse departed unto Castle Perilous, and summoned all her Knights around her, and told them what she had done, and how they were to make ready to fight in the tournament. She began at once to set her castle in order, and to think what she should do with the great array of Knights that would ride hither from the furthest parts — from Scotland and Wales and Cornwall — and to lodge fitly the Kings, Dukes, Earls, and Barons that should come with Arthur. Queen Guenevere also she awaited, and the Queen of Orkney, Sir Gareth’s mother. But Sir Gareth entreated the Lady Lyonesse and those Knights that were in the castle with him not to let his name be known, and this they agreed to.

‘Sir Gareth,’ said dame Lyonesse, ‘I will lend you a ring, which I beseech you for the love you bear me to give me back when the tournament is done, for without it I have but little beauty. This ring is like no other ring, it will turn green red, and blue white, and the bearer shall lose no blood, however sore he may be wounded.’

‘Truly, my own lady,’ answered Sir Gareth, ‘this ring will serve me well, and by its help I shall not fear that any man shall know me.’ And Sir Gringamore, brother to the Lady Lyonesse, gave him a bay horse, and strong armour, and a sharp sword that had once belonged to his father. On the morning of the fifteenth of August, when the Feast of the Assumption was kept, the King commanded his heralds to blow loudly their trumpets, so that every Knight might know that he must enter the lists. It was a noble sight to see them flocking clad in shining armour, each man with his device upon his shield. And the heralds marked who bare them best, and who were overthrown. All marvelled as to who the Knight could be whose armour sometimes seemed green, and sometimes white, but no man knew it was Sir Gareth. And whosoever Sir Gareth tilted with was straightway overthrown. ‘Of a truth,’ cried King Arthur, ‘that Knight with the many colours is a good Knight,’ and he called Sir Lancelot and bade him to challenge that Knight to combat. But Sir Lancelot said that though the Knight had come off victor in every fight, yet his limbs must be weary, for he had fought as a man fights under the eyes of his lady, ‘and for this day,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘he shall have the honour. Though it lay in my power to put it from him, I would not.’

Then they paused for a while to rest, and afterwards the tournament began again more fiercely than before, and Sir Lancelot was set upon by two Knights at once. When Sir Gareth saw that, he rode in between them, but no stroke would he deal Sir Lancelot, which Sir Lancelot noted, and guessed that it was the good Knight Sir Gareth. Sir Gareth went hither and thither, smiting anyone that came in his way, and by fortune he met with his brother Sir Gawaine, and knocked off his helmet. Now it happened that while he was fighting a Knight dealt Sir Gareth a fierce blow on his helm, and he rode off the field to mend it. Then his dwarf, who had been watching eagerly, cried out to Sir Gareth to leave the ring with him, lest he should lose it while he was drinking, which Sir Gareth did; and when he had drunk and mended his helm he forgot the ring, at which the dwarf was glad, for he knew his name could no longer be hid. And when Sir Gareth returned to the field, his armour shone yellow like gold, and King Arthur marvelled what Knight he was, for he saw by his hair that he was the same Knight who had worn the many colours. ‘Go,’ he said to his heralds, ‘ride near him and see what manner of Knight he is, for none can tell me his name.’ So a herald drew close to him, and saw that on his helm was written in golden letters ‘This helm belongs to Sir Gareth of Orkney’; and the herald cried out and made proclamation, and the Kings and Knights pressed to behold him. And when Sir Gareth saw he was discovered, he struck more fiercely than before, and smote down Sir Sagramore, and his brother Sir Gawaine. ‘O brother,’ said Sir Gawaine, ‘I did not think you would have smitten me!’ When Sir Gareth heard him say that he rode out of the press, and cried to his dwarf, ‘Boy, you have played me foul, for you have kept my ring. Give it to me now, that I may hide myself,’ and he galloped swiftly into the forest, and no one knew where he had gone. ‘What shall I do next?’ asked he of the dwarf. ‘Sir,’ answered the dwarf, ‘send the Lady Lyonesse back her ring.’ ‘Your counsel is good,’ said Gareth; ‘take it to her, and commend me to her grace, and say I will come when I may, and bid her to be faithful to me, as I am to her.’ After that Sir Gareth rode deeper into the forest.

Though Sir Gareth had left the tournament he found that there were as many fights awaiting him as if he had remained there. He overcame all his foes, and sent them and their followers to do homage to King Arthur, but he himself stayed behind. He was standing alone after they had gone, when he beheld an armed Knight coming towards him. Sir Gareth sprang on his horse, and without a word the two crashed together like thunder, and strove hard for two hours, till the ground was wet with blood. At that time the damsel Linet came riding by, and saw what was doing, and knew who were the fighters. And she cried ‘Sir Gawaine, Sir Gawaine, leave fighting with your brother Sir Gareth.’ Then he threw down his shield and sword, and ran to Sir Gareth, and first took him in his arms and next kneeled down and asked mercy of him. ‘Why do you, who were but now so strong and mighty, so suddenly yield to me?’ asked Sir Gareth, who had not perceived the damsel. ‘O Gareth, I am your brother, and have had much sorrow for your sake.’ At this Sir Gareth unlaced his helm and knelt before Sir Gawaine, and they rose and embraced each other. ‘Ah, my fair brother,’ said Sir

Gawaine, ‘I ought rightly to do you homage, even if you were not my brother, for in this twelvemonth you have sent King Arthur more Knights than any six of the best men of the Round Table.’ While he was speaking there came the Lady Linet, and healed the wounds of Sir Gareth and of Sir Gawaine. ‘What are you going to do now?’ asked she. ‘It is time that King Arthur had tidings of you both, and your horses are not fit to bear you.’

‘Ride, I pray you,’ said Sir Gawaine, ‘to my uncle King Arthur, who is but two miles away, and tell him what adventure has befallen me.’ So she mounted her mule, and when she had told her tale to King Arthur, he bade them saddle him a palfrey and invited all the Knights and ladies of his Court to ride with him. When they reached the place they saw Sir Gareth and Sir Gawaine sitting on the hill-side. The King jumped off his horse, and would have greeted them, but he swooned away for gladness, and they ran and comforted him, and also their mother.

The two Knights stayed in King Arthur’s Court for eight days, and rested themselves and grew strong. Then said the King to Linet, ‘I wonder that your sister, dame Lyonesse, does not come here to visit me, or more truly to visit my nephew, Sir Gareth, who has worked so hard to win her love.’

‘My lord,’ answered Linet, ‘you must, by your grace, hold her excused, for she does not know that Sir Gareth is here.’

‘Go and fetch her, then,’ said Arthur.

‘That I will do quickly,’ replied Linet, and by the next morning she had brought dame Lyonesse, and her brother Sir Gringamore, and forty Knights, but among the ladies dame Lyonesse was the fairest, save only Queen Guenevere. They were all welcomed of King Arthur, who turned to his nephew Sir Gareth and asked him whether he would have that lady to his wife.

‘My lord,’ replied Sir Gareth, ‘you know well that I love her above all the ladies in the world.’

‘And what say you, fair lady?’ asked the King.

‘Most noble King,’ said dame Lyonesse, ‘I would sooner have Sir Gareth as my husband than any King or Prince that may be christened, and if I may not have him I promise you I will have none. For he is my first love, and shall be my last. And if you will suffer him to have his will and choice, I dare say he will have me.’

‘That is truth,’ said Sir Gareth.

‘What, nephew,’ cried the King, ‘sits the wind in that door? Then you shall have all the help that is in my power,’ and so said Gareth’s mother. And it was fixed that the marriage should be at Michaelmas, at Kin-Kenadon by the sea-shore, and thus it was proclaimed in all places of the realm. Then Sir Gareth sent his summons to all the Knights and ladies that he had won in battle that they should be present, and he gave a rich ring to the Lady Lyonesse, and she gave him one likewise. And before she departed she had from King Arthur a shining golden bee, as a token. After that Sir Gareth set her on her way towards her castle, and returned unto the King. But he would ever be in Sir Lancelot's company, for there was no Knight that Sir Gareth loved so well as Sir Lancelot. The days drew fast to Michaelmas, and there came the Lady Lyonesse with her sister Linet and her brother Sir Gringamore to Kin-Kenadon by the sea, and there were they lodged by order of King Arthur. And upon Michaelmas Day the Bishop of Canterbury wedded Sir Gareth and the Lady Lyonesse with great ceremonies, and King Arthur commanded that Sir Gawaine should be joined to the damsel Linet, and Sir Agrawaine to the niece of dame Lyonesse, whose name was Laurel. Then the Knights whom Sir Gareth had won in battle came with their followings and did homage to him, and the Green Knight besought him that he might act as chamberlain at the feast, and the Red Knight that he might be his steward. As soon as the feast was ended, they had all manner of minstrelsy and games and a great tournament that lasted three days, but at the prayer of dame Lyonesse the King would not suffer that any man who was wedded should fight at that feast.

THE QUEST OF THE HOLY GRAAL

This is a mysterious part of the adventures of King Arthur's Knights. We must remember that parts of these stories are very old; they were invented by the heathen Welsh, or by the ancient Britons, from whom the Welsh are descended, and by the old pagan Irish, who spoke Gaelic, a language not very unlike Welsh. Then these ancient stories were translated by French and other foreign writers, and Christian beliefs and chivalrous customs were added in the French romances, and, finally, the French was translated into English about the time of Edward IV. by Sir Thomas Malory, who altered as he pleased. The Story of the Holy Graal, in this book, is mostly taken from Malory, but partly from 'The High History of the Holy Graal,' translated by Dr. Sebastian Evans from an old French book.

What *was* the Holy Graal? In the stories it is the holy vessel used by our Lord, and brought to Britain by Joseph of Arimathea. But in the older heathen Irish stories there is a mysterious vessel of a magical sort, full of miraculous food, and probably the French writers of the romances confused this with the sacred vessel brought from the Holy Land. On account of the sins of men this relic was made invisible, but now and then it appeared, borne by angels or floating in a heavenly light. The Knights, against King Arthur's wish, made a vow to find it, and gave up their duties of redressing wrongs and keeping order, to pursue the beautiful vision. But most of them, for their sins, were unsuccessful, like Sir Lancelot, and the Round Table was scattered and the kingdom was weakened by the neglect of ordinary duties in the search for what could never be gained by mortal men. This appears to be the moral of the story, if it has any moral. But the stories are confused almost like a dream, though it is a beautiful dream.

I

HOW THE KING WENT ON PILGRIMAGE, AND HIS SQUIRE WAS SLAIN IN A DREAM

Now the King was minded to go on a pilgrimage, and he agreed with the Queen that he would set forth to seek the holy chapel of St. Augustine, which is in the

White Forest, and may only be found by adventure. Much he wished to undertake the quest alone, but this the Queen would not suffer, and to do her pleasure he consented that a youth, tall and strong of limb, should ride with him as his squire. Chaus was the youth’s name, and he was son to Gwain li Aoutres. ‘Lie within to-night,’ commanded the King, ‘and take heed that my horse be saddled at break of day, and my arms ready.’ ‘At your pleasure, Sir,’ answered the youth, whose heart rejoiced because he was going alone with the King.

As night came on, all the Knights quitted the hall, but Chaus the squire stayed where he was, and would not take off his clothes or his shoes, lest sleep should fall on him and he might not be ready when the King called him. So he sat himself down by the great fire, but in spite of his will sleep fell heavily on him, and he dreamed a strange dream.

In his dream it seemed that the King had ridden away to the quest, and had left his squire behind him, which filled the young man with fear. And in his dream he set the saddle and bridle on his horse, and fastened his spurs, and girt on his sword, and galloped out of the castle after the King. He rode on a long space, till he entered a thick forest, and there before him lay traces of the King’s horse, and he followed till the marks of the hoofs ceased suddenly at some open ground and he thought that the King had alighted there. On the right stood a chapel, and about it was a graveyard, and in the graveyard many coffins, and in his dream it seemed as if the King had entered the chapel, so the young man entered also. But no man did he behold save a Knight that lay dead upon a bier in the midst of the chapel, covered with a pall of rich silk, and four tapers in golden candlesticks were burning round him. The squire marvelled to see the body lying there so lonely, with no one near it, and likewise that the King was nowhere to be seen. Then he took out one of the tall tapers, and hid the candlestick under his cloak, and rode away until he should find the King.

On his journey through the forest he was stopped by a man black and ill-favoured, holding a large knife in his hand.

‘Ho! you that stand there, have you seen King Arthur?’ asked the squire.

‘No, but I have met you, and I am glad thereof, for you have under your cloak one of the candlesticks of gold that was placed in honour of the Knight who lies dead in the chapel. Give it to me, and I will carry it back; and if you do not this of your own will, I will make you.’

‘By my faith!’ cried the squire, ‘I will never yield it to you! Rather, will I carry it off and make a present of it to King Arthur.’

‘You will pay for it dearly,’ answered the man, ‘if you yield it not up forthwith.’

To this the squire did not make answer, but dashed forward, thinking to pass him by; but the man thrust at him with his knife, and it entered his body up to the hilt. And when the squire dreamed this, he cried, ‘Help! help! for I am a dead man!’

As soon as the King and the Queen heard that cry they awoke from their sleep, and the Chamberlain said, ‘Sir, you must be moving, for it is day’; and the King rose and dressed himself, and put on his shoes. Then the cry came again: ‘Fetch me a priest, for I die!’ and the King ran at great speed into the hall, while the Queen and the Chamberlain followed him with torches and candles. ‘What aileth you?’ asked the King of his squire, and the squire told him of all that he had dreamed. ‘Ha,’ said the King, ‘is it, then, a dream?’ ‘Yes, Sir,’ answered the squire, ‘but it is a right foul dream for me, for right foully it hath come true,’ and he lifted his left arm, and said, ‘Sir, look you here! Lo, here is the knife that was struck in my side up to the haft.’ After that, he drew forth the candlestick, and showed it to the King. ‘Sir, for this candlestick that I present to you was I wounded to the death!’ The King took the candlestick in his hands and looked at it, and none so rich had he seen before, and he bade the Queen look also. ‘Sir,’ said the squire again, ‘draw not forth the knife out of my body till I be shriven of the priest.’ So the King commanded that a priest should be sent for, and when the squire had confessed his sins, the King drew the knife out of the body and the soul departed forthwith. Then the King grieved that the young man had come to his death in such strange wise, and ordered him a fair burial, and desired that the golden candlestick should be sent to the Church of Saint Paul in London, which at that time was newly built.

After this King Arthur would have none to go with him on his quest, and many strange adventures he achieved before he reached the chapel of St. Augustine, which was in the midst of the White Forest. There he alighted from his horse, and sought to enter, but though there was neither door nor bar he might not pass the threshold. But from without he heard wondrous voices singing, and saw a light shining brighter than any that he had seen before, and visions such as he scarcely dared to look upon. And he resolved greatly to amend his sins, and to bring peace and order into his kingdom. So he set forth, strengthened and comforted, and after divers more adventures returned to his Court.

II

THE COMING OF THE HOLY GRAAL

It was on the eve of Pentecost that all the Knights of the Table Round met together at Camelot, and a great feast was made ready for them. And as they sat at supper they heard a loud noise, as of the crashing of thunder, and it seemed as if the roof would fall on them. Then, in the midst of the thunder, there entered a sunbeam, brighter by seven times than the brightest day, and its brightness was not of this world. The Knights held their peace, but every man looked at his neighbour, and his countenance shone fairer than ever it had done before. As they sat dumb, for their tongues felt as if they could speak nothing, there floated in the hall the Holy Graal, and over it a veil of white samite, so that none might see it nor who bare it. But sweet odours filled the place, and every Knight had set before him the food he loved best; and after that the Holy Vessel departed suddenly, they wist not where. When it had gone their tongues were loosened, and the King gave thanks for the wonders that they had been permitted to see. After that he had finished, Sir Gawaine stood up and vowed to depart the next morning in quest of the Holy Graal, and not to return until he had seen it. 'But if after a year and a day I may not speed in my quest,' said he, 'I shall come again, for I shall know that the sight of it is not for me.' And many of the Knights there sitting swore a like vow.

But King Arthur, when he heard this, was sore displeased. 'Alas!' cried he unto Sir Gawaine, 'you have undone me by your vow. For through you is broken up the fairest fellowship, and the truest of knighthood, that ever the world saw, and when they have once departed they shall meet no more at the Table Round, for many shall die in the quest. It grieves me sore, for I have loved them as well as my own life.' So he spoke, and paused, and tears came into his eyes. 'Ah, Gawaine, Gawaine! you have set me in great sorrow.'

'Comfort yourself,' said Sir Lancelot, 'for we shall win for ourselves great honour, and much more than if we had died in any other wise, since die we must.' But the King would not be comforted, and the Queen and all the Court were troubled also for the love which they had to these Knights. Then the Queen came to Sir Galahad, who was sitting among those Knights though younger he was than any of them, and asked him whence he came, and of what country, and if he was son to Sir Lancelot. And King Arthur did him great honour, and he rested him in his own bed. And next morning the King and Queen went into the Minster, and the Knights followed them, dressed all in armour, save only their shields and their helmets. When the service was finished the King would know how many of the fellowship had sworn to undertake the quest of the Graal, and they were counted, and found to number a hundred and fifty. They bade farewell, and mounted their horses, and rode through the streets of Camelot, and there was weeping of both rich and poor, and the King could not speak for weeping. And at sunrise they all parted company with each other, and every Knight took the way he best liked.

III

THE ADVENTURE OF SIR GALAHAD

Now Sir Galahad had as yet no shield, and he rode four days without meeting any adventure, till at last he came to a White Abbey, where he dismounted and asked if he might sleep there that night. The brethren received him with great reverence, and led him to a chamber, where he took off his armour, and then saw that he was in the presence of two Knights. ‘Sirs,’ said Sir Galahad, ‘what adventure brought you hither?’ ‘Sir,’ replied they, ‘we heard that within this Abbey is a shield that no man may hang round his neck without being dead within three days, or some mischief befalling him. And if we fail in the adventure, you shall take it upon you.’ ‘Sirs,’ replied Sir Galahad, ‘I agree well thereto, for as yet I have no shield.’

So on the morn they arose and heard Mass, and then a monk led them behind an altar where hung a shield white as snow, with a red cross in the middle of it. ‘Sirs,’ said the monk, ‘this shield cannot be hung round no Knight’s neck, unless he be the worthiest Knight in the world, and therefore I counsel you to be well advised.’

‘Well,’ answered one of the Knights, whose name was King Bagdemagus, ‘I know truly that I am not the best Knight in the world, but yet shall I try to bear it,’ and he bare it out of the Abbey. Then he said to Sir Galahad, ‘I pray you abide here still, till you know how I shall speed,’ and he rode away, taking with him a squire to send tidings back to Sir Galahad.

After King Bagdemagus had ridden two miles he entered a fair valley, and there met him a goodly Knight seated on a white horse and clad in white armour. And they came together with their spears, and Sir Bagdemagus was borne from his horse, for the shield covered him not at all. Therewith the strange Knight alighted and took the white shield from him, and gave it to the squire, saying, ‘Bear this shield to the good Knight Sir Galahad that thou hast left in the Abbey, and greet him well from me.’

‘Take thou no heed of my name,’ answered the Knight, ‘for it is not for thee to know, nor for any earthly man.’

‘Now, fair Sir,’ said the squire, ‘tell me for what cause this shield may not be borne lest ill befalls him who bears it.’

‘Since you have asked me,’ answered the Knight, ‘know that no man shall bear this shield, save Sir Galahad only.’

Then the squire turned to Bagdemagus, and asked him whether he were wounded or not. ‘Yes, truly,’ said he, ‘and I shall hardly escape from death’; and scarcely could he climb on to his horse’s back when the squire brought it near him. But the squire led him to a monastery that lay in the valley, and there he was treated of his wounds, and after long lying came back to life. After the squire had given the Knight into the care of the monks, he rode back to the Abbey, bearing with him the shield. ‘Sir Galahad,’ said he, alighting before him, ‘the Knight that wounded Bagdemagus sends you greeting, and bids you bear this shield, which shall bring you many adventures.’

‘Now blessed be God and fortune,’ answered Sir Galahad, and called for his arms, and mounted his horse, hanging the shield about his neck. Then, followed by the squire, he set out. They rode straight to the hermitage, where they saw the White Knight who had sent the shield to Sir Galahad. The two Knights saluted each other courteously, and then the White Knight told Sir Galahad the story of the shield, and how it had been given into his charge. Afterwards they parted, and Sir Galahad and his squire returned unto the Abbey whence they came.

The monks made great joy at seeing Sir Galahad again, for they feared he was gone for ever; and as soon as he was alighted from his horse they brought him unto a tomb in the churchyard where there was night and day such a noise that any man who heard it should be driven nigh mad, or else lose his strength. ‘Sir,’ they said, ‘we deem it a fiend.’ Sir Galahad drew near, all armed save his helmet, and stood by the tomb. ‘Lift up the stone,’ said a monk, and Galahad lifted it, and a voice cried, ‘Come thou not nigh me, Sir Galahad, for thou shalt make me go again where I have been so long.’ But Galahad took no heed of him, and lifted the stone yet higher, and there rushed from the tomb a foul smoke, and in the midst of it leaped out the foulest figure that ever was seen in the likeness of a man. ‘Galahad,’ said the figure, ‘I see about thee so many angels that my power dare not touch thee.’ Then Galahad, stooping down, looked into the tomb, and he saw a body all armed lying there, with a sword by his side. ‘Fair brother,’ said Galahad, ‘let us remove this body, for he is not worthy to be in this churchyard, being a false Christian man.’

This being done they all departed and returned unto the monastery, where they lay that night, and the next morning Sir Galahad knighted Melias his squire, as he had promised him aforetime. So Sir Galahad and Sir Melias departed thence, in quest of the Holy Graal, but they soon went their different ways and fell upon different adventures. In his first encounter Sir Melias was sore wounded, and Sir Galahad came to his help, and left him to an old monk who said that he would heal him of his wounds in the space of seven weeks, and that he was thus wounded because he had not come clean to the quest of the Graal, as Sir Galahad had done. Sir Galahad left him there, and rode on till he came to the Castle of Maidens, which he alone might enter who was free from sin. There he chased away the Knights who had seized the castle seven years agone, and restored all to the Duke's daughter, who owned it of right. Besides this he set free the maidens who were kept in prison, and summoned all those Knights in the country round who had held their lands of the Duke, bidding them do homage to his daughter. And in the morning one came to him and told him that as the seven Knights fled from the Castle of Maidens they fell upon the path of Sir Gawaine, Sir Gareth, and Sir Lewaine, who were seeking Sir Galahad, and they gave battle; and the seven Knights were slain by the three Knights. 'It is well,' said Galahad, and he took his armour and his horse and rode away.

So when Sir Galahad left the Castle of Maidens he rode till he came to a waste forest, and there he met with Sir Lancelot and Sir Percivale; but they knew him not, for he was now disguised. And they fought together, and the two Knights were smitten down out of the saddle. 'God be with thee, thou best Knight in the world,' cried a nun who dwelt in a hermitage close by; and she said it in a loud voice, so that Lancelot and Percivale might hear. But Sir Galahad feared that she would make known who he was, so he spurred his horse and struck deep into the forest before Sir Lancelot and Sir Percivale could mount again. They knew not which path he had taken, so Sir Percivale turned back to ask advice of the nun, and Sir Lancelot pressed forward.

IV

HOW SIR LANCELOT SAW A VISION, AND REPENTED OF HIS SINS

He halted when he came to a stone cross, which had by it a block of marble, while nigh at hand stood an old chapel. He tied his horse to a tree, and hung his shield on a branch, and looked into the chapel, for the door was waste and broken. And he saw there a fair altar covered with a silken cloth, and a candlestick which had six branches, all of shining silver. A great light streamed from it, and at this sight Sir Lancelot would fain have entered in, but he could not. So he turned back sorrowful and dismayed, and took the saddle and bridle off his horse, and let him pasture where he would, while he himself unlaced his helm, and ungirded his sword, and lay down to sleep upon his shield, at the foot of the cross.

As he lay there, half waking and half sleeping, he saw two white palfreys come by, drawing a litter, wherein lay a sick Knight. When they reached the cross they paused, and Sir Lancelot heard the Knight say, ‘O sweet Lord, when shall this sorrow leave me, and when shall the Holy Vessel come by me, through which I shall be blessed? For I have endured long, though my ill deeds were few.’ Thus he spoke, and Sir Lancelot heard it, and of a sudden the great candlestick stood before the cross, though no man had brought it. And with it was a table of silver and the Holy Vessel of the Graal, which Lancelot had seen aforetime. Then the Knight rose up, and on his hands and knees he approached the Holy Vessel, and prayed, and was made whole of his sickness. After that the Graal went back into the chapel, and the light and the candlestick also, and Sir Lancelot would fain have followed, but could not, so heavy was the weight of his sins upon him. And the sick Knight arose and kissed the cross, and saw Sir Lancelot lying at the foot with his eyes shut. ‘I marvel greatly at this sleeping Knight,’ he said to his squire, ‘that he had no power to wake when the Holy Vessel was brought hither.’ ‘I dare right well say,’ answered the squire, ‘that he dwelleth in some deadly sin, whereof he was never confessed.’ ‘By my faith,’ said the Knight, ‘he is unhappy, whoever he is, for he is of the fellowship of the Round Table, which have undertaken the quest of the Graal.’ ‘Sir,’ replied the squire, ‘you have all your arms here, save only your sword and your helm. Take therefore those of this strange Knight, who has just put them off.’ And the Knight did as his squire said, and took Sir Lancelot’s horse also, for it was better than his own.

After they had gone Sir Lancelot waked up wholly, and thought of what he had seen, wondering if he were in a dream or not. Suddenly a voice spoke to him, and it said, ‘Sir Lancelot, more hard than is the stone, more bitter than is the wood, more naked and barren than is the leaf of the fig tree, art thou; therefore go from hence and withdraw thee from this holy place.’ When Sir Lancelot heard this, his heart was passing heavy, and he wept, cursing the day when he had been born. But his helm and sword had gone from the spot where he had lain them at the foot of the cross, and his horse was gone also. And he smote himself and cried, ‘My sin and my wickedness have done me this dishonour; for when I sought worldly adventures for worldly desires I ever achieved them and had the better in every place, and never was I discomfited in any quarrel, were it right or wrong. And now I take upon me the adventures of holy things, I see and understand that my old sin hinders me, so that I could not move nor speak when the Holy Graal passed by.’ Thus he sorrowed till it was day, and he heard the birds sing, and at that he felt comforted. And as his horse was gone also, he departed on foot with a heavy heart.

V

THE ADVENTURE OF SIR PERCIVALE

All this while Sir Percivale had pursued adventures of his own, and came nigh unto losing his life, but he was saved from his enemies by the good Knight, Sir Galahad, whom he did not know, although he was seeking him, for Sir Galahad now bore a red shield, and not a white one. And at last the foes fled deep into the forest, and Sir Galahad followed; but Sir Percivale had no horse and was forced to stay behind. Then his eyes were opened, and he knew it was Sir Galahad who had come to his help, and he sat down under a tree and grieved sore.

While he was sitting there a Knight passed by riding a black horse, and when he was out of sight a yeoman came pricking after as fast as he might, and, seeing Sir Percivale, asked if he had seen a Knight mounted on a black horse. ‘Yes, Sir, forsooth,’ answered Sir Percivale, ‘why do you want to know?’ ‘Ah, Sir, that is my steed which he has taken from me, and wherever my lord shall find me, he is sure to slay me.’ ‘Well,’ said Sir Percivale, ‘thou seest that I am on foot, but had I a good horse I would soon come up with him.’ ‘Take my hackney,’ said the yeoman, ‘and do the best you can, and I shall follow you on foot to watch how you speed.’ So Sir Percivale rode as fast as he might, and at last he saw that Knight, and he hailed him. The Knight turned and set his spear against Sir Percivale, and smote the hackney in the breast, so that he fell dead to the earth, and Sir Percivale fell with him; then the Knight rode away. But Sir Percivale was mad with wrath, and cried to the Knight to return and fight with him on foot, and the Knight answered not and went on his way. When Sir Percivale saw that he would not turn, he threw himself on the ground, and cast away his helm and sword, and bemoaned himself for the most unhappy of all Knights; and there he abode the whole day, and, being faint and weary, slept till it was midnight. And at midnight he waked and saw before him a woman, who said to him right fiercely, ‘Sir Percivale, what doest thou here?’ ‘Neither good nor great ill,’ answered he. ‘If thou wilt promise to do my will when I call upon you,’ said she, ‘I will lend you my own horse, and he shall bear thee whither thou shalt choose.’ This Sir Percivale promised gladly, and the woman went and returned with a black horse, so large and well-apparelled that Sir Percivale marvelled. But he mounted him gladly, and drove in his spurs, and within an hour and less the horse bare him four days’ journey hence, and would have borne him into a rough water that roared, had not Sir Percivale pulled at his bridle. The Knight stood doubting, for the water made a great noise, and he feared lest his horse could not get through it. Still, wishing greatly to pass over, he made himself ready, and signed the sign of the cross upon his forehead.

At that the fiend which had taken the shape of a horse shook off Sir Percivale and dashed into the water, crying and making great sorrow; and it seemed to him that the water burned. Then Sir Percivale knew that it was not a horse but a fiend, which would have brought him to perdition, and he gave thanks and prayed all that night long. As soon as it was day he looked about him, and saw he was in a wild mountain, girt round with the sea and filled with wild beasts. Then he rose and went into a valley, and there he saw a young serpent bring a young lion by the neck, and after that there passed a great lion, crying and roaring after the serpent, and a fierce battle began between them. Sir Percivale thought to help the lion, as he was the more natural beast of the twain, and he drew his sword and set his shield before him, and gave the serpent a deadly buffet. When the lion saw that, he made him all the cheer that a beast might make a man, and fawned about him like a spaniel, and stroked him with his paws. And about noon the lion took his little whelp, and placed him on his back, and bare him home again, and Sir Percivale, being left alone, prayed till he was comforted. But at eventide the lion returned, and couched down at his feet, and all night long he and the lion slept together.

VI

AN ADVENTURE OF SIR LANCELOT

As Lancelot went his way through the forest he met with many hermits who dwelled therein, and had adventure with the Knight who stole his horse and his helm, and got them back again. And he learned from one of the hermits that Sir Galahad was his son, and that it was he who at the Feast of Pentecost had sat in the Siege Perilous, which it was ordained by Merlin that none should sit in save the best Knight in the world. All that night Sir Lancelot abode with the hermit and laid him to rest, a hair shirt always on his body, and it pricked him sorely, but he bore it meekly and suffered the pain. When the day dawned he bade the hermit farewell. As he rode he came to a fair plain, in which was a great castle set about with tents and pavilions of divers hues. Here were full five hundred Knights riding on horseback, and those near the castle were mounted on black horses with black trappings, and they that were without were on white horses and their trappings white. And the two sides fought together, and Sir Lancelot looked on.

At last it seemed to him that the black Knights nearest the castle fared the worst, so, as he ever took the part of the weaker, he rode to their help and smote many of the white Knights to the earth and did marvellous deeds of arms. But always the white Knights held round Sir Lancelot to tire him out. And as no man may endure for ever, in the end Sir Lancelot waxed so faint of fighting that his arms would not lift themselves to deal a stroke; then they took him, and led him away into the forest and made him alight from his horse and rest, and when he was taken the fellowship of the castle were overcome for want of him. ‘Never ere now was I at tournament or jousts but I had the best,’ moaned Sir Lancelot to himself, as soon as the Knights had left him and he was alone. ‘But now am I shamed, and I am persuaded that I am more sinful than ever I was.’ Sorrowfully he rode on till he passed a chapel, where stood a nun, who called to him and asked him his name and what he was seeking.

So he told her who he was, and what had befallen him at the tournament, and the vision that had come to him in his sleep. ‘Ah, Lancelot,’ said she, ‘as long as you were a knight of earthly knighthood you were the most wonderful man in the world and the most adventurous. But now, since you are set among Knights of heavenly adventures, if you were worsted at that tournament it is no marvel. For the tournament was meant for a sign, and the earthly Knights were they who were clothed in black in token of the sins of which they were not yet purged.

And the white Knights were they who had chosen the way of holiness, and in them the quest has already begun. Thus you beheld both the sinners and the good men, and when you saw the sinners overcome you went to their help, as they were your fellows in boasting and pride of the world, and all that must be left in that quest. And that caused your misadventure. Now that I have warned you of your vain-glory and your pride, beware of everlasting pain, for of all earthly Knights I have pity of you, for I know well that among earthly sinful Knights you are without peer.’

VII

AN ADVENTURE OF SIR GAWAINE

Sir Gawaine rode long without meeting any adventure, and from Pentecost to Michaelmas found none that pleased him. But at Michaelmas he met Sir Ector de Maris and rejoiced greatly.

As they sat talking there appeared before them a hand showing unto the elbow covered with red samite, and holding a great candle that burned right clear; and the hand passed into the chapel and vanished, they knew not where. Then they heard a voice which said, ‘Knights full of evil faith and poor belief, these two things have failed you, and therefore you may not come to the adventure of the Holy Graal.’ And this same told them a holy man to whom they confessed their sins, ‘for,’ said he, ‘you have failed in three things, charity, fasting, and truth, and have been great murderers. But sinful as Sir Lancelot was, since he went into the quest he never slew man, nor shall, till he come into Camelot again. For he has taken upon him to forsake sin. And were he not so unstable, he should be the next to achieve it, after Galahad his son. Yet shall he die an holy man, and in earthly sinful men he has no fellow.’

‘Sir,’ said Gawaine, ‘by your words it seems that our sins will not let us labour in that quest?’ ‘Truly,’ answered the hermit, ‘there be an hundred such as you to whom it will bring naught but shame.’ So Gawaine departed and followed Sir Ector, who had ridden on before.

VIII

THE ADVENTURE OF SIR BORS

When Sir Bors left Camelot on his quest he met a holy man riding on an ass, and Sir Bors saluted him. Then the good man knew him to be one of the Knights who were in quest of the Holy Graal. ‘What are you?’ said he, and Sir Bors answered, ‘I am a Knight that fain would be counselled in the quest of the Graal, for he shall have much earthly worship that brings it to an end.’ ‘That is true,’ said the good man, ‘for he will be the best Knight in the world, but know well that there shall none attain it but by holiness and by confession of sin.’ So they rode together till they came to the hermitage, and the good man led Sir Bors into the chapel, where he made confession of his sins, and they ate bread and drank water together. ‘Now,’ said the hermit, ‘I pray you that you eat none other till you sit at the table where the Holy Graal shall be.’ ‘Sir,’ answered Sir Bors, ‘I agree thereto, but how know you that I shall sit there?’ ‘That know I,’ said the holy man, ‘but there will be but few of your fellows with you. Also instead of a shirt you shall wear this garment until you have achieved your quest,’ and Sir Bors took off his clothes, and put on instead a scarlet coat. Then the good man questioned him, and marvelled to find him pure in life, and he armed him and bade him go. After this Sir Bors rode through many lands, and had many adventures, and was often sore tempted, but remembered the words of the holy man and kept his life clean of wrong. And once he had by mischance almost slain his own brother, but a voice cried, ‘Flee, Bors, and touch him not,’ and he hearkened and stayed his hand. And there fell between them a fiery cloud, which burned up both their shields, and they two fell to the earth in a great swoon; but when they awakened out of it Bors saw that his brother had no harm. With that the voice spoke to him saying, ‘Bors, go hence and bear your brother fellowship no longer; but take your way to the sea, where Sir Percivale abides till you come.’ Then Sir Bors prayed his brother to forgive him all he had unknowingly done, and rode straight to the sea. On the shore he found a vessel covered with white samite, and as soon as he stepped in the vessel it set sail so fast it might have been flying, and Sir Bors lay down and slept till it was day. When he waked he saw a Knight lying in the midst of the ship, all armed save for his helm, and he knew him for Sir Percivale, and welcomed him with great joy; and they told each other of their adventures and of their temptations, and had great happiness in each other’s company. ‘We lack nothing but Galahad, the good Knight,’ Sir Percivale said.

IX

ADVENTURE OF SIR GALAHAD

Sir Galahad rested one evening at a hermitage. And while he was resting, there came a gentlewoman and asked leave of the hermit to speak with Sir Galahad, and would not be denied, though she was told he was weary and asleep. Then the hermit waked Sir Galahad and bade him rise, as a gentlewoman had great need of him, so Sir Galahad rose and asked her what she wished. ‘Galahad,’ said she, ‘I will that you arm yourself, and mount your horse and follow me, and I will show you the highest adventure that ever any Knight saw.’ And Sir Galahad bade her go, and he would follow wherever she led. In three days they reached the sea, where they found the ship where Sir Bors and Sir Percivale were lying. And the lady bade him leave his horse behind and said she would leave hers also, but their saddles and bridles they would take on board the ship. This they did, and were received with great joy by the two Knights; then the sails were spread, and the ship was driven before the wind at a marvellous pace till they reached the land of Logris, the entrance to which lies between two great rocks with a whirlpool in the middle.

Their own ship might not get safely through; but they left it and went into another ship that lay there, which had neither man nor woman in it. At the end of the ship was written these words: ‘Thou man which shalt enter this ship beware thou be in steadfast belief; if thou fail, I shall not help thee.’ Then the gentlewoman turned and said, ‘Percivale, do you know who I am?’ ‘No, truly,’ answered he. ‘I am your sister, and therefore you are the man in the world that I most love. If you are without faith, or have any hidden sin, beware how you enter, else you will perish.’ ‘Fair sister,’ answered he, ‘I shall enter therein, for if I am an untrue Knight then shall I perish.’ So they entered the ship, and it was rich and well adorned, that they all marvelled.

In the midst of it was a fair bed, and Sir Galahad went thereto and found on it a crown of silk, and a sword drawn out of its sheath half a foot and more. The sword was of divers fashions, and the pommel of stone, wrought about with colours, and every colour with its own virtue, and the handle was of the ribs of two beasts. The one was the bone of a serpent, and no hand that handles it shall ever become weary or hurt; and the other is a bone of a fish that swims in Euphrates, and whoso handles it shall not think on joy or sorrow that he has had, but only on that which he beholds before him. And no man shall grip this sword but one that is better than other men. So first Sir Percivale stepped forward and set his hand to the sword, but he might not grasp it. Next Sir Bors tried to seize it, but he also failed. When Sir Galahad beheld the sword, he saw that there was written on it, in letters of blood, that he who tried to draw it should never fail of shame in his body or be wounded to the death. ‘By my faith,’ said Galahad, ‘I would draw this sword out of its sheath, but the offending is so great I shall not lay my hand thereto.’ ‘Sir,’ answered the gentlewoman, ‘know that no man can draw this sword save you alone’; and she told him many tales of the Knights who had set their hands to it, and of the evil things that had befallen them. And they all begged Sir Galahad to grip the sword, as it was ordained that he should. ‘I will grip it,’ said Galahad, ‘to give you courage, but it belongs no more to me than it does to you.’ Then he gripped it tight with his fingers, and the gentlewoman girt him about the middle with the sword, and after that they left that ship and went into another, which brought them to land, where they fell upon many strange adventures. And when they had wrought many great deeds, they departed from each other. But first Sir Percivale’s sister died, being bled to death, so that another lady might live, and she prayed them to lay her body in a boat and leave the boat to go as the winds and waves carried it. And so it was done, and Sir Percivale wrote a letter telling how she had helped them in all their adventures; and he put it in her right hand, and laid her in a barge, and covered it with black silk. And the wind arose and drove it from their sight.

X

SIR LANCELOT MEETS SIR GALAHAD, AND THEY PART

FOR EVER

Now we must tell what happened to Sir Lancelot.

When he was come to a water called Mortoise he fell asleep, awaiting for the adventure that should be sent to him, and in his sleep a voice spoke to him, and bade him rise and take his armour, and enter the first ship he should find. So he started up and took his arms and made him ready, and on the strand he found a ship that was without sail or oar. As soon as he was within the ship, he felt himself wrapped round with a sweetness such as he had never known before, as if all that he could desire was fulfilled. And with this joy and peace about him he fell asleep. When he woke he found near him a fair bed, with a dead lady lying on it, whom he knew to be Sir Percivale's sister, and in her hand was the tale of her adventures, which Sir Lancelot took and read. For a month or more they dwelt in that ship together, and one day, when it had drifted near the shore, he heard a sound as of a horse; and when the steps came nearer he saw that a Knight was riding him. At the sight of the ship the Knight alighted and took the saddle and bridle, and entered the ship. 'You are welcome,' said Lancelot, and the Knight saluted him and said, 'What is your name? for my heart goeth out to you.'

'Truly,' answered he, 'my name is Sir Lancelot du Lake.'

'Sir,' said the new Knight, 'you are welcome, for you were the beginner of me in the world.'

'Ah,' cried Sir Lancelot, 'is it you, then, Galahad?'

'Yes, in sooth,' said he, and kneeled down and asked Lancelot's blessing, and then took off his helm and kissed him. And there was great joy between them, and they told each other all that had befallen them since they left King Arthur's Court. Then Galahad saw the gentlewoman dead on the bed, and he knew her, and said he held her in great worship, and that she was the best maid in the world, and how it was great pity that she had come to her death. But when Lancelot heard that Galahad had won the marvellous sword he prayed that he might see it, and kissed the pommel and the hilt, and the scabbard. 'In truth,' he said, 'never did I know of adventures so wonderful and strange.' So dwelled Lancelot and Galahad in that ship for half a year, and served God daily and nightly with all their power. And after six months had gone it befell that on a Monday they drifted to the edge of the forest, where they saw a Knight with white armour bestriding one horse and holding another all white, by the bridle. And he came to the ship, and saluted the two Knights and said, 'Galahad, you have been long enough with your father, therefore leave that ship and start upon this horse, and go on the quest of the Holy Graal.' So Galahad went to his father and kissed him, saying, 'Fair sweet father, I know not if I shall see you more till

I have beheld the Holy Graal.’ Then they heard a voice which said, ‘The one shall never see the other till the day of doom.’ ‘Now, Galahad,’ said Lancelot, ‘since we are to bid farewell for ever now, I pray to the great Father to preserve me and you both.’ ‘Sir,’ answered Galahad, ‘no prayer availeth so much as yours.’

The next day Sir Lancelot made his way back to Camelot, where he found King Arthur and Guenevere; but many of the Knights of the Round Table were slain and destroyed, more than the half. All the Court was passing glad to see Sir Lancelot, and the King asked many tidings of his son Sir Galahad.

XI

HOW SIR GALAHAD FOUND THE GRAAL AND DIED OF THAT FINDING

Sir Galahad rode on till he met Sir Percivale and afterwards Sir Bors, whom they greeted most gladly, and they bare each other company. First they came to the Castle of Carbonek, where dwelled King Pelles, who welcomed them with joy, for he knew by their coming that they had fulfilled the quest of the Graal. They then departed on other adventures, and with the blood out of the Holy Lance Galahad anointed the maimed King and healed him. That same night at midnight a voice bade them arise and quit the castle, which they did, followed by three Knights of Gaul. Then Galahad prayed every one of them that if they reached King Arthur’s Court they should salute Sir Lancelot his father, and those Knights of the Round Table that were present, and with that he left them, and Sir Bors and Sir Percivale with him. For three days they rode till they came to a shore, and found a ship awaiting them. And in the midst of it was the table of silver, and the Holy Graal which was covered with red samite. Then were their hearts right glad, and they made great reverence thereto, and Galahad prayed that at what time he asked, he might depart out of this world. So long he prayed that at length a voice said to him, ‘Galahad, thou shalt have thy desire, and when thou askest the death of the body thou shalt have it, and shalt find the life of the soul.’ Percivale likewise heard the voice, and besought Galahad to tell him why he asked such things. And Galahad answered, ‘The other day when we saw a part of the adventures of the Holy Graal, I was in such a joy of heart that never did man feel before, and I knew well that when my body is dead my soul shall be in joy of which the other was but a shadow.’

Some time were the three Knights in that ship, till at length they saw before them the city of Sarras. Then they took from the ship the table of silver, and Sir Percivale and Sir Bors went first, and Sir Galahad followed after to the gate of the city, where sat an old man that was crooked. At the sight of the old man Sir Galahad called to him to help them carry the table, for it was heavy. ‘Truly,’ answered the old man, ‘it is ten years since I have gone without crutches.’ ‘Care not for that,’ said Galahad, ‘but rise up and show your good will.’ So he arose and found himself as whole as ever he was, and he ran to the table and held up the side next Galahad. And there was much noise in the city that a cripple was healed by three Knights newly entered in. This reached the ears of the King, who sent for the Knights and questioned them. And they told him the truth, and of the Holy Graal; but the King listened nothing to all they said, but put them into a deep hole in the prison. Even here they were not without comfort, for a vision of the Holy Graal sustained them. And at the end of a year the King lay sick and felt he should die, and he called the three Knights and asked forgiveness of the evil he had done to them, which they gave gladly. Then he died, and the whole city was afraid and knew not what to do, till while they were in counsel a voice came to them and bade them choose the youngest of the three strange Knights for their King. And they did so. After Galahad was proclaimed King, he ordered that a coffer of gold and precious stones should be made to encompass the table of silver, and every day he and the two Knights would kneel before it and make their prayers.

Now at the year’s end, and on the selfsame day that Galahad had been crowned King, he arose up early and came with the two Knights to the Palace; and he saw a man in the likeness of a Bishop, encircled by a great crowd of angels, kneeling before the Holy Vessel. And he called to Galahad and said to him, ‘Come forth, thou servant of Christ, and thou shalt see what thou hast much desired to see.’ Then Galahad began to tremble right hard, when the flesh first beheld the things of the spirit, and he held up his hands to heaven and said, ‘Lord, I thank thee, for now I see that which hath been my desire for many a day. Now, blessed Lord, I would no longer live, if it might please Thee.’ Then Galahad went to Percivale and kissed him, and commended him to God; and he went to Sir Bors and kissed him, and commended him to God, and said, ‘Fair lord, salute me to my lord Sir Lancelot, my father, and bid him remember this unstable world.’ Therewith he kneeled down before the table and made his prayers, and while he was praying his soul suddenly left the body and was carried by angels up into heaven, which the two Knights right well beheld. Also they saw come from heaven a hand, but no body behind it, and it came unto the Vessel, and took it and the spear, and bare them back to heaven. And since then no man has dared to say that he has seen the Holy Graal.

When Percivale and Bors saw Galahad lying dead they made as much sorrow as ever two men did, and the people of the country and of the city were right heavy. And they buried him as befitted their King. As soon as Galahad was buried, Sir Percivale sought a hermitage outside the city, and put on the dress of a hermit, and Sir Bors was always with him, but kept the dress that he wore at Court. When a year and two months had passed Sir Percivale died also, and was buried by the side of Galahad; and Sir Bors left that land, and after long riding came to Camelot. Then was there great joy made of him in the Court, for they had held him as dead; and the King ordered great clerks to attend him, and to write down all his adventures and those of Sir Percivale and Sir Galahad. Next, Sir Lancelot told the adventures of the Graal which he had seen, and this likewise was written and placed with the other in almonries at Salisbury. And by and by Sir Bors said to Sir Lancelot, ‘Galahad your son saluteth you by me, and after you King Arthur and all the Court, and so did Sir Percivale; for I buried them with mine own hands in the City of Sarras. Also, Sir Lancelot, Galahad prayeth you to remember of this uncertain world, as you promised when you were together!’ ‘That is true,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘and I trust his prayer may avail me.’ But the prayer but little availed Sir Lancelot, for he fell to his old sins again. And now the Knights were few that survived the search for the Graal, and the evil days of Arthur began.

THE FIGHT FOR THE QUEEN

So the quest of the Holy Graal had been fulfilled, and the few Knights that had been left alive returned to the Round Table, and there was great joy in the Court. To do them honour the Queen made them a dinner; and there were four and twenty Knights present, and among them Sir Patrise of Ireland, and Sir Gawaine and his brethren, the King’s nephews, which were Sir Agrawaine, Sir Gaheris, Sir Gareth, and Sir Mordred. Now it was the custom of Sir Gawaine daily at dinner and supper to eat all manner of fruit, and especially pears and apples, and this the Queen knew, and set fruit of all sorts before him. And there was present at the dinner one Sir Pinel le Savage, who hated Sir Gawaine because he and his brethren had slain Sir Lamorak du Galis, cousin to Sir Pinel; so he put poison into some of the apples, hoping that Sir Gawaine would eat one and die. But by ill fortune it befell that the good Knight Sir Patrise took a poisoned apple, and in a few moments he lay dead and stark in his seat. At this sight all the Knights leapt to their feet, but said nothing, for they bethought them that Queen Guenevere had made them the dinner, and feared that she had poisoned the fruit.

‘My lady, the Queen,’ said Sir Gawaine, who was the first to speak, ‘this fruit was brought for me, for all know how well I love it; therefore, Madam, the shame of this ill deed is yours.’ The Queen stood still, pale and trembling, but kept silence, and next spoke Sir Mador de la Porte.

‘This shall not be ended so,’ said he, ‘for I have lost a noble Knight of my blood, and I will be avenged of the person who has wrought this evil.’ And he turned to the Queen and said ‘Madam, it is you who have brought about the death of my cousin Sir Patrise!’ The Knights round listened in silence, for they too thought Sir Mador spake truth. And the Queen still said nothing, but fell to weeping bitterly, till King Arthur heard and came to look into the matter. And when they told him of their trouble his heart was heavy within him.

‘Fair lords,’ said the King at last, ‘I grieve for this ill deed; but I cannot meddle therein, or do battle for my wife, for I have to judge justly. Sure I am that this deed is none of hers, therefore many a good Knight will stand her champion that she be not burned to death in a wrong quarrel. And, Sir Mador, hold not your head so high, but fix the day of battle, when you shall find a Knight to answer you, or else it were great shame to all my Court.’

‘My gracious lord,’ said Sir Mador, ‘you must hold me excused. But though you are a King you are also a Knight, and must obey the laws of Knighthood.

Therefore I beseech your forgiveness if I declare that none of the four and twenty Knights here present will fight that battle. What say you, my lords?' Then the Knights answered that they could not hold the Queen guiltless, for as the dinner was made by her either she or her servants must have done this thing.

'Alas!' said the Queen, 'no evil was in my heart when I prepared this feast, for never have I done such foul deeds.'

'My lord the King,' cried Sir Mador, 'I require of you, as you are a just King, to fix a day that I may get ready for the fight!'

'Well,' answered the King, 'on the fifteenth day from this come on horseback to the meadow that is by Westminster. And if it happens that there be a Knight to fight with you, strike as hard as you will, God will speed the right. But if no Knight is there, then must my Queen be burned, and a fire shall be made in the meadow.'

'I am answered,' said Sir Mador, and he and the rest of the Knights departed.

When the King and Queen were left alone he asked her what had brought all this about. 'God help me, that I know not,' said the Queen, 'nor how it was done.'

'Where is Sir Lancelot?' said King Arthur, looking round. 'If he were here he would not grudge to do battle for you.'

'Sir,' replied the Queen, 'I know not where he is, but his brother and his kinsmen think he is not in this realm.'

'I grieve for that,' said the King, 'for he would soon stop this strife. But I counsel you, ask Sir Bors, and he will not refuse you. For well I see that none of the four and twenty Knights who were with you at dinner will be your champion, and none will say well of you, but men will speak evil of you at the Court.'

'Alas!' sighed the Queen, 'I do indeed miss Sir Lancelot, for he would soon ease my heart.'

'What ails you?' asked the King, 'that you cannot keep Sir Lancelot at your side, for well you know that he who Sir Lancelot fights for has the best Knight in the world for his champion. Now go your way, and command Sir Bors to do battle with you for Sir Lancelot's sake.' So the Queen departed from the King, and sent for Sir Bors into her chamber, and when he came she besought his help.

'Madam,' said he, 'what can I do? for I may not meddle in this matter lest the Knights who were at the dinner have me in suspicion, for I was there also. It is now, Madam, that you miss Sir Lancelot, whom you have driven away, as he would have done battle for you were you right or wrong, and I wonder how for shame's sake you can ask me, knowing how I love and honour him.'

'Alas,' said the Queen, 'I throw myself on your grace,' and she went down on her knees and besought Sir Bors to have mercy on her, 'else I shall have a shameful death, and one I have never deserved.’ At that King Arthur came in, and found her kneeling before Sir Bors. ‘Madam! you do me great dishonour,’ said Sir Bors, raising her up.

‘Ah, gentle Knight,’ cried the King, ‘have mercy on my Queen, for I am sure that they speak falsely. And I require by the love of Sir Lancelot that you do battle for her instead of him.’

‘My lord,’ answered Sir Bors, ‘you require of me the hardest thing that ever anyone asked of me, for well you know that if I fight for the Queen I shall anger all my companions of the Round Table; but I will not say nay, my lord, for Sir Lancelot’s sake and for your sake! On that day I will be the Queen’s champion, unless a better Knight is found to do battle for her.’

‘Will you promise me this?’ asked the King.

‘Yes,’ answered Sir Bors, ‘I will not fail you nor her, unless there should come a better Knight than I, then he shall have the battle.’ Then the King and Queen rejoiced greatly, and thanked Sir Bors with all their hearts.

So Sir Bors departed and rode unto Sir Lancelot, who was with the hermit Sir Brasias, and told him of this adventure. ‘Ah,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘this has befallen as I would have it, and therefore I pray you make ready to do battle, but delay the fight as long as you can that I may appear. For I am sure that Sir Mador is a hot Knight, and the longer he waits the more impatient he will be for the combat.’

‘Sir,’ answered Sir Bors, ‘let me deal with him. Doubt not you shall have all your will.’ And he rode away, and came again to the Court.

It was soon noised about that Sir Bors would be the Queen’s champion, and many Knights were displeased with him; but there were a few who held the Queen to be innocent. Sir Bors spoke unto them all and said, ‘It were shameful, my fair lords, if we suffered the most noble Queen in the world to be disgraced openly, not only for her sake, but for the King’s.’ But they answered him: ‘As for our lord King Arthur, we love him and honour him as much as you; but as for Queen Guenevere, we love her not, for she is the destroyer of good Knights.’

‘Fair lords,’ said Sir Bors, ‘you shall not speak such words, for never yet have I heard that she was the destroyer of good Knights. But at all times, as far as I ever knew, she maintained them and gave them many gifts. And therefore it were a shame to us all if we suffered our noble King’s wife to be put to death, and I will not suffer it. So much I will say, that the Queen is not guilty of Sir Patrise’s death; for she owed him no ill will, and bade him and us to the dinner for no evil purpose, which will be proved hereafter. And in any case there was foul dealing among us.’

‘We may believe your words,’ said some of the Knights, but others held that he spoke falsely.

The days passed quickly by until the evening before the battle, when the Queen sent for Sir Bors and asked him if he was ready to keep his promise.

‘Truly, Madam,’ answered he, ‘I shall not fail you, unless a better Knight than I am come to do battle for you. Then, Madam, I am discharged of my promise.’

‘Shall I tell this to my lord Arthur?’ said the Queen.

‘If it pleases you, Madam,’ answered Sir Bors. So the Queen went to the King, and told him what Sir Bors had said, and the King bade her to be comforted, as Sir Bors was one of the best Knights of the Round Table.

The next morning the King and Queen, and all manner of Knights, rode into the meadow of Westminster, where the battle was to be; and the Queen was put into the Guard of the High Constable, and a stout iron stake was planted, and a great fire made about it, at which the Queen should be burned if Sir Mador de la Porte won the fight. For it was the custom in those days that neither fear nor favour, love nor kinship, should hinder right judgment. Then came Sir Mador de la Porte, and made oath before the King that the Queen had done to death his cousin Sir Patrise, and he would prove it on her Knight’s body, let who would say the contrary. Sir Bors likewise made answer that Queen Guenevere had done no wrong, and that he would make good with his two hands. ‘Then get you ready,’ said Sir Mador. ‘Sir Mador,’ answered Sir Bors, ‘I know you for a good Knight, but I trust to be able to withstand your malice; and I have promised King Arthur and my Lady the Queen that I will do battle for her to the uttermost, unless there come forth a better Knight than I am.’

‘Is that all?’ asked Sir Mador; ‘but you must either fight now or own that you are beaten.’

‘Take your horse,’ said Sir Bors, ‘for I shall not tarry long,’ and Sir Mador forthwith rode into the field with his shield on his shoulder, and his spear in his hand, and he went up and down crying unto King Arthur, ‘Bid your champion come forth if he dare.’ At that Sir Bors was ashamed, and took his horse, and rode to the end of the lists. But from a wood hard by appeared a Knight riding fast on a white horse, bearing a shield full of strange devices. When he reached Sir Bors he drew rein and said, ‘Fair Knight, be not displeased, but this battle must be to a better Knight than you. For I have come a great journey to fight this fight, as I promised when I spoke with you last, and I thank you heartily for your goodwill.’ So Sir Bors went to King Arthur and told him that a Knight had come who wished to do battle for the Queen. ‘What Knight is he?’ asked the King.

‘That I know not,’ said Sir Bors; ‘but he made a covenant with me to be here this day, and now I am discharged,’ said Sir Bors.

Then the King called to that Knight and asked him if he would fight for the

Queen. ‘For that purpose I came hither,’ replied he, ‘and therefore, Sir King, delay me no longer, for as soon as I have ended this battle I must go hence, as I have many matters elsewhere. And I would have you know that it is a dishonour to all the Knights of the Round Table to let so noble a lady and so courteous a Queen as Queen Guenevere be shamed amongst you.’

The Knights who were standing round looked at each other at these words, and wondered much what man this was who took the battle upon him, for none knew him save Sir Bors.

‘Sir,’ said Sir Mador de la Porte unto the King, ‘let me know the name of him with whom I have to do.’ But the King answered nothing, and made a sign for the fight to begin. They rode to the end of the lists, and couched their spears and rushed together with all their force, and Sir Mador’s spear broke in pieces. But the other Knight’s spear held firm, and he pressed on Sir Mador’s horse till it fell backward with a great fall. Sir Mador sprang from his horse, and, placing his shield before him, drew his sword, and bade his foe dismount from his horse also, and do battle with him on foot, which the unknown Knight did. For an hour they fought thus, as Sir Mador was a strong man, and had proved himself the victor in many combats. At last the Knight smote Sir Mador grovelling to his knees, and the Knight stepped forward to have struck him flat upon the ground. Therewith Sir Mador suddenly rose, and smote the Knight upon the thigh, so that the blood ran out fiercely. But when the Knight felt himself wounded, and saw his blood, he let Sir Mador rise to his feet, and then he gave him such a buffet on the helm that this time Sir Mador fell his length on the earth, and the Knight sprang to him, to unloose his helm. At this Sir Mador prayed for his life, acknowledging that he was overcome, and confessed that the Queen’s innocence had been proved. ‘I will only grant you your life,’ said the Knight, ‘if you will proclaim publicly that you have foully slandered the Queen, and that you make no mention, on the tomb of Sir Patrise, that ever Queen Guenevere consented to his murder.’ ‘All that will I do,’ said Sir Mador, and some Knights took him up, and carried him away to heal his wounds. And the other Knight went straight to the foot of the steps where sat King Arthur, and there the Queen had just come, and the King and the Queen kissed each other before all the people. When King Arthur saw the Knight standing there he stooped down to him and thanked him, and so likewise did the Queen; and they prayed him to put off his helmet, and commanded wine to be brought, and when he unlaced his helmet to drink they knew him to be Sir Lancelot du Lake. Then Arthur took the Queen’s hand and led her to Sir Lancelot and said, ‘Sir, I give you the most heartfelt thanks of the great deed you have done this day for me and my Queen.’

‘My lord,’ answered Sir Lancelot, ‘you know well that I ought of right ever to fight your battles, and those of my lady the Queen. For it was you who gave me the high honour of Knighthood, and that same day my lady the Queen did me a great service, else I should have been put to shame before all men. Because in my hastiness I lost my sword, and my lady the Queen found it and gave it to me when I had sore need of it. And therefore, my lord Arthur, I promised her that day that I would be her Knight in right or in wrong.'

'I owe you great thanks,' said the King, 'and some time I hope to repay you.' The Queen, beholding Sir Lancelot, wept tears of joy for her deliverance, and felt bowed to the ground with sorrow at the thought of what he had done for her, when she had sent him away with unkind words. Then all the Knights of the Round Table and his kinsmen drew near to him and welcomed him, and there was great mirth in the Court.

THE FAIR MAID OF ASTOLAT

Soon after this it befell that the damsel of the lake, called by some Nimue and by others Vivien, wedded Sir Pelleas, and came to the Court of King Arthur. And when she heard the talk of the death of Sir Patrise and how the Queen had been accused of it, she found out by means of her magic that the tale was false, and told it openly that the Queen was innocent and that it was Sir Pinel who had poisoned the apple. Then he fled into his own country, where none might lay hands on him. So Sir Patrise was buried in the Church of Westminster, and on his tomb was written, ‘Here lieth Sir Patrise of Ireland, slain by Sir Pinel le Savage, that empoisoned apples to have slain Sir Gawaine, and by misfortune Sir Patrise ate one of those apples and then suddenly he burst.’ Also there was put upon the tomb that Queen Guenevere was accused of the death of Sir Patrise by Sir Mador de la Porte, and how Sir Lancelot fought with him and overcame him in battle. All this was written on the tomb.

And daily Sir Mador prayed to have the Queen’s grace once more, and by means of Sir Lancelot he was forgiven. It was now the middle of the summer, and King Arthur proclaimed that in fifteen days a great tourney should be held at Camelot, which is now called Winchester, and many Knights and Kings made ready to do themselves honour. But the Queen said she would stay behind, for she was sick, and did not care for the noise and bustle of a tourney. ‘It grieves me you should say that,’ said the King, for you will not have seen so noble a company gathered together this seven years past, save at the Whitsuntide when Galahad departed from the Court.’

‘Truly,’ answered the Queen, ‘the sight will be grand. Nevertheless you must hold me excused, for I cannot be there.’

Sir Lancelot likewise declared that his wounds were not healed and that he could not bear himself in a tourney as he was wont to do. At this the King was wroth, that he might not have either his Queen or his best Knight with him, and he departed towards Winchester and by the way lodged in a town now called Guildford, but then Astolat. And when the King had set forth, the Queen sent for Sir Lancelot, and told him he was to blame for having excused himself from going with the King, who set such store by his company; and Sir Lancelot said he would be ruled by her, and would ride forth next morning on his way to Winchester; ‘but I should have you know,’ said he, ‘that at the tourney I shall be against the King and his Knights.’

‘You must do as you please,’ replied the Queen, ‘but if you will be ruled by my counsel, you will fight on his side.’

‘Madam,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘I pray you not to be displeased with me. I will take the adventure as it comes,’ and early next morning he rode away till at eventide he reached Astolat. He went through the town till he stopped before the house of an old Baron, Sir Bernard of Astolat, and as he dismounted from his horse, the King spied him from the gardens of the castle. ‘It is well,’ he said smiling to the Knights that were beside him, ‘I see one man who will play his part in the jousts, and I will undertake that he will do marvels.’

‘Who is that?’ asked they all. ‘You must wait to know that,’ replied the King, and went into the castle. Meantime Sir Lancelot had entered his lodging, and the old Baron bade him welcome, but he knew not it was Sir Lancelot. ‘Fair Sir,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘I pray you lend me, if you can, a shield with a device which no man knows, for mine they know well.’

‘Sir,’ answered Sir Bernard, ‘you shall have your wish, for you seem one of the goodliest Knights in the world. And, Sir, I have two sons, both but lately knighted, Sir Tirre who was wounded on the day of his Knighthood, and his shield you shall have. My youngest son, Sir Lavaine, shall ride with you, if you will have his company, to the jousts. For my heart is much drawn to you, and tell me, I beseech you, what name I shall call you by.’

‘You must hold me excused as to that, just now,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘but if I speedwell at the jousts, I will come again and tell you. But let me have Sir Lavaine with me, and lend me, as you have offered, his brother’s shield.’ ‘This shall be done,’ replied Sir Bernard.

Besides these two sons, Sir Bernard had a daughter whom everyone called The Fair Maid of Astolat, though her real name was Elaine le Blanc. And when she looked on Sir Lancelot, her love went forth to him and she could never take it back, and in the end it killed her. As soon as her father told her that Sir Lancelot was going to the tourney she besought him to wear her token in the jousts, but he was not willing. ‘Fair damsel,’ he said, ‘if I did that, I should have done more for your love than ever I did for lady or damsel.’ But then he remembered that he was to go disguised to the tourney, and because he had before never worn any manner of token of any damsel, he bethought him that, if he should take one of hers, none would know him. So he said to her, ‘Fair damsel, I will wear your token on my helmet, if you will show me what it is.’

‘Sir,’ she answered, ‘it is a red sleeve, embroidered in great pearls,’ and she brought it to him. ‘Never have I done so much for any damsel,’ said he, and gave his own shield into her keeping, till he came again. Sir Arthur had waited three days in Astolat for some Knights who were long on the road, and when they had arrived they all set forth, and were followed by Sir Lancelot and Sir Lavaine, both with white shields, and Sir Lancelot bore besides the red sleeve that was a token. Now Camelot was filled with a great number of Kings and Lords and Knights, but Sir Lavaine found means to lodge both himself and Sir Lancelot secretly with a rich burgess, and no man knew who they were or whence they came. And there they stayed till the day of the tourney. At earliest dawn the trumpets blew, and King Arthur took his seat upon a high scaffold, so that he might see who had done best; but he would not suffer Sir Gawaine to go from his side, for Sir Gawaine never won the prize when Sir Lancelot was in the field, and as King Arthur knew, Sir Lancelot oftentimes disguised himself.

Then the Knights formed into two parties and Sir Lancelot made him ready, and fastened the red sleeve upon his helmet, and he and Sir Lavaine rode into a little wood that lay behind the Knights who should fight against those of the Round Table. ‘Sir,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘yonder is a company of good Knights and they hold together as boars that are vexed with dogs.’

‘That is truth,’ said Sir Lavaine.

‘Now,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘if you will help me a little, you shall see King Arthur’s side, which is winning, driven back as fast as they came.’

‘Spare not, Sir,’ answered Sir Lavaine, ‘for I shall do what I may.’ So they rode into the thickest of the press, and smote so hard both with spear and sword that the Knights of the Round Table fell back. ‘O mercy!’ cried Sir Gawaine, ‘what Knight is that yonder who does such marvellous deeds?’

‘I know well who it is,’ said King Arthur, ‘but I will not tell you yet.’

‘Sir,’ answered Sir Gawaine, ‘I should say it was Sir Lancelot by the blows he deals and the manner that he rides, but it cannot be he, for this man has a red sleeve upon his helmet, and Sir Lancelot has never borne the token of any lady.’

‘Let him be,’ said Sir Arthur, ‘you will find out his name, and see him do greater deeds yet, before he departs.’ And the Knights that were fighting against the King’s party took heart again, for before they feared they would be beaten. But when Sir Bors saw this, he called unto him the Knights that were of kin to Sir Lancelot, and they banded together to make a great charge, and threw Sir Lancelot’s horse to the ground, and by misfortune the spear of Sir Bors broke, and its head was left in Sir Lancelot’s side. When Sir Lavaine saw that, he unhorsed the King of Scots, and brought his horse to Sir Lancelot, and helped him mount thereon and gave him a spear, with which Sir Lancelot smote Sir Bors to the earth and Sir Ector de Maris, the foster-father of King Arthur, and buffeted sorely the Knights that were with them. Afterward he hurled himself into the thick *mêlée* of them all, and did the most wonderful deeds that ever were heard of. And Sir Lavaine likewise did well that day, for he smote down full two

Knights of the Round Table. ‘Mercy,’ again cried Sir Gawaine to Arthur, ‘I marvel what Knight that is with the red sleeve.’

‘That you shall know soon,’ said King Arthur, and commanded that the trumpets should be blown, and declared that the prize belonged to the Knight with the white shield, who bare the red sleeve, for he had unhorsed more than thirty Knights. And the Kings and Lords who were of his party came round him and thanked him for the help he had given them, by which means the honours of the day had been theirs.

‘Fair Lords,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘if I have deserved thanks, I have paid for them sorely, for I shall hardly escape with my life, therefore I pray you let me depart, for my hurt is grievous.’ Then he groaned piteously, and galloped from them to a wood’s side, followed by Sir Lavaine. ‘Oh help me, Sir Lavaine,’ said he, ‘to get this spear’s head out of my side, for it is killing me.’ But Sir Lavaine feared to touch it, lest Sir Lancelot should bleed to death. ‘I charge you,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘if you love me draw out the head,’ so Sir Lavaine drew it out. And Sir Lancelot gave a great shriek, and a marvellous grisly groan, and his blood flowed out so fast, that he fell into a swoon. ‘Oh what shall I do?’ cried Sir Lavaine, and he loosed Sir Lancelot’s helm and coat of mail, and turned him so that the wind might blow on him, but for full half an hour he lay as if he had been dead. And at last Sir Lancelot opened his eyes, and said, ‘O Lavaine, help me on my horse, for two miles from this place there lives a hermit who once was a Knight of the Round Table, and he can heal my wounds.’ Then Sir Lavaine, with much ado, helped him on his horse, and brought him bleeding to the hermit. The hermit looked at him as he rode up, leaning piteously on his saddle-bow, and he thought that he should know him, but could not tell who he was for the paleness of his face, till he saw by a wound on his cheek that it was Sir Lancelot.

‘You cannot hide your name from me,’ said the hermit, ‘for you are the noblest Knight in the world, and well I know you to be Sir Lancelot.’

‘Since you know me, Sir,’ said he, ‘help me for God’s sake, and for death or life put me out of this pain.’

‘Fear nothing,’ answered the hermit, ‘your pain will soon be gone,’ and he called his servants to take the armour off the Knight, and laid him in bed. After that he dressed the wound, and gave him good wine to drink, and Sir Lancelot slept and awoke free of his pain. So we will leave him to be healed of his wound, under the care of the hermit, and go back to King Arthur.

Now it was the custom in those days that after a tourney was finished, a great feast should be held at which both parties were assembled, so King Arthur sent to ask the King of Northgalis, where was the Knight with the red sleeve, who had fought on his side. ‘Bring him before me,’ he said, ‘that he may have the prize he has won, which is his right.’ Then answered the King with the hundred Knights, ‘we fear the Knight must have been sore hurt, and that neither you nor we are ever like to see him again, which is grievous to think of.’

‘Alas!’ said King Arthur, ‘is he then so badly wounded? What is his name?’

‘Truly,’ said they all, ‘we know not his name, nor whence he came, nor whither he went.’

‘As for me,’ answered King Arthur, ‘these tidings are the worst that I have heard these seven years, for I would give all the lands I hold that no harm had befallen this Knight.’

‘Do you know him?’ asked they all.

‘Whether I know him or not,’ said King Arthur, ‘I shall not tell you, but may Heaven send me good news of him.’ ‘Amen,’ answered they.

‘By my head,’ said Sir Gawaine, ‘if this good Knight is really wounded unto death, it is a great evil for all this land, for he is one of the noblest that ever I saw for handling a sword or spear. And if he may be found, I shall find him, for I am sure he is not far from this town,’ so he took his Squire with him, and they rode all round Camelot, six or seven miles on every side, but nothing could they hear of him. And he returned heavily to the Court of King Arthur.

Two days after the King and all his company set out for London, and by the way, it happened to Sir Gawaine to lodge with Sir Bernard at Astolat. And when he was in his chamber, Sir Bernard and his daughter Elaine came unto Sir Gawaine, to ask him tidings of the Court, and who did best in the tourney at Winchester.

‘Truly,’ said Sir Gawaine, ‘there were two Knights that bare white shields, but one of them had a red sleeve upon his helm, and he was one of the best Knights that ever I saw joust in the field, for I dare say he smote down forty Knights of the Table Round.’

‘Now blessed be God,’ said the Maid of Astolat, ‘that that Knight sped so well, for he is the man in the world that I loved first, and he will also be the last that ever I shall love.’

‘Fair Maid,’ asked Sir Gawaine, ‘is that Knight your love?’

‘Certainly he is my love,’ said she.

‘Then you know his name?’ asked Sir Gawaine.

‘Nay, truly,’ answered the damsel, ‘I know neither his name, nor whence he cometh, but I love him for all that.’

‘How did you meet him first?’ asked Sir Gawaine. At that she told him the whole story, and how her brother went with Sir Lancelot to do him service, and lent him the white shield of her brother Sir Tirre and left his own shield with her. ‘Why did he do that?’ asked Sir Gawaine.

‘For this cause,’ said the damsel, ‘his shield was too well known among many noble Knights.’

‘Ah, fair damsel,’ said Sir Gawaine, ‘I beg of you to let me have a sight of that shield.’

‘Sir,’ answered she, ‘it is in my chamber covered with a case, and if you will come with me, you shall see it.’

‘Not so,’ said Sir Bernard, and sent his Squire for it. And when Sir Gawaine took off the case and beheld the shield, and saw the arms, he knew it to be Sir Lancelot’s. ‘Ah mercy,’ cried he, ‘my heart is heavier than ever it was before!’

‘Why?’ asked Elaine.

‘I have great cause,’ answered Sir Gawaine. ‘Is that Knight who owns this shield your love?’

‘Yes, truly,’ said she; ‘I would I were his love.’

‘You are right, fair damsel,’ replied Gawaine, ‘for if you love him, you love the most honourable Knight in the world. I have known him for four-and-twenty years, and never did I or any other Knight see him wear a token of either lady or damsel at a tournament. Therefore, damsel, he has paid you great honour. But I fear that I may never behold him again upon earth, and that is grievous to think of.’

‘Alas!’ she said, ‘how may this be? Is he slain?’

‘I did not say that,’ replied Sir Gawaine, ‘but he is sorely wounded, and is more likely to be dead than alive. And, maiden, by this shield I know that he is Sir Lancelot.’

‘How can this be?’ said the Maid of Astolat, ‘and what was his hurt?’

‘Truly,’ answered Sir Gawaine, ‘it was the man that loved him best who hurt him so, and I am sure that if that man knew that it was Sir Lancelot whom he had wounded, he would think it was the darkest deed that ever he did.’

‘Now, dear father,’ said Elaine, ‘give me leave to ride and to seek him, for I shall go out of my mind unless I find him and my brother.’

‘Do as you will,’ answered her father, ‘for I am grieved to hear of the hurt of that noble Knight.’ So the damsel made ready.

On the morn Sir Gawaine came to King Arthur and told him how he had found the shield in the keeping of the Maid of Astolat. ‘All that I knew beforehand,’ said the King, ‘and that was why I would not suffer you to fight at the tourney, for I had espied him when he entered his lodging the night before. But this is the first time that ever I heard of his bearing the token of some lady, and much I marvel at it.’

‘By my head,’ answered Sir Gawaine, ‘the Fair Maiden of Astolat loves him wondrous well. What it all means, or what will be the end, I cannot say, but she has ridden after him to seek him.’ So the King and his company came to London, and everyone in the Court knew that it was Sir Lancelot who had jousted the best.

And when the tidings came to Sir Bors, his heart grew heavy, and also the hearts of his kinsmen. But when the Queen heard that Sir Lancelot bore the red sleeve of the Fair Maid of Astolat, she was nearly mad with wrath and summoned Sir Bors before her in haste.

‘Ah, Sir Bors,’ she cried when he was come, ‘have the tidings reached you that Sir Lancelot has been a false Knight to me?’

‘Madam,’ answered Sir Bors, ‘I pray you say not so, for I cannot hear such language of him.’

‘Why, is he not false and a traitor when, after swearing that for right or wrong he would be my Knight and mine only, he bore the red sleeve upon his helm at the great jousts at Camelot?’

‘Madam,’ said Sir Bors, ‘I grieve bitterly as to that sleeve-bearing, but I think he did it that none of his kin should know him. For no man before that had seen him bear the token of any lady, be she what she may.’

‘Fie on him!’ said the Queen, ‘I myself heard Sir Gawaine tell my lord Arthur of the great love that is between the Fair Maiden of Astolat and him.’

‘Madam,’ answered Sir Bors, ‘I cannot hinder Sir Gawaine from saying what he pleases, but as for Sir Lancelot, I am sure that he loves no one lady or maiden better than another. And therefore I will hasten to seek him wherever he be.’

Meanwhile fair Elaine came to Winchester to find Sir Lancelot, who lay in peril of his life in the hermit’s dwelling. And when she was riding hither and thither, not knowing where she should turn, she fell on her brother Sir Lavaine, who was exercising his horse. ‘How doth my lord Sir Lancelot?’ asked she.

‘Who told you, sister, that my lord’s name was Sir Lancelot?’ answered Sir Lavaine.

‘Sir Gawaine, who came to my father’s house to rest after the tourney, knew him by his shield,’ said she, and they rode on till they reached the hermitage, and Sir Lavaine brought her to Sir Lancelot. And when she saw him so pale, and in such a plight, she fell to the earth in a swoon, but by-and-bye she opened her eyes and said, ‘My lord Sir Lancelot, what has brought you to this?’ and swooned again. When she came to herself and stood up, Sir Lancelot prayed her to be of good cheer, for if she had come to comfort him she was right welcome, and that his wound would soon heal. ‘But I marvel,’ said he, ‘how you know my name.’ Then the maiden told him how Sir Gawaine had been at Astolat and had seen his shield.

‘Alas!’ sighed Sir Lancelot, ‘it grieves me that my name is known, for trouble will come of it.’ For he knew full well that Sir Gawaine would tell Queen Guenevere, and that she would be wroth. And Elaine stayed and tended him, and Sir Lancelot begged Sir Lavaine to ride to Winchester and ask if Sir Bors was there, and said that he should know him by token of a wound which Sir Bors had on his forehead. ‘For well I am sure,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘that Sir Bors will seek me, as he is the same good Knight that hurt me.’

Therefore as Sir Lancelot commanded, Sir Lavaine rode to Winchester and inquired if Sir Bors had been seen there, so that when he entered the town Sir Lavaine readily found him. Sir Bors was overjoyed to hear good tidings of Sir Lancelot, and they rode back together to the hermitage. At the sight of Sir Lancelot lying in his bed, pale and thin, Sir Bors’ heart gave way, and he wept long without speaking. ‘Oh, my lord Sir Lancelot,’ he said at last, ‘God send you hasty recovery; great is my shame for having wounded you thus, you who are the noblest Knight in the world. I wonder that my arm would lift itself against you, and I ask your mercy.’

‘Fair cousin,’ answered Sir Lancelot, ‘such words please me not at all, for it is the fault of my pride which would overcome you all, that I lie here to-day. We will not speak of it any more, for what is done cannot be undone, but let us find a cure so that I may soon be whole.’ Then Sir Bors leaned upon his bed, and told him how the Queen was filled with anger against him, because he wore the red sleeve at the jousts.

‘I am sorrowful at what you tell me,’ replied Sir Lancelot, ‘for all I did was to hinder my being known.’

‘That I said to excuse you,’ answered Sir Bors, ‘though it was all in vain. But is this damsel that is so busy about you the Fair Maid of Astolat?’

‘She it is, and she will not go from me!’

‘Why should she go from you?’ asked Sir Bors. ‘She is a passing fair damsel, and of gentle breeding, and I would that you could love her, for it is easy to see by her bearing that she loves you entirely.’

‘It grieves me to hear that,’ said Sir Lancelot.

After this they talked of other things, till in a few days Sir Lancelot’s wounds were whole again. When Sir Lancelot felt his strength return, Sir Bors made him ready, and departed for the Court of King Arthur, and told them how he had left Sir Lancelot. And there was on All Hallows a great tournament, and Sir Bors won the prize for the unhorsing of twenty Knights, and Sir Gareth did great deeds also, but vanished suddenly from the field, and no man knew where he had gone. After the tourney was over, Sir Bors rode to the hermitage to see Sir Lancelot, whom he found walking on his feet, and on the next morning they bade farewell to the hermit, taking with them Elaine le Blanc. They went first to

Astolat, where they were well lodged in the house of Sir Bernard, but when the morrow came, and Sir Lancelot would have departed from them, Elaine called to her father and to her brothers Sir Tirre and Sir Lavaine, and thus she said:

‘My lord Sir Lancelot, fair Knight, leave me not, I pray you, but have mercy upon me, and suffer me not to die of love of thee.’

‘What do you wish me to do?’ asked Sir Lancelot.

‘I would have you for my husband,’ answered she.

‘Fair damsel, I thank you,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘but truly I shall never have a wife. But in token and thanks of all your good will towards me, gladly will I give a thousand pounds yearly when you set your heart upon some other Knight.’

‘Of such gifts I will have none,’ answered Elaine, ‘and I would have you know, Sir Lancelot, that if you refuse to wed me, my good days are done.’

‘Fair damsel,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘I cannot do the thing that you ask.’

At these words she fell down in a swoon, and her maids bore her to her chamber, where she made bitter sorrow. Sir Lancelot thought it would be well for him to depart before she came to her senses again, and he asked Sir Lavaine what he would do.

‘What should I do?’ asked Sir Lavaine, ‘but follow you if you will have me.’ Then Sir Bernard came and said to Sir Lancelot, ‘I see well that my daughter Elaine will die for your sake.’

‘I cannot marry her,’ answered Sir Lancelot, ‘and it grieves me sorely, for she is a good maiden, fair and gentle.’

‘Father,’ said Sir Lavaine, ‘she is as pure and good as Sir Lancelot has said, and she is like me, for since first I saw him I can never leave him.’ And after that they bade the old man farewell and came unto Winchester, where the King and all the Knights of the Round Table made great joy of him, save only Sir Agrawaine and Sir Mordred. But the Queen was angry and would not speak to him, though he tried by all means to make her. Now when the Fair Maid of Astolat knew he was gone, she would neither eat nor sleep, but cried after Sir Lancelot all the day long. And when she had spent ten days in this manner, she grew so weak that they thought her soul must quit this world, and the priest came to her, and bade her dwell no more on earthly things. She would not listen to him, but cried ever after Sir Lancelot, and how she had loved none other, no, nor ever would, and that her love would be her death. Then she called her father Sir Bernard, and her brother Sir Tirre, and begged her brother to write her a letter as she should tell him, and her father that he would have her watched till she was dead. ‘And while my body is warm,’ said she, ‘let this letter be put in my right hand, and my hand bound fast with the letter until I be cold, and let me be dressed in my richest clothes and be lain on a fair bed, and driven in a chariot to the Thames. There let me be put on a barge, and a dumb man with me, to steer the barge, which shall be covered over with black samite. Thus, father, I beseech you, let it be done.' And her father promised her faithfully that so it should be done to her when she was dead. Next day she died, and her body was lain on the bed, and placed in a chariot, and driven to the Thames, where the man awaited her with the barge. When she was put on board, he steered the barge to Westminster and rowed a great while to and fro, before any espied it. At last King Arthur and Queen Guenevere withdrew into a window to speak together, and espied the black barge and wondered greatly what it meant. The King summoned Sir Kay, and bade him take Sir Brandiles and Sir Agrawaine, and find out who was lying there, and they ran down to the river side, and came and told the King. 'That fair corpse will I see,' returned the King, and he took the Queen's hand and led her thither. Then he ordered the barge to be made fast, and he entered it, and the Queen likewise, and certain Knights with them. And there he saw a fair woman on a rich bed, and her clothing was of cloth of gold, and she lay smiling. While they looked, all being silent, the Queen spied a letter in her right hand, and pointed it out to the King, who took it saying, 'Now I am sure this letter will tell us what she was, and why she came hither.' So leaving the barge in charge of a trusty man, they went into the King's chamber, followed by many Knights, for the King would have the letter read openly. He then broke the seal himself, and bade a clerk read it, and this was what it said:

'Most noble Knight Sir Lancelot, I was your lover, whom men called the Fair Maid of Astolat: therefore unto all ladies I make my moan; yet pray for my soul, and bury me. This is my last request. Pray for my soul, Sir Lancelot, as thou art peerless.'

This was all the letter, and the King and Queen and all the Knights wept when they heard it.

'Let Sir Lancelot be sent for,' presently said the King, and when Sir Lancelot came the letter was read to him also.

'My lord Arthur,' said he, after he had heard it all, 'I am right grieved at the death of this damsel. God knows I was not, of my own will, guilty of her death, and that I will call on her brother, Sir Lavaine, to witness. She was both fair and good, and much was I beholden to her, but she loved me out of measure.'

'You might have been a little gentle with her,' answered the Queen, 'and have found some way to save her life.'

'Madam,' said Sir Lancelot, 'she would have nothing but my love, and that I could not give her, though I offered her a thousand pounds yearly if she should set her heart on any other Knight. For, Madam, I love not to be forced to love; love must arise of itself, and not by command.'

‘That is truth,’ replied the King, ‘love is free in himself, and never will be bounden; for where he is bounden he looseth himself. But, Sir Lancelot, be it your care to see that the damsel is buried as is fitting.’

LANCELOT AND GUENEVERE

Now we come to the sorrowful tale of Lancelot and Guenevere, and of the death of King Arthur. Already it has been told that King Arthur had wedded Guenevere, the daughter of Leodegrance, King of Cornwall, a damsel who seemed made of all the flowers, so fair was she, and slender, and brilliant to look upon. And the Knights in her father's Court bowed down before her, and smote their hardest in the jousts where Guenevere was present, but none dared ask her in marriage till Arthur came. Like the rest he saw and loved her, but, unlike them, he was a King, and might lift his eyes even unto Guenevere. The maiden herself scarcely saw or spoke to him, but did her father's bidding in all things, and when he desired her to make everything ready to go clothed as beseemed a Princess to King Arthur's Court, her heart beat with joy at the sight of rich stuffs and shining jewels. Then one day there rode up to the Castle a band of horsemen sent by the King to bring her to his Court, and at the head of them Sir Lancelot du Lake, friend of King Arthur, and winner of all the jousts and tournaments where Knights meet to gain honour. Day by day they rode together apart and he told her tales of gallant deeds done for love of beautiful ladies, and they passed under trees gay with the first green of spring, and over hyacinths covering the earth with sheets of blue, till at sunset they drew rein before the silken pavilion, with the banner of Uther Pendragon floating on the top. And Guenevere's heart went out to Lancelot before she knew. One evening she noted, far across the plain, towers and buildings shining in the sun, and an array of horsemen ride forth to meet her. One stopped before her dazzled eyes, and leaping from his horse bowed low. Arthur had come to welcome her, and do her honour, and to lead her home. But looking up at him, she thought him cold, and, timid and alone, her thoughts turned again to Lancelot. After that the days and years slipped by, and these two were ever nearest the King, and in every time of danger the King cried for Lancelot, and trusted his honour and the Queen's to him. Sir Lancelot spoke truly when he told Elaine that he had never worn the badge of lady or maiden, but for all that every one looked on Sir Lancelot as the Queen's Knight, who could do no worship to any other woman. The King likewise held Sir Lancelot bound to fight the Queen's battles, and if he was absent on adventures of his own, messengers hastened to bring him back, as in the fight with Sir Mador. So things went on for many years, and the King never guessed that the Queen loved Lancelot best.

It befell one spring, in the month of May, that Queen Guenevere bethought herself that she would like to go a-maying in the woods and fields that lay round the City of Westminster on both sides of the river. To this intent she called her own especial Knights, and bade them be ready the next morning clothed all in green, whether of silk or cloth, ‘and,’ said she, ‘I shall bring with me ten ladies, and every Knight shall have a lady behind him, and be followed by a Squire and two yeomen, and I will that you shall all be well horsed.’ Thus it was done, and the ten Knights, arrayed in fresh green, the emblem of the spring, rode with the Queen and her ladies in the early dawn, and smelt the sweet of the year, and gathered flowers which they stuck in their girdles and doublets. The Queen was as happy and light of heart as the youngest maiden, but she had promised to be with the King at the hour of ten, and gave the signal for departure unwillingly. The Knights were mounting their horses, when suddenly out of a wood on the other side rode Sir Meliagraunce, who for many years had loved the Queen, and had sought an occasion to carry her off, but found none so fair as this. Out of the forest he rode, with two score men in armour, and a hundred archers behind him, and bade the Queen and her followers stay where they were, or they would fare badly. ‘Traitor,’ cried the Queen, ‘what evil deed would you do? You are a King’s son and a Knight of the Round Table, yet you seek to shame the man who gave you knighthood. But I tell you that you may bring dishonour on yourself, but you will bring none on me, for rather would I cut my throat in twain.’

‘As for your threats, Madam, I pay them no heed,’ returned Sir Meliagraunce; ‘I have loved you many a year, and never could I get you at such an advantage as I do now, and therefore I will take you as I find you.’ Then all the Knights spoke together saying, ‘Sir Meliagraunce, bethink yourself that in attacking men who are unarmed you put not only our lives in peril but your own honour. Rather than allow the Queen to be shamed we will each one fight to the death, and if we did aught else we should dishonour our knighthood for ever.’

‘Fight as well as you can,’ answered Sir Meliagraunce, ‘and keep the Queen if you may.’ So the Knights of the Round Table drew their swords, and the men of Sir Meliagraunce ran at them with spears; but the Knights stood fast, and clove the spears in two before they touched them. Then both sides fought with swords, and Sir Kay and five other Knights were felled to the ground with wounds all over their bodies. The other four fought long, and slew forty of the men and archers of Sir Meliagraunce; but in the end they too were overcome. When the Queen saw that she cried out for pity and sorrow, ‘Sir Meliagraunce, spare my noble Knights and I will go with you quietly on this condition, that their lives be saved, and that wherever you may carry me they shall follow. For I give you warning that I would rather slay myself than go with you without my Knights, whose duty it is to guard me.'

'Madam,' replied Sir Meliagraunce, 'for your sake they shall be led with you into my own castle, if you will consent to ride with me.' So the Queen prayed the four Knights to fight no more, and she and they would not part, and to this, though their hearts were heavy, they agreed.

The fight being ended the wounded Knights were placed on horseback, some sitting, some lying across the saddle, according as they were hurt, and Sir Meliagraunce forbade anyone to leave the castle (which had been a gift to him from King Arthur), for sore he dreaded the vengeance of Sir Lancelot if this thing should reach his ears. But the Queen knew well what was passing in his mind, and she called a little page who served her in her chamber and desired him to take her ring and hasten with all speed to Sir Lancelot, 'and pray him, if he loves me, to rescue me. Spare not your horse, neither for water nor for land.' And the boy bided his time, then mounted his horse, and rode away as fast as he might. Sir Meliagraunce spied him as he flew, and knew whither he went, and who had sent him; and he commanded his best archers to ride after him and shoot him ere he reached Sir Lancelot. But the boy escaped their arrows, and vanished from their sight. Then Sir Meliagraunce said to the Queen, 'You seek to betray me, Madam; but Sir Lancelot shall not so lightly come at you.' And he bade his men follow him to the castle in haste, and left an ambush of thirty archers in the road, charging them that if a Knight mounted on a white horse came along that way they were to slay the horse but to leave the man alone, as he was hard to overcome. After Sir Meliagraunce had given these orders his company galloped fast to the castle; but the Queen would listen to nothing that he said, demanding always that her Knights and ladies should be lodged with her, and Sir Meliagraunce was forced to let her have her will.

The castle of Sir Meliagraunce was distant seven miles from Westminster, so it did not take long for the boy to find Sir Lancelot, and to give him the Queen's ring and her message. 'I am shamed for ever,' said Sir Lancelot, 'unless I can rescue that noble lady,' and while he put on his armour, he called to the boy to tell him the whole adventure. When he was armed and mounted, he begged the page to warn Sir Lavaine where he had gone, and for what cause. 'And pray him, as he loves me, that he follow me to the castle of Sir Meliagraunce, for if I am a living man, he will find me there.'

Sir Lancelot put his horse into the water at Westminster, and he swam straight over to Lambeth, and soon after he landed he found traces of the fight. He rode along the track till he came to the wood, where the archers were lying waiting for him, and when they saw him, they bade him on peril of his life to go no further along that path.

‘Why should I, who am a Knight of the Round Table, turn out of any path that pleases me?’ asked Sir Lancelot.

‘Either you will leave this path or your horse will be slain,’ answered the archers.

‘You may slay my horse if you will,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘but when my horse is slain I shall fight you on foot, and so would I do, if there were five hundred more of you.’ With that they smote the horse with their arrows, but Sir Lancelot jumped off, and ran into the wood, and they could not catch him. He went on some way, but the ground was rough, and his armour was heavy, and sore he dreaded the treason of Sir Meliagraunce. His heart was near to fail him, when there passed by a cart with two carters that came to fetch wood. ‘Tell me, carter,’ asked Sir Lancelot, ‘what will you take to suffer me to go in your cart till we are within two miles of the castle of Sir Meliagraunce?’

‘I cannot take you at all,’ answered the carter, ‘for I am come to fetch wood for my lord Sir Meliagraunce.’

‘It is with him that I would speak.’

‘You shall not go with me,’ said the carter, but hardly had he uttered the words when Sir Lancelot leapt up into the cart, and gave him such a buffet that he fell dead on the ground. At this sight the other carter cried that he would take the Knight where he would if he would only spare his life. ‘Then I charge you,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘that you bring me to the castle gate.’ So the carter drove at a great gallop, and Sir Lancelot’s horse, who had espied his master, followed the cart, though more than fifty arrows were standing in his body. In an hour and a half they reached the castle gate, and were seen of Guenevere and her ladies, who were standing in a window. ‘Look, Madam,’ cried one of her ladies, ‘in that cart yonder is a goodly armed Knight. I suppose he is going to his hanging.’

‘Where?’ asked the Queen, and as she spoke she espied that it was Sir Lancelot, and that his horse was following riderless. ‘Well is he that has a trusty friend,’ said she, ‘for a noble Knight is hard pressed when he rides in a cart,’ and she rebuked the lady who had declared he was going to his hanging. ‘It was foul talking, to liken the noblest Knight in the world to one going to a shameful death.’ By this Sir Lancelot had come to the gate of the castle, and he got down and called till the castle rang with his voice. ‘Where is that false traitor Sir Meliagraunce, Knight of the Round Table? Come forth, you and your company, for I, Sir Lancelot du Lake, am here to do battle with you.’ Then he burst the gate open wide, and smote the porter who tried to hold it against him. When Sir Meliagraunce heard Sir Lancelot’s voice, he ran into Queen Guenevere’s chamber, and fell on his knees before her: ‘Mercy, Madam, mercy! I throw myself upon your grace.’

‘What ails you now?’ said she; ‘of a truth I might well expect some good Knight to avenge me, though my lord Arthur knew not of your work.’

‘Madam, I will make such amends as you yourself may desire,’ pleaded Sir Meliagraunce, ‘and I trust wholly to your grace.’

‘What would you have me do?’ asked the Queen.

‘Rule in this castle as if it were your own, and give Sir Lancelot cheer till to-morrow, and then you shall all return to Westminster.’

‘You say well,’ answered the Queen. ‘Peace is ever better than war, and I take no pleasure in fighting.’ So she went down with her ladies to Sir Lancelot, who still stood full of rage in the inner court, calling as before, ‘Traitor Knight, come forth!’

‘Sir Lancelot,’ asked the Queen, ‘what is the cause of all this wrath?’

‘Madam,’ replied Sir Lancelot, ‘does such a question come from you? Methinks your wrath should be greater than mine, for all the hurt and the dishonour have fallen upon you. My own hurt is but little, but the shame is worse than any hurt.’

‘You say truly,’ replied the Queen, ‘but you must come in with me peaceably, as all is put into my hand, and the Knight repents bitterly of his adventure.’

‘Madam,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘since you have made agreement with him, it is not my part to say nay, although Sir Meliagraunce has borne himself both shamefully and cowardly towards me. But had I known you would have pardoned him so soon, I should not have made such haste to come to you.’

‘Why do you say that?’ asked the Queen; ‘do you repent yourself of your good deeds? I only made peace with him to have done with all this noise of slanderous talk, and for the sake of my Knights.’

‘Madam,’ answered Sir Lancelot, ‘you understand full well that I was never glad of slander nor noise, but there is neither King, Queen nor Knight alive, save yourself, Madam, and my lord Arthur, that should hinder me from giving Sir Meliagraunce a cold heart before I departed hence.’

‘That I know well,’ said the Queen, ‘but what would you have more? Everything shall be ordered as you will.’

‘Madam,’ replied Sir Lancelot, ‘as long as you are pleased, that is all I care for,’ so the Queen led Sir Lancelot into her chamber, and commanded him to take off his armour, and then took him to where her ten Knights were lying sore wounded. And their souls leapt with joy when they saw him, and he told them how falsely Sir Meliagraunce had dealt with him, and had set archers to slay his horse, so that he was fain to place himself in a cart. Thus they complained each to the other, and would have avenged themselves on Sir Meliagraunce but for the peace made by the Queen. And in the evening came Sir Lavaine, riding in great haste, and Sir Lancelot was glad that he was come.

Now Sir Lancelot was right when he feared to trust Sir Meliagraunce, for that Knight only sought to work ill both to him and to the Queen, for all his fair words. And first he began to speak evil of the Queen to Sir Lancelot, who dared him to prove his foul words, and it was settled between them that a combat should take place in eight days in the field, near Westminster. ‘And now,’ said Sir Meliagraunce, ‘since it is decided that we must fight together, I beseech you, as you are a noble Knight, do me no treason nor villainy in the meantime.’

‘Any Knight will bear me witness,’ answered Sir Lancelot, ‘that never have I broken faith with any man, nor borne fellowship with those that have done so.’ ‘Then let us go to dinner,’ said Sir Meliagraunce, ‘and afterwards you may all ride to Westminster. Meanwhile would it please you to see the inside of this castle?’ ‘That I will gladly,’ said Sir Lancelot, and they went from chamber to chamber, till they reached the floor of the castle, and as he went Sir Lancelot trod on a trap, and the board rolled, and he fell down in a cave which was filled with straw, and Sir Meliagraunce departed and no man knew where Sir Lancelot might be. The Queen bethought herself that he was wont to disappear suddenly, and as Sir Meliagraunce had first removed Sir Lavaine’s horse from the place where it had been tethered, the Knights agreed with her. So time passed till dinner had been eaten, and then Sir Lavaine demanded litters for the wounded Knights, that they might be carried to Westminster with as little hurt as might be. And the Queen and her ladies followed. When they arrived, the Knights told of their adventure, and how Sir Meliagraunce had accused the Queen of treason, and how he and Sir Lancelot were to fight for her good name in eight days.

‘Sir Meliagraunce has taken a great deal upon him,’ said the King, ‘but where is Sir Lancelot?’

‘Sir,’ answered they all, ‘we know not, but we think he has ridden to some adventure.’ ‘Well, leave him alone,’ said the King. ‘He will be here when the day comes, unless some treason has befallen him.’

All this while Sir Lancelot was lying in great pain within the cave, and he would have died for lack of food had not one of the ladies in the castle found out the place where he was held captive, and brought him meat and drink, and hoped that he might be brought to love her. But he would not. ‘Sir Lancelot,’ said she, ‘you are not wise, for without my help you will never get out of this prison, and if you do not appear on the day of battle, your lady, Queen Guenevere, will be burnt in default.’ ‘If I am not there,’ replied Sir Lancelot, ‘the King and the Queen and all men of worship will know that I am either dead or in prison. And sure I am that there is some good Knight who loves me or is of my kin, that will take my quarrel in hand, therefore you cannot frighten me by such words as these. If there was not another woman in the world, I could give you no different answer.’ ‘Then you will be shamed openly,’ replied the lady, and left the dungeon. But on the day that the battle was to be fought she came again, and said, ‘Sir Lancelot, if you will only kiss me once, I will deliver you, and give you the best horse in Sir Meliagraunce’s stable.’ ‘Yes, I will kiss you,’ answered Sir Lancelot, ‘since I may do that honourably; but if I thought it were any shame to kiss you, I would not do it, whatever the cost.’ So he kissed her, and she brought him his armour, and led him to a stable where twelve noble horses stood, and bade him choose the best. He chose a white courser, and bade the keepers put on the best saddle they had, and with his spear in his hand and his sword by his side, he rode away, thanking the lady for all she had done for him, which some day he would try to repay.

As the hours passed on and Sir Lancelot did not come, Sir Meliagraunce called ever on King Arthur to burn the Queen, or else bring forth Sir Lancelot, for he deemed full well that he had Sir Lancelot safe in his dungeon. The King and Queen were sore distressed that Sir Lancelot was missing, and knew not where to look for him, and what to do. Then stepped forth Sir Lavaine and said, ‘My lord Arthur, you know well that some ill-fortune has happened to Sir Lancelot, and if he is not dead, he is either sick or in prison. Therefore I beseech you, let me do battle instead of my lord and master for my lady the Queen.’

‘I thank you heartily, gentle Knight,’ answered Arthur, ‘for I am sure that Sir Meliagraunce accuses the Queen falsely, and there is not one of the ten Knights who would not fight for her were it not for his wounds. So do your best, for it is plain that some evil has been wrought on Sir Lancelot.’ Sir Lavaine was filled with joy when the King gave him leave to do battle with Sir Meliagraunce, and rode swiftly to his place at the end of the lists. And just as the heralds were about to cry ‘Lesses les aler!’ Sir Lancelot dashed into the middle on his white horse. ‘Hold and abide!’ commanded the King, and Sir Lancelot rode up before him, and told before them all how Sir Meliagraunce had treated him. When the King and Queen and all the Lords heard Sir Lancelot’s tale, their hearts stirred within them with anger, and the Queen took her seat by the King, in great trust of her champion. Sir Lancelot and Sir Meliagraunce prepared themselves for battle, and took their spears, and came together as thunder, and Sir Lancelot bore Sir Meliagraunce right over his horse. Then Sir Lancelot jumped down, and they fought on foot, till in the end Sir Meliagraunce was smitten to the ground by a blow on his head from his enemy. ‘Most noble Knight, save my life,’ cried he, ‘for I yield myself unto you, and put myself into the King’s hands and yours.’ Sir Lancelot did not know what to answer, for he longed above anything in the world to have revenge upon him; so he looked at the Queen to see whether she would give him any sign of what she would have done. The Queen wagged her head in answer, and Sir Lancelot knew by that token that she would have him dead, and he understood, and bade Sir Meliagraunce get up, and continue the fight. ‘Nay,’ said Sir Meliagraunce, ‘I will never rise till you accept my surrender.’ ‘Listen,’ answered Sir Lancelot. ‘I will leave my head and left side bare, and my left arm shall be bound behind me, and in this guise I will fight with you.’ At this Sir Meliagraunce started to his feet, and cried, ‘My lord Arthur, take heed to this offer, for I will take it, therefore let him be bound and unarmed as he has said.’ So the Knights disarmed Sir Lancelot, first his head and then his side, and his left hand was bound behind his back, in such a manner that he could not use his shield, and full many a Knight and lady marvelled that Sir Lancelot would risk himself so. And Sir Meliagraunce lifted his sword on high and would have smitten Sir Lancelot on his bare head, had he not leapt lightly to one side, and, before Sir Meliagraunce could right himself, Sir Lancelot had struck him so hard upon his helmet that his skull split in two, and there was nothing left to do but to carry his dead body from the field. And because the Knights of the Round Table begged to have him honourably buried, the King agreed thereto, and on his tomb mention was made of how he came by his death, and who slew him. After this Sir Lancelot was more cherished by the King and Queen than ever he was before.

Among the many Knights at Arthur’s Court who owned kings for their fathers were Sir Mordred and Sir Agrawaine, who had for brothers, Sir Gawaine, Sir Gaheris and Sir Gareth. And their mother was Queen of Orkney, sister to King Arthur. Now Sir Agrawaine and Sir Mordred had evil natures, and loved both to invent slanders and to repeat them. And at this time they were full of envy of the noble deeds Sir Lancelot had done, and how men called him the bravest Knight of the Table Round, and said that he was the friend of the King, and the sworn defender of the Queen. So they cast about how they might ruin him, and found the way by putting jealous thoughts into the mind of Arthur.

As was told in the tale of the marriage of Arthur, Queen Guenevere’s heart had gone out to Lancelot, on the journey to the Court, and ever she loved to have him with her. This was known well to Sir Mordred, who watched eagerly for a chance to work her ill.

It came one day when Arthur proclaimed a hunt, and Sir Mordred guessed that Sir Lancelot, who did not love hunting, would stay behind, and would spend the time holding talk with the Queen. Therefore he went to the King and began to speak evil of the Queen and Sir Lancelot. At first King Arthur would listen to nothing, but slowly his jealousy burned within him, and he let the ill words that accused the Queen of loving Sir Lancelot the best, sink into his mind, and told Sir Mordred and Sir Agrawaine that they might do their worst, and he would not meddle with them. But they let so many of their fellowship into the secret of their foul plot, that at last it came to the ears of Sir Bors, who begged Sir Lancelot not to go near the Queen that day, or harm would come of it. But Sir Lancelot answered that the Queen had sent for him, and that she was his liege lady, and never would he hold back when she summoned him to her presence. Therefore Sir Bors went heavily away. By ill fortune, Sir Lancelot only wore his sword under his great mantle, and scarcely had he passed inside the door when Sir Agrawaine and Sir Mordred, and twelve other Knights of the Table Round, all armed and ready for battle, cried loudly upon Sir Lancelot, that all the Court might hear.

‘Madam,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘is there any armour within your chamber that I might cover my body withal, for if I was armed as they are I would soon crush them?’

‘Alas!’ replied the Queen, ‘I have neither sword nor spear nor armour, and how can you resist them? You will be slain and I shall be burnt. If you could only escape their hands, I know you would deliver me from danger.’

‘It is grievous,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘that I who was never conquered in all my life should be slain for lack of armour.’

‘Traitor Knight,’ cried Sir Mordred again, ‘come out and fight us, for you are so sore beset that you cannot escape us.’

‘Oh, mercy,’ cried Sir Lancelot, ‘I may not suffer longer this shame and noise! For better were death at once than to endure this pain.’ Then he took the Queen in his arms and kissed her, and said, ‘Most noble Christian Queen, I beseech you, as you have ever been my special good lady, and I at all times your true poor Knight, and as I never failed you in right or in wrong, since the first day that King Arthur made me Knight, that you will pray for my soul, if I be here slain. For I am well assured that Sir Bors, my nephew, and Sir Lavaine and many more, will rescue you from the fire, and therefore, mine own lady, comfort yourself whatever happens to me, and go with Sir Bors, my nephew, and you shall live like a Queen on my lands.’

‘Nay, Lancelot,’ said the Queen, ‘I will never live after your days, but if you are slain I will take my death as meekly as ever did any Christian Queen.’

‘Well, Madam,’ answered Lancelot, ‘since it is so I shall sell my life as dear as I may, and a thousandfold I am more heavy for you than for myself.’

Therewith Sir Lancelot wrapped his mantle thickly round his arm, and stood beside the door, which the Knights without were trying to break in by aid of a stout wooden form.

‘Fair Lords,’ said Sir Lancelot, ‘leave this noise, and I will open the door, and you may do with me what you will.’

‘Open it then,’ answered they, ‘for well you know you cannot escape us, and we will save your life and bring you before King Arthur.’ So Sir Lancelot opened the door and held it with his left hand, so that but one man could come in at once. Then came forward a strong Knight, Sir Colgrevance of Gore, who struck fiercely at Lancelot with his sword. But Sir Lancelot stepped on one side, that the blow fell harmless, and with his arm he gave Sir Colgrevance a buffet on the head so that he fell dead. And Sir Lancelot drew him into the chamber, and barred the door.

Hastily he unbuckled the dead Knight’s armour, and the Queen and her ladies put it on him, Sir Agrawaine and Sir Mordred ever calling to him the while, ‘Traitor Knight, come out of that chamber!’ But Sir Lancelot cried to them all to go away and he would appear next morning before the King, and they should accuse him of what they would, and he would answer them, and prove his words in battle. ‘Fie on you, traitor,’ said Sir Agrawaine, ‘we have you in our power, to save or to slay, for King Arthur will listen to our words, and will believe what we tell him.’

‘As you like,’ answered Sir Lancelot, ‘look to yourself,’ and he flung open the chamber door, and strode in amongst them and killed Sir Agrawaine with his first blow, and in a few minutes the bodies of the other twelve Knights lay on the ground beside his, for no man ever withstood that buffet of Sir Lancelot’s. He wounded Sir Mordred also, so that he fled away with all his might. When the clamour of the battle was still, Sir Lancelot turned back to the Queen and said, ‘Alas, Madam, they will make King Arthur my foe, and yours also, but if you will come with me to my castle, I will save you from all dangers.’

‘I will not go with you now,’ answered the Queen, ‘but if you see to-morrow that they will burn me to death, then you may deliver me as you shall think best.’

‘While I live I will deliver you,’ said Sir Lancelot, and he left her and went back to his lodging. When Sir Bors, who was awaiting him, saw Sir Lancelot, he was gladder than he ever had been in his whole life before. ‘Mercy!’ cried Sir Lancelot, ‘why you are all armed!’

‘Sir,’ answered Sir Bors, ‘after you had left us I and your friends and your kinsmen were so troubled that we felt some great strife was at hand, and that perchance some trap had been laid for you. So we put on armour that we might help you whatever need you were in.’ ‘Fair nephew,’ said Lancelot, ‘but now I have been more hardly beset than ever I was in my life, and yet I escaped,’ and he told them all that had happened. ‘I pray you, my fellows, that you will be of good courage and stand by me in my need, for war is come to us all.’

‘Sir,’ answered Sir Bors, ‘all is welcome that God sends us, and we have had much good with you and much fame, so now we will take the bad as we have taken the good.’ And so said they all.

‘I thank you for your comfort in my great distress,’ replied Sir Lancelot, ‘and you, fair nephew, haste to the Knights which be in this place, and find who is with me and who is against me, for I would know my friends from my foes.’

‘Sir,’ said Sir Bors, ‘before seven of the clock in the morning you shall know.’

By seven o’clock, as Sir Bors had promised, many noble Knights stood before Sir Lancelot, and were sworn to his cause. ‘My lords,’ said he, ‘you know well that since I came into this country I have given faithful service unto my lord King Arthur and unto my lady Queen Guenevere. Last evening my lady, the Queen, sent for me to speak to her, and certain Knights that were lying in wait for me cried “Treason,” and much ado I had to escape their blows. But I slew twelve of them, and Sir Agrawaine, who is Sir Gawaine’s brother; and for this cause I am sure of mortal war, as these Knights were ordered by King Arthur to betray me, and therefore the Queen will be judged to the fire, and I may not suffer that she should be burnt for my sake.’

And Sir Bors answered Sir Lancelot that it was truly his part to rescue the Queen, as he had done so often before, and that if she was burned the shame would be his. Then they all took counsel together how the thing might best be done, and Sir Bors deemed it wise to carry her off to the Castle of Joyous Gard, and counselled that she should be kept there, a prisoner, till the King’s anger was past and he would be willing to welcome her back again. To this the other Knights agreed, and by the advice of Sir Lancelot they hid themselves in a wood close by the town till they saw what King Arthur would do. Meanwhile Sir Mordred, who had managed to escape the sword of Sir Lancelot, rode, wounded and bleeding, unto King Arthur, and told the King all that had passed, and how, of the fourteen Knights, he only was left alive. The King grieved sore at his tale, which Sir Mordred had made to sound as ill as was possible; for, in spite of all, Arthur loved Sir Lancelot. ‘It is a bitter blow,’ he said, ‘that Sir Lancelot must be against me, and the fellowship of the Table Round is broken for ever, as many a noble Knight will go with him. And as I am the judge, the Queen will have to die, as she is the cause of the death of these thirteen Knights.’

‘My lord Arthur,’ said Sir Gawaine, ‘be not over-hasty; listen not to the foul tongue of Sir Mordred, who laid this trap for Sir Lancelot, that we all know to be the Queen’s own Knight, who has done battle for her when none else would. As for Sir Lancelot, he will prove the right on the body of any Knight living that shall accuse him of wrong — either him, or my lady Guenevere.’

‘That I believe well,’ said King Arthur, ‘for he trusts so much in his own might that he fears no man; and never more shall he fight for the Queen, for she must suffer death by the law. Put on, therefore, your best armour, and go with your brothers, Sir Gaheris and Sir Gareth, and bring the Queen to the fire, there to have her judgment and suffer her death.'

'Nay, my lord, that I will never do,' cried Sir Gawaine; 'my heart will never serve me to see her die, and I will never stand by and see so noble a lady brought to a shameful end.'

'Then,' said the King, 'let your brothers Sir Gaheris and Sir Gareth be there.'

'My lord,' replied Sir Gawaine, 'I know well how loth they will be, but they are young and unable to say you nay.'

At this Sir Gaheris and Sir Gareth spoke to King Arthur: 'Sir, if you command us we will obey, but it will be sore against our will. And if we go we shall be dressed as men of peace, and wear no armour.'

'Make yourselves ready, then,' answered the King, 'for I would delay no longer in giving judgment.'

'Alas!' cried Sir Gawaine, 'that I should have lived to see this day'; and he turned and wept bitterly, and went into his chamber.

So the Queen was led outside the gates, and her rich dress was taken off, while her lords and ladies wrung their hands in grief, and few men wore armour, for in that day it was held that the presence of mail-clad Knights made death more shameful. Now among those present was one sent by Sir Lancelot, and when he saw the Queen's dress unclasped, and the priest step forth to listen to her confession, he rode to warn Sir Lancelot that the hour had come. And suddenly there was heard a sound as of rushing horses, and Sir Lancelot dashed up to the fire, and all the Knights that stood around were slain, for few men wore armour. Sir Lancelot looked not where he struck, and Sir Gaheris and Sir Gareth were found in the thickest of the throng. At last he reached the Queen, and, throwing a mantle over her, he caught her on to his saddle and rode away with her. Right thankful was the Queen at being snatched from the fire, and her heart was grateful to Sir Lancelot, who took her to his Castle of Joyous Gard, and many noble Knights and Kings had fellowship with them.

After King Arthur had given judgment for the Queen to die he went back into his Palace of Westminster, where men came and told him how Sir Lancelot had delivered her, and of the death of his Knights, and in especial of Sir Gaheris and Sir Gareth, and he swooned away from sorrow. 'Alas!' he cried, when he recovered from his swoon, 'alas! that a crown was ever on my head, for in these two days I have lost forty Knights and the fellowship of Sir Lancelot and his kinsmen, and never more will they be of my company. But I charge you that none tell Sir Gawaine of the death of his brothers, for I am sure that when he hears of Sir Gareth he will go out of his mind. Oh, why did Sir Lancelot slay them? for Sir Gareth loved Sir Lancelot more than any other man.'

'That is true,' answered some of the Knights, 'but Sir Lancelot saw not whom he smote, and therefore were they slain.'

'The death of those two,' said Arthur, 'will cause the greatest mortal war that ever was. I am sure that when Sir Gawaine knows Sir Gareth is slain he will never suffer me to rest till I have destroyed Sir Lancelot and all his kin, or till they have destroyed me. My heart was never so heavy as it is now, and far more grievous to me is the loss of my good Knights than of my Queen; for Queens I might have in plenty, but no man had ever such a company of Knights, and it hurts me sore that Sir Lancelot and I should be at war. It is the ill will borne by Sir Agrawaine and Sir Mordred to Sir Lancelot that has caused all this sorrow.' Then one came to Sir Gawaine and told him that Sir Lancelot had borne off the Queen, and that twenty-four Knights had been slain in the combat. 'I knew well he would deliver her,' said Sir Gawaine, 'and in that, he has but acted as a Knight should and as I would have done myself. But where are my brethren? I marvel they have not been to seek me.'

'Truly,' said the man, 'Sir Gaheris and Sir Gareth are slain.'

'Heaven forbid any such thing,' returned Sir Gawaine. 'I would not for all the world that that had happened, especially to my brother Sir Gareth.'

'He is slain,' said the man, 'and it is grievous news.'

'Who slew him?' asked Sir Gawaine.

'Sir Lancelot slew them both,' answered the man.

'He cannot have slain Sir Gareth,' replied Sir Gawaine, 'for my brother Gareth loved him better than me and all his brethren, and King Arthur too. And had Sir Lancelot desired my brother to go with him, he would have turned his back on us all. Therefore I can never believe that Sir Lancelot slew my brother.'

'Sir, it is in everyone's mouth,' said the man. At this Sir Gawaine fell back in a swoon and lay long as if he were dead. Then he ran to the King, crying, 'O King Arthur, mine uncle, my good brother Sir Gareth is slain, and Sir Gaheris also,' and the King wept with him. At length Sir Gawaine said, 'Sir, I will go and see my brother Sir Gareth.'

'You cannot do that,' returned the King, 'for I have caused him to be buried with Sir Gaheris, as I knew well that the sight would cause you overmuch sorrow.'

'How came he, Sir Lancelot, to slay Sir Gareth?' asked Sir Gawaine; 'mine own good lord, I pray you tell me, for neither Sir Gareth nor Sir Gaheris bore arms against him.'

'It is said,' answered the King, 'that Sir Lancelot slew them in the thickest of the press and knew them not. Therefore let us think upon a plan to avenge their deaths.'

'My King, my lord and mine uncle,' said Sir Gawaine, 'I swear to you by my knighthood that from this day I will never rest until Sir Lancelot or I be slain. And I will go to the world's end till I find him.'

'You need not seek him so far,' answered the King, 'for I am told that Sir Lancelot will await me and you in the Castle of Joyous Gard, and many people are flocking to him. But call your friends together, and I will call mine,' and the King ordered letters to be sent throughout all England summoning his Knights and vassals to the siege of Joyous Gard. The Castle of Joyous Gard was strong, and after fifteen weeks had passed no breach had been made in its walls. And one day, at the time of harvest, Sir Lancelot came forth on a truce, and the King and Sir Gawaine challenged him to do battle.

'Nay,' answered Sir Lancelot, 'with yourself I will never strive, and I grieve sorely that I have slain your Knights. But I was forced to it, for the saving of my life and that of my lady the Queen. And except yourself, my lord, and Sir Gawaine, there is no man that shall call me traitor but he shall pay for it with his body. As to Queen Guenevere, oft times, my lord, you have consented in the heat of your passion that she should be burnt and destroyed, and it fell to me to do battle for her, and her enemies confessed their untruth, and acknowledged her innocent. And at such times, my lord Arthur, you loved me and thanked me when I saved your Queen from the fire, and promised ever to be my good lord, for I have fought for her many times in other quarrels than my own. Therefore, my gracious lord, take your Queen back into your grace again.'

To these words of Sir Lancelot's, King Arthur answered nothing, but in his heart he would fain have made peace with Sir Lancelot, but Sir Gawaine would not let him. He reproached Sir Lancelot bitterly for the deaths of his brothers and kinsmen, and called Sir Lancelot a craven and other ill names that he would not fight with King Arthur. So at the last Sir Lancelot's patience and courtesy failed him, and he told them that the next morning he would give them battle.

The heart of Sir Gawaine leaped with joy when he heard these words of Sir Lancelot, and he summoned all his friends and his kinsfolk, and bade them watch well Sir Lancelot, and to slay him if a chance offered. But he knew not that Sir Lancelot had bidden the Knights of his following in no wise to touch King Arthur or Sir Gawaine. And when the dawn broke a great host marched out of the Castle of Joyous Gard, with Sir Lancelot at the head, and Sir Bors and Sir Lionel commanding on either side. All that day they fought, and sometimes one army seemed to be gaining, and sometimes the other. Many times King Arthur drew near Sir Lancelot, and would have slain him, and Sir Lancelot suffered him, and would not strike again. But the King was unhorsed by Sir Bors, and would have been slain but for Sir Lancelot, who stayed his hand. ‘My lord Arthur,’ he said, ‘for God’s love stop this strife. I cannot strike you, so you will gain no fame by it, though your friends never cease from trying to slay me. My lord, remember what I have done in many places and how evil is now my reward.’ Then when King Arthur was on his horse again he looked on Sir Lancelot, and tears burst from his eyes, thinking of the great courtesy that was in Sir Lancelot more than in any other man. He sighed to himself, saying softly, ‘Alas! that ever this war began,’ and rode away, while the battle ended for that time and the dead were buried.

But Sir Gawaine would not suffer the King to make peace, and they fought on, now in one place, and now in another, till the Pope heard of the strife and sent a noble clerk, the Bishop of Rochester, to charge the King to make peace with Sir Lancelot, and to take back unto him his Queen, the Lady Guenevere. Now the King, as has been said, would fain have followed the Pope’s counsel and have accorded with Sir Lancelot, but Sir Gawaine would not suffer him. However, as to the Queen Sir Gawaine said nothing; and King Arthur gave audience to the Bishop, and swore on his great seal that he would take back the Queen as the Pope desired, and that if Sir Lancelot brought her he should come safe and go safe. So the Bishop rode to Joyous Gard and showed Sir Lancelot what the Pope had written and King Arthur had answered, and told him of the perils which would befall him if he withheld the Queen. ‘It was never in my thought,’ answered Sir Lancelot, ‘to withhold the Queen from King Arthur, but as she would have been dead for my sake it was my part to save her life, and to keep her from danger till better times came. And I thank God that the Pope has made peace, and I shall be a thousand times gladder to bring her back than I was to take her away. Therefore ride to the King, and say that in eight days I myself will bring the Lady Guenevere unto him.’ So the Bishop departed, and came to the King at Carlisle, and told him what Sir Lancelot had answered, and tears burst from the King’s eyes once more.

A goodly host of a hundred Knights rode eight days later from the Castle of Joyous Gard; every Knight was clothed in green velvet, and held in his hand a branch of olive, and bestrode a horse with trappings down to his heels. And behind the Queen were four and twenty gentlewomen clad in green likewise, while twelve esquires attended on Sir Lancelot. He and the Queen wore dresses of white and gold tissue, and their horses were clothed in housings of the same, set with precious stones and pearls; and no man had ever gazed on such a noble pair, as they rode from Joyous Gard to Carlisle. When they reached the castle, Sir Lancelot sprang from his horse and helped the Queen from hers, and led her to where King Arthur sat, with Sir Gawaine and many lords around him. He kneeled down, and the Queen kneeled with him, and many Knights wept as though it had been their own kin. But Arthur sat still and said nothing. At that Sir Lancelot rose, and the Queen likewise, and, looking straight at the King, he spoke:

‘Most noble King, I have brought to you my lady the Queen, as right requires; and time hath been, my lord Arthur, that you have been greatly pleased with me when I did battle for my lady your Queen. And full well you know that she has been put to great wrong ere this, and it seems to me I had more cause to deliver her from this fire, seeing she would have been burnt for my sake.’

‘Well, well, Sir Lancelot,’ said the King, ‘I have given you no cause to do to me as you have done, for I have held you dearer than any of my Knights.’ But Sir Gawaine would not suffer the King to listen to anything Sir Lancelot said, and told him roughly that while one of them lived peace could never be made, and desired on behalf of the King that in fifteen days he should be gone out of the country. And still King Arthur said nothing, but suffered Sir Gawaine to talk as he would; and Sir Lancelot took farewell of him and of the Queen, and rode, grieving sorely, out of the Court, and sailed to his lands beyond the sea.

Though the Queen was returned again, and Sir Lancelot was beyond the sea, the hate of Sir Gawaine towards him was in no way set at rest, but he raised a great host and persuaded the King to follow him. And after many sieges and long fighting Sir Gawaine did battle with Sir Lancelot once more, and was worsted, and Sir Lancelot might have slain him, but would not. While he lay wounded tidings came to King Arthur from England that caused the King to give up his war with Sir Lancelot and return in all haste to his own country.

THE END OF IT ALL

Now when King Arthur left England to fight with Sir Lancelot he ordered his nephew Sir Mordred to govern the land, which that false Knight did gladly. And as soon as he thought he might safely do so he caused some letters to be written saying that King Arthur had been slain in battle, and he had himself crowned King at Canterbury, where he made a great feast which lasted fifteen days. After it was over, he went to Winchester and summoned Queen Guenevere, and told her that on a certain day he would wed her and that she should make herself ready. Queen Guenevere's soul grew cold and heavy as she heard these words of Sir Mordred's, for she hated him with all her might, as he hated her; but she dared show nothing, and answered softly that she would do his bidding, only she desired that first she might go to London to buy all manner of things for her wedding. Sir Mordred trusted her because of her fair speech, and let her go. Then the Queen rode to London with all speed, and went straight to the Tower, which she filled in haste with food, and called her men-at-arms round her. When Sir Mordred knew how she had beguiled him he was wroth out of measure, and besieged the Tower, and assaulted it many times with battering rams and great engines, but could prevail nothing, for the Queen would never, for fair speech nor for foul, give herself into his hands again.

The Bishop of Canterbury hastened unto Sir Mordred, and rebuked him for wishing to marry his uncle's wife. 'Leave such desires,' said the Bishop, 'or else I shall curse you with bell, book, and candle. Also, you noise abroad that my lord Arthur is slain, and that is not so, and therefore you will make ill work in the land.' At this Sir Mordred waxed very wroth, and would have killed the Bishop had he not fled to Glastonbury, where he became a hermit, and lived in poverty and prayed all day long for the realm, for he knew that a fierce war was at hand. Soon word came to Sir Mordred that King Arthur was hurrying home across the seas, to be avenged on his nephew, who had proved traitor. Wherefore Sir Mordred sent letters to all the people throughout the kingdom, and many followed after him, for he had cunningly sown among them that with him was great joy and softness of life, while King Arthur would bring war and strife with him. So Sir Mordred drew with a great host to Dover, and waited for the King. Before King Arthur and his men could land from the boats and ships that had brought them over the sea Sir Mordred set upon them, and there was heavy slaughter. But in the end he and his men were driven back, and he fled, and his people with him. After the fight was over the King ordered the dead to be buried; and there came a man and told him that he had found Sir Gawaine lying in a boat, and that he was sore wounded. And the King went to him and made moan over him: ‘You were ever the man in the world that I loved most,’ said he, ‘you and Sir Lancelot.’ ‘Mine uncle King Arthur,’ answered Sir Gawaine, ‘my death day has come, and all through my own fault. Had Sir Lancelot been with you as he used to be this unhappy war had never begun, and of that I am the cause, for I would not accord with him. And therefore, I pray you, give me paper, pen, and ink that I may write to him.’ So paper and ink were brought, and Sir Gawaine was held up by King Arthur, and a letter was writ wherein Sir Gawaine confessed that he was dying of an old wound given him by Sir Lancelot in the siege of one of the cities across the sea, and thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Merlin. ‘Of a more noble man might I not be slain,’ said he. ‘Also, Sir Lancelot, make no tarrying, but come in haste to King Arthur, for sore bested is he with my brother Sir Mordred, who has taken the crown, and would have wedded my lady Queen Guenevere had she not sought safety in the Tower of London. Pray for my soul, I beseech you, and visit my tomb.’ And after writing this letter, at the hour of noon, Sir Gawaine gave up his spirit, and was buried by the King in the chapel within Dover Castle. Then was it told King Arthur that Sir Mordred had pitched a new field upon Barham Down, and the next morning the King rode hither to him, and there was a fierce battle between them, and many on both sides were slain. But at the last King Arthur’s party stood best, and Sir Mordred and his men fled to Canterbury.

After the Knights which were dead had been buried, and those that were wounded tended with healing salves, King Arthur drew westwards towards Salisbury, and many of Sir Mordred’s men followed after him, but they that loved Sir Lancelot went unto Sir Mordred. And a day was fixed between the King and Sir Mordred that they should meet upon a down near Salisbury, and give battle once more. But the night before the battle Sir Gawaine appeared unto the King in a vision, and warned him not to fight next day, which was Trinity Sunday, as he would be slain and many of his Knights also; but to make a truce for a month, and at the end of that time Sir Lancelot would arrive, and would slay Sir Mordred, and all his Knights with him. As soon as he awoke the King called the Bishops and the wisest men of his army, and told them of his vision, and took counsel what should be done. And it was agreed that the King should send an embassage of two Knights and two Bishops unto Sir Mordred, and offer him as much goods and lands as they thought best if he would engage to make a treaty for a month with King Arthur.

So they departed, and came to Sir Mordred, where he had a grim host of an hundred thousand men. For a long time he would not suffer himself to be entreated, but at the last he agreed to have Cornwall and Kent in King Arthur’s days, and after all England. Furthermore, it was decided that King Arthur and Sir Mordred should meet in the plain between their hosts, each with fourteen persons. ‘I am glad of this,’ said King Arthur, when he heard what had been done; but he warned his men that if they were to see a sword drawn they were to come-on swiftly and slay that traitor, Sir Mordred, ‘for I in no wise trust him.’ And in like wise spake Sir Mordred unto his host. Then they two met, and agreed on the truce, and wine was fetched and they drank, and all was well. But while they were drinking an adder crept out of a bush, and stung one of the fourteen Knights on his foot, and he drew his sword to slay the adder, not thinking of anything but his pain. And when the men of both armies beheld that drawn sword, they blew trumpets and horns and shouted grimly, and made them ready for battle. So King Arthur leaped on his horse, and Sir Mordred on his, and they went back to their own armies, and thus began the fight, and never was there seen one more doleful in any Christian land. For all day long there was rushing and riding, spearing and striking, and many a grim word was there spoken, and many a deadly stroke given. And at the end full an hundred thousand dead men lay upon the down, and King Arthur had but two Knights left living, Sir Lucan and his brother Sir Bedivere. ‘Alas! that I should have lived to see this day,’ cried the King, ‘for now I am come to mine end; but would to God that I knew where were that traitor Sir Mordred that hath caused all this mischief.’ Then suddenly he saw Sir Mordred leaning on his sword among a great heap of dead men.

‘Give me my spear,’ said King Arthur unto Sir Lucan.

‘Sir, let him be,’ answered Sir Lucan. ‘Remember your dream, and leave off by this. For, blessed be God, you have won the field, and we three be alive, and of the others none is alive save Sir Mordred himself. If you leave off now, the day of destiny is past.’

‘Tide me death, tide me life,’ said the King, ‘he shall not escape my hands, for a better chance I shall never have,’ and he took his spear in both hands and ran towards Sir Mordred, crying ‘Traitor! now is your death day come,’ and smote him under the shield, so that the spear went through his body. And when Sir Mordred felt he had his death wound, he raised himself up and struck King Arthur such a blow that the sword clave his helmet, and then fell stark dead on the earth again. When Sir Lucan and Sir Bedivere saw that sight they carried the King to a little chapel, but they hoped not to leave him there long, for Sir Lucan had noted that many people were stealing out to rob the slain of the ornaments on their armour. And those that were not dead already they slew.

‘Would that I could quit this place to go to some large town,’ said the King, when he had heard this, ‘but I cannot stand, my head works so. Ah, Lancelot, sorely have I missed thee.’ At that Sir Lucan and Sir Bedivere tried to lift him, but Sir Lucan had been grievously wounded in the fight, and the blood burst forth again as he lifted Arthur, and he died and fell at the feet of the King.

‘Alas!’ said the King, ‘he has died for my sake, and he had more need of help than I. But he would not complain, his heart was so set to help me. And I should sorrow yet more if I were still to live long, but my time flieth fast. Therefore, Sir Bedivere, cease moaning and weeping, and take Excalibur, my good sword, and go with it to yonder water side, and when thou comest there, I charge thee, throw my sword in that water, and come again and tell me what thou hast seen.’

‘My lord,’ answered Sir Bedivere, ‘your commandment shall be done,’ and he departed. But when he looked at that noble sword, and beheld the jewels and gold that covered the pommel and hilt, he said to himself, ‘If I throw this rich sword into the water no good will come of it, but only harm and loss’; so he hid Excalibur under a tree, and returned unto the King and told him his bidding was done. ‘What did you see there?’ asked the King.

‘Sir,’ answered Sir Bedivere, ‘I saw nothing but the winds and the waves.’

‘You have not dealt truly with me,’ said the King. ‘Go back, and do my command; spare not, but throw it in.’ But again Sir Bedivere’s heart failed him, and he hid the sword, and returned to tell the King he had seen nothing but the wan water.

‘Ah, traitor!’ cried King Arthur, ‘this is twice you have betrayed me. If you do not now fulfil my bidding, with mine own hands will I slay you, for you would gladly see me dead for the sake of my sword.’ Then Sir Bedivere was shamed at having disobeyed the King, and drew forth the sword from its hiding place, and carried it to the water side, and with a mighty swing threw it far into the water. And as it flew through the air, an arm and hand lifted itself out of the water, and caught the hilt, and brandished the sword thrice, and vanished with it beneath the water. So Sir Bedivere came again unto the King, and told him what he saw.

‘Alas!’ said the King, ‘help me hence, for I have tarried overlong,’ and Sir Bedivere took him on his back, and bare him to the water side. And when they stood by the bank, a little barge containing many fair ladies and a Queen, all in black hoods, drew near, and they wept and shrieked when they beheld King Arthur.

‘Now put me into the barge,’ said the King, and Sir Bedivere laid him softly down, and the ladies made great mourning and the barge rowed from the land.

‘Ah, my lord Arthur!’ cried Sir Bedivere, ‘what shall become of me now you go from me, and I am left here alone with my enemies?'

'Comfort yourself,' replied the King, 'and do as well as you may, for I go unto the valley of Avilion, to be healed of my grievous wound. And if you never more hear of me, pray for my soul.' But Sir Bedivere watched the barge till it was beyond his sight, then he rode all night till he came to a hermitage. Now when Queen Guenevere heard of the battle, and how that King Arthur was slain and Sir Mordred and all their Knights, she stole away, and five ladies with her, and rode to Amesbury; and there she put on clothes of black and white, and became a nun, and did great penance, and many alms deeds, and people marvelled at her and at her godly life. And ever she wept and moaned over the years that were past, and for King Arthur.

As soon as the messenger whom the King had sent with Sir Gawaine's letter reached Sir Lancelot, and he learned that Sir Mordred had taken for himself the crown of England, he rose up in wrath, and, calling Sir Bors, bid him collect their host, that they should pass at once over the sea to avenge themselves on that false Knight. A fair wind blew them to Dover, and there Sir Lancelot asked tidings of King Arthur. Then the people told him that the King was slain, and Sir Mordred, and an hundred thousand men besides, and that the King had buried Sir Gawaine in the chapel at Dover Castle. 'Fair Sirs,' said Sir Lancelot, 'show me that tomb'; and they showed it to him, and Sir Lancelot kneeled before it, and wept and prayed, and this he did for two days. And on the third morning he summoned before him all the great lords and leaders of his host, and said to them, 'Fair lords, I thank you all for coming here with me, but we come too late, and that will be bitter grief to me as long as I shall live. But since it is so, I will myself ride and seek my lady Guenevere in the west country, where they say she has gone, and tarry you here, I entreat you, for fifteen days, and if I should not return take your ships and depart into your own country.'

Sir Bors strove to reason with him that the quest was fruitless, and that in the west country he would find few friends; but his words availed nothing. For seven days Sir Lancelot rode, and at last he came to a nunnery, where Queen Guenevere was looking out from her lattice, and was ware of his presence as he walked in the cloister. And when she saw him she swooned, and her ladies and gentlewomen tended her. When she was recovered, she spoke to them and said, 'You will marvel, fair ladies, why I should swoon. It was caused by the sight of yonder Knight who stands there, and I pray you bring him to me.' As soon as Sir Lancelot was brought she said to her ladies, 'Through me and this man has this war been wrought, for which I repent me night and day. Therefore, Sir Lancelot, I require and pray you never to see my face again, but go back to your own land, and govern it and protect it; and take to yourself a wife, and pray that my soul may be made clean of its ill doing.’

‘Nay, Madam,’ answered Sir Lancelot, ‘that shall I never do; but the same life that you have taken upon you, will I take upon me likewise.’

‘If you will do so,’ said the Queen, ‘it is well; but I may never believe but that you will turn to the world again.’

‘Well, Madam,’ answered he, ‘you speak as it pleases you, but you never knew me false to my promise, and I will forsake the world as you have done. For if in the quest of the Sangreal I had forsaken its vanities with all my heart and will, I had passed all Knights in the quest, except Sir Galahad my son. And therefore, lady, since you have taken you to perfection, I must do so also, and if I may find a hermit that will receive me I will pray and do penance while my life lasts. Wherefore, Madam, I beseech you to kiss me once again.’

‘No,’ said the Queen, ‘that I may not do,’ and Sir Lancelot took his horse and departed in great sorrow. All that day and the next night he rode through the forest till he beheld a hermitage and a chapel between two cliffs, and heard a little bell ring to Mass. And he that sang Mass was the Bishop of Canterbury, and Sir Bedivere was with him. After Mass Sir Bedivere told Sir Lancelot how King Arthur had thrown away his sword and had sailed to the valley of Avilion, and Sir Lancelot’s heart almost burst for grief. Then he kneeled down and besought the Bishop that he might be his brother. ‘That I will, gladly,’ said the Bishop, and put a robe upon him.

After the fifteen days were ended, and still Sir Lancelot did not return, Sir Bors made the great host go back across the sea, while he and some of Sir Lancelot’s kin set forth to seek all over England till they found Sir Lancelot. They rode different ways, and by fortune Sir Bors came one day to the chapel where Sir Lancelot was. And he prayed that he might stay and be one of their fellowship, and in six months six other Knights were joined to them, and their horses went where they would, for the Knights spent their lives in fasting and prayer, and kept no riches for themselves.

In this wise six years passed, and one night a vision came to Sir Lancelot in his sleep charging him to hasten unto Amesbury. ‘By the time that thou come there,’ said the vision, ‘thou shalt find Queen Guenevere dead; therefore take thy fellows with thee and fetch her corpse, and bury it by the side of her husband, the noble King Arthur.’

Then Sir Lancelot rose up and told the hermit, and the hermit ordered him to make ready and to do all as the vision had commanded. And Sir Lancelot and seven of the other Knights went on foot from Glastonbury to Amesbury, and it took them two days to compass the distance, for it was far and they were weak with fasting. When they reached the nunnery Queen Guenevere had been dead but half an hour, and she had first summoned her ladies to her, and told them that Sir Lancelot had been a priest for near a twelvemonth. ‘And hither he cometh as fast as he may,’ she said, ‘to fetch my corpse, and beside my lord King Arthur he shall bury me. And I beseech Almighty God that I may never have power to see Sir Lancelot with my bodily eyes.’ ‘Thus,’ said the ladies, ‘she prayed for two days till she was dead.’ Then Sir Lancelot looked upon her face and sighed, but wept little, and next day he sang Mass. After that the Queen was laid on a bier drawn by horses, and an hundred torches were carried round her, and Sir Lancelot and his fellows walked behind her singing holy chants, and at times one would come forward and throw incense on the dead. So they came to Glastonbury, and the Bishop of Canterbury sang a Requiem Mass over the Queen, and she was wrapped in cloth, and placed first in a web of lead, and then in a coffin of marble, and when she was put into the earth Sir Lancelot swooned away.

‘You are to blame,’ said the hermit, when he awaked from his swoon, ‘you ought not make such manner of sorrow.’

‘Truly,’ answered Sir Lancelot, ‘I trust I do not displease God, but when I remember her beauty, and her nobleness, and that of the King, and when I saw his corpse and her corpse lie together, my heart would not bear up my body. And I remembered, too, that it was through me and my pride that they both came to their end.’

From that day Sir Lancelot ate so little food that he dwined away, and for the most part was found kneeling by the tomb of King Arthur and Queen Guenevere. None could comfort him, and after six weeks he was too weak to rise from his bed. Then he sent for the hermit and to his fellows, and asked in a weary voice that they would give him the last rites of the Church; and begged that when he was dead his body might be taken to Joyous Gard, which some say is Alnwick and others Bamborough. That night the hermit had a vision that he saw Sir Lancelot being carried up to heaven by the angels, and he waked Sir Bors and bade him go and see if anything ailed Sir Lancelot. So Sir Bors went and Sir Lancelot lay on his bed, stark dead, and he smiled as he lay there. Then was there great weeping and wringing of hands, more than had been made for any man; but they placed him on the horse bier that had carried Queen Guenevere, and lit a hundred torches, and in fifteen days they reached Joyous Gard. There his body was laid in the choir, with his face uncovered, and many prayers were said over him. And there, in the midst of their praying, came Sir Ector de Maris, who for seven years had sought Sir Lancelot through all the land.

‘Ah, Lancelot,’ he said, when he stood looking beside his dead body, ‘thou wert head of all Christian Knights. Thou wert the courtliest Knight that ever drew sword, and the faithfulest friend that ever bestrode a horse. Thou wert the goodliest Knight that ever man has seen, and the truest lover that ever loved a woman.’

THE BATTLE OF RONCEVALLES

About twelve hundred years ago there lived an Emperor of the West whose name was Charles the Great, or, as some called him, Charlemagne, which means Carolus Magnus. When he was not making war he ruled well and wisely at Aix-la-Chapelle, but at the time that this story begins he had been for seven years in Spain, fighting against the Saracens. The whole country had fallen before him, except only Saragossa, a famous town on the river Ebro, not far from the outskirts of the Pyrenees, which was held by the Moorish King Marsile, with a great host.

One hot day Marsile was lying on a cool slab of blue marble which was shaded by overhanging fruit trees, and his nobles were sitting all round him. Suddenly the King sat up, and, turning to his followers, he said:

‘Listen to me, my Lords, for I have something of note to say unto you. Evil days are upon us, for the Emperor of fair France will never rest until he has driven us out of our country, and I have no army wherewith to meet him. Then counsel me, my wise men, how to escape both death and shame.’

At the King’s speech there was silence, for none knew how to reply, till Blancandrin, Lord of Val-Fonde, stood up.

‘Fear nothing,’ he said to the King, ‘but send a messenger to this proud Charles, promising to do him faithful service and asking for his friendship. And let there go with the messenger presents to soften his heart, bears and lions, and dogs to hunt them; seven hundred camels and four hundred mules, loaded with gold and silver, so that he shall have money to pay his soldiers. The messenger shall tell him that on the Feast of St. Michael you yourself will appear before him, and suffer yourself to be converted to the faith of Christ, and that you will be his man and do homage to him. If he asks for hostages, well! send ten or twenty, so as to gain his confidence; the sons of our wives. I myself will offer up my own son, even if it leads to his death. Better they should all die, than that we should lose our country and our lands, and be forced to beg till the end of our lives.’ And the nobles answered, ‘He has spoken well.’

King Marsile broke up his Council, and chose out those who were to go on the embassy. ‘My lords,’ he said, ‘you will start at once on your mission to King Charles, and be sure you take olive branches in your hands, and beg him to have pity on me. Tell him that before a month has passed over his head I will follow you with a thousand of my servants, to receive baptism and do him homage. If, besides, he asks for hostages, they shall be sent.’ ‘It is well,’ said Blancandrin, ‘the treaty is good.’

The Emperor Charles was happier than he had ever been in his life. He had taken Cordova, and thrown down the walls; his war machines had laid low the towers, and the rich city had been plundered, while every Saracen who refused to be baptized had been slain. Now he felt he might rest, and sought the cool of an orchard, where were already gathered his nephew Roland, with Oliver his comrade, Geoffrey of Anjou his standard bearer, and many other famous Knights. They lay about on white carpets doing what they best liked — some played games, chess or draughts, but these were mostly the old men who were glad to be still: the young ones fenced and tilted. Under a pine tree, close to a sweet-briar, a seat of massive gold was placed, and on it sat the Emperor of the fair country of France, a strong man, with his beard white as snow. But his rest was short. Soon came the messengers of the Saracen King, and, descending from their mules, they bowed low before him.

It was Blancandrin who first spoke, showing with his hands the presents he had brought with him, and offering that the King would receive baptism, and do homage for his lands, if only the Emperor Charles would return with his army into France, ‘for,’ said Blancandrin, ‘you have been too long in this country.’

When Blancandrin had spoken, the Emperor sat silent with his head bent, thinking of the words of the Saracen, for never was it his custom to be hasty in his speech. At length he looked up, and a proud look was on his face.

‘You have said well,’ he answered, ‘yet King Marsile is my deadly enemy, and how do I know that I can put my trust in your offers?’

‘You will have hostages,’ replied the Saracen, ‘sons of the highest nobles, and my own son will be among them. And when you have gone back to your own palace, my master will follow you on the Feast of St. Michael, and will be made a Christian in the waters of Aix.’

‘If he does this,’ said Charles, ‘his soul may still be saved,’ and he bade hospitality to be shown to his guests.

Before sunrise next morning the Emperor left his bed, and heard Mass said and Matins sung. Then he seated himself under a pine, and called his Barons to council. Many there were whose names men still remember: Ogier the Dane, and Archbishop Turpin of Rheims, and the brave Count of Gascony, Count Roland, nephew of Charles, and his friend the valiant Oliver. Ganélon was there too, by whom the wrong was to be wrought. As soon as they were all seated, the Emperor spoke and told them afresh what the messengers had said. ‘But Marsile makes one condition,’ continued Charles, ‘which is that I must return to France, where he will come to me as my vassal. Now, does he swear falsely, or can I trust his oath?' 'Let us be very careful how we answer him,' cried the nobles with one voice.

At that Roland sprang to his feet. 'It is madness to put faith in Marsile,' said he; 'seven years have we been in Spain, and many towns have I conquered for you, but Marsile we have always proved a traitor. Once before he sent us an embassy of Unbelievers each one bearing an olive branch, and they made you the same promises. Once before you called a meeting of your barons who counselled you to do the thing they knew you wished, and you sent to the Court of the Unbelievers the noble Counts Basil and Bazan. And how did Marsile treat them? He commanded that they should be led into the mountains and that their heads should be cut off, which was done. No! Go on with the war, as you have begun it; march on Saragossa and lay siege to the town, though it should last to the end of your life, and avenge those whom Marsile put to death.'

With bent head the Emperor listened to Roland, twisting all the while his fingers in his moustache. He kept silent, turning over in his mind the things Roland had said, and the nobles kept silence, too, all except Ganélon. For Ganélon rose and stood before Charles and began to speak. 'Believe none of us,' he said; 'think of nothing but your own advantage when Marsile offers to become your vassal, and to do homage for the whole of Spain, and to receive baptism besides; he who wishes you to reject such offers cares nothing for the deaths the rest of us may die. Pay no attention to such madness, but listen to your wise men.'

He sat down in his place, and then the Duke Naimes took up his words. 'You have heard,' he said to Charles, 'the words of Ganélon. Wise counsel, if we only follow it! Marsile knows that he is conquered at last. You have won his towns, and vanquished him in battle, and he is reduced to beg for your pity. It would be shameful to ask for anything further, and the more so as you have hostages as pledges of his good faith. It is time that the war ended; therefore send him one of your barons to speak with him face to face.' And the nobles answered, 'The Duke has spoken well.'

'Noble lords, what envoy shall we send to King Marsile at Saragossa?' 'I will go, if it is your pleasure,' said Duke Naimes. 'Give me your glove and the wand of office.' 'No,' replied Charles, 'your wisdom is great, and I cannot spare you from my side. Remain where you are, I command you.'

'Let me go,' cried Roland. 'No, no,' answered Count Oliver; 'you are too hasty and too imprudent. You would only fall into some trap. With the King's good leave I will go instead.'

'Hold your peace,' said Charles, shaking his head; 'you will neither of you go. None of my twelve peers shall be chosen.'

Then Turpin of Rheims left his seat and spoke to Charles with his loud and ringing voice. ‘Fair King, give your Franks a little peace. For seven years you have been in Spain, and your barons have all that time been fighting and suffering. It is now, sire, that the glove and the wand of office should be given. I will go and visit this Unbeliever, and will tell him in what scorn I hold him.’ But the Emperor, full of rage, cried out, ‘By my beard, you will stop with me. Go to your place on the white carpet, and give me none of your advice unless I ask for it.’

‘Good Frankish Knights,’ said Charles, ‘choose me a baron from my own land, who shall be envoy to King Marsile, and who, at need, can fight well.’

‘Ah,’ cried Roland, ‘let it be Ganélon, my stepfather; you will not find a better man.’ ‘Yes,’ said the Franks, ‘he is the man; let him go if the King pleases.’

‘Ganélon,’ commanded the King, ‘come here and I will give you the glove and the wand of office. It is the voice of the barons that has chosen you.’

‘No,’ replied Ganélon, ‘it is Roland’s doing, and to the end of my life I will bear him hatred for it. Oliver also will I hate, since Oliver is his friend. And never more will I love the twelve peers, for they love him. Under your own eyes, sire, I throw down my challenge.’

‘You are angry about nothing,’ said the King, ‘and as I have commanded you, you will go.’

‘I can go, but it will be my death, as it was the death of Basil and of his brother Bazan. Who goes there, returns not. But, sire, do not forget that your sister is my wife and that I have a son Baldwin, who, if he lives, will be the bravest of the brave. To him I leave all my lands. Guard him well, for I shall see him no more.’

‘Your heart is too tender,’ said Charles, ‘but there is no help for it, you must go.’

At the words of the King, Ganélon flung his fur mantle to the ground in fury. ‘It is to you,’ he cried, turning to Roland, ‘that I owe this peril. I am your stepfather, and that is reason enough that you send me to lose my head at the Court of King Marsile. Let it be so; but if ever I return I will bring on you such trouble that it will only end with your life.’

‘You talk like a madman,’ said Roland. ‘All men know that I care nothing for threats. But it needs a wise man to go on such a mission, and if the King pleases, I will go in your place.’

‘You will not go in my place,’ answered Ganélon. ‘I am not your vassal, to do as you bid me. Charles has commanded me to go to Saragossa, therefore to Saragossa I go. But beware of what I do when I get there.’

At this Roland began to laugh, and when Ganélon saw him laughing, it seemed as if his heart would burst with anger. ‘I hate you,’ he muttered to Roland. ‘I should never have been chosen but for you. Great Emperor,’ he said aloud to Charles, ‘behold me ready to obey your orders.’

‘Listen, fair Count,’ replied Charles, ‘for this is the message I would have you bear to King Marsile. If he agrees to become my vassal, and to receive Holy Baptism, I will give him half of Spain as a fief. The other half will be held by Roland, my nephew. If these terms do not please King Marsile, I will myself besiege Saragossa, and will take him and bind him in chains. Then he shall be brought to Aix, where he shall be put to a shameful death. So take this letter which is sealed with my seal, and give it into the hand of the Infidel.’ When Ganélon had put the letter in safety, the King held out to him his glove, but the Count was not quick to seize it, and it fell to the ground. ‘Heavens,’ cried the Franks who were standing round, ‘how dreadful an omen! This message will be the cause of dire misfortunes.’ ‘I will send you news of them,’ Ganélon answered. And he said to Charles, ‘Let me depart, sire, as I must go. I wish to lose no time.’

‘Go then,’ replied the King, making over him the sign of the cross and giving him the wand of office. And Ganélon went.

It was not long before he overtook the Saracens, who had lingered, hoping he might join them, and Blancandrin began to sing the praises of Charles and his conquests. ‘He is a wonderful man,’ answered Ganélon, ‘and of such a strong will that no man may strive against it.’

‘How brave are these Franks,’ went on Blancandrin; ‘but your nobles were ill-advised in the counsel they gave the King upon this matter. It bodes evil to Charles and to many beside him.’

‘None of them merit this blame,’ said Ganélon, ‘save Roland only, and the shame will be on his head. His pride is so great that he thinks no sword can touch him, but until he is really dead peace we can never have.’ Here the Saracen glanced at Ganélon beside him. ‘He is a fine man,’ thought he, ‘but there is cunning in his eye,’ and then Blancandrin spoke. ‘Let us understand each other plainly,’ he said; ‘is it your wish to be avenged of Roland? Then, by the beard of Mahomet, deliver him into our hands. King Marsile is a generous master, and knows how to repay those who serve him.’ Ganélon heard his words, and bent his head in silence.

But the silence did not last long: before they had arrived at Saragossa, Ganélon had made an agreement with Blancandrin, that they would find some means of causing Roland to perish. This decided, they rode through the gates of the town, and dismounted from their horses. In the shadow of a pine, a throne was placed covered with soft silk from Alexandria, and on it sat he who was once the master of the whole of Spain. Twenty thousand Saracens stood around him, but not a sound was made, so eager they were to hear Charles's answer. Blancandrin advanced to the King's throne, leading Ganélon by the wrist. 'Greeting, great King,' said he; 'we delivered your message to Charles, and he raised his two hands to heaven, and answered nothing. But he has sent you one of his great lords, and he will tell you if it is peace or no peace.'

'Let him speak,' replied Marsile, 'and we will listen.'

Ganélon waited a little before he spoke, for he knew that one careless word might prove his own ruin. 'Greeting,' he said, when at last he had made ready his speech. 'This is the message sent you by Charlemagne. You must receive Holy Baptism, and Charles will allow you to do homage for half of Spain. The other half he gives to Roland, his nephew, and a proud neighbour you will find him. If these terms do not please you, he will lay siege to Saragossa, and will seize your person, and carry you to Aix, the capital of the Empire, where you will die a shameful death.' When he heard this, Marsile trembled with rage, and drawing a dart he would have thrown it at Ganélon had not someone held him from behind. Ganélon looked on, his hand on his sword, which he drew a little from its scabbard. 'Sword,' said he, 'you are sharp and bright. While I wear you at the Court of this King, the Emperor can never say that I have died alone in a foreign land. But before I die you shall drink the blood of the best in his army.'

The Infidels who were standing by prayed Marsile to go back to his seat in order that the matter might be decided, 'You put yourself in the wrong,' said the old Caliph, 'when you wish to strike this Frank.'

'Sire,' answered Ganélon, 'I will suffer this insult patiently, but not all the treasure of your kingdom should hinder my delivering the message of my master.' With that he threw from his shoulders his mantle of zibeline, but kept light hold of his sword. 'See,' said the Saracens, 'did you ever behold a prouder warrior?' Ganélon drew near the King and repeated the message that Charles had given him. When he had finished he held out the letter, and Marsile, who had studied in the best schools of learning, broke the seal and read it to himself. 'Listen to this, my lords,' he cried, 'and say if ever you heard such madness! Charles bids me think of Basil and Bazan, whose heads I cut off, up there in the mountains. And if I wish my own life to be spared, I am to send him my uncle, the Caliph, to deal with as he thinks fit.' The Saracens heard the message in grim silence, which was broken by the voice of the King's son. 'Ganélon must be mad indeed to give such a message as that,' said he, 'and he deserves death for his boldness. Deliver him to me, and I will do justice on him.' Ganélon understood his words but said nothing, only he quietly placed his back against a pine tree, and played with the hilt of his sword.

King Marsile rose and went into his orchard, followed by his best councillors, Jorfalon his son, his uncle the Caliph, and others whom he most trusted. ‘Summon the Frank also,’ Blancandrin whispered in his ear, ‘for he has promised to throw in his lot with us.’ ‘Bring him,’ answered the King, and Blancandrin brought him into the orchard, where the web of treason was woven.

‘Noble Ganélon,’ said Marsile, ‘I acted foolishly towards you just now, when, in my anger, I sought to strike you. Let me offer you the mantle of marten fur in amends. It has just arrived from a far country, and is worth five hundred pounds in gold.’ ‘I accept it gladly,’ replied Ganélon as the King hung the cloak round his neck, ‘and may you be rewarded in as splendid a gift!’

‘Ganélon,’ continued the King, ‘I wish you to be my friend, though it will not be wise to show you openly my goodwill. Tell me about Charlemagne, and whether what I have heard of him is really the truth. They say he is very old, nearly two hundred years, and that he has wandered from one country to another and been in the thick of every fight, and has made the most powerful Kings beggars. When will he grow tired of all these wars? It is time that he rested himself at Aix.’

‘No,’ said Ganélon, ‘those who told you that Charlemagne was like that did not speak truly. My tongue could never tell of his goodness and his honour towards all men. Who could ever paint what Charlemagne is? I would rather die than leave his service.’

‘What you say is wonderful,’ replied Marsile, ‘but after all he has done, will repose never seem sweet to him?’

‘Not while his nephew Roland lives,’ said Ganélon. ‘There is not such a fighter under heaven, and his comrade Oliver is famous also for his prowess. The twelve peers whom the Emperor so dearly loves, with twenty thousand picked men from the van of the army — truly Charlemagne may rest in peace, and fear no man.’

‘Fair lord,’ answered Marsile, ‘my subjects are the finest you can see, and at any moment I can summon four hundred thousand men to give battle to Charlemagne.’

‘You will not conquer him this time,’ said Ganélon, ‘and in a fight thousands of your soldiers would be killed. Hear my counsel. Send Charles yet more gold and silver, and offer twenty other hostages, on condition he returns himself to France, leaving his rear-guard behind him. This, being the post of danger, will be claimed by his nephew Roland, whose comrade Oliver is always by his side. It will be easy to manage that the two Counts shall meet their deaths, and Roland and Oliver once dead the King will have no more heart for war.’

‘Fair lord,’ replied Marsile, ‘what shall I have to do in order to kill Roland?’

‘That I can easily tell you,’ answered Ganélon. ‘When Charlemagne has passed safely through the mountains, with the most part of his soldiers, his baggage and his hostages, then have a hundred thousand of your Infidels ready to fall upon Roland and his rear-guard of twenty thousand men. The Franks will fight hard, but they cannot stand against such numbers, though of their foes many will be left upon the field. Then lose not a moment, but give them battle a second time. They will be too few and too weak to fight long, and for the rest of your life you will have peace. If you kill Roland, you will have cut off the Emperor’s right arm. Farewell to the splendid armies of the Franks; never more will such forces be gathered together; never will Charles wear again his golden crown, but all Spain shall be in peace.’

Marsile heard the words of Ganélon, and stooped and kissed his neck, and ordered his costliest treasures to be brought before him. Then he said: ‘There is no further need of speech between us; swear that I shall find him in the rear-guard, and I shall swear that you shall have your revenge.’ And Ganélon swore. But Marsile was not content with the oath that Ganélon made. He commanded that a copy of the Koran should be brought, the sacred book of Mahomet, and placed it on a chair of ivory, which stood under an olive tree. With his hand on the book Marsile also took his oath, that if among the rear-guard of Charlemagne’s army he found Roland, he would fall upon him with all his host and compass his death, and that of the twelve peers of France. So the bond of treachery was sealed. Then the Infidels crowded round, and one offered Ganélon his sword, and another his helmet, while the Queen brought bracelets of precious stones as gifts for his wife. Marsile asked his treasurer if he had made ready the presents that were to be sent to Charles, and pressing Ganélon in his arms, he declared that not a day should pass without his friend likewise receiving presents, if only he would give his help in the slaying of Roland. ‘You keep me too long,’ was Ganélon’s answer, and he mounted his horse and went.

All this while the Emperor Charles was marching towards France, but he halted at a small town which long ago had been taken by Roland, waiting till he heard some tidings of Ganélon, and received the news that Marsile had agreed to do homage for Spain. At length, one morning at dawn, a messenger came to the King’s tent telling him that Ganélon had arrived, and Charles hastened forth with Roland and Oliver, Duke Naimes and a thousand more, to meet Ganélon. ‘Greeting,’ said the traitor, bowing low; ‘I bring you the keys of Saragossa, and twenty hostages, and great gifts. The noble King Marsile beseeches you not to blame him, because the Caliph, his uncle, has not come with me. I have seen — seen with my own eyes — three hundred thousand men all covered with armour sail away in ships with the Caliph for their leader, because they could neither defend their own faith nor forswear it. But hardly were they out of sight of land than a fierce tempest overtook them, and they were all lost. The Caliph must have died with the rest, or the King would have bade him come with me. As to the King himself, sire, before a month has passed he will be in France, ready to receive baptism in your presence. And he will become your vassal, and do homage for the kingdom of Spain.'

'You have done wisely,' said Charles, 'and your reward shall be great.' So trumpets were sounded and tents were struck, and the host marched with gaiety in their hearts to France the Fair.

'My war is finished,' said the King, as his army gladly turned their backs on Spain, and at nightfall spread their tents and slept till day began. But little he knew that four hundred thousand Unbelievers, with shields slung from their necks and swords in their hands, were riding silently through the mountain passes with the intent of hiding themselves in a wood till the moment came. There they were, and the Franks knew nothing of it, nor what would come.

Charles slept, and in his sleep he dreamed that Ganélon took his stout lance of ash wood from his hands and brandished it in the air, then broke it with his fists. After this dream came another. He was no longer shut fast in by the mountains, but was at home in France, standing in his chapel at Aix. Here a bear appeared before him and bit so deep into his arm that it reached the bone. Then from the other side, from the Ardennes, there sprang a leopard and would have torn him in pieces, had not a greyhound come to his aid, and attacked first the bear and then the leopard. 'A fight! a fight!' cried the Franks, but they knew not which would be victorious. And all the while Charles slept soundly. With the dawn a thousand horns awoke the sleepers, and the clamour of a camp began. 'My lords,' said Charles, calling all his barons together, 'you see these narrow defiles through which we must pass? To whom shall I give the command of the rear-guard which must protect the rest of my army?'

'To Roland, to Roland my stepson,' cried Ganélon. 'No Knight is so brave as he, and we may trust to him the safety of our host.' Charles listened and looked him in the face. 'You must be the devil himself,' he said, 'for you seem as if your body was shaken by some evil passion. If Roland goes to the rear, who then shall command the van?'

'Ogier, the Dane,' answered Ganélon. 'There is no better man.'

When Count Roland heard his name he pressed forward. 'Fair stepfather, I owe you much love for proposing me to lead the rear-guard of the army. Charles the King shall lose nothing through me; not a horse or a mule shall fall till his price is paid in blows received by the Infidels.' 'You speak well,' said Ganélon, 'and what you say is true.'

Then Roland turned to Charlemagne: ‘Give me, O King, the bow which you hold in your hand. I will promise not to let it fall, as Ganélon did your glove.’

But the King sat silent, with his head bent, and tears ran down his cheeks. At last Naimes drew near and spoke to him, and among them all Charles had no more faithful friend. ‘You have heard, sire, what Count Roland said. If he is to lead the rear-guard — and there is no man that can do it better — give him the bow that you have drawn, for which he asks.’ So the King gave it to him, and Roland took it gladly. ‘Fair nephew,’ said the King, ‘I wish to leave half of my army behind with you; keep it close to you, it will be your safeguard.’

‘No,’ answered the Count; ‘to accept the half of your army would be to shame my race. Leave me twenty thousand Franks, and you will pass the defiles in safety. While I live you need fear no man.’ Quickly Count Roland girded on his armour, girded on his sword Durendal, the comrade of many fights, and mounted his horse Veillantif, whom all men knew. ‘We will follow you to death,’ cried the Franks as they saw him. But Roland answered them nothing. The first to come to his side was Oliver, his old companion, then Turpin the Archbishop, the Count Gautier, and many more, and after that they chose twenty thousand men, the best that Charles had with him. Some of them he sent, under Count Gautier, to drive the Unbelievers from the hill-top, and that same day they fought a fierce battle. And while Charles and his army entered the pass of Roncevalles, Roland took up his ground and prepared for the fight, which he knew must come shortly. And Ganélon, the traitor, knew it too.

High were the mountains, and dark the valleys; terrible were the defiles amidst the black rocks. The army marched slowly and with great difficulty; fifteen miles away you could hear the sound of their tramping. But when they caught sight of Gascony, of France, where they had left their homes and their wives, there was not a man among them who did not weep for happiness. Charles alone shed tears of sorrow, for he thought of his nephew in the passes of Spain. ‘Ganélon has betrayed us,’ said he to Duke Naimes, ‘and he has betrayed Roland too. It was he who caused him to stay behind with the rear-guard, and if I lose him — O God! I shall never find such another.’

The nephew of Marsile had craved a boon, that he and eleven of his comrades should measure themselves against the Twelve Peers of France, and that none but himself should strike the first blow at Roland. The noblest subjects of Marsile flocked at his call, and a gay show they made when ready for battle, and mounted on horses as eager for the fray as themselves. So great was the noise that the sound reached even to the French camp. ‘I think, comrade, that it will not be long before we fight with the Saracens,’ said Oliver.

‘May it be as you say,’ answered Roland; ‘it is our duty to make a stand here for the King, as one should be ready to suffer all pains for one's liege lord. For him one must endure heat and cold, hunger and thirst, and strike hard blows with all one's might, and take heed that no evil song can be made on us after we are dead. The right is on the side of the Christians. Look to yourselves, for you will never see a bad example from me.'

THE BATTLE

Oliver had climbed a hill, from which he could see into the plains of Spain. 'Roland,' cried he, 'do you see those shining helmets and glittering swords? It is Ganélon who has done this, and it was he who had you left here.'

'Be silent, Oliver,' answered Roland. 'He is my stepfather. I will not hear him ill spoken of.' Then Oliver went down the hill and told his soldiers what he had seen. 'No battle will ever be like this one,' he said; 'you will need all your strength to keep your ground and not be driven back.' 'Cursed be he who runs away,' answered they. 'There is not one of us but knows how to die.'

'The Infidels are many,' said Oliver again, 'and our Franks are but few. Roland, blow your horn; Charles will hear it and come to our help.'

'You are mad to say that,' replied Roland, 'for in France I should lose all my glory. No; but my sword Durendal knows how to strike, and our Franks will fight hard, and with what joy! It was an ill day for the Unbelievers when they came here, for none, I tell you, none will escape.'

'The Unbelievers are many,' said Oliver again, 'and we are very few. Roland, my friend, sound your horn; Charles will hear it, and come to our help.'

'I should be mad if I did so,' answered Roland. 'In France, when they knew it, I should lose all my glory! No; but my sword Durendal knows how to strike, and our Franks will fight hard, and with what joy! It was an ill day for the Unbelievers when they came here, for none, I tell you, none will escape death.'

'O Roland, I pray you sound your horn, and Charles will hear it as he passes the defiles, and the Franks, I will swear it, will come to our help.'

'Now God forbid,' said Roland, 'that through me my parents should be shamed, or that I should bring dishonour on the fair land of France. No; but my sword Durendal knows how to strike. The Unbelievers have come to their death, and they will find it.'

'I see no dishonour,' said Oliver. 'With my own eyes have I beheld the Saracens of Spain; the mountains and the valleys alike are full of them. And how few are we!’

‘Then we shall have the more fighting,’ answered Roland. ‘God forbid that I should turn my Franks into cowards! Rather death than dishonour. The more we kill, the better the Emperor will love us.’

Roland was brave, but Oliver was wise also, and the souls of both were as high as their words. ‘Look round you, and think for a moment,’ said Oliver; ‘they are close to us, and Charles is far. Ah! if you would only have sounded your horn, the King would have been here, and our troops would not have been in danger. The poor rear-guard will never more be again such as it is to-day.’

‘You speak foolishly,’ answered Roland. ‘Cursed be he whose heart is afraid. We will be strong to hold our ground. From us will come the blows, from us the battle.’

When Roland saw that he must give battle to the Infidels, he called his Franks and bade Oliver stand beside him. ‘Do not say these things, my friend and comrade,’ said he. ‘The Emperor has left us twenty thousand picked men, with not one craven heart amongst them. For our liege lord, one must be ready to suffer cold and heat, hunger and thirst, and cheerfully shed his blood and endure every ill. Strike with your lance, Oliver, as I shall strike with Durendal, the sword which was given me by the King himself. And if I am slain, the man who wins it may say, “it was the sword of a noble vassal.”’

Then from a little hill Turpin the Archbishop spoke to them. ‘Charles has left us here; he is our King, and it is our duty to die for him. Christianity is in danger, and you must defend it. You cannot escape a battle; then fight, and ask God’s pardon for your sins. In His Name, I will give you absolution, and already they wait for you in Paradise.’ The Franks got off their horses and knelt on the ground, and the Archbishop blessed them. After this they mounted again, and placed themselves in order of battle.

Like lightning Roland on his horse Veillantif swept along the defiles, his face bright and smiling, his lance in rest. Oliver his friend was close behind him, and the Franks said to each other, ‘Look at our champion!’ He glanced proudly at the Infidels, but when his eyes fell upon the Franks they were soft and gentle. ‘Go slowly, noble barons,’ said he; ‘the Unbelievers to-day are seeking their martyrdom, and you will find richer booty than ever King of France did before.’

‘Words of mine are useless,’ said Oliver; ‘you would not let Charles know of our peril, so you cannot blame him for our danger. Ride as hard as you can, and think only of two things, how best to give and receive blows. And do not forget the battle cry of King Charles.’

‘Montjoie! Montjoie!’ shouted the Franks, as the two armies came together with a crash.

It were long to tell of that battle and of the brave deeds that were done both by Christians and Unbelievers. Roland was there where the strife was hardest, and struck with his lance till the wood snapped. Then he drew Durendal from the scabbard and drove a bloody path through the ranks of the Infidels. Oliver and the Twelve Peers were not far behind him, and the ground was red from the corpses of the pagans. ‘Well fought, well fought!’ cried the Archbishop, ‘Montjoie, Montjoie!’

Oliver seemed to be everywhere at once. His lance was broken in two, and there was only the head and a splinter remaining, but it dealt more death blows than the sword of many another man. ‘What are you doing, comrade?’ cried Roland, when for a moment their horses touched. ‘It is not wood that is needed in this battle, but well-tempered steel! Where is your sword Hauteclair, with its guard of gold and its handle of crystal?’

‘I have no time to draw it,’ said Oliver. ‘There are too many blows to strike.’

Fiercer and fiercer grew the combat; thicker and thicker the corpses lay on the ground. Who could count the Franks who were stretched there, never more to see their wives or their mothers, or the comrades that awaited them in the defiles? But the number of the dead Saracens was greater even than theirs. And while they fought on Spanish soil, a strange tempest arose in France, thunder and wild winds, and a trembling of the earth; walls fell down, and at mid-day there was darkness. Men whispered to each other: ‘It is the end of the world.’ No, no; the end of all things was not yet, it was nature mourning for the death of Roland. At length the Saracens turned and fled, and the Franks pursued them, and Margaris the Valiant was left alone. His lance was broken, his shield pierced with holes, his sword-blade bloody, while he himself was sorely wounded. Heavens! what a warrior he would have made if he had only been a Christian. He rode fast to Marsile the King, and cried to him to mount his horse, and rally his men, and bring up fresh soldiers to deal the Franks a last blow, while they were exhausted from the long fight. ‘It will be easy to revenge the thousands that they have slain,’ said he; ‘but if you let them slip now the tide of battle may turn against us.’

The King Marsile sent for fresh forces, and at sight of them the Franks embraced each other for the last time, while the Archbishop promised them a speedy entrance into Paradise. ‘The Emperor will avenge the treachery of Ganélon,’ cried Roland, ‘whether we live or die, but the worst part of the fight is before us, and we shall need all our strength to beat back the Unbelievers. They must not tell tales of cowardice in the fair land of France.’ Then they spurred their horses and advanced in line, crying ‘Montjoie! Montjoie!’

‘Count Roland is not as other men,’ said King Marsile, ‘and as he is not content with two battles, we will give him a third. To-day Charles will cease to have power over Spain, and France will bow her head with shame.' And he gave his orders to the vanguard to go forward, while he himself waited on a little hill till the moment came to charge. Fierce was the shock as the two armies met, and bravely did their leaders fight, hand to hand and sword to sword. None struck harder than Turpin the Archbishop, who cursed his foes as he bore them from their saddles. 'He fights well,' said the Franks who watched his blows. But the Franks had fought long, and were faint and weary. They had lost much blood, and their arms were weak to strike. 'See how our brothers fall,' they whispered one to another, and Roland heard their groans, and his heart was near breaking. Thousands lay dead, thousands more were wounded, but still the battle went on. Horses without riders wandered about the field neighing for their masters. Then Marsile bade the trumpets sound, and his army gathered round the great standard with the Dragon, borne by a Saracen named Abimus. When Turpin the Archbishop caught sight of him, he dashed straight towards the banner, and with one blow of his mighty sword stretched the Unbeliever dead on the ground before the Dragon. 'Montjoie! Montjoie!' he cried, and the Franks heard, and said one to the other, 'Heaven send that Charles has many like him!' The lances of the Franks were broken, and their shields were for the most part split in two, but three hundred naked swords still were left to deal blows at the shining helmets of the Infidels. 'Help! help! O King!' cried the Saracens, and Marsile heard, and answered, 'Better die than flee before these Franks. Let no one think of himself, but all press round Roland. If Roland dies, Charles is conquered. If Roland lives, all is over for us!' But Roland, with Oliver at his side, swept a clear space with Durendal, and none might come near him; the Archbishop kept his enemies at bay with his lance. Four times the Franks endured the shock of the onset, but at the fifth they were borne down by numbers, and now only sixty remained upon the ground.

Then Roland turned to Oliver and said, 'Fair sir and dearest friend, well may we pity France who will henceforth be widowed of such brave warriors. O Charles, my King, why do you not come to us? Oliver, tell me, how can we let him know what straits we are in?' 'There is no way,' said Oliver, 'and death rather than dishonour.'

'I will sound my horn,' said Roland, 'and Charles will hear, and come back through the defiles. I know that the Franks will retrace their steps and come to our aid.'

'That would be a shameful thing for them,' replied Oliver; 'all our kinsfolk would blush for us for ever, and we should likewise blush for ourselves. When I begged you to do it you would not, and now the time is past.'

‘The battle is sore,’ said Roland, ‘I shall sound the horn, and Charles will hear it.’

‘You refused to do it while yet there was time,’ answered Oliver. ‘If the Emperor had come then, so many of our best warriors would not be lying dead before us. It is not his fault that he is not here. But if you sound the horn now, I will never give you my sister, the fair Aude, for your wife.’

‘Why do you bear such malice?’ said Roland.

‘It is your fault,’ answered Oliver. ‘Courage and madness are not the same thing, and prudence is always better than fury. If so many Franks lie dead, it is your folly which has killed them, and now we can no longer serve the Emperor. If you would have listened to me, Charles would have been here, and Marsile and his Saracens would have been slain. Your courage, Roland, has cost us dear! For yourself, you will be killed and France be covered with dishonour. And before night falls our friendship will be ended.’ Then he wept, and Roland wept also.

The Archbishop had been near, and heard their words. ‘Do not quarrel at this hour,’ he said. ‘Your horn could not save them now. Charles is too far; it would take him too long to come. Yet sound it, for he will return and avenge himself on the Unbelievers. And they will take our bodies and put them on biers, and lay them on horses, and will bury us with tears of pity among the mountains, building up high walls round us, so that the dogs and the wild boar shall not devour us.’ ‘What you say is good,’ answered Roland, and he lifted his horn, and its mighty voice rang through the mountains and Charles heard the echo thirty miles away. ‘Our men are fighting,’ he cried, but Ganélon answered, ‘If another man had said that, we should have called him a liar.’ Count Roland was sorely wounded and the effort to sound the horn caused the blood to pour from his mouth. But he sounded it once more, and the echoes leaped far. Charles heard it in the defiles, and all his Franks heard it too. ‘It is Roland’s horn,’ said the King, ‘and he is fighting.’

‘He is not fighting,’ answered Ganélon; ‘you are old, and your words are those of a child. Beside, you know how great is the pride of Roland; it is a marvel that God has suffered him to live so long. For a hare, Roland would sound his horn all day, and at this moment he is most likely laughing with his Twelve Peers over the fright he has caused us. And again, who is there who would dare to attack Roland? No one. March on, sire; why make halt? France is still distant.’

Count Roland suffered grievous pain and a great wound was across his forehead. He sounded his horn for the third time, and Charles and his Franks heard it. ‘That horn carries far,’ said he, and Naimes answered, ‘It is Roland who is calling for help. A battle is going on; some one has betrayed him. Quick, sire, he has called often enough. Sound your war-cry and hasten to his help.’ Then the Emperor ordered his trumpets to be sounded, and his army gathered itself together and girded on their armour with what speed they might, and each man said to the other, ‘If only we are in time to save Roland from death, what blows we will strike for him.’ Alas, they are too late, too late!

But before the march back there was something for the Emperor to do. He sent for his head cook to appear in his presence, and he delivered the traitor Ganélon into his custody, and told him to treat his prisoner as he liked, for he had shown himself unworthy to mix with warriors. So the head cook did as he pleased with him, and beat him with sticks and put a heavy chain about his neck. And thus he guarded him till Charles came back.

How tall the mountains seemed to the returning army! how deep the valleys, and how swift the streams! but all the while the trumpets were sounded, that Roland might hear them and take heart. And as he rode, Charles had only one thought, ‘If Roland is slain, shall I find one man alive?’

Roland stood looking at the mountains and at the plains, and wherever his eyes fell his dead comrades lay before him. Loudly he mourned their loss, and then he turned to Oliver, saying, ‘Brother, we must die here with the rest of the Franks.’ He spurred his horse and blew his horn, and dashed into the ranks of the foe, shouting ‘Montjoie! Montjoie!’ The remnant that was left closed eagerly round him, and the battle-cries were fierce and loud. If Marsile and his host fled before them, others not less valiant remained behind, and Roland knew that the hour of his doom was come. And in valour, Oliver was no whit behind him, but flung himself into the thickest of the battle. It was the Caliph who gave Oliver his death blow. ‘Charles made a mistake when he left you to guard these defiles,’ said he, ‘but your life will pay for many that you have slain.’ But Oliver was not dead yet, and the taunt of the Caliph stung his blood. With all the strength he had left, he swung his sword Hauteclair on high, and it came down upon the Caliph’s helmet with a crash, cleaving it clean through. ‘Ah, pagan,’ said he, ‘you will never boast now of the prizes you have taken in battle.’ Then ‘Roland! Roland!’ he cried, and Roland came. When he saw Oliver before him, livid and bleeding, he swayed on his horse as if he should faint. Oliver’s sight was weak and troubled from loss of blood, and not hearing Roland’s voice he mistook him for an enemy, and struck him a hard blow on his helmet. This blow restored Roland to his senses, and he sat upright. ‘My friend,’ said he, ‘why have you done this? I am Roland, who loves you well, and never did I think you could lift your hand against me.’

‘I hear you,’ answered Oliver, ‘I hear you speak, but I cannot see you. If I have struck you, forgive me, for I knew it not.’

‘I forgive you from my heart,’ said Roland, and they embraced each other for the last time.

The agony of death was falling upon Oliver; his sight had failed, his hearing was fast failing too. Slowly he dismounted from his horse and laid himself painfully on the ground, making, in a loud voice, the confession of his sins. Then he prayed God to bless Charlemagne, fair France, and Roland his friend, and after that his soul left him. And Roland returned and found him dead, and wept for him bitterly. At last he stood up and looked around. Of all the twenty thousand men, not one was left except himself, and Turpin and Gautier. And these three placed themselves shoulder to shoulder, and sent many an Infidel to join his dead brothers. But the wounds they received in their bodies were without number, and at length the Archbishop tottered and fell. But they had not slain him yet: with a mighty struggle he rose to his feet and looked round for Roland. ‘I am not conquered yet,’ he said; ‘a brave man dies but never surrenders.’ Then with his good sword he rushed into the *mêlée* dealing death around him. Roland fought as keenly as his friend, but the moments seemed long till Charles brought them help. Again he sounded his horn, though the wound in his head burst out afresh with his effort. And the Emperor heard it, and stopped for an instant on his march. ‘My lords,’ he said, ‘things are going badly with us; we shall lose my nephew Roland to-day, for I know by the way he blows his horn that he has not long to live. Spur your horses, for I would fain see him before he dies. And let every trumpet in the army sound its loudest!’ The Unbelievers heard the noise of the trumpets, which echoed through the mountains and valleys, and they whispered fearfully to each other, ‘It is Charles who is coming, it is Charles!’ It was their last chance, and a band of their best warriors rode straight at Roland. At that sight the strength rushed back into his veins, and he waited for them proudly. ‘I will fight beside you,’ he said to Turpin, ‘and till I am dead I will never leave you. Let them strike as hard as they will; Durendal knows how to strike back.’

‘Shame be upon every man who does not fight his best,’ answered the Archbishop, ‘for this is our last battle. Charles draws near, and will avenge us.’

The Infidels said afterwards that an army could not have wrought the ruin that was done that day by the Archbishop and Roland. Veillantif received thirty wounds in his body and then fell dead under his master. But Roland leaped off, and smote the Saracens, who turned and fled before him. He was too weak to follow after them, and turned to see if the Archbishop still breathed. Kneeling by his side he unlaced Turpin’s golden helmet, and bound up his gaping wounds. Then he pressed him closely to his heart and laid him gently on the ground. ‘O friend, we must take farewell of each other, now all our comrades have gone before us. But let us do all we can for their bodies, which cannot be left lying here. I will myself go and seek their corpses, and bring them here and place them in rows before you.’

‘Go,’ answered the Archbishop, ‘but do not stay long. Thanks be to God, the victory remains with you and me.’

Alone Roland searched the battle-field; he went up the sides of the mountains, he descended into the plains, and everywhere he saw the dead faces of his friends. One after another he brought them, and laid them at the feet of Turpin, and at the sight of their faces the Archbishop wept sore. Then he held up his hand to bless them for the last time. ‘Noble lords,’ he said, ‘you have fallen upon evil days. May God receive your souls into His Paradise. As for me, among all the pains I suffer, the worst is that never shall I see my Emperor again.’

Under a pine, close to a sweet-briar, the corpse of Oliver was lying, and Roland raised him in his arms and bare him to the Archbishop, where he laid him on a shield, near to the other peers. Then his heart broke with a cry, and he fell fainting beside Oliver. At the sight of Roland’s grief the Archbishop’s own sorrow grew double, and he stretched out his hand for the horn which lay near him. A stream ran down the valley of Roncevalles, and he dragged himself towards it, to fetch water to revive Roland. But he was too weak from the blood he had lost to reach the river, and he fell where he stood. ‘Pardon for my sins,’ he said, and died, the servant of God and of Charles. The cry was heard by Roland, who was slowly coming back to life, and he rose to his feet and went to the dead Archbishop and crossed his hands upon his breast. ‘Ah, noble Knight,’ he said, ‘in God’s hands I leave you, for never since the Apostles has He had a more faithful servant. May your soul henceforth be free from sorrow, and may the Gates of Paradise stand wide for you to enter in!’

As he spoke, Roland knew that his own death was not far off. He made his peace with God, and took his horn in one hand and Durendal in the other. Then he mounted a small hill where stood two pine trees, but fell almost unconscious as soon as he reached the top. But a Saracen who had watched him, and had feigned to be dead, sprang up and seeing him cried, ‘Conquered! he is conquered, the nephew of Charles! and his famous sword will be carried into Arabia’; so he grasped Durendal tightly in his fist, and pulled Roland’s beard in derision. If the Saracen had been wise he would have left Roland’s beard alone, for at his touch the Count was brought back to consciousness. He felt his sword being taken from him, and with his horn, which was always beside him, he struck the Saracen such a blow on his helmet that he dropped Durendal, and sank dead to the earth. ‘Coward,’ said Roland, ‘who has told you that you might dare to set hands on Roland, living or dead? You were not worthy a blow from my horn.’ Still death was pressing closer and closer, and Roland knew it. He rose panting for breath, his face as white as if he was already in the grave, and took Durendal out of its scabbard. Ten times he struck it hard on a brown rock before him, but the steel never gave way. ‘O my faithful Durendal, do you know that the hour of our parting has come?’ he cried. ‘You have gained many battles for me, and won Charles many kingdoms. You shall never serve another master after I am dead.’ Again he smote the rock with all his force, but the steel of Durendal glanced aside. When Roland saw that he could not break it, he sat down and wept and lamented sore, calling back to him all the fights that they had fought together. Yet another time he struck, but the steel held good. Death was drawing nearer; what was he to do? Under a pine tree he laid himself down to die, his head resting on the green grass, his face turned towards the Infidels. Beneath him he placed Durendal and his horn. Alone on the mountain, looking towards Spain, he made the confession of his sins, and offered up his last prayer. Then he held up his right hand, and the Angels came and bore his soul to Paradise.

THE PURSUIT OF DIARMID

Fionn, the son of Cumhaill, rose early from his bed and went and sat upon the clearing of grass that stretched at the foot of the hill of Allen, where was the favourite palace of the Irish Kings of Leinster. He had stolen out alone, while his attendants were sleeping, but soon he was missed and two of his men followed him to the green plain.

‘Why have you risen so early?’ said Ossian as he came up.

‘Since my wife died,’ answered Fionn, ‘little sleep has come to me, and better I like to be sitting by the hill-side than to toss restlessly between walls.’

‘Why did you not tell us?’ answered Ossian, ‘for there is not a girl in the whole land of Erin whom we would not have brought you by fair means or foul.’

Dearing, who had till now kept silence, then spoke. ‘I myself know of a wife who would be a fitting mate even for Fionn, son of Cumhaill — Grania, the daughter of Cormac, who is fairer of speech and form than the daughters of other men.’

Fionn looked up quickly at Dearing’s words.

‘There has been strife for long between me and Cormac,’ said he, ‘and it is not seemly that I should ask anything of him which might be refused. Therefore go you and Ossian and, as from yourselves, see if this marriage pleases him. It were better that he should refuse you, rather than me.’

‘Farewell then,’ said Ossian, ‘but let no man know of our journey till we come back again.’

So the two went their ways, and found Cormac, King of Erin, holding a great council on a wide plain, with the chiefs and the great nobles gathered before him. He welcomed Ossian and Dearing with courtesy, and as he felt sure they bore some message, he bade the council meet again on the morrow. When the nobles and chiefs had betaken themselves to their homes, Ossian told the King of Erin that they had come to know his thoughts as to a marriage between his daughter and Fionn, son of Cumhaill.

‘There is not the son of a king or of a great prince, a hero or a champion in the whole of Erin,’ answered Cormac, ‘whom my daughter has not refused to wed, and it is I whom all hold guilty for it, though it is none of my doing. Therefore betake yourselves to my daughter, and she will speak for herself. It is better that you be displeased with her than with me.’

Thereupon Ossian and Dearing were led by the King to the dwelling of the women, and they found Grania lying on a high couch. 'Here, O Grania,' said the King, 'are two of the men of Fionn, the son of Cumhaill, and they have come to ask you as wife for him. What is your answer?'

'If he be a fitting son-in-law for you, why should he not be a fitting husband for me?' said Grania. And at her words, her father ordered a banquet to be made in the palace for Ossian and Dearing, and sent them back to Fionn with a message summoning him to a tryst in a fortnight's time.

When Ossian and Dearing were returned into Kildare, they found Fionn and his men, the Fenians, on the hill of Allen, and they told them their tale from the beginning to end. And the heart of Fionn grew light as he heard it, and the fortnight of waiting stretched long before him. But everything wears away at last, and so did those fifteen days; and on the last, Fionn assembled seven battalions of his Fenians from wherever they might be, and they set forth in troops for the great plain where Cormac, King of Erin, had given them tryst.

The King had made ready a splendid feast, and welcomed the new-comers gladly, and they ate and drank together. When the feast was over the Druid Derry sang songs before Grania, and she, knowing he was a man of wisdom, asked him why Fionn had come thither. 'If you know not that,' said the Druid, 'it is no wonder that I know it not.'

'I wish to learn it from you,' answered Grania.

'Well then,' replied the Druid, 'it is to ask you for wife that he is come.'

'I marvel,' said Grania, 'that it is not for Ossian that he asks me. For my father himself is not as old as Fionn. But tell me, I pray you, who is that softly spoken man with the curling black hair and ruddy countenance, that sits on the left hand of Ossian, the son of Fionn?'

'That is Diarmid, son of Dowd, the best lover in the whole world.'

'It is a goodly company,' said Grania, and ordered her lady to bring her the golden goblet chased with jewels. When it was brought she filled it up with the drink of nine times nine men, then bade her handmaid carry it to Fionn and say that she had sent it to him, and that he was to drink from it. Fionn took the goblet with joy, but no sooner had he drunk than he fell down into a deep slumber; and the same thing befel also Cormac, and Cormac's wife, and as many as drank of the goblet sent by Grania.

When all were sleeping soundly, she rose softly and said to Ossian, 'I marvel that Fionn should ask such a wife as I, for it were fitter that he should give me a husband of my own age than a man older than my father.'

'Say not so, O Grania,' answered Ossian, 'for if Fionn were to hear you, he would not have you, neither should I dare to ask for you.'

'Then you will not listen to word of marriage from me?' asked Grania.

‘I will not,’ answered Ossian, ‘for I must not lay my hand on what Fionn has looked on.’

Then Grania turned her face to Diarmid Dowd and what she said was, ‘Will you receive courtship from me, O Son of Dowd, since Ossian will not receive it?’

‘I will not,’ answered Diarmid, ‘for whatever woman is betrothed to Fionn, I may not take her.’

‘I will put you under bonds of destruction, O Diarmid,’ said Grania, ‘if you take me not out of this house to-night.’

‘Those are indeed evil bonds,’ answered Diarmid, ‘and wherefore have you laid them on me, seeing there is no man less worthy to be loved by you than myself?’

‘Not so, O son of Dowd,’ said Grania, ‘and I will tell you wherefore.’

‘One day the King of Erin held a muster on the great plain of Tara, and Fionn and his seven battalions were there. And a goaling match was played, and all took part, save only the King, and Fionn, and myself and you, O Diarmid. We watched till the game was going against the men of the kingdom of Erin, then you rose, and, taking the pole of the man who was standing by, threw him to the ground, and, joining the others, did thrice win the goal from the warriors of Tara. And I turned the light of my eyes upon you that day, and I never gave that love to any other from that time to this, and will not for ever. So to-night we will pass through my wicket-gate, and take heed you follow me.’

After she had spoken, Diarmid turned to Ossian and his companions. ‘What shall I do, O Ossian, with the bonds that have been laid on me?’

‘Follow Grania,’ said Ossian, ‘and keep away from the wiles of Fionn.’

‘Is that the counsel of you all to me?’ asked Diarmid.

‘It is the counsel of us all,’ said they.

Then Diarmid bade them farewell, and went to the top of the Fort, and put the shafts of his two javelins under him, and rose like a bird into the air, and found himself on the plain where Grania met him. ‘I trow, O Grania,’ said he, ‘this is an evil course upon which you are come, for I know not to which corner of Erin I can take you. Return to the town, and Fionn will never harm you.’

‘I will never go back,’ answered Grania, ‘and nothing save death shall part us.’

‘Then go forward,’ said Diarmid.

The town was a mile behind them when Grania stopped. ‘I am weary, son of O’Dowd.’

‘It is a good time to weary, Grania, for your father’s house is still nigh at hand, and I give you my word as a warrior that I will never carry you or any woman.’

‘You need not do that,’ answered Grania, ‘for my father’s horses are in a fenced meadow by themselves, and have chariots behind them. Go and bring two horses and a chariot, and I will wait for you here.’

And Diarmid did what Grania bade him, and he brought two of the horses, and they journeyed together as far as Athlone.

‘It is the easier for Fionn to follow our track,’ said Diarmid at last, ‘now we have the horses.’

‘Then leave them,’ cried Grania, ‘one on each side of the stream, and we will travel on foot.’ So they went on till they reached Galway, and there Diarmid cut down a grove, and made a palisade with seven doors of wattles, and gathered together the tops of the birch trees and soft rushes for a bed for Grania.

When Fionn and all that were in Tara awoke and found that Diarmid and Grania were not among them, a burning rage seized upon Fionn. At once he sent out trackers before him, and he followed them himself with his men, till they reached the land of Connaught. ‘Ah, well I know where Grania and Diarmid shall be sought,’ cried Fionn. And Ossian and Dearing heard him, and said to each other, ‘We must send Diarmid a warning, lest he should be taken. Look where Bran is, the hound of Fionn, and he shall take it, for he does not love Fionn better than he loves Diarmid, so, Oscar, tell him to go to Diarmid who is in Derry.’ And Oscar told that to Bran, and Bran understood, and stole round to the back part of the army where Fionn might not see him; then he bounded away to Derry and thrust his head into Diarmid’s bosom as he lay asleep.

At that Diarmid awoke and sprang up and woke Grania, and told her that Bran had come, which was a token that Fionn himself was coming. ‘Fly then,’ said Grania; but Diarmid would not fly. ‘He may take me now,’ said he, ‘seeing he must take me some time.’ At his words Grania shook with fear, and Bran departed.

All this while the friends of Diarmid took counsel together, and they dreaded lest Bran had not found them, and they resolved to give them another warning. So they bade the henchman Feargus to give three shouts, for every shout could be heard over three counties. And Diarmid heard them, and awoke Grania, and told her that it was a warning they had sent him of Fionn. ‘Then take that warning,’ said she. ‘I will not,’ answered Diarmid, ‘but will stay in this wood till Fionn comes.’ And Grania trembled when she heard him.

By-and-by the trackers came back to Fionn with news that they had seen Diarmid and Grania, and though Ossian and Diarmid’s friends tried to persuade Fionn that the men had been mistaken, Fionn was not to be deceived. ‘Well did I know the meaning of the three shouts of Feargus, and why you sent Bran, my own hound, away. But it shall profit him nothing, for Diarmid shall not leave

Derry till he has paid me for every slight he has put upon me.’

‘Great foolishness it is of you, O Fionn,’ said Oscar, ‘to think that Diarmid would stay in this plain waiting to have his head taken from him.’

‘Who else would have cut down the trees, and have made a palisade of them, and cut seven doors in it? Speak, O Diarmid, is the truth with me or with Oscar?’

‘With you, O Fionn,’ said Diarmid, ‘and truly I and Grania are here.’

When he heard this, Fionn bade his men surround Diarmid and take him, and Diarmid rose up and kissed Grania three times in presence of Fionn and his men, and Fionn, seeing that, swore that Diarmid should pay for those kisses with his head.

But Angus, the foster-father of Diarmid, knew in what straits his foster-son was, and he stole secretly to the place where Diarmid was hidden with Grania, and asked him what he had done to bring his head into such danger. ‘This,’ said Diarmid; ‘Grania, the daughter of Cormac, King of Erin, has fled with me against my will to escape marriage with Fionn.’

‘Then let one of you come under my mantle,’ answered Angus, ‘and I will carry you out of your prison.’

‘Take Grania,’ answered Diarmid. ‘If I live, then will I follow you, but if not, carry her to her father, and let him deal with her as seems good.’

After that Angus put Grania under his mantle and they went their ways, and neither Fionn nor his Fenians knew of it.

When Angus and Grania had left him, Diarmid girded his arms upon him, and standing at one of the seven wattled doors, asked who stood behind. ‘No foe to you,’ answered a voice, ‘but Ossian, the son of Fionn, and Oscar, the son of Ossian, and others who are your friends. Come out, and none will do you hurt.’

‘I will not open the door until I find out where Fionn himself is.’ And so it befel at six of the doors, and Diarmid would not open them, lest his friends should come under the wrath of Fionn. But as he drew near the seventh, and put his question, the answer came loud: ‘Here are Fionn, the son of Cumhaill, and four hundred of his servants, and we bear you no love, and if you come out we will tear your bones in sunder.’

‘I pledge my word,’ said Diarmid, ‘that yours is the first door by which I will pass,’ and he rose into the air on the shafts of his javelins, with a bound as light as a bird’s, and went far beyond Fionn and his people, and they knew nothing of it. Then he looked back and shouted that he had got the better of them, and followed after the track of Angus and Grania.

He found them warm in a hut with a fire in it, watching a wild boar roasting on a spit, and Grania’s soul almost left her body for joy at seeing Diarmid. They told their stories before the fire, and when morning broke Angus rose and said to

Diarmid, ‘I must now depart, O son of O’Dowd, and this counsel I leave you. Go not into a tree having but one trunk, when you fly before Fionn. And go not to a cave of the earth having only one door, or to an island which can only be reached by one channel. And in whatever place you cook your meal, there eat it not; and in whatever place you eat, there lie not; and in whatever place you lie down to sleep, there rise not on the morrow.’ So saying, he bade them farewell, and went his way.

The next day Diarmid and Grania journeyed up the Shannon, and they killed a salmon, and crossed the river to eat it, as Angus had told them. Soon they met a youth called Muadan, who wished to take service with them; and he was strong, and carried them over the rivers across their path. When evening came they found a cave, where Muadan spread out soft rushes and birch twigs for Diarmid and Grania to lie on, and as soon as they were asleep he stole into the next wood, and broke a long straight rod from a tree, and put a hair line and a hook upon it, and a holly berry on the rod, and fished in the stream. In three casts he had taken three fish. That night they ate a good supper, and while Diarmid and Grania slept, Muadan kept watch for them.

At dawn Diarmid woke Grania and told her to watch while Muadan slept, as he was going to climb a hill near by, and see where they had best go.

He soon stood on the top and looked round about him. In front of him was a great company of ships bearing towards him out of the west. They landed at the foot of the hill where Diarmid stood, and he swiftly ran down to meet them and to ask of what country they were.

‘We are three royal chiefs,’ said they, ‘and are sent by Fionn to take an enemy of his whom he has outlawed, called Diarmid O’Dowd. And with us are three fierce hounds whom we will loose upon his track. Fire burns them not, nor water drowns them, nor weapons wound them, and of us there are two thousand men. Moreover, tell us who you yourself are, and if you have any tidings of the son of O’Dowd.’

‘I am but a warrior walking the world with the strength of my arm and the blade of my sword. But I warn you, you will have no common man to deal with if you meet Diarmid, whom but yesterday I saw.’

‘Well, no one has been found yet,’ said they.

‘Is there wine in your ships?’ asked Diarmid.

‘There is,’ answered they.

‘If you would bring a tun of it here, I would do a trick for you.’ So the wine was sent for, and Diarmid raised the cask up and drank from it, and took it up to the top of the hill and stood on it, and it glided with him to the bottom. And that trick he did thrice, standing on the tun as it came and went. But the strangers only scoffed, and they told him they could do a much better trick than that, and one of them jumped on the tun. Then, before it could move, Diarmid gave the tun a kick, and the young man fell, and the tun rolled over and crushed him. And in like manner he did to many more, and the rest fled back to their ships.

The next morning they came to Diarmid where he stood on the hill, and he asked if they would like him to show them any more tricks, but they said they would rather hear some news of Diarmid first. ‘I have seen a man who met him to-day,’ answered Diarmid, and thereupon he laid his weapons on the ground and bounded upwards upon his javelin, coming down lightly beyond the host.

‘If you call that a feat, then you have never seen a feat,’ said a young warrior of the green Fenians — for so were they called from the colour of their armour. And he rose in like manner on his javelin and came down heavily on it, and it pierced his heart. Diarmid drew out the javelin, and another man took it and tried to do the same thing, and he also was slain, and so to the number of fifty. And they went to their ships while Diarmid returned to Muadan and Grania.

As soon as Diarmid awoke he went to the forest and cut two forked poles, which he took to the hill and placed upright, and he balanced the sword of Angus across the top. Then he rose lightly over and came down safely over it. ‘Is there any man among you who can do that?’ asked he of the men who had come up from their ships.

‘That is a foolish question,’ answered one, ‘for no man ever did a feat in Erin which one of us could not do,’ and he arose and leapt over the sword, but his foot caught in it, and he was cut in half. After that others tried, but none jumped that sword and lived. ‘Have you any tidings of the son of O’Dowd?’ asked the rest at last.

‘I have seen him that saw him to-day,’ answered Diarmid. ‘I will seek tidings of him to-night.’ And he returned to Grania.

When the sun rose Diarmid put on his coat of mail which no sword could pierce, and girded on the sword of Angus, and took his two javelins, whose stroke none could cure. Grania trembled at this brave sight, but Diarmid soothed her fears, and went off to meet the Fenians.

‘What tidings of the son of O’Dowd?’ said they. ‘Show us where he is, that we may take his head to Fionn.’

‘The body and life of Diarmid are under my protection, and I will not betray him.’

‘Then we will take your head, as Fionn is your enemy,’ said they.

‘Take it if you can,’ answered Diarmid, and he drew his sword and struck at the head of the man next him, and it rolled away from the body. Then he rushed on the host, and slew them right and left, and none lived to tell the tale but the three green chiefs and a few men who went back to their ships. And they returned the next morning and renewed the fight, but Diarmid vanquished them, and binding them fast, left them where they were. For he knew that there were only four men in the world that could loose them.

After this Diarmid called to Grania and Muadan to come with him, and they travelled till Grania grew weary, and Muadan carried her on his back to the foot of a great mountain. And there they rested on the bank of the stream.

Meanwhile the few men who had been left alive abandoned their ship, and sought the three chiefs who were lying bound on the hill. They tried to loosen the bands of the captives, but only drew them tighter.

Soon they saw the witch-messenger of Fionn coming over the tops of the hills skimming from one to the other as lightly as a swallow.

‘Who has made this great slaughter?’ said she.

‘Who are you that ask?’ said they.

‘I am Deirdre, the witch-messenger of Fionn, and he has sent me to look for you.’

‘We know not who the man was,’ answered they, ‘but his hair was black and curly, and his countenance ruddy. And he has bound our three chiefs, so that we cannot loose them.’

‘It was Diarmid himself,’ said she; ‘so loosen your hounds on his track, and I will send Fionn and his Fenians to help you.’

The men went down to their ships, and brought out their hounds, and loosened them on the track of Diarmid. The hounds made straight for the door of the cave, and the men followed them; and the hounds left the cave, and set forth westwards.

But Diarmid knew not of their coming till he saw silken banners waving, and three mighty warriors marching at the head. And he was filled with hatred of them, and went his ways, and Muadan took Grania on his back and bore her a mile along the mountain.

It was not long before they heard the hound coming, and Muadan bade Diarmid follow Grania, and he would keep the hound at bay. And when he had slain the hound, he departed after Diarmid and Grania.

Then the second hound was loosened, and Diarmid waited till he came close, so that he could take sure aim; and he cast his javelin into the hound and it fell dead like its fellow, and having drawn his javelin, he followed after Grania.

They had not gone much farther before the third hound was upon them. He bounded straight over the head of Diarmid, and would have seized Grania, but Diarmid took hold of his two hind legs, and swung him so fiercely against a rock that he was slain on the spot. And when that was done, Diarmid put on his arms, and slipped his little finger into the silken string of the javelin, and cast it straight at a youth in a green mantle that had outstripped his fellows, and slew him; and so to the rest, while Deirdre, the witch, wheeled and hovered about them all.

Now when news of the green Fenians that were bound by Diarmid reached Fionn he summoned his men, and they took the shortest ways till they reached the hill of slaughter. Then Fionn spoke, and what he said was, ‘O Ossian, loose the three chiefs for me.’

‘I will not,’ replied Ossian, ‘for Diarmid bound me not to loose any warrior that he should bind.’

‘O Oscar, loose them,’ said Fionn.

‘Nay,’ answered Oscar, ‘rather would I place more bands upon them.’ And so said the other two, and, before their eyes, the chiefs died of their bondage. So Fionn ordered their graves to be dug, and their flag laid upon their stone, and the heart of Fionn was heavy.

He raised his head and saw drawing near Deirdre, the witch, her legs trembling, her tongue raving, and her eyes dropping out of her head. ‘I have great and evil tidings for you,’ said she, and she told him of all the slaughter Diarmid had made, and how she herself had hardly escaped.

‘Whither went the son of O’Dowd?’ asked Fionn.

‘I know not,’ said she. At that Fionn and his Fenians departed, and wandered far before they could hear news of Diarmid.

On the road that led to the county of Galway, Fionn saw fifty stout warriors coming towards him. ‘I know not who they are,’ said Fionn, ‘yet I think they are enemies of mine’; and, indeed, this proved to be so, for the leaders of the company told Fionn that his father and their fathers had fought in battle. ‘Then you must give me payment for the death of my father,’ said Fionn, ‘and in return you shall have power among the Fenians.’

‘But we have neither silver, nor gold, nor herds, O Fionn,’ answered the two young men.

‘I want none of these,’ replied Fionn; ‘the payment I ask is but the head of a warrior, or a handful of berries from the magic tree of Dooros.’

‘Take counsel from me,’ cried Ossian, ‘for it is no light matter to bring to Fionn that which he asks of you. The head is the head of Diarmid, son of Dowd, and if there were two thousand of you instead of fifty, Diarmid would not let it go.’

‘And what are the berries that Fionn asks of us?’ said they.

‘Those berries would never have been heard of but for the jealousy of two women of different tribes, each of whom swore that her husband could hurl a pole farther than the other. So all the rest of the tribes came out to take part in the goaling match, and the game lasted long, and neither won a goal. At last the tribe of the Tuatha De Denann saw that the Fenians were stronger than they, and they went away bearing their provisions with them — nuts, and apples, and fragrant berries. And as they passed near the river Moy one of the berries fell, and turned into a quicken tree. No disease or sickness can touch anyone who eats three of its berries, and were he a hundred years old, the eater of them shall become no more than thirty.

‘Since those days the tribe has set a guard over it. He is a crooked giant, with an eye in the midst of his forehead. No weapon can wound him, and he can only die of three strokes from his own iron club. At night he sleeps on the top of the tree, and by day watches at the foot. Around him is a wilderness, and the Fenians dare not hunt there, for fear of that terrible one. These are the berries which Fionn asks of you.’

But Aod, the son of Andala, spoke and declared that he would rather die seeking those berries than return to his own land with his head bowed in shame. So he and Angus his cousin took farewell of Ossian and went their ways, and as they drew near the forest they came on the track of Diarmid; and they followed to the tent, where they found him with Grania. ‘Who are you?’ asked Diarmid.

‘We are Aod and Angus of the Clan Moirna,’ said Aod, ‘and it is your head that we seek, Diarmid, son of O’Dowd. For Fionn will either have that, or a handful of berries from the quicken tree.’

‘Neither task is easy,’ answered Diarmid, ‘and woe to him that falls under the power of Fionn. He it was who slew your father, and surely that is payment enough. And whichever of those things you take him, you shall never have peace.’

‘What berries are those that Fionn wants?’ asked Grania, ‘and why cannot they be got for him?’ Then Diarmid told her the story, and how the country round was laid waste. ‘But when Fionn put me under his ban,’ continued he, ‘the giant gave me leave to hunt there if I would, but forbade me to touch the berries. And now, O children of Moirna, will you fight me or seek the berries?’

‘We will fight you first,’ said they.

They fought long and well, but Diarmid got the better of them both, and bound them on the spot where they fell. ‘You struck valiantly,’ said Grania to Diarmid, ‘but I vow that even if the children of Moirna go not after those berries, I will never rest in my bed till I have eaten them.’

‘Force me not to break faith with the giant,’ answered Diarmid, ‘for he would not give them me more readily for that.’

‘Loose our bonds,’ said the children of Moirna, ‘and we will go with you, and give ourselves for your sake.’

‘Not so,’ answered Diarmid, ‘for the sight of him might kill you.’

‘Then let us go to watch you fight, before you cut off our heads.’ And Diarmid did so.

They found the giant asleep before the tree, and Diarmid pushed him with his foot.

The giant raised his head and looked at him: ‘Are you fain to break peace, O Diarmid?’

‘Not I,’ answered he, ‘but Grania my wife is ill, and she longs for the taste of your berries, and it is to get a handful of them that I am now come.’

‘If she should die,’ said the giant, ‘she should have none.’

‘I may not do you treachery,’ replied Diarmid, ‘therefore I tell you I will have them by fair means or foul.’

The giant having heard that, stood up and dealt Diarmid three mighty strokes with his club, so that he staggered. Then, flinging down his weapons, he sprang upon the giant and grasped the club between his hands, hurling the giant to the ground by the weight of his body. Without giving him time to rise, Diarmid struck three blows with the club at the giant’s head and he died without a word.

Aod and Angus had watched the combat, and now came forth. ‘Bury the giant under the brushwood of the forest,’ said Diarmid, ‘so that Grania may not see him, and then go and bring her to me, for I am very weary.’

And the young men did so. ‘There, Grania, are the berries you asked for,’ said Diarmid when she came, but she swore that she would not taste a berry except he plucked it for her. So he plucked the berries for her and for the children of Moirna, and they ate their fill of them. ‘Now go,’ said he, ‘take as many berries as you can to Fionn, and tell him that it was you who slew the giant.’ And they gave thanks to Diarmid and left him, and he and Grania went to sleep on the top of the tree where the sweetest berries grew.

The children of Moirna reached Fionn, and bowed before him. ‘We have slain the giant,’ said they, ‘and have brought you the berries, and now we shall have peace for the death of our father.’ Fionn took the berries into his hand, and stooped down and smelt them. ‘I swear,’ he cried, ‘that it was Diarmid O’Dowd who gathered these berries, and full sure I am that it was he who slew the giant. I will follow him to the quicken tree, and it shall profit you nothing to have brought the berries to me.’

With seven battalions of his Fenians, he marched along Diarmid’s track till he reached the foot of the quicken tree, and finding the berries with no watch on them, they ate their fill. The sun was hot, and Fionn said he would stay at the foot of the tree till it grew cooler, as well he knew that Diarmid was at the top. ‘You judge foolishly,’ answered Ossian, ‘to think that Diarmid would stay up there when he knows that you are bent on his death.’

In spite of the heat and his long march, Fionn could not sleep, and called for a chess-board, and bade Ossian play with him. Fionn was the most skilled, and at length he said, ‘There is but one move that can save you the game, O Ossian, and I dare all that are by to show you that move.’ And in the top of the tree Diarmid heard him, and said, ‘O Ossian, why am I not there to show you?’

‘It is worse for you to be here in the power of Fionn, than for Ossian to lack that move,’ answered Grania.

But Diarmid plucked one of the berries, and aimed it at the man which should be moved, and Ossian moved it, and turned the game against Fionn. And so he did a second time, and a third, when Ossian was in straits, and he won the game and the Fenians sent up a great shout.

‘I marvel not at your winning, O Ossian, seeing that Oscar is doing his best for you, and that the skilled knowledge of Dearing, and the prompting of Diarmid, are all with you.’

‘Now your eyes must be blinded, O Fionn, to think that Diarmid would stay in that tree when you are beneath him.’

‘Which of us has the truth on his side, O Diarmid?’ said Fionn, looking up.

‘Never did you err in your wisdom, O Fionn,’ answered Diarmid, ‘and truly, I and Grania are here.’ Then, in presence of them all, he kissed Grania three times. ‘Thou shalt give thy head for those three kisses,’ said Fionn.

So Fionn and the four hundred that were with him surrounded the quicken tree, and he bade them on pain of death not to let Diarmid pass through them. Further, he promised to whichever man should go up the tree and fetch down Diarmid, he would give him arms and armour, and whatever place his father held among the Fenians. But Angus heard what Fionn said, and being somewhat of a wizard, came to Diarmid’s help, without being seen of the Fenians. And one man after another rolled down the tree.

Howbeit, both Diarmid and Angus felt that this was no place for Grania, and Angus said he would take her with him.

‘Take her,’ answered Diarmid; ‘if I be alive this evening I will follow you. If not, send Grania to her father at Tara.’ And with that Angus bade farewell to Diarmid, and flung his magic mantle over himself and Grania, and they passed out and no man knew aught of them till they reached the river Boyne.

When they were safely gone, Diarmid, son of O’Dowd, spoke from the top of the tree. ‘I will go down to you, O Fionn, and to the Fenians, and will deal slaughter and discomfiture upon you and your people, seeing that I know your wish is to allow me no escape, but to work my death after some manner. Moreover, I have no friend who will help or protect me, since full often have I wrought havoc among the warriors of the world, for love of you. For there never came on you battle or strait, but I would plunge into it for your sake, and for that of the Fenians. Therefore I swear, O Fionn, that thou shalt not get me for nothing.’

‘Diarmid speaks truth,’ said Oscar. ‘Grant him, I pray you, mercy and forgiveness.’

‘I will not,’ answered Fionn, ‘till he has paid for every slight put upon me.’

‘It is a foul shame in thee to say that,’ said Oscar, ‘and I pledge the word of a soldier that unless the heavens fall upon me or the earth opens under my feet, I will not suffer you nor your Fenians to strike him a single blow, and I will take him under my protection, and keep him safe in spite of you all. Therefore, O Diarmid, come down out of the tree, since Fionn will not grant you mercy. ‘I will pledge that no evil will come to you to-day.’

So Diarmid rose, and stood upon the topmost bough of the tree, and leapt light and birdlike, by the shafts of his spears, and passed out far beyond Fionn and the Fenians of Erin. And he and Oscar went their way, and no tidings were heard of them till they reached Grania and Angus on the banks of the Boyne.

After Diarmid and Oscar had departed, Fionn ordered a ship to be made ready, and as soon as it was done he marched on board with a thousand of his warriors and set sail for the north of Scotland. When he arrived at the harbour nearest the King’s palace, he moored his ship and took the path to the palace, where the King received him kindly, and gave him food and drink. Then Fionn told the King why he was come. ‘And truly you should give me a host,’ said he, ‘for Diarmid it was who slew your father and two brothers and many of your men besides.’

‘That is so,’ answered the King, ‘and I will give you my two sons, with a thousand men to each of them.’ Joyful was Fionn to hear this, and he departed with his company, and nothing was known of them till they reached the Boyne, where Fionn challenged Diarmid and Angus to battle.

‘What shall I do touching this, O Oscar?’ asked Diarmid.

‘We will give them battle and slay them all,’ answered Oscar.

On the morrow Diarmid and Oscar rose, and put on their armour and went their way to the place of combat, where they bound the rims of their shields together, so that they might not be parted in the fight. Next they proclaimed battle against Fionn, and the Scots said they would land and fight them first. They rushed together, and Diarmid passed under them and through them and over them, as a whale would go through small fish. And all of them fell by Diarmid and Oscar before night came, while they themselves had neither cut nor wound.

When Fionn saw that great slaughter he and his men put out to sea, and sailed to the cave where dwelt an old woman, Fionn’s nurse. And he told her his story from the beginning. ‘I will go with you,’ said she, ‘and will practise magic against him.’

They came to the Boyne, and the witch threw magic over Fionn and his Fenians, so that the men of Erin knew not they were there; and that day Diarmid was hunting alone, for he had parted from Oscar the day before. Now the witch knew this, and she flew to where a water-lily leaf lay with a hole in the middle of it, and as the wind lifted the leaf from the surface of the water she cast deadly darts at Diarmid through the hole, and did him great hurt. And every evil that had come upon him was little compared with that evil. Then he felt that unless he could strike her through the hole in the leaf she would slay him on the spot; so he lay down on his back and took his javelin in his hand, and reached her through the hole, and she fell dead.

After that he cut off her head and carried it with him to Angus.

The next day Diarmid rose early and Angus with him, and they went to Fionn and asked if he would make peace with Diarmid, and also to Cormac, King of Erin, with a like question; and they agreed thereto, and asked Diarmid what terms he wanted. Diarmid demanded several of the best baronies in Ireland, and he got them, and they blotted out all Diarmid had done during the sixteen years of his outlawry, and Cormac gave his other daughter to Fionn that he might let Diarmid be, and there was peace for many years, and Diarmid prospered mightily, and had four sons and one daughter.

THE GREEN BOAR

But one day a restless spirit seized on Grania, and she told Diarmid that it was a shame to them that the two greatest men in Erin, Cormac and Fionn, had never visited their house, and she wished to give a splendid feast and to bid them to it. And this was done: for a year Grania and her daughter were preparing the feast, and when it was ready the guests came, and stayed feasting for a year.

It was on the last day of the year that in his sleep Diarmid heard the voice of a dog that caused him to start and to wake Grania. ‘What is the matter?’ said she, and Diarmid told her. ‘May you be kept safely,’ answered Grania; ‘lie down again.’ So Diarmid lay down, but no sleep would come to him, and by-and-by he heard the hound’s voice again, but again Grania kept him from seeking it. This time he fell into a deep slumber, and a third time the hound bayed, and he woke and said to Grania, ‘Now it is day, and I will go.’ ‘Well, then,’ said she, ‘take your large sword and the red javelin.’ But Diarmid answered, ‘No, I will take the little sword that bites, and the small javelin, and my favourite hound on a chain.’

So he went without stopping to the top of a mountain, where Fionn stood alone. Diarmid asked if he was hunting, and Fionn said no, but that after midnight a company of Fenians had come out, and one of the hounds had crossed the track of the wild boar of Ben Gulbain, which had slain thirty Fenians that morning.

‘He is even now coming up this mountain against us,’ added he, ‘so let us leave the place.’

‘I will never leave the place for him,’ answered Diarmid.

‘Know you not that when you were a child a wizard prophesied that you should live as long as a green boar without ears or tail, and that it was by him that you should fall at last?’

‘No, I knew nothing of these things, but for all that I will not leave the mountain,’ answered Diarmid. And Fionn went his way, and Diarmid stood alone on the top. ‘It was to slay me that you made this hunt, O Fionn; and if it is fated that I die here, die I must.’

The wild boar came tearing up the mountain, and behind him followed the Fenians. Diarmid slipped his hound, but it profited him nothing, for he did not await the boar, but fled before him. ‘Woe unto him that doeth not the counsel of a good wife,’ said Diarmid to himself, ‘for Grania bade me take my best hound and my red javelin.’ Then he aimed carefully at the boar’s head, and smote him in the middle of his forehead; but he did not so much as cut one of his bristles, far less pierce his skin. At that Diarmid felt his heart quail like those of weaker men, and he drew his sword and dealt the boar a stout blow, but the sword broke in two; and the beast stood unharmed. With a spring he threw himself upon Diarmid, so that he tripped and fell, and somehow when he rose up he was sitting astride the back of the boar, with his face looking towards the tail. The boar tried to fling him off but could not, though he rushed down the hill and jumped three times backwards and forwards out of the river at the foot; but Diarmid never stirred, and at last the boar dashed up the hill again, and Diarmid fell from his back. Then the boar sprang upon Diarmid with a mighty spring, and wounded him mortally; but Diarmid swung his broken sword about his head as he lay, and hit the boar such a blow on his head that where he stood there he fell dead.

Not long after that Fionn and his Fenians came up and watched Diarmid, who was dying fast. ‘It pleases me well to see you in that plight, O Diarmid,’ said

Fionn, ‘and I grieve that all the fair women of Erin cannot see you also.’

‘If you wished you could still heal me, O Fionn,’ answered Diarmid.

‘How could I heal you, O Diarmid?’

‘Easily,’ answered Diarmid. ‘Was it not given to you that whoever should drink from the palms of your hands should become young and whole again?’

‘You have not deserved that I should give you that drink,’ said Fionn.

‘That is not true, O Fionn, well have I deserved it of you. Was it not I who avenged you and slew fifty of your enemies who tried to set on fire the house wherein you were holding your great feast? Had I asked you for such a drink then, you would have given it to me, and now I deserve it no less.’

‘Not so,’ answered Fionn; ‘you have deserved ill at my hands since that time, and little reason have I to give you drinks or any good thing. For did you not bear away Grania from me before all the men of Erin the night you were set as guard over her in Tara?’

‘The guilt of that was not mine, O Fionn, but Grania besought me, else I would not have failed to keep my charge for all the bonds in the world. And well do I deserve you should give me a drink, for many is the day since I came among the Fenians in which I have perilled my life for your sake. Therefore you should not do me this foul treachery. And soon a dire defeat will come upon the Fenians, and few children will be left to them to carry on the race. It is not for you that I grieve, O Fionn, but for Ossian and for Oscar, and for the rest of my faithful comrades. And you shall lack me sorely yet, O Fionn.’

‘I am near of kin to you, O Fionn,’ said Oscar, ‘but you shall not do Diarmid this wrong. Further, I swear that were any other prince in the world to have done this to Diarmid, we would have seen whose hand was strongest and who should bring him a drink.’

‘I know no well upon this mountain,’ answered Fionn.

‘That is not true,’ replied Diarmid, ‘for nine paces from this is the best well of pure water in the world.’

So Fionn went to the well and filled his palms with water; but he had only come half way to where Diarmid lay when he let the water run down between his fingers. ‘The water would not stay in my hands,’ he said, as he reached the rest.

‘You spilt it of your will,’ answered Diarmid.

For the second time Fionn set out to fetch the water, but returning he thought of Grania, and let it run upon the ground. Diarmid saw and sighed piteously. ‘I swear by my sword,’ cried Oscar, ‘that if this time you bring not that water either you or I, O Fionn, shall leave our body here.’

And Fionn trembled when he heard those words, and brought back the water, but as he came to his side the life went out of Diarmid. And the company of the Fenians raised three exceeding great cries; while Oscar looked fiercely at Fionn, and told him it had been better for the Fenians had Fionn himself died, and not Diarmid. Then Fionn left the top of the mountain, leading Diarmid's hound, and his Fenians came after. But Ossian and Oscar and two others returned and laid their four mantles over Diarmid, and when they had done that they went their ways after Fionn.

Now Grania was standing on the ramparts of her house when she saw Fionn and the Fenians approaching. She said to herself that if Diarmid were alive it was not Fionn who would lead his hound, and at this thought she swooned and fell heavily over the battlements. Ossian's heart was full of pity, and he bade Fionn and the Fenians to go, and ran himself to help her, but she lifted her head and begged that Fionn would leave her the hound of Diarmid. Fionn said No, he would not; but Ossian took the stag-hound from Fionn's hand and put it into Grania's, and then followed after the Fenians.

When they had gone, Grania uttered a loud and grievous cry that was heard far round, so that the people came to her and asked her what was the matter, and when she told them that Diarmid was dead they sat down and wailed also. After that Grania sent five hundred men to bring her the body of Diarmid.

That night it was shown to Angus in a dream that Diarmid was dead on Ben Gulbain; and he was carried by the wind, and reached the place at the same moment as Grania's men, who knew him, and held out the insides of their shields to him in token of peace. And they sent up three exceeding great cries, which were heard even at the gates of heaven.

Then Angus spoke: 'There has not been one night since I took you, an infant of nine months old, to the Boyne that I have not watched over you, O Diarmid, until last night, when Fionn did you basely to death, for all you were at peace with him.' And he told Grania's men he himself would bear Diarmid's body to the Boyne. So the dead man was placed on a gilded bier with his javelins over him pointed upwards, and the men of Grania returned to their mistress, and said as Angus had bade them.

The first thing she did was to send messengers to her sons, who lived each in his own house, and bade them come with their followings to the house of Grania, for that their father Diarmid had been foully slain by Fionn. They all came forthwith, and after they had eaten and drunk she pointed to the weapons and arms of Diarmid, and said they were theirs, and by them they should learn all arts of brave men, till they should reach their full strength, and after that they should avenge themselves on Fionn.

The sayings of Grania were whispered in the ears of Fionn, and a great fear fell upon him. He called his Fenians together, and told them how the sons of Diarmid had gone to their mother, and returned to their own homes again. ‘It is to rebel against me that they have done this,’ and he asked counsel in the matter. ‘The guilt is yours and no other man’s,’ spoke Ossian, ‘and we will not stand by you, for you slew Diarmid in time of peace.’

Without Ossian, Oscar, and their men Fionn knew that he could not conquer Grania, and resolved to try what cunning would do. So he slipped away secretly, and went to her house, and greeted her with soft words, in reply to her bitter ones. But so cunning was he that at last her wrath broke down, and she agreed to go with him back to his Fenians.

It was a long while before the Fenians knew who that could be walking by the side of Fionn, but when they did they laughed and mocked till Grania bowed her head for shame. ‘This time, O Fionn, you will guard her well,’ said Ossian.

For seven years the sons of Diarmid exercised themselves in all the skill of a warrior, and then they came back to Grania’s house. There they learned how long ago Grania had fled with Fionn, and in wrath they set out to seek Fionn, and proclaimed battle against him. Fionn sent Dearing to ask how many men it would take to fight them, and they answered that each one of them would fight a hundred. So Fionn brought four hundred men, and the young men rushed under them and through them and over them, till there was not a man left. ‘What shall we do concerning these youths, O Grania,’ said Fionn, ‘for I have not men enough to go through many such fights?’

‘I will visit them,’ answered Grania, ‘and will try to make peace between you.’

And Fionn bade her offer them terms such as no man then living would refuse, yet for long the young men did refuse them. But at the last the prayers of Grania prevailed, and peace was made, and Fionn and Grania lived together till they died.

From the Transactions of the Ossianic Society.

SOME ADVENTURES OF WILLIAM SHORT NOSE

William Short Nose was also styled William of Orange, quite a different man from the one who came to be King of England, although they both took their title from the same small town in the south of France. This William of Orange spent his life battling with the Saracens in the south of France, and a very hard task he had, for their numbers seemed endless, and as fast as one army was beaten another was gathered together.

Now by a great effort the Infidels had been driven back south in the year 732, but before a hundred years had passed they had again crossed the Pyrenees and were streaming over France, south of the Loire, and, what was worse, the men of Gascony were rising too. Someone had to meet the enemy and to crush the rebels, and of all the subjects of King Louis, the son of the Emperor Charles, no one was so fit to lead the army of the Franks as William Short Nose, Count of Orange, husband of the Lady Gibourc.

It was at the Aliscans that he met them, and a great host they were, spreading over the country till whichever way you looked you saw men flocking round the Golden Dragon, which was the banner of the Saracens. But it was not Count William's way to think about numbers, and he ordered his trumpeters to sound the charge. Spurring his horse, he dashed from one part of the fight to the other, striking and killing as he went, and heeding as little the wounds that he got as those that he gave, and *they* were many. The Franks whom he led followed after him, and slew the Pagans as they came on; but the Christians were in comparison but a handful, and their enemies as the sands of the sea. The young warriors whom William had brought with him were prisoners or dying men, and from far he saw Vivian, whom he loved the best, charging a multitude with his naked sword. 'Montjoie! Montjoie!' cried he, 'O noble Count! O Bertrand my cousin, come to my aid! O my Lady Gibourc, never more shall my eyes look upon you!'

Bertrand heard and pressed to his side. 'Ride to the river,' he said, 'and I will protect you with my life'; but Vivian was too weak even to sit on his horse, and fell half fainting at the feet of Bertrand.

At this moment there rode at them a large troop of Saracens, headed by their King Haucebier, and the Christian Knights knew that all was lost. 'It is too late now for me to think of life,' said Vivian, 'but I will die fighting,' and again they faced their enemies till Bertrand's horse was killed under him. Then Vivian seized the horse of a dead Infidel, and thrust the bridle into Bertrand's hand, 'Fly, for God's sake, it is your only chance. Where is my uncle? If he is dead we have lost the battle.'

But Bertrand did not fly, though every instant made the danger more deadly. 'If I forsake you, if I take flight,' he said, 'I shall bring eternal shame upon myself.'

'No, no,' cried Vivian, 'seek my uncle down there in the Aliscans, and bring him to my aid.'

'Never till my sword breaks,' answered Bertrand, and laid about him harder than ever. And to their joy they heard a war cry sounding in their ears, and five Frankish Counts, cousins of Vivian and of Bertrand, galloped up. Fight they did with all their might, but none fought like Vivian. 'Heavens! what a warrior!' cried the Counts as they saw his blows, while the Saracens asked themselves if the man whom they had killed at mid-day had been brought back to life by the help of devils. 'If we let them escape now we shall be covered with shame before Mahomet,' said they, 'but ere night falls William shall acknowledge that he is conquered.'

'Indeed!' said Bertrand, and with his cousins he fell upon them till they fled.

The Counts were victors on this field, but, wounded and weary as they were, another combat lay before them, for a force of twenty thousand Saracens was advancing from the valley. Their hearts never failed them, but they had no strength left; the young Counts were all taken prisoners, except Vivian, who was left for dead by the side of a fountain where he had been struck down. 'O Father in Heaven,' he said, feeling his life going from him, 'forgive me my sins, and help my uncle, if it is Thy holy will.'

William Short Nose was still fighting, though he knew that the victory lay with the Unbelievers and their hosts. 'We are beaten,' he said to the fourteen faithful comrades that stood by him. 'Listen as you will, no sound of our war cry can be heard. But by the Holy Rood, the Infidels will know no rest while I am alive. I will give my forefathers no cause for shame, and the minstrels shall not tell in their songs how I fell back before the enemy.'

They then gave battle once more, and fought valiantly, till all lay dead upon the ground, save only William himself.

Now the Count knew that if the Infidel was ever to be vanquished and beaten out of fair France he must take heed of his own life, for the task was his and no other man's; so he turned his horse's head towards Orange, and then stopped, for he saw a troop of freshly landed Saracens approaching him along the same road.

'The whole world is full of these Infidels!' he cried in anger; 'cursed be the day when they were born. Fair God, you alone can save me. My Lady Gibourc, shall I ever again behold you? My good horse,' added he, 'you are very tired. If you had had only five hours' rest, I would have led you to the charge; but I see plainly that I can get no help from you, and I cannot blame you for it, as you have served me well all day, and for this I thank you greatly. If ever we reach Orange you shall wear no saddle for twenty days, your food shall be the finest corn, and you shall drink out of a golden trough. But how should I bear it if the Pagans captured you and carried you to Spain?'

And the horse understood as well as a man, and he threw up his head, and pawed the ground, and his strength came back to him as of old. At this sight William Short Nose felt more glad than if he had been given fourteen cities.

But no sooner had he entered a valley that led along the road to Orange than he saw a fresh body of Pagans blocking one end. He turned to escape into another path, but in front of him rode a handful of his enemies. 'By the faith that I swore to my dear Lady Gibourc,' he said, 'I had better die than never strike a blow,' and so went straight at Telamon, their leader, on his horse Marchepierre. 'William!' cried the Saracen, 'this time you will not escape me.' But the sun was in his eyes, and his sword missed his aim. Before he could strike another blow William had borne him from his horse and galloped away on Bausant.

The mountain that he was climbing now was beset with Infidels, like all the rest, and William looked in vain for a way of escape. He jumped from his horse and rubbed his flanks, saying to him the while, 'Bausant, what will you do? Your sides are all bloody, and you can scarcely stand; but remember, if once you fall it means my death.' At these words Bausant neighed, pricked up his ears and shook himself, and as he did so the blood seemed to flow strongly in his veins, as of old. Then the Count rode down into the field of the Aliscans, and found his nephew Vivian lying under a tree.

'Ah! my God,' cried William, 'what sorrow for me! To the end of my life I shall mourn this day. Earth, do thou open and swallow me! Lady Gibourc, await me no longer, for never more shall I return to Orange!'

So he lamented, grieving sore, till Vivian spoke to him. The Count was full of joy to hear his words, and, kneeling beside the youth, took him in his arms, and bade him, as no priest was there, confess his sins to him, as to his own father. One by one Vivian remembered them all, then a mist floated before his eyes, and, murmuring a farewell to the Lady Gibourc, his soul left the world.

William laid him gently down on his shield, and took another shield for covering, and turned to mount his horse, but at this his heart failed him.

'Is it you, William, that men look to as their leader, and whom they call Fierbras, who will do this cowardly deed?' he said to himself, and he went back to his nephew’s side, and lifted the body on to his horse, to bury it in his city of Orange.

He had done what he could to give honour to Vivian, but he might as well, after all, have left him where he fell, for in a fierce combat with some Pagans on the road the Count was forced to abandon his nephew’s body and fight for his own life. He knew the two Saracens well as brave men, but he soon slew one, and the other he unhorsed after a struggle.

‘Come back, come back,’ cried the Unbeliever; ‘sell me your horse, for never did I behold his like! I will give you for him twice his weight in gold, and set free besides all your nephews that have been taken prisoners.’ But William loved his horse, and would not have parted with him to Charles himself; so he cut off the Saracen’s head with his sword, and mounted his horse Folatisse, taking the saddle and bridle off Bausant so that he might the more easily escape from the Pagans.

At length, after fighting nearly every step of the way, he saw the towers of Orange before him, and his palace, Gloriette, where dwelt his wife, the Lady Gibourc. ‘Ah, with what joy did I leave these walls,’ he said to himself, ‘and how many noble Knights have I lost since then! Oh! Gibourc, my wife, will you not go mad when you hear the tidings I have brought!’ And, overcome with grief, the Count bowed his head on the neck of his horse.

When he recovered himself he rode straight to the City Gate, and commanded the porter to let him in. ‘Let down the drawbridge,’ called he, ‘and be quick, for time presses.’ But he forgot that he had changed his own arms, and had taken instead those of Aeroflé the Saracen; therefore the porter, seeing a man with a shield and pennon and helmet that were strange to him, thought he was an enemy, and stood still where he was. ‘Begone!’ he said to William; ‘if you approach one step nearer I will deal you a blow that will unhorse you! Begone, I tell you, and as quick as you can, or when William Short Nose returns from the Aliscans it will be the worse for you.’

‘Fear nothing, friend,’ replied the Count, ‘for I am William himself. I went to the Aliscans to fight the Saracens, and to help Vivian; but all my men are dead, and I only am left to bring these evil tidings. So open the gates, for the Saracens are close behind.’

‘You must wait a moment,’ answered the porter, and he quitted the turret where he had been standing and hastened to the chamber of the Lady Gibourc. ‘Noble Countess,’ cried he, ‘there knocks at the drawbridge a Knight in pagan armour, who seems fresh from battle, for his arms are bloody. He is tall of stature and bears himself proudly, and he says he is William Short Nose. I pray you, my lady, come with me and see him for yourself.’

The face of Gibourc grew red when she heard the porter's words, and she left the Palace and mounted the battlements, where she called across the fosse, 'Warrior, what is your will?'

'Oh, lady!' answered he, 'open the gate, and that quickly. Twenty thousand Saracens are close upon my track; if they reach me, I am a dead man.'

'You cannot enter,' replied Gibourc. 'I am alone here except for this porter, a priest, a few children, and some ladies whose husbands are all at the war. Neither gate nor wicket will be opened until the return of my beloved lord, William the Count.' Then William bowed his head for a moment, and two tears ran down his cheeks.

'My lady, I am William himself,' said he. 'Do you not know me?'

'Infidel, you lie,' replied Gibourc. 'Take off your helmet, and let me see who you are!'

But the Count in his thought felt the earth trembling under his feet from the steps of the accursed ones. 'Noble Countess,' cried he, 'this is no time to parley. Look round you! Is not every hill covered with Pagans?'

'Ah, now I know you are not William,' answered she, 'for all the Pagans in the world would never have stirred him with fear. By St. Peter! neither gate nor wicket shall be opened till I have seen your face. I am alone and must defend myself. The voices of many men are alike.'

Then the Count lifted his helmet: 'Lady, look and be content. I am William himself. Now let me in.'

Gibourc knew that it was indeed the Count who had returned, and was about to order the gates to be opened when there appeared in sight a troop of Saracens escorting two hundred prisoners, all of them young Knights, and thirty ladies with fair white faces. Each one was loaded with chains, and they cowered under the blows of their captors. Their cries and prayers for mercy reached the ears of Gibourc, and, changing her mind, she said quickly: 'There is the proof that you are not William my husband, the "Strong Arm," whose fame has spread far! For *he* would never have suffered his brethren to be so shamefully entreated while he was by!'

'Heavens!' cried the Count, 'to what hard tests does she put me! But if I lose my head I will do her bidding, for what is there that I would *not* do for the love of God and of her!' Without a word more he turned, and, relacing his helmet, spurred his horse at the Saracens with his lance in rest. So sudden and fierce was his attack that the foremost riders fell back on those behind, who were thrown into confusion, while William's sword swept him a path to the centre, where the prisoners stood bound. The Pagans expected the city gates to open and a body of Franks to come forth to destroy them, and without waiting another moment they turned and fled. Though the prisoners were free, William pursued the enemy hotly.

‘Oh, fair lord!’ called Gibourc, who from the battlements had watched the fight, ‘come back, come back, for now indeed you may enter.’ And William heard her voice, and left the Saracens to go where they would while he struck the chains off the prisoners, and led them to the gates of Orange, while he himself rode back to the Saracens.

Not again would the Lady Gibourc have reason to call him coward.

And Gibourc saw, and her heart swelled within her, and she repented her of her words. ‘It is my fault if he is slain,’ she wept. ‘Oh, come back, come back!’

And William came.

Now the drawbridge was let down before him, and he entered the city followed by the Christians whom he had delivered, and the Countess unlaced his helmet, and bathed his wounds, and then stopped, doubting.

‘You cannot be William after all,’ said she, ‘for William would have brought back the young kinsmen who went with him; and Guy and Vivian, and all the young Barons of the country side. And William would have been encircled by minstrels singing the great deeds he had done.’

‘Ah, noble Countess, you speak truth,’ answered he. ‘Henceforth my life will be spent in mourning, for my friends and comrades who went to war with me are lying dead at the Aliscans. Vivian is dead also, but Bertrand and Guy, Guichard the bold, and Gerard the brave, are captives in the Saracen camp.’

Great was the sorrow in the city of Orange, great likewise was the sorrow in the palace of her lord, where the ladies of the Countess mourned for their husbands. But it was Gibourc herself who first dried her tears, and roused herself from her grief for Vivian and others whom she had loved well. ‘Noble Count,’ she said, ‘do not lose your courage, and let the Infidels crush your spirit. Remember it is not near Orleans, in safety, that your lands lie, but in the very midst of the Saracens. Orange never will have peace till they are subdued. So send messengers to Paris, to your brother-in-law King Louis, and to your father Aimeri, asking for aid. Then march upon the Saracens, and rescue the captives that are in their hands before they are carried across the sea.’

‘Heavens!’ cried William, ‘has the world ever seen so wise a lady?’

‘Let no one turn you from your road,’ she went on. ‘At the news of your distress Ermengarde of Pavia, whom may God bless, and Aimeri with the white beard, and all the Barons that are your kin, will fly to your help. Their numbers are as the sands of the sea.’

‘But how shall I make them believe in what has befallen us?’ answered William. ‘Gibourc, sweetheart, in France they would hold any man mad who brought such a message. If I do not go myself I will send nobody, and go myself I will not, for I will not leave you alone again for all the gold in Pavia.'

'Sir, you must go,' said Gibourc, weeping. 'I will stay here with my ladies, of whom there are plenty, and each will place a helmet on her head, and hang a shield round her neck, and buckle a sword to her side, and with the help of the Knights whom you have delivered we shall know how to defend ourselves if the Unbelievers should seek to take the city by assault.'

William's heart bounded at her words; he took her in his arms, and promised that he himself would go, and more, that he would never lie soft nor eat delicately nor kiss the cheek of any lady, however fair, till he returned again to Orange.

Thus William Short Nose set forth and the next day passed through Orleans. There he met with his brother Ernaut, who had ridden home from escorting King Louis back to Paris. Ernaut promised his help and that of his father and brothers, but counselled William to go to Laon, where a great feast would be held and many persons would be assembled. The Count followed Ernaut's counsel, but refused the troop of Knights and men-at-arms which Ernaut offered him, liking rather to ride alone.

He made his entrance into Laon on Sunday, and the people laughed at him and made jests on his tall thin horse; but William let them laugh, and rode on until he reached the Palace. There he alighted under an olive tree, and, fastening his horse to one of the branches, took off his helmet and unbuckled his breastplate. The people stared as they passed by, but nobody spoke to him.

Someone told the King that a strange man without a squire or even a man-at-arms was sitting before the Palace under an olive tree. The King's face grew dark as he heard their tale, for he loved to keep his gardens for his own pleasure. 'Sanson,' he called to one of his guards, 'go and find out who this stranger is and whence he comes, but beware of bringing him hither.'

Sanson hastened to do his errand, and William answered, 'My name is one that is known to France. I am William Short Nose, and I come from Orange. My body is worn out with much riding; I pray you hold my horse until I have spoken to King Louis.'

'Noble Count,' replied Sanson, 'let me first return to the King and tell him who you are. And be not angry, I beseech you, for such are my orders.'

'Be quick, then, my friend,' said William, 'and do not neglect to tell the King that I am in great distress. This is the time to show his love for me; and if he truly does love me, let him come to meet me with the great lords of his Court. If he does not come, I have no other hope.'

'I will tell him what you say,' said Sanson, 'and if it rests with me you shall be content.’

Then Sanson went back to the King. ‘It is William, the famous William!’ he said, ‘and he wishes you to go out to meet him.’

‘Never!’ answered Louis. ‘Will he always be a thorn in my side? Woe be to him who rejoices at his coming.’

So the King sat still, and on the steps of the Palace there gathered Knights and Nobles in goodly numbers, and hardly one but wore a mantle of ermine or marten, a helmet set with precious stones, a sword or a shield which had been given him by William himself. But now they were rich and he was poor, so they mocked at him.

‘My lords,’ said William, ‘you do ill to treat me so. I have loved you all, and you bear the tokens of my love about you at this moment. If I can give you no more gifts, it is because I have lost all I have in the world at the Aliscans. My men are dead, and my nephews are prisoners in the hands of the Saracens. It is the Lady Gibourc who bade me come here, and it is she who asks for help through me. Have pity on us, and help us.’ But without a word, they rose up and went into the Palace, and William knew what their love was worth.

The young men told Louis of the words that the Count had spoken, and the King rose and leaned out of the window. ‘Sir William,’ said he, ‘go to the inn, and let them bathe your horse. You seem in a sorry plight, without a groom or esquire to help you.’

William heard and vowed vengeance. But if the King and the courtiers had no hearts, in his need a friend came to him, Guimard, a citizen of Laon, who took the Count home and offered him rich food. But because of his vow to the Lady Gibourc, he would only eat coarse bread, and drink water from the spring; and as soon as it was light he rose up from his bed of fresh hay, and dressed himself. ‘Where are you going?’ asked his host.

‘To the Palace, to entreat the aid of the King, and woe be to him who tries to stop me.’

‘May God protect you, Sir,’ answered Guimard. ‘To-day the King crowns Blanchefleur, your sister, who no doubt loves you well. And he gives her the Vermandois for her dower, the richest land in all fair France, but a land that is never at peace.’

‘Well,’ said William, ‘I will be present at the ceremony. Indeed they cannot do without me, for all France is under my care, and it is my right to bear her standard in battle. And let them beware how they move me to wrath, lest I depose the King of France and tear the crown from his head.’

The Count placed a breastplate under his jerkin and hid his sword under his cloak. The gates of the Palace opened before him and he entered the vaulted hall.

It was filled with the greatest nobles in the land, and ladies with rich garments of silk and gold. Lords and ladies both knew him, but not one gave him welcome — not even his sister, the Queen. His fingers played with his sword, and he had much ado not to use it. But while his wrath was yet kindling the heralds announced that his father Aimeri had come.

The Lord of Narbonne stepped on to the grass with Ermengarde, his noble Countess, his four sons, and many servants. King Louis and the Queen hastened to meet them, and amid cries of joy they mounted the steps into the hall. Aimeri sat beside the King of Saint-Denis, and the Countess was seated next the Queen, while the Knights placed themselves on the floor of the hall. And William sat also, but alone and apart, nursing his anger.

At last he rose, and, advancing to the middle of the floor, he said with a loud voice: ‘Heaven protect my mother, my father, my brothers and my friends; but may His curse alight on my sister and on the King, who have no hearts, and have left me to be the butt of all the mockers of the Court. By all the Saints! were not my father sitting next him, this sword should ere now have cloven his skull.’ The King listened, pale with fright, and the Queen wished herself at Paris or at Senlis. The rest whispered to each other, ‘William is angry, something will happen!’

When Ermengarde and Aimeri saw their son standing before them great joy filled their souls. They left their seats and flung themselves on his neck, and William’s brother also ran to greet him. The Count told them how he had been vanquished at the Aliscans, how Vivian had been killed, and he himself had fled to Orange, and of the distress in which he had left Gibourc. ‘It was at her bidding I came here to ask aid from Louis, the base King, but from the way he has treated me I see plainly that he has no heart. By St. Peter! he shall repent before I go, and my sister also.’

The King heard and again waxed cold with fear; the nobles heard and whispered low, ‘Who is strong enough to compass this matter? No man, be he the bravest in France, ever went to his help and came back to tell the tale. Let him abandon Orange, and let the King give him instead the Vermandois.’

It was the Lady Ermengarde who broke the silence. ‘O God,’ she cried, ‘to think that the Franks should be such cowards! And you, Sir Aimeri, has your courage failed you also? Have no fear, fair son William, I have still left gold that would fill thirty chariots, and I will give it to those who enrol themselves under your banner. I myself will don breastplate and shield, and will fight in the front rank of your army.’

Aimeri smiled and sighed as he listened to her words, and his sons shed tears.

William answered nothing, but remained standing in the middle of the hall, his eyes fixed on his sister sitting on her throne, with a small golden crown upon her head, and on her husband King Louis.

‘This, then, O King, is the reward of all I have done! When Charlemagne your father died, and all the Barons of the Empire met at Paris, you would have lost your crown if I had not forced them to place it upon your head.’

‘That is true,’ answered the King, ‘and in remembrance of your services I will to-day bestow on you a fief.’

‘Yes,’ cried Blanchefleur, ‘and no doubt will deprive me of one. A nice agreement, truly! Woe to him who dares carry it out.’

‘Be silent, woman without shame!’ said William. ‘Every word you speak proclaims the depth of your baseness! You pass your days wrapped in rich clothing, eating costly food, and drinking rare wines, and little you care that we endure heat and cold, hunger and thirst, and suffer wounds and death so that your life may be easy.’ Then he bounded forwards and tore off the crown, and, drawing his sword, would have cut off her head had not Ermengarde wrenched the weapon from his hands. Before he could seize it again the Queen darted away and took refuge in her chamber, where she fell fainting on the floor.

It was her daughter Alix, the fair and the wise, who raised her up and brought her back to consciousness; then heard with shame the tale she had to tell. ‘How could you speak so to my uncle, the best man that ever wore a sword?’ asked Alix. ‘It was he who made you Queen of France, and the words that you uttered must have been taught you by devils.’

‘Yes, my daughter, you say truth,’ answered the Queen, ‘I have done ill, and if it rests with me I will make peace with my brother’; and she wept over her wicked speech, while Alix, red and white as the roses in May, went down into the hall, where the Franks were still whispering together, and calling curses on the head of William.

They all rose as the maiden entered; Aimeri, her grandfather, took her in his arms, and her four uncles kissed her cheek. Her presence seemed to calm the anger and trouble which before had reigned throughout the hall, and Ermengarde flung herself at William’s feet and besought his pardon for the Queen. William raised his mother from her knees, but his anger was not soothed. ‘I have no love for the King,’ he said, ‘and before night I will break his pride,’ and he stood where he had been always standing, his face red with wrath, leaning on his naked sword. Not a sound was heard, and the eyes of all were fixed breathlessly upon William. Then in her turn Alix stepped forward and knelt at his feet. ‘Punish me in my mother’s place,’ said she, ‘and cut off my head if you will, or send me into exile, but let there be peace, I pray you, between you and my father and mother. Her ill words towards you did not come from her heart, but were put into her mouth by devils.'

At the voice of Alix William's wrath melted, but at first he would promise nothing. 'Fair son William,' said Ermengarde again, 'be content. The King will do what you desire, and will aid you to the uttermost.'

'Yes, I will aid you,' answered the King.

So peace was made, the Queen was fetched, and they all sat down to a great feast.

In this manner the pride of the King was broken.

But when one man is shifty and another is hasty wrath is not apt to slumber long, and treaties of peace are easier made than kept. When the feast was over William pressed King Louis to prepare an army at once, so that no time might be lost in giving battle to the Infidels, but the King would bind himself to nothing. 'We will speak of it again,' said he; 'I will tell you to-morrow whether I will go or not.'

At this answer William grew red with rage, and holding out a wand he said to the King, 'I give you back your fief. I will take nothing from you, and henceforth will neither be your friend nor your vassal.'

'Keep your fief,' said Ernaut to his brother, 'and leave the King to do as he will. I will help you and my brothers also, and between us twenty thousand men shall march to the Aliscans, and deal death to any Infidels we shall find there.'

'You speak weak words,' cried Aimeri; 'he is Seneschal of France, and also her Standard Bearer; he has a right to our help, and if that fails a right to vengeance.' And Alix approved of his saying, and the Queen likewise.

The King saw that none was on his side and from fear of Aimeri and of his sons he dared refuse no longer. 'Count William, for love of you I will call together my army, and a hundred thousand men shall obey your commands. But I myself will not go with you, for my kingdom needs me badly.'

'Remain, Sire,' answered William, 'I myself will lead the host.' And the King sent out his messengers, and soon a vast army was gathered under the walls of Laon.

It was on one of these days when the Count stood in the great hall that there entered from the kitchen a young man whom he had never seen before. The youth, whose name was Rainouart, was tall; strong as a wild boar, and swift as a deer. The scullions and grooms had played off jests upon him during the night, but had since repented them sorely, for he had caught the leaders up in his arms and broken their heads against the walls. The rest, eager to avenge their comrades' death, prepared to overcome him with numbers, and in spite of his strength it might have gone ill with Rainouart had not Aimeri de Narbonne, hearing the noise, forbade more brawling.

Count William was told of the unseemly scuffle, and asked the King who and what the young man was who could keep at bay so many of his fellows. ‘I bought him once at sea,’ said Louis, ‘and paid a hundred marks for him. They pretend that he is the son of a Saracen, but he will never reveal the name of his father. Not knowing what to do with him, I sent him to the kitchen.’

‘Give him to me, King Louis,’ said William, smiling, ‘I promise you he shall have plenty to eat.’

‘Willingly,’ answered the King.

Far off in the kitchen Rainouart knew nothing of what was passing between the King and the Count, and his soul chafed at the sound of the horses’ hoofs, and at the scraps of talk he heard let fall by the Knights, who were seeing to the burnishing of their armour before they started to fight the Unbelievers. ‘To think,’ he said to himself, ‘that I, who am of right King of Spain, should be loitering here, heaping logs on the fire and skimming the pot. But let King Louis look to himself! Before a year is past I will snatch the crown from his head.’

When the army had finished its preparations and was ready to march he made up his mind what to do, and it was thus that he sought out William in the great hall. ‘Noble Count, let me come with you, I implore you. I can help to look after the horses and cook the food, and if at any time blows are needed I can strike as well as any man.’

‘Good fellow,’ answered William, who wished to try what stuff he was made of, ‘you dream idle dreams! How could you, who have passed your days in the warmth of the kitchen, sleeping on the hearth when you were not busy turning the spit — how could you bear all the fatigue of war, the long fasts, and the longer watches? Before a month had passed you would be dead by the roadside!’

‘Put me to the proof,’ said he, ‘and if you will not have me I will go alone to the Aliscans, and fight barefoot. My only weapon will be an iron-bound staff, and I promise you it shall kill as many Saracens as the best sword among you all.’

‘Come then,’ answered the Count.

The next morning the army set forth, and Alix and the Queen Blanchefleur watched them go from the steps of the Palace. When Alix saw Rainouart stepping proudly along with his heavy staff on his shoulder her heart stirred, and she said to her mother, ‘See, what a goodly young man! In the whole army there is not one like him! Let me bid him farewell, for nevermore shall I see his match.’

‘Peace! my daughter,’ answered the Queen, ‘I hope indeed that he may never more return to Laon.’ But Alix took no heed of her mother’s words, but signed to Rainouart to draw near. Then Alix put her arms round his neck, and said, ‘Brother, you have been a long time at Court, and now you are going to fight under my uncle’s banner. If ever I have given you pain, I ask your pardon.’ After that she kissed him, and bade him go.

At Orleans William took leave of his father Count Aimeri and his mother Ermengarde, the noble Countess, who returned to their home at Narbonne, and also of his brothers, who promised to return to meet William under the walls of Orange, which they did faithfully. He himself led his army by a different road, and pressed on quickly till he came in sight of his native city. But little of it could he see, for a great smoke covered all the land, rising up from the burning towers which the Saracens had that morning set on fire. Enter the city they could not, for Gibourc and her ladies held it firm, and, armed with helmets and breastplates, flung stones upon the head of any Saracen who appeared on the walls. So the Unbelievers fell back and took the way to the Aliscans, there to build as quickly as they might an engine to bring up against the tower and overthrow it.

When William beheld the smoke, and whence it came, he cried ‘Orange is burning! Holy Saint Mary, Gibourc is carried captive! To arms! To arms!’ And he spurred his horse to Orange, Rainouart running by his side. From her tower Gibourc saw through the smoke a thousand banners waving and the sparkle of armour, and heard the sound of the horses’ hoofs, and it seemed to her that the Infidels were drawing near anew. ‘Oh, William!’ cried she, ‘have you really forgotten me? Noble Count, you linger overlong! Never more shall I look upon your face.’ And so saying she fell fainting on the floor.

But something stirred the pulses of Gibourc, and she soon sat up again, and there at the gate was William the Count, with Rainouart behind him. ‘Fear nothing, noble lady,’ said he, ‘it is the army of France that I have brought with me. Open, and welcome to us!’ The news seemed so good to Gibourc that she could not believe it, and she bade the Count unlace his helmet, so that she might indeed be sure that it was he. William did her bidding, then like an arrow she ran to the gate and let down the drawbridge, and William stepped across it and embraced her tenderly. Then he ordered his army to take up its quarters in the city.

Gibourc’s eyes had fallen upon Rainouart, who had passed her on his way to the kitchen, where he meant to leave his stout wooden staff. ‘Tell me,’ said she to the Count, ‘who is that young man who bears lightly on his shoulder that huge piece of wood which would weigh down a horse? He is handsome and well made. Where did you find him?’

‘Lady,’ answered William, ‘he was given me by the King.’

‘My Lord,’ said Gibourc, ‘be sure you see that he is honourably treated. He looks to me to be of high birth. Has he been baptized?’

‘No, Madam, he is not a Christian. He was brought from Spain as a child, and kept for seven years in the kitchen. But take him, I pray you, under your protection, and do with him as you will.’

The Count was hungry, and while waiting for dinner to be served he stood with Gibourc at the windows which looked out beyond the city. An army was drawing near; thousands of men, well mounted and freshly equipped. ‘Gibourc!’ cried the Count joyfully, ‘here is my brother Ernaut de Gironde, with his vassals. Now all the Saracens in the world shall not prevent Bertrand from being delivered to-morrow.’

‘No,’ answered Gibourc, ‘nor Vivian from being avenged.’

On all sides warriors began to arrive, led by the fathers of those who had been taken prisoners with Bertrand, and with them came Aimeri de Narbonne and the brothers of William. Glad was the heart of the Count as he bade them welcome to his Palace of Gloriette, and ordered a feast to be made ready, and showed each Knight where he should sit.

It was late before the supper was served, but when every man had his trencher filled Rainouart entered the hall, armed with his staff, and stood leaning against a pillar, watching the noble company. ‘Sir,’ said Aimeri, the man whom the Saracens most dreaded, ‘who is it that I see standing there holding a piece of wood that five peasants could hardly lift? Does he mean to murder us?’

‘That youth,’ replied William, ‘is a gift to me from King Louis. None living is as strong as he.’ Then Aimeri called Rainouart, and bade him sit at his side, and eat and drink as he would. ‘Noble Count,’ said Aimeri, ‘such men grow not on every bush. Keep him and cherish him, and bring him with you to the Aliscans. For with his staff he will slay many Pagans.’

‘Yes,’ answered Rainouart, ‘wherever I appear the Pagans will fall dead at the sight of me.’ Aimeri and William laughed to hear him, but ere four days were past they had learnt what he was worth.

Rainouart went back to the kitchen and slept soundly, but as he had drunk much wine the cooks and scullions thought to play jokes upon him, and lighted some wooden shavings with which to burn his moustache. At the first touch of the flame Rainouart leapt to his feet, seized the head cook by his legs, flung him on to the blazing fire, and turned for another victim, but they had all fled.

At daybreak they went to William to complain of the death of their chief, and to pray for vengeance on his murderer. If the Count would not forbid him the kitchen, not a morsel of food would they cook. But William only laughed at their threats, and said, ‘Beware henceforth how you meddle with Rainouart, or it will cost you dear. Did I not forbid anyone to mock at him, and do you dare to disobey my orders? Lady Gibourc, take Rainouart to your chamber, and keep him beside you.'

So the Countess went to the kitchen to look for Rainouart and found him sitting on a bench, his head leaning against his staff. She sat down by him and said graciously, 'Brother, come with me. I will give you my ermine pelisse and a mantle of marten, and we will have some talk together.'

'Willingly,' answered Rainouart, 'the more as I can hardly keep my hands off these low-born scoundrels.'

He followed Gibourc to her room, and then she questioned him about himself and the days of his childhood.

'Have you brothers or sisters?' asked she.

'Yes,' he answered, 'beyond the sea I have a brother who is a King, and a sister who is more beautiful than a fairy,' and as he spoke he bent his head. Something in her heart told Gibourc that this might be her brother, but she only asked again, 'Where do you come from?'

'Lady,' he replied, 'I will answer that question the day I come back from the battle which William shall have won, thanks to my aid.'

Gibourc kept silence, but she opened a chest and drew from it a white breastplate that had belonged to the Emir Tournefer, her uncle, which was so finely wrought that no sword could pierce it. Likewise a helmet of steel and a sword that could cut through iron more easily than a scythe cuts grass. 'My friend,' she said, 'buckle this sword to your left side. It may be useful to you.' Rainouart took the sword and drew it from its scabbard, but it seemed so light that he threw it down again. 'Lady,' he cried, 'what good can such a plaything do me? But with my staff between my hands there is not a Pagan that can stand up against me, and if one escapes then let Count William drive me from his door.'

At this Gibourc felt sure this was indeed her brother, but she did not yet like to ask him more questions, and in her joy and wonder she began to weep. 'Lady Countess,' said Rainouart, 'do not weep. As long as my staff is whole William shall be safe.'

'My friend, may Heaven protect you,' she answered, 'but a man without armour is soon cut down; one blow will be his death. So take these things and wear them in battle,' and she laced on the helmet, and buckled the breastplate, and fastened the sword on his thigh. 'If your staff breaks, it may serve you,' said she.

Rainouart's heart was proud indeed when the armour was girded on him, and he sat himself down well pleased at William's table. The Knights vied with each other in pouring him out bumpers of wine, and after dinner every man tried to lift his iron-bound staff, but none could raise it from the ground, except William himself, who by putting forth all his strength lifted it the height of a foot.

‘Let me aid you,’ said Rainouart, and catching it up he whirled it round his head, throwing it lightly from hand to hand. ‘We are wasting time,’ he went on. ‘I fear lest the Pagans should fly before we come up with them. If I only have the chance to make them feel the weight of my staff, I shall soon sweep the battle-field clean.’ And William embraced him for these words, and ordered the trumpets to be sounded and the army to march.

From her window Gibourc watched them go. She saw the Knights, each with his following, stream out into the plain, their banners floating on the wind, their helmets shining in the sun, their shields glittering with gold. She heard their horses neigh with delight, as they snuffed up the air, and she prayed God to bless all this noble host.

After two days’ march they came within sight of the Aliscans, but for five miles round the country was covered by the Pagan army. William perceived that some of his men quailed at the number of the foe, so he turned and spoke to his soldiers. ‘My good lords,’ he said, ‘a fearful battle awaits us, and we must not give way an inch. If any man feels afraid let him go back to his own land. This is no place for cowards.’

The cowards heard joyfully, and without shame took the road by which they had come. They spurred their horses and thought themselves safe, but they rejoiced too soon.

At the mouth of a bridge Rainouart met them, and he took them for Pagans who were flying for their lives. But when he saw that they were part of the Christian host he raised his staff and barred their passage. ‘Where are you going?’ asked he. ‘To France, for rest,’ answered the cowards; ‘the Count has dismissed us, and when we reach our homes we shall bathe ourselves and have good cheer, and see to the rebuilding of our castles, which have fallen into ill-repair during the wars. With William one has to bear pains without end, and at the last to die suffering. Come with us, if you are a wise man.’

‘Ask someone else,’ said Rainouart; ‘Count William has given me the command of the army, and it is to him that I have to render account. Do you think I shall let you run away like hares? By Saint Denis! not another step shall you stir!’ And, swinging his staff round his head, he laid about him. Struck dumb with terror at the sight of their comrades falling rapidly round them they had no mind to go on, and cried with one voice, ‘Sir Rainouart, we will return and fight with you in the Aliscans; you shall lead us whither you will.’ So they turned their horses’ heads and rode the way they had come, and Rainouart followed, keeping guard over them with his staff. When they reached the army he went straight to William, and begged that he might have the command of them. ‘I will change them into a troop of lions,’ said he.

Harsh words and gibes greeted the cowards, but Rainouart soon forced the mockers to silence. ‘Leave my men alone!’ he cried, ‘or by the faith I owe to Gibourc I will make you. I am a King’s son, and the time has come to show you what manner of man I am. I have idled long, but I will idle no longer. I am of the blood royal, and the saying is true that good blood cannot lie.’

‘How well he speaks!’ whispered the Franks to each other, for they dared not let their voices be heard.

Now the battle was to begin, for the two armies were drawn up in fighting array, and Rainouart took his place at the head of his cowards opposite the Saracens, from which race he sprang.

The charge was sounded, and the two armies met with a shock, and many a man fell from his horse and was trampled under foot. ‘Narbonne! Narbonne!’ shouted Aimeri, advancing within reach of a crossbow shot, and he would have been slain had not his sons dashed to his rescue. Count William did miracles, and the Saracens were driven so far back that Rainouart feared that the battle would be ended before he had struck a blow.

Followed by his troop of cowards Rainouart made straight for the enemy, and before him they fell as corn before a sickle. ‘Strike, soldiers,’ shouted he; ‘strike and avenge the noble Vivian; woe to the King Desramé if he crosses my path.’ And a messenger came and said to Desramé, ‘It is Rainouart with the iron staff, the strongest man in the world.’

Rainouart and his cowards pressed on and on, and the Saracens fell back, step by step, till they reached the sea, where their ships were anchored.

Then Rainouart drove his staff in the sand, and by its help swung himself on board a small vessel, which happened to be the very one in which the nephews of William were imprisoned. He laid about him right and left with his staff, till he had slain all the gaolers, and at last he came to a young man whose eyes were bandaged and his feet tied together. ‘Who are you?’ asked Rainouart.

‘I am Bertrand of France, nephew of William Short Nose. Four months ago I was taken captive by the Pagans, and if, as I think, they carry me into Arabia, then may God have pity on my soul, for it is all over with my body.’

‘Sir Count,’ answered Rainouart, ‘for love of William I will deliver you.’

Bertrand was set free and his companions also. Seizing the weapons of the dead Saracens, they scrambled on shore, and, while fighting for their lives, looked about for their uncle, whom they knew at last by the sweep of his sword, which kept a clean space round him. More than once Rainouart swept back fresh foes that were pressing forwards till the tide of battle carried him away and brought him opposite Desramé the King. ‘Who are you?’ asked Desramé, struck by his face, for there was nothing royal in his dress or his arms.

‘I am Rainouart, vassal of William whom I love, and if you do hurt to him I will do hurt to you also.’

‘Rainouart, I am your father,’ cried Desramé, and he besought him to forswear Christianity and to become a follower of Mahomet; but Rainouart turned a deaf ear, and challenged him to continue the combat. Desramé was no match for his son, and was soon struck from his horse. ‘Oh, wretch that I am,’ said Rainouart to himself, ‘I have slain my brothers and wounded my father — it is my staff which has done all this evil,’ and he flung it far from him.

He would have been wiser to have kept it, for in a moment three giants surrounded him, and he had only his fists with which to beat them back. Suddenly his hand touched the sword buckled on him by Gibourc, which he had forgotten, and he drew it from its scabbard, and with three blows clove the heads of the giants in twain. Meanwhile King Desramé took refuge in the only ship that had not been sunk by the Christians, and spread its sails. ‘Come back whenever you like, fair father,’ called Rainouart after him.

The fight was over; the Saracens acknowledged that they were beaten, and the booty they had left behind them was immense. The army, wearied with the day’s toil, lay down to sleep, but before midnight Rainouart was awake and trumpets called to arms. ‘Vivian must be buried,’ said he, ‘and then the march to Orange will begin.’

Rainouart rode at the head, his sword drawn, prouder than a lion; and as he went along a poor peasant threw himself before him, asking for vengeance on some wretches who had torn up a field of beans which was all he had with which to feed his family. Rainouart ordered the robbers to be brought before him and had them executed. Then he gave to the peasant their horses and their armour in payment of the ruined beans. ‘Ah, it has turned out a good bargain for me,’ said the peasant. ‘Blessed be the hour when I sowed such a crop.’

William entered into his Palace, where a great feast was spread for the visitors, but one man only remained outside the walls, and that was Rainouart, of whom no one thought in the hour of triumph. His heart swelled with bitterness as he thought of the blows he had given, and the captives he had set free, and, weeping with anger, he turned his face towards the Aliscans. On the road some Knights met him, and asked him whither he was going and why he looked so sad. Then his wrath and grief burst out, and he told how he mourned that ever he had slain a man in William’s cause, and that he was now hastening to serve under the banner of Mahomet, and would shortly return with a hundred thousand men behind him, and would avenge himself on France and her King. Only towards Alix would he show any pity!

In vain the Knights tried to soften his heart, it was too sore to listen. So they rode fast to Orange and told the Count what Rainouart had said.

‘I have done him grievous wrong,’ answered William, and ordered twenty Knights to ride after him. But the Knights were received with threats and curses, and came back to Orange faster than they had left it, thinking that Rainouart was at their heels.

William smiled when he heard the tale of his messengers, and bade them bring his horse, and commanded that a hundred Knights should follow him, and prayed Gibourc to ride at his side. They found Rainouart entering a vessel whose sails were already spread, and all William’s entreaties would have availed nothing had not Gibourc herself implored his forgiveness.

‘I am your brother,’ cried Rainouart, throwing himself on her neck; ‘I may confess it now, and for you I will pardon the Count’s ingratitude and never more will I remind you of it.’

There was great joy in Orange when William rode through the gates with Rainouart beside him, and the next day the Count made him his Seneschal, and he was baptized. Then William sent his brothers on an embassy to the King in Paris, to beg that he would bestow the hand of Princess Alix on Rainouart, son of King Desramé and brother of Lady Gibourc. And when the embassy returned Alix returned with it, and the marriage took place with great splendour; but to the end of his life, whenever Rainouart felt cold, he warmed himself in the kitchen.

WAYLAND THE SMITH

Far up to the north of Norway and Sweden, looking straight at the Pole, lies the country of Finmark. It is very cold and very bare, and for half the year very dark; but inside its stony mountains are rich stores of metals, and the strong, ugly men of the country spent their lives in digging out the ore and in working it. Like many people who dwell in mountains, they saw and heard strange things, which were unknown to the inhabitants of the lands to the south.

Now in Finmark there were three brothers whose names were Slagfid, Eigil, and Wayland, all much handsomer and cleverer than their neighbours. They had some money of their own, but this did not prevent them working as hard as anyone else; and as they were either very clever or very lucky, they were soon in a fair way to grow rich.

One day they went to a new part of the mountains which was yet untouched, and began to throw up the earth with their pick-axes; but instead of the iron they expected to see they found they had lighted upon a mine of gold. This discovery pleased them greatly and their blows became stronger and harder, for the gold was deep in the rock and it was not easy to get it out. At last a huge lump rolled out at their feet, and when they picked it up they saw three stones shining in it, one red and one blue and one green. They took it home to their mother, who began to weep bitterly at the sight of it. ‘What is the matter?’ asked her sons anxiously, for they knew things lay open to her which were hidden from others.

‘Ah, my sons,’ she said as soon as she could speak, ‘you will have much happiness, but I shall be forced to part with you. Therefore I shed tears, for I hoped that only death would divide us! Green is the grass, blue is the sky, red are the roses, golden is the maiden. The Norns’ (for so in that country they called the Fates) ‘beckon you to a land where green fields lie under a blue sky, fields where golden-haired maidens lie among the flowers.’

Great was the joy of the three brothers when they heard the words of their mother; for they hated the looks of the women who dwelt about them, and longed for the tall stature and white skins of the maidens of the south.

Next morning they rose early and buckled on their swords and coats of mail, and fastened on their heads helmets that they had made the day before from the lump of gold. In the centre of Slagfid’s helmet was the green stone, and in the centre of Eigil’s was the blue stone, and in the centre of Wayland’s was the red stone; and when they were ready they put their reindeer into their sledges, and set out over the snow.

When they reached the mountains where only yesterday they had been digging they saw by the light of the moon a host of little men running to meet them. They were dressed all in grey, except for their caps, which were red; they had red eyes, too, and black tongues, which never ceased chattering. These were the mountain elves, and when they came near they formed themselves into a fairy ring, and sang while they danced round it:

Will you leave us? Will you leave us? Slagfid, Eigil, and Wayland, sons of a King. Is not the emerald better than grass? Is not the ruby better than roses? Is not the sapphire better than the sky? Why do you leave the mountains of Finmark?

But Eigil was impatient and struck his reindeer, that willing beast which flies like the wind and needs not the touch of a whip. It bounded forward in surprise, and knocked down one of the elves that stood in its path. But the hands of his brothers laid hold of the reins, and stopped the reindeer, and sang again,

The Finlander’s world, the Finlander’s joy, Lies under the earth; Seek not without what we offer within, Despise not the elves, small and dark though they be. The best is within, do not seek it without: The Finlander’s world, the Finlander’s joy, Lies under the earth.

Slagfid struck his reindeer. It bounded forward and struck down an elf who stood in its road. Then his brothers stood in its path, and stopped the reindeer, and sang:

Because Slagfid struck his reindeer, Because Eigil struck his reindeer, Our hatred shall follow you. A time of weal, a time of woe, a time of grief, a time of joy. Because Wayland also forsook us, Though he struck not the reindeer, A time of weal, a time of woe, a time of grief, a time of joy. Farewell, O Finlanders, sons of a King.

Their voices died away as they crossed a bright strip of moonlight which lay between them and the mountains and were seen no more.

The brothers thought no more about them or their words, but went swiftly on their way south, sleeping at night in their reindeer skins.

After many days they came to a lake full of fish, in a place which was called the Valley of Wolves, because of the number of wolves which hid there. But the Finlanders did not mind the wolves, and built a house close to the lake, and hunted bears, and caught fish through holes in the ice, till winter had passed away and spring had come. Then one day they noticed that the sky was blue and the earth covered with flowers.

By-and-by they noticed something more, and that was that three maidens were sitting on the grass, spinning flax on the bank of a stream. Their eyes were blue, and their skins were white as the snow on the mountains, while instead of the mantles of swansdown they generally wore, golden hair covered their shoulders.

The hearts of the brothers beat as they looked on the maidens, who were such as they had often dreamed of, but had never seen; and as they drew near they found to their surprise that the maidens were dressed each in red, green, and blue garments, and the meadow was so thickly dotted with yellow flowers that it seemed as if it were a mass of solid gold.

‘Hail, noble princes! Hail, Slagfid, Eigil, and Wayland,’ sang the maidens.

Swanvite, Alvilda, and Alruna are sent by the Norns, To bring joy to the princes of Finland.

Then the tongues of the young men were unloosed, and Slagfid married Swanvite, Eigil Alruna, and Wayland Alvilda.

For nine years they all lived on the shores of the lake, and no people in the world were as happy as these six: till one morning the three wives stood before their husbands and said with weeping eyes:

‘Dear lords, the time has now come when we must bid you farewell, for we are not allowed to stay with you any longer. We are Norns — or, as some call us, Valkyrie. Nine years of joy are granted to us, but these are paid for by nine years during which we hover round the combatants on every field of battle. But bear your souls in patience, for on earth all things have an end, and in nine years we will return to be your wives as before.’

‘But we shall be getting old then,’ answered the brothers, ‘and you will have forgotten us. Stay now, we pray you, for we love you well.’

‘*We* are not mortals to grow old,’ said the Norns, ‘and true love does not grow old either. Still, we do not wish you to fall sick with grieving, so we leave you these three keys, with which you may open the mountain, and busy yourselves by digging out the treasures it contains. By the time the nine years are over you will have become rich men, and men of renown.’ So they laid down the keys and vanished.

For a long while the young men only left their houses to seek for food, so dreary had the Valley of Wolves become. At last Slagfid and Eigil could bear it no longer, and declared they would travel through the whole world till they found their wives; but Wayland, the youngest, determined to stay at home.

‘You would do much better to remain where you are,’ said he. ‘You do not know in which direction to look for them, and it is useless to seek on earth for those who fly through the air. You will only lose yourselves, and starve, and when the nine years are ended who can tell where you may be?’

But his words fell on deaf ears; for Slagfid and Eigil merely filled their wallets with food and their horns with drink, and prepared to take leave of their brother. Wayland embraced them weeping, for he feared that he would never more see them, and once again he implored them to give up their quest. Slagfid and Eigil only shook their heads. ‘We have no rest, night or day, without them,’ they said, and they begged him to look after their property till they came back again.

Wayland saw that more words would be wasted, so he walked with them to the edge of the forest, where their ways would part. Then Slagfid said, ‘Our fathers, when they went a journey, left behind them a token by which it might be known whether they were dead or alive, and I will do so also.’ So he stamped heavily on the soft ground, and added, ‘As long as this footmark remains sharp and clear, I shall be safe. If it is filled with water I shall be drowned; if with blood, I shall have fallen in battle. But if it is filled with earth an illness will have killed me, and I shall lie under the ground.’ Thus he did, and Eigil did likewise. Then they cut stout sticks to aid their journeys, and went their ways.

Wayland stood gazing after them as long as they were in sight, then he went sadly home.

Slagfid and Eigil walked steadily on through the day, and when evening came they reached a stream bordered with trees, where they took off their golden helmets and sat down to rest and eat. They had gone far that day and were tired, and drank somewhat heavily, so that they knew not what they did. ‘If I lose my Swanvite,’ said Slagfid, ‘I am undone. She is the fairest woman that sun ever looked on, or that man ever loved.’

‘It is a lie,’ answered Eigil. ‘I know one lovelier still, and her name is Alruna. Odin does not love Freya so fondly as Eigil adores her.’

‘It is no lie,’ cried Slagfid, ‘and may shame fall on him who slanders me.’

‘And I,’ answered Eigil, ‘stand to what I have said, and declare that you are the liar.’ At this they both drew their swords and fell fighting, till Slagfid struck Eigil’s helmet so hard that the jewel flew into a thousand pieces, while Eigil himself fell backwards into the river.

Slagfid stood still, leaning on his sword and looking at the river into which his brother had fallen. Suddenly the trees behind him rustled, and a voice came out of them, saying, ‘A time of weal, a time of woe, a time of tears, a time of death’; and though he could see nothing he remembered the mountain elves, and thought how true their prophecy had been. ‘I have slain my brother,’ he said to himself, ‘my wife has forsaken me; I am miserable and alone. What shall I do? Go back to Wayland, or follow Eigil into the river? No. After all I may find my wife. The Norns do not always bring misfortune.’

As he spoke a light gleamed in the darkness of the night, and, looking up, Slagfid saw it was shed by a bright star which seemed to be drawing nearer to the earth, and the nearer it drew the more its shape seemed to change into a human figure. Then Slagfid knew that it was his wife Swanvite floating just over his head and encircled by a rim of clear green light. He could not speak for joy, but held out his arms to her. She beckoned to him to follow her, and, drawing out a lute, played on it, and Slagfid, flinging away his sword and coat of mail, began to climb the mountain. Half way up it seemed to him as if a hand from behind was pulling him back, and turning he fancied he beheld his mother and heard her say, ‘My son, seek not after vain shadows, which yet may be your ruin. Strive not against the will of Odin, nor against the Norns.’ The words caused Slagfid to pause for a moment, then the figure of Swanvite danced before him and beckoned to him again, and his mother was forgotten. There were rivers to swim, precipices to climb, chasms to leap, but he passed them all gladly till at last he noticed that the higher he got the less the figure seemed like Swanvite. He felt frightened and tried to turn back, but he could not. On he had to go, till just as he reached the top of the mountain the first rays of the sun appeared above the horizon, and he saw that, instead of Swanvite, he had followed a black elf.

He paused and looked over the green plain that lay thousands of feet below him, cool and inviting after the stony mountain up which he had come. ‘A time of death,’ whispered the black elf in his ear, and Slagfid flung himself over the precipice.

After his brothers had forsaken him Wayland went to bed lonely and sad; but the next morning he got up and looked at the three keys that the Norns had left behind them. One was of copper, one was of iron, and one was of gold. Taking up the copper one, he walked to the mountain till he reached a flat wall of rock. He laid his key against it, and immediately the mountain flew open and showed a cave where everything was green. Green emeralds studded the rocks, green crystals hung from the ceiling or formed rows of pillars, even the copper which made the walls of the cave had a coating of green. Wayland broke off a huge projecting lump and left the cave, which instantly closed up so that not a crack remained to tell where the opening had been.

He carried the lump home, and put it into the fire till all the earth and stones which clung to it were burned away; and then he fashioned the pure copper into a helmet, and in the front of the helmet he set three of his largest emeralds.

This occupied some days, and when it was done he took the iron key, and went to another mountain, and laid the key against the rock, which flew open like the other one. But now the walls were of iron, which shone like blue steel, while sapphires glittered in the midst. From an opening above, the blue of the sky was reflected in the river beneath, and gentians and other blue flowers grew along the edge. Wayland gazed with wonder at all these things; then he broke off a piece of the iron, and carried it home with him. For many days after he busied himself in forging a sword that was so supple he could wind it round his body, and so sharp it could cut through a rock as if it had been a stick. In the handle and in the sheath he set some of the finest sapphires that he had brought away with him.

When all was finished he laid the sword aside, and returned to the mountain, with the golden key. This time the mountain parted, and he saw before him an archway, with a glimpse of the sea in the distance. Before the entrance roses were lying, and inside the golden walls sparkled with rubies, while branches of red coral filled every crevice. Vines clambered about the pillars, and bore large bunches of red grapes.

Wayland stood long, looking at these marvels; then he plucked some of the grapes, broke off a lump of gold, and set out home again.

Next day he began to make himself a golden breastplate, and in it he placed the jewels, and it was so bright that you could have seen the glitter a mile off.

After he had tried all the three keys, and found out the secrets of the mountain, Wayland felt dull, and as if he had nothing to do or to think about. So his mind went back to his brothers, and he wondered how they had fared all this time. The first thing he did was to go to the edge of the forest, and see if he could find the two footprints they had left. He soon arrived at the spot where they had taken farewell of each other, but a blue pool of water covered the trace of Eigil’s foot. He turned to look at the impression made by Slagfid, but fresh green grass had sprung up over it, and on a birch-tree near it a bird had perched, which sang a mournful song.

Then Wayland knew that his brothers were dead, and he returned to his hut, grieving sore.

It was a long time before Wayland could bring himself to go out, so great was his sorrow; but at last he roused himself from his misery, and went to the mountain for more gold, meaning to work hard till the nine years should be over and he should get his wife back again. All day long he stood in his forge, smelting and hammering, till he had made hundreds of suits of armour and thousands of swords, and his fame travelled far, so that all men spoke of his industry. At last he grew tired of making armour, and hammered a number of gold rings, which he strung on strips of bark, and as he hammered he thought of

Alvilda his wife, and how the rings would gleam on her arms when once she came back again.

Now at this time Nidud the Little reigned over Sweden, and was hated by his people, for he was vain and cowardly and had many other bad qualities. It came to his ears that away in the forests lived a man who was very rich, and worked all day long in pure gold. The King was one of those people who could not bear to see anyone with things which he did not himself possess, and he began to make plans how to get hold of Wayland's wealth. At length he called together his chief counsellors, and said to them: 'I hear a man has come to my kingdom who is called Wayland, famous in many lands for his skill in sword-making. I have set men to inquire after him, and I have found that when first he came here he was poor and of no account, so he must have grown rich either by magic or else by violence. I command, therefore, that my stoutest men-at-arms should buckle on their iron breastplates and ride in the dead of night to Wayland's house, and seize his goods and his person.'

'King Nidud,' answered one of the courtiers, 'that you should take himself and his goods is well, but why send a troop of soldiers against one man? If he is no sorcerer, then a single one of your soldiers could take him captive; but if, on the other hand, he is a magician, then a whole army could do nothing with him against his will.' At this reply the King flew in a rage, and, snatching up a sword, ran it through his counsellor's body; then, turning to the rest, told them that they would suffer the same fate if they refused to submit to his will.

So the men-at-arms put on all their armour, and, mounting their horses, set forth at sunset to Wayland's house, King Nidud riding at their head. The door stood wide open, and they entered quietly, in deadly fear lest Wayland should attack them. But no one was inside, and they looked about, their eyes dazzled by the gold on the walls. The King gazed with wonder and delight at the long string of golden rings, and, slipping the finest off a strip of bark, placed it on his finger. At that moment steps were heard in the outer court, and the King hastily desired his followers to hide themselves and not to stir till he signed to them to do so. In another moment Wayland stood in the doorway, carrying on his shoulders a bear which he had killed with his spear and was bringing home for supper. He was both tired and hungry, for he had been hunting all day; but he had first to skin the animal, and make a bright fire, before he could cut off some steaks and cook them at the end of the spear. Then he poured some mead into a cup and drank, as he always did, to the memory of his brothers. After that he spread out his bear's skin to dry in the wind, and this done he stretched himself out on his bed and went to sleep.

King Nidud waited till he thought all was safe, then crept forth with his men, who held heavy chains in their hands wherewith to chain the sleeping Wayland. But the task was harder than they expected, and he started up in wrath, asking why he should be treated so. ‘If you want my gold, take it and release me. It is useless fighting against such odds.’

‘I am no robber,’ said the King, ‘but Nidud your sovereign.’

‘You do me much honour,’ replied Wayland, ‘but what have I done to be loaded with chains like this?’

‘Wayland, I know you well,’ said Nidud. ‘Poor enough you were when you came from Finland, and now your jewels are finer and your drinking cups heavier than mine.’

‘If I am indeed a thief,’ answered Wayland, ‘then you do well to load me with chains and lead me bound into your dungeons; but if not, I ask again, Why do you misuse me?’

‘Riches do not come of themselves,’ said Nidud, ‘and if you are not a thief, then you must be a magician and must be watched.’

‘If I were a magician,’ answered Wayland, ‘it would be easy for me to burst these bonds. I know not that ever I have wronged any man, but if he can prove it I will restore it to him tenfold. As to the gifts that may come from the gods, no man should grudge them to his fellow. Therefore release me, O King, and I will pay whatever ransom you may fix.’

But Nidud only bade his guards take him away, and Wayland, seeing that resistance availed nothing, went with them quietly. By the King’s orders he was thrown into a dark hole fifteen fathoms under ground, and the soldiers then came and robbed the house of all its treasures, which they took to the Palace. The ring which Wayland had made for his wife, Nidud gave to his daughter Banvilda.

One day the Queen was playing the harp in her own room when the King came in to ask her counsel how best to deal with Wayland, as he did not think it wise to put him to death, for he hoped to make some profit out of his skill. ‘His heart will beat high,’ said the Queen, ‘when he sees his good sword, and beholds his ring on Banvilda’s finger. But cut asunder the sinews of his strength, so that he can never more escape from us, and keep him a prisoner on the island of Savarsted.’

The King was pleased with the Queen’s words, and sent soldiers to carry Wayland to the tower on the island. The sinews of his leg were cut so that he could not swim away; but they gave him his boots, and the chests of gold they had found in his house. Here he was left, with nothing to do from morning till night but to make helmets and drinking cups and splendid armour for the King.

On this island Wayland remained for a whole year, chained to a stone and visited by no one but the King, who came from time to time to see how his prisoner was getting on with a suit of golden armour he had been ordered to make. The shield was also of gold, and on it Wayland had beaten out a history of the gods and their great deeds. He was very miserable, for the hope of revenge which had kept him alive seemed as far off as ever in its fulfilment, and finding a sword he had lately forged lying close to his hand, he seized it, with the intent of putting an end to his wretched life. He had hardly stretched out his hand when a bird began to sing at the iron bars of his window, while the evening sun shone into his prison. ‘I should like to see the world once more,’ thought he, and, raising himself on the stone to which his chain was fastened, he was able to look at what lay beneath him. The sea washed the base of the rock on which the tower was built, and on a neck of land a little way off some children were playing before the door of a hut. Everything was bathed in red light from the glow of the setting sun.

Wayland stood quite still on the top of the stone, gazing at the scene with all his eyes, yet thinking of the land of his birth, which was so different. Then he looked again at the sea, which was already turning to steel, and in the distance he saw something moving on the waves. As it came nearer he discovered it was a young Nixie, or water sprite, and she held a lyre in her hand, and sang a song which blended with the murmur of the waves and the notes of the bird. And the song put new life and courage into his heart, for it told him that if he would endure and wait the pleasure of the gods, joy would be his one day.

The Nixie finished her song, and smiled up at Wayland at the window before turning and swimming over the waves till she dived beneath them. That same instant the bird flew away, and the moon was covered by a cloud. But Wayland’s heart was cheered, and when he lay down to rest he slept quietly.

Some days later the King paid another visit, and suddenly espied the three keys which had been hidden in a corner with some of Wayland’s tools. He at once asked Wayland what they were, and when he would not tell him the King grew so angry that, seizing an axe, he declared that he would put his prisoner to death unless he confessed all he knew. There was no help for it, and Wayland had to say how he came by them and what wonders they wrought. The King heard him with delight and went away, taking the keys with him.

No time was lost in preparing for a journey to the mountains, and when he reached the spot described by Wayland he divided his followers into three parties, sending two to await him some distance off, and keeping the third to enter the mountain with himself, if the copper key did the wonders it had done before. So he gave it to one of the bravest of his men, and told him to lay it against the side of the mountain. The man obeyed, and instantly the mountain split from top to bottom. The King bade them enter, never doubting that rich spoils awaited him; but instead the men sank into a green marsh, which swallowed up many of them, while the rest were stung to death by the green serpents hanging from the roof. Those who, like the King, were near the entrance alone escaped.

As soon as he had recovered from the terror into which this adventure had thrown him he commanded that it should be kept very secret from the other two parties, and desired Storbiorn, his Chamberlain, to take the key of iron and the key of gold and deliver them to the leaders of the divisions he had left behind, with orders to try their fortune in different parts of the mountain. ‘Give the keys to me, my lord King,’ answered Storbiorn, ‘and I shall know what to do with them. These magicians may do their worst, my heart will not beat one whit the faster; and I will see all that happens.’ So he went and gave his message to the two divisions, and one stayed behind while Storbiorn went to the mountain with the other.

When they arrived the man who held the key laid it against the rock, which burst asunder, and half the men entered at Storbiorn’s command. Suddenly an icy blue stream poured upon them from the depths of the cavern and drowned most of them before they had time to fly. Only those behind escaped, and Storbiorn bade them go instantly to the King and tell him what had befallen them. Then he went to the third troop and marched with them to the rock, where he gave the golden key to one of the men, and ordered him to try it. The rock flew open at once, and Storbiorn told the men to enter, taking care, however, to keep behind himself. They obeyed and found themselves in a lovely golden cave, whose walls were lit up by thousands of precious stones of every hue. There was neither sight nor sound to frighten them, and even Storbiorn, when he saw the gold, forgot his prudence and his fears, and followed them in. In a moment a red fire burst out with a terrific noise, and clouds of smoke poured over them, so that they fell down choked into the flames. Only one man escaped, and he ran back as fast as he could to the King to tell him of the fate of his army.

All this time Wayland was working quietly in his island prison waiting for the day of his revenge. The suit of golden armour which the King had commanded kept him busy day and night, and, besides the wonderful shield with figures of the gods, he had wrought a coat of mail, a helmet, and armour for the thighs, such as never had been seen before. The King had invited all his great nobles to meet him at the Palace when he returned from the mountain, that they might both see his armour and behold all the precious things he should bring with him from the caverns.

When Nidud reached his Palace the Queen and Banvilda, their daughter, came forth to meet him, and told him that the great hall was already full of guests, expecting the wonders he had brought. The King said little about his adventures, but went into the armoury to put on his armour in order to appear before his nobles. Piece by piece he fastened it, but he found the helmet so heavy that he could hardly bear it on his head. However, he did not look properly dressed without it, so he had to wear it, though it felt as if a whole mountain was pressing on his forehead. Then, buckling on the sword which Wayland had forged, he entered the hall, and seated himself on the throne. The Earls were struck dumb by his splendour, and thought at first that it was the god Thor himself, till they looked under the helmet and saw the ugly little man with the pale cowardly face. So they turned their eyes gladly on the Queen and Princess, both tall and beautiful and glittering with jewels, though inwardly they were not much better than the King.

A magnificent dinner made the nobles feel more at ease, and they begged the King to tell them what man there was in Sweden so skilled in smith's work. Now Nidud had drunk deeply of mead, and longed to revenge himself on Wayland, whom he held to have caused the loss of his army; so he gave the key of the tower to one of his Earls, and bade him take two men and bring forth Wayland, adding that if the next time he visited the tower he should find a grain of gold missing, they should pay for it with their lives.

The three men got a boat, and rowed towards the tower, but on the way one who, like the King, had drunk too much mead, fell into the sea and was drowned. The other two reached the tower in safety, and finding Wayland, blackened with dust, busy at his forge, bade him come just as he was to the boat. With his hands bound they led him before the King, and Eyvind the Earl bowed low and said, 'We have done your desire, Sir King, and must now hasten back to look for Gullorm, who fell into the sea.'

'Leave him where he is,' replied Nidud; 'if he is not drowned by now he will never drown at all, but in token of your obedience to my orders I will give you each these golden chains.'

The guests had not thought to see the man who had made such wonderful armour helpless and a cripple, and said so to the King. 'He was once handsome and stately enough,' answered Nidud, 'but I have bowed his stubborn head.' And the Queen and her daughter joined in saying, 'The maidens of Finland will hardly fancy a lover who cannot stand upright.' But Wayland stood as if he heard nothing till the King's son snatched a bone from the table and threw it at his head. Then his patience gave way, and, seizing the bone, he beat Nidud about the head with it till the straps of the helmet gave way and the helmet itself fell off. The guests all took his side, and said that, though a cripple, he was braver than many men whose legs were straight, and begged the King to allow him to go back to his prison without being teased further. But the King cried that Wayland had done mischief enough, and must now be punished, and told them the story of his visit to the mountain and the loss of his followers. ‘It would be a small punishment to put him to death,’ he said, ‘for to so wretched a cripple death would be welcome. He may use the gold that is left, but henceforth he shall only have one eye to work with,’ and the Princess came forward and carried out the cruel sentence herself. And Wayland bore it all, saying nothing, but praying the gods to grant him vengeance.

One night Wayland sat filled with grief and despair at his window, looking out over the sea, when he caught sight of two red lights, bobbing in his direction. He watched them curiously till they vanished beneath the tower; and soon the key of the outer door turned, and two men, whom he knew to be the King’s sons, Gram and Skule, talked softly together. He kept very still, so that they might think he was asleep, and he heard Skule say: ‘Let us first get the golden key from him, and when we have taken from the chest as much as we can carry we will put him to death, lest he should betray us to our father.’ Then Wayland took a large sword which lay by his side and hid it behind his seat, and he had scarcely done so when the princes entered the prison. ‘Good greeting to you,’ said Gram. ‘Nidud our father has gone a journey into the country, and as he is so greedy of wealth that he will give us none, we have come here to get it for ourselves. Hand us the key and swear not to tell our father, or you shall die.’

‘My good lords,’ answered Wayland, ‘your request is reasonable, and I am not so foolish as to refuse it. Here is the key, and in the name of the gods I will swear not to betray you.’

The brothers took the key, and opened the chest that stood by Wayland, which was still half full of gold. It dazzled their eyes, and they both stooped down so as to see it better. This was what Wayland had waited for, and, seizing his sword, he cut off their heads, which fell into the chest. He then shut down the lid, and dug a grave for the bodies in the floor of his dungeon. Afterwards he dried the skulls in the sun, and made them into two drinking cups wrought with gold. The eyes he set with precious stones and fashioned into armlets, while the teeth he filed till they were shaped like pearls, and strung like a necklace.

As soon as the King came back from his journey he paid a visit to Wayland, who produced the drinking cups, which he said were made of some curious shells washed up in a gale close to his window. The armlet he sent as a present to the Queen, and the bracelet to the Princess.

After some days had passed, and Gram and Skule had not returned, the King ordered a search to be made for them, and that very evening some sailors brought back their boat, which had drifted into the open sea. Their bodies, of course, were not to be found, and the King ordered a splendid funeral feast to be prepared to do them honour. On this occasion the new drinking cups were filled with mead, and, besides her necklace, Banvilda wore the ring which her father had taken long ago from Wayland's house. As was the custom, the feast lasted long, and the dead Princes were forgotten by the guests, who drank deeply and grew merry. But at midnight their gaiety suddenly came to an end. The King was in the act of drinking from the cup of mead when he felt a violent pain in his head and let the vessel fall. The hues of the armlet became so strange and dreadful that the Queen's eyes suffered agony from looking at them, and she tore the armlets off her; while Banvilda was seized with such severe toothache that she could sit at table no longer. The guests at once took leave, but it was not till the sun rose that the pains of their hosts went away.

In the torture of toothache which she had endured during the night Banvilda had dashed her arm against the wall, and had broken some of the ornaments off the ring. She feared to tell her father, who would be sure to punish her, and was in despair how to get the ring mended when she caught sight of the island on which Wayland's tower stood. 'If I had not mocked at him he might have helped me now,' thought she. But no other way seemed to offer itself, and in the evening she loosened a boat and began to row to the tower. On the way she met an old merman with a long beard, floating on the waves, who warned her not to go on; but she paid no heed, and only rowed the faster.

She entered the tower by a false key, and, holding the ring out to Wayland, begged him to mend it as fast as possible, so that she might return before she was missed. Wayland answered her with courtesy, and promised to do his best, but said that she would have to blow the bellows to keep the forge fire alight. 'How comes it that these bellows are sprinkled with blood?' asked Banvilda.

'It is the blood of two young sea dogs,' answered Wayland; 'they troubled me for long, but I caught them when they least expected it. But blow, I pray you, the bellows harder, or I shall never be finished.'

Banvilda did as she was told, but soon grew tired and thirsty, and begged Wayland to give her something to drink. He mixed something sweet in a cup, which she swallowed hastily, and soon fell fast asleep on a bench. Then Wayland bound her hands, and placed her in the boat, after which he cut the rope that held it and let it drift out to sea. This done, he shut the door of the tower, and, taking a piece of gold, he engraved on it the history of all that had happened and put it where it must meet the King's eye when next he came. 'Now is my hour come,' he cried with joy, snatching his spear from the wall, but before he could throw himself on it he heard a distant song and the notes of a lute.

By this time the sun was high in the heavens, yet its brightness did not hinder Wayland from seeing a large star, which was floating towards him, and a brilliant rainbow spanned the sky. The flowers on the island unfolded themselves as the star drew near, and he could smell the smell of the roses on the shore. And now Wayland saw it was no star, but the golden chariot of Freya the goddess, whose blue mantle floated behind her till it was lost in the blue of the sky. On her left was a maiden dressed in garlands of fresh green leaves, and on her right was one clad in a garment of red. At the sight Wayland's heart beat high, for he thought of the lump of gold set with jewels which he and his brothers had found in the mountain so long ago. Fairies fluttered round them, mermaids rose from the depths of the sea to welcome them, and as Freya and her maidens entered the prison Wayland saw that she who wore the red garment was really Alvilda. 'Wayland,' said the goddess, 'your time of woe is past. You have suffered much and have avenged your wrongs, and now Odin has granted my prayer that Alvilda shall stay by you for the rest of your life, and when you die she shall carry you in her arms to the country of Walhalla, where you shall forge golden armour and fashion drinking horns for the gods.'

When Freya had spoken, she beckoned to the green maiden, who held in her hand a root and a knife. She cut pieces off the root and laid them on Wayland's feet, and on his eye, then, placing some leaves from her garland over the whole, she breathed gently on it. 'Eyr the physician has healed me,' cried Wayland, and the fairies took him in their arms and bore him across the waves to a bower in the forest, where he dreamed that Alvilda and Slagfid and Eigil were all bending over him.

When he woke Alvilda was indeed there, and he seemed to catch glimpses of his brothers amid the leaves of the trees. 'Arise, my husband,' said Alvilda, 'and go straight to the Court of Nidud. He still sleeps, and knows nothing. Throw this mantle on your shoulders, and they will take you for his servant.'

So Wayland went, and reached the royal chamber, and in his sleep the King trembled, though he knew not that Wayland was near. 'Awake,' cried Wayland, and the King woke, and asked who had dared to disturb him thus.

'Be not angry,' answered Wayland; 'had you slain Wayland long ago, the misfortune that I have to tell you of would never have happened.'

'Do not name his name,' said the King, 'since he sent me those drinking cups a burning fever has laid hold upon me.'

'They were not shells, as he told you,' answered Wayland, 'but the skulls of your two sons, Sir King. Their bodies you will find in Wayland's tower. As for your daughter she is tossing, bound, on the wild waves of the sea. But now I, Wayland, have come to give you your deathblow — —' But before he could draw his sword fear had slain the King yet more quickly.

So Wayland went back to Alvilda, and they went into another country, where he became a famous smith, and he lived to a good old age; and when he died he was carried in Alvilda’s arms to Walhalla, as Freya had promised.

THE STORY OF ROBIN HOOD

Many hundreds of years ago, when the Plantagenets were kings, England was so covered with woods that a squirrel was said to be able to hop from tree to tree from the Severn to the Humber. It must have been very different to look at from the country we travel through now; but still there were roads that ran from north to south and from east to west, for the use of those that wished to leave their homes, and at certain times of the year these roads were thronged with people. Pilgrims going to some holy shrine passed along, merchants taking their wares to Court, fat Abbots and Bishops ambling by on palfreys nearly as fat as themselves, to bear their part in the King's Council, and, more frequently still, a solitary Knight, seeking adventures.

Besides the broad roads there were small tracks and little green paths, and these led to clumps of low huts, where dwelt the peasants, charcoal-burners, and plough-men, and here and there some larger clearing than usual told that the house of a yeoman was near. Now and then as you passed through the forest you might ride by a splendid abbey, and catch a glimpse of monks in long black or white gowns, fishing in the streams and rivers that abound in this part of England, or casting nets in the fish ponds which were in the midst of the abbey gardens. Or you might chance to see a castle with round turrets and high battlements, circled by strong walls, and protected by a moat full of water.

This was the sort of England into which the famous Robin Hood was born. We do not know anything about him, who he was, or where he lived, or what evil deed he had done to put him beyond the King's grace. For he was an outlaw, and any man might kill him and never pay penalty for it. But, outlaw or not, the poor people loved him and looked on him as their friend, and many a stout fellow came to join him, and led a merry life in the greenwood, with moss and fern for bed, and for meat the King's deer, which it was death to slay. Peasants of all sorts, tillers of the land, yeomen, and as some say Knights, went on their ways freely, for of them Robin took no toll; but lordly churchmen with money-bags well filled, or proud Bishops with their richly dressed followers, trembled as they drew near to Sherwood Forest — who was to know whether behind every tree there did not lurk Robin Hood or one of his men?

THE COMING OF LITTLE JOHN

One day Robin was walking alone in the wood, and reached a river which was spanned by a very narrow bridge, over which one man only could pass. In the midst stood a stranger, and Robin bade him go back and let him go over. ‘I am no man of yours,’ was all the answer Robin got, and in anger he drew his bow and fitted an arrow to it. ‘Would you shoot a man who has no arms but a staff?’ asked the stranger in scorn; and with shame Robin laid down his bow, and unbuckled an oaken stick at his side. ‘We will fight till one of us falls into the water,’ he said; and fight they did, till the stranger planted a blow so well that Robin rolled over into the river. ‘You are a brave soul,’ said he, when he had waded to land, and he blew a blast with his horn which brought fifty good fellows, clad in green, to the little bridge. ‘Have you fallen into the river that your clothes are wet?’ asked one; and Robin made answer, ‘No, but this stranger, fighting on the bridge, got the better of me, and tumbled me into the stream.’

At this the foresters seized the stranger, and would have ducked him had not their leader bade them stop, and begged the stranger to stay with them and make one of themselves. ‘Here is my hand,’ replied the stranger, ‘and my heart with it. My name, if you would know it, is John Little.’

‘That must be altered,’ cried Will Scarlett; ‘we will call a feast, and henceforth, because he is full seven feet tall and round the waist at least an ell, he shall be called Little John.’

And thus it was done; but at the feast Little John, who always liked to know exactly what work he had to do, put some questions to Robin Hood. ‘Before I join hands with you, tell me first what sort of life is this you lead? How am I to know whose goods I shall take, and whose I shall leave? Whom I shall beat, and whom I shall refrain from beating?’

And Robin answered: ‘Look that you harm not any tiller of the ground, nor any yeoman of the greenwood — no, nor no Knight nor Squire, unless you have heard him ill spoken of. But if Bishops or Archbishops come your way, see that you spoil *them*, and mark that you always hold in your mind the High Sheriff of Nottingham.’

This being settled, Robin Hood declared Little John to be second in command to himself among the brotherhood of the forest, and the new outlaw never forgot to ‘hold in his mind’ the High Sheriff of Nottingham, who was the bitterest enemy the foresters had.

LITTLE JOHN’S FIRST ADVENTURE

Robin Hood, however, had no liking for a company of idle men about him, and he at once sent off Little John and Will Scarlett to the great road known as Watling Street, with orders to hide among the trees and wait till some adventure might come to them; and if they took captive Earl or Baron, Abbot or Knight, he was to be brought unharmed back to Robin Hood.

But all along Watling Street the road was bare; white and hard it lay in the sun, without the tiniest cloud of dust to show that a rich company might be coming: east and west the land lay still.

At length, just where a side path turned into the broad highway, there rode a Knight, and a sorrier man than he never sat a horse on summer day. One foot only was in the stirrup, the other hung carelessly by his side; his head was bowed, the reins dropped loose, and his horse went on as he would. At so sad a sight the hearts of the outlaws were filled with pity, and Little John fell on his knees and bade the Knight welcome in the name of his master.

‘Who is your master?’ asked the Knight.

‘Robin Hood,’ answered Little John.

‘I have heard much good of him,’ replied the Knight, ‘and will go with you gladly.’

Then they all set off together, tears running down the Knight’s cheeks as he rode, but he said nothing, neither was anything said to him. And in this wise they came to Robin Hood.

‘Welcome, Sir Knight,’ cried he, ‘and thrice welcome, for I waited to break my fast till you or some other had come to me.’

‘God save you, good Robin,’ answered the Knight, and after they had washed themselves in the stream they sat down to dine off bread and wine, with flesh of the King’s deer, and swans and pheasants. ‘Such a dinner have I not had for three weeks and more,’ said the Knight. ‘And if I ever come again this way, good Robin, I will give you as fine a dinner as you have given me.’

‘I thank you,’ replied Robin, ‘my dinner is always welcome; still, I am none so greedy but I can wait for it. But before you go, pay me, I pray you, for the food which you have had. It was never the custom for a yeoman to pay for a Knight.’

‘My bag is empty,’ said the Knight, ‘save for ten shillings only.’

‘Go, Little John, and look in his wallet,’ said Robin, ‘and, Sir Knight, if in truth you have no more, not one penny will I take, nay, I will give you all that you shall need.’

So Little John spread out the Knight’s mantle, and opened the bag, and therein lay ten shillings and naught besides.

‘What tidings, Little John?’ cried his master.

‘Sir, the Knight speaks truly,’ said Little John.

‘Then fill a cup of the best wine and tell me, Sir Knight, whether it is your own ill doings which have brought you to this sorry pass.’

‘For an hundred years my fathers have dwelt in the forest,’ answered the Knight, ‘and four hundred pounds might they spend yearly. But within two years misfortune has befallen me, and my wife and children also.’

‘How did this evil come to pass?’ asked Robin.

‘Through my own folly,’ answered the Knight, ‘and because of the great love I bore my son, who would never be guided of my counsel, and slew, ere he was twenty years old, a Knight of Lancaster and his Squire. For their deaths I had to pay a large sum, which I could not raise without giving my lands in pledge to the rich Abbot of St. Mary’s. If I cannot bring him the money by a certain day they will be lost to me for ever.’

‘What is the sum?’ asked Robin. ‘Tell me truly.’

‘It is four hundred pounds,’ said the Knight.

‘And what will you do if you lose your lands?’ asked Robin again.

‘Hide myself over the sea,’ said the Knight, ‘and bid farewell to my friends and country. There is no better way open to me.’

At this tears fell from his eyes, and he turned him to depart. ‘Good day, my friend,’ he said to Robin, ‘I cannot pay you what I should—’ But Robin held him fast. ‘Where *are* your friends?’ asked he.

‘Sir, they have all forsaken me since I became poor, and they turn away their heads if we meet upon the road, though when I was rich they were ever in my castle.’

When Little John and Will Scarlett and the rest heard this they wept for very shame and fury and Robin bade them fill a cup of the best wine, and give it to the Knight.

‘Have you no one who would stay surety for you?’ said he.

‘None,’ answered the Knight, ‘but only Our Lady, who has never yet failed to help me.’

‘You speak well,’ said Robin, ‘and you, Little John, go to my treasure chest, and bring me thence four hundred pounds. And be sure you count it truly.’

So Little John went, and Will Scarlett, and they brought back the money.

‘Sir,’ said Little John, when Robin had counted it and found it no more nor no less, ‘look at his clothes, how thin they are! You have stores of garments, green and scarlet, in your coffers — no merchant in England can boast the like. I will measure some out with my bow.’ And thus he did.

‘Master,’ spoke Little John again, ‘there is still something else. You must give him a horse, that he may go as beseems his quality to the Abbey.’

‘Take the grey horse,’ said Robin, ‘and put a new saddle on it, and take likewise a good palfrey and a pair of boots, with gilt spurs on them. And as it were a shame for a Knight to ride by himself on this errand, I will lend you Little John as Squire — perchance he may stand you in yeoman's stead.'

'When shall we meet again?' asked the Knight.

'This day twelve months,' said Robin, 'under the greenwood tree.'

Then the Knight rode on his way, with Little John behind him, and as he went he thought of Robin Hood and his men, and blessed them for the goodness they had shown towards him.

'To-morrow,' he said to Little John, 'I must be at the Abbey of St. Mary, which is in the city of York, for if I am but so much as a day late my lands are lost for ever, and though I were to bring the money I should not be suffered to redeem them.'

Now the Abbot had been counting the days as well as the Knight, and the next morning he said to his monks: 'This day year there came a Knight and borrowed of me four hundred pounds, giving his lands in surety. And if he come not to pay his debt ere midnight tolls they will be ours for ever.'

'It is full early yet,' answered the Prior, 'he may still be coming.'

'He is far beyond the sea,' said the Abbot, 'and suffers from hunger and cold. How is he to get here?'

'It were a shame,' said the Prior, 'for you to take his lands. And you do him much wrong if you drive such a hard bargain.'

'He is dead or hanged,' spake a fat-headed monk who was the cellarer, 'and we shall have his four hundred pounds to spend on our gardens and our wines,' and he went with the Abbot to attend the court of justice wherein the Knight's lands would be declared forfeited by the High Justiciar.

'If he come not this day,' cried the Abbot, rubbing his hands, 'if he come not this day, they will be ours.'

'He will not come yet,' said the Justiciar, but he knew not that the Knight was already at the outer gate, and Little John with him.

'Welcome, Sir Knight,' said the porter. 'The horse that you ride is the noblest that ever I saw. Let me lead them both to the stable, that they may have food and rest.'

'They shall not pass these gates,' answered the Knight sternly, and he entered the hall alone, where the monks were sitting at meat, and knelt down and bowed to them.

'I have come back, my lord,' he said to the Abbot, who had just returned from the court. ‘I have come back this day as I promised.’

‘Have you brought my money?’ was all the Abbot said.

‘Not a penny,’ answered the Knight, who wished to see how the Abbot would treat him.

‘Then what do you here without it?’ cried the Abbot in angry tones.

‘I have come to pray you for a longer day,’ answered the Knight meekly.

‘The day was fixed and cannot be gainsaid,’ replied the Justiciar, but the Knight only begged that he would stand his friend and help him in his strait. ‘I am with the Abbot,’ was all the Justiciar would answer.

‘Good Sir Abbot, be my friend,’ prayed the Knight again, ‘and give me one chance more to get the money and free my lands. I will serve you day and night till I have four hundred pounds to redeem them.’

But the Abbot only swore a great oath, and vowed that the money must be paid that day or the lands be forfeited.

The Knight stood up straight and tall: ‘It is well,’ said he, ‘to prove one’s friends against the hour of need,’ and he looked the Abbot full in the face, and the Abbot felt uneasy, he did not know why, and hated the Knight more than ever. ‘Out of my hall, false Knight!’ cried he, pretending to a courage which he did not feel. But the Knight stayed where he was, and answered him, ‘You lie, Abbot. Never was I false, and that I have shown in jousts and in tourneys.’

‘Give him two hundred pounds more,’ said the Justiciar to the Abbot, ‘and keep the lands yourself.’

‘No, by Heaven!’ answered the Knight, ‘not if you offered me a thousand pounds would I do it! Neither Justiciar, Abbot, nor Monk shall be heir of mine.’ Then he strode up to a table and emptied out four hundred pounds. ‘Take your gold, Sir Abbot, which you lent to me a year agone. Had you but received me civilly, I would have paid you something more.

‘Sir Abbot, and ye men of law, Now have I kept my day! Now shall I have my land again, For aught that you may say.’

So he passed out of the hall singing merrily, leaving the Abbot staring silently after him, and rode back to his house in Verisdale, where his wife met him at the gate.

‘Welcome, my lord,’ said his lady, ‘Sir, lost is all your good.’ ‘Be merry, dame,’ said the Knight, ‘And pray for Robin Hood.’

‘But for his kindness, we had been beggars.’

After this the Knight dwelt at home, looking after his lands, and saving his money carefully till the four hundred pounds lay ready for Robin Hood. Then he bought a hundred bows and a hundred arrows, and every arrow was an ell long, and had a head of silver and peacock’s feathers. And clothing himself in white and red, and with a hundred men in his train, he set off to Sherwood Forest.

On the way he passed an open space near a bridge where there was a wrestling, and the Knight stopped and looked, for he himself had taken many a prize in that sport. Here the prizes were such as to fill any man with envy; a fine horse, saddled and bridled, a great white bull, a pair of gloves, a ring of bright red gold, and a pipe of wine. There was not a yeoman present who did not hope to win one of them. But when the wrestling was over, the yeoman who had beaten them all was a man who kept apart from his fellows, and was said to think much of himself. Therefore the men grudged him his skill, and set upon him with blows, and would have killed him, had not the Knight, for love of Robin Hood, taken pity on him, while his followers fought with the crowd, and would not suffer them to touch the prizes a better man had won.

When the wrestling was finished the Knight rode on, and there under the greenwood tree, in the place appointed, he found Robin Hood and his merry men waiting for him, according to the tryst that they had fixed last year:

‘God save thee, Robin Hood, And all this company.’ ‘Welcome be thou, gentle Knight, And right welcome to me.’

‘Hast thou thy land again?’ said Robin, ‘Truth then tell thou me.’ ‘Yea, for God,’ said the Knight, ‘And that thank I God and thee.’

‘Have here four hundred pounds,’ said the Knight, ‘The which you lent to me; And here are also twenty marks For your courtesie.’

But Robin would not take the money. A miracle had happened, he said, and Our Lady had paid it to him, and shame would it be for him to take it twice over. Then he noticed for the first time the bows and arrows which the Knight had brought, and asked what they were. ‘A poor present to you,’ answered the Knight, and Robin, who would not be outdone, sent Little John once more to his treasury, and bade him bring forth four hundred pounds, which was given to the Knight. After that they parted, in much love, and Robin prayed the Knight if he were in any strait ‘to let him know at the greenwood tree, and while there was any gold there he should have it.’

HOW LITTLE JOHN BECAME THE SHERIFF’S SERVANT

Meanwhile the High Sheriff of Nottingham proclaimed a great shooting-match in a broad open space, and Little John was minded to try his skill with the rest. He rode through the forest, whistling gaily to himself, for well he knew that not one of Robin Hood’s men could send an arrow as straight as he, and he felt little fear of anyone else. When he reached the trysting place he found a large company assembled, the Sheriff with them, and the rules of the match were read out: where they were to stand, how far the mark was to be, and how that three tries should be given to every man.

Some of the shooters shot near the mark, some of them even touched it, but none but Little John split the slender wand of willow with every arrow that flew from his bow. And at this sight the Sheriff of Nottingham swore a great oath that Little John was the best archer that ever he had seen, and asked him who he was and where he was born, and vowed that if he would enter his service he would give twenty marks a year to so good a bowman.

Little John, who did not wish to confess that he was one of Robin Hood’s men and an outlaw, said his name was Reynold Greenleaf, and that he was in the service of a Knight, whose leave he must get before he became the servant of any man. This was given heartily by the Knight, and Little John bound himself to the Sheriff for the space of twelve months, and was given a good white horse to ride on whenever he went abroad. But for all that he did not like his bargain, and made up his mind to do the Sheriff, who was hated of the outlaws, all the mischief he could.

His chance came on a Wednesday when the Sheriff always went hunting and Little John lay in bed till noon, when he grew hungry. Then he got up, and told the steward that he wanted some dinner. The steward answered he should have nothing till the Sheriff came home, so Little John grumbled and left him, and sought out the butler. Here he was no more successful than before; the butler just went to the buttery door and locked it, and told Little John that he would have to make himself happy till his lord returned.

Rude words mattered nothing to Little John, who was not accustomed to be baulked by trifles, so he gave a mighty kick which burst open the door, and then ate and drank as much as he would, and when he had finished all there was in the buttery, he went down into the kitchen.

Now the Sheriff’s cook was a strong man and a bold one, and had no mind to let another man play the king in his kitchen; so he gave Little John three smart blows, which were returned heartily. ‘Thou art a brave man and hardy,’ said Little John, ‘and a good fighter withal. I have a sword, take you another, and let us see which is the better man of us twain.’

The cook did as he was bid, and for two hours they fought, neither of them harming the other. ‘Fellow,’ said Little John at last, ‘you are one of the best swordsmen that I ever saw — and if you could shoot as well with the bow I would take you back to the merry greenwood, and Robin Hood would give you twenty marks a year and two changes of clothing.’

‘Put up your sword,’ said the cook, ‘and I will go with you. But first we will have some food in my kitchen, and carry off a little of the gold that is in the Sheriff's treasure house.'

They ate and drank till they wanted no more, then they broke the locks of the treasure house, and took of the silver as much as they could carry, three hundred pounds and more, and departed unseen by anyone to Robin in the forest.

'Welcome! Welcome!' cried Robin when he saw them, 'welcome, too, to the fair yeoman you bring with you. What tidings from Nottingham, Little John?'

'The proud Sheriff greets you, and sends you by my hand his cook and his silver vessels, and three hundred pounds and three also.'

Robin shook his head, for he knew better than to believe Little John's tale. 'It was never by his good will that you brought such treasure to me,' he answered, and Little John, fearing that he might be ordered to take it back again, slipped away into the forest to carry out a plan that had just come into his head.

He ran straight on for five miles, till he came up with the Sheriff, who was still hunting, and flung himself on his knees before him.

'Reynold Greenleaf,' cried the Sheriff, 'what are you doing here, and where have you been?'

'I have been in the forest, where I saw a fair hart of a green colour, and sevenscore deer feeding hard by.'

'That sight would I see too,' said the Sheriff.

'Then follow me,' answered Little John, and he ran back the way he came, the Sheriff following on horseback, till they turned a corner of the forest, and found themselves in Robin Hood's presence. 'Sir, here is the master-hart,' said Little John.

Still stood the proud Sheriff, A sorry man was he, 'Woe be to you, Reynold Greenleaf, Thou hast betrayed me!'

'It was not my fault,' answered Little John, 'but the fault of your servants, master. For they would not give me my dinner,' and he went away to see to the supper.

It was spread under the greenwood tree, and they sat down to it, hungry men all. But when the Sheriff saw himself served from his own vessels, his appetite went from him.

'Take heart, man,' said Robin Hood, 'and think not we will poison you. For charity's sake, and for the love of Little John, your life shall be granted you. Only for twelve months you shall dwell with me, and learn what it is to be an outlaw.'

To the Sheriff this punishment was worse to bear than the loss of gold or silver dishes, and earnestly he begged Robin Hood to set him free, vowing he would prove himself the best friend that ever the foresters had.

Neither Robin nor any of his men believed him, but he took a great oath that he would never seek to do them harm, and that if he found any of them in evil plight he would deliver them out of it. With that Robin let him go.

HOW ROBIN MET FRIAR TUCK

In many ways life in the forest was dull in the winter, and often the days passed slowly; but in summer, when the leaves grew green, and flowers and ferns covered all the woodland, Robin Hood and his men would come out of their warm resting places, like the rabbits and the squirrels, and would play too. Races they ran, to stretch their legs, or leaping matches were arranged, or they would shoot at a mark. Anything was pleasant, when the grass was soft once more under their feet.

‘Who can kill a hart of grace five hundred paces off?’

So said Robin to his men in the bright May time; and they went into the wood and tried their skill, and in the end it was Little John who brought down the ‘hart of grace,’ to the great joy of Robin Hood. ‘I would ride my horse a hundred miles to find one who could match with thee,’ he said to Little John, and Will Scarlett, who was perhaps rather jealous of this mighty deed, answered with a laugh, ‘There lives a friar in Fountains Abbey who would beat both him and you.’

Now Robin Hood did not like to be told that any man could shoot better than himself or his foresters, so he swore lustily that he would neither eat nor drink till he had seen that friar. Leaving his men where they were, he put on a coat of mail and a steel cap, took his shield and sword, slung his bow over his shoulder, and filled his quiver with arrows. Thus armed, he set forth to Fountains Dale.

By the side of the river a friar was walking, armed like Robin, but without a bow. At this sight Robin jumped from his horse, which he tied to a thorn, and called to the friar to carry him over the water or it would cost him his life.

The friar said nothing, but hoisted Robin on his broad back and marched into the river. Not a word was spoken till they reached the other side, when Robin leaped lightly down, and was going on his way when the friar stopped him. ‘Not so fast, my fine fellow,’ said he. ‘It is my turn now, and you shall take me across the river, or woe will betide you.’ So Robin carried him, and when they had reached the side from which they had started he set down the friar and jumped for the second time on his back, and bade him take him whence he had come. The friar strode into the stream with his burden, but as soon as they got to the middle he bent his head and Robin fell into the water. ‘Now you can sink or swim as you like,’ said the friar, as he stood and laughed.

Robin Hood swam to a bush of golden broom, and pulled himself out of the water, and while the friar was scrambling out Robin fitted an arrow to his bow and let fly at him. But the friar quickly held up his shield, and the arrow fell harmless.

‘Shoot on, my fine fellow, shoot on all day if you like,’ shouted the friar, and Robin shot till his arrows were gone, but always missed his mark. Then they took their swords, and at four of the afternoon they were still fighting.

By this time Robin’s strength was wearing, and he felt he could not fight much more. ‘A boon, a boon!’ cried he. ‘Let me but blow three blasts on my horn, and I will thank you on my bended knees for it.’

The friar told him to blow as many blasts as he liked, and in an instant the forest echoed with his horn; it was but a few minutes before ‘half a hundred yeomen were racing over the lea.’ The friar stared when he saw them; then, turning to Robin, he begged of him a boon also, and leave being granted he gave three whistles, which were followed by the noise of a great crashing through the trees, as fifty great dogs bounded towards him.

‘Here’s a dog for each of your men,’ said the friar, ‘and I myself for you’; but the dogs did not listen to his words, for two of them rushed at Robin, and tore his mantle of Lincoln green from off his back. His men were too busy defending themselves to take heed of their master’s plight, for every arrow shot at a dog was caught and held in the creature’s mouth.

Robin’s men were not used to fight with dogs, and felt they were getting beaten. At last Little John bade the friar call off his dogs, and as he did not do so at once he let fly some arrows, which this time left half a dozen dead on the ground.

‘Hold, hold, my good fellow,’ said the friar, ‘till your master and I can come to a bargain,’ and when the bargain was made this was how it ran. That the friar was to forswear Fountains Abbey and join Robin Hood, and that he should be paid a golden noble every Sunday throughout the year, besides a change of clothes on each holy day.

This Friar had kept Fountains Dale Seven long years or more, There was neither Knight, nor Lord, nor Earl Could make him yield before.

But now he became one of the most famous members of Robin Hood’s men under the name of Friar Tuck.

HOW ROBIN HOOD AND LITTLE JOHN FELL OUT

One Whitsunday morning, when the sun was shining and the birds singing, Robin Hood called to Little John to come with him into Nottingham to hear Mass. As was their custom, they took their bows, and on the way Little John proposed that they should shoot a match with a penny for a wager. Robin, who held that he himself shot better than any man living, laughed in scorn, and told Little John that he should have three tries to his master’s one, which John without more ado accepted. But Robin soon repented both of his offer and his scorn, for Little John speedily won five shillings, whereat Robin became angry and smote Little John with his hand. Little John was not the man to bear being treated so, and he told Robin roundly that he would never more own him for master, and straightway turned back into the wood. At this Robin was ashamed of what he had done, but his pride would not suffer him to say so, and he continued his way to Nottingham, and entered the Church of St. Mary, not without secret fears, for the Sheriff of the town was ever his enemy. However, there he was, and there he meant to stay.

He knelt down before the great cross in the sight of all the people, but none knew him save one monk only, and he stole out of church and ran to the Sheriff, and bade him come quickly and take his foe. The Sheriff was not slow to do the monk’s bidding, and, calling his men to follow him, he marched to the church. The noise they made in entering caused Robin to look round. ‘Alas, alas,’ he said to himself, ‘now miss I Little John.’

But he drew his two-handed sword and laid about him in such wise that twelve of the Sheriff’s men lay dead before him. Then Robin found himself face to face with the Sheriff, and gave him a fierce blow; but his sword broke on the Sheriff’s head, and he had shot away all his arrows. So the men closed round him, and bound his arms.

Ill news travels fast, and not many hours had passed before the foresters heard that their master was in prison. They wept and moaned and wrung their hands, and seemed to have gone suddenly mad, till Little John bade them pluck up their hearts and help him to deal with the monk.

The next morning he hid himself, and waited with a comrade, Much by name, till he saw the monk riding along the road, with a page behind him, carrying letters from the Sheriff to the King telling of Robin’s capture.

‘Whence come you?’ asked Little John, going up to the monk, ‘and can you give us tidings of a false outlaw named Robin Hood, who was taken prisoner yesterday? He robbed both me and my fellow of twenty marks, and glad should we be to hear of his undoing.’

‘He robbed me, too,’ said the monk, ‘of a hundred pounds and more, but I have laid hands on him, and for that you may thank me.’

‘I thank you so much that, with your leave, I and my friend will bear you company,’ answered Little John; ‘for in this forest are many wild men who own Robin Hood for leader, and you ride along this road at the peril of your life.’

They went on together, talking the while, when suddenly Little John seized the horse by the head and pulled down the monk by his hood.

‘He was my master,’ said Little John, ‘That you have brought to bale, ‘Never shall you come at the King ‘For to tell him that tale.’

At these words the monk uttered loud cries, but Little John took no heed of him, and smote off his head, as Much had already smitten off that of the page, lest he should carry the news of what had happened back to the Sheriff. After this they buried the bodies, and, taking the letters, carried them themselves to the King.

When they arrived at the Palace, in the presence of the King, Little John fell on his knees and held the letter out. ‘God save you, my liege lord,’ he said; and the King unfolded the letters and read them.

‘There never was yeoman in Merry England I longed so sore to see,’ he said. ‘But where is the monk that should have brought these letters?’

‘He died by the way,’ answered Little John; and the King asked no more questions.

Twenty pounds each he ordered his treasurer to give to Much and to Little John, and made them yeomen of the crown. After which he handed his own seal to Little John and ordered him to bear it to the Sheriff, and bid him without delay bring Robin Hood unhurt into his presence.

Little John did as the King bade him, and the Sheriff, at sight of the seal, gave him and Much welcome, and set a feast before them, at which John led him to drink heavily. Soon he fell asleep, and then the two outlaws stole softly to the prison. Here John ran the porter through the body for trying to stop his entrance, and, taking the keys, hunted through the cells until he had found Robin. Thrusting a sword into his hand Little John whispered to his master to follow him, and they crept along till they reached the lowest part of the city wall, from which they jumped and were safe and free.

‘Now, farewell,’ said Little John, ‘I have done you a good turn for an ill.’ ‘Not so,’ answered Robin Hood, ‘I make you master of my men and me,’ but Little John would hear nothing of it. ‘I only wish to be your comrade, and thus it shall be,’ he replied.

‘Little John has beguiled us both,’ said the King, when he heard of the adventure.

HOW THE KING VISITED ROBIN HOOD

Now the King had no mind that Robin Hood should do as he willed, and called his Knights to follow him to Nottingham, where they would lay plans how best to take captive the felon. Here they heard sad tales of Robin’s misdoings, and how of the many herds of wild deer that had been wont to roam the forest in some places scarce one remained. This was the work of Robin Hood and his merry men, on whom the King swore vengeance with a great oath.

‘I would I had this Robin Hood in my hands,’ cried he, ‘and an end should soon be put to his doings.’ So spake the King; but an old Knight, full of days and wisdom, answered him and warned him that the task of taking Robin Hood would be a sore one, and best let alone. The King, who had seen the vanity of his hot words the moment that he had uttered them, listened to the old man, and resolved to bide his time, if perchance some day Robin should fall into his power.

All this time and for six weeks later that he dwelt in Nottingham the King could hear nothing of Robin, who seemed to have vanished into the earth with his merry men, though one by one the deer were vanishing too!

At last one day a forester came to the King, and told him that if he would see Robin he must come with him and take five of his best Knights. The King eagerly sprang up to do his bidding, and the six men clad in monks’ clothes mounted their palfreys and rode down to the Abbey, the King wearing an Abbot’s broad hat over his crown and singing as he passed through the greenwood.

Suddenly at the turn of a path Robin and his archers appeared before them.

‘By your leave, Sir Abbot,’ said Robin, seizing the King’s bridle, ‘you will stay a while with us. Know that we are yeomen, who live upon the King’s deer, and other food have we none. Now you have abbeys and churches, and gold in plenty; therefore give us some of it, in the name of holy charity.’

‘I have no more than forty pounds with me,’ answered the King, ‘but sorry I am it is not a hundred, for you should have had it all.’

So Robin took the forty pounds, and gave half to his men, and then told the King he might go on his way. ‘I thank you,’ said the King, ‘but I would have you know that our liege lord has bid me bear you his seal, and pray you to come to Nottingham.’

At this message Robin bent his knee.

‘I love no man in all the world So well as I do my King’;

he cried, ‘and Sir Abbot, for thy tidings, which fill my heart with joy, to-day thou shalt dine with me, for love of my King.’ Then he led the King into an open place, and Robin took a horn and blew it loud, and at its blast seven score of young men came speedily to do his will.

‘They are quicker to do his bidding than my men are to do mine,’ said the King to himself.

Speedily the foresters set out the dinner, venison, and white bread, and the good red wine, and Robin and Little John served the King. ‘Make good cheer,’ said Robin, ‘Abbot, for charity, and then you shall see what sort of life we lead, that so you may tell our King.’

When he had finished eating the archers took their bows, and hung rose-garlands up with a string, and every man was to shoot through the garland. If he failed, he should have a buffet on the head from Robin.

Good bowmen as they were, few managed to stand the test. Little John and Will Scarlett, and Much, all shot wide of the mark, and at length no one was left in but Robin himself and Gilbert of the White Hand. Then Robin fired his last bolt, and it fell three fingers from the garland. ‘Master,’ said Gilbert, ‘you have lost, stand forth and take your punishment.’

‘I will take it,’ answered Robin, ‘but, Sir Abbot, I pray you that I may suffer it at your hands.’

The King hesitated. ‘It did not become him,’ he said, ‘to smite such a stout yeoman,’ but Robin bade him smite on; so he turned up his sleeve, and gave Robin such a buffet on the head that he rolled upon the ground.

‘There is pith in your arm,’ said Robin. ‘Come, shoot a main with me.’ And the King took up a bow, and in so doing his hat fell back and Robin saw his face.

‘My lord the King of England, now I know you well,’ cried he, and he fell on his knees and all the outlaws with him. ‘Mercy I ask, my lord the King, for my men and me.’

‘Mercy I grant,’ then said the King, ‘and therefore I came hither, to bid you and your men leave the greenwood and dwell in my Court with me.’

‘So shall it be,’ answered Robin, ‘I and my men will come to your Court, and see how your service liketh us.’

ROBIN AT COURT

‘Have you any green cloth,’ asked the King, ‘that you could sell to me?’ and Robin brought out thirty yards and more, and clad the King and his men in coats of Lincoln green. ‘Now we will all ride to Nottingham,’ said he, and they went merrily, shooting by the way.

The people of Nottingham saw them coming, and trembled as they watched the dark mass of Lincoln green drawing near over the fields. ‘I fear lest our King be slain,’ whispered one to another, ‘and if Robin Hood gets into the town there is not one of us whose life is safe’; and every man, woman, and child made ready to fly.

The King laughed out when he saw their fright, and called them back. Right glad were they to hear his voice, and they feasted and made merry. A few days later the King returned to London, and Robin dwelt in his Court for twelve months. By that time he had spent a hundred pounds, for he gave largely to the Knights and Squires he met, and great renown he had for his open-handedness.

But his men, who had been born under the shadow of the forest, could not live amid streets and houses. One by one they slipped away, till only Little John and Will Scarlett were left. Then Robin himself grew home-sick, and at the sight of some young men shooting thought upon the time when he was accounted the best archer in all England, and went straightway to the King and begged for leave to go on a pilgrimage to Bernisdale.

‘I may not say you nay,’ answered the King, ‘seven nights you may be gone and no more.’ And Robin thanked him, and that evening set out for the greenwood.

It was early morning when he reached it at last, and listened thirstily to the notes of singing birds, great and small.

‘It seems long since I was here,’ he said to himself; ‘it would give me great joy if I could bring down a deer once more’; and he shot a great hart, and blew his horn, and all the outlaws of the forest came flocking round him. ‘Welcome,’ they said, ‘our dear master, back to the greenwood tree,’ and they threw off their caps and fell on their knees before him in delight at his return.

THE DEATH OF ROBIN HOOD

For two and twenty years Robin Hood dwelt in Sherwood Forest after he had run away from Court, and naught that the King could say would tempt him back again. At the end of that time he fell ill; he neither ate nor drank, and had no care for the things he loved. ‘I must go to merry Kirkley,’ said he, ‘and have my blood let.’

But Will Scarlett, who heard his words, spoke roundly to him. ‘Not by *my* leave, nor without a hundred bowmen at your back. For there abides an evil man, who is sure to quarrel with you, and you will need us badly.’

‘If you are afraid, Will Scarlett, you may stay at home, for me,’ said Robin, ‘and in truth no man will I take with me, save Little John only, to carry my bow.’

‘Bear your bow yourself, master, and I will bear mine, and we will shoot for a penny as we ride.’

‘Very well, let it be so,’ said Robin, and they went on merrily enough till they came to some women weeping sorely near a stream.

‘What is the matter, good wives?’ said Robin Hood.

‘We weep for Robin Hood and his dear body, which to-day must let blood,’ was their answer.

‘Pray why do you weep for me?’ asked Robin; ‘the Prioress is the daughter of my aunt, and my cousin, and well I know she would not do me harm for all the world.’ And he passed on, with Little John at his side.

Soon they reached the Priory, where they were let in by the Prioress herself, who bade them welcome heartily, and not the less because Robin handed her twenty pounds in gold as payment for his stay, and told her if he cost her more she was to let him know of it. Then she began to bleed him, and for long Robin said nothing, giving her credit for kindness and for knowing her art, but at length so much blood came from him that he suspected treason. He tried to open the door, for she had left him alone in the room, but it was locked fast, and while the blood was still flowing he could not escape from the casement. So he lay down for many hours, and none came near him, and at length the blood stopped. Slowly Robin uprose and staggered to the lattice-window, and blew thrice on his horn; but the blast was so low, and so little like what Robin was wont to give, that Little John, who was watching for some sound, felt that his master must be nigh to death.

At this thought he started to his feet, and ran swiftly to the Priory. He broke the locks of all the doors that stood between him and Robin Hood, and soon entered the chamber where his master lay, white, with nigh all his blood gone from him.

‘I crave a boon of you, dear master,’ cried Little John.

‘And what is that boon,’ said Robin Hood, ‘which Little John begs of me?’

And Little John answered, ‘It is to burn fair Kirkley Hall, and all the nunnery.’

But Robin Hood, in spite of the wrong that had been done him, would not listen to Little John’s cry for revenge. ‘I never hurt a woman in all my life,’ he said, ‘nor a man that was in her company. But now my time is done, that know I well; so give me my bow and a broad arrow, and wheresoever it falls there shall my grave be digged. Lay a green sod under my head and another at my feet, and put beside me my bow, which ever made sweetest music to my ears, and see that green and gravel make my grave. And, Little John, take care that I have length enough and breadth enough to lie in.’ So he loosened his last arrow from the string and then died, and where the arrow fell Robin was buried.

THE STORY OF GRETTIR THE STRONG

About nine hundred years ago, more or less, there lived in Iceland, at a homestead called Biarg, two old folks named Asmund the Greyhaired and his wife Asdis. At the time our story begins they had two sons, Atli the eldest, and Grettir, besides daughters; sixteen years later another son was born to them, named Illugi. Atli was a general favourite, in disposition good-natured and yielding, in this the very opposite of Grettir, who held to his own way, and was, besides, silent, reserved, and rough in manner. But he is described as fair to look on, broad-faced, short-faced, red-haired and much freckled, not of quick growth in his childhood. There was little love lost between him and his father, but his mother loved the boy right well. So matters sped till Grettir was ten years old, when, one day, his father told him to go and watch the geese on the farm, fifty of them, besides many goslings. The boy went, but with an ill grace, and shortly afterwards the geese were found all dead or dying, with many of their necks wrung, at which Asmund was mightily vexed. Again, one evening, being cold, he asked the boy to warm him by rubbing his back, but Grettir, taking up a wool-carder’s comb, dropped it down his father’s back. The old man was furiously angry, and would have beaten Grettir, had he not run away, while Asdis, though vexed, tried her best to make peace between them.

Next, Grettir was sent to tend the horses, amongst which was a favourite mare called Keingala, who always preferred the coldest and windiest spots to graze in; the boy was ill-clad and half-starved with cold, so, by way of paying Keingala out for her uncomfortable choice of pasture, he drew a sharp knife right across her shoulder and along both sides of her back. When Asmund next saw the mare and stroked her back, the hide came off beneath his hand. He taxed Grettir with the deed, but the boy sneered mockingly and said nothing. Keingala had to be killed. Such and many other scurvy tricks did Grettir play in his childhood, but meanwhile he grew in body and strength, though none as yet knew him to be strong beyond his years.

This first came to be known shortly afterwards at Midfirth Water, where some ball games were being held on the ice. Grettir was now fourteen; and was matched to play with one Audun, several years older than himself. Audun struck the ball over Grettir’s head, so that he could not catch it, and it bounded far away along the ice; Grettir brought it back, and in a rage threw it at Audun’s forehead; Audun struck at him with his bat, but Grettir closed with him and wrestled, for a long time holding his own; but Audun was a man of full strength, and at last prevailed. Grettir's next performance brought him into more trouble. Asmund had a bosom friend named Thorkel Krafla, who paid him a visit at Biarg on his way to the Thing, or Icelandic parliament, with a retinue of sixty followers, for Thorkel was a great chief, and a man of substance. Each traveller had to carry his own provisions for the journey, including Grettir, who joined Thorkel's company. Grettir's saddle turned over, however, and his meal bag was lost, nor could he find it, notwithstanding a long search. Just then he saw a man who was in like plight with himself, having also lost his meal sack: his name was Skeggi, one of Thorkel's followers. All of a sudden Skeggi darted off, and Grettir saw him stoop and pick up a mealsack, which Skeggi claimed as his own. Grettir was not satisfied, and they fought for it; Skeggi cut at Grettir with his axe, but he wrenched it out of his hand, and clove his head in twain. Thorkel then allowed Grettir his choice: whether to go on to the Thing, or return home. He chose the first alternative; but a lawsuit was set on foot by the heirs of the dead man. Thorkel paid the necessary fines, but Grettir was outlawed, banished from the country, and had to stay abroad three years.

Asmund entrusted his son to the keeping of a man called Haflidi, the captain of a ship that was sailing for Norway; father and son parted with but little sorrow between them, but Asdis accompanied the boy part of the way, and gave him a sword which had been owned by Jokul, her grandfather; for which Grettir thanked her well, saying he deemed it better than things of more worth, so he came to the ship. With the sailors he was no more popular than he had been elsewhere, for he would work only by fits and starts, as he pleased; besides, he had a gift of making very biting rhymes, which he indulged in at the expense of all on board. But when he did condescend to work he was a match for any four, or, as some say, for any eight men by reason of his strength. After they had sailed some way east over the sea, and had much thick weather, one night they ran aground on a rock near an island which turned out to be Haramsey, off Norway. The lord of that island was called Thorfinn, son of Karr the Old. When day dawned he sent down a boat to rescue the shipwrecked sailors, who were saved, with their merchandise, but their vessel broke up. Grettir remained with Thorfinn some time; and was fond of rambling about the island, going from house to house; and he made friends with one Audun, not, of course, the one who has already been mentioned.

One night the two noticed a great blaze on a ness or headland, and Grettir asked the reason of it, adding, that in his country such a fire would only burn above hidden treasure. Audun told him he had better not inquire too closely into the matter, which, however, as one might expect, only whetted his curiosity the more. He was told accordingly that on that headland Karr the Old was buried; that at first father and son had but one farm on the island, but since Karr died he had so haunted the place that all the farmers who owned land were driven away. Thorfinn, therefore, now held the whole island, and to such good purpose, that whosoever enjoyed his protection was not worried by the ghost. Grettir determined to investigate, and providing himself with spades and tools, set off with Audun to dig into the ‘barrow,’ as these mounds of earth are called, which northern races and others used to raise over their dead. Leaving Audun to guard the rope by which he descended, Grettir found the interior of the cavern very dark, and a smell therein none of the sweetest. First he saw horse-bones, then he stumbled against the arm of a high chair wherein was a man sitting; great treasures of gold and silver lay heaped together, and under the man’s feet a small chest full of silver. All this Grettir carried towards the rope, but while doing so he was suddenly seized in a strong grip; whereupon he let go the treasure and rushed at the Thing which lived in the barrow; and now they set on one another unsparingly enough. There was a battle, first one, then the other gaining a slight advantage, but at last the barrow-wight fell over on his back with a huge din; whereupon Grettir drew his sword, ‘Jokul’s gift,’ and cut off Karr’s head, laying it beside the thigh, for, in this way only, men said, could a ghost be laid. Grettir took the treasure and brought it to Thorfinn, who was not ill-pleased that his father’s tomb had been rifled, for he held that wealth hidden in the ground was wealth wrongly placed, in which we shall probably agree with him.

After the events just described, Thorfinn went away with thirty of his men to one of his farms on the mainland, in order to keep the Yule-tide feast (Christmas). His wife and daughter, the latter of whom was ill in bed, remained at home. Now Thorfinn, some time previously, had taken a leading part in passing a law, the object of which was that all berserkers should be outlawed. These berserkers were roving bands of pirates, brave fighters, but respecting no man’s property; on the contrary, their chief object was to lay violent hands on women and goods to which they had no title. It is easily to be understood that Thorfinn, in consequence of his action, had incurred their bitterest enmity. One day Grettir observed a ship approaching, rowed by twelve men; it landed near Thorfinn’s boat-stand, wherein was his boat which was never launched by less than thirty men; nevertheless these twelve pushed it down to the water’s edge, laid their own boat upon it, and bore it into the boat-stand.

Grettir’s suspicions being aroused, he went down, and after giving them a hearty welcome, asked who they were. The leader told him he was known as Thorir Paunch; that his brother was Ogmund, and the rest fellows of theirs. Grettir told them they could not have come at a better time, if, as he thought, they had some grudge against Thorfinn, for he was away from home, and would not be back till Yule was past, but his wife and daughter were in the house. ‘Now am I well enough minded to take revenge on Thorfinn,’ said Thorir, ‘and this man is ready enough of tidings, and no need have we to drag the words out of him.’ So they all went up to the farm, but the women were distracted with fear, thinking that Grettir had played false. He, however, induced the berserkers to lay aside their arms, and when evening was come, brought them beer in abundance, and entertained them with tales and merry jests. After a while he proposed to lead them to Thorfinn’s treasure house: nothing loth they followed readily; when they were all inside he managed to slip out and lock them in. He then ran back for weapons: a broad-headed barbed spear, his sword and helmet. Now the berserkers knew they had been entrapped; breaking down the panelling of a wall they rushed out into the passage, where in the nick of time arrived Grettir, who thrust Thorir through with his spear; Ogmund the Evil was pressing close behind, so that the same thrust which pierced the one transfixed the other also. The remainder defended themselves with logs and whatever lay ready to hand, or tried to escape; but Grettir slew all of them save two, who for the moment escaped, but were found next day under a rock, dead from cold and wounds.

Shortly afterwards Thorfinn returned, and when he was told of the wondrous deeds of Grettir, who had thus saved the honour of his house, he bade him come to him whenever he needed aid; and the two were now close friends; moreover, Grettir’s fame began to spread abroad, and he became renowned all over Norway. Leaving his friend Thorfinn, he took passage in a ship belonging to one Thorkel, who lived in Heligoland. He welcomed Grettir heartily to his house, but with a man called Biorn, who lived there with him, the Icelander could by no means agree, nor indeed did others find it easy, for Biorn’s temper was hasty and difficult.

It happened that a savage bear wrought havoc at that time, being so grim that it spared neither man nor beast, so one night Biorn set out to slay it. The bear was in its cave, in the track leading to which Biorn lay down, with his shield over him, to wait for the beast to stir abroad as its manner was. But the beast suspected the presence of the man, and was slow to move; delayed so long indeed that Biorn fell asleep. Now the bear became brisk enough, sallied forth, hooked its claws in Biorn’s shield, and threw it over the cliff. Biorn woke suddenly and ran, just escaping its clutch; but the whole proceedings had been watched, and he had to endure many taunts and jeers. Grettir went afterwards and killed the beast, though not without a terrible struggle, in which they both fell over the rocks, but the bear was underneath, and Grettir was able to stab it to the heart. More than ever then on account of this did ill-will against Grettir rankle in Biorn’s breast. He sailed west to England, as master of Thorkel’s ship; when he returned he met Grettir at a place called Drontheim-firth. The two took up their old quarrel again, fought on the strand, and Biorn was killed.

At that time Earl Svein was ruling over Norway as regent, the rightful king being but a boy. At the court in the Earl’s service was Biorn’s brother, Hiarandi, who was exceedingly wroth when he heard of Biorn’s death, and begged the Earl’s assistance in the matter. Svein therefore sent for Thorfinn and Grettir, but Hiarandi would not agree to any terms proposed, and lay in wait to take Grettir’s life. With five others he sprang out from a certain court gate, dealt a blow at him with an axe, and wounded him; but Grettir and a companion turned on them and slew them all save one, who escaped and told the Earl. There remained yet another brother of Biorn and Hiarandi to take up the feud, but he fared no better, and was also slain. Earl Svein was now ‘wondrous wroth’ at this tale, for said he, ‘Grettir has now slain three brothers, one at the heels of the other, and I will not thus bring wrongs into the land so as to take compensation for such unmeasured misdeeds’; so he would not listen to any proposals by Thorfinn to pay blood-money. However, many more added their words to Thorfinn’s, and prayed the Earl to spare Grettir’s life, for, after all, he had acted in self-defence, and if his life were to be forfeit, there would be slayings throughout the whole land. These arguments at length prevailed, Grettir was allowed to go in peace, and went back to Iceland, the term of his outlawry being expired.

Being now grown to man’s estate, and having waxed greatly in bodily strength, he roamed about the country to see if there were any with whom he might match himself, and took it very ill that he found none. About this time, strange rumours were flying about to the effect that a farm belonging to one Thorhall was haunted. Thorhall was an honest man and very rich in cattle and livestock, but could hardly get a shepherd to stay in his service; whereat, being sore perplexed, he went for advice to Skapti the Lawman. Skapti promised to get him a shepherd called Glam, a Swede, for which Thorhall thanked him. On his return he missed two dun cows, went to look for them, and on the way met a man carrying faggots, who said his name was Glam. He was great of stature, uncouth in appearance, his eyes grey and glaring, and his hair wolf-grey. Thorhall told him Skapti had recommended him, adding that the place was haunted, but Glam made light of this: ‘Such bugs will not scare me,’ quoth he. There was a church at Thorhall-stead, but Glam loathed church-song, being godless, foul-tempered and surly, and no man could abide him, Thorhall’s wife least of all. So time wore on till Christmas-eve, when Glam called for his meat, but was told that no Christian man would eat meat on that day. He insisted; and the housewife gave it, though prophesying evil would come of it. Glam took the food and went out growling and grumbling.

He was heard in the early morning on the hills, but not as the day wore on; then a snowstorm came, and Glam returned not that night nor yet the day following, so search parties were sent out, who found the sheep scattered wide about in fens, beaten down by the storm, or strayed up into the mountains. Then they came to a great beaten place high up in a valley, where it seemed as though there had been wrestling, stones and earth torn up, and signs of a severe struggle; looking closer, they found Glam dead, his body blue and swollen to the size of an ox. They tried to bring the body down to the church, but could only move it a very little way; they returned, therefore, and told how they had tracked steps as great as if a cask bottom had been stamped down, leading from the beaten place up to beneath sheer rocks high up the valley, and along the track great stains of blood. From this men thought that the evil wight which had killed Glam had got such wounds as had sufficed for him, but none ever could say for certain.

The second day after Christmas men were sent again to bring Glam's body to the church, but though horses were put to drag it, they could not move the corpse except down hill, so Glam was buried where he lay. Now within a little time men became aware that Glam lay not quiet; he walked well-nigh night and day, and took to riding the house roofs at night, so much so that he nearly broke them in. The folk were exceedingly afraid thereat; many fainted or went mad, while others incontinently fled there and then. Another shepherd, big and strong, came to take Glam's place; he was nowise dismayed by the hauntings, but deemed it good sport rather than not when Glam rode the house-roofs. But when another Christmas came the shepherd was missed; search was made, and he was found on the hill-side by Glam's cairn, his neck broken, and every bone in his body smashed. Then Glam waxed more mighty than ever; the cattle bellowed and roared, and gored each other; the byre cracked, and a cattle-man who had been long in Thorhall's service was found dead, his head in one stall and feet in another. None could go up the dale with horse or hound, because it was straightway slain, and it was no easy task to get servants to remain at the steading.

Things had come to this pass when Grettir rode over to Thorhall-stead, where the owner gave him good welcome, though warning him that few cared to stay long under his roof. Grettir's horse was locked up in the stable, and the first night nothing happened; but on the second the stable was broken into, the horse dragged out to the door, and every bone of him broken. Next night Grettir sat up to watch; and when a third of the night was past, he heard a terrible din as of one riding the roof, and driving his heels against the thatch so that every rafter cracked again. He went to the door, and saw Glam, whose head, as it appeared to him, was monstrously big. Glam came slowly in and took hold of a bundle lying on the seat, but Grettir planted his foot against a beam, seized the bundle also, and pulled against Glam with such strength that the wrapper was rent between them. Glam wondered who might this be that pulled with such strength against him, when Grettir rushed in, seized him round the waist, and tried to force him down backwards; but he shrank all aback by reason of Glam's strength, which, indeed, seemed to be almost greater than his own. A wondrous hard wrestling bout was that; but at last Grettir, gathering up his strength for a sudden effort, drove against Glam's breast, at the same moment pushing with both feet against the half-sunken stone that stood in the threshold of the door. For this Glam was not ready, therefore he reeled backwards and spun against the door, so that his shoulders caught against the upper part of it; the roof burst — both rafters and frozen thatch — and he fell open-armed backwards out of the house with Grettir over him.

It was bright moonlight without, with drift scudding over the moon; at that instant the moon's face cleared, and Glam glared up against her. By that sight only Grettir confessed himself dismayed beyond all that he had ever seen; nor, for weariness and fear together, could he draw his sword to strike off Glam's head withal. But Glam was crafty beyond other ghosts, so that now he spoke: 'Exceeding eager hast thou been to meet me, Grettir, but it will be deemed no wonder if this meeting work thee harm. This must I tell thee, that thou now hast but half the strength and manhood which was thy lot if thou hadst not met me; I may not take from thee the strength that was thine before, but this may I rule — that thou shalt never be mightier than thou now art. Hitherto thou hast earned fame by thy deeds, but henceforth will wrongs and manslayings fall on thee, and the most part of thy doings will turn to thy woe and ill-hap, an outlaw shalt thou be made, and ever shall it be thy lot to dwell abroad. Therefore this fate I lay upon thee, ever in those days to see these eyes of mine with thine eyes, and thou wilt find it hard to be alone, and that shall drag thee unto death.' Grettir's wits came back to him, and therewith he drew his short sword, cut off Glam's head, and laid it at his thigh. Glam's body was burnt, the ashes put into a beast's skin and buried. Thorhall, overjoyed at the deliverance, treated Grettir handsomely, giving him a good horse and decent clothes, for his own had been torn to pieces in the struggle. Grettir's fame spread far abroad for this deed, and none was deemed his equal for boldness and prowess. Yet Glam's curse began already to work, for Grettir dared not go out after nightfall, for then he seemed to see all kinds of horrors. It became a proverb in the land that Glam gives Glam-sight to those who see things otherwise than as they are, which we now express by the word ‘glamour.’

Now Grettir had a strong wish to go to Norway, for Earl Svein had fled the country after being beaten in a battle, and Olaf the Saint held sole rule as king. There was also a man named Thorir of Garth who had been in Norway, and was a friend of the king; this man was anxious to send out his sons to become the king’s men. The sons accordingly sailed, and came to a haven at Stead, where they remained some days, during stormy weather. Grettir also had sailed after them, and the crew bore down on Stead, being hard put to it by reason of foul weather, snow and frost; and they were all worn, weary and wet. To save expense they did not put into the harbour, but lay to beside a dyke, where, though perished with cold, they could not light a fire. As the night wore on they saw that a great fire was burning on the opposite side of the sound up which they had sailed, and fell to talking and wondering whether by possibility any man might fetch that fire. Grettir said little, but made ready for swimming; he had on but a cape and sail-cloth breeches. He girt up the cape and tied a rope strongly round his middle, and had with him a cask; then he leaped overboard and swam across. There he saw a house, and heard much talking and noise, so he turned towards it, and found it to be a house of refuge for coasting sailors; twelve men were inside sitting round a great fire on the floor, drinking, and these were the sons of Thorir. When Grettir burst in he knew not who was there, he himself seemed huge of bulk, for his cape was frozen all over into ice; therefore the men took him to be some evil troll, and smote at him with anything that lay to hand; but Grettir put all blows aside, snatched up some firebrands, and swam therewith back to the ship. Grettir’s comrades were mightily pleased, and bepraised him and his journey and his prowess.

Next morning they crossed the sound, but found no house, only a great heap of ashes, and therein many bones of men. They asked if Grettir had done this misdeed; but he said it had happened even as he had expected. The men said wherever they came that Grettir had burnt those people; and the news soon spread that the victims were the sons of Thorir of Garth. Grettir therefore now grew into such bad repute that he was driven from the ship, and scarcely anyone would say a good word for him. As matters were so hopeless he determined to explain all to the king, and offer to free himself from the slander by handling hot iron without being burned. His ill-luck still pursued him, for when all was ready in the church where the ceremony was about to take place, a wild-looking lad, or, as some said, an unclean spirit, started up from no one knew where, and spoke such impertinent words to Grettir that he felled him with a blow of his fist. After this the king would not allow the ceremony to go on: ‘Thou art far too luckless a man to abide with us, and if ever man has been cursed, of all men must thou have been,’ said he; and advised him to go back to Iceland in the summer. Meanwhile Asmund the Greyhaired died, and was buried at Biarg, and Atli succeeded to his goods, but was soon afterwards basely murdered by a neighbouring chief who bore him ill-will for his many friendships, and grudged him his possessions. Thorir of Garth brought a suit at the Thing to have Grettir outlawed for the burning of his sons; but Skapti the Lawman thought it scarcely fair to condemn a man unheard, and spoke these wise words: ‘A tale is half told if one man tells it, for most folk are readiest to bring their stories to the worser side when there are two ways of telling them.’ Thorir, however, was a man of might, and had powerful friends; these between them pushed on the suit, and with a high hand rather than according to law obtained their decree. Thus was Grettir outlawed for a deed of which he was innocent. These three pieces of bad news greeted him all at once on his return to Iceland: his father’s death, his brother’s murder, and his own outlawry.

One of the first things he did was to avenge his brother’s murder, but there was a price on his head, and he wandered about from place to place in the wilderness. On one occasion, as he lay asleep, some men of Icefirth came upon him, and though they were ten in number they had much ado to take him; but at last they bound him, and put up a gallows, for they intended to hang him. Fortunately for Grettir, at that moment there rode along the wife of the ruling chief of that district, who interposed and set him free, on his promise not to stir up strife in that neighbourhood. His next adventure was at a place called Ernewaterheath where he had built himself a hut, and lived by fishing in the river. There were other outlaws, who, on hearing that Grettir was in the neighbourhood, made a bargain with one Grim that he should slay him. Grim begged Grettir to take him into his hut, which he agreed to do, as he was so frightened when alone in the dark; nevertheless, having his suspicions of the man, he kept his short sword always within reach. One day Grim came back from fishing, and thought Grettir was asleep, for he made no movement when Grim suddenly stamped his foot; thinking he now had his chance, he stole on tip-toe to the bedside, took Grettir’s short sword and unsheathed it. But at the very moment when Grim had it raised aloft to stab Grettir, the supposed sleeping man sprang up, knocked Grim down, wrenched the sword out of his hand and killed him. Next, Grettir’s enemy Thorir of Garth heard of his whereabouts, and prevailed upon one Thorir Redbeard to attempt to slay him. So Redbeard laid his plans, with the object, as it is quaintly phrased, of ‘winning’ Grettir. He, however, declined to be ‘won,’ for Redbeard fared no better than Grim. He tried to slay the outlaw while he was swimming back from his nets, but Grettir sank like a stone and swam along the bottom till he reached a place where he could land unseen by Redbeard. He then came on him from behind, while Redbeard was still looking for his appearance out of the water; heaved him over his head, and caused him to fall so heavily that his weapon fell out of his hand. Grettir seized it and smote off his head.

Thorir of Garth was anything but satisfied with the result of his endeavour to have Grettir killed, and gathered together a force of nearly eighty men to take him; but this time Grettir was forewarned by a friend, and took up a position in a very narrow pass. When Thorir's men came up and attacked him he slew them one by one till he had killed eighteen and wounded many more, so that Thorir said, 'Lo, now we have to do with trolls and not men,' and bade the rest retire. Shortly afterwards he collected some twenty men and rode off again to search for Grettir. This time he was within an ace of coming upon the outlaw unawares; but Grettir and a friend had just time to conceal themselves when Thorir rode by. After the party had passed, an idea occurred to Grettir. 'They will not deem their journey good if we be not found,' he said; so, though much against the advice of his friend, he disguised himself in a slouch hat and other clothes, took a staff and intercepted Thorir's band at a point where he knew they must pass. They asked him whether he had seen any men riding over the heath. 'Yes,' he said, 'the men you seek I have seen, and you have missed them only by a very little; they are there on the south side of these bogs to the left.' On hearing this, off galloped Thorir and his men, but the bogs were a sort of quagmire, wherein the horses stuck fast; and remained wallowing and struggling for the greater part of the day, while the riders 'gave to the devil withal the wandering churl who had so befooled them.'

Grettir now deemed it advisable to go about the country in disguise, and, under the name of Guest, came to a place called Sandheaps, much haunted by trolls. Two winters before he arrived the husband of the good-wife had mysteriously disappeared during her absence, none knew whither; her name was Steinvor. A loud crashing had been heard in the night about the man's bed, but the folk were too frightened to rise and find out the cause; in the morning Steinvor came back, but her husband was gone. Again, the next year, while she was away at church, a house-servant remained behind; but he too vanished, and bloodstains were found about the outer door. Grettir was told of this when he came to Sandheaps on Christmas-eve, staying there under the name of Guest. Steinvor, as usual, went away to worship, and remained absent that night, leaving Grettir at home. He sat up to watch, and about midnight he heard a great noise outside, shortly after which there came into the hall a huge troll-wife, with a trough in one hand and a monstrous chopper in the other. Seeing Grettir she rushed at him, but he closed with her, and there was a terrible wrestling match.

She was the stronger, and dragged him from the house, breaking down all the fittings of the door; down she dragged him to the river which flowed through the farm, and Grettir, exhausted with the struggle, was well-nigh at the limit of his endurance. Making one last great effort, he managed to draw his short sword and strike off the hag’s arm at the shoulder; then was he free, and she fell into the gulf and was carried down the rapids. This, at least, was Grettir’s story; but the men of the neighbourhood say that day dawned on them while they were still wrestling, and that therefore the troll burst; for this trolls do, according to Norse tradition, if they happen to be caught above ground by the rising sun.

Steinvor came back with the priest, who asked Grettir where he thought the two men were who had disappeared. He replied they were, he thought, in the gulf; but if the priest would help him he would find out. The priest agreed. Accordingly, taking a rope with them, they followed the stream down to a waterfall where they saw a cave up under the cliff — a sheer rock the cliff was, nearly fifty fathoms down to the water. The priest’s heart misgave him, but Grettir determined to make the attempt; so, driving a peg into the ground, he made the rope fast to it and bade the priest watch it; then he tied a stone to the end and let it sink into the water. When all was ready, he took his short sword and leapt into the water. Disappearing from the priest’s view, he dived under the waterfall — and hard work it was, for the whirlpool was strong; but he reached a projecting rock on which he rested awhile. A great cave was under the waterfall, and the river fell over it from the sheer rocks. Grettir climbed into the cave, where he found a great fire flaming, and a giant sitting beside it, huge and horrible to look upon. He smote at the new-comer with a broadsword, but Grettir avoided the blow, and returned such a mighty stroke with his own sword that the giant fell dead at once. The priest on the bank, seeing blood washed down by the swirling waters, and thinking Grettir was killed, fled in alarm and spread the report of his death. Grettir meanwhile stayed in the cave till far on into the night; he found there the bones of two men, which he put in a bag; swimming with them to the rope, he shook it, but as the priest had gone he had to draw himself up by strength of hands. He took the bones to the church, where he left them, returning himself to Sandheaps. When the priest saw Grettir, the latter taxed him with breach of faith in quitting the rope, which charge the priest must needs admit; however, no great harm had resulted, the bones were buried, and the district was freed from hauntings. Grettir received much credit, in so far as he had cleansed the land from these evil wights who had wrought the loss of the men there in the dale.

Our hero remained in hiding at Sandheaps, but Thorir of Garth heard of him and sent men to take him. Grettir accordingly left the place and went to

Maddervales, to Gudmund the Rich, of whom he begged shelter. Gudmund, however, dared not harbour him, but advised him to seek shelter in an isle called Drangey in Skagafirth. The place, he said, was excellent for defence, for without ladders no one could land. Grettir agreed to go, and went home to Biarg to bid his mother farewell. His brother, Illugi, was now fifteen years old, a handsome boy, and he overheard Grettir’s conversation with his mother about his proposed departure to Drangey. ‘I will go with thee, brother,’ said he, ‘though I know not that I shall be of any help to thee, unless that I shall be ever true to thee, nor run from thee whiles thou standest up.’ Asdis bade them farewell, warning Grettir against sorcery; yet well she knew that she would never see either of her sons again. They left Biarg, going north towards Drangey; and on the way met with a big ill-clad loon called Thorbiorn Noise, a man too lazy to work, and a great swaggerer; but they allowed him to join them.

Now Drangey was an island whose cliffs rose sheer up from the sea; there was good pasturage on it, and many sheep and cattle, owned by about twenty men, who amongst them held the island in shares. Two men called Hialti and Thorbiorn Angle, being the richest men, had the largest shares. When the men got ready to fetch their beasts from the island for slaughter, they found it occupied, which they thought strange; but supposing the men in possession to be shipwrecked sailors, they rowed to the place where the ladders were, but found these drawn up. Persuasion was of no avail, so the baffled owners retired, and in one way or another made over their respective shares to Angle, on the understanding that he would free the island from these unwelcome intruders. The months wore on, and brought no change; but now Grettir said he would go to the mainland and get victuals. Disguising himself, he carried out his plan, leaving Illugi and Noise to guard the ladders. Sports were being held at a place called Heron-ness, and the stranger was asked if he would wrestle. ‘Time was,’ he said, ‘when he had been fond of it, but he had now given it up; yet, upon condition of peace and safe conduct being assured to him until such time as he returned home, he was willing to try a bout.’ This was agreed to, whereupon he cast aside his disguise, and stood revealed as Grettir the outlaw. All saw that they had been beguiled, yet, for their oath’s sake, they could do nothing. First Hialti alone tried to throw Grettir, but met with nothing but a mighty fall; then he and his brother Angle tried together, but though each of them had the strength of two men they were no match for their antagonist, and had to retire discomfited.

Then Grettir went back to Drangey. Two winters had now been spent on the island, but firewood was hard to come by; Noise was sent down to gather drifted logs from the sea, but he grew lazier and grumbled more and more every day, letting the fire out on one occasion, whereas his duty was to keep it burning.

Grettir determined to swim to the mainland and bring back wood; in this he was successful, though the distance was a sea mile, whereat all said his prowess both on land and sea was marvellous. Meanwhile Angle, having been baffled in a second attempt to land and drive out Grettir, induced a young man called Hœring, an expert climber, to try to scale the cliffs, promising him if successful a very large reward. Angle rowed him over, and Hœring did, indeed, scale the precipice, but young Illugi was on the watch, chased him round the island, and Hœring, sore pressed, leapt over the cliff and was killed.

About this time, Grettir having been so many years in outlawry, many thought that the sentence should be annulled; and it was deemed certain that he would be pardoned in the next ensuing summer; but they who had owned the island were exceedingly discontented at the prospect of his acquittal, and urged Angle either to give back the island or slay Grettir. Now Angle had a foster-mother, Thurid; she was old and cunning in witchcraft, which she had learnt in her youth; for though Christianity had now been established in the island, yet there remained still many traces of heathendom. Angle and she put out in a ten-oared boat to pick a quarrel with Grettir, of which the upshot was that the outlaw threw a huge stone into the boat, where the witch lay covered up with wrappings, and broke her leg. Angle had to endure many taunts at the failure of all his attempts to outplay Grettir. One day, Thurid was limping along by the sea, when she found a large log, part of the trunk of a tree. She cut a flat space on it, carved magic characters, or runes, on the root, reddened them with her blood, and sang witch-words over them; then she walked backwards round it, and widdershins — which means in a direction against the sun — and thrust the log out to sea under many strong spells, in such wise that it should drive out to Drangey. In the teeth of the wind it went, till it came to the island, where Illugi and Grettir saw it, but knowing it boded them ill, they thrust it out from shore; yet next morning was it there again, nearer the ladders than before; but again they drove it out to sea. The days wore on to summer, and a gale sprang up with wet; the brothers being short of firewood, Noise was sent down to the shore to look for drift, grumbling at being ordered out in bad weather, when, lo! the log was there again, and he fetched it up.

Grettir was angry with Noise, and not noticing what the log was, hewed at it with his axe, which glanced from the wood and cut into his leg, right down to the bone. Illugi bound it up, and at first it seemed as though the wound was healed. But after a time his leg took to paining Grettir, and became blue and swollen, so that he could not sleep, and Illugi watched by him night and day. At this time Thurid advised Angle to make another attempt on the island; he therefore gathered a force of a dozen men together, and set sail in very foul weather, but no sooner had they reached open sea than the wind lulled, so they came to Drangey at dusk. Noise had been told to guard the ladders, and had gone out as usual with very ill grace; he thought to himself he would not draw them up, so he lay down there and fell asleep, remaining all day long in slumber till Angle came to the island. Mounting the ladders, he and his men found Noise snoring at the top; arousing him roughly, they learned from him what had happened, and how Grettir lay sick in the hut with Illugi tending him. Angle thrashed Noise soundly for betraying his master, and the men made for the hut. Illugi guarded the door with the greatest valour, and when they thrust at him with spears he struck off all the spear heads from the shafts. But some of the men leapt up on to the roof, tore away the thatch, and broke one of the rafters. Grettir thrust up with a spear and killed one man, but he could not rise from his knee by reason of his wound; the others leapt down and attacked him; young Illugi threw his shield over him and made defence for both in most manly wise. Grettir killed another man, whose body fell upon him, so that he could not use his sword; wherefore Angle at that moment was able to stab him between the shoulders, and many another wound they gave him till they thought he was dead. Angle took Grettir’s short sword and struck at the head of the body with such force that a piece of the sword-blade was nicked out. So died Grettir, the bravest man of all who ever dwelt in Iceland.

The gallant young Illugi was offered his life by Angle if he would promise not to try to avenge Grettir; but he scorned the offer, and was slain next day; the brothers were buried in a cairn on the island. Noise was taken aboard the boat, but bore himself so ill that he too was killed. Now Angle thought to claim from Thorir of Garth the reward set upon Grettir’s head; but the murderer was very ill spoken of in the land: first, because he had used sorcery, which was against the law; next, that he had acted a cowardly part in bearing arms against a half-dead man. A suit of outlawry was brought against him in the Thing; but seeing that it would go against him he escaped to Norway. In that country lived an elder half-brother of Grettir, who had heard of his fate and determined to avenge him; neither knew the other by sight. Angle, however, becoming uneasy, went to Micklegarth (Constantinople), whither he was followed by Thorstein Dromond. One day, at a weapon-showing, or exhibition of arms, Angle drew the short sword which had belonged to Grettir; it was praised by all as a good weapon, but the notch in the edge was a blemish. Angle related how he had slain Grettir, and how the notch came to be there. Thereupon Thorstein, who was present, knew his man, and asked to be allowed, like the rest, to see the short sword; Angle gave it to him, whereupon Thorstein clove his head in two with it, and Angle fell to earth dead and dishonoured.

Thus Grettir was avenged.

THE RED ROMANCE BOOK

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PREFACE

WHAT ROMANCES ARE

(To Children and Others)

I once read a book about a poor little lonely boy in a great house with a large library. This boy was pale, dull, and moping. Nobody knew what was the matter with him. But somebody tracked him into the library and saw him take a huge thick black book, half as tall as himself, out of a bookcase, and sit down and read it. The name of the book was *Polexander*. So he sat and sobbed over *Polexander*, because it was so very dull and so very long. There were 800 pages, and he had only read sixty-seven. But some very stupid grown-up person had told him that he must always begin a book at the beginning, and, if he once began, he must read every word of it, and read nothing else till he had finished every word of it.

The boy saw that he would die of weariness long before he reached the end of *Polexander*, but he stuck to it like the other boy who stood by the burning deck long after it was 'time for him to go.' So *Polexander* was taken away from him and locked up, and so his life was saved.

Now, in the first place *Polexander* was a romance, but it was not like the romances in this book, for it was dreadfully long, and mainly about the sorrows of lovers who cannot get married. That could not amuse a small boy. In the second place, every boy should stop reading a book as soon as he finds that he does not like it, just as you are not expected to eat more mutton than you want to eat. Lesson books are another thing; you have to read them, and if you do not you will get into trouble. They are not meant to be amusing, but to teach Latin grammar, or geography, or arithmetic, which are not gay. As to this book of Romances, if you do not like one story, give it up and try another. If you do not like any of them, read something else that you do like.

Now what are romances? They are grown-up people's fairy tales or story-books, but they are the kind of story-books that grown-up people read long ago, when there were castles and knights, and tournaments, and the chief business of gentlemen was to ride about in full armour, fighting, while ladies sat at home doing embroidery work, or going to see the men tilt at tournaments, just as they go to see cricket matches now. But they liked tournaments better, because they understood the rules of the game. Anybody could see when one knight knocked another down, horse and all, but many ladies do not understand leg before wicket, or stumping.

The stories that they read were called ‘romances,’ but were in prose. Before people could read they were not in prose but in poetry, and were recited by minstrels. Mrs. Lang, who did the stories in this book, says: ‘Many hundreds of years ago, when most of these stories were told in the halls of great castles, the lives of children were very different from what they are now. The little girls were taught by their mothers’ maidens to spin and embroider, or make simple medicines from the common herbs, and the boys learnt to ride and tilt, and shoot with bows and arrows; but their tasks done, no one paid any further heed to them. They had very few games, and in the long winter evenings the man who went from house to house, telling or singing the tales of brave deeds, must have been welcome indeed. From him the children, who early became men and women, heard of the evil fate that awaited cowardice and treachery, and grew to understand that it was their duty through life to help those that were weaker than themselves.’ That was long, long ago, when nobody but priests and a very few gentlemen could read and write. They just listened to stories in rhyme, which the minstrels sang, striking their harps at the end of each verse.

The stories were really fairy tales, dressed up and spun out, and instead of ‘a boy’ or ‘a king’ or ‘a princess’ with no name, the old fairy adventures were said to have happened to people with names: King Arthur, or Charlemagne, or Bertha Broadfoot. A little real history came in, but altered, and mixed up with fairy tales, and done into rhyme.

Later, more and more people learned to read, and now the long poems were done into prose, and written in books, not printed but written books; and these were the Romances, very long indeed, all about fighting, and love-making, and giants, and dwarfs, and magicians, and enchanted castles, and dragons and flying horses. These romances were the novels of the people of the Middle Ages, about whom you can read in the History Books of Mrs. Markham. They were not much like the novels which come from the library for your dear mothers and aunts. There is not much fighting in them, though there is any amount of love-making, and there are no giants; and if there is a knight, he is usually a grocer or a doctor, quite the wrong sort of knight.

Here is the beginning of a celebrated novel: ‘Comedy is a game played to throw reflections upon social life, and it deals with human nature in the drawing-rooms of civilised men and women.’ You do not want to read any more of that novel. It is not at all like a good old romance of knights and dragons and enchanted princesses and strong wars. The knights and ladies would not have looked at such a book, all about drawing-rooms.

Now, in this book, we have made the old romances much shorter, keeping the liveliest parts, in which curious things happen. Some of the tales were first told in Iceland eight hundred years ago, and are mostly true and about real people. Some are from the ancient French romances of the adventures of Charlemagne, and his peers and paladins. Some are from later Italian poems of the same kind. ‘Cupid and Psyche’ is older, and so is the story of the man who was changed into a donkey. These are from an old Latin romance, written when people were still heathens, most of them. Some are about the Danes in England (of whom you may have heard), but there is not much history in them.

Mrs. Lang says: ‘In this book you will read of men who, like Don Quixote, were often mistaken but never mean, and of women, such as Una and Bradamante, who kept patient and true, in spite of fierce trials and temptations. I have only related a few of their adventures, but when you grow older you can read them for yourselves, in the languages in which they were written.’

‘Don Quixote’ was written by a Spaniard, Cervantes, in the time of James I. of England, to show what would happen if a man tried to behave like a knight of old, after people had become more civilised and less interesting. Don Quixote was laughed at, because he came too late into too old a world. But he was as brave and good a knight as the best paladin of them all. So about the knights and ladies and dwarfs and giants, I hope you will think like Sir Walter Scott, when he was a boy, and read the old romances. He says: ‘Heaven only knows how glad I was to find myself in such company.’

If you like the kind of company, then read ‘Ivanhoe,’ by Sir Walter Scott, for that is the best romance in the world.

All the stories in this book were done by Mrs. Lang, out of the old romances.

Andrew Lang.

HOW WILLIAM OF PALERMO WAS CARRIED OFF BY THE WERWOLF

Many hundreds of years ago there lived in the beautiful city of Palermo a little prince who was thought, not only by his parents but by everyone who saw him, to be the handsomest child in the whole world. When he was four years old, his mother, the queen, made up her mind that it was time to take him away from his nurses, so she chose out two ladies of the court who had been friends of her own youth, and to them she entrusted her little son. He was to be taught to read and write, and to talk Greek, the language of his mother's country, and Latin, which all princes ought to know, while the Great Chamberlain would see that he learned to ride and shoot, and, when he grew bigger, how to wield a sword.

For a while everything went on as well as the king and queen could wish. Prince William was quick, and, besides, he could not bear to be beaten in anything he tried to do, whether it was making out the sense of a roll of parchment written in strange black letters, which was his reading-book, or mastering a pony which wanted to kick him off. And the people of Palermo looked on, and whispered to each other:

'Ah! what a king he will make!'

But soon a terrible end came to all these hopes!

William's father, king Embrons, had a brother who would have been the heir to the throne but for the little prince. He was a wicked man, and hated his nephew, but when the boy was born he was away at the wars, and did not return till five years later. Then he lost no time in making friends with the two ladies who took care of William, and slowly managed to gain their confidence. By-and-by he worked upon them with his promises and gifts, till they became as wicked as he was, and even agreed to kill not only the child, but the king his father.

Now adjoining the palace at Palermo was a large park, planted with flowering trees and filled with wild beasts. The royal family loved to roam about the park, and often held jousts and sports on the green grass, while William played with his dogs or picked flowers.

One day — it was a festival — the whole court went into the park at noon, after they had finished dining, and the queen and her ladies busied themselves with embroidering a quilt for the royal bed, while the king and his courtiers shot at a mark. Suddenly there leapt from a bush a huge grey wolf with his mouth open and his tongue hanging out. Before anyone had time to recover from his surprise, the great beast had caught up the child, and was bounding with him through the park, and over the wall into the plain by the sea. When the courtiers had regained their senses, both the wolf and boy were out of sight.

Oh! what weeping and wailing burst forth from the king and queen when they understood that their little son was gone from them for ever, only, as they supposed, to die a cruel death! For of course they did not know that one far worse had awaited him at home.

After the first shock, William did not very much mind what was happening to him. The wolf jerked him on to his back, and told him to hold fast by his ears, and the boy sat comfortably among the thick hair, and did not even get his feet wet as they swam across the Straits of Messina. On the other side, not far from Rome, was a forest of tall trees, and as by this time it was getting dark, the wolf placed William on a bed of soft fern, and broke off a branch of delicious fruits, which he gave him for supper. Then he scooped out a deep pit with his paws, and lined it with moss and feathery grasses, and there they both lay down and slept till morning; in spite of missing his mother, in all his life William had never been so happy.

For eight days they stayed in the forest, and it seemed to the boy as if he had never dwelt anywhere else. There was so much to see and to do, and when he was tired of playing the wolf told him stories.

But one morning, before he was properly awake, he felt himself gently shaken by a paw, and he sat up, and looked about him. ‘Listen to me,’ said the wolf. ‘I have to go right over to the other side of the wood, on some business of a friend’s, and I shall not be back till sunset. Be careful not to stray out of sight of this pit, for you may easily lose yourself. You will find plenty of fruit and nuts piled up under that cherry tree.’

So the wolf went away, and the child curled himself up for another sleep, and when the sun was high and its beams awakened him, he got up and had his breakfast. While he was eating, birds with blue and green feathers came and hopped on his shoulder and pecked at the fruit he was putting into his mouth, and William made friends with them all, and they suffered him to stroke their heads.

Now there dwelt in the forest an old cowherd, who happened that morning to have work to do not far from the pit where William lived with the wolf. He took with him a big dog, which helped him to collect the cows when they wandered, and to keep off any strange beasts that threatened to attack them. On this particular morning there were no cows, so the dog ran hither and thither as he would, enjoying himself mightily, when suddenly he set up a loud barking, as if he had found a prey, and the noise caused the old man to hasten his steps.

When he reached the spot from which the noise came, the dog was standing at the edge of a pit, out of which came a frightened cry. The old man looked in, and there he saw a child clad in garments that shone like gold, shrinking timidly into the farthest corner.

‘Fear nothing, my boy,’ said the cowherd; ‘he will never hurt you, and even if he wished I would not let him;’ and as he spoke he held out his hand. At this William took courage. He was not really a coward, but he felt lonely and it seemed a long time since the wolf had gone away. Would he *really* ever come back? This old man looked kind, and there could be no harm in speaking to him. So he took the outstretched hand and scrambled out of the pit, and the cowherd gathered apples for him, and other fruits that grew on the tops of trees too high for the wolf to reach. And all the day they wandered on and on, till they came to the cowherd’s cottage, before which an old woman was standing.

‘I have brought you a little boy,’ he said, ‘whom I found in the forest.’

‘Ah, a lucky star was shining when you got up to-day,’ answered she. ‘And what is your name, my little man? And will you stay and live with me?’

‘My name is William, and you look kind like my grandmother, and I will stay with you,’ said the boy; and the old people were very glad, and they milked a cow, and gave him warm milk for his supper.

When the wolf returned — he was not a wolf at all, but the son of the king of Spain, who had been enchanted by his stepmother — he was very unhappy at finding the pit empty. Indeed, his first thought was that a lion must have carried off the boy and eaten him, or that an eagle must have pounced on him from the sky, and borne him away to his young ones for supper. But after he had cried till he could cry no more, it occurred to him that before he gave up the boy for dead it would be well to make a search, as perchance there might be some sign of his whereabouts. So he dried his eyes with his tail and jumped up quite cheerfully.

He began by looking to see if the bushes round about were broken and torn as if some great beast had crashed through them. But they were all just as he had left them in the morning, with the creepers still knotting tree to tree. No, it was clear that no lion had been near the spot. Then he examined the ground carefully for a bird’s feather or a shred of a child’s dress; he did not find these either, but the marks of a man’s foot were quite plain, and these he followed.

The track turned and twisted for about two miles, and then stopped at a little cottage with roses climbing up the walls. The wolf did not want to show himself, so he crept quietly round to the back, where there was a hole in the door just big enough for the cats to come in and out of. The wolf peeped through this hole and saw William eating his supper, and chattering away to the old woman as if he had known her all his life, for he was a friendly little boy, and purred like a pussy-cat when he was pleased. And when the wolf saw that all was well with the child, he was glad and went his way.

‘William will be safer with them than with me,’ he said to himself.

Many years went by, and William had grown a big boy, and was very useful to the cowherd and his wife. He could shoot now with his bow and arrow in a manner which would have pleased his first teacher, and he and his playfellows — the sons of charcoal-burners and woodmen — were wont to keep the pots supplied at home with the game they found in the forest. Besides this, he filled the pails full of water from the stream, and chopped wood for the fire, and, sometimes, was even trusted to cook the dinner. And when *this* happened William was a very proud boy indeed.

One day the emperor planned a great hunt to take place in the forest, and, while following a wild boar, he outstripped all his courtiers and lost his way. Turning first down one path and then the other, he came upon a boy gathering fruit, and so beautiful was he that the emperor thought that he must be of a fairy race.

‘What is your name, my child?’ asked the emperor; ‘and where do you live?’

The boy looked round at the sound of his voice, and, taking off his cap, bowed low.

‘I am called William, noble sir,’ he answered, ‘and I live with a cowherd, my father, in a cottage near by. Other kindred have I none that ever I heard of;’ for the gardens of Palermo and the life of the palace had now faded into dreams in the memory of the child.

‘Bid your father come hither and speak to me,’ said the emperor, but William did not move.

‘I fear lest harm should befall him through me,’ he answered, ‘and that shall never be.’ But the emperor smiled as he heard him.

‘Not harm, but good,’ he said; and William took courage and hastened down the path to the cottage.

‘I am the emperor,’ said the stranger, when the boy and the cowherd returned together. ‘Tell me truly, is this your son?’

Then the cowherd, trembling all over, told the whole story, and when he had finished the emperor said quietly:

‘You have done well, but from to-day the boy shall be mine, and shall grow up with my daughter.’

The heart of the cowherd sank as he thought how sorely he and his wife would miss William, but he kept silence. Not so William, who broke into sobs and wails.

‘I should have fared ill if this good man and his wife had not taken me and nourished me. I know not whence I came or whither I shall go! None can be so kind as they have been.'

'Cease weeping, fair child,' said the emperor, 'some day you shall be able to reward the good that they have done you;' and then the cowherd spoke and gave him wise counsel how to behave himself at court.

'Be no teller of tales, and let your words be few. Be true to your lord, and fair of speech to all men; and seek to help the poor when you may.'

'Set him on my horse,' said the emperor, and, though William wept still as he bade farewell to the cowherd, and sent a sorrowful greeting to his wife and to his playfellows Hugonet, and Abelot, and Akarin, yet he was pleased to be riding in such royal fashion, and soon dried his tears.

They reached the palace at last, and the emperor led William into the hall, and sent a messenger for Melior, his daughter.

'I have brought home a present for you,' he cried, as she entered; 'and be sure to treat him as you would your brother, for he has come of goodly kindred, though now he does not know where he was born, or who was his father.' And with that he told her the tale of how he had found the boy in the wood.

'I shall care for him willingly,' answered Melior, and she took him away, and saw that supper was set before him, and clothes provided for him, and made him ready for his duties as page to the emperor.

So the boy and girl grew up together, and everyone loved William, who was gentle and pleasant to all, and was skilled in what a gentleman should know. Wise he was too, beyond his years, and the emperor kept him ever at his side, and took counsel with him on many subjects touching his honour and the welfare of his people.

And if the people loved him, how much more Melior, who saw him about the court all day long, and knew the store her father set on him? Yet she remembered with sadness certain whispers she had heard of a match between herself and a foreign prince, and if her father had promised her hand nought would make him break his word.

So she sighed and bewailed herself in secret, till her cousin Alexandrine marked that something was amiss.

'Tell me all your sickness,' said Alexandrine one day, 'and what grieves you so sorely. You know that you can trust me, for I have served you truly, and perhaps I may be able to help you in this strait!'

Then Melior told her, and Alexandrine listened in amaze. From his childhood William and the two girls had played together, and well Alexandrine knew that the emperor had cast his eyes upon another son-in-law. Still, she loved her cousin, and she loved William too, so she said.

‘Mourn no longer, madam; I am skilled in magic, and can heal you. So weep no more.’ And Melior took heart and was comforted.

That night Alexandrine caused William to dream a dream in which the whole world vanished away, and only he and Melior were left. In a moment he felt that as long as she was there the rest might go, and that she was the princess that was waiting for every prince. But who was he that he should dare to ask for the emperor’s daughter? and what chance had he amongst the noble suitors who now began to throng the palace? These thoughts made him very sad, and he went about his duties with a face as long as Melior’s was now.

Alexandrine paid no heed to his gloomy looks. She was very wise, and for some days left her magic to work. At last one morning she thought the time had come to heal the wounds she had caused, and planned a meeting between them. After this they had no more need of her, neither did Melior weep any longer.

For a while they were content, and asked nothing more than to see each other every day, as they had always done. But soon a fresh source of grief came. A war broke out, in which William, now a knight, had to follow the emperor, and more than once saved the life of his master. On their return, when the enemy was put to flight, the expected ambassadors from Greece arrived at court, to seek the hand of Melior, which was readily granted by her father. This news made William sick almost unto death, and Melior, who was resolved not to marry the stranger, hastened to Alexandrine in order to implore her help.

But Alexandrine only shook her head.

‘It is true,’ said she, ‘that, unless you manage to escape, you will be forced to wed the prince; but how are you to get away when there are guards before every door of the palace, except by the little gate, and to reach that you will have first to pass by the sentries, who know you?’

‘O dear Alexandrine,’ cried Melior, clasping her hands in despair. ‘Do try to think of some way to save us! I am sure you can; you are always clever, and there is nobody else.’

And Alexandrine did think of a way, but what it was must be told in the next chapter.

THE DISENCHANTMENT OF THE WERWOLF

(William of Palermo)

Everybody will remember that William and Melior trusted to Alexandrine to help them to escape from the palace, before Melior was forced into marriage by her father with the prince of Greece. At first Alexandrine declared that it was quite impossible to get them away unseen, but at length she thought of something which might succeed, though, if it failed, all three would pay a heavy penalty.

And this was her plan, and a very good one too.

She would borrow some boy's clothes, and put them on, hiding her hair under one of those tight caps that kitchen varlets wore covering all their heads; she would then go down into the big kitchens underneath the palace, where the wild beasts shot by the emperor were skinned and made into coats for the winter. Here she would have a chance of slipping out unnoticed with the skins of two white bears, and in these she would sew up William and Melior, and would let them through the little back gate, from which they could easily escape into the forest.

'Oh, I knew you would find a way!' said Melior, throwing her arms joyfully round her cousin's neck. 'I am quite sure it will all go right, only let us make haste, for my father may find us out, or perhaps I may lose my courage.'

'I will set about it at once,' said Alexandrine, 'and you and William must be ready to-night.'

So she got her boy's clothes, which her maid stole for her out of the room of one of the scullions, and dressed herself in them, smearing her face and hands with walnut-juice, that their whiteness might not betray her. She slipped down by some dark stairs into the kitchen, and joined a company of men who were hard at work on a pile of dead animals. The sun had set, and in the corner of the great hall where the flaying was going on, there was very little light, but Alexandrine marked that close to an open door was a heap of bearskins, and she took up her position as near them as she could. But the girl was careful not to stand too long in one place; she moved about from one group of men to another, lending a hand here and there and passing a merry jest, and as she did so she gave the topmost skins a little shove with her foot, getting them each time closer to the open door, and always watching her chance to pick them up and run off with them.

It came at last. The torch which lighted that end of the hall flared up and went out, leaving the men in darkness. One of them rose to fetch another, and, quick as thought, Alexandrine caught up the bearskins and was outside in the garden. From that it was easy to make her way upstairs unseen.

‘See how I have sped!’ she said, throwing the skins on the floor. ‘But night is coming on apace, and we have no time to lose; I must sew you up in them at once.’

The skins were both so large that Melior and William wore all their own clothes beneath, and did not feel at all hot, as they expected to do.

‘Am I not a bold beast?’ asked Melior in glee, as she caught sight of herself in a polished shield on the wall. ‘Methinks no handsomer bear was ever seen!’

‘Yes, verily, madam,’ answered her maiden, ‘you are indeed a grisly ghost, and no man will dare to come near you. But now stand aside, for it is William’s turn.’

‘How do you like me, sweetheart?’ asked he, when the last stitches had been put in.

‘You have so fierce an air, and are so hideous a sight, that I fear to look on you!’ said she. And William laughed and begged Alexandrine to guide them through the garden, as they were not yet used to going on all fours, and might stumble.

As they passed through the bushes, galloping madly — for in spite of the danger they felt as though they were children again — a Greek who was walking up to the palace saw them afar, and, seized with dread, took shelter in the nearest hut, where he told his tale. The men who heard it paid but little heed at the time, though they remembered it after; but bears were common in that country, and often came out of the forest at night.

Not knowing what a narrow escape they had had, the two runaways travelled till sunrise, when they hid themselves in a cave on the side of a hill. They had nothing to eat, but were too tired to think of that till they had had a good sleep, though when they woke up they began to wonder how they should get any food.

‘Oh, it will be all right!’ said Melior; ‘there are blackberries in plenty and acorns and hazel-nuts, and there is a stream just below the cave — do you not hear it? It will all be much nicer than anything in the palace.’

But William did not seem to agree with her, and wished to seek out some man who would give him something he liked better than nuts and acorns. This, however, Melior would not hear of; they would certainly be followed and betrayed, she said, and, to please her, William ate the fruit and stayed in the cave, wondering what would happen on the morrow.

Luckily for themselves, they did not have to wait so long before they got a good supper. Their friend the werwolf had spied them from afar, and was ready to come to their rescue. During that day he had hidden himself under a clump of bushes close to the highway, and by-and-by he saw a man approaching, carrying a very fat wallet over his shoulder. The wolf bounded out of his cover, growling fiercely, which so frightened the man that he dropped the wallet and ran into the wood. Then the wolf picked up the wallet, which contained a loaf of bread and some meat ready cooked, and galloped away with it to William.

They felt quite strong and hearty again when they had finished their supper, and quite ready to continue their journey. As it was night, and the country was very lonely, they walked on two feet, but when morning came, or they saw signs that men were about, they speedily dropped on all fours. And all the way the werwolf followed them, and saw that they never lacked for food.

Meanwhile the preparations for Melior’s marriage to the prince of Greece were going on blithely in the palace, and none thought of asking for the bride. At last, when everything was finished, the emperor bade the high chamberlain fetch the princess.

‘She is not in her room, your Majesty,’ said the chamberlain, when he re-entered the hall; but the emperor only thought that his daughter was timid, and answered that he would go and bring her himself.

Like the chamberlain, he found the outer room empty and passed on to the door of the inner one, which was locked. He shook and thumped and yelled with anger, till Alexandrine heard him from her distant turret, and, terrified though she was, hastened to find out what was the matter.

‘My daughter! Where is my daughter?’ he cried, stammering with rage.

‘Asleep, sire,’ answered Alexandrine.

‘Asleep still!’ said the emperor; ‘then wake her instantly, for the bridegroom is ready and I am waiting to lead her to him.’

‘Alas! sire, Melior has heard that in Greece royal brides pass their lives shut in a tower, and she has sworn that she will never wed one of that race. But, indeed, for my part, I think that is not her true reason, and that she has pledged her faith to another, whom you also know and love.’

‘And who may that be?’ asked the emperor.

‘The man who saved your life in battle, William himself,’ answered Alexandrine boldly, though her limbs shook with fear.

At this news the emperor was half beside himself with grief and rage.

‘Where is she?’ he cried; ‘speak, girl, or I will shut you up in the tower.’

‘Where is William?’ asked Alexandrine. ‘If Melior is not here, and William is not here, then of a surety they have gone away together.’

The emperor looked at her in silence for a moment.

‘The Greeks will make war on me for this insult,’ he said; ‘and, as for William, a body of soldiers shall go in search of him this moment, and when he is found I will have his head cut off, and stuck on my palace gate as a warning to traitors.’

But the soldiers could not find him. Perhaps they did not look very carefully, for, like everyone else, they loved William. Party after party was sent out by the emperor, but they all returned without finding a trace of the runaways. Then at last the Greek who had seen the two white bears galloping through the garden came to the high chamberlain and told his tale.

‘Send to the kitchen at once and ask if any bearskins are missing,’ ordered the chamberlain; and the page returned with the tidings that the skins of two white bears could not be found.

Now the werwolf had been lurking round the palace seeking for news, and as soon as he heard that the emperor had ordered out his dogs to hunt the white bears, he made a plan in his head to save William and Melior. He hid in some bushes that lay in the path of the hounds, and let them get quite near him. As soon as they were close, he sprang out in front of their noses and they gave chase at once. And a fine dance he led them! — over mountains and through swamps, under ferns that were thickly matted together, and past wide lakes. And every step they took brought them further away from the bears, who were lying snugly in their den.

At last even the patience of the emperor was exhausted. He gave up the hunt, and bade his men call off the dogs and go home.

‘They have escaped me this time,’ said he, ‘but I will have them by-and-by. Let a reward be offered, and posted up on the gate of every city. After all, that is the surest way of capturing them.’

And the emperor was right: the shepherds and goatherds were told that if they could bring the two white bears to the gates of the palace they would not need to work for the rest of their lives, and they kept a sharp look-out as they followed their flocks. Once a man actually saw them, and gave notice to one of the royal officials, who brought a company of spearmen and surrounded the cave. Another moment, and they would have been seized, had not the wolf again come to their rescue. He leapt out from behind a rock, and snatched up the officer’s son, who had followed his father. The poor man shrieked in horror, and cried out to save the boy, so they all turned and went after the wolf as before.

‘We are safer now in our own clothes,’ said William; and they hastily stripped off the bearskins, and stole away, but they would not leave the skins behind, for they had learnt to love them.

For a long while they wandered through the forest, the werwolf ever watching over them, and bringing them food. At length the news spread abroad, no one knew how, that William and Melior were running about as bears no more, but in the garments they always wore. So men began to look out for them, and once they were very nearly caught by some charcoal-burners. Then the wolf killed a hart and a hind, and sewed them in their skins and guided them across the Straits of Messina into the kingdom of Sicily.

Very dimly, and one by one, little things that had happened in his childhood began to come back to William; but he wondered greatly how he seemed to know this land, where he had never been before. The king his father had been long dead, but the queen (his mother) and his sister were besieged in the city of Palermo by the king of Spain, who was full of wrath because the princess had refused to marry his son. The queen was in great straits, when one night she dreamed that a wolf and two harts had come to help her, and one bore the face of her son, while both had crowns on their heads.

She could sleep no more that night, so she rose and looked out of the window on the park which lay below, and there, under the trees, were the hart and the hind! Panting for joy, the queen summoned a priest, and told him her dream, and, as she told it, behold the skins cracked, and shining clothes appeared beneath.

‘Your dream has been fulfilled,’ said the priest. ‘The hind is the daughter of the emperor of Rome, who fled away with yonder knight dressed in a hart skin!’

Joyfully the queen made herself ready, and she soon joined the animals, who had wandered off to a part of the park that was full of rocks and caves. She greeted them with fair words, and begged William to take service under her, which he did gladly.

‘Sweet sir, what token will you wear on your shield?’ asked she; and William answered, ‘Good madam, I will have a werwolf on a shield of gold, and let him be made hideous and huge.’

‘That shall be done,’ said she.

When the shield was painted, William prayed her to give him a horse, and she led him into the stable, and bade him choose one for himself. And he chose one that had been ridden by the late king his father. And the horse knew him, though his mother did not, and it neighed from pure delight. After that William called to the soldiers to rally round him, and there was fought a great battle, and the Spaniards were put to flight, and throughout Palermo the people rejoiced mightily.

When the enemy had retreated far away, and William returned to the palace, where the queen and Melior were awaiting him; suddenly, from the window, they beheld the werwolf go by, and as he passed he held up his foot as if he craved mercy.

‘What does he mean by that?’ asked the queen.

‘It betokens great good to us,’ answered William.

‘That is well,’ said the queen; ‘but the sight of that beast causes me much sorrow. For my fair son was stolen away from me by such a one, when he was four years old, and never more have I heard of him.’ But in her heart she felt, though she said nothing, that she had found him again.

By-and-by the king of Spain came back with another army, and there was more fighting. In the end the Spanish king was forced to yield up his sword to William, who carried him captor to his mother Felice. The queen received him with great courtesy, and placed him next her at dinner, and the peers who had likewise been taken prisoners sat down to feast.

The next day a council was held in the hall of the palace to consider the terms of peace. The king of Spain and his son were present also, and everyone said in turn what penalty the enemy should pay for having besieged their city and laid waste their cornfields. In the midst of this grave discussion a werwolf entered through the open door, and, trotting up to the Spanish king, he kissed his feet. Then he bowed to the queen and to William, and went away as he came.

The sight of his tail disappearing through the door restored to the guards their courage, which had vanished in the presence of anything so unexpected. They sprang up to pursue him, but like a flash of lightning William flung himself in their path, crying, ‘If any man dare to hurt that beast, I will do him to death with my own hands;’ and, as they all knew that William meant what he said, they slunk back to their places.

‘Tell me, gracious king,’ asked William when they were all seated afresh round the council table, ‘why did the wolf bow to you more than to other men?’

Then the king made answer that long ago his first wife had died, leaving him with a son, and that in a little while he had married again, and that his second wife had had a son also. One day when he came back from the wars she told him that his eldest son had been drowned, but he found out afterwards that she had changed him into a werwolf, so that her own child might succeed to the crown.

‘And I think,’ he added, ‘that this werwolf may be indeed the son I lost.’

‘It may right well be thus,’ cried William, ‘for he has the mind of a man, and of a wise man too. Often has he succoured me in my great need, and if your wife had skill to turn him into a werwolf her charms can make him a man again.

Therefore, sire, neither you nor your people shall go hence out of prison till he has left his beast’s shape behind him. So bid your queen come hither, and if she says you nay I will fetch her myself!’

Then the king called one of his great lords, and he bade him haste to Spain and tell the queen what had befallen him, and to bring her with all speed to Palermo. Little as she liked the summons, the Spanish queen dared not refuse, and on her arrival she was led at once into the great hall, which was filled with a vast company, both of Spaniards and Sicilians. When all were assembled William fetched the werwolf from his chamber, where he had lain for nights and days, waiting till his stepmother should come.

Together they entered the hall, but at the sight of the wicked woman who had done him such ill the wolf’s bristles stood up on his back, and with a snarl that chilled the blood of all that heard it he sprang towards the dais. But, luckily, William was on the watch, and, flinging his arms round the wolf’s neck, he held him back, saying in a whisper:

‘My dear, sweet beast, trust to me as truly as to your own brother. I sent for her for your sake, and if she does not undo her evil spells I will have her body burned to coals, and her ashes scattered to the winds.’

The wicked queen knew well what doom awaited her, and that she could resist no longer. Sinking on her knees before the wolf, she confessed the ill she had wrought, and added:

‘Sweet Alfonso, soon shall the people see your seemly face, and your body as it would have been but for me!’ At that she led the wolf into a private chamber, and, drawing from her wallet a thread of red silk, she bound it round a ring she wore, which no witchcraft could prevail against. This ring she hung round the wolf’s neck, and afterwards read him some rhymes out of a book. Then the werwolf looked at his body, and, behold, he was a man again!

There were great rejoicings at the court of Palermo when prince Alfonso came among them once more. He forgave the queen for her wickedness, and rebuked his father for having stirred up such a wanton and bloody war.

‘Plague and famine would have preyed upon this land,’ he said, ‘had not this knight, whose real name is unknown to you, come to your aid. He is the rightful lord of this country, for he is the son of king Embrons and queen Felice, and I am the werwolf who carried him away, to save him from a cruel death that was planned for him by his own uncle!’

So the tale ends and everyone was made happy. The werwolf, now prince Alfonso, married William’s sister, and in due time ruled the kingdom of Spain, and William and Melior lived at Palermo till the emperor her father died, when the Romans offered him the crown in his stead.

And if you want to know any more about them, you must read the story for yourselves.

(Old Romance of *William of Palermo*.)

THE SLAYING OF HALLGERDA’S HUSBANDS

If any traveller had visited Iceland nearly a thousand years ago, he would have found the island full of busy, industrious people, who made the most of their short summer, and tilled the ground so well that they generally reaped a golden harvest. Many of the families were akin, and had fled some sixty years earlier from Norway and the islands of the sea because the king, Harald Fairhair, had introduced new laws, which displeased them. They were soon joined, for one reason and another, by dwellers in Orkney and Shetland and the Faroe Islands and the Hebrides, and, being men of one race, they easily adopted the same customs and obeyed the same laws.

Now the Northmen had many good qualities and many very troublesome ones. The father of every household had absolute power over all his children; he fixed the amount of money that should be paid in exchange for his daughter at her marriage, and the sum that was due for the wounded slave or ‘thrall’ as he was called, or even for his murdered son; or, if he thought better, he could refuse to take any money at all as the price of his injuries, and could then avenge blood by blood.

But once he had declared his purpose he was bound to abide by his word.

Fond though they were of fighting, the Northmen had their own notions of fair dealing. If you had killed a man, you had to confess it; if you slew him at night, or when he was sleeping, you were guilty of murder, and if you refused to throw gravel or sand over his body, thus denying your enemy the rights of burial, you were considered a dastard even by your friends.

Now in the valley or dale of the river Laxa dwelt two brothers, each in his own house. One was named Hauskuld, and the other Hrut. This Hrut was much younger than Hauskuld, and was handsome, brave, and, like so many of the Northmen, very gentle when not engaged in war. Like many of them also, the gift was given him of reading the future.

One day Hauskuld made a feast, and Hrut came with many of his kinsmen, and took his place next his brother Hauskuld. They were all seated in the great hall of the house and near the fire Hauskuld’s little daughter, Hallgerda, was playing with some other children. Fair and blue eyed were they all, but Hallgerda was taller and more beautiful than any, and her hair fell in long bright curls far below her waist. ‘Come hither,’ said Hauskuld, holding out his hand, and, taking her by the chin, he kissed her and bade her go back to her companions. Then, turning to his brother he asked:

‘Well, is she not fair to look upon?’ but Hrut held his peace. Again Hauskuld would know what was in the thoughts of Hrut concerning the maiden, and this time Hrut made answer:

‘Of a truth fair is the maid, and great will be the havoc wrought by her among men. But one thing I would know, which of our race has given her those thief’s eyes?’

At that Hauskuld waxed wroth, and bade Hrut begone to his own house.

After this some years went by. Hrut left Iceland and spent some time at the Court of Norway, and then he came back and married, and had much trouble with his wife, Unna. But after they had parted and she had gone back to her father, Hrut was a free man again, and he went to visit his brother Hauskuld, whose daughter Hallgerda had now become a woman. Tall and stately she was, and fair, but sly and greedy of gain, as in the days of her childhood, and more she loved Thiostolf, whose wife had brought her up, than Hauskuld her father, or Hrut her uncle.

When Hallgerda went back to Hauskuld her father, he saw that he must be looking out for a husband for her, as the fame of her beauty would go far. It was indeed not long before one came to her, Thorwald, son of Oswif, who, besides the broad lands which he possessed on the island, owned the Bear Isles out in the sea, where fish were to be had in abundance.

Oswif, Thorwald’s father, knew more about the maiden than did Thorwald, who had been on a journey, and he tried to turn his son’s thought to some other damsel, but Thorwald only answered, ‘Whatever you may say, she is the only woman I will marry;’ and Oswif made reply, ‘Well, after all, the risk is yours and not mine.’

So they two set out for Hauskuld’s house and he bade them welcome heartily. They wasted no time before telling him their business, and Hauskuld answered that for his part he could desire no more honourable match for his daughter, but he would not hide from them that her temper was hard and cruel.

‘That shall not stand between us,’ said Thorwald, ‘so tell me what I shall pay for her.’

And the bargain was made, and Thorwald rode home with his father, but Hallgerda was never asked if she wished to wed Thorwald or not.

When Hauskuld told his daughter that she was to be married to Thorwald, she was not pleased, and said that if her father had loved her as much as he pretended to do he would have consulted her in such a matter. Besides, she did not think that the match was in any way worthy of her.

But, grumble as she might, there was no getting out of it, and, as Hauskuld would listen to nothing, she sought for her foster-father, Thiostolf, who never had been known to say her nay. When she had told her story, he bade her be of good cheer, prophesying that Thorwald should not be her only husband, and that if she was not happy she had only to come to him and he would do her bidding, be it what it might, save as regarded Hauskuld and Hrut.

Then Hallgerda was comforted, and went home to prepare the bridal feast, to which all their friends and kinsfolk were bidden. And when the marriage was over, she rode home with her husband Thorwald, and Thiostolf her foster-father was ever at her side, and she talked more to him than to Thorwald. And there he stayed all the winter.

Now, as time went on, Thorwald began to repent that he had not hearkened to the words of his father. His wife paid him scant attention, and she wasted his goods, and was noted among all the women of the dales for her skill in driving a hard bargain. And, beyond all that, folk whispered that she was not careful to ask whether the things she took were her own or someone else’s. This irked Thorwald sore; but worse was to follow. The spring came late that year, and Hallgerda told Thorwald that the storehouse was empty of meat and fish, and he must go out to the Bear Isles and fetch some more. At this Thorwald reproached her, saying that it was her fault if garners were not yet full, and on Hallgerda’s taunting him with being a miser, struck her such a blow in the face that blood spouted, and when he left her to row with his men to the islands, Hallgerda sat still, vowing vengeance.

It was not long in coming. Soon after, Thiostolf chanced to pass that way, and, seeing the blood on her face, asked whence it sprang.

‘From the hand of my husband Thorwald,’ answered she, and reproached Thiostolf for suffering such dealings.

‘I knew not of it,’ said Thiostolf, ‘but I will avenge it speedily;’ and he went to the shore, and put off in a boat, taking nothing but a great axe with him. He found Thorwald and his men on the beach of the biggest island, loading his vessel with meat and fish from the storehouses. Then he began to pick a quarrel with Thorwald and spoke words that vexed him more and more, till Thorwald bent forward to seize a knife which lay near him. This was the moment for which the other had been waiting. He lifted his axe and gave a blow at Hallgerda’s husband, and, though Thorwald tried to defend himself, a second stroke clove his skull.

‘Your axe is bloody,’ said Hallgerda, who was standing outside the door.

‘Yes; and *this* time you can choose your own husband,’ answered Thiostolf; but Hallgerda only asked calmly:

‘So Thorwald is dead?’ and as Thiostolf nodded she went on: ‘You must go northward, to Swan my kinsman; he will hide you from your enemies.’

After that she unlocked her chests and dismissed her maidens with gifts; then she mounted her horse and rode home to her father.

‘Where is Thorwald?’ asked Hrut, who had heard nothing.

‘He is dead,’ answered Hallgerda.

‘By the hand of Thiostolf?’ said her father.

‘By his hand, and by that of no other;’ and Hallgerda passed by them and entered the house.

As soon as Oswif, Thorwald’s father, had heard the tidings, he guessed that Thiostolf must have gone northward to Swan, and calling his men round him they all rode to the Bearfirth. But before they were in sight Swan cried to Thiostolf, ‘Oswif is coming, but we need fear nothing, they will never see us,’ and he took a goatskin and wrapped it round his head, and said to it: ‘Be thou darkness and fog, and fright and wonder, to those who seek us.’ And immediately a thick fog and black darkness fell over all things, and Oswif and his men lost their way, and tumbled off their horses and tripped over large stones, till Oswif resolved to give up seeking Thiostolf and Swan, and to go himself to Hauskuld.

Now Hauskuld was abiding at home, and with him was Hrut his brother. Oswif got off his horse, and, throwing its bridle over a stake driven into the ground, he said to Hauskuld: ‘I have come to ask atonement for my son’s life.’

‘It was not I who slew your son,’ answered Hauskuld; ‘but as he is slain, it is just that you should seek atonement from somebody.’

‘You have much need to give him what he asks,’ said Hrut, ‘for it is not well that evil tongues should be busy with your daughter’s name.’

‘Then give the judgment yourself,’ replied Hauskuld.

‘That will I do, in truth,’ said Hrut; ‘and be sure that I will not spare you, as I know it was Hallgerda wrought his death;’ so he offered his hand to Oswif, as a token that his award would be accepted, and that at the Great Council of the nation he would not summon Hauskuld for Thorwald’s murder. And Oswif took his hand, and Hauskuld’s, and Hrut bade his brother pay down two hundred pounds in silver to Oswif, while he himself gave him a stout cloak. And Oswif went away well pleased with the award.

For some time Hallgerda dwelt in her father’s house, and she brought with her a share of Thorwald’s goods, and was very rich. But men kept away from her, having heard tales of her evil ways. At length Glum, the youngest son of Olaf the Lame, told his brother that he would go no more trading in strange lands, but would remain at home, and meant to take to himself a wife, if the one on whom he had set his heart would come to him.

So one day a company of the men, with Glum and Thorarin his brother at their head, rode into the Dales to the door of Hauskuld’s dwelling. Hauskuld greeted them heartily and begged them to stay all night, sending secretly for Hrut, whose counsel he always asked when any matter of importance was talked over.

‘Do you know what they want?’ said Hrut next morning, when his brother met him on the road.

‘No,’ replied Hauskuld, ‘they have not spoken to me of any business.’

‘Then I will tell you,’ answered Hrut. ‘They have come to ask Hallgerda in marriage.’

‘And what shall I do?’ said Hauskuld.

‘Tell them you would like the match,’ replied Hrut, ‘but hide nothing. Let them know all there is of good and evil concerning her.’

They reached the house as he spoke, and the guests came out, and Thorarin opened his business by entreating Hauskuld to give his daughter Hallgerda to Glum his brother. ‘You know,’ he added, ‘that he is rich and strong, and thought well of by all men.’

‘Yes, I know that,’ answered Hauskuld; ‘but once before I chose a husband for my daughter, and matters turned out ill for all of us.’

‘That will be no hindrance,’ replied Thorarin, ‘for the lot of one man is not the lot of all men. And things might have fared better had it not been for the meddling of Thiostolf.’

‘You speak truth,’ said Hrut, who had listened to their talk in silence; ‘and the marriage may yet turn out well if you will do as I tell you. See that you suffer not Thiostolf to ride with her to Glum’s house, and that he never sleeps in the house for more than three nights running, without Glum’s leave, on pain of outlawry and death by Glum himself. And if Glum will hearken to my counsel, leave to stay he will never give. But it is time to let Hallgerda know of the matter, and she shall say whether Glum is to her mind.’

And Thorarin agreed, and Hauskuld sent to summon his daughter.

Now, though nothing had been said to Hallgerda as to the business which brought all these men to her father’s house, perhaps she may have guessed something, for when she appeared she was attended by her two women, and clad in her festal garments. She wore a dress of scarlet, girdled by a silver belt, and over it a mantle of soft dark blue, while her thick yellow hair was unbound, and fell almost to her knees. She smiled and spoke kindly to the visitors, then sat herself down between her father and uncle. After that Glum spoke.

‘Your father and Thorarin my brother have had talk about a marriage betwixt you and me, Hallgerda. Is it your will, as it is theirs? Tell me all that is in your heart. For, if you like me not, I will straightway ride back again.’

‘The match is to my liking,’ answered Hallgerda, ‘and better suited to my condition than what my father made for me before. And you are to my liking also, if our tempers do not fall out.’

‘Let Hallgerda betroth herself,’ said Hrut, when they had told her what terms had been arranged, and that Glum should bring goods or money to an equal value to Hallgerda’s, and that they two should divide the whole.

After that the betrothal ceremony took place, and Glum went away, and returned no more till his wedding.

There was a great company in Hauskuld’s hall to witness Hallgerda’s marriage, and when the feast began Thiostolf might have been seen stalking about holding his axe aloft; but, as the guests pretended not to know he was there, no harm came of it.

For some time Glum and his wife lived happily together, though Hallgerda proved herself the same greedy yet wasteful woman she had been before. At the end of a year a daughter was born to her, whom she named Thorgerda, and the child grew up to be as beautiful as her mother. But by-and-by trouble came to them through Thiostolf, who had been driven away by Hauskuld for beating one of his thralls. Thiostolf vowed vengeance in his heart, and rode south to Glum’s house.

Hallgerda was pleased to see him, but when she heard his tale she said she could not give him shelter without the consent of Glum. So when her husband came in she ran quickly to greet him, and, putting her arms round his neck, she asked if he would agree to something she wished very much.

‘If it is anything I can do in honour,’ answered Glum, ‘do it I will of a surety.’

Then she told him how her father had cast out Thiostolf, and that he had come to her for shelter, and she wished him to remain, if it was Glum’s will. And Glum answered that, if she wished it greatly, Thiostolf should remain, unless he betook himself to evil courses.

For a while Thiostolf went warily, and no fault did Glum find with him; then he fell to marring everything, as he had done in Thorwald’s time, and to no one would he listen save to Hallgerda only. In vain Thorarin warned Glum that things would have an ill ending, but Glum only smiled, and let Hallgerda have her way.

When autumn came, and the days grew short and cold, the men went to bring their flocks home from the pastures where they had been feeding all the summer. It was hard work, for the sheep often strayed far, and, besides, the flocks got mixed up, and needed to be separated one from the other. One day, when the shepherds had brought tidings that many of Glum's sheep were missing, Glum bade Thiostolf go into the hills and see if he could find those that were lost.

But Thiostolf grew angry, and answered rudely:

'I am not your slave, and it is not my work to bring in sheep. If you mean to go yourself, perhaps I will consent to go with you.'

At this Glum was greatly angered, and, seeking Hallgerda, he told her what had happened, adding as he did so:

'I will not have Thiostolf here any longer.'

Then Hallgerda waxed very wrathful, and she upheld Thiostolf in his ill doing.

At last the patience of Glum gave way, and he struck her a blow in the face, and crying, 'Words are wasted on you,' went off to his own business. Hallgerda, who loved him much in spite of her unruly tongue, wept bitterly at the thought of what had happened, and, as evil fate would have it, Thiostolf heard her, and saw the red mark across her cheek.

'It shall not be there again,' he said, but Hallgerda answered:

'It is not for you to come between Glum and me.'

When he heard this, Thiostolf only smiled and said nothing, but got ready to go with Glum and his men, to seek after the sheep. After long searchings they found many of those that were missing, and he sent some of his men one way and some another, till at length by chance he and Thiostolf were left alone. They soon came upon a flock of wild sheep, and tried to drive them down the steep side of a hill towards Glum's house, but it was of no use, and as fast as the sheep were collected together they all scattered again. Very soon, Glum and Thiostolf grew tired and ill-tempered, and each told the other he was stupid and lazy. At length, Glum taunted Thiostolf with being a thrall, and from that blows quickly followed. Both men drew their axes, but Thiostolf struck so hard at Glum that he rolled dead upon the ground.

At the sight of Glum lying dead at his feet, Thiostolf's wrath cooled somewhat. He stooped and covered Glum's body with stones, and took a gold ring from his finger. After that he took the road back to Varmalek, and found Hallgerda sitting in front of the door. Her eyes fell instantly on the bloody axe, and Thiostolf saw this and said hastily:

'Glum, your husband, is slain.'

'Then it is by your hand,' she answered.

'Yes, it is,' said Thiostolf, and added after a moment's pause: 'What is best to be done now?'

‘Go to Hrut, and ask him,’ replied Hallgerda, and Thiostolf went.

‘Glum is slain’ said Thiostolf to Hrut, who had come down to the door in answer to Thiostolf’s knock.

‘Who slew him?’ asked Hrut.

‘I slew him,’ answered Thiostolf.

‘Why did you come here?’ asked Hrut again.

‘Because Hallgerda sent me,’ answered Thiostolf.

‘Then Hallgerda had no part in his slaying,’ said Hrut, with a sound of relief in his voice; but as he spoke he drew his sword, which Thiostolf saw, and thrust at Hrut with his axe. Hrut, too, saw, and sprang quickly aside, knocking up as he did so the handle of the axe, so that it fell full on the ground. Turning himself swiftly, Hrut dealt Thiostolf a blow which brought him to his knees, and a stab in the heart finished the work.

After that Hrut’s house-carles laid stones on Thiostolf’s body, while he himself rode away to tell Hauskuld all that had befallen. And soon after Thorarin, Glum’s brother, came there too, with eleven men at his back. He asked Hauskuld what atonement he would make for Glum, but Hauskuld answered that it was neither he nor his daughter who had slain Glum, and that Hrut had avenged himself on Thiostolf. To this Thorarin said nothing, but Hrut offered to give him gifts, and so peace lay between them.

Now, Hrut’s wife, Unna, was of kin to two brothers, Gunnar and Kolskegg. Both were tall, brave men, but there was not Gunnar’s like in all the country round for beauty, and for skill in shooting, jumping, and swimming. And, besides this, he was beautiful and gentle, faithful to the friends he made, but not making them readily. His chief friend was Njal, from whom he ever sought counsel, for Njal was a wise man and could see far into the future.

Having a mind to see something of the world, Gunnar set sail for Norway, where he stayed some time, and had many adventures. It was early in the summer when he and Kolskegg sailed home to Iceland, where men were assembling for the great Council, or Thing.

Gunnar’s first act was to ride off to Njal’s house, and Gunnar asked if he would be present at the Thing. ‘No, truly,’ answered Njal; ‘stay you at home or bad will come of it.’

And Gunnar! What evil was likely to befall him, who wished to live at peace with everyone? But Njal only shook his head and said slowly:

‘I remain in my own house, and if I had my way you should do so also.’

But Gunnar would not listen, and rode straight off to the Thing.

What happened to him when he got there will be told in another story.

(*Saga*)

THE DEATH OF GUNNAR

Now of all the men gathered together at the Thing of the year 974, no man was handsomer or more splendidly clad than Gunnar. He was arrayed in the scarlet raiment given him by King Harald, and he bore on his arm a gold ring, given him by Hacon the Earl, and the horse he rode had a shining black skin.

A brave figure he made one morning as he left the Hill of Laws and passed out beyond the tents of the men of Mossfell. And as he went there came to meet him a woman whose dress was no less rich than his. She stopped as he drew near, and told him that she was Hallgerda, Hauskuld's daughter, and that she knew well that he was Gunnar the traveller, and she wished to hear some of the wonders of the lands beyond the seas. So he sat down, and they two talked together for long, and they agreed well, and became friends. After a while he asked her if she had a husband.

'No,' she replied; men feared her, for they held that she brought them ill-luck; but at that Gunnar laughed, and said, 'What would you answer if I asked you to marry me?'

'Are you jesting?' said Hallgerda.

'No, of a sooth,' replied Gunnar.

'Then go and see what my father has to say to it,' answered Hallgerda, and Gunnar went.

Hauskuld was inside his booth when Gunnar arrived. Hrut was there likewise, and bade him welcome. For a while the talk ran upon the business of the Thing, and then Gunnar turned and asked what answer Hauskuld would give if he offered to lay down money for Hallgerda.

'What do you say, Hrut?' inquired Hauskuld.

'It ought not to be,' replied Hrut. 'No man has aught but good to say of you; no man has aught but ill to say of her. And this I must not hide from you.'

'I thank you for your plain speech,' said Gunnar; 'but my soul is still set on wedding Hallgerda. And we have spoken together, and are agreed in this matter.'

But though Hrut knew that his words were vain, he told Gunnar all that had happened in respect of Hallgerda and her two husbands. And Gunnar weighed it for a while, and then he said, 'You know the saying, "Forewarned is forearmed." Doubtless it is true, all that you have told of Hallgerda, but I am strong, and have travelled far, and if we can make a bargain, so shall it be.'

So a messenger was sent for Hallgerda, and she betrothed herself, as she had done to Glum, and after that Gunnar rode over to Njal, and told him what things had happened.

‘Evil will come of it betwixt you and me,’ said Njal sadly.

‘No woman, or man either, shall ever work ill between us,’ answered Gunnar, who loved Njal more than his own father.

‘She works ill wherever she goes,’ replied Njal, ‘and you will never cease making atonements for her;’ but he said no more, for he was a wise man and wasted no words, and when Gunnar asked him to come to the wedding feast he gave his promise that he would be there.

The winter after Gunnar’s wedding, he and Hallgerda were bidden to a great feast at Njal’s house. Njal and his wife greeted them heartily, and by-and-by Helgi, Njal’s son, came, and with him Thorhalla his wife. Then Bergthora, Njal’s wife, went up to Hallgerda, and said, ‘Give place to Thorhalla,’ but Hallgerda would not, and she fell to quarrelling with Bergthora, and at last Bergthora taunted Hallgerda with having plotted to do Thorwald her husband to death. At that Hallgerda turned and said to Gunnar: ‘It is nothing to be married to the strongest man in Iceland, if you avenge not these insults, Gunnar.’

But Gunnar cried that he would take no part in women’s quarrels, least of all in Njal’s house, and bade Hallgerda come home with him.

‘We shall meet again, Bergthora,’ said Hallgerda as she mounted the sleigh. Then they rode back to Lithend and spent the rest of the winter there.

When the spring came, Gunnar went to the Thing, bidding Hallgerda take heed, and to give no cause of offence to his friends. But she would give no promise, and he set forth with a heavy heart.

By ill-fortune, Njal and Gunnar owned a wood between them, and when Njal and his sons departed to the Thing, Bergthora, Njal’s wife, ordered Swart her servant to cut her some branches for kindling fires from this very forest. These tidings reached the ears of Hallgerda, and she muttered with a grim face, ‘It is the last time that Swart shall steal my wood,’ and bade Kol, her bailiff, start early next morning and seek Swart.

‘And when I find him?’ asked Kol; but Hallgerda only turned away angrily.

‘You, the worst of men, ask that?’ said she. ‘Why, you shall kill him, of course.’

So Kol took his axe, though he was ill at ease, for he knew that evil would come of it, and he mounted one of Gunnar’s horses and fared to the wood.

He soon saw Swart and his men piling up bundles of firewood, so he left his horse in a hollow, and crouched down behind some bushes, till he heard Swart bid the men carry the wood to Njal’s house, as he himself had more work to do. He began to look about for a tall straight young stem with which to make himself a bow, when Kol sprang out of the bushes and dealt Swart such a stroke with his axe that he fell dead without a word. After that Kol went back and told Hallgerda.

And Hallgerda spoke cheering words, and said he need have no fear, for that she would protect him; but Kol's heart was heavy.

Now Hallgerda had forced Kol to slay Swart, to bring about a quarrel between her husband and Njal, so she straightway sent a messenger to seek Gunnar at the Thing, and tell him what had befallen Swart. Gunnar listened in silence to the messenger's tale; then he called his men around him, and they all went to Njal's tent, and begged him to come out and speak to Gunnar.

'Swart, your house servant has been killed by Hallgerda and Kol her man,' said Gunnar gravely when Njal stood before him; and he told the tale as he had heard it from the messenger.

'It is for you, Njal, to fix the atonement,' he said at the end.

'You will have work to atone for all Hallgerda's misdoings,' answered Njal, 'and it will take all our old friendship to keep us from quarrelling now. But I have it in mind that at the last you shall win through, but after hard fighting. As to the atonement, as you are my friend and have no hand in this, I will fix it at twelve ounces of silver. And if it should come to be your turn to settle an award, I shall not expect to pay more than that.'

So Gunnar laid down the money and gave it to Bergthora his wife when he came home with his sons from the Thing. And Bergthora was content, but said to her husband that it should not be spent, as it would some day do to make atonement for Kol.

Although Hallgerda met her husband bravely and answered him boldly, in secret she trembled a little at his stern face and sharp words, as he told her that she was to remember that whatever quarrels she might choose to begin, the ending of them would always lie with him. But she pretended not to care, and went out among her neighbours as usual, telling all who would listen the tale of the killing of Swart. At length this reached the ears of Bergthora, and she was sore angered, but bided her time in silence.

When Njal and his sons went up to the pastures to see after the cattle, and the thralls were busy working in the fields, Bergthora the mistress was left alone in the house. On this day a man mounted on a black horse and armed with a spear and a short sword rode up to the door and asked her if she could find something for him to do. He was skilled in many things, he said, but his temper was hot, and had oftentimes been his bane.

'I will give you work,' answered Bergthora, 'but you must do whatever I bid you, even though it should be to slay a man.'

‘You have plenty of other men whom you can better trust on such business,’ replied the man, as if he repented of his bargain; but Bergthora only told him that she expected her servants to do as they were bid, and sent the man to put his horse in the stable.

During that summer another Thing was held and Njal and his sons went to it, and likewise Gunnar. But Bergthora was left alone in the house with her servants.

Then she called Atli, the new man, and bade him seek out Kol, that he might slay him, so Atli took his horse and his sword and spear and departed.

He found Kol in the place where some men had shown him, and he spoke to Kol civilly, but only received rude tones in answer. So, without more ado, Atli thrust at him, and Kol, though wounded, swung his axe above his head; but his eyes had grown dim, and he could not see to aim, and he fell to the ground and rolled over.

Atli left the body where it was, and rode on till he came to some of Gunnar’s men, and bade them go and tell Hallgerda that Kol was dead.

‘Did you kill him?’ asked the man.

‘Well, I don’t expect Hallgerda will think that he dealt his own death-blow,’ answered Atli; and with that he rode back to Bergthora, who praised him for the swiftness with which he had done her bidding. But Atli did not seem content, and at last he said:

‘What will Njal think?’

‘Oh, never fear him,’ replied Bergthora, ‘for he took with him the money of the atonement for the slaying of Swart, and now he can pay it over for Kol. But in spite of the atonement, beware of Hallgerda, who knows nought of promises.’

When Hallgerda heard of Kol’s slaying, she bade a messenger ride to Gunnar at the Thing, and Gunnar sent to seek out Njal and Skarphedinn his son. They came to his tent, and he greeted them, and then Njal said that Bergthora his wife had done great wrong in breaking the atonement, and that Gunnar must now fix the award for Kol.

‘Let it be the same as that which I paid for Swart,’ said Gunnar; and Njal laid down the money and they parted, and no ill blood was between them, though their wives were still resolved to do each other all the ill they could.

Njal was too wise a man not to know that Hallgerda would seek revenge on Atli for the slaying of Kol, and he begged Atli would take service far away to the east, so that Hallgerda might not reach him. But Atli told Njal that he would sooner be slain in his service than live free in the service of another master, and he would gladly stay where he was if Njal would grant him the atonement due to a free man.

This Njal granted, and Atli remained in his house.

Hallgerda soon came to know what had happened, and she sent messengers both to Bergthora and to Gunnar at the Thing to tell them about it.

‘Hallgerda my wife has caused Atli to be slain!’ said Gunnar to Njal and to Skarphedinn his son. ‘What atonement must I make for him?’

‘The atonement will be heavy, for he was no thrall, but a freeman, and I fear it may cause strife between us,’ replied Njal; but Gunnar stretched out his hand and said that no woman should sow strife betwixt him and Njal. Then Njal fixed a hundred ounces of silver, and Gunnar laid it down before him.

‘Hallgerda does not let our servants die of old age,’ said Skarphedinn, as they rode home from the Thing.

Now the words came true, that Gunnar had spoken, and ‘blow for blow’ grew to be the rule between Hallgerda and Bergthora; but for all that there was no quarrel between Njal and Gunnar.

So the years went by, and many Things had been held, and much blood-money had been paid, when one spring there was a great dearth of hay throughout all Iceland, and much cattle died. Gunnar, who was wise as well as rich, had seen what was coming and had laid up stores of both dried meat and of hay. As long as they lasted, he shared them with his neighbours, but when his barns were empty he called Kolskegg his brother and two of his friends, and they all fared to Kirkby, where dwelt Otkell the son of Skarf.

This Otkell owned many flocks and herds and wide pastures, and Gunnar hoped that his barns might yet be full.

‘I have come to buy meat and hay, if there is any in your storehouses, for mine are empty!’ said Gunnar.

‘I have yet many storehouses untouched,’ answered Otkell, ‘but I will sell you nothing.’

‘Will you give me them, then?’ asked Gunnar, ‘and I will pay you back some time in what you will.’

‘I will neither give nor sell,’ said Otkell.

‘Let us take what we want and leave the money,’ said Thrain, who had come with Gunnar, but Gunnar answered: ‘I am no robber!’ and was turning to go when Otkell stopped him.

‘Will you buy a thrall from me? He is a good thrall,’ said Otkell, ‘but I have no need of him.’

And Gunnar bought the thrall, and they all went home to Lithend together.

When Njal heard that Otkell would not sell to Gunnar, he was very wroth and rode up into the hills with all his sons, and took meat from his storehouses and bound it upon five horses, and hay from his barns and bound it upon ten horses, and they drove them all to Lithend, which was Gunnar's house.

'Never ask another man for aught when you can ask me,' said Njal, and Gunnar answered:

'Your gifts are great, but truly your love is greater.'

In a few weeks the summer began, and, as was his custom, Gunnar rode to the Thing, leaving Hallgerda in the house at Lithend.

The day after he had ridden away with his men Hallgerda sent for Malcolm the thrall, and said to him:

'I have somewhat for you to do! Take with you two horses besides the one you ride, and go to Kirkby and steal meat enough to load the two horses, and butter and cheese as well. But take heed, when all is done, to set the storehouses on fire, so that none can trace that the goods have vanished.'

Malcolm the thrall lifted his head and looked at her.

'I have never been a thief, in spite of all my ill-deeds,' said he.

But Hallgerda only laughed and made sport of him.

'Do you think men have kept silent about your misdeeds?' she asked. 'Hie hence when I bid you, or you shall not see the new moon rise!'

And Malcolm the thrall knew that she spoke no jesting words, and he did her bidding; and none would have known of the thing had he not dropped his knife when he was trying to mend the thong of his shoe, and his belt also.

A few days after that Gunnar and his men returned home, and many guests with him. The table was set by Hallgerda herself, and besides meat there were also great cheeses and jars of butter. Well Gunnar knew that Njal had not sent these, and he asked Hallgerda whence they came.

'It beseems a man to eat what is before him and not to trouble himself further,' answered Hallgerda; but Gunnar cried out:

'I will have no part in food that is ill come by,' and with that he gave her a buffet on the cheek.

'I shall remember that,' said Hallgerda, and she got up and went out.

The next morning, Skamkell, Otkell's friend, was riding to bring in some sheep, when he saw something bright on the side of the path. He got off his horse to see what it was, and found the belt and knife which Malcolm had dropped, and he took them straight to Kirkby.

'Did you ever see these things before?' asked Skamkell.

'Yes, often,' answered Otkell; 'they are the knife and belt of Malcolm the thrall. And they asked many men the same question, and they all knew them likewise. Then they went toward Mord the son of Valgard and took counsel with him, how to charge Gunnar's thrall with the theft and the burning; for they feared Gunnar, the mighty man of war. At last, for three silver marks Mord agreed to give them his help, and bade them follow out his plan.

It was this. That they should send women over the country with goods of housekeeping use, and mark what was given them in exchange. ‘Take heed that you note carefully,’ said Mord, ‘because no man will keep in his house the things that he has stolen, if he has a chance of getting rid of them. Set therefore apart whatever you get from each house, and bring it to me.’

And it was done exactly as Mord commanded, and in fourteen days the women came back, all bearing large bundles.

‘Who gave you the most?’ asked Mord, and one woman answered:

‘Hallgerda, the wife of Gunnar; she gave us a cheese cut into great slices.’

‘I will keep that cheese,’ said Mord.

When the women had gone, Mord rode away to Otkell’s farm, and bade him fetch the cheese-mould of Thorgerda his wife. And when it was brought, Mord took the slices and laid them in it, and they filled up the mould.

After this they all saw that Hallgerda had stolen the cheese, and, now that Mord had found the thief, he went back to his own house.

The tidings soon spread far and wide, and reached the ears of Kolskegg, who rode over to Lithend, so that he might speak with Gunnar.

‘Know you that it is said by every man that it was Hallgerda who caused the fire at Kirkby, that she might steal the cheese and butter?’ asked he.

‘I have thought before that it must be so, but how can I set it right?’ answered Gunnar.

‘You must make atonement to Otkell, and it is better there should be no delay,’ replied Kolskegg.

‘I will do your bidding,’ said Gunnar; and, mounting his horse, he took eleven with him, beside Thrain and Lambi his friends, and they all fared to Kirkby. There, Otkell came out to greet them, and with him were Skamkell and two other men, Hallkell and Hallbjorm.

‘I am here,’ said Gunnar, ‘to offer atonement for the misdeed of my wife and the thrall you sold me, for it was they who caused the fire and stole the cheeses. And, if it pleases you, let the award be fixed by the best of the men round!’

‘That sounds fairer than it is, Gunnar,’ put in Skamkell, ‘for you are a man of many things, whereas Otkell has few.’

‘Well,’ said Gunnar, ‘then I will offer atonement of twice the value of all that Otkell lost;’ but again it was Skamkell and not Otkell who replied:

‘Beware, Otkell, of giving him the right of making the award when it belongs to you.’

And Otkell answered: ‘I will fix the award myself, Gunnar.’

‘Then fix it,’ said Gunnar, who was waxing wroth at this delay; but once more

Otkell turned to Skamkell, and asked what he should answer.

‘Let the award be made by Gizur the white and Geir the priest,’ and this saying pleased Otkell.

‘Do you as you will,’ replied Gunnar, ‘but do not think that men will speak well of your refusing the choices that I gave you.’

And after that he rode home with his men.

Then Hallbjorm spoke to Otkell, saying: ‘Ill was it to refuse the offers of Gunnar, which were good offers, as you know well. Can it be that you think yourself a match for Gunnar in fight, when he has proved himself better than any man in the island? But go and see Gizur the white and Geir the priest at once, and see if the offers of Gunnar do not seem good to them! For he is a just and gentle-hearted man, and perchance he will still hearken to you, if you accept them.’

So Otkell, who ever listened to the last speaker, bade, them bring out his horse and set forth, Skamkell walking by his side. In a little while, when they had gone a mile or two, Skamkell said: ‘You have much to look to at Kirkby, and no one but yourself can see after the men. Get home, therefore, and let me ride to Gizur the white and Geir the priest instead of you.

‘Go, then,’ answered Otkell, who was lazy and never took the trouble to think for himself; ‘but see you do not tell them lies, as you are wont to do.’

‘I will lie no more than I can help, master,’ answered Skamkell, jumping on Otkell’s horse.

Otkell fared home and found Hallbjorm in front of the house.

‘Has anything befallen you that you have returned on foot?’ asked he; and Otkell, who feared him, said hurriedly:

‘I had many men to look over, and much work to do, so I sent Skamkell in my stead,’ But Hallbjorm held his peace and eyed him scornfully.

‘He who makes a thrall his friend rues it ever more,’ he answered at last. ‘And it is ill done when men’s lives are at stake to send the biggest liar in Iceland on such an errand.’

‘If you are afraid now, what would you be if Gunnar’s bill were singing,’ asked Otkell, who was always brave when there were none to slay, and whose courage always waxed great when there were none to fight.

Hallbjorm laughed as he heard him.

‘Who can tell who will fear most at the sound of that singing? But this you know well, that when the fight has begun Gunnar does not give his bill much time to sing!’

Now when Skamkell reached Mossfell, he told truly to Gizur the white the offers Gunnar had made.

‘Why did not Otkell accept them?’ asked Gizur, ‘they were generous and noble, as Gunnar’s offers are.’

‘Otkell wished to do you honour,’ replied Skamkell; but Gizur for all answer bade Geir the priest be sent for, and next morning, as soon as he arrived, Gizur told him the story, and after he had finished he said:

‘Let Skamkell tell it again, for I misdoubt him greatly.’

So Skamkell was called in, but he was wary, and he told his tale the second time as he had done the first, and though Gizur still misdoubted him he could find no fault.

‘Mayhap you speak the truth,’ he said; ‘but I know the wickedness of your deeds, and if you die in your bed your face belies you.’

And after a little more talking Skamkell rode home to Kirkby.

‘Gizur and Geir greet you,’ said Skamkell, ‘and they wish that this matter should have a peaceful ending. They will that Gunnar shall be summoned as having received and eaten the goods, likewise Hallgerda for stealing them!’

So Otkell followed this counsel, and five days before the opening of the Althing he rode with his brother and Skamkell and a great following to Lithend.

When Gunnar heard what errand they were on, he was very wroth, and after Otkell had read the summons, and departed with his men, he went away to seek Njal.

But Njal told him not to trouble, as before the Thing was over he should be held in greater honour than before.

Gizur the white rode to the Thing also, and he spoke to Otkell, and asked why he had summoned Gunnar to the Thing. Otkell listened in amaze and then answered that he had done so because of the counsel that Gizur himself and Geir the priest had told Skamkell.

‘He lied, then,’ replied Gizur; ‘we gave no such counsel;’ and Gunnar and his friends were called, and Gizur stood forth and bade Gunnar make his own award. At first Gunnar refused, but at length, after Gizur and Geir the priest swore that what Skamkell had said was false, he agreed to do it. And his award was this: that atonement in full should be made for the burnt storehouses and for the stolen food. ‘But for the thrall,’ said Gunnar, ‘I will give nothing, for you knew what he was when you sold him to me. Therefore I will restore him to you. On the other hand, the ill-words which you have spoken of me, and the way in which you sought to put me to shame, I count to be worth full as great an atonement as the burning of a few sheds, of the stealing of a few cheeses. So that for money we stand equal. One thing more I would say, Beware lest you seek again to do me evil.’

So spake Gunnar, and no man said him nay. But after a little Gizur asked that

Gunnar might forgive the wrongs Otkell had done him, and hold him his friend. At this Gunnar laughed out in scorn and answered:

‘Let Skamkell be his friend. It is to him Otkell looks for counsel. They are fitting mates. But one piece of counsel I will give him, and that is to take shelter with his kinsfolk, for if he stays in this country his end will be speedy.’

For a while Gunnar rested in peace at home and there was no more quarrelling. He gathered in his harvest and tended his cattle, ploughed his fields, and so the autumn and winter passed away and the spring came.

One day when the sun was shining Gunnar took his small axe, and a bag of corn, and set out to sow seed. And while he was stooping to do this, Otkell galloped past, on a wild horse that carried him faster than he would, and he did not see Gunnar. As ill-chance would have it, Gunnar raised himself at that moment from stooping over the furrow, and Otkell’s spur tore his ear, and he was very wroth.

‘You summon me first, and then you ride over me,’ he said, and, as was his wont, Skamkell made answer:

‘The wound might have been far sorer, but your anger was greater at the Thing, when you judged the atonement and clenched your bill in your fist.’

‘When we next meet my bill shall have something to say to you,’ said Gunnar, and went on sowing his corn.

The corn was all sown, and Gunnar was beginning to think of other work, when one morning his shepherd came riding fast.

‘I passed eight men in Markfleet,’ said he; ‘their faces were set this way, and Skamkell was with them. He ever speaks ill of you, and I have heard him tell how you shed tears when Otkell rode over you.’

‘It does not do to mind words,’ answered Gunnar; ‘but for the warning you have given me you shall henceforth do the work that pleases you. Now go to sleep.’

So the shepherd slept, and Gunnar took the saddle off his horse, and laid his own saddle on it; he fetched his shield, and buckled on his sword, and then he took his bill, and as his hand touched it it sang loudly. Rannveig his mother heard the sound, and came out from the door to the place where Gunnar was fastening on his helmet.

‘Never have I seen you so full of wrath,’ said she. But Gunnar answered her nothing and rode quickly away.

Rannveig went back to the sitting-room, where many men were talking, and, looking at them, she said:

‘Loud is your talk, but the bill sang louder when Gunnar rode away.’

When Kolskegg heard that, he saddled his horse and hasted after Gunnar.

Gunnar’s horse was swift and steady, and he never drew rein till he reached the ford which he knew Otkell’s men must pass. There he tied up his horse, and awaited them on foot. When Otkell’s men came up, they, too, sprang to the ground, and Hallbjorm strode towards Gunnar.

‘Keep back,’ said Gunnar, ‘I have no quarrel with brave men like you,’ but Hallbjorm answered:

‘I cannot for shame stand by while you kill my brother;’ and he smote with his spear at Gunnar. While they were fighting, Skamkell struck at Gunnar’s back with his axe, but Gunnar turned round, and, with his bill caught the axe from beneath, so that it fell out of Skamkell’s hands. A second thrust with the bill stretched Skamkell on the ground, and after him Otkell and three others. They slew eight men in all, Kolskegg aiding.

After that they rode home, and as they went Gunnar said: ‘I wonder if I am less base than others because I kill men less willingly than they.’

The first thing Gunnar did was to seek counsel of Njal, who bid him take care never to break the peace which was made between him and his foes, and never to slay more than one man of the same race, ‘else your life will be but short.’

‘Do you know the death you yourself will die?’ he asked.

‘Yes, I know it,’ answered Njal.

‘And what is it?’ asked Gunnar once more.

‘One that none could guess,’ replied Njal, and Gunnar went away.

Now at the next Thing there was great dispute over this suit, but in the end it was settled to Gunnar’s honour, and Gizur the white and Geir the priest gave pledges that they would keep the peace. But there were other men who thought they had been wronged by Gunnar, and laid plots to anger him, so that he might be outlawed and forced to leave the country.

By ill-fortune the words which Njal had spoken when he bade Gunnar never to slay more than one man of the same race were noised abroad, and his enemies made a plan by which Gunnar should be forced to fight Thorgeir, son of Otkell, so that his doom might come upon him.

Thus matters stood for a while, and then Gunnar rode down to the isles to see what his thralls were doing, and his foes heard of it, and resolved to lie in wait for him at the Rang river.

But when Gunnar returned he was not alone, as they expected he would be, for Kolskegg his brother was at his side, and carried the short sword which some of them knew well, while Gunnar was armed with his sword and his bill.

The two were yet far from the Rang river when the bill which Gunnar bore in his hand sweated with blood, and Kolskegg, who had not yet seen this sight, grew cold with terror.

‘This has some dreadful meaning,’ said he; and Gunnar nodded.

‘It only happens before a great fight,’ he answered, ‘and they are called “wound drops” in other lands. So beware. Let us not be taken unawares;’ and they looked well about them, till they saw some men lying hidden on the banks on the other side of the ford.

Long it were to tell of that fierce fight, and of the men that were slain by Kolskegg and Gunnar. At last Thorgeir, Otkell’s son, forced his way to the front and swung his sword at Gunnar. The blow would have been deadly had it fallen, but, leaping aside, he thrust his bill through Thorgeir’s body, and flung him far into the river.

At that the other men turned and fled away.

‘Our money-chests will be emptied for atonement for these men,’ said Gunnar as they drew near Lithend, and when they told their mother, Rannveig shook her head.

‘I fear lest ill should come of it,’ said she.

And ill *did* come of it.

Njal’s heart was sore when Gunnar told him of the fight by the Rang river, for he said:

‘You have gone against my counsel, and have slain two men of the same race. So take heed, if you break the award, your life will pay forfeit. But whatever befalls I am always your friend.’

Soon the Thing was held, and upon the Hill of Laws Gizur the white summoned Gunnar, for manslaughter of Thorgeir, Otkell’s son, and demanded that his goods should be forfeited and his body outlawed, and that no man should help or harbour him.

After this there was much talking, but at last the award was given by twelve men.

And this was it.

Money was to be paid down for the men slain, and Gunnar and Kolskegg were to depart from Iceland and not return for three winters. But if Gunnar should break the settlement and stay at home, any man might slay him as he would.

Gunnar promised to keep the award, but he did not hold it a just one.

Then Kolskegg began to inquire of the vessels that were sailing that summer, and he settled that he would go on board the ship of Armfin of the Bay, and Gunnar his brother would go with him.

They sent down to the shore those things that they might need in foreign lands, and then Gunnar bade farewell to Njal and his men, and thanked his friends for the help they had given him.

At the last he took leave of the thralls at Lithend, and of his mother, and told them that, since his own country had outlawed him, he would never return to it. Then he threw his arms round every man, and without looking back sprang into the saddle.

As they rode along the Mark fleet, his horse stumbled, and Gunnar fell to the ground. When he got up he did not mount at once, but stood and looked round him for a while. Suddenly he turned and said to Kolskegg: ‘Never has my home seemed to me so fair as now when the corn is ripe and ready for cutting. Come what may, I will not leave it.’

‘Do not let your foes triumph over you,’ answered Kolskegg. ‘For if you should break your atonement, any man may deal with you as he will.’

‘I will go no whither,’ repeated Gunnar, ‘and I would that you would stay with me.’

‘I cannot do this thing,’ answered Kolskegg; ‘but if you go back, tell my mother and my kindred that I bid them farewell for ever, for you will soon be dead, and I shall have naught to bind me to Iceland.’

Hallgerda’s heart was filled with joy when Gunnar came under the doorway, but Rannveig said nothing, for her heart was sad.

All that winter Gunnar sat fast at Lithend and would not be prevailed on to leave it, and when the winter had gone and the Thing had met, Gizur the white proclaimed Gunnar an outlaw for having broken his atonement. Then he called together all his foes, and they planned together how that they should ride to Lithend and slay him. But Njal heard what they had been saying, and he warned Gunnar.

‘You have always dealt truly and kindly with me,’ said Gunnar, when Njal had finished speaking, ‘and if ill befall me, take heed, I pray you, of my son and Hogni. As for Grani, he has an evil nature, and there is no turning him from bad deeds.’

It was in the autumn that Mord, the son of Valgard, sent word to Gunnar’s foes that the time had come to make the attack upon Lithend, as all his men had gone to the haymaking on the isles of the sea. So they set forth secretly, but stopped first at the farm nearest to Lithend, where they seized the farmer, and warned him that unless he came with them and put to death the hound Sam which had guarded Gunnar ever since Olaf the Peacock had bestowed him as a gift, his own life should be forfeit. Thorkell the farmer was sore at heart when he heard what was required of him, but he took his axe and went with the rest. It was easy to entice Sam the hound into a hollow dell; but when he saw the crowd of men behind Thorkell he knew that evil was afoot, and sprang on Thorkell and tore open his throat. Then Aumond of Witchwood smote him on the head with his axe, and Sam gave a howl which was not the utterance of any mortal dog, and rolled over.

Gunnar, who was sleeping in the narrow space above his great wooden hall, heard the awful sound, and said to himself: ‘So they have killed thee, Sam, my fosterling. Well, I will follow thee soon;’ and, taking his bill in his hand, he went up into the roof of the hall, where among the beams were little slits for windows. In the winter there were shutters fastened over these little slits, but now they were left open.

From the beam on which he was crouching Gunnar saw a red tunic slipping by the window, and he thrust swiftly out his bill. In a moment a man’s body fell upon the ground below.

‘Well, is Gunnar at home?’ said Gizur, and Thorgrim the Easterling answered: ‘Go and see for yourselves; but if Gunnar is not at home, his bill is,’ and those were his last words, for the thrust had been mortal.

It hardly seemed possible that one man could keep such a force at bay, but wherever they went Gunnar’s arrows followed them. Three times they came on, and three times they fell back, and Gunnar’s heart beat high, for he thought that perchance their courage might fail, and that they would return whither they had come.

‘One of their own arrows sticks outside the window,’ he said, laughing loud in his glee; ‘I will send it to kill its master.’ But his mother answered: ‘It is ill to waken a sleeping dog, my son.’

Her words were wise, but Gunnar would not listen to them. He shot the arrow into the midst of the men gathered beneath him, and knew not that it had dealt a death-blow, or that Gizur the white had been watching its course.

‘The arm that drew in that shaft had a ring on it — a gold ring such as Gunnar wears,’ said he, ‘and if they had not shot away their own arrows they would not be needing ours;’ and with that he urged them to make a fresh attack.

‘Let us set the house on fire,’ said Mord, but Gizur answered him hotly, and bade him find out some other plan.

Now Mord was a man of many thoughts, and great skill in planning, so he looked about him to see if there was aught else he could do. Lying near were some ropes, and as soon as he saw them he cried out, ‘If we can twist one end of the ropes round the beams, and the other round this rock, we can twist them tight, and pull the roof off the hall.’

And this was done; and when the roof fell down they beheld Gunnar standing on the beam, shooting arrows at his enemies.

At this Mord cried once more that the house should be burned, but the rest called shame on him, and then Thorbrand crept up on one side and cut Gunnar’s bowstring with his axe. But before he could reach the ground again Gunnar had seized his bill, and driven it through his body.

Then, without looking round, Gunnar said swiftly to Hallgerda his wife: ‘Let you and my mother cut off two locks of hair from your heads, and twist them into my bowstring, so that I may shoot at them once more.’

‘Does aught depend on it?’ she asked. ‘My life,’ he said; and Hallgerda made answer: ‘Do you remember that time when you struck me in the face?’ said she; ‘well, now you shall die for it.’

For many a day men sang of the fight which Gunnar made for his life and the numbers that he slew before he himself was struck down and slain.

‘We have laid low a great chief,’ said Gizur, ‘and many hearts will be sore because of his slaying. But, though his body is dead, his name shall live for ever.’

(*Saga*)

NJAL’S BURNING

Now, Valgard the Cunning was dying. And he sent for his son Mord and bade him stir up strife between Njal’s sons and their brother Hauskuld the priest, for he ever hated Njal, and longed to be avenged on him. So Mord fared to Hauskuld, and told him tales of what his brothers had said of him, but Hauskuld bade him begone, for he would listen to none of his stories. Then Mord left Hauskuld the priest, and had ready a long tale, how that Hauskuld had meant to burn them while they sat at a feast in Whiteness, had not Hogni, Gunnar’s son, come by. And as this plan had failed, he set about gathering his men together to slay his brothers as they rode home, but neither Grani, son of Gunnar, nor Gunnar, son of Lambi, had the heart to do it.

At first, neither Njal’s sons, nor Kari, who had married their sister, would give ear to Mord’s false words, but in spite of themselves ill-feelings began to spring up in their breasts towards Hauskuld.

Thus things went on for many months, and whenever Mord met one of Njal’s sons, or Kari, who had married their sister, he had new stories to tell them, till at length their hearts grew hot, and they determined that they would slay Hauskuld, lest perchance he might first slay them.

Hauskuld was sowing his corn when his brothers, and with them Mord, Valgard’s son, came up to kill him. Skarphedinn, Njal’s son, was their leader, and had bidden the rest each to give Hauskuld a wound. But the first blow dealt by Skarphedinn brought him on his knees, and he died praying that they might be forgiven for the ill they had brought on him, guiltless.

When he was dead they went home and told Njal what they had done.

‘It had been well if two of you had died and Hauskuld had lived,’ said Njal after he had heard the tidings, ‘for I know better than you what will be the end of this.’

‘And what will be the end?’ asked Skarphedinn.

‘My death, and yours, and your mother’s,’ answered Njal.

‘Shall I die also?’ he asked; but Njal shook his head.

‘Good fortune will ever be with you!’ he answered, and turned away and wept.

Now all men knew that at the next Thing a suit would be brought for the slaying of Hauskuld, and Njal and his sons made ready to fare to it, and to hear the award which should be given. But first sundry of Njal’s friends came to see him and offered to stand by him, and to set up their tents beside his, and among them were Gizur the white and Asgrim. And at the Thing an award was made, but was made void by a quarrel between Flosi, the friend of Hauskuld the slain, and Skarphedinn, and Njal and his sons returned home, and Njal's heart was heavy.

'Are you riding back to your wife?' asked he of Kari, his son-in-law; and Kari made answer, 'Whatever happens to you, happens to me!' and they all stayed at Bergthorasknoll.

In the house dwelt an old, old woman, so old that she had nursed Bergthora, Njal's wife, and she was wise and could see into the future. Njal's sons laughed at her warnings, and took no heed to them, but for all that they knew well that it was often the truth she told them. One day Skarphedinn was standing outside the door, and the old woman came out with a stick in her hand, and she passed silently by him, and walked up the path to where a pile of dried shrubs lay above the house.

'May a curse be upon you!' she cried, shaking her stick over it; and Skarphedinn, who had followed after her, asked wherefore she was wroth with the pile.

'Because with the fire lighted from this pile there will be a great burning,' said she. 'And Njal and his sons will be burnt, and Bergthora, my foster-child. So carry it away and scatter it in the water, or else set fire to it before your enemies can get here!'

'What is the use of doing anything?' answered Skarphedinn, 'for if it is written that we should be burned, our foes will find some other fuel, though I were to scatter this stack to the four winds;' and he went away laughing.

All through the summer the old nurse was ever begging Njal to do away with the stack of vetch, but the harvest was plentiful in the pastures and the men never came home save to sleep.

'We can bring in that vetch stack any time,' they said.

The harvest was stored in the barns, and a good harvest it was. There had been none such since the day that Gunnar had fared from Lithend with Kolskegg, and had returned to his ruin. One day, when Grim and Helgi, Njal's sons, had ridden away to Holar to see their children, who were at nurse there, they heard strange tidings from some poor woman, that the country side was stirring and that bands of men were gathering together, and were seen riding along the same road.

At this news Grim and Helgi looked at each other.

'Let us go home to Bergthorasknoll,' said they.

Now they had told their mother they would sleep that night at Holar, with their children, so she gave no thought to them; but in the evening, when the hour had come to prepare supper, Bergthora bade every man choose whatever dish he liked best, ‘for,’ said she, ‘this is the last food you will eat in this house!’

‘Of a truth you must be ill to speak such words,’ cried they.

‘They are true words,’ she said again; ‘and that you may know them to be true, I will give you a sign. Before the meat that is on the board to-night is eaten, Grim and Helgi will be in the house!’ and she held her peace and went out.

When the food was prepared, Bergthora called to them, and all sat down but Njal, who lingered in the doorway.

‘What hinders you eating with the rest?’ asked Bergthora; and Njal, as he answered, put his hand before his eyes.

‘A vision has come to me,’ he said slowly— ‘the wall is thrown down, and the board is wet with blood.’

At this the men’s faces grew pale, and a strange look came into their eyes, but Skarphedinn bade them be of good cheer, and to remember that, whatever might befall, all men would look to them to bear themselves bravely.

Then Grim and Helgi entered with their tidings, and every one had in his mind what Bergthora had said, and knew that ill was in store.

‘Let no man sleep to-night,’ said Njal, ‘but take heed to his arms.’

The band of Njal’s foes, headed by Flosi, had ridden to a valley behind the house, and had fastened their horses there. After that they walked slowly up the path, to the front of the house, where Njal and his sons, and Kari, his-son-in-law, and his thralls, thirty in all, stood up to meet them.

Then both sides halted and spoke together. Flosi’s counsel was to fall on them where they stood, though he knew that few would there be left to tell the tale to their children.

Njal, for his part, desired that his men might return inside the hall, for the house was strong; ‘and if Gunnar alone could keep them at bay they will never prevail against us,’ he said.

‘Ah, but these chiefs are not of the kind that slew Gunnar,’ answered Skarphedinn, ‘for they turned a deaf ear to Mord’s evil counsel to set fire to Lithend, so that Gunnar and his wife and mother should be burnt up in it. But this band care nothing for what is fair and honourable, so long as we leave our bones behind us.’

Then Helgi spoke:

‘Let us do as our father wills. He knows best,’ and Skarphedinn said:

‘If he wishes us to enter the hall, and all to be burnt together, I am ready to do it. I care little what death I shall die, and if the time of my doom is come, it matters nothing that we try to escape.’ And so saying he turned to Kari, and bade him stand by his side.

‘They are all mad,’ cried Flosi, as he saw Njal and his sons and Kari, his son-in-law, take their place on the inside of the door. ‘Surely none of them can escape us now;’ and the fight began with a spear which was thrown at Skarphedinn.

But victory was not so near as Flosi thought. Man after man fell back wounded or dead, yet Skarphedinn and his brethren remained without a wound.

‘We shall never put them to flight with our spears,’ said Flosi, ‘and there are only two ways open. Either we give up our vengeance, and await the death that will surely befall us at their hands; or else we must set fire to the house, and burn them in it. And I know not what else we can do; yet that is a mean and cowardly deed, which will lie heavily on our souls.’

So they gathered wood and made a great stack before the door, and Skarphedinn laughed, and asked if they were turning cooks.

It was Grani, the son of Gunnar, whose soul was black like his mother Hallgerda’s, who answered him.

‘You will not wish better cooking when *you* are put on the spit;’ but he had better have left Skarphedinn alone, for the men around heard his reply, and looked curiously on Grani.

‘Your deeds become your mother’s son,’ said Skarphedinn. ‘It was I who avenged your father, therefore it is natural to one of your kind that you should wish to slay me,’ and he stepped back to pick up some fresh arrows.

In spite of Grani’s boastful words, the pile of wood was slow in catching, for the women threw whey and water upon it from the little windows in the roof, so that the flames were quenched as fast as they sprang up. The men grew angry and impatient, and at last Kol, Thorstein’s son, said to Flosi:

‘It avails nought to kindle the fire here; but there is a pile of dry vetch at the back, just above the house, and we can light it, and put the burning wood on the beams under the roof.’

So he crept round unseen, and did as he had said, and the other men heaped up wood before the doors of the house, so that none could escape, and those within the hall knew nothing that was doing, till a great light filled the place, and they saw that the roof was burning.

Then horrible dread overwhelmed the souls of the women, and they broke forth into weeping and wailing, till Njal spoke words of comfort to them, and bade them keep up their hearts, for God would not suffer them to burn both in this world and in the next. And when he had stilled their fears he went near the door, and asked:

‘Is Flosi nigh at hand?’

‘Yes,’ answered Flosi.

‘Will you suffer my sons to atone?’ asked Njal once more, ‘or let them leave the house?’ but Flosi said:

‘The women and children and thralls may go out, but, as for your sons, the time for atonement is past, and I will not leave this spot as long as one of them remains alive.’

When Njal heard that, he went back into the house and called the women and children and thralls round him, and bade Thorhalla, the wife of Helgi, go out first, for she was a brave woman. And Thorhalla went, after bidding farewell to Helgi her husband.

But Astrid whispered softly to Helgi:

‘I will tie a woman’s kerchief about your head, and wrap you in a cloak, and the women folk will stand about you, and none shall know that you are not a woman also.’

Helgi did not like this plan, for he thought it shame to steal away in his sister’s garments; but they prayed him not to be stiff-necked, and at length he suffered the cloak to be put round him.

Now the children of Njal were all tall, but Helgi was tallest of all, except his brother Skarphedinn. And Flosi marked him, and said to his men:

‘I like not the height of the woman who went yonder, nor the breadth of her shoulders. Seize her and hold her fast.’

As soon as Helgi heard that he threw his cloak aside and thrust at a man with his sword, and cut off his leg. But Flosi was close behind, and stretched Helgi dead in front of him.

After that he went back to the house, and offered Njal that he should come outside, but Njal answered that he was too old to avenge his sons, and that he would not outlive them, for that would be a shame and disgrace to him.

‘Come out, then, Bergthora,’ said Flosi, ‘for I will not suffer you to burn inside.’

But Bergthora made answer:

‘Long years from my youth have I lived with Njal, and I vowed on the day of betrothal that his death should be mine;’ and without more words they went into the house.

‘I am weary,’ said Njal to his wife, ‘let us lay down on our bed and rest;’ and Bergthora bowed her head, and spoke to the boy Thord, the son of Kari:

‘Come to the door with me and go forth with your kinsmen. I will not have you stay here to burn.’ But the boy shook off the hand she had laid on his shoulder.

‘You promised me when I was little, grandmother, that I should never go from you till I wished it of myself. And I would rather die with you than live after you.’

Bergthora was silent, but she led the boy to the bed, and he climbed in, and laid himself down. Then Njal said to his head man:

‘Bring hither the oxhide and put it on the bed, and watch how we lay ourselves down, so that you may know where to find our bones. For not one inch will we stir, whatever befall.’

And he laid himself down, and bade the boy lie between himself and Bergthora.

So they waited.

At the doors and in the windows of the roof Skarphedinn and Grim were casting away burning brands, and hurling spears as if they had had twenty hands instead of two. At last Flosi called to his men to let be, till the fire had its way, for many had been killed and wounded already.

And now a beam which held up the oak fell in, and then another and another. ‘Surely my father must be dead,’ said Skarphedinn, ‘that he makes no sound,’ and, followed by Grim and Kari, he went to the end of the hall where a cross beam had fallen.

‘The smoke is thick here,’ said Kari, ‘thick enough to hide a man; let us leap out one by one, and we shall be away before they have seen us. Skarphedinn, you jump first!’

‘No!’ answered Skarphedinn, ‘you go first and I will follow; or, if I follow not, you will avenge me.’

‘I have a chance of my life,’ said Kari, ‘and I will take it. We must each do as seems best to him, but I fear me that we see each other no more;’ and catching up a huge blazing beam, he threw it over the edge of the roof, among the men who were gathered below.

They scattered at once like leaves in a storm, and at that instant Kari, with his tunic and hair already burning, leaped from the roof and crept away in the smoke. The man who stood nearest on the ground thought he saw something dark moving, and he asked his neighbour:

‘Think you that was one of them jumping from the beam?’ but the man answered: ‘Nay, but it may have been Skarphedinn hurling a firebrand;’ and then they went to their own work, and paid no more heed to the figure on the roof.

So Kari was left free to escape, and he put out the fire that was burning him, and rested in a safe place till he could seek shelter with his friends.

Thrice Skarphedinn tried to leap after Kari, and thrice the beam broke under his weight, and he was forced to climb back again. Then part of the wall fell in, and Skarphedinn fell down with it on to the floor of the hall.

In a moment the face of Gunnar, son of Lambi, was seen on top of the wall, and he cried out, ‘Are those tears on your cheeks, Skarphedinn?’ and Skarphedinn made answer:

‘Now am I finding out in truth how smoke can force tears from one’s eyes. But methinks I see laughter in yours, Gunnar.’

‘Of a surety,’ said Gunnar, ‘never have I laughed so much since the day you slew Thrain in Markfleet.’

‘Here is a remembrance of that day for you,’ said Skarphedinn, and he took from his pouch Thrain’s tooth, and flung it at Gunnar. And it knocked out Gunnar’s eye, and he fell from the roof.

Then Skarphedinn went to Grim, and hand in hand they two tried to stamp out the burning beams, but before they had crossed the hall Grim dropped dead, and the roof fell in, and shut Skarphedinn in a corner, so that he could not move.

At daylight a man rode up who had met Kari, and had learned from him that when he had jumped from the roof both Skarphedinn and Grim were still alive, but that was many hours before, and both must long since be dead.

Then Flosi and some of his men drew nearer and climbed up the gable, for the fire had burned low, and only threw out a flame here and there. And as they looked into the hall beneath them, which was a mass of charred and fallen wood, there seemed to rise up from the red ashes a song of triumph, and they held their breath and looked into each other’s faces.

‘Is it Skarphedinn’s song?’ asked Glum, ‘and is it a token that he is dead? or a sign that he is alive? Let us look for him.’

‘That shall not be,’ said Flosi quickly. ‘Fool that you are, do you not know that even now Kari is gathering together a band to avenge his kinsmen? Therefore let every man take his horse and ride up to the Three-corner Fell, and there we can hide and take counsel how we can escape from our enemies.’

So it was done, and not a whit too soon, for a very great company scattered over the country, seeking Flosi and his Band of Burners — for by this ill name men knew them.

As for Kari himself, he begged Hjallti, Njal’s cousin, to go with him to Bergthorasknoll and find Njal’s bones and bury them. And, as they went, men joined them, till they numbered nigh on a hundred when they reached Bergthorasknoll.

Kari entered the hall first and led them up to the spot where the bed had stood, and where a great heap of ashes now covered it. The ashes took long to clear away, and underneath was the oxhide, charred and shrivelled. But when the oxhide was pulled away they saw the three bodies fresh and whole, as they had laid them down. Only one finger of the boy was burned, where he had thrust it outside the hide.

When they saw this a great joy fell on the hearts of all, and Hjallti said:

'Never have I seen a dead man with a face as bright as this!' And the other men said likewise.

After that they sought for Skarphedinn, and then found him, fastened by the beam into the corner, and he had driven his axe into the wall of the gable, so that it had to be broken out. And they sought the bones of Grim, and found them lying in the middle of the hall, where he had dropped down dead. And they sought the bones of other men, and found them, and nine bodies in all were carried into the church and buried there.

And that is Burnt Njal's story.

THE LADY OF SOLACE

There was once an emperor who had two things that he loved more than all the world — his daughter and his garden. The finest linen and the richest silks of India or China decked the princess from the moment she was old enough to run alone, and the ships that brought them brought also the fairest flowers and sweetest fruits that grew in distant lands. All the time that he was not presiding over his council, or hearing the petitions of his people, the emperor passed in his garden, watching the flowers open and the fruits ripen, and by-and-by he planted trees and shrubs and made walks and alleys, till altogether the garden was the most beautiful as well as the largest that had ever been seen.

The years passed, and the princess reached the age of fourteen; quite old enough to be married, thought the kings and princes who were looking out for a bride for their sons. The emperor's heart sank when he heard rumours of embassies that were coming to rob him of his daughter, and he shut himself up in his room to try to invent a plan by which he might keep the princess, without giving offence to the powerful monarchs who had asked for her hand.

For a long while he sat with his head on his hands, thinking steadily, but every scheme had some drawback. At length his face brightened and he sprang up from his seat.

'Yes! that will do,' he cried, and went down to attend his council, looking quite a different man from what he had been a few hours before.

The embassies and the princes continued to arrive, and they all got the same answer. 'The emperor was proud of the honour done to himself and his daughter, and would give her in marriage to any man who would pass through the garden and bring him a branch of the tree which stood at the further end.' Nothing could surely be more easy, and every prince in turn as he heard the conditions felt that the fairest damsel on the whole earth was already his wife.

But though each man went gaily in, none ever came out, nor was it ever known what had befallen them. At last so many had entered that fatal gate that it seemed as if there could be no more princes or nobles left, and the emperor began to breathe again at the thought that he would be able after all to keep his daughter.

But one day a knight of great renown, named Tirius, arrived from beyond the seas and knocked at the gate of the castle. Like the others, he was welcomed and feasted, and when the feast was ended he craved that the emperor would grant him the hand of the princess on whatever condition he might choose.

‘Right willingly,’ answered the emperor; ‘there is only one condition I have laid down, and that is an easy one, though for some strange reason no one as yet has been able to fulfil it. You have merely to walk through the garden that you see below, and bring me back a branch from a tree bearing golden fruit, which stands on the opposite side. If fame speaks true, this is child’s play to the adventures in which you have borne so noble a part.’

‘In good sooth,’ said the knight, who saw clearly that there was more in the matter than appeared— ‘in good sooth your condition likes me well. Still, as fortune is ever inconstant, and may be tired of dealing me favours, I would first ask as a boon a sight of your fair daughter and leave to hearken to her voice. After that I will delay no longer, but proceed on my quest.’

‘I will take you to her myself,’ answered the emperor, who thought that he might show this small mercy to a man who was going to his death, and he led his guest down long passages and through lofty halls, till they reached the princess’s apartments.

‘In five minutes my chamberlain shall come for you, and he shall show you the way to the garden,’ said the emperor, ‘and meanwhile I bid you farewell;’ and, leaving Tirius to enter alone, he went to seek his ministers.

It would be hard to say whether the knight or the princess was most amazed as they stood gazing at each other — he at her beauty and she at his boldness, for never before had any man crossed her threshold. For a moment both were silent; then the knight, remembering how short a time was allowed him, aroused himself from his dream and spoke:

‘Gentle damsel, help me now in my need, for I have been drawn hither by love. Full well I know that many have had this adventure before me, and have entered that garden and never returned from it. Without your aid my fate will be such as theirs, and therefore, I pray you, tell me what I should do so that I may win through without harm.’

Now the knight was a goodly man and tall, and perhaps the princess may have bewailed in secret the noble youths who had fallen victims to her father’s pleasure. But, however that might be, she smiled and made reply:

‘I am ready to marry any man on whom my father wishes to bestow me, and you say you have come hither for love of me. Still, you have asked of me a hard thing, for it beseems not a daughter to betray her father’s confidence. Yet, as I am loth that any more fair youths should lose their lives for my sake, I will give you this counsel. You must first pass through a forest, which is the home of a lady who is known to all as the “Lady of Solace.” Go to her, and she will give you the help you need to journey safely through the garden.’

The princess had scarcely finished these words when the voice of the chamberlain was heard without, bidding him withdraw, and, glancing gratefully at her, the knight bowed low and took his leave.

In the great hall the chamberlain quitted him, telling him to take his ease and rest till the emperor should return, but instead the knight waited till he was alone and then plunged straight into the forest.

He walked on for a little way till he reached a green space, and there he stopped and cried, ‘Where is the Lady of Solace?’ Then he sat down on a stone and waited. In a short time he saw coming towards him two ladies, one bearing a basin and the other a cloth.

‘We give you greeting, sir,’ they said; ‘the Lady of Solace has sent us to you, and she bids you first wash your feet in this basin, and then go with us to her palace.’ So the knight washed his feet, and dried them in the white cloth, and rose up and went with the ladies to the palace, which was built of blue marble, and the fairest that ever he saw. The Lady of Solace was fair likewise and of a marvellous sweet countenance, and her voice was soft like the voice of a thrush as she asked him what he wanted with her. At that the knight told his errand, and how the princess had bade him come to her, for she alone could help him to win through the enchanted garden.

‘I am called the Lady of Solace,’ said she, with a smile which seemed made up of all the beautiful things in the world, ‘and I give succour to all those who need it. Here is a ball of thread; take it and bind it round the post of the gate of the garden, and hold fast the thread in your hand, unwinding it as you go. For if you lose the clue, you will perish like those before you. And more. A lion dwells in the garden, who will spring out and devour you, as he has devoured the rest. Therefore, arm yourself with armour, and see that the armour be anointed thickly with ointment. When the lion sees you, he will take your arm or your leg into his mouth, and his teeth shall stick fast in the ointment, and when you sunder yourself from him his teeth shall be drawn out, and you shall kill him easily. But during the fight beware lest you let go the clue.’

And after the lion shall come four men, who will set on you and seek to turn you from their path; but beware of them also, and if you are in peril call to me, and I will succour you. And now return to the palace and put on your armour, and so, farewell.’

When the knight heard this he was right glad, and stole back to the palace, where he found that the emperor was still sitting at his council. He sat down in the great hall to await him, but the time seemed very long before his host entered.

‘How have you sped?’ asked he.

‘My lord, now that through your goodness I have seen the princess,’ said the knight, ‘there can be but one ending to my journey. I go at once in quest of the tree, and I am content whatever fate may befall me.’

‘May fortune be with you!’ answered the emperor, who never failed to give good wishes to his daughter’s suitors, as he felt quite sure that they would be of no use.

So the knight bowed low and left the hall, going straight to the gatekeeper’s house, where he had put off his armour on arriving. On pretence of sharpening his sword, he borrowed a pot of ointment from the man, and, unseen by him, rubbed the paste thickly over his armour. After this he looked about to see that no one was watching him, and took the path that led to the garden.

A large iron gate supported by two posts stood at the entrance, and round one of these he firmly bound one end of the thread which the Lady of Solace had given him. Holding the other end in his hand, he advanced for a long while without seeing or hearing any strange thing, till a roar close to him caused him to start. The knight had just time to draw his sword and hold up his shield before the lion was upon him; but, as he had been forewarned, the great beast dashed aside the shield, and fastened his teeth in the arm that held it. The pain was such that the knight leaped backwards, but the lion’s teeth were fixed fast in the ointment, and they all came out of his mouth, so that he could bite no more. And when he rushed at his enemy with his claws they stuck also, so that the knight with a blow of his sword was able to kill him with ease.

Mightily he rejoiced at seeing his foe dead before him, and by ill fortune he forgot that, had it not been for the counsel of the Lady of Solace, it was *he* who would have been slain, and not the lion. He swelled with pride and conceit at the ease with which he had won the victory, and never noted that the clue of thread was no longer in his hands.

‘Ah, lovely princess, I come to seek my reward,’ cried he to himself, and turned his face towards the palace. But a little way on he spied seven trees, very fair to view, all covered with fruit that shone temptingly in the sun. He gathered a cluster that hung just above his head, and when he had eaten that, he thought that it tasted so delicious he really must have another, and another also.

He was still eating when three men passed by, and asked him what he was doing there. The knight was so puffed up that he did not answer them civilly after his manner, but gave them rude words, for which in return he received buffets. In the end, the men dragged him away from the tree and flung him into a ditch that was full of water, and his armour weighed him down, so that he could not get out. Then at last he remembered his clue, and felt for it, but it was not there, and his pride broke down, and he saw that he had brought his ruin on himself. And in despair he lifted up his voice and cried, ‘O Lady of Solace, help me, I beseech you, in my great need, for I am nigh dead.’ He shut his eyes for very misery, but opened them again in a moment, for a lady stood by him, and she said:

‘Did not I tell you that if you lost the clue you could never more find your way out of the garden? I will lift you out of the ditch, but, for the clue, you must seek for it yourself till you find it.’ And with that she vanished.

Not that day did the knight find the clue, nor the next, nor the next. Faint and weary was he, but he dared not eat of the fruit that was around him, some hanging from the boughs of trees and some growing on the ground. At length he wandered back to the spot where he had fought with the lion, and there, covered with blood, lay the clue he had so long sought. By its help he was led to the tree with the golden fruit, which stood at the far end of the garden, and plucking one of the boughs he turned to retrace his steps, wondering, now that he held the thread, at the shortness of the way.

‘Here is the branch, O Emperor! and now give me the princess,’ he said, kneeling and laying the bough down on the steps of the throne. And the emperor could not gainsay him, but bade his officers fetch his daughter, and after they had been married she went with her husband into his own country, where they lived happily till they died.

UNA AND THE LION

Once upon a time there lived a king and queen who had only one child, a little girl, whom they named Una, and they all lived happily at home for many years till Una had grown into a woman.

It seemed as if they were some of the fortunate people to whom nothing ever happens, when suddenly, just as everything appeared going well and peacefully with them, a fearful dragon, larger and more horrible than any dragon which had yet been heard of, arrived one night, seized the king and queen as they were walking in the garden after the heat of the day, and carried them prisoners to a strong castle. Luckily, Una was at that moment sitting among her maidens on the top of a high tower embroidering a kirtle, or she would have shared the same fate.

When the princess learnt what had befallen her parents, she was struck dumb with grief, but she had been taught that no misfortune was ever mended by tears, so she soon dried her eyes, and began to think what was best to do, and to whom she could turn for help. She ran quickly over in her mind the knights who thronged her father’s court, but there was not one amongst them to whose hands their rescue could be entrusted. One spent his days in writing pretty verses to the ladies who were about the queen, another passed his time in putting on suits more brilliant than any worn by his friends, a third loved hawking, but did not welcome the rough life and hard living of real warfare; no, she must seek a champion out of her own country if her parents were to be delivered out of the power of the dragon. Then all at once she remembered a certain Red Cross Knight whose fame had spread even to her distant land, and, ordering her white ass to be saddled, she set forth in quest of him.

It were long to tell the adventures Una met with on the way, but at last she found the knight resting after a hard-won fight, and told him her tale.

‘Right willingly will I help you, princess,’ said he, ‘only you must ride with me and guide me to the castle, for I know nothing of the countries that lie beyond the sea;’ and Una heard his words with joy, and called softly to her ass, who was cropping the short green grass beside her.

‘Let us go forth at once,’ she cried gaily, and sprang into her saddle. The knight hastily fastened on his armour, and, placing a blood-red cross upon his breast, swung himself on to his horse’s back. And so they rode over the plain, a trusty dwarf following far behind, and a snow-white lamb, held by a golden cord, trotting by Una’s side.

After some hours they left the plain and entered a forest, where the trees and bushes grew so thick that no path could they see. At first, in their eagerness to escape the storm which was sweeping up the plain behind them, they hardly took heed where they were going; and besides, the beauty of the flowers and the sweet scent of the fruit caused them to forget the trouble they would have to find the road again. But when the sound of the thunder ceased, and the lightning no longer darted through the leaves, they were startled to perceive they had wandered they knew not whither. No sun could they see to show them which was east and which west, neither was there any man to tell them what they fain would know. At length they stopped, for before them lay a cave stretching far away into the darkness.

‘We can rest there this night,’ said the Red Cross Knight, leaping to the ground, and handing his spear to the dwarf; ‘and first, you, lady, shall remain, here, while I enter and make sure that no fierce or loathsome beasts lurk in the corners.’ But Una turned pale as she listened.

‘The perils of this place I better know than you,’ she answered gravely. ‘In this den dwells a vile monster, hated by God and man.’ And the voice of the dwarf cried also, ‘Fly, fly! this is no place for living men.’ They might have spared their warnings; when did youth ever heed them? The knight looked into the cave, and

Forth into the darksome hole he went.
His glistening armour made a little glooming light,
By which he saw the ugly monster plain,
Half like a serpent horribly displayed,
The other half did woman’s shape retain.

It was too late to turn back, even had he wished it; but indeed it was the monster who looked round, as if to find a way to flee. Before her stood the knight, his sword drawn, waiting for a fair chance to plunge it into her throat. Escape there was none, and she prepared for battle.

The knight fought valiantly, but never had he met a foe like this. The monster was so large and so scaly that he could not get round her, while his sword glanced, blunted, from off her skin. Blow after blow he struck, but they only served to increase her fury, till, gathering all her strength together, she wound her great tail about his body, pressing him close against her horny bosom.

‘Strangle her, else she sure will strangle thee,’ cried Una, who had been watching the combat as well as the darkness would let her; and the knight heard, and seized the monster by the throat, till she was forced to let go her hold on him. Then, grasping his sword, he cut her head clean from her body.

Fain would they now leave the dreadful wood which had been the nurse of such an evil creature, and by following a track where the leaves grew less thickly, they at last found themselves on the other side of the plain, just as the sun was sinking to rest. They pushed on fast, hoping to find a shelter for the night, but none could they spy. The plain seemed bare, save for one old man in the guise of a hermit who was approaching them.

Him the Red Cross Knight stopped and asked if he knew of any adventures which might await him in that place. The old man, who was in truth the magician Archimago, the professor of lore which could read the secrets of men’s hearts, answered that the hour was late for the undertaking of such things, and bade them rest for the night in his cell hard by. So saying, he led them into a little dell amidst a group of trees, in which stood a chapel and the dwelling of the hermit.

It was but a short space before both knight and lady were sleeping soundly on the beds of fern which the hermit told them he had always at hand for the entertainment of guests. But, for himself, he crept unseen to a little cave inside a rock, and taking out his magic books he sought therein for mighty charms to trouble sleepy minds!

He soon found what he wanted, and repeated some strange words aloud. In an instant there fluttered round him a crowd of little sprites awaiting his bidding, but he motioned all aside except two — one of whom he kept with him and the other he sent on a message to the house of Morpheus, the god of sleep.

‘I come from Archimago the wizard,’ said the sprite when he reached his journey’s end. ‘Give me, I pray you, as swiftly as may be, a bad dream, that I may carry it back to him.’

Slowly the god rose up, and, going to his storehouse, where lay dreams of all sorts — dreams to make people happy, dreams to make people miserable, dreams to stir people to good, and dreams to move them to every kind of wickedness — he took from the shelf a small but very black little dream, which the sprite tied round his neck, and hurried to the cave of Archimago.

The wizard took the dream in silence, and, going into the den where the knight was sleeping, laid it softly on his forehead. In a moment his face clouded over; evil thoughts of Una sprang into his mind, till at length, unable to bear any longer the grief of mistrusting her he so loved and honoured, the knight called to the dwarf to bring him his horse, and together they rode away. But when Una woke and found both of her companions departed she wept sorely. Then, mounting her milk-white ass, she set out to follow them.

Meanwhile the Red Cross Knight was wandering he knew not whither, so deep were the wounds in his heart. He rode on with his bridle hanging loosely on his horse's neck, till a bend in the path brought him face to face with a mighty Saracen, bearing on his arm a shield with the words 'Sans foy' written across it. By his side, mounted on a palfrey hung with golden bells, was a lady clad in scarlet robes embroidered with jewels, who chattered merrily as they passed along.

It was she who first perceived the approach of an enemy, and, turning to Sansfoy, bade him begin the attack. He, nothing loth, dashed forward to meet the knight, who had barely time to steady himself to receive the blow, which caused him to reel in his saddle. The blow was indeed so hard that it would have pierced the knight's armour had it not been for the cross upon his breast; which, when the Saracen saw, he cursed the power of the holy emblem, and prepared himself for a fresh attack.

But either the Christian knight was the more skilful swordsman, or the cross lent new strength to his arm, for the fight was not a long one. Only a few strokes had passed between them, when the boastful Sansfoy fell from his horse, and rolled heavily to the ground. The lady hardly waited for the issue of the combat, and galloped off lest she too should be in danger. But the knight did not wage war on ladies, and, calling to the dwarf to bring the Saracen's shield as a trophy, he spurred quickly after her.

He did not take long to come up with her for, in truth, she intended to be overtaken, and turned a woeful countenance to the young knight, who listened, believing, to the false tale she told. Pitying her from his heart, he assured her of his care and protection, and while they are faring through the woods together, let us see what had become of Una.

The maiden was herself wandering distraught, seated on her 'unhastie beast,' when with a fearful roar a lion rushed out from a thicket with eyes glaring and teeth gleaming, seeking to devour his prey. But at the sight of Una's tender beauty he stopped suddenly, and, stooping down, he kissed her feet and licked her hands.

At this kindness on the part of the great creature, Una bent her head and wept grievously. 'He, my lion and my noble lord, how does he find it in his cruel heart to hate her that him loved?' she moaned sadly, and the lion again looked pityingly at her, and at last the maiden checked her sobs and bade her ass go on, the lion walking by her side during the day, and sleeping at her feet by night.

They had travelled far and for many days, through a wilderness untrodden by either man or beast, when at the foot of a mountain they spied a damsel bearing on her shoulder a pot of water. At sight of the lion she flung down the pitcher, and ran to the hut where she dwelt, without once looking behind her. In the cottage sat her blind mother, not knowing what could be the meaning of the shrieks and cries uttered by her daughter, who shut the door quickly after her, and caught trembling hold of her mother's hands.

It was the first lion the girl had ever seen, or she would have known that if he was determined to enter, it was not a wicket-gate that would prevent him. As neither mother nor daughter replied to Una's gentle prayer for a night's lodging, her 'unruly page' put his paw on the little door, which opened with a crash. The maiden then stepped softly over the threshold, begging afresh that she might pass the night in one corner, and receiving no answer — for the women were still too terrified to speak — she curled herself up on the earthen floor with the lion beside her.

About midnight there arrived at the door, which Una had refastened, a thief laden with spoils of churches, and whatever else he had managed to pick up by stealth. To spend the night in thieving was his custom, and hither he brought his spoils, as he thought none would suspect a blind woman and her daughter of harbouring stolen goods.

Many times he called, but the two women were in grievous dread of the lion, and durst not move from the corner where they were crouching; at last the man grew angry, and burst the door asunder, as the lion had done before him. He entered the hut, and straightway beheld the dreadful beast, with glaring eyes and gleaming teeth, as Una had first beheld him. But Kirkrapine (such was his name) had neither beauty nor goodness to still the lion's rage, and in another moment his body was rent in a thousand pieces.

The sun had scarce sent his first beams above the horizon when Una left the hut, mounted on her ass, and, followed by the lion, again began her quest of the Red Cross Knight. But, alas! though she found him not, she met her ancient foe, the magician Archimago, who had taken on himself the form of him whom she sought. Too true and unsuspecting was she, to dream of guile in others, and the welcome she gave him was from her whole heart. In the guise of the knight, Archimago greeted her fondly, and bade her tell him the story of her woes, and how came she to take the lion for her companion. And so they journeyed, the flowers seeming sweeter and the skies brighter to Una, as they went, when suddenly they beheld

One pricking towards them with hasty heat;

Full strongly armed, and on a courser free.

On his shield the words ‘Sans loy’ could be read, written in letters of blood.

Now, though Archimago had clad himself in the outward shape of the Red Cross Knight, he lacked his courage and his skill in war; and his heart was faint from fear, when the Saracen reined back his horse and prepared for battle. In the shock of the rush the wizard was borne backwards, and the blood from his side dyed the ground.

‘The life that from Sansfoy thou tookest, Sansloy shall from thee take,’ cried the Paynim, and was unlacing the vizor of the fallen man to deal him his death-stroke when a cry from Una stayed his hand for a moment, though it was not her prayers for mercy that would have kept him from drawing his sword, but the sight of the hoary head beneath the helmet, which startled him.

‘Archimago!’ he stammered, ‘what mishap is this?’ And still Archimago lay on the ground stunned, and answered nothing.

For a moment Una gazed in amazement at the strange sight before her, and wondered what was the meaning of these things. Then she turned to fly, but, quick as thought, the Saracen plucked at her robe to stop her.

Now when the lion, her fierce servant, saw that Paynim knight lay hands on his sovereign lady, he sprang on him with gaping jaws, and almost tore the shield from his arm. But the knight leapt swiftly back, and swinging his sword plunged it into the heart of the faithful creature, who rolled over and died amidst the tears of his mistress.

After which the knight set Una on his steed before him and bore her away.

HOW THE RED CROSS KNIGHT SLEW THE DRAGON

While Una was riding through forest and over plains, with her faithful lion for her guard, the knight whom she sought had given himself over into the care of Duessa (for such was the name of Sansfoy's companion), by whom he was led to the gates of a splendid palace. The broad road up to it was worn by the feet of hosts of travellers; but though many peeped through the doors few returned. As the knight stood aside and watched, all manner of strange people passed before him, though none spoke. At length a man, but newly issued from the palace, and bearing a shield with the words 'Sans joy' written across it, stopped suddenly in front of the knight's page, then snatched from his arm a shield like his own, bearing the name 'Sansfoy.' The page, overcome by the quickness of the action, did not resist, but a blow on the helmet from the Red Cross Knight made Sansjoy stagger where he stood.

The fight was fierce, and no one could tell with whom the victory lay till the queen of that place came by, and bade them cease their brawling, for on the morrow they should meet in the lists.

But the battle next day went against the Paynim, in spite of the presence of the queen and the counsel of the false Duessa. Short would have been his shrift had not thick darkness fallen about him, and when the Red Cross Knight cried to him to begin the fray afresh, only silence answered him.

Then the false Duessa, ever wont to take the side of him who wins, hurried up to him, and whispered, as she had whispered to Sansjoy, 'The conquest yours, I yours, the shield and glory yours;' but the knight did not heed her, for his eye was ever bent on the wall of thick darkness which shut in his foe. Indeed, so busy were his thoughts that he never knew that blood was streaming from his wounds, till the queen ordered him to be carried into the palace, and ointments to be laid on his body.

As was her custom, Duessa talked much and loudly of the care she would give him, and of his speedy cure under her hands; but when night fell she stole forth and came to the spot where Sansjoy lay, still covered with the enchanted cloud. Then, in an iron chariot, borrowed from the Queen of Darkness, she drove him down to the underworld, and across the river which divides the kingdom of the living from that of the dead. Here giving him into the hands of the oldest and greatest of physicians, she went her way to the bedside of the Red Cross Knight.

But for all that concerned that knight she might well have stayed in the kingdom of darkness; for in her absence the dwarf, wandering through the palace, had come upon a dungeon full of wretched captives, who filled the air with their wailings.

Filled with fear, the dwarf hastened back to his master and prayed him to flee that place before the sun rose. Which the young knight gladly did, creeping away through a secret postern, though it was hard to find a footing amidst the corpses piled up on all sides, which had come to a bad end by reason of their own folly.

And what had become of Una when she had fallen into the power of Sansloy? Well, trembling she had followed him into the midst of a forest, where, to her wonder, from every bush sprang a host of fauns and people of the wood, and ran towards her. When the Saracen beheld them, he was so distraught with fear that he galloped right away, leaving Una behind him. But she, not knowing what to fear the most, stood shaking with dread, till the wood folk pressed around her, and, kneeling on the ground stroked lovingly her hands and feet. Then she understood that she was safe amongst them, and let them lead her where they would, and smiled at their songs and merry dances. If she could not be with the Red Cross Knight, then it mattered little where she was, and it gave her a feeling of rest and safety to lie hidden among the woods, with a people who would let nothing harmful come near her.

So she stayed with them long, and taught them many things, while they in their turn showed her how to play on their pipes and to dance the prettiest and most graceful of their dances.

Time passed in this wise, when one day it chanced that a noble knight, Satyrane by name, came to seek his kindred among the woodfolk. He wondered greatly to find so lovely a maid among them, and still more to see how eagerly they listened to her teachings, and henceforth he formed part of the throng that sat at her feet when the heat of the day was over.

In this manner Una and the knight Satyrane soon became friends, and at length one day she poured out all her sad tale, and besought his help in her search for the Red Cross Knight. It was not easy to escape from the kind people who always thronged about her, and her heart was sore at the thought of leaving them, but she felt that for her captive parents' sake, as well as for the knight's, she could delay no longer.

Therefore one morning, when the wood folk had gone to hold a feast in the forest, she rode away in company with Satyrane, and issuing from the forest soon reached the open plain. Towards evening they met a weary pilgrim, whose clothes were worn and soiled, and so true a pilgrim did he look, that Una did not know him to be the wizard Archimago. The knight instantly drew rein, and asked what tidings he could impart, and Una begged with faltering voice that he would tell her aught concerning a knight whose armour bore a red cross.

‘Alas! dear dame,’ answered he slowly, ‘these eyes did see that knight, both living and eke dead;’ and with that he told her all his story.

When he had finished, it was Satyrane who spoke.

‘Where is that Paynim’s son, that him of life, and us of joy hath reft?’ And the pilgrim made answer that he was hard by, washing his wounds at a fountain.

Satyrane wasted no more words, but went right straight to the fountain, where he found Sansloy, whom he challenged instantly to fight. Sansloy hastily buckled on his armour, and cried that, though he had not slain the Red Cross Knight, he hoped to lay his champion in the dust. Then, both combatants being ready, the battle began.

The sight was too dreadful for Una to bear, and she galloped away, not knowing that her deadliest foe, the wizard Archimago, was following her.

Meanwhile Duessa had left the splendid palace, and was riding over the country in pursuit of the Red Cross Knight, for it was bitter to her to see any escape, who had ever been under her thrall. Her good fortune, which never seemed to forsake her, before long led her to his side, where he lay resting on the banks of a stream, and he greeted her gladly.

The sun was hot, and the water rippling clear over the stones seemed inviting. The knight was tired, and leaned down to drink, never knowing that the stream was enchanted. But in a moment his strength seemed to fail, and his arms grew weak as a child’s, though he felt nothing till a horrible bellowing sounded in the wood. At the dreadful sound he started up and looked around for his armour, but before he could reach it a hideous giant was upon him.

The fight did not take long, and in a short while the Red Cross Knight was a prisoner in the hands of the giant, who, accompanied by the false Duessa, carried his captive to a dungeon of his castle. After the door was safely locked and barred, the two then retired into the large hall, where they ate and made merry.

From that day the giant brought forth his choicest treasures with which to deck Duessa. Her robes were purple, and a triple crown of gold was on her head, and, what she liked not so well, he gave her a seven-headed serpent to ride on.

Now the faithful dwarf had watched the fate of his master, and when he saw him borne away senseless by the giant, he took up the armour which had been lain aside in the hour of need, and set out he knew not whither.

He had gone but a little distance when he met Una, who read at a glance the evil tidings he had brought. She fell off her ass in a deadly swoon, and the dwarf, whose heart was nigh as sore, rubbed her temples with water and strove to bring her back to life. But when she heard the tale of all that had befallen the Red

Cross Knight since last she had parted from him, she would fain have died, till the thought sprang suddenly into her mind that perhaps she might still rescue him. So with fresh hope she took the road to the giant’s castle, but the way was far, and she was woefully tired before even its towers were in sight. Brave though she was, the maiden’s courage failed her at last, and she began to weep afresh, when her eyes happened to light upon a good knight riding to meet her. He was clad in armour that shone more than any man’s, and well it might, as it had been welded by the great enchanter Merlin. On the crest of his helmet a golden dragon spread his wings: and in the centre of his breast-plate a precious stone shone forth amidst a circle of smaller ones, ‘like Hesperus among the lesser lights.’

As he drew near, and saw before him a lady in distress, he reined in his horse, and with gentle words drew from her all her trouble.

‘Be of good cheer,’ he said, when the tale was ended, ‘and take comfort; for never will I forsake you till I have freed your captive knight.’

And, though she knew him not, at his promise Una took heart of grace, and bade the dwarf lead them to the giant’s castle.

Conducted by the dwarf and followed by the squire, the knight and lady soon reached the castle. Bidding Una to await him outside, and calling to his squire to come with him, they both walked up to the gates, which were fast shut, though no man was guarding them.

‘Blow your horn,’ said the knight, and the squire blew a blast. At the sound, the gates flew open, and the giant came foaming from his chamber to see what insolent thief had dared disturb his peace.

And the giant did not come alone. Close after him rode Duessa, ‘high mounted on her many-headed beast’; and at this sight the knight raised his shield and eagerly began the attack.

But, horrible though the serpent was, he was not the sole foe that the knight had to fight with. The giant’s only weapon was his club, but that was as thick as a man’s body, and studded with iron points besides. Luckily for the knight, this was not the first giant to whom he had given battle, and ere the mighty blow could fall he sprang lightly to one side, and the club lay buried so deep in the ground that before the giant could draw it out again, his left arm was smitten off by the knight’s sword.

The giant’s roars of pain might have been heard in the uttermost parts of the kingdom, and Duessa quickly guided her baleful beast to the help of her wounded friend. But her way was barred by the squire, who, sword in hand, ‘stood like a bulwark’ between his lord and the serpent. Duessa, full of wrath at being foiled, turned the serpent on him, but not one foot would the squire move till, beside herself with anger, the witch drew out her cup and sprinkled him with the poisonous water. Then the strength went out of his arms and the courage from his heart, and he sank helpless on the ground before the snake, who fain would have trampled the life out of him, and it would have fared ill with him had not the knight rushed swiftly to his rescue, and dealt the snake such a wound that the garments of Duessa were all soaked in blood. She shrieked to the giant that she would be lost if he did not come to her aid, and the giant, whose one arm seemed to have gained the strength of two, struck the knight such a blow on the helmet that he sank heavily on the ground.

The giant raised a shout of joy, but he triumphed too soon. The knight, in falling, caught the covering of his shield upon his spear, and rent it from top to toe. The brilliance that flowed from it burnt into the eyes of the giant, so that he was ‘blinded by excess of light,’ and sank sightless on the ground. At a fresh cry from Duessa he struggled to his feet, but all in vain. He had no power to hurt nor to defend, and fell back so heavily that the very earth shook beneath him, and was an easy prey for his foe, who smote his head from his body.

Duessa, as we know, never stayed with those with whom the world went ill, and she was stealing away quietly, when once more the squire stopped her.

‘You are captive to my lord,’ he said, and, holding her firmly, led her back.

Then Una came running full of grateful words, but when she saw Duessa a cloud of fierce wrath passed over her face.

‘Beware lest that wicked woman escape,’ cried she, ‘for she it is who has worked all this ill, and thrown my dearest lord into the dungeon. Oh, hear how piteously he calls to you for aid!’

‘I give her into your keeping,’ answered the knight, turning to the squire, ‘and beware of her wiles, for they are many;’ and, leaving the rest behind him, he strode into the castle, meeting no man as he went.

At last there crept forth from one corner an old, old man with a huge bunch of rusty keys hanging from his arm. The knight asked him in gentle speech whence had gone all the people who dwelt in the castle, but he answered only that he could not tell, till the knight waxed impatient, and took the keys from him.

The doors of all the rooms opened easily enough, and inside he found the strangest medley. Everywhere blood lay thick upon the floors, while the walls were covered with cloth of gold and splendid tapestry. No signs were there of any living creature, yet he knew that in some hiding-place in the castle the captive lay concealed.

The knight had come to the last door of all. It was of iron, and no key on the bunch would open it. On one side was a little grating, and through it he called loudly, lest perchance any man might hear his voice.

At that there answered him a hollow empty sound, and for a while he could not make out any words. Then from out the wailing in the darkness something spoke:

‘Oh, who is that which brings me happy choice of death? Three moons have waxed and waned since I beheld the face of heaven? Oh, welcome, welcome art thou who hast come to end my weary life!’

The moaning sound of the voice thrilled the brave champion with horror. Putting his shoulder to the iron door, he gave a mighty heave, and the hinges gave way. Nothing could he see, for the darkness was terrible, and his foot, which he stretched cautiously inward, touched no floor. And, besides, the foul smells rushed out, poisoning him with their fumes.

But when he had grown in some measure used to the darkness and the odours, he began to think how he could best deliver the Red Cross Knight from the pit into which he had fallen. To this end he sought through the castle till he found some lengths of rope, which he carried back with him, as he did not know how deep the pit might be. He knotted three or four together and let the rope down, but even when a faint cry from the captive told him that it had reached the bottom, his labours were not ended yet. Twice the knots gave way, by good fortune, before the man was more than a foot or two from the ground, and other pieces of rope had to be fetched. Then, when all was made fast, the prisoner had grown so weak that he could scarce draw himself up; and again the knight feared greatly lest he himself should not have strength to hold fast the rope. But at length his courage and patience prevailed, and the Red Cross Knight, hollow-eyed, and thin as a skeleton, looked once more upon the sun.

His parents might have gazed on him and not known him for their child, but Una’s heart leapt when the unknown knight brought him to her.

‘Welcome,’ she said, ‘welcome in weal or woe. Your presence I have lacked for many a day,’ and fain would she have heard the tale of his sufferings, had not the knight, who knew that men love not to speak of their sorrows, begged her to tend the captive carefully, so that his forces might come to him again. Further, he bade them remember that they had in their power the woman who had been the cause of all their grief, and the time had come to give sentence on her.

‘I cannot slay her, now she is mine to slay,’ answered Una, ‘but strip her robe of scarlet from off her, and let her go whither she will.’

With her robes and her jewels went all the magic arts that gave her youth and beauty. Instead of the dazzling maiden who had wrought so much havoc in the world, there stood before them an old bald-headed shaking crone, that seemed as ancient as the earth itself. Silently they gazed, then turned away in horror, while Duessa wandered into paths of which she alone knew the ending.

It was not until they had rested themselves awhile in the castle that the stranger knight told who he was and why he came there. He was, he said, Arthur, the ward of Merlin, and had ridden far and long in quest of the Faerie Queen. And having fulfilled his vow to Una, in delivering the Red Cross Knight out of the power of the giant, he bade both farewell, leaving behind him, as a remembrance of their friendship a diamond box containing a precious ointment, which would cure any wound, however deep or poisonous.

So they parted, but not yet was the Red Cross Knight able to face the monstrous dragon who held captive Una’s royal parents. For some weeks therefore he rested in the castle till his strength came back, then once more he and Una rode forth side by side.

They had not gone far when they beheld an armed knight galloping fast towards them, and as he went ever glancing over his shoulder as if fearful of some dread thing behind. His matted hair streamed in the wind and the fingers which grasped the reins were like the claws of an eagle. Stranger than all, round his neck was tied a hempen rope. ‘He seems to be afraid of himself,’ thought the Red Cross Knight as he checked his horse to offer help to the flying man before him.

At first it seemed as if his words fell on dumb ears, but patiently he repeated them over and over again, and at length an answer came from the shaking figure:

‘For God’s sake, Sir Knight, do not, I pray you, stay me, for look, HE comes, HE comes fast after me;’ and as he spoke he urged on his horse afresh. But the Red Cross Knight caught his bridle and bade him fear nothing, as he was safe with him, and to tell him why such awful fear possessed his soul.

At last the stricken man poured forth his tale, and the Red Cross Knight learned that once he was happy and free, like other men, till on an ill-starred day he and a friend had fallen in with a cursed wight who called himself ‘Despair,’ who had plucked all hope from their breasts, and bade them seek death, the one with a rope, the other with a knife. His friend, whose love had been disdained by a proud lady, fell an easy prey to the persuasions of the giant, and it was the sight of his corpse lying weltering in his blood that drove this man to ride away while yet the rope hung loose. ‘O sir,’ he added when the sad tale was told— ‘O sir, be warned by me, and never let yourself stray into his presence! His subtle tongue, like dropping honey, melts into the heart, and ere one be aware, his power is gone and weakness doth remain.’

But the Red Cross Knight made answer that he would never rest till he had seen with his own eyes that baleful being, and begged the stranger, whose name was Trevisan, to guide him hither.

‘I will ride back with you, as you ask it of me,’ said Sir Trevisan unwillingly, ‘but not for all the gold in the world will I stay with you when you reach his cave, for sooner would I die than see his deadly face!’

‘Ride on, then, and I will follow,’ answered the Red Cross Knight.

The cave lay in the side of a cliff, and was dark and gloomy as a tomb. The only sounds they heard were the hooting of an owl and the wails and howls of wandering ghosts; the only sights were the corpses of men hanging on trees or lying stark upon the ground. Sir Trevisan turned his horse’s head and would fain have fled, but the Red Cross Knight stopped him.

‘You are safe with me,’ he said confidently, and the other, who was ever weak of will, waited.

They entered the cave, and found the doer of all that evil seated on the floor, his eyes as the eyes of a dead man, and his body well nigh as much a skeleton as any of his victims. On the grass beneath him lay a body that was still warm, and in its bleeding wound a rusty knife still stood. The sight stirred the blood in the knight’s veins, and he challenged the murderer to fight where he stood.

‘Are you distraught, you foolish man,’ was all his answer, ‘that you should talk in this wild way? It was his own guilt which drove him to his end. He loathed his life, why should he then prolong it? Is it not the part of a friend to free his feet when they stick fast in the mud, and to point to the door that leads to rest, even if some little pain must be suffered in the passage? Is not short pain well borne that brings long ease — sleep after toil, port after stormy seas?’

The Red Cross Knight listened wonderingly. Then he answered:

‘The soldier may not cease to watch nor leave his stand until his captain bid.’

But the cursed wight replied boldly, ‘The longer life, I wot, the greater sin. The greater sin, the greater punishment. Therefore, I pray you go no further, but lie down and betake you to your rest. A longer life means old age and sickness, and every kind of sorrow. So lay it down while things are yet well with you.’

In spite of Sir Trevisan’s warning, the fair-sounding words found an echo in the heart of the Red Cross Knight, as they had done in the hearts of many men before him. The miscreant saw that his courage was wavering, and forthwith he brought forth a store of swords, ropes, poisons, and a brazier of fire, and bade him choose what manner of death he would prefer. The knight gazed at them all, like one who walks in sleep, but touched none of them, and the miscreant, beholding this, chose out a dagger bright and new, and thrust it in his shaking hand. The young man looked at it, his face reddened and then grew pale again, and slowly, as if against his will, he lifted the dagger.

A shriek from Una, who had only just reached the cave, caused him to drop his arm again, and in an instant she had snatched it from his limp fingers, and had flung it on the ground.

‘Come away, come away,’ she cried, ‘let no vain words bewitch you! What have you to do with despair, after all the brave deeds you have done? Arise, Sir knight, arise and leave this cursed place. Have you forgotten that other work awaits you?’

The voice of Una broke the spell which had possessed him. Once more his eye grew bright and his arm strong. He mounted his horse and rode away by Una’s side without ever looking behind him. If he had, he would have seen that the miscreant had placed a rope round his own neck, and hanged himself on a tree. But even so he could not die; the death to which he drove others remained far from him.

The ease with which the Red Cross Knight had been mastered by the wily talk of the gloomy miscreant in the cave showed Una that his mind, if not his body, was still weak from his long imprisonment in the dungeon. She saw that before he could fight the dragon who had carried off her parents he needed yet more repose, and luckily she knew of a house not far off where they would be made welcome for as long as they chose to stay. Hither they fared, and for many weeks the knight’s armour was laid away, and the ladies who dwelt in that place gave him all the strength and counsel that they could think of. Then, when at last he had become what he had been of yore, Una bade farewell to her hosts with great thanks, and set out for the royal castle. After three days the walls of a high tower might be seen dimly across the plain.

‘It is there that my parents are kept imprisoned by the dragon,’ said Una, pointing to it with her hand, ‘and I see the watchman watching for good tidings, if haply such there be. Ah, he has waited long!’

As she spoke, a roaring hideous sound was heard that seemed to shake the ground and to fill all the air with terror. Turning their heads, they beheld on their right a huge dragon, lying stretched upon the sunny side of a great hill, himself like a great hill. But no sooner did he see the shining armour of the knight than he roused himself and made ready for battle.

Hastily the Red Cross Knight bade Una withdraw herself to another hill, from which she could see the fight without herself being in danger. Crouching behind a rock, she watched the dreadful beast approaching, half flying and half walking as he went. Run he could not, his size was too vast.

Her heart sank as she looked, for how could mortal man get the better of such a creature! Besides the brazen scales which thickly covered his body, his wings were like two sails, and at the tip of each huge feather was a many-pronged claw; while his back was hidden with the folds of his tail, which lay doubled in a hundred coils, and in his mouth were three rows of sharp-pointed teeth. Una could look no more; she shut her eyes and waited.

The knight felt that if he was to win the victory at all it must be by means of his lightness of foot, as the monster was so large he could not turn himself about quickly. So, getting a little behind his head, he tried to pierce his neck between the scaly plates, but the spear glanced off harmlessly, and a stroke from the tip of the tail laid both him and his horse on the ground.

They rose again instantly, and returned to the charge, but a second blow met with no better fate. Then the dragon in wrath spread wide his sails and rose heavily above the earth, till, suddenly and swiftly darting down his head, he snatched both horse and man off the ground. But here the knight had the advantage, for with his spear he stung the beast so sore that the monster speedily set his captives again on the earth.

Not giving the dragon time to gather himself up, the knight dealt him a blow under the left wing. With a roar of agony, the beast snapped the spear asunder with his claws, and pulled out the head. At that a sea of blood gushed from the wound which would have turned a water-mill, and in his pain and rage flames of fire gushed from his mouth.

Unwinding his tail from his back, he coiled it like lightning about the legs of the horse, which fell to the ground with his rider. But in an instant the knight was on his feet, and by the mere force of his blows forced his enemy to reel, though the brazen scales were still unpierced. Though his courage was as great as ever, the young man began to lose patience, when of a sudden he noticed that the monster could no longer rise into the air by reason of his wounded wing. That sight gave him heart, and he drew near once more, only to be scorched by the deadly fire from the dragon’s jaws. Half blinded and suffocated, he staggered, which the dragon seeing, he dealt the knight such a blow that he fell backwards into a well that lay behind.

‘So that is the end of him,’ said the dragon to himself; but, if he had only known, it was the beginning, for the well into which the knight had fallen was the well of life, which could cure all hurts and heal all wounds.

All night Una watched at her post, for darkness had come before the knight received his final blow. In the morning, before the sun had risen above the plain, she was looking for the knight, who was lying she knew not where. Her eyes dropping by chance on the well, she was sore amazed to see him rise out of it fairer and mightier than before. With a rush he fell upon the dragon, who had gone to sleep, safe in the knowledge of his victory, and, taking his sword in both hands, he drove right through the brazen scales, and wounded him deep in his skull. In vain did the monster roar and struggle; the blows rained thick and fast, and most of his tail was cut from his body.

Again and again the knight was overthrown, and again and again he rose to his feet, and laid about him as valiantly as ever. But while the fight was still hanging in the balance, the dragon thrust his head forward with wide-open jaws, thinking to swallow his enemy and make an end of him. Quick as thought the knight sprang aside, and, thrusting his sword in the yawning gulf up to the hilt, gave the dragon his death-blow.

Down he fell, fire and smoke gushing from his nostrils — down he fell, and men thought some mighty mountain must have cast up rocks on the earth.

The victor himself trembled, and it was long ere Una dared draw near, dreading lest the direful fiend should stir. But when at last she knew him dead, she came joyfully forth, and, bursting into happy tears, faltered her gratitude for the good he had wrought her.

There is little more to be told of Una and the Red Cross knight.

The watchman on the wall, who had seen the dreadful battle, was the first to tell the king and queen that the dragon was dead and that they were free. Then the king commanded the trumpets to sound and the people to assemble, so that fitting rejoicings might be made at the destruction of their foe.

This being done, a mighty procession came down, headed by the king and queen, to lay laurel boughs at the feet of the victor, and to set a garland of bay on the head of the maiden. Once more Duessa and Archimago sought to prevent the betrothal of the Red Cross Knight and Una by a plot to send the wizard in the guise of a messenger, proclaiming the knight to have been already bound to the daughter of the emperor, but the false tale was easily seen through, and Archimago thrown into a dungeon.

After that the king himself performed the marriage rite, and a solemn feast was held through the land, but the wedded pair were not long left together. A vow the knight had made when he received his spurs to do the Faerie Queen six years of service called him from Una’s side, and, sad though the parting might be, both held their word too high ever to break it.

AMYS AND AMYLE

Some time in the Middle Ages there lived in the Duchy of Lombardy, which, as everybody knows, is part of Italy, two knights, who loved each other like brothers. And, what is more to be wondered at, their wives were the best friends in the world. To complete the happiness of the two couples, two little boys were born to them on the same day, and they were given the names of Amys and Amyle.

Now it generally happens that when parents are very anxious for their children to be friends, because they are the same age, or neighbours, or for some equally good reason, the young people make up their minds to hate each other. However, Amys and Amyle did not disappoint their fathers and mothers in this way. From the moment they could walk they were never seen apart; if they ever *did* quarrel no one ever heard of it; and by the time they were twelve years old they had grown so like each other that even their parents could hardly tell the difference between them. Indeed, the likeness between them is supposed to have given rise to the proverb, ‘A miss is as good as a mile.’

It was in that year that the duke, their liege lord, bade all his vassals to a great festival to be held in his castle, and many of them took their sons with them, to show them some of the customs of chivalry. Amys and Amyle went with the rest, and endless were the mistakes made about them. The boys themselves, who were merry little fellows, delighted in increasing the confusion, and played so many pranks that the duke declared that they must remain at the court with him, as his life would be too dull without them.

Perhaps the knights thought that their homes would be dull too, but, if so, they did not dare say so; only their wives noticed, as they entered the castle gates, that their heads were bowed, as if some ill had befallen them.

At first the boys felt unhappy and lonely in this strange new world, and clung to each other more closely than ever, but, after a little, they got used to the change, and learned eagerly how to shoot at a mark and tilt at a ring, or to sing sweet love-songs to the sound of a lute.

So the years passed away till Amys and Amyle were eighteen years old, and thought themselves men, and were ready to cross lances with the bravest. The first step they took towards proving to the world that no tie of blood could bind them closer than the love they bore one to another, was to swear the oaths which made them brothers in arms, and obliged them to fight in each other’s quarrels, avenge each other’s wrongs — even to sacrifice what the other held most dear in the service of his friend. Marriage itself was not more sacred.

All this time the duke had been too busy with his own affairs to have the youths much in his company, though he took care that they had the best chances of learning everything that they ought to know. When, however, he heard that Amys and Amyle had sworn the solemn oaths that made them brothers in arms, he ordered a tournament to be held in their honour, and, when it was over, knighted them on the field. He further declared that henceforth Sir Amys should be his chief butler and Sir Amyle his head steward over his household, thus the steward whom Amyle displaced became their deadly enemy.

Although the young men knew a great deal about hunting, and wrestling, and other such sports, they had no idea what the duties of a butler and a steward might be. But what they *did* know was that they would have to be very careful, for the eyes of the old steward were watching eagerly to report any mistakes to the duke their master. Luckily for them, they were favourites with everyone, and if now and then they forgot their work, or slipped away for a day’s hunting, well! the task was done by somebody, and not even the old steward could find out by whom.

Everything seemed going smoothly, and the new-made knights were in danger of being spoilt by the favour of the ladies of the court, when a sudden stop was put to all their pleasures. One day a man-at-arms riding a jaded horse appeared at the palace gateway, and demanded to be led into the presence of the good knight Sir Amyle.

‘Oh, my lord,’ said he, and knew not that it was Amys before whom he was kneeling, ‘it is grievous news that I bear unto you. Your father and mother, that noble knight and his lady, died of a pestilence but seven days agone, and none save you can take their place. Therefore am I sent unto you.’

‘*My* father and mother?’ cried Amys, staggering back.

‘Yes, my lord, yours,’ answered the man. ‘At least — —’ he stammered, as Sir Amyle came and stood by his friend, ‘I know not if indeed it may be yours. It is long years since I have seen you, and this knight and you have but one face. But it is Sir Amyle with whom I would speak.’

Then Amys laid his hand on his brother’s shoulder.

‘Be comforted,’ he said softly. ‘Am I not with thee? and, though I cannot go with thee now, I will follow thee shortly unless thou quickly return to me.’

Early next morning Amyle started with a heavy heart for the home which he had left six years before; but before his departure he had caused to be made two cups of gold, delicately wrought with figures of birds and beasts, such as he and Amys had often chased in the forests and lakes of Lombardy. The cups were no more to be told from each other than were Amys and Amyle themselves, and Amyle placed them in the pockets of his saddle till the moment came for him to part from Sir Amys, who had ridden with him as far as he might. Then, drawing out one of the cups, Amyle placed it in his friend's hands.

'Farewell, my brother,' he said. 'Be true to me as I will be true to you, according to the oath which we sware, that as long as we both shall live nothing and nobody shall stand between me and thee.'

And Sir Amys repeated the words of his oath, then slowly turned his horse's head towards the castle.

Seven days' hard riding brought Sir Amyle back to his native place, and for many months he had much to do in setting aside the pretenders who had sprung up to claim his father's lands. When at last peace was restored and the false traitors had been thrown into prison, a petition on the part of his vassals to take a wife and settle down amongst them, turned his thoughts in other directions.

It was the custom of the country that the ruler of those lands should choose his wife from the most beautiful maidens in the Duchy of Lombardy, no matter what might be their degree. So a herald was sent forth to proclaim that any damsel who wished to fill this high place was to present herself in the courtyard of the palace on the morning following the next new moon, where the chamberlain would receive her. Oh, what a fluttering of hearts there was in the towns and villages, as the herald, with his silver trumpet and his satin coat of red and yellow, covered with figures of strange beasts, passed up and down the streets! How the girls all ran to their mirrors, and turned themselves this way and that to see if there could possibly be a chance for them! Perhaps it was the fault of the headdress they wore that their faces seemed so long and their noses so big, or surely something was wrong with the glass that their cheeks looked so yellow! But even when it was proved beyond a doubt that neither headdress nor mirror was to blame in the matter, there were enough lovely maidens and to spare in the courtyard of the castle on the day following the new moon.

'He is certain to choose *you*,' said one, who in her secret heart thought it was impossible that *she* should be passed over.

'Oh no; fair men's eyes alway rest upon dark women,' answered the girl, whose locks were brighter than the sun, though while she spoke she was really thinking that no one could bear comparison with her. And then all grew silent, for there was heard a blast of trumpets announcing that Sir Amyle was at hand.

The young knight had donned for this occasion a close-fitting coat of silver cloth, while a short blue velvet mantle hung from his shoulders. He walked slowly down the ranks of the maidens, watching each carefully, and noting the way in which she received his gaze. Some looked down and blushed; some looked up and smiled, but one there was who did neither, only stood calm and pale as the young man drew near.

She was a tall girl with dark hair and soft grey eyes, and the chamberlain had doubted long, before he told her father that she might take her stand with the rest. None would have chosen her as Queen of a Tourney, or bidden her preside over a Court of Love, yet there was that in her face which had caused Amyle to pause before her and to hold out his hand.

So they were married, and by the side of his wife Sir Amyle for a while forgot his brother.

Meanwhile Sir Amys dwelt sorrowfully at the court, defending himself as best he might against the wiles of the black-hearted steward, who now received him with smiles and fair words. Nay, he even desired that they should become brothers at arms, but to this Sir Amys replied that, having made oath to one brother at arms, the rules of chivalry did not allow him to take another.

At these words the steward threw off the mask with which he had sought to beguile Sir Amys.

‘You will have cause to rue this day,’ roared he, nearly choking in his wrath; ‘you dog, you white-livered cur!’ but Amys only smiled, and bade him do his worst.

By this time the duke’s only daughter, Belisante, had reached the age of fifteen, and on her birthday her father proclaimed a great tournament, which was to last for fourteen days. Knights from far and near flocked to break a lance in honour of the fair damsel, but, though many doughty deeds were done, the prize fell to Sir Amys. When he came up to receive the golden circlet from the hands of the duchess — for the duke held his daughter to be of too tender years to be queen of the tourney — Belisante looked earnestly at the knight whose praises had rung in her ears ever since her childhood. It was almost the first time her eyes had beheld him, for she had lived in one of her father’s distant castles, and had seldom visited the court.

Now we all know full well that whenever we form to ourselves the picture of a man or woman of whom great things are said, woeful is in general the disappointment. But even in that assembly Sir Amys was taller and stronger and fairer to look upon than the rest.

‘He shall be my knight,’ said Belisante to herself, never dreaming that any man alive could pass her by. But Sir Amys’ thoughts dwelt not upon women, and he hardly so much as marked her where she sat.

This slight was more than the spoiled damsel could bear. She fell sick with love and anger, and for many days lay in bed, pondering how she should win the love of Sir Amys.

A full week went by, and still she had never had speech of him — nor had even so much as caught sight of him as he followed her father to the chase. But one morning her lady brought her word — for indeed she had guessed something of her mistress's heart — that Sir Amys had so wearied himself in pursuit of a boar the previous evening that he had let his lord ride forth alone. So Belisante bade her maiden bring her kirtle of green silk, and clasp it with her golden belt set with precious stones, and place a veil of shining white upon her hair; then seeking her mother they went down into the garden together.

It was not long before her quick-glancing eyes beheld Sir Amys lying under a tree by the side of a stream, but in her guile she took no heed of him, but turned away and entered a little wood.

'I can sleep now,' she said, stretching herself on a bank of soft moss. 'Listen to the birds, how sweetly they sing! Methinks I hear the voice of the nightingale, for the trees make such darkness that he knows not night from day.'

'Let us leave her,' answered her mother, and signing to her ladies they all returned to the castle.

For a moment Belisante lay still, feigning to sleep; then she raised herself on her arm and looked about her. Nothing was to be seen save the green darkness about her, nothing was to be heard save the songs of the birds. Softly she rose to her feet, and stole out of the wood to the orchard where Sir Amys was resting, thinking, though she guessed it not, of his brother in arms Amyle.

He sprang to his feet in surprise as Belisante the Fair drew near him; but she begged him to sit beside her, and told him how that she had been sick of love, and besought him of his grace not to withhold this good gift from her. Sir Amys hearkened to her words, not knowing if he had heard aright, but, calling his wits to his aid, he answered that she was the daughter of a great prince while he was only the son of a poor knight, and that marriage between them might never be. This speech so wrought upon Belisante that she broke out in such tears and entreaties that Sir Amys, to gain time to ponder what best to do, replied that if in eight days her mind was still set on him, he would ask her hand in marriage.

By ill-luck for both the knight and the maiden, the steward, who had been seeking a chance of doing Sir Amys an ill turn, had seen Belisante leave the wood and go in search of Sir Amys. Creeping stealthily up to them, he hid himself behind a clump of bushes and heard all that was said. Cunningly he made his plan, and on the eighth day he waylaid the duke and told him that Sir Amys was about to repay all the kindness shown him by a secret marriage with the duke's daughter.

Sir Amys was keeping guard that day in the hall of the palace, when, sword in hand, his liege lord stood before him charging him with beguiling his daughter.

In another moment Amys would have fallen dead, but behind him was a little room, and into this he stepped, shutting the door, so that the sword stuck in the hard wood as it came against it. This mischance somewhat cooled the duke's anger, and, bidding Sir Amys come out and speak with him, he again accused him of having sought to steal away his daughter, whom he wished to betrothe to the emperor's son.

Sir Amys was in sore straits. If he could have borne the penalty alone, he would have suffered gladly whatever sentence the duke might have passed on him; but this could not be. So, to save Belisante from her father's wrath, he swore a great oath that there was no truth in that tale, and, flinging down his glove, offered to fight any man whom the duke should appoint, and prove his innocence on his body. Then the king bade his steward pick up Sir Amys' glove, and fixed a morning, fourteen days hence, when the two should meet in single combat.

Still it was not enough that Sir Amys and the steward should agree to fight; it was needful also that sureties should be found, and such was the steward's power at court that all men feared to come forward on behalf of Sir Amys. The young man would have fared badly, and indeed would at once have been thrown into prison, had not both Belisante and her mother offered themselves as sureties for his presence when the day arrived.

But not all the wiles of the fair Belisante could chase the gloom from the face of Sir Amys. He never forgot that he had sworn a false oath, and it was to no purpose that Belisante reminded him of all the ill deeds done by the steward to him and others. 'This time,' he said sadly, '*I* have the wrong and *he* the right, therefore I am afraid to fight,' and no other answer could she wring from him.

Way out of the tangle there seemed none. Fight Sir Amys could not, with the weight of a false oath on his soul, yet to run away were to confess all, and leave Belisante to bear her father's anger alone. Turn his thoughts which side he would, escape seemed barred, till the image of Sir Amyle flashed across him. 'Fool, why had he not remembered him earlier? Luckily there was yet time, and he could ride with full speed to his brother's castle, and bid him return to take the battle on himself.' With a gladder face than he had known for long, he sought out the duchess and her daughter, and told them his plan.

Before the sun rose Sir Amys was in the saddle, and so busy was he with all that had befallen him that he pushed on and never drew rein till his horse dropped dead under him from sheer weariness. As there was no town or house where he might find another, he was forced to proceed on foot. But by-and-by he too fell from lack of sleep, and when Sir Amyle was returning home through the forest after a day's hunting, he discovered his brother stretched across the path in the shade of a tree.

Joy at meeting gave new life to Sir Amys, and, sitting up, he told his friend all his woes, and how he dare not fight with a false oath on his conscience.

‘Oh! that is easily to be managed,’ cried Sir Amyle, with a great laugh. ‘Go home to my castle,’ said he, ‘and tell my wife that you have sent the horse to Sir Amys, at court, as you heard he had sore need of one. None will know you from me, no more than they did of old, and, as to my wife, it was but now I told her that business called me to the most distant parts of my lands, so this very night you can bid her farewell.’

Sir Amys did as his brother bade him, and Sir Amyle hastened with all speed to the duke’s palace.

He was only just in time. The hour for the fight had come, and the steward had entered the lists, and, looking round in triumph, proclaimed to all whom it might concern that his adversary knew himself to be a traitor to his lord, and had fled. Therefore, according to all the rules of chivalry, a fire should be made, and his sureties burned before all the people.

At these dreadful words, the hearts of the king and his wife and daughter trembled within them. For the steward had spoken truly, and the order for the execution must be given. It was in vain that the men worked right slowly; linger as they might, the pile was ready at last, and with one despairing glance round, the duchess and her daughter were bravely walking up to it, when Sir Amyle hastily pushed his way to the duke and demanded that the captives should be instantly set free. Then, followed by the duchess and Belisante, he entered the palace to gird himself with the armour of Sir Amys.

When his helmet and sword were buckled on him, he prayed them to leave him, as he would fain be alone for a short space before he mounted his horse. So the two ladies embraced him and left him, wishing him God-speed. As the door closed upon them, Sir Amyle held up his sword and muttered a prayer before it.

‘Come weal or woe, I will help my brother,’ he said softly; then mounting his horse he rode into the lists, and, kneeling, took the oath that he was guiltless of wrong and would prove his innocence on the body of his foe.

The fight lasted but a short time; the steward’s sword was keen, and he knew how to use it, and it was not long before he had given Sir Amyle a sharp thrust through the shoulder, and the young knight reeled in his saddle. The steward uttered a cry of fierce joy, and raised his arm to deal a second blow, when Sir Amyle suddenly spurred his horse to one side and pierced his enemy to the heart. Then, all bleeding as he was, the false Amys cut off the head of the traitor, and gave it to the duke, proving to him and to all the court that the right had conquered. But hardly had he done so when, faint from loss of blood, he fell senseless on the ground, and was carried into the palace, where the duke’s best leeches were called in to attend him. In a few days the fever left him, and he was able to receive a visit from the duke himself.

‘O Amys, my friend, how I have misjudged you!’ cried the duke, falling on his knees weeping; ‘but I will let my people know that you were always true, and you shall marry my daughter as soon as you can stand upon your feet, and I will hold a feast, and proclaim you heir to my duchy.’

And the wounded man gave him thanks and grace, but sent off a messenger in all haste to Sir Amys, bidding him be by a spring in the forest, nine days hence, which message Sir Amys obeyed, wondering what had passed. Then the two knights changed their clothes once more, and Sir Amyle returned to his wife and Sir Amys to his bride, and they lived happily to the end of their lives.

THE TALE OF THE CID

In the year 1025, when Canute the Dane was sitting on the throne of England, there was born in the ancient Spanish city of Burgos a baby, to whom was given the name of Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar. He came of noble blood on both sides of the House, and his forefathers had borne some of the highest offices of the land, and from his childhood the boy had been taught that it was his duty never to fall one whit behind them in courage and in honour. As he grew older, he burned more and more for a chance to show the metal of which he was made, and longed to join the companies of knights that were ever going forth to fight the Arabs, who for nearly four hundred years had reigned over the fairest provinces of Spain. But to all his prayers, his father, Don Diego Lainez, turned a deaf ear.

‘Wait, wait, my son!’ he would say; ‘the little shoot must first grow into a tree. Go now and practise that sword-thrust in which you failed yesterday.’

It was when he was sixteen that the longed-for opportunity came.

Don Diego Lainez, now old and weak, had gone to do his homage to King Fernando, who had managed to unite the small kingdoms of Northern Spain under his banner. Some dispute arose between him and the powerful count, Don Lozano Gomez, probably as to which had the right to pass first into the presence of their king, and in the presence of the whole court Don Lozano spoke words of deadly insult to the old man, and even gave him a buffet on the cheek. The courtiers all cried shame, and Don Diego’s hand clutched the pommel of his sword, but his rage had deprived him of the little strength that remained, and he was powerless to draw it. At this the count laughed scornfully, and, bowing mockingly to the king, who held it best that men should settle their own quarrels, rode away to his castle. Then, without another word, Don Diego turned and mounted his horse and set out homewards.

A broken man and older by ten years was he when he entered his hall, but many days passed before any could guess what had wrought this change in him. All night he lay awake staring into the darkness, and when food was brought him it was carried away untasted, and his wife whispered to her ladies, ‘If we rouse him not he will surely die! Would that I knew what has stricken him like this?’

Fifteen days went by in this manner, and none thought to see him leave his bed again, when one morning he strode into the hall with some of the fire of his former years, and called his sons to him. One by one he signed to each to draw near, and taking their soft hands in his palms, pressed so hard that the boys cried to him to loosen his grasp, or they would die of the pain. But when he came to Rodrigo, he heard no prayers of mercy from *him*, only threats and hot words uttered with blazing eyes and cheeks burning with anger. And the old man wept for joy, and cried:

‘Thou art indeed my true son; your rage calms me, your fury heals me. It is you who will redeem my honour, which I held lost.’ And then he told the youth the tale of what had passed at court.

‘Take my blessing,’ were his last words, ‘and take this sword also, which shall deal the count his death-blow. After that, you shall do greater deeds still.’

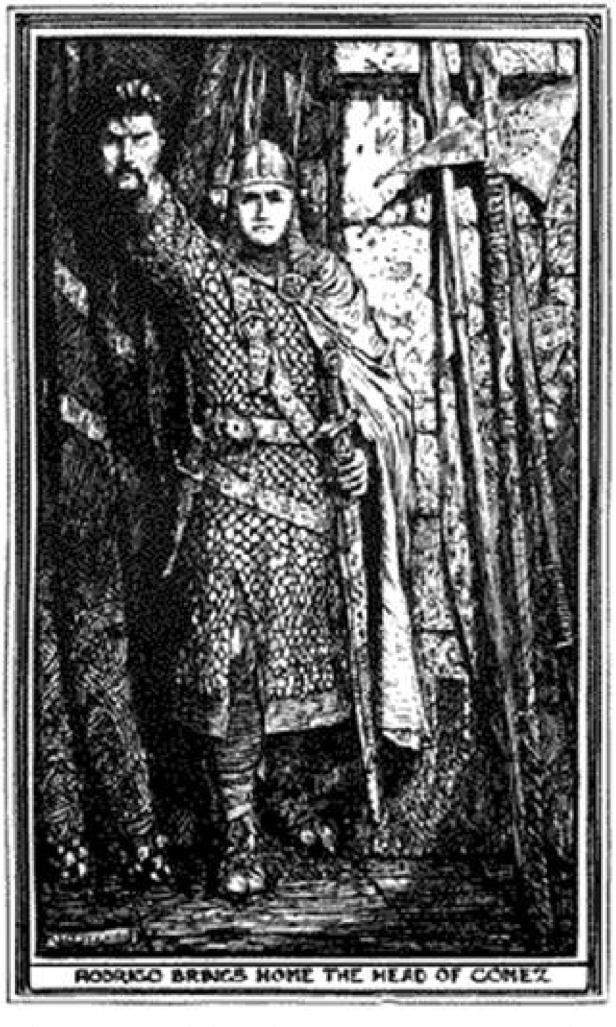
RODRIGO BRINGS HOME THE HEAD OF GOMEZ

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Young though he was, Rodrigo had heard enough of war to know Lozano Gomez would not prove an easy prey; but, easy or not, he meant to fight him. So, vowing to his sword that should he ever bring dishonour on the weapon that had done his House good service, he would sheathe it in his breast, he mounted his horse and rode to meet his foe.

‘Is it a knightly or a brave deed, think you, to smite an old man who cannot defend himself?’ asked he. ‘But when you dealt that blow you may have thought that his sons were yet in their cradles, and that there was none to avenge him. Well, traitor, you are wrong. *I* am his son, and his honour is mine, so look to yourself, lest I take your head home with me.’

And Gomez laughed to hear him, and bade him cease crowing like a young cock, but a furious onslaught from Rodrigo cut his words short, and hardly did he escape being unhorsed. Before he had steadied himself in the saddle Rodrigo had charged again, and this time his enemy was borne to the ground.

‘So may all dastards die!’ cried the victor, as he cut off his head.

Don Diego Lainez was sitting at the table in his great hall, the tears rolling down his cheeks as the shameful scene of his dishonour rose up before him. Suddenly a clatter of hoofs was heard in the courtyard, and the doors swung open. The men-at-arms gathered round the board rose to their feet as Rodrigo entered, carrying the head of Count Gomez by the long front lock. Taking Don Diego by the arm, he shook him roughly:

‘Open your eyes wide, my father, and raise your head, and let your heart be merry, for I have cut down the poisonous weed; I have stamped out the plague-spot; the robe of your honour is stainless as of yore.’

For a moment the old man kept silence, and then he looked up, his face shining.

‘Son of my heart,’ he said, ‘it is enough. From henceforth the seat of honour is yours, and you shall take my place as the head of my House.’

From that day the young knights vied with each other in gaining leave to ride in the train of Rodrigo Diaz, or ‘the Cid’ as he was afterwards called, and to this name was later added the proud title of ‘Campeador.’ Three hundred youths in splendid attire followed him to the court of Fernando, when he went in his turn to do the king homage, and stood by his side as he challenged anyone of the blood of Count Lozano to fight and avenge his death; but no one came. Then his father and his noble company left their horses to kiss the hand of the king, but Rodrigo remained in his saddle.

‘Get down, get down, Rodrigo!’ cried his father, fearing lest the king should resent his rudeness. ‘Swear fealty to thy lord, and kiss his hand, as a loyal subject should do.’

Now, ever since he had fought with Count Gomez, Rodrigo had felt himself to be a man, and, more than that, to be much greater than other men, and he was not pleased to be scolded by his father in the presence of so many people. Still, he was wise enough to know that it would do him no good in the eyes of the nobles gathered round, to disobey his father, and slowly he got down from his horse to do homage with the rest. But so clumsy was he that, as he knelt, his sword nearly fell out of its sheath, and the king, thinking Rodrigo meant to kill him, started back, exclaiming:

‘Away, away! you devil! If you have the form of a man, your deeds are those of a lion.’

‘It is base to kiss the hand of such a craven,’ answered Rodrigo in anger, ‘and I hold that my father has heaped disgrace on his family by humbling himself in such a fashion!’ And so saying, he rode away, with his followers behind him.

A few centuries later a man might have lost his head for such words, but in those days people were accustomed to speak their minds even to kings, and little harm came of it. Six weeks later, Rodrigo had forgotten all about it, and, what was more to the purpose, so had the king, at any rate he pretended to do so, and when Don Diego sent his son to do his business with Fernando, who was at Burgos, the young man went willingly. The morning after he reached the city he was dining in the hall of the palace with the king and his nobles, when word was brought to the royal table that Ximena, the daughter of Count Gomez, and her train stood at the gates, and demanded an audience of the king. Fernando rose from his seat, and, signing to his nobles to follow him, he went to meet Ximena.

A figure of woe was she, clothed all in black, even her face hidden by a black veil. Throwing herself on her knees, she implored that justice might be done on the murderer of her father, for not till then would the stain be wiped out which had killed her mother and was killing her. ‘He rides to and fro under my lattice,’ said she, ‘and the hawk on his wrist slays my doves, and my mantle is sprinkled with their blood. If you do not do me right, O king, you are not fit to reign, or to call yourself a knight.’

Thus spake Ximena, and the king sat silent and pondered her words. ‘I cannot punish Don Rodrigo, either by imprisonment or death,’ he said to himself, ‘for my nobles would not suffer it; I must find some other way to satisfy Ximena.’ Then turning to her, he bade her go home, and added that no damsel should have cause to complain that wrong had been done them at his hands.

Then Ximena rode away, and by-and-by Rodrigo departed also.

Six months later King Fernando was seated in the great hall of his palace of Burgos, dispensing justice to high and low, when there entered once more Ximena, followed by thirty esquires and pages.

‘I come, though I know it is in vain,’ she cried, when she had made her way to the foot of the throne. ‘Five times I have appeared to demand my rights, and no longer will I be put off with empty words. No king are you, who are swayed this way and that by every man that passes, and dare not even avenge your friends, for fear of what may come of it.’

‘Not so,’ answered the king; ‘but is there no other way by which your quarrel may be appeased? Has Rodrigo on his side suffered no insult? You have heard of the fame he has lately won, when he took captive the five Moorish kings who broke suddenly into the land and ravaged it with fire and sword. And to prove that it was fame and not gold he wanted he set them all free, with only a promise of homage from them. Ah, if there were but a few more like him, Spain would soon be rid of the Moors. Happy is the woman he shall choose for his wife; she will live all her days in safety and in honour.’

Then the king paused, and watched to see how Ximena took his words.

She was silent for some moments, but the king could not see her face, as she had pulled her veil over it. Suddenly she raised her head, and cast the veil back over her shoulders.

‘It is true, O king, what you speak, and I will forego my vengeance. Nay, I think my father himself would have it so. Give me Don Rodrigo for my husband; all my days I will be a loyal wife to him, and his honour shall be mine.’

Perhaps the king was not so surprised as some of his courtiers as they listened to Ximena’s request. If he smiled, his beard was thick enough to hide it, and he answered gravely:

‘You say well, my daughter, and I will to-day send a messenger bidding Don Rodrigo meet me at Palencia, and I will give him lands and riches, so that in wealth as in birth he may be equal to you.’

When the messengers reached Don Rodrigo, with the offer of Ximena’s hand, his heart was glad, and, calling his friends to dress themselves in their most splendid cloaks and brightest armour, he rode at their head towards the city of Palencia. Ximena with her train was already in the royal palace, and in the presence of the king the two plighted their troth. But Rodrigo swore by the cross on his sword that the marriage rite should not be fulfilled till he had beaten five foes in the field, and, leaving Ximena under the care of his mother, he bade her farewell, and set forth to accomplish his vow.

However, he was not destined to be absent very long, for in those days enemies were not far to seek, and in less than two months the wedding preparations began. His brothers took pride in arraying him themselves, and buttoning on the doublet of black satin which his father had worn in many of his battles, while over this he wore a jacket of stout leather and a loose cloak lined with plush.

At the last he girded on his sword Tizona, the Dread of the World, then, surrounded by his friends and his family, the bridegroom walked to the court, where the king, the bishop, and all the nobles were awaiting him.

Soon the noise of trumpets was heard, and there entered Ximena dressed in a robe of fine white cloth, brought from London across the seas, with a border of silver embroidered on it. On her head was a close hood of the same stuff, and high shoes of red leather were on her feet. Round her neck was a necklace made of eight round medals, with a little figure of St. Michael hanging from them.

Don Rodrigo went forward to lift Ximena from her horse, and kissed her, whispering as he did so:

‘It is true, O my lady, that I killed your father, but I did it in fair fight, as man to man. And in his stead you shall have a husband that will care for you and protect you to the end of your life.’

Now, although Don Rodrigo was married, he did not stay at home much more than he had done in other days, and his sword was ever unsheathed in the service of his king. He was the champion chosen by Fernando to meet in single combat Martino Gonzalez, the stoutest knight in Spain, and decide a quarrel between Castile and Aragon. The victory lay with Rodrigo, and no sooner was the duel over than he rode off to fight the Moors in the North of Spain. At length the patience of Ximena was worn out, and she wrote a letter to Fernando in which she told him plainly all that was in her mind.

‘What was the use,’ she asked, ‘of her marrying Rodrigo if the king kept him for ever engaged in his service, and away from her?’ She had no father, and might as well have no husband, and she implored his master to think upon her loneliness, and to let Rodrigo return to her side.

But the king would make no promises, and by-and-by Ximena had a little girl to comfort her, to whom Fernando stood godfather.

It seems strange that after these great deeds King Fernando never thought of making Don Rodrigo a knight, but so it was. Not till the long siege of the city of Coimbra was ended, and the Moorish mosque turned into a Christian church, was the order of knighthood conferred on Don Rodrigo in return for the mighty works that he had done. But Don Rodrigo knew well that his sword-thrusts would have availed him nothing had it not been for the aid of a Greek bishop who dreamed when at the shrine of St. James that the gates of the city would only fall when a successor of the Apostle should appear before them. So the bishop arose and clad himself in armour and rode into the Christian hosts, and as he drew near, the walls fell down like Jericho of old, and the army entered in triumph.

After this the Cid, as men now called him, from a Moorish word which meant a man of great valour and fame, went home for a short space to see his wife and his little daughter, who by this time was seven years old and had never beheld her father. Rest was sweet to Don Rodrigo, but before it could grow irksome to him he was summoned to court by the death of Fernando, who left all his children under the wardship of the Cid. Unluckily, the old man's will had not been a wise one, and bitter quarrels soon raged between the new king Sancho and his brothers and sisters. In vain Don Rodrigo tried to heal the feuds, but war soon broke out, and by his oath of allegiance he was forced, sorely against his wish, to fight under the king's banner. By his aid Sancho despoiled his two brothers and one of his sisters of the lands which were theirs by right, but when the king demanded that he should go as envoy and bid the princess Doña Urraca yield up her town of Zamora in exchange for much gold, the Cid prayed him to send someone else, for he could not take arms against the princess whom he had known when they were children together. His words, however, were useless. The king would listen to nothing, and the Cid rode forth to Zamora with a heavy heart. Silently he bore the reproaches of Doña Urraca, and returned in five days to tell Fernando that the citizens of Zamora had sworn in his presence, that the city would never be given up till they all lay dead upon her walls. This answer so infuriated Don Sancho that he falsely accused the Cid of having put the words into the mouths of his enemies, and bade him begone out of the kingdom.

But a man like the Cid could not lightly be dismissed, and very soon the king was forced to humble himself, and send messengers to beg his forgiveness. The Campeador was too generous to bear malice, and rode joyfully back, to find Sancho besieging Zamora. And an ill day it was for the king when he resolved to wrest his sister's possessions from her; for one of her citizens, spurred by love to his lady, gained admittance into the royal camp and offered to betray the city. A councillor of the princess, the old Arias Gonzalo, cried to the king from the walls to lend no ear unto the man's words, for he was a traitor; but Dolfos had a wily tongue, and easily persuaded Sancho to come with him to see the small door across the trench by which the army might enter. They were hardly outside the camp when Dolfos struck him between the shoulders with his spear, and the king rolled in his death agony on the ground. The sight was seen by Don Rodrigo, who had watched eagerly and anxiously the movements of Dolfos, and now sprang towards the traitor with his drawn sword. But Dolfos was too quick for him, and the postern was flung open by some of the men of Zamora, before the Cid could get across the trench.

'Oh, fool was I not to have fastened on my spurs, and then I should have caught him!' cried Don Rodrigo shaking with rage, as he turned sadly back to stand by the bedside of his dying master, waiting for the vengeance which the future would bring.

Now directly she heard that King Sancho was dead, Doña Urraca, his sister, the lady of Zamora, sent the tidings to her brother, Don Alfonso, in exile at Toledo.

‘We have been sent to summon you, King Alfonso,’ said the messengers when they found him, falling on their knees as they spoke. ‘Don Sancho was foully stabbed by Bellido el Dolfos, and the men of Castile and Leon call on you to take his place. Don Rodrigo only hangs back, and swears he will never take the oath of fealty till you have proved that you had no part in the murder of your brother.’

Don Alfonso felt glad at their words. He had received nothing but ill at the hands of his brother, and he hurried to place himself at the head of the army of Castile. But the Arab ruler was not willing to let him go, and many days passed before he was able to escape at night, climbing silently with a few followers down the walls of Toledo; then, turning the shoes on the feet of their horses, so that the track should point south instead of north, they made the best of their way to Zamora.

The nobles received the king with joy, and, kneeling to kiss his hand, vowed to be true to him. The Cid alone held aloof.

‘You are heir to the throne, Don Alfonso,’ said he, ‘but before I bend the knee to you I demand that you and twelve of your vassals shall swear that you are innocent, in deed or in word, of the blood of your brother.’

‘I will swear it,’ answered Alfonso, ‘when and where you please, and twelve men of Leon shall swear it likewise.’

‘You shall swear to me in the holy cathedral of Santa Gadea in Burgos,’ said the Cid; and thither they all rode silently and solemnly, while Don Rodrigo, standing at the altar, held out the crucifix to the kneeling king. But though the oath was taken freely, both by Alfonso and his vassals, deep in the heart of the Cid lay a doubt of his truth.

‘You shall swear it thrice,’ he said, and Alfonso, devoured as he was with rage, knew the Cid’s power too well to disobey, though his face grew pale with wrath.

‘You shall answer for this,’ he cried as he rose to his feet, and from that day the king never ceased to seek for an excuse to compass Don Rodrigo’s banishment. At last he found one.

The Moorish king of Toledo laid a complaint against the Cid that, in spite of his alliance with Alfonso of Castile, his lands had been ravaged and his people made captive. Well Alfonso knew that it was the Moors themselves who had broken faith with him, and had wasted the Spanish territories which lay along their borders, but he eagerly snatched at the plea, and bade the Cid go, an exile, from Castile, while his possessions were declared forfeit.

With every insult heaped on him that the king could invent, the Cid left the city and rode to his castle of Bivar, only to find that his enemies had been before him and had stripped it bare, while his wife and children had sought refuge in the convent of San Pedro de Cardeña.

It was on his way thither that the Cid in his dire distress did the one mean deed recorded of him, which he never ceased to bewail during his life, and afterwards on his deathbed. He had reckoned on finding money for his needs at Bivar, and there was none, and he knew not what to do. In this strait he invited two rich Jews to his tent under the walls of Burgos, and, pointing to two large chests which stood on the ground, he told the Jews that they were filled with silver plate, and begged that they would take them, and give him a thousand crowns in exchange. The Jews, used though they were to being cheated and despoiled by Christians, yet trusted to the honour of the Cid, and counted out the money. Then, placing the coffers on the backs of two stout mules, they returned with them into Burgos, first promising that they would not open them till a year had passed. At the time appointed they lifted the lid, and, behold, the coffers were full of sand!’

But except in this matter, for which his repentance was bitter, the Cid never ceased in his exile to be true to his knighthood, and in all the wars which he and his followers made on the Moors he always sent part of the spoils to Alfonso. At length the king found that he could not do without him. Young knights there were in plenty, but neither in battle nor in the council chamber could they vie with Don Rodrigo; so after many years, when the Cid had captured strong cities and great towns from the Moors, Alfonso sent messengers to say that he was willing to pardon him. And the Cid vowed anew to serve him, but his heart was heavy for the death of his only son in the siege of Consuegra.

From time to time the king’s jealousy broke out afresh, and more than once Don Rodrigo was banished, but in the end the Cid always returned to Castile, for in truth, as we have said, the land prospered but little in his absence. After conquering the Moors in Valencia and elsewhere, his fame and wealth grew greater than ever, and two of the proudest nobles in Castile, the counts of Carrion, prayed Alfonso to use his rights as liege lord, and to grant them the Cid’s daughters in marriage. Now, the proposal pleased Don Rodrigo but little, and his wife even less. He knew something of the two young men who wished to be his sons-in-law, and he felt that it was his wealth, and not his daughters, that was wooed. Besides, he liked not the boastfulness of the two brothers, and feared that beneath their proud and haughty ways the hearts of cowards might be hidden. But outwardly all was fair-seeming, and when the king in a meeting on the banks of the Tagus bade the Cid consider well the matter, Don Rodrigo could only reply that, in his view, his daughters were as yet too young to be wedded, but that they and all that belonged to him were in the hands of the king, to be dealt with as he thought best. To which the king answered that he knew the maidens to be wise beyond their years, and, summoning the counts of Carrion to his presence, he informed them that he had resolved to grant their desire, and bade them kneel and kiss the Cid's hand, which they did with joy. So the next day they all rode back to Valencia, and the Cid made a feast for fifteen days, and the marriage rite was performed by the Bishop Geronymo, mighty in battle.

It was not long after the wedding that the counts showed of what metal they were made, and that the Cid had read them truly. One evening they and Don Bermudo, nephew of the Cid, were sitting laughing and jesting in the hall of the castle, when a cry arose from without, 'Beware of the lion; he has broken from his den'; and in an instant the huge beast had sprung through the door. Don Bermudo sat still, waiting to see what the lion would do, but Don Diego, the elder count, took refuge in a closet, while Don Fernan, his brother, hid himself under the bed on which the Cid was stretched sleeping. The noise awoke Don Rodrigo, who sprang up, when the lion at once lay down on the ground and began to lick his feet. The Cid stooped and stroked its head, then calling to the beast to follow, he led it back to its den, which it entered quietly, for it knew its master well.

'Where are my sons-in-law?' asked he as he entered. 'Methought I heard their voices but a moment agone.'

'Here,' cried one of his nephews, and 'here' cried another, and the counts were dragged forth, their fine clothes disordered and their faces pale with fear.

The Cid looked at them silently, till they grew red with shame and anger.

'Are these your wedding garments?' said he at last. 'Truly I should scarce have guessed it'; and he passed on, leaving hate and a longing for revenge in the young men's hearts.

The matter of the lion did not dwell long in the mind of the Cid, for news was speedily brought him that the Moorish king of Morocco was advancing with an army to besiege the fair city of Valencia. He quickly gathered together a host large enough to give battle in the plain outside the walls, but while mounting his horse Babieca he counselled his sons-in-law to remain in safety behind the walls of the town. This they would gladly have done, but dared not set at naught the mocking eyes of the knights around them, so, clad in shining armour, they rode forth with the rest. Hardly had the fight begun, when a Moor attacked the younger brother, who turned and fled. Another instant and he would have sunk to the ground, pierced by the enemy’s lance, when Don Bermudo suddenly appeared, and engaged the Moor in deadly combat. After a hard struggle the infidel was overborne and slain, and the victor turned to Don Fernan Gonzalez:

‘Take his horse and his armour,’ he said, ‘and tell the Cid it was you who killed him; I will not gainsay you.’ And, as cowards are generally liars also, Don Fernan gladly snatched at the crown of glory that belonged to another.

Don Bermudo was rewarded for his generous deed when he saw the joy of the Cid. Perhaps he had condemned them wrongly, thought Don Rodrigo, and that the souls of men were at last awaking in them. So he praised them for their valour, and if there were those present who could have told a different tale, they held their peace.

But whether they were, perforce, following the Cid in the field, or basking in the wealth and pleasures of Valencia, the counts of Carrion never forgot or forgave the scorn they had read in the eyes of the Cid on the day when they had hidden from the lion. Together they plotted to take vengeance on them, and it was a vengeance as mean as their souls.

One morning they entered the great hall of Valencia, where the Cid was sitting, and prayed him to give them their wives, and let them depart forthwith to their lands. Their words were fair, yet the Cid felt troubled; why, he knew not.

‘I gave you my daughters to wife, at my king’s bidding,’ answered he at last, ‘and I cannot withhold them from you if indeed you desire to take them unto your own lands. But see that they are treated as beseems them; if not, woe to you.’

And the counts of Carrion, with treason in their hearts, promised that all honour should await their brides.

Eight days hence, the procession passed out of the city gates, and the Cid went first, with Doña Elvira on his right hand, and Doña Sol on his left. For the space of a league he rode, and then he reined up his horse. Calling his nephew Don Ordoño to his side, he bade him follow unperceived, and bring back news of what befell his daughters.

And so they parted.

For many miles the procession went slowly on, and was received with kindness and hospitality by the great Moslem lords through whose country the road lay, a kindness repaid whenever possible by theft and cruelty by the counts of Carrion. Then, when they had reached a wood which was neither in the lordship of the Cid nor of the Moors, they felt that the time for which they had so long waited was come. Ordering the guards and attendants to ride forward to the Castle of Carrion and prepare for their reception, the counts scarcely delayed until they were out of their sight before they dragged their wives from their mules, and stripped their bodies bare. Next, seizing them by their hair, they flung them to the ground, and dug their spurs into them till their bodies were covered with blood.

‘Farewell, beautiful damsels,’ they cried mockingly, bowing low, ‘you were never fit mates for the counts of Carrion, and, besides, it was needful to avenge the affront that the Cid your father put on us in the matter of the fierce beast who would have slain us.’ And, stooping low from their horses, the base knights rode away.

From a distant hill Don Ordoño had seen and heard all that had passed, and he now came forth to help and comfort his cousins. ‘Take heart,’ he said, ‘I will bring you your lost garments, and if you have lost your husbands, who deserve nothing better than the fate of traitors, remember that you have yet a father, without a peer throughout the world.’

None can tell the wrath of the Cid when his daughters came home. Little he said, for he was ever a man of few words, but he sent forthwith messengers to the king, telling him of the base deeds of the counts of Carrion, and begging for leave to plead his cause before the Parliament at Toledo. This permission Alfonso granted gladly, and bade the counts of Carrion to be present also and answer the Cid.

Many days they waited ere Don Rodrigo, accompanied by his wife and daughters, and followed by a train of nobles, rode through the gates. The king was sitting surrounded by the Cortes or Parliament, but he desired that the Cid should be brought to him at once, and then commanded him to set forth his wrongs.

‘It is you, O king, and not I, who gave my daughters in marriage to these base men, therefore it is you, and not I, who must answer for this. I ask you that you will force them to restore my swords Colada and Tizona that I girded on them when they bore my children from Valencia.’ And the hearts of the counts were glad when they heard his words, and they hasted to place the gold-pommelled swords in the hands of the Cid.

Next, Don Rodrigo demanded that the dowries of his daughters should be given back to him, and this also the king adjudged to be his right. Last, he set forth the treatment his daughters had suffered from the counts of Carrion, and challenged them and also their uncle, who had ever given them evil counsel, to fight with three of his knights that day.

Before the combat could take place a sound as of armed men was heard in the courtyard, and in rode two youths covered with golden armour and tall plumed helmets, and one was Don Ramiro of Navarre, and the other Don Sancho of

Aragon.

‘It has reached our ears,’ said they, ‘that the marriages between the counts of Carrion and the daughters of the Cid are about to be set aside, and we have come to pray that the ladies may be given to us to wife.’

And the king answered: ‘If it pleases the Cid, it pleases me also, but the Cortes here present must grant its consent.’

So the Cid kissed the hand of the king in token of the honour done him, and the Cortes cried with one voice that the man who allied himself with Don Rodrigo de Bivar was honoured above all. Therefore, the weddings were celebrated without delay, the counts of Carrion having been pronounced outlaws and their former marriages null and void.

This matter being settled, the king directed that there should be no more delay in arranging the fight between the champions of the Cid and the counts of Carrion, which at the request of the counts was to be held three weeks later in their own castle. Don Rodrigo himself did not mean to fight. His honour was, he knew, safe in the hands of Don Bermudo and his other nephews, and he rode blithely home to Valencia. But Alfonso declared that he would be present to see that the combat was fairly fought, and it was well that he went, for the counts, thinking themselves safe on their own lands, had planned treachery. However, the king, mistrusting them, made a proclamation that in case of false dealing the traitor should be slain upon the field, and his possessions be forfeit. Baulked in this direction, the counts then entreated the king to forbid their foes to use the swords Tizona and Colada which they had been forced to give up, but Alfonso answered that it was now too late to make conditions, and they must get to the fight with stout hearts. This they could not do, for they had not got them, but, finding there was no help for it, they mounted their horses and put their lances in rest.

Between such adversaries the combat lasted but a short while. Fernan Gonzalez was soon unhorsed by Don Bermudo; Don Diego and his uncle confessed themselves vanquished. Their lands were declared forfeit by the judges, though their lives were granted them; but the tale of their cowardice spread far and wide, and none would speak to them or have dealings with them.

Thus was the Cid avenged.

For five years the Cid lived on in Valencia wearied of wars, and turning his thoughts to repenting him of his sins, and chief among them the wrong he had done many years before to the two Jews of Burgos. His strength grew daily less, till at length he could rise from his bed no more, neither could he eat food. While he lay in this manner, tidings were brought him that the Moors were preparing to besiege Valencia. This news roused the dying man, and for a moment it seemed as if he might be well again. Clearly he gave his orders how best to resist the attack, and bade his followers fight under the banner of Bishop Geronymo. ‘As for me,’ he said, ‘you shall take my body and fill it with sweet spices, and shall set me once more on Babieca, and place Tizona in my hand. With cords shall you fasten me to the saddle, and so you shall lead me forth to my last fight with the Moors. Ximena my wife will care for Babieca, and when he is dead she will bury him where no Moorish dogs may root up his grave. And let no women be hired to make mourning for me. I want no tears to be shed over me but the tears of Ximena my wife. But for the Christians in this city, well know I that they are too few men to conquer the Moors, therefore let them prepare their goods, and steal forth by night, and take refuge in Castile. So farewell to you all, and pray that God may have mercy on my soul.’

Thus the Cid died, and all was done as he had said, and the king put rich garments on him, and set Tizona in his hand, and seated him in a carved chair by the altar of San Pedro de Cardeña.

THE KNIGHT OF THE SORROWFUL COUNTENANCE

Everybody knows that in the old times, when Arthur was king or Charles the Great emperor, no gentleman ever rested content until he had received the honour of knighthood. When once he was made a knight, he left his home and the court, and rode off in search of adventures, seeking to help people in distress who had no one else to help them.

After a while, however, the knights grew selfish and lazy. They liked better to hunt the deer through the forest than wicked robbers who had carried off beautiful ladies. ‘It was the king’s business,’ they said, ‘to take care of his subjects, not theirs,’ so they dwelt in their own castles, and many of them became great lords almost as powerful as the king himself.

But though the knights no longer went in search of noble adventures, as knights of earlier days had been wont to do, there were plenty of books in which they could read if they chose of the wonderful deeds of their forefathers. Lancelot and Roland, Bernardo del Carpio, the Cid, Amadis de Gaule, and many more, were as well known to them as their own brothers, and if we will only take the trouble they may be known to us too.

Now, several hundreds of years after Lancelot and Roland and all the rest had been laid in their graves, a baby belonging to the family of Quixada was born in that part of Spain called La Mancha. We are not told anything of his boyhood, or even of his manhood till he reached the age of fifty, but we know that he was poor; that he lived with a housekeeper and a niece to take care of him, and that he passed all his days in company with these old books until the courts and forests which were the scenes of the adventures of those knights of bygone years were more real to him than any of his own doings.

‘I wish all those books could be burned,’ said the noble gentleman’s housekeeper one day to his niece. ‘My poor master’s wits are surely going, for he never understands one word you say to him. Indeed, if you speak, he hardly seems to see you, much less to hear you!’

What the housekeeper said was true. The things that belonged to her master’s every-day life vanished completely bit by bit. If his niece related to him some scrap of news which a neighbour had run in to tell her, he would answer her with a story of the giant Morgante, who alone among his ill-bred race had manners that befitted a Spanish knight. If the housekeeper lamented that the flour in her storehouse would not last out the winter, he turned a deaf ear to all her complaints, and declared that he would give her and his niece into the bargain for the pleasure of bestowing one kick on Ganelon the traitor.

At last one day things came to a climax. When the hour of dinner came round, Don Quixada was nowhere to be found. His niece sought him in his bedroom, in the little tower where his books were kept, and even in the stable, where lay the old horse who had served him for more years than one could count. He was in none of these; but just as she was leaving the stable a strange noise seemed to come from over the girl's head, and on looking up she beheld her uncle rubbing a rusty sword that had lain there long before anybody could remember, while by his side were a steel cap and other pieces of armour.

From that moment Don Quixada became deaf and blind to the things of this world. He was in despair because the steel cap was not a proper helmet, but only a morion without a vizor to let down. Perhaps a smith might have made him what he wanted, but the Don was too proud to ask him, and, getting some cardboard, cut and painted it like a vizor, and then fastened it to the morion. Nothing could look — at a little distance — more like the helmet the Cid might have worn, but Don Quixada knew well that no knight ever went forth in search of adventures without first proving the goodness of his armour, so, fixing the helmet against the wall, he made a slash at it with his sword. He only dealt two strokes, whereas his enemy might give him twenty, but those two swept clean through the vizor, and destroyed in three minutes a whole week's work. So there was nothing for it but to begin over again, and this time the Don took the precaution of lining the vizor with iron.

'It looks beautiful,' he cried when it was finished; but he took care not to try his blade upon it.

His next act was to go into the stable and rub down his horse's coat, and to give it a feed of corn, vainly hoping that in a few days its ribs might become less plainly visible.

'It is not right,' he said to himself, one morning, as he stood watching the animal that was greedily eating out of its manger— 'it is not right that a knight's good horse should go forth without a name. Even the heathen Alexander bestowed a high-sounding title on his own steed; and so, likewise, did those Christian warriors, Roland and the Cid!' But, try as he might, no name would come to him except such as were unworthy of the horse and his rider, and for four nights and days he pondered the question.

Suddenly, at the moment he had least expected it, when he was eating the plain broth his housekeeper had set before him, the inspiration came.

'Rozinante!' he cried triumphantly, laying down his spoon— 'Rozinante!

Neither the Cid’s horse nor Roland’s bore a finer name than that!’

This weighty matter being settled, the Don now began to think of himself, and, not being satisfied with the name his fathers had handed down to him, resolved to take one that was more noble, and better suited to a knight who was destined to do deeds that would keep him alive in the memory of men. For eight days he took heed of nothing save this one thing, and on the ninth he found what he had sought.

‘The world shall know me as Don Quixote,’ he said; ‘and as the noble Amadis himself was not content to bear this sole title, but added to it the name of his own country, so I, in like manner, will add the name of mine, and henceforth will appear to all, as the good knight Don Quixote de la Mancha!’

Now Don Quixote de la Mancha had read far too many books about the customs of chivalry not to be aware that every knight worshipped some lady of whose beauty he boasted upon all occasions and whose token he wore upon his helmet in battle. It was not very easy for Don Quixote to find such a lady, for all his life long, the company which he met in his books had been dearer to him than that which he could have had outside his home.

‘A knight without a liege lady is a tree without fruit, a body without soul,’ he thought. ‘Of what use will it be if I meet with some giant such as always crosses the path of a wandering knight, and disarm him in our first encounter, unless I have a lady at whose feet he can kneel?’ So without losing more time he began to search the neighbouring villages for such a damsel, whose token he might wear, and at length found one with enough beauty for him to fall in love with, whose humble name of Aldonza he changed for that of Dulcinea del Toboso.

The sun had hardly risen on the following morning when Don Quixote laced on his helmet, braced on his shield, took his lance in hand, and mounted Rozinante.

Never during his fifty years had he felt his heart so light, and he rode forth into the wide plain, expecting to find a giant or a distressed lady behind every bush. But his joy was short-lived, for suddenly it came to his mind that in the days of chivalry it never was known that any man went in quest of adventures without being first made a knight, and that no such good fortune had happened to him. This thought was so terrible that he reeled in his saddle, and was near turning the head of Rozinante towards his own stable; but Don Quixote was a man of good courage, and in a short while he remembered on how many knights Sir Lancelot had conferred the honour of knighthood, and he determined to claim his spurs from the first that he managed to conquer in fight. Till then, he must, as soon as might be, make his armour white, in token that as yet he had had no adventures. In this manner he took heart again.

All that day he rode, without either bite or sup, and, of the two, Rozinante fared the better, for he at least found a tuft of coarse grass to eat. At nightfall a light as big as a faint star was seen gleaming in the distance, and both master and horse plucked up courage once more. They hastened towards it, and discovered that the light came from a small inn, which Don Quixote's fancy instantly changed into a castle with four towers and pinnacles of shining silver, surrounded by a moat. He paused a moment, expecting a dwarf to appear on the battlements and announce by the blasts of his trumpet that a knight was approaching, but, as no dwarf could be seen, he dismounted at the door, where he was received with courtesy by the landlord or the governor of the castle, as Don Quixote took him to be.

At the sight of this strange figure, which looked as if it had gone to sleep a thousand years ago, and had only just woke up again, the landlord had as much ado to keep from laughter as the muleteers and some women who were standing before the door. But being a civil man, and somewhat puzzled, he held the stirrup for Don Quixote to alight, offering to give him everything that would make him comfortable except a bed, which was not to be had. The Don made little of this, as became a good knight, and bade the landlord look well after Rozinante, for no better horse would ever stand in his stable. The man, who had seen many beasts in his day, did not rate him quite so highly, but said nothing, and after placing the horse in the stable returned to the house to see after the master.

As it happened, it was easier to provide for the wants of Rozinante than for those of Don Quixote, for the muleteers had eaten up everything in the kitchen, and nothing was left save a little dried fish and black bread. Don Quixote, however, was quite content; indeed, he imagined it the most splendid supper in the world, and when he had finished he fell on his knees before the landlord.

'Never will I rise again, noble sir,' said he, 'until you grant my prayer, which shall be an occasion of glory to you and of gain to all men.'

The landlord, not being used to such conduct on the part of his guests, tried to lift Don Quixote on to his feet, but the knight vowed that he would not move till his prayer was granted.

'The gift I would ask of you,' continued the Don, now rising to his feet, 'is that to-night I may watch my arms in the chapel of your castle, and at sunrise I shall kneel before you to be made a knight. Then I shall bid you farewell, and set forth on my journey through the world, righting wrongs and helping the oppressed, after the manner of the knights of old.'

'I am honoured indeed,' replied the landlord, who by this time saw very clearly that the poor gentleman was weak in his wits, and had a mind to divert himself. ‘As a youth, I myself wandered through the land, and my name, the champion of all who needed it, was known to every court in Spain, till a deadly thrust in my side, from a false knight, forced me to lay down my arms, and to return to this my castle, giving shelter and welcome to any knights that ask it. But as to the chapel, it is but a week since it was made level with the ground, being but a poor place, and in no way worthy of the service of noble knights; but keep your watch in the courtyard of my castle, as your books will have told you that others have done in case of need. Afterwards, I will admit you into the Order of Chivalry, but before you take up your vigil tell me, I pray you, what money you have brought with you?’

This question surprised the Don very much.

‘I have brought none,’ he answered presently, ‘for never did I hear that either Roland or Percival or any of the great knight-errants whose example I fain would follow, carried any money with them.’

‘That is because they thought it no more needful to say that they carried money or clean shirts than that they carried a sword or a box of ointment to cure the wounds of themselves or their foes, in case no maiden or enchanter with a flask of water was on the spot,’ replied the landlord; and he spoke so long and so earnestly on the subject that the Don promised never again to start on a quest without money and a box of ointment, besides at least three clean shirts.

It was now high time for his watch to begin, and the landlord led the way to a great yard at the side of the inn. Here the Don took his arms, and piled them on a trough of stone that stood near a well. Then bearing his lance he walked up and down beside his trough.

For an hour or two he paced the yard, watched, though he knew it not, by many eyes from the inn windows, which, with the aid of a bright moon, could see all that happened as clearly as if it were day. At length a muleteer who had a long journey before him drove up his team to the trough, which was fed by the neighbouring well, and in order to let his cattle drink, stretched out his arms to remove the sword and helmet which lay there. The Don perceived his aim, and cried in a voice of thunder:

‘What man are you, ignorant of the laws of chivalry, who dares to touch the arms of the bravest knight who ever wore a sword? Take heed lest you lay a finger upon them, for if you do your life shall pay the forfeit.’

It might have been as well for the muleteer if he had listened, and had led his cattle to water elsewhere, but, looking at the Don’s tall lean figure and his own stout fists, he only laughed rudely, and, seizing both sword and helmet, threw them across the yard. The Don paused a moment, wondering if he saw aright; then raising his eyes to heaven he exclaimed:

‘O Lady Dulcinea, peerless in thy beauty, help me to avenge this insult that has been put upon me’; and, lifting high his lance, he brought it down with such a force on the head of the man that he fell to the ground without a word, and the Don began his walk afresh.

He had not been pacing the yard above half an hour when another man, not knowing what had befallen his friend, drove his beasts up to the trough, and was stooping to move the Don’s arms, so that the cattle could get at the water, when a mighty blow fell on *his* head, splitting it nearly into pieces.

At this noise the people from the inn ran out, and seeing the two muleteers stretched wounded on the ground picked up stones wherewith to stone the knight. The Don, however, fronted them with such courage that they did not dare to venture near him, and the landlord, making use of their fears, called on them to leave him alone, for that he was a madman, and the law would not touch him, even though he should kill them all. Then, wishing to be done with the business and with his guest, he made excuses for the rude fellows, who had only got what they deserved, and said that, as there was no chapel to his castle, he could dub him knight where he stood, for, the watch of arms having been completed, all that was needful was a slap on the neck with a palm of the hand and the touch of the sword on the shoulder.

So Don Quixada was turned into Don Quixote de la Mancha, and, mounting Rozinante, he left the inn, and with a joyful heart started to seek his first adventure.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE TWO ARMIES WHO TURNED OUT TO BE FLOCKS OF SHEEP

The first adventure of the new knight did not turn out at all to his liking, nor answered his expectations, for in all the books of chivalry which he had read, never had he heard of a good knight being sorely wounded by a mere pack of common fellows, as happened to himself shortly after leaving the inn; though indeed he comforted his soul by thinking that, had not Rozinante stumbled over a stone and fallen, it would have fared ill with his foes.

He lay upon the ground for some time, aching in every bone, and repeating in a weak voice some lines out of his favourite romance of the ‘Marquis of Mantua,’ when a labourer from his own village came by and went to see if the man stretched on his back across the road was dead or only wounded.

‘What ails you, master?’ asked he; but as the vizor over the Don’s face prevented his answer being understood, the labourer pulled it off with some trouble, and then stood, staring with surprise.

‘Master Quixada!’ cried he, wiping off the blood as he spoke, ‘what villain has served you like this?’ but, as Don Quixote only replied to his questions with long stories of the heroes of romance, the man gave it up, and after gathering up the stray bits of armour, and even the broken lance, helped the Don on to his own ass and took Rozinante by the bridle.

In this manner Don Quixote returned home.

When the knight dismounted and entered the house he found his housekeeper and niece filled with dismay, and bewailing his loss to the priest and the barber, who were wont to spend many an hour in company with the Don, listening to the strange tales that were always on his tongue. The joy with which they heard his well-known knock, in the middle of their discourses, was somewhat spoilt when they saw the condition he was in, and he stopped them quickly when they flew to embrace him.

‘Let no one touch me,’ cried he, ‘for by the falling of my horse I am sore wounded. Carry me to bed, and summon the wise woman Urganda to heal me with her enchanted water.’

‘Oh, never fear, your worship, we can cure you without her,’ answered the housekeeper; ‘and right glad we are to see you back, wounded or not.’

So between them all they bore him up the narrow stairs and laid him on his bed. And when he was undressed they sought his wounds, but found none, only a black bruise so they told him.

‘Is it so?’ he answered. ‘Then the deeds that I did were yet more valorous than I thought. It was while I was fighting with ten giants, the biggest and strongest who ever gave battle to any Christian knight, that Rozinante fell, and I with him.’

‘Oh! so there are giants in the dance now,’ whispered the priest to the barber. ‘I will not close my eyes this night till the books which have brought this evil are safely in the fire.’ And, so saying, they left Don Quixote to sleep.

He was still sleeping next morning, when the priest came to ask for the keys of the little room where Don Quixote kept the old books he so much loved. They were handed to him with joy by the girl, who held books to be the enemy of all mankind, and when they all four entered they found more than a hundred volumes large and small, which was a great number for so poor a gentleman. One by one the priest examined them, and condemned them to the flames, unless by chance there was any doubt about their wickedness; that is, unless they had been written by a friend of the priest. In these cases, after the barber had been consulted, the books escaped the doom of the rest.

For fifteen days Don Quixote stayed at home and seemed content to stay there, passing the evenings in talk with the priest and the barber. Nothing was needed, he said, to put right the wrongs of the world, save a new order of knighthood, of which he had set the example. After much of this talk he suddenly remembered that a knight ever had a squire riding behind him, and that before he rode forth on his next quest he must needs provide himself with such an one. This was almost as hard a matter as finding a liege lady, but at length he bethought him of a poor peasant living in the same village, who possessed a wife and children, and not much else. This man he sent for, and promised him such great things and such noble rewards that Sancho Panza, for such was his name, readily agreed to serve him. ‘Who knows,’ said Don Quixote, ‘what island I may conquer, and it would then fall to you to be the governor, or if you disdain the island, and would prefer to follow my fortune, I can make you Count at least! But, remember, my business admits of no delay, and next week we go forth to seek adventures. Meanwhile, I will give you money wherewith to provide all that is needful for our journeying, and take heed that you bring wallets with you.’

‘Worshipful knight,’ answered Sancho Panza, ‘I will do all that you bid me, but, by your leave, I will bring my ass also, for she is a good ass, and never did I walk when a beast was at hand.’

‘I know not,’ replied Don Quixote, ‘if any knight was ever yet followed by a squire mounted on an ass’s back. Yet, bring the beast, for it will doubtless not be long before I meet some discourteous knight, whom I will speedily overcome, and his horse shall be yours.’

When all was ready, Sancho Panza bade his wife and children farewell, and, joining his master, they rode for some hours across a wide plain without seeing anything which would enable them to prove their valour. At length Don Quixote reined up Rozinante with a jerk, and turning to his squire he said:

‘Fortune is on our side, friend Sancho. Look there, what huge giants are standing in a row! thirty of them at the least! It is a glorious chance for a new-made knight to give battle to these giants, and to rid the country of this wretched horde.’

‘What giants?’ asked Sancho, staring about him. ‘I see none.’

‘Those drawn up over there,’ replied the Don. ‘Never did I behold such arms! Those nearest us must be two miles long.’

‘Go not within reach of them, good master,’ answered Sancho anxiously, ‘for they are no giants, but windmills, and what you take for arms are the sails, by which the wind turns the mill-stones.’

‘How little do you know, friend Sancho, of these sorts of adventures!’ replied Don Quixote. ‘I tell you, those are no windmills, but giants. Know, however, that I will have no man with me who shivers with fear at the sight of a foe, so if you are afraid you had better fall to praying, and I will fight them alone.’

And with that he put spurs to Rozinante and galloped towards the windmills, heedless of the shouts of Sancho Panza, which indeed he never heard. Bending his body and holding his lance in rest, like all the pictures of knights when charging, he rushed on, crying as he went, ‘Do not fly from me, cowards that you are! It is but a single knight with whom you must do battle!’ And, calling on the Lady Dulcinea to come to his aid, he thrust his lance through the sail of the nearest windmill, which happened to be turned by a sharp gust of wind. The sail struck Rozinante so violently on the side that he and his master rolled over together, while the lance broke into small pieces.

When Sancho Panza saw what had befallen the Don — though indeed it was no more than he had expected — he rode up hastily to give him help. Both man and horse were half stunned with the blow; but, though Don Quixote’s body was bruised, his spirit was unconquered, and to Sancho’s complaint that no one could have doubted that the windmills were giants save those who had other windmills in their brains, he only answered:

‘Be silent, my friend, and do not talk of things of which you know nothing. For of this I am sure, that the enchanter Friston, who robbed me of my books, has changed these knights into windmills to rob me of my glory also. But in the end, his black arts will have little power against my keen blade!’

‘I pray that it may be so,’ said Sancho, as he still held the stirrup for his master, when he struggled, not without pain, to mount Rozinante.

‘Sit straighter in your saddle,’ went on the worthy man; ‘you lean too much on one side, but that doubtless comes from the fall you have had.’

‘You speak truly,’ replied Don Quixote; ‘and if I do not complain of my hurt, it is because it was never heard that any knight complained of a wound, however sore!’

‘If that is so, I am thankful that I am only a squire,’ answered Sancho; ‘for this I can say, that I shall cry as loud as I please for any pain, however little it may be — unless squires are forbidden to cry out as well as knights-errant.’

At this Don Quixote laughed, in spite of his hurts, and bade him complain whenever he pleased, for squires might lawfully do what was forbidden to knighthood. And with that the conversation ended, as Sancho declared it was their hour for dinner.

Towards three o’clock they returned to the road, which Don Quixote had left on catching sight of the windmills. But before entering it the knight thought well to give a warning to his squire.

‘I would have you know, brother Sancho,’ said he, ‘that in whatsoever danger you may see me you shall stand aside, and never seek to defend me, unless those who set on me should come of base forefathers, and not be people of gentle birth. For if those who attack me are knights, it is forbidden by the laws of chivalry that a knight be attacked by any man that has himself not received the honour of knighthood.’

‘Your lordship shall be obeyed in all that you say,’ answered Sancho, ‘and the more readily that I am a man of peace, and like not brawls. But, see, who are these that approach us?’

The question was natural, for the procession advancing along the road was a strange one, even at that day. First came two monks of the Order of St. Benedict, mounted on mules so large that Don Quixote, with some reason, took them to be dromedaries. The better to conceal their faces they had masks, and carried parasols. After them came a coach which had for a guard four or five mounted men and two muleteers, and inside the coach was seated a lady on her way to join her husband in the city of Seville. In reality the monks were strangers to her, and had nothing to do with her party, but this Don Quixote did not know, and, being ever on the watch to give help to any who needed it, he said:

‘Either my eyes deceive me, or this is the most wonderful adventure that ever fell to the lot of a knight. For those black shapeless monsters that you see yonder are magicians carrying off some princess, and I must undo this wrong with all the strength I have.’

‘Look you, master,’ answered Sancho hastily, ‘if you take up with this adventure, you will fare worse than you did with the windmills. Those are no magicians but monks of St. Benedict, while the others are travellers, journeying for business or pleasure. Think, I pray you, lest it be a snare of the Evil One.’

‘I have often told you, Sancho, that, being what you are, you can know nothing of adventures,’ replied Don Quixote; ‘but what I have said, I do, as you will see’; and as he spoke he planted himself in the middle of the road, and awaited the approach of the friars.

As soon as they drew near enough for his voice to reach their ears, Don Quixote cried loudly:

‘Fiends and scum of all the wicked, set free on this instant the captive princess whom you hold imprisoned in that coach, or else prepare for death, which is the just punishment of all your crimes.’

The monks reined in their mules and stared at Don Quixote, whose figure, to say truth, was no less startling than his words. At first they were very angry, then gentler counsels prevailed, and they answered:

‘Fair sir, we are neither fiends nor scum, but only two friars of St. Benedict, who are riding peacefully along the king’s highway, and know nothing of any captive princess.’

‘Miscreants that you are, do you think I am a man to be deceived by false speeches?’ cried the Don, now beside himself with fury, and, dashing with his lance in rest at the friar next him, he would indeed have given him his last shrift had not the monk slipped cleverly from the other side of his saddle, so that the lance passed over his head. His companion, fearing that like treatment was in store for him, galloped away with all his might.

As for the squire, directly he saw the man fall to the ground he ran up and began to strip off his clothes, till he was stopped in this proceeding by a blow on his head from one of the attendants of the two monks. The friar, left to himself, jumped on his mule, and rode off pale and trembling to rejoin his companion, while Don Quixote busied himself with conversing with the lady in the coach, and assuring her of his protection.

It were long indeed to tell of the many battles delivered by Don Quixote, who troubled himself little about the sore wounds he received on his own body as long as he could give aid to those in distress. What grieved him far more than mere sword-thrusts or bruises was the loss of his helmet.

But, come what might, his spirit was never daunted, though he could not deny that, as Sancho Panza truly said, never had they gained any battle, unless they counted one which was doubtful, and even at that the knight had come off the poorer by half an ear and half a helmet.

‘From the first day we set out,’ went on the good squire, ‘until this moment, we have received nothing but blows and more blows, beatings and more beatings, over and above the tossing I once got in a blanket. And you tell me that the fellows who maltreat me so are enchanted, and would not feel my blows if I had a chance of returning them. In truth, my eyes are too dull to see where lies the pleasure of conquering one’s foes, of which your worship is always telling me.’

‘Ah, Sancho, that is just what grieves me,’ answered Don Quixote sadly; ‘but henceforth I will seek to gird myself always with a sword that shall be enchanted in such a manner that it will defend me from any spells they may try to throw over me. Maybe that Fortune will send me that of Amadis, one of the keenest blades in the world, and the best sword that ever knight had. But look, do you see that cloud of dust rising out there? That tells us that a large army, made up of men and nations without number, are marching towards us.’

‘By that way of reckoning,’ answered the squire, ‘another army must be advancing to meet them, for behind us the cloud is just as thick.’

Filled with joy at the thought of fighting two armies, Don Quixote turned to look, and his heart beat high. The dust was so thick that neither he nor Sancho could perceive that the clouds of dust were caused by two immense flocks of sheep. To the mind of the knight they *could* be nothing but vast armies, and this he declared so positively that at length Sancho Panza came to believe it also. The squire, however, looked on the fact with very different feelings to his master, and asked anxiously:

‘Noble sir, what are we to do?’

‘What *can* we do,’ replied the knight, ‘except fly to the help of those who need it? For you must know, friend Sancho, that the army in front of us is led by the Emperor Alifanfaron, while the other, which is marching to meet him, is Pentapolin of the Uplifted Arm, so called because he rides into battle with his right arm bare.’

‘And what is their quarrel?’ asked Sancho.

‘Alifanfaron is a Moslem, yet desires to marry the daughter of Pentapolin,’ replied Don Quixote, ‘but her father will not give her to him till he ceases to be an unbeliever.’

‘By my beard,’ cried Sancho, ‘if I see this Pentapolin driven back I will strike a blow for him with all my might.’

‘And you will do well,’ replied Don Quixote, ‘for in such battles it is not necessary to be a knight.’

‘But what shall I do with my ass?’ inquired the squire anxiously, ‘for I suppose that until this day no man has ever yet ridden into combat on an ass.’

‘Let him loose,’ said Don Quixote, ‘and think no more of him, for after we have vanquished our enemies we shall have such choice of horses that I may light upon one even better than Rozinante! But let us stand on yonder little hill, for I would fain describe to you the names and arms of the noble knights that are approaching.’

For a long while he spoke, telling his squire of the countries from which those leaders of the armies had come. And truly it was wonderful to listen to him, seeing that they were all children of his own brain. From time to time Sancho Panza stared hard at the dust, trying to see as much as his master, and at last he cried:

‘If there is a knight or a giant there, they must be enchanted like the rest; for, look as I may, I cannot see them.’

‘How can you speak such words?’ answered Don Quixote reproachfully. ‘Do you not hear the horses neighing, the drums beating, the trumpets sounding?’

‘No, I hear nothing of all that,’ replied Sancho stoutly; ‘all *I* hear is the bleating of sheep and of ewes.’ And as he spoke the dust was lifted by the wind, and he saw the two flocks in front of them.

‘It is the deadly fear which has overtaken you,’ answered Don Quixote, ‘which has clouded your eyes and ears, and made everything seem different from what it is. If you are afraid, stand aside then, for my arm alone carries victory with it’; and, so saying, he touched Rozinante with his spurs, and with his lance in rest galloped down the hill, unheeding the cries of Sancho, who shrieked out that it was only a flock of sheep that he saw, and that there were neither giants nor knights to fight with.

He might have spared his voice, for Don Quixote, if he heard him, which is doubtful, rode on without turning his head, shouting defiance at the Moslem leader, and spearing the sheep which could not get out of his way, as if they were indeed the soldiers he took them for.

When the shepherds had recovered from this unexpected onslaught, they shouted with all their might to Don Quixote to leave off spearing their sheep, but, as he paid no heed to their warnings, they took out the slings they carried with them, and whirling them round their heads let fly large stones. Don Quixote, however, cared no more for the stones than he had done for the cries, and galloped up and down wildly, calling as he went:

‘Proud Alifanfaron, where can I find you? I, a solitary knight, challenge you to meet me in single combat, that I may avenge the wrongs that you have done to the noble Pentapolin!’ Doubtless the knight would have said still more had not a stone hit him on his side at that very moment, breaking two of his ribs. At first he thought he was dead, but, recollecting the balsam which he kept in his wallet, he drank a draught of it, although it was only intended to be laid on the outside of wounds and bruises.

He was still in the act of swallowing it when another missile struck him full on the face, and knocked out some of his teeth. He reeled in his saddle from the blow, and then fell heavily to the ground.

The shepherds, frightened at what they had done, ran up to look at him, and seeing him lying there senseless, drove quickly off the rest of their flock, leaving the seven that Don Quixote had speared stretched beside him.

Directly the shepherds had departed, Sancho Panza came down to look after his master, and finding him bruised and bleeding, but not stunned, he fell to reproaching him for his folly. But the knight only answered that if the enemies around him seemed to bear the likeness of sheep, it was only because they had been enchanted, and that their fellows now marching along the road would soon regain their proper shape, and become straight men and tall again.

Then, with Sancho’s help, he mounted Rozinante, and the two rode slowly along the road, hoping that they might shortly discover an inn, where they could get food and rest.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE BOBBING LIGHTS

Both Rozinante and his master had fared so ill at the hands of the shepherds that they journeyed but slowly, and darkness fell without their having reached an inn, or even caught sight of one. This grieved sorely both knight and squire, for not only did all Don Quixote’s bones ache from the stoning he had undergone, but somehow or other their wallets had been also lost, and it was many hours since they had broken their fast.

In this plight they travelled, man and beast hanging their heads with fatigue, when they saw on the road, coming towards them, a great multitude of lights, bobbing up and down, as if all the stars of heaven were shifting their places. Neither Don Quixote nor Sancho felt much at their ease at this strange spectacle, and both pulled up their beasts, and waited trembling. Even Don Quixote feared he knew not what, and the hair stood up on his head, in spite of his valour, as he said to Sancho:

‘There lies before me, Sancho, a great and perilous adventure, and one in which I must bear a stout heart.’

‘It seems to be an adventure of phantoms,’ whispered Sancho fearfully, ‘which never was to my liking.’

‘Whatever phantoms they be,’ answered the knight, ‘they shall not touch a hair of your head,’ replied Don Quixote soothingly. ‘If they mocked at you in the inn, it was for reason that I could not leap the fence. But here, where the ground is open, I can lay about me as I will.’

‘And what if they bewitch you, as they did that other time?’ asked the squire. ‘How much will the open ground profit you then’?

‘Trust to me,’ replied Don Quixote, ‘for my experience is greater than yours’; and Sancho said no more.

They stood a little on one side watching the lights approaching, and soon they saw a host of men clad in white riding along the road. The squire’s teeth chattered at the sight of them, and his terror increased when he was able to make out that the moving stars were flaming torches which men in white shirts carried in their hands, and that behind them followed a litter draped in black. After the litter came six other men dressed in black and mounted on mules. And Sancho had no doubt that he saw before him shadows from the next world.

Though Don Quixote’s heart quailed for a moment at the strangeness of the vision, he soon recalled his valour. In an instant his fancy had changed the litter into a bier, and the occupant into a knight who had been done to death by foul means, and whom he was bound in honour to avenge. So he moved forward to the middle of the road, and cried in a loud voice:

‘Proud knights, whoever you may be, stand and give me account of yourselves, and tell me who it is that lies in that bier. For either you have done an ill deed to some man, or else a wrong has been done to you.’

‘Pardon me, fair sir,’ answered the foremost of the white-shirted men, ‘but we are in haste, and the inn is far. We have no time for parleying.’

This reply only confirmed Don Quixote’s worst suspicions.

‘Stop, or you are a dead man,’ cried he in tones of thunder. ‘Tell me who you are and whither you are going, or else I will fight you all’; and with that he seized the mule by the bridle. The mule, not being used to such rough treatment, reared herself up on her hind legs, so that her rider slipped off her back. At this sight one of the other men ran to his aid, calling the knight all the ill names he could think of, which so inflamed the anger of Don Quixote that he laid about him with his spear on every side. Even Rozinante seemed to have gotten a new spirit as well as a new body, for he turned him about so nimbly that soon the plain was covered with flying white men, still holding the bobbing torches. The mourners who rode behind did not escape so easily, for their long skirts and cloaks hindered them from moving, and Don Quixote struck and beat them just as he would, till they took him to be a giant or enchanter rather than a man.

Sancho, as was his custom, bore no part in the fray, but stood by and said to himself: ‘Had ever any man such a master!’

When Don Quixote’s rage was somewhat abated, he paused and gazed about him. Then, seeing a burning torch lying on the ground, and a figure near it, he went up, and perceived by the light that it was the man whom he had first attacked.

‘Yield, or I will slay you!’ he shouted, and the man answered grimly:

‘I seem to have “yielded” as much as can be required of me, as my leg is broken. If you are indeed a Christian knight, I pray you of your nobility to spare my life, as I am a member of the Holy Church.’

‘Who brought you here, then?’ asked Don Quixote.

‘Who? My ill fortune,’ replied he. ‘I and the eleven priests who have fled with the torches set forth as escort to the body of the gentleman that lies in the litter, bearing it to its tomb in the city of Segovia, where he was born.’

‘And who killed him?’ said Don Quixote, who never imagined that any man could die naturally.

‘He died by reason of a most pestilent fever,’ answered the wounded man.

‘Then,’ replied Don Quixote, ‘I am delivered from the duty of avenging his death, which would otherwise have fallen to me. For in case you are ignorant, I would have you know that I am the knight Don Quixote de la Mancha, and it is my place to wander through the world, helping those that suffer wrongs and punishing those who inflict them.'

'As to helping those who suffer wrongs,' replied the churchman, 'for my part I can see nothing but that it is you and no other who have inflicted the wrong upon me. For whereas I was whole before, you have given me a thrust which has broken my leg, and I shall remain injured for ever.'

'You and your friends the priests,' answered Don Quixote, in no wise abashed by this remark, 'have wrought the evil yourselves by coming in such wise, and by night, that no man could think but that you were ill creatures from another world.'

'Then, if you repent you of the wrong that you have done me,' said the man, 'I pray you, worshipful knight, to deliver my leg from the bondage of this ass, who has my leg fastened between the stirrup and the saddle.'

The kind heart of Don Quixote was shocked at his thoughtlessness, and he answered quickly:

'You should have told me of your pain before, or I might have talked on till to-morrow'; and he called to Sancho Panza, who was busily robbing the mule that carried the provisions. Hearing his master's voice, Sancho left off with an ill grace, and, placing the bag of food on his own donkey, went to see what his master wanted.

Between them both they set the mule on its feet, and the man on its saddle. Don Quixote then put the torch in his hand and bade him ride after his companions, and not to forget to ask their pardon in his name for the wrong he had unconsciously done them.

'And,' added the squire, 'if your friends should ask the name of this gentleman, who now craves their forgiveness, tell them that it is the famous Don Quixote, the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance!'

THE HELMET OF MAMBRINO

The morning after the last adventure Don Quixote and his squire were riding along the road, when the knight saw in front of him a man on horseback, with something on his head which looked as if it were made of gold.

‘If my eyes do not deceive me,’ he said, turning to Sancho Panza, ‘here comes one who wears on his head the helmet of Mambrino.’

‘If I had your worship’s leave to speak,’ answered Sancho, who was by this time beginning to learn a little wisdom, ‘I could give many reasons to show that you are mistaken.’

‘How *can* I be mistaken?’ cried Don Quixote angrily. ‘Do not you see for yourself that a knight is coming towards us, mounted on a grey horse and with a golden helmet on his head?’

‘All that *I* can see,’ replied the squire, ‘is that the man is mounted on a grey donkey like my own, and he has on his head something that glitters.’

‘What you see,’ answered Don Quixote solemnly, ‘is the helmet of Mambrino. Go, stand aside and let *me* deal with him, for without even speaking to him I will get possession of his helmet, for which my soul has always longed.’

Truth to tell, the real story of the helmet, for so Don Quixote took it to be, was very simple. A rich man who lived in a village only a few miles away had sent for the nearest barber to shave and bleed him. The man started, taking with him a brass basin, which he was accustomed to use, and, as a shower of rain soon came on, he put the basin on his head to save his hat, which was a new one. The ass, as Sancho Panza rightly said, was very like his own.

The good man was jogging comfortably along, thinking what he would like for supper, when suddenly he saw Don Quixote galloping towards him, head bent and lance in rest. As he drew near he cried loudly:

‘Defend yourself, or give me up the helmet, to which you have no right.’

The barber was so taken by surprise that for a moment he did nothing; then he had only just time to escape the lance thrust by sliding off his ass and running so swiftly over the plain that even the wind could scarcely overtake him. In his flight the basin fell from his head, to the great pleasure of Don Quixote, who bade his squire bring it to him.

‘The Unbeliever who wore this helmet first must have had indeed a large head,’ cried he, turning it over in his hands, seeking the vizor; ‘yet, even so, half of it is wanting.’

At this Sancho began to laugh, and his master asked him what he found to divert him so much.

‘I cannot but laugh when I think how large was the head of the Unbeliever,’ replied Sancho gravely, knowing that the knight did not love the mirth of other men. ‘But, to my mind, the helmet looks exactly like a barber’s basin.’

‘Listen to me,’ answered Don Quixote, ‘and I will tell you what has happened. By a strange accident this famous helmet must have fallen to the lot of someone who did not know the value of his prize. But, seeing it was pure gold, he melted half of it for his own uses, and the rest he made into a barber’s basin. Be sure that in the first village where I can meet with a skilled workman I will have it restored to its own shape again, and meanwhile I will wear it as it is, for half a helmet is better than none.’

‘And what,’ inquired Sancho, ‘shall we do with the grey horse that looks so like an ass? The beast is a good beast.’

‘Leave the ass or horse, whichever it pleases you to call it,’ replied the Don, ‘for no knight ever takes the steed of his foe, unless it is won in fair fight. And perchance, when we have ridden out of sight, its master will come back and seek for it.’

Sancho, however, was not overmuch pleased by this speech.

‘Truly the laws of chivalry are strict,’ he grumbled, ‘if they will not let a man change one donkey for another! And is it forbidden to change the pack-saddle also?’

‘Of that I am in doubt,’ replied Don Quixote; ‘and until I have certain information on this point, if your need is great, you may take what you need.’

Sancho hardly expected such good fortune to befall him, and stripping the ass of his harness he speedily put it upon his own beast, and then laid out the dinner he had stolen from the sumpter mule for himself and his master.

Not long after this event, as Don Quixote and his squire were riding along the road, discoursing as they went of matters of chivalry, they saw approaching them from a distance a dozen men or more, with iron chains round their necks, stringing them together like beads on a rosary, and bearing iron fetters on their hands. By their side were two men on horseback carrying firelocks, and two on foot with swords and spears.

‘Look!’ cried Sancho Panza, ‘here come a gang of slaves, sent to the galleys by the king.’

‘What is that you say — *sent*?’ asked Don Quixote. ‘Can any king *send* his subjects where they have no mind to go?’

‘They are men who have been guilty of many crimes,’ replied the squire, ‘and to punish them they are being led by force to the galleys.’

‘They go,’ inquired Don Quixote, ‘by force and not willingly?’

‘You speak truly,’ answered Sancho Panza.

‘Then if that is so,’ said the knight, ‘it is my duty to set them free.’

‘But think a moment, your worship,’ cried Sancho, terrified at the consequences of this new idea; ‘they are bad men, and deserve punishment for the crimes they have committed.’

Don Quixote was silent. In fact, he had heard nothing of what his squire had said. Instead he rode up to the galley-slaves, who by this time were quite near, and politely begged one of the soldiers who had charge of them to tell him of his courtesy where these people were going, and why they were chained in such a manner.

The guard, who had never read any of the romances of chivalry, and was quite ignorant of the speech of knights, answered roughly that they were felons going to the galleys, and that was all that mattered to anybody. But Don Quixote was not to be put aside like this.

‘By your leave,’ he said, ‘I would speak with them, and ask of every man the reason of his misfortune.’

Now this civility of the knight made the soldiers feel ashamed of their own rudeness, so one of them replied more gently than before:

‘We have here set down the crimes of every man singly, but if your worship pleases you may inquire of the prisoners yourself. And be sure you will hear all about their tricks, and more too, for it is a mighty pleasure to them to tell their tales.’

The soldier spoke truly; and wonderful were the stories which Don Quixote listened to and believed, until the knight, smitten by compassion, turned to the guards and implored them to set free the poor fellows, whose sins would be punished elsewhere.

‘I ask you to do this as a favour,’ he ended, ‘for I would willingly owe you this grace. But, if you deny me, my arm and my sword will teach you to do it by force.’

‘That is a merry jest indeed,’ cried the soldier. ‘So we are to let go the king’s prisoners just because you tell us to do it. You had better mind your own business, fair sir, and set that pot straight on your head, and do not waste your time in looking for five feet in a cat.’

Don Quixote was so furious at the man’s words that he felled him to the earth with a blow from his sword, while for a moment the other guards stood mute from surprise. Then seizing their weapons they rushed at Don Quixote, who sat firm in his saddle as became a knight, awaiting their onslaught. But for all his valour it would have gone hard with him had not the attention of the soldiers been hastily called off by the galley-slaves, who were taking advantage of the tumult to break their fetters. The chief among them had snatched the sword and firelock of the man whom Don Quixote had overthrown, and by merely pointing it at the other guards he so frightened them that they fled in all directions, followed by a shower of stones from the rest of the captives.

‘Let us depart from here,’ whispered Sancho Panza, knowing better than his master in what a sorry plight they might presently find themselves. ‘If we once reach those hills, none can overtake us.’

‘It is well,’ replied the knight; ‘but first I must settle this matter,’ and, calling together the prisoners, he bade them go with all speed and present themselves before the Lady Dulcinea del Toboso, and say that they had come by the command of the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance, and further to relate the doughty deeds by which they had been set free.

At this the convicts only laughed, and replied that if they were to fulfil his desires and travel together in a body they would soon be taken captive by their enemies, and would be no better off than before, but that in gratitude for his services they would be willing to pray for him, which they could do at their leisure.

This discourse enraged Don Quixote nearly as much as the words of the guard had done, and he answered the fellow in terms so abusive that the convict’s patience, which was never very great, gave way altogether, and he and his comrades, picking up what stones lay about, flung them with such hearty goodwill at the knight and Rozinante, that at length they knocked him right out of the saddle. The man then dragged the basin from his head, and after dealing him some mighty blows with it dashed it to the ground, where it broke in pieces. They next took the coat which he wore over his armour, and stripped the squire of all but his shirt. Having done this, they went their ways, fearing lest they might be overtaken.

Mambrino was one of the Moorish kings, to whom the helmet belonged. He who wore it could not be wounded in battle.

HOW DON QUIXOTE WAS ENCHANTED WHILE GUARDING THE CASTLE

In the course of their adventures Don Quixote and his squire found themselves at the door of an inn which they had already visited, where they met with many friends. The hours were passed in pleasant discourse, and in the telling and reading of strange stories; the company parted at night well satisfied with their entertainment.

Don Quixote, however, did not share in these joys, for he was sorely cast down by reason of wounds he had received a few days previously in seeking to right a wrong. So, leaving the remainder of the guests to each other's society, he threw himself on the bed that had been made for him, and soon fell fast asleep.

The guests below had forgotten all about him, so absorbed were they in the interest of a tale of woeful ending, when the voice of Sancho Panza burst upon their ears.

'Hasten! hasten! good sirs; hasten and help my master in the hardest battle I have ever seen him fight. By my faith, he has dealt such a blow to the giant that his head he has cut clean off.'

'What is that you say?' asked the priest, who was reading out the tale. 'Are you out of your senses, Sancho?' But his question was lost in a furious noise from above, in which Don Quixote might be heard crying:

'Rogue, thief, villain! I have you fast, and little will your sword avail you'; then followed loud blows against the wall.

'Quick, quick! don't stand there listening, but fly to the aid of my master. Though, indeed, by this time there can be little need, for the giant must be dead already, and will trouble the world no more. For I saw his blood spurt and run all over the floor, and his head is cut off and fallen to one side.'

'As I am alive,' exclaimed the innkeeper, 'I fear that Don Quixote has been fighting with one of the wine-skins that I put to hang near the bed, and it is wine not blood that is spilt on the ground.' And he ran into the room, followed by the rest, to see what had really happened.

They all stopped short at the sight of Don Quixote, who did, in truth, present a most strange figure. The only garments he had on were a shirt and a little red cap; his legs were bare, and round his left arm was rolled the bed covering, while in the right he held a sword, with which he was cutting and thrusting at everything about him, uttering cries all the while, as if in truth he were engaged in deadly combat with a giant. Yet his eyes were tight shut, and it was clear to all that he was fast asleep; but in his dream he had slashed at so many of the skins that the whole room was full of wine. When the innkeeper perceived this, the loss of his wine so enraged him that he in his turn flew at the knight, and struck him such hard blows with his fists that, had not the priest and another man pulled him off, the war with the giant would soon have ended.

Still, curious to say, it was not until a pannikin of cold water had been poured over him by the barber that Don Quixote awoke, and even then he did not understand what he had been doing, and why he stood there in such a dress.

Now the priest had caught hold of Don Quixote’s hands, so that he should not beat those who were pouring the water over him, and the knight, having only partly come to his senses, took him for the princess, for whose sake he had made war on the giant.

‘Fair and gracious lady,’ he said, falling on his knees, ‘may your life henceforth be freed from the terror of this ill-born creature!’

‘Well, did I not speak truly?’ asked Sancho Panza proudly. ‘Has not my master properly salted the giant? I have got my earldom safe at last.’ For Sancho never ceased to believe in the knight’s promises.

Everyone was driven to laugh at the strange foolery of both master and man, except the innkeeper, whose mind was still sore at the loss of his wine-skins. The priest and the barber first busied themselves in getting Don Quixote, now quite worn out with his adventure, safely into bed, and then went to administer the best consolation they could to the poor man.

Many days passed before Don Quixote was well enough to leave the inn, but at length he seemed to be cured of the fatigue he had undergone during his previous adventures, and had bidden his squire get all things ready for his departure. Maritornes, the servant at the inn, and the innkeeper’s daughter, having overheard the plans of Don Quixote, resolved that he should not leave them before they had played him some merry tricks.

That night, when everyone else had gone to bed, and Don Quixote, armed, and mounted on Rozinante, was keeping guard in front of the inn, the two girls crept up to a loft. Nowhere in the inn was there such a thing as a proper window, but in the loft was a hole through which the knight could be seen, leaning on his lance uttering deep sighs and broken words about the Lady Dulcinea.

The innkeeper’s daughter, falling in with his humour, advanced to the hole, and invited him to draw a little nearer. Nothing more was needed than for Don Quixote to imagine that the damsel was sick of love for him, and he told her straightway that any service he could do her short of proclaiming her his liege lady she might command. Upon this, Maritornes informed him that her mistress would be content were she permitted to kiss his hand, which Don Quixote answered might be done without wrong to the Lady Dulcinea. So, without more ado, he passed it through the hole, when it was instantly seized by Maritornes, who slipped a noose of rope over his wrist, and tied the other end of it tightly to the door of the loft.

After that they both ran off, overflowing with laughter, leaving the knight to reproach them for their ill-usage.

There the poor knight remained, mounted on Rozinante, his arm in the hole and his hand fastened to the door, fearing lest Rozinante should move and he should be left hanging. But in this he did wrong to his horse, who was happy enough to stand still.

Then Don Quixote, seeing himself bound, instead of seeking to unloose himself as many others would have tried to do, sat quietly in his saddle, and dreamed dreams of the enchantment which had befallen him. And thus he stayed till the day dawned.

His dreams were rudely broken into when there drew up at the inn door four men well armed and mounted. As no one answered their knock, they repeated it more loudly, when Don Quixote cried to them:

‘Knights or squires, or whoever you may be, it is not for you to knock at the gates of this castle; for sure, any man might tell that those within are asleep, or else it is their custom not to open until the sun touches the whole floor. You must wait until it is broad day, and then it will be seen whether you can be admitted within the gates.’

‘What sort of castle is this, which receives no guests without such ceremonies?’ mocked one of the men. ‘If you are the innkeeper, bid your servants open to us without delay. We are neither knights nor squires, but honest travellers, who need corn for our horses, and that without delay.’

‘Have I the air of an innkeeper?’ asked Don Quixote loftily.

‘I do not know of what you have the air,’ answered the man, ‘but this I *do* know, and that is that you are jesting when you call this inn a castle.’

‘But it *is* a castle,’ replied Don Quixote, ‘and one of the finest in the whole country! And within are those who carry crowns on their heads and sceptres in their hands.’

‘It may well be that inside are players with crowns and sceptres both,’ answered the traveller, ‘for in so small an inn no real kings and their trains would find a place’; and, being weary of talking, he knocked at the door with more violence than before.

Meanwhile, one of the horses had drawn near to Rozinante, wondering what the strange creature could be, of a form like unto his own, but to all outward seeming formed of wood. Rozinante, cheered by the presence of one of his own kind, moved his body a little, which caused Don Quixote to slip from his saddle, and to remain hanging by his arm, though his feet almost touched the ground. The pain of thus being suspended from his arm was so great that, knight though he was, he shrieked in agony, till the people in the inn ran to the doors to see what was the matter.

Maritornes alone, fearing punishment, slipped round another way, and unfastened the cord which bound Don Quixote, who dropped to the ground as the travellers came up, and in answer to their questions mounted Rozinante, and, after riding round the field, reined up suddenly in front of them, crying:

‘Whoever shall proclaim that I have suffered enchantment I give him the lie, and challenge him to meet me in single combat.’

But instead of answering his defiance the guests merely stood and stared at him, till the innkeeper whispered that he was a noble gentleman, a little touched in his wits, so they took no further notice of his words. This so enraged Don Quixote that he was only withheld from fighting them all by remembering that nowhere in the records of chivalry was it lawful to undertake a second adventure before the first had drawn to a good end.

Meanwhile a new strife had begun in the inn, for two of the travellers who had lodged there during the night were found trying to leave the inn without paying their reckoning. But it happened that the landlord detected their purpose and held them fast, upon which the two fellows set on him with blows, till his daughter ran to Don Quixote and implored his help.

‘Beautiful damsel,’ replied the knight slowly, ‘just now I cannot listen to your prayer, for the laws of chivalry forbid my engaging in a fresh adventure. But tell your father to keep his assailants at bay, while I ride to the Princess Micomicona, in whose service I already am, and ask her leave to aid him in his trouble.’

‘And long before your return,’ cried Maritornes, ‘my poor master will be in another world’; but Don Quixote, not heeding her, turned his back, and, falling on his knees before a lady present, begged that she would grant him permission to rescue the lord of the castle.

This being given, the knight braced on his shield and drew his sword, and hastened to the inn door, where the two men were still beating the landlord. But the moment he reached the combatants he stopped and drew back, in spite of the entreaties of Maritornes and of the innkeeper’s wife.

‘It has come into my mind,’ he said, ‘that it is not lawful for me to give battle to any except belted knights. Now there are no knights here, and the task belongs to my squire Sancho, who I will bid to undertake it in my stead.’

So the fight still raged, till at length the men’s arms grew tired, which, Don

Quixote seeing, he persuaded them to make peace, and the two guests to pay the sum which they rightly owed the landlord.

DON QUIXOTE’S HOME-COMING

By this time the company of friends who had been passing their days so pleasantly at the inn, were called away by other business, but, not liking to leave Don Quixote to himself, they contrived a plan by which the priest and barber were to carry him home, where they hoped his wits might come back to him.

So they set about making secretly a large cage of poles, having the sides latticed, so that Don Quixote should receive both air and light, and this cage was to be placed on a bullock-cart which happened to be going in the same direction. The rest of the company put on masks and disguised themselves in various manners, so that the knight might not know them again.

These preparations being finished, they stole softly into his room at the dead of night and tied his hands and feet firmly together. He woke with a start, and, seeing the array of strange figures about him, took them to be the phantoms which hovered about the enchanted castle, and believed without doubt that he himself was enchanted likewise, for he could neither move nor fight.

This reasoning pleased the priest greatly, as in just such a manner he had reckoned that the knight would behave. Sancho alone had been left in the garments that he commonly wore, and he was not deceived by the ghosts who passed before him. But he looked on and said nothing till he should see how the matter turned out.

When all was ready, Don Quixote was picked up and carried to the cage, where they laid him at full length, but taking good care to nail the door, so that it could not be opened. Then a voice was heard from behind to utter a prophecy, which Don Quixote understood to mean that he was setting forth on his wedding journey, and that he was to be bound in marriage to the Lady Dulcinea del Toboso, whose name he had always upheld in battle.

The knight responded joyfully to the words he heard, beseeching the mighty enchanter in whose power he was not to leave him in his prison till these glorious promises had been fulfilled, and appealing to Sancho never to part from him either in good or ill fortune. Sancho bowed in answer and kissed his master’s hand; then the ghosts took up the cage and placed it on a waggon.

Don Quixote beguiled the way after his usual fashion, recalling the stories of enchantments he had read, yet never finding a knight who had been enchanted after his fashion.

‘No knight that ever *I* heard,’ said he, ‘was drawn by such heavy and sluggish animals. Strange it is indeed to be carried to adventures in an ox-cart, instead of flying through the air on a griffin or a cloud! Yet, mayhap, the new chivalry, of which I am the first knight, may have new ways'; and with that he contented himself, and discoursed to Sancho about the ghosts, while Rozinante and the ass were saddled. Then Sancho mounted his ass and took Rozinante's rein, the priest meanwhile giving the troopers a few pence a day to ride by the ox-cart as far as Don Quixote's native village.

After allowing Don Quixote to bid farewell to the good people gathered at the inn door, the priest, still masked, gave the signal to the driver, and the cart drawn by the oxen started at a foot's pace. The troopers rode on each side to guard it, and behind them came Sancho riding on his ass, leading Rozinante, while the priest and the barber, mounted on a pair of fine mules, brought up the rear.

They journeyed in silence for some time, till the driver of the ox-cart, who was a lazy fellow, called a halt as he himself wished to rest, and the grass was rich and green for the oxen. Soon they were joined by a company of well-dressed men on horseback, who stopped in surprise on seeing such a strange sight as that of a man in a cage. The leader of the party, who made himself known to them as a canon of Toledo, entered into conversation with the captive knight. Don Quixote informed him that he was enchanted by reason of envy of his glorious deeds, which was denied by Sancho Panza, who declared that when he was at liberty his master ate, drank, and slept like other people, and if no one hindered him would talk more than thirty lawyers.

The canon and his friends rode on with the priest for some distance, as he desired greatly to hear the tale of Don Quixote's adventures, for never before had he met with such a strange man. In the heat of the day they again rested in a shady spot, and here, at the petition of the squire, Don Quixote was unloosed from his bonds and set at liberty.

For a while he was content to pass the hours of his journey in hearing and telling of matters of chivalry, rejoicing to find himself once more on the back of Rozinante. But unfortunately the sight of a procession of men in white approaching him stirred up all his anger, for, as was his custom, he instantly divined that they were assembled for some unlawful purpose, though in sooth they were a body of penitents praying that rain might fall upon their thirsty land. He dashed up to battle, followed by Sancho on foot, who arrived just at the moment that his master fell to the ground stunned by a tremendous blow. The penitents who formed the procession, seeing so many men running up, received them with fists and candlesticks, but when one of them cast his eyes on the priest who was journeying with Don Quixote he found that he had known him formerly, and begged him to tell what all this might mean.

By the time the story was told Don Quixote’s wits began to return to him, and he called to Sancho to put him back into the cage, as he had been nigh dead, and could not hold himself on Rozinante.

‘With all my heart,’ answered Sancho, thankful that the adventure had ended no worse; ‘and if these gentlemen will do us the honour to go with us, we will return home and there make plans for adventures that will bring us more profit and glory.’

The villagers were all gathered together in the great square, when at the end of six days a cage containing a man passed through their midst. The people pressed close to see who the captive might be, and when they saw it was Don Quixote, they sent a boy to tell his housekeeper and his niece that the knight had come back looking pale and lean from his wanderings.

Loud were the cries raised by the good women when they saw him in so sorry a plight, and they undressed him and put him to bed with what speed they were able.

‘Keep him there as long as you may,’ said the priest who had brought him; but it is whispered that this period of rest and repose did not last, and that soon Don Quixote might have been seen again mounted on Rozinante and seeking adventures.

THE MEETING OF HUON AND OBERON, KING OF THE FAIRIES

In the days of the emperor Charles the Great there lived two young men named Huon and Gerard, sons of the duke of Bordeaux and heirs of his lands. Now by all the rules of chivalry they were bound to hasten to Paris as soon as their father died and do homage to the emperor as their liege lord; but, like many other youths, they were careless of their duties, and put off the long and tedious journey from day to day.

This conduct was particularly foolish, because there was present at the emperor’s court the famous earl Amaury, who, rich though he was, coveted the estates of the duke of Bordeaux, and whispered in the ear of his master that the young men were rebels and traitors. By this time Charles was old, and his mind, as well as his body, had waxed feeble; the crown was too heavy for him, and he was thinking of resigning it to his son Charlot. So Amaury cunningly represented to him that he must summon the young men to his court without delay, and then himself plotted with Charlot to waylay and kill them. But, though they made their plans with great care, fortune was on the side of Huon and Gerard, for they defended themselves so bravely that, though they were taken by surprise, Gerard only received a slight wound, while Charlot was slain by Huon.

When Amaury returned to Paris with these dreadful tidings, the emperor was beside himself with anger, and ordered Amaury to fight a duel with Huon, who was the elder of the two, and bid him take heed not to spare him. As Huon was young and slight, and Amaury one of the strongest men at the court, neither the emperor nor the earl ever had a moment’s doubt with whom the victory would lie; but if Amaury was more powerful, Huon was quicker on his feet, and before long he had stretched his enemy dead upon the ground.

The emperor was watching the fight from a window of his palace, and his anger at the triumph of Huon was so great that it very near killed him. Still, as the duel had been fairly fought, he dared not punish Huon, and he was forced to content himself with sending him on a mission to the king of Babylon, knowing well the perils which would beset him on the way.

The small vessel in which Huon sailed for Jerusalem met with so many dangers that oftentimes the young duke thought that he would be dead long before he had touched the shores of Palestine. Thrice they were attacked by pirates, who were hardly beaten off; twice such terrible storms arose that they were almost driven on the rocks, and once they had much ado to avoid being drawn into a whirlpool. But somehow or other they escaped everything, and Huon was safely landed on the holy soil with his uncle Garyn and a few followers.

He was at first so thankful to be on dry land again that he felt as if his journey was already over, but he soon found that the worst part was yet to come. Leaving Jerusalem behind them, the little band entered a desert, dreary and boundless as far as they could see. Hunger and thirst they suffered, and death felt very near them, when at last they reached a tiny hut, before which an old man was sitting. At the sight of Huon, thin and wasted as he had grown, the old man broke into sobs, crying that his face was like unto the face of the duke of Bordeaux, whom he had known when he was young.

‘Thirty years have I dwelt in these deserts,’ said he, ‘and never have my eyes lighted on the face of a Christian man.’

Then Huon answered that he was indeed the son of the duke of Bordeaux whom he had known in his youth, and while they rested each man told his tale.

‘It is indeed good fortune that guided you here,’ said Gerames when Huon had ended his story, ‘for without me and my counsel never would you have reached the kingdom of Babylon. There are two roads which lead to that great city; one will take you forty days, and the other fifteen days, but if you will be ruled by me you will travel by the longer.’

‘And wherefore?’ asked Huon, whose body was still sore from the hardships he had suffered, and whose ears had been tickled with the tidings of the soft couches and lovely gardens of Babylon the Great.

‘The short way leads through a wood which is the home of fairies and other strange creatures,’ answered Gerames, ‘and in it dwells Oberon, the king of them all, in stature no higher than a child of three years old, but with a face more beautiful than any worn by mortal man. His voice is softer and his words more sweet than we are wont to use; but beware of listening to them, for should you speak to him one word, you will fall into his power for ever. But if you hold your peace think not to escape that way, for he will be so wroth with you that he will cause all manner of tempests to spring up, and a great and black river to rise before you. Fear not to pass this river, black and swift though it be, for it is but a fantasy, and will not even wet the feet of your horse. And now that I have told you the ills that lie in that wood, I pray you hearken to my counsel, and ride by the way that is longer.’

Huon paused before he answered. In sooth, Gerames’ words had not awakened dread in his soul. Instead, he desired greatly to meet that dwarf, and to try whose will should prove strongest. So he answered that it would ill become a knight, and the son of his father, to shun a meeting with anyone, be he man or fairy, and it might be well for him to take the short road, for many adventures might befall him by the longer.

‘Sir,’ said Gerames, ‘be it as you will; whichever way you take I will go with you.’

Then Huon and Gerames rode at the rear of their company, and entered the wood where Oberon, king of the Fairies, abode. For two days they had neither food nor drink, and Huon repented him of his journey and wished that he had hearkened to Gerames, as perchance the other road might have been easier.

‘Let us all alight and seek for food,’ said he; but at that moment, Oberon, richly dressed, and covered with precious stones, appeared before them. A magic bow was in his hand, whose arrows never failed to hit the beast he aimed at, while round his neck was slung a horn. Now this horn was unlike any other in the whole world, for one blast of it could cure a man’s sickness, even if he was nigh to death, or make him feel satisfied if he lacked meat, or joyful though he was poor, or summon whomsoever he wanted, if he was distant a hundred days’ journey.

Seeing the doleful plight of the little company, Oberon blew the third blast, and, behold! Huon and his companions began to sing and dance, as if good fortune had come to them.

‘Ah, what strange thing has come to pass!’ cried the young knight. ‘But now I was like to fall from my horse from hunger, but in an instant I am filled and wish for nothing.’

‘Sir,’ said Gerames, ‘it is Oberon who has wrought this; but do not suffer yourself to be drawn into speech with him, or you will rue it.’

‘Have no fears for me,’ answered Huon, ‘I will be steadfast.’

He held his head very high when Oberon the dwarf came up, and begged the knight to speak to him; but Huon only leaped on his horse and signed to his men to do likewise. At that the dwarf waxed angry, and bade a tempest arise, and with it came such a rain and hail that they were sore affrighted. Many times Gerames prayed them to take courage, for these were devices of the fairy king, and would not really hurt them, and as long as they spoke no words they would be safe.

‘Have no doubt of me,’ answered Huon.

For a while they lost sight of the dwarf, and Huon vainly hoped that they had beaten him off, and that they were rid of him. But in a little time they reached a bridge which spanned a great river, and on the bridge was Oberon himself. Fain would they have slipped past him, but the bridge was narrow, and Oberon stood in the middle. Once more he spoke soft words to Huon, and offered to do him service, but Huon held his peace. Again Oberon was angered sorely, and blew a blast which hindered the company from riding onwards, while four hundred knights of his own came galloping up.

‘Slay these men at once,’ he cried, shaking with wrath, but their leader implored him to spare them for a space.

‘It will be time enough to kill them if they still keep silence,’ said he; and Oberon agreed that he would give them yet another chance, and Huon and his companions rode hastily onwards.

‘We have left him full five miles behind us,’ said Huon, drawing rein; ‘and now that he is not here to trouble us I will say that never in my life did I see so fair a creature. Nor do I think he can do us any ill. If he should come again, I fain would speak to him, and I pray you, Gerames, not to be displeased with me thereat.’

Gerames’ heart was heavy at these words, but he knew well the wilfulness of young men, and he answered nothing. For fifteen days they rode on, and Gerames began to hope that Oberon had given up their pursuit, when suddenly he again appeared.

‘Noble sir,’ he said to Huon, ‘have you resolved in good sooth not to speak to me? I know all your past life, and the task set you by the emperor, and without my help never will you come to the end of that business. Therefore, be warned by me, and go no further.’

‘You are welcome, sir,’ answered Huon at last, and Oberon laughed for very joy.

‘Never did you give a greeting so profitable as this one,’ he said, and they rode on together.

HOW OBERON SAVED HUON

Oberon was so rejoiced that Huon had at last made friends with him, that he did everything that he could think of to give pleasure to the knight and his friends.

‘There is nothing in the world that I cannot have by wishing for it,’ said he, ‘and all I possess is yours. And to prove that my words are not vain I will set before you the richest feast that ever you ate. After you have finished, you shall go whithersoever you will.’

So they ate and drank to their hearts’ content, but, before they departed, Oberon bade one of his fairy knights to bring him his golden cup, which he showed to Huon.

‘Behold,’ he said, ‘this cup is empty, and will so remain, if any man who has done a deadly sin should seek to drink of it. But he who has led a goodly life, the moment that he takes it in his hands it will become full of wine. Make proof of it yourself, and if you are found worthy the cup shall be yours.’

‘Alas, sir,’ answered Huon, ‘I fear very greatly that I have sinned too deeply for that cup to have any virtue for me, but yet I have repented, and desire from henceforth to wrong no one.’ Then he lifted the cup, and the wine brimmed over.

Oberon was right glad when he saw this sight, and gave the cup into his keeping.

‘As long as you are true and faithful, you shall never lack drink in it,’ said he, ‘but if you do falsely to any man, it will lose all its virtue and my help will go from you also. I have likewise another gift for you: take this horn of ivory, and when you are in great straits, and will blow it, however far I may be, I will come to you, and will bring with me a great company to lend you aid. But beware, as you set store by my friendship and by your life, that you do not blow the horn lightly.’

‘I give you great thanks for your kindness, and will hearken to your words,’ said Huon; ‘and now, I pray, let me depart hence to do the emperor’s bidding.’

So the knight and the fairy king took leave of each other, and they fared on their way, and in the evening they sat and rested in a green meadow, and ate and drank of the food that Oberon had given them. Now Huon was uplifted by the gifts the king had given him, and thought that he himself must be in some way better than other men, to be singled out for such honour, and, as young men will, he began to boast and talk idly, making pretence that he doubted the magic qualities of the horn and the cup, so that he might prove them at once before his company.

‘It was a fair adventure for me when I spoke to Oberon,’ said he, ‘and that I did not listen to the counsel of Gerames. When I fulfil my mission and return unto the court of the emperor, I will present him with the cup, the like of which he has not got in all his treasury. But as for the horn, how do I know if Oberon spoke the truth concerning it?’

‘Oh, sir, be not rash, I entreat you!’ cried Gerames, ‘for he charged you straitly not to blow the horn save in your direst need.’

‘Ay, surely,’ answered Huon, ‘but for all that I will try what power it has,’ and, raising it to his mouth, he blew a loud blast.

At that all the company rose up, and sang and danced joyfully, and Garyn, Huon’s uncle, begged him to blow the horn once more.

Oberon heard it, though he was full many miles away.

‘What man is so bold as to seek to do him ill whom I love best in all the world?’ said Oberon. ‘I wish myself and a hundred good men in his company’; and in an instant Huon and his friends beheld the horses’ skins flashing in the bushes. Then Huon’s soul smote him, and he bowed his head before Oberon, saying:

‘Sir, I have done ill; tell me quickly if death must be my punishment?’

‘Where are those that would work you evil?’ asked Oberon sternly; but in spite of his wrath Huon took heart of grace, and, confessing his folly, prayed for pardon, which Oberon granted him for very pity, knowing, he said, that Huon would have much to suffer, some things through the wicked ways of others, but more from his own pride and self-will. Then, bidding the young man farewell afresh, the fairy king rode back to the wood.

All befell just as the fairy king had foretold. Giants and mortals alike barred his way; small would have been his chance of ever reaching Babylon had not Oberon himself watched over him, and sent him help when he knew it not. Only one thing he asked of Huon in return — to keep himself from ill-doing and lies, so that he might be worthy to drink from the golden cup.

And thus it came to pass that after many perils Huon knocked at the first of the four gates of the city.

No sound was heard in answer to his knock, so he seized the great bell that hung there, and rang it loudly. At this a porter opened a little lattice, and asked what great lord it might be who demanded admittance in so rude a fashion, to which Huon answered hotly that he was an envoy from the emperor Charles, and that if the porter refused him entrance he would have to answer for it to his own master.

At that the porter said that if the stranger was an infidel like themselves, the gates should be thrown open at once, but that, should he allow any Christian to enter, he would pay for it with his head.

‘But I am as much a Saracen as yourself,’ said Huon, who only thought of getting into Babylon and paid no heed to the lie he was telling, or to the dishonour of his words. Then the gates were opened wide, and he entered.

It was not till he was crossing the bridge which stood before the second gate that the wickedness of what he had done came upon him, and then he felt ashamed, and sorry, and frightened altogether. And how should he pass through the other three gates without again denying his faith and steeping himself in dishonour? He was about to turn back in despair, when he remembered the two good gifts of a giant whom he had overcome — a suit of armour which no sword could pierce, and a ring which would throw open all doors. So he showed the ring to the porters that guarded all the other three doors, and soon found himself in the garden of the palace.

Even the groves of palms, and the trees of delicious fruits, could not make him forget the lie he had uttered. Indeed, if he had wished to do so, he could not, for presently he came to a fountain beside which was written that no traitor should drink thereof on pain of being destroyed by the serpent that dwelt therein. At this Huon suddenly felt himself forsaken of all, and he sat down and wept bitterly.

‘O noble King Oberon, listen to me once more,’ he cried, and tremblingly blew his horn.

‘I help no liars,’ said the fairy king when the blast echoed through the forest, and, though Huon could not hear his answer, the silence soon told him what it was.

‘If he slays me, at least it will be soon over,’ he thought to himself, and, putting forth all his strength, he blew a fresh blast.

This time it was so loud that it reached the ears of the lord of Babylon, who was sitting at a feast in the Hall of Moonbeams. And he rose up, together with his nobles and their squires and their wives and daughters, and every one in the palace from the least to the greatest, and began to dance and sing. They sang and danced as long as the horn kept on blowing, and when it had ceased the ruler of Babylon called to his lords and bade them follow him into the garden, as of a surety some great enchanter must have strayed therein.

‘Seek him and bring him to me, wherever I be,’ commanded the emir; but the gardens were so large, and it took so long to find Huon, that the emir went back into the palace and laid himself down on a pile of soft cushions at the end of the hall.

By his side on a great carved chair was the king of a neighbouring country, who arrived hither only a few days before to beg for the hand of the emir’s fair daughter, the princess Esclaramonde, who was said to be the loveliest maiden in the whole world. To be sure, it was whispered among the courtiers that the princess did not look on him with a favourable eye, when she had watched his arrival from behind her lattice, and that more than once she had protested that she was too ill to leave her room when sent for by her father; but of course, if marriage was resolved upon, it would have to be.

Huon had heard talk of these things between his guards when they were marching through the gardens that were almost as big as a town, and up the long flight of marble steps that led to the palace. He said nothing; perhaps by this time he had learnt a little wisdom, but he knew who the man was whose dress was so rich and his air so proud, and before anyone even saw him lift his arm the king’s head was rolling in the dust.

For a moment all remained still, too astonished to speak. Then the emir recovered his wits, and ordered Huon to be carried off to a dungeon, and not to be let go or the guards lives would be forfeit. But quick as thought Huon held out his hand with the ring on it.

‘Do you know this?’ he said, and the king started back at the sight of it, and cried to the soldiers to let the prisoner go, for in that place he might do whatsoever he would. At this permission Huon turned to where the princess Esclaramonde was sitting by her father, and kissed her thrice.

The emir was not altogether pleased at this fashion of Huon’s, but he said nothing, and in a moment the knight told him how the emperor had sent him to pray the emir to become a Christian, otherwise he should proceed against him with a mighty host.

The emir laughed in scorn as he listened to Huon’s vain boast.

‘Fifteen envoys has he despatched on a like errand,’ answered he, ‘and all fifteen have I hanged. Right willingly should you make the sixteenth but for the ring which you wear. Tell me, I pray you, whence you got it?’

But when Huon confessed that it had been given him by the giant, the emir waxed more wroth than before, and ordered his guards to seize him and cast him into prison, which in the end they did, though he resisted them well by reason of the harness that was on him.

For a long space Huon lingered in that dark prison, and sad indeed would have been his lot had it not been for the secret visits of the princess Esclaramonde, who, the better to preserve his life, assured her father of his death.

At length, when the emir was sore beset by the army of the giant Agrapart, she deemed it a favourable time to betray to her father that Huon was still alive in his prison, and was ready to do battle with the giant if, as was usual in that country, the princess’s hand should be given to the victor. Both the emir and the giant agreed that their quarrel should stand or fall by single combat, and so the fight began.

Huon felt in his heart that there was more at stake than even the hand of the princess. He stood forth as the champion of Christendom amidst a host of pagans, and it behoved him to strike with all his strength. In the end the victory was his, and the giant Agrapart was overcome, but his life was spared on condition that he would serve the emir faithfully all his days, which solemn oath he took gladly. After that, Huon drew out the cup the fairy king had given him, and, having made the sign of the cross over it, it was filled with wine, and he drank of it. For he had long since repented of the lie he had told, and was clean again. Then the emir tried to drink also, but no wine would come.

‘You must forsake your false gods, and be a Christian such as I am,’ said Huon, ‘and if you like not fair words you shall see how an armed host pleases you;’ but, as was natural, the ruler of Babylon was not the man to be moved by such persuasions. He angrily bade Huon cease, and to speak to him no more on the matter or all the hosts of Charlemagne himself should not avail to save his head.

‘You will repent you too late,’ said Huon, and blew his horn.

At first the emir and his courtiers began to dance and sing wildly, they knew not wherefore, while in the wood far away Oberon heard the sound. ‘Huon, my friend, has great need of me,’ he thought to himself, ‘and his ill-doings have been punished enough, so I will pardon him, for there is not in all the world so noble a man. Therefore I wish myself at his side, with a thousand men behind me.’ And in another moment, no man could tell how, Oberon and his men were within the walls of Babylon. The guards of the palace fell before them on every hand, till at last they reached the emir himself.

‘He is yours to spare or to slay,’ said Oberon, and once more the knight gave the Paynim his choice.

‘Be a Christian or you die,’ said Huon, and the emir made answer:

‘I will never forsake my own.’ They were the last words he spoke, for his head rolled upon the floor. After that Huon cut off the emir’s beard and pulled out four of his teeth, and hid them in the beard of his old friend Gerames, who had lately returned to Babylon.

‘Now I must leave you,’ said Oberon, when these things were over. ‘See that in all ways you behave yourself as a good and true knight should do, and have no share in ill-doings. I bid you take ship and carry the princess Esclaramonde, your bride, into France, and guard her from all ills on the way. And if you do not that which I bid you, great evil shall happen unto you.’

But, alas! no sooner was the ship out of sight of land than the good counsels of

Oberon faded out of Huon’s mind, and he fell into many sins. The cup would not fill with wine, and Oberon was deaf to the blast of the horn. Then an awful tempest arose; the ship struck on a rock and was rent in pieces, and all were drowned save Huon and the princess, who were washed on an island. But even here they were not safe, for Huon was bound and tortured, and left under a tree, while Esclaramonde was carried away by the pirates who were dwellers on the isle.

Meanwhile, the knowledge of Huon’s plight had reached Oberon, and, angry though he was, he began to think how best to send help to him, when a monster of the sea, called Mallebron, who had before given him aid on his journey to Babylon, begged to be allowed to deliver him once more.

‘It pleases me well,’ answered Oberon, ‘that this caitiff Huon should suffer pain for the evil that he has wrought, but if you love him so much that for his sake you shall endure to wear the shape of a fish for twenty years longer I will grant you your wish on two conditions. Carry him away from the island and place him on the mainland, only never more let mine eyes light on him. Be careful also to bring back to me my golden cup, my horn, and my fairy armour, for it is long since he has shown himself unworthy of them.’

So Mallebron swam straightway to the island, and, finding Huon fast bound, as Oberon had said, he loosed him, and he stood on his feet. But when Huon heard the message of Oberon he was sore angered, and, forgetting his own misdeeds, complained bitterly of Oberon’s hardness of heart in commanding that the gifts he had given him should be yielded up again. But, wail as he might, he could not move Mallebron, who bade him farewell, and departed with Oberon’s treasures.

It were long to tell of Huon’s adventures after he had left the island. At one time he took service with a minstrel and was his varlet. At another time he was forced to play chess for the hand of a king’s daughter, but refused to marry her when he had won the game. Unknowingly, he once fought with Gerames, and only found out who he was in the course of the battle. He afterwards entered the city with him, and visited Esclaramonde, who was a captive in the palace, and right glad were they to meet. After that he and some French knights who had joined him were besieged in the castle by the Paynims, and were rescued by a French ship, which carried Huon and Esclaramonde and all the company on their way to Wana, together with much treasure which they had found in the castle.

But, happy though Huon felt on the road home again, he heard with wrath that Gerard, his brother, had persuaded the emperor that by now Huon must be dead, and that *he* was rightful heir to the duchy. It was so long since any tidings had been received of Huon — for none had fared that way — that some thought

Gerard spoke reasonably, and upheld his suit, which in the end was granted by Charles. And no sooner was the new duke invested with the lands than he began to oppress all his subjects, till the duchess his mother died of grief at the misery of her people.

‘He shall pay me for that,’ muttered Huon grimly.

There was one thing, however, that could not be delayed a moment more than was needed, and this was the marriage between Huon and Esclaramonde, for the princess had promised to become a Christian and to receive baptism at the hands of the pope. So they bade the captain put into the port nearest to Rome, and, taking horse, rode thither as fast as they might.

The pope was seated on his throne with his threefold crown on his head, holding counsel with his cardinals, when Huon and his company entered the hall two by two, and saluted humbly. At the sight of Huon leading Esclaramonde by the hand, the pope, who had once visited the court of the duke of Bordeaux, and remembered the face of Huon, rose up to greet him, kissed him on both cheeks, and bade him tell his adventures, and how he had fared.

‘Ill enough, good sir, and these others also,’ answered Huon; ‘but I have by grace won through it all, and I have brought the daughter of the great emir of the Paynims, whom I desire you should make my wife, after she has been baptized by your hands.’

‘Huon,’ said the pope, ‘all this pleases me right well to do, and it is my will that you tarry with me here this night.’

So they tarried; and the next day the wedding feast was held, and there were great rejoicings in the pope’s palace. And early the next morning, Huon and his wife and his friends took ship for Bordeaux.

But not yet were Huon’s trials ended. Gerard, his brother, had no mind to give up his lands and honours lightly, and many were the plots that he laid against Huon. Indeed, he not only contrived to throw the new-comers into prison, but prevailed on the emperor to journey himself to Bordeaux, to the intent that Huon should be put to death, which would have happened had it not been for the timely help of Oberon.

It was thus it came about.

The fairy king was seated at dinner in his palace in the wood, when the knowledge came to him that the emperor Charles had taken an oath to hang Huon ere he slept, and at the thought thereof he broke into weeping.

‘I have sore punished the sins he has committed,’ said he, ‘and great has been my wrath. But now it is time that I help him, or he will be gone from me. So I wish my table and all that is on it near to the emperor’s table, only about two feet higher. And I will that on my table be set my cup and horn and armour. And I wish that with me shall go a hundred thousand men, such as I am wont to have in battle.’

Great was the marvel of the emperor when this table appeared beside him, and he took it for an enchantment of duke Names; but Huon and Gerames and Esclaramonde, who were present at the feast with fetters on their wrists, knew that Oberon had come to their deliverance.

Soon the clank of swords was heard throughout the streets, and you could not see the stones for the armed men who stood on them.

‘See that none leave the gates,’ said Oberon, ‘and when you hear the blast of my ivory horn, come to me in the palace, and slay everyone you shall meet on the way’; and so saying he entered the hall, and many of his lords with him. Their dresses were the richest that had ever been seen, and on their necks they wore collars of precious stones. As the king passed by Charles, he knocked against him, so that his hat fell upon the ground.

‘Who is this dwarf who so rudely has shouldered me?’ asked the emperor, ‘and whence comes he? I will see what he will do, for, small as he is, he is the fairest creature that ever I saw.’

Leaving the emperor behind him, the fairy king came to the spot where Huon and the captives were standing, and he wished that the fetters might fall off their feet, and that they might be free men. Then silently he led them before Charles, and caused them to sit down at his own table, and bade the lords of the court drink out of the magic cup after Huon and Esclaramonde and Gerames had drunk out of it. But only for duke Names would the wine bubble up.

Afterwards Oberon ordered Gerard to confess his sins and his plots that he had plotted, which out of very shame he was constrained to do, and then Oberon prayed the emperor to command Gerard and those who had helped him to work ill to be hanged on the gallows which had been reared for Huon, and this was done also; and the emperor Charles and Huon, duke of Bordeaux, made reconciliation together.

‘Come to me in my city of Mommur four years from now, Huon,’ said Oberon, ‘and I will give you my realm and my dignity, for I know in truth I shall not long abide in this world. But beware, as you love your life, that you fail not to be with me at the day I have appointed, else I shall cause you to die an ill-death.’

When he heard, Huon stooped down and kissed his feet, and said:

‘Sir, for this great boon I thank you.’

HAVELOK AND GOLDBOROUGH

Once upon a time there lived in England a king called Athelwold, who ruled the land so well that everyone was rich and happy: or, if they were not, it was their own fault. His people all loved him dearly, and would do anything for him, and when he went to war there was no sovereign that could count on a larger following of stout brave men. He was quite a youth when he came to the throne, and at first all sorts of traitors and robbers from other countries took refuge in his kingdom, but Athelwold sought them out so carefully and punished them so severely that they soon betook themselves and their crimes elsewhere.

Now one thing grieved the king sorely. He had no son to sit on his throne after he was dead, to protect the poor and put down the lawless. And how was his little daughter, who was not yet fourteen, to keep order, or to uphold the laws?

‘If she were a woman grown, it might be different,’ he thought to himself, ‘for Goldborough sees clearly and acts promptly. But as yet she has little knowledge, and her ways are those of a child. And full well I know that my death is nigh at hand, and there is none to watch over her.’

Long the king pondered in his mind what he could best do for his daughter’s safety and the welfare of his people, and in the end he sent messengers with letters to all his earls and barons from Roxborough to Dover, bidding them come to his castle of Winchester as swiftly as they might, for he could no more mount his horse, neither could he swallow meat or pasties.

Sadly his vassals received the summons, for each loved him as his own father, and not one lurked behind. The king gave them a glad welcome, but they could not forbear shedding tears when they saw his weakness and heard his feeble voice. Athelwold let them have their way a little while, and then he said:

‘I am dying, as you see, and I have sent for you hither, to ask you all to tell me which of you will best guard my daughter when I am dead, till she has come to years when she can guard herself.’

And they answered as one man:

‘Earl Godrich of Cornwall.’

Then the king bade the priest bring the holy vessels, and earl Godrich swore on them that he would be faithful and true in peace and in war to Goldborough; and, further, that he would seek out a man who was better and fairer and stronger than all others to be her husband, so that the land might have peace, as in the days of Athelwold.

After the earl had sworn to fulfil what the king required of him, Athelwold made his will, and gave England into the keeping of Godrich. This done, he lay back in his bed, and that same morning he died in the arms of his daughter.

But bad indeed was the choice which king Athelwold's vassals had made when they proclaimed earl Godrich as the fittest guardian for the young princess. In the beginning, indeed, while Goldborough was still a child, everything went smoothly. The earl appointed justices and sheriffs to carry out the laws, and, though he took more heed to gather riches for himself than to protect his people, yet on the whole he governed well.

Thus six years passed away, and Goldborough was twenty years old. She had lived far away from the castle of Winchester, and had never seen her guardian since the day that her father had been buried, and, for his part, he had hardly remembered her, he was so busy making laws and amassing treasures. Still, other people recollected Goldborough, if he did not, and one Eastertide, when the princess's twentieth birthday was at hand, an old pilgrim chanced to stop at Winchester on his way to Canterbury. He had but lately passed through the town where Goldborough was living, and had many tales to tell of her fair and gracious ways.

Godrich let him talk, but his face was gloomy and he answered nought. But, though his tongue was silent, his heart was base and his thoughts were evil.

'Have I toiled all these years for nothing?' he said to himself, 'and shall England be ruled by a fool, a maiden? I have a son, a full fair knave; he shall have England and be king.'

So Goldborough was brought from her woods and gardens, and shut up in the castle of Dover, where none might visit her. And no company had she but her foster-sister, and an old woman who had been her nurse.

At the time when Athelwold ruled England there reigned in Denmark a king called Birkabeyn, who had three children, two girls named Swanborough and Helfled and a boy called Havelok. Birkabeyn was strong and healthy, and thought to live many years, when a wound in battle proved his death-blow. Like Goldborough, the children were all young, and he was forced to choose someone to protect them till they were of full age. The man on whom Birkabeyn's choice fell was his own close friend, who had served him all his life, and who, he thought, loved his children well. And so perhaps the earl would have done had not such power been given into his hands, but this he was not proof against. No sooner had the king died than he caused the three children to be cast into prison, where he murdered the two girls himself.

At the dreadful fate of his sisters, Havelok, who was the youngest, fell on his knees and implored the wicked earl to spare him.

‘If it is Denmark you want, it shall be yours,’ cried the boy, ‘and never will I seek to take it from you. Nay, give me a ship, and to-day I will leave the country for ever.’

Even the earl’s heart was for a moment softened by the child’s tears and prayers, and at first he thought that he would let him go, as it would be many years before he would be old enough to be an enemy. But then he remembered that, if Havelok died unwedded, he and his sons would be heirs to the crown, for he was the king’s cousin. However, he pretended to grant the child’s prayer, and bade him follow him down to the shore, where dwelt an old fisherman. Havelok wandered down to the water, and wondered which of the ships drawn up on the beach he should set sail in, and where he would go. He was still terrified at the death of sisters, and shook with fear as long as their murderer was in sight.

Meanwhile the earl was speaking to the fisherman, who stood at the door of his cottage, which was built just out of reach of the waves.

‘Grim,’ he said, ‘to-day you are my thrall, but to-morrow you shall be a free man if you will do my bidding. Take the boy that stands there, and throw him into the sea, that he drown. Fear nothing: the penalty will be mine, not yours.’

‘Your bidding shall be done,’ answered the fisherman, ‘though the deed is but little to my liking.’

‘So be it,’ said the earl, and went home to hold counsel with his family how best to take possession of the crown.

Grim took down a cord from a hook in the roof, and went out to the child, who screamed with terror as he drew near, but there was no one to help him, and Grim thrust a cloth in his mouth to stifle his cries, while he bound his hands behind his back with a cord. When this was done, he put the boy in a black bag, and carried him to his wife, who flung him on the floor, where he lay for many hours, thinking every moment that he would be thrown down a well or stabbed by a dagger.

At midnight, when all was still, and the men in the ships were sleeping soundly, Grim arose, and told his wife to kindle a fire and to light a candle.

‘Why, there is a light in the room already,’ said she, ‘and it seems to come from the farthest corner, and to shine as brightly as if it were the sun itself’; and with that she sprang out of bed and ran over the floor, calling to Grim to follow her.

And in truth it was as she had said, for round the bag which held the boy a brilliant light was shining.

‘If we touch him we shall rue it all our lives,’ she whispered to her husband; then, stooping, she cut the knots which held the bag, and drew out Havelok, who was well-nigh dead with fright and suffocation. Next she stripped him of his clothes, and on his shoulder she found the mark of a tiny cross, from which the light came.

‘He is born to be king,’ said Grim softly, ‘and surely it is he and no other who is the son of Birkabeyn, and who some day shall come to his own. It is easy to see that he will grow into a man, tall and strong, who shall come back from over the sea where I shall send him, and avenge himself on the traitor.’ Then Grim fell on his knees before Havelok and prayed his forgiveness.

‘You shall stay here awhile,’ he said, ‘till I can fit out a ship, and in it we will all set sail, you, and I, and my wife and my three sons, but it must be done in secret, lest the earl should come to know of it.’

So they gave Havelok bread to eat and milk to drink, and laid him in a bed in a dark corner, where no man could see him, and the next day Grim set out for the traitor’s castle to ask for the reward that had been promised him.

‘Your bidding is done, and I have come to claim my freedom,’ said Grim when he stood in the presence of the traitor. But the earl made answer:

‘Who is there to know what lies betwixt us? Go home, and be my thrall, as you have ever been.’

Full of rage though he was, Grim dared say no more, lest his head should pay forfeit; but the earl’s words had filled him with fear, and he hastened to get ready a ship and to fill it during the night with food enough to last them for three weeks. By that time, he thought, they would reach the shores of England.

When all was finished, Grim and his wife, his three sons and two daughters and little Havelok, stole away very early one morning before the sun was up, and set sail southwards. A north wind soon sprang up and drove him, in ten days, to the mouth of a great river called the Humber. Here he steered his ship on to the beach, and then they all got out and set up a tent, till they could look about for a little and see what best to do.

It was a wild place where they landed, and for many miles there was not even a hut to be seen, but Grim liked it well, and he built houses for himself and his family, and by-and-by more people came thither also, and a town was built and was called Grimsby, after Grim. But that happened afterwards.

Fish were plentiful at the mouth of the river — lampreys and sturgeon and turbot and great cod — and Grim and his sons were good fishers, both with net and line, and Havelok soon learned to fish too, and was as happy as any boy could be. Sometimes he stayed at home with the women while the others carried fish round the country in baskets.

Twelve years passed in this manner, during which Grim had prospered greatly, but he began to get old, and the long journeys with heavy panniers on his back tried him sorely. This Havelok perceived, and one day he spoke:

‘I am a man grown, and shall I sit at home idle mending nets while my father travels over the whole country-side carrying weights too heavy for him to bear? Not so! To-morrow I go forth, and my father shall take his seat by the fire, and shall mend the nets.’

Whatever Havelok said he did, and early the next morning he took the panniers on his shoulders, and started for the houses where Grim was wont to sell his fish. But soon, none could tell why, a bad time came, and there was no corn in the land, and no fish in the sea. And Grim felt pity in his heart for Havelok, who was young and strong, and needed more meat than other men. So one day Grim spoke:

‘Havelok, dear son, you have come upon evil days, and must stay with us no longer. Go to the city of Lincoln. It is a rich town, and there you may find work for all you need. But, woe is me! no clothes can I give you, save this old sail, which the women shall fashion into doublet and hose for you.’

The sail was soon cut and fashioned by Grim’s wife and daughters, but there was nothing to make into shoes, and Havelok walked into Lincoln barefoot, and he fasted from meat for two or three days; at length the earl’s cook took him into his service as porter, and his chief duty was to carry the earl’s fish into the castle. But the cook had many porters besides Havelok, and when the cry of ‘barmen’ was heard they all tried one to outdo the other in obtaining the pot in which lay the hot fish. However, Havelok was taller and stronger than the rest, and generally was able to thrust the others on one side.

Besides bearing the cauldron of fish, Havelok had many things to do. He had to fill a huge tub in the kitchen with water, and to cut wood for the fire, and to do anything the cook told him. And, whatever happened, he was full of mirth, and would jest and play with the children who ran about the back of the castle.

At last his clothes, which had been fashioned out of the old sail, fell into holes, and the cook, out of pity and liking, bought him some new ones, and when he put them on there was no man, be he who he might, that was fairer to see. Then folk began to notice that he was taller than any man in the castle, and that he was very strong. Very soon a chance came to him to prove his strength.

Godrich the earl — or the king, as he called himself — now held his court at Lincoln, and summoned a parliament to be held there to settle the affairs of the nation. They came in great companies, and everyone had a following, and so many were they that they were forced to dwell in tents outside the city walls. It was not long before they fell to wrestling and such sports.

For a while Havelok looked on, and bided his time. He took no part in the wrestling, though there was not a champion on the ground that he could not easily have overcome.

When they were tired of throwing each other, someone proposed that they should put the stone, and a large smooth piece of rock was chosen. Man after man came forward, but hardly one could raise it from the ground, far less cast it any distance from him. At this moment the cook strolled up and saw his scullion standing there.

‘It is your turn,’ he said to Havelok; ‘show them what you can do, for the honour of Lincoln,’ and Havelok obeyed him. He lifted the mighty stone to the height of his shoulder, and sent it spinning through the air.

‘Measure the cast,’ said the cook proudly; and when it was measured it was found to be twelve feet beyond the cast of any other man.

Little was talked of that day but the wonderful throw of the young scullion, and soon it reached the ears of the knights at court, and in time, Godrich himself. As he listened to the tale, there flashed across his memory the words of the dying Athelwold: ‘Find out the man who is better and fairer and stronger than any man in the world, and give him to be husband to my daughter.’ Was there any man living stronger than this Havelok? and could he himself be ill-spoken of if he should carry out Athelwold’s dying wish? So thought Godrich; but far back in his heart he knew that once Goldborough was wedded to a scullion there would be small chance of her becoming queen.

Next morning a knight mounted on a big bay horse, and attended by two men-at-arms, might have been seen riding southwards through the fair county of Lincoln, and in twenty days’ time he returned, bringing with him the princess. Godrich greeted her with tokens of great joy, and told her that, as her father had bidden him, he had found at last the fairest and strongest man in the world, and he should be her husband.

Goldborough listened quietly to his words, and when he had ended she looked at him.

‘Let him be as strong and fair as he may,’ she said, ‘but if he is not a king or a king’s son he is no husband for me.’

At this Godrich waxed wrath, and his whole body trembled with anger.

‘Your father bade me swear to him when he was dying that you should marry the strongest man in the world, and none other,’ cried he, ‘and, by the Rood, it is he you seek to disobey, and not me. The man who is to be your husband is the servant of my cook, and to-morrow we will have the wedding.’

The heart of Goldborough was filled with horror when she heard the fate that was in store for her, and she fell weeping on her knees before the earl to implore him the rather to let her enter a convent; but Godrich answered her nothing, and strode out of the hall.

The bells were ringing next day when Havelok woke, and before he was dressed a message came ordering him to go at once to the earl’s presence. He wondered for what cause he was wanted, for never yet had he had speech of the earl, and still more surprised was he to find Godrich clad in his most splendid robes, as if for a festival. But if Havelok was astonished at all this, he was nearly struck dumb by the words which he heard.

‘Master, will you take a wife?’ and the young man gazed at him in silence; for why should the ruler of all England take heed whether his scullion was wedded or not?

‘Will you take a wife?’ asked Godrich again, in tones of impatience; then Havelok found his voice.

‘No, by heaven I will not,’ he cried; ‘what should I do with a wife? I could neither feed, nor clothe, nor shoe her! For myself, I should have no clothes either, had it not been for the bounty of your cook.’

In his rage Godrich seized a thick staff and laid it across his scullion’s shoulder.

‘Promise me that you will wed her within an hour, or I will hang you on the nearest tree,’ he cried; and Havelok, who had no liking for death, consented.

His purpose thus gained with Havelok, the earl now summoned Goldborough, whom he threatened to burn if she withstood him. All night the princess had wept and pondered how to escape so dreadful a doom, but at last she took comfort in the thought that in accepting this husband, however lowly born he might be, she would be fulfilling her father’s wishes. So as soon as Godrich gave her a chance to speak she said she would resist him no longer.

Then Godrich for the first time in six years felt that he was indeed King of England.

‘You are a wise maiden,’ cried he, his face glowing with joy; ‘and, to show you how well I love you, I will give you much gold, and you shall have an archbishop to bless your marriage.’ And so it was done.

Both Havelok and his wife felt that they could stay in Lincoln no longer, and the next day they bought two horses and set forth for Grimsby. To Havelok’s great grief he found that the fisherman had died just before, after a few days’ illness, but his sons and daughters gave them a glad greeting, and bade them stay in their house, promising that they themselves would be their servants.

Weary with travel, Havelok soon went to bed, but Goldborough knelt praying before the window, when suddenly a bright light filled the room. She turned to see what it might be, and beheld it issuing from a cross on Havelok’s shoulder. While she gazed wondering, she heard a voice saying, ‘Goldborough, let sorrow depart from you, for your husband is no scullion, but the son of a king, and he shall rule over England and Denmark.’ At that her heart grew light again, and she kissed Havelok and woke him, and told him what the voice had said.

‘Let us sail at once,’ added she, ‘for who knows when Godrich the traitor may change his mind? And bid the sons of Grim sail with us.’

Goldborough’s counsel seemed good to Havelok, and he rose in haste and sought Grim’s sons, whom he found setting forth to fish. He begged them to wait, and to listen to his story, which Grim had always hidden from them, and when they heard it, they said that they would go with him, and help him to slay the murderer of his sisters and the robber of his crown.

‘You shall be rich men the day he dies,’ vowed Havelok; and the boat was made ready for sea.

A fair wind blew them to Denmark, and Havelok left his wife with his three foster-brothers, and betook himself to the house of Ubbe the earl, whom his father had loved dearly. He said no word as to his birth, but asked him leave to trade on his lands, offering a ring as earnest-money.

Ubbe looked at the ring, and then at the young man who gave it.

‘You look fitter to do a knight’s work than to buy and sell,’ he said, and Havelok answered:

‘That will come, fair sir, but I must first go softly. Meanwhile I have left my wife Goldborough under the care of her foster-brothers, and can tarry here no longer.’

‘Bring her hither,’ said Ubbe, ‘and dwell with her in this castle, and if no man has dubbed you knight I will take that upon me.’

And so it was done, and the heart of Goldborough rejoiced, for by this time she loved her husband dearly.

That same midnight Ubbe was wakened by a great light, which seemed to fill the castle. He rose from his bed, and went from room to room, and all were bright as day, though he could not tell why. Then he came to the room where Havelok and Goldborough lay asleep, and out of Havelok’s mouth came a flame like that of a hundred and ninety-seven candles. And on his shoulder was the cross of kingship, and that was shining too.

When Ubbe saw that, he knew that Havelok was indeed the son of Birkabeyn, his friend, and the rightful king of Denmark; and, waking the sleeping man, he bade him sit up and receive his homage. After that he sent for his lords, and commanded that they should swear fealty to their king. And when the lords had sworn, Ubbe summoned the people, and told them, what many had known before, that the earl had betrayed his trust, and that now he should pay forfeit of his wickedness.

Blithe were Havelok and Goldborough that day as they moved amidst the groups of men who shared in the sports which the people of Denmark ever loved, and once more Havelok cast the stone further than any one there could throw it. His first act, after he had been proclaimed king, was to make Grim’s three faithful sons barons with fair lands. Then he bid them go and seek the earl, and bring him back with them.

This was not done without a hard fight, for the earl and his men defended themselves stoutly; but at length he was bound and placed upon an old horse and carried before Havelok, who was waiting in the castle with his lords about him.

‘What judgment will ye pass on him, fair lords?’ asked the king.

‘That he may be hanged as beseems a murderer and a traitor, and that his head be planted over the chief gate of the town as a warning to all,’ they said with one voice, and this was done also.

For a while Havelok stayed in Denmark to see to the affairs of the kingdom, and then, leaving Ubbe to rule, he set sail for England with Goldborough his wife, and a large army, in many ships with high carved prows. Once again he landed at the mouth of the Humber, and his first act was to found a church in memory of Grim. Next, he placed his army in order of battle, and awaited the attack of his enemy. Godrich the earl had heard that he had come, and had hastily collected a great host, with which he marched upon Lincoln. The attack was begun by the English, and fierce was the fight. Many were killed, both of English and Danes. At last, just as the English were being beaten slowly back, Havelok and Godrich came face to face with each other. Bitterly the earl then rued the day when he had married Goldborough to the strongest man in the world, scullion though he were! Many times Havelok might have slain him, but such was not his purpose, and, taking a cord from his waist, he bound the traitor’s arms, and bade one of his knights ride and fetch Goldborough, whom he had left under a guard at a little distance.

When she drew near, Havelok commanded that a flag of truce should be waved, so that the fighting might cease. Then, taking his wife by the hand, he led her forward, and told her story to them all, and how Godrich the earl had wronged her. And the English fell on their faces and did obeisance, and vowed to serve her faithfully all the days of their lives.

‘And what is the law of England respecting a traitor?’ asked Havelok, when Goldborough had been proclaimed queen with trumpets and shouting.

‘That he be laid on an ass and burned at the stake,’ cried they. And this was done also.

After this, Havelok gave his two foster-sisters in marriage to great lords, and made the cook to whom he had owed his good fortune earl of Cornwall in place of the wicked Godrich. He left Ubbe to rule in Denmark, while he and Goldborough remained in England, but every two years he sailed across the sea to be sure that all went well in the country of his birth.

And for sixty years Havelok and Goldborough lived happily together and had many children, and wherever Havelok went, Goldborough went too.

CUPID AND PSYCHE

Once upon a time there lived a king who had three daughters. The two elder girls were very fair, and many were their suitors, but the youngest was so beautiful that it was whispered in the city that the goddess Aphrodite was not her equal in loveliness, and as she walked through the streets men touched their foreheads, and bowed low to the ground, as if Aphrodite herself had passed by.

Now it was not long since the shepherd Paris had given the goddess the golden apple, in token that neither on the earth nor even on Olympus was a woman to be found as fair as she. And when she heard of the honours paid to Psyche, she rose up in her wrath and sent a winged messenger for Cupid, her son.

‘Come with me,’ she said, when Cupid appeared before her, ‘I have somewhat to show you’; and without further speech the two flew through the air together, till they reached the palace where Psyche was sleeping.

‘That is the maiden to whom men pay the homage due to me alone,’ she whispered, while her grey eyes darted gleams like fire. ‘I have brought you hither that you may avenge me by pricking her with an arrow that will fill her heart with love for one of the basest of mortals. And now I must depart in haste, for Oceanos awaits me.’

Aphrodite vanished, but Cupid remained where he was, gazing on the sleeping maiden and confessing in his heart that those who paid her the honours due to his mother were not much to blame.

‘Never will I do you such wrong,’ he murmured, ‘as to mate you with some base wretch, who has no thought beyond the wine-cup. From me and my darts you are safe. But am I safe from yours?’ Then, fearing to stay any longer, lest his mother should wax wroth with him, he also took his way to the palace of Oceanos.

If Aphrodite had not been a goddess, and had known a little more about the hearts of men, she might not have envied Psyche so bitterly; for, though all men bowed down before her and worshipped her beauty, each felt that she was too far above him to woo for his bride. So that, while her sisters had homes and children of their own, Psyche remained unasked and unsought in her father’s palace.

At length the king grew frightened as months and years slipped by, and Psyche was past the age when Greek maidens left the hearth where they had grown into girlhood. He summoned some wise men to give him counsel, but they shook their heads, and bade him consult the oracle of his fathers. It was a three days’ journey to his shrine, and then no man knew when the oracle would speak, so the king took with him sheep and oxen, and skins of wine for himself and his followers.

Ten days later he returned to the city with bowed head and white face. The queen, with anxious heart, had been watching his arrival from the roof of the palace, and awaited him at the door of the women’s apartments.

‘What has happened?’ she said, as she greeted him; but he drew her on one side, where none might hear them.

‘The oracle has spoken,’ answered he, ‘and decrees that Psyche shall be left upon a barren rock till a hideous monster shall come and devour her. And it is for this that men have paid her honours which were the portion only of the gods! Far better had she been born with the hair of Medusa and the hump of Hephæstos.’

At these dreadful tidings the queen and her maidens broke into weeping, and when the news spread through the city no sounds but those of wailing were heard. Only the voice of Psyche was silent among them. She moved about as one that was sleeping, and indeed she felt as if the boat, with its grim ferryman, had already borne her across the Styx. So the days passed on, and one evening a white-clad priest arrived from the shrine to bid the king tarry no longer.

That night a sad procession left the gates of the city, and in the midst was Psyche, clad in garments of black, and led by her father, while her mother followed weeping behind. Singers wailed out a dirge, which was scarcely heard above the sobs of the mourners, and the torches burned dimly and soon went out.

The sun was rising when they reached the bare rock on top of a high mountain where the oracle had directed that Psyche should be left to perish. She made no sign when her father and mother took her in their arms for the last time, and, though they cried bitterly, she never shed a tear. What was the use? It was the will of the gods, and so it had to be!

Not daring to look back, the king and queen took their way home to their desolate palace, and Psyche leaned against the rock trembling with fear lest every moment the monster should appear in sight. She was very tired, for the road to the mountain had been long and stony, and she was likewise exhausted by her grief, so that slowly a deep sleep crept over her, and for a while her sorrows were forgotten.

While she thus slumbered, Cupid, unknown to herself, had been watching over her, and at his bidding Zephyr approached and played round her garments and among her hair. Then, lifting her gently up, he carried her down the mountain side, and laid her upon a bed of lilies in the valley.

While she slept, pleasant dreams floated through her mind, and her terrors and grief were forgotten. She awoke feeling happy, though she could not have told why, for she was in a strange place and alone. In the distance, through some trees, the spray of a fountain glimmered white, and she rose and walked slowly towards it. By the fountain was a palace, finer by far than the one in which Psyche had lived, for that was built of stone, while this was all of ivory and gold. Vast it was, and full of precious things, as Psyche saw for herself when, filled with wonder mixed with a little fear, she stepped across the threshold.

‘This palace is as large as a city,’ the maiden said aloud, as she passed from room to room without coming to an end of the marvels; ‘but how strange to find that there is no one here to enjoy these treasures, or to guard them!’ She started, as out of the silence a voice answered her:

‘The palace with all it contains is yours, lady. Therefore, bathe yourself, if you will, or rest your limbs upon silken cushions, till the feast is prepared, and we your handmaids clothe you in fine raiment. You have only to command, and we obey you.’

By this time all fear had departed from Psyche, and with gladness she bathed herself and slept. When she opened her eyes she beheld in front of her a table covered with dishes of every kind, and with wines of purple and amber hues. As before, she could see no one, though she heard the sound of voices, and when she had finished, and lay back on her cushions, unseen fingers struck a lyre, and sang the songs that she loved.

So the hours flew by, and the sun was sinking, when suddenly a veil of golden tissue was placed on her head, and at the same time a voice that she had not heard spoke thus:

‘Dip your hands in this sacred water’; and Psyche obeyed, and, as her fingers sank into the basin she felt a light touch, as if other fingers were there also.

‘Break this cake and eat half,’ said the voice again; and Psyche did so, and she saw that the rest of the cake vanished bit by bit, as if someone else were eating it also.

‘Now you are my wife, Psyche,’ whispered the voice softly; ‘but take heed to what I say, if you would not bring ruin on yourself, and cause me to leave you for ever. Your sisters, I well know, will soon seek you out, for they think they love you, though their love is of the kind that quickly turns to hate. Even now they are with your parents weeping over your fate, but a few days hence they will go to the rock, hoping to gather tidings of your last moments. It may chance that at last they may wander to this enchanted place, but as you value your happiness and your life do not answer their questions, or lift your eyes towards them.’

Psyche promised she would do her unseen husband’s bidding, and the weeks slipped swiftly by, but one morning she felt suddenly lonely and broke into wailing that she might never look on her sisters’ faces again, or even tell them that she was alive. All the long bright hours she sat in her palace weeping, and when darkness fell, and she heard her husband’s voice, she put out her arms and drew him to her.

‘What is it?’ he asked gently, and she felt soft fingers stroking her hair.

Then Psyche poured out all her woe. How could she be happy, even in this lovely place, when her sisters were grieving for her loss? If she might only see them once, if she might only tell them that she was safe, then she would ask for nothing more. If not — why, it was a pity the monster had not devoured her.

There was a silence after Psyche had poured forth her entreaties, and then the bridegroom spoke, but his voice seemed somehow changed from what it had been before.

‘You shall do as you wish,’ he said, ‘though I fear that ill will come of it. Send for your sisters if you please, and give them anything that the palace contains. But once again let me beseech you to answer nothing to their questions, or we shall be parted for ever.’

‘Never, never, shall that be,’ cried Psyche, embracing her husband with delight. And, whoever and whatever you may be, I would not give you up, even for the god Cupid. I will tell them nothing, but bid, I pray you, Zephyr, your servant, to carry them hither to-morrow, as he carried me.’

Next morning Zephyr found the two sisters seated on the rock, tearing their hair and beating their breasts with sorrow. ‘Psyche! Psyche,’ they cried, and the mountains echoed ‘Psyche! Psyche,’ but no other sound answered them. Suddenly they felt themselves gently lifted from the earth, and wafted through the air to the door of the palace, where stood Psyche herself.

‘Psyche! Psyche!’ they cried again, but this time with joy and wonder, and for a while they forgot everything else in the world. Then Psyche bade them tell her of her father and mother, and how the days had passed since she had left them, and she pictured to herself their gladness when they heard how different had been her fate from that which the oracle had foretold.

After her sisters had made known to her everything they had to tell, Psyche invited them to see the palace, and, calling to the voices, ordered them to prepare baths with sweet-smelling spices, and to set forth a banquet for her guests. At these tokens of riches and splendour, envy began to arise in their hearts, and curiosity also. They looked at each other, and the glances of their eyes promised no good to Psyche.

‘But where is your husband?’ asked the eldest. ‘Are we not to see him also?’

‘Yes,’ said the other, ‘you have not even told us what he is like, and our mother will assuredly wish to know that.’

Their questions recalled to Psyche’s mind the danger against which she had been warned, and she answered hastily:

‘Oh, he is young and very handsome — the handsomest man in all the world, I think. But he spends much of his time in hunting, and has now gone far into the mountains to chase the boar. It was thus that, feeling myself lonely, I sent a messenger for you. And now, come and choose what you will out of the treasure-chamber, for the hour of your departure draws nigh!’

The sight of gold and precious stones heaped up in the treasure-chamber only made the sisters more jealous than before; but their jealousy did not prevent their carrying off the most splendid necklaces they could find before Psyche summoned Zephyr to bear them unseen back to their own homes.

‘Why has Fortune treated her so differently from us?’ cried the eldest, before they were out of sight of the palace. ‘Why should *she* have boundless riches, and be married to a man who is young and handsome, and own slaves who fly through the air as if they were birds? Far indeed are the days when she sat in our father’s house, and no suitor came to woo! But, though she was lonely and forlorn enough in the city, here she is treated as if she were a goddess, while I am linked to a husband whose head is bald, and whose back is a hump!’

‘My plight is worse than yours,’ groaned the other sister, ‘for I have to spend my time nursing a man who is always ill and rarely suffers me to leave his side. But do not let us flatter her pride by telling our father and mother of the honours Fate has heaped on her. Rather let us consider how best to humble her and bring her low.’

Meanwhile night had fallen, and Psyche’s husband came to her side.

‘Did you take heed to my warnings,’ asked he, ‘and refuse to answer the questions of your sisters?’

‘Oh yes,’ cried Psyche; ‘I told them nothing that they wished to know. I said that you were young and handsome, and gave me the most beautiful things in the world, but that they could not see you to-day, for you were hunting in the mountains.’

‘So far it is well, then,’ sighed he; ‘but remember that even at this moment they are plotting how they may destroy you, by filling your heart with their own evil curiosity, so that one day you may ask to see my face. But recollect, the moment you do this I vanish for ever.’

‘Ah, you do not trust me,’ sobbed Psyche; ‘yet I have shown you that I can be silent! Let me prove it again by suffering Zephyr to bring my sisters once more, and then never, never will I crave another boon from you.’

For long her husband refused to grant her what she asked, but at last, wearied by her tears and prayers, he told her that this once she might bid Zephyr bring her sisters to her. Eagerly they ran through the garden into the palace, and greeted Psyche with warm embraces and gentle words, while she on her part did everything she could think of to give them pleasure. As before, she bade them choose whatever they most desired, and when they had returned from the treasure-chamber and were eating fruit under the trees by the fountain the elder sister spoke:

‘How it grieves me to see you the victim of such deceit, and how I long to be able to ward off the danger!’

‘What do you mean by such words?’ asked Psyche, turning pale. ‘No one is deceiving me, and no goddess could be happier than I.’

‘Ah! you do not know — I dare not tell you,’ gasped the other in broken accents. ‘Sister, you try; I cannot shape the words.’

‘It is hard, but my duty demands it of me,’ said the second sister. It is — oh, how shall I tell it? — your husband is not such as you think, but a huge serpent whose neck swells with venom, and whose tongue darts poison. The men who work in the fields have watched him swimming across the river as darkness falls, at the moment that he goes to seek you!’

Their groans and sobs, no less than their words, convinced Psyche, who fell straightway into the pit they had digged for her.

‘It is true,’ she said with a trembling voice, ‘that never yet have I beheld my husband’s face, and that many times he has warned me that the moment my eyes light upon him he will abandon me for ever. His words were always sweet and gentle, and his touch hardly resembles the skin of a serpent. It is not easy to believe; but yet, if you know, I pray you, of your love for me, to come to my aid in this deadly peril.’

‘Ah, hapless one, it is for that we are here,’ answered the elder; ‘and this is what you must do. This very night, fill a lamp full of oil, and cover it with a dark cloth, so that not a ray of light can be seen; then take a sharp knife and hide it in your bosom. After the serpent is sound asleep, steal softly across the room, and snatch the cloth from the lamp, so that you may see where to strike home, for if he should wake before you have cut off his head your life will be forfeit.’

Having said this, they both hurriedly embraced their sister, and were wafted home on the wings of Zephyr.

Left alone, Psyche flung herself on the ground, and for many hours lay trying to subdue her misery. At one moment she thought that she could not do it — that her sisters might be wrong after all. But her faith in them was strong, and as night approached she rose up to do their bidding.

So well did she feign happiness that her husband heard no change in her voice as she bade him welcome, and, having travelled far that day, he soon laid himself down on the couch and fell sound asleep. Then Psyche seized the lamp and snatched off the covering, but by its light she saw stretched on the cushions, not a huge and hideous serpent, but the most beautiful of all the gods, Cupid himself.

At this sight her knees knocked together with surprise, and she gave a step backwards, and the lamp, trembling in her hand, let fall a drop of burning oil on Cupid’s shoulder. He sprang to his feet, and with one reproachful look he turned, and would have flown away had not Psyche grasped his leg, and was borne up with him into the air, till at length her strength gave way and she fell to the ground, where for some time she remained unconscious.

When her senses came back, she was so miserable that she sought eternal forgetfulness in a neighbouring stream, but the river, in pity, carried her gently along and placed her on a bank of flowers. Finding that even the river would have none of her, she rose up, and resolved to wander night and day through the world till she should find her husband.

The first spot at which she halted was a temple on the top of a high mountain, where, to her surprise, she saw blades of wheat, ears of barley, sheaves of oats, scythes and ploughs, all scattered about in wild confusion. Never before had she seen such disorder about a temple, and, stooping down, she began to separate one thing from another and to place them in heaps.

While she was busy with this, a voice cried to her from afar:

‘Unhappy girl, my heart bleeds for you! Yet even while you are pursued by the wrath of Aphrodite, you can labour in my service. May you find some day the rest that you deserve! But now, quit this temple, lest you draw down on me the anger of the goddess.’

With despair in her soul, Psyche wandered from one place to another, not knowing and not caring whither her feet might lead her. At length she was tracked and seized by one of Aphrodite’s attendants, who dragged her by the hair into the presence of the goddess herself. Here she was beaten and scourged, both by whips and by cruel words, and, when every kind of suffering had been heaped on her, Aphrodite took a number of bags containing wheat, barley, millet, and many other seeds, and, tumbling them all into one heap, bade her separate and place them each in its own bag by the evening.

Psyche stood staring where Aphrodite had left her, not even trying to begin a task that she knew to be hopeless.

She would certainly be killed, thought she, but, after all, death would be welcome; and she laid her weary body on the floor and sought sleep. At that moment a tiny ant, which had been passing through the storehouse on his way to the fields, and saw her terrible straits, went and fetched all his brothers, and bade them take pity on the damsel, and do the work that had been given to her.

By sunset every grain was sorted and placed in its own bag, but Psyche waited with trembling the return of Aphrodite, as she felt that nothing she could do would content her.

And so it happened, when Aphrodite entered, and thirsting for vengeance, cried with glee, ‘Well, where are my seeds?’ Psyche pointed silently to the row of bags against the wall, each with its mouth open, so that at the first glance it could be seen what kind of seed it contained. The goddess grew white with rage, and screamed loudly, ‘Wretched creature, it is not your hands that have done this! you will not escape my anger so easily’; and, tossing her a piece of bread, went away, locking the door behind her.

Next morning the goddess bade one of her slaves bring Psyche before her.

‘In yonder grove,’ she said, on the banks of a river, feed sheep whose wool is soft as silk and as bright as gold. Before night I shall expect you to return with as much of this wool as will make me a robe. And I do not think that you will find any one to perform your task this time!’

So Psyche went towards the river, which looked so clear and cool that she stepped down to the brink, meaning to lay herself to rest in its waters. But a reed sang to her, and its song said:

‘O Psyche, do my bidding and fear nothing! Hide yourself till evening, for the sheep are driven mad by the heat of the sun, and rush wildly through the bushes and thickets. But when the air grows fresh they sink exhausted to sleep, and you can gather all the wool you want from the branches.’

Then Psyche thanked the reed for its counsel and brought the wool safely back to the goddess; but she was received as before with scornful looks and words, and ordered to go to the top of a lofty mountain and fill a crystal urn from a fountain of black water which spouted from between walls of smooth rock. And Psyche went willingly, thinking that this time surely she must die.

But an eagle which was hovering over this dark and awful place came to her aid, and taking the urn from her he bore it in his beak to the fountain, which was guarded by two horrible dragons. It needed all his strength and skill to pass by them, and indeed it was only when he told them that Aphrodite needed it to give fresh lustre to her beauty that they ceased to snap at him with their long fangs.

Joyfully the eagle bore back the urn to Psyche, who carried it back carefully in her breast. But Aphrodite was still unsatisfied. Again and again she found new errands for Psyche, and hoped that each one might lead her to her death, though every time birds or beasts had pity on her.

If Cupid had only known his mother's wicked schemes, he would have contrived to stop them and to deliver Psyche. But the wound on his shoulder where the burning oil had fallen took long to heal, and for some time he was in ignorance of all that Psyche was suffering. At last, however, the pain ceased, and his first thought was to visit Psyche, who, nearly fainting with joy at the sound of his voice, poured forth all that had happened since that dreadful night which had destroyed her happiness.

'Your punishment has been sore,' said he, 'and I have no power to save you from the task my mother has set you. But while you fulfil this I will fly to Olympus, and beseech the gods to grant you forgiveness, and, more, a place among the immortals.'

And so the envy and malice of Aphrodite and the wicked sisters were brought to nought, and Psyche left the earth, to sit enthroned on Olympus.

SIR BEVIS THE STRONG

Many hundreds of years ago there lived in the South of England an earl of Southampton, whose name was Guy. He spent most of his life in defending his country from all sorts of invaders who sailed from beyond the seas, and it was not until he was getting old that he had time to think of a wife. Then he made a very foolish choice, for he asked in marriage the daughter of the king of Scotland, who had already plighted her troth to the young and handsome Sir Murdour.

But though Sir Murdour was brother to the emperor, the Scottish king preferred to wed the princess to the stout earl of Southampton, whom he had known of old, and his word was law to all his court. So the bride journeyed with a great following to the south of England, where the marriage took place, and the next year a baby was born that was called Bevis.

Now, though her husband was good and kind, and gave her the most beautiful dresses and horse-trappings in the whole kingdom, the princess hated him with a deadly hatred, just because he was not Sir Murdour. And when her son Bevis was seven years old she determined to seek the help of her old lover, and entice the earl to his death.

To this end she made use of her charms and beauty to gain over to her side some of her husband’s most trusted lords, and when this was done she chose out a faithful messenger to ride north to Sir Murdour.

‘Bid him,’ she said, ‘to come without fail on the first of May to the great forest that lies by the sea. Thither will I take care that my lord shall fare, with but a small company, and — the rest Sir Murdour can grasp. Only, I should like to see a bleeding head, in proof that all has gone as I wish.’

Sir Murdour did not delay when he heard this message, but called together a troop of armed knights, and set sail with them for the forest on the water over against Southampton. They landed late one night, and Sir Murdour bade his foster-brother go secretly to the palace, and let the countess know that he was close at hand. After that he posted his men in deep dells and behind trees, and awaited his enemy.

The sun was scarcely up before the countess roused her husband, who was sleeping heavily after a day’s hunting.

‘Awake,’ she cried, shaking his shoulder, ‘I am feeling like unto death, and I have dreamed that this day I shall surely die if I eat not of the flesh of a wild boar of the forest.’

At these woeful tidings the earl sprang from his bed, and in a short while he was riding with a pack of hounds and a few attendants towards the part of the forest where the wild boars were most plentiful. The dogs were soon racing down a track, having scented a boar, and the earl was preparing to follow when Sir Murdour and his men leapt out from their hiding-places and suddenly surrounded him.

‘I am here at your lady’s bidding,’ said the knight; ‘she has begged me to send her your head, and I mean to do it.’

The earl’s face grew pale at these dreadful words. He did not fear any man alive, but the thought of his wife’s baseness took the strength from his arm and the courage from his heart. Still, for the honour of his name and knighthood, it behoved him to fight his best, though his only weapon was a boar spear. The battle lasted long, but at length the earl’s horse was killed under him, and he fell to the ground. In another moment Sir Murdour struck his head from his shoulders, and, placing it on a spear, he ordered his squire to bear it to the castle.

Bevis, who was standing on the battlements, saw this terrible sight, and seeking out his mother he vowed vengeance against the murderer. Though he was only seven years old, his strength was so great that the countess felt that her life would not be safe if once he discovered the truth, so she ordered his uncle Saber to take the boy to some distant place and there to slay him. Saber did not dare to disobey. He took Bevis with him to a small hut near the forest, and, killing a pig, sprinkled the child’s garments with the blood and sent them to his mother. Afterwards he dressed Bevis in the clothes of a peasant, and, putting a stout staff in his hands, set him to watch a flock of sheep.

The boy did what he was told without a word, but the sheep wandered far that day, and by-and-by he found himself in sight of his father’s castle. Then a sudden fury filled his soul, and, leaving the sheep to go whither they would, he ran swiftly down the hill, and never stopped till he reached the castle gate. Here the porter, to whom the countess had given much gold, tried to stop him, but Bevis only knocked him down with his cudgel, and on into the hall he went, and there he beheld his mother and Sir Murdour feasting at the high table.

‘Traitors and murderers!’ cried he, and lifting his staff, he dealt three fierce blows at the head of Sir Murdour, which felled him to the ground, where he lay unconscious. Then the boy turned and walked out of the hall, none daring to stop him.

He told his uncle what had happened, but Saber was never ready of counsel, and before he had time to think what was best the countess entered the hut attended by two knights, whom she ordered to seize Bevis, and sell him as a slave to any captain in the port of Southampton who might be sailing that night for the lands of the Infidel.

The captain of the ship was a kind man and took a liking to the boy whose fate was so hard, and when a fair wind blew them into the harbour of Heathenesse he bade the child bear him company to the palace. The king, whose name was Ermyn, thought he had never seen any boy of his age so tall and beautiful, and asked him many things as to his past life. These Bevis answered with so much truth and spirit that Ermyn was persuaded that he would grow into a man much above the common, and declared that he would make him heir to his throne and wed him in due course to his daughter Josyan, if he would only give up Christianity and become a convert to the faith of Heathenesse. But this Bevis swore he would never do.

The good captain feared greatly that the king might be angered by Bevis’s refusal, but instead Ermyn seemed to think that the boy, who would not break his vows lightly, was fain to turn out a true and loyal man. So he smiled, and told Bevis that he would make him his chamberlain, and when he was of age to be a knight, he should be his banneret.

Eight years passed by, spent by Bevis in learning all the feats with the sword and spear for which the knights of Heathenesse had long been famous. His life was smooth and pleasant, and it was only when he had counted fifteen summers that he had his first adventure.

It was Christmas Day, and Bevis was riding with a large company of Paynim knights through the great plain that surrounded the city. The talk ran upon the many lion chases they had held in that very place, when suddenly one of the knights who had journeyed both to Rome and Jerusalem turned to Bevis, who happened to be next him, and asked if he knew what day it was.

‘No,’ answered Bevis; ‘why should I? Is it different from any other day?’ and the knight laughed and told him he was but a poor Christian. This angered Bevis, who said that, as he had lived among heathens since he was seven years old, it was not likely he should have learnt anything about his faith, but that in defence of it he was ready to tilt with the knights one after the other and hoped that in so good a cause he might prevail.

‘Listen to the crowing of this young cock’ cried one of the party, highly wroth at the answer of Bevis; and indeed so furious were they that they set upon him at once and dealt him many wounds before the boy was able to defend himself. Then he snatched a sword from the man nearest him, and laid about him so hardly that in a short time they were all stretched dead upon the ground, while their horses galloped back to their stalls. Bevis himself, suffering great pain, went quietly back to his room in the palace and waited to see what would come next.

When king Ermyn heard the news, and how so many of his best knights had been put to death by his page, he was beside himself with fury, and gave orders that Bevis should be instantly beheaded. But Josyan, his daughter, pleaded so hard for the young page that the king agreed to hear his story, and when he had heard it he not only forgave the youth, but told Josyan, who was skilled in leechcraft, to heal his wounds. And in a little while Bevis was raised to higher favour than ever by slaying a boar which had carried away and eaten several children on the outskirts of the city.

By this time the fame of the princess's beauty had spread far and wide, and the king of Damascus sent an embassy to the court of king Ermyn, praying that she should be given him to wife.

'But,' added he, 'in case you do not well consider my suit, I would have you know that I will gather together a great army, and lay waste your land with fire and sword. So think well before you refuse me.'

King Ermyn was little used to language of this sort, and for all answer collected twenty thousand men, whom he commanded to be in readiness. Next, at the request of his daughter, he dubbed Bevis a knight, and the princess herself clad him in a richly inlaid helmet, and buckled on him the good sword Morglay. As a parting gift she bestowed on him a swift white horse called Arundel, and very proud was Bevis as he rode away at the head of the army beside the commander.

It were too long to tell of all the deeds wrought by Sir Bevis during the fight with the king of Damascus, whose standard-bearer, the giant Radyson, he slew at the very outset of the battle. In the end, and owing in a great measure to the valour of the young knight, the Damascenes owned themselves beaten, and their king remained a captive in the hands of Sir Bevis.

'I will spare your life on one condition only,' said the victor, 'and that is that you shall swear fealty on my sword to king Ermyn, and acknowledge yourself to be his vassal.'

The king's heart was sore when he heard what was demanded of him, for never before had he been vanquished in war. Still, he saw that there was no help for it, and he took the oath that Bevis required of him, after which he was suffered to depart into his own country.

King Ermyn could not do enough honour to Sir Bevis when he came back to the palace, and, as was the custom, he bade his daughter rid him of his heavy armour, to put on him gorgeous robes, and to wait on him when he sat down to table. Sir Bevis was half glad and half ashamed to receive these services at the hands of the princess, but Josyan heard her father's orders right willingly, and led him away to fulfil them at once.

The first thing she did was to order her slaves to prepare a bath for him, and to make it soft with all manner of sweet-smelling spices. Then she summoned him to her chamber, where she had prepared food and wine, and, like a wise woman, spoke nothing till he had eaten and drunk as much as he would. When he had satisfied his hunger, he flung himself to rest on a pile of cushions, and Josyan seated herself near him. Taking one of his hands in hers, she said softly:

‘Oh, Bevis, little do you know what I have suffered these many months from the love I bear you! Indeed, so grievous have been my pains that I marvel that I am alive this day. But if you return not my love, of a surety I am a dead woman.’

Now Bevis had long loved the princess in secret; but his heart was proud, and, besides, he feared to seem that he had betrayed the king’s trust. So he answered:

‘Fair Josyan, I thank you for your gentle words, but it would ill become me to take advantage of them. There is no prince in all the world, be he who he may, who would not crown you queen, and hold himself honoured. For me, I am but a poor knight, and one from a strange land, to whom your father has shown more favour than I deserve. It is not thus I should repay his kindness.’

These words struck a chill through Josyan. All her life she had never known what it was to be denied anything she asked for, and she fell to weeping.

‘I would sooner have you, poor as you are, than the greatest king alive,’ sobbed she; but when Bevis sat still and kept silence her grief turned to wrath.

‘Am I, who might reign over any of the kingdoms of the earth, to be flouted by you, a mere churl? Out of my chamber this instant, and betake yourself to working in the fields, for they are fitter setting for one of your birth than a lady’s bower!’

‘Damsel,’ said Bevis, ‘you wrong me. No churl am I, but the son of an earl, and a knight withal. And now farewell, for I shall depart into my own country.’

For a short time Josyan’s anger held sway in her heart, and even the death of Bevis would hardly have moved her, but when she heard that Bevis was actually preparing to leave the city her pride broke down, and she sent a messenger to implore his forgiveness. But she had to learn that Bevis was no less proud than she, and he dismissed the messenger with a ring that the king had given him, merely saying that he had already bid good-bye to the princess Josyan.

Then Josyan saw that if she would keep Bevis at her side she must humble herself to the dust, so she went herself to the chamber of Bevis, and implored him to forget her hasty words, and not to forsake her. Nay, she would even promise to give up her own faith and to become a Christian.

At this proof of her devotion, Sir Bevis’s resolve gave way, and he told her that he had loved her always, but feared that her father would never accept him as a son-in-law. Josyan made light of this obstacle, and declared that her father would never refuse her anything she had set her heart upon; but Bevis was not so hopeful, and soon events proved that he was right.

Two knights whom Bevis had rescued from captivity and had brought to the palace overheard the vows exchanged between him and Josyan, and her offer of being baptized. Hating and envying the good fortune of Bevis, they sought out the king, and told him that his daughter was about to give up the faith of Mahomet, and to fly from the country with a Christian knight.

These tidings were grievous to king Ermyn. He could not forgive his daughter, and yet, after all the deeds he had done, the people of the city would not suffer Bevis to be punished. What was he to do? The more he thought of it the more bewildered he felt; and all the while the two traitors stood patiently by, knowing well what was passing through the king’s mind.

At length he turned, as they were sure he would, and asked their counsel, which was quite ready.

‘Let your Majesty write a letter to King Bradmond, as from liege lord to vassal, and let Sir Bevis be the bearer of it, and bid the king put the knight to instant death.’ So said the traitors, and, though the device was neither new nor honourable, it would serve. Bevis was summoned to the king’s presence, and listened carefully to all he was told. Joyful was he at being chosen for this mission, which he thought betokened special favour, though his spirits were somewhat damped by the assurance that he must leave his sword Morglay and Arundel, his swift horse, behind him.

‘It were an insult to the king to approach him on a war-horse, and brandishing the sword that has slain so many of his men,’ said Ermyn. ‘You shall ride the ambling palfrey on which I make my progress through the city; and, as for weapons, you will have no need of them.’ So Arundel remained quietly in his stable, while Bevis unwillingly jogged along at the slow pace of the palfrey. But in one thing he disobeyed king Ermyn, for under his tunic was hidden a short sword.

On the way he fell in with a pilgrim, whose offer to share his dinner Bevis accepted gladly. They soon began to tell each other their adventures, and, to his surprise, Bevis found that the pilgrim was his own cousin, the son of his uncle Saber, and that he had come so far with no other purpose than to seek out the young knight and to inform him of all that had happened during the years that had passed since his father’s death.

The vassals of the old earl, said the pilgrim, had been so ground down by the wicked Sir Murdour and his wife, that they had risen up as one man, and, headed by Saber, had defended the Isle of Wight against the usurper. But it was greatly to be desired that the young earl should return home as fast as possible, and attack Murdour in his castle of Southampton, and for this reason had he set forth to seek him.

Bevis's heart and his blood waxed hot with the listening, but he did not wish that the pilgrim should learn just then who he was, so he answered that the young earl was his friend and brother, and that on his part he would promise speedy help to the faithful vassals fighting in his cause. With this they parted, and Bevis pursued his way to Damascus.

On entering the gates of the city he found himself in the midst of a large crowd, who were making ready a sacrifice to a wooden idol, which was carried in a golden car. This roused the wrath of the young man, and, forcing his way through the multitude, he seized the idol and flung it into the mud, calling loudly on the people to go and help their god, since he could not help them. In an instant a thousand arms were raised against the stranger who had dared to insult the majesty of their idol, and, though Bevis drew his short sword and defended himself bravely, he could not have held out against such numbers had not the palace gates been close behind. Still fighting, Bevis entered the gates, and drawing the letter from his tunic ordered the guards to take him at once into the presence of the king.

Bradmond read the letter with joy, as he felt that his enemy was delivered into his hands, and the tidings of the attack on the idol hardened his heart still more. Without further delay he bade the guards take Bevis and carry him off to a deep dungeon under the palace where lived two huge dragons, who would be fain to eat him forthwith.

'And I do this,' said Bradmond, 'not to avenge my own wrongs, but to perform my oath of duty unto my sovereign lord king Ermyn. For this is the service he requires of me, in the letter that you yourself have brought.'

Ropes were tied under Bevis's arms, and he was lowered down, down, down, till he could see nothing but four fiery eyes which glared furiously up at him. Soon after his hands knocked against something hard and rough, which moved under his touch. At the same moment his feet touched the bottom, and he found himself standing in a large cave with a feeble ray of light coming from the far end. By this he dimly perceived two horrible dragons, but for a moment they were still, and did not move to attack him.

Bevis made use of the short time allowed him to feel about if perchance he could find some weapon with which to defend himself instead of the short sword which had been taken from him, and he came upon a stout staff, thrown into one corner, and by the aid of this he held those two monsters at bay for a whole night and day. By this time the dragons, who had been weakened by a slothful life and the flesh of many prisoners, were too weak to resist any longer, and fell an easy prey to the strong arm of Bevis.

Of course it was not long before the men who had charge of the dungeon discovered that the dragons were dead, but they were so filled with admiration of Bevis's courage that they kept his counsel, and let down into his prison daily a good portion of wheat cake, so that he managed to keep himself alive. Bradmond the king very soon forgot all about him, so that the soldiers did as they pleased.

Thus some years passed away.

At the end of that time one of the gaolers died, and the other was sent to a distant city. The two men who took their places knew nothing of Bevis, save that he was a captive in the dungeon, and that as long as he was alive it was part of their duty to feed him every day. 'Let us murder him,' said one man to another; 'it is small use to feed a man in a dungeon who is forgotten by himself and all the world'; so one of them fastened a ladder of ropes to the side and climbed down it, in the hope of finding an easy victim lying on the ground. Instead there was a man as strong as ten other men, who leapt swiftly aside to avoid the blow of his sword, and struck him dead to the ground with a blow of his fist. The other gaoler, hearing no noise from below, crept down the ladder to see what had taken place; but as soon as he was on the floor of the dungeon Bevis gave a mighty spring which snapped the chain that had bound him to the rock, and thrust him through with the sword he had taken from his fellow. Then, when, as far as he could reckon, the night was nearly gone, he climbed up the ladder, and stood once more a free man.

At the first gleam of dawn, Sir Bevis stole out to the stables, where the king's horses were being groomed. Peeping through a hole, he discovered a room hung round with suits of armour, and, getting in through the roof, he took down a coat of mail, a helmet, and a shield, while he chose out a good sword from a pile standing in a corner. Then entering the stable, he cut off the heads of several of the men, while the rest fled out of reach of the strange being with the long hair and strong arm. When they were all gone Bevis brought out the best horse in the stable, and rode out across the drawbridge into the world again.

Of course, directly he was missed, king Ermyn sent his best knights in pursuit of him, but in one way or another Sir Bevis got the better of them all, and made his way to Jerusalem, where, for the first time since he was seven years old, he entered a Christian church. But so anxious was he to hear some tidings of Josyan, that he remained only a short time in the city, and soon rode on again along the road to her father's court.

On the way he met with a young knight who had once been his squire, and who told him a sad tale. Josyan, he said, had been asked in marriage by the most powerful and fierce of all the kings of Heathenesse, but she steadily refused to wed any man who was not a Christian like herself. This so enraged her father that he gave leave to her suitor to do with her as he would; so king Inor, for so was he named, carried her off to his own kingdom, and shut her up in a tower till she should come to a better mind, and be ready to return to her old faith.

‘In her tower she is still,’ continued the knight; ‘but if you would have speech with her it is first needful to persuade the king to go on some distant mission. And first you must put on a disguise, for at any moment those may come by who knew you well at the royal palace.’

This advice Bevis followed; he hid himself with his friend behind a clump of bushes till a pilgrim passed on the way to Jerusalem. The young knight then left his hiding-place, and prayed the pilgrim for the sake of charity and a dole of money to be given in alms that he would exchange clothes with Sir Bevis. To this the pilgrim readily agreed, and soon Bevis was arrayed in a long mantle, carrying a staff in his hand.

‘Now go and stand about the door of the palace, and when the king comes from hunting he will see you, and will ask you where you come from, and what news is stirring in the world. And you must say to him that you have lately journeyed from Syria, from the kingdom of his brother, and that the land has been overrun by strange armies, and that the country is in a great strait. When he hears that he will of a surety hasten to his aid, and then you will be able to escape with Josyan without danger of losing your head.’

Now Inor the king had placed Josyan under the charge of Boniface, the chamberlain, who had been long in the service of her father, and in order the better to help her had pretended to approve of the evil way in which she was treated. Directly he heard of the plot he began to play his part towards its fulfilment, and in the evening of the day on which the king had departed he managed to give the steward, who had been left to rule the city, such a powerful sleeping draught that he did not wake for twenty-four hours. Meanwhile Sir Bevis chose out the best suit of armour in the king’s armoury and the fastest horse in his stable; and when night fell Josyan stole softly down from her tower, and, mounting Arundel, whom she had brought with her from her old home, rode out of the gates by the side of Bevis. Boniface followed close after them. He did not dare to stay behind, as he knew that his head was forfeit.

But as things happened he might as well have remained where he was, for the very next day, when Bevis was hunting, two lions came up to the cave where Josyan and her chamberlain lay concealed. Without an instant’s pause they devoured Boniface and his horse, which was tethered outside, though Josyan’s beauty so overawed them that they bent their heads humbly in her presence.

The next adventure that befell Sir Bevis was a battle with a giant thirty feet high, who had been sent by the steward to catch the two runaways. During the fight he was sore wounded, and in the end owned Bevis to be his master, and begged to be allowed to take service with him. Sir Bevis agreed, though somewhat doubtfully, but soon found reason to rejoice in his new page, for by his help he was able to turn some Saracens out of a ship which bore them all with a fair wind to the city of Cologne.

Here he found his uncle, the bishop; who was brother to his father and to Sir Saber, and, leaving Josyan in safety under his care, he set sail with a hundred knights for Southampton. Before landing he sent one of his most trusty squires for tidings as to how fared Sir Murdour, and received for answer that the quarrel still raged betwixt him and Sir Saber. Then Bevis went on shore with all his knights, and bade one of them tell Sir Murdour that they had sailed from France in quest of service, and that if he so willed they would fight under his banner, but, if not, they would offer themselves to his foe.

Sir Murdour was overjoyed at the sight of the strangers, and asked the name of their leader.

‘Sir Jarrard,’ said Bevis, who did not wish to make himself known, and inquired further what were the causes of the war with Sir Saber, and how long it had lasted. To this Sir Murdour made reply that Sir Saber had been seeking for many years past to wrest from him the heritage which was his by purchase from the spendthrift heir Bevis, who had afterwards quitted the country, but that with the help of the strangers an end would speedily be put to the quarrel.

While Bevis stood listening to Sir Murdour, his fingers unconsciously crept to the handle of his sword, but he forced back his wrath and answered that, had they brought their horses with them, the dispute might have been settled that very night. Still, much might be done if Sir Murdour would give them a ship in which to sail to the Isle of Wight, and would provide them with horses.

Sir Murdour did not need to be asked twice; he gave to Sir Bevis his finest horses and his best armour, and before many hours Bevis was standing on the Isle of Wight by the side of his uncle Saber.

‘Take yonder fishing-boat,’ said he to one of his knights, ‘and return to Southampton and enter the castle. Then tell Sir Murdour that the man to whom he has given his arms and his horses is no knight of France, but Sir Bevis earl of Southampton, who has come to take vengeance for the death of his father.’

The battle which decided the strife was fought upon the island, and never for a moment did Bevis lose sight of his enemy. In vain did Murdour ride from one part of the field to the other; Bevis was always there, though it was long before he was close enough to thrust at him. At last he managed to hurl him to the ground, but Murdour's followers pressed hard on him, and Bevis could not, by his own self, take him captive.

'To me! To me!' he cried at last, and Ascapard strode up, cleaving the heads of all that stood in his way.

'What shall be done with him?' asked he, picking up the fallen knight and holding him tightly.

'Put him in the cauldron that is boiling outside the camp,' said Bevis. 'For that is the death for traitors.'

So Sir Bevis got his own again, and he sent to Cologne for Josyan, and was wedded to her by his uncle the bishop in his good town of Southampton.

OGIER THE DANE

Long, long ago, a baby lay asleep in a cot in a palace. It was a royal baby, therefore it was never left alone for a moment, but always had two or three ladies watching it, by day and by night, so that no serpent should crawl into its cradle and bite it, nor any evil beast run off with it, as sometimes happened in other countries.

But one evening, after a very hot day, all the ladies in waiting felt strangely drowsy, and, though they tried their best to keep awake, one by one they gradually dropped off to sleep in the high carved chairs on which they sat. Then a gentle rustle might have been heard outside on the staircase, and when the door opened a brilliant light streamed in, though the ladies slept too soundly to be awakened by it. Wrapped round by the light were six fairies, more beautiful than any fairies that ever were seen, who glided noiselessly to the cradle of the baby.

‘How fair he is!’ whispered one; ‘the true son of a king.’

‘And how strong he is!’ answered another; ‘look at his arms and legs,’ and the whole six bent forward and looked at him.

‘The world shall ring with his fame,’ said the first, whose name was Gloriande, ‘and I will give him the best gift I have. He shall never fear death, and no word of shame shall ever touch him.’

Then the second fairy leaned forward and lifted the baby out of his cradle. She was tall, and on her head was a ruby crown, while a plate of gold covered her breast.

‘Through all your life,’ she murmured, ‘wherever war and strife may be, you shall be found in the midst of it, even as your forefathers.’

‘Yes,’ said a third; ‘but my gift is better than hers, for you shall never be worsted in any fight, and every one shall add to your honour.’

‘And though you are the first of knights,’ exclaimed the fourth, ‘you shall win fame for your courtesy and gentlehood, no less than for your valour.’

‘The hearts of all women shall turn to you, and they shall love you,’ said the fifth, who was clad in a robe of transparent green; ‘but beware how you give them back their love, for this love of mortals needs proving’; and with that she slipped away from the cradle.

The sixth fairy looked silently at the child for a few moments, though her thoughts seemed to be with something far away.

At length she spoke, and these were her words:

‘When you are weary of travel and of strife and have won all the glory and honour that may fall to men, then you shall come to me in my palace of Avallon, and rest in the joys of fairyland with Morgane le Fay.’

After that the light began to fade, and the six fairies vanished none could tell how or whither.

By-and-by the baby’s attendants woke up, and never knew that during their sleep the child’s fate had been fixed as surely as if he had been bitten by a serpent or carried off by a wolf. Everything *seemed* the same as it had done before, and so they took it for granted that it *was*.

Time passed on, and Ogier, for that was the name they gave him, was ten years old. He was tall and strong and could send his arrows farther than most boys many years older. He could handle a spear too, and his thrusts went straight at the mark; while he could sing a song, or touch the lute as delicately as a maiden. His father was proud of him, and it went sore with him when Charlemagne the emperor, who had had a bitter quarrel with the king of Denmark, demanded that Ogier should be sent as a hostage to his court of Paris.

For four years the boy lived happily in Paris, daily making new friends, and learning to be a skilled swordsman; but at the end of that time the Danish king sank some of Charlemagne’s ships, and the emperor vowed that Ogier should pay for his father’s deed. His life was spared, but the youth was banished to St. Omer, a little town on the coast. Here he spent some years, which would have been dull and very wearisome but for the kindness of the governor, who not only allowed him to fish and hunt on receiving his word that he would not try to escape, but gave him his daughter, the fair Belissande, as his companion, and even consented to a marriage between them. For, kind though he was, he did not forget that the captive youth was after all heir to the Danish throne.

Ogier would have been quite content to stay where he was, when suddenly the emperor summoned him to come to Paris and take part in a war which had broken out between him and the Saracens, who had landed in Italy. Unwilling though he was, of course Ogier was forced to obey, and he speedily won such fame that in a little while Charlemagne declared that from henceforth he should have in battle the place of honour on the right hand of the emperor himself. This favour so excited the jealousy of Charlot, the emperor’s son, that he laid many snares for Ogier’s life, but, owing to the gift of the fairy Gloriande, the young man contrived to escape them all.

On his return to France with the army, after the war was over and the Saracens had been beaten, he found two pieces of news awaiting him. One was that his father was dead, and that he was king of Denmark, and the other was that during his absence a son had been born to him.

Taking leave of the emperor, he chose the swiftest horse he could find in the stables and rode straight to St. Omer. The boy was by this time three years old, and promised to be tall and strong like his father. Already he could mount a pony and use a tiny bow and arrows that had been made for him, and even could tell the names of some of the battles his father had won.

But Ogier could not tarry long in the castle of St. Omer. Taking his wife and son with him, he set out at once for Denmark, and spent several years in the kingdom making laws and teaching his people many things that he had learnt in his travels.

After ten years, however, he became weary of this peaceful life, and, after Belissande died, he felt he could bear it no longer. So, leaving the crown to his uncle, he returned to France with his son and fought once more by the side of Charlemagne. This was the life he loved, and it seemed as if it might have gone on for ever had it not been for the prince Charlot, who, unhappily, only grew more quarrelsome and foolish the older he got.

Charlot was one day playing chess with the son of Ogier, and, as he was hasty and impatient, the game went against him. Like many others, he had never learned how to take a beating like a man, and, raising his hand, he struck the youth a blow on the temple which killed him. Charlemagne, grieved though he really was, refused to punish Charlot, and after saying bitter words Ogier left Paris, and took service with the king of Lombardy, but was soon captured, while asleep, by Archbishop Turpin.

By this time Charlemagne had felt the loss of Ogier so greatly, and had besides suffered so much from further ill-doings on the part of his son, that he lent a ready ear to Ogier’s offer of reconciliation, provided he were allowed to avenge himself on the murderer. But just as Ogier was about to strike off Charlot’s head, and rid the world of a man who never did any good in it, he was stopped by a mysterious voice which bade him to spare the son of Charlemagne. So Charlot was left to work more mischief throughout the land.

A second time a crown fell to Ogier in right of his wife, the princess Claria of England, who had been delivered by Ogier out of the hands of the Saracens. But the princess died not many months after, and the fetters of the throne were no more to Ogier’s taste in England than in Denmark. So he assembled all his barons, and bade them choose themselves a king from among them. This done, he set sail across the sea for the life of adventure that he loved.

For some time Ogier fought in Palestine, where he gained great fame, for no army and no city could stand before him. But his heart always turned to France, and directly peace was made he said farewell to his companions and took ship for Marseilles. At first the breeze was fair, but when they had made half the voyage a tempest arose and the vessel was driven on a rock, while all the crew except Ogier himself were drowned. This happened early in the morning, but as soon as darkness fell and Ogier was fearing that he might die of hunger, as no living thing could be seen on the island, he suddenly beheld facing him a castle of adamant. He rubbed his eyes and gazed at it in amazement, thinking it was a vision, for he knew not that this castle was enchanted, and, though unseen by day, shone by night from light of its own. However, he did not hesitate at the strangeness of his adventure, but taking his sword in his teeth he swam ashore, and mounted the flight of steps that led to the open door.

Rich and beautiful things lay scattered everywhere, but not a sign was there of any one to enjoy them. Room after room was empty, and Ogier was fast losing hope and wondering whether he was to die of starvation in the midst of all this splendour. He had searched every chamber of the castle except one which lay before him at the end of a long gallery. He would go into that too, but if it should prove as barren as the rest then his case was indeed perilous.

With a beating heart he drew back the bolts and lifted the latch of the great carved door. Before him a long table was spread with fruits and food of the rarest sort, while in a large chair at the further end a horse was seated enjoying a huge pasty. At the sight of Ogier he rose politely and bowed, after which he presented him with a golden bowl full of water and returned to his chair.

During his travels Ogier had beheld many strange things, but never before had a horse been his host, and he was so startled that, hungry though he was, he hardly touched the food which the horse heaped on his plate, expecting every moment that a magician might appear or the whole castle crumble away.

Quiet though Ogier was, the horse, who had been taught manners in the court of the sultan of Babylon himself, took no notice of his guest’s behaviour but finished his own supper, which was a very hearty one. When it was done he rose again, bowed a second time to Ogier, who had risen also, and, signing with his fore hoof towards a curtain on one side of the hall, passed through, followed by his guest. In the centre of a magnificent chamber stood a soft bed, at which Ogier gazed longingly. The horse saw the direction of his eyes, and with another bow he withdrew.

In the morning Ogier awoke early and passed through the door into a meadow bright with flowers. He looked round him, and saw a group of ladies sitting under a tree plucking fruit from its branches, and filling golden cups from a clear stream that ran at their feet. Not having eaten since his scanty supper of the night before, he approached the ladies, one of whom arose and spoke to him, saying:

‘Welcome, Ogier of Denmark! I have waited for you long. A hundred years have passed since I stood by your cradle — a hundred years of war and of fighting. But you have tired of them at last and have come back to me! And now you shall rest in the palace of Avallon. I am Morgane le Fay.'

She held out her hand, and Ogier placed his within it, and thus they entered the castle. Then she went to her closet and drew a casket from it, and from the casket she took a ring, which she slipped on Ogier's finger. Afterwards she placed on his head a wreath of golden laurels intertwined with bays, and his white hair became once more like sunshine, and the wrinkles faded from his brow. And with the wrinkles faded also the recollection of the battles he had fought, and of Charlemagne himself, and even of Belissande, whom he had loved so well. Soft sounds of singing floated through the palace, and fairies trailing flowers glided in and out in the dance. While Ogier stood entranced and dumb, there entered King Arthur, to whom spoke Morgane le Fay:

'Draw near, Arthur, my lord and brother, come and salute the flower of chivalry, the boast of the court of France, he in whom courtesy, loyalty, and all virtue are united.'

And Arthur drew near, and they embraced each other.

Two hundred years passed as a single day, till one morning when Ogier was lying on a bank listening to the birds which sang like no birds which mortal ears have ever heard, he took for an instant the crown from off his head. In a moment the memories of his old life flashed across him, and, starting up, he sought Morgane le Fay, and bade her give him his sword, for he was going to fight for fair France again. In vain the fairy besought him not to forsake her, but he would hear nothing, and she was fain to do as he wished. So by her magic she conjured up a little boat which bore Ogier to Marseilles, whence he hastened to the war, which was being carried on in Normandy.

Great was the surprise of the warriors and ladies of the court at the sight of the new-comer, whose face was as young and fresh as their own, but whose arms and whose speech were of a time long gone by. At first some were inclined to try him with jests, but they speedily found that, strange though his manners might seem, it were wiser to accept them. Indeed, it was not long before Ogier's presence had caused itself to be so felt throughout the camp that he was given command of an army that was about to march against the enemy who were invading France and utterly routed them. In gratitude the king begged him to counsel him in all things, and in a few months some of Ogier's strength and wisdom had passed into the people.

Now night and day Ogier wore the ring which Morgane le Fay had placed on his finger, and as long as it was there no youth about the court was fairer and more splendid than he. The gift with which he had been endowed in his cradle had lost none of its power, and as he passed through the crowd, towering full a head over other men, the hearts of the ladies went out towards him. *He* could not help it, and *they* could not help it. It had been so ordained by the fairy. Even age could not preserve them; nay, it seemed to render them an easier prey.

Amongst the noble ladies whose pulses beat faster at the sight of Ogier's golden hair was the Countess of Senlis. Old was she, and withered of face, but she had never ceased to think that she was young, and she mistook the kindliness and courtesy of Ogier's manner for the love that man bears to woman.

One morning, in crossing the garden to attend upon her mistress the queen, the countess came upon Ogier lying asleep under the trees. She stopped and looked upon him tenderly; then her eyes fell upon the ring on his finger, whose stone, of a strange green hue, was graven with devices.

'If I could see them close, perchance I might guess who he is and whence he came,' said she to herself, and, stooping, she drew lightly the ring from his hand, not knowing that the queen had crept up and stood behind her. But what an awful change came over him all at once! His limbs grew shrivelled, his hair white, his eyes so shrunken that they seemed hardly more than points; but when the queen turned with horror to ask her lady what it meant, the change in her was hardly less wondrous, for, though the old countess was ignorant of it, fifty years had been swept from her, and she was straight and winsome as of yore.

They were still standing, dumb with surprise, when Ogier awoke and glanced about him with feeble, uncertain gaze. Catching sight of the ring, which the countess was still holding, he stretched his shaking hand towards it. The action was more than the queen could bear.

'Give it back to him,' she said; and, unwilling though she was to part with such a treasure, the countess was forced to obey.

Tremblingly Ogier restored the ring to its place, and in an instant his youth and beauty returned to him.

Soon after this the king of France died, and when the time of mourning was over the queen made known to Ogier that she wished to take him for her second husband. Gentle was she and fair, and easy it was for Ogier to love her, and his heart beat high at the thought of sitting on the throne where Charlemagne had once sat. The people rejoiced greatly when they heard of the marriage, for with Ogier for their king they were safe, they thought, from invaders.

The wedding day had come, and scarce a man or woman in Paris had closed their eyes the night before. Magnificent indeed would the procession be that was to end in the new cathedral; gorgeous would be the trappings of the horses, dazzling the dresses of the ladies that would ride, some in litters and some on horses, through the streets that bordered the river. Early was the queen astir, to be tired by her maidens, and if Ogier's slumbers lasted longer — well, it was not the first time that he had been crowned a king.

At length he was awakened by the sound of a voice calling his name:

‘Ogier, Ogier!’ and at the sound the present was forgotten, and the past rushed back. ‘Ogier, Ogier!’ whispered the voice again, and, looking, he saw standing by his bed not the queen, but Morgane le Fay.

‘Rise quickly,’ she said, ‘and put on your wedding garments. Clothe yourself in the mantle Charlemagne wore, and the crown that was placed upon his brow. Set on your feet his shoes of gold, and let me see you once as France would have seen you.’

He did her bidding, and she gazed at him awhile, then slowly drawing nigh she lifted the crown from his hair, and in its stead she put on him the wreath of laurel which brought peace and forgetfulness.

‘Now come with me,’ she said, holding out her hand, and together they left the palace unseen, and entered a barge that was waiting in the river, and in the sunrise they sailed away to the castle of Avallon.

HOW THE ASS BECAME A MAN AGAIN

Once upon a time there lived a young man who would do nothing from morning till night but amuse himself. His parents were dead and had left him plenty of money, but this was fast vanishing, and his friends shook their heads sadly, for when the money was gone they did not see where more was to come from. It was not that Apuleius (for that was the name of the youth) was stupid. He might have been a good soldier, or a scholar, or a worker in gold, if so it had pleased him, but from a child he had refused to do anything useful, and roamed about the city all day long in search of adventures. The only kind of learning to which he paid any heed was magic, and when he was in the house he would spend hours poring over great books of spells.

Fond though he was of sorcery, he was too lazy to leave the town and its pleasures — the chariot-racing, the theatre, and the wrestling, and to travel in search of the wizards who were renowned for their skill in the art. However, the time came when, very unwillingly, he was forced to take a journey into Thessaly, to see to the proper working of some silver mines in which he had a share, and Thessaly, as everybody knows, is the home of all magic. So when Apuleius arrived at the town of Hypata, where dwelt the man Milo, overseer of his mines, he was prepared to believe that all he saw was enchanted.

Now, if Thessaly is the country of magic, it is also the country of robbers, and Apuleius soon noticed that everybody he met was in fear of them. Indeed, they made this fear the excuse for all sorts of mean and foolish ways. For instance, Milo, who loved money and could not bear to spend a farthing, refused to have any seats in his house that could be removed, and in consequence there was nothing to sit upon except two marble chairs fixed to the wall. As there was only room in these for one person, the wife of Milo had to retire to her own chamber when the young man entered.

‘It was no use,’ explained Milo, ‘in laying out money on moveable seats, with robbers about. They would be sure to hear of it and to break into the house.’

Unlike his guest, Milo was always occupied in adding to his wealth in one form or another. Sometimes he sent down a train of mules to the sea, and bought merchandise which the ships had carried from Babylon or Egypt, to sell it again at a high price. Then he dealt in sheep and cattle, and when he thought he might do so with safety made false returns of the silver that was dug up from the mines, and kept the difference for himself. But most often he lent large sums at high interest to the young men of the neighbourhood, and so cunning was he that, whoever else might be ruined, Milo managed to make large profits.

Apuleius knew very well that his steward was in his way as great a robber as any in Thessaly, but, as usual, he found it too much trouble to look into the matter. So he laughed and jested with the miser, and next morning went out to the public baths and then took a stroll through the city. It was full of statues of the famous men to whom Hypata had given birth; but as Apuleius had made up his mind that nothing in Thessaly *could* be what it seemed, he supposed that they were living people who had fallen under enchantment, and that the oxen whom he met driven through the streets had once been men and women.

One evening he was returning as usual from a walk when he saw from afar three figures before Milo's house, who he at once guessed were trying to force an entrance. 'Here is an adventure at last,' thought he, and, keeping in the shadow, he stole softly up behind them, and drawing his short sword he stabbed each one to the heart. Then, without waiting to see what more would befall, he left them where they were and entered the house by a door at the back.

He said nothing of what had happened to Milo his host, but the next day, before he had left his bed, a summons was brought him by one of the slaves to appear before the court at noon on a charge of murder. As has been seen, Apuleius was a brave man and did not fear to face three times his number, but his heart quailed at the thought of a public trial. Still, he was wise enough to know that there was no help for it, and at the hour appointed he was in his place.

The first witnesses against him were two women with black veils covering them from head to foot. At the sound of the herald's trumpet, one of the two stepped forward and accused him of compassing the death of her husband. When she had ended her plaint the herald blew another blast, and another veiled woman came forward and charged him with her son's murder. Then the herald inquired if there was not yet a third victim, but was answered that his wound was slight, and that he was able to roam through the city.

After the witnesses had been called, the judge pronounced sentence. Apuleius the murderer was condemned to death, but he must first of all be tortured, so that he might reveal the names of the men who had abetted him. By order of the court, horrible instruments were brought forward which chilled the blood of Apuleius in his veins. But to his surprise, when he looked round to see if none would be his friend, he noticed that every one, from the judge to the herald, was shaking with laughter. His amazement was increased when with a trembling voice one of the women demanded that the bodies should be produced, so that the judge might be induced to feel more pity and to order more tortures. The judge assented to this, and two bodies were carried into court shrouded in wrappings, and the order was given that Apuleius himself should remove the wrappings.

The face of the young man grew white as he heard the words of the judge, for even a hardened criminal cares but little to touch the corpse of a man whom he has murdered. But he dared not disobey, and walked slowly to the place where the dead bodies lay. He shrank for a moment as he took the cloth in his hand, but his guards were behind him, and calling up all his courage he withdrew it. A shout of laughter pealed out behind him, and to his amazement he saw that his victims of the previous night had been three huge leather bottles and not men at all!

As soon as Apuleius found out the trick that had been played on him he was no less amused than the rest, but in the midst of his mirth a sudden thought struck him.

‘How was it you managed to make them alive?’ asked he, ‘for alive they were, and battering themselves against the door of the house.’

‘Oh, that is simple enough when one has a sorceress for a mistress,’ answered a damsel, who was standing by. ‘She burned the hairs of some goats and wove spells over them, so that the animals to whom the hairs and skins had once belonged became endowed with life and tried to enter their former dwelling.’

‘They may well say that Thessaly is the home of wonders,’ cried the young man. ‘But do you think that your mistress would let me see her at work? I would pay her well — and you also,’ he added.

‘It might be managed perhaps, without her knowledge,’ answered Fotis, for such was the girl’s name; ‘but you must hold yourself in readiness after nightfall, for I cannot tell what evening she may choose to cast off her own shape.’

Apuleius promised readily that he would not stir out after sunset, and the damsel went her way.

That very evening, Hesperus had scarcely risen from his bed when Fotis knocked at the door of the house.

‘Come hither, and quickly,’ she said; and without stopping to question her Apuleius hastened by her side to the dwelling of the witch Pamphile. Entering softly, they crept along a dark passage, where they could peep through a crack in the wall and see Pamphile at work. She was in the act of rubbing her body with essences from a long row of bottles which stood in a cupboard in the wall, chanting to herself spells as she did so. Slowly, feathers began to sprout from her head to her feet. Her arms vanished, her nails became claws, her eyes grew round and her nose hooked, and a little brown owl flew out of the window.

‘Well, are you satisfied?’ asked Fotis; but Apuleius shook his head.

‘Not yet,’ he answered. ‘I want to know how she transforms herself into a woman again.’

‘That is quite easy, you may be sure,’ replied Fotis. ‘My mistress never runs any risks. A cup of water from a spring, with some laurel leaves and anise floating in it, is all that she needs. I have seen her do it a thousand times.’

‘Turn me into a nightingale, then, and I will give you five hundred sesterces,’ cried Apuleius eagerly; and Fotis, tempted by the thought of so much money, agreed to do what he wished.

But either Fotis was not so skilful as she thought herself, or in her hurry she neglected to observe that the bird bottles were all on one shelf, and the beast bottles on another, for when she had rubbed the ointment over the young man’s chest something fearful happened. Instead of his arms disappearing, they stretched downwards; his back became bent, his face long and narrow, while a browny-grey fur covered his body. Apuleius had been changed, not into a nightingale, but into an ass!

A loud scream broke from Fotis when she saw what she had done, and Apuleius, glancing at a polished mirror from Corinth which hung on the walls, beheld with horror the fate that had overtaken him.

‘Quick, quick! fetch the water, and I will seek for the laurels and anise,’ he cried. ‘I do not want to be an ass at all; my arms and back are aching already, and if I am not swiftly restored to my own shape I shall not be able to overthrow the champion in the wrestling match to-morrow.’

So Fotis ran out to draw the water from the spring, while Apuleius opened some boxes with his teeth, and soon found the anise and laurels. But alas! Fotis had deceived herself. The charm which was meant for a bird would not work with a beast, and, what was worse, when Apuleius tried to speak to her and beg her to try something else, he found he could only bray!

In despair the girl took down the book of spells, and began to turn over the pages; while the ass, who was still a man in all but his outward form, glanced eagerly down them also. At length he gave a loud bray of satisfaction, and rubbed his nose on a part of the long scroll.

‘Of course, I remember now,’ cried Fotis with delight. ‘What a comfort that nothing more is needed to restore you to your proper shape than a handful of rose leaves!

The mind of Apuleius was now quite easy, but his spirits fell again when Fotis reminded him that he could no longer expect to be received by his friends, but must lie in the stable of Milo, with his own horse, and be tended, if he was tended at all, by his own servant.

‘However, it will not be for long,’ she added consolingly. ‘In the corner of the stable is a little shrine to the goddess of horses, and every day fresh roses are placed before it. Before the sun sets to-morrow you will be yourself again.’

Slowly and shyly Apuleius slunk along lonely paths till he came to the stable of Milo. The door was open, but, as he entered, his horse, who was fastened with a sliding cord, kicked wildly at him, and caught him right on the shoulder. But before the horse could deal another blow Apuleius had sprung hastily on one side, and had hidden himself in a dark corner, where he slept soundly.

The moon was shining brightly when he awoke, and looking round he saw, as Fotis had told him, the shrine of Hippone, with a branch of sweet-smelling pink roses lying before it. It was rather high up, he thought, but, when he reared himself on his hind legs, he would surely be tall enough to reach it. So up he got, and trod softly over the straw, till he drew near the shrine, when with a violent effort he threw up his forelegs into the air. Yes! it was all right, his nose was quite near the roses; but just as he opened his mouth his balance gave way, and his front feet came heavily on the floor.

The noise brought the man, who was sleeping in another part of the stable.

‘Oh, I see what you are at, you ugly beast,’ cried he; ‘would you eat roses that I put there for the goddess? I don’t know who may be your master, or how you got here, but I will take care that you do no more mischief.’ So saying, he struck the ass several times with his fists, and then, putting a rope round his neck, tied him up in another part of the stable.

Now it happened that an hour or two later some of the most desperate robbers in all Thessaly broke into the house of Milo, and, unheard by anyone, took all the bags of money that the miser had concealed under some loose stones in his cellar. It was clear that they could not carry away such heavy plunder without risk of the crime being discovered, but they managed to get it quietly as far as the stable, where they gave the horse some apples to put it in a good temper, while they thrust a turnip into the mouth of Apuleius, who did not like it at all. Then they led out both the animals, and placed the sacks of money on their backs, after which they all set out for the robbers’ cave in the side of the mountain. As this, however, was some distance off, it took them many hours to reach it, and on the way they passed through a large deserted garden, where rose bushes of all sorts grew like weeds. The pulse of Apuleius bounded at the sight, and he had already stretched out his nose towards them, when he suddenly remembered that if he should turn into a man in his present company he would probably be murdered by the robbers. With a great effort, he left the roses alone, and tramped steadily on his way.

It were long indeed to tell the adventures of Apuleius and the number of masters whom he served. After some time he was captured by a soldier, and by him sold to two brothers, one a cook and the other a maker of pastry, who were attached to the service of a rich man who lived in the country. This man did not allow any of his slaves to dwell in his house, except those who attended on him personally, and these two brothers lived in a tent on the other side of the garden, and the ass was given to them to send to and fro with savoury dishes in his panniers.

The cook and his brother were both careful men, and always had a great store of pastry and sweet things on their shelves, so that none might be lacking if their lord should command them. When they had done their work they placed water and food for their donkey in a little shed which opened on to the tent, then, fastening the door so that no one could enter, they went out to enjoy the evening air.

On their return, it struck them that the tent looked unusually bare, and at length they perceived that this was because every morsel of pastry and sweets on the shelves had disappeared, and nothing was left of them, not so much as a crumb. There was no room for a thief to hide, so the two brothers supposed that, impossible though it seemed, he must not only have got *in* but *out* by the door, and, as their master might send for a tray of cakes at any moment, there was no help for it but to make a fresh supply. And so they did, and it took them more than half the night to do it.

The next evening the same thing happened again; and the next, and the next, and the next.

Then, by accident, the cook went into the shed where the ass lay, and discovered a heap of corn and hay that reached nearly to the roof.

‘Ah, you rascal!’ he exclaimed, bursting out laughing as he spoke. ‘So it is you who have cost us our sleep! Well, well, I dare say I should have done the same myself, for cakes and sweets are certainly nicer than corn and hay.’ And the donkey brayed in answer, and winked an eye at him, and, more amused than before, the man went away to tell his brother.

Of course it was not long before the story reached the ears of their master, who instantly sent to buy the donkey, and bade one of his servants, who had a taste for such things, teach him fresh tricks. This the man was ready enough to do, for the fame of this wonderful creature soon spread far and wide, and the citizens of the town thronged the doors of his stable. And while the servant reaped much gold by making the ass display his accomplishments, the master gained many friends among the people, and was soon made chief ruler.

For five years Apuleius stayed in the house of Thyasus, and ate as many sweet cakes as he chose; and if he wanted more than were given him he wandered down to the tent of his old masters, and swept the shelves bare as of yore. At the end of the five years Thyasus proclaimed that a great feast would be held in his garden, after which plays would be acted, and in one of them his donkey should appear.

Now, though Apuleius loved eating and drinking, he was not at all fond of doing tricks in public, and as the day drew near he grew more and more resolved that he would take no part in the entertainment. So one warm moonlight night he stole out of his stable, and galloped as fast as he could for ten miles, when he reached the sea. He was hot and tired with his long run, and the sea looked cool and pleasant.

‘It is years since I have had a bath,’ thought he, ‘or wetted anything but my feet. I will take one now; it will make me feel like a man again’; and into the water he went, and splashed about with joy, which would much have surprised anyone who had seen him, for asses do not in general care about washing.

When he came back to dry land once more, he shook himself all over, and held his head first on one side and then on the other, so that the water might run out of his long ears. After that he felt quite comfortable, and lay down to sleep under a tree.

He was awakened some hours later by the sound of voices singing a hymn, and, raising his head, he saw a vast crowd of people trooping down to the shore to hold the festival of their goddess, and in their midst walked the high priest crowned with a wreath of roses.

At this sight hope was born afresh in the heart of Apuleius. It was long indeed since he had beheld any roses, for Thyasus fancied they made him ill, and would not suffer anyone to grow them in the city. So he drew near to the priest as he passed by, and gazed at him so wistfully that, moved by some sudden impulse, the pontiff lifted the wreath from his head, and held it out to him, while the people drew on one side, feeling that something was happening which they did not understand.

Scarcely had Apuleius swallowed one of the roses, when the ass’s skin fell from him, his back straightened itself, and his face once more became fair and rosy. Then he turned and joined in the hymn, and there was not a man among them all with a sweeter voice or more thankful spirit than that of Apuleius.

GUY OF WARWICK

Everyone knows about the famous knight Sir Guy, the slayer of the great Dun Cow which had laid waste the whole county of Warwick. But besides slaying the cow, he did many other noble deeds of which you may like to hear, so we had better begin at the beginning and learn who Sir Guy really was.

The father of Guy, Segard the Wise, was one of the most trusty councillors of the powerful earl of Warwick and Oxford, who was feared as well as loved by all, as a man who would suffer no wrong through the lands which he governed.

Now the earl had long noted the beauty and strength of Segard's young son, and had enrolled him amongst his pages and taught him all manner of knightly exercises. He even was versed in the art of chess-playing, and thus whiled away many a wet and gloomy day for his master, and for his daughter the fair Felice, learned in astronomy, geometry, and music, and in all else that professors from the schools of Toulouse and Spain could teach a maiden.

It happened one Pentecost that the earl of Warwick ordered a great feast, followed by a tourney, to be held in the open space near the castle, and tents to be set up for dancing and players on the lute and harp. At these tourneys it was the custom of every knight to choose out his lady and to wear her token or colours on his helmet, as Sir Lancelot did the red sleeve of Elaine, and oftentimes, when Pentecost and the sports were over, marriages would be blessed by the priest.

At this feast of Pentecost in particular, Guy stood behind the chair of his master the earl, as was his duty, when he was bidden by the chamberlain of the castle to hasten to the chamber of the Lady Felice, and to attend upon her and her maidens, as it was not thought seemly for them to be present at the great feast.

Although, as we have said, the page had more than once been called upon to amuse the young damsel with a bout of chess, she had ever been strictly guarded by her nurse and never suffered to exchange a word with the youth whose place was so much below hers. On this evening, however, with none to hinder her, she chattered and laughed and teased her ladies, till Guy's heart was stolen from him and he quite forgot the duties he was sent to fulfil, and when he left her presence he sought his room, staggering like one blind.

Young though he was, Guy knew — none better — how wide was the gulf that lay between him and the daughter of his liege lord. If the earl, in spite of all his favour, was but to know of the passion that had so suddenly been born in him, instant death would be the portion of the over-bold youth. But, well though he knew this, Guy cared little, and vowed to himself that, come what might, as soon as the feast was over he would open his heart to Felice, and abide by her answer.

It was not easy to get a chance of speaking to her, so surrounded was she by all the princes and noble knights who had taken part in the tourney; but, as everything comes to him who waits, he one day found her sitting alone in the garden, and at once poured forth all his love and hopes.

‘Are you mad to think that *I* should marry *you*?’ was all she said, and Guy turned away so full of unhappiness that he grew sick with misery. The news of his illness much distressed his master, who bade all his most learned leeches go and heal his best-beloved page, but, as he answered nothing to all they asked him, they returned and told the earl that the young man had not many days to live.

But, as some of our neighbours say, ‘What shall be, shall be’; and that very night Felice dreamed that an angel appeared to her and chided her for her pride, and bade her return a soft answer if Guy again told her of his love. She arose from her bed full of doubts and fears, and hurried to a rose bower in her own garden, where, dismissing her ladies, she tried to set her mind in order and find out what she really felt.

Felice was not very successful, because when she began to look into her heart there was one little door which always kept bursting open, though as often as it did so her pride shut it and bolted it again. She became so tired of telling herself that it was impossible that the daughter of a powerful noble could ever wed the simple son of a knight, that she was about to call to her maidens to cheer her with their songs and stories, when a hand pushed aside the roses and Guy himself stood before her.

‘Will my love ever be in vain?’ he asked, gasping painfully as he spoke and steadying himself by the walls of the arbour. ‘It is for the last time that I ask it; but if you deny me, my life is done, and I die, I die!’ And indeed it seemed as if he were already dead, for he sank in a swoon at Felice’s feet.

Her screams brought one of her maidens running to her. ‘Grammercy, my lady, and is your heart of stone,’ cried the damsel, ‘that it can see the fairest knight in the world lying here, and not break into pieces at his misery? Would that it were *I* whom he loved! I would never say him nay.’

‘Would it *were* you, and then I should no more be plagued of him,’ answered Felice; but her voice was softer than her words, and she even helped her maiden to bring the young man out of his swoon. ‘He is restored now,’ she said to her damsel, who curtseyed and withdrew from the bower; then, turning to Guy, she added, half smiling:

‘It seems that in my father’s court no man knows the proverb, “Faint heart never won fair lady.” Yet it is old, and a good one. *My* hand will only be the prize of a knight who has proved himself better than other men. If *you* can be that knight — well, you will have your chance with the rest.’

The soul of the youth leaped into his eyes as he listened; for he knew that this was much for the proud Felice to say. But he only bowed low, and with new life in his blood he left the castle. In a few days he was as strong as ever he had been, and straightway sought the earl, whom he implored to bestow on him the honour of knighthood.

‘Right gladly will I do so, my page,’ answered Rohand, and gave orders that he would hold a solemn ceremony, when Guy and twenty other youths should be dubbed knights.

Like many young men, Sir Guy thought that his first step on the road was also to be his last, and instantly sought the presence of Felice, whom he expected to find in the same softened mood as he had left her. But the lady only laughed his eagerness to scorn.

‘Think you that the name of knight is so rare that its ownership places you high above all men?’ asked she. ‘In what, I pray you tell me, does it put you above the rest who were dubbed by my father with you to-day? No troth of mine shall you have until your name is known from Warwick to Cathay.’

And Sir Guy confessed his folly and presumption, and went heavily unto the house of Segard.

‘O my father,’ he began before he had let the tapestry fall behind him, ‘I would fain cross the seas and seek adventures.’

‘Truly this is somewhat sudden, my fair young knight,’ answered Sir Segard, with a mocking gleam in his eyes, for Guy’s father had not been as blind as fathers are wont to be.

‘Other knights do so,’ replied Guy, drawing figures on the floor with the point of his sword. ‘And I would not that I were behind them.’

‘You shall go, my son,’ said Segard, ‘and I will give you as companions the well-tried knights Sir Thorold and Sir Leroy, and Héraud, whom I have proved in many wars. Besides these, you shall have men-at-arms with you, and such money as you may need.’

Before many days had passed, Sir Guy and his friends had sailed across the high seas, and had made their way to the noble city of Rouen. Amidst all that was strange and new to him, there was yet much that was familiar to his eyes, for there were certain signs which betokened a tournament, and on questioning the host of the inn he learned all that he desired. Next morning a tourney was to be held by order of the emperor and the prize should be a white horse, a milk-white falcon, and two white greyhounds, and, if he wished it, the hand of the princess Whiterose, the emperor's daughter.

Though he had not been made a knight a month ago, Sir Guy knew full well the customs of chivalry, and presented a palfrey, scarcely less beautiful than the one promised as a prize, to the teller of these happy tidings. Then he put on his armour and rode forth to the place of the tourney.

In the field over against Rouen was gathered the flower of Western chivalry. The emperor had sent his son, and in his train came many valiant knights, among them Otho duke of Pavia, hereafter to be Sir Guy's most bitter enemy. The fights were long and sore, but one by one the keenest swordsmen rolled in the dust, and the prize was at length adjudged to the youngest knight there present.

Full courteously he told all who might wish to hear that he might not wed Whiterose, the princess, for his faith was already plighted to another across the sea. And to Felice and to her father he sent the falcon and horse and greyhounds as tokens of his valour. After that he and his friends journeyed to many lands, fighting tournaments when there were any tournaments to fight, till the whole of Christendom rang with the name of Sir Guy.

'Surely I have proved my worth,' he said, when a whole year had gone by. 'Let us go home'; and home they went.

Joyful was the welcome bestowed on him by every one he met — joyful, that is, from all but Felice.

'Yes, you have done well,' she said, when he knelt before her, offering some of the prizes he had won. 'It is truly spoken among men that there are not twelve knights living as valorous as you. But that is not good enough for me. It matters not that you are "one of the best"; my husband must be "the best of all."'

In vain Sir Guy pleaded that with her for his wife his strength would be doubled, and his renown also.

'If you cannot conquer all men for my sake *now*, you will never do it after,' she answered; and Sir Guy, seeing his words were useless, went out to do her bidding.

The wrath of his father and mother was great when their son came to tell them he was going to seek a fresh quest, but, though his heart was sore rent with their tears, he only embraced them tenderly, and departed quickly, lest he should make some promise he might not keep.

For long he found no knight whose skill and strength were equal to his own, and he was beginning to hope that the day was drawing nigh that should see him stand without a peer, when, in a tourney near the city of Benevento, his foe thrust his lance deep into his shoulder, and for many days Sir Guy lay almost senseless on his bed.

Now Otho duke of Pavia had neither forgotten nor forgiven his overthrow by the young knight at Rouen, more than a year agone, and he resolved to have his revenge while his enemy was still weak from loss of blood. So he hid some men behind some bushes, which Sir Guy would needs pass while riding along the road to the north, ‘and *then*,’ thought he, ‘I will cast him into prison, there to await my pleasure.’

But though his plans were well laid, the fight went against him, and in the end Sir Guy, nearly fainting with weariness and loss of blood, was again the victor, and Otho’s best knight, Sir Guichard of Lombardy, owed his life to the swiftness of his horse. His victory, however, was to Sir Guy as sad as many defeats, for his constant companions lay dead before him.

‘Ah, Felice, this is your doing,’ said he.

Long were it to tell of the deeds done by the noble knight Sir Guy; of the tourneys that he won, of the cities that he conquered — even at the game of chess he managed to be victorious! Of course many men were sorely jealous of him and his renown, and wove plots for his ruin, but somehow or other he contrived to escape them all.

By this time Sir Guy had grown to love wandering and fighting so well that he had well-nigh forgotten who had sent him from his native land, and why he was not dwelling in his father’s castle. Indeed, so wholly had the image of Felice faded from his memory, that when Ernis emperor of Constantinople, under whose banner he was serving, offered him the hand of his only daughter and half of his dominions, Sir Guy at once accepted his gifts.

The sight of the wedding-ring brought him back to his allegiance. He no longer loved Felice it is true, and he *did* love a younger and gentler maiden. But he must abide by the oath he had sworn, though it were to his own undoing.

His grief at the loss of the princess Lorette sent Sir Guy to his bed for many days, but as soon as the fever left him he felt that he could stay at court no longer, and began to make plans to seek other adventures in company with his friend Héraud and a lion which he had saved from the claws of a dragon.

Since that day this lion had never quitted his side, except at his master’s bidding, and he always slept on the floor by his master’s bed. The emperor and all his courtiers were fond of the great beast, who moved among them as freely as a kitten, but Sir Morgadour, the chief steward of the emperor of the West, who was visiting the court, had ever been Sir Guy’s mortal enemy, and one evening, thinking himself unseen, gave the lion a mortal wound as he was sleeping quietly in the garden. He had just strength enough to drag himself to Sir

Guy’s feet, where he died, and a damsel who had marked the cruel deed proclaimed loudly that it was done by Sir Morgadour. In an instant Sir Guy’s dagger was buried in his breast; but when he grew calmer he remembered that his presence at court might bring injury upon Ernis, as the emperor of the West would certainly seize the occasion to avenge the death of his steward. So the next day he left the city, and slowly turned his face towards England.

It was some months before he arrived there, so many adventures did he meet with on the way. But directly he landed he hastened to York to throw himself at the feet of Athelstan the king.

‘Ah, welcome indeed, fair son,’ cried he; ‘the fame of your prowess has reached us these many years past, and we have just received the news that a fearful and horrible dragon, with wings on his feet and claws on his ears, is laying waste our county of Northumberland. He is as black as any coal, and as rough as any foal, and every man who has gone out to meet him has been done to death ere he has struck a blow. Go, therefore, with all speed and deliver us from this monster, for of dragons you have slain many, and perchance this one is no more evil than the rest.’

The adventure was one after Sir Guy’s own heart, and that very day he rode northwards; but even *his* well-proved courage failed somewhat at the sight of the dragon, ten times uglier and more loathsome than any he had ever beheld. The creature roared hideously as he drew near, and stood up at his full length, till he seemed almost to stretch as far as Warwick. ‘Verily,’ thought Sir Guy to himself, ‘the fight of old with the great Dun Cow was as the slaying of a puppy in comparison with this!’

The dragon was covered thickly with scales all over his body, his stomach as well as his back. They were polished and shiny and hard as iron, and so closely planted that no sword could get in between them.

‘No use to strike there,’ muttered Sir Guy, ‘a thrust down his throat is my only chance.’

But if Sir Guy knew this, the dragon knew it much better, and, though the knight managed to jump aside and avoid the swoops of his long neck and the sudden darting of his sharp claws, he had not even tried to strike a blow himself for fear lest his sword should break in two against that shining horny surface. This was not the kind of warfare to which the dragon was accustomed, and he began to grow angry, as anyone might have seen by the lashings of his tail and the jets of smoke and flame that poured out of his nostrils. Sir Guy felt that his chance would soon come, and waited patiently, keeping his eye for ever fixed on the dragon’s mouth.

At length the monster gave a sudden spring forward, and if Sir Guy had not been watching he could scarcely have leaped out of the way. The failure to reach his prey enraged the dragon more than ever, and, opening his mouth, he gave a roar which the king heard on his throne at York. He opened his mouth; but he never shut it again, for Guy's sword was buried in it. The death struggles were short; and then Sir Guy cut off the head and bore it to the king.

After this, his first thought was for his parents, who, he found, had died many years agone, and having said a prayer over their graves, and put his affairs in order, he hurried off to Warwick to see Felice, and tell her that he had fulfilled the commands she had given him long years ago, when he was but a boy. He also told her of the ladies of high degree whose hands he had won in fair fight — won — and rejected. 'All of them I forsook for thee, Felice,' he said.

He had kept his word; but he had left his heart in Constantinople. Perhaps Felice did not know this, or perhaps she did not set much store by hearts, and cared more for the renown that Sir Guy had won throughout Christendom. Anyhow, she received him gladly and graciously, and so did her father, and the marriage was celebrated with great pomp, and for a space Sir Guy remained at home, and after a time a son was born to him.

But at the day of his son's birth Sir Guy was far away. In the quiet and idleness of the castle he began to think, and his conscience pricked him sore, that all the years of his life he had done ill to many a man

And slain many a man with his hand,
Burnt and destroyed many a land.
And all was for woman's love,
And not for God's sake above.

'The end should be different from the beginning,' he said, and forthwith he put on the dress of a pilgrim, and took ship for the Holy Land, carrying with him a gold ring, given him by Felice.

Once more he came back, an old man now, summoned by Athelstan, to deliver the city of Winchester out of the hands of the Danes, who were besieging it. Once more he returned to Warwick, and, unseen, watched Felice training her son in all the duties of knighthood, and once more he spoke with her, when, dying in his hermitage, he sent her the ring by his page, and prayed her to come and give him burial.

HOW BRADAMANTE CONQUERED THE WIZARD

Many of you will remember reading of the death of Roland, fighting against the Infidels in the Pass of Roncesvalles. Well, there is another book called ‘Roland the Wrathful,’ or in Italian (in which it was written), ‘Orlando Furioso,’ telling of the adventures of the great Paladin when he was a young man, and those of his friends. It is of one of these stories about a lady named Bradamante that you are going to hear now.

From childhood, Bradamante had loved all feats of arms, and her chiefest joy was to mount the most fiery horses in her father’s stable. She grew up very tall and strong, as well as fair to see, and soon put on man’s armour, and began to take her part in tournaments, and it was rare indeed that she failed to carry off the prize. In truth, it was not long before her skill was said to be equal to that of Roland’s cousin, the renowned Rinaldo.

Of course so wise and beautiful a maiden had no lack of wooers, but Bradamante listened to none, save only to the brave Roger, who had quitted the Moorish court to seek adventures in the lands of Charlemagne the emperor. But she kept silence as to her love, and was content to wait till such time as Roger should think fit to claim her as his bride.

Suddenly the tidings came to her that Roger had vanished from among men, no one knew whither. As was her wont, Bradamante heard, and said nothing, but the next morning she sharpened her sword, and looked to the fastenings of her helmet, and rode off to seek him if perchance some ill had befallen him.

In this quest she met with some adventures of her own, but of these we have no time to tell. Bradamante, we may be sure, did not linger over them, but pushed on till she crossed a mountain, and reached a valley watered by a stream and shaded by large trees.

On the bank lay a young man with his head buried in his hands and seemingly in a state of deepest misery. He had flung his horse’s bridle over the branch of a beech, and on the same bough he had hung his shield and sword. His looks and posture were so forlorn that Bradamante was moved to pity, and he himself was nothing loth to confess his woes, pretending the while to take her for a man, though he knew well she was a maiden. He was journeying, such was his tale, to the court of Charlemagne with a company of spearmen to aid the emperor in the war he was waging with the Moorish king of Spain. In the company was riding a damsel whom the knight had but lately freed from the power of a dragon. The beauty of this damsel had fired his heart, and as soon as the Infidel was crushed he hoped to wed her. But as they rode along by the side of a rapid river a winged horse guided by a man in black was seen hovering in the air above the troop. Swifter than lightning he swooped down upon the maiden; the rider bent low and snatched her off her palfrey, and was out of sight in the heavens almost before he knew that she was gone.

‘Since that day,’ continued he, ‘I have sought her through forests and over mountains, wherever I heard that a wizard’s den was to be found. But each time it was a false hope that lured me on, and now my horse is spent and not another step can he go, though at length I know that hidden among yonder rocks is my captive maiden.’

‘If it is there she lies, I will free her,’ cried Bradamante; but the knight shook his head more grievously than before.

‘I have visited that dark and dreadful place,’ he said, ‘which indeed I think seems more like the valley of death than aught on this fair and lovely earth. Amidst black and pathless precipices stands a rock, and on its top is a castle whose walls are of steel. It was built, so I have since learned, by a magician, and none can capture it.’

‘But did you see no man who would take pity on you, and tell you what to do?’ asked Bradamante.

‘As I lingered, unable to tear myself away from that loathly prison, there appeared a dwarf guiding two knights whose faces I had often seen upon the battlefield and at court. One was Gradasso king of Sericane, the other and more valiant was the young Roger.’

‘And what did they there?’ asked Bradamante, casting down her eyes.

‘They had come to fight the wizard who dwells in the castle, so said the dwarf,’ replied the knight, ‘and I told them my sad tale, and they answered in knightly fashion, that as long as their lives should last they would fight for the freedom of my lady. Little need have I to tell how my bosom was rent as I stood aside waiting for the combat to begin.

‘Each good knight was eager that the first blow might fall to him, but it was Gradasso who seized the horn and blew a blast which rang through the castle.

‘In a moment there shot into the sky the winged horse bearing his master, clad as before in black armour. He hovered for a little space so high that even the eagle could scarcely have followed him, then darted straight downwards, and Gradasso felt a spear-thrust in his side. The knight struck sharply back, but his sword cleft the empty air, for the horse was already far out of reach. Roger ran to staunch the blood and bind up the wound, never thinking of what might befall himself. But, in truth, how could mortal men fight with a wizard who had studied all the magic of the East, and had a winged horse to help him? His movements were so swift that they knew not where to smite, and both Gradasso and Roger were covered with wounds and bruises, while their enemy had never once been touched.

‘Their strength as well as their courage began to fail in the stress of this strange warfare. The blows they dealt grew ever wilder and more feeble, when from off his shield which hung upon his arm the wizard drew a silken covering, and held the shield towards them as a mirror. As I looked and wondered, behold the knights fell upon their faces, and I also, and when next I opened my eyes I was alone upon the mountain.’

‘And Roger?’ said Bradamante.

‘Roger and Gradasso had doubtless been carried by the wizard to the dark cells of the prison, where my fair lady lies,’ answered the knight, and he again dropped his head upon his hands.

Now the knight was count Pinabello, the false son of a false race, and woe betide the man or maid who trusted him. But this Bradamante knew not, and thinking that the end of her quest was come cried joyfully:

‘Oh, take me to the castle, sir knight, with all the speed you may, and I shall be beholden to you for ever!

‘If you so desire it I will lead you there,’ answered the knight; ‘but remember that I have warned you that the danger is great! When you have climbed those walls of steel, you will find yourself a prisoner like the rest.’

‘I care nothing for that,’ said Bradamante.

So they set forth, but it was not by the road to the castle that Pinabello led the maiden. Wrapped in his gloom begotten of treachery and hate, he wandered from the path into a wood, where the trees grew so thickly that the sky was scarcely visible. Then a dark thought entered his mind. ‘She shall trouble me no more,’ he murmured as he went; and aloud, ‘The night is at hand, and ere it comes it were well that we found a shelter. Rest, I pray you, here a short while, and I will climb that hill and see if, as I expect, there is a tower not far off where we can lie. To-morrow we will proceed on our way.’

‘Let me go with you,’ answered Bradamante, ‘lest you should never find *me* again, or *I* the wizard’s castle,’ and, so saying, she guided her horse after his.

Thus they rode for some way, when Pinabello, who was in front, espied among the rocks a deep cavern with sides so steep and smooth that no mortal could have climbed them. He jumped off his horse and peered to the bottom, but no bottom could he see. Then his heart leaped at the thought that now, once and for all, he would be rid of Bradamante.

‘Ah, good knight, you did well to follow me,’ turning to greet her, as her horse came panting up the steep hill.

‘A damsel lies imprisoned in that dark place, and it is foretold that only a knight with a white mantle and a white plume in his helm can deliver her. Now I think that you must be that knight, and if you have the courage to go down into that cavern as I went, you will get speech of her, as I did.’

‘I will go right willingly,’ answered Bradamante, and looked about her for some means of descending into the cavern. Near the mouth was a stout oak, and Bradamante cut off a branch with her sword and plunged it down the mouth of the cave. She gave Pinabello one end to hold fast, and lowered herself carefully into the darkness.

‘Can you jump?’ asked the count suddenly, with a laugh, and, giving the bough a push, it fell with Bradamante into the pit.

But the traitor triumphed without a cause. In the swift passage down the cave the branch struck the bottom first, and, though it broke in pieces, Bradamante was saved from being dashed against the floor, where she lay for a while bruised and shaken.

When she became used to the darkness, she stood up and looked around her. ‘There may be some way out, after all,’ thought she, noting that the cave was less gloomy than she had fancied, and felt round the walls with her hands. On one side there seemed to be a passage, and going cautiously down it she found that it ended in a sort of church, with a lamp hanging over the altar.

At this moment there opened a little gate, and through it came a lady, bare-footed, with streaming hair.

‘O Bradamante,’ she said, ‘long have I awaited you, for Merlin, who lies here, prophesied before he entered this living tomb that ages hence you would find your way hither. He bade me come from a far-distant land, and be with you at the hour when his spirit, though dead, should tell of the glories of the race that will spring from you and Roger.’

‘I am not worthy of such honour,’ answered Bradamante, casting down her eyes, though her heart beat with joy at the thought that though she and Roger might be parted now, yet in the end they would be united. ‘Let my lord speak, and I will hearken to him.’

At that a voice rose from the sepulchre where Merlin had lain buried for many hundreds of years.

‘Since it is decreed that you shall be the wife of Roger, take courage, and follow the path that leads you to him. Let nothing turn you aside, and suffer no adventure to ensnare you till you have overthrown the wizard who holds him captive.’

The voice ceased, and Melissa, the kind magician who went through the world seeking to set wrongs right, showed from a book the glories that would attend the children of Bradamante.

‘To-morrow at dawn,’ she said when she had finished and put away the magic scroll— ‘to-morrow at dawn I myself will lead you to the wizard’s castle. Till then it would be well for you to seek of the wisdom of Merlin guidance to overcome the dangers bestrewing your path.’

Next morning Melissa and Bradamante rode out from the cavern by a secret way, and passed over rushing rivers, and climbed high precipices, and as they went Melissa held discourse with Bradamante how best to set Roger free.

‘No man, however brave, could withstand the wizard, who has his magic mirror as well as his flying horse to aid him. If you would reach Roger, you must first get possession of the ring stolen from Angelica by Agramante, the African king, and given by him to Brunello, who is riding only a few miles in front of us. In the presence of this ring all charms and sorceries lose their power; but, take heed, for to outwit Brunello is no easy task.’

‘It is good fortune indeed that Brunello should be so near us,’ answered Bradamante joyfully; ‘but how shall I know him from other men?’

‘He is of low stature, and covered with black hair,’ replied Melissa; ‘his nose lies flat upon his face, and his skin is yellow, as the skin of those who come from the far lands beyond Scythia. You must fall to talking with him upon magic and enchantments, but beware lest he guess who you are or what your business, and lead him on till he offer himself your guide to the wizard’s castle. As you go, strike him dead, before he has time to spy into your heart, and, above all, before he can slip the ring into his mouth. Once he does that, you lose Roger for ever.’

Having thus said, Melissa bade Bradamante farewell, and they parted with tears and promises of speedy meeting. Forthwith Bradamante entered an inn hard by, where Brunello was already seated, and if she at once marked him amongst other men he no less knew her, for many a time he had seen her at jousts and tourneys.

Thus, both feigning, they fell into talk, and held discourse upon the castle and the knights who lay imprisoned therein. ‘Many an adventure as perilous have I dared,’ at length said Bradamante, ‘and never have I failed to trample under foot my foe. So, if our worthy host will but give me a guide, I myself will challenge this wizard to deadly combat.’

But Brunello would suffer no man to be her guide save himself, and together they climbed the mountain till they stood at the foot of the castle. ‘Look at those walls of steel that crown the precipice,’ began Brunello; but before he could say more a strong girdle was passed round his arms, which were fastened tightly to his side; and in spite of his cries and struggles Bradamante drew the ring off his finger and placed it on her own, though kill him she would not.

Then she seized the horn which hung from a cord, and, blowing a loud blast, waited calmly for the magician to answer.

Out he came on his flying steed, bearing on his left arm his silken-covered shield, while he uttered spells that had laid low many a knight and lady. Bradamante heard them all, and was no whit the worse for the blackest of them.

Furious at his defeat, the wizard snatched the cover from the shield, and Bradamante, knowing full well what was wont to follow, sank heavily on the ground. At this the wizard covered his shield once more, and guided his steed swiftly to where the maiden lay. After that, unclasping a chain from his body, he bent down to find her. It was then that she lifted her ringed hand, and there stood before her an old man with white hair and a face scarred with sorrow.

‘Kill me, I pray you, gentle lady,’ cried he; ‘yet know before I die that my love to Roger has been the cause of these heavy woes to so many gallant knights and fair damsels. I am that Atlantes who watched over him in childhood, and as he grew to manhood he was ever the first in all deeds of chivalry. So reckless was he, that many a time it needed all my magic to bring him back to life when seemingly he lay dead. At length, to keep him from harm, I built this castle, and filled it with all that was beautiful, and, as you know, with knights and ladies to be his companions. When everything was ready I captured Roger himself.’

‘Now, take my horse and shield, and throw open wide the castle doors — do what you will, but leave me only Roger.’

The heart of Bradamante was not wont to be deaf to the sorrows of others, but this time it seemed turned to stone.

‘Your horse and shield I have won for myself,’ she said; ‘and have you lived so long in the world without learning that it is idle to war against fate? It is fate which has given you into my hands, and it is useless to strive against it. Therefore, lead the way to the gate, and I will follow.’

They climbed in silence the long flight of steps leading to the castle; then Atlantes stooped and raised a stone on which was graven strange and magic signs. Beneath the stone was a row of pots filled with undying flames, and on these the wizard let the stone fall. In a moment there was a sound as if all the rocks on the earth were rent, the castle vanished into the air, and with it Atlantes.

Instead, a troop of knights and ladies stood before Bradamante, who saw and heard none save only Roger.

THE RING OF BRADAMANTE

When Bradamante had freed Roger and his companions from the enchanted castle, she thought that henceforth they would never more be parted. But she forgot that she had to deal with a wizard, and that wizards are not easily outwitted.

On a little plain beneath the mountain the winged horse was grazing, and when the knights and ladies came gaily down the path Bradamante left the rest and went up to take it by the bridle. Atlantes, however, had laid other plans, and had thrown a spell over the horse, so that directly Bradamante was close to it the creature moved away to a little distance. At this the knights, thinking to help her, gave chase, but the horse led them up and down the mountain, over rocks and through streams, till one by one they dropped behind, and in front there remained only Roger.

As it had been taught by Atlantes, the horse stood still, while Roger, with a cry of delight, seized the bridle and jumped upon its back. With a bound it sprang into the air, and, though Roger tried to guide it downwards to the earth, it was all in vain, for so the enchanter had willed it. Below stood Bradamante gazing up; her joy turned quickly to despair, and when the traces of Roger had vanished she rode sadly away, taking with her the horse Roger had left behind.

Meanwhile Roger was flying through the air swifter than an arrow or the lightning. Since he could not make the horse swerve an hair’s breadth to the right or left, he ceased his useless efforts, and let himself be carried this way or that. Suddenly he felt that, instead of going forward they were gradually dropping down, down, down; and soon the horse stopped on a lovely island.

Where the island might be Roger did not know, nor could he tell how long he had been on his journey thither. In truth, he was content to feel himself on solid ground once more, and to smell sweet flowers and eat delicious fruits, for how could he guess that this also was devised by Atlantes — that these sights and sounds might lull his senses, and keep him safe from war? Atlantes was a great wizard and wise beyond most, but he had never learned that it was a better thing to die in battle than to live only for pleasure.

On reaching the ground Roger was careful to hold fast the bridle, having no mind that the horse should fly up into the air and leave him helpless on the island. Then, looking round, he saw a strong myrtle, and he tied the reins tightly to it, so that he himself could roam about as he would.

At length he grew tired of wandering and returned to the place where he had left his horse, which he found champing and struggling to shake itself free. As he drew near a voice cried in melancholy tones:

‘If, as I think, you are a knight, and bound by the rules of chivalry, release me, I pray you, from this monster, who only adds to the pains which I myself endure.’

Startled at the sound, Roger looked around, but nought could he see save the myrtle to which the horse was fastened.

‘I crave your pardon,’ answered he, ‘for having unwittingly done you wrong; but tell me who you are, and what has caused your present plight?’

‘I am Astolfo, peer of France,’ replied the tree, ‘and I was enchanted by the fairy Alcina, who thus rids herself of her friends and her servants when they have ceased to please her. Even this island is not hers by right, but was stolen from her sister Logistilla, who is as wise and kind as Alcina is wicked. But so beautiful is Alcina, that none can withstand her if once she looks on them, therefore fly while you may and ask counsel of Logistilla if there is aught that you would know.’

‘Oh, tell me, good tree, how I can escape without crossing the path of the cruel Alcina?’ cried Roger.

‘There is a way,’ answered the tree, ‘but it is rough to the feet, and beset by fierce and ill-tongued men, placed there by the fairy. He who would quit Alcina’s isle needs open eyes and deaf ears.’

‘I will have both,’ said Roger.

But, alas! he boasted overmuch, as young men are wont to do. He was indeed in no wise affrighted at the strange shapes that met him and sought to bar his progress. Some had heads of apes and feet of goats; some rode eagles or bestrode cranes; while the captain of all was mounted on a tortoise. They swarmed on him like a crowd of flies, and Roger was so sore bested that he gave no thought to his magic shield, which perchance might have saved him.

For into the *mêlée* came two maidens of such wondrous beauty that Roger dropped his lance and stood without defence to gaze his fill. Two snow-white unicorns bore them from the city gates, and, at their coming, the noisy rabble vanished as if they had never been. Then the ladies stretched out their hands, and prayed the knight to follow them into the city.

‘We have need of your brave heart and mighty arm,’ they said, ‘to vanquish a giantess who guards a bridge which none can pass’; and well they knew that, if Roger was to be ensnared by them, it must be by slow degrees, for not all at once would he drop into the idle life of the dwellers on the island.

So, nothing loth, Roger gladly did their behest, and went forth to meet the giantess.

The fight did not last long, and soon the monstrous creature lay stretched on the ground at Roger’s feet; but her life was spared at the request of the damsels, and at their bidding he followed them over the bridge and up a hill. On the top was a large meadow full of flowers, in which maidens were playing at ball or singing sweet songs on the lute, while others were dancing.

In their midst was a damsel so fair that the rest, even the guides of Roger, looked swarthy beside her, and she came forth from among them, and held out her hand for him to kiss.

Vain it were to seek to tell Alcina’s charms, but even as his eyes fell on her Roger felt that everything said by Astolfo in her despite was false. Even Bradamante was forgotten, as if she had never lived at all; yet for this Roger was hardly to blame, for how should he stand against Alcina’s magic!

It was here that Melissa, clad in the form of Atlantes, found him after many months had gone by, during which Bradamante had sought him vainly. At last fate brought Melissa again across her path, and from her the forsaken damsel learnt who it was that kept him from her.

‘Be comforted,’ said Melissa, when she beheld Bradamante’s tears. ‘You yourself have the ring which can free him from those evil spells, and bring him back to your side. So lend it me, I pray, and by to-morrow’s dawn I will be with him.’

Roger was lying on a bed of soft moss, when Atlantes, for so he took her to be, stood before him.

He lifted his head lazily, and smiled, but the face of his old master was grave as he said sternly:

‘And is it *you*, Roger, whom I find thus, your hair curled and scented, your neck circled with jewelled chains? Was it for this you passed your boyhood in waging war against fierce beasts, fearing neither hunger nor thirst as you tracked them to their lair? But, as I loved you once, I will give you a chance to shake off this shameful life, and to become once more worthy of Bradamante. Take this ring, and when next Alcina comes this way mark well the change that is wrought in the queen of this fair land.’

With shame and repentance burning at his heart, Roger slowly drew the ring upon his finger; and by its virtue he beheld not Atlantes but Melissa.

‘Yes, it is I,’ she said, ‘and it is Bradamante who sent me hither, to save you by means of the ring which she took from the hand of Brunello. It will break the strongest spells that wizard ever wove, and open wide the eyes that have been longest blinded.’

With that she vanished, and Roger rose and followed the path which led to the palace.

On the marble steps he saw, as he went, a troop of ladies standing. Their clothes were rich and made of shining stuffs, and well became their golden hair or curly raven locks; but who was she in their midst whose form was unknown to him? Her back was bowed with age, and scarce a hair remained upon her head, while all her skin was shrivelled and yellow. Roger gazed in horror, expecting, as he looked, the lean body to crumble into dust before him. Yet something, what he knew not, seemed not wholly strange in that pale and shrunken figure — something that, in spite of all, spoke to him of Alcina. A thrill of horror ran through him, but he remembered in time the counsel of Melissa, and, trembling though he was, he greeted her with fair words.

Dreading lest he should again fall under the fairy’s enchantments, Roger never parted from the ring, and kept guard over himself, lest perchance Alcina should guess what was passing within him. To gain possession of his armour, long laid aside, he feigned a wish to prove if his life of idleness had unfitted him to bear the weight of it, or if his chest had grown too broad for the clasps of his breast-plate to meet. Then, laughing still, he strolled carelessly to the stables, calling back as he went that perhaps his horse might have become as fat and lazy as himself. But when he reached the stables he passed by the winged steed which had borne him to the island, for he bethought himself once more of Melissa’s words: ‘Beware of the hippogryph,’ she had said, ‘you will never wed Bradamante if you mount that.’ So he left the great creature flapping its wings with longing to soar once more into the sky, and led out a strong black horse. Vaulting on his back, he touched him with his spurs, and dashed through the guards at the gate before Alcina knew that her captive had won his freedom.

When the fairy found that the knight did not return, she sent a messenger for tidings of him, and so great was her wrath when she learned that he had passed the gate, and was far on the road to her sister, the good Logistilla, that she ordered all the guards to be put to death. Then she commanded her ships to be got ready, and put to sea herself, thinking by that means she might bring him back. But all was vain, and at last she was forced to believe that Roger had shaken off her yoke for ever.

THE FULFILLING OF THE PROPHECY

For a long while Bradamante waited quietly in Marseilles, thinking that every day Roger would come to her, but as time passed and he gave no sign she grew heart-sick and impatient. Some evil must surely have befallen him, she whispered to herself, yet where to seek him she did not know.

At length one morning, when hope had almost left her, the enchantress Melissa stood by her side and smiled at her.

‘Have no fear for Roger,’ said Melissa; ‘he is safe, and counts the hours to your meeting. But once more he has been taken captive by Atlantes, who ensnared him by putting on your form and face, and entering his palace, whither Roger followed eagerly. Never look so cast down, Bradamante, but listen to my counsel and abide by it, and all will be well.’

Then Bradamante sprang up, grasping tightly her sword and shield.

‘Whatever you tell me to do, I will do it,’ cried she; and Melissa went on:

‘This time Atlantes will change his shape for that of Roger, that you also may fall a victim to his wiles. Beware lest you be deceived, or instead of saving Roger you will find yourself also a prisoner in the castle. Harden your heart, and slay him as he stands before you, and Roger shall be free for evermore.’

So spoke Melissa not once, but many times, before they drew near the castle, where she bade farewell to Bradamante, dreading that the wizard should see her and take fright. The maiden rode on till she reached an open space, where two fierce giants were pressing Roger sore and well-nigh overcoming him. In a moment all the words of Melissa were forgotten, or rather she deemed that jealousy or revenge had prompted her words. And, as these thoughts ran swiftly through her, a cry for help sounded in her ears. Slay Roger? Melissa must have indeed been mad when she gave her this counsel, and, spurring her horse, she galloped after the wounded knight, who, pursued by his foes, was riding at full speed to the castle.

When they were all four inside the courtyard, the gate swung to and Bradamante was a prisoner.

Now it was written in the magic book carried by Astolfo, the knight who had been changed by Alcina into a myrtle tree and restored by Melissa, that if a stone on the threshold were raised, the whole palace would vanish into smoke as the other castle had done before. Though he knew it not, Melissa stood by his side as he rode through the wood, many weeks after Bradamante had entered the castle, and whispered to him that the time had come to prove the truth of the prophecy. First blowing a blast with the horn which affrighted all that dwelt within the walls, with a mighty heave he raised the magic stone. In an instant the earth rocked, and he was thrown flat upon the ground, while with a roar the castle crumbled into dust. The knights and ladies imprisoned therein ran forth in fear, and it was not until the ill-fated place was left far behind that they stopped to look about them.

It was then that Roger and Bradamante beheld each other once more, and in the joy of meeting forgot the pains they had endured since they had parted. But one promise Bradamante asked of Roger before she would be his wife. ‘I cannot wed an infidel,’ said she. ‘You must become a Christian first.’

‘Right willingly,’ answered Roger, and it was agreed between them that they should set out at once for a fair abbey, so that the rite might be delayed no longer.

Thus they talked; but not yet were they to be united. On their way a distressed damsel met them on the road imploring help, which both knight and lady readily granted. But, alas! in seeking to give the aid prayed of them they strayed unwittingly down various roads, and it was long before fortune again brought them together. For hardly had Roger brought to an end his adventure than he learned that his liege lord, Agramante king of Africa, was hard pressed by Charlemagne the emperor, and needed his vassal to fight by his side. So Roger turned his face to the west, first bidding his squire ride back to Bradamante and tell her that, once the war was finished, nothing further should delay his baptism.

The war went ill with Agramante, and many a time Roger was sore wounded and like to die. Far away, in the house of her father among the mountains, tales came now and then to Bradamante of Roger’s doings in the fight. Bitterly her soul chafed at not being by his side to help and tend him; but, if she could not fight against him, far less could she fight in the ranks of the infidels. Thus, weary at heart, she waited and sat still, or wandered about the forests, hoping to meet someone who could bring her tidings of Roger.

For long no one came through the thick dark woods, and Bradamante was almost sick with despair, when a Gascon knight rode by.

‘Are you from the war, brave sir?’ asked she, springing up from the bank where she had cast herself, and going eagerly to meet him. ‘Are you from the war, and have you news from one Roger?’

‘Alas! madam,’ he answered, ‘but a month since he was sore wounded in fight with one Mandricado, and has since lain in his bed, tended by the lady Marfisa, who wears a breast-plate as easily as she does a woman’s gown. Had it not been for her skill, Roger would long have been buried, and when he is able to bear arms again doubtless he will offer his hand to the damsel in marriage. At least, so say all in camp. But the sun is low and time presses. I must begone.’

He went on his way, and when he was out of sight Bradamante turned and loosed her horse from the tree to which she had tied him and rode back to the castle. Without a word she mounted the stairs to the tower where she dwelt, and, throwing herself on her bed, gave vent to the torrents of jealousy which possessed her soul. Then, rising up, she bade her maidens weave her with all speed a sad-coloured mantle, and when it was ready she took the lance of gold belonging to Astolfo, which had (though she knew it not) the gift of unhorsing every warrior whom it touched, and, going to the courtyard, led out and saddled her horse.

Alone, without even a squire to help her, Bradamante began her journey to Arles, where the army of Agramante lay encamped. On the road thither she met with many an adventure, but by the aid of the golden lance always bore down her foe. After one of these fights she fell in with the Lady Flordelice, who was herself riding to Arles in the hope of gaining news of her husband, now a prisoner in the hands of the Moors. By her Bradamante sent a message challenging Roger to come forth to meet her in single combat.

‘And if he asks my name say it is unknown to you,’ she added, ‘but that the stranger knight had bidden you take this horse, and prayed that he might bestride it in battle.’

Flordelice was careful to fulfil the trust laid upon her, and no sooner was she within the gates of Arles than she sought out Roger and delivered him the message and the horse. The young man, perplexed at the defiance of the nameless knight, sought counsel of his father, who bade him accept the challenge and prepare for battle without delay. While he was making ready other knights were not slow to seize the chance of giving the haughty Christian a lesson, and went out to fight in the plain beyond the walls. But a single touch of the magic lance was enough to unhorse them all, and one by one Bradamante sent them to their lord.

‘Tell him I await a better man than you,’ said she.

‘And what is his name?’ asked Ferrau of Spain when he rode before her, having craved permission to try his strength against the stranger.

‘Roger,’ answered she, and, as her vizor was raised, Ferrau could not but see the red that flushed her face, though he feigned to notice nothing.

‘He shall come to you,’ replied Ferrau, ‘but first you must cross swords with me,’ and, spurring his horse, he rode to share the fate of the rest.

Right glad was Roger to hear that the peerless knight Ferrau had been borne down like those who had gone before him, and that it was he and no other whom the victor wished to fight. But the courtiers of King Agramante now thronged around Ferrau, asking if perchance he had seen the face of his foe, and knew it for having beheld it elsewhere.

‘Yes, I saw it,’ said Ferrau, ‘and it bore something of the semblance of Rinaldo. But since we know that it cannot be, and that the young Ricardo has neither the strength nor the skill to unhorse so many well-proved knights, it can be none other than their sister Bradamante. Truly she is mightier even than Rinaldo or her cousin Roland the Wrathful.’

At that Roger started, and his cheeks reddened even as those of Bradamante had done. He stood silent and awkward under the eyes of the whole court, for he feared to meet Bradamante and to read in her face that during the long months of his absence her love had given place to anger.

While Roger waited, uncertain whether to accept or refuse the challenge of Bradamante, Marfisa buckled on her coat of mail, and rode out in his stead to meet the foe. Bradamante felt in her heart who the knight was with the plume of blue and shining golden corselet, and hate burned in her soul as fiercely as in the breast of the other.

Thrice the magic lance stretched Marfisa on the ground, and thrice she rose and sought to avenge herself by a sword-thrust. At this point a body of knights, with Roger in their midst, arrived upon the field, while a band of pagan warriors approached from the opposite side. Blows were soon struck, and Bradamante, caring nothing for her own life, galloped wildly about seeking to catch sight of Roger.

The silver eagle on a blue shield was hard to find, but Bradamante found it at last, and crying, ‘Traitor, defend yourself!’ dashed wildly at him. Yet, in spite of herself, the arm which had been strong before was strangely weak now, and Roger could, with one thrust, have borne her off her horse, but instead his lance remained in air; she might slay him if so she chose; she had the right, but every hair of her head was safe from him.

So the day that began so badly ended happily for them all. Roger renewed his vow and became a Christian, but once more declared that by all the laws of honour and chivalry he could not desert Agramante in his dire straits. Fate again divided him from Bradamante, and sent him to join the army of Agramante, which had been worsted in many battles. The king had broken a truce with Charlemagne, and was trying to collect men and ships in Africa, and Roger felt that he was bound in honour to go to his aid. He put off in a small barque, but a violent tempest drove them up and down all night, and cast Roger at dawn upon a barren shore. But, so exhausted was he by his fight with the waves, that even yet he must have died from hunger and cold had not a hermit who dwelt in a cave close by come to his help. Here Roger rested till his strength came back to him, and before he bade farewell to the hermit he had been baptized a Christian.

No sooner was Roger healed from the hurts given him by the winds and waves, than he watched eagerly for a passing boat that might take him back to France. He waited and watched for long, but at length a ship put into the island, having on board both Rinaldo and Roland. Right welcome did they make Roger, whom both knew to be the flower of infidel chivalry, and when they heard that, Agramante being slain in battle, Roger was free to swear fealty to the emperor, and had besides been baptized a Christian, Rinaldo at once promised him the hand of his sister Bradamante.

And now it may well be thought that the time had come for the prophecy of Melissa to be fulfilled, and for Roger and Bradamante to receive the marriage blessing. But their happiness was to be delayed still further, for the old duke Aymon declared that he had chosen a husband for his daughter in the son of Constantine, emperor of the East, and not all the tears and prayers of Bradamante and Rinaldo would move him one whit. By the help of her brother, Bradamante contrived once more to see Roger, who bade her take heart, as he would himself go to Constantinople and fight the upstart prince and dethrone his father, then he would seize the crown for himself, and Bradamante should be empress after all. At these words Bradamante plucked up her courage and they embraced and parted.

After Roger had set forth the days hung heavily at duke Aymon’s court, till one night, as Bradamante was lying awake, wondering if the vision of Melissa would ever come to pass, she saw suddenly a way out of her distresses. So the next morning she rose early, and fastening on her armour, left her father’s castle for Charlemagne’s camp. Craving speedy audience of the emperor, she besought him as a boon that he would order proclamation to be made that no man should be given her for husband till he had first overcome her in battle. To this Charlemagne consented, although duke Aymon, who had followed his daughter, prayed the emperor to refuse her this grace, and the old man, waxing very wroth at his defeat, shut up the damsel in a strong tower between Perpignan and Carcassonne.

While these things were taking place at home, Roger had reached the shores of Constantinople, and learned that the emperor of the East was engaged in a fight with the Bulgars, and that his army was encamped in a field near Belgrade. Thither Roger rode with all the speed he might, and finding that the king of the Bulgars had just been slain by the hand of Leo, son of Constantine, he offered to be the leader of the army, and soon put the Greeks to flight. Indeed, such were his mighty deeds, that Leo himself, rival (though he knew it not) of Roger, could not fail to wonder at them. When the battle was over, the Bulgarian army begged him to be their king, so sure were they that victory would follow his banner; but he declined, for the secret reason that he purposed to follow the prince, and slay him in single combat.

But instead of killing each other these two brave knights ended in becoming friends and brothers, for Leo delivered Roger from prison, where he had unjustly been thrown by the sister of Constantine, and they both journeyed together to France, to enter the lists for the hand of Bradamante.

Although they travelled with all the speed they might, they only arrived at the appointed place outside Paris on the day of the combat, when Bradamante was arming herself for the struggle. The prince knew well by this time that it was hopeless for him to think of winning for himself the love that had so long been given to another, and he prayed Roger to do him the grace to wear his arms and to bear his name in the tourney. It cost Roger somewhat to lay aside the arms and the name that had stood him for many a year in such good stead, but he owed the prince too much to say him nay, although to bid farewell to Bradamante when he had won the prize in fair fight would be bitter indeed.

With a double-headed eagle on Leo’s crimson shield, and Leo’s velvet surcoat over his coat of mail, Roger did obeisance to the emperor and then walked into the lists. He had chosen to give battle on foot, since Bradamante was riding his horse Frontino.

All day long the combat lasted, and, as Bradamante had been unable to bear down her foe, she was proclaimed vanquished. But of what value was the victory to him, seeing that he had gained the reward for another? So, hastily stripping off the armour belonging to the Greek prince, he left the tent unseen, and, catching sight of Frontino grazing quietly among some trees, sprang quickly on his back and plunged into the forest.

‘Let death come soon,’ he said to himself, ‘since life is worthless.’

Meanwhile the court in Paris rang with the name of Leo the prince, and duke Aymon informed his daughter that the marriage feast need no longer be postponed. But to this Bradamante turned a deaf ear.

‘I will wed none but Roger,’ she cried, and though her parents taunted her with her broken vow, and threatened her with the wrath of the emperor, she would give no other answer.

‘I can always die,’ she thought to herself.

The court was all confusion and perplexity; the emperor loved Bradamante, but he did not wish to offend either her powerful father or the still more powerful Constantine. The test had been proposed by Bradamante herself, and how could he give permission that she should break her plighted word?

It was Melissa who once more set this tangle straight. She appeared to Leo, who was standing idly at his tent door, and told him that Roger was dying in the depths of the forest. The prince, who had grieved sorely for the loss of his friend, heard eagerly her tale, and consented gladly to go with her to seek him.

The Roger whom they found at last was very different from the Roger who had entered the lists but three days agone. His face was pale, his hair was damp, his clothes hung loosely on his body. Leo's heart smote him as he gazed, and, sinking on his knees beside Roger, he pulled his hands gently down from his face.

It was not long before he had drawn out from the young knight the secret which Roger had hidden so carefully when he had thought that honour and gratitude demanded it. Leo listened in amaze and took shame to himself that he had never guessed it sooner.

'Oh, Roger,' he cried, when at length the tale was ended, 'sooner would I give up a thousand Bradamantes and all I possess in the world than lose a friend so noble and generous as you. So rise quickly and let us hasten back to where Bradamante awaits us.'

And so the prophecy was fulfilled in the end, and everyone was made happy. Yes, even duke Aymon and his wife Beatrice; for before the wedding rejoicings were begun an embassy arrived from the Bulgarian people, begging leave from the emperor Charlemagne to offer their crown to his vassal Roger. And nobody grudged Roger and Bradamante their happiness, for they had waited so long for it, and worked so hard for it.

THE KNIGHT OF THE SUN

Once upon a time two little boys were born, and the elder had on his breast the image of a sun, which shone so brightly that the ladies who were waiting on his mother, the princess Briane, were forced to shut their dazzled eyes. On the breast of the younger one lay a pink rose, and it was hard to believe that the flower had not been newly flung there, so fresh was its colour and so vivid its green.

So the elder baby was called in after years ‘the Knight of the Sun’; while his little brother was known as Rosiclair.

Now it happened that their mother, the princess Briane, had been secretly married to Trebatius, emperor of Constantinople, who had courted her under the name of prince Theodoart. Soon after their marriage her husband, while riding through the forest, had been astonished at the sight of a magnificent chariot which dashed furiously along the road, and, as it passed, he felt sure that his wife, the princess Briane, was seated inside. Without losing a moment, he turned his horse instantly round, and followed the chariot, but, spur his steed as he might, it was impossible to overtake it. However, he rode on as fast as the thick creepers and fallen trees would let him in the direction in which the chariot had disappeared, and at last he left the forest behind him and entered a beautiful meadow.

Here the emperor paused in surprise, for in front of him stood the greatest and finest castle he had ever seen, which would have held thirty thousand men with ease. At each corner was a large tower, while a wide moat of clear water would have kept a large army at bay. Happily for the emperor’s curiosity, the drawbridge was at the moment let down, so he knocked at the door, which straightway opened to him, and boldly entered the castle.

He looked around the magnificent hall to see some traces of his wife, but, instead, a powerful odour stole gradually over his senses. At the same instant a golden curtain was drawn aside, and a lady whose beauty dazzled his eyes glided up to him and laid her hand on his shoulder.

‘You belong to me now,’ she said, as she led him away; and twenty years went by before the emperor again left the castle.

Meanwhile the little boys were carried away in the night by one of the mother’s ladies, whose name was Clandestrie, and taken to her sister’s house, where they lived freely and happily for some years till they were old enough to be brought to the convent where the princess Briane still remained, and taught the duties of pages. Rosiclair was always good and quiet, but his brother gave his teachers a great deal of trouble, though that did not prevent their loving him dearly. He was so tall and strong and high-spirited, that it was difficult to remember he was only a child after all, and the moment he was left alone he was always seeking some adventure.

One day, while Rosiclair was learning from his mother to play on the lute, the Knight of the Sun — for so they called him — had gone with his nurse to the banks of the broad river, and was amusing himself with scrambling in and out of a boat that lay moored to the side. There were no mirrors in the convent, and the boy jumped hastily back with dismay when he saw some one dressed like himself looking at him from out of the water.

He grew red with rage and struck out with his fist, and the arm in the water struck out too. Then the prince sprang forward, but, as he did so, he began to perceive that it was nothing but his own image that was looking at him and imitating his movements. ‘How could I be such a baby!’ he said to himself, and turned to leave the boat, when, to his dismay, he found that the rope had got loose and he was gently floating down the stream.

At this sight his courage began to fail him; he called loudly to his nurse, who had been talking to some friends and had not noticed the child’s danger. At his cries she rushed into the river a little lower down, hoping to catch the boat as it danced by, but the current swept her off her feet, and she would certainly have been drowned had not a wood-cutter, who had watched her from above, held out a long stick which she was able to reach.

Very soon the little boat was a mere speck in the distance, and, now that there was nothing to be done, the boy took heart again and thought of all he would have to tell Rosiclair when he came back — for come back he would some day, he was sure of that.

By-and-by the grass and the trees, and even the big mountains, vanished, and all around him was the blue sea, with not even a sail to look at. How long he remained in that boat he never knew, but one day, just before sunrise, when the air is clearest and you can see farthest, he was roused from his sleep by a shout. At first he took it for part of his dream and did not move; then the shout came again, and he jumped up and waved his hand, for sailing towards him was a large vessel. At the prow stood a man in a beautiful purple tunic edged with gold. This was Florian prince of Persia.

Oh, how glad the little boy was to be amongst friends again, and how hungrily he ate the food they put before him! When he was quite rested, they brought him a child about the same age, whom they had picked up from a wreck a few days before; and then the ship’s head was turned towards Babylon.

It took them a long while to get there, but at last they entered the great river which flowed past the gates of the city, and the sultan, hearing of their approach, came down from his palace to greet them. He had lived as a youth at the court of prince Florian’s father, and was delighted to meet his old friend once more. As for the boys, he took a fancy to them at once, and kept them in his palace till many years had gone by and they were almost men.

When the Knight of the Sun was about sixteen he was taller than any one in all Babylon, for he took after his father, the emperor Trebatius, who was fully eight feet high. The youth was also very strong, and was afraid of nothing and nobody, and in many ways was different from his companions, especially in liking to ride and hunt alone instead of with a troop of merry young men. His friends were all fond of him, but rather afraid of him, as people often are of those who are quicker than themselves.

One morning the sultan arranged a great hunting expedition, which was to take place in some huge forests a few miles from Babylon. The sun was hot, and the sultan was old, so he soon gave up the chase, and returned to join the princess and her maidens, who were lying under the shady trees, with a stream rippling by to make them think they were cool.

Suddenly, without any warning, a band of giants sprang upon them from behind a rock, and, seizing the sultan and the ladies, bound them rapidly with silken cords. Their shrieks brought a few knights who were within earshot to their aid, but these were soon overpowered by the strength of the giants, except one, who managed to make his escape, and plunged deep into the forest.

He was flying along, half mad with terror, when a voice cried out:

‘Sir knight, look well to it, or you will lose your spurs in your unseemly haste.’

‘Fair youth,’ replied the knight, ‘do not, I pray you, waste the moments in idle talk; for the sultan and the princess have but now been attacked by an army of giants, and are being borne captive to some unknown land.’ But before his tale was ended the youth was riding fast down the path along which the knight had come.

He was just in time: the tallest and strongest giant had laid hold of the sultan, bound and helpless as he was, and was carrying him off to a huge coal-black horse that was picketed to a tree close by. A blow on his helmet forced him to drop his burden, and he turned rapidly on his assailant.

‘Bah! a boy!’ he cried disdainfully; but the ‘boy’ struck him another swinging stroke, which almost cleft his shield. Then the giant drew out his great double-edged battle-axe, but the champion sprang aside, and the axe crashed harmlessly on a rock, while a well-aimed throw from the javelin pierced the joints of the giant’s harness, and he fell heavily to the ground.

‘It is an earthquake,’ whispered the people of Babylon, as the houses shook and the swords rattled.

After this the giant’s followers, who, big though they were, had no mind to face such a fighter, fled into the forest, and were seen no more.

The first thing to be done was of course to cut the cords which had been carefully wound round the arms and legs of the prisoners, who, seizing the champion’s hands, shed tears and kisses over them. As to the sultan, he was well-nigh speechless from gratitude, but when he was able to speak he begged the youth to ask for some boon that he could grant, even if it were the half of his kingdom.

‘That I will tell you to-morrow,’ said he.

By this time the evening had come, and the chariots and the horses were made ready, and the company returned to the palace in Babylon, though neither the princess nor her ladies felt very safe till they were within the gates of the city.

Early next day the sultan sent the grand vizier to bid the youth await him in the great hall, that he might declare in presence of all the court what guerdon should be given him for saving his master’s life.

And a right noble company was gathered together, for the victor was well loved of all, and every man expected that he would ask the hand of the princess.

All stood up and bowed low as the sultan swept down between them clothed in his royal robes, and wearing his golden crown on his head; for he wished the goodly assemblage to know how priceless a service the young man had done him. Nay, he too thought, like his people, that there was only one boon that the youth could fitly crave.

When he was seated on his throne, he signed to the chevalier to draw near.

‘And what is the reward that I shall give you?’ he asked with a smile as the young man knelt before him.

‘O mighty sultan, grant me this, that with the sword which slew your enemy you will make me a knight’; then he paused and grew red, as a cloud came over the sultan’s brow.

‘By all the rules of chivalry — —’ But the sultan’s words were drowned by a tumult in the hall, and pushing her way between the crowds came a richly clad maiden, closely pursued by a huge black king.

‘Save me!’ she cried, looking wildly on the company of knights that stood round. ‘I am the daughter of as mighty a monarch as you, and was carried off from my father’s island by this black man whom you see before you. One grace he has given me, that for the space of a year I may wander where I will, seeking a knight to be my champion. But, despite their mighty names, not one has ever managed to pierce his armour.’

And again she looked on the knights, but not a man stirred from his place.

Then the chevalier rose to his feet and spoke out boldly.

‘Make *me* a knight, O sultan, and *I* will fight this man who is feared by all the world! Oh, I know what you would say, that I am yet too young to bear the weight which has sometimes proved too heavy for many a goodly knight. But, if my years are few, my deeds have proved that I am no whit behind the doughtiest knight of your court. So grant me my boon or this day I will leave you for ever.’

‘Be it so,’ answered the sultan at last, ‘though I would rather have given you the half of my kingdom or the hand of my daughter. But watch this night beside your arms in the temple, and to-morrow you shall be admitted into the order of chivalry.’

Now the sultan had a brother named Lyrgander, who was wise in every kind of enchantment, and, though he was at this time in a far country, he learned by means of his arts what strange things were happening at the court of Babylon. Without losing a moment he went to the room where his treasures were kept, and opened a large chest, from which he took two suits of armour. One, which was all white, he meant for the chevalier, and the other was for his friend Claberinde. Then he poured a few drops of a yellow liquid into a glass and drank it, wishing, as he did so, that he was in Babylon. Before the glass fell from his hand he found himself there. Very early after the youth had ended his watch, Lyrgander came to him and girded on him the suit of white armour. Led by Lyrgander, and followed by all the knights and nobles of the court, the chevalier entered the presence-chamber, where the sultan was sitting on his throne awaiting him. Once again the youth knelt, and the sultan, drawing the magic sword from its sheath, struck him three times lightly on the head with it. Afterwards, the sultan put back the sword in the scabbard and buckled it on the side of the kneeling youth.

Then, stooping down, he lowered the vizor, and said slowly and solemnly:

‘I dub you knight, and arm you knight. May the high gods have you in their care!’

‘Amen!’ said the chevalier, and he rose from his knees and went out to the place where the lists had been prepared. And the court sat round to watch the fight, while in the midst of them all, her eyes fixed on her champion, was the captive princess, who was resolved to kill herself with her own hands rather than fall into the power of the black king.

The Knight of the Sun had chosen the best horse in the sultan’s stables, and was waiting in his place till the signal should be given.

At the other end, the black king bestrode a huge black horse, and the moment he caught sight of his foe poured out a stream of abuse, which only ceased when the sound of the trumpets drowned his voice.

‘I have never been conquered by mortal man,’ said he, ‘and shall yon wretched beardless boy, who should now be sitting with his mother’s maidens, the child who but an hour ago was dubbed a knight by special grace of the sultan, have strength to do what the hardiest knights have failed in doing? By the eyes of my fathers! he will make fine food for the vultures before the sun sets.’

And the young knight heard, and the blood flew to his cheeks under his vizor, and his fingers closed more tightly on his sword.

With the first blast of the trumpets he spurred his horse, and his onslaught was so fierce that the giant reeled in his saddle.

‘They have tricked me,’ he said to himself, as he righted himself again. ‘That blow was never given by the boy I saw; they have put someone else in his place. The battle will be harder than I thought, but the end is sure’; and he reined his horse back for a second rush.

The hours passed by, and the sun grew high in the heavens, but the flashing of swords never ceased, and the watchers of the fight could hardly breathe. Once the chevalier was thrown right on to his horse’s neck, and was forced to cling to it lest he should fall to the ground. Once again — and here a murmur of terror could be heard in the crowd — a blow on his head rendered him sick and dizzy, and the charger carried him three times round the lists while he sat grasping the bridle, unconscious where he was and what he was doing. But after all, the swift rush through the air brought back his senses, and, by the time the black king was expecting that one more thrust would gain him the day, the knight spurred his horse quickly to one side, and, taking his adversary unawares, swept him dead from his saddle.

Then at last the silence was broken, and a roar of triumph and relief burst from the crowd.

Slowly the young man turned and rode along the lists, pausing before the lady Radimere as she sat by the sultan.

‘You are free, princess,’ he said, as he lifted his vizor; and with those words he disappeared in the crowd, before anyone had time to stop him.

It was whispered, perhaps truly, that the princess Radimere would fain have made him her husband, and have given him lordship over her island; but all we know for certain is that she returned there alone, and soon after married the son of a neighbouring king.

HOW THE KNIGHT OF THE SUN RESCUED HIS FATHER

When once the youth had been made a knight by the sultan of Babylon, and had slain the black king, he set off by himself in quest of other adventures, desiring greatly to see the world. For the next few years the young man wandered from court to court, fighting giants and delivering enchanted damsels, till at last his feet led him to a kingdom where Rosiclair his brother happened to be.

Now Rosiclair was scarcely a whit behind the Knight of the Sun in manly deeds, and not long before had done such good service to the king of England that Olive, the king's daughter, had, at her father's bidding, clasped a collar of gold around his neck, and held out to him a crown studded with jewels. Rosiclair bent gladly to receive the collar, and then taking the crown from the hands of the princess he placed it on her head.

'Lady, I am evermore your knight,' said he.

This tale and many others had come to the ears of the Knight of the Sun, and he longed to see his brother again, and to break a lance with him in good fellowship, but some time had yet to pass before they met, and then it fell out in this wise. After the combat in the lists in London, where Rosiclair had cut off the arms of the giant Candramarte, the giant's daughter had brought him by her wiles to the island in which lay her father's castle.

No sooner had he stepped on shore than the damsel pushed off, crying as she did so to her brothers and their knights to avenge the giant's wounds. In a moment all the little island was alive with men, whirling lances or swords or axes above their heads, and all pressing forward to the spot where Rosiclair awaited them. Luckily he had time to place himself with the sea at his back, so that he could not be attacked from behind, and, covering himself with his shield, stood ready.

Never was there such a dreadful fight, and Rosiclair seemed to have a hundred arms, and to be able to strike fifty ways at once. He hardly knew himself what he did, so great was the stress of battle, but hour by hour the ground slowly reddened round him, and there looked to his dimming eyes to be fewer men in front. But by this time his strength was fast failing him, and he felt he could not hold out much longer. A mighty blow from an axe made him reel, and well-nigh fall; another such, and he would be rolling on the sand among the dead men lying at his feet. Suddenly the upraised axe flew from the hand of the giant in front, and with a cry that echoed through the island he fell backwards on the shore.

Rosiclair was still too hard beset to turn and see from whom help had come, but he took fresh courage and his sword no longer hit so wildly as before. The other sword was even stronger and surer than his own, and soon the few men who were left alive ran off and took refuge within the gates of the castle.

Then the two knights looked at each other.

‘Who are you, and whence do you come?’ asked Rosiclair. ‘I owe you my life this day.’

‘I am called the Knight of the Sun,’ replied the other; ‘this shining star upon my breast has given me my name. And I come from wandering over the seas in a little boat that just holds me and my horse. I descried you from afar, and hastened to your help. Of a truth, it is the noblest fight that ever I saw.’

Now, when Rosiclair had seen the emblem of the sun on the new knight’s breast he wondered if this might indeed be his brother. But being warned by his mother not to hold converse with strangers concerning private matters, he began to tell of the fight with Candramarte in the lists of London, when a cry from the sea caused them both to turn. On the prow of a boat stood the giant’s daughter, pointing with her forefinger at the bodies which lay upon the shore.

‘O cruel and bloody wolves,’ she called, ‘the ocean will give me the pity which I have been denied both by heaven and earth. And the god of storms will avenge me.’ With that she jumped into the sea, but, instead of sinking, was held up by the waves. This the Knight of the Sun beheld, and, forgetting the evil she had done, jumped into his boat, and pushed off to her aid before Rosiclair had time to get in after him. However, the Knight of the Sun was never able either to reach the damsel or to return to his brother, for a furious wind sprang up, which drove him before it, in some direction that he did not know.

In his hurry to reach the side of Rosiclair, the Knight of the Sun had forgotten to place his oars in the bottom of the boat, but just left them loose in their holes, so that they had floated away; now he had no means of directing his course, but was forced to go wherever the waves took him. For many days he drifted past the shores of strange countries and saw from afar the gleam of white cities, but though he fain would have landed, he could not, but was bound to remain where his adventure carried him. At length, to the joy of his heart, the boat stopped of its own accord on the beach of a beautiful island, and the young man once more felt soft grass under his feet, and heard the sound of trickling streams. Close by was a forest, and from between the bushes peeped the heads of little goats and tiny deer, all gazing with wonder at the stranger. From the look of the place it was plain that seldom indeed did man come to disturb their lives, and the Knight of the Sun felt he must go further inland if he wished to meet with any adventures. So, breaking through the creepers which hung from tree to tree, he struggled on bravely, and at last the trees grew less thickly, and he came out upon a wide open space in front of a big castle.

This castle was quite different from any he had seen, either in Babylon or in the other countries he had visited. It seemed to be made of nothing but towers, and every tower had a steep pointed roof, so high that you would have thought it reached up to heaven itself. In the tower nearest him was a door of shining steel, and on top of a row of steps above it was a column, from which hung a horn of ivory edged with gold. Under the horn some words were cut deep into the column, and mounting the steps the knight read:

‘This is the castle of the peerless Lindarasse, whose door will never open save to him who blows the horn. Yet let him beware who seeks to blow it, for if the door *should* open he will find it is guarded by fierce and cruel porters, and his life will pay for his rash curiosity.’

The Knight of the Sun laughed out at the thought that any such threats could stop his going wherever he pleased, and, seizing the horn, blew so powerful a blast that the sound rang through the whole island. In an instant the gates of steel burst open, and between them stood a giant with an iron club in one hand, and in the other a chain which was fastened round the neck of a serpent. Now in all the world there was no serpent more horrible than this, for it did not wriggle along the ground as serpents generally do, but advanced erect, its head higher than a man seated on a horse, while it trailed besides a tail ten feet behind it. At the sight of the young man it lashed its tail so violently that the earth trembled as if with an earthquake, while its forky tongue darted in and out with a deafening hissing noise.

The few knights who had dared to blow the horn had been so frightened at this terrible creature that they had stood as if frozen, and thus the giant killed them with his club without any trouble. He, of course, expected this knight to behave like the rest, but to his surprise the young man remained quietly where he was. Then the giant dropped the chain and the snake began to mount the steps, opening its mouth wide enough to swallow a man and showing its long and yellow fangs. The Knight of the Sun swung his sword in the air and let it fall on the serpent’s neck with a force that seemed as if it must have severed its head from its body; but to his amazement the weapon bounded back as if it had been made of wood, though the snake was for the moment half stunned and was unable to throw itself on its prey. However, in another moment it had reared itself high and was preparing to fling itself forward, when the knight leaped behind the column and from its shelter struck again at the serpent’s head. This time the horrible creature sank to the ground, though the sword glanced off harmlessly without penetrating its skin; but it became more angry than before, and glided rapidly towards the column, hoping to seize his enemy in his gaping jaws. The giant meanwhile stood planted, club in hand, at the bottom of the steps, ready to receive the young man when the serpent should have done with him.

It was not long before this happened. The Knight of the Sun was so intent watching the movements of the head of his horrible foe, that he forgot everything else till a violent blow from the serpent's tail cast him to the ground and sent him rolling down the steps to the place where the giant stood. Before he could raise himself, the iron staff had split his helmet in pieces, and, as it seemed, his skull with it. Luckily for him, the giant felt sure he must be dead, and thus the knight was enabled to lie still for some minutes till his senses and his strength came back to him, and, springing to his feet, he snatched his sword from its sheath and sent half of the giant's body flying one way and half the other. But before he was able to rejoice at having slain one foe the serpent was upon him for a second time. The knight had proved that the sword was useless against it, so seizing the club of the dead giant he struck such a blow that its head fell in pieces.

Then he took the ivory horn, and entered the door of the first tower. As soon as the Knight of the Sun reached the second tower, he found it was shut by a door of steel, just as the first had been. He sounded a blast on his horn, and the door flew open with a grating and horrible noise, which might have filled the heart of the bravest with terror, and another giant stepped forth, no less horrible to look upon than his brother, with a club in one hand and a huge chained lion in the other. The great beast was larger than any bull that ever was seen, and each of its nails was as long as the foot of a man. Directly its chain was loosed, the lion reared itself up and sprang upon the knight, who awaited it as calmly as if it had been only a sheep. But after the fight with the serpent the attack of the lion seemed quite easy to parry, and, without pausing till they came together, the young man turned nimbly aside and felled him to the earth with the iron staff. After that he turned to meet the giant.

This time the battle was soon over, for the giant, like many very big people, was heavy and clumsy, and the Knight of the Sun stepped past his dead body to the third gate, which flew open at the blast of his horn. Behind it stood a fresh giant taller than the last, and all covered with thick wiry hair, that looked as if it would resist the keenest sword-blade which had ever been forged in Damascus. The young knight felt much more afraid of him than of the two tigers which he held on a chain, and which showed their teeth and snarled wickedly. But before long the knight had stretched them both on the ground, and summoned all his strength for the struggle with the giant.

This was much harder than any he had fought yet. The wiry hair turned the edge of his sword, and he felt he might almost as well try to cut through a fence of iron. Besides, in spite of his great height, this giant was much quicker of eye and of hand than the last, and several times the young champion was brought to his knees, though he rose again before his enemy could deal him a second blow. At length the Knight of the Sun noticed a place on the giant's neck where the hair seemed less thick than on the rest of his body, and, dropping his sword, he seized his dagger and drove it home.

Thus, step by step, fighting giants and beasts every inch of the way, the Knight of the Sun at last reached the hall of the castle, where the emperor Trebatius sat by the side of the fair Lindarasse. The spells she had woven round him were so strong, that for years he had not only never been outside the castle walls, but had ceased to wish to see the world again. But, powerful though Lindarasse might be, the Knight of the Sun did not fear to meet her, as before he had left Babylon the wise Lyrgander had given him a ring, which preserved him from all enchantments.

At the entrance of the young man the fair Lindarasse looked up; she knew who he was and why he had come.

'What is the matter, Wonder of the World?' asked the emperor Trebatius, raising his head from her lap, where it had been resting.

'I am a dead woman, my good lord,' answered she, 'unless you will slay me that knight who has forced his way into my castle.'

These words filled the emperor with fury, and the spirit awoke within him from its long sleep.

'I will teach him manners,' he said grimly, and stalked proudly to the gallery where his arms had hung for many a day.

Meanwhile the fair Lindarasse, who, in spite of her haughty bearing, bore a sinking heart, tried both by threats and soft words to persuade the Knight of the Sun to leave the castle.

'Not till the emperor goes with me!' he answered steadily. 'You took him from his wife, and if you will not give him back to her I will take him.'

And Lindarasse ground her teeth, and held her peace for a few moments. Then she broke into tears and sobs, thinking to move him by these means; but this method fared no better than the other.

Thus were they standing when the emperor entered the hall, armed *cap-à-pie*.

Now the knight knew that Trebatius's skill in fight had grown rusty from want of use, and that as long as he remained inside the castle the spells which the fair

Lindarasse had woven round him would weaken his arm and confuse his head. So the youth refrained from striking, and with his shield and sword defended himself the while from the blows which the emperor dealt in all directions — for his hand no longer followed his eye. And all the while the Knight of the Sun stepped gently backwards, drawing Trebatius with him till, after twenty years, the emperor stood outside the walls, and the enchantment fell from him like a cloak. Then with a rush the remembrance of his wife, the princess Briane, came back to him, and in that very moment, though he knew it not, the fair Lindarasse fell dead in the place where he had left her. For, evil as she was, she had loved him truly, and felt that he had gone from her for ever.

So Trebatius was set free by his son, and became a man once more. And the two journeyed back towards Hungary, to the monastery where the princess Briane still lived. But on the road an adventure claimed the Knight of the Sun, so that the emperor alone stood before his wife, whose heart was almost broken with joy at the sight of him.

As for their two sons, the Knight of the Sun and his brother Rosiclair, who was also known as the Knight of Love, no such deeds had been wrought as were done by them since the days of Lancelot and the Round Table.

THE RED BOOK OF HEROES by Mrs. Lang

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PREFACE

‘Life is not all beer and skittles,’ said a reflective sportsman, and all books are not fairy tales. In an imperfect state of existence, ‘the peety of it is that we cannot have all things as we would like them.’ Undeniably we would like all books to be fairy tales or novels, and at present most of them are. But there is another side to things, and we must face it. ‘“Life is real, life is earnest,” as Tennyson tells us,’ said an orator to whom I listened lately, and though Longfellow, not Tennyson, wrote the famous line quoted by the earnest speaker, yet there is a good deal of truth in it. The word ‘earnest,’ like many other good words, has been overdone. It is common to sneer at ‘earnest workers,’ yet where would we be without them, especially in our climate?

In a Polynesian island, where the skies for ever smile, and the blacks for ever dance, earnestness is superfluous. The bread-fruit tree delivers its rolls punctually every morning, strawberries or other fruits, as nice, spring beneath the feet of the dancers; the cavern in the forest provides a roof and shelter from the sun; the sea supplies a swimming-bath, and man, in time of peace, has only to enjoy himself, eat and drink, laugh and love, sing songs and tell fairy tales. His drapery is woven of fragrant flowers, nobody is poor and anxious about food, nobody is rich and afraid of losing his money, nobody needs to think of helping others; he has only to put forth his hand, or draw his bow or swing his fishing-rod, and help himself. To be sure, in time of war, man has just got to be earnest, and think out plans for catching and spearing his enemies, and drill his troops and improve his weapons, in fact to do some work, or have his throat cut, and be put in the oven and eaten. Thus it is really hard for the most fortunate people to avoid being earnest now and then.

The people whose stories are told in this book were very different from each other in many ways. The child abbess, Mère Angélique, ruling her convent, and at war with naughty abbesses who hated being earnest, does not at once remind us of Hannibal. The great Montrose, with his poems and his scented love-locks, his devotion to his cause, his chivalry, his death, to which he went gaily clad like a bridegroom to meet his bride, does not seem a companion for Palissy the Potter, all black and shrunk and wrinkled, and bowed over his furnaces. It is a long way from gentle Miss Nightingale, tending wounded dogs when a child, and wounded soldiers when a woman, to Charles Gordon playing wild tricks at school, leading a Chinese army, watching alone at Khartoum, in a circle of cruel foes, for the sight of the British colours, and the sounds of the bagpipes that never met his eyes and ears.

But these people, and all the others whose stories are told, had this in common, that they were in earnest, though we may be sure that they did not go about with talk of earnestness for ever in their mouths. It came natural to them, they could not help it, they liked it, their hearts were set on two things: to do their very best, and to keep their honour. The Constant Prince suffered hunger and cold and long imprisonment all ‘to keep the bird in his bosom,’ as the old Cavalier said, to be true to honour. ‘I will carry with me honour and fidelity to the grave,’ said Montrose; and he kept his word, though his enemies gave him no grave, but placed his head and limbs on spikes in various towns of his country. But now his grave, in St. Giles’s Church in Edinburgh, is the most beautiful and honourable in Scotland, adorned with his stainless scutcheon, and with those of Napiers and Grahams, his kindred and his friends.

“*The grave of March, the grave of Gwythar, The grave of Gugann Gleddyvrudd, A mystery to the world, the grave of Arthur*,”

says the old Welsh poem, and unknown as the grave of Arthur is the grave of Gordon. The desert wind may mingle his dust with the sand, the Nile may sweep it to the sea, as the Seine bore the ashes of that martyr of honour, the Maid of France. ‘The whole earth is brave men’s common sepulchre,’ says the Greek, their tombs may be without mark or monument, but ‘honour comes a pilgrim grey’ to the sacred places where men cannot go in pilgrimage.

We see what honour they had of men; the head of Sir Thomas More, the head of Montrose, were exposed to mockery in public places, the ashes of Jeanne d’Arc were thrown into the river, Gordon’s body lies unknown; but their honour is eternal in human memory. It was really for honour that Sir Thomas More suffered; it was not possible for him to live without the knowledge that his shield was stainless. It was for honour rather than for religion that the child Angélique Arnauld gave up amusement and pleasure, and everything that is dear to a girl, young, witty, beautiful, and gay, and put on the dress of a nun. Later she worked for the sake of duty and religion, but honour was her first mistress, and she could not go back from her plighted word.

These people were born to be what they were, to be examples to all of us that are less nobly born and like a quiet, easy, merry life. We cannot all be Gordons, Montroses, Angéliques, but if we read about them and think about them, a touch of their nobility may come to us, and surely our honour is in our own keeping. We may try never to do a mean thing, or a doubtful thing, a thing that Gordon would not have been tempted to do, though we are tempted, more tempted as we grow older and see what the world does than are the young. I think honour is the dearest and the most natural of virtues; in their own ways none are more loyal than boys and girls. Later we may forget that no pleasure, no happiness, not even the love that seems the strongest force in our natures, is worth having at the expense of a stain on the white rose of honour. Had she been a few years older, Angélique might have failed to keep the word which was extorted from her as a child, but, being young, she kept it the more easily. What we have to do is to try to be young always in this matter, to be our natural selves and unspotted from the world. Certainly some people are a little better, and so far a little happier, because they have seen the light from Charles Gordon's yet living head, and been half heart-broken by his end, so glorious to himself, so inglorious to his fellow countrymen. For his dear sake we may all do a little, sacrifice a little, to help the Homes for Boys which have been built to his memory, and to help the poor boys whom he used to help, making himself poor, and giving his time for them.

We read in the book, 'A Child's Hero,' how the brave Havelock won the heart of a little child who never saw him. She heard the words 'Havelock is dead,' and laid her head against the wall and burst into tears. Other children may feel the same devotion for these splendid people, for Hannibal, so far away from us, giving his whole heart and whole genius and his life for his wretched country, for men who would not understand, who would not aid him:

"Their old art statesmen plied, And paltered, and evaded, and denied"

till their country was vanquished. Bad as that country was, for Hannibal's own sake we are all on the side of Hannibal, as we are on the side of Hector of Troy. 'Well know I this in heart and soul,' said Hector to his wife, when she would have kept him out of the battle, 'that the day is coming when holy Ilios shall perish, and Priam, and the people of Priam of the ashen spear, my father with my mother, and my brothers, many and brave, dying in the dust at the hands of our foemen; but most I sorrow for thee, my wife, when they lead thee weeping away, a slave to weave at thy master's loom and bear water from thy master's well, and the passers-by, as they see thee weeping, shall say, "This was the wife of Hector, the foremost in fight of the men of Troy, when they fought for their city." But may I be dead, and the earth be mounded above me, ere I hear thy cry and the tale of thy captivity.'

So he went back into the battle, and never again saw his wife and child. It was in the spirit of Hector that Hannibal planned and fought and toiled, till as an old man he bit on the poison ring, and died, and was free from the Roman captivity that threatened him.

Honour and courage were the masters of the men and women whose stories are told in this book, but of them all none dared a risk so horrible as brave Father

Damien in the Isle of Lepers. For his adventure among dreadful people who must give him their own dreadful disease, a Montrose or a Havelock might have had little heart, for his task had none of the excitement and glitter of the soldier’s duty in war. But they are all, these men and women, good to live with, good to know, good to go with, weary camp followers as we are of the Noble Army of Martyrs, and unworthy of a single leaf from the laurel crown.

A. Lang.

THE LADY-IN-CHIEF

Everybody nowadays is so used to seeing in the streets nurses wearing long floating cloaks of different colours, blue, brown, grey, and the rest, and to having them with us when we are ill, that it is difficult to imagine a time when there were no such people. In the stories that were written even fifty years ago you will soon find out what sort of women they were who called themselves ‘nurses.’ Any kind of person seems to have been thought good enough to look after a sick man; it was not a matter which needed a special talent or teaching, and no girl would have dreamed of nursing anybody outside her own home, still less of giving up her life to looking after the sick. It was merely work, it was thought, for *old* women, and so, at the moment when the patient needed most urgently some one young and strong and active about him, who could lift him from one side of the bed to the other, or keep awake all night to give him his medicine or to see that his fire did not go out, he was left to a fat, sleepy, often drunken old body, who never cared if he lived or died, so that *she* was not disturbed.

The woman who was to change all this was born in Florence in the year 1820 and called after that city. Her father, Mr. Nightingale, seems to have been fond of giving his family place-names, for Florence’s sister, about a year older than herself, had the old title of Naples tacked on to ‘Frances,’ and in after life was always spoken of as ‘Parthy’ or ‘Parthenope.’ By and by a young cousin of these little girls would be named ‘Athena,’ after the town Athens, and then the fashion grew, and I have heard of twins called ‘Inkerman’ and ‘Balaclava,’ and of an ‘Elsinora,’ while we all know several ‘Almas,’ and may even have met a lady who bears the name of the highest mountain in the world — of course you can all guess what *that* is?

Mr. and Mrs. Nightingale did not stay very long in Italy after Florence’s birth. They grew tired of living abroad, and wanted to get back to their old home among the hills and streams of Derbyshire. Here, at Lea hall, Florence’s father could pass whole days happily with his books and the beautiful things he had collected in his travels; but he looked well after the people in the village, and insisted that the children should be sent to a little school, where they learned how to read and write and count for twopence a week. If the poor villagers were ill or unhappy, his wife used to visit them, and help them with advice as well as with money, and we may be quite sure that her little daughters often went with her on her rounds.

So the early years of Florence's childhood passed away amidst the flowery fields and bare hills that overlooked the beautiful river Derwent. The village, built of stone like so many in the North Country, lay far below, and on Sundays the two little girls, dressed in their best tippets and bonnets, used to walk with their father and mother across the meadows to the tiny church at Dethick. Here nearly two hundred and fifty years ago one Anthony Babington knelt in prayer, though his thoughts often wandered to the beautiful Scottish queen, shut up by order of Elizabeth in Wingfield manor, only a few miles away. Of course Parthy and Florence knew all about him, and their greatest treat was a visit to his house, where they could see in the kitchen a trap-door leading to a large secret chamber, in which a conspirator might live for weeks without being found out. A great deal of the house had been pulled down or allowed to fall into decay, but the bailiff, who lived in the rest, was always glad to see them, and would take them to all kinds of delightful places, and up little dark narrow winding stairs, at the end of which you pushed up another trap-door and found yourself in your bedroom. What a fascinating way of getting there, and how very, very silly people are now to have wide staircases and straight passages and stupid doors, which you *know* will open, instead of never being sure if the trap-door had not stuck, or some enemy had not placed a heavy piece of furniture upon it!

But much as the Nightingales, big and little, loved Lea hall, it was very bare and cold in winter, and Florence's father determined to build a new house in a more sheltered place. Lea Hurst, as it was called, was only a mile from the hall, and, like it, overlooked the Derwent; but here the hills were wooded and kept out the bitter winds which had howled and wailed through the old house. Mr. Nightingale was very careful that all should be done exactly as he wished, therefore it took some time to finish, and *then* the family could not move in till the paint and plaster were dry, so that Florence was between five and six when at last they took possession.

No doubt the two little girls had much to say about the laying out of the terraced gardens, and insisted on having some beds of their own, to plant with their favourite flowers. They were greatly pleased, too, at discovering a very old chapel in the middle of the new house, and very likely they told each other many stories of what went on there. Then there was a summer-house, where they could have tea, and if you went through the woods in May, and could make up your mind to pass the sheets of blue hyacinths without stopping to pick them till you were too tired to go further, you came out upon a splendid avenue, with a view of the hills for miles round. This was the walk which Florence loved best.

It seems, however, that Mr. Nightingale could not have thought Lea Hurst as pleasant as he expected it to be, for a few months later he bought a place called Embley, near the beautiful abbey of Romsey, in Hampshire. Here they all moved every autumn as soon as the trees at Lea Hurst grew bare; and when the young leaves were showing like a green mist, they began the long drive back again, sometimes stopping in London on the way, to see some pictures and hear some music, and have some talk with many interesting people whom Mr. Nightingale knew. And when they got home at last, how delightful it was to ride round to the old friends in the farms and cottages, and listen to tales of all that had happened during the little girls' absence, and in their turn to tell of the wonderful sights they had witnessed, and the adventures that had befallen them! Best of all were the visits to the families of puppies and kittens which had been born during their absence, for Florence especially loved animals, and was often sent for by the neighbours to cure them when they were ill. The older and uglier they were, the sorrier Florence was for them, and she would often steal out with sugar or apples or carrots in her pocket for some elderly beast which was ending its days quietly in the fields, stopping in the woods on the way to play with a squirrel or a baby rabbit. The game was perhaps a little one-sided, but what did that matter? As the poet Cowper says,

Wild, timid hares were drawn from woods To share her home caresses, And looked up to her human eyes With sylvan tendernesses.

Beasts and birds were Florence's dear friends, but dearest of all were her ponies.

While she was at Embley, the vicar, who was very fond of her, used often to take her out riding when he went on his rounds to see his people. Florence enjoyed this very much; she knew them all well, and never forgot the names of the children or their birthdays. Her mother would often give her something nice to carry to the sick ones, and when the flowers came out, Florence used to gather some for her special favourites, out of her own garden.

One day when she and the vicar were cantering across the downs, they saw an old shepherd, who was a great friend of both of them, attempting to drive his flock without the help of his collie, Cap, who was nowhere to be seen.

'What has become of Cap?' they asked, and the shepherd told them that some cruel boys had broken the dog's leg with a stone, and he was in such pain that his master thought it would be more merciful to put an end to him.

Florence was hot with indignation. 'Perhaps *I* can help him,' she said. 'At any rate, he will like me to sit with him; he must feel so lonely. Where is he?'

'In my hut out there,' answered the shepherd; 'but I'm afraid it's little good you or anyone else can do him.'

But Florence did not hear, for she was galloping as fast as she could to the place where Cap was lying.

'Poor old fellow, poor old Cap,' whispered she, kneeling down and stroking his head, and Cap looked up to thank her.

'Let me examine his leg,' said the vicar, who had entered behind her; 'he does not hold it as if it were broken. No, I am sure it is not,' he added after a close inspection. 'Cheer up, we will soon have him well again.'

Florence's eyes brightened.

'What can I do?' she asked eagerly.

'Oh, make him a compress. That will take down the swelling,' replied the vicar, who was a little of a doctor himself.

'A compress?' repeated Florence, wrinkling her forehead. 'But I never heard of one. I don't know how.'

'Light a fire and boil some water, and then wring out some cloths in it, and put them on Cap's paw. Here is a boy who will make a fire for you,' he added, beckoning to a lad who was passing outside.

While the fire was kindling, Florence looked about to find the cloths. But the shepherd did not seem to have any, and her own little handkerchief would not do any good. Still, cloths she must have, and those who knew Miss Nightingale in after years would tell you that when she *wanted* things she *got* them.

'Ah, there is Roger's smock,' she exclaimed with delight. 'Oh, *do* tear it up for me; mamma will be sure to give me another for him.' So the vicar tore the strong linen into strips, and Florence wrung them out in the boiling water, as he had told her.

'Now, Cap, be a good dog; you know I only want to help you,' she cried, and Cap seemed as if he *did* know; for though a little tremble ran through his body as the hot cloth touched him, he never tried to bite, nor even groaned with the pain, as many children would have done. By and by the lump was certainly smaller, and the look of pain in Cap's eyes began to disappear.

Suddenly she glanced up at the vicar, who had been all this time watching her.

'I can't leave Cap till he is *quite* better,' she said. 'Can you get that boy to go to Embley and tell them where I am? Then they won't be frightened.' So the boy was sent, and Florence sat on till the setting sun shot long golden darts into the hut.

Then she heard the shepherd fumbling with the latch, as if he could not see to open it; and perhaps he couldn't, for in his hand he held the rope which was to put an end to all Cap’s sorrows. But Cap did not know the meaning of the rope and only saw his old master. He gave a little bark of greeting and struggled on to his three sound legs, wagging his tail in welcome.

Roger could hardly believe his eyes, and Florence laughed with delight.

‘Just look how much better he is,’ she said. ‘The swelling is very nearly gone now. But he wants some more compresses. Come and help me make them.’

‘I think we can leave Roger to nurse Cap,’ said the vicar, who had just returned from some of the neighbouring cottages. ‘Your patient must have some bread and milk to-night, and to-morrow you can come to see how he is.’

‘Yes, of course I shall,’ answered Florence, and she knelt down to kiss Cap’s nose before the vicar put her up on her pony.

Now, though Florence was so fond of flowers and animals and everything out of doors, she was never dull in the house on a wet day. In the first place, nothing was ever allowed to interfere with her lessons, and though the little girls had a good governess, their father chose the books they were to read and the subjects they were to study. Greek, Latin, and mathematics he taught them himself, and besides he took care that they could read and speak French, German, and Italian. They were fond of poetry, and no doubt some of the earliest poems of young Mr. Tennyson were among their favourites, as well as ‘Lycidas’ and the songs of the cavaliers. Parthy was a better artist and a cleverer musician than Florence, though *she* could sing and sketch; but both were good needlewomen, and could make samplers as well as do fine work and embroidery. When school-time was over and the rain was still coming down, they would run away to their dolls, who, poor things, were always ill, so that Florence might have the pleasure of curing them. And though before Cap’s accident she had never heard of a compress, she could make nice food for them at the nursery fire, and bandage their broken arms and legs while Parthy held the wounded limb steady.

When they grew older, they went abroad now and then with their parents, but Florence liked best being at home with her friends in the village, who were very proud of her wishing to take their pictures with her new photographic camera. If they had only known it, the children in their best clothes standing up very stiff and straight did not look half as pretty as the baskets of kittens with eyes half-innocent, half-wise, or the funny little pups, so round and fat. But the parents thought the portraits of their children the most beautiful things in the world, and had them put into hideous gilt frames and hung on the walls, where Florence could see them on her frequent visits.

Welcome as she was to all, it was the sick people who awaited her coming the most eagerly. She was so quiet in her movements, and knew so exactly what to do without talking or fussing about it, that the invalids grew less restless in her presence, and believed so entirely that she really *could* cure them that they were half cured already! Then before she left she would read them ‘a chapter’ or a story to make them laugh, or anything else they wished for; and it was always a pleasure to listen to her, for she never stammered, or yawned, or lost her place, or had any of the tricks that often make reading aloud a penance to the victim.

For the young people both in Derbyshire and Hampshire she formed singing classes, and some of her ‘societies’ continue to-day. She was full of interest in other people’s lives, and not only was *ready* to help them but *enjoyed* doing so, which makes all the difference.

There is much nonsense talked in the world about ‘born’ actors, and ‘born’ artists, and ‘born’ nurses. No doubt some are ‘born’ with greater gifts in these matters than others, but the most famous artists or actors or nurses will all tell you that the only work which is lasting has been wrought by long hours of patient labour. Miss Nightingale knew this as well as anybody, and as soon as she began to think of doing what no modern lady had ever done before her, and devoting her life to the care of the sick, she set about considering how she could best find the training she needed. She tried, to use her own words, ‘to qualify herself for it as a man does for his work,’ and to ‘submit herself to the rules of business as men do.’

So she spent some months among the London hospitals, where her quick eye and clever fingers, aided by her cottage experience, made her a welcome help to the doctors. From the first she ‘began at the beginning,’ which is the only way to come to a successful end. A sick person cannot get well where the floor is covered with dirt, and the dust makes him cough; therefore his nurse must get rid of both dirt and dust before her treatment can have any effect. After London, Miss Nightingale went to Edinburgh and Dublin, and then to France and Italy, where the nursing was done by nuns; and after that she visited Germany, where at the town of Kaiserswerth, on the Rhine, she found what she wanted.

The hospital of Kaiserswerth, where Miss Nightingale had decided to do her training, had been founded about sixteen years earlier by Pastor Fliedner, who was a wise man, content with very small beginnings. At the time of her arrival it was divided into a number of branches, and there was also a school for the children, who were taught entirely by some of the sisters, or deaconesses, as they were called. On entering, everyone had to go through the same work for a certain number of months, whether they meant to be hospital nurses or school teachers.

All must learn to sew, cook, scrub, and read out clearly and pleasantly; but as Miss Nightingale had practised most of these things from the time she was a child, she soon was free to go into the hospital and attend to the sick people. The other nurses were German peasant women, but when they found that she could speak their language, and was ready to work as hard as any of them, they made friends at once. In her spare hours Miss Nightingale would put on her black cloak and small bonnet, and go round to the cottages with Mr. Fliedner, as long ago she had done with the vicar of Embley, and we may be sure any sick people whom she visited were always left clean and comfortable when she said good-bye.

But at Kaiserswerth Miss Nightingale had very little chance of learning any surgery, so she felt that she could not do better than pass some time in Paris with the nursing sisterhood of St. Vincent de Paul, which had been established about two hundred years earlier. Here, too, she went with the sisters on their rounds, both in the hospitals and in the homes of the poor, and learnt how best to help the people without turning them into beggars. Every part of the work interested her, but the long months of hard labour and food which was often scanty and always different from what she had hitherto had, began to tell on her. She fell ill, and in her turn had to be looked after by the sisters, and no doubt in many ways she learned more of sick nursing when she was a patient than she did when she was a nurse.

It was quite clear that it would be necessary for her to have a good rest before she grew strong again, and so she went back to Embley, and afterwards to Lea, and tried to forget that there was any such thing as sickness. But it is not easy for people who are known to be able and willing to have peace anywhere, and soon letters came pouring in to Miss Nightingale begging for her help in all sorts of ways. As far as she could she undertook it all, and often performed the most troublesome of all tasks, that of setting right the mistakes of others. In the end her health broke down again, but not till she had finished what she had set herself to do.

It was in March 1854 that war broke out between England, France, and Turkey on the one side, and Russia on the other. The battle-ground was to be the little peninsula of the Crimea, and soon the Black Sea was crowded with ships carrying eager soldiers, many of them young and quite ignorant of the hardships that lay before them.

At first all seemed going well; the victory of the Alma was won on September 20, 1854, and that of Balaclava on October 25, the anniversary of Agincourt. But while the hearts of all men were still throbbing at the splendid madness of the charge when, owing to a mistaken order, the Light Brigade rode out to take the Russian guns and were mown down by hundreds, the rain began to fall in torrents and a winter of unusual coldness was upon them. Nights as well as days were passed in the trenches that had been dug before the strong fortress of Sebastopol, which the allies were besieging, and the suffering of our English soldiers was far greater than it need have been, owing to the wickedness of many of the contractors who had undertaken to supply the army with boots and stores, and did not hesitate to get these so cheap and bad as to be quite useless, while the rest of the money set aside for the purpose was put into their pockets. The doctors gave themselves no rest, but there were not half enough of them, while of nurses there were none. The men did what they could for one another, but they had their own work to attend to, and besides, try as they would it was impossible for them to fill the place of a trained and skilful woman. So they, as well as their dying comrades lying patiently on the sodden earth, looked longingly at the big white caps of the French sisters, who for their part would gladly have given help and comfort had not the wounded of their own nation taken all their time. One or two of the English officers had been followed to the Crimea by their wives, and these ladies cooked for and tended the sick men who were placed in rows along the passages of the barracks, but even lint for bandages was lacking to them, and after the Alma they wrote letters to their friends in England entreating that no time might be lost in sending out proper aid.

These letters were backed by a strong appeal from the war correspondent of the *Times,* Dr. W.~H. Russell, and from the day that his plain account of the privations and horrors of the suffering army appeared in the paper, the War Office was besieged by women begging to be sent to the Crimea by the first ship. The minister, Mr. Sidney Herbert, did not refuse their offers; though they were without experience and full of excitement, he saw that most of them were deeply in earnest and under a capable head might be put to a good use. But where was such a head to be found? Then suddenly there darted into his mind the thought of Miss Nightingale, his friend for years past.

It was on October 15 that Mr. Sidney Herbert wrote to Miss Nightingale offering her, in the name of the government, the post of Superintendent of the nurses in the East, with absolute authority over her staff; and, curiously enough, on the very same day *she* had written to *him* proposing to go out at once to the Black Sea. As no time was to be lost, it was clear that most of the thirty-eight nurses she was to take with her must be women of a certain amount of training and experience. Others might follow when they had learnt a little what nursing really meant, but they were of no use now. So Miss Nightingale went round to some Church of England and Roman Catholic sisterhoods and chose out the strongest and most intelligent of those who were willing to go, the remainder being sent her by friends whose judgment she could trust. Six days after Sidney Herbert had written his letter, the band of nurses started from Charing Cross.

When after a very rough passage they reached the great hospital of Scutari, situated on a hill above the Bosphorus, they heard the news of the fight at Balaclava and learnt that a battle was expected to take place next day at Inkerman. The hospital was an immense building in the form of a square, and was able to hold several thousand men. It had been lent to us by the Turks, but was in a fearfully dirty state and most unfit to receive the wounded men who were continually arriving in ships from the Crimea. Often the vessels were so loaded that the few doctors had not had time to set the broken legs and arms of the men, and many must have died of blood poisoning from the dirt which got into their undressed wounds. Oftener still they had little or no food, and even with help were too weak to walk from the ship to the hospital. And as for rats! why there seemed nearly as many rats as patients.

The first thing to be done was to unpack the stores, to boil water so that the wounds could be washed, to put clean sheets on the beds, and make the men as comfortable as possible. The doctors, overworked and anxious as they were, did not give the nurses a very warm welcome. As far as their own experience went, women in a hospital were always in the way, and instead of helpers became hinderers. But Miss Nightingale took no heed of ungracious words and cold looks. She did her own business quietly and without fuss, and soon brought order out of confusion, and a feeling of confidence where before there had been despair. If an operation had to be performed — and at that time chloroform was so newly invented that the doctors were almost afraid to give it, Miss Nightingale, ‘the Lady-in-Chief,’ was present by the side of the wounded man to give him courage to bear the pain and to fill him with hope for the future. And not many days after her arrival, her coming was eagerly watched for by the multitudes of sick and half-starved soldiers who were lying along the walls of the passages because the beds were all full.

It is really hardly possible for us to understand all that the nurses had to do. First the wards must be kept clean, or the invalids would grow worse instead of better. Then proper food must be cooked for them, or they would never grow strong. Those who were most ill needed special care, lest a change for the worse might come unnoticed; and besides all this a laundry was set up, so that a constant supply of fresh linen might be at hand. In a little while, when some of the wounds were healing and the broken heads had ceased to ache, there would come shy petitions from the beds that the nurse would write them a letter home, to say that they had been more fortunate than their comrades and were still alive, and hoped to be back in England some day.

‘Well, tell me what you want to say, and I will say it,’ the nurse would answer, but it is not very easy to dictate a letter if you have never tried, so it soon ended with the remark,

‘Oh! nurse, *you* write it for me! You will say it much better than I can.’

‘Tell me what you want to say, and I will say it’

Would you like to know how the nurses passed their days? Well, first they got up very early, made their beds, put their rooms tidy, and went down to the kitchen, where they had some bread, which was mostly sour, and some tea without milk. Then arrowroot and beef tea had to be made for the men, and when the night nurses took their turn to rest, those who were on duty by day went into the wards and stayed there from half-past nine till two, washing and dressing and feeding the men and talking over their illnesses with the doctors, who by this time were thankful for their aid. At two the men were left to rest or sleep while their tired nurses had their dinner, and little as they might like it, they thought it their duty to swallow a plateful of very bad meat and some porter. At three some of them often took a short walk, but that November the rains were constant and very heavy at Scutari as well as in the Crimea, and as Miss Nightingale would allow no risk of catching cold, on these days the nurses all stayed in the hospital, where there was always something to be done or cooked for the patients, who required in their weak state to be constantly fed. At half-past five the nurses left the wards and went to their tea, but that did not take long, and soon they were back again making everything comfortable for the night, which began with the entrance of the night nurses at half-past nine.

It was a hard life, and when one remembers how bad their own food was, it is a marvel that any of them were able to bear it for so long. But, as Shakespeare says, ‘Nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so,’ and it is wonderful how far a brave spirit will carry one. Still, heavy though the nurses’ work was, that of Miss Nightingale was far more of a strain. It was she on whom everything depended, who had to think and plan and look forward, and write accounts of it all to Mr. Sidney Herbert in London, and lord Raglan, the Commander-in-Chief, at the Crimea. The orderlies of the regiment gave her willing aid, but they needed to be taught what to do, and no doubt the Lady-in-Chief often found that it is far quicker and easier to do things oneself than to spend time in training another person. Luckily she was prompt to see the different uses to which men and women could be put, so that there were no wasted days or weeks, caused by setting them tasks for which they were unfitted, and in a very short while the hospital, which had been a scene of horror on her arrival from England, was a well-arranged and most comfortable place.

But not only were there soldiers to be cared for, there were also their wives and children, who were almost forgotten and huddled together in a corner of the barracks, with few clothes and hardly any food. Miss Nightingale took them under her charge, and placed them in a clean house close by, giving some of the women work in her laundry and finding employment for the rest, with the help of the wife of one of the chaplains. The children were taught for several hours in the day, and thus their mothers were left free to earn money to support them, while the widows were given clothes and money, and as soon as possible sent home.

One morning, as the Lady-in-Chief went her rounds, the men noticed that her face was brighter than usual and looked as if something had pleased her very much. So it had, and in the afternoon, when they were all resting comfortably, they knew what it was. One of the chaplains went from ward to ward reading a letter which Queen Victoria had written to Mr. Sidney Herbert, and this was how it ran: —

Windsor Castle, December 6, 1854.

‘Would you tell Mrs. Herbert that I begged she would let me see frequently the accounts she received from Miss Nightingale or Mrs. Bracebridge, as I hear no details of the wounded, though I see so many from officers, &c., about the battlefield, and naturally the former must interest me most.

‘Let Mrs. Herbert also know that I wish Miss Nightingale and the ladies would tell those poor noble wounded and sick men that no one takes a warmer interest or feels more for their sufferings or admires their courage and heroism more than their queen. Day and night she thinks of her beloved troops. So does the Prince.

‘Victoria.’

‘God save the Queen,’ said the chaplain when he had finished, and from their hearts the men raised a feeble shout, ‘God save the Queen.’

Soon another detachment of nurses arrived from home and undertook the charge of other hospitals along the shores of the Bosphorus. They were led by Miss Stanley, sister of the famous dean of Westminster, and the band consisted partly of ladies who gave their services and partly of nurses who were paid. Some Irish sisters of mercy also accompanied them, and these were allowed to wear their nun’s dress, but the others must have looked very funny in the Government uniform — loose gowns of grey tweed, worsted jackets, short woollen cloaks, and scarves of brown holland with ‘Scutari Hospital’ in red letters across them. They were all made the same size, and ‘in consequence,’ adds sister Mary Aloysius, who was thankful that *she* did not need to present such an odd figure, ‘the tall ladies appeared to be attired in short dresses, and the short ladies in long.’

Clad in these strange clothes they reached their destination and were placed by Miss Nightingale wherever she thought they were most needed. Cholera was now raging and the rain in the Crimea had turned to bitter cold, so that hundreds of men were brought in frost-bitten. Often their garments, generally of thin linen, were frozen so tightly to their bodies that they had first to be softened with oil and then cut off. The stories of their sufferings are too terrible to tell, but scarcely one murmured, and all were grateful for the efforts to ease their pain. If death came, as it often did, Miss Nightingale was there to listen to their last wishes.

All through the spring the cholera raged, and at length some of the nurses, weakened by the strain on mind and body, and the lack of nourishing food, fell victims. One of them was a personal friend of Miss Nightingale’s, others were Irish nuns working in Balaclava, and their graves were kept gay with flowers planted by the soldiers. Thus the Lady-in-Chief found them when in May 1855 she set out to inspect the hospitals in the Crimea.

What a rest it must have been to be able to lie on deck and watch the blue waters without feeling that every moment of peace was stolen from some duty. She had several nurses with her; also her friend Mr. Bracebridge, whose wife had taken charge of the stores at Scutari, and a little drummer of twelve, called Thomas, who got amusement out of everything and kept up their spirits when the outlook seemed gloomiest.

The moment she landed Miss Nightingale, accompanied by a train of doctors, went at once to the hospitals, thus missing lord Raglan who came to give her a hearty welcome. Next day, when as in duty bound she returned his visit, she had the pleasure once more of feeling a horse under her, and old memories came back and it seemed as if she was again a child riding with the vicar. As we are told by a Frenchman that she wore a regular riding-dress, she probably borrowed this from one of the four English ladies then in the Crimea, for she is not likely to have had a habit of her own. Her horse was fresh and spirited and nervous, after the manner of horses, and the noise and confusion of the road that led to the camp was too much for his nerves. He plunged and kicked and reared and bucked, and did all that a horse does when he wants to be unpleasant, but Miss Nightingale did not mind at all — in fact she quite enjoyed it.

All day long the Lady-in-Chief went about, visiting the hospitals and even penetrating into the trenches while sharp firing was going on. The weather was intensely hot — for it is the greatest mistake to look on the Crimea, which is as far south as Venice or Genoa, as being always cold — and one day Miss Nightingale was struck down with sudden fever. She was at once taken to the Sanatorium on a stretcher, which was followed by the faithful Thomas, and great was the dismay and sorrow of the whole camp. Fortunately after a fortnight she began to recover, thanks to the care that was taken of her, but she absolutely refused to go home, as the doctors wished her to do, and, weak though she was, returned to Scutari, where soon afterwards she heard of her friend lord Raglan's death, which was a great shock to her. It was some time before she was strong enough to go back to her work, and she spent many hours wandering about the cypress-planted cemetery at Scutari, where so many English soldiers lay buried, and in planning a memorial to them which was afterwards set up.

In September Sebastopol fell and the war was over, but the sick and wounded were still uncured. It was hard for them to hear of their comrades going home proud and happy in the honours they had won, while *they* were left behind in pain and weariness, but it would have been infinitely harder without the knowledge that Miss Nightingale would bear them company to the end. After all they stood on English ground before she did, as when she was well enough she sailed a second time for the Crimea to finish the work which her illness had caused her to leave undone.

All through the winter of 1855 she stayed there, driving over the snow-covered mountains in a little carriage made for the purpose, which had been given her as a present. Sick soldiers there were in plenty in the hospitals, and for some time there was an army also, to keep order until the peace was signed. In order to give the soldiers occupation and amusement, she begged her friends at home to send out books and magazines to them, and this the queen and her mother, the duchess of Kent, were the first to do. Nothing was too small for the Lady-in-Chief to think of; she arranged some lectures, got up classes for the children and for anyone who wanted to learn; started a *café,* in hopes to save the men from drinking; and kept a money-order office herself, so that the men could, if they wished, send part of their pay home to their families. And when in July

1856 the British army set sail for England, Miss Nightingale stayed behind to see a white marble cross twenty feet high set up on a peak above Balaclava. It was a memorial from her to the thousands who had died at the mountain’s foot, in battle or in the trenches.

Honours and gifts showered on Miss Nightingale on all sides, and everybody was eager to show how highly they valued her self-sacrificing labours. If money had been wanted, it would have poured in from all quarters; but when the queen had made inquiries on the subject a year before Miss Nightingale’s return, Mr. Sidney Herbert replied that what the Lady-in-Chief desired above everything was the foundation of a hospital in which her own special system of nursing could be carried out. The idea was welcomed with enthusiasm, but none of the sums sent were as dear to Miss Nightingale’s heart as the day’s pay subscribed by the soldiers and sailors. The fund was applied to founding a home and training school for nurses, attached to St. Thomas’ hospital, and Miss Nightingale helped to plan the new buildings opposite the Houses of Parliament, to which the patients were afterwards moved.

Miss Nightingale came home with her aunt, Mrs. Smith, calling herself ‘Miss Smith’ so that she might travel unrecognised, but that disguise could not be kept up when she got back to Lea Hurst. Crowds thronged to see her from the neighbouring towns, and the lodge-keeper had a busy time. However, her father would not allow her to be worried. She needed rest, he said, and she should have it; and if addresses and plate and testimonials should pour in (as they did, in quantities) someone else could write thanks at her dictation. All round Lea Hurst her large Russian dog was an object of reverence, and as for Thomas the drummer-boy — well, if you could not see Miss Nightingale herself, you might spend hours of delight in listening to Thomas, who certainly could tell you far more thrilling tales than his mistress would ever have done.

We should all like to know what became of Thomas.

Miss Nightingale is still living, but the privations and overwork of those terrible months had so broken her down that for the last forty years she has been more or less of an invalid. Still, her interest is as wide as ever in all that could help her fellows, and though she was unable to go among them as of old, she was ready to help and advise, either personally or by letter. If she had given her health and the outdoor pleasures that she loved so much in aid of the sick and suffering, she had won in exchange a position and an influence for good such as no other woman has ever held.

Since this little account was written, the king has conferred on her the highest honour he could bestow on a woman, the Order of Merit, while the lord mayor of London and the corporation have given her the freedom of the City. Thus her life will end in the knowledge that she has gained the only honours worth having, those which have not been sought.

PRISONERS AND CAPTIVES

I am afraid you will think this a sad story, and so it is, but things would have been sadder still but for the man I am going to tell you about. His name was John Howard, and if you were to ask, ‘Which John Howard?’ the answer would be, ‘John Howard the Philanthropist,’ which means ‘a lover of men.’

It is a great title for anyone to win, and no one ever earned it more truly than this son of the rich upholsterer of Smithfield, born in Clapton, then a country village of the parish of Hackney, in 1727. As you will see by and by, Howard spent the last seventeen years of his life in fighting three giants who were very hard to beat, named Ignorance, Sloth, and Dirt; and it is all the more difficult to overcome them because they are generally to be met with together. Unfortunately, they never can be wholly killed, for when you think they are left dead on the field after a hard struggle, they always come to life again; but they have never been quite so strong since the war waged on them by John Howard, who died fighting against them in a Russian city.

Howard had always been a delicate boy, which made it all the more wonderful that he could bear the fatigue of the long journeys which he undertook to help people who could not help themselves. He was married twice, but neither of his wives lived long, and he had only one little boy to look after. But when the child was four years old, Howard felt that it was dull for him to be alone with his father, and without any play-fellows, so he sent him to a small school kept by some ladies, where little John, or ‘Master Howard,’ as it was the fashion to call him, would be well taken care of.

Howard was a quiet man, and very religious, but, what was rare in those times, he did not believe everybody in the wrong who thought differently from himself. He lived quietly among his books on a small estate he owned near Bedford, called Cardington, where he studied astronomy and questions about heat and cold, and when only twenty-nine was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Medicine always interested him, and he learned enough of it to be very useful to him during his travels; indeed, it was owing to his fame as a doctor that he was summoned to see a young Russian lady dying of fever, which, according to many, infected him, and caused his own death. In his studies and in the care of his tenants many peaceful years passed away. The man who afterwards became known as the champion of ‘prisoners and captives, and all who were desolate and oppressed,’ did not allow his own tenants to live in unhealthy and uncomfortable cottages crowded together in tiny rooms with water dropping on to their beds from the badly thatched roofs, like many other landlords both in his day and ours. He opened schools for the children, and drew up rules for them. The girls were taught reading and needlework, the boys reading and a little arithmetic. Writing does not seem to have been thought necessary, as none of the girls learned it, and only a few of the boys — probably the cleverer ones. On Sundays they were all expected to go to church or chapel, whichever their parents preferred.

In spite of the generosity which made John Howard ready to give money or time to any scheme that seemed likely to be of use to the poor, he was not popular with his neighbours, and saw very little of them. They thought him ‘odd’ because he did not care for races, or cock-fights, or long dinners that lasted far into the night, where the gentlemen often drank so much that they could not get home at all. Year by year Howard was teaching himself to do without things, and by and by he was able to live on green tea and a little bread and vegetables, with fruit now and then as a great treat. No wonder he was considered eccentric by the Bedfordshire country gentlemen!

But, in spite of his quiet ways, Howard had a passion for travelling, and when a youth threw up the position of grocer’s apprentice which his father had obtained for him, and started for France and Italy. Immediately after the death of his first wife he determined to go for a change to Lisbon, then lying in ruins after the recent earthquake. Before, however, his ship was out of the English Channel it was attacked and overpowered by a French privateer, and both crew and passengers were left without anything to eat or drink for nearly two days. They were then taken to the prison at Brest, thrown into a dark and horribly dirty dungeon, and apparently forgotten. Besides hunger and thirst, they went through terrible pangs, fearing lest they were to be left to starve; but at length the heavy bolts of the iron door were shot back, and a leg of mutton was thrust inside. Nobody had a knife, every weapon had been taken from them, and if they had, they were all too hungry to wait to use it. They sprang on the food like wolves and gnawed it like dogs.

For a week they all remained in their dungeon, and then Howard, at any rate, was allowed to leave it, and was sent first to Morlaix and then to Carpaix, where he was kindly treated by the gaoler, in whose house he lived. Howard gave his word that he would not try to escape, and for two months he remained there — a prisoner on parole, as it is called — writing letters to prisoners he had left behind him, who had not been so fortunate as himself. From what he had gone through he could easily guess what they were suffering, and determined that when once he got back to England he would do everything in his power to obtain their freedom.

They sprang on the food like wolves.

In two months Howard was informed by his friend the gaoler that the governor had decided that he should be sent to England, in order that he might arrange to be exchanged for a French naval officer, after swearing that in case this could not be managed, he would return as a prisoner to Brest. It was a great trial of any man’s good faith, but it was not misplaced, and happily the exchange was easily made. No sooner were his own affairs settled than Howard set about freeing his countrymen, and very shortly some English ships were sent to Brest with a cargo of French prisoners and came back with an equal number of English ones, all of whom owed their liberty to Howard’s exertions.

His captivity in France first gave him an idea of the state of prisons and the sufferings of prisoners, but eighteen years were to pass before the improvement of their condition became the business of his life.

Mr. Howard was appointed high sheriff for the county of Bedford in 1773, and as such had the prisons under his charge. The high sheriffs who had gone before him were of course equally bound to see that everything inside the gaol was clean and well-ordered, but nobody really expected them to trouble their heads about the matter, and certainly they never did. However, Mr. Howard’s notion of his duty was very different. He at once visited the county prison in Bedford, and the misery that he found there was repeated almost exactly in nearly every prison in the British Isles. The gaoler in Bedford — and in many other places — had no salary paid him, and therefore screwed all he could out of his prisoners; and no matter if a man were innocent or guilty, if a jury had condemned him or not, he must pay fifteen shillings and fourpence to the gaoler, and two shillings to the warder who brought him his food — when he had any — before he was set free. If, as often happened, the prisoners could not find the money, well, they were locked up till they died, or till the fees were paid.

When Howard informed the magistrates of what he had found, they were as much shocked as if it had not been their business to have known all about it.

‘A dreadful state of things, indeed!’ they said, ‘and they were greatly obliged to Mr. Howard for having discovered it. Yes, certainly, the criminals and those who had been confined for debt alone ought to be placed in different parts of the prison, and the men and women should be separated, and an infirmary built for the sick. Oh! they were quite willing to do it, but the cost would be very heavy, and the people might decline to pay it, unless the high sheriff could point to any other county which supported its own gaol.’

At the moment, the high sheriff could not, but he had no doubt that such a county would be easily found, so he at once started on a visit to some of the prisons, but, to his surprise, he did not discover *one* in which the gaoler was paid a fixed salary. And the more he saw of the prisons, the more he was grieved at their condition. Almost all had dungeons for criminals built underground, dark, damp, and dirty, and sometimes as much as twenty feet below the surface; and often these dungeons were very small and very crowded. Mats or, in a few of the better-managed prisons, straw was given the prisoners to lie on, but no coverings, and those who were imprisoned for debt were expected to pay for their own food or go without it.

Sick at heart with all that he had seen, Howard went home for a short rest, and then set out again on one of those tours on which he spent the remaining years of his life, never thinking that the work was done when he had reported on the terrible evils of the prison system, but always returning to make sure that his advice had been carried out, which it often was not. Curious to say, there are few instances of difficulties being put in the way of his inspecting the prisons in any of the countries which he visited, while about six months after his labours began, he was called to the bar of the House of Commons, and publicly thanked for his services in behalf of those who could not help themselves.

Mr. Howard was pleased and touched at the honour done him, and at the proof that

Evil is wrought by want of Thought, As well as by want of Heart;

but he was much more gratified by two laws that were passed during that session, one for relieving innocent prisoners from paying fees, and the other for insisting on certain rules being carried out which were necessary to keep the prisoners in good health.

This last Act was greatly needed. The bad air, the dirt, and the closeness of the rooms constantly produced an illness called gaol fever, from which numbers of prisoners died yearly, one catching it from the other. Nominally, a doctor was attached to every prison, but instead of being ready, as doctors generally are, to risk their lives for their patients, these men usually showed great cowardice. In Exeter, the doctor when appointed had it set down in writing that he should not be obliged to attend anyone suffering from gaol fever; in the county gaol for Cornwall, every prisoner but one was ill of this disease when Howard paid his first visit there. And no wonder, for here the prison consisted of only one room with a small window, and three ‘dungeons or cages,’ the one for women being only five feet long. The food was let down to them through a hole in the floor of the room above.

In Derby, Howard was thankful to see that things were far more what they ought to be. The rooms were larger and lighter, there was an infirmary for the sick, ‘a neat chapel,’ and even a bath, ‘which the prisoners were required occasionally to use.’ Here the debtors, instead of being nearly starved, were given the same allowance of food as the criminals. They were also supplied with plenty of straw, and had fires in the winter. Newcastle was still better managed, and here the doctor gave his services free; but the Durham gaol was in a terrible state, and when Howard went down into the dungeon he found several criminals lying there half-starved and chained to the floor. The reason of these differences probably lies in the fact that before Howard’s time nobody had ever taken the trouble to visit the prisons or to see if the rules were carried out. If, as sometimes happened, the doctor and gaoler were kind-hearted men, anxious to do their duty, then the prisoners were tolerably well cared for. If, on the other hand, they were careless or cruel, the captives had to suffer. This Howard saw, and was resolved, as far as possible, to put the prisoners out of the power of the gaolers, who should be made to undergo a severe punishment for any neglect of duty. For in Howard’s mind, though it was, of course, needful that men should learn that if they chose to commit crimes they must pay for them, yet he considered that so much useless misery only made the criminals harder and more brutal, and that the real object of punishment was to help people to correct their faults, and once more to become honest men and women.

Having satisfied himself of the state of the English prisons, and done what he could to improve them, Howard determined to discover how those in foreign countries were managed. Paris was the first place he stopped at, and the famous

Bastille the first prison he visited. Here, however, he was absolutely refused admittance, and seems, according to his friend Dr. Aikin, to have narrowly escaped being detained as a prisoner himself. But once outside the walls he remembered having heard that an Act had been passed in 1717, when Louis XV. was seven years old and the duke of Orleans was regent, desiring all gaolers to admit into their prisons any persons who wished to bestow money on the prisoners, only stipulating that whatever was given to those confined in the dungeons should be offered in the presence of the gaoler.

Armed with this knowledge and a quantity of small coins, Howard called on the head of the police, who received him politely and gave him a written pass to the chief prisons in Paris. These he found very bad, with dungeons in some of ‘these seats of woe beyond imagination horrid and dreadful,’ yet not apparently any worse than many on this side of the Channel.

After Howard’s dismal experiences in England, Scotland, Ireland, and France, it must have given him heartfelt pleasure to visit the prisons in Belgium, which, with scarcely an exception, were ‘all fresh and clean, no gaol distemper, no prisoners in irons.’ The bread allowance ‘far exceeds that of any of *our* gaols. Two pounds of bread a day, soup once, with a pound of meat on Sunday.’ This was in Brussels, but when he went on to Ghent, things were better still.

Like most of the large towns of Flanders, Ghent had a stirring history, and its townspeople were rich and prosperous. At the time of Howard’s visit, it was part of the dominions of the emperor Joseph II., brother of Marie Antoinette, and by his orders a large prison was in course of building. Though not yet finished, it already contained more than a hundred and fifty men, and Howard felt as if he must be dreaming when he saw that each of these prisoners had a room to himself, a bedstead, a mattress, a pillow, a pair of sheets, with two blankets in winter and one in summer. Everything was very clean, and the food plentiful and wholesome. But, besides all this, Howard noted with a feeling of envy two customs which so far he had tried in vain to introduce into England. One was that the men and the women should be kept apart, and the other, that they should be given useful work to employ their time. In England, a prisoner was sometimes condemned to ‘hard labour,’ but this was a mere form. There was no system arranged beforehand for the employment of convicts, and indeed, till more light was admitted into the English prisons, it was too dark to work at anything, so they just sat with the other criminals in the dark, stifling dungeons, with nothing to do and nothing to think of!

A more horrible punishment could not have been invented, and if the criminal left the prison at all, he was sure to come out even worse than he went in. And how was anything else possible?

Now in Ghent, and in most of the Flemish prisons, it was all as different as could be. The women sat in work-rooms of their own, when they had finished cleaning and cooking, mending all their own and the men's clothes, which it was part of their duty to wash. This done, wool in what is called its 'raw state' was served out to them — that is, wool as it had been taken off the sheep's fleece — and they had to comb out all the tangles, and spin it into long skeins. Then the skeins were taken to the men, many of whom were weavers by trade, and by them it was woven into cloth which was sold.

Thus, in doing work in which they could occupy themselves and take a pride, the prisoners unconsciously ceased to think all day of the bad lives they had led, and longed to lead again; and when they had served the time of their sentences and were discharged, they had a trade to fall back on, and, what was still more important, the *habit* of working.

Besides this, the method of 'hard labour' carried out in the Ghent prison had another great advantage for the prisoners. Every day each person's work, which would take him a certain number of hours to finish, was dealt out, and when it was done, and done *properly*, the prisoners were allowed, if they chose, to go on working, and the profits of this work were put aside to be given them when they were discharged. And in Ghent the criminals were not left, as in England, to the mercy of the gaoler, nobody knowing and nobody caring what became of them, for the city magistrates went over the prison once every week, and also arranged what meals the prisoners were to have till the next meeting.

In a gaol in the beautiful old city of Bruges, the contrast between the care taken of the sick criminals and the numberless deaths from gaol fever in his own country filled Howard with the deepest shame. In Bruges, the doctors did not make stipulations that they should not be expected to visit infectious patients, but they wrote out their prescriptions in a book for the magistrates to read. Thus it was possible for the rulers of the city to judge for themselves how ill a man might be, and how he was being treated; and as long as the doctor considered him in need of it, fourteen pence daily — a much larger sum then than now — was allotted to provide soup and other nourishing food for the sick person.

When Howard passed from Belgium to Holland he found the same care, though here the rules respecting the gaolers were stricter, because they were responsible for the orderly state of the prison and the conduct of the prisoners.

The gaolers were forbidden, on pain of a fine, to be seen drinking in public-houses, to quarrel with the prisoners, and to use bad language to them, and, greatest difference of all from the prisons he was accustomed to, no strong drink was allowed to be sold within the walls! Debtors were few, while in England they were more numerous than the criminals; and in Amsterdam not a single person had been executed for ten years, whereas in Britain sheep-stealing and all sorts of petty offences were punished by hanging.

From Holland Mr. Howard travelled to Germany, where, as a whole, the same sort of rules prevailed; and in Hamburg, the wives of the magistrates went to the prisons every Saturday to give out the women’s work. In some places the men were set to mend the roads, clean the bridges, clear away the snow, or do whatever the magistrates desired, and a guard with fixed bayonets always attended them. But they much preferred this labour, hard though it often was, to being shut up indoors, and looked healthy and cheerful.

After three months Mr. Howard returned home and inspected the prison at Dover, to find to his dismay everything exactly as before; and when, after a little rest, he set out on a second English tour, scarcely anywhere did he perceive an improvement. One small prison in the Forest of Dean was inhabited by two sick and half-starved men, who had been kept in one room for more than a year almost without water or fire or any allowance for food. In another, at Penzance, which consisted of two tiny rooms in a stable-yard, was one prisoner only, who would have died of hunger had it not been for a brother, even poorer than himself, who brought him just enough to keep him alive. Again and again Howard paid out of his own pocket the debts of many of those miserable people, which sometimes began by being no more than a shilling, but soon mounted up, with all the fees, to several pounds.

With only short intervals for rest, Howard went on travelling and inspecting, now in the British Isles and now abroad, and by slow degrees he began to see an improvement in the condition of the prisoners in his own country, whether criminals or debtors in gaols or convicts in the ‘hulks,’ as the rotten old ships used as prisons were called. He was careful never to leave a single cell unvisited, and spoke his mind freely both to the keepers and to the magistrates. The House of Commons always listened with eagerness to all he had to tell, and passed several Bills which should have changed things much for the better. But the difficulty lay, not in making the law, but in getting it carried out.

It is wonderful how, during all these travels and the hours spent in the horrible atmosphere of the prisons, a delicate man like Howard so seldom was ill. Luckily he knew enough of medicine to teach him to take some simple precautions, and he never entered a hospital or prison before breakfast. Dresden and Venice appear to have been the two cities on the Continent where the prisoners were the worst treated, many of them wearing irons, and few of them having enough food.

It would be impossible to give an account of all Howard’s journeys, which included Italy, Russia, Turkey, Germany, France, and Holland, but I have told you enough for you to understand what a task he had undertaken. When he was abroad he was sometimes entreated to attend private patients, so widely had his fame spread; and though he did not pretend to be a doctor, he never refused to give any help that was possible, and it was through this kindness that he lost his life. Once, during a visit to Constantinople, he received a message from a man high in the Sultan’s favour, begging him to come and see his daughter, as she was suffering great pain and none of the doctors could do anything to relieve her. Howard asked the girl some questions, and felt her pulse, and then gave some simple directions for her treatment which soon took away the pain, and in a few days she was nearly well. Her father was so grateful that he offered Howard a large sum of money, just as he would have done to one of his own countrymen, and was struck dumb when Howard declined the gift, and asked instead for a bunch of the beautiful grapes that he had seen hanging in the garden. As soon as the official had made sure that his ears had not deceived him, he ordered a large supply of the finest grapes to be sent to Howard daily as long as he stayed in Constantinople.

So for a whole month we can imagine him enjoying the Pasha’s grapes, in addition to the vegetables, bread, and water which formed his usual meals, taken at any hour that happened to be convenient. If he wished to go to visit a prison or hospital or lazaretto, there was no need to put it off because ‘it would interfere with his dinner-hour,’ for his dinner could be eaten any time. Not that there were any hospitals, properly speaking, in Constantinople; for though there was a place in the Greek quarter to which sick people were sent, hardly a single doctor could be found to attend them, and the only real hospital in the capital was for the benefit of cats.

Now in most of the great seaport towns along the Mediterranean, lazarettos, or pest-houses, were built, so that passengers on arriving from plague-stricken countries should be placed in confinement for forty days, till there was no fear of their infecting the people. In England, in spite of her large trade with foreign lands, there were no such buildings, and it is only wonderful that the plague was so little heard of. Howard determined to insist on the wisdom and necessity of the foreign plan; but as he always made his reports from experience and not from hearsay, he felt that the time had come when he should first visit the lazarettos, and then go through the forty days' quarantine himself.

This experiment was more dangerous than any he had yet tried, so instead of taking a servant with him, as had generally been his habit, he set out alone in November 1785.

As regards lazarettos, he found, as he had found with regard to prisons and hospitals, that their condition depended in a great degree on the amount of care taken by the ruler of the city. In Italy there were several that were extremely well managed, especially in the dominions of the grand duke of Tuscany; but he had made up his mind that when the moment came for his quarantine it should be undergone in Venice, the most famous lazaretto of them all. He took ship eastwards, and visited the great leper hospital at the Island of Scio, where everything was done to make the poor creatures as comfortable as possible. Each person had his own room and a garden of his own, where he could grow figs, almonds, and other fruit, besides herbs for cooking.

From Scio Howard sailed to Smyrna, and then changed into another vessel, bound for Venice, which he knew would be put in quarantine the moment it arrived in the city. The winds were contrary and the voyage slow, and off the shores of Greece they were attacked by one of the 'Barbary corsairs' who infested the Mediterranean. The Smyrna crew fought hard, for well they knew the terrors of the fate that awaited them if captured, and when their shot was exhausted they loaded their biggest gun with spikes and nails, and anything else that came handy. Howard himself aimed it, and after it had fired a few rounds, the enemy spread his black sails and retired.

At length, after two months, Venice was reached, and as a passenger on board a ship from an infected port, Howard was condemned to forty days' quarantine in the new lazaretto. His cell was as dirty as any dungeon in any English prison, and had neither chair, table, nor bed. His first care was to clean it, but it was so long since anyone had thought of doing such a thing that it was nearly as long before the dirt could be made to disappear, and meanwhile he was attacked by the same headache which had always marked his visit to such places, and in a short time became so ill that he was removed to the old lazaretto. Here he was rather worse off than before, for the water came so close to the walls that the stone floor was always wet, and in a week's time he was given a third apartment, this time consisting of four rooms, but all without furniture and as dirty as the first.

Ordinary washing was again useless to remove the thick coating of filth of all kinds, and at length Howard felt himself getting so ill that by the help of the English consul he was allowed to have some brushes and lime, which by mixing with water became whitewash. He then brushed down the walls without hindrance from anyone, though he had made up his mind that if the guard tried to stop him, he would lock him up in one of the rooms. Almost directly he grew better, and was able to enjoy his tea and bread once more.

The rules for purification of the infected ships were most strict, but it depended on the prior, or head of the lazaretto, whether they were carried out or not. All woollen, cotton, and silk materials, which were specially liable to carry infection, were carefully cleansed. The bags in which they were packed were all emptied, and the men belonging to the lazaretto were strictly forbidden to touch them with their hands, and always used canes to turn over the contents of the bags. This was done daily for forty days, when they were free from infection. Other things were kept in salt water for forty-eight hours, and short-haired animals were made to swim ashore.

He brushed down the walls without hindrance from anyone.

On November 20, Howard was set free, his health having suffered from the lack of air and exercise, and from anxiety about his son, whom he had left in England. However, he still continued his tour of inspection, and it was not till February 1787 that he reached home. After a short time given to his own affairs, in making the best arrangements that he could for his son, now completely out of his mind, he was soon busily employed in putting a stop very vigorously to the erection of a statue to his honour. The subscriptions to it had been large, for everybody felt how much the country owed to his unwearied efforts in the cause of his fellow-men, carried out entirely at his own cost. But Howard would not listen to them for one moment.

'The execution of your design would be a cruel punishment to me,' he says in a letter to the subscribers. 'I shall always think the reform now going on in several of the gaols of this kingdom, which I hope will become general, the greatest honour and most ample reward I can possibly receive.’

It was Howard who was right, and his friends who were wrong, for though after his death they would no longer be denied, it is not the picture of the statue in St. Paul’s which rises before us at the name of John Howard, but that of the prison cell.

HANNIBAL

If we could go back more than three thousand years, and be present at one of the banquets of Egypt or of the great kingdoms of the East, we should be struck by the wonderful colour which blazed in some of the hangings on the walls, and in the dresses of the guests; and if, coveting the same beautiful colour for our own homes, we asked where it came from, the answer would be that it was the famous Tyrian purple, made at the prosperous town of Tyre, off the coast of Palestine, inhabited by the Phœnician race.

The Phœnicians were celebrated traders and sent their goods all over the world. Ships took them to the mouth of the Nile, to the islands in the Cornish sea, to the flourishing cities of Crete almost as civilised as our own; while caravans of camels bore Phœnician wares across the desert to the Euphrates and the Tigris, most likely even to India itself. Soon the Phœnicians began to plant colonies which, like Tyre their mother, grew rich and beautiful, and far along the north African coast — so runs the old story — the lady Dido founded the city of Carthage, whose marble temples, theatres, and places of assembly were by and by to vie with those of Tyre itself.

But before these were yet completed, a wanderer, tall and strong and sunburned, towering nearly a head over the small Phœnician people, landed on the coast and was brought before the queen, as Dido was now called.

His name, he said, was Æneas, and he had spent many years in fighting before the walls of Troy for the sake of Helen, whom he thought the loveliest woman in the world, till he had looked on Dido the queen. After the war was ended he had travelled westwards, and truly strange were the scenes on which his eyes had rested since he had crossed the seas.

Dido listened, and as she had talked with many traders from all countries she understood somewhat of his speech, and bade him stay awhile and behold the wonders of the city she was building. So Æneas stayed, and the heart of the queen went out to him; but as the days passed by he tired of rich food and baths made sweet with perfumes, and longed for wild hills and the flocks driven by the shepherds. Then one morning he sailed away, and Dido saw his face no more; and in her grief she ordered a tall pyre to be reared of logs of sandalwood and cedar. When all was prepared she came forth with a golden circlet round her head, and a robe of scarlet falling to her feet, till men marvelled at her fairness, and laid herself down on the top of the pyre.

‘I am ready,’ she said to the chief of her slaves, who stood by, and a lighted torch was placed against the pile, and the flames rose high.

In this manner Dido perished, but her name was kept green in her city to the end.

But though Dido was dead, her city of Carthage went on growing, and conquering, and planting colonies, in Sicily, Spain, and Sardinia. Not that the Carthaginians themselves, though a fierce and cruel people, cared about forming an empire, but they loved riches, and to protect their trade from other nations it was needful to have strong fleets and armies. For some time the various Greek states were her most powerful enemies; but in the third century before Christ signs appeared to those with eyes to read them that a war between Carthage and Rome was at hand.

Now it must never be forgotten for a moment that neither then, nor for over two thousand years later, was there any such thing as Italy, as *we* understand it.

The southern part of the peninsula was called ‘Greater Greece,’ and filled, as we have said, by colonies from different Greek towns. In the northern parts, about the river Po, tribes from Gaul had settled themselves, and in the centre were various cities peopled by strange races, who for long joined themselves into a league to resist the power of Rome. But by the third century b.c. the Roman empire, which was afterwards to swallow up the whole of the civilised world from the straits of Gibraltar to the deserts of Asia, had started on its career; the league had been broken up, the Gauls and Greeks had been driven back, and the whole of Italy south of the river Rubicon paid tribute to the City of the Seven Hills on the Tiber.

Having made herself secure in Italy, Rome next began to watch with anxious eyes the proceedings of Carthage in Spain and in Sicily. The struggle for lordship was bound to come, and to come soon. As to her army, Rome feared nothing, but it was quite clear that to gain the victory over Carthage she must have a fleet, and few things are more striking in the great war than the determination with which Rome, never a nation of sailors, again and again fitted out vessels, and when they were destroyed or sunk gave orders to build more. And at last she had her reward, and the tall galleys, with high carved prows and five banks of oars, beat the ships which had been hitherto thought invincible.

It was in 263 b.c. that the war at last broke out in Sicily, and after gaining victories both by land and sea, Rome in the eighth year of the contest sent an army to Africa, under the consuls Regulus and Volso, with orders to besiege Carthage. The invading army consisted of forty thousand men, and was joined as soon as it touched the African shore by some tributary towns, and also by twenty thousand slaves — for Carthage was hated by all who came under her rule because of her savage cruelty. At the news of the invasion the people seemed turned into stone. Then envoys were sent to beg for peace, peace at any price, at the cost of any humiliation. But the consuls would listen to nothing, and Carthage would have fallen completely into her enemy's hands had the Romans marched to the gates. But at this moment an order arrived from the Roman senate, bidding Volso with twenty-four thousand men return at once, leaving Regulus with only sixteen thousand. With exceeding folly Regulus left the strongly fortified camp, which in Roman warfare formed one of the chief defences, and arrayed his forces in the open plain. There Carthage, driven to bay, gave him battle with her hastily collected forces. The Carthaginians, commanded by Xanthippus, a better general than Regulus, won the day, and only two thousand Romans escaped slaughter. The victory gave heart to the men of Carthage, and when news came from Sicily that Rome had been driven back and her fleets destroyed, their joy knew no bounds. In her turn Rome might have lain at the feet of the conqueror, but Carthage had no army strong enough to act in a foreign land, and contented herself with destroying during the war seven hundred five-banked Roman ships, which were every time replaced with amazing swiftness.

The war had raged for sixteen years when Hamilcar Barca, father of the most famous general before Cæsar (except Alexander the Great), was given command over land and sea. He was a young man, not more than thirty, and belonged to one of the oldest families in Carthage. Unlike most of his nation, he valued many things more highly than money, and despised the glitter and show and luxury in which all the Carthaginians delighted. A boy of fourteen when the first Punic war began (for this is its name in history), his strongest passion was hatred of Rome and a burning desire to humble the power which had defied his own beloved city. It did not matter to Hamilcar that his ships were few and his soldiers undisciplined. The great point was that he had absolute power over them, and as to their training he would undertake that himself.

So, full of hope he began his work, and in course of time, after hard labour, his raw troops became a fine army.

Hamilcar's first campaign in Sicily — so often the battleground of ancient

Europe — was crowned with success. The Romans were hemmed in by his skilful strategy, and if he had only been given a proper number of ships it would have been easy for him to have landed in Italy, and perhaps marched to Rome. But now, as ever in the three Punic wars, Carthage, absorbed in counting her money and reckoning her gains and losses, could never understand where her real interest lay. She waited until Rome, by a supreme effort, built another fleet of two hundred vessels, which suddenly appeared on the west coast of Sicily, and gave battle to the Carthaginian ships when, too late, they came to the help of their general. The battle was lost, the fleet destroyed, and Hamilcar with wrath in his soul was obliged to make peace. Sicily, which Carthage had held for four hundred years, was ceded to Rome, and large sums of money paid into her treasury for the expenses of the war.

Bitterly disappointed at the failure forced on him when victory was within his grasp, Hamilcar was shortly after summoned back to Carthage to put down a rebellion which the government by its greed and folly had provoked. The neighbouring tribes and subject cities joined the foreign troops whose pay had been held back, and soon an army of seventy thousand men under a good general was marching upon Carthage. So widespread was the revolt that it took Hamilcar, to whom the people had insisted on giving absolute power, three years to quell the revolt; but at length he triumphed, punishing the leaders, and pardoning those who had only been led.

Peace having been restored, Hamilcar was immediately despatched to look after affairs in Spain, where both Carthage and Rome had many colonies. Strange to say, he took with him his three little boys, Hannibal, Hasdrubal, and Mago, and before they sailed he bade Hannibal, then only nine, come with him into the great temple, and swear to the gods that he would be avenged on Rome.

If you read this story you will see how Hannibal kept his oath.

As this is a history of Hannibal, and not of his father, I have not room to tell you how Hamilcar took measures to carry out the purpose of his life, namely, the destruction of Rome. To this end he fortified the towns that had hitherto only been used as manufactories or storehouses, turned the traders into steady soldiers, sent for heavy armed African troops from Libya, and the celebrated light horse from Numidia, made friends with the Iberian (or Spanish) tribes, and ruled wisely and well from the straits of Gibraltar to the river Ebro. But, busy as he might be, he always had time to remember his three boys, and saw that they were trained in the habits and learning of a soldier. All three were apt pupils, and loved flinging darts and slinging stones, and shooting with the bow, though in these arts they could not rival their masters from the Balearic isles, however much they practised.

When Hannibal was eighteen, Hamilcar was killed in a battle with some of the native tribes who had refused to submit to the sway of Carthage. In spite of the hatred that he cherished for everything Roman, he had earned the undying respect of the noblest among them. ‘No king was equal to Hamilcar Barca,’ writes Cato the elder, and the words of Livy the historian about Hannibal might also be applied to his father.

‘Never was a genius more fitted to obey or to command. His body could not be exhausted nor his mind subdued by toil, and he ate and drank only what he needed.’ He had failed in his aim, but, dying, he left it as a heritage to his son, who, on the point of victory, was to fail also.

Under Hamilcar’s son-in-law, Hasdrubal, the work of training the army, encouraging agriculture, and fostering trade was carried on as before. It was not long before Hasdrubal made his young brother-in-law commander of the cavalry, and often sought counsel from him in any perplexity. Hannibal was much beloved, too, by his soldiers of all nations, and to the end they clung to him through good and ill. He gave back their devotion by constant care for their comfort — very rare in those days — seeing that they were fed and warmed before entering on a hard day’s fighting, and arranging that they had proper time for rest. To the Iberians he was bound by special ties, for before he quitted Spain for his death-struggle with Rome he married a Spanish princess, little thinking, when he started northwards in May 218 b.c., that he was leaving her and her infant son behind him for ever.

All this time Rome had been growing both in her influence and her dominions, when for a while her very existence was threatened by the sudden invasion of seventy thousand Gauls, who poured in from the north. They were defeated in a hard-fought battle and beaten back, but the struggle with the barbarians was long and fierce, and Rome remained exhausted. Her attention was occupied with measures needful for her own defence and in raising both men and money, and except for warning the Carthaginians not to cross the Ebro, she left them for a time pretty much to themselves, thinking vainly that, as long as her navy gave her command of the sea, she had no need to trouble herself about affairs in Spain or Africa. Indeed, after the severe strain of the Gallic war, the Roman senate thought that they were in so little danger either from Carthage or from Greece that their troops might take a sorely needed rest, and the army was disbanded.

This was Hannibal's chance, and with the siege and fall of the Spanish town of Saguntum in 218 b.c. began the second Punic war.

For years the young general had been secretly brooding over his plans, and had prepared friends for himself all along the difficult way his army would have to march. Unknown to Rome, he had received promises of help from most of the tribes in what is now the province of Catalonia, from Philip of Macedon, ruler in the kingdom of Alexander the Great, and from some of the Gauls near the Rhone and along the valley of the Po. Many of these proved broken reeds at the time of trial, when their help was most needed, and even turned into enemies, and Hannibal was too wise not to have foreseen that this might happen. Still, for the moment all seemed going as he wished; war was declared, and Rome made ready her fleet for the attack by sea which she felt was certain to follow.

In our days of telephones and telegrams and wireless telegraphy, it is very nearly *impossible* for us to understand how an army of ninety thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and thirty-seven elephants could go right through Spain from Carthagena in the south-east to the Pyrenees in the north, and even beyond them, without a whisper of the fact reaching an enemy across the sea. Yet this is what actually occurred. Rome sent a large force under one consul into Sicily, the troops were later to embark for Carthage, another to the Po to hold the Gauls in check, while a third, under Publius Scipio, was shortly to sail for Spain and there give battle to the Carthaginians. That Hannibal was fighting his way desperately through Catalonia at that very moment they had not the remotest idea.

Not only did Hannibal lose many of his men in Catalonia, but he was obliged to leave a large body behind, under Hanno, his general, to prevent the Catalans rising behind him, and cutting off his communications with Spain.

The Pyrenees were crossed near the sea without difficulty, and for a time the march was easy and rapid along the great Roman road as far as Nismes, and then on to the Rhone between Orange and Avignon. By this time the consul, Publius Scipio, who had been prevented for some reason from going earlier to Spain, and was now sailing along the gulf of Genoa on his way thither, heard at Marseilles that Hannibal was advancing towards the river Rhone. The Roman listened to the news with incredulity and little alarm. How could Hannibal have got over the Pyrenees and he not know it? A second messenger arrived with the same tale as the first, but Scipio still refused to believe there was any danger. Why, the late rains had so swollen the river that it was now in high flood, and how could any army ford a stream so broad and so rapid? And if it *did*, had not the envoy said that some Gallic troops were drawn up on the other side to prevent the enemy landing? So Scipio disembarked his troops in a leisurely manner, and contented himself with sending out a scouting party of horse to see where the Carthaginians might be encamped — if they really were there at all!

Now all the way along his line of march Hannibal had followed his usual policy, and had gained over to his side most of the Gauls who lay in his path, and when they seemed inclined to oppose him, a bribe of money generally made matters smooth. But on reaching the right bank of the river he found the Gallic tribes, of whom Scipio had heard, assembled in large numbers on the left bank, just at the very place where he wished to cross. He knew at once that it was useless to persist in making the passage here, and some other plan must be thought of.

The first thing Hannibal did was to buy at their full value all the boats and canoes used by the natives in carrying their goods down to the mouth of the Rhone, there to be sold to foreign traders. The people, finding that the army of strange nations with dark skins and curious weapons did not intend to rob them, but to pay honestly for all they took, became ready to help them, and offered themselves as guides if they should be needed. And to prove their good will, they began to help the soldiers to cut down trees from the neighbouring forests, and to scoop them into canoes, one for every soldier.

It was the third night after the Carthaginians had reached the river when Hannibal ordered Hanno, one of his most trusted generals, to take a body of his best troops up the stream, to a place out of sight and sound of the Gallic camp, where one of the friendly guides had told him that a passage might be made. The country at this point was lonely, and the detachment met with no enemies along the road, and no one hindered them in felling trees and making rafts to carry them to the further bank. Early next morning they all got across, and then by Hannibal’s express orders rested and slept, for he never allowed his soldiers to fight when exhausted. Before dawn they started on their march down the left bank, sending up, as soon as it was light, a column of smoke to warn Hannibal that everything had gone smoothly, and that he might now begin to cross himself.

His men were all ready, and without hurry or confusion took their places. The heavy-armed cavalry, with their corselets of bronze, and swords and long spears, entered the larger vessels; two men, standing in the stern of every boat, holding the bridles of three or four horses which were swimming after them. It must have required great skill on the part of the oarsmen to allow sufficient space between the boats, so that the horses should not become entangled with each other, but no accident happened either to the larger vessels or to the canoes which contained the rest of the foot.

Exactly as Hannibal expected, for he always seemed to know by magic the faults that his enemy would commit, at the sight of the Carthaginian army on the river the Gauls poured out of their camp, and crowded to the bank, shouting and screaming with delight and defiance. There they stood, with eyes fixed on the advancing boats, when suddenly Hanno's men came up and attacked them from behind. They turned to grapple with this unexpected enemy, thus giving Hannibal time to land his first division and charge them in the rear. Unable to stand the twofold onslaught, the Gauls wavered, and in a few minutes disappeared in headlong flight.

When the rest of the army was safe on the left bank a camp was pitched, and orders given for the morrow. Hannibal's great anxiety was for the passage of the elephants, still on the other side, for the great creatures on whose help he counted, perhaps more than he should, were terribly afraid of water. But no man ever lived who was cleverer at forming schemes than Hannibal, and at last he hit on one which he thought would do. Five hundred of his light-armed horsemen from the African province of Numidia were despatched down the river to find out how many soldiers Scipio had with him, the number and size of the ships that had arrived, and, if possible, the consul's future plans. Then the general chose out some men who were specially fitted to manage the elephants, and bade them recross the river immediately, giving them exact directions what they were to do when they were once more on the right bank.

The plan Hannibal had invented for the passage of the elephants was this.

The men whom he had left on the other side of the Rhone were ordered to cut down more trees as fast as possible, and chop them into logs, which were bound firmly together into rafts about fifty feet broad; when finished, these rafts were standing on the bank, lashed to trees and covered with turf, so that they looked just like part of the land. The rafts stretched a long way into the river, and the two furthest from the bank were only tied lightly to the others, in order that their ropes might be cut in a moment. By this means Hannibal felt that it would be possible for the elephants to be led by their keepers as far as the outermost rafts, when the ropes would be severed, and the floating platform rowed towards the further shore. The elephants, seeing the water all round them, would be seized with a panic, and either jump into the river in their fright and swim by the side of the raft, guided by their Indian riders, or else from sheer terror would remain where they stood, trembling with fear. But though the rafts were to be built without delay, the passage was on no account to be attempted till the signal was given from Hannibal’s camp.

Meanwhile the Numidians on their way down the left bank of the Rhone had nearly reached the Roman headquarters when they met the party of cavalry whom Scipio, on his side, had sent out to reconnoitre. The two detachments at once fell upon each other and fought fiercely, and then, as Hannibal had directed, the Numidians retreated, drawing the Romans after them, till they were in sight of the Carthaginian entrenchments. Here the cavalry pulled up, and returned unpursued to Scipio with the news that they had defeated the famous Numidian horsemen in a hot skirmish, and that Hannibal was entrenched higher up the river. Immediately Scipio broke up his camp and began his march northwards, which was just what Hannibal wanted.

But at sunrise that same morning the signal had been given for the passage of the elephants, and the Carthaginians had started on their way to the Alps, the heavy-armed infantry in front, with the cavalry in the rear to protect them. Hannibal himself was determined not to stir till the elephants were safely over, but everything fell out as he expected, and the whole thirty-seven were soon safe beside him on dry land, snorting and puffing with their trunks in the air.

Then he followed his main body, and when Scipio, thirsting to give battle to the enemy he felt sure of conquering, arrived at the spot where three days before the Carthaginian army had been encamped, he found it empty.

Nothing is so necessary to the success of a campaign as having correct maps and information about the country through which your army has to pass. Hannibal, who thought of everything, had thought of this also, and had paid native guides well to lead him to the nearest passes over the Alps. For four days the Carthaginians marched along the Rhone, till they reached the place where the river Isère flows into it. The Gallic chief of the tribes settled in this part of Gaul, being at war with his brother, was easily gained over by some assistance of Hannibal’s in securing his rights, and in return he furnished the Carthaginians with stores from the rich lands he ruled, with new clothes and strong leather sandals, and, more precious than all, with fresh weapons, for their own had grown blunted and battered in many a grim fight since the soldiers left Carthagena.

At the foot of the pass leading over the Mont du Chat, or Cat Mountain, in a lower range of the Alps, the chief bade them farewell, and returned to his own dominions. It was then that Hannibal’s real difficulties began. His army consisted of many races, all different from each other, with different customs and modes of warfare, worshippers of different gods. There were Iberians from Spain, Libyans and Numidians from Africa, Gauls from the south of France; but they one and all loved their general, and trusted him completely, and followed blindly where he led. Still, the plunge into those silent heights was a sore trial of their faith, and in spite of themselves they trembled.

As they began their climb they found the pass occupied by numbers of Gallic tribes ready to hurl down rocks on their heads, or attack them at unexpected places. Perceiving this, Hannibal called a halt, while his native scouts stole away to discover the hiding-places of the enemy, and, as far as possible, how they intended to make their assault.

The guides came back bringing with them the important news that the tribes never remained under arms during the night, but retired till daylight to the nearest villages. Then Hannibal knew what to do. As soon as it was dark he seized upon the vacant posts with his light-armed troops, leaving the rest, and the train of animals, to follow at sunrise.

When they returned and saw what had happened in their absence the Gallic tribes were filled with rage, and lost no time in attacking the baggage-horses, which were toiling painfully over the rough ground. The animals, stung by their wounds, were thrown into confusion, and either rolled down the precipice themselves or pushed others over. To save worse disasters, Hannibal sounded a charge, and drove the Gauls out of the pass, even succeeding in taking a town which was one of their strongholds, and full of stores and horses.

After a day’s rest he started again, this time accompanied by some of the enemy, who came with presents of cows and sheep, pretending to wish for peace, and offered themselves as guides over the next pass. But Hannibal feared them ‘even when they bore gifts,’ and did not put much faith in their promises. He determined to keep a close watch on them, but guides of some sort were necessary, and no others were to be had. However, he made arrangements to guard as far as possible against their treachery, placing his cavalry and baggage train in front, and his heavy troops in the rear to protect them.

The Carthaginian army had just entered a steep and narrow pass when the Gauls, who had kept pace with them all the way, suddenly attacked them with stones and rocks. Unlike their usual custom, they did not cease their onslaughts, even during the dark hours, and did great harm; but at sunrise they had vanished, and without much more trouble the Carthaginians managed to reach the head of the pass, where for two days the men and beasts, quite exhausted, rested amidst the bitter cold of the November snows, so strange to many of the army, who had grown up under burning suns and the sands of the desert.

Cold and tired though they were, hundreds of miles from their homes, one and all answered to Hannibal’s words, entreating them to put their trust in him, and they should find ample reward for their sufferings in the rich plains of Italy which could be seen far below them.

‘You are now climbing,’ he said, ‘not only the walls of Italy, but also those of Rome. The worst is past, and the rest of the way lies downhill, and will be smooth and easy to travel. We have but to fight one, or at most two, battles, and Rome will be ours.’

And so perhaps it might have been if Carthage had only supported the greatest of her sons, and sent him help when he needed it so badly.

Hannibal was wrong when he told his soldiers that their difficulties were over, for as all accustomed to mountain-climbing could have informed him, it was much harder to go down the pass than it had been to come up it. A fresh fall of snow had covered the narrow track, but beneath it all was frozen hard and was very slippery. The snow hid many holes in the ice or dangerous rocks, while landslips had carried away large portions of the path. No wonder that men and beasts unused to such ground staggered and fell and rolled down the sides of the precipice. At length the path, barely passable before, grew narrower still; the army halted, and an active, light-armed soldier offered to go forward, and discover if the track became wider, and whether it was possible for even the men to go on. But the further he went the worse matters seemed. For some distance he managed, by clinging to a few small bushes which had wedged themselves into clefts of the rock, to lower himself down the side of the cliff, which was as steep as the wall of a house. Then he found right in front of him a huge precipice nearly a thousand feet deep, formed by a recent landslip, which entirely blocked what was once a path. As long as this rock remained standing it was plain that no man, still less an army, could get round it.

Climbing painfully back the way he had come, the soldier at once went with his report to Hannibal, who instantly made up his mind what to do. He carried supplies of some sort of explosive with him — what it was we do not know — and with this he blew up the rocks in front till there was a rough pathway through the face of the precipice. Then the soldiers cleared away the stones, and after one day’s hard work the oxen, bearing the few stores left, and the half-starved, weary horses, were led carefully along, and down into a lower valley, where patches of grass could be seen, green amidst the wastes of snow. Here the beasts were turned loose to find their own food, and a camp was pitched to protect them.

Still, though the path had proved wide enough for horses and oxen, it was yet far too narrow for the elephants, and it took the Numidian troops three more days to make it safe for the great creatures which had struck such terror into the hearts of the mountain tribes. But weak as they were, the skin hanging loose over their bones, they made no resistance, and soon the whole army was marching towards the friendly Gauls, in the valley of the Po.

This was how in fifteen days Hannibal made the passage of the Little St. Bernard five months after he had set out from Carthagena. But the journey had been accomplished at a fearful cost, for of the fifty thousand men whom he had led from the city there remained only eight thousand Iberians or Spaniards, twelve thousand Libyans, and six thousand cavalry, though, strange to say, not one elephant had been lost.

It was well indeed for the Carthaginians that Scipio was not awaiting them at the foot of the Alps, but was making his way northwards from Pisa to the strong fortress of Placentia on the Po.

Among the friendly Gallic tribe of the Insubres, to whom Hannibal was united by the bond of hate of Rome, the troops rested and slept, and the horses and elephants grew fat once more. The men had had no time to think of themselves during those terrible weeks, and their health had suffered from the bitter cold and the wet clothes, which were often frozen on them. To add to this, their food had been as scanty as their labour had been hard, for most of their stores lay buried under the snows of the Alps. But in the rich, well-watered plains of Italy, ‘the country and the inhabitants being now less rugged,’ as the historian Livy tells us, they soon recovered their strength, and besieged and took by assault the city of Turin, capital of the territory of the Taurini, who were always at war with the Gallic allies of Hannibal.

With two Roman armies so near at hand the Gauls did not dare to join him in any great numbers, though they would gladly have flocked to his standard. Rome itself was filled with consternation at the news that Hannibal, whom they had expected to fight in Spain, was really in Italy, and hastily recalled the troops intended for Carthage, which were still at the Sicilian town of Lilybæum. On receipt of the order, the general Tiberius instantly sailed with part of the men for Rome, and ordered the rest of the legions to proceed to Rimini on the Adriatic, bidding each man swear that he would reach the city by bedtime on a certain day.

If you look at the map and see the distance they had to go, you will be amazed that they kept their oaths, and arrived at Rimini in four weeks, marching daily sixteen miles.

Meanwhile Scipio was encamped in Placentia, and Hannibal, who had no time to lose in besieging such a strong position, was doing his best to tempt his enemy into the plain, where his own cavalry could have room to manœuvre. But instead of remaining in Placentia, and allowing Hannibal to wear himself out in waiting, the Roman general left the town, crossed the Po, and advanced towards the river Ticino, where he ordered his engineers to build a bridge.

It was quite clear that with the two armies so near each other a battle could not be long delayed, and both commanders took what measures they thought necessary.

The way which Hannibal took to ‘encourage’ his army, as the Greek historian Polybius calls it, was rather a curious one, and reminds us of the manner in which lessons were taught in some of the old Bible stories.

While crossing the Alps he had captured a number of young Gauls in the very act of hurling rocks on the head of his army. Most commanders, both in that age and for very long after, would have put them to death at once, but Hannibal, unlike the Carthaginians, was never unnecessarily cruel, though he put his prisoners in chains and took care they should not escape. He now ordered these young men to be brought before him and placed in the centre of his troops, which were drawn up all round. On the ground near him lay some suits of armour, once worn by Gallic chiefs, and a pile of swords, while horses were tethered close by. Making a short speech, he then offered the young men a chance of saving their lives with honour, or meeting an honourable death at each other’s hands. Would they take it, or would they rather remain prisoners?

A shout of joy answered him.

‘Well, then,’ said Hannibal, ‘you will each of you draw lots which shall fight with the other, and the victor of every pair shall be given armour, a horse, and a sword, and be one of my soldiers.’

Pressing eagerly forward towards the urns which held the lots, the captives stopped to hold up their hands, as was their custom, praying to their gods for victory. After the lots were all drawn, they took their places, and under the eyes of the army the combat began. And when it was finished, and half the fighters lay dead on the field, it was they, and not the victors, who were envied by the soldiers, for having gloriously ended the misery of their lives. For in the old world death was welcomed as a friend, and seldom was a man found who dared to buy his life at the cost of his disgrace.

‘The struggle between the captives,’ said Hannibal to his army, ‘is an emblem of the struggle between Carthage and Rome. The prize of the victors will be the city of Rome, and to those who fall will belong the crown of a painless death while fighting for their country. Let every man come to the battlefield resolved, if he can, to conquer, and if not to die.’

It was in this spirit that Hannibal trained his troops and led them to battle. He never made light of the difficulties that lay before him, or the dogged courage of the Romans, who rose up from every defeat with a fresh determination to be victorious. One advantage they had over Hannibal, and it could hardly be valued too highly. Though the councils of the senate who sent forth the troops might be divided, though the consuls who commanded them might be jealous of each other, yet the great mass of the army consisted of one nation, who together had fought for years under the eagles of Rome.

Hannibal, on the other hand, had to deal with soldiers of a number of different races, and his latest recruits, the Gauls, though eager and courageous, could not be depended upon in battle. When to this is added the fact that Hannibal was in a country which he did not know, among a people who feared Rome even while they hated her, and would desert him at the first sign of defeat; that he had to provide daily for the wants of both men and animals, and that for sixteen years he remained in Italy with a dwindling army, striking terror into the hearts of the bravest of the Romans, you may have some little idea of the sort of man he was.

Well may an historian say that the second Punic war was the struggle of a great man against a great nation. Take away Hannibal, and the Carthaginian forces were at the mercy of Rome.

We have no space to describe the various battles in the valley of the Po, in which Hannibal was always the victor. At the river Trebia he defeated Scipio in December 218, by aid of the strategy which never failed, till he taught his enemies how to employ it against himself. Hannibal was a man who never left anything to chance, and whether his generals were trusted to draw the enemy from a strong position into the open field, or to decoy it into an ambuscade, everything was foreseen, and as far as possible provided against. He took care that his troops and his animals should go into action fresh, well-fed, and well-armed, and more than once had the wounds of both horses and men washed with old wine after a battle. That tired soldiers cannot fight was a truth he never forgot or neglected.

During the winter months following the victory of Trebia, Hannibal pitched his camp in the territories of his Gallic allies, and busied himself with making friendly advances to the Italian cities which had been forced to acknowledge the headship of Rome. ‘He had not come to fight against them,’ he said, ‘but against Rome, on their behalf.’ So the Italian prisoners were set free without ransom, while the Roman captives were kept in close confinement. He also sent out spies to collect all the information they could as to the country through which he had to travel. He was anxious, for other reasons, to break up his camp as soon as he was able, as he saw signs that the Gauls were weary and rather afraid of having him for a neighbour.

Therefore, in the spring of 217 b.c. he marched southwards, placing the Spaniards and Libyans in front, with the baggage and stores behind them, the Gauls, whom he never quite trusted, in the centre, and the Numidian light horse and cavalry in the rear, under his brother Mago. There were no elephants to be thought of now, for they had all died of cold after the battle of Trebia. North of the Arno was a wide tract of marshland, which had to be crossed before the Apennine mountains could be reached. Never, during all his campaigns, did Hannibal’s army have to undergo such suffering. In many ways it was worse than the passage of the Alps, for once in the midst of the morasses, swollen by the melting snows, it was hardly possible to snatch a moment of sleep. Many of the oxen fell and died, and when this happened the wearied men stretched themselves on their still warm bodies, and closed their eyes for a short space.

At length, after three nights and four days of incessant marching, till the troops were nearly numb with cold, firm ground was reached, and for a while they rested in peace on the hill of Fiesole, above the Arno.

Here Hannibal formed his plans for the next campaign. He found out that Flaminius the consul was a vain, self-confident man, with neither experience nor skill in war. It would be easy, he thought, by laying waste the rich country to the south, to draw the Roman general from his camp at Arretium; and so it proved. Flaminius, greedy of glory he could never gain, refused to listen to the advice of his officers and wait for the arrival of the other consul, and set out in pursuit of Hannibal, who felt that victory was once more in his hands.

The place which Hannibal chose for his battle was close to lake Thrasymene, a reedy basin in the mountains not far from the city of Cortona. At this spot a narrow valley ran down to the lake, with lines of hills on both sides, and a very steep mountain at the opposite end of the lake. At the lake end the hills came so close together that there was only a small track through which a few men could pass at a time.

Making sure that his enemy was following in his footsteps, Hannibal placed his steady heavy armed Spaniards and Libyans on the hill at the end of the valley opposite the lake, in full view of anyone who might approach them. His Balearic slingers and archers, and light-armed troops, were hidden behind the rocks of the hills on the right, and the Gauls and cavalry were posted in gorges on the left, close to the entrance of the defile, but concealed by folds in the ground. Next day Flaminius arrived at the lake, and, as Hannibal intended, perceived the camp on the hill opposite. It was too late to attack that night, but the next morning, in a thick mist, the consul gave orders for the advance through the pass. Grimly smiling at the success of his scheme, Hannibal waited till the Romans were quite close to him, and then gave the signal for the assault from all three sides at once.

Never in the whole of history was a rout more sudden and more complete. Flaminius’ army was enclosed in a basin, and in the thick fog could get no idea from which direction the enemy was coming. The soldiers seemed to have sprung right out of the earth, and to be attacking on every quarter. All that the Romans could do was to fight, and fight they did with desperation. But there was no one to lead them, for their generals, like themselves, were bewildered, and Flaminius speedily met with the fate his folly deserved. Fifteen thousand Romans fell that day in the fierce battle, during which even an earthquake passed unheeded. Multitudes were pushed back into the lake and were dragged down to the bottom by the weight of their armour. Some fled to the hills and surrendered on the promise of their lives being spared, and a few thousands found their way back to Rome.

The victory being won, Hannibal charged the soldiers to seek for the body of Flaminius, so that he might give it honourable burial, by which nations in ancient times set special store. But, search as they might, they could not find it, nor was it ever known what became of him. Very differently did the Roman general Nero behave eleven years later on the banks of the Metaurus, when Hannibal’s brother Hasdrubal, seeing that the day was lost, rode straight into the ranks of the enemy. When he fell, Nero, with savagery worthy of his namesake the emperor, cut off the head of the Carthaginian and threw it into Hannibal’s camp.

There was silence in Rome when bands of wounded and weary soldiers came flying to the gates, bearing the news of this fresh disaster. Fifteen thousand men slain, fifteen thousand men taken prisoners! Hardly a family in Rome that was not stricken, and who could tell when the banners of the Carthaginians might not be seen on the crests of the hills? But as the troubles of life show the stuff of which men are made, Romans were never so great as when their cause seemed hopeless. The city was at once put in a state of defence, every boy and old man that could bear arms was sent to the walls, the bridges over the Tiber were destroyed, and the senate, putting aside the consuls, elected a dictator, who for six months had absolute power over the whole state.

The man who in this hour of sorest need was chosen to save the city was Quintus Fabius, whose policy of ‘waiting’ has become a proverb even to this day. He was already old, and was never a brilliant general, but, like most Romans, possessed great common-sense.

Alone among the senate he saw that there was no hope of conquering Hannibal in a pitched battle. Rome had not then — and, except for Cæsar, never has had — a single general with a genius equal to his; but there was one way, and one only, by which he might be vanquished, and that was to leave him where he was, in the midst of a hostile country, till his troops grew weary of expecting a battle which never was fought, and his Gallic allies became tired of inaction and deserted him.

Such was the plan of warfare which Fabius proposed, but his own countrymen put many obstacles in the way of its success. Many times he was called a coward for declining a battle which would certainly have been a defeat; but he let such idle cries pass him by, and hung on Hannibal’s rear, keeping his soldiers, many of whom were raw and untrained, under his own eye. In vain Hannibal drew up his men in order of battle and tried by every kind of insult to induce Fabius to fight. The old general was not to be provoked, and the enemy at length understood this and retired to his camp.

Immediately after the battle of Thrasymene, Hannibal, knowing quite well that he was not strong enough to attack Rome, had taken up his headquarters on the shores of the Adriatic, so as to be at hand if Philip of Macedon made a descent upon Italy, or Carthage sent the reinforcements her general had so frequently asked for. But it was as useless to trust to the promises of the one as to the patriotism of the other, and having laid waste the country nearly as far south as Tarentum, he suddenly crossed the Apennines to the plain on the western sea, where he hoped to gain over some of the cities to his cause. In this again he was doomed to disappointment, for the rich Campanian towns, notably Capua, richest of all, held aloof till they knew for certain who would be conqueror.

In all Hannibal’s campaigns nothing is more surprising than the way he managed to elude his enemies, who were always close to him and always on the look-out for him; yet he went wherever he wished.

Seeing that he could not hope for support in Campania, Hannibal determined to carry off the stores and booty he had collected into a safe place east of the Apennines, in order that his troops might be well-fed during the winter. This Fabius learned through a spy, and, knowing that there was only one pass through the mountains, sent a body of four thousand men to occupy a position in ambush from which they might fall upon the Carthaginians as they entered the gorge, while he himself encamped with a large force on a hill near at hand.

We can imagine the old dictator's satisfaction when he had completed his arrangements for crushing the Carthaginians, and felt that *this* time he would put to silence the grumblings of the people in Rome.

Fabius passed the day in preparing his plan of the attack which was to take place on the morrow, perhaps now and then allowing his secret thoughts to linger a little on the triumph awaiting him at Rome. But that very night Hannibal ordered one of his generals to fell some trees and split them into faggots, which were to be piled close to where two thousand oxen were tethered outside the camp. The men wondered a little what was going to happen, but did as they were bid, and then, by Hannibal's directions, had supper and lay down to sleep. Very early in the morning they were awakened by Hannibal himself, who bade them follow him out of the camp and tie the faggots on to the horns of the oxen. This was soon done, and then the faggots were kindled by a burning torch, and the oxen were driven up a low ridge which stretched before the pass.

'Help the drivers get them on to the ridge,' he said to his light troops, 'and then pass them, shouting and making all the noise you can.'

The march was conducted silently for some distance, but no sooner did the soldiers break out into shrieks and yells than the oxen grew frightened and wildly rushed hither and thither. The Romans in the defile below heard the shouts and saw the bobbing lights, but could not tell what they meant. Leaving their post, the whole four thousand climbed the ridge, where they found the Carthaginians. But it was still too dark for the Romans to see what these strange lights really were, so they drew up on the ridge to wait till daybreak, by which time Hannibal and most of his army were safe through the pass, when he sent back some of his Spanish troops to help the force he had left behind him. The troops speedily defeated the entire army of Fabius, who had now come up, and then, joining Hannibal, pushed on to Apulia.

A howl of rage rang through Rome at the news that they had once more been outwitted, and all Fabius' wise generalship was forgotten in this fresh defeat. Yet, had they stopped to think, the fault did not lie with the dictator, whose plans had been well laid, but with the commander of the troops in the pass, who, instead of sending out scouts to find out the cause of the disturbance on the ridge, moved his whole body of men, leaving the defile unguarded. Perhaps Hannibal, in arranging the surprise, had known something of the commander and what to expect of him; or he may merely have counted — as he had often done before — on the effects of curiosity. But time after time he traded on the weakness of man, and always succeeded.

It was in June 216 b.c. that Hannibal gained his last great battle in Italy. He had remained for many months near the river Ofanto, which runs into the Adriatic, but in the beginning of summer he threw himself into the town of Cannæ, used by the Romans as a storehouse for that part of Italy.

A Roman army of ninety thousand men amply supplied was coming swiftly to meet him along the splendid roads, and he had only fifty thousand to cope with them, the greater number being Gauls, and not to be depended on. Of the original troops that he had brought from Spain, many were dead, but he was able to muster ten thousand cavalry, mostly consisting of the Numidian horse, and in this respect he was superior to the Romans. There was also to be reckoned to his advantage the fact that the two consuls, Varro and Paulus, hated each other bitterly, and that neither of them had any instinct of command, though Paulus was a capable soldier and a brave man.

There was a custom among the Romans, dating back from ancient days, that when the two consuls were serving on the same campaign, each should command on alternate days. It seems strange that such a very practical nation should have made such a foolish law, but so it was; and on this occasion it once more led, as it was bound to do, to an utter defeat. Hannibal played his usual game of sending Numidians across the river to insult and tease his enemy, till at length Varro exclaimed in wrath that the next day the command would be his, and that he would give the Carthaginians battle and teach them something of the majesty of Rome.

In vain the wiser Paulus, who had followed the counsels of Fabius, reasoned and protested. Varro would listen to nothing, and orders were given to the army to be ready on the morrow for the attack.

The day before the battle Hannibal spent ‘in putting the bodies of his troops into a fit state to fight,’ as the historian tells us — that is, he made them rest and sleep, and prepare plenty of food for their breakfast. Early next morning the Romans began to cross the river, which took several hours, thus leaving their strong camp on the southern bank with only a small force to defend it, and took up their position in the plains, where Hannibal’s cavalry had ample room to manœuvre. And, to make matters worse, the consul formed his men into such close columns that they could not avoid being hampered by each other’s movements.

The two armies when facing each other in order of battle must have presented a curious contrast. The Roman legions and their allies, amounting in all to seventy-six thousand men, wore helmets and cuirasses and carried swords and short throwing-spears. In front, the Carthaginian troops looked a mere motley crowd, so various were the dress and weapons of the different nations. It is true that the black-skinned Libyans might at first sight have been taken for deserters from the Roman camp, as they, like their enemies, were clad in the same armour and bore the same arms, the spoils of many a victory; and the young men of the legions trembled with rage as they beheld the glittering line, and thought of what it betokened. But the Gauls were almost naked, and their swords, unlike those of the Romans, could only cut, and were useless for thrusting, while the Spanish troops were clothed in a uniform of short linen tunics striped with purple. In the van, or front of the army, were the small remainder of the contingent from the Balearic Isles, with their slings and bows.

In spite of the faults committed by Varro in placing his troops, Hannibal’s lines were once broken by the heavy-armed Roman soldiers, while the cavalry on the wing by the river were fighting in such deadly earnest that they leaped from their horses and closed man to man. But at Cannæ, as at Trebia, the honours of the day fell to the Numidians and to the Spanish and Gallic horse commanded by Hasdrubal. The Romans had been again routed by an army weaker by thirty thousand men than their own; the consul Paulus, and Servilius and Atilius, consuls of the year before, were all dead: only Varro saved his life by a disgraceful flight.

Still Hannibal did not march to Rome, as the senate expected. Though the battle of Cannæ decided the wavering minds of those who had been waiting to see on which side lay the victory; though the southern half of Italy and many cities of Campania were now anxious to throw in their lot with him; though Philip of Macedon promised once more to send ships and men to his support, and thousands of Gauls swarmed into his camp, the army on which he could actually rely was too small to besiege the city with any chance of success. He did, indeed, send ambassadors to Rome, with powers to treat for the ransoming of some Roman prisoners, but as before in the case of the Gauls, the envoys were not even given a hearing by the senate.

Till he got reinforcements from Carthage, Hannibal felt he must remain where he was; but surely she would delay no longer when she knew that the moment for which Hannibal was waiting had come, and his allies were ready. So he sent his brother Mago to tell the story of his triumphs and his needs to the Carthaginian senate, never doubting that a few weeks would see the tall-prowed ships sailing up the coast of the Tyrrhene sea, where he now had his headquarters. He did not reckon on the jealousy of his success which filled the breasts of the rulers of his country, a jealousy which even self-interest was unable to overcome. From the first he had borne their burden alone, and owing to the treachery and baseness of his own nation in the end it proved too heavy for his shoulders.

Soon Hannibal began to understand that he would get help from no one, and from Carthage least of all, and the knowledge was very bitter. The Romans had gathered together a fresh army of eighty or ninety thousand men, and had armed a large number of their slaves, offering them freedom. Any check, however slight, to the Carthaginian army was the cause of joy and thankfulness in Rome, for, as Livy says, ‘not to be conquered by Hannibal then was more difficult than to vanquish him afterwards.’

In spite of Thrasymene and Cannæ things were now changed, and it was Hannibal who was on the defensive. The Romans had learned their lesson, and the legions always lying at the heels of Hannibal’s army were commanded by experienced generals, who adopted the policy of Fabius and were careful never to risk a battle.

Thus three years passed away, and Carthage, absorbed in the difficult task of keeping Spain, from which she drew so much of her wealth, in her hands, sent thither all the troops she could muster to meet the Romans, who were gradually gaining ground in the peninsula.

In Italy the war was shifting to the south, and about 213 b.c. Hannibal was besieged in the town of Tarentum by a Roman fleet which had blocked the entrance to the gulf on which the city was situated. The alarm in Tarentum was great; escape seemed impossible; but Hannibal ordered boards to be placed in the night across a little spit of land that lay between the gulf and the open sea. When darkness fell, the boards were greased, and ox-hides stretched tightly over them. Then one by one the imprisoned Tarentine fleet was dragged along the boards and launched on the other side, and when all the ships were afloat, they formed in a line and attacked the Roman vessels, which were soon sunk or destroyed.

It was deeds such as these which showed the power Hannibal still possessed, and kept alive the Roman dread of him; yet he himself knew that the triumph of Rome was only a work of time, and that the kingdom of Carthage was slipping from her.

In Sicily, which had once been hers, and even now contained many towns which were her allies, a strong Roman party had arisen. Syracuse in the south was besieged by Appius Claudius by land and by Marcellus by sea, and its defence is one of the most famous in history. The Greek engineer, Archimedes, invented all sorts of strange devices new to the ancient world. He made narrow slits in the walls, and behind them he placed archers who could shoot through with deadly aim, while they themselves were untouched. He taught the smiths in the city how to make grappling irons, which were shot forth from the ramparts and seized the prows of the ships. By pressing a lever the vessels were slowly raised till they stood nearly upright, when the grapplers were opened, and the ships fell back with a splash that generally upset the crew into the sea, or were filled with water and sunk to the bottom. Of course you must remember that these were not great vessels with four masts like our old East Indiamen, but were long, high boats, worked by banks of oars, the shortest row being, of course, the lowest, nearest the water.

After a while the Romans got so frightened, not knowing what Archimedes might do next, that they thought every end of loose rope that was lying about hid some machine for their destruction. For a long while the engineer kept the enemy at bay, but in the end the power of Rome conquered; the beautiful marble palaces were ruined, and the paintings and statues which had been the glory of Syracuse were carried to Rome.

Just at this time news from Spain became more and more gloomy for the Carthaginians. The young Scipio, who had saved his father’s life nine years before at the battle of the Ticinus, was, at the age of twenty-six, made commander-in-chief in the peninsula. Though never a great soldier, Scipio was a good statesman, and had the gift of winning men to his side. Multitudes of natives flocked to his standard, and many important places fell into his hands; and in his hour of victory he was merciful, and caused his captives as little suffering as possible. In the words of the people themselves, ‘he had conquered by kindness.’

Seeing that for the time, at any rate, all was lost in Spain, Hasdrubal set out with an army to join his brother Hannibal. In Auvergne, in the centre of Gaul, where he spent the winter, large numbers of Gallic tribes joined him, and in the spring he crossed the Alps by the same pass as Hannibal. But the difficulties of nine years earlier were now absent, for the mountaineers understood at last that no evil to them was intended, and let the Carthaginian army climb the defile without attempting to hurt them. Traces of Hannibal's roads remained everywhere, and thus the troops, consisting perhaps of sixty thousand men, marched easily along and descended into the plains of the Po. But it was all useless; before Hasdrubal could join Hannibal, who was still in Apulia, the consul Nero, encamped near by at the head of a considerable force, made prisoners some messengers sent by the general to his brother.

Instantly taking steps to have the roads to the north watched by armies, Nero set off at night with a picked detachment to meet the consul Livius on the coast of the Adriatic, south of the river Metaurus. Night and day his men marched, eating as they went food brought them by the peasants. In less than ten days they had gone two hundred miles, and entered the camp of Livius by night, so that the Carthaginian general might know nothing of their arrival. Next morning Nero insisted, against the opinion of the other generals, that battle should be given immediately, as he must return and meet Hannibal at once. In vain they protested that his troops were too tired to fight; he shut his ears, the signal was sounded, and the army drawn up.

The Carthaginians had already taken their places at the time that the Romans began to form, when Hasdrubal, riding down his lines to make sure that everything was done according to his orders, noticed that among the enemy's array clad in shining armour were a band with rusty shields, and a bevy of horses which looked lean and ill-groomed. Glancing from the horses to their riders, he saw that their skins were brown with the sun of the south and their faces weary. No more was needed to tell him that reinforcements had come, and that it would be madness to risk a fight. He could do nothing during the day, but as soon as the night came he silently broke up his camp and started for the river Metaurus, hoping to put it between him and the Romans; but it was too late.

Had the Carthaginian army only consisted of old and well-seasoned troops all might have gone well with it; but the large body of Gauls were totally untrained, and in their disappointment at not being allowed to give battle, seized on all the drink in the camp, and fell along the roadside quite unable to move. Before Hasdrubal could get his vanguard across the Romans were close upon him, and there was nothing left for him to do but to post his men as strongly as he could.

For hours they fought, and none could tell with whom the victory would lie:

then a charge by Nero decided it. When the day was hopelessly lost, Hasdrubal, who had always been in the fiercest of the struggle, cheering and rallying his men, rode straight at the enemy, and died fighting. Thus ended the battle of the Metaurus, the first pitched battle the Romans had ever gained over the Carthaginian army.

The next night Nero set off again for Apulia, bearing with him the head of Hasdrubal, which, as we have said, he caused to be flung into Hannibal’s tent, staining for ever the laurels he had won.

With the triumph of Nero, and his reception in the Rome which he had delivered, dates the last act of the second Punic war. At the news of his brother’s defeat, which was a great blow to him, Hannibal retreated into the most southern province of Italy. His troops, whose love and loyalty never wavered, were largely composed of foreign levies, and had not the steadiness and training of his old Libyans and Spaniards. Never for one moment did he think of abandoning his post till his country called him, yet his quick eye could not fail to read the signs of the times. The Roman senate was no longer absorbed by the thought of war. Relieved by Nero’s victory from the crushing dread which for so long had weighed it down, it was taking measures to encourage agriculture and to rebuild villages, to help the poor who had been ruined during these years of strife, to *blot out*, he felt, the traces of the victories he had won. And he had to watch it all and to know himself powerless, though he still defied Rome for three years longer, and knew that she still feared *him*.

It was in the year 204 b.c. that Scipio entreated the senate to allow him to carry the war into Africa, which he had already visited, and where he had already made many important allies, among them the famous Numidian Massinissa, whom he promised to make king over his tribe. Fabius, now ninety, declared it was folly to take an army to Africa while Hannibal remained in Italy, and a large party agreed with him. The people, however, who had absolute trust in the young general, insisted that he should have his way; and after a long and fierce debate, the senate with almost inconceivable foolishness consented that Scipio should sail for Carthage, as he so much desired it, but that he must do so at the head of no more than thirty thousand or forty thousand men.

That so practical and sensible a nation should not have remembered the lesson of the defeat of Regulus, and have known the dangers which must be run by a small army in a foreign land, is truly surprising, and had Massinissa, with his priceless Numidian horse, not joined the Romans, Scipio's army would more than once have been almost certainly cut to pieces.

When it became known that Scipio had landed and was besieging the old town of Utica, the rich and pleasure-loving citizens of Carthage were filled with despair. But this did not last long, for one of the leading men of the city, called Hanno, collected a small force, while Hasdrubal Gisco and Syphax the Numidian raised another, and between them both Scipio was forced to retreat. If only Hannibal had been there —— But Hannibal was still in Italy, and no tidings of the struggle had reached him.

Winter had now set in, and though it was only the mild winter of North Africa, Scipio entrenched himself securely on rising ground, and Hasdrubal Gisco with Syphax made their camps close by. The Carthaginians, who had several times been defeated, now wished to make peace, and Syphax, whom the Roman general was most anxious to gain over to his side, was the messenger chosen. While discussing the terms, Scipio suddenly learned that the Carthaginian and Numidian huts were built solely of wood and reeds, covered with hastily woven mats — materials which they had gathered from the woods and streams close by.

'A spark would set them on fire, and *how* they would burn,' said the general to himself, and the evil thought took root, till one night orders were given to surround the camps stealthily and put flaming torches against the walls. In a few minutes the country round was lighted up with a fierce blaze, and the Carthaginians, wakened from their sleep and not knowing what was happening, were cut down on all sides before they could defend themselves. This piece of wicked treachery may be said to have turned the scales in favour of Rome. A battle followed in a place called 'the great plains,' when Hasdrubal was beaten and Syphax soon after fell into the hands of the enemy. The Numidian chief was sent to Rome, and Sophonisba, his wife, took poison rather than bear the humiliation of walking behind the triumphal car of the Roman victor.

Massinissa obtained the reward promised for his help — or his treason — and was made king of Numidia. Again Scipio offered peace, and the terms he proposed were as good as Carthage had any right to expect; but, favourable as they were, a few citizens were left to reject them with scorn. The fastest ship in the Carthaginian navy was sent to Italy to summon Hannibal from Bruttium and Mago from Milan. When the message arrived, Mago was already dead, but his troops embarked immediately and joined Hannibal and his twenty-five thousand men who had landed in Africa.

It was in this way that Hannibal came back to his native city, after an absence of thirty-six years. When he had last seen it he had been a boy of nine, and the events that had since happened crowded into his memory.

Notwithstanding his recent defeats, he had 'left a name at which the world grew pale,' and during the sixteen years he had spent in Italy none had dared to molest him. Single-handed he had fought; was it possible that at last his hour of triumph was at hand?

Now that Hannibal, whom they had deserted and betrayed, was really in Africa the weak and foolish citizens of Carthage sent orders to him to fight without delay. For answer he bade the messengers 'confine their attention to other matters, and leave such things to him, for he would choose for himself the time of fighting,' and without more ado he began collecting a number of elephants and all the Numidian horse that had not gone over to Rome with Massinissa.

He was labouring night and day at this task when again his plans were spoilt by some citizens of Carthage, who broke the truce which had been made by seizing some Roman ships. Scipio lost no time in avenging himself by burning all the towns and villages on the plain, and occupying the passes on a range of mountains where Hannibal had hoped to take up his position. Baulked in this project, Hannibal sent to Scipio to beg for an interview, and tried to obtain for Carthage better terms than the Roman was inclined to grant.

'You have broken the truce by capturing the vessel containing the Roman envoys,' he said, 'and now you and your country must throw yourselves on our mercy, or else conquer us.'

So the armies drew up opposite each other on the field of Zama, on the bright spring morning of 202 b.c. which was to decide whether Carthaginians or Romans were to be masters of the world. Hannibal had about five thousand men more than his enemy, but he was weak in cavalry, and the eighty elephants which he had placed in front were young and untrained. The cavalry of the Romans was under the command of Massinissa and of Lælius, friend of the historian Polybius, and it was this strong body of Numidian horse which ultimately turned the fate of the day. As for the elephants, the sound of the Roman trumpets frightened them before the battle had begun, and threw them into confusion. They charged right into the middle of the Carthaginian cavalry, followed by Massinissa and by Lælius, who succeeded in breaking the ranks of the horse and putting them to flight. For a moment it seemed as if the heavy armed foreign troops which Hannibal then brought up would prevail against the Roman legions, but at length they were forced back on to their own lines, which took them for deserters.

With a cry of ‘Treachery!’ the foreign soldiers fell on the Carthaginians, and fighting hard they retreated on Hannibal’s reserve, the well-trained Italians.

At this point there was a pause, and both commanders made use of it to re-form their armies. Then the battle began afresh, and the generals left their posts and fought for hours in the ranks of the common soldiers. At last the cavalry returned from pursuit and threw itself on the rear of the Carthaginians. This time they gave way, and Hannibal, seeing that the battle was lost, quitted the field, in the hope that somehow or other he might still save his country from destruction.

How bitter, in after years, must have been his regret that he had not died fighting among his men at Zama!

Though Hannibal and the Romans hated each other so much, they were alike in many respects, and in nothing more than in the way that no defeat ever depressed them or found them without some plan to turn it into victory. In truth, in spite of his love for his country, which was dearer to him than wife or child, Hannibal was far, far more of a Roman than a Carthaginian.

Peace was made, and, as was inevitable, the terms were less favourable than when the fate of both countries hung in the balance. Naturally, the Carthaginians threw the blame on Hannibal, and naturally also, being filled with the meanest qualities that belong to mankind, when they found that all was in confusion and no one knew where to turn, they sent for the man they had abandoned and abused, and bade him set them on their feet again. In a moment all the wrongs he had suffered at their hands were forgotten; he accepted the position of dictator or *suffete*, he caused more humane laws to be passed, and not only saved the people from ruin and enabled the merchants again to sell their goods, but paid the large sum demanded as a war indemnity by Rome within the year.

Having done what no other man in Carthage, probably no other man in his age, could possibly have done, it is needless to remark that his fellow-citizens grew jealous of him, and listened without anger to Rome’s demand for his surrender, made, it is just to say, in spite of the indignation of Scipio. To save himself from the people for whom he had ‘done and dared’ everything he escaped by night, leaving a sentence of banishment to be passed on him and the palace of his fathers to be wrecked. Perhaps — who knows? — he may have wished to save his country from the crowning shame of giving him up to walk by the chariot wheels in the triumph of Scipio Africanus.

The remaining years of his life — nearly twenty-five, it is said — are so sad that one can hardly bear to write about them. The first place at which he sought refuge was at Ephesus, with Antiochus the Great, lord, at least in name, of a vast number of mixed races from Asia Minor to the river Oxus. Here, still keeping in mind the master passion of his life, he tried to induce Antiochus to form a league by which Rome could be attacked on all sides. But the king, who had little in him of greatness but his name, made war before his preparations were half finished, and gave the chief commands to incapable men, leaving Hannibal to obey orders instead of issuing them. One by one the allies forsook the king and joined Rome — even Carthage sending help to the Roman fleet. In 196 b.c. the battle of Magnesia put an end to the war, and the dominions of Antiochus became a Roman province.

Once more the surrender of Hannibal was made one of the terms of the treaty, and once more he escaped and spent some time first in Crete, and then in Armenia, and finally, for the last time, returned to Asia Minor on the invitation of Prusias, king of Bithynia.

The hearty welcome of Prusias gave Hannibal a feeling of pleasure and rest that he had not known for long; but he was never destined to be at peace, and soon after a Roman envoy arrived at the palace of Prusias and demanded that the enemy of Rome should instantly be given up. To a brave soldier like Flaminius the mission was highly distasteful, which is another proof, if one were wanted, how great even in his downfall was the dread the Carthaginian inspired. ‘Italy will never be without war while Hannibal lives!’ had been the cry long, long ago, and it still rang proudly in his ears. He knew, and had always known, that his life would end by his own hand, and most likely he was not sorry that the moment had come.

‘Let me release the Romans from their anxiety, since they cannot wait for the death of one old man,’ he said, when he heard that soldiers had surrounded his house, and drawing from his tunic some poison that he carried, he swallowed it and fell back dead. He had escaped at last.

His last words had told truly the story of his life. It was the one old man who had held at bay the whole of the great nation.

On reading the tale of his steadfastness, his unselfishness, his goodness to his soldiers, and the base ingratitude and wickedness with which his countrymen treated him, more than ever do we instinctively long that the lost cause had proved the winning one, and again and again we have to remind ourselves of the terrible evil it would have been to the world if Carthage had overcome Rome. For Carthage was possessed of almost every bad quality which could work ill to the human race. Greed for money was her passion, and in order to obtain wealth she proved herself fickle, short-sighted, lawless, and boundlessly cruel. The government of Rome, which the Eternal City handed on to the countries she conquered, was founded not only on law, but on common-sense. Considering the customs of the world during the thousand years of her greatest glory, she was seldom cruel, and her people were ready at all times to sacrifice themselves for the good of the state.

So it was well for us now and here that Hannibal was overthrown at Zama, and was banished from Carthage; yet our hearts will always cry out with Othello, ‘Oh, the pity of it!’

THE APOSTLE OF THE LEPERS

No one can travel through the countries of the East or sail about the lovely islands of the South Seas without constantly seeing before him men and women dying of the most terrible of all diseases — leprosy. The poor victims are cast out from their homes, and those who have loved them most, shrink from them with the greatest horror, for one touch of their bodies or their clothes might cause the wife or child to share their doom. Special laws are made for them, special villages are set apart for them, and in old times as they walked they were bound to utter the warning cry,

‘Room for the leper! Room!’

From time to time efforts have been made to help these unfortunate beings, and over two hundred years ago a beautiful island in the Ægean Sea, called Leros, was set apart for them, and a band of nuns opened a hospital or lazar-house, as it was called, to do what they could to lessen their sufferings, and sooner or later to share their fate. Nobody, except perhaps the nuns’ own relations, thought much about them — people in those days considered illness and madness to be shameful things, and best out of sight. The world was busy with discoveries of new countries and with wars of conquest or religion, and those who had no strength for the march fell by the wayside, and were left there. Nowadays it is a little different; there are more good Samaritans and fewer Levites; the wounded men are not only picked up on the road, but sought out in their own homes, and are taken to hospitals, where they are tended free of cost.

It is the story of a man in our own times, who gave himself up to the saddest of lives and the most lonely of deaths, that I am now going to tell you.

On a cold day in January 1841 a little boy was born in the city of Louvain, in Belgium, to Monsieur and Madame Damien de Veuster. He had already a brother a few years older, and for some time the children grew up together, the younger in all ways looking up to the elder, who seemed to know so much about everything. We have no idea what sort of lives they led, but their mother was a good woman, who often went to the big church in the town, and no doubt took her sons with her, and taught them that it was nobler and better to serve Christ by helping others and giving up their own wills than to strive for riches or honours. Their father, too, bade them learn to endure hardness and to bear without complaints whatever might befall them. And the boys listened to his counsel with serious faces, though they could be merry enough at times.

The lessons of their early years bore fruit, and one day the elder boy informed his parents that he wished to become a priest. It was what both father and mother had expected, and most likely hoped, and they at once agreed to his desire. Arrangements were soon made for his entering a training college, where he would have to live until he was old enough to be ordained.

Joseph, the younger, missed his brother greatly. He loved his father and mother dearly, but they seemed far too old to share the thoughts and dreams which came to him in the night-time, or during the quiet moments that he passed in church. Yet, from what we know of his after-life, we may be quite certain that he was no mere dreamer, standing aloof from his fellows. He was fond of carpentering and building; he watched with interest while the workmen were laying down the pipes which were to carry the water from the river to some dry field; he noted how the doctor bound up wounds and treated sores; and indeed no sort of knowledge that a man may gather in his everyday existence came amiss to young Damien. As to what he would do when he was a man, he said nothing, and his parents said nothing either.

On January 3, 1860, Joseph was nineteen, and Monsieur Damien proposed to take him as a birthday treat to see his brother, and to leave the two together while he went to the town on some business. It was a long time since they had met, and there was much to ask and hear. We do not know exactly what took place, but when Monsieur Damien returned to fetch Joseph, his son told him that he had made up his mind to follow in his brother’s steps, and to be a priest also.

Monsieur Damien was not surprised; he had long seen whither things were tending. He would perhaps have liked to keep one son with him, but Joseph was old enough to judge for himself and he did not intend to make any objection. Still, he was hardly prepared for the boy’s announcement that farewells were always painful, and that he thought he would best spare his mother by remaining where he was until she had grown accustomed to doing without him. Then he would beg permission to come to see her for the last time before he became a priest.

Very reluctantly Monsieur Damien gave his consent to this plan. He tried in vain to induce Joseph to think it over and to go back with him; but the young man was firm, and at length the father took leave of both his sons, and with a heavy heart returned home to break the news to his wife.

In this way Joseph Damien set about the work which was by and by to make his name so famous, though to that he never gave a thought. He does not seem to have dreamed dreams of greatness, like so many boys, or of adventures of which he was always the hero. As far as we can guess, Joseph Damien just did the thing that came next and lay ready to his hand, and thus fitted himself unconsciously for what was greater and better. Just now he had to study hard, and as soon as his father had written to say that neither he nor his mother wished to hold back their son from the life he had chosen, Joseph entered the same college where his brother had received his training for the priesthood.

For some time — we do not know if it was years or only months — Joseph studied hard, hoping that the harder he worked the sooner he would be ready to go forth on ‘active service’ against the sin and misery of the world. His brother’s plans were already formed. He was to make one of a band of priests starting for the islands in the South Seas, which more than forty years before had been visited by a band of American missionaries.

It was a strange state of things that prevailed in the lovely group of the Sandwich Islands when the missionaries arrived there. The isles had been discovered during the eighteenth century by Captain Cook, but from the white men, chiefly merchants and traders, who followed him the natives learned nothing but evil, and fell victims to horrible diseases hitherto unknown there. To the Americans, who had left snow and ice behind them, the islands of Hawaii — to use their native name — appeared fairyland itself. Though the sun beat fiercely on them, cool streams rushed down the mountain-side, and in the great forests there was silence as well as darkness. Here the trees were bound together by ropes of flowery creepers, while outside, in the light and air, were groves of towering cocoa palms, standing with their roots almost in the water, and sheltering the huts, which could hardly be seen for the huge clusters of heliotropes, roses, and lilies that overshadowed them. But the sea! the sea! it was there that the greatest marvels were to be found! Fishes, orange, blue and scarlet; corals, seaweeds of every colour, creatures of every form and shape, whose names no white man knew. Afterwards, the missionaries learned that volcanoes were scattered over the islands, some extinct and only showing wide black mouths, others still blazing and throwing up jets of burning lava, which even in the sunshine take on a scarlet hue, and in the night gleam a yellowish white. Besides these wonders, there were also the curious customs of the people to be studied; and it was very necessary to know these, or a man might break the law and incur the penalty of death without having the slightest idea that he was doing any harm. For instance, he might go to pay a friendly visit to a chief, on whom the shadow of the visitor might fall; he might lose his way, and seeing a hut surrounded by a palisade would hasten to ask the shortest road to his tent, not guessing that he was entering the sacred home of a chieftain. If he offered a tired child a drink of cocoa-nut milk or a ripe banana, and she took it, he had brought about her death as certainly as if he had put the rope round her neck. But shortly before the arrival of the Americans a great king had abolished these iron rules, though no doubt they still lingered in out-of-the-way places.

The reigning monarch, son of the late king, was bathing in the marvellous blue sea with his five wives when a messenger brought him word that the white strangers had landed. Full of politeness, like all the islanders, the king at once hastened to greet them, followed by the ladies. The missionaries felt a little awkward, which was foolish, as the Hawaiians seldom wore clothes, being more comfortable without them; but the king noticed that his guests were ill at ease, and determined that he would be careful not to hurt their feelings again. So when they had taken leave of him, he sent for one of his servants and bade him seek for some clothes belonging to a trader who had died in the palace. A pair of silk stockings was found and a tall and curly brimmed hat, such as in pictures you may see the duke of Wellington wearing after the battle of Waterloo. The king smiled and nodded, and the very next afternoon he put on the hat and the stockings, and highly pleased with himself set out to call upon his visitors. The missionary whose tent he entered was sitting inside with his wife, having just put up in one corner a bed which they had brought with them. They were so amazed at the sight of this strange figure that they stood silently staring; but when, in the act of greeting them, Liholiho's glance fell upon the bed, he completely forgot the object of his visit. 'What a delicious soft-looking thing, to be sure!' he said to himself, and with a spring he landed upon the bed, and jumped up and down, while the tall hat rolled away and settled in a corner.

Like many people, when once he had begun to imitate the customs of other nations, king Liholiho was very particular in seeing that he was not put to shame by his own family. The missionary's wife wore clothes, and it was necessary, therefore, that his own ladies should not go uncovered; so orders were given accordingly, and when the white lady came to pay her respects at the palace — a somewhat larger hut than the rest — she found the brown ladies sitting up in great state to receive her, one of the widows of the late king being dressed in a garment made of seventy thicknesses of bark from the trees.

Such were the islands to which Joseph's elder brother longed to go. His own Church had sent out missionaries over twenty years before, who had now written home appealing for helpers. He had given in his name among the first, and had been accepted, when he was suddenly stricken with fever, and forbidden by the doctor to think of carrying out his plan. In vain did he argue and entreat; the doctor was firm. 'You would be a hindrance, and not a help,' he said, and in a paroxysm of grief the young man hid himself among the bedclothes, where Joseph found him.

‘Yes, the doctor is right; you cannot go,’ sighed the boy, when his brother had poured out the tale of his disappointment. ‘You might get the fever again, you know, and only strong men are wanted there. But let *me* go instead; I dare say I shall not do as well, but, at any rate, I will do my best.’

Now there was a strict rule in the college that no student should post a letter without the superior having first read it. Joseph knew this as well as anyone, but was far too excited and too much afraid of what the superior might say to pay any attention to it. So he wrote secretly to the authorities who were preparing to send out the missionaries, and begged earnestly that he might be allowed to take his brother’s place, although he had not yet passed the usual examinations for the priesthood. Perhaps candidates for the South Sea Islands were not very plentiful just then, or there may have been something uncommon about Joseph’s letter. At all events he was accepted, and when the news was told him by the superior he could not contain his delight, but rushed out of doors, running and jumping in a manner that would have greatly astonished his bishop, could he have seen it.

For several years he worked hard among the islands making friends with the people, to whom he soon was able to talk in their own language. The young priest knew something about medicine, and could often give them simple remedies, so that they learned to look up to him, and were willing to listen to his teaching of Christianity. He was sociable and pleasant, and always ready to help in any way he could, and he was welcomed by many whose religious views differed from his own. Of course he had not been long there without finding out that the disease of leprosy was terribly common, and that the Government had set apart the island of Molokai as a home for the lepers, in order to prevent the spread of the disease; but the work given him to do lay in other directions, and in spite of the intense pity he felt for these poor outcasts he did not take any part in actual relief.

In the year 1873 Father Damien happened to be sent to the island of Maui, where the great volcano has burnt itself out, and while he was there the bishop came over to consecrate a chapel which had just been built. In his sermon he spoke of the sad condition of the colony at Molokai, and how greatly he wished to spare them a priest who would devote himself entirely to them. But there was much to do elsewhere, and it was only occasionally that one could go even on a visit. Besides, added the bishop, life in Molokai meant a horrible death in a few years at latest, and he could not take upon himself to send any man to that.

Father Damien heard, and a rush of enthusiasm came over him. He had done the work which he had been given faithfully and without murmuring, and now something higher and more difficult was offered. Without a moment’s hesitation he turned to the bishop, his face glowing as it had done more than ten years before, when the letter which had decided his career had come to him.

‘Some fresh priests have arrived at Hawaii,’ he said; ‘they can take my place. Let *me* go to Molokai.’

And he went, without losing an hour, for a cattle-boat was sailing that very day for the island of the outcasts.

Every Monday a small steamer left Honolulu for Molokai, bearing any fresh cases of leprosy that had broken out since the departure of the last boat. On the shore were the friends and relations of the doomed passengers, weeping tears as bitter as those of the Athenians in the old story, when the ship each ninth year left the port with the cargo of youths and maidens for the Minotaur. Molokai was only seven hours distance from Hawaii, and on the north side, where the two leper villages lie situated, are high precipices guarded by a rough sea. Inland there are dense groves of trees, huge tree-ferns, and thick matted creepers. Here brilliant-plumaged birds have their home, while about the cliffs fly the long-tailed white bo’sun birds; but as a whole Molokai cannot compare in beauty with the islands which Father Damien had left behind him.

A hospital had been built for the worst cases, and when Father Damien arrived it was quite full. He at once went to see the poor people and did all he could to relieve them a little; and when that was impossible, he sat by their bedsides, speaking to them of the new life they were soon to enjoy, and often he dug their graves, if nobody else could be found to do so. The rest of the lepers had taken fright, and had built themselves wretched houses, or, rather, sheds, of branches of the castor-oil trees, bound together with leaves of sugar-cane or with coarse grass. They passed their time in playing cards, dancing, and drinking, and very rarely took the trouble to wash either themselves or their clothes. But this was not altogether their fault. Molokai, unlike many of the other islands, was very badly off for water, and the lepers had to carry from some distance all that they used. Under these circumstances it was perhaps natural that they should use as little as possible.

Such was the state of things when Father Damien reached Molokai, and in spite of his own efforts, aided sometimes by a few of the stronger and more good-natured of the lepers, such it remained for many months. The poor creatures seem to have grown indifferent to their miseries, or only tried to forget them by getting drunk. Happily the end was at hand; for when a violent gale had blown down all their huts it was plain, even to them, that something must be done, and Father Damien wrote at once to Honolulu the news of the plight they were in.

In a very short time a ship arrived with materials to enable the lepers to have comfortable houses, and carpenters to put them up. Of course these carpenters lived quite separate from the inhabitants of the island, and as long as they did not touch the lepers, or anything used by them, were in no danger of catching the disease; while in order to hasten matters the Father turned his own carpentering talents to advantage, and with the help of some of the leper boys built a good many of the simpler houses, in which the poorer people were to live. Those who were richer, or who had rich friends, could afford more comforts; but all the houses were made after one pattern, with floors raised above the ground, so that no damp or poisonous vapours might affect them.

But while all this was being done, Father Damien knew that it was impossible to keep the village clean and healthy unless it had a better supply of water. He had been too busy since he came to the island to explore the country in search of springs, but now he began to make serious inquiries, and found to his joy that there existed at no very great distance a large and deep lake of cold fresh water, which had never been known to run dry. At his request, pipes were sent over from Honolulu by the next steamer, and Father Damien was never happier in his life than when he and some of the stronger men were laying them down from the lake to the villages with their own hands. Of course there were still some who preferred to be dirty, but for the most part the lepers were thankful indeed for the boon.

Little by little things began to improve, and the king and queen of the islands were always ready and eager to do all they could to benefit the poor lepers and to carry out Father Damien’s wishes. Regular allowances of good food were sent weekly to the island, a shop was opened, some Sisters of Mercy came to nurse the sick and look after the children, a doctor established himself in the island, and one or two more priests and helpers arrived to share Father Damien’s labours and to comfort him when he felt depressed and sad; while from time to time a ship might be seen steaming into Molokai from Honolulu filled with the relations and friends of the poor stricken people. The sick and the healthy could not, of course, touch each other — *that* was forbidden — but they might sit near enough to talk together, and what happiness it must have been to both! Late in the evening the ship weighed anchor, and good-byes were shouted across the water. No doubt hearts were heavy both on deck and on the shore, where the green cliffs remained crowded as long as the ship was in sight. But it gave the exiles something to look forward to, which meant a great deal in their lives.

Now anyone would have thought that, after all Father Damien had done and obtained for them, the lepers of Molokai would have been filled with gratitude to their priest. But among the inhabitants of the island there was a large number who met him sullenly, with downcast faces, and spoke evil of him behind his back. The priest took no notice, and greeted them as cheerfully as he did the rest, but he knew well the cause of their dislike, and he could take no steps to remove it. The reason was not far to seek; he had tried, and at last succeeded, in putting down the manufacture of spirits from the ki-tree, which grew all over the island, and made those who drank it, not stupid, but almost mad. He had been at Molokai for ten years before their enmity died out, and that was only when they knew that he, like themselves, was a leper!

For the doom, though long delayed, fell upon him. When he first suspected it he consulted some of the doctors then on the island, as, besides the one always living there, there were others who came for a few months to study the disease under great precautions. They laughed at his words, and told him that he was as strong as ever he was, and that no one else could have done what he had done for ten years without catching the disease, but as he had escaped so far he was probably safe to the end. Father Damien did not contradict them. He saw that they really believed what they stated, and were not seeking to soothe his fears; but he went to a German doctor who had not been present with the rest and told him the symptoms he had himself noticed. ‘You are right,’ said the doctor after a pause, and Father Damien went out and sat in a lonely place by the sea.

In a little while he had faced it all and was master of himself again — and more; as his condition became known he felt that he was working with a new power. Those who had turned a deaf ear to him before listened to him now; he was no longer a man apart from them, whose health had been preserved by some sort of charm, but one of themselves. And the awful curse had not fallen on him by accident, as it had fallen upon *them*, but he had sought it, wilfully, deliberately, for their sakes. Thus, out of his very distress, came a new joy to Father Damien.

Armed with this knowledge he grew more cheerful than he had ever been before, till the people wondered at him. He held more frequent services in the churches which had sprung up, held classes for the boys, and taught them some of the games that he himself had played in the far-away days in Belgium. The boys were pleasant, well-mannered children, with the strangest names, some native nicknames, others picked up by their fathers from the white people and given to their sons, whereas often they should have been kept for their daughters. In the class of Father Conradi there were Mrs. Tompkins, The Emetic, Susan, Jane Peter, Eyes of Fire, The River of Truth, The First Nose, The Window; while in Honolulu, from which many of them had come, lived their friends, Mrs. Oyster, The Man who Washes his Dimples, Poor Pussy, The Stomach, and The Tired Lizard. We should like to know what their sisters were called, but they were not Father Conradi's business. The Father also took the greatest interest in the experiments which the Sisters of Mercy were carrying on in their school, not only to stop the spread of the disease, but to cure it, for a healing oil had been discovered which had worked marvels in many people. He encouraged the love of music and singing which existed among the exiles, whose most precious possession was a kind of barrel-organ which could play forty tunes, a present from a Scotch lady. This barrel-organ was never absent from any of the entertainments which, with the priests and doctors for audience, the lepers got up from time to time. It even played its part in a performance on one Christmas Day, which consisted of scenes from Belshazzar's feast. Unluckily it was so dark that it was not easy for the audience to know exactly what was going on, but they *did* perceive that the Babylonish king sat the whole time with his head on his arms and his arms on the table, like the Dormouse in the play of 'Alice in Wonderland.' However, the actors were intensely pleased with themselves, and that was all that mattered.

Father Damien lived for nearly six years after he became a leper, and as long as he was able he took his part in all that was going on, even helping to build the churches (there were five of them now) with his own hands. It was only three weeks before his death that his strength gave out, and he laid himself on his bed, knowing that he would nevermore rise from it. So he died, with his friends around him and the noise of the sea in his ears. His task was done, for he had 'set alight a fire' in Molokai 'which should never be put out.'

THE CONSTANT PRINCE

When, some years ago, a banquet was given at the Guildhall to king Alfonso of Spain on the occasion of his marriage to an English princess, the lord mayor said in his speech that four queens of England were Spaniards by birth. Can any of you tell me without looking at your history books what were their names?

Yet in different ways three out of the four are very well known to us. One flits through a delightful romance of the great deeds of the Crusaders; a second is remembered for having risked her life to save her husband from a speedy and painful death, and for the crosses which he set up on every spot which her body touched on its road to its last resting-place; while the fourth and latest had a troubled life and every kind of insult heaped on her.

Now can you guess?

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries marriages between England and the countries south of the Pyrenees were very frequent, for in those times Spain was our natural ally, and France our enemy. Two of Edward III.'s sons, John of Gaunt and Edmund of Langley, married the daughters of Pedro the Cruel, king of Castile, and Constance, wife of John of Gaunt, had the pleasure of seeing her own daughter reigning by-and-by in her old home, while Philippa, John of Gaunt's elder daughter by his first wife, became queen of Portugal.

Philippa's husband had no real right to the kingdom of Portugal, for the legal heir was the queen of Castile, the only child of Fernando. But her uncle, grand master of the order of Aviz, was dear to the hearts of the Portuguese, who would tell their children in low voices the sad story of his father's first wife, the beautiful Inez de Castro, whose embalmed body was crowned by her husband, many years after her cruel murder. And besides their love for the master of Aviz, the Portuguese hated the Castilians, as only near neighbours *can* hate each other, and were resolved to choose their own sovereign. So war followed, and John of Gaunt fought with his English soldiers on the side of the master of Aviz, or 'John I.,' against his wife's nephew, Henry III. of Castile, and during the war he kept his daughters with him in the peninsula.

It was in 1378 that John I. married Philippa, the elder of the two princesses. According to the notions of those times the bride must have been 'quite old,' for she was twenty-seven, only a year younger than her bridegroom, and very happy they were. The queen of Portugal had been brought up in England amongst clever people, had heard grave questions discussed from her childhood, and seen her father grow uneasy as fresh reports of Richard II.'s follies and extravagance came to his ears. From her stepmother, Constance of Castile, she had learned to speak Spanish, and knew much of the customs of the kingdoms south of the Pyrenees; so that it was easy for her to fall into the ways of her new country, though she never ceased to love her old land, and to teach her children to love it too. She trained her sons to bear hardships without complaining, to be true to their word, and to be affectionate and faithful to each other, while she had them taught something of the histories of other countries, and saw that they could speak Latin and English, as well as Spanish and French. As to the art of war, and all knightly exercises, she left those to her husband.

When the eldest of the princes, dom Duarte, or Edward, was twenty years old, he came one day to the king, telling him that he and his three next brothers, Pedro, Enrique, and John, were burning to strike a blow against the infidel Moors, and besought him to lead an expedition against the town of Ceuta, on the African coast. In those days it was considered a good deed to fight against the followers of Mahomet the prophet, and king John agreed gladly to what his sons proposed; but he was more prudent than they, and did not intend to raise the standard of the Cross before he had made sure of defeating the Crescent. Therefore he took means to find out secretly the exact position of Ceuta, the extent of the fortifications, and other things it was needful for him to know, and then he laid his plans before queen Philippa, who always gave him good counsel. To his surprise and disappointment Philippa prayed him to give it all up.

The country, she said, was still poor from the wars of succession with Castile, which had seated her husband on the throne, and if the men were taken away across the seas, who would till the fields and reap the crops?

But, urged the king, he felt sure that the people would welcome the crusade; he had bidden one of his trusted officers to go amongst them, and had heard how their faces brightened at the bare idea that perhaps *some* day, no doubt in the future, the golden shores of Africa might be snatched from the unbelievers' grasp. Oh, no, he had no fears about his army, though of course he would take every care to make victory certain.

Queen Philippa listened, but only shook her head.

'At least you will not go yourself?' she answered after a pause; 'the kingdom needs you'; then like a wise woman she held her peace and began to talk of something else.

Although king John did not give up his cherished scheme, he hesitated about carrying it out for three years longer, and then he succeeded in blinding the eyes of Europe as to the real object of his preparations. A large fleet was assembled in the mouth of the Tagus, ‘to punish the Dutch pirates,’ it was said; but, just as it was ready to sail, the queen caught the plague which was raging in Portugal. By this time she had made up her mind to the war, though she was hardly convinced of its wisdom, and as soon as she felt that she was nearing death she sent for her sons, and giving them each a splendid sword which she had ordered to be specially forged and beautifully inlaid, she added a few words of counsel. Then she bade her husband farewell, and entreated him to leave her, lest he also should catch the plague and be lost to his country. Her sons she kept with her to the end.

A week later, on July 25, 1415, the fleet sailed for Ceuta.

Only two of the king’s five sons remained in Portugal, and they were the youngest, dom John and dom Fernando. Fernando was a delicate boy of thirteen, versed in Latin, and, like his brother Duarte, a passionate lover of books, only happy when alone with some old manuscript or roll of illuminated prayers, yet thirsting to do his duty by ridding the world of as many infidels as possible. It was a blow when he found that he was not allowed to join the army of Africa, but, as was his way, he made no complaint; only when the news came of the fall of Ceuta his heart burned, half with envy and half with triumph. How he longed to make one of the group of brothers who had covered themselves with glory, and had been knighted by their father in the mosque, which was now consecrated and declared a cathedral. But he was getting stronger every day, and by-and-by he felt that a halo of glory would enshrine his name also. And so it has, and will for all time, only it was won in another way from those of his brothers.

It was soon after his return from Africa that king John’s health began to break down, and though he lived for eighteen years longer, he left the government of Portugal mostly to his son Duarte, who was guided in military matters by the advice of his father’s old friend, the constable of the kingdom. Fighting still went on in the neighbourhood of Ceuta, but though the other princes, or infantes, took part, Fernando stayed in Portugal.

We know little as to how he passed his time. Probably he shared the studies of prince Duarte, who collected a large library and himself wrote a book of philosophical maxims, which gained him the surname of Duarte the Eloquent. The two brothers were bound together by the same tastes, and we may be sure Duarte approved when by-and-by Fernando refused the pope's offer of a cardinal's hat, on the ground — unheard of at that period — that, not being a priest, he was quite unfitted to wear it. For the same reason, though the cases were rather different, he wished also to refuse the office of grand master of the order of Aviz, which had been held by his father; but in the end Duarte's counsels prevailed, and he kept it.

Fernando was thirty years old when his father died, and never yet had his sword left its sheath, though he longed from his soul to join in the frequent expeditions that went out from Ceuta to attack the strongholds of the unbelievers scattered about the coast. But king John always refused to let him leave the country, thinking he was too delicate to bear the hardships of a soldier's life; and so Fernando stayed at home, making himself as happy as he could with his books and his prayers, and long philosophical talks with Duarte. Now Duarte was king, and perhaps Fernando would be able to gain his heart's desire.

The new king was putting on his robes for the ceremony of his proclamation when his physician craved humbly an immediate audience. Dom Duarte wondered what could have happened which made an interview so necessary at that inconvenient moment, but master Guedelha was an old friend, so orders were given to admit him at once.

'Oh, senhor,' exclaimed the physician, as soon as they were alone, 'do not, I beseech you, suffer yourself to be proclaimed before noon; the hour you have fixed on is an evil one, and the stars which rule it are against you.'

Sad though he was, dom Duarte could hardly help smiling at the earnestness of the man; but he answered gravely that, greatly as he respected the knowledge of the stars, his faith in God was greater still, and nothing could befall him that was contrary to His will. In vain Guedelha fell on his knees and implored him to delay till the fatal hour was past; Duarte refused to change his plans, and at length the old man rose to his feet.

'I have done all I could,' he said; 'on your own head be it. The years of your reign will be short and full of trouble to yourself, and to those you love, and to the country.'

Although dom Duarte had so steadily declined to listen to the prayers of Guedelha, he had enough 'respect,' as he had said, for the science of astrology, as the study of the stars was called, to feel very uncomfortable at the prophecy of the physician. But he could not draw back now, even if he wished, and ‘Eduarte, king of Portugal,’ was thrice proclaimed and the royal standard unfurled and raised. When this was done, the nobles and officials kissed the king’s hand and swore allegiance to him. Then Duarte went back to his palace, and took off his crown and robes of state, and put on deep mourning for his father.

For some time dom Duarte had been governing the kingdom under the direction of John I., so affairs went on much as before. He and his brothers were the best of friends, and he often sought their counsel, especially that of dom Pedro, only a year younger than himself. Pedro was one of the wisest princes in Europe, as well as one of the best, and if his brothers had listened to his advice the prophecy of master Guedelha might have come to naught. Like the rest, he loved books, and even wrote poetry, and during his father’s lifetime made many voyages along the coast of Africa, though he was no discoverer of strange lands like dom Enrique. But for the present his duty was in Portugal, where Duarte wanted him.

In this way things went on for two or three years, during which the plague broke out in Portugal, and people died like flies, as they did in those days when dirt and ignorance helped infection to spread and prevented cure. The king and his brothers did all in their power to check it and assist the poor people; but nothing was of much good, and, as usual, the plague was left to wear itself out, which in time it did.

Meanwhile the years were going by, and the physician’s prophecy was drawing near fulfilment. And this is how the disasters came about.

The infante — so the Spaniards and Portuguese formerly called their princes — the infante dom Fernando grew tired of remaining idle at home, and besought Duarte to allow him to travel and take service under some foreign king, most likely that of England, where his young cousin Henry VI. was reigning. ‘Of course,’ he said, ‘if his own country needed him he would come back at once, but the Portuguese had ever been wanderers, and it was his turn to go with the rest.’

To his surprise Duarte’s face clouded as he listened, and there was a long pause before he spoke. Then he implored Fernando to think no more of his cherished plan, but to remain quietly in Portugal, else wrong would be done to both of them in the minds of men, for strangers would hold that he, the king, treated his brother so ill that Fernando was forced to seek his fortune elsewhere, or that Fernando was so possessed by desire for gain that he was ready to give up all for its sake.

Fernando heard him to the end without speaking; it was plain that even this brother, who he thought knew him best, had judged him wrongly. For years the young man had kept silence about his desire to see other countries, and the ruins of the cities which had once given law to the world, and the result was that he had been held by all to be a man of no spirit, a bookworm, content with the little duties that every day brought him. Ah, no! the hour for those had gone by, and a freer life called to him!

Seeing that his words made no impression on dom Fernando's resolve, the king sought dom Enrique, praying him to use his eloquence in order to prevail on Fernando to give up his plan. But he would have been wiser to have left things alone, for Enrique merely turned his brother's thoughts into a new and more alarming direction. Why take service under a foreign king when there were Moors at hand to fight? Let them cross the sea and deliver Tangier from the Moslem.

When the king heard of this new project he was nearly beside himself. After the long wars which seated John on the throne, and the constant expense of maintaining the fortress of Ceuta, the country was too poor to be able to undertake a fresh expedition, and then the plague had carried off so many men that he did not know where the army was to come from. But the match had been put to the wood, and Enrique secretly went to the queen and asked for her help to persuade the king, promising that when he and Fernando should have conquered the north of Africa, they would go and live there, and leave their possessions in Portugal to her children.

The bait took; queen Leonor promised to use all her influence, which was great, with the king, but before she had a chance of doing so the wild scheme of the two infantes received still stronger support from an unexpected quarter. Some time earlier the king had asked the pope to give him a Bull, or papal document, allowing him to raise a crusade whenever he thought it would have a chance of success. At the moment the pope was busy with several other affairs nearer home, and returned no answer. When at last he had leisure to attend to the king of Portugal's request, and sent over an abbot with the Bull, Duarte seems to have forgotten all about the matter, and was filled with dismay. Of course his brothers were delighted and declared that the king could no longer resist!

In spite, however, of wife, pope, and brothers, the king *did* resist, though he went as far as to say that any expedition which *might* be undertaken must be directed against Tangier, and that fourteen thousand men would be the utmost that he could furnish. But when he had yielded this much, it was difficult for him to refuse his consent, even though dom John and dom Pedro spoke strongly in a family council of the folly of beginning a war when the treasury was empty and the people unwilling to bear the burden of taxation.

Dom Pedro's words found their echo in the heart of Duarte. They said what his own sense had told him, and he was filled with fears for the future, though he could not break his promise. One last effort he made, and this was an appeal to the pope as to whether it was lawful to impose a tax for the purpose of making war against the infidels. The pope and his cardinals decided that it was *not*, as the infidels had not made war upon *him*, and Duarte, though more than ever cast down, had not the courage to acknowledge that he had been hasty and foolish, and, bitterly though he repented of his weakness, he allowed Enrique to equip fleets in Lisbon and in Oporto.

But when, at the end of August 1436, the hour of departure arrived, the king had recovered himself, and handed Enrique a paper of instructions which would probably have changed the fate of the expedition had they been followed. Unfortunately, Enrique was a headstrong man, and thought that he *must* know better than his stay-at-home brother, who had not seen a battlefield for eighteen years. He had listened contemptuously to dom Pedro when he pointed out that African conquests were both expensive and useless, that the cities, even if taken, could never become part of Portugal, and would always need garrisons to hold them, and smiled scornfully at the statement that any Portuguese force besieging Tangier would in its turn of a surety be besieged by a Moorish host, who would gather men from all parts and have a supply of provisions constantly at hand.

'Those whom the gods will to destroy they first infatuate,' says the proverb, and no man was ever more infatuated than the infante dom Enrique. The fourteen thousand men of which the king had spoken had dwindled down to six thousand, and these were but half-hearted. Small as the force was, dom Duarte had instructed Enrique to divide it into three, in order to prevent the Moors from concentrating large numbers upon one place. This counsel Enrique declined to follow, nor did he attempt to surprise and take Tangier by assault, which might possibly have been successful. Instead, he allowed the Moors to assemble a large army and to put the town in a state of defence. Finally, he totally disobeyed the wise counsel of Duarte to make his camp close to the sea, where his ships lay at anchor, in order that provisions and a retreat might be secured to them.

Having thus done all in his power to ensure defeat, only one thing remained, and that was 'to die like good men with constant souls,' in the words which the poet

Calderon puts into the mouth of Fernando. Too late Enrique perceived the snare into which his folly had led them, and assembling his little army, gave orders that at night, when the Moorish camp was quiet, they should cut their way through to the ships and put to sea. Their attacks on Tangier had been repulsed with heavy losses, he told them, and if the enterprise was ever to be carried through they must first seek reinforcements.

The men agreed with him, and prepared to sell their lives dearly. Silently at the appointed time they crept up to the Moorish tents, beyond which lay safety and the great galleons. But the chaplain, unluckily, had been before them. As soon as darkness fell he had deserted to the enemy, and the sight of the large force drawn up in order of battle was the first sign of warning to the Christians that they had been betrayed.

Even Enrique felt that in the face of such numbers fighting was useless, but he placed his men in the best position and awaited events. All the next day the Moors made no sign, but on the following morning envoys left the ranks and proposed terms of peace. Considering all things, they were not hard. Ceuta must be surrendered, the Moorish captives in Portugal be released, and the Christian camp with everything it contained abandoned to the captors. But the infantes wished to deal directly with the kings of Fez and Morocco, in order to make sure that the terms offered would be loyally carried out. They were still expecting the return of the envoys which they had sent when the Moors, who had grown more and more impatient at the long wait so close to their enemies, could be restrained no more and fell on the Portuguese.

In spite of their small numbers, the Portuguese, commanded by dom Enrique and the bishop of Ceuta, fought so fiercely that after six hours the Moors were beaten back. After a short rest dom Enrique ordered every man to repair the trenches and to throw up earthworks to protect the camp, in case of another assault. They worked hard the whole of that night, which was Saturday, and when by sunrise on Sunday everything was finished, the soldiers sank down exhausted where they were, and cried for food and water. It was long in coming. Then a horrible suspicion, which turned the men’s faces white, ran, no one knew why, from end to end of the camp. Was there *any* food? and, worse still, any water?

They had guessed truly; they had no provisions left, and the water had been cut off by the Moors. For two days they held out, then dom Enrique decided to accept the terms offered him. He would give up Ceuta and the Moorish prisoners, would abandon the camp, and would undertake that Portugal should sign a peace with the Barbary States lying along that part of the African coast for a hundred years. In return the former Moorish governor of Ceuta, Salat-ben-Salat, should hand over his son as a hostage, in exchange for four Portuguese nobles, but the pledge for the surrender of Ceuta was to be dom Fernando himself.

Bitter were the shame and grief that filled dom Enrique when the results of his folly were brought home to him, and he instantly begged that he might be accepted as hostage instead of his brother. No doubt the Moors would have agreed to this; it mattered little to them which of the infantes remained captive, but the council of war which Enrique summoned would not consent. Fernando knew nothing of war, they said, but Enrique, their commander, could not be spared, though it is hard to see what Enrique had done except lead them into traps which a recruit might have foreseen. Dom Fernando was present with the rest of the council, and was the first to declare that his brother's proposal was not to be thought of. Then, with a heavy heart, Enrique signed the treaty, and a few hours later Fernando and he had parted for the last time.

Thus ended the expedition for the taking of Tangier; and what had it attained? As far as Portugal was concerned, the loss, as stipulated by treaty, of Ceuta, by which the country set such store; the death of five hundred out of the six thousand men under the walls of Tangier, which held out in spite of the field guns used in war for the first time; the waste of money which had been only raised by the oppression of the people; and the delivery of the king's favourite brother into the hands of a cruel race.

Such was the tale which the fugitives had to tell on their arrival at Lisbon. And while the king was debating the best means of rescuing the captive, let us see how Fernando himself was faring.

Accompanied by his chaplain, his doctor, his secretary, and a few friends, who would seem to have gone with him of their own will, dom Fernando was sent by his captors to the fortress of Tangier, and closely imprisoned for several days. Perhaps the Moors may have been waiting for Enrique, who had gone to Ceuta, to deliver up the keys of the town; but as nothing was heard of him, the captives were taken next to the little town of Arzilla, further down the coast. Here the Portuguese were kindly treated by the governor, and Fernando, though the hardships he had gone through had told heavily on his health, did all he could to help his friends, who fared no better than himself, and devoted what money was left to him to ransoming those who had been for some years in captivity.

For seven months Fernando and his companions remained in Arzilla, and during all that time both he and his gaoler, Salat-ben-Salat, expected to receive answers to the many letters the captive prince had been suffered to write to Enrique respecting his promise to surrender Ceuta, where he stayed for some time after the embarkation of the Portuguese army. But after five months the only news that reached Arzilla was that Enrique had returned to Portugal; so Fernando then wrote to the king himself, imploring that he would redeem his pledge and set him free. It seemed little to ask, seeing that a treaty is considered sacred, and Duarte, from every point of view, was ready to fulfil the stipulation; but there was a strong party in the state which held that a Christian city should never be delivered up to the unbelievers, and even Enrique advised him instead to offer a large ransom and the Moorish captives then in Portugal in exchange for the infante.

Always distrustful of his own opinion, and fearful of taking any decided action, Duarte next appealed for counsel to the pope and to the kings of all the countries of Europe. They sent the politest and most sympathetic answers to his questions. No words could express their admiration for dom Fernando's patience under his sufferings, and their pity for his hard lot, but — faith with Moslems need never be kept, and at all costs Ceuta must be retained.

Thus, after all, it was the Christians, and not the Moslems, who failed to keep their word and were responsible for the death of Fernando.

At length news reached Fernando that dom John was starting with a fleet for his rescue, and then the doom which he dreaded befell him, for he was sent with his fellow-captives at once to Fez, a city far in the interior, and delivered over to Lazuraque, the vizier of the young king, a man whose name was a proverb of cruelty throughout the whole of Barbary. On their arrival at Fez, after a journey in which the whole population turned out to howl at and to stone them, they were thrust into a tiny cell without a ray of light. The four months that they spent in this black hole were bad enough, but worse was yet to follow. The little money that Fernando had left was taken from him, and heavy chains were fastened to the ankles of the prisoners, while their food was hardly fit for dogs or enough to keep them alive. But Fernando at least never grumbled, and tried to keep up the hearts of his friends.

One morning a warder entered the cell and roughly informed the prince that he was to go and clean out the vizier's stables, while the others were to dig up the royal garden. Of course Fernando had never done such a thing in his life, and now, hardly able to stand from weakness, and with fetters on his legs, it seemed an impossible task. Still, only to get out into the sunshine again was delightful to him, and he worked away with a will. However, he could not have done his cleansing very thoroughly, or else the vizier had merely wished to humiliate him, for the next day he was sent to the gardens with the rest. Here he was almost happy; he loved flowers, and he had the company of his friends, to whom he could talk freely, for the gaolers, satisfied that they could not escape, left them very much to themselves. As to food, each man had two loaves a day, but no meat; however, in this respect Fernando fared better than the others, for when the king of Fez and his wives walked through the gardens, as they often did, they would speak to him with the politeness to which he had long been a stranger, and bid their slaves bring him fruit and wine from their own table. It seems curious that king Abdallah did not insist on better treatment for the Portuguese prince, but he was afraid of Lazuraque, who had ruled the kingdom from Abdallah's childhood, and dared not interfere.

When darkness fell the captives were taken back to their prison, and here Fernando had a cell all to himself, and, tired out with his labours, was glad enough to throw himself on the two sheepskins covered by an old carpet which served him for a bed, and lay his head on the bundle of hay which was his pillow.

Matters had gone on in this way for a few weeks, when one day the captives were told that they were to work in the gardens no more; heavier chains were fastened to their arms and legs, and they were all thrust together into one tiny dungeon. Then a message came that dom Fernando was to be brought before the vizier. With a beating heart the infante gladly followed his gaoler. Surely Lazuraque would not have troubled to send for him unless deliverance had been at hand? But his hopes fell at the sight of Lazuraque's face, which was cruel and stern as usual.

'Your brother the king of Portugal is dead,' were the words that fell upon Fernando's ears, and he sank fainting to the ground. When he came to himself, he was lying chained in his cell, with his friends anxiously bending over him.

Dom Pedro was now regent, ruling for Duarte's little son, Alfonso V., and besides the view which he had always held that the honour of the country demanded the surrender of Ceuta, he felt bound to carry out the late king's will, which directed him to deliver Fernando at any cost. But now it was not Ceuta that Lazuraque wanted, but a huge ransom, impossible for Portugal to raise, and till this was forthcoming the horrors of the prisoners' captivity were increased.

For some days after hearing the news Fernando's grief, together with the stifling air of the cell, made him so ill that his companions expected that every hour would be his last. Well he guessed that shame at the result of the expedition, and sorrow for his own fate, had hastened the end of dom Duarte, and the infante’s thoughts flew back to the day of the proclamation of the king, five years before, and to the prophecy of master Guedelha. One thing, however, did not occur to him — that it was Duarte’s weakness in allowing the expedition which had brought about the fulfilment of the prophecy.

After a while Lazuraque saw that unless he meant his captives to die, which would not have suited him at all, he must free them from their dungeon, so they were sent back to the gardens. Slowly the years 1439 and 1440 wore away. The hearts of the poor prisoners grew sick, but Fernando alone never lost his cheerfulness, and kept up the spirits of the others when they were bowed down with despair.

It was in 1441 that hope suddenly sprang into life again, for the news reached them that some envoys had arrived from Portugal to treat for their release, and that the governor of Arzilla was using his influence on their behalf. Soon after they were removed from Fez near to Ceuta, where they could once more see the blue Mediterranean and feel themselves close to Portugal again. But everything came to an end because neither side would trust the other. Lazuraque, though he still preferred a ransom, part of which he could have put in his own pocket, dared not refuse openly to exchange the prince for Ceuta, now that the envoys had come for the express purpose of delivering up the fortress. Still, he could place many obstacles in the way of the fulfilment of the treaty, and declared that the keys of Ceuta must be in his possession before the infante could be handed over to the envoys. They, on their side, insisted on Fernando’s release before the surrender of the fortress.

So the poor victim of ill-faith was carried back to Fez, and set to break stones with his companions. Then the plague broke out among the Moors, and each man shrank from his sick brother, and left him to die alone. As far as he might, dom Fernando sought out the plague-stricken people and nursed them night and day, often going without his own food that they might be nourished. Perhaps Lazuraque had fled like other rich men from the city, but at all events he seems to have permitted dom Fernando to do as he liked till the pestilence had run its course.

It was in March 1442 that Fernando was again taken before Lazuraque, and though the prisoner always told himself that he had given up hope, nevertheless his heart beat faster than usual at the summons. The Moor did not waste words, but went at once to the point.

‘I have sent for you to ask what price you will pay for your freedom and that of your friends,’ he said.

Dom Fernando looked at him for an instant before he answered. Long ago he and his companions had talked over the matter and decided what they could offer, if they ever had the chance. But now that the moment had come on which everything depended, his voice seemed choked, and he could not utter a sound.

‘Are you deaf?’ inquired Lazuraque impatiently. ‘Be quick, or I shall raise my terms.’

Then Fernando stammered out, ‘Fifty thousand doubloons and fifty Moorish prisoners.’

‘Nonsense,’ cried Lazuraque, with a scornful laugh. ‘Fifty thousand doubloons for a Portuguese prince! Why, it is a beggarly sum! Take him away, gaoler, till he learns wisdom.’ And the infante was led back to his dungeon.

It was no more than he had expected, yet he needed all his strength of will to help him bear the blow. By order of Lazuraque he was allowed to receive his fellow-prisoners in order to take counsel with them, and at length it was agreed that amongst them, by the aid of the king and their families, they would treble their former offer, and promise one hundred and fifty thousand doubloons and one hundred and fifty captives. This the vizier agreed to accept, and when they heard the news the prisoners fell on each other’s necks and wept for joy. But for Fernando the hour of happiness was soon at an end, for till the ransom was paid and the captives landed on Moorish soil his treatment was worse than ever.

The dungeon into which he was now thrown was smaller and darker than before, and even his gaoler was forbidden to speak to him. The loneliness and silence put the finishing touch to the alternate hopes and fears of the last few months, and one day, when the warder brought his scanty supply of food, he found the prince lying unconscious on the ground. Fearing the anger of Lazuraque should his prisoner escape him by death before the money was received, he at once reported the matter, and orders were given to remove the captive into a larger cell, where he could feel the soft winds blowing and even see a ray of the sun. His companions, who were once more working hard, with the least possible allowance of sleep, were permitted to see him, and to carry him books of prayer, as he had been deprived of his own. Greatest boon of all, he was given a lamp by which he could read them.

Outside of his cell there was a sand-pit, in which some of the Portuguese came to dig sand every morning to scatter over the floor of the stables after they had been cleaned out. A tiny glimmer of light in this part of the wall showed dom Fernando that a stone was loose, and might with a little patience be moved away. It was hard work for one so weak; still, it gave him something to do and to look forward to, and prevented him, sitting all day in his prison, from wondering why no answer to his letter had ever come, and if his brothers had forgotten him altogether, little knowing that out of mere spite Lazuraque had kept back everything they had written. When these thoughts came into his head he worked away at the stone harder than ever, to deaden the pain which was almost too bad to bear. At last one day his efforts were rewarded, and he was able to take the stone in and out and speak to his fellow-captives, who, with sun and air about them, were more fortunate than he.

Perhaps he may have heard from them (for outside a gaol news flies quickly) that ever since Duarte's death his wife had given great trouble to dom Pedro by interfering in matters of government, and that civil war had actually broken out in Portugal, though happily it was soon put an end to by the flight of the queen. The expenses entailed by all this would, Fernando understood, have prevented the raising of the large ransom required; and with the lightening of his despair at his apparent abandonment came suspicions of Lazuraque. It was so much easier and happier for him to believe that the vizier, whose cruelty he knew, should be playing some trick on him than that Pedro should have left him to die without a word.

We cannot tell how it really happened, and why the money used by dom Enrique ('the Navigator' as he was called) in fitting out exploring expeditions was not employed in setting free the brother who had been made captive through Enrique's own folly. Certain it is that fifty thousand doubloons were all the Portuguese would offer, and now Lazuraque demanded four hundred thousand! This Fernando learnt after fifteen months of waiting, and then his last remnant of hope flickered out.

When hope was gone he had nothing left to live for, and on June 1, 1443, he was too weak even to kneel at his prayers. In vain did his companions implore that he might be moved to a larger, healthier room; the vizier refused all their petitions, and if he had granted them, most likely it would have been too late. However, the prince's physician obtained leave to see him, and his chaplain and secretary watched by him alternately, so that he was not left alone in his last moments.

Four days passed in this manner, and on the morning of June 5 he awoke looking happier than he had done since he bade farewell to the shores of

Portugal five years before.

‘I have seen in a vision,’ he said to his confessor, ‘the archangel Michael and Saint John entreating the Blessed Virgin to have pity on me and put an end to my sufferings. And she smiled down on me, and told me that to-day the gates of heaven should be thrown open, and I should enter.’ So saying he begged to confess his sins, and when this was done he turned on his side and whispered, ‘Now let me die in peace,’ and with the last rays of the sun he was free.

‘He that is dead pays all his debts,’ writes the poet who more than any man knew the best and the worst of the human heart, but Lazuraque did not agree with him. Fernando’s body was stripped bare and hung for four days from the battlements of the city, where, silent and uncomplaining as in life, it was a prey to every insult the people could heap on it. Then it was taken down and placed in a box, but still remained unheeded on the walls. How long it might have stayed there we cannot guess, but shortly after Fernando’s death Lazuraque was stabbed by some victim of his tyranny, and by-and-by the remnant of dom Fernando’s fellow-captives obtained their release on payment of a small ransom, leaving in Fez the bones of three of their companions who had not long survived the Constant Prince. It would seem as if his courage alone had sustained them, and when he was gone they sank and died also.

In 1448 dom Pedro, who had never ceased to mourn the brother he had been powerless to save, exchanged an important Moorish prisoner for father John Alvaro, secretary to the infante. Owing to various delays, it was three years before Alvaro reached Portugal, but when he arrived he carried with him the heart of Fernando, which was borne at the head of a long procession clad in black to the abbey of Batalha, where John and Philippa, Duarte, and a little brother and sister lay buried. On the way they met unexpectedly dom Enrique, master of the Order of Christ, attended by his knights, and a messenger was sent by the prince to ask the meaning of the train of mourners.

‘Senhor, it is the heart of the saintly infante,’ was the answer he received, and without a word Enrique turned his horse, and accompanied by his knights rode on to Batalha, where he laid the casket in the grave which awaited it.

Twenty-seven years after his death Fernando’s body was obtained from the Moors, and was carried over to Portugal. With the pomp of a king expecting his bride Alfonso V., surrounded by his nobles, was drawn up on the banks of the Tagus, and behind him were the bishops and abbots of Portugal and a dense throng of people.

For long they watched and waited, and none that was present forgot the dead silence that reigned in that multitude, more solemn than prayers, more welcoming than the sound of guns. At length a ship came in sight across the bar of the river; then, baring their heads, the crowd parted, and the bones of the Constant Prince were borne to Batalha.

THE MARQUIS OF MONTROSE

Fighting was in the blood of the Grahams, and when James, hereafter to be known as the ‘great marquis of Montrose,’ was a little boy he loved to hear tales of the deeds of his ancestors, who had struck hard blows for the liberty of Scotland in days of old. One, sir John Graham, a friend of sir William Wallace’s, had been killed at Falkirk more than three hundred years before; another had died on Flodden field, and a third had fallen at Pinkie, besides many who had taken part in less famous battles. James knew all about them, and was proud to belong to them, and did not guess that it was *his* name and not *theirs* which would be best remembered through the centuries to come.

But the Grahams were not only brave soldiers; they were for the most part clever men. There was an archbishop among them and a bishop, while James’s grandfather had held the highest offices of the state under king James VI., and was president of the Parliament when the king was far away in Westminster talking broad Scotch to the great nobles and servants of his dead cousin queen Elizabeth. Montrose’s own father, however, had no love either for war or statesmanship, and after he lost his wife in 1618 stayed quietly at home in one of his many castles, taking care of his family, keeping accounts of every penny he spent, and shooting and playing golf with his friends and neighbours.

James, his only son, was six years old when his mother died, but there were five daughters of all ages, who were always ready to play with the boy. To be sure, the two eldest, Lilias and Margaret, married early, and before two years had passed by one was lady Colquhoun and the other lady Napier of Merchiston. Still Dorothy and Katherine were left, and Beatrix, who was only three years younger than her brother, and the one he liked best of all.

When the great business of marrying his two eldest daughters was safely over, lord Montrose took his little boy with him on a riding tour of visits to his estates in Forfar, Perthshire, Dunbarton, and the Lothians, stopping in the houses of his many friends on the way. James loved horses all his life, and bills for ‘shoes for naigs’ were constantly coming in to him. He spent a good deal of time practising archery at the butts, and would make up matches with the boys who lived in the different houses where he and his father went to stay; on wet days they would get out their foils and fence in the hall, or even dance solemnly with the young ladies. Of course, he did some lessons too, when he was at home, probably with his sisters, but while his father only puts down in his accounts the items of six shillings for books and seven shillings for a ‘pig of ink,’ we read of nine shillings for bowstrings and three pounds for ‘12 goiff balls.’ As for tobacco, the elder Montrose smoked the whole day, a new accomplishment in those times, and an expensive one when tobacco was sometimes as much as thirteen shillings and fourpence an ounce; but this habit was hated by James, who never could bear the smell of a pipe all his life long.

After his son’s twelfth birthday lord Montrose decided that his son must go to college at Glasgow like other youths of his age and position. The news filled the little girls with awe; it seemed to make their brother a man at once, and they were sure he would never, never want to play bowls or hide and seek with them again. But James, though in his secret heart he may have agreed with them, was too kind to say so, and he comforted them with the thought of the fine things he would bring them from the great city, and the stories he would have to tell of its strange ways. And, if they wished, they might even now come and see the ‘stands’ (or suits) of clothes that had been prepared for him.

Drying their tears, the girls eagerly accepted his offer. The mixed grey cloth English clothes were passed by in scorn, but the bright trimming of a cloak was much admired by the young ladies, though they would have liked James to have been dressed in red, like his two pages and kinsfolk, Willy and Mungo Graham. Still, even in the despised grey suit they thought he made a brave show as he rode away from the door on his white pony, with his tutor, master Forrett, by his side, the pages and a valet following. Bringing up the rear were some strong, broad-backed ‘pockmanty naigs,’ or baggage-horses, bearing the plate, linen and furniture for the large house lord Montrose had taken for his son in Glasgow.

Gay indeed that house must have looked with its red and green and yellow curtains and cushions and counterpanes. As for food, it seems to have been simple enough, if we can judge by the bills sent in by the tutor for bags of oatmeal and barrels of herrings. There are also, we are glad to find, some bills for books, among them Raleigh’s ‘History of the World,’ only recently published, a Latin translation of Xenophon, and Seneca’s Philosophy. These last two James only read because he was obliged to, but he would sit half the morning poring over the pages of Raleigh, of whose own life and adventures master Forrett could tell him much.

For a short time his little sister Katherine lived with him. Probably she had been ill, and the soft air of the west was thought good for her; for Glasgow was only quite a small place then, and the sky over the Clyde was bright and clear, instead of being dark with smoke, as it often is now. But in two years' time James Graham's life at Glasgow came to a sudden end, owing to the death of his father, and, distressed and bewildered at the duties of his new position, he rode swiftly away one November morning to Kincardine Castle, to make arrangements for the funeral.

The ceremonies attending the burial of a great noble were of vast importance in the seventeenth century. The widow, if he had one, was expected to spend weeks, or even months, in a room hung with black, in a bed with black curtains and coverings, no ray of sunlight being suffered to creep through the cracks of the shutters. The young earl of Montrose had, as we are aware, no mother, but his sisters were kept carefully out of sight, while he prepared the list of invitations, to be despatched by men on horseback, to the friends and relations of the dead earl. For seven weeks they stayed at Kincardine, every guest bringing with him a large supply of game or venison, though the castle larders already held an immense amount of food. Poor James must have felt the days terribly long and dismal, and doubtless escaped, as often as he could, to take counsel with his brother-in-law, sir Archibald Napier, who remained his staunch friend to the end.

At length the old customs had been fulfilled; the last guest was gone, and in January 1627 Montrose, not yet fifteen, set out for the University of St. Andrews. Here he found many acquaintances, with whom he played golf or tennis, or, what he loved still more, practised archery at the butts. Bows instead of pictures hung on his walls, and in the second year of his residence the place of honour was given to the bow with which he gained the silver medal that may still be seen in the college. On wet days he spent his free hours in chess and cards, or in making verses like all young cavaliers, but he studied Cæsar and other Latin authors under his tutor master Lambe and worked at his Greek grammar, so that he might read Plutarch's 'Lives' in the original tongue. Everybody liked him in spite of his hot temper, he was so kind-hearted and generous and free with his money, and though never a bookworm, his mind was quick and thoughtful and his speech ready. His vacations he either passed with the Napiers, or in visiting the houses of his friends in Forfar or Fife, hunting, hawking, playing billiards or attending races; but he never failed to go to the kirk on Sundays or days of preachings in his best clothes with a nosegay in his coat, for he was very fond of flowers, and always had them on his table.

At seventeen this pleasant college life came to an end, and Montrose married Magdalen Carnegie, whose father was later created earl of Southesk. We do not know very much about his wife, and most likely she was not very interesting, but the young couple remained at lord Carnegie's house of Kinnaird for some years, till in 1633 Montrose, now twenty-one, set out on his journey to Rome, leaving lady Montrose and two little boys behind him. In his travels 'he made it his work to pick up the best of the qualities' of the foreigners whom he met, and learned 'as much of the mathematics as is required for a soldier,' but 'his great study was to read men and the actions of great men.'

What the foreigners in their turn thought of the young man with the long bright brown hair and grey eyes, whose height was no more than ordinary, yet whose frame was strong and spare, we do not know. They must have admired his quickness and skill in games and exercises, and the grace of his dancing; but his manner kept strangers at a distance, though he was always kind to his servants and those dependent on him.

During the three years that Montrose spent abroad grave events took place in Scotland. Charles I., who had already excited the angry suspicion of his Scotch subjects by what they considered the 'popish' ceremonies of his coronation at Holyrood, had lately been enraging them still more by his measures for putting down the national Church and supporting bishops throughout the country. The king, in spite of many good qualities, could never be trusted, and was very obstinate. Also, what was worse both for himself and his people, he could never understand the signs of the times or the tempers of those with whom he had to deal. The gatherings held in various parts of Scotland to express discontent with the king's proceedings did, indeed, alarm him a little, but not even some strange scenes that took place in 1637 taught him how serious the matter really was. The Scottish Church then used no prayer-book, but, by the royal commands, the bishop and dean of Edinburgh were reading certain new prayers in the church of St. Giles' on Sunday, July 23, when 'the serving-maids began such a tumult as was never heard of since the Reformation.' This 'tumult' was no sudden burst of feeling, but 'the result of a consultation in the Cowgate of Edinburgh, when several gentlemen recommended to various matrons that they should give their first affront to the book, assuring them that the men should afterwards take the business out of their hands.'

We are not told why 'the men' did not do 'the business' to begin with, but the matrons and serving-maids seemed to have enjoyed themselves so much on this occasion that they were quite ready for a second effort a month later.

On August 28 Mr. William Annan preached in St. Giles', defending the Litany, and when the news was spread about what the subject of his sermon was to be there arose, says the chronicler, in the town and among the women a great din.

'At the outgoing of the church, about thirty or forty of our honestest women in one voice before the bishop and magistrates did fall a railing, cursing, and scolding, with clamours on Mr. William Annan. Some two of the meanest were taken to the Tolbooth,' or city prison, where Montrose in after years was himself to lie.

Mr. Annan got safely to his own house, but being troubled over these events in his mind resolved to ask counsel of his bishop. So that evening, 'at nine on a mirk night,' he set out in company of three or four ministers to the bishop's dwelling, but no sooner had the little party stepped into the street than they were surrounded by 'hundreds of enraged women with fists and staves and peats, but no stones. They beat him sore; his cloak, ruff, hat were rent. He escaped all bloody wounds, yet he was in great danger even of killing.'

This was the beginning of the struggle which was to rend Scotland for so many years. A bond or covenant was drawn up, part of which was copied from one of the reign of James VI., fifty years before, guarding against the establishment of 'popery.' But now new clauses were added, protesting against the appointment of bishops, or allowing priests of any sort power over the laws of the country. This document Montrose signed with the rest, and consented to act if necessary as one of the defenders of the religion and liberty of Scotland.

Charles of course declined to give way on the smallest point, and issued a proclamation, to be read at Edinburgh, declaring all who opposed him to be traitors. In answer the malcontents raised a scaffold beside the cross, and on it stood Warriston, with a reply written by the nobles representing the people, which was received with shouts of applause. Montrose sat at Warriston's side, his legs dangling from a cask.

'Ah, James,' cried old lord Rothes, as he saw him, 'you will never be at rest till you be lifted up there above the rest, with a rope.'

Strange words, which were exactly fulfilled twelve years later.

So the first covenant was read, and afterwards it was laid on a flat tombstone in Greyfriars churchyard, and signed by the earl of Sutherland as the first noble of Scotland, and then by others according to their degree. During two days it was borne round the city, followed by an immense crowd, sobbing and trembling with excitement; from time to time they all stopped for fresh signatures to be added, and copies were made and sent over the country, so that each man should place his mark. Next, subscription lists were opened, taxes apportioned, and a war committee chosen.

And Charles heard and grew frightened, though even yet he did not understand.

However, the king saw it was needful to do something, and, as was usual with him, he did the wrong thing. He chose the earl of Hamilton (in whom he believed blindly, though no one else did) to go down to Scotland as his commissioner, with leave to yield certain points when once the covenant had been retracted, but with secret orders to spin out as much time as possible, so that Charles might be able to get ready an army. Yet, secret as Hamilton's instructions were, old Rothes knew all about them, and on his side made preparations. As each week passed it became increasingly plain that the two parties could never agree. The General Assembly, which had been held in November in Glasgow Cathedral, was dissolved by Hamilton, who had presided over it. The covenanters answered by deposing the bishops, and suppressing the liturgy, and then dissolving itself; and the earl of Argyll, soon to be Montrose's deadliest enemy, joined the covenanters.

One town only remained loyal, and this was Aberdeen, situated in the country of the Gordons, whose chief, the marquis of Huntly, was Argyll's brother-in-law. Huntly, like Leslie, who held a command in the covenanting army under Montrose, had seen much foreign service, so Charles appointed him his lieutenant in the north, though he bound him hand and foot by orders to do nothing save with Hamilton's consent. Chafing bitterly under these restrictions, Huntly was forced to disband his army of two thousand men, and had the mortification of seeing the covenanters enter Aberdeen the following week, wearing their badge of blue ribbons in their Highland bonnets.

The citizens were granted easy terms, and all pillage was strictly forbidden. Huntly himself was given a promise of safe conduct, but was afterwards held as a prisoner and sent with his son to Edinburgh castle. It is not clear how far Montrose himself was guilty of this breach of faith. The covenanters had always detested Huntly, and it is possible that he found it difficult to act against them, but at any rate he does not appear to have taken any active steps to stop their proceedings, and in after days paid a heavy penalty for his weakness.

Shortly after the English army, consisting of nineteen ships and five thousand men, arrived in the Firth of Forth, but so dense were the crowds on both shores that Hamilton, who commanded it, saw that landing was impossible. Suddenly the multitude gathered at Leith (the port of Edinburgh) parted asunder, and down the midst rode an old lady with a pistol in her hand. Hamilton looked with the rest and turned pale at the sight, for the old lady was his own mother, who in a voice that almost seemed loud enough to reach the vessel where her son stood, declared she would shoot him dead before he should set foot on land.

The time was evidently not ripe for invasion, so the men encamped on the little islands in the Forth, and spent their days in drill.

As often during Montrose's wars, Aberdeen was again the centre of fighting, but again the general preserved the city from pillage, against the express wishes, and even orders, of the covenanters. Then came the news that a peace, or rather truce, had been signed at Berwick, by which Charles had consented that a parliament should assemble in August in Edinburgh, though, as he insisted that the fourteen Scottish bishops should be present at its sittings, wise men shook their heads, and prophesied that no good could come of the measure. Their fears were soon justified. Riots broke out in the capital, and Aboyne, Huntly's son, narrowly escaped violence; the people refused to allow the army to be disbanded or the fortresses to be dismantled, as had been stipulated by the peace, till the king had fulfilled the promise made by Hamilton at the assembly at Glasgow of abolishing the bishops.

This he showed no signs of doing, but merely desired a number of the leading covenanters to appear before him. Six only obeyed, at the risk, some thought, of imprisonment or death, but neither Rothes nor Montrose, who headed them, was given to think of peril to themselves.

The old covenanter seems to have told Charles some plain truths, and the king in return forgot the courtesy which so distinguished him, and retorted that Rothes was a liar. No man was present when Montrose was summoned to confer with the king, and neither he nor Charles ever let fall a word upon the subject; but after that day his friends noted that he was no longer as bitter as before against his sovereign, nor so entirely convinced that the covenanters were right in their acts. Yet, whatever his feelings may have been, he strongly opposed the king's desire of filling the bishops' vacant places with inferior clergy at the meeting of Parliament, and, as might have been expected, the assembly was prorogued, leaving matters precisely as they were.

After this the Scotch took on themselves the management of their own affairs, and a Committee of Estates was formed, to which was entrusted absolute power both in state and army. Leslie was one of this committee; Montrose was another, and immediately he set about raising troops from his own lands, and carried out the plan of campaign that had been agreed on by attacking Airlie castle. On its surrender he garrisoned it with a few men, and went away; but shortly after Argyll arrived, turned out the garrison, and burned the castle, at the same time accusing Montrose of treason to the covenant in having spared it. But the Committee of Estates declared Montrose ‘to have done his duty as a true soldier of the covenant,’ and the accusation fell to the ground.

Montrose, however, though entirely cleared of the charge, was not slow to read the signs of the times. He saw that the covenanters were no longer content with guarding their own liberties of church and state, but desired to set at naught the king’s authority, perhaps even to depose him. So he and certain of his friends, Mar, Almond, and Erskine among them, formed a bond by which they swore to uphold the old covenant which they had signed in 1638, ‘to the hazard of their lives, fortunes, and estates, against the particular perhaps indirect practising of a few.’ This was the covenant to which Montrose held all his life, and for which he was hanged beside the city cross.

Having as he hoped taken measures to checkmate Argyll, Montrose joined the army, which had now swelled to twenty-five thousand men, was the first to cross the Tweed at Coldstream, and marched straight on Newcastle. The town surrendered without firing a shot, and Montrose sent a letter to the king again professing his loyalty. When later he was imprisoned on a charge of treason to the covenant in so doing, he answered that his conscience was clear in the matter, and that it was no more than they had all declared in the covenant, which no man could deny. But soon another storm was raised on account of the famous bond which he and his friends had made a short time before they were put in prison, and the clamour was so great that even his own party was alarmed, and gave it up to be burned by the hangman.

Montrose’s next object was to induce the king to come to Edinburgh in order to persuade the Scotch that he was ready to keep his word, and to grant the country the religious and civil liberties demanded by the covenant. Charles came, and was gracious and charming as he knew how to be, even going to the Presbyterian service, which he hated. This pleased everyone, and hopes ran high; but the quarrel was too grave to be soothed by a few soft words spoken or a few titles given. Plots and rumours of plots were rife in Edinburgh, and the king was forced to employ not the men he wished, but the men whom the Parliament desired. In November he returned to England, first promising that he would never take into his service Montrose, who had just been released after five months spent in prison, where he had been thrown with the rest of his party after the discovery of the bond.

To one who knew Scotland as well as he it was apparent that the Scotch Parliament and the English would speedily join hands, and he retired to one of his houses to watch the course of events. The covenanters tried to win him back, but Montrose felt that they disagreed among themselves, and that it would be impossible for him to serve under them. Meanwhile in England things marched rapidly: Edgehill had been fought; episcopacy had been abolished by Parliament in England as well as Scotland; and Hamilton's brother Lanark was using the Great Seal to raise a Scotch army against the king, for, by a treaty called the Solemn League and Covenant, Scotland was to fight with the English Parliament against the king, and England was to abolish bishops and become presbyterian like Scotland. England, however, did not keep her promise.

It was then that Charles, in his desperation, turned to Montrose. Montrose was too skilful and experienced a general to think lightly of the struggle before him, but he formed a plan by which Scotland was to be invaded on the west by the earl of Antrim from Ireland, while he himself, reinforced by royalist troops, would fall on the Scotch who were on the border. But the reinforcements he expected hardly amounted, when they came, to one thousand one hundred men, and these being composed of the two nations were constantly quarrelling, which added to the difficulties of the commander. At Dumfries he halted, and read a proclamation stating that 'he was king's man, as he had been covenanter, for the defence and maintenance of the true Protestant religion, his majesty's just and sacred authority, the laws and privileges of Parliament, the peace and freedom of oppressed and thralled subjects.' Adding that 'if he had not known perfectly the king's intention to be such and so real as is already expressed' he would 'never have embarked himself in his service,' and if he 'saw any appearance of the king changing' from these resolutions he would continue no longer 'his faithful servant.'

Thus he said, and thus we may believe he felt, but none the less not a man joined his standard as he marched along the border. He tried to reach prince Rupert, the king's nephew, in Yorkshire, but Marston Moor had been lost before he arrived there. Then, dressed as a groom, he started for Perthshire, and after four days arrived at the house of his kinsman Graham of Inchbrackie, where he learned that the whole of the country beyond the Tay was covenanting, with the single exception of the territory of the Gordons. No one knew of his presence, for he still wore his disguise, and slept in a little hut in the woods, where food was brought him. All day he wandered about the lonely hills, thinking over the tangled state of affairs, and waiting for the right moment to strike.

One afternoon when he was lying on the heather, wondering if he ought not to come out of his hiding, and join either the Gordons or prince Rupert, he beheld a man running quickly over the moor, holding in his hand the Fiery Cross, which, as every Highlander knew, was the call to arms. Starting to his feet, Montrose stopped the man and asked the meaning of the signal, and whither he was going.

‘To Perth,’ answered the messenger, ‘for a great army of Irishmen have swooped down in the Atholl country, and Alastair Macdonald is their leader. I myself have seen them, and I must not tarry,’ so on he sped, leaving Montrose with his puzzle solved. The Irishmen whom he expected had arrived, and he would go to meet them.

There was no need for hiding any more, and glad was he to throw off his disguise and put on his Highland dress again. Then, accompanied by the laird of Inchbrackie, he walked across the hills to join Macdonald, bearing the royal standard on his shoulder.

As soon as he reached the meeting-place where the clans and the Irish were already waiting, he stuck the standard in the ground, and, standing by it, he read aloud the king’s commission to him as lieutenant-general. Shouts of joy made answer when he had done, and next Montrose went round the ranks to inspect the troops he was to fight with, and find out what arms they had. The numbers only amounted to about two thousand three hundred, and it was not long before the clans began to quarrel with each other, and all with the Irish. As to their weapons, the Irish had matchlock guns, which took a long time to load, and one round of ammunition apiece, while the Highlanders had seized upon anything that happened to be in their cottages and showed a medley of bows, pikes, clubs, and claymores — a kind of broad sword. As to horses, they could only muster three.

With this ragged army Montrose marched, and his first victory was gained against lord Elcho, on the wide plain of Tippermuir, near Perth. The covenanting force was nearly double that of the royalists, but many of the troops were citizens of Perth, who thought more of their own skins than of the cause for which they were fighting. When Montrose’s fierce charge had broken their ranks, they all turned and fled, and many of them are said to have ‘bursted with running’ before they got safely within the city gates.

In Perth Montrose fitted out his army with stores, arms, and clothes, and released some of the prisoners on their promising not to serve against him, while others enlisted under the royal banner. Before he set out for Aberdeen he was joined by his two eldest sons and their tutor, master Forrett; and in Forfarshire he found lord Airlie and his sons awaiting him, with the welcome addition of fifty horse, which formed his entire cavalry. These, and one thousand five hundred foot, were all the army he had when he crossed the Dee fifteen miles from Aberdeen, and the covenanters mustered a thousand more.

Two miles from the town the two armies met. As was his custom, Montrose sent an envoy summoning the enemy to surrender, and with the envoy went a little drummer-boy, who was wantonly shot down by a covenanter. When Montrose heard of this deed of deliberate cruelty his face grew dark, but he began to dispose his men to the best advantage. Both sides fought well, and for a moment victory seemed uncertain; then Montrose brought up reinforcements and decided the day by one of his rapid charges.

He had already bidden the magistrates of Aberdeen to bring out the women and children to a place of safety as he would not answer for their lives, but, as he had twice preserved the city from pillage, it is probable they looked on his words as a mere idle threat, and left them where they were. After the battle the sack began; houses were burned and robbed, and many fell victims, though the dead, including those who had fallen in battle, did not exceed a hundred and eighteen. But his friends lamented that this time also he had not restrained his soldiers, and a price of 20,000*l.* was set on his head by the enraged covenanters.

Never was Montrose’s power of moving his men swiftly from one place to another more greatly needed than now. The Gordons were all in arms against him; Argyll was advancing from the south with a strong force, and Montrose had been obliged to send a large body of men into the west under Macdonald to raise fresh levies. With the remainder he retired into the Grampians, and turned and twisted about among the mountains, Argyll always following.

At Fyvie Montrose suddenly learned that his enemy was within two miles of him. Hastily ordering all the pewter vessels that could be found in the castle to be melted down for bullets, he disposed his troops on a hill, where a few trees and some outhouses gave them cover. Here they waited while the covenanters gallantly made the best of their way upwards. Then Montrose turned to young O’Gahan, who commanded the Irish, and said gaily, ‘Come, what are you about? Drive those rascals from our defences, and see we are not troubled by them again.’

Down came the Irishmen with a rush which scattered the covenanters far and wide, and seizing some bags of powder that lay handy, the victors retreated up the hill again, while Montrose with some musketeers attacked Argyll's flank, till they retired hastily.

After this defeat the covenanting leader went into Argyllshire, where was his strong castle of Inverary, by the sea. But Montrose crossed the pathless mountains, deep in snow, drove Argyll to Edinburgh, and when he came back with all his clan, turned on them suddenly, destroyed them at Inverlochy, and caused Argyll to escape in a boat.

The hopes of the king's lieutenant rose high as he thought of all he had done with the few undisciplined troops at his command.

'I trust before the end of this summer I shall be able to come to your majesty's assistance with a brave army,' he wrote; but meanwhile he dared not go to Edinburgh, where he had been sentenced to death by the Committee of Estates, and his property declared forfeited. But though the campaign had been successful beyond his expectations, yet his heart was heavy, for his eldest son had died of cold and exposure and the second was a prisoner in Edinburgh castle.

Such was the state of things when he went west again into the country of the Macdonalds, who flocked to his standard. On the other hand the Lowlanders fell off, and began to cast longing eyes at the rewards promised to those who joined the covenant. If Montrose could only have forced a battle on Baillie, who commanded the covenanting army, another victory would probably have been gained, but Baillie was wise, and declined to fight. Then the Highlanders grew sullen and impatient, and every day saw them striding over the hills to their own homes. By the time he reached Dunkeld the royal army had shrunk to six hundred foot and two hundred horse.

With this small force he entered Dundee, the great fortress of the covenant, and his men took to drinking. At that moment news was brought him that Baillie was at the gates, and with marvellous rapidity he collected his men and marched them out of the east gate as the English entered by the west. The Grampians were within a long march, and once there Montrose knew he was safe.

And, far away in Sweden and in Germany, the generals who had been trained under Wallenstein and under Gustavus Adolphus looked on, and wondered at the skill with which Montrose met and defeated the armies and the wealth arrayed against him.

But to those who had eyes to see the end was certain. It was to no purpose that he, with the aid of the Gordons, now once more on his side, gained a victory at Auldearn, between Inverness and Elgin, and another at Alford, south of the Don, which cost him the life and support of Huntly's son, lord Gordon. In vain did Ogilvies, Murrays, and Gordons swell his ranks, and the covenanting committee play into his hands by forcing Baillie to fight when the general knew that defeat was inevitable. The battle of Kilsyth had been won near Glasgow on August 14, and the day was so hot that Montrose ordered his men to strip to their shirts so that they might have no more weight to carry than was strictly necessary. Baillie was not even allowed to choose his own ground, but though he did all that man could do, the struggle was hopeless, and the Fife levies were soon in flight.

Only a year had passed since Montrose, now captain-general and viceroy of Scotland, had taken the field, and yet the whole country was subdued, largely by the help of the Irish, and of their leader Macdonald, whom he had knighted after Kilsyth. But for the royalist cause Naseby had been lost, Wales was wavering, Ireland was useless, and Montrose was not strong enough to make up for them all.

From Kilsyth, which is near Glasgow, it was easy for Macdonald to lead his men across the hills and lay waste the territories of his hereditary enemy Argyll. He would, he said, return to Montrose if he was wanted; but the marquis took the words for what they were worth, and waited to see whose turn to desert would come next. It was young Aboyne, who was tired of fighting, which had not brought him any of the rewards he thought his due, and he took with him four hundred horse and many infantry. At the end there only remained five hundred of Macdonald's Irish, who had cast in their lot with Montrose, and about one hundred horsemen. With these he marched to the south, trusting in the promises of help freely given by the great border nobles, and hoping to enter England and help the king.

And doubtless these promises would have been kept had the king's cause showed signs of triumph, but the speedy advance of four thousand horsemen under David Leslie, the best cavalry officer of the day, turned the scale. Roxburgh and Home at once proclaimed themselves on the side of the covenant, and only Douglas reached Montrose's camp on the river Gala, and brought a few untrained and unwilling recruits with him. It was the best he could do, yet he knew well enough how little reliance could be placed on his country contingent, who had been taught to look on the king and Montrose as monsters of evil, seeking to destroy whatever they held most dear.

It was on September 12 that Montrose drew up his forces at Philiphaugh between a line of hills and the river Ettrick, while shelter was given on the west by some rising ground covered with trees. Trenches had been made still further to protect them, and the Irish foot soldiers were ordered to occupy the position, which seemed secure against attack. But on this day, which was destined to decide whether the king or the covenant should rule Scotland, Montrose's military skill — even his good sense — deserted him; he posted his horse and best generals at Philiphaugh, on the other side of the river close to Selkirk, and he himself slept in the town. More than this, instead of placing his sentinels himself, as was his invariable custom, he allowed his officers to do it, and also to send out whatever scouts they may have thought necessary without orders from himself, while he sat undisturbed, writing despatches, little knowing that Leslie was only three miles away, at Sunderland Hall.

So the night of the 12th passed, and Montrose took counsel with the three men he most trusted, the earls of Crawford and Airlie, and his brother-in-law, old lord Napier, as to what should be their next step when the battle was won. The mist was thick and heavy over the land when morning dawned, but in spite of the cold their hearts grew light as one scout after another came in, reporting that there was not a sign of an enemy within miles. Had they been bribed? We shall never know, yet it is hardly possible that they could all have overlooked the presence of several thousand men so close to their own camp. At that very moment Leslie's army was crossing the river, and it began the attack while the royalists were putting on their uniforms for an inspection.

Montrose was at breakfast in Selkirk when a messenger burst in upon him with the news, but before he could ford the river with his horse his left wing had given way under Leslie's steady pressure. At the head of a handful of troopers, and followed closely by his faithful friends, Montrose twice charged the covenanters and forced them to retire. But a detachment of Leslie's men which had crossed the river higher up fell upon the right wing, composed of the Irish, who were placed in the wood. Desperate was the fight and bravely and faithfully the king's men died at their posts. Montrose seems to wish to die too, and bitterly he must later have regretted that he listened to his friends, who bade him remember his duty as a general, and besought him to fly. At length he yielded, and with fifty comrades galloped off the field, bearing the standards with him.

With the battle of Philiphaugh the cause of the king was hopelessly lost, and with it also the fortunes of his followers. A hundred of the Irish surrendered on promise of quarter, and were shot down next day, while their wives and children were killed on the spot, or imprisoned, and hanged later. Strange as it may appear to us, Montrose did not recognise the meaning of the defeat, and, with the dash and energy that marked him to the last, he collected a fresh army of Highlanders, and prepared to set out for the south, hoping to rescue his personal friends, who were now prisoners in Glasgow. Yet again his judgment failed him, and instead of attacking the English general who was holding Huntly in check in the north of Aberdeenshire, he left him alone, and then found that without the Gordons he was not strong enough to cope with Leslie’s army. Once more the mountains were his refuge, and from their shelter he crept out to attend the burial of his wife in the town of Montrose. On his way he probably passed the ruins of his castles, which had been burned by order of the covenanters.

Owing to the special desire of the Scottish rulers every possible degradation was heaped on the imprisoned nobles, and it was a rare favour indeed when they were suffered to die on the block, and not by the common hangman. Lord Ogilvy was saved by his sister, who, like lady Nithsdale sixty years later, forced him to exchange his clothes for hers, and remained in his cell, ready to take the consequences.

Then came the rumour that the king, with cropped hair like a Puritan and wearing a disguise, had ridden over Magdalen bridge at Oxford, attended by lord Ashburnham and Hudson, his chaplain, and entered the Scottish camp in the hope of softening his foes by submission. He was soon undeceived as to the way in which they regarded him, for before he had even eaten or rested he was begged — or bidden — to order the surrender of Newark, which still held out, and to command Montrose to lay down his sword. Charles, whose manhood returned to him in these hours of darkness, positively refused; but at Newcastle he found he was powerless to resist, and wrote to his faithful servant to disband his army and to go himself to France.

In the letter which the marquis sent in reply he asks nothing for himself, but entreats the king to obtain the best terms possible for those that had fought for him, and the conditions arranged by Middleton were certainly better than either king or general expected. The men who had served in Montrose’s wars were given their lives and liberty, and also were allowed to retain whatever lands had not been already handed over to other people. As to Montrose himself, he, with Crawford and Hurry the general, was to leave Scotland before September 1 in a ship belonging to the Committee of Estates. Should they be found in the country after that date death would be the penalty.

After disbanding his army — or what was left of it — in the king’s name, and thanking them for their services, Montrose went to Forfarshire to await the ship which was to convey him to France. But day after day passed without a sign of it, and the marquis soon became convinced that treachery was intended, and took measures to prevent it. Leaving old Montrose, he went to Stonehaven, another little town on the coast, and settled with a Norwegian captain to lie off Montrose on a certain day. So when, on August 31, the covenanting captain at last appeared, and declared his ship would not be ready to sail for another eight days — by which time, of course, Montrose’s life would be forfeit — he found his bird flown; for the exile and a friend had disguised themselves and put off one morning in a small boat to the larger vessel that was waiting for them, and in a week were safe across the North Sea at Bergen.

But Norway was merely a stepping-stone to Paris, where the queen of England was living under the protection of her sister-in-law, Anne of Austria, and of the young king Louis XIV. The handsome pension allowed her in the beginning gradually ceased when the civil war of the Fronde broke out in 1648, and, as we know, she was found one day by a visitor sitting with her little girl, whom she had kept in bed because she could not afford a fire. And even at this time, in 1647, she always spent whatever she had, so from one cause or another no money was forthcoming to help Montrose, who perhaps did not understand the situation, and thought that she was unkind and careless of her husband’s welfare. As often before, he spoke out his feelings when he would have done better to be silent, and pressed on the queen advice that was not asked for, and may not have been possible to follow. Yet, if he felt that there was no place for him in the little English court, ample evidence was given him of the high respect in which he was held elsewhere. The all-powerful minister, cardinal Mazarin, desired to enlist him in the French service, and the greatest nobles paid court to him. Montrose, however, was not the sort of man to find healing for his sorrows in honours such as these. He gave a grateful and courteous refusal to all proposals, and bidding farewell to his hosts, made his way to the Prague to offer his sword to the emperor Ferdinand. Like the rest, the emperor received him warmly, and created him a field-marshal, but there was no post for Montrose in the Austrian army, and in the end he joined some friends in Brussels, whence he kept up an intimate correspondence with Elizabeth of Bohemia, Charles I.’s sister, who was staying at the Hague with her niece, Mary of Orange, and the young prince of Wales.

There in February arrived the news of the king’s execution, and when he heard it Montrose vowed that the rest of his life should be spent in the service of his son, and in avenging his master. Charles II. did not like him; he was too grave and too little of a courtier; and besides, the new king had listened and believed the stories to his discredit brought by men whose fortunes had been ruined in their own country, and who sought to build them up in Holland! Charles soon found for himself how untrue were these tales, and though the two never could become friends, he recognised Montrose’s loyalty and ability and appointed him commander-in-chief of the royal forces and lieutenant-governor of Scotland, and gave him leave to get what mercenaries he could from Sweden and Denmark.

Full of hope, Montrose at once set off on his recruiting journey, and sent off some troops to the Orkneys to be drilled under the earls of Kinnoull and Morton; but Morton in a very short time caught fever and died. Meanwhile his friend, Elizabeth of Bohemia, looked on with distrust and alarm at her nephew’s proceedings, for well she knew — as did Charles himself — that the surrender of Montrose would be the first article of any treaty made by the covenant. She even wrote to put Montrose on his guard; but he, judging the king by himself, believed the assurances of help and support given in Charles’ own letters, accompanied by the gift of the garter, as a pledge of their fulfilment. He was bidden to lose no time in opening the campaign, but one thousand out of the one thousand two hundred men whom he despatched went down in a great gale, and only two hundred reached the shore. So April had come before the general had collected sufficient soldiers to march southwards, and by that time the forces of the enemy were ready to meet him.

It was on April 27 that Montrose’s last battle was fought at Carbisdale, near the Kyle, where the rivers Shin and Oykel reach the sea. The earl of Sutherland secured the passes of the hills, while colonel Strachan and a large body of cavalry approached from the south. When they arrived within a few miles of the royalist camp at the head of the Kyle, Strachan ordered two divisions of his cavalry to proceed under cover of some woods and broken ground, and only suffered a few horse, led by himself, to remain visible. These were seen, as they were meant to be, by Montrose’s scouts, who, as at Philiphaugh, were either careless or treacherous or very stupid, and they brought back the report that the covenanting force was weak. Montrose, taking for granted the truth of their report, disposed of his foot on a flat stretch of ground, and ordered his horse to advance. Then the trees and the hills ‘started to life with armed men’; the Orkney islanders fled without striking a blow; and though the foreign troops made a stout resistance, they were overpowered by numbers, and those of their leaders who were not dead were taken prisoners. Montrose, who was badly wounded, fought desperately on foot, but at length after much entreaty accepted the horse ridden by Sutherland’s nephew and dashed away into the hills, throwing away as he did so his star, sword and cloak — a fatal act, which brought about his discovery and death. Their horses were next abandoned, and Montrose changed clothes with a peasant, and with young lord Kinnoull and Sinclair of Caithness plunged into the wild mountains that lay on the west.

Now began for the three fugitives the period of bodily anguish that was to cease only with their lives. The country was strange to them, and was almost bare of inhabitants, so that for two days they sought in vain to find a road which might take them to Caithness, whence they could escape to France or Norway. During these two days they ate absolutely nothing, and passed the cold nights under the stars. At length Kinnoull, who had always been delicate, flung himself down on the heather, and in a few hours died of exhaustion. There his friends were forced to leave him, without even a grave, and wandered on, their steps and their hearts heavier than before, till a light suddenly beamed at them out of the dusk. It was a shepherd’s cottage, where they were given some milk and oatmeal, the first food they had eaten since the battle; but the man dared not take them into his hut, lest he should bring on himself the wrath of the covenant for harbouring royalists, even though he knew not who they were.

The reward offered for Montrose sharpened men’s eyes and ears, and in two days he was discovered lying on the mountain side almost too weak to move. It was Macleod of Assynt to whom the deadly shame of his betrayal is said to belong, and Montrose prayed earnestly that the mercy of a bullet in his heart might be vouchsafed him. But the man who for many years had defied all Scotland could not be dealt with like a common soldier, so he was put on a small Shetland pony, with his feet tied together underneath, and led through roaring, hissing crowds, which pressed to see him in every town through which they had to pass. The wounds that he had received in the battle were still untouched, and he was feverish from the pain. This was another cause of rejoicing to his foes; but they were careful to give him food lest he should escape them as Kinnoull had done. And at each halting-place there came a minister to heap insults and reproaches on his head, which he seldom deigned to answer. But though the ministers of peace and goodwill had no words bad enough for him, one is glad to think that Leslie the general did what he could, and allowed his friends to see him whenever they asked to do so, and also permitted him to accept and wear the clothes of a gentleman, which were given him by the people of Dundee. It was to Leslie also that he probably owed a last interview with his two little boys, when he stopped for the night at the castle of Kinnaird, from which he had been married.

From Dundee the prisoner was brought by ship to Leith, and taken to the palace of Holyrood, where he was received by the magistrates of the city in their robes of office, with the provost (or mayor) at their head. Here the order of the Parliament was read, and he listened ‘with a majesty and state becoming him, and kept a countenance high.’ Then his friends, who, like himself, were prisoners, were ordered to walk, chained two together, through the streets, and behind came Montrose, seated bareheaded on a chair in a cart driven by the hangman. The streets of the old town were crowded by people who came to mock and jeer, but remained dumb with shame and pity. The cart slowly went on its way, and at seven the Tolbooth prison was reached, with the gallows thirty feet high standing as it had stood twelve years before beside the city cross.

The last days of Montrose were disturbed by the constant visits of ministers, who tried to force from him a confession of treachery to the covenant, but in vain.

‘The covenant which I took,’ he said, ‘I own it and adhere to it. Bishops I care not for. I never intended to advance their interest. But when the king had granted you all your desires, and you were everyone sitting under his vine and under his fig tree — that then you should have taken a party in England by the hand and entered into a league and covenant with them against the king was the thing I judged my duty to oppose to the yondmost.’

These words are the explanation of Montrose’s conduct in changing from one side to another; but little he guessed that the new king, by whose express orders he had undertaken his present hopeless mission, had only a few days before, at the conference of Breda, consented to bid his viceroy disband his army and to leave Scotland. This knowledge, which would have added bitterness to his fate, was spared him; as was the further revelation of the baseness of Charles II., who gave orders to his messenger not to deliver the document if he found Montrose likely to get the upper hand.

As an act of extraordinary generosity the Parliament, which had voted to colonel Strachan a diamond clasp for his share in the final defeat of Montrose, permitted the prisoner’s friends to provide him with a proper dress, so that he might appear suitably before them. Their courtesy did not, however, extend to a barber to shave him — a favour which, as he said, ‘might have been allowed to a dog.’ But he must have looked very splendid as he stood at the bar of the House, in black cloth trimmed with silver, and a deep lace collar, with a scarlet cloak likewise trimmed with silver falling over his shoulders, a band of silver on his beaver hat, and scarlet shoes and stockings.

A long list of his crimes was read to him, and these one by one he denied. ‘For the league,’ he said, ‘I thank God I never was in it, and so could not break it. Never was any man’s blood spilt save in battle, and even then, many thousand lives have I preserved. As for my coming at this time, it was by his majesty’s just commands’ — the commands of the king who a week earlier had abandoned him! But of what use are words and denial when the doom is already fixed? The chancellor’s reply was merely a series of insults, and then the prisoner was ordered to kneel and hear the sentence read by Warriston, by whose side he had stood on the scaffold in 1638 when the first covenant was read, and old Lord Rothes had made his dark prophecy.

He had known beforehand what it would be — hanging, drawing, and quartering, with a copy of his last declaration and the history of his wars tied round his neck, and no burial for his body unless he confessed his guilt at the last. This did not trouble him. ‘I will carry honour and fidelity with me to the grave’ he had said eight years before, and that no grave was to be allowed him mattered little.

The ceremony over, he was led back to the Tolbooth, where his gaoler kept him free from the ministers who would fain have thrust their sermons and reproaches on the dying man.

Soldiers were early under arms on the morning of May 21, for even now the Parliament greatly dreaded a rescue. With the ‘unaltered countenance’ he had borne ever since his capture Montrose heard the beating of drums and trumpets, and answered calmly the taunt of Warriston as to his vanity in dressing his hair.

‘My head is yet my own,’ said Montrose, ‘and I will arrange it to my taste. To-night, when it will be yours, treat it as you please.’

Every roof and window in the High Street and within sight of the city cross was filled with people as Montrose, clad in scarlet and black, walked calmly down at three that afternoon. ‘Many of his enemies did acknowledge him to be the bravest subject in the world,’ writes one who beheld him, and he walked up the steps as quietly as if he were taking his place to see some interesting sight.

They feared him too much to allow him to speak to the crowd, as was the custom, but he addressed himself to the magistrates and the ministers who were standing on the platform. Once more he confessed his faith and his loyalty, and when, in accordance with the sentence, the hangman suspended the two books round his neck, he said, ‘they have given me a decoration more brilliant than the garter.’ Then he mounted the ladder, and the hangman burst into tears as he gave the last touch.

So died Montrose, and eleven years later the king who had disowned him bethought him of his fate. In January 1661 the Parliament, which had been summoned by the restored monarch, Charles II., ‘thought fit to honour Montrose his carcase with a glorious second burial, to compensate the dishonour of the first.’ His limbs, which had been placed over the gates of the cities made memorable by his victories, remained in state at Holyrood for four months, and May 11 was fixed to lay them where they now rest, in the church of St. Giles. Heralds in their many-coloured robes arranged the procession, and the train-bands occupied the street to keep off the dense crowds. The magistrates, headed by the provost, walked two and two in deep mourning — had any of them taken part in that brutal scene eleven years ago? — and behind them came the barons and the burgesses. Next followed the dead man’s kinsmen bearing his armour, the order of the garter, and his field-marshal’s baton, and behind the coffin came his two sons and most of his kindred. Middleton, as lord high commissioner and representative of the king, occupied the place of honour, and brought up the rear in a coach drawn by six horses, with six bareheaded gentlemen riding on each hand.

Thus was Montrose lowered into his grave to the sound of the guns that he loved, which thundered from the castle. He has a beautiful tomb in the old church of St. Giles, adorned with the coats-of-arms of the Grahams and Napiers and his other brothers-in-arms.

A CHILD’S HERO

On a dark January day in the year 1858 a little girl was running quickly downstairs for her play-hour with her elders. Just as she reached the foot of the staircase the drawing-room door opened, and her brother came out with a grave face. ‘Havelock is dead!’ said he, and at the news the little girl laid her head against the wall and burst into tears.

Who was this Havelock, that a strange child should care so much about him? Well, he was a man who worked hard and fought hard all the days of his life, never shirking his duty or envious of the good luck of others. Again and again those who had shared the burden and heat of the day with Havelock got rewards to which it might seem that he had an equal claim; still, whatever his disappointment he showed no sign, but greeted his fortunate friends cheerfully, and when it was required of him served under them with all his might. Just at the end the chance came to him also, and gloriously he profited by it.

But if you want to know how that came about you must begin at the beginning.

Henry Havelock was born at Bishop’s Wearmouth, close to Sunderland, on April 5, 1795. His grandfather was a shipbuilder in the flourishing seaport town, and his son, Henry’s father, became a partner in the business. The Havelocks soon made a name in the trade, and were given a commission to build the *Lord Duncan*, christened after the famous admiral, the largest ship ever launched from the port.

Money flowed in rapidly, and when Henry was about three years old his father determined to leave the north and to go and settle at Ingress Hall, near Dartford, in Kent, which became the birthplace of his two youngest sons, Thomas and Charles.

There was no school nearer than three miles, which was too far for them to walk, so to the great delight of Henry and his elder brother William ponies were given them, and even if they had disliked their lessons instead of being fond of books, the pleasure of the ride through the lanes would have made up for everything. As it was, they were always hanging about the front door long before it was time to start, and the moment the coachman brought out the ponies from the stable they would spring into their saddles in a great bustle, and clatter away over the grass, pretending that they were very late and would get bad marks if they did not hurry.

All through Havelock’s childhood the continent of Europe was under the foot of Napoleon, and was forced to submit to his rule. England only had stood aloof and refused his advances; yet she waited, with the dread that accompanies the expectation whose fulfilment is delayed, for an invasion of her own coasts. No story was too bad to be believed of ‘Boney,’ and women are said to have frightened their naughty children into good behaviour by threatening to send for ‘Boney’ to carry them away. No doubt Havelock heard a great deal from his parents and schoolfellows of the desperate wickedness of ‘Boney,’ but, in spite of the terrible pictures that were drawn, the boy devoured eagerly all the newspapers wrote of the ogre’s campaigns and his battles, and never joined in the outcry against him.

Before Henry had passed his tenth birthday he was sent, with his brother William, to the Charterhouse School in the City of London, where he stayed for seven years. He was always bold and daring, so the other boys respected him, even though he did not care much for games, and, what was still worse in their eyes, was fond of Greek and Latin and always did his work. Still, though it was, they said, very silly for a boy to do more than he could possibly help, it must be admitted that Havelock never minded risking his neck when he was dared to do so, would climb trees or chimneys while others looked on awe-stricken, and would endure any punishment sooner than betray ‘a fellow’ who was caught.

During these years of school Havelock had many battles of Napoleon’s to study, and we may be sure that each one in its turn was thoroughly discussed with the friends who afterwards became celebrated in many ways — the historians, Grote and Thirlwall, Eastlake the painter, Yates the actor, and Macnaghten, afterwards murdered at Cabul, while Havelock was with the force on the way to relieve him. As they grew older they used to talk over the future together, and not one of them doubted that he would be in the front rank of whatever profession he might choose. ‘My mother wants me to be a lawyer, and she is sure that one day I shall be lord chancellor,’ said Havelock, and no doubt every other mother was equally convinced of her son’s genius. But before his school-days were over Mrs. Havelock died, to Henry’s great grief, and then came the news that their father had lost a great deal of money, and they must leave Ingress Hall and move to a smaller house at Clifton.

It was in 1813 — the year of the battle of Leipzig, Henry Havelock would have told you — that the young man took the first step towards becoming ‘lord chancellor,’ and was entered at the Middle Temple. He set to work with his usual energy, and when he was too tired to understand any more of what the law books taught him, he would take down a volume of poetry and read till he was soothed by the music of the words. But at the end of a year a change came into his life. His father, whose temper seems to have been ruined by the loss of his money, quarrelled with him about some trifling matter. Henry’s allowance was withdrawn, and as he could not live in the Temple upon nothing he was forced to bid good-bye to the dream of the chancellorship.

At this time in his life he was perplexed and unhappy, though he never gave up the strong religious faith which he had inherited from his mother. It was necessary that he should earn his living in some way, but he could not see what he was to do, and things were so uncomfortable at home that he wished to leave it as soon as possible.

Happily he had not long to wait, for William, who had joined the 43rd Regiment and fought at Busaco and Salamanca and Waterloo, came home on leave, and solved the puzzle.

In the great battle which finally broke the power of Napoleon, William Havelock had been acting as aide-de-camp to baron von Alten, who had succeeded to the command of general Craufurd’s division. We are told that William ‘had done the baron a service’ during the engagement, and that the general was anxious to prove his gratitude. The special ‘service’ the young soldier had rendered is not mentioned, but we may take it for granted that William Havelock had in some way saved his life. However, in answer to the general’s offer of reward, William said that he had all he could possibly wish for, and so the matter ended for the moment. But when he came home, and found Henry with all his plans changed, and not knowing how to set about making a career for himself, the baron von Alten’s words flashed into his mind.

‘You were always fond of soldiering,’ he said to Henry one day, ‘and I believe you could describe the battles I have fought in almost as well as I could. If the baron can give me a commission for you, will you take it? I am sure you would make a splendid soldier.’

Henry’s eyes beamed. Somehow he had never thought of that. At the Charterhouse he had been laughed at for his love of books, and called the ‘Phlos.’ — short for ‘Philosopher’ — by the boys. He had always, too, been very religious, and after his mother’s death (which occurred when he was about fourteen) had gathered four of his special friends round him once or twice a week in the big dormitory where they all slept, in order that they might read the Bible together. Yet there was in Havelock much of the spirit of the old crusader and of his enemy, the follower of Mahomet the prophet, and though, unlike them, he did not deal out death as the punishment of a rejected faith, still he positively delighted in fighting, and indeed looked on it as a sacred duty.

So the commission was obtained, and Henry, now second lieutenant in the Rifle Brigade, then called the 95th, was sent to Shorncliffe, and captain Harry Smith was his senior officer. The Boer war has made us very well acquainted with the name of this gentleman, for in after years it was given to the town of Harrismith in South Africa, while his wife's has become immortal in 'Ladysmith.'

Young Havelock, who was still under twenty-one, made fast friends with his captain, and listened eagerly to all he could tell of the Punjaub, where Smith had seen much of service. How he longed to take part in such deeds! But his turn was slow in coming, and for eight years he remained inactive in England, while the nation was recovering as best it could from the strain of the Peninsular War. Most of his messmates grumbled and fretted at having 'nothing to do,' but this was never Havelock's way, for if he could not 'do' what he wanted, he did something else. The young man, only five feet six inches in height, with the long face and eyes which looked as if they saw things that were hidden from other people, spent his spare time in studying all that belonged to his profession. For hours he would pore over books on fortification and tactics, and try to find for himself why this or that plan, which seemed so good, turned out when tried a hopeless failure. He had always a pile of memoirs of celebrated soldiers round him, and often bored his brother-officers by persisting in talking of the campaigns of Marlborough or Frederick the Great, instead of discussing the balls or races that filled their minds. Still, though he made the best of the circumstances in which he found himself, he looked forward to the prospect of going to India, where William and Charles already were.

But to get to India it was needful to exchange into another regiment, and Henry was gazetted to the 13th Light Infantry. The process took some time, but as usual he found some work for himself, and prepared for his future life by taking lessons in Persian and Hindostanee.

Now there is no better way of learning a language than to teach it to somebody else, and on the voyage out to Calcutta, which then took four months, some of the officers on board ship begged him to form a class in these two languages. Havelock had passed in London the examination necessary for the degree of a qualified Moonshee, or native tutor, and his Persian was so good that regularly throughout his life, when his superior officers wished to mark their appreciation of his services, they recommended him for an interpretership! Therefore during those tedious four months, when land was seldom seen, and the ship sailed on from St. Helena, whose great captive had not been two years dead, to the Cape of Good Hope and the island of Ceylon, the little band of students met and struggled with the strange letters of the two tongues, and by the time the ship *General Kyd* arrived at Calcutta in May 1823, Havelock's pupils could all talk a little, and read tolerably.

At first it seemed as if life in India was going to be as quiet as life in England, but in 1824 the king of Ava, a Burmese city, demanded that Eastern Bengal should be given up to him, or war would be instantly declared. The answer sent to the 'Lord of the Great White Elephant' was a declaration of war on the part of our viceroy in India. Sir Archibald Campbell was given the command of the invading force, and he appointed Havelock to be his deputy-assistant adjutant-general.

It was the young man's first taste of warfare, and a very bitter one it proved to be. The experiences of Marlborough and Frederick on the battlefields of Europe were of little use in the jungle, where the Burmese knew a thousand hiding-places undreamed of by the English, who had the unhealthy climate to fight against as well. At last Havelock fell ill like the rest, and was sent to his brother, then stationed at Poonah, not far from Bombay, to recover his health.

Havelock went very unwillingly; he was doing his work to the satisfaction of the general, and he knew it; besides, he could not help thinking that before he got better the war might have ended, or someone else might be filling his place. However, there was no help for it, and as soon as he was on board ship he began to feel for the first time how ill he had really been. Once at Poonah he soon recovered, and in June was able to return to the camp in Burmah.

For a long while it had been Havelock's habit to hold a sort of Bible class for any of the men whom he could persuade to come to it; and not only did he give them religious teaching, but he made them understand that he expected them to 'live soberly, righteously, and godly,' as the Catechism says. They were not to quarrel, or to drink too much, or to do as little work as possible. They were to tell the truth, even if it got them into trouble, and they were to bear the hardships that fall to the lot of every soldier — hunger and thirst, heat and cold — without grumbling. And the men accepted his teaching, and tried to act up to it, because they saw that Havelock asked nothing of them that he did not practise himself.

‘Havelock’s Saints’ was their nickname among the rest of the camp, but sometimes even their enemies were forced to admit that ‘Havelock’s Saints’ had their uses. One night sir Archibald Campbell ordered a sudden attack to be made on the Burmese by a certain corps. The messenger or orderly who was sent with the order returned saying that the men were too drunk to be fit for duty.

‘Then call out Havelock’s Saints,’ said the commander-in-chief; ‘*they* are always sober and to be depended upon, and Havelock himself is always ready.’

So the night attack was made by the ‘Saints,’ and the position carried.

At the end of the Burmese war Havelock returned to his regiment, then commanded by colonel Sale, who became his lifelong friend. All he had gained in Burmah, except experience, was the rank of a Burmese noble, conferred on him by the ‘Golden King’ on account of his services in making the treaty of peace. This cost the ‘Lord of the White Elephant’ nothing, and did no good to Havelock; and six months after the troops left Burmah he was glad to accept the adjutancy of a regiment in a pleasant part of India, near some friends. Here he became engaged to be married to Miss Marshman, daughter of a missionary, and the wedding-day was soon fixed. Early that morning the bridegroom received a message that he must go up at once to Calcutta in order to attend a court-martial to be held at twelve o’clock. Calcutta was a long way from Chinsurah, and as he was bound to be present at the military trial most men would have put off the marriage till the following day. But Havelock was different from other people. He sent one messenger to order the fastest boat on the river to be in waiting, and another to inform the bride and her father that they must get ready as quickly as possible. The ceremony was performed without delay, and as soon as it was over Havelock ran down to his boat. For several hours he sat in the stifling court, hearing witnesses and asking them questions as coolly as if there had been no marriage and no bride, and when the proceedings were ended, and the sentence passed, he stepped on board the boat again, and arrived at Chinsurah in time for the wedding dinner.

After he had been at Chinsurah for four years the Government thought they could do without an adjutant, and thus save money. This fell hardly on Havelock, who was very poor, and when he went back to his regiment his wife and child had to live in two tiny rooms on the ramparts. Mrs. Havelock never complained, but in a hot climate like India plenty of space and air are necessary for health, and both father and mother were terrified lest the baby should suffer. However, very soon the new governor-general gave him the adjutancy of his own regiment, then at Agra, and things grew brighter. His days were passed in drilling and looking after his men, but he still took thought for their welfare in their spare hours, and managed to get some chapels put up for them, and to open a coffee-house, with games and books, which he hoped might keep them out of mischief.

Now at this date, and for many years after, it was the custom in the English army that the officers should *buy* their promotion, unless a vacancy occurred by death. Havelock was a poor man, and like many well-known Indian soldiers had to depend for luck on his ‘steps,’ or advancement. If, like Havelock, officers exchanged into other regiments, they were put back to the bottom of the list, and had to work their way up all over again.

Besides this there were *two* armies in India, one belonging to the English sovereign, and the other to the East India Company’s Service, under which near a hundred years before Clive had won his battles. It was the officers serving under ‘John Company,’ as it was called, who had all the ‘plums’ of the profession; who governed large provinces, made treaties with the native princes, and gave orders even to the general himself. Outram, who afterwards entered Lucknow side by side with Havelock; sir Henry Lawrence, who died defending the city before Outram and Havelock fought their way in; John Nicholson, who was killed in the siege of Delhi, and hundreds of other well-known men, all wore the Company’s colours and received rewards. For the officers of the royal army it was no uncommon thing for a man to wait fifty years before being made a general, as lord Roberts’s father waited; so, although it was very disheartening for Havelock to see young men, with not half his brains but with ten times his income, become captains and majors and colonels over his head, he knew well what he had to expect, and also that he possessed thousands of companions in misfortune.

By-and-by the Company’s army was done away with, and India is now ruled in an entirely different way.

It was in the autumn of 1836 that Havelock sent up his wife and little children for a change to a hill station called Landour. The cool air and quiet were very restful after the heat of the summer, and at last they were all able to sleep, instead of tossing to and fro through the dark hours, longing for the dawn.

One night the moon was shining brightly, and Mrs. Havelock had stepped out on her verandah before she went to bed, and thought how beautiful and peaceful everything looked. A few hours later she was awakened by a dense smoke, and jumping up found that the house was on fire all round her. She snatched up her baby and opened the door to get to the room where the two little boys were sleeping with their ayah, or nurse, but such a rush of flames met her that she staggered back and fell. In an instant her thin nightdress was on fire, and she was so blinded by the glare and the smoke that she did not know which way to turn. Happily one of the native servants heard the noise, and, wrapping a wet blanket about him which was too damp to burn, he managed to crawl over the floor and drag her through the verandah to a place of safety. He then ran back and succeeded in reaching the two boys and putting them beside their mother, but not before the eldest had been badly burnt.

As for the baby, she died in a few days, and it was thought that her mother, who had been borne unconscious to the house of a neighbour, could hardly survive her many hours.

Such was the news which reached Havelock at Kurnaul, where the regiment was now stationed. It was a crushing blow to him, but, with a violent effort to control himself, he sent a hasty request to the colonel for leave, and arranged the most important parts of his work, so that it might be carried on by another officer. He had just finished and was ready to start when a message was brought in from the men of his regiment, who were waiting below, begging that he would speak to them for one moment. Half dazed he hurried out to the courtyard, and then the sergeant stepped forward from the ranks, and in a few words told him of the sorrow with which all his company had heard of the terrible calamity, and hoped that he would accept a month of their pay to go towards replacing the burnt furniture.

Havelock was touched to the heart, and his eyes filled with tears of gratitude. His voice shook as he stammered out his thanks, but he could not take their savings, though to the end of his life he never forgot the kindness of their offer. Happily Mrs. Havelock did not die, and in a few months was as well as ever.

In 1838, when Havelock had been twenty-three years a soldier, he obtained his captaincy by the death of the man above him, and in the end of the same year the war with Afghanistan gave him another chance of distinguishing himself.

It was a very unfortunate and badly managed business. The native ruler, the Ameer or Dost Mohammed, who had for twelve years governed the country fairly well, was deposed, and a weak and treacherous prince, hated by all the Afghans, was chosen by us to replace him. This could only be done by the help of our troops, and although Englishmen who knew Cabul pointed out to the governor-general the folly of his course, lord Auckland would listen to no one, and the expedition which was to finish in disaster was prepared.

Havelock’s old friend sir Willoughby Cotton was given the command of the part of the army destined for Afghanistan itself, while the other half remained as a reserve in the Punjaub. Cotton appointed Havelock his aide-de-camp, greatly to his delight, and at the end of December 1838 the march began. As far as the Indus things went smoothly enough, but after that difficulties crowded in upon them. They had deserts to cross, and not enough animals to drag their guns and waggons, food grew scarcer and scarcer, and at length the general ordered ‘famine rations’ to be served out. It was winter also, and the country was high and bitterly cold, and April was nearly at its close before the city of Candahar was reached. Here sickness broke out among the troops, and they were obliged to wait in the town till the crops had ripened and they could get proper supplies for their march to Cabul.

The first step towards winning Cabul was the capture of Ghuzni, a strong fortress lying two hundred and seventy miles to the north of Candahar. This was carried by assault during the night, the only gate not walled up being blown open by the English. In the rush into the town which followed, colonel Sale was thrown on the ground while struggling desperately with a huge native, who was standing over him.

‘Do me the favour to pass your sword through the body of the infidel,’ cried Sale, politely, to captain Kershaw, who had just come up. The captain obligingly did as he was asked, and the Afghan fell dead beside his foe.

Early in August the British army reached the town of Cabul, on the river of the same name, and found that the Dost Mohammed had fled into the mountains of the Hindu Koosh, leaving the city ready to welcome the British. As everything was quiet, and the army was to remain in Cabul for the winter, Havelock obtained permission to go back to Serampore, near Calcutta, in the hope of bringing out a book he had been writing about the march across the Indus. Unluckily this book, like the two others he wrote, proved a failure; which was the more unfortunate as, in order to get it published, Havelock had been obliged to refuse sir Willoughby Cotton’s offer of a Persian interpretership. But he needed money for his boy’s education, and thought he might obtain it through his book. Therefore this lack of a sale was a bitter disappointment to him.

Just at that time a company of recruits had been raised for service in Cabul, and in June 1840 Havelock started in charge of them from Serampore. He had the whole width of India to cross, and at Ferozepore, on a tributary of the Indus, he joined general Elphinstone, the successor of Cotton, who was retiring. Why

Elphinstone should have been chosen to conduct a war which the mountainous country was certain to render difficult is a mystery, and another mystery is why Elphinstone should have accepted the appointment, as he was so crippled with gout that he could hardly move. However, there he was, commander-in-chief of this part of the expedition, and from this unwise choice resulted many of the calamities which followed.

The general could not travel fast, and it was more than six months before they reached Cabul. Havelock, now Persian interpreter to Elphinstone, was much disturbed at the condition of things that they found on their arrival, and at the folly which had lost us the support of the native hill tribes, who had hitherto acted as our paid police and guarded the passes leading into the Punjaub. So when Sale's brigade, with a native regiment, a small force of cavalry and artillery, and a few engineers under the famous George Broadfoot, marched eastwards up the river Cabul, they discovered that the passes had all been blocked by the mountaineers, who were ready to spring out and attack the English from all sorts of unsuspected hiding-places.

Now Havelock had not drawn his sword since the end of the Burmese war, and directly he saw a chance of fighting he had begged to be allowed to accept the appointment of staff-officer offered him by Sale. This was given him, and the troops had only gone a few miles from Cabul when the fighting began, and Sale was severely wounded.

It is impossible to tell all the details of the march, but much of the burden of it fell on Havelock's shoulders, as Sale could not go about and see after things himself. Here, as always, he proved himself, as Kaye the historian says, 'every inch a soldier.' 'Among our good officers,' wrote Broadfoot at the time, 'first comes captain Havelock. The whole of them together would not compensate for his loss. He is brave to admiration, invariably cool, and, as far as I can see or judge, correct in his views.'

All along the march up the Cabul these qualities were badly needed, for it was necessary to watch night and day lest the little army should be taken unawares by the hill tribes. At last the rocky country was left behind, and they halted in the rich and well-wooded town of Gundamak, to rest for a little and to wait Elphinstone's orders. The letters, when they came, told a fearful tale. The Afghans had risen in Cabul; Burnes, the East India Company's officer in Afghanistan, had been murdered, together with other men, among them Broadfoot's brother, and though there were five thousand British troops stationed only two miles away, as Havelock well knew, they had never been called out to quell the insurrection.

Under these circumstances Elphinstone implored Sale to return without delay to Cabul.

A council of war was held to decide what was to be done. They all saw that if it had been difficult to get through the passes before, it would be almost impossible now, when the success at Cabul had given fresh courage and audacity to the hill-men, and thousands who had hung back waiting to know if the insurrection would be successful or not would have rushed to the help of their country. Besides, with five thousand fresh troops close to the city, the English could hardly be in such desperate straits. So Sale decided to disobey Elphinstone’s orders and to push on to Jellalabad further up the river.

Jellalabad was not reached without much fighting, and when they entered the town it was clear that it would not be easy to hold, and that the walls stood in much need of repair. However, Broadfoot was the kind of man who felt that whatever *had* to be done *could* be done, and he turned out his corps, consisting of natives of every tribe, to work on the fortifications. Happily he had brought with him from Cabul all the tools that were necessary, and the Afghan fire which poured in upon them was soon checked by Colonel Monteath, who scattered the enemy for the time being.

This left the garrison a chance of getting in supplies; but they were short of powder and shot, and orders were issued that it should not be used unnecessarily.

On the morning of January 8, 1842, three Afghans rode into the town, bearing a letter from Cabul, signed both by sir Henry Pottinger and general Elphinstone. This told them that a treaty had been concluded by which the English had agreed to retire from Afghanistan, and bidding Sale to quit Jellalabad at once and proceed to India, leaving behind him his artillery and any stores or baggage that he might not be able to carry with him.

With one voice the council of war, which was hastily summoned, declined once more to obey these instructions, which they declared had been wrung out of Elphinstone by force. Jellalabad should be held at any cost, and the news that they received during the following week only strengthened their resolution. The British in Cabul were hemmed in by their enemies, the cantonments or barracks were deserted, and the sixteen thousand fugitives had been surrounded outside the city by Afghan troops led by the son of the Dost Mohammed. These things gave the defenders of Jellalabad enough to think of, and to fear.

Five days later some officers on the roof of a tall house were sweeping the horizon with their field glasses to see if there was any chance of an attack from the Afghans, who were always hovering about watching for some carelessness on the part of the besieged. But gaze as they might, nothing was moving in the broad valley, or along the banks of the three streams which watered it. They were turning away satisfied that at present there was no danger, when one of them uttered a sudden cry, and snatching the glasses from his companion, exclaimed, ‘Yes, I am right. A man riding a pony has just come round that corner. It is the Cabul road, and his clothes are English. Look!’

The others looked, and saw for themselves. The pony’s head drooped, and he was coming wearily down the road, while it was clear that the rider was urging the poor beast to his best speed. A chill feeling of disaster filled the little group; they hastened down to the walls and gave a shout of welcome, and the man waved his cap in answer.

‘Throw open the gate,’ said the major, and they all rushed out to hear what the stranger had to tell.

It was a fearful tale. The general in Cabul had listened to the promises of the son of the Dost Mohammed, and had ordered the five thousand troops and ten thousand other hangers-on of the British army to leave their position, in which they were safe, and trust themselves solely to the Afghans. Cold, hungry, and tired they struggled to the foot of the mountains; then the signal was given, the Afghans fell on their victims, and the few who escaped were lost among the snows of the passes. Only Dr. Brydon had been lucky enough to strike a path where no one followed him, and in spite of wounds and exhaustion had managed to reach the walls of Jellalabad.

In silence the men listened, horror in their faces. It seemed impossible that Englishmen should have walked blindfold into such a trap, and besides the grief and rage they felt at the fate of their countrymen another thought was in the minds of all. The Afghans would be intoxicated by their success, and at any moment might swoop down upon the ill-defended Jellalabad. Instantly the gates were closed, the horses saddled, and every man went to his post. At night bonfires were lit and bugles sounded every half-hour to guide to the city any fugitives that might be hiding in the woods or behind the rocks. But none came — none ever came save Brydon.

Meanwhile Sale was daily expecting a relief force under Wild; but instead there arrived the news that Wild had been unable to fight his way through the terrible Khyber Pass — the scene of more than one tragedy in Indian history.

In face of this a council of war was again held to consider what was best to be done. Most of the officers wished to abandon the city and make terms with the Afghans, in spite of the lesson that had already been given them of what was the fate of those who trusted to Afghan faith. Only Broadfoot and Havelock opposed violently this resolution, and in the end their views prevailed. Jellalabad was to be defended by the garrison till general Pollock arrived from the East.

So matters went for the next three months. By this time the raw troops that had entered the city had become steady and experienced soldiers. There was a little fighting every now and then, which served to keep up their spirits, and though food needed to be served out carefully, they were able sometimes to drive in cattle from the hills, which gave them fresh supplies. On February 19 Sale received a letter from general Pollock asking how long they could hold out, and he was writing an answer at a table, with Havelock beside him, when suddenly the table began to rock and the books slid on to the ground. Then a whirlwind of dust rushed past the window, making everything black as night, and the floor seemed to rise up under their feet.

The two men jumped up, and, blinded and giddy as they were, made their way outside, where they were nearly deafened with the noise of tumbling houses and the cries of hurt and frightened people. It was no use to fly, for havoc was all round them, and they were no safer in one place than another. At last the earth ceased to tremble and houses to fall; the dust stopped dancing and whirling, and the sun once more appeared.

During the first shock of the earthquake Broadfoot was standing with another officer on the ramparts, his eyes fixed on the defences, which had caused him so much labour, and were now falling like nine-pins.

‘This is the time for Akbar Khan,’ he said, and if Akbar had not dreaded the earthquake more than British guns the massacre of Cabul would have been repeated in Jellalabad. But though Akbar feared greatly, he knew that his soldiers feared yet more; he waited several days till the earth seemed peaceful again, and then rode up to a high hill from which he could overlook the city.

‘Why, it is witchcraft!’ he cried, as he saw the defences all in their places; for Broadfoot’s men had worked so well that in a week everything had been rebuilt exactly as before.

March passed with some skirmishes, but when April came the senior officers told Sale that they strongly advised an attack on Akbar, who, with six thousand men, had taken up a position on the Cabul river two miles from Jellalabad, and had placed an outpost of three hundred picked men only three-quarters of a mile outside the walls. Broadfoot had been badly wounded in a skirmish a fortnight before, and could not fight, so the attacking party, consisting of three divisions of five hundred each, were led by Dennie, Monteath and Havelock. Dennie was mortally wounded in trying to carry the outpost, and Havelock halted and formed some of his men into a square to await Akbar's charge, leaving part of his division behind a walled enclosure to the right.

Having made his arrangements, Havelock stood outside the square and near to the wall, so that he could command both parties, and told his troops to wait till the Afghans were close upon them before they fired; but in their excitement they disobeyed orders, and Havelock's horse, caught between two fires, plunged and threw him. In another moment he would have been trampled under the feet of the Afghan cavalry had not three of his soldiers dashed out from the ranks and dragged him into the square.

The enemy were thrown into confusion and retired to re-form. They charged again, and were again repulsed, and by seven that morning Akbar's camp was abandoned and his power broken.

Pollock's assistance had not been needed; the garrison of Jellalabad had delivered themselves.

There is no room in this story to tell of the many wars in which Havelock took part during the next fifteen years, always doing good work and gaining the confidence of his commanding officers. He fought in the war with the Mahrattas in 1843, and was made lieutenant-colonel after the battle of Maharajpore. The following year he was fighting by sir Hugh Gough's side in the Punjaub against the Sikhs, who were the best native soldiers in India, and had been carefully trained by French officers. In this war four battles took place in fifty-five days, all close to the river Sutlej, but the last action at the village of Sobraon put an end to hostilities for two years to come.

'India has been saved by a miracle,' writes Havelock, 'but the loss was terrific on both sides.'

In 1849 Havelock, who had exchanged from the 13th into the 39th, and again into the 53rd, applied for leave of absence to join his family in England. It was his first visit home for twenty-six years, and everything was full of interest to him. His health had broken down, and if he had been rich enough he would certainly have retired; but he had never been able to save a six-pence, and there were five sons and two daughters to be educated and supported. Should he die, Mrs. Havelock would have a pension of 70*l.* a year, and the three youngest children 20*l.* each till they were fourteen, when it would cease. This, in addition to 1,000*l.* which he possessed, was all the family had to depend on.

Therefore, leaving them at Bonn, on the Rhine, where teaching was good and living cheap, he returned to India in December 1851, rested both in mind and body, and in good spirits. To his great joy a few months later his eldest son was given the adjutancy of the 10th Foot, and he himself was promoted to various posts where the pay was good and the work light. Now that he had some leisure he went back to his books, and in a letter to his youngest son, George, on his fifth birthday, he bids him read all the accounts he can find of the battles that had just been fought in the Crimea — Alma, Balaclava, and Inkerman — and when his father came home to England again he would make him drawings, and show him how they were fought. But little George had to understand the battles as best he might, for his father never came back to explain them to him.

After serving in Persia during the early part of 1857, Havelock was suddenly ordered to return to India to take part in the struggle which gave him undying fame, and a grave at Lucknow before the year was out. According to the testimony of Kaye the historian, for half a century he had been seriously studying his profession, and knew every station between Burmah and Afghanistan! ‘Military glory,’ says Kaye, ‘was the passion of his life, but at sixty-two he had never held an independent command.’

Now, in the mutiny which had shaken our rule to its foundation, all Havelock’s study of warfare and all his experience were to bear fruit. A great many causes had led up to that terrible outbreak of the native soldiers, or sepoys, early in 1857. India is, as you perhaps know, a huge country made up of different nations, some of whom are Mahometans, or followers of the prophet Mahomet, and worshippers of one God, while most of the rest have a number of gods and goddesses. These nations are divided into various castes or classes, each with its own rules, and the man of one caste will not eat food cooked by the man of another, or touch him, or marry his daughter, lest he should become unclean.

It is easy to see how an army composed of all these races would be very hard to manage, especially as it is impossible for any white man, who is used to changes going on about him, really to understand the minds of people who have followed the same customs from father to son for thousands of years. And if it is difficult for the English officers to understand the Hindoos, it is too much to expect that soldiers without education should do so either.

The true cause of the mutiny which wrought such havoc in so short a time in the north of India was that the number of our British soldiers had been greatly reduced, and some had been sent to the Crimea, some to Persia, and some to Burmah. Besides this, the government had been very weak for many years in its dealings with the native troops. Whenever the sepoys chose to grumble, which was very often indeed, their grievances were listened to, and they were generally given what they wanted — and next time, of course, they wanted more. To crown all, our arsenals containing military stores were mostly left unprotected, as well as our treasuries, and from the Indus to the Ganges the native army was waiting for a pretext to shake off the British rule.

This they found in an order given by the commander-in-chief that a new sort of rifle, called the Enfield rifle, should be used throughout India, and it was necessary that the cartridges with which it was loaded should be greased. As early as the month of January an English workman employed in the factory of Dumdum, near Calcutta, where the cartridges were made, happened one day to ask a sepoy soldier belonging to the 2nd Grenadiers to give him some water from his brass pot. This the sepoy refused, saying that he did not know what caste the man was of, and his pot might be defiled if he drank from it. ‘That is all very fine,’ answered the workman, ‘but you will soon have no caste left yourself, as you will be made to bite off the ends of cartridges smeared with the fat of pigs and cows’ — animals which the Hindoos held to be unclean.

This story speedily reached the ears of the officer in charge at Dumdum, and on inquiry he found that the report had been spread through the native army that their caste was to be destroyed by causing them to touch what would defile them.

General Hearsey, the commander of the Bengal division, instantly took what steps he could to prove to the sepoys that the government had no intention of making them break their caste, but it was too late. Chupatties, little cakes which are the common food of the people, were sent from town to town as a signal of revolt, and on February 19, 1857, the first troops mutinied.

This was only the beginning; the message of the chupatties spread further and further, but even now the government failed to understand the temper of the people. The regiment which had been the earliest to rebel were merely disarmed and disbanded, and even this sentence was not carried out for five weeks, while they were allowed to claim their pay as usual. It is needless to say that in a few weeks the whole of Northern India was in a flame; the king of Delhi was proclaimed emperor, and every European who came in the way of the sepoys was cruelly murdered.

Such was the state of things found by Havelock when he landed in Bombay from Persia, and was immediately sent on by the governor by sea to Calcutta, to resume his appointment of adjutant-general to the royal troops in Bengal. On the way his ship was wrecked, and he had to put in to Madras, where he heard that the commander-in-chief was dead, and that sir Patrick Grant, an old friend of Havelock's, had been nominated temporarily to the post.

As soon as possible Havelock hurried on to Calcutta in company with Grant, and there the news reached them that Lucknow was besieged by the celebrated Nana Sahib, the leader of the sepoys and a skilful general, and that a force was being got ready to go to its relief.

'Your excellency, I have brought you the man,' said Grant to lord Canning as he presented Havelock, and the command of the 64th and the 78th Highlanders was entrusted to him. These last he knew well, as they had been with him in Persia, and he thought them 'second to none' in the service.

But before you can understand all the difficulties Havelock had to fight with I must tell you a little about the towns on his line of march.

The instructions given to Havelock were to go first to the important city of Allahabad, situated at the place where the Ganges joins the Jumna. Allahabad had revolted in May, and the English garrison now consisted mainly of a few artillerymen between fifty and seventy years of age. Benares, the 'Holy City' of the Hindoos, a little further down the Ganges, had been saved by the prompt measures of the resident and the arrival of colonel Neill with a detachment of the 1st Fusiliers. The soldiers had come up from Madras and were instantly ordered to Benares, but when they reached the Calcutta station they found that the train which was to take them part of the way was just starting.

The railway officials declared that there was no time for the troops to get in, and they would have to wait for the next train — many hours after. For all answer Neill turned to his troops, and told them to hold the engine driver and stoker till the company was seated. But for this the soldiers could not have got to Benares in time, for that very night had been fixed for the revolt.

Having put down the rising at Benares, Neill pushed on over the eighty miles that separated him from Allahabad, the largest arsenal in India except Delhi. For five days the sepoys had been killing and plundering the British. On hearing of Neill's approach, two thousand of them encamped near the fort in order to hold it, but an attack of the Fusiliers soon dispersed them, and the commander ordered a large number to be executed in order to strike terror into the rest.

Bad as was the state of things at Allahabad, where the railway had been destroyed and the garrison was weak, it was still worse in Cawnpore, a hundred and twenty miles higher up the Ganges. Here sir Hugh Wheeler was in command, and having spent his whole life among the sepoys it was long before he would believe in the tales of their treason. Even when at length his faith was partly shaken by the deeds done under his eyes, he still did not take all the precautions that were needful. His little fort, which was to be the last refuge of the sick and wounded, women and children, in case of attack, was a couple of barracks one brick thick, which had hitherto been used as a hospital, and in this he gave orders that provisions for a twenty-five days' siege should be stored. This was the place for which he intended to abandon the powder magazine, where he could have held the enemy at bay for months.

With inconceivable carelessness nobody saw that the orders for provisioning the fort were properly carried out, or the works of defence capable of resisting an attack. By May 22, however, even sir Hugh Wheeler was convinced that there was danger abroad, and he directed that the women and children, whose numbers were now swelled by fugitives from Lucknow and the surrounding towns, should be placed in it. Altogether the refugees amounted to about five hundred, and the force of men to defend them was about equal.

The expected siege did not begin till June 6, when the plain which surrounds Cawnpore was black with sepoys, led by the treacherous Nana. For three weeks the prisoners inside the fort underwent the most frightful sufferings of every kind, and had it not been for the women the garrison would have tried to cut their way through to the river. As it was they felt they must stay — till the end.

So the soldiers fought on, and the women helped as best they might, giving their stockings as bags for grape-shot, and tearing up their clothes to bind up wounds, till they had scarcely a rag to cover them. One, the gallant wife of a private of the 32nd, Bridget Widdowson, stood, sword in hand, over a number of prisoners tied together by a rope. Not one of their movements passed unnoticed by her; her gun was instantly levelled at the hand which was trying to untie the rope, and not a man of them escaped while in her charge. By-and-by she was relieved by a soldier, and in his care many of them got away.

At length hope sprung up in their hearts, for Nana offered a safe-conduct for the garrison down the Ganges to Allahabad, if only sir Hugh Wheeler would surrender the city. It was a hard blow to the old general, and but for the women and children he and his men would gladly have died at their posts. But for their sakes he accepted the terms, first making Nana swear to keep them by the waters of the Ganges, the most sacred of all oaths to a Hindoo.

The following morning a train of elephants, litters and carts was waiting to carry the sick, the women, and children down to the river, a mile away, for after their terrible imprisonment they were all too weak to walk; and behind them marched the soldiers, each with his rifle. Crowds lined the banks and watched them as they got into the boats, and pushed off with thankful hearts into the middle of the stream, leaving behind them, as they thought, the place where they had undergone such awful suffering. Suddenly those looking towards the shore saw a blinding flash and heard a loud report. Nana had broken his oath and ordered them to be fired on.

One boat alone out of the whole thirty-nine managed to float down the stream, and the men in it landed and took refuge in a little temple, the maddened sepoys at their heels. But the fourteen Englishmen were desperate, and drove back their enemies again and again, till the sepoys heaped wood outside the walls and set it on fire. It was blowing hard, and the wind instead of fanning the flames put them out, and the defenders breathed once more. But their hopes were dashed again as they saw the besiegers set fire to the logs a second time, and, retiring to a safe distance, lay a trail of powder to blow up the temple. Then the men knew they had but one chance, and fixing their bayonets they charged into the crowd towards the river.

When they reached the banks, seven had got through, and flung themselves into the stream. Half-starved and weak as they were, they could scarcely make head against the swift current, and three sank and disappeared. The other four were stronger swimmers, and contrived to hold out till they arrived at the territory of an Oude rajah who was friendly to the English.

It was while they were resting here that they heard of the awful fate of their countrymen. After a time Nana had desired that the women and children should be spared, and the remnant were brought back to Cawnpore. They were lodged, all of them, in two rooms, and here these stayed, hardly able to breathe, and almost thankful when the expected doom fell on them. After their sufferings death was welcome, even though it came by the hand of Nana Sahib.

All this time Havelock (now brigadier-general), ignorant of the horrors that were taking place, was advancing towards Cawnpore, which he knew must be in the hands of the English before it was possible to relieve Lucknow, lying further away across the plain to the north-west of Allahabad. Neill had sent forward a detachment of four hundred British soldiers and three hundred Sikhs under major Renaud, and Havelock, who had arrived in the town just as they were starting, promised to follow in a day or two, as soon as he could get ready a larger force. Eager soldier though he was, he had long ago laid to heart the truth of the old saying, ‘for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; for want of a horse the man was lost; for want of a man the kingdom was lost,’ and he always took care that his nails were in their places. Therefore he waited a few days longer than he expected to do, and spent the time in enlisting a body of volunteer cavalry, formed partly of officers of the native regiments who had mutinied, of ruined shopkeepers, of fugitive planters, and of anybody else that could be taught to hold a gun.

The general was still asleep in the hot darkness of July 1 when a tired horseman rode into camp and demanded to see him without delay. He was shown at once into the general’s tent, and in a few short words explained that he had been sent by Renaud with the tidings of the massacre of Cawnpore.

Six days later ‘Havelock’s Ironsides,’ numbering under two thousand men, of whom a fourth were natives, began the march to Cawnpore, and five days after the start they had won about half-way to the city the battle of Futtehpore. It was the first time since the mutiny broke out that the sepoys had been beaten in the field, and it shook their confidence, while it gave fresh courage to sir Henry Lawrence and the heroic band in the residency of Lucknow. But the relief which they hoped for was still many months distant, and Havelock was fighting his way inch by inch, across rivers, over bridges, along guarded roads, with soldiers often half-fed, and wearing the thick clothes that they had carried through the snows of a Persian winter. But they never flinched and never grumbled — they could even laugh in the midst of it all! During a fierce struggle for a bridge over the Pandoo river, one of the 78th Highlanders was killed by a round shot close to where Havelock was standing.

‘He has a happy death, Grenadiers,’ remarked the general, ‘for he died in the service of his country’; but a voice answered from behind:

‘For mysel, sir, gin ye’ve nae objection, I wud suner bide alive in the service of ma cuntra.’ And let us hope he did.

The guns across the bridge were captured with a dash, and the sepoys retreated on Cawnpore. In spite of their victory our men were too tired to eat, and flung themselves on the ground where they were. Next morning, July 16, they set out on a march of sixteen miles, after breakfasting on porter and biscuits, having had no other food for about forty hours.

At the end of the sixteen miles march, which they had performed under a burning sun, the bugles sounded a halt. For three hours the troops rested and fed, and then two sepoys who had remained loyal to their salt came in with the news that in front of us Nana Sahib, with five thousand men and eight guns, was drawn up across the Grand Trunk road, down which he expected our guns to pass; and doubtless they would have been sent that way had it not been for the timely warning. Now Havelock, with a strong detachment, crept round through some mango groves between the enemy’s left flank and the Ganges, and attacked from behind; the sepoys wheeled round in a hurry and confusion, and the Nana dared not order his right and centre to fire lest they should injure his own men, and before he could re-form them the pipers of the 78th had struck up and the Highlanders were upon them, the sound of the slogan striking terror into the heart of the Hindoos. Once more the Scots charged, led this time by Havelock himself, and the position was carried.

Yet the Nana was hard to beat, and on the road to Cawnpore he halted again, and fresh troops streamed out from the gates to his help. It was his last chance; but he knew that the little British army was wearied out, and he counted on his reinforcements from the city. But Havelock noted the first sign of flagging as his men were marching across the ploughed fields heavy with wet, and knew that they needed the spur of excitement. ‘Come, who is to take that village, the Highlanders or the Sixty-fourth?’ cried he, and before the words were out of his mouth there was a rush forwards, and the village was taken.

Still, even now the battle of Cawnpore was not ended. Once more the sepoys re-formed, but always nearer the city, and their deadly fire was directed full upon us. The general would have waited till our guns came up to answer theirs, but saw that the men were getting restless. So turning his pony till he faced his troops, while the enemy’s guns were thundering behind him, he said lightly:

‘The longer you look at it the less you will like it. The brigade will advance, the left battalion leading.’

The enemy’s rout was complete, even before our guns had reached the field of battle. Next morning the news was brought in that while the battle for the deliverance was being fought the women and children inside the walls had been shot by order of the Nana. And, as a final blow, when, the day after, the victor rode through the gate of Cawnpore, a messenger came to tell him that his old friend sir Henry Lawrence, the defender of Lucknow, had been struck by a shell a fortnight previously, and had died two days later in great agony.

‘Put on my tombstone,’ he gasped in an interval of pain, ‘here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty, and may God have mercy on him.’

For a while it seemed to Havelock that his whole mission had been a failure; and indeed he is said never to have recovered the two shocks that followed so close on each other, though there was no time to think about his feelings or indulge regret. Like Lawrence, he must ‘try to do his duty,’ and the first thing was to put the town in a state of defence lest the Nana should return, and sternly to check with the penalty of death the plundering and drunkenness and other crimes of his victorious army. Then, leaving Neill with three hundred men in Cawnpore, he prepared to cross the Ganges, now terribly swollen by the late rains, into the kingdom of Oude, of which Lucknow is the capital.

Not for a moment did Havelock make light of the difficulties that lay before him. They would have been great enough with a large force, and his was now reduced to twelve hundred British soldiers, three hundred Sikhs, and ten guns, while cholera had begun to make its appearance. However, the passage had to be made somehow, and there must be no delay in making it.

First, boats were collected, and as the boatmen secretly sided with the sepoys, the hundreds of little craft generally to be seen on the river had vanished. At length about twenty were found concealed, and as the Ganges was dangerous to cross in its present state, the old boatmen were bribed, by promises of safe-conduct and regular pay, to pilot the troops to the Oude bank. Even under their skilled guidance the river was so broad that a boat could not perform the passage under eight hours, and a week passed before the whole force was over and encamped on a strong position in Oude.

Well, they were at last on the same side as Lucknow — that was something; but they still had forty-five miles to march, wide rivers to cross, and Nana to fight, and Havelock knew that the sepoy general had an instinct for war as keen as his own. But Lucknow must be relieved, and the sooner the work was begun the better.

Two days after the landing of the British a battle was fought at Onao against the steady, well-disciplined soldiers of Oude, whose gunners were said to be the best in India. The fighting was fiercer than any Havelock had yet experienced, but in the end the enemy was beaten back and fifteen guns taken. The next day there was another battle and another victory, but the general had lost a sixth of his men and a third of his ammunition — and he had only gone one-third of the way. Nana Sahib was hovering about with a large body of troops, ready to fall on him;

how under the circumstances was it possible for him to reach Lucknow?

Therefore, with soreness of heart, he gave the order to fall back till the reinforcements which he had been promised came up, and to send the sick and wounded, of which there were now many, across to Cawnpore.

Deep was the gloom and disappointment of the ‘Ironsides’ as they marched back along the road they had come; but far deeper and more awful was the disappointment of the garrison at Lucknow. They had looked on relief as so near and so certain that their hardships seemed already things of the past. Now it appeared as if they were abandoned, and the horrors of the siege felt tenfold harder to bear. In the heat of an Indian summer the women and children were forced to leave the upper part of the residency, where at least there was light and air, and seek safety in tiny rooms almost under ground, where shot and shell were less likely to penetrate. These cellars were swarming with large rats, and, what was worse, there was a constant plague of flies and other insects. Luckily, sir Henry Lawrence had collected large stores before he died, and had hidden away a quantity of corn so securely that colonel Inglis, the present commander, had no idea of its existence, and not knowing how long the siege might last, was very careful in dealing out rations. There was no milk or sugar for the babies, and many of them died.

Meanwhile Neill sent over urgent requests that Havelock would come to his assistance in Cawnpore, as he was threatened on all sides and could not hold out in case of an attack. Most reluctantly the general gave the order to recross the Ganges, but before doing so gave battle to a body of troops entrenched in his rear, and caused them to retreat. This raised the spirits of his soldiers a little, and they entered Cawnpore in a better temper than they had been in since their marching orders had been given.

It was while he was in Cawnpore that Havelock received notice that major-general Outram was starting from Calcutta to his assistance, and owing to his superior rank in the army would naturally take command over Havelock’s head, as successor to major-general sir Hugh Wheeler. This Havelock quite understood, and though disappointed, felt no bitterness on the subject, welcoming Outram as an old friend, under whom he was ready to serve cheerfully.

Outram’s answer to the generous spirit of Havelock’s reception was a proclamation which showed that he understood and appreciated the services which seemed so ill-rewarded by the government, and that he too would not be behindhand in generosity. Till Lucknow was taken Havelock should be still in command, and it was Outram himself who would take the lower position.

When Havelock had entered Cawnpore for the second time, he gave orders to break down the bridges of boats which had been thrown across the Ganges, so as to check any pursuit from the enemy. Therefore a floating bridge must be built over which the troops might pass; and so hard did the men work, that in three days the little army, consisting, with Outram’s reinforcements, of 3,179 soldiers, was once more in Oude.

Here the sepoys were awaiting them, but they were soon put to flight and some guns captured. In the confusion of the retreat the defeated army quite forgot to destroy the bridge over the Sye, a deep river flowing across the plain between the Ganges and the Goomtee, so that when the British force arrived next day they found nothing to prevent their crossing at once, as even the fortifications on this further bank had been abandoned. Soon a faint noise, as of thunder, broke on their ears. The men looked at each other and said nothing, but their eyes grew bright and their feet trod more lightly.

It was the sound of the guns of Lucknow, sixteen miles away.

On September 23 the British army reached the Alumbagh, the beautiful park and garden belonging to the king of Oude. Opposite 12,000 sepoys were drawn up, the right flank being protected by a swamp. In front of them was a ditch filled with water from the recent heavy rains, and the road itself was deep in mud, so that the passage of heavy guns was a difficult matter. But the soldiers came along with a gallop and got through the ditch somehow, following our cavalry, which were already on the other side. On they flew, cavalry and gunners, wheeling so as to get behind the right of the sepoys, while Eyre’s artillery, stationed in the road, raked with fire the centre and the left. The enemy wavered and showed signs of giving way, but one gun manned by Oude artillerymen remained steady. Then young Johnson, who led the Irregular Horse, dashed along the road for half a mile, followed by a dozen of his men, killed the gunners and threw the gun into the ditch. When he returned to his post the enemy was flying to the Charbagh bridge across the canal, with our army behind them.

It was no use attempting to take the bridge that day; the troops were exhausted and wet through, and the position strongly fortified. The order was given to encamp, but there were no tents and no baggage, and after drinking some grog which was fortunately obtained, the men lay down on the wet ground wrapped in their great-coats, the rain pouring heavily on them. But wet, weary and hungry as they were, a great shout of joy rent the air when Outram announced that he had just received news that Delhi had been recaptured by the English.

The next day the sun was shining, and as the baggage waggons came up the men changed the soaking clothes, and slept and rested while the generals anxiously discussed the best plan for getting into Lucknow. There were three ways to choose from, all full of danger and difficulty, but in the end it was decided to force the passage of the Charbagh bridge over the canal.

This the enemy had evidently expected, for they had erected across it a barrier seven feet in height, with six guns, one a 24-pounder. Beyond the bridge, along the canal, were tall houses, and from every window and loophole a deadly fire would pour. And even supposing that the bridge was carried, the troops would have to pass through narrow streets and gardens and palaces, under showers of bullets at every step.

Yet this seemed the only way to Lucknow.

As for the sick and wounded, they were left with the stores and a guard of three hundred men at the Alumbagh.

Breakfast was over by half-past eight on the morning of September 25, when the order was given to advance. The first opposition met with by the leading column, headed by Outram, was near the Yellow House, which lay along the road to the bridge. Here Maude, one of the best officers in the army, who was to win his V.C. that day, charged the two guns whose fire was so deadly, and silenced them, and the troops went on till they were close to the canal. Then Outram took the 5th Fusiliers and bore away to the right in order to clear the gardens of the sepoys hidden in them, and to draw off the attention of the enemy; lieutenant Arnold, with a company of the Madras Fusiliers, took his station on the left of the bridge with orders to fire at the houses across the canal, and right out in the open facing the bridge was Maude, with two light guns straight in front of the battery. In a bend of the road on one side some of the Madras Fusiliers supported him, and on the other side, a little way off, stood Neill and his detachment, waiting for the diversion to be made by Outram’s movement.

To Neill’s surprise, not a trace of Outram was to be seen, and Maude stood shelterless, his gunners falling before the continuous fire from the bridge. Again and again the Fusiliers from behind filled their places, only to be swept down like the rest, and now Maude and a subaltern were doing the work.

‘You must do something,’ called out Maude to young Havelock; ‘I cannot fight the guns much longer.’ Havelock nodded and rode through the fire that was raking the road to Neill, urging him to order a charge. But Neill refused. He was not in command, he replied, and could not take such a responsibility. The young aide-de-camp did not waste time in arguing, but hurried on to Fraser-Tytler, only to receive the same answer. Then, turning his horse’s head, he galloped hard down the road, in the direction of the spot where his father was stationed. In a few minutes he was back and, reining up his horse at Neill’s side, while he saluted with his sword, he said breathlessly:

‘You are to charge the bridge, sir.’

It did not occur to Neill that there had not been time for young Havelock to have reached his father’s position and come back so soon, and therefore that no such order could have been given by the general, and was simply the invention of the aide-de-camp himself. Quite unsuspiciously, therefore, he bade the buglers sound the advance, and Arnold, with twenty-five of his men, rushed on to the bridge and were instantly shot down. For fully two minutes Harry Havelock on his horse kept his position in front of the guns with only a private beside him, and the dead lying in heaps on all sides.

‘Come on! Come on!’ he cried, turning in his saddle and waving his sword, while the fire from the houses was directed upon him, and a ball went through his hat.

And they ‘came on’ with a rush, wave upon wave, till the guns were silenced and the barrier carried.

The aide-de-camp had indeed ‘done something.’

The 78th Highlanders held the bridge for three hours till the whole force was over, and desperate fighting was going on all the time, for the enemy was coming up in dense numbers. At length a detachment advanced to a little temple further up the road, which was held by the sepoys, and succeeded in turning them out. But once inside, the Highlanders could only defend it with their swords, for the cartridges were so swelled by exposure to the rain that they would not go into the guns. After an hour, young Havelock, whose duty lay at the bridge, sent up some fresh cartridges, and then Webster, who from the shelter of the temple had been impatiently watching the action of three small cannon which had been firing down the Cawnpore road, exclaimed:

‘Who’s for those guns?’

‘I’m for the guns!’ they all shouted, and the temple door was opened and Webster leaped out, Macpherson, the adjutant, and the men following. The guns when captured were thrown into the canal, where those of the Charbagh bridge were already lying.

Perhaps the most trying part of the whole campaign was the advance towards the residency through the narrow streets, where the very women flung down stones, and from the roofs and windows a ceaseless fire poured upon our men. Deep trenches had been cut along the cross-roads in order to make the horses stumble, and the smoke was so thick that men and beasts were nearly blinded. It was here that Neill fell, shot in the head, and Webster found a grave instead of the Victoria Cross, which would certainly have been given him. Then there was a rush forward, and they were within the gates.

For the first few minutes the men did not know what they were saying or doing, so great was the excitement on both sides; but soon it was plain that the rescuing party were utterly exhausted, and needed rest, and what food might be forthcoming, which was neither good nor plentiful. Most of all they must have rejoiced in the possibility of changing their clothes, stiff with mud and wet, for Havelock tells us that he himself entered the city with one suit which had hardly been off his back for six weeks.

Next day Outram resumed his proper position as commander, and Havelock took a subordinate place as brigadier-general. But to him fell the task of making up his despatches and recommending certain of his men for the Victoria Cross. In this Havelock was especially begged by Outram to mention his son Harry for his gallantry on the Charbagh bridge; corporal Jakes, who was also worthy of the honour, had unhappily been killed later in the day. Unluckily, young Havelock had, against his own will, been previously recommended for the decoration by his father for an act of extraordinary bravery, but one which he had no sort of right to perform.

In the battle of Cawnpore young Havelock, then a lieutenant in the 10th Foot, and aide-de-camp to his father, was sent to order the 64th, who had been under a heavy fire all day, and were now lying on the ground, to advance with some other regiments, and take a gun of twenty-four pounds, which was sweeping the road in front. The 64th at once formed up, but before they had started their major’s horse was shot under him, and he was forced to dismount. Harry Havelock, carried away by excitement, never gave him time to get another, but calling on the men to follow him, rode straight to the mouth of the gun and stayed there till it was captured.

Now of course this was a deed of wonderful courage, and no man denied it, but it is curious that so stern a supporter of discipline as Havelock did not see that his son had put himself in a position where he had no right to be, and in so doing had thrown a slur on the bravery of the major, who except for the accident of his horse being shot would have led the men himself. But Havelock, full of pride in his son's action, insisted, to the great mortification of the 64th, on recommending him for the Victoria Cross, though the young man himself, when his excitement had calmed down, implored his father to leave out his name, declaring that the recommendation would be put down to affection. For a month he managed to delay the despatch, but in the end it was sent and the Cross granted. Therefore Outram's recommendation after the relief of Lucknow was disregarded, and only captain Maude's V.C. is associated with the Charbagh bridge.

But although Havelock's force had successfully won its way into the residency of Lucknow, the town was in no way 'relieved,' for the British troops were few and the sepoys many. The besieging army crowded up as before, and bored mines under the buildings, which kept our men continually on the watch to hinder the town from blowing up. Every day Havelock went round the entrenchments, and then he returned to the house, to pass some hours in reading, for now that the frightful strain of the last six weeks was over he felt tired and broken, and unfit for work. Much of the time he spent in visiting the banqueting hall, which had months before been made into a hospital for the soldiers, but there was little that he or anyone else could do to help them, for all medicines and bandages and food suited to sick people had been used up long ago.

In this manner seven weeks went slowly by, while the garrison was waiting for the arrival of sir Colin Campbell, commander-in-chief in India, with an army of nearly five thousand men, a mere handful in numbers compared with the enemy, but yet enough to compass what is known in history as 'the second relief of Lucknow.' By November 9 news came that the British troops had reached the Alumbagh, but it was absolutely necessary that the commander-in-chief should know Outram's plans for the defence of the city, and tell him the manner in which he himself intended to attack.

How was this to be done? The country lying between the two generals was covered with small detachments of sepoys carefully entrenched, and it seemed impossible for any man to pass through them. Yet without some knowledge of the sort and of the state of affairs in the residency the relief expedition could not advance without frightful loss, and might perhaps end in failure.

Then there entered the room where Outram and Havelock were gloomily talking over the matter a man, Henry Cavanagh by name, who said that he would undertake to get through the pickets of sepoys and carry any message to the English camp. Outram was amazed. Brave though they all were, not one soldier had volunteered for this forlorn hope, not because they were afraid, but because if our maps and plans fell into the enemy's hands, the destruction of our army would certainly follow; and if a soldier could not do it, with all his experience of war, how could this man, who knew nothing of soldiering, except what he had learned during the siege? But when the general looked at Cavanagh's face his doubts vanished.

Disguised as a native and speaking the language like one, Cavanagh made his way slowly through the lines till the open plain was reached. Here he breathed more freely, for, though many dangers awaited him, the worst risks were over. Often he had seen suspicion in the eyes of the sepoys, and felt that a terrible death was very near, but he had kept his head and got through somehow. At length he was within the Alumbagh and could speak with sir Colin face to face.

The return journey still lay before him, but now he knew better what he was about, and reached the residency without accident. On November 14 the relieving force was to begin its advance on the town, and on the 15th the general signalled that the attack would begin next day.

This last fight was a desperate one for both sides, and continued far into the night, while at the Kaiserbagh, or king's palace, the fire was fiercest of all. The brave deeds that were done that day would fill a volume, but at length it was over, and Lucknow once more flew the British flag, planted on the highest tower of the mess house by the hand of young Roberts.

Did Havelock, one asks oneself, know that this was his last fight also? He had been present during the whole struggle, but when it was done sank into the weakness which seemed daily to grow greater. The commander-in-chief had informed him — probably by means of Cavanagh — that on September 29 he had been gazetted major-general, and the somewhat tardily bestowed honour filled him with pleasure. If he had been able to see any English papers he would have known how eagerly the nation followed his footsteps, and how warmly they rejoiced in his success.

The capture of Lucknow was only three days old when Havelock was taken suddenly ill. In order to get him away from the close, infected air of the town, he was carried in a litter to a quiet wooded place, called the Dilkoosha, near a bend of the river Goomtee, where a tent was pitched for him, but as the bullets of the enemy fell around him even here, a more sheltered spot had to be found for him to lie. His illness did not appear at first very serious, but he himself felt that he would not recover. Perhaps he hardly wished to, for he had ‘fought a good fight,’ and was too tired to care for anything but rest. His son, whose wound, received on the day of the fight for the residency, was still unhealed, sat on the ground by the litter, and gave him anything he wanted. For a time he lay quiet, and in the afternoon of the 23rd Outram came to see him, and holding out his hand, Havelock bade his friend good-bye.

‘I have so ruled my life for forty years that when death came I might face it without fear,’ he said; and next morning death did come.

Marching on the 25th into the Alumbagh, the victorious army bore with them Havelock’s body, still lying in the litter on which he died. They dug a grave for him under a mango tree, on which an H. was cut to mark the place — all they dared do with hosts of the enemy swarming round them, ready to offer insult to the dead who had defied them.

Thus Henry Havelock died and was buried, though the news did not reach England for six weeks. So he never knew how the hearts of his countrymen had been stirred by his courage and his constancy, and that his queen had made him a baronet and Parliament had voted him a pension of 1,000*l.* a year, which was continued to his widow and to his son. But

Guarded to a soldier’s grave By the bravest of the brave, He hath gained a nobler tomb Than in old cathedral gloom. Nobler mourners paid the rite Than the crowd that craves a sight. England’s banners o’er him waved — Dead, he keeps the realm he saved.

CONSCIENCE OR KING?

Now we come to quite another sort of hero; a man who enjoyed every day of his life, and loved books and music and pets of all sorts; who played with his children and made jokes with them; who held two of the greatest offices an Englishman can hold, yet laid his head on the scaffold by order of the king, because his conscience forbade him to swim with the tide and to take an oath that king demanded of him. If you try, you will find that this sort of heroism is more difficult than the other. There is no excitement about it, and no praise. Your friends talk of you with contempt, and call you a dreamer and a man who sacrifices his family to his own whims. And very often the family agree with him.

‘Verily, daughter, I never intend to pin my soul to another man’s back, for I know not whither he may hap to carry it. Some may do for favour, and some may do for fear, and so they might carry my soul a wrong way.’

These were the words of sir Thomas More to his favourite daughter when she came to him in prison, urging him to do as his friends had done, and swear to acknowledge the king as head of the church instead of the pope. All his life he had ‘carried’ his own soul himself, and that was no small thing to be able to say in the reign of Henry VIII., when men’s hearts failed them for fear, not knowing from day to day what the tyrant might demand of them.

Thomas More came of a family bred to the law, and his father, afterwards made a knight and a judge, seems to have been kindly and pleasant, and like his son in many ways, especially in his fondness for children. He set great store by books and learning, and taught Thomas to love them too. The boy was born when the Wars of the Roses were just over, and the country was beginning to settle down again. In London king Edward IV. was still the favourite of the people, and after his death, in 1483, Thomas, then five years old, happened to overhear a gentleman telling his father that it was prophesied duke Richard of Gloucester would be king. When the prophecy came to pass, and Richard snatched the crown for himself, many besides little Thomas were filled with wonder. For Richard had played his part so well that few guessed at what he really was, or that the murder of his nephews would be nothing to him, if he could mount the throne on their bodies.

At that period boys were sent early to school, and after careful inquiries, John More decided to put his son under the charge of one Nicholas Holt, headmaster of St. Anthony’s in Threadneedle Street, a school founded by Henry VI. Here Thomas spent most of his time in learning Latin, which it was necessary for a gentleman to know. Foreign languages were very little studied; instead, Latin was used; hence ambassadors addressed each other in that tongue, and in it men wrote letters, and often books. Thomas, who had been accustomed all his life to hear Latin quoted by his father and the lawyers who came to his house in Milk Street, soon mastered most of the difficulties, knowing well that he would be considered stupid and ignorant if when he left school he should ever make a mistake in his declensions, or forget the gender of a noun.

When John More was satisfied with his son’s progress in Latin, he got leave for him to enter, as was the custom, the house of cardinal Morton as a sort of page. Thomas was then about twelve, quick and observant, and though fond of joking, good-tempered and prudent, taking care to hurt the feelings of nobody. Morton was both a clever and a learned man, a good speaker and excellent lawyer, and the king, Henry VII., frequently took counsel with him and profited by his experience. On his side, Morton took a fancy to the boy, whose sharp answers amused him. His keen eyes noticed that Thomas, who, with the other pages, waited at dinner upon the cardinal and his guests, listened to all that was being said, while never neglecting his own especial duties.

‘This child will prove a marvellous man,’ Morton one day whispered to his neighbour, and the neighbour lived to prove the truth of his words.

Thomas greatly enjoyed the two years he passed in Morton’s house, and made many friends, both amongst his companions and with the older men. There was always something going on which pleased and interested him, for he was very sociable, and liked, above everything, a ‘good argument.’ At Christmas time all kinds of shows and pageants were to take place, and the young pages could hardly sleep for excitement, though their appetites never failed, and the huge pieces of pasty put on their wooden or pewter plates disappeared surprisingly quick. Of course they had no forks to help themselves with, but each boy possessed a knife of his own, in which he took great pride, and a spoon made either of horn or pewter. At Christmas they were given plenty of good things as a treat, and the cardinal, like other great men, flung open his doors, and feasted the poor as well as the rich. Then companies of strolling players would come by, and beg permission to amuse the guests by their acting. On this Christmas Day in 1490 the play was in full swing when young Thomas suddenly appeared on the stage in the great hall, and began to ‘make a part of his own, never studying for the matter, which made the lookers-on more sport than all the players beside.’ It must have been rather difficult for the poor actors to go on with their parts when they did not know what the boy was going to say next; but Thomas seems to have been as clever as he was impudent, and the play ended in applause and laughter.

In those days boys grew into young men much earlier than they do now, and set about earning their living, and even getting married, at an age when to-day they would probably just be leaving a public school. So we are not surprised at hearing that when Thomas was only fourteen he was sent by cardinal Morton to Canterbury Hall, Oxford, a college which afterwards became part of Christ Church, founded by Wolsey. The elder More was a poor man, and Thomas was not his only child; five others had been born to him, but, as far as we can gather, three of these died when they were still babies. Thomas had been brought up from his earliest years to do without many things which must have seemed necessaries to the richer boys in Morton’s house. But he cared little that his dress was so much plainer than theirs, and that when he went home he had what food was needful and no more. As long as he had books, and somebody to talk to about them, he was quite happy, but even he found the fare of an Oxford scholar rather hard to digest. However, throughout his life he always made the best of things, and if he ever went to bed hungry, well, nobody but himself was any the wiser. Law was the study his father wished him specially to follow, but he was eager too to learn Greek, which had lately been introduced into the University, and to improve his Latin style. He also wrote verses, as was beginning to be the fashion with young men, and worked out problems in arithmetic and geometry, while, after his regular work was done, he would carry a French or Latin chronicle to his small window, and pore over the history of bygone times. In his spare moments he would play some old music on the flute or practise on the viol.

After two years, when, according to his son-in-law Roper, ‘he was both in the Greek and Latin tongues sufficiently instructed, he was then, for the study of the law of the realm, put to an Inn of Chancery, called New Inn, where for his time he prospered very well, and from thence was admitted to Lincoln’s Inn, with very small allowance, continuing there his study until he was made and accounted a worthy barrister.’ Like the other youths of his own age — Thomas was eighteen when he was admitted to Lincoln’s Inn — he attended classes where law was taught by professors, or ‘readers,’ and took part in the proceedings of mock trials, old French being the language used. When the trial was over, the reader and other teachers gave their opinions as to the way in which the scholars had pleaded, and pointed out the mistakes they had made. We may be sure that young More delighted in this ‘exercise,’ and he evidently excelled in it, for he was soon given a ‘readership’ himself.

It was during the year following his admission to Lincoln’s Inn that More met for the first time his lifelong friend, the celebrated Erasmus. Erasmus, the most learned and witty man of his time, came over from Holland to stay with his former pupil, lord Mountjoy, in his country house, and while there the young lawyer was invited also to pay a visit and to make acquaintance with the famous scholar. In spite of the ten years difference in their ages — More was then twenty-one and Erasmus ten years older — they took pleasure in almost exactly the same things, and in their walks through the woods and about the neighbouring villages would discuss merrily, in Latin of course, all manner of subjects. One day the two bent their steps to the place where Henry VII.’s younger children were living, under the care of tutors and ladies. Princess Margaret, the eldest, afterwards queen of Scotland, stood solemnly beside her brother Henry, aged nine, who received them with the grand manner he could always put on when he chose. Princess Mary, at that time four years old, was kneeling on the floor playing with her dog, and paid no heed to the visitors, whom she thought old and dull. Erasmus was astonished to notice More present prince Henry with a roll on which something, he could not tell what, was written. The prince took it with a smile, and then looked at Erasmus, who guessed directly that a similar offering was expected from him also; and this was confirmed by a message sent him by Henry while the guests were dining, to say how much he hoped to receive some remembrance of the visit of the great scholar. The Dutchman, thus pressed, returned answer that had he dreamed his highness would value any work from his poor pen, he would certainly have prepared himself, but having been taken by surprise, he could only ask grace for three days, by which time he would have composed a poem, however unworthy.

On parting, they promised to write to each other, and many letters passed between them in the three years that Erasmus remained in England. Previous to his departure, they met once more in lord Mountjoy’s house, and there their walk and talks were resumed.

The poem when written was of some length, and full of the praises of the king, his country, and his children. It does not sound amusing, and probably Henry, content with possessing what in these days we should call ‘Erasmus’s autograph,’ did not trouble himself to read much of it.

For three years More held his readership; then he seems to have had a wish to become a priest, and, in his son-in-law’s words, ‘gave himself to devotion and prayer in the Charterhouse of London, religiously living there, without vow, about four years.’

Religious More remained all his life, but at the end of the four years he felt that his place was in the world rather than in a monastery, and this decision was largely helped by a visit he paid to master Colt in Essex, a gentleman with three daughters. ‘Albeit,’ says Roper, ‘his mind most served him to the second daughter, for that he thought her the fairest and best favoured, yet when he considered that it would be both great grief and some shame also to the eldest to see her younger sister preferred before her in marriage, he then, of a certain pity, framed his fancy toward her and married her.’

This was indeed being good-natured and obliging, and one hopes that the bride never guessed the reason why he had asked her to be his wife. The young couple settled down in Bucklersbury in the City, and More continued his studies at Lincoln’s Inn and his attendance at Westminster, for he had been elected a member of Parliament almost as soon as he left the Charterhouse and before his marriage. Very early he had given proof that he did not intend ‘to pin his conscience to another man’s back’ by refusing to vote for a large grant of money demanded by Henry VII. as a dowry for his eldest daughter. Chiefly owing to More, the grant was refused, and ‘the king,’ according to Roper, ‘conceiving great indignation towards him, could not be satisfied until he had in some way revenged it. And for as much as he (Thomas) nothing having, nothing could lose, his grace (the king) devised a causeless quarrel against his father (the elder More), keeping him in the Tower till he had made him pay a hundred pounds fine.’

No doubt it was very hard for the More family to raise the money, equal to about 1,200*l.* in our day, and Thomas’s heart was hot with wrath. He angrily spurned various attempts made to gain him over, and ‘for some time thought of leaving England and trying his fortune in other lands.’ In fact, he did pay a short visit both to the Low Countries and to Paris, but he could not make up his mind to settle in either, and decided that he could do better for his wife and small children by continuing his practice at the Bar. The next year Henry VII. died, and More hoped that a new era was beginning.

The household in Bucklersbury was as happy as any that could have been found in London. Its mistress, Joan Colt, was, when she married, a country girl, cleverer at making possets and drying herbs than at reading books or playing on the viol. But More, who charmed everybody, easily charmed his wife, and to please him she studied whatever books he gave her, and worked hard at her music. But after five years she died, leaving him with four babies, Margaret, Elizabeth, Cicely, and John, and in a few months More saw himself obliged to marry again. This time he chose a widow with a daughter of her own — a lady ‘neither young nor handsome,’ as he tells Erasmus — but an excellent housekeeper, and the best of mothers to his children.

More soon became known not only as an honest man above all bribery, but as a generous one who would often refuse to take payment for pleading the cause of a poor man or a widow. His practice at the Bar increased, and he was made a judge, or under-sheriff, his income reaching 400*l.* a year, which would now be reckoned about 5,000*l.* He needed it all, for besides his own four children and his stepdaughter he had adopted another girl. This girl, Margaret Gigs, afterwards married a learned man, Dr. Clements, who lived in More’s house, and probably shared with John Harris the duties of secretary and of tutor in Greek and Latin to the children. We must not forget either the ‘fool,’ Henry Patenson, or sir Thomas’s special friend and confidant, William Roper, by-and-by to be the husband of More’s favourite daughter, Margaret, and the man to whom his heart opened more freely than to anyone else.

It naturally took a good deal of money to support this large household and to save something for the children, as well as to bestow a tenth part of his income on the poor, as was More’s rule through life. His charity did not consist in giving to everyone that asked, thereby doing more harm than good, but he went himself to the cottage to make sure that the tale he heard was true, and then would gladly spend what was needed to set the family in the way of earning their own living. If they proved to be ill, dame Alice, whose heart was soft though her words were harsh, would bid one of the girls take them nourishing food or possets, and often the poor pensioners would be invited to the house, to share the family dinner. At other times the guests would be men of learning, such as Colet, afterwards dean of St. Paul’s, and founder of St. Paul’s School, now moved to Hammersmith; Linacre or Grocyn, old friends of long ago; and of course Erasmus, if he happened to be in London. Poor dame Alice must have had a dull time of it, for while the room rang with merry jests in Latin, flavoured sometimes with a little

Greek, and even the children could join in the laughter, she alone was ignorant of the matter, and felt as a deaf man feels when he watches people dancing to music that he cannot hear. She must have welcomed the moment when they left the table, and she could show off the skill she had gained since her marriage on four musical instruments, on which, to please her husband, she practised daily — for no man ever lived who was as clever as Sir Thomas in coaxing people to do as he wished. Quite meekly, though she had a quick temper, she bore his teasing remarks as he watched her 'binding up her hair to make her a fair large forehead, and with strait-bracing in her body to make her middle small, both twain to her great pain'; while she on her part was frequently vexed that he 'refused to go forward with the best,' and had no wish 'greatly to get upward in the world.'

Yet, in spite of the modesty which vexed his wife so much, More's fame grew daily wider. The king, Henry VIII., who at this time was at his best, had always kept an eye on him, and soon bade Wolsey seek him out. Now More and Wolsey were so different in their ways and in their views that they could never have become real friends, for while Wolsey was ambitious, More was always content with what he had, and never desired to thrust himself into notice. At first he resisted the cardinal's advances; but rudeness was impossible to him, and as there was no means of checking Wolsey's persistence, he had to put aside his own feelings and appear both at the cardinal's house and at court. Indeed, such good company did Henry find him that, as quick to take fancies as he was to tire of them, he would hardly allow the poor man to spend an evening alone, so sir Thomas in despair gave up being amusing, and sat silent, though no doubt with a twinkle in his eye, resisting all the king's efforts to make him speak, till at length everyone grew weary of him, and his place was filled by some livelier man.

How Sir Thomas laughed, and what funny stories he told about it all, when he had gained his object, at his own table.

So the years slipped by, and brought with them many unsought honours to sir Thomas. Several times he was sent abroad on missions which needed an honest man, as well as a shrewd one, to carry them through. Sometimes he was the envoy of the citizens of London, sometimes of the king himself, and he was present at the wonderful display of magnificence known to history as 'The Field of the Cloth of Gold' — the meeting of Francis of France, Henry of England, and the emperor Charles V. He had remained in London during the fearful time of the sweating sickness, to which people would fall victims while opening a window, playing with their children, or even lying asleep. Death followed almost at once, and 'if the half in every town escaped it was thought great favour.' It spared the house in Bishopsgate in which More had for some time been living, and where he stayed till, four years later, he moved to a country place at Chelsea.

Few men have held more dignities than sir Thomas More, or have earned greater respect in the holding. Within eight years he was Under-Treasurer, or, as we should say, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Speaker of the House of Commons, and finally Lord Chancellor. Even dame Alice must have been satisfied; but her content only lasted three years, as by that time events had occurred which made it necessary either for sir Thomas to resign the Great Seal always entrusted to the lord chancellor, or else ‘to tie his conscience to another man’s back,’ and that back the king’s.

In 1531 Henry had decided to divorce his wife, Katherine of Aragon, and to marry in her stead the beautiful Anne Boleyn. His desire met with violent opposition from almost all churchmen, and from many statesmen, among whom was sir Thomas More. The pope, of course, entirely refused his consent to any such violation of the law, and Henry, whom resistance only made more obstinate, suddenly resolved to cut himself off altogether from Rome, and declare that he, and not the pope, was the head of the English church. This meant that he could do as he pleased and make his own laws, and he lost no time in demanding the assent of Parliament to his new claim, and afterwards that of the clergy. Once these were obtained, there would be nothing to hinder him from divorcing his first wife and marrying his second. In fact, he would be his own pope.

For a year the battle raged fiercely, and More watched anxiously for the issue. He withdrew himself as far as possible from the king, and kept as much as might be to his own business. At length Henry was victorious. The greater part of the clergy cast off their allegiance to the pope and took the oath required by the king. Sir Thomas saw and understood, and placed his resignation as lord chancellor in the hands of his sovereign.

The loss of his office left More a poor man, and to support the whole family in Chelsea he had only an income of 1,200*l.* a year. To his great regret, he felt he could no longer lead the easy, happy life that had been so pleasant to him. So the various married men, husbands of the girls of the house, took away their wives and sought employment elsewhere. Only the Ropers remained at hand.

Sir Thomas himself was glad enough to be free of his duties, and to have time to read books and to prepare himself for the trial of faith that was sure to come, though at present the king had only fair words for him, and the clergy had subscribed a large sum as a proof of the esteem in which they held him. More was much touched and pleased with this gift, but he refused to accept it, or to allow his family to do so; instead, he sold his plate and bade dame Alice be careful of her household expenses.

If left to himself, Henry might perhaps have allowed sir Thomas, whom he undoubtedly liked, to remain in peace, but his absence from her coronation rankled deep in Anne Boleyn’s heart. The late chancellor was a man of mark in the sight of Europe, and could count famous men of all nations among his friends. If he could not be gained over, he must be punished, for the eyes of England were upon him, and he had but to hold up his hand for many to follow. So he was one of the first bidden to take the oath, swearing to put aside the claims of the princess Mary, daughter of Katherine of Aragon, and to settle the crown on the children of the new queen.

It was in April 1534 that More was summoned before the royal commissioners, consisting of Audley, who had succeeded him in the chancellorship, the abbot of Westminster, Thomas Cromwell as secretary of state, and Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury. At More’s own request, the Act of Succession, as it was called, was given into his hand, and he read it through. When he had finished, he informed the commissioners that he had nothing to say as to the Act itself or to the people that took the oath, but that he himself must refuse.

It was probably no more than they expected; but Audley replied that he was very sorry for it, as no man before had declined to swear, and that sir Thomas might see for himself the names of those who had already signed, whose consciences were perhaps as tender as his own. More glanced down the long roll unfolded before him, but only repeated his answer, nor could any persuasions induce him to give a different one. He was willing, it seems, to take an oath of obedience to the sovereign and his successors, but what he would *not* do was to swear that the king was the head of the church, and some words declaring this had been introduced — whether carelessly or wilfully we do not know — into the Act of Succession, with which they had nothing to do. It was his refusal to take this part of the oath which caused the downfall of More.

For four days sir Thomas remained a prisoner in the care of the abbot of Westminster; then he was sent to the Tower. Sir Richard Southwell conveyed him there and placed him under the custody of the lieutenant of the Tower, sir Edmund Walsingham, an old friend of the More family. As appears to have been the custom, his cap and outside gown were taken from him and kept by the porter, and a man set to spy upon his actions. This was sorely against the wishes of his gaoler, who would fain have made More’s captivity in the Beauchamp Tower as light as might be; but at first it was needful to be very strict, lest inquiries should be made. Later, he was for a while allowed writing materials; he went to church in St. Peter ad Vincula, where so many famous captives lie buried, and occasionally walked in the garden, or took exercise in the narrow walk outside his cell. By-and-by, too, occasional visits from his family were permitted; his stepdaughter, lady Alington, came to see him, and so did her mother, dame Alice, More’s daughter-in-law Anne, and most frequently of all his daughter Margaret.

With these indulgences he might have been content, for all his life he had made the best of things, but the expenses of his captivity weighed on his soul. The barest food for himself and his servant cost him fifteen shillings a week (over 5*l.* now), and some months later, when he was convicted of high treason and the lands granted him by the king were taken from him, his wife was forced to sell her own clothes so that the money might be paid. But this, we may hope, she kept from sir Thomas, whose body was bent and broken by painful diseases, though his spirit was as cheerful as ever. He could even ‘inwardly’ laugh at dame Alice when she came to see him for complaining that she would die for want of air if she was left all night in a locked cell, when ‘he knew full well that every night she shut her own chamber, both doors and windows, and what was the difference if the doors were locked or not?’ But he durst not laugh aloud nor say anything to her, for, indeed, he stood somewhat in awe of her.

Most of the hours were passed during the first months of his captivity in writing books in English or Latin; but when pen and paper were taken from him, and he could only scribble a few words with the end of a charred stick, he had plenty of time to think over his life and to recall the years that had been so happy. The harsh words that he had written about men whose religion was different from his own did not trouble him, nor the thought of the imprisonment to which he had sentenced many of them. In those days everyone held his own religion to be right, and any that differed from it to be wrong, and though sir Thomas never would, and never did, send any man to the block for his faith, yet he would have considered that he had failed in his duty had he left them at liberty to teach their ‘wicked opinions.’ So his mind did not dwell upon those things, but rather upon his coming death, which he well foresaw, and upon the old days in Bishopsgate and Chelsea, when he would examine his children in the lessons they had learned, or set all the girls to write letters in Latin to his friend Erasmus, that he might see which of them proved to have the most skill. From time to time during this year efforts were made to gain him over to the side of the king, who would have given him almost anything he asked as the price of his conscience. Even Margaret Roper joined with the rest, and begged him to consider whether it was not his duty to obey the Parliament, and to remember that it was possible that he might be mistaken in his refusal, as so many good men and true had taken the oath. But nothing would move sir Thomas.

‘What now, Mother Eve?’ he answered. ‘Sit not musing with some serpent in your breast, or some new persuasion to offer Father Adam the apple yet once again.’

‘I have sworn myself,’ said she, and at this More laughed and replied:

‘That was like Eve, too, for she offered Adam no worse fruit than she had eaten herself.’

Finding that his daughter’s persuasions were useless, the king and council sent Cromwell to see if by fair words or threats he could induce More to declare that the king was head of the church. But, try as he might, nothing either treasonable or submissive could be wrung from the prisoner.

‘I am the king’s true, faithful subject, and pray for his highness, and all his, and all the realm,’ said sir Thomas. ‘I do nobody none harm, I say none harm, I think none harm, but wish everybody good, and if this be not enough to keep a man alive, in good faith I long not to live. And I am dying already, and have since I came here been many times in the case that I thought to die within one hour. And therefore my poor body is at the king’s pleasure.’ Then Cromwell took his leave ‘full gently,’ promising to make report to the king.

Lord Cromwell having failed also, the whole council next came and put forth all their skill, with no better result; and it was then determined to bring sir Thomas out of the Tower, and to try him at Westminster on the charge of treason. Neither the prisoner nor the judges had any doubt as to what the verdict would be; but whatever his thoughts as to the future, More must have rejoiced to be rowing once more on the Thames, with the air and sunlight all around him, and after a year’s confinement even the sight of Westminster Hall and the assembly met together, as he knew, to doom him would have been full of interest. He was allowed a chair, for his legs were so swollen that he could hardly have stood; and then began the trial which a late lord chancellor has called ‘the blackest crime under the name of the law ever committed in England.’ At the close, sentence was passed. More had been proved guilty of treason, and was to be hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn.

The constable of the Tower, sir William Kingston, sir Thomas’s ‘very dear friend,’ conducted the condemned man back to prison, and so sorrowful was the constable’s face that any man would have thought that it was he who was condemned to death. Margaret Roper was waiting on the wharf, and as her father landed from the barge she flung herself into his arms, ‘having neither respect to herself, nor to the press of people that were about him.’ He whispered some words of comfort and gave her his blessing, and ‘the beholding thereof was to many present so lamentable that it made them to weep.’

The last shame of hanging was after all not inflicted on him, and the King decreed that his faithful servant and merry companion should be executed on Tower Hill, like the rest of the men whose bodies lie in the church of St. Peter ad Vincula within the Tower walls. The day before his beheading sir Thomas wrote with a charred stick to Margaret, leaving her the hair shirt he had always worn under his clothes, and messages and little remembrances to the rest of the old household. Oddly enough, his wife is never mentioned.

Very early in the morning of July 6 the king sent sir Thomas Pope to tell More he was to die before the clock struck nine, and to say that ‘he was not to use many words’ on the scaffold, evidently fearing lest the minds of the crowd might be stirred up to avenge his murder.

More answered that he had never meant to say anything at which the king could be offended, and begged that his daughter Margaret might be present at his burial. Pope replied that the king had given permission for his wife and children and any other of his friends to be there, and sir Thomas thanked him, and then put on a handsome dress of silk which had been provided on purpose by the Italian Bonvisi.

But sir Thomas was not allowed to be at peace during the short walk between the Beauchamp Tower and the block, for he was beset first by a woman who wished to know where he had put some papers of hers when he was sent to prison, and then by a second, upbraiding him with a judgment he had given against her when he was chancellor.

‘I remember you well, and should give judgment against you still,’ said he; but at length the crowd was kept back, and a path was kept to the scaffold.

Roper was there, watching, and he noticed that the ladder leading to the platform was very unsteady. Sir Thomas noticed it too, and with his foot on the first step turned and said to the lieutenant of the Tower:

‘I pray thee see me safe up, and for my coming down let me shift for myself.’

When he reached the top, he knelt down and prayed; then rising, kissed the executioner, and said:

‘Pluck up thy spirits, man, and be not afraid to do thine office. My neck is very short, take heed therefore thou strike not awry.’ As he spoke, he drew out a handkerchief he had brought with him, and, binding it over his eyes, he stretched himself out on the platform and laid his head on the block.

Thus died sir Thomas More, because he would not tie his conscience to another man’s back, for he had no enemies save those who felt that this courage put them to shame, and he had striven all his life to do harm to no one. After his death, his head, as was the custom, was placed on a stake, and shown as the head of a traitor on London Bridge for a month, till Margaret Roper bribed a man to steal it for her, and, wrapping it round with spices, she hid it in a safe place. It is possible that she laid it in a vault belonging to the Roper family, in St. Dunstan’s Church in Canterbury, but she herself lies with her mother, in the old church of Chelsea, where sir Thomas ‘did mind to be buried.’

What the king’s feelings were when he heard that the act of vengeance had been accomplished we know not, but the emperor Charles V. spoke his mind plainly to the English ambassador, sir Thomas Eliott.

‘My Lord ambassador, we understand that the king your master hath put his faithful servant sir Thomas More to death.’

Whereupon sir Thomas Eliott answered ‘that he understood nothing thereof.’

‘Well,’ said the emperor, ‘it is too true; and this we will say, that had we been master of such a servant, of whose doings ourselves have had these many years no small experience, we would rather have lost the best city of our dominions than such a worthy counsellor.’

THE LITTLE ABBESS

A nun!

As one reads the word, two pictures flash into the mind. One is that of sisters of mercy going quickly through the streets, with black dresses and flappy white caps, to visit their poor people. If you look at their faces, you will notice how curiously smooth and unlined they are, even when they are not young any more, and their expression is generally quiet and contented, while the women of their own age who live in the world appear tired and anxious.

The other picture is one that most of us have to make for ourselves, as few have had a chance of seeing it. This nun is also dressed in black robes, and has a flowing black veil, and a white band across her forehead, under which her hair, cut short when she takes her vows, is hidden away. She never leaves her convent, except for a walk in the garden, but she often has children to teach, for many convents are great Roman Catholic schools, and the nuns have to take care that they can tell their scholars about the discoveries of the present day: about wireless telegraphy, about radium, about the late wars and the changes in the boundaries of kingdoms, and many other things.

Of course, nuns are divided into various orders, each with its own rules, and some, the strictest, do not admit anyone inside the convent at all, even into a parlour. After a girl has taken the veil, she is allowed to receive one visit from her friends and relations, and then she says good-bye to them for ever.

But if you had been living in Paris towards the end of the sixteenth century, when Catherine de Médicis was queen-mother, and into the days when Henry IV. was king, and his son Louis succeeded him, you would have found this picture of a convent very far from the truth. Convents were comfortable and even luxurious houses, richly endowed, where poor noblemen and gentlemen sent their daughters for life, paying on their entrance what money they could spare, but keeping enough to portion one or two girls — generally the prettiest of the family — or to help the son to live in state. If, as often happened, the father did not offer enough, the abbess would try to get more from him, or else refuse his daughter altogether. If she was accepted, he bade her farewell for the time, knowing that he could see her whenever he chose, and that she would lead quite as pleasant and as amusing an existence as her married sister. Perhaps, too, she might even be allowed to wear coloured clothes, for there was one order in which the habit of the nuns was white and scarlet; but even if the archbishop, or the abbot, or the king, or whoever had supreme power over the convent, insisted on black and white being worn, why, it would be easy to model the cap and sleeves near enough to the fashion to look picturesque; and could not the dress be of satin and velvet and lace, and yet be black and white still?

As to food, no one was more particular about it than the abbess of a large convent, or else the fine gentlemen and elegant ladies would not come from Paris or the country round to her suppers and private theatricals, where the nuns acted the chief parts, or to the balls for which she was famous. How pleasant it was in the summer evenings to sit with their friends and listen to music from hidden performers; and could anything be so amusing as to walk a little way along the road to Paris till the nuns reached a stretch of smooth green turf, where the monks from a neighbouring monastery were waiting to dance with them in the moonlight?

No, decidedly, nuns were not to be pitied when Henry IV. was king.

Yet soon all these joys were to be things of the past, and it was a girl of sixteen who set her hand to the work.

The family of the Arnaulds were well known in French history as soldiers or lawyers — sometimes as both, for the grandfather of the child whose story I am going to tell you commanded a troop of light horse in time of war, and in time of peace was, in spite of his being a Huguenot — that is, a Protestant — Catherine’s trusted lawyer and adviser. This Antoine Arnauld, or M. de la Mothe, as he was called, was once publicly insulted by a noble whose claim to some money Arnauld had been obliged to refuse.

‘You are mistaking me for somebody else,’ answered M. de la Mothe, quietly.

‘What do you mean? I thought you just admitted that you *were* M. de la Mothe?’ replied the angry nobleman.

‘Oh, yes,’ said the lawyer, ‘so I am; but sometimes I change my long robe for a short coat, and once outside this court you would not dare to speak to me in such a manner.’

At this point one of the attendants whispered in his ear that this was the celebrated soldier, and the nobleman, who seems to have been a poor-spirited creature, instantly made the humblest apologies.

Many of his relatives remained Huguenots up to the end, but M. de la Mothe returned to the old religion after the Massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572. No man ever had a narrower escape of his life, for his house in Paris was attacked during the day, and though his servants defended it bravely, neither he nor his children would have been left alive had not a messenger wearing the queen’s colours been seen pushing through the crowd. The leaders then called upon the mob to fall back, and the messenger produced a paper, signed by the queen, giving the family leave to come and go in safety.

M. de la Mothe’s son, Antoine Arnauld, had in him more of the lawyer than the soldier, and he was clever enough to escape detection for acts which *we* should certainly call frauds. But he was an excellent husband to the wife of thirteen whom he married, and a very affectionate father to the ten out of his twenty children who lived to grow up.

Monsieur Arnauld was much thought of at the French bar, and was entrusted with law cases by the court and by the nobles. He was a pleasant and clever man, and made friends as easily as money, and if he and his wife had chosen they might have led the same gay life as their neighbours. But the little bride of thirteen did not care for the balls and plays in which the fashionable ladies spent so much of their time, and her dresses were as plain as those of the nuns *ought* to have been. She looked well after her husband’s comfort, and saw that her babies were well and happy, and when everything in her own house was arranged for the day, she went through the door that opened into her father’s Paris dwelling, and sat with her mother, who was very delicate and could scarcely leave her sofa.

The summer months were passed at monsieur Arnauld’s estate of Andilly, not far from Paris, to which they all moved in several large coaches. Even here the lawyer was busy most of the day over his books and papers, but in the evening he was always ready to listen to his wife’s account of her visits to their own poor people, or to those of the village near by. At a period when scarcely anyone gave a thought to the peasants, or heeded whether they lived or died, Arnauld’s labourers were all well paid, and the old and ill fed and clothed. And if monsieur Arnauld did not go amongst them much himself, he allowed his wife to do as she liked, and gave her sound advice in her difficulties.

As they grew older the children used often to accompany their mother on her rounds, and learnt from her how to help and understand the lives that were so different from their own. They saw peasants in bare cottages contented and happy on the simplest food, and sometimes on very little of it. They did not think about it at the time, of course, but in after-years the memory of these poor people was to come back to them; and they no longer felt strange and shy of those whom they were called upon to aid.

Madame Arnauld’s second daughter, Jacqueline, was a great favourite with her grandfather, monsieur Marion, and was very proud of it. In Paris every morning she used to run into his house, locking the door of communication behind her. If, as often occurred, her brothers and sisters wanted to come too, and drummed on the panels to make Jacqueline open it, she would call out through the key-hole:

‘Go away! You have no business here, this house belongs to *me*,’ and then she would run through the rooms till she found her grandfather, and sit chattering to him about the things she liked and the games she was fond of. She was quick and clever and easily interested, and it amused monsieur Marion to listen to her when he had no work to occupy him; but one fact he plainly noticed, and that was that Jacqueline was never happy unless she was put first.

In the year 1599, madame Arnauld, though only twenty-five, had eight children, and her father, monsieur Marion, who was already suffering from the disease which afterwards killed him, began to be anxious about their future. After talking the matter over with his son-in-law, they decided that it was necessary that the second and third little girls, Jacqueline and Jeanne, should become nuns, in order that Catherine, the eldest, might have a larger fortune and make a more brilliant marriage. Not that monsieur Marion intended that they should be common nuns. He would do better than that for Jacqueline, and as his majesty Henry IV. had honoured him with special marks of his favour, he had no doubt that the king would grant an abbey to each of his granddaughters.

When the plan was told to madame Arnauld, she listened with dismay.

‘But Jacqueline is hardly seven and a half,’ she said, ‘and Jeanne is five;’ but monsieur Marion only laughed and bade her not to trouble herself, as he would see that their duties did not weigh upon them, and that though he hoped they would behave better than many of the nuns, yet they would lead pleasant lives, and their mother could visit them as often as she liked.

Madame Arnauld was too much afraid of her father to raise any more objections, but she had also heard too much of convents and their ways to wish her daughters to enter them. Meanwhile the affair was carried through by the help of the abbé of Citeaux, and as a rule existed by which no child could be appointed abbess, the consent of the Pope was obtained by declaring each of the girls many years older than she really was. Both Arnauld and Marion considered themselves, and were considered by others, to be unusually good men, yet their consciences never troubled them about this wicked fraud.

However, by the aid of the false statement all went smoothly, and the old and delicate abbess of Port Royal, an abbey situated in a marshy hollow eighteen miles from Paris, agreed to take Jacqueline as helper or coadjutrix, with the condition that on the death of the old lady the little girl was to succeed her, while Jeanne was made abbess of Saint-Cyr, six miles nearer Paris, where madame de

Maintenon’s famous girls’ school was to be founded a hundred years later. The duties of the office were to be discharged by one of the elder nuns till Jeanne was twenty.

It is always the custom that the young girls or novices should spend a year in the convent they wish to enter before they take the vows, which are for life. During that time they can find out if they really wish to leave the world for ever, or if it was only a passing fancy; while the abbess, on the other hand, can tell whether their characters are suited to a secluded existence, or if it would only make them — and therefore other people — restless and unhappy. When Jacqueline became a novice in 1599, her father invited all his friends, and a very grand company they were. The child was delighted to feel that she was the most important person present, and no doubt amused her grandfather by her satisfaction at being ‘first.’ No such fuss seems to have been made over Jeanne on a similar occasion, but in a few weeks both little girls were sent for eight months to Saint-Cyr.

Abbesses though they might be, they were still the children who had played in their father’s garden only a few weeks before. Jacqueline and her elder sister Catherine, the one who was ‘to be married,’ and very unhappily, were chief in all the games and mischief. They were very daring, and were always quick at inventing new plays. They were very sensible, too, and if one of their brothers or sisters hurt themselves during their games, these two knew what was best to be done without troubling their mother. They were all fond of each other, and never had any serious quarrels; but Jacqueline was generally the leader, and the others, especially the shy and dreamy Jeanne, let themselves be ruled by her. At Saint-Cyr, Jacqueline, who felt no difference, and speedily became a favourite of the other novices, ordered her sister about as she had been accustomed to do, and generally Jeanne obeyed her meekly; but at last she rebelled and informed Jacqueline, much to her surprise, that it was *her* abbey, and that if Jacqueline did not behave properly she might go away to her own.

Some months of Jacqueline’s noviciate had still to run when she was sent to the abbey of Maubuisson, which belonged to the same order of nuns as Port Royal, whereas the nuns of Saint-Cyr belonged to another community. The abbess, Angélique d’Estrées, was a famous woman, and her nuns were some of the worst and most pleasure-loving in the whole of France. Most likely madame Arnauld heard of the change with trembling, but she could do nothing: in October 1600, Jacqueline, then nine years old, took the veil and the vows of poverty and obedience in the midst of a noble company. She was far too excited to think about the religious ceremony which had bound her for life to the cloister, and certainly nobody else — unless her mother was present — thought about it either. Her very name was changed too, and instead of ‘Jacqueline’ she became ‘Angélique,’ as ‘Jeanne’ became ‘Agnes.’

As soon as the little girl was a professed nun, monsieur Marion and monsieur Arnauld, who were not satisfied that the pope’s consent already obtained was really sufficient, began afresh to prepare a variety of false papers, in order that when Angélique took possession of her abbey no one should be able to turn her out of it. Seventy years before a law had been passed declaring that no nun could be appointed abbess under forty, and though this was constantly disregarded, the child’s father and grandfather felt that it was vain to ask the Pope to nominate a child of nine to the post. So in the declaration her age was stated to be seventeen; but even that Clement considered too young, and it required all the influence that monsieur Marion could bring to bear to induce him at last to give his consent. Permission was long in coming, and in the midst of the negotiations the old abbess died suddenly, and Angélique, now ten and a half, was ‘Madame de Port Royal.’

When Angélique said good-bye to the nuns at Maubuisson, all of whom had been fond of her, her mother took her to Port Royal, fearing in her heart lest the customs of the convent might be as bad as in the one ruled by madame d’Estrées. But she was consoled at finding the abbey far too poor to indulge in all the expensive amusements of Maubuisson, and that it contained only thirteen nuns, so that Angélique would not have so many people to govern. It was thirty years since a sermon had been preached within its walls, except on a few occasions when a novice had taken the veil, and during the carnival, just before Lent, all the inmates of the convent, the chaplain or confessor among them, acted plays and had supper parties. Like the Maubuisson sisters, the nuns always kept their long hair, and wore masks and gloves; but they were only foolish, harmless young women following the fashion, except the oldest of them all, whom madame Arnauld managed to get dismissed.

Angélique was now nearly eleven, but much older in her thoughts and ways than most children of her age, though she was still fond of games, and spent part of the day playing or wandering about the garden. If it was wet, she read Roman history, and perhaps she may have learnt something of housekeeping from the prioress, who saw that all was kept in order. The abbess said carefully the short prayers appointed for certain hours of the day, and heard matins every morning at four and evensong every afternoon. After this was over, she did as she was bidden by her superior, the abbot of Citeaux, and took all her nuns for a solemn walk on the hills outside the abbey.

At first the young abbess was full of self-importance, and much occupied with her position. After Agnes's taunts when they were both at St. Cyr — oh, *long* ago now! — it was delightful to be able to send her *own* carriage for her, and play at the old home games in the garden. But by-and-by the novelty wore off, and she became very tired of her life, which was always the same, day after day, and would never, never be different. If only she could be back at Andilly with the rest! and then she would shut her eyes very tight so that no tears might escape them.

Lively and impulsive though she was, she was not accustomed to speak of her feelings to others, and did her best to thrust her longing for freedom into the background. But she grew pale and thin in the struggle, and at last there came a day when a visitor, guessing what was the matter, hinted that as she had taken her vows before she was old enough to do so by law, it would be easy to get absolved from them. Something of the kind may have perhaps occurred to Angélique, but, put into words, the idea filled her with horror, for deep down in her mind she felt that though her profession had been thrust upon her before she knew what she was doing, she would feel ashamed and degraded all her life if she broke her vows. Still, she wanted to forget it all if she could, and in order to distract her thoughts she began to receive and pay visits in the neighbourhood, to the great grief of her mother, who feared this was the first step towards the moonlight balls of Maubuisson.

Angélique was far too tender-hearted to withstand her mother's tears, and gave up paying calls; spending the time instead in reading Plutarch's 'Lives' and other books about ancient history, and pretending to herself that she was each of the heroes in turn. But even Plutarch was a poor substitute for home life, and when her fifteenth birthday was drawing near she began to wonder if she *could* stand it any longer.

'I considered,' she says herself, 'if it would be possible for me to return to the world, and even to get married, without telling my father or mother, for the yoke had become unsupportable.' Perhaps, she reflected, she might go to La Rochelle, where some of her Huguenot aunts were living, and though she had no wish to change her own religion, yet she was sure they would protect her. As to the difficulties of a young abbess travelling through France alone, they did not even occur to her, and she seems to have arranged her plans for escape without informing the good ladies of their expected visitor.

The day Angélique had fixed for her flight had almost come when she fell very ill of a sort of nervous fever, chiefly the result of the trouble of mind she had been going through, though the unhealthy marshes round Port Royal may have had something to do with her illness. Monsieur and madame Arnauld at once sent a litter drawn by horses to fetch her to Paris, where the best doctors awaited her. Her mother hardly left her bedside, and for some time Angélique was at rest, feeling nothing except that she was at home, and that the old dismal life of the convent must be a dream. But as she grew stronger her perplexities came back. She *could* not bring such grief on her parents, who loved her so much, yet the sight of her aunts in their beautiful dresses with long pointed bodices, and the pretty hoods that covered their hair when they came to inquire after her, revived all her longings for the amusements of other girls. Again she kept silence, but secretly induced one of the maids to make her a pair of corsets, ‘to improve her figure.’

It may have been the sight of the corsets which caused monsieur Arnauld, whose keen eyes nothing escaped, to take alarm. At any rate, one day he brought a paper, so ill-written that it could hardly be read, and thrust it with a pen into Angélique’s hand, saying, ‘Sign this, my daughter.’

The girl did not dare to refuse, or even to question her father, though she did manage to make out a word or two, which showed her that the paper contained a renewal of the vows she so bitterly regretted.

Though custom and respect kept her silent, Angélique’s frank and straightforward nature must have felt bitterly ashamed as well as angry at the way her father had tried to trick her, and she seems on the whole to have been rather glad to return to her abbey. The nuns were delighted to have her back again, and as she remained very delicate all through the winter, she was a great deal indoors, too tired to do anything but rest, and read now and then a little book of meditations, which one of the sisters had given her.

Just at this time an event happened which turned the whole course of Angélique’s life.

A Capuchin monk, father Basil by name, stopped at Port Royal one evening, and asked the abbess’s leave to preach. At first she refused, saying it was too late; then she changed her mind, for she was fond of hearing sermons, which, even if they were bad, generally gave her something to think of. There does not seem to have been anything very striking about this one, but when it was ended ‘I found myself,’ says Angélique, ‘happier to know myself a nun than before I had felt wretched at being one, and that there was nothing in the whole world that I would not do for God.’

Now Angélique’s inward struggles took a different turn; she no longer desired to be free of her vows, but rather to carry them out to the utmost of her power, and to persuade her nuns to do so likewise. For some time she met with little encouragement. Another friar of the order of the Capuchins, to whom she opened her heart when he came to preach on Whit Sunday, was a man of no sense or tact, and urged such severe and instant reforms that the poor nuns were quite frightened. Then the prioress, whom Angélique also consulted, told her that she was not well, and excited, and that in three months’ time she would think quite differently; all of which would have been true of a great many people, but was a mistake as regarded Angélique. Thus disappointed in both her counsellors, the abbess longed to resign her post, and to become a simple nun in some distant convent; but she dared not disobey her newly awakened conscience, which told her to stay where she was and do her work.

It is to be noted that, unlike most reformers, Angélique took care that her reforms began at the right end — namely, with herself. Again and again we see that when she made a new rule or revived an old one she practised it secretly herself long before she asked any of her nuns to adopt it. At this time she was torn between the advice of two of the Capuchin monks, one of whom urged her to lay down her burden and to enter as a sister in some other convent; while the other, the father Bernard, who had alarmed the nuns by his zeal, at last seemed to understand the position of Angélique, and told her that, having put her hand to the plough, she must not draw back.

Angélique was only sixteen and in great trouble of mind, and in her sore distress she did some foolish things in the way of penances which she afterwards looked on with disapproval, for she never encouraged her nuns to hurt their bodies so as to injure their minds. Indeed, her character was too practical for her to adopt the follies which were the fashion in some of the religious houses not wholly given over to worldly pleasures. She had no wish to become famous or to be considered a saint when she knew how far she was from being one, and prayed earnestly and sensibly never to be allowed to see visions — the visions which she was well aware were often the result first of fasting, and next the cause of vanity, with its root in the praise of men.

As usual, the early autumn proved a trying season for Angélique, and she again fell ill of a fever, and spent some weeks at Andilly with her troop of brothers and sisters. But she could not shake off the sad thoughts which were pressing on her, and was glad to go back to the convent, taking with her little Marie Arnauld, then seven years old. The winter passed before she could decide what to do, and her illness was increased by the damp vapours arising from the ponds and marshes around the abbey. She was worn out by thinking, and at length the prioress was so alarmed by her appearance that she begged the abbess to do whatever she thought right, as the sisters would submit to anything sooner than see her in such misery.

The relief to Angélique's mind was immense, and she instantly called on the whole community to assemble together. She then spoke to them, reminding them of the vow of poverty they had taken, and showing them how, if it was to be kept, they must cease to have possessions of their own and share all things between them. When she had finished, a nun rose up and silently left the room, returning in a few minutes with a little packet containing the treasures by which she had set so much store. One by one they all followed her example, and Angélique's first battle was won.

In spite of the French proverb which says 'it is only the first step which hurts,' the second step on the road to reform was the cause of far more pain to Angélique, for she was resolved to put an end to the practice of permitting the relatives and friends of the nuns free entrance into the convent; and knew that her father, who during all these years had come and gone as he wished, would not submit quietly to his exclusion. Therefore she made certain alterations in the abbey: ordered a foot or two to be added to the walls, and built a parlour outside with only a small grated window, through which the nuns would be allowed now and then to talk to their families.

All being ready, she again assembled the sisters, and informed them of the new rule which was to be carried out, and when shortly after a novice took the veil, and her friends were entertained outside the convent, many voices were raised in discontented protest, and more than once the murmur was heard, 'Ah! it will be a very different thing when monsieur Arnauld comes.'

But it was not. Angélique never made one rule for herself and another for her nuns, and by-and-by when her father's work was over in Paris, and they all moved to Andilly, the abbess knew that her time of trial had come. She wrote to either her mother or sister, madame le Maître, begging them to inform her father of the new state of affairs; but this they do not seem to have done. At all events, on September 24, 1609, Angélique received a message from her father, saying that they would arrive the next morning to see her.

Now the abbess of Port Royal was no hard-hearted, despotic woman, delighting to display her power and to ‘make scenes.’ She was an affectionate girl, easily touched and very grateful, and in her generosity had striven to forget her father’s double dealing in the matter of her vows. That the coming interview would be a cause of much pain to both she well knew, and she entreated two or three of the nuns — among whom was her sister Agnes, who had resigned Saint-Cyr and was now at Port Royal — to spend the night in praying that her determination might not falter.

It was at the dinner-hour, about eleven o’clock, that the noise of a carriage was heard in the outer court of the abbey. The abbess turned pale and rose from her seat, while those of the sisters whom she had taken into her confidence hastened away to be ready for the different duties she had assigned to them. Angélique, holding in her hands the keys of every outer door leading into the convent, walked to the great gate, against which monsieur Arnauld, who was accompanied by his wife, his son, and two of his daughters, was knocking loudly. He was not used to be kept waiting like this, and did not understand the meaning of it, and when the tiny window cut in the thick oak panels was suddenly thrown open, and his daughter’s face appeared, he asked impatiently what was the matter that the gates were locked, and why she did not open them. Angélique replied gently that if he would go into the parlour beside the gate she would speak to him through the grating and explain the reason of the gates being shut; but her father, not believing his ears, only rapped the louder, while madame Arnauld reproached her daughter with lack of respect and affection, and monsieur d’Andilly her brother called her all sorts of names.

The noise was so great that it reached the refectory or dining-hall, where the nuns were still sitting, and soon their voices were joined to the clamour, some few upholding the conduct of their abbess, but most of them condemning her.

At this point monsieur Arnauld, seeing that Angélique would not give way, bethought him of a trick by which he could gain a footing inside the walls. If, he said, Angélique had lost all sense of duty and obedience to her parents, he would not suffer his other children to be ruined by her example, and Agnes and little Marie must be given up to him at once. No doubt he reckoned on the great door being opened for the girls to come out, and that then he would be able to slip inside; but, unfortunately, Angélique knew by experience of what her father was capable, and had foreseen his demand. She answered that his wishes should be obeyed, and seeking out one of the sisters whom she could trust, gave her the key of a little door leading from the chapel outside the walls, and bade her let Agnes and Marie out that way. This was done, and suddenly the two little nuns were greeting their father as if they had dropped from the skies.

At length understanding that neither abuse nor tricks could move Angélique, monsieur Arnauld consented to go to the parlour, and there a rush of tenderness came over him, and he implored her to be careful in what she did, and not to ruin her health by privations and harsh treatment. Angélique was not prepared for kindness, and after all she had undergone it proved too much for her. She fell fainting to the ground, and lay there without help, for her parents could not reach her through the grating in the wall, and the nuns, thinking that monsieur Arnauld was still heaping reproaches on her head, carefully kept away. At last, however, they realised that help was needed, and arrived to find their abbess lying senseless. Her first words on recovering were to implore her father not to leave that day, and the visitors passed the night in a guest-room which she had built outside the walls, and next morning she had a long and peaceful talk with her family from a bed placed on the convent side of the grating.

In the end the abbot of Citeaux gave permission for monsieur Arnauld still to inspect the outer buildings and gardens, as he had been in the habit of doing, while his wife and daughters had leave to enter the convent itself when they wished. But this was not for a whole year, as madame Arnauld in her anger had sworn never to enter the gates of Port Royal, and it was only after hearing a sermon setting forth that vows taken in haste were not binding that she felt at liberty once more to see her daughter.

The income left by the founder of Port Royal was very small — about 240*l.* a year — little enough on which to support a number of people and find work for the poor, though, of course, it could perhaps buy as many things as 1,200*l.* a year now.

When Angélique first went there as abbess, monsieur Arnauld, who managed all the money matters, paid all that seemed necessary for the comfort of his daughter and the nuns. But after the day when she closed the gates on him Angélique would no longer accept his help, as she felt she could not honestly do so while behaving in a manner of which he disapproved. So she called together her little community, and they thought of all the things they could possibly do without. The masks and the gloves had already been discarded, and there seemed to be nothing for the sisters to give up, if they were to help the sick people and peasants who crowded about their doors, but their food and their firing. Not that she intended to support anybody in idleness; Angélique was far too sensible for that. She took counsel with her father, and found work for the men, and even the children, in the gardens and lands belonging to the abbey. Their wages were small, but each day good food was prepared in the kitchens — Angélique had no belief in bad cooking — and was wheeled out by the sisters in little carts as far as the garden walls, where the workmen could eat it while it was hot. Then some of the children or women were employed as messengers to carry bowls with dinners to the old and ill. Of course some of these were in the abbey infirmary, and were looked after by the nuns, and especially by Angélique, who took the one who seemed to need most care into her own room, while she slept on the damp floor — for half the sickness at Port Royal was due to the marshes that surrounded it. If it happened that she had her cell to herself, there was no fire to warm her, yet she often got up in the night to carry wood to the long dormitory where several of the nuns slept, so that they, at least, should not suffer from cold.

All the daily expenses she saw to herself, as debt was hateful to her, and she and the sisters denied themselves food and wore the cheapest and coarsest clothes, not for the sake of their own souls, but of other people's bodies.

In many ways, though she did not know it and certainly would have been shocked to hear it, Angélique resembled the Puritans, whose influence in England was daily increasing. She had a special dislike to money being spent on decorations and ornaments in churches, or in embroidered vestments for priests, and never would allow any of them in her own. She also invented a loose and ugly grey dress for the girls to wear who desired admission to the convent, instead of permitting them to put on the clothes they had worn at home, as had always been the custom. The first to wear it was her own sister Anne, who after leading the gay life of a Parisian young lady for a year, at fifteen resolved to abandon it for ever and join her three sisters at Port Royal.

It is possible that monsieur Arnauld may have regretted his hastiness in forcing Angélique and Agnes to become nuns when he saw one daughter after another following in their footsteps. Anne he had expected to remain, for she was full of little fancies and vanities, and he could not imagine her submitting to the work which he knew the abbess loved.

He would have laughed sadly enough if he could have seen how right he was. On the first night that Anne slept in the abbey, she laid a cloth on a table in her cell, and tried to make it look a little like the dressing-table she had left in Paris. Angélique happened to pass the open door on her way to the chapel, and, smiling to herself, quietly stripped the table. Some hours later she went by again, and over it was spread a white handkerchief. This she also removed, but, leaving Anne to apply the lesson, she did not make any remark, and sent her to clean out the fowl-house.

By this time the eyes of the world had been turned to Port Royal, and to the strange spectacle of a girl who, possessed of every talent which would enable her to shine in society, had deliberately chosen the worst of everything, and had induced her nuns to choose it too. Possibly the quiet and useful life led by the Port Royal sisters may have made the gaieties and disorders of the other convents look even blacker than before; but however that may be, when Angélique was about twenty-six a most difficult and disagreeable piece of work was put into her hands.

The king, Louis XIII., a very different man from his father, Henry IV., had determined to put an end to the state of things that prevailed, and resolved to begin with Maubuisson.

Now nobody had ever attempted to interfere with madame d'Estrées, who was still abbess, and when the abbot of Citeaux, her superior, informed her that in obedience to the king's commands he proposed to come over and inspect Maubuisson, she was extremely angry. Without caring for the consequences, she locked up in a cell two monks who had brought the message, and kept them without food for some days; after which she roughly bade them return whence they came, and thought no more about the matter.

For two years the affair rested where it was; then the king again turned his attention to Maubuisson, and wrote to the abbot of Citeaux inquiring why his previous orders had not been carried out, bidding him send an officer at once and obtain an exact report of the conduct of the nuns and the abbess.

The commissioner, monsieur Deruptis, arrived with three or four men at Maubuisson, and congratulated themselves when they found the doors flung wide and they were invited to enter.

'The reverend mother is too unwell to see anyone to-day,' said the nun who admitted them, 'but she has prepared rooms in the west tower for your reception, and to-morrow she hopes to be able to speak with you herself.' So saying she led them down several passages till she reached a little door, which she unlocked, and then stood back for them to pass in. As soon as they were all inside, making their way up the corkscrew stairs, she swung back the door, and before the men realised what had happened they heard the key turn in the lock.

For four days they were kept prisoners, with nothing to eat but a very little bread and water; while every morning the commissioner was severely flogged till he was almost too weak to move. At length, driven to desperation, he and his companions contrived to squeeze themselves through a narrow window, and returned dirty and half-starved to the abbot.

Powerful as the abbess might be, even her friends and relations thought she had gone too far, and they were besides very angry with her for allowing her own young sister, who was a novice in the convent, to be secretly married there. They therefore informed the abbot of Citeaux that as far as they were concerned no opposition would be made, and he instantly started for Maubuisson, sending a messenger before him to tell the abbess that he was on his way. For all answer the messenger came back saying that the abbess would listen to nothing; but the abbot, now thoroughly angry, only pushed on the faster, and thundered at the great gates. He hardly expected that madame d'Estrées would refuse to see him when it came to the point, but she *did*; he then, as was his right, called an assembly of the nuns, and summoned her to attend. Again she declined; she was ill, she said, and could not leave her bed; so, fuming with rage, he went back to Paris and told the whole story to the king.

After certain forms of law had been gone through, which took a little time, the Parliament of Paris issued a warrant for the seizure of the abbess, and for her imprisonment in the convent of the Penitents in Paris. On this occasion the abbot took a strong body of archers with him, but wishing to avoid, if possible, the scandal of carrying off the abbess by force, he left them at Pontoise. He went alone to the abbey, and for two days tried by every means he could think of to persuade the abbess to submit. But she only laughed, and declared she was ill, and at last he sent for his archers and ordered them to force an entrance.

'Open, in the king's name!' cried their captain; but as the doors remained closed, he signed to his men to force them, and soon two hundred and fifty archers were in the abbey, seeking its abbess. During the whole day they sought in vain, and began to think that she was not in the house at all; at length a soldier passing through a dormitory noticed a slight movement in one of the beds, which proved to contain the rebellious abbess. The man bade her get up at once, but she told them that it was impossible, as she had hardly any clothes on. The soldier, not knowing what to do, sent for his captain, who promptly bade four archers take up mattress and abbess and all, and place them in the carriage which stood before the gates.

In this manner, accompanied by one nun, madame d'Estrées entered the convent of the Penitents.

It is very amusing to read about, but at the time the affair made a great noise, and the other abbesses who were conscious of having neglected their vows had long felt very uneasy and watched anxiously what would happen next. Of course, Maubuisson could not be left without a head, and as soon as the abbess was removed, the abbot summoned the nuns before him and informed them that they might choose which of three ladies should take the place of madame d’Estrées. One of the three was madame de Port Royal.

The ‘ladies of Maubuisson,’ as they had always been called, trembled at the thought of what they might have to undergo at the hands of Angélique, yet they liked still less the other abbesses proposed. In the end it was she who was appointed, and a fortnight later arrived at Maubuisson with three of her own nuns, one being her young sister Marie.

Some of the Maubuisson nuns remembered their new abbess quite well, when she had lived amongst them nearly seventeen years before. These she treated with the utmost consideration, for she knew it was unreasonable to expect them to give up all at once the habits of a lifetime, and she thought it wiser to gain permission to add thirty young novices to the community whom she might train herself. To these girls she taught the duties performed by her own nuns, and herself took part in carrying wood for the fires, keeping clean the chapel and other parts of the abbey, washing the clothes, digging up the garden, and singing the chants, for she had been shocked by the discordant and irreverent manner in which the services were conducted. She even allowed her novices to wait on the older nuns, replacing their own servants.

For a year and a half Angélique struggled patiently to soften the hearts of the Maubuisson ‘ladies,’ but without success, and her courage and spirits began to fail her. Then, in September 1619, an event occurred which, unpleasant though it was, brought her back to her old self, and this was the sudden return of madame d’Estrées.

At six o’clock one morning the late abbess, who had managed to escape from the convent where she had been imprisoned, unexpectedly appeared as the nuns were on their way to church, having been let in secretly by one of the sisters.

‘Madame,’ she said to Angélique, ‘I have to thank you for the care you have taken of my abbey, and to request that you will go back to yours.’

‘There is nothing I long for more, madame,’ replied Angélique, ‘but I have been placed here by the abbot of Citeaux, our superior, and I cannot leave without his permission.’ Upon this madame d’Estrées declared that she was abbess and would take her proper position; but Angélique, merely asserting that the king and the abbot had placed her there, and there she must stay, walked calmly to her own seat, while madame d’Estrées, not having made up her mind what to do, went off to see her own nuns, who seldom were present at the early service.

By command of Angélique, everything went on as usual in the abbey, except that the keys of all the doors had been given up to her. But after dinner, to her great surprise, the chaplain came to her and informed her that it was her duty to give way to force, and that if she did not do so quietly the armed men whom madame d’Estrées had left outside the walls would thrust her out. The abbess replied that she could not forsake her charge; but she had hardly spoken when, to her amazement, five soldiers with naked swords advanced towards her, and threatened her with violence if she did not do as they wished. But no Arnauld ever submitted to bullying, and Angélique repeated her words, and said that nothing but force could make her quit her post.

While this conversation was going on the novices, terrified at what might be happening to their abbess, crowded round in order to protect her. They were all very much excited, and when madame d’Estrées, who had entered also, happened to touch Angélique’s veil, one of the young nuns turned to her and cried out indignantly:

‘Wretched woman! Would you dare to pull off the veil of madame de Port Royal?’ and snatching the veil which the abbess had put on her own head, she tore it off and flung it in a corner.

‘Put madame out,’ said madame d’Estrées, turning to the gentlemen with her, and Angélique, who did not resist, was at once thrust out of the door and into a carriage that was waiting. In an instant the carriage was covered with novices as with a swarm of flies. The wheels, the rumble, the coach-box, all were full of them; it was astonishing how they got there in their heavy, cumbrous clothes. Madame d’Estrées called to the coachman to whip up the horses, but he, perhaps enjoying the scene, replied that if he moved he was certain to crush somebody. Then Angélique left the coach, and the novices got down from their perches and stood around her.

Finding that this plan had failed, madame d’Estrées ordered one of her lackeys to stand at the gate of the abbey and to allow Angélique, her two sisters, and the two Port Royal nuns to pass out, but no one else. She herself took hold of Angélique, who was nearly torn in half between her friends and enemies, and pulled her out of the gate, all the novices pressing behind her. The moment the rival abbesses had passed through a strong young novice seized hold of madame d’Estrées and forced her to the ground, keeping her there until every one of her companions was on the outside. It was in vain that the lackey tried to stop them.

‘If you attempt to shut that door we will squeeze you to death,’ cried they, and each in turn gave the door behind which he stood a good push!

At length they were outside, and were walking quietly down the road to

Pontoise, where they took refuge in a church, till the inhabitants, hearing of their arrival, placed all they had at their disposal.

Great was the indignation of the king and the abbot when, next morning, a letter from mère Angélique informed them of what had happened. Instantly a warrant was issued for the arrest of madame d’Estrées, and a large body of archers was sent off post-haste to Maubuisson in order to carry it out. But the abbess had received warning of her danger, and was not to be found, though her flight was so hurried that on searching her rooms the captain discovered several important papers that she had left behind her. Her friend, madame de la Serre, took refuge in a cupboard, which was concealed by tapestry, high up in a wall. The dust seems to have got into her nose, and she sneezed, and in this manner betrayed herself to the archers who set a ladder against the wall, which the lady instantly threw down. The captain then levelled his pistol at her, and bade his men put up the ladder again.

‘I will shoot you if you do not surrender,’ he said, and as she was sure he meant it, she gave herself up.

When all was quiet in the abbey, the archers mounted their horses and rode to Pontoise, and under their protection Angélique and her nuns walked back to Maubuisson at ten o’clock that night, escorted by the people of Pontoise, and lighted by a hundred and fifty torches borne by the archers. For six months a guard of fifty remained there, but when madame d’Estrées was at last captured and sent back for life to the Convent of the Penitents, at the request of Angélique they returned to their quarters, and she was left to manage the nuns herself.

The last year of her residence at Maubuisson was, if possible, more unpleasant than the rest had been, for the title of abbess was given to a lady of high birth whose views were far more worldly than those of Angélique. She was very angry at the presence of the thirty poor nuns who had been added to the community, and declared she would turn them out. So Angélique begged them to come with her to Port Royal, small though her abbey was, and had them taken there in a number of carriages sent by madame Arnauld.

After this Angélique, or some of the nuns chosen by her, was often sent to reform other convents, and very hard work it was. She had, besides, her own cares at Port Royal, for the abbey, always unhealthy, was made worse by overcrowding and underfeeding, and the income and the dormitories which had been held sufficient for sixteen now had to do for eighty. A low fever broke out, of which many died, and soon it became clear that the rest would follow if they did not leave. At length, at the entreaty of her mother, Angélique applied for permission to move into Paris, where madame Arnauld had taken a house for them.

It is not easy, of course, even in a big town, to find a ready-made building large enough to hold so many people, and, though Angélique added a sleeping-gallery, the refectory or dining-room was so small that the nuns had to dine in parties of four. Her father was dead, and she does not seem to have thought of consulting any of her brothers; more space appeared a necessity, and, much as she hated debt, in her strait she made up her mind that she must borrow money in order to build fresh dormitories, and, breaking her rule, accepted a rich boarder, who became the cause of infinite trouble.

Just at this period the king's mother, who was in Paris, paid a visit to the famous abbess, and inquired if she had nothing to ask for, as it was her custom always to grant some favour on entering a convent for the first time.

Angélique replied that she prayed her to implore the king's grace to allow a fresh abbess to be chosen every three years, and leave being granted, she and her sister Agnes, who was her coadjutor, instantly resigned. She meant the change to be a safeguard, so that no one nun should enjoy absolute power for long; but as regarded her own abbey it was a great mistake, for she had a gift of ruling such as belonged to few women, and often when a mean or spiteful sister was elected she would wreak her ill-temper upon the late abbess, and impose all sorts of absurd penances upon her, which Angélique always bore meekly.

During the years that followed Angélique not only had her four younger sisters with her, Agnes, Anne, Marie, and Madeleine, but later her mother and her widowed sister, madame le Maître. They were all happy to be together, though the rule of silence laid down by Angélique to prevent gossip must have stood in the way of much that would have been pleasant. By-and-by her nieces almost all entered the convent, and, what is still more surprising, her brothers and several of her nephews, most of them brilliant and successful men, one by one quitted the bar or the army, and formed a little band known as the 'Recluses of Port Royal,' who afterwards did useful work in draining and repairing the abbey 'in the fields,' so that the nuns could go back to it.

And all this was owing to the example and influence of one little girl, who had been thrust into a position for which she had certainly shown no liking.

In the last twenty-five years of Angélique's life her religious views underwent a change, and her confessor, St. Cyran, who shared them, was imprisoned, on a charge of heresy, at Vincennes. Even as a young girl she had left the chapel at Port Royal bare of ornaments, and later sold the silver candlesticks which were a gift to the altar of Port Royal de Paris, in order to bestow the money on the poor. Everyone looked up to her, but by-and-by it began to be whispered that she was ‘a dangerous person,’ who thought that the Church needed reforming as well as the convents, and had adopted the opinions of one Jansen, a Swiss, who wished to go back to the faith of early times, when St. Augustine was bishop.

In 1654 she heard through one of her nephews that in consequence of some of the recluses having resisted a decree of the pope condemning a book of Jansen’s, a resistance supposed to have been inspired by the abbess herself, it was reported that she was either to be sent to the Bastille or imprisoned in some convent. She did not take any notice, and neither threat was fulfilled; but the hatred which the order of the Jesuits bore to the ‘Jansenists,’ as their opponents were called, never rested, and later a command came for the recluses to be dispersed, and the leaders were forced to go into hiding. Then her schoolgirls were sent to their homes, ‘la belle Hamilton,’ a Scotch girl, among them; and after them went the candidates, or those who wished to take the veil. All these blows came thick and fast, and Angélique, with health broken from the incessant labours of over fifty years, was attacked by dropsy.

The nuns were in despair, and hung about her night and day, hoping that she might let fall some words which they might cherish almost as divine commands; but Angélique, who, unlike her sister Agnes, had all her life been very impatient of sentimentality, detected this at once, and took care ‘neither to say nor do any thing remarkable.’ ‘They are too fond of me,’ she once said, ‘and I am afraid they will invent all sorts of silly tales about me.’ And in order to put a stop as far as she could to all the show and parade which she knew her nuns would rejoice in, as she felt that her end was drawing near she gave them her last order:

‘Bury me in the churchyard, and do not let there be any nonsense after my death.’

GORDON

Many years hence, when the children of to-day are growing old men and women, they will perhaps look back over their lives, as I am doing now, and ask themselves questions about the people they have known or have heard of. ‘Who,’ they will say, ‘was the person I should have gone to at once if I needed help?’ ‘Who was the man whose talk made me forget everything, till I felt as if I could listen to him for ever?’ ‘What woman was the most beautiful, or the most charming?’ and they will turn over the chapters in the Book of Long Ago and give the answers to themselves, or to the boys and girls who are listening for their reply. Well, if the question were put throughout England at this moment, ‘What man has kindled the greatest and most undying enthusiasm during your life?’ the answer would be given with one voice:

‘Gordon.’

It seemed as if from the very first Nature had intended him for a soldier. His father came of a clan that has a fighting record even in Scotch history, and he was living on Woolwich Common, within hearing of the Arsenal guns, when his fourth son, Charles George, was born on January 28, 1833. Yet, strange to say, though fearless in many ways, and accustomed to rough games with his numerous brothers and sisters, Charles as a small boy hated the roar of cannon. Unlike queen Christina of Sweden, who at four years old used to clap her hands when a gun was discharged near her, and cry ‘Again!’ Charles shrank away and put his fingers in his ears to shut out the noise. It was not lack of courage, for he showed plenty of that about other things, but simply that the sudden sound made him jump, and was unpleasant to him.

His life was from the first full of change, as the lives of soldiers’ children often are, for the Gordons were stationed in Dublin and near Edinburgh before they went out to the island of Corfu when Charles was seven. During the three years he spent there Charles grew big and strong and full of daring; guns might fire all day long without his moving a muscle, and he was always trying to imitate the deeds of boys bigger than himself. When he saw them diving and swimming about in the beautiful clear water, he would throw himself from a rock into their midst, feeling quite sure that somebody would help him to float. And as courage and confidence are the two chief qualities necessary to make a good swimmer, by the time he left Corfu he was as much at home in the sea as any of his friends.

After his tenth birthday his life at Corfu came to an end, and Charles was brought home by his mother and sent to school at Taunton, where he stayed for five years. He is sure to have been liked by his schoolfellows, for he was a very lively, mischievous boy, constantly inventing some fresh prank, but never shirking the punishment it frequently brought. At Woolwich, which he entered as a cadet at fifteen, it was just the same. He was continually defying, in a good-humoured way, those who were set over him, and more than once he had a very narrow escape of having his career cut short by dismissal.

At this period his father held the appointment of director of the carriage department of the Arsenal, and his whole family suffered greatly from the plague of mice which overran the house they lived in. After putting up with it for some time, Charles and his brother Henry, also a cadet, laid traps and caught vast numbers of the mice, and during the night they carried them stealthily across the road in baskets to the commandant’s house, exactly opposite. Opening a door which they felt pretty sure of finding unlocked, they emptied the baskets one by one, and let the mice run where they would. Then the boys crept back softly to their own room, shaking with laughter at the thought of the commandant’s face when he came down in the morning.

The two youths were great favourites with the workmen in the Arsenal, who used often to leave off the work they should have been doing to make squirts, crossbows, and other weapons for Charles and Henry. They must have trembled sometimes when they heard that the windows of the storehouse had been mysteriously broken, or that an officer who was known to be disliked by the cadets had received a deluge of water down his neck from a hedge bordering the road. But the culprits never betrayed each other, and the young Gordons soon grew so bold that they thought they might venture on a piece of mischief which very nearly ended their military career.

Some earthworks had been newly thrown up near a room where the senior cadets, known as ‘Pussies,’ attended lectures on certain evenings in the week. One night the two Gordons hid themselves behind this rampart, and while listening to remarks upon fortification and strategy the cadets were startled by a crash of glass and a shower of small shot falling about their ears. In an instant they were all up and out of the house, dashing about in the direction from which the shots had come; and so quick were they that if Charles and Henry had not known every inch of the ground and dodged their pursuers, they would certainly have been caught and expelled, as they richly deserved.

In June 1852 Charles Gordon was given a commission as second lieutenant in the Engineers, and was sent to Chatham for two years. In spite of the mice and the crossbows and the earthworks and many other things, he had gained several good conduct badges, for he had worked hard, and was noted for being clever both at fortifications and at surveying. Mathematics he never could learn. So Charles said good-bye to his father, who was thankful to see him put to man's work — for during the four years his son had passed at Woolwich he had, as he expressed it, 'felt himself sitting on a powder barrel' — and set out on the career in which he was to earn a name for justice and truth throughout three continents.

It was while Gordon was learning in Pembroke Dock something of what fortifications really were that the Crimean war broke out, and in December he was ordered to Balaclava, in charge of the materials for erecting wooden huts for the troops. He went down to Portsmouth and put the planks and fittings on board some collier boats, but not wishing to share their voyage, he started for Marseilles, and there took a steamer to Constantinople. He arrived in the harbour of Balaclava on January 1, 1855, and heard the guns of Sebastopol booming six miles away. The cold was bitter, men were daily frozen to death in the trenches, food was very scarce, and the streets of Balaclava were full of 'swell English cavalry and horse-artillery carrying rations, and officers in every conceivable costume foraging for eatables.'

Soon the young engineer was sent down to the trenches before Sebastopol, where he and his comrades were always under fire and scarcely ever off duty. It was here that his friendship began with a young captain in the 90th Foot, now lord Wolseley, who has many stories to tell of what life in the trenches was like. Notwithstanding all the suffering and sadness around them, these young men, full of fun and high spirits, managed to laugh in the midst of their work. At Christmas-time captain Wolseley and two of his friends determined to have a plum-pudding, so that they might feel as if they were eating their Christmas dinner in England. It is true that they only had dim ideas how a plum-pudding was to be made, and nothing whatever to make it with, but when one is young that makes no difference at all. One of the three consulted a sergeant, who told him he thought it would need some flour and some raisins, as well as some suet; but as none of these things could be got, they used instead butter which had gone bad, dry biscuits which they pounded very fine, and a handful of raisins somebody gave them. Stirring this mixture carefully by turns, they calculated how long it would have to boil — in one of captain Wolseley's three towels which he sacrificed for the purpose — so that they might be able to enjoy it at a moment when they would all be off duty. Five hours, they fancied, it must be on the fire, but it had scarcely been boiling one when the summons came to go back to their work. Resolved not to lose the fruits of so much labour and care, they snatched the plum-pudding from the pot and ate a few spoonfuls before running out to their posts. But Wolseley had hardly reached his place before he was seized with such frightful pains that he felt as if he would die. His commanding officer, who happened to pass, seeing his face looking positively green, ordered him back to his hut. But a little rest soon cured him, and, like the others, he spent the night in the trenches.

You will have read in the story of the ‘Lady in Chief’ something about the hardships which the allied army of English, French, and Turks went through during the war with the Russians, so I will not repeat it here. Gordon, whose quick eye saw everything, was greatly struck with the way the French soldiers bore their sufferings. ‘They had nothing to cover them,’ he says, ‘and in spite of the wet and cold they kept their health and their high spirits also.’ Our men worked hard and with dogged determination, but, as a rule, they could not be called lively. True, till Miss Nightingale and her nurses came out they were left when wounded to the care of rough and ignorant, however kindly, comrades, while the French had always their own Sisters of Charity to turn to for help. But it is pleasant to think that the sons of the men who had fallen in the awful passage of the Berezina forty years before were worthy of their fathers, and could face death with a smile and a jest as well as they.

As the war went on and the assaults on the town of Sebastopol became more frequent, the English generals learned to know of what stuff their young officers were made, and what special duties they were fit for. They marked that Gordon had some of Hannibal’s power of guessing, almost by instinct, what the enemy was doing — a quality that rendered him extremely useful to his superiors. With all his untiring energy and eagerness — forty times he was in the trenches for twenty hours — he never overlooked the details that were necessary to ensure the success of any work he was entrusted with, and he never relaxed his watchfulness till the post to be won was actually taken. In his leisure moments he seems to have been fond of walking as far as he could without running into danger, and writes home in February of the grass that was springing and the crocuses that were flowering outside the camp. Sometimes he would go with a friend down to the great harbour on the north side of which the Russians were entrenched, and listen to them singing the sad boating songs of the Volga, or watch them trying to catch fish, chattering merrily all the while.

At last the forts of the Mamelon and the Malakoff were stormed, and the Russians abandoned Sebastopol. Gordon, who had often narrowly escaped death, was mentioned by the generals in despatches; but he did not receive promotion, and, except a scar, the only token he carried away of those long months of toil and strain was the cross of the Legion of Honour bestowed on him by the French. But he was a marked man for all that, and was sent straight from the Crimea, after peace was made, to join a mission for fixing fresh frontiers for Russia south-west along the river Pruth and on the shores of the Black Sea.

Wherever he went, whether he was on the borders of Turkey, in Armenia, or in the Caucasus, where he proceeded after a winter in England, he made the best of his opportunities and saw all he could of the country and the people. He was as fond as ever of expeditions and adventures, and climbed Ararat till a blinding snowstorm came on and the guides refused to proceed. In the Caucasus he dined out whenever he was asked, and was equally surprised at the beauty of the smart ladies (who wore bracelets made of coal) and at the ingrained dirt of their clothes and their houses. On the whole, though he thoroughly enjoyed the good dinners they gave him, he preferred going on shooting expeditions into the mountains with their husbands and sons.

At the end of 1858 he was ordered home again, and a few months later obtained his captaincy, and was made adjutant and field-work instructor at Chatham. But this did not last long, for in a year’s time he was destined to undertake one of the two great missions of his life.

Early in 1860 a war with China broke out, and in this also the French were our allies. More soldiers were needed, and volunteers were asked for. Gordon was one of the first to send in his name, but before he reached Pekin the Taku forts, at the mouth of the Tientsin River — forts of which in the year 1900 we were to hear so much — had been taken. However, the famous Summer Palace was still to be captured, and this, which indeed might be called the eighth wonder of the world, lay out in the country, eight miles away from Pekin. The grounds, covering more than twelve miles, were laid out with lakes, fountains, tea-houses, waterfalls, banks of trees, and beds of flowers, while scattered about were palaces belonging to different members of the royal family, all filled with beautiful things — china of the oldest and rarest sorts, silks, lacquer, cabinets, and an immense variety of clocks and watches. By order of the English envoy this gorgeous place was given over to pillage, in revenge for the ill-treatment of some French and British prisoners. One can form a little idea of the vast amount of treasures it contained from constantly seeing scattered in houses a watch or a lacquer box or a china bowl that, we are told, had once decorated the Summer Palace; they really seem to be endless. Lord Wolseley tells how he happened to be standing by the French general in the gardens while the looting was going on, and as a French soldier came out he handed to his chief something that he had brought expressly for him. Then, turning to the young English officer, he held out a beautiful miniature of a man wearing a dress of the time of Louis XIV.

‘That is for you, my comrade,’ he said, smiling, and Wolseley, heartily thanking him, examined the gift.

‘How,’ he thought, ‘could a miniature of a French poet living two hundred years ago have got to Pekin?’ Then he remembered that an embassy from China had arrived in France, bearing presents to the French court. Louis received them graciously, and showed them the splendours of Versailles and all the curious and artistic ornaments it contained. When the envoys left, the king gave them gifts of French manufacture as valuable as their own to take to their emperor, and among them was this miniature of Boileau, by Petitot, the greatest of French miniaturists.

The imperial throne, which stands on dragon’s claws, and is covered with cushions of yellow silk, the imperial colour, was bought by Gordon himself, and presented by him to Chatham, where it may still be seen.

Till the large sum fixed for the expenses of the war was paid General Staveley was left with three thousand men in command at Tientsin, and Gordon remained with him. Tientsin is a dreary place in a salt plain, and the climate is very cold, as it is throughout North China. But Gordon minded cold far less than heat and mosquitoes, and besides his days were full from morning till night, building huts for the soldiers and stables for the horses, and in managing a fund which he had collected to help some Chinese in the neighbourhood who had been ruined by the war. Though very careless of his own money, and ready to give it away without inquiry to any beggar who asked for it, he was most particular about other people’s, and the attention which he paid to small things enabled him to spend the fund in the manner that would best aid the poor creatures who had lost everything. Now and then he gave himself a day’s holiday, and explored the country, as he was fond of doing; and once he rode out to the Great Wall, twenty-two feet high and sixteen wide, which runs along the north-west of China, over mountains and across plains, for fifteen hundred miles, and was built two thousand years ago by an emperor to keep out the invading hosts of the

Tartars. At certain distances strong forts were placed, and these were garrisoned by Chinese soldiers. As he passed through the more remote villages the inhabitants would come out of their houses and stare. A white man! They had heard that there were such, though they had never really believed it. Well, he was a strange creature truly, with his hair cropped close and pink in his cheeks, and they did not much admire him!

Nearer Pekin he met long strings, or caravans, of camels laden with tea, making their way to Russia. Everywhere in the neighbourhood of the mountains it was frightfully cold, and raw eggs were frozen so hard that no one could eat them; but Gordon could do with as little food as any man, and did not suffer from the climate. He came back strengthened and interested, and it was as well he had the short rest to brace him, for now there lay before him a very difficult task.

For quite thirty years great discontent with government had been felt by the peasants and lower classes in some of the central provinces of the empire, and a long while before the war with England broke out a peasant emperor had been proclaimed. The insurrection — or the Taeping rebellion, as it is called — could have been easily put down in the beginning, but ministers in China are slow to move, and it soon became a real danger to the empire. The great object of the rebels was to gain possession of Shanghai, the centre of European trade, built in the midst of canals and rivers, with the great Yang-tse-kiang at hand to carry into the interior of China the goods of foreign merchants of all countries that come to its harbour across the Pacific. Pirate vessels, too, haunted its shores, ready to pounce upon the rich traders, and when their prizes were captured, they went swiftly away, and hid themselves among the islands and bogs that stretched themselves a hundred miles to the north and south of the city.

Thus Shanghai was a very important place both to Chinese, French, and English; yet for twelve years the rebellion had been allowed to go on unchecked, burning, pillaging, and murdering, till in 1853 the rebels had reached a point only a hundred miles distant from Pekin itself. Then soldiers were hastily collected, and the Taepings forced back; quarrels broke out among their leaders, and most likely the rebellion would have melted away altogether had it not been for the appearance four years later of young Chung Wang, who assumed the command, and proved himself a most skilful general. As long as he led the Taepings in battle victory was on their side; if he was needed elsewhere, they were invariably defeated.

Inspired by his successes, Chung Wang attacked and took several rich and important towns in the Shanghai district, and held Nankin, the ancient capital of China. Shanghai trembled when the flames of burning villages became visible from her towers and pagodas, and even the Chinese felt that, if they were to be saved at all, measures must be quickly taken. Volunteers of all nations living in the town, Chinese as well as Europeans and Americans, put themselves under the command of an American named Ward, who drilled them, trained them, and fought with them, and, it is said, gave battle to the rebels on seventy different occasions without once being beaten. Well had his troops earned the title afterwards given them at Pekin, of the Ever-Victorious Army.

This was the state of things when, in May 1862, Gordon was sent to Shanghai in command of the English engineers who, with some French troops, were to assist the Chinese army in clearing the district round Shanghai of the dreaded Taepings. The nature of the country, almost encircled by water, was such that the help of a good engineer was needed if the expedition was to be successful, and Gordon was busy all day in surveying the canals or moats outside the walls of some city they were about to attack, to see at what point he could throw a bridge of boats across, or where he could best place his reserves. At the end of six months the enemy was forced back to a distance of forty miles; but the French admiral Protet had been killed in action, and Ward had fallen while leading an assault.

By this time the emperor and his ministers at Pekin understood that if the Taepings were to be put down the Chinese army must be commanded by a general capable of opposing Chung Wang, and a request was sent to the English government that the post might be temporarily offered to major Gordon. After some hesitation, leave was granted, and permission was given to a certain number of officers to serve under him. The emperor was overjoyed — much more so than Gordon, who was promptly created a mandarin. He foresaw many difficulties in store before he could get his ‘rabble’ of four thousand men into order, and at the outset he had much trouble with Burgevine, Ward’s successor in command of the Ever-Victorious Army, but a very different man from Ward himself. However, by the help of the famous Li Hung Chang, Burgevine was ultimately got rid of, but not before he had done a great deal of mischief. Gordon was free to devote all his energies to building a little fleet of small steamers and Chinese gunboats that could go down the rivers and canals, and hinder the foreign traders from secretly supplying the rebels with arms and ammunition.

The strict discipline enforced by Gordon made him very unpopular with his little army, and they could not understand why he made the act of pillage a crime, to be punished by death. But when we think how wholly impossible it is for any European or American to guess what is going on in the mind of any Asiatic, it is surprising, not that he met with difficulties, but that he ever succeeded in obtaining obedience. As it was, two thousand of his men deserted after some heavy fighting, and Ching, the Chinese general, was jealous of him, and incited the troops to oppose and annoy him in every way. Besides, Li Hung Chang was behindhand in paying his army, and, as Gordon felt that his own good faith and honour were pledged to punctual payment, he tendered his resignation as commander. This frightened the emperor and his ministers so much that the money due was quickly sent, and by the help of General Staveley matters were arranged.

At the capture of Quinsan Gordon took prisoners about two thousand Taepings, whom he drilled with care and enlisted in his own army, turning them, he said, into much better soldiers than his old ones. Eight hundred of them he made his own guard, and under his eye they proved faithful and trustworthy. With the help of his new force he determined to besiege the ancient town of Soo-chow, situated on the Grand Canal and close to the Tai-ho, or great lake.

All around it were waterways leading to the sea, but the Grand Canal itself, stretching away to the Yang-tse-kiang, was held by the Taeping general Chung Wang.

Now the possession of Soo-chow was of great importance to both parties, and Gordon at once proceeded to cut off its supplies that came by way of the sea and the Tai-ho, by putting three of his steamers on the lake, so that no provisions could get into the city except through the Grand Canal. On the land side fighting was going on perpetually, and by the help of a body of good Chinese troops Gordon gained a decisive victory in the open field. We can scarcely, however, realise all the difficulties he had to contend with in his army itself. General Ching not only hated him, and always tried to upset his plans, but was quite reckless, and if left to himself invariably got into mischief. Then the minister, Li Hung Chang’s brother, who had been given the command of twenty thousand troops, was utterly without either instinct or experience, and continually hampered Gordon’s movements by some act of folly. Worst of all, he could not feel sure of the fidelity of his own officers, and during the siege he found that one of them had actually given information of his plans to Chung Wang.

As soon as the man’s guilt was certain Gordon sent for him, and in the light of one whose soul had never held a thought that was not honourable and true the traitor must have seen himself as he really was. We do not know what Gordon said to him — most likely very little, but he offered him one chance of retrieving himself, and that was that he should lead the next forlorn hope.

In spite of his treachery the culprit was able to feel the baseness of his conduct. He eagerly accepted Gordon's proposal, though he was well aware that almost certain death was in store. And his repentance was real, and not merely the effect of a moment's shame, for when, some time after, a forlorn hope was necessary to carry the stockades before Soo-chow, Gordon, whose mind had been occupied with other things, had entirely forgotten all about his promise. But though he did not remember, the officer did, and claimed his right to lead. He was the first man killed, but the stockades were carried, and after two months' siege Soo-chow was won.

Nowhere during Gordon's service in China was the difference between East and West more clearly shown than in the events that happened after the capture of Soo-chow. Gordon respected his enemies, who had fought bravely, and wished them to be granted favourable terms of surrender. Moh Wang in particular, the captain of the city, had shown special skill and courage, and before the town fell Gordon had obtained a promise from Li Hung Chang that the Taeping commander's fate should be placed in his hands. At a council held inside Soo-chow, Moh Wang desired to hold out, but the other Wangs (or nobles) all voted for surrender, and at length they began to quarrel. Moh Wang would not give way, and then Kong Wang caught up his dagger and struck the first blow. The rest fell upon Moh Wang, and dragged him from his seat, cutting off his head, which they sent to Ching the general as a gift.

As plunder had been strictly forbidden by Gordon, he was very anxious to give his soldiers two months' pay to make up; but one month's pay was all he could obtain, and that with great difficulty, while the troops, angry and disappointed, threatened to revolt and to march against Li Hung Chang, as governor of the province. This was, however, stopped by Gordon, who then went into the city to the house of Nar Wang, another Taeping leader, whom he wished also to gain over. On the previous day he had heard from Ching that at twelve o'clock on the morning of December 6 the Wangs had arranged to meet the governor and surrender Soo-chow, as the emperor had consented to spare their lives and those of the prisoners; so Gordon started early in order to catch Nar Wang before he left, reaching Nar Wang's house just as he and the other Wangs were mounting their horses for the interview. After talking to them a little he bade them good-bye, and they rode away.

The fate that they met with was the same as they had dealt to Moh Wang. It seemed ridiculous to the governor to keep faith with men who had just delivered themselves and their city into his hands, and almost every Chinaman would have agreed with him. The Wangs were all taken over to the other side of the river and there beheaded, their heads being cut off and flung aside. But somehow, though the murder was committed in broad daylight, it was kept a secret till the following day.

This breach of faith in murdering men who had surrendered might long have remained unknown to Gordon but for a slight change in his plans. He suddenly decided that he would embark on one of his steamers on the Tai-ho, instead of leaving the city by another route. It was some little time before steam could be got up, so he went for a walk through the streets with Dr. Halliday Macartney, whose name will always be connected with China. To his surprise, crowds of imperialists were standing about, talking eagerly and excitedly, and it was clear to both Englishmen that some sort of a disturbance had taken place. Turning a corner they suddenly met General Ching, who grew so pale and looked so uncomfortable that Gordon's suspicions were aroused, and he at once inquired if the Wangs had seen Li Hung Chang, and what had taken place.

Ching replied that they had never been to Li Hung Chang at all, which astonished Gordon, who answered that he had seen them starting, and if they had not gone there, where were they? Then Ching said they had sent a message to the governor stating that they wished to be allowed to keep twenty thousand men, and to retain half of the city, building a wall to shut off their own portion. Gordon was greatly puzzled by this information, and asked if Ching thought that the Wangs could have joined the Taepings again in some other place; but the Chinese general replied that he thought most likely that they had returned quietly to their own homes.

To all appearance Ching was speaking the truth, yet Gordon could not feel satisfied. Turning to Macartney, who was standing by listening to the conversation, he begged him to go quickly to Nar Wang's house and tell him that the surrender must be unconditional, and then to return to him at a certain spot. When Macartney reached the house where Nar Wang lived he was informed by the servant who opened it that his master was out.

'Will he be in soon, for I must see him,' inquired Macartney. 'I have business of the greatest importance.'

The man looked at him silently, and then drew his hand slowly across his throat. Macartney understood the ghastly sign, and went swiftly away, but only just in time to avoid a crowd of pillagers, who poured into the house and in a few minutes had wrecked or stolen all they could lay hands on. He soon reached the spot which Gordon had appointed, but, long though he waited, Gordon never came.

After Macartney had left him Gordon stayed some time talking with Ching, and trying to find out what had really occurred, for that some dark deed had taken place he became quite convinced. However, not even torture can wring from a Chinaman what he does not choose to tell, and at length Gordon gave up the attempt in despair, and hurried through crowds laden with plunder to Nar Wang's house in order to see and hear for himself. The door stood open, and he walked rapidly through the rooms. At first the dwelling seemed as empty as it was bare, but at length he thought he saw some eyes looking at him behind a pile of rubbish.

'Come out,' he said; 'I am alone, you have nothing to fear'; and then an old man crept out, who, with many low bows and polite expressions, explained that in his nephew's absence the Chinese soldiers had pillaged his house, and begged the honourable Englishman to help him take away the ladies, whom he had hidden in a cellar, to his own dwelling.

Gordon was furious at learning that his strict orders against pillage had been disobeyed, but this was not the moment to think of that. With some difficulty they all passed through the crowded streets, but when they reached the old man's house they found a guard round it, and Gordon was informed that he must consider himself a prisoner. Luckily for him the Taepings had not yet learned the fate of the Wangs, or his life would have been speedily taken in payment for theirs.

All that night Gordon remained locked up in one room, impatiently chafing at the thought of what might be going on in the city. Early in the morning he got leave to send an interpreter with a letter to the English lines, ordering his bodyguards to come to his rescue, and to seize Li Hung Chang as security for the Wangs. His first messenger was stopped and his letter torn up; but in the afternoon he was himself set free on a promise to send a guard to protect the Taepings in Nar Wang's house. This he instantly did, and in his indignation at the permission given in his absence to the imperialist soldiers to sack the city refused to see or speak to general Ching.

On receiving Gordon's refusal Ching began to feel that he and Li Hung Chang had gone rather far, and that the day of reckoning would be a very uncomfortable one. Some explanation he must make, so he ordered an English officer to go at once to Gordon and inform him that he knew nothing of what had become of the Wangs, or whether they were alive or dead, but that Nar Wang's son was safe in his tent.

'Bring him here,' said Gordon, and he waited in silence till a boy of fourteen entered the camp at the east gate. From him he learned what had happened in a few words. All the Wangs, his father among them, had been taken across the river on the previous day, and there cruelly murdered; their heads had been cut off, and their bodies left lying on the bank.

Speechless with horror, Gordon set off at once for the place of the murder, and found the nine headless corpses lying as they had fallen. Englishman and soldier though he was, tears of rage forced their way into his eyes at the thought that by this act of treachery on the part of the Chinese his honour and that of his country had been trampled in the dust. Then, taking a revolver instead of the stick which was the only weapon he carried even in action, he went straight to Li Hung Chang's quarters, intending to shoot him dead and to bear the responsibility.

But the governor had been warned, and took his measures accordingly. Li Hung Chang had escaped from his boat, and was hiding in the city. In vain Gordon, his anger no whit abated, sought for him high and low. No trace of him could be found; and at last Gordon returned to Quinsan, where he called a council of his English officers, and informed them that until the emperor had punished Li Hung Chang as he deserved he should decline to serve with him, and should resign his command into the hands of General Brown, who was stationed at Shanghai. As to Li Hung Chang's offer, sent by Macartney, to sign any proclamation Gordon chose to write, saying that he was both innocent and ignorant of the murder of the Wangs, he would not even listen to it.

As soon as General Brown received Gordon's letter at Shanghai he instantly set out for Quinsan, where Gordon remained with his troops for two months, while Li Hung Chang's conduct was being inquired into, or, rather, while the government was trying to find out how the anger of the English generals and the English envoy on account of the murder of the Wangs could best be satisfied. For Li Hung had been beforehand with us, guessing how much he had at stake, and had been much praised for his act and given a yellow jacket, or, as we should say 'the Garter.' On Gordon himself a medal of the highest class was bestowed, with a large sum of money, and, what the imperial government knew he would value much more, a grant for his wounded men and extra pay for the soldiers. Anything that tended to make his troops more comfortable Gordon, who had already devoted to their help his 1,200*l.* a year of pay from the Chinese government, gladly received, but for himself he would accept nothing and keep nothing, except two flags, which had no connection with the Wang massacre. Nor did he allow anyone to remain in ignorance of the motive of his refusal, for he wrote a letter to the emperor himself, in which he stated that 'he regretted most sincerely that, owing to the circumstances which occurred since the capture of Soo-chow, he was unable to receive any mark of his majesty the emperor's recognition,' though he 'respectfully begged his majesty to accept his thanks for his intended kindness.'

With the taking of Soo-chow the Taeping resistance was really broken, and soon Nankin and Hangchow were the only important places left to them, though plenty of fighting was still to be done. To the great relief of the government Gordon was at length persuaded to resume his command, more from the thought that he might be able to some extent to check the cruelty natural to the Chinese than for any other reason. It is amusing to watch the slavish behaviour of the emperor towards the man whose help he so greatly needed, and whose anger he so deeply feared. Once, when Gordon in leading an attack with his wand in his hand, the only weapon he ever carried, received a bad wound below the knee, his majesty promulgated a public edict ordering Li Hung Chang to inquire daily after him, and the governor himself issued a proclamation, setting forth all the circumstances of the massacre of Soo-chow, and declaring in the clearest manner that Gordon had been totally ignorant of the whole affair.

In June 1864 the British government sent an intimation to China that they considered the country had no further need for Gordon's services, and wished him set at liberty to return home. Gordon himself would perhaps have preferred to remain a little longer, but, as he was given no choice, he quietly disbanded the Ever-Victorious-Army, fearing that, if led by unscrupulous men, it might become a danger to the empire. He then visited the general besieging Nankin, whose name was Tseng-kwo-fan, and gave him a little advice as to the training of troops, and even took part in directing some of the assaults. Then he took leave of the general, and a few hours later he had started on his journey. Tien Wang, one of the Taeping commanders within the walls of Nankin, seeing that the cause was tottering to its fall, committed suicide in the manner proper to his rank by swallowing gold leaf. Shortly after the city itself was stormed, and Chung Wang, whose presence among the rebels was, said Gordon, equal to an army of five thousand men, fell into the hands of the victors. He was sentenced to be beheaded, but was given a week's respite in order to write the history of the rebellion of the Taepings, who had invaded sixteen out of the eighteen provinces and destroyed six hundred cities.

By this time Gordon and Li Hung Chang had begun to know more of each other and to understand a little better the different views of East and West. Gordon had gained the trust and respect of everybody, even of the Taeping chiefs themselves, while the prince Kung, in the name of the emperor, wrote a letter of the most hearty gratitude for Gordon’s services to the British minister at Pekin. The title of Ti-tu, the highest rank in the Chinese army, had been conferred on him, and also the yellow jacket, a distinction dating back to the coming of the present Manchu dynasty in the seventeenth century, and only given to generals who had been victorious against rebels. Gordon had besides six dresses of mandarins, and a book explaining how they should be worn. They were of course the handsomest that China could produce, and the buttons on the hats alone were worth 30*l.* or 40*l.* each. From the two empresses he received a gold medal specially struck in his honour; and by this he set great store, though not long after, having spent all his pay on his boys at Gravesend, he sold it for 10*l.*, and, smoothing out the inscription, sent the money to the Lancashire Famine Fund.

His own government gave him a step in military rank, and it was as ‘Colonel Gordon’ that he returned home early in 1865.

The next six years of his life Gordon passed at home, and these years were, he said, the happiest he had ever spent. He first visited his family, who were living at Southampton, and to them he was ready to talk of all that he had seen and done since they last parted. Invitations poured in upon him from all sides, but he hated being fussed over, and invariably lost his temper at any attempt to show him off. He was so angry at a minister who borrowed from Mrs. Gordon his private journal of the Taeping rebellion, and then sent to have it printed for the other members of the Cabinet to read, that he rushed straight to the printers and insisted that the type should at once be destroyed. It was a very great loss to the world; but the minister had no business to act as he did without Gordon’s permission, and had only himself to thank for what happened.

Delightful though it was to be back again, Gordon soon got tired of being idle, so he was given an appointment to superintend the erection of forts at Gravesend. His leisure hours he devoted to helping the people round him, especially little ragged boys, whose only playground and schoolroom were the streets or the riverside. And it is curious that he, who amongst strangers of his own class was shy and abrupt, and often tactless, was quite at his ease with these little fellows, generally as suspicious as they are acute. About himself and his own comfort he never thought, and if he was working would eat, when it was necessary and he remembered to do so, food which he had ready in a drawer of his table. But as he had carefully watched over the welfare of his troops in China, so in Gravesend he looked after that of his boys. He took into his own house as many as there was room for, and clothed and fed them, while in the evenings he taught them geography, and told them stories from English history and the Bible, and when he considered they had done lessons long enough he played games with them. By-and-by more boys came in from the outside and joined his classes. It did not matter to him how many they were, they were all welcome, and he gave them, as far as the time allowed, a training which was religious as well as practical, hoping that some day they might turn out good soldiers and sailors, and be a protection to the empire. Several of his boys were taken on board some of the many ships off Gravesend, and the ‘kernel,’ as they called him, kept a map stuck over with pins tracing their voyages all over the world.

Most people would have considered that between military duties and boys’ classes they were busy enough; but Gordon still found time to spare for the ragged schools, and money to provide hundreds of boots and suits for the little waifs, till he left himself almost penniless.

The large garden attached to his house was of no benefit to himself, but was lent by him to a number of his friends, each of whom did as he liked with his own portion, and either kept the fruit and vegetables for his family, or else sold them. Of course, the ‘kernel’ was frequently taken in, and spent his money on those who had no claim to it; but the boys he helped were seldom a disappointment, any more than the boys of to-day sent out from the Gordon Boys’ Homes founded in his memory.

It must have been a black day indeed for many in Gravesend when Gordon was despatched by his government on a mission to the Danube, and then ordered to inspect the graves of those who had fallen in the Crimea seventeen years before. So he said good-bye to his friends, young and old, leaving to the ragged schools some gorgeous Chinese flags, which are still waved at the school treats amidst shouts of remembrance of their giver.

On his way back from the Crimea Gordon stopped at Constantinople, and while there a proposal was made to him, on the part of the sultan, to proceed to Egypt and to take service, with the queen's permission, under his vassal, the khedive, or ruler, as governor of the tribes in upper Egypt. Sir Samuel Baker had hitherto held the post, but now wished to resign, and Gordon, who had always laid greatly to heart the iniquity of the slave-trade, thought that, as governor of the provinces from which the supply of slaves was drawn, he might be able to put an end to it. Leave was granted in the autumn of 1873, and before Gordon returned to London to make the necessary preparations, he proceeded to Cairo to see the khedive, or, as he was still called, 'the lieutenant of the sultan.'

When Gordon accepted the position of 'governor of the equatorial provinces,' with a salary of £2,000 a year, instead of the £10,000 offered him by the khedive, the country, which ten years before had been rich and prosperous, was in a wretched condition owing to the slave-trade, carried on as long as they were able by Europeans as well as by Arabs. At first elephant-hunting was made the pretext of their expeditions, but soon they found negroes a more profitable article of commerce, and whole villages had the strong men and women torn away from them, till, at the first hint of the approach of a caravan, the people would abandon their huts and fly off to hide themselves. At length the trade became so well known and so scandalous that the Europeans were forced to give it up; but the Arab dealers continued to grow powerful and wealthy, and the wealthiest and most powerful of all was Zebehr, whose name for ever after was closely connected with that of Gordon.

The slave-dealers soon formed themselves into a sort of league, with Zebehr at their head, and, having created an army made up of Arabs and of the slaves they had taken, refused to pay tribute to the khedive, or to acknowledge the supremacy of the sultan of Constantinople, whose viceroy he was. The Egyptian government, which had suffered the slave-trade to proceed unchecked when human life only was at stake, grew indignant the moment it became a question of money. An army was sent against Zebehr, who easily defeated it, and proclaimed himself ruler of the Soudan or 'land of the black,' south of Khartoum, then a little group of three thousand mud-houses on the left bank of the Blue Nile, three miles from its junction with the White Nile.

But, small though it was, Khartoum was the capital of the province, and owned a governor's house, with the Blue Nile sheltering it on one side, and surrounded on the other three by a deep ditch and a wall, while on the west side the town was only half a mile distant from the White Nile itself.

As soon as the khedive understood that he was no match for Zebehr he determined to make a friend of him, and offered him an alliance with the title of pasha.

For the moment it suited Zebehr to accept this proposal, and the two armies combined and conquered the province of Darfour; but directly the pasha wished to turn into a governor-general the khedive grew frightened, and declared that he was now convinced that the trade in slaves was wicked and must be put down. Perhaps he guessed that Europe was hardly likely to be convinced by this sudden change, so, instead of appointing an Egyptian governor of the equatorial provinces, he conferred the post first on Sir Samuel Baker, and, later, on Gordon.

It did not take Gordon long to find out that the khedive's newly discovered zeal in putting down the slave-trade was 'a sham to catch the attention of the English people,' but the weapon had been thrust into his hands, and he meant to use it for the help of the oppressed tribes. Difficulties he knew there would be, and he was ready to fight them, but one difficulty he hardly made allowance for, which was that among the Mahometan races throughout the world it was as much a matter of course to have slaves as it is to us to have houses.

With great care he selected the staff that was to accompany him, and a body of two hundred troops to inspect Khartoum. He chose five Englishmen, an American, an old Crimean Italian interpreter called Romulus Gessi, and a slave-trader named Abou Saoud, whom Gordon had found a prisoner in Cairo. In vain the khedive warned the new governor-general of the danger of taking such a villain into his service, and of the strange look his appointment would have in the eyes of Europe. To Gordon the only thing that mattered was that the man knew the country through which they were to travel, and as to the rest, his own neck must take its chance.

It was on March 12, 1874, that Gordon came in sight of Khartoum, where eleven years later he was to find his grave. He was received on the banks by the Egyptian governor-general, who ordered salutes to be fired and the brass band to play. If Gordon did not appreciate the honours paid to him, he was delighted at the news that a growth of grass and stones that had hitherto rendered the White Nile impassable had been at last cut away by the soldiers. Now the river was free, and instead of the journey to Gondokoro — his own capital, eleven hundred miles south of Khartoum — taking fourteen months, as in the days of Sir Samuel Baker, he would be able to perform it in four weeks.

Every moment of the ten days that Gordon stayed at Khartoum was busily employed in discovering all he could as to the condition of the people and the state of the government. It did not take him more than a few hours to learn that the Egyptian government had no authority whatever over the people, and that the money matters of the Soudan were hopelessly mixed with those of Cairo. But at present he could only note what was wrong, and wait to set it right. His work just now lay at Gondokoro, and thither he must go.

On the 22nd he started up the river, and at each mile, as they drew nearer and nearer to the equator, he found the climate more trying. It was, as he says, nothing but ‘heat and mosquitoes day and night, all the year round.’ But, exhausting though the climate was, he could not help being deeply interested in the many things that were new to him. There were great hippopotamuses plunging about in their clumsy way; the crocodiles, looking more like stone beasts than living things, basking motionless on the mud where the river had fallen; the monkeys that had their homes with the storks among the trees that covered the banks in places; the storks that sounded as if they were laughing, and ‘seemed highly amused at anybody thinking of going up to Gondokoro with the hope of doing anything.’ In a forest higher up they found a tribe, the Dinkas, dressed in necklaces. Their idea of greeting a white ‘chief’ was to lick his hands, and they would have kissed his feet also had not Gordon jumped up hastily and, snatching up some strings of gay beads he had brought with him for the purpose, hung them over their heads.

The people of Gondokoro were filled with astonishment when Gordon’s steamer anchored under the river banks. It was a wretched place, worse even than Khartoum, and inhabited by wretched people, whom ill-treatment had made at once revengeful and timid. But Gordon did not care how miserable the place was, he felt sure he could do something to help the people; and first he began by trying to make friends. For a time it was uphill work; they had given up planting their little plots of ground — what was the use when their harvest was always taken from them? Their only possession of value was their children, and these they often begged Gordon to buy, to save them from starvation. It seemed too good to be true when the white man gave them maize, which they baked in cakes, and fed them while they sowed their patches once more. ‘He would see that no one hurt them,’ he said, and little by little, under his protection, the poor people plucked up heart again and forgot their troubles, as nobody but negroes can.

Up and down the river he went, establishing some of the forts which he knew to be necessary if the slave-trade was to be put down. One day Abou Saoud brought him some letters written by a party of slave-dealers to the Egyptian governor of Fashoda, on the White Nile, half-way to Khartoum, saying that they would shortly arrive with a gang of negroes whom they had captured, and with two thousand cows, which they had also kidnapped, as was their custom. Gordon was ready for them; the cattle he kept, not being able to return them to their black owners, and the negroes he set free. If possible they were sent home, but if that could not be done he bought them himself, so that no one else should have a claim to them. The gratitude shown by the blacks was boundless, and one, a chief of the Dinkas, proved useful to him in many ways. The others, tall, strong men, gladly served him as hewers of wood and drawers of water.

So the weeks went on, and in the intervals of capturing more convoys of slaves Gordon still found time to attend to an old dying woman, whom he often visited himself, besides daily sending her food, and, what she loved better still, tobacco. The heat grew worse and worse, and no doubt the mosquitoes also; and Gordon’s only pleasure was wading in the Nile morning and evening — a very dangerous amusement, as the river swarmed with crocodiles. But he had heard that crocodiles never attacked anything that was moving, and certainly he took no harm, and his health was good. All his white men, however, fell ill, and as there was no one to nurse them but himself, he would not replace them.

Meanwhile the natives had learned to trust him, and under his rule things were looking more prosperous. He saw that his men took nothing from them without paying for it, whereas the Egyptian governor had forced them to work without pay; and finding the troops he had brought from Cairo both cowardly and lazy, he engaged forty Soudanese, on whom he could depend, and trained them to act as his bodyguard.

It was not to be expected that Gordon could carry through all these measures without becoming an object of hatred to the Egyptian officials, most of whom were in league with the slave-dealers. Soon he discovered that many of his men were taking bribes and plotting against him, and of them all, Abou Saoud was the worst. He even incited the black troops under him to revolt; but Gordon soon frightened the men into obedience, and sent their leader down the Nile to Gondokoro.

Yet, in spite of fever, discontent, laziness, and open rebellion, in ten months (1874), writes one of his subordinates, ‘he had garrisoned eight stations with the seven hundred men whom he had found at Gondokoro too frightened to stir a hundred yards outside the town, and had sent to Cairo enough money to pay the expenses of the expedition for this year and the next, while that of Baker had cost the Egyptian government £1,170,000.

It seemed to Gordon that if he could establish a route from the great lake Victoria Nyanza, further south, at the head of the Nile, to Mombasa, on the Indian Ocean, trade would increase and goods be exchanged far more easily and quickly than if they had to be brought down the whole length of the Nile, which is often rendered impassable by shallows and cataracts. Therefore, towards the end of 1874 he set up posts from Gondokoro towards lake Albert Nyanza, hoping that directly the Nile fell the steamers he had left at Khartoum might be able to reach him. But here again he was beset with difficulties and dangers. The Arabs were lazy, the Egyptians useless and often treacherous, many of the tribes hostile; and to add to it all, it was almost impossible to get past the rapids. The boats were very strong, but liable to be upset at any instant by the plunging of the hippopotamuses in the river. Sixty or eighty men were often straining at the ropes which were to drag the craft along, and Gordon took his turn with the rest. Nobody in the camp worked so hard as the commander. He cooked his food and cleaned his gun, while the men stood by and stared. When there was nothing else to be done he mended watches and musical boxes, which he took with him as presents to the natives, and he kept himself well by walking fourteen miles daily, in spite of the heat and mosquitoes.

‘I do not carry arms, as I ought to do,’ he said one day, ‘for my whole attention is devoted to defending the nape of my neck from the mosquitoes,’ the enemies he hated most of all. Still inch by inch the troops fought their way along the river, till at length they reached the lake of Albert Nyanza. Gordon established forts as he went, though in the depths of his heart he knew full well that the moment his back was turned everything would relapse into its former state of oppression and lawlessness. But what happened afterwards was not *his* business. He had done the work set him to the utmost of his power, and that was all for which he was responsible.

Thus two years passed away, and having mapped out the country he started northwards, to resign his post to the khedive before returning to England.

As might have been expected, he was not allowed to throw off his burden so easily. The khedive had no intention of loosening his hold of a man who sent money into his treasury instead of taking it out, but, try as he would, he could not wring from Gordon more than a conditional promise of coming back. No sooner had Gordon arrived in England than telegrams were sent after him imploring him to finish his work, and in spite of his weariness and disgust he felt that he could not leave it half done. In six weeks the khedive had triumphed, and Gordon was in Cairo.

At his very first meeting with the khedive, when the affairs of the Soudan were discussed, Gordon stated clearly that he would not go back unless he was given undivided authority and power over the Soudan as well as over the other provinces. The khedive granted everything he asked. The governor-general of the Soudan, Ismail Pasha, was recalled, and Gordon took his place as ruler over the equatorial provinces, Darfour, the whole of the Soudan, and the Red Sea coast. He owed obedience to no one save the khedive, who again was responsible to the sultan of Turkey. The salary offered him by the khedive was £12,000 a year, but £6,000 was all that Gordon would accept, and later he cut it down to £3,000.

With 'terrific exertion' he thought it possible that in three years he might make a good army in his provinces, with increased trade, a fair revenue, and, above all, slavery suppressed. It seemed a gigantic work to undertake, especially when we consider that it had to be carried out in a district one thousand six hundred miles long and seven hundred broad. But nothing less would be of any use, and Gordon was not the man to spare himself if he could make his work permanent. So after a few days in Cairo he started for the south, going first, by the khedive's orders, to try and bring about a peace with the kingdom of Abyssinia. This he did to a certain extent by 'setting a thief to catch a thief,' that is, by holding one claimant to the throne in check by means of another. The state with which he was surrounded made him very cross, as any kind of fuss over him always did. 'Eight or ten men to help me off my camel, as if I were an invalid,' he writes indignantly. 'If I walk, everyone gets off and walks; so, furious, I get on again.'

However, these pin-pricks to his temper did not last long, for soon bad news came from Khartoum, and he had to set out for the Soudan directly. His daily journey on his camel was never less than thirty, and more often forty miles. On his arrival at a station he received everybody, rich and poor, who chose to come to him, listened to all complaints, and settled all disputes, besides writing constant reports to the khedive of what he was doing. He had nobody to help him; it was far easier and quicker for him to do his own work than first to tell someone else what he wanted done, and then to make sure his instructions were properly carried out.

At length Khartoum was reached, and Gordon was duly proclaimed governor-general, the ceremony being, we may be sure, as short as he could make it. According to the wishes of the khedive, he was treated like a sultan in the ‘Arabian Nights.’ On no account was he ever to get up, even when a great chief came to pay his respects to him, and no one was allowed to remain seated in his presence. Worse than all, his palace was filled with two hundred servants.

The first reform he wished to make was to disband a body of six thousand Bashi-Bazouks, or Arab and Turkish irregular troops, who pillaged the tribes on the frontiers that they were set to guard, and let the slave-dealers go free. Of course this could only be done very slowly and cautiously; but he managed gradually to discharge a few at a time and to replace them with soldiers from the Soudan, whom he always found very trustworthy. Then, after setting right many abuses in Khartoum itself, and giving the outlying houses a proper water-supply, where before the lack of it had caused disease and discomfort, he began a march of several hundred miles westwards to Darfour.

Here the whole province had risen up against its new Egyptian masters, and those tribes which had not already broken out were preparing to do so. With the hopeful spirit that never deserted him, and which more than once had created the miracle he had expected, Gordon imagined that he would be able to turn his enemies into allies. As to his own life, his faith in God was too real and too firm for him to take that into consideration. Till his appointed task was finished he was perfectly safe, and after that he would, in his own words, ‘leave much weariness for perfect peace.’

Thus he went about his work with complete unconcern, and one day arrived at a discontented place an hour and a half before the few hundred soldiers that formed his army. Nobody expected him, and when they saw a man in a uniform shining with gold, flying towards them on the swiftest camel they had ever beheld, and with only one companion, they were filled with amazement. Nothing would have been easier than to kill Gordon; but somehow they never even thought of it, and soon the people of Darfour and the neighbouring tribes came in and submitted to him. On the way he was welcomed gladly by the garrisons of the various little towns, some of whom had received no pay for three years. These half-starved men, being in their weak condition even more useless than the ordinary Egyptian soldier, he sent eastwards to be disbanded, and with an army of five hundred untrustworthy troops, who did not possess a single cannon, and whose arms were old-fashioned flint-lock guns, he had to prepare to face the attack of thousands of rebels against the Egyptian government.

Luckily, for some reason, the rebel army melted away without a shot being fired, and the danger being passed the Egyptians pushed on to Dara.

Now came the moment to which Gordon had long been looking forward — the life and death struggle with the slave-dealers, headed by Suleiman, son of Zebehr, who had armed six thousand of his own slaves, and could besides summon the help of five thousand good soldiers. How thankfully, then, Gordon must have greeted the arrival of a powerful tribe seven thousand strong, who, having suffered bitterly from the slave-traders, were thirsting for revenge. That after a hard fight the victory remained with Gordon was owing only to the support of this and other friendly tribes, for the Egyptians 'crowded into the stockade' and hid there, safe, as they hoped, from stray spears or wandering bullets.

It is impossible to follow all Gordon's movements during this campaign, when in the heat of summer, near the equator, he darted about on his camel from one place to another, 'a dirty, red-faced man, ornamented with flies,' and often by his unexpected appearance and promptitude carried the day, 'because he gave his enemies no time to think' or to plot against him. Hearing at the end of August that Suleiman was about to attack Dara, he at once rode straight to the spot, which he reached in the condition I have described.

'If I had no escort of men,' he writes to his sister, 'I had a large escort of flies. I suppose the queen fly was among them. The people were paralysed at my arrival, and could not believe their eyes. At dawn I got up, and putting on the golden armour the khedive gave me, mounted my horse, and with an escort of my robbers of Bashi-Bazouks rode out to the camp of the other robbers, about three miles off. There were about three thousand of them, men and boys: they were dumbfounded at my coming among them.'

Alone in a tent, with the chiefs, headed by Suleiman, 'a nice-looking lad of twenty-two,' sitting in a circle round him, Gordon informed them 'in choice Arabic' that he was quite aware that they intended to revolt against the Egyptian government, and that he intended to disarm them and break them up.

'They listened in silence and went off to consider what I had said. They have just now sent in a letter stating their submission, and I thank God for it,' he continues. 'The sort of stupefied way in which they heard me go to the point about their doings, the pantomime of signs, the bad Arabic, was quite absurd.' Then one by one the other slave-dealers surrendered, and though Suleiman still gave him much trouble, and was to give more, yet on the whole things had gone much better than he had feared, and by the middle of October he arrived at Khartoum, and after a week's hard work took a steamer and went down the river to Berber and Dongola. In March he very unwillingly continued his journey to Cairo, at the command of the khedive, who desired to create him president of the

Finance Inquiry. But this was a great mistake; Gordon's views on the matter were different from those of other men, and he had been too long accustomed to be absolute master in any task he undertook to be able to work harmoniously with his equals. The khedive, too, failed to support him, and Gordon, seeing it was hopeless to expect to gain his point, and depressed and annoyed with what had taken place, returned to Khartoum by way of the Suez Canal and Suakim.

Then came the news that Suleiman had revolted, and had overrun the province of Bahr-el-Ghazal on the south of Darfour. Gordon's old follower and lieutenant Gessi was sent with some troops to put down the revolt; but it was a rainy season, and the country was partially under water. He had only one thousand troops, while daily fresh Arabs swelled the army of the successful leader; but he was enterprising as well as prudent, and in the middle of November he came up with the enemy and entrenched himself behind stockades on the river Dyoor. Here Suleiman attacked him again and again, and again and again was beaten back. Gessi sent repeated messages to Gordon for help and ammunition, but all that the governor general could spare was soon exhausted. At length Gessi obtained some from the Bahr-el-Ghazal, and now was able to leave his camp and successfully attack bands of slave-dealers. At length he stormed a town where Suleiman was stationed, and nearly captured 'the Cub' himself. Finding to his disgust that the leader had escaped, Gessi followed him westwards through deserted villages and dense forests, and though he did not succeed in catching his prey, he was able to break up the gang of slave-dealers.

Meanwhile Gordon had left Khartoum and had gone to the slave-dealers' headquarters at Shaka, and then back towards Khartoum, capturing many caravans on the way. During one week, on his way from Oomchanga to Toashia, he thinks he must have taken about six hundred slaves, and he puts down the number that had lost their lives in the last four years from the cruelty of the dealers to have been at least one hundred thousand in Darfour alone.

At Toashia Gordon had a short interview with Gessi, whom he created a pasha and made governor of the Bahr-el-Ghazal, with a present of £2,000. On his way back to his province news was brought to Gessi of Suleiman's whereabouts. He at once started in pursuit with three hundred men, and came up with Suleiman during the night at Gara. The slave dealer, taken by surprise, surrendered, and was shot next day, and it would have been well for the Soudan if Suleiman's father Zebehr had paid the same penalty for his rebellion against the khedive.

It was in the year 1879 that the khedive Ismail was deposed at Cairo, and Tewfik appointed in his place. The new khedive seemed fully as anxious as his predecessors to make use of the one man who feared neither danger nor responsibility, and bore a charmed life, and Gordon was at once sent on a fruitless mission to Abyssinia. On his return he carried out the intention that he had formed for some time, and placed his resignation in the hands of the khedive. Well he knew that the Egyptian government cared nothing for the reforms he had made, or the slave-trade that he had broken. They never supported any of his measures, and he felt assured that in a few months the state of things would be as bad as ever.

Sick at heart and worn out in body, he came home early in 1880, having paused on his way to see Rome. Once in London it was the old story. Invitations rained on him, only to be refused. To escape from them he rushed off to Lausanne for peace. But peace and Gordon had little to do with each other, and he soon received an urgent request from the ministers of Cape Colony to allow himself to be appointed commander of the colonial forces. This, however, Gordon refused at once. The war with the Zulus was only just over, and Gordon, who on all questions involving the well-being of nations, was very keen-sighted, may well have noted signs of unrest throughout the whole of South Africa. His health had been severely tried by all he had gone through, and he needed rest before he could take active employment.

So he returned to England, and in May, much to everyone’s surprise, accepted the post of secretary to the new viceroy of India, lord Ripon. But no sooner had the viceregal party reached Bombay than Gordon found that the work he had to do was not the sort he was suited for. Not because he thought that anything was beneath his dignity — the man who had cleaned his own gun and cooked his own food in the Soudan was never likely to feel that — but his career, as he ought to have known before, had unfitted him to cope with the minute details bound up with Indian life, and the immense importance given to the distinctions of caste. Therefore four days after the ship reached Bombay he resigned, expressing his regrets for the mistake he had made, and thanking lord Ripon most warmly for the kindness shown him. His passage money and all the expenses to which his appointment had put the new government — for the Liberals had lately come into power — he instantly repaid.

Two days later he received a telegram from sir Robert Hart, director of the customs in China, begging him to take the first ship to Tientsin, where his services were badly needed. As his request to the English War Office for six months’ leave was refused, he replied that his object in going to China was to prevent a war which was likely to break out between that country and Russia, and therefore, if the permission asked was not granted, he should be forced to throw up his commission in the queen’s service.

On receipt of this message the government allowed him to go, and for three months he worked hard, and not only contrived, as he hoped, to prevent the war with Russia, but to check the revolt of Li Hung Chang, who desired to place the crown on his own head.

Having accomplished what he intended, he found himself in London in October, and in 1881 went out to the island of Mauritius, in the Indian Ocean, to command the engineers.

At last he rested from the heavy responsibilities of the last few years, though he worked as he always must do, and, now a major-general, in April 1882 set sail for the Cape, where the governor of the colony, sir Hercules Robinson, wanted his advice on the settlement and administration of Basutoland. But when Gordon arrived he found his views on the subject so totally different from those of the men in power that he resigned and left, and from London he carried out the great longing of his life — a visit to the Holy Land. Few people knew and loved their Bibles like Gordon, and every stone in Palestine was full of interest to him. Here he was alone and quiet, respecting the faith of others, and therefore causing them to respect his; talking and praying with those of different religions, teaching them and learning from them; preparing himself, as the Master whom he served had also done, for the fiery trial through which he was to pass.

All this time the king of the Belgians had been offering him the command of an expedition his majesty was anxious to send to the Congo, and continued to press the matter in spite of the refusal of Mr. Gladstone, then prime minister, to lend him Gordon to lead it. On January 1, 1884, Gordon went over to Brussels to talk over affairs with the king, and while he was there the English government suddenly decided to send him at once to the Soudan, where matters were in a very threatening state.

Since Gordon had left the country, four years before, Arabi pasha had revolted, and been crushed at Tel-el-Kebir, and a dervish in the Soudan, Mohammed Ahmed by name, had made himself famous by proclaiming himself mahdi, the expected prophet of the whole Mahometan world. Thousands flocked to the standard that he raised, and his armed escort stood with drawn swords in his presence. The Egyptian governor-general summoned him to Khartoum to answer for his proceedings, but the mahdi answered that he was master of the country and obeyed no one. The troops despatched against him he always defeated, and when a new governor-general and a fresh army gave him battle they were utterly destroyed. Obeid in Darfour surrendered after a five months' siege, and, flushed with success, he carried all before him.

In June 1883 colonel Hicks was given by the Egyptian government the military command at Khartoum, with ten thousand men and thirty guns; but he had no knowledge of the country where he had to fight, and fell an easy prey to the mahdi's army, which was ten times as numerous as his own. The tribes of the eastern Soudan joined the victor's banner, and here, while Gordon was on his way to Khartoum, Baker pasha was defeated by Osman Digna, a slave-dealer of Suakim.

On January 17, 1884, Gordon, who was in Brussels, received a telegram from lord Wolseley, bidding him come over to London by the evening train. He started at once, and reached London early in the morning, and at twelve o'clock was taken by Wolseley to the Cabinet Council.

'He went in,' writes Gordon, 'and talked to the ministers, and came back and said, "Her majesty's government want you to undertake this. The government are determined to evacuate the Soudan, for they will not undertake to guarantee its safety. Will you go and do it?" I said, "Yes!" He said, "Go in." I went in and saw them. They said, "Did Wolseley tell you our orders?" I said, "Yes." I said, "You will not guarantee the future government of the Soudan, and you wish me to go up to evacuate now?" They said, "Yes," and it was over, and I left at 8 p.m. for Calais.'

He was seen off from the station by lord Wolseley and by lord Hartington, afterwards the duke of Devonshire, who always stood loyally by him, and repeatedly urged that help must be sent instantly, while his colleagues in the Cabinet waited to see how things would drift, till the time for help was past.

On January 26, the day which a year hence was to witness his death, Gordon, with colonel Stewart, was in Cairo, where he spent two busy days. The first news that greeted him was the success of the mahdi in all directions, and that the Mahometans in Syria and in Arabia would probably rise against their rulers. Yet he does not seem to have understood any better than the English and Egyptian governments what a terrific force the man really was, not so much in himself, but because he stood in the minds of hundreds of thousands for the deliverer who would aid them to shake off a yoke under which they groaned. 'I do not believe in the advance of the mahdi,' says Gordon a few days later; 'he is nephew to my old guide in Darfour, who was a very good fellow,' and on several occasions he shows that he had no idea as yet of the task that lay before him, and considered the mahdi a mere puppet in the hands of the slave-owners, who had joined him to a man. While in Cairo he did his best to make arrangements to ensure good government. He desired to see Nubar pasha, of whom he thought highly, placed in power, and the dangerous Zebehr banished to Cyprus, but Tewfik the khedive would listen to neither proposal. So, to the horror of some of the anti-slavery societies in England, who knew nothing of the supreme difficulties of Gordon's position, the newly appointed governor-general of the Soudan asked to take Zebehr with him, and keep him under his own eye. 'He is the ablest man in the Soudan,' said Gordon afterwards, 'a capital general and a good governor, and with his help I could have crushed the mahdi.' But Gordon's friends at Cairo had no faith in Zebehr's loyalty, and much in his hatred of Gordon, and at their entreaty the plan was given up. Yet Gordon did not sleep one night in Khartoum without knowing he was right, and writing to beg for Zebehr.

Forty-eight hours after reaching Cairo Gordon started with Stewart and four Egyptian officers for Khartoum.

'I go with every confidence and trust in God,' he wrote to Wolseley a few hours before he set out, in the spirit in which he lived and died, and in twenty days he was at Khartoum, where the whole population came out to welcome him.

With the help of the garrison of five thousand men Gordon began to fortify the town, and to throw up proper defences for Omdurman, on the left bank of the river. Provisions were stored, and a telegraph wire rigged up between the outworks and his palace, where he spent hours every day in sweeping the horizon with his field-glass. Once at Khartoum he began to realise what a force the mahdi had become. In March he wrote to the English government, 'I shall be caught in Khartoum, and even if I was mean enough to escape, I've not the power.' He begs both for men and money, but no notice was taken of his letter; so in April he telegraphs to sir Evelyn Baring, the English agent in Cairo, saying that he had asked sir Samuel Baker to try and obtain £30,000 from English and American millionaires to enable him to get three thousand Turkish soldiers, 'who would settle the mahdi for ever. I do not see the fun of being caught here to walk about the streets as a dervish with sandalled feet,' he goes on; 'not that I shall ever be taken alive.'

He had been sent expressly to evacuate the Soudan, yet he was not allowed to do it when it came to the point, and, as usually happens, attempts at compromise proved failures. An expedition was despatched to Suakim, and two bloody battles were fought, but the only result of these was to inflame the zeal of the mahdi's followers and to enable him to capture Berber, the key of the Soudan.

In Khartoum Gordon was using all his skill to fit the place to stand a siege, for he speedily saw that his garrison of one thousand Soudanese were all he had to rely on, the three thousand Egyptians and Bashi-Bazouks being worse than useless. Later his troops amounted to about double the number, and the population which he had to feed he reckoned at forty thousand. The provisions, he estimated, would last for five months; but in the end they had to do for ten, and up to the very last, when all else was eaten, there was still some corn left in the granary.

While the river was yet open, and before the Arabs had cut off all communication between Khartoum and the outer world, Gordon managed to send away some old and helpless soldiers, various government officials, and two thousand three hundred refugees, who had fled to the town for safety. Everything he could think of was done for their comfort; and in order to prevent the poor black women and children from feeling strange and frightened, he ordered colonel Duncan to ask a German woman living at Korosko to be ready to meet and help them. In Khartoum itself there were no fevers or pestilence, and food was given daily to the very poor.

It was in the middle of March that the town, with its three rings of defence, was invested by the Arabs; but when the time came for the Nile to rise it was easy for Gordon to send his steamers up and down both branches of the river, and to attack the Arab camps. Besides those boats he had already, he built some new ones, and kept his men busy in the workshops of the arsenal. But when April came, and there were no answers to his appeals, he wrote home that the matter *must* be settled before the Nile fell in November, when the river route would become not only difficult but dangerous.

In this way the months went on, and in England his friends were doing all they could to help him, though vainly. Lord Wolseley repeatedly urged on the Government the need of sending out a relief force, and in a letter of July 24, to Gordon's brother, he writes that if he was allowed to start immediately he could be at Dongola by October 15, and could go all the way to Khartoum by the river. Lord Hartington, too, never forgot Gordon, but the rest of the Cabinet turned a deaf ear; they had other things to think about.

The next move came from the French consul, monsieur Herbin, who was inside Khartoum. He suggested to Gordon that now that it was September, and the Nile had risen to its greatest height, the cataracts would be covered to a depth of thirty or forty feet; therefore it would be quite easy for a small steamer such as the *Abbas* to make its way to Dongola, and from there to send on letters and despatches to Cairo. Gordon approved of the plan, and Stewart offered to command the little force of forty or fifty soldiers — all that could be spared to go with it. On board were some Greeks, monsieur Herbin himself, Stewart, and Power the 'Times' correspondent, the only two friends Gordon had. How he must have longed to go with them. But that being impossible he put the thought out of his mind, and gave them most careful directions as to the precautions they were to take. But on their return journey Gordon's orders were neglected, the steamer was taken by the mahdi's troops, and all on board put to death, Stewart among them.

Thus Gordon was left alone in Khartoum, without a creature to share his responsibility or to help him in his work. From henceforward he was obliged to see to everything himself, and make sure that his orders were carried out.

From his journal and letters, which we have up to December 14, we know all that was going on inside the town: the measures of defence; the decoration which he invented to reward the soldiers for their courage or fidelity, an eight-pointed star with a grenade in the centre, and consisting of three classes, gold, silver, and pewter; the presence of Slatin (later the sirdar) in the mahdi's camp, and the chains put upon him. But in November the fighting grew fiercer; the mahdi cut all communication between Khartoum, stretching from the Blue to the White Nile, and Omdurman, on the right bank of the latter river. However, though he took the town, he did not keep it long, for he was shelled out of it; but day by day his forces crept closer, and Gordon, who had sent his steamers down to Shendy to meet the relieving troops which he thought were on their way, had no means of stopping the mahdi when he began to transport his army from one bank of the Nile to the other, in preparation for the last assault.

During the summer months Gordon had been cheered by the knowledge that sir Gerald Graham was fighting Osman Digna and keeping him at bay, but this was all the consolation he had.

'Up to this date,' he writes on October 29, 'nine people have come up as reinforcements since Hicks's defeat, and not a penny of money.' Still, for seven months not a man had deserted; but with the advance of the mahdi many of the defenders of Khartoum might be seen stealing after dark to his camp. He sent an envoy across the river to offer Gordon honourable terms if he would surrender, knowing full well from the papers which his spies had stolen from the steamer *Abbas* what straits the garrison were in. But Gordon, putting little faith in the word of the mahdi, rejected the proposal and returned for answer, ‘We can hold out twelve years.’

By this time ‘Relief Expedition No. 2, to save our national honour,’ as Gordon persisted in calling it, was on its way, and many of us can recall with what sickening hearts we watched its daily progress. The obstacles which had been foretold months before by both Gordon and Wolseley proved even greater than they expected. The Nile had fallen, and its cataracts, like staircases of rocks, were of course impassable, and the transport of the boats was a terrible difficulty. Then, owing to treachery, all the useful camels were spirited away, and only enough could be collected to carry one thousand men across the desert. Sir Herbert Stewart started first, and reached the wells of Jakdul on January 3, and being obliged to halt there, as the camels were needed to bring up other troops, he occupied the time in building a fort. On the 12th they all pushed on to Abou Klea, where they arrived on the 17th, to find the mahdi awaiting them. Here two fierce battles were fought, in one of which sir Herbert Stewart was mortally wounded. In each the mahdi was defeated, but he proceeded to attack Metemmeh on the 21st, the British force being now commanded by sir Charles Wilson, who was unexpectedly reinforced during the battle by some troops on board Gordon’s four steamers, which were returning to Khartoum. Three days later (January 24) Wilson started in two steamers for Khartoum, ninety-five miles away, and the river was so low that it was necessary to be very cautious. On the morning of the 25th one of the boats ran on a rock, and could not be floated off till nine o’clock that night. As soon as he possibly could Wilson got up steam again, but eight miles from Khartoum a native hailed him from the bank. ‘Khartoum has fallen!’ he said, ‘and Gordon has been shot.’

Wilson would not believe it. To have failed when success was within his grasp seemed too terrible to think of. It must be one of the mahdi’s devices to stop the advance of our troops, so he went on till he could command a proper view of the town. The masses of black-robed dervishes that filled the streets and crowded along the river bank told their own tale, and, bowing his head, Wilson gave the signal to go back down the river.

From Slatin pasha, then a captive in the mahdi’s camp, we know how it happened. Omdurman had fallen on the 13th, but Khartoum would probably not have been assaulted so soon had not the mahdi suffered such severe defeats at Abou Klea and at Abou Kru, three days later; then he hurried back to Khartoum and again summoned Gordon to surrender. His offer was refused, and addressing his men he informed them that during the night they were to be conveyed across the river in boats, but that if victory was to be theirs, absolute silence was necessary.

About half-past three in the morning they were all ready, and attacked at the same moment both the east and west gates. The east held out for some time, but the west gate soon gave way, and the rebels entered with a rush, murdering every man they met. In an open space near the palace they came up with Gordon, walking quietly in front of a little group of people to take refuge at the Austrian consul's house. A shot ended his life, and saved him from the tortures that men like the mahdi inflict on their captives. Death, as we know, had no terrors for him. 'I am always ready to die,' he had said to the king of Abyssinia nearly six years before, 'and so far from fearing your putting me to death, you would confer a favour on me, for you would deliver me from all the troubles and misfortunes which the future may have in store.' Now death *had* delivered him, yet none the less does his fate lie like a blot on the men who sent him to his doom, and turned a deaf ear to his prayers for help until it was too late. England was stricken with horror and grief at the news, and showed her sorrow in the way which Gordon would have chosen, not by erecting statues or buildings to his memory, but by founding schools to help the little orphan boys whom he always loved. But whatever bitterness may have been in the hearts of his friends towards those who had sacrificed him, Gordon we can be sure would have felt none.

'One wants some forgiveness oneself,' he said, when he pardoned Abou Saoud, who had tried to betray him. 'And it is not a dear article.'

THE CRIME OF THEODOSIUS

Everyone who stops to visit the town of Trèves, or Trier, to give it its German name, must be struck by the number and beauty of its ruins, which give us some idea of the splendour of the city at the time that Ambrose the Prefect lived there and ruled his province. About the city were hills now covered with vines, and through an opening between them ran the river Moselle. A wall with seven gates defended Trèves from the German tribes on the east of the Rhine, but only one, the Porta Nigra, or Black Gate, is left standing. Its cathedral, the oldest in Europe north of the Alps, was founded in 375 a.d. by Valentinian I., who often occupied the palace which was sacked and ruined a century later by Huns and Franks. A great bridge spanned the Moselle, and outside the walls, where the vineyards now climb the hills, was an amphitheatre which held 30,000 people, and when these came back, tired and dusty, from chariot races or games, there were baths and warm water in the underground galleries to make them clean and comfortable.

It was somewhere about the year 333 a.d. that a boy was born at Trèves in the house of the governor, and called Ambrose, after his father. He was the youngest of three children, his brother Satyrus being only a little older than himself, while Marcellina, their sister, who was nearly four, looked down upon the others as mere babies. Ambrose the elder was a very important person indeed, for the emperor Constantine had made him ruler, or prefect, of the whole of Europe west of the Rhine, that is, of Spain, Gaul or France, and Britain. The prefect was a good and just man, and the nations were happy under his sway; but he died after a few years, and his wife, unfortunately, thought it wiser to leave Trèves and take her children to Rome, where they could get the best teaching and would become acquainted with their father’s friends.

It was a long and difficult journey for a lady and two boys (Marcellina had already gone to a convent in Rome), though they were rich enough to travel in tolerable comfort. Even in summer the passage of the Alps was hard enough, and the towering mountains, steep precipices, and rushing rivers must have seemed strange and alarming to anyone fresh from the fertile slopes of the Rhineland. But the boys were not frightened, only deeply interested, and they quite forgot to be sorry at leaving their old home in the excitement of what lay before them.

No doubt they had many adventures, or what they would have considered as such, before they reached the corn-covered plains of Lombardy, and stopped to rest in the city of Milan, whose name was hereafter to be bound up for all time with that of little Ambrose. But we are not told anything about their travels, and when they arrived in Rome they went straight to the old house, which had been for generations in their father's family. That family was famous in the annals of the city, and had become Christian in the time of the persecution; but nowadays Christians and pagans lived happily together, and divided the public offices between them.

The children soon settled down in their new surroundings, and felt as if they had lived all their lives in Rome. Marcellina they seldom or never saw, and, however much her mother may have longed after her, she was forced to content herself with her two boys and to take pride in their success.

The prefect of Rome, Symmachus by name, had taken a great fancy to Satyrus, in spite of the fact that the boy was brought up a Christian, while he himself was a pagan. Symmachus shared with the Christian Probus the chief authority in Rome, and while Satyrus was to be found in his house during most of the hours when he was not attending, with his brother, classes in Greek and Latin literature and in law, Ambrose was no less frequently in that of Probus. Though this caused their mother to spend many lonely evenings, she was well pleased, for both men bore a high character, and would be able to help her boys in many ways that were impossible to a woman. The two youths were very popular, pleasant, and well-mannered, and with strong common-sense which proved useful in saving them from pitfalls that might otherwise have been their ruin. They had friends without number, but they liked no one's company so much as each other's, and it was a sad moment for both when Symmachus gave Satyrus a post under his own son, and the two young men set sail for Asia Minor.

For some time Ambrose remained at home, learning the duties of a prefect under Probus. He early showed great talent for managing men, a quick eye for detecting crime, impartiality in giving judgment, and firmness in seeing it carried out. Probus must have watched anxiously to see how far the young man's sense of justice and his desire for mercy would act on each other, but what he saw satisfied him. Ambrose knew at once what was the important point in every matter, and never allowed his mind to be confused by things that had nothing to do with the real question. This was his safeguard as a judge, and this was the principle he held to all through his life, which caused him to be such a different man from Hildebrand or Thomas à Becket, or many great bishops who came after him. To Ambrose, murder was murder, theft was theft, whether it was done by a Christian or a pagan, and the punishment was equally heavy for both.

Perhaps the emperor Valentinian may have noted the qualities of the young lawyer, or perhaps he may have consulted with Probus, but in any case, in the year 372 Ambrose was sent off to govern the whole of North Italy, under the title of ‘consul.’ At the utmost he was only twenty-nine, and he may have been younger, for the date of his birth is uncertain. But his head was in no way turned by his position, and the emperor, a well-meaning but tactless man, beheld with satisfaction that the restless people of Milan, the capital of the north, were growing daily quieter under the rule of Ambrose. What his own severity had been powerless to accomplish Ambrose carried through without any difficulty. The parties, religious as well as political, into which the city was split up, all came to him with their grievances, and, wonderful to say, never murmured at his verdicts. Before he had been consul much more than a year, Milan was in a quieter state than it had been for half a century.

But the death of the bishop early in 374 threatened to plunge everything into the old confusion. Valentinian was consulted, but refused to have anything to do in the matter of the election of a new prelate; it was not his business, he said. So the bishops streamed in to Milan from the cities of the north and met in the gallery of one of the large round churches that were built in those days. In great excitement the people pressed in below; so much depended on who was chosen — to which party he belonged. For hours and hours they waited, and every now and then a murmur ran through the crowd that the announcement was about to be made; but it died away as fast as it came, and the weary waiting began again. At last the strain grew too great, and it was quite plain that the smallest spark of disagreement would kindle a great fire.

A man wiser than the rest saw this, and hastened to summon Ambrose to the spot.

‘Do not delay an instant,’ he cried, ‘or it will be too late. Only you can keep the peace, so come at once.’

Ambrose needed no urging. What his friend said was true, and, besides, he was as a magistrate bound if possible to prevent a riot, or, if one had already begun, to quell it.

The loud, angry voices ceased as he entered the church, and amidst a dead silence he begged the crowd to be patient yet a little while longer, and to remember that the choice of a bishop was one that affected them all, and could not be made in a hurry. As he spoke he noted that the excitement began to grow less, and by the time he had ended the flushed faces were calm again. Then the voice of a child rang through the church.

‘Ambrose, bishop!’

‘Ambrose, bishop,’ echoed the people, but Ambrose stood for a moment rooted to the spot. It was the last thing he had expected or wished, but the continued cries brought him to himself, and hastily leaving the church he went to the hall where he gave his judgments, the crowd pressing on him right up to the door.

Never before or since has any man been so suddenly lifted into a position for which he had made no previous preparation. He, a bishop! Why, though a Christian, in common with many of his friends and also with his brother, he had never even been baptized, still less had he studied any of the things a bishop ought to know. Oh! it was impossible. It was only a moment's craze, and would be forgotten as soon as he was out of sight; so he stole away at night and hid himself, intending to escape to another city. But on his way he was recognised by a man who had once pleaded a cause before him. A crowd speedily collected, and he was carried by the people back to his house within the walls, and a guard placed before it, while a letter was despatched to the emperor informing him that the lot had fallen upon Ambrose.

'Vox populi, vox Dei' ('The voice of the people is the voice of God'). Valentinian gave a sigh of surprise and relief as he read the wax tablets before him. Losing no time, he sent a paper, signed by himself, the imperial seal affixed, nominating Ambrose bishop of Milan, while to Ambrose he wrote privately, saying that no better choice could have been made, and that he would support him in everything. But by the time the messenger reached Milan, Ambrose had escaped again, and was hiding in the house of a friend outside the walls. However, this effort to avoid the greatness thrust upon him was as vain as the rest, and he saw that he must accept what fate had brought him. Within a week he had been baptized, ordained priest, and consecrated bishop, knowing as little as any man might of the studies hitherto considered necessary for his position. But it is quite possible that his ignorance of these may have been a help instead of a hindrance in the carrying out of his duties.

Now very often, if a man's position is changed, his character seems to change too, and the very qualities which caused him to be chosen for the new appointment sink into the background, while others, far less suitable, take their place. No doubt, during the first days after his election Ambrose must have been watched carefully by many eyes — for no one, however popular, is wholly without enemies — and any alteration in his conduct or way of life would have been noted down. Still, even the most envious could find no difference. Ambrose the bishop was in all respects the same as Ambrose the consul, except that he gave away more money than he had done before, and held himself to a still greater degree at the disposal of the people.

In these days we are so used to reading of the struggle which raged for so many centuries between the Church and the State — the Emperor and the Pope — that it seems quite natural to us that after the death of the emperor Valentinian (which happened a few months later) the bishop should become the adviser and minister of his young son Gratian. To Ambrose, however, the situation was beset with difficulties, and both disagreeable and dangerous. He had not the least desire to meddle in the affairs of the empire — the care of the church in Milan was quite enough for any one man; but when the young emperor Gratian came to him for advice and guidance it was his duty to give it. Soon matters grew worse and worse. The Goths crossed the Danube, and defeated the army of the Eastern Empire near Adrianople; Byzantium, or Constantinople, the city of Constantine, lay at their mercy; and Italy might be entered through Hungary and the Tyrol, or by sea from the south.

The tidings reached Milan through the first of the numerous fugitives who had managed to escape across the Alps. Every day more frightened, starving people arrived, and the city was taxed to the utmost to find them food and shelter. Yet even the lot of these poor creatures was happy in comparison with those who had been taken prisoners by the Goths, and were doomed to spend their lives in slavery unless they were ransomed. Ambrose set the rich citizens an example by giving all the money he had, but after every farthing possible had been raised the unredeemed captives were still many. There only remained the golden vessels of the church, which were the pride of Milan, and these the bishop brought out and melted down, so that as far as in him lay all prisoners might be freed.

In after-years his enemies sought to use the fact as a handle against him. He had no right to give what was not his own, they said; but Ambrose paid little heed to their words; he had done what he knew was just, and the rest did not matter.

With the appointment of the general Theodosius as emperor of the East things began to mend. The Goths began to understand that they had a strong man to deal with, and Ambrose was once more left to act both as bishop and magistrate in his own diocese, and to give constant advice to the well-meaning but weak young Gratian. The legal training that Ambrose had received was now of the highest value, and his experience of men and the world acquired in Rome preserved him from making many mistakes and giving ear to lying stories. The cleverest rogues in Milan knew that the most cunning tale would never deceive the bishop, and would only earn for themselves a heavy fine or imprisonment.

‘Some,’ he writes, ‘say they have debts; make sure that they speak truly. Others declare they have been robbed by brigands; let them prove their words, and show that the injuries were really received by them.’ Under Ambrose’s rule impostors of all kinds grew scarce.

During these years the bishop’s life, except for public anxieties, had been calm and happy, for his brother Satyrus had been with him, and had given him his help in many ways. At length important business took the elder brother to Africa, and on his return the ship in which he was sailing struck on a rock and sank. Luckily, they were not far from land, and Satyrus was a good swimmer, so with great exertions he managed to reach a lonely part of the coast. He was kindly cared for by the people, but there was no means of letting Ambrose hear of his safety, and he had to wait long before another ship passed that way. Then, when his friends had abandoned all hope, he suddenly appeared in Milan, to the speechless joy of the bishop. But not long were they left together. In a little while Satyrus fell ill, and in spite of the constant care that was given him, in a few days he died, leaving Ambrose more lonely than before.

After this troubles crowded thick and fast on the bishop. Gratian, whom he had loved as a son, was treacherously murdered in Gaul by order of Maximus, who had been given by Gratian himself rule over the prefecture of Gaul with the title of emperor. The grief of Ambrose was deep; but besides he was forced to act for Gratian’s half-brother Valentinian, whose mother Justina never failed to send for the bishop to help her out of her difficulties, and directly he had made things smooth, proceeded to fall back into them.

Thankful indeed was he when she and her son set out for Thessalonica, to put themselves under the protection of Theodosius.

In the long line of the emperors of the East there were few more honest and able than Theodosius. He found his dominions in a state of confusion, the prey of the barbarian hordes that were always pouring westwards from the wide plains of Scythia, while internally the strife in the church was fiercer than ever. Quietly and steadily the emperor took his measures. Here he pardoned, there he punished, and men felt that both pardon and punishment were just. He was not yet strong enough to fight against the rebel Maximus, as he would have liked to do, but he determined that, cost what it might, he would never forsake the young Valentinian. Maximus had snatched at some excuse to invade Milan, which on his entrance he had found abandoned by its chief men, save only Ambrose, who treated him with contempt and went his own way. The intruder’s efforts to buy support by conciliation failed miserably, and in a few weeks there came the news that Theodosius was preparing to meet him on the borders of Hungary, or Pannonia. Then Maximus assembled what forces he could, and set out across the pass of the Brenner.

Two battles were lost, for the legions of Maximus were but half-hearted; in the third he was taken prisoner and brought before the emperor. Theodosius was a merciful man, but his heart was hard towards the murderer of Gratian. ‘Let him die!’ he said, and without delay the order was carried out.

Now that Maximus was dead the legions were quite ready to return to their rightful emperor, and as soon as he had settled matters Theodosius went on to Milan. There he and Ambrose became great friends; the bishop was much the cleverer of the two, but they were both honest and straightforward, with great common-sense, and it must have been a relief to Ambrose, who did not in the least care for being an important person, to feel that he could at last mind his own business, and leave affairs of state to the emperor.

It was while all seemed going so smoothly that the supreme crisis in the lives of both men took place — the event which has linked the names of Ambrose and Theodosius for evermore.

Thessalonica, the chief town of Macedonia, was a beautiful city, and its Governor, Count Botheric, a special friend of the Emperor, who constantly went to pay him a visit when wearied out with the cares of state, which pressed on him so heavily in Constantinople. The people were gay and light-hearted, loving shows and pageants of all sorts, but more especially the games of the circus. In order to celebrate the defeat of Maximus, Botheric had arranged a series of special displays, and in the chariot races most of the prizes were carried off by one man, who became the idol of the moment. Furious, therefore, was the indignation which ran through the city when, immediately after the festival was over, the charioteer was accused of some disgraceful crime, and being found guilty, was thrown into prison by Botheric. In a body the populace surged up to the house of the Governor and demanded his release. But Botheric was not the man to be turned from what he knew to be right by an excited crowd. He absolutely refused to give way, and told them that the man had deserved the punishment he had given him, and more too. Then the passion of the mob broke loose. They attacked the Governor’s house and the houses of all who were in authority. The soldiers who were ordered out were too few to cope with their violence. In the struggle Botheric was killed, and many of his friends also, and their bodies subjected to every kind of insult that madness could suggest.

Theodosius was in Milan when the news reached him, and after a few moments of stony horror he was seized with such terrific passion that it almost seemed as if he would die of rage. At last he spoke; to those who stood around the voice sounded as the voice of a stranger.

‘The crime was committed by the whole town,’ he said, ‘and the whole town shall suffer.’ Then, and without giving himself time to change his mind, he sat down and wrote the order for a massacre to one of the few magistrates left alive.

His words were probably reported to Ambrose, and no doubt the bishop tried his best to calm the wrath of the emperor. But Theodosius was in no mood to be reasoned with. He declined to see his friend, and left Milan, shutting himself up in silence till the terrible tale of vengeance was told.

In obedience to his instructions, games, and especially chariot races, were announced to take place in the circus. We do not know if the mob had broken open the prison and released the charioteer in whose honour so much blood had been shed; but if so we may be sure that he was present, and was hailed with shouts of welcome. The circus was crowded from end to end — not a single seat was vacant. The eyes of the spectators were fixed on the line of chariots drawn up at the starting-point, and drivers and lookers-on awaited breathlessly the signal. In their absorption they never noticed that soldiers had drawn silently up and had surrounded them. A moment later, and a signal was indeed given, but it was the signal for one of the bloodiest massacres that ever shocked the ancient world. Probably the authorities who carried out the emperor’s orders went further than he intended, even in the first passion of his anger. But of one thing we may be quite sure, and that is that remorse and shame filled his soul when the hideous story reached him. Not that he would confess it; to the public he would say he was justified in what he had done, but none the less he would have given all he had to undo his actions. He came back one night to Milan, and shut himself up again in his palace.

At the time of the emperor’s return Ambrose happened to be staying with a friend in the country, for his health had suffered from his hard work, and also from this last blow, and his uncertainty how best to bring Theodosius to a sense of his crime. When he entered Milan once more, he waited, in the hope that the emperor might send for him, as he was used to do; but as no messenger arrived, the bishop understood that Theodosius refused to see him, and the only course open was to write a letter.

The occasion was not one for polite phrases, neither was Ambrose the man to use them. In the plainest words he set his guilt before Theodosius and besought him to repent. And as his sin had been public, his repentance must be public too. But this letter remained unanswered. Theodosius was resolved to brave the matter out, and next day, accompanied by his usual attendants, he went to the great church.

At the porch Ambrose met him, and refused to let him pass.

‘Go back,’ he said, ‘lest you add another sin to those you have already committed. You are blinded by power, and even now your heart is hard, and you do not understand that your hands are steeped in blood. Go back.’

And Theodosius went back, feeling in his soul the truth of the bishop’s words, but prevented by pride from humbling himself.

Months went on, and the two men still lived as strangers, and now Christmas was near. Rufinus, prefect of the palace, who was suspected of having inflamed the wrath of the Emperor in the matter of Thessalonica, upbraided his master with showing so sad a face while the whole world was rejoicing. Theodosius then opened his soul to him, and acknowledged that at length he had repented of his crime and was ready to confess it before the bishop and the people. Once having spoken, he would not delay, and there and then went on foot to the church. As before, Ambrose, who had been warned of his intention, met him in the porch, thinking that the emperor meant to force his way in, and in that case the bishop was prepared to put him out with his own hands.

But Theodosius stood with bowed head, and in a low voice confessed his guilt and entreated forgiveness. ‘What signs can you show me that your repentance is real?’ asked Ambrose. ‘A crime like yours is not to be expiated lightly.’

‘Tell me what to do, and I will do it,’ said Theodosius.

And the proof that Ambrose demanded was neither fasting nor scourging nor gifts to the church. ‘It was that the emperor should write where now he stood, on the tablets that he always took with him, an order delaying for thirty days the announcement of any decree passed by a reigning emperor which carried sentence of death or confiscation of property to his subjects.’ Further, that after the thirty days had passed the sentence and the circumstances which called it forth must be considered over again, to make quite sure that no injustice should be committed. To this Theodosius willingly agreed; not only because it was the token of repentance imposed on him by Ambrose, but because his own sense of right and justice made him welcome a law by which the people no longer should be at the mercy of one man’s rage.

The law was written down and read out so that those who stood around might hear; then Ambrose drew back the bar across the porch, and Theodosius once more entered the church.

PALISSY THE POTTER

Four hundred years ago a little boy called Bernard Palissy was born in a village of France, not very far from the great river Garonne. The country round was beautiful at all times of year — in spring with orchards in flower, in summer with fields of corn, in autumn with heavy-laden vines climbing up the sides of the hills, down which rushing streams danced and gurgled. Further north stretched wide heaths gay with broom, and vast forests of walnut and chestnut, through which roamed hordes of pigs, greedy after the fallen chestnuts that made them so fat, or burrowing about the roots of the trees for the truffles growing just out of sight. When the peasants who owned the pigs saw them sniffing and scratching in certain places, they went out at once and dug for themselves, for, truffles as well as pigs, were thought delicious eating, and fetched high prices from the rich people in Périgueux or even Bordeaux.

But the forests of the province of Périgord contained other inhabitants than the pigs and their masters, and these were the workers in glass, the people who for generations had made those wonderful coloured windows which are the glory of French cathedrals. The glass-workers of those days were set apart from all other traders, and in Italy as well as in France a noble might devote himself to this calling without bringing down on himself the insults and scorn of his friends. Still, at a time when the houses of the poor were generally built of wood, it was considered very dangerous to have glass furnaces, with the fire often at a white heat, in the middle of a town, and so a law was passed forcing them to carry on their trade at a distance. In Venice the glass-workers were sent to the island of Murano, where the factories still are; in Périgord they were kept in the forest, where they could cut down the logs they needed for their kilns, and where certain sorts of trees and ferns grew which, when reduced to powder, were needed in the manufacture of the glass.

Whether the father of Palissy was a glass-maker or not — for nothing is quite certain about the boy’s early years — Bernard must of course have had many companions among the children of the forest workers, and as he went through the world with his eyes always open, he soon learnt a great deal of all that had to be done in order to turn out the bits of glass that blazed like jewels when the sun shone through them. There were special kinds of earth, or rocks, or plants to be sought for, and when found the glass-maker must know how to use them, so as to get exactly the colour or thickness of material that he wanted. And when he had spent hours and hours mixing his substances and seeing that he had put in just the right quantity of each, and no more, perhaps the fire would be a little too hot and the glass would crack, or a little too cold and the mixture would not become solid glass, and then the poor man had to begin the whole process again from the beginning. Bernard stood by and watched, and noted the patience under failure, as well as the way that glass was made, and when his turn came the lesson bore fruit.

But Bernard learned other things besides how to make glass. He was taught to read and write, and by-and-by to draw. In his walks through the woods or over the hills, his eyes were busy wandering through the fallen leaves or glancing up at the branches of the trees in search of anything that might be hidden there. The bright-eyed lizards he especially loved, and sometimes he would persuade them to stay quiet for a few minutes by singing some country songs, while he took out his roll of paper and made rough sketches of them.

But after a while Palissy grew restless, and before he was twenty he left home and travelled on foot over the south of France, gaining fresh knowledge at every step, as those do who keep their wits about them. He had no money, so he paid his way by the help of his pencil, as he was later to do in the little town of Saintes, taking portraits of the village innkeeper or his wife, or drawing plans for the new rooms the good man meant to build now that business was so thriving, and measuring the field at the back of the house, that he thought of laying out as a garden of fruits and herbs. And as the young man went he visited the cathedrals in the towns as well as the forges and the manufactories, and never rested till he found out why this city made cloth, and that one silk, and a third wonderful patterns of wrought iron.

We do not know exactly how long Palissy remained on his travels, but as there was no need for him to hurry and so much for him to see he probably was away for some years. On his return he seems to have settled down in the little town of Saintes, on the river Charente, where he supported himself by doing what we should call surveying work, measuring the lands of the whole department, and reporting on the kind of soil of which they were made, so that the government might know how to tax them.

In the year 1538 Palissy married, and a year later came the event which influenced more than any other the course of his future life. A French gentleman named Pons, who had spent a long while at the Italian court of Ferrara, returned to France, bringing with him many beautiful things, among others an ‘earthenware cup, wonderfully shaped and enamelled.’ Pons happened to meet Palissy, and finding that the same subjects interested them both, he showed him the cup. The young man could scarcely contain himself at the sight. For some time he had been turning over in his mind the possibility of discovering enamel, or glaze, to put on the earthen pots, and now here, in perfection, was the very thing he was looking for.

During the next two or three years, when he was busy surveying the lands about Saintes, in order to support his wife and little children, his thoughts were perpetually occupied with the enamelled cup, and how to make one like it. If he could only see a few more, perhaps something might give him a clue; but how was he to do that? Then one day in the winter of 1542 a pirate boat from La Rochelle, on the coast, sailed into port with a great Spanish ship in tow, filled with earthenware cups from Venice, and plates and goblets from the Spanish city of Valencia, famous for its marvellously beautiful glaze. The news of the capture soon reached Palissy, and we may be sure he had made a study of the best of the pots before they were bought by the king, Francis I., and given away to the ladies of the French court. But the Venetian and Spanish treasures still kept their secret, and Palissy was forced to work on in the dark, buying cheap earthen pots and breaking them, and pounding the pieces in a mortar, so as to discover, if he could, the substances of which they were made.

All this took a long time, and Palissy gave up his surveying in order to devote his whole days to this labour of love. The reward, however, was very slow in coming, and if he had not contrived to save a little money while he was still a bachelor his wife and children would have starved. Week after week went by, and Palissy was to be seen in his little workshop, making experiments with pieces of common pots, over which he spread the different mixtures he had made. These pieces, he tells us, ‘he baked in his furnace, hoping that some of these mixtures might, when hot, produce a colour’; white was, however, what he desired above all, as he had heard that if once you had been able to procure a fine white, it was comparatively easy to get the rest. Remembering how as a boy he had used certain chemical substances in staining the glass, he put these into some of his mixtures, and hopefully awaited the result.

But, alas! he ‘had never seen earth baked,’ and had no idea how hot the fire of his furnace should be, or in what way to regulate it. Sometimes the substance was baked too much, and sometimes too little; and every day he was building fresh furnaces in place of the old ones which had cracked, collecting fresh materials, making fresh failures, and altogether wasting a great deal of time and money.

Thus passed several years, and it is a marvel how the family contrived to live at all, and madame Palissy had reason for the reproaches and hard words which she heaped on her husband. The amount of wood alone necessary to feed the furnaces was enormous, and when Palissy could no longer afford to buy it, he cut down all the trees and bushes in his garden, and when they were exhausted burned all the tables and chairs in the house and tore up the floors. Fancy poor madame Palissy's feelings one morning when this sight met her eyes. His friends laughed at him and told tales of his folly in the neighbouring town, which hurt his feelings; but nothing turned him from his purpose, and except for the few hours a week when he worked at something which *would* bring in money enough to keep his family alive, every moment, as well as every thought, was given up to the discovery which was so slow in being made.

Again he bought some cheap pots, which he broke in pieces, and covered three or four hundred fragments with his mixtures. These he carried, with the help of a man, to a kiln belonging to some potters in the forest, and asked leave to bake them. The potters willingly gave him permission, and the pieces were laid carefully in the furnace. After four hours Palissy ventured to examine them, and found one of the fragments perfectly baked, and covered with a splendid white glaze. 'My joy was such,' he writes, 'that I felt myself another man'; but he rejoiced too soon, for success was still far distant. The mixture which produced the white glaze was probably due to Palissy having added unconsciously a little more of some special substance, because when he tried to make a fresh mixture to spread over the rest of the pieces he failed to obtain the same result. Still, though the disappointment was great, he did not quite cease to 'feel another man.' He had done what he had wanted once, and some day he would do it again and always.

It seems strange that Palissy did not go to Limoges, which was not very far off, and learn the trade of enamelling at the old-established manufactory there. It would have saved him from years of toil and heartsickness, and his family from years of poverty. But no! he wished to discover the secret *for himself*, and this he had no right to do at the expense of other people.

However, we must take the man as he was, and as we read the story of his incessant toils we wonder that any human being should have lived to tell the tale. He was too poor to get help; perhaps he did not want it; but 'he worked for more than a month night and day,’ grinding into powder the substances such as he had used at the moment of his success. But heat the furnace as he might, it would not bake, and again he was beaten. He had found the secret of the enamel, but not how to make it form part of the pots.

Each time victory appeared certain some fresh misfortune occurred, the most vexatious of all being one which seems due to Palissy’s own carelessness. The mortar used by the potter in building his kiln was full of small pebbles, and when the oven became very hot these pebbles split, and mixed with the glaze. Then the enamel was spread over the earthen pots (which at last were properly baked), and the surface of each vessel, instead of being absolutely smooth, became as sharp as a razor and tore the hand of any unlucky person who touched it.

To guard against such accidents Palissy invented some sort of cases—‘lanterns’ he calls them — in which to put his pots while in the kiln, and these he found extremely useful. He now plucked up heart and began to model lizards and serpents, tortoises and lobsters, leaves and flowers, but it was a long while before he could turn them out as he wished. ‘The green of the lizards,’ he tells us, ‘got burned before the colour of the serpents was properly fixed,’ and the lobsters, serpents and other creatures were baked before it suited the potter, who would have liked them all to take the same time. But at length his patience and courage triumphed over all difficulties. By-and-by he learned how to manage his furnace and how to mix his materials; the victory had taken him sixteen years to win, but at last he, and not the fire, was master; henceforth he could make what he liked, and ask what price he chose.

And there we will leave Palissy the artist and turn to the life of Palissy the Huguenot.

For some years past the reformed religion had spread rapidly in this corner of France, and Palissy, always anxious to understand everything that came in his way, began first to inquire into the new doctrines, and then to adopt them. One of the converts, Philibert Hamelin, a native of Tours, was seized by the magistrates and condemned to death, and Palissy, who was his special friend, careless of any risk to himself, did all that was possible to obtain his pardon; when that proved hopeless, the potter arranged a plan of escape for the prisoner, but Hamelin declined to fly, and was hanged at Bordeaux in 1557.

The new religion had changed life outwardly as well as inwardly at Saintes, as Palissy himself tells us. ‘Games, dances, songs, banquets, smart clothes, were all things of the past. Ladies were forbidden by Calvin, whose word was law, even to wear ribbons; the wine shops were empty, for the young men passed their spare hours in the fields; girls sat singing hymns on the banks of the streams, and boys abandoned their games, and were as grave as their fathers.’ The new faith spread rapidly in this district, but the converts did not all behave in the peaceable manner described by Palissy. As the party grew stronger it also grew more violent, and it was plain to him and to everyone else that civil war must shortly follow. Cruelty on one side was answered by cruelty on the other, and Palissy had thrown in his lot with the Huguenots, and by his writings as well as his words urged them to take arms against the Catholics. Perhaps the artist in him may have grieved to hear of the destruction in the beautiful churches of the carved images of the saints that were broken by axes and hammers; of the pictures that were burned, or the old illuminated manuscripts that were torn in pieces; but outwardly he gave his approval, and when things went against the Huguenots, even Palissy’s powerful friends who admired his works could no longer shut their eyes. He was warned to change his ways, and as he did not the duke of Montpensier, then governor of the rebellious provinces, thought he would keep Palissy from greater mischief by putting him into prison. From Saintes he was sent to Bordeaux, where the magistrates, irritated at his having given the use of a tower which they had granted him for a studio as a meeting-place for Huguenots, ordered him into stricter confinement, while they debated whether the studio should be destroyed. But the constable of France, Anne de Montmorency, hearing of this proposal, hastened to the queen dowager, Catherine de Médicis, who came to the rescue by appointing him potter to the royal household. In this manner Palissy and his studio both escaped, and soon afterwards the Treaty of Amboise (1563) gave peace to both parties.

After this the happiest period of Palissy’s life began. He was free, he was on the way to grow rich, and he had leisure to write down the thoughts and plans that had come to him long ago as a boy in his wanderings, or lately, in his lonely hours in prison. His children could be well provided for, and he need have no more anxiety about them. As to his wife, she appears to have been already dead when fortune at last visited him, and, indeed, she played but a small part in his life.

Now his first book was composed, and in it we can read about the gardens that Palissy hoped to lay out if his rich friends, Montmorency, or Montpensier, or Condé, or even the queen herself, would help him to carry out his designs.

The garden of Palissy’s thoughts was to be very large, and certainly would cost a great deal of money. It was to be situated under a hill, so that the flowers and fruits might be protected from the winds, and many streams were to flow through it. Broad alleys would cross the garden, ending in arbours, some made of trees, trained or cut into different shapes, and filled with statues; others of different coloured stones, with lizards and vipers climbing upon the walls, while on the floor texts would be picked out in pebbles. Plants and flowers would hang from the roofs of the grottos, and beside them the rivulets would broaden into basins where real frogs and fish would gaze with surprise at their stone companions on the brink. Here and there the stream would be dammed up into a lake covered with tiny islands, and filled with forget-me-nots and water-lilies and pretty yellow irises, and at the next turn of the path the visitor would be delighted by a beautiful statue half hidden by a grove of trees. Catching sight of an inscription in the left hand of the figure, he would not resist stepping aside to read it, and as he was stooping to see what was written a jar of water in the figure's right hand would empty itself on his head.

Wet and cross, the visitor would pursue his way, taking care not to go near another statue standing alone in a wide grassy space, with a ring dangling from its finger. The children or pages waiting on the lady of the house would, however, think that the flat lawn would be a splendid place in which to play at 'tilting at the ring,' and here was a ring just set up for the purpose. Hastily fetching their toy weapons, they would choose a starting-place and, holding their lances well back, run swiftly towards the statue, hoping to thrust the lance-point through the ring, as by-and-by they would have to do at the sports at a royal wedding or a coronation. But the moment the ring was touched a huge wet sponge would swing round from the back of the figure and hit the champion a sharp blow on the back of the head, to the great delight and surprise of his companions.

It was not a game that could be played twice on the same person, as Palissy well knew; but in those days great lords with trains of attendants frequently stopped at each other's houses on the way to their own lands, so that a constant supply of fresh pages might be looked for, all eager to play at tilting at the ring.

It was in 1565 that Palissy was sent for to Paris by the queen, to help her to decorate and lay out the gardens of the palace of the Tuileries, which she was now planning, close to the Louvre.

The very name of the place must have sounded home-like in the ears of Palissy, for Tuileries means nothing more than 'tile-fields,' and for a long while this part of Paris had been the workshop of brick-makers and potters outside the walls of the old city. But in the reign of Catherine's father-in-law, Francis I., they were forced to move further away, as the king had taken a fancy to the site, and had bought it for his mother. Gardens were made where the furnaces had stood; but these were by no means fine enough to please Catherine, and she called in her favourite architect, Philibert Delorme, to erect a palace in their place, and bade Palissy, now called 'Bernard of the Tuileries' by his friends, to invent her a new pleasure-ground stretching away to the west.

We may be sure that Palissy did not lose this happy chance of carrying into practice the ‘delectable garden’ of his dreams. He had his workshops and kilns on the spot, and a band of skilled potters who baked the figures of men and animals which he himself fashioned out of clay. Two of his sons, Nicholas and Mathurin, seem to have inherited some of his talent, and were his partners, as we learn from a royal account book of the year 1570, and it must have been pleasant to him to have their company. The queen herself often walked down from the Louvre close by to see how he was getting on, and to give her opinion as to the grouping of some statues or the arrangement of a grotto; and here too came his friends when in Paris, Montmorency, Condé, Jarnac and others, and Delorme, Bullant, Filon, and all the great architects of the day. The château of Ecouen, belonging to Montmorency, situated about twelve miles from Paris, had been decorated by Palissy before he entered the service of the queen-mother, and had gained him great fame and many commissions.

At Ecouen the long galleries and the floor of the chapel were paved with tiles containing pictures of subjects taken out of the Bible. In the garden was the first ‘grotto’ the potter ever made, and very proud he was of it, and still more so of the invention by which, at a signal from the host, one of the attendants would touch a spring, and streams of water poured over the guests. It is difficult to imagine the grave constable, occupied as he was with religious wars, or anxiously watching affairs of state, playing such rude and silly tricks on the gentlemen and ladies he was entertaining, and it is pleasanter to think of them all listening to the songs of birds which, we are told, were imitated to the life by means of water passing through pipes and reeds. Altogether, Ecouen was thought a marvel of beauty and fancy, and everybody who considered they had any claims to good taste made a point of riding out to visit it.

Safe under royal protection and happy in his work, Palissy did not trouble himself about the fighting that still raged in the name of religion. When he was tired of the hot atmosphere of the kiln, he would wander along the banks of the river, or into the woods and hills about Paris, and watch the birds and the insects fluttering among the trees. Then, with his mind full of what he had beheld, he would return to his workshop, and, calling for clay, would never rise from his chair until he had made an exact copy of the little scene which had caught his fancy. First he would form his oval-shaped dish, and in the centre of it would lie some twisted snakes, with sprays of leaves and flowers scattered round them, while over the cups of the flowers bees and butterflies hovered gaily. Or, again, he would fashion a wavy sea, bordered by shells of all sorts, fishes, frogs, leaves, and butterflies, and in the middle a great sea-serpent wriggling gracefully across the dish.

Everything was true to nature and beautifully executed, and in those days it never seemed to strike anyone that dishes were meant to hold food and not to be treated as pictures.

Palissy had been working for eight years in Paris when the massacre of St. Bartholomew took place. No one sought to harm the potter, Huguenot though he was, and he lived on peacefully, respected by all, for some time longer.

In 1574 Charles IX., the well-intentioned, half-mad young king, died, and his brother Henry, a man in every way much worse than himself, came to the throne. Like the rest of his family, however, he was fond of art, and protected the potter, and a few months later we find Palissy, quite unharmed, giving lectures on natural history to some of the most famous scientific men in Paris. If he wanted to prove a point he had a quantity of drawings or materials at hand to show them. He spoke well, and the fame of his lectures spread. The little room was soon filled to overflowing with lawyers, scholars, and, above all, physicians, the celebrated monsieur Ambroise Paré, doctor to the queen-mother, and a Huguenot like himself, at their head.

During nine years Palissy continued to deliver these lectures every Lent, working steadily most of the day among his furnaces at the Tuileries. He was now seventy-five, and had escaped so many dangers that he might well think himself safe to the end, which could not be far off. But in 1585 Henry III. thought himself obliged to take more active measures against the Huguenots. Palissy had never concealed — as he had never obtruded — his faith, and, most likely at the instigation of someone who envied him, he was at once sent to the prison of the Bastille, and sentence of death passed upon him.

Yet once again the potter’s gift for making friends, perhaps the most valuable of all his talents in that fierce age, stood him in good stead. This time it was actually one of the persecuting Guises, the duc de Mayenne, who saved him, and prevented the decree from being carried out.

For four years Palissy remained a prisoner. Mayenne desired to set him free, but did not dare to do so, so left him where he was till better times came. But Palissy had a surer friend than Mayenne, who came to his rescue. In spite of his strong frame, years passed in a prison of those days, where hunger, cold, and dirt would break any man down, proved too much even for Bernard Palissy, now more than eighty years of age. Little by little he grew weaker, watched and tended, as far as might be, by those who, like himself, had suffered for conscience’ sake. Then one evening he went to sleep, and woke in the Delectable Garden.

TALES OF ROMANCE

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THE STORY OF ROBIN HOOD.

PART I.

Many hundreds of years ago, when the Plantagenets were kings, England was so covered with woods, that a squirrel was said to be able to hop from tree to tree from the Severn to the Humber.

It must have been very different to look at from the country we travel through now; but still there were roads that ran from north to south and from east to west, for the use of those who wished to leave their homes, and at certain times of the year these roads were thronged with people.

Pilgrims going to some holy shrine passed along, merchants taking their wares to Court, Abbots and Bishops ambling by on palfreys to bear their part in the King's Council, and, more frequently still, a solitary Knight, seeking adventures.

Besides the broad roads there were small tracks and little green paths, and these led to clumps of low huts, where dwelt the peasants, charcoal-burners, and ploughmen, and here and there some larger clearing than usual told that the house of a yeoman was near.

Now and then as you passed through the forest you might ride by a splendid abbey, and catch a glimpse of monks in long black or white gowns, fishing in the streams and rivers that abound in this part of England, or casting nets in the fish ponds which were in the midst of the abbey gardens. Or you might chance to see a castle with round turrets and high battlements, circled by strong walls, and protected by a moat full of water.

This was the sort of England into which the famous Robin Hood was born. We do not know anything about him, who he was, or where he lived, or what evil deed he had done to put him beyond the King's grace. For he was an outlaw, and any man might kill him and never pay penalty for it.

But, outlaw or not, the poor people loved him and looked on him as their friend, and many a stout fellow came to join him, and led a merry life in the greenwood, with moss and fern for bed, and for meat the King's deer, which it was death to slay.

Peasants of all sorts, tillers of the land, yeomen, and as some say Knights, went on their ways freely, for of them Robin took no toll; but lordly churchmen with money-bags well filled, or proud Bishops with their richly dressed followers, trembled as they drew near to Sherwood Forest — who was to know whether behind every tree there did not lurk Robin Hood or some of his men?

PART II.

THE COMING OF LITTLE JOHN.

One day Robin was walking alone in the wood, and reached a river which was spanned by a very narrow bridge, over which one man only could pass. In the midst stood a stranger, and Robin bade him go back and let him go over. “I am no man of yours,” was all the answer Robin got, and in anger he drew his bow and fitted an arrow to it.

“Would you shoot a man who has no arms but a staff?” asked the stranger in scorn; and with shame Robin laid down his bow, and unbuckled an oaken stick at his side. “We will fight till one of us falls into the water,” he said; and fight they did, till the stranger planted a blow so well that Robin rolled over into the river.

“You are a brave soul,” said he, when he had waded to land, and he blew a blast with his horn which brought fifty good fellows, clad in green, to the little bridge.

“Have you fallen into the river that your clothes are wet?” asked one; and Robin made answer, “No, but this stranger, fighting on the bridge, got the better of me, and tumbled me into the stream.”

At this the foresters seized the stranger, and would have ducked him had not their leader bade them stop, and begged the stranger to stay with them and make one of themselves. “Here is my hand,” replied the stranger, “and my heart with it. My name, if you would know it, is John Little.”

“That must be altered,” cried Will Scarlett; “we will call a feast, and henceforth, because he is full seven feet tall and round the waist at least an ell, he shall be called Little John.”

And thus it was done; but at the feast Little John, who always liked to know exactly what work he had to do, put some questions to Robin Hood. “Before I join hands with you, tell me first what sort of life is this you lead? How am I to know whose goods I shall take, and whose I shall leave? Whom I shall beat, and whom I shall refrain from beating?”

And Robin answered: “Look that you harm not any tiller of the ground, nor any yeoman of the greenwood — no, nor no Knight nor Squire, unless you have heard him ill spoken of. But if Bishops or Archbishops come your way, see that you spoil *them*, and mark that you always hold in your mind the High Sheriff of Nottingham.”

This being settled, Robin Hood declared Little John to be second in command to himself among the brotherhood of the forest, and the new outlaw never forgot to “hold in his mind” the High Sheriff of Nottingham, who was the bitterest enemy the foresters had.

Robin Hood, however, had no liking for a company of idle men about him, and he at once sent off Little John and Will Scarlett to the great road known as Watling Street, with orders to hide among the trees and wait till some adventure might come to them; and if they took captive Earl or Baron, Abbot or Knight, he was to be brought unharmed back to Robin Hood.

But all along Watling Street the road was bare; white and hard it lay in the sun, without the tiniest cloud of dust to show that a rich company might be coming: east and west the land lay still.

PART III.

LITTLE JOHN’S FIRST ADVENTURE.

At length, just where a side path turned into the broad highway, there rode a Knight, and a sorrier man than he never sat a horse on summer day. One foot only was in the stirrup, the other hung carelessly by his side; his head was bowed, the reins dropped loose, and his horse went on as he would. At so sad a sight the hearts of the outlaws were filled with pity, and Little John fell on his knees and bade the Knight welcome in the name of his master.

“Who is your master?” asked the Knight.

“Robin Hood,” answered Little John.

“I have heard much good of him,” replied the Knight, “and will go with you gladly.”

Then they all set off together, tears running down the Knight’s cheeks as he rode, but he said nothing, neither was anything said to him. And in this wise they came to Robin Hood.

“Welcome, Sir Knight,” cried he, “and thrice welcome, for I waited to break my fast till you or some other had come to me.”

“God save you, good Robin,” answered the Knight, and after they had washed themselves in the stream, they sat down to dine off bread and wine, with flesh of the King’s deer, and swans and pheasants. “Such a dinner have I not had for three weeks and more," said the Knight. "And if I ever come again this way, good Robin, I will give you as fine a dinner as you have given me."

"I thank you," replied Robin, "my dinner is always welcome; still, I am none so greedy but I can wait for it. But before you go, pay me, I pray you, for the food which you have had. It was never the custom for a yeoman to pay for a Knight."

"My bag is empty," said the Knight, "save for ten shillings only."

"Go, Little John, and look in his wallet," said Robin, "and, Sir Knight, if in truth you have no more, not one penny will I take; nay, I will give you all that you shall need."

So Little John spread out the Knight's mantle, and opened the bag, and therein lay ten shillings and naught besides.

"What tidings, Little John?" cried his master.

"Sir, the Knight speaks truly," said Little John.

"Then fill a cup of the best wine and tell me, Sir Knight, whether it is your own ill doings which have brought you to this sorry pass."

"For an hundred years my fathers have dwelt in the forest," answered the Knight, "and four hundred pounds might they spend yearly. But within two years misfortune has befallen me, and my wife and children also."

"How did this evil come to pass?" asked Robin.

"Through my own folly," answered the Knight, "and because of the great love I bore my son, who would never be guided of my counsel, and slew, ere he was twenty years old, a Knight of Lancaster and his Squire. For their deaths I had to pay a large sum, which I could not raise without giving my lands in pledge to the rich Abbot of St. Mary's. If I cannot bring him the money by a certain day they will be lost to me for ever."

"What is the sum?" asked Robin. "Tell me truly."

"It is four hundred pounds," said the Knight.

"And what will you do if you lose your lands?" asked Robin again.

"Hide myself over the sea," said the Knight, "and bid farewell to my friends and country. There is no better way open to me."

At this tears fell from his eyes, and he turned him to depart. "Good day, my friend," he said to Robin, "I cannot pay you what I should — —" But Robin held him fast. "Where *are* your friends?" asked he.

"Sir, they have all forsaken me since I became poor, and they turn away their heads if we meet upon the road, though when I was rich they were ever in my castle."

When Little John and Will Scarlett and the rest heard this, they wept for very shame and fury, and Robin bade them fill a cup of the best wine, and give it to the Knight.

"Have you no one who would stay surety for you?" said he.

"None," answered the Knight, "but only Our Lady, who has never yet failed to help me."

"You speak well," said Robin, "and you, Little John, go to my treasure chest, and bring me thence four hundred pounds. And be sure you count it truly."

So Little John went, and Will Scarlett, and they brought back the money.

"Sir," said Little John, when Robin had counted it and found it no more nor no less, "look at his clothes, how thin they are! You have stores of garments, green and scarlet, in your coffers — no merchant in England can boast the like. I will measure some out with my bow." And thus he did.

"Master," spoke Little John again, "there is still something else. You must give him a horse, that he may go as beseems his quality to the Abbey."

"Take the grey horse," said Robin, "and put a new saddle on it, and take likewise a good palfrey and a pair of boots, with gilt spurs on them. And as it would be a shame for a Knight to ride by himself on this errand, I will lend you Little John as Squire — perchance he may stand you in yeoman's stead."

"When shall we meet again?" asked the Knight.

"This day twelve months," said Robin, "under the greenwood tree."

Then the Knight rode on his way, with Little John behind him, and as he went he thought of Robin Hood and his men, and blessed them for the goodness they had shown towards him.

"To-morrow," he said to Little John, "I must be at the Abbey of St. Mary, which is in the city of York, for if I am but so much as a day late my lands are lost forever, and though I were to bring the money I should not be suffered to redeem them."

PART IV.

Now the Abbot had been counting the days as well as the Knight, and the next morning he said to his monks: "This day year there came a Knight and borrowed of me four hundred pounds, giving his lands in surety. And if he come not to pay his debt ere midnight tolls they will be ours for ever."

"It is full early yet," answered the Prior, "he may still be coming."

"He is far beyond the sea," said the Abbot, "and suffers from hunger and cold. How is he to get here?"

"It were a shame," said the Prior, "for you to take his lands. And you do him much wrong if you drive such a hard bargain."

“He is dead or hanged,” spake a fat-headed monk who was the cellarer, “and we shall have his four hundred pounds to spend on our gardens and our wines,” and he went with the Abbot to attend the court of justice, wherein the Knight’s lands would be declared forfeited by the High Justiciar.

“If he come not this day,” cried the Abbot, rubbing his hands, “if he come not this day, they will be ours.”

“He will not come yet,” said the Justiciar, but he knew not that the Knight was already at the outer gate, and Little John with him.

“Welcome, Sir Knight,” said the porter. “The horse that you ride is the noblest that ever I saw. Let me lead them both to the stable, that they may have food and rest.”

“They shall not pass these gates,” answered the Knight sternly, and he entered the hall alone, where the monks were sitting at meat, and knelt down and bowed to them.

“I have come back, my lord,” he said to the Abbot, who had just returned from the court. “I have come back this day as I promised.”

“Have you brought my money?” was all the Abbot said.

“Not a penny,” answered the Knight, who wished to see how the Abbot would treat him.

“Then what do you here without it?” cried the Abbot in angry tones.

“I have come to pray you for a longer day,” answered the Knight meekly.

“The day was fixed and cannot be gainsaid,” replied the Justiciar; but the Knight only begged that he would stand his friend and help him in his strait. “I am with the Abbot,” was all the Justiciar would answer.

“Good Sir Abbot, be my friend,” prayed the Knight again, “and give me one chance more to get the money and free my lands. I will serve you day and night till I have four hundred pounds to redeem them.”

But the Abbot only vowed that the money must be paid that day or the lands be forfeited.

The Knight stood up straight and tall: “It is well,” said he, “to prove one’s friends against the hour of need,” and he looked the Abbot full in the face, and the Abbot felt uneasy, he did not know why, and hated the Knight more than ever. “Out of my hall, false Knight!” cried he, pretending to a courage which he did not feel. But the Knight stayed where he was, and answered him, “You lie, Abbot. Never was I false, and that I have shown in jousts and in tourneys.”

“Give him two hundred pounds more,” said the Justiciar to the Abbot, “and keep the lands yourself.”

“No, by Heaven!” answered the Knight, “not if you offered me a thousand pounds would I do it! Neither Justiciar, Abbot, nor Monk shall be heir of mine.”

Then he strode up to a table and emptied out four hundred pounds. “Take your gold, Sir Abbot, which you lent to me a year agone. Had you but received me civilly, I would have paid you something more.

“Sir Abbot, and ye men of law,
Now have I kept my day!
Now shall I have my land again,
For aught that you may say.”

So he passed out of the hall singing merrily, leaving the Abbot staring silently after him, and rode back to his house, where his wife met him at the gate.

“Welcome, my lord,” said his lady,
“Sir, lost is all your good.”
“Be merry, dame,” said the Knight,
“And pray for Robin Hood.

“But for his kindness, we had been beggars.”

PART V.

After this the Knight dwelt at home, looking after his lands and saving his money carefully, till the four hundred pounds lay ready for Robin Hood. Then he bought a hundred bows and a hundred arrows, and every arrow was an ell long, and had a head of silver and peacock’s feathers. And clothing himself in white and red, and with a hundred men in his train, he set off to Sherwood Forest.

On the way he passed an open space near a bridge where there was a wrestling, and the Knight stopped and looked, for he himself had taken many a prize in that sport. Here the prizes were such as to fill any man with envy; a fine horse, saddled and bridled, a great white bull, a pair of gloves, a ring of bright red gold, and a pipe of wine.

There was not a yeoman present who did not hope to win one of them. But when the wrestling was over, the yeoman who had beaten them all was a man who kept apart from his fellows, and was said to think much of himself.

Therefore the men grudged him his skill, and set upon him with blows, and would have killed him, had not the Knight, for love of Robin Hood, taken pity on him, while his followers fought with the crowd, and would not suffer them to touch the prizes a better man had won.

When the wrestling was finished the Knight rode on, and there under the greenwood tree, in the place appointed, he found Robin Hood and his merry men waiting for him, according to the tryst that they had fixed last year: —

“God save thee, Robin Hood,
And all this company.”
“Welcome be thou, gentle Knight,
And right welcome to me.

“Hast thou thy land again?” said Robin,
“Truth then tell thou me.”
“Yea, for God,” said the Knight,
“And that thank I God and thee.

“Have here four hundred pounds,” said the Knight,
“The which you lent to me;
And here are also twenty marks
For your courtesie.”

But Robin would not take the money. A miracle had happened, he said, and Our Lady had paid it to him, and shame would it be for him to take it twice over.

Then he noticed for the first time the bows and arrows which the Knight had brought, and asked what they were. “A poor present to you,” answered the Knight, and Robin, who would not be outdone, sent Little John once more to his treasury, and bade him bring forth four hundred pounds, which was given to the Knight.

After that they parted, in much love, and Robin prayed the Knight if he were in any strait “to let him know at the greenwood tree, and while there was any gold there he should have it”.

PART VI.

HOW LITTLE JOHN BECAME THE SHERIFF’S SERVANT.

Meanwhile the High Sheriff of Nottingham proclaimed a great shooting-match in a broad open space, and Little John was minded to try his skill with the rest.

He rode through the forest, whistling gaily to himself, for well he knew that not one of Robin Hood’s men could send an arrow as straight as he, and he felt little fear of anyone else.

When he reached the trysting place he found a large company assembled, the Sheriff with them, and the rules of the match were read out: where they were to stand, how far the mark was to be, and how that three tries should be given to every man.

Some of the shooters shot near the mark, some of them even touched it, but none but Little John split the slender wand of willow with every arrow that flew from his bow.

At this sight the Sheriff of Nottingham swore that Little John was the best archer that ever he had seen, and asked him who he was and where he was born, and vowed that if he would enter his service he would give twenty marks a year to so good a bowman.

Little John, who did not wish to confess that he was one of Robin Hood’s men and an outlaw, said his name was Reynold Greenleaf, and that he was in the service of a Knight, whose leave he must get before he became the servant of any man.

This was given heartily by the Knight, and Little John bound himself to the Sheriff for the space of twelve months, and was given a good white horse to ride on whenever he went abroad. But for all that he did not like his bargain, and made up his mind to do the Sheriff, who was hated of the outlaws, all the mischief he could.

His chance came on a Wednesday when the Sheriff always went hunting, and Little John lay in bed till noon, when he grew hungry. Then he got up, and told the steward that he wanted some dinner. The steward answered he should have nothing till the Sheriff came home, so Little John grumbled and left him, and sought out the butler.

Here he was no more successful than before; the butler just went to the buttery door and locked it, and told Little John that he would have to make himself happy till his lord returned.

Rude words mattered nothing to Little John, who was not accustomed to be baulked by trifles, so he gave a mighty kick which burst open the door, and then ate and drank as much as he would, and when he had finished all there was in the buttery, he went down into the kitchen.

Now the Sheriff’s cook was a strong man and a bold one, and had no mind to let another man play the king in his kitchen; so he gave Little John three smart blows, which were returned heartily. “Thou art a brave man and hardy,” said Little John, “and a good fighter withal. I have a sword, take you another, and let us see which is the better man of us twain."

The cook did as he was bid, and for two hours they fought, neither of them harming the other. "Fellow," said Little John at last, "you are one of the best swordsmen that I ever saw — and if you could shoot as well with the bow, I would take you back to the merry greenwood, and Robin Hood would give you twenty marks a year and two changes of clothing."

"Put up your sword," said the cook, "and I will go with you. But first we will have some food in my kitchen, and carry off a little of the gold that is in the Sheriff's treasure house."

They ate and drank till they wanted no more, then they broke the locks of the treasure house, and took of the silver as much as they could carry, three hundred pounds and more, and departed unseen by anyone to Robin in the forest.

PART VII.

"Welcome! welcome!" cried Robin when he saw them, "welcome, too, to the fair yeoman you bring with you. What tidings from Nottingham, Little John?"

"The proud Sheriff greets you, and sends you by my hand his cook and his silver vessels, and three hundred pounds and three also."

Robin shook his head, for he knew better than to believe Little John's tale. "It was never by his good will that you brought such treasure to me," he answered, and Little John, fearing that he might be ordered to take it back again, slipped away into the forest to carry out a plan that had just come into his head.

He ran straight on for five miles, till he came up with the Sheriff, who was still hunting, and flung himself on his knees before him.

"Reynold Greenleaf," cried the Sheriff, "what are you doing here, and where have you been?"

"I have been in the forest, where I saw a fair hart of a green colour, and sevenscore deer feeding hard by."

"That sight would I see too," said the Sheriff.

"Then follow me," answered Little John, and he ran back the way he came, the Sheriff following on horseback, till they turned a corner of the forest, and found themselves in Robin Hood's presence. "Sir, here is the master-hart," said Little John.

Still stood the proud Sheriff,
A sorry man was he,
"Woe be to you, Reynold Greenleaf,
Thou hast betrayed me!"

“It was not my fault,” answered Little John, “but the fault of your servants, master. For they would not give me my dinner,” and he went away to see to the supper.

It was spread under the greenwood tree, and they sat down to it, hungry men all. But when the Sheriff saw himself served from his own vessels, his appetite went from him.

“Take heart, man,” said Robin Hood, “and think not we will poison you. For charity’s sake, and for the love of Little John, your life shall be granted you. Only for twelve months you shall dwell with me, and learn what it is to be an outlaw.”

To the Sheriff this punishment was worse to bear than the loss of gold or silver dishes, and earnestly he begged Robin Hood to set him free, vowing he would prove himself the best friend that ever the foresters had.

Neither Robin nor any of his men believed him, but he swore that he would never seek to do them harm, and that if he found any of them in evil plight he would deliver them out of it. With that Robin let him go.

PART VIII.

HOW ROBIN MET FRIAR TUCK.

In many ways life in the forest was dull in the winter, and often the days passed slowly; but in summer, when the leaves were green, and flowers and ferns covered all the woodland, Robin Hood and his men would come out of their warm resting places, like the rabbits and the squirrels, and would play too. Races they ran to stretch their legs, or leaping matches were arranged, or they would shoot at a mark. Anything was pleasant when the grass was soft once more under their feet.

“Who can kill a hart of grace five hundred paces off?” So said Robin to his men in the bright May time; and they went into the wood and tried their skill, and in the end it was Little John who brought down the “hart of grace,” to the great joy of Robin Hood.

“I would ride my horse a hundred miles to find one who could match with thee,” he said to Little John, and Will Scarlett, who was perhaps rather jealous of this mighty deed, answered with a laugh, “There lives a friar in Fountains Abbey who would beat both him and you."

Now Robin Hood did not like to be told that any man could shoot better than himself or his foresters, so he swore lustily that he would neither eat nor drink till he had seen that friar. Leaving his men where they were, he put on a coat of mail and a steel cap, took his shield and sword, slung his bow over his shoulder, and filled his quiver with arrows. Thus armed, he set forth to Fountains Dale.

By the side of the river a friar was walking, armed like Robin, but without a bow. At this sight Robin jumped from his horse, which he tied to a thorn, and called to the friar to carry him over the water or it would cost him his life.

The friar said nothing, but hoisted Robin on his broad back and marched into the river. Not a word was spoken till they reached the other side, when Robin leaped lightly down, and was going on his way when the friar stopped him. "Not so fast, my fine fellow," said he. "It is my turn now, and you shall take me across the river, or woe will betide you."

So Robin carried him, and when they had reached the side from which they had started, he set down the friar and jumped for the second time on his back, and bade him take him whence he had come. The friar strode into the stream with his burden, but as soon as they got to the middle he bent his head and Robin fell into the water. "Now you can sink or swim as you like," said the friar, as he stood and laughed.

obin Hood swam to a bush of golden broom, and pulled himself out of the water, and while the friar was scrambling out Robin fitted an arrow to his bow and let fly at him. But the friar quickly held up his shield, and the arrow fell harmless.

"Shoot on, my fine fellow, shoot on all day if you like," shouted the friar, and Robin shot till his arrows were gone, but always missed his mark. Then they took their swords, and at four of the afternoon they were still fighting.

By this time Robin's strength was wearing, and he felt he could not fight much more. "A boon, a boon!" cried he. "Let me but blow three blasts on my horn, and I will thank you on my bended knees for it."

The friar told him to blow as many blasts as he liked, and in an instant the forest echoed with his horn; it was but a few minutes before "half a hundred yeomen were racing over the lea". The friar stared when he saw them; then, turning to Robin, he begged of him a boon also, and leave being granted he gave three whistles, which were followed by the noise of a great crashing through the trees, as fifty great dogs bounded towards him.

"Here's a dog for each of your men," said the friar, "and I myself for you"; but the dogs did not listen to his words, for two of them rushed at Robin, and tore his mantle of Lincoln green from off his back. His men were too busy defending themselves to take heed of their master’s plight, for every arrow shot at a dog was caught and held in the creature’s mouth.

Robin’s men were not used to fight with dogs, and felt they were getting beaten. At last Little John bade the friar call off his dogs, and as he did not do so at once he let fly some arrows, which this time left half a dozen dead on the ground.

“Hold, hold, my good fellow,” said the friar, “till your master and I can come to a bargain,” and when the bargain was made this was how it ran. That the friar was to forswear Fountains Abbey and join Robin Hood, and that he should be paid a golden noble every Sunday throughout the year, besides a change of clothes on each holy day.

This Friar had kept Fountains Dale
Seven long years or more,
There was neither Knight, nor Lord, nor Earl
Could make him yield before.

But now he became one of the most famous members of Robin Hood’s men under the name of Friar Tuck.

PART IX.

HOW ROBIN HOOD AND LITTLE JOHN FELL OUT.

One Whitsunday morning, when the sun was shining and the birds singing, Robin Hood called to Little John to come with him into Nottingham to hear Mass. As was their custom, they took their bows, and on the way Little John proposed that they should shoot a match with a penny for a wager.

Robin, who held that he himself shot better than any man living, laughed in scorn, and told Little John that he should have three tries to his master’s one, which John without more ado accepted.

But Robin soon repented both of his offer and his scorn, for Little John speedily won five shillings, whereat Robin became angry and smote Little John with his hand.

Little John was not the man to bear being treated so, and he told Robin roundly that he would never more own him for master, and straightway turned back into the wood.

At this Robin was ashamed of what he had done, but his pride would not suffer him to say so, and he continued his way to Nottingham, and entered the Church of St. Mary, not without secret fears, for the Sheriff of the town was ever his enemy. However, there he was and there he meant to stay.

He knelt down before the great cross in the sight of all the people, but none knew him save one monk only, and he stole out of church and ran to the Sheriff, and bade him come quickly and take his foe.

The Sheriff was not slow to do the monk’s bidding, and, calling his men to follow him, he marched to the church. The noise they made in entering caused Robin to look round. “Alas, alas,” he said to himself, “now miss I Little John.”

But he drew his two-handed sword and laid about him in such wise that twelve of the Sheriff’s men lay dead before him. Then Robin found himself face to face with the Sheriff, and gave him a fierce blow; but his sword broke on the Sheriff’s head, and he had shot away all his arrows. So the men closed round him, and bound his arms.

Ill news travels fast, and not many hours had passed before the foresters heard that their master was in prison. They wept and moaned and wrung their hands, and seemed to have gone suddenly mad, till Little John bade them pluck up their hearts and help him to deal with the monk.

PART X.

The next morning Little John hid himself, and waited with a comrade, Much by name, till he saw the monk riding along the road, with a page behind him, carrying letters from the Sheriff to the King telling of Robin’s capture.

“Whence come you?” asked Little John, going up to the monk, “and can you give us tidings of a false outlaw named Robin Hood, who was taken prisoner yesterday? He robbed both me and my fellow of twenty marks, and glad should we be to hear of his undoing.”

“He robbed me, too,” said the monk, “of a hundred pounds and more, but I have laid hands on him, and for that you may thank me.”

“I thank you so much that, with your leave, I and my friend will bear you company,” answered Little John; “for in this forest are many wild men who own Robin Hood for leader, and you ride along this road at the peril of your life.”

They went on together, talking the while, when suddenly Little John seized the horse by the head and pulled down the monk by his hood.

“He was my master,” said Little John,
“That you have brought to bale,
Never shall you come at the King
For to tell him that tale.”

At these words the monk uttered loud cries, but Little John took no heed of him, and smote off his head, as Much had already smitten off that of the page, lest he should carry the news of what had happened back to the Sheriff. After this they buried the bodies, and, taking the letters, carried them themselves to the King.

When they arrived at the Palace, in the presence of the King, Little John fell on his knees and held the letter out. “God save you, my liege lord,” he said; and the King unfolded the letters and read them.

“There never was yeoman in Merry England I longed so sore to see,” he said. “But where is the monk that should have brought these letters?”

“He died by the way,” answered Little John; and the King asked no more questions.

Twenty pounds each he ordered his treasurer to give to Much and to Little John, and made them yeomen of the crown. After which he handed his own seal to Little John and ordered him to bear it to the Sheriff, and bid him without delay bring Robin Hood unhurt into his presence.

Little John did as the King bade him, and the Sheriff, at sight of the seal, gave him and Much welcome, and set a feast before them, at which John led him to drink heavily. Soon he fell asleep, and then the two outlaws stole softly to the prison. Here John ran the porter through the body for trying to stop his entrance, and, taking the keys, hunted through the cells until he had found Robin. Thrusting a sword into his hand Little John whispered to his master to follow him, and they crept along till they reached the lowest part of the city wall, from which they jumped and were safe and free.

“Now, farewell,” said Little John, “I have done you a good turn for an ill.” “Not so,” answered Robin Hood, “I make you master of my men and me,” but Little John would hear nothing of it. “I only wish to be your comrade, and thus it shall be,” he replied.

“Little John has beguiled us both,” said the King, when he heard of the adventure.

PART XI.

HOW THE KING VISITED ROBIN HOOD.

Now the King had no mind that Robin Hood should do as he willed, and called his Knights to follow him to Nottingham, where they would lay plans how best to take captive the felon. Here they heard sad tales of Robin’s misdoings, and how of the many herds of wild deer that had been wont to roam the forest in some places scarce one remained. This was the work of Robin Hood and his merry men, on whom the King swore vengeance with a great oath.

“I would I had this Robin Hood in my hands,” cried he, “and an end should soon be put to his doings.” So spake the King; but an old Knight, full of days and wisdom, answered him and warned him that the task of taking Robin Hood would be a sore one, and best let alone.

The King, who had seen the vanity of his hot words the moment that he had uttered them, listened to the old man, and resolved to bide his time, if perchance some day Robin should fall into his power.

All this time, and for six weeks later that he dwelt in Nottingham, the King could hear nothing of Robin, who seemed to have vanished into the earth with his merry men, though one by one the deer were vanishing too!

At last one day a forester came to the King, and told him that if he would see Robin he must come with him and take five of his best Knights. The King eagerly sprang up to do his bidding, and the six men clad in monks’ clothes mounted their palfreys and rode down to the Abbey, the King wearing an Abbot’s broad hat over his crown, and singing as he passed through the green wood.

Suddenly at the turn of a path Robin and his archers appeared before them.

“By your leave, Sir Abbot,” said Robin, seizing the King’s bridle, “you will stay a while with us. Know that we are yeomen, who live upon the King’s deer, and other food have we none. Now you have abbeys and churches, and gold in plenty; therefore give us some of it, in the name of holy charity.”

“I have no more than forty pounds with me,” answered the King, “but sorry I am it is not a hundred, for you should have had it all.”

So Robin took the forty pounds, and gave half to his men, and then told the King he might go on his way. “I thank you,” said the King, “but I would have you know that our liege lord has bid me bear you his seal, and pray you to come to Nottingham.”

At this message Robin bent his knee.

“I love no man in all the world
So well as I do my King”;

he cried, “and Sir Abbot, for thy tidings, which fill my heart with joy, to-day thou shalt dine with me, for love of my King”. Then he led the King into an open place, and Robin took a horn and blew it loud, and at its blast seven score of young men came speedily to do his will.

“They are quicker to do his bidding than my men are to do mine,” said the King to himself.

Speedily the foresters set out the dinner, venison, and white bread, and the good red wine, and Robin and Little John served the King. “Make good cheer,” said Robin, “Abbot, for charity, and then you shall see what sort of life we lead, that so you may tell our King.”

When he had finished eating, the archers took their bows, and hung rose-garlands up with a string, and every man was to shoot through the garland. If he failed, he should have a buffet on the head from Robin.

Good bowmen as they were, few managed to stand the test. Little John and Will Scarlett, and Much, all shot wide of the mark, and at length no one was left in but Robin himself and Gilbert of the Wide Hand. Then Robin fired his last bolt, and it fell three fingers from the garland. “Master,” said Gilbert, “you have lost, stand forth and take your punishment.”

“I will take it,” answered Robin, “but, Sir Abbot, I pray you that I may suffer it at your hands.”

The King hesitated. “It did not become him,” he said, “to smite such a stout yeoman,” but Robin bade him smite on; so he turned up his sleeve, and gave Robin such a buffet on the head that he rolled upon the ground.

“There is pith in your arm,” said Robin. “Come, shoot a main with me.” And the King took up a bow, and in so doing his hat fell back and Robin saw his face.

“My lord the King of England, now I know you well,” cried he, and he fell on his knees and all the outlaws with him. “Mercy I ask, my lord the King, for my men and me.”

“Mercy I grant,” then said the King, “and therefore I came hither, to bid you and your men leave the greenwood and dwell in my Court with me.”

“So shall it be,” answered Robin, “I and my men will come to your Court, and see how your service liketh us.”

PART XII.

ROBIN AT COURT.

“Have you any green cloth,” asked the King, “that you could sell to me?” and Robin brought out thirty yards and more, and clad the King and his men in coats of Lincoln green. “Now we will all ride to Nottingham,” said he, and they went merrily, shooting by the way.

The people of Nottingham saw them coming, and trembled as they watched the dark mass of Lincoln green drawing near over the fields. “I fear lest our King be slain,” whispered one to another, “and if Robin Hood gets into the town there is not one of us whose life is safe”; and every man, woman, and child made ready to fly.

The King laughed out when he saw their fright, and called them back. Right glad were they to hear his voice, and they feasted and made merry. A few days later the King returned to London, and Robin dwelt in his Court for twelve months. By that time he had spent a hundred pounds, for he gave largely to the Knights and Squires he met, and great renown he had for his open-handedness.

But his men, who had been born under the shadow of the forest, could not live amid streets and houses. One by one they slipped away, till only Little John and Will Scarlett were left. Then Robin himself grew home-sick, and at the sight of some young men shooting, he thought upon the time when he was accounted the best archer in all England, and went straightway to the King and begged for leave to go on a pilgrimage to Bernisdale.

“I may not say you nay,” answered the King, “seven nights you may be gone and no more.” And Robin thanked him, and that evening set out for the greenwood.

It was early morning when he reached it at last, and listened thirstily to the notes of singing birds, great and small.

“It seems long since I was here,” he said to himself; “it would give me great joy if I could bring down a deer once more;” and he shot a great hart, and blew his horn, and all the outlaws of the forest came flocking round him. “Welcome,” they said, “our dear master, back to the greenwood tree,” and they threw off their caps and fell on their knees before him in delight at his return.

PART XIII.

THE DEATH OF ROBIN HOOD.

For two and twenty years Robin Hood dwelt in Sherwood Forest after he had run away from Court, and naught that the King could say would tempt him back again. At the end of that time he fell ill; he neither ate nor drank, and had no care for the things he loved, “I must go to merry Kirkley,” said he, “and have my blood let.”

But Will Scarlett, who heard his words, spoke roundly to him. “Not by my leave, nor without a hundred bowmen at your back. For there abides an evil man, who is sure to quarrel with you, and you will need us badly.”

“If you are afraid, Will Scarlett, you may stay at home, for me,” said Robin, “and in truth no man will I take with me, save Little John only, to carry my bow.”

“Bear your bow yourself, master, and I will bear mine, and we will shoot for a penny as we ride.”

“Very well, let it be so,” said Robin, and they went on merrily enough till they came to some women weeping sorely near a stream.

“What is the matter, good wives?” said Robin Hood.

“We weep for Robin Hood and his dear body, which to-day must let blood,” was their answer.

“Pray why do you weep for me?” asked Robin; “the Prioress is the daughter of my aunt, and my cousin, and well I know she would not do me harm for all the world.”

And he passed on, with Little John at his side.

Soon they reached the Priory, where they were let in by the Prioress herself, who bade them welcome heartily, and not the less because Robin handed her twenty pounds in gold as payment for his stay, and told her if he cost her more she was to let him know of it.

Then she began to bleed him, and for long Robin said nothing, giving her credit for kindness and for knowing her art, but at length so much blood came from him that he suspected treason.

He tried to open the door, for she had left him alone in the room, but it was locked fast, and while the blood was still flowing he could not escape from the casement. So he lay down for many hours, and none came near him, and at length the blood stopped.

Slowly Robin uprose and staggered to the lattice-window, and blew thrice on his horn; but the blast was so low, and so little like what Robin was wont to give, that Little John, who was watching for some sound, felt that his master must be nigh to death.

At this thought he started to his feet, and ran swiftly to the Priory. He broke the locks of all the doors that stood between him and Robin Hood, and soon entered the chamber where his master lay, white, with nigh all his blood gone from him.

“I crave a boon of you, dear master,” cried Little John.

“And what is that boon,” said Robin Hood, “which Little John begs of me?” And Little John answered, “It is to burn fair Kirkley Hall, and all the nunnery.”

But Robin Hood, in spite of the wrong that had been done him, would not listen to Little John’s cry for revenge. “I never hurt a woman in all my life,” he said, “nor a man that was in her company. But now my time is done, that know I well; so give me my bow and a broad arrow, and wheresoever it falls there shall my grave be digged. Lay a green sod under my head and another at my feet, and put beside me my bow, which ever made sweetest music to my ears, and see that green and gravel make my grave. And, Little John, take care that I have length enough and breadth enough to lie in.” So he loosened his last arrow from the string and then died, and where the arrow fell Robin was buried.

WAYLAND THE SMITH.

PART I.

Right up to the north of Norway and Sweden, looking straight at the Pole, lies the country of Finmark. It is very cold and very bare, and for half the year very dark; but inside its stony mountains are rich stores of metals, and the strong, ugly men of the country spent their lives in digging out the ore and in working it.

Like many people who dwell in mountains, they saw and heard strange things, which were unknown to the inhabitants of the lands to the south.

Now in Finmark there were three brothers whose names were Slagfid, Eigil, and Wayland, all much handsomer and cleverer than their neighbours. They had some money of their own, but this did not prevent them working as hard as anyone else; and as they were either very clever or very lucky, they were soon in a fair way to grow rich.

One day they went to a new part of the mountains which was yet untouched, and began to throw up the earth with their pick-axes; but instead of the iron they expected to see, they found they had lighted upon a mine of gold.

This discovery pleased them greatly and their blows became stronger and harder, for the gold was deep in the rock and it was not easy to get it out.

At last a huge lump rolled out at their feet, and when they picked it up they saw three stones shining in it, one red and one blue and one green. They took it home to their mother, who began to weep bitterly at the sight of it. “What is the matter?” asked her sons anxiously, for they knew things lay open to her which were hidden from others.

“Ah, my sons,” she said as soon as she could speak, “you will have much happiness, but I shall be forced to part with you. Therefore I shed tears, for I hoped that only death would divide us! Green is the grass, blue is the sky, red are the roses, golden is the maiden. The Noras” (for so in that country they called the Fates) “beckon you to a land where green fields lie under a blue sky, fields where golden-haired maidens lie among the flowers.”

Great was the joy of the three brothers when they heard the words of their mother; for they hated the looks of the women who dwelt about them, and longed to see the maidens of the south. Next morning they rose early and buckled on their swords and coats of mail, and fastened on their heads helmets that they had made the day before from the lump of gold. In the centre of

Slagfid’s helmet was the green stone, and in the centre of Eigil’s was the blue stone, and in the centre of Wayland’s was the red stone; and when they were ready they put their reindeers into their sledges, and set out over the snow.

PART II.

When they reached the mountains where only yesterday they had been digging, they saw by the light of the moon a host of little men running to meet them. They were dressed all in grey, except for their caps, which were red; they had red eyes, too, and black tongues, which never ceased chattering.

These were the mountain elves, and when they came near they formed themselves into a fairy ring, and sang while they danced round it; —

Will you leave us? Will you leave us?
Slagfid, Eigil, and Wayland, sons of a King.
Is not the emerald better than grass?
Is not the ruby better than roses?
Is not the sapphire better than the sky?
Why do you leave the mountains of Finmark?

But Eigil was impatient and struck his reindeer, that willing beast which flies like the wind and needs not the touch of a whip. It bounded forward in surprise, and knocked down one of the elves that stood in its path. But the hands of his brothers laid hold of the reins, and stopped the reindeer, and sang again: —

The Finlander’s world, the Finlander’s joy
Lies under the earth;
Seek not without what we offer within,
Despise not the elves small and dark though they be.
The best is within, do not seek it without.
The Finlander’s world, the Finlander’s joy,
Lies under the earth.

Slagfid struck his reindeer. It bounded forward and struck down an elf who stood in its road. Then his brothers stood in its path, and stopped the reindeer, and sang: —

Because Slagfid struck his reindeer,
Because Eigil struck his reindeer,
Our hatred shall follow you.
A time of weal, a time of woe, a time of grief, a time of joy.
Because Wayland also forsook us,
Though he struck not the reindeer,
A time of weal, a time of woe, a time of grief, a time of joy.
Farewell, O Finlanders, sons of a King.

Their voices died away as they crossed a bright strip of moonlight, which lay between them and the mountains and so they were seen no more.

The brothers thought no more about them or their words, but went swiftly on their way south, sleeping at night in their reindeer skins.

After many days they came to a lake full of fish, in a place which was called the Valley of Wolves, because of the number of wolves which hid there. But the Finlanders did not mind the wolves, and built a house close to the lake, and hunted bears, and caught fish through holes in the ice, till winter had passed away and spring had come. Then one day they noticed that the sky was blue and the earth covered with flowers.

By-and-by they noticed something more, and that was that three maidens were sitting on the grass, spinning flax on the bank of a stream. Their eyes were blue, and their skins were white as the snow on the mountains, while instead of the mantles of swansdown they generally wore, golden hair covered their shoulders.

The hearts of the brothers beat as they looked on the maidens, who were such as they had often dreamed of, but had never seen; and as they drew near they found to their surprise that the maidens were dressed each in red, green, and blue garments, and the meadow was so thickly dotted with yellow flowers that it seemed as if it were a mass of solid gold.

“Hail, noble princes! Hail, Slagfid, Eigil, and Wayland,” sang the maidens.

“Swanvite, Alvilda, and Alruna are sent by the Norns,
To bring joy to the princes of Finmark”

Then the tongues of the young men were unloosed, and Slagfid married Swanvite, Eigil Alruna, and Wayland Alvilda.

PART III.

For nine years they all lived on the shores of the lake, and no people in the world were as happy as these six; till one morning the three wives stood before their husbands and said with weeping eyes: —

"Dear lords, the time has now come when we must bid you farewell, for we are not allowed to stay with you any longer.. We are Norns — or, as some call us, Valkyrie. Nine years of joy are granted to us, but these are paid for by nine years during which we hover round the combatants on every field of battle. But bear your souls in patience, for on earth all things have an end, and in nine years we will return to be your wives as before."

"But we shall begetting old then," answered the brothers, "and you will have forgotten us. Stay now, we pray you, for we love you well."

"*We* are not mortals to grow old," said the Norns, "and true love does not grow old either. Still, we do not wish you to fall sick with grieving, so we leave you these three keys, with which you may open the mountain, and busy yourselves by digging out the treasures it contains. By the time the nine years are over you will have become rich and men of renown." So they laid down the keys and vanished.

For a long while the young men only left their houses to seek for food, so dreary had the Valley of Wolves become. At last Slagfid and Eigil could bear it no longer, and declared they would travel through the whole world till they found their wives; but Wayland, the youngest, determined to stay at home.

"You would do much better to remain where you are," said he. "You do not know in which direction to look for them, and it is useless to seek on earth for those who fly through the air. You will only lose yourselves, and starve, and when the nine years are ended who can tell where you may be?"

But his words fell on deaf ears; for Slagfid and Eigil merely filled their wallets with food and their horns with drink, and prepared to take leave of their brother. Wayland embraced them weeping, for he feared that he should never more see them, and once again he implored them to give up their quest. Slagfid and Eigil only shook their heads. "We have no rest, night or day, without them," they said, and they begged him to look after their property till they came back again.

Wayland saw that more words would be wasted, so he walked with them to the edge of the forest, where their ways would part. Then Slagfid said: "Our fathers, when they went a journey, left behind them a token by which it might be known whether they were dead or alive, and I will do so also." So he stamped heavily on the soft ground, and added, "As long as this footmark remains sharp and clear, I shall be safe. If it is filled with water I shall be drowned; if with blood, I shall have fallen in battle. But if it is filled with earth an illness will have killed me, and I shall lie under the ground." Thus he did, and Eigil did likewise. Then they cut stout sticks to aid their journeys, and went their ways. Wayland stood gazing after them as long as they were in sight, and then he went sadly home.

PART IV.

Slagfid and Eigil walked steadily on through the day, and when evening came they reached a stream bordered with trees, where they took off their golden helmets and sat down to rest and eat. They had gone far that day and were tired, and drank somewhat heavily, so that they knew not what they did. "If I lose my Swanvite," said Slagfid, "I am undone. She is the fairest woman that sun ever looked on, or that man ever loved."

"It is a lie," answered Eigil. "I know one lovelier still, and her name is Alruna. Odin does not love Freya so fondly as Eigil adores her."

"It is no lie," cried Slagfid, "and may shame fall on him who slanders me."

"And I," answered Eigil, "stand to what I have said, and declare that you are the liar." At this they both drew their swords and fell fighting, till Slagfid struck Eigil's helmet so hard that the jewel flew into a thousand pieces, while Eigil himself fell backwards into the river.

Slagfid stood still, leaning on his sword and looking at the river into which his brother had fallen. Suddenly the trees behind him rustled, and a voice came out of them, saying, "A time of weal, a time of woe, a time of tears, a time of death"; and though he could see nothing he remembered the mountain elves, and thought how true their prophecy had been. "I have slain my brother," he said to himself, "my wife has forsaken me; I am miserable and alone. What shall I do? Go back to Wayland, or follow Eigil into the river? No. After all I may find my wife. The Norns do not always bring misfortune."

As he spoke a light gleamed in the darkness of the night, and, looking up, Slagfid saw it was shed by a bright star which seemed to be drawing nearer, and the nearer it drew its shape seemed to change into a human figure. Then Slagfid knew that it was his wife, Swanvite, floating just over his head and encircled by a rim of clear green light.

He could not speak for joy, but held out his arms to her. She beckoned to him to follow her, and Slagfid, flinging away his sword and coat of mail, began to climb the mountain.

Half way up it seemed to him as if a hand from behind was pulling him back, and turning he fancied he beheld his mother and heard her say: "My son, seek not after vain shadows, which yet may be your ruin.”

The words caused Slagfid to pause for a moment. Then the figure of Swanvite danced before him and beckoned to him again, and his mother was forgotten. There were rivers to swim, precipices to climb, chasms to leap, but he passed them all gladly, till at last he noticed that the higher he got the less the figure seemed like Swanvite.

He felt frightened and tried to turn back, but he could not. On he had to go, till just as he reached the top of the mountain the first rays of the sun appeared above the horizon, and he saw that, instead of Swanvite, he had followed a black elf.

He paused and looked over the green plain that lay thousands of feet below him, cool and inviting after the stony mountain up which he had come. “A time of death,” whispered the black elf in his ear, and Slagfid flung himself over the precipice.

PART V.

After his brothers had forsaken him Wayland went to bed lonely and sad; but the next morning he got up and looked at the three keys that the Noras had left behind them. One was of copper, one was of iron, and one was of gold.

Taking up the copper one, he walked to the mountain till he reached a flat wall of rock. He laid his key against it, and immediately the mountain flew open and showed a cave where everything was green. Green emeralds studded the rocks, green crystals hung from the ceiling or formed rows of pillars, even the copper which made the walls of the cave had a coating of green. Wayland broke off a huge projecting lump and left the cave, which instantly closed up so that not a crack remained to tell where the opening had been.

He carried the lump home, and put it into the fire till all the earth and stones which clung to it were burned away; and then he fashioned the pure copper into a helmet, and in the front of the helmet he set three of his largest emeralds.

This occupied some days, and when it was done he took the iron key, and went to another mountain, and laid the key against the rock, which flew open like the other one. But now the walls were of iron, which shone like blue steel, while sapphires glittered in the midst.

Wayland gazed with wonder at all these things; then he broke off a piece of the iron, and carried it home with him.

For many days after he busied himself in forging a sword that was so supple he could wind it round his body, and so sharp it could cut through a rock as if it had been a stick. In the handle and in the sheath he set some of the finest sapphires that he had brought away with him.

When all was finished he laid the sword aside, and returned to the mountain, with the golden key. This time the mountain parted, and he saw before him an archway, with a glimpse of the sea in the distance.

Before the entrance roses were lying, and inside the golden walls sparkled with rubies, while branches of red coral filled every crevice. Vines climbed around the pillars, and bore large bunches of red grapes.

Wayland stood long, looking at these marvels; then he plucked some of the grapes, broke off a lump of gold, and set out home again.

Next day he began to make himself a golden breastplate, and in it he placed the jewels, and it was so bright that you could have seen the glitter a mile off.

After he had tried all the three keys, and found out the secrets of the mountain, Wayland felt dull. So his mind went back to his brothers, and he wondered how they had fared all this time.

The first thing he did was to go to the edge of the forest, and see if he could find the two footprints they had left.

He soon arrived at the spot where they had taken farewell of each other, but a blue pool of water covered the trace of Eigil’s foot. He turned to look at the impression made by Slagfid, but on that fresh green grass had sprung up over it, and on a birch-tree near it a bird had perched, which sang a mournful song.

Then Wayland knew that his brothers were dead, and he returned to his hut, grieving sore.

PART VI.

It was a long time before Wayland could bring himself to go out, so great was his sorrow; but at last he roused himself from his misery, and went to the mountain for more gold, meaning to work hard till the nine years should be over and he should get his wife back again.

All day long he stood in his forge, smelting and hammering, till he had made hundreds of suits of armour and thousands of swords, and his fame travelled far, so that all men spoke of his industry.

At last he grew tired of making armour, and hammered a number of gold rings, which he strung on strips of bark, and as he hammered he thought of Alvilda his wife, and how the rings would gleam on her arms when once she came back again.

Now at this time Nidud the Little reigned over Sweden, and was hated by his people, for he was vain and cowardly and had many other bad qualities. It came to his ears that away in the forests lived a man who was very rich, and worked all day long in pure gold.

The King was one of those people who could not bear to see anyone with things which he did not himself possess, and he began to make plans how to get hold of Wayland's wealth.

At length he called together his chief counsellors, and said to them: "I hear a man has come to my kingdom who is called Wayland, famous in many lands for his skill in sword-making. I have set men to inquire after him, and I have found that when first he came here he was poor and of no account, so he must have grown rich either by magic or else by violence. I command, therefore, that my stoutest men-at-arms should buckle on their iron breastplates and ride in the dead of night to Wayland's house, and seize his goods and his person."

"King Nidud," answered one of the courtiers, "that you should take himself and his goods is well, but why send a troop of soldiers against one man? If he is no sorcerer, then a single one of your soldiers could take him captive; but if, on the other hand, he is a magician, then a whole army could do nothing with him against his will."

At this reply the King flew in a rage, and, snatching up a sword, ran it through his counsellor's body; then, turning to the rest, told them that they would suffer the same fate if they refused to submit to his will.

So the men-at-arms put on all their armour, and, mounting their horses, set forth at sunset to Wayland's house, King Nidud riding at their head. The door stood wide open, and they entered quietly, in deadly fear lest Wayland should attack them.

But no one was inside, and they looked about, their eyes dazzled by the gold on the walls. The King gazed with wonder and delight at the long string of golden rings, and, slipping the finest off a strip of bark, placed it on his finger.

At that moment steps were heard in the outer court, and the King hastily desired his followers to hide themselves, and not to stir till he signed to them to do so.

In another moment Wayland stood in the doorway, carrying on his shoulders a bear which he had killed with his spear and was bringing home for supper.

He was both tired and hungry, for he had been hunting all day; but he had first to skin the animal, and make a bright fire, before he could cut off some steaks and cook them at the end of the spear. Then he poured some mead into a cup and drank, as he always did, to the memory of his brothers. After that he spread out his bear's skin to dry in the wind, and this done he stretched himself out on his bed and went to sleep.

PART VII.

King Nidud waited till he thought all was safe, then crept forth with his men, who held heavy chains in their hands wherewith to chain the sleeping Wayland. But the task was harder than they expected, for he started up in wrath, asking why he should be treated so. "If you want my gold, take it and release me. It is useless fighting against such odds."

"I am no robber," said Nidud, "but I am your King."

"You do me much honour," replied Wayland, "but what have I done to be loaded with chains like this?"

"Wayland, I know you well," said Nidud. "Poor enough you were when you came from Finmark, and now your jewels are finer and your drinking cups heavier than mine."

"If I am indeed a thief," answered Wayland, "then you do well to load me with chains and lead me bound into your dungeons; but if not, I ask again, Why do you misuse me?"

"Riches do not come of themselves," said Nidud, "and if you are not a thief, then you must be a magician and must be watched."

"If I were a magician," answered Wayland, "it would be easy for me to burst these bonds. I know not that I have ever wronged any man, but if he can prove it, I will restore it to him tenfold. As to the gifts that may come from the gods, no man should grudge them to his fellow. Therefore release me, O King, and I will pay whatever ransom you may fix."

But Nidud only bade his guards take him away, and Wayland, seeing that resistance availed nothing, went with them quietly.

By the King's orders he was thrown into a dark hole fifteen fathoms under ground, and the soldiers then came and robbed the house of all its treasures, which they took to the Palace. The ring which Wayland had made for Alvilda, Nidud gave to his daughter, Banvilda.

One day the Queen was in her own room, when the King came in to ask her advice as to how best to deal with Wayland, as he did not think it wise to put him to death, for he hoped to make some profit out of his skill. "His heart will beat high," said the Queen, "when he sees his good sword, and beholds his ring on Banvilda's finger. But cut asunder the sinews of his strength, so that he can never more escape from us, and keep him a prisoner."

The King was pleased with the Queen’s words, and sent soldiers to carry Wayland to a tower on an island. The sinews of his legs were cut so that he could not swim away; but they gave him his boots, and the chests of gold they had found in his house. Here he was left, with nothing to do from morning till night, but to make helmets and drinking cups and splendid armour for the King.

PART VIII.

On this island Wayland remained for a whole year, chained to a stone and visited by no one but the King, who came from time to time to see how his prisoner was getting on with a suit of golden armour he had been ordered to make.

The shield was also of gold, and on it Wayland had beaten out a history of the gods and their great deeds. He was very miserable, for the hope of revenge which had kept him alive seemed as far off as ever in its fulfilment, and finding a sword he had lately forged lying close to his hand, he seized it, with the intent of putting an end to his wretched life.

He had hardly stretched out his hand, when a bird began to sing at the iron bars of his window, while the evening sun shone into his prison. “I should like to see the world once more,” thought he, and, raising himself on the stone to which his chain was fastened, he was able to look at what lay beneath him.

The sea washed the base of the rock on which the tower was built, and on a neck of land a little way off some children were playing before the door of a hut. Everything was bathed in red light from the glow of the setting sun.

Wayland stood quite still on top of the stone, gazing at the scene with all his eyes, yet thinking of the land of his birth, which was so different. Then he looked again at the sea, which was already turning to steel, and in the distance he saw something moving on the waves.

As it came nearer he discovered it was a water sprite, singing a song which blended with the murmur of the waves and the notes of the bird. And the song put new life and courage into his heart, for it told him that if he would endure and await the pleasure of the gods, joy would be his one day.

The sprite finished her song, and smiled up at Wayland at the window before turning and swimming over the waves till she dived beneath them. That same instant the bird flew away, and the moon was covered by a cloud. But Wayland’s heart was cheered, and when he lay down to rest he slept quietly.

Some days later the King paid another visit, and suddenly espied the three keys which had been hidden in a corner with some of Wayland’s tools.

He at once asked Wayland what they were, and when he would not tell him the King grew so angry that, seizing an axe, he declared that he would put his prisoner to death unless he confessed all he knew. There was no help for it, and Wayland had to say how he came by them and what wonders they wrought. The King heard him with delight and went away, taking the keys with him.

PART IX.

No time was lost in preparing for a journey to the mountains, and when the King reached the spot described by Wayland he divided his followers into three parties, sending two to await him some distance off, and keeping the third to enter the mountain with himself, if the copper key did the wonders it had done before.

So he gave it to one of the bravest of his men, and told him to lay it against the side of the mountain. The man obeyed, and instantly the mountain split from top to bottom.

The King bade them enter, never doubting that rich spoils awaited him; but instead, the men sank into a green marsh, which swallowed up many of them, while the rest were stung to death by the green serpents hanging from the roof. Those who, like the King, were near the entrance alone escaped.

As soon as he had recovered from the terror into which this adventure had thrown him, he commanded that it should be kept very secret from the other two parties, and desired Storbiorn his Chamberlain, to take the key of iron and the key of gold and deliver them to the leaders of the divisions he had left behind, with orders to try their fortune in different parts of the mountain.

“Give the keys to me, my lord King,” answered Storbiorn, “and I shall know what to do with them. These magicians may do their worst, my heart will not beat one whit the faster; and I shall see all that happens.”

So he went and gave his message to the two divisions, and one stayed behind while Storbiorn went to the mountain with the other.

When they arrived, the man who held the key laid it against the rock, which burst asunder, and half the men entered at Storbiorn’s command.

Suddenly an icy blue stream poured upon them from the depths of the cavern, and drowned most of them before they had time to fly. Only those behind escaped, and Storbiorn bade them go instantly to the King and tell him what had happened.

Then he went to the third troop and marched with them to the rock, where he gave the golden key to one of the men, and ordered him to try it.

The rock flew open at once, and Storbiorn told the men to enter, taking care, however, to keep behind himself. They obeyed and found themselves in a lovely golden cave, whose walls were lit up by thousands of precious stones of every hue.

There was neither sight nor sound to frighten them, and even Storbiorn, when he saw the gold, forgot his prudence and his fears, and followed them in.

In a moment a red fire burst out with a terrific noise, and clouds of smoke poured over them, so that they fell down choked into the flames. Only one man escaped, and he ran back as fast as he could to the King to tell him of the fate of his army.

PART X.

All this time Wayland was working quietly in his island prison, waiting for the day of his revenge. The suit of golden armour which the King had commanded kept him busy day and night, and, besides the wonderful shield with figures of the gods, he had wrought a coat of mail, a helmet, and armour for the thighs, such as never had been seen before.

The King had invited all his great nobles to meet him at the Palace, when he returned from the mountain, so that they might see his wonderful armour and all the precious things he should bring with him from the caverns.

When Nidud reached his Palace the Queen and Banvilda, their daughter, came forth to meet him, and told him that the great hall was already full of guests, expecting to see the wonders he had brought.

The King said little about his adventures, but went into the armoury to put on his armour in order to appear before his nobles. Piece by piece he fastened it, but he found the helmet so heavy that he could hardly bear it on his head. However, he did not look properly dressed without it, so he had to wear it, though it felt as if a whole mountain was pressing on his forehead. Then, buckling on the sword which Wayland had forged, he entered the hall, and seated himself on the throne.

The Earls were struck dumb by his splendour, and thought at first that it was a god, till they looked under the helmet and saw the ugly little man with the pale cowardly face. So they turned their eyes gladly on the Queen and Princess, both tall and beautiful and glittering with jewels, though inwardly they were not much better than the King.

A magnificent dinner made the nobles feel more at ease, and they begged the

King to tell them what man was so skilled in smith’s work. Now Nidud had drunk deeply, and longed to revenge himself on Wayland, whom he held to have caused the loss of his army; so he gave the key of the tower to one of his Earls, and bade him take two men and bring forth Wayland, adding that if the next time he visited the tower he should find a grain of gold missing, they should pay for it with their lives.

The three men got a boat, and rowed towards the tower, but on the way one who, like the King, had drunk too much fell into the sea and was drowned. The other two reached the tower in safety, and finding Wayland, blackened with dust, busy at his forge, bade him come just as he was to the boat.

With his hands bound they led him before the King, and said, “We have done your desire, Sir King, and must now hasten back to look for Grullorm, who fell into the sea”.

“Leave him where he is,” replied Nidud; “and in token of your obedience to my orders I will give you each these golden chains.”

The guests had not thought to see the man who had made such wonderful armour helpless and a cripple, and said so to the King. “He was once handsome and stately enough,” answered Nidud, “but I have bowed his stubborn head.” And the Queen and her daughter laughed and said, “The maidens of Finmark will hardly fancy a lover who cannot stand upright”.

But Wayland stood as if he heard nothing, till the King’s son snatched a bone from the table and threw it at his head. Then his patience gave way, and, seizing the bone, he beat Nidud about the head with it till the helmet itself fell off.

The guests all took his side, and said that, though a cripple, he was braver than many men whose legs were straight, and begged the King to allow him to go back to his prison without being teased further.

But the King cried that Wayland had done mischief enough, and must now be punished, and told them the story of his visit to the mountain and the loss of his followers. “It would be a small punishment to put him to death,” he said, “for to so wretched a cripple death would be welcome. He may use the gold that is left, but henceforth he shall only have one eye to work with,” and the Princess came forward and carried out the cruel sentence herself. Wayland bore it all, saying nothing, but praying the gods to grant him vengeance.

PART XI.

One night Wayland sat filled with grief and despair, looking out over the sea, when he caught sight of two red lights, bobbing in his direction. He watched them curiously till they vanished beneath the tower.

Soon the key of the door turned, and two men, whom he knew to be the King's sons, talked softly together. He kept very still, and heard one say: “Let us first get as much from the chest as we can carry, then we will put him to death, lest he should betray us to our father.”

Then Wayland took a large sword which lay by his side and hid it behind him, and he had scarcely done so when the princes entered the prison. “Greeting to you,” said they. “Nidud our father has gone into the country, and as he is so greedy of wealth that he will give us none, we have come here to get it for ourselves. Hand us the key and swear not to tell our father, or you shall die.”

“My good lords,” answered Wayland, “your request is reasonable, and I am not so foolish as to refuse it. Here is the key, and I will swear not to betray you.”

The brothers took the key, and opened the chest, which was still half full of gold. It dazzled their eyes, and they both stooped down so as to see it better. This was what Wayland had waited for, and, seizing his sword, he cut off their heads, which fell into the chest. He then dug a grave for the bodies in the floor of his dungeon. Afterwards he dried the skulls, and made them into two drinking cups wrought with gold. The eyes he set with precious stones, while the teeth he filed till they were shaped like pearls, and strung like a necklace.

As soon as the King came back from his journey he paid a visit to Wayland, who produced the drinking cups which he said were made of some curious shells washed up in a gale.

After some days had passed, some sailors found the princes' boat, which had drifted into the open sea. Their bodies, of course, were not to be found, and the King ordered a splendid funeral feast to be prepared.

On this occasion the new drinking cups were filled with mead, and, besides her necklace, Banvilda wore the ring which her father had taken long ago from Wayland's house.

As was the custom, the feast lasted long, and the guests drank deeply and grew merry. But at midnight their gaiety suddenly came to an end. The King was drinking from the cup of mead, when he felt a violent pain in his head and let the vessel fall. The hues of the armlets that the Queen wore became so strange and dreadful that her eyes suffered agony from looking at em, and she tore them from her arms; while Banvilda was seized with such severe toothache that she could sit at table no longer. The guests at once took leave, but it was not till the sun rose that the pains of their hosts went away.

PART XII.

In the torture of toothache which she had endured during the night, Banvilda had dashed her arm against the wall, and had broken some of the ornaments off the ring.

She feared to tell her father, who would be sure to punish her, and was in despair how to get the ring mended, when she caught sight of the island on which Wayland's tower stood. "If I had not mocked at him he might have helped me now," thought she.

No other way seemed to offer itself, and in the evening she loosened a boat and began to row to the tower. On the way she met an old merman with a long beard, floating on the waves who warned her not to go on; but she paid no heed, and only rowed the faster.

She entered the tower by a false key, and, holding the ring out to Wayland, begged him to mend it as fast as possible, so that she might return before she was missed. Wayland answered her with courtesy, and promised to do his best, but said that she would have to blow the bellows to keep the forge fire alight. "How comes it that these bellows are sprinkled with blood?" asked Banvilda.

"It is the blood of two young sea dogs," answered Wayland; "they troubled me for long, but I caught them when they least expected it. But blow the bellows harder, I pray you, or I shall never be finished."

Banvilda did as she was told, but soon grew tired and thirsty, and begged Wayland to give her something to drink. He mixed something sweet in a cup, which she swallowed hastily, and soon fell fast asleep on a bench. Then Wayland bound her hands, and placed her in the boat, after which he cut the rope that held it and let it drift out to sea.

This done, he shut the door of the tower, and, taking a piece of gold, he engraved on it the history of all that had happened, and put it where it must meet the King's eye when next he came. "Now is my hour come," he cried with joy, snatching his spear from the wall, but before he could throw himself on it he heard a distant song and the notes of a lute.

By this time the sun was high in the heavens, yet its brightness did not hinder Wayland from seeing a large star, which was floating towards him, and a brilliant rainbow spanned the sky. The flowers on the island unfolded themselves as the star drew near, and he could smell the smell of the roses on the shore.

And now Wayland saw it was no star, but the golden chariot of Freya the goddess, whose blue mantle floated behind her till it was lost in the blue of the sky. On her left was a maiden dressed in garlands of fresh green leaves, and on her right was one clad in a garment of red.

At the sight Wayland's heart beat high, for he thought of the lump of gold set with jewels, which he and his brothers had found in the mountain so long ago. Fairies fluttered round them, mermaids rose from the depths of the sea to welcome them, and as Freya and her maidens entered the prison Wayland saw that she who wore the red garment was indeed Alvilda. "Wayland," said the goddess, "your time of woe is past. You have suffered much and have avenged your wrongs, and now Odin has granted my prayer that Alvilda shall stay by you for the rest of your life, and when you die she shall carry you in her arms to the country of Walhalla, where you shall forge golden armour and fashion drinking horns for the gods."

When Freya had spoken, she beckoned to the green maiden, who held in her hand a root and a knife. She cut pieces off the root and laid them on Wayland's feet, and on his eye, then, placing some leaves from her garland over the whole, she breathed gently on it. "Eyr the physician has healed me," cried Wayland, and the fairies took him in their arms and bore him across the waves to a bower in the forest, where he dreamed that Alvilda and Slagfid and Eigil were all bending over him.

When he woke Alvilda was indeed there, and he seemed to catch glimpses of his brothers amid the leaves of the trees. "Arise, my husband," said Alvilda, "and go straight to the Court of Nidud. He still sleeps, and knows nothing. Throw this mantle on your shoulders, and they will take you for his servant."

So Wayland went, and reached the royal chamber, and in his sleep the King trembled, though he knew not that Wayland was near. "Awake," cried Wayland, and the King awoke, and asked who had dared to disturb him thus.

"Be not angry," answered Wayland; "had you slain Wayland long ago, this misfortune that I have to tell you of would never have happened."

"Do not name his name," said the King, "since he sent me those drinking cups a burning fever has laid hold upon me."

"They were not shells, as he told you," answered Wayland, "but the skulls of your two sons, Sir King. Their bodies you will find in Wayland's tower. As for your daughter, she is tossing, bound, on the wild waves of the sea. But now I, Wayland, have come to give you your deathblow — —" But before he could draw his sword fear had slain the King yet more quickly.

So Wayland went back to Alvilda, and they went into another country, where he became a famous smith, and he lived to a good old age; and when he died he was carried to Walhalla, as Freya had promised.

SOME ADVENTURES OF WILLIAM SHORT NOSE.

PART I.

William Short Nose was also styled William of Orange, quite a different man from the one who came to be King of England, although they both took their title from the same small town in the South of France. This William of Orange spent his life battling with the Saracens in the south of France, and a very hard task he had, for their numbers seemed endless, and as fast as one army was beaten another was gathered together.

Now by a great effort the Saracens had been driven back to the south in the year 732, but before a hundred years had passed they had again crossed the Pyrenees and were streaming over France, south of the Loire, and, what was worse, the men of Gascony were rising too.

Some one had to meet the enemy and crush the rebels, and of all the subjects of King Louis no one was so fit to lead the army of the Franks as William Short Nose, husband of the Lady Gibourc.

It was at the Aliscans that he met them, and a great host they were, spreading over the country till whichever way you looked you saw men flocking round the Golden Dragon, which was the banner of the Saracens.

But it was not Count William's way to think about numbers, and he ordered his trumpeters to sound the charge. Spurring his horse, he dashed from one part of the fight to the other, striking and killing as he went, and heeding as little the wounds that he got as those that he gave, and *they* were many.

The Franks whom he led followed after him, and slew the Saracens as they came on; but the Christians were in comparison but a handful, and their enemies as the sands of the sea.

The young warriors whom William had brought with him were prisoners or dying men, and from far he saw Vivian, whom he loved the best, charging a multitude with his naked sword. "Montjoie! Montjoie!" cried he, "O Bertrand, my cousin, come to my aid!"

Bertrand heard and pressed to his side. "Ride to the river," he said, "and I will protect you with my life"; but Vivian was too weak even to sit on his horse, and fell half fainting at Bertrand's feet.

At this moment there rode at them a large troop of Saracens, headed by their

King, Haucebier, and the Christian Knights knew that all was lost. “It is too late now for me to think of life,” said Vivian, “but I will die fighting,” and again they faced their enemies till Bertrand’s horse was killed under him. Then Vivian seized the horse of a dead Saracen, and thrust the bridle into Bertrand’s hand, “Fly, for God’s sake, it is your only chance. Where is my uncle? If he is dead we have lost the battle.”

But Bertrand did not fly, though every instant made the danger more deadly. “If I forsake you, if I take flight,” he said, “I shall bring eternal shame upon myself.”

“No, no,” cried Vivian, “seek my uncle down there in the Aliscans, and bring him to my aid.”

“Never till my sword breaks,” answered Bertrand, and laid about him harder than ever. And to their joy they heard a war cry sounding in their ears, and five Frankish Counts, cousins of Vivian and of Bertrand, galloped up. Fight they did with all their might, but none fought like Vivian. “Heavens! what a warrior!” cried the Counts as they saw his blows, while the Saracens asked themselves if the man whom they had killed at mid-day had been brought back to life by the help of fiends. “If we let them escape now we shall be covered with shame,” said they, “but ere night falls William shall acknowledge that he is conquered.”

“Indeed!” said Bertrand, and with his cousins he fell upon them till they fled.

The Counts were victors on this field, but, wounded and weary as they were, another combat lay before them, for a force of twenty thousand Saracens was advancing from the valley.

Their hearts never failed them, but they had no strength left; the young Counts were all taken prisoners, except Vivian, who was left for dead by the side of a fountain where he had been struck down. “O Father in Heaven,” he said, feeling his life going from him, “forgive me my sins, and help my uncle, if it is Thy holy will.”

William Short Nose was still fighting, though he knew that the victory lay with the Saracens and their hosts. “We are beaten,” he said to the fourteen faithful comrades who stood by him. “Listen as you will, no sound of our war cry can be heard. But by the Holy Rood, the Saracens shall know no rest while I am alive. I will give my forefathers no cause for shame, and the minstrels shall not tell in their songs how I fell back before the enemy.”

They then gave battle once more, and fought valiantly, till all lay dead upon the ground, save only William himself.

PART II.

Now the Count knew that if the Saracens were ever to be vanquished and beaten out of fair France he must take heed of his own life, for the task was his and no other man’s; so he turned his horse’s head towards Orange, and then stopped, for he saw a troop of freshly landed Saracens approaching him along the same road.

“The whole world is full of these Saracens!” he cried in anger, “God alone can save me. My good horse,” added he, “you are very tired. If you had had only five days’ rest, I would have led you to the charge; but I see plainly that I can get no help from you, and I cannot blame you for it, as you have served me well all day, and for this I thank you greatly. If ever we reach Orange you shall wear no saddle for twenty days, your food shall be the finest corn, and you shall drink out of a golden trough.”

And the horse understood; he threw up his head, and pawed the ground, and his strength came back to him as of old. At this sight William Short Nose felt more glad than if he had been given fourteen cities.

No sooner had he entered a valley that led along the road to Orange, than he saw a fresh body of Saracens blocking one end. He turned to escape into another path, but in front of him rode a handful of his enemies. “By the faith that I swore to my dear Lady Gibourc,” he said, “I had better die than never strike a blow,” and so rode straight at their leader. “William!” cried the Saracen, “this time you will not escape me.” But the sun was in his eyes, and his sword missed his aim. Before he could strike another blow William had borne him from his horse and galloped away.

The mountain that he was climbing now was beset with enemies, like all the rest, and William looked in vain for a way of escape. He jumped from his horse and rubbed his flanks saying to him, “What will you do? Your sides are bleeding, and you can scarcely stand; but remember, if once you fall it means my death.”

At these words the good horse neighed, pricked up his ears and shook himself, and as he did so the blood seemed to flow strongly in his veins, as of old. Then the count rode down into the field of the Aliscans, and found his nephew, Vivian, lying under a tree.

“Ah!” cried William, “what sorrow for me! To the end of my life I shall mourn this day. Lady Gibourc, await me no longer, for never more shall I return to Orange!”

So he lamented, grieving sore, till Vivian spoke to him. The Count was full of joy to hear his words, and, kneeling beside the youth, took him in his arms, and bade him confess his sins to him, as to his own father. One by one Vivian remembered them all, then a mist floated before his eyes, and, murmuring a farewell to the Lady Gibourc, his soul left the world.

William laid him gently down on his shield, took another shield for covering, and turned to mount his horse, but at this his heart failed him.

"Is it you, William, that men look to as their leader, who will do this cowardly deed?" he said to himself, and he went back to his nephew's side, and lifted the body on to his horse, to bury it in his city of Orange.

He had done what he could to give honour to Vivian, but he might as well, after all, have left him where he fell, for in a fierce combat with some Saracens on the road the Count was forced to abandon his nephew's body and fight for his own life. He knew the two Saracens well as brave men, but he soon slew one, and the other he unhorsed after a struggle.

"Come back, come back," cried the Saracen; "sell me your horse, for never did I behold his like! I will give you for him twice his weight in gold, and set free besides all your nephews that have been taken prisoners." But William loved his horse, and would not have parted with him to Charles himself.

At length, after fighting nearly every step of the way, he saw the towers of Orange before him, and his palace, Gloriette, where dwelt his wife, the Lady Gibourc. "Ah, with what joy did I leave these walls," he said to himself, "and how many noble Knights have I lost since then! Oh, Gibourc, my wife, will you not go mad when you hear the tidings I have brought!" And, overcome with grief, the Count bowed his head on the neck of his horse.

PART III.

When he recovered himself he rode straight to the City Gate, and commanded the porter to let him in. "Let down the drawbridge," called he, "and be quick, for time presses." But he forgot that he had changed his own arms, and had taken instead those of a Saracen; therefore the porter, seeing a man with a shield and pennon and helmet that were strange to him, thought he was an enemy, and stood still where he was. "Begone!" he said to William, "if you approach one step nearer I will deal you a blow that will unhorse you! Begone, I tell you, and as quick as you can, or when William Short Nose returns from the Aliscans it will be the worse for you."

"Fear nothing, friend," replied the Count, "for I am William himself. I went to the Aliscans to fight the Saracens, and to help Vivian; but all my men are dead, and I only am left to bring these evil tidings. So open the gates, for the Saracens are close behind."

“You must wait a moment,” answered the porter, and he quitted the turret and hastened to the Lady Gibourc. “Noble Countess,” cried he, “there knocks at the drawbridge a Knight in Pagan armour, who seems fresh from battle, for his arms are bloody. He is tall of stature and bears himself proudly, and he says he is William Short Nose. I pray you, my lady, come with me and see him for yourself.”

The face of Gibourc grew red when she heard the porter’s words, and she left the Palace and mounted the battlements, where she called, “Warrior, what is your will?”

“Oh, lady,” answered he, “open the gate, and that quickly. Twenty thousand Saracens are close upon my track; if they reach me, I am a dead man.”

“You cannot enter,” replied Gibourc. “I am alone here except for this porter, a priest, a few children, and some ladies whose husbands are all at the war. Neither gate nor wicket will be opened until the return of my beloved lord, William the Count.” Then William bowed his head for a moment, and tears ran down his cheeks.

“My lady, I am William himself,” said he. “Do you not know me?”

“Saracen, you lie,” replied Gibourc. “Take off your helmet and let me see who you are!”

“Noble Countess,” cried he, “this is no time to parley. Look round you! Is not every hill covered with enemies?”

“Ah, now I know you are not William,” answered she, “for all the Saracens in the world would never have stirred him with fear. By St. Peter! neither gate nor wicket shall be opened till I have seen your face. I am alone and must defend myself. The voices of many men are alike.”

Then the Count lifted his helmet: “Lady look and be content. I am William himself. Now let me in.”

Gibourc knew that it was indeed the Count who had returned, and was about to order the gates to be opened when there appeared in sight a troop of Saracens escorting two hundred prisoners, all of them young Knights, and thirty ladies with fair, white faces. Each one was loaded with chains, and cowered under the blows of their captors. Their cries and prayers for mercy reached the ears of Gibourc, and, changing her mind, she said quickly: “There is the proof that you are not William, my husband, whose fame has spread far! For he would never have suffered his brethren to be so shamefully entreated while he was by!”

“Heavens!” cried the Count, “to what hard tests does she put me! But if I lose my head I will do her bidding, for what is there that I would *not* do for the love of God and of her!”

PART IV.

Without a word more he turned, and spurred his horse at the Saracens. So sudden and fierce was his attack that the foremost riders fell back on those behind, who were thrown into confusion, while William's sword swept him a path to the centre, where the prisoners stood bound. The Saracens expected the city gates to open and a body of Franks to come forth to destroy them, and without waiting another moment they turned and fled.

"Oh, fair lord," called Gibourc, who from the battlements had watched the fight, "come back, come back, for now indeed you may enter." And William heard her voice, and left the Saracens to go where they would while he struck the chains off the prisoners, and led them to the gates of Orange, when he himself rode back to the Saracens.

Not again would the Lady Gibourc have reason to call him coward.

And Gibourc saw, and her heart swelled within her, and she repented her of her words. "It is my fault if he is slain,", she wept. "Oh, come back, come back!"

And William came.

Now the drawbridge was let down, and he entered the city followed by the Christians whom he had delivered, and the Countess unlaced his helmet, and bathed his wounds, and then stopped, doubting.

"You cannot be William after all," said she, "for William would have brought back the young kinsmen who went with him; and would have been encircled by minstrels singing the great deeds he had done."

"Ah, noble Countess, you speak truth," answered he. "Henceforth my life will be spent in mourning, for my friends and comrades who went to war with me are lying dead at the Aliscan."

Great was the sorrow in the city of Orange and in the palace of her lord, where the ladies of the Countess mourned for their husbands. But it was Gibourc who first roused herself from her grief for Vivian and others whom she had loved well. "Noble Count," she said, "do not lose your courage. Remember it is not near Orleans, in safety, that your lands lie, but in the very midst of the Saracens. Orange never will have peace till they are subdued. So send messengers to King Louis, and to your father, Aimeri, asking for aid."

"Heavens!" cried William, "has the world ever seen so wise a lady?"

"Let no one turn you from your road," she went on. "At the news of your distress all the Barons that are your kin will fly to your help. Their numbers are as the sands of the sea."

"But how shall I make them believe in what has befallen us?" answered William. "If I do not go myself I will send nobody, and go myself I will not, for

I will not leave you alone again for all the gold in Pavia."

"Sir, you must go," said Gibourc, weeping. "I will stay here with my ladies, and each will place a helmet on her head, and hang a shield round her neck, and buckle a sword to her side, and with the help of the Knights whom you have delivered, we shall know how to defend ourselves."

William's heart bounded at her words; he took her in his arms, and promised that he himself would go, and that he would never lie soft till he returned again to Orange.

PART V.

Thus William Short Nose set forth and the next day passed through Orleans. There he met with his brother Ernaut, who had ridden home from escorting King Louis back to Paris. Ernaut promised his help and that of his father and brothers, but counselled William to go to Laon, where a great feast would be held and many persons would be assembled. The Count followed Ernaut's counsel, but refused the troop of Knights which Ernaut offered him, liking rather to ride alone.

He made his entrance into Laon, and the people laughed at him and made jests on his tall, thin horse; but William let them laugh, and rode on until he reached the Palace. There he alighted under an olive tree, and, fastening his horse to one of the branches, took off his helmet and unbuckled his breastplate. The people stared as they passed by, but nobody spoke to him.

Someone told the King that a strange man without even a squire was sitting before the Palace under an olive tree. The King's face grew dark as he heard their tale, for he loved to keep his gardens for his own pleasure. "Sanson," he called to one of his guards, "go and find out who this stranger is and whence he comes, but beware of bringing him hither."

Sanson hastened to do his errand, and William answered, "My name is one that is known to France. I am William Short Nose, and I come from Orange. My body is worn out with much riding; I pray you hold my horse until I have spoken to King Louis."

"Noble Count," replied Sanson, "let me first return to the King and tell him who you are. And be not angry, I beseech you, for such are my orders."

"Be quick, then, my friend," said William, "and do not neglect to tell the King that I am in great distress. This is the time to show his love for me; and if he truly does love me, let him come to meet me with the great lords of his Court. If he does not come, I have no other hope."

"I will tell him what you say," said Sanson, "and if it rests with me you shall be content."

Then Sanson went back to the King. "It is William, the famous William!" he said, "and he wishes you to go out to meet him."

"Never!" answered Louis; "will he always be a thorn in my side! Woe be to him who rejoices at his coming."

So the King sat still, and on the steps of the Palace there gathered Knights and Nobles in goodly numbers, and hardly one but wore a helmet set with precious stones, a sword or a shield which had been given him by William himself. But now they were rich and he was poor, so they mocked at him.

"My lords," said William, "you do ill to treat me so. I have loved you all, and you bear the tokens of my love about you at this moment. If I can give you no more gifts, it is because I have lost all I have in the world at the Aliscans. My men are dead, and my nephews are prisoners in the hands of the Saracens. It is the Lady Gibourc who bade me come here, and it is she who asks for help through me. Have pity on us, and help us." But without a word, they rose up and went into the Palace, and William knew what their love was worth.

The young men told Louis of the words that the Count had spoken, and the King rose and leaned out of the window. "Sir William," said he, "go to the inn, and let them bathe your horse. You seem in a sorry plight, without a groom to help you."

William heard and vowed vengeance. But if the King and the courtiers had no hearts, in his need a friend came to him, Guimard, a citizen of Laon, who took the Count home and offered him rich food. But because of his vow to the Lady Gibourc, he would only eat coarse bread, and drink water from the spring; and as soon as it was light he rose up from his bed of fresh hay, and dressed himself. "Where are you going," asked his host.

"To the Palace, to entreat the aid of the King, and woe be to him who tries to stop me."

"May God protect you, Sir," answered Guimard. "To-day the King crowns Blanchefleur, your sister, who no doubt loves you well. And he gives her for her dower the richest land in all fair France, but a land that is never at peace."

"Well," said William, "I will be present at the ceremony. Indeed they cannot do without me, for all France is under my care, and it is my right to bear her standard in battle. And let them beware how they move me to wrath, lest I depose the King of France and tear the crown from his head."

The Count placed a breastplate under his jerkin, and hid his sword under his cloak. The gates of the Palace opened before him and he entered the vaulted hall.

It was filled with the greatest nobles in the land, and ladies with rich garments of silk and gold. Lords and ladies both knew him, but not one gave him welcome — not even his sister, the Queen. His fingers played with his sword, and he had much ado not to use it. But while his wrath was yet kindling the heralds announced that his father, Aimeri, had come.

PART VI.

The Lord of Narbonne stepped on to the grass with his noble Countess, his four sons, and many servants. King Louis and the Queen hastened to meet them, and amid cries of joy they mounted the steps into the hall. Aimeri sat beside the King, and the Countess was seated next the Queen, while the Knights placed themselves on the floor of the hall. And William sat also, but alone and apart, nursing his anger.

At last he rose, and, advancing to the middle of the floor, he said with a loud voice: “Heaven protect my mother, my father, my brothers and my friends; but may His curse alight on my sister and on the King, who have left me to be the butt of all the mockers of the Court. By all the Saints! were not my father sitting next to him, this sword should ere now have cloven his skull.” The King listened pale with fright, and the rest whispered to each other, “William is angry, something will happen!”

When Ermengarde and Aimeri saw their son standing before them great joy filled their souls. They left their seats and flung themselves on his neck, and William’s brother also ran to greet him. The Count told them how he had been vanquished at the Aliscans, and he himself had fled to Orange, and of the distress in which he had left Gibourc. “It was at her bidding I came here to ask aid from Louis, but from the way he has treated me I see plainly that he has no heart. By St. Peter! he shall repent before I go, and my sister also.”

The King heard and again waxed cold with fear; the nobles heard and whispered: “Who is strong enough to compass this matter? No man, be he the bravest in France, ever went to his help and came back to tell the tale.”

It was the Lady Ermengarde who broke the silence. “O God,” she cried, “to think that the Franks should be such cowards! Have no fear, fair son William, I have still left gold that would fill thirty chariots, and I will give it to those who enrol themselves under your banner.”

Aimeri smiled and sighed as he listened to her words, and his sons shed tears.

William answered nothing, but remained standing in the middle of the hall, his eyes fixed on his sister sitting on her throne, with a small golden crown upon her head, and on her husband, King Louis.

"This, then, O King, is the reward of all I have done! When Charlemagne, your father, died, you would have lost your crown if I had not forced the Barons to place it upon your head."

"That is true," answered the King, "and in remembrance of your services I will to-day bestow on you a fief."

"Yes," cried Blanchefleur, "and no doubt will deprive me of one. A nice agreement, truly! Woe to him who dares carry it out."

"Be silent, woman without shame!" said William. "Every word you speak proclaims your baseness! You pass your days eating and drinking, and little you care that we endure heat and cold, hunger and thirst, and suffer wounds and death so that your life may be easy."

Then he bounded forwards, and, drawing his sword, would have cut off her head had not Ermengarde wrenched the weapon from his hands. Before he could seize it again the Queen darted away and took refuge in her chamber, where she fell fainting on the floor.

PART VII.

It was her daughter Alix, the fair and the wise, who raised her up and then heard with shame the tale she had to tell. "How could you speak so to my uncle, the best man that ever wore a sword?" asked Alix. "It was he who made you Queen of France."

"Yes, my daughter, you say truth," answered the Queen, "I have done ill, I will make peace with my brother;" and she wept over her wicked speech, while Alix, red and white as the roses in May, went down into the hall, where the Franks were still whispering together, and calling curses on the head of William.

They all rose as the maiden entered; Aimeri, her grandfather, took her in his arms, and her four uncles kissed her cheek. Her presence seemed to calm the anger and trouble which before had reigned throughout the hall, and Ermengarde flung herself at William's feet and besought his pardon for the Queen.

William raised his mother from her knees, but his anger was not soothed. "I have no love for the King," he said, "and before night I will break his pride," and he stood, his face red with wrath, leaning on his naked sword.

Not a sound was heard, and the eyes of all were fixed breathlessly upon William. Then in her turn Alix stepped forward and knelt at his feet. "Punish me in my mother's place," said she, "and cut off my head if you will, but let there be peace, I pray you, between you and my father and mother.”

At the voice of Alix William’s wrath melted, but at first he would promise nothing. “Fair son William,” said Ermengarde again, “be content. The King will do what you desire, and will aid you to the uttermost.”

“Yes, I will aid you,” answered the King.

So peace was made, the Queen was fetched, and they all sat down to a great feast. In this manner the pride of the King was broken.

But when one man is shifty and another is hasty, wrath is not apt to slumber long, and treaties of peace are easier made than kept. When the feast was over William pressed King Louis to prepare an army at once; but the King would bind himself to nothing. “We will speak of it again,” said he; “I will tell you to-morrow whether I will go or not.”

At this William grew red with rage, and holding out a wand he said to the King, “I give you back your fief. I will take nothing from you, and henceforth will neither be your friend nor your vassal.”

“Keep your fief,” said Ernaut to his brother, “and leave the King to do as he will. I will help you and my brothers also, and between us we shall have twenty thousand men to fight with any Saracens we shall find.”

“You speak weak words,” cried Aimeri; “he is Seneschal of France, and also her Standard Bearer; he has a right to our help.” And Alix approved of his saying, and the Queen likewise. The King saw that none were on his side and dared refuse no longer. “Count William, for love of you I will call together my army, and a hundred thousand men shall obey your commands. But I myself will not go with you, for my kingdom needs me badly.”

“Remain, Sire,” answered William, “I myself will lead the host.” And the King sent out his messengers, and soon a vast army was gathered under the walls of Laon.

PART VIII.

It was on one of these days, when the Count stood in the great hall, that there entered from the kitchen a young man whom he had never seen before. The youth, whose name was Rainouart, was tall, strong as a wild boar, and swift as a deer. The scullions and grooms had played off jests upon him during the night, but had since repented them sorely, for he had caught the leaders up in his arms and broken their heads against the walls.

The rest, eager to avenge their comrades’ death, prepared to overcome him with numbers, and in spite of his strength it might have gone ill with Rainouart had not Aimeri de Narbonne, hearing the noise, forbade more brawling.

Count William was told of the unseemly scuffle, and asked the King who and what the young man was who could keep at bay so many of his fellows. “I bought him once at sea,” said Louis, “and paid a hundred marks for him. They pretend that he is the son of a Saracen, but he will never reveal the name of his father. Not knowing what to do with him, I sent him to the kitchen.”

“Give him to me, King Louis,” said William, smiling, “I promise you he shall have plenty to eat.”

“Willingly,” answered the King.

Far off in the kitchen Rainouart was chafing at the sound of the horses’ hoofs, and at the scraps of talk let fall by the Knights, who were seeing to the burnishing of their armour before they started to fight the Saracens. “To think,” he said to himself, “that I, who am of right King of Spain, should be loitering here, heaping logs on the fire and skimming the pot. But let King Louis look to himself! Before a year is past I will snatch the crown from his head.”

When the army was ready to march he made up his mind what to do, and it was thus that he sought out William in the great hall. “Noble Count, let me come with you, I implore you. I can help to look after the horses and cook the food, and if at any time blows are needed I can strike as well as any man.”

“Good fellow,” answered William, who wished to try what stuff he was made of, “how could you, who have passed your days in the kitchen, sleeping on the hearth when you were not busy turning the spit — how could you bear all the fatigue of war, the long fasts, and the longer watches? Before a month had passed you would be dead by the roadside!”

“Try me,” said he, “and if you will not have me I will go alone, and fight barefoot. My only weapon will be an iron-bound staff, and it shall kill as many Saracens as the best sword among you all.”

“Come then,” answered the Count.

PART IX.

The next morning the army set forth, and Alix and the Queen watched them go from the steps of the Palace. When Alix saw Rainouart stepping proudly along with his heavy staff on his shoulder her heart stirred, and she said to her mother, “See, what a goodly young man! In the whole army there is not one like him! Let me bid him farewell, for nevermore shall I see his match.”

“Peace! my daughter,” answered the Queen, “I hope indeed that he may never more return to Laon.” Alix took no heed of her mother’s words, but signed to Rainouart to draw near. Then she put her arms round his neck, and said, “Brother, you have been a long time at Court, and now you are going to fight under my uncle’s banner. If ever I have given you pain, I ask your pardon.” After that she kissed him, and bade him go.

At Orleans William took leave of his father and his mother, who returned to their home at Narbonne; and also of his brothers, who promised to return to meet William under the walls of Orange, which they did faithfully.

He pressed on with his army quickly till he came in sight of his native city. But little of it could he see, for a great smoke covered all the land, rising up from the burning towers which the Saracens had that morning set on fire. Enter the city they could not, for Gibourc and her ladies held it firm, and, armed with helmets and breastplates, flung stones upon the enemy.

When William beheld the smoke, and whence it came, he cried: “Orange is burning! Gibourc is carried captive! To arms! To arms!” And he spurred his horse, Rainouart running by his side.

From her tower Gibourc saw through the smoke a thousand banners waving and the sparkle of armour, and heard the sound of the horses’ hoofs, and it seemed to her that the Saracens were drawing near anew. “O William!” cried she, “have you really forgotten me? Noble Count, you linger overlong! Never more shall I look upon your face.” And so saying she fell fainting on the floor.

But something stirred the pulses of Gibourc, and she soon sat up again, and there at the gate was William, with Rainouart behind him. “Fear nothing, noble lady,” said he, “it is the army of France that I have brought with me. Open, and welcome to us!”

The news seemed so good to Gibourc that she could not believe it, and she bade the Count unlace his helmet, so that she might indeed be sure that it was he. William did her bidding, then she ran swiftly to the gate and let down the drawbridge, and William stepped across it and embraced her tenderly. Then he ordered his army to take up its quarters in the city.

PART X.

Gibourc’s eyes had fallen upon Rainouart, who had passed her on his way to the kitchen, where he meant to leave his stout wooden staff. “Tell me,” said she to the Count, “who is the young man who bears lightly on his shoulder that huge piece of wood which would weigh down a horse? He is handsome and well made. Where did you find him?”

“Lady,” answered William, “he was given me by the King.”

“My Lord,” said Gibourc, “be sure you see that he is honourably treated. He looks to me to be of high birth. Has he been baptised?”

“No, Madam, he is not a Christian. He was brought from Spain as a child, and kept for seven years in the kitchen. But take him, I pray you, under your protection, and do with him as you will.”

The Count was hungry, and while waiting for dinner to be served he stood with Gibourc at the windows which looked out beyond the city. An army was drawing near; thousands of men, well mounted and freshly equipped. “Gibourc!” cried the Count joyfully, “here is my brother Ernaut with his vassals. Now all the Saracens in the world shall not prevent Bertrand from being delivered to-morrow.”

On all sides warriors began to arrive, led by the fathers of those who had been taken prisoners with Bertrand, and with them came Aimeri and the brothers of William. Glad was the heart of the Count as he bade them welcome to his Palace, and ordered a feast to be made ready, and showed each Knight where he should sit.

It was late before the supper was served, but when every man had his trencher filled Rainouart entered the hall, armed with his staff, and stood leaning against a pillar, watching the noble company. “Sir,” said Aimeri, the man whom the Saracens most dreaded, “who is it that I see standing there holding a piece of wood that five peasants could hardly lift? Does he mean to murder us?”

“That youth,” replied William, “is a gift to me from King Louis. None living is as strong as he.” Then Aimeri called Rainouart, and bade him sit at his side, and eat and drink as he would. “Noble Count,” said Aimeri, “such men grow not on every bush. Keep him and cherish him, and bring him with you to the Aliscans. For with his staff he will slay many Pagans.”

“Yes,” answered Rainouart, “wherever I appear the Pagans will fall dead at the sight of me.” Aimeri and William laughed to hear him, but ere four days were past they had learned what he was worth.

PART XI.

Rainouart went back to the kitchen and slept soundly, but as he had drunk much wine the cooks and scullions thought to play jokes upon him, and lighted some wooden shavings with which to burn his moustache. At the first touch of the flame Rainouart leapt to his feet, seized the head cook by his legs, flung him on to the blazing fire, and turned for another victim, but they had all fled.

At daybreak they went to William to pray for vengeance on the murderer of the cook. If the Count would not forbid him the kitchen, not a morsel of food would they cook. But William only laughed at their threats, and said, "Beware henceforth how you meddle with Rainouart. Did I not forbid anyone to mock at him, and do you dare to disobey my orders? Lady Gibourc, take Rainouart to your chamber, and keep him beside you."

So the Countess went to the kitchen and found Rainouart sitting on a bench, his head leaning against his staff. She sat down by him and said graciously, "Brother, come with me and we will have some talk together."

"Willingly," answered Rainouart, "the more so that I can hardly keep my hands off these scoundrels."

He followed Gibourc to her room, and then she questioned him about his childhood.

"Have you brothers or sisters?" asked she.

"Yes," he answered, "beyond the sea I have a brother who is a King, and a sister who is more beautiful than a fairy," and as he spoke he bent his head. Something in her heart told Gibourc that this might be her brother, but she only asked again, "Where do you come from?"

"Lady," he replied, "I will answer that question the day I come back from the battle which William shall have won, thanks to my aid."

Gibourc kept silence, but she opened a chest and drew from it a white breastplate that had belonged to her uncle, which was so finely wrought that no sword could pierce it; likewise a helmet of steel and a sword that could cut through iron more easily than a scythe cuts grass. "My friend," she said, "buckle this sword to your side. It may be useful to you."

Rainouart took the sword and drew it from its scabbard, but it seemed so light that he threw it down again. "Lady," he cried, "what good can such a plaything do me? But with my staff between my hands there is not a Pagan that can stand up against me, and if one escapes then let Count William drive me from his door."

At this Gibourc felt sure this was indeed her brother, but she did not yet like to ask him more questions, and in her joy she began to weep. "Lady," said Rainouart, "do not weep. As long as my staff is whole William shall be safe."

"My friend, may Heaven protect you," she answered, "but a man without armour is soon cut down; so take these things and wear them in battle," and she laced on the helmet, and buckled the breastplate, and fastened the sword on his thigh. "If your staff breaks, it may serve you," said she.

Rainouart was proud indeed when the armour was girded on him, and he sat himself down well pleased at William’s table. The Knights vied with each other in pouring him out bumpers of wine, and after dinner every man tried to lift his iron-bound staff, but none could raise it from the ground, except William himself, who by putting forth all his strength lifted it the height of a foot.

“Let me aid you,” said Rainouart, and he whirled it round his head, throwing it lightly from hand to hand. “We are wasting time,” he said. “I fear lest the Saracens should fly before we come up with them. If I only have the chance to make them feel the weight of my staff, I will soon sweep the battlefield.” And William embraced him for these words, and ordered the trumpets to be sounded and the army to march.

From her window Gibourc watched them go. She saw the Knights stream out into the plain, their banners floating on the wind, their helmets shining in the sun, their shields glittering with gold. She heard their horses neigh, and she prayed God to bless all this noble host.

PART XII.

After two days’ march they came within sight of the Aliscans, but for five miles round the country was covered by the Saracen army. William saw that some of his men quailed at the number of the foe, so he turned and spoke to his soldiers. “My good lords,” he said, “a fearful battle awaits us, and we must not give way an inch. If any man feels afraid let him go back to his own land. This is no place for cowards.”

The cowards heard joyfully, and without shame took the road by which they had come. They spurred their horses and thought themselves safe, but they rejoiced too soon.

At the mouth of a bridge Rainouart met them, and when he saw that they were part of the Christian host he raised his staff and barred their passage. “Where are you going?” asked he. “To France, for rest,” answered the cowards; “the Count has dismissed us, and when we reach our homes we shall see to the rebuilding of our castles, which have fallen into ill-repair during the wars. Come with us, if you are a wise man.”

“Ask some one else,” said Rainouart; “Count William has given me the command of the army, and it is to him that I have to render account. Do you think I shall let you run away like hares?” And, swinging his staff round his head, he laid about him.

Struck dumb with terror at the sight of their comrades falling rapidly round them, they cried with one voice, “Sir Rainouart, we will return and fight with you.”

So they turned their horses’ heads and rode the way they had come, and Rainouart followed, keeping guard over them with his staff. When they reached the army he went straight to William, and begged that he might have the command of them. “I will change them into a troop of lions,” said he.

Harsh words and gibes greeted the cowards, but Rainouart soon forced the mockers to silence. “Leave my men alone!” he cried, “or by the faith I owe to Gibourc I will make you. I am a King’s son, and the time has come to show you what manner of man I am. I have idled long, but I will idle no longer. I am of the blood royal, and the saying is true that good blood cannot lie.”

“How well he speaks!” whispered the Franks to each other, for they dared not let their voices be heard.

PART XIII.

Now the battle was to begin, for the two armies were drawn up in fighting array, and Rainouart took his place at the head of his cowards opposite the Saracens, from which race he sprang.

The charge was sounded, and the two armies met with a shock, and many a man fell from his horse and was trampled under foot. “Narbonne! Narbonne!” shouted Aimeri, advancing within reach of a crossbow shot, and he would have been slain had not his sons dashed to his rescue. Count William did miracles, and the Saracens were driven so far back that Rainouart feared the battle would be ended before he had struck a blow.

Followed by his troop of cowards Rainouart made straight for the enemy, and before him they fell as corn before a sickle. “Strike, soldiers,” shouted he; “strike and avenge the noble Vivian.”

Rainouart and his cowards pressed on and on, and the Saracens fell back, step by step, till they reached the sea, where their ships were anchored.

Then Rainouart drove his staff in the sand, and by its help swung himself on board a small vessel, which happened to be the very one in which the nephews of William were imprisoned. He laid about him right and left with his staff, till he had slain all the gaolers, and at last he came to a young man whose eyes were bandaged and his feet tied together. “Who are you?” asked Rainouart.

“I am Bertrand, nephew of William Short Nose. Four months ago I was taken captive by the Saracens, and if, as I think, they carry me into Arabia, then may God have pity on my soul, for it is all over with my body.”

“Sir Count,” answered Rainouart, “for love of William I will deliver you.”

Seizing the weapons of the dead Saracens, they scrambled on shore, and, while fighting for their lives, looked about for their uncle, whom they knew at last by the sweep of his sword, which kept a clear space around him. More than once Rainouart swept back fresh foes that were pressing forwards, till the tide of battle carried him away and brought him opposite Desramé the King. “Who are you?” asked Desramé, struck by his face, for there was nothing royal in his dress or his arms.

“I am Rainouart, vassal of William whom I love, and if you do hurt to him I will do hurt to you also.”

“Rainouart, I am your father,” cried Desramé, and he besought him to forswear Christianity and to become a follower of Mahomet; but Rainouart turned a deaf ear, and challenged him to continue the combat. Desramé was no match for his son, and was soon struck from his horse. “Oh, wretch that I am,” said Rainouart to himself, “I have slain my brothers and wounded my father — it is my staff which has done all this evil,” and he flung it far from him. He would have been wiser to have kept it, for in a moment three giants surrounded him, and he had only his fists with which to beat them back. Suddenly his hand touched the sword buckled on him by Gibourc, which he had forgotten, and he drew it from its scabbard, and with three blows clove the heads of the giants in twain. Meanwhile King Desramé took refuge in the only ship that had not been sunk by the Christians, and spread its sails. “Come back whenever you like, fair father,” called Rainouart after him.

PART XIV.

The fight was over; the Saracens acknowledged that they were beaten, and the booty they had left behind them was immense. The army, wearied with the day’s toil, lay down to sleep, but before midnight Rainouart was awake and trumpets called to arms. “Vivian must be buried,” said he, “and then the march to Orange will begin.”

Rainouart rode at the head, his sword drawn, prouder than a lion; and as he went along a poor peasant threw himself before him, asking for vengeance on some wretches who had torn up a field of beans, which was all he had with which to feed his family. Rainouart ordered the robbers to be brought before him and had them executed. Then he gave to the peasant their horses and their armour in payment of the ruined beans. “Ah, it has turned out a good bargain for me,” said the peasant. “Blessed be the hour when I sowed such a crop.”

William entered into his Palace, where a great feast was spread for the visitors, but one man only remained outside the walls and that was Rainouart, of whom no one thought in the hour of triumph. His heart swelled with bitterness as he thought of the blows he had given, and the captives he had set free, and, weeping with anger, he turned his face towards the Aliscans.

On the road some Knights met him, and asked him whither he was going and why he looked so sad. Then his wrath and grief burst out, and he told how he mourned that ever he had slain a man in William's cause, and that he was now hastening to serve under the banner of Mahomet, and would shortly return with a hundred thousand men behind him, and would avenge himself on France and her King. Only towards Alix would he show any pity!

In vain the Knights tried to soften his heart, it was too sore to listen. So they rode on fast to Orange and told the Count what Rainouart had said.

"I have done him grievous wrong," answered William, and ordered twenty Knights to ride after him. But the Knights were received with threats and curses, and came back to Orange faster than they had left it, thinking that Rainouart was at their heels.

William smiled when he heard the tale of his messengers, and bade them bring his horse, and commanded that a hundred Knights should follow him, and prayed Gibourc to ride at his side. They found Rainouart entering a vessel whose sails were already spread, and all William's entreaties would have availed nothing had not Gibourc herself implored his forgiveness.

"I am your brother," cried Rainouart, throwing himself on her neck; "I may confess it now, and for your sake I will pardon the Count's ingratitude, and never more will I remind you of it."

There was great joy in Orange when William rode through the gates with Rainouart beside him, and the next day the Count made him his Seneschal, and he was baptised. Then William sent his brothers on an embassy to the King in Paris, to beg that he would bestow the hand of Princess Alix on Rainouart, son of King Desramé and brother of Lady Gibourc. And when the embassy returned Alix returned with it, and the marriage took place with great splendour; but to the end of his life, whenever Rainouart felt cold, he warmed himself in the kitchen.

THE SWORD EXCALIBUR

King Arthur had fought a hard battle with the tallest Knight in all the land, and though he struck hard and well, he would have been slain had not Merlin enchanted the Knight and cast him into a deep sleep, and brought the King to a hermit who had studied the art of healing, and cured all his wounds in three days. Then Arthur and Merlin waited no longer, but gave the hermit thanks and departed.

As they rode together Arthur said, “I have no sword,” but Merlin bade him be patient and he would soon give him one. In a little while they came to a large lake, and in the midst of the lake Arthur beheld an arm rising out of the water, holding up a sword. “Look!” said Merlin, “that is the sword I spoke of.” And the King looked again, and a maiden stood upon the water. “That is the Lady of the Lake,” said Merlin, “and she is coming to you, and if you ask her courteously she will give you the sword.” So when the maiden drew near Arthur saluted her and said, “Maiden, I pray you tell me whose sword is that which an arm is holding out of the water. I wish it were mine, for I have lost my sword.”

“That sword is mine, King Arthur,” answered she, “and I will give it to you, if you in return will give me a gift when I ask you.”

“By my faith,” said the King, “I will give you whatever gift you ask.” “Well,” said the maiden, “get into the barge yonder, and row yourself to the sword, and take it and the scabbard with you.” For this was the sword Excalibur. “As for *my* gift, I will ask it in my own time.”

Then King Arthur and Merlin dismounted from their horses and tied them up safely, and went into the barge, and when they came to the place where the arm was holding the sword Arthur took it by the handle, and the arm disappeared. And they brought the sword back to land.

As they rode the King looked lovingly on his sword, which Merlin saw, and, smiling, said, “Which do you like best, the sword or the scabbard?” “I like the sword,” answered Arthur. “You are not wise to say that,” replied Merlin, “for the scabbard is worth ten of the sword, and as long as it is buckled on you, you will lose no blood, however sorely you may be wounded.”

So they rode into the town of Carlion, and Arthur’s Knights gave them a glad welcome, and said it was a joy to serve under a King who risked his life as much as any common man.

HOW GRETTIR THE STRONG BECAME AN OUTLAW.

I

Now Grettir had a strong wish to go to Norway, for Earl Svein had fled the country after being beaten in a battle, and Olaf the Saint held sole rule as King.

There was also a man named Thorir of Garth who had been in Norway, and was a friend of the King; this man was anxious to send out his sons to become the King’s men. The sons accordingly sailed, and came to a haven at Stead, where they remained some days, during stormy weather.

Grettir also had sailed after them, and the crew bore down on Stead, being hard put to it by reason of foul weather, snow and frost; and they were all worn, weary and wet. To save expense they did not put into the harbour, but lay to beside a dyke, where, though perished with cold, they could not light a fire.

As the night wore on they saw that a great fire was burning on the opposite side of the sound up which they had sailed, and fell to talking and wondering whether any man might fetch that fire.

Grettir said little, but made ready for swimming; he had on but a cape and sail-cloth breeches. He girt up the cape and tied a rope strongly round his middle, and had with him a cask; then he leaped overboard and swam across. There he saw a house, and heard much talking and noise, so he turned towards it, and found it to be a house of refuge for coasting sailors; twelve men were inside sitting round a great fire on the floor, drinking, and these were the sons of Thorir.

When Grettir burst in he knew not who was there; he himself seemed huge of bulk, for his cape was frozen all over into ice; therefore the men took him to be some evil troll, and smote at him with anything that lay to hand; but Grettir put all blows aside, snatched up some firebrands, and swam therewith back to the ship. Grettir’s comrades were mightily pleased, and bepraised him and his journey and his prowess.

Next morning they crossed the sound, but found no house, only a great heap of ashes, and therein many bones of men. They asked if Grettir had done this misdeed; but he said it had happened even as he had expected.

The men said wherever they came that Grettir had burnt those people; and the news soon spread that the victims were the sons of Thorir of Garth.

Grettir therefore now grew into such bad repute that he was driven from the ship, and scarcely any one would say a good word for him. As matters were so hopeless he determined to explain all to the King, and offer to free himself from the slander by handling hot iron without being burned.

His ill-luck still pursued him, for when all was ready in the Church where the ceremony was about to take place, a wild-looking lad, or, as some said, an unclean spirit, started up from no one knew where, and spoke such impertinent words to Grettir that he felled him with a blow of his fist.

After this the King would not allow the ceremony to go on: “Thou art far too luckless a man to abide with us, and if ever man has been cursed, of all men must thou have been,” said he; and advised him to go back to Iceland in the summer.

Meanwhile Asmund the Greyhaired died, and was buried at Biarg, and Atli succeeded to his goods, but was soon afterwards basely murdered by a neighbouring chief, who bore him ill-will for his many friendships, and grudged him his possessions.

Thorir of Garth brought a suit at the Thing to have Grettir outlawed for the burning of his sons; but Skapti the Lawman thought it scarcely fair to condemn a man unheard, and spoke these wise words: “A tale is half told if one man tells it, for most folk are readiest to bring their stories to the worser side when there are two ways of telling them.”

Thorir, however, was a man of might, and had powerful friends; these between them pushed on the suit, and with a high hand rather than according to law obtained their decree. Thus was Grettir outlawed for a deed of which he was innocent.

Next, Grettir’s enemy Thorir of Garth heard of his whereabouts, and prevailed upon one Thorir Redbeard to attempt to slay him.

So Redbeard laid his plans, with the object, as it is quaintly phrased, of “winning” Grettir. He, however, declined to be “won,” for Redbeard fared no better than Grim.

He tried to slay the outlaw while he was swimming back from his nets, but Grettir sank like a stone and swam along the bottom, till he reached a place where he could land unseen by Redbeard. He then came on him from behind, while Redbeard was still looking for his appearance out of the water; heaved him over his head, and caused him to fall so heavily that his weapon fell out of his hand. Grettir seized it and smote off his head.

DEATH OF GRETTIR THE STRONG.

About this time, Grettir having been so many years in outlawry, many thought that the sentence should be annulled, and it was deemed certain that he would be pardoned in the next ensuing summer; but they who had owned the island were discontented at the prospect of his acquittal, and urged Angle either to give back the island or slay Grettir.

Now Angle had a foster-mother, Thurid; she was old and cunning in witchcraft, which she had learnt in her youth; for though Christianity had now been established in the island, yet there remained still many traces of heathendom.

Angle and she put out a ten-oared boat to pick a quarrel with Grettir, of which the upshot was that the outlaw threw a huge stone into the boat, where the witch lay covered up with wrappings, and broke her leg. Angle had to endure many taunts at the failure of all his attempts to outplay Grettir.

One day, Thurid was limping along by the sea, when she found a large log, part of the trunk of a tree. She cut a flat space on it, carved magic characters, or runes, on the root, reddened them with her blood, and sang witch-words over them; then she walked backwards round it, and widdershins — which means in a direction against the sun — and thrust the log out to sea under many strong spells, in such wise that it should drive out to Drangey.

In the teeth of the wind it went, till it came to the island, where Illugi and Grettir saw it, but knowing it boded them ill, they thrust it out from shore; yet next morning was it there again, nearer the ladders than before; but again they drove it out to sea.

The days wore on to summer, and a gale sprang up with wet; the brothers being short of firewood, Noise was sent down to the shore to look for drift, grumbling at being ordered out in bad weather, when, lo! the log was there again, and he fetched it up.

Grettir was angry with Noise, and not noticing what the log was, hewed at it with his axe, which glanced from the wood and cut into his leg, right down to the bone.

Illugi bound it up, and at first it seemed as though the wound was healed. But after a time his leg took to paining Grettir, and became blue and swollen, so that he could not sleep, and Illugi watched by him night and day.

At this time Thurid advised Angle to make another attempt on the island; he therefore gathered a force of a dozen men together, and set sail in very foul weather, but no sooner had they reached open sea than the wind lulled, so they came to Drangey at dusk.

Noise had been told to guard the ladders, and had gone out as usual with very ill grace; he thought to himself he would not draw them up, so he lay down there and fell asleep, remaining all day long in slumber till Angle came to the island.

Mounting the ladders, he and his men found Noise snoring at the top; arousing him roughly, they learned from him what had happened, and how Grettir lay sick in the hut with Illugi tending him.

Angle thrashed Noise soundly for betraying his master, and the men made for the hut. Illugi guarded the door with the greatest valour, and when they thrust at him with spears he struck off all the spear heads from the shafts.

But some of the men leapt up on to the roof, tore away the thatch, and broke one of the rafters. Grettir thrust up with a spear and killed one man, but he could not rise from his knee by reason of his wound; the others leapt down and attacked him; young Illugi threw his shield over him and made defence for both in most manly wise.

Grettir killed another man, whose body fell upon him, so that he could not use his sword; wherefore Angle at that moment was able to stab him between the shoulders, and many another wound they gave him till they thought he was dead.

Angle took Grettir’s short sword and struck at the head of the body with such force that a piece of the sword-blade was nicked out. So died Grettir, the bravest man of all who ever dwelt in Iceland.

THE STRANGE STORY BOOK by Mrs. Lang

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PREFACE

TO THE CHILDREN

And now the time has come to say good-bye; and good-byes are always so sad that it is much better when we do not know that we have got to say them. It is so long since Beauty and the Beast and Cinderella and Little Red Riding Hood came out to greet you in the 'Blue Fairy Book,' that some of you who wore pigtails or sailor suits in those days have little boys and girls of your own to read the stories to now, and a few may even have little baby grandchildren. Since the first giants and enchanted princes and ill-treated step-daughters made friends with you, a whole new world of wheels and wings and sharp-voiced bells has been thrown open, and children have toy motors and aeroplanes which take up all their thoughts and time. You may see them in the street bending over pictures of the last machine which has won a prize of a thousand pounds, and picturing to themselves the day when *they* shall invent something finer still, that will fly higher and sail faster than any of those which have gone before it.

Now as this is the very last book of all this series that began in the long long ago, perhaps you may like to hear something of the man who thought over every one of the twenty-five, for fear lest a story should creep in which he did not wish his little boys and girls to read. He was born when nobody thought of travelling in anything but a train — a very slow one — or a steamer. It took a great deal of persuasion to induce him later to get into a motor and he had not the slightest desire to go up in an aeroplane — or to possess a telephone. Somebody once told him of a little boy who, after giving a thrilling account at luncheon of how Randolph had taken Edinburgh Castle, had expressed a desire to go out and see the Museum; 'I like old things better than new,' said the child! 'I wish I knew that little boy,' observed the man. 'He would just suit me.' And that was true, for he too loved great deeds of battle and adventure as well as the curious carved and painted fragments guarded in museums which show that the lives described by Homer and the other old poets were not tales made up by them to amuse tired crowds gathered round a hall fire, but were real — real as our lives now, and much more beautiful and splendid. Very proud he was one day when he bought, in a little shop on the way to Kensington Gardens, a small object about an inch high which to his mind exactly answered to the description of the lion-gate of Mycenæ, only that *now* the lions have lost their heads, whereas in the plaster copy from the shop they still had eyes to look at you and mouths to eat you. His friends were all sent for to give their opinion on this wonderful discovery, but no two thought alike about it. One declared it dated from the time of Solomon or of Homer himself, and of course it would have been delightful to believe that! but then somebody else was quite certain it was no more than ten years old, while the rest made different guesses. To this day the question is undecided, and very likely always will be.

All beasts were his friends, just because they *were* beasts, unless they had been very badly brought up. He never could resist a cat, and cats, like beggars, tell each other these things and profit by them. A cat knew quite well that it had only to go on sitting for a few days outside the window where the man was writing, and that if it began to snow or even to rain, the window would be pushed up and the cat would spend the rest of its days stretched in front of the fire, with a saucer of milk beside it, and fish for every meal.

But life with cats was not all peace, and once a terrible thing happened when Dickon-draw-the-blade was the Puss in Possession. His master was passing through London on the way to take a journey to some beautiful old walled towns in the south of France where the English fought in the Hundred Years War, and he meant to spend a few weeks in the country along the Loire which is bound up with the memory of Joan of Arc. Unluckily, the night after he arrived from Scotland Dickon went out for a walk on the high trellis behind the house, and once there did not know how to get down again. Of course it was quite easy, and there were ropes of Virginia creeper to help, but Dickon lost his presence of mind, and instead of doing anything sensible only stood and shrieked, while his master got ladders and steps and clambered about in the dark and in the cold, till he put Dickon on the ground again. Then Dickon’s master went to bed, but woke up so ill that he was obliged to do without the old towns, and go when he was better to a horrid place called Cannes, all dust and tea-parties.

Well, besides being fond of beasts, he loved cricket, and he never could be in a house with a garden for half an hour without trying to make up a cricket team out of the people who were sitting about declaring it was too hot to do anything at all; yet somehow or other, in ten minutes they were running and shouting with the rest. He would even turn a morning call to account in this way. Many years ago, a young lady who wished to introduce a new kind of dancing and thought he might be of use to her, begged a friend to invite them to meet. They did meet, but before a dozen words had been exchanged one was on the lawn and the other in the drawing-room, and there they remained to the end of the visit.

Do you love ghosts? So did he, and often and often he wanted to write you a book of the deadliest, creepiest ghost-stories he could find or invent, but he was afraid: afraid not of the children of course, but of their mothers, who were quite certain that if such a volume were known only to be in print, all kinds of dreadful things would happen to their sons and daughters. Perhaps they might have; nobody can prove that they wouldn't. At any rate, it was best to be on the safe side, so the book was never written.

The books that told of wonderful deeds enthralled him too, and these he read over and over again. He could have stood a close examination of Napoleon's battles and generals, and would have told you the ground occupied by every regiment when the first shot was fired at Waterloo. As for travelling, he longed to see the places where great events had happened, but travelling tired him, and after all, when it came to the point, what was there in the world better than Scotland? As long as he could lie by a burn with a book in his pocket, watching the fish dancing in and out, he did not care so very much even about catching them. And he lay so still that two or three times a little bird came and perched on his rod — once it was a blue and green kingfisher — and he went home brimming with pride at the compliment the bird had paid him. Wherever he stayed, children were his friends, and he would tell them stories and write them plays and go on expeditions with them to ghost-haunted caves or historic castles. He would adapt himself to them and be perfectly satisfied with their company, and there is certainly one story of his own which owes its ending to a little girl, though in the Preface he was careful to speak of her as 'The Lady.'

Everything to do with the ideas and customs of savages interested him, and perhaps if some of you go away by and bye to wild parts of the world, you will make friends with the people whose stories you may have read in some of the Christmas books. But remember that savages and seers of fairyland are just like yourselves, and they will never tell their secrets to anyone who they feel will laugh at them. This man who loved fairies was paying a visit in Ireland several years ago and the girls in the house informed him that an old peasant in the hills was learned in all the wisdom and spells of the little folk. He perhaps might be persuaded to tell them a little, he did sometimes, but never if his own family were about— 'they only mocked at him,' he said. It was a chance not to be missed; arrangements were made to send his daughters out of the way, and the peasant's fairy-tales were so entertaining that it was hours before the party came back.

Well, there does not seem much more to add except to place at the end of these pages a poem which should have gone into the very first Fairy Book, but by some accident was left out. It is only those who know how to shake off the fetters of the outside world, and to sever themselves from its noise and scramble, that can catch the sound of a fairy horn or the rush of fairy feet. The little girl in the poem had many friends in fairyland as well as pets among the wood folk, and she has grown up among the books year by year, sometimes writing stories herself of the birds and beasts she has tamed, and being throughout her life the dearest friend of the man who planned the Christmas books twenty-five years ago.

TO ELSPETH ANGELA CAMPBELL

Too late they come, too late for you,
These old friends that are ever new,
Enchanted in our volume blue.
For you ere now have wandered o’er
A world of tales untold of yore,
And learned the later fairy lore!
Nay, as within her briery brake,
The Sleeping Beauty did awake,
Old tales may rouse them for your sake.
And you once more may voyage through
The forests that of old we knew,
The fairy forests deep in dew,
Where you, resuming childish things,
Shall listen when the Blue Bird sings, And sit at feasts with fairy kings,

And taste their wine, ere all be done, And face more welcome shall be none
Among the guests of Oberon.
Ay, of that feast shall tales be told, The marvels of that world of gold
To children young, when you are old.
When you are old! Ah, dateless when,
For youth shall perish among men,
And Spring herself be ancient then.
A. L.

1889.

THE DROWNED BUCCANEER

The story of Wolfert Webber was said by Louis Stevenson to be one of the finest treasure-seeking stories in the world; and as Stevenson was a very good judge, I am going to tell it to you.

Wolfert's ancestor, Cobus Webber, was one of the original settlers who came over from Holland and established themselves on the coast of what is now the State of New York. Like most of his countrymen, Cobus was a great gardener, and devoted himself especially to cabbages, and it was agreed on all sides that none so large or so sweet had ever been eaten by anybody.

Webber's house was built after the Dutch pattern, and was large and comfortable. Birds built their nests under the eaves and filled the air with their singing, and a button-wood tree, which was nothing but a sapling when Cobus planted his first cabbage, had become a monster overshadowing half the garden in the days of his descendant Wolfert early in the eighteenth century.

The button-wood tree was not the only thing that had grown during those years. The city known at first as 'New Amsterdam,' and later as 'New York,' had grown also, and surrounded the house of the Webbers. But if the family could no longer look from the windows at the beautiful woods and rivers of the countryside, as their forefathers had done, there was no reason to drive a cart about from one village to another to see who wanted cabbages, for now the housewives came to Wolfert to choose their own, which saved a great deal of trouble.

Yet, though Wolfert sold all the cabbages he could raise, he did not become rich as fast as he wished, and at length he began to wonder if he was becoming rich at all. Food was dearer than when he was a boy, and other people besides himself had taken to cabbage-growing. His daughter was nearly a woman, and would want a portion if she married. Was there no way by which he could make the money that would be so badly needed by and bye?

Thinking of those things, Wolfert walked out one blustering Saturday afternoon in the autumn to a country inn near the sea, much frequented by the Dutchmen who lived within reach. The usual guests were gathered round the hearth, and in a great leather armchair sat Ramm Rapelye, a wealthy and important person, and the first white child born in the State. Wolfert drew up a chair and stared moodily into the fire till he was startled by a remark of the landlord's, which seemed to chime in exactly with his thoughts.

‘This will be a rough night for the money-diggers,’ said he.

‘What! are they at their works again?’ asked a one-eyed English captain.

‘Ay, indeed,’ answered the landlord; ‘they have had great luck of late. They say a great pot of gold has been dug up just behind Stuyvesant’s orchard. It must have been buried there in time of war by old Stuyvesant, the governor.’

‘Yes,’ said Peechy Prauw, another of the group. ‘Money has been dug up all over the island from time to time. The lucky man has always dreamt of the treasure three times beforehand, and, what is more wonderful still, nobody has ever found it who does not come from the old Dutch settlers — a sure proof that it was a Dutchman that buried it.’

That evening Wolfert went home feeling as if he was walking on air. The soil of the place must be full of gold, and how strange it was that so little of it should yet be upturned! He was so excited that he never listened to a word his wife said, and went to bed with his mind full of the talk he had heard.

His dreams carried on his last waking thoughts. He was digging in his garden, and every spadeful of mould that he threw up laid bare handfuls of golden coins or sparkling stones. Sometimes he even lighted on bags of money or heavy treasure-chests.

When he woke, his one wish was to know if his dream would be repeated the next two nights, for that, according to Peechy Prauw, was needful before you could expect to discover the treasure.

On the third morning he jumped up almost mad with delight, for he had had the three dreams, and never doubted that he could become rich merely by stretching out his hand. But even so, great caution was necessary, or other people might suspect and rob him of his wealth before he had time to place it in safety. So as soon as he thought his wife and daughter were sound asleep, he got softly out of bed and, taking his spade and a pickaxe, began to dig in the part of the garden furthest from the road. The cabbages he left lying about, not thinking it was worth while for such a rich man to trouble about them.

Of course, his wife and daughter quickly perceived what he was doing, but he would explain nothing, and grew so cross when they ventured to put him a question that they feared he was going out of his mind.

Then the frosts began and the ground for many weeks was too hard to dig. All day long he sat gazing into the fire and dreaming dreams, and his wife saw their savings slowly dwindling.

At last spring came — surely the winter had never before been so long! — and

Wolfert went gaily back to his digging; but not so much as a silver penny rewarded his labours. As the months passed by his energy became feverish, and his body thinner and thinner. His friends, one by one, ceased to come to his house, and at length his only visitor was a young man — Dick Waldron by name — whom he had rejected as a husband for his daughter on account of his poverty.

On a Saturday afternoon Wolfert left the house not knowing or caring where he was going, when suddenly he found himself close to the old inn by the sea-shore. It was a year since he had entered it, and several of the usual customers were now present, though in the great armchair once occupied by Ramm Rapelye a stranger was seated. He was an odd and forbidding-looking person, short, bow-legged, and very strong, with a scar across his face; while his clothes were such a jumble of curious garments that they might have been picked out of dust-heaps at various times. Wolfert did not know what to make of him, and turned to inquire of Peechy Prauw, who took him into a corner of the large hall and explained how the man came there. As to who he was, no one knew; but one night a great shouting had been heard from the water-side, and when the landlord went down with his negro servant he found the stranger seated on a huge oak sea-chest. No ship was in sight, nor boat of any kind. With great difficulty his chest was moved to the inn and put in the small room which he had taken, and there he had remained ever since, paying his bill every night and spending all day at the window, watching with his telescope the ships that went by. And if anyone had been there to notice, they would have seen that it was the little vessels and not the big ones that he examined most attentively.

By and bye, however, there was a change in the stranger’s habits. He spent less time in his room and more downstairs with the rest of the company, telling them wonderful stories of the pirates in the Spanish Main. Indeed, so well did he describe the adventures that his listeners were not slow in guessing that he had himself taken a chief part in them.

One evening the talk happened to turn on the famous Captain Kidd, most celebrated of buccaneers. The Englishman was relating, as he often did, all the traditions belonging to this hero, and the stranger who liked no one to speak but himself, could hardly conceal his impatience. At length the Englishman made some allusion to a voyage of Kidd’s up the Hudson river in order to bury his plunder in a secret place, and at these words the stranger could contain himself no longer.

‘Kidd up the Hudson?’ he exclaimed; ‘Kidd was *never* up the Hudson.’

‘I tell you he *was*,’ cried the other; ‘and they say he buried a quantity of treasure in the little flat called the Devil’s Hammer that runs out into the river.’

‘It is a lie,’ returned the stranger; ‘Kidd was *never* up the Hudson! What the plague do *you* know of him and his haunts?’

‘What do *I* know?’ echoed the Englishman. ‘Why, I was in London at the time of his trouble and saw him hanged.’

‘Then, sir, let me tell you that you saw as pretty a fellow hanged as ever trod shoe-leather, and there was many a landlubber looking on that had better have swung in his stead.’

Here Peechy Prauw struck in, thinking the discussion had gone far enough.

‘The gentleman is quite right,’ said he; ‘Kidd never did bury money up the Hudson, nor in any of these parts. It was Bradish and some of his buccaneers who buried money round here, though no one quite knew where: Long Island, it was said, or Turtle Bay, or in the rocks about Hellgate. I remember an adventure of old Sam, the negro fisherman, when he was a young man, which sounded as if it might have to do with the buccaneers. It was on a dark night many years ago, when Black Sam was returning from fishing in Hellgate—’ but Peechy got no further, for at this point the stranger broke in:

‘Hark’ee, neighbour,’ he cried; ‘you’d better let the buccaneers and their money alone,’ and with that the man rose from his seat and walked up to his room, leaving dead silence behind him. The spell was broken by a peal of thunder, and Peechy was begged to go on with his story, and this was it: —

Fifty years before, Black Sam had a little hut so far down among the rocks of the Sound that it seemed as if every high tide must wash it away. He was a hard-working young man, as active as a cat, and was a labourer at a farm on the island. In the summer evenings, when his work was done, he would hasten down to the shore and remove his light boat and go out to fish, and there was not a corner of the Sound that he did not know, from the Hen and Chickens to the Hog’s Back, from the Hog’s Back to the Pot, and from the Pot to the Frying Pan.

On this particular evening Sam had tried in turn all these fishing-grounds, and was so eager to fill his basket that he never noticed that the tide was ebbing fast, and that he might be cast by the currents on to some of the sharp rocks. When at length he looked up and saw where he was, he lost no time in steering his skiff to the point of Blackwell’s Island. Here he cast anchor, and waited patiently till the tide should flow again and he could get back safely. But as the night drew on, a great storm blew up and the lightning played over the shore. So before it grew too dark, Sam quickly changed his position and found complete shelter under a jutting rock on Manhattan Island, where a tree which had rooted itself in a cleft spread its thick branches over the sea.

‘I shan’t get wet, anyhow,’ thought Sam, who did not like rain, and, making his boat fast, he laid himself flat in the bottom and went to sleep.

When he awoke the storm had passed, and all that remained of it was a pale flash of lightning now and then. By the light of these flashes — for there was no moon — Sam was able to see how far the tide had advanced, and judged it must be near midnight. He was just about to loose the moorings of his skiff, as it was now safe to venture out to sea, when a glimmer on the water made him pause. What could it be? Not lightning certainly, but whatever it was, it was rapidly approaching him, and soon he perceived a boat gliding along in the shadow, with a lantern at the prow. Sam instantly crouched still farther into the shadow, and held his breath as a boat passed by, and pulled up in a small cave just beyond. Then a man jumped on shore, and, taking the lantern, examined all the rocks.

‘I’ve got it!’ he exclaimed to the rest. ‘Here is the iron ring,’ and, returning to the boat, he and the five others proceeded to lift out something very heavy, and staggered with it a little distance, when they paused to take breath. By the light of the lantern which one of them held on high, Sam perceived that five wore red woollen caps, while the man who had found the iron ring had on a three-cornered hat. All were armed with pistols, knives, and cutlasses, and some carried, besides, spades and pickaxes.

Slowly they climbed upwards towards a clump of thick bushes, and Sam silently followed them and scaled a rock which overlooked the path. At a sign from their leader they stopped, while he bent forward with the lantern, and seemed to be searching for something in the bushes.

‘Bring the spades,’ he said at last, and two men joined him and set to work on a piece of open ground.

‘We must dig deep, so that we shall run no risks,’ remarked one of the men, and Sam shivered, for he made sure that he saw before him a gang of murderers about to bury their victim. In his fright he had started, and the branches of the tree to which he was clinging rustled loudly.

‘What’s that?’ cried the leader. ‘There’s someone watching us,’ and the lantern was held up in the direction of the sound and Sam heard the cock of a pistol. Luckily his black face did not show in the surrounding dark, and the man lowered the lantern.

‘It was only some beast or other,’ he said, ‘and surely you are not going to fire a pistol and alarm the country?’

So the pistol was uncocked and the digging resumed, while the rest of the party bore their burden slowly up the bank. It was not until they were out of sight that Sam ventured to move as much as an eyelid; but great as his fear was, his curiosity was greater still, and instead of creeping back to his boat and returning home, he resolved to remain a little longer.

The sound of spades could now be heard, and as the men would all be busy digging the grave, Sam thought he might venture a little nearer.

Guided by the noise of the strokes he crawled upwards, till only a steep rock divided him from the diggers. As silently as before he raised himself to the top, feeling every ledge with his toes before he put his feet on it, lest he should dislodge a loose stone which might betray him. Then he peered over the edge and saw that the men were immediately below him — and far closer than he had any idea of. Indeed, they were so near that it seemed as if it were safer to keep his head where it was than to withdraw it.

By this time the turf was carefully being replaced over the grave, and dry leaves scattered above it.

‘I defy anybody to find it out!’ cried the leader at last, and Sam, forgetting everything, except his horror of their cruelty, exclaimed:

‘The murderers!’ but he did not know he had spoken aloud till he beheld the eyes of the whole gang fixed upon him.

‘Down with him,’ shouted they; and Sam waited for no more, but the next instant was flying for his life. Now he was crashing through undergrowth, now he was rolling down banks, now he was scaling rocks like a mountain goat; but when at length he came to the ridge at the back, where the river ran into the sea, one of the pirates was close behind him.

The chase appeared to be over; a steep wall of rock lay between Sam and safety, and in fancy he already heard the whiz of a bullet. At this moment he noticed a tough creeper climbing up the rock, and, seizing it with both hands, managed to swing himself up the smooth surface. On the summit he paused for an instant to take breath, and in the light of the dawn he was clearly visible to the pirate below. *This* time the whiz of the bullet was a reality, and it passed by his ear. In a flash he saw his chance of deceiving his pursuers and, uttering a loud yell, he threw himself on the ground and kicked a large stone lying on the edge into the river.

‘We’ve done for him now I *think*,’ remarked the leader, as his companions came panting up. ‘He’ll tell no tales; but we must go back and collect our booty, so that it shan’t tell tales either,’ and when their footsteps died away Sam clambered down from the rock and made his way to the skiff, which he pushed off into the current, for he did not dare to use the oars till he had gone some distance. In his fright he forgot all about the whirlpools of Pot and Frying Pan, or the dangers of the group of rocks right in the middle of Hellgate, known as the Hen and Chickens. Somehow or other he got safely home, and hid himself snugly for the rest of the day in the farmhouse where he worked.

This was the story told by Peechy Prauw, which had been listened to in dead silence by the men round the fire.

‘Is that all?’ asked one of them when Peechy stopped.

‘All that belongs to the story,’ answered he.

‘And did Sam never find out what they buried?’ inquired Wolfert.

‘Not that I know of,’ replied Peechy; ‘he was kept pretty hard at work after that, and, to tell the truth, I don’t think he had any fancy for another meeting with those gentlemen. Besides, places look so different by daylight that I doubt if he could have found the spot where they had dug the grave. And after all, what is the use of troubling about a dead body, if you cannot hang the murderers?’

‘But *was* it a dead body that was buried?’ said Wolfert.

‘To be sure,’ cried Peechy. ‘Why, it haunts the place to this day!’

‘Haunts!’ repeated some of the men, drawing their chairs nearer together.

‘Ay, haunts,’ said Peechy again. ‘Have none of you heard of Father Redcap that haunts the old farmhouse in the woods near Hellgate?’

‘Yes,’ replied one; ‘I’ve heard some talk of that, but I always took it for an old wives’ tale.’

‘Old wives’ tale or not,’ answered Peechy, ‘it stands not far from that very spot — and a lonely one it is, and nobody has ever been known to live in it. Lights are seen from time to time about the wood at night, and some say an old man in a red cap appears at the windows and that he is the ghost of the man who was buried in the bushes. Once — so my mother told me when I was a child — three soldiers took shelter there, and when daylight came they searched the house through from top to bottom and found old Father Red Cap in the cellar outside on a cider-barrel, with a jug in one hand and a goblet in the other. He offered them a drink, but just as one of the soldiers held out his hand for the goblet, a flash of lightning blinded them all three for several minutes, and when they could see again, Red Cap had vanished, and nothing but the cider-barrel remained.’

‘That’s all nonsense!’ exclaimed the Englishman.

‘Well, I don’t know that I don’t agree with you,’ answered Peechy; ‘but everybody knows there is something queer about the house. Still, as to that story of Black Sam’s, I believe it just as well as if it had happened to myself.’

In the silence that followed this discussion, the roar of the storm might plainly be heard, and the thunder grew louder and louder every moment. It was accompanied by the sound of guns coming up from the sea and by a loud shout, yet it was strange that, though the whole strait was constantly lit up by lightning, not a creature was to be seen.

Suddenly another noise was added to the rest. The window of the room above was thrown up, and the voice of the stranger was heard answering the shout from the sea. After a few words uttered in a language unknown to anyone present, there was a great commotion overhead, as if someone were dragging heavy furniture about. The negro servant was next called upstairs, and soon he appeared holding one handle of the great sea-chest, while the stranger clung to the other.

‘What!’ cried the landlord, stepping forward in surprise, and raising his lantern. ‘Are you going to sea in such a storm?’

‘Storm!’ repeated the stranger. ‘Do you call this sputter of weather a storm? Don’t preach about storms to a man whose life has been spent amongst whirlwinds and tornadoes,’ and as he spoke, the voice from the water rang out, calling impatiently.

‘Put out the light,’ it said. ‘No one wants lights here,’ and the stranger turned instantly and ordered the bystanders who had followed from curiosity, back to the inn.

But although they retired to a little distance, under the shadow of some rocks, they had no intention of going any further. By help of the lightning they soon discovered a boat filled with men, heading up and down under a rocky point close by, and kept in position with great difficulty by a boat-hook, for just there the current was strong. One of the crew reached forward to seize a handle of the stranger’s heavy sea-chest and assist the owner to place it on board. But his movement caused the boat to drift into the current, the chest slipped from the gunwale and fell into the sea, dragging the stranger with it, and in that pitch darkness and amidst those huge waves, no aid was possible. One flash, indeed, showed for an instant a pair of outstretched hands; but when the next one came, nothing was to be seen or heard but the roaring waters.

The storm passed at midnight, the men were able to return to their homes, casting, as they went along, fearful glances towards the sea. But the events of the evening, and the tales he had listened to, made a deep impression on the mind of Wolfert, and he wondered afresh if he were not the person destined to find the hidden treasure of Black Sam’s adventure. It was no dead body, he felt sure, that the pirates had buried on the island, but gold and, perhaps, jewels; and the next morning he lost no time in going over to the place and making cautious inquiries of the people who lived nearest to it.

‘Oh! yes,’ he was told, ‘he had heard quite right. Black Sam’s story had filtered out somehow, and many were the visits which had been paid to the wood by experienced money-diggers, though never once had they met with success. And more, it had been remarked that for ever after, the diggers had in every case been dogged by ill-luck.’ (This, thought Wolfert to himself, was because they had neglected some of the proper ceremonies necessary to be performed by every hunter after treasure.) ‘Why, the very last man who had dug there,’ went on the speakers, ‘had worked the whole night, in spite of two handfuls of earth being thrown in for one which he threw out. However, he persevered and managed to uncover an iron chest when, with a roar that might have been heard across the Sound, a crowd of strange figures sprang out of the hole and dealt him such blows that he was fain to betake himself to his boat as fast as his legs could carry him. This story the man told on his death-bed, so no doubt it was true.’

Now every tale of the sort only went to prove to Wolfert that Sam had actually seen the pirates burying the treasure, and he was quite determined to make an effort to obtain it for himself. The first thing to be done was to get Sam to serve as his guide, for many years had passed since his adventure, and the trees and bushes would have grown thickly about the hole.

The negro was getting old by this time, but he perfectly recollected all that had happened, though *his* tale was not quite the same as the one told by Peechy Prauw. But, he was an active man yet, and readily agreed to go with Wolfert for a couple of dollars. As to being afraid of ghosts or pirates, Sam had long forgotten that he had feared either.

This time the two made their expedition mostly on foot, and after walking five or six miles they reached a wood which covered the eastern part of the island. Here they struck into a deep dark lane overgrown with brambles and overshadowed by creepers, showing that it was seldom indeed that anybody went that way. The lane ended at the shore of the Sound, and just there were traces of a gap surrounded by trees that had become tall since the days when Sam last saw them. Near by stood the ruins of a house — hardly more than a heap of stones, which Wolfert guessed to be the one in Peechy Prauw’s story.

It was getting late, and there was something in the loneliness and desolation of the place which caused even Wolfert to feel uncomfortable. Not that he was specially brave, but his soul was so possessed with the idea of money-getting — or, rather, money-finding — that he had no thoughts to spare for other matters. He clung to Sam closely, scrambling along the edges of rocks which overhung the sea, till they came to a small cave. Then Sam paused and looked round; next he pointed to a large iron ring fastened to a sort of table-rock.

Wolfert’s eyes followed him, and glistened brightly and greedily. This was the ring of Peechy Prauw’s tale, and when the negro stooped to examine the rock more carefully, Wolfert fell on his knees beside him and was able to make out just above the ring three little crosses cut in the stone.

Starting from this point, Sam tried to remember the exact path that the pirates had taken, and after losing his way two or three times came to the ridge of rock from which he had overlooked the diggers. On the face of it also were cut three crosses, but if you had not known where to look you would never have found them, for they were nearly filled up with moss. It was plain that the diggers had left this mark for their guidance, but what was not so plain was where they had buried their treasure, for fifty years change many things. Sam fixed first on one spot and then on another — it must have been under that mulberry tree, he declared. Or stay, was it not beside that big white stone, or beneath that small green knoll? At length Wolfert saw that Sam could be certain of nothing, and as he had brought neither spade nor pickaxe nor lantern with him, decided that he had better content himself with taking notes of the place, and return to dig some other day.

On their way back Wolfert’s fancy began to play him strange tricks, as it has a way of doing when people are excited or very tired. He seemed to behold pirates hanging from every tree, and the fall of a nut or the rustling of a leaf caused him to jump and to feel for his companion. As they approached the garden of the ruined house, they saw a figure advancing along a mossy path with a heavy burden on his shoulders. On his head was a red cap, and he passed on slowly until he stopped at the door of what looked to be a burying-vault. Then he turned and shook his fist at them, and as Wolfert saw his face he recognised with horror the drowned buccaneer.

Wolfert did not need to look twice, but rushed away helter-skelter with Sam behind him, running nearly as fast as he had done fifty years before. Every stone they stumbled over they imagined to be the pirate’s foot stretched out to trip them up; every bramble that caught them to be his hands grasping at their clothes. They only breathed fully when Wolfert’s home was in sight.

It was several days before he recovered from the shock and the run combined, and all that time he behaved in such a strange manner that his wife and daughter were convinced that he was rapidly going mad. He would sit for hours together staring before him, and if a question was put to him, seldom gave a sensible answer. He scarcely ate any food, and if he *did* fall asleep, he talked about money-bags, and flung the blankets right and left, imagining that he was digging the earth out of the hole.

In this extremity the poor woman felt that the matter was beyond her skill, and she hastened to consult a German doctor famous for his learning. But the result was very different from what she had expected. At the doctor's first interview with Wolfert he questioned the patient closely as to all that he had seen and heard of the treasure, and at length told him that if he was ever to find it, it was necessary to proceed with the utmost caution and to observe certain ceremonies.

'You can never dig for money except at night,' ended the doctor, 'and then you must have the help of a divining rod. As I have some experience in these matters, you had better let me join in the search. If you agree to this, you can leave all preparations to me. In three days everything will be ready.'

Wolfert was delighted at this offer. Now, he thought, he was sure of success, and though he neglected his work as much as ever, he was so much brighter and happier than before that his wife congratulated herself on her wisdom in sending him to the doctor.

When the appointed night arrived Wolfert bade his women-kind go to bed and not to feel frightened if he should be out till daylight; and dressed in his wife's long, red cloak, with his wide felt hat tied down by his daughter's handkerchief, he set gaily out on his adventure.

The doctor was awaiting him, with a thick book studded with clasps under his arm, a basket of dried herbs and drugs in one hand, and the divining rod in the other. It was barely ten o'clock, but the whole village was fast asleep, and nothing was to be heard save the sound of their own footsteps. Yet, now and then it seemed to Wolfert that a third step mingled with theirs, and as he glanced round he fancied he saw a figure moving after them, keeping always in the shadow but stopping when they stopped, and proceeding when they proceeded.

Sam was ready for them and had put the spades and pickaxes in the bottom of his boat, together with a dark lantern. The tide was in their favour running fast up the Sound, so that oars were hardly needed. Very shortly they were passing the little inn where these strange adventures had begun; it was dark and still now, yet Wolfert thought he saw a boat lurking in the very place where he had beheld it on the night of the storm, but the shadow of the rocks lay so far over the water that he could be sure of nothing. Still, in a few minutes he was distinctly aware of the noise of oars, apparently coming from a long way off, and though both his companions were silent, it was evident from the stronger strokes instantly pulled by Sam that he had heard it also. In half an hour the negro shot his skiff into the little cave, and made it fast to the iron ring.

Even with the help of the notes he had taken, it was some time before Wolfert managed to hit on the exact spot where the treasure had been buried. After losing their way twice or thrice they reached the ledge of rock with the crosses on it, and at a sign from Wolfert the doctor produced the divining rod. This was a forked twig, and each of the forks was grasped in his hand, while the stem pointed straight upwards. The doctor held it at a certain distance above the ground, and frequently changed his position, and Wolfert kept the light of the lantern full on the twig, but it never stirred. Their hopes and their patience were nearly exhausted when the rod began slowly to turn, and went on turning until the stem pointed straight to the earth.

‘The treasure lies here,’ said the doctor.

‘Shall I dig?’ asked Sam.

‘No! no! not yet. And do not speak, whatever you see me do,’ and the doctor drew a circle round them and made a fire of dry branches and dead leaves. On this he threw the herbs and drugs he had brought with him, which created a thick smoke, and finished by reading some sentences out of the clasped book. His companions, nearly choked and blinded by the dense vapour, understood nothing of what was going on, and it is quite possible that there was not anything to understand, but the doctor thought that these ceremonies were necessary to the right beginning of any important adventure. At last he shut the book.

‘You can dig now,’ he said to Sam.

So the negro struck his pickaxe into the soil, which gave signs of not having been disturbed for many a long day. He very soon came to a bed of sand and gravel, and had just thrust his spade into it, when a cry came from Wolfert.

‘What is that?’ he whispered. ‘I fancied I heard a trampling among the dry leaves and a rustling through the bushes.’ Sam paused, and for a moment there was no sound to break the stillness. Then a bat flitted by, and a bird flew above the flames of the fire.

Sam continued to dig, till at length his spade struck upon something that gave out a hollow ring. He struck a second time, and turned to his companions.

‘It is a chest,’ he cried.

‘And full of gold, I’ll warrant,’ exclaimed Wolfert, raising his eyes to the doctor, who stood behind him. But beyond the doctor who was that? By the dying light of the lantern, peering over the rock, was the face of the drowned buccaneer.

With a shriek of terror he let fall the lantern, which fizzled out. His companions looked up, and, seeing what he saw, were seized with a fear as great as his. The negro leaped out of the hole, the doctor dropped his book and basket, and they all fled in different directions, thinking that a legion of hobgoblins were after them. Wolfert made a dash for the water-side and the boat, but, swiftly as he ran, someone behind him ran more swiftly still. He gave himself up for lost, when a hand clutched at his cloak; then suddenly a third person seemed to gain on them, and to attack his pursuer. Pistol shots were fired in the fierceness of the fight, the combatants fell, and rolled on the ground together.

Wolfert would thankfully have disappeared during the struggle, but a precipice lay at his feet, and in the pitch darkness he knew not where he could turn in safety. So he crouched low under a clump of bushes and waited.

Now the two men were standing again and had each other by the waist, straining and dragging and pulling towards the brink of the precipice. This much Wolfert could guess from the panting sounds that reached him, and at last a gasp of relief smote upon his ears followed instantaneously by a shriek and then a plunge.

One of them had gone, but what about the other? Was he friend or foe? The question was soon answered, for climbing over a group of rocks which rose against the sky was the buccaneer. Yes; he was sure of it.

All his terrors revived at the sight, and he had much ado to keep his teeth from chattering. Yet, even if his legs would carry him, where could he go? A precipice was on one side of him and a murderer on the other. But as the pirate drew a few steps nearer, Wolfert’s fears were lashed into frenzy, and he cast himself over the edge of the cliff, his feet casting about for a ledge to rest on. Then his cloak got caught in a thorn tree and he felt himself hanging in the air, half-choking. Luckily the string broke and he dropped down, rolling from bank to bank till he lost consciousness.

It was long before he came to himself. When he did, he was lying at the bottom of a boat, with the morning sun shining upon him.

‘Lie still,’ said a voice, and with a leap of the heart he knew it to be that of Dick Waldron, his daughter’s sweetheart.

Dame Webber, not trusting her husband in the strange condition he had been in for months, had begged the young man to follow him, and though Dick had started too late to overtake the party, he had arrived in time to save Wolfert from his enemy.

The story of the midnight adventure soon spread through the town, and many were the citizens who went out to hunt for the treasure. Nothing, however, was found by any of the seekers; and whether any treasure had been buried there at all, no one could tell, any more than they knew who the strange buccaneer was, and if he had been drowned or not. Only one thing was curious about the whole affair, and that was the presence in the Sound at that very time of a brig looking like a privateer which, after hanging about for several days, was seen standing out to sea the morning after the search of the money-diggers.

Yet, though Wolfert missed one fortune, he found another, for the citizens of Manhattan desired to cut a street right through his garden, and offered to buy the ground for a large sum. So he grew to be a rich man after all, and might be seen any day driving about his native town in a large yellow carriage drawn by two big black Flanders mares.

THE PERPLEXITY OF ZADIG

On the banks of the river Euphrates there once lived a man called Zadig, who spent all his days watching the animals he saw about him and in learning their ways, and in studying the plants that grew near his hut. And the more he knew of them, the more he was struck with the differences he discovered even in the beasts or flowers which he thought when he first saw them were exactly alike.

One morning as he was walking through a little wood there came running towards him an officer of the queen's household, followed by several of her attendants. Zadig noticed that one and all seemed in the greatest anxiety and glanced from side to side with wild eyes as if they had lost something they held to be very precious, and hoped against hope that it might be lurking in some quite impossible place.

On catching sight of Zadig, the first of the band stopped suddenly.

'Young man,' he said, panting for breath, 'have you seen the queen's pet dog?'

'It is a tiny spaniel, is it not?' answered Zadig, 'which limps on the left fore-paw, and has very long ears?'

'Ah then, you have seen it!' exclaimed the steward joyfully, thinking that his search was at an end and his head was safe, for he knew of many men who had lost theirs for less reason.

'No,' replied Zadig, 'I have never seen it. Indeed, I did not so much as know that the queen had a dog.'

At these words the faces of the whole band fell, and with sighs of disappointment they hurried on twice as fast as before, to make up for lost time.

Strange to say, it had happened that the finest horse in the king's stable had broken away from its groom and galloped off no one knew where, over the boundless plains of Babylon. The chief huntsman and all the other officials pursued it with the same eagerness that the officers of the household had displayed in running after the queen's dog and, like them, met with Zadig who was lying on the ground watching the movements of some ants.

'Has the king's favourite horse passed by here?' inquired the great huntsman, drawing rein.

'You mean a wonderful galloper fifteen hands high, shod with very small shoes, and with a tail three feet and a half long? The ornaments of his bit are of gold and he is shod with silver?'

‘Yes, yes, that is the runaway,’ cried the chief huntsman; ‘which way did he go?’

‘The horse? But I have not seen him,’ answered Zadig, ‘and I never even heard of him before.’

Now Zadig had described both the horse and the dog so exactly that both the steward and the chief huntsman did not doubt for a moment that they had been stolen by him.

The chief huntsman said no more, but ordered his men to seize the thief and to bring him before the supreme court, where he was condemned to be flogged and to pass the rest of his life in exile. Scarcely, however, had the sentence been passed than the horse and dog were discovered and brought back to their master and mistress, who welcomed them with transports of delight. But as no one would have respected the judges any longer if they had once admitted that they had been altogether mistaken, they informed Zadig that, although he was to be spared the flogging and would not be banished from the country, he must pay four hundred ounces of gold for having declared he had *not* seen what he plainly *had* seen.

With some difficulty Zadig raised the money, and when he had paid it into court, he asked permission to say a few words of explanation.

‘Moons of justice and mirrors of truth,’ he began. ‘I swear to you by the powers of earth and of air that never have I beheld the dog of the queen nor the horse of the king. And if this august assembly will deign to listen to me for a moment, I will inform them exactly what happened. Before I met with the officers of the queen’s household I had noticed on the sand the marks of an animal’s paws, which I instantly recognised to be those of a small dog; and as the marks were invariably fainter on one side than on the three others, it was easy to guess that the dog limped on one paw. Besides this, the sand on each side of the front paw-marks was ruffled on the surface, showing that the ears were very long and touched the ground.

‘As to the horse, I had perceived along the road the traces of shoes, always at equal distances, which proved to me that the animal was a perfect galloper. I then detected on closer examination, that though the road was only seven feet wide, the dust on the trees both on the right hand and on the left had been swept to a height of three and a half feet, and from that I concluded the horse’s tail, which had switched off the dust, must be three and a half feet long. Next, five feet from the ground I noticed that twig and leaves had been torn off the trees, so evidently he was fifteen hands high. As to the ornaments on his bit, he had scraped one of them against a rock on turning a corner too sharply, and some traces of gold remained on it, while the light marks left on the soil showed that his shoes were not of iron but of a less heavy metal, which could only be silver.'

Great was the amazement of the judges and of everybody else at the perception and reasoning of Zadig. At court, no one talked of anything else; and though many of the wise men declared that Zadig should be burnt as a wizard, the king commanded that the four hundred ounces of gold, which he had paid as a fine, should be restored to him. In obedience to this order, the clerk of the court and the ushers came in state to Zadig's hut, bringing with them the four hundred ounces; but, when they arrived, they told Zadig that three hundred and ninety-eight of them were due for law expenses, so he was not much better off than before.

Zadig said nothing, but let them keep the money. He had learned how dangerous it is to be wiser than your neighbours, and resolved never again to give any information to anybody, or to say what he had seen.

He had very speedily a chance of putting this determination into practice. A prisoner of state escaped from the great gaol of Babylon, and in his flight happened to pass beneath the window of Zadig's hut. Not long after, the warders, of the gaol discovered which way he had gone, and cross-questioned Zadig closely. Zadig, warned by experience, kept silence; but notwithstanding, it was proved — or at least, they said so — that Zadig had been looking out of the window when the man went by, and for this crime he was sentenced by the judges to pay five hundred ounces of gold.

'Good gracious!' he murmured to himself as, according to the custom of Babylon, he thanked the court for its indulgence. 'What is one to do? It is dangerous to stand at your own window, or to be in a wood which the king's horse and the queen's dog have passed through. How hard it is to live happily in this life!'

THE RETURN OF THE DEAD WIFE

Once upon a time there lived in Alaska a chief of the Tlingit tribe who had one son. When the boy grew to be a man, he saw a girl who seemed to him prettier and cleverer than any other girl of the tribe, and his heart went out to her, and he told his father. Then the chief spoke to the father and the mother of the girl, and they agreed to give her to the young man for a wife. So the two were married, and for a few months all went well with them and they were very happy.

But one day the husband came home from hunting and found his wife sitting crouched over the fire — her eyes dull and her head heavy.

‘You are ill,’ he said, ‘I will go for the shaman,’ but the girl answered:

‘No, not now. I will sleep, and in the morning the pains will have gone from me.’

But in the morning she was dead, and the young man grieved bitterly and would eat nothing, and he lay awake all that night thinking of his wife, and the next night also.

‘Perhaps if I went out into the forest and walked till I was tired, I might sleep and forget my pain,’ thought he. But, after all, he could not bear to leave the house while his dead wife was in it, so he waited till her body was taken away that evening for burial. Then, very early next morning, he put on his leggings and set off into the forest and walked through that day and the following night. Sunrise on the second morning found him in a wide valley covered with thick trees. Before him stretched a plain which had once been full of water, but it was now dried up.

He paused for a moment and looked about him, and as he looked he seemed to hear voices speaking a long way off. But he could see nobody, and walked on again till he beheld a light shining through the branches of the trees and noticed a flat stone on the edge of a lake. Here the road stopped; for it was the death road along which he had come, though he did not know it.

The lake was narrow, and on the other side were houses and people going in and out of them.

‘Come over and fetch me,’ he shouted, but nobody heard him, though he cried till he was hoarse.

‘It is very odd that nobody hears me,’ whispered the youth after he had shouted for some time longer; and at that minute a person standing at the door of one of the houses across the lake cried out:

‘Someone is shouting’; for they could hear him when he whispered, but not when he made a great noise.

‘It is somebody who has come from dreamland,’ continued the voice. ‘Let a canoe go and bring him over.’ So a canoe shot out from the shore, and the young man got into it and was paddled across, and as soon as he stepped out he saw his dead wife.

Joy rushed into his heart at the sight of her; her eyes were red as though she had been crying; and he held out his hands. As he did so the people in the house said to him:

‘You must have come from far; sit down, and we will give you food,’ and they spread food before him, at which he felt glad, for he was hungry.

‘Don’t eat that,’ whispered his wife, ‘if you do, you will never get back again’; and he listened to her and did not eat it.

Then his wife said again:

‘It is not good for you to stay here. Let us depart at once,’ and they hastened to the edge of the water and got into the canoe, which is called the Ghost’s Canoe, and is the only one on the lake. They were soon across and they landed at the flat stone where the young man had stood when he was shouting, and the name of that stone is the Ghost’s Rock. Down they went along the road that he had come, and on the second night they reached the youth’s house.

‘Stay here,’ he said, ‘and I will go in and tell my father.’ So he entered and said to his father:

‘I have brought my wife back.’

‘Well, why don’t you bring her in?’ asked the chief, and he took a fur robe and laid it on top of a mat for her to sit on. After that the young man led his wife into the house, but the people inside could not see her enter, but only her husband; yet when he came quite close, they noticed a deep shadow behind him. The young man bade his wife sit down on the mat they had prepared for her, and a robe of marten skins was placed over her shoulders, and it hung upon her as if she had been a real woman and not a ghost. Then they put food before her, and, as she ate, they beheld her arms, and the spoon moving up and down. But the shadow of her hands they did not see, and it seemed strange to them.

Now from henceforth the young man and his wife always went everywhere together; whether he was hunting or fishing, the shadow always followed him, and he begged to have his bed made where they had first seated themselves, instead of in the room where he had slept before. And this the people in the house did gladly, for joy at having him back.

In the day, if they happened not to be away hunting or fishing, the wife was so quiet that no one would have guessed she was there, but during the night she would play games with her husband and talk to him, so that the others could hear her voice. At her first coming the chief felt silent and awkward, but after a while he grew accustomed to her and would pretend to be angry and called out: ‘You had better get up now, after keeping everyone awake all night with your games,’ and they could hear the shadow laugh in answer, and knew it was the laugh of the dead woman.

Thus things went on for some time, and they might have gone on longer, had not a cousin of the dead girl’s who had wanted to marry her before she married the chief’s son become jealous when he found that her husband had brought her back from across the lake. And he spied upon her, and listened to her when she was talking, hoping for a chance to work her some ill. At last the chance came, as it commonly does, and it was in this wise:

Night after night the jealous man had hidden himself at the head of the bed, and had stolen away unperceived in the morning without having heard anything to help his wicked plans. He was beginning to think he must try something else when one evening the girl suddenly said to her husband that she was tired of being a shadow, and was going to show herself in the body that she used to have, and meant to keep it always. The husband was glad in his soul at her words, and then proposed that they should get up and play a game as usual; and, while they were playing, the man behind the curtains peeped through. As he did so, a noise as of a rattling of bones rang through the house, and when the people came running, they found the husband dead and the shadow gone, for the ghosts of both had sped back to Ghostland.

Tlingit Myths.

YOUNG AMAZON SNELL

When George I. was king, there lived in Worcester a man named Snell, who carried on business as a hosier and dyer. He worked hard, as indeed he had much need to do — having three sons and six daughters to provide for. The boys were sent to some kind of school, but in those days tradesmen did not trouble themselves about educating their girls, and Snell thought it quite enough for them to be able to read and to count upon their fingers. If they wanted more learning they must pick it up for themselves.

Now although Snell himself was a peaceable, stay-at-home man, his father had been a soldier, and had earned fame and a commission as captain-lieutenant, by shooting the Governor of Dunkirk in the reign of King William. Many tales did the Snell children hear in the winter evenings of their grandfather's brave deeds when he fought at Blenheim with the Welsh Fusiliers, and a thrill of excitement never failed to run through them as they listened to the story of the battle of Malplaquet, where the hero received the wound that killed him.

'Twenty-two battles!' they whispered proudly yet with awe-struck voices; 'did ever any man before fight in so many as that?' and, though the eldest boy said less than any, one morning his bed was empty, and by and bye his mother got a message to tell her that Sam had enlisted, and was to sail for Flanders with the army commanded by the Duke of Cumberland.

Poor Sam's career was not a long one. He was shot through the lungs at the battle of Fontenoy, and died in a few hours.

The old grandfather's love of a fight was in all these young Snells, and one by one the boys followed Sam's example, and the girls married soldiers or sailors. Hannah, the youngest, brought up from her babyhood on talk of wars and rumours of wars, thought of nothing else.

'*She* would be a soldier too when she was big enough,' she told her father and mother twenty times a day, and her playfellows were so infected by her zeal, that they allowed themselves to be formed into a company, of which Hannah, needless to say, was the commander-in-chief, and meekly obeyed her orders.

In their free hours, she would drill them as her brothers had drilled her, and now and then when she decided that they knew enough not to disgrace her, she would march them through the streets of Worcester, under the admiring gaze of the shopkeepers standing at their doors.

'Young Amazon Snell's troop are coming this way. See how straight they hold themselves! and look at Hannah at the head of them,' said the women, hurrying out; and though Hannah, like a well-trained soldier, kept her eyes steadily before her, she heard it all and her little back grew stiffer than ever.

So things went on for many years, till at the end of 1740 Mr. and Mrs. Snell both died, and Hannah left Worcester to live with one of her sisters, the wife of James Gray, a carpenter, whose home was at Wapping in the east of London.

Much of Gray's work lay among the ships which drew up alongside the wharf, and sailors were continually in and out of the house in Ship Street. One of these, a Dutchman called Summs, proposed to Hannah, who married him in 1743, when she was not yet twenty.

She was a good-looking, pleasant girl, and no doubt had attracted plenty of attention. But of course she laughed at the idea of her marrying a shopkeeper who had never been outside his own parish. So, like Desdemona and many another girl before and after, she listened entranced to the marvellous stories told her by Summs, and thought herself fortunate indeed to have found such a husband.

She soon changed her opinion. Summs very quickly got tired of her; and after ill-treating her in every kind of way, and even selling her clothes, deserted her, and being ill and miserable and not knowing what to do, she thankfully returned to her sister.

After some months of peace and rest, Hannah grew well and strong, and then she made up her mind to carry out a plan she had formed during her illness, which was to put on a man's dress, and go in search of the sailor who had treated her so ill. At least this was what she said to herself, but no doubt the real motive that guided her was the possibility of at last becoming a soldier or sailor, and seeing the world. It is not quite clear if she confided in her sister, but at any rate she took a suit of her brother-in-law's clothes and his name into the bargain, and it was as 'James Gray' that she enlisted in Coventry in 1745, in a regiment commanded by General Guise.

It was lucky for Hannah that, unlike most girls of her day and position, she had not been pent up at home doing needlework, as after three weeks, she with seventeen other raw recruits was ordered to join her regiment at Carlisle, so as to be ready to act, if necessary, against the Highlanders and Prince Charlie. But these three weeks had taught her much about a soldier's life which her brothers had left untold. She had learnt to talk as the men about her talked, and to drink with them if she was invited, though she always contrived to keep her head clear and her legs steady. As to her husband, of him she could hear nothing at Coventry; perhaps she might be more fortunate in the north.

In spite of a burn on her foot, which she had received after enlisting, Hannah found no difficulty in marching to Carlisle with the other recruits, and when they reached the city at the end of twenty-two days, she was as fresh as any of them. How delighted she was to find that the dream of her childhood was at last realised, and that she could make as good a soldier as the rest. But her spirits were soon dashed by the wickedness of the sergeant, who on Hannah's refusal to help him to carry out an infamous scheme on which he had set his heart, reported her to the commanding officer for neglect of duty. No inquiry as to the truth of this accusation appears to have been made, and the sentence pronounced was extraordinarily heavy, even though it was thought to have been passed on a man. The prisoner was to have her hands tied to the castle gates and to receive six hundred lashes. She actually did receive five hundred, at least, so it was said, and then some officers who were present interfered, and bade them set her free.

It does not seem as if Hannah suffered much from her stripes, but very soon a fresh accident upset all her plans. The arrival of a new recruit was reported, and the youth turned out to be a young carpenter from Wapping, who had spent several days in her brother-in-law's house while she was living there. Hannah made sure that he would recognise her at once, though as a matter of fact he did nothing of the kind, and to prevent the shame of discovery, she determined to desert the regiment, and try her fortune elsewhere.

To go as far as possible from Carlisle was her one idea, and what town could be better than Portsmouth for the purpose?

But in order to travel such a long way, money was needed, and Hannah had spent all her own and did not know how to get more. She consulted a young woman whom she had helped when in great trouble, and in gratitude, the girl instantly offered enough to enable her friend to get a lift on the road when she was too tired to walk any longer.

'If you get rich, you can pay me back,' she said; 'if not, the debt is still on my side. But, oh, Master Gray, beware, I pray you! for if they catch you, they will shoot you, to a certainty.'

'No fear,' answered Hannah laughing, and very early one morning she stole out.

Taking the road south she crept along under the shade of the hedge, till about a mile from the town she noticed a heap of clothes lying on the ground, flung there by some labourers who were working at the other end of the field.

'It will be many hours yet before they will look for them,' thought she, 'and fair exchange is no robbery,' so stooping low in the ditch she slipped off her regimentals, and hiding them at the very bottom of the pile, put on an old coat and trousers belonging to one of the men. Then full of hope, she started afresh.

Perhaps the commander in Carlisle never heard of the desertion of one of the garrison, or perhaps search for James Gray was made in the wrong direction. However that may be, nobody troubled the fugitive, who weary and footsore, in a month’s time entered Portsmouth.

At this point a new chapter begins in Hannah Snell’s history. The old desire to see the world was still strong upon her, and, after resting for a little in the house of some kind people, she enlisted afresh in a regiment of marines. A few weeks later, she was ordered to join the ‘Swallow,’ and to sail with Admiral Boscawen’s fleet for the East Indies.

It was Hannah’s first sea-voyage, but, in spite of the roughness of the life on board ship in those days, she was happy enough. England was behind her; that was the chief thing, and who could tell what wonderful adventures lay in front? So her spirits rose, and she was so good-natured and obliging as well as so clever, that the crew one and all declared they had found a treasure. There was nothing ‘James Gray’ could not and would not do — wash their shirts, cook their food, mend their holes, laugh at their stories. And, as she looked a great deal younger in her men’s clothes than she had done in her woman’s dress, no one took her for anything but a boy, and all willingly helped to teach her the duties which would fall to her, both now and in case of war.

She kept watch for four hours in turn with the rest, and soon began to see in the dark with all the keenness of a sailor. Next she was taught how to load and unload a pistol, which pleased her very much, and was given her place on the quarter-deck, where she was at once to take up her station during an engagement. Most likely she was forced from time to time to attend drill, but this we are not told.

The ‘Swallow’ was not half through the Bay of Biscay when a great storm arose which blew the fleet apart, and did great damage to the vessel. Both her topmasts were lost, and it is a wonder that, in this crippled condition, the ship was able to make her way to Lisbon, where the crew remained on shore till the ship was refitted, and she could join the rest of the fleet, which then set sail down the Atlantic towards the coast of India.

Except for more bad weather and a scarcity of provisions on board the ‘Swallow,’ nothing worthy of note occurred, till they had rounded the Cape of Good Hope and passed Madagascar.

Some fruitless attacks on a group of islands belonging to the French gave Hannah her first experience of war, and her comrades were anxious as to how ‘the boy’ would behave under fire. But they speedily saw that there was no danger that any cowardice of his would bring discredit on the regiment, and that ‘James Gray’ was as good a fighter as he was a cook. Perhaps ‘James Gray,’ if the truth be told, was rather relieved himself when the bugle sounded a retreat, for no one knows what may happen to him in the excitement of a first battle; or whether in the strangeness and newness of it all, he may not lose his head and run away, and be covered with shame for ever.

None of this, however, befell Hannah, and when six weeks after, they were on Indian soil, and sat down to besiege the French settlement of Pondicherry, the Worcestershire girl was given more than one chance of distinguishing herself.

Pondicherry was a very strong place and the walls which were not washed by the sea were thoroughly fortified and defended by guns, while the magazines contained ample supplies both of food and powder. Further, it was guarded by the fort of Areacopong commanding a river, and with a battery of twelve guns ready to pour forth fire on the British army. Hannah was speedily told off with some others to bring up certain stores, which had been landed by the fleet, and, after some heavy skirmishing, they succeeded in their object. Her company was then ordered to cross the river so as to be able to march, when necessary, upon Pondicherry itself, and this they did under the fire of the guns of Areacopong, with the water rising to their breasts.

At length the fort was captured and great was the rejoicing in the British lines, for the surrender of Areacopong meant the removal of the chief barrier towards taking the capital of French India.

For seven nights Hannah had to be on picket duty, and was later sent to the trenches, where she constantly was obliged to dig with the water up to her waist, for the autumn rains had now begun.

But her heart and soul were bound up in the profession she had chosen, and everything else was forgotten, even her desire to revenge herself on her husband. Not a soldier in the army fought better than she, and in one of the battles under the walls of Pondicherry, she is said to have received eleven shots in her legs alone! She was carried into hospital, and when the doctors had time to attend to her, she showed them the bullet wounds down her shins, but made no mention of a ball which had entered her side, for she was resolved not to submit to any examination. This wound gave her more pain than all the rest put together, and after two days she made up her mind that in order to avoid being discovered for a woman she must extract it herself, with the help of a native who was acting as nurse.

Setting her teeth to prevent herself shrieking with the agony the slightest touch caused her, Hannah felt about till she found the exact spot where the ball was lodged, and then pressed the place until the bullet was near enough to the surface for her to pull it out with her finger and thumb. The pain of it all was such that she sank back almost fainting, but with a violent effort she roused herself, and stretching out her hand for the lint and the ointment placed within her reach by the nurse, she dressed the wound. Three months later she was as well as ever, and able to do the work of a sailor on board a ship which, at that time, was anchored in the harbour.

As soon as the fleet returned from Madras, Hannah was ordered to the ‘Eltham,’ but at Bombay she fell into disgrace with the first lieutenant, was put into irons for five days, spent four hours at the foretop-masthead, and received twelve lashes. She was likewise accused of stealing a shirt, but, as this was proved to be false, the charge only roused the anger of the crew, and they took the first opportunity to revenge themselves on the lieutenant who had sentenced her.

It was in November 1749 that the fleet sailed for home, and the ‘Eltham’ was directed to steer a straight course for Lisbon, having to take on board a large sum of money, destined for some London merchants. One day when she was ashore with her mates, they turned into a public-house to have dinner. Here they happened to meet an English sailor, with whom many of the party were well acquainted. Learning that he had been lately engaged on a Dutch vessel, Hannah inquired carelessly whether he had ever come across one Jemmy Summs.

‘Summs?’ answered the man. ‘I should think I had. I heard of him only the other day at Genoa, in prison for killing an Italian gentleman. I asked to be allowed to see him, and as he was condemned to death, they gave me leave to do so. He told me the story of his life, and how, while he was in London, he married a young woman called Hannah Snell, and then deserted her. More than six years have passed since that time, and he does not know what became of her. But he begged me, if ever I was near Wapping again, to seek her out and entreat her to forgive him. As soon as he had finished, the gaoler entered and bade us say farewell.

‘That was the last we saw of him, but before I left I heard that he had been sewn up in a bag filled with stones, and thrown into the sea, which is their way of hanging.’

Hannah had listened in silence, and would gladly have quitted the place, to think over the sailor’s story quietly. But she never forgot the part she was playing, and roused herself to tell the sailor that when she returned to England she would make it her business to search for the widow, and to help her if she seemed in need. Then she got up and called for the bill, and followed by her companions, rowed back to the ship.

It was on June 1, 1750, that Hannah Snell landed in Portsmouth, and in the course of a few days made her way to Wapping. The rough life she had led, and even her uniform, had changed her so little that her sister recognised her at once, and flung her arms round the stranger’s neck, much to the surprise of the neighbours. But Hannah, in spite of her sister's entreaties, refused to put on the dress of a woman till she had received £15 of pay due to her, and two suits; and when this was done, she invited those of the ship's crew who were then in London to drink with her at a public-house, and there revealed to them her secret.

It was, however, to no purpose that she talked. These men, by whose side she had fought and drunk for so long, would believe nothing, and thought it was just 'one of Jemmy's stories.' At length she was forced to send for her sister and brother-in-law, who swore that her tale was true, and then the sailors broke out into a chorus of praise of her courage, her cleverness, and her kindness, all the time that they had known her. One, indeed, made her an offer on the spot; but Hannah had had enough of matrimony, and was not minded to tie herself to another husband.

It was not long before the wondrous story of Hannah Snell reached the ears of the Duke of Cumberland, son of George II., and Commander-in-Chief of the British Army. A petition was drawn up, setting forth her military career, and requesting the grant of a pension in consideration of her services. This petition an accident enabled her to deliver in person to the Duke as he was leaving his house in Pall Mall, and by the advice of his equerry, Colonel Napier, the pension of a shilling a day for life — £18 5*s.* — was bestowed on her.

It does not sound much to us, but money went a great deal further in those times.

But her fame as a female soldier was worth much more to Hannah than the scars she had won in His Majesty's service. The manager of the theatre at the New Wells, Goodman's Fields, saw clearly that the opportunity was too good to be lost, and that advertisement of 'the celebrated Mrs. Hannah Snell, who had gained twelve wounds fighting the French in India,' would earn a large fortune for him, and a small fortune for her.

So here we bid her good-bye, and listen to her for the last time — her petticoats discarded for ever — singing to the fashionable audience of Goodman's Fields the songs with which she had delighted for many months the crew of the 'Eltham.'

THE GOOD SIR JAMES

My Sir James is not the leal friend of Robert Bruce nor is he the Douglas who fell at Otterburn and was buried ‘by the bracken bush that grows on yonder lilye lee.’ My Sir James is alive and well to-day, and is one of the Quiqui people who live in the wood beyond the avenue at the end of our garden. There were two of these little squirrels, Sir James and Lady Quiqui, and both sometimes came on to the lawn and grubbed up crocus bulbs and committed other sins readily forgiven to people of such beauty. They lived a peaceful and happy life till one wild November night, when poor Lady Quiqui fell or was blown off a tree. I went out next morning, and close to the garden gate I found her little body on the ground still alive, but unable to move. I brought her to the house, but no care could save her and she died within a few hours. Sir James was now an inconsolable widower. I think he felt lonely, for after his wife’s death his appearances about the house became more and more frequent.

The days were short and cold, and every morning the ground was white with frost. Hungry birds flocked to the drawing-room window-sill for a breakfast of bread-crumbs. One day Sir James came when they were feasting. He was angry:

‘The feast is for me,’ he said, and with skilful, energetic hands he put sparrows, chaffinches, and robins to flight and then breakfasted with an excellent appetite.

Rows of sad little birds perched on the fence, and sat and watched greedy Sir James from afar, but none dared come near the window till he had gone. This happened nearly every day.

Once a great big herring-gull came and I think the little birds hoped that their wrongs would now be avenged. Again and again the gull swooped down and attempted to snatch some choice morsel, but again and again the good Sir James tiny and brave, drove away his gigantic foe. It then circled round uttering shrieks of rage and despair, and finally departed, leaving Sir James triumphant.

One morning, a few days after the discomfiture of the herring-gull, Sir James had another adventure. He had been sitting quietly on the window-sill enjoying his cake and nuts. All of a sudden his mood changed and he became very restless and angrily excited. He ran backwards and forwards at a great pace for some moments, then he gave a spring forward and downward towards the narrow garden-path. I looked out and, to my horror, saw no Sir James, but the terrifying sight of ‘Dolly,’ the gardener’s cat, galloping away at full speed. Dolly was at once pursued and captured. We almost wept with relief when we found that our worst fears were not realised and that the good Sir James was not in Dolly’s mouth. Indeed, we blamed the cat far too hastily, and I now think that Sir James was possibly not the victim, but the aggressor, and that he had merely been driving the innocent Dolly away from the vicinity of his breakfast. All we know for certain is that he very soon ran back to this breakfast and finished it with much enjoyment, and that his return brought peace and comfort to our agitated and anxious minds.

Sir James was sometimes unpunctual, and on those days the birds thoroughly enjoyed themelves. By the time the little Quiqui-man arrived, not a crumb was to be found off which he could dine. The birds twittered with delight.

One day I bought a little cream-can with a lid, and filled it with his favourite dainties. I then put it out on the window-sill, fastening the handle firmly to a nail.

‘Fancy expecting a wild animal to eat out of a thing like that,’ someone remarked, scornfully; ‘he will think it is a trap and never go near it.’

I waited anxiously. About twelve o’clock a startled flight of small birds announced the arrival of Sir James. Although there were still some crumbs lying about, he went straight to the cream-can and shook it vigorously with eager hands and teeth. It took him nearly five minutes to get it open, but he persevered and succeeded. I then had the satisfaction of seeing him dive into the tin, head first, about half a dozen times, each time reappearing with cake or a nut.

From that day the little cream-can was kept well supplied with nuts and cake. As time passed, Sir James grew more and more particular about his food. He soon scorned crocus bulbs and even bread-crumbs, insisting on a diet of shortbread cake and nuts. He always selected the biggest nut or piece of cake to carry home. It was surprising what he could do. He was one day seen dragging off about a third of a coconut that I had hung up for the tits, and he managed to get this heavy burden over the high fence that bounds our garden.

Another time we put uncracked nuts in the can instead of the usually carefully prepared ones. Sir James examined them, dropped them, and then with angry hands drummed upon the window-panes. Our guilty consciences told us what was wrong, so we gently opened the window. Sir James disappeared for a few moments, but long before we had finished cracking the nuts he was back and watching us. We have never since dared offer him uncracked nuts.

Winter passed, and ‘in the spring a young man’s fancy turns to thoughts of love.’ Sir James was very lonely and he longed for the companionship of his own kind. He took to wandering. Sometimes days went by without our seeing him, and our hearts were anxious when the little cream-can remained with closed lid and contents untouched. Then on one occasion I met the Quiqui-man nearly a mile from home. I knew him at once and he knew me, for he came half-way down a tree to greet me, waving his little brown hands with ten very black nails. When I saw the good Sir James so far from home, I feared for him. I thought of the perils from hawks and prowling cats that he was daily incurring. Something must be done and at once. Negotiations produced the arrival a few days later of Jemima Golightly, a fine handsome squirrel, who came by herself all the way from Eastbourne to these West Highland shores. Miss Golightly was instantly put in a cage, and next morning the wedding breakfast was prepared and put in the cream-can. The cage was placed on a table by the open window in the drawing-room. How anxiously I watched for the coming of Sir James! At last he appeared. Just as he was making for his cream-can, his quick eye detected Miss Golightly. In a moment he was on the top of the cage tugging away at the handle, while Miss Golightly inside rushed round and round, banging herself about so that I thought the cage would get knocked over. Sir James, finding his efforts with tooth and nail were unsuccessful, bestowed a further inspection on the cage. He soon discovered the door which opened easily to his skilful touch. Miss Golightly sprang out with a graceful bound — poor little captive, set free by as gallant a knight as ever sat at Arthur’s table.

The two squirrels stood quite still for a moment. Then Sir James led the way through the open window, closely followed by Miss Golightly. I rushed to the library. From there I could see the two little forms making for the beech avenue. I was delighted. My joy, however, received a decided check when Sir James reappeared alone, half an hour afterwards. He went at once to the cream-can and in solitary splendour ate nearly all the wedding breakfast. Had he already deserted the little English bride he had so bravely rescued? Sir James resumed his daily visits to the cream-can, but he never said anything about the bride. To be sure, he always took away a tribute when he went home, but as he was in the habit of doing this, we could not feel certain that it was intended for anybody but himself.

It was about a fortnight later that a servant came to my room and said, ‘Sir James is at the window.’ I went at once to the drawing-room and, to my surprise, saw, not Sir James, but the little bride. She was redder in colour than Sir James, and had much bigger hands. I was enchanted, and still more so when a few minutes later the good Sir James himself arrived on the scene, and it was certainly charming to see the two little squirrels side by side on the window-sill. Both the Quiqui people have often come since then, but Lady Quiqui has never to this day learned the secret of the cream-can. Sir James himself always performs the opening ceremony, and he then retires and allows his lady to dine.

When he thinks that she has had enough he comes back and she goes away home, and he feasts on what is left.

Sir James seems content with this arrangement and never fails to give Lady Quiqui first choice of all the good things. This is the more touching as he is rather a greedy little man. Greedy, generous, and brave; and all of us, who know him, realise the fascination of the good Sir James.

E. A. C.

RIP VAN WINKLE

West of the river Hudson, and at the foot of the Catskill Mountains, lies one of the oldest European villages in the United States of America. It was built by some of the earliest Dutch settlers, who were so anxious to have everything nice and tidy as it would have been at home, that they brought a large supply of bricks and weathercocks from Holland to make it, and you would never have guessed from the look of the houses that you were in the New World.

In course of time the snows of winter and the heats of summer began to leave their mark on the surface of the bricks, and the cottages that were not well cared for showed signs of wear and tear. In one of the shabbiest of them there dwelt while New York was still a British Colony a descendant of one of the old fighters, called Rip van Winkle. Rip was one of those delightful people who are never too busy to listen to your troubles or to sympathise with your grievances, and if you were short-handed in the hay-field or had no one to grind the corn, you might always count on him. But if men and women loved him, children adored him. He made the best toys, flew kites when there really seemed no breeze to lift them from the ground, and bowled over a larger number of ninepins than the cleverest of them all. As he passed through the fields or the village street, the children ran out of the houses and gathered about him, till you might have thought that the days of the Pied Piper of Hamelin had come back. And if a child was ill or a snowstorm heavier than usual was raging, there would be a knock at the door, and Rip’s cheerful pink face would enter, with tales of ghosts and witches and Indians, which, like all the very nicest things, were a joy and a terror in one.

Yet, for some reason which few persons and certainly none of the children could understand, Rip’s wife did not seem to appreciate him as highly as his friends did. When he came home in the evening and was burning to tell her how he had spent all day sitting on a wet rock above a splendid pool in the river, and how very cleverly he had caught all sorts of big fish, she would point to some logs which needed splitting for the kitchen fire. When he began to relate how the gale of last night had blown down Farmer Gilpin’s stone wall, and that it had taken both of them all the morning and afternoon to set it up again, she would ask him how it was he had never perceived the gap in his own fence. And if she inquired why the plums in the orchard had not been gathered, but had fallen rotting to the ground, she did not seem content with his answer that good-wife

Barker had run out of thread, and could not go on with her spinning till he fetched her a supply.

‘Everyone’s business but your own,’ she replied bitterly, to which Rip, though he never got cross, would murmur with a downcast face that his farm was the worst bit of land in the country and would grow nothing but weeds. And that of course he could not have guessed that the cow which was feeding at the other end of the field would have spied the hole in the hedge, and have eaten all the cabbages in the garden; and if ever he planted any seed, the rain was sure to wash it out of the ground before it had time to take root.

Now it must be admitted that Mrs. van Winkle had some grounds for complaint, for though she did nothing but grumble, she worked hard to feed the children, not thinking it necessary however to mend their clothes. They were the oddest sights in the cast-off garments of their father and mother, or of anyone who took pity on their ragged condition; and the oddest of all was young Rip, whose coat tails if not held well up or pinned across him in front, trailed on the ground behind him like a lady’s train.

Still the children were, in spite of the drawbacks, as happy as kings. They did not want to be made clean and tidy, and they were so used to hearing their mother scolding — scolding all the day long — that they would have quite missed the sound of her tongue if it had ever stopped.

But there was no danger of *that*.

Except Rip, the only person who minded Mrs. van Winkle’s ill-temper was Rip’s inseparable companion, his dog Wolf. As soon as he entered the house, his tail instead of being carried proudly in the air, fell between his legs; and far from jumping about and putting his muddy paws on your knees as a happy dog always does, he would sneak into the darkest corner, and try to escape notice.

As the years went by, things grew worse and not better. Rip spent less and less time at home and was generally to be found sitting on a bench in front of the inn telling some of his old stories or discussing with other idle men the actions of the Government of which none of them knew anything, and which generally were over and done with weeks before. These gatherings were presided over by Nicholas Vedder the landlord, who said little but smoked his pipe and looked wise.

For a while Rip was left in peace and enjoyed himself; then one day his wife broke in upon the peaceable company and scolded them for their idleness till they all fled in different directions. After that Rip went there no more, but whistled to Wolf, and, taking down his gun, went up into the mountains.

On a fine autumn morning, the two friends went off as usual, and climbed to one of the highest peaks of the Catskills. At length, quite exhausted, Rip threw himself down a on green knoll almost on top of a cliff, and watched the sun sinking slowly in the West. The Hudson river, bounded with woods, could be seen on one side of him; a deep stony glen was on the other; and all about him the stillness seemed in itself to bring rest and peace. But the lengthening shadows gave him warning that he must retrace his steps at once, unless he wished to be barred out of his house, and heavily he rose to his feet and whistled to Wolf, when he heard a voice crying ‘Rip van Winkle!’

He looked round with a start, but as he saw nothing but a crow flying home to bed, he thought his ears must have deceived him. He turned again to the path, when a second time the cry sounded, ‘Rip van Winkle! Rip van Winkle!’ and at the same instant Wolf gave a howl, and his hair stood up as if something terrible was in the neighbourhood. Rip followed the direction of the dog’s eyes, which were fixed with an expression of fear on the glen; and Rip, with a sinking of heart that he could not explain, beheld a shadowy figure toiling towards them through the rocks, weighed down by something heavy which it carried on its back.

‘Poor old fellow! he can hardly get along. I had better go and help him,’ thought Rip, and set off down the path; but when he came near to the stranger he stopped in surprise, for never had he beheld anyone so odd.

The man was old and short and square, with a shock of thick bushy hair, and a long greyish beard. He was dressed after the Dutch fashion of a hundred years back, in a jacket belted round the waist, and several pairs of breeches, each a little longer than the other. On his shoulder was a keg of liquor, nearly as big as himself.

‘Let me take that for a bit,’ said Rip, and though the dwarf did not understand his words, there was no mistaking the meaning of Rip’s outstretched hands. So, carrying the keg by turns they clambered upwards apparently along the bed of a mountain stream, while thunder rolled about them. Now of course, thunder in mountains is common enough, but what was uncommon about *this* thunder was, that instead of coming from *above* them, it seemed to issue from a narrow cleft of the rock in front of them, where the path ended.

When they reached the ravine, the dwarf led the way through the cleft and signed to his companion to follow, for they could not walk abreast. Once through the cleft, Rip found himself in a round, hollow place enclosed by precipices overhung by trees, so that it would be completely concealed from anyone walking on the mountain. The branches and the leaves were so thick that even the bright rays of the setting sun could hardly pierce through them.

At the entrance to the hollow Rip paused again, for before him was a group of little men playing ninepins. Like his guide they wore jerkins and breeches, and knives were stuck in their belts. They were all very ugly, with long beards and large noses, and one who appeared the leader had a high-crowned hat with a feather and high-heeled shoes with roses on them — very unfit, thought Rip, for climbing about those rough paths.

As Rip and his companion came out from the cleft, the little men suddenly stopped their game, which they had played in dead silence and without seeming in the least to enjoy it. They turned and looked at the stranger, and Rip felt his blood run cold and his knees knock together. *Why* he could not have told, except that their faces had a queer, fixed expression such as he had never seen on the face of any living being. But no time was allowed him to indulge in these thoughts, for his companion signed to him to fill some big flagons which stood on one side, from the keg they had carried.

When the players had emptied the flagons, they went back to their game, seeming as melancholy as before.

After a while Rip began to grow a little less frightened, and he even ventured, when no one was observing him, to take a good draught out of the keg himself. As soon as he had done so, his eyes and head became very heavy, and he fell down where he stood, sunk in a deep sleep.

It was bright and sunny when Rip woke, lying curled up comfortably on the green knoll from which he had first beheld the old man climbing up the path. The birds were twittering in the bushes and hopping round him, and high up over the tops of the mountains an eagle was soaring.

‘Have I really slept here all night?’ he said to himself. ‘Oh, dear, how angry my wife will be!’ Then he sat up, and there rushed into his mind the cleft in the rocks and the little men playing ninepins. ‘It was the flagon which was my undoing,’ said he.

Scrambling to his feet, he looked about for his gun, but in place of the well-kept weapon, with its shining barrel (the only thing on which Rip ever bestowed any care), he saw an old, rusty firelock, with the wooden stock eaten by worms and falling away.

‘Why they have been playing tricks on me and changed my gun!’ he exclaimed, ‘though they *did* look so solemn; but what has become of Wolf? Gone after a squirrel, I suppose,’ and he whistled loudly to call him back.

But whistle as Rip might, for the first time he heard no bark in answer.

‘Oh, well! he will come home when he is tired. I’ll go back to that curious place, and tell them I must have my own gun.’ But as Rip moved to climb the path he felt his legs stiff, and was obliged to go slowly.

‘These mountain roads don’t agree with me,’ he thought. ‘I mustn’t be caught in this way a second time,’ and with great difficulty he made his way to the gully. But since he saw it last, the face of the glen had altered completely. Instead of the dried-up watercourse through which he and the dwarf had painfully clambered, a torrent was now dashing itself from rock to rock, so that Rip was obliged to take a round-about path through the mass of shrubs and creepers that clothed the sides of the ravine. Pushing and fighting, he at length reached the spot where the cleft led to the hollow in the rocks. But what a change from the evening before! The opening had entirely vanished, and a high waterfall leapt from above into a round basin. ‘Surely this was the place? Yes! I am certain of it!’ cried the bewildered Rip, and again he tried to call to Wolf, but his voice died away in his throat.

‘Well, I can’t starve among the mountains, whatever happens,’ he said, with a show of briskness which would not have deceived anybody, if anybody but himself had been there to see; and taking up the old rusty gun, he began to go down the mountain.

As he drew near the village he met several people and was surprised to find they were all strangers to him. ‘Where can they all have come from, and who can they be?’ he said. ‘I didn’t think there could be three people for miles round unknown to me. What queer dresses they have on, too! Can they be a crew of foreigners shipwrecked in the Sound, who have strayed up here? If they *are*, they have been pretty quick about it. And really,’ he thought as he glanced back over his shoulder and noticed them staring at him, ‘they seem to find me as odd as I find them! And why do they all stroke their chins as they look at me? Is anything the matter with *my* chin?’ and as he put his hand up to feel it, he discovered that he had grown a beard a foot long.

By this time he had entered the village street and a group of children gathered at his heels. At that his eyes brightened and his face lost something of its half-puzzled, half-frightened expression. Here, at least, was something to which he was accustomed, but instead of the smiles and shouts of joy which formerly greeted him, these children hooted rudely, and pointed to his beard.

Then indeed Rip’s heart began to fail within him. What was the matter that in one night everything had changed so, and nothing seemed as it was only yesterday? And now he came to think of it, after a single night the village appeared much bigger, and the fields that were green when he went up the mountain, were full of houses to-day. Even the very dogs did not know him, and perhaps that was worst of all.

‘I am bewitched,’ thought Rip. ‘It can’t all be that flagon.’

He turned to go to his own house, but the very road to it was altered, and he lost his way more than once. At last he struck into a path which he recognised, and he stopped for a moment expecting to hear his wife’s voice scolding somebody. But all was still, and as he drew nearer he saw that the roof had fallen in, and the glass of the windows was broken. A half-starved dog was prowling round, and with a throb of joy Rip whistled and called to him, ‘Wolf, Wolf! Come here, good dog!’ but the dog snarled and showed his teeth before trotting away.

Was it Wolf, or not? Rip never knew.

Inside, the house was as desolate as without, and very unlike to what Rip had been accustomed to see it. Though he felt it was useless, he shouted the names of his wife and children; then a thrill of fear passed over him, and not daring to look behind him, he hurried back to the street.

‘I must go and have a drink,’ he said. ‘Of course, I had no breakfast and that has made my head get queer. A little food will set me to rights.’

So he hastened on to the village inn, and, being busy with his thoughts, walked with his eyes on the ground till his feet unconsciously halted at the old place. Then he glanced up, but only to receive another shock. The ancient structure with its latticed panes and gabled roof was gone, and instead he beheld a long sort of wooden shed, untidy and dirty, the windows more holes than glass, and stuffed with old hats or even petticoats to keep out the air. Over the door was painted a sign bearing the words ‘Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle.’ In the room of the great tree in front, where he and his friends had smoked so many pipes, was a pole crowned with a sort of red nightcap from which a flag fluttered. An odd kind of flag it was too, for when the wind blew it out, you saw, not the familiar criss-cross lines of the Union Jack, but stars and stripes which had never appeared on any English banner as far as Rip knew! And when his eyes fell upon the sign where a very pink-faced King George in a red coat was wont to gaze at his loyal subjects, he too had vanished and given place to a gentleman in blue and buff, holding a sword instead of a sceptre, while underneath was painted in large letters

General Washington.

From the inn Rip turned to the crowd that stood about it, and even here the strange alteration that pervaded everything and everybody was visible. There was none of the former air of calm and leisure characteristic of the friends who had sat with him round the tree yesterday — or was it a hundred years ago? This crowd was noisy and bustling and inclined to quarrel: full of plans and inventions to judge by the talk, and eager to discuss and find fault with the contents of a handbill, which one of their number was handing about. Rip did not understand much of what they were saying, but he caught such phrases as ‘Members of Congress,’ ‘Bunker’s Hill,’ ‘liberty,’ and other expressions as meaningless to him as if they were uttered in a foreign tongue.

It was some time before he noticed that to the villagers on their side he himself was an object of great interest and curiosity. They pressed round him and made remarks to each other about his strange dress and the rust on his gun, while the little man with the handbills pushed his way up to him and inquired ‘how he had voted?’ which Rip, who had not the least idea what he meant, answered merely with a stare. Another who desired to know ‘whether he was Federal or Democrat’ fared no better; but a third questioner, who asked why he had come to the election with a gun on his shoulder and a mob at his heels, and if he intended to head a riot, at last gave Rip back his power of speech.

‘Alas! gentlemen,’ he cried; ‘I am a poor, quiet man, a native of this village and a loyal subject of King George.’

The tumult that broke forth at this reply nearly deafened him. ‘A spy! a spy!’ shouted the people, ‘away with him! to the gallows with him!’ and it might have gone hardly with Rip had not a man in a cocked hat interfered and called them to order. The man next demanded of Rip what he wanted and why he was there, to which Rip humbly made answer that he had come in search of some of his neighbours who had been used to meet him at the tavern.

‘Well, give us their names?’ said the man in the cocked hat.

‘Nicholas Vedder, the innkeeper,’ answered Rip.

There was a moment’s silence; then an old man, in a thin piping voice, spoke.

‘Nicholas Vedder? Why, he’s dead and gone these eighteen years; and even his wooden tombstone in the churchyard has got rotten.’

‘And Brom Dutcher?’

‘Oh, he enlisted as a soldier in the beginning of the war. Some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point; others, that he was drowned in a squall off Antony’s Nose. Anyway, he never came back here.’

‘And van Bummel, the schoolmaster?’

‘He went off to the wars too, and became a general, and is now a member of Congress.’

Rip asked no further questions: his home and his friends were gone, and he seemed to be alone in the world. At length a cry of despair broke from him.

‘Does nobody know Rip van Winkle?’

‘Rip van Winkle?’ answered two or three. ‘Oh, to be sure! There’s Rip van Winkle leaning against that tree.’

Rip looked where they pointed, and grew more bewildered and despairing than ever. For what he saw was himself; himself as he had been yesterday when he went up the mountain; himself in the rags that he had worn with such a light heart.

‘And what is *your* name?’ asked the man in the cocked hat, watching his face.

‘God knows,’ cried Rip; ‘I don’t know who I am. I’m not myself. I’m somebody else — that’s me yonder — at least I can’t tell; he seems to have got into my shoes. I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain and they changed my gun, and now everything is changed and I’m changed, and I don’t know what is my name or who I am.’

When he had ceased, the bystanders looked at each other and tapping their foreheads, whispered something about taking away the gun so that he might not do himself a mischief. They were still talking when a pleasant-faced woman pushed through the crowd to get a peep of the stranger with the long beard. His looks frightened the child she was carrying, and it began to cry. ‘Hush, Rip! hush!’ she said; ‘the old man won’t hurt you.’

As he heard her words Rip started and turned towards her eagerly.

‘What is your name?’ he asked.

‘Judith Gardener.’

‘And who was your father?’

‘Ah, poor man, he was Rip van Winkle; but he went away from home more than twenty years agone. He took his dog and his gun with him, and the dog was found lying in front of the door early next morning. But as for father, whether he shot himself by accident or was carried away by the Indians, we never knew. I was only a little girl then.’

‘And your mother?’

‘Oh, she died only a short time since. She flew into such a passion with a pedlar who she thought had cheated her, that she broke a blood vessel.’

But though Rip had inquired after his wife, all affection for her had long died away, and he did not take this news much to heart. He flung his arms round his daughter and cried.

‘I am your father. Don’t you know me? Young Rip van Winkle once, now old Rip van Winkle. Does *nobody* know poor Rip van Winkle?’

The crowd heard, amazed, and in silence. Then suddenly an old woman went up to him, and peered closely into his face.

‘Why, ’tis Rip van Winkle, for sure!’ said she. ‘Welcome home, neighbour! Where have you been these twenty long years?’

Rip’s story was soon told, but the people who listened to it had as much difficulty in believing that you could sleep for twenty years and think it was one night, as Rip himself. ‘Mad!’ was the only interpretation they put upon the tale, though they did not say so openly.

In the midst of the general perplexity an old man was seen coming along the road, and someone called out:

‘Here is Peter Vanderdonk! Let us ask him if he ever knew of such doings?’

‘Ay, let us! He is the oldest dweller in the village, and we will abide by his words,’ the rest answered in chorus, and they watched intently till Peter came up.

‘Why! ’tis Rip van Winkle back again!’ he exclaimed, just as the old woman had done. ‘Right glad I am to see him, too.’

Who can tell the joy of poor Rip at this hearty greeting? So he was no ghost after all, as he had almost begun to think, but a flesh and blood man, with friends like other people. He could hardly speak for happiness, but he grasped Peter’s hand tightly, and then the man with the cocked hat asked Peter if he had ever heard any strange stories of the Catskill Mountains.

‘Ay, that have I, many a time,’ replied Peter. ‘My grandfather — he was mighty taken up with all such things — told me that the great Hendrik Hudson who first came over from Europe and gave his name to the river, held a feast up there once in every twenty years, with the crew of his ship the “Half Moon”; and my old father had actually beheld them playing at ninepins in the hollow of the mountains. And though I never saw anything myself,’ finished Peter, ‘I heard the sound of their balls one summer afternoon, and anybody who did not know, would have thought it was thunder.’

After this the crowd broke up and went about its own concerns, and Rip returned with his daughter to her own house. Her husband was one of the children he had played with long ago, and he was now a thriving farmer. Rip’s son, whom he had seen leaning against the tree, was supposed to be employed on the farm, but he was no more fond of attending to his own work than his father before him.

Little by little Rip slipped back into his former life, and gathered about him those of his old friends that were still left. But now, as in the days of long ago, it was the children whom he loved best, and when they grew tired of romping together, he would sit down on some green knoll while they climbed about him, and tell them the tale, of which they never grew weary, of his night on the Catskills.

None of you who read this story are old enough to remember the wonderful American actor Jefferson, who played Rip van Winkle till he grew at last to feel he was more Rip van Winkle than Jefferson. But those who *did* see him act it will never forget it, nor his burst of despair when he came home, to be repudiated and denied by everyone.

THE WONDERFUL BASKET

There was once a time when young women of the Tlingit tribe were not allowed to eat between their meals, but in spite of this rule which they knew very well, two girls belonging to one of the noblest families one day being very hungry took some food. Of course, they did not tell anybody, but their mother, who looked after the food-box found it out and was very angry.

‘What do you mean by behaving like that?’ she asked her eldest daughter, shaking her violently while she spoke. ‘It is not right that a big girl like you should do such things. I am ashamed of you! As you are so fond of eating, you had better go and marry Mountain Dweller. You will get plenty of food from him.’ But though the mother did not scold her other daughter who was still quite little, the child did not like her sister to be slapped and scratched. The sister did not like it either; so that night the two girls crept softly out of the house and ran away to the forest.

The mother was surprised next morning when she found no signs of her daughters, but she thought they were cross or lazy, and had stayed in bed in order that they might not have to do any work. She waited a little, expecting to see them every moment, and as they did not come she called out, ‘Why don’t you get up? it is very late.’ There was no answer, so she went to their room to discover what was the matter. Then she perceived that they had never been to bed at all, and felt sorry that her cross words the day before had driven them away.

The first thing she did was to go to the houses of some neighbours, and ask if they knew anything of her daughters, and if they had been playing any games with the children. But no one had seen them; and for seven days the mother wandered from one place to another, but she could never find any trace of them.

All this time the two girls were walking about the woods not knowing where they went, and looking vainly for fruit or berries, as they were very hungry. At last the path they were following led upwards, and they found themselves among the mountains. A faint sound as of somebody chopping wood a long distance off reached their ears, and the elder sister said to herself, ‘I wonder if that is the man that mother was talking of.’ By and bye the sound grew clearer and clearer, and on turning a corner they came upon the woodcutter, with his face painted red, standing over a fallen tree. As the girls approached he looked up and said:

‘What are you two doing here?’

‘Mother was unkind to us,’ answered the elder, ‘so we came away.’

‘What had you done to vex her?’ asked the man.

‘We had eaten some food between our meals, and she said, “If you are so fond of eating, you had better go and marry Mountain Dweller.”’

‘Well, come into my house,’ said Mountain Dweller, for it was he who was chopping the wood, and they went with him and he took them all over it, and very fine it was. Last of all he led them into a store-house full of dried meat, salmon, and deer, and halibut. They gazed at it hungrily, though they did not say anything, but Mountain Dweller saw their eyes and gave them food which they gladly ate; and they slept there all that night, as they did not know where else to go.

Next morning they got up very early and found Mountain Dweller making ready to hunt, drawing on his leggings and choosing his weapons.

‘We will be married to-morrow,’ said he, ‘but to-day I have a long way to walk, and I shall not be back till nightfall. And before I go, I want to warn you not to peep behind the large curtain of skins hanging over that door. A very bad woman lives on the other side, and she does not like anyone to see her.’

‘No; of course we won’t,’ answered they, and Mountain Dweller set out.

So the girls stayed in the house all day, and wondered what their friends were doing in the village, and if they were still seeking them. ‘I expect,’ said the elder, ‘they think we have been eaten by wolves, and are mourning for us. And mother will have cut off her hair, and painted her face black.’

‘Yes; she is sure to have done that,’ answered the little girl; and so she had.

The days went by in much the same way, except that the big girl was now married to Mountain Dweller. Every morning he went out to hunt, so the two sisters had plenty to eat, and if they wanted any food between meals, they took it. They were quite happy until one unlucky morning when it was snowing so fast they could not leave the house, and at last they grew weary, and longed for something new.

‘Who can the woman be that lives behind the curtain?’ said the elder sister at last. ‘I daresay she is not so very bad after all, and perhaps she can teach us some fresh games. I have noticed that there is a little hole in the curtain; I will peep through that, and if she looks kind and good-natured, I will go in.’

‘Yes; that is a good plan,’ answered the child, and they both went on tiptoe to the curtain.

The hole was very small, and it was hardly possible that anyone on the other side of the curtain should have seen them looking through. Yet the moment that the wife had fixed her eye on it, the woman threw up her hands and screamed, and both sisters fell down dead; and that is how Mountain Dweller found them when he returned from the hunt.

He guessed at once what had happened, and his anger was so great that the first thing he did was to run behind the curtain and kill the bad woman who lived there. Then he took some eagle-down and spread it over the girls' bodies, and walked round them many times, shaking his rattle all the while. At length slight shivers passed through their limbs; the colour came back into their faces, and there they stood on their feet, as well as ever they were.

When they had been in the mountain for many, many months, Mountain Dweller said one day to his wife:

'Would you not like to see your father and mother once more?'

'Oh, yes, yes!' cried both the girls at once.

'Well, you shall,' said he; 'but first I must go to hunt and prepare a gift for them. So make me a little basket, just big enough to put your finger in.'

'That won't take long,' laughed she, and on his return in the evening the basket was ready. But this basket was not like other baskets, for when the husband shook it, it grew large enough to hold all kinds of meat and bags of tallow, and when he shook it again, it shrunk — and the meat also.

At dawn the next day the girls started and carried the basket to their father's house. It was evening before they arrived, and the first person who saw them approaching was their little brother, who ran in, crying, 'Mother, my sisters are there.'

'Nonsense!' she answered angrily. 'Why do you say such things? They have been dead this many a long day.'

'They *are* my sisters,' shouted he. 'Do you suppose I don't know them?'

'Well, let me see the hair from their marten-skin robes,' she replied, still unbelieving, for she remembered that her daughters had marten-skin robes, such as only the chief families were allowed to wear. Then the boy went and spoke to his sisters, and pulled little pieces of the fur out. As soon as she saw the fur, the mother believed, and she and her husband and their kinsfolk went forth to meet the lost girls, weeping for joy at having found them again.

The next day the big girl said to her mother, 'There is a little basket in the woods, filled with meat. Let it be fetched.' So several people went to fetch it, but returned, saying it was so large that all of them put together could not bring it in.

'I will go and see about it,' answered the girl, and she made it small so that she could easily carry it, but as soon as she laid it down in the house, it became as large as ever. She knelt on the floor and unpacked the basket, and the house could hardly contain all that was in it; and the village people came and feasted likewise. Only the mother ate so much that she grew very ill, and never got any better.

To this day luck befalls every man who hears Mountain Dweller chopping the wood.

THE ESCAPE OF THE GALLEY-SLAVES

In the year 1563 the ‘Three Half Moons,’ with thirty men on board, set sail from Portsmouth for the south of Spain, intending to sell their goods to merchants in the town of Seville, situated on the river Guadalquivir. The wind was behind them and they had a prosperous voyage till they neared the Straits of Gibraltar, when eight Turkish ships suddenly hove in sight, and surrounded the ‘Three Half Moons.’

Of course, no vessel ever entered the Mediterranean, which in those days was alive with pirates, without being fully armed, and every man was a fighter. So when the captain of the ‘Three Half Moons’ beheld the flag with the crescent flying at the masthead of each galley, he ordered the trumpets and drums to be beaten, and served out swords and ammunition to the crew. This done, John Fox the gunner moved his cannon into position and sent a shower of bullets at the Turks.

The enemy however either had better artillery or were in greater practice than the English men, for they loaded at least three times as quickly, coming up as they did so to closed quarters, so that the crew were forced to take to their bows. Their aim was deadly and soon many of the Turks had fallen upon their decks, but again their more rapid firing told, and soon there were signs that the ‘Three Half Moons’ was filling with water from the holes pierced in her side. Then the Turks left their own galleys and tried to board her before she sank. Bows and cannon were alike useless now, so the English seized their pikes and swords, and fought hand to hand till they were overborne by the number of the enemy. At length they could resist no longer; their weapons were taken from them, and those who were left alive were sent, as prisoners of war usually were, to work at the oars of the galley. This was a fate dreaded by all from nearly the beginnings of history. The unfortunate slaves were generally chained together on benches in a stifling, dark place, where they could hardly breathe; their food was scanty and often bad, and if from exhaustion any man showed symptoms of flagging, an overseer was at hand to flog him into greater vigour. Should the ship sink, as often happened, the heavy chains deprived the unhappy slaves of any chance of escaping death.

It was the custom of the Turks to lay up their galleys during the winter in a harbour near the town of Alexandria, and to throw all their prisoners and galley-slaves into gaol, with irons on their legs. The crew of the ‘Three Half Moons’ were thrust into dungeons like the rest, but before very long the captain and the owner of the ship, who had sailed with them, were ransomed by their friends.

Thankful though they were to be free again, they suffered terrible pain at leaving their companions to so many and great miseries, and they could only falter out a few broken words about doing their best to collect money at home to deliver them also. The prisoners sighed and did not answer: they knew too well the worth of promises such as these.

Their daily allowance of food in the prison was no greater than it had been on the galleys, and they were all more than half starved. Yet their plight would have been even worse than it was, had not John Fox the gunner possessed unusual skill as a barber, which somehow became known, and the officials about the gaol and harbour would send for him to shave them and cut their hair. With the money thus earned, he bought good food for his mates and himself. After a while, he and certain of his companions were allowed by the keeper to go out for the day and make what they could, a regular part of their earnings being paid to the gaoler. As they were obliged to report themselves at night and always kept the irons on their legs, there was not much fear of their running away.

In the winter of 1577, when the crew of the ‘Three Half Moons’ had reached the fourteenth year of their captivity, the galleys were dismantled of their masts and sails, and laid up in harbour till the spring. The captains and sailors, having nothing more to do, returned to their own homes; and the prisoners, amounting in all to two hundred and sixty-eight Christians belonging to sixteen different nations, were marched back to the prison.

Not far from the harbour was an eating-house kept by one Unticaro, a Spaniard, who since he had been thirty years a captive without once attempting to escape was permitted certain privileges. With him, John Fox had long ago made friends, and it was of this man he now asked advice as to his best plan of running away, because Fox had determined that, even if he died for it, he would stay there no longer. Unticaro had lacked the courage to move on his own account, but fired by Fox, readily agreed to risk his own life also. Six of the other prisoners whom they could trust were let into the secret, and they swore they would stand or fall together.

The first thing to be done was, of course, to get rid of their chains, so Fox distributed files among them, with orders to have their irons off their legs by eight o’clock the next night. They had by this time been imprisoned for so many years, and the gaoler had got so accustomed to seeing them about, that so long as they were all there when he locked up, he did not trouble himself further.

On the evening of the following day, January 1, 1578, the six captives accompanied by John Fox met at Unticaro's eating-house, pretending to be in high spirits so that nobody who dropped in should guess that anything serious was on hand. When eight o'clock struck, Fox sent Unticaro to the master of the harbour, with a message professing to come from one of the city officials, a friend of the gaolers. Unticaro seems to have persuaded the gaoler to go with him, and the two set out, injunctions being given to the warders not to bar the gate till his return, as he should not be absent long. No sooner had they departed, than the other men began to search Unticaro's house for the various weapons which he had hidden there. These all proved to be old, and there was only one sword among them which Fox took, and, grasping the hilt, he concealed himself round the corner of the house and awaited the gaoler.

The man was not long in coming, and when he saw the house in total darkness he instantly suspected that something was the matter. Stepping back from the door in order to make sure that he might not be taken by surprise, he perceived Fox standing in the shadow, and cried 'O Fox, what have I deserved of thee that thou shouldst seek my death?'

'Thou villain!' answered Fox, 'thou hast sucked many a Christian's blood, and now thou shalt know what thou hast deserved at my hands,' and he lifted his sword and struck the keeper such a blow that he fell stark dead to the ground.

Leaving the body, the men went down to the place where the six warders were waiting.

'Who goes there?' asked one, and Fox replied:

'All friends,' which, says the chronicler, 'when they were in, proved contrary,' for the prisoners fell upon the gaolers and soon dispatched them all. Then Fox barred the gate and dragged a gun against it, for he had work to do inside.

In the gaoler's lodge, which appears to have been empty, they found the prison keys and a number of weapons much better than those they had brought with them. There was also a chest containing money which they would certainly need, if they managed to escape from the town. John Fox, however, declined to touch any of it, but Unticaro and two others were not so scrupulous, and stuffed as many golden ducats into their clothes as they could contrive to stow away. After this was done Fox bade them follow him into the prison, unlocking the doors with the gaoler's keys, and slaying the warders in charge. The prisoners, thus set free, were put by him to different tasks, the greater number being ordered to seize a galley lying at the prison end of the harbour, while the others carried down to it the mast and the sails and oars which had been stored up in the prison. Although most of the warders had been killed, eight of them had taken refuge in the roof of the prison, and in order to come at them the conspirators had to place ladders against the walls. The fighting was hot, and Fox received three shots in his clothes, while Unticaro and the two men who had taken the ducats were killed outright, which Fox considered a judgment upon them, for taking what did not belong to them.

All seemed going well, when a wounded Turk fell outside the prison wall, and ‘made such a lowing’ or bellowing, that he was heard by the people who lived in one or two scattered houses about. They instantly gave the alarm, and the prisoners fighting for their freedom felt as if the way of escape was barred to them. For at each end of the harbour was a fortress, while the city of Alexandria lay behind. Yet, such good use had the men made of the start they had had in getting ready the galley that before another ship could put to sea they were all on board, and had passed in safety the guns of the two forts, gaining the open water.

Once fairly away, they looked back to be sure that none of the Turkish vessels were likely to catch them up. The shores of the harbour were black with people, ‘in companies like unto swarms of bees, bustling themselves to dress up the galleys.’ But this was not so easy, as the whole of the fittings were locked up in the town. So the Christians breathed again, and, falling on their knees, gave thanks for their deliverance.

But the danger was by no means over, the wind was constantly shifting, and they did not know how to shape their course; and worse than that, the few provisions, which in their haste they had been able to bring, were soon exhausted. In twenty-eight days, eight persons died of starvation, just before they made the port of Gallipoli in the island of Candia. Here they were welcomed by the abbot and the monks, who bade them stay till they were strong again, and thankful the fugitives were for their rest. After a while they took ship, and reached the harbour of Taranto in south Italy without further adventure, and there by order of Fox the galley was sold and the price divided equally among the men. Together they marched to Naples where they parted, every man going to his own country, Fox himself journeying to Rome. The Pope granted him a private interview, and bestowed a large sum of money on him, while the King of Spain pensioned him on twenty pence a day, which in those times meant a great deal more than it does now. The Ministers of Queen Elizabeth were not behind the rest, and, when Fox returned to England in 1579, ‘extended to him their liberality to maintain him in his age, to the great encouragement of all Christians.’

THE BEAVER AND THE PORCUPINE

Once upon a time there lived in the North West of America a beaver and a porcupine, who were great friends; and, as often happens, they loved each other all the better because they were so different. To begin with, the porcupine as no doubt you know is stuck over like a pin-cushion with long prickly quills, while the beaver is smooth-haired. Then the beaver had his house in the middle of a great lake, and the porcupine much preferred to dwell on land among the mountains, and if the beaver had not been able to swim, the two would never have met at all.

Now the beaver was often to be seen at the door of the porcupine's house, and was continually urging him to return the visit; but so far the porcupine had always refused.

'How can I?' he would ask. 'You know quite well that in a moment I should have swallowed so much water that my body would sink to the bottom, and I should never come up again. No, no! it is impossible — totally impossible — sorry as I am to give up the pleasure of seeing all the wonderful things you have told me of.' And try as he might, the beaver never could get another answer.

But one day he thought of a very clever plan, and he lost no time in putting it into practice. He had noticed from his house that the porcupine was sitting on the shore, enjoying the sun, so he instantly set off to swim to him.

'You are coming to see my house this minute,' said he.

'To see your house?' repeated the porcupine in amazement; 'but how am I to do that? I have told you a hundred times I should be drowned before I had gone ten yards.'

'Oh, no, you wouldn't!' replied the beaver, 'for I am going to carry you. Be quick and get on my back, and hold fast round my neck.'

'But I shall die! I know I shall!'

'I tell you, you *won't* die. I will take care of that! Oh, don't be such a coward!' And at length, very slowly, the porcupine climbed up and seated himself.

'Hold tight round my neck,' said the beaver again; 'I am just going to start.' But he need not have troubled to give that advice, for the porcupine's grasp nearly choked him. Still, so long as the beaver kept on the surface, the porcupine really had nothing to complain of; but when he dived as he did once or twice, the water got into the rider's eyes and nose and down his throat, and almost suffocated him.

No words could tell how thankful he was to reach the beaver’s house, but he could not think how he should ever have the courage to make that dreadful journey a second time.

‘You seem tired; you must have something to eat,’ said the beaver as the porcupine lay down feebly on his side. The porcupine was very glad to hear that, for he was certainly hungry; but great was his disappointment when the beaver took out of a hole a bundle of sticks and placed them before his guest.

‘They are quite young twigs — you will find them very good,’ said he, and the poor porcupine did not know how to refuse, and ate them silently and without making more faces than he could help, for he did not like them at all.

Next morning, when the porcupine awoke, the beaver was standing by him.

‘Let us have a game, friend,’ he cried; ‘I know ever so many!’

‘What sort of game is it?’ asked the porcupine, and the beaver answered: ‘You shall get on my back, and put your nose well down on the nape of my neck, and four times will I dive to the bottom of the lake, and four times will I come up!’

This did not sound a very good game to the porcupine, and he would have preferred something quite different, but he did not like to be rude or ill-natured, so he agreed to play it. But when it came to the point, the game proved even worse than he thought, for before the beaver started he splashed about with his tail, and filled the porcupine’s eyes and nose with water; and not content with that he stayed below at each dive so very long that, when they rose to the surface for the fourth time, the porcupine was nearly dead.

‘I will take you home now,’ said the beaver; ‘I have enjoyed my game so much.’

No sooner had the porcupine touched dry land than he went up to join his tribe, and bade them come to a feast in his house. As soon as they were all assembled he told them of the terrible sufferings he had gone through at the hands of the beaver, whom he had always looked on as a friend, though he could do so no more.

‘He really almost killed me,’ he said mournfully; and his guests replied smilingly, ‘Well, invite *him* to come and play with *you*.’

The porcupine was well pleased with their words, and next day sent a message to the beaver, begging for the honour of a visit as early as possible. The beaver lost no time in setting out, and the porcupine who was keeping watch soon saw him coming up the valley.

‘Come in! come in!’ cried he, and gave the fire a switch with his tail, so that some sparks flew right into the eyes of the guest. ‘Do you feel inclined for some food?’ inquired the porcupine; ‘you have had a long walk and I am sure you must be hungry.’

‘Thank you, I should like some,’ replied the beaver; but he did not fancy the bark and pine needles that the porcupine placed before him. However, the porcupine did not seem to notice his guest’s unwillingness, and only said:

‘Eat a little faster, my friend, for I am longing to have a game with you’; so the beaver was forced to swallow some of the bark, which he did not like any better than the porcupine had liked the twigs.

‘What game is it, and where do you play?’ he asked when he had finished.

‘Do you see that tree on the slope over there? That is my play-ground. But, perhaps, as it is getting late and you may be tired, it would be as well to put it off till to-morrow. I will show you where you are to sleep.’ And as they walked along, the porcupine said something to the sky and the clouds vanished, and in the morning the ground was covered with ice.

The following day he told the beaver he had prepared another feast for him, but as it was just like the last, the beaver would rather have been without it.

‘I have finished now,’ he observed as soon as he could, and the porcupine answered:

‘Very well; now we will go out to play.’

So the two went down towards the slope and came to a frozen stream which had to be crossed. The porcupine easily got over with his long claws, but the beaver’s feet were smooth, and had nothing to hold on with, thus he slid from one side to the other and was very uncomfortable.

‘Come along,’ said the porcupine, ‘it is all right’; but the beaver could not ‘come along,’ and at last the porcupine had to go back and take him by the hand and lead him over.

‘Now you will be able to walk,’ remarked the porcupine, and they went on to the place where the tree was standing.

‘Here we are!’ said the porcupine, stopping beneath it.

‘But what is the game?’ asked the beaver.

‘Oh, you have to climb this tree.’

‘But I have never climbed a tree in my life,’ replied the beaver anxiously. ‘How do you begin?’

‘I will go first, and you have only to watch me and see how I do it,’ answered the porcupine, and he climbed and climbed till he reached the very top of the tree. Then he let go the branch he was on, and dropped straight to the ground.

‘There, it is not very difficult,’ he said to the beaver; ‘but as you are not used to climbing I will take you up on my back, and you can come down by yourself. Be sure you cling tight round my neck.’ And the beaver did — very tight indeed.

It took them some time to reach the top of the tree and then the porcupine put the beaver on to a branch. But the beaver was not much more comfortable than when he was crossing the ice, for his smooth hands could not dig into the bark like the porcupine’s claws.

‘Hold fast to the tree, and I will go down first,’ said the porcupine, and as he spoke he let the branch go, and fell down to the earth. Then he got up, and ran about at the foot of the tree, watching the beaver who was still on his branch, too frightened to move.

‘Oh, don’t be afraid! Look at me! I am alive as you see,’ so at last the beaver let go as the porcupine bade him. But he did not know the proper way to fall as the porcupine did, and his head struck on a rock, and the blow killed him.

Then the porcupine went home.

AN OLD-WORLD GHOST

Children are often inclined to think that the nations who ruled the world long, long ago, were quite unlike ourselves, and always busy with very serious things, such as the passing of laws or fighting. It is quite a surprise sometimes to learn that they really shared our feelings on a whole quantity of subjects, and even, as this story will show, were quite as much afraid of ghosts or haunted houses as anybody in these days could be. It is told by a famous Roman citizen called Pliny, who was born near Lake Como in the reign of the Emperor Nero.

There was, he says, at that time a large and comfortable house in a good part of the town of Athens which, to the astonishment of everybody, stood empty for many years. It seemed odd that so fine a building should remain so long unoccupied, and at length one man more curious than the rest asked his host when at a small dinner party if he could explain the reason. The tale he heard from the Athenian noble was a marvellous one, and the guest shuddered as he listened, for though he was bold enough in the field of battle, he trembled in the presence of that which he did not understand.

Once the house had been filled with a gay family; music had floated through the garden, children had played at knuckle bones in the hall, and young men had thrown discs in the courts. But gradually sounds of laughter grew more rare and the dwellers in the house fell ill of mysterious maladies, till at last the few that were left departed for another place, hoping amidst new surroundings to shake off the gloom which possessed them. For a while none dared ask why the home of their fathers had been thus forsaken; but little by little whispers of the truth got abroad, and it was noticed that men turned down another street sooner than pass the empty mansion.

A little girl was the first to hear the noise and sat up straight in her bed with wide-open eyes peering into the darkness, too frightened even to call to her slave, as a sound like the clanking of chains struck upon her ear. It seemed to come from very far off; but soon, to the child’s wild terror, it drew closer and closer, till she expected every moment to feel the touch of the cold iron on her cheek. Then, to her immense relief, it became fainter, and went farther and farther away, by and bye dying out altogether.

Such was the tale the little girl told to her mother in the morning, and very shortly there was not a person in the house who had not been roused by the mysterious noise. For a time this was all that happened, and though it was bad enough, perhaps it might have been borne; but there was worse to come. One night the form of an old man appeared, so thin you could almost see his bones, his hair standing up like bristles, and a white beard flowing to his waist. On his wrists and ankles were iron chains, which shook as he moved. Henceforward there was no sleep for any of the household; their days were passed in dread of the nights, and one by one they fell a prey to their terrors. At length there came a time when the living skeletons could endure it no longer and fled, leaving the ghost behind them. Such was the tale told to the guest, but the end was yet to come.

Years passed by, and the survivors began gradually to recover their health and spirits, and wondered if things had really been so bad as they had thought, and if some stranger, ignorant of the story, might not be persuaded to take the house if the rent was made low enough. So a notice was put up in a public place, offering the mansion for sale or hire, and one of the first to read it happened to be Athenodorus the philosopher, who had arrived on a visit to Athens. He knew nothing of the evil reputation which belonged to the house, but the low price asked aroused his suspicions, and he at once inquired why so fine a dwelling should be offered for so little. With some difficulty he managed to piece together the true story, and when he heard it, instantly took the house, resolved to find out if possible the secret of the ghost.

As it grew dark, he bade his slave carry a couch for him to the front part of the mansion, and place a lamp and writing materials on a table near it. He afterwards dismissed the slaves to their own quarters, and turned his whole attention to the book he happened to be writing, so that he might not from idleness fancy he saw or heard all sorts of things which were not there. For a little while he worked amidst dead silence; then a faint sound as of the clanking of chains smote on his ears, always coming nearer and nearer, and growing louder and louder. But Athenodorus, as became a philosopher, was master of himself, even at this moment. He gave no sign of having heard anything out of the common, and his sharp-pointed instrument never faltered for an instant in drawing the words on the waxen tablet. In a few seconds the noise reached the door; next, it was within the door and coming down the room. At last Athenodorus *did* lift his head and beheld the figure he had been told of standing close to him, and signalling with his finger. In reply the philosopher waved his hand, begging the ghost to wait until he had finished the sentence he was writing, and this he succeeded in doing in spite of the fact that the figure incessantly rattled the chains close to his ears. Athenodorus, however, would not hurry himself, and wrote on deliberately. Then he laid down his stylus and looked round. The ghost was again beckoning to him, so he took up the lamp and motioned the figure to go before him. With a slow step, as of one who carries a heavy weight on his feet, the old man walked through the house as far as the courtyard, where he vanished quite suddenly; nor could the philosopher discover the smallest trace of him, though he searched every corner carefully by the aid of his lamp. As it was now night and too late to examine further, Athenodorus made a little heap of leaves and grass to mark the spot where the figure disappeared, and returned to his couch where he slept peacefully till dawn.

When he awoke next morning he at once visited a magistrate of the city and, after telling his story, begged that some men might be sent to dig up that part of the courtyard. The magistrate gave the order without delay, and, accompanied by Athenodorus, the slaves set about their task. A few feet from the surface the pickaxes struck upon iron and the philosopher drew nearer, for he felt that the secret of the haunting was about to be disclosed. And so it was, for there lay a heap of bones with chains fastened to them.

How they came there, how long they had been there, whose bones they were, none could tell; but they were collected in a box and buried by order of the magistrate, at the expense of the public. This seemed to satisfy the unquiet spirit, for the house was henceforward left in peace, and as Athenodorus had no further interest in the matter its owners were free to return and dwell there, which they gladly did.

THE GENTLEMAN HIGHWAYMAN

Few people can have crowded more occupations into a life of twenty-six years than James Maclean.

His father, a Scot by birth, had settled in the Irish county of Monaghan, where the position of minister to a body of dissenters had been offered him. From the first moment of his coming amongst them Mr. Maclean was much liked by his congregation, who carried all their troubles to him, sure that if he could not help them, he would at least give them advice and sympathy, and there was not one of them who did not drink his health with his whole heart when the minister married the daughter of a gentleman in the neighbourhood.

More than twenty years passed away quietly and happily. The Macleans had two sons, and the elder one early showed a wish to follow his father’s profession, and, at an age when most young men are still at the University, received a ‘call’ to a Protestant congregation at the Hague.

James, the younger, was educated for a merchant, and as soon as he was eighteen was to go into a counting-house and learn his business. Unfortunately, just before he reached the date fixed, his father died, leaving the youth his own master — for as no mention is made of his mother, it is probable she was dead also. Without consulting anyone, James threw up the post which old Maclean had taken so much pains to get for him, and withdrawing the money left him by the will, from the bank, spent it all in a few months on racing and betting.

Of course he was not allowed to make himself a beggar in this silly way without an effort to save him on the part of his mother’s friends. But from a child he had always thought he knew better than anyone else, and quarrelled with those who took a different view. Naturally, when the money had all disappeared without anything to show for it, he chose to forget how rude he had been, and expected his relations to support him in idleness, which they absolutely refused to do. At length, not knowing which way to turn, he was glad enough to become the valet of a certain Mr. Howard, who was on his way to England. When he liked, the young Irishman could make himself as pleasant as most of his countrymen, and Mr. Howard took a great fancy to him, and treated him with much kindness. But from first to last James never knew when he was well off, and after a while he returned to his old ways, and frequently stayed out all night, drinking and gambling. In vain did Mr. Howard warn him that unless he gave up these habits he would certainly be dismissed. The young man paid no heed to his words, and in the end his master’s patience was exhausted, and one day James found himself on board the Irish boat, without a character and nothing but his quarter’s wages in his pockets.

Now James Maclean was one of those people who are totally without a sense of shame, and if once a person cannot be made ashamed of what he has done, and always imagines himself to be the victim of bad luck or of somebody else, his case is hopeless. On this occasion he was quite convinced that it was the duty of his relations to supply him with an income, or at least with a home, and when as before refusals met him on all sides, he applied not for the first or even the second time, to his brother at the Hague for help. We do not know what excuse he made for his request, but we may be quite certain it was not the true one; still whether his brother believed him or not, he sent him a small sum, probably at the cost of great self-denial, for the salaries of ministers were not high. This money, as was to be expected, went the way of the rest, and again James found himself penniless and reduced to look for a place as a servant.

Hearing that a Colonel in the British army who had served abroad with some of his Scotch uncles was in need of a butler, young Maclean went to see him, and was lucky enough to obtain the situation, though he knew as little of a butler’s work as he did of a printer’s. He was, however, quick at picking up anything that he chose and contrived to keep this place for a year or two, till the Colonel discovered that his butler had been carrying out a system of robbery ever since he had been in his house. After a few words from his master, James was once more cast on the world, and had some idea of enlisting in the Irish brigade then serving under the French flag, and this would have been the best thing that could have happened to him. But as, on inquiry, he learned that unless he became a Roman Catholic he would be refused a commission, he changed his mind and resolved to remain where he was.

‘Well, I suppose there is nothing for it but a humble letter to the Colonel,’ thought James one day, when he heard from a man whom he met at a tavern that his late master was on his way to England. So calling for paper and a pen, he composed a letter to such good purpose and so full of lies, that the kindhearted Colonel really believed he had repented, and offered to take him back, desiring at the same time that James should take his baggage by sea to London, and allowing him a shilling a day for his food.

It was with mingled feelings of contempt and relief that the young reprobate read his master’s reply. ‘What a fool he is!’ he said to himself, adding after a moment ‘Well, after all, it is lucky for me!’

But the Colonel, good-natured though he was, knew too much about master James to give credit to his stories, and declined a request, made soon after their arrival in London, to purchase a commission for his late butler, with a view to enabling him to marry an heiress. Yet when he discovered that Maclean had really enlisted in Lord Albemarle’s regiment of horse-guards, he consented to give him the ten pounds necessary for the purpose, which, to keep it the more safely, was placed in the hands of one of the officers. Whether Maclean ever succeeded in handling the money seems doubtful, for as soon as his papers were made out and he was ordered to join the army in Flanders, he suddenly disappeared, and the troopship sailed without him.

There must have been something very attractive about this rogue, for whatever desperate plight he was in he always contrived to fall on his feet; and when he thought it safe to emerge from the place where he was in hiding while there was a hue and cry raised after the deserter, it was in the character of a man anxious to start for the West Indies — if someone would only lend him fifty pounds!

Someone *did* lend it to him, and it was instantly spent on fine clothes which captured the heart of Miss Macglegno, the daughter of a horse-dealer, with five hundred pounds to her dowry.

This time, Maclean did not dare to throw about the money as he had previously done, but with his father-in-law’s eye upon him, he opened a grocer’s shop in Welbeck Street, hoping that the fashionable people who had come to live in the big new houses in Cavendish Square might give him their custom. But his wife speedily saw that if the business was to prosper she must look after it herself, as her husband could be depended on for nothing. Therefore she set to work, and for three years all went well, and the neighbours said to each other that it was fortunate she was such a stirring woman, as though Master Maclean was a harmless sort of man he was apt to be lazy.

At the end of this period Mrs. Maclean died, after a short illness, and her two little girls went to live with their grandmother. Left alone, James neglected the shop more and more, and at length it grew plain to himself, as well as to everybody else, that if any money was to be saved at all, the goods must be sold for what they would fetch. And once sold, it is easy to guess how quickly the gold melted in James’s pocket.

It was not till he had come to his last shilling — or at any rate his last pound — that Maclean began to ask himself ‘What next?’ After these years of comfort and plenty — and idleness — it would be hard to become a servant again, yet he could not see any other means of keeping himself from starving.

He was slowly getting accustomed to the idea of seeking for a servant’s place, when one day he met in the streets an apothecary named Plunket, whom he had known in Monaghan.

‘How now?’ asked Plunket. ‘Is anything the matter? You look as if you were on the road to be hung at Tyburn.’

‘The matter is that to-morrow I shall not have a penny in the world,’ answered Maclean, gloomily.

‘Oh, things are never so bad as they seem,’ said Plunket. ‘Cheer up. Perhaps I can find a way to supply you with *more* pennies. It only wants a little pluck and spirit! If *we* haven’t got any money, there are plenty of other people who have.’

Maclean was silent. He understood at once what Plunket meant, and that he was being offered a partnership in a scheme of highway robbery. He had, as we know, stolen small sums before, but that felt to him a very different thing from stopping travellers along the road, and demanding ‘their money or their life.’ However, he soon shook off his scruples, and was ready to take his part in any scheme that Plunket should arrange.

‘You are in luck just now,’ said his tempter, who all this time had been watching his face and read the thoughts that were passing through his mind. ‘I heard only this morning of a farmer who has sold a dozen fat oxen at the Smithfield Market, and will be riding home this evening with the money in his saddle-bags. If he had any sense he would have started early and ridden in company, but I know my gentleman well, and dare swear he will not leave the tavern outside the market till dusk is falling. So if we lie in wait for him on Hounslow Heath, he cannot escape us.’

It was autumn, and dark at seven o’clock, when the farmer, not as sober as he might have been, came jogging along. He was more than half-way across, and was already thinking how best to spend the sixty pounds his beasts had brought him, when out of a hollow by the roadside sprang two men with masks and pistols, which were pointed straight at his horse’s head.

‘Your money or your life,’ said one of them, while the other stood silent; and with trembling fingers the farmer unloaded his saddle-bags, and delivered up his watch. As soon as Plunket saw there was no more to be got out of him, he gave the horse a smart cut on his flanks, and the animal bounded away.

All this while Maclean had not uttered a word, nor had he laid a finger on the victim. He had in reality trembled with fear quite as much as the farmer, and it was not till they were safe in Plunket’s garret off Soho Square that he breathed freely.

‘Sixty pounds, do you say? Not bad for one night’s work,’ cried Plunket. ‘Well, friend James, I will give you ten pounds for your share, which I call handsome, seeing you did not even cock your pistol! But perhaps it is all one could expect for the first time, only on the next occasion you must do better. And you might just as well, you know, as if the officers of the peace catch you they will hang you to a certainty, never stopping to ask questions as to your share in the matter.’

Maclean nodded. He saw the truth of this, and besides, the excitement of the adventure began to stir his blood, and he was soon counting the days till he heard from Plunket again. On this occasion a travelling carriage was to be stopped on the St. Albans road, and it was settled that Maclean should present his pistol to the coachman’s head, while Plunket secured the booty. But when it came to the point, James’s face was so white, and the fingers which held the pistol so shaky, that Plunket saw they had better change parts, and indeed, as the gentleman inside offered no resistance whatever, and meekly yielded up everything of value he had about him, Maclean succeeded in doing all that was required of him by his partner.

‘Much good *you* are!’ said Plunket, when they had plunged into the neighbouring wood. ‘If I had not been there that coachman would have stunned you with the butt end of his whip. You are the lion who was born without claws or teeth! A cat would have been as useful.’

‘Yes, I know,’ answered Maclean hurriedly, feeling very much ashamed of himself. ‘I can’t think what was the matter with me — I suppose I’m not quite accustomed to it yet.’ And that very evening, to prove to Plunket — and himself — that he was not such a coward as he seemed, he attacked a gentleman in Hyde Park and robbed him of a gold watch and chain and a small sum of money.

After this Maclean shook off his timidity, and became known to his brother highwaymen as one of the most daring and successful ‘gentlemen of the road,’ — for so the people called them. Only on one occasion did he run any risk of being caught, and then he took refuge on board a vessel that was sailing for Holland, and sought out his brother at the Hague.

‘It is so long since we have seen each other, I could not but come,’ he said to the minister, who, suspecting nothing, was delighted to welcome him, and insisted on hearing the story of James’s life since they had last parted. For a whole evening the good man listened to a moving tale, not one word of which was true, except that which related to James's marriage and the starting of the grocer's shop. The minister praised and pitied, and told it all to his friends, rich and prosperous citizens who were proud to invite the fine gentleman from London to their parties. And if at the end of the evening some purses and watches were missing, well! they might have been robbed on their way hither, or have forgotten them at home. At any rate, nobody dreamed for one moment of suspecting their minister's guest.

But in spite of all the precautions which, notwithstanding his recklessness, Maclean thought well to take — in spite of his silence respecting his own affairs, and his frequent changes of lodgings so that no one might connect him with one particular neighbourhood, he at last put the rope round his own neck by an act of gross carelessness.

On the morning of June 26, 1750, James robbed Lord Eglinton in his travelling carriage, and a little later in the same day attacked the Salisbury coach, in company with Plunket. They escaped as usual, Maclean carrying with him a bag containing several suits of fine clothes, trimmed with beautiful lace, belonging to one of the passengers named Higden. Maclean's first care was to strip off the lace, and to send a message to a dealer that he had some clothes to sell, if the man would call to see them at his address. At the time, the dealer chanced to be busy and could not come, and by the following morning, when he made his way to Maclean's rooms, an advertisement was out describing the garments so exactly that the man instantly recognised them, and gave information to the magistrate.

That night the 'gentleman highwayman' was arrested on a warrant, and carried to the prison of Newgate, and Plunket, who had been uneasy since the dealer's visit, and was on the watch, hurried to the coast in disguise and hid on board a smuggler's boat, bound for France. Maclean remained to take his trial, and after first confessing and then denying his confession, was convicted of robbery on the King's highway, and was hanged at the gallows erected at Tyburn, where the corner of Connaught Square and the Edgware Road now stand. He was at the period of his execution only twenty-six, yet he had contrived to do more mean and base deeds than most rogues of sixty.

THE VISION OF THE POPE

It was the evening of October 7, 1571, when the Christian fleet, under the command of Don John of Austria, had defeated the Turks at the battle of Lepanto — one of the ‘Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World.’ Far away from the narrow Greek seas, where the victory had been gained, the Pope, Pius V, was in his palace of the Vatican in Rome, discussing business with his treasurer, Busotti of Bibiana. Pope Pius suffered from a painful complaint which made him very restless, and he always preferred to stand or walk about, rather than to sit. He was therefore pacing the room, putting questions or listening to statements as he did so, when suddenly he broke off in the middle of a sentence and stood still with his neck stretched out in the attitude of a person whose ears are strained to catch some sound, at the same time signing to Busotti to keep silent. After a moment’s pause he approached the window and threw it open, always in the same listening attitude, while Busotti, half frightened, sat watching. Then in an instant a look of rapture passed over the face of Pius, and lifting his head he raised his clasped hands to Heaven as if in thanksgiving. At this sight Busotti understood that something strange was happening which he could not see, and he remained awed and still for three minutes, as he afterwards swore. When the three minutes were ended the Pope aroused himself from his ecstasy, and with a countenance shining with joy, spoke to Busotti:

‘This is not the hour for business. Let us give thanks to God for our great victory over the Turks,’ and he retired into his oratory.

Left at liberty the treasurer hastened to give an account of these strange events to various bishops and cardinals, who desired that it should instantly be taken down in writing, the time and place of the scene being carefully noted. They ordered further, that when sealed, the document should be deposited for safety in the house of a lawyer. This, it will be remembered, was on October 7, but the first news of the battle was not received in Rome till the 26th, when a messenger arrived from the Doge of Venice, Mocenigo, followed three or four days later by one from Don John himself. Then calculations were made of the difference of time between the longitude of Rome and that of the islands off the Greek coast where the battle was fought, with the result that it was proved that the vision of the Pope had occurred at the precise moment in which Don John had sprung, sword in hand, from his place in the centre of his galley to beat back the Turks who were swarming over the bulwarks.

The repelling of the attack had turned the scale in the fortunes of the day, and the power of the Turks over Christendom was broken for ever.

GROWING-UP-LIKE-ONE-WHO-HAS-A-GRANDMOTHER

That was the name of a little Indian boy living on the North-West coast of America, and a very odd name it is, as well as a very long one. To be sure, in his own language it could all be put into seventeen letters, while in English it takes thirty-four, as you will find if you count them, and that *does* make a difference.

However, though we should have preferred a name that was shorter and prettier, there is something satisfactory about this one, for a little boy who has a grandmother is likely to be well fed and petted, and made to feel himself a person of importance, and that is pleasant to everybody. But it also means in general that he has lost his father and mother, which had happened to this particular little boy. They had died a long while before, and now there only remained his grandmother and his mother’s brother, who was chief of the village.

One evening the chief was sitting on the beach gazing up at the sky. And while he gazed, fire came right down like a shooting star, and struck the point of a branch which grew on a tree behind his house. As it touched the branch it became solid and hung there, shining like copper. When the chief saw this he arose and walked to the house and said to the people inside:

‘There is a great piece of copper hanging from that tree. Bid the young men go and knock it down and whichever hits it shall marry my daughter.’

Quite a crowd of youths gathered at the back of the chief’s house early next morning, and many of the old men came likewise to watch the sport. All day the young Indians threw stones till their hands became sore and their arms ached, but never once did the lump of copper move. At last for very weariness they had to rest, and eat some food. After that they felt better and went on throwing stones till darkness fell, but still no one had hit the copper.

As soon as the stars peeped out the poor little boy who had been looking on also ran down to the beach, as his uncle had done, and laid himself upon a rock. By and bye a man approached him and said:

‘What are the village people talking about? They make a great noise!’

‘A lump of copper is hanging on the tree and they were trying to knock it down, but nobody succeeded,’ answered the boy; and as he spoke, the man stooped and picked up four pebbles.

‘It is you who shall knock it down,’ said he. ‘First you must throw the white stone, then the black stone, then the blue stone, and last of all the red stone. But be careful not to show them to anybody.’

‘I will be careful,’ replied the boy.

On the following morning all the people returned to the place behind the house, and the poor little boy went with them.

‘I am going to throw, too,’ said he, and the young men tried to push him aside, asking scornfully how one so small could hope to succeed when they had failed. But the old men would not allow them to have their way, and said:

‘Let him throw, too; the chief has given leave to everybody, and he can but fail as you have done. He shall throw first.’ So the poor little boy stepped forward, and taking out the white stone swung it round his head so that it whistled four times before he let it go. It flew very near the copper, nearer than any of the young men’s stones had flown, and the black and the blue almost grazed it. The young men looking on grew uncomfortable and ceased mocking, and as the poor little boy drew out the red stone, they held their breath. Swiftly it shot through the air and struck the copper with a great clang, so that it fell down to the earth. The old men nodded their heads wisely, but the young men quickly picked up the copper and carried it into the chief’s house, each man crying out that it was he who had hit the copper and had gained the chief’s daughter. But as they could not *all* have hit it, the chief knew that they were a pack of liars and only bade them wait a while, and he would see. As for the poor little boy, he did not want to marry the girl or anyone else, so he did not mind what the young men said.

Nothing more was heard that day of the winner of the prize, but at night a white bear came to the back of the house, and growled loudly.

‘Whoever kills that white bear shall marry my daughter,’ said the chief, and not a youth slept all through the village, wondering how best to kill the white bear, and between them they made so many plans that it seemed as if the white bear could never escape. In the evening, the poor little boy went down to the beach again, and sat upon a rock looking out to sea, till at last he beheld a man approaching him, but it was not the same man whom he had seen before.

‘What are the people talking about in the village?’ asked the man, just as the other had done, and the poor little boy answered:

‘Last night a white bear appeared behind the house. Whoever kills it shall marry the chief’s daughter.’

The man nodded his head and thought for a moment; then he said:

‘Ask the chief for a bow and arrow: you shall shoot it.’ So the poor little boy got up and left the beach, and returned to the village.

When it grew dark, all the young men met in the house of the chief, and the poor little boy stole in after them. The chief took from a shelf a tall quiver containing a quantity of bows and arrows, and he held them to the fire in order to make them supple. Then he gave a bow and two arrows to each man, but to the poor little boy, his own nephew, he gave nothing.

‘Give me a bow and arrows also,’ said the poor little boy, when he saw that the chief did not notice him, and the young men broke out into scoffs and jeers as they had done before; and as before, the old men answered:

‘Give a bow and arrows to the poor little boy.’ And the chief listened and gave them to him.

All that night the young men sat up, listening, listening; but it was only before daybreak that they heard the white bear’s growl. At the first sound they ran out, and the poor little boy ran out with them, and he ran more swiftly than they and shot his arrow. And the arrow passed right through the neck of the bear, so that when the poor little boy pulled it out it was covered with blood.

By this time the young men had come up and found the bear dead, so they dipped their arrows in the blood, and picking up the bear, carried it into the house of the chief, the poor little boy coming behind them.

‘It was I who shot the bear; we are bringing him to you,’ shouted one quicker to speak than the rest; but the chief was a wise man, and only answered:

‘Let every man give me his bow and arrows, that I may examine them, and see who has killed the white bear.’

Now the young men did not like that saying, but they were forced to obey.

‘Give me your bow and arrows also,’ he said to the poor little boy, and the poor little boy handed them to him, and the chief knew by the marks that it was he who shot the white bear. And the young men saw by his eyes that he knew it, but they all kept silence: the chief because he was ashamed that a boy had done these two things where grown men had failed; the young men, because they were ashamed that they had lied and had been found to be lying.

So ashamed was the chief that he did not wish his people to look upon his face, therefore he bade his slave go down to the village and tell them to depart to some other place before morning. The people heard what the slave said and obeyed, and by sunrise they were all in their canoes — all, that is, except the chief’s daughter, and the poor little boy and his grandmother. Now the grandmother had some pieces of dried salmon which she ate; but the chief's daughter would not eat, and the poor little boy would not eat either. The princess slept in a room at the back of the house and the poor little boy lay in the front, near the fire. All night long he lay there and thought of their poverty, and wondered if he could do anything to help them to grow richer. 'At any rate,' he said to himself, 'I shall never become a chief by lying in bed,' and as soon as some streaks of light were to be seen under the door, he dressed himself and left the house, running down to the bank of the great river which flowed by the town. There was a trail by the side of the river, and the poor little boy walked along the trail till he came to the shore of a lake; then he stopped and shouted. And as he shouted a wave seemed to rise on the top of the water, and out of it came the great frog who had charge of the lake, and drew near to the place where the poor little boy was standing. Terrible it was to look upon, with its long copper claws which moved always, its copper mouth and its shiny copper eyes. He was so frightened that his legs felt turned to stone; but when the frog put out its claws to fasten them in his shoulders, fear gave him wings, and he ran so fast that the frog could not reach him, and returned to the lake. On and on ran the poor little boy, till at last he found himself outside the woods where his grandmother and the chief's daughter were waiting for him. Then he sat still and rested; but he was very hungry, for all this time he had had nothing to eat, and the grandmother and the chief's daughter had had nothing to eat either.

'We shall die if I cannot find some food,' said the poor little boy to himself, and he went out again to search the empty houses in the village, lest by chance the people might have left some dried salmon or a halibut behind them. He found neither salmon nor halibut, but he picked up in one place a stone axe, and in another a handle, and in a third a hammer. The axe and the handle he fastened together, and after sharpening the blade of the axe he began to cut down a tree. The tree was large, and the poor little boy was small, and had not much strength, so that dusk was approaching before the tree fell. The next thing he did was to split the tree and make a wide crack, which he kept open by wedging two short sticks across it. When this was done he placed the tree on the trail which led to the lake, and ran home again.

Early in the morning he crept safely out, and went to the shore of the lake and shouted four times, looking up as he shouted at the sky. Again there arose a wave on the water, and out of it came the frog, with the copper eyes and mouth and claws. It hopped swiftly towards him, but now the poor little boy did not mind, and waited till it could almost touch him. Then he turned and fled along the trail where the tree lay. Easily he slipped between the two sticks, and was safe on the other side, but the great frog stuck fast, and the more it struggled to be free the tighter it was held.

As soon as the poor little boy saw that the frog was firmly pinned between the bars, he took up his stone hammer which he had left beside the tree and dealt two sharp blows to the sticks that wedged open the crack. The sticks flew out and the crack closed with a snap, killing the frog as it did so. For awhile the poor little boy sat beside the tree quietly, but when he was sure the great frog must be quite dead, he put back the sticks to wedge open the crack and drew out the frog.

‘I must turn it on its back to skin it,’ said he, and after a long time he managed to do this: But he did not take off the claws on the skin, which he spread on the ground to dry. After the skin was dried he put his arms and legs into it, and laced it firmly across his chest.

‘Now I must practise,’ he said, and he jumped into the lake just as a frog would do, right down to the bottom. Then he walked along, till a trout in passing swished him with its tail, and quickly he turned and caught it in his hands. Holding the trout carefully, he swam up to the surface, and when he was on shore again he unlaced the skin and hung it on the branch of a tree, where no one was likely to see it.

After that he went home and found his grandmother and the princess still sleeping, so he laid the trout on the beach in front of the house and curled himself up on his mat.

By and bye the princess awoke, and the first thing she heard was the sound of a raven crying on the beach. So she quickly got out of bed and went to the place where the poor little boy was lying, and said to him:

‘Go down to the beach, and see why the raven is crying.’

The poor little boy said nothing, but did her bidding, and in a few minutes he came back holding out the trout to the princess.

‘The raven brought this,’ he said to her. But it was the trout which he himself had caught in the bottom of the lake; and he and his grandmother ate of it, but the princess would not eat. And every morning this same thing happened, but the princess would eat nothing, not even when the raven — for it was he, she thought — brought them a salmon.

At last a night came when the princess could not sleep, and hearing a movement she rose softly and peeped through her curtain of skins. The poor little boy was getting ready to go out, and as she watched him she saw that he was a poor little boy no longer, but a tall youth. After a long, long time he crept in again and lay down, but the princess did not sleep; and when daylight broke and the raven called, she went to the beach herself, and beheld a large salmon on the sand. She took up the salmon, and carried it into the house, and stood before the poor little boy.

‘I know the truth now,’ she said. ‘It was you and not the raven who found the trout,’ and the poor little boy answered:

‘Yes; it was I. My uncle deserted us all, and I had to get food. The frog lived in the lake, and when I called it, it came, and I set a trap for it and killed it; and by the help of its skin I dived into the lake likewise, and now I am great, for you have taken notice of me.’

‘You shall marry me,’ said the princess, and he married her, for he had ceased to be a poor little boy, and was grown to be a man. And whenever he went out to hunt or to fish, luck was with him, and he killed all that he sent his spear after, even whales and porpoises.

Time passed and they had two children, and still his hunting prospered and he grew rich. But one day he suddenly felt very tired and he told his wife, who feared greatly that some evil should befall him.

‘Oh, cease hunting, I pray you!’ said she. ‘Surely you are rich enough’; but he would not listen, and hunted as much as ever.

Now most of the people who had left the town at the chief’s bidding were dead, and the chief never doubted but that his daughter and the poor little boy and the old grandmother were dead also. But at length some of those who survived, wished to behold their homes once more, and they set out in four canoes to the old place. As they drew near, they saw many storehouses all full of spoils from the sea, and four whales laid up outside. Greatly were they amazed, but they got out of their canoes and went up to speak to the young man who stood there, and he spread food before them, and gave them gifts when in the evening they said farewell. They hastened to tell their chief all that they had seen and heard, and he was glad, and bade his people move back to the town and live in their old houses. So the next day the canoes put to sea again, and the poor little boy opened his storehouses and feasted the people, and they chose him for their chief.

‘It grows harder every day to take off the frog blanket,’ he said to his wife, and at his words she cried and would not take comfort. For now her husband could not rest contented at home, but hunted elks and bought slaves and was richer than any other chief had ever been before him. At length he told his uncle he wished to give a pot-latch or a great banquet, and he invited to it the Indians who dwelt many miles away. When they were all gathered together he called the people into the house, for in the centre of it he had placed his slaves and elk-skins and the other goods that he possessed.

‘You shall distribute them,’ he said to his uncle, and his uncle bade him put on his head the great copper he had knocked down from the tree, and the skin of the white bear which he had killed when he was still a poor little boy. Thus with the copper on his head and the bear-skin on his shoulders he walked to the pile of elk-skins in the middle of the house and sang, for this was part of the ceremony of giving him a name to show that he was grown up. And after the song was ended the chief said:

‘Now I will call you by your name,’ and the name that he gave him was Growing-up-like-one-who-has-a-grandmother, because his grandmother had always been so kind to him. After that the poor little boy took off the great copper and the bear-skin, and gave gifts to his guests, and they departed.

The chief and his wife were left alone and he put on his frog blanket, for he was going to catch seals for the people to eat. But his face was sad and he said to his wife:

‘I shall return safely this time, but when next I put on that blanket I may not be able to take it off, and if I can’t, perhaps I may never come home again. But I shall not forget you, and you will always find the seals and halibut and the salmon, which I shall catch for you, in front of the house.’

He did not leave them quite as soon as he expected. For several days his wife who was always watching for him, saw him walk up the beach; then one day she watched in vain, for though salmon and whales were there, the poor little boy was not. Each morning she took her two children down to the shore and they stood looking over the waves crying bitterly as the tide went out, because they knew he could not come till it was high again.

Food in plenty they had, and enough for the people of the town also, but the poor little boy never came home any more, for he had grown to be a frog, and was obliged to live in the sea.

THE HANDLESS BRIGADE

Have you ever thought what it would be like to have no arms, and be obliged to use your toes for everything? If not, try it on a wet day, and see how much you can manage to do. Yet, there are plenty of true stories of people born without hands, who have contrived by practice to teach their toes not only to supply the place of *ordinary* fingers, but of very clever fingers, which is quite another matter! I myself once saw a young man in a Belgian gallery busily engaged in copying a picture, and as he had no arms he painted with his toes, seated on a high stool, to place him on the level he wanted. It was near the hour of closing when I happened to notice him, and after a few minutes during which I had watched him spellbound, he got down from his stool, kicked off one shoe, disclosing a stocking neatly cut across the toes, leaving them free. He then shut up his paint box, and picking up his brushes one by one dabbled them in a glass of water that stood near, and wiped them on a cloth, after which he put them carefully in their case, lying on a table.

At the sight of this, I forgot my manners and uttered a cry of amazement, which I think rather pleased the painter, for everyone likes to feel that he can do something better than his fellows. At all events he knew I did not mean to be rude, for he went to his box on the floor, opened it, took up the top card printed with his name, Charles le Félu, from a packet, and presented it to me. Then he put on his hat which was hanging on a peg, bowed and walked away, the sleeves of his coat being so fastened that he looked like a man with his hands in his pockets.

I kept that card till I was married, and obliged to throw away many of my treasures.

James Caulfield, about the beginning of the last century, collected many stories of handless people — who were ‘handless’ in a very different sense from what *we* mean, when we use the word. He tells us of a German called Valerius, who was born when Charles II. was on the throne of England, and like my friend the painter, had no arms. This would have seemed a terrible calamity if it had come alone, but before he was out of his boyhood both his parents died, and left him penniless. Happily for Valerius, his mother had been a sensible woman, and insisted that her son should learn to make his toes as useful as fingers. Perched on his high stool, he did his copies like another child, and in later life, when he became famous, often wrote lines round his portraits. But much better than writing copies, he loved to beat a drum. Now beating a drum does not sound nearly so difficult as writing copies, and perhaps he was allowed to do it as a treat when he had said his lessons without a mistake, but with practice he was able to play cards and throw dice as well as any of his friends. He certainly always shaved himself when he grew to be a man, but it is rather hard to believe that in fencing he used his rapier, which he held between his big toe and the next, ‘with as much skill as his adversary,’ standing on his left leg the while.

The admiration of his playfellows at his cleverness filled him with pride, and Valerius was always trying fresh feats to show off to his audience.

When it became necessary for him to earn his own living, he was able to support himself in comfort, travelling from one country to another, and always drawing crowds who came to see this Eighth Wonder of the world — for so they thought him. In his leisure hours he practised some of his old tricks, or learnt new ones, and in 1698 he came to England where he stayed for seven years. Many are the tales told of him during this time. Sometimes he would raise a chair with his toes, and put it in a different place; sometimes with the help of his teeth he would build towers made of dice, or he would lie on his back and, taking a glass of water in his toes, would carry it to his mouth. He could fire a pistol with his toes when seated on a stool, and using both feet he could discharge a musket. This must have been the hardest thing of any, for the musket of those times was a clumsy, heavy weapon, and it was not easy to keep your balance when it went off.

Then we have all of us heard of the famous Miss Biffin, who lived at the time when James Caulfield wrote his book. She went to the big fairs round London, and had a little booth all to herself. There, on payment of a small sum, visitors were admitted to see her sewing with a needle held by her toes, and sewing much more neatly than many of those who came to look at her would have been capable of doing with their fingers. And if they paid a little extra she would draw them, roughly, anything they wanted; or cut them out houses or dogs, or even likenesses of themselves on paper.

Miss Biffin, it is pleasant to think, thoroughly enjoyed her life, and, far from feeling that she was to be pitied because she had no hands, was quite convinced that she was much superior to anybody with two.

Perhaps the most wonderful of all the ‘Handless Brigade’ was a man called William Kingston, who was living in a village near Bristol in 1788. In that year a

Mr. Walton happened to be staying in Bristol and was taken to see this marvel, of whom he writes an account to his friend John Wesley.

On the entrance of the two gentlemen into his house Kingston did not lose a moment in giving them their money’s worth. He was having breakfast, and after inviting them to sit down, took up his cup between his big toe and the next, and drank off his tea without spilling a drop. After waiting till he had buttered his toast and eaten as much as he wanted, Mr. Walton then ‘put half a sheet of paper upon the floor, with a pen and an ink-horn. Kingston threw off his shoes as he sat, took the ink-horn in the toes of his left foot, and held the pen in those of his right. He then wrote three lines as well as most ordinary writers, and as swiftly. He writes out,’ continues Walton, ‘his bills and other accounts. He then showed how he shaves with a razor in his toes, and how he combs his own hair. He can dress and undress himself, except buttoning his clothes,’ which really does not sound half as difficult as many of his other performances. ‘He feeds himself and can bring both his meat and his broth to his mouth, by holding the fork or spoon in his toes. He cleans his own shoes; can clean the knives, light the fire, and do almost every domestic business as well as any other man. He can make his hen-coops. He is a farmer by occupation; he can milk his cows with his toes, and cut his own hay, bind it up in bundles, and carry it about the field for his cattle. Last winter he had eight heifers constantly to fodder. The last summer he made all his own hay-ricks. He can do all the business of the hay-field (except mowing) as fast and as well with only his feet, as others can with rakes and forks; he goes to the field and catches his horse; he saddles and bridles him with his feet and toes. If he has a sheep among his flock that ails anything, he can separate it from the rest, drive it into a corner, and catch it when nobody else can; he then examines it, and applies a remedy to it. He is so strong in his teeth that he can lift ten pecks of beans with them; he can throw a great sledge-hammer with his feet as other men can with their hands. In a word, he can do nearly as much without, as other men can with, their hands.’

‘He began the world with a hen and chicken; with the profit of these he purchased an ewe. The sale of these procured him a ragged colt and then a better; after this he raised a few sheep, and now occupies a small farm.’

It would be interesting to know how many of these astonishing feats Mr. Walton actually saw Kingston perform. But at any rate we put down his letter with the impression that to be born *with* fingers is a distinct disadvantage.

THE SON OF THE WOLF CHIEF

Once upon a time a town near the North Pacific Ocean suffered greatly from famine and many of the Indians who lived there died of hunger. It was terrible to see them sitting before their doors, too weak and listless to move, and waiting silently and hopelessly for death to come. But there was one boy who behaved quite differently from the rest of the tribe. For some reason or other *he* seemed quite strong on his legs, and all day long he would go into the fields or the woods, with his bow and arrows slung to his back, hoping to bring back a supper for himself and his mother.

One morning when he was out as usual, he found a little animal that looked like a dog. It was such a round, funny little thing that he could not bear to kill it, so he put it under his warm blanket, and carried it home, and as it was very dirty from rolling about in the mud and snow, his mother washed it for him. When it was quite clean, the boy fetched some red paint which his uncle who had died of famine had used for smearing over their faces, and put it on the dog's head and legs so that he might always be able to trace it when they were hunting together.

The boy got up early next morning and took his dog into the woods and the hills. The little beast was very quick and sharp, and it was not long before the two got quite a number of grouse and birds of all sorts; and as soon as they had enough for that day and the next, they returned to the wigwam and invited their neighbours to supper with them.

A short time after, the boy was out on the hills wondering where the dog had gone, for, in spite of the red paint, he was to be seen nowhere. At length he stood still and put his ear to the ground and listened with all his might, and that means a great deal, for Indian ears are much cleverer at hearing than European ones. Then he heard a whine which sounded as if it came from a long way off, so he jumped up at once and walked and walked till he reached a small hollow, where he found that the dog had killed one of the mountain sheep.

'Can it really *be* a dog?' said the boy to himself. 'I don't know; I wish I did. But at any rate, it deserves to be treated like one,' and when the sheep was cooked, the dog — if it was a dog — was given all the fat part.

After this, never a day passed without the boy and the dog bringing home meat, and thanks to them the people began to grow fat again. But if the dog killed many sheep at once, the boy was always careful to give it first the best for itself.

Some weeks later the husband of the boy’s sister came to him and said:

‘Lend me your dog, it will help me greatly.’ So the boy went and brought the dog from the little house he had made for it, and painted its head and its feet, and carried it to his brother-in-law.

‘Give it the first thing that is killed as I always do,’ observed the boy, but the man answered nothing, only put the dog in his blanket.

Now the brother-in-law was greedy and selfish and wanted to keep everything for himself; so after the dog had killed a whole flock of sheep in the fields, the man threw it a bit of the inside which nobody else would touch, exclaiming rudely:

‘Here, take that! It is quite good enough for you.’

But the dog would not touch it either, and ran away to the mountains, yelping loudly.

The man had to bring back all the sheep himself, and it was evening before he reached the village. The first person he saw was the boy who was waiting about for him.

‘Where is the dog?’ asked he, and the man answered:

‘It ran away from me.’

On hearing this the boy put no more questions, but he called his sister and said to her:

‘Tell me the truth. What did your husband do to the dog? I did not want to let it go, because I guessed what would happen.’

And the wife answered:

‘He threw the inside of a sheep to it, and that is why it ran off.’

When the boy heard this, he felt very sad, and turned to go into the mountains in search of the dog. After walking some time he found the marks of its paws, and smears of red paint on the grass. But all this time the boy never knew that the dog was really the son of the Wolf Chief and had been sent by his father to help him, and he did not guess that from the day that he painted red paint round its face and on its feet a wolf can be told far off by the red on its paws and round its mouth.

The marks led a long, long way, and at length they brought him to a lake, with a town on the opposite side of it, where people seemed to be playing some game, as the noise that they made reached all the way across.

‘I must try if I can get over there,’ he said, and as he spoke, he noticed a column of smoke coming right up from the ground under his feet, and a door flew open.

‘Enter!’ cried a voice, so he entered, and discovered that the voice belonged to an old woman, who was called ‘Woman-always-wondering.’

‘Grandchild, why are you here?’ she asked, and he answered:

‘I found a young dog who helped me to get food for the people, but it is lost and I am seeking it.’

‘Its people live right across there,’ replied the woman. ‘It is the Wolf Chief’s son, and that is his father’s town where the noise comes from.’

‘How can I get over the lake?’ he said to himself, but the old woman guessed what he was thinking and replied:

‘My little canoe is just below here.’

‘It might turn over with me,’ he thought, and again she answered him:

‘Take it down to the shore and shake it before you get in, and it will soon become large. Then stretch yourself in the bottom, and, instead of paddling, wish with all your might to reach the town.’

The boy did as he was told, and by and bye he arrived on the other side of the lake. He shook the canoe a second time, and it shrunk into a mere toy-boat which he put in his pocket, and after that he went and watched some boys who were playing with a thing that was like a rainbow.

‘Where is the chief’s house?’ he asked when he was tired of looking at their game.

‘At the other end of the village,’ they said, and he walked on till he reached a place where a large fire was burning, with people sitting round it. The chief was there too, and the boy saw his little wolf playing about near his father.

‘There is a man here,’ exclaimed the Wolf Chief. ‘Vanish all of you!’ and the wolf-people vanished instantly, all but the little wolf, who ran up to the boy and smelt him and knew him at once. As soon as the Wolf Chief beheld that, he said:

‘I am your friend; fear nothing. I sent my son to help you because you were starving, and I am glad you have come in quest of him.’ But after a pause, he added:

‘Still, I do not think I will let him go back with you; but I will aid you in some other way,’ and the boy did not guess that the reason the chief was so pleased to see him was because he had painted the little wolf. Yet, as he glanced at the little beast again, he observed with surprise that it did not look like a wolf any longer, but like a human being.

‘Take out the fish-hawk’s quill that is hanging on the wall, and if you should meet a bear point the quill straight at it, and it will fly out of your hand. I will also give you this,’ and he opened a box and lifted out a second quill stuck in a blanket. ‘If you lay this side on a sick person, it will cure him; and if you lay the other side on your enemy, it will kill him. Thus you can grow rich by healing sick people.’

So the boy and the Wolf Chief made friends, and they talked together a long time, and the boy put many questions about things he had seen in the town, which puzzled him.

‘What was the toy the children were playing with?’ he asked at last.

‘That toy belongs to me,’ answered the chief. ‘If it appears to you in the evening it means bad weather, and if it appears in the morning it means fine weather. Then we know that we can go out on the lake. It is a good toy.’

‘But,’ continued he, ‘you must depart now, and, before you leave eat this, for you have a long journey to make and you will need strength for it;’ and he dropped something into the boy’s mouth.

And the boy did not guess that he had been absent for two years, and thought it was only two nights.

Then he journeyed back to his own town, not a boy any more, but a man. Near the first house he met a bear and he held the quill straight towards it. Away it flew and hit the bear right in the heart; so there was good meat for hungry people. Further on, he passed a flock of sheep, and the quill slew them all and he drew it out from the heart of the last one. He cooked part of a sheep for himself and hid the rest where he knew he could find them. After that he entered the town.

It seemed strangely quiet. What had become of all his friends and of the children whom he had left behind him when he left to seek for his dog? He opened the door of a hut and peeped in: three or four bodies were stretched on the floor, their bones showing through their skin, dead of starvation; for after the boy had gone to the mountains there was no one to bring them food. He opened another door, and another and another; everywhere it was the same story. Then he remembered the gift of the Wolf Chief, and he drew the quill out of his blanket and laid one side of it against their bodies, so that they all came to life again, and once more the town was full of noise and gaiety.

‘Now come and hunt with me,’ he said; but he did not show them his quill lest he should lose it as he had lost the dog. And when they beheld a flock of mountain sheep grazing, he let fly the quill so quickly that nobody saw it go, neither did they see him pull out the quill and hide it in his blanket. After that they made a fire and all sat down to dine, and those who were not his friends gave him payment for the meat.

For the rest of his life the man journeyed from place to place, curing the sick and receiving payment from their kinsfolk. But those who had been dead for many years took a long while to get well, and their eyes were always set deep back in their heads, and had a look as if they had seen something.

BLIND JACK OF KNARESBOROUGH

This is the story of a blind man who did more, without any eyes at all, than many people can do with two. For numbers of children need really to be *taught* to use their eyes, or they will never see things that are right under their noses; or else they will only see exactly what they are looking for, and nothing besides.

Blind Jack's proper name was John Metcalfe, and he was born in the town of Knaresborough in Yorkshire, in 1717. His parents seem to have been comfortably off — small farmers perhaps, as we are told that Jack learned to ride on his father's horses; and at four years old he was sent to school, exactly as a child of working people would be now. The boy was very quick and had a good memory and his teachers were proud of him, and prophesied that he would be a great scholar, and who knew if some day he might not be Lord Chancellor, or even Archbishop of Canterbury? The Metcalfes quite agreed that nothing was more likely; but a sudden end was put to these dreams when one morning Jack woke with a rash all over his face and chest, and the doctor declared he had got small-pox.

Now in those times, before babies were vaccinated, small-pox was a most terrible disease and very few lived through it without being marked in one way or another. Jack was very ill, but he does not appear to have been pitted like some of the other children who suffered from it, and only his mother observed that when the crisis was over and the boy was getting better every day, and beginning to chatter again, he did not, as was usual with him, make remarks on the things he saw around him or out of the window. Then a dreadful fear shot through her heart. Could it be that he was blind? With great difficulty she controlled her voice and answered the child's questions, but with every hour she understood more clearly that what she dreaded had indeed come to pass. By and bye Jack himself wondered why the curtains always seemed to be drawn in his room and asked his mother to pull them back. She invariably had some good excuse for his remaining in the dark, and little by little the truth dawned on him also. We cannot guess at the poor boy's horror at his fate, nor at his struggles to behave like a man, but as he grew gradually accustomed to his darkness and became stronger, he made up his mind, as other blind people have done, that if he was so unlucky as to have lost his eyes, he would learn to get on just as well without them.

The bare idea of all he would do was exciting. As Jack sat by the fire in the kitchen or lay curled up in the window-seat listening to the horses which went by, he began to make his plans for the future. How fortunate it was that he was able to ride already! — why, most of the boys at school, who were not blind at all, had never been across a horse's back, far less galloped at full speed up and down the street as Jack had loved to do! So he, blind though he was, could do something which they could not, and had the start of them! Now that he could walk about the room without falling down from weakness he must lose no more time, but try and learn the positions of the chairs and tables and count exactly how many steps there were on the staircase, so that he might soon run up and down them as fast as he did before. The next thing was to trust himself in the street, and find his way about. He was rather shy at first, and felt a little bewildered, but he would not go home till he had gone as far as the baker's shop — up and down, up and down, several times over.

'Well, I can go *there* all right, if mother sends me,' he said to himself, and walked home in triumph to tell his parents.

Having once made a beginning, Jack never let a day pass without learning to do something fresh, till by the time he was nine he could carry messages to any part of Knaresborough as well as another boy. He had a good many friends of his own age, and with them he would go on expeditions into the woods near the town, and even climb trees after birds' eggs. Very quickly the boys discovered that Jack was a better climber than any of them. He was so light, and then he could tell by his sense of touch if a branch was rotten, or whether he might trust himself upon it, and it was not long before it was Jack who was always sent to the top of the tree while the rest remained at the bottom. His mother suffered agonies of fear at first during these hours that the boy was away, but she knew it was no use trying to hinder him, and after a while she ceased to trouble, as Jack never came to harm, and she had too much to do in looking after the younger children to worry about him. It was impossible to keep Jack in the house; if he was not in a tree, he was on the back of a horse or exercising a couple of young hounds that his father had given him; but when, about thirteen, he showed a liking for music, she had him properly taught, in the hope of inducing him to stay at home in the winter evenings.

It was in the summer after this that Blind Jack made friends with some bad boys, whose chief delight consisted of robbing cherry orchards; not so much, if the truth be told, for the sake of the cherries, as for the pleasure of doing what they ought not. One hot night Jack stole quietly to the window of the room which he shared with his little brothers, and swinging himself down through the branches of a tree as lightly as a cat, was over the garden wall in a moment and in the street. Once there he ran quickly to the porch of the parish church, reaching it as the clock struck twelve, and just as the rest of the band, who were waiting for him there, had almost given him up. They set off silently to the orchard and soon had gathered a large basket of ripe cherries, which had been intended by the farmer's wife for the Knaresborough market next day. Enchanted with their booty, the young thieves hurried back in order to eat the cherries comfortably and warmly inside the church. They were in the highest spirits and felt that after their success they were capable of capturing a fort or holding an army at bay. So seizing the big iron ring on the church door which lifted the latch, one of the leaders exclaimed loudly:

'A tankard of ale here!' as if he was entering a tavern. Of course he meant nothing, but from within a voice answered:

'You are at the wrong house.' This so startled the boys that they were struck dumb, hardly believing their ears, till Metcalfe whispered softly:

'Didn't you hear something speak in the church?' This put their own fears into words, and, as one boy, they all turned and fled. When they had put a long distance between themselves and the churchyard they stopped, feeling quite brave again, and began to discuss the matter and what the voice could have been; but as none of their guesses satisfied them, they determined to go back and try to find out for themselves.

As soon as they were again in the churchyard path, they saw bright lights in the church and at once fancied it was on fire. This idea was delightful to them, as they foresaw all kinds of fun in helping to put it out. But before they even had time to open the west door in the porch, they heard once more the latch being lifted from the inside. All their old terror returned, and they rushed home as fast as they could, the sexton's son even jumping into his mother's bed for protection.

The laugh against him was loudest of all next day, when it was discovered that the supposed fire was only some candles lit by the sexton himself, who was in the church with the grave-digger, opening a vault for a funeral which was to take place early in the morning; and the voice which had so frightened the boys was that of the grave-digger. For some time the young thieves were jeered at by the whole town, and grew to hate the very sight of a cherry, so the adventure had one good result, for they let the orchards alone.

Metcalfe now had to amuse himself in some other way, and as many of his friends used to meet every evening in order to bathe in the pools of the river Nidd, he would not be left behind, and persuaded one of them to teach him to swim and dive. Of course, all those things would have been impossible if he had been the least nervous or frightened, but Blind Jack did not know what fear was of any earthly thing. At least he had thought at the time that the voice and the lights in the church were ghostly, and *anybody* might be afraid of ghostly manifestations. But with the air and the shouts of other boys about him, he was as brave as a lion, and soon could swim farther and dive deeper than any of them.

The Nidd is one of those rivers which easily rise and fall, and it is full of ‘holes,’ as they are called, where the water swirls and eddies, and whatever is swept over them by the current always stops for a moment and then slowly sinks. In some strange way which was never explained by him, Jack contrived to reach these holes without being drawn into the eddies, and it quickly became a regular trade with him to rescue with the aid of a hooked stick anything which had sunk in the pool. In this way he drew up several pieces of valuable wood, a quantity of wool swept into the river by a sudden flood, and even the body of a drowned man.

Jack was now about fifteen and was famous throughout Knaresborough, which had grown quite proud of him. He had continued to practise his violin, and everybody declared that never were country-dances danced with such spirit as when Jack was the fiddler. So very speedily he got an engagement as one of a band of four musicians to appear at the Assembly Rooms once a fortnight, where a ball was given, and was invited besides to many other places round about. In this very year too, 1732, he was offered the post of fiddler at Harrogate, for the old man who had held it for seventy years, and was now a hundred, could no longer play briskly enough to please the young people. Jack’s only assistant was a boy younger than himself, whom he took about everywhere. Perhaps they both rode pillion — that is, one behind the other; for Jack had saved up his earnings and bought a horse, of which he was very fond. On its back he was to be seen at Ripon or Boroughbridge or many other towns, and when people were tired of giving balls, Metcalfe would run his horse at the small races, of which there are so many in Yorkshire. Here he met with some of the gentlemen who lived in the neighbourhood, and as they all admired the cleverness and courage with which he had triumphed over his blindness, and found him besides an amusing companion, they made friends with him and sometimes invited him to stay in their houses and hunt with them. To Mr. Barlow, of Middleton near York, he once paid a visit of six months, and while there became acquainted with a celebrated musician called Hebdin, who begged him to come and see him, so that they might practise together. Jack accepted the kind offer gladly, and when no hunting was to be had he went to York, and would play for hours in the old house near the walls.

He had been there one day at the end of his visit to Mr. Barlow, trying over a new piece of music before going home to his parents at Knaresborough, which was a long ride even for him. By this time he could find his way through all the principal streets, and as he was passing the George Inn, the landlord ran out and told him that a gentleman was dining there who wanted to reach Harrogate that night, but that as he was a stranger he must have a guide.

‘You can be as good a guide as anybody,’ added the man, ‘if you are going that way.’

‘Yes, I can,’ answered Metcalfe; ‘but you mustn’t tell him I am blind, or he won’t believe it.’

‘Oh! I’ll take care,’ replied the landlord. ‘Wait here! he will be out in a minute,’ and the stranger was only too thankful to start at once, for it was getting late. He insisted, however, that Jack should be given a cup of wine before they set forth, as the landlord had made some excuse for his refusal to enter the inn.

The gentleman and his guide were passing the corner of Ousegate, when Jack was startled at hearing a shout of ‘There goes Squire Barlow’s Blind Huntsman,’ but he perceived from the manner in which his companion continued the conversation that if the words had reached his ears, they had no meaning for him. They rode steadily on for some distance, Metcalfe carefully placing himself a little in front, so that the gentleman should only see part of his face when he turned to answer his questions. Once or twice he had some fears as to whether he was taking the right road or not, but by long practice he had so sharpened his other senses that the slightest sign was sufficient for him. He could tell by the feeling of the wind or the echo of the horses’ hoofs if they were in the open country, or if a wall ran along one side of the road, and he could detect at once the presence of water. All through that long ride he only made one mistake and that his companion never guessed. He bent down to open the gate, but as it was seven months since he had passed that way he approached it at the wrong side, which he perceived instantly when his hand touched the hinges. However, he did not lose his presence of mind, and quickly backed his horse, exclaiming as he did so:

‘Confound thee! thou always goest to the gate heel instead of the head.’

‘He *does* seem a little awkward,’ observed the gentleman. ‘Let me try: mine is rather good at a gate,’ and as he spoke he rode forward and swung it open.

It was now quite dark, and though of course that made no difference to Metcalfe, his companion had much ado to see his way. However, he followed his guide carefully and at length they found themselves in the streets of

Knaresborough.

‘Let us stop and have a bottle of wine,’ said the stranger, for he was tired from being so many hours in the saddle; but Jack told him that the horses were too hot to think of halting, and they pressed on. By and bye as they were passing under an oil lamp hung by a chain across the road, a boy cried out:

‘That’s Blind Jack!’

‘Not he,’ answered another; ‘that fellow is much too dark.’ Jack chuckled to himself as he listened to them, but never turned his head.

Over the bridge they went and into the forest.

‘What is that light I see?’ asked the gentleman when they had gone a little distance. His guide guessed that it must be a will-o’-the-wisp from some swampy ground that lay there, but was careful not to betray himself by saying so lest he should be mistaken.

‘Do you not see two lights?’ he inquired by way of making some answer; ‘one on the right and the other on the left.’

‘No; I can only distinguish one — one on the right,’ replied the stranger.

‘Then that is Harrogate,’ said Jack. ‘We shall soon be there now,’ and in a quarter of an hour they drew rein in the courtyard of the Granby inn. Early hours were kept in those days and the ostler had gone to bed, so Jack, who knew the place well, stabled the horses himself after rubbing them down. He then went into the inn where his companion was seated by the fire, with a pewter pot of hot spiced wine beside him.

‘You must be as cold and tired as I am,’ observed the gentleman; ‘it is your turn to have a drink.’ To his surprise, Metcalfe, who happened to be thinking of something else, stretched out his hand at first very wide of the mark, a fact which did not escape the stranger’s eye, though Jack at once recollected himself, and, noting from what direction the voice proceeded, picked up the tankard, took a good draught and left the room.

‘My guide must have drunk a good deal, landlord, since we arrived,’ then said the gentleman.

‘And what makes you think so, sir?’ asked the landlord.

‘Well, his eyes look so odd, and he fumbled about so after the tankard.’

‘Yes, sir? Why, don’t you know he is blind?’

‘Blind!’ echoed the stranger; ‘impossible!’

‘Yes, sir, as blind as a bat.’

‘Blind!’ repeated the gentleman again. ‘Call him back. I should like to speak to him,’ and as Jack entered he exclaimed:

‘My friend, is it really true that you are blind?’

‘It is indeed, sir. I lost my sight when I was six years old.’

‘Had I known that, I would not have ventured with you for a hundred pounds.’

‘And I, sir, would not have lost my way for a thousand,’ answered Jack with a laugh, as he pocketed the two guineas held out to him.

Metcalfe, as we know, was fond of races, like a true Yorkshire-man, and he often ran his horse for private bets. On one occasion he laid a wager with some other young men that he would win what would now be called a point-to-point race — that is, posts were set up at different places for the distance of a mile, and the competitors were bound to pass each of them. The whole course was three miles, and they were obliged to go round it three times. Every man was to ride his own horse, and as it seemed almost impossible that even Blind Jack should be able to stick to the course, the odds were heavy against him.

On the morning of the race Jack might have been seen by anyone who had got up early enough, going round to the four inns that Knaresborough contained, and coming away from each with a big dinner-bell in his hand, and numbers of little ones in a bag. These he distributed among his friends, and ordered them to stand out at every post, and at a certain number of yards in between. As the bells were to be rung in turn, he had a perfect chain of sound to guide him the entire distance. With the help of this, he felt he had no reason to fear any rivals, and, as his horse was both fast and steady, he easily won the race.

When the cheers of the crowd had somewhat died down, a gentleman named Skelton came up to Metcalfe and offered to make a bet with him that he would not gallop a certain horse of his for a hundred and fifty yards, and pull him up within two hundred. The horse chosen was noted for having a very hard mouth, and to be ready to bolt at every opportunity.

Metcalfe never refused a wager and accepted this one eagerly, but stipulated that he should be allowed to select his own ground.

‘Very well,’ answered Skelton; ‘but remember there must be no hedges or walls. Do you agree to that?’

‘I agree,’ said Metcalfe; ‘see that the stakes are deposited, and I will let you know later where the wager shall come off.’

The day was fixed for the following Saturday, and the night before, Skelton received a message bidding him to be at the old Spa not far from Harrogate at eleven o’clock. He arrived punctually, but found Metcalfe and his horse there before him. Now Blind Jack knew what Skelton did not, that about a hundred and fifty yards from the old Spa there was a very large bog, in which three weeks earlier a traveller had got stuck in the dark, and would inevitably have been sucked down had not Jack heard his cries and managed to rescue him. The few minutes before the appearance of Skelton had been used by the cunning youth to place a friend near the entrance of the bog, with orders to stand with his back to the wind and sing a song at the top of his voice. This was to be Blind Jack’s guide to the direction he wanted.

‘I am quite ready, you see,’ he cried, as Skelton rode up. ‘Give the word and I will start.’

‘Go!’ said Skelton, and away the horse bounded at the top of his speed straight into the bog, which held him like a vice. Cautiously Metcalfe dismounted and picked his way as well as he was able till he was on firm ground again, when he demanded the money he had won, which was at once handed over to him. He then went back to extricate his horse, but this was no easy matter, for, in his flounderings to get free, the poor beast had only sunk deeper and deeper. However, by the help of two or three men who had been watching the wager, this was at last accomplished, and Jack rode smilingly home, both man and horse covered with dirt up to their necks.

Jack grew up a great deal more quickly than most boys, and by the time he was twenty had fallen very much in love with a girl called Dorothy Benson, who lived at Harrogate. For a long while they only met secretly, as both well knew that the elder Bensons would never allow their daughter to marry a man who was not only poor and blind, but earned his living by fiddling at balls all over the country.

Matters were in this state when Jack, who had not been to Harrogate for seven months, suddenly heard that he had a rival. This was a prosperous shoemaker called Dickinson, much favoured by Dolly’s parents, and they seemed to have pressed her so hard to accept the man that she consented to have the banns published in church. This news woke up Metcalfe, who, thinking he had won Dolly’s heart, was taking things rather easily, and he at once resolved that Miss Benson should be the wife of no one but himself, and after much consideration he laid his plans.

Now Dickinson, in order to celebrate his marriage, had arranged to give a dinner to two hundred of his workpeople, and this took place on a Saturday in his native parish of Kirkby-Overblow. The wedding was fixed for Monday, and for some reason it was to be at Knaresborough, though the breakfast was to be held at Harrogate.

On the Sunday Blind Jack came to Harrogate and was riding past the hotel of the Royal Oak, when he was startled at the sound of a voice close to him saying:

‘One wants to speak with you.’ He pulled up his horse in surprise, but instantly recognised the voice to be that of a maid of the Bensons. She turned towards the stables, telling him to follow, and there was Mistress Dolly herself, anxious and excited, as he guessed by the tremor of her tone as she said:

‘I knew you would come, so I sent for you.’

‘Well, lass,’ he answered, pretending not to care, though his heart was beating fast; ‘thou’s going to have a merry day to-morrow; am I to be the fiddler?’

‘Thou never shalt fiddle at my wedding,’ replied she.

‘Why — what have I done?’ asked Metcalfe, bent on teasing her; but she only answered darkly that matters might not end as some folks thought they would, and she might wish things done another way. But, though her words might not have seemed very plain to another person, Metcalfe understood.

‘What! Wouldst thou rather have me? Canst thou bear starving?’

‘Yes,’ said she; ‘with thee I can.’

So that was settled, and nothing remained but to arrange when and how Dolly could escape from the house.

‘Thou must put a light in thy window when everyone is asleep to-night,’ said Jack.

‘A light!’ cried Dolly; ‘but what good is that to thee?’

‘Ay, a light; and as for the “good,” leave that to me,’ answered Jack, who had already thought of a friend to help him. ‘And now farewell, lest they should seek for thee.’

That evening he went to a trusty man, who was ostler at the inn of the World’s End, and told him his story.

‘Canst thou borrow thy master’s mare for the night?’ asked Jack anxiously. ‘She is used to carry double, and my horse is not.’

‘Ay, if she is in her stable before morning,’ replied the ostler; and then Jack begged him to be at Raffle’s shop at ten o’clock, and to whistle when he got there by way of a signal.

Ten o’clock found them both at the appointed place, but they had to wait some time before the ostler announced that the promised light was in the window. Leaving both horses tied up a little way off — for Metcalfe had brought his own — they stole up to the Bensons’ house and gave a faint tap at the door. Dolly was expecting Jack and came out, shutting the door after her.

‘Not so fast,’ said he; ‘hast thou not brought any gowns? It would be well, as thou mayst not see thy mother for some time; and where is thy new pillion and cloth that thy father gavest thee?’

‘Oh dear!’ she replied, ‘I had forgotten all that. I have nineteen or twenty gowns, and sure, I cannot bring them all. The pillion is in the other part of the house, but we must have it. As the door is shut, I will wake my sister, but she can keep a silent tongue.’ She then threw some gravel at her sister’s window, which, like her own, looked out on to the street, and in another moment the door was opened by Mistress Anne.

‘I want my new tabby gown and the pillion,’ whispered Dolly; and her sister, who knew more about the whole affair than Dolly had any idea of, showed no surprise at her request or at the sight of the two men standing in the shadow.

‘The pillion? But it is in the room where Dickinson is lying,’ she answered in some dismay.

‘Oh, never mind, I will get it!’ said Dolly, and, going upstairs, softly entered the room, which was lit by moonlight, and took up the pillion and cloth, which had been placed on a chair.

‘Who is that?’ asked Dickinson, awakened by her entrance.

‘It is only me,’ said the girl; ‘I’ve come to fetch the pillion, so that I may brush it and have it ready for to-morrow.’

‘That’s well thought on,’ replied the bridegroom; and, turning on his pillow, he fell asleep again.

Metcalfe smiled as he heard the latch lifted, and took the pillion from her. The ostler put it on his master’s mare, then jumping into the saddle, swung Dolly up behind him. Metcalfe mounted his own horse, and they rode away twelve miles to the house of a clergyman whom he had often met on the hunting field. The good man took some time to wake, but at length he came down, and, when he found out what was required of him, hurried into his gown and bands without asking questions, and in a few minutes Dorothy Benson had become Mistress John Metcalfe. This time it was Jack who mounted the landlord’s mare, and leaving Dolly at the house of a much-astonished friend five miles from Harrogate, himself placed the borrowed animal in its stall at the World’s End. He was only just in time, for the landlord had taken a fancy to start early for Knaresborough, and it would have gone hard with the ostler had the mare not been in its place.

Then Jack went to the Queen’s Head, and played his fiddle as he often did, while the guests were breakfasting.

By this time Dolly’s elopement had been discovered, but nobody suspected Jack of being concerned in it till a young man, who had been one of the girl’s suitors and had noticed more than her family had done, told her brother that he had better go and question Blind Jack. The culprit, when asked, at once told the whole story and declared that he had only stolen Dolly away from her home because he knew that her parents would never consent to their marriage.

And in this he was right, for they both vowed that if they ever met him they would kill him; and it was not till Dolly had some children to show them, that she was taken into favour again.

BLIND JACK AGAIN

Would you like to hear some more of Blind Jack? This story tells how he joined the army of the Duke of Cumberland, which was sent to fight Prince Charlie and the Highlanders in 1745.

There was great excitement in York when the news came that the Scotch were marching south, and measures were taken to raise 4,000 men for the defence of the country. £90,000 was very soon subscribed in the county, and this large sum was intended to clothe and pay volunteers during the time their services were needed. The gentlemen of Yorkshire held a meeting in the castle to discuss the matter, and Blind Jack's old friend, Thornton, was present. When the meeting was over he rode back to Knaresborough and sent for Metcalfe, whom he asked to help him enlist some soldiers, and further begged him to join the company himself, which Jack, always on the look out for a fresh adventure, was delighted to do. He lost no time in going round to the men he knew in his native town, and was ready to promise anything that he thought was likely to gain him what he wanted. He even assured these carpenters and blacksmiths and ostlers and ploughmen that they would find themselves colonels of regiments, or holding some well-paid post under the king, as soon as the war — or *bustle* as he termed it — was over.

Out of the hundred and forty men who agreed to enlist on receiving five shillings a head from Captain Thornton, sixty-four were chosen and clad in uniforms of blue cloth, with buff facings and waistcoats, made by Leeds tailors. These tailors were not at all anxious to hurry, and declined to work on Sunday, upon which the captain sent an indignant message to ask whether, if their houses caught fire on a Sunday, they would not try to put the flames out? The tailors were more easily convinced than they would have been at present, and, on receiving the message, instantly crossed their legs and took up their needles, and in a very few days the new soldiers were strutting about in their fine clothes or attending drill, while waiting for the swords and muskets which were coming down from the arsenal in the Tower of London. Then the captain invited them all to stay at Thorneville, and every other day a fat ox was killed for their dinners.

At last they were ready, and off they marched to Boroughbridge, where General Wade's army was halting on its way to the north. Very smart the recruits looked, and none was smarter than Blind Jack, who stood six feet two inches in his stockings. In the evenings he always went to the captain's quarters, and played ‘Britons, strike home,’ and other popular tunes, on his fiddle. The captain’s friends, who came over to see what was going on, pressed him to play one thing after another, and, when they took their leave, pulled out their purses and offered the musician a guinea or two. But Jack always refused the money, as he knew that Thornton would not like him to take it.

From Boroughbridge they marched to Newcastle to join General Pulteney. Winter had now set in, and snow often fell heavily, and during a heavy storm the troops started on their march westwards to Hexham. They had a terrible day’s journey to their first stopping-place seven miles away, and it sometimes took three or four hours to accomplish one single mile. Although the ground was frozen hard, all sorts of obstacles had to be overcome, and ditches filled up, so that the artillery and baggage-waggons might pass over. When at last a halt was sounded, after fifteen hours’ march, the frost was so intense that no tent-pegs could be driven into the earth, and the men were forced to be on the ground without any cover.

After various marches backwards and forwards along the northern line, Thornton’s company, now attached to General Hawley’s, reached Edinburgh and proceeded to Falkirk, where the Highland army was encamped three miles away. It was very cold and the wind blew the rain straight in the faces of the English, and also wetted their powder, so that their guns were quite useless. The general, observing this, ordered the troops to fall back on Linlithgow, which afforded more shelter, and as soon as the town was reached many of the tired men entered the houses to get their wet clothes dried, or borrow fresh ones, little thinking that the Highlanders were close upon them. A large number of English prisoners were taken in the sudden surprise of the attack, and among them twenty of Thornton’s men. The captain himself was just leaving the house in which he had taken refuge, when he heard the bagpipes close to him. Quickly and noiselessly he rushed upstairs, and opening the first door he saw, stood behind it. It was a poor chance of escape, but the only one that offered itself. Luck, however, attended him, for a man merely put his head into the room and exclaimed, ‘None of the rascals are here,’ and went off to search the rest of the house in the same manner.

As soon as the Highlanders had disappeared down the street, the mistress of the house, who had seen the captain’s hurried flight up the staircase, went to him and begged him to hide in a closet at one end of the room, which he gladly did. She next dragged a sort of kitchen dresser in front of the cupboard and piled plates and dishes on it, so that no one would have guessed there was any door behind. Fortunately the closet door did not touch the floor by a couple of inches, so that the woman was able to thrust in food underneath. In his dripping wet clothes and in this cupboard about five feet square, the captain remained for nearly a week, in a room which was constantly full of Highlanders, among them being Prince Charlie's secretary, Murray of Broughton.

All this time Blind Jack was busy searching for his master. He had been present at the battle of Falkirk with the rest of the company, and when the order for retreat was given he found his way to a widow's house a little way from the town, where the captain had left two of his horses. There they were, safe in the stable, and Metcalfe hastily saddled them both. He was leading out the first when some Highlanders came up.

'We must have that beast,' said they.

'You will have nothing of the sort,' answered Metcalfe.

'Shoot him,' said one of the men, and as Metcalfe heard them cock their muskets he exclaimed quickly:

'Why do you want him?'

'For the Prince,' they replied; and Jack, understanding that he must give way, answered:

'If it is for the Prince, you must have him of course,' and waited till the sound of their footsteps died away. He then led out the other horse, which they had not noticed, and was about to jump on his back when Thornton's coachman, who had also been seeking his master, came up. They both mounted the horse and rode to join the army, with which Metcalfe marched on to Linlithgow and afterwards to Edinburgh.

Thornton's company were one and all very anxious about their captain and could not imagine what had become of him. They knew the names of the men who had been taken prisoners and of those who were killed in battle, but Thornton had disappeared as completely as if the earth had swallowed him up. The matter reached the ears of the superior officers in Edinburgh, and, hearing that Metcalfe was one of the troop, sent for him to give them what information he could, and also because they were curious to see this blind volunteer. But Jack could tell them nothing new; only that, if the captain was alive, he would find him.

Now he happened to have met in Edinburgh a Knaresborough man who had joined Prince Charlie, and this fellow might, Jack thought, be of great help to him in his search. So he sought the man out, and told him that he was tired of serving with the English and felt sure they would be badly beaten, and he would like a place as musician to Prince Charlie. The Knaresborough man at once fell into the trap and replied that an Irish spy was going to join the Prince at Falkirk immediately, and Metcalfe might go with him and ask for an interview.

The first difficulty was with the English sentries in Edinburgh, who refused to let them pass; but Jack overcame this by demanding to be taken before the officer on guard, to whom he explained the real object of his journey.

‘Give it up, give it up! my good fellow,’ said the captain; ‘it is certain death to a man with two eyes, and you have none, though you manage to do so well without them.’ But Metcalfe would not listen, so he and the Irishman were allowed to proceed, and after various adventures arrived safely in Falkirk.

All this time, as we have said, Thornton had been caged up in the cupboard in his wet clothes, till he was almost too stiff to stoop to pick up his food when the woman thrust it under his door. He caught a bad cold besides, and more than once could not restrain his cough, even when he knew the soldiers were in the room. They heard it of course, but as the partitions were very thin, they took for granted it was next door, for the dresser completely hid all trace of an opening.

But by Monday night he felt he could not stay in the closet any longer, and when the woman brought him his provisions for the next day he told her that he would not die there like a rat in a hole, but would come out whatever it cost him.

‘Remain there till to-morrow night,’ she said, ‘and I will contrive some way of escape for you,’ and so the poor captain was forced to pass another twenty-four hours in his most uncomfortable prison. Then, when the soldiers had all gone off to their night duty, the landlady brought a carpenter whom she could trust to take away the dresser. Oh! how thankful the captain was to stretch himself again, and to put on a Highland dress and a black wig which the woman brought him. He had only ten guineas with him, and eight of them he thankfully gave to the landlady while the other two he bestowed on the carpenter. As he was bid, he slung over his shoulder a bag of tools, and hid himself downstairs till it grew light and people were setting out to work, when he and the carpenter started together just four hours before Metcalfe entered Falkirk. On the way to Edinburgh they had a terrible fright, and narrowly escaped falling into the hands of a large body of Highlanders, but at length they reached a house belonging to a friend of the carpenter’s, who lent Thornton a horse, which carried him in safety to Edinburgh.

Metcalfe meanwhile had fared rather badly. His dress, consisting of a plaid waistcoat which he had borrowed, and a blue coat faced with buff, the uniform of his company, had attracted the attention of the Highlanders. He told them that he had been fiddling for the English officers, who had given him the coat (which belonged, he said, to a man killed in the battle) as payment. The men would have been satisfied had not a person chanced to pass who had often seen Jack at Harrogate, and said:

‘You had better not let him go without a search; I don’t like the look of him.’ Accordingly Metcalfe was removed to the guard-room and his clothes examined all over to see if they concealed any letters. The guard even split in two a pack of cards which Metcalfe had in his pocket, imagining that he might have contrived to slip a piece of thin paper between the thick edges of the cardboard then used. The cards, however, had not been employed for this purpose, and after three days' confinement in a loft Metcalfe was tried by court-martial and acquitted, and given besides permission to go to the Prince. By this time, however, he had somehow discovered that Thornton had escaped from Falkirk, so he was only anxious to return to the British army as fast as he could. The Irish spy was equally desirous of taking letters to Edinburgh to some of the friends of Prince Charlie, who were to be found there, but did not know how to pass the English sentries, a difficulty easily solved by Blind Jack, who assured him that he would tell them he was going to Captain Thornton.

Not far from the English outposts the two travellers met with an officer who knew Metcalfe, and informed him to his great delight that the captain was in Edinburgh, so when the sentries were passed he bade farewell to the Irishman after promising to meet him the next night, and went straight to the captain.

'You have given me a great deal of trouble,' was Metcalfe's greeting. 'Really, people might manage to come home from market without being fetched.'

'Well, so I did,' answered Thornton with a laugh. 'But what is to be done now, as I have neither clothes nor cash?'

'Oh, I can get you both!' replied Metcalfe; 'some friends I have here have often heard me speak of you, and they will trust you for payment.' And he was as good as his word, and quickly borrowed thirty pounds, which provided the captain with all the clothes he wanted.

In January 1746 the Duke of Cumberland, Commander-in-Chief of the English army, arrived in Edinburgh, and as Thornton was a great friend of his, the Duke heard all his adventures and the share Blind Jack had taken in them. He then sent for Metcalfe, and being much interested in his story often watched him on the march, and noticed, to his surprise, that, by listening to the drum, Jack was able to keep step with the rest.

The British forces proceeded northwards as far as Aberdeen, where the Duke suddenly determined to give a ball to the ladies and begged that Thornton would allow Metcalfe to play the country dances, as the wind instruments of the German musicians were unsuitable. It must have been rather a strange ball, as up to the last moment it was quite uncertain whether they might not have to fight instead of dance, and the invitations were only sent out at five o'clock for the company to assemble at six. Twenty-five couples were present and kept Metcalfe hard at work till two the next morning; the Duke, then about twenty-five, dancing away with the rest.

The English then turned westwards and defeated the Highlanders at Culloden, near Inverness, after which all British prisoners were set free, and the volunteers returned home.

Captain Thornton and Metcalfe rode back together as far as Knaresborough, where they parted company. Blind Jack’s wife had suffered a great deal of anxiety during the eight months of his absence, for she knew that his love of adventure would thrust him into all kinds of unnecessary dangers. But here he was, none the worse for the hardships he had gone through, and in the best of spirits, but, to Dolly’s great relief, quite ready to stay at home for a bit.

According to his own account — and again we ask ourselves how much we may believe of Metcalfe’s amazing story — there was no end to the different trades he carried on successfully for the rest of his life. He soon grew restless and went to Aberdeen to buy a large supply of stockings, which he sold at a profit among his Yorkshire friends; for a while he became a horse dealer, feeling the animals all over before he made an offer to purchase, so that he knew exactly what condition they were in, and their good and bad points. He next turned smuggler, getting a great deal of excitement out of cheating the Government, and finally took to building bridges and making roads. In 1751 he started a coach between York and Knaresborough, which he drove himself. It ran twice a week in the summer and once in the winter; and as soon as he grew tired of this employment, for he detested being obliged to do things at stated times, he managed with his usual luck to get the business taken off his hands.

We bid farewell to him in 1795 when he was seventy-eight, but still strong and active and able to walk ten miles in three and a half hours. His friendship with Colonel Thornton was as fast as ever, and he remained a welcome guest in several of the big houses round York and Knaresborough. And if perhaps he was not *quite* so wonderful a person as he thought, and saw some of his deeds through a magnifying glass, there is no doubt that he was a very uncommon man, worthy of all admiration for not allowing his life to be spoilt by his blindness.

THE STORY OF DJUN

Once upon a time a famine broke out among the tribe of the Tlingits, and one of their girls, who was an orphan and had to look after herself, would have fared very badly had she not now and then been given some food by her father’s sister. But this did not happen often, for everybody was almost starving, and it was seldom that they had any food for themselves, still less for anyone else.

Now the girl, whose name was Djun, heard some of the women planning to go to the forest and dig roots, and though she wished very much to accompany them, they would not take her.

‘You will bring us bad luck,’ they said, and struck her fingers when, in despair at being left behind, she grasped the side of the canoe. But though the girl was obliged to loosen her hold from pain, she was so hungry that she would not be beaten off, and at last her father’s sister, who was one of the party, persuaded the others to let her go with them. So she jumped in and paddled away to the forest.

All that day the women hunted for roots till they had collected a large pile, and had even caught some salmon in the river as well, and as evening drew on they prepared to encamp for the night, and built a fire to warm them and to cook some of the roots. But the girl, who had wandered away by herself as soon as they had landed, did not return, and the women were angry, and said that if she did not choose to come back, she might stay in the forest for ever. And the next morning, when they started for home, they threw water on the fire so that Djun might not be able to cook her food, if she had any to cook. However, the girl’s aunt managed to steal a burning coal which lay on the fire, and, unseen by the rest, threw it into a deserted brush-house where they had slept, and put a piece of dried salmon with it. Just as she had done this she caught sight of the girl hiding behind the brush-house, and went to speak to her; for the other women were too busy packing the food into the boat to notice what she was doing.

‘Are you not coming with us?’ she asked, and Djun answered:

‘No; as they don’t want to take me, I had better stay here.’

‘Well, I have put a live coal in that brush-house for you and a piece of salmon,’ said her aunt, ‘so you will have something to eat for a day or two.’

The girl did not leave her hiding-place till the boat was out of sight, and then she made a big fire from the burning coal, and cooked her roots and her salmon; but though they smelt very good, and she was hungry, she did not somehow feel as if she could eat. So she soon got up and went farther into the forest and dug some more roots.

‘I shall be almost starving by the evening,’ thought she, ‘and I will eat them then;’ but when evening came she had no more appetite than in the morning, so she curled herself up in a corner and fell asleep, for she was very tired.

She was awakened early next day by a rushing of wings, and, looking out of the door, found a flock of birds sweeping by. But there was nothing very uncommon in that, and she lay down again and slept for several hours longer. Then she got up and walked some distance till she reached a flat plain, where the best roots grew, but the flock of birds had found them out also, and were feeding upon them.

When they saw her they flew away, and she went to a spot covered with dead grass, for she expected that would be a good place to dig in. To her surprise, under the dead grass lay several big canoes filled with oil, dried halibut and dried salmon.

‘How lucky I am!’ she said to herself; ‘it was well indeed that I did not return with the others,’ and she broke off a piece of salmon and tried to eat it, but she could not.

‘What is the matter with me?’ she wondered. ‘I wish my aunt were here,’ and she felt rather frightened. And the next day she grew more frightened still, for she found out that the birds were spirits, and it was they who were preventing her from eating food, so that she might become a great shaman or medicine-man. After a little while her eyes were opened, and she understood many things she had never guessed at, and the spirit-birds she had seen took possession of her, and others came from the woods and the sea, and sang to her.

At first she went two or three times every day to visit the buried canoes and to dig for roots, but she quickly gave that up, for she had nothing with which to sharpen the sticks she used instead of spades; and besides, what was the use of digging for roots if you could not eat them? Meanwhile, in the village the girl’s aunt mourned for her, as she felt sure Djun must by this time be dead of hunger.

‘I am very lonely: I wish some of my old friends would come to see me,’ thought Djun when she had been living by herself for several months, and the next morning a canoe appeared in sight, and in it were seated some people whom she knew. Then Djun was happy indeed, and she bade them follow her to the brush-house, and gave them food out of the canoes; for two or three days they stayed, digging for roots and for anything else they could get, and at the end of the time Djun said to them:

‘It is well that you should go again, but be careful not to take with you any of the food that I have given you. Tell my friends that I am alive, and beg my aunt to come and visit me.’

So the people of the canoe returned to the village, and told such tales of the food they had received from Djun that all the townsfolk hastened to get into their canoes and paddled straight off to the place where she was living. When they drew near enough to see the brush-house, they beheld it surrounded by thousands of birds that seemed to stretch right upwards from the earth to the sky. They also heard the shaman’s voice and the sound of singing, but as soon as they approached closer to the brush-house, the birds flew away.

After that the shaman went out to meet them, and she asked:

‘Where is my aunt? I want her;’ and when her aunt came Djun gave her everything that was stored in one of her buried canoes, and then she said:

‘I should like two of the women to stay with me and help me with my singing,’ and one after another the chief women of the tribe, with their faces newly painted, rose up in the canoes; but she would have none of them, and chose two girls who were orphans like herself, and had been treated very badly by their kinsfolk.

‘The rest can come ashore,’ she said, ‘and camp out here,’ but she took the orphans and her aunt into the brush-house.

Now these high-born women had brought their slaves with them, and Djun took the slaves in exchange for food, and put necklaces and paint and feathers and fine robes upon the orphans. And the whole of the village people stayed with her a long while, and when they got into the canoes again they were fat and strong with all that Djun had given them.

For some time Djun lived quite happily in the brush-house now that she had some companions; then a longing took hold of her to go back to her own village, so she worked magic in order to make the chief of the town fall ill, and the people, who had learnt that she had become a shaman, sent a canoe to fetch her and offered her much payment if she would cure him.

The family of Djun the shaman was one of the noblest in the tribe, but misfortune had overtaken them. One by one they had all died, and when the girl came back to the village nothing remained but the posts of her uncle’s house, while grass had sprouted inside the walls. She beheld these things from the canoe and felt very sad, but she bade the slaves cease paddling, as she wished to land. Then she drew out an eagle’s tail, and, holding it up, blew upon it and waved it backwards and forwards. After she had done this four times, the posts and the grass disappeared, and in their place stood a fine house — finer and larger than the one the chief had lived in.

‘Bring in whatever the canoe contains,’ she said; and when everything was ready she went into the house, and the two orphan girls went with her.

‘The chief’s daughter is ill as well as her father,’ so Djun heard after she had been back in the village for a few days, and she waited in the house, expecting to be summoned to work a cure. But though they had sent for her while she was living far from them, now that she was amongst them again she looked so like the girl they had known from a child that the people could not believe she could be a *real* shaman, and called in others. However, in spite of the care of these medicine men, both the chief and his daughter became worse and worse, and in despair, their kinsfolk suddenly bethought themselves of Djun. The girl was not in the house at the time that the messenger arrived, but one of the orphans met him, and asked:

‘How much will they pay the shaman if she cures them?’

‘Two slaves,’ was the answer.

‘That is not enough,’ said the child; ‘go back and tell them so.’

And the messenger went back and came again.

‘How much will they pay the shaman?’ asked the child as she opened the door to him.

‘Two slaves and much goods,’ answered he.

‘That is well; she will come,’ said the child, and the messenger returned with her answer.

‘We will go together,’ Djun said to the orphans, and the three set off at once to the house of the chief. Inside, there was a crowd of people, except for an empty space round the fire where lay the chief and his daughter. The shaman sat down between them and worked all the spells she knew, but they grew no better. Then she rose and walked through the people in the room, and when she had looked at each one she said to the chief:

‘The witch that is killing you two is not here.’

As soon as the people heard that, they left the house and brought in those of the villagers who had not come before, for there was not room for a very great number. For the second time Djun went among them and examined them, and then she repeated:

‘The witch is not yet here.’ But the spirits, which showed her what others could not see, opened her eyes, and after a moment she spoke again.

‘The road of the witch is very clear now; it runs straight to this house.’ After that she waited in silence, and the people were silent also. At last they heard a bird whistling in the woods at the back, and the shaman said:

‘She is coming now; open the door and let her in,’ and they flung the door wide, and there flew in a wild canary.

‘Go and sit between the two sick persons,’ said Djun, and the canary fluttered towards them, making such a noise with her wings that they were frightened and shrank away from her. And the shaman desired a man to tie the bird’s wings to her side so that she might be still. Next a rolling sound such as thunder makes a long way off filled the air.

‘Here come her children,’ cried the shaman. ‘Stop all the holes so that they may not enter, for they are very angry.’ But though the holes were stopped, there were cracks in the boards, and the birds flew in through the cracks till the house became full of them, and the noise was deafening. They flew round and round among the people, and whosoever they touched received a cut or a bruise. Suddenly — no one knew how — they all vanished, and not a bird was left in the room save the one which was tied.

Hours had passed since the shaman first came to the house, and it was now morning. The canary never ceased making a noise all that time, and at last the shaman said:

‘She wants to go to the place where she has put the food and the locks of hair with which she is bewitching the chief and his daughter. Untie her wings and let her do as she will, but be careful to follow her.’ So they untied her wings, and the canary flew out of the house followed by four men, and she hopped ahead of them the way she had come through the woods.

At length she stopped and began scratching at the roots of some bushes till she laid bare a skull. On the top of the skull some leaves, hair, food, and scraps of clothes were carefully arranged in a pattern. She picked up as many of them as she could carry in her beak and flew with them down to the sea, letting the wind scatter them in different directions. This she did till all had disappeared and the skull likewise, and then she returned to the house with the four men following her, and they found the chief and his daughter quite cured, for as soon as the skull and the other things had touched the sea, they recovered by magic.

‘Do you hear the noise she is making?’ asked the shaman, when the bird had begun to chatter as noisily as before. ‘She wants to go away from here, but not to her home, because the other birds will be ashamed of her. The place she wishes to go to is a town called Close-along-the-beach. Therefore, let a canoe be got ready at once to take her there.’ So the canoe was got ready, and the bird flew into it, and they pushed off from the shore, and paddled till the bird suddenly broke out into the strange speech, which no one could understand but the shaman.

‘This must be the place,’ they said, and paddled in towards the beach, and the canary flew out of the boat and went very fast down to the shore followed by a man who wished to see where she was going, and she stopped at a tree whose roots stuck out above the ground. For this was the bird-town of Close-along-the-beach.

That is how the ancient Indians first heard of witchcraft.

WHAT BECAME OF OWEN PARFITT?

In the early part of the eighteenth century a family named Parfitt were living in a small town in the West of England called Shepton Mallet. We are not told how many children they had, but some probably died young, for the only two we hear about are the eldest daughter Mary and her brother Owen, about fifteen years younger.

Owen was apprenticed by his father to a tailor as soon as he had reached the proper age, and learnt his trade thoroughly. But he hated sitting still sewing all day long, and one morning his stool waited for him in vain, and some hours later a message was brought that he had enlisted under the king’s banner. Little was known of him for many years: occasionally a report was carried by some pedlar or old soldier that Owen was serving in this country or in that, but after a while even these rumours ceased, and at length people forgot that such a person as Owen Parfitt had ever existed. His parents were dead; only his sister was left to remember him.

Then suddenly he appeared amongst them, bent and crippled with wounds and rheumatism, and unrecognisable by anyone but Mary. Together they set up house, and Owen again got out the board and the big scissors and the chalk and the wax which his sister had carefully kept, and announced to the town of Shepton Mallet that he was going to become a tailor once more. However, the cottage which the brother and sister had taken proved inconvenient in many ways, and after a time they moved to another, near the high road, with the main street lying at the end of the garden. Here he used to sit in the evening when his work was done, and talk with some of his old friends who would lean over the gate and tell him all the news.

As time went on, Owen’s rheumatism grew worse and worse, till at length he was too crippled to move without help, and by and bye he became unable to stir hand or foot. Mary had grown very old also, for her eightieth birthday had long been past, and though no cottage in Shepton Mallet was cleaner than hers, she was very feeble, and Owen looked forward with terror to the day when she would certainly break down. But Mary was not the woman to give in while there was any strength left in her, and when she found that she could not get her brother outside the door by herself, she engaged a girl called Susannah Snook, living about fifty yards away, to come and assist her. Between them they carried him along the passage to a chair placed, if the weather was fine, outside the house door, and there they left him, warmly wrapped up, while his bed was made and his room put tidy.

It was in the afternoon of a June day in 1768 that Owen Parfitt, dressed in the night things which he always wore, with an old greatcoat over his shoulders, took up his usual position in the little garden. No one seems actually to have seen him or spoken with him, but then it was haymaking season, and the fields round the Parfitts' cottage were filled with people, while it is only reasonable to suppose that the turnpike road opposite had many carts and horsemen passing up and down. Be this as it may, there was the old man taking his airing, 'plain for all folks to see,' when Susannah, having made him comfortable, turned and went back to Mary. After the bed had been made and the room put to rights, the girl went home, but she must either have quitted the cottage by a *back* door, or else the helpless old man must still have been sitting where she left him. In any case, in about half an hour the news reached her that Owen had disappeared, and his sister was almost distracted.

Susannah flew back to the cottage as fast as her feet would take her, and found Mary weeping bitterly. The girl at once tried to find out what had happened, but the old woman was so upset that this was not very easy. Bit by bit, however, Susannah discovered that after she had returned home, Mary had gone upstairs for a short time, and on coming down again was struck by the silence.

'Owen, are you there?' she cried, but there was no answer. 'Owen!' she repeated in a louder voice, but still there was nothing. Then she went to the door and found the chair just as she and Susannah had left it, but with no trace of her brother save the greatcoat which was lying on the back.

'Did you hear no noise?' asked the girl, after listening to her story.

'No; nothing at all. I just came down because I had finished what I had to do upstairs!' And Susannah added, on telling her tale, 'the chair, when I looked, was exactly as we had placed it.'

The alarm once given, the neighbours lost no time in making a thorough search of both town and country for some distance round, even of the most unlikely spots. Ponds and wells were dragged, ditches examined, outhouses explored; though *why* anyone should wish to hide a harmless old cripple in any of these places, nobody stopped to ask, still less how it could have been done in broad daylight. But in spite of the thorough nature of the hunt, which did not cease even during a sharp thunderstorm, and went on all that night and the next day, neither then nor later was any trace ever found of Owen Parfitt.

As far as we know, nothing further was done about the matter for nearly fifty years, when some gentlemen happened to hear the story and were interested in it. They sought out all the old people in the town who had known the Parfitts and questioned them as to what had happened. Of course, the worst of this kind of evidence is that no kind of notes had been taken down at the time, and also that the love of astonishing their hearers by wonderful details which never occurred is a great temptation to many. On the whole, however, the witnesses in the inquiry into Owen Parfitt's disappearance seem to have been more truthful than usual. Susannah Snook, the last person living to see the old man, told her tale as it has been already set down, and her account was closely borne out by that given by another old woman as far as her own knowledge went. Then followed some men, whose clothes had been made by Parfitt as long as he had been able to work, and who had helped in the search for him. One of these declared that Owen was 'neither a very good nor a very bad man, but was said sometimes to have a very violent temper.' Yet, even if this was correct, it does not throw much light on the mystery.

The general opinion of the neighbours at the time of the vanishing of Parfitt was that he was carried off by demons, and indeed the whole affair was so strange and without reason that their view was hardly to be wondered at. The discovery of part of some human bones under a wall near Parfitt's cottage gave a new turn to their thoughts, but this happened many years after the disappearance of Owen, and were held, when examined in 1814, to be the bones of a girl supposed to have been murdered. One witness only contradicted Susannah's evidence, and that was Jehoshaphat Stone, who swore Mary Parfitt had assured him that she had come downstairs hastily after hearing a noise, to find her brother gone and the chair displaced. But this fact he did not know of his own knowledge, and Susannah, when asked about the displacing of the chair, declared for the second time that the chair was exactly as she had left it, and that Mary had expressly said she had heard no noise.

One more question remained to be put, and that was if the old man had any money about him which might have led to his kidnapping or murder, though this seems very unlikely. One witness said he had a small pension amounting to about seven pounds a year, but an old woman who was related to the Parfitts 'was quite sure he had nothing of the sort,' and even if he had contrived to save a little during the years when he could still work at his trade, it must soon have gone in the days of his helplessness. At any rate, he would hardly have had it upon him when he was dressed in his night things, without any sort of pocket to put it in.

‘But *was* he a *totally* helpless cripple?’ inquired Dr. Butler, the future Bishop of Lichfield, to whom the evidence was sent by the gentlemen who had collected it. ‘Be very careful, gentlemen, to discover whether he *walked* to his chair on the day of his disappearance, or whether he was capable of walking so much as a few yards; for there seems to have been a rumour that a person of his description was seen wandering that evening near Frome ten or twelve miles distant.’

In accordance with Dr. Butler’s wish, a close examination was made into this matter, but none of the witnesses had ever seen Parfitt on his feet or attempting to use them for many years before he vanished. But supposing, as has been sometimes known, that a sort of miracle had been wrought and his powers of walking had come suddenly back, how could he have got from Shepton Mallet to Frome in broad daylight, past cottages and along roads where everyone knew him, without being recognised by a single person on the way?

‘I give it up,’ as they say about riddles; and Dr. Butler ‘gave it up,’ too.

BLACKSKIN

In an Indian town on the North Pacific Ocean there lived a chief, whose ambition it was to be stronger than other men and be able to kill the sea-lions down the coast. On the coldest mornings in winter he might be seen running down very early to bathe and the village people followed him into the water. After he had swum and dived till he was quite warm, he would come out and rush up a hill, and, catching hold of a big branch on a particular tree, would try to pull it off from the trunk! Next he would seize another tree and endeavour to twist it in his hands like a rope. This he did to prove to himself that he was daily growing stronger.

Now this chief had a nephew named Blackskin, who besides appearing weak and delicate, was never seen to bathe and seemed terribly frightened when the boys pushed him into the water. Of course, they could not know, when they saw Blackskin sleeping while everyone else was enjoying himself in the sea, that he was merely pretending, and that as soon as *they* were asleep, he rose and went down to the shore by himself and stayed in the sea treading water for so many hours, that he had to float so as to rest his feet. Indeed, he would often remain in till he was chilled to the bone, and then he damped the ashes of his fire in order to make them steam, and put his sleeping-mat on top. The villagers, who only beheld him in bed, thought him a dirty fellow; but in reality he was cleaner than any of them, and was never known to lie or to steal. If they laughed at him for his laziness or his cowardice, he took no notice, though he was strong enough to have picked them up with one hand, and thrown them over the cliffs; and when, as often happened, they begged him, for a joke, to bring them in a large log for their fire, he was careful to make a great fuss and to raise it very slowly, as if it was very hard to lift.

‘A lazy fellow like that does not deserve any food,’ said they, and so poor Blackskin seldom had enough to eat.

Things went on like this for some time, and Blackskin bathed constantly unknown to anyone till one night when he heard a whistle.

‘Someone has seen me,’ he thought to himself, ‘well, if so, I may as well come out,’ and he walked up the beach in the direction of the sound till he reached a short man dressed in a bear-skin. To his surprise, the man caught hold of him, picked him up, and flung him down on the sand.

'I am Strength,' said he, 'and I am going to help you. But tell no one that you have seen me, for as yet you are not strong enough to do that which you wish to do.'

These words made Blackskin very happy, but he was quieter than ever, and the boys and villagers counted him a poor-spirited creature, and did not mind what tricks they played on him, even though he *did* belong to the family of the chief. They ordered him about just as if he had been a captive taken in war, and he bore it quite meekly, and when the little boys wrestled with him he always let them win the match.

'Fancy a great, big man being thrown by a child!' cried those who looked.

Yet, in spite of all this, Blackskin was contented, for after a few more weeks of bathing, he felt there was nothing that he could not do quite easily. Then one night he heard the whistle again, and on the shore stood the same man, who signed to him to come out of the water.

'Wrestle with me,' said the man, and as soon as they had seized each other, he added:

'Now you have strength at last and do not need to go into the sea. Do you see that tree? Try and pull out that big branch.' Blackskin ran over to the tree, and pulled out the branch with ease, and even put it back again, which was harder.

'Very good,' said the man, 'Next, twist that other tree right down to its roots,' and Blackskin did that also, and afterwards untwisted it so that it seemed just as before.

He had hardly got to bed, when the people began to run down to the sea, for it was their bathing hour. And the boys, as they passed, came in and pulled Blackskin's hair, and cried:

'Come and bathe with us,' but as usual he answered nothing. After they all returned from bathing, the chief went up to the tree and pulled out the branch, while the people shouted for joy that at last he was strong enough to do what he had sought to do for so long.

And Blackskin lay in bed and listened. Next, the chief found he was able to twist the other tree, and they shouted again, and the chief felt very proud and thought himself a great man. By and bye they came again to Blackskin and laid hold of his feet to drag him from his bed, laughing and saying as they did so:

'Your chief has pulled out that branch and twisted that tree. Why couldn't you?'

'To-morrow we will hunt the sea-lions,' said the young men to each other. And one of them added:

‘I wonder which part of the canoe that great strong Blackskin will sleep in.’

‘Why, in the bow, of course,’ answered a boy, ‘then he can land first and tear the sea-lions in two before any of us,’ and they all laughed again. But Blackskin, though he heard, took no notice, as was his custom.

All that day the people visited the tree to look at the branch which the chief had pulled out, and in choosing the strongest men among them who had bathed with him in the sea, to hunt the sea-lions. The store of meat they had in the town was nearly exhausted, and it was time they collected more; but the island on which the animals lived was very slippery, and it was not easy for the men to climb over the rocks.

That night Blackskin took one more bath and then he went to his uncle’s wife, who never made fun of him like the rest, and said:

‘Will you give me a clean shirt and something for my hair?’

‘Have you been bidden to the hunt?’ asked the wife, and Blackskin made reply:

‘No; I have not been bidden, but I am going.’ So she got ready some food and tied it up in a small package for him, and gave him the clean shirt and what he wanted for his hair.

He was the last to reach the canoe, and the men who were seated in it cried when they beheld him:

‘Don’t let him come! Don’t let him come!’ But Blackskin was determined to get in, and seized the canoe as they were pushing it off. In vain they struck his fingers to force him to let go; and to their amazement he easily dragged back the canoe, till it was near enough for him to jump in. Finding they could not keep him out, the men began to speak rudely to him, till the chief stopped them.

‘Let him alone,’ he said; ‘he can bale out the water if it should come in;’ so Blackskin sat in the seat of the man that bales, wondering within himself if his uncle had suspected anything when he had pulled back the canoe with the men in it. But as the chief said nothing, Blackskin supposed he had been thinking of something else at the time.

When they were close to the island, the chief waited till the canoe was lifted by a wave, and then he leaped on shore. He seized one sea-lion and killed it, and managed to seat himself on the back of another; but the sea-lion gave a sudden spring and threw the chief high into the air, and he fell down heavily striking his head against a rock, so that he died at once.

Blackskin had seen it all, and was sorry. He opened his bundle of clothes and put on his shirt and his hair ornament, while the rest stood round watching.

‘I am the man who pulled out that branch and twisted that tree,’ he said, ‘and now, bring the canoe closer in!’ As he spoke he walked the length of it upon the seats, which broke under him, so that those who were sitting on them were thrown to the bottom. Very frightened they all were when they heard the crash, lest he should revenge himself on them for the way they had treated him. But he did not even look at them, only jumped ashore as his uncle had done, and climbed straight up the tall cliff, hitting some sea-lions on the head as he passed. When he reached the big one which had killed his uncle, he slew that also, and carried them all to the shore, piling them up in the canoe.

There was enough meat to last them many months, and Blackskin was still piling, when suddenly the men in the canoe pushed off, and paddled home again, and this was because of their dread of Blackskin. They made the canoe fast and told the people of the town that it was Blackskin who pulled out the branch and twisted the tree, and that for very fear they had left him on the island of the sea-lions.

‘Why did you do that?’ asked the people. ‘Trouble may come of it.’

So Blackskin found himself alone on the island, and as there was nothing to make a fire with, he rolled himself, head and all in his blanket, and went to sleep. After a time he was wakened by a noise which sounded like the beating of sticks, and someone called out:

‘I have come after you.’ He sat up and looked round, but only saw a black duck swimming towards him.

‘I have seen you already,’ said he, and the black duck answered:

‘I was bidden to fetch you. Get on my back and be sure to keep your eyes tight shut till I tell you to open them.’ And Blackskin kept his eyes tight shut till the duck called out:

‘Now you may open them,’ and he opened them and found that he was in a fine house, though he did not guess it was the house of the sea-lions.

Of course, the people of the town knew nothing of the black duck, and they mourned for the chief and for Blackskin, who had been left to perish on the island, and the chief’s wife mourned most of all.

‘Why did you do it?’ she asked many times, and the townspeople repeated,’Why did you do it? A strong man like that is scarce.’

Then the chief’s wife begged some of the young men to cross to the island and bring back her husband’s body; and this they did at last, but they could not find Blackskin’s.

‘Where can he be?’ they said. ‘Can the tide have taken him, or a wild beast have eaten him? We must consult the wise man.'

And the wise man told them that Blackskin was not dead, but would come back again some day; and this troubled them more than ever.

All this time Blackskin was quite happy in the house of the sea-lions. He had grown so used to them that they seemed to him quite like human beings, though when he thought about it, he knew of course they were not. One day he heard a young sea-lion crying with pain, and his people could not tell what was the matter. Then Blackskin came and examined him, and declared that he had a barbed spear-point sticking in his side.

'This wise medicine man has found out why he cries,' said one; and Blackskin answered:

'I am not a medicine man, but all the same I can take out that spear-head!' And after it was out, he washed the place with warm water.

The young sea-lion was very grateful, and as he belonged to a powerful tribe they wished to reward Blackskin for his kindness, and said to him:

'Anything that belongs to us, you may have if you will.'

'Give me, then,' answered Blackskin, 'that box that hangs overhead.' Now the box was a magic box which could bring the wind out of whichever quarter you wanted it, and this was what happened. The sea-lions pushed the box up and down the surface of the sea, and whistled, and called to the wind as you would call to a dog, saying:

'Come to this box! Come to this box!'

They were sad at parting with it, and would have wished him to ask for anything else, but they would not break their word and showed Blackskin how to get into it, and bade him on no account to take it near whatever was unclean.

Then they said farewell to each other, and Blackskin packed himself carefully into the box (which was rather small for a tall man), and in a minute he was blown far out to sea.

'West wind! West wind! Come to this box,' he cried, and the west wind came, and blew and blew, till it blew him to the shore, not far from his own town. And when he saw where he was, he got out and shook himself and stretched his arms and legs, and hid the box away in the branches of a tree. After that he walked home.

The first person he saw was his uncle's wife, who welcomed him gladly, for next to the chief she loved Blackskin better than anybody. He then sent a messenger to beg all the townspeople to assemble together, and they obeyed; but those who had been cruel to him came unwillingly, for they feared his wrath always, and hoped he had disappeared for ever. And when they lifted their glance and beheld him strong and tall and able to force men to do his will, even though they liked it little, they trembled more than before for the doom he might pronounce on them. As for Blackskin, his eyes shone with an angry light; but he said to himself:

‘It is my own fault. If I had not let them do as they like, they would never have dared to treat me in that way. It is not just to punish them: I will forgive them.’ But before he had time to tell them so, the men who had left him on the island had run away in terror, and hid themselves in the woods; thus they were not present at the assembling of the people, nor heard of the welcome given him by many. Then Blackskin looked round him, and spoke these words, and some who listened to him hung their heads with shame:

‘You know of yourselves what cruelty you showed me, and you do well to be ashamed of it; and those who are cruel to people because they think they are weaker than themselves will always have reason to feel shame. Remember this, and do not make fun of poor people any more, as you did in the days when my uncle was chief.’

This is what Blackskin said.

THE PETS OF AURORE DUPIN

During the years in which Napoleon and his armies were fighting in Spain, in Germany, and in Russia, a little girl might be seen running wild in the province of Berry, which is almost in the very centre of France. In those days if you had asked her name she would have answered that it was ‘Aurore Dupin’; but by and bye she took another, which by her books she made famous — nearly as famous, indeed, in its own way as that of her great ancestor, the general Count Maurice de Saxe.

But it is not the celebrated writer who called herself ‘George Sand’ with whom we have to do now, but the child Aurore Dupin, and her friends the birds and beasts, dwellers like herself in the bare and desolate plains that surrounded her grandmother’s château of Nohant. Maurice Dupin, father of Aurore, was a soldier like his grandfather, Maurice de Saxe; but her mother was the daughter of a bird-seller, who, curiously enough, lived in the ‘Street of the Birds’ (Quai des Oiseaux) in Paris. To this fact Aurore always declared that she owed her powers of fascination over the chaffinches, robins, or starlings that would sit on her shoulders or perch on her hands as she walked with her mother in the garden. And far from being frightened at the presence of a grown-up person, the birds often seemed to prefer Madame Maurice Dupin to Aurore herself.

Aurore became very learned about birds and their ways, considering them far cleverer than men or animals, and endowed with finer qualities than either. Warblers she held superior to any other small bird, and says that at fifteen days a warbler is as old in the feathered world as a child of ten is in that which speaks instead of chirping. When she was a little girl at Nohant, she brought up by hand two baby warblers of different sorts and different nests.

The one with a yellow breast she named Jonquil; while the other, who had a grey waistcoat, was called Agatha. Jonquil was as much as a fortnight older than Agatha, and when under the care of Aurore she was a slim, gentle young creature, inclined to be thin, and with scarcely enough feathers to cover her skin, and not yet able to fly with certainty from one branch to another, or even to feed herself. This Aurore knew was her own fault, because if Jonquil had remained at home she would have learned these things far earlier, for bird-mothers are much better teachers than *our* mothers, and insist that their children shall find out how to get on by themselves.

Agatha was a most tiresome child. She would never be quiet for a moment, but was always hopping about, crying out and tormenting Jonquil, who was beginning to wonder at all she saw around her, and would sit thinking with one claw drawn up under her wing, her eyes half shut, and her head sunk between her shoulders. But Agatha, who never thought at all, did not see why anybody else should do so either, and would peck at Jonquil's legs and wings in order to attract attention, unless Aurore happened to be in the room and glance at her. Then Agatha would dance up and down the branch uttering plaintive cries, till some bread or biscuit was given to her. For Agatha was always hungry, or always greedy; you did not quite know which.

One morning Aurore was absorbed in writing a story, and her two little friends were seated on a green branch some distance away. It was rather cold, and Agatha, whose feathers still only half covered her, was cuddling for warmth against Jonquil. They had actually been quiet for half an hour — a very rare occurrence — but at length they made up their minds it must be time for dinner, and if Aurore did not know it, she must be told.

So Jonquil hopped on to the back of a chair and from that to the table, and finally planted her claws upon the writing paper, making a great mess of the words; while Agatha, who was afraid to leave the branch by herself, flapped her wings and opened her beak, screaming with hunger.

Aurore was just in the middle of the great scene in her story, where the hero and heroine had found out the wicked uncle, and fond though she was of Jonquil, she felt for the first time very much provoked by her behaviour. She pointed out to her that by now she really was old enough to feed herself, and that close by was an excellent pasty in a pretty saucer, only she was too lazy to eat it, and expected her mistress to put it in her mouth. Jonquil was not accustomed to be scolded, and did not like it, and to show her displeasure hopped sulkily back to her branch. Agatha, however, had no mind to go without her dinner, and, turning to Jonquil, insisted that she should return at once and help her to that delicious dish. And she was so eloquent in her pleading that Jonquil seemed really moved, though she hesitated as to whether she should do as Agatha desired, or if she should keep her dignity and remain on her branch.

Of course, Aurore pretended to see nothing of all this, although in reality she was watching eagerly under her eyelids how it would end.

Suddenly there was a flutter in the air, and Jonquil stood on the edge of the saucer. She opened her mouth and chirped, expecting the food to fly into her beak; but as it did nothing of the sort, she stooped down and pecked it. To the surprise of her mistress, instead of swallowing the morsel herself, she flew back to the branch and gave it to Agatha.

From that day Jonquil took as much care of Agatha as if she had been her own child. She saw that her feathers were kept in order, taught her very soon to feed herself, and steadied her in her first nights from the branch. Agatha proved quicker and cleverer than her mistress expected, and in a month’s time she and Jonquil had made a home for themselves amongst the big trees in the garden, from which they would often fly down to see their old friends at dinner in the garden, and to share their dessert.

All through her life Aurore and the birds around were close friends; others besides Jonquil and Agatha would come when she called them, not because they knew their names, but because they recognised the sound of her voice. In later years she had a splendid hawk whom everyone else was afraid of, but his mistress would trust him to perch on her baby’s cot, and snap gently at any flies which settled on the child’s face without waking him. Unluckily this charming gentleman was not always nice to people whom he did not like, and at last he was obliged to be placed in a strong cage, from which he easily escaped the next day after breaking the bars.

Maurice Dupin, the father of Aurore, was aide-de-camp to General Murat, afterwards King of Naples and Napoleon’s brother-in-law. In April 1808, long before the time of Jonquil and Agatha, when the general was ordered to Madrid, the Dupins followed him, and they all lived for a time in a splendid palace belonging to the hated Spanish minister, known as the ‘Prince of Peace,’ who like his master the king, was now a captive in France. Here Aurore was very happy. The rooms were large, the passages long, and you never knew *what* kind of delightful beast you might not meet with in one or the other. Perhaps, on the whole, it was *most* likely that you would come across a rabbit, as there were so many of them that they came and went without the slightest attention from anyone. A beautiful white bunny, with eyes as red as rubies, at once bade Aurore welcome. He had established himself in the corner of her bedroom behind the looking-glass, and would come out from there to play games on the polished floor. When they were both tired, the little girl — Aurore was then about four — would throw herself into a chair, and the white rabbit would jump into her lap, and lie quietly there for hours, while Aurore made up all kinds of interesting stories to amuse him.

Besides the white rabbit, Aurore greatly admired General Murat (especially when he wore his uniform) and was quite convinced he was a fairy prince. Her mother made her a uniform too, not like the general’s, of course, but an exact copy of her father’s. It consisted of a white cashmere vest with sleeves fastened by gold buttons, over which was a loose pelisse, trimmed with black fur, while the breeches were of yellow cashmere embroidered with gold. The boots of red morocco had spurs attached; at her side hung a sabre and round her waist was a sash of crimson silk cords. In this guise Aurore was presented by Murat to his friends, but though she was intensely proud of her uniform, the little aide-de-camp found the fur and the gold very hot and heavy, and was always thankful to change it for the black silk dress and black mantilla worn by Spanish children. One does not know in which costume she must have looked most strange.

Murat, who was a good-natured man, grew very fond of the child, and one evening when he returned from hunting he went up to the rooms in the palace occupied by the Dupins bearing in his arms a tiny fawn. Aurore was sound asleep, for it was nearly midnight, but, followed by her father and mother, the general entered the room and laid the fawn beside her on the pillow. The child half-opened her eyes, and seeing the little head close to her face, put her arm round its neck and dozed off again. The next morning when she woke up, she found Murat standing by her bed, for M. Dupin had told him what a pretty picture the two made, and he wished to see it. The poor little creature — probably not more than a few days old — had been chased by dogs the previous evening, and though it had escaped unhurt, which was a marvel, was absolutely worn out, and had settled itself comfortably to sleep like a kitten. It lay curled up on Aurore’s chest, with its head on the pillow and her arms still remained round its neck. At the sound of voices she awoke, and rubbed her cheek against the nose of her bedfellow, who, feeling warm and comfortable and sure of a friend, licked her hands gratefully. But the little thing pined for its mother, and though Aurore did her very best to replace her, it was too late, and early one morning Madame Dupin found the fawn quite dead under the pile of coverings Aurore had spread over it. She dared not tell the child what had happened, so she said it had run away in the night, and was now quite happy with its family in the woods. All of which Aurore believed.

After a few months spent in Spain, the Dupins returned to Nohant at the end of August, exhausted by the hardships they had undergone and their terrible journey. For a few days they had peace and rest; then the little blind baby died, and, at his mother’s express wish, was buried by his father secretly under a pear-tree in the garden of Nohant. Nine days later Maurice Dupin mounted a hard-mouthed horse named Leopardo, and rode off to dine with some friends in the country. On his return Leopardo stumbled in the darkness over a heap of stones on one side of the road, and threw his master.

‘Weber! Come quickly! I am dying,’ Maurice called to his groom, and it was true. His back was broken; and though help was speedily got and he was taken to an inn near by, there was no hope from the first, and he spoke no more. For the second time in her life, his mother put her feet on the ground, and *walked* to meet him as they carried him back to Nohant. The other occasion was when she awaited him on the road at Passy, after his release from prison.

The blow was a dreadful one, but the elder Madame Dupin was a woman of strong and silent courage, and tried to take up her life as usual. She wished to adopt Aurore entirely, and leave Madame Maurice to take care of another daughter named Caroline, whom she had had by a former husband. But Madame Maurice could not bear to part from her younger child, and as Caroline was at this time in a convent there was no need to decide the matter at present. In this manner two or three years slipped past, and Aurore grew strong and healthy in the open air, playing with any children who came in her way, or, better still, with any animals she could get hold of.

Among her particular friends at Nohant was a donkey — the best donkey in the world. Of course, he might have been obstinate and fond of kicking in his youth, like some other donkeys; but now he was old, very old indeed, and was a model of good behaviour.

His walk was slow and stately, and, owing to the respect due to his age and his long service in the house of Madame Dupin, no one either scolded or corrected him. Every day Aurore and Ursule, the little girl who was her companion, were placed in panniers on his back, and made what seemed to them long journeys through the world. On their return home he was unharnessed, and left to wander where he wished, for nobody ever dreamed of interfering with him. He might have been met in the village, in the fields, or in the garden, but always conducting himself as an elderly gentleman should. Now and then the fancy took him to walk in at Madame Dupin’s front door, from which he would enter the dining-room or even the lady’s private apartments. One day she found him installed in her dressing-room, sniffing curiously at a box of oris powder. As the doors were only fastened by a latch after the old custom, he could easily open them, and could find his way all over the ground floor, which he generally explored in search of Madame Dupin, for he knew quite well she would be sure to have something nice for him in her pocket. As to being laughed at for his odd habits, he was quite indifferent to *that*, and listened to the jokes made about him with the air of a philosopher.

One hot night in summer he could not sleep, and a wandering fit seized him. He passed through a door which had been left open, mounted six or eight steps, crossed the hall and the kitchen and arrived at Madame Dupin’s bedroom. He tried as usual to lift the latch, but as a bolt had been put on the inside, he could not get in. He then began to scratch with his hoofs, but Madame Dupin only thought that it was a thief, cutting through the door, and rang for her maid violently. The maid, fearing that her mistress had been taken ill, did not wait even to obtain a light, but ran along the passage as fast as she could, falling right over the donkey. The maid set up piercing cries; the donkey uttered loud hee-haws, and Madame Dupin jumped hastily out of bed to see what in the world *could* be happening. It took a good deal to move her stately composure, but on that occasion she really did allow herself to smile, if only the maid and the donkey had not been too frightened to notice it. But when Aurore heard the story next morning, she laughed more than she had ever done in her life.

So good-bye to her for the present. When we next hear of her, she will be busy with lessons.

THE TRIALS OF M. DESCHARTRES

For many years Aurore Dupin spent her life between Berry and Paris, travelling in a coach drawn by six strong horses, till lack of money obliged them to sell the big and heavy ‘Berlin,’ and go in a sort of gig which could only hold two people, with a child between them. Of course, the journey took some days, and Aurore, sitting between her mother and her nurse, was thinking all the way of the forests they would have to pass through, and how, on their way to Paris, she had overheard her grandmother telling her maid that she remembered well when the Forest of Orleans was the haunt of robbers, who stopped the passers-by and stripped them of everything that was valuable. If the thieves were caught, they were hung on the trees along the road, to prevent others from following in their footsteps, though, to judge from the numbers of the bodies seen by Madame Dupin, the warning had no effect whatever.

Aurore was thought to be asleep when Madame Dupin told this gloomy tale, but it made a deep impression on her mind, and she never quite forgot it, even amongst the wonders of Paris. So when they started for Nohant she trembled at the sight of every wood, and only breathed freely when they came out safely on the other side. What a comfort it was to arrive safely at the town of Châteauroux, and know that you were only nine miles from home!

They had dinner with an old friend, who insisted on showing them every fruit and flower in his garden, so that it was getting dusk when they climbed into the only sort of carriage to be hired in the place, a kind of springless cart drawn by a horse whose bones could be counted. The coachman was a boy of twelve or thirteen, new to that part of the world and with no idea at all how to make his way in the dark, through a lonely trackless waste, scattered over with pools of water and long heather. For miles round there was only one cottage and that belonged to a gardener.

For five hours the cart rocked and floundered as the horse found itself knee-deep in gorse or picking its way through a marsh, and every instant Aurore — and her mother also — expected a robber to spring up out of the darkness and seize them. They need not have been afraid; it was not worth any robber’s while to waste his time in that barren district; but there was a great risk of their being upset. This did at length happen, and about midnight they suddenly found themselves in a deep sandy hole out of which their horse was unable to drag them. The boy soon understood this, and, unharnessing the beast, jumped on his back and, wishing them gaily good-night, disappeared in the darkness, quite unmoved by the prayers of Madame Maurice Dupin, the threats of Rose, or the sobs of Aurore.

For a new terror had taken hold of the child. A strange hoarse noise had burst out all round them, unlike anything she had ever heard.

‘It is all right; it is only the frogs croaking,’ said Rose; but Aurore knew much better. How absurd to talk of frogs when everyone could guess the voices were those of gnomes or ill-natured water-sprites, irritated at having their solitude disturbed, and Aurore sobbed on, and clung to her mother.

It was only when Rose flung stones into the water that the croaking stopped, and Aurore was persuaded to go to sleep in the cart. Her mother had decided that she must make the best of it, as they could not get on till morning, and was talking cheerfully to Rose, when about two o’clock they suddenly beheld a light moving jerkily about, some distance off. Rose declared it was the moon rising, *Mme*. Maurice that it was a meteor, but it soon became plain that it was coming in their direction. The boy was not so faithless as he seemed. He had ridden in search of the gardener’s cottage of which he had heard, and the good man, who was used to these accidents, had brought his sons, his horses, and a long torch dipped in oil to the help of the travellers. By their aid, the cart was soon out of the hole and two stout farm-horses harnessed to it, and as it was too late to proceed to Nohant, the hungry and tired travellers were taken back to the cottage, and given a good supper and warm beds, in which they slept till morning, in spite of the noise made by cocks and children.

The next day at twelve they reached Nohant.

It is never possible to forget that Aurore’s childhood was streaked through and through with Napoleon, though she does not write down her recollections till three kings had succeeded him on the throne of France. Still, he more or less pervades her book just as he pervaded the hearts of the people, and when she was fifteen one of his generals wanted to marry her. Which? How much we should like to know! But that she does not tell us. Her grandmother, old Madame Dupin, did not share the almost universal enthusiasm for the Emperor — she had lived her long life mostly under the Bourbons, had nearly lost her head under the Terror, and had been a pupil of the philosophers who were in fashion during the last days of the old *régime*. She had inspired her son with some of her feelings towards Napoleon; yet, though Maurice might and did condemn many of the Emperor’s acts, he could not, as he says himself, help loving him. ‘There is something in him,’ he writes to his wife, ‘apart from his genius, which moves me in spite of myself when his eye catches mine,’ and it is this involuntary fascination, his daughter tells us, which would have prevented him not only from betraying Napoleon, but from rallying to the Bourbons. Even his mother, Royalist as she was, knew this.

‘Ah!’ she would exclaim in after years; ‘if my poor Maurice had been alive he would certainly have found death at Waterloo or beneath the walls of Paris, or if he had escaped there, he would have blown out his brains at seeing the Cossacks marching through the gates.’

But in the springtime of 1811, none of the dark days so near at hand were throwing their shadows over France. ‘His Majesty the King of Rome’ was only a few weeks old, and the sound of the hundred-and-one guns which had greeted his birth were still ringing in the ears of Aurore, who had heard them in Paris. No doubt she often talked to her friend Ursule and her half-brother Hippolyte, both then at Nohant, of the excitement of the people in the streets of Paris when she walked through them with her mother, for Aurore was a child who noticed things and also remembered them; but soon the life of the country absorbed her, and besides, there were her lessons to do. Old Madame Dupin taught her music, which they both loved, and from M. Deschartres — who had lived at Nohant for years and years and was a little of everything — she learnt grammar, and, much against her will, Latin too, as Deschartres thought it would be of use to her in understanding and speaking French. He was perfectly right, but even as a middle-aged woman Aurore protests that the time spent in such studies was wasted, for at the end of years children knew nothing about them.

What would she have said if she had known of the seven or eight extraordinarily difficult and different languages which the little Austrian Archdukes learnt to speak and write correctly while they were still children? Luckily Aurore loved books, though she preferred to choose them for herself, and she knew a good many curious things which she would never have learned from any tutor.

Poor M. Deschartres did not have an easy time with his three pupils Aurore, Hippolyte, and Ursule. He was rather a dandy and was very particular about his shoes, and walked always with stiff knees and toes turned out. One day Hippolyte took it into his naughty head to prepare a ‘booby trap’ for his tutor, of a kind very popular with the village children. He dug, right in the middle of Deschartres’ favourite walk, a hole filled with fine liquid mud and concealed by sticks crossed on the top, and covered with earth scattered over with dead leaves, collected by Aurore and Ursule. They were old hands at this game, and many a time had the gardener or the peasants fallen victims to it, but this was the first occasion on which they had been bold enough to try it on M. Deschartres.

Walking a little in front, in his accustomed manner, his head up, his hands behind him, he proceeded down the path, the children following with dancing eyes. Suddenly plop, a splash, and a stagger! and M. Deschartres was seen pulling himself up on the other side, but without his beautiful shoes, which had stuck in the mud. Hippolyte pressed forward, his face expressing surprise and horror at such a misfortune, and the tutor, easily taken in, turned angrily upon the little girls, who ran away shrieking with laughter. They knew they would get nothing worse than a scolding, whatever they did, whereas a beating, and a bad one, would be the certain fate of Hippolyte.

Deschartres, as has been said, performed the duties of a steward of the estate, as well as those of tutor to the children, and on one occasion he left Nohant quite early in the morning to superintend the sale of some cattle at a neighbouring fair. Hippolyte always did his lessons in the room of the great man, and it occurred to him that it would be fun to play at being the great man himself. So without more ado he pulled out of the wardrobe a hunting-coat, which reached to his heels, took a hunting-cap from a peg, and marched up and down with his toes turned out and his hands behind his back, in exact imitation of M. Deschartres, the little girls watching it all from a corner. He next approached the blackboard, and began to draw some figures with a piece of chalk, stopped in the middle, stammered and grew angry, abusing his pupil for being a doll and a blockhead. When he was satisfied that he could really imitate the voice and manner of his master, he went to the window and found fault with the gardener’s way of pruning trees, threatening in loud tones to inform Madame of his stupidity. The gardener, standing a little distance off, fell into the trap and defended himself sulkily, but what was his surprise when he lifted his eyes and beheld the true Deschartres standing a few paces from him, but out of sight of his copy at the window? The tutor may possibly have been amused at the imitation, but he was not the man to allow his dignity to be tampered with. He noiselessly mounted the staircase to his room, to find Hippolyte with his back turned, saying, in a loud voice, to an invisible pupil at the table:

‘What is the good of expecting you to work? You write like a cat and spell like a porter. Perhaps this will wake you up a little’ — and here there was the sound of a smack— ‘you lazy little dog.’

And for the spectators the scene was at this moment doubled, and while the false Deschartres was boxing the ears of an imaginary Hippolyte, the real Hippolyte was having his ears boxed by the true Deschartres.

There is no doubt, Aurore tells us in after years, that Hippolyte was really very ill-treated by his tutor, and lacked the courage to stand up to him, or even to complain to his grandmother. On the other hand, it is not to be denied that the boy displayed the most amazing ingenuity in showing up the absurdities of Deschartres. Often, during lesson hours, Deschartres would be obliged hurriedly to leave his pupils to attend to something which had gone wrong in the house or the farm. Then Hippolyte would instantly seize his master's flageolet and play it with all the airs and graces assumed by Deschartres. Ursule on her side, who worked steadily as long as her tutor was present, grew perfectly wild when they were left to themselves. She climbed over the furniture, played ball with Deschartres' slippers, flung about his clothes, and mixed together all the little bags of seeds that he had put aside for experiments in the garden. In this sport she was joined by Aurore, and together they shuffled the pages of manuscripts which he had received from learned men of the Society of Agriculture. It is strange that, with all his experience of his pupils, Deschartres never suspected that they were the authors of these misfortunes, and, still more, that he did not lock up his treasures. But as Aurore makes no mention of discovery or whippings, we must suppose they did not receive the punishments they richly deserved.

As the winter drew near, old Madame Dupin began to consider the question of their move to Paris, and what was to be done with the children. At length she decided that Hippolyte must be sent to school there, and that he should make the journey on horseback in company with M. Deschartres. As we know, Hippolyte loved to run wild, and was not anxious to lose his freedom and be shut up in a French school (which was much stricter than an English one), but all possible future pains were forgotten in the fact that if he rode he *must* have a pair of high boots — for long the object of his dearest ambition. *How* he pined for them may be guessed from the fact that he had tried when at Nohant to make some for himself. He had found an old pair of his tutor's, which he fancied might form the upper part, while he expected to get the foot-soles out of a large piece of leather — probably once the apron of a 'chaise' — that he picked up in the stables. For four days and nights the boy worked, cutting, measuring and sewing, till he succeeded in producing a pair of shapeless objects, worthy of an Esquimaux, which split the first day he wore them.

'Never,' writes his sister thirty years after, 'never did I see anybody so entirely happy as Hippolyte when the shoemaker brought him home *real* riding-boots with heels clamped with iron, and tiny holes to receive the spurs. The prospect of the journey to Paris — the first he had ever taken — the joy of performing it on horseback, the idea of getting rid of Deschartres, all were as nothing in the light of those boots. Even now,’ she continues, ‘he will tell you himself that his whole life did not contain a joy to compare with the joy of that moment. “Talk of a first love!” he would cry; “*my* first love was a pair of boots.”’

We may be quite sure Hippolyte did not allow his friends to forget the treasure which had come into his possession. To Aurore, in particular, he showed them so often, displaying their special excellences and calling on her to admire them, that at last they haunted her dreams. The evening before their departure he drew them proudly on, and never took them off till he reached Paris! But even so, he could not sleep. Not that he was afraid of his spurs tearing the sheets, but of the sheets dimming the brilliance of his boots. By midnight he was so distracted at this terrible prospect that he got out of bed and went into Aurore’s room to examine them by the light of her fire. Aurore’s maid, who slept next door, tried to make him go away, as she said they would all have to be up early next morning and would be very tired before they finished their journey. But she need not have troubled herself; Hippolyte did not pay the slightest attention to her, but merely woke up Aurore to ask her opinion about the boots, and then sat down before the fire, not wishing even to sleep, as that would be to lose some minutes of exquisite joy. At length, however, fatigue got the better of him, and in the morning when the maid came to wake Aurore, she found Hippolyte stretched on the floor in front of the hearth, unconscious of everybody and everything — even of his boots.

AURORE AT PLAY

When Aurore Dupin went to Paris she found herself in the Rue Thiroux, where Madame Dupin had taken a suite of rooms, or, as the French say, an ‘appartement.’ For this ‘appartement’ the old lady paid a high rent — more than she could afford, indeed; but she clung to the ancient custom of a flat with a large drawing-room, where the friends of the host and hostess could meet once or twice a year. During the rest of the time it was kept shut, and all but rich and fashionable people lived in their bedrooms. As Madame Dupin never gave parties at all, she might have done without the *salon* and housed herself for half the price, but that she would have thought beneath her dignity, and would have starved first.

Though Ursule was left behind at Nohant, Aurore had other playfellows, with one of whom, Pauline de Pontcarré, she did lessons. Pauline was a very pretty little girl, much less heedless than Aurore, and less in the habit of losing her gloves and dropping her handkerchief. Madame Dupin was always praising her for being so well brought up, and wishing that Aurore had such nice manners; but instead of this making Pauline hated by her new friend, Aurore admired her beauty and was quite fond of her. Three times a week they had lessons together at Madame Dupin’s in music, writing, and dancing. The dancing-master came direct from the opera, and was one of the best in Paris; the writing-master was also a person of high reputation, but unluckily he was of opinion that a graceful attitude at a desk was of more importance than a clear hand, and Aurore soon became very impatient with his teaching.

On the other three days Madame de Pontcarré (who, unlike Madame Dupin, loved walking) came to fetch Aurore to her own house, where Pauline was awaiting them.

It was Madame de Pontcarré herself who taught them geography and history by a method invented by the Abbé Gaultier that was much in fashion at that period. It sounds as if it must have been like those used in the kindergartens to-day, for everything was a sort of game, and played with balls and counters. But best of all the hours spent at Madame de Pontcarré’s were those when Aurore sat and listened to her friend singing and playing, or learned from her some of the principles of musical composition. This was even a greater joy than the romps with Pauline’s cousins in a big garden in the Rue de la Victoire belonging to Madame de Pontcarré’s mother, where there was plenty of room for blindman’s buff, or for the game known in Scotland as ‘tig.’ In this game — *barres* was the French name — the children were formed into two camps, the object being to take as many prisoners as possible. Sometimes they all dined together and afterwards the dining-room was cleared out, and they played games in which their mothers or even the servants joined. How horrified old Madame Dupin would have been at the noise they made! She would not have thought them at all ‘well brought up.’

Aurore gives a very funny account of the way in which Hippolyte danced, for he lived at home and only went to school for certain classes. It was all very well for him and Aurore to laugh secretly when M. Gogault, the dancing-master, entered the room ‘like a zephyr cutting a caper’; but it was M. Gogault’s turn to smile when Hippolyte, who was more heavy and awkward than it was possible to imagine, nearly brought down the house when he did his steps, and shook the walls in his attempts to *chasser*. If he was told to hold his head up and not to poke, he took his chin in his hand, and kept it there all the time he was dancing. And all this he did with the utmost seriousness, and with no idea of being troublesome. But at school he only got into mischief, and when the whole Dupin family returned to Nohant in the spring, it was thought best for Hippolyte to go with them.

It was there during the next few months that, in the intervals of play and laughter, Aurore first paid attention to the conversation of her elders as to the result of the Russian campaign and the future of France. Nowadays it seems to us almost impossible to believe that for a whole fortnight no news was received of the French Army of 300,000 men, and still more that Napoleon, ‘the man who filled the universe with his name and Europe with his presence,’ should have disappeared like a pilgrim lost in the snow. At Nohant no one spoke of anything else, till one night this child of eight, who had silently brooded over the words of her elders, had a curious dream, so clear that it was almost a vision. She felt herself hovering in the air above endless white plains, with the wandering columns of the vanished army straggling they knew not where, and guided them towards France. When she awoke she was as tired and hungry as if she had taken a long flight, and her eyes were still dazzled by the snow.

In the summer of 1813 — the year of the victories of Lutzen, Bautzen, and Dresden — prisoners of war were sent to all parts of the country, many of them not even under a guard. The first prisoner that the children noticed was an officer sitting on the steps of a little pavilion at the end of their garden. His shoes were dropping to pieces though his coat and shirt were of the finest material, and in his hand he held the miniature of a woman suspended from his neck by a black ribbon, which he was examining sadly. They both felt awed — they did not know why — and were afraid to speak to him. But in a moment his servant came up, and the two went away silently together. After that, such numbers passed by that the peasants paid no attention to them, and even Aurore and Hippolyte speedily grew accustomed to the sight. One morning, in spite of the stifling heat, they were again playing near the pavilion, when one of these poor wretches passed and flung himself wearily on the steps. He was a German with a simple good-natured face, and the children went up and spoke to him, but he only shook his head and answered in French, 'me not understand.' Then Aurore made signs to ask if he was thirsty, and in reply the man pointed to some stagnant water in the ditch. They contrived to convey to him by violent head-shakings that it was not good to drink, and, further, that he must wait a minute and they would get him something. As fast as they could, they ran to the house and brought back a bottle of wine and some bread, which he swallowed. When he had finished, and felt better, he held out his hand repeatedly and they thought he wanted money. Not having any themselves, Aurore was going to ask her grandmother for some, but the German, guessing her intention, stopped her, and made signs that he only desired to shake hands. His eyes were full of tears, and he was evidently trying hard to say something. At last he got it out: 'Children very good.'

Filled with pity they ran back to tell Madame Dupin, who, remembering how her own son had been taken prisoner by the Croats, gave orders that every day a certain number of bottles of wine and loaves of bread should be placed in the pavilion for the use of these unfortunate Germans. Every instant of freedom that Hippolyte and Aurore could get was spent in that pavilion, handing slices of bread and cups of wine to the weary creatures sitting on the steps, who were so gentle and grateful for the unexpected help. Sometimes, when three or four arrived together, they would sing to their little hosts some of their national songs before they left. Their talent for singing and dancing gained them friends all through the country, and now and then gained them wives also.

The troubled years from 1814 to 1817 passed away and Aurore remained at Nohant with her grandmother, who was constantly growing more and more helpless from a stroke of paralysis. Aurore was left very much to herself, but studied music under the organist of the neighbouring village, learnt history and geography, and read Homer and Tasso in translations. But her real life was the one she created for herself, presided over by a mystic personage to whom she gave the name of Corambé. In her mind, he represented all that was kind and pitiful, and in the thickness of a wood in the corner of the garden she made him a temple. That is to say, she decorated the trees which stood about a round green space, with coloured pebbles, fresh moss, or anything else she could find. A sort of altar was next put together at the foot of a large maple from whose boughs hung wreaths of pink and white shells, while trails of ivy reaching from one tree to another formed an arcade. Empty birds' nests, chaplets of flowers and moss were soon added, and when the temple was done it seemed so lovely to the child that often she could hardly sleep at night for thinking of it.

It is needless to say all would have been spoilt for Aurore had the 'grown-ups' guessed at the existence of her precious temple or of Corambé. She took the greatest care to pick up her shells and the fallen birds' nests as if she really hardly knew what she was doing, and was thinking of something else all the time. Never did she enter the wood except when alone, and then from a direction different from that which she had taken before.

When the temple was ready, it was necessary to know what the sacrifice was to be. Nothing dead should be offered to Corambé. Of that she was certain. Then if no dead sacrifice was to be laid before him, why should he not become the champion and deliverer of living objects in danger of death? So Liset, a boy older than herself and her faithful follower, was ordered to catch birds and butterflies and even insects in the fields, and carry them to her, unhurt. What she was going to do with them, he neither knew nor cared, for Aurore had kept her secret well. Great would have been his surprise had he known that daily these captive swallows, redbreasts, chaffinches, or dragon-flies were borne tenderly to the altar of Corambé, and there set free. If one happened to perch for an instant on a branch above her head before disappearing into the blue, a thrill of ecstasy ran through the priestess.

But one day Liset, who had been sent to look for her, caught sight of her white frock as she was entering the wood. And with his words:

'Oh, ma'mselle, what a pretty little altar!' the spell of her story was broken, and it is a spell that can never be cast twice.

Aurore, however, did not always have dryads and cherubs and wonder-working spirits for company; Hippolyte would not have allowed anything of the sort, for he liked Aurore to be with him, whatever he was doing. They had many friends too, both boys and girls, with whom they climbed trees, played games, and even kept sheep, which means that they did not keep them at all, but let them trample down the young wheat in the fields or eat it, if they preferred, while they themselves were dancing. If they were thirsty, they milked the cows and the goats; if they were hungry they ate wild apples or made a fire and cooked potatoes. Aurore's particular favourites were two girls called Marie and Solange, daughters of a small farmer, and whenever she could get away she ran up to the farm, and helped them seek for eggs, pick fruit, or nurse the sickly little lambs. And apart from the pleasure the others took in all this, Aurore found one of her own, for the orchard became transformed by her fancy into a fairy wood, with little creatures having sharp ears and merry eyes peeping from behind the trees. Then her dreams would be roughly dispersed by Hippolyte's voice, summoning her to the most delightful of all the games they ever played, which was to jump from some high place into the mountain of sheaves piled up in the barn.

'I should like to do it now, if I dared,' says Aurore thirty years after.

At length it occurred to Madame Dupin that Aurore was thirteen, and needed better teaching than M. Deschartres could give her, and, still worse, that the child was running wild, that her complexion was getting ruined, and that if she was ever to wear the thin elegant slippers worn by other young ladies, she must grow accustomed to them before the *sabots*, or wooden shoes worn by the peasants, had spoilt her for everything else. She wanted, in fact, proper training, so her grandmother was going to take her to Paris at once, and to place her in a convent.

'And shall I see my mother?' cried Aurore.

'Yes; certainly you will see her,' replied Madame Dupin; 'and after that you will see neither of us, but will give all your time to your education.'

Aurore did not mind. She had not the slightest idea of the life she would lead in the convent, but it would at any rate be something new. So, 'without fear, or regret, or repugnance,' as she herself tells us, she entered the 'Couvent des Anglaises,' where both Madame Dupin and her own mother had been imprisoned during the Revolution. This, of course, gave the convent a special interest for Aurore.

The Couvent des Anglaises was the only remaining one of three or four British religious houses which had been founded in Paris during the time of Cromwell, and as a school, ranked with the convents of the Sacré-Cœur and of l'Abbaye-aux-Bois. Queen Henrietta Maria used often to come and pray in the chapel, and this fact rendered the Couvent des Anglaises peculiarly dear to English royalists. All the nuns were either English, Scotch, or Irish, and nearly all the girls — at least, when Aurore went there — were subjects of King George also. As it was strictly forbidden during certain hours of the day to speak a word of French, Aurore had every possible chance of learning English. She learnt, too, something about English habits, for the nuns drank tea three times a day, and invited the best behaved of the girls to share it with them. All was as English as it could be made. In the chapel were the tombs bearing English texts and epitaphs, of holy exiles who had died abroad. On the walls of the Superior's private rooms hung the portraits of English princes and bishops long dead, among whom Mary Queen of Scots — counted as a saint by the nuns — held the central place. In fact, the moment the threshold was crossed, you seemed to have crossed the Channel also. The Mother Superior at the date of Aurore's entrance was a certain Madame Canning, a clever woman with a large experience of the world.

Like many children brought up at home, Aurore had read a great deal in her own way, but was very ignorant of other subjects familiar to girls younger than herself, who had been educated at school. This she was well aware of, so it was no surprise to her, though a disappointment to her grandmother, when she was confided by the Superior to the pupils of the second class, whose ages varied from six to thirteen or fourteen. Aurore was never shy and did not in the least mind being stared at by thirty or forty pairs of eyes, and at once set out to explore the garden and examine everything in company with one of the older girls, in whose charge she had been put. When they had visited every corner, they were called to play at 'bars,' and as Aurore could run like a hare, she soon gained the respect of her schoolfellows.

The three years passed by Aurore in the Couvent des Anglaises were, she tells us, happy ones for her, though almost without exception her schoolfellows were pining, or thought they were, for their homes and their mothers. But after the free life and country air of Nohant the confinement and lack of change tried her, and for a while she grew weak and languid. Twice in every month the girls were allowed to spend the day with their friends, and on New Year's Day they might sleep at home. Of course, in the summer there were regular holidays, but Madame Dupin decided that Aurore had better stay at school and learn all she could, so by that means she might finish the regular course earlier than usual, and save money. It was then the custom of all schools both in England and France to keep the girls under strict watch, and never permit them to be one moment alone. The garden was very large, and Aurore at least would have been perfectly content to remain in it, had not such elaborate precautions been taken to prevent the girls even seeing through the door when it was opened, into the dull street outside. These precautions enraged the others, and only made them eager for glimpses of a passing cab or a horse and cart, though on their days of freedom they would walk through the most brilliant parts of Paris with their parents, and never trouble to turn their heads. But Aurore was only amused at what irritated them, and felt, for her part, that

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage.

It was foolish, she thought, to make so much fuss about nothing; but after all, what did it matter?

Now both the big and little classes had divided themselves into three camps: the ‘good’ girls, who would probably one day become nuns; the ‘demons,’ or rebels, who were always inventing some new kind of mischief; and the ‘idiots,’ who were afraid to take sides. These profoundly despised by the rest, would shake with laughter over the pranks of the ‘demons,’ but put on a solemn face at the appearance of one of the mistresses, and hastened to cry at the approach of danger: ‘It was not I!’ ‘It was not I!’ unless they went further and exclaimed, ‘It was Dupin,’ or ‘it was G.’ ‘Dupin’ was Aurore, and ‘G.’ a wild Irish girl of eleven, tall and strong and truthful and clever, but utterly unruly, and the terror of the ‘idiots’ of the younger class.

As soon as Mary G. discovered that Aurore did not mind being teased or being thumped on the shoulder by a hand which might have felled an ox, she felt that she had found a friend who would join in her maddest tricks. Aurore’s education in this respect was not long in beginning. The very next day as the mistress was handing round books and slates to the class, Mary quietly walked out, followed in two or three minutes by Aurore. Both girls went to the empty cloister, and began to talk:

‘I am glad you came,’ said Mary. ‘The others are always making excuses for getting away, and declaring their noses are bleeding or they want to practise, or some stupid old story like that. I never tell lies; it is so cowardly. If they ask me where I have been, I don’t answer. If they punish me — well, let them! I just do as I like.’

‘That would just suit me.’

‘You are a demon then!’

‘I should like to be.’

‘As much as I am?’

‘Neither more nor less.’

‘Accepted,’ answered Mary, giving Aurore a shake of the hand. ‘Now we will go back and behave quite properly to Mother Alippe. She is a good old thing. We will reserve ourselves for Mother D. Ah, you don’t know her yet! Every evening outside the class-room. Do you understand?’

‘No. What do you mean by “outside the class-room”?’

‘Well, the games after supper under the superintendence of Mother D. are dreadfully dull. So when we come out of the dining-room we will slip away, and not come back till it is time for prayers. Sometimes Mother D. does not miss us, but generally she is enchanted that we should run away, because then she can have the pleasure of punishing us when we come in. The punishment is to wear your nightcap all the next day, even in chapel. In this kind of weather it is very pleasant and good for the health, and though the nuns you meet cry ‘Shame! shame!’ that hurts nobody. If in the course of a fortnight you have worn many nightcaps, the Superior threatens not to allow you to go out on the next holiday, but she either forgets or forgives you at the request of your parents. When you have worn the nightcap so long that it seems to have grown on your head, you are locked up for a day. But after all, it is better to give up amusing yourself for a single day than to bore yourself perpetually of your own freewill.’

Aurore quite agreed with Mary’s reasoning, and found the time very long till supper. The whole school had meals together, and then came the hour of play before prayers and bed. The older ones went to their large and beautiful study, but the rest had only quite a little room where there was no space to play, so that they were thankful when the evening was over. In leaving the refectory there was always a certain confusion, and it was easy for both big and little demons to slip away down the ill-lighted passages to the dark side of the cloisters.

Here Aurore, with Irish Mary for her guide, found a number of girls assembled, each with something in her hand. One held a stick, another a pair of tongs, a third a poker. What could they be going to do? ‘Dupin’ asked herself. Something exciting, of course; but she never guessed that it would be her favourite game of ‘pretending.’ For all these strange weapons were intended for the deliverance of a prisoner who was hidden in a dungeon somewhere under the convent.

Certainly it would have been impossible to have invented a better place in which to hide any number of prisoners than the immense cellars and vaults and dark holes of all sorts, that ran underneath. The building itself was more like a village than a house, and, since its foundation, had been constantly added to and altered, so that it was full of irregularities and steps up and down and roofs at different heights, and passages which once led to something but were now blocked up. On one side of the garden, whose magnificent chestnut trees were the pride of the nuns, stood small houses in which lived noble ladies retired from the world, but free from vows. There was besides a very large vegetable garden for the use of the convent, which at this time contained about a hundred and thirty people. It was possible, if you stood on tiptoe, to snatch a glimpse through the grating of melons or grapes or feathery pinks, but the door was not easy to climb, and only two or three of the bolder girls had ever managed to penetrate into the enclosure and taste these forbidden joys.

The legend of the concealed prisoner had been handed on from generation to generation of school girls, as well as the terrors which were half a joy, that thrilled through them as they crept along the narrow passages, ending no one knew where — perhaps in the Catacombs, perhaps in the baths of Julian, perhaps outside Paris itself! Who could tell? Could life have any feeling more exciting in store than the sensation that at any moment your feet might meet the empty air, and that you might fall into one of those terrible pits common in castles of the Middle Ages, known by the evil name of *oubliettes* or holes of forgetfulness? And many of these dangers were not at all imaginary, whatever the 'prisoner' might be.

It was the knowledge of the heavy punishments that would fall on their heads in case of discovery that made it a point of honour with the demons to risk everything in order to explore this underground world. Very few, however, gained an entrance to these vaults during their school lives, and only then after years of patience and perseverance. The memory of these heroines was kept green, and their names whispered reverently 'to encourage the rest.'

In Aurore's day the question had come up again — the burning question of how to get into the underground world. Not by the main door which led to it, that was clear; for close by were the kitchens, where nuns passed continually! But if the main door was barred, there must be a hundred other doors or walled-up staircases, by which you could get there; and if these failed, there was always the roof.

Now, the very last thought that would occur to most people, if they want to penetrate into an underground passage, is to go first on to the roof; but then they are not school girls, and have forgotten all about these things, if, indeed, they ever knew them. To Aurore and her friends it was a matter of everyday knowledge that 'the longest way round is the shortest way home.' Had not Aurore sat breathless for days together over Mrs. Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*, and her companions lain awake trembling at the recollections of Scotch or Irish ancestral ghosts?

Why, even in the convent, where the great dormitories were filled with girls and the terrors of loneliness were unknown, did they not shudder sometimes in the dark in the certainty that they caught the echo of the sighs, the groans, the clanking of chains of the victim?

As to whether it was always the same victim who had to be rescued, or whether in every generation a fresh victim was somehow mysteriously supplied, nobody inquired and nobody minded.

On the never-to-be-forgotten evening of Aurore’s initiation into the company of the demons, she was conducted by the rest of the band into the oldest and most irregular part of the convent. At length they found themselves standing on a gangway with a wooden railing, ending in a little room, from which there was no outlet. By the light of their single taper they beheld a staircase below them, also with a wooden railing, and protected at the top by a strong oaken door. In order to get on to the staircase it was necessary to drop from one balustrade to the other — and the more experienced of the explorers strongly suspected that both of them were worm-eaten — while the staircase hung over black depths which no eye could penetrate.

It was an adventure which required a good deal of courage, but not one of the girls flinched. Isabelle, one of the oldest of the demons, claimed her right to go first, and accomplished her dangerous feat with the resolution of a heroine. Mary followed with the calm of a gymnastic professor, the remainder as best they could, but somehow or other they all managed to arrive safely on the staircase. At the foot was another little hall or room, without door or window or issue of any kind; but this, for some strange reason, caused the girls more joy than regret.

‘Certainly,’ they said, ‘nobody would make a staircase which went nowhere! There must be *some* way out and we have got to find it.’

So the little taper was divided into several parts and each girl began a careful examination of the walls, pressing the plaster, which they hoped might conceal a ring or a button that, if touched, would reveal an opening. What would have happened if a sudden blast had blown out their candles, they never thought, for they had no means of lighting them again; and, of course, none of the Sisters had the slightest idea where they might be. Happily this did not occur, and though the surface of the walls was perfectly smooth, Isabelle declared that when she tapped the part under the staircase it sounded hollow.

This discovery threw the whole party into a state of wild excitement.

‘We have found it at last!’ they cried; ‘this staircase leads down to the cell where living victims have been buried.’ They jostled each other so as to place their ears against the wall, but strange to say, in spite of their fervent wish, they were compelled to confess that they heard nothing. All, that is except Isabelle, who persisted in declaring that they must every one of them be deaf, as the sounds of groans and clanking chains were quite plain.

‘Then we must break down the wall,’ said Mary, ‘and the sooner we begin the better.’

In an instant the wall was attacked by the collection of arms the girls had brought with them. Tongs, pokers, shovels were all brought into play, but luckily without making any impression on the stones, which otherwise might have come rattling about their heads. Besides, the demons dared not make *too* much noise, for they were afraid of being heard, as they did not know exactly in which part of the convent they might happen to be.

Only a few pieces of plaster had fallen when the warning bell for prayers clanged through the building. How they contrived the upward climb from one balustrade to another, they never knew, and that they were able to do it at all was almost a miracle. Down they dashed along the passages, brushing the plaster from their dresses as they ran, and arrived breathless as the two classes were forming to enter the chapel.

During the whole winter they worked at the wall, but, persevering though they were, the obstacles encountered were so many that at length they decided it was sheer folly to waste more time on it, and they had better try to force an entrance by some other way.

There was a little room — one of many under the roof — which contained one of the thirty pianos of the convent, and there Aurore was accustomed to practise for an hour daily. From its window could be seen a whole world of roofs, penthouses, sheds, and buildings of all sorts, covered with mossy tiles, and most tempting to the adventurous. It seemed quite reasonable that somewhere amongst the buildings should exist a staircase leading to the underground passages, and one fine, starlight night the demons met in the little music-room, and in a few minutes they had all scrambled from the window on to the roof six feet below them. From there they climbed over gables, jumped from one incline to another, and behaved in fact as if they were cats, taking care to hide behind a chimney or crouch in a gutter whenever they caught sight of a nun in the garden or courtyard beneath them.

They had managed to get a long way downwards when prayer-time drew near, and they knew they must begin their return journey. As the Latin proverb tells you, it is easy enough to go *down*, but what about getting back again? And to make matters worse, the demons had not the slightest idea where they were. Still, they contrived to retrace some of their footsteps and at last recognised to their joy the window of Sidonie Macdonald, daughter of the general. But to reach this window it was necessary to spring upwards a considerable distance, and the chances of hitting exactly the right spot were very few. Aurore, at any rate, almost lost her life in the attempt. She jumped in too great a hurry, and very nearly fell thirty feet through a skylight into a gallery where the little class were playing. As it was, her heel struck against the glass, and several panes went crashing in their midst. Clinging to the window-sill, with her knees scratched and bleeding, Aurore heard the voice of Sister Thérèse below accusing Whisky, Mother Alippe’s big black cat, of fighting with his neighbours on the roof and breaking all the windows in the convent. Mother Alippe warmly denied that her cat ever quarrelled with anyone, and in spite of her wounds and her danger, Aurore burst into fits of laughter at the hot dispute, in which she was joined by Fanelly stretched in the gutter, and Mary lying in a ‘spread-eagle’ on the tiles, feeling about for her comb. They heard the nuns mounting the stairs, and discovery seemed inevitable.

Nothing of the sort, however, occurred. The overhanging gables preserved them from being seen, and as soon as they felt they were safe, the young demons began to mew loudly, so that Sister Thérèse proved triumphantly that she was right, and that the mischief *had* been caused by Whisky and his friends!

This being happily settled, the girls climbed at their leisure into the window where Sidonie was quietly practising her scales, undisturbed by the noise in the cat-world. She was a gentle, nervous child, who had no sympathy with a passion for roofs, and when a procession of demons entered her room she hid her face in her hands and screamed loudly. But before the nuns could hurry to the spot, the girls had dispersed in all directions, and, up to the end, the blame of the broken window was laid upon Whisky.

HOW AURORE LEARNT TO RIDE

When Aurore was old enough to leave the convent she went back to Nohant to live with her grandmother, who was failing fast and died the following year. Aurore was sixteen now, and things looked very different from what they did three years earlier. The trees were not so tall nor the garden so big as she remembered them; that was disappointing, no doubt. But on the other hand, what joy to do your hair as you liked without being told that no nice girl ever let her temples be seen; to wear a pink cotton frock instead of one of yellow serge, and to have as many cakes and sweet things as you wanted! Of course it had been terrible to part from your friends at the convent, but then at Nohant there were all those of long ago — and the dogs almost better than any friend! Then, too, it was delightful to be so changed that even M. Deschartres did not know you, and to be called ‘Mademoiselle’ by him and everyone else. At least it was delightful just at first, but soon it began to be tiresome to find the girls with whom you had climbed trees and played blind man’s buff treating you very much as they treated your grandmother. No; decidedly there were *some* drawbacks to being ‘grown up’!

For a few days Aurore ran about the country nearly as much as she had done in former years, but after a while she made plans for study, and drew up a time-table. History, drawing, music, English and Italian, had each its hour; but somehow when that hour struck there was always something else to be done, and Aurore’s books were still unopened when, at the end of a month, Madame de Pontcarré and Pauline arrived on a visit.

Pauline was just the same as she had always been; ‘growing up’ had worked no transformation in *her*. She was pretty, pleasant, gentle as ever, and quite as indifferent to everybody. Indeed, she was still exactly the opposite of her mother, who had played with Aurore’s father when she was a child, and in consequence was a great favourite with Madame Dupin. And now that Madame de Pontcarré was there, there was no more dreaming for Aurore. Instead, they all three took walks twice a day and studied music together. When they came in the evenings, they would sing airs from Gluck’s beautiful old operas ‘Armida’ and ‘Iphigenia’ to Madame Dupin, whose criticisms and judgment were as good as of old. They even acted a play or, rather, a proverb to amuse the old lady, who was nevertheless a little shocked to see her granddaughter dressed as a boy. After that the Pontcarrés went away, and perhaps it was as well, for Madame

Dupin was getting jealous of Aurore being so much with them.

Aurore would have been very dull without her friends had not Hippolyte, now a hussar, come back to spend his leave at Nohant. He was such a splendid person, rolling his *r*'s, making fun of everybody, riding horses which no one else would go near, that at first Aurore was quite afraid of him. But this soon wore off, and they were speedily on the old footing, taking long walks across country, and going off into fits of laughter at the silliest jokes.

'Now I am going to teach you to ride,' he said one day. 'Of course, I might give you the book of instructions that I am obliged to read to the poor young soldiers in the barracks, who don't understand a word; but it all comes to this — you either fall off or you don't. And as one must be prepared for a fall, we will pick out a place for your lesson where you can't hurt yourself much.' So saying he led the way to a field of soft grass, mounted on General Pépé, and holding Colette by the bridle.

Pépé was a grandson of the horse which had killed Maurice Dupin, and Colette (who was occasionally known as Mademoiselle Deschartres) had been trained — or supposed to be — by the tutor; she had only lately been brought into the stable, and had never yet felt a human being on her back. Of course it was nothing short of madness on the part of Hippolyte to dream of mounting his sister upon her, but the mare seemed very gentle, and after taking her two or three times round the field he declared she was all right, and swung Aurore into the saddle. Then, without giving either mare or rider time to think what was happening, he struck Colette a smart cut with his whip, and off she started on a wild gallop, shying and leaping and bounding out of pure gaiety of heart.

'Sit up straight,' shouted Hippolyte. 'Hold on to her mane if you like, but don't drop the bridle, and stick on. To fall or not to fall — that is the whole thing.'

Aurore heard and obeyed with all her might. Five or six times she was jerked upwards out of the saddle, but she always returned to it again, and at the end of an hour — breathless, untidy, and intoxicated with delight — she guided Colette to the stable, feeling that she was capable of managing all the horses of the French Army. As to Colette, who was as new to the business as her mistress, she also had experienced a fresh joy, and from that day till her death she was Aurore's faithful companion.

'Lean, big and ugly when standing,' writes Aurore, 'when moving she became beautiful by force of grace and suppleness. I have ridden many splendid horses admirably trained, but for cleverness and intelligence I have never found the equal of Colette. I have had falls, of course, but they were always the result of my own carelessness, for she never shied nor made a false step. She would suffer nobody else to mount her, but from the first moment she and I understood each other absolutely. At the end of a week we jumped hedges and ditches and swam rivers, for I was suddenly transformed into something bolder than a hussar, and more robust than a peasant.'

Curiously enough, Madame Dupin, so little given to exercise herself, was not in the least nervous as to Aurore's adventures, while Madame Maurice never beheld her on a horse's back without hiding her face in her hands and declaring she would die like her father. One day Aurore heard some visitors inquiring why Madame Dupin allowed her granddaughter to do such wild things, and the old lady in reply quoted with rather a sad smile the well-known story of the sailor and the citizen.

'What, sir! Do you tell me that your father and your grandfather both died at sea, and yet you are a sailor? In your place, I would never have set foot in a boat!'

'And your parents, sir? How did they die?'

'In their beds, I am thankful to say!'

'Then, in your place, I would never set foot in a bed.'

After Hippolyte's leave was over, and he had rejoined his regiment, Aurore was obliged to ride with M. Deschartres, which was not nearly so amusing; still, it was a great deal better than not riding at all. And as the months went on, the poor girl grew more and more dependent on the hours that she and Colette spent together, for it was quite plain that Madame Dupin's life was fast drawing to a close. She lost her memory, and though she was never really awake, she was never really asleep either. Her maid Julie, Aurore, or M. Deschartres were with her always, and as Aurore did not find the four hours of sleep which fell to her share enough to carry her through the day, she tried the plan of going to bed every other night only, and watching her grandmother on alternate ones. Very soon she got used to this mode of life, although sometimes even the nights spent in bed were broken. Her grandmother would insist on Aurore coming to assure her that it was *really* two o'clock, as Julie had told her, for she did not believe it; or whether the cat was in the room, as she was sure she heard it. The girl's presence always soothed her, and the old lady would murmur a few tender words and send her back to bed. If this only happened once in the night it did not so much matter; but when Madame Dupin had a restless fit, Aurore would be summoned two or three times over. Then she gave up the idea of sleep, and passed the night with a book by the side of her grandmother.

It was a sad and lonely existence for a girl not seventeen, and Aurore soon fell into melancholy ways, and had strange fancies. The companions she might have sought seemed years younger than herself at this time, and she was out of tune for their gaiety. In these days she had grown to have more sympathy with Deschartres than she could have believed possible, and she was very grateful for his devotion to her grandmother. So it came to pass that when one of the other maids could be spared to help Julie, Aurore and her old tutor might be met riding on the commons or fields that surrounded Nohant.

They were returning one afternoon after paying a visit to a sick man and took a road which ran along the banks of the river Indre. Suddenly Deschartres stopped.

‘We must cross here,’ he said. ‘But be careful. The ford is very dangerous, for if you go the least bit too much to the right, you will find yourself in twenty feet of water. I will go first, and you must follow me exactly.’

‘I think I would rather not try it,’ answered Aurore, seized with a fit of nervousness. ‘You cross by yourself, and I will take the bridge below the mill.’

This was so unlike the Aurore he knew that Deschartres turned in his saddle and stared at her in surprise.

‘Why, when did you begin to be a coward!’ asked he. ‘We have been over worse places twenty times, and you never dreamed of being frightened! Come along! If we are not home by five we shall keep your grandmother waiting for her dinner.’

Feeling much ashamed of herself, Aurore said no more and guided Colette into the water. But in the very middle of the ford a sudden giddiness attacked her: her eyes grew dim, and there was a rushing sound in her ears. Pulling the right rein she turned Colette into the deep water, against which Deschartres had warned her.

If Colette had plunged or struggled, nothing could have saved either of them, but happily she was a beast who took things quietly, and at once began to swim towards the opposite bank. Deschartres, seeing the girl’s danger, screamed loudly, and his agitation brought back Aurore’s presence of mind.

‘Stay where you are! I am all right,’ she cried, as he was about to put his horse into the river for her rescue, which was the more courageous of him, as he was a bad rider and his steed was ill-trained. He would certainly be drowned, she knew, and in spite of her words she was not very certain that she would not be drowned also, as it is not easy to sit on a swimming horse. The rider is uplifted by the water, and at the same time the animal is pressed down by his weight. Luckily Aurore was very light, and Colette was both brave and strong, and everything went well till they reached the opposite bank, which was very steep. Here Deschartres in an agony of terror, was awaiting her.

‘Catch hold of that branch of willow and draw yourself up,’ he cried, and she managed to do as he told her. But when she saw the frantic efforts of Colette to obtain a footing, she forgot all about her own danger and thought only of her friend’s. She was about to drop back again into the water, which would not have helped Colette and would have caused her own death, when Deschartres seized her arm; and at the same moment Colette remembered the ford and swam back to it.

Once they were all safe on land again, Deschartres’ fright showed itself in the abuse which he heaped upon his pupil, but Aurore understood the reason of his anger, and threw her arms round his neck and kissed him.

When her grandmother died, as she did during that year, and Aurore went to live with some relations, Colette went with her. They remained together till Colette died of old age, friends to the last.

LAND-OTTER THE INDIAN

On the North-West part of America, and especially near the sea, a great many tribes of Indians are still living, each with its peculiar customs and interesting stories handed down from one generation to another. The story which I am going to tell you now is a tale of the Tlingit tribe and is about ‘Land-otter,’ as the Indians called him, whose parents lived on the coast of Alaska.

That year the crop of maize had failed all through the country, and the people took their boats and went out to catch halibut, so that they might not die of starvation. Among them was a certain man and his wife who made a little house for themselves just out of reach of the high tides, and fished harder than any of the rest; but the halibut seemed as scarce as the maize, and the one or two fish that they caught in a week hardly kept them alive. Then the wife used to go to the beach at low water and look for crabs or shrimps among the pools in the rocks, but even so they grew thinner and thinner.

One night the husband came home with only one small halibut in his big fishing-basket. They were both very hungry and could have eaten ten times as many, but there was no good thinking of that, and the woman put part of the halibut in the pot which stood on the fire, and hung the rest of it outside in a shed.

‘At least, there shall be something for breakfast to-morrow,’ said she.

But when to-morrow came a strange noise was heard in the shed where the fish was lying, as if someone was throwing things about.

‘What *is* that?’ asked the wife. ‘Go and see who has got into the shed.’ So the man went, and beheld, to his surprise, two large devil-fish on the floor.

‘How *did* they come up from the beach?’ thought he. ‘But however they managed it, they will be very useful,’ and he hurried back to his wife and said to her:

‘We are in luck! There are two devil-fish in the shed; Whoever brought them, it was very kind of him, and now we have such good bait we will go out in the morning and catch some halibut.’ His face as he spoke was filled with joy, but the woman’s grew pale and she sat down rather quickly.

‘Do you know who brought them here?’ she said at last? ‘It was our son; it is a year to-day since he was drowned, and he knows how poor we are, so he has taken pity on us. I will listen at night, and if I hear anyone whistle I will call him;

for I know it is he.'

At dawn they got up and baited their lines with the devil-fish, and this time they caught two halibut. As soon as it grew dark and they could see no longer, they rowed back and pulled up their boat, and the woman went inside and threw one of the halibut into the pot. At that moment she heard a whistle behind the house, and her heart beat wildly.

'Come in, my son,' she said. 'We have longed for you these many months. Fear nothing; no one is here except your father and I.' But nobody entered; only the whistle was repeated. Then the man rose and flung open the door and cried:

'Come in, come in, my son! You have guessed how poor we are and have sought to help us,' and though neither the man nor his wife saw the son enter, they felt he was somehow sitting opposite at the fire, with his hands over his face.

'Is it you, my son?' they both asked at once, for they could not see. Again he whistled in answer, and the three sat in silence till midnight when the young man made some sounds as if he would speak.

'Is that you, my son?' asked the father again, and the son replied:

'Yes,' and made a sign, pointing outside the door, where more devil-fish were lying.

'In the morning we will go out,' he said in a strange voice, as if speaking was difficult to him, and his mother gave him a pillow and some blankets and he slept by the fire.

It was still dark when he took his father by the feet and shook him, saying 'Get up, it is time to fish,' so they fetched the line and dragged the canoe to the water's edge. When they were seated the son took a paddle, and he pulled so hard that they had reached the feeding grounds of the halibut in only a few minutes. After that he baited the hooks and fastened the end of the line to the seat.

'Put the blanket over you,' he said, turning to his father, 'and be careful not to watch me.' But the father *did* watch him through a hole in the blanket, and this is what he saw.

The son got up very gently so that the boat should not move, and, plunging into the sea, put the largest halibut he could find on the hooks. When no more were to be had, he returned into the canoe and shook it; his father perceiving this, stretched out his arms drowsily and inquired if they had had any luck.

'Pull in the lines and see,' answered the son, and as they pulled, one big halibut after another met their eyes. The canoe was soon full, and they paddled home again.

On the way back the young man who was standing at the bow with a spear in his hand threw it at a seal, which he dragged on board the boat, and killed it with a blow from his fist. But as soon as they touched the shore he looked at the sky and exclaimed that if he did not make haste the raven might cry before he could reach a shelter, and ran off up to the woods.

It took the father and mother all day to take out the halibut and cut them in pieces and salt them, so that they should always have something to eat. Darkness came on before they had finished, and in the evening their son was with them again. Then the father took some of the raw halibut and set it before him, first cutting it into small mouthfuls. He knew that drowned men did not like cooked food, and also that they did not like being watched. So he signed to his wife to say nothing when the son turned his back, and began to eat very fast, for he was hungry.

In this manner things went on for a whole week, and then his parents begged him not to go back to the woods to sleep, but to stay with them, which he did gladly. And every day before it was light, he woke his father and they went off to fish together, and each time the canoe came back full, so that at length they had great stores of food laid up in the outhouse.

At first, as we know, he was only a voice; then he would not let them see his face, but little by little his body grew plain to them and his features distinct, and they noticed that his hair had grown long and reached his waist. At first, too, he could only whistle, but now he could talk freely, and always was ready to help either his father or his mother, and she used to go with them in the boat whenever she had time, for she loved the fishing. Very soon, no longer fearing starvation, they packed up their store of food and placed it in the canoe and pushed off, for they were going back to Silka where they lived with their tribe. And as they drew near the landing-place, the woman beheld the shadow of her son’s hands paddling, and wondered to herself, for his hands she could not see.

‘What is the matter with my son?’ she asked her husband at last. ‘I can only see his shadow,’ and she rose to find out if he was asleep or had fallen into the water. But he was not in the boat, neither was there any trace of him. Only the blanket, which had been across his knees, remained in the bottom.

So they rowed on to Silka.

THE DISINHERITING OF A SON

Near a large town in England there lived in the last century a gentleman with his son and daughter. His wife died when her children were quite young, leaving a large fortune behind her, and in a few years her husband married again. Now, though the new lady of the manor had seemed gentle and amiable as long as she was a girl, she soon grew jealous of her stepson and his sister, and treated them very harshly and unkindly. She thought that anything was good enough for them, but that the moment she wished for anything she was to have it — quite forgetting that the money which bought her horses and diamonds belonged of right to the children. When she began to have babies of her own, matters grew worse, and as soon as her husband's eldest son declared that he wished to leave England and pass some years in foreign countries, the stepmother broke into a furious rage, and declared that he must stop at home, for there was no money to waste on him.

The young man saw that no help was to be expected from his father, who was always afraid of his wife's temper, so he said no more, but wrote at once to his own mother's brother to beg his assistance. This was at once given, and thus it came about that very soon Alexander started off to see the world.

In the beginning, the allowance which his father had agreed to make him was paid regularly, and as regularly the son wrote home to tell where he was and what he was doing. Then gradually the payments were delayed, for the stepmother had always some good reason why the money could not be forthcoming at that particular date, and at length they ceased altogether. And when the payments ceased, the letters ceased also.

For four years things remained in this state, but the stepmother was not idle. She intended in one way or another to work upon her husband till she had forced him to do as she wished, and this was to leave the estate to her own son, 'as it was quite certain,' she went on, 'that Alexander must be dead, or by this time they would have heard something about him.'

At first her husband would not listen to her, and many and frequent were their quarrels; but, as we know, 'the dropping of water wears away a stone,' and in the end he showed signs of giving way. His wife noticed it, and redoubled her efforts. 'If Alexander were alive,' she declared, 'it was unpardonable of him to have treated his father in such a manner, and that fact alone would make him worthy of disinheritance; and if he were dead, then, of course, her boy was the proper heir to the estate.’

Still, in spite of all her arguments, she could not entirely bend her husband to her will; and the utmost she could get from him was a promise that if he did not hear from his son in four years he would agree to her plan.

For the moment the wife felt that no more could be gained, but soon she began her grumblings afresh, and worried him so perpetually that at last he consented to reduce the time of waiting from four years to one. This was not done very easily, and many angry words passed between them, till one day the wife burst out in a passion that she hoped his son’s ghost would appear to him and tell his father that he was dead, and that justice ought to be done to his other children.

‘And I,’ cried the father, ‘only wish his ghost would appear before the year is up, and tell us that he is alive.’

It happened not long after that they were sitting one summer evening in the parlour, disputing over the same subject — for nowadays they never talked about anything else — when suddenly the wife became silent and started up.

‘Did you see that hand at the window?’ she cried. ‘There must be thieves in the garden!’

‘Thieves!’ he exclaimed, and rushed to the door, but he quickly returned, saying:

‘You have made a mistake; there is nobody in the garden.’

‘But there *must* be,’ she answered.

‘It was a ghost, then,’ he replied, ‘for no one could have got over the walls without my seeing him.’

‘I am certain,’ persisted the wife, ‘that I saw a man put up his hand to the window, and if it *was* a ghost, it was the ghost of your son, who came to tell you that he is dead.’

‘If it *was* my son,’ said the husband, ‘he is come to tell us he is alive, I warrant you, and to ask how you can be so wicked as to wish to disinherit him. Alexander! Alexander!’ he cried, looking towards the window. ‘If you are alive, show yourself, and don’t let me be vexed daily with tales of your death.’

As he spoke, the window flew open, and Alexander looked in. He stared angrily at his stepmother, who shrieked and fainted; and uttering the word ‘Here’ in a clear voice, the young man vanished.

Immediately her husband rushed outside and tried the doors leading from the garden into the stables and some fields, but found them all barred. Then he inquired of some men if anyone had passed, but they had seen no one.

After that he returned to the parlour, and seated himself in his chair, waiting till his wife had recovered herself.

‘What was it?’ she asked as soon as she could speak.

‘Alexander, without a doubt,’ answered he, and she fainted a second time, and was in bed for several days afterwards.

The husband hoped that the fright his wife had undergone would have put an end to her schemes, but as time went on she forgot her scare, and began to tease as of old. This so enraged the poor man that he threatened to summon Alexander again, to which the furious woman retorted by calling him a magician. Finally the quarrel was ended by the resolve to refer the dispute to some friends and to beg them to judge between them. The friends, when they had listened to what had passed, laughed at the wife, and said that all they could make of it was that her husband had cried out his son’s name, and that someone had answered ‘Here.’ In their opinion, that was all there was in the affair, and they advised the two to be reconciled to each other as soon as possible.

Of course, if the husband had possessed any sense he would have turned his wife’s fright to good account, but he was very weak and terribly afraid of her. He agreed after much arguing to sign the deed she wanted in the presence of two witnesses, saying as he delivered it to her:

‘You have worried me into this by your horrible temper, but I have signed it against justice and my conscience, and depend upon it, I shall never perform it, as I am satisfied in my mind that my son is alive.’

When four months had passed, and the year was up, the woman told her husband that the time was come to perform his promise about the estate, and to have the new deeds executed to settle it upon her son. Therefore she had invited the two friends who had helped them before, to dine with them the next night, and they would see that everything was done properly.

The following evening they were all seated round a table, which was covered with papers. The new deeds handing over the estate to the second wife’s son on the death of his father were read out and signed, and the wife took up the old deeds which had appointed Alexander heir to his own mother’s property, and tore off the seal. At that instant an icy, whistling wind rushed through the room, as if someone had entered from the hall and passed out by the garden door, which was shut.

Nothing was seen, but they all shivered. The wife turned pale, but, recovering herself, asked her husband what tricks he was playing now, to which he answered angrily that he knew no more about it than anybody else.

‘When did you last hear from your son?’ asked one of the gentlemen present.

‘Five years ago,’ replied the father.

‘And have you not written to him about this business?’ continued the gentleman.

‘No; for I did not know where to write to.’

‘Sir,’ said his friend earnestly, ‘I never saw a ghost in my life, nor believed in them; and even now I have seen nothing. But that *something* passed through the room just now was quite clear. I heard it distinctly.’

‘And I *felt* the wind it made as it passed by me,’ remarked another witness.

‘Pray, sir,’ said the first, addressing himself to the father; ‘have *you* seen anything at any time, or heard voices or noises, or dreamed anything about this matter?’

‘Many times I have dreamed that my son was alive, and that I had spoken with him, and once that I had asked him why he had not written to me for so long, seeing that I had it in my power to disinherit him.’

‘And what answer did he make to that?’

‘I never dreamt on so long as to have his answer.’

‘And what do you think yourself? Do you believe he is dead?’

‘No; I do not. I believe he is alive, and that if I disinherit him I shall commit a sin.’

‘Truly,’ said the second witness; ‘it begins to shock me. I will meddle with it no further.’ But at these words the wife, who had recovered her courage, exclaimed:

‘What is the use of talking like that? Everything is settled. Why else are we here? *I* am not frightened, if *you* are,’ and again she took up one of the old deeds, in order to tear off the seal.

Then the window flew open and the shadow of a body was seen standing outside, with its face looking straight at her face.

‘Here,’ said a voice, and the spectre vanished.

In spite of her boasted courage, the wife shrieked and fell in hysterics, and the two witnesses took up the deeds.

‘We will have no more to do with this business,’ cried they, and, taking up the new deeds which they had signed, they tore off their names, and by so doing these deeds became of no value, and the elder son was still heir to the property.

Four or five months later the young man arrived from India, where he had gone from Portugal soon after leaving home. The two gentlemen who had been concerned in the matter of the deeds, as well as his father, put many questions to him as to whether he on *his* side had seen visions or heard voices which warned him of the plots going on against him. But Alexander denied having received warning of any sort, ‘unless,’ he added, ‘you can so call a dream I once had — which was indeed what sent me home — that my father had written me a very angry letter, threatening me, if I stayed away any longer, to deprive me of my inheritance. But why do you want to know?’

THE SIEGE OF RHODES

When you are reading the history of the sixteenth century, you will notice that in Europe nearly the whole of that period was occupied by two struggles: the struggle of the Reformed religion against the Catholic Church, and that of the Christian world with the Sultans of Turkey.

When the century began, the Turks had been lords of Constantinople for fifty years, and were for a while busy with establishing themselves firmly in the capital of the Emperors of the East. Then, as in the days of Mahomet's successors nine hundred years before, they proceeded to look about for fresh worlds to conquer, when the Crescent should trample underfoot the Cross. In 1521, Solyman, accompanied by a vast host, marched northwards to Hungary, and after a two months' siege captured the town of Belgrade. This expedition was undertaken by the Sultan in obedience to the wishes of his father, who died before he could march there himself; but what the young man really longed to possess was the beautiful Island of Rhodes lying at a short distance from the coast of Asia Minor.

His councillors shook their heads when he told them of his plan. The city of Rhodes was the stronghold of the Brotherhood of St. John of Jerusalem and the Knights had seen to its fortifications. It *might* be taken, of course; still the loss of life was sure to be tremendous and the Sultan possessed other islands as lovely and fertile as Rhodes. No doubt he did; but it was Rhodes he wanted, so Solyman turned from his old councillors and listened to the advice of his brother-in-law, Mustafa Pasha.

The first step was to discover something about the town and its defences: how many men could be mustered on the walls, and what means the Knights had of providing against a long siege. For this purpose he despatched a Jewish physician greatly trusted by his father, to the island, with orders to pretend himself ready to become a Christian so as to find favour with the Grand Master of the Knights of St. John, and to lose no opportunity of making friends with the people by trying to cure their sick. These instructions were faithfully carried out by the Jew, who sent word to the Sultan that an important part of one of the city walls was being rebuilt, and that if an army could be landed before the work could be completed, the men would easily be able to enter the breach.

Now the Jew, of course, was fulfilling the task given him, and was risking his own neck in the accomplishment of it. But what can be said of the treachery of one of the Knights themselves who out of jealousy had bidden Solyman to besiege the town? This man, Sir Andrew de Merall, was a Portuguese and so highly thought of among his fellows that he had been named Chancellor of the Order. He expected, however, to be the next Grand Master, and when, on the death of Fabrice of Cacetto, Sir Philip de Villiers was chosen in his place, de Merall’s rage at being passed over was such that he could not control himself. The Knights did not pay much heed to his words; it was natural, they thought, that he should be disappointed, but he would soon calm down again. And so de Merall did, to all outward appearance, and no one guessed how black were his thoughts.

A pretext for his treason was soon found: it was easy for him to send over a Turkish prisoner to Constantinople, on the plea of the man raising money for his ransom, and instructing the Turk beforehand exactly what he was to tell the Sultan as to the condition of the city.

‘He will never find a better time,’ said the traitor, ‘seeing that the wall is now partly down and there is mischief among some Italian Knights. As to help from without, the Christian princes are busy warring each upon the other, and, if this should last, the town will be his without fail,’ which thing came to pass.

The Sultan took the counsel given him, and assembled a great fleet in all haste to bear his army through the Ægean Sea. In order to keep everything as secret as possible, he forbade his subjects to enter Rhodes on any pretence whatever. But the return of the Turkish spy and his friendship with de Merall was noted by all, and the Grand Master’s own men reported that a large army was being assembled in Turkey. Yet, in spite of these rumours, Sir Philip de Villiers did not disquiet himself. No Turkish host had ever captured Rhodes, and when the wall was repaired the defences would be stronger than before. And it was far more likely that the fleet was intended for the Adriatic, and meant either to attack Venice herself or some of her dependencies on the opposite coast. Still, in order not to be caught unawares, the Grand Master heightened the walls and deepened the trenches beyond them while he filled the storehouses with food, and the magazines with powder.

His precautions were received with scorn by the larger number of his Knights and most of the citizens. ‘Why, the town was already provisioned for a year or more,’ they said, ‘and no siege would last as long as that.’ But the day came when they lamented that the granaries had not been twice the size, and the magazines three times bigger, for a month before the surrender of the town food was hardly to be had, and ammunition had almost failed them.

Though no help was to be expected from the great nations of Christendom, and the Governor of Candia or Crete forbade his men to serve under the Grand Master of the Knights in Rhodes, Sir Philip de Villiers contrived by his energy to get in a large quantity of wine from the island. Besides this, he was greatly cheered by the kindness of a private gentleman from Venice, who not only brought over a ship laden with 700 butts of wine for their use, instead of selling his cargo at Constantinople as he had meant to do, but stayed and fought for them himself, and put all he had at their disposal. Night and day the Grand Master worked; he seemed to be everywhere at once, and to think of everything. Now he was in the powder magazine watching the officers serving out ammunition to the soldiers; now he was on the walls testing the strength of the repairs; now he was in the fields examining the corn and deciding what was ripe enough to be cut and brought in. When this was done he gathered into the city the people of the neighbouring villages.

Hardly was this accomplished when news arrived that the Turks were near at hand. Then the Grand Master ordered a muster of all the men capable of bearing arms, and began with the Knights, the flower of many races; and a splendid sight they were, in their scarlet tunics with a large white cross on the breast. To each he appointed his place, with his special duties, and next proceeded to the citizens and the strangers, giving them separate colours and mottoes, and forming them into companies. But at the most the defenders did not number more than 6,000, and who could tell how many the Turks might be?

On June 18, 1522, the Turkish fleet was sighted, and for the next fortnight it moved from place to place in the neighbourhood of Rhodes, till it finally cast anchor about six miles from the town and remained there till the end of the siege. Four hundred ships, large and small, were said to be assembled, and for a fortnight some of the galleys went to and from the mainland, returning with fresh supplies and more soldiers. Meanwhile the Grand Master left his palace and took up his abode near the part of the walls where he expected the fight to be fiercest. He had need of vigilance; for more to be dreaded than the enemy without were the traitors within, though as yet none suspected de Merall of treason. But many of the women slaves serving in the houses of the rich were Turks, who sought to help their countrymen. This was to be done by setting fire to their masters' houses at the moment of the first assault, in order to tempt the soldiers to leave their posts at the defences, to put out the flames. Luckily the plot was betrayed and the leader executed before any harm was done. The Turkish male slaves, on the contrary, were faithful throughout, and as they numbered 1,500 were of great importance, working hard in the trenches. The walls were divided into different portions, called sometimes after the kingdoms and sometimes after provinces of countries. There was the ‘gate of Italy,’ the ‘gate of Almaine’ or Germany, the ‘gate of Auvergne,’ the ‘gate of Provence,’ the ‘Walls of England and Spain’; and it was at these two walls that the first assault was directed. The Turks shot huge stones from their guns, and their engines cast them upwards into the air, so that they fell down with tremendous force into the street, but strangely enough they did little damage to anyone. Soon there arrived in Rhodes, from Candia, Captain Gabriel Martinengo and two other captains, all skilled in war, while the following day the young Sultan himself joined his fleet.

His presence inspired the army with fresh energy. The soldiers now began to take aim with harquebuses and ‘hand-guns’, and to erect mounds nearer the town as cover for their marksmen. They worked under a heavy fire from the besieged, and though many of them were slain, the hill they made grew steadily higher till at length it overtopped the wall of Spain and the gate of Auvergne by ten or twelve feet. The Christians, in their turn, rebuilt the walls with boards and trenches for cover, but not before numbers who could ill be spared had fallen victims to the fire of the Turks.

In spite of the hosts encamped before them, the courage of the defenders never failed, and for a time it seemed as if their strength would never fail either. Vainly did the besiegers build screens or ‘mantelets’ of wood or stones, behind which their soldiers could shoot in safety; a well-directed fire beat on them with such persistence that at length they got weary of constantly repairing, and moved their mantelets away to some other place. But though the Knights had won the day here, the number of the Turks was beginning to tell, as it was bound to do in the long run. It did not matter to them how many were killed, there were always plenty more to take their places, and at the end of a month the wall of England was cast down, and a breach was made in the wall of Spain. Gabriel Martinengo did his utmost to make use of these disasters and his guns fired through the breaches into the trenches, while he stationed men with harquebuses on the roofs of the houses. To this the enemy answered by throwing hollow stones into the town filled with that terrible Greek fire which it was said could only be put out by burying it under earth. Some of the wooden buildings caught, but on the whole, not much harm was done.

So passed August, and September brought a new terror to the besieged. The Turks were undermining the town, and countermines had to be prepared. The mine under the wall of England, however, was so well laid with gunpowder that when it exploded all the town felt the shock, and part of the wall fell into the trench, whereat the Turks leaped into the breach waving their banners and poured forth an incessant fire from their hand-guns. For three hours the battle raged; then the victory remained with the Grand Master, and the enemy retired, leaving a thousand dead upon the ground.

Again and again the assault was renewed upon one or other of the walls and gates. The fire of the besieged was so fierce that, brave as they were, the Turks often recoiled before it and had literally to be driven forward by their officers. Their loss was always much greater than that of the Christians, as must invariably happen in a siege; but, on the other hand, some of the best and most useful of the Christian Knights were killed by the enemy.

Throughout September the mining continued, and explosions were frequent. Sixty thousand Turks were now in the trenches all well armed, and it was easy for them to attack the walls in various places at once. On the 24th the famous Turkish band of Janizaries, led by their chief, fought their way into the bulwark of Spain, and planted their standards on the top. It seemed as if the capture of the town was inevitable, but the Grand Master on hearing of the peril hastened from his post at the gate of England, and put himself at the head of the combatants at the bulwark of Spain. The struggle lasted for hours, but at length the Turks gave way, and so many of them lay dead that you could not see the ground for the corpses.

From his tent Solyman had watched it all, and ‘was very sore displeased, and half in despair.’ He laid the whole blame of defeat on Mustafa Pasha, his brother-in-law, because, he declared, without his advice the siege would never have been undertaken. The Sultan even wished in his anger to put the unfortunate man to death, but was dissuaded from his purpose by the other pashas, on the ground that ‘it would comfort their enemies and give them courage.’ So Mustafa’s life was spared, and ‘that he might do something to please the Turk, as well for his honour as for to save his person, he was marvellously diligent to make mines at the bulwark of England.’

Had it not been for the traitors in the town who sent letters to the Sultan showing that it was impossible for the defenders to hold out much longer the siege would now have been raised. After three months of almost hand-to-hand warfare, in spite of mines that threw down the houses and breaches that had been made in the walls, the Turks did not seem any nearer their end. Even the Janizaries declared they would fight no more, and from the walls the Christians noted bodies of stragglers making their way towards the Turkish fleet.

Then one night an Albanian captive stole out to the enemy’s camp, bearing letters from de Merall and the other betrayers of their land and their religion, and the next morning the fire of the enemy was hotter than ever.

Early in October three successive assaults were made on the bulwark of England, but were beaten back at the cost of many lives, the Turkish soldiers vowing at last that no one, not the Sultan himself, should induce them to make another attack on a place so obstinately defended. Indeed, a mutiny nearly broke out among the troops. Some of all this was perceived by the Christians, and their hearts beat with joy. By command of the Grand Master a body of men went outside the walls while the guns above played upon the enemy, and cleared away the earth from the ditch beyond, bringing it back into the town where they flung it down inside the wall. And this, though they did not guess it, proved later one of the causes of their undoing. So busy were they, that they did not perceive that the Turks, having covered their trenches with boards, worked hard at boring a passage which came out on the other side of the wall under the barbican — a sort of small fortification — by which means they were able to gain the foot of the wall.

Therefore now, on October 17, the fighting began on the inside. In vain the Christians tried by every means to drive the Turks from the barbican; they could never be dislodged. Then Sir Gabriel Martinengo ordered, as a last resource, that the wall should be broken down so that these might be reached face to face, but when this was done the Christians were no nearer success. Three days after, the Turks fastened strong ropes, weighted with anchors, to the walls which had already been undermined; but the artillery, placed on the bulwark of Auvergne, cut the ropes and sent away the besiegers.

By this time all the slaves in the Christian army and many of the soldiers had fallen, and there was hardly anyone left to do the repairs or to carry the wounded to the Hospital within the city. It was evident to everyone that the end was not far off, and it was then, when things could scarcely be worse, that the sorest blow of all was dealt to the courage of the Grand Master. Hitherto the treachery of Sir Andrew de Merall had been totally unsuspected by him, but one day a servant of the Portuguese Knight was caught in the act of firing a cross-bow into the Turkish camp, with a letter tied to the shaft. Taken before the Grand Master the man confessed that it was not the first occasion by many that, at the command of his master, he had in like manner sent the enemy information of the condition of the town, warning them not to leave, as men, powder, and provisions were rapidly failing.

But cut to the heart though he was, the Grand Master had no leisure as yet to attend to de Merall; he ordered the servant to be locked up securely, and went back to the walls, which he scarcely ever left. The bulwark of England was now in the hands of the Turks, who were arranging a fierce assault on the wall of Spain. The last great battle took place on November 29, and for the last time the

Christians were victorious.

A few days after this a native of Genoa — probably a prisoner — came out of the Turkish camp to the gate of Auvergne and demanded to speak with someone in authority. When his request was granted, he inquired why the town, which could hold out no longer, was not surrendered, while there was yet time to get good terms from the Sultan. Thrice he made attempts to prevail on the Knights to listen to his proposals, but they would not, preferring rather to die at their posts. The townspeople, however, thought otherwise, and whispered together secretly at first, and then openly, that they would fain save their own lives and that of their children, seeing there was no further hope of driving away the enemy. And these murmurings soon came to the ears of the council, who laid them before the Grand Master.

While the assembled lords were talking over this weighty matter, some of the citizens knocked at the door of the chamber and, being admitted, ‘meekly besought the said reverend lord the Grand Master to consider the piteous and sorrowful state the town was in’, and to pray that if he would not surrender it, at least to send away their wives and children, or otherwise they would become slaves or be slain. ‘And the conclusion was, that if the said lord would not purvey, they would purvey for it themselves. That is, they would see to the placing in safety of their wives and children.’

The Grand Master heard them with a gloomy face, and dismissed them, saying, they should know shortly what was in the minds of the council to do. He then inquired of the Knight who had charge of the gunpowder how much there was left, and received for answer ‘not more than was needed to withstand two assaults.’ At that the Grand Master turned to Sir Gabriel Martinengo, who was Captain of the soldiers, and asked if the town might hold out or not, or if there were any means to save it.

‘Scarcely are there folk enough to move a piece of artillery from one place to another,’ answered he, ‘and it is impossible without folk to set up the repairs which every day are broken and crushed by the great, furious, and continual shot of the enemy.’

Very unwillingly the Grand Master was convinced that his cause was hopeless and that, as it was the wish of the people and of many of the lords also, a treaty must be made with the Sultan. ‘He took it most heavily and was more sorrowful than any of the others,’ writes the old chronicler, ‘for the business belonged very near to him.’

So a ‘sign’ was set upon the tower of the abbey outside the walls, and the two

Turks who came from the camp in answer bore with them a letter from Solyman to the Grand Master, offering, in case of surrender, to let all the Knights and the people leave the town with their ‘goods and jewels without fear of harm or displeasure of his folks. But that if the Grand Master would not accept the treaty none of the city should think to escape, but they all, unto the cats, should pass by the edge of the sword.’

The die had been cast by the council, yet even so the Grand Master could not bear to deliver up his trust, and seems to have sought to delay matters. Therefore he sent two of his Knights into the Turkish camp to beg an audience of the Sultan and to ascertain without a doubt that faith would be kept with the Christians.

The ambassadors were received courteously by two high Turkish officials, and a truce of three days was agreed upon, during which ‘the enemies came to our repairs and spake with our folk, and drank with one another,’ as enemies should after the battle is over. When the Christian Knights saw the Sultan, he repeated his terms, and informed them that at the end of the truce he must have an answer. He then dismissed them, giving each a garment of velvet and cloth of gold as a present.

Thus all was arranged for the yielding up of the city, when a most unexpected thing happened. Some of the very citizens who had been most urgent for the surrender now appeared before the Grand Master and the council, and declared that as *they* had not been consulted they would not consent to ceding the town, and they might as well die while defending it, for they were sure to be put to death anyhow.

In fact, they behaved more like a set of pettish children than like men, whose lives were at stake.

However much these words of the citizens may have chimed in with his secret wishes, the Grand Master’s reason told him that he had no right to take advantage of their folly, and all he would agree to was to send two fresh ambassadors to the Turkish camp, begging the Sultan once more to repeat his conditions and give them renewed guarantees.

Not unnaturally Solyman declined to be played with like this, and his only answer was to order an attack to be sounded at once. Refreshed by the three days’ truce the Turks fought harder than ever, and hour by hour pressed nearer into the town. Then the Grand Master summoned the citizens who had prevented the surrender, and said that as they were willing to die he was well content to die with them, and that a proclamation would be made throughout the town that every man should be at his post at the gates day and night, and that, if he left, instant death would be the penalty.

For a day or two the Rhodians were most zealous at the walls — especially after one had been hanged for desertion — but soon their hearts failed; they slunk away, and as it was not possible to hang everybody the Knights were left to defend the walls themselves. At length the Grand Master sent to inquire of the citizens why they had broken their word and abandoned their duty, to which they made answer that ‘when they had gainsaid the surrender of the town, they had been wrongly informed of many things. But that now the Grand Master might do whatever seemed good to him, only they prayed him to grant them the favour of sending two among them as ambassadors to the Great Turk.’

This time the negotiations took longer than before, and after rejecting the excellent terms Solyman had offered them in the first instance, the Christians were not in a position to demand anything more than their lives. The Sultan, however, was generous, and though his soldiers cannot be said to have kept completely to the conditions of the treaty, they confined themselves to pillaging the town, and offered violence to nobody.

Thus ended on Christmas Day 1522 the famous Siege of Rhodes, after it had lasted six months.

THE PRINCESS OF BABYLON

Belus, King of Babylon, thought himself the greatest man in all the earth, for his subjects were continually telling him so and he had no difficulty in believing them. It was very absurd, of course, but there is this to be said in his excuse, that though his ancestors had built Babylon thirty thousand years before, it owed its chief beauties to him. Belus it was who constructed the vast palace with its famous ‘hanging gardens,’ and planted with fruit-trees the park stretching from the Euphrates to the Tigris, everything being kept fresh and cool in that burning heat by means of canals and fountains which scattered their waters around.

But though Babylon contained much that was beautiful, the palace itself held the most beautiful and precious thing of all, the king’s only child, the Princess Formosante; and her father was prouder of her than of his whole empire put together. Still, with all his delight in his daughter’s presence, he knew his duty, and that now she was eighteen it was needful to find her a suitable husband. Yet, who was worthy of such a prize? One by one Belus passed the kings of the earth in judgment before him, and could not answer this question. Then he remembered that the oracle which had been consulted at Formosante’s birth had declared that only he who could bend the iron bow of Nimrod, the mighty hunter, should win the hand of the princess.

Well, since that was the decision of the oracle — which, of course, must be obeyed — matters became in one way a little easier. But, could Belus be mistaken? Had not the oracle said something else? Oh, yes! he recollected now that the arm which could draw the bow must overcome also the largest and fiercest lion ever seen in Babylon, and be the best, the cleverest, and the most splendid of men, and possess the rarest object in the whole universe.

And as one by one Belus recalled these conditions he sighed aloud, for where should he look for a son-in-law like that?

King Belus need not have been so anxious as regards suitors for the princess, for as an old song says:

‘Where maidens are fair, many lovers will come,’

and Formosante was very fair indeed. The fame of her beauty had spread far and wide, and soon the Court of Babylon received notice that the Pharaoh of Egypt, the Shah of India, and the Khan of Scythia — such were the names these nations gave to their rulers — were on their way to Babylon to ask the hand of

Formosante.

Preparations for the great event had to be made instantly, and that very day the place was marked out in the park for the erection of a marble amphitheatre capable of holding five hundred thousand persons. Opposite the amphitheatre was a high throne for King Belus and his daughter, and on each side, but a step lower, were those for the princes and nobles who might wish to see the contest. The seats for the three foreign kings were set a little apart.

The first to arrive was the King of Egypt, mounted on the bull Apis and followed by a train of eight thousand attendants; and scarcely had Belus bidden him welcome than the sound of trumpets announced the approach of the King of India, lying upon cushions in a gorgeous litter drawn by twelve elephants, and attended by a still more numerous company. The last to appear was the King of Scythia, riding a tiger as tall as the biggest horse from Persia. He had with him only a few picked warriors, magnificent men armed with bows and arrows; but the king himself was more imposing than any of his soldiers, and the Babylonians, as they looked at him, said to themselves: ‘Ah! there is no doubt who will win the princess.’

When they were all assembled, the three monarchs fell on their faces before the king and his daughter, and then offered the gifts they had brought with them. The present of the Pharaoh consisted of two of the finest crocodiles that could be caught in the Nile, two hippopotamuses, two rats, and two mummies, all of which caused the princess to shudder at their ugliness. In his hands he held the Book of Hermes, which his magicians assured him was the rarest treasure on earth.

The Shah of India brought a hundred elephants and a document written by the hand of Xaca himself; while the Khan of Scythia, who could neither read nor write, signed to his warriors to bring forward a hundred horses covered with skins of black fox fur.

As soon as the offerings had been made, Formosante bowed modestly, but did not raise her eyes or speak, for that was never expected of a princess.

‘Ah, why have I not three daughters!’ exclaimed King Belus, as he conducted his guests to their thrones; ‘then I could have made six people happy! Now here is the golden basin holding the lots which you must draw. The one who draws the longest, first pulls the bow.’

It was the Pharaoh who was the lucky man, and the master of the ceremonies stepped forward with the long golden case, bearing the bow of Nimrod. The Pharaoh was about to take it from him, when there suddenly appeared at the barrier which had been erected in front of the royal seats a young man mounted on a unicorn, with a bird upon his wrist, accompanied by a single attendant also riding on a unicorn. His face was fair and his hair shone like the sun, and altogether he was so different from the dwellers in Babylon that the five hundred thousand spectators in the amphitheatre rose to their feet in order to stare at him better; and suddenly they shouted with one voice: ‘He is the only man on earth handsome enough for the princess.’

Formosante heard and glanced up at him; then looked hastily down. The kings heard too, and grew pale.

At this moment the ushers approached the stranger and inquired if he was a king. The young man replied that he did not have that honour, but that he had travelled far to see whether the suitors who were to present themselves were worthy of Formosante, whose renown had reached even his distant country. By the King of Babylon’s orders, places were found for him and his attendant in the front row of the amphitheatre: his bird perched on his shoulder, and the two unicorns crouched at his feet.

Now all was ready: the master of the ceremonies, who had during this time been holding the case, took the bow from it to the sound of trumpets, and presented it to the King of Egypt. The Pharaoh, who had not the slightest doubt that the prize would fall to him, laid it for a moment on the head of the sacred bull Apis and stepped into the middle of the arena. The bow, though made of iron, *looked* flexible, and he fitted an arrow to the string with a light heart. But try as he would, he could not bend it; again and again he put forth all his strength, making such dreadful faces the while that shouts of laughter rang through the amphitheatre, and even the well-brought-up Formosante could not resist a smile.

Deeply hurt at his master’s failure, the Grand Almoner of Egypt hastened to his side.

‘Let not your Majesty,’ he said, ‘struggle further for this empty honour, which is after all only a matter of muscles and sinews. In the other tests you are sure to be victor. You will conquer the lion, for have you not the sabre of the god Osiris? The Princess of Babylon is to be the prize of the king who has given proofs of the greatest intelligence; and numerous are the riddles which you have guessed. Her husband must be the most virtuous of princes. Well, were you not the favourite pupil of the Egyptian priesthood? And do you not possess the two rarest objects in the world, the bull Apis and the book of Hermes? No; you are quite safe. There is no one to dispute with you the hand of the Princess Formosante.’

‘You are right,’ answered the king, and seated himself on his throne.

The bow was next delivered to the King of India, who spent fifteen days in vainly trying to draw it, and when he failed as hopelessly as the King of Egypt had done before him, consoled himself with thinking that the King of Scythia would fare no better than they.

But he was wrong. The King of Scythia had passed his whole life in shooting with bows and arrows, whereas the other two kings had only begun to practise when they heard of the conditions to be fulfilled by the husband of Formosante. When therefore the Scythian monarch grasped the bow, there was an eager rustle amongst the five hundred thousand in the amphitheatre. They leaned forward with straining eyes, and held their breath like one man, as they perceived a slight movement of the bow. The king’s heart beat high as he felt it quiver under his hands, but, pull as hard as he might, he could not bend it further. A sigh of disappointment swept through the audience, partly for him and partly for the princess.

‘At this rate she will never be married,’ they groaned.

Then the young stranger left his seat and went up to the King of Scythia.

‘Do not be surprised,’ he said, ‘if your Majesty has not been entirely successful. These bows are made in my country, and there is a certain knack in drawing them. You have won a greater triumph in bending it even a little than I should have done in drawing it altogether.’

As he spoke he picked up an arrow and, fitting it into the string of the bow, drew, without any apparent effort, the cord to his ear, and the arrow flew out of sight beyond the barrier.

At this spectacle a shout broke from half a million throats. The walls of Babylon rang with cries of joy, and the women murmured:

‘What a comfort that such a handsome young man should have so much strength!’ and waited with great interest to see what would happen next.

Well, this happened which nobody expected at all. The young man took from the folds of his turban an ivory tablet, on which he wrote some lines addressed to the princess, with a golden needle, telling her how jealous the rest of the world would be of the man who carried off the prize for which so many were striving.

To us who read them, they do not seem perhaps to fulfil the second of the conditions imposed, but the oracle knew that to the person whose eyes fell on them for the first time, they would appear to contain all the wit and wisdom of the world. So when the princess glanced at the tablet held out to her at the end of the bow, she felt that nothing more beautiful had ever been written, and the three kings looking on were rooted to the ground in astonishment and disgust.

Meanwhile King Belus, having consulted his magicians, declared that although neither of the three kings could bend the bow, his daughter must nevertheless be married, and that they would now go on to the next test, which was the slaying of the lion. The Pharaoh, who had been educated in all the learning of his country, replied that it really was too ridiculous to expect a king to expose himself to the fury of wild beasts in order to obtain a bride, and that though no one had a greater admiration for the princess Formosante than he, yet if he were slain by the lion, he would not be able to marry her any the more. This was quite true, and the King of India entirely agreed with him. Indeed, they went so far as to say that King Belus was making a jest of them, and that it would be necessary to bring large armies from their respective kingdoms in order to punish him. When between them they had dethroned him, they could then draw lots for Formosante.

Thus grumbling, they each sent off a messenger ordering a levy of three hundred thousand men to be raised without delay.

The King of Scythia, however, gave utterance to no complaints, but descended into the arena, a curved sword in his hand. Not that he was desperately in love with the beautiful Formosante; it was a passion for glory and for no woman which had brought him to Babylon, and when he saw that his two rivals had no intention of fighting the lion, he was filled with delight. He was not afraid of any lion that trod the earth; of course, he might not be able to kill it, and it might even kill him, but after all, a man could only die once.

The lion, when he rushed out from his cage, looked capable of swallowing all three kings at one mouthful, so large and fierce was he. But the King of Scythia stood firm and plunged his sword at the beast’s throat. Unluckily the point of it hit against his teeth and broke into splinters, and the lion, with a roar which shook the amphitheatre to its foundation, buried his claws deep in the thighs of his enemy. Another minute and all would have been over, had not the young stranger leapt to the king’s side, and, seizing a sword from the belt of an attendant, cut off the lion’s head at a single blow. He next produced a little box of ointment, which he begged the king to rub into his wounds.

‘It was only an accident,’ he said, ‘that prevented you from vanquishing the lion, and your courage is still as untarnished as if he lay dead at your feet.’

These words pleased the king even more than the ointment which was to cure his hurts; and full of gratitude he returned to his tent.

Left alone in the arena, the stranger turned to his attendant, and bade him wash the lion’s head in the stream that ran below the amphitheatre, and, when that was done, to take out the teeth of the beast, and put in their place diamonds of the same size, which he produced from his sash. As soon as all was ready the young man said to the bird which had remained perched on his shoulder: ‘Fair bird, I wish you to carry the head of this lion, and lay it at the feet of Formosante.’

So the bird carried the lion’s head, bowing himself low before her as he placed it on the ground, and the diamonds in the mouth shone so brightly that the whole court was dazzled with their brilliance. Indeed, the bird itself was hardly less wonderful, with his beak of coral and his claws of silver mixed with purple. No peacock possessed so splendid a tail, and though his size was that of an eagle, his eyes were gentle as well as piercing. The ladies crowded round him to pat his head and stroke his golden feathers, but though he was polite to them all, he would not be tempted away from the princess. Everyone agreed that they had never beheld anything like the grace with which he received the biscuits and pistachio nuts offered him by Formosante, or the elegant gestures with which he conveyed them to his beak.

Meanwhile Belus had been considering attentively the diamonds in the lion’s mouth and had made up his mind about the young stranger.

‘It is plain,’ he said, ‘that he is the son either of the King of China, or of that part of the world known as Europe, or of Africa, which is, I am told, on the borders of Egypt. At any rate, let a magnificent feast be prepared for him.’ At the same time, he ordered his equerry to ask the unknown, with all possible respect, who he was.

The stranger was about to answer, when there suddenly arrived on the scene a third unicorn ridden by a man very plainly dressed. He quickly dismounted and, addressing the victor, told him that Ocmar, his father, had only a short time to live and that they must start at once if his son wished to see him alive.

‘Let us go then,’ replied the young stranger; then turning to the king he added: ‘Deign, sire, to permit the princess to accept the bird which I am leaving behind me. They are both of them unique.’ He bowed to the king and to the spectators, and went down the marble steps to where his unicorn was waiting, but not before the equerry had obtained the information desired by Belus, and learned that the dying Ocmar was an old shepherd much respected in the neighbourhood of his home.

Nothing could equal the surprise of Belus and his daughter on hearing this news. In fact, the king refused to believe it, and desired the equerry to ride after the stranger at once, and find out more about him. But the unicorns went like the wind, and no traces could be seen of them, even from the platform of the highest towers.

Although the equerry had taken care that his words should be overheard by nobody but the king and the princess, yet somehow the news that the man who had fulfilled all the oracle’s conditions was only a shepherd’s son, speedily leaked out. For a long while no one talked of anything else, as is the way of courts — and other places — and it was generally held that it was a bad joke of the attendant’s, who ought to have known better. One of the ladies-in-waiting went so far as to explain that the word ‘shepherd’ might actually mean a king, because kings were set to guard their flocks; but she found no one to agree with her. As to Formosante, she never said anything at all, but sat silently stroking her bird.

King Belus did not know what to do, and as always happened on these occasions he summoned his council, though he never paid any attention to what they said, or would have said, had they not known it to be useless. He talked to them for some time and at length decided that he would at once go and consult the oracle as to his best course, and return to tell them the result.

When he entered the council chamber after a very short absence, he looked puzzled and crestfallen.

‘The oracle declares that my daughter will never be married till she has travelled all over the world,’ said he. ‘But how can a princess of Babylon, who never has stepped beyond the bounds of the park, “travel over the world”? It is absurd! indeed, if it were not sacrilege to utter such things of an oracle, I should say it was impertinent. Really, the oracle has not a spark of common-sense!’ and the council was of opinion that it certainly had not.

Although there was no triumphant bridegroom to grace the feast commanded by King Belus, it was held, as arranged, in the great hall where the turning roof, painted with stars, caused you to feel as if you were dining under the sky. Everything was on a scale of splendour never before seen in Babylon during the thirty thousand years of its existence; but perhaps the feast could hardly be considered a success, for the guests neither spoke nor ate, so absorbed were they in watching the incomparable manner in which the bird flew about from one to another, bearing the choicest dishes in his beak. At least, the only people who did speak were the King of Scythia and the Princess Aldée, the cousin of Formosante and scarcely less beautiful than she. To him, Aldée confided that it was she who, by law, should have been Queen of Babylon, but that on the death of her grandfather his younger son had usurped her father’s rights.

‘However,’ she ended, in answer to a question put by the King of Scythia; ‘I prefer Scythia with you to Babylon’s crown without you.’

There never was any mistaking what Aldée meant.

‘But I will avenge your father,’ cried the king. ‘In two days from now you shall fly with me back to Scythia, and when I return it will be at the head of three hundred thousand men.’ And so it was settled.

Everyone was glad to go to bed early after the fatigues of the day, and all slept soundly, except Formosante. She had carried the bird with her, and placed him on an orange-tree which stood on a silver tub in her room, and bidden him good-night. But tired as she was she could not close her eyes, for the scenes she had witnessed in the arena passed one by one before her. At length she could bear it no longer:

‘He will never come back! Never!’ she cried, sobbing.

‘Yes, he will, Princess,’ answered the bird from the orange-tree. ‘Who, that has once seen you, could live without seeing you again?’

Formosante was so astonished to hear the bird speak — and in the very best Chaldæan — that she ceased weeping and drew the curtains.

‘Are you a magician or one of the gods in the shape of a bird?’ asked she. ‘Oh! if you are more than man, send him back to me!’

‘I am only the bird I seem,’ answered the voice; ‘but I was born in the days when birds and beasts of all sorts talked familiarly with men. I held my peace before the court because I feared they would take me for a magician.’

‘But how old are you?’ she inquired in amazement.

‘Twenty-seven thousand nine hundred years and six months,’ replied the bird. ‘Exactly the same age as the change that takes place in the heavens known as the “precession of the equinoxes,” but there are many creatures now existing on the earth far older than I. It is about twenty-two thousand years since I learned Chaldæan. I have always had a taste for it. But in this part of the world the other animals gave up speaking when men formed the habit of eating them.’

‘I never knew they did speak,’ replied the Princess, deeply interested in spite of her woes.

‘Not know that they spoke? Why, the earliest fables all begin with the words “Once upon a time when beasts talked,” but that is long ago! Of course, many women still talk to their dogs, but the dogs determined not to answer them; they were so angry at being forced by whips to go and hunt their brothers.

‘There are besides many stories which allude to conversations with horses, and their drivers still speak to them, as you know, but so very rudely that the horses which once loved men, now hate the whole race.’

Formosante nodded her head; she had sometimes been shocked at the language of the Babylonian charioteers.

‘The land where dwells my master,’ continued the bird, ‘is perhaps the only one in the world where animals are treated with proper respect, and where, therefore, they consent to live happily with man.’

‘And where is that?’ asked the Princess eagerly.

‘It is in the country of the Gangarids beyond the Ganges that Amazan my master was born. He is no king — indeed I hardly think he would condescend to be one — and, like his countrymen, he is a shepherd. But you must not suppose him to be one of the shepherds such as those you know, whose sheep are usually far better dressed than themselves. The shepherds of the Gangarids own immense flocks, for it is considered one of the blackest crimes to kill a sheep — and their wool, as fine as silk, is sought after all over the East. The soil is so rich that corn and fruits grow for the asking, while diamonds can be chipped from every rock. They have no army and need none, for a hundred unicorns can put to flight the largest host that ever was assembled.

‘And now, Princess, if you are to travel as the oracle desires, will you not give me the happiness of guiding you thither?’

‘Oh ... really, I ...,’ answered the Princess.

The sun was already rising when the king entered his daughter’s room, and after receiving the respectful greetings of the bird sat down on her bed. He did not seem quite at his ease, but at length he informed her that as, greatly to his sorrow, the oracle had decreed that she was to go on a journey before her marriage, he had arranged for her to make a pilgrimage to Araby the Blest in company with numerous attendants.

To the princess, who had never been beyond either the Euphrates or the Tigris, the thought of a journey was enchanting. She could not sit still, and wandered out into the gardens with her bird upon her shoulder. The bird, for his part, was scarcely less happy than she, and flew from tree to tree in an ecstasy of delight.

Unluckily, the King of Egypt was strolling about the gardens likewise, shooting with bow and arrows at everything within his reach. He was the worst marksman on the banks of the Nile, and though he never by any chance hit what he aimed at, he was none the less dangerous for that, as he usually hit something else. In this way a stray shot pierced the heart of the flying bird, who fell, all bloody, into the arms of the princess.

‘Burn my body,’ whispered the bird, ‘and see that you bear my ashes to Araby the Blest. To the east of the town of Aden spread them out in the sun, on a bed of cinnamon and cloves.’

So saying he breathed his last sigh, leaving Formosante fainting from grief.

On seeing his daughter’s condition, King Belus was filled with anger against the King of Egypt, and, not knowing if the death of the bird might not be a bad omen, hurried as usual to consult the oracle. For answer, the voice to which he looked for guidance, declared:

‘Mixture of everything; living death; loss and gain; infidelity and constancy; disasters and happiness.’ Neither he nor his council could make any sense of it, but he was satisfied with having done his duty.

Formosante, meanwhile, had burned the body of the bird, as he had desired, and put his ashes in a golden vase from which she never parted. Her next step was to order the strange beasts brought by the King of Egypt to be put to death, and the mummies thrown into the river, and if she could have thrown their master after them she would have received some consolation! When the Egyptian monarch heard how she had treated his offering he was deeply offended, and retired to Egypt to collect an army of three hundred thousand men, with which to return and avenge the insult. The King of India promised to do likewise, and the King of Scythia (who had ridden off early that morning with Princess Aldée) might be expected back about the same time with another army of equal size, to regain his wife’s lost inheritance.

Thus when the King of Babylon awoke the following morning, he found the palace quite empty. This he would not have minded for he was tired of feasting, but his fury was great at the news that the Princess Aldée had vanished also. Without losing a moment he called together his council and consulted his oracle, but he only could extract the following words, which have since become famous throughout the world:

‘If you don’t marry your daughters, they will marry themselves.’

Now when the Egyptian king quitted the court of Babylon he left some spies behind him, with orders to let him know the road taken by the princess to reach Araby the Blest. Therefore, when after three days’ travelling she stopped at a rest-house for a little repose, she beheld, to her dismay, the King of Egypt following her. And worse than that: in a few minutes he had placed guards before every door, so that it was useless for her to attempt to escape him. For small though her experience of the world might be, Formosante was well aware that the Pharaoh’s vanity had been deeply wounded by his failure in the matter of the bow, and she knew she could expect no mercy.

Therefore, on receiving the king’s message that he craved an interview with her, the princess saw that her only chance lay in cunning, and, as soon as he began to speak to her, she knew she had guessed rightly. He addressed her very roughly, and told her that she was in his power; that he intended to marry her that evening after supper, and that it was useless for her to object as he had now got the upper hand.

Formosante pretended to be quite overcome by his kindness, and assured him that in secret he had been the lover she had always preferred, although she was afraid to say so. And she added, with her head hanging modestly down, that she would sup with him that evening with all the pleasure in life, and hoped he would deign to invite his Grand Almoner also, as he had appeared to her in Babylon to be a man full of wisdom and learning. Further, that she had with her some of the rare and precious wine of Shiraz which, she trusted, she might be permitted to bring for his Majesty's use.

So well did she act that the Pharaoh was completely deceived, and when the hour for supper arrived, he sat down to the table with his wounded vanity soothed and his good temper restored.

Anyone acquainted with the ways of princesses will not need to be told that Formosante not only drugged the wine set aside for the king and the almoner, but also the bottles which her maid distributed amongst the guards. The powder had been given her long ago by a magician in Babylon, with directions how to use it. 'If,' he said, 'you wish it to take effect at once, put in two pinches. If in an hour, one; if the next morning, a quarter of a pinch. Remember what I tell you; some day your life may depend on it.'

For reasons of her own, Formosante thought it better to get through part of the supper before the king and his guest became unconscious. The Pharaoh was just then well pleased with himself and everyone else, and after paying her compliments on her beauty which grew more ardent as time wore on, begged permission to give her a kiss.

'Certainly, your Majesty,' answered the princess, though it was the last thing she desired. But as she bent her forehead towards him, the drug did its work; the king fell back heavily on his chair, the almoner sank sideways to the ground, and a blackbird, which unnoticed by all had been perched in a corner, flew out through the window.

Then the princess rose calmly from her seat, summoned her maid, and mounting two horses which were saddled in readiness, they rode straight to Araby the Blest.

As soon as she and her maid Irla beheld the town of Aden lying before them, they got down and prepared, as the bird had bidden them, his funeral pyre of cinnamon and cloves. But what was the surprise of the princess when, on scattering the ashes on the little pyre, a flame suddenly broke forth! In the midst of the fire lay an egg, and out of the egg came her bird, more brilliant and beautiful than ever!

‘Take me to the country of the Gangarids,’ she gasped when she was able to speak, ‘and let us find Amazan.’

Fortunately for the princess the bird was able to satisfy her.

‘Two of my best friends among the griffins,’ he said, ‘live not far from here. A pigeon shall start at once with a message, and they can be with us by night.’ And so they were; and the princess and Irla did not lose a moment in mounting a small car which was attached to them, and in setting out for the land of the Gangarids.

‘I wish to speak to Amazan,’ cried the phœnix, as soon as the griffins halted before his house. And it was as well that the bird was there, for between joy and hope and fatigue the princess’s heart was fluttering to such a degree that she could have said nothing.

‘Amazan!’ replied the man whose crook betokened him to be a shepherd also; ‘he went away three hours ago —— .’

‘Ah, that is what I feared!’ exclaimed the phœnix, while the princess sank back upon her cushions nearly fainting with disappointment. ‘Those three hours you passed in the rest-house, may have cost you the happiness of your life. But I will try if anything can be done to repair the mischief. We must see his mother at once,’ he added, and Formosante, with hope springing anew within her, followed him into a large room where the air was filled with song, which proceeded from the throats not only of a thousand different birds, but of shepherds and shepherdesses.

The voices seemed to chime in with the melancholy of the princess, who rose, trembling, as the mother of Amazan entered.

‘Ah, give him back to me!’ she cried; ‘for his sake I have quitted the most brilliant court in the world, and have braved all kinds of dangers. I have escaped the snares of the King of Egypt — and now I find he has fled from me.’

‘Princess,’ answered the lady, ‘did you not happen to notice while you were at supper with the King of Egypt a blackbird flying about the room?’

‘Ah, now you say so, I *do* recollect one!’ rejoined the princess; ‘and I remember that when the king bent forward to give me a kiss, the bird disappeared through the window with a cry of anguish.’

‘You are right, alas!’ replied the lady, ‘and from that moment all our troubles can be dated. That blackbird had been sent by my son to bring him news of your health, as he meant as soon as the burial ceremonies for his father had been completed to return and throw himself at your feet. For when a Gangarid is in love, he *is* in love. But as soon as he was told how gay you seemed, above all, as soon as he heard of you ready to accept the kiss of the monarch who had killed the phœnix, despair filled his soul, and that in the very moment in which he had learned that he was your cousin and that therefore the King of Babylon might be induced to listen to his suit.'

'My cousin! But how?'

'Never mind that now. He *is* your cousin! But I feared he would never survive the news of the kiss which you had given to the King of Egypt.'

'Oh, my aunt, if you could only understand!' cried the princess, wringing her hands. 'I dared not excite the king's suspicions or I should never have escaped! I swear it by the ashes and the soul of the phœnix which were then in my pocket! Tell her, Bird of Wisdom, that what I say is true.'

'It is! It is!' exclaimed the phœnix eagerly. 'But now what we have to do is to go in search of Amazan. I will despatch unicorns in all directions, and I hope before many hours to be able to tell you where he is.'

The phœnix was as good as his word. At length one of the unicorns learned that Amazan was in China. Without losing a moment they set out, and arrived, travelling through the air, in the short space of eight days, but only to find that they had again missed him by a few hours. The emperor would gladly have kept Formosante to show her the wonders of his country, but as soon as he heard her story and how all this misery had its root in a kiss given out of pure fidelity, he saw that the one thing he could do for the princess was to discover for her the road which Amazan had taken.

From that day began a series of journeys such as no Babylonish princess had ever gone through during the thirty thousand years of the monarchy. There was not a kingdom either in Asia or in Europe that Formosante did not visit, and in spite of the fact that she had no room in her mind for any thought except the finding of Amazan (who had invariably left but a few hours before), she was forced to pick up some new ideas on the way. Strange things she saw which her father, King Belus, would never have believed to exist: a country in which the young king had made an agreement with his subjects that the farmer and the noble might sit side by side and make their own laws; another kingdom in which one man had power to prevent any law from being passed by the rest of the assembly; a third in which the will of one queen had changed the face of the world as if by magic, though, perhaps, if the princess had returned for a second visit, she might not have felt so certain that the changes would last. Once it was only a thick fog off an island called Albion which prevented her vessel from meeting the one containing Amazan, but at length they both found themselves in a province bordering on the Mediterranean, where Formosante, driven to despair by a rumour that Amazan was faithless to her, was looking out for a ship that might take her to Babylon.

As usual, she trusted to the phœnix to make all her arrangements, and the people in whose house she was living having overheard the bird speaking to her, at once imagined she was a witch and locked her and her maid Irla in their rooms. They would have seized the phœnix also, but at the sound of the key being turned he quickly flew out of the window and started in search of Amazan. After these long months of wandering the bird and its master met on the road which runs from north to south, and at first their joy was such that even the princess was forgotten. But not for long.

‘And Formosante, where is she?’

‘A prisoner, alas! on suspicion of being a witch, and you know what that means,’ answered the phœnix, with tears in his eyes.

Amazan *did* know, and for an instant was frozen with horror as the vision flashed across his mind of Formosante tied to a stake and the flames gathering round her. Then he aroused himself, and gave the phœnix some orders. In two hours help came, and Amazan was kneeling at the feet of the princess.

So, united at last, we will leave them.

THE ADVENTURES OF FIRE-DRILL’S SON

Here is another story of the Tlingit Indians, and in these stories you will often find the Raven playing the part of friend and helper, just as the Fox does in Japan, and Brer Rabbit in ‘Uncle Remus.’ The Raven is always kinder than anybody else, besides being cleverer, and those who take his advice can never go wrong.

One day the Raven was flying about, and he saw a girl sitting with her baby in the woods, and he stopped to talk to her.

‘That is a fine little boy of yours,’ he said, cocking his head on one side.

‘Yes, he is,’ replied the girl; ‘but I wish he was old enough to get food for us. It is so many years to wait.’

‘That is easily cured,’ said the Raven. ‘You have only to bathe him every day in the cold spring at the back of these rocks, and you have no idea how quickly he will grow up.’ So the girl bathed him every morning in the pool and let the water from the rock pour over him, and it was surprising how soon he was able to help her in work of all kinds as well as to shoot with his bow and arrows.

‘Why are we all alone with grandmother?’ he inquired at last, for he was fond of asking questions. ‘Did you never have friends like other people, and have those houses over there always stood empty?’ Then they told him that once a large tribe had lived at that place, but they had gradually gone away to hunt or to fish and had never come back. Only the woman and the girl and the baby remained behind.

After this the boy was quiet for a time, and for a while he was content to stay at home, only going out in the mornings to bring back a bird from the forest for their dinner. But at length he said to his mother: ‘If I could only paddle in the lake, I could catch you fish and water-fowl; but all the canoes here are old and broken.’

‘Yes; you must not go out in them. You will get drowned,’ answered she, and the boy went sadly to his mat to sleep.

As he slept, his father, whose name was Fire-drill, appeared to him and spoke:

‘Take one of those old canoes into the woods and cover it with bushes. It does not matter how worn-out it seems to be; do as I tell you.’ Then the boy got up and did as his father bade him, and went home again.

Early next day he ran quickly to the place where the canoe was hidden, but found that the old one full of holes had vanished, and a new one, packed with everything he could need, was in its place. While he was admiring it, his father stood before him, and pulled the root of a burnt tree out of the ground, which he turned into a little dog. It was called Gant or ‘Burnt,’ and could smell things miles away, and, though it was so small, it was as strong as a bear. After that, Fire-drill gave his son a fresh bow and arrows and a great club.

Then the boy remembered what his grandmother had said, and he carried the canoe and his father’s presents to the wigwam.

‘I am going away,’ he told his mother, ‘and may be absent two days or much longer. Take care of this fire-stick, or else if the fire goes out, how will you make it again? Hang it in a safe place high on the ceiling, and if I am killed, it will fall. So you will know. And now farewell.’ Thus speaking he climbed into the canoe and pushed off.

As he went he saw from afar another canoe coming to meet him, with a man paddling it.

‘That is the man who killed all my mother’s friends,’ thought he, and he told it to his dog, his club, his bow and his arrows, for they had the gift of magic and could understand his language.

By this time the man had drawn near, and the boy saw that he had only one eye, which was placed in the middle of his face, and that he was more than commonly tall.

‘Is it you, my nephew?’ asked he, and the boy answered:

‘Yes; it is I.’

‘Where did you come from?’

‘From my uncle’s village.’

Then the man read what the boy had in his mind and said:

‘It was not I who killed your uncles and your mother’s friends; it was the East Wind and the North Wind.’

But the boy did not trust the man’s words, and knew that in his heart he wished him evil. And while he was thinking this the big man said to him:

‘Let us exchange arrows.’

‘Not so,’ replied the boy. ‘My arrows are better than yours.’ And his words were true, for they were all different, and pointed with different things. The point of one was a porcupine quill, and of another bark, but the best of all was called Heart-stopper, because the moment it touched a man’s body his heart ceased to beat.

‘My arrows are pointed with sea-urchins; behold how they move,’ said the man; but again it was not true what he told the boy, for the points were made of weed.

‘My arrows are not like that,’ answered the boy. ‘They are only good for shooting birds;’ but though he did not trust the man, he never guessed that his desire was to get Heart-stopper. They talked for some time longer, and at length the boy lost patience and cried out:

‘You call yourself my uncle, yet you made away with my mother’s friends. Now know that you will never make away with me like that.’

His words angered the one-eyed man, and, quick as lightning, they both held their arrows in their hands; but the boy was the quickest, and with the help of the dog, soon killed his enemy. Then he burned the body, and paddled on still further, never thinking that his mother at home was wondering why he did not come back.

At last he heard a voice calling to him. ‘That is another bad man,’ said he; but he paddled to the place where the sound came from, and found a cliff rising straight out of the water. In the middle of the cliff was an opening with a circle of red paint round it, and devil-clubs fastened to a ring which was driven into the rock.

‘Come in! Come in!’ cried the voice, and the boy entered and saw a woman there with a knife in each hand. He guessed who she was, and said to her:

‘I have seen your husband;’ but she took no heed of his words, and begged him again to enter and she would give him some food before he went on his way.

‘I do not like that sort of food,’ he answered as soon as he had seen it; and she exclaimed, ‘Well! if you want to quarrel let us fight till one of us is killed.’

‘Willingly!’ replied the boy, and he heard her go to the rock at the entrance and sharpen the knives in her hands. When she had finished she threw one of them at him, but he jumped aside and it stuck in the stool where he had been sitting. Then he seized the knife and threw it at her, and it stuck in her heart and she died. He let her lie where she fell, and lifting his eyes he noticed with dismay that the hole at the end of the cave was quickly growing smaller and smaller. Hastily he snatched up some ermine skins that lay on the ground and tied two or three in his hair, and shrank himself till he managed to get into one of them, and squeezed through the entrance just before it closed entirely. Once out of the cave he shot some deer and brought them down in his canoe to his mother and his grandmother, who had spent their time in grieving over him and wondering if they would ever see him again.

‘I am all right,’ he said to them when he got home; ‘and I have slain the people who put your friends to death.’

But in spite of his words, he did not know yet for certain whether the man and woman he had killed had been the murderers of his uncles also, and that he was determined to find out. So he soon went back into the forest and began hunting again. From afar he saw smoke rising up, and he walked towards it till he came to a house. At the door was Old Mole-woman, and very old she was, but her face looked kind and honest and the boy felt he might have faith in her.

‘What is it you want, grandson?’ said she, politely, and the boy answered:

‘I am seeking for the slayer of my uncles.’

‘It is not easy to get at them,’ she replied. ‘It was the hawks that did it, and first you have to find their nests which are very high up, and next you must wait till the old birds go away, and only the young ones are left.’

Thus spoke Old Mole-woman, and the boy thanked her and set off to find the nests.

It took him a long time, but at length he discovered them; then he hid himself and waited till the parent birds flew off and the young ones were alone. After that, the boy came out of his hiding-place and climbed up the tree and said to the little birds:

‘What do you live on?’ and the little birds led him to a place that was full of human skulls, and answered, ‘That is what we live on.’

‘How long will your father and mother be away?’ asked the boy.

‘Till daybreak; but you will not be able to see them, because they come in clouds. My mother flies over the mountain in a yellow cloud, and my father in a black cloud.’

‘Well, I am going now,’ said the boy, ‘and take care that you do not tell them that I have been here, or I will kill you.’

‘Oh, no, no! We will be sure not to tell,’ cried the little birds, fluttering their wings in a fright.

Just as it was getting light the boy saw the yellow cloud coming, and by and bye he made out the mother-bird carrying a dead body in her beak. He aimed an arrow at her and she fell dead at the foot of the tree, and the body fell with her. Soon after, he saw the black cloud coming fast, and when it reached the nest the father flew out of it and said to the little ones:

‘Where is your mother?’

‘Our mother dropped the body she was carrying and fell down after it,’ answered they, and as they spoke the boy hit him with an arrow, and he fell to the ground also.

Then the boy cried up to the little birds: ‘You must never kill people any more, or live on human flesh. I will go and get food for you until you are strong enough to look after yourselves,’ and he went out hunting, and he and his dog killed some pigs and brought them to the little birds. And when the little birds grew to be big birds, they killed the pigs for themselves by letting stones fall on their heads, and never more did they eat anything else. After that the boy went back to Old Mole-woman.

‘I have killed the birds,’ said he, ‘and because you have helped me, I have brought you some food which will last you a long time. Now I must hurry home to my mother and grandmother.’

Very glad they were to see him again, and for some time he stayed with them and collected grease for candles and provisions of all sorts, enough to last for many, many years. When this was done he said to his mother: ‘Mother, I am going to leave you for ever, for I was not meant to be with you always, and I have finished that which I set myself to do. If what is hanging overhead should fall, you will know that I am dead. But as long as it remains where it is, do not trouble about me.’

With that he went out.

As he walked along the path, the son of Fire-drill beheld someone in front striding very fast; and the boy chased him till he came first to the Mink people and then to the Marten people. Both of them begged him to stay with them and help them, but he would not, and hurried on after the figure he had seen ahead of him, whose name was Dry-cloud. But when Fire-drill’s son came to the Wolf people they begged him so hard to stop that at last he agreed to do so for a while; besides he was very tired, and wanted to rest.

The Wolf Chief thought much of the boy, and they had great talk together. One day a large company of the Wolf tribe was present, and they spoke of the beasts which could run the fastest.

‘The swiftest of all is the mountain goat,’ said one; ‘and it can jump from rock to rock, and none can come up with it. To-morrow,’ he added, turning to the boy, ‘we are going to hunt them, and if you are there with us you will see if there is any animal that can outrun a mountain goat.’

‘I will be there,’ answered the boy.

So they started in the morning and hastened to the place, and each tried to be the first to kill one of the goats. But Fire-drill’s son’s dog got there before any of them, and killed many goats and the rest galloped away out of reach. Then the Wolves went up and carried the dead goats back to their people, and much ashamed they were that the dog had slain them all and they, the noted hunters, had got nothing.

‘Men will speak ill of us if they know of this day’s work,’ said the Wolves, whispering together. ‘How can we get the better of this son of Fire-drill?’

Now one, cleverer than the rest, thought of a plan, and he bade the others cut a quantity of the long stringy creepers that grow on the mountains, and make them into hoops. These hoops they were to roll down the sides of the mountains, and jump backwards and forwards through them, when they were at full speed. It was a good game for their purpose, because anyone who touched the side of the hoops would be cut in two, because of the sharp edges.

But the dog guessed this, and said to the boy: ‘Friend, do not go near those people who are playing. You know nothing of the game, and those things may kill you.’

‘No; I will not play with them, but let us watch them,’ answered the boy, and they watched them for some time, till the boy said to the dog:

‘You take one of those rings and throw it up in the air as high as you can.’ And the dog took it in his mouth, and stood on his hind legs and threw it upwards with all his might, and he threw it so high that it never came down again but stayed up round the moon, where you may still see it any night that there is going to be a change in the weather.

And as soon as he heard this that the dog had done, the Wolf Chief called the rest of the Wolves, and bade them treat the son of Fire-drill as a friend, ‘for,’ said he, ‘he is a wonderful fellow.’

A little while after, Fire-drill’s son and the wolf went away together. When they had gone a short distance, the wolf raised his head and looked about him.

‘Some strange creature walks about here,’ he exclaimed suddenly. ‘Take my advice and do not try to follow him or he will have your life.’

And though he did not say so, the boy felt it was Dry-cloud that the wolf meant.

‘Don’t be afraid for me,’ he answered; ‘I only play with him. Well I know that it is impossible to kill him, but it is also impossible for him to kill me; but follow him I must, for this my father bade me.’

So they set off after Dry-cloud, and curious to say, the swift-footed wolf was forced to run with all his might, while the boy did not seem to himself to be walking faster than usual. Indeed, so rapid was their pace that if in crossing a stream the wolf got his tail wet, he was too tired to shake it himself, and he cried till the boy shook it for him. In this manner they travelled till they came to a house where an old woman lived, and this was the end of their journey for that time, as Dry-cloud lived near by also and they could watch him in peace. And while they were there Fire-drill’s son saw a girl whom he thought he would like for his squaw, and he married her and they had a baby. But when the baby was born the father shook his head and said to his wife:

‘This is going to be a very bad boy.’

And the fire-stick is still hanging on his mother’s ceiling.

THE STRANGE STORY OF ELIZABETH CANNING

Are you fond of puzzles? I am. And here is a mystery which all sorts of people have been seeking to explain for a hundred and fifty years, and nobody, not even the lawyers who have studied it, can make up their minds. So now it is your turn to try.

In the year 1752 Elizabeth Canning was a girl of seventeen, the eldest of a family of five children. Her mother was a widow and very poor, so she was glad when Elizabeth or Betty, as her friends called her, was old enough to go out to service. Betty was a steady, hard-working young woman, and the neighbours who had known her from a baby were all ready to help her and to get her a suitable place.

Her first master was a respectable man who kept a tavern, and in his house she lived for eighteen months. But she did not serve the customers, or come into the rooms where they drank. She then left to go as servant to a carpenter and his wife named Lyon, in Aldermanbury in the City of London, not very far from her own home. The Lyons were also old acquaintances of Mrs. Canning, and had known Elizabeth since she was two. Now she was grown up; a rather short, pleasant-looking girl with a fresh complexion marked with small-pox, but not pretty.

Elizabeth had been with the Lyons for three months, and had pleased them so well that they promised her a holiday on New Year’s Day 1753, to go to see her uncle and aunt, living behind the London Docks. So on New Year’s Day, the girl got up earlier than usual, in order to get her work over as soon as possible. When everything was done, she went up to her attic and took her best clothes out of a chest. She was a long time dressing, but when she stepped out into the street, she felt herself as smart as any maid in London in her purple gown, black petticoat, white apron, a muslin handkerchief folded across her chest, blue stockings, and neat leather shoes. On her head she wore a small, flat, white chip hat bound with green.

On her way to the Docks she stopped at her mother’s, and said that as she had in her pocket thirteen shillings given her that morning by her mistress — probably they were her wages — she would ask her aunt Mrs. Colley to come out with her and buy a cloak. Mrs. Canning made her put the half-guinea in a box, as so small a thing might easily get lost, and then, after presenting each of the children with a penny a piece, except a naughty little brother who had ‘huffed her,’ she gaily bade them all good-bye and went her way, arriving at her uncle’s house about twelve o’clock. Here she had dinner, tea, and supper at seven when her uncle returned from work — for Colley, poor man, had no holiday — and at last, without the cloak which for some reason was never bought, Elizabeth started back to Aldermanbury, the Colleys walking with her as far as Houndsditch. There they said good-night to her soon after nine, and returned home.

As far as we can tell, the Lyons must have expected her back quite early in the evening, for when nine o’clock struck from the church tower close by, the carpenter grew uneasy, and went round to Mrs. Canning to see if Betty was there. No; her mother had not seen her since the morning, but was sure she would be in directly, and Mr. Lyon would most likely find her at home when he got back. But at ten he paid the good woman another visit, saying he could not imagine what had kept the girl; and at last Mrs. Canning, ‘frightened out of her wits’ as she herself says, sent three of the children out into the fields to look for Elizabeth, and the apprentice went down to the Docks to inquire if she was still at her uncle’s. It was now midnight, and the Colleys were so fast asleep that the apprentice had some difficulty in rousing them to listen to his errand.

‘Betty here?’ they asked. ‘Why, we left her in Houndsditch hours ago.’

But they do not seem to have felt any alarm till the following morning when the young man knocked again, and informed them that they could gain no news of the missing girl.

Inquiries were made and advertisements were placed in the paper; all in vain. To be sure, a ‘gentlewoman in an oil-shop’ in Bishopsgate declared that she had heard a ‘young voice scream out of a coach’ on the night of January 1; but as she ‘did not know whether it was a man’s or a woman’s voice,’ her information was not of much use. However, vague though it was, Mrs. Canning caught at it eagerly and put it into the advertisement. As to what had become of her daughter, she guessed something different every day. Perhaps she had been kidnapped, or she might have been murdered, or have had an attack of illness.

Some years before, part of the ceiling of a garret had fallen on Elizabeth’s head and hurt her, so that if anything frightened her she was apt to lose her sense of what was going on for a while. Naturally when the girl was lost her mother remembered this and dreaded lest she should have fallen down in some strange place unconscious. Every idea that could come into a person’s mind — every accident likely or unlikely that had ever befallen anybody — was, we may feel certain, discussed in the month of January 1753 by Mrs. Canning and her neighbours.

She had almost given up hope, and was even in the act of praying to see her daughter’s ghost, when Elizabeth at last came. But *what* an Elizabeth! The apprentice, when he hastened to the door on hearing the latch lifted, did not recognise the girl, and thought it was a woman who had called to ask her way. Then the truth suddenly dawned on him and he cried out, ‘Betty has come home’; but as she entered, nearly bent double and walking sideways holding her hands before her, her mother took her to be indeed the ghost she had prayed for, and, shrieking ‘Feel her! Feel her!’ sank down in a fit.

It was the apprentice and not Mrs. Canning who attended to Elizabeth and placed her in the chimney-corner, where she sat exhausted and to all appearance nearly dead. Her mother’s first act on recovering from her fit was to send, not for the doctor but for the neighbours, and so many flocked to see the lost girl, that in two minutes the room was full, and the apprentice had to stand at the door to keep fresh people out. Of course it was long before anyone thought of putting Elizabeth to bed, and giving her something to eat or drink; instead they plied her with questions as to where she had been and what she had been doing, and how she had got in that dreadful condition. To these she replied, telling the same tale which she repeated to Alderman Chitty upon oath two days later.

On the following morning an apothecary was summoned, and attended her for a week till a doctor was called in, and he for some days thought very badly of her chance of living.

But weak and ill as she might be, two days after her return home she ‘was brought’ before Alderman Chitty to tell her story. And this was what she said:

After her uncle and aunt had left her in Houndsditch, she was passing along the wall which surrounded the lunatic asylum of Bedlam, into Moorfields, when she was suddenly attacked by two men who took all her money from her pocket, and then stripped off her gown and hat. She struggled and tried to scream, but a handkerchief was quickly thrust into her mouth, and she was told that if she made any noise they would kill her. To show that they spoke the truth, one of them did indeed give a blow on the head, and then they took her under the arms and dragged her along Bishopsgate till she lost her senses, as she was apt to do when frightened. She knew no more till she found herself in a strange place which she had since learned was a house at Enfield Wash, about eleven miles from Aldermanbury. By this time it was about four in the morning of January 2.

In the kitchen in which she recovered consciousness were several people, among them an old woman who asked her if she would stay with her instead of returning home. To this Elizabeth replied No; she would not, as she wanted to go back to her mother at once. The old woman looked very angry at her answer, and pushed her upstairs into a room, where she cut her stay-laces, and took the stays themselves away. She then told her there was bread and water for her if she was hungry, but that was all she would get; adding that the girl had better be quiet, for if she attempted to scream out, she herself would come in and cut her throat.

Having said this, the old woman went away locking the door behind her, and that was the last the girl saw of any human creature for four weeks, except the eye of a person who peeped through the keyhole.

Left alone, Elizabeth looked about for the food which was provided for her, and found there were some pieces of bread about as much as a 'quartern loaf' — and three-quarters of a gallon of water or a little more, in a pitcher. She had besides a penny mince-pie that she had bought while she was at her uncle's the day before, and intended as a present for her little brother; for, as she said to her mother, the boy had 'huffed her,' and she had not given him a penny like his sisters, so the mince-pie was to make up.

At this point Chitty seems to have stopped her, and asked her to describe the room in which she was imprisoned and to tell him what it contained. There was but little furniture of any sort in it, she answered. An old stool or two, an old chair and an old picture over the chimney. The room itself had two windows, facing north and east, one of which was entirely boarded up; but the other, though there were some boards on it, was mostly glass. It was through the window at the end of the room that she escaped about half-past three on the afternoon of Monday January 29, dropping on to the roof of a shed built against the house, and so to the ground.

She knew, it appears, that the road which ran past the house was the one leading from London into Hertfordshire, because she recognised the coachman who had carried parcels for her mistress many a time. Thus, when she escaped, tearing her ear as she did so on a nail outside the window, she had no difficulty in starting in the right direction for London, though after a short distance she became confused, and had to ask the way of several people. She ended by saying that she arrived at home about ten o'clock very weak and faint, and that her mother gave her some wine, which however she was unable to swallow.

Now in those times both lawyers and judges were apt to be very careless, and according to our ideas, very dishonest, and Chitty seems to have been no better than the rest. He took, he says, a few notes of the interview with Elizabeth for his own memorandum, but 'not thinking it would have been the subject of so much inquiry later, did not take it so distinct as he could wish.' Even this paper which he did show was not what he had written down at the time when the girl was telling her story, but something that he had pieced together from her own account and that of various other people who had been present at her mother's two nights before, and had gone with her to the Alderman. So that no court of law in these days would have thought that Alderman Chitty’s account given more than a year later, of what Elizabeth told him, was to be trusted. In the end, however, Chitty, who declares he had examined her for an hour and asked her ‘many questions not set down’ in his paper, granted a warrant for the arrest of one Mother Wells at Enfield Wash, for assaulting and robbing her. Elizabeth herself expressly says she ‘could tell nothing of the woman’s name,’ though ‘she believed she should know her;’ but one of Mrs. Canning’s visitors on the night of the girl’s arrival, who was acquainted with Enfield, was certain that the house described could only be that in which Mother Wells lived, and on his information Chitty allowed the warrant for her arrest to be made out.

This man, Robert Scarrat, seems to have put to Elizabeth a great many questions which never occurred to the Alderman. He asked her, for instance, to describe the woman who had cut off her stays, and she replied that she was ‘tall, black and swarthy, and that two girls, one fair and one dark, were with her.’ This answer surprised him; it was not what he expected. Mother Wells was not a tall, swarthy woman, and he said at once that it could not have been Mother Wells at all, as the description was not in the least like her.

On Thursday February 1, Elizabeth was put into a coach and drove with her mother and two other women to Mother Wells’ house in Enfield Wash, where they were met by the girl’s two masters and several friends. The object of the visit was to prove if the description given by her of the room, in which she was confined, was correct, and if she could pick out from a number of persons the woman who had cut off her stays and locked her up. As to how far the room, as seen by Elizabeth’s friends, at all resembled what she had told them, it is impossible to be certain. It assuredly was very different from the place which Alderman Chitty swore she had described, containing a quantity of hay, old saddles, and other things that the girl had apparently not noticed, even though she had been there a month; while there was no old picture above the mantelpiece — nothing, indeed, but cobwebs — and there was no grate, though she had sworn she had taken out of it the bedgown or jacket she had come home in. Besides, — and this was more serious — there was not a sign of the pent-house on which, she said, she had jumped after tearing away the boards at the north window; and one of the witnesses declared that you had only to push open the *east* window to get out of it with perfect ease, and that he himself had leaned out and shaken hands with his wife, who was standing on the ground which rose on that side of the house. But then the witnesses were not at all agreed among themselves what Elizabeth had *really* said, so again we are unable to make up our minds what to believe.

After she had seen the room, she was taken into the parlour where eight or ten people were sitting, and it is curious that now everyone tells the same tale. On one side of the fireplace sat Mother Wells, and on the other Mary Squires.

Mary Squires was a gipsy, tall and swarthy, very ill made and extraordinarily ugly, and altogether a person whom it would be impossible to forget. At the time of Elizabeth's entrance she was sitting crouched up, with a white handkerchief on her head such as women often wore, and over it a hat, while a short pipe was in her hand. Several more persons were on the same side of the room, in a sort of circle round the fire.

Elizabeth glanced towards them. Her eyes rested first on Mother Wells and then looked past her.

'That is the woman who cut off my stays,' she said, pointing to the gipsy. At these words Mary Squires rose and came up to the girl, throwing aside her hat and handkerchief as she did so.

'Me rob you?' she cried. 'I hope you will not swear my life away, for I never saw you. Pray, madam, look at this face; if you have once seen it you must remember it, for God Almighty I think never made such another.'

'I know you very well,' answered Elizabeth; 'I know you too well, to my sorrow.'

'Pray, madam, when do you say I robbed you?'

'It was on the first day of this New Year,' replied Elizabeth.

'The first day of the New Year?' cried the gipsy. 'Lord bless me! I was an hundred and twenty miles away from this place then, at Abbotsbury in Dorsetshire, and there are a hundred people I can bring to prove it.'

But no one at that time paid any attention to her words, or thought of allowing her to prove her innocence. Elizabeth, with two girls found in Mother Wells' house, were examined before Henry Fielding, the novelist, author of 'Tom Jones,' then a magistrate of London, who showed, according to his own account, gross unfairness in dealing with the matter, and by him the case was sent for trial at the Old Bailey.

Elizabeth repeated the story she had told from the first, with the result that the gipsy was condemned to be hanged, and Mother Wells to be branded on the hand and to go to prison for six months. Luckily, however, for them, the president of the court that tried them was the Lord Mayor Sir Crispe Gascoigne, a man who had more sense of justice and fair play than many of his fellows. He did not feel sure of the truth of Elizabeth's tale, and never rested till both the old women were set at liberty.

This made the mob very angry. They were entirely on Elizabeth's side, and more than once attacked the Lord Mayor's coach. Other people were just as strong on behalf of the gipsy, and things even went so far that often the members of the same family declined to speak to each other.

Then came Elizabeth’s turn. In April 1754 she was arrested on a charge of perjury or false swearing, and sent to stand her trial at the Old Bailey. Now was Mary Squires’ opportunity for calling the ‘hundred people’ to prove that she, with her son George and daughter Lucy, was down at Abbotsbury in Dorsetshire, on January 1, 1753, at the moment that she was supposed to be cutting off the stays of Elizabeth Canning at Enfield Wash! And if she did not quite fulfil her promise, she actually *did* summon thirty-six witnesses who swore to her movements day by day from December 29, 1752, when all three Squires stopped at an inn at South Parret in Dorsetshire, to January 23, 1753, when Mary begged for a lodging at Page Green. Now Page Green was within two or three miles of Enfield Wash, where the gipsy admitted she had stayed at Mother Wells’ house for ten days before Elizabeth Canning had charged her with robbery. Her denial of the accusation was further borne out by a man and his wife, who appear in the reports as ‘Fortune and Judith Natus’ (he was quite plainly called ‘Fortunatus’ after the young man with the fairy purse), both of whom declared upon oath that they had occupied the room in which Elizabeth stated she had been confined, for ten or eleven weeks at that very time, and that it was used as a hayloft.

Mary Squires had called thirty-six witnesses to ‘prove an *alibi*’ — in other words, to prove that she had been present somewhere else; but Elizabeth’s lawyers produced twenty-six, stating that they had seen her about Enfield during the month when Elizabeth was lost. This was enough to confuse anybody, and many of the witnesses on both sides were exceedingly stupid. To make matters worse and more puzzling, not long before a law had been passed to alter the numbering of the days of the year. For instance, May 5 would suddenly be reckoned the 16th, a fact it was almost impossible to make uneducated people understand. Indeed, it is not easy always to remember it oneself, but it all helps to render the truth of Elizabeth’s tale more difficult to get at, for you never could be sure whether, when the witnesses said they had seen the gipsy at Christmas or New Year’s Day, they meant *Old* Christmas or *New* Christmas, *old* New Year’s Day or *new* New Year’s Day. Yet certain facts there are in the story which nobody attempts to contradict. It is undisputed that a young woman, weak and with very few clothes on, was met by four or five persons on the night of January 29, 1753, on the road near Enfield Wash, inquiring her way to London, or that on the very same night Elizabeth Canning arrived at home in Aldermanbury, in such a state that next morning an apothecary was sent for. Nor does anyone, as we have said, deny that she picked out the gipsy from a number of people, as the person who assaulted her. All this is in favour of her tale. Yet we must ask ourselves what possible motive Mary Squires could have had in keeping a girl shut up in a loft for four weeks, apparently with a view of starving her to death? Elizabeth was a total stranger to her; she was very poor, so there was no hope of getting a large ransom for her; and if she had died and her kidnapping had been traced to Mary Squires, the gipsy would have speedily ended her days on the gallows.

On the other hand, if Mary Squires did not know Elizabeth Canning, Elizabeth equally did not know Mary Squires, and we cannot imagine what reason Elizabeth could have had in accusing her falsely. Only one thing stands out clear from the report of the trial, and that is, that Elizabeth was absent during the whole of January 1753, and that she very nearly died of starvation.

‘Guilty of perjury, but not wilful and corrupt,’ was the verdict of the jury, which the judge told them was nonsense. They then declared her guilty, and Elizabeth was condemned to be transported to one of his Majesty’s American colonies for seven years.

We soon hear of her as a servant in the house of the Principal of Yale University, a much better place than any she had at home. At the end of the seven years she came back to England, where she seems to have been received as something of a heroine, and took possession of £500 which had been left her by an old lady living in Newington Green. She then sailed for America once more, and married a well-to-do farmer called Treat, and passed the rest of her life with her husband and children in the State of Connecticut.

Up to her death, which occurred in 1773, she always maintained the truth of her tale.

Was it true?

The lawyers who were against Elizabeth said, at her trial, that as soon as she was found guilty, the secret of where she had been would be revealed.

It never was revealed. Now several persons must have known where Elizabeth was; all the world heard her story, yet nobody told where she had been. If the persons who knew had not detained and ill-used the girl, there was nothing to prevent them from speaking.

Yet to the end we shall ask, why *did* Mary Squires keep her at Enfield Wash — if she *did* keep her?

MRS. VEAL'S GHOST

Now you are going to hear a ghost story published, but he says, not written, by Daniel Defoe the author of 'Robinson Crusoe.' If you read it carefully, you will find how very curious it is.

Miss Veal, or as she was then called according to custom, Mrs. Veal, was an unmarried lady of about thirty living with her only brother in Dover. She was a delicate woman, and frequently had fits, during which she would often stop in the middle of a sentence, and begin to talk nonsense. These fits probably arose from not having had enough food or warm clothes in her childhood, for her father was not only a poor man but also a selfish one, and was too full of his own affairs to look after his children. One comfort, however, she had, in a little girl of her own age, named Lodowick, who often used to bring her neighbour half of her own dinner, and gave her a thick wadded tippet to wear over her bare shoulders.

Years passed away and the girls grew to women, meeting as frequently as of old and reading together the pious books of the day, 'Drelincourt upon Death' being perhaps their favourite. Then gradually a change took place. Old Veal died; the son was given a place in the Customs, and his sister went to keep house for him. She was well-to-do now, and had no longer any need of a friend to provide her with food and clothes, and little by little she became busy with her new life, and forgot the many occasions on which she had exclaimed gratefully to her playfellow, 'You are not only the best, but the only friend I have in the world, and nothing shall ever loosen our friendship.' Now she visited in the houses of people who were richer and grander than herself and sought out her old companion more and more seldom, so that at length when this story begins, two years and a half had passed by without their having seen each other.

Meanwhile, though Mrs. Veal, in spite of a few love affairs, had remained a spinster, her friend had married a Mr. Bargrave, and a very bad match he proved, for the way in which he ill-used his wife soon became known to everyone. They left Dover about a year after Mrs. Bargrave's last visit to Mrs. Veal, and several months later they settled in Canterbury.

It was noon, on September 8, 1705, and Mrs. Bargrave was sitting alone in an armchair in her parlour, thinking over all the misery her husband had caused her and trying hard to feel patient and forgiving towards him. 'I have been provided for hitherto,’ she said to herself, ‘and doubt not that I shall be so still, and I am well satisfied that my sorrows shall end when it is most fit for me.’ She then took up her sewing, which had dropped on her lap, but had hardly put in three stitches when a knocking at the door made her pause. The clock struck twelve as she rose to open it, and to her profound astonishment admitted Mrs. Veal, who had on a riding dress of silk.

‘Madam,’ exclaimed Mrs. Bargrave, ‘I am surprised to see you, for you have been a stranger this long while, but right glad I am to welcome you here.’ As she spoke, she leaned forward to kiss her, but Mrs. Veal drew back, and passing her hand across her eyes, she answered:

‘I am not very well;’ adding after a moment, ‘I have to take a long journey, and wished first to see you.’

‘But,’ answered Mrs. Bargrave, ‘how do you come to be travelling alone? I know that your brother looks after you well.’

‘Oh, I gave my brother the slip,’ replied Mrs. Veal, ‘because I had so great a desire to see you before I set forth.’

‘Well, let us go into the next room,’ said Mrs. Bargrave, leading the way to a small room opening into the other. Mrs. Veal sat down in the very chair in which Mrs. Bargrave had been seated when she heard the knocking at the door. Then Mrs. Veal leaned forward and spoke:

‘My dear friend, I am come to renew our old friendship, and to beg you to pardon me for my breach of it. If you can forgive me, you are one of the best of women.’

‘Oh! don’t mention such a thing,’ cried Mrs. Bargrave. ‘I never had an unkind thought about it, and can most easily forgive it.’

‘What opinion can you have had of me?’ continued Mrs. Veal.

‘I supposed you were like the rest of the world,’ answered Mrs. Bargrave, ‘and that prosperity had made you forget yourself and me.’

After that they had a long talk over the old days, and recalled the books they had read together, and what comfort they had received from Drelincourt’s Book of Death, and from two Dutch books that had been translated, besides some by Dr. Sherlock on the same subject. At Mrs. Veal’s request, Mrs. Bargrave brought Drelincourt’s discourses down from upstairs, and handed it to her friend, who spoke so earnestly of the consolations to be found in it that Mrs. Bargrave was deeply touched. But when Mrs. Veal assured her that ‘in a short time her afflictions would leave her,’ Mrs. Bargrave broke down and wept bitterly.

‘Are you going away and leaving your brother without anyone to look after him?’ asked Mrs. Bargrave as soon as she could speak.

‘Oh no! my sister and her husband had just come down from town to see me, so it will be all right,’ answered Mrs. Veal.

‘But why did you arrange to leave just as they arrived?’ again inquired Mrs. Bargrave. ‘Surely they will be vexed?’

‘It could not be helped,’ replied Mrs. Veal shortly, and said no more on the subject.

After this, the conversation, which continued for nearly two hours, was chiefly carried on by Mrs. Veal, whose language might have been envied by the most learned doctors of the day. But during the course of it Mrs. Bargrave was startled to notice Mrs. Veal draw her hand several times across her eyes (as she had done on her entrance), and at length she put the question, ‘Mrs. Bargrave, don’t you think I look much the worse for my fits?’

‘No,’ answered Mrs. Bargrave, ‘I think you look as well as ever I saw you.’

‘I want you to write a letter for me to my brother,’ then said Mrs. Veal, ‘and tell him to whom he is to give my rings, and that he is to take two gold pieces out of a purse that is in my cabinet, and send them to my cousin Watson.’ Cousin Watson was the wife of a Captain Watson who lived in Canterbury. As there seemed no reason that Mrs. Veal should not write the letter herself, the request appeared rather odd to Mrs. Bargrave, especially as then and afterwards it was the custom for people to leave rings to their friends in their wills. These rings contained little skulls in white enamel, and the initials in gold of the dead.

Mrs. Bargrave wondered if her friend was indeed about to suffer from one of her attacks. So she hastily placed herself in a chair close by her, that she might be ready to catch Mrs. Veal if she should fall, and, to divert her visitor’s thoughts, took hold of her sleeve, and began to admire the pattern.

‘The silk has been cleaned,’ replied Mrs. Veal, ‘and newly made up,’ and then she dropped the subject and went back to her letter.

‘Why not write it yourself?’ asked Mrs. Bargrave. ‘Your brother may think it an impertinence in me.’

‘No,’ said Mrs. Veal; ‘it may seem an impertinence in you now, but you will discover more reason for it hereafter;’ so to satisfy her, Mrs. Bargrave fetched pen and ink and was about to begin when Mrs. Veal stopped her.

‘Not now,’ she said; ‘wait till I am gone; but you must be sure to do it,’ and began to inquire for Mrs. Bargrave’s little girl, Molly, who was not in the house.

‘If you have a mind to see her, I will fetch her home,’ answered the mother, and hastily ran over to the neighbour’s where the child was. When she returned, Mrs. Veal was standing outside the street door, opposite the market (which was crowded, the day being Saturday and market day), waiting to say good-bye to her.

‘Why are you in such a hurry?’ inquired Mrs. Bargrave.

‘It is time for me to go,’ answered Mrs. Veal, ‘though I may not start on my journey till Monday. Perhaps I may see you at my cousin Watson’s before I depart whither I am hastening.’ Then she once more spoke of the letter Mrs. Bargrave was to write, and bade her farewell, walking through the market-place, till a turning concealed her from view.

It was now nearly two o’clock.

The following day Mrs. Bargrave had a sore throat, and did not go out, but on Monday she sent a messenger to Captain Watson’s to inquire if Mrs. Veal was there. This much astonished the Watsons, who returned an answer that Mrs. Veal had never been to the house, neither was she expected. Mrs. Bargrave felt sure that some mistake had been made, and, ill though she was, put on her hood and walked to the Watsons’ (whom she did not know) to find out the truth of the matter.

Mrs. Watson, who was at home, declared herself unable to understand *why* Mrs. Bargrave should imagine that Mrs. Veal should be in their house. She had never been in town, Mrs. Watson was persuaded, as if she had, she would certainly have called on them. It was to no purpose that Mrs. Bargrave assured the good lady that Mrs. Veal had spent two hours with her on the previous Saturday; Mrs. Watson simply refused to believe it.

In the midst of the discussion Captain Watson came in and announced that on the previous Friday — September 7, 1705 — at noon, Mrs. Veal had died of exhaustion, after one of her fits; and that even at that moment the big painted board with the family coat of arms — called by Captain Watson an ‘escutcheon’ and by us a ‘hatchment’ — was being painted in Canterbury. When finished, it would be taken to Dover and hung up in front of the Veals’ house. Mrs. Bargrave found the Captain’s story impossible to believe, and she went off immediately to the undertaker’s shop, where the ‘escutcheon’ was shown her. Not knowing what to think, she next hastened back to the Watsons, and told the whole tale of Mrs. Veal’s visit, describing every particular of her appearance and silk habit, which Mrs. Veal had specially mentioned was scoured. On hearing this, Mrs. Watson cried out excitedly, ‘Then you must indeed have seen her, as I helped her myself to make it up, and nobody but she and I knew that it was scoured.’

In this way the Watsons’ doubts of the appearance of Mrs. Veal were set at rest, and the story was soon ‘blazed’ all about the town by the lady, while the Captain took two of his friends to Mrs. Bargrave in order that they might listen to her own account of the strange circumstance, which she gave in exactly the same words as before. Very soon her house was besieged by all sorts of people interested in the story, who saw that Mrs. Bargrave was a straightforward, cheerful person, not at all likely to have invented such a surprising tale.

Amongst those who visited Mrs. Bargrave was the lady whose account was published by Defoe in 1706. Their houses were near together, and they had known each other well for many years. It is she who tells us of various little facts which go far to prove the truth of Mrs. Veal's apparition: how it was discovered that the sister and brother-in-law to whom Mrs. Veal referred really *had* travelled from London to Dover in order to pay their family a visit but only arrived just as Mrs. Veal was dying; how the servant next door, hanging out clothes in the garden, had heard Mrs. Bargrave talking to someone for above an hour at the very time Mrs. Veal was said to be with her; and how immediately after Mrs. Veal had departed, Mrs. Bargrave had hurried in to the lady next door, and told her that an old friend she feared she had lost sight of had been to see her, and related their conversation.

But Mrs. Veal's brother in Dover was very angry when he heard what was being said in Canterbury, and declared he should go and call on Mrs. Bargrave, who seemed to be making a great deal out of nothing. As to the little legacies which Mrs. Bargrave had mentioned in her letter that Mrs. Veal wished him to give to her friends, why, he had asked his sister on her death-bed — for she was conscious for the last four hours of her life — whether there was anything she desired to dispose of, and she had answered no. But, in spite of Mr. Veal's wrath, everyone believed in Mrs. Bargrave's tale, for they believed in Mrs. Bargrave herself. She had nothing to gain by inventing such a story, and was ready to answer all questions put to her in a plain, straightforward way.

'I asked her,' said the lady from whom Defoe obtained his account, 'if she was sure she felt the gown; she answered, "If my senses are to be relied on, I am sure of it."'

'I asked her if she had heard a sound when Mrs. Veal clapped her hand upon her knee; she said she did not remember that she did, but added: "She appeared to be as much a substance as I did, who talked with her; and I may be as soon persuaded that your apparition is talking to me now as that I did not really see her, for I was under no manner of fear; I received her as a friend and parted with her as such. I would not," she concluded "give one farthing to make anyone believe it, for I have no interest in it."'

From Defoe's day to this many people have read the tale, and several have held it to be a pure invention of the novelist. But some have taken the trouble to search out the history of the persons mentioned in it, and have found that they at any rate were real, and living in Dover and in Canterbury at the very dates required by the story. In the reign of Charles I. a Bargrave had been Dean of Canterbury, and a Richard Bargrave married a widow in the church of St. Alphege in 1700. There had been also Veals connected with Canterbury, which is curious, and we find that a son of William Veal was baptised in St. Mary's, Dover, in August 1707. Now, as Mrs. Veal kept her brother's house when they moved into Dover, he must have married after his sister's death on September 7, 1705. And if we turn over the Parish Register of that very year, we shall see the burial of a 'Mrs. Veal' on September 10.

The Watsons are also to be found in Canterbury, and an 'old Mr. Breton' in Dover, who was known to have given Mrs. Veal £10 a year.

Of course it does not follow from this that, because the characters of the tale published by Defoe only ten months after Mrs. Veal's death were actually alive in the very places where he said we should find them, Mrs. Veal's ghost did really appear to Mrs. Bargrave. But if not, why drag in all these people to no purpose? They could all have contradicted him, but the only person who did so was Mr. Veal himself, and he alone had a motive in disbelieving the appearance of his sister, as he may not have wished to hand over the rings which she had bequeathed to her friends, or to diminish the contents of the purse of gold he was driven to admit that she possessed.

Once more, it is perfectly certain that Mrs. Bargrave told and stood by her story, for in May 1714 a gentleman went to see her and cross-examine her. Mrs. Bargrave said that she did not know the editor of her story, but that it was quite correct except in three or four small points; for instance, that she and Mrs. Veal had talked about the persecution of Dissenters in the time of Charles II. was omitted in the printed version. The gentleman then made the corrections by his copy of the book, and added a long note in Latin about his visit to Mrs. Bargrave on May 21, 1714.

This copy of the book Mr. Aitken found in the British Museum; so, whether we believe Mrs. Bargrave's story or not, she undoubtedly told it, and it was not invented by Defoe.

The facts were discovered by Mr. G. A. Aitken, who published them in his edition of Defoe's tales. He does not seem to have known that in an old book, Dr. Welby's 'Signs before Death,' there is another version, with curious information about Mistress Veal's broken engagement with Major-General Sibourg, killed in the battle of Mons; and about the kinship of the mother of Mrs. Veal with the family of the Earl of Clarendon, which induced Queen Anne, moved by Archbishop Tillotson, to give Mr. Veal his place in the Customs. We also learn that Mrs. Bargrave’s cold on the Sunday was caused by the conduct of her husband, who came home intoxicated, found her excited by her interview with Mrs. Veal, and saying, ‘Molly, you are hot, you want to be cooled,’ led her into the garden, where she passed the night.

THE CHIEF’S DAUGHTER

Raven’s wife had died, and as he felt very lonely he soon determined to marry a second, but it was not very easy to find a girl to suit him, for she was obliged to be of noble birth as the other had been. And to add to the difficulties, a mischief-maker called Tsagwan was also seeking a wife of the same kind, and wherever Raven went Tsagwan flew after him, and told untrue stories about Raven, so that fathers refused to give him their daughters. At last Raven discovered this and went straight to the chief of the town.

‘I know what has happened,’ said he. ‘And you will suffer for it. If I had married your daughter, you would have had a great name in the world, but now your daughter will marry someone whom no one ever heard of, and if they speak of you among men it will be as The-Chief-with-no-name.’ When he heard this the chief trembled, for he knew it would be shameful.

So Raven left him and continued his journey till he reached the house of an old man who lived alone.

‘Do you know the young daughter of the chief who lives not far from here?’ he asked.

‘Yes, I know her.’

‘Well, why don’t you marry her?’

‘Oh, it is quite impossible that I should marry her, so I don’t see the good of trying.’

‘Don’t be so faint-hearted,’ said Raven, ‘I will give you a medicine which will cause her to fall in love with you.’

‘But I have no slaves, and she will expect slaves,’ said the old man.

‘Oh no, she won’t,’ answered Raven, ‘she will take a liking to you and no one will be able to help it. She will marry you, and her father will lose half his property.’

And Raven kept his word and his medicine made the old man look young again, and Raven bestowed feathers on him to put in his hair, and a robe of marten skin to throw over his shoulders. When he was dressed the man looked very handsome and was greatly pleased with himself. But his face fell when Raven said to him:

‘Remember you are not going to be like this always; it is only for a day or two.’

Then the man got into his skin canoe and paddled over to where the girl lived, and he did not go to ask her father’s consent but sought her out when she was alone, and she fell in love with him although she had refused to listen to many other men besides Raven, and this was Raven’s revenge.

‘Yes, I will marry you,’ she said, ‘and I will go with you, even if my father kills me for it.’

So she married him, and after that her father and mother were told of it. But the chief, instead of being unkind to his daughter, gave her rich fur robes; ‘for,’ said he, ‘if she is already married there is no use in my being angry; and besides, her husband is a handsome fellow and is plainly of high birth.’ And he and the husband talked together of his daughter’s suitors and especially of the man who had been cruel to his first wife, but the husband did not know that the chief meant Raven.

The new husband was anxious to get back to his own home, as he was afraid that his fine clothes might drop off him on the way. Therefore he lost no time in saying, ‘My father told me I was to return at once in my canoe; let us hasten, but do not you, my wife, take any furs with you except those you want to keep you warm on the journey, for I have more than enough in my house.’ The wife obeyed him, and only took with her a marten skin and a fox robe.

Now the girl lay in the canoe with her eyes shut, and she lay there for a long while till she thought that they must be near home. Then she sat up and looked out, and caught sight of her husband’s face, which looked quite different from when she had seen it before. For now it was full of wrinkles, and the hair was thin and grey. And at the sight her heart beat so fast it seemed as if it would jump out of her body, and she cried very bitterly, because she was frightened and angry.

As soon as the canoe ran upon the beach she sat upon the rocks weeping while the old man went from house to house throughout the village, begging them to take her in, as she was a high-born girl and he had no place that was fit for her. But they would not, and at last his sister, who was still older than he, came down to the beach and took the girl back to her house, which was dirty and shabby. The girl went, but she was very miserable, and every day the people stopped as they were passing, and mocked at her and her husband.

Curious to say, the chief and his sons had been quite deceived by the fine clothes of the daughter’s husband, and resolved to make him presents suited to his rank. Therefore one day the people of the village beheld a procession of canoes paddling over the sea, one filled with furs, another containing the father and brothers of the girl, and a third, in which sat the slaves with green feathers in their hair, taken from the heads of drakes. The old man saw them likewise, and called to some boys to come and help him clean up the house. But they only answered, ‘Clean up yourself, for you are dirty enough.’

‘Well, at least carry up the strangers’ goods; they are now landing,’ said he, but the boys replied as they had done before, ‘Carry them yourself.’ In the end, it was the strangers who carried them and put them down where they could; and they noticed that the old man’s sister was crying, and the strangers felt sorry for her.

The old man soon found that he would get no help from anybody, for they were all angry with him for having married a chief’s daughter. If he asked them to lend him a basket for his guests to eat off, they told him to use his own; if he begged them to fetch water, they bade him get it himself, and even when he took a very dirty old basket to fill at the stream, as he stooped down the water moved a little further away and then a little further still, as if it also had a spite at him. Indeed, it did this so often that at last he found himself in the mountains, where it vanished into a house. Once more he followed it and beheld a very old woman sitting inside.

‘What is the matter?’ said she. ‘Is there anything I can do for you?’

‘You can do a great deal for me if you only will,’ answered he. ‘I am very poor and have married a noble wife, whose father and brothers have come to visit me. I have nothing to give them, and my neighbours will not help.’

‘Is that all?’ she said.

‘Yes, all! Is it not enough?’ But the old woman only smoothed his hair with her hand, and in a moment it was thick and black as it had been in his youth, and his rags became handsome garments. Even the very basket changed into a beautiful new one.

‘Go and dip the basket into the spring that is in the corner,’ said she, and when he drew it up it was full of water and of shells.

The man made all the haste he could down the mountain, but nobody recognised him except his wife, and those who had seen him when he went to marry her. He refreshed them all with water and gave them handfuls of the shells, which they prized greatly, in return for the slaves and furs his father-in-law had presented to him, for it is the custom of that tribe that, if a man receives a gift from a father-in-law, he shall pay it back with something of much greater value. And he soon grew so rich that the people made him chief of the town.

Now that happened which was bound to happen. The people who had mocked him when he was poor were ready to bow down to him when he was rich, while he and his wife grew harder and prouder every day. They built themselves a large house where they gave magnificent feasts, but they passed most of their time on the roof of the house, watching all that went on below.

One fine spring evening they were sitting there as usual, when a flock of swans flew across the sky from the south-east. ‘What beautiful birds! I should like to marry one of them!’ exclaimed the wife, as the swans gradually disappeared in the distance. Of course she did not mean anything, any more than when she repeated the same words on seeing the sand-cranes overhead, or the brants which presently came past. But the brants did not know this, and as soon as they heard her they flew down and carried her off on their wings. Her husband ran after them but he never reached them, only now and then she let fall some of the loose clothes that covered her. By and bye — for they found she was heavier than they expected — the brants let the woman fall too. Luckily they were then over the sandy beach so she was not hurt, but she was quite naked and even her hair had been rubbed off. She got up and walked quickly, crying as she went, to some trees which had large leaves, and these she twisted together till she had made a kind of apron. Then she wandered along the beach not knowing where she was going, and thinking sadly of her home and her husband, till she came to a house with an old woman sitting in it. The sight gladdened her heart, and she entered and held out the head of a red snapper which she had picked up on the shore, saying, ‘Let us cook this red snapper head for dinner.’

‘Yes, let us cook it,’ answered the old woman, and after they had eaten it she bade the chief’s wife go back to the beach and try to find something else. This time the girl brought in a fish called a sculpin, and it was cooked also; but while they were eating it the chief’s wife heard the noise of boys shouting, though she could see no one.

‘Take the tray with the food out to that hole,’ said the old woman, and as the chief’s wife did so she beheld many hands sticking up out of the ground. She placed the tray in the hands, and waited as it disappeared. In a moment it rose to the surface again, with two fine fox skins on it, which she carried back to the old woman.

‘Make yourself some robes out of them,’ said she, and the girl did so.

When she was dressed, the old woman spoke to her again, and said:

‘Your father and mother live in a salmon creek, a little way along the beach. It might be well for you to go and pay them a visit.’ So the girl went, and after a time she saw her father out in a canoe spearing salmon, and her mother was with him. The girl ran quickly down to the water’s edge in order to meet them, but when her father saw her he cried out:

‘Here comes a fox; where are my bow and arrows?’ And his daughter heard him and ran as fast as she could to the woods.

After a while she stopped running, for she knew she was safe, and then she made her way to the old woman.

‘Why are you crying? Did you not see your father?’

‘Yes, and he took me for a fox.’

‘Why, what else do you think you are?’ asked the old woman in surprise. ‘But return at once to your father who will want to kill you; and be sure you let him do it.’

‘Very well, I will do your bidding,’ answered the girl, though the order seemed strange to her.

The next day the girl went down to the beach and saw her father fishing still closer to the shore.

‘Why, here is that big fox again,’ cried he, and she did not move, but waited while he fitted an arrow to his bow and shot her in the heart. Then his wife got out of the canoe and began to skin the fox, and as she did so she found something on its foreleg which made her start.

‘Surely that is my daughter’s bracelet,’ said she. ‘Yet that is not possible!’ And she continued her work. By and by she came to the throat, and there lay a necklace. ‘Surely that is my daughter’s necklace,’ she repeated, and then she called to her husband, saying:

‘I found our daughter’s necklace and bracelet in this skin. Something that we know not of must have turned her into a fox.’ And they both cried, for they remembered how the fox had run to meet them instead of going away.

But Indians are learned in things of which other people are ignorant, and they quickly set to work and laid the fox’s body on a mat, and covered it with bags of eagle’s down which every tribe has ready to use, and over all they placed a mat, weeping as they did so. After that they fasted and cleaned up their houses, and the girl’s relations fasted likewise and cleaned up their houses. For many days they did this, and at length, at midnight, the father and mother felt their house shaking beneath them, and heard a noise coming from the room where the body lay. Taking a burning stick, the mother hastened to the room, and found her daughter in her own shape, having become a doctor or shaman. Happy indeed were they to behold her thus; but, curious to say, the girl’s husband at that moment lost all his wealth and was as poor as ever.

THE BOYHOOD OF A PAINTER

If we are to believe the proverb, a ‘Jack of all Trades is master of none,’ and it is mostly true. But here and there even in our own day, we meet with some gifted person who seems to be able to do anything he desires, and during the periods of history when men — and boys — were left more to themselves and allowed to follow their own bent, these geniuses were much less rare than at present.

Now during the last half of the fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth there lived in Italy a group of men who were in the highest possible degree Jacks of all Trades, or could have been so if they had chosen. They are known to us principally as painters, but the people amongst whom they lived very soon became aware that more than one of them could arrange you a water supply which would turn your mill wheel if there was no stream handy, or build you a palace if you were a rich citizen and wanted one, or help you to fortify your walls if you were the Lord of Milan or Florence or Ferrara; or fashion you a gold brooch as a present for your wife, if that was what you were seeking. As for making you a statue of yourself on horseback, to adorn the great square of the city over which you ruled — why, it was as easy to do that as to paint your portrait!

Chief among these ‘Universal Geniuses,’ as we should call them, was one Leonardo, son of the Florentine notary or lawyer, Piero da Vinci. He was born in the year 1452 not far from Florence and near the river Arno, and was declared by everyone to be one of the most beautiful children that ever was seen. As soon as he could crawl, he would scramble away (if his mother was busy and not thinking about him) to a place in the garden where there was always a heap of mud after a shower of rain, and sit happily on the ground pinching the mud into some sort of shape, which as he grew older, took more and more the form of something he knew. When his mother missed him and came in search of him, he would utter screams of disgust. Then the only way to quiet him was to play to him on the lute; for throughout his life Leonardo loved music, and at one time even had serious thoughts of being a professional musician.

Ser Piero was very proud of his astonishing little son, and the boy was still very young when his father decided that he must be taught by the best masters that could be found for him. Leonardo was quite willing. Lessons were no trouble to him and he speedily took away the breath of all his teachers by the amazing quickness with which he grasped everything. It did not matter if the subject was arithmetic, or the principles of music, or the study of geometry; it was enough for the boy to hear a thing once for him to understand and remember, and he constantly asked his master such difficult questions and expressed doubts so hard to explain, that the poor man was thankful indeed when school hours were ended.

But whatever lessons he might be doing, Leonardo spent most of his spare time in drawing and in modelling figures in clay, as he had done from his babyhood. His father watched him for a time in silence, wondering within himself which of the boy's many talents ought to be made the occupation of his life, and at length he decided to take Leonardo to his friend Andrea del Verrocchio, and consult him on the matter. Verrocchio, like his pupil, was a painter, a geometrician, a sculptor, a goldsmith and a musician, but had at last settled down as a sculptor, and only now and then amused himself with other arts. When father and son entered his studio or workshop, Piero gave Leonardo some clay, and bade him model anything he fancied. The boy sat down on the floor, and soon finished a tiny statuette which might have been the work of Verrocchio himself, so true to life was the figure. The sculptor was delighted, and declared that Leonardo must come to him, and that he was very sure the pupil would shortly know as much as the master.

But though he had the gift of genius, Leonardo took as much trouble with his work as if he had just been an ordinary child, with his whole future life depending on his industry. And as some of you are perhaps fond of drawing, you may like to hear how one of the greatest artists in the world set about his pictures. First he took a handful of clay and poked it and pinched it until he had got his figure exactly as he wanted it to be. Then he dipped pieces of soft material in plaster, and arranged them in folds over the naked figure. Often the stuff was too stiff and would not go in the proper lines, but long ago Leonardo had learned that no man could be an artist of any kind unless he was possessed of endless patience, and he would sit for hours over his figure, taking the drapery off and trying it afresh, till at length it assumed exactly the right shape. As soon as he had a model precisely to his mind, he would stretch a bit of very fine cambric or linen, that was old and soft, upon a board, and on this — or sometimes on paper — he would copy his figure in pencil. As he grew older, Verrocchio would teach him how you could raise heavy weights by the help of levers or cranes, how to draw up water from immense depths, or how to tunnel through mountains — for the Italians have always been famous for their skill as engineers. But it was the boy Leonardo, and not the man Verrocchio, who invented the plan of so altering the course of the river Arno that a canal might be cut between the cities of Florence and Pisa. Leonardo did not live to see this done, but two hundred years after his death a pupil of the astronomer Galileo executed it after his scheme, for the Medici ruler of Florence. He was very anxious also to raise the Church of San Giovanni and to rest it on stone 'steps,' as he called them, and showed the Signory or governing citizens of Florence how it could be done. And, says his chronicler, so persuasive was his tongue and so good seemed his reasons that while he was speaking he moved them to belief in his words, although out of his presence they all well knew it was impossible.

Was it? one wonders now.

Many stories, of course, were told of him during these years — for the Florentines were not slow to find out the genius who dwelt among them — and here is one that is very characteristic of the boy. Verrocchio was working on a picture of the baptism of our Lord by St. John, and he entrusted the painting of the Angel standing by to his pupil. When it was finished the master came and looked at it, and remained silently gazing at the figure. He was too true an artist not to feel at once that he and Leonardo had changed places, and that the boy's Angel was worth more than all the rest of the picture. The chronicler tells us that he was so wounded at this discovery that he never touched paint any more, but though it is always rather hard to find ourselves thrown into the shade, probably Verrocchio's renunciation of painting lay deeper than mere envy. Why should he do badly what another could do perfectly? The boy's genius was greater than his: let his master be the first to admit it.

Leonardo's father, Ser Piero, had gone to his country house to escape the heats of a Florentine summer. He was resting one evening in his garden when a servant appeared, saying that one of his farmers desired to speak with him. Ser Piero gave orders that the man should be brought to him, as he knew him well, and they had often fished together.

'Well, what now, Francisco?' he asked, as the farmer came up bowing, and bearing in his hands a wooden shield. The man explained that he had cut down a fig tree near his house, because it was old and bore no fruit, and had himself cut the shield he was carrying out of the wood, and had brought it to his lord, humbly hoping that Ser Piero might have the goodness to get it painted with some design, for he wished to hang it up in his kitchen, as a remembrance of the old tree.

'Very willingly will I do so,' answered Ser Piero, and when next he went to Florence he sought out his son and handed him the shield, merely telling him to paint something on it. Leonardo happened to be busy at the moment, but as soon as he had time to examine the piece of wood he found it was rough and ill made, and would need much attention before it would be possible to paint it. The first thing he did was to hold the shield before the fire till the fibres were softened and the crookedness could be straightened out. The surface was then planed and made smooth, and covered with gypsum.

So far he had not thought what the picture should be, but now he began to consider this important matter, and as he pondered a look of mischief danced in his eyes.

‘I know! That will do!’ he said to himself. ‘The person who owns it, whoever he is, shall be as frightened as if he saw the head of Medusa; only, instead of being turned to stone, he will most likely run away!’ And still smiling, Leonardo left the workshop and went to his room, taking the shield in a cloth. Then he went out into the fields and hunted about till he had collected a quantity of strange creatures, hedgehogs, lizards, tadpoles, locusts, snakes and many others, for he knew as much about what is called ‘Natural History’ as he did about everything else, and could tell exactly where these animals could be found.

As soon as he had collected enough he carried them back and locked them safely up in a kind of lumber room, where nobody was allowed to enter but himself. He then sat down and began to place them so as to cause them to form one horrible monster, with eyes and legs everywhere. It was a long time before he could make anything horrid enough to please him; again and again he undid his work, and tried to combine his creatures differently, but at last something so terrible stared him in the face that he almost felt frightened.

‘That is all right, I think,’ he said with a laugh. ‘The monster is ready, but I must find a background fitting for him.’

Taking the shield, he painted on it a black and narrow cavern. At its mouth stood the creature without form; all eyes, all legs, all mouths. Flames poured from it on every side, and a cloud of vapour rose upwards from its many nostrils. After days of hard labour, during which the animals died and filled the room with a smell from which even a boy might well be expected to shrink, Leonardo visited his father and told him he had finished the shield which he hoped would please him, and that he might have it whenever he liked. Ser Piero was at the time engaged in superintending his harvest, but when he was free he set off to see his son. Leonardo himself answered his knock, and, showing his father into another room, begged him to wait for a few minutes while he put away his work. Then he rushed back to the studio, darkened the window a little, and carefully chose a position for the easel on which the shield was standing.

‘Will you come in now, father?’ he said holding open the door, but no sooner was Ser Piero within the room than he turned to fly, so terrible was the object that met his gaze.

‘It will do, I see,’ remarked Leonardo, catching him by the arm. ‘I wanted to make something so dreadful that men would shiver with fear at the sight of it. Take it away, I pray you, and do with it as you will. But stay, I had better wrap it first in a cloth, lest it should frighten people out of their wits as you go along.’

Ser Piero took it, and departed without a word to his son; he really felt quite shaken from the shock he had had, and he determined that so wonderful a painting should never fall into the hands of a peasant. So he went to a shop where he found a shield the same size as the other, bearing the device of a heart pierced by an arrow, and when next he went into the country he bade the farmer come up to the house to receive it.

‘Oh Excellency! how beautiful! how can I ever thank you for your goodness?’ cried the man in delight when, after his long waiting, the shield was at last delivered to him.

‘I thought you would be pleased,’ answered Ser Piero, smiling to himself as he pictured what would have been the face of the man before him, had he been given Leonardo’s monster. But this he kept for some time and then sold to a merchant for a hundred ducats, who in his turn parted with it to the Duke of Milan for three times the price.

In this way Leonardo da Vinci grew to manhood, gaining friends as he went by his beauty and his talents, and keeping them by his sweetness of temper and his generosity. He loved all animals, especially horses, and could never see a caged bird without trying to buy it, in order to set it free.

The kings and popes of those days were always eager to attract artists to their courts, and vied with each other in trying to outbid rivals, and when he was very young Leonardo received a commission from the King of Portugal to draw a design for some hangings to be copied in silk in Flanders. He painted an immense number of portraits, some to please himself and others ordered by his friends, and decorated, either with painting or sculpture, a great many churches and other buildings. Two of his pictures, at any rate, you may perhaps know from engravings of them — the portrait of Francesco del Giocondo’s wife, bought by Francis the First and lately stolen from the Louvre, and the Last Supper, painted for the Dominican monks in Milan, and now almost ruined by the damp.

Leonardo was forty-one when he was invited to go to Milan by the celebrated Lodovico Sforza, uncle to the reigning duke. Knowing that Lodovico — il Moro, as he was called — had a passion for music, the painter constructed with his own hands a silver instrument, shaped like a horse’s head, to which he sang tunes invented by himself, to words made up as he went along. This delighted

Lodovico and also his wife, the young daughter of the Duke of Ferrara, who had been brought up amongst musicians and poets. Those were gay days at Milan, when all did their best to produce some form of beauty and everybody's 'best' was so very good. But dark days were soon to follow, and in a great measure they were the work of Lodovico himself.

The French, on one excuse or another, were trying hard to get a footing in Italy; Louis XII. even laid claim to the Duchy of Milan. Then came his cousin and successor Francis I., whom (in the hope of gaining his favour) Lodovico particularly wished to honour.

'What can you invent, Messer Leonardo?' Lodovico asked the painter. 'I want something no one has ever seen before; the king must be tired of grand shows, and he can get them at home. Of course we shall be obliged to give him a splendid reception for the sake of our own credit, but I should like something besides, which he can remember.'

So Messer Leonardo thought and thought, and the end of his thinking was that when the King of France entered Milan, a lion, life size, advanced to meet him, and touched the king's breast with his own. By means of a spring the lion's breast opened and from it fell sheaves of white lilies, the emblem of France.

Then too the other Italian princes wished to employ him and to make use of his varied talents. One of the Borgias sent him round the various cities over which he ruled, to inspect their fortifications, and to see what new engineering works were needed to withstand the constant sieges and the wars of state with state. Naturally the cardinals would not remain behindhand, especially those of the Medici family, Leonardo's own countrymen, and hearing that his kinsman Giuliano had induced the artist to travel to Rome in his train, Leo X. sent for him and after a long talk on many subjects expressed a desire to know if the painter was able to make figures that would fly. The idea delighted Leonardo, and he instantly set about some experiments. After many failures he at length succeeded in producing a kind of paste out of wax, and while it was still half melted he modelled some little horses and dogs and lions, scooping out the wax till only a very thin outer covering was left, all the rest being hollow. Into the figures he managed to blow some air, and as long as the air was in them they flew about to the joy and surprise of everyone, but when it was all exhausted the horses and dogs and lions came tumbling on the floor, one on top of another. Another day, when the talk had turned on feats of strength, somebody inquired whether what he had been told was true, that Leonardo was stronger than any man in Florence.

'Here I am; try me,' answered the painter.

'We will,' they all cried, and sent a servant for a horseshoe, and for an iron ring such as was used for doorknockers.

‘Now see if you can bend these,’ they said, and Leonardo took them and bent them as easily as Samson broke the ropes of the Philistines.

The last few years of his life Leonardo passed in France, where Francis I. was now king. Many of his pictures were already there, and there were others which Francis desired him to paint. But the artist was tired and ill, and made all sorts of excuses to avoid beginning his work. At last he told the king, who frequently came to visit him, that it was time he left the things of this world and turned his thoughts to the other which he would soon enter. His words were repeated sorrowfully among his friends, and though they fain would have denied their truth, yet they could not. So in May 1519 he died, leaving behind him a memory that will live while painting endures. But he was mourned, not only on account of his many talents and splendid works of all sorts, but for the beauty of his face, which lasted till his death, his merry words that lightened the burden of those who were sad, and his kindness and generosity to all who stood in need of help and comfort.

THE ADVENTURES OF A SPANISH NUN

If you had visited the convent of St. Sebastian in the Spanish town of the same name at the end of the sixteenth century, you would have found there a merry, naughty, clever little girl called Catalina de Erauso, the torment and delight of all the nuns. Catalina had been sent to the convent when she was quite a baby, because her father, like many other gentlemen in the Spain of those days, was too poor to provide for his daughters as well as his sons. And in general the girls were happy enough in the life into which they had been thrust without any will of their own, and were allowed a certain amount of pleasure and could see their relations from time to time.

The Señor de Erauso, Catalina's father, had fixed on this particular convent out of the many he had for choice, because his sister-in-law was the Mother Superior. Like the rest of the nuns she was very fond of the child who was so ready with her tongue, so clever with her hands, so quick to forgive an injury done her, if only the offender would say she was sorry! Some day, no doubt, Catalina would take her place as abbess, and her aunt felt that under her rule all would go well, for unruly as the child often was, she had the gift of winning love from everybody.

But if she had only known, Catalina had not the smallest intention of spending her days in the convent overlooking the Bay of Biscay. From her father and brothers she heard stories of the wars which had quite lately been raging in France between the Catholics and Huguenots; how a few years earlier several of her own kinsmen had gone down in the great storm which had sunk so many of the ships of the huge Armada, sent to conquer England. Something, too, she picked up of the wonders of the lands beyond the ocean, discovered a hundred years ago by Christopher Columbus. All this and much more, Catalina stored in her head, and, though she said nothing even to her closest friends, soon began to play in her mind at 'escaping from the convent.'

At first she was only in fun, and enjoyed, as many of us do, making up stories about herself. Then gradually the idea of taking part in the big world beyond the gates became too precious to set aside, and at last it so possessed her, that she only waited for the chance of carrying it out.

This happened when she was fifteen — a tall, strong, handsome girl full of energy and courage, and quick to decide whatever question came before her.

One day the nuns assembled as usual for vespers or evening prayers, and just as they were all going into chapel the Superior discovered that she had left her psalm-book upstairs, locked in her writing-table. Summoning Catalina, she handed her a key, and bade her unlock the drawer in which the book was kept, and bring it to her as fast as possible. The girl ran upstairs, but when she saw lying in the locked drawer, not only the book, but the key of the convent gate, it darted into her mind that now, if ever, was her opportunity to quit the convent. Yet even at that moment, she did not let her excitement get the better of her. She snatched up some loose money from the drawer and a small work-case that lay on a table and hid it in her dress, and without stopping a moment ran down to the great door of the convent, which she unlocked. She next rejoined her aunt who was waiting for her, and asked if she might go straight to bed, as she had a bad headache.

In this manner she secured to herself a good start, as no one would think about her for hours to come. She passed through the door carefully, locking it after her, and crept cautiously along by the wall till she reached a chestnut wood on the outskirts of the town. Here she flung herself down on a heap of dry leaves and slept till sunrise. This, fortunately for her, was very early, as she had much to do before she continued her journey. Her dress would have told any passer-by that she was a nun, or at least that she had come from a convent, and that was the last thing they must ever guess! Slipping off therefore her white petticoat, Catalina began at once to turn it into trousers such as men then wore, and in three or four hours had finished a pair which, if not exactly fashionable, would pass unnoticed. She next managed to change her long robe into a cloak, and satisfied that she would do well enough, the girl started on a walk to a town not far off, where she had resolved to try and find shelter with an elderly cousin.

It took her two days to arrive at his house, and all that time she had nothing but wild fruits and berries to live on. Of course she did not tell the cousin who she was, but merely asked if he would give hospitality to a traveller for a short time, which the kind old man was glad to do. Here Catalina rested after the fatigues she had undergone, but life in the town house was far more dull than life in the convent, and the girl had not run away for *that*! So in a few days she was again missing, and a handful of dollars also. Not very many, but just enough to take her on her way.

We meet Catalina next in the famous city of Valladolid, where King Philip III. was holding his court. Here she found things much more to her taste, and like what she had pictured. Men were walking through the streets in huge felt hats, with flowing cloaks over their fine clothes. Coaches drawn by mules jolted along and inside she caught a glimpse of ringleted heads and small bodies lost under hooped petticoats. There were soldiers, too, in abundance and bands playing music — the first Catalina had ever heard outside the convent chapel. It so delighted her that she stopped to listen, and at that moment some idle men began to laugh at her clumsy garments, and even threw stones at her. This was more than any Spanish girl could bear, even if she *had* been brought up in a convent. *She* could — and did — throw stones too, with a better aim than theirs, and very soon blood from cut heads was streaming on the roads. But the Spanish police who hurried to the spot on hearing the cries of the wounded men, did not stop to inquire into the rights of the quarrel, and would have straightway flung Catalina into prison, had not a young officer who had been watching the fight from his windows hastened to interfere, and insisted that the stranger should be released.

‘You are a brave boy,’ he said, ‘and if you like to be my page, I will gladly take you into my house.’

Catalina was grateful for the offer and remained there for three months, feeling very proud of herself in her page’s dress of dark-blue velvet. She would have stayed with the young don for much longer, had she not been frightened out of her wits one night at dusk by the appearance, in the dark little ante-room where she sat, of her own father.

He did not know her, of course; how should he? But all the same, he had come to tell of her escape to Catalina’s master, who was in a sort of way lord of the convent. Waiting in the ante-room, the girl heard all their conversation, and in dread lest she should fall into the hands of the Church and be sent back to St. Sebastian she resolved to run off before there was any risk of her being traced.

Now at that time a fleet was being fitted out for Peru, and was to sail from a seaport in the South. The scraps of talk on the subject which she had overheard in the house of the young don had fired her with the wish to go with the army in search of adventures. At the time there seemed little chance of her doing so, but while crossing the dark streets of Valladolid in her flight, the idea occurred to her that if she could manage to get on board one of the ships, she would be out of reach of capture. It was a long way to travel — almost the whole length of Spain — but by joining first one party and then another, Catalina at last found herself in the port of San Lúcar. All volunteers were welcome, and convent-bred though she was, Catalina soon managed to pick up a good deal of seamanship, while her clever hands and her strength combined made her quickly useful. Even with fair winds it was months before they reached the coast of Peru for which they were bound, and when they were almost there, their troubles began. A frightful storm arose that blew the fleet in all directions, and the vessel in which

Catalina was serving was flung on a coral reef. The sea was running high, and the ship had a deep hole in her side, and all on board knew that twenty-four hours at farthest would see her sucked beneath the water.

At the prospect of this awful doom the sailors grew frantic, and hastened to lower the long-boat and scramble into it. The captain alone refused to leave the ship, and Catalina refused to leave him. Instead, she hurriedly lashed a few spars together so as to form a raft which, even if it would not support the weight of both, would at least give them something to cling to while they swam ashore. As she was working at the raft with all her might, a vivid flash of lightning showed an enormous wave breaking over the distant boat and sweeping away the crew, who disappeared for ever.

A fit of despondency had seized on the captain, and it was in vain that the girl tried to put some of her own spirit into him. At length she realised that she had only herself to depend on, and left him alone. As soon as the raft was ready, she went down to his cabin and broke open a box of gold, out of which she took a handful of coins, tying them up in a pillow-case and fastening them securely to the raft, for she dare not put them on her own person lest the weight should sink her when once she found herself in the sea.

The moment Catalina appeared again on deck, she saw that the ship was sinking fast, and that no time was to be lost. She lowered the raft and, calling to the captain to follow her, plunged into the sea. He obeyed her, but did not give the vessel a sufficiently wide berth, and, falling against a jutting spar, was struck senseless and sucked under the vessel. Catalina had managed better. She contrived to get on the raft and was gently washed on shore by the rising tide, though she was too much exhausted by all she had gone through to have been able to swim there for herself.

For a while she lay upon the sand almost unconscious, but the hot sun which appeared suddenly above the horizon warmed her body and dried her clothes, and awoke her usual energy. She soon sat up and looked about her, but the prospect was not cheering; a desolate track stretched away north and south, and she did not know on which side stood the town of Paita whither the fleet had been bound. However, she reflected she would never find it by sitting still, and got up and climbed a rock to enable her to see farther. Great was her joy at beholding that the raft, with the money on it, had stuck in a cleft some way off along the beach, and after she had placed the coins in her own pockets she perceived a barrel of ship’s biscuits at a little distance. To be sure, the biscuits were half soaked with sea water, but even so they tasted quite nice to a starving girl.

A walk of three days brought her to Paita, where she bought some fresh clothes and obtained a situation as clerk to a merchant. But she did not keep this very long, as she incurred the jealousy of a young man who owed money to her employer. He picked a violent quarrel with Catalina, who had to fight a duel with him. Without intending to kill him, her sword passed through his body, with the result that she soon found herself in the hands of the police. By a mixture of cunning and good fortune, Catalina managed to escape from the prison in which she was confined, and making her way through the narrow streets to the harbour, she got into a small boat moored there and hoisted a sail. She was afraid to use the oars as she had no means of muffling them. The wind was behind her and she was quickly swept far out to sea, — in what direction she had not the least idea. For hours she saw nothing, and was wondering if she had escaped so many dangers only to die of hunger and thirst, when towards sunset she beheld a ship coming straight across her path. With her heart in her mouth she waved her handkerchief, though it seemed hardly possible that so small a thing should be visible in that vast expanse of sea. But it was, and the ship lay to, waiting for the boat to be blown up to her, which happened just after the sun had set beneath the horizon, and the short twilight of the tropics was over. Then it occurred to Catalina that if the name of her boat was seen she might be traced as having come from Paita, and be given up for murder. So standing up she rocked it gently from side to side till it was filled with water, then giving it a final kick to make sure it would sink, snatched at the rope which was dangling down the ship’s side, and was hauled on board.

The vessel was on her way to Chili and was filled with recruits for the war then raging with the Indians, and Catalina of course at once declared her wish to throw in her lot with them. When at length they arrived at the port for which they were bound, a cavalry officer came to inspect the newly enlisted soldiers before they were landed, and Catalina was startled to hear him addressed by her own name. It was, though he was quite unaware of it, her eldest brother, who had last seen her when she was three years old. Yet, though from first to last he never guessed the truth, he took an immediate fancy to ‘Pedro Diaz’ — for so Catalina called herself — and, as soon as he heard that Pedro was a native of his own province of Biscaya, greeted him kindly and placed him in his own regiment. But much as she longed to tell him who she was, she dared not do so, for who could tell, if it were once known that she was a woman and had run away from a convent, what the consequences might be?

Years passed away and Catalina — or ‘Pedro Diaz’ — had distinguished herself on many occasions as a cavalry officer. Then a terrible thing occurred. A lieutenant in her own regiment came to her and begged her to be his ‘second’ in a duel to be fought at eleven that night under the walls of a monastery. Catalina, though ready enough with her own sword if her hot temper was roused, had no fancy for duelling, and somehow felt more than usually unwilling to be mixed up with this affair. However, the young man begged her so earnestly not to refuse his request that at last she consented. When the moment arrived it was so dark that the two ‘principals’ were forced to tie white handkerchiefs round their arms, in order to see where to attack; and as they were afraid of arousing the attention of the monks, hardly a word was spoken. The signal was given by the other second, and the duel began — a duel ‘to the death.’ After a sharp struggle both principals fell to the ground, wounded mortally, and according to the code of honour, which lasted nearly a hundred years longer, it was necessary for the seconds to fight in order to avenge them. To Catalina, who had no quarrel with any one, this custom was hateful, and she tried only to defend herself without touching her adversary. But in the dark her foot slipped and the point of her sword entered his side.

‘Villain! You have killed me!’ he cried. They were his last words, and the voice that uttered them was the voice of Catalina’s brother!

Too much horrified to stir, the poor woman remained glued to the spot, till she found herself suddenly seized by the monks who had been awakened by the clash of weapons and by de Erauso’s dying shriek. The glare of their torches revealed that out of the four men who had met on the ground half an hour earlier only one survived, and that one was too crushed by the dreadful fate which had befallen her to be able to give any explanation. The monks kept her safely in their chapel for a few days, and then, when her mind and body had partly recovered from the shock, they provided her with a horse and a knapsack filled with food, and bade her farewell. But where to go she knew not. After the awful thing that had happened she could never return to her regiment.

After three days’ riding she came suddenly upon two soldiers who had deserted from the Spanish army, and were almost starving. As soon as Catalina had shared her food with them and they felt revived, they all agreed that their best plan was to climb over the great mountain chain of the Andes, which runs the whole length of South America, and once on the other side they would be safe and free to go where they would.

They little knew what they were undertaking. Many of the peaks are over 20,000 feet high, and are covered with perpetual snow. There was rarely to be found any material for a fire, and if by any chance they *did* come on a few sticks, they were ignorant of the Indians’ secret of kindling a flame. Soon, even the wild berries of the lower regions were left behind; there was nothing for them to eat, and very shortly it became evident that the day of the deserters was done.

By this time they were among masses of rocks which stood out in black groups from the snow, and for an instant hope rose again in their hearts at the sight of a man leaning against a tall pillar of stone, with a gun in his hand. There was something to shoot then in this fearful white solitude! An eagle perhaps, or, better still, a bear; and with a cry of joy to her companions, Catalina hastened on to greet the stranger. At the news, fresh life seemed to pour into their veins and they stumbled after her as fast as their weakness would allow. They were a little surprised that the man never appeared to see or hear them as they approached, but imagined that the snow had deadened the sound of their footsteps. Was he asleep? In that position? It was not likely! Certainly there was something very odd about him, and Catalina, striding on before the two soldiers, touched him on the shoulder. With a clatter the gun fell to the ground beside him, but he himself did not stir. Then the frightful truth burst upon her. The man was frozen to death!

After this there was no more hope for the two deserters. One sank into the snow first, the other staggered a few yards farther, and upon both came the frozen sleep that knows no waking and which, it is said, is painless.

So Catalina was left to pursue her way alone, wondering all the while how soon *her* strength also would fail her, and *her* bones be left to whiten with the rest. There was something more dreadful to her in the solitude and stillness of the mountains than there ever had been in the solitude of the sea, on the lonely coast of Peru. Yet she went on blindly, almost unconsciously, till she was awakened from her half-paralysed state by the sight of a belt of olive trees lying below her. Where there were trees, there was probably water; possibly, even men! And down she went, stumbling over stones, sliding along the edge of precipices, till she fell, senseless from exhaustion, under their shadow.

It was hours before she came to herself again, and she might have slept on still longer, had not the sound of horses’ hoofs aroused her. The wood was thick and the horsemen might have passed without noticing the figure in the tall grass, had not a ray of sunshine suddenly struck on some silver lace of Catalina’s uniform. Jumping instantly to the ground, they examined her closely and guessed at the reasons of her plight. Taking out a skin bottle, one poured brandy down her throat — though it was no light matter to force her teeth open — and another rubbed her temples. After she had shown signs of life they placed her on a horse, supporting her in the saddle, for she was still too weak and dazed to sit upright.

It was a long time — or it seemed so to Catalina — before the little company drew up at the door of a large house, and a girl ran out to see how it was that the servants who had been sent by her mother to the nearest town should have returned so soon. The poor wanderer received from both ladies the kindest welcome; and food, a warm bed, and rest soon set her to rights, and of course nobody dreamed that she was anything but the soldier she appeared. For a while Catalina was thankful to remain where she was, basking in the sun and enjoying the company of the Señora and her daughter.

It was the first time since she left Valladolid that she had ever been inside a home.

Yet, grateful as she was for all the kindness shown her, Catalina felt she could not remain for ever a guest of the widowed Señora; and she was glad when the lady proposed that they should all visit a large town lying to the south, for purposes of business. ‘And,’ Catalina thought to herself, ‘it will be easy for me, when I am once there, to invent some excuse for bidding them farewell. I cannot pass my life in a hammock under trees, thankful though I am for the rest which has been given me.’ But she did not guess that the ‘excuse’ she wanted was to be obtained only at the risk of her own neck.

Wandering about the town, she fell in with some Portuguese, and as she was fond of cards she was readily persuaded by them to sit down and gamble. Very soon, her suspicions were roused that they were not playing fair, and she watched them more closely.

‘Yes; I was sure of it,’ she thought, and grew so angry that she would have liked to challenge the whole twelve on the spot. Luckily, she contrived with great difficulty to restrain herself, and resolved only to fight the man who had won most of her money.

When this person left the gambling saloon, Catalina kept him in sight, but did not attempt to speak to him till she saw him stop before one of the houses in a dark street. Then she quickened her steps, and, tapping him on the shoulder, remarked: ‘Señor, you are a robber.’

‘It is possible,’ answered the Portuguese, turning coolly; ‘but I don’t care about being told so,’ and drew his sword.

Catalina drew hers, and, after a quick sharp fight, dealt him a mortal blow. As he fell, she looked round hastily, fearing that some of his friends might be at hand to avenge him, but all was silent. Satisfied that nobody was watching her, she tried the door, which opened instantly, and dragged the body into the passage. This done she went back to the Señora's house, and getting into bed slept soundly, only awakening the following morning to find her room filled with police.

Catalina never knew exactly how her fight with the dead man had been discovered, and as she was instantly put in prison to await her trial, perhaps it did not much matter. False witnesses were easily found who trumped up a story of vengeance, and it was useless for Catalina to swear that she had never seen the Portuguese gentleman till that evening, and knew nothing at all about him. The fact that the dead man was a native of the place, while she was a stranger, told heavily against her, and sentence was passed that she should be hanged in the public square in eight days' time.

Wearing her lieutenant's uniform from which she steadily declined to be parted, Catalina walked firmly up the ladder to the gallows on the appointed day. The executioner was new to his work, and bungled the noose which he had to place round Catalina's neck.

'Here, let *me* do it,' she said at last; 'it is plain *you* have never been at sea.' But all the same, the man's clumsiness had saved her, for before he could pull the knot, an order arrived from the Governor of the State to postpone the execution till fresh inquiries could be made. In the end the truth came out, and Catalina was set free, but was advised by the Governor not to remain in that part of the country for the present.

The advice was felt to be good by them all, but as Catalina had no money the good Señora again came to the rescue, and gave her enough to buy a horse and to take her to a large town, where she might find something to do. When at length Catalina reached the city, which bore the name of Paz or 'Peace,' some soldiers who were lounging in the streets stood up, and stared so hard at her beautiful black horse that Catalina began to suspect that something was the matter. The soldiers said nothing whatever to *her*, but one of them, catching sight of a gentleman a few paces off, ran up to him and whispered something. The mayor, for such he was, walked up to Catalina, who inquired if she could be of service to him.

'These men,' said he, 'declare that the horse you are riding was stolen from them.'

Catalina did not answer directly, but, leaping to the ground, flung the loose saddle-cloth over the horse's head. 'I bought it and paid for it in La Plata,' she replied; 'but if, your worship, these men *really* own the horse, they will be able to tell you *which* is its blind eye.'

'The left,' cried one.

‘No; the right,’ exclaimed the other.

‘Well, it must be *one* of the two, mustn’t it, your worship?’ asked she.

‘No, no! we remember now,’ they replied, consulting each other by a glance and a sign; ‘it is the left, of course.’

‘Are you sure?’ she asked again. ‘Yes — quite sure; certain.’

Upon that Catalina whisked off the saddle-cloth, and said gaily to the mayor:

‘Now, your worship, if you will take the trouble to look, you will see that the horse has nothing the matter with either eye!’

Then she bowed and rode away to look for a dinner.

Catalina’s last adventure in South America was a wild ride to the town of Cuzco, carrying on her saddle a lady whose half-mad husband was seeking to murder her. He was following fast behind, and his horse was laden with no double burden, so that in every way he had the advantage. But Catalina was a better rider, and had some start, so, in spite of a wound in her horse’s flank, she won the day and placed the lady in safety in a convent. The husband, arriving just in time to see his victim escape him, at once unsheathed his sword, and inflicted some severe wounds on Catalina. Indeed, had it not been for the interference of the bishop himself, it would have gone hardly with her.

But when, half fainting from loss of blood, she was carried into the palace and a doctor was summoned, she knew that the moment she had dreaded had come, and that she must now confess that, in spite of all her exploits and all her daring, she was only a woman. Always prompt to make up her mind, she asked for an interview with the bishop, who listened to her tale with amazement and sympathy. By his advice she entered a convent till he could write to Spain and to the Pope, and obtain forgiveness for having thrown off her nun’s habit, nearly twenty years before. As soon as could be expected, though not till after many months, the answer came: Catalina was to be sent back to Spain.

It was at the end of November 1624 that the ship entered the harbour of Cadiz, and saw a gilded barge approaching, rowed by men in royal livery. Who could it be intended for? There was no one on board either great or famous! At least so they thought, but it appears they were wrong, for there was *one* person whose adventures had thrilled the hearts of both king and people, and that was Catalina herself. As she left the barge and mounted the steps she beheld the famous Minister Olivarez waiting to receive her, and crowds thronged the streets through which she passed on her way to the palace.

Here she was requested to tell her story to the court, and as some reward for her courage in battle and for her loyalty to the crown, a pension for life was settled upon her. Poor Catalina felt very strange in the stiff uncomfortable dress of a Spanish lady, and far more than her honours and her pension did she value the permission of the Pope (whom she visited at Rome a few months later) to wear on all occasions the uniform of a cavalry officer, together with a sword and spurs.

For ten years Catalina remained in Spain, leading a quiet life, and feeling, if the truth be told, terribly dull. She was forty-three when she heard that an expedition to South America was again being fitted out, and she lost no time in joining the army. Oh, how happy she was to be back in the old life, where, even in the slow voyages of those times, a stirring adventure might befall you at any hour of the day or night! They sailed first to the Gulf of Mexico and stopped in the port of Vera Cruz, where the officers arranged to go on shore and have a grand dinner at the best inn in the place. Catalina was of course to go with them, and jumped into the boat with the rest, laughing and talking in the highest spirits as if twenty years had rolled from her. In a quarter of an hour they reached the inn, but as they gathered round the table, someone inquired: ‘Where is Catalina?’

‘Catalina? Isn’t she here?’ was the answer. ‘Certainly she was in the boat, for she sat by me!’

‘Well, but where has she gone?’ Ah! that no one knew — and what is more, no one ever *did* know!

FINIS

The Novels

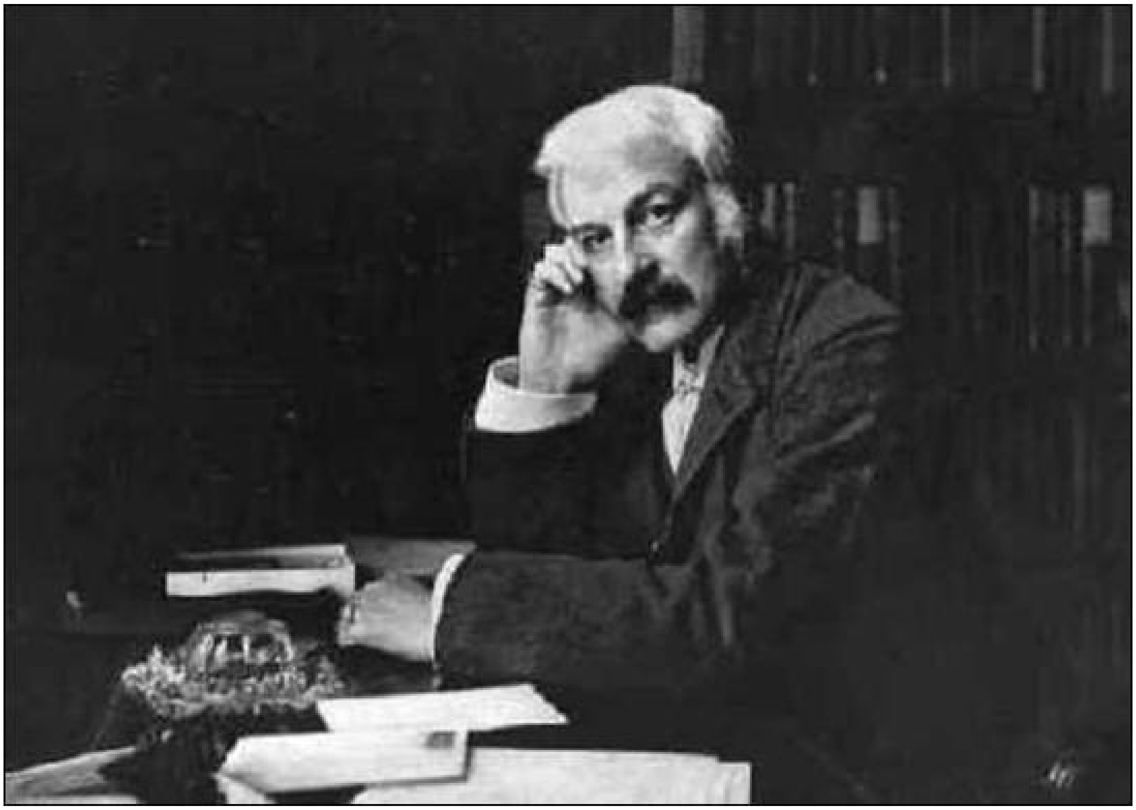

Lang in his study, 1910

THE MARK OF CAIN

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CHAPTER I. — A Tale of Two Clubs.

“Such arts the gods who dwell on high
Have given to the Greek.” — *Lays of Ancient Rome.*

In the Strangers’ Room of the Olympic Club the air was thick with tobacco-smoke, and, despite the bitter cold outside, the temperature was uncomfortably high. Dinner was over, and the guests, broken up into little groups, were chattering noisily. No one had yet given any sign of departing: no one had offered a welcome apology for the need of catching an evening train.

Perhaps the civilized custom which permits women to dine in the presence of the greedier sex is the proudest conquest of Culture. Were it not for the excuse of “joining the ladies,” dinner-parties (Like the congregations in Heaven, as described in the hymn) would “ne’er break up,” and suppers (like Sabbaths, on the same authority) would never end.

“Hang it all, will the fellows *never* go?”

So thought Maitland, of St. Gatien’s, the founder of the feast. The inhospitable reflections which we have recorded had all been passing through his brain as he rather moodily watched the twenty guests he had been feeding — one can hardly say entertaining. It was a “duty dinner” he had been giving — almost everything Maitland did was done from a sense of duty — yet he scarcely appeared to be reaping the reward of an approving conscience. His acquaintances, laughing and gossipping round the half-empty wine-glasses, the olives, the scattered fruit, and “the ashes of the weeds of their delight,” gave themselves no concern about the weary host. Even at his own party, as in life generally, Maitland felt like an outsider. He wakened from his reverie as a strong hand was laid lightly on his shoulder.

“Well, Maitland,” said a man sitting down beside him, “what have *you* been doing this long time?”

“What have I been doing, Barton?” Maitland answered. “Oh, I have been reflecting on the choice of a life, and trying to humanize myself! Bielby says I have not enough human nature.”

“Bielby is quite right; he is the most judicious of college dons and father-confessors, old man. And how long do you mean to remain his pupil and penitent? And how is the pothouse getting on?”

Frank Barton, the speaker, had been at school with Maitland, and ever since, at college and in life, had bullied, teased, and befriended him. Barton was a big young man, with great thews and sinews, and a broad, breast beneath his broadcloth and wide shirt-front. He was blonde, prematurely bald, with an aquiline commanding nose, keen, merry blue eyes, and a short, fair beard. He had taken a medical as well as other degrees at the University; he had studied at Vienna and Paris; he was even what Captain Costigan styles “a scoientific cyarkter.” He had written learnedly in various Proceedings of erudite societies; he had made a cruise in a man-of-war, a scientific expedition; and his *Les Tatouages, Étude Médico-Lêgale*, published in Paris, had been commended by the highest authorities. Yet, from some whim of philanthropy, he had not a home and practice in Cavendish Square, but dwelt and labored in Chelsea.

“How is your pothouse getting on?” he asked again.

“The pothouse? Oh, the *Hit or Miss* you mean? Well, I’m afraid it’s not very successful I took the lease of it, you know, partly by way of doing some good in a practical kind of way. The working men at the waterside won’t go to clubs, where there is nothing but coffee to drink, and little but tracts to read. I thought if I gave them sound beer, and looked in among them now and then of an evening, I might help to civilize them a bit, like that fellow who kept the Thieves’ Club in the East End. And then I fancied they might help to make *me* a little more human. But it does not seem quite to succeed. I fear I am a born wet blanket But the idea is good. Mrs. St. John Deloraine quite agrees with me about *that*. And she is a high authority.”

“Mrs. St. John Deloraine? I’ve heard of her. She is a lively widow, isn’t she?”

“She is a practical philanthropist,” answered Maitland, flushing a little.

“Pretty, too, I have been told?”

“Yes; she is ‘conveniently handsome,’ as Izaak Walton says.”

“I say, Maitland, here’s a chance to humanize you. Why don’t you ask her to marry you? Pretty and philanthropic and rich — what better would you ask?”

“I wish everyone wouldn’t bother a man to marry,” Maitland replied testily, and turning red in his peculiar manner; for his complexion was pale and unwholesome.

“What a queer chap you are, Maitland; what’s the matter with you? Here you are, young, entirely without encumbrances, as the advertisements say, no relations to worry you, with plenty of money, let alone what you make by writing, and yet you are not happy. What is the matter with you?”

“Well, you should know best What’s the good of your being a doctor, and acquainted all these years with my moral and physical constitution (what there is of it), if you can’t tell what’s the nature of my complaint?”

“I don’t diagnose many cases like yours, old boy, down by the side of the water, among the hardy patients of Mundy & Barton, general practitioners. There is plenty of human nature *there!*”

“And do you mean to stay there with Mundy much longer?”

“Well, I don’t know. A fellow is really doing some good, and it is a splendid practice for mastering surgery. They are always falling off roofs, or having weights fall on them, or getting jammed between barges, or kicking each other into most interesting jellies. Then the foreign sailors are handy with their knives. Altogether, a man learns a good deal about surgery in Chelsea. But, I say,” Barton went on, lowering his voice, “where on earth did you pick up —— ?”

Here he glanced significantly at a tall man, standing at some distance, the centre of half a dozen very youthful revellers.

“Cranley, do you mean? I met him at the *Trumpet* office. He was writing about the Coolie Labor Question and the Eastern Question. He has been in the South Seas, like you.”

“Yes; he has been in a lot of queerer places than the South Seas,” answered the other, “and he ought to know something about Coolies. He has dealt in them, I fancy.”

“I daresay,” Maitland replied rather wearily. “He seems to have travelled a good deal: perhaps he has travelled in Coolies, whatever they may be.”

“Now, my dear fellow, do you know what kind of man your guest is, or don’t you?”

“He seems to be a military and sporting kind of gent, so to speak,” said Maitland; “but what does it matter?”

“Then you don’t know why he left his private tutor’s; you don’t know why he left the University; you don’t know why he left the Ninety-second; you don’t know, and no one does, what he did after that; and you never heard of that affair with the Frenchman in Egypt?”

“Well,” Maitland replied, “about his ancient history I own I don’t know anything. As to the row with the Frenchman at Cairo, he told me himself. He said the beggar was too small for him to lick, and that duelling was ridiculous.”

“They didn’t take that view of it at Shephard’s Hotel”

“Well, it is not my affair,” said Maitland. “One should see all sort of characters, Bielby says. This is not an ordinary fellow. Why, he has been a sailor before the mast, he says, by way of adventure, and he is full of good stories. I rather like him, and he can’t do my moral character any harm. *I’m* not likely to deal in Coolies, at my time of life, nor quarrel with warlike aliens.”

“No; but he’s not a good man to introduce to these boys from Oxford,” Barton was saying, when the subject of their conversation came up, surrounded by his little court of undergraduates.

The Hon. Thomas Cranley was a good deal older than the company in which he found himself. Without being one of the hoary youths who play Falstaff to every fresh heir’s Prince Harry, he was a middle-aged man, too obviously accustomed to the society of boys. His very dress spoke of a prolonged youth. À large cat’s-eye, circled with diamonds, blazed solitary in his shirt-front, and his coat was cut after the manner of the contemporary reveller. His chin was clean shaven, and his face, though a good deal worn, was ripe, smooth, shining with good cheer, and of a purply bronze hue, from exposure to hot suns and familiarity with the beverages of many peoples. His full red lips, with their humorous corners, were shaded by a small black mustache, and his twinkling bistre-colored eyes, beneath mobile black eyebrows, gave Cranley the air of a jester and a good fellow. In manner he was familiar, with a kind of deference, too, and reserve, “like a dog that is always wagging his tail and deprecating a kick,” thought Barton grimly, as he watched the other’s genial advance.

“He’s going to say good-night, bless him,” thought Maitland gratefully. “Now the others will be moving too, I hope!”

So Maitland rose with much alacrity as Cranley approached him. To stand up would show, he thought, that he was not inhospitably eager to detain the parting guest.

“Good-night, Mr. Maitland,” said the senior, holding out his hand.

“It is still early,” said the host, doing his best to play his part. “Must you really go?”

“Yes; the night’s young” (it was about half-past twelve), “but I have a kind of engagement to look in at the Cockpit, and three or four of your young friends here are anxious to come with me, and see how we keep it up round there. Perhaps you and your friend will walk with us.” Here he bowed slightly in the direction of Barton.

“There will be a little *bac* going on,” he continued— “*un petit bac de santé*; and these boys tell me they have never played anything more elevating than loo.”

“I’m afraid I am no good at a round game,” answered Maitland, who had played at his Aunt’s at Christmas, and who now observed with delight that everyone was moving; “but here is Barton, who will be happy to accompany you, I daresay.”

“If you’re for a frolic, boys,” said Barton, quoting Dr. Johnson, and looking rather at the younger men than at Cranley, “why, I will not balk you. Good-night, Maitland.”

And he shook hands with his host.

“Good-nights” were uttered in every direction; sticks, hats, and umbrellas were hunted up; and while Maitland, half-asleep, was being whirled to his rooms in Bloomsbury in a hansom, his guests made the frozen pavement of Piccadilly ring beneath their elegant heels.

"It is only round the corner," said Cranley to the four or five men who accompanied him. "The Cockpit, where I am taking you, is in a fashionable slum off St. James's. We're just there."

There was nothing either meretricious or sinister in the aspect of that favored resort, the Cockpit, as the Decade Club was familiarly called by its friends — and enemies. Two young Merton men and the freshman from New, who were enjoying their Christmas vacation in town, and had been dining with Maitland, were a little disappointed in the appearance of the place. They had hoped to knock mysteriously at a back door in a lane, and to be shown, after investigating through a loopholed wicket, into a narrow staircase, which, again, should open on halls of light, full of blazing wax candles and magnificent lacqueys, while a small mysterious man would point out the secret hiding-room, and the passages leading on to the roof or into the next house, in case of a raid by the police. Such was the old idea of a "Hell;" but the advance of Thought has altered all these early notions. The Decade Club was like any other small club. A current of warm air, charged with tobacco-smoke, rushed forth into the frosty night when the swinging door was opened; a sleepy porter looked out of his little nest, and Cranley wrote the names of the companions he introduced in a book which was kept for that purpose.

"Now you are free of the Cockpit for the night," he said, genially. "It's a livelier place, in the small hours, than that classical Olympic we've just left."

They went upstairs, passing the doors of one or two rooms, lit up but empty, except for two or three men who were sleeping in uncomfortable attitudes on sofas. The whole of the breadth of the first floor, all the drawing-room of the house before it became a club, had been turned into a card-room, from which brilliant lights, voices, and a heavy odor of tobacco and alcohol poured out when the door was opened. A long green baize-covered table, of very light wood, ran down the centre of the room, while refreshments stood on smaller tables, and a servant out of livery sat, half-asleep, behind a great desk in the remotest corner. There were several empty chairs round the green baize-covered table, at which some twenty men were sitting, with money before them; while one, in the middle, dealt out the cards on a broad flap of smooth black leather let into the baize. Every now and then he threw the cards he had been dealing into a kind of well in the table, and after every deal he raked up his winnings with a rake, or distributed gold and counters to the winners, as mechanically as if he had been a croupier at Monte Carlo. The players, who were all in evening dress, had scarcely looked up when the strangers entered the room.

"Brought some recruits, Cranley?" asked the Banker, adding, as he looked at his hand, "*J'en donne!*" and becoming absorbed in his game again.

"The game you do not understand?" said Cranley to one of his recruits.

"Not quite," said the lad, shaking his head.

"All right; I will soon show you all about it; and I wouldn't play, if I were you, till you *know* all about it. Perhaps, after you know *all* about it, you'll think it wiser not to play at all At least, you might well think so abroad, where very fishy things are often done. Here it's all right, of course."

"Is baccarat a game you can be cheated at, then — I mean, when people are inclined to cheat?"

"Cheat! Oh, rather! There are about a dozen ways of cheating at baccarat."

The other young men from Maitland's party gathered round their mentor, who continued his instructions in a low voice, and from a distance whence the play could be watched, while the players were not likely to be disturbed by the conversation.

"Cheating is the simplest thing in the world, at Nice or in Paris," Cranley went on; "but to show you how it is done, in case you ever do play in foreign parts, I must explain the game. You see the men first put down their stakes within the thin white line on the edge of the tabla Then the Banker deals two cards to one of the men on his left, and all the fellows on that side stand by *his* luck. Then he deals two to a chappie on his right, and all the punters on the right, back that sportsman. And he deals two cards to himself. The game is to get as near nine as possible, ten, and court cards, not counting at all. If the Banker has eight or nine, he does not offer cards; if he has less, he gives the two players, if they ask for them, one card each, and takes one himself if he chooses. If they hold six, seven, or eight, they stand; if less, they take a card. Sometimes one stands at five; it depends. Then the Banker wins if he is nearer nine than the players, and they win if *they* are better than he; and that's the whole affair."

"I don't see where the cheating can come in," said one of the young fellows.

"Dozens of ways, as I told you. A man may have an understanding with the waiter, and play with arranged packs; but the waiter is always the dangerous element in *that* little combination. He's sure to peach or blackmail his accomplice. Then the cards may be marked. I remember, at Ostend, one fellow, a big German; he wore spectacles, like all Germans, and he seldom gave the players anything better than three court cards when he dealt One evening he was in awful luck, when he happened to go for his cigar-case, which he had left in the hall in his greatcoat pocket. He laid down his spectacles on the table, and someone tried them on. As soon as he took up the cards he gave a start, and sang out, ‘Here’s a swindle! *Nous sommes volés!’* He could see, by the help of the spectacles, that all the nines and court cards were marked; and the spectacles were regular patent double million magnifiers.”

“And what became of the owner of the glasses?”

“Oh, he just looked into the room, saw the man wearing them, and didn’t wait to say good-night. He just *went!*”

Here Cranley chuckled.

“I remember another time, at Nice: I always laugh when I think of it! There was a little Frenchman who played nearly every night. He would take the bank for three or four turns, and he almost always won. Well, one night he had been at the theatre, and he left before the end of the piece and looked in at the Cercle. He took the Bank: lost once, won twice; then he offered cards. The man who was playing nodded, to show he would take one, and the Frenchman laid down an eight of clubs, a greasy, dirty old rag, with *théâtre français de nice* stamped on it in big letters. It was his ticket of readmission at the theatre that they gave him when he went out, and it had got mixed up with a nice little arrangement in cards he had managed to smuggle into the club pack. I’ll never forget his face and the other man’s when *Théâtre Français* turned up. However, you understand the game now, and if you want to play, we had better give fine gold to the waiter in exchange for bone counters, and get to work.”

Two or three of the visitors followed Cranley to the corner where the white, dissipated-looking waiter of the card-room sat, and provided themselves with black and red *jetons* (bone counters) of various values, to be redeemed at the end of the game.

When they returned to the table the banker was just leaving his post.

“I’m cleaned out,” said he, “*décavé*. Good-night,” and he walked away.

No one seemed anxious to open a bank. The punters had been winning all night, and did not like to desert their luck.

“Oh, this will never do,” cried Cranley. “If no one else will open a bank, I’ll risk a couple of hundred, just to show you beginners how it is done!”

Cranley sat down, lit a cigarette, and laid the smooth silver cigarette-case before him. Then he began to deal.

Fortune at first was all on the side of the players. Again and again Cranley chucked out the counters he had lost, which the others gathered in, or pushed three or four bank-notes with his little rake in the direction of a more venturesome winner. The new-comers, who were winning, thought they had never taken part in a sport more gentlemanly and amusing.

“I must have one shy,” said Martin, one of the boys who had hitherto stood with Barton, behind the Banker, looking on. He was a gaudy youth with a diamond stud, rich, and not fond of losing. He staked five pounds and won; he left the whole sum on and lost, lost again, a third time, and then said, “May I draw a cheque?”

“Of course you may,” Cranley answered. “The waiter will give you *tout ce qu’il faut pour écrire*, as the stage directions say; but I don’t advise you to plunge. You’ve lost quite enough. Yet they say the devil favors beginners, so you can’t come to grief.”

The young fellow by this time was too excited to take advice. His cheeks had an angry flush, his hands trembled as he hastily constructed some paper currency of considerable value. The parallel horizontal wrinkles of the gambler were just sketched on his smooth girlish brow as he returned with his paper. The bank had been losing, but not largely. The luck turned again as soon as Martin threw down some of his scrip. Thrice consecutively he lost.

“Excuse me,” said Barton suddenly to Cranley, “may I help myself to one of your cigarettes?”

He stooped as he spoke, over the table, and Cranley saw him pick up the silver cigarette-case. It was a handsome piece of polished silver.

“Certainly; help yourself. Give me back my cigarette-case, please, when you have done with it.”

He dealt again, and lost.

“What a nice case!” said Barton, examining it closely. “There is an Arabic word engraved on it.”

“Yes, yes,” said Cranley, rather impatiently, holding out his hand for the thing, and pausing before he dealt. “The case was given me by the late Khédive, dear old Ismail, bless him! The word is a talisman.”

“I thought so. The case seemed to bring you luck,” said Barton.

Cranley half turned and threw a quick look at him, as rapid and timid as the glance of a hare in its form.

“Come, give me it back, please,” he said.

“Now, just oblige me: let me try what there is in luck. Go on playing while I rub up my Arabic, and try to read this ineffable name on the case. Is it the word of Power of Solomon?”

Cranley glanced back again. “All right,” he said, “as you are so curious — -j’en donne!”

He offered cards, and lost. Martin’s face brightened up. His paper currency was coming back to him.

“It’s a shame,” grumbled Cranley, “to rob a fellow of his fetich. Waiter, a small brandy-and-soda! Confound your awkwardness! Why do you spill it over the cards?”

By Cranley's own awkwardness, more than the waiter's, a little splash of the liquid had fallen in front of him, on the black leather part of the table where he dealt. He went on dealing, and his luck altered again. The rake was stretched out over both halves of the long table; the gold and notes and counters, with a fluttering assortment of Martin's I O U's, were all dragged in. Martin went to the den of the money-changer sullenly, and came back with fresh supplies.

"Banco?" he cried, meaning that he challenged Cranley for all the money in the bank. There must have been some seven hundred pounds.

"All right," said Cranley, taking a sip of his soda water. He had dealt two cards, when his hands were suddenly grasped as in two vices, and cramped to the table. Barton had bent over from behind and caught him by the wrists.

Cranley made one weak automatic movement to extricate himself; then he sat perfectly still. His face, which he turned over his shoulder, was white beneath the stains of tan, and his lips were blue.

"Damn you!" he snarled. "What trick are you after now?"

"Are you drunk, Barton?" cried some one.

"Leave him alone!" shouted some of the players, rising from their seats; while others, pressing round Barton, looked over his shoulder without seeing any excuse for his behavior.

"Gentlemen," said Barton, in a steady voice, "I leave my conduct in the hands of the club. If I do not convince them that Mr. Cranley has been cheating, I am quite at their disposal, and at his. Let anyone who doubts what I say look here."

"Well, I'm looking here, and I don't see what you are making such a fuss about," said Martin, from the group behind, peering over at the table and the cards.

"Will you kindly —— No, it is no use." The last remark was addressed to the captive, who had tried to release his hands. "Will you kindly take up some of the cards and deal them slowly, to right and left, over that little puddle of spilt soda water on the leather? Get as near the table as you can."

There was a dead silence while Martin made this experiment.

"By gad, I can see every pip on the cards!" cried Martin.

"Of course you can; and if you had the art of correcting fortune, you could make use of what you see. At the least you would know whether to take a card or stand."

"I didn't," said the wretched Cranley. "How on earth was I to know that the infernal fool of a waiter would spill the liquor there, and give you a chance against me?"

"You spilt the liquor yourself," Barton answered coolly, "when I took away your cigarette-case. I saw you passing the cards over the surface of it, which anyone can see for himself is a perfect mirror. I tried to warn you — for I did not want a row — when I said the case ‘seemed to bring you luck.’ But you would not be warned; and when the cigarette-case trick was played out, you fell back on the old dodge with the drop of water. Will anyone else convince himself that I am right before I let Mr. Cranley go?”

One or two men passed the cards, as they had seen the Banker do, over the spilt soda water.

“It’s a clear case,” they said. “Leave him alone.”

Barton slackened his grip of Cranley’s hands, and for some seconds they lay as if paralyzed on the table before him, white and cold, with livid circles round the wrists. The man’s face was deadly pale, and wet with perspiration. He put out a trembling hand to the glass of brandy-and-water that stood beside him; the class rattled against his teeth as he drained all the contents at a gulp.

“You shall hear from me,” he grumbled, and, with an inarticulate muttering of threats he made his way, stumbling and catching at chairs, to the door. When he had got outside, he leaned against the wall, like a drunken man, and then shambled across the landing into a reading-room. It was empty, and Cranley fell into a large easy-chair, where he lay crumpled up, rather than sat, for perhaps ten minutes, holding his hand against his heart.

“They talk about having the courage of one’s opinions. Confound it! Why haven’t I the nerve for my character? Hang this heart of mine! Will it never stop thumping?”

He sat up and looked about him, then rose and walked toward the table; but his head began to swim, and his eyes to darken; so he fell back again in his seat, feeling drowsy and beaten. Mechanically he began to move the hand that hung over the arm of his low chair, and it encountered a newspaper which had fallen on the floor. He lifted it automatically and without thought: it was the *Times*. Perhaps to try his eyes, and see if they served him again after his collapse, he ran them down the columns of the advertisements.

Suddenly something caught his attention; his whole lax figure grew braced again as he read a passage steadily through more than twice or thrice. When he had quite mastered this, he threw down the paper and gave a low whistle.

“So the old boy’s dead,” he reflected; “and that drunken tattooed ass and his daughter are to come in for the money and the mines! They’ll be clever that find him, and I shan’t give them his address! What luck some men have!”

Here he fell into deep thought, his brows and lips working eagerly.

“I’ll do it,” he said at last, cutting the advertisement out of the paper with a penknife. “It isn’t often a man has a chance to *star* in this game of existence. I’ve lost all my own social Lives: one in that business at Oxford, one in the row at Ali

Musjid, and the third went — to-night. But I'll *star*. Every sinner should desire a new Life," he added with a sneer.*

* "Starring" is paying for a new "Life" at Pool.

He rose, steady enough now, walked to the door, paused and listened, heard the excited voices in the card-room still discussing him, slunk down-stairs, took his hat and greatcoat, and swaggered past the porter. Mechanically he felt in his pocket, as he went out of the porch, for his cigarette-case; and he paused at the little fount of fire at the door.

He was thinking that he would never light a cigarette there again.

Presently he remembered, and swore. He had left his case on the table of the card-room, where Barton had laid it down, and he had not the impudence to send back for it.

"*Vile damnum!*" he muttered (for he had enjoyed a classical education), and so disappeared in the frosty night.

CHAPTER II. — In the Snow.

The foul and foggy night of early February was descending, some weeks after the scene in the Cockpit, on the river and the town. Night was falling from the heavens; or rather, night seemed to be rising from the earth — steamed up, black, from the dingy trampled snow of the streets, and from the vapors that swam above the squalid houses. There was coal-smoke and a taste of lucifer matches in the air. In the previous night there had been such a storm as London seldom sees; the powdery, flying snow had been blown for many hours before a tyrannous northeast gale, and had settled down, like dust in a neglected chamber, over every surface of the city. Drifts and “snow-wreathes,” as northern folk say, were lying in exposed places, in squares and streets, as deep as they lie when sheep are “smoored” on the sides of Sundhope or Penchrist in the desolate Border-land. All day London had been struggling under her cold winding-sheet, like a feeble, feverish patient trying to throw off a heavy white counterpane. Now the counterpane was dirty enough. The pavements were three inches deep in a rich greasy deposit of mud and molten ice. Above the round glass or iron coverings of coal-cellars the foot-passengers slipped, “ricked” their backs, and swore as they stumbled, if they did not actually fall down, in the filth. Those who were in haste, and could afford it, travelled, at fancy prices, in hansoms with two horses driven tandem. The snow still lay comparatively white on the surface of the less-frequented thoroughfares, with straight shining black marks where wheels had cut their way.

At intervals in the day the fog had fallen blacker than night. Down by the waterside the roads were deep in a mixture of a weak gray-brown or coffee color. Beside one of the bridges in Chelsea, an open slope leads straight to the stream, and here, in the afternoon — for a late start was made — the carts of the Vestry had been led, and loads of slush that had choked up the streets in the more fashionable parts of the town had been unladen into the river. This may not be the most; scientific of sanitary modes of clearing the streets and squares, but it was the way that recommended itself to the wisdom of the Contractor. In the early evening the fog had lightened a little, but it fell sadly again, and grew so thick that the bridge was lost in mist half-way across the river, like the arches of that fatal bridge beheld by Mirza in his Vision. The masts of the vessels moored on the near bank disappeared from view, and only a red lamp or two shone against the blackness of the hulks. From the public-house at the corner — the *Hit* *or Miss* — streamed a fan-shaped flood of light, soon choked by the fog.

Out of the muddy twilight of a street that runs at right angles to the river, a cart came crawling; its high-piled white load of snow was faintly visible before the brown horses (they were yoked tandem) came into view. This cart was driven down to the water-edge, and was there upturned, with much shouting and cracking of whips on the part of the men engaged, and with a good deal of straining, slipping, and stumbling on the side of the horses.

One of the men jumped down, and fumbled at the iron pins which kept the backboard of the cart in its place.

"Blarmme, Bill," he grumbled, "if the blessed pins ain't froze."

Here he put his wet fingers in his mouth, blowing on them afterward, and smacking his arms across his breast to restore the circulation.

The comrade addressed as Bill merely stared speechlessly as he stood at the smoking head of the leader, and the other man tugged again at the pin.

"It won't budge," he cried at last. "Just run into the *Hit or Miss* at the corner, mate, and borrow a hammer; and you might get a pint o' hot beer when ye're at it. Here's fourpence. I was with three that found a quid in the *Mac*,* end of last week; here's the last of it."

* A quid in the *Mac* — a sovereign in the street-scrapings.
called *Mac* from Macadam, and employed as mortar in
building eligible freehold tenements.

He fumbled in his pocket, but his hands were so numb that he could scarcely capture the nimble fourpence. Why should the "nimble fourpence" have the monopoly of agility?

"I'm Blue Ribbon, Tommy, don't yer know," said Bill, with regretful sullenness. His ragged great-coat, indeed, was decorated with the azure badge of avowed and total abstinence.

"Blow yer blue ribbon! Hold on where ye are, and I'll bring the bloomin' hammer myself."

Thus growling, Tommy strode indifferent through the snow, his legs protected by bandages of straw ropes. Presently he reappeared in the warmer yellow of the light that poured through the windows of the old public-house. He was wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, which he then thrust into the deeps of his pockets, hugging a hammer to his body under his armpit.

"A little hot beer would do yer bloomin' temper a deal more good than ten yards o' blue ribbon at sixpence. Blue ruin's more in *my* line," observed Thomas, epigram-matically, much comforted by his refreshment. Aid with two well-directed taps he knocked the pins out of their sockets, and let down the backboard of the cart.

Bill, uncomforted by ale, sulkily jerked the horses forward; the cart was tilted up, and the snow tumbled out, partly into the shallow shore-water, partly on to the edge of the slope.

"Ullo!" cried Tommy suddenly. "E're's an old coat-sleeve a sticking out o' the snow."

"'Alves!" exclaimed Bill, with a noble eye on the main chance.

"'Alves! of course, 'alves. Ain't we on the same lay," replied the chivalrous Tommy. Then he cried, "Lord preserve us, mate; *there's a cove in the coat!*"

He ran forward, and clutched the elbow of the sleeve which stood up stiffly above the frozen mound of lumpy snow. He might well have thought at first that the sleeve was empty, such a very stick of bone and skin was the arm he grasped within it.

"Here, Bill, help us to dig him out, poor chap!"

"Is he dead?" asked Bill, leaving the horses' heads.

"Dead! he's bound to be dead, under all that weight. But how the dickens did he get into the cart? Guess we didn't shovel him in, eh; we'd have seen him?"

By this time the two men had dragged a meagre corpse out of the snow heap. A rough worn old pilot-coat, a shabby pair of corduroy trousers, and two broken boots through which the toes could be seen peeping ruefully, were all the visible raiment of the body. The clothes lay in heavy swathes and folds over the miserable bag of bones that had once been a tall man. The peaked blue face was half hidden by a fell of iron-gray hair, and a grizzled beard hung over the breast.

The two men stood for some moments staring at the corpse. A wretched woman in a thin gray cotton dress had come down from the bridge, and shivered beside the body for a moment.

"He's a goner," was her criticism. "I wish *I* was."

With this aspiration she shivered back into the fog again, walking on her unknown way. By this time a dozen people had started up from nowhere, and were standing in a tight ring round the body. The behavior of the people was typical of London gazers. No one made any remark, or offered any suggestion; they simply stared with all their eyes and souls, absorbed in the unbought excitement of the spectacle. They were helpless, idealess, interested and unconcerned.

"Run and fetch a peeler, Bill," said Tommy at last.

"Peeler be hanged! Bloomin' likely I am to find a peeler. Fetch him yourself."

"Sulky devil you are," answered Tommy, who was certainly of milder mood; whereas Bill seemed a most unalluring example of the virtue of Temperance. It is true that he had only been "Blue Ribbon" since the end of his Christmas bout — that is, for nearly a fortnight — and Virtue, a precarious tenant, was not yet comfortable in her new lodgings.

Before Tommy returned from his quest the dusk had deepened into night The crowd round the body in the pea-coat had grown denser, and it might truly be said that "the more part knew not wherefore they had come together." The centre of interest was not a fight, they were sure, otherwise the ring would have been swaying this way and that. Neither was it a dispute between a cabman and his fare: there was no sound of angry repartees. It might be a drunken woman, or a man in a fit, or a lost child. So the outer circle of spectators, who saw nothing, waited, and patiently endured till the moment of revelation should arrive. Respectable people who passed only glanced at the gathering; respectable people may wonder, but they never do find out the mystery within a London crowd. On the extreme fringe of the mob were some amateurs who had just been drinking in the *Hit or Miss*. They were noisy, curious, and impatient.

At last Tommy arrived with two policeman, who, acting on his warning, had brought with them a stretcher. He had told them briefly how the dead man was found in the cart-load of snow.

Before the men in blue, the crowd of necessity opened. One of the officers stooped down and flashed his lantern on the heap of snow where the dead face lay, as pale as its frozen pillow.

"Lord, it's old Dicky Shields!" cried a voice in the crowd, as the peaked still features were lighted up.

The man who spoke was one of the latest spectators that had arrived, after the news that some pleasant entertainment was on foot had passed into the warm alcoholic air and within the swinging doors of the *Hit or Miss*.

"You know him, do you?" asked the policeman with the lantern.

"Know him, rather! Didn't I give him sixpence for rum when he tattooed this here cross and anchor on my arm? Dicky was a grand hand at tattooing, bless you: he'd tattooed himself all over!"

The speaker rolled up his sleeve, and showed, on his burly red forearm, the emblems of Faith and Hope rather neatly executed in blue.

"Why, he was in the *Hit or Miss*," the speaker went on, "no later nor last night."

"Wot beats me," said Tommy again, as the policeman lifted the light corpse, and tried vainly to straighten the frozen limbs, "Wot beats me is how he got in this here cart of ours."

"He's light enough surely," added Tommy; "but I warrant *we* didn't chuck him on the cart with the snow in Belgrave Square."

"Where do you put up at night?" asked one of the policemen suddenly. He had been ruminating on the mystery.

"In the yard there, behind that there hoarding," answered Tommy, pointing to a breached and battered palisade near the corner of the public-house.

At the back of this ricketty plank fence, with its particolored tatters of damp and torn advertisements, lay a considerable space of waste ground. The old houses that recently occupied the site had been pulled down, probably as condemned "slums," in some moment of reform, when people had nothing better to think of than the housing of the poor.

There had been an idea of building model lodgings for tramps, with all the latest improvements, on the space, but the idea evaporated when something else occurred to divert the general interest. Now certain sheds, with roofs sloped against the nearest walls, formed a kind of lumber-room for the parish.

At this time the scavengers' carts were housed in the sheds, or outside the sheds when these were overcrowded. Not far off were stables for the horses, and thus the waste ground was not left wholly unoccupied.

"Was this cart o' yours under the sheds all night or in the open?" asked the policeman, with an air of penetration.

"Just outside the shed, worn't it, Bill?" replied Tommy.

Bill said nothing, being a person disinclined to commit himself.

"If the cart was outside," said the policeman, "then the thing's plain enough. You started from there, didn't you, with the cart in the afternoon?"

"Ay," answered Tommy.

"And there was a little sprinkle o' snow in the cart?"

"May be there wos. I don't remember one way or the other."

"Then you *must* be a stupid if you don't see that this here cove," pointing to the dead man, "got drinking too much last night, lost hisself, and wandered inside the hoarding, where he fell asleep in the cart."

"Snow do make a fellow bloomin' sleepy," one of the crowd assented.

"Well, he never wakened no more, and the snow had covered over his body when you started with the cart, and him in it, unbeknown. He's light enough to make no difference to the weight. Was it dark when you started?"

"One of them spells of fog was on; you could hardly see your hand," grunted Tommy.

"Well, then, it's as plain as — as the nose on your face," said the policeman, without any sarcastic intentions. "That's how it was."

"Bravo, Bobby!" cried one of the crowd. "They should make you an inspector, and set you to run in them dynamiting Irish coves."

The policeman was not displeased at this popular tribute to his shrewdness. Dignity forbade him, however, to acknowledge the compliment, and he contented himself with lifting the two handles of the stretcher which was next him. A covering was thrown over the face of the dead man, and the two policemen, with their burden, began to make their way northward to the hospital.

A small mob followed them, but soon dwindled into a tail of street boys and girls. These accompanied the body till it disappeared from their eyes within the hospital doors. Then they waited for half an hour or so, and at last seemed to evaporate into the fog.

By this time Tommy and his mate had unharnessed their horses and taken them to stable, the cart was housed (beneath the sheds this time), and Bill had so far succumbed to the genial influences of the occasion as to tear off his blue badge and follow Tommy into the *Hit or Miss*.

A few chance acquaintances, hospitable and curious, accompanied them, intent on providing with refreshments and plying with questions the heroes of so remarkable an adventure. It is true that they already knew all Tommy and Bill had to tell; but there is a pleasure, in moments of emotional agitation, in repeating at intervals the same questions, and making over and again the same profound remarks. The charm of these performances was sure to be particularly keen within the very walls where the dead man had probably taken his last convivial glass, and where some light was certain to be thrown, by the landlady or her customers, on the habits and history of poor Dicky Shields.

CHAPTER III. — An Academic Pothouse.

The *Hit or Miss* tavern, to customers (rough customers, at least) who entered it on a foggy winter night, seemed merely a public by the river's brim. Not being ravaged and parched by a thirst for the picturesque, Tommy and his mates failed to pause and observe the architectural peculiarities of the building. Even if they had been of a romantic and antiquarian turn, the fog was so thick that they could have seen little to admire, though there was plenty to be admired. The *Hit or Miss* was not more antique in its aspect than modern in its fortunes. Few public-houses, if any, boasted for their landlord such a person as Robert Maitland, M.A., Fellow of St. Gatien's, in the University of Oxford.

It is, perhaps, desirable and even necessary to explain how this arrangement came into existence. We have already made acquaintance with "mine host" of the *Hit or Miss*, and found him to be by no means the rosy, genial Boniface of popular tradition. That a man like Maitland should be the lessee of a waterside tavern, like the *Hit or Miss*, was only one of the anomalies of this odd age of ours. An age of revivals, restorations, experiments — an age of dukes who are Socialists — an age which sees the East-end brawling in Pall Mall, and parties of West-end tourists personally conducted down Ratcliffe Highway — need not wonder at Maitland's eccentric choice in philanthropy.

Maitland was an orphan, and rich. He had been an unpopular lonely boy at a public school, where he was known as a "sap," or assiduous student, and was remarked for an almost unnatural indifference to cricket and rowing. At Oxford, as he had plenty of money, he had been rather less unpopular. His studies ultimately won him a Fellowship at St. Gatien's, where his services as a tutor were not needed. Maitland now developed a great desire to improve his own culture by acquaintance with humanity, and to improve humanity by acquaintance with himself. This view of life and duty had been urged on him by his college "coach," philosopher, and friend, Mr. Joseph Bielby. A man of some energy of character, Bielby had made Maitland leave his desultory reading and dull hospitalities at St. Gatien's and betake himself to practical philanthropy.

"You tell me you don't see much in life," Bielby had said. "Throw yourself into the life of others, who have not much to live on."

Maitland made a few practical experiments in philanthropy at Oxford. He once subsidized a number of glaziers out on strike, and thereon had his own windows broken by conservative undergraduates. He urged on the citizens the desirability of running a steam tramway for the people from the station to Cowley, through Worcester, John’s, Baliol, and Wadham Gardens and Magdalene. His signature headed a petition in favor of having three “devils,” or steam-whoopers, yelling in different quarters of the town between five and six o’clock every morning, that the artisans might be awakened in time for the labors of the day.

As Maitland’s schemes made more noise than progress at Oxford, Bielby urged him to come out of his Alma Mater and practise benevolence in town. He had a great scheme for building over Hyde Park, and creating a Palace of Art in Poplar with the rents of the new streets. While pushing this ingenious idea in the columns of the *Daily Trumpet*, Maitland looked out for some humbler field of personal usefulness. The happy notion of taking a philanthropic public-house occurred to him, and was acted upon at the first opportunity. Maitland calculated that in his own bar-room he could acquire an intimate knowledge of humanity in its least sophisticated aspects. He would sell good beer, instead of drugged and adulterated stuff He would raise the tone of his customers, while he would insensibly gain some of their exuberant vitality. He would shake off the prig (which he knew to be a strong element in his nature), and would, at the same time, encourage temperance by providing good malt liquor.

The scheme seemed feasible, and the next thing to do was to acquire a tavern. Now, Maitland had been in the Oxford movement just when æstheticism was fading out, like a lovely sun-stricken lily, while philanthropy and political economy and Mr. Henry George were coming in, like roaring lions. Thus in Maitland there survived a little of the old leaven of the student of Renaissance, a touch of the amateur of “impressions” and of antiquated furniture. He was always struggling against this “side,” as he called it, of his “culture,” and in his hours of reaction he was all for steam tramways, “devils,” and Kindergartens standing where they ought not. But there were moments when his old innocent craving for the picturesque got the upper hand; and in one of those moments Maitland had come across the chance of acquiring the lease of the *Hit or Miss*.

That ancient bridge-house pleased him, and he closed with his opportunity. The *Hit or Miss* was as attractive to an artistic as most public-houses are to a thirsty soul When the Embankment was made, the bridge-house had been one of a street of similar quaint and many-gabled old buildings that leaned up against each other for mutual support near the rivers edge. But the Embankment slowly brought civilization that way: the dirty rickety old houses were both condemned and demolished, till at last only the tavern remained, with hoardings and empty spaces, and a dust-yard round it.

The house stood at what had been a corner. The red-tiled roof was so high-pitched as to be almost perpendicular. The dormer windows of the attics were as picturesque as anything in Nuremberg. The side-walls were broken in their surface by little odd red-tiled roofs covering projecting casements, and the house was shored up and supported by huge wooden beams. You entered (supposing you to enter a public-house) by a low-browed door in front, if you passed in as ordinary customers did. At one corner was an odd little board, with the old-fashioned sign:

“Jack’s Bridge House.
“*Hit or Miss* — Luck’s All.”

But there was a side-door, reached by walking down a covered way, over which the strong oaken rafters (revealed by the unflaking of the plaster) lay bent and warped by years and the weight of the building. From this door you saw the side, or rather the back, which the house kept for its intimates; a side even more picturesque with red-tiled roofs and dormer windows than that which faced the street. The passage led down to a slum, and on the left hand, as you entered, lay the empty space and the dust-yard where the carts were sheltered in sheds, or left beneath the sky, behind the ruinous hoarding.

Within, the *Hit or Miss* looked cosey enough to persons entering out of the cold and dark. There was heat, light, and a bar-parlor with a wide old-fashioned chimney-place, provided with seats within the ingle. On these little benches did Tommy and his friends make haste to place themselves, comfortably disposed, and thawing rapidly, in a room within a room, as it were; for the big chimney-place was like a little chamber by itself. Not on an ordinary night could such a party have gained admittance to the bar-parlor, where Maitland himself was wont to appear, now and then, when he visited the tavern, and to produce by his mere presence, and without in the least intending it, an Early Closing Movement.

But to-night was no common night, and Mrs. Gullick, the widowed landlady, or rather manager, was as eager to hear all the story of the finding of poor Dicky Shields as any of the crowd outside had been. Again and again the narrative was repeated, till conjecture once more began to take the place of assertion.

“I wonder,” asked one of the men, “how old Dicky got the money for a boose?”

“The money, ay, and the chance,” said another. “That daughter of his — a nice-looking girl she is — kept poor Dicky pretty tight.”

“Didn’t let him get—” the epigrammatist of the company was just beginning to put in, when the brilliant witticism he was about to utter burst at once on the intellect of all his friends.

“Didn’t let him *get* tight, you was a-goin’ to say, Tommy,” howled three or four at once, and there ensued a great noise of the slapping of thighs, followed by chuckles which exploded, at intervals, like crackers.

"Dicky 'ad been 'avin' bad times for long," the first speaker went on. "I guess he 'ad about tattooed all the parish as would stand a pint for tattooing. There was hardly a square inch of skin not made beautiful forever about here."

"Ah! and there was no sale for his beastesses and bird-ses nuther; or else he was clean sold out, and hadn't no capital to renew his stock of hairy cats and young parrots."

"The very stuffed beasts, perched above old Dicky's shop, had got to look real mangey and mouldy. I think I see them now: the fox in the middle, the long-legged moulting foreign bird at one end, and that 'ere shiny old rhinoceros in the porch under them picters of the dying deer and t'other deer swimming. Poor old Dicky! Where he raised the price o' a drain, let alone a booze, beats me, it does."

"Why," said Mrs. Gullick, who had been in the outer room during the conversation, "why, it was a sailor gentleman that stood Dicky treat A most pleasant-spoken man for a sailor, with a big black beard He used to meet Dicky here, in the private room up-stairs, and there Dicky used to do him a turn of his trade — tattooing him, like. 'I'm doing him to pattern, mum,' Dicky sez, sez he: 'a *facsimile* o' myself, mum.' It wasn't much they drank neither — just a couple of pints; for sez the sailor gentleman, he sez, 'I'm afeared, mum, our friend here can't carry much even of *your* capital stuff. We must excuse' sez he, 'the failings of an artis'; but I doesn't want his hand to shake or slip when he's a doin' *me*,' sez he. 'Might > spile the pattern,' he sez, 'also hurt' And I wouldn't have served old Dicky with more than was good for him, myself, not if it was ever so, I wouldn't I promised that poor daughter of his, before Mr. Maitland sent her to school — years ago now — I promised as I would keep an eye on her father, and speak of — A hangel, if here isn't Mr. Maitland his very self!"

And Mrs. Gullick arose, with bustling courtesy, to welcome her landlord, the Fellow of St. Gatien's.

Immediately there was a stir among the men seated in the ingle. One by one — some with a muttered pretence at excuse, others with shame-faced awkwardness — they shouldered and shuffled out of the room. Maitland's appearance had produced its usual effect, and he was left alone with his tenant.

"Well, Mrs. Gullick," said poor Maitland, ruefully, "I came here for a chat with our friends — a little social relaxation — on economic questions, and I seem to have frightened them all away."

"Oh, sir, they're a rough lot, and don't think themselves company for the likes of you. But," said Mrs. Gullick, eagerly — with the delight of the oldest aunt in telling the saddest tale— "you 've heard this hawful story? Poor Miss Margaret, sir! It makes my blood—"

What physiological effect on the circulation Mrs. Gullick was about to ascribe to alarming intelligence will never be known; for Maitland, growing a little more pallid than usual, interrupted her:

"What has happened to Miss Margaret? Tell me, quick!"

"Nothing to *herself*, poor lamb, but her poor father, sir."

Maitland seemed sensibly relieved.

"Well, what about her father?"

"Gone, sir — gone! In a cartload o' snow, this very evening, he was found, just outside o* this very door."

"In a cartload of snow!" cried Maitland. "Do you mean that he went away in it, or that he was found in it dead?"

"Yes, indeed, sir; dead for many hours, the doctor said; and in this very house he had been no later than last night, and quite steady, sir, I do assure you. He had been steady — oh, steady for weeks."

Maitland assumed an expression of regret, which no doubt he felt to a certain extent But in his sorrow there could not but have been some relief. For Maitland, in the course of his philanthropic labors, had known old Dicky Shields, the naturalist and professional tattooer, as a hopeless *mauvais sujet*. But Dicky's daughter, Margaret, had been a daisy flourishing by the grimy waterside, till the young social reformer transplanted her to a school in the purer air of Devonshire. He was having her educated there, and after she was educated — why, then, Maitland had at one time entertained his own projects or dreams. In the way of their accomplishment Dicky Shields had been felt as an obstacle; not that he objected — on the other hand, he had made Maitland put his views in writing. There were times — there had lately, above all, been times — when Maitland reflected uneasily on the conditional promises in this document Dicky was not an eligible father-in-law, however good and pretty a girl his daughter might be. But now Dicky had ceased to be an obstacle; he was no longer (as he certainly had been) in any man's way; he was nobody's enemy now, not even his own.

The vision of all these circumstances passed rapidly, like a sensation rather than a set of coherent thoughts, through Maitland's consciousness.

"Tell me everything you know of this wretched business," he said, rising and closing the door which led into the outer room.

"Well, sir, you have not been here for some weeks, or you would know that Dicky had found a friend lately — an old shipmate, or petty-officer, he called him — a sailor-man. Well-to-do, he seemed; the mate of a merchant vessel he might be. He had known Dicky, I think, long ago at sea, and he'd bring him here 'to yarn with him,' he said, once or twice it might be in this room, but mainly in the parlor up-stairs. He let old Dicky tattoo him a bit, up there, to put him in the way of earning an honest penny by his trade — a queer trade it was. Never more than a pint, or a glass of hot rum and water, would he give the old man. Most considerate and careful, sir, he ever was. Well, last night he brought him in about nine, and they sat rather late; and about twelve the sailor comes in, rubbing his eyes, and ‘Good-night, mum,’ sez he. ‘My friend’s been gone for an hour. An early bird he is, and I’ve been asleep by myself. If you please, I’ll just settle our little score. It’s the last for a long time, for I’m bound to-morrow for the China Seas, eastward. Oh, mum, a sailor’s life!’ So he pays, changing a half-sovereign, like a gentleman, and out he goes, and that’s the last I ever see o’ poor Dicky Shields till he was brought in this afternoon, out of the snow-cart, cold and stiff, sir.”

“And how do you suppose all this happened? How did Shields get *into* the cart?”

“Well, that’s just what they’ve been wondering at, though the cart was handy and uncommon convenient for a man as ‘ad too much, if ‘ad he ‘*ad*; as believe it I cannot, seeing a glass of hot rum and water would not intoxicate a babe. May be he felt faint, and laid down a bit, and never wakened. But, Lord a mercy, what’s *that*?” screamed Mrs. Gullick, leaping to her feet in terror.

The latched door which communicated with the staircase had been burst open, and a small brown bear had rushed erect into the room, and, with a cry, had thrown itself on Mrs. Gullick’s bosom.

“Well, if ever I ‘*ad* a fright!” that worthy lady exclaimed, turning toward the startled Maitland, and embracing at the same time the little animal in an affectionate clasp. “Well, if *ever* there was such a child as you, Lizer! What is the matter with you *now*?”

“Oh, mother,” cried the bear, “I dreamed of that big Bird I saw on the roof, and I ran down-stairs before I was ‘arf awake, I was that horful frightened.”

“Well, you just go up-stairs again — and here’s a sweet-cake for you — and you take this night-light,” said Mrs. Gullick, producing the articles she mentioned, “and put it in the basin careful, and knock on the floor with the poker if you want me. If it wasn’t for that bearskin Mr. Toopny was kind enough to let you keep, you’d get your death o’ cold, you would, running about in the night. And look ‘ere, Lizer,” she added, patting the child affectionately on the shoulder, “do get that there Bird out o’ your head. It’s just nothing but indigestion comes o’ you and the other children — himps they may well call you, and himps I’m sure you are — always wasting your screws on pasty and lemonade and raspberry vinegar. Just-nothing but indigestion.”

Thus admonished, the bear once more threw its arms, in a tight embrace, about

Mrs. Gullick's neck; and then, without lavishing attention on Maitland, passed out of the door, and could be heard skipping up-stairs.

"I'm sure, sir, I ask your pardon," exclaimed poor Mrs. Gullick; "but Lizer's far from well just now, and she did have a scare last night, or else, which is more likely, her little inside (saving your presence) has been upset with a supper the Manager gave all them pantermime himps."

"But, Mrs. Gullick, why is she dressed like a bear?"

"She's such a favorite with the Manager, sir, and the Property Man, and all of them at the *Hilarity*, you can't *think*, sir," said Mrs. Gullick, not in the least meaning to impugn Maitland's general capacity for abstract speculation. "A regular little genius that child is, though I says it as shouldn't. Ah, sir, she takes it from her poor father, sir." And Mrs. Gullick raised her apron to her eyes.

Now the late Mr. Gullick had been a clown of considerable merit; but, like too many artists, he was addicted beyond measure to convivial enjoyment. Maitland had befriended him in his last days, and had appointed Mrs. Gullick (and a capital appointment it was) to look after his property when he became landlord of the *Hit or Miss*.

"What a gift, sir, that child always had! Why, when she was no more than four, I well remember her going to fetch the beer, and her being a little late, and Gullick with the thirst on him, when she came in with the jug, he made a cuff at her, not to hurt her, and if the little thing didn't drop the jug, and take the knap! Lord, I thought Gullick would 'a died laughing, and him so thirsty, too."

"Take the knap?" said Maitland, who imagined that "the knap" must be some malady incident to childhood.

"Oh, sir, it's when one person cuffs at another on the stage, you know, and the other slaps his own hand, on the far side, to make the noise of a box on the ear: that's what we call 'taking the knap' in the profession. And the beer was spilt, and the jug broken, and all — Lizer was that clever? And this is her second season, just ended, as a himp at the *Hilarity* pantermime; and they're that good to her, they let her bring her bearskin home with her, what she wears, you know, sir, as the Little Bear in 'The Three Bears,' don't you know, sir."

Maitland was acquainted with the legend of the Great Bear, the Middle Bear, and the Little Tiny Small Bear, and had even proved, in a learned paper, that the Three Bears were the Sun, the Moon, and the Multitude of Stars in the Aryan myth. But he had not seen the pantomime founded on the traditional narrative.

"But what was the child saying about a big Bird?" he asked. "What was it that frightened her?"

"Oh, sir, I think it was just tiredness, and may be, a little something hot at that supper last night; and, besides, seeing so many queer things in pantermimes might put notions in a child’s head. But when she came home last night, a little late, Lizer was very strange. She vowed and swore she had seen a large Bird, far bigger than any common bird, skim over the street. Then when I had put her to bed in the attic, down she flies, screaming she saw the Bird on the roof. I had hard work to get her to sleep. To-day I made her lay a-bed and wear her theatre pantermime bearskin, that fits her like another skin — and she’ll be too big for it next year — just to keep her warm in that cold garret. That’s all about it, sir. She’ll be well enough in a day or two, will Lizer.”

“I am sure I hope she will, Mrs. Gullick,” said Maitland; “and, as I am passing his way, I will ask Dr. Barton to call and see the little girl. Now I must go, and I think the less we say to anyone about Miss Shields, you know, the better. It will be very dreadful for her to learn about her father’s death, and we must try to prevent Her from hearing how it happened.”

“Certainly, sir,” said Mrs. Gullick, bobbing; “and being safe away at school, sir, we’ll hope she won’t be told no more than she needn’t know about it.”

Maitland went forth into the thick night: a half-hearted London thaw was filling the shivering air with a damp brown fog.

He walked to the nearest telegraph office, and did not observe, in the raw darkness and in the confusion of his thoughts, that he was followed at no great distance by a man muffled up in a great-coat and a woollen comforter. The stranger almost shouldered against him, as he stood reading his telegram, and conscientiously docking off a word here and there to save threepence,

“From Robert Maitland to Miss Marlett.
“The Dovecot, Conisbeare,
“Tiverton.
“I come to-morrow, leaving by 10.30 train. Do
not let Margaret see newspaper. Her father dead.
Break news.”

This telegram gave Maitland, in his excited state, more trouble to construct than might have been expected. We all know the wondrous badness of post-office pens or pencils, and how they tear or blot the paper when we are in a hurry; and Maitland felt hurried, though there was no need for haste. Meantime the man in the woollen comforter was buying stamps, and, finishing his bargain before the despatch was stamped and delivered, went out into the fog, and was no more seen.

CHAPTER IV. — Miss Marlett’s.

Girls’ schools are chilly places. The unfortunate victims, when you chance to meet them, mostly look but half-alive, and dismally cold. Their noses (however charming these features may become in a year or two, or even may be in the holidays) appear somehow of a frosty temperature in the long dull months of school-time. The hands, too, of the fair pupils are apt to seem larger than common, inclined to blue in color, and, generally, are suggestive of inadequate circulation. À tendency to get as near the fire as possible (to come within the frontiers of the hearth-rug is forbidden), and to cower beneath shawls, is also characteristic of joyous girlhood — school-girlhood, that is. In fact, one thinks of a girls’ school as too frequently a spot where no one takes any lively exercise (for walking in a funereal procession is not exercise, or Mutes might be athletes), and where there is apt to be a pervading impression of insufficient food, insufficient clothing, and general unsatisfied tedium.

Miss Marlett’s Establishment for the Highest Education of Girls, more briefly known as “The Dovecot, Conisbeare,” was no exception, on a particularly cold February day — the day after Dicky Shields was found dead — to these pretty general rules. The Dovecot, before it became a girls’ school, was, no doubt, a pleasant English home, where “the fires wass coot,” as the Highlandman said. The red-brick house, with its lawn sloping down to the fields, all level with snow, stood at a little distance from the main road, at the end of a handsome avenue of Scotch pines. But the fires at Miss Marlett’s were not good on this February morning. They never *were* good at the Dovecot. Miss Marlett was one of those people who, fortunately for themselves, and unfortunately for persons dwelling under their roofs, never feel cold, or never know what they feel. Therefore, Miss Marlett never poked the fire, which, consequently used to grow black toward its early death, and was only revived, at dangerously long intervals, by the most minute doses of stimulant in the shape of rather damp small coals. Now, supplies of coal had run low at the Dovecot, for the very excellent reason that the roads were snowed up, and that convoys of the precious fuel were scarcely to be urged along the heavy ways.

This did not matter much to the equable temperature of Miss Marlett; but it did matter a great deal to her shivering pupils, three of whom were just speeding their morning toilette, by the light of one candle, at the pleasant hour of five minutes to seven on a frosty morning.

“Oh dear,” said one maiden — Janey Harman by name — whose blonde complexion should have been pink and white, but was mottled with alien and unbecoming hues, “*why* won’t that old Cat let us have fires to dress by? Gracious, Margaret, how black your fingers are!”

“Yes; and I cant get them clean,” said Margaret, holding up two very pretty dripping hands, and quoting, in mock heroic parody:

“Ho, dogs of false Tarentum,
Are not my *hands* washed white?”

“No talking in the bedrooms, young ladies,” came a voice, accompanied by an icy draught, from the door, which was opened just enough to admit a fleeting vision of Miss Mariettas personal charms.

“I was only repeating my lay, Miss Marlett,” replied the maiden thus rebuked, in a tone of injured innocence —

“‘Ho, dogs of false Tarentum,’”

— and the door closed again on Miss Marlett, who had not altogether the best of it in this affair of outposts, and could not help feeling as if “that Miss Shields” was laughing at her.

“Old Cat!” the young lady went on, in a subdued whisper. “But no wonder my hands were a little black, Janey. You forget that it’s my week to be Stoker. Already, girls, by an early and unexpected movement, I have cut off some of the enemy’s supplies.”

So speaking, Miss Margaret Shields proudly displayed a small deposit of coals, stored, for secrecy, in the bottom of a clothes-basket.

“Gracious, Daisy, how clever! Well, you are something *like* a stoker,” exclaimed the third girl, who by this time had finished dressing: “we shall have a blaze to-night.”

Now, it must be said that at Miss Marlett’s school, by an unusual and inconsistent concession to comfort and saniitary principles, the elder girls were allowed to have fires in their bedrooms at night, in winter. But seeing that these fires resembled the laughter of the wicked, inasmuch as they were brief-lived as the crackling of thorns under pots, the girls were driven to make predatory attacks on fuel wherever it could be found. Sometimes, one is sorry to say, they robbed each other’s fireplaces, and concealed the coal in their pockets. But this conduct — resembling what is fabled of the natives of the Scilly Islands, that they “eke out a precarious livelihood by taking in each other’s washing” — led to strife and bickering; so that the Stoker for the week (as the girl appointed to collect these supplies was called) had to infringe a little on the secret household stores of Miss Marlett. This week, as it happened, Margaret Shields was the Stoker, and she so bore herself in her high office as to extort the admiration of the very housemaids.

“Even the ranks of Tusculum
Could scarce forbear to cheer,”

if we may again quote the author who was at that time Miss Shields’ favorite poet. Miss Shields had not studied Mr. Matthew Arnold, and was mercifully unaware that not to detect the “pinchbeck” in the *Lays* is the sign of a grovelling nature.

Before she was sent to Miss Marlett’s, four years ere this date, Margaret Shields’ instruction had been limited. “The best thing that could be said for it,” as the old sporting prophet remarked of his own education, “was that it had been mainly eleemosynary.” The Chelsea School Board fees could but rarely be extracted from old Dicky Shields. But Robert Maitland, when still young in philanthropy, had seen the clever, merry, brown-eyed child at some school treat, or inspection, or other function; had covenanted in some sort with her shiftless parent; had rescued the child from the streets, and sent her as a pupil to Miss Marlett’s. Like Mr. Day, the accomplished author of “Sandford and Merton,” and creator of the immortal Mr. Barlow, Robert Maitland had conceived the hope that he might have a girl educated up to his own intellectual standard, and made, or “ready-made,” a helpmate meet for him. He was, in a more or less formal way, the guardian of Margaret Shields, and the ward might be expected (by anyone who did not know human nature any better) to blossom into the wife.

Maitland could “please himself,” as people say; that is, in his choice of a partner he had no relations to please — no one but the elect young lady, who, after all, might not be “pleased” with alacrity.

Whether pleased or not, there could be no doubt that Margaret Shields was extremely pleasing. Beside her two shivering chamber-mates (“chamber-dekyns” they would have been called, in Oxford slang, four hundred years ago), Miss Shields looked quite brilliant, warm, and comfortable, even in the eager and the nipping air of Miss Marlett’s shuddering establishment, and by the frosty light of a single candle. This young lady was tall and firmly fashioned; a nut-brown maid, with a ruddy glow on her cheeks, with glossy hair rolled up in a big tight knot, and with à smile (which knew when it was well off) always faithful to her lips. These features, it is superfluous to say in speaking of a heroine, “were rather too large for regular beauty.” She was perfectly ready to face the enemy (in which light she humorously regarded her mistress) when the loud cracked bell jangled at seven o’clock exactly, and the drowsy girls came trooping from the dormitories down into the wintry class-rooms.

Arithmetical diversions, in a cold chamber, were the intellectual treat which awaited Margaret and her companions. Arithmetic and slates! Does anyone remember — can anyone forget — how horribly distasteful a slate can be when the icy fingers of youth have to clasp that cold educational formation (Silurian, I believe), and to fumble with the greasy slate-pencil? With her Colenso in her lap, Margaret Shields grappled for some time with the mysteries of Tare and Tret. “Tare an’ ‘ouns, *I* call it,” whispered Janey Harman, who had taken, in the holidays, a “course” of Lever’s Irish novels. Margaret did not make very satisfactory progress with her commercial calculations. After hopelessly befogging herself, she turned to that portion of Colenso’s engaging work which is most palpitating with actuality:

“If ten Surrey laborers, in mowing a field of forty acres, drink twenty-three quarts of beer, how much cider will thirteen Devonshire laborers consume in building a stone wall of thirteen roods four poles in length, and four feet six in height?”

This problem, also, proved too severe for Margaret’s mathematical endowments, and (it is extraordinary how childish the very greatest girls can be) she was playing at “oughts and crosses” with Janey Harman when the arithmetic master came round. He sat down, not unwillingly, beside Miss Shields, erased, without comment, the sportive diagrams, and set himself vigorously to elucidate (by “the low cunning of algebra”) the difficult sum from Colenso.

“You see, it is like *this*,” he said, mumbling rapidly, and scribbling a series of figures and letters which the pupil was expected to follow with intelligent interest. But the rapidity of the processes quite dazed Margaret: a result not unusual when the teacher understands his topic so well, and so much as a matter of course that he cannot make allowance for the benighted darkness of the learner.

“Ninety-five firkins fourteen gallons three quarts. You see, it’s quite simple,” said Mr. Cleghorn, the arithmetic master.

“Oh, thank you; I *see,*” said Margaret, with the kind readiness of woman, who would profess to “see” the Secret of Hegel, or the inmost heart of the Binomial Theorem, or the nature of the duties of cover-point, or the latest hypothesis about the frieze of the Parthenon, rather than be troubled with prolonged explanations, which the expositor, after all, might find it inconvenient to give.

Arithmetic and algebra were not this scholar’s *forte*; and no young lady in Miss Marlett’s establishment was so hungry, or so glad when eight o’clock struck and the bell rang for breakfast, as Margaret Shields.

Breakfast at Miss Marlett’s was not a convivial meal. There was a long narrow table, with cross-tables at each end, these high seats, or *dais*, being occupied by Miss Marlett and the governesses. At intervals down the table were stacked huge piles of bread and butter — of extremely thick bread and surprisingly thin butter

— each slice being divided into four portions. The rest of the banquet consisted solely of tea. Whether this regimen was enough to support growing girls, who had risen at seven, till dinnertime at half-past one, is a problem which, perhaps, the inexperienced intellect of man can scarcely approach with confidence. But, if girls do not always learn as much at school as could be desired, intellectually speaking, it is certain that they have every chance of acquiring Spartan habits, and of becoming accustomed (if familiarity really breeds contempt) to despise hunger and cold. Not that Miss Marlett's establishment was a *Dothegirls Hall*, nor a school much more scantily equipped with luxuries than others. But the human race has still to learn that girls need good meals just as much as, or more than, persons of maturer years. Boys are no better off at many places; but boys have opportunities of adding bloaters and chops to their breakfasts, which would be considered horribly indelicate and insubordinate conduct in girls.

"Est ce que vous aimez les tartines à l'Anglaise," said Janey Harman to Margaret.

"Ce que j'aime dans la tartine, c'est la simplicité prime-sautière da sa nature," answered Miss Shields.

It was one of the charms of the "matinal meal" (as the author of "Guy Livingstone" calls breakfast) that the young ladies were all compelled to talk French (and such French!) during this period of refreshment.

"Toutes choses, la cuisine exceptée, sont Françaises, dans cet établissement peu recréatif," went on Janey, speaking low and fast.

"Je déteste le Français," Margaret answered, "mais je le préfère infiniment à l'Allemand."

"Comment accentuez, vous le mot préfère, Marguerite?" asked Miss Marlett, who had heard the word, and who neglected no chance of conveying instruction.

"Oh, two accents — one this way, and the other that," answered Margaret, caught unawares. She certainly did not reply in the most correct terminology.

"Vous allez perdre dix marks," remarked the schoolmistress, if incorrectly, perhaps not too severely. But perhaps it is not easy to say, off-hand, what word Miss Marlett ought to have employed for "marks."

"Voici les lettres qui arrivent," whispered Janey to Margaret, as the post-bag was brought in and deposited before Miss Marlett, who opened it with a key and withdrew the contents.

This was a trying moment for the young ladies. Miss Marlett first sorted out all the letters for the girls, which came, indubitably and unmistakably, from fathers and mothers. Then she picked out the other letters, those directed to young ladies whom she thought she could trust, and handed them over in honorable silence. These maidens were regarded with envy by the others.

Among them was not Miss Harman, whose letters Miss Marlett always deliberately opened and read before delivering them.

“Il y a une lettre pour moi, et elle va la lire,” said poor Janey to her friend, who, for her part, never received any letters, save a few, at stated intervals, from Maitland. These Miss Shields used to carry about in her pocket without opening them till they were all crumply at the edges. Then she hastily mastered their contents, and made answer in the briefest and most decorous manner.

“Qui est votre correspondent?” Margaret asked. We are not defending her French.

“C’est le pauvre Harry Wyville,” answered Janey. “Il est sous-lieutenant dans les Berkshires à Aldershot Pourquoi ne doit il pas écrire à moi, il est comme on diroit, mon frère.”

“Est il votre parent?”

“Non, pas du tout, mais je l’ai connu pour des ans. Oh, pour des ans! Voici, elle à deux dépêches télégraphiques,” Janey added, observing two orange colored envelopes which had come in the mail-bag with the letters.

As this moment Miss Marlett finished the fraternal epistle of Lieutenant Wyville, which she folded up with a frown and returned to the envelope.

“Jeanne je veux vous parler à part, après, dans mon boudoir,” remarked Miss Marlett severely; and Miss Herman, becoming a little blanched, displayed no further appetite for tartines, nor for French conversation.

Indeed, to see another, and a much older lady, read letters written to one by a lieutenant at Aldershot, whom one has known for years, and who is just like one’s brother, is a trial to any girl.

Then Miss Marlett betook herself to her own correspondence, which, as Janey had noticed, included *two* telegraphic despatches in orange-colored envelopes.

That she had not rushed at these, and opened them first, proves the admirable rigidity of her discipline. Any other woman would have done so, but it was Miss Marietta rule to dispose of the pupils’ correspondence before attending to her own. “Business first, pleasure afterward,” was the motto of this admirable woman.

Breakfast ended, as the girls were leaving the room for the tasks of the day, Miss Marlett beckoned Margaret aside.

“Come to me, dear, in the boudoir, after Janey Harman,” said the schoolmistress in English, and in a tone to which Margaret was so unaccustomed that she felt painfully uneasy and anxious — unwonted moods for this careless maiden.

“Janey, something must have happened,” she whispered to her friend, who was hardening her own heart for the dreadful interview.

"Something's *going* to happen, I'm sure," said poor Janey, apprehensively, and then she entered the august presence, alone.

Margaret remained at the further end of the passage, leading to what Miss Marlett, when she spoke French, called her "boudoir." The girl felt colder than even the weather warranted. She looked alternately at Miss Marietta door and out of the window, across the dead blank flats to the low white hills far away. Just under the window one of the little girls was standing, throwing crumbs, remains of the tartines, to robins and sparrows, which chattered and fought over the spoil. One or two blackbirds, with their yellow bills, fluttered shyly on the outside of the ring of more familiar birds. Up from the south a miserable blue-gray haze was drifting and shuddering, ominous of a thaw. From the eaves and the branches of the trees heavy drops kept falling, making round black holes in the snow, and mixing and melting here and there in a yellowish plash.

Margaret shivered. Then she heard the boudoir door open, and Janey came out, making a plucky attempt not to cry.

"What is it?" whispered Margaret, forgetting the dread interview before her, and her own unformed misgivings.

"She won't give me the letter. I'm to have it when I go home for good; and I'm to go home for good at the holidays," whimpered Janey.

"Poor Janey!" said Margaret, petting the blonde head on her shoulder.

"Margaret Shields, come here!" cried Miss Marlett, in a shaky voice, from the boudoir.

"Come to the back music-room when she's done with you," the other girl whispered. And Margaret marched, with a beating heart, into Miss Marlett's chamber.

"My dear Margaret!" said Miss Marlett, holding out her hands. She was standing up in the middle of the boudoir. She ought to have been sitting grimly, fortified behind her bureau; that was the position in which she generally received pupils on these gloomy occasions.

"My dear Margaret!" she repeated. The girl trembled a little as the schoolmistress drew her closer, and made her sit down on a sofa.

"What has happened?" she asked. Her lips were so dry that she could scarcely speak.

"You must make up your mind to be very brave. Your father — —"

"Was it an accident?" asked Margaret, suddenly. She knew pretty well what was coming. Often she had foreseen the end, which it needed no prophet to foretell. "Was it anything very dreadful?"

"Mr. Maitland does not say. You are to be called for to-day. Poor Daisy!"

"Oh, Miss Marlett, I am so very unhappy!" the girl sobbed. Somehow she was kneeling now, with her head buried in the elder lady’s lap. “I have been horrid to you. I am so wretched!”

A little kindness and a sudden trouble had broken down Miss Margaret Shields. For years she had been living, like Dr. Johnson at college, with a sad and hungry heart, trying to “carry it off by her wild talk and her wit.” “It was bitterness they mistook for frolic.” She had known herself to be a kind of outcast, and she determined to hold her own with the other girls who had homes and went to them in the holidays. Margaret had not gone home for a year. She had learned much, working harder than they knew; she had been in the “best set” among the pupils, by dint of her cheery rebelliousness. Now she suddenly felt all her loneliness, and knew, too, that she had been living, socially, in that little society at the expense of this kind queer old Miss Marlett’s feelings.

“I have been horrid to you,” she repeated. “I wish I had never been born.”

The schoolmistress said nothing at all, but kept stroking the girl’s beautiful head. Surreptitiously Miss Marlett wiped away a frosty tear.

“Don’t mind me,” at last Miss Marlett said. “I never thought hardly of you; I understood. Now you must go and get ready for your journey; you can have any of the girls you like to help you to pack.”

Miss Marlett carried generosity so far that she did not even ask which of the girls was to be chosen for this service. Perhaps she guessed that it was the other culprit.

Then Margaret rose and dried her eyes, and Miss Marlett took her in her arms and kissed her and went off to order a travelling luncheon and to select the warmest railway rug she could find; for the teacher, though she was not a very learned nor judicious schoolmistress, had a heart and affections of her own. She had once, it is true, taken the word *legibus* (dative plural of lex, a law) for an adjective of the third declension, legibus, legiba, legibum; and Margaret had criticised this grammatical subtlety with an unsparing philological acumen, as if she had been Professor Moritz Haupt and Miss Marlett, Orelli. And this had led to the end of Latin lessons at the Dovecot, wherefore Margaret was honored as a goddess by girls averse to studying the classic languages. But now Miss Marlett forgot these things, and all the other skirmishes of the past.

Margaret went wearily to her room, where she bathed her face with cold water; it could not be too cold for her, A certain numb forgetfulness seemed to steep her mind while she was thus deadening her eyes again and again. She felt as if she never wished to raise her eyes from this chilling consolation. Then, when she thought she had got lid of all the traces of her trouble, she went cautiously to the back music-room. Janey was there, moping alone, drumming on the window-pane with her fingers.

“Come to my room, Janey,” she said, beckoning.

Now, to consort together in their bedrooms during school-hours was forbidden to the girls.

“Why, well only get into another scrape,” said Janey, ruefully.

“No, come away; I’ve got leave for you. You’re to help me to pack”

“To pack!” cried Janey. “Why, *you’re* not expelled, are you? You’ve done nothing. You’ve not even had a perfectly harmless letter from a boy who is just like a brother to you and whom you’ve known for years.”

Margaret only beckoned again and turned away, Janey following in silence and intense curiosity.

When they reached their room, where Margaret’s portmanteau had already been placed, the girl began to put up such things as she would need for a short journey. She said nothing till she had finished, and then she sat down on a bed and told Janey what she had learned; and the pair “had a good cry,” and comforted each other as well as they might.

“And what are you going to do?” asked Janey, when, as Homer says, “they had taken their fill of chilling lamentations.”

“I don’t know!”

“Have you no one else in all the world?”

“No one at all. My mother died when I was a little child, in Smyrna. Since then we have wandered all about; we were a long time in Algiers, and we were at Marseilles, and then in London.”

“But you have a guardian, haven’t you?”

“Yes; he sent me here. And, of course, he’s been very kind, and done everything for me; but he’s quite a young man, not thirty, and he’s so stupid, and so stiff, and thinks so much about Oxford, and talks so like a book. And he’s so shy, and always seems to do everything, not because he likes it, but because he thinks he ought to. And, besides—”

But Margaret did not go further in her confessions, nor explain more lucidly why she had scant affection for Maitland of St. Gatien’s.

“And had your poor father no other friends who could take care of you?” Janey asked.

“There was a gentleman who called now and then; I saw him twice. He had been an officer in father’s ship, I think, or had known him long ago at sea. He found us out somehow in Chelsea. There was no one else at all.”

“And you don’t know any of your father’s family?”

“No,” said Margaret, wearily. “Ob, I have forgotten to pack up my prayer-book.” And she took up a little worn volume in black morocco with silver clasps. “This was a book my father gave me,” she said. “It has a name on it — my grandfather’s, I suppose— ‘Richard Johnson, Linkheaton, 1837.’” Then she put the book in a pocket of her travelling cloak.

“Your mother’s father it may have belonged to,” said Janey.

“I don’t know,” Margaret replied, looking out of the window.

“I hope you won’t stay away long, dear,” said Janey, affectionately.

“But *you* are going, too, you know,” Margaret answered, without much tact; and Janey, reminded of her private griefs, was about to break down, when the wheels of a carriage were heard laboring slowly up the snow-laden drive.

“Why, here’s some one coming!” cried Janey, rushing to the window. “Two horses! and a gentleman all in furs. Oh, Margaret, this must be for you!”

CHAPTER V. — Flown.

Maitland’s reflections as, in performance of the promise he had telegraphed, he made his way to the Dovecot were deep and distracted. The newspapers with which he had littered the railway carriage were left unread: he had occupation enough in his own thoughts. Men are so made that they seldom hear even of a death without immediately considering its effects on their private interests. Now, the death of Richard Shields affected Maitland’s purposes both favorably and unfavorably. He had for some time repented of the tacit engagement (tacit as far as the girl was concerned) which bound him to Margaret. For some time he had been dimly aware of quite novel emotions in his own heart, and of a new, rather painful, rather pleasant, kind of interest in another lady. Maitland, in fact, was becoming more human than he gave himself credit for, and a sign of his awakening nature was the blush with which he had greeted, some weeks before, Barton’s casual criticism on Mrs. St. John Deloraine.

Without any well-defined ideas or hopes, Maitland had felt that his philanthropic entanglement — it was rather, he said to himself, an entanglement than an engagement — had become irksome to his fancy. Now that the unfortunate parent was out of the way, he felt that the daughter would not be more sorry than himself to revise the relations in which they stood to each other. Vanity might have prevented some men from seeing this; but Maitland had not vitality enough for a healthy conceit. A curious “aloofness” of nature permitted him to stand aside, and see himself much as a young lady was likely to see him. This disposition is rare, and not a source of happiness.

On the other hand, his future relations to Margaret formed a puzzle inextricable. He could not at all imagine how he was to dispose of so embarrassing a *protégée*. Margaret was becoming too much of a woman to be left much longer at school; and where was she to be disposed of?

“I might send her to Girton,” he thought; and then, characteristically, he began to weigh in his mind the comparative educational merits of Girton and Somerville Hall. About one thing only was he certain: he must consult his college mentor, Bielby of St. Gatien’s, as soon as might be. Too long had this Rasselas — occupied, like the famous Prince of Abyssinia, with *the choice of life* — neglected to resort to his academic Imlac. In the meantime he could only reflect that Margaret must remain as a pupil at Miss Marlett’s. The moment would soon be arriving when some other home, and a chaperon instead of a schoolmistress, must be found for this peculiar object of philanthropy and outdoor relief.

Maitland was sorry he had not left town by the nine o’clock train. The early dusk began to gather, gray and damp; the train was late, having made tardy progress through the half-melted snow. He had set out from Paddington by the half-past ten express, and a glance at the harsh and crabbed page of Bradshaw will prove to the most sceptical that Maitland could not reach Tiverton much before six. Half frozen, and in anything but a happy temper, he engaged a fly, and drove off, along heavy miserable roads, to the Dovecot.

Arriving at the closed and barred gates of that vestal establishment, Maitland’s cabman “pulled, and pushed, and kicked, and knocked” for a considerable time, without manifest effect. Clearly the retainers of Miss Marlett had secured the position for the night, and expected no visitors, though Maitland knew that he ought to be expected. “The bandogs bayed and howled,” as they did round the secret bower of the Lady of Brauksome; and lights flitted about the windows. When a lantern at last came flickering up to the gate, the bearer of it stopped to challenge an apparently unlooked-for and unwelcome stranger.

“Who are you? What do you want?” said a female voice, in a strong Devonian accent.

“I want Miss Marlett,” answered Maitland.

There was some hesitation. Then the porter appeared to reflect that a burglar would not arrive in a cab, and that a surreptitious lover would not ask for the schoolmistress.

The portals were at length unbarred and lugged apart over the gravel, and Maitland followed the cook (for she was no one less) and the candle up to the front door. He gave his card, and was ushered into the chamber reserved for interviews with parents and guardians. The drawing-room had the air and faint smell of a room very seldom occupied. All the chairs were so elegantly and cunningly constructed that they tilted up at intervals, and threw out the unwary male who trusted himself to their hospitality. Their backs were decorated with antimacassars wrought with glass beads, and these, in the light of one dip, shone fitfully with a frosty lustre. On the round table in the middle were volumes of “The Mothers of England,” “The Grandmothers of the Bible,” Blair “On the Grave,” and “The Epic of Hades,” the latter copiously and appropriately illustrated. In addition to these cheerful volumes there were large tomes of lake and river scenery, with gilt edges and faded magenta bindings, shrouded from the garish light of day in drab paper covers.

The walls, of a very faint lilac tint, were hung with prize sketches, in water colors or in pencil, by young ladies who had left. In the former works of art, distant nature was represented as, on the whole, of a mauve hue, while the foreground was mainly composed of burnt-umber rocks, touched up with orange. The shadows in the pencil drawings had an agreeably brilliant polish, like that which, when conferred on fenders by Somebody's Patent Dome-Blacklead, "increases the attractions of the fireside," according to the advertisements. Maitland knew all the blacklead caves, broad-hatted brigands, and pea-green trees. They were old acquaintances, and as he fidgeted about the room he became very impatient.

At last the door opened, and Miss Marlett appeared, rustling in silks, very stiff, and with an air of extreme astonishment.

"Mr. Maitland?" she said, in an interrogative tone.

"Didn't you expect me? Didn't you get my telegram?" asked Maitland.

It occurred to him that the storm might have injured the wires, that his message might never have arrived, and that he might be obliged to explain everything, and break his bad news in person.

"Yes, certainly. I got *both* your telegrams. But why have you come here?"

"Why, to see Margaret Shields, of course, and consult you about her. But what do you mean by *both* my telegrams?"

Miss Marlett turned very pale, and sat down with unexpected suddenness.

"Oh, what will become of the poor girl?" she cried, "and what will become of *me*? It will get talked about. The parents will hear of it, and I am ruined."

The unfortunate lady passed her handkerchief over her eyes, to the extreme discomfiture of Maitland. He could not bear to see a woman cry; and that Miss Marlett should cry — Miss Marlett, the least melting, as he had fancied, of her sex — was a circumstance which entirely puzzled and greatly disconcerted him.

He remained silent, looking at a flower in the pattern of the carpet, for at least a minute.

"I came here to consult you, Miss Marlett, about what is to become of the poor girl; but I do not see how the parents of the other young ladies are concerned. Death is common to all; and Margaret's father, though his life was exposed to criticism, cannot be fairly censured because he has left it And what do you mean, please, by receiving *both* my telegrams? I only #sent *one*, to the effect that I would leave town by the 10.30 train, and come straight to you. There must be some mistake somewhere. Can I see Miss Shields?"

"See Miss Shields! Why, she's *gone!* She left this morning with your friend," said Miss Marlett, raising a face at once mournful and alarmed, and looking straight at her visitor.

"She's *gone!* She left this morning with my friend!" repeated Maitland. He felt like a man in a dream.

"You said in your first telegram that you would come for her yourself, and in your second that you were detained, and that your friend and her father's friend, Mr. Lithgow, would call for her by the early train; so she went with *him*."

"My friend, Mr. Lithgow! I have no friend, Mr. lithgow," cried Maitland; "and I sent no second telegram."

"Then who *did* send it, sir, if you please? For I will show you both telegrams," cried Miss Marlett, now on her defence; and rising, she left the room.

While Miss Marlett was absent, in search of the telegrams, Maitland had time to reflect on the unaccountable change in the situation. What had become of Margaret? Who had any conceivable interest in removing her from school at the very moment of her father's accidental death? And by what possible circumstances of accident or fraud could two messages from himself have arrived, when he was certain that he had only sent one? The records of somnambulism contain no story of a person who despatched telegrams while walking in his sleep. Then the notion occurred to Maitland that his original despatch, as he wrote it, might have been mislaid in the office, and that the imaginative clerk who lost it might have filled it up from memory, and, like the examinees in the poem, might

“Have wrote it all by rote,
And never wrote it right.”

But the fluttering approach of such an hypothesis was dispersed by the recollection that Margaret had actually departed, and (what was worse) had gone off with “his friend, Mr. Lithgow.” Clearly, no amount of accident or mistake would account for the appearance of Mr. Lithgow, and the disappearance of Margaret.

It was characteristic of Maitland that within himself he did not greatly blame the schoolmistress. He had so little human nature — as he admitted, on the evidence of his old college tutor — that he was never able to see things absolutely and entirely from the point of view of his own interests. His own personality was not elevated enough to command the whole field of human conduct. He was always making allowances for people, and never felt able to believe himself absolutely in the right, and everyone else absolutely in the wrong. Had he owned a more full-blooded life, he would probably have lost his temper, and “spoken his mind,” as the saying is, to poor Miss Marlett She certainly should never have let Margaret go with a stranger, on the authority even of a telegram from the girl’s guardian.

It struck Maitland, finally, that Miss Marlett was very slow about finding the despatches. She had been absent quite a quarter of an hour. At last she returned, pale and trembling, with a telegraphic despatch in her hand, but not alone. She was accompanied by a blonde and agitated young lady, in whom Maitland, having seen her before, might have recognized Miss Janey Harman. But he had no memory for faces, and merely bowed vaguely.

“This is Miss Harman, whom I think you have seen on other occasions,” said Miss Marlett, trying to be calm.

Maitland bowed again, and wondered more than ever. It did occur to him, that the fewer people knew of so delicate a business the better for Margaret’s sake.

“I have brought Miss Harman here, Mr. Maitland, partly because she is Miss Shields’ greatest friend” (here Janey sobbed), “but chiefly because she can prove, to a certain extent, the truth of what I have told you.”

“I never for a moment doubted it, Miss Marlett; but will you kindly let me compare the two telegrams? This is a most extraordinary affair, and we ought to lose no time in investigating it, and discovering its meaning. You and I are responsible, you know, to ourselves, if unfortunately to no one else, for Margaret’s safety.”

“But I haven’t got the two telegrams!” exclaimed poor Miss Marlett, who could not live up to the stately tone of Maitland. “I haven’t got them, or rather, I only have one of them, and I have hunted everywhere, high and low, for the other.”

Then she offered Maitland a single dispatch, and the flimsy pink paper fluttered in her shaking hand.

Maitland took it up and read aloud:

“Sent out at 7.45.   Received 7.51.
“From Robert Maitland to Miss Marlett.
“The Dovecot, Conisbeare,
“Tiverton.
“I come to-morrow, leaving by 10.30 train.
Do not let Margaret see the newspaper.
Her father dead. Break news.”

“Why, that is my own telegram!” cried Maitland; “but what have you done with the other you said you received?”

“That is the very one I cannot find, though I had both on the escritoire in my own room this morning. I cannot believe anyone would touch it. I did not lock them away, not expecting to have any use for them; but I am quite sure, the last time I saw them, they were lying there.”

“This is very extraordinary,” said Maitland. “You tell me, Miss Marlett, that you received two telegrams from me. On the strength of the later of the two you let your pupil go away with a person of whom you know nothing, and then you have not even the telegram to show me. How long an interval was there between the receipt of the two despatches?”

“I got them both at once,” said poor, trembling Miss Marlett, who felt the weakness of her case. “They were both sent up with the letters this morning. Were they not, Miss Harman?”

“Yes,” said Janey; “I certainly saw two telegraphic envelopes lying among your letters at breakfast. I mentioned it to — to poor Margaret,” she added, with a break in her voice.

“But why were the telegrams not delivered last night?” Maitland asked.

“I have left orders,” Miss Marlett answered, “that only telegrams of instant importance are to be sent on at once. It costs twelve shillings, and parents and people are so tiresome, always telegraphing about nothing in particular, and costing a fortune. These telegrams *were* very important, of course; but nothing more could have been done about them if they had arrived last night, than if they came this morning. I have had a great deal of annoyance and expense,” the schoolmistress added, “with telegrams that had to be paid for.”

And here most people who live at a distance from telegraph offices, and are afflicted with careless friends whose touch on the wire is easy and light, will perhaps sympathize with Miss Marlett.

"You might at least have telegraphed back to ask me to confirm the instructions, when you read the second despatch," said Maitland.

He was beginning to take an argumentative interest in the strength of his own case. It was certainly very strong, and the excuse for the schoolmistress was weak in proportion.

"But that would have been of no use, as it happens," Janey put in — an unexpected and welcome ally to Miss Marlett— "because you must have left Paddington long before the question could have reached you."

This was unanswerable, as a matter of fact; and Miss Marlett could not repress a grateful glance in the direction of her wayward pupil.

"Well," said Maitland, "it is all very provoking, and very serious. Can you remember at all how the second message ran, Miss Marlett?"

"Indeed, I know it off by heart; it was directed exactly like that in your hand, and was dated half an hour later. It ran: 'Plans altered. Margaret required in town. My friend and her father's, Mr. Lithgow, will call for her soon after mid-day. I noticed there were just twenty words."

"And did you also notice the office from which the message was sent out?"

"No," said Miss Marlett, shaking her head with an effort at recollection. "I am afraid I did not notice."

"That is very unfortunate," said Maitland, walking vaguely up and down the room. "Do you think the telegram is absolutely lost?"

"I have looked everywhere, and asked all the maids."

"When did you see it last, for certain?"

"I laid both despatches on the desk in my room when I went out to make sure that Margaret had everything comfortable before she started."

"And where was this Mr. Lithgow then?"

"He was sitting over the fire in my room, trying to warm himself; he seemed very cold."

"Clearly, then, Mr. Lithgow is now in possession of the telegram, which he probably, or rather certainly, sent himself. But how he came to know anything about the girl, or what possible motive he can have had—" muttered Maitland to himself. "She has never been in any place, Miss Marlett, since she came to you, where she could have made the man's acquaintance?"

"It is impossible to say whom girls may meet, and how they may manage it, Mr. Maitland," said Miss Marlett sadly; when Janey broke in:

"I am *sure* Margaret never met him here. She was not a girl to have such a secret, and she could not have acted a part so as to have taken me in. I saw him first, out of the window. Margaret was very unhappy; she had been crying. I said, ‘Here’s a gentleman in furs, Margaret; he must have come for you.’ Then she looked out and said, ‘It is not my guardian; it is the gentleman whom I saw twice with my father.’”

“What kind of a man was he to look at?”

“He was tall, and dark, and rather good-looking, with a slight black mustache. He had a fur collar that went up to his eyes almost, and he was not a young man. He was a gentleman,” said Janey, who flattered herself that she recognized such persons as bear without reproach that grand old name — when she saw them.

“Would you know him again if you met him?”

“Anywhere,” said Janey; “and I would know his voice.”

“He wore mourning,” said Miss Marlett, “and he told me he had known Margaret’s father. I heard him say a few words to her, in a very kind way, about him. That seemed more comfort to Margaret than anything. ‘He did not suffer at all, my dear,’ he said. He spoke to her in that way, as an older man might.”

“Why, how on earth could *he* know?” cried Maitland. “No one was present when her poor father died. His body was found in a — ,” and Maitland paused rather awkwardly. There was, perhaps, no necessity for adding to the public information about the circumstances of Mr. Shields’ decease. “He was overcome by the cold and snow, I mean, on the night of the great storm.”

“I have always heard that the death of people made drowsy by snow and fatigue is as painless as sleep,” said Miss Marlett with some tact.

“I suppose that is what the man must have meant,” Maitland answered.

There was nothing more to be said on either side, and yet he lingered, trying to think over any circumstance which might lend a clew in the search for Margaret and of the mysterious Mr. Lithgow.

At last he said “Good-night,” after making the superfluous remark that it would be as well to let everyone suppose that nothing unusual or unexpected had happened. In this view Miss Marlett entirely concurred, for excellent reasons of her own, and now she began to regret that she had taken Miss Harman into her counsels. But there was no help for it; and when Maitland rejoined his cabman (who had been refreshed by tea), a kind of informal treaty of peace was concluded between Janey and the schoolmistress. After all, it appeared to Miss Marlett (and correctly) that the epistle from the young officer whom Janey regarded as a brother was a natural and harmless communication. It chiefly contained accounts of contemporary regimental sports and pastimes, in which the writer had distinguished himself, and if it did end “Yours affectionately,” there was nothing very terrible or inflammatory in that, all things considered. So the fair owner of the letter received it into her own keeping, only she was “never to do it again.”

Miss Marlett did not ask Janey to say nothing about Margaret’s inexplicable adventure. She believed that the girl would have sufficient sense and good feeling to hold her peace; and if she did not do so of her own accord, no vows would be likely to bind her. In this favorable estimate of her pupil’s discretion Miss Marlett was not mistaken.

Janey did not even give herself airs of mystery among the girls, which was an act of creditable self-denial. The rest of the school never doubted that, on the death of Miss Shields’ father, she had been removed by one of her friends. As for Maitland, he was compelled to pass the night at Tiverton, revolving many memories. He had now the gravest reason for anxiety about the girl, of whom he was the only friend and protector, and who was, undeniably, the victim of some plot or conspiracy. Nothing more practical than seeking the advice of Bielby of St. Gatien’s occurred to his perplexed imagination.

CHAPTER VI. — At St. Gatien’s.

The following day was spent by Maitland in travel, and in pushing such inquiries as suggested themselves to a mind not fertile in expedients. He was not wholly unacquainted with novels of adventure, and he based his conduct, as much as possible, on what he could remember in these “authorities.” For example, he first went in search of the man who had driven the cab which brought the mysterious Mr. Lithgow to flutter the Dovecot. So far, there was no difficulty. One of the cabdrivers who plied at the station perfectly remembered the gentleman in furs whom he had driven to the school After waiting at the school till the young lady was ready, he had conveyed them back again to the station, and they took the up-train. That was all *he* knew. The gentleman, if his opinion were asked, was “a scaly varmint.” On inquiry, Maitland found that this wide moral generalization was based on the limited *pour-boire* which Mr. Lithgow had presented to his charioteer. Had the gentleman any luggage? Yes, he had a portmanteau, which he left in the cloak-room, and took away with him on his return to town — not in the van, in the railway carriage. “What could he want with all that luggage?” Maitland wondered.

The next thing was, of course, to find the guard of the train which conveyed Margaret and her mysterious friend to Taunton. This official had seen the gentleman and the young lady get out at Taunton. They went on to London.

The unfortunate guardian of Margaret Shields was now obliged to start for Taunton, and thence pursue his way, and his inquiries, as far as Paddington. The position was extremely irksome to Maitland. Although, in novels, gentlemen often assume the *rôle* of the detective with apparent relish, Maitland was not cast by Nature for the part. He was too scrupulous and too shy. He detested asking guards, and porters, and station-masters, and people in refreshment-rooms if they remembered having seen, yesterday, a gentleman in a fur coat travelling with a young lady, of whom he felt that he had to offer only a too suggestive description. The philanthropist could not but see that everyone properly constructed, in imagination, a satisfactory little myth to account for all the circumstances — a myth in which Maitland played the unpopular part of the Avenging Brother or Injured Husband.

What other path, indeed, was open to conjecture? A gentleman in a fur coat, and a young lady of prepossessing appearance, are travelling alone together, one day, in a carriage marked “Engaged.” Next day, another gentleman (not prepossessing, and very nervous) appears on the same route, asking anxious questions about the wayfarer in the notable coat (bearskin, it seemed to have been) and about the interesting young lady. Clearly, the pair were the fond fugitives of Love; while the pursuer represented the less engaging interests of Property, of Law, and of the Family. All the romance and all the popular interest were manifestly on the other side, not on Maitland's side. Even his tips were received without enthusiasm.

Maitland felt these disadvantages keenly; and yet he had neither the time nor the power to explain matters. Even if he had told everyone he met that he was really the young lady's guardian, and that the gentleman in the fur coat was (he had every reason to believe) a forger and a miscreant, he would not have been believed. His opinion would, not unjustly, have been looked on as distorted by what Mr. Herbert Spencer calls "the personal bias." He had therefore to put up with general distrust and brief discourteous replies.

There are many young ladies in the refreshment-bar at Swindon. There they gather, numerous and fair as the sea-nymphs — Doto, Proto, Doris, and Panope, and beautiful Galatea. Of them Maitland sought to be instructed. But the young ladies were arch and uncommunicative, pretending that their attention was engaged in their hospitable duties. Soup it was their business to minister to travellers, not private information. They *had* seen the gentleman and lady. Very attentive to her he seemed. Yes, they were on the best terms: "very sweet on each other," one young lady averred, and then secured her retreat and concealed her blushes by ministering to the wants of a hungry and hurried public. All this was horribly disagreeable to Maitland.

Maitland finally reached Paddington, still asking questions. He had telegraphed the night before to inquire whether two persons answering to the oft-repeated description had been noticed at the terminus. He had received a reply in the negative before leaving Tiverton. Here, then, was a check. If the ticket-collector was to be credited, the objects of his search had reached Westbourne Park, where their tickets had been taken. There, however, all the evidence proved that they had not descended. Nobody had seen them alight Yet, not a trace was to be found at Paddington of a gentleman in a fur coat, nor of any gentleman travelling alone with a young lady.

It was nearly nine o'clock when Maitland, puzzled, worn out, and disgusted, arrived in town. He did what he could in the way of interrogating the porters — all to no purpose. In the crowd and bustle of passengers, who skirmish for their luggage under inadequate lights, no one remembered having seen either of the persons whom Maitland described. There remained the chance of finding out and cross-examining all the cabdrivers who had taken up passengers by the late trains the night before. But that business could not be transacted at the moment, nor perhaps by an amateur.

Maitland's time was limited indeed. He had been obliged to get out at Westbourne Park and prosecute his inquisition there. Thence he drove to Paddington, and, with brief enough space for investigations that yielded nothing, he took his ticket by the 9.15 evening train for Oxford. His whole soul was set on consulting Bielby of St. Gatien's, whom, in his heart, Maitland could not but accuse of being at the bottom of all these unprecedented troubles. If Bielby had not driven him, as it were, out of Oxford, by urging him to acquire a wider knowledge of humanity, and to expand his character by intercourse with every variety of our fallen species, Maitland felt that he might now be vegetating in an existence peaceful, if not well satisfied. "Adventures are to the adventurous." It is a hard thing when they have to be achieved by a champion who is not adventurous at all. If he had not given up his own judgment to Bielby's, Maitland told himself he never would have plunged into philanthropic enterprise, he never would have taken the *Hit or Miss* he never would have been entangled in the fortunes of Margaret Shields, and he would not now be concerned with the death, in the snow, of a dissipated old wanderer, nor obliged to hunt down a runaway or kidnapped school-girl. Nor would he be suffering the keen and wearing anxiety of speculating on what had befallen Margaret.

His fancy suggested the most gloomy yet plausible solutions of the mystery of her disappearance. In spite of these reflections, Maitland's confidence in the sagacity of his old tutor was unshaken. Bielby had not been responsible for the details of the methods by which his pupil was trying to expand his character. Lastly, he reflected that if he had not taken Bielby's advice, and left Oxford, he never would have known Mrs. St. John Deloraine, the lady of his diffident desires.

So the time passed, the minutes flitting by, like the telegraph posts, in the dark, and Maitland reached the familiar Oxford Station. He jumped into a hansom, and said, "Gatien's." Past Worcester, up Carfax, down the High Street, they struggled through the snow; and at last Maitland got out and kicked at the College gate. The porter (it was nearly midnight) opened it with rather a scared face:

"Horful row on in quad, sir," he said. "The young gentlemen 'as a bonfire on, and they're a larking with the snow. Orful A they're a making, sir."

The agricultural operation thus indicated by the porter was being forwarded with great vigor. A number of young men, in every variety of garb (from ulsters to boating-coats), were energetically piling up a huge Alp of snow against the door of the Master's lodge. Meanwhile, another band had carried into the quad all the light tables and cane chairs from a lecture-room. Having arranged these in a graceful pyramidal form, they introduced some of the fire-lighters, called "devils" by the College servants, and set a match to the whole.

Maitland stood for a moment in doubt, looking, in the lurid glare, very like a magician who has raised an army of fiends, and cannot find work for them. He felt no disposition to interfere, though the venerable mass of St Ga-tien's seemed in momentary peril, and the noise was enough to waken the dead, let alone the Bursar of Oriel. But Maitland was a non-resident Fellow, known only to the undergraduates, where he was known at all, as a "Radical," with any number of decorative epithets, according to the taste and fancy of the speaker. He did not think he could identify any of the rioters, and he was not certain that they would not carry him to his room, and there screw him up, according to precedent. Maitland had too much sense of personal dignity to face the idea of owing his escape from his chambers to the resources of civilization at the command of the college blacksmith. He, therefore, after a moment of irresolution, stole off under a low-browed old door-way communicating with a queer black many-sided little quadrangle; for it is by no means necessary that a quadrangle should, in this least mathematical of universities, be quadrangular. Groping and stumbling his familiar way up the darkest of spiral staircases, Maitland missed his footing, and fell, with the whole weight of his body, against the door at which he had meant to knock.

"Come in," said a gruff voice, as if the knocking had been done in the most conventional manner.

Maitland had come in by this time, and found the distinguished Mr. Bielby, Fellow of St. Gatien's, sitting by his fireside, attired in a gray shooting-coat, and busy with a book and a pipe. This gentleman had, on taking his degree, gone to town, and practised with singular success at the Chancery Bar. But on some sudden disgust or disappointment, he threw up his practice, returned to College, and there lived a retired life among his "brown Greek manuscripts." He was a man of the world, turned hermit, and the first of the kind whom Maitland had ever known. He had "coached" Maitland, though he usually took no pupils, and remained his friend and counsellor.

"How are you, Maitland?" said the student, without rising. "I thought, from the way in which you knocked, that you were some of the young men, coming to 'draw me,' as I think they call it."

Mr. Bielby smiled as he spoke. He knew that the undergraduates were as likely to "draw" him as boys who hunt a hare are likely to draw a fierce old bear that "dwells among bones and blood."

Mr. Bielby's own environment, to be sure, was not of the grisly and mortuary character thus energetically described by the poet His pipe was in his hand. His broad, bald, red face, ending in an auburn spade-shaped beard, wore the air of content. Around him were old books that had belonged to famous students of old — Scaliger, Meursius, Muretus — and before him lay the proof-sheets of his long-deferred work, a new critical edition of "Demetrius of Scepsis."

Looking at his friend, Maitland envied the learned calm of a man who had not contrived, in the task of developing his own human nature, to become involved, like his pupil, in a singular and deplorable conjuncture of circumstances.

"The men are making a terrible riot in quad," he said, answering the other's remark.

"Yes, yes," replied Bielby, genially; "boys will be boys, and so will young men. I believe our Torpid has bumped Keble, and the event is being celebrated."

Here there came a terrific howl from without, and a crash of broken glass.

"There go some windows into their battels," said Mr. Bielby. "They will hear of this from the Provost But what brings you here, Maitland, so unexpectedly? Very glad to see you, whatever it is."

"Well, sir," said Maitland, "I rather want to ask your advice on an important matter. The fact is, to begin at the beginning of a long story, that some time ago I got, more or less, engaged to be married."

This was not a very ardent or lover-like announcement, but Bielby seemed gratified.

"Ah-ha," replied the tutor, with a humorous twinkle. "Happy to hear it Indeed, I *had* heard a rumor, a whisper! A little bird, as they say, brought a hint of it — I hope, Maitland, a happy omen! A pleasant woman of the world, one who can take her own part in society, and your part, too, a little — if you will let me say so — is exactly what you need. I congratulate you very heartily. And are we likely to see the young lady in Oxford? Where is she just now?"

Maitland saw that the learned Bielby had indeed heard something, and not the right thing. He flushed all over as he thought of the truth, and of Mrs. St John Deloraine.

"I'm sure I wish I knew," said Maitland at last, beginning to find this consulting of the oracle a little difficult. "The fact is, that's just what I wanted to consult you about. I — I'm afraid I've lost all traces of the young lady."

"Why, what do you mean?" asked the don, his face suddenly growing grave, while his voice had not yet lost its humorous tone. "She has not eloped? You don't mean to tell me she has run away from you?"

"I really don't know what to say," answered Maitland. "I'm afraid she has been run away with, that she is the victim of some plot or conspiracy."

"You surely can't mean what you say" (and now the voice was gruffer than ever). “People don’t plot and conspire nowadays, if ever they did, which probably they didn’t! And who are the young lady’s people? Why don’t they look after her? I had heard she was a widow, but she must have friends.”

“She is not a widow — she is an orphan,” said Maitland, blushing painfully. “I am her guardian in a kind of way.”

“Why, the wrong stories have reached me altogether! I’m sure I beg your pardon, but did you tell me her name?”

“Her name is Shields — Margaret Shields” — (“Not the name I was told,” muttered Bielby)— “and her father was a man who had been rather unsuccessful in life.”

“What was his profession, what did he do?”

“He had been a sailor, I think,” said the academic philanthropist; “but when I knew him he had left the sea, and was, in fact, as far as he was anything, a professional tattooer.”

“What’s that?”

“He tattooed patterns on sailors and people of that class for a livelihood.”

Bielby sat perfectly silent for a few minutes, and no one who saw him could doubt that his silence arose from a conscious want of words on a level with the situation.

“Has Miss — h’m, Spears — Shields? thank you; has she been an orphan long?” he asked, at length. He was clearly trying to hope that the most undesirable prospective father-in-law described by Maitland had long been removed from the opportunity of forming his daughter’s character.

“I only heard of his death yesterday,” said Maitland.

“Was it sudden?”

“Why, yes. The fact is, he was a man of rather irregular habits, and he was discovered dead in one of the carts belonging to the Vestry of St George’s, Hanover Square.”

“St. George’s, Hanover Square, indeed!” said the don, and once more he relapsed, after a long whistle, into a significant silence. “Maitland,” he said at last, “how did you come to be acquainted with these people? The father, as I understand, was a kind of artist; but you can’t, surely, have met them in society?”

“He came a good deal to ‘my public-house, the *Hit or Miss*. I think I told you about it, sir, and you rather seemed to approve of it. The tavern in Chelsea, if you remember, where I was trying to do something for the riverside population, and to mix with them for their good, you know.”

“Good-night!” growled Bielby, very abruptly, and with considerable determination in his tone. “I am rather busy this evening. I think you had better think no more about the young lady, and say nothing whatever about the matter to anyone. Good-night!”.

So speaking, the hermit lighted his pipe, which, in the astonishment caused by Maitland’s avowals, he had allowed to go out, and he applied himself to a large old silver tankard. He was a scholar of the Cambridge school, and drank beer. Maitland knew his friend and mentor too well to try to prolong the conversation, and withdrew to his bleak college room, where a timid fire was smoking and crackling among the wet faggots, with a feeling that he must steer his own course in this affair. It was clearly quite out of the path of Bielby’s experience.

“And yet,” thought Maitland, “if I had not taken his advice about trying to become more human, and taken that infernal public-house too, I never would have been in this hole.”

All day Maitland had scarcely tasted anything that might reasonably be called food. “He had eaten; he had not dined,” to adopt the distinction of Brillat-Savarin. He had been dependent on the gritty and flaccid hospitalities of refreshment-rooms, on the sandwich and the bun. Now he felt faint as well as weary; but, rummaging amidst his cupboards, he could find no provisions more tempting and nutritious than a box of potted shrimps, from the college stores, and a bottle of some Hungarian vintage sent by an advertising firm to the involuntary bailees of St. Gatien’s. Maitland did not feel equal to tackling these delicacies.

He did not forget that he had neglected to answer a note, on philanthropic business, from Mrs. St. John Deloraine.

Weary as he was, he took pleasure in replying at length, and left the letter out for his scout to post. Then, with a heavy headache, he tumbled into bed, where, for that matter, he went on tumbling and tossing during the greater part of the night. About five o’clock he fell into a sleep full of dreams, only to be awakened, at six, by the steam-whooper, or “devil,” a sweet boon with which his philanthropy had helped to endow the reluctant and even recalcitrant University of Oxford.

“Instead of becoming human, I have only become humanitarian,” Maitland seemed to hear his own thoughts whispering to himself in a night-mare. Through the slowly broadening winter dawn, in snatches of sleep that lasted, or seemed to last, five minutes at a time, Maitland felt the thought repeating itself, like some haunting refrain, with a feverish iteration.

CHAPTER VII. — After the Inquest.

To be ill in college rooms, how miserable it is! Mainland’s scout called him at half-past seven with the invariable question, “Do you breakfast out, sir?” If a man were in the condemned cell, his scout (if in attendance) would probably arouse him on the morning of his execution with, “Do you breakfast out, sir?”

“No,” said Maitland, in reply to the changeless inquiry; “in common room as usual. Pack my bag, I am going down by the nine o’clock train.”

Then he rose and tried to dress; but his head ached more than ever, his legs seemed to belong to someone else, and to be no subject of just complacency to their owner. He reeled as he strove to cross the room, then he struggled back into bed, where, feeling alternately hot and cold, he covered himself with his ulster, in addition to his blankets. Anywhere but in college, Maitland would, of course, have rung the bell and called his servant; but in our conservative universities, and especially in so reverend a pile as St. Gatiens, there was, naturally, no bell to ring. Maitland began to try to huddle himself into his greatcoat, that he might crawl to the window and shout to Dakyns, his scout.

But at this moment there fell most gratefully on his ear the sound of a strenuous sniff, repeated at short intervals in his sitting-room. Often had Maitland regretted the chronic cold and handkerchiefless condition of his bedmaker; but now her sniff was welcome as music, much more so than that of two hunting horns which ambitious sportsmen were trying to blow in quad.

“Mrs. Trattles!” cried Maitland, and his own voice sounded faint in his ears. “Mrs. Trattles!”

The lady thus invoked answered with becoming modesty, punctuated by sniffs, from the other side of the door:

“Yes, sir; can I do anything for you, sir?”

“Call Dakyns, please,” said Maitland, falling back on his pillow. “I don’t feel very well.”

Dakyns appeared in due course.

“Sorry to hear you’re ill, sir; you do look a little flushed. Hadn’t I better send for Mr. Whalley, sir?”

Now, Mr. Whalley was the doctor whom Oxford, especially the younger generation, delighted to honor.

“No; I don’t think you need. Bring me breakfast here. I think I’ll be able to start for town by the 11.58. And bring me my letters.”

“Very well, sir,” answered Dakyns.

Then with that fearless assumption of responsibility which always does an Englishman credit, he sent the college messenger in search of Mr. Whalley before he brought round Maitland’s letters and his breakfast commons.

There were no letters bearing on the subject of Margaret’s disappearance; if any such had been addressed to him, they would necessarily be, as Maitland remembered after his first feeling of disappointment, at his rooms in London. Neither Miss Marlett, if she had aught to communicate, nor anyone else, could be expected to know that Maitland’s first act would be to rush to Oxford and consult Bielby.

The guardian of Margaret turned with no success to his breakfast commons; even tea appeared unwelcome and impossible.

Maitland felt very drowsy, dull, indifferent, when a knock came to his door, and Mr. Whalley entered. He could not remember having sent for him; but he felt that, as an invalid once said, “there was a pain somewhere in the room,” and he was feebly pleased to see his physician.

“A very bad feverish cold,” was the verdict, and Mr. Whalley would call again next day, till which time Maitland was forbidden to leave his room.

He drowsed through the day, disturbed by occasional howls from the quadrangle, where the men were snowballing a little, and, later, by the scraping shovels of the navvies who had been sent in to remove the snow, and with it the efficient cause of nocturnal disorders in St. Gatien’s.

So the time passed, Maitland not being quite conscious of its passage, and each hour putting Margaret Shields more and more beyond the reach of the very few people who were interested in her existence. Maitland’s illness took a more severe form than Whalley had anticipated, and the lungs were affected. Bielby was informed of his state, and came to see him; but Maitland talked so wildly about the *Hit or Miss*, about the man in the bearskin coat, and other unintelligible matters, that the hermit soon withdrew to the more comprehensible fragments of “Demetrius of Scepsis.” He visited his old pupil daily, and behaved with real kindness; but the old implicit trust never revived with Maitland’s returning health.

At last the fever abated. Maitland felt weak, yet perfectly conscious of what had passed, and doubly anxious about what was to be done, if there was, indeed, a chance of doing anything.

Men of his own standing had by this time become aware that he was in Oxford, and sick, consequently there was always someone to look after him.

“Brown,” said Maitland to a friend, on the fifth day after his illness began, “would you mind giving me my things? I’ll try to dress.”

The experiment was so far successful that Maitland left the queer bare slit of a place called his bedroom (formed, like many Oxford bedrooms, by a partition added to the large single room of old times), and moved into the weirdly aesthetic study, decorated in the Early William Morris manner.

“Now will you howl for Dakyns, and make him have this telegram sent to the post? Awfully sorry to trouble you, but I can’t howl yet for myself,” whispered Maitland, huskily, as he scribbled on a telegraph form.

“Delighted to howl for you,” said Brown, and presently the wires were carrying a message to Barton in town. Maitland wanted to see him at once, on very pressing business. In a couple of hours there came a reply: Barton would be with Maitland by dinner-time.

The ghostly room, in the Early William Morris manner, looked cosey and even homelike when the lamp was lit, when the dusky blue curtains were drawn, and a monster of the deep — one of the famous Oxford soles, larger than you ever see them elsewhere — smoked between Maitland and Barton. Beside the latter stood a silver quart pot, full of “strong,” a reminiscence of “the old coaching days,” when Maitland had read with Barton for Greats. The invalid’s toast and water wore an air of modest conviviality, and might have been mistaken for sherry by anyone who relied merely on such information as is furnished by the sense of sight The wing of a partridge (the remainder of the brace fell to Barton’s lot) was disposed of by the patient; and then, over the wine, which he did not touch, and the walnuts, which he tried nervously to crack in his thin, white hands, Maitland made confession and sought advice.

It was certainly much easier talking to Barton than to Bielby, for Barton knew so much already, especially about the *Hit or Miss*; but when it came to the story of the guardianship of Margaret, and the kind of prospective engagement to that young lady, Barton rose and began to walk about the room. But the old beams creaked under him in the weak places; and Barton, seeing how much he discomposed Maitland, sat down again, and steadied his nerves with a glass of the famous St. Gatien’s port.

Then, when Maitland, in the orderly course of his narrative, came to the finding of poor Dick Shields’ body in the snow-cart, Barton cried, “Why, you don’t mean to say that was the man, the girl’s father? By George, I can tell you something about *him*! At the inquest my partner, old Munby, made out—”

“Has there been an inquest already? Oh, of course there must have been,” said Maitland, whose mind had run so much on Margaret’s disappearance that he had given little of his thoughts (weak and inconsecutive enough of late) to the death of her father.

“Of course there has been an inquest Have you not read the papers since you were ill?"

Now, Maitland had the common-room back numbers of the *Times* since the day of his return from Devonshire in his study at that very moment But his reading, so far, had been limited to the "Agony Column" of the advertisements (where he half hoped to find some message), and to all the paragraphs headed "Strange Occurrence" and "Mysterious Disappearance." None of these had cast any light on the fortunes of Margaret.

"I have not seen anything about the inquest," he said. "What verdict did they bring in? The usual one, I suppose— 'Visitation,' and all that kind of thing, or 'Death from exposure while under the influence of alcoholic stimulants.'"

"That's exactly what they made it," said Barton; "and I don't blame them; for the medical evidence my worthy partner gave left them no other choice. You can see what he said for yourself in the papers."

Barton had been turning over the file of the *Times*, and showed Maitland the brief record of the inquest and the verdict; matters so common that their chronicle might be, and perhaps is, kept stereotyped, with blanks for names and dates.

"A miserable end," said Maitland, when he had perused the paragraph. "And now I had better go on with my story? But what did you mean by saying you didn't 'blame' the coroner's jury?"

"Have you any more story? Is it not enough? I don't know that I should tell you; it is too horrid!"

"Don't keep anything from me, please," said Maitland, moving nervously. "I must know everything."

"Well," answered Barton, his voice sinking to a tone of reluctant horror— "well, your poor friend was *murdered!* That's what I meant when I said I did not blame the jury; they could have given no other verdict than they did on the evidence of my partner."

Murder! The very word has power to startle, as if the crime were a new thing, not as old (so all religions tell us) as the first brothers. As a meteoric stone falls on our planet, strange and unexplained, a waif of the universe, from a nameless system, so the horror of murder descends on us, when we meet it, with an alien dread, as of an intrusion from some lost star, some wandering world that is Hell.

"Murdered!" cried Maitland. "Why, Barton, you must be dreaming! Who on earth could have murdered poor Shields? If ever there was a man who was no one's enemy but his own, that man was Shields! And he literally had nothing that anyone could have wanted to steal. I allowed him so much — a small sum — paid weekly, on Thursdays; and it was a Wednesday when he was — when he died. He could not have had a shilling at that moment in the world!"

“I am very sorry to have to repeat it, but murdered he was, all the same, and that by a very cunning and cautious villain — a man, I should say, of some education.

“But how could it possibly have been done? There’s the evidence before you in the paper. There was not a trace of violence on him, and the circumstances, which were so characteristic of his ways, were more than enough to account for his death. The exposure, the cold, the mere sleeping in the snow — it’s well known to be fatal Why,” said Maitland, eagerly, “in a long walk home from shooting in winter, I have had to send back a beater for one of the keepers; and we found him quite asleep, in a snowdrift, under a hedge. He never would have wakened.”

He was naturally anxious to refute the horrible conclusion which Barton had arrived at.

The young doctor only shook his head. His opinion was manifestly fixed.

“But how can you possibly know better than the jury,” urged Maitland peevishly, “and the coroner, and the medical officer for the district, who were all convinced that his death was perfectly natural — that he got drunk, lost his way, laid down in the cart, and perished of exposure? Why, you did not even hear the evidence. I can’t make out,” he went on, with the querulousness of an invalid, “why you should have come up just to talk such nonsense. The coroner and the jury are sure to have been right.”

“Well, you see, it was not the coroner’s business nor the jury’s business, to know better than the medical officer for the district, on whose evidence they relied. But it is *my* business; for the said officer is my partner, and, but for me, our business would be worth very little. He is about as ignorant and easy-going an excellent old fellow as ever let a life slip out of his hands.”

“Then, if you knew so much, why didn’t you keep him straight?”

“Well, as it happened, I was down in Surrey with my people, at a wedding, when the death occurred, and they made a rather superficial examination of the deceased.”

“Still, I see less than ever how you got a chance to form such an extraordinary and horrible opinion if you were not there, and had only this printed evidence,” said Maitland, waving a sheet of the *Times*, “to go by; and *this* is dead against you. You’re too clever.”

“But I made a proper and most careful examination myself, on my return to town, the day after the inquest,” said Barton, “and I found evidence enough *for me* — never mind where — to put the matter beyond the reach of doubt. The man was *murdered*, and murdered, as I said, very deliberately, by some one who was not an ordinary ignorant scoundrel.”

“Still, I don’t see how you got a chance to make your examination,” said Maitland; “the man would be buried as usual—”

“Excuse me. The unclaimed bodies of paupers — and there was no one to claim *his* — are reserved, if needed—”

“I see — don’t go on,” said Maitland, turning rather pale, and falling back on his sofa, where he lay for a little with his eyes shut “It is all the fault of this most unlucky illness of mine,” he said, presently. “In my absence, and as nobody knew where I was, there was naturally no one to claim the body. The kind of people who knew about him will take no trouble or risk in a case like that.” He was silent again for a few moments; then, “What do *you* make out to have been tbe cause of death?” he asked.

“Well,” said Barton slowly, “I don’t much care to go into details which you may say I can hardly prove, and I don’t want to distress you in your present state of health.”

“Why don’t you speak out! Was he poisoned? Did you detect arsenic or anything? He had been drinking with some one!”

“No; if, in a sense, he had been poisoned, there was literally nothing that could be detected by the most skilled analysis. But, my dear fellow, there are venoms that leave *no* internal trace. If I am right — and I think I am — he was destroyed by one of these. He had been a great traveller, had he not?”

“Yes,” answered Maitland.

“Well, it is strange; the murderer must have been a great traveller also. He must have been among the Macoushi Indians of Guiana, and well acquainted with their arts. I know them too. I went there botanizing.”

“You won’t be more explicit?”

“No,” he said; “you must take it on my word, after all.”

Maitland, if not convinced, was silent He had knowledge enough of Barton, and of his healthy and joyous nature, to be certain that his theory was no morbid delusion; that he had good grounds for an opinion which, as he said, he could no longer, prove — which was, indeed, now incapable of any proof. No one had seen the commission of tbe crime, and the crime was of such a nature, and so cunningly planned, that it could not possibly be otherwise brought home to the murderer.

Now Maitland, knowing the *Hit or Miss*, and the private room up-stairs with the dormer windows, where the deed must have been done, if done at all, was certain that there could not possibly have been any eye-witness of the crime.

“What shall you do?” he asked, “or have you done anything in consequence of your discovery? Have you been to the police?”

“No,” said Barton; “where was the use? How can I prove anything now? It is not as if poison had been used, that could be detected by analysis. Besides, I reflected that if I was right, the less fuss made, the more likely was the murderer to show his hand. Supposing he had a secret motive — and he must have had — he will act on that motive sooner or later. The quieter everything is kept, the more he feels certain he is safe, the sooner he will move in some way or other. Then, perhaps, there may be a chance of detecting him; but it's an outside chance. Do you know anything of the dead man's past history?"

"Nothing, except that he was from the North, and had lived a wandering life."

"Well, we must wait and see. But there is his daughter, left under your care. What do you mean to do about *her?*"

The question brought Maitland back to his old perplexities, which were now so terribly increased and confused by what he had just been told.

"I was going to tell you, when you broke in with this dreadful business. Things were bad before; now they are awful," said Maitland. "*His daughter has disappeared!* That was what I was coming to: that was the rest of my story. It was difficult and distressing enough before I knew what you tell me; now — great Heavens! what am I to do?"

He turned on the sofa, quite overcome. Barton put his hand encouragingly on his shoulder, and sat so for some minutes.

"Tell me all about it, old boy?" asked Barton, at length.

He was very much interested, and most anxious to aid his unfortunate friend. His presence, somehow, was full of help and comfort. Maitland no longer felt alone and friendless, as he had done after his consultation of Bielby. Thus encouraged, he told, as clearly and fully as possible, the tale of the disappearance of Margaret, and of his entire failure even to come upon her traces or those of her companion.

"And you have heard nothing since your illness?"

"Nothing to any purpose. What do you advise me to do?"

"There is only one thing certain, to my mind," said Barton. "The seafaring man with whom Shields was drinking on the last night of his life, and the gentleman in the fur travelling-coat who sent the telegram in your name and took away Margaret from Miss Marlett's, are in the same employment, or, by George, are probably the same person. Now, have you any kind of suspicion who they or he may be? or can you suggest any way of tracking him or them?"

"No," said Maitland; "my mind is a perfect blank on the subject. I never heard of the sailor till the woman at the *Hit or Miss* mentioned him, the night the body was found. And I never heard of a friend of Shields', a friend who was a gentleman, till I went down to the school."

"Then all we can do at present is, *not* to set the police at work — they would only prevent the man from showing — but to find out whether anyone answering to the description is ‘wanted’ or is on their books, at Scotland Yard. Why are we not in Paris, where a man, whatever his social position might be, who was capable of that unusual form of crime, would certainly have his *dossier*? They order these things better in France.”

“There is just one thing about him, at least about the man who was drinking with poor Shields on the night of his death. He was almost certainly tattooed with some marks or other. Indeed, I remember Mrs. Gullick — that’s the landlady of the *Hit or Miss* — saying that Shields had been occupied in tattooing him. He did a good deal in that way for sailors.”

“By Jove,” said Barton, “if any fellow understands tattooing, and the class of jail-birds who practise it, I do. It is a clew after a fashion; but, after all, many of them that go down to the sea in ships are tattooed, even when they are decent fellows; and besides, we seldom, in our stage of society, get a view of a fellow-creature with nothing on but these early decorative designs.”

This was only too obvious, and rather damping to Maitland, who for a moment had been inclined to congratulate himself on his *flair* as a detective.

CHAPTER VIII. — The Jaffa Oranges.

“Letting *I dare not* wait upon *I would*.”

Of all fairy gifts, surely the most desirable in prospect, and the most embarrassing in practice, would be the magical telescope of Prince Ali, in the “Arabian Nights.” With his glass, it will be remembered, he could see whatever was happening on whatever part of the earth he chose, and, though absent, was always able to behold the face of his beloved. How often would one give Aladdin’s Lamp, and Fortunatus’ Purse, and the invisible Cap which was made of “a darkness that might be *felt*” to possess for one hour the Telescope of Fairyland!

Could Maitland and Barton have taken a peep through the tube, while they were pondering over the means of finding Margaret, their quest would have been aided, indeed, but they would scarcely have been reassured. Yet there was nothing very awful, nor squalid, nor alarming, as they might have expected, anticipated, and dreaded, in what the vision would have shown. Margaret was not in some foreign den of iniquity, nor, indeed, in a den at all.

The tube enchanted would have revealed to them Margaret, not very far off, not in Siberia nor Teheran, but simply in Victoria Square, Pimlico, S.W. There, in a bedroom, not more than commonly dingy, on the drawing-room floor, with the rattling old green Venetian blinds drawn down, Margaret would have been displayed. The testimony of a cloud of witnesses, in the form of phials and medical vessels, proved that she had for some time been an invalid. The pretty dusky red of health would have been seen to have faded from her cheeks, and the fun and daring had died out of her eyes. The cheeks were white and thin, the eyes were half-closed from sickness and fatigue, and Margaret, a while ago so ready of speech, did not even bestir herself to answer the question which a gentleman, who stood almost like a doctor, in an attitude of respectful inquiry, was putting as to her health.

He was a tall gentleman, dark, with a ripe kind of face, and full, red, sensitive, sensual lips, not without a trace of humor. Near the door, in a protesting kind of attitude, as if there against her will, was a remarkably handsome young person, attired plainly as a housekeeper, or upper-servant, The faces of some women appear to have been furnished by Nature, or informed by habit, with an aspect that seems to say (in fair members of the less educated classes), “I won’t put up with none of them goings on.” Such an expression this woman wears.

“I hope you feel better, my dear?” the dark gentleman asks again.

“She’s going on well enough,” interrupted the woman with the beautiful dissatisfied face. “What with peaches and grapes from Covent Garden, and tonics as you might bathe in—”

“Heaven forbid!”

“She *ought* to get well,” the dissatisfied woman continued, as if the invalid were obstinately bent on remaining ill.

“I was not speaking, at the moment, to you, Mrs. Darling,” said the dark gentleman, with mockery in his politeness, “but to the young lady whom I have entrusted to your charge.”

“A pretty trust!” the woman replied, with a sniff

“Yes, as you kindly say, an extremely pretty trust. And now, Margaret, my dear—’—”

The fair woman walked to the window, and stared out of it with a trembling lip, and eyes that saw nothing.

“Now, Margaret, my dear, tell me for yourself, how do you feel?”

“You are very kind,” answered the girl at last. “I am sure I am better. I am not very strong yet. I hope I shall get up soon.”

“Is there anything you would like? Perhaps you are tired of peaches and grapes; may I send you some oranges?”

“Oh, thank you; you are very good. I am often thirsty when I waken, or rather when I leave off dreaming. I seem to dream, rather than sleep, just now.”

“Poor girl!” said the dark gentleman, in a pitying voice. “And what do you dream?”

“There seems to be a dreadful quiet, smooth, white place,” said the girl, slowly, “where I am; and something I feel — something, I don’t know what — drives me out of it. I cannot rest in it; and then I find myself on a dark plain, and a great black horror, a kind of blackness falling in drifts, like black snow in a wind, sweeps softly over me, till I feel mixed in the blackness; and there is always some one watching me, and chasing me in the dark — some one I can’t see. Then I slide into the smooth, white, horrible place again, and feel I *must* get away from it. Oh, I don’t know which is worst! And they go and come all the while I’m asleep, I suppose.”

“I am waiting for the doctor to look in again; but all *I* can do is to get you some Jaffa oranges, nice large ones, myself. You will oblige me, Mrs. Darling” (he turned to the housekeeper), “by placing them in Miss Burnside’s room, and then, perhaps, she will find them refreshing when she wakes. Good-by for the moment, Margaret.”

The fair woman said nothing, and the dark gentleman walked into the street, where a hansom cab waited for him. “Covent Garden,” he cried to the cabman.

We have not for some time seen, or rather we have for some time made believe not to recognize, the Hon. Thomas Cranley, whose acquaintance (a very compromising one) we achieved early in this narrative.

Mr. Cranley, “with his own substantial private purpose sun-clear before him” (as Mr. Carlyle would have said, in apologizing for some more celebrated villain), had enticed Margaret from school. Nor had this been, to a person of his experience and resources, a feat of very great difficulty. When he had once learned, by the simplest and readiest means, the nature of Maitland’s telegram to Miss Marlett, his course had been dear. The telegram which followed Maitland’s, and in which Cranley used Maitland’s name, had entirely deceived Miss Marlett, as we have seen. By the most obvious ruses he had prevented Maitland from following his track to London. His housekeeper had entered the “engaged” carriage at Westbourne Park, and shared, as far as the terminus, the compartment previously occupied by himself and Margaret alone. Between Westbourne Park and Paddington he had packed the notable bearskin coat in his portmanteau. The consequence was, that at Paddington no one noticed a gentleman in a bearskin coat, travelling alone with a young lady. A gentleman in a light ulster, travelling with two ladies, by no means answered to the description Maitland gave in his examination of the porters. They, moreover, had paid but a divided attention to Maitland’s inquiries.

The success of Cranley’s device was secured by its elementary simplicity. A gentleman who, for any reason, wishes to obliterate his trail, does wisely to wear some very notable, conspicuous, unmistakable garb at one point of his progress. He then becomes, in the minds of most who see him, “the man in the bearskin coat,” or “the man in the jack-boots,” or “the man with the white hat.” His identity is practically merged in that of the coat, or the boots, or the hat; and when he slips out of them, he seems to leave his personality behind, or to pack it up in his portmanteau, or with his rugs. By acting on this principle (which only requires to be stated to win the assent of pure reason), Mr. Cranley had successfully lost himself and Margaret in London.

With Margaret his task had been less difficult than it looked. She recognized him as an acquaintance of her father’s, and he represented to her that he had been an officer of the man-of-war in which her father had served; that he had lately encountered her father, and pitied his poverty — in poor Shields, an irremediable condition. The father, so he declared, had spoken to him often and anxiously about Margaret, and with dislike and distrust about Maitland. According to Mr. Cranley, Shield’s chief desire in life had been to see Margaret entirely free from Maitland’s guardianship. But he had been conscious that to take the girl away from school would be harmful to her prospects. Finally, with his latest breath, so Mr. Cranley declared, he had commended Margaret to his old officer, and had implored him to abstract her from the charge of the Fellow of St Gatien's.

Margaret, as we know, did not entertain a very lively kindness for Maitland, nor had she ever heard her father speak of that unlucky young man with the respect which his kindness, his academic rank, and his position in society deserved. It must be remembered that, concerning the manner of her father's death, she had shrunk from asking questions. She knew it had been sudden; she inferred that it had not been reputable. Often had she dreaded for him one of the accidents against which Providence does not invariably protect the drunkard. Now the accident had arrived, she was fain to be ignorant of the manner of it. Her new guardian, again, was obviously a gentleman; he treated her with perfect politeness and respect, and, from the evening of the day when she left school, she had been in the charge of that apparently correct chaperon, the handsome housekeeper with the disapproving countenance. Mr. Cranley had even given up to her his own rooms in Victoria Square, and had lodged elsewhere; his exact address Margaret did not know. The only really delicate point — Cranley's assumption of the name of "Mr. Lithgow" — he frankly confessed to her as soon as they were well out of the Dovecot. He represented that, for the fulfilment of her father's last wish, the ruse of the telegram and the assumed name had been necessary, though highly repugnant to the feelings of an officer and a gentleman. Poor Margaret had seen nothing of gentlemen, except as philanthropists, and (as we know) philanthropists permit themselves a license and discretion not customary in common society.

Finally, even had the girl's suspicions been awakened, her illness prevented her from too closely reviewing the situation. She was with her father's friend, an older man by far, and therefore a more acceptable guardian than Maitland. She was fulfilling her father's wish, and hoped soon to be put in the way of independence, and of earning her own livelihood; and independence was Margaret's ideal.

Her father's friend, her own protector — in that light she regarded Cranley, when she was well enough to think consecutively. There could be no more complete hallucination. Cranley was one of those egotists who do undoubtedly exist, but whose existence, when they are discovered, is a perpetual surprise even to the selfish race of men. In him the instinct of self-preservation (without which the race could not have endured for a week) had remained absolutely unmodified, as it is modified in the rest of us, by thousands of years of inherited social experience. Cranley's temper, in every juncture, was precisely that of the first human being who ever found himself and other human beings struggling in a flood for a floating log that will only support one of them. Everything must give way to his desire; he had literally never denied himself anything that he dared taka As certainly as the stone, once tossed up, obeys the only law it knows, and falls back to earth, so surely Cranley would obtain what he desired (if it seemed safe), though a human life, or a human soul, stood between him and his purpose.

Now, Margaret stood, at this moment, between him and the aims on which his greed was desperately bent. It was, therefore, necessary that she should vanish; and to that end he had got her into his power. Cranley's original idea had been the obvious one of transporting the girl to the Continent, where, under the pretence that a suitable situation of some kind had been found for her, he would so arrange that England should never see her more, and that her place among honest women should be lost forever. But there were difficulties in the way of this tempting plan. For instance, the girl knew some French, and was no tame, unresisting fool; and then Margaret's illness had occurred, and had caused delay, and given time for reflection.

"After all," he thought, as he lit his cigar and examined his mustache in the mirror (kindly provided for that purpose in well-appointed hansoms)— "after all it is only, the dead who tell no tales, and make no inconvenient claims."

For after turning over in his brain the various safe and easy ways of "removing" an inconvenient person, one devilish scheme had flashed across a not uninstructed intellect — a scheme which appeared open to the smallest number of objections.

"She shall take a turn for the worse," he thought; "and the doctor will be an uncommonly clever man, and particularly well read in criminal jurisprudence, if he sees anything suspicious in it."

Thus pondering, this astute miscreant stopped at Covent Garden, dismissed his cab, and purchased a basket of very fine Jaffa oranges. He then hailed another cab, and drove with his parcel to the shop of an eminent firm of chemists, again dismissing his cab. In the shop he asked for a certain substance, which it may be as well not to name, and got what he wanted in a small phial, marked *poison*. Mr. Cranley then called a third cab, gave the direction of a surgical-instrument maker's (also eminent), and amused his leisure during the drive in removing the label from the bottle. At the surgical-instrument maker's he complained of neuralgia, and purchased a hypodermic syringe for injecting morphine or some such anodyne into his arm. À fourth cab took him back to the house in Victoria Square, where he let himself in with a key, entered the dining-room, and locked the door.

Nor was he satisfied with this precaution. After aimlessly moving chairs about for a few minutes, and prowling up and down the room, he paused and listened. What he heard induced him to stuff his pocket-handkerchief into the keyhole, and to lay the hearth-rug across the considerable chink which, as is usual, admitted a healthy draught under the bottom of the door. Then the Honorable Mr. Cranley drew down the blinds, and unpacked his various purchases. He set them out on the table in order — the oranges, the phial, and the hypodermic syringe.

Then he carefully examined the oranges, chose half a dozen of the best, and laid the others on a large dessert plate in the dining-room cupboard. One orange he ate, and left the skin on a plate on the table, in company with a biscuit or two.

When all this had been arranged to his mind, Mr. Cranley chose another orange, filled a wineglass with the liquid in the phial, and then drew off a quantity in the little syringe. Then he very delicately and carefully punctured the skin of one of the oranges, and injected into the fruit the contents of the syringe. This operation he elaborately completed in the case of each of the six chosen oranges, and then tenderly polished their coats with a portion of the skin of the fruit he had eaten. That portion of the skin he consumed to dust in the fire; and, observing that a strong odor remained in the room, he deliberately turned on the unlighted gas for a few minutes. After this he opened the window, sealed his own seal in red wax on paper a great many times, finally burning the collection, and lit a large cigar, which he smoked through with every appearance of enjoyment. While engaged on this portion of his task, he helped himself frequently to sherry from the glass, first carefully rinsed, into which he had poured the liquid from the now unlabelled phial. Lastly he put the phial in his pocket with the little syringe, stored the six oranges, wrapped in delicate paper, within the basket, and closed the window.

Next he unlocked the door, and, without opening it, remarked in a sweet voice:

“Now, Alice, you may come in!”

The handle turned, and the housekeeper entered.

“How is Miss Burnside?” he asked, in the same silvery accents. (He had told Margaret that she had better be known by that name, for the present at least.)

“She is asleep. I hope she may never waken. What do you want with her? Why are you keeping her in this house? What devil’s brew have you been making that smells of gas and sherry and sealing-wax?”

“My dear girl,” replied Mr. Cranley, “you put too many questions at once. As to your first pair of queries, my reasons for taking care of Miss Burnside are my own business, and do not concern you, as my housekeeper. As to the ‘devil’s brew' which you indicate in a style worthy rather of the ages of Faith and of Alchemy, than of an epoch of positive science, did you never taste sherry and sealing-wax? If you did not, that is one of the very few alcoholic combinations in which you have never, to my knowledge, attempted experiments. Is there any other matter on which I can enlighten an intelligent and respectful curiosity?"

The fair woman's blue eyes and white face seemed to glitter with anger, like a baleful lightning.

"I don't understand your chaff," she said, with a few ornamental epithets, which, in moments when she was deeply stirred, were apt to decorate her conversation.

"I grieve to be obscure," he answered; "*brevis esse laboro,* the old story. But, as you say Miss Burnside is sleeping, and as, when she wakens, she may be feverish, will you kindly carry these oranges and leave them on a plate by her bedside? They are Jaffa oranges, and finer fruit, Alice, my dear, I have seldom tasted! After that, go to Cavendish Square, and leave this note at the doctor's."

"Oh, nothing's too good for *her!*" growled the jealous woman, thinking of the fruit; to which he replied by offering her several of the oranges not used in his experiment.

Bearing these, she withdrew, throwing a spiteful glance and leaving the door unshut, so that her master distinctly heard her open Margaret's door, come out again, and finally leave the house.

"Now, I'll give her a quarter of an hour to waken," said Mr. Cranley, and he took from his pocket a fresh copy of the *Times*. He glanced rather anxiously at the second column of the outer sheet "Still advertising for him," he said to himself; and he then turned to the sporting news. His calmness was extraordinary, but natural in him; for the reaction of terror at the possible detection of his villainy had not yet come on. When he had read all that interested him in the *Times*, he looked hastily at his watch.

"Just twenty minutes gone," he said. "Time she wakened — and tried those Jaffa oranges."

Then he rose, went up stairs stealthily, paused a moment opposite Margaret's door, and entered the drawing-room. Apparently he did not find any of the chairs in the dining-room comfortable enough; for he chose a large and heavy *fauteuil*, took it up in his arms, and began to carry it out In the passage, just opposite Margaret's chamber, he stumbled so heavily that he fell, and the weighty piece of furniture was dashed against the door of the sick-room, making a terrible noise. He picked it up, and retired silently to the dining-room.

"That would have wakened the dead," he whispered to himself, "and she is not dead — yet. She is certain to see the oranges, and take one of them, and then—"

The reflection did not seem to relieve him, as he sat, gnawing his mustache, in the chair he had brought down with him. Now the deed was being accomplished, even his craven heart awoke to a kind of criminal remorse. Now anxiety for the issue made him wish the act undone, or frustrated; now he asked himself if there were no more certain and less perilous way. So intent was his eagerness that a strange kind of lucidity possessed him. He felt as if he beheld and heard what was passing in the chamber of sickness, which he had made a chamber of Death.

She has wakened — she has looked round — she has seen the poisoned fruit — she has blessed him for his kindness in bringing it — she has tasted the oranges — she has turned to sleep again — and the unrelenting venom is at its work!

Oh, strange forces that are about us, all inevitably acting, each in his hour and his place, each fulfilling his law without turning aside to the right hand or to the left! The rain-drop running down the pane, the star revolving round the sun of the furthest undiscoverable system, the grains of sand sliding from the grasp, the poison gnawing and burning the tissues — each seems to move in his inevitable path, obedient to an unrelenting will. Innocence, youth, beauty — that will spares them not. The rock falls at its hour, whoever is under it. The deadly drug slays, though it be blended with the holy elements. It is a will that moves all things — *mens agitat molem*; and yet we can make that will a slave of our own, and turn this way and that the blind steadfast forces, to the accomplishment of our desires.

It was not, naturally, with these transcendental reflections that the intellect of Mr. Cranley was at this moment engaged. If he seemed actually to be present in Margaret’s chamber, watching every movement and hearing every heart-beat of the girl he had doomed, his blue lips and livid face, from which he kept wiping the cold drops, did not therefore speak of late ruth, or the beginning of remorse.

It was entirely on his own security and chances of escaping detection that he was musing.

“Now it’s done, it can’t be undone,” he said. “But is it so very safe, after all? The stuff is not beyond analysis, unluckily; but it’s much more hard to detect this way, mixed with the orange-juice, than any other way. And then there’s all the horrid fuss afterward. Even if there is not an inquest — as, of course, there won’t be — they’ll ask who the girl is, what the devil she was doing here. Perhaps they’ll, some of them, recognize Alice: she has been too much before the public, confound her. It may not be very hard to lie through all these inquiries, perhaps.”

And then he looked mechanically at his cold fingers, and bit his thumb-nail, and yawned.

“By gad! I wish I had not risked it,” he said to himself; and his complexion was now of a curious faint blue, and his heart began to flutter painfully in a manner not strange in his experience. He sunk back in his chair, with his hands all thrilling and pricking to the finger-tips. He took a large silver flask from his pocket, but he could scarcely unscrew the stopper, and had to manage it with his teeth. A long pull at the liquor restored him, and he began his round of reflections again.

“That French fellow who tried it this way in Scotland was found out,” he said; “and—” He did not like, even in his mind, to add that the “French fellow, consequently, suffered the extreme penalty of the law. But then he was a fool, and boasted beforehand, and bungled it infernally. Still, it’s not absolutely safe: the other plan I thought of first was better. By gad! I wish I could be sure she had not taken the stuff. Perhaps she hasn’t. Anyway, she must be asleep again now; and, besides, there are the other oranges to be substituted for those left in the room, if she *has* taken it. I *must* go and see. I don’t like the job.”

He filled his pockets with five unpoisoned oranges, and the skin of a sixth, and so crept upstairs. His situation was, perhaps, rather novel. With murder in his remorseless heart, he yet hoped against hope, out of his very poltroonery, that murder had not been done. At the girl’s door he waited and listened, his face horribly agitated and shining wet. All was silent. His heart was sounding hoarsely within him, like a dry pump: he heard it, so noisy and so distinct that he almost feared it might wake the sleeper. If only, after all, she had not touched the fruit!

Then he took the door-handle in his clammy grasp; he had to cover it with a handkerchief to get a firm hold. He turned discreetly, and the door was pushed open in perfect stillness, except for that dreadful husky thumping of his own heart. At this moment the postman’s hard knock at the door nearly made him cry out aloud. Then he entered; a dreadful visitor, had anyone seen him. She did not see him; she was asleep, sound asleep; in the dirty brown twilight of a London winter day, he could make out that much. He did not dare draw close enough to observe her face minutely, or bend down and listen for her breath. And the oranges! Eagerly he looked at them. There were only five of them. Surely — no! a sixth had fallen on the floor, where it was lying. With a great sigh of relief he picked up all the six oranges, put them in his pockets, and, as shrinkingly as he had come-yet shaking his hand at the girl, and cursing his own cowardice under his breath — he stole down stairs, opened the dining-room door, and advanced into the blind, empty dusk.

“Now I’ll settle with you!” came a voice out of the dimness; and the start wrought so wildly on his nerves, excited to the utmost degree as they were, that he gave an inarticulate cry of alarm and despair. Was he trapped, and by whom?

In a moment he saw whence the voice came. It was only Alice Darling, in bonnet and cloak, and with a face flushed with something more than anger, that stood before him.

Not much used to shame, he was yet ashamed of his own alarm, and tried to dissemble it. He sat down at a writing-table facing her, and merely observed:

“Now that you have returned, Alice, will you kindly bring lights? I want to read.”

“What were you doing upstairs just now?” she snarled. “Why did you send me off to the doctor’s, out of the way?”

“My good girl, I have again and again advised you to turn that invaluable curiosity of yours — curiosity, a quality which Mr. Matthew Arnold so justly views with high esteem — into wider and nobler channels. Disdain the merely personal; accept the calm facts of domestic life as you find them; approach the broader and less irritating problems of Sociology (pardon the term) or Metaphysics.”

It was cruel to see the enjoyment he got out of teasing this woman by an ironical jargon which mystified her into madness. This time he went too far. With an inarticulate snarl of passion she lifted a knife that lay on the dining-room table and made for him. But this time, being prepared, he was not alarmed; nay, he seemed to take leasure in the success of his plan of tormenting. The heavy escritoire at which he sat was a breastwork between him and the angry woman. He coolly opened a drawer; produced a revolver, and remarked:

“No; I did not ask for the carving-knife, Alice. I asked for lights; and you will be good enough to bring them. I am your master, you know, in every sense of the word; and you are aware that you had better both hold your tongue and keep your hands off me — and off drink. Fetch the lamp!”

She left the room cowed, like a beaten dog. She returned, set the lamp silently on the table, and was gone. Then he noticed a letter, which lay on the escritoire, and was addressed to him. It was a rather peculiar letter to look at, or rather the envelope was peculiar; for, though bordered with heavy black, it was stamped, where the seal should have been, with a strange device in gold and colors — a brown bun, in a glory of gilt rays.

“Mrs. St John Deloraine,” he said, taking it up. “How in the world did *she* find me out? Well, she is indeed a friend that sticketh closer than a brother — a deal closer than Surbiton, anyhow.”

Lord Surbiton was the elder brother of Mr. Cranley, and bore the second title of the family.

“I don’t suppose there is another woman in London,” he thought to himself, "that has not heard all about the row at the Cockpit, and that would write to me."

Then he tore the chromatic splendors of the device on the envelope, and read the following epistle:

"Early English Bunhouse,

"Chelsea, Friday. "My dear Mr. Cranley,

"Where are you hiding, or yachting, you wandering man? I can hear nothing of you from anyone — nothing *good*, and you know I never believe anything *else*. Do come and see me, at the old Bunhouse here, and tell me about *yourself*"

— ("She *has* heard," he muttered)

— "and help me in a little difficulty. Our housekeeper (you know we are strictly *blue ribbon — a cordon bleu*, I call her) has become engaged to a *plumber*, and she is leaving us. *Can* you recommend me another? I know how interested you are (in spite of your wicked jokes) in our little enterprise. And we also want a girl, to be under the housekeeper, and keep the accounts. Surely you will come to see me, whether you can advise me or not.

"Yours very truly,

"Mary St. John Deloraine"

"Idiot!" murmured Mr. Cranley, as he finished reading this document; and then he added, "By Jove! it's lucky, too. I'll put these two infernal women off on *her*, and Alice will soon do for the girl, if she once gets at the drink. She's dangerous, by Jove, when she has been drinking. Then the Law will do for Alice, and all will be plain sailing in smooth waters."

CHAPTER IX. — Mrs. St. John Deloraine

Mrs. St. John Deloraine, whose letter to Mr. Cranley we have been privileged to read, was no ordinary widow. As parts of her character and aspects of her conduct were not devoid of the kind of absurdity which is caused by virtues out of place, let it be said that a better, or kinder, or gentler, or merrier soul than that of Mrs. St. John Deloraine has seldom inhabited a very pleasing and pretty tenement of clay, and a house in Cheyne Walk.

The maiden name of this lady was by no means so euphonious as that which she had attained by marriage. Miss Widdicombe, of Chipping Carby, in the county of Somerset, was a very lively, good-hearted and agreeable young woman; but she was by no means favorably looked on by the ladies of the County Families. Now, in the district around Chipping Carby, the County Families are very County indeed, few more so. There is in their demeanor a kind of *morgue* so funereal and mournful, that it inevitably reminds the observer (who is not County) of an edifice in Paris, designed by Méryon, and celebrated by Mr. Robert Browning. The County Families near Chipping Carby are far, far from gay, and what pleasure they do take, they take entirely in the society of their equals. So determined are they to drink delight of tennis with their peers, and with nobody else, that even the Clergy are excluded, *ex officio*, and in their degrading capacity of ministers of Religion, from the County Lawn Tennis Club. As we all know how essential young curates fresh from college are to the very being of rural lawn-tennis, no finer proof can be given of the inaccessibility of the County people around Chipping Carby, and of the sacrifices which they are prepared to make to their position.

Now, born in the very purple, and indubitably (despite his profession) one of the gentlest born of men, was, some seven years ago, a certain Mr. St. John Deloraine. He held the sacrosanct position of a squarson, being at once Squire and Parson of the parish of Little Wentley. At the head of the quaint old village street stands, mirrored in a moat, girdled by beautiful gardens, and shadowy with trees, the Manor House and Parsonage (for it is both in one) of Wentley Deloraine.

To this desirable home and opulent share of earth’s good things did Mr. St. John Deloraine succeed in boyhood. He went to Oxford, he travelled a good deal, he was held in great favor and affection by the County matrons and the long-nosed young ladies of the County. Another, dwelling on such heights as he, might have become haughty; but there was in this young man a cheery naturalness and love of mirth which often drove him from the society of his equals, and took him into that of attorneys' daughters. Fate drew him one day to an archery meeting at Chipping Carby, and there he beheld Miss Widdicombe. With her he paced the level turf, her "points" he counted, and he found that she, at least, could appreciate his somewhat apt quotation from *Chastelard*:

"Pray heaven, we make good Ends."

Miss Widdicombe *did* make good "Ends." She vanquished Mrs. Struggles, the veteran lady champion of the shaft and bow, a sportswoman who was now on the verge of sixty. Why are ladies, who, almost professionally, "rejoice in arrows," like the Homeric Artemis — why are they nearly always so well stricken in years? Was Maid Marion forty at least before her performances obtained for her a place in the well-known band of Hood, Tuck, Little John, and Co.?

This, however, is a digression. For our purpose it is enough that the contrast between Miss Widdicombe's vivacity and the deadly stolidity of the County families, between her youth and the maturity of her vanquished competitors, entirely won the heart of Mr. St John Deloraine. He saw — he loved her — he was laughed at — he proposed — he was accepted — and, oh, shame! the County had to accept, more or less, Miss Widdicombe, the attorney's daughter, as *châtelaine* (delightful word, and dear to the author of *Guy Livingstone*) of Wentley Deloraine.

When the early death of her husband threw Mrs. St John Deloraine almost alone on the world (for her family had, naturally, been offended by her good fortune), she left the gray old squarsonage, and went to town. In London, Mrs. St John Deloraine did not find people stiff, With a good name, an impulsive manner, a kind heart, a gentle tongue, and plenty of money, she was welcome almost everywhere, except at the big County dinners which the County people of her district give to each other when they come to town.

This lady, like many of us, had turned to charity and philanthropy in the earlier days of her bereavement; but, unlike most of us, her benevolence had not died out with the sharpest pangs of her sorrow. Never, surely, was there such a festive philanthropist as Mrs. St. John Deloraine.

She would go from a garden-party to a mothers' meeting; she was great at taking children for a day in the country, and had the art of keeping them amused. She was on a dozen charitable committees, belonged to at least three clubs, at which gentlemen as well as ladies of fashion were eligible, and where music and minstrelsy enlivened the after-dinner hours.

So good and unsuspecting, unluckily, was Mrs. St. John Deloraine, that she made bosom friends for life, and contracted vows of eternal sympathy, wherever she went. At Aix, or on the Spanish frontier, she has been seen enjoying herself with acquaintances a little dubious, like Greek texts which, if not absolutely corrupt, yet stand greatly in need of explanation. It is needless to say that gentlemen of fortune, in the old sense — that is, gentlemen in quest of a fortune — pursued hotly or artfully after Mrs. St. John Deloraine. But as she never for a moment suspected their wiles, so these devices were entirely wasted on her, and her least warrantable admirers found that she insisted on accepting them as endowed with all the Christian virtues. Just as some amateurs of music are incapable of conceiving that there breathes a man who has no joy in popular concerts (we shall have popular conic sections next), so Mrs. St John Deloraine persevered in crediting all she met with a passion for virtue. Their speech might bewray them as worldlings of the world, but she insisted on interpreting their talk as a kind of harmless levity, as a mere cynical mask assumed by a tender and pious nature. Thus, no one ever combined a delight in good works with a taste for good things so successfully as Mrs. St John Deloraine.

At this moment the lady's "favorite vanity," in the matter of good works, was *The Bunhouse*. This really serviceable, though quaint, institution was not, in idea, quite unlike Maitland's enterprise of the philanthropic public-house, the *Hit or Miss*. In a slum of Chelsea there might have been observed a modest place of entertainment, in the coffee and bun line, with a highly elaborate Chelsea Bun painted on the sign. This piece of art, which gave its name to the establishment, was the work of one of Mrs. St John Deloraine's friends, an artist of the highest promise, who fell an early victim to arrangements in haschisch and Irish whiskey. In spite of this ill-omened beginning, *The Bunhouse* did very useful work. It was a kind of unofficial club and home, not for Friendly Girls, nor the comparatively subdued and domesticated slavery of common life, but for the tameless tribes of young women of the metropolis. Those who disdain service, who turn up expressive features at sewing machines, and who decline to stand perpendicularly for fifteen hours a day in shops — all these young female outlaws, not professionally vicious, found in *The Bunhouse* a kind of charitable shelter and home.

They were amused, they were looked after, they were encouraged not to stand each other drinks, nor to rival the profanity of their brothers and fathers. "Places" were found for them, in the rare instances when they condescended to "places." Sometimes they breakfasted at *The Bunhouse*, sometimes went there to supper. Very often they came in a state of artificial cheerfulness, or ready for battle. Then there would arise such a disturbance as civilization seldom sees. Not otherwise than when boys, having tied two cats by the tails, hang them over the handle of a door — they then spit, and shriek, and swear, fur flies, and the clamor goes up to heaven: so did the street resound when the young patrons of *The Bunhouse* were in a warlike humor. Then the stern housekeeper would intervene, and check these motions of their minds, *haec certamina tanta*, turning the more persistent combatants into the street. Next day Mrs. St. John Deloraine would come in her carriage, and try to be very severe, and then would weep a little, and all the girls would shed tears, all would have a good cry together, and finally the Lady Mother (Mrs. St John Deloraine) would take a few of them for a drive in the Park. After that there would be peace for a while, and presently disturbances would come again.

For this establishment it was that Mrs. St. John Deloraine wanted a housekeeper and an assistant. The former housekeeper, as we have been told, had yielded to love, "which subdues the hearts of all female women, even of the prudent," according to Homer, and was going to share the home and bear the children of a plumber. With her usual invincible innocence, Mrs. St. John Deloraine had chosen to regard the Hon. Thomas Cranley as a kind good Christian in disguise, and to him she appealed in her need of a housekeeper and assistant.

No application could possibly have suited that gentleman better. *He* could give his own servant an excellent character; and if once she was left to herself, to her passions, and the society of Margaret, that young lady's earthly existence would shortly cease to embarrass Mr. Cranley. Probably there was not one other man among the motley herds of Mrs. St. John Deloraine's acquaintance who would have used her unsuspicious kindness as an instrument in a plot of any sort. But Mr. Cranley had (when there was no personal danger to be run) the courage of his character.

"Shall I go and lunch with her?" he asked himself, as he twisted her note, with its characteristic black border and device of brown, and gold. "I haven't shown anywhere I was likely to meet anyone I knew, not since — since I came back from Monte Carlo."

Even to himself he did not like to mention that affair of the Cockpit The man in the story who boasted that he had committed every crime in the calendar withdrew his large words when asked "if he had ever cheated at cards."

"Well," Mr. Cranley went on, "I don't know: I dare say it's safe enough. She does know some of those Cockpit fellows; confound her, she knows all sorts of fellows. But none of them are likely to be up so early in the day — not up to luncheon anyhow. She says" — and he looked again at the note— "that she'll be alone; but she won't. Everyone she sees before lunch she asks to luncheon: everyone she meets before dinner she asks to dinner. I wish I had her money: it would be simpler and safer by a very long way than this kind of business. There really seems no end to it when once you begin. However, here goes," said Mr. Cranley, sitting down to write a letter at the escritoire which had just served him as a bulwark and breastwork. "I'll write and accept Probably she'll have no one with her, but some girl from Chipping Carby, or some missionary from the Solomon Islands who never heard of a heathen like me."

As a consequence of these reflections, Mr. Cranley arrived, when the clock was pointing to half-past one, at Mrs. St. John Deloraine's house in Cheyne Walk. He had scarcely entered the drawing-room before that lady, in a costume which agreeably became her pleasant English style of beauty, rushed into the room, tumbling over a favorite Dandie Dinmont terrier, and holding out both her hands.

The terrier howled, and Mrs. St. John Deloraine had scarcely grasped the hand which Mr. Cranley extended with enthusiasm, when she knelt on the carpet and was consoling the Dandie.

"Love in which thy hound has part," quoted Mr. Cranley. And the lady, rising with her face becomingly flushed beneath her fuzzy brown hair, smiled, and did not remark the sneer.

"Thank you so much for coming, Mr. Cranley," she said; "and, as I have put off luncheon till two, *do* tell me that you know someone who will suit me for my dear *Bunhouse*. I know how much you have always been interested in our little project."

Mr. Cranley assured her that, by a remarkable coincidence, he knew the very kind of people she wanted. Alice he briefly described as a respectable woman of great strength of character, "of body, too, I believe, which will not make her less fit for the position."

"No," said Mrs. St. John Deloraine, sadly; "the dear girls are sometimes a little tiresome. On Wednesday, Mrs. Carter, the housekeeper, you know, went to one of the exhibitions with her *fiancé*, and the girls broke all the windows and almost all the tea-things."

"The woman whom I am happy to be able to recommend to you will not stand anything of that kind," answered Mr. Cranley. "She is quiet, but extremely firm, and has been accustomed to deal with a very desperate character. At one time, I mean, she was engaged as the attendant of a person of treacherous and ungovernable disposition."

This was true enough; and Mr. Cranley then began to give a more or less fanciful history of Margaret She had been left in his charge by her father, an early acquaintance, a man who had known better days, but had bequeathed her nothing, save an excellent schooling and the desire to earn her own livelihood.

So far, he knew he was safe enough; for Margaret was the last girl to tell the real tale of her life, and her desire to avoid Maitland was strong enough to keep her silent, even had she not been naturally proud and indisposed to make confidences.

"There is only one thing I must ask," said Mr. Cranley, when he had quite persuaded the lady that Margaret would set a splendid example to her young friends. "How soon does your housekeeper leave you, and when do you need the services of the new-comers?"

"Well, the plumber is rather in a hurry. He really is a good man, and I like him better for it, though it seems rather selfish of him to want to rob me of Joan. He is; determined to be married before next Bank Holiday — in a fortnight that is — and then they will go on their honeymoon of three days to Yarmouth."

Mr. Cranley blessed the luck that had not made the plumber a yet more impetuous wooer.

"No laggard in love," he said, smiling. "Well, in a fortnight the two women will be quite ready for their new place. But I must ask you to remember that the younger is somewhat delicate, and has by no means recovered from the shock of her father's sudden death — a very sad affair," added Mr. Cranley, in a sympathetic voice.

"Poor dear girl!" cried Mrs. St. John Deloraine, with the ready tears in her eyes; for this lady spontaneously acted on the injunction to weep with those who weep, and also laugh with those who laugh.

Mr. Cranley, who was beginning to feel hungry, led her thoughts off to the latest farce in which Mr. Toole had amused the town; and when Mrs. St. John Deloraine had giggled till she wept again over her memories of this entertainment, she suddenly looked at her watch.

"Why, he's very late," she said; "and yet it is not far to come from the *Hit or Miss*."

"From the *Hit or Miss*!" cried Mr. Cranley, much louder than he was aware.

"Yes; you may well wonder, if you don't know about it, that I should have asked a gentleman from a public-house to meet you. But you will be quite in love with him; he is such a very good young man. Not handsome, nor very amusing; but people think a great deal too much of amusingness now. He is very, very good, and spends almost all his time among the poor. He is a Fellow of his College at Oxford."

During this discourse Mr. Cranley was pretending to play with the terrier; but, stoop as he might, his face was livid, and he knew it.

"Did I tell you his name?" Mrs. St. John Deloraine ran on. "He is a—"

Here the door was opened, and the servant announced "Mr. Maitland."

When Mrs. St. John Deloraine had welcomed her new guest, she turned, and found that Mr. Cranley was looking out of the window.

His position was indeed agonizing, and, in the circumstances, a stronger heart might have blanched at the encounter.

When Cranley last met Maitland, he had been the guest of that philanthropist, and he had gone from his table to swindle his fellow-revellers. What other things he had done — things in which Maitland was concerned — the reader knows, or at least suspects. But it was not these deeds which troubled Mr. Cranley, for these he knew were undetected. It was that affair of the baccarat which unmanned him.

There was nothing for it but to face Maitland and the situation.

“Let me introduce you—” said Mrs. St. John Deloraine.

“There is no need,” interrupted Maitland. “Mr. Cranley and I have known each other for some time. I don’t think we have met,” he added, looking at Cranley, “since you dined with me at the Olympic, and we are not likely to meet again, I’m afraid; for to-morrow, as I have come to tell Mrs. Si John Deloraine, I go to Paris on business of importance.”

Mr. Cranley breathed again; it was obvious that Maitland, living out of the world as he did, and concerned (as Cranley well knew him to be) with private affairs of an urgent character, had never been told of the trouble at the Cockpit, or had, in his absent fashion, never attended to what he might have heard with the hearing of the ear. As to Paris, he had the best reason for guessing why Maitland was bound thither, as he was the secret source of the information on which Maitland proposed to act.

At luncheon — which, like the dinner described by the American guest, was “luscious and abundant” — Mr. Cranley was more sparkling than the champagne, and made even Maitland laugh. He recounted little philanthropic misadventures of his own — cases in which he had been humorously misled by the *Captain Wraggs* of this world, or beguiled by the authors of that polite correspondence — begging letters.

When luncheon was over, and when Maitland was obliged, reluctantly, to go (for he liked Mrs. St. John Deloraine’s company very much), Cranley, who had determined to see him out, shook hands in a very cordial way with the Fellow of St. Gatien’s.

“And when are we likely to meet again?” he asked.

“I really don’t know,” said Maitland. “I have business in Paris, and I cannot say how long I may be detained on the Continent.”

“No more can I,” said Mr. Cranley to himself; “but I hope you won’t return in time to bother me with your blundering inquiries, if ever you have the luck to return at all."

But while he said this to himself, to Maitland he only wished a good voyage, and particularly recommended to him a comedy (and a *comédienne*) at the Palais Royal.

CHAPTER X. — Traps.

The day before the encounter with Mr. Cranley at the house of the lady of *The Bunhouse,* Barton, when he came home from a round of professional visits, had found Maitland waiting in his chill, unlighted lodgings. Of late, Maitland had got into the habit of loitering there, discussing and discussing all the mysteries which made him feel that he was indeed "moving about in worlds not realized." Keen as was the interest which Barton took in the labyrinth of his friend's affairs, he now and again wearied of Maitland, and of a conversation that ever revolved round the same fixed but otherwise uncertain points.

"Hullo, Maitland; glad to see you," he observed, with some shade of hypocrisy. "Anything new to-day?"

"Yes," said Maitland; "I really do think I have a clew at last."

"Well, wait a bit till they bring the candles," said Barton, groaning as the bell-rope came away in his hands. "Bring lights, please, and tea, and stir up the fire, Jemima, my friend," he remarked, when the blackened but alert face of the little slavey appeared at the door.

"Yes, Dr. Barton, in a minute, sir," answered Jemima, who greatly admired the Doctor, and in ten minutes the dismal lodgings looked almost comfortable.

"Now for your clew, old man," exclaimed Barton, as he handed Maitland a cup of his peculiar mixture, very weak, with plenty of milk and no sugar. "Oh, Ariadne, what a boon that clew of yours has been to the detective mind! To think that, without the Minotaur, the police would probably never have hit on that invaluable expression, 'the police have a clew.'"

Maitland thought this was trifling with the subject.

"This advertisement," he said, gravely, "appears to me undoubtedly to refer to the miscreant who carried off Margaret, poor girl."

"Does it, by Jove?" cried Barton, with some eagerness this time. "Let's have a look at it!"

This was what he read aloud:

> "Bearskin Coat. — The gentleman travelling with a young lady,
> who, on Feb. 19th, left a bearskin coat at the Hôtel Alsace
> and Lorraine, Avenue de l'Opéra, Paris, is requested to
> remove it, or it will be sold to defray expenses.
>
> "Dupin."

“This *may* mean business,” he said, “or it may not. In the first place, is there such an hotel in Paris as the ‘Alsace et Lorraine,’ and is M. Dupin the proprietor?”

“*That’s* all right,” said Maitland. “I went at once to the Club, and looked up the *Bottin*, the Paris Directory, don’t you know.”

“So far, so good; and yet I don’t quite see what you can make of it. It does not come to much, you know, even if the owner of the coat is the man you want And again, is he likely to have left such a very notable article of dress behind him in an hotel? Anyway, can’t you send some detective fellow? Are you going over yourself in this awful weather?”

So Barton argued, but Maitland was not to be easily put off the hopeful scent.

“Why, don’t you see,” he exclaimed, “the people at the hotel will at least be able to give one a fuller description of the man than anything we have yet. And they may have some idea of where he has gone to; and, at least, they will have noticed how he was treating Margaret, and that, of course, is what I am most anxious to learn. Again, he may have left other things besides the coat, or there may be documents in the pockets. I have read of such things happening.”

“Yes, in ‘Le Crime de l’Opéra;’ and a very good story, too,” answered the incredulous Barton; “but I don’t fancy that the villain of real life is quite so innocent and careless as the monster of fiction.”

“Everyone knows that murderers are generally detected through some incredible piece of carelessness,” said Maitland; “and why should this elaborate scoundrel be more fortunate than the rest? If he *did* leave the coat, he will scarcely care to go back for it; and I do not think the chance should be lost, even if it is a poor one. Besides, I’m doing no good here, and I can do no harm there.”

This was undeniably true; and though Barton muttered something about “a false scent,” he no longer attempted to turn Maitland from his purpose. He did, however, with some difficulty, prevent the Fellow of St. Gatien’s from purchasing a blonde beard, one of those wigs which simulate baldness, and a pair of blue spectacles. In these disguises, Maitland argued, he would certainly avoid recognition, and so discomfit any mischief planned by the enemies of Margaret.

“Yes; but, on the other hand, you would look exactly like a German professor, and probably be taken for a spy of Bismarck’s,” said Barton.

And Maitland reluctantly gave up the idea of disguise. He retained, however, certain astute notions of his own about his plan of operations, and these, unfortunately, he did not communicate to his friend. The fact is, that the long dormant romance of Maitland’s character was now thoroughly awake, and he began, unconsciously, to enjoy the adventure.

His enjoyment did not last very long. The usual troubles of a winter voyage, acting on a dilapidated digestive system, were not spared the guardian of Margaret But everything — -even a period of waiting at the Paris *salle d'attente*, and a struggle with the *cochers* at the station (who, for some reason, always decline to take a fare) — must come to an end at last. About dinner-time, Maitland was jolted through the glare of the Parisian streets, to the Avenue de l'Opéra. At the Hôtel Alsace et Lorraine he determined not to betray himself by too precipitate eagerness. In the first place, he wrote an assumed name in the hotel book, choosing, by an unlucky inspiration, the pseudonym of Buchanan. He then ordered dinner in the hotel, and, by way of propitiation, it was a much better dinner than usual that Maitland ordered. Bottles of the higher Bordeaux wines, reposing in beautiful baskets, were brought at his command; for he was determined favorably to impress the people of the house.

His conduct in this matter was partly determined by the fact that, for the moment, the English were not popular in Paris.

In fact, as the French newspapers declared, with more truth than they suspected, "Paris was not the place for English people, especially for English women."

In these international circumstances, then, Maitland believed he showed the wisdom of the serpent when he ordered dinner in the fearless old fashion attributed by tradition to the Milords of the past But he had reckoned without his appetite.

A consequence of sea-travel, neither uncommon nor alarming, is the putting away of all desire to eat and drink. As the waiter carried off the untouched *hors d'oeuvres* (whereof Maitland only nibbled the delicious bread and butter); as he bore away the *huîtres*, undiminished in number; as the *bisque* proved too much for the guest of the evening; as he faltered over the soles, and failed to appreciate the cutlets; as he turned from the noblest *crûs* (including the widow's *crûs*, those of La Veuve Cliquot), and asked for *siphon* and *fine champagne*, the waiter's countenance assumed an air of owl-like sagacity. There was something wrong, the *garçon* felt sure, about a man who could order a dinner like Maitland's, and then decline to partake thereof. However, even in a republican country, you can hardly arrest a man merely because his intentions are better than his appetite. The waiter, therefore, contented himself with assuming an imposing attitude, and whispering something to the hall porter.

The Fellow of St. Gatien's, having dined with the Barmecide regardless of expense, went on (as he hoped) to ingratiate himself with the *concierge*. From that official he purchased two large cigars, which he did not dream of attempting to enjoy; and he then endeavored to enter into conversation, selecting for a topic the state of the contemporary drama. What would monsieur advise him to go to see? Where was Mile. Jane Hading playing?

Having in this conversation broken the ice (and almost every rule of French grammar), Maitland began to lead up craftily to the great matter — the affair of the bearskin coat. Did many English use the hotel? Had any of his countrymen been there lately? He remembered that when he left England a friend of his had asked him to inquire about an article of dress — a great-coat — which he had left somewhere, perhaps in a cab. Could monsieur the Porter tell him where he ought to apply for news about the garment, a coat in *peau d’ours*?

On the mention of this raiment a clerkly-looking man, who had been loitering in the office of the *concierge*, moved to the neighborhood of the door, where he occupied himself in study of a railway map hanging on the wall.

The porter now was all smiles. But, certainly! Monsieur had fallen well in coming to him. Monsieur wanted a lost coat in skin of the bear? It had been lost by a compatriot of monsieur’s? Would monsieur give himself the trouble to follow the porter to the room where lost baggage was kept?

Maitland, full of excitement, and of belief that he now really was on the trail, followed the porter, and the clerkly man (rather a liberty, thought Maitland) followed *him*.

The porter led them to a door marked “private,” and they all three entered.

The clerkly-looking person now courteously motioned Maitland to take a chair.

The Englishman sat down in some surprise.

“Where,” he asked, “was the bearskin coat?”

“Would monsieur first deign to answer a few inquiries? Was the coat his own, or a friend’s?”

“A friend’s,” said Maitland, and then, beginning to hesitate, admitted that the garment only belonged to “a man he knew something about.”

“What is his name?” asked the clerkly man, who was taking notes.

His name, indeed! If Maitland only knew that! His French now began to grow worse and worse in proportion to his flurry.

Well, he explained, it was very unlucky, but he did not exactly remember the man’s name. It was quite a common name. He had met him for the first time on board the steamer; but the man was going to Brussels, and, finding that Maitland was on his way to Paris, had asked him to make inquiries.

Here the clerkly person, laying down his notes, asked if English gentlemen usually spoke of persons whom they had just met for the first time on board the steamer as their friends?

Maitland, at this, lost his temper, and observed that, as they seemed disposed to give him more trouble than information, he would go and see the play.

Hereupon the clerkly person requested monsieur to remember, in his deportment, what was due to Justice; and when Maitland rose, in a stately way, to leave the room, he also rose and stood in front of the door.

However little of human nature an Englishman may possess, he is rarely unmoved by this kind of treatment. Maitland took the man by the collar, *sans phrase*, and spun him round, amid the horrified clamor of the porter. But the man, without any passion, merely produced and displayed a card, containing a voucher that he belonged to the Secret Police, and calmly asked Maitland for "his papers."

Maitland had no papers. He had understood that passports were no longer required.

The detective assured him that passports "spoil nothing." Had monsieur nothing stating his identity? Maitland, entirely forgetting that he had artfully entered his name as "Buchanan" on the hotel book, produced his card, on the lower corner of which was printed, *St. Gatien's College*. This address puzzled the detective a good deal, while the change of name did not allay his suspicions, and he ended by requesting Maitland to accompany him into the presence of Justice. As there was no choice, Maitland obtained leave to put some linen in his travelling-bag, and was carried off to what we should call the nearest police-station. Here he was received in a chill bleak room by a formal man, wearing a decoration, who (after some private talk with the detective) asked Maitland to explain his whole conduct in the matter of the coat. In the first place, the detective's notes on their conversation were read aloud, and it was shown that Maitland had given a false name; had originally spoken of the object of his quest as "the coat of a friend;" then as "the coat of a man whom he knew something about;" then as "the coat of a man whose name he did not know;" and that, finally, he had attempted to go away without offering any satisfactory account of himself.

All this the philanthropist was constrained to admit; but he was, not unnaturally, quite unable to submit any explanation of his proceedings. What chiefly discomfited him was the fact that his proceedings were a matter of interest and observation. Why, he kept wondering, was all this fuss made about a coat which had, or had not, been left by a traveller at the hotel? It was perfectly plain that the hotel was used as a *souricière*, as the police say, as a trap in which all inquirers after the coat could be captured. Now, if he had been given time (and a French dictionary), Maitland might have set before the Commissaire of Police the whole story of his troubles. He might have begun with the discovery of Shields' body in the snow; he might have gone on to Margaret's disappearance (*enlèvement*), and to a description of the costume (bearskin coat and all) of the villain who had carried her away. Then he might have described his relations with Margaret, the necessity of finding her, the clew offered by the advertisement in the *Times*, and his own too subtle and ingenious attempt to follow up that clew. But it is improbable that this narrative, had Maitland told it ever so movingly, would have entirely satisfied the suspicions of the Commissaire of Police. It might even have prejudiced that official against Maitland. Moreover, the Fellow of St. Gatien’s had neither the presence of mind nor the linguistic resources necessary to relate the whole plot and substance of this narrative, at a moment’s notice, in a cold police-office, to a sceptical alien. He therefore fell back on a demand to be allowed to communicate with the English Ambassador; and that night Maitland of Gatien’s passed, for the first time during his blameless career, in a police-cell.

It were superfluous to set down in detail all the humiliations endured by Maitland. Do not the newspapers continually ring with the laments of the British citizen who has fallen into the hands of Continental Justice? Are not our countrymen the common butts of German, French, Spanish, and even Greek and Portuguese Jacks in office? When an Englishman appears, do not the foreign police usually arrest him at a venture, and inquire afterward?

Maitland had, with the best intentions, done a good deal more than most of these innocents to deserve incarceration. His conduct, as the Juge d’Instruction told him, without mincing matters, was undeniably *louche*.

In the first place, the suspicions of M. Dupin, of the Hôtel Alsace et Lorraine, had been very naturally excited by seeing the advertisement about the great-coat in the *Times*, for he made a study of “the journal of the City.”

Here was a notice purporting to be signed by himself, and referring to a bearskin coat, said (quite untruly) to have been left in his own hotel. A bearskin coat! The very words breathe of Nihilism, dynamite, stratagems, and spoils. Then the advertisement was in English, which is, at present and till further notice, the language spoken by the brave Irish. M. Dupin, as a Liberal, had every sympathy with the brave Irish in their noble struggle for whatever they *are* struggling for; but he did not wish his hostelry to become, so to speak, the mountain-cave of Freedom, and the great secret storehouse of nitro-glycerine. With a view to elucidating the mystery of the advertisement, he had introduced the police on his premises, and the police had hardly settled down in its *affût*, when, lo! a stranger had been captured, in most suspicious circumstances. M. Dupin felt very clever indeed, and his friends envied him the distinction and advertisement which were soon to be his.

When Maitland appeared, as he did in due course, before the Juge d’Instruction, he attempted to fall back on the obsolete *Civis Romanus sum!* He was an English citizen. He had written to the English ambassador, or rather to an old St. Gatien’s man, an *attaché* of the embassy, whom he luckily happened to know. But this great ally chanced to be out of town, and his name availed Maitland nothing in his interview with the Juge d’Instruction. That magistrate, sitting with his back to the light, gazed at Maitland with steady, small gray eyes, while the scribble of the pen of the *greffier*, as he took down the Englishman’s deposition, sounded shrill in the bleak torture-chamber of the law.

“Your name?” asked the Juge d’Instruction.

“Maitland,” replied the Fellow of St. Gatien’s.

“You lie!” said the Juge d’Instruction. “You entered the name of Buchanan in the book of the hotel.”

“My name is on my cards, and on that letter,” said Maitland, keeping his temper wonderfully.

The documents in question lay on a table, as *pièces justificatives*.

“These cards, that letter, you have robbed them from some unfortunate person, and have draped (*affublé*) yourself in the trappings of your victim! Where is his body?”

This was the working hypothesis which the Juge d’Instruction had formed within himself to account for the general conduct and proceedings of the person under examination.

“Where is *whose* body?” asked Maitland, in unspeakable surprise.

“Buchanan,” said the Juge d’Instruction. (And to hear the gallantry with which he attacked this difficult name, of itself insured respect.) “Buchanan, you are acting on a deplorable system. Justice is not deceived by your falsehoods, nor eluded by your subterfuges. She is calm, stern, but merciful. Unbosom yourself freely” (*répandez franchement*), “and you may learn that justice can be lenient It is your interest to be frank.” (*Il est de votre intérêt d’être franc*.)

“But what do you want me to say?” asked the prévenu, “What is all this pother about a great-coat?” (*Tant de fracas pour un paletot?*)

Maitland was rather proud of this sentence.

“It is the part of Justice to ask questions, not to answer them,” said the Juge d’Instruction. “Levity will avail you nothing. Tell me, Buchanan, why did you ask for the coat at the Hôtel Alsace et Lorraine?”

“In answer to that advertisement in the Times.”

“That is false; you yourself inserted the advertisement. But, on your own system, bad as it is, what did you want with the coat?”

“It belonged to a man who had done me an ill-turn.”

“His name?”

“I do not know his name; that is just what I wanted to find out I might have found his tailor’s name on the coat, and then have discovered for whom the coat was made.”

“You are aware that the proprietor of the hotel did not insert the forged advertisement?”

“So he says.”

“You doubt his word? You insult France in one of her citizens!”

Maitland apologized.

“Then whom do you suspect of inserting the advertisement, as you deny having done it yourself, for some purpose which does not appear?”

“I believe the owner of the coat put in the advertisement.”

“That is absurd. What had he to gain by it?”

“To remove me from London, where he is probably conspiring against me at this moment.”

“Buchanan, you trifle with Justice!”

“I have told you that my name is not Buchanan.”

“Then why did you forge that name in the hotel book?”

“I wrote it in the hurry and excitement of the moment; it was incorrect.”

“Why did you lie?” (*Pourquoi avez vous menti?*)

Maitland made an irritable movement

"You threaten Justice. Your attitude is deplorable. You are consigned *au secret*, and will have an opportunity of revising your situation, and replying more fully to the inquiries of Justice."

So ended Maitland's first and, happily, sole interview with a Juge d'Instruction. Lord Walter Brixton, his old St Gatien's pupil, returned from the country on the very day of Maitland's examination. An interview (during which Lord Walter laughed unfeelingly) with his old coach was not refused to the *attaché*, and, in a few hours, after some formalities had been complied with, Maitland was a free man. His *pièces justificatives*, his letters, cards, and return ticket to Charing Cross, were returned to him intact.

But Maitland determined to sacrifice the privileges of the last-named document.

"I am going straight to Constantinople and the Greek Islands," he wrote to Barton. "Do you know, I don't like Paris. My attempt at an investigation has not been a success. I have endured considerable discomfort, and I fear my case will get into the *Figaro*, and there will be dozens of 'social leaders' and 'descriptive headers' about me in all the penny papers."

Then Maitland gave his banker's address at Constantinople, relinquished the quest of Margaret, and for a while, as the Sagas say, "is out of the story."

CHAPTER XI. — The Night of Adventures.

A cold March wind whistled and yelled round the twisted chimneys of the *Hit or Miss*. The day had been a trial to every sense. First there would come a long-drawn distant moan, a sigh like that of a querulous woman; then the sigh grew nearer and became a shriek, as if the same woman were working herself up into a passion; and finally a gust of rainy hail, mixed with dust and small stones, was dashed, like a parting insult, on the windows of the *Hit or Miss*.

Then the shriek died away again into a wail and a moan, and so *da capo*.

“Well, Eliza, what do you do now that the pantomime season is over?” said Barton to Miss Gullick, who was busily dressing a doll, as she perched on the table in the parlor of the *Hit or Miss*.

Barton occasionally looked into the public-house, partly to see that Maitland’s investment was properly managed, partly because the place was near the scene of his labors; not least, perhaps, because he had still an unacknowledged hope that light on the mystery of Margaret would come from the original centre of the troubles.

“I’m in no hurry to take an engagement,” answered the resolute Eliza, holding up and examining her doll. It was a fashionable doll, in a close-fitting tweed ulster, which covered a perfect panoply of other female furniture, all in the latest mode. As the child worked, she looked now and then at the illustrations in a journal of the fashions. “There’s two or three managers in treaty with me,” said Eliza. “There’s the *Follies and Frivolities* down Norwood way, and the *Varieties* in the ‘Ammersmith Road. Thirty shillings a week and my dresses, that’s what I ask for, and I’ll get it too! Just now I’m taking a vacation, and making an honest penny with these things,” and she nodded at a little basket full of the wardrobe of dolls.

“Do you sell the dresses to the toy-shops, Eliza?” asked Barton.

“Yes,” said Eliza; “I am doing well with them. I’m not sure I shan’t need to take on some extra hands, by the job, to finish my Easter orders.”

“Pm glad you are successful,” answered Barton. “I say, Eliza!”

“Yes, Doctor.”

“Would you mind showing me the room up-stairs where poor old Shields was sitting the night before he was found in the snow?”

It had suddenly occurred to Barton — it might have occurred to him before — that this room might be worth examining.

“We ain’t using it now! Ill show you it,” said Eliza, leading the way up-stairs, and pointing to a door.

Barton took hold of the handle.

“Ladies first,” he said, making way for Eliza, with a bow.

“No,” came the child’s voice, from half-way down the stairs; “I won’t come in! They say he walks, I’ve heard noises there at night.”

A cold stuffy smell came out of the darkness of the unused room. Barton struck a match, and, seeing a candle on the table, lit it The room had been left as it was when last it was tenanted. On the table were an empty bottle, two tumblers, and a little saucer stained with dry colors, blue and red, part of Shields’ stock-in-trade. There were, besides, some very sharp needles of bone, of a savage make, which Barton recognized. They were the instruments used for tattooing in the islands of the Southern Seas.

Barton placed the lighted candle beside the saucer, and turned over the needles. Presently his eyes brightened: he chose one out, and examined it closely. It was astonishingly sharp, and was not of bone like the others, but of wood.

Barton made an incision in the hard brittle wood with his knife, and carefully felt the point, which was slightly crusted with a dry brown substance.

“I thought so,” he said aloud, as he placed the needle in a pocket instrument-case: “the stem of the leaf of the coucourite palm!”

Then he went down-stairs with the candle.

“Did you see him?” asked Eliza, with wide-open eyes.

“Don’t be childish, Eliza: there’s no one to see. Why is the room left all untidy?”

“Mother dare not go in!” whispered the child. Then she asked in a low voice, “Did you never hear no more of that awful big Bird I saw the night old Shields died in the snow?”

“The Bird was a dream, Eliza. I am surprised such a clever girl as you should go on thinking about it,” said Barton, rather sternly. “You were tired and ill, and you fancied it.”

“No, I wasn’t,” said the child, solemnly. “I never say no more about it to mother, nor to nobody; but I did see it, ay, and heard it, too. I remember it at night in my bed, and I am afraid. Oh, what’s that?”

She turned with a scream, in answer to a scream on the other side of the curtained door that separated the parlor from the bar of the *Hit or Miss*.

Someone seemed to fall against the door, which at the same moment flew open, as if the wind had burst it in. A girl, panting and holding her hand to her breast, her face deadly white and so contorted by terror as to be unrecognizable, flashed into the room. “Oh, come! oh, come!” she cried. “She’s killing her!” Then the girl vanished as hurriedly as she had appeared. It was all over in a moment: the vivid impression of a face maddened by fear, and of a cry for help, that was all. In that moment Barton had seized his hat, and sped, as hard as he could run, after the girl. He found her breaking through a knot of loafers in the bar, who were besieging her with questions. She turned and saw Barton.

“Come, doctor, come!” she screamed again, and fled out into the night, crossing another girl who was apparently speeding on the same errand. Barton could just see the flying skirts of the first messenger, and hear her footfall ring on the pavement. Up a long street, down another, and then into a back slum she flew, and, lastly, under a swinging sign of the old-fashioned sort, and through a doorway. Barton, following, found himself for the first time within the portals of *The Old English Bunhouse*.

The wide passage (the house was old) was crowded with girls, wildly excited, weeping, screaming, and some of them swearing. They were pressed so thick round a door at the end of the hall, that Barton could scarcely thrust his way through them, dragging one aside, shouldering another: it was a matter of life and death.

“Oh, she’s been at the drink, and she’s killed her! she’s killed her! I heard her fall!” one of the frightened girls was exclaiming with hysterical iteration.

“Let me pass!” shouted Barton; and reaching the door at last, he turned the handle and pushed. The door was locked.

“Give me room,” he cried, and the patrons of *The Bunhouse* yielding place a little, Barton took a little short run, and drove with all the weight of his shoulders against the door. It opened reluctantly with a crash, and he was hurled into the room by his own impetus, and by the stress of the girls behind him.

What he beheld was more like some dreadful scene of ancient tragedy than the spectacle of an accident or a crime of modern life.

By the windy glare of a dozen gas-jets (red and shaken like the flame of blown torches by the rainy gusts that swept through a broken pane), Barton saw a girl stretched bleeding on the sanded floor.

One of her arms made a pillow for her head; her soft dark hair, unfastened, half hid her, like a veil; the other arm lay loose by her side; her lips were white, her face was bloodless; but there was blood on the deep-blue folds about the bosom, and on the floor. At the further side of this girl — who was dead, or seemingly dead — sat, on a low stool, a woman, in a crouching, cat-like attitude, quite silent and still. The knife with which she had done the deed was dripping in her hand; the noise of the broken door, and of the entering throng, had not disturbed her.

For a moment even Barton’s rapidity of action and resolution were paralyzed by the terrible and strange vision that he beheld. He stared with all his eyes, in a mist of doubt and amazement, at a vision, dreadful even to one who saw death every day. Then the modern spirit awoke in him.

“Fetch a policeman,” he whispered, to one of the crowding frightened troop of girls.

“There is a copper at the door, sir; here he comes,” said Susan, the young woman who had called Barton from the *Hit or Miss*.

The helmet of the guardian of the peace appeared welcome above the throng.

And still the pale woman in white sat as motionless as the stricken girl at her feet — as if she had not been an actor, but a figure in a *tableau*.

“Policeman,” said Barton, “I give that woman in charge for an attempt at murder. Take her to the station.”

“I don’t like the looks of her,” whispered the policeman. “I’d better get her knife from her first, sir.”

“Be quick, whatever you do, and have the house cleared. I can’t look after the wounded girl in this crowd.”

Thus addressed, the policeman stole round toward the seated woman, whose eyes had never deigned, all this time, to stray from the body of her victim. Barton stealthily drew near, outflanking her on the other side.

They were just within arm’s reach of the murderess when she leaped with incredible suddenness to her feet, and stood for one moment erect and lovely as a statue, her fair locks lying about her shoulders. Then she raised her right hand; the knife flashed and dropped like lightning into her breast, and she, too, fell beside the body of the girl whom she had stricken.

“By George, she’s gone!” cried the policeman. Barton pushed past him, and laid his hand on the woman’s heart. She stirred once, was violently shaken with the agony of death, and so passed away, carrying into silence her secret and her story.

Mr. Cranley’s hopes had been, at least partially, fulfilled.

“Drink, I suppose, as usual. A rummy start!” remarked the policeman, sententiously; and then, while Barton was sounding and stanching the wound of the housekeeper’s victim, and applying such styptics as he had within reach, the guardian of social order succeeded in clearing *The Bunhouse* of its patrons, in closing the door, and in sending a message (by the direction of the girl who had summoned Barton, and who seemed not devoid of sense) to Mrs. St. John Deloraine. While that lady was being expected, the girl, who now took a kind of subordinate lead, was employed by Barton in helping to carry Margaret to her own room, and in generally restoring order.

When the messenger arrived at Mrs. St John Deloraine's house with Barton's brief note, and with his own curt statement that "murder was being done at *The Bunhouse*," he found the Lady Superior rehearsing for a play. Mrs. St. John Deloraine was going to give a drawing-room representation of "Nitouche," and the terrible news found her in one of the costumes of the heroine. With a very brief explanation (variously misunderstood by her guests and fellow-amateurs) Mrs. St. John Deloraine hurried off, "just as she was," and astonished Barton (who had never seen her before) by arriving at *The Bunhouse* as a rather conventional shepherdess, in pink and gray, rouged, and with a fluffy flaxen wig. The versatility with which Mrs. St. John Deloraine made the best of all worlds occasionally let her into *inconsequences* of this description.

But, if she was on pleasure bent, Mrs. St. John Deloraine had also, not only a kind heart, but a practical mind. In five minutes she had heard the tragic history, had dried her eyes, torn off her wig, and settled herself as nurse by the bedside of Margaret. The girl's wound, as Barton was happily able to assure her, was by no means really dangerous; for the point of the weapon had been turned, and had touched no vital part. But the prodigious force with which the blow had followed on a scene of violent reproaches and insane threats (described by one of the young women) had affected most perilously a constitution already weakened by sickness and trouble. Mrs. St. John Deloraine, assisted by the most responsible of *The Bunhouse* girls, announced her intention to, sit up all night with the patient. Barton — who was moved, perhaps, as much by the beauty of the girl, and by the excitement of the events, as by professional duty — remained in attendance till nearly dawn, when the Lady Superior insisted that he should go home and take some rest. As the danger for the patient was not immediate, but lay in the chances of fever, Barton allowed himself to be persuaded, and, at about five in the morning, he let himself out of *The Bunhouse,* and made sleepily for his lodgings. But sleep that night was to be a stranger to him, and his share of adventures — which, like sorrows, never "come as single spies, but in battalions" — was by no means exhausted.

The night, through which the first glimpse of dawn just peered, was extremely cold; and Barton, who had left his great-coat in the *Hit or Miss,* stamped his way homeward, his hands deep in his pockets, his hat tight on his head, and with his pipe for company.

"There's the gray beginning, Zooks," he muttered to himself, in half-conscious quotation. He was as drowsy as a man can be who still steps along and keeps an open eye. The streets were empty, a sandy wind was walking them alone, and hard by the sullen river flowed on, the lamplights dimly reflected in the growing blue of morning. Barton was just passing the locked doors of the *Hit* *or Miss* — for he preferred to go homeward by the riverside — when a singular sound, or mixture of sounds, from behind the battered old hoarding close by, attracted his attention. In a moment he was as alert as if he had not passed a *nuit blanche*. The sound at first seemed not very unlike that which a traction engine, or any other monster that murders sleep, may make before quite getting up steam. Then there was plainly discernible a great whirring and flapping, as if a windmill had become deranged in its economy, and was laboring "without a conscience or an aim." Whir, whir, flap, thump, came the sounds, and then, mixed with and dominating them, the choking scream of a human being in agony. But, strangely enough, the scream appeared to be half checked and suppressed, as if the sufferer, whoever he might be, and whatever his torment, were striving with all his might to endure in silence. Barton had heard such cries in the rooms of the hospital. To such sounds the Question Chambers of old prisons and palaces must often have echoed. Barton stopped, thrilling with a half-superstitious dread; so moving, in that urban waste, were the accents of pain.

Then whir, flap, came the noise again, and again the human note was heard, and was followed by a groan. The time seemed infinite, though it was only to be reckoned by moments, or pulse-beats — the time during which the torturing crank revolved, and was answered by the hard-wrung exclamation of agony. Barton looked at the palings of the hoarding: they were a couple of feet higher than his head. Then he sprung up, caught the top at a place where the rusty-pointed nails were few and broken, and next moment, with torn coat and a scratch on his arm, he was within the palisade.

Through the crepuscular light, bulks of things — big, black, formless — were dimly seen; but nearer the hoarding than the middle of the waste open ground was a spectacle that puzzled the looker-on. Great fans were winnowing the air, a wheel was running at prodigious speed, flaming vapors fled hissing forth, and the figure of a man, attached in some way to the revolving fans, was now lifted several feet from the ground, now dashed to earth again, now caught in and now torn from the teeth of the flying wheel.

Barton did not pause long in empty speculation; he shouted, "Hold on!" or some other such encouragement, and ran in the direction of the sufferer. But, as he stumbled over dust-heaps, piles of wood, old baskets, outworn hats, forsaken boots, and all the rubbish of the waste land, the movement of the flying fans began to slacken, the wheels ran slowly down, and, with a great throb and creak, the whole engine ceased moving, as a heart stops beating. Then, just when all was over, a voice came from the crumpled mass of humanity in the centre of the hideous mechanism:

“Don’t come here; stop, on your peril! I am armed, and I will shoot!”

The last words were feeble, and scarcely audible.

Barton stood still. Even a brave man likes (the old Irish duelling days being over) at least to know *why* he is to be shot at.

“What’s the matter with you?” he said. “What on earth are you doing? How can *you* talk about shooting? Have you a whole bone in your body?”

To this the only reply was another groan; then silence.

By this time there was a full measure of the light “which London takes the day to be,” and Barton had a fair view of his partner in this dialogue.

He could see the crumpled form of a man, weak and distorted like a victim of the rack — scattered, so to speak — in a posture inconceivably out of drawing, among the fragments of the engine. The man’s head was lowest, and rested on an old battered box; his middle was supported by a beam of the engine; one of his legs was elevated on one of the fans, the other hung disjointedly in the air. The man was strangely dressed in a close-fitting suit of cloth — something between the uniform of bicycle clubs and the tights affected by acrobats. Long, thin, gray locks fell back from a high yellow forehead: there was blood on his mouth and about his beard.

Barton drew near and touched him: the man only groaned.

“How am I to help you out of this?” said the surgeon, carefully examining his patient, as he might now be called. A little close observation showed that the man’s arms were strapped by buckles into the fans, while one of his legs was caught up in some elastic coils of the mechanism.

With infinite tenderness, Barton disengaged the victim, whose stifled groans proved at once the extent of his sufferings and of his courage.

Finally, the man was free from the machine, and Barton discovered that, as far as a rapid investigation could show, there were no fatal injuries done, though a leg, an arm, and several ribs were fractured, and there were many contusions.

“Now I must leave you here for a few minutes, while I go round to the police-office and get men and a stretcher,” said Barton.

The man held up one appealing hand; the other was paralyzed.

“First hide all *this*,” he murmured, moving his head so as to indicate the fragments of his engine. They lay all confused, a heap of spars, cogs, wheels, fans, and what not, a puzzle to the science of mechanics. “Don’t let them know a word about it,” he said. “Say I had an accident — that I was sleep-walking, and fell from a window — say anything you like, but promise to keep my secret. In a week,” he murmured dreamily, “it would have been complete. It is the second time I have just missed success and fame.”

“I have not an idea what your secret may be,” said Barton; “but here goes for the machine."

And, while the wounded man watched him, with piteous and wistful eyes, he rapidly hid different fragments of the mechanism beneath and among the heaps of rubbish, which were many, and, for purposes of concealment, meritorious.

"Are you sure you can find them all again?" asked the victim of misplaced ingenuity.

"Oh yes, all right," said Barton.

"Then you must get me to the street before you bring any help. If they find me here they will ask questions, and my secret will come out."

"But how on earth am I to get you to the street?" Barton inquired, very naturally. "Even if you could bear being carried, I could not lift you over the boarding."

"I can bear anything — I will bear anything," said the man. "Look in my breast, and you will find a key of a door in the palings."

Barton looked as directed, and, fastened round the neck of the sufferer by a leather shoe-tie, he discovered, sure enough, a kind of skeleton-key in strong wire.

"With that you can open the gate, and get me into the street," said the crushed man; "but be very careful not to open the door while anyone is passing."

He only got out these messages very slowly, and after intervals of silence broken by groans.

"Wait! one thing more," he said, as Barton stooped to take him in his arms. "I may faint from pain. My address is, Paterson's Kents, hard by; my name is Winter." Then, after a pause, "I can pay for a private room at the infirmary, and I must have one. Lift the third plank from the end in the left-hand corner by the window, and you will find enough. Now!"

Then Barton very carefully picked up the poor man, mere bag of bones (and broken bones) as he was.

The horrible pain that the man endured Barton could imagine, yet he dared not hurry, for the ground was strewn with every sort of pitfall. At last — it seemed hours to Barton, it must have been an eternity to the sufferer — the hoarding was reached, and, after listening earnestly, Barton opened the door, peered out, saw that the coast was clear, deposited his burden on the pavement, and flew to the not distant police-station.

He was not absent long, and returning with four men and a stretcher, he found, of course, quite a large crowd grouped round the place where he had left his charge. The milkman was there, several shabby women, one or two puzzled policemen, three cabmen (though no wizard could have called up a cab at that hour and place had he wanted to catch a train;) there were riverside loafers, workmen going to their labor, and a lucky penny-a-liner with his “tissue” and pencil.

Pushing his way through these gapers, Barton found, as he expected, that his patient had fainted. He aided the policemen to place him on the stretcher, accompanied him to the infirmary (how common a sight is that motionless body on a stretcher in the streets!), explained as much of the case as was fitting to the surgeon in attendance, and then, at last, returned to his rooms and a bath, puzzling over the mystery.

“By Jove!” he said, as he helped himself to a devilled wing of a chicken at breakfast, “I believe the poor beggar had been experimenting with a Flying-Machine!”

CHAPTER XII. — A Patient.

A doctor, especially a doctor actively practising among the poor and laborious, soon learns to take the incidents of his profession rather calmly. Barton had often been called in when a revel had ended in suicide or death; and if he had never before seen a man caught in a flying-machine, he had been used to heal wounds quite as dreadful caused by engines of a more familiar nature.

Though Barton, therefore, could go out to his round of visits on the day after his adventurous vigil without unusual emotion, it may be conceived that the distress and confusion at *The Bunhouse* were very great. The police and the gloomy attendants on Death were in the place; Mrs. St. John Deloraine had to see many official people, to answer many disagreeable questions, and suffered in every way extremely from the consequences of her beneficent enterprise. But she displayed a coolness and businesslike common sense worthy of a less versatile philanthropist, and found time, amid the temporary ruin of her work, to pay due attention to Margaret. She had scarcely noticed the girl before, taking her very much on trust, and being preoccupied with various schemes of social enjoyment. But now she was struck by her beauty and her educated manner, though that, to be sure, was amply accounted for by the explanations offered by Cranley before her engagement. Already Mrs. St. John Deloraine was conceiving a project of perpetual friendship, and had made up her mind to adopt Margaret as a daughter, or, let us say, niece and companion. The girl was too refined to cope with the rough-and-ready young patronesses of *The Bunhouse*.

If the lady's mind was even more preoccupied by the survivor in the hideous events of the evening than by the tragedy itself and the dead woman, Barton, too, found his thoughts straying to his new patient — not that he was a flirt or a sentimentalist. Even in the spring Barton's fancy did not lightly turn to thoughts of love. He was not one of those "amatorious" young men (as Milton says, perhaps at too great length) who cannot see a pretty girl without losing their hearts to her. Barton was not so prodigal of his affections; yet it were vain to deny that, as he went his rather drowsy round of professional visits, his ideas were more apt to stray to the girl who had been stabbed, than to the man who had been rescued from the machinery. The man was old, yellow, withered, and, in Barton's private opinion, more of a lunatic charlatan than a successful inventor. The girl was young, beautiful, and interesting enough, apart from her wound, to demand and secure a place in any fancy absolutely free.

It was no more than Barton’s actual duty to call at *The Old English Bunhouse* in the afternoon. Here he was welcomed by Mrs. St John Deloraine, who was somewhat pale and shaken by the horrors of the night. She had turned all her young customers out, and had stuck up a paper bearing a legend to the effect that *The Old English Bunhouse* was closed for the present and till further notice. A wistful crowd was drawn up on the opposite side of the street, and was staring at *The Bunhouse*.

Mrs. St John Deloraine welcomed Barton, it might almost be said, with open arms. She had by this time, of course, laid aside the outward guise of *Nitouche*, and was dressed like other ladies, but better.

“My dear Mr. Barton,” she exclaimed, “your patient is doing very well indeed. She will be crazy with delight when she hears that you have called.”

Barton could not help being pleased at this intelligence, even when he had discounted it as freely as even a very brief acquaintance with Mrs. Si John Deloraine taught her friends to do.

“Do you think she is able to see me?” he asked.

“I’ll run to her room and inquire,” said Mrs. St John Deloraine, fleeting nimbly up the steep stairs, and leaving, like Astrsea, as described by Charles Lamb’s friend, a kind of rosy track or glow behind her from the chastened splendor of her very becoming hose.

Barton waited rather impatiently till the lady of *The Bunhouse* returned with the message that he might accompany her into the presence of the invalid.

A very brief interview satisfied him that his patient was going on even better than he had hoped; also that she possessed very beautiful and melancholy eyes. She said little, but that little kindly, and asked whether Mr. Cranley had sent to inquire for her. Mrs. St. John Deloraine answered the question, which puzzled Barton, in the negative; and when they had left Margaret (Miss Burnside, as Mrs. St. John Deloraine called her), he ventured to ask who the Mr. Cranley might be about whom the girl had spoken.

“Well,” replied Mrs. St. John Deloraine, “it was through Mr. Cranley that I engaged both Miss Burnside and that unhappy woman whom I can’t think of without shuddering. The inquest is to be held to-morrow. It is too dreadful when these things, that have been only names, come home to one. Now, I really do not like to think hardly of anybody, but I must admit that Mr. Cranley has quite misled me about the housekeeper. He gave her an excellent character, *especially* for sobriety, and till yesterday I had no fault to find with her. Then, the girls say, she became quite wild and intoxicated, and it is hard to believe that this is the first time she yielded to that horrid temptation. Don’t you think it was odd of Mr. Cranley? And I sent round a messenger with a note to his rooms, but it was returned, marked, ‘Has left; address not Known.’ I don’t know what has become of him. Perhaps the housekeeper could have told us, but the unfortunate woman is beyond reach of questions.”

“Do you mean the Mr. Cranley who is Rector of St. Medard’s, in Chelsea?” asked Barton.

“No; I mean Mr. Thomas Cranley, the son of the Earl of Birkenhead. He was a great friend of mine.”

“Mr. Thomas Cranley!” exclaimed Barton, with an expression of face which probably spoke at least three volumes, and these of a highly sensational character.

“Now, please,” cried Mrs. St. John Deloraine, clasping her hands in a pretty attitude of entreaty, like a recording angel hesitating to enter the peccadillo of a favorite saint; “please don’t say you know anything against Mr. Cranley. I am aware that he has many enemies.”

Barton was silent for a minute. He had that good old school-boy feeling about not telling tales out of school, which is so English and so unknown in France; but, on the other side, *he* could scarcely think it right to leave a lady of invincible innocence at the mercy of a confirmed scoundrel.

“Upon my word, it is a very unpleasant thing to have to say; but really, if you ask me, I should remark that Mr. Cranley’s enemies are of his own making. I would not go to him for a girl’s character, I’m sure. But I thought he had disappeared from society.”

“So he had. He told me that there was a conspiracy against him, and that I was one of the few people who, he felt sure, would never desert him. And I never would. I never turn my back on my friends.”

“If there was a conspiracy,” said Barton, “I am the ringleader in it; for, as you ask me, I must assure you, on my honor, that I detected Mr. Cranley in the act of trying to cheat some very young men at cards. I would not have mentioned it for the world,” he added, almost alarmed at the expression of pain and terror in Mrs. St John Deloraine’s face; “but you wished to be told. And I could not honestly leave you in the belief that he is a man to be trusted. What he did when I saw him was only what all who knew him well would have expected. And his treatment of you, in the matter of that woman’s character, was,” cried Barton, growing indignant as he thought of it, “one of the very basest things I ever heard of. I had seen that woman before; she was not fit to be entrusted with the care of girls. She was at one time very well known.”

Mrs. St. John Deloraine’s face had passed through every shade of expression — doubt, shame, and indignation; but now it assumed an air of hope.

“Margaret has always spoken so well of him,” she said, half to herself. “He was always very kind to her, and yet she was only the poor daughter of a humble acquaintance."

"Perhaps he deviated into kindness for once," said Barton; "but as to his general character, it is certain that it was on a par with the trap he laid for you. I wish I knew where to find him. You must never let him get the poor girl back into his hands."

"Certainly not," said Mrs. Si John Deloraine, with conviction in her voice; "and now I must go back to her, and see whether she wants anything. Do you think I may soon move her to my own house, in Cheyne Walk? It is not far, and she will be so much more comfortable there."

"The best thing you can do," said Barton; "and be sure you send for me if you want me, or if you ever hear anything more of Mr. Cranley. I am quite ready to meet him anywhere."

"You will call to-morrow?"

"Certainly, about this time," said Barton; and he kept his promise assiduously, calling often.

A fortnight went by, and Margaret, almost restored to health, and in a black tea-gown, the property of Mrs. St. John Deloraine, was lying indolently on a sofa in the house in Cheyne Walk. She was watching the struggle between the waning daylight and the fire, when the door opened, and the servant announced "Dr. Barton."

Margaret held forth a rather languid hand.

"I'm so sorry Mrs. St. John Deloraine is out," she said. "She is at a soap-bubble party. I wish I could go. It is so long since I saw any children, or had any fun."

So Margaret spoke, and then she sighed, remembering the reason why she should not attend soap-bubble parties.

"I'm selfish enough to be glad you could not go," said Barton; "for then I should have missed you. But why do you sigh?"

"I have had a good many things to make me unhappy," said Margaret, "in addition to my — to my accident. You must not think I am always bewailing myself. But perhaps you know that I lost my father, just before I entered Mrs. St. John Deloraine's service, and then my whole course of life was altered."

"I am very sorry for you," said Barton, simply. He did not know what else to say; but he felt more than his conventional words indicated, and perhaps he looked as if he felt it and more.

Margaret was still too weak to bear an expression of sympathy, and tears came into her eyes, followed by a blush on her pale, thin cheeks. She was on the point of breaking down.

There is nothing in the world so trying to a young man as to see a girl crying. A wild impulse to kiss and comfort her passed through Barton's mind, before he said, awkwardly again:

"I can't tell you how sorry I am; I wish I could do anything for you. Can't I help you in any way? You must not give up so early in the troubles of life; and then, who knows but yours, having begun soon, are nearly over?"

Barton would perhaps have liked to ask her to let him see that they *were* over, as far as one mortal can do as much for another.

"They have been going on so long," said Margaret "I have had such a wandering life, and such changes."

Barton would have given much to be able to ask for more information; but more was not offered.

"Let us think of the future," he said. "Have you any idea about what you mean to do?"

"Mrs. St. John Deloraine is very kind. She wishes me to stay with her always. But I am puzzled about Mr. Cranley. I don't know what he would like me to do. He seems to have gone abroad."

Barton hated to hear her mention Cranley's name.

"Had you known him long?" he asked.

"No; for a very short time only. But he was an old friend of my father's, and had promised him to take care of me. He took me away from school, and he gave me a start in life."

"But surely he might have found something more worthy of you, of your education," said Barton.

"What can a girl do?" answered Margaret. "We know so little. I could hardly even have taught very little children. They thought me dreadfully backward at school — at least, Miss —— I mean, the teachers thought me backward."

"I'm sure you know as much as anyone should," said Barton, indignantly. "Were you at a nice school?" he added.

He had been puzzling himself for many days over Margaret's history. She seemed to have had at least the ordinary share of education and knowledge of the world; and yet he had found her occupying a menial position at a philanthropic bunhouse. Even now she was a mere dependent of Mrs. St. John Deloraine, though there was a stanchness in that lady's character which made her patronage not precarious.

"There were some nice girls at it," answered Margaret, without committing herself.

Rochefoucauld declares that there are excellent marriages, but no such thing as a delightful marriage. Perhaps school-girls may admit, as an abstract truth, that good schools exist; but few would allow that any place of education is "nice."

"It is really getting quite late," Barton observed, reluctantly. He liked to watch the girl, whose beauty, made wan by illness, received just a touch of becoming red from the glow of the fire. He liked to talk to her; in fact, this was his most interesting patient by far. It would be miserably black and dark in his lodgings, he was aware; and non-paying patients would be importunate in proportion to their poverty. The poor are often the most exacting of hypochondriacs. Margaret noticed his reluctance to go contending with a sense of what he owed to propriety.

"I am sure you must want tea; but I don't like to ring. It is so short a time since I wore an apron and a cap and the rest of it myself at *The Bunhouse*, that I am afraid to ask the servants to do anything for me. They must dislike me; it is very natural."

"It is not natural at all," said Barton, with conviction; "perfectly monstrous, on the other hand." This little compliment eclipsed the effect of fire-light on the girl's face. "Suppose I ring," he added, "and then you can say, when Mary says 'Did you ring, miss?' 'No, I didn't ring; but as you *are* here, Mary, would you mind bringing tea?'"

"I don't know if that would be quite honest," said Margaret, doubtfully.

"A pious fraud — a drawing-room comedy," said Barton; "have we rehearsed it enough?"

Then he touched the bell, and the little piece of private theatricals was played out, though one of the artists had some difficulty (as amateurs often have) in subduing an inclination to giggle.

"Now, this is quite perfect," said Barton, when he had been accommodated with a large piece of plum-cake. "This is the very kind of cake which we specially prohibit our patients to touch; and so near dinner-time, too! There should be a new proverb, 'Physician, diet thyself.' You see, we don't all live on a very thin slice of cold bacon and a piece of dry toast."

"Mrs. St John Deloraine has never taken up that kind of life," said Margaret.

"She tries a good many new things," Barton remarked.

"Yes; but she is the best woman in the world!" answered the girl. "Oh, if you knew what a comfort it is to be with a lady again!" And she shuddered as she remembered her late chaperon.

"I wonder if some day — you won't think me very rude?" asked Barton— "you would mind telling me a little of your history?"

"Mr. Cranley ordered me to say nothing about it," answered Margaret; "and a great deal is very sad and hard to tell. You are all so kind, and everything is so quiet here, and safe and peaceful, that it frightens me to think of things that have happened, or may happen."

"They shall never happen, if you will trust me," cried Barton, when a carriage was heard to stop at the gateway of the garden outside.

"Here is Mrs. St. John Deloraine at last," cried Margaret, starting to run to the window; but she was so weak that she tripped, and would have fallen had Barton not caught her lightly.

"Oh, how stupid you must think me!" she said, blushing. And Barton thought he had never seen anything so pretty.

"Once for all, I don't think you stupid, or backward, or anything else that you call yourself."

But at that very moment the door opened, and Mrs. St John Deloraine entered, magnificently comfortable in furs, and bringing a fresh air of hospitality and content with existence into the room.

"Oh, *you* are here!" she cried, "and I have almost missed you. Now you *must* stay to dinner. You need not dress; we are all alone, Margaret and I."

So he did stop to dine, and pauper hypochondriacs, eager for his society (which was always cheering), knocked, and rang also, at his door in vain. It was an excellent dinner; and, on the wings of the music Mrs. St John Deloraine was playing in the front drawing-room, two happy hours passed lightly over Barton and Margaret, into the backward, where all hours — good and evil — abide, remembered or forgotten.

CHAPTER XIII. — Another Patient.

> “Des ailes! des ailes! des ailes!
> Comme dans le chant de Ruckert.”
> — Théophile Gautier.

“So you think a flying machine impossible, sir, and me, I presume, a fanatic? Well, well, you have Eusebius with you. ‘Such an one,’ he says — meaning me, and inventors like me— ‘is a little crazed with the humors of melancholy.’”

The speaker was the man whom Barton had rescued from the cogs and wheels and springs of an infuriated engine. Barton could not but be interested in the courage and perseverance of this sufferer, whom he was visiting in hospital. The young surgeon had gone to inspect the room in Paterson’s Rants, and had found it, as he more or less expected, the conventional den of the needy inventor. Our large towns are full of such persons. They are the Treasure Hunters of cities and of civilization — the modern seekers for the Philosopher’s Stone. At the end of a vista of dreams they behold the great Discovery made perfect, and themselves the winners of fame and of wealth incalculable.

For the present, most of these visionaries are occupied with electricity. They intend to make the lightning a domestic slave in every house, and to turn Ariel into a common carrier. But, from the aspect of Winter’s den in Paterson’s Rents, it was easy to read that his heart was set on a more ancient foible. The white deal book-shelves, home-made, which lined every wall, were packed with tattered books on mechanics, and especially on the art of flying. Here you saw the spoils of the fourpenny box of cheap bookvendors mixed with volumes in better condition, purchased at a larger cost. Here — among the litter of tattered pamphlets and well-thumbed “Proceedings” of the Linnean and the Aeronautic Society of Great Britain — here were Fredericus Hermannus’ “De Arte Volandi,” and Cayley’s works, and Hatton Turner’s “Astra Castra,” and the “Voyage to the Moon” of Cyrano de Bergerac, and Bishop Wilkins’s “Dædalus,” and the same sanguine prelate’s “Mercury, The Secret Messenger.” Here were Cardan and Raymond Lully, and a shabby set of the classics, mostly in French translations, and a score of lucubrations by French and other inventors — Ponton d’Amocourt, Borelli, Chabrier, Girard, and Marey.

Even if his books had not shown the direction of the new patient’s mind — (a man is known by his books at least as much as by his companions, and companions Winter had none) — even if the shelves had not spoken clearly, the models and odds-and-ends in the room would have proclaimed him an inventor. As the walls were hidden by his library, and as the floor, also, was littered with tomes and pamphlets and periodicals, a quantity of miscellaneous gear was hung by hooks from the ceiling.

Barton, who was more than commonly tall, found his head being buffeted by big preserved wings of birds and other flying things — from the sweeping pinions of the albatross to the leathery covering of the bat. From the ceiling, too, hung models, cleverly constructed in various materials; and here — a cork with quills stuck into it, and with a kind of drill-bow — was the little flying model of Sir George Cayley. The whole place, dusty and musty, with a faded smell of the oil in birds' feathers, was almost more noisome than curious. When Barton left it, his mind was made up as to the nature of Winter's secret, or delusion; and when he visited that queer patient in hospital, he was not surprised either by his smattered learning or by his golden dreams.

"Yes, sir; Eusebius is against me, no doubt," Winter went on with his eager talk. "An acute man — rather *too* acute, don't you think, for a Father of the Church? That habit he got into of smashing the arguments of the heathen, gave him a kind of flippancy in talking of high matters."

"Such as flying?" put in Barton.

"Yes; such as our great aim — the aim of all the ages, I may call it. What does Bishop Wilkins say, sir? Why, he says, (I doubt not but that flying in the air may be easily effected by a diligent and ingenious artificer.) 'Diligent,' I may say, I have been; as to 'ingenious,' I leave the verdict to others."

"Was that Peter Wilkins you were quoting?" asked Barton, to humor his man.

"Why, no sir; the Bishop was not Peter. Peter Wilkins is the hero of a mere romance, in which, it is true, we meet with women — *Goories* he calls them — endowed with the power of flight. But *they* were born so. We get no help from Peter Wilkins: a mere dreamer."

"It doesn't seem to be so easy as the Bishop fancies?" remarked Barton, leading him on.

"No, sir," cried Winter, all his aches and pains forgotten, and his pale face flushed with the delight of finding a listener who did not laugh at him. "No, sir; the Bishop, though ingenious, was not a practical man. But look at what he says about the *weight* of your flying machine! Can anything be more sensible? Borne out, too, by the most recent researches, and the authority of Professor Pettigrew Bell himself. You remember the iron fly made by Begimontanus of Nuremberg?"

"The iron fly!" murmured Barton. "I can't say I do."

"You will find a history of it in Bamus. This fly would leap from the hands of the great Begimontanus, flutter and buzz round the heads of his guests assembled at supper, and then, as if wearied, return and repose on the finger of its maker."

"You don't mean to say you believe *that*?" asked Barton.

"Why not, sir; why not? Did not Archytas of Tarenturn, one of Plato's acquaintances, construct a wooden dove, in no way less miraculous? And the same Regimontanus, at Nuremberg, fashioned an eagle which, by way of triumph, did fly out of the city to meet Charles V. But where was I? Oh, at Bishop Wilkins. Cardan doubted of the iron fly of Regimontanus, because the material was so heavy. But Bishop Wilkins argues, in accordance with the best modern authorities, that the weight is no hindrance whatever, if proportional to the motive power. A flying machine, says Professor Bell, in the *Encyclopodia Britannica* — (you will not question the authority of the *Encyclopodia Britannica*?) — a flying machine should be 'a compact, moderately heavy, and powerful structure.' There, you see, the Bishop was right."

"Yours was deuced powerful," remarked Barton. "I did not expect to see two limbs of you left together."

"It *is* powerful, or rather it *was*," answered Winter, with a heavy sigh; "but it's all to do over again — all to do over again! Yet it was a noble specimen. 'The passive surface was reduced to a minimum,' as the learned author in the *Encyclopodia* recommends."

"By Jove! the passive surface was jolly near reduced to a mummy. *You* were the passive surface, as far as I could see."

"Don't laugh at me, please sir, after you've been so kind. All the rest laugh at me. You can't think what a pleasure it has been to talk to a scholar," and there was a new flush on the poor fellow's cheek, and something watery in his eyes.

"I beg your pardon, my dear sir," cried Barton, greatly ashamed of himself. "Pray go on. The subject is entirely new to me. I had not been aware that there were any serious modern authorities in favor of the success of this kind of experiment."

"Thank you, sir," said Winter, much encouraged, and taking Barton's hand in his own battered claw; "thank you. But why should we run only to modern authorities? All great inventions, all great ideas, have been present to men's minds and hopes from the beginning of civilization. Did not Empedocles forestall Mr. Darwin, and hit out, at a stroke, the hypothesis of natural selection?"

"Well, he *did* make a shot at it," admitted Barton, who remembered as much as that from "the old coaching days," and college lectures at St. Gatien's.

"Well, what do we find? As soon as we get a whisper of civilization in

Greece, we find Dædalus successful in flying. The pragmatic interpreters pretend that the fable does but point to the discovery of sails for ships; but I put it to you, is that probable?”

“Obvious bosh,” said Barton.

“And the meteorological mycologists, sir, *they* maintain that Dædalus is only the lightning flying in the breast of the storm!”

“There’s nothing those fellows won’t say,” replied Barton.

“I’m glad you are with me, sir. In Dædalus *I* see either a record of a successful attempt at artificial flight, or at the very least, the expression of an aspiration as old as culture. *You* wouldn’t make Dædalus the evening clouds accompanying Minos, the sun, to his setting in Sicily, in the west?” added Winter anxiously.

“I never heard of such nonsense,” said Barton.

“Sir Frederick Leighton, the President of the Royal Academy, is with me, sir, if I may judge by his picture of Dædalus.”

“Every sensible man must be with you,” answered Barton.

“Well, sir, I won’t detain you with other famous flyers of antiquity, such as Abaris, mounted on an arrow, as described by Herodotus. Doubtless the arrow was a flying machine, a novelty to the ignorant Scythians.”

“It *must* have been, indeed.”

“Then there was the Greek who flew before Nero in the circus; but he, I admit, had a bad fall, as Seutonius recounts. That character of Lucian’s, who employed an eagle’s wing and a vulture’s in his flight, I take to be a mere figment of the satirist’s imagination. But what do you make of Simon Magus? He, I cannot doubt, had invented a machine in which, like myself, he made use of steam or naphtha. This may be gathered from Arnobius, our earliest authority. He mentions expressly *currum Simonis Magi et quadrigas igneas*, the chariot of Simon Magus and his *vehicles of flame* — clearly the naphtha is alluded to — which vanished into air at the word of the Apostle Peter. The latter circumstances being miraculous, I take leave to doubt; but certainly Simon Magus had overcome the difficulties of aerial navigation. But, though Petrus Crinitus rejects the tradition as fabulous, I am prepared to believe that Simon Magus actually flew from the Capitol to the Aventine!

“‘The world knows nothing of its greatest men,’” quoted Barton.

“Simon Magus has been the victim, sir, of theological acrimony, his character blackened, his flying machine impugned, or ascribed, as by the credulous Arnobius, to diabolical arts. In the dark ages, naturally, the science of Artificial Flight was either neglected or practised in secret, through fear of persecution. Busbequius speaks of a Turk at Constantinople who attempted something in this way; but he (the Turk, I mean), was untrammelled by ecclesiastical prejudice.

But why should we tarry in the past? Have we not Mr. Proctor with us, both in *Knowledge* and the *Cornhill*? Does not the preeminent authority, Professor Pettigrew Bell, himself declare, with the weight, too, of the *Encyclopodia Britannica*, that 'the number of successful flying models is considerable. It is not too much to expect,' he goes on, 'that the problem of artificial flight will be actually solved, or at least much simplified.' What less can we expect, as he observes, in the land of Watt and Stephenson, when the construction of flying machines has been 'taken up in earnest by practical men?'"

"We may indeed," said Barton, "hope for the best when persons of your learning and ingenuity devote their efforts to the cause."

"As to my learning, you flatter me," said Winter. "I am no scholar; but an enthusiast will study the history of his subject Did I remark that the great Dr. Johnson, in these matters so sceptical, admits (in a romance, it is true) the possibility of artificial flight? The artisan of the Happy Valley expected to solve the problem in one year's time. 'If all men were equally virtuous,' said this artist, 'I should with equal alacrity teach them all to fly.'"

"And you will keep your secret, like Dr. Johnson's artist?"

"To *you* I do not mind revealing this much. The vans or wings of my machine describe elliptic figures of eight."

"I've seen them do *that*, said Barton.

"Like the wings of birds; and have the same forward and downward stroke, by a direct piston action. The impetus is given, after a descent in air — which I effected by starting from a height of six feet only — by a combination of heated naphtha and of india rubber under torsion. By steam alone, in 1842, Philips made a model of a flying-machine soar across two fields. Penaud's machine, relying only on india rubber under torsion, flies for some fifty yards. What a model can do, as Bishop Wilkins well observes, a properly weighted and proportioned flying-machine, capable of carrying a man, can do also."

"But yours, when I first had the pleasure of meeting you, was not carrying you at all."

"Something had gone wrong with the mechanism," answered Winter, sighing. "It is always so. An inventor has many things to contend against. Remember Ark-wright, and how he was puzzled hopelessly by that trifling error in the thickness of the valves in his spinning machine. He had to give half his profits to Strutt, the local blacksmith, before Strutt would tell him that he had only to chalk his valves! The thickness of a coating of chalk made all the difference. Some trifle like that, depend on it, interfered with my machine. You see, I am obliged to make my experiments at night, and in the dark, for fear of being discovered and anticipated. I have been on the verge — nay, *over* the verge — of success.

‘No imaginable invention,’ Bishop Wilkins says, ‘could prove of greater benefit to the world, or greater glory to the author.’ A few weeks ago that glory was mine!”

“Why a few weeks ago?” asked Barton. “Was your machine more advanced then than when I met you?”

“I cannot explain what had happened to check its motion,” said Winter, wearily; “but a few weeks ago my *machine acted*, and I may say that I knew the sensations of a bird on the wing.”

“Do you mean that you actually *flew*?”

“For a very short distance, I did indeed, sir!”

Barton looked at him curiously: two currents of thought — one wild and credulous, the other practical and professional — surged and met in his brain. The professional current proved the stronger for the moment.

“Good-night,” he said. “You are tiring and over-exciting yourself. I will call again soon.”

He *did* call again, and Winter told him a tale which will be repeated in its proper place.

CHAPTER XIV. — Found.

“All precious things, discovered late,
To those that seek them issue forth;
For Love, in sequel, works with Fate,
And draws the veil from hidden worth.”
— The Sleeping Beauty.

That Margaret and Barton were losing their hearts to each other could not, of course, escape the keen eye of Mrs. St. John Deloraine. She noticed that Margaret, though perfectly restored to health, and lacking only the clear brown over the rose of her cheeks, was by no means so light of heart as in the very earliest days of her recovery. Love makes men and women poor company, and, to speak plainly, takes the fun out of them. Margaret was absent-minded, given to long intervals of silence, a bad listener — all of them things hateful to Mrs. St. John Deloraine, but pardoned, in this instance, by the benevolent lady. Margaret was apt to blush without apparent cause, to start when a knock came to the door, to leave the room hurriedly, and need to be sought and brought back, when Barton called. Nor was Barton himself such good company as he had been. His manner was uncertain and constrained; his visits began to be paid at longer intervals; he seemed to have little to say, or talked in fits and starts; and yet he did not know how to go away.

Persons much less clear-sighted than Mrs. St John Deloraine could have interpreted, without difficulty, this awkward position of affairs.

Now, like most women of her kindly and impulsive character (when it has not been refined away into nothing by social hypocrisies), Mrs. St. John Deloraine was a perfectly reckless match-maker. She believed in love with her whole heart; it was a joy to her to mark the beginnings of inclination in two young souls, and she simply revelled in an “engagement.” All considerations of economy, prudence, and foresight melted away before the ardor of her enthusiasm: to fall in love first, to get engaged next, and to be married as soon as possible afterward, without regard to consequences of any kind, were, in this lady’s mind, heroic actions, and almost the whole duty of men and women.

In her position, and with her opportunities, she soon knew all that was to be known about Margaret’s affections, and also about Barton’s.

“He’s as much in love with you as a man can be, my dear,” she said to Margaret “Not worthy of him? Your past a barrier between you and him?

Nonsense, Daisy; that is *his* affair. I know you are as good a girl as ever lived. Your father was poor, no doubt, and that wretched Mr. Cranley — yes, he was a wretch — had a spite against you. I don't know why, and you won't help me to guess. But Mr. Barton is too much of a man to let that kind of thing disturb him, I'm sure. You are afraid of something, Margaret Your nerves have been unstrung. I'm sure I don't wonder at it. I know what it is to lose one's nerve. I could no more drive now, as I used to do, or go at the fences I used to think *nothing* of! But once you are married to a man like Mr. Barton, who is there can frighten you? And as to being poor," and Mrs. St. John Deloraine explained her generous views as to arrangements on her part, which would leave Margaret far from portionless.

Then Margaret would cry a little, and lay her head on her friend's shoulder, and the friend would shed some natural tears for company; and they would have tea, and Barton would call, and look a great deal at his boots, and fidget with his hat.

"I've no patience with you, Mr. Barton," said Mrs. St. John Deloraine at last, when she had so manouvred as to have some private conversation with him, and Barton had unpacked his heart. "I've no patience with you. Why, where is your courage? 'She has a history?' She's been persecuted. Well, where's your chivalry? Why don't you try your fortune? There never was a better girl, nor a pleasanter companion when she's not — when she's not disturbed by the nervousness of an undecided young man. If you don't take your courage in both hands, I will carry Margaret off on a yachting voyage to the Solomon Islands, or Jericho, or somewhere. Look here, I am going to take her for a drive in Battersea Park; it is handy, and looking very pretty, and as lonely as Tadmor in the wilderness. We will get out and saunter among the ponds. I shall be tired and sit down; you will show Margaret the marvels of natural history in the other pond, and when you come back you will both have made up your minds!"

With this highly transparent ruse Barton expressed his content. The carriage was sent for, and in less than half an hour Barton and Margaret were standing alone, remote, isolated from the hum of men, looking at a pond where some water-hens were diving, while a fish ("coarse," but not uninteresting) occasionally flopped on the surface, The trees — it was the last week of May — were in the earliest freshness of their foliage; the air, for a wonder, was warm and still.

"How quiet and pretty it is!" said Margaret "Who would think we were in London?"

Barton said nothing. Like the French parrot, mentioned by Sir Walter Scott, he thought the more.

"Miss Burnside!" he exclaimed suddenly, "we have known each other now for some time."

This was a self evident proposition; but Margaret felt what was coming, and trembled. She turned for a moment, pretending to watch the movements of one of the water-fowls. Inwardly she was nerving herself to face the hard part of her duty, and to remind Barton of the mystery in her life.

"Yes," she said at last; "we have known each other for some time, and yet — you know nothing about me."

With these words she lifted her eyes and looked him straight in the face. There seemed a certain pride and nobility in her he had not seen before, though her beautiful brown eyes were troubled, and there was a mark of pain on her brow. What was she going to tell him?

Barton felt his courage come back to him.

"I know one thing about you, and that is enough for me. I know I love you!" he said. "Margaret, can't you care for me a little? Don't tell me anything you think you should not say. I'm not curious."

Margaret turned back again to her inspection of the pond and its inmates, grasping the iron railing in front of her and gazing down into the waters, so that he could not see her face.

"No," she said at last, in a very low voice; "it would not be fair." Then, after another pause, "There is someone—" she murmured, and stopped.

This was the last thing Barton had expected. If she did not care for *him*, he fancied she cared for nobody.

"If you like someone better—" he was beginning.

"But I don't like him at all," interrupted Margaret. "He was very kind, but—"

"Then can't you like *me*?" asked Barton; and by this time he was very near her, and was looking down into her face, as curiously as she was still studying the natural history of Battersea Ponds.

"Perhaps I should not; it is so difficult to know," murmured Margaret. And yet her rosy confusion, and beautiful lowered eyes, tender and ashamed, proved that she knew very well. Love is not always so blind but that Barton saw his opportunity, and was assured that she had surrendered. And he prepared, a conqueror, to march in with all the honors and rewards of war; for the place was lonely, and a covenant is no covenant until it is sealed.

But when he would have kissed her, Margaret disengaged herself gently, with a little sigh, and returned to the strong defensible position by the iron railings.

"I must tell you about myself," she said. "I have promised never to tell, but I must. I have been so tossed about, and so weak, and so many things have happened." And she sighed.

However impassioned a lover may be, he does naturally prefer that there should be no mystery about her he adores. Barton had convinced himself (aided by the eloquence and reposing on the feminine judgment of Mrs. St. John Deloraine) that Margaret could have nothing that was wrong to conceal. He could not look at her frank eyes and kind face and suspect her; though, to anyone but a lover, these natural advantages are no argument. He, therefore, prepared to gratify an extreme curiosity, and, by way of comforting and aiding Margaret, was on the point of assuming an affectionate attitude. But she moved a little away, and, still turning toward the friendly ponds, began her story:

"The person — the gentleman whom I was thinking of was a friend of my father's, who, at one time, wanted him" — here Margaret paused— "wanted me to — to be his wife some day."

The rapid imagination of Barton conjured up the figure of a well-to-do local pawnbroker, or captain of a trading vessel, as the selected spouse of Margaret. He fumed at the picture in his fancy.

"I didn't like him much, though he certainly was very kind. His name — but perhaps I should not mention his name?"

"Never mind," said Barton. "I dare say I never heard of him."

"But I should tell you, first of all, that my own name is not that which you, and Mrs. St. John Deloraine know me by. I had often intended to tell her; but I have become so frightened lately, and it seemed so mean to be living with her under a false name. But to speak of it brought so many terrible things back to mind."

"Dear Margaret," Barton whispered, taking her hand.

They were both standing, at this moment, with their backs to the pathway, and an observer might have thought that they were greatly interested in the water-fowl.

"My name is not Burnside," Margaret went on, glancing over her shoulder across the gardens and toward the river; "my name is—"

"Daisy Shields!" cried a clear voice. "Daisy, you're found at last, and I've found you! How glad Miss Marlett will be!"

But by this time the astonished Barton beheld Margaret in the impassioned embrace of a very pretty and highly-excited young lady; while Mrs. St. John Deloraine, who was with her, gazed with amazement in her eyes.

"Oh, my dear!" Miss Harman (for it was that enthusiast) hurried on, in a pleasant flow of talk, like a brook, with pleasant interruptions. "Oh, my dear! I was walking in the park with my maid, and I met Mrs. St. John Deloraine, and she said she had lost her friends, and I came to help her to look for them; and I've found *you!* It's like Stanley finding Livingstone. 'How I Found Daisy.' I'll write a book about it. And where *have* you been hiding yourself? None of the girls ever knew anything was the matter — only Miss Mariett and me! And I've left for good; and she and I are quite friends, and I'm to be presented next Drawing Room."

While this address (which, at least, proved that Margaret had acquaintances in the highest circles) was being poured forth, Mrs. St. John Deloraine and Barton were observing all with unfeigned astonishment and concern.

They both perceived that the mystery of Margaret's past was about to be dispelled, or rather, for Barton, it already *was* dispelled. The names of Shields and Miss Marlett had told *him* all that he needed to know. But he would rather have heard the whole story from his lady's lips; and Mrs. St. John Deloraine was mentally accusing Janey Harman of having interrupted a "proposal," and spoiled a darling scheme.

It was therefore with a certain most unfamiliar sharpness that Mrs. St John Deloraine, observing that the day was clouded over, requested Margaret to return to the carriage.

"And as Miss Harman seems to have *a great deal* to say to you, Margaret," added the philanthropic lady, "you two had better walk on as fast as you can; for *you* must be very careful not to catch cold! I see Miss Harman's maid waiting for her in the distance there. And you and I, Mr. Barton, if you will give me your arm, will follow slower; I'm not a good walker."

"*Now*," said Barton's companion eagerly, when Margaret and Janey, about three yards in advance, might be conventionally regarded as beyond earshot—"*Now*, Mr. Barton, am I to congratulate you?"

Barton gave a little shamefaced laugh, uneasily.

"I don't know — I hope so — I'm not sure."

"Oh, you're not satisfactory — not at all satisfactory. Are you *still* shillyshallying? What is the matter with young people?" cried the veteran of twenty-nine. "Or was it that wretched Janey, rushing in, like a cow in a conservatory? She's a regular school-girl!"

"It isn't that exactly, or at least that's not all. I hope — I think she does care for me, or will care for me, a little."

"Oh, bother!" said Mrs. St John Deloraine. She would not, for all the world, reveal the secrets of the confessional, and tell Barton what she knew of the state of Margaret's heart But she was highly provoked, and showed it in her manners, at no time applauded for their repose.

"The fact is," Barton admitted, "that I'm so taken by surprise I hardly know where I am! I do think, if I may say so without seeming conceited, that I have every reason to be happy. But, just as she was beginning to tell me about herself, that young lady, who seems to have known her at school, rushed in and explained the whole mystery."

"Well," said Mrs. Si John Deloraine, turning a little pale and looking anxiously at Barton, "was it anything so very dreadful?"

"She called her Daisy Shields," said Barton.

"Well, I suppose she did! I always fancied, after what happened at *The Bunhouse*, that that dreadful Mr. Cranley sent her to me under a false name. It was not *her* fault. The question is, What was her reason for keeping her real name concealed?"

"That's what I'm coming to," said Barton. "I have a friend, a Mr. Maitland."

"Mr. Maitland of St. Gatien's?" asked the widow.

"Yes."

"I know him."

"Yes, I have often heard him speak of you," said Barton. "Well, he had a *protégée* — a kind of ward, to tell a long story in few words — a girl whom he had educated, and whom he was under some kind of promise to her father to marry. The father died suddenly; the girl disappeared mysteriously from school at the same moment; and Maitland, after many efforts, has never been able to find out anything about her. Now, this girl's name, this girl in whom my friend was interested, was Margaret Shields. That is the very name by which your friend, Miss Harman, called Margaret. So, you see, even if I am right, and if she *does* care for me, what a dreadful position I am in! I want to marry the girl to whom my friend is, more or less, engaged! My friend, after doing his best to find his ward, and after really suffering a great deal of anxiety and annoyance, is living abroad. What am I to say to him?"

"Mr. Barton," said Mrs. St John Deloraine, "perhaps you alarm yourself too much. I think" — here she dropped her voice a little— "I think — I don't think Mr. Maitland's *heart* is very deeply concerned about Miss Shields. I may be wrong, but I know him pretty well" — she gave a little nervous laugh— "and I don't think he's in *love* with Margaret."

By the time she reached the end of this interrupted and tentative discourse Mrs. St. John Deloraine was blushing like a rose in June.

Barton felt an enormous weight lifted from his heart, and a flood of welcome light poured into his mind. The two philanthropists were in love with each other!

"He's an awfully good fellow, Maitland," he replied. "But you are right; I'm *sure* you are right. You must know. He is *not* in love with Margaret."

Mrs. St. John Deloraine seemed not displeased at the tribute to Maitland's unobtrusive virtues, and replied:

"But he will be very glad to hear that she is found at last, and quite safe; and

I’ll write to him myself, this very evening. I heard from him — about a charity, you know — a few days ago, and I have his address.”

By this time they had reached the carriage. Janey, with many embraces, tore herself from Margaret, and went off with her attendant; while Mrs. St John Deloraine, with a beaming face, gave the coachman the order “Home.”

“We shall see you to-morrow at luncheon,” she cried to Barton; and no offer of hospitality had ever been more welcome.

He began to walk home, turning over his discoveries in his thoughts, when he suddenly came to a dead halt.

“By George!” he said out loud; “I’ll go back and have it out with her at once. I’ve had enough of this shillyshally.”

He turned and strode off in the direction of Cheyne Walk. In a few minutes he was standing at the familiar door.

“Will you ask Miss — Miss Burnside if she can see me for one moment?” he said to the servant “I have forgotten something she wished me to do for her,” he added in a mumble.

Then he was taken into the boudoir, and presently Margaret appeared, still in her bonnet and furs.

“I couldn’t help coming back, Margaret,” he said, as soon as she entered the room. “I want to tell you that it is all right, that you needn’t think — I mean, that I know all about it, and that there is nothing, *nothing* to prevent us — I mean» Margaret, if you *really* care for me—”

Then he came to a dead stop.

It was not a very easy situation. Barton could not exactly say to Margaret, “My dear girl, you need not worry yourself about Maitland. He does not care a pin for you; he’ll be delighted at being released. He is in love with Mrs. St. John Deloraine.”

That would have been a statement both adequate and explicit; but it could not have been absolutely flattering to Margaret, and it would have been exceedingly unfair to her hostess.

The girl came forward to the table, and stood with her hand on it, looking at Barton. She did not help him out in any way; her attitude was safe, but embarrassing.

He made a charge, as it were, at the position — a random, desperate charge.

“Margaret, can you trust me?” he asked.

She merely put out her hand, which he seized.

“Well, then, believe me when I tell you that I know everything about your doubts; that I know more than anyone else can do; and that there is *nothing* to prevent us from being happy. More than that, if you will only agree to make me happy, you will make everyone else happy too. Can’t you take it on trust? Can’t you believe me?”

Margaret said nothing; but she hid her face on Barton’s shoulder. She *did* believe him.

The position was carried!

CHAPTER XV. — The Mark of Cain.

Next morning Barton entered his sitting-room in very high spirits, and took up his letters. He had written to Maitland the night before, saying little but, “Come home at once. Margaret is found. She is going to be my wife. You can’t come too quickly, if you wish to hear of something very much to your advantage.” A load was off his mind, and he felt as *Romeo* did just before the bad news about *Juliet* reached him.

In this buoyant disposition, Barton opened his letters. The first was in a hand he knew very well — that of a man who had been his fellow-student in Paris and Vienna, and who was now a prosperous young physician. The epistle ran thus:

“Dear Barton. — I’m off to the West of Ireland, for a fortnight People are pretty fit, as the season has not run far. Most of my patients have not yet systematically overeaten themselves. I want you to do something for me. Martin & Wright, the lawyers, have a queer little bit of medical jurisprudence, about which young Wright, who was at Oriel in our time, asked my opinion. I recommended him to see you, as it is more in your line; and *my* line will presently be attached to that eminent general practitioner, ‘The Blue Doctor.’ May he prosper with the Galway salmon!

“Thine,

“Alfred Franks.”

“Lucky beggar!” thought Barton to himself, but he was too happy to envy even a man who had a fortnight of salmon-fishing before him.

The next letter he opened was in a blue envelope, with the stamp of Messrs. Martin & Wright. The brief and and formal note which it contained requested Dr. Barton to call, that very day if possible, at the chambers of the respectable firm, on “business of great importance.”

“What in the world can they want?” thought Barton. “Nobody can have left *me* any money. Besides, Franks says it is a point in medical jurisprudence. That sounds attractive. I’ll go down after breakfast.”

He walked along the sunny embankment, and that bright prospect of houses, trees, and ships have never seemed so beautiful. In an hour he was in Lincoln’s Inn Fields, and had shaken hands with young Wright, whom he knew; had been introduced to old Wright, a somewhat stately man of business, and had taken his seat in the chair sacred to clients.

“Dr. Barton,” said old Mr. Wright, solemnly, “you are, I think, the author of this book?"

He handed to Barton a copy of his own volume, in its gray paper cover, "Les Tatouages Étude Médico-Légale".

"Certainly," said Barton. "I wrote it when I was in Paris I had plenty of chances of studying tattooing in the military hospitals."

"I have not read it myself," said old Mr. Wright, "because I am not acquainted with the French language; but my son tells me it is a work of great learning."

Barton could only bow, and mutter that he was glad Mr. Wright liked it. *Why* he should like it, or what the old gentleman wanted, he could not even imagine.

"We are at present engaged in a very curious case, Dr. Barton," went on the lawyer, "in which we think your special studies may assist us. The position is this: Nearly eight months ago a client of ours died, a Mr. Richard Johnson, of Linkheaton, in the North. You must excuse me if I seem to be troubling you with a long story?"

Barton mentioned that he was delighted, and added, "Not at all," in the vague modern dialect.

"This Mr. Richard Johnson, then, was a somewhat singular character. He was what is called a 'statesman' in the North. He had a small property of about four hundred acres, on the marches, as they say, or boarders of the Earl of Birkenhead's lands. Here he lived almost alone, and in a very quiet way. There was not even a village near him, and there were few persons of his own position in life, because his little place was almost embedded, if I may say so, in Lord Birkenhead's country, which is pastoral. You are with me, so far?"

"Perfectly," said Barton.

"This Mr. Johnson, then, lived quite alone, with an old housekeeper, dead since his decease, and with one son, called Richard, like himself. The young man was of an adventurous character, a ne'er-do-weel in fact; and about twenty years ago he left Linkheaton, after a violent quarrel with his father. It was understood that he had run away to sea. Two years later he returned; there was another quarrel, and the old man turned him out, vowing that he would never forgive him. But, not long after that, a very rich deposit of coal — a *very* rich deposit," said Mr. Wright, with the air of a man tasting most excellent claret— "was discovered on this very estate of Linkheaton. Old Johnson, without much exertion on his part, and simply through the payment of royalties by the company that worked the coal, became exceedingly opulent, in what you call most affluent circumstances."

Here Mr. Wright paused, as if to see whether Barton was beginning to understand the point of the narrative, which, it is needless to remark, he was *not*. There is no marked connection between coal mines, however lucrative, and "Les

Tatouages, Étude Médico-Légale.”

“In spite of his wealth, Mr. Johnson in no way changed his habits. He invested his money carefully, under our advice, and he became, as I said, an extremely warm man. But he continued to live in the old farmhouse, and did not, in any way, court society. To tell the truth, except Lord Birkenhead, who is our client, I never knew anyone who was at all intimate with the old man. Lord Birkenhead had a respect for him, as a neighbor and a person of the old-fashioned type. Yes,” Mr. Wright added, seeing that his son was going to speak, “and, as you were about to say, Tom, they were brought together by a common misfortune. Like old Mr. Johnson, his lordship has a son who is very, very — unsatisfactory. His lordship has not seen the Honorable Mr. Thomas Cranley for many years; and in that lonely country the two boys had been companions in wild amusements, long before. He is *very* unsatisfactory, the Honorable Thomas Cranley;” and Mr. Wright sighed heavily, in sympathy with a client so noble and so afflicted.

“I know the beast,” said Barton, without reflecting.

Mr. Wright looked at him in amazement and horror. “The beast!” A son of Lord Birkenhead’s called “The beast!”

“To return to our case, Dr. Barton,” he went on severely, with some stress laid on the *doctor*. “Mr. Johnson died, leaving, by a will made on his death-bed, all that he possessed to his son Richard, or, in case of his decease, to the heirs of his body lawfully begotten. From that day to this we have hunted everywhere for the man. We have traced him all over the world; we have heard of him in Australia, Burmah, Guiana, Smyrna, but at Smyrna we lose sight of him. This advertisement,” said the old gentleman, taking up the outside sheet of the *Times*, and folding it so as to bring the second column into view, “remained for more than seven months unanswered, or only answered by impostors and idiots.”

He tapped his finger on the place as he handed the paper to Barton, who read aloud:

“Linkheaton. — If Richard Johnson, of Linkheaton, Durham, last heard of at Smyrna in 1875, will apply to Messrs. Martin and Wright, Lincoln’s Inn Fields, he will hear of something very greatly to his advantage. His father died, forgiving him. A reward of £1,000 will be paid to anyone producing Richard Johnson, or proving his decease.”

“As a mixture of business with the home affections,” said old Mr. Wright proudly (for the advertisement was of his own composition), “I think that leaves little ta be desired.”

“It is admirable,” said Barton— “admirable; but may I ask — —”

“Where the tattooing comes in?” said Mr. Wright. “I am just approaching *that*.

The only person from whom we received any reliable information about Richard Johnson was an old ship-mate of his, a wandering, adventurous character, now, I believe, in Paraguay, where we cannot readily communicate with him. According to his account, Johnson was an ordinary seafaring man, tanned, and wearing a black beard, but easily to be recognized for an excellent reason. *He was tattooed almost all over his whole body*.”

Barton nearly leaped out of his chair, the client’s chair, so sudden a light flashed on him.

“What is the matter, Dr. Barton! I *thought* I should interest you; but you seem quite excited.”

“I really beg your pardon,” said Barton. “It was automatic, I think; besides, I *am* extremely interested in tattooing.”

“Then, sir, it is a pity you could not have seen Johnson. He appears, from what our informant tells us, to have been a most remarkable specimen. He had been tattooed by Australian blacks, by Burmese, by Arabs, and, in a peculiar blue tint and to a particular pattern, by the Dyacks of Borneo. We have here a rough chart, drawn by our informant, of his principal decorations.”

Here the lawyer solemnly unrolled a great sheet of drawing-paper, on which was rudely outlined the naked figure of a man, filled up, on the breast, thighs, and arms, with ornamental designs.

The guess which made Barton leap up had not been mistaken: he recognized the tattooings he had seen on the dead body of Dicky Shields.

This confirmation of what he had conjectured, however, did not draw any exclamation or mark of excitement from Barton, who was now on his guard.

“This is highly interesting,” he said, as he examined the diagram; “and I am sure, Mr. Wright, that it should not be difficult to recognize a claimant with such remarkable peculiarities.”

“No, sir; it is easy enough, and we have been able to dismiss scores of sham Richard Johnsons. But one man presented himself the day before yesterday — a rough sailor fellow, who went straight to the point; asked if the man we wanted had any private marks; said he knew what they were, and showed us his wrist, which exactly, as far as we could verify the design, corresponded to that drawing.”

“Well,” asked Barton, controlling his excitement by a great effort, “what did you do with him?”

“We said to him that it would be necessary to take the advice of an expert before we could make any movement; and, though he told us things about old Johnson and Linkheaton, which it seemed almost impossible that anyone but the right man could have known, we put him off till we had seen you, and could make an appointment for you to examine the tattooings. *They* must be dealt with first, before any other identification."

"I suppose you have made some other necessary inquiries? Did he say why he was so late in answering the advertisement? It has been out for several months."

"Yes, and that is rather in his favor," said Mr. Wright. "If he had been an impostor on the lookout he would probably have come to us long ago. But he has just returned from the Cape, where he had been out of the way of newspapers, and he did not see the advertisement till he came across it three or four days ago."

"Very well," said Barton. "Make an appointment with the man for any time tomorrow, and I will be with you."

As he said this he looked very hard and significantly at the younger Mr. Wright.

"Very good, sir; thank you. Shall we say at noon tomorrow?"

"With pleasure," answered Barton, still with his eye on the younger partner.

He then said good-by, and was joined, as he had hoped, in the outer office by young Wright.

"You had something to say to me?" asked the junior member of the firm.

"Several things," said Barton, smiling. "And first, would you mind finding out whether the coast is clear — whether any one is watching for me?"

"Watching for you! What do you mean?"

"Just take a look round the square, and tell me whether any suspicious character is about."

Young Wright, much puzzled, put on his hat, and stood lighting a cigarette on the outer steps.

"Not a soul in sight but lawyers' clerks," he reported.

"Very well; just tell your father that, as it is a fine morning, you are taking a turn with me."

Barton's friend did as he wished, and presently the pair had some serious conversation.

"I'll do exactly as you suggest, and explain to my father," said the young lawyer as they separated.

"Thanks; it is so much easier for you to explain than for a stranger like myself," said Barton, and strolled westward by way of Co vent Garden.

At the noted establishment of Messrs. Aminadab, theatrical costumiers, Barton stopped, went in, was engaged some time with the Messrs. Aminadab, and finally had a cab called for him, and drove home with a pretty bulky parcel.

At five minutes to twelve on the following day, a tall, burly, mahogany-colored mariner, attired, for the occasion, in a frock-coat and hat, appeared in Lincoln's Inn Fields. He seemed to be but ill acquainted with those coasts, and mooned about for some minutes before he reached the door of Messrs. Wright Then he rang, the door was opened, and he was admitted into the presence of the partners.

"I have come, gentlemen, in answer to your letter," he said with a Northern burr, bowing awkwardly, and checking a disposition to salute by touching his forelock.

His eyes wandered round the room, where he saw no one but the partners, with whom he was already acquainted, and a foreign-looking gentleman — a gentleman with hay-colored hair, a soft hat, spectacles, and a tow-colored beard. He had a mild, short-sighted expression, a pasty complexion, and the air of one who smoked too much.

"Good morning, Mr. — h'm — Mr. Johnson," said old Mr. Wright. "As we told you, sir, we have, as a necessary preliminary to the inquiry, requested Professor Lieblein to step in and inspect — h'm — the personal marks of which you spoke. Professor Lieblein, of Bonn, is a great authority on these matters — author of 'Die Tattuirung,' a very learned work, I am told."

Thus introduced, the Professor bowed.

"Glad to meet you, sir," said the sailor-man gruffly, "or any gentleman as really knows what's what."

"You have been a great traveller, sir?" said the learned Professor, whose Teutonic accent it is superfluous to reproduce. "You have in many lands travelled? So!"

"Yes, sir; I have seen the world."

"And you are much tattooed: it is to me very interesting. You have by many races been decorated?"

"Most niggers have had a turn at me, sir!"

"How happy you are to have had such experiences! Now, the Burmese — ah! have you any little Burmese marks?"

"Yes, sir; from the elbow to the shoulder," replied the seafaring man. "Saving your presence, I'll strip to the buff."

"The buff! What is that? Oh, thank you, sir," this was in reply to young Mr. Wright "The naked body! why, buff! 'Buff,' the abstract word, the actual stuff, the very *wesen* of man unclothed. 'Buffer,' the concrete man, in the 'buff,' in the flesh; it is *sehr intéressant*."

While the learned Professor muttered these metaphysical and philological reflections, the seaman was stripping himself to the waist.

"That's the Burmese style, sir," he said, pointing to his shoulders and upper arm.

These limbs were tattooed in a beautiful soft blue; the pattern was a series of diminishing squares, from which long narrow triangles ran down to the elbow-joints.

"*Sehr schôn, sehr schôn,*" exclaimed the delighted Professor. "It is very *hubsch*, very pretty, very well. We cannot now decorate, we Germans. Ach, it is mournful!" and he sighed. "And now, sir, have you to show me any *moko*? A little *moko* would be very instructive."

"Moko? Rather! The Maori pattern, you mean; the New Zealand dodge? Just look between my shoulders," and the seaman turned a broad bare back, whereon were designs of curious involuted spirals.

"That is right, that is right," whispered the Professor. "*Moko, schlange*, serpent-marks, so they call it in their tongue. Better *moko*, on an European man, have I never seen. You observe," he remarked to the elder Mr. Wright, waving his hand as he followed the tattooed lines— "you observe the serpentine curves? Very beautiful."

"Extremely interesting," said Mr. Wright, who, being no anthropologist, seemed nervous and uncomfortable.

"Corresponds, too, with the marks in the picture," he added, comparing the sketch of the original Shields with the body of the claimant.

"Are you satisfied now, governor?" asked the sailor.

"One little moment. Have you on the Red Sea coast been? Have you been at Suakim? Have you any Arab markings?"

"Oh, yes; here you are!" and the voyager pointed to his breast.

The Professor inspected, with unconcealed delight, some small tattooings of irregular form.

"It is, it is," he cried, "the *wasm*, the *sharat*,* the Semitic tribal mark, the mark with which the Arab tribes brand their cattle! Of old time they did tattoo it on their bodies. The learned Herr Professor Robertson Smith, in his leedle book, do you know what he calls that very mark, my dear sir?"

> * Sharat or Short.— "The shart was in old times a tattooed
> mark.... In the patriarchal story of Cain...the institution
> of blood revenge is connected with a 'mark' which Jehovah
> appoints to Cain. Can this be anything else than the
> *sharat*, or tribal mark, which every man bore on his
> person?"
>
> — Robertson Smith, *Kinship in Ancient Arabia*, p.215.

"Not I," said the sailor; "I'm no scholar."

"He says it was — I do not say he is right," cried the Professor, in a loud voice, pointing a finger at his victim's breast— "he says it was *the mark of cain*!"

The sailor, beneath his mahogany tan, turned a livid white, and grasped at a bookcase by which he stood.

"What do you mean?" he cried, through his chattering teeth; "what do you mean with your damned Hebrew-Dutch and your mark of Cain? The mark's all right! A Hadendowa woman did it in Suakim years ago. Ain't it on that chart of yours?"

"Certainly, good sir; it is," answered the Professor. "Why do you so agitate yourself? *The proof is complete!*" he added, still pointing at the sailor's breast.

"Then I'll put on my togs, with your leave: it's none so warm!" grumbled the man.

He had so far completed his dressing that he was in his waistcoat, and was just looking round for his coat.

"Stop!" said the Professor. "Hold Mr. Johnson's coat for a moment!"

This was to young Wright, who laid his hands on the garment in question.

"You must be tired, sir," said the Professor, in a very soft voice. "May I offer you a leedle cigarette?"

He drew from his pocket a silver cigarette-case, and, in a thoroughly English accent, he went on:

"I have waited long to give you back your cigarette-case, which you left at your club, Mr. Thomas Cranley!"

The sailor's eye fell on it. He dashed the silver box violently to the ground, and trampled on it, then he made one rush at his coat.

"Hold it, hold it!" cried Barton, laying aside his Teutonic accent— "hold it: there's a revolver in the pocket!"

But there was no need to struggle for the coat.

The sailor had suddenly staggered and fallen, a crumpled but not unconscious mass, on the floor.

"Call in the police!" said Barton. "They'll have no difficulty in taking him."

"This is the man against whom you have the warrant," he went on, as young Wright opened the door and admitted two policemen. "I charge the Honorable Thomas Cranley with murder!"

The officers lifted the fallen man.

"Let him be," said Barton. "He has collapsed. Lay him on the floor: he's better so. He needs a turn of my profession: his heart's weak. Bring some brandy."

Young Wright went for the spirits, while the frightened old lawyer kept murmuring:

"The Honorable Thomas Cranley *was* always very unsatisfactory!"

It had been explained to the old gentleman that an impostor would be unmasked, and a criminal arrested; but he had *not* been informed that the culprit was the son of his great client, Lord Birkenhead.

Barton picked up the cigarette-case, and as he, for the first time, examined its interior, some broken glass fell out and tinkled on the floor.

CHAPTER XVI. — The Verdict of Fate.

Maitland did not dally long in the Levant after getting Barton’s letter. He was soon in a position to receive, in turn, the congratulations which he offered to Margaret and Barton with unaffected delight.

Mrs. St. John Deloraine and he understood each other!

Maitland, for perhaps the first time in his life, was happy in a thoroughly human old-fashioned way.

Meanwhile the preparations for Cranley’s trial dragged on. Interest, as usual, was frittered away in examinations before the magistrates.

But at last the day of judgment shone into a court crowded as courts are when it is the agony of a gentleman that the public has to view.

When the prisoner, uttering his last and latest falsehood, proclaimed himself “Not Guilty,” his voice was clear and strong enough, though the pallor of his face attested, not only the anxiety of his situation, but the ill-health which, during his confinement, had often made it doubtful whether he could survive to plead at the bar of any earthly judgment.

The Counsel for the Crown, opening the case, stated the theory of the prosecution, the case against Cranley. His argument is here offered in a condensed form:

First, Counsel explained the position of Johnson, or Shields, as the unconscious heir of great wealth, and set forth his early and late relations with the prisoner, a dishonored and unscrupulous outcast of society. The prisoner had been intimately acquainted with the circumstances of Johnson’s early life, with his history and his home. His plan, therefore, was to kill him, and then personate him. A celebrated case, which would be present to the minds of the jury, proved that a most plausible attempt at the personation of a long-missing man might be made by an uneducated impostor, who possessed none of the minute local and personal knowledge of the prisoner. Now, to personate Johnson, a sailor whose body was known to have been indelibly marked by the tattooing of various barbarous races, it was necessary that the prisoner should be similarly tattooed. It would be shown that, with unusual heartlessness, he had persuaded his victim to reproduce on his body the distinctive marks of Johnson, and then had destroyed him with fiendish ingenuity, in the very act of assuming his personality. The very instrument, it might be said, which stamped Cranley as Johnson, slew Johnson himself, and the process which hallmarked the prisoner as the heir of vast wealth stigmatized him with the brand of Cain. The personal marks which seemed to establish the claimant's case demonstrated his guilt He was detected by the medical expert brought in to prove his identity, and was recognized by that gentleman, Dr. Barton, who would be called, and who had once already exposed him in a grave social offence — cheating at cards. The same witness had made a *post-mortem* examination of the body of Richard Johnson, and had then suspected the method by which he had been murdered.

The murder itself, according to the theory of the prosecution, was committed in the following manner: Cranley, disguised as a sailor (tbe disguise in which he was finally taken), had been in the habit of meeting Johnson, and being tattooed by him, in a private room of the *Hit or Miss* tavern, in Chelsea. On the night of February 7th, he met him there for the last time. He left the tavern late, at nearly twelve o'clock, telling the landlady that "his friend," as he called Johnson, had fallen asleep upstairs. On closing the establishment, the landlady, Mrs. Gullick, found the room, an upper one, with dormer windows opening on the roof, empty. She concluded that Johnson — or Shields, as she called him — had wakened, and left the house by the back staircase, which led to a side-alley. This way Johnson, who knew the house well, often took, on leaving. On the following afternoon, however, the dead body of Johnson, with no obvious marks of violence on it, was found in a cart belonging to the vestry — a cart which, during the night, had remained near a shed on the piece of waste ground adjoining the *Hit or Miss*. A coroner's jury had taken the view that Johnson, being intoxicated, had strayed into the piece of waste ground (it would be proved that the door in the palisade surrounding it was open on that night), had lain down in the cart, and died in his sleep of cold and exposure. But evidence derived from a later medical examination would establish the presumption, which would be confirmed by the testimony of an eye-witness, that death had been wilfully caused by Cranley, employing a poison which it would be shown he had in his possession — a poison which was not swallowed by the victim, but introduced by means of a puncture into the system. The dead man's body had then been removed to a place where his decease would be accounted for as the result of cold and exhaustion. A witness would be put in the box who, by an extraordinary circumstance, had been enabled to see the crime committed by the prisoner, and the body carried away, though, at the moment, he did not understand the meaning of what he saw. As the circumstances by which this witness had been enabled to behold what was done at dead of night, in an attic room, locked and bolted, and not commanded from any neighboring house nor eminence, were exceedingly peculiar, testimony would be brought to show that the witness really had enjoyed the opportunity of observation which he claimed.

On the whole, then, as the prisoner had undeniably personated Johnson, and claimed Johnson’s property; as he undeniably had induced Johnson, unconsciously, to aid him in the task of personation; as the motive for the murder was plain and obvious; as Johnson, according to the medical evidence, had probably been murdered; and as an eye-witness professed to have seen, without comprehending, the operation by which death, according to the medical theory, was caused, the counsel for the prosecution believed that the jury could find no other verdict than that the prisoner had wilfully murdered Richard Johnson on the night of February 7th.

This opened the case for the Crown. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the evidence of all the witnesses who proved, step by step, the statements of the prosecution. First was demonstrated the identity of Shields with Johnson. To do this cost enormous trouble and expense; but Johnson’s old crony, the man who drew the chart of his tattoo marks, was at length discovered in Paraguay, and, by his aid and the testimony he collected, the point was satisfactorily made out. It was, of course, most important in another respect, as establishing Margaret’s claims on the Linkheaton estate.

The discovery of the body of Johnson (or Shields) in the snow was proved by our old friends Bill and Tommy.

The prisoner was recognized by Mrs. Gullick as the sailor gentleman who had been with Johnson on the last night of his life. In spite of the difference of dress, and of appearance caused by the absence of beard — for Cranley was now clean shaved — Mrs. Gullick was positive as to his voice and as to his eyebrows, which were peculiarly black and mobile.

Barton, who was called next, and whose evidence excited the keenest interest, identified the prisoner as the man whom he had caused to be arrested in the office of Messrs. Martin and Wright, and whom he had known as Cranley. His medical evidence was given at considerable length, and need not be produced in full detail On examining the body of Richard Johnson, his attention had naturally been directed chiefly to the tattooings. He had for some years been deeply interested, as an ethnologist, in the tattooed marks of various races. He had found many curious examples on the body of the dead man. Most of the marks were obviously old; but in a very unusual place, generally left blank — namely, behind and under the right shoulder — he had discovered certain markings of an irregular character, clearly produced by an inexperienced hand, and perfectly fresh and recent. They had not healed, and were slightly discolored. They could not, from their position, possibly have been produced by the man himself. Microscopic examinations of these marks, in which the coloring matter was brown, not red or blue, as on the rest of the body, showed that this coloring matter was of a character familiar to the witness as a physiologist and scientific traveller. It was the *Woorali*, or arrow poison of the Macoushi Indians of Guiana.

Asked to explain the nature of this poison to the Court, the witness said that its "principle" (to use the term of the old medical writers) had not yet been disengaged by Science, nor had it ever been compounded by Europeans. He had seen it made by the Macoushi Indians, who combined the juice of the Woorali vine with that of certain bulbous plants, with certain insects, and with the poison-fangs of two serpents, boiling the whole amidst magical ceremonies, and finally straining off a thick brown paste, which, when perfectly dry, was used to venom the points of their arrows. The poison might be swallowed by a healthy man without fatal results. But if introduced into the system through a wound, the poison would act almost instantaneously, and defy analysis. Its effect was to sever, as it were, the connection between the nerves and the muscles, and the muscles used in respiration being thus gradually paralyzed, death followed within a brief time, proportionate to the size of the victim, man or animal, and the strength of the dose.

Traces of this poison, then, the witness had found in the fresh tattoo marks on Johnson's body.

The witness now produced the sharp wooden needle, the stem of the leaf of the coucourite palm, which he had found among Johnson's tattooing materials, in the upper chamber of the *Hit or Miss*. This needle had been, he said, the tip of one of the arrows used for their blowpipes, by the Macoushi of Guiana.

Barton also produced the Oriental silver cigarette-case, the instrument of his cheating at baccarat, which Cranley had left in the club on the evening of his detection. He showed that the case had contained a small crystal receptacle, intended to hold opium. This crystal had been broken by Cranley when he dashed down the case, in the office of Martin and Wright. But crumbs of the poison— "Woorali," or "Ourali" — perfectly dry, remained in this réceptacle. It was thus clear that Cranley, himself a great traveller, was possessed of the rare and perilous drug.

The medical evidence having been heard, and confirmed in its general bearing by various experts, and Barton having stood the test of a severe cross-examination, William Winter was called.

There was a flutter in the Court, as a pale and partly paralyzed man was borne in on a kind of litter, and accommodated in the witness-box.

"Where were you," asked the counsel for the prosecution, when the officer had sworn the witness, "at eleven o'clock on the night of February 7th?"

"I was on the roof of the *Hit or Miss* tavern."

"On which part of the roof?"

"On the ledge below the dormer window at the back part of the house, facing the waste ground behind the plank fence."

"Will you tell the Court what you saw while you were in that position?"

Winter's face was flushed with excitement; but his voice, though thin, was clear as he said:

"There was a light streaming through the dormer window beside which I was lying, and I looked in."

"What did you see?"

"I saw a small room, with a large fire, a table, on which were bottles and glasses, and two men, one seated, the other standing."

"Would you recognize either man if you saw him?"

"I recognize the man who was seated, in the prisoner at the bar; but at that time he wore a beard."

"Tell the Court what happened."

"The men were facing me. One of them — the prisoner — was naked to the waist. His breast was tattooed. The other — the man who stood up — was touching him with a needle, which he applied, again and again, to a saucer on the table."

"Could you hear what they said?"

"I could; for the catch of the lattice window had not caught, and there was a slight chink open."

"You listened?"

"I could not help it; the scene was so strange. I heard the man with the needle give a sigh of relief, and say, 'There, it's finished, and a pretty job too, though I say it.' The other said, 'You have done it beautifully, Dicky; it's a most interesting art. Now, just out of curiosity, let *me* tattoo *you* a bit.' The other man laughed, and took off his coat and shirt while the other dressed. 'There's scarce an inch of me plain,' he said, 'but you can try your hand here,' pointing to the lower part of his shoulder."

"What happened then?"

"They were both standing up now. I saw the prisoner take out something sharp; his face was deadly pale, but the other could not see that. He began touching him with the sharp object, and kept chaffing all the time. This lasted, I should think, about five minutes, when the face of the man who was being tattooed grew very red. Then he swayed a little, backward and forward, then he stretched out his hands like a blind man, and said, in a strange, thick voice, as if he was paralyzed, 'I'm very cold; I can't shiver!' Then he fell down heavily, and his body made one or two convulsive movements. That was all."

"What did the prisoner do?"

"He looked like death. He seized the bottle on the table, poured out half a tumbler full of the stuff in it, drank it off, and then fell into a chair, and laid his face between his hands. He appeared ill, or alarmed, but the color came back into his cheek after a third or fourth glass. Then I saw him go to the sleeping man and bend over him, listening apparently to his breathing. Then he shook him several times, as if trying to arouse him. But the man lay like a log. Finally, about half-an-hour after what I have described, he opened the door and went out. He soon returned, took up the sleeping man in his arms — his weight seemed lighter than you would expect — and carried him out. From the roof I saw him push the door in the palisade leading into the waste land, a door which I myself had left open an hour before. It was not light enough to see what he did there; but he soon returned alone and walked away."

Such was the sum of Winter's evidence, which, if accepted, entirely corroborated Barton's theory of the manner of the murder.

In cross-examination, Winter was asked the very natural question:

"How did you come to find yourself on the roof of the *Hit or Miss* late at night?"

Winter nearly rose from his litter, his worn faced flushed, his eye sparkling.

"Sir, I flew!"

There was a murmur and titter through the court, which was, of course, instantly suppressed.

"You flew! What do you mean by saying that you flew?"

"I am the inventor of a flying machine, which, for thirty years, I have labored at and striven to bring to perfection. On that one night, as I was experimenting with it, where I usually did, inside the waste land bordering on the *Hit or Miss*, the machine actually worked, and I was projected in the machine, as it were, to some height in the air, coming down with à fluttering motion, like a falling feather, on the roof of the *Hit or Miss*."

Here the learned counsel for the defence smiled with infinite expression at the jury.

"My lord," said the counsel for the prosecution, noting the smile, and the significant grin with which it was reflected on the countenances of the twelve good men and true, "I may state that we are prepared to bring forward a large mass of scientific evidence — including a well-known man of science, the editor of *Wisdom*, a popular journal which takes all knowledge for its province — to prove that there is nothing physically impossible in the facts deposed to by this witness. He is at present suffering, as you see, from a serious accident caused by the very machine of which he speaks, and which can be exhibited, with a working model, to the Court."

"It certainly requires corroboration," said the judge. "At present, so far as I am aware, it is contrary to scientific experience. You can prove, perhaps, that, in the opinion of experts, these machines have only to take one step further to become practical modes of locomotion. But *that* is the very step *qui coûte*. Nothing but direct evidence that the step has been taken — that a flying machine, on this occasion, actually *flew* (they appear to be styled *volantes, a non volando*) — would really help your case, and establish the credibility of this witness."

"With your lordship's learned remarks," replied the counsel for the crown, "I am not the less ready to agree, because I *have* an actual eye-witness, who not only saw the flight deposed to by the witness, but reported it to several persons, who are in court, on the night of its occurrence, so that her statement, though disbelieved, was the common talk of the neighborhood."

"Ah! that is another matter," said the judge.

"Call Eliza Gullick," said the counsel.

Eliza was called, and in a moment was curtsying, with eagerness, but perfect self-possession.

After displaying an almost technical appreciation of the nature of an oath, Eliza was asked:

"You remember the night of the 7th of February?"

"I remember it very well, sir."

"Why do you remember it so well, Eliza?"

"Becos such a mort o' things happened, sir, that night."

"Will you tell his lordship what happened?"

"Certainly, my lord. Mr. Toopny gave us a supper, us himps, my lord, at the *Hilarity*; for he said—"

"Never mind what he said, tell us what happened as you were coming home."

"Well, sir, it was about eleven o'clock at night, and I was turning the lane into the *Hit or Miss*, when I heard an awful flapping and hissing and whirring, like wings working by steam, in the waste ground at the side of the lane. And, as I was listening — oh, it frightens me now to think of it — oh, sir—"

"Well, don't be alarmed, my good child! What occurred?"

"A great thing like a bird, sir, bigger than a man, flew up over my head, higher than the houses. And then — did you ever see them Japanese toys, my lord, them things with two feathers and a bit of India-rubber as you twist round and round and toss them up and they fly—"

"Well, my girl, I have seen them."

"Well, just as if it had been one of them things settling down, the bird's wings turned round and fluttered and shook, and at last it all lighted, quite soft like, on the roof of our house, the *Hit or Miss*. And there I saw it crouching when I went to bed, and looked out o' the window, but they wouldn't none o' them believe me, my lord."

There was a dead silence in the Court as Eliza finished this extraordinary confirmation of Winter's evidence, and wove the net inextricably round the prisoner.

Then the silence was broken by a soft crashing sound, as if something heavy had dropped a short distance on some hard object.

All present turned their eyes from staring at Eliza to the place whence the sound had come.

The prisoner's head had fallen forward on the railing in front of him.

One of the officers of the Court touched him on the shoulder.

He did not stir. They lifted him. He moved not.

The faint heart of the man had fluttered with its last pulsation. The evidence had sufficed for him without verdict or sentence. As he had slain his victim, so Fate slew him, painlessly, in a moment!

EPILOGUE.

And what became of them all?

He who does not tell, on the plea that he is “competing with Life,” which never knits up a plot, but leaves all the threads loose, acts unfairly.

Mrs. St. John Deloraine is now Mrs. Maitland, and the happy couple are visiting the great Colonies, seeking a site for a new settlement of the unemployed, who should lead happy lives under the peaceful sway of happy Mrs. Maitland.

Barton and Mrs. Barton have practised the endowment of research, in the case of Winter, who has quite recovered from his injuries, and still hopes to fly. But he has never trusted himself again on his machine, which, moreover, has never flown again. Winter, like the alchemist who once made a diamond by chance, in Balzac’s novel, has never recovered the creative moment. But he makes very interesting models, in which Mrs. Barton’s little boy begins to take a lively interest.

Eliza Gullick, declining all offers of advancement unconnected with the British drama, clings to the profession for which, as Mrs. Gullick maintains, she has a hereditary genius.

“We hear,” says the *Athenæum*, “that the long promised edition of ‘Demetrius of Scepsis,’ by Mr. Bielby, of St. Gatien’s, is in the hands of the delegates of the Clarendon Press.”

But Fiction herself is revolted by the improbability of the statement that an Oxford Don has finished his *magnum opus!*

EXPLICIT.

THE WORLD'S DESIRE

This fantasy novel was first published in 1890 and co-written with Andrew Lang. It tells the story of the hero Odysseus, mainly referred to as *the Wanderer* for most of the novel. In the narrative, Odysseus returns home to Ithaca after his second, unsung journey. He looks forward to finding his home at peace and meeting his beloved wife and son, who has not seen for twenty years. Unfortunately, he finds his home ravaged by a plague and his wife Penelope has been slain. As he grieves, he is visited by an old flame, Helen of Troy, after whom the novel title refers to.

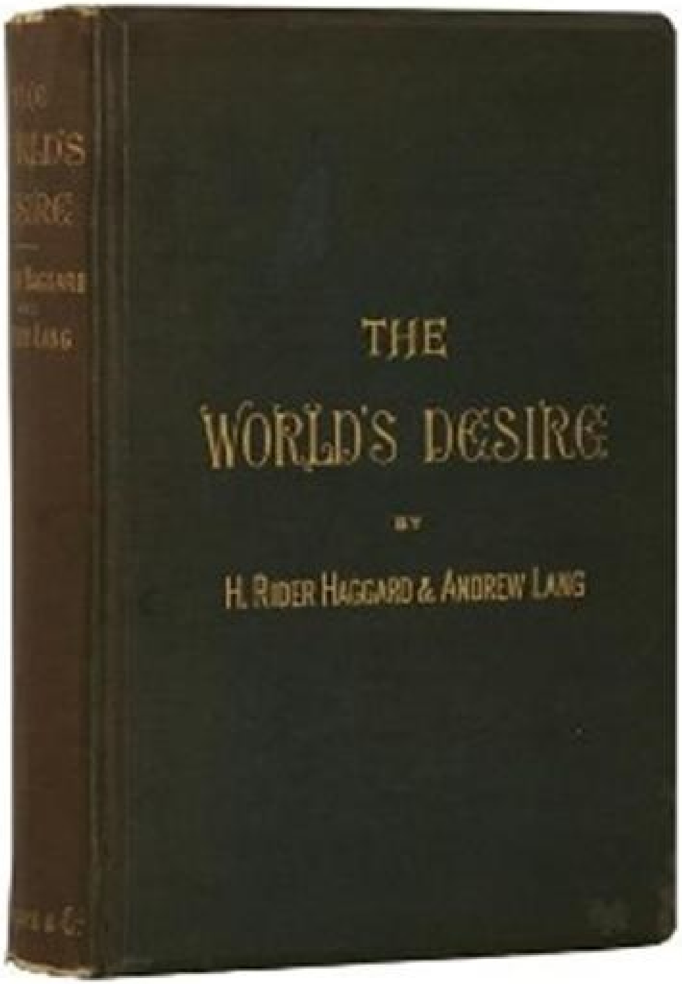
THE
WORLD'S DESIRE
BY
H. RIDER HAGGARD & ANDREW LANG

The first edition

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PREFACE

The period in which the story of *The World's Desire* is cast, was a period when, as Miss Braddon remarks of the age of the Plantagenets, "anything might happen." Recent discoveries, mainly by Dr. Schliemann and Mr. Flinders Petrie, have shown that there really was much intercourse between Heroic Greece, the Greece of the Achaeans, and the Egypt of the Ramessids. This connection, rumoured of in Greek legends, is attested by Egyptian relics found in the graves of Mycenae, and by very ancient Levantine pottery, found in contemporary sites in Egypt. Homer himself shows us Odysseus telling a feigned, but obviously not improbable, tale of an Achaean raid on Egypt. Meanwhile the sojourn of the Israelites, with their Exodus from the land of bondage, though not yet found to be recorded on the Egyptian monuments, was probably part of the great contemporary stir among the peoples. These events, which are only known through Hebrew texts, must have worn a very different aspect in the eyes of Egyptians, and of pre-historic Achaean observers, hostile in faith to the Children of Israel. The topic has since been treated in fiction by Dr. Ebers, in his *Joshua*. In such a twilight age, fancy has free play, but it is a curious fact that, in this romance, modern fancy has accidentally coincided with that of ancient Greece.

Most of the novel was written, and the apparently "un-Greek" marvels attributed to Helen had been put on paper, when a part of Furtwängler's recent great lexicon of Mythology appeared, with the article on Helen. The authors of *The World's Desire* read it with a feeling akin to amazement. Their wildest inventions about the Daughter of the Swan, it seemed, had parallels in the obscurer legends of Hellas. There actually is a tradition, preserved by Eustathius, that Paris beguiled Helen by magically putting on the aspect of Menelaus. There is a mediaeval parallel in the story of Uther and Ygerne, mother of Arthur, and the classical case of Zeus and Amphitryon is familiar. Again, the blood-dripping ruby of Helen, in the tale, is mentioned by Servius in his commentary on Virgil (it was pointed out to one of the authors by Mr. Mackail). But we did not know that the Star of the story was actually called the "Star-stone" in ancient Greek fable. The many voices of Helen are alluded to by Homer in the *Odyssey*: she was also named *Echo*, in old tradition. To add that she could assume the aspect of every man's first love was easy. Goethe introduces the same quality in the fair witch of his *Walpurgis Nacht*. A respectable portrait of Meriamun's secret counsellor exists, in pottery, in the British Museum, though, as it chances, it was not discovered by us until after the publication of this romance. The Laestrygonian of the Last Battle is introduced as a pre-historic Norseman. Mr. Gladstone, we think, was perhaps the first to point out that the Laestrygonians of the *Odyssey*, with their home on a fiord in the Land of the Midnight Sun, were probably derived from travellers' tales of the North, borne with the amber along the immemorial Sacred Way. The Magic of Meriamun is in accordance with Egyptian ideas; her resuscitation of the dead woman, Hataska, has a singular parallel in Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584), where the spell "by the silence of the Night" is not without poetry. The general conception of Helen as the World's Desire, Ideal Beauty, has been dealt with by M. Paul de St. Victor, and Mr. J. A. Symonds. For the rest, some details of battle, and of wounds, which must seem very "un-Greek" to critics ignorant of Greek literature, are borrowed from Homer.

H. R. H. A. L.

Come with us, ye whose hearts are set
On this, the Present to forget;
Come read the things whereof ye know
They were not, and could not be so!
The murmur of the fallen creeds,
Like winds among wind-shaken reeds
Along the banks of holy Nile,
Shall echo in your ears the while;
The fables of the North and South
Shall mingle in a modern mouth;
The fancies of the West and East
Shall flock and flit about the feast
Like doves that cooled, with waving wing,
The banquets of the Cyprian king.
Old shapes of song that do not die
Shall haunt the halls of memory,
And though the Bow shall prelude clear
Shrill as the song of Gunnar's spear,
There answer sobs from lute and lyre
That murmured of The World's Desire.

There lives no man but he hath seen
The World's Desire, the fairy queen.
None but hath seen her to his cost,
Not one but loves what he has lost.
None is there but hath heard her sing
Divinely through his wandering;
Not one but he has followed far

The portent of the Bleeding Star;
Not one but he hath chanced to wake,
Dreamed of the Star and found the Snake.
Yet, through his dreams, a wandering fire,
Still, still she flits, THE WORLD’S DESIRE!

BOOK I

I

THE SILENT ISLE

Across the wide backs of the waves, beneath the mountains, and between the islands, a ship came stealing from the dark into the dusk, and from the dusk into the dawn. The ship had but one mast, one broad brown sail with a star embroidered on it in gold; her stem and stern were built high, and curved like a bird’s beak; her prow was painted scarlet, and she was driven by oars as well as by the western wind.

A man stood alone on the half-deck at the bows, a man who looked always forward, through the night, and the twilight, and the clear morning. He was of no great stature, but broad-breasted and very wide-shouldered, with many signs of strength. He had blue eyes, and dark curled locks falling beneath a red cap such as sailors wear, and over a purple cloak, fastened with a brooch of gold. There were threads of silver in his curls, and his beard was flecked with white. His whole heart was following his eyes, watching first for the blaze of the island beacons out of the darkness, and, later, for the smoke rising from the far-off hills. But he watched in vain; there was neither light nor smoke on the grey peak that lay clear against a field of yellow sky.

There was no smoke, no fire, no sound of voices, nor cry of birds. The isle was deadly still.

As they neared the coast, and neither heard nor saw a sign of life, the man’s face fell. The gladness went out of his eyes, his features grew older with anxiety and doubt, and with longing for tidings of his home.

No man ever loved his home more than he, for this was Odysseus, the son of Laertes — whom some call Ulysses — returned from his unsung second wandering. The whole world has heard the tale of his first voyage, how he was tossed for ten years on the sea after the taking of Troy, how he reached home at last, alone and disguised as a beggar; how he found violence in his house, how he slew his foes in his own hall, and won his wife again. But even in his own country he was not permitted to rest, for there was a curse upon him and a labour to be accomplished. He must wander again till he reached the land of men who had never tasted salt, nor ever heard of the salt sea. There he must sacrifice to the Sea-God, and then, at last, set his face homewards. Now he had endured that curse, he had fulfilled the prophecy, he had angered, by misadventure, the

Goddess who was his friend, and after adventures that have never yet been told, he had arrived within a bowshot of Ithaca.

He came from strange countries, from the Gates of the Sun and from White Rock, from the Passing Place of Souls and the people of Dreams.

But he found his own isle more still and strange by far. The realm of Dreams was not so dumb, the Gates of the Sun were not so still, as the shores of the familiar island beneath the rising dawn.

This story, whereof the substance was set out long ago by Rei, the instructed Egyptian priest, tells what he found there, and the tale of the last adventures of Odysseus, Laertes’ son.

The ship ran on and won the well-known haven, sheltered from wind by two headlands of sheer cliff. There she sailed straight in, till the leaves of the broad olive tree at the head of the inlet were tangled in her cordage. Then the Wanderer, without once looking back, or saying one word of farewell to his crew, caught a bough of the olive tree with his hand, and swung himself ashore. Here he kneeled, and kissed the earth, and, covering his head within his cloak, he prayed that he might find his house at peace, his wife dear and true, and his son worthy of him.

But not one word of his prayer was to be granted. The Gods give and take, but on the earth the Gods cannot restore.

When he rose from his knees he glanced back across the waters, but there was now no ship in the haven, nor any sign of a sail upon the seas.

And still the land was silent; not even the wild birds cried a welcome.

The sun was hardly up, men were scarce awake, the Wanderer said to himself; and he set a stout heart to the steep path leading up the hill, over the wolds, and across the ridge of rock that divides the two masses of the island. Up he climbed, purposing, as of old, to seek the house of his faithful servant, the swineherd, and learn from him the tidings of his home. On the brow of a hill he stopped to rest, and looked down on the house of the servant. But the strong oak palisade was broken, no smoke came from the hole in the thatched roof, and, as he approached, the dogs did not run barking, as sheep-dogs do, at the stranger. The very path to the house was overgrown, and dumb with grass; even a dog’s keen ears could scarcely have heard a footstep.

The door of the swineherd’s hut was open, but all was dark within. The spiders had woven a glittering web across the empty blackness, a sign that for many days no man had entered. Then the Wanderer shouted twice, and thrice, but the only answer was an echo from the hill. He went in, hoping to find food, or perhaps a spark of fire sheltered under the dry leaves. But all was vacant and cold as death.

The Wanderer came forth into the warm sunlight, set his face to the hill again, and went on his way to the city of Ithaca.

He saw the sea from the hill-top glittering as of yore, but there were no brown sails of fisher-boats on the sea. All the land that should now have waved with the white corn was green with tangled weeds. Half-way down the rugged path was a grove of alders, and the basin into which water flowed from the old fountain of the Nymphs. But no maidens were there with their pitchers; the basin was broken, and green with mould; the water slipped through the crevices and hurried to the sea. There were no offerings of wayfarers, rags and pebbles, by the well; and on the altar of the Nymphs the flame had long been cold. The very ashes were covered with grass, and a branch of ivy had hidden the stone of sacrifice.

On the Wanderer pressed with a heavy heart; now the high roof of his own hall and the wide fenced courts were within his sight, and he hurried forward to know the worst.

Too soon he saw that the roofs were smokeless, and all the court was deep in weeds. Where the altar of Zeus had stood in the midst of the court there was now no altar, but a great, grey mound, not of earth, but of white dust mixed with black. Over this mound the coarse grass pricked up scantily, like thin hair on a leprosy.

Then the Wanderer shuddered, for out of the grey mound peeped the charred black bones of the dead. He drew near, and, lo! the whole heap was of nothing else than the ashes of men and women. Death had been busy here: here many people had perished of a pestilence. They had all been consumed on one funeral fire, while they who laid them there must have fled, for there was no sign of living man. The doors gaped open, and none entered, and none came forth. The house was dead, like the people who had dwelt in it.

Then the Wanderer paused where once the old hound Argos had welcomed him and had died in that welcome. There, unwelcomed, he stood, leaning on his staff. Then a sudden ray of the sun fell on something that glittered in the heap, and he touched it with the end of the staff that he had in his hand. It slid jingling from the heap; it was the bone of a forearm, and that which glittered on it was a half-molten ring of gold. On the gold lambda these characters were engraved:

IKMALIOS MEPOIESEN

(Icmalios made me.)

At the sight of the armlet the Wanderer fell on the earth, grovelling among the ashes of the pyre, for he knew the gold ring which he had brought from Ephyre long ago, for a gift to his wife Penelope. This was the bracelet of the bride of his youth, and here, a mockery and a terror, were those kind arms in which he had lain. Then his strength was shaken with sobbing, and his hands clutched blindly before him, and he gathered dust and cast it upon his head till the dark locks were defiled with the ashes of his dearest, and he longed to die.

There he lay, biting his hands for sorrow, and for wrath against God and Fate. There he lay while the sun in the heavens smote him, and he knew it not; while the wind of the sunset stirred in his hair, and he stirred not. He could not even shed one tear, for this was the sorest of all the sorrows that he had known on the waves of the sea, or on land among the wars of men.

The sun fell and the ways were darkened. Slowly the eastern sky grew silver with the moon. A night-fowl's voice was heard from afar, it drew nearer; then through the shadow of the pyre the black wings fluttered into the light, and the carrion bird fixed its talons and its beak on the Wanderer's neck. Then he moved at length, tossed up an arm, and caught the bird of darkness by the neck, and broke it, and dashed it on the ground. His sick heart was mad with the little sudden pain, and he clutched for the knife in his girdle that he might slay himself, but he was unarmed. At last he rose, muttering, and stood in the moonlight, like a lion in some ruinous palace of forgotten kings. He was faint with hunger and weak with long lamenting, as he stepped within his own doors. There he paused on that high threshold of stone where once he had sat in the disguise of a beggar, that very threshold whence, on another day, he had shot the shafts of doom among the wooers of his wife and the wasters of his home. But now his wife was dead: all his voyaging was ended here, and all his wars were vain. In the white light the house of his kingship was no more than the ghost of a home, dreadful, unfamiliar, empty of warmth and love and light. The tables were fallen here and there throughout the long hall; mouldering bones, from the funeral feast, and shattered cups and dishes lay in one confusion; the ivory chairs were broken, and on the walls the moonbeams glistened now and again from points of steel and blades of bronze, though many swords were dark with rust.

But there, in its gleaming case, lay one thing friendly and familiar. There lay the Bow of Eurytus, the bow for which great Heracles had slain his own host in his halls; the dreadful bow that no mortal man but the Wanderer could bend. He was never used to carry this precious bow with him on shipboard, when he went to the wars, but treasured it at home, the memorial of a dear friend foully slain. So now, when the voices of dog, and slave, and child, and wife were mute, there yet came out of the stillness a word of welcome to the Wanderer. For this bow, which had thrilled in the grip of a god, and had scattered the shafts of the vengeance of Heracles, was wondrously made and magical. A spirit dwelt within it which knew of things to come, which boded the battle from afar, and therefore always before the slaying of men the bow sang strangely through the night. The voice of it was thin and shrill, a ringing and a singing of the string and of the bow. While the Wanderer stood and looked on his weapon, hark! the bow began to thrill! The sound was faint at first, a thin note, but as he listened the voice of it in that silence grew clear, strong, angry and triumphant. In his ears and to his heart it seemed that the wordless chant rang thus: Keen and low

Doth the arrow sing
The Song of the Bow,
The sound of the string.
The shafts cry shrill:
Let us forth again,
Let us feed our fill
On the flesh of men.
Greedy and fleet
Do we fly from far,
Like the birds that meet
For the feast of war,
Till the air of fight
With our wings be stirred,
As it whirrs from the flight
Of the ravening bird.
Like the flakes that drift
On the snow-wind’s breath,
Many and swift,
And winged for death —
Greedy and fleet,
Do we speed from far,
Like the birds that meet
On the bridge of war.
Fleet as ghosts that wail,
When the dart strikes true,
Do the swift shafts hail,
Till they drink warm dew.
Keen and low
Do the grey shafts sing
The Song of the Bow,

The sound of the string.

This was the message of Death, and this was the first sound that had broken the stillness of his home.

At the welcome of this music which spoke to his heart — this music he had heard so many a time — the Wanderer knew that there was war at hand. He knew that the wings of his arrows should be swift to fly, and their beaks of bronze were whetted to drink the blood of men. He put out his hand and took the bow, and tried the string, and it answered shrill as the song of the swallow.

Then at length, when he heard the bowstring twang to his touch, the fountains of his sorrow were unsealed; tears came like soft rains on a frozen land, and the Wanderer wept.

When he had his fill of weeping, he rose, for hunger drove him — hunger that is of all things the most shameless, being stronger far than sorrow, or love, or any other desire. The Wanderer found his way through the narrow door behind the dais, and stumbling now and again over fallen fragments of the home which he himself had built, he went to the inner, secret storehouse. Even *he* could scarcely find the door, for saplings of trees had grown up about it; yet he found it at last. Within the holy well the water was yet babbling and shining in the moonlight over the silver sands; and here, too, there was store of mouldering grain, for the house had been abundantly rich when the great plague fell upon the people while he was far away. So he found food to satisfy his hunger, after a sort, and next he gathered together out of his treasure-chest the beautiful golden armour of unhappy Paris, son of Priam, the false love of fair Helen. These arms had been taken at the sack of Troy, and had lain long in the treasury of Menelaus in Sparta; but on a day he had given them to Odysseus, the dearest of all his guests. The Wanderer clad himself in this golden gear, and took the sword called “Euryalus’s Gift,” a bronze blade with a silver hilt, and a sheath of ivory, which a stranger had given him in a far-off land. Already the love of life had come back to him, now that he had eaten and drunk, and had heard the Song of the Bow, the Slayer of Men. He lived yet, and hope lived in him though his house was desolate, and his wedded wife was dead, and there was none to give him tidings of his one child, Telemachus. Even so life beat strong in his heart, and his hands would keep his head if any sea-robbers had come to the city of Ithaca and made their home there, like hawks in the forsaken nest of an eagle of the sea. So he clad himself in his armour, and chose out two spears from a stand of lances, and cleaned them, and girt about his shoulders a quiver full of shafts, and took in hand his great bow, the Bow of Eurytus, which no other man could bend.

Then he went forth from the ruined house into the moonlight, went forth for the last time; for never again did the high roof echo to the footstep of its lord. Long has the grass grown over it, and the sea-wind wailed!

II

THE VISION OF THE WORLD’S DESIRE

The fragrant night was clear and still, the silence scarce broken by the lapping of the waves, as the Wanderer went down from his fallen home to the city on the sea, walking warily, and watching for any light from the houses of the people. But they were all as dark as his own, many of them roofless and ruined, for, after the plague, an earthquake had smitten the city. There were gaping chasms in the road, here and there, and through rifts in the walls of the houses the moon shone strangely, making ragged shadows. At last the Wanderer reached the Temple of Athene, the Goddess of War; but the roof had fallen in, the pillars were overset, and the scent of wild thyme growing in the broken pavement rose where he walked. Yet, as he stood by the door of the fane, where he had burned so many a sacrifice, at length he spied a light blazing from the windows of a great chapel by the sea. It was the Temple of Aphrodite, the Queen of Love, and from the open door a sweet savour of incense and a golden blaze rushed forth till they were lost in the silver of the moonshine and in the salt smell of the sea. Thither the Wanderer went slowly, for his limbs were swaying with weariness, and he was half in a dream. Yet he hid himself cunningly in the shadow of a long avenue of myrtles, for he guessed that sea-robbers were keeping revel in the forsaken shrine. But he heard no sound of singing and no tread of dancing feet within the fane of the Goddess of Love; the sacred plot of the goddess and her chapels were silent. He hearkened awhile, and watched, till at last he took courage, drew near the doors, and entered the holy place. But in the tall, bronze braziers there were no faggots burning, nor were there torches lighted in the hands of the golden men and maids, the images that stand within the fane of Aphrodite. Yet, if he did not dream, nor take moonlight for fire, the temple was bathed in showers of gold by a splendour of flame. None might see its centre nor its fountain; it sprang neither from the altar nor the statue of the goddess, but was everywhere imminent, a glory not of this world, a fire untended and unlit. And the painted walls with the stories of the loves of men and gods, and the carven pillars and the beams, and the roof of green, were bright with flaming fire!

At this the Wanderer was afraid, knowing that an immortal was at hand; for the comings and goings of the gods were attended, as he had seen, by this wonderful light of unearthly fire. So he bowed his head, and hid his face as he sat by the altar in the holiest of the holy shrine, and with his right hand he grasped the horns of the altar. As he sat there, perchance he woke, and perchance he slept. However it was, it seemed to him that soon there came a murmuring and a whispering of the myrtle leaves and laurels, and a sound in the tops of the pines, and then his face was fanned by a breath more cold than the wind that wakes the dawn. At the touch of this breath the Wanderer shuddered, and the hair on his flesh stood up, so cold was the strange wind.

There was silence; and he heard a voice, and he knew that it was the voice of no mortal, but of a goddess. For the speech of goddesses was not strange in his ears; he knew the clarion cry of Athene, the Queen of Wisdom and of War; and the winning words of Circe, the Daughter of the Sun, and the sweet song of Calypso's voice as she wove with her golden shuttle at the loom. But now the words came sweeter than the moaning of doves, more soft than sleep. So came the golden voice, whether he woke or whether he dreamed.

"Odysseus, thou knowest me not, nor am I thy lady, nor hast thou ever been my servant! Where is she, the Queen of the Air, Athene, and why comest *thou* here as a suppliant at the knees of the daughter of Dione?"

He answered nothing, but he bowed his head in deeper sorrow.

The voice spake again:

"Behold, thy house is desolate; thy hearth is cold. The wild hare breeds on thy hearthstone, and the night-bird roosts beneath thy roof-tree. Thou hast neither child nor wife nor native land, and *she* hath forsaken thee — thy Lady Athene. Many a time didst thou sacrifice to her the thighs of kine and sheep, but didst thou ever give so much as a pair of dove to *me*? Hath she left thee, as the Dawn forsook Tithonus, because there are now threads of silver in the darkness of thy hair? Is the wise goddess fickle as a nymph of the woodland or the wells? Doth she love a man only for the bloom of his youth? Nay, I know not; but this I know, that on thee, Odysseus, old age will soon be hastening — old age that is pitiless, and ruinous, and weary, and weak — age that cometh on all men, and that is hateful to the Gods. Therefore, Odysseus, ere yet it be too late, I would bow even thee to my will, and hold thee for my thrall. For I am she who conquers all things living: Gods and beasts and men. And hast thou thought that thou only shalt escape Aphrodite? Thou that hast never loved as I would have men love; thou that hast never obeyed me for an hour, nor ever known the joy and the sorrow that are mine to give? For thou didst but ensure the caresses of Circe, the Daughter of the Sun, and thou wert aweary in the arms of Calypso, and the Sea King's daughter came never to her longing. As for her who is dead, thy dear wife Penelope, thou didst love her with a loyal heart, but never with a heart of fire. Nay, she was but thy companion, thy housewife, and the mother of thy child. She was mingled with all the memories of the land thou lovest, and so thou gavest her a little love. But she is dead; and thy child too is no more; and thy very country is as the ashes of a forsaken hearth where once was a camp of men. What have all thy wars and wanderings won for thee, all thy labours, and all the adventures thou hast achieved? For what didst thou seek among the living and the dead? Thou soughtest that which all men seek — thou soughtest *The World's Desire*. They find it not, nor hast thou found it, Odysseus; and thy friends are dead; thy land is dead; nothing lives but Hope. But the life that lies before thee is new, without a remnant of the old days, except for the bitterness of longing and remembrance. Out of this new life, and the unborn hours, wilt thou not give, what never before thou gavest, one hour to me, to be my servant?"

The voice, as it seemed, grew softer and came nearer, till the Wanderer heard it whisper in his very ear, and with the voice came a divine fragrance. The breath of her who spoke seemed to touch his neck; the immortal tresses of the Goddess were mingled with the dark curls of his hair.

The voice spake again:

"Nay, Odysseus, didst thou not once give me one little hour? Fear not, for thou shalt not see me at this time, but lift thy head and look on The World's Desire!"

Then the Wanderer lifted his head, and he saw, as it were in a picture or in a mirror of bronze, the vision of a girl. She was more than mortal tall, and though still in the first flower of youth, and almost a child in years, she seemed fair as a goddess, and so beautiful that Aphrodite herself may perchance have envied this loveliness. She was slim and gracious as a young shoot of a palm tree, and her eyes were fearless and innocent as a child's. On her head she bore a shining urn of bronze, as if she were bringing water from the wells, and behind her was the foliage of a plane tree. Then the Wanderer knew her, and saw her once again as he had seen her, when in his boyhood he had journeyed to the Court of her father, King Tyndareus. For, as he entered Sparta, and came down the hill Taygetus, and as his chariot wheels flashed through the ford of Eurotas, he had met her there on her way from the river. There, in his youth, his eyes had gazed on the loveliness of Helen, and his heart had been filled with the desire of the fairest of women, and like all the princes of Achaia he had sought her hand in marriage. But Helen was given to another man, to Menelaus, Atreus's son, of an evil house, that the knees of many might be loosened in death, and that there might be a song in the ears of men in after time.

As he beheld the vision of young Helen, the Wanderer too grew young again. But as he gazed with the eyes and loved with the first love of a boy, she melted like a mist, and out of the mist came another vision. He saw himself, disguised as a beggar, beaten and bruised, yet seated in a long hall bright with gold, while a woman bathed his feet, and anointed his head with oil. And the face of the woman was the face of the maiden, and even more beautiful, but sad with grief and with an ancient shame. Then he remembered how once he had stolen into Troy town from the camp of the Achæans, and how he had crept in a beggar's rags within the house of Priam to spy upon the Trojans, and how Helen, the fairest of women, had bathed him, and anointed him with oil, and suffered him to go in peace, all for the memory of the love that was between them of old. As he gazed, that picture faded and melted in the mist, and again he bowed his head, and kneeled by the golden altar of the Goddess, crying:

"Where beneath the sunlight dwells the golden Helen?" For now he had only one desire: to look on Helen again before he died.

Then the voice of the Goddess seemed to whisper in his ear:

"Did I not say truth, Odysseus? Wast not thou my servant for one hour, and did not Love save thee in the city of the Trojans on that night when even Wisdom was of no avail?"

He answered: "Yea, O Queen!"

"Behold then," said the voice, "I would again have mercy and be kind to thee, for if I aid thee not thou hast no more life left among men. Home, and kindred, and native land thou hast none; and, but for me, thou must devour thine own heart and be lonely till thou diest. Therefore I breathe into thy heart a sweet forgetfulness of every sorrow, and I breathe love into thee for her who was thy first love in the beginning of thy days.

"For Helen is living yet upon the earth. And I will send thee on the quest of Helen, and thou shalt again take joy in war and wandering. Thou shalt find her in a strange land, among a strange people, in a strife of gods and men; and the wisest and bravest of man shall sleep at last in the arms of the fairest of women. But learn this, Odysseus; thou must set thy heart on no other woman, but only on Helen.

"And I give thee a sign to know her by in a land of magic, and among women that deal in sorceries.

"*On the breast of Helen a jewel shines, a great star-stone, the gift I gave her on her wedding-night when she was bride to Menelaus. From that stone fall red drops like blood, and they drip on her vestment, and there vanish, and do not stain it.*

"By the Star of Love shalt thou know her; by the star shalt thou swear to her; and if thou knowest not the portent of the Bleeding Star, or if thou breakest that oath, never in this life, Odysseus, shalt thou win the golden Helen! And thine own death shall come from the water — the swiftest death — that the saying of the dead prophet may be fulfilled. Yet first shalt thou lie in the arms of the golden Helen.”

The Wanderer answered:

“Queen, how may this be, for I am alone on a seagirt isle, and I have no ship and no companions to speed me over the great gulf of the sea?”

Then the voice answered:

“Fear not! the gods can bring to pass even greater things than these. Go from my house, and lie down to sleep in my holy ground, within the noise of the wash of the waves. There sleep, and take thy rest! Thy strength shall come back to thee, and before the setting of the new sun thou shalt be sailing on the path to The World’s Desire. But first drink from the chalice on my altar. Fare thee well!”

The voice died into silence, like the dying of music. The Wanderer awoke and lifted his head, but the light had faded, and the temple was grey in the first waking of the dawn. Yet there, on the altar where no cup had been, stood a deep chalice of gold, full of red wine to the brim. This the Wanderer lifted and drained — a draught of Nepenthe, the magic cup that puts trouble out of mind. As he drank, a wave of sweet hope went over his heart, and buried far below it the sorrow of remembrance, and the trouble of the past, and the longing desire for loves that were no more.

With a light step he went forth like a younger man, taking the two spears in his hand, and the bow upon his back, and he lay down beneath a great rock that looked toward the deep, and there he slept.

III

THE SLAYING OF THE SIDONIANS

Morning broke in the East. A new day dawned upon the silent sea, and on the world of light and sound. The sunrise topped the hill at last, and fell upon the golden raiment of the Wanderer where he slept, making it blaze like living fire. As the sun touched him, the prow of a black ship stole swiftly round the headland, for the oarsmen drove her well with the oars. Any man who saw her would have known her to be a vessel of the merchants of Sidon — the most cunning people and the greediest of gain — for on her prow were two big-headed shapes of dwarfs, with gaping mouths and knotted limbs. Such gods as those were worshipped by the Sidonians. She was now returning from Albion, an isle beyond the pillars of Heracles and the gates of the great sea, where much store of tin is found; and she had rich merchandise on board. On the half-deck beside the steersman was the captain, a thin, keen-eyed sailor, who looked shoreward and saw the sun blaze on the golden armour of the Wanderer. They were so far off that he could not see clearly what it was that glittered yellow, but all that glittered yellow was a lure for him, and gold drew him on as iron draws the hands of heroes. So he bade the helmsman steer straight in, for the sea was deep below the rock, and there they all saw a man lying asleep in golden armour. They whispered together, laughing silently, and then sprang ashore, taking with them a rope of twisted ox-hide, a hawser of the ship, and a strong cable of byblus, the papyrus plant. On these ropes they cast a loop and a running knot, a lasso for throwing, so that they might capture the man in safety from a distance. With these in their hands they crept up the cliff, for their purpose was to noose the man in golden armour, and drag him on board their vessel, and carry him to the mouth of the river of Egypt, and there sell him for a slave to the King. For the Sidonians, who were greedy of everything, loved nothing better than to catch free men and women, who might be purchased, by mere force or guile, and then be sold again for gold and silver and cattle. Many kings' sons had thus been captured by them, and had seen the day of slavery in Babylon, or Tyre, or Egyptian Thebes, and had died sadly, far from the Argive land.

So the Sidonians went round warily, and, creeping in silence over the short grass and thyme towards the Wanderer, were soon as near to him as a child could throw a stone. Like shepherds who seek to net a sleeping lion, they came cunningly; yet not so cunningly but that the Wanderer heard them through his dreams, and turned and sat up, looking around him half awake. But as he woke the noose fell about his neck and over his arms and they drew it hard, and threw him on his back. Before they could touch him he was on his feet again, crying his war-cry terribly, the cry that shook the towers of Ilium, and he rushed upon them, clutching at his sword hilt. The men who were nearest him and had hold of the rope let it fall from their hands and fled, but the others swung behind him, and dragged with all their force. If his arms had been free so that he might draw his sword, it would have gone ill with them, many as they were, for the Sidonians have no stomach for sword blades; but his arms were held in the noose. Yet they did not easily master him; but, as those who had fled came back, and they all laid hands on the rope together, they overpowered him by main force at last, and hauled him, step by step, till he stumbled on a rock and fell. Then they rushed at him, and threw themselves all upon his body, and bound him with ropes in cunning sailor knots. But the booty was dearly won, and they did not all return alive; for he crushed one man with his knees till the breath left him, and the thigh of another he broke with a blow of his foot.

But at last his strength was spent, and they had him like a bird in a snare; so, by might and main, they bore him to their ship, and threw him down on the fore-deck of the vessel. There they mocked him, though they were half afraid; for even now he was terrible. Then they hauled up the sail again and sat down to the oars. The wind blew fair for the mouth of the Nile and the slave-market of Egypt. The wind was fair, and their hearts were light, for they had been among the first of their people to deal with the wild tribes of the island Albion, and had brought tin and gold for African sea shells and rude glass beads from Egypt. And now, near the very end of their adventure, they had caught a man whose armour and whose body were worth a king’s ransom. It was a lucky voyage, they said, and the wind was fair!

The rest of the journey was long, but in well-known waters. They passed by Cephalonia and the rock of Ægilips, and wooded Zacynthus, and Samê, and of all those isles he was the lord, whom they were now selling into captivity. But he lay still, breathing heavily, and he stirred but once — that was when they neared Zacynthus. Then he strained his head round with a mighty strain, and he saw the sun go down upon the heights of rocky Ithaca, for that last time of all.

So the swift ship ran along the coast, slipping by forgotten towns. Past the Echinean isles, and the Elian shore, and pleasant Eirene they sped, and it was dusk ere they reached Dorion. Deep night had fallen when they ran by Pylos; and the light of the fires in the hall of Pisistratus, the son of Nestor the Old, shone out across the sandy sea-coast and the sea. But when they were come near

Malea, the southernmost point of land, where two seas meet, there the storm snatched them, and drove them ever southwards, beyond Crete, towards the mouth of the Nile. They scudded long before the storm-wind, losing their reckoning, and rushing by island temples that showed like ghosts through the mist, and past havens which they could not win. On they fled, and the men would gladly have lightened the ship by casting the cargo overboard; but the captain watched the hatches with a sword and two bronze-tipped spears in his hand. He would sink or swim with the ship; he would go down with his treasure, or reach Sidon, the City of Flowers, and build a white house among the palms by the waters of Bostren, and never try the sea again.

So he swore; and he would not let them cast the Wanderer overboard, as they desired, because he had brought bad luck. “He shall bring a good price in Tanis,” cried the captain. And at last the storm abated, and the Sidonians took heart, and were glad like men escaped from death; so they sacrificed and poured forth wine before the dwarf-gods on the prow of their vessel, and burned incense on their little altar. In their mirth, and to mock the Wanderer, they hung his sword and his shield against the mast, and his quiver and his bow they arrayed in the fashion of a trophy; and they mocked him, believing that he knew no word of their speech. But he knew it well, as he knew the speech of the people of Egypt; for he had seen the cities of many men, and had spoken with captains and mercenaries from many a land in the great wars.

The Sidonians, however, jibed and spoke freely before him, saying how they were bound for the rich city of Tanis, on the banks of the River of Egypt, and how the captain was minded to pay his toll to Pharaoh with the body and the armour of the Wanderer. That he might seem the comelier, and a gift more fit for a king, the sailors slackened his bonds a little, and brought him dried meat and wine, and he ate till his strength returned to him. Then he entreated them by signs to loosen the cord that bound his legs; for indeed his limbs were dead through the strength of the bonds, and his armour was eating into his flesh. At his prayer they took some pity of him and loosened his bonds again, and he lay upon his back, moving his legs to and fro till his strength came back.

So they sailed southward ever, through smooth waters and past the islands that lie like water-lilies in the midland sea. Many a strange sight they saw: vessels bearing slaves, whose sighing might be heard above the sighing of wind and water — young men and maidens of Ionia and Achaia, stolen by slave-traders into bondage; now they would touch at the white havens of a peaceful city; and again they would watch a smoke on the sea-line all day, rising black into the heavens; but by nightfall the smoke would change to a great roaring fire from the beacons of a beleaguered island town; the fire would blaze on the masts of the ships of the besiegers, and show blood-red on their sails, and glitter on the gilded shields that lined the bulwarks of their ships. But the Sidonians sped on till, one night, they anchored off a little isle that lies over against the mouth of the Nile. Beneath this isle they moored the ship, and slept, most of them, ashore.

Then the Wanderer began to plot a way to escape, though the enterprise seemed desperate enough. He was lying in the darkness of the hold, sleepless and sore with his bonds, while his guard watched under an awning in the moonlight on the deck. They dreamed so little of his escaping that they visited him only by watches, now and again; and, as it chanced, the man whose turn it was to see that all was well fell asleep. Many a thought went through the prisoner’s mind, and now it seemed to him that the vision of the Goddess was only a vision of sleep, which came, as they said, through the false Gates of Ivory, and not through the Gates of Horn. So he was to live in slavery after all, a king no longer, but a captive, toiling in the Egyptian mines of Sinai, or a soldier at a palace gate, till he died. Thus he brooded, till out of the stillness came a thin, faint, thrilling sound from the bow that hung against the mast over his head, the bow that he never thought to string again. There was a noise of a singing of the bow and of the string, and the wordless song shaped itself thus in the heart of the Wanderer:

Lo! the hour is nigh
And the time to smite,
When the foe shall fly
From the arrow’s flight!
Let the bronze bite deep!
Let the war-birds fly
Upon them that sleep
And are ripe to die!
Shrill and low
Do the grey shafts sing
The Song of the Bow,
The sound of the string!

Then the low music died into the silence, and the Wanderer knew that the next sun would not set on the day of slavery, and that his revenge was near. His bonds would be no barrier to his vengeance; they would break like burnt tow, he knew, in the fire of his anger. Long since, in his old days of wandering, Calypso, his love, had taught him in the summer leisure of her sea-girt isle how to tie the knots that no man could untie, and to undo all the knots that men can bind. He remembered this lesson in the night when the bow sang of war. So he thought no more of sleeping, but cunningly and swiftly unknotted all the cords and the bonds which bound him to a bar of iron in the hold. He might have escaped now, perhaps, if he had stolen on deck without waking the guards, dived thence and swam under water towards the island, where he might have hidden himself in the bush. But he desired revenge no less than freedom, and had set his heart on coming in a ship of his own, and with all the great treasure of the Sidonians, before the Egyptian King.

With this in his mind, he did not throw off the cords, but let them lie on his arms and legs and about his body, as if they were still tied fast. But he fought against sleep, lest in moving when he woke he might reveal the trick, and be bound again. So he lay and waited, and in the morning the sailors came on board, and mocked at him again. In his mirth one of the men took a dish of meat and of lentils, and set it a little out of the Wanderer's reach as he lay bound, and said in the Phoenician tongue:

"Mighty lord, art thou some god of Javan" (for so the Sidonians called the Achæans), "and wilt thou deign to taste our sacrifice? Is not the savour sweet in the nostrils of my lord? Why will he not put forth his hand to touch our offering?"

Then the heart of Odysseus muttered sullenly within him, in wrath at the insolence of the man. But he constrained himself and smiled, and said:

"Wilt thou not bring the mess a very little nearer, my friend, that I may smell the sweet incense of the sacrifice?"

They were amazed when they heard him speak in their own tongue; but he who held the dish brought it nearer, like a man that angers a dog, now offering the meat, and now taking it away.

So soon as the man was within reach, the Wanderer sprang out, the loosened bonds falling at his feet, and smote the sailor beneath the ear with his clenched fist. The blow was so fierce, for all his anger went into it, that it crushed the bone, and drove the man against the mast of the ship so that the strong mast shook. Where he fell, there he lay, his feet kicking the floor of the hold in his death-pain.

Then the Wanderer snatched from the mast his bow and his short sword, slung the quiver about his shoulders, and ran on to the raised decking of the prow.

The bulwarks of the deck were high, and the vessel was narrow, and before the sailors could stir for amazement the Wanderer had taken his stand behind the little altar and the dwarf-gods. Here he stood with an arrow on the string, and the bow drawn to his ear, looking about him terribly.

Now panic and dread came on the Sidonians when they saw him standing thus, and one of the sailors cried:

"Alas! what god have we taken and bound? Our ship may not contain him.

Surely he is Resef Mikal, the God of the Bow, whom they of Javan call Apollo. Nay, let us land him on the isle and come not to blows with him, but entreat his mercy, lest he rouse the waves and the winds against us."

But the captain of the ship of the Sidonians cried:

"Not so, ye knaves! Have at him, for he is no god, but a mortal man; and his armour is worth many a yoke of oxen!"

Then he bade some of them climb the decking at the further end of the ship, and throw spears at him thence; and he called others to bring up one of the long spears and charge him with that. Now these were huge pikes, that were wielded by five or six men at once, and no armour could withstand them; they were used in the fights to drive back boarders, and to ward off attacks on ships which were beached on shore in the sieges of towns.

The men whom the captain appointed little liked the task, for the long spears were laid on tressels along the bulwarks, and to reach them and unship them it was needful to come within range of the bow. But the sailors on the further deck threw all their spears at once, while five men leaped on the deck where the Wanderer stood. He loosed the bowstring and the shaft sped on its way; again he drew and loosed, and now two of them had fallen beneath his arrows, and one was struck by a chance blow from a spear thrown from the further deck, and the other two leaped back into the hold.

Then the Wanderer shouted from the high decking of the prow in the speech of the Sidonians:

"Ye dogs, ye have sailed on your latest seafaring, and never again shall ye bring the hour of slavery on any man."

So he cried, and the sailors gathered together in the hold, and took counsel how they should deal with him. But meanwhile the bow was silent, and of those on the hinder deck who were casting spears, one dropped and the others quickly fled to their fellows below, for on the deck they had no cover.

The sun was now well risen, and shone on the Wanderer's golden mail, as he stood alone on the decking, with his bow drawn. The sun shone, there was silence, the ship swung to her anchor; and still he waited, looking down, his arrow pointing at the level of the deck to shoot at the first head which rose above the planking. Suddenly there was a rush of men on to the further decking, and certain of them tore the shields that lined the bulwarks from their pins, and threw them down to those who were below, while others cast a shower of spears at the Wanderer. Some of the spears he avoided; others leaped back from his mail; others stood fast in the altar and in the bodies of the dwarf-gods; while he answered with an arrow that did not miss its aim. But his eyes were always watching most keenly the hatches nearest him, whence a gangway ran down to the lower part of the ship, where the oarsmen sat; for only thence could they make a rush on him. As he watched and drew an arrow from the quiver on his shoulder, he felt, as it were, a shadow between him and the deck. He glanced up quickly, and there, on the yard above his head, a man, who had climbed the mast from behind, was creeping down to drop on him from above. Then the Wanderer snatched a short spear and cast it at the man. The spear sped quicker than a thought, and pinned his two hands to the yard so that he hung there helpless, shrieking to his friends. But the arrows of the Wanderer kept raining on the men who stood on the further deck, and presently some of them, too, leaped down in terror, crying that he was a god and not a man, while others threw themselves into the sea, and swam for the island.

Then the Wanderer himself waited no longer, seeing them all amazed, but he drew his sword and leaped down among them with a cry like a sea-eagle swooping on seamews in the crevice of a rock. To right and left he smote with the short sword, making a havoc and sparing none, for the sword ravened in his hand. And some fell over the benches and oars, but such of the sailors as could flee rushed up the gangway into the further deck, and thence sprang overboard, while those who had not the luck to flee fell where they stood, and scarcely struck a blow. Only the captain of the ship, knowing that all was lost, turned and threw a spear in the Wanderer’s face. But he watched the flash of the bronze and stooped his head, so that the spear struck only the golden helm and pierced it through, but scarcely grazed his head. Now the Wanderer sprang on the Sidonian captain, and smote him with the flat of his sword so that he fell senseless on the deck, and then he bound him hand and foot with cords as he himself had been bound, and made him fast to the iron bar in the hold. Next he gathered up the dead in his mighty arms, and set them against the bulwarks of the fore-deck — harvesting the fruits of War. Above the deck the man who had crept along the yard was hanging by his two hands which the spear had pinned together to the yard.

“Art thou there, friend?” cried the Wanderer, mocking him. “Hast thou chosen to stay with me rather than go with thy friends, or seek new service? Nay, then, as thou art so staunch, abide there and keep a good look-out for the river mouth and the market where thou shalt sell me for a great price.” So he spoke, but the man was already dead of pain and fear. Then the Wanderer unbuckled his golden armour, which clanged upon the deck, and drew fresh water from the hold to cleanse himself, for he was stained like a lion that has devoured an ox. Next, with a golden comb he combed his long dark curls, and he gathered his arrows out of the bodies of the dead, and out of the thwarts and the sides of the ship, cleansed them, and laid them back in the quiver. When all this was ended he put on his armour again; but strong as he was, he could not tear the spear from the helm without breaking the gold; so he snapped the shaft and put on the helmet with the point of the javelin still fixed firm in the crest, as Fate would have it so, and this was the beginning of his sorrows. Next he ate meat and bread, and drank wine, and poured forth some of the wine before his gods. Lastly he dragged up the heavy stone with which the ship was moored, a stone heavier far, they say, than two other men could lift. He took the tiller in his hand; the steady north wind, the Etesian wind, kept blowing in the sails, and he steered straight southward for the mouths of the Nile.

IV

THE BLOOD-RED SEA

A hard fight it had been and a long, and the Wanderer was weary. He took the tiller of the ship in his hand, and steered for the South and for the noonday sun, which was now at his highest in the heavens. But suddenly the bright light of the sky was darkened and the air was filled with the rush, and the murmur, and the winnowing of innumerable wings. It was as if all the birds that have their homes and seek their food in the great salt marsh of Cayster had risen from the South and had flown over sea in one hour, for the heaven was darkened with their flight, and loud with the call of cranes and the whistling cry of the wild ducks. So dark was the thick mass of flying fowl, that a flight of swans shone snowy against the black cloud of their wings. At the view of them the Wanderer caught his bow eagerly into his hand and set an arrow on the string, and, taking a careful aim at the white wedge of birds, he shot a wild swan through the breast as it swept high over the mast. Then, with all the speed of its rush, the wild white swan flashed down like lightning into the sea behind the ship. The Wanderer watched its fall, when, lo! the water where the dead swan fell splashed up as red as blood and all afoam! The long silver wings and snowy plumage floated on the surface flecked with blood-red stains, and the Wanderer marvelled as he bent over the bulwarks and gazed steadily upon the sea. Then he saw that the wide sea round the ship was covered, as far as the eye could reach, as it were with a blood-red scum. Hither and thither the red stain was tossed like foam, yet beneath, where the deep wave divided, the Wanderer saw that the streams of the sea were grey and green below the crimson dye. As he watched he saw, too, that the red froth was drifted always onward from the South and from the mouth of the River of Egypt, for behind the wake of the ship it was most red of all, though he had not marked it when the battle raged. But in front the colour grew thin, as if the stain that the river washed down was all but spent. In his heart the Wanderer thought, as any man must have deemed, that on the banks of the River of Egypt there had been some battle of great nations, and that the War God had raged furiously, wherefore the holy river as it ran forth stained all the sacred sea. Where war was, there was his home, no other home had he now, and all the more eagerly he steered right on to see what the Gods would send him. The flight of birds was over and past; it was two hours after noon, the light was high in the heaven, when, as he gazed, another shadow fell on him, for the sun in mid-heaven grew small, and red as blood. Slowly a mist rose up over it from the South, a mist that was thin but as black as night. Beyond, to the southward, there was a bank of cloud like a mountain wall, steep, and polished, and black, tipped along the ragged crest with fire, and opening ever and again with flashes of intolerable splendour, while the bases were scrawled over with lightning like a written scroll. Never had the Wanderer in all his voyaging on the sea and on the great River Oceanus that girdles the earth, and severs the dead from the living men — never had he beheld such a darkness. Presently he came as it were within the jaws of it, dark as a wolf’s mouth, so dark that he might not see the corpses on the deck, nor the mast, nor the dead man swinging from the yard, nor the captain of the Phoenicians who groaned aloud below, praying to his gods. But in the wake of the ship there was one break of clear blue sky on the horizon, in which the little isle where he had slain the Sidonians might be discerned far off, as bright and white as ivory.

Now, though he knew it not, the gates of his own world were closing behind the Wanderer for ever. To the North, whence he came, lay the clear sky, and the sunny capes and isles, and the airy mountains of the Argive lands, white with the temples of familiar Gods. But in face of him, to the South, whither he went, was a cloud of darkness and a land of darkness itself. There were things to befall more marvellous than are told in any tale; there was to be a war of the peoples, and of the Gods, the True Gods and the False, and there he should find the last embraces of Love, the False Love and the True.

Foreboding somewhat of the perils that lay in front, the Wanderer was tempted to shift his course and sail back to the sunlight. But he was one that had never turned his hand from the plough, nor his foot from the path, and he thought that now his path was fore-ordained. So he lashed the tiller with a rope, and groped his way with his hands along the deck till he reached the altar of the dwarf-gods, where the embers of the sacrifice still were glowing faintly. Then with his sword he cut some spear-shafts and broken arrows into white chips, and with them he filled a little brazier, and taking the seed of fire from the altar set light to it from beneath. Presently the wood blazed up through the noonday night, and the fire flickered and flared on the faces of the dead men that lay about the deck, rolling to larboard and to starboard, as the vessel lurched, and the flame shone red on the golden armour of the Wanderer.

Of all his voyages this was the strangest seafaring, he cruising alone, with a company of the dead, deep into a darkness without measure or bound, to a land that might not be descried. Strange gusts of sudden wind blew him hither and thither. The breeze would rise in a moment from any quarter, and die as suddenly as it rose, and another wind would chase it over the chopping seas. He knew not if he sailed South or North, he knew not how time passed, for there was no sight of the sun. It was night without a dawn. Yet his heart was glad, as if he had been a boy again, for the old sorrows were forgotten, so potent was the draught of the chalice of the Goddess, and so keen was the delight of battle.

"Endure, my heart," he cried, as often he had cried before, "a worse thing than this thou hast endured," and he caught up a lyre of the dead Sidonians, and sang:—

Though the light of the sun be hidden,
Though his race be run,
Though we sail in a sea forbidden
To the golden sun:
Though we wander alone, unknowing, —
Oh, heart of mine, —
The path of the strange sea-going,
Of the blood-red brine;
Yet endure! We shall not be shaken
By things worse than these;
We have 'scaped, when our friends were taken,
On the unsailed seas;
Worse deaths have we faced and fled from,
In the Cyclops' den,
When the floor of his cave ran red from
The blood of men;
Worse griefs have we known undaunted,
Worse fates have fled;
When the Isle that our long love haunted
Lay waste and dead!

So he was chanting when he descried, faint and far off, a red glow cast up along the darkness like sunset on the sky of the Under-world. For this light he steered, and soon he saw two tall pillars of flame blazing beside each other, with a narrow space of night between them. He helmed the ship towards these, and when he came near them they were like two mighty mountains of wood burning far into heaven, and each was lofty as the pyre that blazes over men slain in some red war, and each pile roared and flared above a steep crag of smooth black basalt, and between the burning mounds of fire lay the flame-flecked water of a haven.

The ship neared the haven and the Wanderer saw, moving like fireflies through the night, the lanterns in the prows of boats, and from one of the boats a sailor hailed him in the speech of the people of Egypt, asking him if he desired a pilot.

"Yea," he shouted. The boat drew near, and the pilot came aboard, a torch in his hand; but when his eyes fell on the dead men in the ship, and the horror hanging from the yard, and the captain bound to the iron bar, and above all, on the golden armour of the hero, and on the spear-point fast in his helm, and on his terrible face, he shrank back in dread, as if the God Osiris himself, in the Ship of Death, had reached the harbour. But the Wanderer bade him have no fear, telling him that he came with much wealth and with a great gift for the Pharaoh. The pilot, therefore, plucked up heart, and took the helm, and between the two great hills of blazing fire the vessel glided into the smooth waters of the River of Egypt, the flames glittering on the Wanderer's mail as he stood by the mast and chanted the Song of the Bow.

Then, by the counsel of the pilot, the vessel was steered up the river towards the Temple of Heracles in Tanis, where there is a sanctuary for strangers, and where no man may harm them. But first, the dead Sidonians were cast overboard into the great river, for the dead bodies of men are an abomination to the Egyptians. And as each body struck the water the Wanderer saw a hateful sight, for the face of the river was lashed into foam by the sudden leaping and rushing of huge four-footed fish, or so the Wanderer deemed them. The sound of the heavy plunging of the great water-beasts, as they darted forth on the prey, smiting at each other with their tails, and the gnashing of their jaws when they bit too eagerly, and only harmed the air, and the leap of a greedy sharp snout from the waves, even before the dead man cast from the ship had quite touched the water — these things were horrible to see and hear through the blackness and by the firelight. A River of Death it seemed, haunted by the horrors that are said to prey upon the souls and bodies of the Dead. For the first time the heart of the Wanderer died within him, at the horror of the darkness and of this dread river and of the water-beasts that dwelt within it. Then he remembered how the birds had fled in terror from this place, and he bethought him of the blood-red sea.

When the dead men were all cast overboard and the river was once more still, the Wanderer spoke, sick at heart, and inquired of the pilot why the sea had run so red, and whether war was in the land, and why there was night over all that country. The fellow answered that there was no war, but peace, yet the land was strangely plagued with frogs and locusts and lice in all their coasts, the sacred river Sihor running red for three whole days, and now, at last, for this the third day, darkness over all the world. But as to the cause of these curses the pilot knew nothing, being a plain man. Only the story went among the people that the Gods were angry with Khem (as they call Egypt), which indeed was easy to see, for those things could come only from the Gods. But why they were angered the pilot knew not, still it was commonly thought that the Divine Hathor, the Goddess of Love, was wroth because of the worship given in Tanis to one they called THE STRANGE HATHOR, a goddess or a woman of wonderful beauty, whose Temple was in Tanis. Concerning her the pilot said that many years ago, some thirty years, she had first appeared in the country, coming none knew whence, and had been worshipped in Tanis, and had again departed as mysteriously as she came. But now she had once more chosen to appear visible to men, strangely, and to dwell in her temple; and the men who beheld her could do nothing but worship her for her beauty. Whether she was a mortal woman or a goddess the pilot did not know, only he thought that she who dwells in Atarhechis, Hathor of Khem, the Queen of Love, was angry with the strange Hathor, and had sent the darkness and the plagues to punish them who worshipped her. The people of the seaboard also murmured that it would be well to pray the Strange Hathor to depart out of their coasts, if she were a goddess; and if she were a woman to stone her with stones. But the people of Tanis vowed that they would rather die, one and all, than do aught but adore the incomparable beauty of their strange Goddess. Others again, held that two wizards, leaders of certain slaves of a strange race, wanderers from the desert, settled in Tanis, whom they called the Apura, caused all these sorrows by art-magic. As if, forsooth, said the pilot, those barbarian slaves were more powerful than all the priests of Egypt. But for his part, the pilot knew nothing, only that if the Divine Hathor were angry with the people of Tanis it was hard that she must plague all the land of Khem.

So the pilot murmured, and his tale was none of the shortest; but even as he spoke the darkness grew less dark and the cloud lifted a little so that the shores of the river might be seen in a green light like the light of Hades, and presently the night was rolled up like a veil, and it was living noonday in the land of Khem. Then all the noise of life broke forth in one moment, the kine lowing, the wind swaying the feathery palms, the fish splashing in the stream, men crying to each other from the river banks, and the voice of multitudes of people in every red temple praising Ra, their great God, whose dwelling is the Sun. The Wanderer, too, praised his own Gods, and gave thanks to Apollo, and to Helios Hyperion, and to Aphrodite. And in the end the pilot brought the ship to the quay of a great city, and there a crew of oarsmen was hired, and they sped rejoicing in the sunlight, through a canal dug by the hands of men, to Tanis and the Sanctuary of Heracles, the Safety of Strangers. There the ship was moored, there the Wanderer rested, having a good welcome from the shaven priests of the temple.

V

MERIAMUN THE QUEEN

Strange news flies fast. It was not long before the Pharaoh, who then was with his Court in Tanis, the newly rebuilded city, heard how there had come to Khem a man like a god, wearing golden armour, and cruising alone in a ship of the dead. In these years the white barbarians of the sea and of the isles were wont to land in Egypt, to ravage the fields, carry women captive, and fly again in their ships. But not one of them had dared to sail in the armour of the Aquaiusha, as the Egyptians named the Achæans, right up the river to the city of Pharaoh. The King, therefore, was amazed at the story, and when he heard that the stranger had taken sanctuary in the Temple of Heracles, he sent instantly for his chief counsellor. This was his Master Builder, who bore a high title in the land, an ancient priest named Rei. He had served through the long reign of the King's father, the divine Rameses the Second, and he was beloved both of Meneptah and of Meriamun his Queen. Him the King charged to visit the Sanctuary and bring the stranger before him. So Rei called for his mule, and rode down to the Temple of Heracles beyond the walls.

When Rei came thither, a priest went before him and led him to the chamber where the warrior chanced to be eating the lily bread of the land, and drinking the wine of the Delta. He rose as Rei entered, and he was still clad in his golden armour, for as yet he had not any change of raiment. Beside him, on a bronze tripod, lay his helmet, the Achæan helmet, with its two horns and with the bronze spear-point still fast in the gold.

The eyes of Rei the Priest fell on the helmet, and he gazed so strangely at it that he scarcely heard the Wanderer's salutation. At length he answered, courteously, but always his eyes wandered back to the broken spear-point.

“Is this thine, my son?” he asked, taking it in his hand, while his voice trembled.

“It is my own,” said the Wanderer, “though the spear-point in it was lent me of late, in return for arrows not a few and certain sword-strokes,” and he smiled.

The ancient priest bade the Temple servants retire, and as they went they heard him murmuring a prayer.

“The Dead spoke truth,” he muttered, still gazing from the helmet in his hand to the Wanderer; “ay, the Dead speak seldom, but they never lie.”

“My son, thou hast eaten and drunk,” then said Rei the Priest and Master Builder, “and may an old man ask whence thou camest, where is thy native city, and who are thy parents?”

“I come from Alybas,” answered the Wanderer, for his own name was too widely known, and he loved an artful tale. “I come from Alybas; I am the son of Apheidas, son of Polypemon, and my own name is Eperitus.”

“And wherefore comest thou here alone in a ship of dead men, and with more treasure than a king’s ransom?”

“It was men of Sidon who laboured and died for all that cargo,” said the Wanderer; “they voyaged far for it, and toiled hard, but they lost it in an hour. For they were not content with what they had, but made me a prisoner as I lay asleep on the coast of Crete. But the Gods gave me the upper hand of them, and I bring their captain, and much white metal and many swords and cups and beautiful woven stuffs, as a gift to your King. And for thy courtesy, come with me, and choose a gift for thyself.”

Then he led the old man to the treasure-chambers of the Temple, which was rich in the offerings of many travellers, gold and turquoise and frankincense from Sinai and Punt, great horns of carved ivory from the unknown East and South; bowls and baths of silver from the Khita, who were the allies of Egypt. But amidst all the wealth, the stranger’s cargo made a goodly show, and the old priest’s eyes glittered as he looked at it.

“Take thy choice, I pray thee,” said the Wanderer, “the spoils of foemen are the share of friends.”

The priest would have refused, but the Wanderer saw that he looked ever at a bowl of transparent amber, from the far-off Northern seas, that was embossed with curious figures of men and gods, and huge fishes, such as are unknown in the Midland waters. The Wanderer put it into the hands of Rei.

“Thou shalt keep this,” he said, “and pledge me in wine from it when I am gone, in memory of a friend and a guest.”

Rei took the bowl, and thanked him, holding it up to the light to admire the golden colour.

“We are always children,” he said, smiling gravely. “See an old child whom thou hast made happy with a toy. But we are men too soon again; the King bids thee come with me before him. And, my son, if thou wouldst please me more than by any gift, I pray thee pluck that spear-head from thy helmet before thou comest into the presence of the Queen.”

“Pardon me,” said the Wanderer. “I would not harm my helmet by tearing it roughly out, and I have no smith’s tools here. The spear-point, my father, is a witness to the truth of my tale, and for one day more, or two, I must wear it.”

Rei sighed, bowed his head, folded his hands, and prayed to his God Amen, saying:

“O Amen, in whose hand is the end of a matter, lighten the burden of these sorrows, and let the vision be easy of accomplishment, and I pray thee, O Amen, let thy hand be light on thy daughter Meriamun, the Lady of Khem.”

Then the old man led the Wanderer out, and bade the priests make ready a chariot for him; and so they went through Tanis to the Court of Meneptah. Behind them followed the priests, carrying gifts that the Wanderer had chosen from the treasures of the Sidonians, and the miserable captain of the Sidonians was dragged along after them, bound to the hinder part of a chariot. Through the gazing crowd they all passed on to the Hall of Audience, where, between the great pillars, sat Pharaoh on his golden throne. Beside him, at his right hand, was Meriamun, the beautiful Queen, who looked at the priests with weary eyes, as if at a matter in which she had no concern. They came in and beat the earth with their brows before the King. First came the officers, leading the captain of the Sidonians for a gift to Pharaoh, and the King smiled graciously and accepted the slave.

Then came others, bearing the cups of gold fashioned like the heads of lions and rams, and the swords with pictures of wars and huntings echoed on their blades in many-coloured gold, and the necklets of amber from the North, which the Wanderer had chosen as gifts for Pharaoh’s Queen and Pharaoh. He had silks, too, embroidered in gold, and needlework of Sidonian women, and all these the Queen Meriamun touched to show her acceptance of them, and smiled graciously and wearily. But the covetous Sidonian groaned, when he saw his wealth departing from him, the gains for which he had hazarded his life in unsailed seas. Lastly, Pharaoh bade them lead the Wanderer in before his presence, and he came unhelmeted, in all his splendour, the goodliest man that had ever been seen in Khem. He was of no great height, but very great of girth, and of strength unmatched, and with the face of one who had seen what few have seen and lived. The beauty of youth was gone from him, but his face had the comeliness of a warrior tried on sea and land; the eyes were of a valour invincible, and no woman could see him but she longed to be his love.

As he entered murmurs of amazement passed over all the company, and all eyes were fixed on him, save only the weary and wandering eyes of the listless Meriamun. But when she chanced to lift her face, and gaze on him, they who watch the looks of kings and queens saw her turn grey as the dead, and clutch with her hand at her side. Pharaoh himself saw this though he was not quick to mark what passed, and he asked her if anything ailed her, but she answered: —

“Nay, only methinks the air is sick with heat and perfume. Greet thou this stranger." But beneath her robe her fingers were fretting all the while at the golden fringes of her throne.

"Welcome, thou Wanderer," cried Pharaoh, in a deep and heavy voice, "welcome! By what name art thou named, and where dwell thy people, and what is thy native land?"

Bowing low before Pharaoh, the Wanderer answered, with a feigned tale, that his name was Eperitus of Alybas, the son of Apheidas. The rest of the story, and how he had been taken by the Sidonians, and how he had smitten them on the seas, he told as he had told it to Rei. And he displayed his helmet with the spear-point fast in it. But when she saw this Meriamun rose to her feet as if she would be gone, and then fell back into her seat even paler than before.

"The Queen, help the Queen, she faints," cried Rei the Priest, whose eyes had never left her face. One of her ladies, a beautiful woman, ran to her, knelt before her, and chafed her hands, till she came to herself, and sat up with angry eyes.

"Let be!" she said, "and let the slave who tends the incense be beaten on the feet. Nay, I will remain here, I will not to my chamber. Let be!" and her lady drew back afraid.

Then Pharaoh bade men lead the Sidonian out, and slay him in the market-place for his treachery; but the man, whose name was Kurri, threw himself at the feet of the Wanderer, praying for his life. The Wanderer was merciful, when the rage of battle was over, and his blood was cool.

"A boon, O Pharaoh Meneptah," he cried. "Spare me this man! He saved my own life when the crew would have cast me overboard. Let me pay my debt."

"Let him be spared, as thou wilt have it so," spoke Pharaoh, "but revenge dogs the feet of foolish mercy, and many debts are paid ere all is done."

Thus it chanced that Kurri was given to Meriamun to be her jeweller and to work for her in gold and silver. To the Wanderer was allotted a chamber in the Royal Palace, for the Pharaoh trusted that he would be a leader of his Guard, and took great pleasure in his beauty and his strength.

As he left the Hall of Audience with Rei, the Queen Meriamun lifted her eyes again, and looked on him long, and her ivory face flushed rosy, like the ivory that the Sidonians dye red for the trappings of the horses of kings. But the Wanderer marked both the sudden fear and the blush of Meriamun, and, beautiful as she was, he liked it ill, and his heart foreboded evil. When he was alone with Rei, therefore, he spoke to him of this, and prayed the old man to tell him if he could guess at all the meaning of the Queen.

"For to me," he said, "it was as if the Lady knew my face, and even as if she feared it; but I never saw her like in all my wanderings. Beautiful she is, and yet — but it is ill speaking in their own land of kings and queens!"

At first, when the Wanderer spoke thus, Rei put it by, smiling. But the Wanderer, seeing that he was troubled, and remembering how he had prayed him to pluck the spear-point from his helmet, pressed him hard with questions. Thus, partly out of weariness, and partly for love of him, and also because a secret had long been burning in his heart, the old man took the Wanderer into his own room in the Palace, and there he told him all the story of Meriamun the Queen.

VI

THE STORY OF MERIAMUN

Rei, the Priest of Amen, the Master Builder, began his story unwillingly enough, and slowly, but soon he took pleasure in telling it as old men do, and in sharing the burden of a secret.

“The Queen is fair,” he said; “thou hast seen no fairer in all thy voyagings?”

“She is fair indeed,” answered the Wanderer. “I pray that she be well-mated and happy on her throne?”

“That is what I will tell thee of, though my life may be the price of the tale,” said Rei. “But a lighter heart is well worth an old man’s cheap risk, and thou may’st help me and her, when thou knowest all. Pharaoh Meneptah, her lord, the King, is the son of the divine Rameses, the ever-living Pharaoh, child of the Sun, who dwelleth in Osiris.”

“Thou meanest that he is dead?” asked the Wanderer.

“He dwelleth with Osiris,” said the Priest, “and the Queen Meriamun was his daughter by another bed.”

“A brother wed a sister!” exclaimed the Wanderer.

“It is the custom of our Royal House, from the days of the Timeless Kings, the children of Horus. An old custom.”

“The ways of his hosts are good in the eyes of a stranger,” said the Wanderer, courteously.

“It is an old custom, and a sacred,” said Rei, “but women, the custom-makers, are often custom-breakers. And of all women, Meriamun least loves to be obedient, even to the dead. And yet she has obeyed, and it came about thus. Her brother Meneptah — who now is Pharaoh — the Prince of Kush while her divine father lived, had many half-sisters, but Meriamun was the fairest of them all. She is beautiful, a Moon-child the common people called her, and wise, and she does not know the face of fear. And thus it chanced that she learned, what even our Royal women rarely learn, all the ancient secret wisdom of this ancient land. Except Queen Taia of old, no woman has known what Meriamun knows, what I have taught her — I and another counsellor.”

He paused here, and his mind seemed to turn on unhappy things.

“I have taught her from childhood,” he went on— “would that I had been her only familiar — and, after her divine father and mother, she loved me more than any, for she loved few. But of all whom she did not love she loved her Royal brother least. He is slow of speech, and she is quick. She is fearless and he has no heart for war. From her childhood she scorned him, mocked him, and mastered him with her tongue. She even learned to excel him in the chariot races — therefore it was that the King his father made him but a General of the Foot Soldiers — and in guessing riddles, which our people love, she delighted to conquer him. The victory was easy enough, for the divine Prince is heavy-witted; but Meriamun was never tired of girding at him. Plainly, even as a little child she grudged that he should come to wield the scourge of power, and wear the double crown, while she should live in idleness, and hunger for command."

"It is strange, then, that of all his sisters, if one must be Queen, he should have chosen her," said the Wanderer.

"Strange, and it happened strangely. The Prince's father, the divine Rameses, had willed the marriage. The Prince hated it no less than Meriamun, but the will of a father is the will of the Gods. In one sport the divine Prince excelled, in the Game of Pieces, an old game in Khem. It is no pastime for women, but even at this Meriamun was determined to master her brother. She bade me carve her a new set of the pieces fashioned with the heads of cats, and shaped from the hard wood of Azebi. I carved them with my own hands, and night by night she played with me, who have some name for skill at the sport.

Cyprus.

"One sunset it chanced that her brother came in from hunting the lion in the Libyan hills. He was in an evil humour, for he had found no lions, and he caused the huntsmen to be stretched out, and beaten with rods. Then he called for wine, and drank deep at the Palace gate, and the deeper he drank the darker grew his humour.

"He was going to his own Court in the Palace, striking with a whip at his hounds, when he chanced to turn and see Meriamun. She was sitting where those three great palm-trees are, and was playing at pieces with me in the cool of the day. There she sat in the shadow, clad in white and purple, and with the red gold of the snake of royalty in the blackness of her hair. There she sat as beautiful as the Hathor, the Queen of Love; or as the Lady Isis when she played at pieces in Amenti with the ancient King. Nay, an old man may say it, there never was but one woman more fair than Meriamun, if a woman she be, she whom our people call the *Strange Hathor*."

Now the Wanderer bethought him of the tale of the pilot, but he said nothing, and Rei went on.

"The Prince saw her, and his anger sought for something new to break itself on. Up he came, and I rose before him, and bowed myself. But Meriamun fell indolently back in her chair of ivory, and with a sweep of her slim hand she disordered the pieces, and bade her waiting woman, the lady Hataska, gather up the board, and carry all away. But Hataska’s eyes were secretly watching the Prince.

“‘Greeting, Princess, our Royal sister,’ said Meneptah. ‘What art thou doing with these?’ and he pointed with his chariot whip at the cat-headed pieces. ‘This is no woman’s game, these pieces are not soft hearts of men to be moved on the board by love. This game needs wit! Get thee to thy broidery, for there thou may’st excel.’

“‘Greeting, Prince, our Royal brother,’ said Meriamun. ‘I laugh to hear thee speak of a game that needs wit. Thy hunting has not prospered, so get thee to the banquet board, for there, I hear, the Gods have granted thee to excel.’

“‘It is little to say,’ answered the Prince, throwing himself into a chair whence I had risen, ‘it is little to say, but at the game of pieces I have enough wit to give thee a temple, a priest and five bowmen, and yet win,’ — for these, O Wanderer, are the names of some of the pieces.

“‘I take the challenge,’ cried Meriamun, for now she had brought him where she wanted; ‘but I will take no odds. Here is my wager. I will play thee three games, and stake the sacred circlet upon my brow, against the Royal uraeus on thine, and the winner shall wear both.’

“‘Nay, nay, Lady,’ I was bold to say, ‘this were too high a stake.’

“‘High or low, I accept the wager,’ answered the Prince. ‘This sister of mine has mocked me too long. She shall find that her woman’s wit cannot match me at my own game, and that my father’s son, the Royal Prince of Kush and the Pharaoh who shall be, is more than the equal of a girl. I hold thy wage, Meriamun!’

“‘Go then, Prince,’ she cried, ‘and after sunset meet me in my antechamber. Bring a scribe to score the games; Rei shall be the judge, and hold the stakes. But beware of the golden Cup of Pasht! Drain it not to-night, lest I win a love-game, though we do not play for love!’

“The Prince went scowling away, and Meriamun laughed, but I foresaw mischief. The stakes were too high, the match was too strange, but Meriamun would not listen to me, for she was very wilful.

“The sun fell, and two hours after the Royal Prince of Kush came with his scribe, and found Meriamun with the board of squares before her, in her antechamber.

“He sat down without a word, then he asked, who should first take the field.

“‘Wait,’ she said, ‘first let us set the stakes,’ and lifting from her brow the golden snake of royalty, she shook her soft hair loose, and gave the coronet to me. ‘If I lose,’ she said, ‘never may I wear the uraeus crown.’

“‘That shalt thou never while I draw breath,’ answered the Prince, as he too lifted the symbol of his royalty from his head and gave it to me. There was a difference between the circlets, the coronet of Meriamun was crowned with one crested snake, that of the divine Prince was crowned with twain.

“‘Ay, Meneptah,’ she said, ‘but perchance Osiris, God of the Dead, waits thee, for surely he loves those too great and good for earth. Take thou the field and to the play.’ At her words of evil omen, he frowned. But he took the field and readily, for he knew the game well.

“She moved in answer heedlessly enough, and afterwards she played at random and carelessly, pushing the pieces about with little skill. And so he won this first game quickly, and crying, ‘*Pharaoh is dead*,’ swept the pieces from the board. ‘See how I better thee,’ he went on in mockery. ‘Thine is a woman’s game; all attack and no defence.’

“‘Boast not yet, Meneptah,’ she said. ‘There are still two sets to play. See, the board is set and I take the field.’

“This time the game went differently, for the Prince could scarce make a prisoner of a single piece save of one temple and two bowmen only, and presently it was the turn of Meriamun to cry ‘*Pharaoh is dead,*’ and to sweep the pieces from the board. This time Meneptah did not boast but scowled, while I set the board and the scribe wrote down the game upon his tablets. Now it was the Prince’s turn to take the field.

“‘In the name of holy Thoth,’ he cried, ‘to whom I vow great gifts of victory.’

“‘In the name of holy Pasht,’ she made answer, ‘to whom I make daily prayer.’ For, being a maid, she swore by the Goddess of Chastity, and being Meriamun, by the Goddess of Vengeance.

“‘’Tis fitting thou should’st vow by her of the Cat’s Head,’ he said, sneering.

“‘Yes; very fitting,’ she answered, ‘for perchance she’ll lend me her claws. Play thou, Prince Meneptah.’

“And he played, and so well that for a while the game went against her. But at length, when they had struggled long, and Meriamun had lost the most of her pieces, a light came into her face as though she had found what she sought. And while the Prince called for wine and drank, she lay back in her chair and looked upon the board. Then she moved so shrewdly and upon so deep a plan that he fell into the trap that she had laid for him, and could never escape. In vain he vowed gifts to the holy Thoth, and promised such a temple as there was none in Khem.

“‘Thoth hears thee not; he is the God of lettered men,’ said Meriamun, mocking him. Then he cursed and drank more wine.

"'Fools seek wit in wine, but only wise men find it,' quoth she again. 'Behold, Royal brother, *Pharaoh is dead*, and I have won the match, and beaten thee at thine own game. Rei, my servant, give me that circlet; nay, not my own, the double one, which the divine Prince wagered. So set it on my brow, for it is mine, Meneptah. In this, as in all things else, I have conquered thee.'

"And she rose, and standing full in the light of the lamps, the Royal uraeus on her brow, she mocked him, bidding him come do homage to her who had won his crown, and stretching forth her small hand for him to kiss it. And so wondrous was her beauty that the divine Prince of Kush ceased to call upon the evil Gods because of his ill fortune, and stood gazing on her.

"'By Ptah, but thou art fair,' he cried, 'and I pardon my father at last for willing thee to be my Queen!'

"'But I will never pardon him,' said Meriamun.

"Now the Prince had drunk much wine.

"'Thou shalt be my Queen,' he said, 'and for earnest I will kiss thee. This, at the least, being the strongest, I can do.' And ere she could escape him, he passed his arm about her and seized her by the girdle, and kissed her on the lips and let her go.

"Meriamun grew white as the dead. By her side there hung a dagger. Swiftly she drew it, and swiftly struck at his heart, so that had he not shrunk from the steel surely he had been slain; and she cried as she struck, 'Thus, Prince, I pay thy kisses back.'

"But as it chanced, she only pierced his arm, and before she could strike again I had seized her by the hand.

"'Thou serpent,' said the Prince, pale with rage and fear. 'I tell thee I will kiss thee yet, whether thou wilt or not, and thou shalt pay for this.'

"But she laughed softly now that her anger was spent, and I led him forth to seek a physician, who should bind up his wound. And when he was gone, I returned, and spoke to her, wringing my hands.

"'Oh, Royal Lady, what hast thou done? Thou knowest well that thy divine father destines thee to wed the Prince of Kush whom but now thou didst smite so fiercely.'

"'Nay, Rei, I will none of him — the dull clod, who is called the son of Pharaoh. Moreover, he is my half-brother, and it is not meet that I should wed my brother. For nature cries aloud against the custom of the land.'

"'Nevertheless, Lady, it *is* the custom of thy Royal house, and thy father's will. Thus the Gods, thine ancestors, were wed; Isis to Osiris. Thus great Thothmes and Amenemhat did and decreed, and all their forefathers and all their seed. Oh, bethink thee — I speak it for thine ear, for I love thee as mine own daughter — bethink thee, for thou canst not escape, that Pharaoh’s bed is the step to Pharaoh’s throne. Thou lovest power; here is the gate of power, and mayhap upon a time the master of the gate shall be gone and thou shalt sit in the gate alone.’

“‘Ah, Rei, now thou speakest like the counsellor of those who would be kings. Oh, did I not hate him with this hatred! And yet can I rule him. Why, ’twas no chance game that we played this night: the future lay upon the board. See, his diadem is upon my brow! At first he won, for I chose that he should win. Well, so mayhap it shall be; mayhap I shall give myself to him — hating him the while. And then the next game; that shall be for life and love and all things dear, and I shall win it, and mine shall be the uraeus crest, and mine shall be the double crown of ancient Khem, and I shall rule like Hatshepu, the great Queen of old, for I am strong, and to the strong is victory.’

“‘Yes,’ I made answer, ‘but, Lady, see thou that the Gods turn not thy strength to weakness; thou art too passionate to be all strength, and in a woman’s heart passion is the door by which King Folly enters. To-day thou hatest, beware, lest to-morrow thou should’st love.’

“‘Love,’ she said, gazing scornfully; ‘Meriamun loves not till she find a man worthy of her love.’

“‘Ay, and then —— ?’

“‘And then she loves to all destruction, and woe to them who cross her path. Rei, farewell.’

“Then suddenly she spoke to me in another tongue, that few know save her and me, and that none can read save her and me, a dead tongue of a dead people, the people of that ancient City of the Rock, whence all our fathers came.

> Probably the mysterious and indecipherable ancient books, which were occasionally excavated in old Egypt, were written in this dead language of a more ancient and now forgotten people. Such was the book discovered at Coptos, in the sanctuary there, by a priest of the Goddess. “The whole earth was dark, but the moon shone all about the Book.” A scribe of the period of the Ramessids mentions another indecipherable ancient writing. “Thou tellest me thou understandest no word of it, good or bad. There is, as it were, a wall about it that none may climb. Thou art instructed, yet thou knowest it not; this makes me afraid.” Birch, *Zeitschrift*, 1871, pp. 61-64. *Papyrus Anastasi* I, pl. X. 1. 8, pl. X. 1. 4. Maspero, *Hist. Anc.*, pp. 66-67.

“‘I go,’ she said, and I trembled as she spoke, for no man speaks in this language when he has any good thought in his heart. ‘I go to seek the counsel of That thou knowest,’ and she touched the golden snake which she had won.

“Then I threw myself on the earth at her feet, and clasped her knees, crying, ‘My daughter, my daughter, sin not this great sin. Nay, for all the kingdom of the world, wake not That which sleepeth, nor warm again into life That which is a-cold.’

“But she only nodded, and put me from her,” — and the old man’s face grew pale as he spoke.

“What meant she?” said the Wanderer.

“Nay, wake not *thou* That which sleepeth, Wanderer,” he said, at length. “My tongue is sealed. I tell thee more that I would tell another. Do not ask, — but hark! They come again! Now may Ra and Pasht and Amen curse them; may the red swine’s mouth of Set gnaw upon them in Amenti; may the Fish of Sebek flesh his teeth of stone in them for ever, and feed and feed again!”

“Why dost thou curse thus, Rei, and who are they that go by?” said the Wanderer. “I hear their tramping and their song.”

Indeed there came a light noise of many shuffling feet, pattering outside the Palace wall, and the words of a song rang out triumphantly:

The Lord our God He doth sign and wonder,
Tokens He shows in the land of Khem,
He hath shattered the pride of the Kings asunder
And casteth His shoe o’er the Gods of them!
He hath brought forth frogs in their holy places,
He hath sprinkled the dust upon crown and hem,
He hath hated their kings and hath darkened their faces;
Wonders He works in the land of Khem.

“These are the accursed blaspheming conjurors and slaves, the Apura,” said Rei, as the music and the tramping died away. “Their magic is greater than the lore even of us who are instructed, for their leader was one of ourselves, a shaven priest, and knows our wisdom. Never do they march and sing thus but evil comes of it. Ere day dawn we shall have news of them. May the Gods destroy them, they are gone for the hour. It were well if Meriamun the Queen would let them go for ever, as they desire, to their death in the desert, but she hardens the King’s heart.”

VII

THE QUEEN’S VISION

There was silence without at last; the clamour and the tread of the Apura were hushed in the distance, dying far away, and Rei grew calm, when he heard no longer the wild song, and the clashing of the timbrels.

“I must tell thee, Eperitus,” he said, “how the matter ended between the divine Prince and Meriamun. She bowed her pride before her father and her brother: her father’s will was hers; she seemed to let her secret sleep, and she set her own price on her hand. In everything she must be the equal of Pharaoh — that was her price; and in all the temples and all the cities she was to be solemnly proclaimed joint heir with him of the Upper and Lower Land. The bargain was struck and the price was paid. After that night over the game of pieces Meriamun was changed. Thenceforth she did not mock at the Prince, she made herself gentle and submissive to his will.

“So the time drew on till at length in the beginning of the rising of the waters came the day of her bridal. With a mighty pomp was Pharaoh’s daughter wedded to Pharaoh’s son. But her hand was cold as she stood at the altar, cold as the hand of one who sleeps in Osiris. Proudly and coldly she sat in the golden chariot passing in and out the great gates of Tanis. Only when she listened and heard the acclaiming thousands cry *Meriamun* so loudly that the cry of *Meneptah* was lost in the echoes of her name — then only did she smile.

“Cold, too, she sat in her white robes at the feast that Pharaoh made, and she never looked at the husband by her side, though he looked kindly on her.

“The feast was long, but it ended at last, and then came the music and the singers, but Meriamun, making excuse, rose and went out, attended by her ladies. And I also, weary and sad at heart, passed thence to my own chamber and busied myself with the instruments of my art, for, stranger, I build the houses of gods and kings.

“Presently, as I sat, there came a knocking at the door, and a woman entered wrapped in a heavy cloak. She put aside the cloak, and before me was Meriamun in all her bridal robes.

“‘Heed me not, Rei,’ she said, ‘I am yet free for an hour; and I would watch thee at thy labour. Nay, it is my humour; gainsay me not, for I love well to look on that wrinkled face of thine, scored by the cunning chisel of thy knowledge and thy years. So from a child have I watched thee tracing the shapes of mighty temples that shall endure when ourselves, and perchance the very Gods we worship, have long since ceased to be. Ah, Rei, thou wise man, thine is the better part, for thou buildest in cold enduring stone and attirest thy walls as thy fancy bids thee. But I — I build in the dust of human hearts, and my will is written in their dust. When I am dead, raise me a tomb more beautiful than ever has been known, and write upon the portal, *Here, in the last temple of her pride, dwells that tired builder, Meriamun, the Queen*.'

"Thus she talked wildly in words with little reason.

"'Nay, speak not so,' I said, 'for is it not thy bridal night? What dost thou here at such a time?'

"'What do I here? Surely I come to be a child again! See, Rei, in all wide Khem there is no woman so shamed, so lost, so utterly undone as is to-night the Royal Meriamun, whom thou lovest. I am lower than she who plies the street for bread, for the loftier the spirit the greater is the fall. I am sold into shame, and power is my price. Oh, cursed be the fate of woman who only by her beauty can be great. Oh, cursed be that ancient Counsellor thou wottest of, and cursed be I who wakened That which slept, and warmed That which was a-cold in my breath and in my breast! And cursed be this sin to which he led me! Spurn me, Rei; strike me on the cheek, spit upon me, on Meriamun, the Royal harlot who sells herself to win a crown. Oh, I hate him, hate him, and I will pay him in shame for shame — him, the clown in king's attire. See here,' — and from her robe she drew a white flower that was known to her and me— 'twice to-day have I been minded with this deadly blossom to make an end of me, and of all my shame, and all my empty greed of glory. But this thought has held my hand: I, Meriamun, will live to look across his grave and break his images, and beat out the writings of his name from every temple wall in Khem, as they beat out the hated name of Hatshepu. I — —' and suddenly she burst into a rain of tears; she who was not wont to weep.

"'Nay, touch me not,' she said. 'They were but tears of anger. Meriamun is mistress of her Fate, not Fate of Meriamun. And now, my lord awaits me, and I must be gone. Kiss me on the brow, old friend, whilst yet I am the Meriamun thou knewest, and then kiss me no more for ever. At the least this is well for thee, for when Meriamun is Queen of Khem thou shalt be first in all the land, and stand on the footsteps of my throne. Farewell.' And she gathered up her raiment and cast her white flower of death in the flame of the brazier, and was gone, leaving me yet sadder at heart. For now I knew that she was not as other women are, but greater for good or evil.

"On the morrow night I sat again at my task, and again there came a knocking at the door, and again a woman entered and threw aside her wrappings. It was Meriamun. She was pale and stern, and as I rose she waved me back.

"'Has, then, the Prince — thy husband — —' I stammered.

"'Speak not to me of the Prince, Rei, my servant,' she made answer. 'Yesterday I spoke to thee wildly, my mind was overwrought; let it be forgotten — a wife am I, a happy wife'; and she smiled so strangely that I shrunk back from her.

"'Now to my errand. I have dreamed a dream, a troublous dream, and thou art wise and instructed, therefore I pray thee interpret my vision. I slept and dreamed of a man, and in my dream I loved him more than I can tell. For my heart beat to his heart, and in the light of him I lived, and all my soul was his, and I knew that I loved him for ever. And Pharaoh was my husband; but, in my dream, I loved him not. Now there came a woman rising out of the sea, more beautiful than I, with a beauty fairer and more changeful than the dawn upon the mountains; and she, too, loved this godlike man, and he loved her. Then we strove together for his love, matching beauty against beauty, and wit against wit, and magic against magic. Now one conquered, and now the other; but in the end the victory was mine, and I went arrayed as for a marriage-bed — and I clasped a corpse.

"'I woke, and again I slept, and saw myself wearing another garb, and speaking another tongue. Before me was the man I loved, and there, too, was the woman, wrapped about with beauty, and I was changed, and yet I was the very Meriamun thou seest. And once more we struggled for the mastery and for this man's love, and in that day she conquered me.

"'I slept, and again I woke, and in another land than Khem — a strange land, and yet methought I knew it from long ago. There I dwelt among the graves, and dark faces were about me, and I wore That thou knowest for a girdle. And the tombs of the rock wherein we dwelt were scored with the writings of a dead tongue — the tongue of that land whence our fathers came. We were all changed, yet the same, and once more the woman and I struggled for the mastery, and though I seemed to conquer, yet a sea of fire came over me, and I woke and I slept again.

"'Then confusion was piled upon confusion, nor can my memory hold all that came to pass. For this game played itself afresh in lands, and lives, and tongues without number. Only the last bout and the winner were not revealed to me.

"'And in my dream I cried aloud to the protecting Gods to escape out of the dream, and I sought for light that I might see whence these things were. Then, as in a vision, the Past opened up its gates. It seemed that upon a time, thousand, thousand ages agone, I and this man of my dream had arisen from nothingness and looked in each other’s eyes, and loved with a love unspeakable, and vowed a vow that shall endure from time to time and world to world. For we were not mortal then, but partook of the nature of the Gods, being more fair and great than any of human kind, and our happiness was the happiness of Heaven. But in our great joy we hearkened to the Voice of the That thou knowest, of that Thing, Rei, with which, against thy counsel, I have but lately dealt. The kiss of our love awakened That which slept, the fire of our love warmed That which was a-cold! We defied the holy Gods, worshipping them not, but rather each the other, for we knew that as the Gods we were eternal. And the Gods were angered against us and drew us up into their presence. And while we trembled they spake as with a voice:

“‘“Ye twain who are one life, each completing each, because with your kisses ye have wakened That which slept, and with the fire of your love have warmed That which was a-cold: because ye have forgotten them that gave you life and love and joy: hearken to your Doom!

“‘“From Two be ye made *Three*, and through all Time strive ye to be Twain again. Pass from this Holy Place down to the Hell of Earth, and though ye be immortal put on the garments of mortality. Pass on from Life to Life, live and love and hate and seem to die: have acquaintance with every lot, and in your blind forgetfulness, being one and being equal, work each other’s woe according to the law of Earth, and for your love’s sake sin and be shamed, perish and re-arise, appear to conquer and be conquered, pursuing your threefold destiny, and, at the word of Fate, the unaltering circle meets, and the veil of blindness falls from your eyes, and, as a scroll, your folly is unrolled, and the hid purpose of your sorrow is accomplished and once more ye are Twain and One.”

“‘Then, as we trembled, clinging each to each, again the great Voice spoke:

“‘“Ye twain who are One — let That to which ye have hearkened divide you and enfold you! Be ye Three!”

“‘And as the Voice spoke I was torn with agony, and strength went out of me, and there, by him I loved, stood the woman of my dream crowned with every glory and adorned with the Star. And we were three. And between him and me, yet enfolding him and me, writhed that Thing thou wottest of. And he whom I loved turned to look upon the fair woman, wondering, and she smiled and stretched out her arm towards him as one who would take that which is her own, and Rei, in that hour, though it was but in a dream, I knew the mortal pain of jealousy, and awoke trembling. And now read thou this vision, Rei, thou who art learned in the interpretation of dreams and in the ways of sleep.’

“‘Oh, Lady,’ I made answer, ‘this thing is too high for me, I cannot interpret it; but where thou art, there may I be to help thee.’

"'I know thy love,' she said, 'but in thy words is little light. So — so — let it pass! It was but a dream, and if indeed it came from the Under World, why, it was from no helpful God, but rather from Set, the Tormentor; or from Pasht, the Terrible, who throws the creeping shadow of her doom upon the mirror of my sleep. For that which is decreed will surely come to pass! I am blown like the dust by the breath of Fate; now to rest upon the Temple's loftiest tops, now to be trodden underfoot of slaves, and now to be swallowed by the bitter deep, and in season thence rolled forth again. I love not this lord of mine, who shall be Pharaoh, and never may *he* come whom I shall love. 'Tis well that I love him not, for to love is to be a slave. When the heart is cold then the hand is strong, and I am fain to be the Queen leading Pharaoh by the beard, the first of all the ancient land of Khem; for I was not born to serve. Nay, while I may, I rule, awaiting the end of rule. Look forth, Rei, and see how the rays from Mother Isis' throne flood all the courts and all the city's streets and break in light upon the water's breast. So shall the Moon-child's flame flood all this land of Khem. What matters it, if ere the morn Isis must pass to her dominion of the Dead, and the voice of Meriamun be hushed within a sepulchre?'

"So she spoke and went thence, and on her face was no bride's smile, but rather such a gaze as that with which the great sphinx, Horemku, looks out across the desert sands."

"A strange Queen, Rei," said the Wanderer, as he paused, "but what have I to make in this tale of a bride and her mad dreams?"

"More than thou shalt desire," said Rei; "but let us come to the end, and thou shalt hear thy part in the Fate."

VIII

THE KA, THE BAI, AND THE KHOU

“The Divine Pharaoh Rameses died and was gathered to Osiris. With these hands I closed his coffin and set him in his splendid tomb, where he shall rest unharmed for ever till the day of the awakening. And Meriamun and Meneptah reigned in Khem. But to Pharaoh she was very cold, though he did her will in everything, and they had but one child, so that in a while he wearied of her loveliness.

“But hers was the master-mind, and she ruled Pharaoh as she ruled all else.

“For me, my lot was bettered; she talked much with me, and advanced me to great dignity, so that I was the first Master Builder in Khem, and Commander of the legion of Amen.

“Now it chanced that Meriamun made a feast, where she entertained Pharaoh and Hataska sat beside him. She was the first lady about the Queen’s person, a beautiful but insolent woman, who had gained Pharaoh’s favour for the hour. Now wine worked so with the King that he toyed openly with the lady Hataska’s hand, but Meriamun the Queen took no note, though Hataska, who had also drunk of the warm wine of the Lower Land, grew insolent, as was her wont. She quaffed deep from her cup of gold, and bade a slave bear it to the Queen, crying, ‘Pledge me, my sister.’

“The meaning of her message was plain to all who heard; this waiting lady openly declared herself wife to Pharaoh and an equal of the Queen. Now Meriamun cared nothing for Pharaoh’s love, but for power she did care, and she frowned, while a light shone in her dark eyes; yet she took the cup and touched it with her lips.

“Presently she lifted her own cup in turn and toyed with it, then made pretence to drink, and said softly to the King’s paramour, who had pledged her:

“‘Pledge me in answer, Hataska, my servant, for soon, methinks, thou shalt be greater than the Queen.’

“Now this foolish woman read her saying wrong, and took the golden cup from the eunuch who bore it.

“With a little nod to the Queen, and a wave of her slim hand, Hataska drank, and instantly, with a great cry, she fell dead across the board. Then, while all the company sat in terror, neither daring to be silent nor to speak, and while

Meriamun smiled scornfully on the dark head lying low among the roses on the board, Pharaoh leaped up, mad with wrath, and called to the guards to seize the Queen. But she waved them back, and, speaking in a slow, cold voice, she said:

"'Dare not to touch Khem's anointed Queen lest your fate be as *her* fate. For thee, Meneptah, forget not thy marriage oath. What, am I Queen, and shall thy wantons throw their insolence in my teeth and name me their sister? Not so, for if my eyes be blind yet my ears are open. Peace, she is rightly served — choose thou a lowlier mistress!'

"And Pharaoh made no answer, for he feared her with an ever-growing fear. But she, sinking back in her seat of state, played with the gold kepher on her breast, and watched them bear the body forth to the House of Osiris. One by one all the company made obeisance and passed thence, glad to be gone, till at the last there were left only Pharaoh and Meriamun the Queen, and myself — Rei the Priest — for all were much afraid. Then Pharaoh spoke, looking neither at her nor at me, and half in fear, half in anger.

"'Thou hateful woman, accursed be the day when first I looked upon thy beauty. Thou hast conquered me, but beware, for I am still Pharaoh and thy Lord. Cross my purpose once again, and, by Him who sleeps at Philæ, I will discrown thee and give thy body to the tormentors, and set thy soul loose to follow her whom thou hast slain.'

"Then Meriamun answered proudly:

"'Pharaoh, be warned: lift but one finger against my majesty and thou art doomed. Thou canst not slay me, but I can over-match thee, and I swear by the same oath! By Him who sleeps at Philæ, lift a hand against me, ay, harbour one thought of treachery, and thou diest. Not lightly can I be deceived, for I have messengers that thou canst not hear. Something, Royal Meneptah, do I know of the magic of that Queen Taia who was before me. Now listen — do this one thing and all shall be well. Go on thy path and leave me to follow mine. Queen I am, Queen I will remain, and in all matters of the State mine must be an equal voice though it is thine that speaks. And, for the rest, we are apart henceforth, for thou fearest me, and Meneptah, I love not thee, nor any man.'

"'As thou hast spoken, so be it,' quoth Pharaoh, for his heart sank, and his fear came back upon him. 'Evil was the day when first we met, and this is the price of my desire. Henceforth we are apart in bed and board, but in the council we are still one, for our ends are one. I know thy power, Meriamun, thou gifted of the evil Gods; thou needest not fear that I shall seek to slay thee, for a spear cast against the heavens returns on him who threw it. Rei, my servant, thou art witness to our oaths; hear now their undoing. Meriamun, the Queen of ancient Khem, thou art no more wife of mine. Farewell.'

“And he went heavily and stricken with fear.

“‘Nay,’ she said, gazing after him, ‘no more am I Meneptah’s wife, but still am I Khem’s dreaded Queen. Oh, thou old priest, I am aweary. See what a lot is mine, who have all things but love, and yet am sick of all! I longed for power, and power is mine, and what is power? It is a rod wherewith we beat the air that straightway closes on the stroke. Yes, I tire of my loveless days and of this dull round of common things. Oh, for one hour of love and in that hour to die! Oh that the future would lift its veil and disclose the face of time to be! Say, Rei! Wilt thou be bold and dare a deed?’ And she clasped me by the sleeve and whispered in my ear, in the dead tongue known to her and me— ‘Her I slew — thou sawest — —’

“‘Ay, Queen, I saw — what of her? ’Twas ill done.’

“‘Nay, ’twas rightly done and well done. But thou knowest she is not yet cold, nor for a while will be, and I have the art to drag her spirit back ere she be cold, from where she is, and to force knowledge from her lips — for being an Osiris all the future is open to her in this hour.’

“‘Nay, nay,’ I cried. ‘It is unholy — not lightly may we disturb the dead, lest the Guardian Gods be moved to anger.’

“‘Yet will I do it, Rei. If thou dost fear, come not. But I go. I am fain for knowledge, and thus only may I win it. If I die in the dread endeavour, write this of Meriamun the Queen: That in seeking the to-be — she found it!’

“‘Nay, Royal Lady,’ I answered, ‘thou shalt not go alone. I too have some skill in magic, and perchance can ward evil from thee. So, if indeed thou wilt dare this dreadful thing, behold now, as ever, I am thy servant.’

“‘It is well. See, now, the body will this night be laid in the sanctuary of the Temple of Osiris that is near the great gates, as is the custom, to await the coming of the embalmers. Come ere she be colder than my heart, come with me, Rei, to the house of the Lord of the Dead!’

“She passed to her chamber, wrapped herself about in a dark robe, and hurried with me to the Temple doors, where we were challenged by the guards.

“‘Who passes? In the name of the Holy Osiris speak.’

“‘Rei, the Master Builder and the anointed Priest, and with him another,’ I made answer. ‘Open.’

“‘Nay, I open not. There is one within who may not be wakened.’

“‘Who, then, is within?’

“‘She whom the Queen slew.’

“‘The Queen sends one who would look on her she slew.’

“Then the priest gazed on the hooded form beside me and started back, crying, ‘A token, noble Rei.’

“I held up the Royal signet, and, bowing, he opened. Being come within the Temple I lit the tapers that had been prepared. Then by their feeble light we passed through the outer hall till we came to the curtains that veil the sanctuary of the Holy Place, and here I quenched the tapers; for no fire must enter there, save that which burns upon the altar of the dead. But through the curtains came rays of light.

“‘Open!’ said Meriamun, and I opened, and hand in hand we passed in. On the altar that is in the place the flame burnt brightly. The chamber is not wide and great, for this is the smallest of the temples of Tanis, but yet so large that the light could not reach its walls nor pierce the overhanging gloom, and by much gazing scarcely could we discover the outline of the graven shapes of the Holy Gods that are upon the walls. But the light fell clear upon the great statue of the Osiris that was seated behind the altar fashioned in the black stone of Syene, wound about with the corpse-cloths, wearing on his head the crown of the Upper Land, and holding in his hands the crook of divinity and the awful scourge of punishment. The light shone all about the white and dreadful shape that was placed upon his holy knees, the naked shape of lost Hataska who this night had died at the hand of Meriamun. There she bowed her head against the sacred breast, her long hair streaming down on either side, her arms tied across her heart, and her eyes, whence the hues of life had scarcely faded, widely staring at the darkness of the shrine. For at Tanis to this day it is the custom for a night to place those of high birth or office who die suddenly upon the knees of the statue of Osiris.

“‘See,’ I said to the Queen, speaking low, for the weight of the haunted place sank into my heart, ‘see how she who scarce an hour ago was but a lovely wanton hath by thine act been clad in majesty greater than all the glory of the earth. Bethink thee, wilt thou dare indeed to summon back the spirit to the body whence thou hast set it free? Not easily, O Queen, may it be done for all thy magic, and if perchance she answereth thee, it may well be that the terror of her words shall utterly o’erwhelm us.’

“‘Nay,’ she made answer, ‘I am instructed. I fear not. I know by what name to call the Khou that hovers on the threshold of the Double Hall of Truth, and how to send it back to its own place. I fear not, but if perchance thou fearest, Rei, depart hence and leave me to the task alone.’

“‘Nay,’ I said. ‘I also am instructed, and I go not. But I say to thee that this is unholy.’

“Then Meriamun spoke no more — but lifting up her hands she held them heavenwards, and so for a while she stood, her face fixed, as was the face of dead Hataska. Then, as must be done, I drew the circle round us and round the altar and the statue of Osiris, and that which sat upon his knee. With my staff I drew it, and standing therein I said the holy words which should ward away the evil things that come near in such an hour.

"Now Meriamun threw a certain powder into the flame upon the altar. Thrice she threw the powder, and as she threw it a ball of flame rose from the altar and floated away, each time that she threw did the ball of fire rise; and this it was needful to do, for by fire only may the dead be manifest, and therefore was a globe of fire given to each of the three shapes that together make the threefold spirit of the dead. And when the three globes of fire had melted into air, passing over the head of the statue of Osiris, thrice did Meriamun cry aloud:

"'*Hataska! Hataska! Hataska!*

"'By the dreadful Name I summon thee.

"'I summon thee from the threshold of the Double Hall.

"'I summon thee from the Gates of Judgment.

"'I summon thee from the door of Doom.

"'By the link of life and death that is between thee and me, I bid thee come from where thou art and make answer to that which I shall ask of thee.'

"She ceased, but no answer came. Still the cold Osiris smiled, and still the body on his knee sat with open eyes gazing into nothingness.

"'Not thus easily,' I whispered, 'may this dreadful thing be done. Thou art instructed in the Word of Fear. If thou darest, let it pass thy lips, or let us be gone.'

"'Nay, it shall be spoken,' she said — and thus she wrought. Passing to the statue she hid her head within her cloak and with both hands grasped the feet of the slain Hataska.

"Seeing this I also crouched upon the floor and hid my face, for it is death to hear that Word with an uncovered face.

"Then in so soft a whisper that scarce had its breath stirred a feather on her lips, Meriamun spoke the Word of Fear which may not be written, whose sound has power to pass all space and open the ears of the dead who dwell in Amenti. Softly she said it, for in a shout of thunder it was caught up and echoed from her lips, and down the eternal halls it seemed to rush on the feet of storm and the wings of wind, so that the roof rocked and the deep foundations of the Temple quivered like a wind-stirred tree.

"'Unveil, ye mortals!' cried a dreadful voice, 'and look upon the sight of fear that ye have dared to summon.'

"And I rose and cast my cloak from about my face and gazed, then sank down in terror. For round about the circle that I had drawn pressed all the multitude of the dead; countless as the desert sands they pressed, gazing with awful eyes upon us twain. And the fire that was on the altar died away, but yet was there light, for it shone from those dead eyes, and in the eyes of lost Hataska there was light.

"And ever the faces changed, never for one beat of time did they cease to change. For as we gazed upon a face it would melt, even to the eyes, and round these same eyes again would gather but no more the same. And like the sloping sides of pyramids were the faces set about us from the ground to the Temple roof — and on us were fixed their glowing eyes.

"And I, Rei, being instructed, knew that to suffer myself to be overcome with terror was death, as it was death to pass without the circle. So in my heart I called upon Osiris, Lord of the Dead, to protect us, and even as I named the ineffable name, lo! all the thousand thousand faces bent themselves in adoration and then, turning, looked each upon the other even as though each spake to each, and changed, and swiftly changed.

"'Meriamun,' I said, gathering up my strength, 'fear not, but beware!'

"'Nay, wherefore should I fear,' she answered, 'because the veil of sense is torn, and for an hour we see those who are ever about our path and whose eyes watch our most secret thought continually? I fear not.' And she stepped boldly, even to the edge of the circle, and cried:

"'All hail, ye Sahus, spirits of the awful dead, among whom I also shall be numbered.'

"And as she came the changing faces shrunk away, leaving a space before her. And in the space there grew two arms, mighty and black, that stretched themselves towards her, until there was not the length of three grains of wheat betwixt the clutching fingers and her breast.

"But Meriamun only laughed and drew back a space.

"'Not so, thou Enemy,' she said, 'this circle thou may'st not break; it is too strong for thee. But to the work. Hataska, once again by the link of life and death I summon thee — and this time thou must come, thou who wast a wanton and now art "greater than the Queen."'

"And as she spoke, from the dead form of the woman on Osiris' knee there issued forth another form and stood before us, as a snake issues from its slough. And as was the dead Hataska so was this form, feature for feature, look for look, and limb for limb. But still the corpse rested upon Osiris' knee, for this was but the *Ka* that stood before us.

"And thus spoke the voice of Hataska in the lips of the Ka:

"'What wouldest thou with me who am no more of thy company, O thou by whose hand my body did perish? Why troublest thou me?'

"And Meriamun made answer: 'I would this of thee, that thou shouldest declare unto me the future, even in the presence of this great company. Speak, I command thee.’

“And the Ka said: ‘Nay, Meriamun, that I cannot do, for I am but the Ka — the Dweller in the Tomb, the guardian of what was Hataska whom thou didst slay, whom I must watch through all the days of death till resurrection is. Of the future I know naught; seek thou that which knows.’

“‘Stand thou on one side,’ quoth the Queen, and the Dweller in the Tomb obeyed.

“Then once more she called upon Hataska and there came a sound of rushing wings. And behold, on the head of the statue of Osiris sat a great bird, feathered as it were with gold. But the bird had the head of a woman, and the face was fashioned as the face of Hataska. And thus it spoke, that was the *Bai*:

“‘What wouldest thou with me, Meriamun, who am no more of thy company? Why dost thou draw me from the Under World, thou by whose hand my body did perish?’

“And Meriamun said: ‘This I would of thee, that thou shouldest declare unto me the future. Speak, I command thee.’

“And the Bai said: ‘Nay, Meriamun, that I cannot do. I am but the Bai of her who was Hataska, and I fly from Death to Life and Life to Death, till the hour of awakening is. Of the future I know naught; seek thou that which knows.’

“‘Rest thou where thou art,’ quoth the Queen, and there it rested, awful to see.

“Then once more Meriamun called upon Hataska, bidding her hear the summons where she was.

“And behold the eyes of the Dead One that was upon the knee of Osiris glowed, and glowed the eyes of the Dweller in the Tomb, and of the winged Messenger who sat above. And then there was a sound as the sound of wind, and from above, cleaving the darkness, descended a Tongue of Flame and rested on the brow of the dead Hataska. And the eyes of all the thousand thousand spirits turned and gazed upon the Tongue of Flame. And then dead Hataska spoke — though her lips moved not, yet she spoke. And this she said:

“‘What wouldest thou with me, Meriamun, who am no more of thy company? Why dost thou dare to trouble me, thou by whose hand my body did perish, drawing me from the threshold of the Double Hall of Truth, back to the Over World?’

“And Meriamun the Queen said, ‘Oh, thou *Khou*, for this purpose have I called thee. I am aweary of my days and I fain would learn the future. The future fain would I learn, but the forked tongue of That which sleeps tells me no word, and the lips of That which is a-cold are dumb! Tell me, then, thou, I charge thee by the word that has power to open the lips of the dead, thou who in all things art instructed, what shall be the burden of my days?’

“And the dread Khou made answer: ‘Love shall be the burden of thy days, and Death shall be the burden of thy love. Behold one draws near from out the North whom thou hast loved, whom thou shalt love from life to life, till all things are accomplished. Bethink thee of a dream that thou dreamedst as thou didst lie on Pharaoh’s bed, and read its riddle. Meriamun, thou art great and thy name is known upon the earth, and in Amenti is thy name known. High is thy fate, and through blood and sorrow shalt thou find it. I have spoken, let me hence.’

“‘It is well,’ the Queen made answer: ‘But not yet mayest thou go hence. First I command thee, by the word of dread and by the link of life and death, declare unto me if here upon the earth and in this life I shall possess him whom I shall love?’

“‘In sin and craft and sorrow, Meriamun, thou shalt possess him; in shame and jealous agony he shall be taken from thee by one who is stronger than thou, though thou art strong; by one more beautiful than thou, though thou art beautiful; and ruin thou shalt give him for his guerdon, and ruin of the heart shalt thou harvest for thy portion. But for this time she shall escape thee, whose footsteps march with thine, and with his who shall be thine and hers. Nevertheless, in a day to come thou shalt pay her back measure for measure, and evil for evil. I have spoken. Let me hence.’

“‘Not yet, O Khou — not yet. I have still to learn. Show me the face of her who is mine enemy, and the face of him who is my love.’

“‘Thrice mayest thou speak to me, O thou greatly daring,’ answered the dread Khou, ‘and thrice I may make reply, and then farewell till I meet thee on the threshold of the hall whence thou hast drawn me. Look now on the face of that Hataska whom thou slewest.’

“And we looked, and behold the face of dead Hataska changed, and changed the face of the Double, the *Ka* that stood on one side, and the face of the great bird, the *Bai*, that spread his wings about the head of Osiris. And they grew beautiful, yes, most exceeding beautiful so that it cannot be told, and the beauty was that of a woman asleep. Then lo, there hung above Hataska, as it were, the shadow of one who was watching her sleeping. And his face we saw not, O thou Wanderer, it was hidden by the visor of a golden two-horned helm, and in that helm stood fast *the bronze point of a broken spear*! But he was clad in the armour of the people of the Northern Sea, the Aquaiusha, and his hair fell dark about his shoulders like the petals of the hyacinth flower.

“‘Behold thine enemy and behold thy love! Farewell,’ said the dread Khou, speaking through dead Hataska’s lips, and as the words died the beauty faded and the Tongue of Flame shot upwards and was lost, and once more the eyes of the thousand thousand dead turned and looked upon each other, even as though their lips whispered each to each.

“But for a while Meriamun stood silent, as one amazed. Then, awaking, she waved her hand and cried, ‘Begone, thou *Bai*! Begone, thou *Ka*!’

“And the great bird whereof the face was as the face of Hataska spread his golden wings and passed away to his own place, and the Ka that was in the semblance of Hataska drew near to the dead one’s knees, and passed back into her from whom she came. And all the thousand thousand faces melted though the fiery eyes still gazed upon us.

“Then Meriamun covered her head and once more spoke the awful Word, and I also covered up my head. But, as must be done, this second time she called the Word aloud, and yet though she called it loud, it came but as a tiny whisper from her lips. Nevertheless, at the sound of it, once more was the Temple shaken as by a storm.

“Then Meriamun unveiled, and behold, again the fire burned upon the altar, and on the knees of the Osiris sat Hataska, cold and still in death, and round them was emptiness and silence.

“‘Now that all is done, I greatly fear for that which has been, and that which shall be. Lead me hence, O Rei, son of Pames, for I can no more.’

“And so with a heavy heart I led her forth, who of all sorceresses is the very greatest. Behold, thou Wanderer, wherefore the Queen was troubled at the coming of the man in the armour of the North, in whose two-horned golden helm stands fast the point of a broken spear.”

BOOK II

I

THE PROPHETS OF THE APURA

“These things are not without the Gods,” said the Wanderer, who was called Eperitus, when he had heard all the tale of Rei the Priest, son of Pames, the Head Architect, the Commander of the Legion of Amen. Then he sat silent for a while, and at last raised his eyes and looked upon the old man.

“Thou hast told a strange tale, Rei. Over many a sea have I wandered, and in many a land I have sojourned. I have seen the ways of many peoples, and have heard the voices of the immortal Gods. Dreams have come to me and marvels have compassed me about. It has been laid upon me to go down into Hades, that land which thou namest Amenti, and to look on the tribes of the Dead; but never till now have I known so strange a thing. For mark thou, when first I beheld this fair Queen of thine I thought she looked upon me strangely, as one who knew my face. And now, Rei, if thou speakest truth, *she* deems that she has met me in the ways of night and magic. Say, then, who was the man of the vision of the Queen, the man with dark and curling locks, clad in golden armour after the fashion of the Achæans whom ye name the Aquaiusha, wearing on his head a golden helm, wherein was fixed a broken spear?”

“Before me sits such a man,” said Rei, “or perchance it is a God that my eyes behold.”

“No God am I,” quoth the Wanderer, smiling, “though the Sidonians deemed me nothing less when the black bow twanged and the swift shafts flew. Read me the riddle, thou that art instructed.”

Now the aged Priest looked upon the ground, then turned his eyes upward, and with muttering lips prayed to Thoth, the God of Wisdom. And when he had made an end of prayer he spoke.

“*Thou* art the man,” he said. “Out of the sea thou hast come to bring the doom of love on the Lady Meriamun and on thyself the doom of death. This I knew, but of the rest I know nothing. Now, I pray thee, oh thou who comest in the armour of the North, thou whose face is clothed in beauty, and who art of all men the mightiest and hast of all men the sweetest and most guileful tongue, go back, go back into the sea whence thou camest, and the lands whence thou hast wandered.”

“Not thus easily may men escape their doom,” quoth the Wanderer. “My death may come, as come it must; but know this, Rei, I do not seek the love of Meriamun.”

“Then it well may chance that thou shalt find it, for ever those who seek love lose, and those who seek not find.”

“I am come to seek another love,” said the Wanderer, “and I seek her till I die.”

“Then I pray the Gods that thou mayest find her, and that Khem may thus be saved from sorrow. But here in Egypt there is no woman so fair as Meriamun, and thou must seek farther as quickly as may be. And now, Eperitus, behold I must away to do service in the Temple of the Holy Amen, for I am his High Priest. But I am commanded by Pharaoh first to bring thee to the feast at the Palace.”

Then he led the Wanderer from his chamber and brought him by a side entrance to the great Palace of the Pharaoh at Tanis, near the Temple of Ptah. And first he took him to a chamber that had been made ready for him in the Palace, a beautiful chamber, richly painted with beast-headed Gods and furnished with ivory chairs, and couches of ebony and silver, and with a gilded bed.

Then the Wanderer went into the shining baths, and dark-eyed girls bathed him and anointed him with fragrant oil, and crowned him with lotus flowers. When they had bathed him they bade him lay aside his golden armour and his bow and the quiver full of arrows, but this the Wanderer would not do, for as he laid the black bow down it thrilled with a thin sound of war. So Rei led him, armed as he was, to a certain antechamber, and there he left him, saying that he would return again when the feast was done. Trumpets blared as the Wanderer waited, drums rolled, and through the wide thrown curtains swept the lovely Meriamun and the divine Pharaoh Meneptah, with many lords and ladies of the Court, all crowned with roses and with lotus blooms.

The Queen was decked in Royal attire, her shining limbs were veiled in broidered silk; about her shoulders was a purple robe, and round her neck and arms were rings of well-wrought gold. She was stately and splendid to see, with pale brows and beautiful disdainful eyes where dreams seemed to sleep beneath the shadow of her eyelashes. On she swept in all her state and pride of beauty, and behind her came the Pharaoh. He was a tall man, but ill-made and heavy-browed, and to the Wanderer it seemed that he was heavy-hearted too, and that care and terror of evil to come were always in his mind.

Meriamun looked up swiftly.

“Greeting, Stranger,” she said. “Thou comest in warlike guise to grace our feast.”

"Methought, Royal Lady," he made answer, "that anon when I would have laid it by, this bow of mine sang to me of present war. Therefore I am come armed — even to thy feast."

"Has thy bow such foresight, Eperitus?" said the Queen. "I have heard but once of such a weapon, and that in a minstrel's tale. He came to our Court with his lyre from the Northern Sea, and he sang of the Bow of Odysseus."

"Minstrel or not, thou does well to come armed, Wanderer," said the Pharaoh; "for if thy bow sings, my own heart mutters much to me of war to be."

"Follow me, Wanderer, however it fall out," said the Queen.

So he followed her and the Pharaoh till they came to a splendid hall, carven round with images of fighting and feasting. Here, on the painted walls, Rameses Miamun drove the thousands of the Khita before his single valour; here men hunted wild-fowl through the marshes with a great cat for their hound. Never had the Wanderer beheld such a hall since he supped with the Sea King of the fairy isle. On the daïs, raised above the rest, sat the Pharaoh, and by him sat Meriamun the Queen, and by the Queen sat the Wanderer in the golden armour of Paris, and he leaned the black bow against his ivory chair.

Now the feast went on and men ate and drank. The Queen spoke little, but she watched the Wanderer beneath the lids of her deep-fringed eyes.

Suddenly, as they feasted and grew merry, the doors at the end of the chamber were thrown wide, the Guards fell back in fear, and behold, at the end of the hall, stood two men. Their faces were tawny, dry, wasted with desert wandering; their noses were hooked like eagles' beaks, and their eyes were yellow as the eyes of lions. They were clad in rough skins of beasts, girdled about their waists with leathern thongs, and fiercely they lifted their naked arms, and waved their wands of cedar. Both men were old, one was white-bearded, the other was shaven smooth like the priests of Egypt. As they lifted the rods on high the Guards shrank like beaten hounds, and all the guests hid their faces, save Meriamun and the Wanderer alone. Even Pharaoh dared not look on them, but he murmured angrily in his beard:

"By the name of Osiris," he said, "here be those Soothsayers of the Apura once again. Now Death waits on those who let them pass the doors."

Then one of the two men, he who was shaven like a priest, cried with a great voice:

"*Pharaoh! Pharaoh! Pharaoh!* Hearken to the word of Jahveh. Wilt thou let the people go?"

"I will not let them go," he answered.

"*Pharaoh! Pharaoh! Pharaoh!* Hearken to the word of Jahveh. If thou wilt not let the people go, then shall all the firstborn of Khem, of the Prince and the slave, of the ox and the ass, be smitten of Jahveh. Wilt thou let the people go?"

Now Pharaoh hearkened, and those who were at the feast rose and cried with a loud voice:

"O Pharaoh, let the people go! Great woes are fallen upon Khem because of the Apura. O Pharaoh, let the people go!"

Now Pharaoh's heart was softened and he was minded to let them go, but Meriamun turned to him and said:

"Thou shalt not let the people go. It is not these slaves, nor the God of these slaves, who bring the plagues on Khem, but it is that strange Goddess, the False Hathor, who dwells here in the city of Tanis. Be not so fearful — ever hadst thou a coward heart. Drive the False Hathor thence if thou wilt, but hold these slaves to their bondage. I still have cities that must be built, and yon slaves shall build them."

Then the Pharaoh cried: "Hence! I bid you. Hence, and to-morrow shall your people be laden with a double burden and their backs shall be red with stripes. I will not let the people go!"

Then the two men cried aloud, and pointing upward with their staffs they vanished from the hall, and none dared to lay hands on them, but those who sat at the feast murmured much.

Now the Wanderer marvelled why Pharaoh did not command the Guards to cut down these unbidden guests, who spoiled his festival. The Queen Meriamun saw the wonder in his eyes and turned to him.

"Know thou, Eperitus," she said, "that great plagues have come of late on this land of ours — plagues of lice and frogs and flies and darkness, and the changing of pure waters to blood. And these things our Lord the Pharaoh deems have been brought upon us by the curse of yonder magicians, conjurers and priests among certain slaves who work in the land at the building of our cities. But I know well that the curses come on us from Hathor, the Lady of Love, because of that woman who hath set herself up here in Tanis, and is worshipped as the Hathor."

"Why then, O Queen," said the Wanderer, "is this false Goddess suffered to abide in your fair city? for, as I know well, the immortal Gods are ever angered with those who turn from their worship to bow before strange altars."

"Why is she suffered? Nay, ask of Pharaoh my Lord. Methinks it is because her beauty is more than the beauty of women, so the men say who have looked on it, but I have not seen it, for only those men see it who go to worship at her shrine, and then from afar. It is not meet that the Queen of all the Lands should worship at the shrine of a strange woman, come — like thyself, Eperitus — from none knows where: if indeed she be a woman and not a fiend from the Under

World. But if thou wouldest learn more, ask my Lord the Pharaoh, for he knows the Shrine of the False Hathor, and he knows who guard it, and what is it that bars the way.”

Now the Wanderer turned to Pharaoh saying: “O Pharaoh, may I know the truth of this mystery?”

Then Meneptah looked up, and there was doubt and trouble on his heavy face.

“I will tell thee readily, thou Wanderer, for perchance such a man as thou, who hast travelled in many lands and seen the faces of many Gods, may understand the tale, and may help me. In the days of my father, the holy Rameses Miamun, the keepers of the Temple of the Divine Hathor awoke, and lo! in the Sanctuary of the temple was a woman in the garb of the Aquaiusha, who was Beauty’s self. But when they looked upon her, none could tell the semblance of her beauty, for to one she seemed dark and to the other fair, and to each man of them she showed a diverse loveliness. She smiled upon them, and sang most sweetly, and love entered their hearts, so that it seemed to each man that she only was his Heart’s Desire. But when any man would have come nearer and embraced her, there was that about her which drove him back, and if he strove again, behold, he fell down dead. So at last they subdued their hearts, and desired her no more, but worshipped her as the Hathor come to earth, and made offerings of food and drink to her, and prayers. So three years passed, and at the end of the third year the keepers of the temple looked and the Hathor was gone. Nothing remained of her but a memory. Yet there were some who said that this memory was dearer than all else that the world has to give.

“Twenty more seasons went by, and I sat upon the throne of my father, and was Lord of the Double Crown. And, on a day, a messenger came running and cried:

“‘Now is Hathor come back to Khem, now is Hathor come back to Khem, and, as of old, none may draw near her beauty!’ Then I went to see, and lo! before the Temple of Hathor a great multitude was gathered, and there on the pylon brow stood the Hathor’s self shining with changeful beauty like the Dawn. And as of old she sang sweet songs, and, to each man who heard, her voice was the voice of his own beloved, living and lost to him, or dead and lost. Now every man has such a grave in his heart as that whence Hathor seems to rise in changeful beauty. Month by month she sings thus, one day in every month, and many a man has sought to win her and her favour, but in the doorways are they who meet him and press him back; and if he still struggles on, there comes a clang of swords and he falls dead, but no wound is found on him. And, Wanderer, this is truth, for I myself have striven and have been pressed back by that which guards her. But I alone of men who have looked on her and heard her, strove not a second time, and so saved myself alive."

"Thou alone of men lovest life more than the World's Desire!" said the Queen. "Thou hast ever sickened for the love of this strange Witch, but thy life thou lovest even better than her beauty, and thou dost not dare attempt again the adventure of her embrace. Know, Eperitus, that this sorrow is come upon the land, that all men love yonder witch and rave of her, and to each she wears a different face and sings in another voice. When she stands upon the pylon tower, then thou wilt see the madness with which she has smitten them. For they will weep and pray and tear their hair. Then they will rush through the temple courts and up to the temple doors, and be thrust back again by that which guards her. But some will yet strive madly on, and thou wilt hear the clash of arms and they will fall dead before thee. Accursed is the land, I tell thee, Wanderer; because of that Phantom it is accursed. For it is she who brings these woes on Khem; from her, not from our slaves and their mad conjurers, come plagues, I say, and all evil things. And till a man be found who may pass her guard, and come face to face with the witch and slay her, plagues and woes and evil things shall be the daily bread of Khem. Perchance, Wanderer, thou art such a man," and she looked on him strangely. "Yet if so, this is my counsel, that thou go not up against her, lest thou also be bewitched, and a great man be lost to us."

Now the Wanderer turned the matter over in his heart and made answer:

"Perchance, Lady, my strength and the favour of the Gods might serve me in such a quest. But methinks that this woman is meeter for words of love and the kisses of men than to be slain with the sharp sword, if, indeed, she be not of the number of the immortals."

Now Meriamun flushed and frowned.

"It is not fitting so to talk before me," she said. "Of this be sure, that if the Witch may be come at, she shall be slain and given to Osiris for a bride."

Now the Wanderer saw that the Lady Meriamun was jealous of the beauty and renown and love of her who dwelt in the temple, and was called the Strange Hathor, and he held his peace, for he knew when to be silent.

II

THE NIGHT OF DREAD

The feast dragged slowly on, for Fear was of the company. The men and women were silent, and when they drank, it was as if one had poured a little oil on a dying fire. Life flamed up in them for a moment, their laughter came like the crackling of thorns, and then they were silent again. Meanwhile the Wanderer drank little, waiting to see what should come. But the Queen was watching him whom already her heart desired, and she only of all the company had pleasure in this banquet. Suddenly a side-door opened behind the daïs, there was a stir in the hall, each guest turning his head fearfully, for all expected some evil tidings. But it was only the entrance of those who bear about in the feasts of Egypt an effigy of the Dead, the likeness of a mummy carved in wood, and who cry: “Drink, O King, and be glad, thou shalt soon be even as he! Drink, and be glad.” The stiff, swathed figure, with its folded hands and gilded face, was brought before the Pharaoh, and Meneptah, who had sat long in sullen brooding silence, started when he looked on it. Then he broke into an angry laugh.

“We have little need of thee to-night,” he cried, as he saluted the symbol of Osiris. “Death is near enough, we want not thy silent preaching. Death, Death is near!”

He fell back in his gilded chair, and let the cup drop from his hand, gnawing at his beard.

“Art thou a man?” spoke Meriamun, in a low clear voice; “are you men, and yet afraid of what comes to all? Is it only to-night that we first hear the name of Death? Remember the great Men-kau-ra, remember the old Pharaoh who built the Pyramid of Hir. He was just and kind, and he feared the Gods, and for his reward they showed him Death, coming on him in six short years. Did he scowl and tremble, like all of you to-night, who are scared by the threats of slaves? Nay, he outwitted the Gods, he made night into day, he lived out twice his years, with revel and love and wine in the lamp-lit groves of persea trees. Come, my guests, let us be merry, if it be but for an hour. Drink, and be brave!”

“For once thou speakest well,” said the King. “Drink and forget; the Gods who give Death give wine,” and his angry eyes ranged through the hall, to seek some occasion of mirth and scorn.

“Thou Wanderer!” he said, suddenly. “Thou drinkest not: I have watched thee as the cups go round; what, man, thou comest from the North, the sun of thy pale land has not heat enough to foster the vine. Thou seemest cold, and a drinker of water; why wilt thou be cold before thine hour? Come, pledge me in the red wine of Khem. Bring forth the cup of Pasht!" he cried to them who waited, "bring forth the cup of Pasht, the King drinks!"

Then the chief butler of Pharaoh went to the treasure-house, and came again, bearing a huge golden cup, fashioned in the form of a lion's head, and holding twelve measures of wine. It was an ancient cup, sacred to Pasht, and a gift of the Rutennu to Thothmes, the greatest of that name.

"Fill it full of unmixed wine!" cried the King. "Dost thou grow pale at the sight of the cup, thou Wanderer from the North? I pledge thee, pledge thou me!"

"Nay, King," said the Wanderer, "I have tasted wine of Ismarus before to-day, and I have drunk with a wild host, the one-eyed Man Eater!" For his heart was angered by the King, and he forgot his wisdom, but the Queen marked the saying.

"Then pledge me in the cup of Pasht!" quoth the King.

"I pray thee, pardon me," said the Wanderer, "for wine makes wise men foolish and strong men weak, and to-night methinks we shall need our wits and our strength."

"Craven!" cried the King, "give me the bowl. I drink to thy better courage, Wanderer," and lifting the great golden cup, he stood up and drank it, and then dropped staggering into his chair, his head fallen on his breast.

"I may not refuse a King's challenge, though it is ill to contend with our hosts," said the Wanderer, turning somewhat pale, for he was in anger. "Give me the bowl!"

He took the cup, and held it high; then pouring a little forth to his Gods, he said, in a clear voice, for he was stirred to anger beyond his wont:

"*I drink to the Strange Hathor!*"

He spoke, and drained the mighty cup, and set it down on the board, and even as he laid down the cup, and as the Queen looked at him with eyes of wrath, there came from the bow beside his seat a faint shrill sound, a ringing and a singing of the bow, a noise of running strings and a sound as of rushing arrows.

The warrior heard it, and his eyes burned with the light of battle, for he knew well that the swift shafts should soon fly to the hearts of the doomed. Pharaoh awoke and heard it, and heard it the Lady Meriamun the Queen, and she looked on the Wanderer astonished, and looked on the bow that sang.

"The minstrel's tale was true! This is none other but the Bow of Odysseus, the sacker of cities," said Meriamun. "Hearken thou, Eperitus, thy great bow sings aloud. How comes it that thy bow sings?"

“For this cause, Queen,” said the Wanderer; “because birds gather on the Bridge of War. Soon shall shafts be flying and ghosts go down to doom. Summon thy Guards, I bid thee, for foes are near.”

Terror conquered the drunkenness of Pharaoh; he bade the Guards who stood behind his chair summon all their company. They went forth, and a great hush fell again upon the Hall of Banquets and upon those who sat at meat therein. The silence grew deadly still, like air before the thunder, and men’s hearts sank within them, and turned to water in their breasts. Only Odysseus wondered and thought on the battle to be, though whence the foe might come he knew not, and Meriamun sat erect in her ivory chair and looked down the glorious hall.

Deeper grew the silence and deeper yet, and more and more the cloud of fear gathered in the hearts of men. Then suddenly through all the hall there was a rush like the rush of mighty wings. The deep foundations of the Palace rocked, and to the sight of men the roof above seemed to burst asunder, and lo! above them, against the distance of the sky, there swept a shape of Fear, and the stars shone through its raiment.

Then the roof closed in again, and for a moment’s space once more there was silence, whilst men looked with white faces, each on each, and even the stout heart of the Wanderer stood still.

Then suddenly all down the hall, from this place and from that, men rose up and with one great cry fell down dead, this one across the board, and that one across the floor. The Wanderer grasped his bow and counted. From among those who sat at meat twenty and one had fallen dead. Yet those who lived sat gazing emptily, for so stricken with fear were they that scarce did each one know if it was he himself who lay dead or his brother who had sat by his side.

But Meriamun looked down the hall with cold eyes, for she feared neither Death nor Life, nor God nor man.

And while she looked and while the Wanderer counted, there rose a faint murmuring sound from the city without, a sound that grew and grew, the thunder of myriad feet that run before the death of kings. Then the doors burst asunder and a woman sped through them in her night robes, and in her arms she bore the naked body of a boy.

“Pharaoh!” she cried, “Pharaoh, and thou, O Queen, look upon thy son — thy firstborn son — dead is thy son, O Pharaoh! Dead is thy son, O Queen! In my arms he died suddenly as I lulled him to his rest,” and she laid the body of the child down on the board among the vessels of gold, among the garlands of lotus flowers and the beakers of rose-red wine.

Then Pharaoh rose and rent his purple robes and wept aloud. Meriamun rose too, and lifting the body of her son clasped it to her breast, and her eyes were terrible with wrath and grief, but she wept not.

“See now the curse that this evil woman, this False Hathor, hath brought upon us,” she said.

But the very guests sprang up crying, “It is not the Hathor whom we worship, it is not the Holy Hathor, it is the Gods of those dark Apura whom thou, O Queen, wilt not let go. On thy head and the head of Pharaoh be it,” and even as they cried the murmur without grew to a shriek of woe, a shriek so wild and terrible that the Palace walls rang. Again that shriek rose, and yet a third time, never was such a cry heard in Egypt. And now for the first time in all his days the face of the Wanderer grew white with fear, and in fear of heart he prayed for succour to his Goddess — to Aphrodite, the daughter of Dione.

Again the doors behind them burst open and the Guards flocked in — mighty men of many foreign lands; but now their faces were wan, their eyes stared wide, and their jaws hung down. But at the sound of the clanging of their harness the strength of the Wanderer came back to him again, for the Gods and their vengeance he feared, but not the sword of man. And now once more the bow sang aloud. He grasped it, he bent it with his mighty knee, and strung it, crying:

“Awake, Pharaoh, awake! Foes draw on. Say, be these all the men?”

Then the Captain answered, “These be all of the Guard who are left living in the Palace. The rest are stark, smitten by the angry Gods.”

Now as the Captain spake, one came running up the hall, heeding neither the dead nor the living. It was the old priest Rei, the Commander of the Legion of Amen, who had been the Wanderer’s guide, and his looks were wild with fear.

“Hearken, Pharaoh!” he cried, “thy people lie dead by thousands in the streets — the houses are full of dead. In the Temples of Ptah and Amen many of the priests have fallen dead also.”

“Hast thou more to tell, old man?” cried the Queen.

“The tale has not all been told, O Queen. The soldiers are mad with fear and with the sight of death, and slay their captains; barely have I escaped from those in my command of the Legion of Amen. For they swear that this death has been brought upon the land because the Pharaoh will not let the Apura go. Hither, then, they come to slay the Pharaoh, and thee also, O Queen, and with them come many thousands of people, catching up such arms as lie to their hands.”

Now Pharaoh sank down groaning, but the Queen spake to the Wanderer:

“Anon thy weapon sang of war, Eperitus; now war is at the gates.”

“Little I fear the rush of battle and the blows men deal in anger, Lady,” he made answer, “though a man may fear the Gods without shame. Ho, Guards! close up, close up round me! Look not so pale-faced now death from the Gods is done with, and we have but to fear the sword of men.”

So great was his mien and so glorious his face as he cried thus, and one by one drew his long arrows forth and laid them on the board, that the trembling Guards took heart, and to the number of fifty and one ranged themselves on the edge of the daïs in a double line. Then they also made ready their bows and loosened the arrows in their quivers.

Now from without there came a roar of men, and anon, while those of the house of Pharaoh, and of the guests and nobles, who sat at the feast and yet lived, fled behind the soldiers, the brazen doors were burst in with mighty blows, and through them a great armed multitude surged along the hall. There came soldiers broken from their ranks. There came the embalmers of the Dead; their hands were overfull of work to-night, but they left their work undone; Death had smitten some even of these, and their fellows did not shrink back from them now. There came the smith, black from the forge, and the scribe bowed with endless writing; and the dyer with his purple hands, and the fisher from the stream; and the stunted weaver from the loom, and the leper from the Temple gates. They were mad with lust of life, a starveling life that the King had taxed, when he let not the Apura go. They were mad with fear of death; their women followed them with dead children in their arms. They smote down the golden furnishings, they tore the silken hangings, they cast the empty cups of the feast at the faces of trembling ladies, and cried aloud for the blood of the King.

“Where is Pharaoh?” they yelled, “show us Pharaoh and the Queen Meriamun, that we may slay them. Dead are our first born, they lie in heaps as the fish lay when Sihor ran red with blood. Dead are they because of the curse that has been brought upon us by the prophets of the Apura, whom Pharaoh, and Pharaoh’s Queen, yet hold in Khem.”

Now as they cried they saw Pharaoh Meneptah cowering behind the double line of Guards, and they saw the Queen Meriamun who cowered not, but stood silent above the din. Then she thrust her way through the Guards, and yet holding the body of the child to her breast, she stood before them with eyes that flashed more brightly than the uraeus crown upon her brow.

“Back!” she cried, “back! It is not Pharaoh, it is not I, who have brought this death upon you. For we too have death here!” and she held up the body of her dead son. “It is that False Hathor whom ye worship, that Witch of many a voice and many a face who turns your hearts faint with love. For her sake ye endure these woes, on her head is all this death. Go, tear her temple stone from stone, and rend her beauty limb from limb and be avenged and free the land from curses.”

A moment the people stood and hearkened, muttering as stands the lion that is about to spring, while those who pressed without cried: “Forward! Forward!

Slay them! Slay them!” Then as with one voice they screamed:

“The Hathor we love, but you we hate, for ye have brought these woes upon us, and ye shall die.”

They cried, they brawled, they cast footstools and stones at the Guards, and then a certain tall man among them drew a bow. Straight at the Queen’s fair breast he aimed his arrow, and swift and true it sped towards her. She saw the light gleam upon its shining barb, and then she did what no woman but Meriamun would have done, no, not to save herself from death — she held out the naked body of her son as a warrior holds a shield. The arrow struck through and through it, piercing the tender flesh, aye, and pricked her breast beyond, so that she let the dead boy fall.

The Wanderer saw it and wondered at the horror of the deed, for he had seen no such deed in all his days. Then shouting aloud the terrible war-cry of the Achæans he leapt upon the board before him, and as he leapt his golden armour clanged.

Glancing around, he fixed an arrow to the string and drew to his ear that great bow which none but he might so much as bend. Then as he loosed, the string sang like a swallow, and the shaft screamed through the air. Down the glorious hall it sped, and full on the breast of him who had lifted bow against the Queen the bitter arrow struck, nor might his harness avail to stay it. Through the body of him it passed and with blood-red feathers flew on, and smote another who stood behind him so that his knees also were loosened, and together they fell dead upon the floor.

Now while the people stared and wondered, again the bowstring sang like a swallow, again the arrow screamed in its flight, and he who stood before it got his death, for the shield he bore was pinned to his breast.

Then wonder turned to rage; the multitude rolled forward, and from either side the air grew dark with arrows. For the Guards at the sight of the shooting of the Wanderer found heart and fought well and manfully. Boldly also the slayers came on, and behind them pressed many a hundred men. The Wanderer’s golden helm flashed steadily, a beacon in the storm. Black smoke burst out in the hall, the hangings flamed and tossed in a wind from the open door. The lights were struck from the hands of the golden images, arrows stood thick in the tables and the rafters, a spear pierced through the golden cup of Pasht. But out of the darkness and smoke and dust, and the cry of battle, and through the rushing of the rain of spears, sang the swallow string of the black bow of Eurytus, and the long shafts shrieked as they sped on them who were ripe to die. In vain did the arrows of the slayers smite upon that golden harness. They were but as hail upon the temple roofs, but as driving snow upon the wild stag’s horns. They struck, they rattled, and down they dropped like snow, or bounded back and lay upon the board.

The swallow string sang, the black bow twanged, and the bitter arrows shrieked as they flew.

Now the Wanderer's shafts were spent, and he judged that their case was desperate. For out of the doors of the hall that were behind them, and from the chambers of the women, armed men burst in also, taking them on the flank and rear. But the Wanderer was old in war, and without a match in all its ways. The Captain of the Guard was slain with a spear stroke, and the Wanderer took his place, calling to the men, such of them as were left alive, to form a circle on the daïs, and within the circle he set those of the house of Pharaoh and the women who were at the feast. And to Pharaoh he cast a slain man's sword, bidding him strike for life and throne if he never struck before; but the heart was out of Pharaoh because of the death of his son, and the wine about his wits, and the terrors he had seen. Then Meriamun the Queen snatched the sword from his trembling hand and stood holding it to guard her life. For she disdained to crouch upon the ground as did the other women, but stood upright behind the Wanderer, and heeded not the spears and arrows that dealt death on every hand. But Pharaoh stood, his face buried in his hands.

Now the slayers came on, shouting and clambering upon the daïs. Then the Wanderer rushed on them with sword drawn, and shield on high, and so swift he smote that men might not guard, for they saw, as it were, three blades aloft at once, and the silver-hafted sword bit deep, the gift of Phæacian Euryalus long ago. The Guards also smote and thrust; it was for their lives they fought, and back rolled the tide of foes, leaving a swathe of dead. So a second time they came on, and a second time were rolled back.

Now of the defenders few were left unhurt, and their strength was well-nigh spent. But the Wanderer cheered them with great words, though his heart grew fearful for the end; and Meriamun the Queen also bade them to be of good courage, and if need were, to die like men. Then once again the wave of War rolled in upon them, and the strife grew fierce and desperate. The iron hedge of spears was well-nigh broken, and now the Wanderer, doing such deeds as had not been known in Khem, stood alone between Meriamun the Queen and the swords that thirsted for her life and the life of Pharaoh. Then of a sudden, from far down the great hall of banquets, there came a loud cry that shrilled above the clash of swords, the groans of men, and all the din of battle.

"*Pharaoh! Pharaoh! Pharaoh!*" rose a voice. "Now wilt thou let the people go?"

Then he who smote stayed his hand and he who guarded dropped his shield.

The battle ceased and all turned to look. There at the end of the hall, among the dead and dying, there stood the two ancient men of the Apura, and in their hands were cedar rods.

“It is the Wizards — the Wizards of the Apura,” men cried, and shrunk this way and that, thinking no more on war.

The ancient men drew nigh. They took no heed of the dying or the dead: on they walked, through blood and wine and fallen tables and scattered arms, till they stood before the Pharaoh.

“*Pharaoh! Pharaoh! Pharaoh!*” they cried again. “Dead are the firstborn of Khem at the hand of Jahveh. Wilt thou let the people go?”

Then Pharaoh lifted his face and cried:

“Get you gone — you and all that is yours. Get you gone swiftly, and let Khem see your face no more.”

The people heard, and the living left the hall, and silence fell on the city, and on the dead who died of the sword, and the dead who died of the pestilence. Silence fell, and sleep, and the Gods’ best gift — forgetfulness.

III

THE BATHS OF BRONZE

Even out of this night of dread the morning rose, and with it came Rei, bearing a message from the King. But he did not find the Wanderer in his chamber. The Palace eunuchs said that he had risen and had asked for Kurri, the Captain of the Sidonians, who was now the Queen’s Jeweller. Thither Rei went, for Kurri was lodged with the servants in a court of the Royal House, and as the old man came he heard the sound of hammers beating on metal. There, in the shadow which the Palace wall cast into a little court, there was the Wanderer; no longer in his golden mail, but with bare arms, and dressed in such a light smock as the workmen of Khem were wont to wear.

The Wanderer was bending over a small brazier, whence a flame and a light blue smoke arose and melted into the morning light. In his hand he held a small hammer, and he had a little anvil by him, on which lay one of the golden shoulder-plates of his armour. The other pieces were heaped beside the brazier. Kurri, the Sidonian, stood beside him, with graving tools in his hands.

“Hail to thee, Eperitus,” cried Rei, calling him by the name he had chosen to give himself. “What makest thou here with fire and anvil?”

“I am but furbishing up my armour,” said the Wanderer, smiling. “It has more than one dint from the fight in the hall;” and he pointed to his shield, which was deeply scarred across the blazon of the White Bull, the cognizance of dead Paris, Priam’s son. “Sidonian, blow up the fire.”

Kurri crouched on his hams and blew the blaze to a white heat with a pair of leathern bellows, while the Wanderer fitted the plates and hammered at them on the anvil, making the jointures smooth and strong, talking meanwhile with Rei.

“Strange work for a prince, as thou must be in Alybas, whence thou comest,” quoth Rei, leaning on his long rod of cedar, headed with an apple of bluestone. “In our country chiefs do not labour with their hands.”

“Different lands, different ways,” answered Eperitus. “In my country men wed not their sisters as your kings do, though, indeed, it comes into my mind that once I met such brides in my wanderings in the isle of the King of the Winds.”

For the thought of the Æolian isle, where King Æolus gave him all the winds in a bag, came into his memory.

“My hands can serve me in every need,” he went on. “Mowing the deep green grass in spring, or driving oxen, or cutting a clean furrow with the plough in heavy soil, or building houses and ships, or doing smith’s work with gold and bronze and grey iron — they are all one to me.”

“Or the work of war,” said Rei. “For there I have seen thee labour. Now, listen, thou Wanderer, the King Meneptah and the Queen Meriamun send me to thee with this scroll of their will,” and he drew forth a roll of papyrus, bound with golden threads, and held it on his forehead, bowing, as if he prayed.

“What is that roll of thine?” said the Wanderer, who was hammering at the bronze spear-point, that stood fast in his helm.

Rei undid the golden threads and opened the scroll, which he gave into the Wanderer’s hand.

“Gods! What have we here?” said the Wanderer. “Here are pictures, tiny and cunningly drawn, serpents in red, and little figures of men sitting or standing, axes and snakes and birds and beetles! My father, what tokens are these?” and he gave the scroll back to Rei.

“The King has made his Chief Scribe write to thee, naming thee Captain of the Legion of Pasht, the Guard of the Royal House, for last night the Captain was slain. He gives thee a high title, and he promises thee houses, lands, and a city of the South to furnish thee with wine, and a city of the North to furnish thee with corn, if thou wilt be his servant.”

“Never have I served any man,” said the Wanderer, flushing red, “though I went near to being sold and to knowing the day of slavery. The King does me too much honour.”

“Thou wouldest fain begone from Khem?” asked the old man, eagerly.

“I would fain find her I came to seek, wherever she may be,” said the Wanderer. “Here or otherwhere.”

“Then, what answer shall I carry to the King?”

“Time brings thought,” said the Wanderer; “I would see the city if thou wilt guide me. Many cities have I seen, but none so great as this. As we walk I will consider my answer to your King.”

He had been working at his helm as he spoke, for the rest of his armour was now mended. He had drawn out the sharp spear-head of bronze, and was balancing it in his hand and trying its edge.

“A good blade,” he said; “better was never hammered. It went near to doing its work, Sidonian,” and he turned to Kurri as he spoke. “Two things of thine I had: thy life and thy spear-point. Thy life I gave thee, thy spear-point thou didst lend me. Here, take it again,” and he tossed the spear-head to the Queen’s Jeweller.

“I thank thee, lord,” answered the Sidonian, thrusting it in his girdle; but he muttered between his teeth, “The gifts of enemies are gifts of evil.”

The Wanderer did on his mail, set the helmet on his head, and spoke to Rei. “Come forth, friend, and show me thy city.”

But Rei was watching the smile on the face of the Sidonian, and he deemed it cruel and crafty and warlike, like the laugh of the Sardana of the sea. He said nought, but called a guard of soldiers, and with the Wanderer he passed the Palace gates and went out into the city.

The sight was strange, and it was not thus that the old man, who loved his land, would have had the Wanderer see it.

From all the wealthy houses, and from many of the poorer sort, rang the wail of the women mourners as they sang their dirges for the dead.

But in the meaner quarters many a hovel was marked with three smears of blood, dashed on each pillar of the door and on the lintel; and the sound that came from these dwellings was the cry of mirth and festival. There were two peoples; one laughed, one lamented. And in and out of the houses marked with the splashes of blood women were ever going with empty hands, or coming with hands full of jewels, of gold, of silver rings, of cups, and purple stuffs. Empty they went out, laden they came in, dark men and women with keen black eyes and the features of birds of prey. They went, they came, they clamoured with delight among the mourning of the men and women of Khem, and none laid a hand on them, none refused them.

One tall fellow snatched at the staff of Rei.

“Lend me thy staff, old man,” he said, sneering; “lend me thy jewelled staff for my journey. I do but borrow it; when Yakûb comes from the desert thou shalt have it again.”

But the Wanderer turned on the fellow with such a glance that he fell back.

“I have seen *thee* before,” he said, and he laughed over his shoulder as he went; “I saw thee last night at the feast, and heard thy great bow sing. Thou art not of the folk of Khem. They are a gentle folk, and Yakûb wins favour in their sight.”

“What passes now in this haunted land of thine, old man?” said the Wanderer, “for of all the sights that I have seen, this is the strangest. None lifts a hand to save his goods from the thief.”

Rei the Priest groaned aloud.

“Evil days have come upon Khem,” he said. “The Apura spoil the people of Khem ere they fly into the Wilderness.”

Even as he spoke there came a great lady weeping, for her husband was dead, and her son and her brother, all were gone in the breath of the pestilence. She was of the Royal House, and richly decked with gold and jewels, and the slaves who fanned her, as she went to the Temple of Ptah to worship, wore gold chains upon their necks. Two women of the Apura saw her and ran to her, crying:

"Lend to us those golden ornaments thou wearest."

Then, without a word, she took her gold bracelets and chains and rings, and let them all fall in a heap at her feet. The women of the Apura took them all and mocked her, crying:

"Where now is thy husband and thy son and thy brother, thou who art of Pharaoh's house? Now thou payest us for the labour of our hands and for the bricks that we made without straw, gathering leaves and rushes in the sun. Now thou payest for the stick in the hand of the overseers. Where now is thy husband and thy son and thy brother?" and they went still mocking, and left the lady weeping.

But of all sights the Wanderer held this strangest, and many such there were to see. At first he would have taken back the spoil and given it to those who wore it, but Rei the Priest prayed him to forbear, lest the curse should strike them also. So they pressed on through the tumult, ever seeing new sights of greed and death and sorrow. Here a mother wept over her babe, here a bride over her husband — that night the groom of her and of death. Here the fierce-faced Apura, clamouring like gulls, tore the silver trinkets from the children of those of the baser sort, or the sacred amulets from the mummies of those who were laid out for burial, and here a water-carrier wailed over the carcass of the ass that won him his livelihood.

At length, passing through the crowd, they came to a temple that stood near to the Temple of the God Ptah. The pylons of this temple faced towards the houses of the city, but the inner courts were built against the walls of Tanis and looked out across the face of the water. Though not one of the largest temples, it was very strong and beautiful in its shape. It was built of the black stone of Syene, and all the polished face of the stone was graven with images of the Holy Hathor. Here she wore a cow's head, and here the face of a woman, but she always bore in her hands the lotus-headed staff and the holy token of life, and her neck was encircled with the collar of the gods.

"Here dwells that Strange Hathor to whom thou didst drink last night, Eperitus," said Rei the Priest. "It was a wild pledge to drink before the Queen, who swears that she brings these woes on Khem. Though, indeed, she is guiltless of this, with all the blood on her beautiful head. The Apura and their apostate sorcerer, whom we ourselves instructed, bring the plagues on us."

"Does the Hathor manifest herself this day?" asked the Wanderer.

"That we will ask of the priests, Eperitus. Follow thou me."

Now they passed down the avenue of sphinxes within the wall of brick, into the garden plot of the Goddess, and so on through the gates of the outer tower. A priest who watched there threw them wide at the sign that was given of Rei, the Master-Builder, the beloved of Pharaoh, and they came to the outer court. Before the second tower they halted, and Rei showed to the Wanderer that place upon the pylon roof where the Hathor was wont to stand and sing till the hearers' hearts were melted like wax. Here they knocked once more, and were admitted to the Hall of Assembly where the priests were gathered, throwing dust upon their heads and mourning those among them who had died with the Firstborn. When they saw Rei, the instructed, the Prophet of Amen, and the Wanderer clad in golden armour who was with him, they ceased from their mourning, and an ancient priest of their number came forward, and, greeting Rei, asked him of his errand. Then Rei took the Wanderer by the hand and made him known to the priest, and told him of those deeds that he had done, and how he had saved the life of Pharaoh and of those of the Royal House who sat at the feast with Pharaoh.

"But when will the Lady Hathor sing upon her tower top?" said Rei, "for the Stranger desires to see her and hear her."

The temple priest bowed before the Wanderer, and answered gravely:

"On the third morn from now the Holy Hathor shows herself upon the temple's top," he said; "but thou, mighty lord, who art risen from the sea, hearken to my warning, and if, indeed, thou art no god, dare not to look upon her beauty. If thou dost look, then thy fate shall be as the fate of those who have looked before, and have loved and have died for the sake of the Hathor."

"No god am I," said the Wanderer, laughing, "yet, perchance, I shall dare to look, and dare to face whatever it be that guards her, if my heart bids me see her nearer."

"Then there shall be an end of thee and thy wanderings," said the priest. "Now follow me, and I will show thee those men who last sought to win the Hathor."

He took him by the hand and led him through passages hewn in the walls till they came to a deep and gloomy cell, where the golden armour of the Wanderer shone like a lamp at eve. The cell was built against the city wall, and scarcely a thread of light came into the chink between roof and wall. All about the chamber were baths fashioned of bronze, and in the baths lay dusky shapes of dark-skinned men of Egypt. There they lay, and in the faint light their limbs were being anointed by some sad-faced attendants, as folk were anointed by merry girls in the shining baths of the Wanderer's home. When Rei and Eperitus came near, the sad-faced bath-men shrank away in shame, as dogs shrink from their evil meat at night when a traveller goes past.

Marvelling at the strange sight, the bathers and the bathed, the Wanderer looked more closely, and his stout heart sank within him. For all these were dead who lay in the baths of bronze, and it was not water that flowed about their limbs, but evil-smelling natron.

"Here lie those," said the priest, "who last strove to come near the Holy Hathor, and to pass into the shrine of the temple where night and day she sits and sings and weaves with her golden shuttle. Here they lie, the half of a score. One by one they rushed to embrace her, and one by one they were smitten down. Here they are being attired for the tomb, for we give them all rich burial."

"Truly," quoth the Wanderer, "I left the world of Light behind me when I looked on the blood-red sea and sailed into the black gloom off Pharos. More evil sights have I seen in this haunted land than in all the cities where I have wandered, and on all the seas that I have sailed."

"Then be warned," said the priest, "for if thou dost follow where they went, and desire what they desired, thou too shalt lie in yonder bath, and be washed of yonder waters. For whatever be false, this is true, that he who seeks love ofttimes finds doom. But here he finds it most speedily."

The Wanderer looked again at the dead and at their ministers, and he shuddered till his harness rattled. He feared not the face of Death in war, or on the sea, but this was a new thing. Little he loved the sight of the brazen baths and those who lay there. The light of the sun and the breath of air seemed good to him, and he stepped quickly from the chamber, while the priest smiled to himself. But when he reached the outer air, his heart came back to him, and he began to ask again about the Hathor — where she dwelt, and what it was that slew her lovers.

"I will show thee," answered the priest, and brought him through the Hall of Assembly to a certain narrow way that led to a court. In the centre of the court stood the holy shrine of the Hathor. It was a great chamber, built of alabaster, lighted from the roof alone, and shut in with brazen doors, before which hung curtains of Tyrian web. From the roof of the shrine a stairway ran overhead to the roof of the temple and so to the inner pylon tower.

"Yonder, Stranger, the holy Goddess dwells within the Alabaster Shrine," said the priest. "By that stair she passes to the temple roof, and thence to the pylon top. There by the curtains, once in every day, we place food, and it is drawn into the sanctuary, how we know not, for none of us have set foot there, nor seen the Hathor face to face. Now, when the Goddess has stood upon the pylon and sung to the multitude below, she passes back to the shrine. Then the brazen outer doors of the temple court are thrown wide and the doomed rush on madly, one by one, towards the drawn curtains. But before they pass the curtains they are thrust back, yet they strive to pass. Then we hear a sound of the clashing of weapons and the men fall dead without a word, while the song of the Hathor swells from within.”

“And who are her swordsmen?” said the Wanderer.

“That we know not, Stranger; no man has lived to tell. Come, draw near to the door of the shrine and hearken, maybe thou wilt hear the Hathor singing. Have no fear; thou needst not approach the guarded space.”

Then the Wanderer drew near with a doubting heart, but Rei the Priest stood afar off, though the temple priests came close enough. At the curtains they stopped and listened. Then from within the shrine there came a sound of singing wild and sweet and shrill, and the voice of it stirred the Wanderer strangely, bringing to his mind memories of that Ithaca of which he was Lord and which he should see no more; of the happy days of youth, and of the God-built walls of windy Ilios. But he could not have told why he thought on these things, nor why his heart was thus strangely stirred within him.

“Hearken! the Hathor sings as she weaves the doom of men,” said the priest, and as he spoke the singing ended.

Then the Wanderer took counsel with himself whether he should then and there burst the doors and take his fortune, or whether he should forbear for that while. But in the end he determined to forbear and see with his own eyes what befell those who strove to win the way.

So he drew back, wondering much; and, bidding farewell to the aged priest, he went with Rei, the Master Builder, through the town of Tanis, where the Apura were still spoiling the people of Khem, and he came to the Palace where he was lodged. Here he turned over in his mind how he might see the strange woman of the temple, and yet escape the baths of bronze. There he sat and thought till at length the night drew on, and one came to summon him to sup with Pharaoh in the Hall. Then he rose up and went, and meeting Pharaoh and Meriamun the Queen in the outer chamber, passed in after them to the Hall, and on to the daïs which he had held against the rabble, for the place was clear of dead, and, save for certain stains upon the marble floor that might not be washed away, and for some few arrows that yet were fixed high up in the walls or in the lofty roof, there was nothing to tell of the great fray that had been fought but one day gone.

Heavy was the face of Pharaoh, and the few who sat with him were sad enough because of the death of so many whom they loved, and the shame and sorrow that had fallen upon Khem. But there were no tears for her one child in the eyes of Meriamun the Queen. Anger, not grief, tore her heart because Pharaoh had let the Apura go. For ever as they sat at the sad feast there came a sound of the tramping feet of armies, and of lowing cattle, and songs of triumph, sung by ten thousand voices, and thus they sang the song of the Apura: —

A lamp for our feet the Lord hath litten,
Signs hath He shown in the Land of Khem.
The Kings of the Nations our Lord hath smitten,
His shoe hath He cast o’er the Gods of them.
He hath made Him a mock of the heifer of Isis,
He hath broken the chariot reins of Ra,
On Yakûb He cries, and His folk arises,
And the knees of the Nation are loosed in awe.

He gives us their goods for a spoil to gather,
Jewels of silver, and vessels of gold;
For Yahveh of old is our Friend and Father,
And cherisheth Yakûb He chose of old.
The Gods of the Peoples our Lord hath chidden,
Their courts hath He filled with His creeping things;
The light of the face of the Sun he hath hidden,
And broken the scourge in the hands of kings.

He hath chastened His people with stripes and scourges,
Our backs hath He burdened with grievous weights,
But His children shall rise as a sea that surges,
And flood the fields of the men He hates.
The Kings of the Nations our Lord hath smitten,
His shoe hath He cast o’er the Gods of them,
But a lamp for our feet the Lord hath litten,
Wonders hath he wrought in the Land of Khem.

Thus they sang, and the singing was so wild that the Wanderer craved leave to go and stand at the Palace gate, lest the Apura should rush in and spoil the treasure-chamber.

The King nodded, but Meriamun rose, and went with the Wanderer as he took his bow and passed to the great gates.

There they stood in the shadow of the gates, and this is what they beheld. A great light of many torches was flaring along the roadway in front. Then came a body of men, rudely armed with pikes, and the torchlight shone on the glitter of bronze and on the gold helms of which they had spoiled the soldiers of Khem. Next came a troop of wild women, dancing, and beating timbrels, and singing the triumphant hymn of scorn.

Next, with a space between, tramped eight strong black-bearded men, bearing on their shoulders a great gilded coffin, covered with carven and painted signs.

“It is the body of their Prophet, who brought them hither out of their land of hunger,” whispered Meriamun. “Slaves, ye shall hunger yet in the wilderness, and clamour for the flesh-pots of Khem!”

Then she cried in a loud voice, for her passion overcame her, and she prophesied to those who bare the coffin, “Not one soul of you that lives shall see the land where your conjurer is leading you! Ye shall thirst, ye shall hunger, ye shall call on the Gods of Khem, and they shall not hear you; ye shall die, and your bones shall whiten the wilderness. Farewell! Set go with you. Farewell!”

So she cried and pointed down the way, and so fierce was her gaze, and so awful were her words, that the people of the Apura trembled and the women ceased to sing.

The Wanderer watched the Queen and marvelled. “Never had woman such a hardy heart,” he mused; “and it were ill to cross her in love or war!”

“They will sing no more at my gates,” murmured Meriamun, with a smile. “Come, Wanderer; they await us,” and she gave him her hand that he might lead her.

So they went back to the banquet hall.

They hearkened as they sat till far in the night, and still the Apura passed, countless as the sands of the sea. At length all were gone, and the sound of their feet died away in the distance. Then Meriamun the Queen turned to Pharaoh and spake bitterly:

“Thou art a coward, Meneptah, ay, a coward and a slave at heart. In thy fear of the curse that the False Hathor hath laid on us, she whom thou dost worship, to thy shame, thou hast let these slaves go. Otherwise had our father dealt with them, great Rameses Miamun, the hammer of the Khita. Now they are gone hissing curses on the land that bare them, and robbing those who nursed them up while they were yet a little people, as a mother nurses her child.”

“What then might I do?” said Pharaoh.

“There is nought to do: all is done,” answered Meriamun.

“What is thy counsel, Wanderer?”

“It is ill for a stranger to offer counsel,” said the Wanderer.

“Nay, speak,” cried the Queen.

“I know not the Gods of this land,” he answered. “If these people be favoured of the Gods, I say sit still. But if not,” then said the Wanderer, wise in war, “let Pharaoh gather his host, follow after the people, take them unawares, and smite them utterly. It is no hard task, they are so mixed a multitude and cumbered with much baggage!”

This was to speak as the Queen loved to hear. Now she clapped her hands and cried:

“Listen, listen to good counsel, Pharaoh.”

And now that the Apura were gone, his fear of them went also, and as he drank wine Pharaoh grew bold, till at last he sprang to his feet and swore by Amen, by Osiris, by Ptah, and by his father — great Rameses — that he would follow after the Apura and smite them. And instantly he sent forth messengers to summon the captains of his host in the Hall of Assembly.

Thither the captains came, and their plans were made and messengers hurried forth to the governors of other great cities, bidding them send troops to join the host of Pharaoh on its march.

Now Pharaoh turned to the Wanderer and said:

“Thou hast not yet answered my message that Rei carried to thee this morning. Wilt thou take service with me and be a captain in this war?”

The Wanderer little liked the name of service, but his warlike heart was stirred within him, for he loved the delight of battle. But before he could answer yea or nay, Meriamun the Queen, who was not minded that he should leave her, spoke hastily:

“This is my counsel, Meneptah, that the Lord Eperitus should abide here in Tanis and be the Captain of my Guard while thou art gone to smite the Apura. For I may not be here unguarded in these troublous times, and if I know he watches over me, he who is so mighty a man, then I shall walk safely and sleep in peace.”

Now the Wanderer bethought him of his desire to look upon the Hathor, for to see new things and try new adventures was always his delight. So he answered that if it were pleasing to Pharaoh and the Queen he would willingly stay and command the Guard. And Pharaoh said that it should be so.

IV

THE QUEEN’S CHAMBER

At midday on the morrow Pharaoh and the host of Pharaoh marched in pomp from Tanis, taking the road that runs across the desert country towards the Red Sea of Weeds, the way that the Apura had gone. The Wanderer went with the army for an hour’s journey and more, in a chariot driven by Rei the Priest, for Rei did not march with the host. The number of the soldiers of Pharaoh amazed the Achæan, accustomed to the levies of barren isles and scattered tribes. But he said nothing of his wonder to Rei or any man, lest it should be thought that he came from among a little people. He even made as if he held the army lightly, and asked the priest if this was all the strength of Pharaoh! Then Rei told him that it was but a fourth part, for none of the mercenaries and none of the soldiers from the Upper Land marched with the King in pursuit of the Apura.

Then the Wanderer knew that he was come among a greater people than he had ever encountered yet, on land or sea. So he went with them till the roads divided, and there he drove his chariot to the chariot of Pharaoh and bade him farewell. Pharaoh called to him to mount his own chariot, and spake thus to him:

“Swear to me, thou Wanderer, who namest thyself Eperitus, though of what country thou art and what was thy father’s house none know, swear to me that thou wilt guard Meriamun the Queen faithfully, and wilt work no woe upon me nor open my house while I am afar. Great thou art and beautiful to look on, ay, and strong enough beyond the strength of men, yet my heart misdoubts me of thee. For methinks thou art a crafty man, and that evil will come upon me through thee.”

“If this be thy mind, Pharaoh,” said the Wanderer, “leave me not in guard of the Queen. And yet methinks I did not befriend thee so ill two nights gone, when the rabble would have put thee and all thy house to the sword because of the death of the firstborn.”

Now Pharaoh looked on him long and doubtfully, then stretched out his hand. The Wanderer took it, and swore by his own Gods, by Zeus, by Aphrodite, and Athene, and Apollo, that he would be true to the trust.

“I believe thee, Wanderer,” said Pharaoh. “Know this, if thou keepest thine oath thou shalt have great rewards, and thou shalt be second to none in the land of Khem, but if thou failest, then thou shalt die miserably.”

“I ask no fee,” answered the Wanderer, “and I fear no death, for in one way only shall I die, and that is known to me. Yet I will keep my oath.” And he bowed before Pharaoh, and leaping from his chariot entered again into the chariot of Rei.

Now, as he drove back through the host the soldiers called to him, saying:

“Leave us not, Wanderer.” For he looked so glorious in his golden armour that it seemed to them as though a god departed from their ranks.

His heart was with them, for he loved war, and he did not love the Apura. But he drove on, as so it must be, and came to the Palace at sundown.

That night he sat at the feast by the side of Meriamun the Queen. And when the feast was done she bade him follow her into her chamber where she sat when she would be alone. It was a fragrant chamber, dimly lighted with sweet-scented lamps, furnished with couches of ivory and gold, while all the walls told painted stories of strange gods and kings, and of their loves and wars. The Queen sank back upon the embroidered cushions of a couch and bade the wise Odysseus to sit guard over against her, so near that her robes swept his golden greaves. This he did somewhat against his will, though he was no hater of fair women. But his heart misdoubted the dark-eyed Queen, and he looked upon her guardedly, for she was strangely fair to see, the fairest of all mortal women whom he had known, save the Golden Helen.

“Wanderer, we owe thee great thanks, and I would gladly know to whom we are in debt for the prices of our lives,” she said. “Tell me of thy birth, of thy father’s house, and of the lands that thou hast seen and the wars wherein thou hast fought. Tell me also of the sack of Ilios, and how thou camest by thy golden mail. The unhappy Paris wore such arms as these, if the minstrel of the North sang truth.”

Now, the Wanderer would gladly have cursed this minstrel of the North and his songs.

“Minstrels will be lying, Lady,” he said, “and they gather old tales wherever they go. Paris may have worn my arms, or another man. I bought them from a chapman in Crete, and asked nothing of their first master. As for Ilios, I fought there in my youth, and served the Cretan Idomeneus, but I got little booty. To the King the wealth and women, to us the sword-strokes. Such is the appearance of war.”

Meriamun listened to his tale, which he set forth roughly, as if he were some blunt, grumbling swordsman, and darkly she looked on him while she hearkened, and darkly she smiled as she looked.

“A strange story, Eperitus, a strange story truly. Now tell me thus. How camest thou by yonder great bow, the bow of the swallow string? If my minstrel spoke truly, it was once the Bow of Eurytus of OEchalia.”

Now the Wanderer glanced round him like a man taken in ambush, who sees on every hand the sword of foes shine up into the sunlight.

“The bow, Lady?” he answered readily enough. “I got it strangely. I was cruising with a cargo of iron on the western coast and landed on an isle, methinks the pilot called it Ithaca. There we found nothing but death; a pestilence had been in the land, but in a ruined hall this bow was lying, and I made prize of it. A good bow!”

“A strange story, truly — a very strange story,” quoth Meriamun the Queen. “By chance thou didst buy the armour of Paris, by chance thou didst find the bow of Eurytus, that bow, methinks, with which the god-like Odysseus slew the wooers in his halls. Knowest thou, Eperitus, that when thou stoodest yonder on the board in the Place of Banquets, when the great bow twanged and the long shafts hailed down on the hall and loosened the knees of many, not a little was I put in mind of the song of the slaying of the wooers at the hands of Odysseus. The fame of Odysseus has wandered far — ay, even to Khem.” And she looked straight at him.

The Wanderer darkened his face and put the matter by. He had heard something of that tale, he said, but deemed it a minstrel’s feigning. One man could not fight a hundred, as the story went.

The Queen half rose from the couch where she lay curled up like a glittering snake. Like a snake she rose and watched him with her melancholy eyes.

“Strange, indeed — most strange that Odysseus, Laertes’ son, Odysseus of Ithaca, should not know the tale of the slaying of the wooers by Odysseus’ self. Strange, indeed, thou Eperitus, who art Odysseus.”

Now the neck of the Wanderer was in the noose, and well he knew it: yet he kept his counsel, and looked upon her vacantly.

“Men say that this Odysseus wandered years ago into the North, and that this time he will not come again. I saw him in the wars, and he was a taller man than I,” said the Wanderer.

“I have always heard,” said the Queen, “that Odysseus was double-tongued and crafty as a fox. Look me in the eyes, thou Wanderer, look me in the eyes, and I will show thee whether or not thou art Odysseus,” and she leaned forward so that her hair well-nigh swept his brow, and gazed deep into his eyes.

Now the Wanderer was ashamed to drop his eyes before a woman’s, and he could not rise and go; so he must needs gaze, and as he gazed his head grew strangely light and the blood quivered in his veins, and then seemed to stop.

“Now turn, thou Wanderer,” said the voice of the Queen, and to him it sounded far away, as if there was a wall between them, “and tell me what thou seest.”

So he turned and looked towards the dark end of the chamber. But presently through the darkness stole a faint light, like the first grey light of the dawn, and now he saw a shape, like the shape of a great horse of wood, and behind the horse were black square towers of huge stones, and gates, and walls, and houses. Now he saw a door open in the side of the horse, and the helmeted head of a man look out wearily. As he looked a great white star slid down the sky so that the light of it rested on the face of the man, and that face was his own! Then he remembered how he had looked forth from the belly of the wooden horse as it stood within the walls of Ilios, and thus the star had seemed to fall upon the doomed city, an omen of the end of Troy.

“Look again,” said the voice of Meriamun from far away.

So once more he looked into the darkness, and there he saw the mouth of a cave, and beneath two palms in front of it sat a man and a woman. The yellow moon rose and its light fell upon a sleeping sea, upon tall trees, upon the cave, and the two who sat there. The woman was lovely, with braided hair, and clad in a shining robe, and her eyes were dim with tears that she might never shed: for she was a Goddess, Calypso, the daughter of Atlas. Then in the vision the man looked up, and his face was weary, and worn and sick for home, but it was his own face.

Then he remembered how he had sat thus at the side of Calypso of the braided tresses, on that last night of all his nights in her wave-girt isle, the centre of the seas.

“Look once more,” said the voice of Meriamun the Queen.

Again he looked into the darkness. There before him grew the ruins of his own hall in Ithaca, and in the courtyard before the hall was a heap of ashes, and the charred bones of men. Before the heap lay the figure of one lost in sorrow, for his limbs writhed upon the ground. Anon the man lifted his face, and behold! the Wanderer knew that it was his own face.

Then of a sudden the gloom passed away from the chamber, and once more his blood surged through his veins, and there before him sat Meriamun the Queen, smiling darkly.

“Strange sights hast thou seen, is it not so, Wanderer?” she said.

“Yea, Queen, the most strange of sights. Tell me of thy courtesy how thou didst conjure them before my eyes.”

“By the magic that I have, Eperitus, I above all wizards who dwell in Khem, the magic whereby I can read all the past of those — I love,” and again she looked upon him; “ay, and call it forth from the storehouse of dead time and make it live again. Say, whose face was it that thou didst look upon — was it not the face of Odysseus of Ithaca, Laertes' son, and was not that face thine?"

Now the Wanderer saw that there was no escape. Therefore he spoke the truth, not because he loved it, but because he must.

"The face of Odysseus of Ithaca it was that I saw before me, Lady, and that face is mine. I avow myself to be Odysseus, Laertes' son, and no other man."

The Queen laughed aloud. "Great must be my strength of magic," she said, "for it can strip the guile from the subtlest of men. Henceforth, Odysseus, thou wilt know that the eyes of Meriamun the Queen see far. Now tell me truly: what camest thou hither to seek?"

The Wanderer took swift counsel with himself. Remembering that dream of Meriamun of which Rei the Priest had told him, and which she knew not that he had learned, the dream that showed her the vision of one whom she must love, and remembering the word of the dead Hataska, he grew afraid. For he saw well by the token of the spear point that he was the man of her dream, and that she knew it. But he could not accept her love, both because of his oath to Pharaoh and because of her whom Aphrodite had shown to him in Ithaca, her whom alone he must seek, the Heart's Desire, the Golden Helen.

The strait was desperate, between a broken oath and a woman scorned. But he feared his oath, and the anger of Zeus, the God of hosts and guests. So he sought safety beneath the wings of truth.

"Lady," he said, "I will tell thee all! I came to Ithaca from the white north, where a curse had driven me; I came and found my halls desolate, and my people dead, and the very ashes of my wife. But in a dream of the night I saw the Goddess whom I have worshipped little, Aphrodite of Idalia, whom in this land ye name Hathor, and she bade me go forth and do her will. And for reward she promised me that I should find one who waited me to be my deathless love."

Meriamun heard him so far, but no further, for of this she made sure, that *she* was the woman whom Aphrodite had promised to the Wanderer. Ere he might speak another word she glided to him like a snake, and like a snake curled herself about him. Then she spoke so low that he rather knew her thought than heard her words:

"Was it indeed so, Odysseus? Did the Goddess indeed send thee to seek me out? Know, then, that not to thee alone did she speak. I also looked for thee. I also waited the coming of one whom I should love. Oh, heavy have been the days, and empty was my heart, and sorely through the years have I longed for him who should be brought to me. And now at length it is done, now at length I see him whom in my dream I saw," and she lifted her lips to the lips of the Wanderer, and her heart, and her eyes, and her lips said "Love."

But it was not for nothing that he bore a stout and patient heart, and a brain unclouded by danger or by love. He had never been in a strait like this; caught with bonds that no sword could cut, and in toils that no skill could undo. On one side were love and pleasure — on the other a broken oath, and the loss for ever of the Heart's Desire. For to love another woman, as he had been warned, was to lose Helen. But again, if he scorned the Queen — nay, for all his hardihood he dared not tell her that she was not the woman of his vision, the woman he came to seek. Yet even now his cold courage and his cunning did not fail him.

"Lady," he said, "we both have dreamed. But if thou didst dream thou wert my love, thou didst wake to find thyself the wife of Pharaoh. And Pharaoh is my host and hath my oath."

"I woke to find myself the wife of Pharaoh," she echoed, wearily, and her arms uncurled from his neck and she sank back on the couch. "I am Pharaoh's wife in word, but not in deed. Pharaoh is nothing to me, thou Wanderer — nought save a name."

"Yet is my oath much to me, Queen Meriamun — my oath and the hospitable hearth," the Wanderer made answer. "I swore to Meneptah to hold thee from all ill, and there's an end."

"And if Pharaoh comes back no more, what then Odysseus?"

"Then will we talk again. And now, Lady, thy safety calls me to visit thy Guard." And without more words he rose and went.

The Queen looked after him.

"A strange man," she said in her heart, "who builds a barrier with his oath betwixt himself and her he loves and has wandered so far to win! Yet methinks I honour him the more. Pharaoh Meneptah, my husband, eat, drink, and be merry, for this I promise thee — short shall be thy days."

V

THE CHAPEL PERILOUS

“Swift as a bird or a thought,” says the old harper of the Northern Sea. The Wanderer’s thoughts in the morning were swift as night birds, flying back and brooding over the things he had seen and the words he had heard in the Queen’s chamber. Again he stood between this woman and the oath which, of all oaths, was the worst to break. And, indeed, he was little tempted to break it, for though Meriamun was beautiful and wise, he feared her love and he feared her magic art no less than he feared her vengeance if she were scorned. Delay seemed the only course. Let him wait till the King returned, and it would go hard but he found some cause for leaving the city of Tanis, and seeking through new adventures the World’s Desire. The mysterious river lay yonder. He would ascend the river of which so many tales were told. It flowed from the land of the blameless *Æthiopians*, the most just of men, at whose tables the very Gods sat as guests. There, perchance, far up the sacred stream, in a land where no wrong ever came, there, if the Fates permitted, he might find the Golden Helen.

If the Fates permitted: but all the adventure was of the Fates, who had shown him to Meriamun in a dream.

He turned it long in his mind and found little light. It seemed that as he had drifted through darkness across a blood-red sea to the shores of Khem, so he should wade through blood to that shore of Fate which the Gods appointed.

Yet after a while he shook sorrow from him, arose, bathed, anointed himself, combed his dark locks, and girded on his golden armour. For now he remembered that this was the day when the Strange Hathor should stand upon the pylon of the temple and call the people to her, and he was minded to look upon her, and if need be to do battle with that which guarded her.

So he prayed to Aphrodite that she would help him, and he poured out wine to her and waited; he waited, but no answer came to his prayer. Yet as he turned away it chanced that he saw his countenance in the wide golden cup whence he had poured, and it seemed to him that it had grown more fair and lost the stamp of years, and that his face was smooth and young as the face of that Odysseus who, many years ago, had sailed in the black ships and looked back on the smoking ruins of windy Troy. In this he saw the hand of the Goddess, and knew that if she might not be manifest in this land of strange Gods, yet she was with him. And, knowing this, his heart grew light as the heart of a boy from whom sorrow is yet a long way off, and who has not dreamed of death.

Then he ate and drank, and when he had put from him the desire of food he arose and girded on the sword, Euryalus's gift, but the black bow he left in its case. Now he was ready and about to set forth when Rei the Priest entered the chamber.

"Whither goest thou, Eperitus?" asked Rei, the instructed Priest. "And what is it that has made thy face so fair, as though many years had been lifted from thy back?"

"'Tis but sweet sleep, Rei," said the Wanderer. "Deeply I slept last night, and the weariness of my wanderings fell from me, and now I am as I was before I sailed across the blood-red sea into the night."

"Sell thou the secret of this sleep to the ladies of Khem," answered the aged priest, smiling, "and little shalt thou lack of wealth for all thy days."

Thus he spake as though he believed the Wanderer, but in his heart he knew that the thing was of the Gods.

The Wanderer answered:

"I go up to the Temple of the Hathor, for thou dost remember it is to-day that she stands upon the pylon brow and calls the people to her. Comest thou also, Rei?"

"Nay, nay, I come not, Eperitus. I am old indeed, but yet the blood creeps through these withered veins, and, perchance, if I came and looked, the madness would seize me also, and I too should rush to my slaying. There is a way in which a man may listen to the voice of the Hathor, and that is to have his eyes blindfolded, as many do. But even then he will tear the bandage from his eyes, and look, and die with the others. Oh, go not up, Eperitus — I pray thee go not up. I love thee — I know not why — and am little minded to see thee dead. Though, perchance," he added, as though to himself, "it would be well for those I serve if thou wert dead, thou Wanderer, with the eyes of Fate."

"Have no fear, Rei," said the Wanderer, "as it is doomed so shall I die and not otherwise. Never shall it be told," he murmured in his heart, "that he who stood in arms against Scylla, the Horror of the Rock, turned back from any form of fear or from any shape of Love."

Then Rei wrung his hands and went nigh to weeping, for to him it seemed a pitiful thing that so goodly a man and so great a hero should thus be done to death. But the Wanderer passed out through the city, and Rei went with him for a certain distance. At length they came to the road set on either side with sphinxes, that leads from the outer wall of brick to the garden of the Temple of Hathor, and down this road hurried a multitude of men of all races and of every age. Here the prince was borne along in his litter; here the young noble travelled in his chariot. Here came the slave bespattered with the mud of the fields; here the cripple limped upon his crutches; and here was the blind man led by a hound. And with each man came women: the wife of the man, or his mother, or his sisters, or she to whom he was vowed in marriage. Weeping they came, and with soft words and clinging arms they strove to hold back him whom they loved.

"Oh, my son! my son!" cried a woman, "hearken to thy mother's voice. Go not up to look upon the Goddess, for if thou dost look then shalt thou die, and thou alone art left alive to me. Two brothers of thine I bore, and behold, both are dead; and wilt thou die also, and leave me, who am old, alone and desolate? Be not mad, my son, thou art the dearest of all; ever have I loved thee and tended thee. Come back, I pray — come back."

But her son heard not and heeded not, pressing on toward the Gates of the Heart's Desire.

"Oh, my husband, my husband!" cried another, young, of gentle birth, and fair, who bare a babe on her left arm and with the right clutched her lord's broidered robe. "Oh, my husband, have I not loved thee and been kind to thee, and wilt thou still go up to look upon the deadly glory of the Hathor? They say she wears the beauty of the Dead. Lovest thou me not better than her who died five years agone, Merisa the daughter of Rois, though thou didst love her first? See, here is thy babe, thy babe, but one week born. Even from my bed of pain have I risen and followed after thee down these weary roads, and I am like to lose my life for it. Here is thy babe, let it plead with thee. Let me die if so it must be, but go not thou up to thy death. It is no Goddess whom thou wilt see, but an evil spirit loosed from the under-world, and that shall be thy doom. Oh, if I please thee not, take thou another wife and I will make her welcome, only go not up to thy death!"

But the man fixed his eyes upon the pylon tops, heeding her not, and at length she sank upon the road, and there with the babe would have been crushed by the chariots, had not the Wanderer borne her to one side of the way.

Now, of all sights this was the most dreadful, for on every side rose the prayers and lamentations of women, and still the multitude of men pressed on unheeding.

"Now thou seest the power of Love, and how if a woman be but beautiful enough she may drag all men to ruin," said Rei the Priest.

"Yes," said the Wanderer; "a strange sight, truly. Much blood hath this Hathor of thine upon her hands."

"And yet thou wilt give her thine, Wanderer."

"That I am not minded to do," he answered; "yet I will look upon her face, so speak no more of it."

Now they were come to the space before the bronze gates of the pylon of the outer court, and there the multitude gathered to the number of many hundreds. Presently, as they watched, a priest came to the gates, that same priest who had shown the Wanderer the bodies in the baths of bronze. He looked through the bars and cried aloud:

"Whoso would enter into the court and look upon the Holy Hathor let him draw nigh. Know ye this, all men, the Hathor is to him who can win her. But if he pass not, then shall he die and be buried within the temple, nor shall he ever look upon the sun again. Of this ye are warned. Since the Hathor came again to Khem, of men seven hundred and three have gone to win her, and of bodies seven hundred and two lie within the vaults, for of all these men Pharaoh Meneptah alone hath gone back living. Yet there is place for more! Enter, ye who would look upon the Hathor!"

Now there arose a mighty wailing from the women. They clung madly about the necks of those who were dear to them, and some clung not in vain. For the hearts of many failed them at the last, and they shrank from entering in. But a few of those who had already looked upon the Hathor from afar, perchance a score in all, struck the women from them and rushed up to the gates.

"Surely thou wilt not enter in?" quoth Rei, clinging to the arm of the Wanderer. "Oh, turn thy back on death and come back with me. I pray thee turn."

"Nay," said the Wanderer, "I will go in."

Then Rei the Priest threw dust upon his head, wept aloud, and turned and fled, never stopping till he came to the Palace, where sat Meriamun the Queen.

Now the priest unbarred a wicket in the gates of bronze, and one by one those who were stricken of the madness entered in. For all of these had seen the Hathor many times from afar without the wall, and now they could no more withstand their longing. And as they entered two other priests took them by the hand and bound their eyes with cloths, so that unless they willed it they might not see the glory of the Hathor, but only hear the sweetness of her voice. But two there were who would not be blindfolded, and of these one was that man whose wife had fainted by the way, and the other was a man sightless from his youth. For although he might not see the beauty of the Goddess, this man was made mad by the sweetness of her voice. Now, when all had entered in, save the Wanderer, there was a stir in the crowd, and a man rushed up. He was travel-stained, he had a black beard, black eyes, and a nose hooked like a vulture's beak.

"Hold!" he cried. "Hold! Shut not the gates! Night and day have I journeyed from the host of the Apura who fly into the wilderness. Night and day have I journeyed, leaving wife and flocks and children and the Promise of the Land, that I may once more look upon the beauty of the Hathor. Shut not the gates!”

“Pass in,” said the priest, “pass in, so shall we be rid of one of those whom Khem nurtured up to rob her.”

He entered; then, as the priest was about to bar the wicket, the Wanderer strode forward, and his golden armour clashed beneath the portal.

“Wouldst thou indeed enter to thy doom, thou mighty lord?” asked the priest, for he knew him well again.

“Ay, I enter; but perchance not to my doom,” answered the Wanderer. Then he passed in and the brazen gate was shut behind him.

Now the two priests came forward to bind his eyes, but this he would not endure.

“Not so,” he said; “I am come here to see what may be seen.”

“Go to, thou madman, go to! and die the death,” they answered, and led all the men to the centre of the courtyard whence they might see the pylon top. Then the priests also covered up their eyes and cast themselves at length upon the ground; so for a while they lay, and all was silence within and without the court, for they waited the coming of the Hathor. The Wanderer glanced through the bars of bronze at the multitude gathered there. Silent they stood with upturned eyes, even the women had ceased from weeping and stood in silence. He looked at those beside him. Their bandaged faces were lifted and they stared towards the pylon top as though their vision pierced the cloths. The blind man, too, stared upward, and his pale lips moved, but no sound came from them. Now at the foot of the pylon lay a little rim of shadow. Thinner and thinner it grew as the moments crept on towards the perfect noon. Now there was but a line, and now the line was gone, for the sun’s red disc burned high in the blue heaven straight above the pylon brow. Then suddenly and from afar there came a faint sweet sound of singing, and at the first note of the sound a great sigh went up through the quiet air, from all the multitude without. Those who were near the Wanderer sighed also, and their lips and fingers twitched, and he himself sighed, though he knew not why.

Nearer came the sweet sound of singing, and stronger it swelled, till presently those without the temple gate who were on higher ground caught sight of her who sang. Then a hoarse roar went up from every throat, and madness took them. On they rushed, dashing themselves against the gates of bronze and the steep walls on either side, and beat upon them madly with their fists and brows, and climbed on each other’s shoulders, gnawing at the bars with their teeth, crying to be let in. But the women threw their arms about them and screamed curses on her whose beauty brought all men to madness.

So it went for a while, till presently the Wanderer looked up, and lo! upon the pylon's brow stood the woman's self, and at her coming all were once more silent. She was tall and straight, clad in clinging white, but on her breast there glowed a blood-red ruby stone, fashioned like a star, and from it fell red drops that stained for one moment the whiteness of her robes, and then the robe was white again. Her golden hair was tossed this way and that, and shone in the sunlight, her arms and neck were bare, and she held one hand before her eyes as though to hide the brightness of her beauty. For, indeed, she could not be called beautiful but Beauty itself.

And they who had not loved saw in her that first love whom no man has ever won, and they who had loved saw that first love whom every man has lost. And all about her rolled a glory — like the glory of the dying day. Sweetly she sang a song of promise, and her voice was the voice of each man's desire, and the heart of the Wanderer thrilled in answer to it as thrills a harp smitten by a cunning hand; and thus she sang:

Whom hast thou longed for most,
True love of mine?
Whom hast thou loved and lost?
Lo, she is thine!

She that another wed
Breaks from her vow;
She that hath long been dead
Wakes for thee now.

Dreams haunt the hapless bed,
Ghosts haunt the night,
Life crowns her living head,
Love and Delight.

Nay, not a dream nor ghost,
Nay, but Divine,
She that was loved and lost
Waits to be thine!

She ceased, and a moan of desire went up from all who heard.

Then the Wanderer saw that those beside him tore at the bandages about their brows and rent them loose. Only the priests who lay upon the ground stirred not, though they also moaned.

And now again she sang, still holding her hand before her face:

Ye that seek me, ye that sue me,
Ye that flock beneath my tower,
Ye would win me, would undo me,
I must perish in an hour,
Dead before the Love that slew me, clasped the
Bride and crushed the flower.

Hear the word and mark the warning,
Beauty lives but in your sight,
Beauty fades from all men’s scorning
In the watches of the night,
Beauty wanes before the morning, and
Love dies in his delight.

She ceased, and once more there was silence. Then suddenly she bent forward across the pylon brow so far that it seemed that she must fall, and stretching out her arms as though to clasp those beneath, showed all the glory of her loveliness.

The Wanderer looked, then dropped his eyes as one who has seen the brightness of the noonday sun. In the darkness of his mind the world was lost, and he could think of naught save the clamour of the people, which fretted his ears. They were all crying, and none were listening.

“See! see!” shouted one. “Look at her hair; it is dark as the raven’s wing, and her eyes — they are dark as night. Oh, my love! my love!”

“See! see!” cried another, “were ever skies so blue as those eyes of hers, was ever foam so white as those white arms?”

“Even so she looked whom once I wed many summers gone,” murmured a third, “even so when first I drew her veil. Hers was that gentle smile breaking like ripples on the water, hers that curling hair, hers that child-like grace.”

“Was ever woman so queenly made?” said a fourth. “Look now on the brow of pride, look on the deep, dark eyes of storm, the arched lips, and the imperial air. Ah, here indeed is a Goddess meet for worship.”

“Not so I see her,” cried a fifth, that man who had come from the host of the Apura. “Pale she is and fair, tall indeed, but delicately shaped, brown is her hair, and brown are her great eyes like the eyes of a stag, and ah, sadly she looks upon me, looking for my love.”

“My eyes are opened,” screamed the blind man at the Wanderer’s side. “My eyes are opened, and I see the pylon tower and the splendid sun. Love hath touched me on the eyes and they are opened. But lo! not one shape hath she but many shapes. Oh, she is Beauty’s self, and no tongue may tell her glory. Let me die! let me die, for my eyes are opened. I have looked on Beauty’s self! I know what all the world journeys on to seek, and why we die and what we go to find in death.”

VI

THE WARDENS OF THE GATE

The clamour swelled or sank, and the men called or cried the names of many women, some dead, some lost. Others were mute, silent in the presence of the World's Desire, silent as when we see lost faces in a dream. The Wanderer had looked once and then cast down his eyes and stood with his face hidden in his hands. He alone waited and strove to think; the rest were abandoned to the bewilderment of their passions and their amaze.

What was it that he had seen? That which he had sought his whole life long; sought by sea and land, not knowing what he sought. For this he had wandered with a hungry heart, and now was the hunger of his heart to be appeased? Between him and her was the unknown barrier and the invisible Death. Was he to pass the unmarked boundary, to force those guarded gates and achieve where all had failed? Had a magic deceived his eyes? Did he look but on a picture and a vision that some art could call again from the haunted place of Memory?

He sighed and looked again. Lo! in his charmed sight a fair girl seemed to stand upon the pylon brow, and on her head she bore a shining urn of bronze.

He knew her now. He had seen her thus at the court of King Tyndareus as he drove in his chariot through the ford of Eurotas; thus he had seen her also in the dream on the Silent Isle.

Again he sighed and again he looked. Now in his charmed sight a woman sat, whose face was the face of the girl, grown more lovely far, but sad with grief and touched with shame.

He saw her and he knew her. So he had seen her in Troy towers when he stole thither in a beggar's guise from the camp of the Achæans. So he had seen her when she saved his life in Ilios.

Again he sighed and again he looked, and now he saw the Golden Helen.

She stood upon the pylon's brow. She stood with arms outstretched, with eyes upturned, and on her shining face there was a smile like the infinite smile of the dawn. Oh, now indeed he knew the shape that was Beauty's self — the innocent Spirit of Love sent on earth by the undying Gods to be the doom and the delight of men; to draw them through the ways of strife to the unknown end.

Awhile the Golden Helen stood thus looking up and out to the worlds beyond; to the peace beyond the strife, to the goal beyond the grave. Thus she stood while men scarce dared to breathe, summoning all to come and take that which upon the earth is guarded so invincibly.

Then once more she sang, and as she sang, slowly drew herself away, till at length nothing was left of the vision of her save the sweetness of her dying song.

Who wins his Love shall lose her,
Who loses her shall gain,
For still the spirit woos her,
A soul without a stain;
And Memory still pursues her
With longings not in vain!

He loses her who gains her,
Who watches day by day
The dust of time that stains her,
The griefs that leave her grey,
The flesh that yet enchains her
Whose grace hath passed away!

Oh, happier he who gains not
The Love some seem to gain:
The joy that custom stains not
Shall still with him remain,
The loveliness that wanes not,
The love that ne’er can wane.

In dreams she grows not older
The lands of Dream among,
Though all the world wax colder,
Though all the songs be sung,
In dreams doth he behold her
Still fair and kind and young.

Now the silence died away, and again madness came upon those who had listened and looked. The men without the wall once more hurled themselves against the gates, while the women clung to them, shrieking curses on the beauty of the Hathor, for the song meant nothing to these women, and their arms were about those whom they loved and who won them their bread. But most of the men who were in the outer court rushed up to the inner gates within which stood the alabaster shrine of the Hathor. Some flung themselves upon the ground and clutched at it, as in dreams men fling themselves down to be saved from falling into a pit that has no bottom. Yet as in such an evil slumber the dreamer is drawn inch by inch to the mouth of the pit by an unseen hand, so these wretched men were dragged along the ground by the might of their own desire. In vain they set their feet against the stones to hold themselves from going, for they thrust forward yet more fiercely with their hands, and thus little by little drew near the inner gates writhing forwards yet moving backwards like a wounded snake dragged along by a rope. For of those who thus entered the outer court and looked upon the Hathor, few might go back alive.

Now the priests drew the cloths from their eyes, and rising, flung wide the second gates, and there, but a little way off, the veil of the shrine wavered as if in a wind. For now the doors beyond the veil were thrown open, as might be seen when the wind swayed its Tyrian web, and through the curtain came the sound of the same sweet singing.

“Draw near! Draw near!” cried the ancient priest. “Let him who would win the Hathor draw near!”

Now at first the Wanderer was minded to rush on. But his desire had not wholly overcome him, nor had his wisdom left him. He took counsel with his heart and waited to let the others go, and to see how it fared with them.

The worshippers were now hurrying back and now darting onwards, as fear and longing seized them, till the man who was blind drew near, led by the hand of a priest, for his hound might not enter the second court of the temple.

“Do ye fear?” he cried. “Cowards, I fear not. It is better to look upon the glory of the Hathor and die than to live and never see her more. Set my face straight, ye priests, set my face straight, at the worst I can but die.”

So they led him as near the curtains as they dared to go and set his face straight. Then with a great cry he rushed on. But he was caught and whirled about like a leaf in a wind, so that he fell. He rose and again rushed on, again to be whirled back. A third time he rose and rushed on, smiting with his blind man’s staff. The blow fell, and stayed in mid-air, and there came a hollow sound as of a smitten shield, and the staff that dealt the blow was shattered. Then there was a noise like the noise of clashing swords, and the man instantly sank down dead, though the Wanderer could see no wound upon him.

“Draw near! Draw near!” cried the priest again. “This one is fallen. Let him who would win the Hathor draw near!”

Then the man who had fled from the host of the Apura rushed forward, crying on the Lion of his tribe. Back he was hurled, and back again, but at the third time once more there came the sound of clashing swords, and he too fell dead.

“Draw near! Draw near!” cried the priest. “Another has fallen! Let him who would win the Hathor draw near!”

And now man after man rushed on, to be first hurled back and then slain of the clashing swords. And at length all were slain save the Wanderer alone.

Then the priest spake:

“Wilt thou indeed rush on to doom, thou glorious man? Thou hast seen the fate of many. Be warned and turn away.”

“Never did I turn from man or ghost,” said the Wanderer, and drawing his short sword he came near, warily covering his head with his broad shield, while the priests stood back to see him die. Now, the Wanderer had marked that none were touched till they stood at the very threshold of the doorway. Therefore he uttered a prayer to Aphrodite and came on slowly till his feet were within a bow’s length of the threshold, and there he stood and listened. Now he could hear the very words of the song that the Hathor sang as she wove at her loom. So dread and sweet it was that for a while he thought no more on the Guardians of the Gate, nor of how he might win the way, nor of aught save the song. For she was singing shrill and clear in his own dear tongue, the tongue of the Achæans:

Paint with threads of gold and scarlet, paint the battles fought for me,
All the wars for Argive Helen; storm and sack by land or sea;
All the tale of loves and sorrows that have been and are to be.

Paint her lips that like a cup have pledged the lips of heroes all, Paint her
golden hair unwhitened while the many winters fall,
Paint the beauty that is mistress of the wide world and its thrall!

Paint the storms of ships and chariots, rain of arrows flying far, Paint the
waves of Warfare leaping up at Beauty like a star,
Like a star that pale and trembling hangs above the waves of War.

Paint the ancient Ilios fallen; paint the flames that scaled the sky,
When the foe was in the fortress, when the trumpet and the cry
Rang of men in their last onset, men whose hour had dawned to die.

Woe for me once loved of all men, me that never yet have known
How to love the hearts that loved me. Woe for woe, who hear the moan
Of my lovers’ ghosts that perished in their cities overthrown.

Is there not, of Gods or mortals, oh, ye Gods, is there not one — One whose
heart shall mate with my heart, one to love ere all be done,
All the tales of wars that shall be for my love beneath the sun?

Now the song died away, and the Wanderer once more bethought him of the

Wardens of the Gate and of the battle which he must fight. But as he braced himself to rush on against the unseen foe the music of the singing swelled forth again, and whether he willed it or willed it not, so sweet was its magic that there he must wait till the song was done. And now stronger and more gladly rang the sweet shrill voice, like the voice of one who has made moan through the livelong winter night, and now sees the chariot of the dawn climbing the eastern sky. And thus the Hathor sang: Ah, within my heart a hunger for the love unfelt, unknown,
Stirs at length, and wakes and murmurs as a child that wakes to moan,
Left to sleep within some silent house of strangers and alone.

So my heart awakes, and waking, moans with hunger and with cold, Cries in pain of dim remembrance for the joy that was of old;
For the love that was, that shall be, half forgot and half
foretold.

Have I dreamed it or remembered? In another world was I,
Lived and loved in alien seasons, moved beneath a golden sky,
In a golden clime where never came the strife of men that die.

But the Gods themselves were jealous, for our bliss was over great, And they brought on us division, and the horror of their Hate,
And they set the Snake between us, and the twining coils of Fate.

And they said, “Go forth and seek each other’s face, and only find Shadows of that face ye long for, dreams of days left far behind, Love the shadows and be loved with loves that waver as the wind.”

Once more the sweet singing died away, but as the Wanderer grasped his sword and fixed the broad shield upon his arm he remembered the dream of Meriamun the Queen, which had been told him by Rei the Priest. For in that dream twain who had sinned were made three, and through many deaths and lives must seek each other’s face. And now it seemed that the burden of the song was the burden of the dream.

Then he thought no more on dreams, or songs, or omens, but only on the deadly foe that stood before him wrapped in darkness, and on Helen, in whose arms he yet should lie, for so the Goddess had sworn to him in sea-girt Ithaca. He spoke no word, he named no God, but sprang forward as a lion springs from his bed of reeds; and, lo! his buckler clashed against shields that barred the way, and invisible arms seized him to hurl him back. But no weakling was the

Wanderer, thus to be pushed aside by magic, but the stoutest man left alive in the whole world now that Aias, Telamon’s son, was dead. The priests wondered as they saw how he gave back never a step, for all the might of the Wardens of the Gate, but lifted his short sword and hewed down so terribly that fire leapt from the air where the short sword fell, the good short sword of Euryalus the Phæacian. Then came the clashing of the swords, and from all the golden armour that once the god-like Paris wore, ay, from buckler, helm, and greaves, and breastplate the sparks streamed up as they stream from the anvil of the smith when he smites great blows on swords made white with fire.

Swift as hail fell the blows of the unseen blades upon the golden armour, but he who wore it took no harm, nor was it so much as marked with the dint of the swords. So while the priests wondered at this miracle the viewless Wardens of the Gate smote at the Wanderer, and the Wanderer smote at them again. Then of a sudden he knew this, that they who barred the path were gone, for no more blows fell, and his sword only cut the air.

Then he rushed on and passed behind the veil and stood within the shrine.

But as the curtains swung behind him the singing rose again upon the air, and he might not move, but stood fixed with his eyes gazing where, far up, a loom was set within the shrine. For the sound of the singing came from behind the great web gleaming in the loom, the sound of the song of Helen as she heard the swords clash and the ringing of the harness of those whose knees were loosened in death. It was thus she sang: Clamour of iron on iron, and shrieking of steel upon steel,
Hark how they echo again!
Life with the dead is at war, and the mortals are shaken and reel, The living are slain by the slain!

Clamour of iron on iron; like music that chimes with a song,
So with my life doth it chime,
And my footsteps must fall in the dance of Erinnys, a revel of wrong,
Till the day of the passing of Time!

Ghosts of the dead that have loved me, your love have been vanquished of death,
But unvanquished of death is your hate;
Say, is there none that may woo me and win me of all that draw breath,
Not one but is envied of Fate?

Now the song died, and the Wanderer looked up, and before him stood three shadows of mighty men clad in armour. He gazed upon them, and he knew the blazons painted on their shields; he knew them for heroes long dead — Pirithous, Theseus, and Aias.

They looked upon him, and then cried with one voice:

“Hail to thee, Odysseus of Ithaca, son of Laertes!”

“Hail to thee,” cried the Wanderer, “Theseus, Ægeus’ son! Once before didst thou go down into the House of Hades, and alive thou camest forth again. Hast thou crossed yet again the stream of Ocean, and dost thou live in the sunlight? For of old I sought thee and found thee not in the House of Hades?”

The semblance of Theseus answered: “In the House of Hades I abide this day, and in the fields of asphodel. But that thou seest is a shadow, sent forth by Queen Persephone, to be the guard of the beauty of Helen.”

“Hail to thee, Pirithous, Ixion’s son,” cried the Wanderer again. “Hast thou yet won the dread Persephone to be thy love? And why doth Hades give his rival holiday to wander in the sunlight, for of old I sought thee, and found thee not in the House of Hades.”

Then the semblance of Pirithous answered:

“In the House of Hades I dwell this day, and that thou seest is but a shadow which goes with the shadow of the hero Theseus. For where he is am I, and where he goes I go, and our very shadows are not sundered; but we guard the beauty of Helen.”

“Hail to thee, Aias, Telamon’s son,” cried the Wanderer. “Hast thou not forgotten thy wrath against me, for the sake of those accursed arms that I won from thee, the arms of Achilles, son of Peleus? For of old in the House of Hades I spoke to thee, but thou wouldst not answer one word, so heavy was thine anger.”

Then the semblance of Aias made answer: “With iron upon iron, and the stroke of bronze on bronze, would I answer thee, if I were yet a living man and looked upon the sunlight. But I smite with a shadowy spear and slay none but men foredoomed, and I am the shade of Aias who dwells in Hades. Yet the Queen Persephone sent me forth to be the guard of the beauty of Helen.”

Then the Wanderer spake.

“Tell me, ye shadows of the sons of heroes, is the way closed, and do the Gods forbid it, or may I that am yet a living man pass forward and gaze on that ye guard, on the beauty of Helen?”

Then each of the three nodded with his head, and smote once upon his shield, saying: “Pass by, but look not back upon us, till thou hast seen thy desire.”

Then the Wanderer went by, into the innermost chamber of the alabaster shrine.

Now when the shadows had spoken thus, they grew dim and vanished, and the Wanderer, as they had commanded, drew slowly up on the alabaster shrine, till at length he stood on the hither side of the web upon the loom. It was a great web, wide and high, and hid all the innermost recesses of the shrine. Here he waited, not knowing how he should break in upon the Hathor.

As he stood wondering thus his buckler slipped from his loosened hand and clashed upon the marble floor, and as it clashed the voice of the Hathor took up the broken song; and thus she sang ever more sweetly: — Ghosts of the dead that have loved me, your love has been
vanquished by Death,
But unvanquished by Death is your Hate;
Say, is there none that may woo me and win me of all that draw
breath,
Not one but is envied of Fate?

None that may pass you unwounded, unscathed of invisible spears — By the splendour of Zeus there is one,
And he comes, and my spirit is touched as Demeter is touched by the tears
Of the Spring and the kiss of the sun.

For he comes, and my heart that was chill as a lake in the season of snow,
Is molten, and glows as with fire.
And the Love that I knew not is born and he laughs in my heart, and I know
The name and the flame of Desire.

As a flame I am kindled, a flame that is blown by a wind from the North,
By a wind that is deadly with cold,
And the hope that awoke in me faints, for the Love that is born shall go forth
To my Love, and shall die as of old!

Now the song sobbed itself away, but the heart of the Wanderer echoed to its sweetness as a lyre moans and thrills when the hand of the striker is lifted from the strings.

For a while he stood thus, hidden by the web upon the loom, while his limbs shook like the leaves of the tall poplar, and his face turned white as turn the poplar leaves. Then desire overcame him, and a longing he could not master, to look upon the face of her who sang, and he seized the web upon the loom, and rent it with a great rending noise, so that it fell down on either side of him, and the gold coils rippled at his feet.

VII

THE SHADOW IN THE SUNLIGHT

The torn web fell — the last veil of the Strange Hathor. It fell, and all its unravelled threads of glittering gold and scarlet rippled and coiled about the Wanderer’s feet, and about the pillars of the loom.

The web was torn, the veil was rent, the labour was lost, the pictured story of loves and wars was all undone.

But there, white in the silvery dusk of the alabaster shrine, there was the visible Helen, the bride and the daughter of Mystery, the World’s Desire!

There shone that fabled loveliness of which no story was too strange, of which all miracles seemed true. There, her hands folded on her lap, her head bowed — there sat she whose voice was the echo of all sweet voices, she whose shape was the mirror of all fair forms, she whose changeful beauty, so they said, was the child of the changeful moon.

Helen sat in a chair of ivory, gleaming even through the sunshine of her outspread hair. She was clothed in soft folds of white; on her breast gleamed the Starstone, the red stone of the sea-deeps that melts in the sunshine, but that melted not on the breast of Helen. Moment by moment the red drops from the ruby heart of the star fell on her snowy raiment, fell and vanished, — fell and vanished, — and left no stain.

The Wanderer looked on her face, but the beauty and the terror of it, as she raised it, were more than he could bear, and he stood like those who saw the terror and the beauty of that face which changes men to stone.

For the lovely eyes of Helen stared wide, her lips, yet quivering with the last notes of song, were wide open in fear. She seemed like one who walks alone, and suddenly, in the noonday light, meets the hated dead; encountering the ghost of an enemy come back to earth with the instant summons of doom.

For a moment the sight of her terror made even the Wanderer afraid. What was the horror she beheld in this haunted shrine, where was none save themselves alone? What was with them in the shrine?

Then he saw that her eyes were fixed on his golden armour which Paris once had worn, on the golden shield with the blazon of the White Bull, on the golden helm, whose visor was down so that it quite hid his eyes and his face — and then at last her voice broke from her:

“*Paris! Paris! Paris!* Has Death lost hold of thee? Hast thou come to drag me back to thee and to shame? Paris, dead Paris! Who gave thee courage to pass the shadows of men whom on earth thou hadst not dared to face in war?”

Then she wrung her hands, and laughed aloud with the empty laugh of fear.

A thought came into that crafty mind of the Wanderer’s, and he answered her, not in his own voice, but in the smooth, soft, mocking voice of the traitor, Paris, whom he had heard forswear himself in the oath before Ilios.

“So, lady, thou hast not yet forgiven Paris? Thou weavest the ancient web, thou singest the ancient songs — art thou still unkind as of old?”

“Why art thou come back to taunt me?” she said, and now she spoke as if an old familiar fear and horror were laying hold of her and mastering her again, after long freedom. “Was it not enough to betray me in the semblance of my wedded lord? Why dost thou mock?”

“In love all arts are fair,” he answered in the voice of Paris. “Many have loved thee, Lady, and they are all dead for thy sake, and no love but mine has been more strong than death. There is none to blame us now, and none to hinder. Troy is down, the heroes are white dust; only Love lives yet. Wilt thou not learn, Lady, how a shadow can love?”

She had listened with her head bowed, but now she leaped up with blazing eyes and face of fire.

“Begone!” she said, “the heroes are dead for my sake, and to my shame, but the shame is living yet. Begone! Never in life or death shall my lips touch the false lips that lied away my honour, and the false face that wore the favour of my lord’s.”

For it was by shape-shifting and magic art, as poets tell, that Paris first beguiled Fair Helen.

Then the Wanderer spoke again with the sweet, smooth voice of Paris, son of Priam.

“As I passed up the shrine where thy glory dwells, Helen, I heard thee sing. And thou didst sing of the waking of thy heart, of the arising of Love within thy soul, and of the coming of one for whom thou dost wait, whom thou didst love long since and shalt love for ever more. And as thou sangest, I came, I Paris, who was thy love, and who am thy love, and who alone of ghosts and men shall be thy love again. Wilt thou still bid me go?”

“I sang,” she answered, “yes, as the Gods put it in my heart so I sang — for indeed it seemed to me that one came who was my love of old, and whom alone I must love, alone for ever. But thou wast not in my heart, thou false Paris! Nay, I will tell thee, and with the name will scare thee back to Hell. He was in my heart whom once as a maid I saw driving in his chariot through the ford of

Eurotas while I bore water from the well. He was in my heart whom once I saw in Troy, when he crept thither clad in beggar’s guise. Ay, Paris, I will name him by his name, for though he is long dead, yet him alone methinks I loved from the very first, and him alone I shall love till my deathlessness is done — Odysseus, son of Laertes, Odysseus of Ithaca, he was named among men, and Odysseus was in my heart as I sang and in my heart he shall ever be, though the Gods in their wrath have given me to others, to my shame, and against my will.”

Now when the Wanderer heard her speak, and heard his own name upon her lips, and knew that the Golden Helen loved him alone, it seemed to him as though his heart would burst his harness. No word could he find in his heart to speak, but he raised the visor of his helm.

She looked — she saw and knew him for Odysseus — even Odysseus of Ithaca. Then in turn she hid her eyes with her hands, and speaking through them said:

“Oh, Paris! ever wast thou false, but, ghost or man, of all thy shames this is the shamefullest. Thou hast taken the likeness of a hero dead, and thou hast heard me speak such words of him as Helen never spoke before. Fie on thee, Paris! fie on thee! who wouldest trick me into shame as once before thou didst trick me in the shape of Menelaus, who was my lord. Now I will call on Zeus to blast thee with his bolts. Nay, not on Zeus will I call, but on Odysseus’ self. *Odysseus! Odysseus!* Come thou from the shades and smite this Paris, this trickster, who even in death finds ways to mock thee.”

She ceased, and with eyes upturned and arms outstretched murmured, “Odysseus! Odysseus! Come.”

Slowly the Wanderer drew near to the glory of the Golden Helen — slowly, slowly he came, till his dark eyes looked into her eyes of blue. Then at last he found his voice and spake.

“Helen! Argive Helen!” he said, “I am no shadow come up from Hell to torment thee, and of Trojan Paris I know nothing. For I am Odysseus, Odysseus of Ithaca, a living man beneath the sunlight. Hither am I come to see thee, hither I am come to win thee to my heart. For yonder in Ithaca Aphrodite visited me in a dream, and bade me wander out upon the seas till at length I found thee, Helen, and saw the Red Star blaze upon thy breast. And I have wandered, and I have dared, and I have heard thy song, and rent the web of Fate, and I have seen the Star, and lo! at last, at last! I find thee. Well I saw thou knewest the arms of Paris, who was thy husband, and to try thee I spoke with the voice of Paris, as of old thou didst feign the voices of our wives when we lay in the wooden horse within the walls of Troy. Thus I drew the sweetness of thy love from thy secret breast, as the sun draws out the sweetness of the flowers. But now I declare myself to be Odysseus, clad in the mail of Paris — Odysseus come on this last journey to be thy love and lord.” And he ceased.

She trembled and looked at him doubtfully, but at last she spoke:

“Well do I remember,” she said, “that when I washed the limbs of Odysseus, in the halls of Ilios, I marked a great white scar beneath his knee. If indeed thou art Odysseus, and not a phantom from the Gods, show me that great scar.”

Then the Wanderer smiled, and, resting his buckler against the pillar of the loom, drew off his golden greave, and there was the scar that the boar dealt with his tusk on the Parnassian hill when Odysseus was a boy.

“Look, Lady,” he said; “is this the scar that once thine eyes looked on in the halls of Troy?”

“Yea,” she said, “it is the very scar, and now I know that thou art no ghost and no lying shape, but Odysseus’ self, come to be my love and lord,” and she looked most sweetly in his eyes.

Now the Wanderer wavered no more, but put out his arms to gather her to his heart. Now the Red Star was hidden on his breast, now the red drops dripped from the Star upon his mail, and the face of her who is the World’s Desire grew soft in the shadow of his helm, while her eyes were melted to tears beneath his kiss. The Gods send all lovers like joy!

Softly she sighed, softly drew back from his arms, and her lips were opened to speak when a change came over her face. The kind eyes were full of fear again, as she gazed where, through the window of the shrine of alabaster, the sunlight flickered in gold upon the chapel floor. What was that which flickered in the sunlight? or was it only the dance of the motes in the beam? There was no shadow cast in the sunshine; why did she gaze as if she saw another watching this meeting of their loves? However it chanced, she mastered her fear; there was even a smile on her lips and mirth in her eyes as she turned and spoke again.

“Odysseus, thou art indeed the cunningest of men. Thou hast stolen my secret by thy craft; who save thee would dream of craft in such an hour? For when I thought thee Paris, and thy face was hidden by thy helm, I called on Odysseus in my terror, as a child cries to a mother. Methinks I have ever held him dear; always I have found him ready at need, though the Gods have willed that till this hour my love might not be known, nay, not to my own heart; so I called on Odysseus, and those words were wrung from me to scare false Paris back to his own place. But the words that should have driven Paris down to Hell drew Odysseus to my breast. And now it is done, and I will not go back upon my words, for we have kissed our kiss of troth, before the immortal Gods have we kissed, and those ghosts who guard the way to Helen, and whom thou alone couldst pass, as it was fated, are witnesses to our oath. And now the ghosts depart, for no more need they guard the beauty of Helen. It is given to thee to have and keep, and now is Helen once more a very woman, for at thy kiss the curse was broken. Ah, friend! since my lord died in pleasant Lacedæmon, what things have I seen and suffered by the Gods' decree! But two things I will tell thee, Odysseus, and thou shalt read them as thou mayest. Though never before in thy life-days did thy lips touch mine, yet I know that not now for the first time we kiss. And this I know also, for the Gods have set it in my heart, that though our love shall be short, and little joy shall we have one of another, yet death shall not end it. For, Odysseus, I am a daughter of the Gods, and though I sleep and forget that which has been in my sleep, and though my shape change as but now it seemed to change in the eyes of those ripe to die, yet I die not. And for thee, though thou art mortal, death shall be but as the short summer nights that mark off day from day. For thou shalt live again, Odysseus, as thou hast lived before, and life by life we shall meet and love till the end is come."

As the Wanderer listened he thought once more of that dream of Meriamun the Queen, which the priest Rei had told him. But he said nothing of it to Helen; for about the Queen and her words to him it seemed wisest not to speak.

"It will be well to live, Lady, if life by life I find thee for a love."

"Life by life thou shalt find me, Odysseus, in this shape or in that shalt thou find me — for beauty has many forms, and love has many names — but thou shalt ever find me but to lose me again. I tell thee that as but now thou wonnest thy way through the ranks of those who watch me, the cloud lifted from my mind, and I remembered, and I foresaw, and I knew why I, the loved of many, might never love in turn. I knew then, Odysseus, that I am but the instrument of the Gods, who use me for their ends. And I knew that I loved thee, and thee only, but with a love that began before the birth-bed, and shall not be consumed by the funeral flame."

"So be it, Lady," said the Wanderer, "for this I know, that never have I loved woman or Goddess as I love thee, who art henceforth as the heart in my breast, that without which I may not live."

"Now speak on," she said, "for such words as these are like music in my ears."

"Ay, I will speak on. Short shall be our love, thou sayest, Lady, and my own heart tells me that it is born to be brief of days. I know that now I go on my last voyaging, and that death comes upon me from the water, the swiftest death that may be. This then I would dare to ask: When shall we twain be one? For if the hours of life be short, let us love while we may."

Now Helen's golden hair fell before her eyes like the bride's veil, and she was silent for a time. Then she spoke:

"Not now, and not while I dwell in this holy place may we be wed, Odysseus, for so should we call down upon us the hate of Gods and men. Tell me, then, where thou dwellest in the city, and I will come to thee. Nay, it is not meet. Hearken, Odysseus. To-morrow, one hour before the midnight, see that thou dost stand without the pylon gates of this my temple; then I will pass out to thee as well I may, and thou shalt know me by the jewel, the Starstone on my breast that shines through the darkness, and by that alone, and lead me whither thou wilt. For then thou shalt be my lord, and I will be thy wife. And thereafter, as the Gods show us, so will we go. For know, it is in my mind to fly this land of Khem, where month by month the Gods have made the people die for me. So till then, farewell, Odysseus, my love, found after many days."

"It is well, Lady," answered the Wanderer. "To-morrow night I meet thee without the pylon gates. I also am minded to fly this land of witchcraft and of horror, but I may scarce depart till Pharaoh return again. For he has gone down to battle and left me to guard his palace."

"Of that we will talk hereafter. Go now! Go swiftly, for here we may not talk more of earthly love," said the Golden Helen.

Then he took her hand and kissed it and passed from before her glory as a man amazed.

But in his foolish wisdom he spoke no word to her of Meriamun the Queen.

VIII

THE LOOSING OF THE SPIRIT OF REI

Rei the Priest had fled with what speed he might from the Gates of Death, those gates that guarded the loveliness of Helen and opened only upon men doomed to die. The old man was heavy at heart, for he loved the Wanderer. Among the dark children of Khem he had seen none like this Achæan, none so goodly, so strong, and so well versed in all arts of war. He remembered how this man had saved the life of her he loved above all women — of Meriamun, the moon-child, the fairest queen who had sat upon the throne of Egypt, the fairest and the most learned, save Taia only. He bethought him of the Wanderer’s beauty as he stood upon the board while the long shafts hailed down the hall. Then he recalled the vision of Meriamun, which she had told him long years ago, and the shadow in a golden helm which watched the changed Hataska. The more he thought, the more he was perplexed and lost in wonder. What did the Gods intend? Of one thing he was sure: the leaders of the host of dreams had mocked Meriamun. The man of her vision would never be her love: he had gone to meet his doom at the door of the Chapel Perilous.

So Rei hasted on, stumbling in his speed, till he came to the Palace and passed through its halls towards his chamber. At the entrance of her own place he met Meriamun the Queen. There she stood in the doorway like a picture in its sculptured frame, nor could any sight be more beautiful than she was, clad in her Royal robes, and crowned with the golden snakes. Her black hair lay soft and deep on her, and her eyes looked strangely forth from beneath the ivory of her brow.

He bowed low before her and would have passed on, but she stayed him.

“Whither goest thou, Rei?” she asked, “and why is thy face so sad?”

“I go about my business, Queen,” he answered, “and I am sad because no tidings come of Pharaoh, nor of how it has fared with him and the host of the Apura.”

“Perchance thou speakest truth, and yet not all the truth,” she answered. “Enter, I would have speech with thee.”

So he entered, and at her command seated himself before her in the very seat where the Wanderer had sat. Now, as he sat thus, of a sudden Meriamun the Queen slid to her knees before him, and tears were in her eyes and her breast was shaken with sobs. And while he wondered, thinking that she wept at last for her son who was dead among the firstborn, she hid her face in her hands upon his knees, and trembled.

"What ails thee, Queen, my fosterling?" he said. But she only took his hand, and laid her own in it, and the old priest's eyes were dim with tears. So she sat for awhile, and then she looked up, but still she did not find words. And he caressed the beautiful Imperial head, that no man had seen bowed before. "What is it, my daughter?" he said, and she answered at last:

"Hear me, old friend, who art my only friend — for if I speak not my heart will surely burst; or if it break not, my brain will burn and I shall be no more a Queen but a living darkness, where vapours creep, and wandering lights shine faintly on the ruin of my mind. Mindest thou that hour — it was the night after the hateful night that saw me Pharaoh's wife — when I crept to thee and told thee the vision that had come upon my soul, had come to mock me even at Pharaoh's side?"

"I mind it well," said Rei; "it was a strange vision, nor might my wisdom interpret it."

"And mindest thou what I told thee of the man of my vision — the glorious man whom I must love, he who was clad in golden armour and wore a golden helm wherein a spear-point of bronze stood fast?"

"Yes, I mind it," said Rei.

"And how is that man named?" she asked, whispering and staring on him with wide eyes. "Is he not named Eperitus, the Wanderer? And hath he not come hither, the spear-point in his helm? And is not the hand of Fate upon me, Meriamun? Hearken, Rei, hearken! I love him as it was fated I should love. When first I looked on him as he came up the Hall of Audience in his glory, I knew him. I knew him for that man who shares the curse laid aforetime on him, and on the woman, and on me, when, in an unknown place, twain became three and were doomed to strive from life to life and work each other's woe upon the earth. I knew him, Rei, though he knew me not, and I say that my soul shook at the echo of his step, and my heart blossomed as the black earth blossoms when after flood Sihor seeks his banks again. A glory came upon me, Rei, and I looked back through all the mists of time and knew him for my love, and I looked forward into the depths of time to be and knew him for my love. Then I looked on the present hour, and naught could I see but darkness, and naught could I hear but the groans of dying men, and a shrill sound as of a woman singing."

"An ill tale, Queen," said Rei.

"Ay, an ill tale, Rei, but half untold. Hearken again, I will tell thee all. Madness hath entered into me from the Hathor of Atarhechis, the Queen of

Desire. I am mad with love, even I who never loved. Oh, Rei! Rei! I would win this man. Nay, look not so sternly on me, it is Fate that drives me on. Last night I spoke to him and discovered to him the name he hides from us, his own name, Odysseus, Laertes’ son, Odysseus of Ithaca. Ay, thou startest, but so it is. I learned it by my magic, and wrung the truth even from the guile of the most crafty of men. But it seemed to me that he turned from me, though this much I won from him, that he had journeyed from far to seek me, the Bride that the Gods have promised him.”

The priest leaped up from his seat. “Lady!” he cried, “Lady! whom I serve and whom I have loved from a child, thy brain is sick, and not thy heart. Thou canst not love him. Dost thou not remember that thou art Queen of Khem and Pharaoh’s wife? Wilt thou throw thy honour in the mire to be trampled by a wandering stranger?”

“Ay,” she answered, “I am Queen of Khem and Pharaoh’s wife, but never Pharaoh’s love. Honour! Why dost thou prate to me of honour? Like Nile in flood, my love hath burst the bulwark of my honour, and I mark not where custom set it. For all around the waters seethe and foam, and on them, like a broken lily, floats the wreck of my lost honour. Talk not to me of honour, Rei, teach me rather how I may win my hero to my arms.”

“Thou art mad indeed,” he groaned; “nevertheless — I had forgotten — this must needs end in words and tears. Meriamun, I bring thee tidings. He whom thou desireth is lost to thee for ever — to thee and all the world.”

She heard, then sprang from the couch and stood over him like a lioness over a smitten stag, her fierce and lovely face alive with rage and fear.

“Is he dead?” she hissed in his ear. “Dead! and I knew it not? Then thou hast murdered him, and thus I avenge his murder.”

With the word she snatched a dagger from her girdle — that same dagger with which she had once struck at Meneptah her brother, when he would have kissed her — and high it flashed above Rei the Priest.

“Nay,” she went on, letting the knife fall; “after another fashion shalt thou die — more slowly, Rei, yes, more slowly. Thou knowest the torment of the palm-tree? By that thou shalt die!” She paused, and stood above him with quivering limbs, and breast that heaved, and eyes that flashed like stars.

“Stay! stay!” he cried. “It is not I who have slain this Wanderer, if he indeed is dead, but his own folly. For he is gone up to look upon the Strange Hathor, and those who look upon the Hathor do battle with the Unseen Swords, and those who do battle with the Unseen Swords must lie in the baths of bronze and seek the Under World.”

The face of Meriamun grew white at this word, as the alabaster of the walls, and she cried aloud with a great cry. Then she sank upon the couch, pressing her hand to her brow and moaning:

"How may I save him? How may I save him from that accursed witch? Alas! It is too late — but at least I will know his end, ay, and hear of the beauty of her who slays him. Rei," she whispered, not in the speech of Khem, but in the dead tongue of a dead people, "be not wrath with me. Oh, have pity on my weakness. Thou knowest of the Putting-forth of the Spirit — is it not so?"

"I am instructed," he answered, in the same speech; "'twas I who taught thee this art, I, and that Ancient Evil which is thine."

"True — it was thou, Rei. Thou hast ever loved me, so thou swearest, and many a deed of dread have we dared together. Lend me thy Spirit, Rei, that I may send it forth to the Temple of the False Hathor, and learn what passes in the temple, and of the death of him — whom I must love."

"An ill deed, Meriamun, and a fearful," he answered, "for there shall my Spirit meet them who watch the gates, and who knows what may chance when the bodiless one that yet hath earthly life meets the bodiless ones who live no more on earth?"

"Yet wilt thou dare it, Rei, for love of me, as being instructed thou alone canst do," she pleaded.

"Never have I refused thee aught, Meriamun, nor will I say thee nay. This only I ask of thee — that if my Spirit comes back no more, thou wilt bury me in that tomb which I have made ready by Thebes, and if it may be, by thy strength of magic wring me from the power of the strange Wardens. I am prepared — thou knowest the spell — say it."

He sank back in the carven couch, and looked upwards. Then Meriamun drew near to him, gazed into his eyes and whispered in his ear in that dead tongue she knew. And as she whispered the face of Rei grew like the face of one dead. She drew back and spoke aloud:

"Art thou loosed, Spirit of Rei?"

Then the lips of Rei answered her, saying: "I am loosed, Meriamun. Whither shall I go?"

"To the court of the Temple of Hathor, that is before the shrine."

"It is done, Meriamun."

"What seest thou?"

"I see a man clad in golden armour. He stands with buckler raised before the doorway of the shrine, and before him are the ghosts of heroes dead, though he may not see them with the eyes of the flesh. From within the shrine there comes a sound of singing, and he listens to the singing."

"What does he hear?"

Then the loosed Spirit of Rei the Priest told Meriamun the Queen all the words of the song that Helen sang. And when she heard and knew that it was Argive Helen who sat in the halls of Hathor, the heart of the Queen grew faint within her, and her knees trembled. Yet more did she tremble when she learned those words that rang like the words she herself had heard in her vision long ago — telling of bliss that had been, of the hate of the Gods, and of the unending Quest.

Now the song ended, and the Wanderer went up against the ghosts, and the Spirit of Rei, speaking with the lips of Rei, told all that befell, while Meriamun hearkened with open ears — ay, and cried aloud with joy when the Wanderer forced his path through the invisible swords.

Then once more the sweet voice rang and the loosed Spirit of Rei told the words she sang, and to Meriamun they seemed fateful. Then he told her all the talk that passed between the Wanderer and the ghosts.

Now the ghosts being gone she bade the Spirit of Rei follow the Wanderer up the sanctuary, and from the loosed Spirit she heard how he rent the web, and of all the words of Helen and of the craft of him who feigned to be Paris. Then the web was torn and the eyes of the Spirit of Rei looked on the beauty of her who was behind it.

“Tell me of the face of the False Hathor?” said the Queen.

And the Spirit of Rei answered: “Her face is that beauty which gathered like a mask upon the face of dead Hataska, and upon the face of the Bai, and the face of the Ka, when thou spakest with the spirit of her thou hadst slain.”

Now Meriamun groaned aloud, for she knew that doom was on her. Last of all, she heard the telling of the loves of Odysseus and of Helen, her undying foe, of their kiss, of their betrothal, and of that marriage which should be on the morrow night. Meriamun the Queen said never a word, but when all was done and the Wanderer had left the shrine again, she whispered in the ear of Rei the Priest, and drew back his Spirit to him so that he awoke as a man awakes from sleep.

He awoke and saw the Queen sitting over against him with a face white as the face of the dead, and about her deep eyes were lines of black.

“Hast thou heard, Meriamun?” he asked.

“I have heard,” she answered.

“What dreadful thing hast thou heard?” he asked again, for he knew naught of that which his Spirit had seen.

“I have heard things that may not be told,” she said, “but this I will tell thee. He of whom we spoke hath passed the ghosts, he hath met with the False Hathor — that accursed woman — and he returns here all unharmed. Now go, Rei!”

IX

THE WAKING OF THE SLEEPER

Rei departed, wondering and heavy at heart, and Meriamun the Queen passed into her bed-chamber, and there she bade the eunuchs suffer none to enter, made fast the doors, and threw herself down upon the bed, hiding her face in its woven cushions. Thus she lay for many hours as one dead — till the darkness of the evening gathered in the chamber. But though she moved not, yet in her heart there burned a fire, now white with heat as the breath of her passion fanned it, and now waning black and dull as the tears fell from her eyes. For now she knew all — that the long foreboding, sometimes dreaded, sometimes desired, and again, like a dream, half forgotten, was indeed being fulfilled. She knew of the devouring love that must eat her life away, knew that even in the grave she should find no rest. And her foe was no longer a face beheld in a vision, but a living woman, the fairest and most favoured, Helen of Troy, Argive Helen, the False Hathor, the torch that fired great cities, the centre of all desire, whose life was the daily doom of men.

Meriamun was beautiful, but her beauty paled before the face of Helen, as a fire is slain by the sun. Magic she had also, more than any who were on the earth; but what would her spells avail against the magic of those changing eyes? And it was Helen whom the Wanderer came to seek, for *her* he had travelled the wide lands and sailed the seas. But when he told her of one whom he desired, one whom he sought, she had deemed that she herself was that one, ay, and had told him all.

At that thought she laughed out, in the madness of her anger and her shame. And he had smiled and spoken of Pharaoh her lord — and the while he spoke he had thought not on her but of the Golden Helen. Now this at least she swore, that if he might not be hers, never should he be Helen’s. She would see him dead ere that hour, ay, and herself, and if it might be, Helen would she see dead also.

To what counsel should she turn? On the morrow night these two meet; on the morrow night they would fly together. Then on the morrow must the Wanderer be slain. How should he be slain and leave no tale of murder? By poison he might die, and Kurri the Sidonian should be charged to give the cup. And then she would slay Kurri, saying that he had poisoned the Wanderer because of his hate and the loss of his goods and freedom; and yet how could she slay her love?

If once she slew him then she, too, must die and seek her joy in the kingdom that Osiris rules, and there she might find little gladness.

What, then, should she do? No answer came into her heart. There was one that must answer in her soul.

Now she rose from the bed and stood for awhile staring into the dark. Then she groped her way to a place where there was a carven chest of olive-wood and ivory, and drawing a key from her girdle she opened the chest. Within were jewels, mirrors, and unguents in jars of alabaster — ay, and poisons of deadly bane; but she touched none of these. Thrusting her hand deep into the chest, she drew forth a casket of dark metal that the people deemed unholy, a casket made of “Typhon’s Bone,” for so they call grey iron. She pressed a secret spring. It opened, and feeling within she found a smaller casket. Lifting it to her lips she whispered over it words of no living speech, and in the heavy and scented dark a low flame flickered and trembled on her lips, as she murmured in the tongue of a dead people. Then slowly the lid opened of itself, like a living mouth that opens, and as it opened, a gleam of light stole up from the box into the dusk of the chamber.

Now Meriamun looked, and shuddered as she looked. Yet she put her hand into the box, and muttering “Come forth — come forth, thou Ancient Evil,” drew somewhat to her and held it out from her on the palm of her hand. Behold, it glowed in the dusk of the chamber as a live ember glows among the ashes of the hearth. Red it glowed and green, and white, and livid blue, and its shape, as it lay upon her hand, was the shape of a coiling snake, cut, as it were, in opal and in emerald.

For awhile she gazed upon it, shuddering, as one in doubt.

“Minded I am to let thee sleep, thou Horror,” she murmured. “Twice have I looked on thee, and I would look no more. Nay, I will dare it, thou gift of the old wisdom, thou frozen fire, thou sleeping Sin, thou living Death of the ancient city, for thou alone hast wisdom.”

Thereon she unclasped the bosom of her robe and laid the gleaming toy, that seemed a snake of stone, upon her ivory breast, though she trembled at its icy touch, for it was more cold than death. With both her hands she clasped a pillar of the chamber, and so stood, and she was shaken with throes like the pangs of childbirth. Thus she endured awhile till that which was a-cold grew warm, watching its brightness that shone through her silken dress as the flame of a lamp shines through an alabaster vase. So she stood for an hour, then swiftly put off all her robes and ornaments of gold, and loosing the dark masses of her hair let it fall round her like a veil. Now she bent her head down to her breast, and breathed on that which lay upon her breast, for the Ancient Evil can live only in the breath of human kind. Thrice she breathed upon it, thrice she whispered, “*Awake! Awake! Awake!*”

And the first time that she breathed the Thing stirred and sparkled. The second time that she breathed it undid its shining folds and reared its head to hers. The third time that she breathed it slid from her bosom to the floor, then coiled itself about her feet and slowly grew as grows the magician’s magic tree.

Greater it grew and greater yet, and as it grew it shone like a torch in a tomb, and wound itself about the body of Meriamun, wrapping her in its fiery folds till it reached her middle. Then it reared its head on high, and from its eyes there flowed a light like the light of a flame, and lo! its face was the face of a fair woman — it was the face of Meriamun!

Now face looked on face, and eyes glared into eyes. Still as a white statue of the Gods stood Meriamun the Queen, and all about her form and in and out of her dark hair twined the flaming snake.

At length the Evil spoke — spoke with a human voice, with the voice of Meriamun, but in the dead speech of a dead people:

“Tell me my name,” it said.

“*Sin* is thy name,” answered Meriamun the Queen.

“Tell me whence I come,” it said again.

“From the evil that is in me,” answered Meriamun.

“Tell me whither I go.”

“Where I go there thou goest, for I have warmed thee in my breast and thou art twined about my heart.”

Then the Snake lifted up its human head and laughed horribly.

“Well art thou instructed,” it said. “So I love thee as thou lovest me,” and it bent itself and kissed her on the lips. “I am that Ancient Evil, that Life which endures out of the first death; I am that Death which abides in the living life. I am that which brought on thee the woe that is in division from the Heart’s Desire, and the name thereof is *Hell*. From Life to Life thou hast found me at thy hand, now in this shape, now in that. I taught thee the magic which thou knowest; I showed thee how to win the Throne! Now, what wilt thou of me, Meriamun, my Mother, my Sister, and my Child? From Life to Life I have been with thee: ever thou mightest have put me from thee, ever thou fliest to the wisdom which I have, and ever from thee I draw my strength, for though without me thou mightest live, without thee I must die. Say now, what is it? — tell me, and I will name my price. No more will I ask than must be, for — ah! — I am glad to wake and live again; glad to grip thy soul within these shining folds, to be fair with thy beauty! — to be foul with thy sin!”

“Lay thy lips against my ear and thine ear against my lips,” said Meriamun the

Queen, “and I will say what it is that I will of thee, thou Ancient Evil.”

So the human-headed Evil laid its ear against the lips of Meriamun, and Meriamun laid her lips against its ear, and they whispered each to each. There in the darkness they whispered, while the witch-light glittered down the grey snake’s shining folds, beamed in its eyes, and shone through the Queen’s dark hair and on her snowy breast.

At length the tale was told, and the Snake lifted its woman’s head high in the air and again it laughed.

“He seeks the Good,” it said, “and he shall find the Ill! He looks for Light, and in Darkness shall he wander! To Love he turns, in Lust he shall be lost! He would win the Golden Helen, whom he has sought through many a way, whom he has followed o’er many a sea, but first shall he find thee, Meriamun, and through thee Death! For he shall swear by the Snake who should have sworn by the Star. Far hath he wandered — further shall he wander yet, for thy sin shall be his sin! Darkness shall wear the face of Light — Evil shall shine like Good. I will give him to thee, Meriamun, but, hearken to my price. No more must I be laid cold in the gloom while thou walkest in the sunshine — nay, I must be twined about thy body. Fear not, fear not, I shall seem but a jewel in the eyes of men, a girdle fashioned cunningly for the body of a queen. But with thee henceforth I must ever go — and when thou diest, with thee must I die, and with thee pass where thou dost pass — with thee to sleep, with thee to awake again — and so, on and on, till in the end I win or thou winnest, or she wins who is our foe!”

“I give thee thy price,” said Meriamun the Queen.

“So once before thou didst give it,” answered the Evil; “ay, far, far away, beneath a golden sky and in another clime. Happy wast thou then with him thou dost desire, but I twined myself about thy heart and of twain came three and all the sorrow that has been. So woman thou hast worked, so woman it is ordained. For thou art she in whom all woes are gathered, in whom all love is fulfilled. And I have dragged thy glory down, woman, and I have loosed thee from thy gentleness, and set it free upon the earth, and Beauty is she named. By beauty doth *she* work who is the Golden Helen, and for her beauty’s sake, that all men strive to win, are wars and woes, are hopes and prayers, and longings without end. But by Evil dost *thou* work who art divorced from Innocence, and evil shalt thou ever bring on him whom thou desireth. A riddle! A riddle! Read it who may — read it if thou canst, thou who art named Meriamun the Queen, but who art less than Queen and more. Who art thou? Who is she they named the Helen? Who is that Wanderer who seeks her from afar, and who, who am *I*? A riddle! a riddle! that thou mayst not read. Yet is the answer written on earth and sky and sea, and in the hearts of men.

"Now hearken! To-morrow night thou shalt take me and twine me about thy body, doing as I bid thee, and behold! for a while thy shape shall wear the shape of the Golden Helen, and thy face shall be as her face, and thine eyes as her eyes, and thy voice as her voice. Then I leave the rest to thee, for as Helen's self thou shalt beguile the Wanderer, and once, if once only, be a wife to him whom thou desireth. Naught can I tell thee of the future, I who am but a counsellor, but hereafter it may be that woes will come, woes and wars and death. But what matter these when thou hast had thy desire, when he hath sinned, and hath sworn by the Snake who should have sworn by the Star, and when he is bound to thee by ties that may not be loosed? Choose, Meriamun, choose! Put my counsel from thee and to-morrow this man thou lovest shall be lost to thee, lost in the arms of Helen; and alone for many years shalt thou bear the burden of thy lonely love. Take it, and he shall at least be thine, let come what may come. Think on it and choose!"

Thus spake the Ancient Evil, tempting her who was named Meriamun, while she hearkened to the tempting.

"I have chosen," she said; "I will wear the shape of Helen, and be a wife to him I love, and then let ruin fall. Sleep, thou Ancient Evil. Sleep, for no more may I endure thy face of fear that is my face, nor the light of those flaming eyes that are my eyes made mad."

Again the Thing reared its human head and laughed out in triumph. Then slowly it unloosed its gleaming coils: slowly it slid to the earth and shrank and withered like a flaming scroll, till at length it seemed once more but a shining jewel of opal and of amethyst.

The Wanderer, when he left the inner secret shrine, saw no more the guardian of the gates, nor heard the clash of the swords unseen, for the Gods had given the beauty of Helen to Odysseus of Ithaca, as it was foretold.

Without the curtains the priests of the temple were gathered wondering — little could they understand how it came to pass that the hero who was called Eperitus had vanished through the curtains and had not been smitten down by the unseen swords. And when they saw him come forth glorious and unharmed they cried aloud with fear.

But he laughed and said, "Fear not. Victory is to him whom the Gods appoint. I have done battle with the wardens of the shrine, and passed them, and methinks that they are gone. I have looked upon the Hathor also, and more than that seek ye not to know. Now give me food, for I am weary."

So they bowed before him, and leading him thence to their chamber of banquets gave him of their best, and watched him while he ate and drank and put from him the desire of food.

Then he rose and went from the temple, and again the priests bowed before him. Moreover, they gave him freedom of the temple, and keys whereby all the doors might be opened, though little, as they thought, had he any need of keys.

Now the Wanderer, walking gladly and light of heart, came to his own lodging in the courts of the Palace. At the door of the lodging stood Rei the Priest, who, when he saw him, ran to him and embraced him, so glad was he that the Wanderer had escaped alive.

"Little did I think to look upon thee again, Eperitus," he said. "Had it not been for that which the Queen — —" and he bethought himself and stayed his speech.

"Nevertheless, here I am unhurt, of ghost or men," the Wanderer answered, laughing, as he passed into the lodging. "But what of the Queen?"

"Naught, Eperitus, naught, save that she was grieved when she learned that thou hadst gone up to the Temple of the Hathor, there, as she thought, to perish. Hearken, thou Eperitus, I know not if thou art God or man, but oaths are binding both men and Gods, and thou didst swear an oath to Pharaoh — is it not so?"

"Ay, Rei. I swore an oath that I would guard the Queen well till Pharaoh came again."

"Art thou minded to keep that oath, Eperitus?" asked Rei, looking on him strangely. "Art thou minded to guard the fair fame of Pharaoh's Queen, that is more precious than her life? Methinks thou dost understand my meaning, Eperitus?"

"Perchance I understand," answered the Wanderer. "Know, Rei, that I am so minded."

Then Rei spake again, darkly. "Methinks some sickness hath smitten Meriamun the Queen, and she craves thee for her physician. Now things come about as they were foreshown in the portent of that vision whereof I spoke to thee. But if thou dost break thy oath to him whose salt thou eatest, then, Eperitus, God or man, thou art a dastard."

"Have I not said that I have no mind so to break mine oath?" he answered, then sank his head upon his breast and communed with his crafty heart while Rei watched him. Presently he lifted up his head and spoke:

"Rei," he said, "I am minded to tell thee a strange story and a true, for this I see, that our will runs one way, and thou canst help me, and, in helping me, thyself and Pharaoh to whom I swore an oath, and her whose honour thou holdest dear. But this I warn thee, Rei, that if thou dost betray me, not thine age, not thy office, nor the friendship thou hast shown me, shall save thee."

"Speak on, Odysseus, Laertes' son, Odysseus of Ithaca," said Rei; "may my life be forfeit if I betray thy counsel, if it harm not those I serve."

Now the Wanderer started to his feet, crying:

“How knowest thou that name?”

“I know it,” said Rei, “and I tell thee that I know it, thou most crafty of men, to show this, that with me thy guile will not avail thee.” For he would not tell him that he had it from the lips of the Queen.

“Thou hast heard a name that had been in the mouths of many,” said the Wanderer; “perchance it is mine, perchance it is the name of another. It matters not. Now know this: I fear this Queen of thine. Hither I came to seek a woman, but the Queen I came not to seek. Yet I have not come in vain, for yonder, Rei, yonder, in the Temple of the Hathor, I found her on whose quest I came, and who awaited me there well guarded till I should come to take her. On the morrow night I go forth to the temple, and there, by the gates of the temple, I shall find her whom all men desire, but who loves me alone among men, for so it has been fated of the Gods. Thence I bring her hither that here we may be wed. Now this is my mind: if thou wilt aid me with a ship and men, that at the first light of dawn we should flee this land of thine, and that thou shouldest keep my going secret for awhile till I have gained the sea. True it is that I swore to guard the Queen till Pharaoh come again; but as thou knowest, things are so that I can best guard her by my flight, and if Pharaoh thinks ill of me — so it must be. Moreover I ask thee to meet me by the pylon of the Temple of Hathor to-morrow at one hour before midnight. There will we talk with her who is called the Hathor, and prepare our flight, and thence thou shalt go to that ship which thou hast made ready.”

Now Rei thought for awhile and answered:

“Somewhat I fear to look upon this Goddess, yet I will dare it. Tell me, then, how shall I know her at the temple’s gate?”

“Thou shalt know her, Rei, by the red star which burns upon her breast. But fear not, for I will be there. Say, wilt thou make the ship ready?”

“The ship shall be ready, Eperitus, and though I love thee well, I say this, that I would it rode the waves which roll around the shores of Khem and thou wert with it, and with thee she who is called the Hathor, that Goddess whom thou desirest.”

X

THE OATH OF THE WANDERER

That night the Wanderer saw not Meriamun, but on the morrow she sent a messenger to him, bidding him to her feast that night. He had little heart to go, but a Queen's courtesy is a command, and he went at sundown. Rei also went to the feast, and as he went, meeting the Wanderer in the ante-chamber, he whispered to him that all things were made ready, that a good ship waited him in the harbour, the very ship that he had captured from the Sidonians, and that he, Rei, would be with him by the pylon gate of the temple one hour before midnight.

Presently, as he whispered, the doors were flung wide and Meriamun the Queen passed in, followed by eunuchs and waiting-women. She was royally arrayed, her face was pale and cold, but her great eyes glowed in it. Low the Wanderer bowed before her. She bent her head in answer, then gave him her hand, and he led her to the feast. They sat there side by side, but the Queen spoke little, and that little of Pharaoh and the host of the Apura, from whom no tidings came.

When at length the feast was done, Meriamun bade the Wanderer to her private chamber, and thither he went for awhile, though sorely against his will. But Rei came not in with them, and thus he was left alone with the Queen, for she dismissed the waiting ladies.

When they had gone there was silence for a space, but ever the Wanderer felt the eyes of Meriamun watching him as though they would read his heart.

"I am weary," she said, at length. "Tell me of the wanderings, Odysseus of Ithaca — nay, tell me of the siege of Ilios and of the sinful Helen, who brought all these woes about. Ay, and tell me how thou didst creep from the leaguers of the Achæans, and, wrapped in a beggar's weeds, seek speech of this evil Helen, now justly slain of the angry Gods."

"Justly slain is she indeed," answered the crafty Wanderer. "An ill thing is it, truly, that the lives of so many heroes should be lost because of the beauty of a faithless woman. I had it in my own heart to slay her when I spoke with her in Troy town, but the Gods held my hand."

"Was it so, indeed?" said the Queen, smiling darkly. "Doubtless if she yet lived, and thou sawest her, thou wouldst slay her. Is it not so, Odysseus?"

“She lives no more, O Queen!” he answered.

“Nay, she lives no more, Odysseus. Now tell me; yesterday thou wentest up to the Temple of the Hathor; tell me what thou didst see in the temple.”

“I saw a fair woman, or, perchance, an immortal Goddess, stand upon the pylon brow, and as she stood and sang those who looked were bereft of reason. And thereafter some tried to pass the ghosts who guarded the woman, and were slain of invisible swords. It was a strange sight to see.”

“A strange sight, surely. But thou didst not lose thy craft, Odysseus, nor try to break through the ghosts?”

“Nay, Meriamun. In my youth I looked upon the beauty of Argive Helen, who was fairer than she who stood upon the pylon tower. None who have looked upon the Helen would seek to win the Hathor.”

“But, perchance, those who have looked upon the Hathor may seek to win the Helen,” she answered slowly, and he knew not what to say, for he felt the power of her magic on him.

So for awhile they spoke, and Meriamun, knowing all, wondered much at the guile of the Wanderer, but she showed no wonder in her face. At length he rose and, bowing before her, said that he must visit the guard that watched the Palace gates. She looked upon him strangely and bade him go. Then he went, and right glad he was thus to be free of her.

But when the curtains had swung behind him, Meriamun the Queen sprang to her feet, and a dreadful light of daring burned in her eyes. She clapped her hands, and bade those who came to her seek their rest, as she would also, for she was weary and needed none to wait upon her. So the women went, leaving her alone, and she passed into her sleeping chamber.

“Now must the bride deck herself for the bridal,” she said, and straightway, pausing not, drew forth the Ancient Evil from its hiding-place and warmed it on her breast, breathing the breath of life into its nostrils. Now, as before, it grew and wound itself about her, and whispered in her ear, bidding her clothe herself in bridal white and clasp the Evil around her; then think upon the beauty she had seen gather on the face of dead Hataska in the Temple of Osiris, and on the face of the Bai, and the face of the Ka. She did its command, fearing nothing, for her heart was alight with love, and torn with jealous hate, and little did she reck of the sorrows which her sin should bring forth. So she bathed herself in perfumes, shook out her shining hair, and clad herself in white attire. Then she looked upon her beauty in the mirror of silver, and cried in the bitterness of her heart to the Evil that lay beside her like a snake asleep.

“Ah, am I not fair enow to win him whom I love? Say, thou Evil, must I indeed steal the beauty of another to win him whom I love?”

“This must thou do,” said the Evil, “or lose him in Helen’s arms. For though thou art fair, yet is she Beauty’s self, and her gentleness he loves, and not thy pride. Choose, choose swiftly for presently the Wanderer goes forth to win the Golden Helen.”

Then she doubted no more, but lifting the shining Evil, held it to her. With a dreadful laugh it twined itself about her, and lo! it shrank to the shape of a girdling, double-headed snake of gold, with eyes of ruby flame. And as it shrank Meriamun the Queen thought on the beauty she had seen upon the face of the dead Hataska, on the face of the Bai, and the face of the Ka, and all the while she watched her beauty in the mirror. And as she watched, behold, her face grew as the face of death, ashen and hollow, then slowly burned into life again — but all her loveliness was changed. Changed were her dark locks to locks of gold, changed were her deep eyes to eyes of blue, changed was the glory of her pride to the sweetness of the Helen’s smile. Fairest among women had been her form, now it was fairer yet, and now — now she was Beauty’s self, and like to swoon at the dream of her own loveliness.

“So, ah, so must the Hathor seem,” she said, and lo! her voice rang strangely in her ears. For the voice, too, was changed, it was more soft than the whispering of wind-stirred reeds; it was more sweet than the murmuring of bees at noon.

Now she must go forth, and fearful at her own loveliness and heavy with her sin, yet glad with a strange joy, she passes from her chamber and glides like a starbeam through the still halls of her Palace. The white light of the moon creeps into them and falls upon the faces of the dreadful Gods, on the awful smile of sphinxes, and the pictures of her forefathers, kings and queens who long were dead. And as she goes she seems to hear them whisper each to each of the dreadful sin that she has sinned, and of the sorrow that shall be. But she does not heed, and never stays her foot. For her heart is alight as with a flame, and she will win the Wanderer to her arms — the Wanderer sought through many lives, found after many deaths.

Now the Wanderer is in his chamber, waiting for the hour to set forth to find the Golden Helen. His heart is alight, and strange dreams of the past go before his eyes, and strange visions of long love to be. His heart burns like a lamp in the blackness, and by that light he sees all the days of his life that have been, and all the wars that he has won, and all the seas that he has sailed. And now he knows that these things are dreams indeed, illusions of the sense, for there is but one thing true in the life of men, and that is Love; there is but one thing perfect, the beauty which is Love’s robe; there is but one thing which all men seek and are born to find at last, the heart of the Golden Helen, the World’s Desire, that is peace and joy and rest.

He binds his armour on him, for foes may lurk in darkness, and takes the Bow of Eurytus, and the grey bolts of death; for perchance the fight is not yet done, he must cleave his way to joy. Then he combs his locks and sets the golden helm upon them, and, praying to the Gods who hear not, he passes from his chamber.

Now the chamber opened into a great hall of pillars. As was his custom when he went alone by night, the Wanderer glanced warily down the dusky hall, but he might see little because of the shadows. Nevertheless, the moonlight poured into the centre of the hall from the clerestories in the roof, and lay there shining white as water beneath black banks of reeds. Again the Wanderer glanced with keen, quick eyes, for there was a sense in his heart that he was no more alone in the hall, though whether it were man or ghost, or, perchance, one of the immortal Gods who looked on him, he might not tell. Now it seemed to him that he saw a shape of white moving far away in the shadow. Then he grasped the black bow and laid hand upon his quiver so that the shafts rattled.

Now it would seem that the shape in the shadow heard the rattling of the shafts, or perchance saw the moonlight gleam upon the Wanderer’s golden harness — at the least, it drew near till it came to the edge of the pool of light. There it paused as a bather pauses ere she steps into the fountain. The Wanderer paused also, wondering what the shape might be. Half was he minded to try it with an arrow from the bow, but he held his hand and watched.

And as he watched, the white shape glided into the space of moonlight, and he saw that it was the form of a woman draped in white, and that about her shone a gleaming girdle, and in the girdle gems which sparkled like the eyes of a snake. Tall was the shape and lovely as a statue of Aphrodite; but who or what it was he might not tell, for the head was bent and the face hidden.

Awhile the shape stood thus, and as it stood, the Wanderer passed towards it, marvelling much, till he also stood in the pool of moonlight that shimmered on his golden mail. Then suddenly the shape lifted its face so that the light fell full on it, and stretched out its arms towards him, and lo! the face was the face of the Argive Helen — of her whom he went forth to seek. He looked upon its beauty, he looked upon the eyes of blue, upon the golden hair, upon the shining arms; then slowly, very slowly, and in silence — for he could find no words — the Wanderer drew near.

She did not move nor speak. So still she stood that scarce she seemed to breathe. Only the shining eyes of her snake-girdle glittered like living things. Again he stopped fearfully, for he held that this was surely a mocking ghost which stood before him, but still she neither moved nor spoke.

Then at length he found his tongue and spoke:

“Lady,” he whispered, “is it indeed thou, is it Argive Helen whom I look upon, or is it, perchance, a ghost sent by Queen Persephone from the House of Hades to make a mock of me?"

Now the voice of Helen answered him in sweet tones and low:

"Did I not tell thee, Odysseus of Ithaca, did I not tell thee, yesterday in the halls of Hathor, after thou hadst overcome the ghosts, that to-night we should be wed? Wherefore, then, dost thou deem me of the number of the bodiless?"

The Wanderer hearkened. The voice was the voice of Helen, the eyes were the eyes of Helen, and yet his heart feared guile.

"So did Argive Helen tell me of a truth, Lady, but this she said, that I should find her by the pylon of the temple, and lead her thence to be my bride. Thither I go but now to seek her. But if thou art Helen, how comest thou to these Palace halls? And where, Lady, is that Red Star which should gleam upon thy breast, that Star which weeps out the blood of men?"

"No more doth the red dew fall from the Star that was set upon my breast, Odysseus, for now that thou hast won me men die no more for my beauty's sake. Gone is the Star of War; and see, Wisdom rings me round, the symbol of the Deathless Snake that signifies love eternal. Thou dost ask how I came hither, I, who am immortal and a daughter of the Gods? Seek not to know, Odysseus, for where Fate puts it in my mind to be, there do the Gods bear me. Wouldst thou, then, that I leave thee, Odysseus?"

"Last of all things do I desire this," he answered, for now his wisdom went a-wandering; now he forgot the words of Aphrodite, warning him that the Helen might be known by one thing only, the Red Star on her breast, whence falls the blood of men; and he no more doubted but that she was the Golden Helen.

Then she who wore the Helen's shape stretched out her arms and smiled so sweetly that the Wanderer knew nothing any more, save that she drew him to her.

Slowly she glided before him, ever smiling, and where she went he followed, as men follow beauty in a dream. She led him through halls and corridors, past the sculptured statues of the Gods, past man-headed sphinxes, and pictures of long-dead kings.

And as she goes, once more it seems to her that she hears them whisper each to each the horror of her sin and the sorrow that shall be. But naught she heeds who ever leads him on, and naught he hears who ever follows after, till at length, though he knows it not, they stand in the bed-chamber of the Queen, and by Pharaoh's golden bed.

Then once more she speaks:

"Odysseus of Ithaca, whom I have loved from the beginning, and whom I shall love till all deaths are done, before thee stands that Loveliness which the

Gods predestined to thy arms. Now take thou thy Bride; but first lay thy hand upon this golden Snake, that rings me round, the new bridal gift of the Gods, and swear thy marriage oath, which may not be broken. Swear thus, Odysseus: ‘I love thee, Woman or Immortal, and thee alone, and by whatever name thou art called, and in whatever shape thou goest, to thee I will cleave, and to thee alone, till the day of the passing of Time. I will forgive thy sins, I will soothe thy sorrows, I will suffer none to come betwixt thee and me. This I swear to thee, Woman or Immortal, who dost stand before me. I swear it to thee, Woman, for now and for ever, for here and hereafter, in whatever shape thou goest on the earth, by whatever name thou art known among men.’

“Swear thou thus, Odysseus of Ithaca, Laertes’ son, or leave me and go thy ways!”

“Great is the oath,” quoth the Wanderer; for though now he feared no guile, yet his crafty heart liked it ill.

“Choose, and choose swiftly,” she answered. “Swear the oath, or leave me and never see me more!”

“Leave thee I will not, and cannot if I would,” he said. “Lady, I swear!” And he laid his hand upon the Snake that ringed her round, and swore the dreadful oath. Yea, he forgot the words of the Goddess, and the words of Helen, and he swore by the Snake who should have sworn by the Star. By the immortal Gods he swore it, by the Symbol of the Snake, and by the Beauty of his Bride. And as he swore the eyes of the Serpent sparkled, and the eyes of her who wore the beauty of Helen shone, and faintly the black bow of Eurytus thrilled, forboding Death and War.

But little the Wanderer thought on guile or War or Death, for the kiss of her whom he deemed the Golden Helen was on his lips, and he went up into the golden bed of Meriamun.

XI

THE WAKING OF THE WANDERER

Now Rei the Priest, as had been appointed, went to the pylon gate of the Temple of Hathor. Awhile he stood looking for the Wanderer, but though the hour had come, the Wanderer came not. Then the Priest went to the pylon and stood in the shadow of the gate. As he stood there a wicket in the gate opened, and there passed out a veiled figure of a woman upon whose breast burned a red jewel that shone in the night like a star. The woman waited awhile, looking down the moonlit road between the black rows of sphinxes, but the road lay white and empty, and she turned and hid herself in the shadow of the pylon, where Rei could see nothing of her except the red star that gleamed upon her breast.

Now a great fear came upon the old man, for he knew that he looked upon the strange and deadly Hathor. Perchance he too would perish like the rest who had looked on her to their ruin. He thought of flight, but he did not dare to fly. Then he too stared down the road seeking for the Wanderer, but no shadow crossed the moonlight. Thus things went for awhile, and still the Hathor stood silently in the shadow, and still the blood-red star shone upon her breast. And so it came to pass that the World's Desire must wait at the tryst like some forsaken village maid.

While Rei the Priest crouched thus against the pylon wall, praying for the coming of him who came not, suddenly a voice spoke to him in tones sweeter than a lute.

"Who art thou that hidest in the shadow?" said the voice.

He knew that it was the Hathor who spoke, and so afraid was he that he could not answer.

Then the voice spoke again:

"Oh, thou most crafty of men, why doth it please thee to come hither to seek me in the guise of an aged priest. Once, Odysseus, I saw thee in beggar's weeds, and knew thee in the midst of thy foes. Shall I not know thee again in peace beneath thy folded garb and thy robes of white?"

Rei heard and knew that he could hide himself no longer. Therefore he came forward trembling, and knelt before her, saying: "Oh, mighty Queen, I am not that man whom thou didst name, nor am I hid in any wrappings of disguise. Nay, I do avow myself to be named Rei the Chief Architect of Pharaoh, the

Commander of the Legion of Amen, the chief of the Treasury of Amen, and a man of repute in this land of Khem. Now, if indeed thou art the Goddess of this temple, as I judge by that red jewel which burns upon thy breast, I pray thee be merciful to thy servant and smite me not in thy wrath, for not by my own will am I here, but by the command of that hero whom thou hast named, and for whose coming I await. Be merciful therefore, and hold thy hand."

"Fear not thou, Rei," said the sweet voice. "Little am I minded to harm thee, or any man, for though many men have gone down the path of darkness because of me, who am a doom to men, not by my will has it been, but by the will of the immortal Gods, who use me to their ends. Rise thou, Rei, and tell me why thou art come hither, and where is he whom I have named?"

Then Rei rose, and looking up saw the light of the Helen's eyes shining on him through her veil. But there was no anger in them, they shone mildly as stars in an evening sky, and his heart was comforted.

"I know not where the Wanderer is, O thou Immortal," he said. "This I know only, that he bade me meet him here at one hour before midnight, and so I came."

"Perchance he too will come anon," said the sweet voice; "but why did he, whom thou namest the Wanderer, bid thee meet him here?"

"For this reason, O Hathor. He told me that this night he should be wed to thee, and was minded thereafter to fly from Khem with thee. Therefore he bade me come, who am a friend to him, to talk with thee and him as to how thy flight should go, and yet he comes not."

Now as Rei spake, he turned his face upward, and the Golden Helen looked upon it.

"Hearken, Rei," she said; "but yesterday, after I had stood upon the pylon tower as the Gods decreed, and sang to those who were ripe to die, I went to my shrine and wove my web while the doomed men fell beneath the swords of them who were set to guard my beauty, but who now are gone. And as I wove, one passed the Ghosts and rent the web and stood before me. It was he whom I await to-night, and after awhile I knew him for Odysseus of Ithaca, Laertes' son. But as I looked on him and spake with him, behold, I saw a spirit watching us, though he might not see it, a spirit whose face I knew not, for no such man have I known in my life days. Know then, Rei, that the face of the spirit was *thy* face, and its robes *thy* robes."

Then once more Rei trembled in his fear.

"Now, Rei, I bid thee tell me, and speak the truth, lest evil come on thee, not at my hands indeed, for I would harm none, but at the hands of those Immortals who are akin to me. What did thy spirit yonder, in my sacred shrine? How didst thou dare to enter and look upon my beauty and hearken to my words?"

"Oh, great Queen," said Rei, "I will tell thee the truth, and I pray thee let not the wrath of the Gods fall upon me. Not of my own will did my spirit enter into thy Holy Place, nor do I know aught of what it saw therein, seeing that no memory of it remains in me. Nay, it was sent of her whom I serve, who is the mistress of all magic, and to her it made report, but what it said I know not."

"And whom dost thou serve, Rei? And why did she send thy spirit forth to spy on me?"

"I serve Meriamun the Queen, and she sent my spirit forth to learn what befell the Wanderer when he went up against the Ghosts."

"And yet he said naught to me of this Meriamun. Say, Rei, is she fair?"

"Of all women who live upon the earth she is the very fairest."

"Of *all*, sayest thou, Rei? Look now, and say if Meriamun, whom thou dost serve, is fairer than Argive Helen, whom thou dost name the Hathor?" and she lifted her veil so that he saw the face that was beneath.

Now when he heard that name, and looked upon the glory of her who is Beauty's self, Rei shrank back till he went nigh to falling on the earth.

"Nay," he said, covering his eyes with his hand; "nay thou art fairer than she."

"Then tell me," she said, letting fall her veil again, "and for thine own sake tell me true, why would Meriamun the Queen, whom thou servest, know the fate of him who came up against the Ghosts?"

"Wouldst thou know, Daughter of Amen?" answered Rei; "then I will tell thee, for through thee alone she whom I serve and love can be saved from shame. Meriamun doth also love the man whom thou wouldst wed."

Now when the Golden Helen heard these words, she pressed her hand against her bosom.

"So I feared," she said, "even so. She loves him, and he comes not. Ah! if it be so! Now, Rei, I am tempted to pay this Queen of thine in her own craft, and send thy spirit forth to spy on her. Nay, that I will not do, for never shall Helen work by shameful guile or magic. Nay — but we will hence, Rei, we will go to the Palace where my rival dwells, there to learn the truth. Fear not, I will bring no ill on thee, nor on her whom thou servest. Lead me to the Palace, Rei. Lead me swiftly."

Now the Wanderer slept in the arms of Meriamun, who wore the shape of Argive Helen. His golden harness was piled by the golden bed, and by the bed stood the black bow of Eurytus. The night drew on towards the dawning, when of a sudden the Bow awoke and sang, and thus it sang: "Wake! wake! though the arms of thy Love are about thee, yet dearer by far

Than her kiss is the sound of the fight; And more sweet than her voice is the

cry of the trumpet, and goodlier far
Than her arms is the battle's delight:
And what eyes are so bright as the sheen of the bronze when the sword is aloft,
What breast is so fair as the shield?
Or what garland of roses is dear as the helm, and what sleep is so soft
As the sleep of slain men on the field?"

Lo! the Snake that was twined about the form of her who wore the shape of Helen heard the magic song. It awoke, it arose. It twisted itself about the body of the Wanderer and the body of her who wore the shape of Helen, knitting them together in the bond of sin. It grew, and lifting its woman's head on high, it sang in answer. And thus it sang of doom: "Sleep! be at rest for an hour; as in death men believe they shall rest,
But they wake! And thou too shalt awake!
In the dark of the grave do they stir; but about them, on arms and on breast,
Are the toils and the coils of the Snake: By the tree where the first lovers lay, did I watch as I watch where he lies,
Love laid on the bosom of Lust!"

Then the great bow answered the Snake, and it sang: "Of the tree where the first lovers sinned was I shapen; I bid thee arise,
Thou Slayer that soon shall be dust."

And the Snake sang reply:

"Be thou silent, my Daughter of Death, be thou silent nor wake him from sleep,
With the song and the sound of thy breath."

The Bow heard the song of the Snake. The Death heard the song of the
Sin, and again its thin music thrilled upon the air. For thus it sang:

"Be thou silent, my Mother of Sin, for this watch it is given me to keep
O'er the sleep of the dealer of Death!"
Then the Snake sang:
"Hush, hush, thou art young, and thou camest to birth when the making was done
Of the world: I am older therein!"

And the Bow answered:

"But without me thy strength were as weakness, the prize of thy strength were unwon.
I am *Death*, and thy Daughter, O Sin!"

Now the song of the Snake and the song of the Bow sunk through the depths of sleep till they reached the Wanderer's ears. He sighed, he stretched out his mighty arms, he opened his eyes, and lo! they looked upon the eyes that bent above him, eyes of flame that lit the face of a woman — the face of Meriamun that wavered on a serpent's neck and suddenly was gone. He cried aloud with fear, and sprang from the couch. The faint light of the dawning crept through the casements and fell upon the bed. The faint light of the dawning fell upon the golden bed of Pharaoh's Queen, it gleamed upon the golden armour that was piled by the bed, and on the polished surface of the great black bow. It shone upon the face of her who lay in the bed.

Then he remembered. Surely he had slept with the Golden Helen, who was his bride, and surely he had dreamed an evil dream, a dream of a snake that wore the face of Pharaoh's Queen. Yea, there lay the Golden Helen, won at last — the Golden Helen now made a wife to him. Now he mocked his own fears, and now he bent to wake her with a kiss. Faintly the new-born light crept and gathered on her face; ah! how beautiful she was in sleep. Nay, what was this? Whose face was this beneath his own? Not so had Helen looked in the shrine of her temple, when he tore the web. Not so had Helen seemed yonder in the pillared hall when she stood in the moonlit space — not so had she seemed when he sware the great oath to love her, and her alone. Whose beauty was it then that now he saw? By the Immortal Gods, it was the beauty of Meriamun; it was the glory of the Pharaoh's Queen!

He stared upon her lovely sleeping face, while terror shook his soul. How could this be? What then had he done?

Then light broke upon him. He looked around the chamber — there on the walls were the graven images of the Gods of Khem, there above the bed the names of Meneptah and Meriamun were written side by side in the sacred signs of Khem. Not with the Golden Helen had he slept, but with the wife of Pharaoh! To her he had sworn the oath, and she had worn the Helen's shape — and now the spell was broken.

He stood amazed, and as he stood, again the great bow thrilled, warning him of Death to come. Then his strength came back to him, and he seized his armour and girt it about him piece by piece till he lifted the golden helm. It slipped from his hand; with a crash it fell upon the marble floor. With a crash it fell, and she who slept in the bed awoke with a cry, and sprang from the bed, her dark hair streaming down, her night-gear held to her by the golden snake with gemmy eyes that she must ever wear. But he caught his sword in his hand, and threw down the ivory sheath.

BOOK III

I

THE VENGEANCE OF KURRI

The Wanderer and Pharaoh’s Queen stood face to face in the twilight of the chamber. They stood in silence, while bitter anger and burning shame poured into his heart and shone from his eyes. But the face of Meriamun was cold as the dead, and on it was a smile such as the carven sphinxes wear. Only her breast heaved tumultuously as though in triumph, and her limbs quivered like a shaken reed. At length she spoke.

“Why lookest thou so strangely on me, my Lord and Love; and why hast thou girded thy harness on thy back? Scarcely doth glorious Ra creep from the breast of Nout, and wouldest thou leave thy bridal bed, Odysseus?”

Still he spoke no word, but looked on her with burning eyes. Then she stretched out her arms and came towards him lover-like. And now he found his tongue again.

“Get thee from me!” he said, in a voice low and terrible to hear; “get thee from me. Dare not to touch me, thou, who art a harlot and a witch, lest I forget my manhood and strike thee dead before me.”

“That thou canst not do, Odysseus,” she answered soft, “for whatever else I be I am thy wife, and thou art bound to me for ever. What was the oath which thou didst swear not five short hours ago?”

“I swore an oath indeed, but not to thee, Meriamun. I swore an oath to Argive Helen, whom I love, and I wake to find thee sleeping at my side, thee whom I hate.”

“Nay,” she said, “to me thou didst swear the oath, Odysseus, for thou, of men the most guileful, hast at length been over-mastered in guile. To me, ‘Woman or Immortal,’ thou didst swear ‘for now and for ever, for here and hereafter, *in whatever shape thou goest on the earth, by whatever name thou art known among men*.’ Oh, be not wroth, my lord, but hearken. What matters the shape in which thou seest me? At the least am I not fair? And what is beauty but a casket that hides the gem within? ’Tis my love which thou hast won, my love that is immortal, and not the flesh that perishes. For I have loved thee, ay, and thou hast loved me from of old and in other lives than this, and I tell thee that we shall love again and yet again when thou art no more Odysseus of Ithaca, and when I am no more Meriamun, a Queen of Khem, but while we walk in other forms upon the world and are named by other names. I am thy doom, thou Wanderer, and wherever thou dost wander through the fields of Life and Death I shall be at thy side. For I am She of whom thou art, and thou art He of whom I am, and though the Gods have severed us, yet must we float together down the river of our lives till we find that sea of which the Spirit knows. Therefore put me not from thee and raise not my wrath against thee, for if I used my magic to bring thee to my arms, yet they are thy home." And once more she came towards him.

Now the Wanderer drew an arrow from his quiver, and set the notch against his breast and the keen barb towards the breast of Meriamun.

"Draw on," he said. "Thus will I take thee to my arms again. Hearken, Meriamun the witch — Meriamun the harlot: Pharaoh's wife and Queen of Khem. To thee I swore an oath indeed, and perchance because I suffered thy guile to overcome my wisdom, because I swore upon That which circles thee about, and not by the Red Star which gleams upon the Helen's breast, it may be that I shall lose her whom I love. So indeed the Queen of Heaven told me, yonder in sea-girt Ithaca, though to my sorrow I forgot her words. But if I lose her or if I win, know this, that I love her and her only, and I hate thee like the gates of hell. For thou hast tricked me with thy magic, thou hast stolen the shape of Beauty's self and dared to wear it, thou hast drawn a dreadful oath from me, and I have taken thee to wife. And more, thou art the Queen of Khem, thou art Pharaoh's wife, whom I swore to guard; but thou hast brought the last shame upon me, for now I am a man dishonoured, and I have sinned against the hospitable hearth, and the God of guests and hosts. And therefore I will do this. I will call together the guard of which I am chief, and tell them all thy shame, ay, and all my sorrow. I will shout it in the streets, I will publish it from the temple tops, and when Pharaoh comes again I will call it into his ear, till he and all who live in Khem know thee for what thou art, and see thee in thy naked shame."

She hearkened, and her face grew terrible to see. A moment she stood as though in thought, one hand pressed to her brow and one upon her breast. Then she spoke.

"Is that thy last word, Wanderer?"

"It is my last word, Queen," he answered, and turned to go.

Then with the hand that rested on her breast she rent her night robes and tore her perfumed hair. Past him she rushed towards the door, and as she ran sent scream on scream echoing up the painted walls.

The curtains shook, the doors were burst asunder, and through them poured guards, eunuchs, and waiting-women.

"Help," she cried, pointing to the Wanderer. "Help, help! oh, save mine honour from this evil man, this foreign thief whom Pharaoh set to guard me, and who guards me thus. This coward who dares to creep upon me — the Queen of Khem — even as I slept in Pharaoh's bed!" and she cast herself upon the floor and threw her hair about her, and lay there groaning and weeping as though in the last agony of shame.

Now when the guards saw how the thing was, a great cry of rage and shame went up from them, and they rushed upon the Wanderer like wolves upon a stag at bay. But he leapt backwards to the side of the bed, and even as he leapt he set the arrow in his hand upon the string of the great black bow. Then he drew it to his ear. The bow-string sang, the arrow rushed forth, and he who stood before it got his death. Again the bow-string sang, again the arrow rushed, and lo! another man was sped. A third time he drew the bow and the soul of a third went down the ways of hell. Now they rolled back from him as the waters roll from a rock, for none dares face the shafts of death. They shot at him with spears and arrows from behind the shelter of the pillars, but none of these might harm him, for some fell from his mail and some he caught upon his buckler.

Now among those who had run thither at the sound of the cries of Meriamun was that same Kurri, the miserable captain of the Sidonians, whose life the Wanderer had spared, and whom he had given to the Queen to be her jeweller. And when Kurri saw the Wanderer's plight, he thought in his greedy heart of those treasures that he had lost, and of how he who had been a captain and a rich merchant of Sidon was now nothing but a slave.

Then a great desire came upon him to work the Wanderer ill, if so he might. Now all round the edge of the chamber were shadows, for the light was yet faint, and Kurri crept into the shadows, carrying a long spear in his hand, and that spear was hafted into the bronze point which had stood in the Wanderer's helm. Little did the Wanderer glance his way, for he watched the lances and arrows that flew towards him from the portal, so the end of it was that the Sidonian passed round the chamber unseen and climbed into the golden bed of Pharaoh on the further side of the bed. Now the Wanderer stood with his back to the bed and a spear's length from it, and in the silken hangings were fixed spears and arrows. Kurri's first thought was to stab him in the back, but this he did not; first, because he feared lest he should fail to pierce the golden harness and the Wanderer should turn and slay him; and again because he hoped that the Wanderer would be put to death by torment, and he was fain to have a hand in it, for after the fashion of the Sidonians he was skilled in the tormenting of men. Therefore he waited till presently the Wanderer let fall his buckler and drew the bow. But ere the arrow reached his ear Kurri had stretched out his spear from between the hangings and touched the string with the keen bronze, so that it burst asunder and the grey shaft fell upon the marble floor. Then, as the

Wanderer cast down the bow and turned with a cry to spring on him who had cut the cord, for his eye had caught the sheen of the outstretched spear, Kurri lifted the covering of the purple web which lay upon the bed and deftly cast it over the hero's head so that he was inmeshed. Thereon the soldiers and the eunuchs took heart, seeing what had been done, and ere ever the Wanderer could clear himself from the covering and draw his sword, they rushed upon him. Cumbered as he was, they might not easily overcome him, but in the end they bore him down and held him fast, so that he could not stir so much as a finger. Then one cried aloud to Meriamun:

"The Lion is trapped, O Queen! Say, shall we slay him?"

But Meriamun, who had watched the fray through cover of her hands, shuddered and made answer:

"Nay, but lock his tongue with a gag, strip his armour from him, and bind him with fetters of bronze, and make him fast to the dungeon walls with great chains of bronze. There shall he bide till Pharaoh come again; for against Pharaoh's honour he hath sinned and shamefully broken that oath he swore to him, and therefore shall Pharaoh make him die in such fashion as seems good to him."

Now when Kurri heard these words, and saw the Wanderer's sorry plight, he bent over him and said:

"It was I, Kurri the Sidonian, who cut the cord of thy great bow, Eperitus; with the spear-point that thou gavest back to me I cut it, I, whose folk thou didst slay and madest me a slave. And I will crave this boon of Pharaoh, that mine shall be the hand to torment thee night and day till at last thou diest, cursing the day that thou wast born."

The Wanderer looked upon him and answered: "There thou liest, thou Sidonian dog, for this is written in thy face, that thou thyself shalt die within an hour and that strangely."

Then Kurri shrank back scowling. But no more words might Odysseus speak, for at once they forced his jaws apart and gagged him with a gag of iron; and thereafter, stripping his harness from him, they bound him with fetters as the Queen had commanded.

Now while they dealt thus with the Wanderer, Meriamun passed into another chamber and swiftly threw robes upon her to hide her disarray, clasping them round her with the golden girdle which now she must always wear. But her long hair she left unbound, nor did she wash the stain of tears from her face, for she was minded to seem shamed and woe-begone in the eyes of all men till Pharaoh came again.

Rei and the Golden Helen passed through the streets of the city till they came to the Palace gates. And here they must wait till the dawn, for Rei, thinking to come thither with the Wanderer, who was Captain of the Guard, had not learned the word of entry.

"Easy would it be for me to win my way through those great gates," said the Helen to Rei at her side, "but it is my counsel that we wait awhile. Perchance he whom we seek will come forth."

So they entered the porch of the Temple of Osiris that looked towards the gates, and there they waited till the dawn gathered in the eastern sky. The Helen spoke no word, but Rei, watching her, knew that she was troubled at heart, though he might not see her face because of the veil she wore; for from time to time she sighed and the Red Star rose and fell upon her breast.

At length the first arrow of the dawn fell upon the temple porch and she spoke.

"Now let us enter," she said; "my heart forebodes evil indeed; but much of evil I have known, and where the Gods drive me there I must go."

They came to the gates, and the man who watched them opened to the priest Rei and the veiled woman who went with him, though he marvelled at the beauty of the woman's shape.

"Where are thy fellow-guards?" Rei asked of the soldier.

"I know not," he answered, "but anon a great tumult rose in the Palace, and the Captain of the Gate went thither, leaving me only to guard the gate."

"Hast thou seen the Lord Eperitus?" Rei asked again.

"Nay, I have not seen him since supper-time last night, nor has he visited the guard as is his wont."

Rei passed on wondering, and with him went Helen. As they trod the Palace they saw folk flying towards the hall of banquets that is near the Queen's chambers. Some bore arms in their hands and some bore none, but all fled east towards the hall of banquets, whence came a sound of shouting. Now they drew near the hall, and there at the further end, where the doors are that lead to the Queen's chambers, a great crowd was gathered.

"Hide thee, lady — hide thee," said Rei to her who went with him, "for methinks that death is afoot here. See, here hangs a curtain, stand thou behind it while I learn what this tumult means."

She stepped behind the curtain that hung between the pillars as Rei bade her, for now Helen's gentle breast was full of fears, and she was as one dazed. Even as she stepped one came flying down the hall who was of the servants of Rei the Priest.

"Stay thou," Rei cried to him, "and tell me what happens yonder."

"Ill deeds, Lord," said the servant. "Eperitus the Wanderer, whom Pharaoh made Captain of his Guard when he went forth to slay the rebel Apura — Eperitus hath laid hands on the Queen whom he was set to guard. But she fled from him, and her cries awoke the guard, and they fell upon him in Pharaoh's very chamber. Some he slew with shafts from the great black bow, but Kurri the Sidonian cut the string of the bow, and the Wanderer was borne down by many men. Now they have bound him and drag him to the dungeons, there to await judgment from the lips of Pharaoh. See, they bring him. I must begone on my errand to the keeper of the dungeons."

The Golden Helen heard the shameful tale, and such sorrow took her that had she been mortal she had surely died. This then was the man whom she had chosen to love, this was he whom last night she should have wed. Once more the Gods had made a mock of her. So had it ever been, so should it ever be. Loveless she had lived all her life days, now she had learned to love once and for ever — and this was the fruit of it! She clasped the curtain lest she should sink to the earth, and hearing a sound looked forth. A multitude of men came down the hall. Before them walked ten soldiers bearing a litter on their shoulders. In the litter lay a man gagged and fettered with fetters of bronze so that he might not stir, and they bore him as men bear a stag from the chase or a wild bull to the sacrifice. It was the Wanderer's self, the Wanderer overcome at last, and he seemed so mighty even in his bonds, and his eyes shone with so fierce a light, that the crowd shrank from him as though in fear. Thus did Helen see her Love and Lord again as they bore him dishonoured to his dungeon cell. She saw, and a moan and a cry burst from her heart. A moan for her own woe and a cry for the shame and faithlessness of him whom she must love.

"Oh, how fallen art thou, Odysseus, who wast of men the very first," she cried.

He heard it and knew the voice of her who cried, and he gazed around. The great veins swelled upon his neck and forehead, and he struggled so fiercely that he fell from the litter to the ground. But he might not rise because of the fetters, nor speak because of the gag, so they lifted him again and bore him thence.

And after him went all the multitude save Rei alone. For Rei was fallen in shame and grief because of the tale that he had heard and of the deed of darkness that the man he loved had done. For not yet did he remember and learn to doubt. So he stood hiding his eyes in his hand, and as he stood Helen came forth and touched him on the shoulder, saying:

"Lead me hence, old man. Lead me back to my temple. My Love is lost indeed, but there where I found it I will abide till the Gods make their will clear to me."

He bowed, saying no word, and following Helen stepped into the centre of the hall. There he stopped, indeed, for down it came the Queen, her hair streaming, all her robes disordered, and her face stained with tears. She was alone save for

Kurri the Sidonian, who followed her, and she walked wildly as one distraught who knows not where she goes nor why. Helen saw her also.

“Who is this royal lady that draws near?” she asked of Rei.

“It is Meriamun the Queen; she whom the Wanderer hath brought to shame.”

“Stay then, I would speak with her.”

“Nay, nay,” cried Rei. “She loves thee not, Lady, and will slay thee.”

“That cannot be,” Helen answered.

II

THE COMING OF PHARAOH

Presently, as she walked, Meriamun saw Rei the Priest and the veiled woman at his side, and she saw on the woman’s breast a red jewel that burnt and glowed like a heart of fire. Then like fire burned the heart of Meriamun, for she knew that this was Argive Helen who stood before her, Helen whose shape she had stolen like a thief and with the mind of a thief.

“Say,” she cried to Rei, who bowed before her, “say, who is this woman?”

Rei looked at the Queen with terrified eyes, and spake in a voice of warning.

“This is that Goddess who dwells in the Temple of Hathor,” he said. “Let her pass in peace, O Queen.”

“In peace she shall pass indeed,” answered Meriamun. “What saidest thou, old dotard? That Goddess! Nay, no Goddess have we here, but an evil-working witch, who hath brought woes unnumbered upon Khem. Because of her, men die month by month till the vaults of the Temple of Hathor are full of her slain. Because of her it was that curse upon curse fell on the land — the curse of water turned to blood, of hail and of terrible darkness, ay, and the curse of the death of the firstborn among whom my own son died. And thou hast dared, Rei, to bring this witch here to my Palace halls! By Amen if I had not loved thee always thy life should pay the price. And thou,” and she stretched her hand towards the Helen, “thou hast dared to come. It is well, no more shalt thou bring evil upon Khem. Hearken, slave,” and she turned to Kurri the Sidonian; “draw that knife of thine and plunge it to the hilt in the breast of yonder woman. So shalt thou win freedom and all thy goods shall be given thee again.”

Then for the first time Helen spake:

“I charge thee, Lady,” she said in slow soft tones, “bid not thy servant do this deed, for though I have little will to bring evil upon men, yet I may not lightly be affronted.”

Now Kurri hung back doubtfully fingering his dagger.

“Draw, knave, draw!” cried Meriamun, “and do my bidding, or presently thou shalt be slain with this same knife.”

When the Sidonian heard these words he cried aloud with fear, for he well knew that as the Queen said so it would be done to him. Instantly he drew the great knife and rushed upon the veiled woman. But as he came, Helen lifted her veil so that her eyes fell upon his eyes, and the brightness of their beauty was revealed to him; and when he saw her loveliness he stopped suddenly as one who is transfixed of a spear. Then madness came upon him, and with a cry he lifted the knife, and plunging it, not into her heart, but into his own, fell down dead.

This then was the miserable end of Kurri the Sidonian, slain by the sight of the Beauty.

“Thou seest, Lady,” said Helen, turning from the dead Sidonian, “no man may harm me.”

For a moment the Queen stood astonished, while Rei the Priest muttered prayers to the protecting Gods. Then she cried:

“Begone, thou living curse, begone! Wherefore art thou come here to work more woe in this house of woe and death?”

“Fear not,” answered the Helen, “presently I will begone and trouble thee no more. Thou askest why I am come hither. I came to see him who was my love, and whom but last night I should have wed, but whom the Gods have brought to shame unspeakable, Odysseus of Ithaca, Odysseus, Laertes’ son. For this cause I came, and I have stayed to look upon the face of her whose beauty had power to drive the thought of me from the heart of Odysseus, and bring him, who of all men was the greatest hero and the foremost left alive, to do a dastard deed and make his mighty name a byword and a scorn. Knowest thou, Meriamun, that I find the matter strange, since if all else be false, yet is this true, that among women the fairest are the most strong. Thou art fair indeed, Meriamun, but judge if thou art more fair than Argive Helen,” and she drew the veil from her face so that the splendour of her beauty shone out upon the Queen’s dark loveliness. Thus for awhile they stood each facing each, and to Rei it seemed as though the spirits of Death and Life looked one on another, as though the darkness and the daylight stood in woman’s shape before him.

“Thou art fair indeed,” said the Queen, “but in this, witch, has thy beauty failed to hold him whom thou wouldst wed from the most shameless sin. Little methinks can that man have loved thee who crept upon me like a thief to snatch my honour from me.”

Then Helen bethought her of what Rei had said, that Meriamun loved the Wanderer, and she spoke again:

“Now it comes into my heart, Egyptian, that true and false are mixed in this tale of thine. Hard it is to believe that Odysseus of Ithaca could work such a coward deed as this, or, unbidden, seek to clasp thee to his heart. Moreover, I read in thine eyes that thou thyself dost love the man whom thou namest dastard. Nay, hold thy peace, look not so wildly on me whom thou canst not harm, but hearken. Whether thy tale be true or false I know not, who use no magic and learn those things only that the Gods reveal to me. But this at the least is true, that Odysseus, whom I should have wed, has looked on thee with eyes of love, even in that hour when I waited to be made his wife. Therefore the love that but two days agone bloomed in my heart, dies and withers; or if it does not, at least I cast it from me and tread its flowers beneath my feet. For this doom the Gods have laid upon me, who am of all women the most hapless, to live beloved but loveless through many years, and at the last to love and be betrayed. And now I go hence back to my temple shrine; but fear not, Meriamun, not for long shall I trouble thee or Khem, and men shall die no more because of my beauty, for I shall presently pass hence whither the Gods appoint; and this I say to thee — deal gently with that man who has betrayed my faith, for whatever he did was done for the love of thee. It is no mean thing to have won the heart of Odysseus of Ithaca out of the hand of Argive Helen. Fare thee well, Meriamun, who wouldst have slain me. May the Gods grant thee better days and more of joy than is given to Helen, who would look upon thy face no more."

Thus she spake, and letting her veil fall turned to go. For awhile the Queen stood shamed to silence by these gentle words, that fell like dew upon the fires of her hate. But ere Helen had passed the length of a spear her fury burned up again. What, should she let this strange woman go — this woman who alone of all that breathed was more beautiful than she, by the aid of whose stolen beauty she alone had won her love, and for whose sake she had endured such bitter words of scorn? Nay, while Helen yet lived she could find not joy nor sleep. But were Helen dead, then perchance all might yet be well, and the Wanderer yet be hers, for when the best is gone men turn them to the better.

"Close the gates and bar them," she cried to the men, who now streamed back into the hall; and they ran to do her bidding, so that before Helen reached the Palace doors, they had been shut and the gates of bronze beyond had clashed like the shields of men.

Now Helen drew near the doors.

"Stay yon witch," cried the Queen to those who guarded them, and in wonder they poised their spears to bar the way to Helen. But she only lifted her veil and looked upon them. Then their arms fell from their hands and they stood amazed at the sight of beauty.

"Open, I beseech you," said the Helen gently, and straightway they opened the doors and she passed through, followed by those who guarded them, by the Queen, and by Rei. But one man there was who did not see her beauty, and he strove in vain to hold back the doors and to clasp Helen as she passed.

Now she drew near to the gates —

“Shoot the witch!” cried Meriamun the Queen; “if she pass the gates, by my royal word I swear that ye shall die every man of you. Shoot her with arrows.”

Then three men drew their bows mightily. The string of the bow of one burst, and the bow was shattered, and the arrow of the second slipped as he drew it, and passing downwards pierced his foot; and the shaft of the third swerved ere it struck the breast of Helen, and sunk into the heart of that soldier who was next to the Queen, so that he fell down dead. It was the same man who had striven to hold to the doors and clasp the Helen.

Then Helen turned and spoke:

“Bid not thy guard to shoot again, Meriamun, lest the arrow find *thy* heart, for, know this, no man may harm me;” and once more she lifted her veil, and speaking to those at the gates said: “Open, I beseech you, and let the Hathor pass.”

Now their weapons fell from their hands, and they looked upon her beauty, and they too made haste to open the gates. The great gates clanged upon their sockets and rolled back. She passed through them, and all who were there followed after her. But when they looked, lo! she had mingled with the people who went to and fro and was gone.

Then Meriamun grew white with rage because Helen whom she hated had escaped her, and turning to those men who had opened the doors and those who had given passage of the gates, who yet stood looking on each other with dazed eyes, she doomed them to die.

But Rei, kneeling before her, prayed for their lives:

“Ill will come of it, O Queen!” he said, “as ill came to yonder Sidonian and to the soldier at thy feet, for none may work evil on this Goddess, or those who befriended the Goddess. Slay them not, O Queen, lest ill tidings follow on the deed!”

Then the Queen turned on him madly:

“Hearken thou, Rei!” she said; “speak thus again, and though I have loved thee and thou hast been the chief of the servants of Pharaoh, this I swear, that thou shalt die the first. Already the count is long between thee and me, for it was thou who didst bring yon accursed witch to my Palace. Now thou hast heard, and of this be sure, as I have spoken so I will do. Get thee gone — get thee from my sight, I say, lest I slay thee now. I take back thy honours, I strip thee of thy offices, I gather thy wealth into my treasury. Go forth a beggar, and let me see thy face no more!”

Then Rei held his peace and fled, for it were better to stand before a lioness robbed of her whelps than before Meriamun in her rage. Thereon the gates were shut again, and the captain of the gates was dragged before the place where the

Queen stood, and asking no mercy and taking little heed, for still his soul was filled with the beauty of Helen as a cup with wine, he suffered death, for his head was straightway smitten from him.

Rei, watching from afar, groaned aloud, then turned and left the Palace, but the Queen called to the soldiers to slay on. Even as she called there came a cry of woe without the Palace gates. Men looked each on each. Again the cry rose and a voice without called, “Pharaoh is come again! Pharaoh is come again!” and there rose a sound of knocking at the gates.

Now for that while Meriamun thought no more of slaying the men, but bade them open the gates. They opened, and a man entered clad in raiment stained with travel. His eyes were wild, his hair was dishevelled, and scarce could his face be known for the face of Pharaoh Meneptah, it was so marred with grief and fear.

Pharaoh looked on the Queen — he looked upon the dead who lay at her feet, then laughed aloud:

“What!” he cried, “more dead! Is there then no end to Death and the number of his slain? Nay, here he doth work but feebly. Perchance his arm grows weary. Come, where are *thy* dead, Queen? Bring forth thy dead!”

“What hath chanced, Meneptah, that thou speakest thus madly?” asked the Queen. “She whom they name the Hathor hath passed here, and these, and another who lies yonder, do but mark her path. Speak!”

“Ay, I will speak, Queen. I have a merry tale to tell. Thou sayest that the Hathor hath passed here and these mark her footsteps. Well, I can cap thy story. He whom the Apura name Jahveh hath passed yonder by the Sea of Weeds, and there lie many, lie to mark His footsteps.”

“Thy host! Where is thy host?” cried the Queen. “At the least some are left.”

“Yes, Queen, *all* are left — all — all — save myself alone. They drift to and fro in the Sea of Weeds — they lie by tens of thousands on its banks; the gulls tear their eyes, the lion of the desert rends their flesh; they lie unburied, their breath sighs in the sea gales, their blood sinks into the salt sands, and Osiris numbers them in the hosts of hell. Hearken! I came upon the tribes of the Apura by the banks of the Sea of Weeds. I came at eve, but I might not fall upon them because of a veil of darkness that spread between my armies and the hosts of the Apura. All night long through the veil of darkness, and through the shrieking of a great gale, I heard a sound as of the passing of a mighty people — the clangour of their arms, the voices of captains, the stamp of beasts, and the grinding of wheels. The morning came, and lo! before me the waters of the sea were built up as a wall on the right hand and the left, and between the walls of water was dry land, and the Apura passed between the walls. Then I cried to my captains to arise and follow swiftly, and they did my bidding. But the chariot wheels drew heavily in the sand, so that before all my host had entered between the waters, the Apura had passed the sea. Then of a sudden, as last of all I passed down into the path of the ocean bed, the great wind ceased, and as it ceased, lo! the walls of water that were on either side of the sea path fell together with noise like the noise of thunder. I turned my chariot wheels, and fled back, but my soldiers, my chariots, and my horses were swallowed; once more they were seen again on the crest of the black waves like a gleam of light upon a cloud, once a great cry arose to the heaven; then all was done and all was still, and of my hosts I alone was left alive of men."

So Pharaoh spoke, and a great groan rose from those who hearkened. Only Meriamun spoke:

"So shall things go with us while that False Hathor dwells in Khem."

Now as she spoke thus, again there came a sound of knocking at the gates and a cry of "Open — a messenger! a messenger!"

"Open!" said Meriamun, "though his tidings be ill, scarce can they match these that have been told."

The gates were opened, and one came through them. His eyes stared wide in fear, so dry was his throat with haste and with the sand, that he stood speechless before them all.

"Give him wine," cried Meriamun, and wine was brought. Then he drank, and he fell upon his knees before the Queen, for he knew not Pharaoh.

"Thy tidings!" she cried. "Be swift with thy tidings."

"Let the Queen pardon me," he said. "Let her not be wrath. These are my tidings. A mighty host marches towards the city of On, a host gathered from all lands of the peoples of the North, from the lands of the Tulisha, of the Shakalishu, of the Liku, and of the Shairdana. They march swiftly and raven, they lay the country waste, naught is left behind them save the smoke of burning towns, the flight of vultures, and the corpses of men."

"Hast done?" said Meriamun.

"Nay, O Queen! A great fleet sails with them up the eastern mouth of Sihor, and in it are twelve thousand chosen warriors of the Aquaiusha, the sons of those men who sacked Troy town."

And now a great groan went up to heaven from the lips of those who hearkened. Only Meriamun spoke thus:

"And yet the Apura are gone, for whose sake, ye say, came the plagues. They are fled, but the curse remains, and so shall things ever be with us while yon False Hathor dwells in Khem."

III

THE BED OF TORMENT

It was nightfall, and Pharaoh sat at meat and Meriamun sat by him. The heart of Pharaoh was very heavy. He thought of that great army which now washed to and fro on the waters of the Sea of Weeds, of whose number he alone had lived to tell the tale. He thought also of the host of the Apura, who made a mock of him in the desert. But most of all he brooded on the tidings that the messenger had brought, tidings of the march of the barbarians and of the fleet of the Aquaiusha that sailed on the eastern stream of Sihor. All that day he had sat in his council chamber, and sent forth messengers east and north and south, bidding them gather the mercenaries from every town and in every city, men to make war against the foe, for here, in his white-walled city of Tanis, there were left but five thousand soldiers. And now, wearied with toil and war, he sat at meat, and as he sat bethought him of the man whom he had left to guard the Queen.

"Where, then, is that great Wanderer, he who wore the golden harness?" he asked presently.

"I have a tale to tell thee of the man," Meriamun answered slowly, "a tale which I have not told because of all the evil tidings that beat about our ears like sand in a desert wind."

"Tell on," said Pharaoh.

Then she bent towards him, whispering in his ear.

As she whispered, the face of Pharaoh grew black as the night, and ere all the tale was done he sprang to his feet.

"By Amen and by Ptah!" he cried, "here at least we have a foe whom we may conquer. Thou and I, Meriamun, my sister and my queen, are set as far each from each as the sky is set from the temple top, and little of love is there between us. Yet I will wipe away this blot upon thy honour, which also is a blot upon my own. Sleepless shall this Wanderer lie to-night, and sorry shall he go to-morrow, but to-morrow night he shall sleep indeed."

Thereupon he clapped his hands, summoning the guard, and bade them pass to the dungeon where the Wanderer lay, and lead him thence to the place of punishment. He bade them also call the tormentors to make ready the instruments of their craft, and await him in the place of punishment.

Then he sat for awhile, drinking sullenly, till one came to tell him that all was prepared. Then Pharaoh rose.

"Comest thou with me?" he asked.

"Nay," said Meriamun, "I would not look upon the man again; and this I charge thee. Go not down to him this night. Let him be found upon the bed of torment, and let the tormentors give him food and wine, for so he shall die more hardly. Then let them light the fires at his head and at his feet and leave him till the dawn alone in the place of torment. So he shall die a hundred deaths ere ever his death begins."

"As thou wilt," answered Pharaoh. "Mete out thine own punishment. To-morrow when I have slept I will look upon his torment." And he spoke to his servants as she desired.

The Wanderer lay on the bed of torment in the place of torment. They had taken the gag from his mouth, and given him food and wine as Pharaoh commanded. He ate and drank and his strength came back to him. Then they made fast his fetters, lit the braziers at his head and foot, and left him with mocking words.

He lay upon the bed of stone and groaned in the bitterness of his heart. Here then was the end of his wanderings, and this was the breast of the Golden Helen in whose arms Aphrodite had sworn that he should lie. Oh, that he were free again and stood face to face with his foes, his harness on his back! Nay, it might not be, no mortal strength could burst these fetters, not even the strength of Odysseus, Laertes' son. Where now were those Gods whom he had served? Should he never again hear the clarion cry of Pallas? Why then had he turned him from Pallas and worshipped at the shrine of the false Idalian Queen? Thus it was that she kept her oaths; thus she repaid her votary.

So he thought in the bitterness of his heart as he lay with closed eyes upon the bed of torment whence there was no escape, and groaned: "Would, Aphrodite, that I had never served thee, even for one little hour, then had my lot gone otherwise."

Now he opened his eyes, and lo! a great glory rolled about the place of torment, and as he wondered at the glory, a voice spoke from its midst — the voice of the Idalian Aphrodite:

"Blame me not, Odysseus," said the heavenly voice; "blame me not because thou art come to this pass. Thyself, son of Laertes, art to blame. What did I tell thee? Was it not that thou shouldst know the Golden Helen by the Red Star on her breast, the jewel whence fall the red drops fast, and by the Star alone? And did she not tell thee, also, that thou shouldst know her by the Star? Yet when one came to thee wearing no Star but girdled with a Snake, my words were all forgotten, thy desires led thee whither thou wouldst not go. Thou wast blinded by desire and couldst not discern the False from the True. Beauty has many shapes, now it is that of Helen, now that of Meriamun, each sees it as he desires it. But the Star is yet the Star, and the Snake is yet the Snake, and he who, bewildered of his lusts, swears by the Snake when he should have sworn by the Star, shall have the Snake for guerdon.”

She ceased, and the Wanderer spoke, groaning bitterly:

“I have sinned, O Queen!” he said. “Is there then no forgiveness for my sin?”

“Yea, there is forgiveness, Odysseus, but first there is punishment. This is thy fate. Never now, in this space of life, shalt thou be the lord of the Golden Helen. For thou hast sworn by the Snake, and his thou art, nor mayest thou reach the Star. Yet it still shines on. Through the mists of death it shall shine for thee, and when thou wakest again, behold, thine eyes shall see it fitfully.

“And now, this for thy comfort. Here thou shalt not die, nor by torment, for thy death shall come to thee from the water as the dead seer foretold, but ere thou diest, once more thou shalt look upon the Golden Helen, and hear her words of love and know her kiss, though thine she shall not be. And learn that a great host marches upon the land of Khem, and with it sails a fleet of thine own people, the Achæans. Go down and meet them and take what comes, where the swords shine that smote Troy. And this fate is laid upon thee, that thou shalt do battle against thy own people, even against the sons of them by whose side thou didst fight beneath the walls of Ilios, and in that battle thou shalt find thy death, and in thy death, thou Wanderer, thou shalt find that which all men seek, the breast of the immortal Helen. For though here on earth she seems to live eternally, it is but the shadow of her beauty that men see — each as he desires it. In the halls of Death she dwells, and in the garden of Queen Persephone, and there she shall be won, for there no more is beauty guarded of Those that stand between men and joy, and there no more shall the Snake seem as the Star, and Sin have power to sever those that are one. Now make thy heart strong, Odysseus, and so do as thy wisdom tells thee. Farewell!”

Thus the Goddess spoke from the cloud of glory, and lo! she was gone. But the heart of the Wanderer was filled with joy because he knew that the Helen was not lost to him for ever, and he no more feared the death of shame.

Now it was midnight, and Pharaoh slept. But Meriamun the Queen slept not. She rose from her bed, she wrapped herself in a dark cloak that hid her face, and taking a lamp in her hand, glided through the empty halls till she came to a secret stair down which she passed. There was a gate at the foot of the stair, and a guard slept by it. She pushed him with her foot.

He awoke and sprang towards her, but she held a signet before his eyes, an old ring of great Queen Taia, whereon a Hathor worshipped the sun. Then he bowed and opened the gate. She swept on through many passages, deep into the bowels of the earth, till she came to the door of a little chamber where a light shone. Men talked in the chamber, and she listened to their talk. They spoke much and laughed gleefully. Then she entered the doorway and looked upon them. They were six in number, evil-eyed men of Ethiopia, and seated in a circle. In the centre of the circle lay the waxen image of a man, and they were cutting it with knives and searing it with needles of iron and pincers made red-hot, and many instruments strange and dreadful to look upon. For these were the tormentors, and they spoke of those pains that to-morrow they should wreak upon the Wanderer, and practised them.

But Meriamun, who loved him, shivered as she looked, and muttered thus beneath her breath:

"This I promise you, black ministers of death, that in the same fashion ye shall die ere another night be sped."

Then she passed into the chamber, holding the signet on high, and the tormentors fell upon their faces before her majesty. She passed between them, and as she went she stamped with her sandalled foot upon the waxen image and brake it. On the further side of the chamber was another passage, and this she followed till she reached a door of stone that stood ajar. Here she paused awhile, for from within the chamber there came a sound of singing, and the voice was the Wanderer's voice, and thus he sang:

"Endure, my heart: not long shalt thou endure
The shame, the smart;
The good and ill are done; the end is sure;
Endure, my heart!
There stand two vessels by the golden throne
Of Zeus on high,
From these he scatters mirth and scatters moan,
To men that die.
And thou of many joys hast had thy share,
Thy perfect part;
Battle and love, and evil things and fair;
Endure, my heart!
Fight one last greatest battle under shield,
Wage that war well:
Then seek thy fellows in the shadowy field
Of asphodel,

There is the knightly Hector; there the men
Who fought for Troy;
Shall we not fight our battles o’er again?
Were that not joy?
Though no sun shines beyond the dusky west,
Thy perfect part
There shalt thou have of the unbroken rest;
Endure, my heart!”

Meriamun heard and wondered at this man’s hardihood, and the greatness of his heart who could sing thus as he lay upon the bed of torment. Now she pushed the door open silently and passed in. The place where she stood was dreadful. It was shaped as a lofty vault, and all the walls were painted with the torments of those who pass down to Set after living wickedly on earth. In the walls were great rings of bronze, and chains and fetters of bronze, wherein the bones of men yet hung. In the centre of the vault there was a bed of stone on which the Wanderer was fastened with fetters. He was naked, save only for a waistcloth, and at his head and feet burned polished braziers that gave light to the vault, and shone upon the instruments of torment. Beyond the further braziers grinned the gate of Sekhet, that is shaped like a woman, and the chains wherein the victim is set for the last torment by fire, were hanging from the roof.

Meriamun passed stealthily behind the head of the Wanderer, who might not see her because of the straitness of his bonds. Yet it seemed to her that he heard somewhat, for he ceased from singing and turned his ear to hearken. She stood awhile in silence looking on him she loved, who of all living men was the goodliest by far. Then at length he spoke craftily:

“Who art thou?” he said. “If thou art of the number of the tormentors, begin thy work. I fear thee not, and no groan shall thy worst torture wring from these lips of mine. But I tell thee this, that ere I be three days dead, the Gods shall avenge me terribly, both on thee and those who sent thee. With fire and with sword they shall avenge me, for a great host gathers and draws nigh, a host of many nations gathered out of all lands, ay, and a fleet manned with the sons of my own people, of the Achæans terrible in war. They rush on like ravening wolves, and the land is black before them, but the land shall be stamped red behind their feet. Soon they shall give this city to the flames, the smoke of it shall go up to heaven, and the fires shall be quenched at last in the blood of its children — ay, in thy blood, thou who dost look on me.”

Hearing these words Meriamun bent forward to look on the face of the speaker and to see what was written there; and as she moved, her cloak slipped apart, showing the Snake’s head with the eyes of flame that was set about her as a girdle. Fiercely they gleamed, and the semblance of them was shown faintly on the polished surface of the brazier wherein the fire burned at the Wanderer's feet. He saw it, and now he knew who stood behind him.

"Say, Meriamun the Queen — Pharaoh's dishonoured wife," he said, "say, wherefore art thou come to look upon thy work? Nay, stand not behind me, stand where I may see thee. Fear not, I am strongly bound, nor may I lift a hand against thee."

Then Meriamun, still speaking no word, but wondering much because he knew her ere his eyes fell upon her, passed round the bed of torment, and throwing down her cloak stood before him in her dark and royal loveliness.

He looked upon her beauty, then spoke again:

"Say, wherefore art thou come hither, Meriamun? Surely, with my ears I heard thee swear that I had wronged thee. Wouldst thou then look on him who wronged thee, or art thou come, perchance, to watch my torments, while thy slaves tear limb from limb, and quench yon fires with my blood? Oh, thou evil woman, thou hast worked woe on me indeed, and perchance canst work more woe now that I lie helpless here. But this I tell thee, that thy torments shall outnumber mine as the stars outnumber the earth. For here, and hereafter, thou shalt be parched with such a thirst of love as never may be quenched, and in many another land, and in many another time, thou shalt endure thine agony afresh. Again, and yet again, thou shalt clasp and conquer; again, and yet again, thou shalt let slip, and in the moment of triumph lose. By the Snake's head I swore my troth to thee, I, who should have sworn by the Star; and this I tell thee, Meriamun, that as the Star shall shine and be my beacon through the ages, so through the ages shall the Snake encircle thee and be thy doom!"

"Hold!" said Meriamun, "pour no more bitter words upon me, who am distraught of love, and was maddened by thy scorn. Wouldst thou know then why I am come hither? For this cause I am come, to save thee from thy doom. Hearken, the time is short. It is true — though how thou knowest it I may not guess — it is true that the barbarians march on Khem, and with them sails a fleet laden with the warriors of thine own people. This also is true, Pharaoh has returned alone: and all his host is swallowed in the Sea of Weeds. And I, foolish that I am, I would save thee, Odysseus, thus: I will put it in the heart of Pharaoh to pardon thy great offence, and send thee forward against the foe; yes, I can do it. But this thou shalt swear to me, to be true to Pharaoh, and smite the barbarian host."

"That I will swear," said the Wanderer, "ay, and keep the oath, though it is hard to do battle on my kin. Is that all thy message, Meriamun?"

"Not all, Odysseus. One more thing must thou swear, or if thou swearest it not, here thou shalt surely die. Know this, she who in Khem is named the Hathor, but who perchance has other names, hath put thee from her because last night thou wast wed to me."

"It may well be so," said the Wanderer.

"She hath put thee from her, and thou — thou art bound to me by that which cannot be undone, and by an oath that may not be broken; in whatever shape I walk, or by whatever name I am known among men, still thou art bound to me, as I am bound to thee. This then thou shalt swear, that thou wilt tell naught of last night's tale to Pharaoh."

"That I swear," said the Wanderer.

"Also that if Pharaoh be gathered to Osiris, and it should chance that she who is named the Hathor pass with him to the Underworld, then that thou, Odysseus, wilt wed me, Meriamun, and be faithful to me for thy life days."

Now the crafty Odysseus took counsel with his heart, and bethought him of the words of the Goddess. He saw that it was in the mind of Meriamun to slay Pharaoh and the Helen. But he cared nothing for the fate of Pharaoh, and knew well that Helen might not be harmed, and that though she change eternally, wearing now this shape, and now that, yet she dies only when the race of men is dead — then to be gathered to the number of the Gods. This he knew also, that now he must go forth on his last wandering, for Death should come upon him from the water. Therefore he answered readily:

"That oath I swear also, Meriamun, and if I break it may I perish in shame and for ever."

Now Meriamun heard, and knelt beside him, looking upon him with eyes of love.

"It is well, Odysseus: perchance ere long I shall claim thy oath. Oh, think not so ill of me: if I have sinned, I have sinned from love of thee. Long years ago, Odysseus, thy shadow fell upon my heart and I clasped its emptiness. Now thou art come, and I, who pursued a shadow from sleep to sleep and dream to dream, saw thee a living man, and loved thee to my ruin. Then I tamed my pride and came to win thee to my heart, and the Gods set another shape upon me — so thou sayest — and in that shape, the shape of her thou seekest, thou didst make me wife to thee. Perchance she and I are *one*, Odysseus. At the least, not so readily had *I* forsaken thee. Oh, when thou didst stand in thy might holding those dogs at bay till the Sidonian knave cut thy bowstring — —"

"What of him? Tell me, what of Kurri? This would I ask thee, Queen, that he be laid where I lie, and die the death to which I am doomed."

"Gladly would I give thee the boon," she answered, "but thou askest too late. The False Hathor looked upon him, and he slew himself. Now I will away — the night wanes and Pharaoh must dream dreams ere dawn. Fare thee well, Odysseus. Thy bed is hard to-night, but soft is the couch of kings that waits thee,” and she went forth from him.

“Ay, Meriamun,” said the Wanderer, looking after her. “Hard is my bed to-night, and soft is the couch of the kings of Men that waits me in the realms of Queen Persephone. But it is not thou who shalt share it. Hard is my bed to-night, harder shall thine be through all the nights of death that are to come when the Erinnyes work their will on folk forsworn.”

IV

PHARAOH’S DREAM

Pharaoh slept heavily in his place, for he was wearied with grief and toil. But Meriamun passed into the chamber, and standing at the foot of the golden bed, lifted up her hands and by her art called visions down on Pharaoh, false dreams through the Ivory Gate. So Pharaoh dreamed, and thus his vision went: —

He dreamed that he slept in his bed, and that the statue of Ptah, the Creator, descended from the pedestal by the temple gate and came to him, towering over him like a giant. Then he dreamed that he awoke, and prostrating himself before the God, asked the meaning of his coming. Thereon the God spoke to him: —

“Meneptah, my son, whom I love, hearken unto me. The Nine-bow barbarians overrun the ancient land of Khem; nine nations march up against Khem and lay it waste. Hearken unto me, my son, and I will give thee victory. Awake, awake from sloth, and I will give thee victory. Thou shalt hew down the Nine-bow barbarians as a countryman hews a rotting palm; they shall fall, and thou shalt spoil them. But hearken unto me, my son, thou shalt not thyself go up against them. Low in thy dungeon there lies a mighty chief, skilled in the warfare of the barbarians, a Wanderer who hath wandered far. Thou shalt release him from his bonds and set him over thy armies, and of the sin that he has sinned thou shalt take no heed. Awake, awake, Meneptah; with this bow which I give thee shalt thou smite the Nine-bow barbarians.”

Then Meriamun laid the bow of the Wanderer, even the black bow of Eurytus, on the bed beside Pharaoh, and passed thence to her own chamber, and the deceitful dream too passed away.

Early in the morning, a waiting-woman came to the Queen saying that Pharaoh would speak with her. She went into the ante-chamber and found him there, and in his hand was the black bow of Eurytus.

“Dost thou know this weapon?” he asked.

“Yea, I know it,” she answered; “and thou shouldst know it also, for surely it saved us from the fury of the people on the night of the death of the first-born. It is the bow of the Wanderer, who lies in the place of torment, and waits his doom because of the wrong he would have wrought upon me.”

“If he hath wronged thee, yet it is he who shall save Khem from the barbarians,” said Pharaoh. “Listen now to the dream that I have dreamed,” and he told her all the vision.

“It is indeed evil that he who would have wrought such wickedness upon me should go forth honoured, the first of the host of Pharaoh,” quoth Meriamun. “Yet as the God hath spoken, so let it be. Send now and bid them loose the man from the place of torment, and put his armour on him and bring him before thee.”

So Pharaoh went out, and the Wanderer was loosed from his bed of stone and clothed again in his golden harness, and came forth glorious to see, and stood before Pharaoh. But no arms were given him. Then Pharaoh told him all his dream, and why he caused him to be released from the grip of the tormentors. The Wanderer hearkened in silence, saying no word.

“Now choose, thou Wanderer,” said Pharaoh: “choose if thou wilt be borne back to the bed of torment, there to die beneath the hands of the tormentors, or if thou wilt go forth as the captain of my host to do battle with the Nine-bow barbarians who waste the land of Khem. It seems there is little faith in thine oaths, therefore I ask no more oaths from thee. But this I swear, that if thou art false to my trust, I will yet find means to bring thee back to that chamber whence thou wast led but now.”

Then the Wanderer spoke: —

“Of that charge, Pharaoh, which is laid against me I will say nothing, though perchance if I stood upon my trial for the sin that is laid against me, I might find words to say. Thou askest no oath from me, and no oath I swear, yet I tell thee that if thou givest me ten thousand soldiers and a hundred chariots, I will smite these foes of thine so that they shall come no more to Khem, ay, though they be of my own people, yet will I smite them, and if I fail, then may those who go with me slay me and send me down to Hades.”

Thus he spoke, and as he spoke he searched the hall with his eyes. For he desired to see Rei the Priest, and charge him with a message to Helen. But he sought him in vain, for Rei had fled, and was in hiding from the anger of Meriamun.

Then Pharaoh bade his officers take the Wanderer, and set him in a chariot and bear him to the city of On, where Pharaoh’s host was gathering. Their charge was to watch him night and day with uplifted swords, and if he so much as turned his face from the foe towards Tanis, then they should slay him. But when the host of Pharaoh marched from On to do battle on the foe, then they should give the Wanderer his own sword and the great black bow, and obey him in everything. But if he turned his back upon the foe, then they should slay him; or if the host of Pharaoh were driven back by the foe, then they should slay him.

The Wanderer heard, and smiled as a wolf smiles, but spoke no word. Thereon the great officers of Pharaoh took him and led him forth. They set him in a chariot, and with the chariot went a thousand horsemen; and soon Meriamun, watching from the walls of Tanis, saw the long line of desert dust that marked the passing of the Wanderer from the city which he should see no more.

The Wanderer also looked back on Tanis with a heavy heart. There, far away, he could see the shrine of Hathor gleaming like crystal above the tawny flood of waters. And he must go down to death, leaving no word for Her who sat in the shrine and deemed him faithless and forsworn. Evil was the lot that the Gods had laid upon him, and bitter was his guerdon.

His thoughts were sad enough while the chariot rolled towards the city of On, where the host of Pharaoh was gathering, and the thunder of the feet of horses echoed in his ears, when, as he pondered, it chanced that he looked up. There, on a knoll of sand before him, a bow-shot from the chariot, stood a camel, and on the camel a man sat as though he waited the coming of the host. Idly the Wanderer wondered who this might be, and, as he wondered, the man urged the camel towards the chariot, and, halting before it cried “Hold!” in a loud voice.

“Who art thou?” cried the captain of the chariot, “who darest cry ‘hold’ to the host of Pharaoh?”

“I am one who have tidings of the barbarians,” the man made answer from the camel.

The Wanderer looked on him. He was wondrous little, withered and old; moreover, his skin was black as though with the heat of the sun, and his clothing was as a beggar’s rags, though the trappings of the camel were of purple leather and bossed with silver. Again the Wanderer looked; he knew him not, and yet there was that in his face which seemed familiar.

Now the captain of the chariot bade the driver halt the horses, and cried, “Draw near and tell thy tidings.”

“To none will I tell my tidings save to him who shall lead the host of Pharaoh. Let him come down from the chariot and speak with me.”

“That may not be,” said the captain, for he was charged that the Wanderer should have speech with none.

“As thou wilt,” answered the aged man upon the camel; “go then, go to thy doom! thou art not the first who hath turned aside a messenger from the Gods.”

“I am minded to bid the soldiers shoot thee with arrows,” cried the captain in anger.

“So shall my wisdom sink in the sand with my blood, and be lost with my breath. Shoot on, thou fool.”

Now the captain was perplexed, for from the aspect of the man he deemed that he was sent by the Gods. He looked at the Wanderer, who took but little heed, or so it seemed. But in his crafty heart he knew that this was the best way to win speech with the man upon the camel. Then the captain took counsel with the captain of the horsemen, and in the end they said to the Wanderer:

“Descend from the chariot, lord, and walk twelve paces forward, and there hold speech with the man. But if thou go one pace further, then we will shoot thee and the man with arrows.” And this he cried out also to him who sat upon the camel.

Then the man on the camel descended and walked twelve paces forward, and the Wanderer descended also from the chariot and walked twelve paces forward, but as one who heeds little what he does. Now the two stood face to face, but out of earshot of the host, who watched them with arrows set upon the strings.

“Greetings, Odysseus of Ithaca, son of Laertes,” he said who was clothed in the beggar’s weeds.

The Wanderer looked upon him hard, and knew him through his disguise.

“Greeting, Rei the Priest, Commander of the Legion of Amen, Chief of the Treasury of Amen.”

“Rei the Priest I am indeed,” he answered, “the rest I am no more, for Meriamun the Queen has stripped me of my wealth and offices, because of thee, thou Wanderer, and the Immortal whose love thou hast won, and by whom thou hast dealt so ill. Hearken! I learned by arts known to me of the dream of Pharaoh, and of thy sending forth to do battle with the barbarians. Then I disguised myself as thou seest, and took the swiftest camel in Tanis, and am come hither by another way to meet thee. Now I would ask thee one thing. How came it that thou didst play the Immortal false that night? Knowest thou that she waited for thee there by the pylon gate? Ay, there I found her and led her to the Palace, and for that I am stripped of my rank and goods by Meriamun, and now the Lady of Beauty is returned to her shrine, grieving bitterly for thy faithlessness; though how she passed thither I know not.”

“Methought I heard her voice as those knaves bore me to my dungeon,” said the Wanderer. “And she deemed me faithless! Say, Rei, dost thou know the magic of Meriamun? Dost thou know how she won me to herself in the shape of Argive Helen?”

And then, in as few words as might be, he told Rei how he had been led away by the magic of Meriamun, how he who should have sworn by the Star had sworn by the Snake.

When Rei heard that the Wanderer had sworn by the Snake, he shuddered. “Now I know all,” he said. “Fear not, thou Wanderer, not on thee shall all the evil fall, nor on that Immortal whom thou dost love; the Snake that beguiled thee shall avenge thee also.”

“Rei,” the Wanderer said, “one thing I charge thee. I know that I go down to my death. Therefore I pray thee seek out her whom thou namest the Hathor and tell her all the tale of how I was betrayed. So shall I die happily. Tell her also that I crave her forgiveness and that I love her and her only.”

“This I will do if I may,” Rei answered. “And now the soldiers murmur and I must be gone. Listen, the might of the Nine-bow barbarians rolls up the eastern branch of Sihor. But one day’s march from On the mountains run down to the edge of the river, and those mountains are pierced by a rocky pass through which the foe will surely come. Set thou thy ambush there, Wanderer, there at Prosopis — so shalt thou smite them. Farewell. I will seek out the Hathor if in any way I can come at her, and tell her all. But of this I warn thee, the hour is big with Fate, and soon will spawn a monstrous birth. Strange visions of doom and death passed before mine eyes as I slept last night. Farewell!”

Then he went back to the camel and climbed it, and passing round the army vanished swiftly in a cloud of dust.

The Wanderer also went back to the host, where the captains murmured because of the halt, and mounted his chariot. But he would tell nothing of what the man had said to him, save that he was surely a messenger from the Underworld to instruct him in the waging of the war.

Then the chariot and the horsemen passed on again, till they came to the city of On, and found the host of Pharaoh gathering in the great walled space that is before the Temple of Ra. And there they pitched their camp hard by the great obelisks that stand at the inner gate, which Rei the architect fashioned by Thebes, and the divine Rameses Miamun set up to the glory of Ra for ever.

V

THE VOICE OF THE DEAD

When Meriamun the Queen had watched the chariot of the Wanderer till it was lost in the dust of the desert, she passed down from the Palace roof to the solitude of her chamber.

Here she sat in her chamber till the darkness gathered, as the evil thoughts gathered in her heart, that was rent with love of him whom she had won but to lose. Things had gone ill with her, to little purpose she had sinned after such a fashion as may not be forgiven. Yet there was hope. He had sworn that he would wed her when Pharaoh was dead, and when Argive Helen had followed Pharaoh to the Shades. Should she shrink then from the deed of blood? Nay, from evil to evil she would go. She laid her hand upon the double-headed snake that wound her about, and spake into the gloom:

“Osiris waits thee, Meneptah — Osiris waits thee! The Shades of those who have died for thy love, Helen, are gathering at the gates. It shall be done. Pharaoh, thou diest to-night. To-morrow night, thou Goddess Helen, shall all thy tale be told. *Man* may not harm thee indeed, but shall fire refuse to kiss thy loveliness? Are there no *women’s* hands to light thy funeral pile?”

Then she rose, and calling her ladies, was attired in her most splendid robes, and caused the uraeus crown to be set upon her head, the snake circlet of power on her brow, the snake girdle of wisdom at her heart. And now she hid somewhat in her breast, and passed to the ante-chamber, where the Princes gathered for the feast.

Pharaoh looked up and saw her loveliness. So glorious she seemed in her royal beauty that his heart forgot its woes, and once again he loved her as he had done in years gone by, when she conquered him at the Game of Pieces, and he had cast his arms about her and she stabbed him.

She saw the look of love grow on his heavy face, and all her gathered hate rose in her breast, though she smiled gently with her lips and spake him fair.

They sat at the feast and Pharaoh drank. And ever as he drank she smiled upon him with her dark eyes and spake him words of gentlest meaning, till at length there was nothing he desired more than that they should be at one again.

Now the feast was done. They sat in the ante-chamber, for all were gone save Meneptah and Meriamun. Then he came to her and took her hand, looking into her eyes, nor did she say him nay.

There was a lute lying on a golden table, and there too, as it chanced, was a board for the Game of Pieces, with the dice, and the pieces themselves wrought in gold.

Pharaoh took up the gold king from the board and toyed with it in his hand. “Meriamun,” he said, “for these five years we have been apart, thou and I. Thy love I have lost, as a game is lost for one false move, or one throw of the dice; and our child is dead and our armies are scattered, and the barbarians come like flies when Sihor stirs within his banks. Love only is left to us, Meriamun.”

She looked at him not unkindly, as if sorrow and wrong had softened her heart also, but she did not speak.

“Can dead Love waken, Meriamun, and can angry Love forgive?”

She had lifted the lute and her fingers touched listlessly on the cords.

“Nay, I know not,” she said; “who knows? How did Pentaur sing of Love’s renewal, Pentaur the glorious minstrel of our father, Rameses Miamun?”

He laid the gold king on the board, and began listlessly to cast the dice. He threw the “Hathor” as it chanced, the lucky cast, two sixes, and a thought of better fortune came to him.

“How did the song run, Meriamun? It is many a year since I heard thee sing.”

She touched the lute lowly and sweetly, and then she sang. Her thoughts were of the Wanderer, but the King deemed that she thought of himself.

O joy of Love’s renewing,
Could Love be born again;
Relenting for thy rueing,
And pitying my pain:
O joy of Love’s awaking,
Could Love arise from sleep,
Forgiving our forsaking
The fields we would not reap!

Fleet, fleet we fly, pursuing
The Love that fled amain,
But will he list our wooing,
Or call we but in vain?
Ah! vain is all our wooing,
And all our prayers are vain,
Love listeth not our suing,
Love will not wake again.

“Will he not waken again?” said Pharaoh. “If two pray together, will Love refuse their prayer?”

“It might be so,” she said, “if two prayed together; for if they prayed, he would have heard already!”

“Meriamun,” said the Pharaoh eagerly, for he thought her heart was moved by pity and sorrow, “once thou didst win my crown at the Pieces, wilt thou play me for thy love?”

She thought for one moment, and then she said:

“Yes, I will play thee, my Lord, but my hand has lost its cunning, and it may well be that Meriamun shall lose again, as she has lost all. Let me set the Pieces, and bring wine for my lord.”

She set the Pieces, and crossing the room, she lifted a great cup of wine, and put it by Pharaoh’s hand. But he was so intent on the game that he did not drink.

He took the field, he moved, she replied, and so the game went between them, in the dark fragrant chamber where the lamp burned, and the Queen’s eyes shone in the night. This way and that went the game, till she lost, and he swept the board.

Then in triumph he drained the poisoned cup of wine, and cried, “Pharaoh is dead!”

“Pharaoh is dead!” answered Meriamun, gazing into his eyes.

“What is that look in thine eyes, Meriamun, what is that look in thine eyes?”

And the King grew pale as the dead, for he had seen that look before — when Meriamun slew Hataska.

“Pharaoh is dead!” she shrilled in the tone of women who wail the dirges. “Pharaoh, great Pharaoh is dead! Ere a man may count a hundred thy days are numbered. Strange! but to-morrow, Meneptah, shalt thou sit where Hataska sat, dead on the knees of Death, an Osirian in the lap of the Osiris. Die, Pharaoh, die! But while thy diest, hearken. There is one I love, the Wanderer who leads thy hosts. His love I stole by arts known to me, and because I stole it he would have shamed me, and I accused him falsely in the ears of men. But he comes again, and, so sure as thou shalt sit on the knees of Osiris, so surely shall he sit upon thy throne, Pharaoh. For Pharaoh is dead!”

He heard. He gathered his last strength. He rose and staggered towards her, striking at the air. Slowly she drew away, while he followed her, awful to see. At length he stood still, he threw up his hands, and fell dead.

Then Meriamun drew near and looked at him strangely.

“Behold the end of Pharaoh,” she said. “That then was a king, upon whose breath the lives of peoples hung like a poised feather. Well, let him go! Earth can spare him, and Death is but the richer by a weary fool. ’Tis done, and well done! Would that to-morrow’s task were also done — and that Helen lay as Pharaoh lies. So — rinse the cup — and now to sleep — if sleep will come. Ah, where hath sleep flown of late? To-morrow they'll find him dead. Well, what of it? So do kings ofttimes die. There, I will be going; never were his eyes so large and so unlovely!"

Now the light of morning gathered again on all the temple tops, and men rose from sleep to go about their labours. Meriamun watched it grow as she lay sleepless in her golden bed, waiting for the cry that presently should ring along the Palace walls. Hark! What was that? The sound of swinging doors, the rush of running feet. And now it came — long and shrill it rose.

"Pharaoh is dead! Awake! Awake, ye sleepers! Awake! awake! and look upon that which has come about. Pharaoh is dead! Pharaoh is dead!"

Then Meriamun arose, and followed by the ladies, rushed from her chamber.

"Who dreams so evilly?" she said. "Who dreams and cries aloud in his haunted sleep?"

"O Queen, it is no dream," said one. "Pass into the ante-chamber and see. There lies Pharaoh dead, and with no wound upon him to tell the manner of his end."

Then Meriamun cried aloud with a great cry, and threw her hair about her face, while tears fell from her dark eyes. She passed into the chamber, and there, fallen on his back and cold, lay Pharaoh in his royal robes. Awhile the Queen looked upon him as one who is dumb with grief. Then she lifted up her voice and cried:

"Still is the curse heavy upon Khem and the people of Khem. Pharaoh lies dead; yea, he is dead who has no wound, and this I say, that he is slain of the witchcraft of her whom men name the Hathor. Oh, my Lord, my Lord!" and kneeling, she laid her hand upon his breast; "by this dead heart of thine I swear that I will wreak thy murder on her who wrought it. Lift him up! Lift up this poor clay, that was the first of kings. Clothe him in the robes of death, and set him on the knees of Osiris in the Temple of Osiris. Then go forth through the city and call out this, the Queen's command; call it from street to street. This is the Queen's command, that 'every woman in Tanis who has lost son, or husband, or brother, or kin or lover, through the witchcraft of the False Hathor, or by the plagues that she hath wrought on Khem, or in the war with the Apura, whom she caused to fly from Khem, do meet me at sundown in the Temple of Osiris before the face of the God and of dead Pharaoh's Majesty.'"

So they took Meneptah the Osirian, and wrapping him in the robes of death, bore him to the knees of Osiris, where he should sit a day and a night. And the messengers of Meriamun went forth summoning the women of the city to meet her at sunset in the Temple of Osiris. Moreover, Meriamun sent out slaves by tens and by twenties to the number of two thousand, bidding them gather up all the wood that was in Tanis, and all the oil and the bitumen, and bundles of reeds by hundreds such as are used for the thatching of houses, and lay them in piles and stacks in a certain courtyard near the Temple of Hathor. This they did, and so the day wore on, while the women wailed about the streets because of the death of Pharaoh.

Now it chanced that the camel of Rei the Priest fell down from weariness as it journeyed swiftly back to Tanis. But Rei sped forward on foot, and came to the gates of Tanis, sorely wearied, towards the evening of that day. When he heard the wailing of the women, he asked of a passer-by what new evil had fallen upon Khem, and learned the death of Pharaoh. Then Rei knew by whose hand Pharaoh was dead, and grieved at heart, because she whom he had served and loved — Meriamun the moon-child — was a murderess. At first he was minded to go up before the Queen and put her to an open shame, and then take his death at her hands; but when he heard that Meriamun had summoned all the women of Tanis to meet her in the Temple of Osiris, he had another thought. Hurrying to that place where he hid in the city, he ate and drank. Then he put off his beggar's rags, and robed himself afresh, and over all drew the garment of an aged crone, for this was told him, that no man should be suffered to enter the Temple. Now the day was dying, and already the western sky was red, and he hurried forth and mingled with the stream of women who passed towards the Temple gates.

"Who then slew Pharaoh?" asked one; "and why does the Queen summon us to meet her?"

"Pharaoh is slain by the witchcraft of the False Hathor," answered another; "and the Queen summons us that we may take counsel how to be rid of the Hathor."

"Tell not of the accursed Hathor," said a third; "my husband and my brother are dead at her hands, and my son died in the death of the first-born that she called down on Khem. Ah, if I could but see her rent limb from limb I should seek Osiris happily."

"Some there be," quoth a fourth, "who say that not the Hathor, but the Gods of those Apura brought the woes on Khem, and some that Pharaoh was slain by the Queen's own hand, because of the love she bears to that great Wanderer who came here a while ago."

"Thou fool," answered the first; "how can the Queen love one who would have wrought outrage on her?"

"Such things have been," said the fourth woman; "perchance he wrought no outrage, perchance she beguiled him as women may. Yes, yes, such things have been. I am old, and I have seen such things."

“Yea, thou art old,” said the first. “Thou hast no child, no husband, no father, no lover, and no brother. Thou hast lost none who are dear to thee through the magic of the Hathor. Speak one more such slander on the Queen, and we will fall upon thee and tear thy lying tongue from its roots.”

“Hush,” said the second woman, “here are the Temple gates. By Isis did any ever see such a multitude of women, and never a man to cheer them, a dreary sight, indeed! Come, push on, push on or we shall find no place. Yea, thou soldier — we are women, all women, have no fear. No need to bare our breasts, look at our eyes blind with weeping over the dead. Push on! push on!”

So they passed by the guards and into the gates of the Temple, and with them went Rei unheeded. Already it was well-nigh filled with women. Although the sun was not yet dead, torches were set about to lighten the gloom, and by them Rei saw that the curtains before the Shrine were drawn. Presently the Temple was full to overflowing, the doors were shut and barred, and a voice from behind the veil cried:

“*Silence!*”

Then all the multitude of women were silent, and the light of the torches flared strangely upon their shifting upturned faces, as fires flare over the white sea-foam. Now the curtains of the Shrine of Osiris were drawn aside slowly, and the light that burned upon the altar streamed out between them. It fell upon the foremost ranks of women, it fell upon the polished statue of the Osiris. On the knees of Osiris sat the body of Pharaoh Meneptah, his head resting against the breast of the God. Pharaoh was wrapped about with winding clothes like the marble statue of the God, and in his cold hands were bound the crook, the sceptre, and the scourge, as the crook, the sceptre, and the scourge were placed in the hands of the effigy of the God. As was the statue of the God, so was the body of Pharaoh that sat upon his knees, and cold and awful was the face of Osiris, and cold and awful was the face of Meneptah the Osirian.

At the side, and somewhat in front of the statue of the God, a throne was placed of blackest marble, and on the throne sat Meriamun the Queen. She was glorious to look on. She wore the royal robes of Khem, the double-crown of Khem fashioned of gold, and wreathed with the uraeus snakes, was set upon her head; in her hand was the crystal cross of Life, and between her mantle’s purple folds gleamed the eyes of her snake girdle. She sat awhile in silence speaking no word, and all the women wondered at her glory and at dead Pharaoh’s awfulness. Then at length she spoke, low indeed, but so clearly that every word reached the limits of the Temple hall.

“Women of Tanis, hear me, the Queen. Let each search the face of each, and if there be any man among your multitude, let him be dragged forth and torn limb from limb, for in this matter no man may hear our counsels, lest following his madness he betray them."

Now every woman looked upon her neighbour, and she who was next to Rei looked hard upon him so that he trembled for his life. But he crouched into the shadow and stared back on her boldly as though he doubted if she were indeed a woman, and said no word. When all had looked, and no man had been found, Meriamun spoke again.

"Hearken, women of Tanis, hearken to your sister and your Queen. Woe upon woe is fallen on the head of Khem. Plague upon plague hath smitten the ancient land. Our first-born are dead, our slaves have spoiled us and fled away, our hosts have been swallowed in the Sea of Weeds, and barbarians swarm along our shores like locusts. Is it not so, women of Tanis?"

"It is so, O Queen," they answered, as with one voice.

"A strange evil hath fallen on the head of Khem. A false Goddess is come to dwell within the land; her sorceries are great in the land. Month by month men go up to look upon her deadly beauty, and month by month they are slain of her sorceries. She takes the husband from his marriage bed; she draws the lover from her who waits to be a bride; the slave flies to her from the household of his lord; the priests flock to her from the altars of the Gods — ay, the very priests of Isis flock forsworn from the altars of Isis. All look upon her witch-beauty, and to each she shows an altered loveliness, and to all she gives one guerdon — Death! Is it not so, women of Tanis?"

"Alas! alas! it is so, O Queen," answered the women as with one voice.

"Woes are fallen on you and Khem, my sisters, but on me most of all are woes fallen. My people have been slain, my land — the land I love — has been laid waste with plagues; my child, the only one, is dead in the great death; hands have been laid on me, the Queen of Khem. Think on it, ye who are women! My slaves are fled, my armies have been swallowed in the sea; and last, O my sisters, my consort, my beloved lord, mighty Pharaoh, son of great Rameses Miamun, hath been taken from me! Look! look! ye who are wives, look on him who was your King and my most beloved lord. There he sits, and all my tears and all my prayers may not summon one single answering sigh from that stilled heart. The curse hath fallen on him also. He too hath been smitten silently with everlasting silence. Look! look! ye who are wives, and weep with me, ye who are left widowed."

Now the women looked, and a great groan went up from all that multitude, while Meriamun hid her face with the hollow of her hand. Then again she spoke.

"I have besought the Gods, my sisters; I have dared to call down the majesty of the Gods, who speak through the lips of the dead, and I have learnt whence these woes come. And this I have won by my prayers, that ye who suffer as I suffer shall learn whence they come, not from my mortal lips, indeed, but from the lips of the dead that speak with the voice of the Gods.”

Then, while the women trembled, she turned to the body of Pharaoh, which was set upon the knees of Osiris, and spoke to it.

“Dead Pharaoh! great Osirian, ruling in the Underworld, hearken to me now! Hearken to me now, thou Osiris, Lord of the West, first of the hosts of Death. Hearken to me, Osiris, and be manifest through the lips of him who was great on earth. Speak through his cold lips, speak with mortal accents, that these people may hear and understand. By the spirit that is in me, who am yet a dweller on the earth, I charge thee speak. Who is the source of the woes of Khem? Say, Lord of the dead, who are the living evermore?”

Now the flame on the altar died away, and dreadful silence fell upon the Temple, gloom fell upon the Shrine, and through the gloom the golden crown of Meriamun, and the cold statue of the Osiris, and the white face of dead Meneptah gleamed faint and ghost-like.

Then suddenly the flame of the altar flared as flares the summer lightning. It flared full on the face of the dead, and lo! the lips of the dead moved, and from them came the sound of mortal speech. They spake in awful accents, and thus they spoke:

“*She who was the curse of Achœans, she who was the doom of Ilios; she who sits in the Temple of Hathor, the Fate of man, who may not be harmed of Man, she calls down the wrath of the Gods on Khem. It is spoken!*”

The echo of the awful words died away in the silence. Then fear took hold of the multitude of women because of the words of the Dead, and some fell upon their faces, and some covered their eyes with their hands.

“Arise, my sisters!” cried the voice of Meriamun. “Ye have heard not from my lips, but from the lips of the dead. Arise, and let us forth to the Temple of the Hathor. Ye have heard who is the fountain of our woes; let us forth and seal it at its source for ever. Of men she may not be harmed who is the fate of men, from men we ask no help, for all men are her slaves, and for her beauty’s sake all men forsake us. But we will play the part of men. Our women’s milk shall freeze within our breasts, we will dip our tender hands in blood, ay, scourged by a thousand wrongs we will forget our gentleness, and tear this foul fairness from its home. We will burn the Hathor’s Shrine with fire, her priests shall perish at the altar, and the beauty of the false Goddess shall melt like wax in the furnace of our hate. Say, will ye follow me, my sisters, and wreak our shames upon the Shameful One, our woes upon the Spring of Woe, our dead upon their murderess?”

She ceased, and then from every woman’s throat within the great Temple there went up a cry of rage, fierce and shrill.

“We will, Meriamun, we will!” they screamed. “To the Hathor! Lead us to the Hathor’s Shrine! Bring fire! Bring fire! Lead us to the Hathor’s Shrine!”

VI

THE BURNING OF THE SHRINE

Rei the Priest saw and heard. Then turning, he stole away through the maddened throng of women and fled with what speed he might from the Temple. His heart was filled with fear and shame, for he knew full well that Pharaoh was dead, not at the hand of Hathor, but at the hand of Meriamun the Queen, whom he had loved. He knew well that dead Meneptah spake not with the voice of the dread Gods, but with the voice of the magic of Meriamun, who, of all women that have been since the days of Taia, was the most skilled in evil magic, the lore of the Snake. He knew also that Meriamun would slay Helen for the same cause wherefore she had slain Pharaoh, that she might win the Wanderer to her arms. While Helen lived he was not to be won away.

Now Rei was a righteous man, loving the Gods and good, and hating evil, and his heart burned because of the wickedness of the woman that once he cherished. This he swore that he would do, if time were left to him. He would warn the Helen so that she might fly the fire if so she willed, ay, and would tell her all the wickedness of Meriamun her foe.

His old feet stumbled over each other as he fled till he came to the gates of the Temple of the Hathor, and knocked upon the gates.

“What wouldst thou, old crone?” asked the priest who sat in the gates.

“I would be led to the presence of the Hathor,” he answered.

“No woman hath passed up to look upon the Hathor,” said the priest. “That women do not seek.”

Then Rei made a secret sign, and wondering greatly that a woman should have the inner wisdom, the priest let him pass.

He came to the second gates.

“What wouldst thou?” said the priest who sat in the gates.

“I would go up into the presence of the Hathor.”

“No woman hath willed to look upon the Hathor,” said the priest.

Then again Rei made the secret sign, but still the priest wavered.

“Let me pass, thou foolish warden,” said Rei. “I am a messenger from the Gods.”

“If thou art a mortal messenger, woman, thou goest to thy doom,” said the priest.

“On my head be it,” answered Rei, and the priest let him pass wondering.

Now he stood before the doors of the Alabaster Shrine that glowed with the light within. Still Rei paused not, only uttering a prayer that he might be saved from the unseen swords; he lifted the latch of bronze, and entered fearfully. But none fell upon him, nor was he smitten of invisible spears. Before him swung the curtains of Tyrian web, but no sound of singing came from behind the curtains. All was silence in the Shrine. He passed between the curtains and looked up the Sanctuary. It was lit with many hanging lamps, and by their light he saw the Goddess Helen, seated between the pillars of her loom. But she wove no more at the loom. The web of fate was rent by the Wanderer’s hands, and lay on either side, a shining cloth of gold. The Goddess Helen sat songless in her lonely Shrine, and on her breast gleamed the Red Star of light that wept the blood of men. Her head rested on her hand, and her heavenly eyes of blue gazed emptily down the empty Shrine.

Rei drew near trembling, though she seemed to see him not at all, and at last flung himself upon the earth before her. Now at length she saw him, and spoke in her voice of music.

“Who art thou that dares to break in upon my sorrow?” she said wonderingly. “Art thou indeed a woman come to look on one who by the will of the Gods is each woman’s deadliest foe?”

Then Rei raised himself saying:

“No woman am I, immortal Lady. I am Rei, that aged priest who met thee two nights gone by the pylon gates, and led thee to the Palace of Pharaoh. And I have dared to seek thy Shrine to tell thee that thou art in danger at the hands of Meriamun the Queen, and also to give thee a certain message with which I am charged by him who is named the Wanderer.”

Now Helen looked upon him wonderingly and spoke:

“Didst thou not but now name me immortal, Rei? How then can I be in danger, who am immortal, and not to be harmed of men? Death hath no part in me. Speak not to me of dangers, who, alas! can never die till everything is done; but tell me of that faithless Wanderer, whom I must love with all the womanhood that shuts my spirit in, and all my spirit that is clothed in womanhood. For, Rei, the Gods, withholding Death, have in wrath cursed me with love to torment my deathlessness. Oh, when I saw him standing where now thou standest, my soul knew its other part, and I learned that the curse I give to others had fallen on myself and him.”

“Yet was this Wanderer not altogether faithless to thee, Lady,” said Rei. “Listen, and I will tell thee all.”

“Speak on,” she said. “Oh, speak, and speak swiftly.”

Then Rei told Helen all that tale which the Wanderer had charged him to deliver in her ear, and keep no word back. He told her how Meriamun had beguiled Eperitus in her shape; how he had fallen in the snare and sworn by the Snake, he who should have sworn by the Star. He told her how the Wanderer had learned the truth, and learning it, had cursed the witch who wronged him; how he had been overcome by the guards and borne to the bed of torment; how he had been freed by the craft of Meriamun; and how he had gone forth to lead the host of Khem. All this he told her swiftly, hiding naught, while she listened with eager ears.

"Truly," she said, when all was told, "truly thou art a happy messenger. Now I forgive him all. Yet has he sworn by the Snake who should have sworn by the Star, and because of his fault never in this space of life shall Helen call him Lord. Yet will we follow him, Rei. Hark! what is that? Again it comes, that long shrill cry as of ghosts broke loose from Hades."

"It is the Queen," quoth Rei; "the Queen who with all women of Tanis comes hither to burn thee in thy Shrine. She hath slain Pharaoh, and now she would slay thee also, and so win the Wanderer to her arms. Fly, Lady! Fly!"

"Nay, I fly not," said Helen. "Let her come. But do thou, Rei, pass through the Temple gates and mingle with the crowd. There thou shalt await my coming, and when I come, draw near, fearing nothing; and together we will pass down the path of the Wanderer in such fashion as I shall show thee. Go! go swiftly, and bid those who minister to me pass out with thee."

Then Rei turned and fled. Without the doors of the Shrine many priests were gathered.

"Fly! the women of Tanis are upon you!" he cried. "I charge ye to fly!"

"This old crone is mad," quoth one. "We watch the Hathor, and, come all the women of the world, we fly not."

"Ye are mad indeed," said Rei, and sped on.

He passed the gates, the gates clashed behind him. He won the outer space, and hiding in the shadows of the Temple walls, looked forth. The night was dark, but from every side a thousand lights poured down towards the Shrine. On they came like lanterns on the waters of Sihor at the night of the feast of lanterns. Now he could see their host. It was the host of the women of Tanis, and every woman bore a lighted torch. They came by tens, by hundreds, and by thousands, and before them was Meriamun, seated in a golden chariot, and with them were asses, oxen, and camels, laden with bitumen, wood, and reeds. Now they gained the gates, and now they crashed them in with battering trees of palm. The gates fell, the women poured through them. At their head went Meriamun the Queen. Bidding certain of them stay by her chariot she passed through, and standing at the inner gates called aloud to the priests to throw them wide.

"Who art thou who darest come up with fire against the holy Temple of the Hathor?" asked the guardian of the gates.

"I am Meriamun, the Queen of Khem," she answered, "come with the women of Tanis to slay the Witch thou guardest. Throw the gates wide, or die with the Witch."

"If indeed thou art the Queen," answered the priest, "here there sits a greater Queen than thou. Go back! Go back, Meriamun, who art not afraid to offer violence to the immortal Gods. Go back! lest the curse smite thee."

"Draw on! draw on! ye women," cried Meriamun; "draw on, smite down the gates, and tear these wicked ones limb from limb."

Then the women screamed aloud and battered on the gates with trees, so that they fell. They fell and the women rushed in madly. They seized the priests of Hathor and tore them limb from limb as dogs tear a wolf. Now the Shrine stood before them.

"Touch not the doors," cried Meriamun. "Bring fire and burn the Shrine with her who dwells therein. Touch not the doors, look not in the Witch's face, but burn her where she is with fire."

Then the women brought the reeds and the wood, and piled them around the Shrine to twice the height of a man. They brought ladders also, and piled the fuel upon the roof of the Shrine till all was covered. And they poured pitch over the fuel, and then at the word of Meriamun they cast torches on the pitch and drew back screaming. For a moment the torches smouldered, then suddenly on every side great tongues of flame leapt up to heaven. Now the Shrine was wrapped in fire, and yet they cast fuel on it till none might draw near because of the heat. Now it burned as a furnace burns, and now the fire reached the fuel on the roof. It caught, and the Shrine was but a sheet of raging flame that lit the white-walled city, and the broad face of the waters, as the sun lights the lands. The alabaster walls of the Shrine turned whiter yet with heat: they cracked and split till the fabric tottered to its fall.

"Now there is surely an end of the Witch," cried Meriamun, and the women screamed an answer to her.

But even as they screamed a great tongue of flame shot out through the molten doors, ten fathoms length and more, it shot like a spear of fire. Full in its path stood a group of the burners. It struck them, it licked them up, and lo! they fell in blackened heaps upon the ground.

Rei looked down the path of the flame. There, in the doorway whence it had issued, stood the Golden Hathor, wrapped round with fire, and the molten metal of the doors crept about her feet. There she stood in the heart of the fire, but there was no stain of fire on her, nor on her white robes, nor on her streaming hair; and even through the glow of the furnace he saw the light of the Red Star at her breast. The flame licked her form and face, it wrapped itself around her, and curled through the masses of her hair. But still she stood unharmed, while the burners shrank back amazed, all save Meriamun the Queen. And as she stood she sang wild and sweet, and the sound of her singing came through the roar of the flames and reached the ears of the women, who, forgetting their rage, clung to one another in fear. Thus she sang — of that Beauty which men seek in all women, and never find, and of the eternal war for her sake between the women and the men, which is the great war of the world. And thus her song ended:

“Will ye bring flame to burn my Shrine
Who am myself a flame,
Bring death to tame this charm of mine
That death can never tame?
Will ye bring fire to harm my head
Who am myself a fire,
Bring vengeance for your Lovers dead
Upon the World’s Desire?

Nay, women while the earth endures,
Your loves are not your own.
They love you not, these loves of yours,
Helen they love alone!
My face they seek in every face,
Mine eyes in yours they see,
They do but kneel to you a space,
And rise and follow *me!*”

Then, still singing, she stepped forward from the Shrine, and as she went the walls fell in, and the roof crashed down upon the ruin and the flames shot up into the very sky. Helen heeded it not. She looked not back, but out to the gates beyond. She glanced not at the fierce blackened faces of the women, nor on the face of Meriamun, who stood before her, but slowly passed towards the gates. Nor did she go alone, for with her came a canopy of fire, hedging her round with flame that burned from nothing. The women saw the wonder and fell down in their fear, covering their eyes. Meriamun alone fell not, but she too must cover her eyes because of the glory of Helen and the fierceness of the flame that wrapped her round.

Now Helen ceased singing, but moved slowly through the courts till she came to the outer gates. Here by the gates was the chariot of Meriamun. Then Helen called aloud, and the Queen, who followed, heard her words:

"Rei," she cried, "draw nigh and have no fear. Draw nigh that I may pass with thee down that path the Wanderer treads. Draw nigh, and let us swiftly hence, for the hero's last battle is at hand, and I would greet him ere he die."

Rei heard her and drew near trembling, tearing from him the woman's weeds he wore, and showing the priest's garb beneath. And as he came the fire that wrapped her glory round left her, and passed upward like a cloak of flame. She stretched out her hand to him, saying:

"Lead me to yonder chariot, Rei, and let us hence."

Then he led her to the chariot, while those who stood by fled in fear. She mounted the chariot, and he set himself beside her. Then he grasped the reins and called to the horses, and they bounded forward and were lost in the night.

But Meriamun cried in her wrath:

"The Witch is gone, gone with my own servant whom she hath led astray. Bring chariots, and let horsemen come with the chariots, for where she passes there I will follow, ay, to the end of the world and the coast of Death."

VII

THE LAST FIGHT OF ODYSSEUS, LAERTES’ SON

Now the host of Pharaoh marched forth from On, to do battle with the Nine-bow barbarians. And before the host marched, the Captains came to the Wanderer, according to the command of Pharaoh, and placing their hands in his, swore to do his bidding on the march and in the battle. They brought him the great black bow of Eurytus, and his keen sword of bronze, Euryalus’ gift, and many a sheaf of arrows, and his heart rejoiced when he saw the goodly weapon. He took the bow and tried it, and as he drew the string, once again and for the last time it sang shrilly of death to be. The Captains heard the Song of the Bow, though what it said the Wanderer knew alone, for to their ears it came but as a faint, keen cry, like the cry of one who drowns in the water far from the kindly earth. But they marvelled much at the wonder, and said one to another that this man was no mortal, but a God come from the Under-world.

Then the Wanderer mounted the chariot of bronze that had been made ready for him, and gave the word to march.

All night the host marched swiftly, and at day-break they camped beneath the shelter of a long, low hill. But at the sunrise the Wanderer left the host, climbed the hill with certain of the Captains, and looked forth. Before him was a great pass in the mountains, ten furlongs or more in length, and through it ran the road. The sides of the mountain sloped down to the road, and were strewn with rocks split by the sun, polished by the sand, and covered over with bush that grew sparsely, like the hair on the limbs of a man. To the left of the mountains lay the river Sihor, but none might pass between the mountain and the river. The Wanderer descended from the hill, and while the soldiers ate, drove swiftly in his chariot to the further end of the pass and looked forth again. Here the river curved to the left, leaving a wide plain, and on the plain he saw the host of the Nine-bow barbarians, the mightiest host that ever his eyes had looked upon. They were encamped by nations, and of each nation there was twenty thousand men, and beyond the glittering camp of the barbarians he saw the curved ships of the Achæans. They were drawn up on the beach of the great river, as many a year ago he had seen them drawn up on the shore that is by Ilios. He looked upon plain and pass, on mountain and river, and measured the number of the foe. Then his heart was filled with the lust of battle, and his warlike cunning awoke. For of all leaders he was the most skilled in the craft of battle, and he desired that this, his last war, should be the greatest war of all.

Turning his horses' heads, he galloped back to the host of Pharaoh and mustered them in battle array. It was but a little number as against the number of the barbarians — twelve thousand spearmen, nine thousand archers, two thousand horsemen, and three hundred chariots. The Wanderer passed up and down their ranks, bidding them be of good courage, for this day they should sweep the barbarians from the land.

As he spoke a hawk flew down from the right, and fell on a heron, and slew it in mid-air. The host shouted, for the hawk is the Holy Bird of Ra, and the Wanderer, too, rejoiced in the omen. "Look, men," he cried; "the Bird of Ra has slain the wandering thief from the waters. And so shall ye smite the spoilers from the sea."

Then he held counsel with Captains, and certain trusty men were sent out to the camp of the barbarians. And they were charged to give an ill report of the host of Pharaoh, and to say that such of it as remained awaited the barbarian onset behind the shelter of the hill on the further side of the pass.

Then the Wanderer summoned the Captains of the archers, and bade them hide all their force among the rocks and thorns on either side of the mountain pass, and there to wait till he drew the hosts of the foe into the pass. And with the archers he sent a part of the spearmen, but the chariots he hid beneath the shelter of the hill on the hither side of the pass.

Now, when the ambush was set, and all were gone save the horsemen only, his spies came in and told him that the host of the barbarians marched from their camp, but that the Achæans marched not, but stopped by the river to guard the camp and ships. Then the Wanderer bade the horsemen ride through the pass and stand in the plain beyond, and there await the foe. But when the hosts of the barbarians charged them, they must reel before the charge, and at length fly headlong down the pass as though in fear. And he himself would lead the flight in his chariot, and where he led there they should follow.

So the horsemen rode through the pass and formed their squadrons on the plain beyond. Now the foe drew nigh, and a glorious sight it was to see the midday sun sparkling on their countless spears. Of horsemen they had no great number, but there were many chariots and swordsmen, and spearmen, and slingers beyond count. They came on by nations, and in the centre of the host of each nation sat the king of the nation in a glorious chariot, with girls and eunuchs, holding fans to fan him with and awnings of silk to hide him from the sun.

Now the Wanderer hung back behind the squadrons of horsemen as though in fear. But presently he sent messengers bidding the Captains of the squadrons to charge the first nation, and fight for a while but feebly, and then when they saw him turn his horses and gallop through the pass, to follow after him as though in doubt, but in such fashion as to draw the foe upon their heels.

This the Captains of the mercenaries did. Once they charged and were beaten back, then they charged again, but the men made as though they feared the onset. Now the foe came hard after them, and the Wanderer turned his chariot and fled through the pass, followed slowly by the horsemen. And when the hosts of the barbarians saw them turn, they set up a mighty shout of laughter that rent the skies, and charged after them.

But the Wanderer looked back and laughed also. Now he was through the pass followed by the horsemen, and after them swept the hosts of the barbarians, like a river that has burst its banks. Still the Wanderer held his hand till the whole pass was choked with the thousands of the foe, ay, until the half of the first of the nations had passed into the narrow plain that lay between the hill and the mouth of the pass. Then, driving apace up the hill, he stood in his chariot and gave the signal. Lifting his golden shield on high he flashed it thrice, and all the horsemen shouted aloud. At the first flash, behold, from behind every rock and bush of the mountain sides arose the helms of armed men. At the second flash there came a rattling sound of shaken quivers, and at the third flash of the golden shield, the air was darkened with the flight of arrows. As the sea-birds on a lonely isle awake at the cry of the sailor, and wheel by thousands from their lofty cliffs, so at the third flash of the Wanderer’s shield the arrows of his hidden host rushed downward on the foe, rattling like hail upon the harness. For awhile they kept their ranks, and pressed on over the bodies of those that fell. But soon the horses in the chariots, maddened with wounds, plunged this way and that, breaking their companies and trampling the soldiers down. Now some strove to fly forward, and some were fain to fly back, and many an empty chariot was dragged this way and that, but ever the pitiless rain of shafts poured down, and men fell by thousands beneath the gale of death. Now the mighty host of the Nine-bows rolled back, thinned and shattered, towards the plain, and now the Wanderer cried the word of onset to the horsemen and to the chariots that drew from behind the shelter of the hill, and following after him they charged down upon those barbarians who had passed the ambush, singing the song of Pentaur as they charged. Among those nigh the mouth of the pass was the king of the nation of the Libu, a great man, black and terrible to see. The Wanderer drew his bow, the arrow rushed forth and pierced the king, and he fell dead in his chariot.

Then those of his host who passed the ambush turned to fly, but the chariot of the Wanderer dashed into them, and after the chariot came the horsemen, and after the horsemen the chariots of Pharaoh.

Now all who were left of the broken host rolled back, mad with fear, while the spearmen of Pharaoh galled them as hunters gall a flying bull, and the horsemen of Pharaoh trampled them beneath their feet. Red slaughter raged all down the pass, helms, banners, arrow-points shone and fell in the stream of the tide of war, but at length the stony way was clear save for the dead alone. Beyond the pass the plain was black with flying men, and the fragments of the broken nations were mixed together as clay and sand are mixed of the potter. Where now were the hosts of the Nine-bow barbarians? Where now were their glory and their pride?

The Wanderer gathered his footmen and his chariots and set them in array again but the horsemen he sent out to smite the flying nations and wait his coming by the camp; for there were mustering those who were left of the nations, perchance twenty thousand men, and before their ships were ranged the dense ranks of the Achæans, shield to shield, every man in his place.

The Wanderer led his host slowly across the sandy plain, till at length he halted it two bow-shots from the camp of the barbarians. The camp was shaped like a bow, and the river Sihor formed its string, and round it was a deep ditch and beyond the ditch a wall of clay. Moreover, within the camp and nearer to the shore there was a second ditch and wall, and behind it were the beaks of the ships and the host of Aquaiusha, even of his own dear people the Achæans. There were the old blazons, and the spears that had fought below Troy town. There were the two lions of Mycenæ, the Centaur of the son of Polypaetas, son of Pirithous; there were the Swan of Lacedæmon, and the Bull of the Kings of Crete, the Rose of Rhodes, the Serpent of Athens, and many another knightly bearing of old friends and kindred dear. And now they were the blazons of foemen, and the Wanderer warred for a strange king, and for his own hand, beneath the wings of the Hawk of the Legion of Ra.

The Wanderer sent heralds forward, calling to those barbarians who swarmed behind the wall to surrender to the host of Pharaoh, but this, being entrenched by the river Sihor, they would in nowise do. For they were mad because of their slaughtered thousands, and moreover they knew that it is better to die than to live as slaves. This they saw also, that their host was still as strong as the host of Pharaoh, which was without the wall, and weary with the heat and stress of battle and the toil of marching through the desert sands. Now the Captains of the host of Pharaoh came to the Wanderer, praying him that he would do no more battle on that day, because the men were weary, and the horses neighed for food and water.

But he answered them: “I swore to Pharaoh that I would utterly smite the people of the Nine-bows and drive them down to death, so that the coasts of Khem may be free of them. Here I may not camp the host, without food or pasture for the horses, and if I go back, the foe will gather heart and come on, and with them the fleet of the Achæans, and no more shall we lure them into ambush, for therein they have learned a lesson. Nay, get you to your companies. I will go up against the camp.”

Then they bowed and went, for having seen his deeds and his skill and craft in war, they held him the first of Captains, and dared not say him nay.

So the Wanderer divided his host into three parts, set it in order of battle, and moved up against the camp. But he himself went with the centre part against the gate of the camp, for here there was an earthen way for chariots, if but the great gates might be passed. And at a word the threefold host rushed on to the charge. But those within the walls shot them with spears and arrows, so that many were slain, and they were rolled back from the wall as a wave is rolled from the cliff. Again the Wanderer bade them charge on the right and left, bearing the dead before them as shields, and hurling corpses into the ditch to fill it. But he himself hung back awhile with the middle army, watching how the battle went, and waiting till the foe at the gate should be drawn away.

Now the mercenaries of Pharaoh forced a passage on the right and thither went many of the barbarians who watched the gate, that they might drive them back.

Then the Wanderer bade men take out the poles of chariots and follow him and beat down the gates with the poles. This with much toil and loss they did, for the archers poured their arrows on the assailants of the gate. Now at length the gates were down, and the Wanderer rushed through them with his chariot. But even as he passed the mercenaries of Pharaoh were driven out from the camp on the right, and those who led the left attack fled also. The soldiers who should have followed the Wanderer saw and wavered a little moment, and while they wavered the companies of the barbarians poured into the gateway and held it so that none might pass. Now the Wanderer was left alone within the camp, and back he might not go. But fear came not nigh him, nay, the joy of battle filled his mighty heart. He cast his shield upon the brazen floor of the chariot, and cried aloud to the charioteer, as he loosened the long grey shafts in his quiver.

“Drive on, thou charioteer! Drive on! The jackals leave the lion in the toils. Drive on! Drive on! and win a glorious death, for thus should Odysseus die.”

So the charioteer, praying to his Gods, lashed the horses with his scourge, and they sprang forward madly among the foe. And as they rushed, the great bow rang and sang the swallow string — rung the bow and sung the string, and the lean shaft drank the blood of a leader of men. Again the string sang, again the shaft sped forth, and a barbarian king fell from his chariot as a diver plunges into the sea, and his teeth bit the sand.

“Dive deep, thou sea-thief!” cried the Wanderer, “thou mayest find treasures there! Drive on, thou charioteer, so should lions die while jackals watch.”

Now the barbarians looked on the Wanderer and were amazed. For ever his chariot rushed to and fro, across the mustering ground of the camp, and ever his grey shafts carried death before them, and ever the foemen’s arrows fell blunted from his golden harness. They looked on him amazed, they cried aloud that this was the God of War come down to do battle for Khem, that it was Sutek the Splendid, that it was Baal in his strength; they fled amain before his glory and his might. For the Wanderer raged among them like great Rameses Miamun among the tribes of the Khita; like Monthu, the Lord of Battles, and lo! they fled before him, their knees gave way, their hearts were turned to water, he drove them as a herdsman drives the yearling calves.

But now at length a stone from a sling smote the charioteer who directed the chariot, and sunk in between his eyes, so that he fell down dead from the chariot. Then the reins flew wide, and the horses rushed this way and that, having no master. And now a spear pierced the heart of the horse on the right, so that he fell, and the pole of the chariot snapped in two. Then the barbarians took heart and turned, and some of them set on to seize the body of the charioteer, and spoil his arms. But the Wanderer leaped down and bestrode the corpse with shield up and spear aloft.

Now among the press of the barbarians there was a stir, as of one thrusting his way through them to the front. And above the plumes of their helmets and the tossing of their shields the Wanderer saw the golden head, unhelmeted, of a man, taller than the tallest there from the shoulders upwards. Unhelmeted he came and unshielded, with no body armour. His flesh was very fair and white, and on it were figures pricked in blue, figures of men and horses, snakes and sea-beasts. The skin of a white bear was buckled above his shoulder with a golden clasp, fashioned in the semblance of a boar. His eyes were blue, fierce and shining, and in his hand he held for a weapon the trunk of a young pine-tree, in which was hafted a weighty axe-head of rough unpolished stone.

“Give way!” he cried. “Give place, ye dusky dwarfs, and let a man see this champion!”

So the barbarians made a circle about the Wanderer and the giant, and stood silently to watch a great fight.

“Who art thou?” said the mighty man disdainfully, “and whence? Where is thy city, and thy parents who begat thee?”

“Now I will avow that men call me Odysseus, Sacker of Cities, Laertes’ son, a Prince of the Achæans,” said the Wanderer. “And who art thou, I pray thee, and where is thy native place, for city, I wot, thou hast none?”

Then the mighty man, swinging his great stone axe in a rhythmic motion, began to chant a rude lay, and this was the manner of the singing —

“Laestrygons men
And Cimmerians call us
Born of the land
Of the sunless winter,
Born of the land
Of the nightless summer:
Cityless, we,
Beneath dark pine boughs,
By the sea abiding
Sail o’er the swan’s bath.
Wolf am I hight,
The son of Signy,
Son of the were-wolf.
Southwards I sailed,
Sailed with the amber,
Sailed with the foam-wealth.
Among strange peoples,
Winning me wave-flame,
Winning me war-fame,
Winning me women.
Soon shall I slay thee,
Sacker of Cities!”

Gold.

With that, and with a cry, he rushed on the Wanderer, his great axe swung aloft, to fell him at a blow.

But while the giant had been singing, the Wanderer had shifted his place a little, so that the red blaze of the setting sun was in his face. And as the mighty man came on, the Wanderer lifted up his golden shield and caught the sunlight on it, and flashed it full in the giant’s eyes, so that he was dazzled, and could not see to strike. Then the Wanderer smote at his naked right arm, and struck it on the joint of the elbow; with all his force he smote, and the short sword of Euryalus bit deep, and the arm fell, with the axe in the hand-grip. But so terrible was the stroke that bronze might not abide it, and the blade was shattered from the ivory handle.

“Didst thou feel aught, thou Man-eater?” cried Odysseus, jeering, for he knew from the song of the giant that he was face to face with a wanderer from an evil race, that of old had smitten his ships and devoured his men — the Laestrygons of the land of the Midnight Sun, the Man-eaters.

But the giant caught up his club of pine-tree in his left hand, the severed right arm still clinging to it. And he gnawed on the handle of the stone axe with his teeth, and bit the very stone, and his lips foamed, for a fury came upon him. Roaring aloud, suddenly he smote at the Wanderer’s head, and beat down his shield, and crushed his golden helm so that he fell on one knee, and all was darkness around him. But his hands lit on a great stone, for the place where they fought was the holy place of an ancient temple, old and ruined before King Mena’s day. He grasped the stone with both hands; it was the basalt head of a fallen statue of a God or a man, of a king long nameless, or of a forgotten God. With a mighty strain the Wanderer lifted it as he rose, it was a weight of a chariot’s burden, and poising it, he hurled it straight at the breast of the Laestrygon, who had drawn back, whirling his axe, before he smote another blow. But ere ever the stroke fell, the huge stone struck him full and broke in his breast bone, and he staggered long, and fell like a tree, and the black blood came up through his bearded lips, and his life left him.

Then the multitude of the barbarians that stood gazing at the fray drew yet further back in fear, and the Wanderer laughed like a God at that old score paid, and at the last great stroke of the hands of the City-sacker, Odysseus.

VIII

“TILL ODYSSEUS COMES!”

The Wanderer laughed like a God, though he deemed that the end was near, and the foes within the camp and the friends without looked on him and wondered.

“Slay him!” cried the foes within, speaking in many tongues. “Slay him!” they cried, and yet they feared the task, but circled round like hounds about a mighty boar at bay.

“Spare him!” shouted the host of the Achæans, watching the fray from far, as they stood behind their inner wall, for as yet they had not mingled in the battle but stayed by their ships to guard them.

“Rescue!” cried the Captains of Pharaoh without, but none came on to force the way.

Then of a sudden, as Fate hung upon the turn, a great cry of fear and wonder rose from the ranks of Pharaoh’s host beyond the wall. It swelled and swelled till at length the cry took the sound of a name — the sound of the name of *Hathor*.

“The Hathor! the Hathor! See, the Hathor comes!”

The Wanderer turned his head and looked swiftly. A golden chariot sped down the slope of sand towards the gate of the camp. The milk-white horses were stained with sweat and splashed with blood. They thundered on towards the gate down the way that was red with blood, as the horses of the dawn rush through the blood-red sky. A little man, withered and old, drove the chariot, leaning forward as he drove, and by his side stood the Golden Helen. The Red Star blazed upon her breast, her hair and filmy robes floated on the wind.

She looked up and forth. Now she saw him, Odysseus of Ithaca, her love, alone, beset with foes, and a cry broke from her. She tore away the veil that hid her face, and her beauty flashed out upon the sight of men as the moon flashes from the evening mists. She pointed to the gate, she stretched out her arms towards the host of Pharaoh, bidding them look upon her and follow her. Then a shout went up from the host, and they rushed onwards in the path of the chariot, for where the Helen leads there men must follow through Life to Death through War to Peace.

On the chariot rushed to the camp, and after it the host of Pharaoh followed. The holders of the gate saw the beauty of her who rode in the chariot; they cried aloud in many tongues that the Goddess of Love had come to save the God of

War. They fled this way and that, or stood drunken with the sight of beauty, and were dashed down by the horses and crushed of the chariot wheels. Now she had passed the gates, and after her poured the host of Pharaoh. Now Rei reined up the horses by the broken chariot of the Wanderer, and now the Wanderer, with a shout of joy, had sprung into the chariot of Helen.

"And art thou come to be with me in my last battle?" he whispered in her ear. "Art thou indeed that Argive Helen whom I love, or am I drunk with the blood of men and blind with the sheen of spears, and is this the vision of a man doomed to die?"

"It is no vision, Odysseus, for I am Helen's self," she answered gently. "I have learned all the truth, and knowing thy fault, count it but a little thing. Yet because thou didst forget the words of the immortal Goddess, who, being my foe now and for ever, set this cunning snare for thee, the doom is on thee, that Helen shall not be thine in this space of life. For thou fightest in thy last battle, Odysseus. On! see thy hosts clamour to be led, and there the foe hangs black as storm and shoots out the lightning of his spears. On, Odysseus, on! that the doom may be accomplished, and the word of the Ghost fulfilled!"

Then the Wanderer turned and called to the Captains, and the Captains called to the soldiers and set them in array, and following the blood-red Star they rolled down upon the gathered foe as the tide rolls upon the rocks when the breath of the gale is strong; and as the waters leap and gather till the rocks are lost in the surge, so the host of Pharaoh leapt upon the foe and swallowed them up. And ever in the forefront of the war blazed the Red Star on Helen's breast, and ever the sound of her singing pierced the din of death.

Now the host of the Nine-bow barbarians was utterly destroyed, and the host of Pharaoh came up against the wall that was set about the camp of the Achæans to guard their ships, and at its head came the golden chariot wherein were the Wanderer and Helen. The Captains of the Achæans looked wondering from their wall, watching the slaughter of their allies.

"Now, who is this?" cried a Captain, "who is this clad in golden armour fashioned like our own, who leads the host of Pharaoh to victory?"

Then a certain aged leader of men looked forth and answered:

"Such armour I have known indeed, and such a man once wore it. The armour is fashioned like the armour of Paris, Priam's son — Paris of Ilios; but Paris hath long been dead."

"And who is she," cried the Captain, "she on whose breast a Red Star burns, who rides in the chariot of him with the golden armour, whose shape is the shape of Beauty, and who sings aloud while men go down to death?"

Then the aged leader of men looked forth again and answered:

“Such a one have I known, indeed; so she was wont to sing, and hers was such a shape of beauty, and such a Star shone ever on her breast. Helen of Ilios — Argive Helen it was who wore it — Helen, because of whose loveliness the world grew dark with death; but long is Helen dead.”

Now the Wanderer glanced from his chariot and saw the crests of the Achæans and the devices on the shields of men with whose fathers he had fought beneath the walls of Ilios. He saw and his heart was stirred within him, so that he wept there in the chariot.

“Alas! for the fate that is on me,” he cried, “that I must make my last battle in the service of a stranger against my own people and the children of my own dear friends.”

“Weep not, Odysseus,” said Helen, “for Fate drives thee on — Fate that is cruel and changeless, and heeds not the loves or hates of men. Weep not, Odysseys, but go on up against the Achæans, for from among them thy death comes.”

So the Wanderer went on, sick at heart, shooting no shafts and striking no blow, and after him came the remnant of the host of Pharaoh. Then he halted the host, and at his bidding Rei drove slowly down the wall seeking a place to storm it, and as he drove they shot at the chariot from the wall with spears and slings and arrows. But not yet was the Wanderer doomed. He took no hurt, nor did any hurt come to Rei nor to the horses that drew the chariot, and as for Helen, the shafts of Death knew her and turned aside. Now while they drove thus Rei told the Wanderer of the death of Pharaoh, of the burning of the Temple of Hathor, and of the flight of Helen. The Wanderer hearkened and said but one thing, for in all this he saw the hand of Fate.

“It is time to make an end, Rei, for soon will Meriamun be seeking us, and methinks that I have left a trail that she can follow,” and he nodded at the piled-up dead that stretched further than the eye could reach.

Now they were come over against that spot in the wall where stood the aged Captain of the Achæans, who had likened the armour of the Wanderer to the armour of Paris, and the beauty of her at his side to the beauty of Argive Helen.

The Captain loosed his bow at the chariot, and leaning forward watched the flight of the shaft. It rushed straight at Helen’s breast, then of a sudden turned aside, harming her not. And as he marvelled she lifted her face and looked towards him. Then he saw and knew her for that Helen whom he had seen while he served with Cretan Idomeneus in the Argive ships, when the leaguer was done and the smoke went up from burning Ilios.

Again he looked, and lo! on the Wanderer’s golden shield he saw the White Bull, the device of Paris, son of Priam, as ofttimes he had seen it glitter on the walls of Troy. Then great fear took him, and he lifted up his hands and cried aloud:

“Fly, ye Achæans! Fly! Back to your curved ships and away from this accursed land. For yonder in the chariot stands Argive Helen, who is long dead, and with her Paris, son of Priam, come to wreak the woes of Ilios on the sons of those who wasted her. Fly, ere the curse smite you.”

Then a great cry of fear rose from the host of the Achæans, as company called to company that the ghosts of Paris of Ilios and Argive Helen led the armies of Pharaoh on to victory. A moment they gazed as frightened sheep gaze upon the creeping wolves, then turning from the wall, they rushed headlong to their ships.

Behind them came the soldiers of Pharaoh, storming the walls and tearing at their flanks as wolves tear the flying sheep. Then the Achæans turned at bay, and a mighty fray raged round the ships, and the knees of many were loosened. And of the ships, some were burned and some were left upon the bank. But a remnant of them were pushed off into the deep water, and hung there on their oars waiting for the end of the fray.

Now the sun was gone down, so that men could scarce see to slay each other. The Wanderer stood his chariot on the bank, watching the battle, for he was weary, and had little mind to swell the slaughter of the people of his own land.

Now the last ship was pushed off, and at length the great battle was done. But among those on the ship was a man still young, and the goodliest and mightiest among all the host of the Achæans. By his own strength and valour he had held the Egyptians back while his comrades ran the curved ship down the beach, and the Wanderer, looking on him, deemed him their hardiest warrior and most worthy of the Achæans.

He stood upon the poop of the ship, and saw the light from the burning vessels gleam on the Wanderer’s golden helm. Then of a sudden he drew a mighty bow and loosed an arrow charged with death.

“This gift to the Ghost of Paris from Telegonus, son of Circe and of Odysseus, who was Paris’ foe,” he cried with a loud voice.

And as he cried it, and as the fateful words struck on the ears of Odysseus and the ears of Helen, the shaft, pointed by the Gods, rushed on. It rushed on, it smote the Wanderer with a deadly wound where the golden body-plate of his harness joined the taslets, and pierced him through. Then he knew that his fate was accomplished, and that death came upon him from the water, as the ghost of Tiresias in Hades had foretold. In his pain, for the last time of all, he let fall his shield and the black bow of Eurytus. With one hand he clasped the rail of the chariot and the other he threw about the neck of the Golden Helen, who bent beneath his weight like a lily before the storm. Then he also cried aloud in answer:

“Oh, Telegonus, son of Circe, what wickedness hast thou wrought before the awful Gods that this curse should have been laid upon thee to slay him who begat thee? Hearken, thou son of Circe, I am not Paris, I am Odysseus of Ithaca, who begat thee, and thou hast brought my death upon me from the water, as the Ghost foretold.”

When Telegonus heard these words, and knew that he had slain his father, the famed Odysseus, whom he had sought the whole world through, he would have cast himself into the river, there to drown, but those with him held him by strength, and the stream took the curved ship and floated it away. And thus for the first and last time did the Gods give it to Telegonus to look upon the face and hear the voice of his father, Odysseus.

But when the Achæans knew that it was the lost Odysseus who had led the host of Pharaoh against the armies of the Nine Nations, they wondered no more at the skill of the ambush and the greatness of the victory of Pharaoh.

Now the chariots of Meriamun were pursuing, and they splashed through the blood of men in the pass, and rolled over the bodies of men in the plain beyond the pass. They came to the camps and found them peopled with dead, and lit with the lamps of the blazing ships of the Aquaiusha. Then Meriamun cried aloud:

“Surely Pharaoh grew wise before he died, for there is but one man on the earth who with so small a force could have won so great a fray. He hath saved the crown of Khem, and by Osiris he shall wear it.”

Now the chariots of Meriamun had passed the camp of the barbarians, and were come to the inner camp of the Achæans, and the soldiers shouted as she came driving furiously.

The Wanderer lay dying on the ground, there by the river-bank, and the light of the burning ships flamed on his golden armour, and on the Star at Helen’s breast.

“Why do the soldiers shout?” he asked, lifting his head from Helen’s breast.

“They shout because Meriamun the Queen is come,” Rei answered.

“Let her come,” said the Wanderer.

Now Meriamun sprang from her chariot and walked, through the soldiers who made way, bowing before her royalty, to where the Wanderer lay, and stood speechless looking on him.

But the Wanderer lifting his head spake faintly:

“Hail! O Queen!” he said, “I have accomplished the charge that Pharaoh laid upon me. The host of the Nine-bow barbarians is utterly destroyed, the fleet of the Aquaiusha is burned, or fled, the land of Khem is free from foes. Where is

Pharaoh, that I may make report to him ere I die?"

"Pharaoh is dead, Odysseus," she answered. "Oh, live on! live on! and thyself thou shalt be Pharaoh."

"Ay, Meriamun the Queen," answered the Wanderer, "I know all. The Pharaoh is dead! Thou didst slay Pharaoh, thinking thus to win me for thy Lord, me, who am won of Death. Heavily shall the blood of Pharaoh lie upon thee in that land whither I go, Meriamun, and whither thou must follow swiftly. Thou didst slay Pharaoh, and Helen, who through thy guile is lost to me, thou wouldst have slain also, but thou couldst not harm her immortality. And now I die, and this is the end of all these Loves and Wars and Wanderings. My death has come upon me from the water."

Meriamun stood speechless, for her heart was torn in two, so that in her grief she forgot even her rage against Helen and Rei the Priest.

Then Helen spoke. "Thou diest indeed, Odysseus, yet it is but for a little time, for thou shalt come again and find me waiting."

"Ay, Odysseus," said the Queen, "and I also will come again, and thou shalt love me then. Oh, now the future opens, and I know the things that are to be. Beneath the Wings of Truth shall we meet again, Odysseus."

"There shall we meet again, Odysseus, and there thou shalt draw the Veil of Truth," said the Helen.

"Yea," quoth the dying Wanderer; "there or otherwhere shall we meet again, and there and otherwhere love and hate shall lose and win, and die to arise again. But not yet is the struggle ended that began in other worlds than this, and shall endure till evil is lost in good, and darkness swallowed up in light. Bethink thee, Meriamun, of that vision of thy bridal night, and read its riddle. Lo! I will answer it with my last breath as the Gods have given me wisdom. When we three are once more twain, then shall our sin be purged and peace be won, and the veil be drawn from the face of Truth. Oh, Helen, fare thee well! I have sinned against thee, I have sworn by the Snake who should have sworn by the Star, and therefore I have lost thee."

"Thou hast but lost to find again beyond the Gateways of the West," she answered low.

Then she bent down, and taking him in her arms, kissed him, whispering in his ear, and the blood of men that fell ever from the Star upon her breast, dropped like dew upon his brow, and vanished as it dropped.

And as she whispered of joy to be, and things too holy to be written, the face of the Wanderer grew bright, like the face of a God.

Then suddenly his head fell back, and he was dead, dead upon the heart of the World's Desire. For thus was fulfilled the oath of Idalian Aphrodite, and thus at the last did Odysseus lie in the arms of the Golden Helen.

Now Meriamun clasped her breast, and her lips turned white with pain. But Helen rose, and standing at the Wanderer’s head looked on Meriamun, who stood at his feet.

“My sister,” said Helen to the Queen; “see now the end of all. He whom we loved is lost to us, and what hast thou gained? Nay, look not so fiercely on me. I may not be harmed of thee, as thou hast seen, and thou mayest not be harmed of me, who would harm none, though ever thou wilt hate me who hate thee not, and till thou learnest to love me, Sin shall be thy portion and Bitterness thy comfort.”

But Meriamun spoke no word.

Then Helen beckoned to Rei and spake to him, and Rei went weeping to do her bidding.

Presently he returned again, and with him were soldiers bearing torches. The soldiers lifted up the body of the Wanderer, and bore it to a mighty pyre that was built up of the wealth of the barbarians, of chariots, spears, and the oars of ships, of wondrous fabrics, and costly furniture. And they laid the Wanderer on the pyre, and on his breast they laid the black bow of Eurytus.

Then Helen spoke to Rei once more, and Rei took a torch and fired the pyre so that smoke and flame burst from it. And all the while Meriamun stood by as one who dreams.

Now the great pyre was a mass of flame, and the golden armour of the Wanderer shone through the flame, and the black bow twisted and crumbled in the heat. Then of a sudden Meriamun gave a great cry, and tearing the snake girdle from her middle hurled it on the flames.

“From fire thou camest, thou Ancient Evil,” she said in a dead tongue; “to fire get thee back again, false counsellor.”

But Rei the Priest called aloud in the same tongue:

“An ill deed thou hast done, O Queen, for thou hast taken the Snake to thy bosom, and where the Snake passes there thou must follow.”

Even as he spoke the face of Meriamun grew fixed, and she was drawn slowly towards the fire, as though by invisible hands. Now she stood on its very brink, and now with one loud wail she plunged into it and cast herself at length on the body of the Wanderer.

And as she lay there on the body, behold the Snake awoke in the fire. It awoke, it grew, it twined itself about the body of Meriamun and the body of the Wanderer, and lifting its head, it laughed.

Then the fire fell in, and the Wanderer and Meriamun the Queen, and the Snake that wrapped them round, vanished in the heart of the flames.

For awhile the Golden Helen stood still, looking on the dying fire. Then she let her veil fall, and turning, wandered forth into the desert and the night, singing as she passed.

And so she goes, wandering, wandering, till Odysseus comes again.

Now this is the tale that I, Rei the Priest, have been bidden to set forth before I lay me down to sleep in my splendid tomb that I have made ready by Thebes. Let every man read it as he will, and every woman as the Gods have given her wit.

PALINODE

Thou that of old didst blind Stesichorus, If e’er, sweet Helen, such a thing befell, We pray thee of thy grace, be good to us, Though little in our tale accordeth well With that thine ancient minstrel had to tell, Who saw, with sightless eyes grown luminous, These Ilian sorrows, and who heard the swell Of ocean round the world ring thunderous, And thy voice break when knightly Hector fell!

And thou who all these many years hast borne To see the great webs of the weaving torn By puny hands of dull, o’er-learned men, Homer, forgive us that thy hero’s star Once more above sea waves and waves of war, Must rise, must triumph, and must set again!

PARSON KELLY

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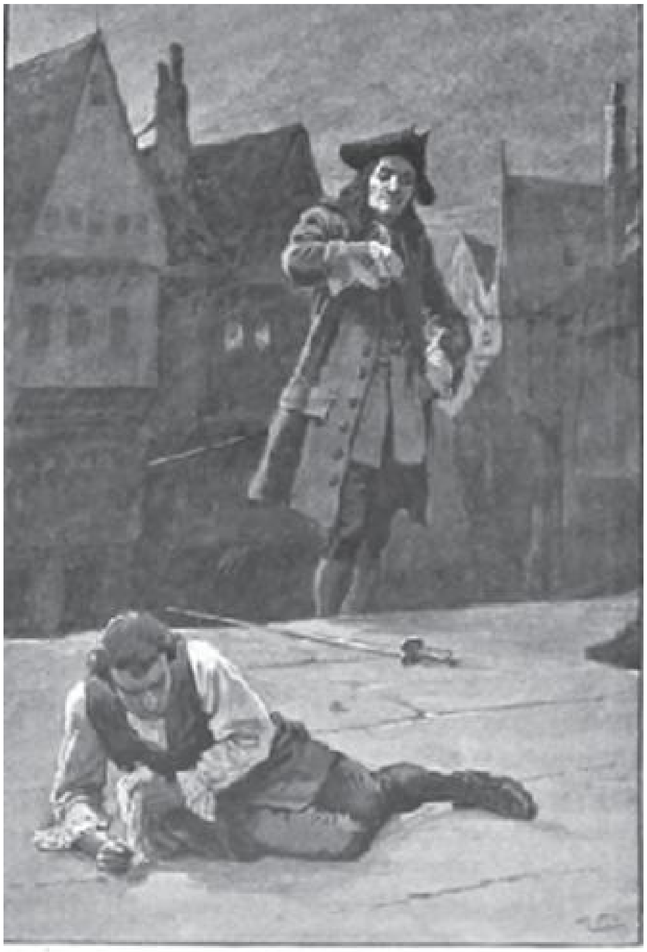

"BUT I AM GRIEVED I HAVE NO VIRGIL"

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“BUT I AM GRIEVED I HAVE NO VIRGIL.”

TO THE

BARON TANNEGUY DE WOGAN

The Representative of a House illustrious for its Antiquity:
In Prosperity splendid: in Exile and Poverty gay
and constant: of Loyalty unshaken;

Is Dedicated

This Narrative, founded on the deeds of his Ancestor, **The Chevalier Nicholas De Wogan.**

A. E. W. M.
A. L.

PREFACE

The authors wish to say that the proceedings of Lady Oxford are unhistorical. Swift mentions a rumour that there was such a lady, but leaves her anonymous.

CHAPTER I

THE PARSON EXPRESSES IRREPROACHABLE SENTIMENTS AT THE MAZARIN PALACE

“What mighty quarrels rise from trivial things!”

So wrote Mr. Alexander Pope, whom Nicholas Wogan remembers as a bookish boy in the little Catholic colony of Windsor Forest. The line might serve as a motto for the story which Mr. Wogan (now a one-armed retired colonel of Dillon’s Irish Brigade in French Service) is about to tell. The beginnings of our whole mischancy business were trivial in themselves, and in all appearance unrelated to the future. They were nothing more important than the purchase of a couple of small strong-boxes and the placing of Parson Kelly’s patrimony in Mr. Law’s company of the West. Both of these events happened upon the same day.

It was early in February of the year 1719, and the streets of Paris were deep in snow. Wogan, then plotting for King James’s cause, rode into Paris from St. Omer at ten o’clock of the forenoon, and just about the same hour Parson Kelly, plotting too in his way, drove through the Orleans gate.

A few hours later the two men met in the Marais, or rather Nicholas Wogan saw the skirts of Kelly’s coat vanishing into an ironmonger’s shop, and ran in after him. Kelly was standing by the counter with a lady on either side of him, as was the dear man’s wont; though their neighbourhood on this occasion was the merest accident, for the Parson knew neither of them.

‘Sure it’s my little friend the lace merchant,’ said Wogan, and clapped his hand pretty hard on the small of his friend’s back, whom he had not seen for a twelvemonth and more. Kelly stumbled a trifle, maybe, and no doubt he coughed and spluttered. One of the ladies dropped her purse and shuddered into a corner.

‘*Quelle bête sauvage!*’ murmured the second with one indignant eye upon Nicholas Wogan, and the other swimming with pity for Mr. Kelly.

‘Madame,’ said Wogan, picking up the purse and restoring it with his most elegant bow, ‘it was pure affection.’

‘No doubt,’ said Kelly, as he rubbed his shoulder; ‘but, Nick, did you never hear of the bear that smashed his master’s skull in the endeavour to stroke off a fly that had settled on his nose? That was pure affection too.’

He turned back to the counter, on which the shopman was setting out a number of small strong-boxes, and began to examine them.

‘Well, you must e’en blame yourself, George,’ said Nick, ‘for the mere sight of you brings the smell of the peat to my nostrils and lends vigour to my hand.’

This he said with all sincerity, for the pair had been friends in county Kildare long before Kelly went to Dublin University, and took deacon’s orders, and was kicked out of the pulpit for preaching Jacobitism in his homilies. As boys they had raced bare-legged over the heather, and spent many an afternoon in fighting over again that siege of Rathcoffey Castle which an earlier Nicholas Wogan had held so stoutly for King Charles. The recollection of those days always played upon Wogan’s foolish heartstrings with a touch soft as a woman’s fingers, and very likely it now set George Kelly’s twanging to the same tune; for at Wogan’s words he turned himself about with a face suddenly illumined.

‘Here, Nick, lay your hand there,’ said he and stretched out his hand. ‘You will be long in Paris?’

‘No more than a night. And you?’

‘Just the same time.’

He turned again to the counter, and busied himself with his boxes in something of a hurry, as though he would avoid further questioning. Wogan blew a low whistle.

Maybe we are on the same business, eh?’ he asked. ‘The King’s business?’

‘Whisht, man,’ whispered Kelly quickly, and he glanced about the shop. ‘Have you no sense at all?’

The shop was empty at the moment, and there was no reason that Wogan could see for his immoderate secrecy. But the Parson was much like the rest of the happy-go-lucky conspirators who were intriguing to dislodge the Elector from the English throne — cautious by fits and moods, and the more often when there was the less need. But let a scheme get ripe for completion, and sure they imagined it completed already, and at once there would be letters left about here, for all the world to read, and a wink and a sly word there, so that it was little short of a miracle when a plot was launched before it had been discovered by those it was launched against. Not that you are to attribute to Mr. Wogan any superior measure of reticence. On the contrary, it is very probable that it was precisely Mr. Wogan’s tongue which George Kelly distrusted, and if so, small blame to him. At any rate, he pursed up his lips and stiffened his back. Consequence turned him into a ramrod, and with a voice pitched towards the shopman:

‘I am still in the muslin trade,’ said he, meaning that he collected money for the Cause. ‘I shall cross to England tomorrow.’

‘Indeed and will you now?’ said Wogan, who was perhaps a little contraried by his friend's reserve. 'Then I'll ask you to explain what these pretty boxes have to do with the muslin trade?'

'They are to carry my samples in,' replied Kelly readily enough; and then, as if to put Wogan's questions aside, 'Are you for England, too?'

'No,' said Wogan, imitating Mr. Kelly's importance; 'I am going to visit my Aunt Anne at Cadiz; so make the most of that, my little friend.'

Wogan was no great dab at the cyphers and the jargon of the plots, but he knew that the Duke of Ormond, being then in Spain, figured in the correspondence as my Aunt Anne. It was now Kelly's turn to whistle, and that he did, and then laughed besides.

'I might have guessed,' said he, 'for there's a likely prospect of broken heads at all events, and to that magnet you were never better than a steel filing.'

'Whisht, man,' exclaimed Wogan, frowning and wagging his head preposterously. 'Is it yourself that's the one person in the world to practise mysteries? Broken heads, indeed!' and he shrugged his shoulder as though he had a far greater business on hand. Kelly's curiosity rose to the bait, and he put a question or two which Wogan waived aside. The Parson indeed had hit the truth. Wogan had no business whatsoever except the mere fighting, but since the Parson was for practising so much dignified secrecy, Wogan would do no less.

To carry the joke a step further, he turned to the counter, even as Kelly had done, and examined the despatch-boxes. He would buy one, to convince Kelly that he, too, was trusted with secret papers. The boxes were as like to one another as peas, but Wogan discovered a great dissimilitude of defects.

'There's not one of them fit to keep a mouldy cheese in,' said he, tapping and sounding them with his knuckles, 'let alone—' and then he caught himself up with a glance at Kelly. 'However, this perhaps may serve — but wait a little.' He felt in his pockets and by chance discovered a piece of string. This string he drew out and carefully measured the despatch-box, depth and width and length. Then he put the tip of his thumb between his teeth and bit it in deep thought. 'Well, and it must serve, since there's no better; but for heaven's sake, my man, clap a stouter lock on it! I could smash this with my fist. A good stout lock; and send it — wait a moment!' He glanced towards Kelly and turned back to the shopman. 'I'll just write down where you are to send it to.'

To Kelly's more complete mystification he scribbled a name and an address on a sheet of paper, and folded it up with an infinity of precautions.

'Send it there, key and all, by nine o'clock tomorrow morning.'

The name was Mr. Kelly's, the address the inn at which Mr. Kelly was in the habit of putting up. Wogan bought the box merely to gull Kelly into the belief that he, also, was a Royal messenger. Then he paid for the box, and forthwith forgot all about it over a bottle of wine. Kelly, for his part, held his despatch-box in his hand.

‘Nick, I have business,’ said he as soon as the bottle was empty, ‘and it appears you have too. Shall we meet to-night? Mr. Law expects me at the Mazarin Palace.’

‘Faith, then I’ll make bold to intrude upon him,’ said Nicholas, who, though Mr. Law kept open house for those who favoured the White Rose, was but a rare visitor to the Mazarin Palace, holding the financier in so much awe that no amount of affability could extinguish it.

However, that night he went, and so learned in greater particular the secret of the Parson’s journey. It was nine o’clock at night when Wogan turned the corner of the Rue Vivienne and saw the windows of the Mazarin Palace blazing out upon the snow. A little crowd shivered and gaped beneath them, making, poor devils! a vicarious supper off the noise of Mr. Law’s entertainment. And it was a noisy party that Mr. Law entertained. Before he was half-way down the street Wogan could hear the peal of women’s laughter and a snatch of a song, and after that maybe a sound of breaking glass, as though a tumbler had been edged off the table by an elbow. He was shown up the great staircase to a room on the first floor.

‘Monsieur Nicholas de Wogan,’ said the footman, throwing open the door. Wogan stepped into the company of the pretty arch conspirators who were then mismanaging the Chevalier’s affairs. However, with their mismanagement Wogan is not here concerned, for this is not a story of Kings and Queens and high politics but of the private fortunes of Parson Kelly. Olive Trant was playing backgammon in a corner with Mr. Law. Madame de Mezières, who was seldom absent when politics were towards, graced the table and conversed with Lady Cecilia Law. And right in front of Mr. Wogan stood that madcap her sister, Fanny Oglethorpe, with her sleeves tucked back to her elbows, looking gloriously jolly and handsome. She was engaged in mincing chickens in a china bowl which was stewing over a little lamp on the table, for, said she, Mr. Law had aspersed the English cooks, and she was minded to make him eat his word and her chicken that very night for supper. She had Parson Kelly helping her upon the one side, and a young French gentleman whom Wogan did not know upon the other; and the three of them were stirring in the bowl with a clatter of their wooden spoons.

‘Here’s Mr. Wogan,’ cried Fanny Oglethorpe, and as Wogan held out his hand she clapped her hot spoon into it. ‘M. de Bellegarde, you must know Mr. Wogan. He has the broadest back of any man that ever I was acquainted with. You must do more than know him. You must love him, as I do, for the broadness of his back.’

M. de Bellegarde looked not over-pleased with the civility of her greeting, and bowed to Wogan with an affectation of ceremony. Mr. Law came forward with an affable word. Olive Trant added another, and Madame de Mezières asked eagerly what brought him to Paris.

‘He is on his way to join the Duke of Ormond at Cadiz,’ cried Kelly; ‘and,’ said this man deceived, ‘he carries the most important messages. Bow to him, ladies! Gentlemen, your hands to your hearts, and your knees to the ground! It’s no longer a soldier of fortune that you see before you, but a diplomatist, an ambassador: His Excellency, the Chevalier Wogan;’ and with that he ducked and bowed, shaking his head and gesticulating with his hands, as though he were some dandified court chamberlain. All the Parson’s diplomacy had been plainly warmed out of him in his present company. Mr. Law began to laugh, but Fanny Oglethorpe dropped her spoon and looked at Wogan.

‘The Duke of Ormond?’ said she, lowering her voice.

‘Indeed? and you carry messages?’ said Miss Olive Trant, upsetting the backgammon board.

‘Of what kind?’ exclaimed Madame de Mezières; and then, in an instant, their pretty heads were clustered about the table, and their mouths whispering questions, advice, and precautions, all in a breath. ‘It’s at Bristol you are to land?’ ‘The Earl Marischal is for Scotland?’ ‘You carry 5,000 barrels, Mr. Wogan?’ meaning thereby stands of arms. And, ‘You may speak with all confidence,’ Miss Oglethorpe urged, with a glance this way and that over her shoulders. ‘There are none but honest people here. M. de Bellegarde,’ and she looked towards the French spark, blushing very prettily, ‘is my good friend.’

Mr. Wogan bowed.

‘It was not that I doubted M. de Bellegarde,’ he replied. ‘But ‘faith, ladies, I have learnt more of the prospects of the expedition from your questions than ever I knew before. I was told for a certain thing that heads would be broken, and, to be sure, I was content with the information.’

At that Mr. Law laughed. Kelly asked, ‘What of the despatch-box, then?’ The ladies pouted their resentment; and Mr. Wogan, for the first and last time in his life, wore the reputation of a diplomatist. ‘A close man,’ said M. de Bellegarde, pursing his lips in approval.

‘But sped on an unlikely venture,’ added Mr. Law, getting back to his backgammon. ‘Oh, I know,’ he continued, as the voices rose against him, ‘you have grumblings enough in England to fill a folio, and so you think the whole country will hurry to the waterside to welcome you, before you have set half your foot on shore. But, when all is said, the country’s prosperous. Your opportunity will come with its misfortunes.'

But Madame de Mezières would hear nothing of such forebodings; and Olive Trant, catching up a glass, swung it above her head.

'May the Oak flourish!' she cried.

Fanny Oglethorpe sprang from her seat. 'May the White Rose bloom!' she answered, giving the counter-word. The pair clinked their glasses.

'Aye, that's the spirit!' cried the Parson. 'Drink, Nick! God save the King! Here's a bumper to him!'

He stood with his face turned upwards, his blue eyes afire. 'Here's to the King!' he repeated. 'Here's to the Cause! God send that nothing ever come between the Cause and me.' He drained his glass as he spoke, and tossed it over his shoulder. There was a tinkling sound, and a flash of sparks, as it were, when the glass splintered against the wall. George Kelly stood for a moment, arrested in his attitude, his eyes staring into vacancy, as though some strange news had come of a sudden knocking at his heart. Then he hitched his shoulders. 'Bah!' he cried, and began to sing in a boisterous voice some such ditty as

Of all the days that's in the year,
The tenth of June's to me most dear,
When our White Roses do appear

To welcome Jamie the Rover.

Or it may have been

Let our great James come over,
And baffle Prince Hanover,
With hearts and hands in loyal bands,

We’ll welcome him at Dover.

It was not the general practice to allow the Parson to sing without protest; for he squeezed less music out of him than any other Irishman could evoke from a deal board with his bare knuckles. When he sang, and may Heaven forgive the application of the word in this conjunction, there was ever a sort of mortal duello between his voice and the tune — very distressing to an audience. But now he sang his song from beginning to end, and no one interrupted him, or so much as clapped a hand over an ear; and this not out of politeness. But his words so rang with a startling fervour; and he stood, with his head thrown back, rigid in the stress of passion. His voice quavered down to silence, but his eyes still kept their fires, his attitude its fixity. Once or twice he muttered a word beneath his breath, and then a hoarse cry came leaping from his mouth.

‘May nothing ever come between the Cause and me, except it be death — except it be death!’

A momentary silence waited upon the abrupt cessation of his voice: Wogan even held his breath; Miss Oglethorpe did not stir; and during that silence, there came a gentle rapping on the door. Kelly looked towards it with a start, as though there was his answer; but the knocking was repeated before anyone moved; it seemed as if suspense had hung its chains upon every limb. It was Mr. Wogan who opened the door, and in stalked Destiny in the shape of a lackey. He carried a note, and handed it to George Kelly.

‘The messenger has but this instant brought it,’ he said.

Kelly broke the seal, and unfolded the paper.

‘From General Dillon,’ he said; and, reading the note through, ‘Ladies, will you pardon me? Mr. Law, I have your permission? I have but this one night in Paris, and General Dillon has news of importance which bears upon my journey.’

With that he took his hat, and got him from the room. Fanny Oglethorpe sprang up from her chair.

‘Sure, my chicken will be ruined,’ she cried. ‘Come, M. de Bellegarde,’ and the pair fell again to stirring in the bowl, and with such indiscriminate vigour that more than once their fingers got entangled. This Mr. Wogan observed, and was sufficiently indiscreet to utter a sly proposal that he should make a third at the stirring.

‘There is no need for a third,’ said Miss Oglethorpe, with severity. ‘But, on the other hand, I want a couple of pats of butter, and a flagon of water; and I shall be greatly obliged if Mr. Wogan will procure me them.’ And what with that and other requests which chanced to come into her head, she kept him busy until the famous supper was prepared.

In the midst of that supper back came Mr. Kelly, and plumped himself down in his chair, very full of his intelligence. A glass or two of Mr. Law’s burgundy served to warm out of his blood all the reserve that was left over from the morning.

‘We are all friends here,’ said he, turning to Miss Oglethorpe. ‘Moreover, I need the advantage of your advice and knowledge. General Dillon believes that my Lord Oxford maybe persuaded to undertake the muslin trade in Britain.’

‘Lord Oxford,’ exclaimed Miss Oglethorpe, with a start, for Oxford had lain quiet since he nearly lost his head five years agone. ‘He is to collect the money from our supporters?’

‘It is the opinion that he will, if properly approached.’

Mr. Law, at the top of the table, shook his head.

‘It is a very forward and definite step for so prudential a politician,’ said he.

‘But a politician laid on a shelf, and pining there,’ replied George. ‘There’s the reason for it. He has a hope of power, — *Qui a bu, boira!* The hope grows real if we succeed.’

‘I would trust him no further than a Norfolk attorney,’ returned Mr. Law; ‘and that’s not an inch from the end of my nose. He will swear through a two-inch board to help you, and then turn cat in pan if a Whig but smile at him.’

‘Besides,’ added Miss Oglethorpe, and she rested, her chin thoughtfully upon her hands. As she spoke, all the eyes in that company were turned on her. ‘Besides,’ and then she came to a stop, and flushed a little. ‘Lord Oxford,’ she continued, ‘was my good friend when I was in England.’ Then she stopped again. Finally she looked straight into M. de Bellegarde’s eyes, and with an admirable bravery: ‘Some, without reason, have indeed slandered me with stories that he was more than my friend.’

‘None, Madame, who know you, I’ll warrant,’ said M. de Bellegarde, and gravely lifting her hand to his lips, he kissed it.

‘Well, that’s a very pretty answer,’ said she in some confusion. ‘So Mr. Kelly may know,’ she went on, ‘that I speak with some authority concerning my Lord Oxford. It is not he whom I distrust. But he has lately married a young wife.’

‘Ah,’ said Mr. Law, and ‘Oh!’ cried Mr. Wogan, with a shrug of his shoulders. ‘If a lady is to dabble her tender fingers in the pie—’

‘And what of it, Mr. Wogan?’ Madame de Mezières took him up coldly.

‘Yes, Mr. Wogan, what of it?’ repeated Olive Trant hotly, ‘provided the lady be loyal.’ In an instant Mr. Wogan had the whole nest swarming about his ears, with the exception of Fanny Oglethorpe. It was intimated to him that he had a fine preposterous conceit of his sex, and would he be pleased to justify it?

Madame de Mezières hinted that the ability to swing a shillelagh and bring it down deftly on an offending sconce did not comprise the whole virtues of mankind. And if it came to the test of dealing blows, why there was Joan of Arc, and what had Mr. Wogan to say to her? Mr. Wogan turned tail, as he always did when women were in the van of the attack.

‘Ladies,’ he said, ‘I do not think Joan of Arc so singular after all, since I see four here who I believe from my soul could emulate her noblest achievements.’

But Mr. Wogan’s gallantry went for very little. The cowardice of it was apparent for all that he bowed and laid his hand on his heart, and performed such antics as he thought likely to tickle women into good humour.

‘Besides,’ put in Lady Cecilia, with a soothing gentleness, ‘Mr. Wogan should know that the cause he serves owes, as it is, much to the good offices of women.’

Mr. Wogan had his own opinions upon that point, but he wiped his forehead and had the discretion to hold his tongue. Meanwhile Fanny Oglethorpe, who had sat with frowning brows in silence, diverted the onslaught.

‘But it is just the loyalty of Lady Oxford which is in question. Lady Oxford is a Whig, of a Whig family. She is even related to Mr. Walpole, the Minister. I think Mr. Kelly will have to tread very warily at Lord Oxford’s house of Brampton Bryan.’

‘For my part,’ rejoined Mr. Law, ‘I think the Chevalier de St. George would do better to follow the example of Mr. Kelly and my friends here.’

‘And what is that?’ asked Wogan.

‘Why, scrape up all the money he can lay hands on and place it in my company of the West.’

Mr. Wogan was not well pleased to hear of his friend’s speculation, and, when they left the house together, took occasion to remonstrate with him.

‘How much have you placed?’ he asked.

‘All that I could,’ replied George. ‘It is little enough — the remnant of my patrimony. Mr. Law lent me a trifle in addition to make up a round sum. It is a very kindly man, and well disposed to me. I have no fears, for all the money in France dances to the tune he fiddles.’

‘To his tune, to be sure,’ grumbled Wogan; ‘but are you equally certain his tune is yours? Oh, I know. He is a monstrous clever man, not a doubt of it. The computation of figures — it is the devil’s own gift, and to my nose it smells damnably of sulphur.’

Mr. Wogan has good occasion to reflect how Providence fleers at one’s apprehensions when he remembers the sleepless hours during which he tossed upon his bed that night, seeing all the Parson’s scanty savings drowned beyond redemption in the China seas. For no better chance could have befallen Kelly than that Wogan’s forebodings should have come true. But the venture succeeded. Fanny Oglethorpe made a fortune and married M. de Bellegarde. Olive Trant, the richer by 100,000 pistoles, became Princess of Auvergne. Do they ever remember that night at the Hotel de Mazarin, and how Parson Kelly cried out almost in an agony as though, in the heat of passion, he surmised the future, ‘May nothing come between the Cause and me’? Well, for one thing the money came. It placed in his hands a golden key wherewith to unlock the gates of disaster.

CHAPTER II

MR. WOGAN REFUSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE AN UNDESIRABLE ACQUAINTANCE IN ST. JAMES'S STREET

Mr. Wogan left Paris early the next morning without a thought for the despatch-box that he had sent to Kelly, and, coming to Cadiz, sailed with the Spaniards out of that harbour on the tenth of March, and into the great storm which dispersed the fleet off Cape Finisterre. In company with the Earl Marischal and the Marquis of Tullibardine, he was aboard one of those two ships which alone touched the coast of Scotland. Consequently, he figured with better men, as Field-Marshal Keith, and his brother the Ambassador, and my Lord George Murray, in that little skirmish at Glenshiel, and very thankful he was when the night shut black upon the valleys and put its limit to the attack of General Wightman's soldiers from Inverness. A council of war was held in the dark upon a hill-side, whence the fires of General Wightman's camp could be seen twinkling ruddily below, but Wogan heard little of what was disputed, for he went to sleep with his back against a boulder and dreamed of his ancestors. He was waked up about the middle of the night by the Earl Marischal, who informed him that the Spaniards had determined to surrender at discretion, and that the handful of Highlanders were already dispersing to their homes.

'As for ourselves, we shall make for the Western Islands and wait there for a ship to take us off.'

'Then I'll wish you luck and a ship,' said Wogan. He stood up and shook the dew off his cloak. 'I have friends in London, and I'll trust my lucky star to get me there.'

'Your star's in eclipse,' said the Earl. 'You will never reach London except it be with your legs tied under a horse's belly.'

'Well, I'm thinking you have not such a clear path after all to the Western Islands! Did you never hear of my forefather, Thomas Wogan, that rode with twenty-eight Cavaliers through the heart of Cromwell's England, and came safe into the Highlands? Sure what that great man could do with twenty-eight companions to make him conspicuous, his degenerate son can do alone.'

Mr. Wogan began his journey by walking over the hill, near to the top of which his friends had been driven off the road to Inverness by the English fire, which was very well nourished. He made his way to Loch Duich, as they call it, and so by boat round Ardnamurchan, to a hamlet they call Oban. There he changed his dress for the Campbell black and green, and, joining company with a drove of Rob Roy's cattle from the Lennox, travelled to Glasgow. His Irish brogue no doubt sounded a trifle strange in a Highland drover, but he was in a country where the people were friendly. At Glasgow he changed his dress again for a snuff-coloured bourgeois suit, and so rode into England by the old Carlisle and Preston route, which he had known very well in the year 1715.

Wogan was at this time little more than a lad, though full-grown enough to make a man and a good-sized boy into the bargain, and the exploit of the Cavalier Thomas Wogan, as it had prompted his design, so it exhilarated him in the execution. He went lightly on his way, weaving all manner of chivalric tales about his ancestor, to the great increase of his own vanity, bethinking him when he stopped for an hour at a wayside inn that here, too, perhaps Thomas Wogan had reined in his horse, and maybe had taken a draught from that very pint-pot which Nicholas now held to his lips. Thus the late burst up the hill-side above the Shiel was quickly robbed of its sting, and by the time that he had reached London he was so come to a pitch of confidence in the high destinies of the Wogan family that, after leaving his horse in the charge of Mr. Gunning, of Mussell Hill, whom he knew of old as a staunch friend of George Kelly's, and borrowing from him a more suitable raiment than his stained travelling dress, he must needs walk down St. James's Street with no more disguise than the tilting of his hat over his nose, and the burying of his chin in his cravat.

Soon Mr. Wogan's confidence and, with his confidence, his legs were brought to a sudden check. For when he was come half-way down the hill he saw the figure of one Captain Montague in the uniform of the Guards turn the corner out of Ryder Street and walk towards him. Wogan had met the officer before on an occasion of which he did not wish at this particular moment to be reminded. He wheeled about, took a step or two, and so came again to a halt. Was it known, he asked himself, that he had sailed from Cadiz and landed in Scotland? If so, and it was a most likely conjecture, then for Wogan to be straggling about St. James's Street was egregious impertinence, and the sooner he got under shelter the better for his neck. Now Wogan's destination was the lodging of George Kelly, not five hundred yards away, in Bury Street. But to reach that lodging it would be necessary for him to turn about again and face the Captain. Would the Captain know him again? Wogan debated the question, and finding no answer, asked himself another. What would Thomas Wogan have done under the like contingency? The answer to that was evident enough. Wogan turned about on the instant, cocked his hat on the back of his head, took his chin out of his cravat, twirled his cane, whistled a tune and sauntered past the Captain, looking him over as if he were so much dirt. The Captain stopped: Wogan felt his heart jump into his throat, whistled a bit louder, and twirled his cane a trifle ferociously. Over his shoulder he saw the Captain draw his brows together and rub a check with the palm of his hand like a man perplexed. The Captain took a step towards Wogan, and stopped again. Wogan sauntered on, expecting every moment to hear his name called, and a clattering run, and then to feel a heavy hand close upon his shoulder. But no voice spoke, no steps clattered on the pavement. Wogan reached the corner and spied up St. James's Street as he turned. The Captain was still standing in the attitude of perplexity; only, instead of smoothing his cheek, he had tilted his peruke aside and was scratching his head to ease the labour of his recollections. At the sight of him the ancestor and his twenty-eight Cavaliers rode clean out of Mr. Wogan's mind. 'Sure, Thomas wouldn't have done it, but Nicholas will,' said he, and kicking up his heels he ran. He ran along Ryder Street, turned into Bury Street, raced a hundred yards or so up the cobbles, and thundered on the door of Kelly's lodging. Here and there a head was poked from a window, and Mr. Wogan cursed his own noisiness. It seemed an age before the door was opened. Fortunately it was Mrs. Barnes, Kelly's landlady, in person, and not her serving-woman, who stood in the entrance.

'Is the Parson in London?' says Wogan. 'Say that he is, Mrs. Barnes, and say it quick.'

'Why, it's Mr. Wogan!' cries she.

'Whisht, my dear woman!' answered Wogan, pushing through the doorway. 'It's Mr. Hilton. There's no Wogan anywhere in England. Remember that, if you please.'

Mrs. Barnes slammed the door in a hurry.

'Then you are in trouble again,' said she, throwing up her hands.

'Well, there's nothing unusual in that,' said he. 'Sure man is born to it, and who am I that I should escape the inheritance?' and he opened the door of Mr. Kelly's sitting-room. He saw the figure of a man bending over the table. As the door was thrown open, the figure straightened itself hurriedly. There was a sound of an iron lid clanging down upon a box, and the sharp snap of a lock. George Kelly turned and stood between the table and the door, in a posture of defence. Then —

'Nick!' he cried, and grasped his friend's hand. The next moment he let it go. 'What brings you here?' he exclaimed.

'My ancestor,' said Wogan, dropping into a chair. ''Twas his spirit guided me.'

'Then take my word for it,' cried George, 'if there's a Bedlam beyond the grave your ancestor inhabits it.’

Wogan made no reply in words at first. But he rose stiffly from his chair, bowed to Kelly with profuse ceremony, took his hat, and with his hat a step towards the door. Kelly, on the other hand, shut the door, locked it, put the key in his pocket and leaned his back against the panels. Wogan affected to see nothing of these actions, but spoke in a tone of dignity like a man taking his leave.

‘Such insults as you are pleased to confer on me,’ said he, ‘no doubt I deserve, and I take them in all Christian meekness. But when my ancestor Thomas Wogan, God rest his soul for ever and ever, rode with twenty-eight Cavaliers from Dover to Scotland through the thick of his bloodthirsty foes to carry the succour of his presence to the friends of his blessed Majesty of sacred memory King Charles the Second, it was not, I’d have you know, Mr. Kelly, in order that his name should be bespattered after he was dead by a snuffling long-legged surreptitious gawk of a parson who was kicked out of his Dublin pulpit with every circumstance of ignominy because his intellect didn’t enable him to compose a homily.’

At this point Wogan drew a long breath, which he sorely needed. It was not at all truth that he had spoken, as he knew — none better. The Parson was indeed stripped of his gown because he preached a very fine homily on the text of ‘Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s,’ wherein he mingled many timely and ingenious allusions to the Chevalier. Nor was there any particular force in that epithet ‘surreptitious,’ beyond that it had an abusive twang. Yet it was just that word at which Mr. Kelly took offence.

‘Surreptitious,’ said he, ‘and if you please what is the meaning of that?’

And then surveying Wogan, he began of a sudden to smile.

‘Ta-ta-ta,’ he said with a grimace.

‘It is a pretty though an interjectional wit,’ replied Wogan in a high disdain, falling upon long words, as was his fashion on the rare occasions when he cloaked himself with dignity.

‘Faith,’ continued George, with the smile broadening over his face, ‘but it is indeed the very picture of Christian meekness,’ and then, breaking into a laugh, ‘Will you sit down, you noisy firebrand. As for Thomas Wogan — be damned to him and to all his twenty-eight Cavaliers into the bargain!’

Mr. Wogan will never deny but what the man’s laugh was irresistible, for the Parson’s features wore in repose something of clerkly look. They were cast in a mould of Episcopal gravity; but when he laughed his blue eyes would lighten at you like the sun from a bank of clouds, and the whole face of him wrinkled and creased into smiles, and his mouth shook a great rumbling laugh out of his throat, and then of a sudden you had come into the company of a jolly man. Wogan put his hat on the table and struggled to preserve his countenance from any expression of friendliness.

‘It is the common talk at the Cocoa Tree that you sailed from Cadiz. It is thought that you were one of the remnant at Glenshiel. Oh, the rumour of your whereabouts has marched before you, and that you might have guessed. But see what it is to know no Virgil, and,’ shaking a minatory finger,

‘Fama, malum quo non aliud velocius ullum.’

Mr. Wogan bowed before Latin like a sapling before the wind. He seated himself as he was bid.

‘And you must needs come parading your monstrous person through the thick of London, like any fashionable gentleman,’ continued George. ‘What am I to do with you? Why couldn’t you lie quiet in a village and send me news of you? Did you meet any of your acquaintance by chance when you came visiting your friend Mr. Kelly? Perhaps you passed the time of day with Mr. Walpole—’ and as he spoke the name he stopped abruptly. He walked once or twice across the room, shifting his peruke from one side of his head to the other in the fluster of his thoughts. Then he paused before Wogan.

‘Oh, what am I to do with you?’ he cried. ‘Tell me that, if you please.’ But the moment Wogan began,

‘Sure, George, it’s not you that I will be troubling for my security’ — Kelly cut in again:

‘Oh, if you have nothing better to say than that, you say nothing at all. It is dribbling baby’s talk,’ and then he repeated a question earnestly. ‘Did you see anyone you knew, or rather did anyone that knows you see you?’

‘Why,’ replied Wogan meekly, ‘I cannot quite tell whether he knows me or not, but to be sure I ran into the arms of Captain Montague not half a dozen yards from the corner of Ryder Street.’

‘Montague!’ exclaimed Kelly. Wogan nodded.

‘The man who fought against you at Preston siege?’

‘The same.’

‘’Tis a pity you were at so much pains to save his life in that scuffle.’

‘Haven’t I been thinking that myself?’ asked Wogan. ‘If only I had left him lying outside the barricades, where he would have been surely killed by the cross-fire, instead of running out and dragging him in! But it is ever the way. Once do a thoroughly good-natured action and you will find it’s the thorn in your side that will turn and sting you. But I am not sure that he knew me,’ and he related how the Captain had stopped with an air of perplexed recollection, and had then gone on his way. Kelly listened to the account with a certain relief.

‘It is likely that he would not remember you. For one thing, he was wounded when you carried him in, and perhaps gave little heed to the features of his preserver. Moreover, you have changed, Nick, in these years. You were a stripling then, a boy of fifteen, and,’ here he smiled and laid a hand on Wogan’s shoulder, ‘you have grown into a baby in four years.’

Then he took another turn across the room. ‘Well, and why not?’ he said to himself, and finally brought his fist with a bang upon the table. ‘I’ll hazard it,’ said he. ‘I am not sure but what it is the safest way,’ and, drawing a chair close to Wogan, he sat himself down.

‘It was the mention of Mr. Walpole set me on the plan,’ he said. ‘You heard in Paris that Lady Oxford is a kinsman of his. Well, I go down to Lord Oxford’s in two days. It is a remote village in the north of Herefordshire. You shall come with me as my secretary. ‘Faith, but I shall figure in my lord’s eyes as a person of the greatest importance.’

Mr. Wogan resisted the proposal as being of some risk to his friend, but Kelly would hear of no argument. The plan grew on him, the more he thought of it. ‘You can lie snug here for the two days. Mrs. Barnes is to be trusted, devil a doubt. You can travel down with me in safety. I am plain Mr. Johnson here, engaged in smuggling laces from the Continent into England. And once out of London there will be little difficulty in shipping you out of the country until the affair’s blown over.’

So it was arranged, and Kelly, looking at his watch, says —

‘By my soul, I am late. I should have been with my Lord of Rochester half-an-hour since. The good Bishop will be swearing like a dragoon.’

He clapped his hat on his head, took up his cane, and marched to the door. His hand was on the knob, when he turned.

‘By the way, Nick, I have something which belongs to you. ’Twas sent to my lodging in Paris by mistake. I brought it over, since I was sure to set eyes on you shortly.’

‘Ah,’ said Nick. ‘Then you expected me, for all your scolding and bullying.’

‘To speak the honest truth, Nick,’ said Kelly, with a laugh, ‘I have been expecting you all the last week.’

He went into his bedroom, and brought out the strong-box which Wogan had purchased in Paris.

‘Sure there was no mistake,’ said Wogan. ‘I sent it to you as a reward for your discretion.’

‘Oh, you did. Well, you wasted your money, for I have no need for it.’

‘Nor I,’ replied Wogan. ‘But it has a very good lock, and will serve to hold your love-letters.’

Kelly laughed carelessly at the careless words, and laid the box aside upon his scrutore. Many a time in the months that followed Wogan saw it there, and the sight of it would waken him to a laugh, for he did not know that a man’s liberty, his honour, his love, came shortly to be locked within its narrow space.

CHAPTER III

MR. WOGAN INSTRUCTS THE IGNORANT PARSON IN THE WAYS OF WOMEN

Mr. Wogan then remained for two days closeted in his friend’s lodgings, and was hard put to it to pass the time, since the Parson, who acted as secretary and right-hand man to Bishop Atterbury, was ever dancing attendance upon his lordship at Bromley or the Deanery of Westminster. Wogan smoked a deal of tobacco, and, knitting his brows, made a strenuous endeavour to peruse one of George Kelly’s books — a translation of Tully’s *Letters*. He did, indeed, read a complete page, and then being seized with a sudden vertigo, such as from his extreme youth had prevented him from a course of study, was forced to discontinue his labours. At this juncture Mrs. Barnes comforted him with a greasy pack of cards, and for the rest of that day he played games of chance for extraordinary stakes, one hand against t’other, winning and losing millions of pounds sterling in the space of a single hour. By bedtime he was sunk in a plethora of wealth and an extremity of destitution at one and the same time; and so, since he saw no way of setting the balance right, he bethought him of another plan. On the morrow he would write out a full history of his ancestors, as a memorial of their valour and a shame to the men of this age.

The Parson, when he was informed of the notable design, quoted a scrap of Latin to the effect that it would be something more than a brazen proceeding. Wogan, however, was not to be dissuaded by any tag of rhyme, and getting up before daylight, since he had but this one day for the enterprise, was at once very busy with all of Kelly’s spluttering pens. He began with the founder of the family, the great Chevalier Ugus, who lived in the time of my little Octavius Cæsar, and was commissioned by that unparalleled monarch to build the town of Florence. ‘Ugus,’ wrote Mr. Wogan in big round painful letters with a flourish to each, and, coming to a stop, woke up George Kelly to ask him in what year of Our Lord Octavius Cæsar was born into this weary world. ‘In no year of Our Lord,’ grumbled George, a little churlishly to Wogan’s thinking, who went back to his desk, and taking up a new pen again wrote ‘Ugus.’ Thereupon he fell into a great profundity of thought; so many philosophic reflections crowded into his head while he nibbled his pen, as he felt sure must visibly raise him in the estimation of his friends. So, taking his candle in one hand and his pen in the other, he came a second time to Kelly’s bedside and sat him down heavily upon his legs, the better to ensure his awakening. It is to be admitted that this time the Parson sat up in his bed, and swore with all the volubility of a dragoon or even of my Lord Bishop of Rochester. But Wogan smiled amiably, knowing when he communicated his thoughts how soon those oaths would turn to cries of admiration.

‘It is a very curious thing,’ said Wogan, shifting himself a little so that Kelly’s shins should not press so sharply, ‘how the mere inking of one’s fingers produces speculation. Just as great valorous deeds are the consequence of swords,’ here he paused to snuff the candle with his fingers, ‘so great philosophic thoughts are the consequence of pens. Put a sword in a man’s hand! What does he want to do but cut his neighbour right open from the chine to the ribs? Put a pen between his fingers, on the other hand, and what does he want to do but go away by himself and write down great thoughts?’

‘Then, in Heaven’s name, why don’t you do it?’ cried George.

‘Because, my friend,’ replied Wogan, ‘out of the great love I bear for you, I shall always, always communicate my thoughts first of all to you.’ Here the Parson groaned like a man giving up the ghost, and Wogan continued:

‘For instance, you have doubtless heard of my illustrious forbear the Chevalier Ugus.’ At this Kelly tried to turn on his side; but he could not do so, since his legs were pinned beneath Wogan’s weight. ‘The Chevalier Ugus,’ repeated Wogan, ‘who built and beautified the city of Florence to the glory of God in the reign of the Emperor Octavius. How many of the English have loitered in the colonnades, and feasted their eyes upon the cathedral, and sauntered on the bridges of the Arno? How many of them, I say, have drawn profitable thoughts and pleasurable sensations from the edifices of my great ancestor? And yet not one of them — if poor Nicholas Wogan, his degenerate son, were to poke his nose outside of Mrs. Barnes’s front door — not one of them but would truss him hands and heels and hang him up to derision upon a nasty gibbet.’

So far Wogan had flowed on when a sigh from Kelly’s lips brought him to a pause. He leaned forward and held the candle so that the light fell upon Kelly’s face. Kelly was sound asleep.

‘To be sure,’ said Wogan in a soft voice of pity, on the chance that Kelly might be counterfeiting slumber, ‘my little friend’s jealous of my reflective powers,’ and going back to his chair wrote ‘Ugus’ a third time with a third pen; and then, in order to think the more clearly, laid his hand upon the table and closed his eyes.

It was Mrs. Barnes’s hand upon his shoulder, some three hours afterwards, which roused him from his so deep reflections, and to a man in Wogan’s course of life the shoulder is a most sensitive member. She took the paper, whereon the great name was thrice inscribed, very daintily between her forefinger and thumb, as though she touched pitch; folded it once, twice, thrice, and set it on the mantelshelf. There Mr. Kelly, coming into the room for breakfast, discovered it, hummed a little to himself like a man well pleased, and turned over the leaf to see what was written t'other side.

'That is all,' said Wogan, indifferently.

'And it is a very good night's work,' replied Kelly, with the politest gravity, 'not a letter — and there are precisely twelve of them in all — but is writ with scrupulous correctness. Such flourishes, too, are seldom seen. I cannot call to mind that ever I saw a *g* so pictorially displayed. Ugus — Ugus — Ugus—' and he held the paper out at arm's length.

'I went no further with my work,' explained Wogan, 'because I reflected—'

'What, again?' asked the Parson in a voice of condolence.

'That the mere enunciation of the name Ugus gives an epitome of the Wogan family.'

'Indeed, it gives a history in full,' said the Parson.

'It comprises—'

'Nay, it conveys—'

'All that need be known of the Wogan family.'

'All that need be known, indeed, and perhaps more,' added George with the air of a man turning a compliment Mr. Wogan was sensibly flattered, and took his friend's words as an apology for that disrespect which he had shown towards Thomas Wogan two days before, and the pair seated themselves to breakfast in the best of good humour.

'We start at nine of the evening,' said George. 'I have commanded a sober suit of grey cloth for you, Nick, since you cannot squeeze into my coats, and it should be here by now. Meanwhile, I leave you to Mrs. Barnes's attentions.'

Of these attentions Mrs. Barnes was by no means sparing. For the buxom widow of the bookseller, who, to her credit be it said, had her full share of good looks, joined to an admirable warmth of heart a less adorable curiosity. With the best intentions in the world for her lodgers' security, she was always prying into their secrets. Nor did she always hold her tongue outside her own doors, as Mr. Kelly had bitter reason afterwards to know. In a word, she had all the inquisitiveness of her class, and sufficient wiles to make that inquisitiveness difficult to parry. Not that Nicholas Wogan was at all troubled upon this score, for if there was one quality upon which the good man prided himself, it was his comprehension of the sex. 'Woman,' he would say with a sententious pursing of the lips and a nod of the head; and again 'woman,' and so drop into silence; as who should say, ‘Here’s a nut I could show you the kernel of were I so disposed.’

This morning, however, Mrs. Barnes made no demand upon Wogan’s cunning. For she took the paper with the thrice iterated Ugus which the Parson had replaced upon the mantelshelf, and, with the same gingerly precautions as she had used in touching it before, dropped it into the fire.

‘And why that?’ asked Wogan.

Mrs. Barnes flung out at him in reply.

‘I have no patience with you,’ she cried. ‘What’s Ugus, Mr. Wogan? Answer me that,’ and she struck her arms akimbo. ‘What’s Ugus but one of your cypher words, and you must needs stick it up on your mantelshelf for all the world to see?’

‘It’s no cypher word at all,’ replied Wogan with a laugh.

‘What is it then?’ said she.

‘My dear woman, the merest mare’s nest,’ said he.

‘Oh, you may “dear woman” me,’ cried she, and sat herself down in a chair, ‘and you may laugh at a woman’s fears; but, good lack, it was a bad day when Mr. Kelly first found a lodging here. What with his plottings here and his plottings there, it will be a fortunate thing if he doesn’t plot us all into our graves.’

‘Whisht,’ interrupted Wogan. ‘There are no plots at all, any more than there’s sense in your talk.’

But the woman’s eloquence was not so easily stemmed.

‘Then if there are no plots, why is Mr. Kelly “Mr. Johnson,” why is Mr. Wogan “Mr. Hilton”; and why, oh why, am I in danger of my life and liberty, and in peril of my immortal soul?’

‘Sure you are bubbled with your fears, answered Wogan. ‘It is sufficiently well known that since Mr. George Kelly ceased to minister to souls he has adopted the more lucrative profession of a lace merchant. There’s some secrecy no doubt in his comings and goings, but that is because he is most honourably engaged in defrauding the revenue.’

‘A pretty lace merchant, upon my soul,’ said she, and she began to rock her body to and fro. The sight alarmed Nicholas Wogan, since he knew the movement to be a premonition of tears. ‘A lace merchant who writes letters in Latin, and rides in the Bishop of Rochester’s coach, and goes a-visiting my Lord Oxford in the country. Thirteen shillings have I paid for letters in one day. Laces, forsooth! It is hempen ropes the poor gentleman travels in, and never was a man so eager to fit them to his own neck.’ And, at the affecting prospect which her words called up, the good woman lifted her apron to her eyes and forthwith dissolved into tears. Sobs tore her ample bosom, her soft frame quivered like a jelly. Never did Mr. Wogan find his intimate knowledge of the sex of more inestimable value. He crossed the room; he took one plump hand into his left palm and gently cherished it with his right. The tears diminished to a whimpering. He cooed a compliment into Mrs. Barnes's ear, 'A little white dove of a hand in a brown nest, my dear woman,' said he, and affectionately tweaked her ear. Even the whimpering ceased, but ceased under protest! For Mrs. Barnes began to speak again. Wogan, however, kissed the tearful eyes and sealed them in content.

'Hoity-toity, here's a set out,' he said, 'because my Lord Oxford wants a pair of Venice ruffles to hide his gouty fingers, or a new mantilla for his new spouse,' and so, softly chiding her, he pushed her out of the room.

At nine o'clock to the minute the chaise drove up to the door. Mr. Kelly took a stroll along the street to see the coast was clear; Mrs. Barnes was in two minds whether to weep at losing her lodgers, or to smile at their prospects of security, and compromised between her emotions by indulging them alternately; and finally the two friends in burgess dress entered the chaise and drove off. Mr. Wogan thrust his head half out of the window, the better to take his fill of the cool night air, but drew it back something of the suddenest at the corner where Ryder Street debouches into St. James's.

'Sure the man's a spy,' said he, flinging himself back. Parson Kelly leaned cautiously forward, and under an oil-lamp above the porch of a door he saw Captain Montague. The Captain was standing in an indecisive attitude, tapping with his stick upon the pavement and looking up and down the street.

'I doubt it,' returned Kelly. 'I have ever heard he was the most scrupulous gentleman.'

'But he's a Whig. A Whig and a gentleman! But it's a contradiction in terms. Whigging is a nasty insupportable trade, and infects a man like a poison. A Whig is a sort of third sex by itself that combines all the failings of the other two.'

However, this time it was evident that Captain Montague had taken no note of Nicholas Wogan. He could not but reflect how it was at this very spot that he had come upon the captain before, and mighty glad he was when the lights of Knightsbridge had sunk behind them, and they were driving betwixt the hedgerows. Then at one spring he jumped to the top of his spirits.

'George, what a night!' cries he. 'Sure I was never designed to live in a house at all, but to be entirely happy under the blue roof-tree of the sky. Put me out on a good road at night and the whole universe converses with me on the most familiar terms. Perhaps it's a bush that throws out a tendril and says, "Smell that, you devil, and good luck to you." Or, maybe it's the stars that wink at me and say, “Here’s a world for you, Nick, my little friend. Only wait a moment, and we’ll show you a bit of a moon that’ll make a poet of you.” Then up comes the moon, perhaps, in a crescent like a wisp of fire, and, says she, “It’s all very well here, Nicholas, but take my word for it, I can show you as good on the sea and better. For you’ll have all this, and the hiss of the water under your lee besides, and the little bubbles dancing on the top.” But what troubles you, George?’

But Kelly made little or no reply, being sunk in the consideration of some difficulty. For two days he remained closeted with his trouble, and it was not until they had got to Worcester that he discovered it. They changed horses at the ‘Dog and Turk’ and drove through the town under the Abbey clock.

‘It is five minutes to twelve,’ said Wogan, looking at the clock.

‘Yes,’ said Kelly with a sigh, ‘the face is very plain to read.’ Then he sighed again.

‘Now, if the clock were a woman,’ said he, ‘it might be half-past four and we still thinking it five minutes to twelve.’

‘Oh, is it there you are?’ said Wogan.

‘Why, yes,’ replied Kelly. ‘Lord Oxford, do you see, Nick, is a half-hearted sort of trembler — that we know and are ready for him. But what of my lady?’

Wogan crossed his legs and laughed comfortably. Here was matter with which he could confidently deal.

‘Well, what of her?’ he asked.

‘You heard what Fanny Oglethorpe said. She is a kinswoman of Mr. Walpole’s. How shall we be sure of her at all? A woman, Nick, is a creature who walks in the byways of thought. How shall an obtuse man follow her?’

Wogan took a pinch of snuff.

‘It is very well, George,’ said he, ‘that I took this journey with you. I’ll make your conduct plain to you as the palm of my hand. In the first place, there was never a woman yet from Cleopatra downwards that cared the scrape of a fiddle for politics. ’Twas never more than a path that led to something else, and is held of just as small account as the road a girl dances down when she goes to meet her lover. Look at Fanny Oglethorpe, Olive Trant, and the rest of them in Paris! D’you think it’s the Cause they ever give a thought to? If you do you’re sadly out, my friend. No; what troubles their heads is simply that the Chevalier is a romantical figure of a man, and would look extraordinarily well with a gold crown on the top of his periwig. Now I’m wagering it will be just the same with my Lady Oxford. You have all the qualifications down to your legs, and let my lady once take a liking to your person she will gulp your politics without a grimace.’

Mr. Kelly turned a startled face towards his instructor.

‘You would have me pay court to her?’ says he.

‘Just that,’ says Wogan, imperturbably. ‘Keep your politics for my lord and have a soft word ready for my lady. Pen her a delicate ode in Latin. To be sure the addresses of an erudite man have something particularly flattering to the sex. Or drop out a pretty compliment on her ear.’

‘Oh, on her ear?’ said Kelly, beginning to smile. ‘Of what sort?’

‘Faith, George, but you exasperate me,’ said Nick. ‘Isn’t there an infinity of images you could use? For instance — ,’ said he, and hummed a little.

‘Well, for instance!’ said Kelly, urging him on.

‘For instance,’ returned Wogan, ‘you can speak of its functions—’

‘I understand. I am to tell her that it is a very proper thing for a woman to sit and listen to other people.’

‘Tell her that,’ cries Wogan, lifting up his hands, ‘and you will be drubbed down the staircase pretty quick! No. Tell her there is never a poet laureate in the world would print a single one of his poems if he could treasure his music within her ear.’

‘Ah,’ says Kelly. ‘That is a compliment of quite a different kind,’ and he repeated it three times to commit it to memory. ‘But one, Nick, will not suffice. I must have more sayings about her ear.’

‘And you shall,’ says Wogan. ‘You can speak of its appearance.’

‘Of its appearance?’

‘And fit a simile to it.’

‘Give me one,’ said Kelly.

‘You can say her ear is like a rosy shell on the sea-banks.’

Mr. Kelly began to laugh outright.

‘Sure,’ said he, ‘I might as well tell her at once her hair is sandy.’

‘Oh, she will not examine your words so nicely. She will just perceive that you intend a compliment.’

‘And take me for a very impertinent fellow.’

‘George’ said Wogan, ‘for a parson you are a man of a most unnatural modesty.’ In which remark Wogan did his friend no more than the merest justice. For he had nothing in common with that usual foible of the young chaplains and tutors who frequent the houses of the great.

To listen to them over a bottle you would think them conquerors of all hearts, from the still-room maid to my lady and her daughters. But Mr. Kelly was in a different case. The Bishop of Rochester himself gave him the character of being prudent and reserved beyond his years. And perhaps it was by reason of that very modesty that he slid insensibly into the thoughts of more women than he knew of. Of these, however, Lady Oxford was not one.

It was about three in the afternoon of the next day when the chaise drove up to the door of the great house at Brampton Bryan. The Parson and Nicholas Wogan had barely stepped into the hall before an inner door opened and my lady came forward to greet them. She was for her sex uncommonly tall, and altogether of a conquering beauty, which a simple country dress did but the more plainly set forth. For, seeing her, one thought what a royal woman she would look if royally attired, and so came to a due appreciation of her consummate appearance. Whereas, had she been royally attired, her dress might have taken some of the credit of her beauty. She stood for a second between the two men, looking from one to the other as though in doubt.

‘And which is Mr. James Johnson? ‘said she, with a sly emphasis upon the name.

‘I am,’ said George, stepping forward, ‘and your Ladyship’s humble servant.’

She gave him a smile and her hand. Mr. Kelly clicked his heels together, bent over the hand and kissed it reverentially.

The lady sighed a quick little sigh (of pleasure) as she drew her hand away.

‘I have taken the liberty, your Ladyship,’ said Kelly, ‘to bring my secretary, Mr. Hilton, with me,’ and he waved a hand towards Wogan.

‘Mr. Hilton,’ she returned, ‘is very welcome. For, indeed, we hear too few voices in the house.’ She bowed very graciously, but she did not give her hand to Mr. Wogan. ‘Gentlemen,’ she continued, ‘my lord bids me make you his apologies, but he lies abed. Else would he have welcomed you in person.’

‘Your Ladyship,’ said Kelley, ‘if we come at an inopportune time—’

‘By no means,’ interrupted Lady Oxford. ‘My lord is troubled with the gout, but the fit is passing. And if for a couple of days my poor hospitality will content you—’

‘Your Ladyship,’ protested Kelly, but that was all he said. Now, to Mr. Wogan’s thinking, here was as timely an occasion for a compliment as a man could wish. And since Mr. Kelly had not the tact to seize it, why, his friend must come to his help. Accordingly,

‘So might the holy angels apologise when they open the gates of Paradise,’ said Wogan with his hand on his heart, and bowed. As he bowed he heard some stifled sounds, and he looked up quickly. My lady was crimson in the face with the effort to check her laughter.

‘Mr. Hilton is too polite,’ said she instantly, with an elaborate courtesy, and turned again to Kelly with some inquiries about his journey. Wogan was shown up the stairs before the inquiries were answered. The staircase ran round the three sides of the hall up to a landing on the fourth, and as Wogan came to the first turn he saw Lady Oxford cross to the great wood fire which was burning on the hearth; when he came to the second he saw that the Parson had crossed too and stood over against her; when he reached the third turn, my lady was seated toasting a foot at the blaze; when he reached the landing, Mr. Kelly had drawn up a chair.

Wogan leaned for a moment over the balustrade. It was a very small foot with an admirably arched instep; Mr. Wogan had seen the like in Spain. Well, very likely she only thrust it out to warm it. The firelight coloured her face to a pretty rose hue, sparkled in her dark eyes, and searched out the gold threads in her brown hair. Mr. Wogan was much tempted to whisper a reminder to his friend concerning her ear. But he resisted the temptation, for after all it seemed there would be little to do about my lady’s politics.

CHAPTER IV

SHOWS THE EXTREME DANGER OF KNOWING LATIN

An hour later the three sat down to dinner, though, for all the talking that one of them did, there might have been present only the two whom Wogan had left chatting in the hall. It was not that Lady Oxford omitted any proper courtesy towards Mr. Johnson's secretary, but the secretary himself, sensible that he was something too apt to say in all companies just what came into his head, was careful to keep his tongue in a strict leash, lest an inconvenient word should slip from him. His deficiency, however, was not remarked. Lady Oxford was young, and for all that my lord lay upstairs in a paroxysm of the gout, she was in the highest feather; she rattled from course to course, plying Mr. Kelly with innumerable questions as to the latest tittle-tattle of the tea-parties, and whether Lady Mary Wortley and Mr. Pope were still the best of friends.

'Then your Ladyship is acquainted with Lady Mary?' says Kelly, looking up with some eagerness. For Lady Mary, then a toast among the wits and a wit among the toasts, was glanced at by some tongues as if, being sister to the Duchess of Mar, she was not of the most loyal to the Elector. The Duke of Mar was still Secretary to King James over the water.

'Without doubt,' returned Lady Oxford. 'Lady Mary is my bosom friend. The dear malicious creature! What is her latest quip? Tell me, Mr. Johnson, I die to hear it. Or rather whisper it. It will be too deliciously cruel for loud speaking. Lady Mary's witticisms, I think, should always be spoken in a low voice, with a suggestive nod and a tap of the forefinger on the table, so that one may not mistake where the sting lies. Not that the sayings are in themselves at all clumsy — how could they be, when she has such clever friends? But they gain much from a mysterious telling of them. You agree with me?'

It was evident that Lady Oxford wasted no love on Lady Mary, and Kelly's face fell.

'Your ladyship,' he replied, 'though I have no claims to be considered clever, I have the honour to be ranked amongst her friends.'

'Indeed!' said she with a light laugh at the rebuff. 'No doubt you have brought her some of your laces and brocades from France, Mr. — Johnson.' She paused slyly upon the name.

Kelly glanced quickly at her, their eyes met, and the lady laughed. There could be no doubt that she knew something of Kelly's business. Indeed, she would hardly have asked him for the fashionable gossip at all had she taken him for just what he represented himself to be. Wogan put his foot on his friend's pretty heavily, and, he knows not how, encountered her ladyship's. To his horror, Lady Oxford made a moan of pain. Kelly starts up in a hurry.

'Your ladyship is unwell,' says he, and bids the servant bring a bottle of salts.

'No,' she replied with a smile on her lips and her eyes full of tears, 'but your secretary has dropped a blot on the wrong paper.'

'Your ladyship,' cried Wogan in an extremity of confusion, 'it was the most miserable accident, believe me. A spasm in the leg, madam, the consequence of a sabre cut across the calf,' he explained, making the matter worse.

'Oh, and in what battle was Mr. Johnson's secretary wounded?' she said, taking him up on the instant.

'In a struggle with the Preventive men,' replied Wogan hurriedly, and he too broke off with a wry face, for Mr. Johnson was warning *him* and with no less vigour. Before he knew what he was doing Wogan had stooped down and begun to rub his leg. Lady Oxford's smile became a laugh.

'To be sure,' said she, 'and I think Mr. Johnson must have been wounded too, in just that same way, and in just that same encounter.'

'Faith, madam,' said Kelly, 'the smuggling trade is a hard one. No man engages in it but sooner or later he gets a knock that leaves its mark.'

Lady Oxford expressed the profoundest sympathy with a great deal of disbelief; and when her ladyship left her guests to their wine, they looked at one another across the table.

'Well,' said Wogan cheerfully, 'if my Lady Oxford is in Mr. Walpole's interest we have not made the best beginning in the world,' and in a little he went off to smoke a pipe in the stables.

Kelly withdrew to the great library, and had not been there many minutes before Lady Oxford came in. It seemed she did not see him at the first, although he sat bent up over the fire and his shadow huge upon the walls. Mr. Kelly certainly did not remark her entrance. For one thing, he was absorbed in his book; for another, the carpet was thick and the lady's step of the lightest. She went first to the bookcase, then she crossed the room and shuffled some papers on a table, then she knocked against a chair, the chair knocked against the table, and at the noise Kelly looked up. He rose to his feet. Lady Oxford turned round, started, and uttered a sharp little cry.

'My lady,' began Mr. Kelly.

'Oh, it is you, Mr. Johnson,' she broke in with a hand to her heart, and dropped into the chair. 'I believe,' she said with a broken laugh, 'I was foolish enough to be frightened. I fancied you had gone with your friend to the stables,' which was as much as to say that she knew he had not. Kelly commenced an apology for so disordering her, but she would not listen to it.

'No,' she said, 'it is I that am to be blamed. Indeed, such stupid fears need chiding. But in a house so lonely and silent they grow on one insensibly. Indeed, I have known the mere creak of the stairs keep me awake in terror half the night.'

She spoke with the air of one gently railing at her own distress, but shivered a little to prove the distress genuine, and Kelly, as he looked at her, felt a sudden pang of pity.

'Your place, my lady, is not here,' he cried, 'but in the Mall, at the Spring Gardens, in the lighted theatres, when even your ladyship's own sex would pay you homage for outrivalling them.'

'Nay,' she replied, with the sweetest smile of reproof, 'you go too fast, Mr. Johnson. My place is here, for here my duty lies.' She looked up to the ceiling with a meek acceptance of the burden laid upon her fair shoulders. 'But I am not come to disturb you,' she continued briskly; 'I came to fetch a book to read aloud to my lord.' At that a sigh half broke from her and was caught back as it were upon her lips. 'Perhaps, Mr. Johnson,' she said in a well-acted flurry, 'you will help me in the selection?'

'With all the heart in the world,' said he, laying down his volume. The choice took perhaps longer than need have been, for over each book there was some discussion. This one was too trivial to satisfy my Lord Oxford's weighty mind; that other was too profound to suit his health. 'And nothing too contentious, I implore you, lest it throw him into a heat,' she prayed, 'for my lord has a great gift of logic, and will argue with you by the hour over the merest trifle.' This with another half-uttered sigh, and so the martyr sought her lord's bedside. It appeared, however, that Lord Oxford was sleepy that night, or had no mind for the music of his lady's voice, for in a very little while she returned to the library and Mr. Kelly, where Wogan presently found them discussing in a great animation the prospects of Mr. Law's ventures.

'You are in for a great stake?' she asked.

'For all I have,' replied Kelly, 'and a little more. It is not a great sum.'

'But may become one,' said she, 'and will if a friend's good wishes can at all avail.' And so she wished her guests good night.

The next morning Lord Oxford sent a message that he was so far recovered as would enable him to receive his visitors that afternoon. Meanwhile Lady Oxford, after breakfast carried off the two gentlemen to visit a new orchard she was having planted. The orchard was open to the south-west, and Kelly took objection to its site, quoting Virgil in favour of a westerly outlook.

‘Ah, but the west wind,’ she said, ‘comes to us across the Welsh mountains, which even in the late spring are at times covered deep in snow. However, I should be pleased to hear the advice of Virgil,’ and the Parson goes off to the library and fetches out a copy.

It was a warm day in April, with the sky blue overhead and the buds putting out on the trees, and for the most part of that morning Mr. Kelly translated the Georgics to her ladyship, on a seat under a great yew-tree, in a little square of grass fenced off with a hedge. She listened with an extraordinary complaisance, and now and then a compliment upon the Parson’s fluency; so that Mr. Wogan lost all his apprehensions as to her meddling in the King’s affairs. For, to his thinking, than listening to Virgil, there was no greater proof of friendship.

Nor was it only upon this occasion that she gave the proof. Lord Oxford was a difficult man from his very timidity, and the Parson’s visit was consequently protracted. His lordship needed endless assurances as to the prospects of a rising on behalf of King James, before he would hazard a joint of his little finger to support it. Who would take the place of the Royal Swede? Could the French Regent be persuaded to lend any troops or arms or money, or even to wink? Had the Czar been approached? Indeed he had, by Wogan’s brother Charles. And what office would my Lord Oxford hold when James III. was crowned? Each day saw these questions reiterated and no conclusion come to. Lady Oxford was never present at these discussions; the face of her conduct was a sedulous discretion. It is true that after a little she dropped the pretence of laces, and, when the servants were not present, styled the Parson ‘Mr. Kelly.’ But that was all. ‘These are not women’s matters,’ she would say with a pretty humility, and then rise like a queen and sail out of the room. Mr. Wogan might have noticed upon such occasions that the Parson hesitated for a little after she had gone, and spoke at random, as though she had carried off some part of his mind from affairs with the waft of her hoop. But he waited on the lady’s dispositions and set down what he saw of his friend’s conduct at the time as merely the consequence of an endeavour to enlist her secrecy and goodwill.

These councils with Lord Oxford took place, as a rule, in the afternoon, his lordship being a late riser, and even when risen capable only of sitting in a chair, with a leg swathed in a mountain of flannel. So that, altogether, Mr. Kelly had a deal of time upon his hands, and doubtless would have found it hang as heavy as Nick Wogan did, but for the sudden interest he took in Lady Oxford’s new orchard. He would spend hours over the ‘Observations on Modern Gardening,’ and then,

‘Nick,’ he would cry,’ there’s no life but a country life. One wakes in the morning, and the eye travels with delight over the green expanse of fields. One makes friends with the inanimate things of nature. Nick, here one might re-create the Golden Age.'

'To my mind,' says Nick, 'but for the dogs and horses it would be purely insupportable. With all the goodwill in the world I cannot make friends with a gatepost, and I'm not denying I shall be mightily glad when the wambling old sufferer upstairs brings his mind at last to an anchor.'

But the Parson was already lost in speculation, and would presently wake to ask Wogan's opinion as to whether a Huff-cap pear was preferable to a Bar-land. To which he got no answer, and so, snatching up his Virgil, would go in search of Lady Oxford. He acquired, indeed, a most intimate knowledge of apples and pears, and would discourse with her ladyship upon the methods of planting and grafting as though he had been Adam, and she Flora, or, rather, our mother Eve, before the apple was shared between them. For apples the store, the hayloe-crab, the brandy-apple, the red-streak, the moyle, the foxwhelp, the dymock-red; for pears the squash pear, the Oldfield, the sack-pear, never a meal passed but one of these names cropped up at the table and was bandied about between Kelly and her ladyship like a tennis-ball. Now all this, though dull, was none the less reassuring to Wogan, who saw very clearly that Lady Oxford was altogether devoted to country pursuits, and wisely inferred that while there might result confusion in the quality of the pears, there would be the less disorder in the affairs of the Chevalier.

Moreover, her ladyship's inclination towards Mr. Kelly plainly increased. He translated the whole of the second book of the Georgics to her, five hundred and forty-two mortal lines of immortal poetry, and she never winced. Nor did she cry halt at the end of them, but, thereafter, listened to the Eclogues; and, all at once, their conversation was sprinkled with Melibœus and Mœris, and Lycidas and Mopsus, and Heaven knows what other names. Mr. Wogan remembers very well coming upon them one wet afternoon in the hall when it was growing dark. The lamps had not been lit, and Kelly had just finished reading one of the pastorals by the firelight. Lady Oxford sat with her hands clasped upon her knees, and, as he closed the book,

'Oh for those days,' she cried, 'when a youth and a maid could roam barefoot over the grass in simple woollen garments! But now we must go furbelowed and bedecked till there's no more comfort than simplicity,' and she smoothed her hand over her petticoat with a great contempt for its finery. Lady Mary Wortley, to whom Wogan related this saying afterwards, explained that doubtless her ladyship had laced her stays too tight that morning; but the two men put no such construction on her words, nor, indeed, did they notice a certain contradiction between them and Lady Oxford's anxiety for London gossip — the Parson, because he had ceased to do anything but admire; Wogan, because a little design had suddenly occurred to him.

It was Lady Oxford's patience under the verses which put it into Wogan's head. For since she endured to listen to poetry about trees and shepherds, poetry about herself must be a sheer delight to her. So, at all events, he reasoned, not knowing that Lady Oxford had already enjoyed occasion to listen to poetry about herself from Lady Mary's pen, which was anything but a delight. Accordingly he hinted to his friend that a little ode might set a firm seal upon her friendliness.

'Make her a Dryad in one of the trees of her own orchard, d'ye see?' he suggested; 'something pretty and artful, with sufficient allusions to her beauty. Who knows but what she may be so flattered as to carry the verses against her heart; and so, when some fine day she brings her husband's secrets to Mr. Walpole, she may hear the paper crackling against her bodice, and turn back on the very doorstep.'

'She will carry no secrets,' replied Kelly with a huff. 'She is too conscious of her duties. Besides, she knows none. Have you not seen her leave the room the moment politics are so much as hinted of?'

'True,' said Wogan. 'But what's her husband for except to provide her with secrets when they are alone to which she cannot listen without impertinence in company?'

Kelly moved impatiently away. He stood with a foot upon the fender, turning over the pages of his Virgil.

'You allow her no merit whatsoever,' he said slowly with a great gentleness.

'Indeed, but I do,' replied Wogan. 'I allow that she will be charmed by your poetry, and that's a rare merit. She will find it as soothing as a soldier does a pipe of tobacco after a hard day's fighting.'

'I would not practise on her for the world,' says Kelly with just the same gentleness, and goes softly out by the door.

Wogan, however, was troubled by no such delicate scruples. An ode must be written, even if he had to write it himself. He slapped his forehead as the notion occurred to him. The ode might be dropped as though by accident at some spot where her ladyship's eyes could not fail to light on it. Wogan heaved a deep breath, took a turn across the room, and resolved on the heroical feat. He would turn poet to help his friend. For two nights he fortified himself with the perusal of Sir John Suckling's poems, and the next morning took pencil and paper into the garden. He walked along the terrace, and seated himself on the bench beneath the yew-tree. Wogan sucked strenuously at his pencil.

'Strephon to his Smilinda, running barefoot over the grass in a gale of wind,' he wrote at the top, and was very well pleased with the title. By noonday he had produced a verse, and was very well pleased with that, except, perhaps, that the last line halted. The verse ran as follows: —

Nay, sweet Smilinda, do not chide
The wind that wantons with thy hair;
The grass will all his prickles hide
Nor harm thy snowy feet and bare.
And, listen, the enamoured air
Makes lutestrings of thy locks so fair.
At night the stars are mirrors which reflect
Thine eyes: at least that is what I expect.

Mr. Wogan spent an hour and three pipes of tobacco over his unwonted exercise, which brought him into a great heat.

Having finished the verse he blew out his cheeks and took a rest from his labours. It was a fine spring morning, and the sun bright as a midsummer day. To his right the creepers were beginning to stretch their green tendrils over the red bricks of the garden wall. To his left half-a-dozen steps led up to a raised avenue of trees. Wogan looked down the avenue, noted the border of spring flowers, and a flash of a big window at the extreme end; and in all the branches the birds sang. The world seemed all together very good, and his poem quite apiece with the world. Wogan stretched his arms and kicked out his feet. His feet struck against something hard in a tuft of grass. He stooped down and picked it up. It was Kelly’s Virgil. The book was open, and the pages all blotted and smeared with the dew. It had evidently lain open on the grass by the bench all night. Wogan wiped the covers dry, and, using it as a desk, settled himself to the composition of his second verse. He had not, however, thought of an opening for it before a voice hailed him from behind.

He turned round and saw Kelly coming towards him from the direction of the orchard, and at that moment the opening of his verse occurred to him; Strephon offered to Smilinda his heart’s allegiance. Wogan set his pencil to the paper, fearful lest he should forget the line.

‘Nick,’ cries Kelly, waving a bundle of letters, and starts to run. Wogan slipped his paper between the leaves of the book; just as he did so, Strephon, in return for his heart’s ‘allegiance,’ asked for Smilinda’s soft ‘obedience.’

‘Nick,’ cries Kelly again, coming up to the bench, ‘what d’you think?’

‘I think, ‘says Wogan, ‘that interruption is the true source of inspiration.’

‘What do you mean?’ asked Kelly, looking at Wogan’s pencil.

‘I mean,’ says Wogan, looking at the cover of the book, ‘that if I lived by my poetry, I would hire a man to rap at my door all day long.’

Kelly, however, had no ears for philosophy.

‘Nick,’ says he, ‘will you listen to me, if you please? I have a letter from Miss Oglethorpe. It explains—’

‘Yes,’ interposed Wogan thoughtfully. ‘It explains why the best poets are ever those who are most dunned by their creditors.’

Kelly snatched the Virgil out of Wogan’s hand, and threw it on to the grass. The book opened as it fell. It opened at the soiled pages, and it was behind those pages that Wogan had slipped his poem.

‘You are as contrarious as a woman. Here am I, swollen with the grandest news, and you must babble about poets and creditors. Nick, there’ll be few creditors to dun you and me for a bit. Just listen, will you?’

He leaned his elbows on the back of the bench, and read from his letter. It was to the effect that, during April, an edict had been published in France, transferring to Mr. Law’s company of the West the exclusive rights of trading to the East Indies and the South Seas.

‘Think of it, Nick!’ he cried. ‘The actions have risen from 550 livres to 1,000, and we are as yet at the budding of May. Why, man, as it is we are well to do. Just imagine that, if you can, you threadbare devil! We shall be rich before August.’

‘We shall dine off silver plates in September!’ cries Nick, leaping up in the contagion of his friend’s good spirits..

‘And drink out of diamond cups in November,’ adds Kelly, dropping at once into the Irish accent.

‘Bedad!’ shouts Wogan, ‘I’ll write my poetry on beaten gold,’ and he sprang on to the seat.

‘You shall,’ replies Kelly; ‘and your ink shall be distilled out of black pearls.’

‘Sure, George, one does not write on gold with ink, but with a graving tool.’

‘This nonsense, and poetry, are what the lucky heart sings,’ said Kelly.

‘To a tune of clinking coins,’ said Wogan. He stooped down to his friend. ‘Have it all in solid gold, and tied up in sacks,’ said he earnestly. ‘None of their bills of exchange, but crowns, and pieces of eight, and doubloons, and guinea-pieces; and all tied up in sacks.’

‘What will we do with it?’ asked Kelly.

‘Why, sit on the sacks,’ replied Nick, and then grew silent. He looked at Kelly. Kelly looked away to the garden-wall.

‘Ah!’ said the Parson, with a great start of surprise. ‘There’s a lizard coming out of the bricks to warm himself,' and he made a step away from the bench. Wogan's hand came quickly down upon his shoulder.

'George,' said he, 'I think we are forgetting something. Not a farthing of it is mine at all.'

'Now, that's a damned scurvy ungenerous remark,' replied George. 'Haven't I borrowed half of your last sixpence before now?'

Wogan got down from the seat.

'Poverty may take a favour from poverty, George, and 'tis all very well.'

Kelly sat himself down on the bench, crossed his knees, and swung a leg to and fro.

'I don't want the money,' said he, with a snort.

'My philosophy calls it altogether an encumbrance,' said Wogan, sitting down by his side.

Kelly turned his back on Wogan, and stared at the garden-wall. Then he turned back.

'I know,' said he of a sudden, and smacks his hand down on Wogan's thigh. 'We'll give it to the King. He can do no more than spend it.'

'He will certainly do no less.' But they did not give it to the King.

Wogan was sitting turned rather towards the house, and as he looked down the avenue, he saw the great windows at the end open, and Lady Oxford come out.

'Here's her ladyship come for her Latin lesson,' said Wogan, and he rose from his seat.

'I'll tell her of our good fortune,' said Kelly, and he walked quickly to the steps at the end of the avenue. Lady Oxford stopped on the first step, with a hand resting on the stone balustrade. George Kelly stood on the grass at the foot of the steps, and told her of his news.

'The shares,' he ended, 'have risen to double value already.'

It seemed to Wogan that her eyes flashed suddenly with a queer, unpleasant light, and the hand which was resting idly on the balustrade crooked like the claws of a bird. He had seen such eyes, and such a hand, at the pharo tables in Paris.

'It is the best news I have heard for many a day,' she said the next instant, with a gracious smile, and coming down the steps, walked by Mr. Kelly's side towards the bench.

'And what will you do with it?' she asked. It was her first question, for she was a practical woman.

'In the first flush,' replied Kelly, hesitating as to how he should put the answer, 'we had a thought of disposing of it where it is sorely needed.'

She looked quickly at Kelly; as quickly looked away. She took a step to the seat with her eyes on the ground.

‘Oh,’ she observed slowly; ‘you would give it away.’ There was, perhaps, a trifle of a pucker upon her forehead, perhaps a shade of disappointment in her eyes. But it was all gone in a moment. She clasped her hands fervently together, raised her face to the heavens, her cheeks afire, her eyes most tender. ‘Indeed,’ she exclaimed, ‘the noblest, properest disposition of it! Heaven dispense me more such friends who, in a world so niggardly, retain so ancient a spirit of generosity,’ and she stood for a little, with her lips moving, as if in prayer. It was plain to Mr. Wogan that her ladyship had guessed the destination of the money. No such thought, however, troubled George Kelly, who was wholly engaged in savouring the flattery, and, from his appearance, found it very much to his taste.

‘I would not, however, if a woman might presume to advise,’ she continued, ‘be in any great hurry to sell the shares. Though they have risen high, they will doubtless rise higher. And your gift, if you will but wait, in a little will grow worthier of the spirit which prompts it.’

‘Madam,’ returned Kelly, ‘it is very prudent advice. I will be careful to follow it.’

Was it relief which showed for an instant in Lady Oxford’s face? Kelly did not notice; Wogan could not tell; and a second afterwards an event occurred which wholly diverted his thoughts.

All three had been standing with their faces towards the garden-seat, the yew-tree and the orchard beyond, Lady Oxford between, and a little in advance of Kelly and Wogan, so that each saw her face obliquely over her shoulders. Now, however, she turned and sat down, giving thus her whole face to the two men; and both saw it suddenly blanch, suddenly flush as though all the blood had leaped from her heart into her cheeks, and then fade again to pallor. Terror widened and fixed her eyes, her lips parted, she quivered as though she had been struck a buffet across the face.

‘Your ladyship—’ began Kelly, and, noticing the direction of her gaze, he broke off his sentence, and turned him about. As he moved, Lady Oxford, even in the midst of her terror, stole a quick, conscious glance at his face.

‘Sure, ’tis a predecessor to George,’ thought Wogan; and he too turned about.

Some twenty paces away a man was waiting in an easy attitude. He was of the middle height, and, judged by his travelling dress and bearing, a gentleman. His face was thin, hard, and sallow of complexion, the features rather peaked, the eyes dark, and deepset beneath the brows. Without any pretension to good looks, the stranger had a certain sinister distinction — stranger, for that he was to the two men at this time, whatever he may have been to Lady Oxford. Yet George thought he had seen the man’s eyes before, at Avignon, when the King was there; and Wogan later remembered his voice, perhaps at Genoa, which he had used much at one time. He stood just within the opening in the hedge, and must needs have come through the trees beyond, while Lady Oxford and her guests were discussing the Parson’s good fortune.

As soon as he saw the faces turned towards him, he took off his hat, made a step forwards, and flourished a bow.

‘Your ladyship’s most humble and obedient servant.’

He laid a stress upon the word ‘obedient,’ and uttered it with a meaning smile. Lady Oxford returned his bow, but instinctively shifted her position on the bench towards Kelly, and timidly put out a hand as though she would draw him nearer.

The stranger took another step forwards. There was no change in his expression, but the step was perhaps more swiftly taken.

‘Mr. George Kelly,’ he said quietly, and bowed again. ‘The Reverend Mr. George Kelly, I think,’ and he bowed a third time, but lower, and with extreme gravity.

Wogan started as the stranger pronounced the name. Instantly the stranger turned to him.

‘Ah,’ said he, ‘Captain Nicholas Wogan, I think,’ and he took a third step. His foot struck in a tuft of grass, and he stumbled forward; he fell plump upon his knees. For a gentleman of so much dignity the attitude was sufficiently ridiculous. Wogan grinned in no small satisfaction.

‘Sure, my unknown friend,’ said he, ‘I think something has tripped you up.’

‘Yes,’ said the stranger, and, as he stood up, he picked up a book from the grass.

‘It is,’ said he, ‘a copy of Virgil.’

CHAPTER V

A LITERARY DISCUSSION IN WHICH A CRITIC, NOT FOR THE FIRST TIME, TURNS THE TABLES UPON AN AUTHOR

Kelly frowned at Wogan, enjoining silence by a shake of the head. Her ladyship was still too discomposed to speak; she drew her breath in quick gasps; her colour still came fitfully and went. The only person entirely at ease in that company was the disconcerting stranger, and even behind his smiling mask of a face one was somehow aware of sleeping fires; and underneath the suave tones of his voice one somehow felt that there ran an implacable passion.

‘Upon my word,’ said he, ‘I find myself for a wonder in the most desirable company. A revered clergyman, a fighting captain, a lady worthy of her quality, and a poet.’ He tapped the Virgil as he spoke, and it fell open between his hands. His speech had been uttered with a provocative politeness, and since no one responded to the provocation, he continued in the same strain. ‘The story of Dido’ — the book was open at the soiled pages— ‘and all spluttered with tears.’

‘It has lain open in the dew since yesterday,’ interrupted Wogan.

‘Tears no less because the night has shed them,’ he replied; ‘and indeed it is a sad story, though not all true as the poet relates it. For Dido had a gout-ridden husband hidden discreetly away in a dark corner of the Palace, and Æneas was no more than an army chaplain, though he gave himself out for a general.’

Kelly flushed at the words, and took half a step towards the speaker of them.

‘It is very true, Mr. Kelly. A chaplain, my soul upon it, a chaplain. Didn’t he invoke his religion when he was tired of the lady, and so sail away with a clear conscience? A very parsonical fellow, Mr. Kelly. *O infelix Dido!* he burst out, ‘that met with an army chaplain, and so became food for worms before her time!’

He shut up the book with a bang, and, as ill-luck would have it, Mr. Wogan’s poem peeped out from the covers as if in answer to his knock.

‘Oho,’ says he, ‘another poet,’ and he read out the dedication.

‘Strephon to his Smilinda running barefoot in a gale of wind.’

Kelly laughed aloud, and a faint smile flickered for the space of a second about Lady Oxford’s lips. Wogan felt his cheeks grow red, but constrained himself to a like silence with his companions. His opportunity would come later; meanwhile some knowledge was needed of who the stranger was.

‘A pretty conceit,’ resumed the latter, ‘though consumption in its effects. Will the author pardon me?’

He took the sheet of paper in his hand, dropped the Virgil carelessly on the grass, and read out the verses with an absolute gravity which mocked at them more completely than any ridicule would have done. ‘It breaks off,’ he added, ‘most appropriately just when the gentleman claims the lady’s obedience. There is generally a break at that point. “At least, that is what I expect,”’ he quoted. Then he looked at each of his two adversaries. For adversaries his language and their faces alike proved them to be. ‘Now which is Strephon?’ he asked, with an insinuating smile, as he calmly put the verses in his pocket. ‘Is it the revered clergyman or the fighting captain?’

Kelly’s face flushed darkly.

‘The revered clergyman,’ he broke in, and his voice shook a little, ‘would be happy to be reminded of the occasion which brought him the honour of your acquaintance.’

‘A sermon,’ replied the stranger. ‘I was much moved by a sermon which you preached in Dublin upon the text of “Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s.”’

Mr. Kelly could not deny that he had preached that sermon; and for all he knew the stranger might well have been among his audience. He contented himself accordingly with a bow. So Wogan stepped in.

‘And the fighting captain,’ he said, with a courtesy of manner no whit inferior to his questioner’s, ‘would be glad to know when he ever clapped eyes upon your honour’s face, if you please.’

‘Never,’ answered the other with a bow. ‘Captain Nicholas Wogan never in his life saw the faces of those who fought behind him. He had eyes only for the enemy.’

Now, Mr. Wogan had fought upon more than one field of which he thought it imprudent to speak. So he copied the Parson’s example and bowed.

‘Does her ladyship also wish to be reminded of the particulars of our acquaintance?’ said the stranger, turning now to Lady Oxford. There was just a tremor, a hint of passion discernible in his voice as he put the question. Both Wogan and Kelly had been waiting for it, had restrained themselves to silence in the expectation of it. For only let the outburst come, and the man’s design would of a surety tumble out on the top. Lady Oxford, however, suddenly interposed and prevented it. It may be that she, too, had caught the threatening tremble of his words, and dreaded the outburst as heartily as the others desired it. At all events, she rose from the bench as though some necessity had spurred her to self-possession.

‘No, Mr. Scrope,’ she said calmly, ‘I do not wish to be reminded of our acquaintance either in particular or in general. It was a slight thing at its warmest, and I thank God none of my seeking. Mr. Kelly, will you give me your arm to the house?’

The stranger for a second was plainly staggered by her words. Kelly cast a glance at Wogan which the ‘fighting captain’ very well understood, offered his arm to Lady Oxford, and before the stranger recovered himself, the pair were up the steps and proceeding down the avenue.

‘A slight thing!’ muttered Mr. Scrope in a sort of stupor. ‘God, what’s a strong thing, then?’ and at that the passion broke out of him. ‘It’s the Parson now, is it?’ he cried. ‘Indeed, Mr. Wogan, a parson is very much like a cat. Whether he throws his cassock over the wall, or no, it is still the same sly, soft-footed, velvety creature, with a keen eye for a soft lap to make his bed in,’ and with an oath he started at a run after Kelly. Wogan, however, ran too, and he ran the faster. He got first to the steps, sprang to the top of them, and turned about, just as Mr. Scrope reached the bottom.

‘Wait a bit, my friend!’ said Wogan.

‘Let me go, if you please,’ said Mr. Scrope, mounting the lowest step.

‘You and I must have a little talk first.’

‘It will be talk of a kind uncommon disagreeable to you,’ said Mr. Scrope hotly, and he mounted the second step.

Wogan laughed gleefully.

‘Why, that’s just the way I would have you speak,’ said he. Mr. Scrope stopped, looked over Wogan from head to foot, and then glanced past him up the avenue.

‘I have no quarrel with you, Mr. Wogan,’ he said politely, and took the third step.

‘And have you not?’ asked Wogan. ‘I’m thinking, on the contrary, that you took exception to my poetry.’

‘Was the poetry yours? Indeed, I did not guess that,’ he replied. ‘But the greatest of men may yet be poor poets.’

‘In this case you’re mightily mistaken,’ cried Wogan, and he stamped his foot and threw out his chest. ‘I am my poetry.’

Mr. Scrope squinted up the avenue under Wogan’s arm.

‘Damn!’ said he.

Wogan turned round; Parson Kelly and her ladyship were just passing through the window into the house. Wogan laughed, but a trifle too soon. For as he still stood turned away and looking down the avenue, Mr. Scrope took the last three steps at a bound, and sprang past him. Luckily as he sprang he hit against

Wogan's shoulder, and so swung him round the quicker. Wogan just caught the man's elbow, jerked him back, got both his arms coiled about his body, lifted him off his feet, and flattened him up against his chest. Mr. Scrope struggled against the pressure; he was lithe and slippery like a fish, and his muscles gave and tightened like a steel spring. Wogan gripped him the closer, pinioning his arms to his side. In a little Scrope began to pant, and a little after to perspire; then the veins ridged upon his face, and his eyes opened and shut convulsively.

'Have you had enough, do you think?' asked Wogan; 'or shall I fall on you? But you may take my word for it, whatever you think of my love-poems, that I never yet fell on any man but something broke inside of him.'

Mr. Scrope was not in that condition which would enable him to articulate, but he seemed to gasp an assent, and Wogan put him down. He staggered backwards towards the house for a yard or two, leaned against one of the trees, and then, taking out his handkerchief, wiped his forehead; at the same time he walked towards the house, but with the manner of a man who is dizzy, and knows nothing of his direction.

'Stop!' cried Wogan.

Scrope stooped, and turned back carelessly, as though he had not heard the command. Indeed, he seemed even to have forgotten why he was out of breath.

'Mr. Wogan,' he said, 'I do not quite understand. It seems you write love-poems to her ladyship, and yet encourage the Parson to court her.'

Wogan was not to be drawn into any explanation.

'Let us leave her ladyship entirely out of the question. There's the value of my poetry to be argued out.'

Mr. Scrope bowed, and they walked down the steps side by side, and through the opening in the hedge. A path led through the trees, and they followed it until they came to an open space of sward. Wogan measured it across with his stride.

'A very fitting place for the argument, I think,' he said, and took off his coat.

'What? In Smilinda's garden?' asked Scrope easily. 'Within view of Smilinda's windows? Surely the common road would be the more convenient place.'

'Why, and that's true,' answered Wogan. 'It would have been an outrage.'

'No,' said Scrope, 'merely a flaw in the argument. This is the nearest way. At least, I think so,' and he turned off at an angle, passed through a shrubbery, and came out opposite a little postern-gate in the garden-wall.

'You know the grounds well,' said Wogan.

'It is my first visit,' replied Scrope, with a trace of bitterness, 'but I have been told enough of them to know my way.'

He stepped forward and opened the gate. Outside in the road stood a travelling chaise with a pair of horses harnessed to it.

‘There is no one within view,’ said Wogan. The road ran to right and left empty as far as the eye could reach; in front stretched the empty fields.

‘No one,’ said Mr. Scrope, and he looked up to the sky.

‘Well, I would as lief take my last look at the sunlight as at anything else, and I doubt not it is the same with you.’

Wogan, in spite of himself, began to entertain a certain liking for the man. He had accepted each stroke of ill-fortune — his discomfiture at Lady Oxford’s hands, the grapple on the steps, and now this duel — without disputation. Moreover Wogan was wondering whether or no the man had some real grievance against her ladyship and what motive brought him, in what expectation, in his chaise to Brampton Bryan. He felt indeed a certain compunction for his behaviour, and he said doubtfully, ‘Mr. Scrope, you and I might have been very good friends in other circumstances.’

‘I doubt it very much, Mr. Wogan.’ Scrope shook his head and smiled. ‘Your poetry would always have come between us. I would really sooner die than praise it.’

He looked up and down the road as he spoke, and then made an almost imperceptible nod at his coachman.

‘That field opposite will do, I think,’ Scrope said, and advanced from the doorway to the side of his chaise as though he was looking for something. It was certainly not his sword; Wogan now thinks it was his pistols. Wogan felt his liking increase and was inclined to put the encounter off for a little. It was for this reason that he stepped forward and passed an arm through Scrope’s just as the latter had set a foot on the step of the chaise, no doubt to search the better for what he needed.

‘Now what’s amiss with the poem?’ asked Wogan in a friendly way.

‘It is altogether too inconsequent,’ replied Scrope with a sudden irritation for which Wogan was at a loss to account.

‘But my dear man,’ said he, ‘it was not intended for a syllogism.’

Scrope took his foot off the step and turned to Wogan as though a new thought had sprung into his brain.

‘Mr. Wogan,’ he said, ‘I shall have all the pleasure imaginable in pointing out the faults to you if you care to listen and have the leisure. Then if you kill me afterwards, why I shall have done you some slight service and perhaps the world a greater. If I kill you, on the other hand, why there’s so much time wasted, it is true, but I am in no hurry.’

There was no escape from the duel; that Wogan knew. Mr. Scrope had insulted the Parson, Lady Oxford, and himself; he was aware besides that the

Parson and Wogan, both of them at the best suspected characters, were visiting the Earl of Oxford; and he had, whether it was justified or no, a hot resentment against the Parson. He might, since he knew so much, know also more, as, for instance, the names under which the Parson and Wogan were hiding themselves. It would not in any case need a very shrewd guess to hit upon their business, and if Mr. Scrope got back safe to London, why he might make himself confoundedly unpleasant. Wogan ran through these arguments in his mind, and was brought to the conclusion that he must most infallibly kill Mr. Scrope; but at the same time a little of his company meanwhile could do no harm.

‘Nor I,’ replied Wogan accordingly. ‘I shall be delighted to confute your opinions.’

Mr. Scrope bowed; it seemed as though his face lighted up for a moment.

‘There is no reason why we should stand in the road,’ he said, ‘when we can sit in the chaise.’

‘Very true,’ answered Wogan.

Scrope mounted into the chaise. Wogan followed upon his heels. They sat down side by side, and Scrope pulled out the verses from his pocket. He read the dedication once more: ‘Strephon to Smilinda running barefoot over the grass in a gale of wind.’

‘Let me point out,’ said he, ‘that you have made the lady run barefoot at the very time when she would be most certain to put on her shoes and stockings. And that error vitiates the whole poem. For the wind is severe, you will notice. So when she reprimands the storm, she should really reprimand herself for her inconceivable folly.’

‘But Smilinda has no shoes and stockings at all in the poem,’ replied Wogan triumphantly.

‘That hardly betters the matter,’ returned Scrope. ‘For in that case her feet might be bare but they would certainly not be snowy.’

He stooped down as he spoke and drew from under the seat a bottle of wine, which he opened.

‘This,’ he said, ‘may help us to consider the poem in a more charitable light.’

He gave Wogan the bottle to hold, and stooping once more fetched out a couple of glasses. Then he held one in each hand.

‘Now will you fill them?’ he said. Wogan poured out the wine and while pouring it:

‘Two glasses?’ he remarked. ‘It seems you came prepared for the conversation.’

Scrope raised his eyes quickly to Wogan’s face, and dropped them again to the glasses.

‘One might easily have been broken,’ he explained.

They leaned back in the chaise, each with a glass in his hand.

‘It is to your taste, I hope,’ said Scrope courteously.

Wogan smacked his lips in contentment.

‘Lord Oxford has no better in his cellars.’

‘I may agree without boastfulness. It is indeed Florence of a rare vintage, which I was at some pains to procure.’ He laughed with a spice of savagery and resumed the consideration of Wogan’s verses.

‘You seem to me to have missed the opportunity afforded by your gale of wind. A true poet would surely have made great play with the lady’s petticoats.’

‘Smilinda had none,’ again replied Wogan in triumph, and he emptied his glass.

‘No shoes and stockings and no petticoats,’ said he in a shocked voice. ‘It is well you wrote a poem about her instead of painting her portrait,’ and he filled Wogan’s glass again, and added a little to his own, which was no more than half empty.

‘Don’t you comprehend, my friend,’ exclaimed Wogan, ‘that Smilinda’s a nymph, an ancient Roman nymph?’

‘Oh, she’s a nymph!’

‘Yes, and so wears no clothes but a sort of linsey-wolsey garment kirtled up to her knees.’

‘Well, let that pass. But here’s a line I view with profound discontent. “The grass will all its prickles hide.” Thistles have prickles, Mr. Wogan, but the grass has blades like you and me; only, unlike you and me, it has no scabbards to sheathe them in.’

‘Well,’ said Wogan, ‘but that’s very wittily said,’ and he laughed and chuckled.

‘It is not bad, upon my faith,’ replied Scrope. ‘Let us drink to it in full glasses.’

He emptied the bottle into Wogan’s glass and tossed it into the road.

‘Now here’s something more. The wind, you observe, makes lutestrings of Smilinda’s hair.’

‘There is little fault to be discovered in that image, I fancy,’ said Wogan, lifting his glass to his lips with a smile.

‘It is a whimsical image,’ replied Scrope. ‘It is as much as to call her hair catgut.’

Wogan was startled by the criticism. He sat up and scratched his nose.

‘Well, I had not thought of that,’ he said. He was somewhat crestfallen, and he looked to his glass for consolation. The glass was empty; he looked on to the road where the empty bottle rolled in the dust.

‘I have its fellow,’ said Scrope, interpreting Wogan’s glance. He produced a second bottle from the same place. The second bottle brought them to the end of the verse. There was, however, a little discussion over the last line, and a third bottle was broached to assist.

‘“At least that is what I expect.” It is a very vile line, Mr. Wogan.’

‘It is, perhaps, not so good as the others,’ Wogan admitted. ‘But you must blame the necessities of rhyming.’

‘But the art of the poet is to conceal such necessities,’ answered Scrope. ‘And observe, Mr. Wogan, you sacrifice a great deal here to get an accurate rhyme, but in the remaining two lines of the next verse you do not trouble your head about a rhyme at all.’

‘Oh, let me see that!’ said Wogan, holding out a hand for the paper. He had clean forgotten by this time what those two lines described.

‘Allegiance, Mr. Wogan,’ said Scrope, politely handing him the verses, ‘is no rhyme to obedience.’

‘Allegiance — obedience — obedience — allegiance,’ repeated Wogan as clearly as he could. ‘Nay, I think it’s a very good rhyme.’

‘Oh!’ exclaimed Scrope in a sudden comprehension. ‘If you tell me the verses are conceived in the Irish dialect, I have not another word to say.’

Now Mr. Wogan, as a rule, was a little touchy on the subject of his accent. But at this moment he had the better part of three bottles of admirable Florence wine under his belt and was so disposed to see great humour in any remark. He grew uproarious over Mr. Scrope’s witticism.

‘Sure, but that’s the most delicate jest I have heard for months,’ he cried. ‘Conceived in the Irish dialect! Ho! Ho! I must tell it at the Cocoa Tree — though it hits at me,’ and he stood up in the chaise. ‘Obedience — allegiance.’ Mr. Scrope steadied him by the elbow. ‘Faith, Mr. Scrope, but you and I must have another crack one of these days.’ He put a foot out on the step of the chaise. ‘I love a man that has some warmth in his merriment — and some warmth in his bottle too.’ He stepped out of the chaise on to the ground. ‘The best Florence I have tasted — the best joke I have heard — the Irish dialect. Ha, ha!’ and he waved a hand at Scrope. Scrope called quickly to the coachman; the next instant the chaise started off at a gallop.

Wogan was left standing in the road, shouting his laughter. When the coach chaise was some thirty yards away, however, his laughter stopped completely. He rubbed his hand once or twice over his bemused forehead.

‘Stop!’ he yelled suddenly, and began to run after the chaise. Scrope stood up and spoke to the driver. The horses slackened their pace until Wogan got within twenty yards of it. Then Scrope spoke again, and the coachman drove the horses just as fast as Wogan was running.

‘You have forgotten something, my friend,’ cries Wogan.

‘And what’s that?’ asked Scrope pleasantly, leaning over the back of the chaise.

‘You have forgotten the duel.’

‘No,’ shouted Scrope with a grimace. ‘It is you that forgot that.’

‘Ah, you cheese-curd! — you white-livered coward!’ cried Wogan, ‘and I taking you for a fine man — equal to myself — you chalky cheese-curd!’ He quickened his pace; Scrope called to the coachman; the coachman whipped up his horses. ‘Oh wait a bit till I come up with you. I’ll eat you in your clothes.’

Wogan bounded along the road, screaming out every vile epithet he could lay his tongue to in the heat of the moment. His hat and wig fell off on the road; he did not stop, but ran on bareheaded.

‘But listen, the enamoured air
Makes lutestrings of thy locks so fair,’

quoted Scrope, rubbing his hands with delight. Wogan’s fury redoubled, he stripped off his coat and ran till the road grew dizzy and the air flashed sparks at him. But the chaise kept ever at the same distance. With this interval of twenty yards between them, chaise and Wogan dashed through the tiny street of Brampton Bryan. A horde of little boys tumbled out of the doors and ran at Wogan’s heels. The more he cursed and raved, the more the little boys shouted and yelled. Scrope in the chaise shook with laughter, clapped his hands as if in commendation of Wogan’s powers, and encouraged him to greater efforts. They passed out of the village; the children gave up the pursuit, and sent a few parting stones after Wogan’s back; in front stretched the open road. Wogan ran half a mile further, but he was too heavily handicapped with his three bottles of wine, and Scrope’s horses were fresh. He shouted out one last oath, and then in a final spasm of fury sat down by the roadside, stripped off his shoe, and springing into the middle of the road, hurled it with all his might at the retreating chaise. The shoe struck the top of the hood, balanced there for a moment, and bounced over on to the seat. Scrope took it up and waved it above his head.

‘The grass will all its prickles hide,
Nor harm thy snowy feet and bare.’

The driver plied his whip; the chaise whirled out of sight in a cloud of dust; and the disconsolate Wogan hobbled back to Brampton Bryan with what secrecy he could.

Mr. Scrope was on his way with the road to London open, were he disposed to follow it. Mr. Wogan seemed to see his chaise flashing through the turnpikes, and his sallow cheeks taking on an eager colour as the miles were heaped behind him.

He knew that Mr. Kelly and Nicholas Wogan were at Lord Oxford’s house at Brampton Bryan. He knew enough, therefore, to throw some disorder on the Chevalier’s affairs were he disposed to publish his news. But not in that way did he take, at this time, his revenge upon the Parson.

CHAPTER VI

MR. NICHOLAS WOGAN REMINDS THE PARSON OF A NIGHT AT THE MAZARIN PALACE

While Wogan pursued in vain a flying foe, Lady Oxford and Parson Kelly waited in the house for his return, her ladyship in a great discomposure and impatience, and the Parson more silent than ordinary. Whatever he may have thought of Scrope's unexpected visit, his pride forbade him questions.

'The most unfortunate affair,' exclaimed her ladyship distractedly. 'Sure never was a woman so cursed. But indeed I was born under a frowning star, Mr. Kelly, and so my lord's friends cannot visit him, but some untoward accident puts them into peril.'

'You need be troubled by no fears on our account,' replied Kelly, 'for Nick will ensure the fellow's silence before ever he lets him out of his sight.'

'True,' said she, with a fresh pang of anxiety, 'Mr. Wogan is with him and will doubtless seek an explanation.'

Kelly smiled, but without any overwhelming amusement.

'Neither,' said he, 'need your ladyship fear that he will listen to any indiscreet explanation. Words have very little to do with the explanations which Nicholas favours.'

Lady Oxford remarked the distant stateliness in Kelly's tone and was in a hurry to retrieve the slip she had made.

'It is just that I mean,' she cried, coming over to Kelly. 'If Mr. Wogan — kills this man,' and her eyes flashed as though she did in her heart desire that consummation, 'here at the Park Gates—'

'Believe me,' replied Kelly reassuringly, 'he will omit no proper ceremony if he does.'

'No, nor will the county justices either,' retorted Lady Oxford, 'and there are Mr. George Kelly and Mr. Nicholas Wogan to explain their presence at Brampton Bryan Manor, as best they can, to a bench of bumpkins.'

'Again your ladyship is unnecessarily alarmed. For if Mr. Scrope is now no more, Mr. George Kelly and Mr. Nicholas Wogan are still Mr. James Johnson and his secretary Mr. Hilton. No harm threatens Brampton Bryan Manor from their visit.'

This he said no less coldly, and to cut the conversation short, stalked with excessive dignity to the door. Lady Oxford was gazing ruefully down the avenue from the window, when she heard the knob of the door move under his hand. She turned quickly about.

‘It was not of Brampton Bryan Manor I was thinking,’ she said hurriedly, ‘nor of our safety. Why, in what poor esteem do you hold me! Am I then so contemptible a thing?’ There was no anger in her reproach. Rather it melted in a most touching sadness. ‘Have I no friends whose safety troubles me?’ she added. At that out came her handkerchief and fluttered at her eyes. ‘Nay, but I thought I had — two of the noblest.’ It was a mere scrap of a handkerchief, and the greater part of that a lace edging. It would not have sopped up many tears, but it served her ladyship’s turn. For indeed the mere sight of it convinced Kelly of his monstrous cruelty.

‘Your ladyship!’ he cried, turning back. ‘Tears! And I have caused them. Faith, I should be hanged for that. Yet they flow for my friend and me, and I am blessed instead.’

But she would have none of his apologies. She stepped back as he approached.

‘No,’ said she, and wiped an imaginary tear-drop from the dryest of eyes; ‘you have asked me for an explanation of Mr. Scrope’s coming and you have a right to ask it.’

‘Madam,’ expostulated Kelly, ‘I was careful, on the contrary, to ask for no explanation whatever. For I have no right to it.’

‘Oh, but you have,’ returned her ladyship with asperity; and then up went her handkerchief again.

‘All men,’ she said, in a voice most pathetical, ‘have a right to ask any explanation of any woman, at anytime. Women, poor sad creatures, are suspect from their cradles, and to distrust them is the prerogative of manhood.’ Here she tore away her handkerchief and lifted her hands in an ardent prayer. ‘Oh that some day I might meet with one single man who would believe us worthy of respect!’ She walked away to the window and said in a low voice, ‘With what friendship would I requite him.’

Thus the unfortunate Mr. Kelly was not merely plunged in remorse, but brought to see that he had missed the one solitary path which would have led him into this great lady’s friendship.

‘Your ladyship,’ he implored, ‘mistakes my sentiments altogether.’

‘Mr. Kelly,’ she replied, proudly, ‘we will not, if you please, pursue the matter. You have your explanation and I trust you will allow it to content you,’ and so she sailed majestically out of the room, leaving Mr. Kelly in that perturbation that he quite failed to notice he had received no explanation whatever. She dropped her stateliness, however, when the door was closed behind her, and, hurrying across the hall, lay in wait behind a shrubbery for Wogan's return. Wogan, on the other hand, had admirable reasons for avoiding all paths, and so slipped into the back of the house unseen. Consequently it was not until half-an-hour later, when Lady Oxford was fairly distracted, that she discovered him, decently clothed, and urging upon Kelly the necessity of an immediate retreat. He broke off from his advice as Lady Oxford entered.

'You have done him no hurt? 'she asked, looking Wogan over from head to foot in search of a speck of blood, and ready to swoon if she saw one.

'Not the least in the world,' replied Wogan.

'Nor he you?'

'There was never any likelihood of that.' Wogan had to put the best face on the matter possible, and since he could not own to the humiliating truth, why, the necessary lie might just as well redound to his credit. 'I swore him to secrecy upon his bended knees. He took the oath on the hilt of this very sword, 'and Wogan hitched forward his hanger.

A footman at this moment announced that dinner was served.

'Will you give me your hand, Mr. Wogan?' asked Lady Oxford, and detaining him until Kelly had passed out of the room:

'He gave you doubtless a reason for his coming?' she asked.

'Surely he did,' said Wogen, who was not for admitting any omission on his own part.

'And what reason?' asked her ladyship.

Mr. Wogan looked at the ground and got a flash of inspiration.

'Why,' said he as bold as brass, 'precisely the same reason which you gave to my friend George Kelly,' in which answer Wogan hit the literal truth, although her ladyship looked puzzled, as well she might, and then flushed a fine crimson.

However, she made up an ingenious story, and that same day hinted rather than told it with a pretty suggestion of sympathy which quite melted Mr. Kelly's heart, and threw Wogan into some doubt whether to believe her or no. Scrope, it appeared, had been at some indefinite time a secretary to Mr. Walpole, and was entrusted with the keeping of the good man's accounts. Lady Oxford was then simply Mistress Margaret Middleton and intimate with her cousin, Mr. Walpole, although since her marriage, as Mr. Kelly and his friend were requested to note, that intimacy had entirely ceased. Hence it came about that the rash Scrope cast longing eyes upon the humble relation of his patron, and was indeed so carried away by passion that Margaret was forced now and again to chide him for the forwardness of his demeanour. Also, alas! he transgressed in a more serious way. For Mr. Walpole's accounts fell into the saddest disorder; there were sums of money of which no trace could be found until — well, the deplorable affair was hushed up. Mr. Scrope was turned off and set down his dismissal to Margaret, who, gentle soul, would not have hurt a fly. From that time he had not spared her his resentment, and would go miles out of his way if by any chance he might fix a slight upon her. Which conduct she most Christianly forgave, since indeed the poor man’s head must needs be turned.

‘Yet he had all the appearances of prosperity,’ objected Wogan.

‘I fancied that I said that there were large sums missing,’ replied her ladyship.

‘Yes, you did indeed say so,’ said Mr. Kelly, ‘but you avoided the implication out of your generous pity.’

It is not in truth very difficult to befool a man who does half the fooling himself. Mr. Kelly was altogether appeased by Lady Oxford’s explanation, which to his friend seemed to explain nothing, but none the less he readily acknowledged to Wogan the propriety of hurrying his business to a close.

‘To tell the truth,’ said Wogan, as soon as her ladyship had withdrawn, ‘I feel my cravat stiffening prophetically about my neck. My presence does not help you; indeed, it is another danger; and since we are but a few miles from Aberystwith, I am thinking that I could do nothing wiser than start for that port to-night.’

The Parson drew figures with his forefinger on the table for a while; then:

‘I would not have you go, he said slowly. ‘I will use what despatch I may; but I would not have you go, and leave me here.’

Kelly was true to his word, and used so much despatch that within two days he extorted a promise from Lord Oxford to undertake the muslin trade in England, as the cant phrase went. Possibly he might have won that same promise before had used the same despatch. But Lord Oxford’s foible was to hold long discourses, and Mr. Pope truly said that he had an epical habit of beginning everything at the middle. However it may be, the two men left the Manor on the morning of the third day. Wogan drove back with the Parson as far as Worcester, who for the first few miles remained in a melancholy silence, and then burst out of a sudden.

‘To think that she should be mewed up in a corner of Herefordshire, with no companions but drunken rustics! Mated to an old pantaloon, too!’

‘Sure it was her ladyship’s own doing,’ murmured Wogan.

‘No woman in all London could hold a candle to her. And we distrusted her — we distrusted her, Nick.’ He beat a clenched fist into the palm of his other hand to emphasise the enormity of the crime. ‘Why, what impertinent fools men are!’

Then he again relapsed into silence and again broke out.

‘Damme! but Fortune plays bitter tricks upon the world. ’Tis all very well to strike at a pair of rascals like you and me, Nick, but she strikes at those who offend her least. Faith, but I am bewildered. Here is a woman indisputably born to be a queen and she is a nurse. And no better prospect when my lord dies than a poor jointure and a dull Dower House.’

‘Oh, she told you that, did she?’ said Wogan. ‘Sure it was a queenly complaint.’

‘She made no complaint,’ said Kelly fiercely. ‘She would not — she could not. It is a woman of unexampled patience.’

He grumbled into silence, and his thoughts changed and turned moodily about himself.

‘Why did I ever preach that sermon?’ he exclaimed. ‘But for that I might now have the care of half-a-dozen rambling parishes. Instead of hurrying and scurrying from one end of Europe to the other, at the risk of my neck, I might sit of an evening by the peat fire of an inn kitchen and give the law to my neighbour. I might have a little country parsonage all trailed over with roses, and leisure to ensure preferment by my studies and enjoy the wisdom of my Latin friend Tully. I might have a wife, too,’ he added, ‘and maybe half a score of children to plague me out of my five wits with their rogueries.’

He fetched up a sigh as he ended which would have done credit to my Lady Oxford; and Wogan, seeing his friend in this unwonted pother, was minded to laugh him out of it.

‘And a credit to your cloth you would have been,’ says he. ‘Why, it’s a bottle you would have taken into the pulpit with you, and a mighty big tumbler to measure your discourse by. Indeed there would have been but one point of resemblance between yourself and your worthier brethren, and that’s the number of times you turned your glass upside down before you came to an end.’

Kelly, however, was not to be diverted from his melancholy. The picture of the parsonage was too vivid on the canvas of his desires. And since he dreamed of one impossibility, no doubt he went a step further and dreamed of another besides. No doubt his picture of the parsonage showed the figure of the parson’s wife, and no doubt the parson’s wife was very like to my Lady Oxford.

Wogan, though he had laughed, was, to tell the truth, somewhat disturbed, and began to reckon up how much he was himself to blame for setting Kelly’s thoughts towards her ladyship. He had not thought that his friend had taken the woman so much to heart. But whenever the Parson fell a dreaming of a quiet life and the cure of souls, it was a sure sign the world was going very ill with him.

‘I would have you remember, George,’ said Wogan, ‘that not so long ago I saw you stand up before a certain company in Paris and cry out with an honest — ay, an honest passion, “May nothing come between the Cause and me!”

Kelly flushed as his words were recalled to him and turned his head away.

Wogan held out his hand.

‘George, am I then to understand that something has come between the Cause and you?’ And he had to repeat the question before he got an answer. Then Kelly turned back.

‘Understand nothing, Nick, but that I am a fool,’ he cried heartily, and slapped his hand into Wogan’s. ‘True, the Cause, the Cause,’ he muttered to himself once or twice. After all, Nick,’ he said, ‘we have got the old man’s assurance. My Lord Oxford will lend a hand. We have not failed the Cause.’ And they did not speak again until they drove into Worcester. Then Kelly turned to Nick with a sad sort of smile.

‘Well, have you nothing to say to me? ‘said he.

Mr. Wogan could discover nothing to say until he had stepped out of the chaise at the post-house and was shaking his friend’s hand. Then he delivered himself of the soundest piece of philosophy imaginable.

‘Woman,’ he said, ‘is very much like a jelly-fish — very pretty and pink and transparent to look at, but with a devil of a sting if you touch it.’

CHAPTER VII

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU HAS A WORD TO SAY ABOUT SMILINDA

From Worcester Nicholas Wogan made his way to Bristol, and, taking passage there on a brigantine bound for Havre-de-Grace with a cargo of linen, got safely over into France. He travelled forthwith to Paris that he might put himself at the disposition of General Dillon, and, being commanded to supper some few days after his arrival by the Duke of Mar, saw a familiar swarthy face nodding cheerily at him across the table. The lady was embrowned with the Eastern sun, and, having lost her eye-lashes by that disease which she fought so manfully to conquer, her eyes were fierce and martial. It was indeed the face of the redoubtable Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, sister to the Duchess of Mar, who chanced to be passing through Paris on her travels from Constantinople. Wogan remembered that Mr. Kelly’s rustic friend at Brampton Bryan had spoken of Lady Mary with considerable spleen. And since he began to harbour doubts of her rusticity, he determined to seek some certain information from Lady Mary.

Lady Mary was for a wonder in a most amiable mood, and had more than one question to put concerning ‘Kelly as the Bishop that was to be when your King came to his own.’

‘Why, madam, he has a new friend,’ said Wogan.

Lady Mary maybe caught a suspicion of uneasiness in Wogan’s tone. She cocked her head whimsically.

‘A woman?’

‘Yes.’

‘Who?’

‘My Lady Oxford.’

Lady Mary made a round O of her lips, drew in a breath, and blew it out again.

‘There go the lawn-sleeves.’

Wogan took a seat by her side.

‘Why?’

Lady Mary shrugged her shoulders.

‘In what esteem is she held?’ continued Wogan, ‘of what character is she?’

‘I could never hear,’ returned Lady Mary carelessly. ‘For her friends always stopped abruptly when they chanced upon her character, and the rest was merely pursed lips and screwed-up eyes, which it would be the unfairest thing in the world to translate in her disfavour. Her character, Mr. Wogan, is a tender and delicate plant. It will not grow under glass, but in a dark room, where I believe it flourishes most invisibly.’

Lady Mary seemed ill-disposed to pursue the topic, and began to talk of her journey and the great things she had seen at Constantinople. Wogan waited until she came to a pause, and then stepped in with another question.

‘Is Lady Oxford political?’

‘Lady Oxford! Lady Oxford!’ she repeated almost pettishly. ‘Upon my word, the woman has infected you. You can speak of nothing else. Political?’ and she laughed maliciously. ‘That she is, and on both sides. She changes her party more often than an ambitious statesman. For politics to my Lady Oxford are just pawns in the great game of Love.’

‘Oh, Love,’ exclaimed Wogan, with a recollection of Mr. Scrope. ‘Is Love her quarry?’

‘She will play cat to any man’s mouse,’ returned Lady Mary indifferently.

‘And there are many mice?’

Lady Mary shrugged her shoulders and made no reply. However, Wogan’s appetite for information was only whetted, and to provoke Lady Mary to speak more freely he made an inventory of Lady Oxford’s charms. He dwelt on her attractions. Lady Mary played with her fan, pulled savagely at the feathers, opened it, shut it up, while Wogan discoursed serenely on item — a dark eye, big, with a glint of light in it like sunshine through a thundercloud. Lady Mary laughed scornfully. Wogan went on to item — a profusion of blackish-brown hair, very silky, with a gloss, and here and there a gold thread in the brown; item — a Barbary shape; item — an admirable instep and a most engaging ankle.

‘It would look very pretty in the stocks,’ Lady Mary snapped out.

Wogan shook his head with a knowing air.

‘’Twould slip out.’

‘Not if I had the locking of it in,’ she exclaimed with a vicious stamp of the foot, and rose, as though to cross the room.

‘I have omitted the lady’s most adorable merit,’ said Wogan thoughtfully. Lady Mary was altogether human, and did not cross the room.

‘She has the greatest affection for your ladyship. She spoke of your ladyship indeed in quite unmeasured terms, and while praising your ladyship’s wit would not have it that one single spark was due to the cleverness of your ladyship’s friends. Upon that point she was most strenuous.’

Lady Mary sat down again. The stroke had evidently told.

‘I am most grateful to her,’ she said, ‘and when did Lady Oxford show such a sweet condescension towards me?’

‘But a few weeks ago at Brampton Bryan, where she was nursing her husband with an assiduous devotion.’

‘I have known her show the like devotion before, when her losses at cards have driven her from London.’

‘So she gambles?’ inquired Wogan. ‘Altogether, then, a dangerous friend for George.’

Lady Mary nodded.

‘Particularly for George,’ said she with a smile. ‘For observe, she is compact of wiles, and so is most dangerous to an honest man. She is at once insatiable in her desires, and implacable if they are not fulfilled. She is always in love, and knows nothing of what the word means. She is tender at times, but only through caprice; she is never faithful except for profit or lack of occasion to be anything else. Coquetry is the abiding principle of her nature, and her virtue merely a habit of hiding her coquetry. Her mind is larded with affectations as is her face with paint, and once or twice she has been known to weep — when tears were likely to deceive a man. There, Mr. Wogan, you have her likeness, and I trust you are satisfied.’

It was not a character very much to Wogan’s liking (Lady Mary, he learned later, was quoting from a manuscript ‘portrait’ of her own designing), though he drew a spice of comfort from the thought that Lady Mary might have coloured the effigy with her unmistakable enmity. But events proved that she had not over-coloured it, and even at that time Lady Oxford had no better reputation than Lady Mary Wortley attributed to her. The ballad-makers called her gallant, and they did her no wrong — the ballad-makers of the *ruelles,* be it understood, not they of the streets, but such poets as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu herself and his Grace Sophia of Wharton. The street-singers knew not Lady Oxford, who, indeed, was on the top of the fashion, and could hold her own in the war of written verses. It was in truth to her ability to give as good as she took in the matter of ballads that she owed Lady Mary’s hostility, who had no taste for the counter-stroke. There were many such daring Penthesileas of the pen who never gave each other quarter; but neither Wogan nor the Parson were at this time in their secrets, although subsequently a ballad, not from Lady Mary’s pen, was to have an astonishing effect upon their fortunes.

‘Your ladyship can help me to make the best of it, at all events,’ said Wogan. ‘Since you have told me so much, will you tell me this one thing more? Have you ever heard of Mr. Scrope?’

‘Scrope? Scrope?’ said she casting about in her recollections. Wogan told her the story of Mr. Scrope’s appearance at Brampton Bryan, and the explanation which Lady Oxford had given to account for it. Lady Mary laughed heartily.

'Secretary to Mr. Walpole?' she said. 'And how, then, did he come to hear that mad sermon of Mr. Kelly's at Dublin?'

'Sure I have been puzzled to account for that myself,' says Wogan. 'But who is he? Where does he come from? What brought him to Brampton Bryan? What took him away in such a mighty hurry? For upon my word I find it difficult to believe the man's a coward.'

'And you are in the right,' replied her ladyship. 'I know something of Mr. Scrope, and I will wager it was no cowardice made him run. I doubt you have not seen the last of Mr. Scrope. It is a passionate, determined sort of creature. He came to London a year or so agone. It was understood that he was a country gentleman with a comfortable estate in Leicestershire. He had laid his estate at Lady Oxford's feet, before she was as yet her ladyship. Lady Oxford would have it, and then would have none of it, and married the Earl. Well, he had been her valet for a season, and, I have no doubt, thought the service worth any price. She gave him her fan to hold, her gloves to caress, and what more can a man want? He spent much of his money, and some whisper that he turned informer afterwards.'

'Oh, did he?' asked Wogan, who was now yet more concerned that he had let the informer slip through his fingers.

'Yes. An informer for conscience' sake — a gentleman spy. His father died for Monmouth's affair. He has ever hated the Pretender and his cause. He is a Protestant and a fanatic.'

Then she looked at Wogan and began to laugh.

'I would have given much to have seen you bouncing down the road after Mr. Scrope's chaise,' and she added seriously, 'But I doubt you have not heard the last of Mr. Scrope.'

That also was Wogan's thought. For Lady Mary's story, though vague enough, was sufficiently clear to deepen his disquietude. Well, Mr. Wogan would get no comfort by the mere addling his brains with thinking of the matter, and he thrust it forth of his mind and went upon his way, that led him clean out of the path of this story for a while. He was despatched to Cadiz to take charge of a ship, and, in company with Captain Galloway of the *Resolution*, who was afterwards seized at Genoa, and Morgan, of the *Lady Mary*, he spent much fruitless time in cruising on and off the coasts of France, Spain, and Sweden. It was given out that they carried snuff, or were engaged in the Madagascar trade. But they took no cargoes aboard but barrels of powder and stands of arms, and waited on the Rising, which never came. There were weeks idled away at Morlaix, at Roscoff in Brittany, at Lisbon in Portugal, at Alicant Bay in Spain, until Wogan's heart grew sick with impatience. At rare times, when the venture wore a face of promise, the little fleet would run the hazard of the Channel and creep along the English coast, from Dartmouth, across the West Bay to Portland, from Portland on to the Isle of Wight. Mr. Wogan would pace the deck of his little ketch, *Fortune*, of a night, and as he looked at the quiet fields lying dark beneath the sky, would wonder how the world wagged for his friend the Parson, and whether my Lady Oxford was shaping it or no, until a longing would seize on him to drop a boat into the water and himself into the boat, and row ashore and see. But it was not for more than a full twelve months that his longing was fulfilled, and during those twelve months the harm was done.

CHAPTER VIII

MR. KELLY HAS AN ADVENTURE AT A MASQUERADE BALL

For the greater part of that year Mr. Kelly simply went about his business. He travelled backwards and forwards from General Dillon, Lord Lansdowne, the Duke of Mar, in Paris, to the Bishop of Rochester, in London, and from the Bishop to the others of the five who mismanaged the Chevalier’s affairs in England, Lord Arran, Lord Strafford, Lord North and Grey, Lord Orrery, and last, though not least, the Earl of Oxford. Thus business brought him more than once knocking again at the doors of Brampton Bryan Manor, though he did not always find her ladyship at home to welcome him. On such occasions he found the great house very desolate for the want of her footstep and her voice, and so would pull out his watch and fall to wondering what at that precise moment she was engaged upon in town.

Thus things dallied, then, until a warm wet night of summer in the year 1720. Mr. Kelly was in London and betook himself to His Majesty’s Theatre in Drury Lane, where he witnessed a farce which was very much to his taste. It was entitled ‘South-Sea; or the Biter Bit,’ and was happy not merely in its quips, but in the moment of its performance. For the King, or, as the honest party called him, the Elector, and his lords had sold out, and were off to Germany with their plunder, and the stocks were falling by hundreds every week. Mr. Kelly might well laugh at the sallies on the stage and the wry faces with which the pit and boxes received them. For he had recently sold out his actions in the Mississippi scheme at a profit of 1,200 per cent., and had his money safe locked up at Mr. Child’s, the goldsmith. Kelly’s, however, was not a mere wanton pleasure. For the floating of the bubble out of reach meant a very solid change in the Jacobite prospects. So long as the South-Sea scheme prospered and all the town grew wealthy, there would be no talk of changing kings and no chance for Mr. Kelly’s friends. That great and patriotic bishop whom he served, my Lord of Rochester, had said to him this many a month past, ‘Let ’em forget their politics, let ’em all run mad in Change Alley, and the madder the better. For the funds will fall and be the ruin of thousands, and when England is sunk into a salutary wretchedness and discontent, then our opportunity will come.’

It was altogether, then, in a very good humour that Mr. Kelly left the theatre. The night was young, and he disinclined for his lodgings. He strolled across to the Groom Porters, in White Hall, where his spirits were mightily increased. For taking a hand there at Bassette, in three deals he won nine rich septlevas, and, for once, did not need the money, and when he left the Groom Porters his pockets were heavy with gold, and his head swimming with the fumes of punch.

It is not to be wondered at that those same fumes of punch floated Lady Oxford into Mr. Kelly's mind. He swaggered up St. James's Street with her ladyship consequently riding atop of his bemused fancies. It was a gay hour in St. James's, being then about half past one of the morning. Music rippled out of windows open on the night. Kelly heard the dice rattle within and the gold clink on the green cloth; lovers were whispering on the balconies; the world seemed to be going very well for those who had not their money in the Bubble, and for no one better than for Mr. Kelly. He looked about him, if by chance he might catch a glimpse of his divinity among the ladies of fashion as he watched them getting into their chairs, pushing their hoops sidelong before them, and the flambeaux flaring on their perfections. He imagined himself a Paladin rescuing her from innumerable foes. She was an angel, a sprite, a Hamadryad, in fact everything tender and immaterial.

He was roused from these dreams by an illumination of more than ordinary brilliancy, and looking up saw that he had wandered to the theatre in the Haymarket. A ragged crowd of pickpockets and the like was gathered about the portico. Carriages and chairs set down in quick succession, ladies in dominoes, gentlemen in masks. Mr. Kelly remembered that it was a night of the masquerades; all the world would be gathered in the theatre, and why not Lady Oxford, who was herself the better half of it? Kelly had a ticket in his pocket, pushed through the loiterers, and stood on the inner rim of the crowd watching the masqueraders arrive. Every carriage that drew up surely concealed her ladyship, every domino that passed up the steps hid her incomparable figure. Mr. Kelly had staked his soul with unruffled confidence upon her identity with each of the first twelve women who thus descended before he realised that he was not the only one who waited. From the spot where he stood he could see into the lobby of the theatre. Heidegger, M. le surintendant des plaisirs du Roi de l'Angleterre,

'With a hundred deep wrinkles impressed on his front,
Like a map with a great many rivers upon 't,'

was receiving the more important of his guests. The guests filed past him into the parterre, Heidegger remained. But another man loitered ever in the lobby too. He was evidently expecting someone, and that with impatience. For as each coach or chaise drew up he peered eagerly forward; as it delivered its occupants he turned discontentedly away. It is perhaps doubtful whether Mr. Kelly would have paid him any great attention but for his dress, which arrested all eyes and caused the more tender of the ladies who passed him to draw their cloaks closer about them with a gesture of disgust. For he was attired to represent a headsman, being from head to foot in black, with a crape mask upon his face and a headsman's axe in his hand. He had carried his intention out with such thoroughness, moreover, that he had daubed his doublet and hose with red.

Mr. Kelly was in a mood to be charmed by everything strange and eccentric, and the presence of this bloodsmeared executioner at a masquerade seemed to him a piece of the most delicate drollery. Moreover, the executioner was waiting like Mr. Kelly, and with a like anxiety. Mr. Kelly had a fellow-feeling for him in his impatience which prompted him suddenly to run up the steps and accost him.

'Like me, you are doubtless waiting for your aunt,' said the Parson courteously.

The impulse, the movement, the words had all been the matter of a second; but the executioner was more than naturally startled, as Mr. Kelly might have perceived had he possessed his five wits. For the man leaped rather than stepped back; he gave a gasp; his hand gripped tight about the handle of his axe. Then he stepped close to Kelly.

'You know me?' he said. The voice was muffled, the accent one of menace. Kelly noticed neither the voice nor the menace. He bowed with ceremony.

'Without a doubt. You are M. de Strasbourg.'

The headsman laughed abruptly like a man relieved.

'You and I,' he returned, mimicking Kelly's politeness of manner, 'will be better acquainted in the future.'

Kelly was overjoyed with the rejoinder. 'Here's a devil of a fellow for you,' he cried, and with his elbow nudged Heidegger in the ribs. Heidegger was at that moment bent to the ground before the Duchess of Wharton, and nearly stumbled over her Grace's train. He turned in a passion as soon as the Duchess had passed.

'Vas you do dat for dam?' he said all in a breath. Kelly however was engaged in contemplating the executioner. He ran his thumb along the edge of the axe.

'It is cruelly blunt,' said he.

'You need not fear,' returned the other. 'For your worship is only entitled to a cord.'

'Oh, so you know me,' says Kelly, stepping close to the executioner.

'Without a doubt,' replied the latter, stepping back, 'Monsieur le Marchand de dentelles.'

It was Kelly's turn to be startled, and that he was effectually; he was shocked into a complete recovery of his senses and an accurate estimation of his folly. He walked to the entrance and stood upon the steps. The executioner knew him, knew something of his trade. Who, then, was M. de Strasbourg? Kelly recalled the tones of his voice, conned them over in his mind, and was not a penny the wiser. He glanced backwards furtively across his shoulder and looked the man over from head to foot.

At that moment a carriage drove up to the entrance. Mr. Kelly was standing on the top of the steps and the face of the coachman on the box was just on a level with his own. He stared, in a word, right at it, and so took unconsciously an impression of it upon his mind, while pondering how he should act with regard to M. de Strasbourg. Consequently he did not notice that a woman stepped out of the carriage and, without looking to the right or left, quickly mounted the steps. His eyes, in fact, were still fixed upon the coachman's face; and it needed the brushing of her cloak against his legs to rouse him from his reflections.

He turned about just as she disappeared at the far end of the lobby. He caught a glimpse of a white velvet cloak and an inch of blue satin petticoat under a muffling domino. He also saw that M. de Strasbourg was drawn close behind a pillar, as though he wished to avoid the lady. As soon, however, as she had vanished he came boldly out of his concealment and followed her into the theatre. Mr. Kelly began instantly to wonder whether a closer view of the domino would help him discover who M. de Strasbourg really was, and entering the theatre he went up into the boxes.

At first his eyes were bedazzled by the glitter of lights and jewels and the motley throng which paraded the floor. There was the usual medley of Chinese, Turks, and friars; here was a gentleman above six feet high dressed like a child in a white frock and leading strings and attended by another of very low stature, who fed him from time to time with a papspoon; there was a soldier prancing a minuet upon a hobby horse to the infinite discomfort of his neighbours; and as for the women — it seemed to Mr. Kelly that all the goddesses of the heathen mythology had come down from Olympia in their customary négligé.

Among them moved M. de Strasbourg like a black shadow, very distinguishable. Kelly kept his eyes in the man's neighbourhood, and in a little perceived a masked lady with her hair dressed in the Greek fashion. What character she was intended to represent he could not for the life of him determine. He learnt subsequently that she went as Iphigeneia — Iphigeneia, if you please, in a blue satin petticoat. To be sure her bosom was bared for the sacrifice, but then all the ladies in that assembly were in the like case. She had joined a party of friends, of whom M. de Strasbourg was not one. For though he kept her ever within his sight, following her hither and thither, it was always at a distance; and, so far as Kelly could see, and he did not take his eyes from the pair, he never spoke to her so much as a single word. On the contrary he seemed rather to lurk behind and avoid her notice. Kelly's curiosity was the more provoked by this stealthy pursuit. He lost his sense of uneasiness in a wonder what the man designed against the woman. He determined to wait the upshot of the affair.

The night wore away, the masqueraders thinned. The inch of blue satin petticoat took her departure from the parterre. M. de Strasbourg followed her; Mr. Kelly followed M. de Strasbourg.

The lobby was crowded. Kelly threaded his way through the crowd and came out upon the steps. He saw the lady, close wrapped again in her velvet cloak, descend to her carriage. The coachman gathered up his reins and took his whip from its rest. The movement chanced to attract Kelly's eyes. He looked at the coachman, at the first glance indifferently, at the second with all his attention. For this was not the same man who had driven the carriage to the masquerade. And then the coachman turned his full face towards Kelly and nodded. He nodded straight towards him. But was the nod meant for him? No! Well, then, for someone just behind his shoulder.

Kelly did not turn, but stepped quietly aside and saw M. de Strasbourg slip past him down the steps. So the nod was meant for him. M. de Strasbourg was still masked, but he had thrown a cloak about his shoulders which in some measure disguised his dress. The mystery seemed clear to Kelly; the lady was to be forcibly abducted unless someone, say Mr. James Johnson, had a word to say upon the matter. The carriage turned and drove slowly through the press of chairs and shouting link-boys; M. de Strasbourg on the side-walk kept pace with the carriage. Kelly immediately crossed the road, and, concealed by the carriage, kept pace with M. de Strasbourg. Thus they went as far as the corner of the Haymarket, and then turned into Pall Mall.

At this point Kelly, to be the more ready should the lady need his assistance, stepped off the pavement and walked in the mud hard by the hind wheels of the carriage. It was now close upon four of the morning, but, fortunately, very dark, and only a sullen sort of twilight about the south-eastern fringes of the sky.

In Pall Mall the carriages were fewer, but the coachman did not quicken his pace, doubtless out of regard for M. de Strasbourg, and at the corner of Pall Mall, where the road was quite empty, he jerked the horses to a standstill. Instantly M. de Strasbourg ran across the road to the carriage, the coachman bent over on that side to watch, and Mr. Kelly, on the other side, ran forward to the box. M. de Strasbourg wrenched open the door and jumped into the carriage. Mr. Kelly heard a woman's scream and sprang on to the box. The coachman turned with a start. Before he could shout, before he could speak, Kelly showed him a pistol (for he went armed) under the man's nose.

'One word,' said Kelly, 'and I will break your ugly face in with the stock of that, my friend.'

The woman screamed again; M. de Strasbourg thrust his head out of the window.

'Go on,' he shouted with an oath, 'you know where. At a gallop! Kill the horses, they are not mine! Flog 'em to death so you go but fast enough.'

'To the right,' said Kelly, quietly.

The man whipped up the horses. They started at a gallop up St. James's Street.

'To the right,' again whispered Kelly.

The carriage turned into Ryder Street, rocking on its wheels. M. de Strasbourg's head was again thrust from the window.

'That's not the way. Are you drunk, man? — are you drunk?' he cried.

'To the left,' says Kelly, imperturbably, and fingered the lock of the pistol a little.

The carriage swung into Bury Street.

'Stop,' said Kelly.

The coachman reined in his horses; the carriage stopped with a jerk.

'Where in the devil's name have you taken us?' cried M. de Strasbourg, opening the door.

Kelly sprang to the ground, ran round the carriage to the open door.

'To the Marchand de dentelles, M. de Strasbourg,' said he with a bow. 'I have some most elegant pieces of *point d'Alençon* for the lady's inspection.'

M. de Strasbourg was utterly dumbfounded. He staggered back against the panels of the carriage; his mouth opened and shut; it seemed there was no language sufficiently chaotic to express his discomposure. At last:

'You are a damned impudent fellow,' he gasped out in a weak sort of quaver.

'Am I?' asked Kelly. 'Shall we ask the lady?'

He peeped through the door. The lady was huddled up in a corner — an odd heap of laces, silks, and furbelows, but with never a voice in all the confusion. It seemed she had fainted.

Meanwhile M. de Strasbourg turned on the unfortunate coachman.

'Get down, you rascal,' he cried; 'you have been bribed, you're in the fellow's pay. Get down! Not a farthing will you get from me, but only a thrashing that will make your bones ache this month to come.'

'Your honour,' replied the coachman piteously, 'it was not my fault. He offered to kill me unless I drove you here.'

M. de Strasbourg in a rage flung back to Kelly. He clapped a hand on his shoulder and plucked him from the carriage door.

‘So you offered to kill him, did you?’ he said. ‘Perhaps you will make a like offer to me. But I’ll not wait for the offer.’

He unclasped his cloak, drew his sword (happily not his axe) and delivered his thrust with that rapidity it seemed all one motion. Mr. Kelly jumped on one side, and the sword just gleamed against his sleeve. M. de Strasbourg overbalanced himself and stumbled a foot or two forwards. Kelly had whipped out his sword by the time that M. de Strasbourg had recovered, and a battle began which was whimsical enough. A quiet narrow street, misty with the grey morning, the carriage lamps throwing here a doubtful shadow, a masked headsman leaping, swearing, thrusting in an extreme passion, and, to crown the business, the coachman lamenting on the box that whichever honourable gentleman was killed he would most surely go wanting his hire, he that had a woeful starving family! Mr. Kelly, indeed, felt the strongest inclination to laugh, but dared not, so hotly was he pressed. The attack, however, he did not return, but contented himself with parrying the thrusts. His design, indeed, reached at no more than the mere disarming of M. de Strasbourg. M. de Strasbourg, however, lost even his last remnants of patience.

‘Rascal!’ he cried. ‘Scullion! Grasshopper!’

Then he threw his hat at Kelly and missed, and at last flung his periwig full in Kelly’s face, accompanying the present with a thrust home which his opponent barely parried.

It was this particular action which brought the contest to a grotesque conclusion quite in keeping with its beginnings. For the periwig tumbled in the mud, and the coachman, assured that he would get no stiver of his hire, scrambled down from his box, rushed at a prize of so many pounds in value, picked it up and took to his heels.

M. de Strasbourg uttered a cry and leaped backwards out of reach.

‘Stop!’ he bawled to the coachman. The coachman only ran the quicker. M. de Strasbourg passed his hand over his shaven crown and looked at the carriage. It was quite impossible to abduct a lady without a periwig to his head. He swore, he stamped, he shouted ‘Stop!’ once more, and then dashed at full speed past Kelly in pursuit.

Kelly made no effort to prevent him, but gave way to his inclination and laughed. The coachman threw a startled glance over his shoulder and, seeing that M. de Strasbourg pressed after him, quickened his pace; behind him rushed a baldheaded executioner hurling imprecations. The pair fled, one after the other, to the top of Bury Street, turned the corner and disappeared. Kelly laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks, and leaned against the carriage.

The touch of the panels recalled him to the lady’s presence. The street was now fairly roused by the clamour. Night-capped heads peeped from the windows; an indignant burgher in a dressing-gown even threatened Mr. Kelly with a blunderbuss; and, as he turned to the door of the carriage, he saw Mrs. Barnes at a window on the second floor looking at him with an air of the gravest discontent.

‘Take me into shelter, good sir, at once, at once,’ cried the lady from out the confusion of her laces, in a feigned tone of the masquerade.

‘With all my heart, madam,’ said Kelly. ‘This is my door, and my lodging is at your disposal. Only the street is fairly awake, and should you prefer, I will most readily drive you to your own house.’

The lady looked out of the window. She was still masked so that Kelly could see nothing of her face, and she hesitated for a little, as if in doubt what answer she should make.

‘You may make yourself at ease, madam,’ said Kelly, believing that she was not yet relieved of fear; ‘you are in perfect safety. Our worthy friend had to choose between your ladyship and his periwig, of which he has gone in chase. And, indeed, while I deplore his taste, I cannot but commend his discretion.’

‘Very well,’ she replied faintly. ‘I owe you great thanks already, Mr.—’ she paused.

‘Johnson,’ said Kelly.

‘Mr. Johnson,’ she replied; ‘and I shall owe you yet more if you will drive me to my home.’

She gave him the address of a house in Queen’s Square, Westminster. Kelly mounted on the box, took up the reins, and drove off. He looked up, as he turned the carriage in the narrow street, towards the second floor of his lodging. Mrs. Barnes shook her head at him in a terrible concern.

‘I shall write and tell Mr. Wogan,’ she bawled out.

‘Hush, Mrs. Barnes, have you no sense?’ cried Kelly, and he thought that from within the carriage he heard a stifled peal of laughter. ‘Poor woman,’ thought he, ‘’tis the hysterics,’ and he drove to Queen’s Square, Westminster, at a gallop.

CHAPTER IX

WHEREIN THE CHIVALROUS MR. KELLY BEHAVES WITH DEPLORABLE FOLLY

Mr. Kelly did not drive very straight perhaps, but to be sure he had the streets entirely to himself, and he certainly hit upon Queen's Square. The house was unknown to him, and he drove through the square before he found it.

It made an angle at the south corner, and was conspicuous for a solid family air, and a fine new statue of Queen Anne. Level windows of a distinguished respectability looked you over with indifference and said, 'Here's a house you'll take off your hat to, if you please.' 'Faith, but those windows must have shuddered in their sashes when they saw the Parson driving Madam home at five o'clock of the morning from a masquerade ball. A sleepy footman opened the door; a no less sleepy maid yawned in the hall. However, they both waked up to some purpose when Mr. Kelly jumped down from the box, bade the footman take the carriage round to the stables, called the maid to attend upon Madam, and himself opened the carriage door. He opened it quickly with a thought that Madam might very likely have removed her mask, for he was not so tipsy but that he was curious to know who it was that he had befriended. Madam, however, had done nothing of the kind.

'Is my lady ill?' asked the maid, hurrying forward. So Madam was a woman of title.

'A trifle discomposed, no doubt,' answered Kelly.

My lady said nothing whatever. It seemed she was unwilling to speak in the feigned voice before her maid, and in the natural voice before Mr. Kelly. She took his arm, and, leaning on it somewhat heavily, yet walked with a firm enough step into the hall, as Mr. Kelly could not but remark.

The maid threw open a door on the right. It gave into a little cheery room with a wainscot of polished oak, and a fire blazing on the hearth. My lady did not release Mr. Kelly's arm, and they both stood in front of the fire, and no doubt found the warmth comfortable enough after the chill of the morning. Her ladyship, indeed, went so far as to untie the strings of her domino, and make as though she would turn it back upon her shoulders. But with a glance at Mr. Kelly, she changed her mind, and hugged it somewhat closer over her dress than before.

‘Were you at the masquerade, Mr. Johnson?’ she asked in a low voice.

Mr. Kelly took the movement and the words together, and set them down as mere coquetry. Now, coquetry to Kelly at that time was a challenge, and it was contrary to his principles of honour to remain under such a provocation from man or woman. So he answered:

‘Indeed, your ladyship, I was, to my eternal happiness. I shall dream of blue satin for a month to come.’

Her ladyship hitched her domino a little tighter still about her neck, and quickly tied the strings again, but made no other reply to his sally. The action, while it inflamed his curiosity, put him into something of a quandary. Was it but another piece of coquetry, he asked himself, or did she indeed wish to hinder him from discovering who she was? He could answer neither question, but he felt constrained, at all events, to offer to take her concealment as a hint that he should depart. It seemed a pity, for the adventure promised well.

‘Your ladyship,’ he said, and at that she gave a start and glanced at him, ‘for so I understand from your maid I may address you,’ he added, ‘it grows late, the world is getting on to its legs, and your ladyship has had an eventful night.’

He took a step backwards and bowed.

‘No,’ said she, in a sharp quick voice, and put out a hand to detain him. Then she stopped as quickly, and drew in her hand again.

Mr. Kelly had borne himself very prettily in the little affair with M. de Strasbourg. Madam, in fact, was in the typical attitude of woman. She knew it was inconvenient to keep him, but for the life of her she could not let him go, wherefore she found a woman’s way out of the trouble. For she staggered on her legs, and fainted to all appearance clean away, leaving matters to take their own course and shift for themselves. She fainted, of course, towards Mr. Kelly, who caught her in his arms and set her in an arm-chair. The maid, who all this while had been standing in the doorway, smiled. ‘I will run to her ladyship’s dressing-room for the salts,’ she said, and so went out of the room, carefully closing the door behind her. Kelly kneeled by the lady’s side, and taking up her fan, sought to waft her that way back into the world. She did not stir so much as a muscle, but lay all huddled up in her domino and mask. Mr. Kelly leaned over her, and so became aware of a penetrating perfume which breathed out from her dress. The perfume was bergamot.

Kelly dropped the fan and sat back on his heel. The maid had called her ‘my lady,’ and bergamot was Lady Oxford’s favourite perfume. What if it was Lady Oxford he had unwittingly rescued! The possibility caught his breath away. If that were only true, he thought, why, he had done her some slight service, and straightway a great rush of tenderness came upon him, which went some way to sober him. In a minute, however, he dropped into despondency; for Lord Oxford’s house was in the northern part of the town, as he knew, though he had never as yet been there, and neither the footman nor the maid were of her ladyship’s household. Yet, if by some miracle the lady might be Smilinda! She was of the right height. Mr. Kelly looked at her, seeking vainly to trace out the form hidden under the folds of the domino. But if it were Smilinda, then Smilinda had swooned.

Mr. Kelly woke to this conclusion with a start of alarm. He clapped his hand into his pocket, pulled out his snuff-box, opened it quickly, and held it close beneath her ladyship’s nose. The effect of the snuff was purely magical, for before she could have inhaled one grain of it — before, indeed, Mr. Kelly’s box was within a foot of her face, up went her hands to the tie-strings of her mask.

So the swoon was counterfeit.

‘Madam,’ said Kelly, ‘you interpret my desires to a nicety. It is your face I would see, but I did not dream of removing your mask. I did but offer to revive you with a pinch of snuff.’

She took the box from his hand, but not to inhale the macawba.

‘It is for your own sake, Mr. Johnson, that I do not unmask. ’Tis like that I am a fright, and did you see my face you would take me for a pale ghost.’

‘Madam,’ said Kelly, ‘I am not afraid of ghosts, nor apt to take your ladyship for one of those same airy appearances. A ghost! No,’ he cried, surveying her. ‘An angel! It is only the angels in Heaven that wear blue satin petticoats.’

The lady laughed, and checked the laugh, aware that a laugh betrays where a voice does not.

‘Ghost or angel,’ she said,’ a being of my sex would fain see herself before she is seen. ’Tis a mirror I seek.’ She was still holding Mr. Kelly’s snuff-box. It was open and within the lid a little looking-glass was set; and as she spoke she turned away and bent over it with a motion as if she was about to lift her mask.

‘Nay,’ said Kelly abruptly; he stretched out his hand towards the snuff-box. ‘The glass will be unfaithful, for the snuff has tarnished it. Madam, I beseech you, unloose that mask and turn your face to me and consult a truer mirror, your servant’s eyes.’ He spoke, perhaps, with a trifle more of agitation than the occasion seemed to warrant. Madam did indeed turn her face to Mr. Kelly, but it was in surprise at his agitation, and the mask still hid her face. Mr. Kelly could see no more than a pair of eyes blazing bright and black through the eyelet holes.

‘You are gallant, I find, as well as brave,’ she said, ‘unless some other cause prompted the words.’

‘What cause, madam? You wrong me.’

‘Why,’ said she, ‘you still hold out your hand.’ Mr. Kelly drew it away quickly. ‘Ah,’ she continued, ‘I am right. There was a reason. You would not have me examine your snuff-box too closely.’

In that she was right, for the snuff-box was at once the dearest and the most dangerous of Mr. Kelly’s possessions. It was a pretty toy in gold and tortoiseshell, with brilliants on the hinges, and had been given to Mr. Kelly on a certain occasion when he had been presented to his king at Avignon. For that reason, and for another, he was mightily loth to let it out of his possession. What that other reason was Madam very soon discovered.

‘It is a dangerous toy,’ she said. ‘It has perhaps a secret to tell?’

‘Madam, has not your mask?’ returned Kelly.

‘There is a mystery behind the mirror.’

‘Well, then, it’s mystery for mystery.’

For all that he spoke lightly he was in some uneasiness. For the lady might not be Smilinda, and her fingers played deftly about the setting of the mirror, touching a stone here and there. To be sure she wore gloves, and was the less likely therefore to touch the spring. But give her time enough — however, at that moment Kelly heard the maid’s footsteps in the hall. He stepped to the door at once and opened it.

‘You have the salts?’ he asked. ‘You have been the deuce of a time finding them.’

The maid stared at him.

‘But her ladyship fainted,’ she argued.

‘Well,’ said he, ‘wasn’t that why you went for the salts?’

‘To be sure,’ says she. ‘’Twas an order to go for the salts.’

She pushed open the door. My lady was still fingering the box. The maid paid no attention to the box, but she looked at my lady’s mask; from the mask she looked towards Kelly with a shrug of the shoulders, which said ‘Zany’ as plain as writing.

Kelly had no thoughts to spare for the maid.

‘Madam,’ he said, ‘here is your maid, to whose attentions I may leave you.’

He advanced, made a bow, took up his hat, held out his hand for his snuff-box.

‘But I cannot let you go,’ she answered, ‘without I thank you’ — all the time she was running her fingers here and there for the spring. Kelly noticed, too, with some anxiety, that while he had gone to the door she had made use of the occasion to strip off her glove— ‘and thank you fitly, as I should have done ere this. But the trouble I was in has made me backward.’

‘Nay, madam,’ said Kelly impatiently, and taking a step nearer, ‘there is no need for thanks. No man could have done less.’

Her ladyship’s fingers travelled faster in their vain attempt.

‘But you risked your life!’ said she in admiration.

‘It is worth very little,’ said he with a touch of disdain; ‘and, madam, I keep you from your bed.’

The maid turned her eyes up to the ceiling, and then Madam by chance pressed on a diamond which loosed a hidden spring; the glass in the snuff-box flew down and showed a painting of the Chevalier in miniature.

‘Oh!’ cried my lady with a start in which, perhaps, there was a trace of affectation. Then she turned to the maid and bade her bring some wine and glasses. She spoke quickly, now forgetting for the moment to disguise her voice. Mr. Kelly recognized it with absolute certainty. The voice was Smilinda’s.

The maid went out of the door. Kelly looked at the lady, and seeing that she was seemingly engrossed in the contemplation of the little picture, stole after the maid.

‘Betty!’ he called in a whisper.

‘Sir? ‘she asked, coming to a stop.

He took a crown from his pocket, spun it in the air, and caught it.

‘The Margout,’ said he, ‘will doubtless be more difficult to discover than the salts,’ he suggested.

‘It might indeed be necessary to go down to the cellar,’ she replied readily.

‘And that would take time,’ said Kelly, handing her the crown.

‘It would take an entire crown’s worth,’ said the maid, pocketing the coin.

Kelly slipped back into the room.

The lady seemed not to have noticed Mr. Kelly’s absence, so fondly did she study the portrait; but none the less, no sooner had he closed the door than she cried out, not by any means to him but in a sort of ecstasy, ‘*Le Roi!’* Then she hid the snuff-box suddenly and glanced with a shudder round the room. The panic was altogether misplaced, since there could be no other person in the room except the owner of the box, who, if her ladyship was guilty for admiring, was ten thousand times more so for possessing it.

She caught with her hand at her heart when she perceived Mr. Kelly, then her eyes smiled from out of her mask, as though in the extremity of her alarm she had forgotten who he was, and so fell back in her chair with an air of languor, breathing deep and quick.

‘Upon my word, I fear, Mr. Johnson,’ she said, ‘that if I have escaped one danger by your help I have fallen into another. You seem to me to be a man of dangerous company.’

‘Indeed I find it so when I am with you, madam, since you discover my secrets and show me nothing of your own,’ replied Kelly.

The maid it appears, had no less perversity than her mistress, for precisely at this moment she rapped on the door, and without waiting for any answer sharply entered the room, bearing the wine and glasses on a salver. There was a distance of three yards between Kelly and her ladyship. The maid measured the distance with her eyes, and her face showed some disappointment. Her ladyship dismissed her, filled both the glasses and took one in her hand. Mr. Kelly drained the other, and the bumper carried off the remnant of his brains.

‘You run no danger from my knowing your secret, Mr. Johnson,’ said she, ‘for —’

Breaking off her sentence, she turned her head aside, swiftly pushed up her mask and kissed the portrait in the box, stooping her fragrant hair over it. Mr. Kelly, speeded by the wine, was this time too quick for her ladyship. Before she could raise her face he had paid the same compliment to her lips as she to his Majesty. She lifted her head with a bewitching air of anger.

‘Lady Oxford!’ he cried out as if in amazement, since he had bottomed the mystery for now some time. ‘Forgive me, madam, if my hasty loyalty to my Sovereign prevented me from recognising his latest adherent. The Cause must now infallibly triumph.’

‘Sir,’ she began, looking up at him with her eyes melting from anger to reproach, ‘your apology is something graceless. For though my colour be gone’ — it was only the worse or artificial part of her matchless complexion which the mask had rubbed off— ‘you yet had time to know and respect a face you— ‘and then she came suddenly to a stop, as she untied the strings of her domino and threw it back from her shoulders. ‘You blame me,’ she said pitifully. Her ladyship was a ready woman, and even went more than half-way to meet an attack. At Brampton Bryan the talk had been of duty and the charms of a rustic life; but here the dutiful country wife, violently disarrayed in the extreme of fashion, had been alone to a masquerade ball and Mr. Kelly might conceive himself tricked. And so ‘You blame me,’ she said, ‘you blame me even as you blamed me at Brampton Bryan, and with no more justice.’

‘At Brampton Bryan!’ exclaimed Kelly suddenly.

‘M. de Strasbourg! M. de Strasbourg was Scrope.’

Her ladyship nodded.

‘And ’twas he attacked *you* — would have carried you off.’

Her ladyship shivered.

‘And I let him go. Curse me! I let him go even as Nick did. But the third time! Oh, only let the third time come.’

Her ladyship shook her head with the most weariful resignation.

‘It will come too late, that third time,’ she said; ‘too late for me. I have no husband who can protect me, and no friend so kind as to serve me in his place.’

‘Nay, madam,’ cried Kelly, instantly softened by the lonely picture which her words called up in his mind. She was transfigured all at once into Una, Andromeda, Ariadne, or any other young woman of great beauty and virtue who has ever been left desolate to face a wintry world. ‘Believe me, you have one friend whose only aspiration is to serve you with his life-blood. ‘Faith, madam, had you but shown me your face when first I came to the door of your carriage, I would never have let M. de Strasbourg run away until I had offered you his smoking heart on the point of my sword.’

Her ladyship gave the Parson to understand that she had gone to the ball on the King’s service. Had his brain been of its customary sobriety the adventure would doubtless have surprised him more than it did. He might have questioned the nature of the service which took her ladyship to the masquerade. But she had sufficient art to tell him nothing and persuade him that she told all. Moreover, he had other matters to engage him.

There is no need to extend more particularly the old story of a young man’s folly with a woman of Lady Oxford’s kind. She had sought to hide who she was, she said, because she dared not trust herself; and the fact that she was not living in her own house, which was being repaired, but in one that she had borrowed, with the servants, from a friend who had gone to the Bath, seemed to make her intention possible. But Heaven had been against her. Mr. Kelly was readily beguiled into the sincere opinion that she had fought against her passion, but that her weakness and his transcendent bravery, of which she would by no means allow him to make light, had proved her ruin. It was all in a word set down to gratitude, which was a great virtue, she suggested. Love, indeed, was just the charge of powder which would have never flashed — no never — had not gratitude served as a flint and thrown off the spark.

Well, Mr. Kelly walked home in the dawning of a new day and painted his thoughts with the colours of the sky. For weeks thereafter he seemed in his folly to tread on air; and no doubt he had more than ordinary warrant for his folly. He had a fortune safely lodged with Mr. Child, the goldsmith; his mistress was no less fair than she showed fond; and so fond she was that she could not bring herself to chide the coachman who was discovered the next morning drunk with drugged wine at a tavern near the Haymarket, whither one of Scrope’s hirelings had lured him. Mr. Kelly was prosperous in the three great games of life, love, and politics. For he was wholly trusted by the Bishop, by Lord Oxford and the rest; he took his place in the world and went and came from France with hanging matter in his valise. The valise weighed all the lighter for the thought that he was now serving Lady Oxford as well as the King. She was at this time always in his dreams. His passion indeed was in these days extreme, a devouring fire in brain and marrow. He believed her a most loyal conspirator, and, of course, all that he knew came to her ladyship's ears. But his bliss in the affection of Lady Oxford quite blinded him to danger, and he seemed to himself to walk invisible, as though he had the secret of fernseed.

For a season, then, Mr. Kelly was the happy fool, and if the season was short — why, is it ever long? Mr. Wogan is not indeed sure that the Parson has got altogether out of her ladyship's debt, in spite of what happened afterwards. For when the real morning broke and the true love came to him, troubles followed apace upon its coming. It is something to have been a happy fool, if only for a season and though the happiness ended with the folly.

CHAPTER X

WHAT CAME OF MR. KELLY'S WINNINGS FROM THE SOUTH SEA

Luck is a chameleon, and in November of that same year 1720, thought fit to change its complexion. The date, to be precise, was the 17th of the month. Mr. Wogan can determine on the particular day, for the reason that Mrs. Barnes carried out her threat, and sent him a laborious long letter concerning the Parson's moral iniquities. The letter reached Mr. Wogan in October, who was then cleaning his ship at Morlaix in Brittany, and what with his fifteen months of purposeless cruises, felt himself as encrusted with idleness as his ship's bottom with barnacles. It was just this eternal inactivity which no doubt induced him to take the serious view of Mrs. Barnes's epistle. 'It is a most cruel affair,' said he to Mr. Talbot, who was with him, 'and of the last importance that I should hurry to London and set it straight.'

'But you are fixed here,' said the Crow, for so Talbot was commonly called from the blackness of his complexion. 'Can I undertake the business for you?'

'No,' says Nick, shaking his head very solemn; though maybe his eye twinkled. Mr. Wogan forgets what point the plot was at then, for since the black year, 1688, there had been but one plot, though it had changed and shifted shape like the faces you see in the dark before you sleep. But he could not hear that anything immediate was intended; and it would be, therefore, the most convenient occasion to refit his ketch *Fortune*. He gave orders to that effect, travelled to Paris, obtained from General Dillon a month's leave to dispose of his own affairs, and went whistling to London like a schoolboy off on his holidays. For, to tell the truth, he was not greatly concerned at George Kelly's backslidings, but on the contrary was inclined to chuckle over them, and trusted completely to his friend's discretion.

He arrived in London on November 20, and drove boldly to Kelly's lodging in Bury Street. For the Glenshiel affair had completely blown over — there had never been more than a rumour that he was there — and as for the Fifteen, why Mr. Wogan had his pardon like the rest. That he got for his behaviour to Captain Montagu at Preston; moreover, who could know the boy Wogan that ran away from Westminster School, and his task of copying Lord Clarendon's history, in Mr. Hilton, the man of six feet four in his stockings. He found Kelly's lodgings empty.

‘A letter came for him three days ago,’ explained Mrs. Barnes, ‘and he set off almost on the instant in an agitation so great that he did not wait to pack his valise, but had it sent after him.’

‘Where to?’

‘I do not know,’ replied Mrs. Barnes with a sniff of the nose and a toss of the head, ‘and no doubt I am a better woman for not knowing.’

‘No doubt, replied Wogan gravely. ‘But, Mrs. Barnes, who signed the letter? Where did it come from?’

‘And how should I know that?’ she cried. ‘Would I demean myself by reading the letters of a nasty trull? For she’s no better for all her birth, and that’s not so high neither.’

‘Ah,’ says Wogan, ‘I see you don’t know who signed the letter.’

‘And that’s truth,’ said she, ‘but I saw the superscription. As for the letter, he hid it in his bosom.’

‘Well, that’s as good as showing the signature. Who carried his valise after him?’

‘Francis Vanlear,’ she said, ‘the porter who plyed in St. James’s Street and Piccadilly and lodged at the Crown ale-house in Germain Street.’

Thither Wogan sent for him, and when he was come asked him whither he had carried the valise.

‘To Mr. Gunning’s at Mussell Hill,’ Vanlear answered, where he had found a horse ready saddled at the door and ‘Mr. Johnson’ in a great fume to be off.

Wogan gave the porter a crown for his trouble and went forthwith to Mr. Gunning’s, whom he had not seen since the occasion of his coming down from Glenshiel. From Mr. Gunning he learned that Kelly had undoubtedly taken the Aberystwith road, since he had left the horse he borrowed at Beaconsfield, and thither had Mr. Gunning sent to fetch it. Kelly’s destination was consequently as clear to Wogan as the urgency of his haste, and coming back into London he dropped in at the Cocoa Tree, where he found the story of Lady Oxford and Mr. Kelly a familiar pleasantry.

He heard of it again that night at Will’s coffeehouse in Covent Garden, and at Burton’s in King Street, where Mr. Kelly was very well known. For, besides being close to Kelly’s lodging, it was one of the houses to which his letters were directed under cover. From Burton’s Wogan came back to Bury Street, and, while smoking a pipe in the parlour before going to bed, he chanced to notice his strongbox. It stood on the scrutoire by the side of Mr. Kelly’s big Bible, where Wogan had left it eighteen months before. It was the brother to Mr. Kelly’s strongbox, in every particular but one, and that one a stouter lock. Wogan remembered that when he had placed the box on the scrutoire the key was attached to it by a string. Now, however, he noticed that the key was gone. He was sufficiently curious to cross the room and try the lock. But the box would not open; it was securely locked. There were papers too within it, as he found out by shaking it. Kelly, then, was using the box — but for what purpose? His own box served for his few political papers. Any other papers that needed the shelter of a strong box must be love-letters. Here, then, were amorous, not political epistles. Besides, he was in the habit of burning all those which had done their work, and the rest which he needed he carried about in his own dispatch-box.

‘Now, I wonder,’ said Wogan, tapping the lid, ‘I wonder whether a certain letter, signed — shall we say Smilinda? — and summoning my friend to Brampton Bryan, is locked up inside you.’ Wogan’s guess hit the truth even to the signature, though he was destined to get little satisfaction from this proof of his sagacity. The letter, he later learned, lay in box with not a few others in the same handwriting, and they all ended in the same manner with a request: ‘Burn this.’ Mr. Kelly would have been honester had he obeyed it, but, like many a man when passion gets hold of him, he could not part with them. Faint whispers breathed, as it seemed, from Heaven, and caught and written loud in my lady’s hand, pure diamonds fetched up from the obscure mines of a woman’s heart, sure he treasured them up beyond all jewels, and locked them up in Mr. Wogan’s despatch-box to his own undoing.

This letter was, (Wogan learned afterwards) the most laconic of them all, and it was the most momentous. It began, ‘My own Strephon,’ and then Strephon was crossed out and again written on the top, and it was signed ‘Smilinda’ in a doubtful hand; as though, at first, Brampton Bryan had recalled to her ladyship the beginning of their affections with so overpowering a compulsion that she must needs use the names which were associated with it, and then the dear woman’s modesty timidly crossed them out, and in the end love got the upper hand and wrote them in again. At least that was a small portion of all the great meanings which Kelly read in the hesitation of her ladyship’s address. Between the Strephon and the Smilinda there was but one line— ‘Come; there is a secret. I have great need of you.’ But this had been quite enough to send Mr. Kelly spurring out into the November night with such speed that he came to Oxford the next day, where he found the snow lying very deep. The snow troubled him, no doubt, because it delayed him, but he took little account of the cold beyond a sharp pang or two lest Smilinda might have caught a chilblain. For himself — well, Smilinda had need of him — the great lady turned for help to the Irish outlaw. Wasn’t it always so? Her Majesty throws her glove to the page, my lord the King Cophetua goes clean daft for a beggar wench, and the obliging Cupid builds a rickety bridge whereby the despairing lovers leap into each other’s arms.

Smilinda needed him! There was a tune ravished from Heaven! His whole frame moved to it as the waves to the direction of the moon. It sang in his blood, his heart beat to it, the hooves of his horse drummed it out on the road. Even the boughs of the trees whispered the words with a tender secrecy to the wind, much as the reeds whispered that other saying, ages ago, which the Queen in the fable had entrusted to them. And, ‘faith, when you come to think of it, there was little difference in meaning between the two remarks. Smilinda needed Mr. Kelly! It was, after all, as much as to say ‘Mr. Kelly has ass’s ears.’ He made such haste that on the evening of the second day after his departure from London he cantered up the drive of the Manor House.

Lady Oxford met him in the hall, and Mr. Kelly’s heart gave a great jump of pride when he saw her stately figure all softened to an attitude of expectation.

‘I knew you would come,’ she said; and, as Mr. Kelly bent over her hand, she whispered, ‘My Strephon,’ for all the world as if her emotion choked her. Then she raised her voice for the servants to hear: ‘My lord is from home, Mr. Johnson, but he has commissioned me at once to pay you his regrets and to act as his deputy in your business.’

Mr. Kelly was all impatience to broach his business, but her ladyship’s solicitude would not allow him to speak until he had supped. She came near to waiting upon him herself, and certainly plied him with her best wine, vowing that it was ill weather for travellers, and that if he kept his glass full beside his elbow it was a sure sign he hated her. This, of course, after the servants had been dismissed. Mr. Kelly chided her for the thought, and, with a shake of the finger, quoted her a text: ‘We are bidden not to look upon the wine when it is red,’ said he.

‘And a very good text, too,’ says she; ‘so, if you please, shut your eyes and drink it,’ and, coming behind him, she laid her cool hand upon his eyes and forehead. So Mr. Kelly drank, and the bumper floated his wits into my lady’s haven.

‘Now,’ says my lady; and, leading the way into her boudoir, she sat herself down before the fire, and, clasping her hands at the back of her head, smiled at Mr. Kelly.

‘Strephon,’ she murmured on a lilt of her voice, and with all the provocation that witchery could devise. Mr. Kelly was on his knees at her side in a moment. She laid a white hand upon his breast, and, gently holding him off:

‘Tell me,’ says she, ‘why I sent for you.’

‘Because my Smilinda needed me,’ he answered with a laugh of pride. Her hand caressed his shoulder. She nodded, bit her under lip and smiled very wisely.

‘What is the service Strephon can do?’ cried Kelly. ‘Is it to lift the world? Give me but your love and I’ll accomplish that.’

Smilinda clapped her hands with delight, like a child.

‘It is nothing so important,’ said she. ‘It is not in truth any service you can do for me, but rather one that I can do for you.’

Kelly’s face lost all its light, and dropped to the glummest disappointment. He had so nursed that aspiration of doing her some great service. Through the night, through the day, it had borne him company. Some great service — that was to be the bridge of Cupid’s building whereby they were to stand firm-footed on equal ground. And now it was some service Lady Oxford was to do for him. Lady Oxford noticed the change; it may have been to read the thought which it expressed, and that the thought touched her to unwonted depths. For the smile faded from her lips, her eyes became grave, thoughtful, there was a certain suspense in her attitude.

‘Must the woman always owe, the man always pay?’ she asked, but in a broken way, and with almost a repugnance for herself. Indeed, she barely finished the question, and then, with an abrupt laugh, crossed to the window, drew aside the curtains, and gazed out upon the darkness and the glimmering snow.

‘A strange, cold world,’ she said in an absent voice, ‘with a strange white carpet.’ Mr. Kelly in truth had given her a glimpse into a world yet stranger to her ladyship than that which her eyes beheld — a world that had an odd white carpet too, though the feet of those who paced it as often as not were stained — a world of generous impulses and unselfish devotions. Into this world Lady Oxford was peering with an uneasy curiosity. Perhaps for a moment she compared it with her own; perhaps she was caught by it and admired it; but, if so, it was with a great deal of discomfort. For she dropped the curtain petulantly across the window, and, coming back to the fire — well, what she would have said it is impossible to guess, for a gentle tap on the door was followed by a servant’s entrance into the room. He carried a letter on a salver, and, advancing to Lady Oxford, offered it to her.

Now, Mr. Kelly was standing almost at the centre of the mantelpiece, Lady Oxford at one end; and they faced one another. So the man inevitably stopped between them, and, when he lifted up the salver, it was impossible but that the Parson should observe the superscription. He recognised the handwriting of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Lady Oxford recognised it too, for she flushed as she picked the letter up. But she flushed deeper as she read it through, and then crumpled it up and flung it into the fire with an anger which showed very clearly she would have done the like for Lady Mary were the writer instead of her letter within reach of her vindictive fingers.

‘A strange, incomprehensible creature is Lady Mary Wortley Montagu,’ said Lady Oxford with a laugh and a glance at Mr. Kelly. ‘The most whimsical contradiction. She offers you a kindness with one hand and slaps you in the face with the other. For instance, this letter here. ’Twas written out of pure kindness. It completes the friendliest service, yet it ends with so rough a jest that but for Strephon’s sake I should be much drawn to reject the service.’

‘For my sake? ‘asked Kelly.

‘Why, to be sure. Lady Mary gave me a piece of news a week ago in town. It was that news which made me send for you, and she writes now expressly to confirm it. But, let my Strephon answer me,’ and she asked whether he had yet sent his winnings from the Mississippi to be used for the King’s service.

Now, Mr. Kelly was, after all, a human being. It was all very well in the first flush of prosperity to propose to scatter his few thousands, but afterwards he had come to see that they would not go so very far. Besides, he had now obvious reasons for desiring to cut as agreeable a figure as he could. At all events the money still remained with Mr. Child, the goldsmith, and so he told her ladyship, with a little remorse.

‘Then,’ she cried in joy,’ that chance has come for which Smilinda has been longing. My presents, Strephon, you have always refused,’ which was true enough; indeed, on the other hand, she had Mr. Kelly’s royal snuff-box and a few of his jewels. ‘But now I can make your fortune, and with yours my own. There’s the sweetness of it,’ she said, and clasped her hands on her heart. ‘Your fortune, too!’

‘My fortune you have made already,’ said he, with other compliments proper to the occasion. But her ladyship was in a practical mood.

‘Listen,’ says she. ‘I am made acquainted that the tide has turned. I mean, you know, in the Straits of Magellan. The South-Sea stock that has been falling so long will certainly rise in a week; the Elector is buying secretly. Lady Mary has it from Mr. Pope, and he at the first and best hands from Mr. Craggs, the secretary. Mr. Craggs will insert my name in the next list and your money I shall send to the directors with my own. You shall be rich, Strephon, on the level of your merits.’

Mr. Kelly was very well content with his one speculation, but the evident joy with which Lady Oxford anticipated serving him was worth more than his thousands.

‘My gold shall be in Smilinda’s coffers the morning that I get back to town, ‘he said.

‘You must go at once,’ she exclaimed, ‘we must lose no time. Stay. I will travel with you to-morrow morning if you will favour me with your company’; and so a new flow of compliments carried the South Sea out of sight. But a minute or two later Mr. Kelly, chancing to look down at the hearth, said, quite inconsequently:

‘We must not forget to thank Lady Mary.’

Smilinda followed the direction of his eyes, and saw that Lady Mary’s letter had tumbled out of the fire and now lay, half burnt, but the other half only curled up and scorched. She shivered as though she was cold, and the better to warm herself knelt down on the hearth-rug. Then she took up the letter (which Kelly must not see) and carelessly tossed it into the fire.

‘You know Lady Mary,’ she said. ‘Yes, you told me.’

‘I do, indeed,’ said Kelly, with a smile.

‘I could wish you did not,’ said her ladyship with a frown. Smilinda made it plain that she was jealous. Kelly laughed heartily at the assumption, which was in truth ridiculous enough.

‘Who am I,’ said he, ‘that I should attract Lady Mary’s fancy,’

‘You are — my Strephon,’ replied Smilinda, with a sigh of exquisite tenderness.

Kelly argued the matter on other grounds. Smilinda listened to them all.

‘I have no doubt you are right,’ she said, with a meek resignation. ‘But I remember you spoke very warmly of the friendship you had for her, and ever since—’ here she broke off shyly. ‘A weak woman’s empty fears,’ she continued,’ but they keep her awake at nights. Well, she must even make the best of them.’

Smilinda lying awake at nights out of jealousy! There was a notion to convict Mr. Kelly of slow murder. He was on his knees in a moment, and swore that for the future on earth and in Heaven he would avoid Lady Mary’s company as though she was the devil in person. It was a confused sort of oath and deprived Mr. Kelly for a time of a very good friend; but on the other hand it undoubtedly raised a load from Lady Oxford’s anxieties.

She left Brampton Bryan the next morning and travelled with Mr. Kelly up to London, where the coach set them down at the King’s Head in the Strand. Kelly went straight from the King’s Head to the goldsmith and his money was carried to Queen’s Square that same afternoon. It would seem, however, that Mr. Pope had been choused, for the market fell from little to nothing. But when the Bubble presently burst into air, Smilinda burst into tears, and Mr. Kelly was smitten to the heart for her distress.

‘I have ruined thee, my Strephon,’ she sobbed. She had covered her face with her hands and the tears trickled through her fingers.

‘Love arms me against such ill-fortunes,’ replied Kelly. ‘It is only Smilinda’s tears that hurt. Each one of them falls upon Strephon’s heart like a drop of molten lead.’

‘Ah, Strephon,’ she cried. ‘Thou art ruined and Smilinda’s hapless hand hath dealt the blow. The arrow came from her quiver,’ she being one of Dian’s nymphs, you are to suppose.

Then Mr. Kelly fell to comparing himself to Procris in the fable, who was shot by her lover, and said that it was sweet to perish by her inadvertent shaft. It seems that kind of love-making has now gone out of date. But that was the humour of it when Kelly and Wogan were young. Men and women, let them but fall in love, and they were all swains and nymphs, though they dabbled in the stocks and were as hard-headed as before and afterwards.

‘That odious Lady Mary,’ exclaimed Smilinda. ‘She was born to be my bane and curse. ’Twas her counsel that ruined my Strephon. My Strephon has kept his oath?’

Her Strephon had, but on the other hand, Mr. Wogan had sworn no oath, and would not have kept it if he had done so. He paid a visit to Lady Mary soon after Kelly’s return from Brampton Bryan. She asked him his news and gave him a budget of gossip in return.

‘And Lady Oxford has sold her diamonds!’ she ended.

Wogan asked how that came about, and she answered:

‘Lady Oxford was here at the bassette table three weeks since. Her stakes were ever inordinately high, and she lost to me all night. She drew a queen when she should have chose the knave, the knave was Sonica. “There go my diamonds,” she said, and vowing she would punt no more, went home in her chair. I could not see her or hear of her for a little. I guessed that she had run away into the country until she could wheedle enough money to pay me out of the dotard husband. So at a venture I wrote a polite letter to her, hoping that the country air would restore her credit. Well, here she is back in London and her losses paid. That means selling her diamonds.’

Wogan laughed over Lady Oxford’s straits and came home to the lodging in Bury Street. Wogan’s time was getting short and he must return to Morlaix. But, as has been said, he left Brittany in a hurry with very little money in his pocket, and what was left at his journey’s end he had since spent in London. So he said to the Parson:

‘George, my friend, I must dip into your winnings after all. For here am I with a couple of crowns,’ he took them out and laid them on the table. George flushed crimson.

‘Nick,’ said he, ‘you have two crowns more than I have.’

Wogan turned away to the window and looked out into the street, bethinking him of what Lady Mary had told him.

‘Sure, Nick, it’s the truth,’ Kelly pleaded, entirely miscomprehending Wogan’s action. ‘I drew the money out of the Mississippi and sunk it in the South Sea. It’s all gone. I have not two penny pieces to rub together until this day week, when my pension is paid. Nick, you’ll believe that. Why, Nick, you would ha’ been welcome to all that I had. But you know that. Sure you know it.’

Wogan had no such mean thought as Kelly in his fluster attributed to him. He turned back to the table.

‘So you are as poor as an Irish church mouse again, are you?’ he said with a smile. ‘Well, here’s two crowns — one for me, one for you.’

He pocketed one coin and pushed the other over to the Parson. The Parson took it up and turned it over blinking his eyes. For a moment there was an awkward sort of silence. Wogan laughed; the Parson blew his nose.

‘I hear,’ said Wogan, ‘that Lady Oxford has lost her diamonds.’

Kelly looked up in perplexity.

‘Lost her diamonds!’ said he. ‘Why, she wore them last night!’

‘I thought the rumour was untrue,’ said Wogan.

Mr. Kelly slipped his crown into his pocket. There was no more said about the matter between them, though perhaps they clasped hands at parting with a trifle more than their ordinary heartiness.

Mr. Wogan, however, told Lady Mary of the Parson’s loss, and she was at no pains to discover the explanation. Lady Oxford had paid Lady Mary with the Parson’s guineas. They had never been in the South Sea Bubble.

‘I should like to send the money I won back to Mr. Kelly,’ said Lady Mary.

‘That’s plainly impossible,’ returned Wogan, and to this Lady Mary perforce agreed. ‘*Olet*,’ the Latin-learned lady said, and Wogan remarked, ‘Certainly,’ so she put the money aside, thinking that some day she might employ it on Mr. Kelly’s behalf. That night Wogan borrowed his travelling money from Mr. Carte, the historian, whom he met at the Cocoa Tree, and so set out the next morning for Brittany.

CHAPTER XI

THE PARSON DEPARTS FROM SMILINDA AND LEARNS A NUMBER OF UNPALATABLE TRUTHS

Mr. Wogan then returned to Morlaix, and, finding his ketch by this time cleaned and refitted, and two others (the *Revolution*, a big ship of 40 guns, under Morgan, which was afterwards seized by Commodore Scot at Genoa, and the *Lady Mary*, a smaller vessel of 14 guns, commanded by Captain Patrick Campbell) at anchor in the harbour, he set sail for the Downs. There they picked up four thousand small arms and a couple of hundred kintals of cannon powder, for traffic, it was alleged, on the coasts of Brazil and Madagascar. But the arms and ammunition travelled no further than Bilboa, where they were stored in the country house of Mr. Brown, an Irish merchant of that part, against the next expedition to England. At Bilboa the three ships parted, and Mr. Wogan, taking in upon freight such goods as he could get, sailed to Genoa, and lay there behind the Mole.

Nor was the Parson to tarry long behind him in London; for less than a fortnight after Wogan’s departure, he was sent to carry to Rome, for the Chevalier’s approval, a scheme of a lottery for raising a quarter of a million pounds, which Mr. Christopher Layer (later hanged) most ingeniously imagined. With the scheme he carried some silk stockings as a present for the Chevalier and his spouse. This was none of the Bishop of Rochester’s work, who knew nothing of Mr. Layer, and of what was later plotted by bold and impatient spirits. The Parson had sad work parting with Smilinda, but made light of the separation to save the lady from distress, and she had happily broken a bank at pharo that same night, which withheld her from entirely breaking her heart. Still, it was as affecting an affair as one could wish for.

The Parson received certain orders of Atterbury’s as to business with General Dillon, the Chevalier’s manager in Paris, just before he was to start; and, coming from the Deanery at Westminster where the Bishop resided, he walked at once through Petty France to Queen’s Square. Lady Oxford’s house was all in a blaze of light with figures moving to and fro upon the blinds of the windows. ‘Mr. Johnson’ was announced, but for some little while could not get a private word with her ladyship, and so stood of one side, taking his fill of that perfumed world of fans and hoops, of sparkling eyes and patches and false hearts wherein Lady

Oxford so fitly moved. Many of the faces which flitted before his eyes were strange to him, but one he remarked in particular — a strong, square sort of face set on the top of an elegant figure that wore the uniform of the King's Guards. Mr. Kelly had seen that face under the oil-lamp of a portico in Ryder Street on the occasion when he and Nicholas Wogan set out on their first journey to Brampton Bryan, and the officer who owned the face was now a certain Colonel Montague.

Kelly remarked him because he was playing at the same table with her ladyship, and losing his money to her with all the grace in the world. At last Lady Oxford rose, and, coming towards him:

'Well?' she murmured, 'my Strephon is pale.'

'I leave for Rome to-morrow morning,' he returned in a whisper. At that her hand went up to her heart, and she caught her breath.

'Wait,' said she, and went back to her cards. As the guests were departing some two hours later, she called to Kelly openly.

'Mr. Johnson leaves for Paris to-morrow morning, and has the great kindness to carry over some of my brocades, which indeed need much better repairing than they can get in London.'

It made an excuse for Mr. Johnson to stay, but none the less provoked a smile here and there; and Colonel Montague, deliberately coming to a stop a few paces from Kelly, took careful stock of him. The Colonel did not say a word, but just looked him over. Mr. Kelly was tickled by the man's impudence, and turned slowly round on his heels to give him an opportunity of admiring his back. Then he faced him again. The Colonel gravely bowed his thanks for Mr. Kelly's politeness, Mr. Kelly as gravely returned the bow, and the Colonel stalked out of the door. It was in this way that Mr. Kelly and the Colonel first met.

But the moment Smilinda and Strephon were left alone!

'Oh,' wailed Smilinda, and her arms went round Strephon's neck. '*Heureuse en jeu, malheureuse en amour*. O fatal cards, would that I had lost this dross!' cries she, with her eyes on the glittering heap of guineas and doubloons strewed about the table. 'Oh, Strephon, thou wilt forget me in another's arms. I dread the French syrens.'

And then Mr. Kelly to the same tune:

'Never will I forget Smilinda. If I come back with the King, and he makes me a Bishop, with a pastoral crook, thy Strephon will still be true.'

Whereat the lady laughed, though Kelly was jesting with a heavy heart, and vowed that Lady Mary would write a ballad on 'Strephon, or the Faithful Bishop.' Then she fell into a story of lovely Mrs. Tusher, the Bishop of Ealing's wife, who was certainly more fair than faithful. Next she wept again, and so yawned, and gave him her portrait in miniature.

‘You will not part with it — never — never,’ she implored.

The portrait was beautifully set with diamonds.

‘It shall be buried with me,’ said Kelly, and so Lady Oxford let him go, but called him back again when he was through the door to make him promise again that he would not part with her portrait. Mr. Kelly wondered a little at her insistence, but set it down to the strength of her affection. So he departed from the cave of the enchantress with many vows of mutual constancy and went to Rome, and from Rome he came back to Genoa, where he fell in with Nicholas Wogan.

Mr. Wogan remembers very well one night on which the pair of them, after cracking a bottle in Grimble’s tavern, came down to the water-gate and were rowed on board of Wogan’s ketch. This was in the spring of the year 1721, some four or five months since the Parson had left England, and Wogan thought it altogether a very suitable occasion for what he had to say. He took the Parson down into his cabin, and there, while the lamp flecked the mahogany panels with light and shade, and the water tinkled against the ship’s planks as it swung with the tide, he told him all that he had surmised of Lady Oxford’s character, and how Lady Mary had corroborated his surmises. At the first Mr. Kelly would hear nothing of his arguments.

‘It is pure treason,’ said he. ‘From any other man but you, Nick, I would not have listened to more than a word, and that word I would have made him eat. But I take it ill even from you. Why do you tell me this now? Why did you not tell it me in London, when I could have given her ladyship a chance of answering the slander?’

‘Why,’ replied Wogan, ‘because I know very well the answer she would have made to you — a few words of no account whatever, and her soft arms about your neck, and you’d have been convinced. But now, when you have not seen her for so long, there’s a chance you may come to your senses. Did you never wonder what brought Scrope to Brampton Bryan?’

‘No need for wonder since she told me.’

‘She told you, did she? Well, I’m telling you now, and do you sit there until I have told you, for Mr. Scrope’s history you are going to hear. Bah, leave that bodkin of a sword alone. If you draw it, upon my soul I’ll knock you down and kneel on your chest. Mr. Scrope went before you in her ladyship’s affections.’

Here Mr. Kelly flinched as though he had been struck, and thereafter sat with a white stern face as though he would not condescend to answer the insinuation. ‘Sure he was a gentleman — out of Leicestershire, and of some fortune, which fortune Lady Oxford spent for him. He was besides a sad, pertinacious fellow, and nothing would content him but she must elope with him from her old husband, and make for themselves a Paradise on the Rhine. It appears that he talked all the old nonsense — they were man and wife in the sight of God, and the rest of it. Her ladyship was put to it for shifts and excuses, and at the last, what with his money being almost spent, and his suit more pressing, she fled into the country where we met her. Scrope was no better than a kitten before its eyes are opened, and, getting together what was left of his fortune, followed her with a chaise, meaning to carry her off there and then. However, he found us there, and I take it that opened his eyes. And I would have you beware of Mr. Scrope, George. A kitten becomes a cat, and a cat has claws. It is Lady Mary's thought that you have not heard the last of him, for his conscience hath made him a kind of gentleman spy on the honest party.'

George, who in spite of himself could not but see how exactly Wogan's account fitted in with and explained Scrope's attempt after the masquerade, caught at Lady Mary's name with an eager relief.

'Ah, it was she gave you this flimsy story,' he cried, leaning forward over the table. 'There's more malice in it than truth, Nick. The pair of them have been at loggerheads this long while. Lady Mary never could suffer a woman who can hold her own against her. Why, Nick, you have been gulled,' and he lit his pipe, which he had let go out.

'Oh, and have I? Well, at all events, I have not stripped myself of every penny in order to pay Lady Oxford's losses at cards. Scrope is not the only man whom her ladyship has sucked dry.'

'What do you mean?' cried Kelly, letting his pipe slip out of his fingers and break on the floor. Wogan told him of his visit to Lady Mary, and the story was so circumstantial, the dates of the loss at cards and the payment so fitted with Lady Oxford's message to Kelly and her proposal as to the placing of his fortune, that it could not but give him pause.

'It is not true,' was all he could find to say, and 'I'll not believe it,' and so fell to silence.

'You'll be wanting another pipe,' said Wogan. He fetched one from a cupboard and filled it. The two men smoked for a while in silence. Then Kelly burst out of a sudden:

'Nick, the fool that I was ever to preach that sermon in Dublin,' and stopped. Wogan knew well enough what the Parson meant. His thoughts had gone back to the little parsonage, and the rambling cure of half a dozen parishes, and the quiet library, and evenings by the inn-fire, where he would tell his little trivial stories of the day's doings. It was always that dream he would play with and fondle when the world went wrong with him, though to be sure, could the dream have come true, he would have been the unhappiest man that ever breathed Irish air.

‘Shall we go on deck?’ Wogan proposed.

It was a fine clear night, but there was no moon. The riding-lights of ships at anchor were dotted about the harbour, the stars blazed in a rich sky; the water rippled black and seemed to flash sparks where the lights struck it; outside the harbour the Mediterranean stretched away smooth as a slab of marble. Kelly stood in the chains while Wogan paced up and down the deck. The Parson was in for his black hour, and silent companionship is the only alleviation for the trouble. After a time he came towards Wogan and caught him by the arm, but so tight that Wogan could feel his friend’s finger-nails through the thick sleeves of his coat.

‘I’ll not believe it,’ Kelly argued; but it was against himself he was arguing now, as Wogan perceived, and had the discretion to hold his tongue. ‘‘Faith,’ he continued, ‘she came into my life like a glint of the sun into a musty dark room,’ and then he suddenly put his hand into his bosom and drew out something at which he looked for a moment. He laughed bitterly and swung his arm back. Before, however, he could throw that something into the sea Wogan caught his hand.

‘Sure,’ said he, ‘I saw a sparkle of diamonds.’

Kelly opened his hand and showed a miniature.

‘Lady Oxford’s diamonds,’ he answered bitterly, ‘which she did not sell, but gave out of a loving, generous heart.’

‘George, you’re moon-struck,’ said Wogan. ‘Diamonds, after all, are always diamonds.’

‘True,’ said Kelly, ‘and I promised never to part with them,’ he sneered. He put the miniature back in his pocket, and then dropping his arm to his side said,

‘Put me ashore, Nick. I will see you to-morrow. I am very tired.’

But in the morning he was gone, and a few days later Nick, who was not spared certain prickings of conscience for the hand he had taken in bringing about the Parson’s misfortunes (he had just now, by hindering him from throwing away the miniature, taken more of a hand than he guessed), sailed out from Genoa.

The rest of that year ‘21 was a busy time for all engaged in forwarding the Great Affair. England itself seemed ripe for the attempt, and it was finally determined to hazard it in the spring of the next year, when the Elector would be in Hanover. The new plan was that the exiled Duke of Ormond, whom the soldiers were thought to love, should sail from Spain with the Earl Marischal, Morgan, and Halstead, commanding some ragged regiments of Mr. Wogan’s countrymen. The Duke was to land in the west, the King was to be at Antwerp ready to come over, and the young Prince Charles of Wales, who would then be not quite two years old, was to be carried to the Highlands. A mob was to be in readiness in town, with arms secretly buried; the soldiers were expected to declare for High Church and Ormond; and in a word the ‘honest party’ was to secure its interest on its own bottom, without foreign help, which the English people has never loved. The rich lords, but not Bishop Atterbury, knew of the beginning of this scheme, but abandoned it. They did not know, or only Lords North and Grey knew, that the scheme lived on without them.

Mr. Kelly therefore had his hands full, and it was very well for him that it was so. There were things at stake of more moment than his love-affairs, as he was the first to recognise. Yet, even so, he had time enough, in the saddle and on the sea, to plumb the black depths of his chagrin and to toss to and fro that shuttlecock of a question, whether he should accuse her ladyship for her trickeries or himself for misdoubting her. However, he got a complete answer to that question before the year was out. It was his habit now, whenever he was in London, to skulk out of sight and knowledge of Lady Oxford, to avoid theatres, routs, drums, and all places where she might be met, and Mr. Carte the historian took his place when it was necessary to visit Lord Oxford in the country. Mr. Carte had a ready pretence, for Lord Oxford kept a great store of old manuscripts concerning the history of the country, and these beauties, it is to be feared, came somewhat between Mr. Carte and his business, just as her ladyship’s eyes had come between Mr. Kelly’s and his. Accordingly the Parson saw little of her ladyship and heard less, since his friends avoided all mention of her and he himself asked no questions.

‘Saw little,’ and the phrase is intended. For often enough of an evening his misery would fetch him out of the coffee houses and lead him like a man blindfold to where her ladyship was accustomed to visit. There he would stand in the darkness of the street until the door opened and Lady Oxford, all smiles and hooped petticoats, would trip gaily out to her chair. But very likely habit — the habit of her conversation and appearance — had as much to do with this particular folly as any despairing passion. How many lovers the wide world over fancy they are bemoaning their broken hearts, when they are only deploring their broken habits! Well, Mr. Kelly, at all events, took the matter *au grand sérieux*, and so one night saw her ladyship come out from the porch of Drury Lane theatre in company with Colonel Montague.

There is one unprofitable piece of knowledge which a man acquires who has ever had a woman make love to him; he knows when that woman is making love to someone else. Lady Oxford’s modest droop of the head when the Colonel spoke, her shy sidelong smile at him, her red lips a trifle parted as though his mere presence held her in a pleased suspense — all these tokens were familiar to Mr. Kelly as his daily bread, and he went home eating his own heart, and nursing a quite unjustifiable resentment against Nicholas Wogan for that he ever saved the Colonel’s life. It did not take Kelly long to discover that his suspicions were correct. A few questions to his friends, who for his sake had kept silence, and the truth was out. Lady Oxford’s constancy had lasted precisely seven weeks before the Whig colonel had stepped into the Jacobite parson’s shoes. Mr. Kelly put his heart beneath his heel and now stamped her image out of it. Then he went upon his way, and the King’s business took him to Avignon.

CHAPTER XII

THE PARSON MEETS SCROPE FOR THE THIRD TIME, AND WHAT CAME OF THE MEETING

It was early in the year 1722 when Mr. Kelly came to *la ville sonnante*, and took a lodging at L’Auberge des Papes in the Rue des Trois Faucons. He brought with him a sum of 5,000*l*. collected in England, and this sum he was to hand over to a messenger from the Duke of Ormond, who was then at Corunna in Spain, and, what with his disbursements in the purchase of arms, and the support of Irish troops, was hard put to it for money.

It was therefore of the last importance that this sum should come safe to Corunna, and so extraordinary precautions were taken to ensure that result. The Parson, since he did not know who the messenger might be, was to wait every morning between the hours of nine and ten on the first bench to the left of the Porte du Rhone in the boulevard outside the city walls, until a man should ask him if he had any comfortable greeting for Aunt Anne, that being the cant name for the Duke. This man was thereafter to prove to Mr. Kelly’s satisfaction that he was indeed the messenger expected.

Now, the messenger was delayed in his journey, and so for a week George Kelly, having deposited his money with Mr. Philabe, the banker, sat every morning on his bench with what patience he might. He came in consequence to take particular notice of an oldish man and a rosebud of a girl who walked along the boulevard every morning at the time that he was waiting. They were accompanied by a French poodle dog, and indeed it was the poodle dog which first attracted Mr. Kelly’s attention to the couple. It has already been said that Mr. Kelly had a trick of catching a woman’s eyes, though this quality implies no great merit. On the other hand he drew dogs and children to him, and that implies a very great merit, as you may observe from this, that there is never a human being betwixt here and Cathay will admit that dogs and children have a dislike for him.

The poodle dog, then, comes to a halt opposite Mr. Kelly’s bench on the very first morning that he sat there, cocks his ears, lifts a forefoot from the ground, and, looking after the old man and the young girl, says plain as print, ‘Here, wait a bit! There’s something on this bench very well worth looking into.’ However, his master and mistress were in a close conversation and so the poodle puts his foot on the ground and trots after them. But the next morning he came up to the bench, puts his head of one side to display the fine blue riband round his neck, squats on his haunches, and flops a paw on to the Parson's knee.

'How d'ye do?' says the Parson politely.

'I think I'll stretch myself, thank you,' says the poodle, and promptly proceeds to do so, using Mr. Kelly's knee as a purchase for his paws. He was still engaged upon this exercise when his young mistress missed him. She whistled; the poodle looked at the Parson with the clearest invitation.

'Won't you come too?'

'I have not been presented,' replied the Parson.

Thereupon the girl turned round.

'Harlequin,' she called to the dog, and showed Mr. Kelly as sweet a face as a young man ever deserved to see. It was fresh and clear as the morning dew, with frank eyes and a scarlet bow of a mouth ready for a laugh. 'Harlequin!' said Mr. Kelly to himself with a start, as he looked towards the girl. Harlequin trotted off to his mistress, and got prettily chided for his forwardness, of which chiding he made little or no account, and very properly. It is not every dog that achieves immortality by stretching itself against a stranger's knee. But Harlequin did. For had Harlequin not made Mr. Kelly's acquaintance, he would never have found a niche in Mr. Swift's verses.

Now let me tell you plainly, Sir,
Our witness is a real cur,
A dog of spirit for his years,
Has twice two legs, two hanging ears,
His name is *Harlequin*, I wot,
And that's a name in every plot:

*

His answers were extremely witty
Before the secret wise Committee;
Confest as plain as he could bark,
Then with his forefoot left his mark:

wrote the Dean of St. Patrick's concerning this very poodle dog of Miss Rose Townley.

For Rose Townley was the girl's name, as the Parson now knew, and the old gentleman was her father, who had tended Mr. Nicholas Wogan after his wounds in the year '15 at Preston. Mr. Wogan had more than once spoken to Kelly of Dr. Townley and his daughter Rose, who had retired to Avignon, after the Rising, and he had made mention of their poodle Harlequin, of which poodle the present or reigning dog, Harlequin II., was the son and heir. So that, hearing the name called out by Rose, Kelly was aware who the two people were. Dr. Townley had been suspected in the Rising, and therefore had settled at Avignon as physician to the Duke of Ormond, and when the nobleman left the town, remained because he was grown old, and had lost his taste for politics and warrings. He had, moreover, received his pardon for his share in the struggle, and was indeed at this very time preparing to return into England. But of this Kelly was not aware.

The next morning Kelly was again on his bench, and again Dr. Townley and his daughter passed him. Harlequin came forward at once to wish the Parson good-morning. Rose spoke to her father, plainly telling him of Harlequin's new friendship, for the Doctor looked up towards Mr. Kelly and the girl looked away. In consequence there sprang up a queer sort of acquaintance between the Doctor and his daughter on the one hand, and Parson Kelly on the other. Every morning they looked for him on his bench; every morning he had a few words with Harlequin.

Doubtless he would have pursued the acquaintance further, but for Rose. She it was who kept the Parson from approaching Dr. Townley. For he was still sore with Lady Oxford's treacheries, and feminine beauty was *vanitas vanitatum* to him. Moreover, though he had snatched her ladyship's image out of his heart, some of her sayings had stuck in his mind, and amongst her sayings not a few were aimed at girls. Smilinda was a woman, and saw a rival in each youthful beauty. 'Girls of our time,' she would say with a sneer, 'were very kind, at all events, whatever one might think of their looks. And to hear them speak of marriage, why one would fancy oneself in the company of rakes dressed up like the other sex for a masquerade.' She would gloat over the misadventures of poor Mistress Dolly Walpole, the Minister's sister, by the hour, she had even written a ballad thereon, 'The Dolliad,' and since Mr. Kelly had never had been much in the society of young unmarried women, he had insensibly imbibed a deal of Smilinda's philosophy upon this head. And so he waited for the messenger in silence.

Now, upon the fourth day Mr. Philabe the banker sent round for the Parson to L'Auberge des Papes, and, when he was come, told him that on that morning a man called at the bank with a letter which he gave to a clerk. The clerk carried the letter to Mr. Philabe, who opened it. It enclosed a second letter superscribed to Mr. George Kelly, and prayed the banker to add to the superscription Mr. Kelly’s address. This Mr. Philabe would not do, but sent out word that he would take care the letter came into Kelly’s hands. The man, however, who had brought it immediately replied that it was of the last importance the letter should be delivered at once: otherwise there was no use in delivering it at all. If Mr. Philabe would send a messenger at once, well and good; if not, would he kindly return the letter forthwith.

This request roused Mr. Philabe’s suspicions. For if he sent a messenger, as he was prayed to do, the man could follow him, and as easily discover the address as if Philabe had written it on the note. He replied consequently that neither could he accede to this request, but that Mr. Kelly should most certainly have the letter that day.

Upon this the man insisted that the letter should be returned to him, but the more strenuously he insisted, the stronger became Mr. Philabe’s suspicions, until he determined not to part with the letter at all, and the man finally went away very ill-pleased.

Mr. Philabe, as he told this story, handed the letter to Mr. Kelly, who broke open the seal, and found nothing but a clean sheet of paper.

‘Little doubt,’ said he, ‘why the fellow wanted his letter back. It is a pure trick to know where I lodge. What was he like?’

‘He wore a travelling-dress,’ said Mr. Philabe, ‘and a cocked hat.’

‘And very likely a pair of boots,’ added Kelly. ‘But this tells me very little of his looks.’

Mr. Philabe was a poor hand at a description, and beyond that the man had a nose, two eyes, a mouth, two legs, and a pair of arms, Kelly learned nothing whatever of his appearance.

That very day, however, the mystery was to be made clear. Between daylight and dark Mr. Kelly chanced to walk up the narrow Rue St. Agricole, and had just come abreast of the broad flight of steps which leads upwards to the church, when a man leaped down in front of him.

‘I beg your pardon,’ said the Parson politely stepping aside.

‘That is not enough,’ said the other, and, turning on his heel, he faced Kelly and barred the way.

Kelly recognised the voice, recognised the face.

‘Ah,’ cried he, ‘Mr. Scrope.’ His first feeling was one almost of exultation. In the face of his enemy he forgot altogether that there was no longer any amorous reason for his enmity. He almost forgot, too, what he had heard from Wogan about Mr. Scrope’s supposed quality as a gentleman spy. ‘The third time,’ he said with a laugh. ‘I promised myself the third time.’

Scrope nodded his head.

'We are of one mind, then.' He looked up and down the street. It was empty from end to end. 'There is a little square terrace at the top of these steps, with blank walls upon the two sides, and the church door upon the third. The terrace will be very suitable and quiet.'

He turned as he spoke and set a foot upon the lowest step.

'One moment,' said Kelly. During Scrope's words he had reflected. Scrope and himself, politics apart, were really in the like case. For if he had followed Scrope in her ladyship's caprices, Montague had followed him, 'as Amurath to Amurath succeeds.' His enmity quite died away, and gave place to something very like a fellow-feeling. Moreover, he had to consider the messenger from the Duke of Ormond and the 5,000*l.* in Mr. Philabe's keeping.

'One moment,' he said. Scrope stopped with a sneer.

'If you can remain a few days at Avignon,' he continued, 'I shall be happy to oblige you in whatever you will. For the moment I have duties.'

'Of course,' interrupted Scrope. 'Duties are wonderful convenient things when one's bones are in danger. The pious Æneas knew that very well, Mr. Kelly; but then the worthy army-chaplain had not a Scrope upon his heels for the best part of a twelvemonth.'

'Oh,' cried Kelly, 'then it is you who have followed me.' More than once he had heard that his steps were dogged.

'Over a wearisome stretch of Europe,' agreed Scrope.

'It was you who came to Philabe this morning?'

'Who else? So, you see, I have been at some pains to come up with you, and those duties must wait.'

'Those duties,' replied Kelly, 'are so urgent that I am in two minds whether to take to my heels.'

To any man who was acquainted with the Parson this statement would have been proof enough that there was all the necessity in the world for delay. But then Scrope knew very little of his opponent, and:

'I am not at all surprised to hear that,' he replied contemptuously.

Mr. Kelly reddened at the sneer, but kept a tight hold upon his patience.

'Understand me,' said he quietly. 'If I ran away now, I should most certainly follow you afterwards, as you have followed me, and when I came up with you I should kill you.'

'And understand me,' broke in Scrope. His cold, sneering face suddenly lighted up with a fierce passion. 'Neither you will follow me, nor I you. We stand face to face, as I have hoped we should until I have dreamed the hope true. You have robbed me of what I held most precious. You have done worse. You have proved to me that what I held most precious was never worth so much as a cracked farthing. That morning I came to Brampton Bryan, I came at Lady Oxford's bidding. We were to have done with pretences for good and all. Oh, she had forgotten, if you will, but if she had forgotten, who made her forget? You, Mr. Kelly, the sneaking cuckoo! I would have worn her proudly, for all the world to see — the star upon my coat, the scarf across my breast. I would have faced my fellows with one arm for her waist, and the other for a naked sword to silence their slanders with. Well, there's no waist, but there's still the naked sword.' As he spoke, with his left hand he jerked his sword out of the scabbard, and caught it by the hilt with his right. 'There's still the naked sword,' he laughed, with a sort of thrill in the laugh, and made the blade whistle through the air. There's still the sword and a vile cuckoo of a parson—'

'That's enough,' cried Kelly, marching to the steps in an anger now not a whit less than Scrope's, for there was a certain sting of truth in Scrope's abuse which put him to shame; 'more than enough.'

'No, not more than enough,' said Scrope quietly, and he followed.

'You want a little more?' said Kelly, who had reflected. 'Very well; your heroics may be candid enough, but it is less Mr. Scrope the lover and rival than Mr. Scrope, the spy, that I regard with a certain misliking.'

'*Assez*, you die!' said Scrope, with a hiss in his voice.

The space at the top of the steps was a pretty enough spot for their purpose. It was open only on the side towards the street, which was quite deserted, and raised so high above the pathway that a passer-by would see nothing of what was doing. On the other hand, however, the light was failing. Scrope was for bringing the encounter to a speedy end, and drove at the Parson in an impetuous fury. His sword glittered and darted very chill and cold in that grey twilight. He thrust swift as a serpent.

The blood of the Parson was also up. He had at first regarded Scrope's challenge as a pure piece of irony. Why should two men fight for a hilding who had equally jilted and cheated the pair? That had been George's first thought; but now his rapier was drawn for the Cause, and to rid it of a dangerous enemy. Scrope was probably on the track of Ormond and the gold, as well as on that of his rival.

The Parson was as brave as steel, but (though he never knew it) was no true master of the play. The men rushed at each other; their swords were locked, they were breast to breast; George wrenched his blade free, leaped back to get his distance, struck his heel against a cobble, and the next moment he felt Scrope's blade burn into his side. Kelly clasped his hand over the wound, and sank on to the ground. The blood came through between his fingers; he snatched the cravat from his neck, and made a poor shift to bandage it about his body. The one thought in his mind was of the Duke of Ormond’s messenger. Perhaps the very next morning he might come to Avignon and find no one on the bench.

‘A surgeon,’ he whispered to Scrope, saving his breath. Scrope was quietly wiping his sword, and made no reply.

‘A surgeon,’ repeated Kelly. ‘I must live.’

‘Or die,’ said Scrope carelessly. He pulled on his coat, and came close to Kelly. Then he suddenly felt in his pockets.

‘No,’ he said, with an air of disappointment. ‘I was hoping that I had a copy of Virgil wherewith to soothe your last moments. Shall I take a message to her ladyship?’ He picked up his hat. ‘Or shall I ask Mr. Nicholas Wogan to write a ballad— “Strephon’s Farewell to his Smilinda”? Mr. Wogan would, I think, be extremely amusing with so pathetical a subject for his Muse. Well, it grows late. You will, no doubt, excuse me.’

He made a bow to the Parson, clapped his hat on his head, and walked, whistling to the steps. He stopped when he had descended a couple of them, and, turning, shook his head thoughtfully at Kelly.

‘But I am grieved I have no Virgil,’ he said, and so disappeared below the level of the terrace.

Kelly listened till the sound of his feet died slowly down the street. Then he began to drag himself painfully upon his knees towards the steps. He did not dare to get to his feet, lest his blood should flow faster from his wound. He did not dare to shout. He crawled forward over the flags for miles, it seemed; then the knot of the bandage got loose, and a great faintness came over him. With fumbling fingers he re-tied the knot; the flags began to heave before his eyes like waves of the sea, the silence roared in his ears. He looked upwards, and a spinning procession of houses and churches turned him giddy. He sank down on his side, and then he was aware of something wet that rasped along his hand. He looked down. There was a joyous little bark, and the something wet rasped along his check.

‘Harlequin!’ he thought, with a pang of hope. He summoned all his strength, all his will; the houses ceased to spin. He let himself down to his full length, with great care drew a scrap from one pocket, a pencil from the other, and laboriously wrote. Then he poked the paper underneath the ribbon round the poodle’s neck. ‘Home!’ he cried, clapping his hands; and fainted.

But ten minutes afterwards Miss Rose Townley unfolded a slip of paper, with here and there the mark of a bloody thumb, and written on it these words, ‘Help Harlequin’s friend’; and at her feet a bright-eyed poodle dog stood, wagging his tail, ready to conduct her to the spot where Harlequin’s friend lay in sore need.

CHAPTER XIII

OF THE ROSE AND THE ROSE-GARDEN IN AVIGNON.

Life is not wholly the lopsided business that some would have you esteem it. Here was the Parson paying, with a sword-thrust of the first quality, for a love-affair that was dead already; over and ended. That was bad, but, to balance his accounts, the Parson waked up from his swoon in Dr. Townley’s house, with the Doctor’s beautiful daughter, Rose, to be his nurse-tender. Lady Oxford had caused his duel with Scrope, to be sure, but she had thereby, as it were, cast him straight into the girl’s arms, and in that very condition which was likely to make her most tender to him. Carry the conceit a little farther, and you’ll see that here was Mr. Kelly, through her ladyship’s behaviours, imprisoned in the hands of one of those very creatures which she was ever persuading him to avoid: namely, that terrible monster a girl, and she very young, frank, and beautiful. When the Parson came to his senses, he called Dr. Townley to his side, and telling him who he was, and how that, being a friend of Mr. Wogan’s, he knew the doctor from hearing his daughter call the dog Harlequin, he continued:

‘You were at Preston with my friend, and I therefore have the less reluctance in asking a service of you beyond those you have already done me;’ and he began to tell the Doctor of the expected messenger from Spain whom he was to meet on the boulevard.

But the Doctor interrupted him.

‘Mr. Wogan is indeed my friend, though I have seen nothing of him these past six years; and his name is a passport into our friendship, as my daughter will assure you. So, Mr. Kelly, such kindness and hospitality as we can show you you may count upon; but — well, I had my surfeit of politics at Preston. I have no longer any faith in your cause, in your King. I do not think that he will come before the coming of the Coquecigrues. I am, indeed, leaving Avignon in a few months, and hope for nothing better than a peaceful life in some village of my own country under the King who now sits on the throne.

This he said very kindly, but with a certain solemnity which quite closed Mr. Kelly’s lips; and so, giving him a sleeping potion, the Doctor left the room. In spite of the potion, however, the Parson made but a restless night of it, and more than once from under his half-closed lids he saw the doctor come to his bedside; but towards morning he fell into something of a sleep and woke up in the broad daylight with a start, as a man will who has something on his mind. In a minute or two Mr. Kelly remembered what that something was. He got out of his bed, and, holding the door open, listened. There was no sound audible at all except the ticking of a clock in the parlour below. Mr. Kelly drew on his clothes carefully, so as not to disarrange the bandages of his wound, and, taking his shoes in his hand, crept down the stairs. It was a slow, painful business, and more than once he had to sit down on the steps and rest. He glanced into the parlour as he passed, and saw, to his great relief, that it was only half past eight in the morning. What with fomentations and bandages Mr. Kelly had kept the tiny household out of bed to a late hour, and so no one was astir. He drew back the bolt and slipped out of the house.

Half an hour later, Dr. Townley came into the bedroom and found it empty. He scratched his head to ease his perplexity, and then wisely took counsel with his daughter.

‘There was a man he expected to come for him,’ he said. ‘He was very urgent last night that I should see to it. But I cut him short, and so do not know where they were to meet with each other.’

At that moment the clock in the parlour struck nine.

‘I know!’ cried Rose on a sudden, and dragged her father off to the boulevard outside the Porte du Rhone, where they discovered Mr. Kelly sitting bolt upright on his bench, with a flushed red face and extraordinarily bright eyes, chattering to himself like a monkey.

The Parson lay for a week after that at death’s door, and it needed all Dr. Townley’s skill and Rose’s nursing to keep him out of the grave. Meanwhile the Duke of Ormond’s messenger arrived from Corunna, and kicked his heels on the boulevard until Mr. Kelly recovered his senses and summoned Mr. Philabe to his aid. Mr. Philabe the next morning took Kelly’s place on the bench, and that day the money changed hands and the messenger started back post-haste to Corunna. At Corunna he told the story of the Parson’s misfortune in more than one café, and so it came shortly to Wogan’s ears, who put in with his ship at that port in order to give up his command.

The reason for this change in Wogan’s condition was simple enough. Sufficient arms and ammunition had now been collected at Bilboa, and it was become urgent that the plans for the rising of the soldiers in England, and the capture of the Tower of London, should be taken earnestly in hand. The Duke of Ormond, who was to land in the West, was supposed a great favourite with the English troops, but it was none the less necessary that their favour should be properly directed. To that end Mr. Talbot, Tyrell, and Nicholas Wogan, amongst others, were deputed to travel into England, ready for the moment of striking.

Nick was to have the rank of a colonel, and was bidden to repair to Paris by a certain date, where he was to take his instructions from General Dillon and the Earl of Mar. Now that date gave him half a week or so of leisure, and he knew of no better use to which he could put it than in stopping at Avignon, which lay directly in his path to Paris.

But before he reached the olives of Provence Mr. Kelly was convalescent and much had happened. How it had happened Mr. Wogan only discovered by hints which the Parson let slip unconsciously. For George had a complete distaste for the sensibilities, and, after all, a true man, even in the company of his closest friend, never does more than touch lightly upon the fringe of what he holds most sacred. He said that he was recovered of two fevers at one and the same time, and by the same ministering hands, and so was come forth into a sweet, cool life and a quiet air. His affairs, whether of stocks in the Mississippi scheme or of the Great Business, went clean out of his mind. His heart was swept and garnished like the man's in the Parable, and almost unawares a woman opened the door and stepped in, bringing with her train seven virtues, as of modesty, innocence, faith, cheerfulness, youth, courage, and love — qualities no better nor no fairer than herself.

How did it begin? Why, at the first there would be a smiling face at the doorway to wish him a good morning, or if he had slept ill a sweet look of anxious fear which would make up for a dozen sleepless nights. When he could get up from his bed and come into the parlour, the dog Harlequin, and Rose, and he became children and playfellows together, for the brute had been taught a hundred pretty tricks that would make a dying man laugh; until at length the girl grew familiar, and was seated at the very hearth and centre of his affections, where her memory remains enshrined.

Mr. Kelly spoke frankly of the matter only once in Mr. Wogan's hearing, and that was many years afterwards, and then he was not speaking of the matter at all. It was Lady Mary Wortley who set him on to it one night.

For she quoted a saying of some sage or another. 'In a man,' said she, 'desire begets love, and in a woman love begets desire.'

'And that is true,' said Kelly. 'I do think the steadfast and honourable passions between our sex and women are apt to have their beginnings on the woman's side, and then, being perceived and most gratefully welcomed, light up as pure a flame in the heart of a man. For otherwise, if a man sees a woman that she is fair, as King David saw Bathsheba, and so covets her, his appetite may in the end turn to love or may not. But if his eyes are first opened to an innocent woman's love, he being at best a sinful creature, he is then stirred with a wonderful amazement of grateful tenderness which never can pass away, but must endure, as I hold, even after death.’ Which was all very modish and philosophical, and meant — well, just what anyone who had visited Avignon in February of the year ‘22 might have seen with half an eye. Rose was in love with the Parson and the Parson knew it, and so fell in love with Rose.

Mr. Wogan reached Avignon in the afternoon. The Doctor’s house stood a stone’s throw from the Palace of the Emperor Constantine, with a little garden at the back which ran down to the city wall. The top of the wall was laid out as a walk with a chair or two, and there Wogan found the Parson and Rose Townley. It was five years and more since Wogan had seen Rose Townley, and she was grown from a child to a woman. He paid her a foolish compliment, and then the three of them fell into an awkward silence. Mr. Wogan asked Kelly for a history of his wound, and then:

‘So ’twas Scrope. Lady Mary was right when she warned me we had not seen the last of him. ‘Faith, George, it was my fault. For, d’ye see, if I had not been so fond of my poetry I should have made my account with the gentleman at the gates of Brampton Bryan Manor, and you would never have been troubled with him at all.’

“Brampton Bryan?” asked Rose. “Where is that?”

Mr. Kelly made no answer, and perhaps Wogan’s remark was not the discreetest in the world. Miss Rose would not forget that name, Brampton Bryan. At all events, the three of them fell to silence once more, and Mr. Wogan knew that he was trespassing and that he would have done better to have journeyed straight to Paris. Rose, however, came to the rescue and made him tell over again, as he had told her often before, his stories of the march to Preston. But, whereas before she had listened to them with a great enthusiasm and an eagerness for more, now her colour came and went as though they frightened her, and she would glance with a quick apprehension towards the Parson.

‘And the battles are to be fought all over again,’ she said, clasping her hands on her knees, and then plied Wogan for more details. She shivered at the thought of wounds and cannon-balls and swords, yet she must know to the very last word all that was to be described of them. So, until the sun sank behind the low green hills of the Cevennes, and the Rhone at their feet, in that land of olives, took on a pure olive tint. Then she rose and went into the house to prepare the supper, leaving the two friends together; and it presently appeared that Rose Townley was not the only one who was frightened.

The Parson watched her as she went down the garden, brushing the pink blossoms from the boughs of a peach tree or two that grew on the lawn. There was an old moss-grown stone sundial close to the house; she paused for a moment beside it to pick up a scarf which was laid on the top and so passed through the window, whence in a moment or two a lamp-light shone. The Parson seemed sunk in a reverie.

‘I am afraid, Nick,’ he said slowly. ‘I am afraid.’

‘What! You too?’ exclaimed Wogan. ‘Afraid of the wars?’

‘The wars — no, no,’ replied Kelly scornfully dismissing the interpretation of his fears, and then following out his own train of thoughts, ‘you have known her a long time, Nick?’

‘Six years.’

‘I would that I too had known her six years ago,’ said the Parson with a remorseful sigh.

‘She has changed in those six years.’

‘How?’

‘Why, she has grown a foot, and grown a trifle shy.’

‘Ah, but that’s only since—’ began the Parson with a nod, and came to a sudden stop. Rose’s shyness was the outcome of her pride. She was shy just because she knew that she loved a man who had breathed no word of love to her. Mr. Kelly sat for a little longer in silence. Then,

‘But I am afraid, Nick,’ he repeated, and so went down into the house leaving Nick in some doubt as to what he was afraid of.

The Parson repeated his remark the next morning after breakfast. Mr. Wogan was smoking a pipe upon the wall; the Parson was walking restlessly about as he spoke.

‘I am afraid,’ said he, and looks towards the house. As soon as he looked, he started. So Wogan looked too. Rose Townley had just come from the window and was walking across the lawn more or less towards them with an infinite interest and attention for everything except the two figures on the city wall.

‘She comes slowly,’ said Kelly in a great trepidation, as though he had screwed up his courage till it snapped like a fiddle-string. ‘She is lost in thought. No doubt she would not be disturbed,’ and he glanced around him for means of escape. There was, however, only one flight of narrow steps from the wall down to the garden; and if he descended that he would be going to meet her.

Wogan laughed. ‘She comes very slowly,’ said he. ‘No doubt she saw you from the window.’

‘It is plain she did not,’ replied the Parson, ‘for, as you say, she comes very slowly.’

‘The vanity of the creature!’ cried Wogan. ‘D’ye think if she saw you she would run at you and butt you in the chest with her head?’

‘No,’ says Kelly quickly. ‘I do not. But — well, if she saw us here she would at the least look this way.’

‘Would she?’ asked Wogan. ‘‘Faith, my friend, you’ll have to go to school again. Your ignorance of the ways of women is purely miraculous. She does not look this way, therefore she does not know you are here! She looks to every other quarter; observe, she stops and gazes at nothing with the keenest absorption, but she will not look this way. Oh, indeed, indeed, my simple logician, she does not know you are here. Again she comes on — in this direction, you’ll observe, but how carelessly, as though her pretty feet knew nothing of the path they take. See, she stops at the dial. Mark how earnestly she bends over it. There’s a great deal to observe in a dial. One might think it was a clock and, like herself, had stopped. There’s a peach tree she’s coming to. A peach tree in blossom. I’ll wager you she’ll find something very strange in those blossoms to delay her. There, she lifts them, smells them — there’s a fine perfume in peach blossoms — she peers into them, holds them away, holds them near. One might fancy they are the first peach blossoms that ever blossomed in the world. Now she comes on again just as carelessly, but perhaps the carelessness is a thought too careful, eh? However, she does not look this way. Watch for her surprise, my friend, when she can’t but see you. She will be startled, positively startled. Oh, she does not know you are here.’

The girl walked to the steps, mounted them, her face rose above the level of the wall.

‘Oh,’ she cried, ‘Mr. Kelly!’ in an extremity of astonishment. Wogan burst out into a laugh.

‘What is it?’ asked Rose.

‘Sure, Mr. Kelly will tell you,’ said Wogan, and he strolled to the end of the walk, turned, walked down the steps and so left them together.

‘What was it amused Mr. Wogan?’ asked Rose of Kelly as soon as Wogan had vanished. The Parson left the question unanswered. He balanced himself on one foot for a bit then on the other, and he began at the end, as many a man has done before.

‘I can bring you nothing but myself,’ said he, ‘and to be sure myself has battered about the world until it’s not worth sweeping out of your window.’

‘Then I won’t,’ said she with a laugh. The laugh trembled a little, and she looked out over the river and the fields of Provence with eyes which matched the morning.

‘You won’t!’ he repeated, and then blundered on in a voice of intense commiseration. ‘My dear, I know you love me.’

It was not precisely what Rose expected to hear, and she turned towards the Parson with a look of pride. ‘And of course I love you too,’ he said lamely.

‘You might almost have begun with that,’ said she with a smile.

‘Was there need?’ he asked. ‘Since I thought every blade of grass in your garden was aware of it.’ Then he stood for a second silent. ‘Rose,’ said he, savouring the name, and again ‘Rose,’ with a happy sort of laugh. But he moved no nearer to her.

Rose began to smile.

‘I am glad,’ said she demurely, ‘that you find the name to your liking.’

‘It is the prettiest name in the world,’ cried he with enthusiasm.

‘I am much beholden to my parents,’ said she.

‘But, my dear,’ he continued, ‘you put it to shame.’

The girl uttered a sigh which meant ‘At last!’ but Mr. Kelly was in that perturbation that he altogether misunderstood it.

‘But you mustn’t believe, my dear, it’s for your looks I love you,’ he said earnestly. ‘No, it’s for your self; it’s for the shining perfections of your nature. Sure I have seen good-looking women before to-day.’

‘I have no doubt of that,’ she said, tapping with her foot on the pavement.

‘Yes, I have,’ said he. ‘But when I looked at them ’twas to note the colour of their eyes or some such triviality, whereas when I look at your eyes, it’s as though a smiling heart leaned out of them as from a window and said, “How d’ye do?” Sure, my dear, I should love you no less if you had another guess nose, and green eyes.’ (He reflectively deformed her features.) ‘It’s your shining perfections that I am on my knees to.’

‘Are you?’ she interrupted with a touch of plaintiveness. He was standing like a wooden post and there was at the least a couple of yards between them.

‘Just your shining perfections. ‘Faith, you have the most extraordinary charm without any perversity whatever, which is a pure miracle. I am not denying,’ he continued thoughtfully, ‘that there’s something taking in perversity when it is altogether natural, but, to be sure, most women practise it as though it were one of the fine arts, and then it’s nothing short of damnable — I beg your pardon,’ he exclaimed waking up of a sudden. ‘Indeed, but I don’t know what I am saying at all. Rose,’ and he stepped over to her, ‘I have no prospects whatever in the world, but will you take them?’

Well, she did. Mr. Kelly had come to his meaning in a roundabout fashion enough, as he acknowledged that same day to Nicholas Wogan.

‘Upon my conscience, but I made a blundering ass of myself,’ said he.

‘You would,’ said Wogan. ‘My dear man, why didn’t you tell me of your intention and I would have written you out a fine sort of speech that you could have got by heart?’

‘Sure I should have stammered over the first sentence and forgot the rest,’ said Kelly with a shake of the head. ‘To tell the truth, the little girl has sunk me to such a depth of humility and diffidence that I find it wonderful I said anything at all.' Then he grew silent for a minute or so. 'Nick,' said he secretly, drawing his chair a trifle closer. 'There's a question troubles me. D'ye think I should tell her of My Lady Oxford?'

'It would be entirely superfluous,' replied Wogan with decision, 'since the thing's done with.'

'But is it?' asked Kelly. 'Is it, Nick? Look you here. We thought it was done with a year ago, and up springs Mr. Scrope at Avignon. Mr. Scrope does his work and there's not the end of it. For I am carried here and so my very betrothal is another consequence. It is as though her ladyship had presented me to Rose. Well, how are we to know it's done with now? If it ends here it is very well. But, d'ye see, Nick, it was after all not the most honourable business in the world, and am I to make this great profit out of it? Well, perhaps my fears confuse my judgment. I am all fears to-day, Nick,' and he stopped for a moment and clapped his hand into his pocket.

'I'll confess to you a very childish thing,' said he. 'Look!' and out of his pocket he drew a pistol.

'What's that for?' asked Nick.

'It's loaded,' replied Kelly. 'I went up to my room, after the little girl had taken me, and loaded it and slipped it into my pocket,' and he began to laugh, perhaps something awkwardly. 'For, you see, since she prizes me, why I am grown altogether valuable.' He put back the pistol in his pocket. 'But don't misunderstand me, Nick. The new fears are quite overbalanced by a new confidence. Sure, it's not the future I am afraid of.'

'I understand,' said Wogan gravely. 'It's what's to come.'

'Yes, that's it,' said Kelly.

Being afraid, and being a man of honour, Kelly did nothing, said nothing on the head of his old love affair, and trembled with apprehension of he knew not very well what. A path of flowers stretched before him, but a shadow walked on it, a tall, handsome shadow, yet unfriendly. It is Mr. Wogan's firm belief, based on experience, that a woman always finds everything out. The only questions are, when, and how will she take it? Sometimes it is a letter in the pocket of an old coat which the dear charitable creature is giving to a poor devil of a chairman. Sometimes it is a glance at a rout, which she shoots flying. Now it is a trinket, or a dead flower in a book, or a line marked in a poem, but there is always a trail of the past, and woman never misses it.

George's wooing seemed as flowery as the meadows about Avignon, white with fragrant narcissus, or as the gardens purple with Judas trees in spring. Rose was all *parfait amour*, and, in her eyes, Mr. Kelly was a hero, a clerical

Montrose, or a Dundee of singular piety. Wogan has known women more zealous for the Cause, such as her Grace of Buckingham, or Madame de Mézières, who had ever a private plot of her own running through the legs of our schemes, like a little dog at a rout, and tripping us up. To Miss Townley George was the Cause, and the Cause was George, so that, in truth, she was less of a Jacobite than a Georgite.

There never had been such a George as hers for dragons. Why did he fight Mr. Scrope? She was certain it was all for the Cause! Indeed, that *casus belli*, as the lawyers say, proved a puzzle. Why, in fact, did the Parson come to be lying on the flags, in receipt of a sword-thrust of the first quality? George was the last man to brag of his services, but he was merely obliged to put the sword-thrust down to his credit with the Cause. His enemy had been a Whig, a dangerous spy, which was true, but not exactly all the truth, about as much of it as a man finds good for a woman.

Rose clasped her hands, raised her eyes to Heaven, and wondered that it did not better protect the Right. What other deeds of arms had her warrior done? She hung on George imploring him to speak of deadly 'scapes, and of everything that it terrified her to hear. Mr. Kelly, in fact, had never drawn sword in anger before; he was, by profession, a man of peace and of the pen. If ever he indulged a personal ambition, it would have been for a snug Irish deanery, and he communicated to Miss Townley a part of his favourite scheme, for leisure, a rose-hung parsonage, and Tully, his Roman friend.

But the girl put this down to his inveterate modesty, remarked by all Europe in his countrymen.

'Nay, I *know* you have done more,' she said one day alone with him in a bower of the garden. 'You have done something very brave and very great, beyond others. You helped to free the Queen from the Emperor's prison at Innspruck!'

'I!' exclaimed Mr. Kelly in amazement. 'What put that notion into the prettiest head in the world? Why, it was Nicholas's brother Charles, with other Irish gentlemen, Gaydon, Misset, and O'Toole, who did that feat; the world rings of it. I was in Paris at that time.'

'Then you did something greater and braver yet, that is a secret for State reasons, or else, why does the King give you such rich presents?'

Mr. Kelly blushed as red as the flower after which his lady was named.

'Now,' he thought, 'how, in the name of the devil, did she hear of the box the King gave me, and I gave to Lady Oxford?'

That trinket was lying on Lady Oxford's table, but the face behind the mirror was now that of a handsomer man than either his Majesty, or Mr. Kelly, or

Colonel Montague. Kelly knew nothing about that, but he blushed beautifully when Miss Townley spoke of a rich royal present.

'You blush,' cried the girl, before he could find an answer. 'I know you are hiding something, now.' (And here she added to his pleasure without taking anything from his confusion), 'Tell me why you blush to find it fame?'

'Troth, isn't my face a mirror, and reflects your rosy one, my Rose?' answered Mr. Kelly, putting on a great deal of the brogue, to make her laugh. For, if a woman laughs, she is apt to lose sight of her idea.

'I must be told; I cannot trust you to show me how brave you are.'

Mr. Kelly was upon dangerous ground. If he was expected to talk about the box given by the King, and if Rose wished to see, or to know what had become of it, Kelly had not a fable ready, and the truth he could not tell. He made a lame explanation:

'Well, then, I blushed, if I did, for shame that the King has to borrow money to help better men than me.'

'I don't care if he borrowed the money or not, for he could not have borrowed for a better purpose than to give you — what I have seen.'

Mr. Kelly was pale enough now. What in the wide world had she seen? Certainly not the snuffbox.

'Seen in a dream, my dear; sure the King never gave me anything but my little pension.'

'Then you know other kings, for who else give diamonds? Ah, you are caught! You have the Queen's portrait set with diamonds.'

'The Queen's portrait?' cried Kelly in perplexity. He was comforted as well as perplexed. 'Twas plain that Rose knew nothing of the royal snuffbox, now the spoil of Lady Oxford's spear and bow.

'Yes,' cried Rose. 'Whose portrait but the Queen's should it be that lies on your table? So beautiful a lady and such diamonds!'

Mr. Kelly groaned in spirit. The snuffbox was not near so dangerous as this new trail that Rose had hit. She had seen, in his possession, the miniature of Smilinda, and had guessed that it was a royal gift; the likeness of the Princess Clementina Sobieska, who had but lately married the King.

'I saw it lying on your table the day we brought you home from the seat on the boulevard, when we thought'(here Miss Rose hid her face on her lover's shoulder, and her voice broke) 'that — you — would — die.'

Now was this rose wet with a shower, and when Kelly, like the glorious sun in heaven, had dried these pretty petals, what (Mr. Wogan puts it to the casuists) was the dear man to say? What he thought was to curse Nick for holding his hand when he was about throwing Smilinda's picture into the sea.

What he said was that, under Heaven, but without great personal danger, he had been the blessed means of detecting and defeating a wicked Hanoverian plot to kidnap and carry off from Rome the dear little Prince of Wales, and Mrs. Hughes, his Welsh nurse. This prodigious fable George based on one of the many flying stories of the time. It satisfied Miss Townley's curiosity (as, indeed, it was very apt to do) and George gave her the strictest orders never to breathe a word of the circumstance, which must be reckoned a sacred mystery of the royal family. He also remarked that the portrait flattered her Majesty (as painters will do), and that, though extremely pretty and gay, she had not that air of dignity and command, nor was so dark a beauty. 'In fact, my dear,' said George, 'you might wear that portrait at the Elector's Birth Night rout (if you could fall so low) and few people would be much the wiser. These Roman painters are satisfied with making a sitter pretty enough to please her, or him.'

George was driven to this flagrant incorrectness because, though Miss Townley had not yet seen the Queen's portrait (her father having changed sides) she might see one any day, and find Mr. Kelly out.

The girl was satisfied, and the thing went by, for the time. But, on later occasions, his conscience gnawing him, the good George very unwisely dropped out general hints of the unworthiness of his sex, and of himself in particular, as many an honest fellow has done. In Mr. Wogan's opinion, bygones ought to be bygones, but it takes two to that bargain. Meanwhile Miss Rose might make as much or as little of her lover's penitences as she chose, and, indeed, being a lass of gold, with a sense of honour not universal in her sex, and perfectly sure of him, she made nothing whatever, nor thought at all of the matter.

But there was another dragon in the course that never yet ran smooth. The excellent surgeon, who had not recovered the fright of Preston, was obdurate. He had no dislike for Mr. Kelly, but a very great distaste for Mr. Kelly's Cause. Rose might coax, the Parson might argue, Wogan might use all his blandishments — the good man was iron. In brief, Kelly must cease to serve the King, or cease to hope for Rose. This was a hard choice, for indeed Mr. Kelly could not in honour leave hold of the threads of the plot which were then in his hands.

So much Dr. Townley was at last brought to acknowledge, and thereupon a compromise was come to. Mr. Kelly was to go over to England once again, on the last chance. The blow was to be struck in this spring of the year 1722. If it failed, or could not be struck, Mr. Kelly was to withdraw from the King's affairs and earn his living by writing for the booksellers, and instructing youth.

The Parson was the more ready to agree to this delay, because of a circumstance with which he was now acquainted. The Doctor and his daughter were themselves on the point of returning to England. Mr. Kelly and Rose had no great difficulty in persuading the surgeon that he would find it more convenient to live in London than in the country, of the miseries of which they drew a very pathetic and convincing picture; and so, being assured that the delay would not mean a complete separation, they accepted the plan and fell to mapping out their lives.

They chose the sort of house they would live in and where, whether in Paris or in England: they furnished it from roof to cellar.

‘There must be a room for Nick,’ said the Parson, ‘so that he can come in and out as if to his own house.’

Mr. Wogan had borne his part in persuading Dr. Townley, without a thought of the great change which the Parson’s marriage meant for him. But these words, and the girl’s assent, and above all a certain unconscious patronage in their voices, struck the truth into him with something of a shock.

Mr. Wogan escaped from the room, and walked about in the garden. These two men, you are to understand, had been boys together, George being by some years the older, and had quarrelled and fought and made friends again twenty times in a day. Mr. Kelly bore, and would bear till his dying day, a little scar on his cheek close to his ear, where he was hit by a mallet which Wogan heaved at him one day that he was vexed. Wogan never noticed that scar but a certain pleasurable tenderness came over him. His friendship with the Parson had been, as it were, the heart of his boyhood. And in after years it had waxed rather than diminished. The pair of them could sit one on each side of a fire in perfect silence for an hour together, and yet converse intelligibly to each other all the while. Well, here was Mr. Wogan alone in the darkness of the little garden at Avignon now. The Rhone looked very cold beneath the stars, and the fields entirely desolate and cheerless. Yet he gazed that way persistently, for if he turned his head toward the house he saw a bright window across which the curtains were not drawn, and a girl’s fair hair shining gold against a man’s black periwig. Mr. Wogan had enough sense to strangle his jealousy that night, and was heartily ashamed of it the next morning when he bade the couple good-bye and set out for Paris.

Mr. Kelly took his leave a few days later, being now sufficiently recovered to travel. The precise date was the eighth of April. To part from Rose you may well believe was a totally different matter from his adieus to Smilinda. Nothing would serve the poor girl, who had no miniature and diamonds to give, but to sacrifice what she prized most in the world after her father and her lover.

‘You cannot take me,’ she said with a tearful little laugh, ‘but you shall take Harlequin, who made us acquainted. That way you will not be altogether alone.’

Harlequin wagged his tail, and sat up on his hind legs as though he thoroughly approved of the proposal, and Mr. Kelly, to whom the poodle could not but be an inconvenience, had not the heart to refuse the gift.

George had to give as well as to take, and felt even less blessed in giving than in receiving. For Miss Rose must have a souvenir of him, too, and what should it be but that inestimable testimony to her lover's loyalty and courage, the Portrait of the Queen! There was no way of escape, and thus, as a memorial of Mr. Kelly's singular attachment to the best of Causes and of Queens, Miss Townley was treasuring the likeness of the incomparable Smilinda. The ladies, in the nature of things, could never meet, George reckoned, for the daughter of the exiled country physician would not appear among the London fashionables.

In Paris, on his road to London, Mr. Kelly visited the Duke of Mar, who most unfortunately took notice of the dog, and asked him what he purposed to do with it.

'My Lord,' replied Kelly, 'when I am on my jaunts Harlequin will find a home with the Bishop of Rochester, whose wife has a great liking for dogs. The poor lady is ill, and, alas, near to her death; the Bishop is fretting under the gout, and his wife's sickness, and the jealousies among the King's friends. Moreover, he is much occupied with building his tomb in the Abbey, so that, altogether, their house is of the gloomiest, and Harlequin may do something to lighten it.'

For the poodle had more accomplishments than any dog that ever the Parson had met with, and this he demonstrated to the Duke of Mar by putting him through his tricks. The Duke laughed heartily, and commended the Parson's kindliness towards his patron. But in truth the Parson never did a worse day's work in the whole of his life.

CHAPTER XIV

OF THE GREAT CONFUSION PRODUCED BY A BALLAD AND A DRUNKEN CROW

From this time until Saturday, May 19, the world seemed to go very well for those concerned in the Bishop of Rochester's plot, which was a waiting plot; and in the other scheme, the scheme for an immediate rising, which was a hurrying scheme, and not at all known to the good Bishop. There was a comforting air of discontent abroad; the losses from the South Sea made minds heavy and purses light. Mr. Walpole had smoked nothing of what was forward, so far as a man could see; and within a month the country was to rise. Mr. Wogan from Paris travelled to Havre-de-Grace, whence James Roche, an Irishman, settled in that port, and a noted smuggler upon the English coast, set him across the Channel, and put him ashore at the Three Sheds and Torbay near Elephant Stairs in Rotherhithe. Mr. Wogan took his old name of Hilton, and went about his business, paying a visit now and again to the Cocoa Tree, where amongst other gossip he heard that Lady Oxford was still on the worst of friendly terms with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and the best of loving terms with Colonel Montague. There was more than one jest aimed at Mr. Kelly on this last account, since a man who has been fooled by a woman is ever a fair mark for ridicule; and when James Talbot began to talk of the Parson with a mock pity, Wogan could no longer endure it.

'Sure your compassion is all pure waste, Crow,' said he. 'I could tell you a very pretty tale about the Parson were I so minded.'

Of course he *was* minded, and he told the story of the Parson's betrothal with a good many embellishments. He drew so tender a picture of Rose, that he became near to weeping over it himself; he clothed her in high qualities as in a shining garment, and you may be sure he did not spare Lady Oxford in the comparison. On the contrary, he came very near to hinting that it was the Parson jilted Lady Oxford, who therefore fell back upon Colonel Montague to cover her discomfiture. At all events that was the story which soon got about, and Mr. Wogan never said a word to correct it, and in due time, of course, and in a way not very agreeable, it came to her Ladyship's ears.

The Parson arrived in London on a Wednesday, the 13th of April. The weather had been terrible on the sea, and the unhappy dog Harlequin had contrived to slip his leg by a fall on deck. However, he soon recovered of his injury, thanks to the care of Mrs. Barnes, and Mr. Kelly carried him to the Bishop’s house at Bromley, where his lady lay a-dying. There, too, as he had good cause afterwards to remember, he wrote certain letters for the Bishop, to the King, the Duke of Mar, and General Dillon, and put them in the common post. They did but carry common news, and excuses for delay. The Bishop’s lady died on the 26th of April, and on that very day Harlequin’s hurt broke out again, and the poor creature went whining lugubriously about the gloomy house, as though it was mourning for its mistress. This fact should be mentioned, because the Duke of Mar had made an inquiry in a letter as to how Harlequin fared, and whether *Mr. Illington*, as the Bishop was called, had as yet received the dog. Kelly replied that ‘*Illington* is in great tribulation for poor Harlequin, who is in a bad way, having slipped his leg again,’ which was true, for since the dog by his tricks greatly lightened his lady’s sickness, the Bishop grew very fond of him, though at the Bishop’s trial, when these things were brought up to prove that Illington and he were the same man, it was said ‘he never loved a dog.’ So much for Mr. Kelly.

Rose and her father reached London a fortnight or more after the Parson. Wogan had no knowledge of her arrival, for since he left Avignon he had not so much as clapped his eyes upon the Parson, who, what with the Bishop’s grief for his wife, and what with the Bishop’s gout, was much occupied at Bromley. It was not until that calamitous day, the 19th of May, that the two friends met again. Events moved very quickly upon that same day. It seemed they had been hatching this long while out of sight, like thunderclouds gathering on a clear day under the rim of the sea. Seven breathless hours saw the beginning and the end. For it was not until six o’clock of the afternoon that Mr. Wogan chanced upon the ballad, that was our ruin, and by three of the morning all was over.

Now, on the 19th of May, in the morning, Mr. Wogan found himself far enough from London, at the seat of Sir Harry Goring, a gentleman of Sussex, and a very loud friend of the Cause.

This noisy Sir Harry drove Mr. Wogan back to town, in very great state and splendour, and drew up before Burton’s coffee-house, at an hour when the streets had lost the high sun of the day. Mr. Wogan alighted, thinking to seek his letters at Burton’s, and the baronet’s carriage rolled off to his town house. Wogan entered the coffee-house; the great room was extraordinary full, and there was an eager buzz of talkers, who dropped their voices, and looked oddly at Mr. Wogan as he passed through, and so upstairs to a little chamber kept private for himself and his friends.

As he went he heard roars of laughter, and a voice chanting in the deplorable, lamenting tone of the street ballad-singer. Mr. Wogan caught a name he knew in this ditty, and knocking hastily in the manner usual and arranged, was admitted. The room was thick with tobacco smoke, and half-a dozen empty bottles made mantraps on the floor. Through the Virginia haze Wogan saw two men; one was Tyrell, a friend of the Cause, the other was a tall man, very black, in whom he recognised his friend Talbot, of his own country and politics, nicknamed the Crow from his appearance. The Crow was swaying on his legs as he steadied himself by the table, and he sang: —

Let Weapons yield them to the Gown,
The Latin Singers say:
Ye Squires and Ladies of renown,
The tune is changed to-day!
A Lady loved a Parson good,
And vowed she'd still be true,
Alas, the Sword goes o'er the Hood,
The Sword of Montague!

'What ribaldry have you got now?' said Wogan, but the Crow hastily embraced him in the French manner, holding the paper of the ballad over his shoulder, and still chanting.

'The little Parson is made immortal,' quoth he. 'Here is the newest ballad, all the story of his late amorous misfortune. Why do you look so glum?'

For Wogan had gently disengaged himself from Mr. Talbot's embrace, who exhaled a perfume of wine and strong waters.

'Crow, you fool, be quiet,' said Wogan; 'this is miching mallecho! Who wrote that rant?'

'We think it is Lady Mary Montagu, from the Latin tags; it is headed *Cedat Armis Toga*.'

But Lady Mary was not the writer, though she got the credit of the mischievous nonsense, as was intended, and 'hence these tears,' as the Parson said.

Mr. Wogan had snatched the ballad into his hands by this time, where he intended to keep it.

'Gentlemen,' he asked, 'are you entirely sober?'

'Does my speech betray me? 'said Tyrell, who, to do him justice, was wholly in his right mind.

'That is no answer; but, if it were, and if you don't care for a lady's name—'

'She jilted the Parson!' cried the Crow.

'Have you no thought of the reputation of — Mr. Farmer?'

'Mr. Farmer?' exclaimed Tyrell. Mr. Farmer was the cant name for the

Chevalier, and Tyrell scratched his head, wondering what on earth the Chevalier had to do in the same galley with the Parson’s love affairs.

‘Mr. Farmer!’ replied the Crow, blinking his eyes reproachfully. ‘Indeed, it is yourself has been drinking, Nick. What has the ballad of poor George’s misfortune to do with Mr. Farmer, a gentleman of unbleb — upblem — I repeat, sir,’ said the Crow with solemnity, ‘a gentleman of unblemished reputation?’

‘Mark how a long word trips you up, and the evening so young!’

‘Mr. Farmer’s health! I buzz the bottle!’ cried the Crow, putting out his hand to the bottle, that was nearly empty.

Mr. Wogan stopped his hand.

‘I tell you, Crow, the Affair hangs on your nonsense. We may all hang for it,’ he said in a certain tone of voice, which made Tyrell open his mouth.

Wogan read through the ballad, which was full of insults enough to drive any woman mad, let alone Lady Oxford. He knew what a woman wild with anger can do, and blessed his stars that for so many months her Ladyship had not met Kelly, and could know nothing of the inner plot for an immediate rising. Still, she knew enough to do a power of mischief. The ballad was written in a feigned hand, which Wogan did not know.

‘James,’ he said to Talbot,’ where did you get this thing? You are not haunting the fine ladies who pass these wares about? Where did you get it?’ he said, shaking the Crow, who had fallen half asleep, as he spoke.

‘Got it from my friend Mr. Pope,’ answered the Crow drowsily.

‘You got it from Mr. Pope! *You!* Where did you meet Mr. Pope?’

‘At the Little Fox under the Hill, down by the water.’

This tavern was precisely the shyest meeting-place of the party, where the smugglers came to arrange crossings and receive letters.

‘Mr. Alexander Pope at the Fox under the Hill! Crow, you are raving! What kind of man is your friend Mr. Pope?’

‘Who’s Mr. Pope? Don’t know the gentleman. Hear he’s poet.’

‘The gentleman who gave you the ballad.’

‘Didn’t say Pope, said Scrotton,’ answered the Crow. ‘Very honest man, my friend Mr. Scrotton. Met him often. Exshlent judge of wine, Mr. Scrotton. Exshlent judge of plots. Mr. Scrotton applauded our scheme.’

‘You told him about it? What plot did you tell him of? Not of the rising? Not of this immediate Blow? Crow, you should be shot!’

‘I told him! You inshult me, sir. Very good plot, very good wine. Mr. Scrotton told me about plot. Often talked it over a bottle. I’m a most cautious man. I don’t drink except with very honest men. Dangerous!’ murmured the Crow.

‘You are sure his name is Scrotton?’

‘Quite certain. Said “Pope” because of poetry. Soshiation of ideas. Mr. Pope’s poet. You’d know that, but you are drunk, Mr. Wogan.’

There was nothing more to be got out of the Crow. Invited to give a personal description of Mr. Scrotton, he fell back on his moral character as ‘a very honest man.’ He might be, or, again, he might be a spy. In any case, here was the ballad, and there was the furious woman ready for any revenge.

‘Go home; go to bed! Tyrell and I will walk with you to your rooms,’ said Mr. Wogan, who, stepping to the letter-rack, picked up an epistle for Mr. Hilton. The handwriting of the superscription made him look so blank that the others noticed his face and were silent. The letter was in Lady Oxford’s hand. He put it in his pocket.

They led the Crow to his door in Germain Street. He behaved pretty well on the whole, only insisting that his fortune would be made if Wogan would but give him the ballad and let him sing it at the corner of St. James’s.

‘Affluence would be mine,’ he said, and dropped a tear. ‘Oh, Wilton — Hogan, I would say— ’tis a golden opportunity!’

But if the opportunity was golden, Wogan was of iron, and they did not leave the debased Crow till he slept in the sheets, which on the night before it was probable that his limbs had never pressed.

When the Crow was slumbering like a babe, Mr. Wogan and Tyrell stepped out, turning the key of his chamber on the outside and entrusting it to his landlady.

‘Mr. Talbot has a fever,’ Wogan told her, ‘and will see nobody. He must on no account see anyone except Mr. Tyrell, nor must he be disturbed before his physician calls.’

Accompanied by the gift of a crown, the key was pocketed by the woman of the house, who expressed anxiety for the health and repose of so quiet a gentleman as Mr. Talbot.

‘And now, what is all this pother about?’ Tyrell asked when they were got into the street.

‘Come towards the Park and I will instruct you. I need quiet for thought, and sylvan repose. What have you been doing all day?’

‘Watching the Crow play the fool at Burton’s.’

‘You have no news?’

‘I have seen nobody.’

They walked for a hundred yards or so in silence, Wogan frowning, and Tyrell much perturbed with Wogan’s perturbation.

‘The new ballad is a true ballad,’ said Wogan after a pause.

‘Devil a doubt of it; but what then?’

‘The greater the truth, the greater the libel.’

‘*Et après?*’

‘And the greater is the rage of the libelled. This ballad must have run through all the boudoirs before it reached the Crow.’

‘And yet I do not smoke you. Where does this touch the affair?’

‘The lady that’s libelled knew George very well.’

Tyrell nodded his head.

‘George knew everything,’ continued Wogan.

Tyrell stopped and caught Wogan by the elbow.

‘Then, what George knew the lady knows?’

‘No. Thank God, she knows nothing of what is immediately intended. It is a year and more since George and she have spoken. She knows nothing of the Blow. But she knows the men who are directing it.’

‘May be she’s staunch,’ said Tyrell.

Wogan quoted Lady Mary:

‘Politics are nothing more to her than pawns in the game of love.’

The two men stood looking at each other for a moment. The matter was too serious for them even to swear. Then they walked on again.

‘Do you think,’ asked Nick, ‘she will be in the best of tempers when she hears she is sung about in coffee-houses? Do you think she will blame anybody but Kelly for blabbing? She will give the ballad to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and isn’t Kelly of Lady Mary’s friends? No, he did not blab, but never mind. She will think he did. And do you know that she is a kinswoman of the minister, Mr. Walpole? Let her say a word, and she *will* say it, and where is Mr. Farmer’s affair?’

‘Where the Elector’s hat and wig often are — in the fire,’ answered Tyrell, looking serious enough.

‘That letter which I took up was from her; I know her hand. She is stirring.’

Wogan opened the scented letter as he walked. It was but to say that Lady Oxford had heard that Mr. Hilton was in town, and begged the favour of his company at her rout that night.

He told Tyrell what there was to tell, both of them looking very unlike a May sunset as they walked under the trees. Since he left Brampton Bryan, Mr. Wogan had not been favoured with any compliments from Lady Oxford. Why did she begin her favours to-day?

‘She is stirring,’ he said again.

By this time they were got within the Park.

There much was stirring. Carts were streaming in and out with soldiers driving, soldiers lounging among the burdens of planks, tents, picks, and spades.

Beside the Walnut Walk soldiers in their shirt sleeves were digging, trenching, measuring; a child could see what was toward — they were meting out a camp.

Mr. Wogan looked at Mr. Tyrell, Mr. Tyrell looked at Mr. Wogan.

‘The lady *has* stirred,’ said Tyrell in dismay. ‘And what is more she knows of the Blow.’

‘Or Mr. Scrotton is not a very honest man,’ said Wogan, and whistled “Lilliburlero.” He was disposed on the whole to agree with Tyrell. Somehow Lady Oxford had got news of the inner plot; perhaps through this mysterious Mr. Scrotton.

The Walnut Walk was all astir and agape with evening loungers; it hummed with gossip. The two gentlemen went to the Cake House, sat down, and called for glasses of ratafia. Studying the face of Mr. Tyrell, of which his own was no doubt the very likeness, Mr. Wogan inferred that they needed this refreshment.

They listened, with conscious grins of innocence, to the talk at the tables, being a little comforted to hear many questions, but no certain answers. The soldiers, it seems, being asked, could or would give no answer but that they had orders to make a camp. Fair ladies, smiling on private men, could get no other reply. It might be only for practice. It might be that the French were expected. Mr. Wogan heartily wished that they were, but nobody was expected, so far as he knew, save these same ragged regiments of his countrymen with the Duke. And, lo! a welcome was being got ready for them. As for the regiment that had been tampered with in the Tower, they were pitching tents in the Park. The two gentlemen, who had been conversing on faro and Newmarket, and laying each other fantastic odds, arose and walked eastwards.

‘I think the air of the waterside would be wholesome,’ remarked Mr. Tyrell.

‘I have to see a friend,’ said Mr. Wogan, and they shook hands and parted.

‘You will warn the Crow to be on the wing?’ said Wogan over his shoulder, and the other nodded. Mr. Wogan could not but smile to think of the Crow winging an unsteady flight across the Channel. He managed to steer across, after all, thanks to Tyrell. Then Wogan read Lady Oxford’s *billet* again, and he walked to Bury Street.

He knocked, and the door was opened by Mrs. Barnes.

‘Mr. Johnson at home?’

‘It would appear, Mr. Hilton, that I did not give satisfaction,’ said Mrs. Barnes, whose aspect was of a severity.

‘Give satisfaction?’

‘Mr. Kelly has thought to better himself, and if he prefers bed-fellows such as shall be nameless, and the coals disappearing, and his letters pryed into, and if he thinks that I ever mention my gentlemen’s affairs...!’

Here Mrs. Barnes threw her apron over her head, but gulps of lamentation escaped aloud, though her emotion was veiled like that of the Greek gentleman in the picture.

Mr. Wogan was not unpractised in the art of consoling Mrs. Barnes. He led her within, she was slowly induced to unshroud her pleasing features, and, at last, revealed the strange circumstance that Kelly had left her rooms two days before without giving in any sound justifying plea for this treason. Mr. Wogan, who was well aware of Mrs. Barnes's curiosity and the fluency of her tongue, was in no doubt as to the cause which had led the Parson to leave her, and thought the step in this posture of their affairs altogether prudent.

'But he will return,' he reassured her. 'What! — you know Mr. Johnson, he will never desert you.'

'So he said. He would come back in a month, and paid in advance to reserve the rooms, but it would seem that I do not give satisfaction. And here's all his letters to all manner of names. Look at them! Look at them! And how many of them are signed Ugus? Oh, I know what that will end in, and I'm just going to send the girl round with them—'

'I'll carry them myself, Mrs. Barnes,' said Wogan, interrupting her. He picked up the letters from the table, and glanced about the room, if by chance Mr. Kelly had left anything inconvenient behind him. But, except the letters, there was not so much as a scrap of paper about to show that ever he had lodged there. Wogan looked at the scrutoire on which the strong-box he had given to his friend at Paris was used to rest. It had held Lady Oxford's letters in the old days, but of late it had lain unused, and the dust had gathered thick upon the lid, so that in his haste the Parson might well have forgotten it. But he had carried it away, and with it his big Bible, which had stood beside it in such an incongruous juxtaposition.

'I'll carry them myself,' said Wogan, and putting the letters in his pocket he went down the steps. He marched some twenty yards down the street and then came to a stop. He looked round. Mrs. Barnes was watching him from the doorway with as grim a smile as her cheery face could compass.

'But, my dear woman, where will I carry them to? 'asks Wogan, coming back.

'That's it,' cried she with a triumphant toss of her head. 'One minute Mrs. Barnes is a tattling, troublesome woman, and, if you please, we'll not take so much trouble as to say good-bye to her, and the next it's Mrs. Barnes that must help us, and tell us where we are to go. Mr. Johnson lodges at Mrs. Kilburne's in Ryder Street.'

'Mrs. Kilburne's! Why, she's your bosom friend, Mrs. Barnes.'

Mr. Wogan was a trifle surprised that the Parson should leave Mrs. Barnes because of her curiosity and take a lodging with Mrs. Barnes's bosom friend, who, to tell the truth, was no less of a gossip.

'Well,' said Mrs. Barnes, firing up. 'D'ye think I would let him go to those I know nothing of, who would rob him and starve him of his last crust of bread. No, for all that he scorns and despises me! No, he asked me where he should go and I told him to Mrs. Kilburne.'

'Oh, he asked you,' said Wogan. 'Well, it is a very Irish proceeding. I'll go to Mrs. Kilburne's and find him.'

'You may go to Mrs. Kilburne,' said she as Wogan turned away, 'but as to finding him,' and she shrugged her shoulders.

'Why, what do you mean?'

'A man in that moppet's livery, for moppet she is, my Lady or not my Lady, brought a note yesterday and he that had been hiding from her, like the honest man he used to be before she came trapesing after him.'

'A note? Was it anything like this?' asked Wogan, pulling from his pocket his own invitation to Lady Oxford's rout.

'It was very like that,' said Mrs. Barnes. 'I sent the fellow on with the scented thing.'

A note from Lady Oxford to George, an heroic epistle from Ariadne to Theseus! An invitation too! Ariadne invites Theseus to her rout, and for something more, conjectured Wogan, than the pleasure of winning his money at cards. Wogan's anxiety concerning Lady Oxford's attitude was much increased. There was the ballad, the camp in Hyde Park, there were the letters of invitation. Mr. Wogan thought it high time to see Theseus, and leaving Mrs. Barnes with a becoming blush on her features that laughed through their tears, he walked to Ryder Street.

Mr. Wogan knocked at the door in the deepening dusk. The landlady opened. She knew Wogan, who, indeed, had occupied her chambers at one time. She smiled all over her jolly face:

'Mr. Hilton! Taller than ever, and welcome as ever.'

'Thank you, Mrs. Kilburne, I shall soon rival the Monument, but I can still get under your lintel by stooping. Where is Mr. Johnson?'

'Mr. Johnson? Oh, sir, what a life that poor gentleman lives. Out all night, home in the morning with mud or dust on him to the shoulder, and so to bed all day.'

'Then Mr. Johnson must be wakened. I can do it, were he one of the seven sleepers. George!' cried Mr. Wogan, lifting up his voice.

'Oh, sir, be quiet! A very dainty gentleman has my first floor, and he will be complaining of the noise. You always were that noisy, Mr. Hilton!' She walked down the passage as she spoke and threw open a door upon the right. ‘Mr. Johnson, he has my ground floor, but you can’t waken him, loud as you are, nor any man, so be quiet, Mr. Hilton.’

‘Have I to weep for my poor friend’s decease?’ asked Wogan, as he entered the room.

‘No, sir, or I would not be laughing at your nonsense.’

There was no doubt this was the Parson’s lodging. For as Wogan stood just within the door, he saw by the window Mr. Kelly’s scrutoire. It was the first thing indeed on which his eyes fell. He stepped across the room and threw open the lid. He saw a dispatch-box, and from the lock he knew it to be that in which Kelly kept safe the papers of the Bishop’s plot.

‘So there’s another lodger in the house,’ said Nick thoughtfully. He took up the box and tried the lid. It was locked. But Mr. Wogan would have preferred that the Parson should have kept the papers in the box which he had given him at Paris, of which the lock was stouter. That box he saw further back in the scrutoire, half hidden in news-sheets. But that too he found to be locked, and shaking it in his hand, was aware that, like the other, it held papers. The lid of the box was covered with dust, as though it had not been touched for months. Lady Oxford’s letters had been locked up there. No doubt they were there still. Mr. Wogan wondered for a little at the strange sentiment which makes a man keep such dead tokens of a dead passion. He put the box back amongst the news-sheets, and turning to Mrs. Kilburne,

‘But where is the man?’ he cried. ‘George!’ and he rapped on the table with his cane.

‘You can’t waken Mr. Johnson,’ said Mrs. Kilburne ‘because he awoke an hour ago, and dressed in a hurry, but braver than common, with his silver-hilted sword, Alençon ruffles, black coat and satin lining, silver shoulder-knots, and best buckles, and out he goes. He was summoned by a man in the livery of my Lord, the good Bishop of Rochester.’

‘Will you tell him, when he returns, that Mr. Hilton waited on him, and greatly desires to see him in his best before he goes to bed?’ Wogan pulled the letters from his pocket and laid them on the table which stood in the centre of the room.

‘I will, sir, but, if you call again, pray, sir, be very quiet. My first floor gentleman is such a dainty gentleman.’

‘A mouse shall be noisy in comparison. I have a great tenderness, Mrs. Kilburne, for the nerves of fine gentlemen.’

Mrs. Kilburne grinned in a sceptical sort.

‘But,’ Wogan added suddenly, ‘it is very like I shall fall in with Mr. Johnson before then.’ He took some half-a-dozen of the letters again into his hand and looked them over. They were inscribed to such cant names as Illington, Hatfield, Johnson, Andrews, and were evidently dangerous merchandise. Mr. Wogan thought they would be safer in his pocket than on Mr. Kelly’s table. He picked up the rest, but as he put them back into his pocket, one fell on to the floor. Wogan caught sight of the handwriting as it fell. Then it stared up at him from the floor. The letter was written in a woman’s hand, which Mr. Wogan was well enough acquainted with, although it was neither Lady Oxford’s nor the hand of Rose. It was in the handwriting of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Wogan stooped down and picked it up. For a letter, it was extraordinary light. Wogan weighed it in his hand for a second, wondering what it might be. However, there was no answer to be got that way, and Mr. Wogan had weightier matter to engage his thoughts. He put it into his pocket and marched to his own lodgings, which were hard by in the same street.

Several problems, a swarm of skirmishing doubts, trooped through his mind.

‘What did my Lady Oxford mean by writing to Kelly?’

To this Wogan answered that she meant the same thing by Kelly as by himself, and for some reason had bidden him to her rout. As to her motive for that act of unexpected hospitality, Wogan had his own thoughts, which he afterwards confided to his friend. ‘But who,’ he pondered, ‘can answer for a woman’s motives when the devil of perversity sits at her elbow?’

Next, why had Kelly made himself such a beau? It could not be merely to do honour to a mourning prelate who would never glance at his secretary’s satin and point d’Alençon.

Mr. Wogan inferred that his first guess was right, that Lady Oxford had bidden Kelly to her rout, and that, by the token of his raiment, Mr. Kelly meant to accept the invitation.

Kelly knew nothing of the camp, and the discovery which it seemed to speak of, when he left the lodgings where he had slept all day. Of the ballad, too, it was like that Kelly knew nothing, and, in Wogan’s opinion, the ballad was the cause of the military stir. Lady Oxford, inflamed with anger, blaming Lady Mary for the ballad, and blaming Kelly for blabbing her fault to her enemy, Lady Mary; had doubtless visited Mr. Walpole. The innocent Kelly, innocent of all these things, would be going to Lady Oxford’s to fathom the causes of her renewed friendship.

Mr. Wogan puzzled his brains over these matters while he supped in solitude at his lodgings. His friends have hinted that his mental furnishing is not in a concatenation with his bodily stature. He has answered that, if it were so, he would be Shakespeare and the Duke of Marlborough rolled into one. Though refreshed with Burgundy, his head felt weary enough when he turned to the question, ‘What was he, Wogan, to do next?’ In his opinion, the boldest plan is ever the best; moreover, he had a notion that there was no safer place in London for him, that night, and perhaps for Mr. Kelly, than Queen’s Square in Westminster which Lady Oxford had taken for a permanence. For if Lady Oxford had blabbed, the last place in London where the Messengers would be like to look for the Parson was her ladyship’s withdrawing-room. Unless of course she was laying a trap, which did not seem likely. In the face of this new ballad, Lady Oxford would not dare to have the Parson arrested within, or even near her house. It would provoke too great a scandal. He decided, therefore, first to go to the Dean’s house, at Westminster, where the Bishop of Rochester stayed, see Mr. Kelly, if he could, and unfold his parcel of black news. Next, he would take Kelly to Lady Oxford’s, if Kelly would come, for Wogan not only deemed this step the safest of his dangers, but expected to enjoy a certain novelty of the emotions, in which he was not disappointed. He therefore, imitating the clerical example, began to decorate himself in his most seductive shoulder knots to do honour to Lady Oxford.

It may be that Wogan’s mind, already crowded by a number of occurrences and dubitations, had exhausted its logical powers, for there was one idea which should have occurred to him earliest, and which only visited him while he was shaving. Who was the first person he was likely to encounter at Lady Oxford’s? Why, the very last person whom at this juncture it was convenient for him to meet — namely, Colonel Montague. Wogan heartily wished he had left the Colonel between two fires at Preston barricade. But now there was no help for it, go he must. The Colonel, like other people, might not remember the boy in the man and under a new name, or, if he did — and then a fresh idea occurred to Wogan which made him smile.

‘I was born,’ he said, ‘to be a lightning conductor!’

CHAPTER XV

AT THE DEANERY OF WESTMINSTER

Wogan finished the work of adorning his person, and stepped into the street. The night was serene, with a full moon, the air still, the pavements were clean as the deck of his ketch. He thought that he would walk from his rooms to the Dean’s by way of St. James’s Park, and consequently he passed through Ryder St. and in front of Mr. Kelly’s new lodgings. Just as he came to Mr. Kelly’s lodgings, the door opened. A gentleman came forth; the moonlight was full on his face. Mr. Wogan muffled his face in his cloak, and stepped stealthily back.

The gentleman was Colonel Montague. He bade the chairmen carry him to Queen’s Square; Mr. Wogan heard the word of command with an inexpressible confusion of dismay. He had hardened his heart to encounter the enemy whose life, in a youthful indiscretion, he had saved at the risk of his own, but what was the Colonel doing in Kelly’s lodgings?

By this time the warrior and his chair had turned the corner, and Mr. Wogan abandoned himself to meditation. Up and down Ryder Street he paced, puzzling over the Colonel’s visit to Kelly, whom, at all events, he could not have found at home. Was he Was he carrying a cartel to his predecessor in Lady Oxford’s heart? In that case it was all the more necessary to meet him and play the part of Dr. Franklin’s kite, which had not at that time been flown, but is now making talk enough for the learned. On this point Mr. Wogan’s mind was constant. Should he question Mrs. Kilburne, he asked himself? Mr. Wogan crossed the road. But the Colonel was little likely to have told her a word of his business. Mr. Wogan stopped.

There was another point: for whatever reason the Colonel had called at George’s lodgings, George must be told of the visit. Here was something which pressed, without question. Mr. Wogan marched towards the Dean’s house in Westminster, where the Bishop of Rochester lay. He knew the road very well, being himself an old Westminster boy. It was but seven years since he had run away to join his brother Charles and raise the North for King James. He could not tell, at this moment, whether he had deserted his studies for King James’s sake, or to escape his dull task of writing out my Lord Clarendon’s weary history in a fair hand.

As he entered the precincts, Wogan felt much like a truant boy, and it was as if Time had stood still while *he* ran. Nothing was changed, except that the new dormitory, which Bishop Atterbury had just built, shone white among the black old stones. There were lights in the windows that suddenly went out: the lads were abed. Wogan looked up at the blank windows, and thought of seven years agone, and of his life since then, an unprofitable contemplation, which his mind gladly deserted. He marched up under the arch, through the darkling cloister, and tapped, gently but firmly, at the Dean's door. He must see Mr. Kelly. As it chanced, and by the merest accident in the world, Wogan timed his taps thus: 1 — 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 — 7.

There were stealthy steps within, with a movement of yellow light, and then a voice that Mr. Wogan knew very well came through a judas.

'Is it my father's knock?'

'Is it your granny's knock, Sam?' asked Wogan through the judas. The voice was that of Sam Wesley, a young usher in Wogan's time, one whom he had always liked and tormented.

The steps moved away, and the light.

'Sam!' whispered Mr. Wogan, very loud for a whisper, through the judas. 'Sam, you remember me. Nick Wogan.'

The steps were silent.

'Sam, remember Lord Clarendon! Remember Nick, who kicked the bully for beating your little brother Jack.'

The steps shuffled back to the door.

'You have not the password,' said the voice through the judas.

'Damn the password,' whispered Wogan. 'I want George Kelly. I must see him in the name of the Blackbird. Hawks are abroad.'

'It is clean against all rules,' came the voice from within.

'Open, in the name of the cobbler's wax I once put on your chair, or I'll break the windows. You know me, Sam!'

Mr. Wesley knew Mr. Wogan. He undid the lock, Mr. Wogan smuggled himself within, and nearly choked Mr. Wesley in his embrace.

'It is a giant!' said Mr. Wesley, putting up his candle to Wogan's face. The wind blew on the light that flickered in the absolute darkness, all the house being hung with black for Mrs. Atterbury's death.

'A son of Anak, Sam, who would have battered down your old door in a minute.'

'I verily believe you would, Nick,' said Sam, leading the way up the black stairs to a den of his own, where he was within call of the Bishop. On tiptoe he marched, placing his finger on his lips.

When they were got among Sam's books and papers of the boys' exercises, the usher said, 'It is a very extraordinary thing, purely a Providence.'

'I deserve one; the purity of my life deserves one,' said Mr. Wogan. 'But wherein do you see the marvel?'

'You did not know it, but you gave my father's knock,' said Sam in a voice of awe. 'It is Old Jeffrey's doing — directed, of course — directed.'

'Old Jeffrey? Is it a cant name for an honest man?'

'For a very honest spirit,' said the usher, and explained to Mr. Wogan that the particular knock and the passwords to follow (which Mr. Wogan did not know) were his own invention. His father's house at Epworth, in the year 1716, had been troubled, it seems, by an honest goblin that always thumped and routed with a particular malevolence when the Elector was prayed for as 'the King.' Old Mr. Wesley's pet knock, though, the sprite could not deliver. Mr. Wesley had a conceit that the goblin might be the ghost of some good fellow who died at Preston.

'He keeps his politics in the next world,' said Mr. Wogan.

'Wit might say much on that head, wisdom little,' whispered the usher, wagging his kind head. 'You have special business with Mr. Johnson?' he asked. 'He is with my Lord, hard by. The Bishop's voice was raised when Mr. Johnson entered. I caught angry words, but now for long they have been quiet.'

'Mr. Johnson has a way with him,' said Wogan, who had learned from Goring that the reverend Father in God was of a hasty temper. 'How doth his Lordship?'

'Very badly. I never saw him in a less apostolic humour. I know not what ill news he has had from France, or elsewhere, but he has been much troubled about Mr. Johnson's dog, Harlequin. The poodle has been conveyed out of town as craftily as if he were the Chevalier, I know not why, and is now skulking in the country, I know not where.'

It was, indeed, Mr. Wesley's part to know nothing. He was the Bishop's man, and as honest as the day, but had no more enterprise than another usher.

Wogan, he has said, knew Harlequin, second of that name, and had seen him coddled by Mrs. Barnes. He was cudgelling his brains for Harlequin's part in the Great Affair, when a silver whistle sounded, thin and clear.

Mr. Wesley beckoned to Wogan to be still, crept out of the room, and returned on tiptoe with Kelly. The Parson's elegant dress was a trifle disarranged; his face and hands were somewhat stained and blackened as with smoke, but the careful man had tucked up his Alençon ruffles beneath his sleeves. On seeing Wogan George opened his eyes and his mouth, but spoke never a word. He carried a soft bundle wrapped in a tablecloth, and when the door was shut he handed this to

Mr. Wesley.

‘You have the key of the Dean’s garden?’ he whispered.

‘Yes; but wherefore?’ answered Sam.

‘His Lordship bids me ask you to have the kindness to bury the contents of this—’

‘I know not what is in the bundle,’ said Mr. Wesley, with an air of alarm.

‘And you need not be told,’ said George. ‘But can you let me and my friend Mr. Hilton—’

‘Mr. Hilton?’ gasped Sam, as Kelly put his hand out to Wogan.

‘I must present you to Mr. Hilton,’ George said, and Wogan bowed and grinned.

‘I was about to entreat you, Mr. Wesley, while you are playing the sexton, to permit me and Mr. Hilton the convenience of a few moments of privacy in your chamber.’

‘With all my heart,’ said the puzzled Sam, hospitably opening a cupboard in his bookcase, whence he lugged out glasses and a bottle of Florence. Then he put list shoes over his own, and stole forth on his errand like a clerical cat.

All this while Wogan had said not one word to Kelly, nor Kelly to Wogan.

Mr. Wogan had sat down to sample the bottle, and Kelly stared at him.

‘How did you make your way in here?’ he asked at length.

‘Old Jeffrey,’ said Wogan airily. ‘I drink Old Jeffrey’s health, wherever he is.’

‘I believe you are the devil himself. That password is known to no mortal but Mr. Wesley and me. The Bishop does not know it. His servants never see me come or go — only Sam. Whence got you the word?’

Mr. Wogan very gently tapped 1 — 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 — 7 on the table.

‘I know many things,’ he said. ‘But, George, what do *you* know?’

‘I know you should be aboard, Nick, and down to the waterside you step from this house.’

‘I am already promised,’ said Mr. Wogan with an air of fashion. ‘I sup with Lady Oxford.’

‘You are mad.’

‘Nay, *you* are mad. I know many things. When you were carried hither in your chair, you knew nothing. George, what did the Bishop tell you? Why was he wroth with you? In brief, George, what do you know?’

‘The Bishop angry with me! Nick, you know too much. You are the devil.’

‘I want to know a great deal more. Come, unpack, and then it is my turn. But first step into Mr. Wesley’s bedchamber and wash these hands, which go very ill with silver shoulder-knots; and pour the blackened water out of window. Any man or messenger could see that you have been burning a mort of papers.’

Mr. Kelly hastily adopted Mr. Wogan’s precautions. When he entered the room again the conspirator had vanished, the clerical beau remained.

‘Now,’ said Wogan, ‘you are fit to carry out your worldly design of pleasure, and I shall not be ashamed to sup in your company at Lady Oxford’s.’

‘I have changed my mind; I shall not go. But, Nick, how did you know my mind? ’Twas the last of minds you expected to take me in.’

‘I am the devil. Have you not guessed it yourself?’ replied Mr. Wogan, who was enjoying himself hugely. Perhaps it was the Florence, coming a-top of the Burgundy. He was quite easy about the discovery. ‘But unpack,’ he said. ‘What befell you with the Bishop?’

‘He received me oddly. The room was as dark as a wolf’s mouth, being hung with black bombazine. There was a low fire in a brazier, that shone red on his Lordship’s polished poll, for he wore no perruque. His eyes blazed, his teeth grinned white. I was put in mind of a fierce old black panther in the French King’s gardens.’

‘Remote from the apostolic,’ said Mr. Wogan.

‘So were his first words,’ said Kelly:

‘“You Irish dog, come here!” quoth the Bishop.

‘I offered a conjecture that, in the mournful light, his Lordship did not precisely see whom he was addressing. On that the little old man sprang out at me, seized me by the collar, and then fell back on his couch with a groan that was a curse. I put a cordial that stood by him to his lips, and was about to call Mr. Wesley, when he forbade me with his eyebrows, and cried:

‘“Answer me this question before we part for ever. Did you despatch my letters of April 20 to the King and the others?”

‘“My Lord,” I said, “my duty to you ended with that episcopal laying on of hands, and with that expression which you were pleased to use when I entered.”

‘He groaned, and said:

‘“I apologise. I am mad with pain” (which was plainly true), “and grief, and treachery. I beg your pardon, Mr. Kelly, as a Christian and a sick old man.”

‘“My Lord, you honour me. I enclosed the letters, as you directed, in a packet addressed to Mr. Gordon, the banker in Boulogne, and I sent them by the common post, your Lordship not having forbidden the ordinary course.”

‘“Then, damn it, sir, you have ruined us!” said the sick old Christian. “Did I not bid you write to Dillon that nothing of importance should go by the post?”

‘“But your Lordship did not seem to reckon these letters of importance, for you did not discharge me from sending them in the common course.”

‘The Bishop groaned again more than once, and there was a whole Commination Service in the sounds. You know Harlequin, Wogan?’

Mr. Wogan nodded and wondered.

‘’Tis Harlequin has ruined us,’ said Kelly; ‘Harlequin and the Duke of Mar.’

‘I am devilish glad to hear it,’ said Mr. Wogan.

‘Glad to hear it!’ exclaimed Kelly, rising from his chair. ‘You are told of the discovery of the Great Affair, and the probable ruin of the Cause, and the danger of your friends and yourself, and you are glad to hear it!’

‘Faith, I am,’ replied Wogan easily, ‘for I knew of the discovery before you told me, but I put it down to a lady of your acquaintance.’

The Parson very slowly sat himself down again on his chair.

‘In Heaven’s name, why?’ he asked, with a certain suspense.

‘Tell your tale first, then I’ll tell mine. This is very excellent Florence.’

‘The tale is too long, but the short of it is this: The Bishop had by him a letter of Mar’s, dated May 11, in which Mar, addressing the Bishop as Illington, denounced him as plainly to anyone who read the piece as if he had used the Bishop’s own style and title. He condoled on Mrs. Illington’s recent death, he referred to Mr. Illington’s high place in the Church, and to his gout. The three circumstances combined left no doubt as to who Illington is. There was no need such a letter of pure compliment should be written at all, except for the purpose of being opened in the post, and fixing the Bishop as Illington. Then,’ Kelly went on, ‘I remembered a letter of Mar to myself, of last week, in which he spoke of the dog Harlequin as Mrs. Illington’s. If these letters were opened in the post, — and the Bishop knows for certain that they were opened, — a blind man could see that Rochester and Illington are the same man, and own the same dog. The beast saved my life, but he has lost the Cause,’ said Kelly with a sigh. ‘Mar has sold us. It is known he holds a pension from the Elector. The Bishop knows it in a roundabout way, through Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and so the Bishop and I have burned his papers in the brazier. Sam is interring their ashes in the garden.’

Mr. Wogan poured out another glass of Florence.

‘Was there anything very pressing in these same letters of April 20, George? Was there anything to put fear on the Elector’s Ministers? Did they say, for instance, that the Blow was to be dealt, you and I know when?’

‘Not a word of that,’ replied Kelly, and his face lightened. On the other hand, Wogan’s fell, which Kelly no doubt remarked, for he continued eagerly, ‘D’ye see, there is a chance still, for the Cause, for us, if the Blow be struck quickly. We must strike quickly. So may we retrieve Mar’s treachery. The Bishop in his letter made excuses to the King for the delay of any blow. He is not in favour of anything immediate, and in the letters he made his disposition plain. The letters only compromised his Lordship in general, they did not reveal — the Blow.’

Mr. Wogan, however, only shook his head.

‘‘Faith, now, I’m sorry to hear that,’ said he.

‘You are glad and sorry on very strange occasions,’ said Kelly, sourly. ‘First you are pleased that Mar sold us, and then you are displeased that he did not sell the last secret.’

Mr. Wogan leaned his elbows on the table, and bent across towards his friend.

‘I am sorry because the last secret has been sold, and it was not Mar that sold it. Therefore somebody else sold it; therefore I am at the pain of being obliged to suspect a lady who probably knows her late lover’s cypher.’

Mr. Kelly blanched.

‘And how do you know that the last secret is sold?’

‘As any man would know who had not lain abed all the day. George, the Park is full of soldiers. The Tower regiment that we thought Layer had bought is there with the rest under canvas. Ministers would not make an encampment in the Park because they knew that the Bishop had advised the King that nothing was to be done. Therefore Mar is not the only traitor.’

‘And why should my Lady Oxford be the Judas?’

‘Mainly to punish a certain nonjuring clergyman, for whose sake she is the burden of a ballad, and sung of in coffee-houses.’

‘A ballad? Of what sort?’

‘Of the sort that makes a good whipping-post for a fine lady. Ridicule is the whip, and, by the Lord, it is laid on unsparingly. Perhaps you would like to hear it,’ and Mr. Wogan recited, in a whisper, so much of the poem as he judged proper. It closed thus: —

‘Oh, happy to my rhymes,
Consoled for all his woes,
The Parson flies to foreign climes,
And dwells — beneath the Rose!’

Mr. Kelly swore an oath and took a turn across the room. He came to a stop in front of Sam’s bookcase. ‘Rose,’ said he, in a voice of tenderness, ‘sure they might have left the little girl out of it.’

‘The barb was venomed, you see,’ said Mr. Wogan. ‘It was not enough to make a scoff of the lady. She must be stripped of that last consolation, the belief that the discarded Parson wastes in despair. Now she knows that the Parson is consoled. There was spark to powder. The Parson may be putting on flesh. There’s an insult to her beauty. Faith, but she must feel it in her marrow, since she risks her Lord’s neck for the pleasure of requiting it.’

‘No,’ said Kelly, ‘she could do what she would, for her Lord’s neck is not in this noose. Oxford had withdrawn before.’

This was news to Mr. Wogan, who had been concerned only with the actual plan of attack, and sufficiently concerned to have no mind for other matters.

‘Oxford withdrawn,’ he cried rising and coming across to the Parson. ‘Damn him, ’twas pure folly to trust him. Do you remember what Law said that night in Paris? He would trust him no further than he would trust a Norfolk attorney.’

Kelly was silent for a moment, thoughtfully drawing a finger to and fro across the backs of Sam’s books.

‘I have good reason to remember that night,’ he said very sadly. ‘Have you forgotten what I said? “May nothing come between the Cause and me!” Why, it seems the Cause goes down because of me, and with the Cause my friends, and with my friends, Rose.’

Mr. Wogan had no word to say. Whatever excuses rose to his tongue seemed too trivial for utterance.

Kelly’s finger stopped on one particular book, travelled away and came back to it. Wogan saw that the book was a Bible. The Parson took it from the shelf and turning over the leaves read a line here and there. Wogan knew very well what was passing through his mind. His thoughts had gone back to the little country parsonage and the quiet life with no weightier matter to disturb it than the trifling squabbles of his parish.

‘You warned me, Nick,’ he said, ‘you warned me. But I was a fool and would not heed. Read that!’ and with a bitter sort of laugh he handed the open Bible to Mr. Wogan, pointing to a verse. ‘There’s a text for the preacher.’

The Bible was open at the Book of Proverbs, and Mr. Wogan read. ‘The lips of a strange woman drop as a honey-comb and her mouth is smoother than oil. But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death. Her steps take hold on hell.’

Mr. Wogan read the text aloud.

‘The strange woman, Nick,’ said Kelly, ‘the strange woman,’ and then in a fierce outburst, ‘If I live the man who wrote that ballad shall rue it.’

‘They give it to Lady Mary.’

‘She never wrote it. Nick, who wrote the ballad? How did you get hold of it?’

‘I found the Crow, quite tipsy, singing it to Tyrell, at Burton’s, in the little room upstairs.’

‘And where did the Crow get the ballad?’

‘That is another uncomfortable circumstance. You know Talbot?’

‘An honest man, and a good officer, at Preston or in Spain, but a sponge for drink. A pity he was ever let into the plot!’

‘Well, he got the ballad from someone with whom he had been drinking at the Little Fox under the Hill, not a fashionable resort.’

‘Did he name his friend?’

‘He was drunk enough to begin by calling him Mr. Pope.’

‘Mr. Pope, the poet?’

‘He took that back; and said the poetry put Mr. Pope into his head. The man’s real name, he remembered, was Scrotton. I can’t guess who he was, friend or spy, but we may take it that he knows what the Crow knows.’

‘Thank God for that!’ cried Kelly.

‘You rejoice on very singular occasions, and are grateful for very small mercies,’ said Mr. Wogan, who found it his turn to be surprised. ‘What are you so thankful for?’

‘Thankful that a woman need not have done this thing, and that my folly may not be the cause of this disaster. Another knew everything — Pope — Scrotton — the ballad! Who wrote the ballad? Who of our enemies knew a word about Rose? Are you blind? Who was at Avignon, spying on me, when I first met Rose? Who hates Lady Oxford no less than he hates me? Whose name was the unhappy tippler trying to remember? Scrotton? Pope?’

‘Scrope!’ cried Wogan, cursing his own stupidity. ‘Scrope it must have been, and the Crow swore that the man told him about the plot, and often talked it over.’

‘That means, of course, that Scrope made him talk. The old curse of the Cause, that lost us Edinburgh Castle in the Fifteen, when the Scots stopped at the tavern to powder their hair. Our curse, Nicholas. Wine!’

‘And Woman,’ Mr. Wogan thought, but George ran on,

‘Scrope it was who wrote the ballad, for no enemy but Scrope knew what the writer knew. Lady Mary is a friend. Lady Oxford is innocent, thank God — I say it with a humble heart — and I am not the cause of the ruin.’

George’s eyes shone like those of a man reprieved. Wogan shook his friend’s hand; his own eyes were opened.

‘’Tis you are the devil,’ he said. ‘Scrope has hit everyone he hates, and blown up the plot.’

‘His time will come,’ said Kelly; ‘but I hear Sam on the stair.’

Mr. Wesley, tapping lightly, entered his room.

‘Gentlemen,’ he said, ‘the outer door is open.’

Mr. Wesley’s anxiety was plainly to be read in his face.

The two gentlemen bade him farewell, with many thanks for his hospitality. He accompanied them to the door, and they heard the bolt shot behind them as they stood in the cloister.

‘Whither should they go?’ both men reflected, silent.

Mr. Wogan has remarked on a certain gaiety and easiness of mind caused on this occasion, he considers, by Mr. Wesley's Florence coming after his own Burgundy at supper. He was also elated by George's elation, for to find innocence in one whom he had suspected elevated Mr. Kelly's disposition. They were betrayed, true, but the bitterness of a betrayal by the woman he had loved left him the lighter when the apprehension of it had passed.

One little point rankled in Mr. Wogan's mind in spite of all. Why had Lady Oxford bidden both of them to her rout?

He came at an answer by a roundabout road.

'I must hurry home and burn my papers,' said Kelly, as soon as they were out in the cloister, with the door of the Dean's house shut behind them.

Mr. Wogan, who had other notions, gripped his arm.

'By the way, did you burn my lady's invitation to her rout tonight? What did she say, George? Why did she invite you? And did you burn the note?'

Mr. Kelly smote his hand on his brow. 'My wits were wool-gathering.'

'On Cupid's hedges,' said Wogan.

'But I locked the note up.'

'With the rest of the lady's letters in my dispatch box?'

''Faith, Nick, you are the devil. How did you know that?'

'Oh, I have divined your amorous use of my box.'

'But you are wrong. I had the box with the dangerous papers of the plot open on the table when I was reading the letter. Mrs. Kilburne knocked at the door. I did not know who it might be. I slipped the letter in on the top of the papers of the Plot, and locked the box before I opened the door.'

'There it remains then? Well, her Ladyship's note is in the better company. But what did she say? Did she give a reason for your meeting?'

'The chief thing, after the usual compliments, was that she had most important news, that might not be written, to give me about Mr. Farmer's affairs. Probably she may have had an inkling of the discovery and wished to warn me.'

'We must see her,' said Wogan, whose curiosity was on edge from the first about this party of pleasure.

'But my papers — I must burn my papers.'

'George, you are set, or you are not set. If you had been set the messengers would have been at your lodgings before I went thither; in fact, before you were out of bed. Therefore, either you have the whole night safe or, going home now, you go into a mousetrap, as the French say, and your papers are the cheese to lure you there. Now, they cannot know of my lady's invitations, and if they by any accident did know, a Minister would hardly take a man at a lady's house. That were an ill use for the hostess.'

'That's true,' said Mr. Kelly, after reflecting. 'Nicholas, I knew not that you had so much of the syllogism in your composition.’

‘Another thing, and an odd thing enough,’ added Wogan. ‘Perhaps nothing is laid against *you* at all. Did Scrope lay information when he found us at Brampton Bryan?’

‘No!’ cried Kelly. ‘And at Avignon, when a proper spy would have stopped the Duke’s gold, he was content with the sword in his own hand.’

‘Precisely,’ said Wogan; ‘Scrope has blown the plot, that’s business; but he deals with you himself, that’s pleasure. He tried to meet you at Brampton Bryan — he did not have us laid by the heels. He nearly did for you at Avignon, while he let the Duke’s business alone, quite content. Now you are alive and he wants a meeting, ’tis clear he did not inform on you, otherwise the messengers would have been with you when the soldiers began the camp in the morning. ‘Faith, you may meet Mr. Scrope tonight in St. James’s Park. He is a kind of gentleman, Mr. Scrope! But we must see her ladyship first; sure, nothing’s safer.’

‘Nicholas, thou reasonest well,’ said the Parson.

Mr. Wogan towed off his prize, and the pair moved out of the dark, musty cloister into the moonlight.

CHAPTER XVI

MR. WOGAN ACTS AS LIGHTNING-CONDUCTOR AT LADY OXFORD’S ROUT

Mr. Wogan steered his captive through Petty France. It was about ten of the clock, a night of moonlight and young spring, a night for poets to praise and lovers to enjoy. Mr. Wogan was not, at the moment, a lover, and poetry was out of his mind.

‘One trifle I forgot to mention,’ he said. ‘I saw Montague come out of your new lodgings this evening. He bade his chairmen go to Queen’s Square.’

‘Montague? How could he know where to look for me? What can he want with me?’

‘I misdoubt he was not very well pleased with the ballad, and would have you explain it.’

‘Montague,’ sneered Mr. Kelly, with a touch of temper; ‘I am grieved I missed him.’

‘You need not grieve, for you will see him to-night. So there’s balm for your grief, and another reason why you should sup with Lady Oxford.’

The Parson stepped out more briskly after that, and Wogan could not refrain from remarking upon his new alacrity.

‘It is after all a very human sort of a world, as worlds go,’ said he. ‘Here’s a man with all his hopes crumbling to grave-dust about him, and the mere prospect of a quarrel with another man whom he has never spoken to, on account of a woman he has a great contempt for, will make all his blood flow quicker.’ For it was evident that, though the Parson no longer cared a straw for Smilinda’s favours, he had not forgiven the man who had supplanted him in them.

At the further end of the street along which they walked, one house threw out into the night a great blaze of light, and a noise of many voices. As Wogan perceived it, a certain improvement upon his plan came into his head.

‘George,’ said he, as he directed his captive towards the house, ‘will you resolve me a theological quandary? Do the doctors of your sect consider as binding a promise given to a person of a different faith?’

‘Assuredly they do,’ cried Kelly. ‘Dr. Hooker plainly writes—’

‘I shall take your word for it, without Hooker’s bond. Next, does your Reverence reckon it immoral to shake an elbow on occasion?’

‘Even the very Puritans, at the height of their power, doubted if they could proceed against dicers by way of the greater excommunication. We read that the Chosen People themselves cast lots — whence I argue for a permitted latitude.’

‘Well, then, we are opposite the doors of Le Queux’s Temple of Hazard; you may hear through the windows how the devout are calling the main. Now I must take your promise, as you say it is binding, to wait here in obedience to your commanding officer. A wise leader will ever send out scouts to inspect a dangerous pass. I shall reconnoitre at Lady Oxford’s: proper precautions should never be neglected, even in a friendly country. If I do not return, or send, in forty minutes by your watch, you must follow. All will seem safe.’

‘But, Nick, what if they take you? Sure we had best go together.’

‘They will not arrest me alone. You don’t loose your gun at a rabbit when you are stalking a deer. I am not the keeper of secrets, but the King’s mere servant, to give knocks and to take them. I write no letters, and none write them to me. It is Mr. Johnson they will be stalking, if anyone at all, never fear, and they will not shoot at the rabbit whilst Mr. Johnson is out of gunshot. In the meantime, have you any money?’

‘Just enough to pay my chairmen.’

Mr. Wogan turned his pockets inside out.

‘Then here are ten guineas. In my belief our luck must be somewhere, if a man would look for it, and it may very well be lurking in the cavern of a dice-box. Lose or win, if you hear nothing of me, you march forwards and occupy Queen’s Square in forty minutes. It is ten o’clock now. And if you do not join me in forty minutes I walk straight to your lodgings and take my chance.’

‘So be it,’ said Kelly, pocketing Mr. Wogan’s gold, and stepping reluctantly into the house of Le Queux. Mr. Wogan waited until the door closed upon him, and then went on his way alone to Queen’s Square.

He had not displayed the whole face of his purpose to the Parson. It was not merely to reconnoitre that he pushed forward. The Parson might desire an occasion with the Colonel, but Wogan, for Miss Townley’s sake, meant to meet the Colonel first. Betrothed men should not be brawlers, and George was hardly a match for the Colonel.

The Colonel was not, in the nature of things, likely to feel well-disposed towards the Parson. The ballad would have turned that ill-disposition into a genuine hostility. So here was one of the reasons, besides the wish to reconnoitre, why Wogan left his friend behind him in Le Queux’s gaming-rooms. He would be the lightning-conductor; he would pick a quarrel with the Colonel before Mr. Kelly arrived, if by any means that could be brought about.

Mr. Wogan stopped in the shadow a few yards from Lady Oxford’s house, and watched. It was a night of triumph for Lady Oxford. A score or so of link-boys yelled and flashed their torches about the portico; carriages and chairs pressed towards the door. Gentlemen with stars upon their velvet coats, and ladies altogether swaddled in lace and hoops thronged up the steps. But of the possible messengers for whom Mr. Wogan looked, not one was to be seen in any corner. Timidity itself might have slept secure. Only a few ragged loiterers stood about in the roadway on the look-out for a lace handkerchief or a convenient pocket. Wogan crossed the road and joined the throng upon the stairs.

He had carried it off boldly enough at the Deanery, and in the street with Kelly, but, as he walked on alone, the fumes of the Florence wine escaped from the seat of his reasoning faculties. His logic did not seem so conclusive, and he felt an ugly double-edge on some of his arguments. Thus, the plot had certainly been discovered, yet Kelly had not been pounced upon. This might be a generosity of Mr. Scrope's (who had behaved as handsomely before), but again, what if Mr. Kelly's first suspicions were true? What if Lady Oxford had learned something? What if this rout were intended to enable her to savour her revenge for the ballad? The thing was not beyond Wogan's power of belief, and the more he gazed on this perspective, the less he enjoyed it. Under her roof, however, for the sake of her own credit, Kelly and he must be safe from arrest. Besides it might be that her Ladyship was ignorant of the ballad. Reflecting on these doubts, and thankful for this tender mercy, Wogan's heart was ill at ease, though he put on a face of brass. The chatter which buzzed at his inattentive ears seemed the most impertinent thing in the world. At each step a flowered petticoat swung against his legs, or a fan, held by a hand in a perfumed glove, knocked against his elbow, and somehow the fine gentlemen and ladies in their fine clothes seemed to him at that moment as incongruous as a nightmare. Scraps of gossip of which he took no note at the time, for no reason whatever stuck in his mind, and he remembered them quite clearly afterwards; how that Lady Holderness was sunk in all the joys of love, notwithstanding she wanted the use of her two hands by a rheumatism; and Mrs. Hervey, *revenue* from such bagatelles as honour and reputation, had taken to herself two most fascinating lovers, and all the envy of her sex. A shrill lady behind Mr. Wogan's shoulder was proposing a general act for divorcing all the people of England, so that those who pleased might marry again, whereby many reputations which stood in dire peril would be saved from exposure. Mr. Wogan had much ado not to shout 'Hold your tongues, will you? Here, maybe, is life and death in the balance.'

He had got about half-way up the stairs when the shrill voice changed its tune, and now Mr. Wogan pricked up his ears.

'You have heard the new ballad? Oh, the sweetest, most malicious thing. You must certainly hear it. Smilinda, the Parson, and the Colonel. You know who Smilinda is? The Parson and the Colonel make a guess easy.' She quoted a line or two. 'It appears that the Parson has consoled himself with Rose, and snaps his fingers at Smilinda. Who wrote it? No one but Smilinda's dear friend, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, that I will wager. 'Tis the most ingenious thing; and most ingeniously given to the town just at the time when it will sting most. Poor Smilinda.' The voice went off into a giggle, in the midst of which Mr. Wogan distinguished a name — Lord Sidney Beauclerk's. Mr. Wogan would hardly have heeded the name had he not heard it again twice before he reached the stairhead, and each time in that same conjunction with the Parson and the Colonel, and the malicious aptness of the ballad. Even then he gave but scanty heed to Lord Sidney Beauclerk, for the knowledge that the ballad was indeed become the common talk occupied his thoughts, and so thoroughly, that it was the nearest thing imaginable but he gave his name as Mr. Wogan to the lackey who announced him.

Mr. Hilton, however, was announced, and Mr. Hilton stepped through the great doorway into the room, and made his bow. At the first he was sensible only of a great blaze of light spotted here and there with the flames of candles; of a floor polished like a mirror, of a throng of misty faces, a hubbub of voices, and a gorgeous motley of colours like the Turkish bazaars Lady Mary was used to describe. Then the faces grew distinct. Mr. Wogan noticed one or two of the *honest* party, who, knowing his incognito, threw a startled glance at him, and like the rats from the sinking ship, scuttled away as soon as his eyes met theirs.

He looked around him for Lady Oxford. He could not see her in the crowd which ebbed and flowed about the floor. There were card tables set against the walls; doubtless she would be seated at one of them. He glanced down the line of tables to his left. He did not see Lady Oxford, but his attention was seized by one particular table. It stood empty; a few packs of cards waited upon it for the players to handle, but by some strange chance it stood empty. It was the one vacant table in the room.

Mr. Wogan was an Irishman, and now and again had his visionary moments, though he said little about them. As he looked at that one empty table a queer sort of fancy crept into his head, and, to be frank, struck something of a chill into his veins. It came upon him slowly that the table was not in truth empty at all; that in the midst of this velvet company, all jewels and compliments, there sat at this table a grey shrouded figure which silently awaited its player.

Mr. Wogan was roused by a touch on his elbow.

'Mr. Hilton?'

Mr. Hilton saw a dapper, young gentleman at his side who looked like nothing so much as a tangle of ribbons swept up from a milliner’s shop.

‘To be sure,’ said Wogan.

‘Her ladyship sits yonder.’

Mr. Wogan looked. Her ladyship sat with her back towards him at the table nearest to that which stood empty. She had been screened from his sight by the young gentleman now at his elbow. As Wogan looked, Lady Oxford turned with an anxious smile and a glance beyond his shoulder. The smile, the glance braced Mr. Wogan. For doubtless her ladyship looked to discover whether the Parson followed in his steps.

He approached Lady Oxford. By her side sat Colonel Montague, black as thunder, and with a certain uneasy air of humiliation, like a man that finds himself ridiculously placed, and yet has not the courage to move. Mr. Wogan was encouraged; he could have wished the Colonel in no other mood. Mr. Wogan suddenly understood that it was himself who was cast to play with the shrouded figure, and the stake was the privilege of crossing swords with Montague.

From the Colonel his eye strayed to a youth who stood by Lady Oxford’s chair, and the sight of him clean took Wogan’s breath away. It was not merely his face, though even in that bright company he shone a planet among stars. Nature, indeed, thought Wogan, must have robbed a good many women of their due share of looks before she compounded so much beauty in the making of one man. But even more remarkable than his beauty was his extraordinary likeness to Wogan’s King. At the first glance Wogan would have sworn that this youth was the King, grown younger, but that he knew his Majesty was at Antwerp waiting for the Blow to fall. At the second, however, he remarked a difference. The youth had the haunting eyes of the Stuarts, only they were lit with gaiety and sparkled with success; he had the clear delicate features of the Stuarts, only they were rounded out of their rueful length, and in place of a sad gravity, were bright with a sunny contentment. Misfortune had cast no shadows upon the face, had dug no hollows about the eyes.

Lady Oxford spoke to this paragon, smiled at him, drooped towards him. The Colonel shifted a foot, set his lips tight and frowned.

Wogan placed a hand upon his guide’s sleeve.

‘Will you tell me, if you please, the name of her ladyship’s new friend?’

The young gentleman stared at Wogan.

‘Let me perish, Mr. Hilton, but you are strangely out of the fashion. Or is it wit thus to affect an ignorance of our new conqueror, for whom women pine with love and men grow sour with envy? But indeed it is wit — the most engaging pleasantry. ‘Twill make your reputation, Mr. Hilton.’

‘It is pure ignorance,’ interrupted Wogan curtly.

‘Indeed? But I cannot bring myself to believe it.’ He stared at Wogan as though he was gazing at one of Dr. Swift’s Yahoos. ‘Slit my weazand if I can. Sir, he is the gold leaf upon the pill of the world. For his sake dowagers mince in white and silver, and at times he has to take to his bed to protect himself from their assiduities.’

‘He has a dangerous face for these times,’ again Mr. Wogan broke in.

‘Blame his grandmother for that, Mr. Hilton; he is of the royal blood. Nell Gwynn of pious memory gave his father birth. Our last Charles was his grandsire; he hath Queen Mary’s eyes. It is Lord Sidney Beauclerk.’

‘I thought as much. He is a very intimate friend of her ladyship’s?’

‘Mr. Hilton, the world is very *grossier,’* remarked his guide, with a smirk.

Mr. Wogan could have laughed. He understood why the Colonel looked so black, why the ballad was so maliciously apt, why my Lord Sidney Beauclerk was coupled with the Parson and the Colonel in the common talk. Her ladyship was taking a new lover. Colonel Montague was the crumpled ribbon that has done good service but is tossed into the cupboard to make way for fresher colours. The ballad was apt indeed. Mr. Wogan’s spirits rose with a bound. Sure here was an occasion for picking a quarrel with the Colonel ready to his hand. He bowed very low to her ladyship. Her ladyship went on punting.

Colonel Montague looked at him, and then looked at him again with the same perplexity which Mr. Wogan had found so distasteful one evening in St. James’s Street three years before; but he said nothing. Her ladyship laid down a card and gave Mr. Wogan a hand, which he kissed with proper ceremony.

‘You have come late, Mr. Hilton,’ she said; ‘and you have come, it seems — alone?’

‘Madam,’ replied Wogan, with a glance of great sympathy towards the Colonel, and in his softest brogue, ‘men are born to loneliness as the sparks fly upward.’

The Colonel took his meaning, and his face flushed. Wogan’s spirits rose higher. If only Montague was strung to the same pitch of exasperation and injury as the Parson had been in the like circumstances! The supposition seemed probable. Mr. Wogan could have rubbed his hands in sheer content. The Colonel, however, made no rejoinder, and Mr. Wogan had to amuse himself by watching the play.

It was little amusement, however, that Mr. Wogan got; on the contrary, as he watched, his fears returned to him. Her ladyship was evidently in something of a flutter. She did not show her usual severe attention to the game. Now she called her black boy Sambo to bring her fan; now she would pat her spaniel; now she would gaze through the crowd of perruques and laces towards the door. Her smile was fixed even when she paid her losses, and that was not her way, she being a bad loser. She was watching for someone, and that someone without a doubt was Mr. Kelly. Wogan could not but ask himself with what intention she watched. Her ladyship was taking a new lover, and for that reason the ballad struck her hard — if she knew of it. Smilinda was not the woman to forgive the blow. She would assuredly blame Kelly for the ballad — if she knew of it. Had she lured him here to strike back? She turned once more to Mr. Wogan, as though she would put some question to him; but, before she could open her lips, a name was bawled up the stairs, and a sudden hush fell upon the room. The throng in the doorway dissolved as if by magic, and between the doorway and Lady Oxford's chair a clear path was drawn. The name was Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's. Everyone then knew of the ballad and laid it at Lady Mary's door. Everyone? Mr. Wogan asked himself. Did Lady Oxford know?

Montague frowned and drummed with his knuckles on the table; it was the only sound heard in the room. Then Lord Sidney noisily thrust back his chair, and, stepping past Lady Oxford, stood in the open space between her and the door with a frank boyish championship for which Mr. Wogan at once pitied and liked him.

The name was passed up the stairs from lackey to lackey, growing louder with each repetition. The silence was followed by a quick movement which ran through the room like a ripple across a pool, as each head was turned towards Lady Oxford to note how she would bear herself. She rose, the radiant goddess of hospitality.

'There is no striving, Colonel Montague, against this run of luck,' she said, with the most natural ease; 'but my dear Lady Mary is come to save me from ruin. Mrs. Hewett,' she turned to her opposite, 'will you be tallier to our table? The bank is open to a bidder. No? Ah!' and she took a step forwards to where her champion was standing apart, his hand on his hip, his face raised, ready to encounter even so dangerous an antagonist as Lady Mary, 'my Lord Sidney Beauclerk, you are not afraid?' He looked at her, from her to the door. 'I am your servant,' said she, with her eyelids half-closed over her eyes, 'your grateful servant,' and she motioned him to the table; 'for, being a woman, I positively die to hear what new scandal dear Lady Mary has set on foot.'

She spoke with an affectionate compassion for Lady Mary's foible and an air of innocence which quite took aback the most part of her guests. Mr. Wogan, however, was better acquainted with her ladyship's resources, and, wishing to know for certain whether Lady Oxford knew of the ballad;

'I can satisfy your ladyship's curiosity,' he said bluntly; and with that the noise of the room sank to silence again. He was still standing by the card-table. Lady Oxford turned about to him something quickly. It may be she was disconcerted, or that anger got the upper hand with her. At all events, for an instant she dropped the mask. She gave Wogan one look; he never remembers, in all the strange incidents of his life, to have seen eyes so hard, so cold, and so cruel, or a face so venomous. In a second the look was gone, and the prettiest smile of inquiry was softening about her mouth. 'There is a new poem, is there not, from Lady Mary's kind muse?' said Wogan.

'A new poem!' cried she. 'Let us hear it, I pray. It would be the worst of ill-breeding had I not knowledge enough to congratulate my friend. The happy subject of the poem, Mr. Hilton?'

Lady Oxford took a step towards him. She was all courtesy and politeness, but Mr. Wogan, while he recognised her bravery, had her look of a second ago very distinct before his eyes, and was in no mood for pity. He bowed with no less courtesy.

'It is thought to be an allegory,' he said, 'wherein the arm of flesh is preferred before a spiritual — Blade.

The rejoinder, as it seemed, was approved, for the ladies whispered behind their fans, and here and there a man checked a laugh. Lady Oxford met the thrust with all the appearances of unconcern.

'And tagged with Latin, Mr. Hilton?' she asked. That was enough for Mr. Wogan. Lady Oxford knew the ballad, and gave it to Lady Mary. Without a doubt she must believe Mr. Kelly supplied Lady Mary with the matter of it. 'Of a truth the ballad will' be tagged with Latin. Sure Lady Mary has scholars enough among her friends who would not let her wit go naked when a scrap of Latin could cover it decently — indeed, too decently at times, for, though we always see the Latin, one is hard put to it now and then to discover the wit. Do you not think so, Mr. — Hilton?' She paused ever so slightly before the name, and ever so slightly drawled it, with just a hint of menace in her accent. Mr. Hilton, none the less, got a clear enough knowledge of the dangerous game he was playing. Lady Oxford had but to say 'Mr. Wogan,' and it would not be Mr. Wogan who would have the chance of playing a hand with the figure at the empty table.

Lady Mary's name was now called out from the doorway, and Mr. Wogan was glad enough to leave the encounter to her worthier hands. Lady Mary sailed into the room; Lady Oxford swam forwards to meet her. The two ladies dissolved almost in smiles and courtesies.

'We were in despair, dearest Lady Mary; we feared you would baulk us of your company. France, they said, was happy in your sunshine.'

‘France, madam?’ asked Lady Mary.

‘It was your dear friend, Mr. Pope, who said you had withdrawn thither — la, in the strangest hurry!’

‘Indeed, very like! I denied Mr. Pope my door two days ago, and his vanity could only conceive I was gone abroad.’

‘Your ladyship was wise. A poet’s tongue wags most indiscreetly. Not that anyone believes those fanciful creatures. A romance of a — a M. Rémond for whom you should have placed money in the sinking South Sea; the Frenchman arriving in London in a hurry; Lady Mary in a hurry arriving in France; a kind of country dance figure of partners crossing. A story indubitably false, to the knowledge of all your ladyship’s friends, as I took occasion to say at more than one house where the rumour was put about.’

Lady Oxford had scored the first point in the game, as Wogan reckoned and marked ‘Fifteen — love’ with chagrin. However, he took some comfort from Lady Mary’s face, which was grown dangerously sweet and good-natured. Nor was his confidence vain, for Lady Mary did more than hold her ground.

‘Your ladyship’s good will,’ said she, ‘is my sufficient defence. My Lord Oxford is here? It is long since I paid him my respects.’

‘Alas, my dear Lord has lain these last six weeks at Brampton Bryan,’ sighed Lady Oxford, ‘with a monstrous big toe all swathed in flannel. Your ladyship, I fear, can only greet my husband by proxy.’

There was just a sparkle of triumph in Lady Mary’s eyes.

‘By proxy!’ she said; ‘with all the willingness in the world;’ and she swept a courtesy to Colonel Montague, who was coming forward to join them.

Lady Oxford flirted her fan before her face.

A murmur almost of applause ran from group to group of the company.

Mr. Wogan, who loved the game of tennis, marked ‘Fifteen — all.’

At that moment a clock upon the mantelshelf chimed the half-hour. In fifteen minutes the Parson would arrive, and Mr. Wogan had not played his hand. He moved a few yards from the table at which Lord Sidney Beauclerk, with his eyes upon Lady Oxford, was dealing the cards, and stood apart by the empty table, wondering how he should do. He picked up a pack of cards idly, and Lady Mary spoke again to Lady Oxford:

‘I interrupted your ladyship’s game.’

‘Nay, your coming was the most welcome diversion. Colonel Montague,’ said Lady Oxford, as she was gliding back to her table, ‘shared my bank, and played with the worst of luck. I declare the Colonel has ruined me;’ and so retired out of range of Lady Mary’s guns.

The Colonel followed Lady Oxford. Lady Mary turned to Mr. Wogan, and in a voice loud enough for others than Mr. Wogan to hear:

‘What!’ said she, ‘was Lady Oxford ruined by Colonel Montague? I did not think their acquaintance was of so old a standing.’

‘Thirty — fifteen,’ said Mr. Wogan in an abstraction.

Lady Mary stared.

‘I was but marking the game and scoring points to your ladyship,’ Wogan said.

Colonel Montague had heard Lady Mary’s sally, for he stopped. Lord Sidney Beauclerk had heard it, for he rose as though to mark his disbelief, and handed Lady Oxford to her chair with a sort of air of protection very pretty in the boy. It seemed, indeed, as though even Lady Oxford was touched, for her face was half turned towards Mr. Wogan, and he saw it soften with something like pity and her eyes swam for an instant in tears. It was new, no doubt, for the spider to feel compassion for the fly, but Mr. Wogan was not altogether surprised, for he began to find the fly very much to his own taste. It was a clean-limbed, generous lad, that looked mighty handsome in the bravery of his pink satin coat, and without one foppish affectation from his top-knot to his shoe-buckles.

Mr. Wogan was still holding the pack of cards in his hands.

‘You have a mind to play? ‘asked Lady Mary.

Wogan looked at the clock. He had only fifteen minutes for his business as lightning conductor. In fifteen minutes the Parson would be here.

‘If you will present me to the player I have a mind to play with,’ said he, dropping the pack on the table.

‘With all my heart,’ said she; ‘name him.’

‘Colonel Montague.’

Her ladyship looked at Wogan doubtfully, and beckoned the Colonel with her fan. The Colonel, who had his own feud with Lady Mary over the supposed authorship of the ballad, made as though he had not seen her summons. Lady Mary repeated it with no better result, and finally took a step or two towards him. Montague could no longer affect to misunderstand.

‘I wish to present you to a friend,’ she said, as Colonel Montague joined her.

‘If your ladyship will excuse me,’ said the Colonel coldly, ‘I have no taste for the acquaintance of Irish adventurers.’

Mr. Wogan was not out of earshot, and laughed gleefully as he caught the insult. Here was his opportunity, come in the nick of time.

‘Did anyone mention me?’ he said pleasantly, as he came round the card-table. But before the Colonel could answer, or Lady Mary interfere, the servant at the door announced:

‘Dr. and Miss Townley!’

Wogan's heart gave a leap. He swore beneath his breath.

'Miss Townley?' asked her ladyship, who had caught his oath.

'Is Rose, *the* Rose,' replied Wogan.

Lady Mary knew the ballad, knew who Rose was, and looked perplexed as to why Lady Oxford had asked the girl. Mr. Wogan, on the other hand, was no longer perplexed at all. His doubt was now a certainty. Lady Oxford had prepared a scenic revenge, a *coup de theater*. To this end, and to prove her ignorance of the ballad, she had invited Kelly, Montague, and Rose.

Of the *coup de theater* her ladyship had got more than she bargained for. On her bosom Miss Townley wore diamonds that caught the eye even in that Aladdin's treasure house of shining stones, and among the diamonds the portrait of Lady Oxford. Her ladyship saw it, and grew white as marble. Miss Townley saw Lady Oxford, knew the face of the miniature that she had thought was the Queen's, and blushed like the dawn. Her hand flew to her neck as she courtesied deep to Lady Oxford's courtesy; when she rose, by some miracle of female skill, the miniature and the diamonds had vanished. Rising at the same moment, Lady Oxford looked herself again. But the women understood each other now, and, as they purred forth their *politesses,* Wogan knew that the buttons were off the foils.

He had his own game to play, that would brook no waiting, and he played it without pause. Lady Mary had moved towards the door. Colonel Montague was gliding back to his old position near Lord Sidney. Wogan followed Colonel Montague and stopped him.

'Sir,' said he, in a low brogue, 'I fancied that I caught a little word of yours that reflected on me counthry and me honour.'

'For your country, sir,' replied the Colonel politely, 'your speech bewrayeth you, but the habitation of your honour is less discernible.'

''Faith, Colonel,' said Wogan, who found his plan answering to his highest expectations, 'you are so ready with your tongue that you might be qualifying for an Irishman. Doubtless you are as ready to take a quiet little walk, in which case I shall be most happy to show you where my honour inhabits. But, to speak the plain truth, it is somewhat too near the point of my sword to make Lady Oxford's drawing-room a convenient place for the exhibition.'

Colonel Montague smiled at the pleasantry in an agreeable way which quite went to Wogan's heart.

'With all the goodwill imaginable,' said he, 'I will take that walk with you to-morrow,' and he made a bow and turned away.

'But Colonel,' said Wogan in some disappointment, 'why not to-night?'

'There are certain formalities. For instance, I was not fortunate enough to catch your name.'

''Tis as ancient as any in Ireland,' cried Wogan, in a heat, quite forgetting his incognito. 'My forefathers—'

'Ah, sir, they were kings, no doubt,' interrupted Montague with the gravest politeness.

'No, sir, viceroys only,' answered Wogan with indifference, 'up to Edward I.'

'Your Highness,' said the Colonel, and he bowed to the ground, 'I reckon to-morrow a more suitable time.'

Mr. Wogan was tickled out of his ill-humour, and began to warm to the man.

'Sure, Colonel, you and I will be the best of good friends after I have killed you, and for the love of mercy let that be to-night. Look!' and stepping to the window he drew aside the curtain. 'Look,' said he, peering out, 'it is the sweetest moonlight that ever kissed a sword-blade! Oh, to-night, Colonel!' Then he dropped the curtain something suddenly. He had seen a face in the street. 'You prefer sunlight? Very well, sir. But you will acknowledge that to-morrow I have the *earliest* claims on your leisure.'

Colonel Montague bowed.

'The word, you will remember, was an Irish adventurer.' Wogan impressed it upon him.

'Sir, I am wedded to the phrase. You will send your friend to my lodgings at Mrs. Kilburne's, in Ryder Street.'

'Mrs. Kilburne's!' exclaimed Wogan.

Wogan might have guessed as much had he used his brains. It was at the corner of Ryder Street that he had plumped upon Montague when he came down to London from Glenshiel. It was under a portico in Ryder Street that the Parson and he had seen Montague on the night they had driven out on the first journey to Brampton Bryan. It was at Mrs. Kilburne's door that Wogan had seen Montague that afternoon. The Colonel was her fine gentleman upon the first floor. Sure, the Parson had the worst luck in the world. At all events, the Colonel was a gentleman. Wogan consoled himself with that reflection as he thought of Mr. Kelly's despatch box in the scrutoire of his parlour below the Colonel's rooms.

That thought led Wogan's eyes again to the clock. It was half an hour past ten. The Parson was due in ten minutes.

'Good-bye t'ye, Colonel,' he said hastily to Montague, as he turned towards the door. He almost knocked against Rose, who was standing close by his elbow. She made an effort to detain him; he breathed a word of apology. It did not occur to him then that she might have overheard his conversation with the Colonel. He hurried past Lady Oxford and Dr. Townley, who was talking of his schooldays, when he knew Lord Oxford.

‘Mr. Hilton,’ cried her ladyship. Mr. Hilton was deaf as a bed-post. For when he had looked out of the window at the moonlight he had seen a face in the roadway of which the Parson should have knowledge before he reached the house. It was that face which had made him drop the curtain so quickly and fall in so quickly with the Colonel’s objections. A link-boy’s torch had flashed for a second upon a man on the other side of the road, and his face was Scrope’s. Scrope was watching the house.

Wogan pressed through the throng towards the door, but before he could reach it a firm hand closed upon his arm. He looked round. Lord Sidney Beauclerk was standing by his side with a flushed, angry face.

‘A word with you, Mr. Hilton!’

‘A hundred, my lord, in half an hour,’ said Wogan, and shook himself free. He must warn the Parson and turn him back from the house. But he was too late. In the doorway of the house he met Mr. Kelly, whose face wore a singular air of content. And on the other side of the road stood Scrope with his head turned towards the doorway. Scrope knew that the Parson had come.

Mr. Wogan took Kelly’s arm, and led him to the shady side of the street, out of the noisy crowd of lackeys and link-boys.

‘Those divines err,’ said Kelly, ‘who condemn the occasional casting of lots. It is not an ill game.’

‘Then you found our lurking luck?’

‘Six rouleaux of gold,’ said Mr. Kelly, tenderly caressing his pocket.

‘The sinews of war, and we are like to need them.’

‘Then the coast is not clear?’

‘Clear!’ said Wogan, ‘there is every sign of thunder, wind, and earthquake. First, Montague is here!’

‘And here is his Capulet!’ said Kelly smiling.

Wogan smiled too, having secured his duel with the Colonel.

‘Then Miss Townley is here, and, George, she was wearing my lady’s miniature. The women know each other.’

George’s mouth opened, and his utterance was stayed. Then,

‘It is a trap. I go home,’ he said. Despair spoke in his voice.

‘No!’ Mr. Wogan’s plans had changed.

‘Why not? I have no more to lose, and my duty to do.’

‘You do not go home, for Scrope is watching the house. He has seen you come. He is behind us now.’ Mr. Kelly’s hand went to his sword, but Wogan checked him. ‘Don’t let him think you know. We must leave the house together, and your duty is to be just now where Miss Townley is. Be quick!’

The argument had weight with Mr. Kelly. Wogan had his reasons for advancing it. If they went away together, later, Wogan could engage Mr. Scrope’s attentions while the Parson went safely on to Ryder Street. The two passed out of the shade, but not before George had placed his hand in Wogan’s. His hand was cold as ice.

CHAPTER XVII

LADY OXFORD’S ‘COUP DE THÉÂTRE.’

The Parson, when the two friends had climbed the crowded stairs, began making his way towards his fate and Lady Oxford’s table, with a smile on his face. He did not see Rose, who was a little apart, hidden from him by a group of strangers. Wogan was about joining her, when a woman’s voice whispered in his ear:

‘You are mad!’

The voice was Lady Mary’s.

‘You are mad, both of you! He should be halfway to the coast by now. What brings him here? I wrote, or rather I sent to him.’

‘True,’ said Wogan, remembering the letter which he had picked up in the Parson’s lodging, and slipped into his pocket. It had been thrust clean out of his mind at the Deanery by those more pressing questions as to how the Blow had been discovered, and how they were to escape from the consequences of the discovery. He drew it out, still sealed up.

‘He has not opened it?’ she asked.

‘He has not seen it,’ replied Wogan, who began to fear from her ladyship’s discomposure that the letter held news of an urgent importance. She took the letter from his hands, and broke the seal.

‘This was my message,’ she said. There was no scrap of writing in the letter, but a feather from a bird’s wing: it meant “Fly!”

‘The feather is white,’ said Wogan. He could not have mounted it.’

‘He loses his life.’

‘Perhaps, but he keeps his honour. There is something that he must do in London if by any means he can. He must burn the papers at his lodgings and the best hope lies in audacity.’

Mr. Wogan tore up the sheet on which her ladyship had written Mr. Johnson’s name into fragments too minute for anyone to piece them together again.

‘This proof of your good will,’ said he, ‘shall not rise in judgment against you.’

‘But you?’ said Lady Mary. ‘Why do you stay?’

Wogan laughed.

‘For one thing, I have a little business of my own to settle, and — well—’

‘And,’ said she, ‘your friend’s in danger.’

She spoke with so much kindliness that Mr. Wogan felt a trifle awkward, and turned his eyes from her face. He saw that Rose still stood alone, though many of the gallants eyed her through their quizzing-glasses.

‘Lady Mary,’ he said, ‘you have the kindest heart!’

‘Hush! Whisper it,’ she replied, ‘or you will destroy my reputation. What service would you have me do now?’

‘You see Miss Rose? You have read a certain ballad which the ignorant give to your ladyship? And you know Lady Oxford. It is Miss Rose Townley’s first visit to this house, and one cannot believe that Lady Oxford asked her with any amiable intention.’

‘And I am to be Lady Oxford’s spoil-sport?’

‘It has gone beyond sport. At this moment her ladyship has murder in her mind. The girl entered the room wearing our hostess’s portrait in diamonds,’ and he told her shortly how she came to wear it.

Lady Mary looked her horror.

‘She has hidden it, but you will not leave the girl?’

Lady Mary nodded, her lips tight closed.

Wogan presented the girl. Lady Mary made room for her at her side, and Wogan only heard her say, ‘My dear, be brave, you tremble.’

What else passed, Wogan did not desire to hear. Lady Mary had faults, they say, as a woman, but she was of a manlike courage, and her’s was the friendship of a man. Never did woman need it more than Miss Townley, and never, sure, was counsel and comfort wiser and kinder than that which, Wogan knew later, Lady Mary gave to the angry, frightened, and bewildered girl.

Lady Mary’s credentials were Wogan’s name; the girl could not suspect them. How had she come hither? Lady Oxford had invited her father, Rose said, as a schoolfellow of my lord’s, and had asked, too, for the daughter’s company. Then the young lady was lured, her new friend said, by a wicked woman for a cruel purpose. That purpose, whatever it was, and neither Wogan nor Kelly nor Lady Mary could do more than guess, must be defeated at any cost — at all costs. Lady Mary glanced at the guilt and guilelessness of our sex. Kelly, too, had been entrapped, before he knew Rose, but that was ended. Lady Mary certainly knew it was ended, however things appeared. According to men’s notions, he was compelled to lie to Rose about the miniature. Now Miss Townley might, if she chose, give Kelly his *congé* to-morrow. To-night she must know nothing, see nothing, bear no grudge, be staunch; she owed it to her honour, to the honour of her sex, to Kelly’s very life, and to her revenge, if she craved for one, on the false enchantress. That was Lady Mary’s sermon. And the lesson was needed.

She reported it later to Wogan who, at this moment, was following the Parson with all his eyes.

Lady Oxford at the card-table was greeting Kelly with a conspicuous kindness. Her smile was one wide welcome.

‘My dear Mr. Johnson,’ she said, ‘you are grateful as flowers worked on the very finest Alençon. Sure you bring me those laces for which I gave you a commission in Paris, and the lutestring from my Lady Mar.’

Mr. Kelly murmured a word that the laces were below, and he hoped her ladyship would be satisfied. But his eyes searched the room all the time for Rose, whom he could not see.

‘You shall show me them!’ cried Lady Oxford; ‘but first you must bring me luck. Mr. Johnson and I were always lucky before he went abroad.’ She spoke with a provoking smile at Colonel Montague, and then shot a quick glance at Lord Sidney Beauclerk, who was now risen from the table, and stood in a window watching her.

The glance said plain as writing, ‘You understand. I have to face out the ballad. I can trust you.’ Wogan’s blood boiled as he noticed and read the look, for it was just that tender appeal to her lover’s faith which always brought about the lover’s undoing. Lord Sidney’s young face flushed with pride at the trust she reposed in him, and she continued to Kelly:

‘Look over my hand, Mr. Johnson; you must not leave me. What card shall I choose? You, Colonel Montague, I discard you. I appoint you to the Commissariat, run and see that Lady Rich does not starve. She is leaving her party with the air of a loser, and needs the comforts of chicken and champagne. But first let me make you better acquainted with the gentleman who supersedes you. Mr. Johnson, the right-hand man of my dear Bishop of Rochester.’ There she stopped short in a pretty confusion, as though the words had slipped from her lips against her will.

‘Who should be thrown to the lions,’ growled the Colonel to himself, and added gruffly, ‘Mr. Johnson and I have met before.’

The Colonel turned his broad scarlet back with the ghost of a bow, and went reluctantly to Lady Rich, a mature matron, dressed to kill, in virginal white. Wogan watched them out of the door, and was again turning back to the card-table, when again Lord Sidney Beauclerk’s hand was laid on his sleeve.

‘A word with you, Mr. Hilton,’ said he in a hard voice.

‘When the half-hour is past, my lord,’ said Wogan, looking at his watch. ‘There are still eight minutes and a few seconds.’

‘I will set my watch by yours,’ said the lad with great dignity; which he did, and went back to his corner.

Mr. Johnson's welcome, meanwhile, was as that of the prodigal swain. He made more than one effort to slip from her side and go in search of Rose, but Lady Oxford would not let him go. She had eyes only for him, eyes to caress. Many curious people watched the scene as at a play. All the town knew the ballad, and here was Lady Oxford's reply. Mr. Johnson and Lady Oxford were to all seeming the best of friends, and no more than friends, for was not Miss Townley in the room to testify the limits of their friendship?

A shifting of the groups gave Wogan suddenly a view of Rose Townley. She was still talking with Lady Mary, or rather she was still listening to her, and threw in now and again a short reply. But she spoke with an occupied air, and her eyes were drawn ever towards the card-table at which Lady Oxford was practising her blandishments on the Parson. Then to Wogan's relief a few ladies and gentlemen stepped between, and the living screen hid him from her view.

At this moment Lady Oxford lost heavily.

'An ace? Sonica! I am bankrupt!' she cried, and rising from the table she addressed the Parson. 'Mr. Johnson, you bring me no better luck than did the Colonel. I must console myself with private talk, and news of lace and lutestring. What have you brought me? Come, I positively die to see,' and so, with her sweetest smile, she carried off the Parson.

It was thus she had wrought on that first night when Kelly met the Colonel, but there was a mighty difference in Kelly's demeanour. Then he had given her his arm with the proudest gallantry. Now her ladyship went out of her way to lead him past Rose, where she sat with Lady Mary. He threw an imploring glance at the girl, and followed in Lady Oxford's wake, the very figure of discomfort.

Fine smiles rippled silently round the company as the pair made their way to the door. Rose watched them, her face grown very hard and white, but she said no word until they had gone. She stood motionless, except that her bosom rose and fell quickly. Then she turned to Lady Mary.

'I must bid your ladyship good-night,' she said; 'I have stayed too long.'

Pride kept her voice clear, her words steady, but it could not mask the pain of her face.

'What ails you, child? You must smile. Smile!' whispered Lady Mary. But Rose was struck too hard. She lowered her eyes and fixed them on the floor to hide the humiliation they expressed, but she could not smile. She tried, but no more came of it than a quiver at the corners of her lips, and then she set her mouth firmly, as though she could not trust herself.

'I thought I had persuaded you,' whispered Lady Mary. 'It is for honour, it is for life, his life. Appearances are nothing. You *must* stay.'

‘I thank your ladyship, who is most kind. I will stay,’ said the girl. Her face flushed purely with a delicate, proud anger.

Lady Mary presented her to some of her friends, with whom Rose bore herself bravely. Wogan saw that she had taken her part, and blessed Lady Mary.

He had followed Lady Oxford and the Parson out of the room, and leaned over the balusters while they descended the stairs. It was an ominous business, this summons of Lady Oxford. Why must she carry him off alone with her? What blow had she to strike? Mr. Wogan was not surprised that Kelly had turned pale, and though he held his head erect, had none the less the air of one led to the sacrifice. To make the matter yet more ominous, Lady Oxford herself seemed in a flutter of excitement; her colour was heightened; she sparkled with even more than her usual beauty; her tongue rattled with even more than its usual liveliness.

Halfway down the stairs she met Lady Rich and Colonel Montague mounting. Lady Oxford stopped and spoke to the Colonel. Mr. Wogan caught a word or two, such as ‘Miss Townley — the poor girl knows no one.’ Kelly started a little; the Colonel sullenly bowed. Lady Oxford, leaning upon Mr. Kelly’s arm in order to provoke the Colonel, must needs in pity bid the Colonel wait upon Rose in order to provoke Mr. Kelly. There Wogan recognised her ladyship’s refinements.

The pair passed down to the foot of the stairs. To the right of the staircase a door gave on to that little room into which Kelly had led Lady Oxford on the night of the Masquerade. Lady Oxford left his arm and went towards it.

Kelly remained standing by the stairs, very still. It was in this room that Lady Oxford had discovered the Chevalier’s likeness in the lid of the snuff-box, and had deceived George into the belief that she was, heart and soul, as deep in the Cause as he. It was that room which had witnessed the beginnings of the history. Now it seemed it was like to see the end.

Kelly looked up the stairs and saw Wogan’s face. He smiled, in a quiet, hopeless way, and then Lady Oxford threw open the door. She turned back to Kelly, a languorous smile upon her lips, a tender light in her eyes. Neither the smile nor the look had power to beguile the two men any longer. Kelly stepped forwards to her like a man that is tired. Wogan had again the queer sense of incongruity. Behind him voices laughed and chattered, in some room to his left music sounded; and here at the foot of the stairs was a woman all smiles and graces playing with Life and Death as a child with toys.

The pair passed into the room. The door shut behind them. The click of the latch is one of the things Wogan never will forget.

CHAPTER XVIII

WHEREIN A NEW FLY DISCOURSES ON THE INNOCENCE OF THE SPIDER’S WEB

Wogan was still leaning on the rail of the balustrade when a watch was held beneath his nose.

‘The half-hour is gone, Mr. Hilton,’ said Lord Sidney Beauclerk.

‘True,’ said Wogan, ‘it is now a quarter past eleven.’ His eyes moved from the watch to the closed door. ‘Half an hour, my lord,’ he mused, ‘a small trifle of minutes. You may measure it by grains of sand, but, if you will, for each grain of sand you may count a life.’

‘You hit my sentiments to a nicety.’

Lord Sidney spoke with a grave significance which roused Wogan from his reflections. The lad’s face was hard; his eyes gloomy and fierce. Wogan remembered that, when Lord Sidney had spoken before, he had not seemed in the best of good humour.

‘My lord,’ he said, ‘we can hardly talk with comfort here in the doorway.’ He led the way back into the inner withdrawing-room and across the room to the recess of a window.

‘Here we shall be private,’ he said.

‘Mr. Hilton, you spoke a little while ago of a ballad, wherein, to use your words, the arm of flesh was preferred to a spiritual Blade. That may have been wit, of which I do not profess to be the judge. But you aimed an insult at a woman, and any man may claim to be the judge of that.’

‘My lord,’ answered Wogan gently, ‘you do not know the woman. I could wish you never will.’

Lord Sidney laughed with a sharp scorn which brought the blood into Wogan’s face. It was plain the remark was counted an evasion.

‘At all events I know an insult when I hear it. Let us keep to the insult, Mr. Hilton. It reaped its reward, for here and there a coward smirked his applause.’ Lord Sidney’s voice began to tremble with passion. ‘But it has yet to be paid for. You must pay for it to me,’ and, since Wogan kept silence, his passion of a sudden got the upper hand, and in a low quick voice — there was as much pain as anger in it— ‘It hurts me,’ he said, clenching his hands, ‘it positively hurts me. Here is a woman’ — he stopped in full flight, and blushed with a youthful sort of shame at his eloquence— ‘a woman, sir, in a word, and you must torture her with your brave sneers and she must wear a smiling face while her heart bleeds! Mr. Hilton, are you a man? Why, then, so am I, and it humiliates me that we should both be men. The humiliation will not pass even after,’ and he drew a breath in through his shut teeth, ‘after I have killed you.’

Mr. Wogan had listened to the outburst with all the respect he thought due to a boy’s frank faith. A boy — Wogan’s years were not many more than his, but he had seen mankind, and marvelled how they will trust a woman who, they know, has fooled one man, if but a husband. But, at Lord Sidney’s talk of killing him, Wogan sank the philosopher and could not repress a grin.

‘Kill me, my young friend; *ne fait ce tour qui veut*,’ he said; ‘but sure you may try if you will. You will not be the first who has tried.’

‘I have no doubt of that,’ said Lord Sidney gravely, ‘and you will oblige me by using another word. I may be young, Mr. Hilton, but I thank God I am not your friend.’

There was a dignity, a sincerity in his manner which to Mr. Wogan’s ears robbed the speech of all impertinence. Wogan simply bowed and said:

‘If you will send your friend to Burton’s Coffee House in the morning — —’

‘To Burton’s Coffee House.’

Lord Sidney turned away. Mr. Wogan drew aside the curtain of the window and stared out into the night with an unusual discontent. Across the road Mr. Scrope was still lurking in the shadow — a hired spy. Very like, he had once been just such another honest lad, with just the same chivalry, before my lady cast her covetous eyes on him. Downstairs in the little room the Parson was fighting, for the Cause, for his sweetheart, for his liberty, and maybe for his life, with little prospect of a safe issue. It seemed a pity that Lord Sidney Beauclerk should be wasted too.

‘My lord,’ said Wogan, calling after Lord Sidney. And Lord Sidney came back. Wogan was still holding the curtain aside; he had some vague thought of relating Scrope’s history, but his first glance at Lord Sidney’s face showed to him it would not avail. Lord Sidney would disbelieve it utterly. Wogan dropped the curtain.

‘How old is your lordship?’ he asked.

Lord Sidney looked surprised, as well he might, and then blushed for his youth.

‘I am twenty,’ he said, ‘and some months,’ with considerable emphasis on the months as though they made a world of difference.

‘Ah,’ replied Wogan, ‘I am of the century’s age, twenty-two and some more months. You are astonished, my lord. But when I was fifteen I fought in battles.’

‘Was it to tell me this you called me back?’

‘No,’ said Wogan solemnly, ‘but you meet me tomorrow. I am not sure that I could do you better service than by taking care that you meet no one afterwards. It was that I had to tell you,’ and he added with a smile, ‘but I do not think I shall bring myself to do you that service.’

Lord Sidney’s face changed a little from its formal politeness. He eyed Mr. Wogan as though for a moment he doubted whether he had not mistaken his man. Then he said:

‘In a duel, Mr. Hilton, there are two who fight.’

‘Not always, my lord. Sometimes there is one who only defends,’ and with that they parted. Clamorous dames took Lord Sidney captive. Wogan looked at his watch. Five minutes had passed since that latch had clicked. He strolled out of the room to the stairs. The door was still shut. He came back into the room and stood by Lady Mary, who was describing to Rose the characters of those who passed by. She looked anxiously at Wogan, who had no comforting news and shook his head, but she did not cease from her rattle.

‘And here comes Colonel Montague with a yellow bundle of bones tied up in parchment, ‘she cried. Lady Rich was the bundle of bones in parchment. ‘Colonel Montague — well, my dear, he is a gallant officer in the King’s guards who fought at Preston, and he owes his life to a noisy Irish boy who has since grown out of all recognition.’

Here Rose suddenly looked up at Wogan.

‘It was this Colonel Montague you saved!’ said she.

‘Hush,’ whispered Wogan, who had his own reasons for wishing the Colonel should discover nothing upon that head. ‘Remember, if you please, that my name is Hilton.’

Colonel Montague led Lady Rich to the sofa.

‘Colonel, has fortune deserted you that you look so glum?’ asked Lady Mary.

‘I am on the losing hand indeed, your ladyship, to-night,’ said Montague bitterly.

‘Well, *malheureux en jeu*,’ said her ladyship maliciously, ‘you may take comfort from the rest of the proverb.’

Lady Rich shook her rose-coloured ribbons, a girlish simpleton of forty summers.

‘I am vastly ashamed of being so prodigiously ignorant,’ said she. ‘I daresay I ask a mighty silly question, but what is the rest?’

‘French, my dear, and it means that fifteen years is the properest age for a woman to continue at, but why need one be five?’

Colonel Montague smiled grimly. Mr. Wogan stifled a laugh. Lady Rich looked somewhat disconcerted.

‘Oh, is that a proverb?’ said she with a *minauderie*. ‘I shall dote on proverbs,’ and so she simpered out of range.

Lady Mary lifted up her hands.

‘*Regardez cet animal!*’ she cried; ‘*considérez ce néant*. There’s a pretty soul to be immortal.’

‘Your ladyship is cruel,’ said Rose in remonstrance.

‘Nay, my dear, it is the only way to keep her quiet. My Lady Rich is like a top that hums senselessly. You must whip it hard enough and then it goes to sleep and makes no noise. Mr. Hilton, are you struck dumb?’

Mr. Hilton’s ears were on the stretch to catch the sound of a door, and making an excuse he moved away. Suspense kept him restless; it seemed every muscle in his body clamoured to be doing. He walked again to the window. Scrope was still fixed at his post. Wogan sauntered out of the room to the stairs, and down the stairs to the hall. The hall was empty. The door of the little room where Kelly and Lady Oxford were closeted was shut, and no sound came through it, either of word or movement. Wogan wished he had been born a housemaid, that he might lean his ear against the keyhole without any shame at the eavesdropping. He stood at the stair-foot gazing at the door as though his eyes would melt the oak by the ardour of their look. Above the voices laughed, the smooth music murmured of all soft pleasures. Here, in the quiet of the hall, Wogan began to think the door would never open; he had a foolish fancy that he was staring at the lid of a coffin sealed down until the Judgment Day, and indeed the room might prove a coffin. He looked at his watch; only a poor quarter of an hour had passed since the door had closed. Wogan could not believe it; he shook his watch in the belief that it had stopped, and then a hubbub arose in the street. The noise drew nearer and nearer, and Wogan could distinguish the shouts of newsboys crying their papers. What they cried as yet he could not hear. In the great room at the head of the stairs the voices of a sudden ceased; here and there a window was thrown open. The ominous din rang through the open windows and floated down the stairs, first the vague cries, then the sound of running feet, and last of all the words, clear as a knell:

‘Bloody Popish Plot! A Plot discovered!’

So Lady Oxford had played her cards. The plot was out; Scrope was in the street; the Parson was trapped. Wogan determined to open that door. He took his hand from the balustrade, but before he had advanced a step, the door was opened from within. Her ladyship sailed forth upon Mr. Kelly’s arm, radiant with smiles; and, to Wogan’s astonishment, Kelly in the matter of good humour seemed in no wise behind her.

CHAPTER XIX

STROKE AND COUNTER-STROKE

Those fifteen minutes had none the less proved a *mauvais quart d’heure* for Mr. Kelly. As he entered the room, the memories of the grey morning when first he stood there were heavy upon his thoughts. A cheerful fire burnt upon the hearth now as then. There was the settee on which her ladyship had lain in her pretended swoon. The text which he had read in the Deanery recurred to him: ‘Her ways are the ways of Death; her feet take hold on Hell.’ Through the open door came the sound of music and the words jangled through Kelly’s mind to the tune.

Lady Oxford closed the door; as the latch caught, Kelly lifted his head and faced her. On that first occasion her ladyship had worn a mask, and in truth she wore no mask now. A cruel smile played about her lips; a cruel light glittered in her eyes. She looked him over with triumph, as though he were her captive bound hand and foot. The look braced Mr. Kelly. He started from his memories as a man starts up from sleep; he lived alert and complete in the moments as they passed. Rose, the King’s papers, his own liberty — this was his new text. Her ladyship could be trusted to give a sufficient exposition of the other.

She seated herself, and with her fan beckoned him to a chair.

‘We have much to speak of, sir. I hear that I have to make you my congratulations, and to pay you my thanks. You may conceive with what sincerity.’

Mr. Kelly remained standing by the fireside.

‘For what services does your ladyship thank me?’

‘You have made me a tavern-jest. I have to thank you for a ballad.’

Mr. Kelly did not deny or argue the point. His pressing business was to know what Lady Oxford intended.

‘And on what fortunate event does your ladyship congratulate me?’

‘Are there so many fortunate events in the life of an Irish runagate and traitor? On your happy marriage, sir, with the starving apothecary’s daughter.’

Mr. Kelly laughed pleasantly.

‘Your ladyship is pleased to be facetious. Upon my honour, I know no such woman,' he said, thinking thus to provoke her to disclose her purposes.

Lady Oxford, to his surprise, rose up with a joyful air. 'I knew it,' she cried. 'I knew the story of the girl was the idle talk of the Cocoa Tree. And Lady Mary thought to stab me with the cruel news. Ah, if the honour of my Strephon be pledged, his Smilinda's anger vanishes.'

Here she threw her arms about Kelly's neck, in a very particular embrace, as if she would kiss him. But she refrained from such a caress. Her arms were clasped tighter and yet more tight till Kelly could scarcely breathe, and her cold whispering mouth touched his ear.

'There was, then, no starving apothecary?'

'None, madam. You have been misinformed.'

The embrace grew deadly tight. He could not have thought that a woman had such strength in her arms.

'No man named Townley? No daughter Rose? No wound? No nursing? No love-vows? No dog Harlequin? No betrothal? Liar!' she whispered in a strange voice, 'I see your miss's ring upon your finger. I saw my portrait upon her breast. Did she steal it? 'Tis like enough. But 'tis likelier that you lie!'

'Your ladyship misunderstands,' said Kelly. 'I denied that there was a starving apothecary's daughter. I did not deny that there was a man named Townley, who, by the way, is your ladyship's guest. I did not deny there was a daughter Rose — —'

'Go!' she cried suddenly, releasing Kelly, and pushing him off. 'I know everything, everything. Go, traitor to your King and to your word! And when you are hanged, but *not till you are dead*, remember that you have made a toy and jest of *me*, babbling to your Lady Marys and your Wogans.'

She flung herself back on a settee panting and tearing her laced handkerchief into shreds. Kelly waited a little for her to recover her composure.

'Madam,' he said, 'in the fatal circumstances you mention with such relish, it is certainly not of you that I shall think, though in less painful moments I shall ever do so with honour and gratitude. As for what you say of my babbling, I protest my innocence before Heaven. Your ladyship forgets that you have an enemy from whom it was my good fortune once to defend you.'

Lady Oxford dropped her handkerchief and sat forward staring doubtfully at Kelly, who at once pressed his advantage.

'It was into this room that I then had the honour of escorting your ladyship. Upon that occasion, if I may be pardoned for reminding you, what appears now to be treachery in me, seemed more akin to loyalty. But though the sentiments of your ladyship have suffered a change since then, those of Mr. Scrope have not. It was he who had attacked you then; it is he who attacks you now, and, believe me, it is my regret that I was not again at hand to defend you.'

The Parson should have stopped before those last few words were spoken. He spoke them in all sincerity, but they lost him the advantage he had gained, for it was not in Lady Oxford's nature to believe them. She made her profit out of her lovers' sincerity, yet could not comprehend it. It seemed almost as though some instinct led her to choose them for that very quality, with which her judgment could not credit them.

'A fine story,' she exclaimed with a sneer, 'and no doubt the apothecary's daughter would be entirely content with it, but I know you lie.'

Kelly bowed in silence.

'Wait,' she said, mistaking the bow, for Mr. Kelly had a certain question to ask before he returned to the company; 'we must appear together.'

She took in her hand a box of lace which had been placed ready in the room.

'Your hand, if you please, Mr. Johnson, for the last time. You are going, sir, to your death by rope and knife, or by point of sword.'

Mr. Kelly gave Lady Oxford his hand, and put his question:

'Your Ladyship has no fear that I shall escape?'

Her ladyship had none whatever, as her smile clearly showed.

'Then perhaps your ladyship will inform me how much liberty I have still left to me.'

'You have tonight free,' she answered, and as he heard the words Kelly's heart gave a great leap within him. 'So much reprieve you have. But you must not go till I dismiss you. Enjoy yourself.' She took Kelly's hand with a low courtesy.

He had tonight free! At all events, the King's papers would be saved. If all else went down, the papers would be saved. So it came about that he met Wogan at the stair-foot with a smiling face.

In the withdrawing-room the clatter of tongues had begun again, so that neither Lady Oxford nor the Parson distinguished the shouts of the newsboys, as they mounted the stairs. To Mr. Wogan, indeed, who followed upon their heels, the words no longer rose clear and audible. But as they entered the room, it was plain something was stirring. The windows stood open, gentlemen leaned out, ladies asked questions; about each window there was a restless, noisy group. The candles guttered in the wind; the card-tables were deserted; and straight in front of him Mr. Wogan saw Rose, her hands clasped in an extremity of apprehension. Colonel Montague stood beside her chatting easily and making as though he remarked nothing of her uneasiness.

Then the hoarse cries again rang through the room.

'Bloody Popish Plot.' 'A Plot discovered.'

‘What, yet another Plot?’ said Mr. Wogan smiling to Lady Oxford.

‘Mr. Walpole discovers plots by the dozen; he is the most active of our guardians, ‘said Kelly easily. He dared not look at Rose.

‘We must hear more of it,’ said Lady Oxford pleasantly, and calling her black boy: ‘Run, Sambo, bring this late-flying night-bird of ill omen.’

The boy grinned, and ran away upon his errand. Lady Oxford came up to my Lady Mary Montagu.

‘See, madam,’ she cried, opening the box of lace with the air of a child that has a new toy.

‘See what this kind obliger has brought me from the looms of the Fairy Queen. All point d’Alençon of the finest. Yes, you may well look envious. Here is meat for a Queen.’

The other ladies, deserting the windows when they heard that magical word ‘lace,’ crowded round, and Kelly was, where many a pretty fellow would have loved to be, in the centre of a perfumed world of fans and hoops, of sparkling eyes and patched faces. Kelly, however, had other business on hand, and, slipping through the group while Lady Oxford was praising her lace, he drew Wogan aside to a window now deserted. There he told him of his conversation with Lady Oxford.

‘So you see, Nick, I have tonight free. I mean to run to my lodging, burn the papers, and then — why one has a night free. I may yet outwit my lady. Besides, the papers once burned, there’s little proof to condemn me. Speak to Rose, Nick! She will believe *you*; you never lied to her. Tell her there’s no need to despair. Then make speed to the coast. I must go to Ryder Street.’

As he turned, Nick caught him by the arm.

‘You must not go yet.’

‘Why?’

For answer Wogan turned to the window.

‘Stand here in the shadow of the curtain. Across the street; there, in the corner.’

Kelly put his hands to his face to shut out the light of the room, and peered into the darkness.

‘There is a man. Who is it?’

‘I told you! Scrope. I saw him an hour ago. A link-boy’s torch showed me his face. You have tonight free. An hour or so more will make little difference to you, and may tire out our friend there — or he may mean another bout with the sharps.’

‘I hope so,’ said Kelly.

At this moment Sambo returned with a little damp sheet of the *Flying Post*, and the laces were forgotten. Sambo carried the sheet to Lady Oxford.

‘Faugh,’ said she, ‘I dare not touch the inky thing!’

Wogan came out from his window, where he left his friend, and took the sheet from the boy’s black paw.

‘Does your ladyship wish to alarm us all by reading out the news? These Papists are terrible fellows.’

‘Read! Read!’ said Lady Oxford, with a contented laugh.

Wogan ran his eyes over the print.

‘It is scarce fit for ladies’ ears,’ he said meaningly. ‘Some nonsense out of Grub Street. The wretch should be whipped from Temple Bar to Westminster,’ and Wogan made as if he would tear the sheet.

Her ladyship hesitated. But she could not guess what the sheet contained, and she knew Mr. Wogan would try to screen his friend.

‘Nay, read sir,’ she said boldly, ‘or must I imperil my own fingers with the foul thing?’

Wogan folded the paper, and with a bow held it out to her ladyship; again she hesitated; she did not take the sheet; she looked into Wogan’s face as though she would read the news-sheet there. Curious smiles began to show upon the faces about her, heads to nod, lips to whisper.

‘Shall I oblige your ladyship?’ asked Mr. Methuen, who stood by.

‘If you please,’ replied Lady Oxford, but in a less certain tone than she had used before.

Mr. Methuen took the sheet from Wogan’s hand, unfolded it, and glanced at it.

‘It is indeed scarce fit for your ladyship’s ears,’ he said; and in his turn he folded it.

The smiles broadened, the whispers increased. Lady Oxford was altogether disconcerted.

‘I will read it,’ a young voice rang out. Lord Sidney Beauclerk stepped forward, took the sheet from Mr. Methuen, and at once read it aloud. He began defiantly, but towards the end his voice faltered. Mr. Kelly did not turn round, and seemed to pay no heed whatever.

‘They write from Paris that a foul Plot against the Throne, and even the sacred Person of His Most Gracious Majesty hath been discovered. In Town, it is thought that a Lady of great Beauty who has a Tory Lord of advanced years and gouty Habit to her Husband, and a young Whig Officer of great Promise for her Friend, hath given the Intelligence to the Minister. Nobody has yet been taken, but the Gentry of the Silver Greyhound are thought to have their eyes on a certain Reverend Nonjuror. We say no more for the present.’

Lord Sidney crumpled up the sheet, and retiring from the circle, slowly tore it in pieces.

‘To be sure, they say quite enough,’ murmured Lady Mary, and no one else spoke, but all looked to Lady Oxford.

Lady Oxford was brave.

In the silence of the company who were gathered round she spoke.

‘Too scurrilous to need a contradiction! Doubtless it is I and my kind lace-dealer who are aimed at. Now Mr. Johnson is here, and is my guest. The inference is plain.’

Mr. Johnson turned from the window and came up to the group.

‘My confidence in her ladyship is as great as my certainty that there is no Plot in which I am concerned,’ said Kelly, bowing to the lady, and letting his jolly laugh out of him to the comfort of the company who did not smoke his jest. Mr. Wogan admired his friend.

It was now become impossible for Kelly to leave the house. Should he go now, his going would wear all the appearances of a hasty flight, and who knew but what some of Mr. Walpole’s spies might be within the room as well as in the street? Kelly must remain and brave it out, as he clearly recognised. For,

‘There are ears to be cut for this,’ he went on, ‘but we had better be cutting the cards.’

‘Mr. Johnson holds the bank with me!’ cried Lady Oxford. ‘After this terrible false alarm I am ready to risk all, and brave everything. I must win enough to pay for my laces; I am much in Mr. Johnson’s debt. Sambo, my money box.’

The black boy ran out of the room. Mr. Kelly walked towards the card-table, and as he went, a light hand was laid upon his arm, and Rose’s trembling voice whispered in his ear:

‘George, you will go. Yes, now, tonight. There may yet be time for you to cross to France.’

Mr. Kelly was comforted beyond words, beyond belief. Rose knew, and she forgave; he had not thought it was in woman’s nature. But he was also tempted to fly; his papers unburned, the Cause deserted. The hand upon his sleeve had its fingers on his heart-strings, and was twanging them to a very pretty tune. A few strides would bring him to the doorway, a couple of leaps to the foot of the stairs, and outside was the night.

‘You will go,’ she repeated, seeing how her voice weakened him. ‘Now — now.’

‘Yes ‘trembled on his lips. It seemed to Rose in her great longing that she heard the word breathed upon the air. But he did not speak it; he spoke no word at all. He started, his mouth dropped, his blue eyes stared, the blood was drained from his cheeks. He stood amazed, like one that sees a ghost. Rose followed the direction of his eyes; she saw the guests, the tables, the candles, but nothing that should so startle her lover.

‘What is it?’ she asked, fearing any delay that checked the assent she had seen tremble on his lips. ‘You will go! You will go!’ But even as she spoke she knew that he would not go. His face kept its pallor, but grew resolute, ennobled. He had ceased to think of his own safety.

‘I cannot go,’ he said.

‘Why?’

‘Mr. Johnson,’ Lady Oxford’s voice broke in. Sambo had returned with a casket curiously enamelled. ‘Mr. Johnson,’ said she, looking into the casket: ‘Some five hundred pounds.’

‘And six rouleaux,’ added Kelly, bringing out the spoils of Hazard with an air.

Rose turned away, her face of a sudden grown very white and hard. She had done her best to make Kelly seek safety, and he would not: could she do more?

The Parson crossed suddenly to Wogan, his face very pale, but with a wonderful bright light in his eyes.

‘Nick, I have seen the King, here, in this room, young, happy. The shadow of the hundred years of sorrow of his race has lifted from his forehead.’

‘The King is at Antwerp, George. You have not seen him.’

‘Then it is his spirit, which has taken form to hearten us,’ Kelly whispered in a voice of awe.

‘George, you have seen Lord Sidney Beauclerk.’ It needed no more than a word to make him understand. He had not seen the King nor the King’s appearance, only the King’s cousin, Lord Sidney. But now he could not forget any longer that the King’s papers were in his lodgings; that at all costs he must reach his lodgings unfollowed; that at all costs those papers must be a little pile of ashes before the morning came.

‘The bank is open,’ said Lady Oxford. ‘Colonel Montague, will you find a lady and be our opposite?’

The glum Colonel bowed in silence, and allied himself with silly smiling Lady Rich. The play was high. The luck had not deserted Kelly, while Lady Oxford paid him a hundred flattering compliments and bantered her military lover, who was not ready at repartee or was not ready then.

‘*Malheureux en jeu*,’ said Lady Oxford, repeating the proverb Lady Mary had already quoted that evening. ‘How fortunate, Colonel, must be your affections!’

‘It is only your ladyship who has all the luck and wins, or wins back if she loses,’ answered the Colonel, looking at Mr. Kelly with an evil favour, and her ladyship laughed in pure delight.

There was another game besides Quadrille played at that table. Lady Oxford was setting Colonel Montague and the Parson by the ears. Did she wish to embroil them in a quarrel to make Kelly’s ruin doubly sure? Wogan watched the Colonel; he had the first claim upon the Colonel’s sword. Mr. Kelly kept smiling and raking in the rippling golden stakes. The company stood round; they had left their tables to see this great battle of Quadrille. At times Wogan caught a glimpse of Rose Townley through a gap in the circle. She could not know why her lover had not fled. She only knew that, in her despite, he stayed in the house of the woman of whom he had told her at Avignon, though his life was in peril; she only saw that woman fawning upon him, and him smiling back to the woman. Lady Mary had stolen her hand into the girl’s, that no doubt was cold as marble, and in his heart Wogan blessed her kind ladyship. At last all the tide of gold had turned to Lady Oxford’s side of the table. The Colonel rose and confessed defeat.

People began to say their good-byes. Dr. Townley crossed the room to his daughter, who rose at once with a word of thanks to Lady Mary. Mr. Kelly remarked her movement, and with an imploring look bade her wait until Lady Oxford released him.

‘Mr. Johnson,’ said her ladyship, dividing the winnings, ‘short accounts make long friends. I think when you reckon up the night you will find that all my great debt to you is fully paid.’

Mr. Kelly bowed, and took the money, his eyes on her flushed face and glittering serpent’s eyes. Lady Oxford turned to Colonel Montague.

‘Your revenge is waiting for you, Colonel, whenever you are pleased to claim it. Tomorrow if you will.’

‘Madam, I may claim my revenge tonight,’ said the Colonel, and stepped back with his full weight upon Kelly’s foot. There was no mistaking the deliberate movement. Lady Oxford made as though she had not seen it, but as she turned away her face had a look of pleasure, which Mr. Kelly remarked.

‘Nay, Colonel,’ said Wogan, ‘you and I have a game to play, you remember. Le Queux’s is still open and I claim the first call on your leisure at Hazard.’

Colonel Montague answered Mr. Wogan with a good-nature which the latter did not comprehend.

‘I have indeed some words to say to you, sir.’

‘But, Colonel,’ said the Parson, ‘you trod upon my foot. I shall be happy to consult you on the bruise to-morrow.’

‘Tomorrow?’ said Montague, his face hardening instantly. ‘I may inquire after it before then,’ and so making his bow he got him from the room.

Lady Oxford gave her hand to Wogan and dismissed him with a friendly word. She was so occupied with the pleasure of her revenge that she had altogether forgotten his jest about the ballad. Wogan on his side made his leave-taking as short as could be, for out of the corner of his eye he saw Kelly offering his arm to Miss Townley, and Kelly must not leave the house without Wogan at his side. For, in the first place, Colonel Montague was for a sure thing standing sentinel within ten paces of the door, and after he had run the gauntlet of the Colonel, there was Scrope for him to make his account with, should Scrope attempt to follow in his tracks. Mr. Wogan had a mind to insist upon his first claim to Colonel Montague's attentions, and, once they were rid of him, it would not be difficult to come to a suitable understanding with Scrope should he attempt to follow them to Ryder Street.

Mr. Wogan was indeed already relishing in anticipation the half-hour that was to come, and hurried after the Parson, who was by this time close to the door with Rose upon his arm and Dr. Townley at his heels.

'Good night, Mr. Johnson,' said her ladyship in a lazy voice. 'Take care of yourself, for they tell me the streets are not too safe.'

Kelly dropped Rose Townley's arm and turned back towards Lady Oxford.

'But surely,' said he with some anxiety, 'tonight the streets are safe. Your ladyship assured me of their safety tonight.'

Lady Oxford made no reply for a few seconds, she stood watching Kelly with an indolent smile. A word of Lady Mary's came back to Wogan's mind — a word spoken two years since in Paris, 'She will play cat to any man's mouse.'

'Tonight?' said Lady Oxford, lifting her eyebrows, and she glanced towards the clock. It was five minutes to one. Kelly stared at the clock, his mouth open and his eyes fixed. Then he drew his hand across his forehead, and, walking slowly to the mantelpiece, leaned his hands on it in a broken attitude and so stared at the clock again. Lady Oxford had struck her last blow, and the last was the heaviest. Kelly had the night free, but the night was gone — and the streets were not safe. Nothing could be saved now — not even the King's papers. Then Wogan saw a change come over his face. The despair died out of it and left it blank as a shuttered window. But very slowly the shutter opened. He was thinking; the thought became a hope, the hope a resolve. First his knees straightened, then the rounded shoulders rose stiff and strong. In his turn Kelly struck.

'Your ladyship,' he said, 'was kind enough some time ago to entrust me with your own *brocades*. Those brocades are in the strong box in my lodgings.'

Wogan understood. Brocades was the name for letters in the jargon of the Plot. Lady Oxford's love-letters were in that box which he had handled that very afternoon. If Kelly was seized in the street his rooms would be searched, the King's papers found, and, with the King's papers, Lady Oxford's love-letters.

Lady Oxford understood too. Her ingenious stratagems of the evening to discredit the ballad and save her fair fame would be of little avail if the world once got wind of those pretty outpourings of Smilinda’s heart. Her face grew very white. She dropped her fan and stooped to recover it. It was noticeable, though unnoticed, that no one of those who were still present stepped forward to pick up the fan. Curiosity held them in chains, not for the first time that evening. It was as though they stood in a room and knew that behind locked doors two people were engaged in a duel. Now and then a clink of steel would assure them that a thrust was made; but how the duel went they could not tell.

When Lady Oxford rose her colour had returned.

‘My brocades?’ she said. ‘Indeed, I had purely forgotten them. You have had them repaired in Paris?’

‘Yes, madam,’ answered Kelly deliberately. ‘I do not think the streets are so unsafe as your ladyship supposes; but I should be sorry for them to fall into any hands but your own if by any chance footpads end my days tonight.’

He bowed and walked towards Rose Townley and her father, who stood in the doorway at a loss what to make of the scene. He had crossed half the distance before Lady Oxford moved. Then, it seemed with one swift step, she stood at Kelly’s side.

‘Mr. Johnson, you are my prisoner!’ she exclaimed. ‘My dear brocades! Mr. Johnson, you are surely the most attentive of men. You must tell me how they have been repaired; I shall not close my eyes unless you take pity on my impatience.’

Had Kelly been the man to care for triumphs wrested from a woman, he would have found his occasion now. A minute before, Lady Oxford’s eyes glittered with menaces, her face was masterful; now, her eyes besought pity, her face was humbled.

‘If your ladyship will permit me,’ said Kelly, ‘I will return when I have seen Miss Townley to her chair.’

It was a difficult moment for Miss Townley. For to those who looked on it seemed that by some means here was Mr. Johnson brought back into bondage before the very eyes of his betrothed. But Rose was patient of Lady Mary’s lesson. ‘Tomorrow give him his *congé* if you will; tonight be staunch! It is for life and honour!’ She knew no more, but she was loyal. Wogan had seen men go, for the Cause, to a shameful death by torture. But he never saw courage so unfaltering, or loyalty so true, as this girl’s. She was not herself in that hour; she had taken up a part as an actress does, and she played it clean, and played it through. Tomorrow she might be a woman again, a woman wronged, deceived, insulted; tonight, with the astonishing valour and duplicity of her sex, she was all in her part, to see nothing, to know nothing, to be staunch.

To the smiles, the simpered sarcasms, the quizzing glances, she paid no heed. She said, with a simple dignity, to Lady Oxford:

‘I will not keep Mr. Johnson long. It is but a few steps to your ladyship’s door, where my chair waits for me,’ and she held out her hand to Kelly. She had her reward. Kelly’s face put on a look of pride which no one in the room could mistake. He took her hand with a laugh, and threw back his chest.

‘I will return, your ladyship,’ he said gaily, and with Rose passed out of the door. The whispers were stilled; the couple went down the stairs in a great silence. Rose bore herself bravely until she had stepped into her chair; showed a brave face then at the window.

‘I shall hear of you from France,’ she whispered. ‘Good-night.’

The chair was carried off; Dr. Townley followed. The Parson returned slowly up the stairs. His heart was full; in Rose’s eyes he had seen the tears gathering; no doubt in the darkness of her chair they were flowing now. She would hear of him from France! Well, he had his one weapon — Lady Oxford’s letters. If he used that weapon aright, why should she not hear of him from France? By the time he reached the top of the stairs, he was already putting together the words of the letter he should write.

When he re-entered the withdrawing-room, the last few guests, of whom Wogan was one, were taking their departure. Wogan saw Kelly move towards the little card-table which had stood empty. Kelly sat down, and with the fingers of one hand he played with the cards, cutting them unwittingly as though for a deal. It was, after all, he and not Wogan who had to play the hand with the shrouded figure. Wogan had already made his adieux. As he passed out of the door Lady Oxford was standing in the middle of the room plucking at her fan. As he went down the stairs, the door was flung to with a bang. Lady Oxford and Kelly were left alone.

CHAPTER XX

MR. SCROPE BATHES BY MOONLIGHT AND IN HIS PERUKE

Wogan had heard two doors shut that evening, and with very different feelings. One had been latched gently, and the sound had filled him with apprehensions; one had been flung to with an angry violence, and the sound soothed him like the crooning of music. For Kelly, it seemed, after all held the trumps in his hand; he had but to play them aright and the game was his.

‘The longer he takes to play them the better,’ murmured Wogan, as he stood on the steps of Lady Oxford’s house and looked briskly about him. For to his left, standing openly in the moonlight, he saw a tall martial figure wrapped in a cloak, and the end of a scabbard shining beneath the cloak, while across the road his eyes made out a hunched form blotted against the wall. The figure in the cloak was Colonel Montague; the skulker would no less certainly be Mr. Scrope. If the Parson would only take time enough to deploy his arguments like a careful general! Mr. Wogan would have liked to have run back and assured Kelly that there was no need whatever for hurry, since he himself had enough amusements on his hands to make the time pass pleasantly.

He advanced to the Colonel first.

‘Sir, it is now to-morrow, the date at which you kindly promised me a few moments of your leisure. You may hear the chimes of the Abbey strike the half hour after one.’

‘Mr. Wogan,’ replied the Colonel, ‘I reckon this yesterday — till after breakfast. At present I have an engagement with another person.’

‘Colonel Montague, your reckoning of time is contrary to the almanac, and to a sound metaphysic, of which I am the ardent advocate. You will understand, sir, that such a difference of opinion between gentlemen admits of only one conclusion.’

Colonel Montague smiled, and to Wogan’s chagrin and astonishment replied:

‘You have grown a foot, or thereby, Mr. Wogan, since last we met, on an occasion which you will permit me to say that I can never forget. All our differences are sunk for ever in that one consideration. I implore you to leave me to the settlement of my pressing business.’

So the Colonel knew of that unfortunate rescue at Preston. Wogan, however, was not so easily put off.

‘Grown a foot, sir!’ he cried. ‘I am not the same man! You speak of a boy, who died long ago; if he made a mistake in saving your life, overlook a pure accident, and oblige me.’

‘The accident does not remove my obligation.’

‘If you knew the truth, you would be sensible that there was no obligation in the matter. Come, take a stroll in the Park, and I’ll tell the truth of the whole matter to whichever of us is alive to hear it.’

‘I had the whole truth already, to-night, from the young lady.’

‘The young lady?’ Wogan had told Rose Townley of how he saved the life of a Colonel Montague, and to-night he had informed her that this Colonel was the man. She had been standing by his elbow when he had picked his quarrel with Montague. Sure she had overheard and had interfered to prevent it. ‘The young lady!’ he cried. ‘All women are spoil-sports. But, Colonel, you must not believe her. I made a great deal of that story when I told it to Miss Townley. But you would find it a very simple affair if you had it from an eye-witness.’

The Colonel shook his head.

‘Yet the story was very circumstantial, how you leaped from the barricades—’

‘That were but two feet high.’

‘And, through a cross fire of bullets, crossed the square to where I lay—’

‘The fire was a half charge of duckshot that an old fellow let off by mismanagement from a rusty pistol. Both sides stopped firing the moment I jumped over — the politest thing. I might have been tripping down the Mall with a lady on my arm, for all the danger I ran.’

‘But your wounds?’

‘I slipped and cut my shin on the sharp cobbles, that’s true.’

‘Mr. Wogan, it will not do! Had I known your name this evening when Lady Mary made us acquainted, certain expressions properly distasteful to you would not have escaped my lips. But now I can make amends for them to the gallant gentleman who brought a wounded enemy out of a cross-fire. I apologise to you, but I cannot oblige you to the extent you wish, however you may attempt to make light of your courage, and of the obligation on my side.’

‘Sure, Colonel, to be done with adornment of the real truth, I only saved such a fine man to have the pleasure of killing him myself.’

Here the Colonel broke into a laugh.

‘Mr. Wogan, if I drew my sword and stood up before you without making a parry or a lunge, would you kill me?’

‘No, indeed, there would be little diversion in that game,’ said Wogan, who was now grown quite melancholic.

‘Well, that is the utmost you will get from me, I am much pressed for time, and look to find another.'

'Another!' Wogan's failing hopes revived. 'Praise be to the Saints! I see your mistake, and you shall understand it in a twinkling. The other and myself are just one man for these purposes. George is my *alter ego*. We are the greatest friends, and have been taken for each other when we are talking. I'll talk all the time we fight, and you can fancy it is George whose ribs you are trying to tickle.'

The Colonel, however, was obdurate, and before Wogan could hit upon a likelier argument both gentlemen heard a cough.

Someone was standing on Lady Oxford's doorstep looking towards them.

The Colonel coughed in reply, and the figure — it was Mr. Kelly's — waved his hand, and marched, like the ghost of Hamlet's father, toward St. James's Park.

The Colonel followed, like Hamlet, and Mr. Wogan followed the Colonel. Would there be a fourth to follow Wogan? The three men marched in the moonlight, their footsteps rang boldly on the road. Was there a fourth behind them stealthily creeping in the shadow of the wall? As they turned a corner out of the square Wogan fell a little further to the rear. He kept his head screwed upon his shoulders, and he saw a shadow slink round the corner. He listened, and heard the stealthy steps. He stopped; the steps ceased. Wogan went on again. He knew that Scrope was dogging them.

The figure in front moved silently on till he reached a sweet spot for an occasion, a little *clairière* among the trees, the smoothest sward, moonlight on the grass, dark shadow all around. There he stopped, turned, and dropped his cloak. The moon shone silvery on the silver shoulder-knots of Mr. Kelly. The other two gentlemen advanced.

'Nick,' exclaimed Kelly, 'you should be on your road to the coast.'

'At last!' cried Colonel Montague, dropping his cloak.

'A moment, sir,' said Kelly; 'I must dismiss my friend.'

'And would you be so mad? Are you to have nobody to see fair and run for the surgeon while the other gentleman makes his escape? George, I never knew you were so selfish.'

Kelly drew his friend a little way aside.

'Nick, I have that to do which cannot be done before a witness.'

Mr. Wogan merely gaped at this extraordinary speech. He noticed that Kelly looked white and haggard even for a man in the full moonlight.

'When I tell you that my honour hangs on it, that a witness is mere ruin, when I pray you by our old friendship? Nick, you *must* go out of eye-shot and ear-shot.'

'I think you are crazed,' said Wogan.

‘I have obeyed you all night. Things have taken the turn that you must obey me. There is no time for an explanation, the hour presses, and, Nick, my honour hangs on it. You must retire to where you can neither see nor hear us, or I am shamed — lost with the Cause.’

Mr. Kelly had been whispering, his voice trembled as the Cause was named. Wogan had only once seen him thus moved. Had he played his trumps amiss after all? It seemed he had not won the game.

‘Very well,’ said Wogan. ‘Goodnight. I will take care you are not troubled with witnesses.’

‘No,’ said Kelly suddenly, and then ‘yes; goodnight.’

He stood looking at Wogan a moment and then hurried off to the Colonel, who seemed, to Wogan’s judgment, a man apt to give the Parson his bellyful. Wogan twitched his cloak about him, and took his road down a path, bordered by bushes. It was the path by which they had come into the Park. Wogan was determined that the Parson should not be troubled by witnesses.

From his boyhood Mr. Wogan has had a singular passion for bird’s-nesting. He idly scanned the bushes as he marched, for he had heard a twig snap, and in a thick bush he saw what at a first glance certainly resembled a very large brown bird’s-nest. Looking more narrowly at this curiosity there were shining eyes under the nest, a circumstance rarely found in animated nature.

Mr. Wogan paused and contemplated this novelty. The bush was deep; the novelty was of difficult access because of the tangled boughs. Wogan reckoned it good to show a puzzled and bemused demeanour, as of one who has moored himself by the punch-bowl.

‘It’s a very fine bird,’ he said aloud. ‘I wonder what is the exact species this fine fowl may belong to?’

Then he wagged his head in a tipsy manner, and so lurched down the path singing:

‘I heard a bird
Sing in a bush,

And on his head
Was a bowl of punch,
La-la-loodie!'

But Wogan's eye was cocked back over his shoulder, for he hoped that the fowl, thinking the hunter gone, would save him trouble by breaking cover. The bush did not stir, however; all was deadly still.

Wogan lurched back to the bush, still singing, parted the branches, and peered in. His mind, in fact, was quite fixed as to the nature and name of this nocturnal fowl.

He spied into the bush. 'I have heard, in France, of a bird called "the cuckoo Kelly,"' he said, 'I wonder if this can be *le cocu* Scrope?'

Something glittered in the heart of the bush. Mr. Wogan leaped aside, his hat spun round on his head, he was near blinded by the flame and smoke of a pistol discharged almost *à bout portant*. A figure had scrambled out of the bush on the further side, and was running at a great pace towards St. James's.

Mr. Wogan gave a view halloo, and set off at the top of his own pace in pursuit. He was swift of foot when young, sound of wind, and long of stride.

At every step he gained on the flying figure, which, he happily remembered, might be armed with another pistol. These commodities usually go in pairs. Reflecting on this, and reckoning his distance to a mathematical nicety, Mr. Wogan applied his toe to that part of the flying gentleman's figure which he judged most accessible and most appropriate to his purpose. The flying gentleman soared softly into a parabola, coming down with a crash, while a pistol fell from his hand. As the priming was spilled, Mr. Wogan let the weapon lie, and courteously assisted the prostrate person to rise.

'I fear I stumbled over you, sir,' he said. 'I hope I was not so unfortunate as to hurt you. Why, 'tis Mr. Scrope, the celebrated critic and amateur of Virgil. Mr. Scrope, the writer of ballads.'

'You are a brutal Irish bully,' said Scrope, whose hands and face were bleeding, for he had the mischance to slip on a gravel path covered with sharp little flints at the top of the Canal.

'Nay, when last we met it was my poetry that you criticised, and now 'tis my manners that do not please you! How could I guess that it was Mr. Scrope who lay in a bush to watch an explanation between gentlemen? This time, sir, of your flight, you have not two horses to carry you off, and I am not barefoot. Suppose we take up our conversation where we left it when last you ran away? You have a sword I see.'

Scrope's sword was already out, and he made a desperate pass at Wogan, who broke ground and drew his own weapon. Scrope was no match for his reach and skill in fence.

‘Why, sir, our positions are altered,’ said Wogan. ‘Now it is you who make errors, and I who play critic and instructor.’

Wogan made a parade in *contre de carte*.

‘Look, sir, your blade was beaten a good half foot out of line. Had I chosen to riposte, my sword-hilt would have rung on your breast-bone. Ah, that was rather better,’ he said, stepping a pace back, and offering his breast full like a fencing master with his pupil. ‘But you did not really extend yourself. Now, sir, *un, deux, doublez, dégagez, vite!*’ and Mr. Wogan passed his sword through the lappet of Scrope’s coat, coming back on guard. ‘That is how you ought to lunge. There is another thing that I would have you notice. Coming on rashly as you do, I could stop you at any moment with a time thrust. I have only to extend my long arm, and where are you?’

Scrope broke ground, sweating, and drew breath:

‘You cowardly *maître d’armes!*’ he exclaimed between two pants.

‘Cowardly, sir? Am I a spy? Or a nameless, obscene rhymer? Do I carry pistols and try to use them? Fie, Mr. Scrope, you must see that a coward who meant to kill you would have done so long ago, and left you here — with an insult, and without a surgeon. You remember the little square at Avignon. You want another lesson.’

Wogan parried, riposted, and just grazed his opponent on the fore-arm.

‘*Touché!*’ he said. ‘Now you see I do not mean to kill you: at least, not with the sword. To do so would be to oblige a lady whom I have no desire to please. Would you prefer to lay down your weapon and come frankly to my embrace? You remember our fond hugs at Brampton Bryan? By the way, Mr. Scrope,’ asked Wogan, as an idea occurred to him, ‘the night is warm and you seem heated, do you swim? The place is convenient for a bathe, and sheltered from coarse observation.’

With this remark Wogan switched Scrope’s sword out of his hand by a turn of the wrist in *flanconade*. The blade flew up and fell flashing in the water of the Canal.

‘Now, sir, your life is at my mercy. You have betrayed my Cause; you have nearly murdered my friend; you have insulted two ladies of my acquaintance; you have censured my poetry; and you have spoiled my hat with your pistol bullet. I repeat, do you swim? There are two places here mighty convenient for a ducking.’

Here Mr. Wogan caught his enemy by the collar.

‘The Canal is shallow; Rosamond’s Pool is deep. You have your choice; safety and prose, or poetry and peril?’

Scrope was squirming in Wogan's grip like a serpent. When Mr. Wogan had calmed him he carried Mr. Scrope like a babe to the edge of the Canal.

'One, two, three!' he said, heaving Mr. Scrope backward and forward, like children setting a swing in motion. 'And away!'

A heavy body flew through the air, flashed into the Canal, and did not at first arise to the surface.

'I hope he has not hit his head or broken his neck,' said Wogan with anxiety. 'It would be very disagreeable to have to wade for him.'

His fears were soon set at rest. Scrope scrambled to his feet, the water reaching nearly to his middle. In his dripping perruque he cut a figure odd enough, and sufficiently pitiable.

'A water god! A Triton!' cried Wogan. 'Have you a Virgil in your pocket? You might study the marine deities whom you resemble. You are sure you have again forgotten to bring the Virgil you desired for Mr. Kelly's use at Avignon.'

'D —— n you, I shall see your bowels burned before your eyes for this, you Popish traitor,' cried Scrope, shaking his fist.

'That is as may be. You have done what you can to that end already. You have told all you know; as regards myself it is not very much, and I am not in Newgate yet. Moreover, I know a way out. But stop, I cannot possibly permit you to land, for Scrope was wading to the bank. 'Stay where you are and admire the moonshine! If you set foot on shore I will merely throw you in again! You might be hurt.

Scrope turned and was beginning to wade to the other side of the Canal.

'It really is not safe in the middle if you do not swim,' cried Wogan. 'Moreover, I can easily be at the further bank before you.' Mr. Wogan suited the action to the word. He ran round the bank as Scrope waded across. He met his bedraggled victim at the water's edge. Mr. Wogan uttered a joyful whoop; there was a great splash and again Scrope sank beneath the surface. He regained his feet and rose spluttering. 'I do trust, Mr. Scrope, that you are not hectic, or subject to rheumatism,' said Wogan with sympathy.

Wogan walked to the centre of the path across the top of the Canal. He spread his cloak upon the grass and sat down, contemplating the moonlight on Buckingham House. There was a sweet odour of the budding may in the air.

'A more peaceful scene, Mr. Scrope,' he cried, 'I have rarely witnessed. All the poet whom you tried to crush wakes in my bosom. I shall recite Mr. Pope's celebrated Night piece for your benefit.'

Mr. Wogan then arose from his seat on the grass, and, raising his hand towards the Moon, delivered Mr. Pope's lines in his best manner.

‘As when the Moon, refulgent lamp of Night,
O’er Heaven’s clear azure spreads her sacred light.
When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
And not a cloud o’erspreads the solemn scene.’

‘You are not listening, Mr. Scrope!’

Scrope was listening, but not to Wogan. Wogan ceased from reciting and listened also. He heard steps and voices of men approaching. Presently, to his great amazement, he recognised the tones of Kelly and Montague, whose mere existence had been banished from his mind. He was yet more surprised when they both came in view, walking very friendly together.

Wogan rose as they drew near him.

‘What, both of you?’ he exclaimed.

‘You do not seem to be glad to see us again, sir?’ said Colonel Montague.

‘And devil a scratch between the pair of you!’ cried Mr. Wogan. ‘George, what does this mean? Am I to hear,’ he asked with honest indignation, ‘that one of you has debased himself to an apology?’

He looked from one to the other much perplexed in mind.

‘It is too long a tale for the opportunity, Mr. Wogan,’ said the Colonel laughing. ‘But *what* does that mean?’

He pointed to the Water God in the perruque, whose shadow was reflected in the calm bosom of the lake.

‘Colonel Montague,’ cried Scrope, ‘I appeal to you as a Protestant and an officer of his Majesty’s for your protection against an Irish, Popish, Jacobite conspirator.’

‘That gentleman,’ said Wogan, ‘whom I have been entertaining with Mr. Pope’s poem, is an English Protestant, Whig, spy, and murderer, and even, I suspect, a writer in the newspapers. He persists in staying out in the water there, where I cannot get at him. He is one of the Maritime Powers. Egad! George, you know Mr. Scrope of Northumberland and Grub Street?’

George bowed to Mr. Scrope.

‘The fourth time you see, sir, has been lucky, contrary to the proverb,’ he said politely.

‘The poor devil’s teeth are chattering audibly,’ said Colonel Montague. ‘May I ask you to explain his situation, Mr. Wogan?’

‘Faith, sir, the story, as you say, is too long for the occasion. And I want an explanation myself. After a gentleman has trod on another gentleman’s foot, here you both are, well and smiling. I am betrayed,’ cried Mr. Wogan, ‘in the character of a friend. I could not have thought it of George.’

‘What was the pistol shot we heard, Nick?’ asked Mr. Kelly.

‘That was Mr. Scrope firing at me.’

‘And the view halloo that might have wakened the dead?’

‘That was me remonstrating with Mr. Scrope. But I crave your pardon for my thoughtlessness. No doubt the noise brought up some ungentlemanly person who interrupted you in your explanation. You will begin it again? Mr. Scrope and I will be delighted to see fair play, but you will see it from the water, Mr. Scrope. You don’t come out yet.’

‘Our honours, about which you are so kindly concerned, Mr. Wogan, are as intact as our persons,’ said the Colonel.

‘Then you have been finding out that George saved your life, or you saved George’s, some time in the dark ages, all to prevent you killing each other in a friendly way?’

‘You are in an ingenious error, Mr. Wogan; but Mr. Johnson and I have important business together in the town, and we must bid you farewell. Pray allow that dripping gentleman to land and go to bed.’

‘But I cannot take him with me, and it is purely inconvenient to let him follow me, for the precise reason that he would not follow me at all, but my friend Mr. Johnson. I am like my countryman who caught a Tartar in the Muscovite wars. To be sure, I might tie him to a tree with his garters. Come out, Mr. Scrope, and be tied to a tree!’

‘No, no,’ said the Colonel; ‘your friend will die of a cold.’

‘Then what am I to be doing?’ asked Wogan. ‘He is a very curious gentleman.’

‘I must leave that for you and your friend to determine,’ said Colonel Montague. He turned to Kelly. ‘In ten minutes,’ said he, moving off.

‘In ten minutes, Corydon,’ said Kelly, and Wogan thought he heard the Colonel mutter, ‘Oh, damnation!’

It was all Greek to Wogan, and Kelly seemed in no mind to translate the Greek for his baser comprehension.

‘Be off, Nick,’ said he. ‘I have ten minutes to wait here, and for ten minutes Mr. Scrope shall stand in the pond. You have that much law. It is time enough for your long legs.’

‘And do you think I am leaving Mr. Scrope to follow you while I go quietly to bed?’ asked Wogan, who was in truth hurt by the proposal. ‘No. I shall take him with me. It is the best plan after all.’

‘It will not matter, I think, whether he follows me or no; and, Nick, as to going to bed, I hope it will not be on this side of the Channel. Truth, I should be blaming you as it is for your delay, but I have no heart to it.’ He had dropped into the Irish accent, a thing very rare with him. ‘For the world topples about me to-night, and the sight of a friend is very pleasant to me. There! It is all I had to say to you. Goodnight. Good-bye.’

He clapped his hand on Wogan’s shoulder and then sat himself down on the grass. If Mr. Scrope had had his wits about him, he might have chosen this occasion to creep out of the water, for Wogan was paying little heed to him.

‘George,’ said he, ‘it seems the game has gone against you. But I have the simplest plan imaginable to put matters straight. What if you give me the key to that pretty despatch-box? You see if I go to your lodging and am taken—’

‘No!’ cried Kelly.

‘But yes,’ said Wogan, seating himself on the grass beside Kelly. ‘If I am taken, why, it’s just Nick Wogan that’s taken, and no one but Nick Wogan is a penny the worse. But if you go and are taken — well, there’s the Doctor’s daughter.’

Kelly would not listen to reason. It was not, he said, a mere matter of slipping into the house and burning the cyphers. But a man must pay for his own shortcomings, and the whole aspect of affairs had changed. And then he fell to thanking Wogan, which thanks Wogan cut short; and so they sat in the moonlight like a couple of owls, only they did not talk.

‘You are very thoughtful,’ said Kelly, with a tired sort of laugh, ‘and you have thought most of your ten minutes away.’

‘I was thinking,’ said Wogan, ‘of a word you used to say about a little parsonage in Ireland and your Latin books, and an acre or two of land, and how, like a fool, I laughed at you for speaking so.’

Kelly rose very quickly to his feet.

‘Come, Nick,’ said he almost sharply. ‘My ten minutes are almost up. I cannot watch Scrope after that, and you may just as well save your life as lose it.’

‘I mean to take him with me,’ said Wogan. ‘Come out, my friend. I’ll give him the slip, never fear, when I want to.’

‘And then you will start for France?’

Mr. Wogan did not mention a couple of obstacles which would at all events delay his departure. In the first place he had a little matter of business with Lord Sidney Beauclerk, and in the second it would be no more than politeness to inquire after Kelly’s health before he went abroad. He kept silent upon this subject, and again summoned Scrope, who waded with his teeth chattering from the water. He drove Scrope before him along a bypath, leaving the Parson standing alone in the moonlight. Mr. Wogan had no expectation that he would ever see his friend’s face again, and therefore he swore most heartily at Scrope.

‘Come, my man,’ said he, ‘I am to see that you do not catch cold,’ and he marched Scrope at a round pace eastwards as far as Temple Bar, and thence northwards to Soho, and from Soho westwards.

Scrope had been enjoined strictly not to open his lips; but, on the other hand, he heard a great deal about his own character, his merits as a poet, and the morals of his family, which was no doubt new to him. Some three hours later, when the moon had long since set, the pair came to the fields behind Holland House, and there Wogan took his leave of Scrope. The man could do no more harm for that night, and he had for the moment lost his taste for spying.

‘You will stay here for five minutes,’ said Wogan, who in five seconds was lost in the darkness. He knew a shy place in Westminster where he could pass the night undisturbed. As he laid his head on the pillow it seemed to him to be a good year since he had driven off from Sir Harry Goring’s house in the morning. And what of the Parson, whom he had last seen, a sombre figure in the moonlight by the water of St. James’s Park? Well, the night had only then begun for Kelly, who, to be sure, had lain abed all the day before.

CHAPTER XXI

IN WHICH MR. KELLY SURPRISES SMILINDA

The devil in all this affair, it was that Wogan could not be in two, or even three, places at once. While Kelly was shut in with Lady Oxford earlier, Mr. Wogan, as he has said, was on the wrong side of the door. There he was again, after the rout, while he conversed with Colonel Montague in the street. Again, while Wogan was busy with Mr. Scrope in St. James's Park, Kelly and the Colonel were exchanging their unknown explanations, of a kind not admired by Mr. Wogan, which ended in their walking, like a pair of brothers, towards George's rooms. In all these conjunctures Mr. Wogan's advice, could he have been present, might have been serviceable, or at least his curiosity must have been assuaged.

What did pass between Kelly and Lady Oxford when the rout was over, and what were the considerations which induced George and the Colonel to resist their natural and mutual desire for an honourable satisfaction?

These questions (that perplexed Wogan when he awoke, about noon, from the fatigue of the previous day) were answered later by Kelly, and the answer must be given before the later adventures and sorrows of George can be clearly narrated. Sure, no trifle could have turned sword and gown into friends that night.

When Lady Oxford and Kelly were left alone in the empty rooms, among the waning candles and scattered cards, Lady Oxford marched, like indignant royalty, to the end of the inner withdrawing-room, where they could not be heard or interrupted without warning.

Mr. Kelly followed with a mind made up. It was, after all, Lady Oxford that had betrayed him, but he had, by an accident of forgetfulness, kept her letters, and they now gave him the advantage. If those letters could be saved, the Chevalier's papers could and should be saved too, and himself rescued from peril and Rose from much unhappiness. Rose was at the bottom of his thoughts that night; her face was mirrored there bright, it seemed, with divinity. The Chevalier was there too, no doubt, but Rose peeped over his shoulder. Mr. Kelly, then, hardened his heart, and, for love and loyalty, meant to push his advantage over Lady Oxford to its limits. He approached her as she stood retired.

'Wretch,' cried Lady Oxford, 'you promised to burn my letters. Of all traitors you are the most abandoned and perfidious.'

The Parson thought that memory supplied him with a parallel, but he replied:

'It is a promise all men make and all men break.'

Lady Oxford struck her hand upon a table.

'You swore you had burned them.'

This time George was less ready with his answer, but her ladyship stood awaiting it.

'My passion must be my excuse, madam; I could not bear to part with these elegant testimonies of your esteem. It is as I have the honour to tell your ladyship; the brocades are in my strong box in my lodgings. To-morrow they shall be restored to your hands.'

'To-morrow!' she said, in a voice of despair. 'To-morrow! I am undone!'

'It is not so long to wait for the finery, and I do not think the streets are so purely unsafe as you suppose.'

'I am undone!' she repeated. 'The public will ring of my name. I shall become a byword, a thing of scorn for every scribbler to aim his wit at.'

She gnawed her fingers in an agony of fear and perplexity. Mr. Kelly had learned enough. There was plainly no chance within the lady's knowledge, as he had hoped, of saving her letters. Neither, then, could the King's papers be saved. He bowed, and took a step towards the door.

'Stop!'

Mr. Kelly turned with alacrity at the eager cry, but Lady Oxford had no words of hope for him.

'You must not leave this house to-night, or must leave it secretly by the garden.'

Kelly smiled grimly. Her ladyship was suddenly grown most tender of her reputation now that it was in peril.

'Your ladyship's care for me, and your hospitality overcome me, but I have, as you perhaps remarked, an assignation of honour with Colonel Montague which nothing must prevent me from keeping. He is longing for an instant revenge — at the Hazard Table. A while ago, you may pardon me for observing, your ladyship was remote from feeling this sudden and violent anxiety on my hand.'

Mr. Kelly's irony was poured out to deaf ears. Lady Oxford paced to and fro about the room, wringing her hands in her extremity. Then she stopped suddenly.

'I might drive to the Minister's.' She reached out a hand towards the bell. Kelly shook his head.

'That visit would be remarked upon unfavourably by the friends of my Lord Oxford, who are not in the Minister's interest. Mr. Walpole has no party to-night, and must have gone to bed— ’tis verging on two o’clock — or else he is in his cups. Moreover, the *Dolliad,* the ballad on his sister, was credited to your pen. You know that Mr. Walpole loves a broad jest, and loves revenge. He will not protect you nor miss so fair an opportunity. Nay, I think I read in to-morrow’s *Flying Post*, “In the papers of the prisoner Kelly, among other treasonable matter reserved for a later occasion, were found the following letters of a high curiosity, which we are graciously permitted to publish; one begins — *Oh, my Delicious Strephon*.”

Lady Oxford snapped her fan between her fingers and dashed the fragments in Kelly’s face. He owns that he cannot well complain she served him ill, but he wanted to repay her in some sort for her innuendo about his fate at the hangman’s hands, and similar favours. Beholding her passion, which was not unjust, he felt bitterly ashamed of his words.

‘You coward!’ she said. Her dark eyes glared at him from a face white as the ivory of her broken fan, and then, quite suddenly, she burst into a storm of tears. Kelly’s shame was increased a thousandfold.

‘I humbly crave your ladyship’s pardon,’ he said. ‘I have spoken in terms unworthy of a chairman. But some remarks of your ladyship’s on a future event, to me of painful interest, had left an unhappy impression.’

But Lady Oxford paid no heed to the stammered apology. As Mr. Kelly moved to her she waived him aside with her hands, and, dropping on to a sofa, pressed her weeping face into the cushions. Sobs shook her; she lay abandoned to distress.

Mr. Kelly stood apart and listened to the dolorous sound of her weeping. That was true which she had said; he had promised to burn those letters; he had sworn that he had burned them. His fine plan of using them as a weapon against her began to take quite another complexion. There were, no doubt, all manner of pious and respectable arguments to be discovered in favour of the plan, if only he pried about for them. But a saying of Mr. Scrope’s was suddenly scrawled out in his recollections: ‘Æneas was an army chaplain who invoked his religion when he was tired of the lady, and so sailed away with a clear conscience.’ Kelly murmured ‘Rose’ to himself, and, again, ‘Rose,’ seeking to fortify himself with the mention of her name. But it had the contrary effect. Even as he heard his lips murmuring it, the struggle was over.

George had a number of pretty finical scruples, of which his conduct at this crisis of his fortunes was a particular example. He relates how it seemed to him that at the mention of her name Rose threw out a hand to him and drew him up out of a slough; how he understood that his fine plan was unworthy of any man, and entirely despicable in the man whom she, out of her great condescension, had stooped to love; how he became aware that he owed it to her, since she was a woman, that no woman’s fame, whether a Smilinda’s or no, should be smirched by any omission of his; how he suddenly felt in his very marrow that it would dishonour Rose to save her even from great misery by a *lâcheté* towards another of her sex. His duty was revealed to him in that moment, as clear as it was unexpected. He sets his revulsion of feeling wholly to Rose’s account, as a man in love should, but very likely her ladyship’s fan had something to do with it.

He spoke again to Lady Oxford, and very gently.

‘Madam, it is true. I promised to burn your letters. I swore that I had burned them. My honour, I perceive, can only be saved by saving yours.’

Lady Oxford raised her head from the cushions and stared at him with wondering eyes.

‘Let us play this game *cartes sur table*,’ continued Kelly.

Her ladyship rose from her sofa and sat herself in a chair at a table, still wondering, still suspicious. George took the chair on the other side of the table, and spoke while Lady Oxford dried the tears upon her face. To help her at all he must know all that she knew. His first business was to remove her ladyship’s suspicions.

‘I understand that your ladyship, by some means of which I am as yet ignorant, has become aware of a certain Plot, and has carried the knowledge to Mr. Walpole.’

Lady Oxford neither agreed nor denied. She admitted the truth of Mr. Kelly’s statement in her own way.

‘You bragged and blabbed to my worst enemy, to Lady Mary, with her poisonous pen,’ and her fine features writhed with hatred as she spoke Lady Mary’s name.

‘There your ladyship was misled,’ returned Kelly. ‘My lips have been sealed, as I already had the honour to inform you. My Lady Mary may not love you, but she is innocent of this offence. If she wrote those rhymes, she was, indeed, more my enemy than yours; and my enemy, as your ladyship is aware, she is not.’

Lady Oxford understood the strength of the argument.

‘Ah, yes,’ she said thoughtfully. ‘The apothecary’s daughter!’

The contemptuous phrase slipped from Lady Oxford by mistake, and was not at all uttered in a contemptuous voice. But she had no doubt fallen into a habit of so terming the girl in her thoughts. None the less, however, it stung Mr. Kelly, who was at some trouble to keep his voice gentle. He knew how much Smilinda owed at this moment to the apothecary’s daughter.

‘The young lady to whom I conceive you refer, Miss Townley, is of a family as ancient, loyal, and honourable as your ladyship's own, and you may have seen on what terms both ladies were this evening. Moreover, Lady Mary was purely ignorant of Miss Townley's very existence when that pasquinade was written.'

'Then who wrote it?'

'Mr. Scrope, as I have the honour to repeat.'

'Scrope?' she answered in a quick question, as though for the first time she understood that George might well be right. He gave the reasons for his belief as he had given them at the Deanery to Nicholas Wogan. They were to the last degree convincing. Lady Oxford was persuaded long before Mr. Kelly had come to an end. A look came into her face which Kelly could not understand, a look of bitter humiliation. 'Scrope,' she muttered, as her fingers played with the cards upon the table. She overturned a card which lay face downwards on the table, and it chanced to be the knave of hearts.

'Your ladyship now sees that you fell into a natural error,' continued Kelly, who was anxious to smooth Lady Oxford's path, 'in consequence of which you took a natural revenge. May I ask how you secured the means of revenge? How, in a word, you came to know of the hidden Plot within the Plot?'

Her ladyship's answer fairly startled Mr. Kelly. It was not given at once. She still played with the cards, and overturned another. It was the knave of clubs.

'The cards tell you,' she said with a bitter smile.

Mr. Kelly leaned back in his chair open-mouthed. 'Scrope?' he asked.

'Scrope,' replied her ladyship. 'I received a humble letter from him praying that I would forgive his odious ingratitude, and, by way of peace-offering, bidding me tell my Lord Oxford—'

'Who had already withdrawn,' said George. 'I think I understand,' Lady Oxford's look of humiliation had enlightened him, 'and I think your ladyship understands with me. Mr. Scrope is a sort of a gentleman, and would prefer to do his dirty work without appearing as a spy. He has made use of your ladyship. He sends you the Plot and spurs you to disclose it with his ballad. He would have disclosed it himself, I doubt not, had not your ladyship served his turn. But Mr. Scrope has his refinements, and, besides that he spares himself, would take a particular pleasure in compassing my ruin at the same time that he outwitted you.'

Little wonder that Lady Oxford broke in upon Mr. Kelly's reasonings. It must have been sufficiently galling for her to reflect that in exacting her revenge she had been the mere instrument of a man she had tossed aside.

'It is both of us that he has ruined, not you alone,' she cried.

Certainly, Mr. Scrope was a person to reckon with, and had killed quite a covey of birds with one stone.

‘Are you sure?’ asked Kelly. ‘Are you sure of that?’

She bent across the table eagerly, but she did not reply to the question.

‘Will you kill Scrope,’ she flashed out, ‘and you and I part friends?’

Kelly, even in the midst of this tangle of misfortunes, could not but smile.

‘I fear that I may have been anticipated. Mr. Scrope has been watching your ladyship’s house to-night — and Mr. Wogan observed him, and, I conceive, has undertaken for him.’

Lady Oxford at that smiled too. ‘Then he is a dead man,’ she said, slowly savouring her words like wine.

‘But his death, madam, will not save your letters,’ said Kelly; and the fire died out of her face.

‘He has betrayed us both,’ she moaned. It seemed she had already forgotten how she herself had seized at the occasion of betraying Mr. Kelly. Kelly was in no mood to debate these subtleties.

‘Are you sure?’ he contented himself with asking for a second time. ‘There is one thing Mr. Scrope has not done. He has taken no measures purposely to insure that your letters will be discovered, since he does not know of them; else, no doubt, he would have done his worst. We two are still engaged in a common cause — your ladyship’s. Your intentions in my regard I were much less than a man if I did not forgive, granting (what I now know) your ladyship’s erroneous interpretation of my ground of offence, the babbling to Lady Mary. Does your ladyship permit me, then, at the eleventh hour, to save you, if I can find a way, from the odious consequences of Mr. Scrope’s unparalleled behaviour?’

‘You?’

Lady Oxford’s brows were drawn together in perplexity. The notion that Mr. Kelly was prepared to do this thing was still new and strange to her.

‘You?’ Her eyes searched his for the truth of his purpose, and found it. ‘You?’ she said again, but in a voice of gratitude and comprehension. And then, with a gesture of despair, she thrust her chair back and stood up. ‘You cannot save yourself. I cannot save you.’

‘No,’ replied George, ‘myself I cannot save; but it may not be too late to save my honour, which is now wrapped up in that of your ladyship’s. My case is desperate; what can be done for yours? Be plain with me. How much does your ladyship know?’

Lady Oxford turned away from the table. In the face of Kelly’s generosity no doubt she hesitated to disclose the whole truth of her treachery.

‘I know no more than that you are in peril of arrest,’ she said.

‘Madam, surely you know more than that. You spoke earlier this evening of my arrest, and you spoke with the assurance of a more particular knowledge.’

Lady Oxford took a turn across the room.

'Oh, my God, what can I do?' she cried, lifting her hands to her head. 'I hear Lady Mary's laughter and the horrid things they will say!'

The whimsical inconsequence of Smilinda's appeal to her Maker did not fail to strike Kelly as ludicrous, but, as his own case was hopeless and abandoned, any thought of revenge or mockery had ceased to agitate him. His honour now stood in saving all that was left of hers from open and intolerable shame, and Rose beckoned him to the task.

'Surely you know more,' he persisted quietly.

Lady Oxford gave in and came back to the table.

'The Messengers should be waiting for you in Ryder Street.'

At last Kelly knew the worst. He would be taken before he reached his doorstep. There would be no chance of saving the cyphers in his strong box. Could he save Smilinda's letters?

He bent his forehead upon his hands, thinking. Smilinda watched him; her lips moved as though she was praying.

'I might be carried to your lodgings and claim what is mine,' she suggested.

'You would be carried to a trap — a *souricière*. Ten to one you would be arrested by the Messengers. At all events your visit would be remarked upon, and you would not obtain the letters.'

Lady Oxford had no other proposal at hand, and there was silence in the room. Mr. Kelly remained with his face buried in his hands; he took the air in long deep breaths. No other sound was audible except the faint ticking of the clock in the outer withdrawing-room. For Smilinda was holding her breath lest she should disturb the man whom she had betrayed, and who was now wholly occupied with the attempt to save her. Then she remarked that the sound of his breathing ceased. She bent forwards; he raised his face to hers. He did not seem to see her; his eyes kindled with hope.

'You have found a way?' she whispered; and he whispered back:

'A desperate chance, but it may serve.' He started to his feet. 'It must serve.'

A smile brightened over his face.

'It will serve.'

Sure he showed as much pleasure as if he had discovered an issue for himself.

'Quick!' said Smilinda, with a smile to answer his. 'Tell me!'

'Colonel Montague—'

'What of him? Why speak to me now of him?'

Lady Oxford's face had clouded at the name.

'He is your only salvation.'

'What can he do?'

‘Everything we need. His loyalty to the present occupant of the Throne is entirely beyond a suspicion. He can act as he will without peril to his reputation. He can even rescue your papers, which are not in the same strong box as my own. The Colonel, if any man, can assist you if he will.’

‘But he will not,’ said her ladyship sullenly.

‘He will,’ answered Kelly confidently, ‘if properly approached. He is a man of honour, I take it? You will pardon me for saying that your ladyship’s flattering behaviour towards me, in his presence (for the nature of which you had, doubtless, your own particular reasons) can have left him in no doubt on certain heads; while it is equally plain that your ladyship hath no longer any very tender interest in keeping his esteem and regard. Nevertheless, being a gentleman, he will not abandon your ladyship’s cause.’

Lady Oxford was in no way comforted.

‘It may well be as you say,’ she returned with a look at Mr. Kelly. She had already one example of how much a gentleman could forgive a woman when she stood in need of his help. ‘But, Mr. Kelly, you cannot come at Colonel Montague.’

‘Why not?’

‘You know very well that he lodges in the same house as yourself. I sent a lackey with a note to you, yesterday. And your reply was dated from 13 Ryder Street.’

Mr. Kelly stepped back, he could hardly believe his ears.

‘Colonel Montague — lodges — in the same house as myself?’ he asked.

‘Yes,’ Lady Oxford replied in a dispirited fashion. She had lost heart altogether. Mr. Kelly, on the other hand, was quite lifted up by the unexpected news.

‘This is a mere miracle in nature,’ he cried. ‘I only went into my present lodgings two days ago. I have been abroad for the greater part of the time, and asleep the rest, and have had no knowledge of the other tenants, even of their names. ‘Faith, madam, your letters are as safe as though the ashes were now cold in your grate.’

‘But the Colonel will have gone home, and you are to be taken in Ryder Street. You will not get speech with him.’

‘Nay, madam, he has not gone home. He is waiting for me now.’ Lady Oxford started. ‘Ah, your ladyship remembers. He is waiting for me. Ten yards from your doorstep — ten yards at the farthest,’ and Kelly actually chuckled. Carried away by his plan, he began to pace the room as he unfolded it. ‘I shall see the Colonel, and if I can by any means do so, I will acquaint him, as far as is necessary, with the embarrassing posture of your affairs. I shall give him the key of the box containing the — brocades, and, if the Messengers be not already in possession of them, the rest must be entrusted to his honour as a gentleman and a soldier. The unexpected accident of our being fellow-lodgers gives him, to this end, a great advantage, and can scarce have occurred without the providence of — some invisible power or another which watches over your ladyship.’

Kelly thought that Lady Oxford this night had enjoyed what is called the Devil’s own luck.

‘Have I your ladyship’s leave to try my powers of persuasion with Colonel Montague?’

Very much to Kelly’s surprise she moved towards him, like one walking in her sleep.

‘You are bleeding,’ she said, and stanched with her handkerchief some drops from his brow, where it had been cut by the broken edges of the ivory fan. Then she went again into a bitter fit of weeping, which Kelly could never bear to see in a woman. She may have remembered the snow upon the lawn, years ago, and a moment’s vision of white honour. Then she stinted in her crying as suddenly as she had begun; in a time incredibly short you could not tell that she had wept.

‘You must carry a token. I must write. Oh my shame!’ she said, and sitting down to a scrutoire, wrote rapidly and briefly, sanded the paper, and offered it open to Kelly.

‘I cannot see it; your ladyship must seal it,’ he said, which she did with a head of Cicero.

George took the note, and said: ‘Now time presses, madam. I must be gone. I trust that, if not now, at least later, you may forgive me.’

Her lips moved, but no words came forth. Kelly made his bow, and so took leave of Smilinda, she gnawing her lips, as she watched him with her inscrutable eyes, moodily pushing to and fro with her foot the broken pieces of the fan on the polished floor.

There came into Kelly’s fancy his parting view of Rose at Avignon, her face framed among the vine leaves, in the open window; she leaning forth, with a forced smile on her dear lips and waving her kerchief in farewell. A light wind was stirring her soft hair at that time, and she crying ‘*Au revoir*! *Au revoir!* There was a scent of lilacs from the garden in the air of April, George remembered, and now the candles were dying in the sconces with a stench.

With these contrasted pictures of two women and two farewells in his fancy, Kelly was descending the wide empty staircase, not knowing too well where he went. Something seemed to stir, he lifted his eyes and before him he saw again the appearance of his King: the King, young and happy, and as beautiful as the dawn that was stealing into the room and dimming the lustres on the stairs.

Then the appearance moved aside, and Kelly found himself gazing into a great empty mirror that hung on the wall, facing the gallery above.

Lord Sidney Beauclerk, in fact, had not left the house with the other guests, and Kelly, remembering, laughed aloud as he reached the fresh air without.

CHAPTER XXII

AN ECLOGUE WHICH DEMONSTRATES THE PASTORAL SIMPLICITY OF CORYDON AND STREPHON

Wogan has told already how Kelly came out of the house in Queen’s Square, how he led the way to the glade, so convenient for the occasion, and how he dismissed his friend. George has since declared that he never was more tossed up and down in his mind than during that trifle of a promenade. Here was the Colonel that had insulted him, and wished nothing, more or less, than to cut his clerical throat. And here was Kelly, that must make friends with his enemy, if he was to save his honour, and the reputation, such as it was, of the woman whom he had once loved. It was a quandary. If Kelly began by showing a flag of truce, the Colonel, as like as not, would fire on it by way of a kick or cuff, and then a friendly turn to the conversation would be totally out of the possible. Had Kelly been six inches taller than he was and a perfect master of his weapon, he might have trusted to the chance of disarming the Colonel and then proposing a cartel, but unhappily it was the Elector’s officer who possessed these advantages. Thus Kelly could think of nothing except to get rid of Mr. Wogan’s presence as a witness of the explanation. He succeeded in that, and then marched back to the Colonel, who had stood aside while George conversed with his friend.

Kelly waited, as the wiser part, till the Colonel should show his hand. But the Colonel also waited, and there the two gentlemen stood speechless, just out of thrust of each other, while every convenience in nature called on them to begin.

At last the Colonel cleared his throat and said, ‘Reverend Mr. Lace-Merchant, I am somewhat at a loss as to how I should deal with you.’

‘Faith, it is my own case,’ thought George to himself, but all he uttered was, ‘Gallant Mr. Drill-Sergeant, the case seems clear enough. You trod on my foot, and,’ said George, as he let his cloak slip from his shoulders to the ground, ‘you invited me to take a walk; what circumstance now befogs your intellects?’

Kelly’s instincts, naturally good, though dimmed a trifle by a learned education and a clerical training, showed him but that one way out of the wood.

‘Several circumstances combine, sir. Thus, I do not want to save the hangman a job. Again, my respect for your cloth forbids me to draw sword on you, and rather prompts to a public battooning tomorrow in St. James’s. I therefore do but wait to favour you with this warning, which is more than a trafficker of your kidney deserves.’

‘Truth, sir, if you wait to cane me till tomorrow, I have every reason to believe that you may wait a lifetime. As to cloth, mine is as honourable as ever a German usurper’s livery.’

This did not promise a friendly conclusion, but George was ever honourably ready to support the honour of his gown, and he confesses that, at this moment, he somewhat lost sight of his main object.

The Colonel stepped forward with uplifted cane, a trifle of tortoise-shell and amber, in his hand.

George drew back one pace and folded his arms on his breast. His eyes, which are of an uncommon bright blue, were fixed on the Colonel’s.

‘You will find, sir, if you advance one foot, that I do not stand kick or cuff. You are dealing with one who knows his weapon’ (no experience could cure George of this delusion), ‘and who does not value his life at a straw. Moreover, you began a parley for which I did not ask, though I desired it, and I have to tell you that your honour is involved in continuing this conversation in quite another key.’

George stepped forward the pace he had withdrawn, and clasped his hands behind his back, watching the Colonel narrowly.

There was something in his voice, more in his eyes. The Colonel had seen fire, and knew a brave man when he met one. He threw down his cane and Kelly reckoned that the worst of his task was over.

‘You may compel me to fight,’ George went on, ‘and I never went to a feast with a better stomach, but first I have certain words that must be spoken to you.’

‘You cannot intend to escape by promising a discovery?’

‘Sir, I do not take you for a Messenger or a Minister. One or both I can find without much seeking, and, for that sufficient reason, before they lay hands on me I absolutely demand to speak to you on a matter closely touching your own honour, which, as I have never heard it impeached, I therefore sincerely profess my desire to trust.’

‘You are pleased to be complimentary, but I know not how my honour can be concerned with a Jacobite trafficker and his treasons.’

‘I make you this promise, that, if you do thus utterly refuse to listen for five minutes, I will give you every satisfaction at the sword’s point, or, by God! will compel you to take it, as you have been pleased to introduce battoons into a conversation between gentlemen. And if, when you have heard me, you remain dissatisfied, again I will give you a lesson with sharps. You see that we are not likely to be interrupted, and that I am perfectly cool. This is a matter to each of us of more than life or death.’

‘I do see that you desire to pique my curiosity for the sake of some advantage which I am unable to perceive. Perhaps you expect your friends on the scene?’

‘You may observe that I began by dismissing the only friend I have in this town. Do you, perhaps, suspect that Mr. Nicholas Wogan needs, or has gone to procure, assistance?’

‘I confess that I know that gentleman too well for any such suspicions.’

‘Then, sir, remember that the Roman says *noscitur a sociis*, and reflect that I am a friend of Mr. Wogan’s, who must stand sponsor, as you do not know me, for my honesty. Moreover,’ said George, working round by a risky way to his point, ‘had I wished to escape I could, instead of socking you, have sneaked off t’other way. You observed that I remained some minutes with a lady to-night after you and the rest of her company had withdrawn?’

‘It is very like your impudence to remind me of that among other provocations! I am not concerned in your merchant’s business of brocades.’

‘But, indeed, with your pardon, you are concerned in the highest degree, and that is just the point I would bring you to consider.’

‘I tire of your mysteries, sir,’ he said, shrugging his shoulders. ‘Speak on, and be brief.’

‘On these brocades turns the question whether the honour of a lady, which you are bound to cherish, shall be the laughing-stock of the town. Sir, in a word, you, and you only, can save that person; need I say more?’

‘Did she send you with this message to save your own skin?’

‘That is past saving, except by a miracle, which I am in no situation to expect will be wrought for me. Understand me, sir, I am out of hope of earthly salvation. I have nothing to gain, nothing to look for from man. I make you freely acquainted with that position of my affairs, which are purely desperate. And the person of whom we speak looks to you as her sole hope in the world. She sends you this, take it, I know not the contents, the seal, as you perceive, being unbroken.’

‘This looks more serious,’ said the Colonel, taking the sealed note which Kelly handed to him.

He pored over the letter, holding it up to the moonlight. ‘Do as the bearer bids you, if you would have me live,’ he read; then, with a bitter laugh, he tore the note into the smallest shreds, and was about to dash them down on the grass.

‘Hold, sir,’ Kelly said; ‘preserve them till you can burn them. Or — I have myself swallowed the like before now.’

The Colonel stared, and put the fragments into his pocket-book.

‘Well,’ he said, ‘I am hearing you.’

‘I thank you, sir; you will grant that I did not wrong you in trusting your generosity. If I am a free man tomorrow, or even to-night after this business is done, I shall have the honour of meeting you, wherever you are pleased to appoint. For my cloth have no scruple, I never was more than half a parson.'

'Sir, I shall treat you as you may merit. And now for your commands, which, it seems, I am in a manner under the necessity to obey.'

'You see this key, sir,' said Kelly, offering that of one of his strong boxes, 'take it, go to my lodgings, which, by a miracle, are in the same house as your own. Enter my parlour, 'tis on the ground floor; open the small iron strong box which this key fits, and burn all the — brocades which you find there.'

'This is a most ingenious stroke of the theatre! I am to burn, I perceive, all the papers, or brocades as you call them, which damn you for a Jacobite plotter! It is not badly contrived, sir, but you have come to the wrong agent I am acquainted with the ingenious works of the French playwrights.'

'Sir, you compel me, against my will, to be more plain with you than I desire. It is your own fault if I give you concern. On opening the coffer you may satisfy yourself of the hand of the writer, which cannot but be familiar to you. Moreover, the letters of the person for whom we are concerned are addressed (that you may not make the error which you apprehend) to one Strephon — not a cant name of a political plot.'

'She called you — Strephon?'

'She was so kind.'

'And I was Corydon,' groaned the Colonel between his teeth.

'*Arcades ambo!*' said George. 'But now 'tis the hour of a third shepherd! Lycidas, perhaps, *le plus heureux des trois*. Oh, Colonel, be easy, we are both yesterday's roses, or, rather, I am the rose of the day before yesterday.'

'And it is for this woman—'

'Ay, it is just for this woman that you are to risk your commission, for a risk there may be, and I my life, for I could get away from this place. You perceive that we have no alternative?'

'What must be, must,' he said, after some moments of thought; 'but what if I find the Messengers already in possession of your effects?'

'In that case I must depend solely on your own management and invention. But I may say that gold will do much, nay, everything with such fellows, and your position, moreover, as a trusted officer of your King's, will enable you to satisfy men not very eminent for scruples.'

'Gold! I have not a guinea, thanks to the cards, not a stiver in my rooms to-night. The cards took all.'

'Here, at least,' cried George, 'I can offer some kind of proof of my honesty, and even be of service. I am poor, Heaven knows, but there are my winnings, easily enough to corrupt four Messengers. Use the money; I have friends who will not let me starve in the Tower. Nay, delicacy is purely foolish. I insist that you take it.’

‘Mr. Johnson,’ the Colonel said, ‘you are a very extraordinary man.’

‘Sir, I am an Irishman,’ said George.

‘I will not say that I never met one like you, but I hope, after all accounts are settled between us, to have the advantage of your acquaintance. Sir, *au revoir*.’

‘I shall be with you, sir, in ten minutes after your arrival in your lodgings, whether the coast be clear or not. But let me attend you across the Park, as far as the corner of Pall Mall Street.’

If Kelly was an Irishman, Montague was an Englishman, and Kelly was well enough acquainted with that nation to know that the last proof given of his disinterestedness was by much the most powerful he could have used. He reflected again on the Devil’s own luck of Smilinda that night, for if the cards had gone contrary to her and George he could not have produced this demonstration of his loyalty, nor could he very well have invited the Colonel to pay the piper out of his own pocket.

The Colonel also walked silently, turning about in his mind all the aspects of this affair.

‘I understand,’ he said, ‘that you are upon honour not to involve me in tampering with anything disaffected? You will take no advantage whatever that may give *me* the air of being concerned, to shelter yourself or your party?’

‘You have my word for it, sir. Your honour, next to that in which we are equally concerned, is now my foremost consideration.’

He nodded, then sighed, as one not very well satisfied.

‘Things may come to wear a very suspicious complexion, but I must risk a little; the worse the luck. Mr. Johnson, neither of us has been very wise in the beginnings of this business.’

‘I came to that conclusion rather earlier than you, sir, and on very good evidence.’

‘No doubt,’ growled Montague, and he muttered once or twice, ‘Strephon, Corydon — Corydon, Strephon.’ Then he turned unexpectedly to Kelly. ‘You mentioned these letters as I was leaving the room, and I noticed that her ladyship grew white. She kept you, she knew then of the danger you were in and has just informed you of it. Now, how came she to have so particular a knowledge of your danger?’

Mr. Kelly did not answer a question which boded no good for Lady Oxford. ‘She had grounds of resentment against you in a certain ballad.’

Kelly seized at the chance of diverting Montague from his suspicions, and showed how the ballad was aimed at him no less than at her ladyship, and, without giving the Colonel time to interrupt,

‘Here I must bid you *au revoir*, sir,’ he said, ‘for some ten minutes, time enough for you to do what is needed, if, as I hope, you are not disturbed. The Messengers, I conceive, will be lurking for me in Ryder Street outside our common door; they will not think of preventing you from entering, and before I arrive, whatever befalls *me*, our common interest will be secured.’

‘You are determined to follow?’

‘What else can I do? I must know the end of this affair of the brocades. It is not wholly impossible that the Messengers have wearied of waiting, and think to take me abed tomorrow. When you have done what you know, you will leave my room, and I, if I am not taken, have some arrangements of my own to make. That, I presume, is not a breach of my engagement with you?’

‘Certainly not, sir. When I have left your room I am in no sense responsible for your actions. I wish you good fortune.’

While they thus walked and were sad enough, they came within ear-shot of Wogan, who, at that moment, was declaiming Mr. Pope’s Night piece to Mr. Scrope, who was in the Canal.

What conversation passed between the four gentlemen Wogan has already told, and he has mentioned how the Colonel went away, and how, after using pains to prevent Mr. Scrope from catching a cold, he himself withdrew to court slumber, and left Mr. Kelly alone in the moonlight.

Mr. Kelly did not remain in the open, but lay *perdu* on the shadowy side of the grove. Concealing himself from any chance of a rencounter, he allotted a space of twelve minutes by his watch, and time never paced more tardy with him in all his life. There was in his favour but the one chance that the Messengers might choose to take him abed in the early morning, when the streets would be empty. At this moment St. James’s Street was full of chairs and noises; night-rakers were abroad, and the Messengers, who are not very popular, might fear a rescue by the rabble. On this chance Kelly fixed his hopes, for if he could but be alone for ten minutes in his lodgings, he and his friends would have little to fear from any evidence in his possession.

If the Colonel succeeded, Lady Oxford, and, with her ladyship, George’s honour, were safe. If, by an especial miracle of heaven, George could have a few minutes alone in his room, the Cause and the faithful of the Cause would be safe. The Colonel, Kelly hoped, could hardly fail to do his part of the work; he would enter his own rooms unchallenged, his uniform and well-known face must secure him as much as that, and the Epistles of Smilinda would lie in ashes.

So he hoped, but nothing occurred as he anticipated.

CHAPTER XXIII

HOW THE MESSENGERS CAPTURED THE WRONG GENTLEMAN; AND OF WHAT LETTERS THE COLONEL BURNED.

For Colonel Montague was taken in Mr. Kelly's place, as you may see with your own eyes in his Grace of Dorset's Report to the Lords' Committees, where the informations of John Hutchins and Daniel Chandler, described as 'two of his Majesty's Messengers in Ordinary,' are printed. These did not chance to be men of a very high degree of intelligence, as their own confessions bear testimony, in itself a fortunate circumstance.

Colonel Montague, when he parted from the Parson at the grove in St. James's Park, walked into Pall Mall Street by the path at the corner of St. James's House and up to St. James's Street to the corner of Ryder Street, where he turned. Ryder Street, what with gentlemen walking home on the footpaths and chairs carried in the road, was a busy thoroughfare at this time of the night, and he remarked nothing extraordinary until he was close to his own doorstep. Then he distinguished, or rather seemed to distinguish — for in the doubtful light he could not be certain — at a little distance on the opposite side of the road a man in the blue and silver livery of Lady Oxford. The man was loitering at the edge of the path, taking a few steps now this way now that. He was tall, and not unlike Mr. Wogan in his girth. Now, Colonel Montague was aware that her ladyship possessed a lackey of just such a conspicuous figure.

'For once in a while,' he thought, 'the news-sheet spoke truth to-night. It seems it was Lady Oxford that set the reverend non-juror, for here is her lackey to point him out to the Messengers.'

With this thought urging him to get his business done quickly, Montague walked up to his door and knocked. On the instant, three men ran across the road and collared him. The capture was observed by one or two gentlemen, who stopped, and immediately a small crowd began to gather about them.

Montague was prudent enough to waste no time in a useless struggle with the Messengers, and asked them quietly who they were and what they intended. At this moment the door was opened by Mrs. Kilburne's maid, and the Messengers, lifting the Colonel up, carried him into the house. Hutchins, a short, stoutish fellow, who was the chief of the three men, told the Colonel who they were.

'And we hold a warrant for your apprehension under Lord Townshend's seal,' he said, and showed his scutcheon and the warrant.

‘Not for my apprehension,’ replied Montague. ‘There is one without there who can speak for me.’ For the door was still open to the street, and amongst the people who thronged the entrance, he now saw very clearly the blue and silver livery of her ladyship. The lackey, however, pushed backwards out of range, and since those who were foremost of the crowd turned about to see who it was that Montague pointed to, Hutchins took the occasion to close the door in their faces.

‘You are George Kelly, *alias* James Johnson, *alias* Joseph Andrews,’ said he, turning again to Colonel Montague, and reading out from the warrant a number of names by which the Parson was known to the honest party.

‘It is the first I have heard of it,’ replied Montague, and he invited the Messengers up to his rooms on the first floor, where he would be happy to satisfy them of their mistake. Mrs. Kilburne had now joined her maid in the passage, and she followed the Messengers up the stairs, wringing her hands over the disgrace which, through no fault of hers, had fallen upon her house. When they were come within the room, Montague threw open his cloak, which he wore wrapped about his shoulders, and discovered his scarlet coat beneath it.

‘I am Colonel Montague,’ he said, ‘and an officer under the King as well as you. If there is work to be done for the King, I shall be very happy to assist you. I fought for the King at Preston,’ and he made a great flourish of his services and valorous acts, not being sure that the Messengers had reinforcements without, and hoping that Mr. Kelly might enter meanwhile and do what was needful. Mrs. Kilburne’s tongue and care for the Parson seemed likely to forward this plan, for, with many unnecessary words, she declared how the Colonel had lodged with her for years.

‘And as for Mr. Johnson,’ she said, ‘there was such a man who came and went, but he lodged with Mrs. Barnes in Bury Street, and there you should go if you seek for news of him.’

But the ten minutes were not yet gone. The maid remained downstairs in the passage. She was a perfectly honest poor wench, who would have risked herself for the Parson or for any gentleman in distress. But Montague, however closely he listened, could not hear that she opened the door, or any noise in the room below.

Hutchins made his apologies with a great many ‘your honours,’ and the Colonel was no less polite in his compliments upon Hutchins’s zeal, which he would be sure to make known in the proper quarters. But still the Parson did not come, and Montague could hold the Messengers in talk no longer, though that would have been of little use, as he now discovered.

For Hutchins turned about to Chandler, —

‘Go down into the street and tell Lyng and Randall,’ he said, ‘that our man is not come. Bid them watch for him at the corner of Ryder Street and St. James’s.’ And as he spoke he gave Chandler the warrant. Chandler slipped it into his pocket, and ran downstairs to join the others of his worshipful calling in the street. Hutchins followed him, but remained within, in the passage, to watch the maid of the house, and see that she did not go out to warn the Parson.

The Colonel and Mrs. Kilburne were thus left alone.

‘Mrs. Kilburne,’ said Montague. ‘You must take my word for it, I am Mr. Kelly’s friend, and without any argument, if you please.’ For he saw that she was on the point of interrupting him. ‘There is but one thing you can do for him. Send someone you can trust, or go yourself to lure the Messengers off to Mrs. Barnes’s house. But you must be quick, and here’s money to help you.’

He filled her hands with the Parson’s gold, and she, in her turn, went downstairs and out of the house by a door at the back. Montague, for his part, had it in mind to try whether the like means might not over-persuade Hutchins’s zeal. With that design he descended to Hutchins, whom he found lighting a candle in Mr. Kelly’s room with the door open so that he might command a view of the maid who was still waiting in the passage.

The Colonel stepped into the room, casting his eyes about for the strong-box with Smilinda’s letters, which he could not see. He saw the scrutoire, however, which stood in the window with the lid closed. Hutchins held the candle above his head and remarked it at the same time.

‘I will search the rooms,’ he said with an air of consequence. Colonel Montague was in a quandary. Hutchins had only to throw back the lid and the Parson’s strong-box would be in his hands. He had only then to break open the lock, and all Smilinda’s dainty sentiments about the union of souls would be splotched over by the dirty thumbs of a constable. And the Colonel could not prevent the sacrilege unless the money did it for him.

‘Mr. Hutchins,’ he said, and jingled the gold in his pockets. But he got no further in his persuasions. For the name was scarce off his lips when a hubbub arose without. It was a confusion of noise at the first as though it came from the end of the street.

‘They have taken him,’ said Hutchins, setting down the candle and flinging aside the curtains of the window.

The noise was louder, and Kelly’s voice was heard, bawling, ‘A rescue! An arrest! an arrest! A rescue!’ that the rabble might think he was taken for debt. Those who were gathered in front of the house did indeed turn themselves about, but they were for the most part of the better class, and the night-rakers and such-like who might have attempted a rescue, only came up behind at Mr. Kelly’s bawling, from St. James’s Street, where they were likely to find more profit than in Ryder Street. This friendly mob was running together indeed, but came too late.

‘Yes, they have taken him,’ said Montague. Mrs. Kilburne had not drawn the Messengers off. On the other hand, Hutchins had not opened Mr. Kelly’s scrutoire. ‘They have taken him,’ and the Parson was already under the window. His sword was gleaming in his hand but the Messengers dragged upon his arms and he could not use it.

Hutchins threw up the window.

‘Bring him in,’ and he rushed to the street door and unlocked it. Kelly was hustled up the steps, shouting all the while. He was forced into the passage just as the rabble came up at his heels.

‘A rescue!’ they cried.

Lyng and Chandler turned about and drove them back. Randall sprang in after Kelly and slammed the door.

The posture of affairs then was this:

Colonel Montague and Hutchins were standing in Mr. Kelly’s room close to the scrutoire and the open window.

Mr. Kelly, Lyng, who was a big lout, designed by Providence for this office and no other, and the maid, were in the passage. Randall and Chandler were outside in the street and at their wits’ ends to keep back the mob, which was now grown very clamorous.

Mr. Kelly was the first to make any movement. He sheathed his sword, carefully dusted the sleeves of his coat where the Messengers had held him and arranged his cravat.

‘These are ill times for a peaceful man to live in,’ he said. ‘It seems a gentleman cannot walk home of an evening but he must be set upon and cuffed.’

With a shrug of the shoulders, as though the whole matter was a mystery, he sauntered into his parlour. His eyes carelessly took in the room. It seemed that nothing had been disturbed. The scrutoire was shut, but were Smilinda’s letters still hidden there or were they safe in Montague’s pockets? His eyes rested on the Colonel’s face and put the question. But the Colonel gave no sign; Hutchins stood at his elbow. Kelly’s eyes travelled from the Colonel’s face to his red coat.

‘One of the King’s officers,’ he said with a smile. ‘In the presence of one of the King’s officers, gentlemen,’ he said politely with a bow to Hutchins, ‘I take it that you will forgo your ingenious attempt to rob me and we may all go quietly to bed.’

He moved as he spoke towards the scrutoire, and again looked at the Colonel. The Colonel’s face was still a blank.

‘We hold a warrant for the arrest of George Kelly, alias James Johnson,’ began Hutchins.

‘Indeed?’ replied George with an effort of attention, as though fatigue put a strain upon his good manners. ‘And why should George Kelly prefer to call himself James Johnson? I cannot think it is the better name. Mr. George Kelly lacks taste, I am afraid,’ and he stifled a yawn with his hand.

‘Colonel Montague,’ said Hutchins, who was in some perplexity as to what to make of Kelly’s present indifference, ‘your honour promised to assist me.’

Colonel Montague being appealed to, nodded his head.

‘Though you will not need my assistance,’ he said, ‘for here is another of your fellows.’

Chandler had come within the house, and pushing into the room said that the curtains were drawn apart so that the rabble could see clearly all that happened in the room and were on that account the less inclined to disperse. As he spoke he hitched the curtains to and a volley of curses went up from the disappointed crowd.

Hutchins immediately turned to Kelly.

‘Give me your sword.’

Kelly, who knew not what to make of the Colonel’s manner, but thought it likely he had taken his measures, took his sword by the hanger and handed it sheath and all to Hutchins, who in his turn passed it to Montague. Montague stood in the corner by the window.

‘There is some stupid blunder,’ said Kelly, ‘which I cannot take it upon me to understand. You talk to me a great deal about a warrant, but I have not seen it. It is a new thing to come taking off gentlemen to the round-house in the middle of the night without a warrant, but we live in ill times.’ All this he said with an admirable air of resignation, though his eyes kept glancing towards Montague, who still dared give no sign. The Colonel waited upon occasion; his present aim was to hinder the Messengers from any suspicion that the Parson and he were in one purpose or indeed were acquainted.

In answer to Kelly, Chandler took the warrant from his pocket and handed it to Colonel Montague, who read it through.

‘It is a very sufficient warrant,’ he said, ‘and this gentleman may be satisfied if he is rightly named, of which of course I have no assurance,’ and folding the paper he handed it back to Chandler. Whereupon Chandler went out again into the street to guard the door from the rabble.

Hutchins then took Kelly’s hat, placed it on the table, and searching his pockets, pulled out some papers which he had about him, things of no moment; and these papers he laid in the hat. But to search Kelly’s pockets Hutchins must needs stoop. Here was the Colonel’s chance. Over Hutchins’ shoulder, Kelly’s eyes again put their question. The Colonel now answered with a shake of the head. Smilinda’s letters had not been saved, a great surprise and disappointment to the Parson, who of course knew nothing of Montague’s mistaken arrest.

Kelly, however, wasted no precious moments in regrets. As Hutchins turned to place the papers in the hat, Kelly thrust Lyng aside, and, springing to the window, tore aside the curtains and again bawled at the top of his voice. ‘A rescue! An arrest!’

Shouts of encouragement greeted him; the hubbub filled the street again. Hutchins and Lyng at once sprang upon Kelly, tore him back from the window, and sent him staggering across the room.

‘Tie his hands!’ cried Hutchins, as he pulled down the sash. ‘Knock him down! Gag him!’ and he turned to help Lyng.

The maid in the passage began to cry; the Colonel stood irresolute; the Parson drew himself up against the wall as the two men approached him. His Irish blood bubbled in his veins at the prospect of so fine a tumble. He clenched his hands. He forgot Smilinda’s letter, the Cause, even Rose. His face became one broad grin and in an accent as broad as the grin.

‘And what’ll I be doin’ while you’re tyin’ my hands?’ he asked. ‘Why, just this,’ and his fist shot out like a battering-ram and took the worthy Lyng on the tip of the chin. Mr. Lyng was clean lifted off both his feet and so sat down on the floor with some violence, where he felt his neck in a dazed sort of way to make sure that it was not broken.

‘Oh, why isn’t Nick here?’ cried Kelly, and indeed Nicholas Wogan bewails his absence at that festivity to this day. ‘Come, Mr. Hutchins, I have the other fist for you,’ and he began to dance towards Hutchins, who called on the Colonel to mark the murderous look in the prisoner’s eyes and save him from immediate destruction.

‘Is it destruction you want?’ asked Kelly with a chuckle. ‘I’ll gratify you with all the destruction imaginable.’ And no doubt he would have been as good as his word. But Hutchins, while shutting the window had not drawn the curtains, and the rabble in the street had thus enjoyed a full view of the Parson’s prowess. They had roared their applause when Lyng went down, and as Hutchins drew back before the Parson’s fisticuffs, they hooted the Messenger for a coward and made a rush at the door. A stone or two shattered the window and a voice was yelling, ‘Murder! murder!’ in tones of unmistakable sincerity. Chandler then rushed in, his face bleeding, and said that Randall was being mobbed, and, if they did not come to help him, would be knocked on the head. At this, Lyng, who was now got to his feet, ran out into the street with Chandler. Hutchins remained in the room, but cried out to Chandler that he should go or send for a file of musquets.

Now Chandler, when he rushed into the room, was holding the warrant in his hand, he still held it when he ran out again, as the Parson remarked, and instantly thought of a plan by which, after all, Smilinda's letters might be secured, and her name kept wholly out of the business. Accordingly he ceased from his warlike posture and sat down in a chair. Hutchins took the occasion to draw the curtains and shut out the mob from a view of the room. Mr. Kelly smiled, for he was just wondering what excuse he could discover to do that very thing himself. Mr. Hutchins was helping him very well.

'It is a pity,' said the Parson in a plaintive voice, sucking his knuckles, which were bleeding, 'that a peaceful, law-abiding citizen must put himself to so much discomfort because a couple of rascally Messengers will not show him their warrant.'

'It is under Lord Townshend's seal,' began Hutchins.

'It may be, or it may not be. I have not seen it. I cannot really surrender unless the proper formalities are observed.'

Hutchins, who was no doubt well pleased to see the peaceful turn things were taking and had not the wits to suspect it, replied with an oafish grin that the prisoner was wise to submit himself to his lawful captors.

'And as for the warrant, Chandler has it safe enough in the street.'

'In the street!' cried Kelly, suddenly flying into a passion. 'And what's the warrant doing in the street? How dare the warrant be in the street when it is intended for a gentleman in the house? Upon my word it would take very little to persuade me that there's no warrant at all,' and he began to stamp and fume about the room.

'Colonel Montague has read it,' said Hutchins.

'I certainly read a warrant,' agreed the Colonel with an impartial air.

'A warrant, yes,' said Kelly in a testy voice. 'But how can the Colonel know whether it is intended for me? How can he know whether it is a real warrant at all? You come here with a scutcheon, Mr. Hutchins. But you might have stolen the scutcheon, as you have certainly forged the warrant.' He stopped in front of Hutchins and wagged his head at him. 'Mr. Hutchins, I begin to suspect you are one of a gang of cheats come here to rob me. But I will not be your gull,' he cried out as though his fury overmastered him. 'No, nor his worship the Colonel either,' and he called to the maid to lock the street door.

'Lock it,' said he. 'Lock the door' and Mr. Hutchins and I will get to the bottom of the matter quietly.'

That very thing now happened which Mr. Kelly most desired. The maid ran down the passage to the street door: Hutchins ran out of the room after her to prevent her locking it. Kelly flung to the door of the parlour: Mr. Hutchins was outside, the Colonel and Kelly were alone within the room.

‘My sword,’ said the Parson in a quick whisper. Montague held it out to him without a word: he had no right to refuse it to a free man. Kelly snatched the hilt; the blade rattled out of the scabbard; he stood on guard with his naked blade.

Meanwhile Hutchins and the maid were quarrelling in the passage over the door key, as Kelly could distinguish from their voices.

He made a quick step towards the window, threw open the scrutoire, and returned to his station at the door. But he had not so much as glanced at the scrutoire; he had kept his eyes fixed upon the door. Still keeping his eyes so fixed, he pointed towards the strong boxes.

‘Be quick,’ he whispered. ‘In the strong box! Take the candle and have done. You know the hand, and you have the key.’

Montague pulled the key from his pocket, and fumbled at the lock.

‘It will not fit,’ he said under his breath and swore.

‘Be quick,’ repeated Kelly.

The key rattled in the lock as the Colonel turned it this way and that. Mr. Kelly was about to throw a glance over his shoulder when he saw the handle of the door turn. It was turned cautiously without any noise. The next moment the door flew open. Fortunately it opened upwards towards the window and the scrutoire. Kelly stopped it with his foot when it was but half open, so that Montague was entirely hidden behind the panels from the eyes of any one on the threshold or in the passage. Hutchins was on the threshold peering into the room. But he did not peer long, for at the same moment that Kelly stopped the door with his foot he made at Hutchins, with his sword, a pass so vigorous that the hulking fellow leaped back a good yard, crying out to Montague:

‘Will your honour let a poor man be killed in his duty?’

The Colonel made no answer to the pathetic question. He was occupied with business of another complexion. Mr. Kelly heard a crack.

‘What is the matter?’ he asked, in a low voice.

‘The key is filled with dust, or the lock is jammed,’ Montague whispered back. ‘I have broken open the box with the guard of my sword.’

‘Be quick,’ said Kelly. ‘Make sure you have Smilinda’s letters.’

All this while he had not looked towards the scrutoire. The most that he saw was the shadow of the Colonel thrown on the wall of the room by the single candle, a shadow monstrous big that held the shadow of a paper to its eyes. It is to be said in Mr. Kelly’s defence that he dared not look about him. The door of the room was half open; the Messenger who had retreated into the passage was plainly hardening his heart for a rush. Mr. Kelly’s attention was entirely distracted from Colonel Montague’s proceedings at this important moment.

‘Yes,’ whispered Montague. ‘This is her hand, this is the blue-edged paper she affects of late. “My own Strephon,” and dated two days back. It bids you to her rout.’

The words passed in and out of Mr. Kelly’s ears. His eyes were occupied with Hutchins, and with his eyes his mind. He did not remember that he had thrust this letter of her ladyship’s, as he had told to Wogan, into the wrong box, the box holding the papers of the Bishop and the King. Then a little flame shot up and illumined the room, which was at once filled with a smell of burning paper. Montague had burned Smilinda’s letter, inviting Kelly to her rout.

It seemed that Hutchins had after all no stomach for Mr. Kelly’s sword, which to be sure must have glittered ominously in the dismal light of the solitary candle. He ran back again down the passage and pulled open the street door.

‘Chandler,’ he shouted, calling his fellow to assist him. A yell of laughter answered him, and a voice from the street cried out that Chandler was gone for a file of soldiers. Kelly could hear Hutchins swearing and cursing, though it was himself that had sent Chandler on the errand.

A second flame spirted up and died away. Montague had burned a second letter.

‘Lyng! Randall!’ cried Hutchins at the street-door, but again he was answered with jeers, and again the voice called to him mockingly that they were gone to Bury Street, where they were told they would be sure to snare the right man.

Montague, who heard everything clearly, blessed Mrs. Kilburne aloud, and burned a third paper. Kelly kicked the door to.

‘We are safe, then, it seems,’ he said. ‘Smilinda’s safe.’

He took out his handkerchief and wiped the sweat from his face, leaning his back against the panels of the door. He could hear Hutchins bawling up the street for his partners, and his voice sounded as though he had moved from the door in search of them. So for the first time Kelly looked at Montague and the scrutoire.

Colonel Montague had turned the strong-box upside down and emptied the papers on the scrutoire, so that they lay face downwards. By a scruple of delicacy, having read the topmost letter to make sure it was Lady Oxford’s hand, he looked at them no more. He took them up one by one, face downwards, and so burned them separately, knowing no doubt that, lighted in a single heap, only those on the outside and the edges of the letters in the middle, would catch fire. One by one he burnt them face downwards at the candle, the secret letters of the Cause. He had burned three, and he now held the fourth in his hand. He approached it to the candle; he did not so much as look at it. But had he merely glanced once at Mr. Kelly leaning there against the panels of the door, that glance would have surely told him what papers he was burning.

Kelly did not speak a word, or stir a muscle. He had wiped the sweat from his face a second ago, but his forehead was wet now: his eyes stared greedily at the papers: a slow smile, of a knavish kind, that went very ill with his face, curved his lips. An extreme temptation chained him; the Devil whispered in his ear, ‘Be silent,’ and the Parson held his peace.

The blue-edged letter bidding him to the rout he had slipped on the top of the Chevalier’s papers, as he had told Mr. Wogan. Colonel Montague was merrily burning the papers of the Plot. Kelly had but to hold his tongue, and in a few minutes he was safe. The Cause was saved so far as the papers went, and Lady Oxford, her letters unburned, was lost. No wonder the key did not fit; it was the wrong key! Kelly could see the corner of Wogan’s strong-box peeping out from beneath a thatch of papers in the corner of the scrutoire.

All this the Parson saw and understood in the one short moment during which Montague approached the paper to the candle. His mind was tossed up and down in a tempest; the winds of temptation blew hard against the tides of his nature. On one side was safety and the King’s interest, and Rose, who to be sure need never know of the treachery by which the Parson had won her; on the other, a broken pledge that he had given to the Colonel, and the ruin of Smilinda, who had betrayed him.

Montague lit the sheet of paper and held it up. Kelly saw the blue flame creep down from the edge, the writing turn brown, the paper curl over black and tattered, with a multitude of red sparks; and still he kept his peace.

Montague dropped the ashes on the scrutoire, and took a fifth paper from the pile. The Parson turned away, and laid his ear to the panel, making a pretence that he heard Hutchins stirring in the passage.

‘Be quick!’ he said first, and then, moistening his dry lips with his tongue: ‘Make quite sure you have Smilinda’s letters.’

‘Smilinda?’ asked Montague.

Kelly forced a laugh.

‘No doubt she called herself something equally pretty to you.’

‘Phylissa,’ growled Montague.

‘She has a pretty conceit in names. Make sure those are her letters,’ and again he spoke with an effort.

‘Not I. I have had my fill of the lady’s handwriting.’

Montague was already holding the paper to the flame, when Kelly’s good angel got the upper hand with him. He is happy now to think that no chance accident, such as the return of Hutchins or the coming of the soldiers, hurried him into the better choice with a mind half made up. Here was the very occasion of which he had dreamed when he stayed behind in Lady Oxford’s withdrawing room. He could use the weapon which her letters put into his hand to save the Chevalier’s papers and himself and Rose. But he put the weapon aside. He turned about from the door: Montague was holding the paper to the flame, and a corner of it had taken fire. Kelly sprang to the scrutoire, snatched the paper out of Montague’s hand, and crushed the fire out in the palm of his hand.

‘I gave you the right key, ‘he whispered. ‘You chose the wrong box.’

Montague snatched up the pile of papers and turned them over.

‘Good God! Cyphers!’ he exclaimed, and dropped them as though they were, in truth, burning.

‘The other box; the other box,’ said Kelly, pointing to it. He fancied that he heard Hutchins moving cautiously just outside the door, and was now in a fever lest the delay brought about by his incertitude might balk his intentions. At any moment the Messenger might come back from Bury Street, or the file of the musquets march tramping up the stairs.

All this indeed takes a long time to tell, and seemed no less long to Mr. Kelly in the happening; but the whole of the occurrences, the movements of the Messengers, the tidings cried to him from the street, the burning of the papers, with Kelly’s own thoughts and doubts and unlooked-for temptations, passed with momentary speed.

Montague found Wogan’s strong box, the box of the love-letters, unlocked it, tore out all the contents, and glanced at a few at the top, middle and bottom.

‘Smilinda — Smilinda — Smilinda,’ he said, reading the signatures. ‘And it’s for this woman,’ he cried, striking the letters with his fist, ‘Smilinda, Phylissa, and the Lord knows what else to the Lord knows what other men, that — —’

But the Parson was in no mood to listen to Montague’s reflections.

‘Put the other papers back into that box, the box with the unbroken lock, lock it and give me the key,’ he said. Montague crammed her ladyship’s letters into the inner pocket of his coat. But before he could move the door opened with a crash, and Hutchins flew in, Kelly made a furious pass, and Hutchins, leaping back, ‘parried the thrust with the door,’ as he truly said in his evidence before the Lords’ Committee. Had he not used that novel parade Kelly would infallibly have run him through, and, as it was, George could scarcely drag his point out of the wood of the door, which Hutchins in leaping back had shut. Being now sufficiently terrified, for indeed no man ever had a narrower escape of his life, Hutchins contented himself with a plaintive expostulation from the safety of the passage.

‘Sure, I would serve Lord Townshend himself in the same way,’ Kelly shouted back, ‘if he tried to enter my room against my will without a warrant,’ and lowering his voice so that only Montague might hear, ‘Lock the box, and throw me the key.’ If only for Montague’s sake the papers of the Plot must not be found lying open upon Kelly’s scrutoire, and the box which held them broken among a litter of ashes. Mr. Kelly could not but remember with what care, earlier in the evening, he had burned and buried the ashes of his Grace of Rochester’s letters, and reflect with some sadness what little good had come of it. Montague locked up the papers of the Plot in the box which had held Smilinda’s letters, and tossed the key to Kelly, who caught it.

‘There is no more to do?’ said Montague.

‘Nothing,’ and Kelly handed him back his sword and sat him down on a sofa. He seized the occasion to make Montague acquainted with the accident through which Smilinda’s last letter had been laid on the top of those in the box that contained very different wares, adding apologies for his brief delay to inform him. The Colonel then sat down over against Kelly and laid the flat of Kelly’s sword across his knees. He looked at the sword for a little. Then,

‘You had a chance to let me destroy your own papers,’ he said.

‘Yes, and to be a liar to a loyal gentleman, and a traitor to a more sacred cause than even my King’s.’

‘Smilinda’s?’ Montague looked up in perplexity.

‘No,’ said Kelly, and he stared for a little at the floor, then he said very slowly, ‘A long while ago I made a prayer that nothing might ever come between the Cause and me except it be death. Even while I made the prayer I was summoned to visit Lady Oxford, who was then unknown to me. Well, something has come between the Cause and me — honour. A more sacred Cause than even my King’s. Himself would say it.’

Colonel Montague fancied that he heard a distant regular tramp of feet like soldiers. But Mr. Kelly was clean lost in his thoughts.

‘I could meet the King with a clear face and this story on my lips,’ he continued, ‘even though it were over there in Rome, and in his old lodging. The very approach to him was secret, his antechamber a cellar underground. You went by night, you crossed the cellar in the dark, you climbed a little winding stair, and above, in a mean crazy chamber which overhangs the Tiber, there was my King looking towards England. A man like me, with a man’s longings and a man’s despair, but, unlike me, robbed of a nation. Day by day delay shadowed his eyes and wrote upon his face until the face became an open book of sorrows. Yet himself would say, “Perish the Cause, perish all but honour,”’ and, suddenly throwing up his arms, Mr. Kelly cried out in a voice of great passion and longing, ‘The King! The King!’

Colonel Montague very likely had his own opinions as to how the King would take it, but he was careful to keep them to himself, and in the silence which followed upon Kelly’s outburst the tread of soldiers was heard very distinct, and Hutchins’s voice at the door bidding them hurry.

Mr. Kelly raised his head. He too had heard the sound, and, drawing a ring from his finger,

‘Take my seal ring, when you are alone seal up the brocades in a packet. You know the person whom they concern.’

Montague took the ring and slipped it on his finger.

‘Mr. Johnson, or Kelly, or whoever you are,’ he said cordially, ‘we must needs be public enemies, but I wish my King had many as loving servants as your King has in you.’

The rattle of the butts of musquets could now be heard in the passage.

‘And, damme,’ said Montague, bending forward suddenly; he had all this while maintained in word and carriage the reserve of the Englishman, but now he showed a decent warmth of blood, ‘had you been in my place and I in yours, Smilinda or no Smilinda, I should have let you burn the cyphers.’

On those words he was pleased to say, which Mr. Kelly merely counted a politeness, the door was driven open by the butts of several fusils, a sergeant with a file of musqueteers entered; behind them came Chandler with the warrant, Lyng with a broken head, Hutchins with a white, scared face, and Randall whose coat was in tatters.

They were surprised enough, you may be sure, to see the Colonel on one side of the fireplace and their redoubtable prisoner as quiet upon the other.

‘Oh,’ said Mr. Kelly, with an admirable air of astonishment, ‘it seems you have a warrant after all.’

Hutchins then read the warrant through, and Mr. Kelly surrendered. But the Messenger had not done; he picked up presently the impudence to question the Colonel.

‘Your worship let the prisoner take his sword?’

The dignified Montague stared at Hutchins with a strong amazement until the fellow was quite abashed.

‘What’s the world coming to?’ he said. ‘Here is your prisoner’s sword, if he is your prisoner.’ and, lifting Mr. Kelly’s sword from his knees, he handed it to Hutchins. Hutchins then made haste to secure Mr. Kelly’s effects. He went over to the scrutoire, and the first things he clapped his eyes upon were a pile of black ashes and a great many splotches of hot grease from the candle.

Hutchins looked at the Colonel with a question upon his lips; the Colonel looked stonily at Hutchins. Hutchins raised his nose and sniffed the air.

‘Will your worship tell me whether the prisoner meddled with any papers?’ he asked, but with less impertinence than before.

‘Yes, sir, the gentleman did.’

‘What was done with them?’

‘Sir, they were burned, as you may perceive.’

‘And how came you, sir, to let them be burned?’

‘I am not to answer to you, sir, for my conduct, of which I can give a sufficient account to persons who have the right to question me. I have, for your satisfaction, no knowledge of this gentleman’s name, nor as to whether he is correctly described in a warrant which was not in the house while we were together. It appears to me that you are all very likely to lose your scutcheons for your doltish stupidity, whether you have hold of the right or the wrong gentleman. I wish you a good night, sir,’ he said, bowing to Kelly, ‘and speedy deliverance, if you deserve it, from your present company.’

He put his hat on his head and walked out of the room without another word. Hutchins thereupon searched Mr. Kelly’s scrutoire; he found one box broken open and empty, another box, its own fellow, locked. Mr. Kelly delivered the key to it, with a great show of reluctance. It held the papers of the Bishop’s Plot and a key to the Bishop’s cypher, which was used to convict him at his trial. As for the burned papers, it came out at George’s trial that he had destroyed letters in the presence of a King’s officer. But the Duke of Wharton, in his famous speech, argued that a man of Mr. Kelly’s figure might very well have letters to burn which were not political.

That night the Parson was taken to the house of John Gardiner, living in Westminster Market, there to be kept in safe custody. He walked between the soldiers, and whistled a lively tune as he walked.

This was related in more than one inn-parlour the next day by the sergeant, who was mightily surprised that a man should bear so heavy a charge so easily, and so the story got about.

But Mr. Kelly was sensibly lightened by having saved Smilinda in the end after so many mischances, and when he thought of her letters safe in the Colonel’s inner pocket, felt a private glow of pleasure which put all conjectures of his fate and doom clean out of his head. Moreover, he says that Rose was never nearer to him than on that night and during that walk. He speaks as though she walked by his side amongst his captors, and walked with a face that smiled.

CHAPTER XXIV

MR. WOGAN WEARS LADY OXFORD’S LIVERY, BUT DOES NOT REMAIN IN HER SERVICE.

The question with which Mr. Wogan lay down to sleep after Lady Oxford’s rout, woke him at noon; he sent a boy whom he could trust to Ryder Street to desire Colonel Montague’s attendance. Montague came back presently with the boy, and gave Wogan the news that the Parson was taken.

‘There was no escape possible,’ he said. ‘I cannot tell you the innermost truth of the affair, because the secret is not mine to tell; but, Mr. Wogan, you will take my word for it, your friend was in the net.’

‘The room was searched?’

‘And his papers seized. One or two, I believe, were burned, but the greater part were seized,’ and then he broke out with an oath. ‘Damn these plots! What in the world made you meddle with such Tory nonsense?’

‘Faith,’ said Wogan, ‘I have been wondering how ever you demeaned yourself to become a Whig.’

Wogan wondered very much more what strange mishap had brought Mr. Kelly to this pass at the moment when he seemed to have success beneath his hand. Something wholly unexpected must have happened during those few minutes when he and Smilinda were left alone. Something had happened, indeed, but it was something very much simpler than Mr. Wogan looked for, who had not the key to the Parson’s thoughts. However, he forebore to inquire, and instead:

‘Colonel,’ said he, ‘you professed last night that you were under some trifling obligation to me.’

‘I trust to-day to make the profession good.’

‘Faith, then you can, Colonel. There’s a little matter of a quarrel.’

At this the Colonel broke in with a laugh.

‘With whom?’

‘With a lad I have taken a great liking for,’ and the Colonel laughed again. ‘Therefore I would not put a slight on him by missing a certain appointment. It is Lord Sidney Beauclerk.’

Colonel Montague’s face clouded as he heard the name.

‘And the reason of the quarrel?’

‘He took objection to a few words I spoke last night.’

‘About a ballad? I heard the words.’

‘I told him that he would find a friend of mine waiting at Burton’s Coffeehouse this morning, and I doubt if many friends of mine will be seen abroad to-day.’

Montague rose from the bed.

‘I will not deny,’ he said, ‘that there are services I should have preferred to render you. But I will go to Burton’s, on one condition, Mr. Wogan — that you do not stir from this house until I come back to you. There’s an ill wind blowing which might occasion you discomfort if you went abroad.’

This he said with some significance.

‘It catches at one’s throat, I dare say,’ replied Wogan, taking his meaning. ‘I have a tender sort of delicate throat in some weathers.’

Colonel Montague walked to Burton’s, at the corner of King Street in St. James’s. The coffeehouse buzzed with the news of Mr. Kelly’s arrest, and Colonel Montague saw many curious faces look up from their news-sheets and whisper together as he entered. In a corner of the room sat Lord Sidney Beauclerk, with a man whom Montague had remarked at Lady Oxford’s rout the night before.

Lord Sidney arose as Montague approached and bowed stiffly.

‘I come on behalf of a gentleman, whom, perhaps, we need not name,’ said Montague.

‘Indeed?’ said Lord Sidney, with a start of surprise.

‘I can understand that your lordship did not expect me, but I am his friend.’

‘To be frank, I expected no one.’

‘Your lordship, then, hardly knows the gentleman?’

‘On the contrary,’ said Lord Sidney, and he took up from the table the *Flying Post* of that morning. He handed the paper to Montague, and pointed to a sentence which came at the end of a description of Mr. Kelly’s arrest.

‘It is said that Mr. Nicholas Wogan is also in London, hiding under the *incognito* of Hilton, and that he will be taken to-day.’

‘You see, my lord,’ said Montague, ‘that there are certain difficulties which threaten to interfere with our arrangements.’

‘My friend is aware of them,’ said Lord Sidney, and presented his friend.

‘Before making any arrangements I should be glad if your lordship would favour me with a hearing in some private place. It is I who ask, not my friend, Mr. Hilton.’

Lord Sidney reluctantly consented, and the two men walked out of the coffeehouse.

‘There are to be no apologies, I trust,’ said Lord Sidney.

Montague laughed.

‘Your lordship need have no fears. What I propose is entirely unknown to Mr. Wogan. But it seems to me that the conditions of the duel have changed. If Mr. Wogan shows his face in London he will be taken. If he fights you, it matters not whether you pink him or no, for if he escapes your sword he will be taken by the Messengers. On the other hand, he will not go from London until he has met you; unless—’

‘Unless — ?’

‘Unless your lordship insists upon deferring the meeting until it can take place in France.’

‘Yes, I will consent to that,’ said Lord Sidney, after a moment’s pause. ‘It is common fairness.’

‘Again I take the liberty to observe that your lordship does not know the gentleman. You must insist.’

Lord Sidney was brought without great difficulty to understand the justice of Colonel Montague’s argument.

‘Very well; I will insist,’ he said; and, coming back to Burton’s coffeehouse, he wrote a polite letter, which the Colonel put in his pocket.

Montague, however, did not immediately carry it to Mr. Wogan. He stood on the pavement of King Street for a little, biting his thumb in a profundity of thought; then he hurried to the stable where he kept his horses, and gave a strict order to his groom. From the stable he set out for Queen’s Square, but on the way he bought a *Flying Post*, and stopped in St. James’s Park to see what sort of account it gave of Mr. Kelly’s arrest.

‘The Plot concerning which they write from Paris,’ it began, ‘hath brought the Guards into the Park, and a reverend and gallant non-juror within danger of the Law. The Messengers that were essaying to take Mr. Kelly needed reinforcement by a file of musquets before his reverence’s lodgings could be stormed. It is said that a loyal Colonel of the Guards who lodges in the same house in Ryder Street was discovered with Mr. Kelly when the soldiers forced their way in, and that by his interference many valuable papers have been saved, which would otherwise have been destroyed. It appears that Kelly was intent upon burning certain cyphers and letters, and had, indeed, burnt two or three of them before the loyal Colonel interrupted him.’

The loyal Colonel took off his hat to Grub Street for this charitable interpretation of his conduct. Lady Oxford, he reflected, must be in a fine flutter, for assuredly she would have sent for the news-sheet the first thing.

Montague tapped the pocket in which were her ladyship’s letters, and smiled.

Her anxieties would be very suitable to a certain plan of his own.

He walked straight to Queen’s Square and knocked at the door. It seemed to him purely providential that the man who opened the door was the big lackey whom he had seen in Ryder Street the night before. Montague looked him over again and said, ‘I think that I saw you last night in Ryder Street.’

He had some further conversation with the lackey, and money passed between them. But the conversation was of the shortest, for her ladyship, in a fever of impatience, and bearing every mark of a sleepless night, ran down the stairs almost before Colonel Montague had finished. She gave her hand to him with a pretty negligence, and the Colonel bent a wooden face over it, but did not touch the fingers with his lips. Then she led the way into the little parlour, and her negligence vanished in a second. She was all on fire to know whether her letters had been seized or no; yet even at that moment it was not in her nature to put a frank question when a devious piece of cajolery might serve.

‘Corydon!’ she said in a whisper of longing, as though Montague was the one man her heart was set upon, as though she had never brought Mr. Kelly into this very room on a morning of summer two years ago. ‘My Corydon!’ she said, and sighed.

‘Madam,’ said Montague, in a most sudden enthusiasm, ‘I think there is no poetry in the world like a nursery rhyme.’

Her ladyship could make nothing of the remark.

‘A nursery rhyme?’ she repeated.

‘A nursery rhyme,’ repeated the Colonel. ‘“Will you walk into my parlour, said the spider to the fly.”’

Lady Oxford looked at him quite gravely.

‘I do not in the least understand,’ she said. She had a wonderful knack of burying her head in the sand and believing that no one spied her, as travellers tell of the ostrich. ‘But you have a message for me, have you not?’

She put the question frankly now, since coquetry had failed.

‘I have a packet to deliver to your ladyship,’ replied Montague.

Lady Oxford drew a breath and dropped into a chair. ‘Thank you! How shall I thank you?’ she cried; and seeing that Montague made no answer whatever, but stood stiff as a ramrod, she became at once all weak woman. ‘You are very good to me,’ she murmured in a very pathetical voice.

‘Your ladyship owes me no thanks,’ replied Montague. ‘Your ladyship has need of all your gratitude for a gentleman who gave up all that he held dear to save your good name.’

He had it on the tip of his tongue to add, ‘which was not worth saving,’ and barely refrained from the words.

Lady Oxford was not abashed by the rebuke. She turned upon the Colonel eyes that swam with pity for Mr. Kelly's misfortunes.

'I read that he was taken,' she said sadly. 'Poor gentleman! But he should have burnt my letters long ago. They were letters written, as we women write, with a careless pen and ill-considered words which malice might misconstrue. He should have burnt them, as he swore to do; but he broke his word, and so, alas! pays most dearly for his fault. Indeed, it grieves me to the heart, and all the more because he brought his own sufferings about. So unreasonable we poor women are,' and she shook her head, and smiled with a sort of pity for women's frail readiness to forgive.

'Madam,' said Montague, growing yet colder, 'it is not for me either to construe or to misconstrue the packet which I am to give you, nor am I at all concerned to defend a gentleman whom I am proud to name my friend.'

The indifference of the speech no doubt stung her ladyship.

'Friend!' she said with a sneer. 'This friendship is surely something of the suddenest. I did not even so late as last night notice any great cordiality between you.'

'Very likely not,' said Montague. 'Last night there was a trivial cause for disagreement upon which to-day we are of one mind.'

Lady Oxford flushed and took another tone.

'You are cruel,' she said. She was not so much insulted as hurt. 'You are ungenerous. You are cruel.'

But Colonel Montague was not in a melting mood, and so, 'Give me the packet,' she said sullenly.

Montague pressed his hand over his pocket and smiled.

Lady Oxford rose from her chair with a startled face.

'You mean to keep it? To use it?'

'Not to your ladyship's hurt.'

Lady Oxford looked at him with eyes mournful in their reproach.

'Mr. Kelly bade you give these letters back to me at once,' she said; and then, with a great fervour of admiration, 'Mr. Kelly would have given them back to me at once.' It seemed as though the thought of the noble Mr. Kelly was the one thing which now enabled her to keep her faith in men.

'Very likely,' replied Montague coolly, who was not at all moved by the disparaging comparison of himself with the Parson. 'Mr. Kelly would have given them back to you at once had not your ladyship taken good care that a few locks and bars should hinder him. But I am not Mr. Kelly, and indeed it is well for your ladyship I am not. Had your ladyship betrayed *me*, why, when that pretty news-sheet was read out last night, I would have stood up before the whole company, and told boldly out how your ladyship came by the knowledge which gave you the power to betray me.’

The words and the stern voice in which they were spoken stung Lady Oxford into a passion. She forgot to deny that she had betrayed Mr. Kelly.

‘It would have been an infamy!’ she cried.

‘A harsh critic might say that it would have matched an infamy.’

Her ladyship saw her mistake.

‘There was nothing which Mr. Kelly could have said. Mr. Kelly was my friend, as I have told you frankly; but I did not betray him.’

‘Your ladyship’s livery is blue and silver, I think — a pretty notable livery even at night, as I had occasion to remark in Ryder Street.’

Lady Oxford was put out of countenance.

‘What am I to do to earn the packet which is mine?’ she asked bitterly.

‘The simplest thing imaginable. Your ladyship, I fear me, has not slept well. What say you to a little country air, with your humble servant for a companion? If your ladyship would order your carriage to be at your door in an hour’s time we might take the air for a while together. On our return your ladyship will be refreshed for this evening’s diversions, and I shall be the lighter by a packet of letters.’

Lady Oxford did not know what to make of the Colonel’s proposal, but she perforce consented to it.

‘I obey your orders,’ said she bitterly; and Montague went back to Wogan, whom he found sitting on the edge of the bed and disconsolately swinging his legs.

‘I have a letter for you from Lord Sidney Beauclerk,’ said Montague.

It was a very polite letter, and assured Mr. Wogan that he would on no account fight with him in England; but would cut his throat somewhere in France with the greatest friendliness possible.

‘Very well,’ said Wogan, ‘but I have to reach France first.’

‘You will start in an hour’s time,’ said Montague.

‘In broad daylight?’ asked Wogan. ‘And what of the ill wind and the sore throat that’s like to come of it?’

‘I have got a fine coat to protect the throat.’

Montague went outside and cried down the stairs to know whether a parcel had been brought into the house. The parcel was carried upstairs into Mr. Wogan’s room. The Colonel unwrapped it, and spread out on the bed a blue and silver livery.

‘A most distasteful garb,’ said Wogan.

‘It is indeed not what we would choose for the descendant of kings,’ murmured Montague gently as he smoothed out the coat.

‘Viceroys, Colonel, viceroys.’

‘Viceroys, then, Mr. Wogan; but no doubt they murdered, and robbed, and burned, and ravished, just like kings. Besides, you have an example. For I seem to have heard of another Wogan, who went to Innspruck as a shopkeeper.’

‘To be sure,’ cried Nick. ‘That is the finest story in the world. It was my brother Charles—’

‘You shall tell me that story another time,’ said Montague, and Wogan stripped off his clothes.

‘Will you tell me what I am to do when I am dressed?’

‘You will go to a certain house.’

‘Yes,’ said Wogan, and pulled on the lackey’s breeches.

‘At the house you will find a carriage.’

‘I shall find a carriage.’ Wogan drew on a stocking.

‘You will mount behind as though you were a footman from the house.’

‘A footman from the house,’ repeated Wogan, and he pulled on the other stocking.

‘I shall get into the carriage with a companion. You won’t know me. The carriage will drive off. You won’t speak a word for fear your brogue should betray you.’

‘I will whisper my opinions to you in English, Colonel,’ said Wogan as he fastened his garters.

‘I don’t think you could,’ said Montague, ‘and certainly you will not try. We shall drive to the almshouses at Dulwich. When we get there, I will make an excuse to stop the carriage.’

‘You won’t be alone, then?’

‘No. Let me see. It is a fine sunny day. I will say that my watch is stopped, and I will send you to see the time by the sundial in the court.’

Wogan buttoned his waistcoat.

‘I will bring you the exact minute.’

‘No you won’t. You will cross the court to the chapel, by the chapel you will find a path, and the path will lead you out through an arch into another road, bordered with chestnut trees.’

‘And when I am in the road?’ Wogan tied his cravat.

‘You will find my groom with a horse. The horse will be saddled. There will be pistols in the holsters, and then your patron saint or the devil must help you to get out of the country.’

‘I have a friend or two on the coast of Sussex who will do as well,’ said Wogan, and he drew the coat over his shoulders, ‘and I am very grateful to you.

But sure, Colonel, what if a constable pulls me off the carriage by the leg before we are out of London? You will be dipped yourself.'

'There's no fear of that if you hold your tongue.'

Wogan took up his hat.

'And who is to be your companion?'

Montague hesitated.

'My companion will be a lady.'

'Oh! And where's the house with the carriage waiting at the door?'

'In Queen's Square, Westminster.

Wogan looked at his clothes.

'I am wearing her damned livery,' he cried. 'No, I will stay and be hanged like a gentleman, but I take no favours at Lady Oxford's hand,' and in a passion he began to tear off the clothes.

'She offers none,' said Montague. 'She knows nothing of what I intend. I would not trust her. If you have to stand behind, I have to drive by her side; and upon my word I would sooner be in your place. Her ladyship's footman for an hour! Man, are you so proud that your life cannot make up for the humiliation? Why, I have been her lapdog for a year.'

Wogan stopped, with one arm out of the sleeve of his coat. The notion that her ladyship was not helping him, but that, on the contrary, he was tricking her, gave the business a quite different complexion.

'D'ye see? The one place in London where the King's Messengers will not look to find you is the footboard of Lady Oxford's carriage,' urged Montague.

There was reason in the argument: it was the same argument which Mr. Wogan had used to persuade Mr. Kelly to go to Queen's Square the evening before, and now he suffered it to persuade himself.

Wogan drew on the coat again, pulled his peruke about his face, and drew his hat forward on his forehead.

'Now follow me. It is a fortunate thing we are close to her ladyship's house.'

Montague walked quickly to Queen's Square. Wogan followed ten yards behind. As they turned into the square they saw Lady Oxford's carriage waiting at the door.

'Does the coachman know?' asked Wogan, lounging up to the Colonel and touching his hat with his forefinger.

'The lackey whose place you took has primed him.'

At the door Mr. Wogan climbed up to the footboard while Montague entered the house. In a minute Lady Oxford came out, and was handed into the carriage by the Colonel. She did not look at her new lackey, but gave an order to the coachman and the carriage drove off. Mr. Wogan began to discover a certain humour in the manner of his escape which tickled him mightily. He noticed more than one of his acquaintances who would have been ready to lay him by the heels, and once Lady Oxford made a little jump in her seat and would have stopped the coachman had not Colonel Montague prevented her. For Lord Sidney Beauclerk stood on the path gazing at her ladyship and the Colonel with a perplexed and glowing countenance. Mr. Wogan winked and shook a friendly foot at him from the back of the carriage, and his lordship was fairly staggered at the impertinence of her ladyship's footman. So they drove out past the houses and between the fields.

Colonel Montague was plainly in a great concern lest Lady Oxford should turn round and discover who rode behind her. He talked with volubility about the beauty of spring and the blue skies and the green fields, and uttered a number of irreproachable sentiments about them. Lady Oxford, however, it seemed, had lost her devotion to a country life, and was wholly occupied with the Colonel's indifference to herself. Her vanity put her to a great many shifts, which kept her restless and Mr. Wogan in a pucker lest she should turn round. Now it was her cloak that, with an ingenious jerk, she slipped off her shoulders, and the Colonel must hoist it on again; now it was her glove that was too small, and the Colonel must deny the imputation and admire her Liliputian hand, which he failed to do; now his advice was asked upon the proper shape of a patch at the corner of the mouth, and a winsome, smiling face was bent to him that he might judge without any prejudice. The Colonel, however, remained cold, and Wogan was sorely persuaded to lean over and whisper in his ear:

'Flatter her, soften your face and adore her, and she will be quiet as a cat purring in front of a fire.'

For it was solely his indifference that pricked her. Had he pretended a little affection, she would have whistled him off without any regret, but she could not endure that he should discard her of his own free will. This, however, Colonel Montague did not know; he had not Mr. Wogan's experience of the sex, and so Lady Oxford restlessly practised her charms upon him until they came to the gates of the almshouses at Dulwich.

Then Colonel Montague cried to the coachman to halt.

'Or would your ladyship go further?' he asked, and pulled his watch out of his fob to see the time. But his watch had unaccountably stopped. 'Nay, there's a sundial in the court there,' he said, and over his shoulder bade the lackey go and look at it. The lackey climbed down from the footboard. At the same moment Colonel Montague bade the coachman turn, and since the lackey kept at the back of the carriage as it turned, Lady Oxford did not catch a glimpse of him. The lackey walked through the gates, crossed the grass to the chapel without troubling his head about the sundial, ran down the passage and under the archway into a quiet road shaded with chestnut trees and laburnums. Colonel Montague's groom was walking a horse up and down the road. Wogan mounted the horse, thrust his feet into the stirrups, and took the air into his chest with incomparable contentment.

The afternoon sunlight shone through the avenue and glistened on the laburnum flowers. But there is another sort of yellow flower that blooms from the mouth of a pistol barrel with which Mr. Wogan was at that moment more concerned, and he unstrapped the holsters and looked to the priming to see whether the buds were ready to burst. Then he drove his heels into his horse's flanks and so rode down between the chestnut trees. 'Your ladyship, we need wait no longer,' said Montague to Lady Oxford. 'Your footman will not come back, and I have the honour to return you your packet of letters.'

With that he drew the letters from his pocket, sealed up in a parcel with Mr. Kelly's ring. Lady Oxford clutched them tight to her bosom, and lay back in the carriage, her eyes closed. The coachman drove back to London.

They had gone almost half the way before Lady Oxford recovered sufficiently from her joy to have a thought for anything but the letters. Then she looked at Montague, and her eyes widened.

'The footman!' she said. 'Ah! I have saved Mr. Kelly after all. I have saved him!'

The Colonel might have pointed out that whatever saving had been done, Lady Oxford had taken but an involuntary hand in it. But he merely shrugged his shoulders; he imagined her anxiety on Mr. Kelly's account to be all counterfeit, although, may be, she was sincere.

'Mr. Kelly,' he said, 'is most likely in the Tower. Your footman was Mr. Nicholas Wogan.'

Lady Oxford was silent for some little time. Then in a low, broken voice she said:

'There was no need you should have so distrusted me.'

Montague glanced at her curiously. Her face had a new look to him. It was thoughtful, but with a certain simplicity in the thoughtfulness; compunction saddened it, and it seemed there was no artifice in the compunction.

'Madam,' he answered gently, 'if I had told you, and the manner of Mr. Wogan's escape became known, you might fall under the imputation of favouring Mr. Wogan's cause.'

Lady Oxford thanked him with a shy look, and they drove back among the streets. Neither of them spoke until they reached Queen's Square, but Colonel Montague was again very gentle as he handed her from the carriage and bade her good-bye. Lady Oxford’s discretion was to seek. The Colonel seemed to be in a relenting mood; she could not resist the temptation.

‘My Corydon!’ she whispered under her breath.

Montague’s face hardened in an instant.

‘My Phylinda!’ he replied. ‘No, I should say my Smilissa. Madam, there is, in truth, some family likeness between the names, and perhaps it would be better if I said simply “Lady Oxford.”’

So the Colonel got his foot out of the net. Her ladyship made no answer to his sneer, but bowed her head and passed slowly into her house. Montague had struck harder than he had intended, and would gladly have recalled the words. But the door was closed, and the strange woman out of sight and hearing. He walked away to his lodging in Ryder Street, very well content with his day’s work, and opening the door of his parlour on the first floor was at once incommoded by a thick fog of tobacco-smoke. But through the fog he saw, comfortably stretched in his best armchair, with his peruke pushed back and his waistcoat unbuttoned, a lackey in Lady Oxford’s livery. Montague lifted up his voice and swore.

CHAPTER XXV

HOW THE MINIATURE OF LADY OXFORD CAME BY A MISCHANCE.

‘I lent you the swiftest horse I have,’ said Montague.

‘It is just for that reason I am back before you,’ replied Wogan.

Colonel Montague at once became punctilious to the last degree. He stood correct in the stiffest attitude of military deportment. A formal politeness froze the humanity out of his face.

‘This makes me very ridiculous, Mr. Wogan,’ he said in a tone of distaste. ‘If you will pardon the remark, I was at some pains and perhaps a little risk to get you safe out of London. You accepted my services, as it seemed, and yet here you are back in London! Indeed this makes me very ridiculous.’

Mr. Wogan had quite forgotten that Colonel Montague was an Englishman, and so hated ridicule worse than the devil. He was briskly reminded of the fact, and having ruffled the gentleman’s feelings, must now set to work to soothe them.

‘It is very true, Colonel. My behaviour looks uncommonly like a breach of good taste. But it was not for the purpose of playing a trick on you that I came back into danger, when I was safe upon the back of your beautiful horse. Sure, never have I ridden a nobler beast. A mouth of velvet, a leg tapered like a fine lady’s finger, a coat — sir, I have seen the wonderful manufactures of Lyons. There never was silk so smooth or of so bright a gloss, as the noble creature’s coat. He spurned the earth, at each moment he threatened to float among the clouds. Sure, that horse was the original of Pegasus in a direct descent. A true horse, and more than a horse, a copy of all that is best in England, an example of what is most English and therefore most admired, the true English military gentleman.’

‘Mr. Wogan,’ interrupted Montague, with a grim sort of smile, ‘you are likely to learn a little more particularly about the velvet mouth of the English military gentleman if you continue to praise his horse at the expense of his sense. Will you tell me why you have come back?’

‘You have a right to ask that, Colonel, but I have no right to answer you. It is a private affair wherein others are concerned. I should have remembered it before, but I did not. It only came into my mind when I was riding between the chestnut trees, and leaving my friend behind me.'

Colonel Montague was silent for a little.

'In another man, Mr. Wogan, I should suspect an intention to meddle with these plots. But I have no need to remind you that such a proceeding would not be fair to me. And if Mr. Kelly's concerns have brought you back I cannot complain. Meanwhile how are you to lie hidden? I cannot keep you here.'

'There are one or two earths, Colonel, which are not yet stopped, I have no doubt. I did but take the liberty to use your lodging until it grew dark.'

The evening was falling while Wogan and Montague thus talked together. Wogan wrote a letter which he put into his pocket, and holding the ends of his wig in his mouth, without any fear ran the hazard of the streets.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was that evening adorning herself for a masquerade in her house, when word was carried to her that Lady Oxford's big lackey was below and had brought a letter. Lady Mary had no sooner glanced at the superscription than she sent her maid downstairs to bring the lackey immediately to her boudoir. Thither he came without awaking suspicion in the servants, and found Lady Mary sitting in front of her toilette, which was all lighted up with candles, and the rest of the room dark.

Mr. Wogan remained in a dark corner by the door.

'You have a message from Lady Oxford,' said she, carelessly holding out a hand as though to take a letter.

'By word of mouth, your ladyship,' replied Wogan in a disguised voice.

Lady Mary dismissed her maid and spoke in considerable heat:

'Colonel Montague told me you had escaped.'

'I have come back,' replied Wogan coolly, who had no reason to think he had justly incurred Lady Mary's anger, and so made no account of it.

'It is sheer madness,' she exclaimed, 'and yet no more mad than it is for your friends to take precautions for your safety,' and she dabbed a patch on her cheek viciously. 'Why have you come back?'

'Your ladyship has not forgotten how some while ago Lady Oxford paid her losses at cards.'

Lady Mary raised her head from her mirror and looked at Wogan.

'With Mr. Kelly's winnings from the South Sea,' said she.

'Your ladyship was kind enough then to say that you would not count the money yours.'

'I remember.'

'But would keep it, since you could not return it to George, until such time as it could be used on his behalf.'

Lady Mary took a key from a drawer in her toilette and, unlocking a cabinet in a corner of the room, showed Wogan a parcel of bills of exchange lying amongst a heap of guineas.

‘The moment for using it has come,’ said Wogan.

‘Take it, then,’ said Lady Mary, who now asked for no explanations.

‘No. It is only of use if your ladyship uses it.’

‘How?’

Lady Mary went back to her toilette and busied herself with a number of little silver pots and boxes, while Wogan disclosed his plan.

‘George was taken last night in his lodging, as your ladyship is no doubt aware. It is a large sum that Lady Oxford lost at cards, and a large sum might perhaps bail George, if a trusted Whig were the surety. He would have some few weeks of liberty, at all events.’

‘Some few weeks that are like to cost you your life,’ said Lady Mary, who was now grown friendly. ‘It was to tell me this you came back. I should have guessed.’

‘Madam, I shall never believe my life’s in danger until I am dead,’ replied Wogan, with a laugh.

‘I will see what the money can do to-morrow,’ said Lady Mary. ‘Where shall I have news of you? Or very likely I am to meet you at Ranelagh?’

Wogan disclaimed any such bravado, and told her ladyship of a house where she might hear of him if she sent by night and if her messenger knocked in a particular way. To that house he now bent his steps, and stayed there that night and the next day. It was already dark when the particular knock sounded on the door, and Mr. Wogan lifted a corner of the blind and peered down into the street. What he saw brought him down the stairs in a single bound; he opened the door cautiously, and who should slip in but the Parson.

‘Nick!’ said he, in a warm voice. His hand clasped Wogan’s in the dark. ‘Thanks, thanks!’

It appeared that Lady Mary, after seeing that George was bailed out, had told him that the notion of bailing him was none of hers. Moreover, in order to make sure Smilinda’s letters were safe, Kelly had gone as soon as he was released to Colonel Montague, who told him of Wogan’s return to London and other matters of no importance, so that he now wasted a great deal of time in superfluous compliments. ‘But you shall not lose your life on my account, Nick. Montague’s horse, which it seems you have taken a liking to,’ he said, with a smile, ‘will be waiting for you at twelve o’clock to-night at Dulwich, and in the same road; but, Nick, this time you will have to walk to Dulwich. There is a warrant out for you. You can slip away with a better chance on foot; and, Nick, this time you will not come back. Promise me that.’

Wogan promised readily enough.

‘I brought the Colonel into some danger of suspicion by returning before,’ he said. ‘It is a strange thing, George, that, while our friends have left us in the lurch, we should owe, I my escape, you your few weeks of liberty, to perfectly inveterate Whigs, though how you came to an understanding with the Colonel is quite beyond me to imagine.’

‘I will tell you that now, Nick, since you have an hour to spare;’ and, going up to Wogan’s room, Mr. Kelly related to him the story of his meeting with the Colonel in the Park, of the disturbance with the Messengers in his rooms, and of the saving of Smilinda, and how his love for Rose urged him to it. It was eight o’clock when he had come to an end. Mr. Wogan heard the clocks striking the hour.

‘It will take me an hour to get to Dulwich,’ he said, ‘so I have three hours to spare. George, have you seen Rose?’

‘No; but she knows that I am free, for Lady Mary sent the news to her.’

‘That’s a pity,’ said Wogan, pursing his lips.

‘On the contrary, it was not the least kind of Lady Mary’s many kindnesses,’ said George, who was astonished at Mr. Wogan’s cruelty, that would have left the girl in her anxieties a moment longer than was necessary. ‘Had she not heard the news till it was stale, she would never have forgiven me — she that has forgiven me so much,’ said he, with more sentiment than logic.

‘Oh,’ said Wogan, ‘she has forgiven you so much? My young friend, you are very certain upon a very uncertain point. There’s that little matter of her ladyship’s miniature.’

Mr. Kelly looked anxiously at Wogan.

‘True,’ said he; ‘I told her a lie about it at Avignon, and made out it was the likeness of Queen Clementina.’

‘The lie is the smallest part of the difficulty. She wore the miniature, and wore it in Lady Oxford’s withdrawing-room. There’s the trouble, for there’s the humiliation.’

‘But, Nick,’ said Kelly, ‘she forgave it. Didn’t I escort her to her chair? Didn’t I feel her hand upon the sleeve of my coat?’

‘Oh! she carried herself very bravely, never a doubt of that. For one thing, you were in peril; and, to be sure, she will have kept a liking for you at the worst of it. For another, Lady Oxford was there, and Lady Oxford was not to win the day. My little friend Rose is a girl of an uncommon spirit, and would hold her own against any woman, for all her modest ways. But, just because she has spirit, she will not meekly forgive you. If you expect her to droop humbly on to your bosom, you are entirely in the wrong of it. ‘Oons! but it must have been a hard blow to her pride when she found she was in Lady Oxford’s house, and knew who Lady Oxford was, and had that miniature about her throat. Will she forgive you at all? The best you have to hope is that she will be content with making your head sing. That she will do for a sure thing; and I think—’

‘What?’ asked the Parson. The danger of life, the Messengers, the angry Colonel, had only raised his blood; the fear of Rose drove it to his heart. He was now plainly scared.

‘I think it was the greatest pity imaginable that Lady Mary sent word to her you were free. For, d’ye see, if you had dropped upon Rose suddenly, and she thinking you locked up in a dark prison and your head already loose upon your shoulders, why, you might have surprised her into a forgetfulness of her pride; but now she will be prepared for your coming. I think, George, I will walk along with you as far as Soho, since I have three hours to kick my heels in.’

‘Will you, Nick?’ cried George eagerly; and then, with his nose in the air, ‘But I have no fears whatever. She is a woman in a thousand.’ He was, none the less, evidently relieved when Wogan clapped his hat on his head. The night was dark, and Wogan in his livery had no fears of detection.

The two men walked through by-streets until they came to Piccadilly. The Parson was nerving himself for the meeting, but would not allow that he was in the least degree afraid. ‘A trivial woman would think of nothing but her humiliation and her slight, but Rose is, as you say, of an uncommon spirit, Nick,’ he argued.

Nick, however, preserved a majestic silence, which daunted the Parson, who desired arguments to confute. They were by this time come into Bond Street, and Mr. Kelly, who must be talking, declared with a great fervour, ‘There are no limits to a woman’s leniencies. Black errors she will pardon; charity is her father and her mother; she has an infinity of forgiveness, wherefore with truth we place her among the angels.’ Upon that text he preached most eloquently all the way up Bond Street, past the New Building, until he came to the corner of Frith Street in Soho. In Frith Street, all at once the Parson’s assurance was shown to be counterfeit. He caught at his friend’s arm.

‘Nick,’ said he, in a quavering, humble voice, ‘it is in Frith Street she lives. What am I to do at all? I am the most ignorant man, and a coward into the bargain. Nick, I have done the unpardonable thing. What am I to do now?’

Thus the Parson twittered in a most deplorable agitation. Mr. Wogan, on the contrary, was very calm. It was just in these little difficulties, which require an intimate knowledge of the sex, that he felt himself most at home. He stroked his chin thoughtfully.

‘Nick,’ and George shook the arm he held, ‘sure you can advise me. You have told me so often of your great comprehension of women. Sure, you know all there is to be known about them, at all.'

'No, not quite all,' said Wogan, with a proper modesty. 'But here I think I can help you. Which is the house?'

Kelly pointed it out. A couple of windows shone very bright upon the dark street, a few feet above their heads. Looking upwards they could see the ceiling of the room and the globe of a lamp reflected on the ceiling, but no more.

'It is in that room she will be sitting,' whispered the Parson.

'And waiting for you,' added Mr. Wogan grimly.

'And waiting for me,' repeated the Parson with a shiver.

They both stared for a little at the ceiling and the shadow of the lamp.

'Now, if the ceiling would only tell us something of her face,' said Kelly.

'It would be as well to have a look at her,' said Wogan. The street was quite deserted. 'Will you give me a back'?

The house was separated from the path by an iron railing a couple of feet from the wall. The Parson set his legs apart and steadied himself by the railing, while Wogan climbed up and knelt on to his shoulders. In that position he was able to lean forward and catch hold of the sill. His forehead was on a level with the sill. By craning his neck he could just look into the room.

'Is she there?' asked the Parson.

'Yes, and alone.'

'How does she look? Not in tears? Nick, don't tell me she's in tears.' The Parson's legs became unsteady at the mere supposition of such a calamity.

'Make yourself easy upon that point,' said Wogan, clinging for dear life to the sill, 'there's never a trace of a tear about her at all. For your sake, George, I could wish that there was. Her eyes are as dry as a campaigner's biscuits. Oh, George, I am in despair for you.'

'Nick, you are the most consoling friend,' groaned the Parson, who now wished for tears more than anything else in the world. 'What is she doing?'

'Nothing at all. She is sitting at the table. George, have you ever noticed her chin? It is a sort of decisive chin, and upon my word, George, it has the ugliest jilting look that ever I saw. She has just the same look in her big grey eyes, which are staring at nothing at all. Keep still, George, or you will throw me.'

For the Parson was become as uneasy as a restive horse.

'But, Nick, is she doing nothing at all? Is she reading?'

'No, she is doing nothing but expect you. But she is expecting you. Steady, for if I tumble off your shoulders the noise will bring her to the windows.'

The menace had its effect. Mr. Kelly's limbs became pillars of marble, and Wogan again looked into the room.

‘Wait a moment,’ he said, ‘I see what she is doing. She is staring at something she holds in her hands.’

‘My likeness?’ cried the Parson hopefully. ‘To be sure it will be that.’

‘I will tell you in a moment. Hold on to the railings, George.’

George did as he was bid, and Wogan, still holding to the window-sill very cautiously, stood up on his friend’s shoulders. George, however, seemed quite insensible to Mr. Wogan’s weight.

‘It will be my likeness,’ he repeated to himself. ‘I had it done for her by Mr. Zincke. I was right, Nick; she has forgiven me altogether.’

Mr. Wogan’s head was now well above the window-sill, and he looked downwards upon Rose, who sat at the table.

‘Yes, it’s a likeness,’ said Nick.

‘I told you. I told you,’ said the Parson. The man began to wriggle with satisfaction. ‘You are wrong, Nick. You know nothing at all about women, after all. Come down, you vainglorious boaster.’ It seemed he was about to cut capers with Mr. Wogan on his shoulders.

‘Wait,’ said Nick suddenly, and hitched himself higher.

‘Nick, she will see you.’

‘No, she’s occupied. George!’

‘What is it?’

‘It’s Lady Oxford’s miniature she is staring at, and not yours at all.’

The Parson grew quite stiff and rigid.

‘Are you sure?’ he whispered, in an awe-stricken voice.

‘I can see the diamonds flashing. ‘Faith my friend, but I had done better to have let you throw them into the sea at Genoa.’

A groan broke from the Parson.

‘Why didn’t you, Nick? What am I to do now?’

‘I can see the face. ’Tis the miniature of her ladyship that you gave out to be Queen Clementina’s. Did you ever meet Gaydon, George?’ he asked curiously.

‘Gaydon?’ asked Kelly. ‘What in the world has Gaydon to do with Rose?’

‘Listen, and I’ll inform you. He told my brother Charles a very pretty story of the Princess Clementina. It seems that when she escaped out of her perils and came to Bologna to marry the Chevalier, who had, just at the moment when he expected his bride, unaccountably retired into Spain, she stayed at Bologna, and so, picking up the gossip of the town, expressed a great desire to visit the Caprara Palace. ’Twas there the lady lived who had consoled the Chevalier in his anxieties. No doubt he never expected the Princess to get out of the Emperor’s prison. But Charles got her out, and here was she at Bologna. To be sure, the Princess was a most natural woman, eh? And when she came to the Caprara

Palace she asked to be shown the portrait of the Princess de la Caprara. That was more natural still. Gaydon describes how she looked at the portrait, and describes very well. For sure Rose is looking at Lady Oxford’s in just the same way.’

‘That’s good news, Nick,’ said Kelly, grasping at a straw of comfort. ‘For the Princess Clementina forgave.’

‘Ah, but there’s a difference I did not remark at the first. I remember Gaydon said the Princess turned very red, while your little friend Rose, on the contrary, is white to the edge of her lips. Sure, red forgives, when white will not. George,’ and Mr. Wogan ducked his head beneath the window-ledge, ‘she is coming to the window! For the love of mercy don’t move, or she will hear!’

George pressed himself close to the railings. Wogan hunched himself against the wall in the most precarious attitude. Would she open the window? Would she see them? Both men quaked as they asked themselves the question, though they had come thither for no other purpose but to see her and be seen of her. Wogan threw a glance over his shoulder to where the light of the window fell upon the road. But no shadow obscured it.

‘Sure, she’s not coming to the window at all,’ said Nick.

‘Oh, Nick,’ whispered the Parson, ‘you made my heart jump into my throat.’

Wogan drew his head up level with the window again, and again ducked.

‘She is standing looking towards the window with the likeness in her hand,’ and he scrambled to the ground, where the pair of them stood looking at one another, and then to the house, and from the house down the street. Wogan was the first to find his tongue.

‘It is a monstrous thing,’ said he, and he thumped his chest, ‘that a mere slip of a girl should frighten two grown men to death.’

Mr. Kelly thumped his chest too, but without any assurance.

‘Nick, I must look for myself,’ he said.

Footsteps sounded a little distance down the street, and sounded louder the next moment. A man was approaching; they waited until he had passed, and then Mr. Kelly climbed on to Wogan’s shoulders, and in his turn looked into the room.

‘Nick!’ he whispered in a voice of awe.

‘What is she doing?’

‘She has thrown Smilinda’s likeness on the ground. She is stamping on it with her heel. She is grinding it all in pieces.’

‘And the beautiful diamonds? Look if she picks them up, George!’

‘No; she pays no heed to the stones. It is the likeness she thinks of. It was in pieces a moment ago; it is all powder now,’ and he groaned.

‘George, it is an ill business. When a woman spurns diamonds you may be sure she is in a mortal fluster. It’s a Gorgon you have to meet — a veritable Gorgon.’

Mr. Kelly slid from Wogan’s shoulders to the ground.

‘What will I do, Nick?’

Nick bit his thumb, then threw his shoulders back.

‘I am not afraid of her,’ said he. ‘No, I am not. I have done nothing to anger or humiliate her. I am not afraid of her at all — not the least in the world. I will go in myself. I will beard her just to show you I am not at all afraid of her.’

‘Will you do that? Nick, you *are* a friend,’ cried Kelly, who was most reasonably startled by his friend’s heroism.

‘To be sure I will,’ said Nick, looking up at the window. ‘I am not afraid of her. A little slip of a girl! Why should we fear her at all? Haven’t we killed men more than once? Do you wait here, George. If I hold my hand up at the window with my fingers open — so, you may come in. But if I hold up a clenched fist, you had best go home as fast as your legs can carry you. You see, the case is different with you. I have no reason whatever to be frightened at her.’

He knocked at the door, and in a little the door was opened. ‘Not the least bit in the world!’ he stopped to say to Mr. Kelly in the street. Then he stepped into the passage.

CHAPTER XXVI

MR. WOGAN TRADUCES HIS FRIEND, WITH THE HAPPIEST CONSEQUENCES

Mr. Wogan’s title of Hilton was now, thanks to the *Flying Post*, as familiar as his name; he refused both the one and the other to the servant, and was admitted to Rose Townley without any formalities. Her eyes flashed as they remarked his livery, but she was not in any concern about Mr. Wogan, and asked him no questions. She rose with the utmost coldness, did not give him her hand, and only the bare mockery of a bow, as though her indignation against Mr. Kelly was so complete that it must needs embrace his friend.

‘I thought that he would have plucked up enough courage to come himself,’ said she, with a contemptuous shrug of the shoulders.

‘He is a man of the meanest spirit,’ replied Wogan, in a sullen agreement. ‘It is a strange thing how easily one may be misled. Here have I been going up and down the world with him for years, and I never knew him until now, never knew the black heart of him, and his abominable perfidies.’

Rose was taken aback by Wogan’s speech. No doubt she expected a hotch-potch of excuses and arguments on Mr. Kelly’s behalf, which would but have confirmed her in her own opinion; but falling in with her views, he took the words out of her mouth.

‘So,’ she said doubtfully, ‘he has lost your friendship too?’

‘To be sure,’ cried Wogan in a heat, ‘would you have me keep friends with a vile wretch whose thoughts writhe at the bottom of his soul like a poisonous nest of vipers?’

Rose neither answered the question nor expressed any approval of Wogan’s elegant figure describing Mr. Kelly’s mind.

‘Oh,’ said she, ‘then he did not send you to make his peace with me?’

Wogan answered with all the appearances of reluctance.

‘No. In fact the man was coming himself, and with a light heart. He made a great to-do about the infinite fairness and charity of women, which place them equal to the angels, and how you excelled all women in that and other womanly qualities. But I told him, on the contrary, that I knew your spirit, and that you were of too noble a pride to shut your eyes to a slight, and would certainly dismiss him. However, he would not be persuaded, so I slipped away from him and ran here, so that I might warn you against him.’

Rose forgot to thank Mr. Wogan for his zeal on her behalf. Indeed her face, in spite of herself, had lightened for a second; in spite of herself her eyes had sparkled when Wogan spoke of the great faith Mr. Kelly had in her charity.

‘It was more than a slight,’ she said, ‘I could forgive a slight — He would have come himself had not you prevented him.’

‘But he is coming. He would have been here already, but that he paid a visit on the way to Colonel Montague to discover whether Lady Oxford’s letters had been restored to her.’

‘Lady Oxford’s letters!’ exclaimed Rose, her face flushing again with anger.

‘To be sure,’ said Wogan, ‘you would know nothing of them. It is a fine story — the story of Lady Oxford’s love-letters.’

‘I have no wish to hear it,’ cried Rose sharply, and she turned towards the window. Mr. Wogan took a quick step towards her. If she looked out of the window she could hardly fail to observe the Parson.

‘Nor is it a story that you should hear,’ said Wogan in a soothing voice, ‘though indeed to hear it from Mr. Kelly’s lips would surely make you aware of his devilish sophistries. For he declares that, but for you, Lady Oxford’s love-letters would never have been restored to her, nor would he have gone to prison and put his neck in the noose.’

Rose shivered at those last words and drew in her breath. She turned quickly back to Wogan.

‘But for me?’ she asked. ‘What have I to do with Lady Oxford’s love-letters, or with his danger?’ and her voice softened towards the end of the sentence.

‘Why, Lady Oxford, who knew very well Mr. Kelly’s trade, betrayed him in revenge for a certain ballad wherein your name was mentioned.’

‘Yes,’ interrupted Rose, ‘Lady Mary told me of the ballad.’

‘Well, you heard Mr. Kelly perhaps assure Lady Oxford that he had her brocades in his lodging, and perhaps you remarked her ladyship’s confusion.’

‘Yes. I guessed what the brocades were.’

‘Very well. Mr. Kelly remained with her Ladyship, who informed him that he would be taken outside his door, and his rooms searched. There were papers in his rooms of a kind to bring him into great danger. But there were also Lady Oxford’s letters. The story he will tell you is this, that he meant to use Lady Oxford’s letters as a weapon by which he might save his papers and so himself; but a complete revolution took place in his thoughts. He suddenly understood that he owed it to you that no woman’s name should be smirched by his fault, and that thus he was bound, at the peril of his life, to rescue Lady Oxford’s letters, as he did. A strange chance put it into his hands to burn his own papers, and leave Lady Oxford's to be seized, in which case he would have been saved, and she lost. But he saved his honour instead, and his love for you helped him to it. He rescued her Ladyship's letters, his own are in the hands of the Minister.'

Mr. Wogan, who had now secured a most attentive listener, disclosed all that Mr. Kelly had told him of what took place in Ryder Street.

'This is the story he will tell you. And to be sure, he adds a pretty touch to the pretence. For he went whistling to prison and he says that he whistled because he felt as if you were walking by his side.'

'But what if it were no pretence at all?'

Mr. Wogan sagely shook his head, though the story had the stamp of truth on it to those who knew the Parson.

'If he had held you in such respect would he have sent you Lady Oxford's miniature to wear at Lady Oxford's rout?'

'But he did not send it to me for that purpose,' she cried, 'he did not even know that I was going to the rout. He gave me the miniature a long time ago, when it would have been very difficult for him to tell me whose it was.'

'But he told you it was Queen Clementina's.'

'No. It was I who guessed at that, and he — did not deny it.'

Here at all events was sophistry, but Mr. Wogan was less indignant at it than his anger with the Parson's subtleties would lead one to expect.

'Well,' said Wogan, 'I have told you what it was my plain duty to disclose to you.'

At this moment Wogan chanced to look towards the window. He beheld Mr. Kelly's face pressed against the glass. The man had grown impatient and so had climbed on to the railings. Mr. Wogan broke off with an exclamation he could not repress.

'What is it?' said Rose, turning about.

'Some most beautiful diamonds,' said Wogan, spreading out his hand to the window. He then dropped on to the floor and began picking up the diamonds which Rose had scattered when she set her foot on the miniature. Rose bit her lips, and flushed, as he held them in his palm. Then he said carelessly:

'That fine miniature had diamonds set about it. D'ye know, Miss Townley, that miniature would have been at the bottom of the sea long before Mr. Kelly came to Avignon, but for the diamonds about it. 'Twas I held his arm when, having done with her Ladyship, he would also have done with her Ladyship's present, and I bade him keep it for the value of the jewels.'

There was a loud knocking at the door, which came not a moment earlier than was necessary to prevent Mr. Wogan revealing himself as still the Parson's friend.

‘There’s the fellow come to importune you,’ said Wogan.

‘Then he would have thrown it away but for you,’ said Miss Townley thoughtfully. ‘He did not keep it out of any—’

But Wogan heard the servant pass down to the door, and thought it would be as well if he had a private word with the Parson.

‘You will excuse me,’ he said with dignity, ‘but I have no heart for the man’s company. Besides, I have stayed too long in London as it is. Delays would be dangerous.’

But Rose had no ears for any dangers of Mr. Wogan, as he was indescribably glad to remark. For her eyes looked past him to the door; from head to foot she seemed to listen for the sound of the Parson’s voice. Mr. Wogan bowed, and opened the door. Though she followed him to the door, and held it open as he passed out, she did not notice that he was going, she had no word of farewell. She did not even notice that Mr. Wogan put the diamonds in his pocket. For Mr. Wogan had his wits about him. Diamonds were diamonds, and the carpet no place for them. Some day they might be of use to the Parson. The door of the street was opened as Wogan stepped into the passage. But Rose did not shut the door of the parlour and so Wogan, as he met Kelly, could only whisper hurriedly, ‘Remember, I am your worst enemy,’ and so left him to his own resources.

It appeared, however, that they were sufficient. The Parson made no excuses whatever; he carried the day by the modesty of his omissions. Both with regard to the miniature and to the saving of Smilinda he disclosed to her no more than a bald array of facts. He made no parade of the part which the thought of Rose had played in the revulsion of his feelings, bringing him to see that he was bound in honour to save Smilinda’s honour; he did not tell her why he went whistling to prison. But Rose knew from Wogan of these evidences of his love, and no doubt thought of them the more because he would not use them to soften her just resentments.

Mr. Wogan left them together, and, walking out to Dulwich, found the Colonel’s horse waiting in the road between the chestnut trees. He came to the coast of Sussex in the morning, where he had friends among the smugglers, and lay all that day in a hut within sound of the waves. It was a black, melancholy day for Nicholas Wogan, who was leaving his friends behind him to face their perils alone, and who felt very solitary; not even the memory of the noble deeds of his illustrious forefathers had any power to cheer him, until he heard the grating noise of the boat’s keel as it was dragged down the beach to the sea, and saw the sail like a great wing waft up between him and the stars.

He got safe to Paris, where he heard of the strange use to which the Parson put his few weeks of liberty, for the Parson married Rose Townley three weeks later at St. James's Church in Piccadilly, and wrote to Mr. Wogan a very warm, human sort of letter which had not one single classical allusion to disfigure it. In that letter he gave the reasons which had induced him to the marriage.

'I am told,' he wrote, 'that a man so dangerously circumstanced must be selfish in the extreme to marry a woman who, in a short while, may, at the worst, be widowed; and at the best must be separated from her husband in his gaol. I do not fear that you will have so mean an opinion of my inclinations, but I would not have you think me careless upon this point neither. Dr. Townley is old, and his health breaks. He will leave his daughter, when he dies, but little money, and that moment cannot be very far off. It is true that Rose has beauty, and no doubt she might make a rich marriage if she had only beauty. But she has frankness, truth, and constancy as well, qualities which are not marketable wares, since those who possess them will not bring them into the market. Now, if I suffer death for the Cause, Rose will be no poorer than she was before; if, on the other hand, I live, there are the booksellers, and from the silence of my prison I can make shift to earn for her a decent livelihood.'

As all the world knows, Mr. Kelly lived, and even gained much credit by his speech at his trial. He made it plain, to all but prejudiced Whigs, that there was no Plot, nor he concerned in any, if there were. But what is Whig justice? He was sentenced to prison for life. The papers in his strong box were enough to help a foolish fellow, Counsellor Layer, on his way to Tyburn, enough to send Lord Orrery to the Tower, and Lord North and Grey into exile. The Plot was ruined for that time; the Bishop of Rochester was banished, for Mar's traitorous mention of the dog Harlequin fixed the guilt on that holy man. Mr. Kelly came off with loss of fourteen years of his life, which years he passed in the Tower.

It was not, after all, so silent a prison as he imagined it would be. For though during the first months his confinement was severe, and he never drew air except from between the bars, afterwards this rigour was relaxed. He was placed in a room of which one window took the morning sun, and the other commanded the river, and the ships going up and down with the tide; he was allowed the use of his books, and to receive what visitors he would. His visitors were not few, and amongst them Colonel Montague was the most frequent. His gaolers, the officers who were stationed in the Tower, and their wives, became his familiar friends, and it is said that when, after fourteen years, he escaped, not a woman in the precincts could make up her mind whether to clap her hands for joy, or weep at the loss of his society. Moreover, Rose came and went at her pleasure.

The first years of his imprisonment were thus not wholly unhappy years. He sat amongst his books translating Cicero, and if at times his limbs ached for the stress and activity of his youth, and he began to dream of hours in the saddle and starry nights at sea, it was not perhaps for very long. He had friends enough to divert his leisure moments, and Rose to keep him busy at his work. For what he had foreseen came to pass. Two years after Mr. Kelly came to the Tower, Dr. Townley died, and left Rose but poorly circumstanced. She came to lodge close by the Tower Gates, and the Parson set his pen to his paper and wrote essays and translations till the whole Tower of London buzzed with his learning, and no doubt a friendly Jacobite here and there bought one of his books. Mr. Wogan, indeed, bought them all. He has them ranged upon a bookshelf in his lodging at Paris, all bound in leather and most dignified; the very print has a sonorous look. 'Mr. Kelly's *Opera*' he calls them, and always speaks of the books as 'tomes' with prodigious respect and perhaps a sigh. For —

'He lacks one quality,' Mr. Wogan was heard to say, 'to set him on the pinnacle of fame. He cannot write poetry. It is a trick, no doubt, a poor sort of trick; but George had it not, and so when there was poetry to be written, he had to come to his friends.'

Thus ten years passed, and then came the black day, when Rose fell sick of a fever and must keep her bed. She sent word to George daily that he should expect her on the morrow, until a delirium took her, and the doctor, who had been charged by Rose to make light of her suffering, was now forced to tell Mr. Kelly the truth. She lay at death's door, calling on her husband, who could not come to her, and talking ever of that little garden at Avignon above the Rhone, in which she fancied that he and she now walked.

Mr. Kelly took the news in silence as a dog takes pain, and never slept and barely moved while the fever ran its course. Rose was at the Tower Gates, George was in his prison; a few yards only were between them, but those few yards were built upon with stones. In the daytime messages were brought to him often enough, but at night, when the mists rose from the river and the gates were closed, and the Parson had the dark loitering hours wherein to picture the sick room with its dim light and the tired figure tossing from this side to that of the bed, then indeed Smilinda had her revenge.

CHAPTER XXVII

HOW, BY KEEPING PAROLE, MR. KELLY BROKE PRISON

Every morning Mr. Kelly looked for the doctor to come to him with word that in the little house without the Tower Gate the blinds were drawn. But that message was not brought to him, and Colonel Montague, making a visit to the prison, three weeks after Rose fell ill, found the Parson sitting very quiet in his chair with a face strangely illumined.

‘Last night she slept,’ said George, ‘and waked only at midday. The fever has left her, and she will live. It is wonderful.’

The Colonel said what was fitting to the occasion, and the Parson replied to him absently, with his eyes upon the river and the boats swinging on the tide; and after a while Father Myles Macdonnell, whom the Colonel had neither seen nor heard of, was ushered into the room.

The Reverend Father was a kinsman of Parson Kelly, and though their acquaintance had been of the slightest, the Parson now turned to him with a great welcome. For his thoughts were now entirely bent upon an escape from his captivity. He dared not survey the possibility that some time Rose might again fall ill, and that again he must sit behind the bars and only hear news of how she fared.

The Reverend Myles, who was of the honest party, but not as yet blown upon by suspicion, seemed to him his only help and instrument. For a long while, when the Colonel had gone, the pair debated the means of escape, but found no issue; and Rose brought her white face back to the Tower, and the Parson’s spirits drooped, so that at last his health began to fail. He was therefore allowed to drive out in a coach to any place within ten miles of London in the custody of a warder, and on his parole to return before dark. Of this favour he made frequent use, and no doubt the sight of the busy faces in the streets urged him yet more to make a bid for his freedom.

Now these journeys of the Parson to take the air set Father Myles Macdonnell upon a pretty plan, which he imparted to Rose and to George.

‘You drive one afternoon up into Highgate Woods — d’ye follow that? I have half-a-dozen well-disposed persons hiding in a clump of trees who will take care of your warder — d’ye see? There will be a stout horse tethered to a branch close by, and a lugger waiting off the coast of Essex— ‘but the Parson would hear no more of the scheme.

‘I have given my parole to come back to the Tower before dark,’ said he, and glanced at Rose, who was looking away, to strengthen him in his objection. ‘I cannot break it, can I, Rose? I have given my parole. I am not one of the Butcher Cumberland’s officers. We must keep troth.’

Rose made an effort and agreed.

‘Yes,’ said she, ‘he has given his parole, and he cannot break it.’

‘Not so long as he’s a lost Protestant,’ said the Reverend Father. He tapped George on the knee, and continued in a wheedling voice: ‘It is a matter of religion, d’ye see? Just let me convert you. I can do it in a twinkling, and so I shall save your body and your soul in one glorious moment.’

‘How so? ‘asked the Parson with a laugh, for he was by this time well used to his kinsman’s efforts to convert him. ‘How shall a Catholic creep out of the Tower more easily than a Protestant?’

‘Because a Catholic can break his parole. It’s a great sin, to be sure, but I can absolve him for it afterwards.’

To Mr. Kelly’s thinking (and, indeed, to Mr. Wogan’s) this was no sterling theology, and he would not be persuaded. Another device had to be invented, and when at last a satisfactory plan was resolved upon, the plotters must wait for the quick nightfalls of autumn.

It was on Guy Fawkes day, the fifth of November, 1736, that Mr. Kelly made his escape. On the morning of that day he drove out to Epsom in the custody of his warder and upon his parole to return before dark. At four o’clock, when the light was just beginning to fall, Father Myles Macdonnell came into the Tower by the Sally Port Stairs opposite the Mint. He was told that the Parson was taking the air, and replied that he would go to the Parson’s room and wait. Thereupon he crossed the precincts of the Tower, and coming over the green and down the steps of the main-guard, he inquired of the porter at Traitor’s Gate whether or no Mr. Kelly had returned.

The porter answered ‘Not yet.’

‘It is a great pity,’ said the Reverend Myles, who seemed much flustered. ‘I am in a great hurry, and would you tell him, if you please, the moment he comes, to run with all haste to his room?’

Upon that he turned off under the archway of the Bloody Tower, and again mounted the steps of the main-guard.

About half-an-hour afterwards, in the deepening twilight, Mr. Kelly was set down within the Traitor’s Gate; he had kept his parole. The porter gave him Father Myles’s message; and the warder, since it appeared that he could only proceed as usual to his lodging, took his leave of him.

The Parson accordingly ran up the steps of the main-guard on to the green, which was by this time very obscure. Three minutes afterwards Father Myles Macdonnell hurried past the sentry at the Sally Port Stairs opposite the Mint, grumbling that he would wait no longer, and so came out upon Tower Hill. Just at that time to a moment another Father Myles Macdonnell accosted the porter at Traitor's Gate and requested him to let him out, seeing that he was, as he had already said, in a great hurry. The porter let him out with no more ado.

The second Father Myles was the real Father Myles; the first one who went grumbling out by the Sally Port Stairs was Parson Kelly. He had met Father Myles in the dark corner by Beauchamp Tower, had slipped over his head a cassock which the Father had brought with him, and had run across to the entrance over against the Mint, and so into freedom.

The carriage which had driven him to Epsom, after putting him down again at the Tower, had driven to Tower Hill, where it waited for the Parson close by the Sally Port Stairs. It did not wait long: and the Parson was hurried at a gallop out of London amidst the crackling of fireworks and the burning of effigies of Guy Fawkes. It seemed the town was illuminated to celebrate his escape.

At the Tower his evasion was not discovered until half-past seven of the evening, when the two porters, being relieved from their separate stations at the Traitor's Gate and the Sally Port Stairs, each vowed that he had let out Father Myles Macdonnell. This seemed so miraculous an occurrence that the warder ran to Mr. Kelly's chamber. It was empty, and then the clamour began. The Parson had thus three hours' start, and, though a reward of 300*l*. was offered for his recapture, no more was heard of him for a week.

Then, however, two fishermen coming into an alehouse at Broadstairs saw the reward for Kelly proclaimed in print upon the wall, and fell into a great fury and passion, saying that they had only received five pounds when they might have had three hundred. For a fee of five pounds they had put a man over from Broadstairs to Calais, who, when once he was landed in France, had said to them:

'If anyone inquires for George Kelly, you may say that he is safely landed in France.'

And indeed at the very moment when the fishermen were lamenting their mistake in the alehouse, George Kelly and Rose were taking their dinner in Mr. Wogan's lodging at Paris. Rose had travelled into France the day before the Parson escaped, and so, after fourteen years, they were united. It was a merry sort of a party, and no doubt Wogan made a great deal of unnecessary noise. He drew the Parson aside into a window before the evening was over.

'You are not very rich, I suppose?' said he.

‘I want for nothing,’ said the Parson with a foolish eye on Rose, like a boy of eighteen.

Wogan fumbled in his fob and brought out a packet which he unfolded.

‘Diamonds!’ cried Kelly.

‘They are yours,’ said Wogan. ‘I picked them up off the floor of a room in Soho on an occasion which you may remember. A miniature frame had come by a mischance.’

‘Smilinda’s?’ asked Kelly with a frightened glance over his shoulder to Rose, who had the discretion not to meddle in this private conversation.

‘Yes,’ says Wogan; ‘Smilinda’s. She gave the stones to you. Very likely they are worth a trifle.’

‘We’ll slip out and sell them to-morrow,’ answered the Parson in a whisper.

They slipped out, but they did not sell them. The diamonds were paste, and Mr. Wogan at last understood why Lady Oxford, when she gave her miniature set with brilliants to the Parson, had been so anxious that he should never part with it.

CHAPTER XXVIII

MR. WOGAN AGAIN INVADES ENGLAND, MEETS THE ELECT LADY, AND BEARS WITNESS TO HER PERFECTIONS

It seemed to Wogan that this particular story of the Parson’s fortunes, which began in Paris so long ago, had now ended in Paris. But he was wrong, and it was not till ten years after Mr. Kelly’s escape from the Tower that Wogan witnessed the last circumstance in England, and himself spoke the closing word.

Retiring soon from Paris, which ill suited a slender purse, Mr. Kelly lived, with his fair wife, at Avignon, where he played secretary to the Duke of Ormond. The Parson was a *gêne* on the amours of the aged Duke, who posted him off, in the year Forty-Five, to, escort the Prince of Wales to the Scottish islands. Wogan himself, earlier in the same year of grace, lost an arm at the battle of Fontenoy, but got a leaf of the laurels, being dubbed Chevalier of the Order of St. Louis.

His arm amputated and the wound healed, Wogan must needs join the Prince of Wales, then residing in his palace of Holyrood, near Edinburgh. Wogan came too late for that pretty onfall at Prestonpans, but he marched south with the Prince’s forces, riding again the old roads from Carlisle to Lancaster and Preston. The buxom maids of the inns were broad-blown landladies now; some of them remembered Wogan; and the ale was as good as ever.

It chanced that at Preston, where he tarried for a couple of days, Mr. Wogan was billeted on a cobbler, a worthy man, but besotted with a new religion, which then caused many popular tumults. To England it had been brought over from America by two brothers of Wogan’s old friend, Sam Wesley, the usher at Westminster School, and familiar of Bishop Atterbury.

Wogan’s host could talk of nothing but this creed, whose devotees cried out (it seemed), laughed, fell down in fits, barked, and made confession in public.

‘Ah, sir,’ he said to Wogan, ‘if you could but hear the Brothers Wesley, Charles and John, in the pulpit or singing hymns! Charles sings like an angel, and to hear John exhort the unaroused might waken those who have lain for a score of years in the arms of the Devil.’

‘John Wesley, little Jack Wesley?’ cried Wogan. ‘Why, I have saved him from many a beating at Westminster School!’

‘Do you know that saint, sir? ‘asked the cobbler, in an enthusiasm.

‘Know him, I know nobody else, if he is the brother of honest Sam Wesley, that once let me into the Deanery on a night in May. Assuredly I knew little Jack.’

The cobbler came near kneeling to Wogan. ‘Here, indeed, is the finger of Providence,’ he exclaimed. ‘Dear sir, you may yet cast off the swathings of the Scarlet Woman.’

‘Easy, be easy, Mr. Crispin!’ quoth Wogan. ‘But tell me, is Jack to preach and is Charles to sing in this town of yours to-night?’

‘Unhappily no, but we are promised the joy of hearing that famed disciple, Mr. Bunton, discourse, and the Elect Lady, as the Brethren style her, will also speak.’

‘Do the women preach in your new Church?’

‘No, but they are permitted to tell the story of their call, and to-night we shall hear the Elect Lady—’

‘Confess before the congregation? ‘Faith, the discourse may be improving. Is the Elect Lady handsome?’

‘She hath been one of the most renowned beauties of her age, and there are some who say that she is little altered by time. Ah, sir, she will make you embrace the truth.’

‘My embraces were ever at the mercy of feminine persuasion,’ said Wogan. ‘Is this Elect Lady of these parts?’

‘No, sir, she comes from the South, travelling with holy Mr. Bunton. You will oblige me infinitely, sir, if you will take pity on your own poor soul and join our love-feast. We meet in the warehouse of Mr. Brown, our most eminent grocer, in Scotch Lane, behind the “Jackdaw and Bagpipes.”’

‘I thank you for your solicitude,’ Wogan said; ‘and as to the love-feast, I’ll think of it.’

Consequently he thought no more of it till the bottle had gone round half-a-dozen times at the Prince’s mess in the ‘Bull Tavern.’ Lord Elcho, who had certainly drunk his dose, began telling, as a good thing, of his conversation with a *bourgeois* of Preston.

‘“What is your Prince’s religion?” asked the *bourgeois*.

‘“That is still to seek, my good man, still to seek,” I answered him,’ cried Elcho, laughing.

The Prince laughed also; the free-thinking philosophers had been at him already, first in Rome, then in Paris.

‘Good for you, Elcho,’ he cried; then, musing, ‘’Tis a very awkward business, this of religion. We have given three crowns for a mass, and there’s the difficulty, there it is, as black as ever. I wish some one would invent a new creed, and the rest agree about it, d —— n them, and then what is still to seek, my religion, would be found.'

A thought came into Wogan's head; the bottle had made rounds enough, and more; next morning they were to march early.

'Sir,' he said, 'there *is* a new religion, and a handsome lady to preach it.' Then he repeated what his host, the cobbler, had chanted to him, 'The meeting is at night in the warehouse of Mr. Brown, the eminent grocer.'

'A handsome woman! — a new belief! By St. Andrew, I'll go,' cried Charles. 'You'll come, Nick, you and—' he looked at the faces looming through the tobacco smoke round the wine-stained table. The blue reek of pipes clouded and clung to men's faces; to the red rough beard of Lochgarry, the smart, clean-shaven Ker of Graden and Maxwell of Kirkconnell, the hardy gaze of brave Balmerino, the fated Duke of Perth. Wogan thought of the Highland belief in the shroud of mist that is seen swathing men doomed soon to die, as were so many of them. The Prince stood and stared, his pipe in his hand. 'Nick, you will come, you and Ker of Graden; he's sober! *Allons!*'

'Sir,' whispered Mr. Murray of Broughton, 'think of the danger! The Elector has his assassins everywhere; they are taken; your Royal Highness laughs and lets them go, and the troops murmur.'

'Danger! Will they look for me at a tub-thumping match?'

The Prince picked up a cork from the floor; he set it to the flame of a candle; he touched with it his eyebrows and upper lip; he tucked his brown hair under his wig, standing before the mirror on the chimneypiece. Then he flung a horseman's cloak over his shoulders, stooped, and limped a little in his walk.

'A miracle,' everyone called out, for scarce a man of them could have known him.

He tossed his hand in the air; '*Allons, en avant!*' he cried, with a laugh; and Wogan, with Ker of Graden, did what all might have better done at Derby — followed their leader.

The night was wintry, and a cold north wind blew about the rare flickering oil lamps in the street. All three men buttoned themselves up in their cloaks. The Prince, still stooping and limping, took an arm of each of his aides-de-camp; indeed, he somewhat needed their support.

'I am like that Sultan in Monsieur Galland's Eastern tales,' he said, 'visiting my subjects incognito. Nick, you are Mesrour, the Chief of the — no, you're Giaffar. Graden is — I forget the Eastern minister's name. I am the Caliph. But what are the rabble about?'

The three pilgrims had entered the lane that led to the warehouse of the devout grocer. There was a mob around the door waving torches and shouting insults at a few decent tradesmen and their wives who were bent on the same pious errand as Wogan and his friends.

‘Away, swaddlers!’ ‘Down with the Methodists!’ they cried; and a burly fellow brushed against Wogan’s shoulder in the least gentlemanly style. He reeled off and fell flat in the lane, while the other ragamuffins laughed at him.

The three devotees stepped briskly through the grinning crowd that cried to Graden, ‘Come to buy brimstone, Scotch Sandy?’

‘Come to escape it, my dear friend,’ quoth Wogan’s host, the cobbler, who stood at the door, and kept it, too, against the mob with a great show of spirit.

‘You *have* thought of us, sir?’ asked the cobbler.

‘Ay, and brought two other inquiring spirits,’ said Wogan.

They were conducted into a long half-empty warehouse, smelling of cheese and festooned with cobwebs. A light or two burned dimly in horn lanterns; a low platform of new planks had been set up at the top of the room; a table with seven candles made an illumination there; a big black Bible, and a jug of water with a glass flanked the Bible. The preacher sat on a chair (most of the congregation stood, or reposed on barrels and benches), and on another chair, beside the preacher, was a lady, veiled, her fine figure obscured by widow’s weeds.

‘Is that your beauty?’ whispered the Prince.

‘The Elect Lady, sir,’ murmured the cobbler devoutly.

‘*Mon Dieu!* she has a very pretty foot!’

And Wogan, too, noticed the blaze of a diamond buckle that nearly covered the little arched instep. Tap, tap! went the Elect Lady’s foot, thrust out in front of her heavy petticoat of crape.

‘The lady is travelling everywhere, for the good of souls, gentlemen, with Mr. Wesley’s friend and choice disciple, the preacher, Mr. Bunton.’

‘L’heureux Monsieur Bunton! Quelle chance!’ quoth his Highness.

Mr. Bunton, the preacher, was indeed a fine, handsome young fellow as any widow could wish to look upon. He wore lay dress, not being a priest ordained of the Church of England. As for the congregation, they were small trading people, not rabble; indeed, the mob outside broke most of the windows during the sermon, that was interrupted, not only by the pebbles of the ragamuffins, but by the antics of the congregation.

Mr. Bunton, after a hymn had been sung without any music, began his preaching. He assured the audience that none of them could be a gayer dog than he had been, that was now a shining light. He obliged the congregation with a history of his early life and adventures, which Wogan now tells in few words, that people may know what manner of men were certain of these saints, or had been. Mr. Bunton was reared in sin, he said, as a land-surveyor. A broth of a boy he was, and nine times his parents sent him from Reading to London to bind him to a trade. Nine times his masters returned him on their hands.

Here the audience groaned aloud, and one went off in a fit. Mr. Bunton then told how he was awakened to sin as he walked in Cheapside. At this many, and the cobbler among them, cried ‘Hallelujah!’ but some went off into uncontrollable fits of laughter, which did not disturb the gravity of the rest of the assembly.

The preacher’s confession was, indeed, of such a nature that Wogan let a laugh out of himself, while Graden and the Prince rolled in extreme convulsions.

‘Go on, gentlemen; you are in the right path,’ said the cobbler. ‘Our converts are generally taken in this way first. It is reckoned a very favourable sign of grace. Some laugh for a week without stopping to sleep, eat, or drink.’

‘I’ll try to stop to drink,’ hooted his Highness, his face as red as a lobster; and then off he went again, the bench shaking beneath him, while Wogan and Graden laughed till the tears ran down their cheeks in their dark corner. The sympathetic cobbler murmured texts of an appropriate character. Indeed, now he thinks of it all, and sees Mr. Bunton sawing the air while he tells the story of his early wicked days, Mr. Wogan laughs as he writes. The man was greasy and radiant with satisfied vanity. His narrative of what he did and thought after he awoke to sin in Cheapside was a marvel.

‘I felt that beef and mutton were sinful things.’

Here came a groan from an inquiring butcher.

‘I wished to put away all that was of the flesh fleshy. My desire was to dwell alone, in a cave, far from the sight of woman.’

The Elect Lady groaned, and all the wenches in the congregation followed suit.

‘Abstaining from feasts of fat things, my mind was set on a simple diet of acorns, grass, and crabs.’

‘Les glands, les écrevisses, et l’herbe des champs!’ hooted the Prince. ‘Mon Dieu, quel souper, et quelle digestion il doit avoir, cet homme-là!’

‘But, sisters and brethren,’ Mr. Bunton went on, ‘did I yield to these popish temptations? Did I live, like one of their self-righteous so-called saints, on crabs, acorns, and grass? Did I retire to a cave? No, dear sisters and brethren. My motive for abstaining was bad; it was a suggestion of the Old Man—’

‘Qui donc est-il, ce vieillard bien pensant?’ whispered the Prince.

‘The devil, sir,’ answered Graden, who knew the doctrine of the Scotch ministers.

‘My motive for not living on crabs in a cave was bad, I confess, but it was over-ruled for the best. Dear friends, I kept myself far from these temptations, because, indeed, I was afraid of ghosts that haunt caves and such places.’

‘Il ne mangeait pas les écrevisses, parce qu’il avait peur des revenants! O c’est trop!’ said the Prince, in a voice choked with emotion, while more advanced disciples cried ‘Glory!’ and ‘Hallelujah!’

‘But next,’ the preacher went on, much gratified and encouraged by these demonstrations, ‘I was happily brought acquainted with that precious sister, that incomparable disciple of Mr. Wesley, whom we call the Elect Lady. Then I awoke to light, and saw that it was laid upon me to preach, continually and unceasingly, making in every town confession of my offences. That dear lady, friends, promises for this once (she is as modest as she is generous and good) to tell us the moving story of her own early dangers, while she was a dweller in the tents of — of Shem, I think.’

The congregation cheered and stamped with their feet, all but a few who were rolling on the floor in fits and foaming at the mouth. Mr. Bunton sat down very warm, and applied himself to the mug of water.

The Elect Lady rose up to her full height, and tossed back her veil over her shoulders.

‘Ah, nous sommes trompés,’ said the Prince. ‘C’est une femme de quarante ans, bien sonnés!’

But Wogan, between the shoulders of the congregation, stared from his dim corner as he had never stared at mortal woman before. The delicate features were thickened, alas, the lips had fallen in, the gold threads had been unwoven out of the dark brown hair. There were two dabs of red on a powdered face, where in time past the natural roses and lilies had bloomed; but the voice and the little Andalusian foot that beat the time with the Elect Lady’s periods were the voice and the foot of the once incomparable Smilinda! Nay, when she turned and looked at the converted land-surveyor beside her, Mr. Wogan knew in her gaze the ghost of the glance that had bewitched Scrope, and Kelly, and Colonel Montague, and Lord Sidney Beauclerk, and who knows how many other gallants? In that odd place Wogan felt a black fit of the spleen. A woman’s loss of beauty, — Wogan can never think of it unmoved. What tragedy that we men endure or enact is like this?

But her ladyship spoke, and she spoke very well. The congregation, all of them that were not in fits or in laughing hysterics, listened as if to an angel. Heavens! what a story she told of her youth! What dangers encountered! What plots prepared against her virtue, ay, by splendid soldiers, beautiful young lords, and even clergymen; above all, by one monster whom she had discovered to be, not only a monster, but a traitor to the King, and an agent of the Pretender. She was a young thing then, married to an old lord, all unprotected, on every side beset by flattery.

The congregation groaned and swayed at the picture of man’s depravity, but Wogan, his spleen quite forgotten, was chuckling with delight.

Yet, all unawakened as she was, said this penitent, an unknown influence had ever shielded her. She remembered how one of these evil ones, the clergyman, after kneeling vainly at her feet, had cried, ‘Sure, some invisible power protects your ladyship.’

Here the groans gave place to cries of praise, arms were lifted, the simple, good people wept. Wogan listened with a less devotional air, bending forward on his bench, and rubbing his hands for joy. In truth it had just come upon him that it was his duty to stand up when the Elect Lady sat down, and bear his witness to the truth of her narrative.

‘Not to her be the triumph,’ she went on, ‘all unawakened as she then was, and remained, till she heard Mr. Wesley preach,’ and thereafter went through the world with Brother Bunton, converting land-surveyors, colliers, and others.

Wogan does not care to remember or quote any more of this lady’s pieties. They had a kind of warmth and ease of familiarity which, in sacred things, are not to his liking. However, when she ceased, Mr. Wogan stood up, a tall figure of a French officer with an empty sleeve in his dim corner.

‘Good people,’ he said; ‘in my heedless youth I had the honour to be of the acquaintance of this lady who has just spoken to you.’

The Elect Lady glanced at Wogan; she gave a strange, short cry, and the black veil swept over her face again.

‘I was,’ Wogan went on, ‘the eye-witness of these trials to which her Ladyship’s virtue was exposed by the wicked ones of whose company I was a careless partaker. I have heard that wicked minister say that some invisible power protected her Ladyship. If any testimony to the truth of her ladyship’s moving tale were needed I could bear that evidence, as could my friend the Rev. Mr. Kelly, now in France with despatches, and also General Montague, at present serving with Field-Marshal Wade, in the neighbourhood of Newcastle.’

Wogan sat down.

‘That was providential indeed,’ said the cobbler; and all the congregation bawled ‘Miracle.’ But the Elect Lady sat still, her face in her hands, like a Niobe in black bombazine.

In the confusion, the three inquirers from the Prince’s army slipped modestly out. A heavy shower of snow had swept the rabble out of the lane. All was dark and cold, after the reek of the crowded warehouse.

‘Nick,’ said the Prince, ‘was that story all true? Was the Elect Lady a prude?’

‘It is Mr. Kelly’s story, sir,’ said Wogan. Your Royal Highness can ask him.’

‘George was her adorer? Then George shall tell me the tale over a bottle. How the cold strikes! Hey, for a bowl of punch!’ cried the Prince.

‘I am at your commands, sir, but may I say that it is one of the morning, and the pipes play the reveillé at four?’

‘To quarters, then! What is the word, damme? What is the word?’

‘*Slaint an Righ*, sir.’

‘Slaint an Righ? I never can get my tongue about it. Oh, if our subjects had but one language and one religion! But it shall not be the religion of Mr. Bunton. *Bon soir!*’

‘You have taken every trick, Wogan!’ said Graden, as the Prince entered his inn. ‘A sober night, for once, before a long day’s march.’

*

Next morning the army went south, to Derby, and then (by no fault of the Irish officers or of their Prince) came back again. Wogan was at Falkirk, Culloden, and Ruthven, woe worth the day! How he reached France when all was over, is between him and a very beautiful young lady of Badenoch; she said she bore a king’s name — Miss Helen Macwilliam. Of King Macwilliam Wogan hath never heard, but the young lady (whose brothers had taken to the heather) protected Wogan in his distress, tended his wound, hid him from the red-coat soldiers, and at last secured for him a passage in a vessel from Montrose.

And for all souvenir, she kept the kerchief with which she had first bound up the bayonet-stab that Wogan came by, when he, with the Stewarts, broke through Barrel’s regiment at Culloden. He writes this at Avignon, where George and his wife also dwell, in the old house with the garden, the roses, and the noisy, pretty children that haunted Mr. Kelly’s dreams when he was young.

The Poetry Collections

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BALLADS, LYRICS, AND POEMS OF OLD FRANCE

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SPRING.

CHARLES D’ORLEANS, 1391-1465.

[The new-liveried year. - *Sir Henry Wotton*.]

The year has changed his mantle cold
Of wind, of rain, of bitter air;
And he goes clad in cloth of gold,
Of laughing suns and season fair;
No bird or beast of wood or wold
But doth with cry or song declare
The year lays down his mantle cold.
All founts, all rivers, seaward rolled,
The pleasant summer livery wear,
With silver studs on broidered vair;
The world puts off its raiment old,
The year lays down his mantle cold.

RONDEL.

CHARLES D’ORLEANS, 1391-1465.

[To his Mistress, to succour his heart that is beleaguered by jealousy.]

Strengthen, my Love, this castle of my heart,
And with some store of pleasure give me aid,
For Jealousy, with all them of his part,
Strong siege about the weary tower has laid.
Nay, if to break his bands thou art afraid,
Too weak to make his cruel force depart,
Strengthen at least this castle of my heart,
And with some store of pleasure give me aid.
Nay, let not Jealousy, for all his art
Be master, and the tower in ruin laid,
That still, ah Love! thy gracious rule obeyed.
Advance, and give me succour of thy part;
Strengthen, my Love, this castle of my heart.

RONDEL.

FRANCOIS VILLON, 1460

Goodbye! the tears are in my eyes;
Farewell, farewell, my prettiest;
Farewell, of women born the best;
Goodbye! the saddest of goodbyes.
Farewell! with many vows and sighs
My sad heart leaves you to your rest;
Farewell! the tears are in my eyes;
Farewell! from you my miseries
Are more than now may be confessed,
And most by thee have I been blessed,
Yea, and for thee have wasted sighs;
Goodbye! the last of my goodbyes.

ARBOR AMORIS.

FRANCOIS VILLON, 1460

I have a tree, a graft of Love,
That in my heart has taken root;
Sad are the buds and blooms thereof,
And bitter sorrow is its fruit;
Yet, since it was a tender shoot,
So greatly hath its shadow spread,
That underneath all joy is dead,
And all my pleasant days are flown,
Nor can I slay it, nor instead
Plant any tree, save this alone.

Ah, yet, for long and long enough
My tears were rain about its root,
And though the fruit be harsh thereof,
I scarcely looked for better fruit
Than this, that carefully I put
In garner, for the bitter bread
Whereon my weary life is fed:
Ah, better were the soil unsown
That bears such growths; but Love instead
Will plant no tree, but this alone.

Ah, would that this new spring, whereof
The leaves and flowers flush into shoot,
I might have succour and aid of Love,
To prune these branches at the root,
That long have borne such bitter fruit,
And graft a new bough, comforted
With happy blossoms white and red;
So pleasure should for pain atone,

Nor Love slay this tree, nor instead
Plant any tree, but this alone.

L'ENVOY.

Princess, by whom my hope is fed,
My heart thee prays in lowlihead
To prune the ill boughs overgrown,
Nor slay Love's tree, nor plant instead
Another tree, save this alone.

BALLAD OF THE GIBBET.

[An epitaph in the form of a ballad that François Villon wrote of himself and his company, they expecting shortly to be hanged.]

Brothers and men that shall after us be,
Let not your hearts be hard to us:
For pitying this our misery
Ye shall find God the more piteous.
Look on us six that are hanging thus,
And for the flesh that so much we cherished
How it is eaten of birds and perished,
And ashes and dust fill our bones' place,
Mock not at us that so feeble be,
But pray God pardon us out of His grace.

Listen, we pray you, and look not in scorn,
Though justly, in sooth, we are cast to die;
Ye wot no man so wise is born
That keeps his wisdom constantly.
Be ye then merciful, and cry
To Mary's Son that is piteous,
That His mercy take no stain from us,
Saving us out of the fiery place.
We are but dead, let no soul deny
To pray God succour us of His grace.

The rain out of heaven has washed us clean,
The sun has scorched us black and bare,
Ravens and rooks have pecked at our eyne,
And feathered their nests with our beards and hair.
Round are we tossed, and here and there,
This way and that, at the wild wind's will,
Never a moment my body is still;

Birds they are busy about my face.
Live not as we, nor fare as we fare;
Pray God pardon us out of His grace.

L’ENVOY.

Prince Jesus, Master of all, to thee
We pray Hell gain no mastery,
That we come never anear that place;
And ye men, make no mockery,
Pray God pardon us out of His grace.

HYMN TO THE WINDS.

DU BELLAY, 1550.

[The winds are invoked by the winnowers of corn.]

To you, troop so fleet,
That with winged wandering feet,
Through the wide world pass,
And with soft murmuring
Toss the green shades of spring
In woods and grass,
Lily and violet
I give, and blossoms wet,
Roses and dew;
This branch of blushing roses,
Whose fresh bud uncloses,
Wind-flowers too.
Ah, winnow with sweet breath,
Winnow the holt and heath,
Round this retreat;
Where all the golden morn
We fan the gold o’ the corn,
In the sun’s heat.

A VOW TO HEAVENLY VENUS.

DU BELLAY, 1500

We that with like hearts love, we lovers twain,
New wedded in the village by thy fane,
Lady of all chaste love, to thee it is
We bring these amaranths, these white lilies,
A sign, and sacrifice; may Love, we pray,
Like amaranthine flowers, feel no decay;
Like these cool lilies may our loves remain,
Perfect and pure, and know not any stain;
And be our hearts, from this thy holy hour,
Bound each to each, like flower to wedded flower.

TO HIS FRIEND IN ELYSIUM.

DU BELLAY, 1550.

So long you wandered on the dusky plain,
Where flit the shadows with their endless cry,
You reach the shore where all the world goes by,
You leave the strife, the slavery, the pain;
But we, but we, the mortals that remain
In vain stretch hands; for Charon sullenly
Drives us afar, we may not come anigh
Till that last mystic obolus we gain.

But you are happy in the quiet place,
And with the learned lovers of old days,
And with your love, you wander ever-more
In the dim woods, and drink forgetfulness
Of us your friends, a weary crowd that press
About the gate, or labour at the oar.

A SONNET TO HEAVENLY BEAUTY.

DU BELLAY, 1550.

If this our little life is but a day
In the Eternal, - if the years in vain
Toil after hours that never come again, -
If everything that hath been must decay,
Why dreamest thou of joys that pass away,
My soul, that my sad body doth restrain?
Why of the moment's pleasure art thou fain?
Nay, thou hast wings, - nay, seek another stay.

There is the joy whereto each soul aspires,
And there the rest that all the world desires,
And there is love, and peace, and gracious mirth;
And there in the most highest heavens shalt thou
Behold the Very Beauty, whereof now
Thou worshippest the shadow upon earth.

APRIL.

REMY BELLEAU, 1560.

April, pride of woodland ways,
Of glad days,
April, bringing hope of prime,
To the young flowers that beneath
Their bud sheath
Are guarded in their tender time;

April, pride of fields that be
Green and free,
That in fashion glad and gay,
Stud with flowers red and blue,
Every hue,
Their jewelled spring array;

April, pride of murmuring
Winds of spring,
That beneath the winnowed air,
Trap with subtle nets and sweet
Flora's feet,
Flora's feet, the fleet and fair;

April, by thy hand caressed,
From her breast
Nature scatters everywhere
Handfuls of all sweet perfumes,
Buds and blooms,
Making faint the earth and air.

April, joy of the green hours,
Clothes with flowers
Over all her locks of gold

My sweet Lady; and her breast
With the blest
Birds of summer manifold.

April, with thy gracious wiles,
Like the smiles,
Smiles of Venus; and thy breath
Like her breath, the Gods’ delight,
(From their height
They take the happy air beneath;)

It is thou that, of thy grace,
From their place
In the far-oft isles dost bring
Swallows over earth and sea,
Glad to be
Messengers of thee, and Spring.

Daffodil and eglantine,
And woodbine,
Lily, violet, and rose
Plentiful in April fair,
To the air,
Their pretty petals do unclose.

Nightingales ye now may hear,
Piercing clear,
Singing in the deepest shade;
Many and many a babbled note
Chime and float,
Woodland music through the glade.

April, all to welcome thee,
Spring sets free
Ancient flames, and with low breath
Wakes the ashes grey and old

That the cold
Chilled within our hearts to death.

Thou beholdest in the warm
Hours, the swarm
Of the thievish bees, that flies
Evermore from bloom to bloom
For perfume,
Hid away in tiny thighs.

Her cool shadows May can boast,
Fruits almost
Ripe, and gifts of fertile dew,
Manna-sweet and honey-sweet,
That complete
Her flower garland fresh and new.

Nay, but I will give my praise,
To these days,
Named with the glad name of Her
That from out the foam o’ the sea
Came to be
Sudden light on earth and air.

ROSES.

RONSARD, 1550.

I send you here a wreath of blossoms blown,
And woven flowers at sunset gathered,
Another dawn had seen them ruined, and shed
Loose leaves upon the grass at random strown.
By this, their sure example, be it known,
That all your beauties, now in perfect flower,
Shall fade as these, and wither in an hour,
Flowerlike, and brief of days, as the flower sown.

Ah, time is flying, lady - time is flying;
Nay, ’tis not time that flies but we that go,
Who in short space shall be in churchyard lying,
And of our loving parley none shall know,
Nor any man consider what we were;
Be therefore kind, my love, whiles thou art fair.

THE ROSE.

RONSARD, 1550.

See, Mignonne, hath not the Rose,
That this morning did unclose
Her purple mantle to the light,
Lost, before the day be dead,
The glory of her raiment red,
Her colour, bright as yours is bright?

Ah, Mignonne, in how few hours,
The petals of her purple flowers
All have faded, fallen, died;
Sad Nature, mother ruinous,
That seest thy fair child perish thus
‘Twixt matin song and even tide.

Hear me, my darling, speaking sooth,
Gather the fleet flower of your youth,
Take ye your pleasure at the best;
Be merry ere your beauty flit,
For length of days will tarnish it
Like roses that were loveliest.

TO THE MOON.

RONSARD, 1550.

Hide this one night thy crescent, kindly Moon;
So shall Endymion faithful prove, and rest
Loving and unawakened on thy breast;
So shall no foul enchanter importune
Thy quiet course; for now the night is boon,
And through the friendly night unseen I fare,
Who dread the face of foemen unaware,
And watch of hostile spies in the bright noon.
Thou knowest, Moon, the bitter power of Love;
’Tis told how shepherd Pan found ways to move,
For little price, thy heart; and of your grace,
Sweet stars, be kind to this not alien fire,
Because on earth ye did not scorn desire,
Bethink ye, now ye hold your heavenly place.

TO HIS YOUNG MISTRESS.

RONSARD, 1550.

Fair flower of fifteen springs, that still
Art scarcely blossomed from the bud,
Yet hast such store of evil will,
A heart so full of hardihood,
Seeking to hide in friendly wise
The mischief of your mocking eyes.

If you have pity, child, give o’er;
Give back the heart you stole from me,
Pirate, setting so little store
On this your captive from Love’s sea,
Holding his misery for gain,
And making pleasure of his pain.

Another, not so fair of face,
But far more pitiful than you,
Would take my heart, if of his grace,
My heart would give her of Love’s due;
And she shall have it, since I find
That you are cruel and unkind.

Nay, I would rather that it died,
Within your white hands prisoning,
Would rather that it still abide
In your ungentle comforting.
Than change its faith, and seek to her
That is more kind, but not so fair.

DEADLY KISSES.

RONSARD, 1550**.**

All take these lips away; no more,
No more such kisses give to me.
My spirit faints for joy; I see
Through mists of death the dreamy shore,
And meadows by the water-side,
Where all about the Hollow Land
Fare the sweet singers that have died,
With their lost ladies, hand in hand;
Ah, Love, how fireless are their eyes,
How pale their lips that kiss and smile!
So mine must be in little while
If thou wilt kiss me in such wise.

OF HIS LADY’S OLD AGE.

RONSARD, 1550

When you are very old, at evening
You’ll sit and spin beside the fire, and say,
Humming my songs, ‘Ah well, ah well-a-day!
When I was young, of me did Ronsard sing.’
None of your maidens that doth hear the thing,
Albeit with her weary task foredone,
But wakens at my name, and calls you one
Blest, to be held in long remembering.

I shall be low beneath the earth, and laid
On sleep, a phantom in the myrtle shade,
While you beside the fire, a grandame grey,
My love, your pride, remember and regret;
Ah, love me, love! we may be happy yet,
And gather roses, while ’tis called to-day.

ON HIS LADY’S WAKING.

RONSARD, 1550

My lady woke upon a morning fair,
What time Apollo’s chariot takes the skies,
And, fain to fill with arrows from her eyes
His empty quiver, Love was standing there:
I saw two apples that her breast doth bear
None such the close of the Hesperides
Yields; nor hath Venus any such as these,
Nor she that had of nursling Mars the care.

Even such a bosom, and so fair it was,
Pure as the perfect work of Phidias,
That sad Andromeda’s discomfiture
Left bare, when Perseus passed her on a day,
And pale as Death for fear of Death she lay,
With breast as marble cold, as marble pure.

HIS LADY'S DEATH.

RONSARD, 1550.

Twain that were foes, while Mary lived, are fled;
One laurel-crowned abides in heaven, and one
Beneath the earth has fared, a fallen sun,
A light of love among the loveless dead.
The first is Chastity, that vanquished
The archer Love, that held joint empery
With the sweet beauty that made war on me,
When laughter of lips with laughing eyes was wed.

Their strife the Fates have closed, with stern control,
The earth holds her fair body, and her soul
An angel with glad angels triumpheth;
Love has no more that he can do; desire
Is buried, and my heart a faded fire,
And for Death's sake, I am in love with Death.

LADY’S TOMB.

RONSARD, 1550.

As in the gardens, all through May, the rose,
Lovely, and young, and fair apparelled,
Makes sunrise jealous of her rosy red,
When dawn upon the dew of dawning glows;
Graces and Loves within her breast repose,
The woods are faint with the sweet odour shed,
Till rains and heavy suns have smitten dead
The languid flower, and the loose leaves unclose, -

So this, the perfect beauty of our days,
When earth and heaven were vocal of her praise,
The fates have slain, and her sweet soul reposes;
And tears I bring, and sighs, and on her tomb
Pour milk, and scatter buds of many a bloom,
That dead, as living, she may be with roses.

SHADOWS OF HIS LADY.

JACQUES TAHUREAU, 1527-1555.

Within the sand of what far river lies
The gold that gleams in tresses of my Love?
What highest circle of the Heavens above
Is jewelled with such stars as are her eyes?
And where is the rich sea whose coral vies
With her red lips, that cannot kiss enough?
What dawn-lit garden knew the rose, whereof
The fled soul lives in her cheeks' rosy guise?

What Parian marble that is loveliest,
Can match the whiteness of her brow and breast?
When drew she breath from the Sabaean glade?
Oh happy rock and river, sky and sea,
Gardens, and glades Sabaean, all that be
The far-off splendid semblance of my maid!

MOONLIGHT.

JACQUES TAHUREAU, 1527-1555.

The high Midnight was garlanding her head
With many a shining star in shining skies,
And, of her grace, a slumber on mine eyes,
And, after sorrow, quietness was shed.
Far in dim fields cicalas jargonéd
A thin shrill clamour of complaints and cries;
And all the woods were pallid, in strange wise,
With pallor of the sad moon overspread.

Then came my lady to that lonely place,
And, from her palfrey stooping, did embrace
And hang upon my neck, and kissed me over;
Wherefore the day is far less dear than night,
And sweeter is the shadow than the light,
Since night has made me such a happy lover.

LOVE IN MAY.

PASSERAT, 1580.

Off with sleep, love, up from bed,
This fair morn;
See, for our eyes the rosy red
New dawn is born;
Now that skies are glad and gay
In this gracious month of May,
Love me, sweet,
Fill my joy in brimming measure,
In this world he hath no pleasure,
That will none of it.

Come, love, through the woods of spring,
Come walk with me;
Listen, the sweet birds jargoning
From tree to tree.
List and listen, over all
Nightingale most musical
That ceases never;
Grief begone, and let us be
For a space as glad as he;
Time’s flitting ever.

Old Time, that loves not lovers, wears
Wings swift in flight;
All our happy life he bears
Far in the night.
Old and wrinkled on a day,
Sad and weary shall you say,
‘Ah, fool was I,
That took no pleasure in the grace

Of the flower that from my face
Time has seen die.’

Leave then sorrow, teen, and tears
Till we be old;
Young we are, and of our years
Till youth be cold
Pluck the flower; while spring is gay
In this happy month of May,
Love me, love;
Fill our joy in brimming measure;
In this world he hath no pleasure
That will none thereof.

THE GRAVE AND THE ROSE.

VICTOR HUGO.

The Grave said to the Rose,
‘What of the dews of dawn,
Love’s flower, what end is theirs?’
‘And what of spirits flown,
The souls whereon doth close
The tomb’s mouth unawares?’
The Rose said to the Grave.

The Rose said, ‘In the shade
From the dawn’s tears is made
A perfume faint and strange,
Amber and honey sweet.’
‘And all the spirits fleet
Do suffer a sky-change,
More strangely than the dew,
To God’s own angels new,’
The Grave said to the Rose.

THE GENESIS OF BUTTERFLIES.

VICTOR HUGO.

The dawn is smiling on the dew that covers
The tearful roses; lo, the little lovers
That kiss the buds, and all the flutterings
In jasmine bloom, and privet, of white wings,
That go and come, and fly, and peep and hide,
With muffled music, murmured far and wide!
Ah, Spring time, when we think of all the lays
That dreamy lovers send to dreamy mays,
Of the fond hearts within a billet bound,
Of all the soft silk paper that pens wound,
The messages of love that mortals write
Filled with intoxication of delight,
Written in April, and before the May time
Shredded and flown, play things for the wind’s play-time,
We dream that all white butterflies above,
Who seek through clouds or waters souls to love,
And leave their lady mistress in despair,
To flit to flowers, as kinder and more fair,
Are but torn love-letters, that through the skies
Flutter, and float, and change to Butterflies.

MORE STRONG THAN TIME.

VICTOR HUGO.

Since I have set my lips to your full cup, my sweet,
Since I my pallid face between your hands have laid,
Since I have known your soul, and all the bloom of it,
And all the perfume rare, now buried in the shade;

Since it was given to me to hear one happy while,
The words wherein your heart spoke all its mysteries,
Since I have seen you weep, and since I have seen you smile,
Your lips upon my lips, and your eyes upon my eyes;

Since I have known above my forehead glance and gleam,
A ray, a single ray, of your star, veiled always,
Since I have felt the fall, upon my lifetime’s stream,
Of one rose petal plucked from the roses of your days;

I now am bold to say to the swift changing hours,
Pass, pass upon your way, for I grow never old,
Fleet to the dark abysm with all your fading flowers,
One rose that none may pluck, within my heart I hold.

Your flying wings may smite, but they can never spill
The cup fulfilled of love, from which my lips are wet;
My heart has far more fire than you have frost to chill,
My soul more love than you can make my soul forget.

AN OLD TUNE.

GERARD DE NERVAL.

There is an air for which I would disown
Mozart’s, Rossini’s, Weber’s melodies, -
A sweet sad air that languishes and sighs,
And keeps its secret charm for me alone.

Whene’er I hear that music vague and old,
Two hundred years are mist that rolls away;
The thirteenth Louis reigns, and I behold
A green land golden in the dying day.

An old red castle, strong with stony towers,
The windows gay with many coloured glass;
Wide plains, and rivers flowing among flowers,
That bathe the castle basement as they pass.

In antique weed, with dark eyes and gold hair,
A lady looks forth from her window high;
It may be that I knew and found her fair,
In some forgotten life, long time gone by.

JUANA.

ALFRED DE MUSSET.

Again I see you, ah my queen,
Of all my old loves that have been,
The first love, and the tenderest;
Do you remember or forget -
Ah me, for I remember yet -
How the last summer days were blest?

Ah lady, when we think of this,
The foolish hours of youth and bliss,
How fleet, how sweet, how hard to hold!
How old we are, ere spring be green!
You touch the limit of eighteen
And I am twenty winters old.

My rose, that mid the red roses,
Was brightest, ah, how pale she is!
Yet keeps the beauty of her prime;
Child, never Spanish lady's face
Was lovely with so wild a grace;
Remember the dead summer time.

Think of our loves, our feuds of old,
And how you gave your chain of gold
To me for a peace offering;
And how all night I lay awake
To touch and kiss it for your sake, -
To touch and kiss the lifeless thing.

Lady, beware, for all we say,
This Love shall live another day,
Awakened from his deathly sleep;
The heart that once has been your shrine
For other loves is too divine;
A home, my dear, too wide and deep.

What did I say - why do I dream?
Why should I struggle with the stream
Whose waves return not any day?
Close heart, and eyes, and arms from me;
Farewell, farewell! so must it be,
So runs, so runs, the world away,

The season bears upon its wing
The swallows and the songs of spring,
And days that were, and days that flit;
The loved lost hours are far away;
And hope and fame are scattered spray
For me, that gave you love a day
For you that not remember it.

SPRING IN THE STUDENT’S QUARTER.

HENRI MURGER.

Winter is passing, and the bells
For ever with their silver lay
Murmur a melody that tells
Of April and of Easter day.
High in sweet air the light vane sets,
The weathercocks all southward twirl;
A sou will buy her violets
And make Nini a happy girl.

The winter to the poor was sore,
Counting the weary winter days,
Watching his little fire-wood store,
The bitter snow-flakes fell always;
And now his last log dimly gleamed,
Lighting the room with feeble glare,
Half cinder and half smoke it seemed
That the wind wafted into air.

Pilgrims from ocean and far isles
See where the east is reddening,
The flocks that fly a thousand miles
From sunsetting to sunsetting;
Look up, look out, behold the swallows,
The throats that twitter, the wings that beat;
And on their song the summer follows,
And in the summer life is sweet.

With the green tender buds that know

The shoot and sap of lusty spring
My neighbour of a year ago
Her casement, see, is opening;
Through all the bitter months that were,
Forth from her nest she dared not flee,
She was a study for Boucher,
She now might sit to Gavarni.

OLD LOVES.

HENRI MURGER.

Louise, have you forgotten yet
The corner of the flowery land,
The ancient garden where we met,
My hand that trembled in your hand?
Our lips found words scarce sweet enough,
As low beneath the willow-trees
We sat; have you forgotten, love?
Do you remember, love Louise?

Marie, have you forgotten yet
The loving barter that we made?
The rings we changed, the suns that set,
The woods fulfilled with sun and shade?
The fountains that were musical
By many an ancient trysting tree -
Marie, have you forgotten all?
Do you remember, love Marie?

Christine, do you remember yet
Your room with scents and roses gay?
My garret - near the sky ’twas set -
The April hours, the nights of May?
The clear calm nights - the stars above
That whispered they were fairest seen
Through no cloud-veil? Remember, love!
Do you remember, love Christine?

Louise is dead, and, well-a-day!

Marie a sadder path has ta’en;
And pale Christine has passed away
In southern suns to bloom again.
Alas! for one and all of us -
Marie, Louise, Christine forget;
Our bower of love is ruinous,
And I alone remember yet.

MUSETTE.

HENRI MURGER. 1850

Yesterday, watching the swallows' flight
That bring the spring and the season fair,
A moment I thought of the beauty bright
Who loved me, when she had time to spare;
And dreamily, dreamily all the day,
I mused on the calendar of the year,
The year so near and so far away,
When you were lief, and when I was dear.

Your memory has not had time to pass;
My youth has days of its lifetime yet;
If you only knocked at the door, alas,
My heart would open the door, Musette!
Still at your name must my sad heart beat;
Ah Muse, ah maiden of faithlessness!
Return for a moment, and deign to eat
The bread that pleasure was wont to bless.

The tables and curtains, the chairs and all,
Friends of our pleasure that looked on our pain,
Are glad with the gladness of festival,
Hoping to see you at home again;
Come, let the days of their mourning pass,
The silent friends that are sad for you yet;
The little sofa, the great wine glass -
For know you had often my share, Musette.

Come, you shall wear the raiment white

You wore of old, when the world was gay,
We will wander in woods of the heart’s delight
The whole of the Sunday holiday.
Come, we will sit by the wayside inn,
Come, and your song will gain force to fly,
Dipping its wing in the clear and thin
Wine, as of old, ere it scale the sky.

Musette, who had scarcely forgotten withal
One beautiful dawn of the new year’s best,
Returned at the end of the carnival,
A flown bird, to a forsaken nest.
Ah faithless and fair! I embrace her yet,
With no heart-beat, and with never a sigh;
And Musette, no longer the old Musette,
Declares that I am no longer I.

Farewell, my dear that was once so dear,
Dead with the death of our latest love;
Our youth is laid in its sepulchre,
The calendar stands for a stone above.
’Tis only in searching the dust of the days,
The ashes of all old memories,
That we find the key of the woodland ways
That lead to the place of our paradise.

THE THREE CAPTAINS.

All beneath the white-rose tree
Walks a lady fair to see,
She is as white as the snows,
She is as fair as the day:
From her father’s garden close
Three knights have ta’en her away.

He has ta’en her by the hand,
The youngest of the three -
‘Mount and ride, my bonnie bride,
On my white horse with me.’

And ever they rode, and better rode,
Till they came to Senlis town,
The hostess she looked hard at them
As they were lighting down.

‘And are ye here by force,’ she said,
‘Or are ye here for play?
From out my father’s garden close
Three knights me stole away.

‘And fain would I win back,’ she said,
‘The weary way I come;
And fain would see my father dear,
And fain go maiden home.’

‘Oh, weep not, lady fair,’ said she,
‘You shall win back,’ she said,
‘For you shall take this draught from me
Will make you lie for dead.’

‘Come in and sup, fair lady,’ they said,
‘Come busk ye and be bright;
It is with three bold captains
That ye must be this night.’

When they had eaten well and drunk,
She fell down like one slain:
‘Now, out and alas! for my bonny may
Shall live no more again.’

‘Within her father’s garden stead
There are three white lilies;
With her body to the lily bed,
With her soul to Paradise.’

They bore her to her father’s house,
They bore her all the three,
They laid her in her father’s close,
Beneath the white-rose tree.

She had not lain a day, a day,
A day but barely three,
When the may awakes, ‘Oh, open, father,
Oh, open the door for me.

‘’Tis I have lain for dead, father,
Have lain the long days three,
That I might maiden come again
To my mother and to thee.’

THE BRIDGE OF DEATH.

‘The dance is on the Bridge of Death
And who will dance with me?’
‘There’s never a man of living men
Will dare to dance with thee.’

Now Margaret’s gone within her bower
Put ashes in her hair,
And sackcloth on her bonny breast,
And on her shoulders bare.

There came a knock to her bower door,
And blithe she let him in;
It was her brother from the wars,
The dearest of her kin.

‘Set gold within your hair, Margaret,
Set gold within your hair,
And gold upon your girdle band,
And on your breast so fair.

‘For we are bidden to dance to-night,
We may not bide away;
This one good night, this one fair night,
Before the red new day.’

‘Nay, no gold for my head brother,
Nay, no gold for my hair;
It is the ashes and dust of earth
That you and I must wear.

‘No gold work for my girdle band,
No gold work on my feet;
But ashes of the fire, my love,
But dust that the serpents eat.’

They danced across the bridge of Death,
Above the black water,
And the marriage-bell was tolled in hell
For the souls of him and her.

LE PÈRE SÉVÈRE.

KING LOUIS' DAUGHTER.

BALLAD OF THE ISLE OF FRANCE.

King Louis on his bridge is he,
He holds his daughter on his knee.

She asks a husband at his hand
That is not worth a rood of land.

'Give up your lover speedily,
Or you within the tower must lie.'

'Although I must the prison dree,
I will not change my love for thee.

'I will not change my lover fair
Not for the mother that me bare.

'I will not change my true lover
For friends, or for my father dear.'

'Now where are all my pages keen,
And where are all my serving men?

'My daughter must lie in the tower alway,
Where she shall never see the day.'

Seven long years are past and gone
And there has seen her never one.

At ending of the seventh year
Her father goes to visit her.

‘My child, my child, how may you be?’
‘O father, it fares ill with me.

‘My feet are wasted in the mould,
The worms they gnaw my side so cold.’

‘My child, change your love speedily
Or you must still in prison lie.’

‘’Tis better far the cold to dree
Than give my true love up for thee.’

THE MILK WHITE DOE.

It was a mother and a maid
That walked the woods among,
And still the maid went slow and sad,
And still the mother sung.

‘What ails you, daughter Margaret?
Why go you pale and wan?
Is it for a cast of bitter love,
Or for a false leman?’

‘It is not for a false lover
That I go sad to see;
But it is for a weary life
Beneath the greenwood tree.

‘For ever in the good daylight
A maiden may I go,
But always on the ninth midnight
I change to a milk white doe.

‘They hunt me through the green forest
With hounds and hunting men;
And ever it is my fair brother
That is so fierce and keen.’

*

‘Good-morrow, mother.’ ‘Good-morrow, son;
Where are your hounds so good?’
Oh, they are hunting a white doe
Within the glad greenwood.

‘And three times have they hunted her,
And thrice she’s won away;
The fourth time that they follow her
That white doe they shall slay.’

Then out and spoke the forester,
As he came from the wood,
‘Now never saw I maid’s gold hair
Among the wild deer’s blood.

‘And I have hunted the wild deer
In east lands and in west;
And never saw I white doe yet
That had a maiden’s breast.’

Then up and spake her fair brother,
Between the wine and bread,
‘Behold, I had but one sister,
And I have been her dead.’

‘But ye must bury my sweet sister
With a stone at her foot and her head,
And ye must cover her fair body
With the white roses and red.’

And I must out to the greenwood,
The roof shall never shelter me;
And I shall lie for seven long years
On the grass below the hawthorn tree.

A LADY OF HIGH DEGREE.

[I be pareld most of prise,
I ride after the wild fee.]

Will ye that I should sing
Of the love of a goodly thing,
Was no vilein’s may?
’Tis sung of a knight so free,
Under the olive tree,
Singing this lay.

Her weed was of samite fine,
Her mantle of white ermine,
Green silk her hose;
Her shoon with silver gay,
Her sandals flowers of May,
Laced small and close.

Her belt was of fresh spring buds,
Set with gold clasps and studs,
Fine linen her shift;
Her purse it was of love,
Her chain was the flower thereof,
And Love’s gift.

Upon a mule she rode,
The selle was of brent gold,
The bits of silver made;
Three red rose trees there were
That overshadowed her,
For a sun shade.

She riding on a day,
Knights met her by the way,
They did her grace;
‘Fair lady, whence be ye?’
‘France it is my countrie,
I come of a high race.

‘My sire is the nightingale,
That sings, making his wail,
In the wild wood, clear;
The mermaid is mother to me,
That sings in the salt sea,
In the ocean mere.’

‘Ye come of a right good race,
And are born of a high place,
And of high degree;
Would to God that ye were
Given unto me, being fair,
My lady and love to be.’

LOST FOR A ROSE’S SAKE.

I laved my hands,
BY the water side;
With the willow leaves
My hands I dried.

The nightingale sung
On the bough of the tree;
Sing, sweet nightingale,
It is well with thee.

Thou hast heart’s delight,
I have sad heart’s sorrow
For a false false maid
That will wed to-morrow.

’Tis all for a rose,
That I gave her not,
And I would that it grew
In the garden plot.

And I would the rose-tree
Were still to set,
That my love Marie
Might love me yet.

BALLADS OF MODERN GREECE.

THE BRIGAND’S GRAVE.

The moon came up above the hill,
The sun went down the sea;
Go, maids, and fetch the well-water,
But, lad, come here to me.

Gird on my jack and my old sword,
For I have never a son;
And you must be the chief of all
When I am dead and gone.

But you must take my old broad sword,
And cut the green bough of the tree,
And strew the green boughs on the ground
To make a soft death bed for me.

And you must bring the holy priest
That I may sained be;
For I have lived a roving life
Fifty years under the greenwood tree.

And you shall make a grave for me,
And make it deep and wide;
That I may turn about and dream
With my old gun by my side.

And leave a window to the east,
And the swallows will bring the spring;
And all the merry month of May
The nightingales will sing.

THE SUDDEN BRIDAL.

It was a maid lay sick of love,
All for a leman fair;
And it was three of her bower-maidens
That came to comfort her.

The first she bore a blossomed branch,
The second an apple brown,
The third she had a silk kerchief,
And still her tears ran down.

The first she mocked, the second she laughed -
‘We have loved lemans fair,
We made our hearts like the iron stone
Had little teen or care.’

‘If ye have loved ’twas a false false love,
And an ill leman was he;
But her true love had angel’s eyes,
And as fair was his sweet body.

And I will gird my green kirtle,
And braid my yellow hair,
And I will over the high hills
And bring her love to her.’

‘Nay, if you braid your yellow hair,
You’ll twine my love from me.’
‘Now nay, now nay, my lady good,
That ever this should be!’

‘When you have crossed the western hills

My true love you shall meet,
With a green flag blowing over him,
And green grass at his feet.’

She has crossed over the high hills,
And the low hills between,
And she has found the may’s leman
Beneath a flag of green.

’Twas four and twenty ladies fair
Were sitting on the grass;
But he has turned and looked on her,
And will not let her pass.

‘You’ve maidens here, and maidens there,
And loves through all the land;
But what have you made of the lady fair
You gave the rose-garland?’

She was so harsh and cold of love,
To me gave little grace;
She wept if I but touched her hand,
Or kissed her bonny face.

‘Yea, crows shall build in the eagle’s nest,
The hawk the dove shall wed,
Before my old true love and I
Meet in one wedding bed.’

When she had heard his bitter rede
That was his old true love,
She sat and wept within her bower,
And moaned even as a dove.

She rose up from her window seat,

And she looked out to see;
Her love came riding up the street
With a goodly company.

He was clad on with Venice gold,
Wrought upon cramoisie,
His yellow hair shone like the sun
About his fair body.

‘Now shall I call him blossomed branch
That has ill knots therein?
Or shall I call him basil plant,
That comes of an evil kin?

‘Oh, I shall give him goodly names,
My sword of damask fine;
My silver flower, my bright-winged bird,
Where go you, lover mine?’

‘I go to marry my new bride,
That I bring o’er the down;
And you shall be her bridal maid,
And hold her bridal crown.’

‘When you come to the bride chamber
Where your fair maiden is,
You’ll tell her I was fair of face,
But never tell her this,

‘That still my lips were lips of love,
My kiss love’s spring-water,
That my love was a running spring,
My breast a garden fair.

‘And you have kissed the lips of love
And drained the well-water,

And you have spoiled the running spring,
And robbed the fruits so fair.’

‘Now he that will may scatter nuts,
And he may wed that will;
But she that was my old true love
Shall be my true love still.’

GREEK FOLK SONGS.

IANNOULA.

All the maidens were merry and wed
All to lovers so fair to see;
The lover I took to my bridal bed
He is not long for love and me.

I spoke to him and he noting said,
I gave him bread of the wheat so fine,
He did not eat of the bridal bread,
He did not drink of the bridal wine.

I made him a bed was soft and deep,
I made him a bed to sleep with me;
‘Look on me once before you sleep,
And look on the flower of my fair body.

‘Flowers of April, and fresh May-dew,
Dew of April and buds of May;
Two white blossoms that bud for you,
Buds that blossom before the day.’

THE TELL-TALES.

All in the mirk midnight when I was beside you,
Who has seen, who has heard, what was said, what was done?
’Twas the night and the light of the stars that espied you,
The fall of the moon, and the dawning begun.

’Tis a swift star has fallen, a star that discovers
To the sea what the green sea has told to the oars,
And the oars to the sailors, and they of us lovers
Go singing this song at their mistress’s doors.

TWILIGHT ON TWEED.

Three crests against the saffron sky,
Beyond the purple plain,
The dear remembered melody
Of Tweed once more again.

Wan water from the border hills,
Dear voice from the old years,
Thy distant music lulls and stills,
And moves to quiet tears.

Like a loved ghost thy fabled flood
Fleets through the dusky land;
Where Scott, come home to die, has stood,
My feet returning stand.

A mist of memory broods and floats,
The border waters flow;
The air is full of ballad notes,
Borne out of long ago.

Old songs that sung themselves to me,
Sweet through a boy’s day dream,
While trout below the blossom’d tree
Plashed in the golden stream.

Twilight, and Tweed, and Eildon Hill,
Fair and thrice fair you be;
You tell me that the voice is still
That should have welcomed me.

ONE FLOWER.

[“Up there shot a lily red,
With a patch of earth from the land of the dead,
For she was strong in the land of the dead.”]

When autumn suns are soft, and sea winds moan,
And golden fruits make sweet the golden air,
In gardens where the apple blossoms were,
In these old springs before I walked alone;
I pass among the pathways overgrown,
Of all the former flowers that kissed your feet
Remains a poppy, pallid from the heat,
A wild poppy that the wild winds have sown.
Alas! the rose forgets your hands of rose;
The lilies slumber in the lily bed;
’Tis only poppies in the dreamy close,
The changeless, windless garden of the dead,
You tend, with buds soft as your kiss that lies
In over happy dreams, upon mine eyes.

METEMPSYCHOSIS.

I shall not see thee, nay, but I shall know
Perchance, thy grey eyes in another's eyes,
Shall guess thy curls in gracious locks that flow
On purest brows, yea, and the swift surmise
Shall follow, and track, and find thee in disguise
Of all sad things, and fair, where sunsets glow,
When through the scent of heather, faint and low,
The weak wind whispers to the day that dies.

From all sweet art, and out of all 'old rhyme,'
Thine eyes and lips are light and song to me;
The shadows of the beauty of all time,
Carven and sung, are only shapes of thee;
Alas, the shadowy shapes! ah, sweet my dear
Shall life or death bring all thy being near?

LOST IN HADES.

I dreamed that somewhere in the shadowy place,
Grief of farewell unspoken was forgot
In welcome, and regret remembered not;
And hopeless prayer accomplished turned to praise
On lips that had been songless many days;
Hope had no more to hope for, and desire
And dread were overpast, in white attire
New born we walked among the new world's ways.

Then from the press of shades a spirit threw
Towards me such apples as these gardens bear;
And turning, I was 'ware of her, and knew
And followed her fleet voice and flying hair, -
Followed, and found her not, and seeking you
I found you never, dearest, anywhere.

A STAR IN THE NIGHT.

The perfect piteous beauty of thy face,
Is like a star the dawning drives away;
Mine eyes may never see in the bright day
Thy pallid halo, thy supernal grace:
But in the night from forth the silent place
Thou comest, dim in dreams, as doth a stray
Star of the starry flock that in the grey
Is seen, and lost, and seen a moment's space.

And as the earth at night turns to a star,
Loved long ago, and dearer than the sun,
So in the spiritual place afar,
At night our souls are mingled and made one,
And wait till one night fall, and one dawn rise,
That brings no noon too splendid for your eyes.

A SUNSET ON YARROW.

The wind and the day had lived together,
They died together, and far away
Spoke farewell in the sultry weather,
Out of the sunset, over the heather,
The dying wind and the dying day.

Far in the south, the summer levin
Flushed, a flame in the grey soft air:
We seemed to look on the hills of heaven;
You saw within, but to me ’twas given
To see your face, as an angel’s, there.

Never again, ah surely never
Shall we wait and watch, where of old we stood,
The low good-night of the hill and the river,
The faint light fade, and the wan stars quiver,
Twain grown one in the solitude.

HESPEROTHEN.

By the example of certain Grecian mariners, who, being safely returned from the war about Troy, leave yet again their old lands and gods, seeking they know not what, and choosing neither to abide in the fair Phaeacian island, nor to dwell and die with the Sirens, at length end miserably in a desert country by the sea, is set forth the *Vanity of Melancholy*. And by the land of Phaeacia is to be understood the place of Art and of fair Pleasures; and by Circe’s Isle, the places of bodily delights, whereof men, falling aweary, attain to Eld, and to the darkness of that age. Which thing Master Françoys Rabelais feigned, under the similitude of the Isle of the Macraeones.

THE SEEKERS FOR PHAEACIA.

There is a land in the remotest day,
Where the soft night is born, and sunset dies;
The eastern shores see faint tides fade away,
That wash the lands where laughter, tears, and sighs,
Make life, - the lands beneath the blue of common skies.

But in the west is a mysterious sea,
(What sails have seen it, or what shipmen known?)
With coasts enchanted where the Sirens be,
With islands where a Goddess walks alone,
And in the cedar trees the magic winds make moan

Eastward the human cares of house and home,
Cities, and ships, and unknown Gods, and loves;
Westward, strange maidens fairer than the foam,
And lawless lives of men, and haunted groves,
Wherein a God may dwell, and where the Dryad roves.

The Gods are careless of the days and death
Of toilsome men, beyond the western seas;
The Gods are heedless of their painful breath,
And love them not, for they are not as these;
But in the golden west they live and lie at ease.

Yet the Phaeacians well they love, who live
At the light's limit, passing careless hours,
Most like the Gods; and they have gifts to give,
Even wine, and fountains musical, and flowers,
And song, and if they will, swift ships, and magic powers.

It is a quiet midland; in the cool

Of twilight comes the God, though no man prayed,
To watch the maids and young men beautiful
Dance, and they see him, and are not afraid,
For they are near of kin to Gods, and undismayed.

Ah, would the bright red prows might bring us nigh
The dreamy isles that the Immortals keep!
But with a mist they hide them wondrously,
And far the path and dim to where they sleep, -
The loved, the shadowy lands along the shadowy deep.

A SONG OF PHAEACIA.

The languid sunset, mother of roses,
Lingers, a light on the magic seas,
The wide fire flames, as a flower uncloses,
Heavy with odour, and loose to the breeze.

The red rose clouds, without law or leader,
Gather and float in the airy plain;
The nightingale sings to the dewy cedar,
The cedar scatters his scent to the main.

The strange flowers’ perfume turns to singing,
Heard afar over moonlit seas;
The Siren’s song, grown faint in winging,
Falls in scent on the cedar trees.

As waifs blown out of the sunset, flying,
Purple, and rosy, and grey, the birds
Brighten the air with their wings; their crying
Wakens a moment the weary herds.

Butterflies flit from the fairy garden,
Living blossoms of flying flowers;
Never the nights with winter harden,
Nor moons wax keen in this land of ours.

Great fruits, fragrant, green and golden,
Gleam in the green, and droop and fall;
Blossom, and bud, and flower unfolden,
Swing, and cling to the garden wall.

Deep in the woods as twilight darkens,
Glades are red with the scented fire;
Far in the dells the white maid hearkens,
Song and sigh of the heart’s desire.

Ah, and as moonlight fades in morning,
Maiden’s song in the matin grey,
Faints as the first bird’s note, a warning,
Wakes and wails to the new-born day.

The waking song and the dying measure
Meet, and the waxing and waning light
Meet, and faint with the hours of pleasure,
The rose of the sea and the sky is white.

THE DEPARTURE FROM PHAEACIA.

THE PHAEACIANS.

Why from the dreamy meadows,
More fair than any dream,
Why will you seek the shadows
Beyond the ocean stream?

Through straits of storm and peril,
Through firths unsailed before,
Why make you for the sterile,
The dark Kimmerian shore?

There no bright streams are flowing,
There day and night are one,
No harvest time, no sowing,
No sight of any sun;

No sound of song or tabor,
No dance shall greet you there;
No noise of mortal labour,
Breaks on the blind chill air.

Are ours not happy places,
Where Gods with mortals trod?
Saw not our sires the faces
Of many a present God?

THE SEEKERS.

Nay, now no God comes hither,
In shape that men may see;
They fare we know not whither,
We know not what they be.

Yea, though the sunset lingers
Far in your fairy glades,
Though yours the sweetest singers,
Though yours the kindest maids,

Yet here be the true shadows,
Here in the doubtful light;
Amid the dreamy meadows
No shadow haunts the night.

We seek a city splendid,
With light beyond the sun;
Or lands where dreams are ended,
And works and days are done.

A BALLAD OF DEPARTURE.

Fair white bird, what song art thou singing
In wintry weather of lands o’er sea?
Dear white bird, what way art thou winging,
Where no grass grows, and no green tree?

I looked at the far off fields and grey,
There grew no tree but the cypress tree,
That bears sad fruits with the flowers of May,
And whoso looks on it, woe is he.

And whoso eats of the fruit thereof
Has no more sorrow, and no more love;
And who sets the same in his garden stead,
In a little space he is waste and dead.

THEY HEAR THE SIRENS FOR THE SECOND TIME.

The weary sails a moment slept,
The oars were silent for a space,
As past Hesperian shores we swept,
That were as a remembered face
Seen after lapse of hopeless years,
In Hades, when the shadows meet,
Dim through the mist of many tears,
And strange, and though a shadow, sweet.

So seemed the half-remembered shore,
That slumbered, mirrored in the blue,
With havens where we touched of yore,
And ports that over well we knew.
Then broke the calm before a breeze
That sought the secret of the west;
And listless all we swept the seas
Towards the Islands of the Blest.

Beside a golden sanded bay
We saw the Sirens, very fair
The flowery hill whereon they lay,
The flowers set upon their hair.
Their old sweet song came down the wind,
Remembered music waxing strong,
Ah now no need of cords to bind,
No need had we of Orphic song.

It once had seemed a little thing,
To lay our lives down at their feet,
That dying we might hear them sing,

And dying see their faces sweet;
But now, we glanced, and passing by,
No care had we to tarry long;
Faint hope, and rest, and memory
Were more than any Siren’s song.

CIRCE’S ISLE REVISITED.

Ah, Circe, Circe! in the wood we cried;
Ah, Circe, Circe! but no voice replied;
No voice from bowers o’ergrown and ruinous
As fallen rocks upon the mountain side.

There was no sound of singing in the air;
Failed or fled the maidens that were fair,
No more for sorrow or joy were seen of us,
No light of laughing eyes, or floating hair.

The perfume, and the music, and the flame
Had passed away; the memory of shame
Alone abode, and stings of faint desire,
And pulses of vague quiet went and came.

Ah, Circe! in thy sad changed fairy place,
Our dead Youth came and looked on us a space,
With drooping wings, and eyes of faded fire,
And wasted hair about a weary face.

Why had we ever sought the magic isle
That seemed so happy in the days erewhile?
Why did we ever leave it, where we met
A world of happy wonders in one smile?

Back to the westward and the waning light
We turned, we fled; the solitude of night
Was better than the infinite regret,
In fallen places of our dead delight.

THE LIMIT OF LANDS.

Between the circling ocean sea
And the poplars of Persephone
There lies a strip of barren sand,
Flecked with the sea’s last spray, and strown
With waste leaves of the poplars, blown
From gardens of the shadow land.

With altars of old sacrifice
The shore is set, in mournful wise
The mists upon the ocean brood;
Between the water and the air
The clouds are born that float and fare
Between the water and the wood.

Upon the grey sea never sail
Of mortals passed within our hail,
Where the last weak waves faint and flow;
We heard within the poplar pale
The murmur of a doubtful wail
Of voices loved so long ago.

We scarce had care to die or live,
We had no honey cake to give,
No wine of sacrifice to shed;
There lies no new path over sea,
And now we know how faint they be,
The feasts and voices of the Dead.

Ah, flowers and dance! ah, sun and snow!
Glad life, sad life we did forego

To dream of quietness and rest;
Ah, would the fleet sweet roses here
Poured light and perfume through the drear
Pale year, and wan land of the west.

Sad youth, that let the spring go by
Because the spring is swift to fly,
Sad youth, that feared to mourn or love,
Behold how sadder far is this,
To know that rest is nowise bliss,
And darkness is the end thereof.

VERSES ON PICTURES.

COLINETTE.

[FOR A SKETCH BY MR. G. LESLIE, A.R.A.]

France your country, as we know;
Room enough for guessing yet,
What lips now or long ago,
Kissed and named you - Colinette.
In what fields from sea to sea,
By what stream your home was set,
Loire or Seine was glad of thee,
Marne or Rhone, O Colinette?

Did you stand with ‘maidens ten,
Fairer maids were never seen,’
When the young king and his men
Passed among the orchards green?
Nay, old ballads have a note
Mournful, we would fain forget;
No such sad old air should float
Round your young brows, Colinette.

Say, did Ronsard sing to you,
Shepherdess, to lull his pain,
When the court went wandering through
Rose pleasances of Touraine?
Ronsard and his famous Rose
Long are dust the breezes fret;
You, within the garden close,
You are blooming, Colinette.

Have I seen you proud and gay,

With a patched and perfumed beau,
Dancing through the summer day,
Misty summer of Watteau?
Nay, so sweet a maid as you
Never walked a minuet
With the splendid courtly crew;
Nay, forgive me, Colinette.

Not from Greuze’s canvasses
Do you cast a glance, a smile;
You are not as one of these,
Yours is beauty without guile.
Round your maiden brows and hair
Maidenhood and Childhood met
Crown and kiss you, sweet and fair,
New art’s blossom, Colinette.

A SUNSET OF WATTEAU.

LUI.

The silk sail fills, the soft winds wake,
Arise and tempt the seas;
Our ocean is the Palace lake,
Our waves the ripples that we make
Among the mirrored trees.

ELLE.

Nay, sweet the shore, and sweet the song,
And dear the languid dream;
The music mingled all day long
With paces of the dancing throng,
And murmur of the stream.

An hour ago, an hour ago,
We rested in the shade;
And now, why should we seek to know
What way the wilful waters flow?
There is no fairer glade.

LUI.

Nay, pleasure flits, and we must sail,
And seek him everywhere;
Perchance in sunset’s golden pale
He listens to the nightingale,
Amid the perfumed air.

Come, he has fled; you are not you,
And I no more am I;
Delight is changeful as the hue
Of heaven, that is no longer blue
In yonder sunset sky.

ELLE.

Nay, if we seek we shall not find,
If we knock none openeth;
Nay, see, the sunset fades behind
The mountains, and the cold night wind
Blows from the house of Death.

A NATIVITY OF SANDRO BOTTICELLI.

‘Wrought in the troublous times of Italy
By Sandro Botticelli,’ when for fear
Of that last judgment, and last day drawn near
To end all labour and all revelry,
He worked and prayed in silence; this is she
That by the holy cradle sees the bier,
And in spice gifts the hyssop on the spear,
And out of Bethlehem, Gethsemane.

Between the gold sky and the green o’er head,
The twelve great shining angels, garlanded,
Marvel upon this face, wherein combine
The mother’s love that shone on all of us,
And maiden rapture that makes luminous
The brows of Margaret and Catherine.

SONGS AND SONNETS

TWO HOMES.

[To a young English lady in the Hospital of the Wounded at Carlsruhe. Sept. 1870.]

What does the dim gaze of the dying find
To waken dream or memory, seeing you?
In your sweet eyes what other eyes are blue,
And in your hair what gold hair on the wind
Floats of the days gone almost out of mind?
In deep green valleys of the Fatherland
He may remember girls with locks like thine;
May dream how, where the waiting angels stand,
Some lost love’s eyes are dim before they shine
With welcome: - so past homes, or homes to be,
He sees a moment, ere, a moment blind,
He crosses Death’s inhospitable sea,
And with brief passage of those barren lands
Comes to the home that is not made with hands.

SUMMER’S ENDING.

The flags below the shadowy fern
Shine like spears between sun and sea,
The tide and the summer begin to turn,
And ah, for hearts, for hearts that yearn,
For fires of autumn that catch and burn,
For love gone out between thee and me.

The wind is up, and the weather broken,
Blue seas, blue eyes, are grieved and grey,
Listen, the word that the wind has spoken,
Listen, the sound of the sea, - a token
That summer’s over, and troths are broken, -
That loves depart as the hours decay.

A love has passed to the loves passed over,
A month has fled to the months gone by;
And none may follow, and none recover
July and June, and never a lover
May stay the wings of the Loves that hover,
As fleet as the light in a sunset sky.

NIGHTINGALE WEATHER.

[‘Serai-je nonnette, oui ou non?
Serai-je nonnette? je crois que non.
Derrière chez mon père
Il est un bois taillis,
Le rossignol y chante
Et le jour et le nuit.
Il chaste pour les filles
Qui n’ont pas d’ami;
Il ne chante pas pour moi,
J’en ai un, Dieu merci.’ - OLD FRENCH.]

I’LL never be a nun, I trow,
While apple bloom is white as snow,
But far more fair to see;
I’ll never wear nun’s black and white
While nightingales make sweet the night
Within the apple tree.

Ah, listen! ’tis the nightingale,
And in the wood he makes his wail,
Within the apple tree;
He singeth of the sore distress
Of many ladies loverless;
Thank God, no song for me.

For when the broad May moon is low,
A gold fruit seen where blossoms blow
In the boughs of the apple tree,
A step I know is at the gate;
Ah love, but it is long to wait
Until night’s noon bring thee!

Between lark’s song and nightingale’s
A silent space, while dawning pales,
The birds leave still and free
For words and kisses musical,
For silence and for sighs that fall
In the dawn, ‘twixt him and me.

LOVE AND WISDOM.

[‘When last we gathered roses in the garden
I found my wits, but truly you lost yours.’
THE BROKEN HEART.]

July, and June brought flowers and love
To you, but I would none thereof,
Whose heart kept all through summer time
A flower of frost and winter rime.
Yours was true wisdom - was it not? -
Even love; but I had clean forgot,
Till seasons of the falling leaf,
All loves, but one that turned to grief.
At length at touch of autumn tide,
When roses fell, and summer died,
All in a dawning deep with dew,
Love flew to me, love fled from you.

The roses drooped their weary heads,
I spoke among the garden beds;
You would not hear, you could not know,
Summer and love seemed long ago,
As far, as faint, as dim a dream,
As to the dead this world may seem.
Ah sweet, in winter’s miseries,
Perchance you may remember this,
How wisdom was not justified
In summer time or autumn-tide,
Though for this once below the sun,
Wisdom and love were made at one;
But love was bitter-bought enough,
And wisdom light of wing as love.

GOOD-BYE.

Kiss me, and say good-bye;
Good-bye, there is no word to say but this,
Nor any lips left for my lips to kiss,
Nor any tears to shed, when these tears dry;
Kiss me, and say, good-bye.

Farewell, be glad, forget;
There is no need to say ‘forget,’ I know,
For youth is youth, and time will have it so,
And though your lips are pale, and your eyes wet,
Farewell, you must forget.

You shall bring home your sheaves,
Many, and heavy, and with blossoms twined
Of memories that go not out of mind;
Let this one sheaf be twined with poppy leaves
When you bring home your sheaves.

In garnered loves of thine,
The ripe good fruit of many hearts and years,
Somewhere let this lie, grey and salt with tears;
It grew too near the sea wind, and the brine
Of life, this love of mine.

This sheaf was spoiled in spring,
And over-long was green, and early sere,
And never gathered gold in the late year
From autumn suns, and moons of harvesting,
But failed in frosts of spring.

Yet was it thine my sweet,
This love, though weak as young corn witheréd,
Whereof no man may gather and make bread;
Thine, though it never knew the summer heat;
Forget not quite, my sweet.

AN OLD PRAYER.

[Greek text which cannot be reproduced
ODYSSEY, xiii. 59.]

My prayer an old prayer borroweth,
Of ancient love and memory -
‘Do thou farewell, till Eld and Death,
That come to all men, come to thee.’
Gently as winter’s early breath,
Scarce felt, what time the swallows flee,
To lands whereof *no man knoweth*
Of summer, over land and sea;
So with thy soul may summer be,
Even as the ancient singer saith,
‘Do thou farewell, till Eld and Death,
That come to all men, come to thee.’

LOVE’S MIRACLE.

With other helpless folk about the gate,
The gate called Beautiful, with weary eyes
That take no pleasure in the summer skies,
Nor all things that are fairest, does she wait;
So bleak a time, so sad a changeless fate
Makes her with dull experience early wise,
And in the dawning and the sunset, sighs
That all hath been, and shall be, desolate.

Ah, if Love come not soon, and bid her live,
And know herself the fairest of fair things,
Ah, if he have no healing gift to give,
Warm from his breast, and holy from his wings,
Or if at least Love’s shadow in passing by
Touch not and heal her, surely she must die.

DREAMS.

He spake not truth, however wise, who said
That happy, and that hapless men in sleep
Have equal fortune, fallen from care as deep
As countless, careless, races of the dead.
Not so, for alien paths of dreams we tread,
And one beholds the faces that he sighs
In vain to bring before his daylit eyes,
And waking, he remembers on his bed;

And one with fainting heart and feeble hand
Fights a dim battle in a doubtful land,
Where strength and courage were of no avail;
And one is borne on fairy breezes far
To the bright harbours of a golden star
Down fragrant fleeting waters rosy pale.

FAIRY LAND.

In light of sunrise and sunsetting,
The long days lingered, in forgetting
That ever passion, keen to hold
What may not tarry, was of old,
In lands beyond the weary wold;
Beyond the bitter stream whose flood
Runs red waist-high with slain men’s blood.
Was beauty once a thing that died?
Was pleasure never satisfied?
Was rest still broken by the vain
Desire of action, bringing pain,
To die in languid rest again?
All this was quite forgotten there,
Where never winter chilled the year,
Nor spring brought promise unfulfilled,
Nor, with the eager summer killed,
The languid days drooped autumnwards.
So magical a season guards
The constant prime of a cool June;
So slumbrous is the river’s tune,
That knows no thunder of heavy rains,
Nor ever in the summer wanes,
Like waters of the summer time
In lands far from the Fairy clime.

Yea, there the Fairy maids are kind,
With nothing of the changeful mind
Of maidens in the days that were;
And if no laughter fills the air
With sound of silver murmurings,
And if no prayer of passion brings
A love nigh dead to life again,
Yet sighs more subtly sweet remain,

And smiles that never satiate,
And loves that fear scarce any fate.
Alas, no words can bring the bloom
Of Fairy Land; the faint perfume,
The sweet low light, the magic air,
To eyes of who has not been there:
Alas, no words, nor any spell
Can lull the eyes that know too well,
The lost fair world of Fairy Land.

Ah, would that I had never been
The lover of the Fairy Queen!
Or would that through the sleepy town,
The grey old place of Ercildoune,
And all along the little street,
The soft fall of the white deer’s feet
Came, with the mystical command
That I must back to Fairy Land!

TWO SONNETS OF THE SIRENS.

[‘Les Sirènes estoient tant intimes amies et fidelles compagnes de Proserpine, qu’elles estoient toujours ensemble. Esmues du juste deuil de la perte de leur chère compagne, et enuyées jusques au desespoir, elles s’arrestèrent à la mer Sicilienne, où par leurs chants elles attiroient les navigans, mais l’unique fin de la volupé de leur musique est la Mort.’ - PONTUS DE TYARD. 1570.]

I.

The Sirens once were maidens innocent
That through the water-meads with Proserpine
Plucked no fire-hearted flowers, but were content
Cool fritillaries and flag-flowers to twine,
With lilies woven and with wet woodbine;
Till once they sought the bright AEtnaean flowers,
And their bright mistress fled from summer hours
With Hades, down the irremeable decline.
And they have sought her all the wide world through
Till many years, and wisdom, and much wrong
Have filled and changed their song, and o’er the blue
Rings deadly sweet the magic of the song,
And whoso hears must listen till he die
Far on the flowery shores of Sicily.

II.

So is it with this singing art of ours,
That once with maids went maidenlike, and played
With woven dances in the poplar-shade,
And all her song was but of lady’s bowers
And the returning swallows, and spring-flowers,

Till forth to seek a shadow-queen she strayed,
A shadowy land; and now hath overweighed
Her singing chaplet with the snow and showers.
Yea, fair well-water for the bitter brine
She left, and by the margin of life’s sea
Sings, and her song is full of the sea’s moan,
And wild with dread, and love of Proserpine;
And whoso once has listened to her, he
His whole life long is slave to her alone.

A LA BELLE HÉLÈNE.

AFTER RONSARD.

More closely than the clinging vine
About the wedded tree,
Clasp thou thine arms, ah, mistress mine!
About the heart of me.
Or seem to sleep, and stoop your face
Soft on my sleeping eyes,
Breathe in your life, your heart, your grace,
Through me, in kissing wise.
Bow down, bow down your face, I pray,
To me, that swoon to death,
Breathe back the life you kissed away,
Breathe back your kissing breath.
So by your eyes I swear and say,
My mighty oath and sure,
From your kind arms no maiden may
My loving heart allure.
I’ll bear your yoke, that’s light enough,
And to the Elysian plain,
When we are dead of love, my love,
One boat shall bear us twain.
They’ll flock around you, fleet and fair,
All true loves that have been,
And you of all the shadows there,
Shall be the shadow queen.
Ah shadow-loves, and shadow-lips!
Ah, while ’tis called to-day,
Love me, my love, for summer slips,
And August ebbs away.

SYLVIE ET AURÉLIE.

[IN MEMORY OF GÉRARD DE NERVAL.]

Two loves there were, and one was born
Between the sunset and the rain;
Her singing voice went through the corn,
Her dance was woven ‘neath the thorn,
On grass the fallen blossoms stain;
And suns may set, and moons may wane,
But this love comes no more again.

There were two loves and one made white
Thy singing lips, and golden hair;
Born of the city’s mire and light,
The shame and splendour of the night,
She trapped and fled thee unaware;
Not through the lamplight and the rain
Shalt thou behold this love again.

Go forth and seek, by wood and hill,
Thine ancient love of dawn and dew;
There comes no voice from mere or rill,
Her dance is over, fallen still
The ballad burdens that she knew;
And thou must wait for her in vain,
Till years bring back thy youth again.

That other love, afield, afar
Fled the light love, with lighter feet.
Nay, though thou seek where gravesteads are,
And flit in dreams from star to star,

That dead love shalt thou never meet,
Till through bleak dawn and blowing rain
Thy fled soul find her soul again.

A LOST PATH.

[Plotinus, the Greek philosopher, had a certain proper mode of ecstasy, whereby, as Porphyry saith, his soul, becoming free from his deathly flesh, was made one with the Spirit that is in the World.]

Alas, the path is lost, we cannot leave
Our bright, our clouded life, and pass away
As through strewn clouds, that stain the quiet eve,
To heights remoter of the purer day.
The soul may not, returning whence she came,
Bathe herself deep in Being, and forget
The joys that fever, and the cares that fret,
Made once more one with the eternal flame
That breathes in all things ever more the same.
She would be young again, thus drinking deep
Of her old life; and this has been, men say,
But this we know not, who have only sleep
To soothe us, sleep more terrible than day,
Where dead delights, and fair lost faces stray,
To make us weary at our wakening;
And of that long-lost path to the Divine
We dream, as some Greek shepherd erst might sing,
Half credulous, of easy Proserpine
And of the lands that lie ‘beneath the day’s decline.’

THE SHADE OF HELEN.

[Some say that Helen went never to Troy, but abode in Egypt; for the Gods, having made in her semblance a woman out of clouds and shadows, sent the same to be wife to Paris. For this shadow then the Greeks and Trojans slew each other.]

Why from the quiet hollows of the hills,
And extreme meeting place of light and shade,
Wherein soft rains fell slowly, and became
Clouds among sister clouds, where fair spent beams
And dying glories of the sun would dwell,
Why have they whom I know not, nor may know,
Strange hands, unseen and ruthless, fashioned me,
And borne me from the silent shadowy hills,
Hither, to noise and glow of alien life,
To harsh and clamorous swords, and sound of war?

One speaks unto me words that would be sweet,
Made harsh, made keen with love that knows me not,
And some strange force, within me or around,
Makes answer, kiss for kiss, and sigh for sigh,
And somewhere there is fever in the halls,
That troubles me, for no such trouble came
To vex the cool far hollows of the hills.

The foolish folk crowd round me, and they cry,
That house, and wife, and lands, and all Troy town,
Are little to lose, if they may keep me here,
And see me flit, a pale and silent shade,
Among the streets bereft, and helpless shrines.

At other hours another life seems mine,
Where one great river runs unswollen of rain,
By pyramids of unremembered kings,
And homes of men obedient to the Dead.
There dark and quiet faces come and go
Around me, then again the shriek of arms,
And all the turmoil of the Ilian men.
What are they? Even shadows such as I.
What make they? Even this - the sport of Gods -
The sport of Gods, however free they seem.
Ah would the game were ended, and the light,
The blinding light, and all too mighty suns,
Withdrawn, and I once more with sister shades,
Unloved, forgotten, mingled with the mist,
Dwelt in the hollows of the shadowy hills.
Ah, would ‘t were the cloud’s playtime, when the sun
Clothes us in raiment of a rosy flame,
And through the sky we flit, and gather grey,
Like men that leave their golden youth behind,
And through their wind-driven ways they gather grey,
And we like them grow wan, and the chill East
Receives us, as the Earth accepts all men, -
But *we* await the dawn of a new day.

SONNETS TO POETS.

JACQUES TAHUREAU. 1530.

Ah thou! that, undeceived and unregretting,
Saw’st Death so near thee on the flowery way,
And with no sigh that life was near the setting,
Took’st the delight and dalliance of the day,
Happy thou wert, to live and pass away
Ere life or love had done thee any wrong;
Ere thy wreath faded, or thy locks grew grey,
Or summer came to lull thine April song,
Sweet as all shapes of sweet things unfulfilled,
Buds bloomless, and the broken violet,
The first spring days, the sounds and scents thereof;
So clear thy fire of song, so early chilled,
So brief, so bright thy life that gaily met
Death, for thy Death came hand in hand with Love.

FRANÇOIS VILLON. 1450.

List, all that love light mirth, light tears, and all
That know the heart of shameful loves, or pure;
That know delights depart, desires endure,
A fevered tribe of ghosts funereal,
Widowed of dead delights gone out of call;
List, all that deem the glory of the rose
Is brief as last year's suns, or last year's snows
The new suns melt from off the sundial.

All this your master Villon knew and sung;
Despised delights, and faint foredone desire;
And shame, a deathless worm, a quenchless fire;
And laughter from the heart's last sorrow wrung,
When half-repentance but makes evil whole,
And prayer that cannot help wears out the soul.

PIERRE RONSARD. 1560.

Master, I see thee with the locks of grey,
Crowned by the Muses with the laurel-wreath;
I see the roses hiding underneath,
Cassandra’s gift; she was less dear than they.
Thou, Master, first hast roused the lyric lay,
The sleeping song that the dead years bequeath,
Hast sung sweet answer to the songs that breathe
Through ages, and through ages far away.

Yea, and in thee the pulse of ancient passion
Leaped, and the nymphs amid the spring-water
Made bare their lovely limbs in the old fashion,
And birds’ song in the branches was astir.
Ah, but thy songs are sad, thy roses wan,
Thy bees have fed on yews Sardinian.

GÉRARD DE NERVAL.

Of all that were thy prisons - ah, untamed,
Ah, light and sacred soul! - none holds thee now;
No wall, no bar, no body of flesh, but thou
Art free and happy in the lands unnamed,
About whose gates, with weary wings and maimed,
Thou most wert wont to linger, entering there
A moment, and returning rapt, with fair
Tidings that men or heeded not or blamed;
And they would smile and wonder, seeing where
Thou stood'st, to watch light leaves, or clouds, or wind,
Dreamily murmuring a ballad air,
Caught from the Valois peasants; dost thou find
Old prophecies fulfilled now, old tales true
In the new world, where all things are made new?

THE DEATH OF MIRANDOLA. 1494.

[‘The Queen of Heaven appeared, comforting him and promising that he should not utterly die.’ - THOMAS MORE, *Life of Piens*, *Earl of Mirandola*.]

Strange lilies came with autumn; new and old
Were mingling, and the old world passed away,
And the night gathered, and the shadows grey
Dimmed the kind eyes and dimmed the locks of gold,
And face beloved of Mirandola.
The Virgin then, to comfort him and stay,
Kissed the thin cheek, and kissed the lips acold,
The lips unkissed of women many a day.
Nor she alone, for queens of the old creed,
Like rival queens that tended Arthur, there
Were gathered, Venus in her mourning weed,
Pallas and Dian; wise, and pure, and fair
Was he they mourned, who living did not wrong
One altar of its dues of wine and song.

THE ODYSSEY

The Odyssey is the second major epic poem attributed to Homer that has survived antiquity, being in part a sequel to *The Iliad*. It was probably composed near the end of the 8th century BC, somewhere in Ionia, the Greek-speaking coastal region of what is now Turkey. The epic poem centers on the Greek hero Odysseus and his protracted journey home following the fall of Troy. It takes Odysseus ten years to reach Ithaca after the ten-year Trojan War. In his absence, it is assumed he has died, and his wife Penelope and son Telemachus must face a group of unruly suitors, competing for Penelope's hand in marriage.

The poem was composed and intended to be sung rather than read. In the English language as well as many others, the word odyssey has come to refer to an epic voyage. The style of the poem is different to *The Iliad*, causing some critics to identify separate authorship, while others claim *The Odyssey* to be the hallmark of a maturer Homer, after years of experienced poetic composition.

Andrew Lang collaborated with S.H. Butcher to create this 1883 prose translation of Homer's mature epic.

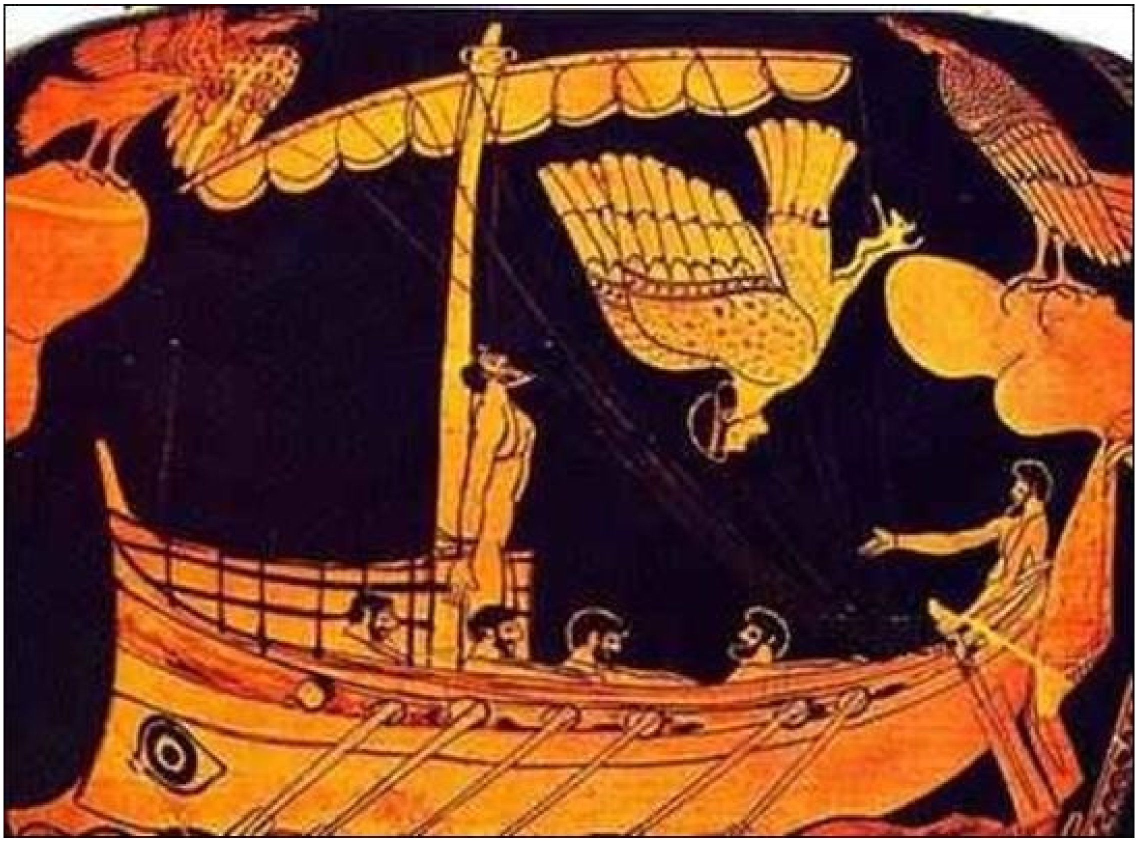

Odysseus braving the alluring, but deadly sirens

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THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER

DONE INTO ENGLISH PROSE

by S. H. BUTCHER, M.A.

AND

A. LANG, M.A.

PREFACE.

There would have been less controversy about the proper method of Homeric translation, if critics bad recognised that the question is a purely relative one, that of Homer there can be no final translation. The taste and the literary habits of each age demand different qualities in poetry, and therefore a different sort of rendering of Homer. To the men of the time of Elizabeth, Homer would have appeared bald, it seems, and lacking in ingenuity, if he had been presented in his antique simplicity. For the Elizabethan age, Chapman supplied what was then necessary, and the mannerisms that were then deemed of the essence of poetry, namely, daring and luxurious conceits. Thus in Chapman's verse Troy must 'shed her towers for tears of overthrow,' and when the winds toss Odysseus about, their sport must be called 'the horrid tennis.'

In the age of Anne, 'dignity' and 'correctness' had to be given to Homer, and Pope gave them by aid of his dazzling rhetoric, his antitheses, his nettete, his command of every conventional and favourite artifice. Without Chapman's conceits, Homer's poems would hardly have been what the Elizabethans took for poetry; without Pope's smoothness, and Pope's points, the Iliad and Odyssey would have seemed rude, and harsh in the age of Anne. These great translations must always live as English poems. As transcripts of Homer they are like pictures drawn from a lost point of view. Chaque siecle depuis le xvi a ue de ce cote son belveder different. Again, when Europe woke to a sense, an almost exaggerated and certainly uncritical sense, of the value of her songs of the people, of all the ballads that Herder, Scott, Lonnrot, and the rest collected, it was commonly said that Homer was a ballad-minstrel, that the translator must imitate the simplicity, and even adopt the formulae of the ballad. Hence came the renderings of Maginn, the experiments of Mr. Gladstone, and others. There was some excuse for the error of critics who asked for a Homer in ballad rhyme. The Epic poet, the poet of gods and heroes, did indeed inherit some of the formulae of the earlier Volks-lied. Homer, like the author of The Song of Roland, like the singers of the Kalevala, uses constantly recurring epithets, and repeats, word for word, certain emphatic passages, messages, and so on. That custom is essential in the ballad, it is an accident not the essence of the epic. The epic is a poem of complete and elaborate art, but it still bears some birthmarks, some signs of the early popular chant, out of which it sprung, as the garden-rose springs from the wild stock, When this is recognised the demand for ballad-like simplicity and ‘ballad-slang’ ceases to exist, and then all Homeric translations in the ballad manner cease to represent our conception of Homer. After the belief in the ballad manner follows the recognition of the romantic vein in Homer, and, as a result, came Mr. Worsley’s admirable Odyssey. This masterly translation does all that can be done for the Odyssey in the romantic style. The smoothness of the verse, the wonderful closeness to the original, reproduce all of Homer, in music and in meaning, that can be rendered in English verse. There still, however, seems an aspect Homeric poems, and a demand in connection with Homer to be recognised, and to be satisfied.

Sainte-Beuve says, with reference probably to M. Leconte de Lisle’s prose version of the epics, that some people treat the epics too much as if the were sagas. Now the Homeric epics are sagas, but then they are the sagas of the divine heroic age of Greece, and thus are told with an art which is not the art of the Northern poets. The epics are stories about the adventures of men living in most respects like the men of our own race who dwelt in Iceland, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. The epics are, in a way, and as far as manners and institutions are concerned, historical documents. Whoever regards them in this way, must wish to read them exactly as they have reached us, without modern ornament, with nothing added or omitted. He must recognise, with Mr. Matthew Arnold, that what he now wants, namely, the simple truth about the matter of the poem, can only be given in prose, ‘for in a verse translation no original work is any longer recognisable.’ It is for this reason that we have attempted to tell once more, in simple prose, the story of Odysseus. We have tried to transfer, not all the truth about the poem, but the historical truth, into English. In this process Homer must lose at least half his charm, his bright and equable speed, the musical current of that narrative, which, like the river of Egypt, flows from an indiscoverable source, and mirrors the temples and the palaces of unforgotten gods and kings. Without this music of verse, only a half truth about Homer can be told, but then it is that half of the truth which, at this moment, it seems most necessary to tell. This is the half of the truth that the translators who use verse cannot easily tell. They MUST be adding to Homer, talking with Pope about 'tracing the mazy lev'ret o'er the lawn,' or with Mr. Worsley about the islands that are 'stars of the blue Aegaean,' or with Dr. Hawtrey about 'the earth's soft arms,' when Homer says nothing at all about the 'mazy lev'ret,' or the 'stars of the blue Aegaean,' or the 'soft arms' of earth. It would be impertinent indeed to blame any of these translations in their place. They give that which the romantic reader of poetry, or the student of the age of Anne, looks for in verse; and without tags of this sort, a translation of Homer in verse cannot well be made to hold together.

There can be then, it appears, no final English translation of Homer. In each there must be, in addition to what is Greek and eternal, the element of what is modern, personal, and fleeting. Thus we trust that there may be room for 'the pale and far-off shadow of a prose translation,' of which the aim is limited and humble. A prose translation cannot give the movement and the fire of a successful translation in verse; it only gathers, as it were, the crumbs which fall from the richer table, only tells the story, without the song. Yet to a prose translation is permitted, perhaps, that close adherence to the archaisms of the epic, which in verse become mere oddities. The double epithets, the recurring epithets of Homer, if rendered into verse, delay and puzzle the reader, as the Greek does not delay or puzzle him. In prose he may endure them, or even care to study them as the survivals of a stage of taste, which is to be found in its prime in the sagas. These double and recurring epithets of Homer are a softer form of the quaint Northern periphrases, which make the sea the 'swan's bath,' gold, the 'dragon's hoard,' men, the 'ring-givers,' and so on. We do not know whether it is necessary to defend our choice of a somewhat antiquated prose. Homer has no ideas which cannot be expressed in words that are 'old and plain,' and to words that are old and plain, and, as a rule, to such terms as, being used by the Translators of the Bible, are still not unfamiliar, we have tried to restrict ourselves. It may be objected, that the employment of language which does not come spontaneously to the lips, is an affectation out of place in a version of the Odyssey. To this we may answer that the Greek Epic dialect, like the English of our Bible, was a thing of slow growth and composite nature, that it was never a spoken language, nor, except for certain poetical purposes, a written language. Thus the Biblical English seems as nearly analogous to the Epic Greek, as anything that our tongue has to offer.

The few foot-notes in this book are chiefly intended to make clear some passages where there is a choice of reading. The notes at the end, which we would like to have written in the form of essays, and in company with more complete philological and archaeological studies, are chiefly meant to elucidate the life of Homer's men. We have received much help from many friends, and especially from Mr. R. W. Raper, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford and Mr. Gerald Balfour, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, who has aided us with many suggestions while the book was passing through the press.

In the interpretation of B. i.411, ii.191, v.90, and 471, we have departed from the received view, and followed Mr. Raper, who, however, has not been able to read through the proof-sheets further than Book xii.

We have adopted La Roche's text (Homeri Odyssea, J. La Roche, Leipzig, 1867), except in a few cases where we mention our reading in a foot-note.

The Arguments prefixed to the Books are taken, with very slight alterations, from Hobbes' Translation of the Odyssey.

It is hoped that the Introduction added to the second edition may illustrate the growth of those national legends on which Homer worked, and may elucidate the plot of the Odyssey.

INTRODUCTION

COMPOSITION AND PLOT OF THE ODYSSEY.

The Odyssey is generally supposed to be somewhat the later in date of the two most ancient Greek poems which are concerned with the events and consequences of the Trojan war. As to the actual history of that war, it may be said that nothing is known. We may conjecture that some contest between peoples of more or less kindred stocks, who occupied the isles and the eastern and western shores of the Aegean, left a strong impression on the popular fancy. Round the memories of this contest would gather many older legends, myths, and stories, not peculiarly Greek or even ‘Aryan,’ which previously floated unattached, or were connected with heroes whose fame was swallowed up by that of a newer generation. It would be the work of minstrels, priests, and poets, as the national spirit grew conscious of itself, to shape all these materials into a definite body of tradition. This is the rule of development — first scattered stories, then the union of these into a NATIONAL legend. The growth of later national legends, which we are able to trace, historically, has generally come about in this fashion. To take the best known example, we are able to compare the real history of Charlemagne with the old epic poems on his life and exploits. In these poems we find that facts are strangely exaggerated, and distorted; that purely fanciful additions are made to the true records, that the more striking events of earlier history are crowded into the legend of Charles, that mere fairy tales, current among African as well as European peoples, are transmuted into false history, and that the anonymous characters of fairy tales are converted into historical personages. We can also watch the process by which feigned genealogies were constructed, which connected the princely houses of France with the imaginary heroes of the epics. The conclusion is that the poetical history of Charlemagne has only the faintest relations to the true history. And we are justified in supposing that, quite as little of the real history of events can be extracted from the tale of Troy, as from the Chansons de Geste.

By the time the Odyssey was composed, it is certain that a poet had before him a well-arranged mass of legends and traditions from which he might select his materials. The author of the Iliad has an extremely full and curiously consistent knowledge of the local traditions of Greece, the memories which were cherished by Thebans, Pylians, people of Mycenae, of Argos, and so on. The Iliad and the Odyssey assume this knowledge in the hearers of the poems, and take for granted some acquaintance with other legends, as with the story of the Argonautic Expedition. Now that story itself is a tissue of popular tales, — still current in many distant lands, — but all woven by the Greek genius into the history of Iason.

The history of the return of Odysseus as told in the
Odyssey, is in the same way, a tissue of old marchen.
These must have existed for an unknown length of time
before they gravitated into the cycle of the tale of Troy.

The extraordinary artistic skill with which legends and myths, originally unconnected with each other, are woven into the plot of the Odyssey, so that the marvels of savage and barbaric fancy become indispensable parts of an artistic whole, is one of the chief proofs of the unity of authorship of that poem. We now go on to sketch the plot, which is a marvel of construction.

Odysseus was the King of Ithaca, a small and rugged island on the western coast of Greece. When he was but lately married to Penelope, and while his only son Telemachus was still an infant, the Trojan war began. It is scarcely necessary to say that the object of this war, as conceived of by the poets, was to win back Helen, the wife of Menelaus, from Paris, the son of Priam, King of Troy. As Menelaus was the brother of Agamemnon, the Emperor, so to speak, or recognised chief of the petty kingdoms of ‘Greece, the whole force of these kingdoms was at his disposal. No prince came to the leaguer of Troy from a home more remote than that of Odysseus. When Troy was taken, in the tenth year of the war, his homeward voyage was the longest and most perilous.

The action of the Odyssey occupies but the last six weeks of the ten years during which Odysseus was wandering. Two nights in these six weeks are taken up, however, by his own narrative of his adventures (to the Phaeacians, p. xx) in the previous ten years. With this explanatory narrative we must begin, before coming to the regular action of the poem.

After the fall of Troy, Odysseus touched at Ismarus, the city of a Thracian people, whom he attacked and plundered, but by whom he was at last repulsed. The north wind then carried his ships to Malea, the extreme southern point of Greece. Had he doubled Malea safely, he would probably have reached Ithaca in a few days, would have found Penelope unvexed by wooers, and Telemachus a boy of ten years old. But this was not to be.

The ‘ruinous winds’ drove Odysseus and his ships for ten days, and on the tenth they touched the land of the Lotus-Eaters, whose flowery food causes sweet forgetfulness. Lotus-land was possibly in Western Libya, but it is more probable that ten days’ voyage from the southern point of Greece, brought Odysseus into an unexplored region of fairy-land. Egypt, of which Homer had some knowledge, was but five days' sail from Crete.

Lotus-land, therefore, being ten days' sail from Malea, was well over the limit of the discovered world. From this country Odysseus went on till he reached the land of the lawless Cyclopes, a pastoral people of giants. Later Greece feigned that the Cyclopes dwelt near Mount Etna, in Sicily. Homer leaves their place of abode in the vague. Among the Cyclopes, Odysseus had the adventure on which his whole fortunes hinged. He destroyed the eye of the cannibal giant, Polyphemus, a son of Poseidon, the God of the Sea. To avenge this act, Poseidon drove Odysseus wandering for ten long years, and only suffered him to land in Ithaca, 'alone, in evil case, to find troubles in his house.' This is a very remarkable point in the plot. The story of the crafty adventurer and the blinding of the giant, with the punning device by which the hero escaped, exists in the shape of a detached marchen or fairy-tale among races who never heard of Homer. And when we find the story among Oghuzians, Esthonians, Basques, and Celts, it seems natural to suppose that these people did not break a fragment out of the Odyssey, but that the author of the Odyssey took possession of a legend out of the great traditional store of fiction. From the wide distribution of the tale, there is reason to suppose that it is older than Homer, and that it was not originally told of Odysseus, but was attached to his legend, as floating jests of unknown authorship are attributed to eminent wits. It has been remarked with truth that in this episode Odysseus acts out of character, that he is foolhardy as well as cunning. Yet the author of the Odyssey, so far from merely dove-tailing this story at random into his narrative, has made his whole plot turn on the injury to the Cyclops. Had he not foolishly exposed himself and his companions, by his visit to the Cyclops, Odysseus would never have been driven wandering for ten weary years. The prayers of the blinded Cyclops were heard and fulfilled by Poseidon.

From the land of the Cyclops, Odysseus and his company sailed to the Isle of Aeolus, the king of the winds. This place too is undefined; we only learn that, even with the most favourable gale, it was ten days' sail from Ithaca. In the Isle of Aeolus Odysseus abode for a month, and then received from the king a bag in which all the winds were bound, except that which was to waft the hero to his home. This sort of bag was probably not unfamiliar to superstitious Greek sailors who had dealings with witches, like the modern wise women of the Lapps. The companions of the hero opened the bag when Ithaca was in sight, the winds rushed out, the ships were borne back to the Aeolian Isle, and thence the hero was roughly dismissed by Aeolus. Seven days' sail brought him to Lamos, a city of the cannibal Laestrygonians. Their country, too, is in No-man's-land, and nothing can be inferred from the fact that their fountain was called Artacia, and that there was an Artacia in Cyzicus. In Lamos a very important adventure befel Odysseus. The cannibals destroyed all his fleet, save one ship, with which he made his escape to the Isle of Circe. Here the enchantress turned part of the crew into swine, but Odysseus, by aid of the god Hermes, redeemed them, and became the lover of Circe. This adventure, like the story of the Cyclops, is a fairy tale of great antiquity. Dr. Gerland, in his Alt Griechische Marchen in der Odyssee, his shown that the story makes part of the collection of Somadeva, a store of Indian tales, of which 1200 A.D. is the approximate date. Circe appears as a Yackshini, and is conquered when an adventurer seizes her flute whose magic music turns men into beasts. The Indian Circe had the habit of eating the animals into which she transformed men.

We must suppose that the affairs with the Cicones, the Lotus-eaters, the Cyclops, Aeolus, and the Laestrygonians, occupied most of the first year after the fall of Troy. A year was then spent in the Isle of Circe, after which the sailors were eager to make for home. Circe commanded them to go down to Hades, to learn the homeward way from the ghost of the Theban prophet Teiresias. The descent into hell, for some similar purpose, is common in the epics of other races, such as the Finns, and the South-Sea Islanders. The narrative of Odysseus’s visit to the dead (book xi) is one of the most moving passages in the whole poem.

From Teiresias Odysseus learned that, if he would bring his companions home, he must avoid injuring the sacred cattle of the Sun, which pastured in the Isle of Thrinacia. If these were harmed, he would arrive in Ithaca alone, or in the words of the Cyclops’s prayer, I in evil plight, with loss of all his company, on board the ship of strangers, to find sorrow in his house.’ On returning to the Isle Aeaean, Odysseus was warned by Circe of the dangers he would encounter. He and his friends set forth, escaped the Sirens (a sort of mermaidens), evaded the Clashing Rocks, which close on ships (a fable known to the Aztecs), passed Scylla (the pieuvre of antiquity) with loss of some of the company, and reached Thrinacia, the Isle of the Sun. Here the company of Odysseus, constrained by hunger, devoured the sacred kine of the Sun, for which offence they were punished by a shipwreck, when all were lost save Odysseus. He floated ten days on a raft, and then reached the isle of the goddess Calypso, who kept him as her lover for eight years.

The first two years after the fall of Troy are now accounted for. They were occupied, as we have seen, by adventures with the Cicones, the Lotus-eaters, the Cyclops, Aeolus, the Laestrygonians, by a year’s residence with Circe, by the descent into Hades, the encounters with the Sirens, and Scylla, and the fatal sojourn in the isle of Thrinacia. We leave Odysseus alone, for eight years, consuming his own heart, in the island paradise of Calypso.

In Ithaca, the hero’s home, things seem to have passed smoothly till about the sixth year after the fall of Troy. Then the men of the younger generation, the island chiefs, began to woo Penelope, and to vex her son Telemachus. Laertes, the father of Odysseus, was too old to help, and Penelope only gained time by her famous device of weaving and unweaving the web. The wooers began to put compulsion on the Queen, quartering themselves upon her, devouring her substance, and insulting her by their relations with her handmaids. Thus Penelope pined at home, amidst her wasting possessions. Telemachus fretted in vain, and Odysseus was devoured by grief and home-sickness in the isle of Calypso. When he had lain there for nigh eight years, the action of the Odyssey begins, and occupies about six weeks.

DAY 1 (Book i).

The ordained time has now arrived, when by the counsels of the Gods, Odysseus is to be brought home to free his house, to avenge himself on the wooers, and recover his kingdom. The chief agent in his restoration is Pallas Athene; the first book opens with her prayer to Zeus that Odysseus may be delivered. For this purpose Hermes is to be sent to Calypso to bid her release Odysseus, while Pallas Athene in the shape of Mentor, a friend of Odysseus, visits Telemachus in Ithaca. She bids him call an assembly of the people, dismiss the wooers to their homes, and his mother to her father’s house, and go in quest of his own father, in Pylos, the city of Nestor, and Sparta, the home of Menelaus. Telemachus recognises the Goddess, and the first day closes.

DAY 2 (Book ii).

Telemachus assembles the people, but he has not the heart to carry out Athene’s advice. He cannot send the wooers away, nor turn his mother out of her house. He rather weakly appeals to the wooers’ consciences, and announces his intention of going to seek his father. They answer with scorn, but are warned of their fate, which is even at the doors, by Halitherses. His prophecy (first made when Odysseus set out for Troy) tallies with the prophecy of Teiresias, and the prayer of the Cyclops. The reader will observe a series of portents, prophecies, and omens, which grow more numerous and admonishing as their doom draws nearer to the wooers. Their hearts, however, are hardened, and they mock at Telemachus, who, after an interview with Athene, borrows a ship and secretly sets out for Pylos. Athene accompanies him, and his friends man his galley.

DAY 3 (Book iii).

They reach Pylos, and are kindly received by the aged
Nestor, who has no news about Odysseus. After sacrifice,
Athene disappears.

DAY 4 (Book iii).

The fourth day is occupied with sacrifice, and the talk of Nestor. In the evening Telemachus (leaving his ship and friends at Pylos) drives his chariot into Pherae, half way to Sparta; Peisistratus, the soil of Nestor, accompanies him.

DAY 5 (Book iv).

Telemachus and Peisistratus arrive at Sparta, where
Menelaus and Helen receive them kindly.

DAY 6 (Book iv).

Menelaus tells how he himself came home in the eighth year after the fall of Troy. He had heard from Proteus, the Old Man of the Sea, that Odysseus was alive, and a captive on an island of the deep. Menelaus invites Telemachus to Stay with him for eleven days or twelve, which Telemachus declines to do. It will later appear that he made an even longer stay at Sparta, though whether he changed his mind, or whether we have here an inadvertence of the poet's it is hard to determine. This blemish has been used as an argument against the unity of authorship, but writers of all ages have made graver mistakes.

On this same day (the sixth) the wooers in Ithaca learned that Telemachus had really set out to I cruise after his father.' They sent some of their number to lie in ambush for him, in a certain strait which he was likely to pass on his return to Ithaca. Penelope also heard of her son's departure, but was consoled by a dream.

DAY 7 (Book v).

The seventh day finds us again in Olympus. Athene again urges the release of Odysseus; and Hermes is sent to bid Calypso let the hero go. Zeus prophecies that after twenty days sailing, Odysseus will reach Scheria, and the hospitable Phaeacians, a people akin to the Gods, who will convey him to Ithaca. Hermes accomplishes the message to Calypso.

DAYS 8-12-32 (Book v).

These days are occupied by Odysseus in making and launching a raft; on the twelfth day from the beginning of the action he leaves Calypso's isle. He sails for eighteen days, and on the eighteenth day of his voyage (the twenty-ninth from the beginning of the action), he sees Scheria. Poseidon raises a storm against him, and it is not till the thirty-second day from that in which Athene visited Telemachus, that he lands in Scheria, the country of the Phaeacians. Here he is again in fairy land. A rough, but perfectly recognisable form of the Phaeacian myth, is found in an Indian collection of marchen (already referred to) of the twelfth century A.D. Here the Phaeacians are the Vidyidhiris, and their old enemies the Cyclopes, are the Rakshashas, a sort of giants. The Indian Odysseus, who seeks the city of gold, passes by the home of an Indian Aeolus, Satyavrata.

His later adventures are confused, and the Greek version retains only the more graceful fancies of the marchen.

DAY 33 (Book vi).

Odysseus meets Nausicaa, daughter of Alcinous, the Phaeacian King, and by her aid, and that of Athene, is favourably received at the palace, and tells how he came from Calypso's island. His name is still unknown to his hosts.

DAY 34 (Books vii, viii, ix, x, xi, xii).

The Phaeacians and Odysseus display their skill in sports. Nausicaa bids Odysseus farewell. Odysseus recounts to Alcinous, and Arete, the Queen, those adventures in the two years between the fall of Troy and his captivity in the island of Calypso, which we have already described (pp. xiii-xvii).

DAY 35 (Book xiii).

Odysseus is conveyed to Ithaca, in the evening, on one of the magical barques of the Phaeacians.

DAY 36 (Books xiii, xiv, xv).

He wakens in Ithaca, which he does not at first recognise He learns from Athene, for the first time, that the wooers beset his house. She disguises him as an old man, and bids him go to the hut of the swineherd Eumaeus, who is loyal to his absent lord. Athene then goes to Lacedaemon, to bring back Telemachus, who has now resided there for a month. Odysseus won the heart of Eumaeus, who of course did not recognise him, and slept in the swineherd's hut, while Athene was waking Telemachus, in Lacedaemon, and bidding him 'be mindful of his return.'

DAY 37 (Book xv).

Is spent by Odysseus in the swineherd's hut. Telemachus reaches Pherae, half-way to Pylos.

DAY 38 (Book xv).

Telemachus reaches Pylos, but does not visit Nestor. To save time he goes at once on board ship, taking with him an unfortunate outlaw, Theoclymenus, a second-sighted man, or the family of Melampus, in which the gift of prophecy was hereditary. The ship passed the Elian coast at night, and evaded the ambush of the wooers. Meanwhile Odysseus was sitting up almost till dawn, listening to the history of Eumaeus, the swineherd.

DAY 39 (Books xv, xvi).

Telemachus reaches the Isle of Ithaca, sends his ship to the city, but himself, by advice of Athene, makes for the hut of Eumaeus, where he meets, but naturally does not recognise, his disguised father. He sends Eumaeus to Penelope with news of his arrival, and then Athene reveals Odysseus to Telemachus. The two plot the death of the wooers. Odysseus bids Telemachus remove, on a favourable opportunity, the arms which were disposed as trophies on the walls of the hall at home. (There is a slight discrepancy between the words of this advice and the manner in which it is afterwards executed.) During this interview, the ship of Telemachus, the wooers who had been in ambush, and Eumaeus, all reached the town of Ithaca. In the evening Eumaeus returned to his hut, where Athene had again disguised Odysseus.

DAY 40 (Books xvii, xviii, xix, xx).

The story is now hastening to its close, and many events are crowded into the fortieth day. Telemachus goes from the swineherd's hut to the city, and calls his guest, Theoclymenus, to the palace. The second-sighted man prophesies of the near revenge of Odysseus. In the afternoon, Odysseus (still disguised) and Eumaeus reach the city, the dog Argos recognises the hero, and dies. Odysseus goes begging through his own hall, and is struck by Antinous, the proudest of the wooers. Late in the day Eumaeus goes home, and Odysseus fights with the braggart beggar Irus. Still later, Penelope appears among the wooers, and receives presents from them. When the wooers have withdrawn, Odysseus and Telemachus remove the weapons from the hall to the armoury. Afterwards Odysseus has an interview with Penelope (who does not recognise him), but he is recognised by his old nurse Eurycleia. Penelope mentions her purpose to wed the man who on the following day, the feast of the Archer-god Apollo, shall draw the bow of Odysseus, and send an arrow through the holes in twelve axe-blades, set up in a row. Thus the poet shows that Odysseus has arrived in Ithaca not a day too soon. Odysseus is comforted by a vision of Athene, and

DAY 41 (Books xx, xxi, xxii, xxiii).

by the ominous prayer uttered by a weary woman grinding at the mill. The swineherd and the disloyal Melanthius arrive at the palace. The wooers defer the plot to kill Telemachus, as the day is holy to Apollo. Odysseus is led up from his seat near the door to a place beside Telemachus at the chief's table. The wooers mock Telemachus, and the second-sighted Theoclymenus sees the ominous shroud of death covering their bodies, and the walls dripping with blood. He leaves the doomed company. In the trial of the bow, none of the wooers can draw it; meanwhile Odysseus has declared himself to the neatherd and the swineherd. The former bars and fastens the outer gates of the court, the latter bids Eurycleia bar the doors of the womens' chambers which lead out of the hall. Odysseus now gets the bow into his hands, strings it, sends the arrow through the axe-blades, and then leaping on the threshold of stone, deals his shafts among the wooers. Telemachus, the neatherd, and Eumaeus, aiding him, he slaughters all the crew, despite the treachery of Melanthius. The paramours of the wooers are hanged, and Odysseus, after some delay, is recognised by Penelope.

DAY 42 (Books xxiii, xxiv).

This day is occupied with the recognition of Odysseus by his aged father Laertes, and with the futile attempt of the kinsfolk of the wooers to avenge them on Odysseus. Athene reconciles the feud, and the toils of Odysseus are accomplished.

The reader has now before him a chronologically arranged sketch of the action of the Odyssey. It is, perhaps, apparent, even from this bare outline, that the composition is elaborate and artistic, that the threads of the plot are skilfully separated and combined. The germ of the whole epic is probably the popular tale, known all over the world, of the warrior who, on his return from a long expedition, has great difficulty in making his prudent wife recognise him. The incident occurs as a detached story in China, and in most European countries it is told of a crusader. ‘We may suppose it to be older than the legend of Troy, and to have gravitated into the cycle of that legend. The years of the hero’s absence are then filled up with adventures (the Cyclops, Circe, the Phaeacians, the Sirens, the descent into hell) which exist as scattered tales, or are woven into the more elaborate epics of Gaels, Aztecs, Hindoos, Tartars, South-Sea Islanders, Finns, Russians, Scandinavians, and Eskimo. The whole is surrounded with the atmosphere of the kingly age of Greece, and the result is the Odyssey, with that unity of plot and variety of character which must have been given by one masterly constructive genius. The date at which the poet of the Odyssey lived may be approximately determined by his consistent descriptions of a peculiar and definite condition of society, which had ceased to exist in the ninth century B.C., and of a stage of art in which Phoenician and Assyrian influences predominated. (Die Kunst bei Homer. Brunn.) As to the mode of composition, it would not be difficult to show that at least the a priori Wolfian arguments against the early use of writing for literary purposes have no longer the cogency which they were once thought to possess. But this is matter for a separate investigation.

THE ODYSSEY

BOOK I

In a Council of the Gods, Poseidon absent, Pallas procureth an order for the restitution of Odysseus; and appearing to his son Telemachus, in human shape, adviseth him to complain of the Wooers before the Council of the people, and then go to Pylos and Sparta to inquire about his father.

Tell me, Muse, of that man, so ready at need, who wandered far and wide, after he had sacked the sacred citadel of Troy, and many were the men whose towns he saw and whose mind he learnt, yea, and many the woes he suffered in his heart upon the deep, striving to win his own life and the return of his company. Nay, but even so he saved not his company, though he desired it sore. For through the blindness of their own hearts they perished, fools, who devoured the oxen of Helios Hyperion: but the god took from them their day of returning. Of these things, goddess, daughter of Zeus, whencesoever thou hast heard thereof, declare thou even unto us.

Now all the rest, as many as fled from sheer destruction, were at home, and had escaped both war and sea, but Odysseus only, craving for his wife and for his homeward path, the lady nymph Calypso held, that fair goddess, in her hollow caves, longing to have him for her lord. But when now the year had come in the courses of the seasons, wherein the gods had ordained that he should return home to Ithaca, not even there was he quit of labours, not even among his own; but all the gods had pity on him save Poseidon, who raged continually against godlike Odysseus, till he came to his own country. Howbeit Poseidon had now departed for the distant Ethiopians, the Ethiopians that are sundered in twain, the uttermost of men, abiding some where Hyperion sinks and some where he rises. There he looked to receive his hecatomb of bulls and rams, there he made merry sitting at the feast, but the other gods were gathered in the halls of Olympian Zeus. Then among them the father of gods and men began to speak, for he bethought him in his heart of noble Aegisthus, whom the son of Agamemnon, far-famed Orestes, slew. Thinking upon him he spake out among the Immortals:

‘Lo you now, how vainly mortal men do blame the gods! For of us they say comes evil, whereas they even of themselves, through the blindness of their own hearts, have sorrows beyond that which is ordained. Even as of late Aegisthus, beyond that which was ordained, took to him the wedded wife of the son of Atreus, and killed her lord on his return, and that with sheer doom before his eyes, since we had warned him by the embassy of Hermes the keen-sighted, the slayer of Argos, that he should neither kill the man, nor woo his wife. For the son of Atreus shall be avenged at the hand of Orestes, so soon as he shall come to man's estate and long for his own country. So spake Hermes, yet he prevailed not on the heart of Aegisthus, for all his good will; but now hath he paid one price for all.'

And the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him, saying: 'O father, our father Cronides, throned in the highest; that man assuredly lies in a death that is his due; so perish likewise all who work such deeds! But my heart is rent for wise Odysseus, that hapless one, who far from his friends this long while suffereth affliction in a seagirt isle, where is the navel of the sea, a woodland isle, and therein a goddess hath her habitation, the daughter of the wizard Atlas, who knows the depths of every sea, and himself upholds the tall pillars which keep earth and sky asunder. His daughter it is that holds the hapless man in sorrow: and ever with soft and guileful tales she is wooing him to forgetfulness of Ithaca. But Odysseus yearning to see if it were but the smoke leap upwards from his own land, hath a desire to die. As for thee, thine heart regardeth it not at all, Olympian! What! did not Odysseus by the ships of the Argives make thee free offering of sacrifice in the wide Trojan land? Wherefore wast thou then so wroth with him, O Zeus?'

And Zeus the cloud-gatherer answered her, and said, 'My child, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips? Yea, how should I forget divine Odysseus, who in understanding is beyond mortals and beyond all men hath done sacrifice to the deathless gods, who keep the wide heaven? Nay, but it is Poseidon, the girdler of the earth, that hath been wroth continually with quenchless anger for the Cyclops' sake whom he blinded of his eye, even godlike Polyphemus whose power is mightiest amongst all the Cyclopes. His mother was the nymph Thoosa, daughter of Phorcys, lord of the unharvested sea, and in the hollow caves she lay with Poseidon. From that day forth Poseidon the earth-shaker doth not indeed slay Odysseus, but driveth him wandering from his own country. But come, let us here one and all take good counsel as touching his returning, that he may be got home; so shall Poseidon let go his displeasure, for he will in no wise be able to strive alone against all, in despite of all the deathless gods.'

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him, and said: 'O father, our father Cronides, throned in the highest, if indeed this thing is now well pleasing to the blessed gods, that wise Odysseus should return to his own home, let us then speed Hermes the Messenger, the slayer of Argos, to the island of Ogygia. There with all speed let him declare to the lady of the braided tresses our unerring counsel, even the return of the patient Odysseus, that so he may come to his home. But as for me I will go to Ithaca that I may rouse his son yet the more, planting might in his heart, to call an assembly of the long-haired Achaeans and speak out to all the wooers who slaughter continually the sheep of his thronging flocks, and his kine with trailing feet and shambling gait. And I will guide him to Sparta and to sandy Pylos to seek tidings of his dear father’s return, if peradventure he may hear thereof and that so he may be had in good report among men.’

She spake and bound beneath her feet her lovely golden sandals that wax not old, and bare her alike over the wet sea and over the limitless land, swift as the breath of the wind. And she seized her doughty spear, shod with sharp bronze, weighty and huge and strong, wherewith she quells the ranks of heroes with whomsoever she is wroth, the daughter of the mighty sire. Then from the heights of Olympus she came glancing down, and she stood in the land of Ithaca, at the entry of the gate of Odysseus, on the threshold of the courtyard, holding in her hand the spear of bronze, in the semblance of a stranger, Mentes the captain of the Taphians. And there she found the lordly wooers: now they were taking their pleasure at draughts in front of the doors, sitting on hides of oxen, which themselves had slain. And of the henchmen and the ready squires, some were mixing for them wine and water in bowls, and some again were washing the tables with porous sponges and were setting them forth, and others were carving flesh in plenty.

And godlike Telemachus was far the first to descry her, for he was sitting with a heavy heart among the wooers dreaming on his good father, if haply he might come somewhence, and make a scattering of the wooers there throughout the palace, and himself get honour and bear rule among his own possessions. Thinking thereupon, as he sat among wooers, he saw Athene — and he went straight to the outer porch, for he thought it blame in his heart that a stranger should stand long at the gates: and halting nigh her he clasped her right hand and took from her the spear of bronze, and uttered his voice and spake unto her winged words:

‘Hail, stranger, with us thou shalt be kindly entreated, and thereafter, when thou hast tasted meat, thou shalt tell us that whereof thou hast need.’

Therewith he led the way, and Pallas Athene followed. And when they were now within the lofty house, he set her spear that he bore against a tall pillar, within the polished spear-stand, where stood many spears besides, even those of

Odysseus of the hardy heart; and he led the goddess and seated her on a goodly carven chair, and spread a linen cloth thereunder, and beneath was a footstool for the feet. For himself he placed an inlaid seat hard by, apart from the company of the wooers, lest the stranger should be disquieted by the noise and should have a loathing for the meal, being come among overweening men, and also that he might ask him about his father that was gone from his home.

Then a handmaid bare water for the washing of hands in a goodly golden ewer, and poured it forth over a silver basin to wash withal, and drew to their side a polished table. And a grave dame bare wheaten bread and set it by them, and laid on the board many dainties, giving freely of such things as she had by her. And a carver lifted and placed by them platters of divers kinds of flesh, and nigh them he set golden bowls, and a henchman walked to and fro pouring out to them the wine.

Then in came the lordly wooers; and they sat them down in rows on chairs, and on high seats, and henchmen poured water on their hands, and maidservants piled wheaten bread by them in baskets, and pages crowned the bowls with drink; and they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer spread before them. Now when the wooers had put from them the desire of meat and drink, they minded them of other things, even of the song and dance: for these are the crown of the feast. And a henchman placed a beauteous lyre in the hands of Phemius, who was minstrel to the wooers despite his will. Yea and as he touched the lyre he lifted up his voice in sweet songs.{*}

{* Or, according to the ordinary interpretation of [Greek]:
So he touched the chords in prelude to his sweet singing.}

But Telemachus spake unto grey-eyed Athene, holding his head close to her that those others might not hear: ‘Dear stranger, wilt thou of a truth be wroth at the word that I shall say? Yonder men verily care for such things as these, the lyre and song, lightly, as they that devour the livelihood of another without atonement, of that man whose white bones, it may be, lie wasting in the rain upon the mainland, or the billow rolls them in the brine. Were but these men to see him returned to Ithaca, they all would pray rather for greater speed of foot than for gain of gold and raiment. But now he hath perished, even so, an evil doom, and for us is no comfort, no, not though any of earthly men should say that he will come again. Gone is the day of his returning! But come declare me this, and tell me all plainly: Who art thou of the sons of men, and whence? Where is thy city, where are they that begat thee? Say, on what manner of ship didst thou come, and how did sailors bring thee to Ithaca, and who did they avow themselves to be, for in nowise do I deem that thou camest hither by land. And herein tell me true, that I may know for a surety whether thou art a newcomer, or whether thou art a guest of the house, seeing that many were the strangers that came to our home, for that HE too had voyaged much among men.’

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him: ‘Yea now, I will plainly tell thee all. I avow me to be Mentes, son of wise Anchialus, and I bear rule among the Taphians, lovers of the oar. And now am I come to shore, as thou seest, with ship and crew, sailing over the wine-dark sea, unto men of strange speech, even to Temesa, {*} in quest of copper, and my cargo is shining iron. And there my ship is lying toward the upland, away from the city, in the harbour of Rheithron beneath wooded Neion: and we declare ourselves to be friends one of the other, and of houses friendly, from of old. Nay, if thou wouldest be assured, go ask the old man, the hero Laertes, who they say no more comes to the city, but far away toward the upland suffers affliction, with an ancient woman for his handmaid, who sets by him meat and drink, whensoever weariness takes hold of his limbs, as he creeps along the knoll of his vineyard plot. And now am I come; for verily they said that HE, thy father, was among his people; but lo, the gods withhold him from his way. For goodly Odysseus hath not yet perished on the earth; but still, methinks, he lives and is kept on the wide deep in a seagirt isle, and hard men constrain him, wild folk that hold him, it may be, sore against his will. But now of a truth will I utter my word of prophecy, as the Immortals bring it into my heart and as I deem it will be accomplished, though no soothsayer am I, nor skilled in the signs of birds. Henceforth indeed for no long while shall he be far from his own dear country, not though bonds of iron bind him; he will advise him of a way to return, for he is a man of many devices. But come, declare me this, and tell me all plainly, whether indeed, so tall as thou art, thou art sprung from the loins of Odysseus. Thy head surely and they beauteous eyes are wondrous like to his, since full many a time have we held converse together ere he embarked for Troy, whither the others, aye the bravest of the Argives, went in hollow ships. From that day forth neither have I seen Odysseus, nor he me.’

{* Tamasia, in the mountainous centre of Cyprus.}

Then wise Telemachus answered her, and said: ‘Yea, sir, now will I plainly tell thee all. My mother verily saith that I am his; for myself I know not, for never man yet knew of himself his own descent. O that I had been the son of some blessed man, whom old age overtook among his own possessions! But now of him that is the most hapless of mortal men, his son they say that I am, since thou dost question me hereof.’

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake unto him, and said: ‘Surely no nameless lineage have the gods ordained for thee in days to come, since

Penelope bore thee so goodly a man. But come, declare me this, and tell it all plainly. What feast, nay, what rout is this? What hast thou to do therewith? Is it a clan drinking, or a wedding feast, for here we have no banquet where each man brings his share? In such wise, flown with insolence, do they seem to me to revel wantonly through the house: and well might any man be wroth to see so many deeds of shame, whatso wise man came among them.'

Then wise Telemachus answered her, and said: 'Sir, forasmuch as thou questionest me of these things and inquirest thereof, our house was once like to have been rich and honourable, while yet that man was among his people. But now the gods willed it otherwise, in evil purpose, who have made him pass utterly out of sight as no man ever before. Truly I would not even for his death make so great sorrow, had he fallen among his fellows in the land of the Trojans, or in the arms of his friends when he had wound up the clew of war. Then would the whole Achaean host have builded him a barrow, and even for his son would he have won great glory in the after days. But now the spirits of the storm have swept him away inglorious. He is gone, lost to sight and hearsay, but for me hath he left anguish and lamentation; nor henceforth is it for him alone that I mourn and weep, since the gods have wrought for me other sore distress. For all the noblest that are princes in the isles, in Dulichium and Same and wooded Zacynthus, and as many as lord it in rocky Ithaca, all these woo my mother and waste my house. But as for her she neither refuseth the hated bridal, nor hath the heart to make an end: so they devour and minish my house, and ere long will they make havoc likewise of myself.'

Then in heavy displeasure spake unto him Pallas Athene: 'God help thee! thou art surely sore in need of Odysseus that is afar, to stretch forth his hands upon the shameless wooers. If he could but come now and stand at the entering in of the gate, with helmet and shield and lances twain, as mighty a man as when first I marked him in our house drinking and making merry what time he came up out of Ephyra from Ilus son of Mermerus! For even thither had Odysseus gone on his swift ship to seek a deadly drug, that he might have wherewithal to smear his bronze-shod arrows: but Ilus would in nowise give it to him, for he had in awe the everliving gods. But my father gave it him, for he bare him wondrous love. O that Odysseus might in such strength consort with the wooers: so should they all have swift fate and bitter wedlock! Howbeit these things surely lie on the knees of the gods, whether he shall return or not, and take vengeance in his halls. But I charge thee to take counsel how thou mayest thrust forth the wooers from the hall. Come now, mark and take heed unto my words. On the morrow call the Achaean lords to the assembly, and declare thy saying to all, and take the gods to witness. As for the wooers bid them scatter them each one to his own, and for thy mother, if her heart is moved to marriage, let her go back to the hall of that mighty man her father, and her kinsfolk will furnish a wedding feast, and array the gifts of wooing exceeding many, all that should go back with a daughter dearly beloved. And to thyself I will give a word of wise counsel, if perchance thou wilt hearken. Fit out a ship, the best thou hast, with twenty oarsmen, and go to inquire concerning thy father that is long afar, if perchance any man shall tell thee aught, or if thou mayest hear the voice from Zeus, which chiefly brings tidings to men. Get thee first to Pylos and inquire of goodly Nestor, and from thence to Sparta to Menelaus of the fair hair, for he came home the last of the mail-coated Achaeans. If thou shalt hear news of the life and the returning of thy father, then verily thou mayest endure the wasting for yet a year. But if thou shalt hear that he is dead and gone, return then to thine own dear country and pile his mound, and over it pay burial rites, full many as is due, and give thy mother to a husband. But when thou hast done this and made an end, thereafter take counsel in thy mind and heart, how thou mayest slay the wooers in thy halls, whether by guile or openly; for thou shouldest not carry childish thoughts, being no longer of years thereto. Or hast thou not heard what renown the goodly Orestes gat him among all men in that he slew the slayer of his father, guileful Aegisthus, who killed his famous sire? And thou, too, my friend, for I see that thou art very comely and tall, be valiant, that even men unborn may praise thee. But I will now go down to the swift ship and to my men, who methinks chafe much at tarrying for me; and do thou thyself take heed and give ear unto my words.’

Then wise Telemachus answered her, saying: ‘Sir, verily thou speakest these things out of a friendly heart, as a father to his son, and never will I forget them. But now I pray thee abide here, though eager to be gone, to the end that after thou hast bathed and had all thy heart’s desire, thou mayest wend to the ship joyful in spirit, with a costly gift and very goodly, to be an heirloom of my giving, such as dear friends give to friends.’

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him: ‘Hold me now no longer, that am eager for the way. But whatsoever gift thine heart shall bid thee give me, when I am on my way back let it be mine to carry home: bear from thy stores a gift right goodly, and it shall bring thee the worth thereof in return.’

So spake she and departed, the grey-eyed Athene, and like an eagle of the sea she flew away, but in his spirit she planted might and courage, and put him in mind of his father yet more than heretofore. And he marked the thing and was amazed, for he deemed that it was a god; and anon he went among the wooers, a godlike man.

Now the renowned minstrel was singing to the wooers, and they sat listening in silence; and his song was of the pitiful return of the Achaeans, that Pallas Athene laid on them as they came forth from Troy. And from her upper chamber the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, caught the glorious strain, and she went down the high stairs from her chamber, not alone, for two of her handmaids bare her company. Now when the fair lady had come unto the wooers, she stood by the pillar of the well-builded roof holding up her glistening tire before her face; and a faithful maiden stood on either side her. Then she fell a weeping, and spake unto the divine minstrel:

‘Phemius, since thou knowest many other charms for mortals, deeds of men and gods, which bards rehearse, some one of these do thou sing as thou sittest by them, and let them drink their wine in silence; but cease from this pitiful strain, that ever wastes my heart within my breast, since to me above all women hath come a sorrow comfortless. So dear a head do I long for in constant memory, namely, that man whose fame is noised abroad from Hellas to mid Argos.’

Then wise Telemachus answered her, and said: ‘O my mother, why then dost thou grudge the sweet minstrel to gladden us as his spirit moves him? It is not minstrels who are in fault, but Zeus, methinks, is in fault, who gives to men, that live by bread, to each one as he will. As for him it is no blame if he sings the ill-faring of the Danaans; for men always prize that song the most, which rings newest in their ears. But let thy heart and mind endure to listen, for not Odysseus only lost in Troy the day of his returning, but many another likewise perished. Howbeit go to thy chamber and mind thine own housewiferies, the loom and distaff, and bid thy handmaids ply their tasks. But speech shall be for men, for all, but for me in chief; for mine is the lordship in the house.’

Then in amaze she went back to her chamber, for she laid up the wise saying of her son in her heart. She ascended to her upper chamber with the women her handmaids, and then was bewailing Odysseus, her dear lord, till grey-eyed Athene cast sweet sleep upon her eyelids.

Now the wooers clamoured throughout the shadowy halls, and each one uttered a prayer to be her bedfellow. And wise Telemachus first spake among them:

‘Wooers of my mother, men despiteful out of measure, let us feast now and make merry and let there be no brawling; for, lo, it is a good thing to list to a minstrel such as him, like to the gods in voice. But in the morning let us all go to the assembly and sit us down, that I may declare my saying outright, to wit that ye leave these halls: and busy yourselves with other feasts, eating your own substance, going in turn from house to house. But if ye deem this a likelier and a better thing, that one man’s goods should perish without atonement, then waste ye as ye will; and I will call upon the everlasting gods, if haply Zeus may grant that acts of recompense be made: so should ye hereafter perish within the halls without atonement.’

So spake he, and all that heard him bit their lips and marvelled at Telemachus, in that he spake boldly.

Then Antinous, son of Eupeithes, answered him: ‘Telemachus, in very truth the gods themselves instruct thee to be proud of speech and boldly to harangue. Never may Cronion make thee king in seagirt Ithaca, which thing is of inheritance thy right!’

Then wise Telemachus answered him, and said: ‘Antinous, wilt thou indeed be wroth at the word that I shall say? Yea, at the hand of Zeus would I be fain to take even this thing upon me. Sayest thou that this is the worst hap that can befal a man? Nay, verily, it is no ill thing to be a king: the house of such an one quickly waxeth rich and himself is held in greater honour. Howsoever there are many other kings of the Achaeans in seagirt Ithaca, kings young and old; someone of them shall surely have this kingship since goodly Odysseus is dead. But as for me, I will be lord of our own house and thralls, that goodly Odysseus gat me with his spear.’

Then Eurymachus, son of Polybus, answered him, saying: ‘Telemachus, on the knees of the gods it surely lies, what man is to be king over the Achaeans in seagirt Ithaca. But mayest thou keep thine own possessions and be lord in thine own house! Never may that man come, who shall wrest from thee thy substance violently in thine own despite while Ithaca yet stands. But I would ask thee, friend, concerning the stranger — whence he is, and of what land he avows him to be? Where are his kin and his native fields? Doth he bear some tidings of thy father on his road, or cometh he thus to speed some matter of his own? In such wise did he start up, and lo, he was gone, nor tarried he that we should know him; — and yet he seemed no mean man to look upon.’ {*}

{* The [Greek] explains the expression of surprise at the sudden departure of the stranger.}

Then wise Telemachus answered him, and said: ‘Eurymachus, surely the day of my father’s returning hath gone by. Therefore no more do I put faith in tidings, whencesoever they may come, neither have I regard unto any divination, whereof my mother may inquire at the lips of a diviner, when she hath bidden him to the hall. But as for that man, he is a friend of my house from Taphos, and he avows him to be Mentes, son of wise Anchialus, and he hath lordship among the Taphians, lovers of the oar.’

So spake Telemachus, but in his heart he knew the deathless goddess. Now the wooers turned them to the dance and the delightsome song, and made merry, and waited till evening should come on. And as they made merry, dusk evening came upon them. Then they went each one to his own house to lie down to rest.

But Telemachus, where his chamber was builded high up in the fair court, in a place with wide prospect, thither betook him to his bed, pondering many thoughts in his mind; and with him went trusty Eurycleia, and bare for him torches burning. She was the daughter of Ops, son of Peisenor, and Laertes bought her on a time with his wealth, while as yet she was in her first youth, and gave for her the worth of twenty oxen. And he honoured her even as he honoured his dear wife in the halls, but he never lay with her, for he shunned the wrath of his lady. She went with Telemachus and bare for him the burning torches: and of all the women of the household she loved him most, and she had nursed him when a little one. Then he opened the doors of the well-builded chamber and sat him on the bed and took off his soft doublet, and put it in the wise old woman’s hands. So she folded the doublet and smoothed it, and hung it on a pin by the jointed bedstead, and went forth on her way from the room, and pulled to the door with the silver handle, and drew home the bar with the thong. There, all night through, wrapped in a fleece of wool, he meditated in his heart upon the journey that Athene had showed him.

BOOK II

Telemachus complains in vain, and borrowing a ship, goes secretly to Pylos by night. And how he was there received.

Now so soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, the dear son of Odysseus gat him up from his bed, and put on his raiment and cast his sharp sword about his shoulder, and beneath his smooth feet he bound his goodly sandals, and stept forth from his chamber in presence like a god. And straightway he bade the clear-voiced heralds to call the long-haired Achaeans to the assembly. And the heralds called the gathering, and the Achaeans were assembled quickly. Now when they were gathered and come together, he went on his way to the assembly holding in his hand a spear of bronze, — not alone he went, for two swift hounds bare him company. Then Athene shed on him a wondrous grace, and all the people marvelled at him as he came. And he sat him in his father's seat and the elders gave place to him.

Then the lord Aegyptus spake among them first; bowed was he with age, and skilled in things past number. Now for this reason he spake that his dear son, the warrior Antiphus, had gone in the hollow ships to Ilios of the goodly steeds; but the savage Cyclops slew him in his hollow cave, and made of him then his latest meal. Three other sons Aegyptus had, and one consorted with the wooers, namely Eurynomus, but two continued in their father's fields; yet even so forgat he not that son, still mourning and sorrowing. So weeping for his sake he made harangue and spake among them:

'Hearken now to me, ye men of Ithaca, to the word that I shall say. Never hath our assembly or session been since the day that goodly Odysseus departed in the hollow ships. And now who was minded thus to assemble us? On what man hath such sore need come, of the young men or of the elder born? Hath he heard some tidings of the host now returning, which he might plainly declare to us, for that he first learned thereof, or doth he show forth and tell some other matter of the common weal? Methinks he is a true man — good luck be with him! Zeus vouchsafe him some good thing in his turn, even all his heart's desire!'

So spake he, and the dear son of Odysseus was glad at the omen of the word; nor sat he now much longer, but he burned to speak, and he stood in mid assembly; and the herald Peisenor, skilled in sage counsels, placed the staff in his hands. Then he spake, accosting the old man first:

‘Old man, he is not far off, and soon shalt thou know it for thyself, he who called the folk together, even I: for sorrow hath come to me in chief. Neither have I heard any tidings of the host now returning, which I may plainly declare to you, for that I first learned thereof; neither do I show forth or tell any other matter of the common weal, but mine own need, for that evil hath befallen my house, a double woe. First, I have lost my noble sire, who sometime was king among you here, and was gentle as a father; and now is there an evil yet greater far, which surely shall soon make grievous havoc of my whole house and ruin all my livelihood. My mother did certain wooers beset sore against her will, even the sons of those men that here are the noblest. They are too craven to go to the house of her father Icarius, that he may himself set the bride-price for his daughter, and bestow her on whom he will, even on him who finds favour in his sight. But they resorting to our house day by day sacrifice oxen and sheep and fat goats, and keep revel, and drink the dark wine recklessly, and lo, our great wealth is wasted, for there is no man now alive such as Odysseus was, to keep ruin from the house. As for me I am nowise strong like him to ward mine own; verily to the end of my days {*} shall I be a weakling and all unskilled in prowess. Truly I would defend me if but strength were mine; for deeds past sufferance have now been wrought, and now my house is wasted utterly beyond pretence of right. Resent it in your own hearts, and have regard to your neighbours who dwell around, and tremble ye at the anger of the gods, lest haply they turn upon you in wrath at your evil deeds. {Or, lest they bring your evil deeds in wrath on your own heads.} I pray you by Olympian Zeus and by Themis, who looseth and gathereth the meetings of men, let be, my friends, and leave me alone to waste in bitter grief; — unless it so be that my father, the good Odysseus, out of evil heart wrought harm to the goodly-greaved Achaeans, in quittance whereof ye now work me harm out of evil hearts, and spur on these men. Better for me that ye yourselves should eat up my treasures and my flocks. Were YE so to devour them, ere long would some recompense be made, for we would urge our plea throughout the town, begging back our substance, until all should be restored. But now without remedy are the pains that ye lay up in my heart.’

{* Cf. B. xxi. 131. For the use of the 1st pers. pl. like our ROYAL plural, cf. B. xvi.44, Il. vii. 190.}

So spake he in wrath, and dashed the staff to the ground, and brake forth in tears; and pity fell on all the people. Then all the others held their peace, and none had the heart to answer Telemachus with hard words, but Antinous alone made answer, saying:

‘Telemachus, proud of speech and unrestrained in fury, what is this thou hast said to put us to shame, and wouldest fasten on us reproach? Behold the fault is not in the Achaean wooers, but in thine own mother, for she is the craftiest of women. For it is now the third year, and the fourth is fast going by, since she began to deceive the minds of the Achaeans in their breasts. She gives hope to all, and makes promises to every man, and sends them messages, but her mind is set on other things. And she hath devised in her heart this wile besides; she set up in her halls a mighty web, fine of woof and very wide, whereat she would weave, and anon she spake among us:

'"Ye princely youths, my wooers, now that the goodly Odysseus is dead, do ye abide patiently, how eager soever to speed on this marriage of mine, till I finish the robe. I would not that the threads perish to no avail, even this shroud for the hero Laertes, against the day when the ruinous doom shall bring him low, of death that lays men at their length. So shall none of the Achaean women in the land count it blame in me, as well might be, were he to lie without a winding-sheet, a man that had gotten great possessions."

'So spake she, and our high hearts consented thereto. So then in the day time she would weave the mighty web, and in the night unravel the same, when she had let place the torches by her. Thus for the space of three years she hid the thing by craft and beguiled the minds of the Achaeans; but when the fourth year arrived and the seasons came round, then at the last one of her women who knew all declared it, and we found her unravelling the splendid web. Thus she finished it perforce and sore against her will. But as for thee, the wooers make thee answer thus, that thou mayest know it in thine own heart, thou and all the Achaeans! Send away thy mother, and bid her be married to whomsoever her father commands, and whoso is well pleasing unto her. But if she will continue for long to vex the sons of the Achaeans, pondering in her heart those things that Athene hath given her beyond women, knowledge of all fair handiwork, yea, and cunning wit, and wiles — so be it! Such wiles as hers we have never yet heard that any even of the women of old did know, of those that aforetime were fair-tressed Achaean ladies, Tyro, and Alcmene, and Mycene with the bright crown. Not one of these in the imaginations of their hearts was like unto Penelope, yet herein at least her imagining was not good. For in despite of her the wooers will devour thy living and thy substance, so long as she is steadfast in such purpose as the gods now put within her breast: great renown for herself she winneth, but for thee regret for thy much livelihood. But we will neither go to our own lands, nor otherwhere, till she marry that man whom she will of the Achaeans.'

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: 'Antinous, I may in no wise thrust forth from the house, against her will, the woman that bare me, that reared me: while as for my father he is abroad on the earth, whether he be alive or dead.

Moreover it is hard for me to make heavy restitution to Icarius, as needs I must, if of mine own will I send my mother away. For I shall have evil at his hand, at the hand of her father, and some god will give me more besides, for my mother will call down the dire Avengers as she departs from the house, and I shall have blame of men; surely then I will never speak this word. Nay, if your own heart, even yours, is indignant, quit ye my halls, and busy yourselves with other feasts, eating your own substance, and going in turn from house to house. But if ye deem this a likelier and a better thing, that one man's goods should perish without atonement, then waste ye as ye will: and I will call upon the everlasting gods, if haply Zeus may grant that acts of recompense be made: so should ye hereafter perish in the halls without atonement.'

So spake Telemachus, and in answer to his prayer did Zeus, of the far borne voice, send forth two eagles in flight, from on high, from the mountain-crest. Awhile they flew as fleet as the blasts of the wind, side by side, with straining of their pinions. But when they had now reached the mid assembly, the place of many voices, there they wheeled about and flapped their strong wings, and looked down upon the heads of all, and destruction was in their gaze. Then tore they with their talons each the other's cheeks and neck on every side, and so sped to the right across the dwellings and the city of the people. And the men marvelled at the birds when they had sight of them, and pondered in their hearts the things that should come to pass. Yea and the old man, the lord Halitherses son of Mastor spake among them, for he excelled his peers in knowledge of birds, and in uttering words of fate. With good will he made harangue and spake among them:

'Hearken to me now, ye men of Ithaca, to the word that I shall say: and mainly to the wooers do I show forth and tell these things, seeing that a mighty woe is rolling upon them. For Odysseus shall not long be away from his friends, nay, even now, it may be, he is near, and sowing the seeds of death and fate for these men, every one; and he will be a bane to many another likewise of us who dwell in clear-seen Ithaca. But long ere that falls out let us advise us how we may make an end of their mischief; yea, let them of their own selves make an end, for this is the better way for them, as will soon be seen. For I prophesy not as one unproved, but with sure knowledge; verily, I say, that for him all things now are come to pass, even as I told him, what time the Argives embarked for Ilios, and with them went the wise Odysseus. I said that after sore affliction, with the loss of all his company, unknown to all, in the twentieth year he should come home. And behold, all these things now have an end.'

And Eurymachus, son of Polybus, answered him, saying: 'Go now, old man, get thee home and prophesy to thine own children, lest haply they suffer harm hereafter: but herein am I a far better prophet than thou. Howbeit there be many birds that fly to and fro under the sun’s rays, but all are not birds of fate. Now as for Odysseus, he hath perished far away, as would that thou too with him hadst been cut off: so wouldst thou not have babbled thus much prophecy, nor wouldst thou hound on Telemachus that is already angered, expecting a gift for thy house, if perchance he may vouchsafe thee aught. But now will I speak out, and my word shall surely be accomplished. If thou that knowest much lore from of old, shalt beguile with words a younger man, and rouse him to indignation, first it shall be a great grief to him: — and yet he can count on no aid from these who hear him; — while upon thee, old man, we will lay a fine, that thou mayest pay it and chafe at heart, and sore pain shall be thine. And I myself will give a word of counsel to Telemachus in presence of you all. Let him command his mother to return to her father’s house; and her kinsfolk will furnish a wedding feast, and array the gifts of wooing, exceeding many, all that should go back with a daughter dearly beloved. For ere that, I trow, we sons of the Achaeans will not cease from our rough wooing, since, come what may, we fear not any man, no, not Telemachus, full of words though he be, nor soothsaying do we heed, whereof thou, old man, pratest idly, and art hated yet the more. His substance too shall be woefully devoured, nor shall recompense ever be made, so long as she shall put off the Achaeans in the matter of her marriage; while we in expectation, from day to day, vie one with another for the prize of her perfection, nor go we after other women whom it were meet that we should each one wed.’

Then wise Telemachus answered him saying: ‘Eurymachus, and ye others, that are lordly wooers, I entreat you no more concerning this nor speak thereof, for the gods have knowledge of it now and all the Achaeans. But come, give me a swift ship and twenty men, who shall accomplish for me my voyage to and fro. For I will go to Sparta and to sandy Pylos to inquire concerning the return of my father that is long afar, if perchance any man shall tell me aught, or if I may hear the voice from Zeus, that chiefly brings tidings to men. If I shall hear news of the life and the returning of my father, then verily I may endure the wasting for yet a year; but if I shall hear that he is dead and gone, let me then return to my own dear country, and pile his mound, and over it pay burial rites full many as is due, and I will give my mother to a husband.’

So with that word he sat him down; then in the midst uprose Mentor, the companion of noble Odysseus. He it was to whom Odysseus, as he departed in the fleet, had given the charge over all his house, that it should obey the old man, and that he should keep all things safe. With good will he now made harangue and spake among them:

‘Hearken to me now, ye men of Ithaca, to the word that I shall say. Henceforth let not any sceptred king be kind and gentle with all his heart, nor minded to do righteously, but let him alway be a hard man and work unrighteousness: for behold, there is none that remembereth divine Odysseus of the people whose lord he was, and was gentle as a father. Howsoever, it is not that I grudge the lordly wooers their deeds of violence in the evil devices of their heart. For at the hazard of their own heads they violently devour the household of Odysseus, and say of him that he will come no more again. But I am indeed wroth with the rest of the people, to see how ye all sit thus speechless, and do not cry shame upon the wooers, and put them down, ye that are so many and they so few.'

And Leocritus, son of Euenor, answered him, saying: 'Mentor infatuate, with thy wandering wits, what word hast thou spoken, that callest upon them to put us down? Nay, it is a hard thing to fight about a feast, and that with men who are even more in number than you. Though Odysseus of Ithaca himself should come and were eager of heart to drive forth from the hall the lordly wooers that feast throughout his house, yet should his wife have no joy of his coming, though she yearns for him; — but even there should he meet foul doom, if he fought with those that outnumbered him; so thou hast not spoken aright. But as for the people, come now, scatter yourselves each one to his own lands, but Mentor and Halitherses will speed this man's voyage, for they are friends of his house from of old. Yet after all, methinks, that long time he will abide and seek tidings in Ithaca, and never accomplish this voyage.'

Thus he spake, and in haste they broke up the assembly. So they were scattered each one to his own dwelling, while the wooers departed to the house of divine Odysseus.

Then Telemachus, going far apart to the shore of the sea, laved his hands in the grey sea water, and prayed unto Athene, saying: 'Hear me, thou who yesterday didst come in thy godhead to our house, and badest me go in a ship across the misty seas, to seek tidings of the return of my father that is long gone: but all this my purpose do the Achaeans delay, and mainly the wooers in the naughtiness of their pride.'

So spake he in prayer, and Athene drew nigh him in the likeness of Mentor, in fashion and in voice, and she spake and hailed him in winged words:

'Telemachus, even hereafter thou shalt not be craven or witless, if indeed thou hast a drop of thy father's blood and a portion of his spirit; such an one was he to fulfil both word and work. Nor, if this be so, shall thy voyage be vain or unfulfilled. But if thou art not the very seed of him and of Penelope, then have I no hope that thou wilt accomplish thy desire. For few children, truly, are like their father; lo, the more part are worse, yet a few are better than the sire. But since thou shalt not even hereafter be craven or witless, nor hath the wisdom of

Odysseus failed thee quite, so is there good hope of thine accomplishing this work. Wherefore now take no heed of the counsel or the purpose of the senseless wooers, for they are in no way wise or just: neither know they aught of death and of black fate, which already is close upon them, that they are all to perish in one day. But the voyage on which thy heart is set shall not long be lacking to thee — so faithful a friend of thy father am I, who will furnish thee a swift ship and myself be thy companion. But go thou to the house, and consort with the wooers, and make ready corn, and bestow all in vessels, the wine in jars and barley-flour, the marrow of men, in well-sewn skins; and I will lightly gather in the township a crew that offer themselves willingly. There are many ships, new and old, in seagirt Ithaca; of these I will choose out the best for thee, and we will quickly rig her and launch her on the broad deep.'

So spake Athene, daughter of Zeus, and Telemachus made no long tarrying, when he had heard the voice of the goddess. He went on his way towards the house, heavy at heart, and there he found the noble wooers in the halls, flaying goats and singeing swine in the court. And Antinous laughed out and went straight to Telemachus, and clasped his hand and spake and hailed him:

'Telemachus, proud of speech and unrestrained in fury, let no evil word any more be in thy heart, nor evil work, but let me see thee eat and drink as of old. And the Achaeans will make thee ready all things without fail, a ship and chosen oarsmen, that thou mayest come the quicker to fair Pylos, to seek tidings of thy noble father.'

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying, 'Antinous, in no wise in your proud company can I sup in peace, and make merry with a quiet mind. Is it a little thing, ye wooers, that in time past ye wasted many good things of my getting, while as yet I was a child? But now that I am a man grown, and learn the story from the lips of others, and my spirit waxeth within me, I will seek to let loose upon you evil fates, as I may, going either to Pylos for help, or abiding here in this township. Yea, I will go, nor vain shall the voyage be whereof I speak; a passenger on another's ship go I, for I am not to have a ship nor oarsmen of mine own; so in your wisdom ye have thought it for the better.'

He spake and snatched his hand from out the hand of Antinous, lightly, and all the while the wooers were busy feasting through the house; and they mocked him and sharply taunted him, and thus would some proud youth speak:

'In very truth Telemachus planneth our destruction. He will bring a rescue either from sandy Pylos, or even it may be from Sparta, so terribly is he set on slaying us. Or else he will go to Ephyra, a fruitful land, to fetch a poisonous drug that he may cast it into the bowl and make an end of all of us.'

And again another proud youth would say: 'Who knows but that he himself if he goes hence on the hollow ship, may perish wandering far from his friends, even as Odysseus? So should we have yet more ado, for then must we divide among us all his substance, and moreover give the house to his mother to possess it, and to him whosoever should wed her.'

So spake they; but he stepped down into the vaulted treasure-chamber of his father, a spacious room, where gold and bronze lay piled, and raiment in coffers, and fragrant olive oil in plenty. And there stood casks of sweet wine and old, full of the unmixed drink divine, all orderly ranged by the wall, ready if ever Odysseus should come home, albeit after travail and much pain. And the close-fitted doors, the folding doors, were shut, and night and day there abode within a dame in charge, who guarded all in the fulness of her wisdom, Eurycleia, daughter of Ops son of Peisenor. Telemachus now called her into the chamber and spake unto her, saying:

'Mother, come draw off for me sweet wine in jars, the choicest next to that thou keepest mindful ever of that ill-fated one, Odysseus, of the seed of Zeus, if perchance he may come I know not whence, having avoided death and the fates. So fill twelve jars, and close each with his lid, and pour me barley-meal into well-sewn skins, and let there be twenty measures of the grain of bruised barley-meal. Let none know this but thyself! As for these things let them all be got together; for in the evening I will take them with me, at the time that my mother hath gone to her upper chamber and turned her thoughts to sleep. Lo, to Sparta I go and to sandy Pylos to seek tidings of my dear father's return, if haply I may hear thereof.'

So spake he, and the good nurse Eurycleia wailed aloud, and making lament spake to him winged words: 'Ah, wherefore, dear child, hath such a thought arisen in thine heart? How shouldst thou fare over wide lands, thou that art an only child and well-beloved? As for him he hath perished, Odysseus of the seed of Zeus, far from his own country in the land of strangers. And yonder men, so soon as thou art gone, will devise mischief against thee thereafter, that thou mayest perish by guile, and they will share among them all this wealth of thine. Nay, abide here, settled on thine own lands: thou hast no need upon the deep unharvested to suffer evil and go wandering.'

Then wise Telemachus answered her, saying: 'Take heart, nurse, for lo, this my purpose came not but of a god. But swear to tell no word thereof to my dear mother, till at least it shall be the eleventh or twelfth day from hence, or till she miss me of herself, and hear of my departure, that so she may not mar her fair face with her tears.'

Thus he spake, and the old woman sware a great oath by the gods not to reveal it. But when she had sworn and done that oath, straightway she drew off the wine for him in jars, and poured barley-meal into well-sewn skins, and Telemachus departed to the house and consorted with the wooers.

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, turned to other thoughts. In the likeness of Telemachus she went all through the city, and stood by each one of the men and spake her saying, and bade them gather at even by the swift ship. Furthermore, she craved a swift ship of Noemon, famous son of Phronius, and right gladly he promised it.

Now the sun sank and all the ways were darkened. Then at length she let drag the swift ship to the sea and stored within it all such tackling as decked ships carry. And she moored it at the far end of the harbour and the good company was gathered together, and the goddess cheered on all.

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, turned to other thoughts. She went on her way to the house of divine Odysseus; and there she shed sweet sleep upon the wooers and made them distraught in their drinking, and cast the cups from their hands. And they arose up to go to rest throughout the city, nor sat they yet a long while, for slumber was falling on their eyelids. Now grey eyed Athene spake unto Telemachus, and called him from out the fair-lying halls, taking the likeness of Mentor, both in fashion and in voice:

‘Telemachus, thy goodly-greaved companions are sitting already at their oars, it is thy despatch they are awaiting. Nay then, let us go, that we delay them not long from the way.’

Therewith Pallas Athene led the way quickly, and he followed hard in the steps of the goddess. Now when they had come down to the ship and to the sea, they found the long-haired youths of the company on the shore; and the mighty prince Telemachus spake among them:

‘Come hither, friends, let us carry the corn on board, for all is now together in the room, and my mother knows nought thereof, nor any of the maidens of the house: one woman only heard my saying.’

Thus he spake and led the way, and they went with him. So they brought all and stowed it in the decked ship, according to the word of the dear son of Odysseus. Then Telemachus climbed the ship, and Athene went before him, and behold, she sat her down in the stern, and near her sat Telemachus. And the men loosed the hawsers and climbed on board themselves and sat down upon the benches. And grey-eyed Athene sent them a favourable gale, a fresh West Wind, singing over the wine-dark sea.

And Telemachus called unto his company and bade them lay hands on the tackling, and they hearkened to his call. So they raised the mast of pine tree and set it in the hole of the cross plank, and made it fast with forestays, and hauled up the white sails with twisted ropes of oxhide. And the wind filled the belly of the sail, and the dark wave seethed loudly round the stem of the running ship, and she fleeted over the wave, accomplishing her path. Then they made all fast in the swift black ship, and set mixing bowls brimmed with wine, and poured drink offering to the deathless gods that are from everlasting, and in chief to the grey eyed daughter of Zeus. So all night long and through the dawn the ship cleft her way.

BOOK III

Nestor entertains Telemachus at Pylos and tells him how the Greeks departed from Troy; and sends him for further information to Sparta.

Now the sun arose and left the lovely mere, speeding to the brazen heaven, to give light to the immortals and to mortal men on the earth, the graingiver, and they reached Pylos, the stablished castle of Neleus. There the people were doing sacrifice on the sea shore, slaying black bulls without spot to the dark-haired god, the shaker of the earth. Nine companies there were, and five hundred men sat in each, and in every company they held nine bulls ready to hand. Just as they had tasted the inner parts, and were burning the slices of the thighs on the altar to the god, the others were bearing straight to land, and brailed up the sails of the gallant ship, and moored her, and themselves came forth. And Telemachus too stept forth from the ship, and Athene led the way. And the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake first to him, saying:

‘Telemachus, thou needst not now be abashed, no, not one whit. For to this very end didst thou sail over the deep, that thou mightest hear tidings of thy father, even where the earth closed over him, and what manner of death he met. But come now, go straight to Nestor, tamer of horses: let us learn what counsel he hath in the secret of his heart. And beseech him thyself that he may give unerring answer; and he will not lie to thee, for he is very wise.’

The wise Telemachus answered, saying: ‘Mentor, and how shall I go, how shall I greet him, I, who am untried in words of wisdom? Moreover a young man may well be abashed to question an elder.’

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake to him again: ‘Telemachus, thou shalt bethink thee of somewhat in thine own breast, and somewhat the god will give thee to say. For thou, methinks, of all men wert not born and bred without the will of the gods.’

So spake Pallas Athene and led the way quickly; and he followed hard in the steps of the goddess. And they came to the gathering and the session of the men of Pylos. There was Nestor seated with his sons, and round him his company making ready the feast, and roasting some of the flesh and spitting other. Now when they saw the strangers, they went all together, and clasped their hands in welcome, and would have them sit down. First Peisistratus, son of Nestor, drew nigh, and took the hands of each, and made them to sit down at the feast on soft fleeces upon the sea sand, beside his brother Thrasymedes and his father. And he gave them messes of the inner meat, and poured wine into a golden cup, and pledging her, he spake unto Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, lord of the aegis:

‘Pray now, my guest, to the lord Poseidon, even as it is his feast whereon ye have chanced in coming hither. And when thou hast made drink offering and prayed, as is due, give thy friend also the cup of honeyed wine to make offering thereof, inasmuch as he too, methinks, prayeth to the deathless gods, for all men stand in need of the gods. Howbeit he is younger and mine own equal in years, therefore to thee first will I give the golden chalice.’

Therewith he placed in her hand the cup of sweet wine. And Athene rejoiced in the wisdom and judgment of the man, in that he had given to her first the chalice of gold. And straightway she prayed, and that instantly, to the lord Poseidon:

‘Hear me, Poseidon, girdler of the earth, and grudge not the fulfilment of this labour in answer to our prayer. To Nestor first and to his sons vouchsafe renown, and thereafter grant to all the people of Pylos a gracious recompense for this splendid hecatomb. Grant moreover that Telemachus and I may return, when we have accomplished that for which we came hither with our swift black ship.’

Now as she prayed on this wise, herself the while was fulfilling the prayer. And she gave Telemachus the fair two-handled cup; and in like manner prayed the dear son of Odysseus. Then, when the others had roasted the outer parts and drawn them off the spits, they divided the messes and shared the glorious feast. But when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, first spake among them:

‘Now is the better time to enquire and ask of the strangers who they are, now that they have had their delight of food. Strangers, who are ye? Whence sail ye over the wet ways? On some trading enterprise, or at adventure do ye rove, even as sea-robbers, over the brine, for they wander at hazard of their own lives bringing bale to alien men?’

Then wise Telemachus answered him and spake with courage, for Athene herself had put boldness in his heart, that he might ask about his father who was afar, and that he might be had in good report among men:

‘Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Achaeans, thou askest whence we are, and I will surely tell thee all. We have come forth out of Ithaca that is below Neion; and this our quest whereof I speak is a matter of mine own, and not of the common weal. I follow after the far-spread rumour of my father, if haply I may hear thereof, even of the goodly steadfast Odysseus, who upon a time, men say, fought by thy side and sacked the city of the Trojans. For of all the others, as many as warred with the Trojans, we hear tidings, and where each one fell by a pitiful death; but even the death of this man Cronion hath left untold. For none can surely declare the place where he hath perished, whether he was smitten by foemen on the mainland, or lost upon the deep among the waves of Amphitrite. So now am I come hither to thy knees, if perchance thou art willing to tell me of his pitiful death, as one that saw it with thine own eyes, or heard the story from some other wanderer, — for his mother bare him to exceeding sorrow. And speak me no soft words in ruth or pity, but tell me plainly what sight thou didst get of him. Ah! I pray thee, if ever at all my father, noble Odysseus, made promise to thee of word or work, and fulfilled the same in the land of the Trojans, where ye Achaeans suffered affliction; these things, I pray thee, now remember and tell me truth.'

Then Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, answered him: 'My friend, since thou hast brought sorrow back to mind, behold, this is the story of the woe which we endured in that land, we sons of the Achaeans, unrestrained in fury, and of all that we bore in wanderings after spoil, sailing with our ships over the misty deep, wheresoever Achilles led; and of all our war round the mighty burg of king Priam. Yea and there the best of us were slain. There lies valiant Aias, and there Achilles, and there Patroclus, the peer of the gods in counsel, and there my own dear son, strong and noble, Antilochus, that excelled in speed of foot and in the fight. And many other ills we suffered beside these; who of mortal men could tell the tale? Nay none, though thou wert to abide here for five years, ay and for six, and ask of all the ills which the goodly Achaeans then endured. Ere all was told thou wouldst be weary and turn to thine own country. For nine whole years we were busy about them, devising their ruin with all manner of craft; and scarce did Cronion bring it to pass. There never a man durst match with him in wisdom, for goodly Odysseus very far outdid the rest in all manner of craft, Odysseus thy father, if indeed thou art his son, — amazement comes upon me as I look at thee; for verily thy speech is like unto his; none would say that a younger man would speak so like an elder. Now look you, all the while that myself and goodly Odysseus were there, we never spake diversely either in the assembly or in the council, but always were of one mind, and advised the Argives with understanding and sound counsel, how all might be for the very best. But after we had sacked the steep city of Priam, and had departed in our ships, and a god had scattered the Achaeans, even then did Zeus devise in his heart a pitiful returning for the Argives, for in no wise were they all discreet or just. Wherefore many of them met with an ill faring by reason of the deadly wrath of the grey-eyed goddess, the daughter of the mighty sire, who set debate between the two sons of Atreus. And they twain called to the gathering of the host all the Achaeans, recklessly and out of order, against the going down of the sun; and lo, the sons of the Achaeans came heavy with wine. And the Atreidae spake out and told the reason wherefore they had assembled the host. Then verily Menelaus charged all the Achaeans to bethink them of returning over the broad back of the sea, but in no sort did he please Agamemnon, whose desire was to keep back the host and to offer holy hecatombs, that so he might appease that dread wrath of Athene. Fool! for he knew not this, that she was never to be won; for the mind of the everlasting gods is not lightly turned to repentance. So these twain stood bandying hard words; but the goodly-greaved Achaeans sprang up with a wondrous din, and twofold counsels found favour among them. So that one night we rested, thinking hard things against each other, for Zeus was fashioning for us a ruinous doom. But in the morning, we of the one part drew our ships to the fair salt sea, and put aboard our wealth, and the low-girdled Trojan women. Now one half the people abode steadfastly there with Agamemnon, son of Atreus, shepherd of the host; and half of us embarked and drave to sea and swiftly the ships sailed, for a god made smooth the sea with the depths thereof. And when we came to Tenedos, we did sacrifice to the gods, being eager for the homeward way; but Zeus did not yet purpose our returning, nay, hard was he, that roused once more an evil strife among us. Then some turned back their curved ships, and went their way, even the company of Odysseus, the wise and manifold in counsel, once again showing a favour to Agamemnon, son of Atreus. But I fled on with the squadron that followed me, for I knew how now the god imagined mischief. And the warlike son of Tydeus fled and roused his men thereto. And late in our track came Menelaus of the fair hair, who found us in Lesbos, considering about the long voyage, whether we should go sea-ward of craggy Chios, by the isle of Psyria, keeping the isle upon our left, or inside Chios past windy Mimas. So we asked the god to show us a sign, and a sign he declared to us, and bade us cleave a path across the middle sea to Euboea, that we might flee the swiftest way from sorrow. And a shrill wind arose and blew, and the ships ran most fleetly over the teeming ways, and in the night they touched at Geraestus. So there we sacrificed many thighs of bulls to Poseidon, for joy that we had measured out so great a stretch of sea. It was the fourth day when the company of Diomede son of Tydeus, tamer of horses, moored their gallant ships at Argos; but I held on for Pylos, and the breeze was never quenched from the hour that the god sent it forth to blow. Even so I came, dear child, without tidings, nor know I aught of those others, which of the Achaeans were saved and which were lost. But all that I hear tell of as I sit in our halls, thou shalt learn as it is meet, and I will hide nothing from thee. Safely, they say, came the Myrmidons the wild spearsmen, whom the famous son of high-souled Achilles led; and safely Philoctetes, the glorious son of Poias. And Idomeneus brought all his company to Crete, all that escaped the war, and from him the sea gat none. And of the son of Atreus even yourselves have heard, far apart though ye dwell, how he came, and how Aegisthus devised his evil end; but verily he himself paid a terrible reckoning. So good a thing it is that a son of the dead should still be left, even as that son also took vengeance on the slayer of his father, guileful Aegisthus, who slew his famous sire. And thou too, my friend, for I see thee very comely and tall, be valiant, that even men unborn may praise thee.'

And wise Telemachus answered him, and said: 'Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Achaeans, verily and indeed he avenged himself, and the Achaeans shall noise his fame abroad, that even those may hear who are yet for to be. Oh that the gods would clothe me with such strength as his, that I might take vengeance on the wooers for their cruel transgression, who wantonly devise against me infatuate deeds! But the gods have woven for me the web of no such weal, for me or for my sire. But now I must in any wise endure it.'

Then Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, made answer: 'Dear friend, seeing thou dost call these things to my remembrance and speak thereof, they tell me that many wooers for thy mother's hand plan mischief within the halls in thy despite. Say, dost thou willingly submit thee to oppression, or do the people through the land hate thee, obedient to the voice of a god? Who knows but that Odysseus may some day come and requite their violence, either himself alone or all the host of the Achaeans with him? Ah, if but grey-eyed Athene were inclined to love thee, as once she cared exceedingly for the renowned Odysseus in the land of the Trojans, where we Achaeans were sore afflicted, for never yet have I seen the gods show forth such manifest love, as then did Pallas Athene standing manifest by him, — if she would be pleased so to love thee and to care for thee, then might certain of them clean forget their marriage.'

And wise Telemachus answered him, saying: 'Old man, in no wise methinks shall this word be accomplished. This is a hard saying of thine, awe comes over me. Not for my hopes shall this thing come to pass, not even if the gods so willed it.'

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake to him again: 'Telemachus, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips? Lightly might a god, if so he would, bring a man safe home even from afar. Rather myself would I have travail and much pain ere I came home and saw the day of my returning, than come back and straightway perish on my own hearth-stone, even as Agamemnon perished by guile at the hands of his own wife and of Aegisthus. But lo you, death, which is common to all, the very gods cannot avert even from the man they love, when the ruinous doom shall bring him low of death that lays men at their length.'

And wise Telemachus answered her, saying: 'Mentor, no longer let us tell of these things, sorrowful though we be. There is none assurance any more of his returning, but already have the deathless gods devised for him death and black fate. But now I would question Nestor, and ask him of another matter, as one who above all men knows judgments and wisdom: for thrice, men say, he hath been king through the generations of men; yea, like an immortal he seems to me to look upon. Nestor, son of Neleus, now tell me true: how died the son of Atreus, Agamemnon of the wide domain? Where was Menelaus? What death did crafty Aegisthus plan for him, in that he killed a man more valiant far than he? Or was Menelaus not in Argos of Achaia but wandering elsewhere among men, and that other took heart and slew Agamemnon?'

Then Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, answered him: 'Yea now, my child, I will tell thee the whole truth. Verily thou guessest aright even of thyself how things would have fallen out, if Menelaus of the fair hair, the son of Atreus, when he came back from Troy, had found Aegisthus yet alive in the halls. Then even in his death would they not have heaped the piled earth over him, but dogs and fowls of the air would have devoured him as he lay on the plain far from the town. {*} Nor would any of the Achaean women have bewailed him; so dread was the deed he contrived. Now we sat in leaguer there, achieving many adventures; but he the while in peace in the heart of Argos, the pastureland of horses, spake ofttimes, tempting her, to the wife of Agamemnon. Verily at the first she would none of the foul deed, the fair Clytemnestra, for she had a good understanding. Moreover there was with her a minstrel, whom the son of Atreus straitly charged as he went to Troy to have a care of his wife. But when at last the doom of the gods bound her to her ruin, then did Aegisthus carry the minstrel to a lonely isle, and left him there to be the prey and spoil of birds; while as for her, he led her to his house, a willing lover with a willing lady. And he burnt many thigh slices upon the holy altars of the gods, and hung up many offerings, woven-work and gold, seeing that he had accomplished a great deed, beyond all hope. Now we, I say, were sailing together on our way from Troy, the son of Atreus and I, as loving friends. But when we had reached holy Sunium, the headland of Athens, there Phoebus Apollo slew the pilot of Menelaus with the visitation of his gentle shafts, as he held between his hands the rudder of the running ship, even Phrontis, son of Onetor, who excelled the tribes of men in piloting a ship, whenso the storm-winds were hurrying by. Thus was Menelaus holden there, though eager for the way, till he might bury his friend and pay the last rites over him. But when he in his turn, faring over the wine-dark sea in hollow ships, reached in swift course the steep mount of Malea, then it was that Zeus of the far-borne voice devised a hateful path, and shed upon them the breath of the shrill winds, and great swelling waves arose like unto mountains.

There sundered he the fleet in twain, and part thereof he brought nigh to Crete, where the Cydonians dwelt about the streams of Iardanus. Now there is a certain cliff, smooth and sheer towards the sea, on the border of Gortyn, in the misty deep, where the South-West Wind drives a great wave against the left headland, towards Phaestus, and a little rock keeps back the mighty water. Thither came one part of the fleet, and the men scarce escaped destruction, but the ships were broken by the waves against the rock; while those other five dark-prowed ships the wind and the water bare and brought nigh to Egypt. Thus Menelaus, gathering much livelihood and gold, was wandering there with his ships among men of strange speech, and even then Aegisthus planned that pitiful work at home. And for seven years he ruled over Mycenae, rich in gold, after he slew the son of Atreus, and the people were subdued unto him. But in the eighth year came upon him goodly Orestes back from Athens to be his bane, and slew the slayer of his father, guileful Aegisthus, who killed his famous sire. Now when he had slain him, he made a funeral feast to the Argives over his hateful mother, and over the craven Aegisthus. And on the selfsame day there came to him Menelaus of the loud war-cry, bringing much treasure, even all the freight of his ships. So thou, my friend, wander not long far away from home, leaving thy substance behind thee and men in thy house so wanton, lest they divide and utterly devour all thy wealth, and thou shalt have gone on a vain journey. Rather I bid and command thee to go to Menelaus, for he hath lately come from a strange country, from the land of men whence none would hope in his heart to return, whom once the storms have driven wandering into so wide a sea. Thence not even the birds can make their way in the space of one year, so great a sea it is and terrible. But go now with thy ship and with thy company, or if thou hast a mind to fare by land, I have a chariot and horses at thy service, yea and my sons to do thy will, who will be thy guides to goodly Lacedaemon, where is Menelaus of the fair hair. Do thou thyself entreat him, that he may give thee unerring answer. He will not lie to thee, for he is very wise.’

{* Reading [Greek]. v. 1. ‘[Greek], which must be wrong.}

Thus he spake, and the sun went down and darkness came on. Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake among them, saying: ‘Yea, old man, thou hast told all this thy tale aright. But come, cut up the tongues of the victims and mix the wine, that we may pour forth before Poseidon and the other deathless gods, and so may bethink us of sleep, for it is the hour for sleep. For already has the light gone beneath the west, and it is not seemly to sit long at a banquet of the gods, but to be going home.’

So spake the daughter of Zeus, and they hearkened to her voice. And the henchmen poured water over their hands, and pages crowned the mixing bowls with drink, and served out the wine to all, after they had first poured for libation into each cup in turn; and they cast the tongues upon the fire, and stood up and poured the drink-offering thereon. But when they had poured forth and had drunken to their heart's content, Athene and godlike Telemachus were both set on returning to the hollow ship; but Nestor would have stayed them, and accosted them, saying: 'Zeus forfend it, and all the other deathless gods, that ye should depart from my house to the swift ship, as from the dwelling of one that is utterly without raiment or a needy man, who hath not rugs or blankets many in his house whereon to sleep softly, he or his guests. Nay not so, I have rugs and fair blankets by me. Never, methinks, shall the dear son of this man, even of Odysseus, lay him down upon the ship's deck, while as yet I am alive, and my children after me are left in my hall to entertain strangers, whoso may chance to come to my house.'

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake to him again: 'Yea, herein hast thou spoken aright, dear father: and Telemachus may well obey thee, for before all things this is meet. Behold, he shall now depart with thee, that he may sleep in thy halls; as for me I will go to the black ship, that I may cheer my company and tell them all. For I avow me to be the one elder among them; those others are but younger men, who follow for love of him, all of them of like age with the high-souled Telemachus. There will I lay me down by the black hollow ship this night; but in the morning I will go to the Cauconians high of heart, where somewhat of mine is owing to me, no small debt nor of yesterday. But do thou send this man upon his way with thy chariot and thy son, since he hath come to thy house, and give him horses the lightest of foot and chief in strength.'

Therewith grey-eyed Athene departed in the semblance of a sea-eagle; and amazement fell on all that saw it, and the old man he marvelled when his eyes beheld it. And he took the hand of Telemachus and spake and hailed him:

'My friend, methinks that thou wilt in no sort be a coward and a weakling, if indeed in thy youth the gods thus follow with thee to be thy guides. For truly this is none other of those who keep the mansions of Olympus, save only the daughter of Zeus, the driver of the spoil, the maiden Trito-born, she that honoured thy good father too among the Argives. Nay be gracious, queen, and vouchsafe a goodly fame to me, even to me and to my sons and to my wife revered. And I in turn will sacrifice to thee a yearling heifer, broad of brow, unbroken, which man never yet hath led beneath the yoke. Such an one will I offer to thee, and gild her horns with gold.'

Even so he spake in prayer, and Pallas Athene heard him. Then Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, led them, even his sons and the husbands of his daughters, to his own fair house. But when they had reached this prince's famous halls, they sat down all orderly on seats and high chairs; and when they were come, the old man mixed well for them a bowl of sweet wine, which now in the eleventh year from the vintaging the housewife opened, and unloosed the string that fastened the lid. The old man let mix a bowl thereof, and prayed instantly to Athene as he poured forth before her, even to the daughter of Zeus, lord of the aegis.

But after they had poured forth and had drunken to their heart’s content, these went each one to his own house to lie down to rest. But Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, would needs have Telemachus, son of divine Odysseus, to sleep there on a jointed bedstead beneath the echoing gallery, and by him Peisistratus of the good ashen spear, leader of men, who alone of his sons was yet unwed in his halls. As for him he slept within the inmost chamber of the lofty house, and the lady his wife arrayed for him bedstead and bedding.

So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, gat him up from his bed, and he went forth and sat him down upon the smooth stones, which were before his lofty doors, all polished, white and glistening, whereon Neleus sat of old, in counsel the peer of the gods. Howbeit, stricken by fate, he had ere now gone down to the house of Hades, and to-day Nestor of Gerenia in his turn sat thereon, warder of the Achaeans, with his staff in his hands. And about him his sons were gathered and come together, issuing from their chambers, Echephron and Stratius, and Perseus and Aretus and the godlike Thrasymedes. And sixth and last came the hero Peisistratus. And they led godlike Telemachus and set him by their side, and Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, spake first among them:

‘Quickly, my dear children, accomplish my desire, that first of all the gods I may propitiate Athene, who came to me in visible presence to the rich feast of the god. Nay then, let one go to the plain for a heifer, that she may come as soon as may be, and that the neat-herd may drive her: and let another go to the black ship of high-souled Telemachus to bring all his company, and let him leave two men only. And let one again bid Laerces the goldsmith to come hither that he may gild the horns of the heifer. And ye others, abide ye here together and speak to the handmaids within that they make ready a banquet through our famous halls, and fetch seats and logs to set about the altar, and bring clear water.’

Thus he spake and lo, they all hastened to the work. The heifer she came from the field, and from the swift gallant ship came the company of great-hearted Telemachus; the smith came holding in his hands his tools, the instruments of his craft, anvil and hammer and well-made pincers, wherewith he wrought the gold; Athene too came to receive her sacrifice. And the old knight Nestor gave gold, and the other fashioned it skilfully, and gilded therewith the horns of the heifer, that the goddess might be glad at the sight of her fair offering. And Stratius and goodly Echephron led the heifer by the horns. And Aretus came forth from the chamber bearing water for the washing of hands in a basin of flowered work, and in the other hand he held the barley-meal in a basket; and Thrasymedes, steadfast in the battle, stood by holding in his hand a sharp axe, ready to smite the heifer. And Perseus held the dish for the blood, and the old man Nestor, driver of chariots, performed the first rite of the washing of hands and the sprinkling of the meal, and he prayed instantly to Athene as he began the rite, casting into the fire the lock from the head of the victim.

Now when they had prayed and tossed the sprinkled grain, straightway the son of Nestor, gallant Thrasymedes, stood by and struck the blow; and the axe severed the tendons of the neck and loosened the might of the heifer; and the women raised their cry, the daughters and the sons’ wives and the wife revered of Nestor, Eurydice, eldest of the daughters of Clymenus. And now they lifted the victim’s head from the wide-wayed earth, and held it so, while Peisistratus, leader of men, cut the throat. And after the black blood had gushed forth and the life had left the bones, quickly they broke up the body, and anon cut slices from the thighs all duly, and wrapt the same in the fat, folding them double, and laid raw flesh thereon. So that old man burnt them on the cleft wood, and poured over them the red wine, and by his side the young men held in their hands the five-pronged forks. Now after that the thighs were quite consumed and they had tasted the inner parts, they cut the rest up small and spitted and roasted it, holding the sharp spits in their hands.

Meanwhile she bathed Telemachus, even fair Polycaste, the youngest daughter of Nestor, son of Neleus. And after she had bathed him and anointed him with olive oil, and cast about him a goodly mantle and a doublet, he came forth from the bath in fashion like the deathless gods. So he went and sat him down by Nestor, shepherd of the people.

Now when they had roasted the outer flesh, and drawn it off the spits, they sat down and fell to feasting, and honourable men waited on them, pouring wine into the golden cups. But when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, first spake among them:

‘Lo now, my sons, yoke for Telemachus horses with flowing mane and lead them beneath the car, that he may get forward on his way.’

Even so he spake, and they gave good heed and hearkened; and quickly they yoked the swift horses beneath the chariot. And the dame that kept the stores placed therein corn and wine and dainties, such as princes eat, the fosterlings of Zeus. So Telemachus stept up into the goodly car, and with him Peisistratus son of Nestor, leader of men, likewise climbed the car and grasped the reins in his hands, and he touched the horses with the whip to start them, and nothing loth the pair flew towards the plain, and left the steep citadel of Pylos. So all day long they swayed the yoke they bore upon their necks.

Now the sun sank and all the ways were darkened. And they came to Pherae, to the house of Diocles, son of Orsilochus, the child begotten of Alpheus. There they rested for the night, and by them he set the entertainment of strangers.

Now so soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, they yoked the horses and mounted the inlaid car. And forth they drave from the gateway and the echoing gallery, and Peisistratus touched the horses with the whip to start them, and the pair flew onward nothing loth. So they came to the wheat-bearing plain, and thenceforth they pressed toward the end: in such wise did the swift horses speed forward. Now the sun sank and all the ways were darkened.

BOOK IV

Telemachus' entertainment at Sparta, where Menelaus tells him what befell many of the Greeks on their return; that Odysseus was with Calypso in the isle Ogygia, as he was told by Proteus.

And they came to Lacedaemon lying low among the caverned hills, and drave to the dwelling of renowned Menelaus. Him they found giving a feast in his house to many friends of his kin, a feast for the wedding of his noble son and daughter. His daughter he was sending to the son of Achilles, cleaver of the ranks of men, for in Troy he first had promised and covenanted to give her, and now the gods were bringing about their marriage. So now he was speeding her on her way with chariot and horses, to the famous city of the Myrmidons, among whom her lord bare rule. And for his son he was bringing to his home the daughter of Alector out of Sparta, for his well-beloved son, strong Megapenthes, {*} born of a slave woman, for the gods no more showed promise of seed to Helen, from the day that she bare a lovely child, Hermione, as fair as golden Aphrodite. So they were feasting through the great vaulted hall, the neighbours and the kinsmen of renowned Menelaus, making merry; and among them a divine minstrel was singing to the lyre, and as he began the song two tumblers in the company whirled through the midst of them.

{* A son of sorrow: Tristram.}

Meanwhile those twain, the hero Telemachus and the splendid son of Nestor, made halt at the entry of the gate, they and their horses. And the lord Eteoneus came forth and saw them, the ready squire of renowned Menelaus; and he went through the palace to bear the tidings to the shepherd of the people, and standing near spake to him winged words:

'Menelaus, fosterling of Zeus, here are two strangers, whosoever they be, two men like to the lineage of great Zeus. Say, shall we loose their swift horses from under the yoke, or send them onward to some other host who shall receive them kindly?'

Then in sore displeasure spake to him Menelaus of the fair hair: 'Eteoneus son of Boethous, truly thou wert not a fool aforetime, but now for this once, like a child thou talkest folly. Surely ourselves ate much hospitable cheer of other men, ere we twain came hither, even if in time to come Zeus haply give us rest from affliction. Nay go, unyoke the horses of the strangers, and as for the men, lead them forward to the house to feast with us.'

So spake he, and Eteoneus hasted from the hall, and called the other ready squires to follow with him. So they loosed the sweating horses from beneath the yoke, and fastened them at the stalls of the horses, and threw beside them spelt, and therewith mixed white barley, and tilted the chariot against the shining faces of the gateway, and led the men into the hall divine. And they beheld and marvelled as they gazed throughout the palace of the king, the fosterling of Zeus; for there was a gleam as it were of sun or moon through the lofty palace of renowned Menelaus. But after they had gazed their fill, they went to the polished baths and bathed them. Now when the maidens had bathed them and anointed them with olive oil, and cast about them thick cloaks and doublets, they sat on chairs by Menelaus, son of Atreus. And a handmaid bare water for the hands in a goodly golden ewer, and poured it forth over a silver basin to wash withal; and to their side she drew a polished table, and a grave dame bare food and set it by them, and laid upon the board many dainties, giving freely of such things as she had by her, and a carver lifted and placed by them platters of divers kinds of flesh, and nigh them he set golden bowls. So Menelaus of the fair hair greeted the twain and spake:

‘Taste ye food and be glad, and thereafter when ye have supped, we will ask what men ye are; for the blood of your parents is not lost in you, but ye are of the line of men that are sceptred kings, the fosterlings of Zeus; for no churls could beget sons like you.’

So spake he, and took and set before them the fat ox-chine roasted, which they had given him as his own mess by way of honour. And they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer set before them. Now when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink Telemachus spake to the son of Nestor, holding his head close to him, that those others might not hear:

‘Son of Nestor, delight of my heart, mark the flashing of bronze through the echoing halls, and the flashing of gold and of amber and of silver and of ivory. Such like, methinks, is the court of Olympian Zeus within, for the world of things that are here; wonder comes over me as I look thereon.’

And as he spake Menelaus of the fair hair was ware of him, and uttering his voice spake to them winged words:

‘Children dear, of a truth no one of mortal men may contend with Zeus, for his mansions and his treasures are everlasting: but of men there may be who will vie with me in treasure, or there may be none. Yea, for after many a woe and wanderings manifold, I brought my wealth home in ships, and in the eighth year came hither. I roamed over Cyprus and Phoenicia and Egypt, and reached the Aethiopians and Sidonians and Erembi and Libya, where lambs are horned from the birth. For there the ewes yean thrice within the full circle of a year; there neither lord nor shepherd lacketh aught of cheese or flesh or of sweet milk, but ever the flocks yield store of milk continual. While I was yet roaming in those lands, gathering much livelihood, meantime another slew my brother privily, at unawares, by the guile of his accursed wife. Thus, look you, I have no joy of my lordship among these my possessions: and ye are like to have heard hereof from your fathers, whosoever they be, for I have suffered much and let a house go to ruin that was stablished fair, and had in it much choice substance. I would that I had but a third part of those my riches, and dwelt in my halls, and that those men were yet safe, who perished of old in the wide land of Troy, far from Argos, the pastureland of horses. Howbeit, though I bewail them all and sorrow oftentimes as I sit in our halls, — awhile indeed I satisfy my soul with lamentation, and then again I cease; for soon hath man enough of chill lamentation — yet for them all I make no such dole, despite my grief, as for one only, who causes me to loathe both sleep and meat, when I think upon him. For no one of the Achaeans toiled so greatly as Odysseus toiled and adventured himself: but to him it was to be but labour and trouble, and to me grief ever comfortless for his sake, so long he is afar, nor know we aught, whether he be alive or dead. Yea methinks they lament him, even that old Laertes and the constant Penelope and Telemachus, whom he left a child newborn in his house.’

So spake he, and in the heart of Telemachus he stirred a yearning to lament his father; and at his father’s name he let a tear fall from his eyelids to the ground, and held up his purple mantle with both his hands before his eyes. And Menelaus marked him and mused in his mind and his heart whether he should leave him to speak of his father, or first question him and prove him in every word.

While yet he pondered these things in his mind and in his heart, Helen came forth from her fragrant vaulted chamber, like Artemis of the golden arrows; and with her came Adraste and set for her the well-wrought chair, and Alcippe bare a rug of soft wool, and Phylo bare a silver basket which Alcandre gave her, the wife of Polybus, who dwelt in Thebes of Egypt, where is the chiefest store of wealth in the houses. He gave two silver baths to Menelaus, and tripods twain, ad ten talents of gold. And besides all this, his wife bestowed on Helen lovely gifts; a golden distaff did she give, and a silver basket with wheels beneath, and the rims thereof were finished with gold. This it was that the handmaid Phylo bare and set beside her, filled with dressed yarn, and across it was laid a distaff charged with wool of violet blue. So Helen sat her down in the chair, and beneath was a footstool for the feet. And anon she spake to her lord and questioned him of each thing:

‘Menelaus, fosterling of Zeus, know we now who these men avow themselves to be that have come under our roof? Shall I dissemble or shall I speak the truth? Nay, I am minded to tell it. None, I say, have I ever yet seen so like another, man or woman — wonder comes over me as I look on him — as this man is like the son of great-hearted Odysseus, Telemachus, whom he left a new born child in his house, when for the sake of me, shameless woman that I was, ye Achaeans came up under Troy with bold war in your hearts.'

And Menelaus of the fair hair answered her, saying: 'Now I too, lady, mark the likeness even as thou tracest it. For such as these were his feet, such his hands, and the glances of his eyes, and his head, and his hair withal. Yea, and even now I was speaking of Odysseus, as I remembered him, of all his woeful travail for my sake; when, lo, he let fall a bitter tear beneath his brows, and held his purple cloak up before his eyes.'

And Peisistratus, son of Nestor, answered him, saying: 'Menelaus, son of Atreus, fosterling of Zeus, leader of the host, assuredly this is the son of that very man, even as thou sayest. But he is of a sober wit, and thinketh it shame in his heart as on this his first coming to make show of presumptuous words in the presence of thee, in whose voice we twain delight as in the voice of a god. Now Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, sent me forth to be his guide on the way: for he desired to see thee that thou mightest put into his heart some word or work. For a son hath many griefs in his halls when his father is away, if perchance he hath none to stand by him. Even so it is now with Telemachus; his father is away, nor hath he others in the township to defend him from distress.'

And Menelaus of the fair hair answered him, and said: 'Lo now, in good truth there has come unto my house the son of a friend indeed, who for my sake endured many adventures. And I thought to welcome him on his coming more nobly than all the other Argives, if but Olympian Zeus, of the far-borne voice, had vouchsafed us a return over the sea in our swift ships, — that such a thing should be. And in Argos I would have given him a city to dwell in, and stablished for him a house, and brought him forth from Ithaca with his substance and his son and all his people, making one city desolate of those that lie around, and are in mine own domain. Then ofttimes would we have held converse here, and nought would have parted us, the welcoming and the welcomed, {*} ere the black cloud of death overshadowed us. Howsoever, the god himself, methinks, must have been jealous hereof, who from that hapless man alone cut off his returning.'

{* Mr. Evelyn Abbott of Balliol College has suggested to us that [Greek] and [Greek] are here correlatives, and denote respectively the parts of host and of guest. This is sufficiently borne out by the usage of the words elsewhere.}

So spake he, and in the hearts of all he stirred the desire of lamentation. She wept, even Argive Helen the daughter of Zeus, and Telemachus wept, and Menelaus the son of Atreus; nay, nor did the son of Nestor keep tearless eyes. For he bethought him in his heart of noble Antilochus, whom the glorious son of the bright Dawn had slain. Thinking upon him he spake winged words:

‘Son of Atreus, the ancient Nestor in his own halls was ever wont to say that thou wert wise beyond man’s wisdom, whensoever we made mention of thee and asked one another concerning thee. And now, if it be possible, be persuaded by me, who for one have no pleasure in weeping at supper time — the newborn day will right soon be upon us. {*} Not indeed that I deem it blame at all to weep for any mortal who hath died and met his fate. Lo, this is now the only due we pay to miserable men, to cut the hair and let the tear fall from the cheek. For I too have a brother dead, nowise the meanest of the Argives, and thou art like to have known him, for as for me I never encountered him, never beheld him. But men say that Antilochus outdid all, being excellent in speed of foot and in the fight.’

{* Cf. B. xv.50}

And Menelaus of the fair hair answered him, and said: ‘My friend, lo, thou hast said all that a wise man might say or do, yea, and an elder than thou; — for from such a sire too thou art sprung, wherefore thou dost even speak wisely. Right easily known is that man’s seed, for whom Cronion weaves the skein of luck at bridal and at birth: even as now hath he granted prosperity to Nestor for ever for all his days, that he himself should grow into a smooth old age in his halls, and his sons moreover should be wise and the best of spearsmen. But we will cease now the weeping which was erewhile made, and let us once more bethink us of our supper, and let them pour water over our hands. And again in the morning there will be tales for Telemachus and me to tell one to the other, even to the end.’

So spake he, and Asphalion poured water over their hands, the ready squire of renowned Menelaus. And they put forth their hands upon the good cheer spread before them.

Then Helen, daughter of Zeus, turned to new thoughts. Presently she cast a drug into the wine whereof they drank, a drug to lull all pain and anger, and bring forgetfulness of every sorrow. Whoso should drink a draught thereof, when it is mingled in the bowl, on that day he would let no tear fall down his cheeks, not though his mother and his father died, not though men slew his brother or dear son with the sword before his face, and his own eyes beheld it. Medicines of such virtue and so helpful had the daughter of Zeus, which Polydamna, the wife of Thon, had given her, a woman of Egypt, where earth the grain-giver yields herbs in greatest plenty, many that are healing in the cup, and many baneful. There each man is a leech skilled beyond all human kind; yea, for they are of the race of Paeeon. Now after she had cast in the drug and bidden pour forth of the wine, she made answer once again, and spake unto her lord:

‘Son of Atreus, Menelaus, fosterling of Zeus, and lo, ye sons of noble men, forasmuch as now to one and now to another Zeus gives good and evil, for to him all things are possible, — now, verily, sit ye down and feast in the halls, and take ye joy in the telling of tales, and I will tell you one that fits the time. Now all of them I could not tell or number, so many as were the adventures of Odysseus of the hardy heart; but, ah, what a deed was this he wrought and dared in his hardiness in the land of the Trojans, where ye Achaeans suffered affliction. He subdued his body with unseemly stripes, and a sorry covering he cast about his shoulders, and in the fashion of a servant he went down into the wide-wayed city of the foemen, and he hid himself in the guise of another, a beggar, though in no wise such an one was he at the ships of the Achaeans. In this semblance he passed into the city of the Trojans, and they wist not who he was, and I alone knew him in that guise, and I kept questioning him, but in his subtlety he avoided me. But when at last I was about washing him and anointing him with olive oil, and had put on him raiment, and sworn a great oath not to reveal Odysseus amid the Trojans, ere he reached the swift ships and the huts, even then he told me all the purpose of the Achaeans. And after slaying many of the Trojans with the long sword, he returned to the Argives and brought back word again of all. Then the other Trojan women wept aloud, but my soul was glad, for already my heart was turned to go back again even to my home: and now at the last I groaned for the blindness that Aphrodite gave me, when she led me thither away from mine own country, forsaking my child and my bridal chamber and my lord, that lacked not aught whether for wisdom or yet for beauty.’

And Menelaus of the fair hair answered her, saying: ‘Verily all this tale, lady, thou hast duly told. Ere now have I learned the counsel and the thought of many heroes, and travelled over many a land, but never yet have mine eyes beheld any such man of heart as was Odysseus; such another deed as he wrought and dared in his hardiness even in the shapen horse, wherein sat all we chiefs of the Argives, bearing to the Trojans death and doom. Anon thou camest thither, and sure some god must have bidden thee, who wished to bring glory to the Trojans. Yea and godlike Deiphobus went with thee on thy way. Thrice thou didst go round about the hollow ambush and handle it, calling aloud on the chiefs of the Argives by name, and making thy voice like the voices of the wives of all the Argives. Now I and the son of Tydeus and goodly Odysseus sat in the midst and heard thy call; and verily we twain had a desire to start up and come forth or presently to answer from within; but Odysseus stayed and held us there, despite our eagerness. Then all the other sons of the Achaeans held their peace, but Anticlus alone was still minded to answer thee. Howbeit Odysseus firmly closed his mouth with strong hands, and so saved all the Achaeans, and held him until such time as Pallas Athene led thee back.’

Then wise Telemachus answered him, and said: ‘Menelaus, son of Atreus, fosterling of Zeus, leader of the host, all the more grievous it is! for in no way did this courage ward from him pitiful destruction, not though his heart within him had been very iron. But come, bid us to bed, that forthwith we may take our joy of rest beneath the spell of sleep.’

So spake he, and Argive Helen bade her handmaids set out bedsteads beneath the gallery, and fling on them fair purple blankets and spread coverlets above, and thereon lay thick mantles to be a clothing over all. So they went from the hall with torch in hand, and spread the beds, and the henchman led forth the guests. Thus they slept there in the vestibule of the house, the hero Telemachus and the splendid son of Nestor. But the son of Atreus slept, as his custom was, in the inmost chamber of the lofty house, and by him lay long-robed Helen, that fair lady.

Soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, Menelaus of the loud war-shout gat him up from his bed and put on his raiment, and cast his sharp sword about his shoulder, and beneath his smooth feet bound his goodly sandals, and stept forth from his chamber, in presence like a god, and sat by Telemachus, and spake and hailed him:

‘To what end hath thy need brought thee hither, hero Telemachus, unto fair Lacedaemon, over the broad back of the sea? Is it a matter of the common weal or of thine own? Herein tell me the plain truth.’

Then wise Telemachus answered him, and said: ‘Menelaus, son of Atreus, fosterling of Zeus, leader of the host, I have come if perchance thou mayest tell me some tidings of my father. My dwelling is being devoured and my fat lands are ruined, and of unfriendly men my house is full, — who slaughter continually my thronging flocks, and my kine with trailing feet and shambling gait, — none other than the wooers of my mother, despiteful out of measure. So now am I come hither to thy knees, if haply thou art willing to tell me of his pitiful death, as one that saw it perchance with thine own eyes, or heard the story from some other wanderer; for his mother bare him to exceeding sorrow. And speak me no soft words in ruth or pity, but tell me plainly how thou didst get sight of him. Ah, I pray thee, if ever at all my father, good Odysseus, made promise to thee of word or work and fulfilled the same in the land of the Trojans, where ye

Achaeans suffered affliction, these things, I pray thee, now remember and tell me truth.’

Then in heavy displeasure spake to him Menelaus of the fair hair: ‘Out upon them, for truly in the bed of a brave-hearted man were they minded to lie, very cravens as they are! Even as when a hind hath couched her newborn fawns unweaned in a strong lion’s lair, and searcheth out the mountain knees and grassy hollows, seeking pasture, and afterward the lion cometh back to his bed, and sendeth forth unsightly death upon that pair, even so shall Odysseus send forth unsightly death upon the wooers. Would to our father Zeus and Athene and Apollo, would that in such might as when of old in stablished Lesbos he rose up and wrestled a match with Philomeleides and threw him mightily, and all the Achaeans rejoiced; would that in such strength Odysseus might consort with the wooers: then should they all have swift fate, and bitter wedlock! But for that whereof thou askest and entreatest me, be sure I will not swerve from the truth in aught that I say, nor deceive thee; but of all that the ancient one of the sea, whose speech is sooth, declared to me, not a word will I hide or keep from thee.

‘In the river Aegyptus, {*} though eager I was to press onward home, the gods they stayed me, for that I had not offered them the acceptable sacrifice of hecatombs, and the gods ever desired that men should be mindful of their commandments. Now there is an island in the wash of the waves over against Aegyptus, and men call it Pharos, within one day’s voyage of a hollow ship, when shrill winds blow fair in her wake. And therein is a good haven, whence men launch the gallant ships into the deep when they have drawn a store of deep black water. There the gods held me twenty days, nor did the sea-winds ever show their breath, they that serve to waft ships over the broad back of the sea. And now would all our corn have been spent, and likewise the strength of the men, except some goddess had taken pity on me and saved me, Eidothee, daughter of mighty Proteus, the ancient one of the sea. For most of all I moved her heart, when she met me wandering alone apart from my company, who were ever roaming round the isle, fishing with bent hooks, for hunger was gnawing at their belly. So she stood by, and spake and uttered her voice saying:

{* The only name for the Nile in Homer. Cf. Wilkinson,
Ancient Egyptians (1878), vol. i. p. 7.}

‘“Art thou so very foolish, stranger, and feeble-witted, or art thou wilfully remiss, and hast pleasure in suffering? So long time art thou holden in the isle and canst find no issue therefrom, while the heart of thy company faileth within them?”

‘Even so she spake, and I answered her saying: “I will speak forth, what goddess soever thou art, and tell thee that in no wise am I holden here by mine own will, but it needs must be that I have sinned against the deathless gods, who keep the wide heaven. Howbeit, do thou tell me — for the gods know all things — which of the immortals it is that binds me here and hath hindered me from my way, and declare as touching my returning how I may go over the teeming deep.”

‘So I spake, and straightway the fair goddess made answer: “Yea now, sir, I will plainly tell thee all. Hither resorteth that ancient one of the sea, whose speech is sooth, the deathless Egyptian Proteus, who knows the depths of every sea, and is the thrall of Poseidon, and who, they say, is my father that begat me. If thou couldst but lay an ambush and catch him, he will surely declare to thee the way and the measure of thy path, and will tell thee of thy returning, how thou mayest go over the teeming deep. Yea, and he will show thee, O fosterling of Zeus, if thou wilt, what good thing and what evil hath been wrought in thy halls, whilst thou has been faring this long and grievous way.”

‘So she spake, but I answered and said unto her: “Devise now thyself the ambush to take this ancient one divine, lest by any chance he see me first, or know of my coming, and avoid me. For a god is hard for mortal man to quell.”

‘So spake I, and straightway the fair goddess made answer: “Yea now, sir, I will plainly tell thee all. So often as the sun in his course stands high in mid heaven, then forth from the brine comes the ancient one of the sea, whose speech is sooth, before the breath of the West Wind he comes, and the sea’s dark ripple covers him. And when he is got forth, he lies down to sleep in the hollow of the caves. And around him the seals, the brood of the fair daughter of the brine, sleep all in a flock, stolen forth from the grey sea water, and bitter is the scent they breathe of the deeps of the salt sea. There will I lead thee at the breaking of the day, and couch you all orderly; so do thou choose diligently three of thy company, the best thou hast in thy decked ships. And I will tell thee all the magic arts of that old man. First, he will number the seals and go over them; but when he has told their tale and beheld them, he will lay him down in the midst, as a shepherd mid the sheep of his flock. So soon as ever ye shall see him couched, even then mind you of your might and strength, and hold him there, despite his eagerness and striving to be free. And he will make assay, and take all manner of shapes of things that creep upon the earth, of water likewise, and of fierce fire burning. But do ye grasp him steadfastly and press him yet the more, and at length when he questions thee in his proper shape, as he was when first ye saw him laid to rest, then, hero, hold thy strong hands, and let the ancient one go free, and ask him which of the gods is hard upon thee, and as touching thy returning, how thou mayest go over the teeming deep.”

‘Therewith she dived beneath the heaving sea, but I betook me to the ships where they stood in the sand, and my heart was darkly troubled as I went. But after I had come down to the ship and to the sea, and we had made ready our supper and immortal night had come on, then did we lay us to rest upon the sea-beach. So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy fingered, in that hour I walked by the shore of the wide-wayed sea, praying instantly to the gods; and I took with me three of my company, in whom I trusted most for every enterprise.

‘Meanwhile, so it was that she had plunged into the broad bosom of the sea, and had brought from the deep the skins of four sea-calves, and all were newly flayed, for she was minded to lay a snare for her father. She scooped lairs on the sea-sand, and sat awaiting us, and we drew very nigh her, and she made us all lie down in order, and cast a skin over each. There would our ambush have been most terrible, for the deadly stench of the sea bred seals distressed us sore: nay, who would lay him down by a beast of the sea? But herself she wrought deliverance, and devised a great comfort. She took ambrosia of a very sweet savour, and set it beneath each man’s nostril, and did away with the stench of the beast. So all the morning we waited with steadfast heart, and the seals came forth in troops from the brine, and then they couched them all orderly by the sea-beach. And at high day the ancient one came forth from out of the brine, and found his fatted seals, yea and he went along their line and told their tale; and first among the sea-beasts he reckoned us, and guessed not that there was guile, and afterward he too laid him down. Then we rushed upon him with a cry, and cast our hands about him, nor did that ancient one forget his cunning. Now behold, at the first he turned into a bearded lion, and thereafter into a snake, and a pard, and a huge boar; then he took the shape of running water, and of a tall and flowering tree. We the while held him close with steadfast heart. But when now that ancient one of the magic arts was aweary, then at last he questioned me and spake unto me, saying:

‘“Which of the gods was it, son of Atreus, that aided thee with his counsel, that thou mightest waylay and take me perforce? What wouldest thou thereby?”

‘Even so he spake, but I answered him saying; “Old man, thou knowest all, wherefore dost thou question me thereof with crooked words? For lo, I am holden long time in this isle, neither can I find any issue therefrom, and my heart faileth within me. Howbeit do thou tell me — for the gods know all things — which of the immortals it is that bindeth me here, and hath hindered me from my way; and declare as touching my returning, how I may go over the teeming deep.”

‘Even so I spake, and he straightway answered me, saying: “Nay, surely thou shouldest have done goodly sacrifice to Zeus and the other gods ere thine embarking, that with most speed thou mightst reach thy country, sailing over the wine-dark deep. For it is not thy fate to see thy friends, and come to thy stablished house and thine own country, till thou hast passed yet again within the waters of Aegyptus, the heaven-fed stream, and offered holy hecatombs to the deathless gods who keep the wide heaven. So shall the gods grant thee the path which thou desirest.”

‘So spake he, but my spirit within me was broken, for that he bade me again to go to Aegyptus over the misty deep, a long and grievous way.

‘Yet even so I answered him saying: “Old man, all this will I do, according to thy word. But come, declare me this, and tell it all plainly. Did all those Achaeans return safe with their ships, all whom Nestor and I left as we went from Troy, or perished any by a shameful death aboard his own ship, or in the arms of his friends, after he had wound up the clew of war?”

‘So spake I, and anon he answered me, saying: “Son of Atreus, why dost thou straitly question me hereof? Nay, it is not for thy good to know or learn my thought; for I tell thee thou shalt not long be tearless, when thou hast heard it all aright. For many of these were taken, and many were left; but two only of the leaders of the mail-coated Achaeans perished in returning; as for the battle, thou thyself wast there. And one methinks is yet alive, and is holden on the wide deep. Aias in truth was smitten in the midst of his ships of the long oars. Poseidon at first brought him nigh to Gyrae, to the mighty rocks, and delivered him from the sea. And so he would have fled his doom, albeit hated by Athene, had he not let a proud word fall in the fatal darkening of his heart. He said that in the gods’ despite he had escaped the great gulf of the sea; and Poseidon heard his loud boasting, and presently caught up his trident into his strong hands, and smote the rock Gyraean and cleft it in twain. And the one part abode in his place, but the other fell into the sea, the broken piece whereon Aias sat at the first, when his heart was darkened. And the rock bore him down into the vast and heaving deep; so there he perished when he had drunk of the salt sea water. But thy brother verily escaped the fates and avoided them in his hollow ships, for queen Hera saved him. But now when he was like soon to reach the steep mount of Malea, lo, the storm wind snatched him away and bore him over the teeming deep, making great moan, to the border of the country whereof old Thyestes dwelt, but now Aegisthus abode there, the son of Thyestes. But when thence too there showed a good prospect of safe returning, and the gods changed the wind to a fair gale, and they had reached home, then verily did Agamemnon set foot with joy upon his country’s soil, and as he touched his own land he kissed it, and many were the hot tears he let fall, for he saw his land and was glad. And it was so that the watchman spied him from his tower, the watchman whom crafty Aegisthus had led and posted there, promising him for a reward two talents of gold. Now he kept watch for the space of a year, lest Agamemnon should pass by him when he looked not, and mind him of his wild prowess. So he went to the house to bear the tidings to the shepherd of the people. And straightway Aegisthus contrived a cunning treason. He chose out twenty of the best men in the township, and set an ambush, and on the further side of the hall he commanded to prepare a feast. Then with chariot and horses he went to bid to the feast Agamemnon, shepherd of the people; but caitiff thoughts were in his heart. He brought him up to his house, all unwitting of his doom, and when he had feasted him slew him, as one slayeth an ox at the stall. And none of the company of Atreides that were of his following were left, nor any of the men of Aegisthus, but they were all killed in the halls."

'So spake he, and my spirit within me was broken, and I wept as I sat upon the sand, nor was I minded any more to live and see the light of the sun. But when I had taken my fill of weeping and grovelling on the ground, then spake the ancient one of the sea, whose speech is sooth:

'"No more, son of Atreus, hold this long weeping without cease, for we shall find no help therein. Rather with all haste make essay that so thou mayest come to thine own country. For either thou shalt find Aegisthus yet alive, or it may be Orestes was beforehand with thee and slew him; so mayest thou chance upon his funeral feast."

'So he spake, and my heart and lordly soul again were comforted for all my sorrow, and I uttered my voice and I spake to him winged words:

'"Their fate I now know; but tell me of the third; who is it that is yet living and holden on the wide deep, or perchance is dead? and fain would I hear despite my sorrow."

'So spake I, and straightway he answered, and said: "It is the son of Laertes, whose dwelling is in Ithaca; and I saw him in an island shedding big tears in the halls of the nymph Calypso, who holds him there perforce; so he may not come to his own country, for he has by him no ships with oars, and no companions to send him on his way over the broad back of the sea. But thou, Menelaus, son of Zeus, art not ordained to die and meet thy fate in Argos, the pastureland of horses, but the deathless gods will convey thee to the Elysian plain and the world's end, where is Rhadamanthus of the fair hair, where life is easiest for men. No snow is there, nor yet great storm, nor any rain; but always ocean sendeth forth the breeze of the shrill West to blow cool on men; yea, for thou hast Helen to wife, and thereby they deem thee to be son of Zeus."

'So spake he, and plunged into the heaving sea; but I betook me to the ships with my godlike company, and my heart was darkly troubled as I went. Now after I had come down to the ship and to the sea, and had made ready our supper, and immortal night had come on, then did we lay us to rest upon the sea-beach. So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, first of all we drew down our ships to the fair salt sea and placed the masts and the sails in the gallant ships, and the crew too climbed on board, and sat upon the benches and smote the grey sea water with their oars. Then back I went to the waters of Aegyptus, the heaven-fed stream, and there I moored the ships and offered the acceptable sacrifice of hecatombs. So when I had appeased the anger of the everlasting gods, I piled a barrow to Agamemnon, that his fame might never be quenched. So having fulfilled all, I set out for home, and the deathless gods gave me a fair wind, and brought me swiftly to mine own dear country. But lo, now tarry in my halls till it shall be the eleventh day hence or the twelfth. Then will I send thee with all honour on thy way, and give thee splendid gifts, three horses and a polished car; and moreover I will give thee a goodly chalice, that thou mayest pour forth before the deathless gods, and be mindful of me all the days of thy life.'

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: 'Son of Atreus, nay, hold me not long time here. Yea even for a year would I be content to sit by thee, and no desire for home or parents would come upon me; for I take wondrous pleasure in thy tales and talk. But already my company wearieth in fair Pylos, and yet thou art keeping me long time here. And whatsoever gift thou wouldest give me, let it be a thing to treasure; but horses I will take none to Ithaca, but leave them here to grace thine own house, for thou art lord of a wide plain wherein is lotus great plenty, and therein is spear-reed and wheat and rye, and white and spreading barley. In Ithaca there are no wide courses, nor meadow land at all. It is a pastureland of goats, and more pleasant in my sight than one that pastureth horses; for of the isles that lie and lean upon the sea, none are fit for the driving of horses, or rich in meadow land, and least of all is Ithaca.'

So spake he, and Menelaus, of the loud war cry, smiled, and caressed him with his hand, and spake and hailed him:

'Thou art of gentle blood, dear child, so gentle the words thou speakest. Therefore I will make exchange of the presents, as I may. Of the gifts, such as are treasures stored in my house, I will give thee the goodliest and greatest of price. I will give thee a mixing bowl beautifully wrought; it is all of silver, and the lips thereof are finished with gold, the work of Hephaestus; and the hero Phaedimus, the king of the Sidonians, gave it me, when his house sheltered me on my coming thither, and to thee now would I give it.'

Even so they spake one to another, while the guests came to the palace of the divine king. They drave their sheep, and brought wine that maketh glad the heart of man: and their wives with fair tire sent them wheaten bread. Thus were these men preparing the feast in the halls.

But the wooers meantime were before the palace of Odysseus, taking their pleasure in casting of weights and spears, on a levelled place, as heretofore, in their insolence. And Antinous and godlike Eurymachus were seated there, the chief men of the wooers, who were far the most excellent of all. And Noemon, son of Phromius, drew nigh to them and spake unto Antinous and questioned him, saying:

‘Antinous, know we at all, or know we not, when Telemachus will return from sandy Pylos? He hath departed with a ship of mine, and I have need thereof, to cross over into spacious Elis, where I have twelve brood mares with hardy mules unbroken at the teat; I would drive off one of these and break him in.’

So spake he, and they were amazed, for they deemed not that Telemachus had gone to Neleian Pylos, but that he was at home somewhere in the fields, whether among the flocks, or with the swineherd.

Then Antinous, son of Eupeithes, spake to him in turn: ‘Tell me the plain truth; when did he go, and what noble youths went with him? Were they chosen men of Ithaca or hirelings and thralls of his own? He was in case to bring even that about. And tell me this in good sooth, that I may know for a surety: did he take thy black ship from thee perforce against thy will? or didst thou give it him of free will at his entreaty?

Then Noemon, son of Phromius, answered him saying: ‘I gave it him myself of free will. What can any man do, when such an one, so bestead with care, begs a favour? it were hard to deny the gift. The youths who next to us are noblest in the land, even these have gone with him; and I marked their leader on board ship, Mentor, or a god who in all things resembled Mentor. But one matter I marvel at: I saw the goodly Mentor here yesterday toward dawn, though already he had embarked for Pylos.’

He spake and withal departed to his father’s house. And the proud spirits of these twain were angered, and they made the wooers sit down together and cease from their games. And among them spake Antinous, son of Eupeithes, in displeasure; and his black heart was wholly filled with rage, and his eyes were like flaming fire:

‘Out on him, a proud deed hath Telemachus accomplished with a high hand, even this journey, and we thought that he would never bring it to pass! This lad hath clean gone without more ado, in spite of us all; his ship he hath let haul to the sea, and chosen the noblest in the township. He will begin to be our bane even more than heretofore; but may Zeus destroy his might, not ours, ere he reach the measure of manhood! But come, give me a swift ship and twenty men, that I may lie in watch and wait even for him on his way home, in the strait between Ithaca and rugged Samos, that so he may have a woeful end of his cruising in quest of his father.’

So spake he, and they all assented thereto, and bade him to the work. And thereupon they arose and went to the house of Odysseus.

Now it was no long time before Penelope heard of the counsel that the wooers had devised in the deep of their heart. For the henchman Medon told her thereof, who stood without the court and heard their purposes, while they were weaving their plot within. So he went on his way through the halls to bring the news to Penelope; and as he stept down over the threshold, Penelope spake unto him:

‘Henchman, wherefore have the noble wooers sent thee forth? Was it to tell the handmaids of divine Odysseus to cease from their work, and prepare a banquet for them? Nay, after thus much wooing, never again may they come together, but here this day sup for their last and latest time; all ye who assemble so often, and waste much livelihood, the wealth of wise Telemachus! Long ago when ye were children, ye marked not your fathers’ telling, what manner of man was Odysseus among them, one that wrought no iniquity toward any man, nor spake aught unrighteous in the township, as is the wont of divine kings. One man a king is like to hate, another he might chance to love. But never did he do aught at all presumptuously to any man. Nay, it is plain what spirit ye are of, and your unseemly deeds are manifest to all, nor is there any gratitude left for kindness done.’

Then Medon, wise of heart, answered her: ‘Would, oh queen, that this were the crowning evil! But the wooers devise another far greater and more grievous, which I pray the son of Cronos may never fulfil! They are set on slaying Telemachus with the edge of the sword on his homeward way; for he is gone to fair Pylos and goodly Lacedaemon, to seek tidings of his father.’

So spake he, but her knees were loosened where she stood, and her heart melted within her, and long time was she speechless, and lo, her eyes were filled with tears and the voice of her utterance was stayed. And at the last she answered him and said:

‘Henchman, wherefore I pray thee is my son departed? There is no need that he should go abroad on swift ships, that serve men for horses on the sea, and that cross the great wet waste. Is it that even his own name may no more be left upon earth?’

Then Medon, wise of heart, answered her: ‘I know not whether some god set him on or whether his own spirit stirred him to go to Pylos to seek tidings of his father’s return, or to hear what end he met.’

He spake, and departed through the house of Odysseus, and on her fell a cloud of consuming grief; so that she might no more endure to seat her on a chair, whereof there were many in the house, but there she crouched on the threshold of her well-builded chamber, wailing piteously, and her handmaids round her made low moan, as many as were in the house with her, young and old. And Penelope spake among them pouring forth her lamentation:

‘Hear me, my friends, for the Olympian sire hath given me pain exceedingly beyond all women who were born and bred in my day. For erewhile I lost my noble lord of the lion heart, adorned with all perfection among the Danaans, my good lord, whose fame is noised abroad from Hellas to mid Argos. And now again the storm-winds have snatched away my well-beloved son without tidings from our halls, nor heard I of his departure. Oh, women, hard of heart, that even ye did not each one let the thought come into your minds, to rouse me from my couch when he went to the black hollow ship, though ye knew full well thereof! For had I heard that he was purposing this journey, verily he should have stayed here still, though eager to be gone, or have left me dead in the halls. Howbeit let some one make haste to call the ancient Dolius, my thrall, whom my father gave me ere yet I had come hither, who keepeth my garden of trees. So shall he go straightway and sit by Laertes, and tell him all, if perchance Laertes may weave some counsel in his heart, and go forth and make his plaint to the people, who are purposed to destroy his seed, and the seed of godlike Odysseus.’

Then the good nurse Eurycleia answered her: ‘Dear lady, aye, slay me if thou wilt with the pitiless sword or let me yet live on in the house, — yet will I not hide my saying from thee. I knew all this, and gave him whatsoever he commanded, bread and sweet wine. And he took a great oath of me not to tell thee till at least the twelfth day should come, or thou thyself shouldst miss him and hear of his departure, that thou mightest not mar thy fair flesh with thy tears. But now, wash thee in water, and take to thee clean raiment and ascend to thy upper chamber with the women thy handmaids, and pray to Athene, daughter of Zeus, lord of the aegis. For so may she save him even from death. And heap not troubles on an old man’s trouble; for the seed of the son of Arceisius, is not, methinks, utterly hated by the blessed gods, but someone will haply yet remain to possess these lofty halls, and the fat fields far away.’

So spake she, and lulled her queen’s lamentation, and made her eyes to cease from weeping. So she washed her in water, and took to her clean raiment, and ascended to the upper chamber with the women her handmaids, and placed the meal for sprinkling in a basket, and prayed unto Athene:

‘Hear me, child of Zeus, lord of the aegis, unwearied maiden! If ever wise Odysseus in his halls burnt for thee fat slices of the thighs of heifer or of sheep, these things, I pray thee, now remember, and save my dear son, and ward from him the wooers in the naughtiness of their pride.’

Therewith she raised a cry, and the goddess heard her prayer. But the wooers clamoured through the shadowy halls, and thus would some proud youth say:

‘Verily this queen of many wooers prepareth our marriage, nor knoweth at all how that for her son death hath been ordained.’

Thus would certain of them speak, but they knew not how these things were ordained. And Antinous made harangue and spake among them:

‘Good sirs, my friends, shun all disdainful words alike, lest someone hear and tell it even in the house. But come let us arise, and in silence accomplish that whereof we spake, for the counsel pleased us every one.’

Therewith he chose twenty men that were the best, and they departed to the swift ship and the sea-banks. So first of all they drew the ship down to the deep water, and placed the mast and sails in the black ship, and fixed the oars in leathern loops all orderly, and spread forth the white sails. And squires, haughty of heart, bare for them their arms. And they moored her high out in the shore water, and themselves disembarked. There they supped and waited for evening to come on.

But the wise Penelope lay there in her upper chamber, fasting and tasting neither meat nor drink, musing whether her noble son should escape death, or even fall before the proud wooers. And as a lion broods all in fear among the press of men, when they draw the crafty ring around him, so deeply was she musing when deep sleep came over her. And she sank back in sleep and all her joints were loosened.

Now the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, turned to other thoughts. She made a phantom, and fashioned it after the likeness of a woman, Iphthime, daughter of great-hearted Icarius, whom Eumelus wedded, whose dwelling was in Pherae. And she sent it to the house of divine Odysseus to bid Penelope, amid her sorrow and lamenting, to cease from her weeping and tearful lamentation. So the phantom passed into the chamber by the thong of the bolt, and stood above her head and spake unto her, saying:

‘Sleepest thou, Penelope, stricken at heart? Nay, even the gods who live at ease suffer thee not to wail or be afflicted, seeing that thy son is yet to return; for no sinner is he in the eyes of the gods.’

Then wise Penelope made her answer as she slumbered very softly at the gates of dreams:

‘Wherefore, sister, hast thou come hither, that before wert not wont to come, for thou hast thine habitation very far away? Biddest thou me indeed to cease from the sorrows and pains, so many that disquiet my heart and soul? Erewhile I lost my noble lord of the lion heart, adorned with all perfection among the Danaans, my true lord, whose fame is noised abroad from Hellas to mid Argos.

And now, again, my well-beloved son is departed on his hollow ship, poor child, not skilled in toils or in the gatherings of men. For him I sorrow yet more than for my lord, and I tremble and fear for him lest aught befal him, whether, it may be, amid that folk where he is gone, or in the deep. For many foemen devise evil against him, and go about to kill him, or ever he come to his own country.'

And the dim phantom answered her, and said: 'Take courage, and be not so sorely afraid. For lo, such a friend goes to guide him, as all men pray to stand by them, for that she hath the power, even Pallas Athene. And she pitieth thee in thy sorrow, and now hath sent me forth to speak these words to thee.'

And wise Penelope answered her, saying: 'If thou art indeed a god, and hast heard the word of a god, come, I pray thee, and tell me tidings concerning that ill-fated man, whether perchance he is yet alive and sees the light of the sun, or hath already died, and is a dweller in the house of Hades.'

And the dim phantom answered her and said: 'Concerning him I will not tell thee all the tale, whether he be alive or dead; it is ill to speak words light as wind.'

Therewith the phantom slipped away by the bolt of the door and passed into the breath of the wind. And the daughter of Icarius started up from sleep; and her heart was cheered, so clear was the vision that sped toward her in the dead of the night.

Meanwhile the wooers had taken ship and were sailing over the wet ways, pondering in their hearts sheer death for Telemachus. Now there is a rocky isle in the mid sea, midway between Ithaca and rugged Samos, Asteris, a little isle; and there is a harbour therein with a double entrance, where ships may ride. There the Achaeans abode lying in wait for Telemachus.

BOOK V

The Gods in council command Calypso by Hermes to send away Odysseus on a raft of trees; and Poseidon, returning from Ethiopia and seeing him on the coast of Phaeacia, scattered his raft; and how by the help of Ino he was thrown ashore, and slept on a heap of dry leaves till the next day.

Now the Dawn arose from her couch, from the side of the lordly Tithonus, to bear light to the immortals and to mortal men. And lo, the gods were gathering to session, and among them Zeus, that thunders on high, whose might is above all. And Athene told them the tale of the many woes of Odysseus, recalling them to mind; for near her heart was he that then abode in the dwelling of the nymph:

‘Father Zeus, and all ye other blessed gods that live for ever, henceforth let not any sceptred king be kind and gentle with all his heart, nor minded to do righteously, but let him alway be a hard man and work unrighteousness, for behold, there is none that remembereth divine Odysseus of the people whose lord he was, and was gentle as a father. Howbeit, as for him he lieth in an island suffering strong pains, in the halls of the nymph Calypso, who holdeth him perforce; so he may not reach his own country, for he hath no ships by him with oars, and no companions to send him on his way over the broad back of the sea. And now, again, they are set on slaying his beloved son on his homeward way, for he is gone to fair Pylos and to goodly Lacedaemon, to seek tidings of his father.’

And Zeus, gatherer of the clouds, answered and spake unto her: ‘My child, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips? Nay, didst thou not thyself plan this device, that Odysseus may assuredly take vengeance on those men at his coming? As for Telemachus, do thou guide him by thine art, as well as thou mayest, that so he may come to his own country all unharmed, and the wooers may return in their ship with their labour all in vain.’

Therewith he spake to Hermes, his dear son: ‘Hermes, forasmuch as even in all else thou art our herald, tell unto the nymph of the braided tresses my unerring counsel, even the return of the patient Odysseus, how he is to come to his home, with no furtherance of gods or of mortal men. Nay, he shall sail on a well-bound raft, in sore distress, and on the twentieth day arrive at fertile Scheria, even at the land of the Phaeacians, who are near of kin to the gods. And they shall give him all worship heartily as to a god, and send him on his way in a ship to his own dear country, with gifts of bronze and gold, and raiment in plenty, much store, such as never would Odysseus have won for himself out of Troy, yea, though he had returned unhurt with the share of the spoil that fell to him. On such wise is he fated to see his friends, and come to his high-roofed home and his own country.’

So spake he, nor heedless was the messenger, the slayer of Argos. Straightway he bound beneath his feet his lovely golden sandals, that wax not old, that bare him alike over the wet sea and over the limitless land, swift as the breath of the wind. And he took the wand wherewith he lulls the eyes of whomso he will, while others again he even wakes from out of sleep. With this rod in his hand flew the strong slayer of Argos. Above Pieria he passed and leapt from the upper air into the deep. Then he sped along the wave like the cormorant, that chaseth the fishes through the perilous gulfs of the unharvested sea, and wetteth his thick plumage in the brine. Such like did Hermes ride upon the press of the waves. But when he had now reached that far-off isle, he went forth from the sea of violet blue to get him up into the land, till he came to a great cave, wherein dwelt the nymph of the braided tresses: and he found her within. And on the hearth there was a great fire burning, and from afar through the isle was smelt the fragrance of cleft cedar blazing, and of sandal wood. And the nymph within was singing with a sweet voice as she fared to and fro before the loom, and wove with a shuttle of gold. And round about the cave there was a wood blossoming, alder and poplar and sweet-smelling cypress. And therein roosted birds long of wing, owls and falcons and chattering sea-crows, which have their business in the waters. And lo, there about the hollow cave trailed a gadding garden vine, all rich with clusters. And fountains four set orderly were running with clear water, hard by one another, turned each to his own course. And all around soft meadows bloomed of violets and parsley, yea, even a deathless god who came thither might wonder at the sight and be glad at heart. There the messenger, the slayer of Argos, stood and wondered. Now when he had gazed at all with wonder, anon he went into the wide cave; nor did Calypso, that fair goddess, fail to know him, when she saw him face to face; for the gods use not to be strange one to another, the immortals, not though one have his habitation far away. But he found not Odysseus, the greathearted, within the cave, who sat weeping on the shore even as aforetime, straining his soul with tears and groans and griefs, and as he wept he looked wistfully over the unharvested deep. And Calypso, that fair goddess, questioned Hermes, when she had made him sit on a bright shining seat:

‘Wherefore, I pray thee, Hermes, of the golden wand, hast thou come hither, worshipful and welcome, whereas as of old thou wert not wont to visit me? Tell me all thy thought; my heart is set on fulfilling it, if fulfil it I may, and if it hath been fulfilled in the counsel of fate. But now follow me further, that I may set before thee the entertainment of strangers.’

Therewith the goddess spread a table with ambrosia and set it by him, and mixed the ruddy nectar. So the messenger, the slayer of Argos, did eat and drink. Now after he had supped and comforted his soul with food, at the last he answered, and spake to her on this wise:

‘Thou makest question of me on my coming, a goddess of a god, and I will tell thee this my saying truly, at thy command. ’Twas Zeus that bade me come hither, by no will of mine; nay, who of his free will would speed over such a wondrous space of brine, whereby is no city of mortals that do sacrifice to the gods, and offer choice hecatombs? But surely it is in no wise possible for another god to go beyond or to make void the purpose of Zeus, lord of the aegis. He saith that thou hast with thee a man most wretched beyond his fellows, beyond those men that round the burg of Priam for nine years fought, and in the tenth year sacked the city and departed homeward. Yet on the way they sinned against Athene, and she raised upon them an evil blast and long waves of the sea. Then all the rest of his good company was lost, but it came to pass that the wind bare and the wave brought him hither. And now Zeus biddeth thee send him hence with what speed thou mayest, for it is not ordained that he die away from his friends, but rather it is his fate to look on them even yet, and to come to his high-roofed home and his own country.’

So spake he, and Calypso, that fair goddess, shuddered and uttered her voice, and spake unto him winged words: ‘Hard are ye gods and jealous exceeding, who ever grudge goddesses openly to mate with men, if any make a mortal her dear bed-fellow. Even so when rosy-fingered Dawn took Orion for her lover, ye gods that live at ease were jealous thereof, till chaste Artemis, of the golden throne, slew him in Ortygia with the visitation of her gentle shafts. So too when fair-tressed Demeter yielded to her love, and lay with Iasion in the thrice-ploughed fallow-field, Zeus was not long without tidings thereof, and cast at him with his white bolt and slew him. So again ye gods now grudge that a mortal man should dwell with me. Him I saved as he went all alone bestriding the keel of a bark, for that Zeus had crushed {*} and cleft his swift ship with a white bolt in the midst of the wine-dark deep. There all the rest of his good company was lost, but it came to pass that the wind bare and the wave brought him hither. And him have I loved and cherished, and I said that I would make him to know not death and age for ever. Yet forasmuch as it is no wise possible for another god to go beyond, or make void the purpose of Zeus, lord of the aegis, let him away over the unharvested seas, if the summons and the bidding be of Zeus. But I will give him no despatch, not I, for I have no ships by me with oars, nor company to bear him on his way over the broad back of the sea. Yet will I be forward to put this in his mind, and will hide nought, that all unharmed he may come to his own country.’

{* It seems very doubtful whether [Greek] can bear this meaning. The reading [Greek], ‘smote,’ preserved by the Schol. is highly probable.}

Then the messenger, the slayer of Argos, answered her: ‘Yea, speed him now upon his path and have regard unto the wrath of Zeus, lest haply he be angered and bear hard on thee hereafter.’

Therewith the great slayer of Argos departed, but the lady nymph went on her way to the greathearted Odysseus, when she had heard the message of Zeus. And there she found him sitting on the shore, and his eyes were never dry of tears, and his sweet life was ebbing away as he mourned for his return; for the nymph no more found favour in his sight. Howsoever by night he would sleep by her, as needs he must, in the hollow caves, unwilling lover by a willing lady. And in the day-time he would sit on the rocks and on the beach, straining his soul with tears, and groans, and griefs, and through his tears he would look wistfully over the unharvested deep. So standing near him that fair goddess spake to him:

‘Hapless man, sorrow no more I pray thee in this isle, nor let thy good life waste away, for even now will I send thee hence with all my heart. Nay, arise and cut long beams, and fashion a wide raft with the axe, and lay deckings high thereupon, that it may bear thee over the misty deep. And I will place therein bread and water, and red wine to thy heart’s desire, to keep hunger far away. And I will put raiment upon thee, and send a fair gale in thy wake, that so thou mayest come all unharmed to thine own country, if indeed it be the good pleasure of the gods who hold wide heaven, who are stronger than I am both to will and to do.’

So she spake, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus shuddered, and uttering his voice spake to her winged words: ‘Herein, goddess, thou hast plainly some other thought, and in no wise my furtherance, for that thou biddest me to cross in a raft the great gulf of the sea so dread and difficult, which not even the swift gallant ships pass over rejoicing in the breeze of Zeus. Nor would I go aboard a raft to displeasure thee, unless thou wilt deign, O goddess, to swear a great oath not to plan any hidden guile to mine own hurt.’

So spake he, and Calypso, the fair goddess, smiled and caressed him with her hand, and spake and hailed him:

‘Knavish thou art, and no weakling {*} in wit, thou that hast conceived and spoken such a word. Let earth be now witness hereto, and the wide heaven above, and that falling water of the Styx, the greatest oath and the most terrible to the blessed gods, that I will not plan any hidden guile to thine own hurt. Nay, but my thoughts are such, and such will be my counsel, as I would devise for myself, if ever so sore a need came over me. For I too have a righteous mind, and my heart within me is not of iron, but pitiful even as thine.’

{* [Greek], from root [Greek], ‘ill-grown,’ i. e. a weakling, in the literal sense as B. xi.249, xiv.212, or metaphorical, as here and viii. 177.}

Therewith the fair goddess led the way quickly, and he followed hard in the steps of the goddess. And they reached the hollow cave, the goddess and the man; so he sat him down upon the chair whence Hermes had arisen, and the nymph placed by him all manner of food to eat and drink, such as is meat for men. As for her she sat over against divine Odysseus, and the handmaids placed by her ambrosia and nectar. So they put forth their hands upon the good cheer set before them. But after they had taken their fill of meat and drink, Calypso, the fair goddess, spake first and said:

‘Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, so it is indeed thy wish to get thee home to thine own dear country even in this hour? Good fortune go with thee even so! Yet didst thou know in thine heart what a measure of suffering thou art ordained to fulfil, or ever thou reach thine own country, here, even here, thou wouldst abide with me and keep this house, and wouldst never taste of death, though thou longest to see thy wife, for whom thou hast ever a desire day by day. Not in sooth that I avow me to be less noble than she in form or fashion, for it is in no wise meet that mortal women should match them with immortals, in shape and comeliness.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered, and spake unto her: ‘Be not wroth with me hereat, goddess and queen. Myself I know it well, how wise Penelope is meaner to look upon than thou, in comeliness and stature. But she is mortal and thou knowest not age nor death. Yet even so, I wish and long day by day to fare homeward and see the day of my returning. Yea, and if some god shall wreck me in the wine-dark deep, even so I will endure, with a heart within me patient of affliction. For already have I suffered full much, and much have I toiled in perils of waves and war; let this be added to the tale of those.’

So spake he, and the sun sank and darkness came on. Then they twain went into the chamber of the hollow rock, and had their delight of love, abiding each by other.

So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, anon Odysseus put on him a mantle and doublet, and the nymph clad her in a great shining robe, light of woof and gracious, and about her waist she cast a fair golden girdle, and a veil withal upon her head. Then she considered of the sending of Odysseus, the greathearted. She gave him a great axe, fitted to his grasp, an axe of bronze double-edged, and with a goodly handle of olive wood fastened well. Next she gave him a polished adze, and she led the way to the border of the isle where tall trees grew, alder and poplar, and pine that reacheth unto heaven, seasoned long since and sere, that might lightly float for him. Now after she had shown him where the tall trees grew, Calypso, the fair goddess, departed homeward. And he set to cutting timber, and his work went busily. Twenty trees in all he felled, and then trimmed them with the axe of bronze, and deftly smoothed them, and over them made straight the line. Meanwhile Calypso, the fair goddess, brought him augers, so he bored each piece and jointed them together, and then made all fast with trenails and dowels. Wide as is the floor of a broad ship of burden, which some man well skilled in carpentry may trace him out, of such beam did Odysseus fashion his broad raft. And thereat he wrought, and set up the deckings, fitting them to the close-set uprights, and finished them off with long gunwales, and there he set a mast, and a yard-arm fitted thereto, and moreover he made him a rudder to guide the craft. And he fenced it with wattled osier withies from stem to stern, to be a bulwark against the wave, and piled up wood to back them. Meanwhile Calypso, the fair goddess, brought him web of cloth to make him sails; and these too he fashioned very skilfully. And he made fast therein braces and halyards and sheets, and at last he pushed the raft with levers down to the fair salt sea.

It was the fourth day when he had accomplished all. And, lo, on the fifth, the fair Calypso sent him on his way from the island, when she had bathed him and clad him in fragrant attire. Moreover, the goddess placed on board the ship two skins, one of dark wine, and another, a great one, of water, and corn too in a wallet, and she set therein a store of dainties to his heart’s desire, and sent forth a warm and gentle wind to blow. And goodly Odysseus rejoiced as he set his sails to the breeze. So he sate and cunningly guided the craft with the helm, nor did sleep fall upon his eyelids, as he viewed the Pleiads and Bootes, that setteth late, and the Bear, which they likewise call the Wain, which turneth ever in one place, and keepeth watch upon Orion, and alone hath no part in the baths of Ocean. This star, Calypso, the fair goddess, bade him to keep ever on the left as he traversed the deep. Ten days and seven he sailed traversing the deep, and on the eighteenth day appeared the shadowy hills of the land of the Phaeacians, at the point where it lay nearest to him; and it showed like a shield in the misty deep.

Now the lord, the shaker of the earth, on his way from the Ethiopians espied him afar off from the mountains of the Solymi: even thence he saw Odysseus as he sailed over the deep; and he was mightily angered in spirit, and shaking his head he communed with his own heart. ‘Lo now, it must be that the gods at the last have changed their purpose concerning Odysseus, while I was away among the Ethiopians. And now he is nigh to the Phaeacian land, where it is ordained that he escape the great issues of the woe which hath come upon him. But, methinks, that even yet I will drive him far enough in the path of suffering.’

With that he gathered the clouds and troubled the waters of the deep, grasping his trident in his hands; and he roused all storms of all manner of winds, and shrouded in clouds the land and sea: and down sped night from heaven. The East Wind and the South Wind clashed, and the stormy West, and the North, that is born in the bright air, rolling onward a great wave. Then were the knees of Odysseus loosened and his heart melted, and heavily he spake to his own great spirit:

‘Oh, wretched man that I am! what is to befal me at the last? I fear that indeed the goddess spake all things truly, who said that I should fill up the measure of sorrow on the deep, or ever I came to mine own country; and lo, all these things have an end. In such wise doth Zeus crown the wide heaven with clouds, and hath troubled the deep, and the blasts rush on of all the winds; yea, now is utter doom assured me. Thrice blessed those Danaans, yea, four times blessed, who perished on a time in wide Troy-land, doing a pleasure to the sons of Atreus! Would to God that I too had died, and met my fate on that day when the press of Trojans cast their bronze-shod spears upon me, fighting for the body of the son of Peleus! So should I have gotten my dues of burial, and the Achaeans would have spread my fame; but now it is my fate to be overtaken by a pitiful death.’

Even as he spake, the great wave smote down upon him, driving on in terrible wise, that the raft reeled again. And far therefrom he fell, and lost the helm from his hand; and the fierce blast of the jostling winds came and brake his mast in the midst, and sail and yard-arm fell afar into the deep. Long time the water kept him under, nor could he speedily rise from beneath the rush of the mighty wave: for the garments hung heavy which fair Calypso gave him. But late and at length he came up, and spat forth from his mouth the bitter salt water, which ran down in streams from his head. Yet even so forgat he not his raft, for all his wretched plight, but made a spring after it in the waves, and clutched it to him, and sat in the midst thereof, avoiding the issues of death; and the great wave swept it hither and thither along the stream. And as the North Wind in the harvest tide sweeps the thistle-down along the plain, and close the tufts cling each to other, even so the winds bare the raft hither and thither along the main. Now the South would toss it to the North to carry, and now again the East would yield it to the West to chase.

But the daughter of Cadmus marked him, Ino of the fair ankles, Leucothea, who in time past was a maiden of mortal speech, but now in the depths of the salt sea she had gotten her share of worship from the gods. She took pity on

Odysseus in his wandering and travail, and she rose, like a sea-gull on the wing, from the depth of the mere, and sat upon the well-bound raft and spake saying:

‘Hapless one, wherefore was Poseidon, shaker of the earth, so wondrous wroth with thee, seeing that he soweth for thee the seeds of many evils? Yet shall he not make a full end of thee, for all his desire. But do even as I tell thee, and methinks thou art not witless. Cast off these garments, and leave the raft to drift before the winds, but do thou swim with thine hands and strive to win a footing on the coast {*} of the Phaeacians, where it is decreed that thou escape. Here, take this veil imperishable and wind it about thy breast; so is there no fear that thou suffer aught or perish. But when thou hast laid hold of the mainland with thy hands, loose it from off thee and cast it into the wine-dark deep far from the land, and thyself turn away.’

{* Lit. Strive after an arrival on the land, *etc.* [Greek] originally meant going, journeying, and had no idea of return. The earlier use survives here, and in Soph. Philoct. 43, Eur. Iph. Aul. 1261. Similarly, perhaps, [Greek] in Odyssey iv.619, xv.119, and [Greek] frequently}

With that the goddess gave the veil, and for her part dived back into the heaving deep, like a sea-gull: and the dark wave closed over her. But the steadfast goodly Odysseus pondered, and heavily he spake to his own brave spirit:

‘Ah, woe is me! Can it be that some one of the immortals is weaving a new snare for me, that she bids me quit my raft? Nay verily, I will not yet obey, for I had sight of the shore yet a long way off, where she told me that I might escape. I am resolved what I will do; — and methinks on this wise it is best. So long as the timbers abide in the dowels, so long will I endure steadfast in affliction, but so soon as the wave hath shattered my raft asunder, I will swim, for meanwhile no better counsel may be.’

While yet he pondered these things in his heart and soul, Poseidon, shaker of the earth, stirred against him a great wave, terrible and grievous, and vaulted from the crest, and therewith smote him. And as when a great tempestuous wind tosseth a heap of parched husks, and scatters them this way and that, even so did the wave scatter the long beams of the raft. But Odysseus bestrode a single beam, as one rideth on a courser, and stript him of the garments which fair Calypso gave him. And presently he wound the veil beneath his breast, and fell prone into the sea, outstretching his hands as one eager to swim. And the lord, the shaker of the earth, saw him and shook his head, and communed with his own soul. ‘Even so, after all thy sufferings, go wandering over the deep, till thou shalt come among a people, the fosterlings of Zeus. Yet for all that I deem not that thou shalt think thyself too lightly afflicted.’ Therewith he lashed his steeds of the flowing manes, and came to Aegae, where is his lordly home.

But Athene, daughter of Zeus, turned to new thoughts. Behold, she bound up the courses of the other winds, and charged them all to cease and be still; but she roused the swift North and brake the waves before him, that so Odysseus, of the seed of Zeus, might mingle with the Phaeacians, lovers of the oar, avoiding death and the fates.

So for two nights and two days he was wandering in the swell of the sea, and much his heart boded of death. But when at last the fair-tressed Dawn brought the full light of the third day, thereafter the breeze fell, and lo, there was a breathless calm, and with a quick glance ahead, (he being upborne on a great wave,) he saw the land very near. And even as when most welcome to his children is the sight of a father’s life, who lies in sickness and strong pains long wasting away, some angry god assailing him; and to their delight the gods have loosed him from his trouble; so welcome to Odysseus showed land and wood; and he swam onward being eager to set foot on the strand. But when he was within earshot of the shore, and heard now the thunder of the sea against the reefs — for the great wave crashed against the dry land belching in terrible wise, and all was covered with foam of the sea, — for there were no harbours for ships nor shelters, but jutting headlands and reefs and cliffs; then at last the knees of Odysseus were loosened and his heart melted, and in heaviness he spake to his own brave spirit:

‘Ah me! now that beyond all hope Zeus hath given me sight of land, and withal I have cloven my way through this gulf of the sea, here there is no place to land on from out of the grey water. For without are sharp crags, and round them the wave roars surging, and sheer the smooth rock rises, and the sea is deep thereby, so that in no wise may I find firm foothold and escape my bane, for as I fain would go ashore, the great wave may haply snatch and dash me on the jagged rock — and a wretched endeavour that would be. But if I swim yet further along the coast to find, if I may, spits that take the waves aslant and havens of the sea, I fear lest the storm-winds catch me again and bear me over the teeming deep, making heavy moan; or else some god may even send forth against me a monster from out of the shore water; and many such pastureth the renowned Amphitrite. For I know how wroth against me hath been the great Shaker of the Earth.’

Whilst yet he pondered these things in his heart and mind, a great wave bore him to the rugged shore. There would he have been stript of his skin and all his bones been broken, but that the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, put a thought into his heart. He rushed in, and with both his hands clutched the rock, whereto he clung till the great wave went by. So he escaped that peril, but again with backward wash it leapt on him and smote him and cast him forth into the deep. And as when the cuttlefish is dragged forth from his chamber, the many pebbles clinging to his suckers, even so was the skin stript from his strong hand against the rocks, and the great wave closed over him. There of a truth would luckless Odysseus have perished beyond that which was ordained, had not grey-eyed Athene given him sure counsel. He rose from the line of the breakers that belch upon the shore, and swam outside, ever looking landwards, to find, if he might, spits that take the waves aslant, and havens of the sea. But when he came in his swimming over against the mouth of a fair-flowing river, whereby the place seemed best in his eyes, smooth of rocks, and withal there was a covert from the wind, Odysseus felt the river running, and prayed to him in his heart:

‘Hear me, O king, whosoever thou art; unto thee am I come, as to one to whom prayer is made, while I flee the rebukes of Poseidon from the deep. Yea, reverend even to the deathless gods is that man who comes as a wanderer, even as I now have come to thy stream and to thy knees after much travail. Nay pity me, O king; for I avow myself thy suppliant.’

So spake he, and the god straightway stayed his stream and withheld his waves, and made the water smooth before him, and brought him safely to the mouths of the river. And his knees bowed and his stout hands fell, for his heart was broken by the brine. And his flesh was all swollen and a great stream of sea water gushed up through his mouth and nostrils. So he lay without breath or speech, swooning, such terrible weariness came upon him. But when now his breath returned and his spirit came to him again, he loosed from off him the veil of the goddess, and let it fall into the salt flowing river. And the great wave bare it back down the stream, and lightly Ino caught it in her hands. Then Odysseus turned from the river, and fell back in the reeds, and kissed earth, the grain-giver, and heavily he spake unto his own brave spirit:

‘Ah, woe is me! What is to betide me? What shall happen unto me at the last? If I watch the river bed all through the careful night, I fear that the bitter frost and fresh dew may overcome me, as I breathe forth my life for faintness, for the river breeze blows cold betimes in the morning. But if I climb the hill-side up to the shady wood, and there take rest in the thickets, though perchance the cold and weariness leave hold of me, and sweet sleep may come over me, I fear lest of wild beasts I become the spoil and prey.’

So as he thought thereon this seemed to him the better way. He went up to the wood, and found it nigh the water in a place of wide prospect. So he crept beneath twin bushes that grew from one stem, both olive trees, one of them wild olive. Through these the force of the wet winds blew never, neither did the bright sun light on it with his rays, nor could the rain pierce through, so close were they twined either to other; and thereunder crept Odysseus and anon he heaped together with his hands a broad couch; for of fallen leaves there was great plenty, enough to cover two or three men in winter time, however hard the weather. And the steadfast goodly Odysseus beheld it and rejoiced, and he laid him in the midst thereof and flung over him the fallen leaves. And as when a man hath hidden away a brand in the black embers at an upland farm, one that hath no neighbours nigh, and so saveth the seed of fire, that he may not have to seek a light otherwhere, even so did Odysseus cover him with the leaves. And Athene shed sleep upon his eyes, that so it might soon release him from his weary travail, overshadowing his eyelids.

BOOK VI

Nausicaa, going to a river near that place to wash the clothes of her father, mother, and brethren, while the clothes were drying played with her maids at ball; and Odysseus coming forth is fed and clothed, and led on his way to the house of her father, King Alcinous.

So there he lay asleep, the steadfast goodly Odysseus, fordone with toil and drowsiness. Meanwhile Athene went to the land and the city of the Phaeacians, who of old, upon a time, dwelt in spacious Hypereia; near the Cyclopes they dwelt, men exceeding proud, who harried them continually, being mightier than they. Thence the godlike Nausithous made them depart, and he carried them away, and planted them in Scheria, far off from men that live by bread. And he drew a wall around the town, and builded houses and made temples for the gods and meted out the fields. Howbeit ere this had he been stricken by fate, and had gone down to the house of Hades, and now Alcinous was reigning, with wisdom granted by the gods. To his house went the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, devising a return for the great-hearted Odysseus. She betook her to the rich-wrought bower, wherein was sleeping a maiden like to the gods in form and comeliness, Nausicaa, the daughter of Alcinous, high of heart. Beside her on either hand of the pillars of the door were two handmaids, dowered with beauty from the Graces, and the shining doors were shut.

But the goddess, fleet as the breath of the wind, swept towards the couch of the maiden, and stood above her head, and spake to her in the semblance of the daughter of a famous seafarer, Dymas, a girl of like age with Nausicaa, who had found grace in her sight. In her shape the grey-eyed Athene spake to the princess, saying:

‘Nausicaa, how hath thy mother so heedless a maiden to her daughter? Lo, thou hast shining raiment that lies by thee uncared for, and thy marriage day is near at hand, when thou thyself must needs go beautifully clad, and have garments to give to them who shall lead thee to the house of the bridegroom! And, behold, these are the things whence a good report goes abroad among men, wherein a father and lady mother take delight. But come, let us arise and go a-washing with the breaking of the day, and I will follow with thee to be thy mate in the toil, that without delay thou mayst get thee ready, since truly thou art not long to be a maiden. Lo, already they are wooing thee, the noblest youths of all the Phaeacians, among that people whence thou thyself dost draw thy lineage. So come, beseech thy noble father betimes in the morning to furnish thee with mules and a wain to carry the men’s raiment, and the robes, and the shining coverlets. Yea and for thyself it is seemlier far to go thus than on foot, for the places where we must wash are a great way off the town.’

So spake the grey-eyed Athene, and departed to Olympus, where, as they say, is the seat of the gods that standeth fast for ever. Not by winds is it shaken, nor ever wet with rain, nor doth the snow come nigh thereto, but most clear air is spread about it cloudless, and the white light floats over it. Therein the blessed gods are glad for all their days, and thither Athene went when she had shown forth all to the maiden.

Anon came the throned Dawn, and awakened Nausicaa of the fair robes, who straightway marvelled on the dream, and went through the halls to tell her parents, her father dear and her mother. And she found them within, her mother sitting by the hearth with the women her handmaids, spinning yarn of sea-purple stain, but her father she met as he was going forth to the renowned kings in their council, whither the noble Phaeacians called him. Standing close by her dear father she spake, saying: ‘Father, dear, couldst thou not lend me a high waggon with strong wheels, that I may take the goodly raiment to the river to wash, so much as I have lying soiled? Yea and it is seemly that thou thyself, when thou art with the princes in council, shouldest have fresh raiment to wear. Also, there are five dear sons of thine in the halls, two married, but three are lusty bachelors, and these are always eager for new-washen garments wherein to go to the dances; for all these things have I taken thought.’

This she said, because she was ashamed to speak of glad marriage to her father; but he saw all and answered, saying:

‘Neither the mules nor aught else do I grudge thee, my child. Go thy ways, and the thralls shall get thee ready a high waggon with good wheels, and fitted with an upper frame.’

Therewith he called to his men, and they gave ear, and without the palace they made ready the smooth-running mule-wain, and led the mules beneath the yoke, and harnessed them under the car, while the maiden brought forth from her bower the shining raiment. This she stored in the polished car, and her mother filled a basket with all manner of food to the heart’s desire, dainties too she set therein, and she poured wine into a goat-skin bottle, while Nausicaa climbed into the wain. And her mother gave her soft olive oil also in a golden cruse, that she and her maidens might anoint themselves after the bath. Then Nausicaa took the whip and the shining reins, and touched the mules to start them; then there was a clatter of hoofs, and on they strained without flagging, with their load of the raiment and the maiden. Not alone did she go, for her attendants followed with her.

Now when they were come to the beautiful stream of the river, where truly were the unfailing cisterns, and bright water welled up free from beneath, and flowed past, enough to wash the foulest garments clean, there the girls unharnessed the mules from under the chariot, and turning them loose they drove them along the banks of the eddying river to graze on the honey-sweet clover. Then they took the garments from the wain, in their hands, and bore them to the black water, and briskly trod them down in the trenches, in busy rivalry. Now when they had washed and cleansed all the stains, they spread all out in order along the shore of the deep, even where the sea, in beating on the coast, washed the pebbles clean. Then having bathed and anointed them well with olive oil, they took their mid-day meal on the river's banks, waiting till the clothes should dry in the brightness of the sun. Anon, when they were satisfied with food, the maidens and the princess, they fell to playing at ball, casting away their tires, and among them Nausicaa of the white arms began the song. And even as Artemis, the archer, moveth down the mountain, either along the ridges of lofty Taygetus or Erymanthus, taking her pastime in the chase of boars and swift deer, and with her the wild wood-nymphs disport them, the daughters of Zeus, lord of the aegis, and Leto is glad at heart, while high over all she rears her head and brows, and easily may she be known, — but all are fair; even so the girl unwed outshone her maiden company.

But when now she was about going homewards, after yoking the mules and folding up the goodly raiment, then grey-eyed Athene turned to other thoughts, that so Odysseus might awake, and see the lovely maiden, who should be his guide to the city of the Phaeacian men. So then the princess threw the ball at one of her company; she missed the girl, and cast the ball into the deep eddying current, whereat they all raised a piercing cry. Then the goodly Odysseus awoke and sat up, pondering in his heart and spirit:

'Woe is me! to what men's land am I come now? say, are they froward, and wild, and unjust, or are they hospitable, and of God-fearing mind? How shrill a cry of maidens rings round me, of the nymphs that hold the steep hill-tops, and the river-springs, and the grassy water meadows! It must be, methinks, that I am near men of human speech. Go to, I myself will make trial and see.'

Therewith the goodly Odysseus crept out from under the coppice, having broken with his strong hand a leafy bough from the thick wood, to hold athwart his body, that it might hide his nakedness withal. And forth he sallied like a lion mountain-bred, trusting in his strength, who fares out blown and rained upon, with flaming eyes; amid the kine he goes or amid the sheep or in the track of the wild deer; yea, his belly bids him go even to the good homestead to make assay upon the flocks. Even so Odysseus was fain to draw nigh to the fair-tressed maidens, all naked as he was, such need had come upon him. But he was terrible in their eyes, being marred with the salt sea foam, and they fled cowering here and there about the jutting spits of shore. And the daughter of Alcinous alone stood firm, for Athene gave her courage of heart, and took all trembling from her limbs. So she halted and stood over against him, and Odysseus considered whether he should clasp the knees of the lovely maiden, and so make his prayer, or should stand as he was, apart, and beseech her with smooth words, if haply she might show him the town, and give him raiment. And as he thought within himself, it seemed better to stand apart, and beseech her with smooth words, lest the maiden should be angered with him if he touched her knees: so straightway he spake a sweet and cunning word:

‘I supplicate thee, O queen, whether thou art a goddess or a mortal! If indeed thou art a goddess of them that keep the wide heaven; to Artemis, then, the daughter of great Zeus, I mainly liken thee, for beauty and stature and shapeliness. But if thou art one of the daughters of men who dwell on earth, thrice blessed are thy father and thy lady mother, and thrice blessed thy brethren. Surely their souls ever glow with gladness for thy sake, each time they see thee entering the dance, so fair a flower of maidens. But he is of heart the most blessed beyond all other who shall prevail with gifts of wooing, and lead thee to his home. Never have mine eyes beheld such an one among mortals, neither man nor woman; great awe comes upon me as I look on thee. Yet in Delos once I saw as goodly a thing: a young sapling of a palm tree springing by the altar of Apollo. For thither too I went, and much people with me, on that path where my sore troubles were to be. Yea, and when I looked thereupon, long time I marvelled in spirit, — for never grew there yet so goodly a shoot from ground, — even in such wise as I wonder at thee, lady, and am astonied and do greatly fear to touch thy knees, though grievous sorrow is upon me. Yesterday, on the twentieth day, I escaped from the wine-dark deep, but all that time continually the wave bare me, and the vehement winds drave, from the isle Ogygia. And now some god has cast me on this shore, that here too, methinks, some evil may betide me; for I trow not that trouble will cease; the gods ere that time will yet bring many a thing to pass. But, queen, have pity on me, for after many trials and sore to thee first of all am I come, and of the other folk, who hold this city and land, I know no man. Nay show me the town, give me an old garment to cast about me, if thou hadst, when thou camest here, any wrap for the linen. And may the gods grant thee all thy heart’s desire: a husband and a home, and a mind at one with his may they give — a good gift, for there is nothing mightier and nobler than when man and wife are of one heart and mind in a house, a grief to their foes, and to their friends great joy, but their own hearts know it best.’

Then Nausicaa of the white arms answered him, and said: ‘Stranger, forasmuch as thou seemest no evil man nor foolish — and it is Olympian Zeus himself that giveth weal to men, to the good and to the evil, to each one as he will, and this thy lot doubtless is of him, and so thou must in anywise endure it: — and now, since thou hast come to our city and our land, thou shalt not lack raiment, nor aught else that is the due of a hapless suppliant, when he has met them who can befriend him. And I will show thee the town, and name the name of the people. The Phaeacians hold this city and land, and I am the daughter of Alcinous, great of heart, on whom all the might and force of the Phaeacians depend.’

Thus she spake, and called to her maidens of the fair tresses: ‘Halt, my maidens, whither flee ye at the sight of a man? Ye surely do not take him for an enemy? That mortal breathes not, and never will be born, who shall come with war to the land of the Phaeacians, for they are very dear to the gods. Far apart we live in the wash of the waves, the outermost of men, and no other mortals are conversant with us. Nay, but this man is some helpless one come hither in his wanderings, whom now we must kindly entreat, for all strangers and beggars are from Zeus, and a little gift is dear. So, my maidens, give the stranger meat and drink, and bathe him in the river, where withal is a shelter from the winds.’

So she spake, but they had halted and called each to the other, and they brought Odysseus to the sheltered place, and made him sit down, as Nausicaa bade them, the daughter of Alcinous, high of heart. Beside him they laid a mantle, and a doublet for raiment, and gave him soft olive oil in the golden cruse, and bade him wash in the streams of the river. Then goodly Odysseus spake among the maidens, saying: ‘I pray you stand thus apart, while I myself wash the brine from my shoulders, and anoint me with olive oil, for truly oil is long a stranger to my skin. But in your sight I will not bathe, for I am ashamed to make me naked in the company of fair-tressed maidens.’

Then they went apart and told all to their lady. But with the river water the goodly Odysseus washed from his skin the salt scurf that covered his back and broad shoulders, and from his head he wiped the crusted brine of the barren sea. But when he had washed his whole body, and anointed him with olive oil, and had clad himself in the raiment that the unwedded maiden gave him, then Athene, the daughter of Zeus, made him greater and more mighty to behold, and from his head caused deep curling locks to flow, like the hyacinth flower. And as when some skilful man overlays gold upon silver — one that Hephaestus and Pallas Athene have taught all manner of craft, and full of grace is his handiwork — even so did Athene shed grace about his head and shoulders.

Then to the shore of the sea went Odysseus apart, and sat down, glowing in beauty and grace, and the princess marvelled at him, and spake among her fair-tressed maidens, saying:

‘Listen, my white-armed maidens, and I will say somewhat. Not without the will of all the gods who hold Olympus hath this man come among the godlike Phaeacians. Erewhile he seemed to me uncomely, but now he is like the gods that keep the wide heaven. Would that such an one might be called my husband, dwelling here, and that it might please him here to abide! But come, my maidens, give the stranger meat and drink.’

Thus she spake, and they gave ready ear and hearkened, and set beside Odysseus meat and drink, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus did eat and drink eagerly, for it was long since he had tasted food.

Now Nausicaa of the white arms had another thought. She folded the raiment and stored it in the goodly wain, and yoked the mules strong of hoof, and herself climbed into the car. Then she called on Odysseus, and spake and hailed him: ‘Up now, stranger, and rouse thee to go to the city, that I may convey thee to the house of my wise father, where, I promise thee, thou shalt get knowledge of all the noblest of the Phaeacians. But do thou even as I tell thee, and thou seemest a discreet man enough. So long as we are passing along the fields and farms of men, do thou fare quickly with the maidens behind the mules and the chariot, and I will lead the way. But when we set foot within the city, — whereby goes a high wall with towers, and there is a fair haven on either side of the town, and narrow is the entrance, and curved ships are drawn up on either hand of the mole, for all the folk have stations for their vessels, each man one for himself. And there is the place of assembly about the goodly temple of Poseidon, furnished with heavy stones, deep bedded in the earth. There men look to the gear of the black ships, hawsers and sails, and there they fine down the oars. For the Phaeacians care not for bow nor quiver, but for masts, and oars of ships, and gallant barques, wherein rejoicing they cross the grey sea. Their ungracious speech it is that I would avoid, lest some man afterward rebuke me, and there are but too many insolent folk among the people. And some one of the baser sort might meet me and say: “Who is this that goes with Nausicaa, this tall and goodly stranger? Where found she him? Her husband he will be, her very own. Either she has taken in some shipwrecked wanderer of strange men, — for no men dwell near us; or some god has come in answer to her instant prayer; from heaven has he descended, and will have her to wife for evermore. Better so, if herself she has ranged abroad and found a lord from a strange land, for verily she holds in no regard the Phaeacians here in this country, the many men and noble who are her wooers.” So will they speak, and this would turn to my reproach. Yea, and I myself would think it blame of another maiden who did such things in despite of her friends, her father and mother being still alive, and was conversant with men before the day of open wedlock. But, stranger, heed well what I say, that as soon as may be thou mayest gain at my father's hands an escort and a safe return. Thou shalt find a fair grove of Athene, a poplar grove near the road, and a spring wells forth therein, and a meadow lies all around. There is my father's demesne, and his fruitful close, within the sound of a man's shout from the city. Sit thee down there and wait until such time as we may have come into the city, and reached the house of my father. But when thou deemest that we are got to the palace, then go up to the city of the Phaeacians, and ask for the house of my father Alcinous, high of heart. It is easily known, and a young child could be thy guide, for nowise like it are builded the houses of the Phaeacians, so goodly is the palace of the hero Alcinous. But when thou art within the shadow of the halls and the court, pass quickly through the great chamber, till thou comest to my mother, who sits at the hearth in the light of the fire, weaving yarn of sea-purple stain, a wonder to behold. Her chair is leaned against a pillar, and her maidens sit behind her. And there my father's throne leans close to hers, wherein he sits and drinks his wine, like an immortal. Pass thou by him, and cast thy hands about my mother's knees, that thou mayest see quickly and with joy the day of thy returning, even if thou art from a very far country. If but her heart be kindly disposed toward thee, then is there hope that thou shalt see thy friends, and come to thy well-builded house, and to thine own country.'

She spake, and smote the mules with the shining whip, and quickly they left behind them the streams of the river. And well they trotted and well they paced, and she took heed to drive in such wise that the maidens and Odysseus might follow on foot, and cunningly she plied the lash. Then the sun set, and they came to the famous grove, the sacred place of Athene; so there the goodly Odysseus sat him down. Then straightway he prayed to the daughter of mighty Zeus: 'Listen to me, child of Zeus, lord of the aegis, unwearied maiden; hear me even now, since before thou heardest not when I was smitten on the sea, when the renowned Earth-shaker smote me. Grant me to come to the Phaeacians as one dear, and worthy of pity.'

So he spake in prayer, and Pallas Athene heard him; but she did not yet appear to him face to face, for she had regard unto her father's brother, who furiously raged against the godlike Odysseus, till he should come to his own country.

BOOK VII

Odysseus being received at the house of the king Alcinous, the queen after supper, taking notice of his garments, gives him occasion to relate his passage thither on the raft. Alcinous promises him a convoy for the morrow.

So he prayed there, the steadfast goodly Odysseus, while the two strong mules bare the princess to the town. And when she had now come to the famous palace of her father, she halted at the gateway, and round her gathered her brothers, men like to the immortals, and they loosed the mules from under the car, and carried the raiment within. But the maiden betook her to her chamber; and an aged dame from Aperaea kindled the fire for her, Eurymedusa, the handmaid of the chamber, whom the curved ships upon a time had brought from Aperaea; and men chose her as a prize for Alcinous, seeing that he bare rule over all the Phaeacians, and the people hearkened to him as to a god. She waited on the white-armed Nausicaa in the palace halls; she was wont to kindle the fire and prepare the supper in the inner chamber.

At that same hour Odysseus roused him to go to the city, and Athene shed a deep mist about Odysseus for the favour that she bare him, lest any of the Phaeacians, high of heart, should meet him and mock him in sharp speech, and ask him who he was. But when he was now about to enter the pleasant city, then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, met him, in the fashion of a young maiden carrying a pitcher, and she stood over against him, and goodly Odysseus inquired of her:

‘My child, couldst thou not lead me to the palace of the lord Alcinous, who bears sway among this people? Lo, I am come here, a stranger travel-worn from afar, from a distant land; wherefore of the folk who possess this city and country I know not any man.’

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him saying: ‘Yea now, father and stranger, I will show thee the house that thou bidst me declare, for it lies near the palace of my noble father; behold, be silent as thou goest, and I will lead the way. And look on no man, nor question any. For these men do not gladly suffer strangers, nor lovingly entreat whoso cometh from a strange land. They trust to the speed of their swift ships, wherewith they cross the great gulf, for the Earth-shaker hath vouchsafed them this power. Their ships are swift as the flight of a bird, or as a thought.’

Therewith Pallas Athene led the way swiftly, and he followed hard in the footsteps of the goddess. And it came to pass that the Phaeacians, mariners renowned, marked him not as he went down the city through their midst, for the fair tressed Athene suffered it not, that awful goddess, who shed a wondrous mist about him, for the favour that she bare him in her heart. And Odysseus marvelled at the havens and the gallant ships, yea and the places of assembly of the heroes, and the long high walls crowned with palisades, a marvel to behold. But when they had now come to the famous palace of the king, the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake first and said:

‘Lo, here, father and stranger, is the house that thou wouldst have me show thee: and thou shalt find kings at the feast, the fosterlings of Zeus; enter then, and fear not in thine heart, for the dauntless man is the best in every adventure, even though he come from a strange land. Thou shalt find the queen first in the halls; Arete is the name whereby men call her, and she came even of those that begat the king Alcinous. First Nausithous was son of Poseidon, the Earth-shaker, and of Periboea, the comeliest of women, youngest daughter of great-hearted Eurymedon, who once was king among the haughty Giants. Howbeit, he destroyed his infatuate people, and was himself destroyed; but Poseidon lay with Periboea and begat a son, proud Nausithous, who sometime was prince among the Phaeacians; and Nausithous begat Rhexenor and Alcinous. While Rhexenor had as yet no son, Apollo of the silver bow smote him, a groom new wed, leaving in his halls one only child Arete; and Alcinous took her to wife, and honoured her as no other woman in the world is honoured, of all that now-a-days keep house under the hand of their lords. Thus she hath, and hath ever had, all worship heartily from her dear children and from her lord Alcinous and from all the folk, who look on her as on a goddess, and greet her with reverend speech, when she goes about the town. Yea, for she too hath no lack of understanding. To whomso she shows favour, even if they be men, she ends their feuds. {*} If but her heart be kindly disposed to thee, then is there good hope that thou mayest see thy friends, and come to thy high-roofed home and thine own country.’

{* And for the women she favours, she ends the feuds of their lords also.}

Therewith grey-eyed Athene departed over the unharvested seas, and left pleasant Scheria, and came to Marathon and wide-wayed Athens, and entered the good house of Erechtheus. Meanwhile Odysseus went to the famous palace of Alcinous, and his heart was full of many thoughts as he stood there or ever he had reached the threshold of bronze. For there was a gleam as it were of sun or moon through the high-roofed hall of great-hearted Alcinous. Brazen were the walls which ran this way and that from the threshold to the inmost chamber, and round them was a frieze of blue, and golden were the doors that closed in the good house. Silver were the door-posts that were set on the brazen threshold, and silver the lintel thereupon, and the hook of the door was of gold. And on either side stood golden hounds and silver, which Hephaestus wrought by his cunning, to guard the palace of great-hearted Alcinous, being free from death and age all their days. And within were seats arrayed against the wall this way and that, from the threshold even to the inmost chamber, and thereon were spread light coverings finely woven, the handiwork of women. There the Phaeacian chieftains were wont to sit eating and drinking, for they had continual store. Yea, and there were youths fashioned in gold, standing on firm-set bases, with flaming torches in their hands, giving light through the night to the feasters in the palace. And he had fifty handmaids in the house, and some grind the yellow grain on the millstone, and others weave webs and turn the yarn as they sit, restless as the leaves of the tall poplar tree: and the soft olive oil drops off that linen, so closely is it woven. For as the Phaeacian men are skilled beyond all others in driving a swift ship upon the deep, even so are the women the most cunning at the loom, for Athene hath given them notable wisdom in all fair handiwork and cunning wit. And without the courtyard hard by the door is a great garden, off our ploughgates, and a hedge runs round on either side. And there grow tall trees blossoming, pear-trees and pomegranates, and apple-trees with bright fruit, and sweet figs, and olives in their bloom. The fruit of these trees never perisheth neither faileth, winter nor summer, enduring through all the year. Evermore the West Wind blowing brings some fruits to birth and ripens others. Pear upon pear waxes old, and apple on apple, yea and cluster ripens upon cluster of the grape, and fig upon fig. There too hath he a fruitful vineyard planted, whereof the one part is being dried by the heat, a sunny plot on level ground, while other grapes men are gathering, and yet others they are treading in the wine-press. In the foremost row are unripe grapes that cast the blossom, and others there be that are growing black to vintaging. There too, skirting the furthest line, are all manner of garden beds, planted trimly, that are perpetually fresh, and therein are two fountains of water, whereof one scatters his streams all about the garden, and the other runs over against it beneath the threshold of the courtyard, and issues by the lofty house, and thence did the townsfolk draw water. These were the splendid gifts of the gods in the palace of Alcinous.

There the steadfast goodly Odysseus stood and gazed. But when he had gazed at all and wondered, he passed quickly over the threshold within the house. And he found the captains and the counsellors of the Phaeacians pouring forth wine to the keen-sighted god, the slayer of Argos; for to him they poured the last cup when they were minded to take rest. Now the steadfast goodly Odysseus went through the hall, clad in a thick mist, which Athene shed around him, till he came to Arete and the king Alcinous. And Odysseus cast his hands about the knees of Arete, and then it was that the wondrous mist melted from off him, and a silence fell on them that were within the house at the sight of him, and they marvelled as they beheld him. Then Odysseus began his prayer:

‘Arete, daughter of godlike Rhexenor, after many toils am I come to thy husband and to thy knees and to these guests, and may the gods vouchsafe them a happy life, and may each one leave to his children after him his substance in his halls and whatever dues of honour the people have rendered unto him. But speed, I pray you, my parting, that I may come the more quickly to mine own country, for already too long do I suffer affliction far from my friends.’

Therewith he sat him down by the hearth in the ashes at the fire, and behold, a dead silence fell on all. And at the last the ancient lord Echeneus spake among them, an elder of the Phaeacians, excellent in speech and skilled in much wisdom of old time. With good will he made harangue and spake among them:

‘Alcinous, this truly is not the more seemly way, nor is it fitting that the stranger should sit upon the ground in the ashes by the hearth, while these men refrain them, waiting thy word. Nay come, bid the stranger arise, and set him on a chair inlaid with silver, and command the henchmen to mix the wine, that we may pour forth likewise before Zeus, whose joy is in the thunder, who attendeth upon reverend suppliants. And let the housewife give supper to the stranger out of such stores as be within.’

Now when the mighty king Alcinous heard this saying, he took Odysseus, the wise and crafty, by the hand, and raised him from the hearth, and set him on a shining chair, whence he bade his son give place, valiant Laodamas, who sat next him and was his dearest. And a handmaid bare water for the hands in a goodly golden ewer, and poured it forth over a silver basin to wash withal, and drew to his side a polished table. And a grave dame bare wheaten bread and set it by him and laid upon the board many dainties, giving freely of such things as she had by her. So the steadfast goodly Odysseus did eat and drink: and then the mighty Alcinous spake unto the henchman:

‘Pontonous, mix the bowl and serve out the wine to all in the hall, that we may pour forth likewise before Zeus, whose joy is in the thunder, who attendeth upon reverend suppliants.’

So spake he, and Pontonous mixed the honey-hearted wine, and served it out to all, when he had poured for libation into each cup in turn. But when they had poured forth and had drunken to their heart’s content, Alcinous made harangue and spake among them:

‘Hear me, ye captains and counsellors of the Phaeacians, that I may speak as my spirit bids me. Now that the feast is over, go ye home and lie down to rest; and in the morning we will call yet more elders together, and entertain the stranger in the halls and do fair sacrifice to the gods, and thereafter we will likewise bethink us of the convoy, that so without pain or grief yonder stranger may by our convoy reach his own country speedily and with joy, even though he be from very far away. So shall he suffer no hurt or harm in mid passage, ere he set foot on his own land; but thereafter he shall endure such things as Fate and the stern spinning women drew off the spindles for him at his birth when his mother bare him. But if he is some deathless god come down from heaven, then do the gods herein imagine some new device against us. For always heretofore the gods appear manifest amongst us, whensoever we offer glorious hecatombs, and they feast by our side, sitting at the same board; yea, and even if a wayfarer going all alone has met with them, they use no disguise, since we are near of kin to them, even as are the Cyclopes and the wild tribes of the Giants.'

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: 'Alcinous, that thought be far from thee! for I bear no likeness either in form or fashion to the deathless gods, who keep wide heaven, but to men that die. Whomsoever ye know of human kind the heaviest laden with sorrow, to them might I liken myself in my griefs. Yea, and I might tell of yet other woes, even the long tale of toil that by the gods' will I endured. But as for me, suffer me to sup, afflicted as I am; for nought is there more shameless than a ravening belly, which biddeth a man perforce be mindful of him, though one be worn and sorrowful in spirit, even as I have sorrow of heart; yet evermore he biddeth me eat and drink and maketh me utterly to forget all my sufferings, and commandeth me to take my fill. But do ye bestir you at the breaking of the day, that so ye may set me, hapless as I am, upon my country's soil, albeit after much suffering. Ah, and may life leave me when I have had sight of mine own possessions, my thralls, and my dwelling that is great and high!'

So spake he, and they all assented thereto, and bade send the stranger on his way, for that he had spoken aright. Now when they had poured forth and had drunken to their hearts' content, they went each one to his house to lay them to rest. But goodly Odysseus was left behind in the hall, and by him sat Arete and godlike Alcinous; and the maids cleared away the furniture of the feast; and white-armed Arete first spake among them. For she knew the mantle and the doublet, when she saw the goodly raiment that she herself had wrought with the women her handmaids. So she uttered her voice and spake to him winged words:

'Sir, I am bold to ask thee first of this. Who art thou of the sons of men, and whence? Who gave thee this raiment? Didst thou not say indeed that thou camest hither wandering over the deep?'

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her, and said: ''Tis hard, O queen, to tell my griefs from end to end, for that the gods of heaven have given me griefs in plenty. But this will I declare to thee, whereof thou dost question and inquire. There is an isle, Ogygia, that lies far off in the sea; there dwells the daughter of Atlas, crafty Calypso, of the braided tresses, an awful goddess, nor is any either of gods or mortals conversant with her. Howbeit, some god brought me to her hearth, wretched man that I am, all alone, for that Zeus with white bolt crushed my swift ship and cleft it in the midst of the wine-dark deep. There all the rest of my good company was lost, but I clung with fast embrace about the keel of the curved ship, and so was I borne for nine whole days. And on the tenth dark night the gods brought me nigh the isle Ogygia, where Calypso of the braided tresses dwells, an awful goddess. She took me in, and with all care she cherished me and gave me sustenance, and said that she would make me to know not death nor age for all my days; but never did she win my heart within me. There I abode for seven years continually, and watered with my tears the imperishable raiment that Calypso gave me. But when the eighth year came round in his course, then at last she urged and bade me to be gone, by reason of a message from Zeus, or it may be that her own mind was turned. So she sent me forth on a well-bound raft, and gave me plenteous store, bread and sweet wine, and she clad me in imperishable raiment, and sent forth a warm and gentle wind to blow. For ten days and seven I sailed, traversing the deep, and on the eighteenth day the shadowy hills of your land showed in sight, and my heart was glad, — wretched that I was — for surely I was still to be the mate of much sorrow. For Poseidon, shaker of the earth, stirred up the same, who roused against me the winds and stopped my way, and made a wondrous sea to swell, nor did the wave suffer me to be borne upon my raft, as I made ceaseless moan. Thus the storm winds shattered the raft, but as for me I cleft my way through the gulf yonder, till the wind bare and the water brought me nigh your coast. Then as I strove to land upon the shore, the wave had overwhelmed me, dashing me against the great rocks and a desolate place, but at length I gave way and swam back, till I came to the river, where the place seemed best in mine eyes, smooth of rocks, and withal there was a shelter from the wind. And as I came out I sank down, gathering to me my spirit, and immortal night came on. Then I gat me forth and away from the heaven-fed river, and laid me to sleep in the bushes and strewed leaves about me, and the god shed over me infinite sleep. There among the leaves I slept, stricken at heart, all the night long, even till the morning and mid-day. And the sun sank when sweet sleep let me free. And I was aware of the company of thy daughter disporting them upon the sand, and there was she in the midst of them like unto the goddesses. To her I made my supplication, and she showed no lack of a good understanding, behaving so as thou couldst not hope for in chancing upon one so young; for the younger folk lack wisdom always.

She gave me bread enough and red wine, and let wash me in the river and bestowed on me these garments. Herein, albeit in sore distress, have I told thee all the truth.’

And Alcinous answered again, and spake saying: ‘Sir, surely this was no right thought of my daughter, in that she brought thee not to our house with the women her handmaids, though thou didst first entreat her grace.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered, and said unto him: ‘My lord, chide not, I pray thee, for this the blameless maiden. For indeed she bade me follow with her company, but I would not for fear and very shame, lest perchance thine heart might be clouded at the sight; for a jealous race upon the earth are we, the tribes of men.’

And Alcinous answered yet again, and spake saying: ‘Sir, my heart within me is not of such temper as to have been wroth without a cause: due measure in all things is best. Would to father Zeus, and Athene, and Apollo, would that so goodly a man as thou art, and like-minded with me, thou wouldst wed my daughter, and be called my son, here abiding: so would I give thee house and wealth, if thou wouldst stay of thine own will: but against thy will shall none of the Phaeacians keep thee: never be this well-pleasing in the eyes of father Zeus! And now I ordain an escort for thee on a certain day, that thou mayst surely know, and that day the morrow. Then shalt thou lay thee down overcome by sleep, and they the while shall smite the calm waters, till thou come to thy country and thy house, and whatsoever place is dear to thee, even though it be much farther than Euboea, which certain of our men say is the farthest of lands, they who saw it, when they carried Rhadamanthus, of the fair hair, to visit Tityos, son of Gaia. Even thither they went, and accomplished the journey on the self-same day and won home again, and were not weary. And now shalt thou know for thyself how far my ships are the best, and how my young men excel at tossing the salt water with the oar-blade.’

So spake he, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus rejoiced; and then he uttered a word in prayer, and called aloud to Zeus: ‘Father Zeus, oh that Alcinous may fulfil all that he hath said, so may his fame never be quenched upon the earth, the grain-giver, and I should come to mine own land!’

Thus they spake one to the other. And white-armed Arete bade her handmaids set out bedsteads beneath the gallery, and cast fair purple blankets over them, and spread coverlets above, and thereon lay thick mantles to be a clothing over all. So they went from the hall with torch in hand. But when they had busied them and spread the good bedstead, they stood by Odysseus and called unto him, saying:

‘Up now, stranger, and get thee to sleep, thy bed is made’

So spake they, and it seemed to him that rest was wondrous good. So he slept there, the steadfast goodly Odysseus, on the jointed bedstead, beneath the echoing gallery. But Alcinous laid him down in the innermost chamber of the high house, and by him the lady his wife arrayed bedstead and bedding.

BOOK VIII

The next day's entertainment of Odysseus, where he sees them contend in wrestling and other exercises, and upon provocation took up a greater stone than that which they were throwing, and overthrew them all. Alcinous and the lords give him presents. And how the king asked his name, his country, and his adventures.

Now when early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, then the mighty king Alcinous gat him up from his bed; and Odysseus, of the seed of Zeus, likewise uprose, the waster of cities. And the mighty king Alcinous led the way to the assembly place of the Phaeacians, which they had established hard by the ships. So when they had come thither, and sat them down on the polished stones close by each other, Pallas Athene went on her way through the town, in the semblance of the herald of wise Alcinous, devising a return for the great-hearted Odysseus. Then standing by each man she spake, saying:

'Hither now get ye to the assembly, ye captains and counsellors of the Phaeacians, that ye may learn concerning the stranger, who hath lately come to the palace of wise Alcinous, in his wanderings over the deep, and his form is like the deathless gods.'

Therewith she aroused the spirit and desire of each one, and speedily the meeting-places and seats were filled with men that came to the gathering: yea, and many an one marvelled at the sight of the wise son of Laertes, for wondrous was the grace Athene poured upon his head and shoulders, and she made him greater and more mighty to behold, that he might win love and worship and honour among all the Phaeacians, and that he might accomplish many feats, wherein the Phaeacians made trial of Odysseus. Now when they were gathered and come together, Alcinous made harangue and spake among them:

'Harken, ye captains and counsellors of the Phaeacians, and I will say that which my spirit within me bids me utter. This stranger, I know not who he is, hath come to my house in his wandering, whether from the men of the dawning or the westward, and he presses for a convoy, and prays that it be assured to him. So let us, as in time past, speed on the convoy. For never, nay never, doth any man who cometh to my house, abide here long in sorrow for want of help upon his way. Nay, come let us draw down a black ship to the fair salt sea, for her first voyage, and let them choose fifty and two noble youths throughout the township, who have been proved heretofore the best. And when ye have made fast the oars upon the benches, step all a shore, and thereafter come to our house, and quickly fall to feasting; and I will make good provision for all. To the noble youths I give this commandment; but ye others, sceptred kings, come to my fair dwelling, that we may entertain the stranger in the halls, and let no man make excuse. Moreover, bid hither the divine minstrel, Demodocus, for the god hath given minstrelsy to him as to none other, to make men glad in what way soever his spirit stirs him to sing.’

He spake and led the way, and the sceptred kings accompanied him, while the henchmen went for the divine minstrel. And chosen youths, fifty and two, departed at his command, to the shore of the unharvested sea. But after they had gone down to the ship and to the sea, first of all they drew the ship down to the deep water, and placed the mast and sails in the black ship, and fixed the oars in leathern loops, all orderly, and spread forth the white sails. And they moored her high out in the shore water, and thereafter went on their way to the great palace of the wise Alcinous. Now the galleries and the courts and the rooms were thronged with men that came to the gathering, for there were many, young and old. Then Alcinous sacrificed twelve sheep among them, and eight boars with flashing tusks, and two oxen with trailing feet. These they flayed and made ready, and dressed a goodly feast.

Then the henchman drew near, leading with him the beloved minstrel, whom the muse loved dearly, and she gave him both good and evil; of his sight she reft him, but granted him sweet song. Then Pontonous, the henchman, set for him a high chair inlaid with silver, in the midst of the guests, leaning it against the tall pillar, and he hung the loud lyre on a pin, close above his head, and showed him how to lay his hands on it. And close by him he placed a basket, and a fair table, and a goblet of wine by his side, to drink when his spirit bade him. So they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer spread before them. But after they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, the Muse stirred the minstrel to sing the songs of famous men, even that lay whereof the fame had then reached the wide heaven, namely, the quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles, son of Peleus; how once on a time they contended in fierce words at a rich festival of the gods, but Agamemnon, king of men, was inly glad when the noblest of the Achaeans fell at variance. For so Phoebus Apollo in his soothsaying had told him that it must be, in goodly Pytho, what time he crossed the threshold of stone, to seek to the oracle. For in those days the first wave of woe was rolling on Trojans and Danaans through the counsel of great Zeus.

This song it was that the famous minstrel sang; but Odysseus caught his great purple cloak with his stalwart hands, and drew it down over his head, and hid his comely face, for he was ashamed to shed tears beneath his brows in presence of the Phaeacians. Yea, and oft as the divine minstrel paused in his song, Odysseus would wipe away the tears, and draw the cloak from off his head, and take the two-handled goblet and pour forth before the gods. But whensoever he began again, and the chiefs of the Phaeacians stirred him to sing, in delight at the lay, again would Odysseus cover up his head and make moan. Now none of all the company marked him weeping, but Alcinous alone noted it and was ware thereof as he sat by him and heard him groaning heavily. And presently he spake among the Phaeacians, masters of the oar:

‘Hearken, ye captains and counsellors of the Phaeacians, now have our souls been satisfied with the good feast, and with the lyre, which is the mate of the rich banquet. Let us go forth anon, and make trial of divers games, that the stranger may tell his friends, when home he returneth, how greatly we excel all men in boxing, and wrestling, and leaping, and speed of foot.’

He spake, and led the way, and they went with him. And the henchman hung the loud lyre on the pin, and took the hand of Demodocus, and let him forth from the hall, and guided him by the same way, whereby those others, the chiefs of the Phaeacians, had gone to gaze upon the games. So they went on their way to the place of assembly, and with them a great company innumerable; and many a noble youth stood up to play. There rose Acroneus, and Ocyalus, and Elatreus, and Nauteus, and Prymneus, and Anchialus, and Eretmeus, and Ponteus, and Proreus, Thoon, and Anabesineus, and Amphialus, son of Polyneus, son of Tekton, and likewise Euryalus, the peer of murderous Ares, the son of Naubolus, who in face and form was goodliest of all the Phaeacians next to noble Laodamas. And there stood up the three sons of noble Alcinous, Laodamas, and Halius, and godlike Clytoneus. And behold, these all first tried the issue in the foot race. From the very start they strained at utmost speed: and all together they flew forward swiftly, raising the dust along the plain. And noble Clytoneus was far the swiftest of them all in running, and by the length of the furrow that mules cleave in a fallow field, {*} so far did he shoot to the front, and came to the crowd by the lists, while those others were left behind. Then they made trial of strong wrestling, and here in turn Euryalus excelled all the best. And in leaping Amphialus was far the foremost, and Elatreus in weight-throwing, and in boxing Laodamas, the good son of Alcinous. Now when they had all taken their pleasure in the games, Laodamas, son of Alcinous, spake among them:

{* The distance here indicated seems to be that which the mule goes in ploughing, without pausing to take breath.}

‘Come, my friends, let us ask the stranger whether he is skilled or practised in any sport. Ill fashioned, at least, he is not in his thighs and sinewy legs and hands withal, and his stalwart neck and mighty strength: yea and he lacks not youth, but is crushed by many troubles. For I tell thee there is nought else worse than the sea to confound a man, how hardy soever he may be.'

And Euryalus in turn made answer, and said: 'Laodamas, verily thou hast spoken this word in season. Go now thyself and challenge him, and declare thy saying.'

Now when the good son of Alcinous heard this, he went and stood in the midst, and spake unto Odysseus: 'Come, do thou too, father and stranger, try thy skill in the sports, if haply thou art practised in any; and thou art like to have knowledge of games, for there is no greater glory for a man while yet he lives, than that which he achieves by hand and foot. Come, then, make essay, and cast away care from thy soul: thy journey shall not now be long delayed; lo, thy ship is even now drawn down to the sea, and the men of thy company are ready.'

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying; 'Laodamas, wherefore do ye mock me, requiring this thing of me? Sorrow is far nearer my heart than sports, for much have I endured and laboured sorely in time past, and now I sit in this your gathering, craving my return, and making my prayer to the king and all the people.'

And Euryalus answered, and rebuked him to his face: 'No truly, stranger, nor do I think thee at all like one that is skilled in games, whereof there are many among men, rather art thou such an one as comes and goes in a benched ship, a master of sailors that are merchantmen, one with a memory for his freight, or that hath the charge of a cargo homeward bound, and of greedily gotten gains; thou seemest not a man of thy hands.'

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on him and said: 'Stranger, thou hast not spoken well; thou art like a man presumptuous. So true it is that the gods do not give every gracious gift to all, neither shapeliness, nor wisdom, nor skilled speech. For one man is feebler than another in presence, yet the god crowns his words with beauty, and men behold him and rejoice, and his speech runs surely on his way with a sweet modesty, and he shines forth among the gathering of his people, and as he passes through the town men gaze on him as a god. Another again is like the deathless gods for beauty, but his words have no crown of grace about them; even as thou art in comeliness pre-eminent, nor could a god himself fashion thee for the better, but in wit thou art a weakling. Yea, thou hast stirred my spirit in my breast by speaking thus amiss. I am not all unversed in sports, as thy words go, but methinks I was among the foremost while as yet I trusted in my youth and my hands, but now am I holden in misery and pains: for I have endured much in passing through the wars of men and the grievous waves of the sea. Yet even so, for all my affliction, I will essay the games, for thy word hath bitten to the quick, and thou hast roused me with thy saying.'

He spake, and clad even as he was in his mantle leaped to his feet, and caught up a weight larger than the rest, a huge weight heavier far than those wherewith the Phaeacians contended in casting. With one whirl he sent it from his stout hand, and the stone flew hurtling: and the Phaeacians, of the long oars, those mariners renowned, crouched to earth beneath the rushing of the stone. Beyond all the marks it flew, so lightly it sped from his hand, and Athene in the fashion of a man marked the place, and spake and hailed him:

‘Yea, even a blind man, stranger, might discern that token if he groped for it, for it is in no wise lost among the throng of the others, but is far the first; for this bout then take heart: not one of the Phaeacians shall attain thereunto or overpass it.’

So spake she; and the steadfast goodly Odysseus rejoiced and was glad, for that he saw a true friend in the lists. Then with a lighter heart he spake amid the Phaeacians:

‘Now reach ye this throw, young men, if ye may; and soon, methinks, will I cast another after it, as far or yet further. And whomsoever of the rest his heart and spirit stir thereto, hither let him come and try the issue with me, in boxing or in wrestling or even in the foot race, I care not which, for ye have greatly angered me: let any of all the Phaeacians come save Laodamas alone, for he is mine host: who would strive with one that entreated him kindly? Witless and worthless is the man, whoso challengeth his host that receiveth him in a strange land, he doth but maim his own estate. But for the rest, I refuse none and hold none lightly, but I fain would know and prove them face to face. For I am no weakling in all sports, even in the feats of men. I know well how to handle the polished bow, and ever the first would I be to shoot and smite my man in the press of foes, even though many of my company stood by, and were aiming at the enemy. Alone Philoctetes in the Trojan land surpassed me with the bow in our Achaean archery. But I avow myself far more excellent than all besides, of the mortals that are now upon the earth and live by bread. Yet with the men of old time I would not match me, neither with Heracles nor with Eurytus of Oechalia, who contended even with the deathless gods for the prize of archery. Wherefore the great Eurytus perished all too soon, nor did old age come on him in his halls, for Apollo slew him in his wrath, seeing that he challenged him to shoot a match. And with the spear I can throw further than any other man can shoot an arrow. Only I doubt that in the foot race some of the Phaeacians may outstrip me, for I have been shamefully broken in many waters, seeing that there was no continual sustenance on board; wherefore my knees are loosened.’

So spake he and all kept silence; and Alcinous alone answered him, saying:

‘Stranger, forasmuch as these thy words are not ill-taken in our gathering, but thou wouldest fain show forth the valour which keeps thee company, being angry that yonder man stood by thee in the lists, and taunted thee, in such sort as no mortal would speak lightly of thine excellence, who had knowledge of sound words; nay now, mark my speech; so shalt thou have somewhat to tell another hero, when with thy wife and children thou suppest in thy halls, and recallest our prowess, what deeds Zeus bestoweth even upon us from our fathers' days even until now. For we are no perfect boxers, nor wrestlers, but speedy runners, and the best of seamen; and dear to us ever is the banquet, and the harp, and the dance, and changes of raiment, and the warm bath, and love, and sleep. Lo, now arise, ye dancers of the Phaeacians, the best in the land, and make sport, that so the stranger may tell his friends, when he returneth home, how far we surpass all men besides in seamanship, and speed of foot, and in the dance and song. And let one go quickly, and fetch for Demodocus the loud lyre which is lying somewhere in our halls.'

So spake Alcinous the godlike, and the henchman rose to bear the hollow lyre from the king's palace. Then stood up nine chosen men in all, the judges of the people, who were wont to order all things in the lists aright. So they levelled the place for the dance, and made a fair ring and a wide. And the henchman drew near bearing the loud lyre to Demodocus, who gat him into the midst, and round him stood boys in their first bloom, skilled in the dance, and they smote the good floor with their feet. And Odysseus gazed at the twinklings of the feet, and marvelled in spirit.

Now as the minstrel touched the lyre, he lifted up his voice in sweet song, and he sang of the love of Ares and Aphrodite, of the fair crown, how at the first they lay together in the house of Hephaestus privily; and Ares gave her many gifts, and dishonoured the marriage bed of the lord Hephaestus. And anon there came to him one to report the thing, even Helios, that had seen them at their pastime. Now when Hephaestus heard the bitter tidings, he went his way to the forge, devising evil in the deep of his heart, and set the great anvil on the stithy, and wrought fetters that none might snap or loosen, that the lovers might there unmoveably remain. Now when he had forged the crafty net in his anger against Ares, he went on his way to the chamber where his marriage bed was set out, and strewed his snares all about the posts of the bed, and many too were hung aloft from the main beam, subtle as spiders' webs, so that none might see them, even of the blessed gods: so cunningly were they forged. Now after he had done winding the snare about the bed, he made as though he would go to Lemnos, that stablished castle, and this was far the dearest of all lands in his sight. But Ares of the golden rein kept no blind watch, what time he saw Hephaestus, the famed craftsman, depart afar. So he went on his way to the house of renowned

Hephaestus, eager for the love of crowned Cytherea. Now she was but newly come from her sire, the mighty Cronion, and as it chanced had sat her down; and Ares entered the house, and clasped her hand, and spake, and hailed her:

‘Come, my beloved, let us to bed, and take our pleasure of love, for Hephaestus is no longer among his own people; methinks he is already gone to Lemnos, to the Sintians, men of savage speech.’

So spake he, and a glad thing it seemed to her to lie with him. So they twain went to the couch, and laid them to sleep, and around them clung the cunning bonds of skilled Hephaestus, so that they could not move nor raise a limb. Then at the last they knew it, when there was no way to flee. Now the famous god of the strong arms drew near to them, having turned him back ere he reached the land of Lemnos. For Helios had kept watch, and told him all. So heavy at heart he went his way to his house, and stood at the entering in of the gate, and wild rage gat hold of him, and he cried terribly, and shouted to all the gods:

‘Father Zeus, and ye other blessed gods, that live for ever, come hither, that ye may see a mirthful thing and a cruel, for that Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus, ever dishonours me by reason of my lameness, and sets her heart on Ares the destroyer, because he is fair and straight of limb, but as for me, feeble was I born. Howbeit, there is none to blame but my father and mother, — would they had never begotten me! But now shall ye see where these have gone up into my bed, and sleep together in love; and I am troubled at the sight. Yet, methinks, they will not care to lie thus even for a little while longer, despite their great love. Soon will they have no desire to sleep together, but the snare and the bond shall hold them, till her sire give back to me the gifts of wooing, one and all, those that I bestowed upon him for the hand of his shameless girl; for that his daughter is fair, but without discretion.’

So spake he; and lo, the gods gathered together to the house of the brazen floor. Poseidon came, the girdler of the earth, and Hermes came, the bringer of luck, and prince Apollo came, the archer. But the lady goddesses abode each within her house for shame. So the gods, the givers of good things, stood in the porch: and laughter unquenchable arose among the blessed gods, as they beheld the sleight of cunning Hephaestus. And thus would one speak, looking to his neighbour:

‘Ill deed, ill speed! The slow catcheth the swift! Lo, how Hephaestus, slow as he is, hath overtaken Ares, albeit he is the swiftest of the gods that hold Olympus, by his craft hath he taken him despite his lameness; wherefore surely Ares oweth the fine of the adulterer.’ Thus they spake one to the other. But the lord Apollo, son of Zeus, spake to Hermes:

‘Hermes, son of Zeus, messenger and giver of good things, wouldst thou be fain, aye, pressed by strong bonds though it might be, to lie on the couch by golden Aphrodite?’

Then the messenger, the slayer of Argos, answered him: ‘I would that this might be, Apollo, my prince of archery! So might thrice as many bonds innumerable encompass me about, and all ye gods be looking on and all the goddesses, yet would I lie by golden Aphrodite.’

So spake he, and laughter rose among the deathless gods.
Howbeit, Poseidon laughed not, but was instant with
Hephaestus, the renowned artificer, to loose the bonds of
Ares: and he uttered his voice, and spake to him winged
words:

‘Loose him, I pray thee, and I promise even as thou biddest me, that he shall himself pay all fair forfeit in the presence of the deathless gods.’

Then the famous god of the strong arms answered him: ‘Require not this of me, Poseidon, girdler of the earth. Evil are evil folk’s pledges to hold. How could I keep thee bound among the deathless gods, if Ares were to depart, avoiding the debt and the bond?’

Then Poseidon answered him, shaker of the earth: ‘Hephaestus, even if Ares avoid the debt and flee away, I myself will pay thee all.’

Then the famous god of the strong arms answered him: ‘It may not be that I should say thee nay, neither is it meet.’

Therewith the mighty Hephaestus loosed the bonds, and the twain, when they were freed from that strong bond, sprang up straightway, and departed, he to Thrace, but laughter-loving Aphrodite went to Paphos of Cyprus, where is her precinct and fragrant altar. There the Graces bathed and anointed her with oil imperishable, such as is laid upon the everlasting gods. And they clad her in lovely raiment, a wonder to see.

This was the song the famous minstrel sang; and Odysseus listened and was glad at heart, and likewise did the Phaeacians, of the long oars, those mariners renowned.

Then Alcinous bade Halius and Laodamas dance alone, for none ever contended with them. So when they had taken in their hands the goodly ball of purple hue, that cunning Polybus had wrought for them, the one would bend backwards, and throw it towards the shadowy clouds; and the other would leap upward from the earth, and catch it lightly in his turn, before his feet touched the ground. Now after they had made trial of throwing the ball straight up, the twain set to dance upon the bounteous earth, tossing the ball from hand to hand, and the other youths stood by the lists and beat time, and a great din uprose.

Then it was that goodly Odysseus spake unto Alcinous: ‘My lord Alcinous, most notable among all the people, thou didst boast thy dancers to be the best in the world, and lo, thy words are fulfilled; I wonder as I look on them.’

So spake he, and the mighty king Alcinous rejoiced and spake at once among the Phaeacians, masters of the oar:

‘Hearken ye, captains and counsellors of the Phaeacians, this stranger seems to me a wise man enough. Come then, let us give him a stranger’s gift, as is meet. Behold, there are twelve glorious princes who rule among this people and bear sway, and I myself am the thirteenth. Now each man among you bring a fresh robe and a doublet, and a talent of fine gold, and let us speedily carry all these gifts together, that the stranger may take them in his hands, and go to supper with a glad heart. As for Euryalus, let him yield amends to the man himself, with soft speech and with a gift, for his was no gentle saying.’

So spake he, and they all assented thereto, and would have it so. And each one sent forth his henchman to fetch his gift, and Euryalus answered the king and spake, saying:

‘My lord Alcinous, most notable among all the people, I will make atonement to thy guest according to thy word. I will give him a hanger all of bronze, with a silver hilt thereto, and a sheath of fresh-sawn ivory covers it about, and it shall be to him a thing of price.’

Therewith he puts into his hands the hanger dight with silver, and uttering his voice spake to him winged words: ‘Hail, stranger and father; and if aught grievous hath been spoken, may the storm-winds soon snatch and bear it away. But may the gods grant thee to see thy wife and to come to thine own country, for all too long has thou endured affliction away from thy friends.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘Thou too, my friend, all hail; and may the gods vouchsafe thee happiness, and mayst thou never miss this sword which thou hast given me, thou that with soft speech hast yielded me amends.’

He spake and hung about his shoulders the silver-studded sword. And the sun sank, and the noble gifts were brought him. Then the proud henchmen bare them to the palace of Alcinous, and the sons of noble Alcinous took the fair gifts, and set them by their reverend mother. And the mighty king Alcinous led the way, and they came in and sat them down on the high seats. And the mighty Alcinous spake unto Arete:

‘Bring me hither, my lady, a choice coffer, the best thou hast, and thyself place therein a fresh robe and a doublet, and heat for our guest a cauldron on the fire, and warm water, that after the bath the stranger may see all the gifts duly arrayed which the noble Phaeacians bare hither, and that he may have joy in the feast, and in hearing the song of the minstrelsy. Also I will give him a beautiful golden chalice of mine own, that he may be mindful of me all the days of his life when he poureth the drink-offering to Zeus and to the other gods.'

So spake he, and Arete bade her handmaids to set a great cauldron on the fire with what speed they might. And they set the cauldron for the filling of the bath on the blazing fire, and poured water therein, and took faggots and kindled them beneath. So the fire began to circle round the belly of the cauldron, and the water waxed hot. Meanwhile Arete brought forth for her guest the beautiful coffer from the treasure chamber, and bestowed fair gifts therein, raiment and gold, which the Phaeacians gave him. And with her own hands she placed therein a robe and goodly doublet, and uttering her voice spake to him winged words:

'Do thou now look to the lid, and quickly tie the knot, lest any man spoil thy goods by the way, when presently thou fallest on sweet sleep travelling in thy black ship.'

Now when the steadfast goodly Odysseus heard this saying, forthwith he fixed on the lid, and quickly tied the curious knot, which the lady Circe on a time had taught him. Then straightway the housewife bade him go to the bath and bathe him; and he saw the warm water and was glad, for he was not wont to be so cared for, from the day that he left the house of fair-tressed Calypso, but all that while he had comfort continually as a god.

Now after the maids had bathed him and anointed him with olive oil, and had cast a fair mantle and a doublet upon him, he stept forth from the bath, and went to be with the chiefs at their wine. And Nausicaa, dowered with beauty by the gods, stood by the pillar of the well-builded roof, and marvelled at Odysseus, beholding him before her eyes, and she uttered her voice and spake to him winged words:

'Farewell, stranger, and even in thine own country bethink thee of me upon a time, for that to me first thou owest the ransom of life.'

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: 'Nausicaa, daughter of great-hearted Alcinous, yea, may Zeus, the thunderer, the lord of Here, grant me to reach my home and see the day of my returning; so would I, even there, do thee worship as to a god, all my days for evermore, for thou, lady, hast given me my life.'

He spake and sat him in the high seat by king Alcinous. And now they were serving out the portions and mixing the wine. Then the henchmen drew nigh leading the sweet minstrel, Demodocus, that was had in honour of the people. So he set him in the midst of the feasters, and made him lean against a tall column. Then to the henchman spake Odysseus of many counsels, for he had cut off a portion of the chine of a white-toothed boar, whereon yet more was left, with rich fat on either side:

‘Lo, henchman, take this mess, and hand it to Demodocus, that he may eat, and I will bid him hail, despite my sorrow. For minstrels from all men on earth get their meed of honour and worship; inasmuch as the Muse teacheth them the paths of song, and loveth the tribe of minstrels.’

Thus he spake, and the henchman bare the mess, and set it upon the knees of the lord Demodocus, and he took it, and was glad at heart. Then they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer set before them. Now after they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, then Odysseus of many counsels spake to Demodocus, saying:

‘Demodocus, I praise thee far above all mortal men, whether it be the Muse, the daughter of Zeus, that taught thee, or even Apollo, for right duly dost thou chant the faring of the Achaeans, even all that they wrought and suffered, and all their travail, as if, methinks, thou hadst been present, or heard the tale from another. Come now, change thy strain, and sing of the fashioning of the horse of wood, which Epeius made by the aid of Athene, even the guileful thing, that goodly Odysseus led up into the citadel, when he had laden it with the men who wasted Ilios. If thou wilt indeed rehearse me this aright, so will I be thy witness among all men, how the god of his grace hath given thee the gift of wondrous song.’

So spake he, and the minstrel, being stirred by the god, began and showed forth his minstrelsy. He took up the tale where it tells how the Argives of the one part set fire to their huts, and went aboard their decked ships and sailed away, while those others, the fellowship of renowned Odysseus, were now seated in the assembly-place of the Trojans, all hidden in the horse, for the Trojans themselves had dragged him to the citadel. So the horse stood there, while seated all around him the people spake many things confusedly and three ways their counsel looked; either to cleave the hollow timber with the pitiless spear, or to drag it to the brow of the hill, and hurl it from the rocks, or to leave it as a mighty offering to appease the gods. And on this wise it was to be at the last. For the doom was on them to perish when their city should have closed upon the great horse of wood, wherein sat all the bravest of the Argives, bearing to the Trojans death and destiny. And he sang how the sons of the Achaeans poured forth from the horse, and left the hollow lair, and sacked the burg. And he sang how and where each man wasted the town, and of Odysseus, how he went like Ares to the house of Deiphobus with godlike Menelaus. It was there, he said, that Odysseus adventured the most grievous battle, and in the end prevailed, by grace of great-hearted Athene.

This was the song that the famous minstrel sang. But the heart of Odysseus melted, and the tear wet his cheeks beneath the eyelids. And as a woman throws herself wailing about her dear lord, who hath fallen before his city and the host, warding from his town and his children the pitiless day; and she beholds him dying and drawing difficult breath, and embracing his body wails aloud, while the foemen behind smite her with spears on back and shoulders and lead her up into bondage, to bear labour and trouble, and with the most pitiful grief her cheeks are wasted; even so pitifully fell the tears beneath the brows of Odysseus. Now none of all the company marked him weeping; but Alcinous alone noted it, and was ware thereof, as he sat nigh him and heard him groaning heavily. And presently he spake among the Phaeacians, masters of the oar:

‘Hearken, ye captains and counsellors of the Phaeacians, and now let Demodocus hold his hand from the loud lyre, for this song of his is nowise pleasing alike to all. From the time that we began to sup, and that the divine minstrel was moved to sing, ever since hath yonder stranger never ceased from woeful lamentation: sore grief, methinks, hath encompassed his heart. Nay, but let the minstrel cease, that we may all alike make merry, hosts and guest, since it is far meeter so. For all these things are ready for the sake of the honourable stranger, even the convoy and the loving gifts which we give him out of our love. In a brother’s place stand the stranger and the suppliant, to him whose wits have even a little range, wherefore do thou too hide not now with crafty purpose aught whereof I ask thee; it were more meet for thee to tell it out. Say, what is the name whereby they called thee at home, even thy father and thy mother, and others thy townsmen and the dwellers round about? For there is none of all mankind nameless, neither the mean man nor yet the noble, from the first hour of his birth, but parents bestow a name on every man so soon as he is born. Tell me too of thy land, thy township, and thy city, that our ships may conceive of their course to bring thee thither. For the Phaeacians have no pilots nor any rudders after the manner of other ships, but their barques themselves understand the thoughts and intents of men; they know the cities and fat fields of every people, and most swiftly they traverse the gulf of the salt sea, shrouded in mist and cloud, and never do they go in fear of wreck or ruin. Howbeit I heard upon a time this word thus spoken by my father Nausithous, who was wont to say that Poseidon was jealous of us for that we give safe escort to all men. He said that the god would some day smite a well-wrought ship of the Phaeacians as she came home from a convoy over the misty deep, and would overshadow our city with a great mountain. Thus that ancient one would speak, and thus the god may bring it about, or leave it undone, according to the good pleasure of his will. But come now, declare me this and plainly tell it all; whither wast thou borne wandering, and to what shores of men thou camest; tell me of the people and of their fair-lying cities, of those whoso are hard and wild and unjust, and of those likewise who are hospitable and of a god-fearing mind. Declare, too, wherefore thou dost weep and mourn in spirit at the tale of the faring of the Argive Danaans and the lay of Ilios. All this the gods have fashioned, and have woven the skein of death for men, that there might be a song in the ears even of the folk of aftertime. Hadst thou even a kinsman by marriage that fell before Ilios, a true man, a daughter’s husband or wife’s father, such as are nearest us after those of our own stock and blood? Or else, may be, some loving friend, a good man and true; for a friend with an understanding heart is no whit worse than a brother.’

BOOK IX

Odysseus relates, first, what befell him amongst the Cicones at Ismarus; secondly, amongst the Lotophagi; thirdly, how he was used by the Cyclops Polyphemus.

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘King Alcinous, most notable of all the people, verily it is a good thing to list to a minstrel such as this one, like to the gods in voice. Nay, as for me, I say that there is no more gracious or perfect delight than when a whole people makes merry, and the men sit orderly at feast in the halls and listen to the singer, and the tables by them are laden with bread and flesh, and a wine-bearer drawing the wine serves it round and pours it into the cups. This seems to me well-nigh the fairest thing in the world. But now thy heart was inclined to ask of my grievous troubles, that I may mourn for more exceeding sorrow. What then shall I tell of first, what last, for the gods of heaven have given me woes in plenty? Now, first, will I tell my name, that ye too may know it, and that I, when I have escaped the pitiless day, may yet be your host, though my home is in a far country. I am ODYSSEUS, SON OF LAERTES, who am in men’s minds for all manner of wiles, and my fame reaches unto heaven. And I dwell in clear-seen Ithaca, wherein is a mountain Neriton, with trembling forest leaves, standing manifest to view, and many islands lie around, very near one to the other, Dulichium and Same, and wooded Zacynthus. Now Ithaca lies low, furthest up the sea-line toward the darkness, but those others face the dawning and the sun: a rugged isle, but a good nurse of noble youths; and for myself I can see nought beside sweeter than a man’s own country. Verily Calypso, the fair goddess, would fain have kept me with her in her hollow caves, longing to have me for her lord; and likewise too, guileful Circe of Aia, would have stayed me in her halls, longing to have me for her lord. But never did they prevail upon my heart within my breast. So surely is there nought sweeter than a man’s own country and his parents, even though he dwell far off in a rich home, in a strange land, away from them that begat him. But come, let me tell thee too of the troubles of my journeying, which Zeus laid on me as I came from Troy.

‘The wind that bare me from Ilios brought me nigh to the Cicones, even to Ismarus, whereupon I sacked their city and slew the people. And from out the city we took their wives and much substance, and divided them amongst us, that none through me might go lacking his proper share. Howbeit, thereafter I commanded that we should flee with a swift foot, but my men in their great folly hearkened not. There was much wine still a drinking, and still they slew many flocks of sheep by the seashore and kine with trailing feet and shambling gait. Meanwhile the Cicones went and raised a cry to other Cicones their neighbours, dwelling inland, who were more in number than they and braver withal: skilled they were to fight with men from chariots, and when need was on foot. So they gathered in the early morning as thick as leaves and flowers that spring in their season — yea and in that hour an evil doom of Zeus stood by us, ill-fated men, that so we might be sore afflicted. They set their battle in array by the swift ships, and the hosts cast at one another with their bronze-shod spears. So long as it was morn and the sacred day waxed stronger, so long we abode their assault and beat them off, albeit they outnumbered us. But when the sun was wending to the time of the loosing of cattle, then at last the Cicones drave in the Achaeans and overcame them, and six of my goodly-greaved company perished from each ship: but the remnant of us escaped death and destiny.

‘Thence we sailed onward stricken at heart, yet glad as men saved from death, albeit we had lost our dear companions. Nor did my curved ships move onward ere we had called thrice on each of those our hapless fellows, who died at the hands of the Cicones on the plain. Now Zeus, gatherer of the clouds, aroused the North Wind against our ships with a terrible tempest, and covered land and sea alike with clouds, and down sped night from heaven. Thus the ships were driven headlong, and their sails were torn to shreds by the might of the wind. So we lowered the sails into the hold, in fear of death, but rowed the ships landward apace. There for two nights and two days we lay continually, consuming our hearts with weariness and sorrow. But when the fair-tressed Dawn had at last brought the full light of the third day, we set up the masts and hoisted the white sails and sat us down, while the wind and the helmsman guided the ships. And now I should have come to mine own country all unhurt, but the wave and the stream of the sea and the North Wind swept me from my course as I was doubling Malea, and drave me wandering past Cythera.

‘Thence for nine whole days was I borne by ruinous winds over the teeming deep; but on the tenth day we set foot on the land of the lotus-eaters, who eat a flowery food. So we stepped ashore and drew water, and straightway my company took their midday meal by the swift ships. Now when we had tasted meat and drink I sent forth certain of my company to go and make search what manner of men they were who here live upon the earth by bread, and I chose out two of my fellows, and sent a third with them as herald. Then straightway they went and mixed with the men of the lotus-eaters, and so it was that the lotus-eaters devised not death for our fellows, but gave them of the lotus to taste. Now whosoever of them did eat the honey-sweet fruit of the lotus, had no more wish to bring tidings nor to come back, but there he chose to abide with the lotus-eating men, ever feeding on the lotus, and forgetful of his homeward way. Therefore I led them back to the ships weeping, and sore against their will, and dragged them beneath the benches, and bound them in the hollow barques. But I commanded the rest of my well-loved company to make speed and go on board the swift ships, lest haply any should eat of the lotus and be forgetful of returning. Right soon they embarked, and sat upon the benches, and sitting orderly they smote the grey sea water with their oars.

‘Thence we sailed onward stricken at heart. And we came to the land of the Cyclopes, a froward and a lawless folk, who trusting to the deathless gods plant not aught with their hands, neither plough: but, behold, all these things spring for them in plenty, unsown and untilled, wheat, and barley, and vines, which bear great clusters of the juice of the grape, and the rain of Zeus gives them increase. These have neither gatherings for council nor oracles of law, but they dwell in hollow caves on the crests of the high hills, and each one utters the law to his children and his wives, and they reck not one of another.

‘Now there is a waste isle stretching without the harbour of the land of the Cyclopes, neither nigh at hand nor yet afar off, a woodland isle, wherein are wild goats unnumbered, for no path of men scares them, nor do hunters resort thither who suffer hardships in the wood, as they range the mountain crests. Moreover it is possessed neither by flocks nor by ploughed lands, but the soil lies unsown evermore and untilled, desolate of men, and feeds the bleating goats. For the Cyclopes have by them no ships with vermilion cheek, not yet are there shipwrights in the island, who might fashion decked barques, which should accomplish all their desire, voyaging to the towns of men (as ofttimes men cross the sea to one another in ships), who might likewise have made of their isle a goodly settlement. Yea, it is in no wise a sorry land, but would bear all things in their season; for therein are soft water meadows by the shores of the grey salt sea, and there the vines know no decay, and the land is level to plough; thence might they reap a crop exceeding deep in due season, for verily there is fatness beneath the soil. Also there is a fair haven, where is no need of moorings, either to cast anchor or to fasten hawsers, but men may run the ship on the beach, and tarry until such time as the sailors are minded to be gone, and favourable breezes blow. Now at the head of the harbour is a well of bright water issuing from a cave, and round it are poplars growing. Thither we sailed, and some god guided us through the night, for it was dark and there was no light to see, a mist lying deep about the ships, nor did the moon show her light from heaven, but was shut in with clouds. No man then beheld that island, neither saw we the long waves rolling to the beach, till we had run our decked ships ashore. And when our ships were beached, we took down all their sails, and ourselves too stept forth upon the strand of the sea, and there we fell into sound sleep and waited for the bright Dawn.

‘So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, in wonder at the island we roamed over the length thereof: and the Nymphs, the daughters of Zeus, lord of the aegis, started the wild goats of the hills, that my company might have wherewith to sup. Anon we took to us our curved bows from out the ships and long spears, and arrayed in three bands we began shooting at the goats; and the god soon gave us game in plenty. Now twelve ships bare me company, and to each ship fell nine goats for a portion, but for me alone they set ten apart.

‘Thus we sat there the livelong day until the going down of the sun, feasting on abundant flesh and on sweet wine. For the red wine was not yet spent from out the ships, but somewhat was yet therein, for we had each one drawn off large store thereof in jars, when we took the sacred citadel of the Cicones. And we looked across to the land of the Cyclopes, who dwell nigh, and to the smoke, and to the voice of the men, and of the sheep and of the goats. And when the sun had sunk and darkness had come on, then we laid us to rest upon the sea-beach. So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, then I called a gathering of my men, and spake among them all:

‘“Abide here all the rest of you, my dear companions; but I will go with mine own ship and my ship’s company, and make proof of these men, what manner of folk they are, whether froward, and wild, and unjust, or hospitable and of god-fearing mind.”

‘So I spake, and I climbed the ship’s side, and bade my company themselves to mount, and to loose the hawsers. So they soon embarked and sat upon the benches, and sitting orderly smote the grey sea water with their oars. Now when we had come to the land that lies hard by, we saw a cave on the border near to the sea, lofty and roofed over with laurels, and there many flocks of sheep and goats were used to rest. And about it a high outer court was built with stones, deep bedded, and with tall pines and oaks with their high crown of leaves. And a man was wont to sleep therein, of monstrous size, who shepherded his flocks alone and afar, and was not conversant with others, but dwelt apart in lawlessness of mind. Yea, for he was a monstrous thing and fashioned marvellously, nor was he like to any man that lives by bread, but like a wooded peak of the towering hills, which stands out apart and alone from others.

‘Then I commanded the rest of my well-loved company to tarry there by the ship, and to guard the ship, but I chose out twelve men, the best of my company, and sallied forth. Now I had with me a goat-skin of the dark wine and sweet which Maron, son of Euanthes, had given me, the priest of Apollo, the god that watched over Ismarus. And he gave it, for that we had protected him with his wife and child reverently; for he dwelt in a thick grove of Phoebus Apollo. And he made me splendid gifts; he gave me seven talents of gold well wrought, and he gave me a mixing bowl of pure silver, and furthermore wine which he drew off in twelve jars in all, sweet wine unmingled, a draught divine; nor did any of his servants or of his handmaids in the house know thereof, but himself and his dear wife and one housedame only. And as often as they drank that red wine honey sweet, he would fill one cup and pour it into twenty measures of water, and a marvellous sweet smell went up from the mixing bowl: then truly it was no pleasure to refrain.

‘With this wine I filled a great skin, and bare it with me, and corn too I put in a wallet, for my lordly spirit straightway had a boding that a man would come to me, a strange man, clothed in mighty strength, one that knew not judgment and justice. {*}

{* Literally, knowing neither dooms, nor ordinances of law.}

‘Soon we came to the cave, but we found him not within; he was shepherding his fat flocks in the pastures. So we went into the cave, and gazed on all that was therein. The baskets were well laden with cheeses, and the folds were thronged with lambs and kids; each kind was penned by itself, the firstlings apart, and the summer lambs apart, apart too the younglings of the flock. Now all the vessels swam with whey, the milk-pails and the bowls, the well-wrought vessels whereinto he milked. My company then spake and besought me first of all to take of the cheeses and to return, and afterwards to make haste and drive off the kids and lambs to the swift ships from out the pens, and to sail over the salt sea water. Howbeit I hearkened not (and far better would it have been), but waited to see the giant himself, and whether he would give me gifts as a stranger’s due. Yet was not his coming to be with joy to my company.

‘Then we kindled a fire, and made burnt-offering, and ourselves likewise took of the cheeses, and did eat, and sat waiting for him within till he came back, shepherding his flocks. And he bore a grievous weight of dry wood, against supper time. This log he cast down with a din inside the cave, and in fear we fled to the secret place of the rock. As for him, he drave his fat flocks into the wide cavern, even all that he was wont to milk; but the males both of the sheep and of the goats he left without in the deep yard. Thereafter he lifted a huge doorstone and weighty, and set it in the mouth of the cave, such an one as two and twenty good four-wheeled wains could not raise from the ground, so mighty a sheer rock did he set against the doorway. Then he sat down and milked the ewes and bleating goats, all orderly, and beneath each ewe he placed her young. And anon he curdled one half of the white milk, and massed it together, and stored it in wicker-baskets, and the other half he let stand in pails, that he might have it to take and drink against supper time. Now when he had done all his work busily, then he kindled the fire anew, and espied us, and made question:

'"Strangers, who are ye? Whence sail ye over the wet ways? On some trading enterprise or at adventure do ye rove, even as sea-robbers over the brine, for at hazard of their own lives they wander, bringing bale to alien men."

'So spake he, but as for us our heart within us was broken for terror of the deep voice and his own monstrous shape; yet despite all I answered and spake unto him, saying:

'"Lo, we are Achaeans, driven wandering from Troy, by all manner of winds over the great gulf of the sea; seeking our homes we fare, but another path have we come, by other ways: even such, methinks, was the will and the counsel of Zeus. And we avow us to be the men of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, whose fame is even now the mightiest under heaven, so great a city did he sack, and destroyed many people; but as for us we have lighted here, and come to these thy knees, if perchance thou wilt give us a stranger's gift, or make any present, as is the due of strangers. Nay, lord, have regard to the gods, for we are thy suppliants; and Zeus is the avenger of suppliants and sojourners, Zeus, the god of the stranger, who fareth in the company of reverend strangers."

'So I spake, and anon he answered out of his pitiless heart: "Thou art witless, my stranger, or thou hast come from afar, who biddest me either to fear or shun the gods. For the Cyclopes pay no heed to Zeus, lord of the aegis, nor to the blessed gods, for verily we are better men than they. Nor would I, to shun the enmity of Zeus, spare either thee or thy company, unless my spirit bade me. But tell me where thou didst stay thy well-wrought ship on thy coming? Was it perchance at the far end of the island, or hard by, that I may know?"

'So he spake tempting me, but he cheated me not, who knew full much, and I answered him again with words of guile:

'"As for my ship, Poseidon, the shaker of the earth, brake it to pieces, for he cast it upon the rocks at the border of your country, and brought it nigh the headland, and a wind bare it thither from the sea. But I with these my men escaped from utter doom."

'So I spake, and out of his pitiless heart he answered me not a word, but sprang up, and laid his hands upon my fellows, and clutching two together dashed them, as they had been whelps, to the earth, and the brain flowed forth upon the ground, and the earth was wet. Then cut he them up piecemeal, and made ready his supper. So he ate even as a mountain-bred lion, and ceased not, devouring entrails and flesh and bones with their marrow. And we wept and raised our hands to Zeus, beholding the cruel deeds; and we were at our wits' end. And after the Cyclops had filled his huge maw with human flesh and the milk he drank thereafter, he lay within the cave, stretched out among his sheep.

'So I took counsel in my great heart, whether I should draw near, and pluck my sharp sword from my thigh, and stab him in the breast, where the midriff holds the liver, feeling for the place with my hand. But my second thought withheld me, for so should we too have perished even there with utter doom. For we should not have prevailed to roll away with our hands from the lofty door the heavy stone which he set there. So for that time we made moan, awaiting the bright Dawn.

'Now when early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, again he kindled the fire and milked his goodly flocks all orderly, and beneath each ewe set her lamb. Anon when he had done all his work busily, again he seized yet other two men and made ready his mid-day meal. And after the meal, lightly he moved away the great doorstone, and drave his fat flocks forth from the cave, and afterwards he set it in his place again, as one might set the lid on a quiver. Then with a loud whoop, the Cyclops turned his fat flocks towards the hills; but I was left devising evil in the deep of my heart, if in any wise I might avenge me, and Athene grant me renown.

'And this was the counsel that showed best in my sight. There lay by a sheep-fold a great club of the Cyclops, a club of olive wood, yet green, which he had cut to carry with him when it should be seasoned. Now when we saw it we likened it in size to the mast of a black ship of twenty oars, a wide merchant vessel that traverses the great sea gulf, so huge it was to view in bulk and length. I stood thereby and cut off from it a portion as it were a fathom's length, and set it by my fellows, and bade them fine it down, and they made it even, while I stood by and sharpened it to a point, and straightway I took it and hardened it in the bright fire. Then I laid it well away, and hid it beneath the dung, which was scattered in great heaps in the depths of the cave. And I bade my company cast lots among them, which of them should risk the adventure with me, and lift the bar and turn it about in his eye, when sweet sleep came upon him. And the lot fell upon those four whom I myself would have been fain to choose, and I appointed myself to be the fifth among them. In the evening he came shepherding his flocks of goodly fleece, and presently he drave his fat flocks into the cave each and all, nor left he any without in the deep court-yard, whether through some foreboding, or perchance that the god so bade him do. Thereafter he lifted the huge doorstone and set it in the mouth of the cave, and sitting down he milked the ewes and bleating goats, all orderly, and beneath each ewe he placed her young. Now when he had done all his work busily, again he seized yet other two and made ready his supper. Then I stood by the Cyclops and spake to him, holding in my hands an ivy bowl of the dark wine:

'"Cyclops, take and drink wine after thy feast of man's meat, that thou mayest know what manner of drink this was that our ship held. And lo, I was bringing it thee as a drink offering, if haply thou mayest take pity and send me on my way home, but thy mad rage is past all sufferance. O hard of heart, how may another of the many men there be come ever to thee again, seeing that thy deeds have been lawless?"

'So I spake, and he took the cup and drank it off, and found great delight in drinking the sweet draught, and asked me for it yet a second time:

'"Give it me again of thy grace, and tell me thy name straightway, that I may give thee a stranger's gift, wherein thou mayest be glad. Yea for the earth, the grain-giver, bears for the Cyclopes the mighty clusters of the juice of the grape, and the rain of Zeus gives them increase, but this is a rill of very nectar and ambrosia."

'So he spake, and again I handed him the dark wine. Thrice I bare and gave it him, and thrice in his folly he drank it to the lees. Now when the wine had got about the wits of the Cyclops, then did I speak to him with soft words:

'"Cyclops, thou askest me my renowned name, and I will declare it unto thee, and do thou grant me a stranger's gift, as thou didst promise. Noman is my name, and Noman they call me, my father and my mother and all my fellows."

'So I spake, and straightway he answered me out of his pitiless heart:

'"Noman will I eat last in the number of his fellows, and the others before him: that shall be thy gift."

'Therewith he sank backwards and fell with face upturned, and there he lay with his great neck bent round, and sleep, that conquers all men, overcame him. And the wine and the fragments of men's flesh issued forth from his mouth, and he vomited, being heavy with wine. Then I thrust in that stake under the deep ashes, until it should grow hot, and I spake to my companions comfortable words, lest any should hang back from me in fear. But when that bar of olive wood was just about to catch fire in the flame, green though it was, and began to glow terribly, even then I came nigh, and drew it from the coals, and my fellows gathered about me, and some god breathed great courage into us. For their part they seized the bar of olive wood, that was sharpened at the point, and thrust it into his eye, while I from my place aloft turned it about, as when a man bores a ship's beam with a drill while his fellows below spin it with a strap, which they hold at either end, and the auger runs round continually. Even so did we seize the fiery-pointed brand and whirled it round in his eye, and the blood flowed about the heated bar. And the breath of the flame singed his eyelids and brows all about, as the ball of the eye burnt away, and the roots thereof crackled in the flame. And as when a smith dips an axe or adze in chill water with a great hissing, when he would temper it — for hereby anon comes the strength of iron — even so did his eye hiss round the stake of olive. And he raised a great and terrible cry, that the rock rang around, and we fled away in fear, while he plucked forth from his eye the brand bedabbled in much blood. Then maddened with pain he cast it from him with his hands, and called with a loud voice on the Cyclopes, who dwelt about him in the caves along the windy heights. And they heard the cry and flocked together from every side, and gathering round the cave asked him what ailed him:

'"What hath so distressed thee, Polyphemus, that thou criest thus aloud through the immortal night, and makest us sleepless? Surely no mortal driveth off thy flocks against thy will: surely none slayeth thyself by force or craft?"

'And the strong Polyphemus spake to them again from out the cave: "My friends, Noman is slaying me by guile, nor at all by force."

'And they answered and spake winged words: "If then no man is violently handling thee in thy solitude, it can in no wise be that thou shouldest escape the sickness sent by mighty Zeus. Nay, pray thou to thy father, the lord Poseidon."

'On this wise they spake and departed; and my heart within me laughed to see how my name and cunning counsel had beguiled them. But the Cyclops, groaning and travailing in pain, groped with his hands, and lifted away the stone from the door of the cave, and himself sat in the entry, with arms outstretched to catch, if he might, any one that was going forth with his sheep, so witless, methinks, did he hope to find me. But I advised me how all might be for the very best, if perchance I might find a way of escape from death for my companions and myself, and I wove all manner of craft and counsel, as a man will for his life, seeing that great mischief was nigh. And this was the counsel that showed best in my sight. The rams of the flock were well nurtured and thick of fleece, great and goodly, with wool dark as the violet. Quietly I lashed them together with twisted withies, whereon the Cyclops slept, that lawless monster. Three together I took: now the middle one of the three would bear each a man, but the other twain went on either side, saving my fellows. Thus every three sheep bare their man. But as for me I laid hold of the back of a young ram who was far the best and the goodliest of all the flock, and curled beneath his shaggy belly there I lay, and so clung face upward, grasping the wondrous fleece with a steadfast heart. So for that time making moan we awaited the bright Dawn.

'So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, then did the rams of the flock hasten forth to pasture, but the ewes bleated unmilked about the pens, for their udders were swollen to bursting. Then their lord, sore stricken with pain, felt along the backs of all the sheep as they stood up before him, and guessed not in his folly how that my men were bound beneath the breasts of his thick-fleeced flocks. Last of all the sheep came forth the ram, cumbered with his wool, and the weight of me and my cunning. And the strong Polyphemus laid his hands on him and spake to him saying:

'"Dear ram, wherefore, I pray thee, art thou the last of all the flocks to go forth from the cave, who of old wast not wont to lag behind the sheep, but wert ever the foremost to pluck the tender blossom of the pasture, faring with long strides, and wert still the first to come to the streams of the rivers, and first did long to return to the homestead in the evening? But now art thou the very last. Surely thou art sorrowing for the eye of thy lord, which an evil man blinded, with his accursed fellows, when he had subdued my wits with wine, even Noman, whom I say hath not yet escaped destruction. Ah, if thou couldst feel as I, and be endued with speech, to tell me where he shifts about to shun my wrath; then should he be smitten, and his brains be dashed against the floor here and there about the cave, and my heart be lightened of the sorrows which Noman, nothing worth, hath brought me!"

'Therewith he sent the ram forth from him, and when we had gone but a little way from the cave and from the yard, first I loosed myself from under the ram and then I set my fellows free. And swiftly we drave on those stiff-shanked sheep, so rich in fat, and often turned to look about, till we came to the ship. And a glad sight to our fellows were we that had fled from death, but the others they would have bemoaned with tears; howbeit I suffered it not, but with frowning brows forbade each man to weep. Rather I bade them to cast on board the many sheep with goodly fleece, and to sail over the salt sea water. So they embarked forthwith, and sate upon the benches, and sitting orderly smote the grey sea water with their oars. But when I had not gone so far, but that a man's shout might be heard, then I spoke unto the Cyclops taunting him:

'"Cyclops, so thou wert not to eat the company of a weakling by main might in thy hollow cave! Thine evil deeds were very sure to find thee out, thou cruel man, who hadst no shame to eat thy guests within thy gates, wherefore Zeus hath requited thee, and the other gods."

'So I spake, and he was mightily angered at heart, and he brake off the peak of a great hill and threw it at us, and it fell in front of the dark-prowed ship. {*} And the sea heaved beneath the fall of the rock, and the backward flow of the wave bare the ship quickly to the dry land, with the wash from the deep sea, and drave it to the shore. Then I caught up a long pole in my hands, and thrust the ship from off the land, and roused my company, and with a motion of the head bade them dash in with their oars, that so we might escape our evil plight. So they bent to their oars and rowed on. But when we had now made twice the distance over the brine, I would fain have spoken to the Cyclops, but my company stayed me on every side with soft words, saying:

{* We have omitted line 483, as required by the sense. It is introduced here from line 540.}

'"Foolhardy that thou art, why wouldst thou rouse a wild man to wrath, who even now hath cast so mighty a throw towards the deep and brought our ship back to land, yea and we thought that we had perished {*} even there? If he had heard any of us utter sound or speech he would have crushed our heads and our ship timbers with a cast of a rugged stone, so mightily he hurls."

{* Neither in this passage nor in B ii.171 nor in B xx.121 do we think that the aorist infinitive after a verb of saying can bear a future sense. The aorist infinitive after [Greek] (ii.280, vii.76) is hardly an argument in its favour; the infinitive there is in fact a noun in the genitive case.}

'So spake they, but they prevailed not on my lordly spirit, and I answered him again from out an angry heart:

'"Cyclops, if any one of mortal men shall ask thee of the unsightly blinding of thine eye, say that it was Odysseus that blinded it, the waster of cities, son of Laertes, whose dwelling is in Ithaca."

'So I spake, and with a moan he answered me, saying:

'"Lo now, in very truth the ancient oracles have come upon me. There lived here a soothsayer, a noble man and a mighty, Telemus, son of Eurymus, who surpassed all men in soothsaying, and waxed old as a seer among the Cyclopes. He told me that all these things should come to pass in the aftertime, even that I should lose my eyesight at the hand of Odysseus. But I ever looked for some tall and goodly man to come hither, clad in great might, but behold now one that is a dwarf, a man of no worth and a weakling, hath blinded me of my eye after subduing me with wine. Nay come hither, Odysseus, that I may set by thee a stranger's cheer, and speed thy parting hence, that so the Earth-shaker may vouchsafe it thee, for his son am I, and he avows him for my father. And he himself will heal me, if it be his will; and none other of the blessed gods or of mortal men."

'Even so he spake, but I answered him, and said: "Would god that I were as sure to rob thee of soul and life, and send thee within the house of Hades, as I am that not even the Earth-shaker will heal thine eye!"

'So I spake, and then he prayed to the lord Poseidon stretching forth his hands to the starry heaven: "Hear me, Poseidon, girdler of the earth, god of the dark hair, if indeed I be thine, and thou avowest thee my sire, — grant that he may never come to his home, even Odysseus, waster of cities, the son of Laertes, whose dwelling is in Ithaca; yet if he is ordained to see his friends and come unto his well-builded house, and his own country, late may he come in evil case, with the loss of all his company, in the ship of strangers, and find sorrows in his house.”

‘So he spake in prayer, and the god of the dark locks heard him. And once again he lifted a stone, far greater than the first, and with one swing he hurled it, and he put forth a measureless strength, and cast it but a little space behind the dark-prowed ship, and all but struck the end of the rudder. And the sea heaved beneath the fall of the rock, but the wave bare on the ship and drave it to the further shore.

‘But when he had now reached that island, where all our other decked ships abode together, and our company were gathered sorrowing, expecting us evermore, on our coming thither we ran our ship ashore upon the sand, and ourselves too stept forth upon the sea beach. Next we took forth the sheep of the Cyclops from out the hollow ship, and divided them, that none through me might go lacking his proper share. But the ram for me alone my goodly-greaved company chose out, in the dividing of the sheep, and on the shore I offered him up to Zeus, even to the son of Cronos, who dwells in the dark clouds, and is lord of all, and I burnt the slices of the thighs. But he heeded not the sacrifice, but was devising how my decked ships and my dear company might perish utterly. Thus for that time we sat the livelong day, until the going down of the sun, feasting on abundant flesh and sweet wine. And when the sun had sunk and darkness had come on, then we laid us to rest upon the sea beach. So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, I called to my company, and commanded them that they should themselves climb the ship and loose the hawsers. So they soon embarked and sat upon the benches, and sitting orderly smote the grey sea water with their oars.

‘Thence we sailed onward stricken at heart, yet glad as men saved from death, albeit we had lost our dear companions.

BOOK X

Odysseus, his entertainment by Aeolus, of whom he received a fair wind for the present, and all the rest of the winds tied up in a bag; which his men untying, flew out, and carried him back to Aeolus, who refused to receive him. His adventure at Laestrygonia with Antiphates, where of twelve ships he lost eleven, men and all. How he went thence to the Isle of Aea, where half of his men were turned by Circe into swine, and how he went himself, and by the help of Hermes recovered them and stayed with Circe a year.

‘Then we came to the isle Aeolian, where dwelt Aeolus, son of Hippotas, dear too the deathless gods, in a floating island, and all about it is a wall of bronze unbroken, and the cliff runs up sheer from the sea. His twelve children to abide there in his halls, six daughters and six lusty sons; and, behold, he gave his daughters to his sons to wife. And they feast evermore by their dear father and their kind mother, and dainties innumerable lie ready to their hands. And the house is full of the savour of feasting, and the noise thereof rings round, yea in the courtyard, by day, and in the night they sleep each one by his chaste wife in coverlets and on jointed bedsteads. So then we came to their city and their goodly dwelling, and the king entreated me kindly for a whole month, and sought out each thing, Ilios and the ships of the Argives, and the return of the Achaeans. So I told him all the tale in order duly. But when I in turn took the word and asked of my journey, and bade him send me on my way, he too denied me not, but furnished an escort. He gave me a wallet, made of the hide of an ox of nine seasons old, which he let flay, and therein he bound the ways of all the noisy winds; for him the son of Cronos made keeper of the winds, either to lull or to rouse what blasts he will. And he made it fast in the hold of the ship with a shining silver thong, that not the faintest breath might escape. Then he sent forth the blast of the West Wind to blow for me, to bear our ships and ourselves upon our way; but this he was never to bring to pass, for we were undone through our own heedlessness.

‘For nine whole days we sailed by night and day continually, and now on the tenth day my native land came in sight, and already we were so near that we beheld the folk tending the beacon fires. Then over me there came sweet slumber in my weariness, for all the time I was holding the sheet, nor gave it to any of my company, that so we might come quicker to our own country. Meanwhile my company held converse together, and said that I was bringing home for myself gold and silver, gifts from Aeolus the high-hearted son of Hippotas. And thus would they speak looking each man to his neighbour:

‘“Lo now, how beloved he is and highly esteemed among all men, to the city and land of whomsoever he may come. Many are the goodly treasures he taketh with him out of the spoil from Troy, while we who have fulfilled like journeying with him return homeward bringing with us but empty hands. And now Aeolus hath given unto him these things freely in his love. Nay come, let us quickly see what they are, even what wealth of gold and silver is in the wallet.”

‘So they spake, and the evil counsel of my company prevailed. They loosed the wallet, and all the winds brake forth. And the violent blast seized my men, and bare them towards the high seas weeping, away from their own country; but as for me, I awoke and communed with my great heart, whether I should cast myself from the ship and perish in the deep, or endure in silence and abide yet among the living. Howbeit I hardened my heart to endure, and muffling my head I lay still in the ship. But the vessels were driven by the evil storm-wind back to the isle Aeolian, and my company made moan.

‘There we stepped ashore and drew water, and my company presently took their midday meal by the swift ships. Now when we had tasted bread and wine, I took with me a herald and one of my company, and went to the famous dwelling of Aeolus: and I found him feasting with his wife and children. So we went in and sat by the pillars of the door on the threshold, and they all marvelled and asked us:

‘“How hast thou come hither, Odysseus? What evil god assailed thee? Surely we sent thee on thy way with all diligence, that thou mightest get thee to thine own country and thy home, and whithersoever thou wouldest.”

‘Even so they said, but I spake among them heavy at heart: “My evil company hath been my bane, and sleep thereto remorseless. Come, my friends, do ye heal the harm, for yours is the power.”

‘So I spake, beseeching them in soft words, but they held their peace. And the father answered, saying: “Get thee forth from the island straightway, thou that art the most reprobate of living men. Far be it from me to help or to further that man whom the blessed gods abhor! Get thee forth, for lo, thy coming marks thee hated by the deathless gods.”

‘Therewith he sent me forth from the house making heavy moan. Thence we sailed onwards stricken at heart. And the spirit of the men was spent beneath the grievous rowing by reason of our vain endeavour, for there was no more any sign of a wafting wind. So for the space of six days we sailed by night and day continually, and on the seventh we came to the steep stronghold of Lamos, Telepylos of the Laestrygons, where herdsman hails herdsman as he drives in his flock, and the other who drives forth answers the call. There might a sleepless man have earned a double wage, the one as neat-herd, the other shepherding white flocks: so near are the outgoings of the night and of the day. Thither when he had come to the fair haven, whereabout on both sides goes one steep cliff unbroken and jutting headlands over against each other stretch forth at the mouth of the harbour, and strait is the entrance; thereinto all the others steered their curved ships. Now the vessels were bound within the hollow harbour each hard by other, for no wave ever swelled within it, great or small, but there was a bright calm all around. But I alone moored my dark ship without the harbour, at the uttermost point thereof, and made fast the hawser to a rock. And I went up a craggy hill, a place of out-look, and stood thereon: thence there was no sign of the labour of men or oxen, only we saw the smoke curling upward from the land. Then I sent forth certain of my company to go and search out what manner of men they were who here live upon the earth by bread, choosing out two of my company and sending a third with them as herald. Now when they had gone ashore, they went along a level road whereby wains were wont to draw down wood from the high hills to the town. And without the town they fell in with a damsel drawing water, the noble daughter of Laestrygonian Antiphates. She had come down to the clear-flowing spring Artacia, for thence it was custom to draw water to the town. So they stood by her and spake unto her, and asked who was king of that land, and who they were he ruled over. Then at once she showed them the high-roofed hall of her father. Now when they had entered the renowned house, they found his wife therein: she was huge of bulk as a mountain peak and was loathly in their sight. Straightway she called the renowned Antiphates, her lord, from the assembly-place, and he contrived a pitiful destruction for my men. Forthwith he clutched up one of my company and made ready his midday meal, but the other twain sprang up and came in flight to the ships. Then he raised the war cry through the town, and the valiant Laestrygons at the sound thereof, flocked together from every side, a host past number, not like men but like the Giants. They cast at us from the cliffs with great rocks, each of them a man’s burden, and anon there arose from the fleet an evil din of men dying and ships shattered withal. And like folk spearing fishes they bare home their hideous meal. While as yet they were slaying my friends within the deep harbour, I drew my sharp sword from my thigh, and with it cut the hawsers of my dark-prowed ship. Quickly then I called to my company, and bade them dash in with the oars, that we might clean escape this evil plight. And all with one accord they tossed the sea water with the oar-blade, in dread of death, and to my delight my barque flew forth to the high seas away from the beetling rocks, but those other ships were lost there, one and all.

‘Thence we sailed onward stricken at heart, yet glad as men saved from death, albeit we had lost our dear companions. And we came to the isle Aeaean, where dwelt Circe of the braided tresses, an awful goddess of mortal speech, own sister to the wizard Aeetes. Both were begotten of Helios, who gives light to all men, and their mother was Perse, daughter of Oceanus. There on the shore we put in with our ship into the sheltering haven silently, and some god was our guide. Then we stept ashore, and for two days and two nights lay there, consuming our own hearts for weariness and pain. But when now the fair-tressed Dawn had brought the full light of the third day, then did I seize my spear and my sharp sword, and quickly departing from the ship I went up unto a place of wide prospect, if haply I might see any sign of the labour of men and hear the sound of their speech. So I went up a craggy hill, a place of out-look, and I saw the smoke rising from the broad-wayed earth in the halls of Circe, through the thick coppice and the woodland. Then I mused in my mind and heart whether I should go and make discovery, for that I had seen the smoke and flame. And as I thought thereon this seemed to me the better counsel, to go first to the swift ship and to the sea-banks, and give my company their midday meal, and then send them to make search. But as I came and drew nigh to the curved ship, some god even then took pity on me in my loneliness, and sent a tall antlered stag across my very path. He was coming down from his pasture in the woodland to the river to drink, for verily the might of the sun was sore upon him. And as he came up from out of the stream, I smote him on the spine in the middle of the back, and the brazen shaft went clean through him, and with a moan he fell in the dust, and his life passed from him. Then I set my foot on him and drew forth the brazen shaft from the wound, and laid it hard by upon the ground and let it lie. Next I broke withies and willow twigs, and wove me a rope a fathom in length, well twisted from end to end, and bound together the feet of the huge beast, and went to the black ship bearing him across my neck, and leaning on a spear, for it was in no wise possible to carry him on my shoulder with the one hand, for he was a mighty quarry. And I threw him down before the ship and roused my company with soft words, standing by each man in turn:

'"Friends, for all our sorrows we shall not yet a while go down to the house of Hades, ere the coming of the day of destiny; go to then, while as yet there is meat and drink in the swift ship, let us take thought thereof, that we be not famished for hunger."

'Even so I spake, and they speedily hearkened to my words. They unmuffled their heads, and there on the shore of the unharvested sea gazed at the stag, for he was a mighty quarry. But after they had delighted their eyes with the sight of him, they washed their hands and got ready the glorious feast. So for that time we sat the livelong day till the going down of the sun, feasting on abundant flesh and sweet wine. But when the sun sank and darkness had come on, then we laid us to rest upon the sea beach. So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, I called a gathering of my men and spake in the ears of them all:

'"Hear my works, my fellows, despite your evil case. My friends, lo, now we know not where is the place of darkness or of dawning, nor where the Sun, that gives light to men, goes beneath the earth, nor where he rises; therefore let us advise us speedily if any counsel yet may be: as for me, I deem there is none. For I went up a craggy hill, a place of out-look, and saw the island crowned about with the circle of the endless sea, the isle itself lying low; and in the midst thereof mine eyes beheld the smoke through the thick coppice and the woodland."

'Even so I spake, but their spirit within them was broken, as they remembered the deeds of Antiphates the Laestrygonian, and all the evil violence of the haughty Cyclops, the man-eater. So they wept aloud shedding big tears. Howbeit no avail came of their weeping.

'Then I numbered my goodly-greaved company in two bands, and appointed a leader for each, and I myself took the command of the one part, and godlike Eurylochus of the other. And anon we shook the lots in a brazen-fitted helmet, and out leapt the lot of proud Eurylochus. So he went on his way, and with him two and twenty of my fellowship all weeping; and we were left behind making lament. In the forest glades they found the halls of Circe builded, of polished stone, in a place with wide prospect. And all around the palace mountain-bred wolves and lions were roaming, whom she herself had bewitched with evil drugs that she gave them. Yet the beasts did not set on my men, but lo, they ramped about them and fawned on them, wagging their long tails. And as when dogs fawn about their lord when he comes from the feast, for he always brings them the fragments that soothe their mood, even so the strong-clawed wolves and the lions fawned around them; but they were affrighted when they saw the strange and terrible creatures. So they stood at the outer gate of the fair-tressed goddess, and within they heard Circe singing in a sweet voice, as she fared to and fro before the great web imperishable, such as is the handiwork of goddesses, fine of woof and full of grace and splendour. Then Polites, a leader of men, the dearest to me and the trustiest of all my company, first spake to them:

'"Friends, forasmuch as there is one within that fares to and fro before a mighty web singing a sweet song, so that all the floor of the hall makes echo, a goddess she is or a woman; come quickly and cry aloud to her."

'He spake the word and they cried aloud and called to her. And straightway she came forth and opened the shining doors and bade them in, and all went with her in their heedlessness. But Eurylochus tarried behind, for he guessed that there was some treason. So she led them in and set them upon chairs and high seats, and made them a mess of cheese and barley-meal and yellow honey with Pramnian wine, and mixed harmful drugs with the food to make them utterly forget their own country. Now when she had given them the cup and they had drunk it off, presently she smote them with a wand, and in the styes of the swine she penned them. So they had the head and voice, the bristles and the shape of swine, but their mind abode even as of old. Thus were they penned there weeping, and Circe flung them acorns and mast and fruit of the cornel tree to eat, whereon wallowing swine do always batten.

‘Now Eurylochus came back to the swift black ship to bring tidings of his fellows, and of their unseemly doom. Not a word could he utter, for all his desire, so deeply smitten was he to the heart with grief, and his eyes were filled with tears and his soul was fain of lamentation. But when we all had pressed him with our questions in amazement, even then he told the fate of the remnant of our company.

‘“We went, as thou didst command, through the coppice, noble Odysseus: we found within the forest glades the fair halls, builded of polished stone, in a place with wide prospect. And there was one that fared before a mighty web and sang a clear song, a goddess she was or a woman, and they cried aloud and called to her. And straightway she came forth, and opened the shining doors and bade them in, and they all went with her in their heedlessness. But I tarried behind, for I guessed that there was some treason. Then they vanished away one and all, nor did any of them appear again, though I sat long time watching.”

‘So spake he, whereon I cast about my shoulder my silver-studded sword, a great blade of bronze, and slung my bow about me and bade him lead me again by the way that he came. But he caught me with both hands, and by my knees he besought me, and bewailing him spake to me winged words:

‘“Lead me not thither against my will, oh fosterling of Zeus, but leave me here! For well I know thou shalt thyself return no more, nor bring any one of all thy fellowship; nay, let us flee the swifter with those that be here, for even yet may we escape the evil day.”

‘On this wise he spake, but I answered him, saying: “Eurylochus, abide for thy part here in this place, eating and drinking by the black hollow ship: but I will go forth, for a strong constraint is laid on me.”

‘With that I went up from the ship and the sea-shore. But lo, when in my faring through the sacred glades I was now drawing near to the great hall of the enchantress Circe, then did Hermes, of the golden wand, meet me as I approached the house, in the likeness of a young man with the first down on his lip, the time when youth is most gracious. So he clasped my hand and spake and hailed me:

‘“Ah, hapless man, whither away again, all alone through the wolds, thou that knowest not this country? And thy company yonder in the hall of Circe are penned in the guise of swine, in their deep lairs abiding. Is it in hope to free them that thou art come hither? Nay, methinks, thou thyself shalt never return but remain there with the others. Come then, I will redeem thee from thy distress, and bring deliverance. Lo, take this herb of virtue, and go to the dwelling of Circe, that it may keep from thy head the evil day. And I will tell thee all the magic sleight of Circe. She will mix thee a potion and cast drugs into the mess; but not even so shall she be able to enchant thee; so helpful is this charmed herb that I shall give thee, and I will tell thee all. When it shall be that Circe smites thee with her long wand, even then draw thou thy sharp sword from thy thigh, and spring on her, as one eager to slay her. And she will shrink away and be instant with thee to lie with her. Thenceforth disdain not thou the bed of the goddess, that she may deliver thy company and kindly entertain thee. But command her to swear a mighty oath by the blessed gods, that she will plan nought else of mischief to thine own hurt, lest she make thee a dastard and unmanned, when she hath thee naked.”

‘Therewith the slayer of Argos gave me the plant that he had plucked from the ground, and he showed me the growth thereof. It was black at the root, but the flower was like to milk. Moly the gods call it, but it is hard for mortal men to dig; howbeit with the gods all things are possible.

‘Then Hermes departed toward high Olympus, up through the woodland isle, but as for me I held on my way to the house of Circe, and my heart was darkly troubled as I went. So I halted in the portals of the fair-tressed goddess; there I stood and called aloud and the goddess heard my voice, who presently came forth and opened the shining doors and bade me in, and I went with her heavy at heart. So she led me in and set me on a chair with studs of silver, a goodly carven chair, and beneath was a footstool for the feet. And she made me a potion in a golden cup, that I might drink, and she also put a charm therein, in the evil counsel of her heart.

‘Now when she had given it and I had drunk it off and was not bewitched, she smote me with her wand and spake and hailed me:

‘“Go thy way now to the stye, couch thee there with the rest of thy company.”

‘So spake she, but I drew my sharp sword from my thigh and sprang upon Circe, as one eager to slay her. But with a great cry she slipped under, and clasped my knees, and bewailing herself spake to me winged words:

‘“Who art thou of the sons of men, and whence? Where is thy city? Where are they that begat thee? I marvel to see how thou hast drunk of this charm, and wast nowise subdued. Nay, for there lives no man else that is proof against this charm, whoso hath drunk thereof, and once it hath passed his lips. But thou hast, methinks, a mind within thee that may not be enchanted. Verily thou art Odysseus, ready at need, whom he of the golden wand, the slayer of Argos, full often told me was to come hither, on his way from Troy with his swift black ship. Nay come, put thy sword into the sheath, and thereafter let us go up into my bed, that meeting in love and sleep we may trust each the other.”

‘So spake she, but I answered her, saying: “Nay, Circe, how canst thou bid me be gentle to thee, who hast turned my company into swine within thy halls, and holding me here with a guileful heart requirest me to pass within thy chamber and go up into thy bed, that so thou mayest make me a dastard and unmanned when thou hast me naked? Nay, never will I consent to go up into thy bed, except thou wilt deign, goddess, to swear a mighty oath, that thou wilt plan nought else of mischief to mine own hurt.”

‘So I spake, and she straightway swore the oath not to harm me, as I bade her. But when she had sworn and had done that oath, then at last I went up into the beautiful bed of Circe.

‘Now all this while her handmaids busied them in the halls, four maidens that are her serving women in the house. They are born of the wells and of the woods and of the holy rivers, that flow forward into the salt sea. Of these one cast upon the chairs goodly coverlets of purple above, and spread a linen cloth thereunder. And lo, another drew up silver tables to the chairs, and thereon set for them golden baskets. And a third mixed sweet honey-hearted wine in a silver bowl, and set out cups of gold. And a fourth bare water, and kindled a great fire beneath the mighty cauldron. So the water waxed warm; but when it boiled in the bright brazen vessel, she set me in a bath and bathed me with water from out a great cauldron, pouring it over head and shoulders, when she had mixed it to a pleasant warmth, till from my limbs she took away the consuming weariness. Now after she had bathed me and anointed me well with olive oil, and cast about me a fair mantle and a doublet, she led me into the halls and set me on a chair with studs of silver, a goodly carven chair, and beneath was a footstool for the feet. And a handmaid bare water for the hands in a goodly golden ewer, and poured it forth over a silver basin to wash withal; and to my side she drew a polished table, and a grave dame bare wheaten bread and set it by me, and laid on the board many dainties, giving freely of such things as she had by her. And she bade me eat, but my soul found no pleasure therein. I sat with other thoughts, and my heart had a boding of ill.

‘Now when Circe saw that I sat thus, and that I put not forth my hands to the meat, and that I was mightily afflicted, she drew near to me and spake to me winged words:

'"Wherefore thus, Odysseus, dost thou sit there like a speechless man, consuming thine own soul, and dost not touch meat nor drink? Dost thou indeed deem there is some further guile? Nay, thou hast no cause to fear, for already I have sworn thee a strong oath not to harm thee."

'So spake she, but I answered her, saying: "Oh, Circe, what righteous man would have the heart to taste meat and drink ere he had redeemed his company, and beheld them face to face? But if in good faith thou biddest me eat and drink, then let them go free, that mine eyes may behold my dear companions."

'So I spake, and Circe passed out through the hall with the wand in her hand, and opened the doors of the stye, and drave them forth in the shape of swine of nine seasons old. There they stood before her, and she went through their midst, and anointed each one of them with another charm. And lo, from their limbs the bristles dropped away, wherewith the venom had erewhile clothed them, that lady Circe gave them. And they became men again, younger than before they were, and goodlier far, and taller to behold. And they all knew me again and each one took my hands, and wistful was the lament that sank into their souls, and the roof around rang wondrously. And even the goddess herself was moved with compassion.

'Then standing nigh me the fair goddess spake unto me: "Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, depart now to thy swift ship and the sea-banks. And first of all, draw ye up the ship ashore, and bestow the goods in the caves and all the gear. And thyself return again, and bring with thee thy dear companions."

'So spake she, and my lordly spirit consented thereto. So I went on my way to the swift ship and the sea-banks, and there I found my dear company on the swift ship lamenting piteously, shedding big tears. And as when calves of the homestead gather round the droves of kine that have returned to the yard, when they have had their fill of pasture, and all with one accord frisk before them, and the folds may no more contain them, but with a ceaseless lowing they skip about their dams, so flocked they all about me weeping, when their eyes beheld me. Yea, and to their spirit it was as though they had got to their dear country, and the very city of rugged Ithaca, where they were born and reared.

'Then making lament they spake to me winged words: "O fosterling of Zeus, we were none otherwise glad at thy returning, than if we had come to Ithaca, our own country. Nay come, of our other companions tell us the tale of their ruin."

'So spake they, but I answered them with soft words: "Behold, let us first of all draw up the ship ashore, and bestow our goods in the caves and all our gear. And do ye bestir you, one and all, to go with me, that ye may see your fellows in the sacred dwelling of Circe, eating and drinking, for they have continual store.”

‘So spake I, and at once they hearkened to my words, but Eurylochus alone would have holden all my companions, and uttering his voice he spake to them winged words:

‘“Wretched men that we are! whither are we going? Why are your hearts so set on sorrow that ye should go down to the hall of Circe, who will surely change us all to swine, or wolves, or lions, to guard her great house perforce, according to the deeds that the Cyclops wrought, when certain of our company went to his inmost fold, and with them went Odysseus, ever hardy, for through the blindness of his heart did they too perish?”

‘So spake he, but I mused in my heart whether to draw my long hanger from my stout thigh, and therewith smite off his head and bring it to the dust, albeit he was very near of kin to me; but the men of my company stayed me on every side with soothing words:

‘“Prince of the seed of Zeus, as for this man, we will suffer him, if thou wilt have it so, to abide here by the ship and guard the ship; but as for us, be our guide to the sacred house of Circe.”

‘So they spake and went up from the ship and the sea. Nay, nor yet was Eurylochus left by the hollow ship, but he went with us, for he feared my terrible rebuke.

‘Meanwhile Circe bathed the rest of my company in her halls with all care, and anointed them well with olive oil; and cast thick mantles and doublets about them. And we found them all feasting nobly in the halls. And when they saw and knew each other face to face, they wept and mourned, and the house rang around. Then she stood near me, that fair goddess, and spake saying:

‘“Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, no more now wake this plenteous weeping: myself I know of all the pains ye endured upon the teeming deep, and the great despite done you by unkindly men upon the land. Nay come, eat ye meat and drink wine, till your spirit shall return to you again, as it was when first ye left your own country of rugged Ithaca; but now are ye wasted and wanting heart, mindful evermore of your sore wandering, nor has your heart ever been merry, for very grievous hath been your trial.”

‘So spake she, and our lordly spirit consented thereto. So there we sat day by day for the full circle of a year, feasting on abundant flesh and sweet wine. But when now a year had gone, and the seasons returned as the months waned, and the long days came in their course, then did my dear company call me forth, and say:

‘“Good sir, now is it high time to mind thee of thy native land, if it is ordained that thou shalt be saved, and come to thy lofty house and thine own country.”

‘So spake they and my lordly spirit consented thereto. So for that time we sat the livelong day till the going down of the sun, feasting on abundant flesh and sweet wine. But when the sun sank and darkness came on, they laid them to rest throughout the shadowy halls.

‘But when I had gone up into the fair bed of Circe, I besought her by her knees, and the goddess heard my speech, and uttering my voice I spake to her winged words: “Circe, fulfil for me the promise which thou madest me to send me on my homeward way. Now is my spirit eager to be gone, and the spirit of my company, that wear away my heart as they mourn around me, when haply thou art gone from us.”

‘So spake I, and the fair goddess answered me anon: “Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, tarry ye now no longer in my house against your will; but first must ye perform another journey, and reach the dwelling of Hades and of dread Persephone to seek to the spirit of Theban Teiresias, the blind soothsayer, whose wits abide steadfast. To him Persephone hath given judgment, even in death, that he alone should have understanding; but the other souls sweep shadow-like around.”

‘Thus spake she, but as for me, my heart was broken, and I wept as I sat upon the bed, and my soul had no more care to live and to see the sunlight. But when I had my fill of weeping and grovelling, then at the last I answered and spake unto her saying: “And who, Circe, will guide us on this way? for no man ever yet sailed to hell in a black ship.”

‘So spake I, and the fair goddess answered me anon: “Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, nay, trouble not thyself for want of a guide, by thy ship abiding, but set up the mast and spread abroad the white sails and sit thee down; and the breeze of the North Wind will bear thy vessel on her way. But when thou hast now sailed in thy ship across the stream Oceanus, where is a waste shore and the groves of Persephone, even tall poplar trees and willows that shed their fruit before the season, there beach thy ship by deep eddying Oceanus, but go thyself to the dank house of Hades. Thereby into Acheron flows Pyriphlegethon, and Cocytus, a branch of the water of the Styx, and there is a rock, and the meeting of the two roaring waters. So, hero, draw nigh thereto, as I command thee, and dig a trench as it were a cubit in length and breadth, and about it pour a drink-offering to all the dead, first with mead and thereafter with sweet wine, and for the third time with water, and sprinkle white meal thereon; and entreat with many prayers the strengthless heads of the dead, and promise that on thy return to Ithaca thou wilt offer in thy halls a barren heifer, the best thou hast, and will fill the pyre with treasure, and wilt sacrifice apart, to Teiresias alone, a black ram without spot, the fairest of your flock. But when thou hast with prayers made supplication to the lordly races of the dead, then offer up a ram and a black ewe, bending their heads towards Erebus and thyself turn thy back, with thy face set for the shore of the river. Then will many spirits come to thee of the dead that be departed. Thereafter thou shalt call to thy company and command them to flay the sheep which even now lie slain by the pitiless sword, and to consume them with fire, and to make prayer to the gods, to mighty Hades and to dread Persephone. And thyself draw the sharp sword from thy thigh and sit there, suffering not the strengthless heads of the dead to draw nigh to the blood, ere thou hast word of Teiresias. Then the seer will come to thee quickly, leader of the people; he will surely declare to thee the way and the measure of thy path, and as touching thy returning, how thou mayst go over the teeming deep.”

‘So spake she, and anon came the golden throned Dawn. Then she put on me a mantle and a doublet for raiment, and the nymph clad herself in a great shining robe, light of woof and gracious, and about her waist she cast a fair golden girdle, and put a veil upon her head. But I passed through the halls and roused my men with smooth words, standing by each one in turn:

‘“Sleep ye now no more nor breathe sweet slumber; but let us go on our way, for surely she hath shown me all, the lady Circe.”

‘So spake I, and their lordly soul consented thereto. Yet even thence I led not my company safe away. There was one, Elpenor, the youngest of us all, not very valiant in war neither steadfast in mind. He was lying apart from the rest of my men on the housetop of Circe’s sacred dwelling, very fain of the cool air, as one heavy with wine. Now when he heard the noise of the voices and of the feet of my fellows as they moved to and fro, he leaped up of a sudden and minded him not to descend again by the way of the tall ladder, but fell right down from the roof, and his neck was broken from the bones of the spine, and his spirit went down to the house of Hades.

‘Then I spake among my men as they went on their way, saying: “Ye deem now, I see, that ye are going to your own dear country; but Circe hath showed us another way, even to the dwelling of Hades and of dread Persephone, to seek to the spirit of Theban Teiresias.”

‘Even so I spake, but their heart within them was broken, and they sat them down even where they were, and made lament and tore their hair. Howbeit no help came of their weeping.

‘But as we were now wending sorrowful to the swift ship and the sea-banks, shedding big tears, Circe meanwhile had gone her ways and made fast a ram and a black ewe by the dark ship, lightly passing us by: who may behold a god against his will, whether going to or fro?’

BOOK XI

Odysseus, his descent into hell, and discourses with the ghosts of the deceased heroes.

‘Now when we had gone down to the ship and to the sea, first of all we drew the ship unto the fair salt water and placed the mast and sails in the black ship, and took those sheep and put them therein, and ourselves too climbed on board, sorrowing, and shedding big tears. And in the wake of our dark-prowed ship she sent a favouring wind that filled the sails, a kindly escort, — even Circe of the braided tresses, a dread goddess of human speech. And we set in order all the gear throughout the ship and sat us down; and the wind and the helmsman guided our barque. And all day long her sails were stretched in her seafaring; and the sun sank and all the ways were darkened.

‘She came to the limits of the world, to the deep-flowing Oceanus. There is the land and the city of the Cimmerians, shrouded in mist and cloud, and never does the shining sun look down on them with his rays, neither when he climbs up the starry heavens, nor when again he turns earthward from the firmament, but deadly night is outspread over miserable mortals. Thither we came and ran the ship ashore and took out the sheep; but for our part we held on our way along the stream of Oceanus, till we came to the place which Circe had declared to us.

‘There Perimedes and Eurylochus held the victims, but I drew my sharp sword from my thigh, and dug a pit, as it were a cubit in length and breadth, and about it poured a drink-offering to all the dead, first with mead and thereafter with sweet wine, and for the third time with water. And I sprinkled white meal thereon, and entreated with many prayers the strengthless heads of the dead, and promised that on my return to Ithaca I would offer in my halls a barren heifer, the best I had, and fill the pyre with treasure, and apart unto Teiresias alone sacrifice a black ram without spot, the fairest of my flock. But when I had besought the tribes of the dead with vows and prayers, I took the sheep and cut their throats over the trench, and the dark blood flowed forth, and lo, the spirits of the dead that be departed gathered them from out of Erebus. Brides and youths unwed, and old men of many and evil days, and tender maidens with grief yet fresh at heart; and many there were, wounded with bronze-shod spears, men slain in fight with their bloody mail about them. And these many ghosts flocked together from every side about the trench with a wondrous cry, and pale fear gat hold on me. Then did I speak to my company and command them to flay the sheep that lay slain by the pitiless sword, and to consume them with fire, and to make prayer to the gods, to mighty Hades and to dread Persephone, and myself I drew the sharp sword from my thigh and sat there, suffering not the strengthless heads of the dead to draw nigh to the blood, ere I had word of Teiresias.

‘And first came the soul of Elpenor, my companion, that had not yet been buried beneath the wide-wayed earth; for we left the corpse behind us in the hall of Circe, unwept and unburied, seeing that another task was instant on us. At the sight of him I wept and had compassion on him, and uttering my voice spake to him winged words: “Elpenor, how hast thou come beneath the darkness and the shadow? Thou hast come fleeter on foot than I in my black ship.”

‘So spake I, and with a moan he answered me, saying: “Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, an evil doom of some god was my bane and wine out of measure. When I laid me down on the house-top of Circe I minded me not to descend again by the way of the tall ladder, but fell right down from the roof, and my neck was broken off from the bones of the spine, and my spirit went down to the house of Hades. And now I pray thee in the name of those whom we left, who are no more with us, thy wife, and thy sire who cherished thee when as yet thou wert a little one, and Telemachus, whom thou didst leave in thy halls alone; forasmuch as I know that on thy way hence from out the dwelling of Hades, thou wilt stay thy well-wrought ship at the isle Aeaean, even then, my lord, I charge thee to think on me. Leave me not unwept and unburied as thou goest hence, nor turn thy back upon me, lest haply I bring on thee the anger of the gods. Nay, burn me there with mine armour, all that is mine, and pile me a barrow on the shore of the grey sea, the grave of a luckless man, that even men unborn may hear my story. Fulfil me this and plant upon the barrow mine oar, wherewith I rowed in the days of my life, while yet I was among my fellows.”

‘Even so he spake, and I answered him saying: “All this, luckless man, will I perform for thee and do.”

‘Even so we twain were sitting holding sad discourse, I on the one side, stretching forth my sword over the blood, while on the other side the ghost of my friend told all his tale.

‘Anon came up the soul of my mother dead, Anticleia, the daughter of Autolycus the great-hearted, whom I left alive when I departed for sacred Ilios. At the sight of her I wept, and was moved with compassion, yet even so, for all my sore grief, I suffered her not to draw nigh to the blood, ere I had word of Teiresias.

‘Anon came the soul of Theban Teiresias, with a golden sceptre in his hand,

and he knew me and spake unto me: “Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, what seekest thou NOW, wretched man, wherefore hast thou left the sunlight and come hither to behold the dead and a land desolate of joy? Nay, hold off from the ditch and draw back thy sharp sword, that I may drink of the blood and tell thee sooth.”

‘So spake he and I put up my silver-studded sword into the sheath, and when he had drunk the dark blood, even then did the noble seer speak unto me, saying: “Thou art asking of thy sweet returning, great Odysseus, but that will the god make hard for thee; for methinks thou shalt not pass unheeded by the Shaker of the Earth, who hath laid up wrath in his heart against thee, for rage at the blinding of his dear son. Yet even so, through many troubles, ye may come home, if thou wilt restrain thy spirit and the spirit of thy men so soon as thou shalt bring thy well-wrought ship nigh to the isle Thrinacia, fleeing the sea of violet blue, when ye find the herds of Helios grazing and his brave flocks, of Helios who overseeth all and overheareth all things. If thou doest these no hurt, being heedful of thy return, so may ye yet reach Ithaca, albeit in evil case. But if thou hurtest them, I foreshow ruin for thy ship and for thy men, and even though thou shalt thyself escape, late shalt thou return in evil plight, with the loss of all thy company, on board the ship of strangers, and thou shalt find sorrows in thy house, even proud men that devour thy living, while they woo thy godlike wife and offer the gifts of wooing. Yet I tell thee, on thy coming thou shalt avenge their violence. But when thou hast slain the wooers in thy halls, whether by guile, or openly with the edge of the sword, thereafter go thy way, taking with thee a shapen oar, till thou shalt come to such men as know not the sea, neither eat meat savoured with salt; yea, nor have they knowledge of ships of purple cheek, nor shapen oars which serve for wings to ships. And I will give thee a most manifest token, which cannot escape thee. In the day when another wayfarer shall meet thee and say that thou hast a winnowing fan on thy stout shoulder, even then make fast thy shapen oar in the earth and do goodly sacrifice to the lord Poseidon, even with a ram and a bull and a boar, the mate of swine, and depart for home and offer holy hecatombs to the deathless gods that keep the wide heaven, to each in order due. And from the sea shall thine own death come, the gentlest death that may be, which shall end thee foredone with smooth old age, and the folk shall dwell happily around thee. This that I say is sooth.”

‘So spake he, and I answered him, saying: “Teiresias, all these threads, methinks, the gods themselves have spun. But come, declare me this and plainly tell me all. I see here the spirit of my mother dead; lo, she sits in silence near the blood, nor deigns to look her son in the face nor speak to him! Tell me, prince, how may she know me again that I am he?”

‘So spake I, and anon he answered me, and said: “I will tell thee an easy saying, and will put it in thy heart. Whomsoever of the dead that be departed thou shalt suffer to draw nigh to the blood, he shall tell thee sooth; but if thou shalt grudge any, that one shall go to his own place again.” Therewith the spirit of the prince Teiresias went back within the house of Hades, when he had told all his oracles. But I abode there steadfastly, till my mother drew nigh and drank the dark blood; and at once she knew me, and bewailing herself spake to me winged words:

‘“Dear child, how didst thou come beneath the darkness and the shadow, thou that art a living man? Grievous is the sight of these things to the living, for between us and you are great rivers and dreadful streams; first, Oceanus, which can no wise be crossed on foot, but only if one have a well wrought ship. Art thou but now come hither with thy ship and thy company in thy long wanderings from Troy? and hast thou not yet reached Ithaca, nor seen thy wife in thy halls?”

‘Even so she spake, and I answered her, and said: “O my mother, necessity was on me to come down to the house of Hades to seek to the spirit of Theban Teiresias. For not yet have I drawn near to the Achaean shore, nor yet have I set foot on mine own country, but have been wandering evermore in affliction, from the day that first I went with goodly Agamemnon to Ilios of the fair steeds, to do battle with the Trojans. But come, declare me this and plainly tell it all. What doom overcame thee of death that lays men at their length? Was it a slow disease, or did Artemis the archer slay thee with the visitation of her gentle shafts? And tell me of my father and my son, that I left behind me; doth my honour yet abide with them, or hath another already taken it, while they say that I shall come home no more? And tell me of my wedded wife, of her counsel and her purpose, doth she abide with her son and keep all secure, or hath she already wedded the best of the Achaeans?”

‘Even so I spake, and anon my lady mother answered me: “Yea verily, she abideth with steadfast spirit in thy halls; and wearily for her the nights wane always and the days in shedding of tears. But the fair honour that is thine no man hath yet taken; but Telemachus sits at peace on his demesne, and feasts at equal banquets, whereof it is meet that a judge partake, for all men bid him to their house. And thy father abides there in the field, and goes not down to the town, nor lies he on bedding or rugs or shining blankets, but all the winter he sleeps, where sleep the thralls in the house, in the ashes by the fire, and is clad in sorry raiment. But when the summer comes and the rich harvest-tide, his beds of fallen leaves are strewn lowly all about the knoll of his vineyard plot. There he lies sorrowing and nurses his mighty grief, for long desire of thy return, and old age withal comes heavy upon him. Yea and even so did I too perish and meet my doom. It was not the archer goddess of the keen sight, who slew me in my halls with the visitation of her gentle shafts, nor did any sickness come upon me, such as chiefly with a sad wasting draws the spirit from the limbs; nay, it was my sore longing for thee, and for thy counsels, great Odysseus, and for thy loving-kindness, that reft me of sweet life."

'So spake she, and I mused in my heart and would fain have embraced the spirit of my mother dead. Thrice I sprang towards her, and was minded to embrace her; thrice she flitted from my hands as a shadow or even as a dream, and sharp grief arose ever at my heart. And uttering my voice I spake to her winged words:

'"Mother mine, wherefore dost thou not abide me who am eager to clasp thee, that even in Hades we twain may cast our arms each about the other, and have our fill of chill lament? Is this but a phantom that the high goddess Persephone hath sent me, to the end that I may groan for more exceeding sorrow?"

'So spake I, and my lady mother answered me anon: "Ah me, my child, of all men most ill-fated, Persephone, the daughter of Zeus, doth in no wise deceive thee, but even on this wise it is with mortals when they die. For the sinews no more bind together the flesh and the bones, but the great force of burning fire abolishes these, so soon as the life hath left the white bones, and the spirit like a dream flies forth and hovers near. But haste with all thine heart toward the sunlight, and mark all this, that even hereafter thou mayest tell it to thy wife."

'Thus we twain held discourse together; and lo, the women came up, for the high goddess Persephone sent them forth, all they that had been the wives and daughters of mighty men. And they gathered and flocked about the black blood, and I took counsel how I might question them each one. And this was the counsel that showed best in my sight. I drew my long hanger from my stalwart thigh, and suffered them not all at one time to drink of the dark blood. So they drew nigh one by one, and each declared her lineage, and I made question of all.

'Then verily did I first see Tyro, sprung of a noble sire, who said that she was the child of noble Salmoneus, and declared herself the wife of Cretheus, son of Aeolus. She loved a river, the divine Enipeus, far the fairest of the floods that run upon the earth, and she would resort to the fair streams of Enipeus. And it came to pass that the girdler of the world, the Earth-shaker, put on the shape of the god, and lay by the lady at the mouths of the whirling stream. Then the dark wave stood around them like a hill-side bowed, and hid the god and the mortal woman. And he undid her maiden girdle, and shed a slumber over her. Now when the god had done the work of love, he clasped her hand and spake and hailed her:

'"Woman, be glad in our love, and when the year comes round thou shalt give birth to glorious children, — for not weak are the embraces of the gods, — and do thou keep and cherish them. And now go home and hold thy peace, and tell it not: but behold, I am Poseidon, shaker of the earth.”

‘Therewith he plunged beneath the heaving deep. And she conceived and bare Pelias and Neleus, who both grew to be mighty men, servants of Zeus. Pelias dwelt in wide Iolcos, and was rich in flocks; and that other abode in sandy Pylos. And the queen of women bare yet other sons to Cretheus, even Aeson and Pheres and Amythaon, whose joy was in chariots.

‘And after her I saw Antiope, daughter of Asopus, and her boast was that she had slept even in the arms of Zeus, and she bare two sons, Amphion and Zethus, who founded first the place of seven-gated Thebes, and they made of it a fenced city, for they might not dwell in spacious Thebes unfenced, for all their valiancy.

‘Next to her I saw Alcmene, wife of Amphitryon, who lay in the arms of mighty Zeus, and bare Heracles of the lion-heart, steadfast in the fight. And I saw Megara, daughter of Creon, haughty of heart, whom the strong and tireless son of Amphitryon had to wife.

‘And I saw the mother of Oedipodes, fair Epicaste, who wrought a dread deed unwittingly, being wedded to her own son, and he that had slain his own father wedded her, and straightway the gods made these things known to men. Yet he abode in pain in pleasant Thebes, ruling the Cadmaeans, by reason of the deadly counsels of the gods. But she went down to the house of Hades, the mighty warder; yea, she tied a noose from the high beam aloft, being fast holden in sorrow; while for him she left pains behind full many, even all that the Avengers of a mother bring to pass.

‘And I saw lovely Chloris, whom Neleus wedded on a time for her beauty, and brought gifts of wooing past number. She was the youngest daughter of Amphion, son of Iasus, who once ruled mightily in Minyan Orchomenus. And she was queen of Pylos, and bare glorious children to her lord, Nestor and Chromius, and princely Periclymenus, and stately Pero too, the wonder of all men. All that dwelt around were her wooers; but Neleus would not give her, save to him who should drive off from Phylace the kine of mighty Iphicles, with shambling gait and broad of brow, hard cattle to drive. And none but the noble seer {*} took in hand to drive them; but a grievous fate from the gods fettered him, even hard bonds and the herdsmen of the wild. But when at length the months and days were being fulfilled, as the year returned upon his course, and the seasons came round, then did mighty Iphicles set him free, when he had spoken out all the oracles; and herein was the counsel of Zeus being accomplished.

{* Melampus}

‘And I saw Lede, the famous bedfellow of Tyndareus, who bare to Tyndareus two sons, hardy of heart, Castor tamer of steeds, and Polydeuces the boxer. These twain yet live, but the quickening earth is over them; and even in the nether world they have honour at the hand of Zeus. And they possess their life in turn, living one day and dying the next, and they have gotten worship even as the gods.

‘And after her I beheld Iphimedeia, bedfellow of Aloeus, who said that she had lain with Poseidon, and she bare children twain, but short of life were they, godlike Otus and far-famed Ephialtes. Now these were the tallest men that earth, the graingiver, ever reared, and far the goodliest after the renowned Orion. At nine seasons old they were of breadth nine cubits, and nine fathoms in height. They it was who threatened to raise even against the immortals in Olympus the din of stormy war. They strove to pile Ossa on Olympus, and on Ossa Pelion with the trembling forest leaves, that there might be a pathway to the sky. Yea, and they would have accomplished it, had they reached the full measure of manhood. But the son of Zeus, whom Leto of the fair locks bare, destroyed the twain, ere the down had bloomed beneath their temples, and darkened their chins with the blossom of youth.

‘And Phaedra and Procris I saw, and fair Ariadne, the daughter of wizard Minos, whom Theseus on a time was bearing from Crete to the hill of sacred Athens, yet had he no joy of her; for Artemis slew her ere that in sea-girt Dia, by reason of the witness of Dionysus.

‘And Maera and Clymene I saw, and hateful Eriphyle, who took fine gold for the price of her dear lord’s life. But I cannot tell or name all the wives and daughters of the heroes that I saw; ere that, the immortal night would wane. Nay, it is even now time to sleep, whether I go to the swift ship to my company or abide here: and for my convoy you and the gods will care.’

So spake he, and dead silence fell on all, and they were spell-bound throughout the shadowy halls. Then Arete of the white arms first spake among them: ‘Phaeacians, what think you of this man for comeliness and stature, and within for wisdom of heart? Moreover he is my guest, though every one of you hath his share in this honour. Wherefore haste not to send him hence, and stint not these your gifts for one that stands in such sore need of them; for ye have much treasure stored in your halls by the grace of the gods.’

Then too spake among them the old man, lord Echeneus, that was an elder among the Phaeacians: ‘Friends, behold, the speech of our wise queen is not wide of the mark, nor far from our deeming, so hearken ye thereto. But on Alcinous here both word and work depend.’

Then Alcinous made answer, and spake unto him: ‘Yea, the word that she hath spoken shall hold, if indeed I am yet to live and bear rule among the Phaeacians, masters of the oar. Howbeit let the stranger, for all his craving to return, nevertheless endure to abide until the morrow, till I make up the full measure of the gift; and men shall care for his convoy, all men, but I in chief, for mine is the lordship in the land.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: My lord Alcinous, most notable of all the people, if ye bade me tarry here even for a year, and would speed my convoy and give me splendid gifts, even that I would choose; and better would it be for me to come with a fuller hand to mine own dear country, so should I get more love and worship in the eyes of all men, whoso should see me after I was returned to Ithaca.’

And Alcinous answered him, saying: ‘Odysseus, in no wise do we deem thee, we that look on thee, to be a knave or a cheat, even as the dark earth rears many such broadcast, fashioning lies whence none can even see his way therein. But beauty crowns thy words, and wisdom is within thee; and thy tale, as when a minstrel sings, thou hast told with skill, the weary woes of all the Argives and of thine own self. But come, declare me this and plainly tell it all. Didst thou see any of thy godlike company who went up at the same time with thee to Ilios and there met their doom? Behold, the night is of great length, unspeakable, and the time for sleep in the hall is not yet; tell me therefore of those wondrous deeds. I could abide even till the bright dawn, so long as thou couldst endure to rehearse me these woes of thine in the hall.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: ‘My lord Alcinous, most notable of all the people, there is a time for many words and there is a time for sleep. But if thou art eager still to listen, I would not for my part grudge to tell thee of other things more pitiful still, even the woes of my comrades, those that perished afterward, for they had escaped with their lives from the dread war-cry of the Trojans, but perished in returning by the will of an evil woman.

‘Now when holy Persephone had scattered this way and that the spirits of the women folk, thereafter came the soul of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, sorrowing; and round him others were gathered, the ghosts of them who had died with him in the house of Aegisthus and met their doom. And he knew me straightway when he had drunk the dark blood, yea, and he wept aloud, and shed big tears as he stretched forth his hands in his longing to reach me. But it might not be, for he had now no steadfast strength nor power at all in moving, such as was aforetime in his supple limbs.

‘At the sight of him I wept and was moved with compassion, and uttering my voice, spake to him winged words: “Most renowned son of Atreus, Agamemnon, king of men, say what doom overcame thee of death that lays men at their length? Did Poseidon smite thee in thy ships, raising the dolorous blast of contrary winds, or did unfriendly men do thee hurt upon the land, whilst thou wert cutting off their oxen and fair flocks of sheep, or fighting to win a city and the women thereof?”

‘So spake I, and straightway he answered, and said unto me: “Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, it was not Poseidon that smote me in my ships, and raised the dolorous blast of contrary winds, nor did unfriendly men do me hurt upon the land, but Aegisthus it was that wrought me death and doom and slew me, with the aid of my accursed wife, as one slays an ox at the stall, after he had bidden me to his house, and entertained me at a feast. Even so I died by a death most pitiful, and round me my company likewise were slain without ceasing, like swine with glittering tusks which are slaughtered in the house of a rich and mighty man, whether at a wedding banquet or a joint-feast or a rich clan-drinking. Ere now hast thou been at the slaying of many a man, killed in single fight or in strong battle, yet thou wouldst have sorrowed the most at this sight, how we lay in the hall round the mixing-bowl and the laden boards, and the floor all ran with blood. And most pitiful of all that I heard was the voice of the daughter of Priam, of Cassandra, whom hard by me the crafty Clytemnestra slew. Then I strove to raise my hands as I was dying upon the sword, but to earth they fell. And that shameless one turned her back upon me, and had not the heart to draw down my eyelids with her fingers nor to close my mouth. So surely is there nought more terrible and shameless than a woman who imagines such evil in her heart, even as she too planned a foul deed, fashioning death for her wedded lord. Verily I had thought to come home most welcome to my children and my thralls; but she, out of the depth of her evil knowledge, hath shed shame on herself and on all womankind, which shall be for ever, even on the upright.”

‘Even so he spake, but I answered him, saying: “Lo now, in very sooth, hath Zeus of the far-borne voice wreaked wondrous hatred on the seed of Atreus through the counsels of woman from of old. For Helen’s sake so many of us perished, and now Clytemnestra hath practised treason against thee, while yet thou wast afar off.”

‘Even so I spake, and anon he answered me, saying: “Wherefore do thou too, never henceforth be soft even to thy wife, neither show her all the counsel that thou knowest, but a part declare and let part be hid. Yet shalt not thou, Odysseus, find death at the hand of thy wife, for she is very discreet and prudent in all her ways, the wise Penelope, daughter of Icarius. Verily we left her a bride new wed when we went to the war, and a child was at her breast, who now, methinks, sits in the ranks of men, happy in his lot, for his dear father shall behold him on his coming, and he shall embrace his sire as is meet. But us for my wife, she suffered me not so much as to have my fill of gazing on my son; ere that she slew me, even her lord. And yet another thing will I tell thee, and do thou ponder it in thy heart. Put thy ship to land in secret, and not openly, on the shore of thy dear country; for there is no more faith in woman. But come, declare me this and plainly tell it all, if haply ye hear of my son as yet living, either, it may be, in Orchomenus or in sandy Pylos, or perchance with Menelaus in wide Sparta, for goodly Orestes hath not yet perished on the earth.”

‘Even so he spake, but I answered him, saying: “Son of Atreus, wherefore dost thou ask me straitly of these things? Nay I know not at all, whether he be alive or dead; it is ill to speak words light as wind.”

‘Thus we twain stood sorrowing, holding sad discourse, while the big tears fell fast: and therewithal came the soul of Achilles, son of Peleus, and of Patroclus and of noble Antilochus and of Aias, who in face and form was goodliest of all the Danaans, after the noble son of Peleus. And the spirit of the son of Aeacus, fleet of foot, knew me again, and making lament spake to me winged words:

‘“Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, man overbold, what new deed and hardier than this wilt thou devise in thy heart? How durst thou come down to the house of Hades, where dwell the senseless dead, the phantoms of men outworn?”

‘So he spake, but I answered him: “Achilles, son of Peleus, mightiest far of the Achaeans, I am come hither to seek to Teiresias, if he may tell me any counsel, how I may come to rugged Ithaca. For not yet have I come nigh the Achaean land, nor set foot on mine own soil, but am still in evil case; while as for thee, Achilles, none other than thou wast heretofore the most blessed of men, nor shall any be hereafter. For of old, in the days of thy life, we Argives gave thee one honour with the gods, and now thou art a great prince here among the dead. Wherefore let not thy death be any grief to thee, Achilles.”

‘Even so I spake, and he straightway answered me, and said: “Nay, speak not comfortably to me of death, oh great Odysseus. Rather would I live on ground {*} as the hireling of another, with a landless man who had no great livelihood, than bear sway among all the dead that be departed. But come, tell me tidings of that lordly son of mine — did he follow to the war to be a leader or not? And tell me of noble Peleus, if thou hast heard aught, — is he yet held in worship among the Myrmidons, or do they dishonour him from Hellas to Phthia, for that old age binds him hand and foot? For I am no longer his champion under the sun, so mighty a man as once I was, when in wide Troy I slew the best of the host, and succoured the Argives. Ah! could I but come for an hour to my father’s house as then I was, so would I make my might and hands invincible, to be hateful to many an one of those who do him despite and keep him from his honour.”

{* [Greek] seems to mean ‘upon the earth,’ ‘above ground,’ as opposed to the dead who are below, rather than ‘bound to the soil,’ in which sense most commentators take it.}

‘Even so he spake, but I answered him saying: “As for noble Peleus, verily I have heard nought of him; but concerning thy dear son Neoptolemus, I will tell thee all the truth, according to thy word. It was I that led him up out of Scyros in my good hollow ship, in the wake of the goodly-greaved Achaeans. Now oft as we took counsel around Troy town, he was ever the first to speak, and no word missed the mark; the godlike Nestor and I alone surpassed him. But whensoever we Achaeans did battle on the plain of Troy, he never tarried behind in the throng or the press of men, but ran out far before us all, yielding to none in that might of his. And many men he slew in warfare dread; but I could not tell of all or name their names, even all the host he slew in succouring the Argives; but, ah, how he smote with the sword that son of Telephus, the hero Eurypylus, and many Ceteians {*} of his company were slain around him, by reason of a woman’s bribe. He truly was the comeliest man that ever I saw, next to goodly Memnon. And again when we, the best of the Argives, were about to go down into the horse which Epeus wrought, and the charge of all was laid on me, both to open the door of our good ambush and to shut the same, then did the other princes and counsellors of the Danaans wipe away the tears, and the limbs of each one trembled beneath him, but never once did I see thy son’s fair face wax pale, nor did he wipe the tears from his cheeks: but he besought me often to let him go forth from the horse, and kept handling his sword-hilt, and his heavy bronze-shod spear, and he was set on mischief against the Trojans. But after we had sacked the steep city of Priam, he embarked unscathed with his share of the spoil, and with a noble prize; he was not smitten with the sharp spear, and got no wound in close fight: and many such chances there be in war, for Ares rageth confusedly.”

{* See Lenormant, Premieres Civilisations, vol. i. p.289.}

‘So I spake, and the spirit of the son of Aeacus, fleet of foot, passed with great strides along the mead of asphodel, rejoicing in that I had told him of his son’s renown.

‘But lo, other spirits of the dead that be departed stood sorrowing, and each one asked of those that were dear to them. The soul of Aias, son of Telamon, alone stood apart being still angry for the victory wherein I prevailed against him, in the suit by the ships concerning the arms of Achilles, that his lady mother had set for a prize; and the sons of the Trojans made award and Pallas Athene. Would that I had never prevailed and won such a prize! So goodly a head hath the earth closed over, for the sake of those arms, even over Aias, who in beauty and in feats of war was of a mould above all the other Danaans, next to the noble son of Peleus. To him then I spake softly, saying:

'"Aias, son of noble Telamon, so art thou not even in death to forget thy wrath against me, by reason of those arms accursed, which the gods set to be the bane of the Argives? What a tower of strength fell in thy fall, and we Achaeans cease not to sorrow for thee, even as for the life of Achilles, son of Peleus! Nay, there is none other to blame, but Zeus, who hath borne wondrous hate to the army of the Danaan spearsmen, and laid on thee thy doom. Nay, come hither, my lord, that thou mayest hear my word and my speech; master thy wrath and thy proud spirit."

'So I spake, but he answered me not a word and passed to Erebus after the other spirits of the dead that be departed. Even then, despite his anger, would he have spoken to me or I to him, but my heart within me was minded to see the spirits of those others that were departed.

'There then I saw Minos, glorious son of Zeus, wielding a golden sceptre, giving sentence from his throne to the dead, while they sat and stood around the prince, asking his dooms through the wide-gated house of Hades.

'And after him I marked the mighty Orion driving the wild beasts together over the mead of asphodel, the very beasts that himself had slain on the lonely hills, with a strong mace all of bronze in his hands, {*} that is ever unbroken.

{* [Greek] in strict grammar agrees with [Greek] in 574, but this merely by attraction, for in sense it refers not to the living man, but to his phantom.}

'And I saw Tityos, son of renowned Earth, lying on a levelled ground, and he covered nine roods as he lay, and vultures twain beset him one on either side, and gnawed at his liver, piercing even to the caul, but he drave them not away with his hands. For he had dealt violently with Leto, the famous bedfellow of Zeus, as she went up to Pytho through the fair lawns of Panopeus.

'Moreover I beheld Tantalus in grievous torment, standing in a mere and the water came nigh unto his chin. And he stood straining as one athirst, but he might not attain to the water to drink of it. For often as that old man stooped down in his eagerness to drink, so often the water was swallowed up and it vanished away, and the black earth still showed at his feet, for some god parched it evermore. And tall trees flowering shed their fruit overhead, pears and pomegranates and apple trees with bright fruit, and sweet figs and olives in their bloom, whereat when that old man reached out his hands to clutch them, the wind would toss them to the shadowy clouds.

'Yea and I beheld Sisyphus in strong torment, grasping a monstrous stone with both his hands. He was pressing thereat with hands and feet, and trying to roll the stone upward toward the brow of the hill. But oft as he was about to hurl it over the top, the weight would drive him back, so once again to the plain rolled the stone, the shameless thing. And he once more kept heaving and straining, and the sweat the while was pouring down his limbs, and the dust rose upwards from his head.

‘And after him I descried the mighty Heracles, his phantom, I say; but as for himself he hath joy at the banquet among the deathless gods, and hath to wife Hebe of the fair ankles, child of great Zeus, and of Here of the golden sandals. And all about him there was a clamour of the dead, as it were fowls flying every way in fear, and he like black Night, with bow uncased, and shaft upon the string, fiercely glancing around, like one in the act to shoot. And about his breast was an awful belt, a baldric of gold, whereon wondrous things were wrought, bears and wild boars and lions with flashing eyes, and strife and battles and slaughters and murders of men. Nay, now that he hath fashioned this, never another may he fashion, whoso stored in his craft the device of that belt! And anon he knew me when his eyes beheld me, and making lament he spake unto me winged words:

‘“Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices: ah! wretched one, dost thou too lead such a life of evil doom, as I endured beneath the rays of the sun? I was the son of Zeus Cronion, yet had I trouble beyond measure, for I was subdued unto a man far worse than I. And he enjoined on me hard adventures, yea and on a time he sent me hither to bring back the hound of hell; for he devised no harder task for me than this. I lifted the hound and brought him forth from out of the house of Hades; and Hermes sped me on my way and the grey-eyed Athene.”

‘Therewith he departed again into the house of Hades, but I abode there still, if perchance some one of the hero folk besides might come, who died in old time. Yea and I should have seen the men of old, whom I was fain to look on, Theseus and Peirithous, renowned children of the gods. But ere that might be the myriad tribes of the dead thronged up together with wondrous clamour: and pale fear gat hold of me, lest the high goddess Persephone should send me the head of the Gorgon, that dread monster, from out of Hades.

‘Straightway then I went to the ship, and bade my men mount the vessel, and loose the hawsers. So speedily they went on board, and sat upon the benches. And the wave of the flood bore the barque down the stream of Oceanus, we rowing first, and afterwards the fair wind was our convoy.

BOOK XII

Odysseus, his passage by the Sirens, and by Scylla and Charybdis. The sacrilege committed by his men in the isle Thrinacia. The destruction of his ships and men. How he swam on a plank nine days together, and came to Ogygia, where he stayed seven years with Calypso.

‘Now after the ship had left the stream of the river Oceanus, and was come to the wave of the wide sea, and the isle Aeaean, where is the dwelling place of early Dawn and her dancing grounds, and the land of sunrising, upon our coming thither we beached the ship in the sand, and ourselves too stept ashore on the sea beach. There we fell on sound sleep and awaited the bright Dawn.

‘So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, I sent forth my fellows to the house of Circe to fetch the body of the dead Elpenor. And speedily we cut billets of wood and sadly we buried him, where the furthest headland runs out into the sea, shedding big tears. But when the dead man was burned and the arms of the dead, we piled a barrow and dragged up thereon a pillar, and on the topmost mound we set the shapen oar.

‘Now all that task we finished, and our coming from out of Hades was not unknown to Circe, but she arrayed herself and speedily drew nigh, and her handmaids with her bare flesh and bread in plenty and dark red wine. And the fair goddess stood in the midst and spake in our ears, saying:

‘“Men overbold, who have gone alive into the house of Hades, to know death twice, while all men else die once for all. Nay come, eat ye meat and drink wine here all day long; and with the breaking of the day ye shall set sail, and myself I will show you the path and declare each thing, that ye may not suffer pain or hurt through any grievous ill-contrivance by sea or on the land.”

‘So spake she, and our lordly souls consented thereto. Thus for that time we sat the livelong day, until the going down of the sun, feasting on abundant flesh and on sweet wine. Now when the sun sank and darkness came on, my company laid them to rest by the hawsers of the ship. Then she took me by the hand and led me apart from my dear company, and made me to sit down and laid herself at my feet, and asked all my tale. And I told her all in order duly. Then at the last the Lady Circe spake unto me, saying:

‘“Even so, now all these things have an end; do thou then hearken even as I tell thee, and the god himself shall bring it back to thy mind. To the Sirens first shalt thou come, who bewitch all men, whosoever shall come to them. Whoso draws nigh them unwittingly and hears the sound of the Sirens’ voice, never doth he see wife or babes stand by him on his return, nor have they joy at his coming; but the Sirens enchant him with their clear song, sitting in the meadow, and all about is a great heap of bones of men, corrupt in death, and round the bones the skin is wasting. But do thou drive thy ship past, and knead honey-sweet wax, and anoint therewith the ears of thy company, lest any of the rest hear the song; but if thou myself art minded to hear, let them bind thee in the swift ship hand and foot, upright in the mast-stead, and from the mast let rope-ends be tied, that with delight thou mayest hear the voice of the Sirens. And if thou shalt beseech thy company and bid them to loose thee, then let them bind thee with yet more bonds. But when thy friends have driven thy ship past these, I will not tell thee fully which path shall thenceforth be thine, but do thou thyself consider it, and I will speak to thee of either way. On the one side there are beetling rocks, and against them the great wave roars of dark-eyed Amphitrite. These, ye must know, are they the blessed gods call the Rocks Wandering. By this way even winged things may never pass, nay, not even the cowering doves that bear ambrosia to Father Zeus, but the sheer rock evermore takes away one even of these, and the Father sends in another to make up the tale. Thereby no ship of men ever escapes that comes thither, but the planks of ships and the bodies of men confusedly are tossed by the waves of the sea and the storms of ruinous fire. One ship only of all that fare by sea hath passed that way, even Argo, that is in all men’s minds, on her voyage from Aeetes. And even her the wave would lightly have cast there upon the mighty rocks, but Here sent her by for love of Jason.

‘“On the other part are two rocks, whereof the one reaches with sharp peak to the wide heaven, and a dark cloud encompasses it; this never streams away, and there is no clear air about the peak neither in summer nor in harvest tide. No mortal man may scale it or set foot thereon, not though he had twenty hands and feet. For the rock is smooth, and sheer, as it were polished. And in the midst of the cliff is a dim cave turned to Erebus, towards the place of darkness, whereby ye shall even steer your hollow ship, noble Odysseus. Not with an arrow from a bow might a man in his strength reach from his hollow ship into that deep cave. And therein dwelleth Scylla, yelping terribly. Her voice indeed is no greater than the voice of a new-born whelp, but a dreadful monster is she, nor would any look on her gladly, not if it were a god that met her. Verily she hath twelve feet all dangling down; and six necks exceeding long, and on each a hideous head, and therein three rows of teeth set thick and close, full of black death. Up to her middle is she sunk far down in the hollow cave, but forth she holds her heads from the dreadful gulf, and there she fishes, swooping round the rock, for dolphins or sea-dogs, or whatso greater beast she may anywhere take, whereof the deep-voiced Amphitrite feeds countless flocks. Thereby no sailors boast that they have fled scatheless ever with their ship, for with each head she carries off a man, whom she hath snatched from out the dark-prowed ship.

'"But that other cliff, Odysseus, thou shalt note, lying lower, hard by the first: thou couldest send an arrow across. And thereon is a great fig-tree growing, in fullest leaf, and beneath it mighty Charybdis sucks down black water, for thrice a day she spouts it forth, and thrice a day she sucks it down in terrible wise. Never mayest thou be there when she sucks the water, for none might save thee then from thy bane, not even the Earth-Shaker! But take heed and swiftly drawing nigh to Scylla's rock drive the ship past, since of a truth it is far better to mourn six of thy company in the ship, than all in the selfsame hour."

'So spake she, but I answered, and said unto her: "Come I pray thee herein, goddess, tell me true, if there be any means whereby I might escape from the deadly Charybdis and avenge me on that other, when she would prey upon my company."

'So spake I, and that fair goddess answered me: "Man overbold, lo, now again the deeds of war are in thy mind and the travail thereof. Wilt thou not yield thee even to the deathless gods? As for her, she is no mortal, but an immortal plague, dread, grievous, and fierce, and not to be fought with; and against her there is no defence; flight is the bravest way. For if thou tarry to do on thine armour by the cliff, I fear lest once again she sally forth and catch at thee with so many heads, and seize as many men as before. So drive past with all thy force, and call on Cratais, mother of Scylla, which bore her for a bane to mortals. And she will then let her from darting forth thereafter.

'"Then thou shalt come unto the isle Thrinacia; there are the many kine of Helios and his brave flocks feeding, seven herds of kine and as many goodly flocks of sheep, and fifty in each flock. They have no part in birth or in corruption, and there are goddesses to shepherd them, nymphs with fair tresses, Phaethusa and Lampetie whom bright Neaera bare to Helios Hyperion. Now when the lady their mother had borne and nursed them, she carried them to the isle Thrinacia to dwell afar, that they should guard their father's flocks and his kine with shambling gait. If thou doest these no hurt, being heedful of thy return, truly ye may even yet reach Ithaca, albeit in evil case. But if thou hurtest them, I foreshow ruin for thy ship and for thy men, and even though thou shouldest thyself escape, late shalt thou return in evil plight with the loss of all thy company."

'So spake she, and anon came the golden-throned Dawn. Then the fair goddess took her way up the island. But I departed to my ship and roused my men themselves to mount the vessel and loose the hawsers. And speedily they went aboard and sat upon the benches, and sitting orderly smote the grey sea water with their oars. And in the wake of our dark-prowed ship she sent a favouring wind that filled the sails, a kindly escort, — even Circe of the braided tresses, a dread goddess of human speech. And straightway we set in order the gear throughout the ship and sat us down, and the wind and the helmsman guided our barque.

‘Then I spake among my company with a heavy heart: “Friends, forasmuch as it is not well that one or two alone should know of the oracles that Circe, the fair goddess, spake unto me, therefore will I declare them, that with foreknowledge we may die, or haply shunning death and destiny escape. First she bade us avoid the sound of the voice of the wondrous Sirens, and their field of flowers, and me only she bade listen to their voices. So bind ye me in a hard bond, that I may abide unmoved in my place, upright in the mast-stead, and from the mast let rope-ends be tied, and if I beseech and bid you to set me free, then do ye straiten me with yet more bonds.”

‘Thus I rehearsed these things one and all, and declared them to my company. Meanwhile our good ship quickly came to the island of the Sirens twain, for a gentle breeze sped her on her way. Then straightway the wind ceased, and lo, there was a windless calm, and some god lulled the waves. Then my company rose up and drew in the ship’s sails, and stowed them in the hold of the ship, while they sat at the oars and whitened the water with their polished pine blades. But I with my sharp sword cleft in pieces a great circle of wax, and with my strong hands kneaded it. And soon the wax grew warm, for that my great might constrained it, and the beam of the lord Helios, son of Hyperion. And I anointed therewith the ears of all my men in their order, and in the ship they bound me hand and foot upright in the mast-stead, and from the mast they fastened rope-ends and themselves sat down, and smote the grey sea water with their oars. But when the ship was within the sound of a man’s shout from the land, we fleeing swiftly on our way, the Sirens espied the swift ship speeding toward them, and they raised their clear-toned song:

‘“Hither, come hither, renowned Odysseus, great glory of the Achaeans, here stay thy barque, that thou mayest listen to the voice of us twain. For none hath ever driven by this way in his black ship, till he hath heard from our lips the voice sweet as the honeycomb, and hath had joy thereof and gone on his way the wiser. For lo, we know all things, all the travail that in wide Troy-land the Argives and Trojans bare by the gods’ designs, yea, and we know all that shall hereafter be upon the fruitful earth.”

‘So spake they uttering a sweet voice, and my heart was fain to listen, and I bade my company unbind me, nodding at them with a frown, but they bent to their oars and rowed on. Then straight uprose Perimedes and Eurylochus and bound me with more cords and straitened me yet the more. Now when we had driven past them, nor heard we any longer the sound of the Sirens or their song, forthwith my dear company took away the wax wherewith I had anointed their ears and loosed me from my bonds.

'But so soon as we left that isle, thereafter presently I saw smoke and a great wave, and heard the sea roaring. Then for very fear the oars flew from their hands, and down the stream they all splashed, and the ship was holden there, for my company no longer plied with their hands the tapering oars. But I paced the ship and cheered on my men, as I stood by each one and spake smooth words:

'"Friends, forasmuch as in sorrow we are not all unlearned, truly this is no greater woe that is upon us, {*} than when the Cyclops penned us by main might in his hollow cave; yet even thence we made escape by my manfulness, even by my counsel and my wit, and some day I think that this adventure too we shall remember. Come now, therefore, let us all give ear to do according to my word. Do ye smite the deep surf of the sea with your oars, as ye sit on the benches, if peradventure Zeus may grant us to escape from and shun this death. And as for thee, helmsman, thus I charge thee, and ponder it in thine heart seeing that thou wieldest the helm of the hollow ship. Keep the ship well away from this smoke and from the wave and hug the rocks, lest the ship, ere thou art aware, start from her course to the other side, and so thou hurl us into ruin."

{* Reading [Greek], not [Greek] with La Roche.}

'So I spake, and quickly they hearkened to my words. But of Scylla I told them nothing more, a bane none might deal with, lest haply my company should cease from rowing for fear, and hide them in the hold. In that same hour I suffered myself to forget the hard behest of Circe, in that she bade me in nowise be armed; but I did on my glorious harness and caught up two long lances in my hands, and went on the decking of the prow, for thence methought that Scylla of the rock would first be seen, who was to bring woe on my company. Yet could I not spy her anywhere, and my eyes waxed weary for gazing all about toward the darkness of the rock.

"Next we began to sail up the narrow strait lamenting. For on the one hand lay Scylla, and on the other mighty Charybdis in terrible wise sucked down the salt sea water. As often as she belched it forth, like a cauldron on a great fire she would seethe up through all her troubled deeps, and overhead the spray fell on the tops of either cliff. But oft as she gulped down the salt sea water, within she was all plain to see through her troubled deeps, and the rock around roared horribly and beneath the earth was manifest swart with sand, and pale fear gat hold on my men. Toward her, then, we looked fearing destruction; but Scylla meanwhile caught from out my hollow ship six of my company, the hardiest of their hands and the chief in might. And looking into the swift ship to find my men, even then I marked their feet and hands as they were lifted on high, and they cried aloud in their agony, and called me by my name for that last time of all. Even as when as fisher on some headland lets down with a long rod his baits for a snare to the little fishes below, casting into the deep the horn of an ox of the homestead, and as he catches each flings it writhing ashore, so writhing were they borne upward to the cliff. And there she devoured them shrieking in her gates, they stretching forth their hands to me in the dread death-struggle. And the most pitiful thing was this that mine eyes have seen of all my travail in searching out the paths of the sea.

‘Now when we had escaped the Rocks and dread Charybdis and Scylla, thereafter we soon came to the fair island of the god; where were the goodly kine, broad of brow, and the many brave flocks of Helios Hyperion. Then while as yet I was in my black ship upon the deep, I heard the lowing of the cattle being stalled and the bleating of the sheep, and on my mind there fell the saying of the blind seer, Theban Teiresias, and of Circe of Aia, who charged me very straitly to shun the isle of Helios, the gladdener of the world. Then I spake out among my company in sorrow of heart:

‘“Hear my words, my men, albeit in evil plight, that I may declare unto you the oracles of Teiresias and of Circe of Aia, who very straitly charged me to shun the isle of Helios, the gladdener of the world. For there she said the most dreadful mischief would befal us. Nay, drive ye then the black ship beyond and past that isle.”

‘So spake I, and their heart was broken within them. And
Eurylochus straightway answered me sadly, saying:

‘“Hardy art thou, Odysseus, of might beyond measure, and thy limbs are never weary; verily thou art fashioned all of iron, that sufferest not thy fellows, foredone with toil and drowsiness, to set foot on shore, where we might presently prepare us a good supper in this sea-girt island. But even as we are thou biddest us fare blindly through the sudden night, and from the isle go wandering on the misty deep. And strong winds, the bane of ships, are born of the night. How could a man escape from utter doom, if there chanced to come a sudden blast of the South Wind, or of the boisterous West, which mainly wreck ships, beyond the will of the gods, the lords of all? Howbeit for this present let us yield to the black night, and we will make ready our supper abiding by the swift ship, and in the morning we will climb on board, and put out into the broad deep.”

‘So spake Eurylochus, and the rest of my company consented thereto. Then at the last I knew that some god was indeed imagining evil, and I uttered my voice and spake unto him winged words:

'"Eurylochus, verily ye put force upon me, being but one among you all. But come, swear me now a mighty oath, one and all, to the intent that if we light on a herd of kine or a great flock of sheep, none in the evil folly of his heart may slay any sheep or ox; but in quiet eat ye the meat which the deathless Circe gave."

'So I spake, and straightway they swore to refrain as I commanded them. Now after they had sworn and done that oath, we stayed our well-builded ship in the hollow harbour near to a well of sweet water, and my company went forth from out the ship and deftly got ready supper. But when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, thereafter they fell a weeping as they thought upon their dear companions whom Scylla had snatched from out the hollow ship and so devoured. And deep sleep came upon them amid their weeping. And when it was the third watch of the night, and the stars had crossed the zenith, Zeus the cloud-gatherer roused against them an angry wind with wondrous tempest, and shrouded in clouds land and sea alike, and from heaven sped down the night. Now when early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, we beached the ship, and dragged it up within a hollow cave, where were the fair dancing grounds of the nymphs and the places of their session. Thereupon I ordered a gathering of my men and spake in their midst, saying:

'"Friends, forasmuch as there is yet meat and drink in the swift ship, let us keep our hands off those kine, lest some evil thing befal us. For these are the kine and the brave flocks of a dread god, even of Helios, who overseeth all and overheareth all things."

'So I spake, and their lordly spirit hearkened thereto. Then for a whole month the South Wind blew without ceasing, and no other wind arose, save only the East and the South.

'Now so long as my company still had corn and red wine, they refrained them from the kine, for they were fain of life. But when the corn was now all spent from out the ship, and they went wandering with barbed hooks in quest of game, as needs they must, fishes and fowls, whatsoever might come to their hand, for hunger gnawed at their belly, then at last I departed up the isle, that I might pray to the gods, if perchance some one of them might show me a way of returning. And now when I had avoided my company on my way through the island, I laved my hands where was a shelter from the wind, and prayed to all the gods that hold Olympus. But they shed sweet sleep upon my eyelids. And Eurylochus the while set forth an evil counsel to my company:

'"Hear my words, my friends, though ye be in evil case. Truly every shape of death is hateful to wretched mortals, but to die of hunger and so meet doom is most pitiful of all. Nay come, we will drive off the best of the kine of Helios and will do sacrifice to the deathless gods who keep wide heaven. And if we may yet reach Ithaca, our own country, forthwith will we rear a rich shrine to Helios Hyperion, and therein would we set many a choice offering. But if he be somewhat wroth for his cattle with straight horns, and is fain to wreck our ship, and the other gods follow his desire, rather with one gulp at the wave would I cast my life away, than be slowly straitened to death in a desert isle.”

‘So spake Eurylochus, and the rest of the company consented thereto. Forthwith they drave off the best of the kine of Helios that were nigh at hand, for the fair kine of shambling gait and broad of brow were feeding no great way from the dark-prowed ship. Then they stood around the cattle and prayed to the gods, plucking the fresh leaves from an oak of lofty boughs, for they had no white barley on board the decked ship. Now after they had prayed and cut the throats of the kine and flayed them, they cut out slices of the thighs and wrapped them in the fat, making a double fold, and thereon they laid raw flesh. Yet had they no pure wine to pour over the flaming sacrifices, but they made libation with water and roasted the entrails over the fire. Now after the thighs were quite consumed and they had tasted the inner parts, they cut the rest up small and spitted it on spits. In the same hour deep sleep sped from my eyelids and I sallied forth to the swift ship and the sea-banks. But on my way as I drew near to the curved ship, the sweet savour of the fat came all about me; and I groaned and spake out before the deathless gods:

‘“Father Zeus, and all ye other blessed gods that live for ever, verily to my undoing ye have lulled me with a ruthless sleep, and my company abiding behind have imagined a monstrous deed.”

‘Then swiftly to Helios Hyperion came Lampetie of the long robes, with the tidings that we had slain his kine. And straight he spake with angry heart amid the Immortals:

‘“Father Zeus, and all ye other blessed gods that live for ever, take vengeance I pray you on the company of Odysseus, son of Laertes, that have insolently slain my cattle, wherein I was wont to be glad as I went toward the starry heaven, and when I again turned earthward from the firmament. And if they pay me not full atonement for the cattle, I will go down to Hades and shine among the dead.”

‘And Zeus the cloud-gatherer answered him, saying: “Helios, do thou, I say, shine on amidst the deathless gods, and amid mortal men upon the earth, the grain-giver. But as for me, I will soon smite their swift ship with my white bolt, and cleave it in pieces in the midst of the wine-dark deep.”

‘This I heard from Calypso of the fair hair; and she said that she herself had heard it from Hermes the Messenger.

‘But when I had come down to the ship and to the sea, I went up to my companions and rebuked them one by one; but we could find no remedy, the cattle were dead and gone. And soon thereafter the gods showed forth signs and wonders to my company. The skins were creeping, and the flesh bellowing upon the spits, both the roast and raw, and there was a sound as the voice of kine.

‘Then for six days my dear company feasted on the best of the kine of Helios which they had driven off. But when Zeus, son of Cronos, had added the seventh day thereto, thereafter the wind ceased to blow with a rushing storm, and at once we climbed the ship and launched into the broad deep, when we had set up the mast and hoisted the white sails.

‘But now when we left that isle nor any other land appeared, but sky and sea only, even then the son of Cronos stayed a dark cloud above the hollow ship, and beneath it the deep darkened. And the ship ran on her way for no long while, for of a sudden came the shrilling West, with the rushing of a great tempest, and the blast of wind snapped the two forestays of the mast, and the mast fell backward and all the gear dropped into the bilge. And behold, on the hind part of the ship the mast struck the head of the pilot and brake all the bones of his skull together, and like a diver he dropt down from the deck, and his brave spirit left his bones. In that same hour Zeus thundered and cast his bolt upon the ship, and she reeled all over being stricken by the bolt of Zeus, and was filled with sulphur, and lo, my company fell from out the vessel. Like sea-gulls they were borne round the black ship upon the billows, and the god reft them of returning.

‘But I kept pacing through my ship, till the surge loosened the sides from the keel, and the wave swept her along stript of her tackling, and brake her mast clean off at the keel. Now the backstay fashioned of an oxhide had been flung thereon; therewith I lashed together both keel and mast, and sitting thereon I was borne by the ruinous winds.

‘Then verily the West Wind ceased to blow with a rushing storm, and swiftly withal the South Wind came, bringing sorrow to my soul, that so I might again measure back that space of sea, the way to deadly Charybdis. All the night was I borne, but with the rising of the sun I came to the rock of Scylla, and to dread Charybdis. Now she had sucked down her salt sea water, when I was swung up on high to the tall fig-tree whereto I clung like a bat, and could find no sure rest for my feet nor place to stand, for the roots spread far below and the branches hung aloft out of reach, long and large, and overshadowed Charybdis. Steadfast I clung till she should spew forth mast and keel again; and late they came to my desire. At the hour when a man rises up from the assembly and goes to supper, one who judges the many quarrels of the young men that seek to him for law, at that same hour those timbers came forth to view from out Charybdis. And I let myself drop down hands and feet, and plunged heavily in the midst of the waters beyond the long timbers, and sitting on these I rowed hard with my hands. But the father of gods and of men suffered me no more to behold Scylla, else I should never have escaped from utter doom.

‘Thence for nine days was I borne, and on the tenth night the gods brought me nigh to the isle of Ogygia, where dwells Calypso of the braided tresses, an awful goddess of mortal speech, who took me in and entreated me kindly. But why rehearse all this tale? For even yesterday I told it to thee and to thy noble wife in thy house; and it liketh me not twice to tell a plain-told tale.’

BOOK XIII

Odysseus, sleeping, is set ashore at Ithaca by the Phaeacians, and waking knows it not. Pallas, in the form of a shepherd, helps to hide his treasure. The ship that conveyed him is turned into a rock, and Odysseus by Pallas is instructed what to do, and transformed into an old beggarman.

So spake he, and dead silence fell on all, and they were spell-bound throughout the shadowy halls. Thereupon Alcinous answered him, and spake, saying:

‘Odysseus, now that thou hast come to my high house with floor of bronze, never, methinks, shalt thou be driven from thy way ere thou returnest, though thou hast been sore afflicted. And for each man among you, that in these halls of mine drink evermore the dark wine of the elders, and hearken to the minstrel, this is my word and command. Garments for the stranger are already laid up in a polished coffer, with gold curiously wrought, and all other such gifts as the counsellors of the Phaeacians bare hither. Come now, let us each of us give him a great tripod and a cauldron, and we in turn will gather goods among the people and get us recompense; for it were hard that one man should give without repayment.’

So spake Alcinous, and the saying pleased them well. Then they went each one to his house to lay him down to rest; but so soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, they hasted to the ship and bare the bronze, the joy of men. And the mighty king Alcinous himself went about the ship and diligently bestowed the gifts beneath the benches, that they might not hinder any of the crew in their rowing, when they laboured at their oars. Then they betook them to the house of Alcinous and fell to feasting. And the mighty king Alcinous sacrificed before them an ox to Zeus, the son of Cronos, that dwells in the dark clouds, who is lord of all. And when they had burnt the pieces of the thighs, they shared the glorious feast and made merry, and among them harped the divine minstrel Demodocus, whom the people honoured. But Odysseus would ever turn his head toward the splendour of the sun, as one fain to hasten his setting: for verily he was most eager to return. And as when a man longs for his supper, for whom all day long two dark oxen drag through the fallow field the jointed plough, yea and welcome to such an one the sunlight sinketh, that so he may get him to supper, for his knees wax faint by the way, even so welcome was the sinking of the sunlight to Odysseus. Then straight he spake among the Phaeacians, masters of the oar, and to Alcinous in chief he made known his word, saying:

‘My lord Alcinous, most notable of all the people, pour ye the drink offering, and send me safe upon my way, and as for you, fare ye well. For now have I all that my heart desired, an escort and loving gifts. May the gods of heaven give me good fortune with them, and may I find my noble wife in my home with my friends unharmed, while ye, for your part, abide here and make glad your wedded wives and children; and may the gods vouchsafe all manner of good, and may no evil come nigh the people!’

So spake he, and they all consented thereto and bade send the stranger on his way, in that he had spoken aright. Then the mighty Alcinous spake to the henchman: ‘Pontonous, mix the bowl and serve out the wine to all in the hall, that we may pray to Father Zeus, and send the stranger on his way to his own country.’

So spake he, and Pontonous mixed the honey-hearted wine, and served it to all in turn. And they poured forth before the blessed gods that keep wide heaven, even there as they sat. Then goodly Odysseus uprose, and placed in Arete’s hand the two-handled cup, and uttering his voice spake to her winged words:

‘Fare thee well, O queen, all the days of thy life, till old age come and death, that visit all mankind. But I go homeward, and do thou in this thy house rejoice in thy children and thy people and Alcinous the king.’

Therewith goodly Odysseus stept over the threshold. And with him the mighty Alcinous sent forth a henchman to guide him to the swift ship and the sea-banks. And Arete sent in this train certain maidens of her household, one bearing a fresh robe and a doublet, and another she joined to them to carry the strong coffer, and yet another bare bread and red wine. Now when they had come down to the ship and to the sea, straightway the good men of the escort took these things and laid them by in the hollow ship, even all the meat and drink. Then they strewed for Odysseus a rug and a sheet of linen, on the decks of the hollow ship, in the hinder part thereof, that he might sleep sound. Then he too climbed aboard and laid him down in silence, while they sat upon the benches, every man in order, and unbound the hawser from the pierced stone. So soon as they leant backwards and tossed the sea water with the oar blade, a deep sleep fell upon his eyelids, a sound sleep, very sweet, and next akin to death. And even as on a plain a yoke of four stallions comes springing all together beneath the lash, leaping high and speedily accomplishing the way, so leaped the stern of that ship, and the dark wave of the sounding sea rushed mightily in the wake, and she ran ever surely on her way, nor could a circling hawk keep pace with her, of winged things the swiftest. Even thus she lightly sped and cleft the waves of the sea, bearing a man whose counsel was as the counsel of the gods, one that erewhile had suffered much sorrow of heart, in passing through the wars of men, and the grievous waves; but for that time he slept in peace, forgetful of all that he had suffered.

So when the star came up, that is brightest of all, and goes ever heralding the light of early Dawn, even then did the seafaring ship draw nigh the island. There is in the land of Ithaca a certain haven of Phorcys, the ancient one of the sea, and thereby are two headlands of sheer cliff, which slope to the sea on the haven’s side and break the mighty wave that ill winds roll without, but within, the decked ships ride unmoored when once they have reached the place of anchorage. Now at the harbour’s head is a long-leaved olive tree, and hard by is a pleasant cave and shadowy, sacred to the nymphs, that are called the Naiads. And therein are mixing bowls and jars of stone, and there moreover do bees hive. And there are great looms of stone, whereon the nymphs weave raiment of purple stain, a marvel to behold, and therein are waters welling evermore. Two gates there are to the cave, the one set toward the North Wind whereby men may go down, but the portals toward the South pertain rather to the gods, whereby men may not enter: it is the way of the immortals.

Thither they, as having knowledge of that place, let drive their ship; and now the vessel in full course ran ashore, half her keel’s length high; so well was she sped by the hands of the oarsmen. Then they alighted from the benched ship upon the land, and first they lifted Odysseus from out the hollow ship, all as he was in the sheet of linen and the bright rug, and laid him yet heavy with slumber on the sand. And they took forth the goods which the lordly Phaeacians had given him on his homeward way by grace of the great-hearted Athene. These they set in a heap by the trunk of the olive tree, a little aside from the road, lest some wayfaring man, before Odysseus awakened, should come and spoil them. Then themselves departed homeward again. But the shaker of the earth forgat not the threats, wherewith at the first he had threatened god like Odysseus, and he inquired into the counsel of Zeus, saying:

‘Father Zeus, I for one shall no longer be of worship among the deathless gods, when mortal men hold me in no regard, even Phaeacians, who moreover are of mine own lineage. Lo, now I said that after much affliction Odysseus should come home, for I had no mind to rob him utterly of his return, when once thou hadst promised it and given assent; but behold, in his sleep they have borne him in a swift ship over the sea, and set him down in Ithaca, and given him gifts out of measure, bronze and gold in plenty and woven raiment, much store, such as never would Odysseus have won for himself out of Troy; yea, though he had returned unhurt with the share of the spoil that fell to him.’

And Zeus, the cloud gatherer, answered him saying: ‘Lo, now, shaker of the earth, of widest power, what a word hast thou spoken! The gods nowise dishonour thee; hard would it be to assail with dishonour our eldest and our best. But if any man, giving place to his own hardihood and strength, holds thee not in worship, thou hast always thy revenge for the same, even in the time to come. Do thou as thou wilt, and as seems thee good.'

Then Poseidon, shaker of the earth, answered him: 'Straightway would I do even as thou sayest, O god of the dark clouds; but thy wrath I always hold in awe and avoid. Howbeit, now I fain would smite a fair ship of the Phaeacians, as she comes home from a convoy on the misty deep, that thereby they may learn to hold their hands, and cease from giving escort to men; and I would overshadow their city with a great mountain.'

And Zeus the gatherer of the clouds, answered him, saying: 'Friend, learn now what seems best in my sight. At an hour when the folk are all looking forth from the city at the ship upon her way, smite her into a stone hard by the land; a stone in the likeness of a swift ship, that all mankind may marvel, and do thou overshadow their city with a great mountain.'

Now when Poseidon, shaker of the earth, heard this saying, he went on his way to Scheria, where the Phaeacians dwell. There he abode awhile; and lo, she drew near, the seafaring ship, lightly sped upon her way. Then nigh her came the shaker of the earth, and he smote her into a stone, and rooted her far below with the down-stroke of his hand; and he departed thence again.

Then one to the other they spake winged words, the Phaeacians of the long oars, mariners renowned. And thus would they speak, looking each man to his neighbour:

'Ah me! who is this that fettered our swift ship on the deep as she drave homewards? Even now she stood full in sight.'

Even so they would speak; but they knew not how these things were ordained. And Alcinous made harangue and spake among them:

'Lo now, in very truth the ancient oracles of my father have come home to me. He was wont to say that Poseidon was jealous of us, for that we give safe escort to all men. He said that the day would come when the god would smite a fair ship of the Phaeacians, as she came home from a convoy on the misty deep, and overshadow our city with a great mountain. Thus that ancient one would speak; and lo, all these things now have an end. But come, let us all give ear and do according to my word. Cease ye from the convoy of mortals, whensoever any shall come unto our town, and let us sacrifice to Poseidon twelve choice bulls, if perchance he may take pity, neither overshadow our city with a great mountain.'

So spake he, and they were dismayed and got ready the bulls. Thus were they praying to the lord Poseidon, the princes and counsellors of the land of the

Phaeacians, as they stood about the altar.

Even then the goodly Odysseus awoke where he slept on his native land; nor knew he the same again, having now been long afar, for around him the goddess had shed a mist, even Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, to the end that she might make him undiscovered for that he was, and might expound to him all things, that so his wife should not know him neither his townsmen and kinsfolk, ere the wooers had paid for all their transgressions. Wherefore each thing showed strange to the lord of the land, the long paths and the sheltering havens and the steep rocks and the trees in their bloom. So he started up, and stood and looked upon his native land, and then he made moan withal, and smote on both his thighs with the down-stroke of his hands, and making lament, he spake, saying:

‘Oh, woe is me, unto what mortals’ land am I now come? Say, are they froward, and wild, and unjust, or hospitable and of a god-fearing mind? Whither do I bear all this treasure? Yea, where am I wandering myself? Oh that the treasure had remained with the Phaeacians where it was, so had I come to some other of the mighty princes, who would have entreated me kindly and sent me on my way. But now I know not where to bestow these things, nor yet will I leave them here behind, lest haply other men make spoil of them. Ah then, they are not wholly wise or just, the princes and counsellors of the Phaeacians, who carried me to a strange land. Verily they promised to bring me to clear-seen Ithaca, but they performed it not. May Zeus requite them, the god of suppliants, seeing that he watches over all men and punishes the transgressor! But come, I will reckon up these goods and look to them, lest the men be gone, and have taken aught away upon their hollow ship.’

Therewith he set to number the fair tripods and the cauldrons and the gold and the goodly woven raiment; and of all these he lacked not aught, but he bewailed him for his own country, as he walked downcast by the shore of the sounding sea, and made sore lament. Then Athene came nigh him in the guise of a young man, the herdsman of a flock, a young man most delicate, such as are the sons of kings. And she had a well-wrought mantle that fell in two folds about her shoulders, and beneath her smooth feet she had sandals bound, and a javelin in her hands. And Odysseus rejoiced as he saw her, and came over against her, and uttering his voice spake to her winged words:

‘Friend, since thou art the first that I have chanced on in this land, hail to thee, and with no ill-will mayest thou meet me! Nay, save this my substance and save me too, for to thee as to a god I make prayer, and to thy dear knees have I come. And herein tell me true, that I may surely know. What land, what people is this? what men dwell therein? Surely, methinks, it is some clear seen isle, or a shore of the rich mainland that lies and leans upon the deep.’

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake to him again: ‘Thou art witless, stranger, or thou art come from afar, if indeed thou askest of this land; nay, it is not so very nameless but that many men know it, both all those who dwell toward the dawning and the sun, and they that abide over against the light toward the shadowy west. Verily it is rough and not fit for the driving of horses, yet is it not a very sorry isle, though narrow withal. For herein is corn past telling, and herein too wine is found, and the rain is on it evermore, and the fresh dew. And it is good for feeding goats and feeding kine; all manner of wood is here, and watering-places unfailing are herein. Wherefore, stranger, the name of Ithaca hath reached even unto Troy-land, which men say is far from this Achaean shore.’

So spake she, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus was glad, and had joy in his own country, according to the word of Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, lord of the aegis. And he uttered his voice and spake unto her winged words; yet he did not speak the truth, but took back the word that was on his lips, for quick and crafty was his wit within his breast:

‘Of Ithaca have I heard tell, even in broad Crete, far over the seas; and now have I come hither myself with these my goods. And I left as much again to my children, when I turned outlaw for the slaying of the dear son of Idomeneus, Orsilochus, swift of foot, who in wide Crete was the swiftest of all men that live by bread. Now he would have despoiled me of all that booty of Troy, for the which I had endured pain of heart, in passing through the wars of men, and the grievous waves of the sea, for this cause that I would not do a favour to his father, and make me his squire in the land of the Trojans, but commanded other fellowship of mine own. So I smote him with a bronze-shod spear as he came home from the field, lying in ambush for him by the wayside, with one of my companions. And dark midnight held the heavens, and no man marked us, but privily I took his life away. Now after I had slain him with the sharp spear, straightway I went to a ship and besought the lordly Phoenicians, and gave them spoil to their hearts’ desire. I charged them to take me on board, and land me at Pylos or at goodly Elis where the Epeans bear rule. Howbeit of a truth, the might of the wind drave them out of their course, sore against their will, nor did they wilfully play me false. Thence we were driven wandering, and came hither by night. And with much ado we rowed onward into harbour, nor took we any thought of supper, though we stood sore in need thereof, but even as we were we stept ashore and all lay down. Then over me there came sweet slumber in my weariness, but they took forth my goods from the hollow ship, and set them by me where I myself lay upon the sands. Then they went on board, and departed for the fair-lying land of Sidon; while as for me I was left stricken at heart.’

So spake he and the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, smiled, and caressed him with her hand; and straightway she changed to the semblance of a woman, fair and tall, and skilled in splendid handiwork. And uttering her voice she spake unto him winged words:

‘Crafty must he be, and knavish, who would outdo thee in all manner of guile, even if it were a god encountered thee. Hardy man, subtle of wit, of guile insatiate, so thou wast not even in thine own country to cease from thy sleights and knavish words, which thou lovest from the bottom of thine heart! But come, no more let us tell of these things, being both of us practised in deceits, for that thou art of all men far the first in counsel and in discourse, and I in the company of all the gods win renown for my wit and wile. Yet thou knewest not me, Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, who am always by thee and guard thee in all adventures. Yea, and I made thee to be beloved of all the Phaeacians. And now am I come hither to contrive a plot with thee and to hide away the goods, that by my counsel and design the noble Phaeacians gave thee on thy homeward way. And I would tell thee how great a measure of trouble thou art ordained to fulfil within thy well-builded house. But do thou harden thy heart, for so it must be, and tell none neither man nor woman of all the folk, that thou hast indeed returned from wandering, but in silence endure much sorrow, submitting thee to the despite of men.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: ‘Hard is it, goddess, for a mortal man that meets thee to discern thee, howsoever wise he be; for thou takest upon thee every shape. But this I know well, that of old thou wast kindly to me, so long as we sons of the Achaeans made war in Troy. But so soon as we had sacked the steep city of Priam and had gone on board our ships, and the god had scattered the Achaeans, thereafter I have never beheld thee, daughter of Zeus, nor seen thee coming on board my ship, to ward off sorrow from me — but I wandered evermore with a stricken heart, till the gods delivered me from my evil case — even till the day when, within the fat land of the men of Phaeacia, thou didst comfort me with thy words, and thyself didst lead me to their city. And now I beseech thee in thy father’s name to tell me: for I deem not that I am come to clear-seen Ithaca, but I roam over some other land, and methinks that thou speakest thus to mock me and beguile my mind. Tell me whether in very deed I am come to mine own dear country.’

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him: ‘Yea, such a thought as this is ever in thy breast. Wherefore I may in no wise leave thee in thy grief, so courteous art thou, so ready of wit and so prudent. Right gladly would any other man on his return from wandering have hasted to behold his children and his wife in his halls; but thou hast no will to learn or to hear aught, till thou hast furthermore made trial of thy wife, who sits as ever in her halls, and wearily for her the nights wane always and the days, in shedding of tears. But of this I never doubted, but ever knew it in my heart that thou wouldest come home with the loss of all thy company. Yet, I tell thee, I had no mind to be at strife with Poseidon, my own father's brother, who laid up wrath in his heart against thee, being angered at the blinding of his dear son. But come, and I will show thee the place of the dwelling of Ithaca, that thou mayst be assured. Lo, here is the haven of Phorcys, the ancient one of the sea, and here at the haven's head is the olive tree with spreading leaves, and hard by it is the pleasant cave and shadowy, sacred to the nymphs that are called the Naiads. Yonder, behold, is the roofed cavern, where thou offeredst many an acceptable sacrifice of hecatombs to the nymphs; and lo, this hill is Neriton, all clothed in forest.'

Therewith the goddess scattered the mist, and the land appeared. Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus was glad rejoicing in his own land, and he kissed the earth, the grain-giver. And anon he prayed to the nymphs, and lifted up his hands, saying:

'Ye Naiad nymphs, daughters of Zeus, never did I think to look on you again, but now be ye greeted in my loving prayers: yea, and gifts as aforetime I will give, if the daughter of Zeus, driver of the spoil, suffer me of her grace myself to live, and bring my dear son to manhood.'

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake to him again: 'Be of good courage, and let not thy heart be careful about these things. But come, let us straightway set thy goods in the secret place of the wondrous cave, that there they may abide for thee safe. And let us for ourselves advise us how all may be for the very best.'

Therewith the goddess plunged into the shadowy cave, searching out the chambers of the cavern. Meanwhile Odysseus brought up his treasure, the gold and the unyielding bronze and fair woven raiment, which the Phaeacians gave him. And these things he laid by with care, and Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, lord of the aegis, set a stone against the door of the cave. Then they twain sat down by the trunk of the sacred olive tree, and devised death for the froward wooers. And the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake first, saying:

'Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, advise thee how thou mayest stretch forth thine hands upon the shameless wooers, who now these three years lord it through thy halls, as they woo thy godlike wife and proffer the gifts of wooing. And she, that is ever bewailing her for thy return, gives hope to all and makes promises to every man and sends them messages, but her mind is set on other things.'

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying:

‘Lo now, in very truth I was like to have perished in my halls by the evil doom of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, hadst not thou, goddess, declared me each thing aright. Come then, weave some counsel whereby I may requite them; and thyself stand by me, and put great boldness of spirit within me, even as in the day when we loosed the shining coronal of Troy. If but thou wouldest stand by me with such eagerness, thou grey-eyed goddess, I would war even with three hundred men, with thee my lady and goddess, if thou of thy grace didst succour me the while.’

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him: ‘Yea, verily I will be near thee nor will I forget thee, whensoever we come to this toil: and methinks that certain of the wooers that devour thy livelihood shall bespatter the boundless earth with blood and brains. But come, I will make thee such-like that no man shall know thee. Thy fair skin I will wither on thy supple limbs, and make waste thy yellow hair from off thy head, and wrap thee in a foul garment, such that one would shudder to see a man therein. And I will dim thy two eyes, erewhile so fair, in such wise that thou mayest be unseemly in the sight of all the wooers and of thy wife and son, whom thou didst leave in thy halls. And do thou thyself first of all go unto the swineherd, who tends thy swine, loyal and at one with thee, and loves thy son and constant Penelope. Him shalt thou find sitting by the swine, as they are feeding near the rock of Corax and the spring Arethusa, and there they eat abundance of acorns and drink the black water, things whereby swine grow fat and well-liking. There do thou abide and sit by the swine, and find out all, till I have gone to Sparta, the land of fair women, to call Telemachus thy dear son, Odysseus, who hath betaken himself to spacious Lacedaemon, to the house of Menelaus to seek tidings of thee, whether haply thou are yet alive.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: ‘Nay, wherefore then didst thou not tell him, seeing thou hast knowledge of all? Was it, perchance, that he too may wander in sorrow over the unharvested seas, and that others may consume his livelihood?’

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him: ‘Nay, let him not be heavy on thy heart. I myself was his guide, that by going thither he might win a good report. Lo, he knows no toil, but he sits in peace in the palace of the son of Atreus, and has boundless store about him. Truly the young men with their black ship they lie in wait, and are eager to slay him ere he come to his own country. But this, methinks, shall never be. Yea, sooner shall the earth close over certain of the wooers that devour thy livelihood.’

Therewith Athene touched him with her wand. His fair flesh she withered on his supple limbs, and made waste his yellow hair from off his head, and over all his limbs she cast the skin of an old man, and dimmed his two eyes, erewhile so fair. And she changed his raiment to a vile wrap and a doublet, torn garments and filthy, stained with foul smoke. And over all she clad him with the great bald hide of a swift stag, and she gave him a staff and a mean tattered scrip, and a cord therewith to hang it.

And after they twain had taken this counsel together, they parted; and she now went to goodly Lacedaemon to fetch the son of Odysseus.

BOOK XIV

Odysseus, in the form of a beggar, goes to Eumaeus, the master of his swine, where he is well used and tells a feigned story, and informs himself of the behaviour of the wooers.

But Odysseus fared forth from the haven by the rough track, up the wooded country and through the heights, where Athene had showed him that he should find the goodly swineherd, who cared most for his substance of all the thralls that goodly Odysseus had gotten.

Now he found him sitting at the vestibule of the house, where his courtyard was builded high, in a place with wide prospect; a great court it was and a fair, with free range round it. This the swineherd had builded by himself for the swine of his lord who was afar, and his mistress and the old man Laertes knew not of it. With stones from the quarry had he builded it, and coped it with a fence of white thorn, and he had split an oak to the dark core, and without he had driven stakes the whole length thereof on either side, set thick and close; and within the courtyard he made twelve styes hard by one another to be beds for the swine, and in each stye fifty grovelling swine were penned, brood swine; but the boars slept without. Now these were far fewer in number, the godlike wooers minishing them at their feasts, for the swineherd ever sent in the best of all the fatted hogs. And their tale was three hundred and three-score. And by them always slept four dogs, as fierce as wild beasts, which the swineherd had bred, a master of men. Now he was fitting sandals to his feet, cutting a good brown oxhide, while the rest of his fellows, three in all, were abroad this way and that, with the droves of swine; while the fourth he had sent to the city to take a boar to the proud wooers, as needs he must, that they might sacrifice it and satisfy their soul with flesh.

And of a sudden the baying dogs saw Odysseus, and they ran at him yelping, but Odysseus in his wariness sat him down, and let the staff fall from his hand. There by his own homestead would he have suffered foul hurt, but the swineherd with quick feet hasted after them, and sped through the outer door, and let the skin fall from his hand. And the hounds he chid and drave them this way and that, with a shower of stones, and he spake unto his lord, saying:

‘Old man, truly the dogs went nigh to be the death of thee all of a sudden, so shouldest thou have brought shame on me. Yea, and the gods have given me other pains and griefs enough. Here I sit, mourning and sorrowing for my godlike lord, and foster the fat swine for others to eat, while he craving, perchance, for food, wanders over some land and city of men of a strange speech, if haply he yet lives and beholds the sunlight. But come with me, let us to the inner steading, old man, that when thy heart is satisfied with bread and wine, thou too mayest tell thy tale and declare whence thou art, and how many woes thou hast endured.'

Therewith the goodly swineherd led him to the steading, and took him in and set him down, and strewed beneath him thick brushwood, and spread thereon the hide of a shaggy wild goat, wide and soft, which served himself for a mattress. And Odysseus rejoiced that he had given him such welcome, and spake and hailed him:

'May Zeus, O stranger, and all the other deathless gods grant thee thy dearest wish, since thou hast received me heartily!'

Then, O swineherd Eumaeus, didst thou answer him, saying: 'Guest of mine, it were an impious thing for me to slight a stranger, even if there came a meaner man than thou; for from Zeus are all strangers and beggars; and a little gift from such as we, is dear; for this is the way with thralls, who are ever in fear when young lords like ours bear rule over them. For surely the gods have stayed the returning of my master, who would have loved me diligently, and given me somewhat of my own, a house and a parcel of ground, and a comely {*} wife, such as a kind lord gives to his man, who hath laboured much for him and the work of whose hands God hath likewise increased, even as he increaseth this work of mine whereat I abide. Therefore would my lord have rewarded me greatly, had he grown old at home. But he hath perished, as I would that all the stock of Helen had perished utterly, forasmuch as she hath caused the loosening of many a man's knees. For he too departed to Ilios of the goodly steeds, to get atonement for Agamemnon, that so he might war with the Trojans.'

{* Reading [Greek]}

Therewith he quickly bound up his doublet with his girdle, and went his way to the styes, where the tribes of the swine were penned. Thence he took and brought forth two, and sacrificed them both, and singed them and cut them small, and spitted them. And when he had roasted all, he bare and set it by Odysseus, all hot as it was upon the spits, and he sprinkled thereupon white barley-meal. Then in a bowl of ivywood he mixed the honey-sweet wine, and himself sat over against him and bade him fall to:

'Eat now, stranger, such fare as thralls have to hand, even flesh of sucking pigs; but the fatted hogs the wooers devour, for they know not the wrath of the gods nor any pity. Verily the blessed gods love not froward deeds, but they reverence justice and the righteous acts of men. Yet even foes and men unfriendly, that land on a strange coast, and Zeus grants them a prey, and they have laden their ships and depart for home; yea, even on their hearts falls strong fear of the wrath of the gods. But lo you, these men know somewhat, — for they have heard an utterance of a god — , even the tidings of our lord’s evil end, seeing that they are not minded justly to woo, nor to go back to their own, but at ease they devour our wealth with insolence, and now there is no sparing. For every day and every night that comes from Zeus, they make sacrifice not of one victim only, nor of two, and wine they draw and waste it riotously. For surely his livelihood was great past telling, no lord in the dark mainland had so much, nor any in Ithaca itself; nay, not twenty men together have wealth so great, and I will tell thee the sum thereof. Twelve herds of kine upon the mainland, as many flocks of sheep, as many droves of swine, as many ranging herds of goats, that his own shepherds and strangers pasture. And ranging herds of goats, eleven in all, graze here by the extremity of the island with trusty men to watch them. And day by day each man of these ever drives one of the flock to the wooers, whichsoever seems the best of the fatted goats. But as for me I guard and keep these swine and I choose out for them, as well as I may, the best of the swine and send it hence.’

So spake he, but Odysseus ceased not to eat flesh and drink wine right eagerly and in silence, and the while was sowing the seeds of evil for the wooers. Now when he had well eaten and comforted his heart with food, then the herdsman filled him the bowl out of which he was wont himself to drink, and he gave it him brimming with wine, and he took it and was glad at heart, and uttering his voice spake to him winged words:

‘My friend, who was it then that bought thee with his wealth, a man so exceedingly rich and mighty as thou declarest? Thou saidest that he perished to get atonement for Agamemnon; tell me, if perchance I may know him, being such an one as thou sayest. For Zeus, methinks, and the other deathless gods know whether I may bring tidings of having seen him; for I have wandered far.’

Then the swineherd, a master of men, answered him: ‘Old man, no wanderer who may come hither and bring tidings of him can win the ear of his wife and his dear son; but lightly do vagrants lie when they need entertainment, and care not to tell truth. Whosoever comes straying to the land of Ithaca, goes to my mistress and speaks words of guile. And she receives him kindly and lovingly and inquires of all things, and the tears fall from her eyelids for weeping, as is meet for a woman when her lord hath died afar. And quickly enough wouldst thou too, old man, forge a tale, if any would but give thee a mantle and a doublet for raiment. But as for him, dogs and swift fowls are like already to have torn his skin from the bones, and his spirit hath left him. Or the fishes have eaten him in the deep, and there lie his bones swathed in sand-drift on the shore. Yonder then hath he perished, but for his friends nought is ordained but care, for all, but for me in chief. For never again shall I find a lord so gentle, how far soever I may go, not though again I attain unto the house of my father and my mother, where at first I was born, and they nourished me themselves and with their own hands they reared me. Nor henceforth it is not for these that I sorrow so much, though I long to behold them with mine eyes in mine own country, but desire comes over me for Odysseus who is afar. His name, stranger, even though he is not here, it shameth me to speak, for he loved me exceedingly, and cared for me at heart; nay, I call him "worshipful," albeit he is far hence.'

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus spake to him again: 'My friend, forasmuch as thou gainsayest utterly, and sayest that henceforth he will not come again, and thine heart is ever slow to believe, therefore will I tell thee not lightly but with an oath, that Odysseus shall return. And let me have the wages of good tidings as soon as ever he in his journeying shall come hither to his home. Then clothe me in a mantle and a doublet, goodly raiment. But ere that, albeit I am sore in need I will not take aught, for hateful to me even as the gates of hell, is that man, who under stress of poverty speaks words of guile. Now be Zeus my witness before any god, and the hospitable board and the hearth of noble Odysseus whereunto I am come, that all these things shall surely be accomplished even as I tell thee. In this same year Odysseus shall come hither; as the old moon wanes and the new is born shall he return to his home, and shall take vengeance on all who here dishonour his wife and noble son.'

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus: 'Old man, it is not I then, that shall ever pay thee these wages of good tidings, nor henceforth shall Odysseus ever come to his home. Nay drink in peace, and let us turn our thoughts to other matters, and bring not these to my remembrance, for surely my heart within me is sorrowful whenever any man puts me in mind of my true lord. But as for thine oath, we will let it go by; yet, oh that Odysseus may come according to my desire, and the desire of Penelope and of that old man Laertes and godlike Telemachus! But now I make a comfortless lament for the boy begotten of Odysseus, even for Telemachus. When the gods had reared him like a young sapling, and I thought that he would be no worse man among men than his dear father, glorious in form and face, some god or some man marred his good wits within him, and he went to fair Pylos after tidings of his sire. And now the lordly wooers lie in wait for him on his way home, that the race of godlike Arceisius may perish nameless out of Ithaca. Howbeit, no more of him now, whether he shall be taken or whether he shall escape, and Cronion stretch out his hand to shield him. But come, old man, do thou tell me of thine own troubles.

And herein tell me true, that I may surely know. Who art thou of the sons of men, and whence? Where is thy city, where are they that begat thee? Say on what manner of ship didst thou come, and how did sailors bring thee to Ithaca, and who did they avow them to be? For in nowise do I deem that thou camest hither by land.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘Yea now, I will tell thee all most plainly. Might we have food and sweet wine enough to last for long, while we abide within thy hut to feast thereon in quiet, and others betake them to their work; then could I easily speak for a whole year, nor yet make a full end of telling all the troubles of my spirit, all the travail I have wrought by the will of the gods.

‘I avow that I come by lineage from wide Crete, and am the son of a wealthy man. And many other sons he had born and bred in the halls, lawful born of a wedded wife; but the mother that bare me was a concubine bought with a price. Yet Castor son of Hylax, of whose blood I avow me to be, gave me no less honour than his lawful sons. Now he at the time got worship even as a god from the Cretans in the land, for wealth and riches and sons renowned. Howbeit the fates of death bare him away to the house of Hades, and his gallant sons divided among them his living and cast lots for it. But to me they gave a very small gift and assigned me a dwelling, and I took unto me a wife, the daughter of men that had wide lands, by reason of my valour, for that I was no weakling nor a dastard; but now all my might has failed me, yet even so I deem that thou mightest guess from seeing the stubble what the grain has been, for of trouble I have plenty and to spare. But then verily did Ares and Athene give me boldness and courage to hurl through the press of men, whensoever I chose the best warriors for an ambush, sowing the seeds of evil for my foes; no boding of death was ever in my lordly heart, but I would leap out the foremost and slay with the spear whoso of my foes was less fleet of foot than I. Such an one was I in war, but the labour of the field I never loved, nor home-keeping thrift, that breeds brave children, but galleys with their oars were dear to me, and wars and polished shafts and darts — baneful things whereat others use to shudder. But that, methinks, was dear to me which the god put in my heart, for divers men take delight in divers deeds. For ere ever the sons of the Achaeans had set foot on the land of Troy, I had nine times been a leader of men and of swift-faring ships against a strange people, and wealth fell ever to my hands. Of the booty I would choose out for me all that I craved, and much thereafter I won by lot. So my house got increase speedily, and thus I waxed dread and honourable among the Cretans. But when Zeus, of the far-borne voice, devised at the last that hateful path which loosened the knees of many a man in death, then the people called on me and on renowned

Idomeneus to lead the ships to Ilios, nor was there any way whereby to refuse, for the people's voice bore hard upon us. There we sons of the Achaeans warred for nine whole years, and then in the tenth year we sacked the city of Priam, and departed homeward with our ships, and a god scattered the Achaeans. But Zeus, the counsellor, devised mischief against me, wretched man that I was! For one month only I abode and had joy in my children and my wedded wife, and all that I had; and thereafter my spirit bade me fit out ships in the best manner and sail to Egypt with my godlike company. Nine ships I fitted out and the host was gathered quickly; and then for six days my dear company feasted, and I gave them many victims that they might sacrifice to the gods and prepare a feast for themselves. But on the seventh day we set sail from wide Crete, with a North Wind fresh and fair, and lightly we ran as it were down stream, yea and no harm came to any ship of mine, but we sat safe and hale, while the wind and the pilots guided the barques. And on the fifth day we came to the fair-flowing Aegyptus, and in the river Aegyptus I stayed my curved ships. Then verily I bade my dear companions to abide there by the ships and to guard them, and I sent forth scouts to range the points of outlook. But my men gave place to wantonness, being the fools of their own force, and soon they fell to wasting the fields of the Egyptians, exceeding fair, and led away their wives and infant children and slew the men. And the cry came quickly to the city, and the people hearing the shout came forth at the breaking of the day, and all the plain was filled with footmen and chariots and with the glitter of bronze. And Zeus, whose joy is in the thunder, sent an evil panic upon my company, and none durst stand and face the foe, for danger encompassed us on every side. There they slew many of us with the edge of the sword, and others they led up with them alive to work for them perforce. But as for me, Zeus himself put a thought into my heart; would to God that I had rather died, and met my fate there in Egypt, for sorrow was still mine host! Straightway I put off my well-wrought helmet from my head, and the shield from off my shoulders, and I cast away my spear from my hand, and I came over against the chariots of the king, and clasped and kissed his knees, and he saved me and delivered me, and setting me on his own chariot took me weeping to his home. Truly many an one made at me with their ashen spears, eager to slay me, for verily they were sore angered. But the king kept them off and had respect unto the wrath of Zeus, the god of strangers, who chiefly hath displeasure at evil deeds. So for seven whole years I abode with their king, and gathered much substance among the Egyptians, for they all gave me gifts. But when the eighth year came in due season, there arrived a Phoenician practised in deceit, a greedy knave, who had already done much mischief among men. He wrought on me with his cunning, and took me with him until he came to Phoenicia, where was his house and where his treasures lay. There I abode with him for the space of a full year. But when now the months and days were fulfilled, as the year came round and the seasons returned, he set me aboard a seafaring ship for Libya, under colour as though I was to convey a cargo thither with him, but his purpose was to sell me in Libya, and get a great price. So I went with him on board, perforce, yet boding evil. And the ship ran before a North Wind fresh and fair, through the mid sea over above Crete, and Zeus contrived the destruction of the crew. But when we left Crete, and no land showed in sight but sky and sea only, even then the son of Cronos stayed a dark cloud over the hollow ship, and the deep grew dark beneath it. And in the same moment Zeus thundered and smote his bolt into the ship, and she reeled all over being stricken by the bolt of Zeus, and was filled with fire and brimstone, and all the crew fell overboard. And like sea-gulls they were borne hither and thither on the waves about the black ship, and the god cut off their return. But in this hour of my affliction Zeus himself put into my hands the huge mast of the dark-prowed ship, that even yet I might escape from harm. So I clung round the mast and was borne by the ruinous winds. For nine days was I borne, and on the tenth black night the great rolling wave brought me nigh to the land of the Thesprotians. There the king of the Thesprotians, the lord Pheidon, took me in freely, for his dear son lighted on me and raised me by the hand and led me to his house, foredone with toil and the keen air, till he came to his father’s palace. And he clothed me in a mantle and a doublet for raiment.

‘There I heard tidings of Odysseus, for the king told me that he had entertained him, and kindly entreated him on his way to his own country; and he showed me all the wealth that Odysseus had gathered, bronze and gold and well-wrought iron; yea it would suffice for his children after him even to the tenth generation, so great were the treasures he had stored in the chambers of the king. He had gone, he said, to Dodona to hear the counsel of Zeus, from the high leafy oak tree of the god, how he should return to the fat land of Ithaca after long absence, whether openly or by stealth. Moreover, he sware, in mine own presence, as he poured the drink offering in his house, that the ship was drawn down to the sea and his company were ready, who were to convey him to his own dear country. But ere that, he sent me off, for it chanced that a ship of the Thesprotians was starting for Dulichium, a land rich in grain. Thither he bade them bring me with all diligence to the king Acastus. But an evil counsel concerning me found favour in their sight, that even yet I might reach the extremity of sorrow. When the seafaring ship had sailed a great way from the land, anon they sought how they might compass for me the day of slavery. They stript me of my garments, my mantle and a doublet, and changed my raiment to a vile wrap and doublet, tattered garments, even those thou seest now before thee; and in the evening they reached the fields of clear-seen Ithaca. There in the decked ship they bound me closely with a twisted rope, and themselves went ashore, and hasted to take supper by the sea-banks. Meanwhile the gods themselves lightly unclasped my bands, and muffling my head with the wrap I slid down the smooth lading-plank, and set my breast to the sea and rowed hard with both hands as I swam, and very soon I was out of the water and beyond their reach. Then I went up where there was a thicket, a wood in full leaf, and lay there crouching. And they went hither and thither making great moan; but when now it seemed to them little avail to go further on their quest, they departed back again aboard their hollow ship. And the gods themselves hid me easily and brought me nigh to the homestead of a wise man; for still, methinks, I am ordained to live on.'

Then didst thou make answer to him, swineherd Eumaeus: 'Ah! wretched guest, verily thou hast stirred my heart with the tale of all these things, of thy sufferings and thy wanderings. Yet herein, methinks, thou speakest not aright, and never shalt thou persuade me with the tale about Odysseus; why should one in thy plight lie vainly? Well I know of mine own self, as touching my lord's return, that he was utterly hated by all the gods, in that they smote him not among the Trojans nor in the arms of his friends, when he had wound up the clew of war. So should the whole Achaean host have builded him a barrow; yea and for his son would he have won great glory in the after days; but now all ingloriously the spirits of the storm have snatched him away. But as for me I dwell apart by the swine and go not to the city, unless perchance wise Penelope summons me thither, when tidings of my master are brought I know not whence. Now all the people sit round and straitly question the news-bearer, both such as grieve for their lord that is long gone, and such as rejoice in devouring his living without atonement. But I have no care to ask or to inquire, since the day that an Aetolian cheated me with his story, one who had slain his man and wandered over wide lands and came to my steading, and I dealt lovingly with him. He said that he had seen my master among the Cretans at the house of Idomeneus, mending his ships which the storms had broken. And he said that he would come home either by the summer or the harvest-tide, bringing much wealth with the godlike men of his company. And thou too, old man of many sorrows, seeing that some god hath brought thee to me, seek not my grace with lies, nor give me any such comfort; not for this will I have respect to thee or hold thee dear, but only for the fear of Zeus, the god of strangers, and for pity of thyself.'

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: 'Verily thy heart within thee is slow to believe, seeing that even with an oath I have not won thee, nor find credence with thee. But come now, let us make a covenant; and we will each one have for witnesses the gods above, who hold Olympus. If thy lord shall return to this house, put on me a mantle and doublet for raiment, and send me on my way to Dulichium, whither I had a desire to go. But if thy lord return not according to my word, set thy thralls upon me, and cast me down from a mighty rock, that another beggar in his turn may beware of deceiving.'

And the goodly swineherd answered him, saying: 'Yea stranger, even so should I get much honour and good luck among men both now and ever hereafter, if after bringing thee to my hut and giving thee a stranger's cheer, I should turn again and slay thee and take away thy dear life. Eager indeed thereafter should I be to make a prayer to Zeus the son of Cronos! But now it is supper-time, and would that my fellows may speedily be at home, that we may make ready a dainty supper within the hut.'

Thus they spake one to the other. And lo, the swine and the swineherds drew nigh. And the swine they shut up to sleep in their lairs, and a mighty din arose as the swine were being stalled. Then the goodly swineherd called to his fellows, saying:

'Bring the best of the swine, that I may sacrifice it for a guest of mine from a far land: and we too will have good cheer therewith, for we have long suffered and toiled by reason of the white-tusked swine, while others devour the fruit of our labour without atonement.'

Therewithal he cleft logs with the pitiless axe, and the others brought in a well-fatted boar of five years old; and they set him by the hearth nor did the swineherd forget the deathless gods, for he was of an understanding heart. But for a beginning of sacrifice he cast bristles from the head of the white-tusked boar upon the fire, and prayed to all the gods that wise Odysseus might return to his own house. Then he stood erect, and smote the boar with a billet of oak which he had left in the cleaving, and the boar yielded up his life. Then they cut the throat and singed the carcass and quickly cut it up, and the swineherd took a first portion from all the limbs, and laid the raw flesh on the rich fat. And some pieces he cast into the fire after sprinkling them with bruised barley-meal, and they cut the rest up small, and pierced it, and spitted and roasted it carefully, and drew it all off from the spits, and put the whole mess together on trenchers. Then the swineherd stood up to carve, for well he knew what was fair, and he cut up the whole and divided it into seven portions. One, when he had prayed, he set aside for the nymphs and for Hermes son of Maia, and the rest he distributed to each. And he gave Odysseus the portion of honour, the long back of the white-tusked boar, and the soul of his lord rejoiced at this renown, and Odysseus of many counsels hailed him saying:

‘Eumaeus, oh that thou mayest so surely be dear to father Zeus, as thou art to me, seeing that thou honourest me with a good portion, such an one as I am!’

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus:

‘Eat, luckless stranger, and make merry with such fare as is here. And one thing the god will give and another withhold, even as he will, for with him all things are possible.’

So he spake, and made burnt offering of the hallowed parts to the everlasting gods, and poured the dark wine for a drink offering, and set the cup in the hands of Odysseus, the waster of cities, and sat down by his own mess. And Mesaulius bare them wheaten bread, a thrall that the swineherd had gotten all alone, while his lord was away, without the knowledge of his mistress and the old Laertes: yea he had bought him of the Taphians with his own substance. So they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer spread before them. Now after they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, Mesaulius cleared away the bread, and they, now that they had eaten enough of bread and flesh, were moved to go to rest.

Now it was so that night came on foul with a blind moon, and Zeus rained the whole night through, and still the great West Wind, the rainy wind, was blowing. Then Odysseus spake among them that he might make trial of the swineherd, and see whether he would take off his own mantle and give it to him or bid one of his company strip, since he cared for him so greatly:

‘Listen now, Eumaeus, and all of you his companions, with a prayer will I utter my word; so bids me witless wine, which drives even the wisest to sing and to laugh softly, and rouses him to dance, yea and makes him to speak out a word which were better unspoken. Howbeit, now that I have broken into speech, I will not hide aught. Oh that I were young, and my might were steadfast, as in the day when we arrayed our ambush and led it beneath Troy town! And Odysseus, and Menelaus son of Atreus, were leaders and with them I was a third in command; for so they bade me. Now when we had come to the city and the steep wall, we lay about the citadel in the thick brushwood, crouching under our arms among the reeds and the marsh land, and behold, the night came on foul, with frost, as the North Wind went down, while the snow fell from above, and crusted like rime, bitter cold, and the ice set thick about our shields. Now the others all had mantles and doublets, and slept in peace with their shields buckled close about their shoulders; but I as I went forth had left my mantle behind with my men, in my folly, thinking that even so I should not be cold: so I came with only my shield and bright leathern apron. But when it was now the third watch of the night and the stars had passed the zenith, in that hour I spake unto Odysseus who was nigh me, and thrust him with my elbow, and he listened straightway:

‘“Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, verily I shall cease from among living men, for this wintry cold is slaying me, seeing that I have no mantle. Some god beguiled me to wear a doublet only, and henceforth is no way of escape.”

‘So I spake, and he apprehended a thought in his heart, such an one as he was in counsel and in fight. So he whispered and spake to me, saying:

‘“Be silent now, lest some other Achaeans hear thee.” Therewith he raised his head upon his elbow, and spake, saying: “Listen, friends, a vision from a god came to me in my sleep. Lo, we have come very far from the ships; I would there were one to tell it to Agamemnon, son of Atreus, shepherd of the host, if perchance he may send us hither a greater company from the ships.”

‘So spake he, and Thoas, son of Andraemon, rose up quickly and cast off his purple mantle. And he started to run unto the ships, but I lay gladly in his garment, and the golden-throned Dawn showed her light. Oh! that I were young as then and my might steadfast! Then should some of the swineherds in the homestead give me a mantle, alike for love’s sake and for pity of a good warrior. But now they scorn me for that sorry raiment is about my body.’

Then didst thou make answer, O swineherd Eumaeus: ‘Old man, the tale that thou hast told in his praise is very good, and so far thou hast not misspoken aught, nor uttered a word unprofitably. Wherefore for this night thou shalt lack neither raiment nor aught else that is the due of a hapless suppliant, when he has met them that can befriend him. But in the morning thou shalt go shuffling in thine own rags, for there are not many mantles here or changes of doublet; for each man hath but one coat. But when the dear son of Odysseus comes, he himself will give thee a mantle and doublet for raiment, and send thee whithersoever thy heart and spirit bid.’

With that he sprang up and set a bed for Odysseus near the fire, and thereon he cast skins of sheep and goats. There Odysseus laid him down and Eumaeus cast a great thick mantle over him, which he had ever by him for a change of covering, when any terrible storm should arise.

So there Odysseus slept, and the young men slept beside him. But the swineherd had no mind to lie there in a bed away from the boars. So he made him ready to go forth and Odysseus was glad, because he had a great care for his master’s substance while he was afar. First he cast his sharp sword about his strong shoulders, then he clad him in a very thick mantle, to keep the wind away; and he caught up the fleece of a great and well-fed goat, and seized his sharp javelin, to defend him against dogs and men. Then he went to lay him down even where the white-tusked boars were sleeping, beneath the hollow of the rock, in a place of shelter from the North Wind.

BOOK XV

Pallas sends home Telemachus from Lacedaemon with the presents given him by Menelaus. Telemachus landed, goes first to Eumaeus.

Now Pallas Athene went to the wide land of Lacedaemon, to put the noble son of the great-hearted Odysseus in mind of his return, and to make him hasten his coming. And she found Telemachus, and the glorious son of Nestor, couched at the vestibule of the house of famous Menelaus. The son of Nestor truly was overcome with soft sleep, but sweet sleep gat not hold of Telemachus, but, through the night divine, careful thoughts for his father kept him wakeful. And grey-eyed Athene stood nigh him and spake to him, saying:

‘Telemachus, it is no longer meet that thou shouldest wander far from thy home, leaving thy substance behind thee, and men in thy house so wanton, lest they divide and utterly devour all thy wealth, and thou shalt have gone on a vain journey. But come, rouse with all haste Menelaus, of the loud war-cry, to send thee on thy way, that thou mayest even yet find thy noble mother in her home. For even now her father and her brethren bid her wed Eurymachus, for he outdoes all the wooers in his presents, and hath been greatly increasing his gifts of wooing. So shall she take no treasure from thy house despite thy will. Thou knowest of what sort is the heart of a woman within her; all her desire is to increase the house of the man who takes her to wife, but of her former children and of her own dear lord she has no more memory once he is dead, and she asks concerning him no more. Go then, and thyself place all thy substance in the care of the handmaid who seems to thee the best, till the day when the gods shall show thee a glorious bride. Now another word will I tell thee, and do thou lay it up in thine heart. The noblest of the wooers lie in wait for thee of purpose, in the strait between Ithaca and rugged Samos, eager to slay thee before thou come to thine own country. But this, methinks, will never be; yea, sooner shall the earth close over certain of the wooers that devour thy livelihood. Nay, keep thy well-wrought ship far from those isles, and sail by night as well as day, and he of the immortals who hath thee in his keeping and protection will send thee a fair breeze in thy wake. But when thou hast touched the nearest shore of Ithaca, send thy ship and all thy company forward to the city, but for thy part seek first the swineherd who keeps thy swine, loyal and at one with thee. There do thou rest the night, and bid him go to the city to bear tidings of thy coming to the wise

Penelope, how that she hath got thee safe, and thou art come up out of Pylos.’

Therewith she departed to high Olympus. But Telemachus woke the son of Nestor out of sweet sleep, touching him with his heel, and spake to him, saying:

‘Awake, Peisistratus, son of Nestor, bring up thy horses of solid hoof, and yoke them beneath the car, that we may get forward on the road.’

Then Peisistratus, son of Nestor, answered him, saying: ‘Telemachus, we may in no wise drive through the dark night, how eager soever to be gone; nay, soon it will be dawn. Tarry then, till the hero, the son of Atreus, spear-famed Menelaus, brings gifts, and sets them on the car, and bespeaks thee kindly, and sends thee on thy way. For of him a guest is mindful all the days of his life, even of the host that shows him loving-kindness.’

So spake he, and anon came the golden-throned Dawn. And Menelaus, of the loud war cry, drew nigh to them, new risen from his bed, by fair-haired Helen. Now when the dear son of Odysseus marked him, he made haste and girt his shining doublet about him, and the hero cast a great mantle over his mighty shoulders, and went forth at the door, and Telemachus, dear son of divine Odysseus, came up and spake to Menelaus, saying:

‘Menelaus, son of Atreus, fosterling of Zeus, leader of the people, even now do thou speed me hence, to mine own dear country; for even now my heart is fain to come home again.’

Then Menelaus, of the loud war cry, answered him: ‘Telemachus, as for me, I will not hold thee a long time here, that art eager to return; nay, I think it shame even in another host, who loves overmuch or hates overmuch. Measure is best in all things. He does equal wrong who speeds a guest that would fain abide, and stays one who is in haste to be gone. Men should lovingly entreat the present guest and speed the parting. But abide till I bring fair gifts and set them on the car and thine own eyes behold them, and I bid the women to prepare the midday meal in the halls, out of the good store they have within. Honour and glory it is for us, and gain withal for thee, that ye should have eaten well ere ye go on your way, over vast and limitless lands. What and if thou art minded to pass through Hellas and mid Argos? So shall I too go with thee, and yoke thee horses and lead thee to the towns of men, and none shall send us empty away, but will give us some one thing to take with us, either a tripod of goodly bronze or a cauldron, or two mules or a golden chalice.’

Then wise Telemachus answered him saying: ‘Menelaus, son of Atreus, fosterling of Zeus, leader of the people, rather would I return even now to mine own land, for I left none behind to watch over my goods when I departed. I would not that I myself should perish on the quest of my godlike father, nor that any good heir-loom should be lost from my halls.’

Now when Menelaus, of the loud war cry, heard this saying, straightway he bade his wife and maids to prepare the midday meal in the halls, out of the good store they had by them. Then Eteoneus, son of Boethous, came nigh him, just risen from his bed, for he abode not far from him. Him Menelaus of the loud war cry bade kindle the fire and roast of the flesh; and he hearkened and obeyed. Then the prince went down into the fragrant treasure chamber, not alone, for Helen went with him, and Megapenthes. Now, when they came to the place where the treasures were stored, then Atrides took a two-handled cup, and bade his son Megapenthes to bear a mixing bowl of silver. And Helen stood by the coffers, wherein were her robes of curious needlework which she herself had wrought. Then Helen, the fair lady, lifted one and brought it out, the widest and most beautifully embroidered of all, and it shone like a star, and lay far beneath the rest.

Then they went forth through the house till they came to Telemachus; and Menelaus, of the fair hair, spake to him saying:

‘Telemachus, may Zeus the thunderer, and the lord of Here, in very truth bring about thy return according to the desire of thy heart. And of the gifts, such as are treasures stored in my house, I will give thee the goodliest and greatest of price. I will give thee a mixing bowl beautifully wrought; it is all of silver and the lips thereof are finished with gold, the work of Hephaestus; and the hero Phaedimus the king of the Sidonians, gave it to me when his house sheltered me, on my coming thither. This cup I would give to thee.’

Therewith the hero Atrides set the two-handled cup in his hands. And the strong Megapenthes bare the shining silver bowl and set it before him. And Helen came up, beautiful Helen, with the robe in her hands, and spake and hailed him:

‘Lo! I too give thee this gift, dear child, a memorial of the hands of Helen, against the day of thy desire, even of thy bridal, for thy bride to wear it. But meanwhile let it lie by thy dear mother in her chamber. And may joy go with thee to thy well-builded house, and thine own country.’

With that she put it into his hands, and he took it and was glad. And the hero Peisistratus took the gifts and laid them in the chest of the car, and gazed on all and wondered. Then Menelaus of the fair hair led them to the house. Then they twain sat them down on chairs and high seats, and a handmaid bare water for the hands in a goodly golden ewer, and poured it forth over a silver basin to wash withal, and drew to their side a polished table. And a grave dame bare wheaten bread and set it by them, and laid on the board many dainties, giving freely of such things as she had by her. And the son of Boethous carved by the board and divided the messes, and the son of renowned Menelaus poured forth the wine. So they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer set before them. Now when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, then did Telemachus and the glorious son of Nestor yoke the horses and climb into the inlaid car. And they drave forth from the gateway and the echoing gallery. After these Menelaus, of the fair hair, the son of Atreus, went forth bearing in his right hand a golden cup of honey-hearted wine, that they might pour a drink-offering ere they departed. And he stood before the horses and spake his greeting:

‘Farewell, knightly youths, and salute in my name Nestor, the shepherd of the people; for truly he was gentle to me as a father, while we sons of the Achaeans warred in the land of Troy.’

And wise Telemachus answered him, saying: ‘Yea verily, O fosterling of Zeus, we will tell him all on our coming even as thou sayest. Would God that when I return to Ithaca I may find Odysseus in his home and tell him all, so surely as now I go on my way having met with all loving-kindness at thy hands, and take with me treasures many and goodly!’

And even as he spake a bird flew forth at his right hand, an eagle that bare in his claws a great white goose, a tame fowl from the yard, and men and women followed shouting. But the bird drew near them and flew off to the right, across the horses, and they that saw it were glad, and their hearts were all comforted within them. And Peisistratus, son of Nestor, first spake among them:

‘Consider, Menelaus, fosterling of Zeus, leader of the people, whether god hath showed forth this sign for us twain, or for thee thyself.’

So spake he, and the warrior Menelaus pondered thereupon, how he should take heed to answer, and interpret it aright.

And long-robed Helen took the word and spake, saying: ‘Hear me, and I will prophesy as the immortals put it into my heart, and as I deem it will be accomplished. Even as yonder eagle came down from the hill, the place of his birth and kin, and snatched away the goose that was fostered in the house, even so shall Odysseus return home after much trial and long wanderings and take vengeance; yea, or even now is he at home and sowing the seeds of evil for all the wooers.’

Then wise Telemachus answered her, saying: ‘Now may Zeus ordain it so, Zeus the thunderer and the lord of Here. Then would I do thee worship, as to a god, even in my home afar.’

He spake and smote the horses with the lash, and they sped quickly towards the plain, in eager course through the city. So all day long they swayed the yoke they bore upon their necks. And the sun sank, and all the ways were darkened. And they came to Pherae, to the house of Diocles, son of Orsilochus, the child begotten of Alpheus. There they rested for the night, and by them he set the entertainment of strangers.

Now so soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, they yoked the horses and mounted the inlaid car. And forth they drave from the gateway and the echoing gallery. And he touched the horses with the whip to start them, and the pair flew onward nothing loth. And soon thereafter they reached the steep hold of Pylos. Then Telemachus spake unto the son of Nestor, saying:

'Son of Nestor, in what wise mightest thou make me a promise and fulfil my bidding? For we claim to be friends by reason of our fathers' friendship from of old. Moreover we are equals in age, and this journey shall turn to our greater love. Take me not hence past my ship, O fosterling of Zeus, but leave me there, lest that old man keep me in his house in my despite, out of his eager kindness, for I must go right quickly home.'

So spake he, and the some of Nestor communed with his own heart how he might make promise, and duly fulfil the same. So as he thought thereon, in this wise it seemed to him best. He turned back his horses toward the swift ship and the sea-banks, and took forth the fair gifts and set them in the hinder part of the ship, the raiment and the gold which Menelaus gave him. And he called to Telemachus and spake to him winged words:

'Now climb the ship with all haste, and bid all thy company do likewise, ere I reach home and bring the old man word. For well I know in my mind and heart that, being so wilful of heart, he will not let thee go, but he himself will come hither to bid thee to his house, and methinks that he will not go back without thee; for very wroth will he be despite thine excuse.'

Thus he spake, and drave the horses with the flowing manes back to the town of the Pylians, and came quickly to the halls. And Telemachus called to his companions and commanded them, saying:

'Set ye the gear in order, my friends, in the black ship, and let us climb aboard that we may make way upon our course.'

So spake he, and they gave good heed and hearkened. Then straightway they embarked and sat upon the benches.

Thus was he busy hereat and praying and making burnt-offering to Athene, by the stern of the ship, when there drew nigh him one from a far country, that had slain his man and was fleeing from out of Argos. He was a soothsayer, and by his lineage he came of Melampus, who of old time abode in Pylos, mother of flocks, a rich man and one that had an exceeding goodly house among the Pylians, but afterward he had come to the land of strangers, fleeing from his country and from Neleus, the great-hearted, the proudest of living men, who kept all his goods for a full year by force. All that time Melampus lay bound with hard bonds in the halls of Phylacus, suffering strong pains for the sake of the daughter of Neleus, and for the dread blindness of soul which the goddess, the Erinnys of the dolorous stroke, had laid on him. Howsoever he escaped his fate, and drave away the lowing kine from Phylace to Pylos, and avenged the foul deed upon godlike Neleus, and brought the maiden home to his own brother to wife. As for him, he went to a country of other men, to Argos, the pastureland of horses; for there truly it was ordained that he should dwell, bearing rule over many of the Argives. There he wedded a wife, and builded him a lofty house, and begat Antiphates and Mantius, two mighty sons. Now Antiphates begat Oicles the great-hearted, and Oicles Amphiaraus, the rouser of the host, whom Zeus, lord of the aegis, and Apollo loved with all manner of love. Yet he reached not the threshold of old age, but died in Thebes by reason of a woman’s gifts. And the sons born to him were Alcmaeon and Amphilochus. But Mantius begat Polypheides and Cleitus; but it came to pass that the golden-throned Dawn snatched away Cleitus for his very beauty’s sake, that he might dwell with the Immortals.

And Apollo made the high-souled Polypheides a seer, far the chief of human kind, Amphiaraus being now dead. He removed his dwelling to Hypheresia, being angered with his father, and here he abode and prophesied to all men.

This man’s son it was, Theoclymenus by name, that now drew nigh and stood by Telemachus. And he found him pouring a drink-offering and praying by the swift black ship, and uttering his voice he spake to him winged words:

‘Friend, since I find thee making burnt-offering in this place, I pray thee, by thine offerings and by the god, and thereafter by thine own head, and in the name of the men of thy company answer my question truly and hide it not. Who art thou of the sons of men and whence? Where is thy city, where are they that begat thee?’

And wise Telemachus answered him, saying: ‘Yea now, stranger, I will plainly tell thee all. Of Ithaca am I by lineage, and my father is Odysseus, if ever such an one there was, but now hath he perished by an evil fate. Wherefore I have taken my company and a black ship, and have gone forth to hear word of my father that has been long afar.’

Then godlike Theoclymenus spake to him again: ‘Even so I too have fled from my country, for the manslaying of one of mine own kin. And many brethren and kinsmen of the slain are in Argos, the pastureland of horses, and rule mightily over the Achaeans. Wherefore now am I an exile to shun death and black fate at their hands, for it is my doom yet to wander among men. Now set me on board ship, since I supplicate thee in my flight, lest they slay me utterly; for methinks they follow hard after me.’

And wise Telemachus answered him, saying: ‘Surely I will not drive thee away from our good ship, if thou art fain to come. Follow thou with us then, and in Ithaca thou shalt be welcome to such things as we have.’

Therewith he took from him his spear of bronze, and laid it along the deck of the curved ship, and himself too climbed the seafaring ship. Then he sat him down in the stern and made Theoclymenus to sit beside him; and his company loosed the hawsers. Then Telemachus called unto his company, and bade them lay hands on the tackling, and speedily they hearkened to his call. So they raised the mast of pine tree, and set it in the hole of the cross plank and made it fast with forestays, and hauled up the white sails with twisted ropes of ox-hide. And grey-eyed Athene sent them a favouring breeze, rushing violently through the clear sky that the ship might speedily finish her course over the salt water of the sea. So they passed by Crouni and Chalcis, a land of fair streams.

And the sun set and all the ways were darkened. And the vessel drew nigh to Pheae, being sped before the breeze of Zeus, and then passed goodly Elis where the Epeans bear rule. From thence he drave on again to the Pointed Isles, pondering whether he should escape death or be cut off.

Now Odysseus and the goodly swineherd were supping in the hut, and the other men sat at meat with them. So when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, Odysseus spake among them, to prove the swineherd, whether he would still entertain him diligently, and bid him abide there in the steading or send him forward to the city:

‘Listen now, Eumaeus, and all the others of the company. In the morning I would fain be gone to the town to go a begging, that I be not ruinous to thyself and thy fellows. Now advise me well, and lend me a good guide by the way to lead me thither; and through the city will I wander alone as needs I must, if perchance one may give me a cup of water and a morsel of bread. Moreover I would go to the house of divine Odysseus and bear tidings to the wise Penelope, and consort with the wanton wooers, if haply they might grant me a meal out of the boundless store that they have by them. Lightly might I do good service among them, even all that they would. For lo! I will tell thee and do thou mark and listen. By the favour of Hermes, the messenger, who gives grace and glory to all men’s work, no mortal may vie with me in the business of a serving-man, in piling well a fire, in cleaving dry faggots, and in carving and roasting flesh and in pouring of wine, those offices wherein meaner men serve their betters.’

Then didst thou speak to him in heaviness of heart, swineherd Eumaeus: ‘Ah! wherefore, stranger, hath such a thought arisen in thine heart? Surely thou art set on perishing utterly there, if thou wouldest indeed go into the throng of the wooers, whose outrage and violence reacheth even to the iron heaven! Not such as thou are their servants; they that minister to them are young and gaily clad in mantles and in doublets, and their heads are anointed with oil and they are fair of face, and the polished boards are laden with bread and flesh and wine. Nay, abide here, for none is vexed by thy presence, neither I nor any of my fellows that are with me. But when the dear son of Odysseus comes, he himself will give thee a mantle and a doublet for raiment, and will send thee whithersoever thy heart and spirit bid thee go.'

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him: 'Oh, that thou mayst so surely be dear to father Zeus as thou art to me, in that thou didst make me to cease from wandering and dread woe! For there is no other thing more mischievous to men than roaming; yet for their cursed belly's need men endure sore distress, to whom come wandering and tribulation and pain. But behold now, since thou stayest me here, and biddest me wait his coming, tell me of the mother of divine Odysseus, and of the father whom at his departure he left behind him on the threshold of old age; are they, it may be, yet alive beneath the sunlight, or already dead and within the house of Hades?'

Then spake to him the swineherd, a master of men: 'Yea now, stranger, I will plainly tell thee all. Laertes yet lives, and prays evermore to Zeus that his life may waste from out his limbs within his halls. For he has wondrous sorrow for his son that is far away, and for the wedded lady his wise wife, whose death afflicted him in chief and brought him to old age before his day. Now she died of very grief for her son renowned, by an evil death, so may no man perish who dwells here and is a friend to me in word and deed! So long as she was on earth, though in much sorrow, I was glad to ask and enquire concerning her, for that she herself had reared me along with long-robed Ctimene, her noble daughter, the youngest of her children. With her I was reared, and she honoured me little less than her own. But when we both came to the time of our desire, to the flower of age, thereupon they sent her to Same, and got a great bride-price; but my lady clad me in a mantle and a doublet, raiment very fair, and gave me sandals for my feet and sent me forth to the field, and right dear at heart she held me. But of these things now at last am I lacking; yet the blessed gods prosper the work of mine own hands, whereat I abide. Of this my substance I have eaten and drunken and given to reverend strangers. But from my lady I may hear naught pleasant, neither word nor deed, for evil hath fallen on her house, a plague of froward men; yet thralls have a great desire to speak before their mistress and find out all eat and drink, and moreover to carry off somewhat with them to the field, such things as ever comfort the heart of a thrall.'

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: 'Ah, Eumaeus, how far then didst thou wander from thine own country and thy parents while as yet thou wast but a child! But come, declare me this and plainly tell it all. Was a wide-wayed town of men taken and sacked, wherein dwelt thy father and thy lady mother, or did unfriendly men find thee lonely, tending sheep or cattle, and shipped thee thence, and sold thee into the house of thy master here, who paid for thee a goodly price?’

Then spake to him the swineherd, a master of men: Stranger, since thou askest and questionest me hereof, give heed now in silence and make merry, and abide here drinking wine. Lo, the nights now are of length untold. Time is there to sleep, and time to listen and be glad; thou needest not turn to bed before the hour; even too much sleep is vexation of spirit. But for the rest, let him whose heart and mind bid him, go forth and slumber, and at the dawning of the day let him break his fast, and follow our master’s swine. But let us twain drink and feast within the steading, and each in his neighbour’s sorrows take delight, recalling them, for even the memory of griefs is a joy to a man who hath been sore tried and wandered far. Wherefore I will tell thee that whereof thou askest and dost question me.

‘There is a certain isle called Syria, if haply thou hast heard tell of it, over above Ortygia, and there are the turning-places of the sun. It is not very great in compass, though a goodly isle, rich in herds, rich in flocks, with plenty of corn and wine. Dearth never enters the land, and no hateful sickness falls on wretched mortals. But when the tribes of men grow old in that city, then comes Apollo of the silver bow, with Artemis, and slays them with the visitation of his gentle shafts. In that isle are two cities, and the whole land is divided between them, and my father was king over the twain, Ctesius son of Ormenus, a man like to the Immortals.

‘Thither came the Phoenicians, mariners renowned, greedy merchant men, with countless gauds in a black ship. Now in my father’s house was a Phoenician woman, tall and fair and skilled in bright handiwork; this woman the Phoenicians with their sleights beguiled. First as she was washing clothes, one of them lay with her in love by the hollow ship, for love beguiles the minds of womankind, even of the upright. Then he asked her who she was and whence she came, and straightway she showed him the lofty home of my father, saying:

‘“From out of Sidon I avow that I come, land rich in bronze, and I am the daughter of Arybas, the deeply wealthy. But Taphians, who were sea-robbers, laid hands on me and snatched me away as I came in from the fields, and brought me hither and sold me into the house of my master, who paid for me a goodly price.”

‘Then the man who had lain with her privily, answered: “Say, wouldst thou now return home with us, that thou mayst look again on the lofty house of thy father and mother and on their faces? For truly they yet live, and have a name for wealth.”

‘Then the woman answered him and spake, saying: “Even this may well be, if ye sailors will pledge me an oath to bring me home in safety.”

‘So spake she, and they all swore thereto as she bade them. Now when they had sworn and done that oath, again the woman spake among them and answered, saying:

‘“Hold your peace now, and let none of your fellows speak to me and greet me, if they meet me in the street, or even at the well, lest one go and tell it to the old man at home, and he suspect somewhat and bind me in hard bonds and devise death for all of you. But keep ye the matter in mind, and speed the purchase of your homeward freight. And when your ship is freighted with stores, let a message come quickly to me at the house; for I will likewise bring gold, all that comes under my hand. Yea and there is another thing that I would gladly give for my fare. I am nurse to the child of my lord in the halls, a most cunning little boy, that runs out and abroad with me. Him would I bring on board ship, and he should fetch you a great price, wheresoever ye take him for sale among men of strange speech.”

‘Therewith she went her way to the fair halls. But they abode among us a whole year, and got together much wealth in their hollow ship. And when their hollow ship was now laden to depart, they sent a messenger to tell the tidings to the woman. There came a man versed in craft to my father’s house, with a golden chain strung here and there with amber beads. Now the maidens in the hall and my lady mother were handling the chain and gazing on it, and offering him their price; but he had signed silently to the woman, and therewithal gat him away to the hollow ship. Then she took me by the hand and led me forth from the house. And at the vestibule of the house she found the cups and the tables of the guests that had been feasting, who were in waiting on my father. They had gone forth to the session and the place of parley of the people. And she straightway hid three goblets in her bosom, and bare them away, and I followed in my innocence. Then the sun sank and all the ways were darkened and we went quickly and came to the good haven, where was the swift ship of the Phoenicians. So they climbed on board and took us up with them, and sailed over the wet ways, and Zeus sent us a favouring wind. For six days we sailed by day and night continually; but when Zeus, son of Cronos, added the seventh day thereto, then Artemis, the archer, smote the woman that she fell, as a sea-swallow falls, with a plunge into the hold. And they cast her forth to be the prey of seals and fishes, but I was left stricken at heart. And wind and water bare them and brought them to Ithaca, where Laertes bought me with his possessions. And thus it chanced that mine eyes beheld this land.’

Then Odysseus, of the seed of Zeus, answered him saying:

‘Eumaeus, verily thou hast stirred my heart within me with the tale of all these things, of all the sorrow of heart thou hast endured. Yet surely Zeus hath given thee good as well as evil, since after all these adventures thou hast come to the house of a kindly man, who is careful to give thee meat and drink and right well thou livest. But I have come hither still wandering through the many towns of men.’

Thus they spake one with the other. Then they laid them down to sleep for no long while, but for a little space, for soon came the throned Dawn. But on the shore the company of Telemachus were striking their sails, and took down the mast quickly and rowed the ship on to anchorage. And they cast anchors and made fast the hawsers, and themselves too stept forth upon the strand of the sea, and made ready the midday meal, and mixed the dark wine. Now when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, wise Telemachus first spake among them:

‘Do ye now drive the black ship to the city, while I will go to the fields and to the herdsmen, and at even I will return to the city, when I have seen my lands. And in the morning I will set by you the wages of the voyage, a good feast of flesh and of sweet wine.’

Then godlike Theoclymenus answered him: ‘And whither shall I go, dear child? To what man’s house shall I betake me, of such as are lords in rocky Ithaca? Shall I get me straight to thy mother and to thy home?’

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: ‘In other case I would bid thee go even to our own house; for there is no lack of cheer for strangers, but now would it be worse for thyself, forasmuch as I shall be away nor would my mother see thee. For she comes not often in sight of the wooers in the house, but abides apart from them in her upper chamber, and weaves at her web. Yet there is one whom I will tell thee of, to whom thou mayst go, Eurymachus the glorious son of wise Polybus, whom now the men of Ithaca look upon, even as if he were a god. For he is far the best man of them all, and is most eager to wed my mother and to have the sovereignty of Odysseus. Howbeit, Olympian Zeus, that dwells in the clear sky, knows hereof, whether or no he will fulfill for them the evil day before their marriage.’

Now even as he spake, a bird flew out on the right, a hawk, the swift messenger of Apollo. In his talons he held a dove and plucked her, and shed the feathers down to the earth, midway between the ship and Telemachus himself. Then Theoclymenus called him apart from his fellows, and clasped his hand and spake and hailed him:

‘Telemachus, surely not without the god’s will hath the bird flown out on the right, for I knew when I saw him that he was a bird of omen. There is no other house more kingly than yours in the land of Ithaca; nay, ye have ever the mastery.’

And wise Telemachus answered him, saying: ‘Ah, stranger, would that this word may be accomplished! Soon shouldest thou be aware of kindness and many a gift at my hands, so that whoso met with thee would call thee blessed.’

Then he spake to Piraeus, his trusty companion: ‘Piraeus, son of Clytius, thou that at other seasons hearkenest to me above all my company who went with me to Pylos, even now, I pray, lead this stranger home with thee, and give heed to treat him lovingly and with worship in thy house till I come.’

Then Piraeus, spearsman renowned, answered him saying: ‘Telemachus, why, even if thou shouldest tarry here long, yet will I entertain this man, and he shall have no lack of stranger’s cheer.’

Therewith he went on board, and bade his men themselves to mount and loose the hawsers. And quickly they embarked and sat upon the benches. And Telemachus bound his goodly sandals beneath his feet, and seized a mighty spear, shod with sharp bronze, from the deck of the ship and his men loosed the hawsers. So they thrust off and sailed to the city, as Telemachus bade them, the dear son of divine Odysseus. But swiftly his feet bore him on his forward way, till he came to the court, where were his swine out of number; and among them the good swineherd slept, a man loyal to his lords.

BOOK XVI

Telemachus sends Eumaeus to the city to tell his mother of his return. And how, in the meantime, Odysseus discovers himself to his son.

Now these twain, Odysseus and the goodly swineherd, within the hut had kindled a fire, and were making ready breakfast at the dawn, and had sent forth the herdsmen with the droves of swine. And round Telemachus the hounds, that love to bark, fawned and barked not, as he drew nigh. And goodly Odysseus took note of the fawning of the dogs, and the noise of footsteps fell upon his ears. Then straight he spake to Eumaeus winged words:

‘Eumaeus, verily some friend or some other of thy familiars will soon be here, for the dogs do not bark but fawn around, and I catch the sound of footsteps.’

While the word was yet on his lips, his own dear son stood at the entering in of the gate. Then the swineherd sprang up in amazement, and out of his hands fell the vessels wherewith he was busied in mingling the dark wine. And he came over against his master and kissed his head and both his beautiful eyes and both his hands, and he let a great tear fall. And even as a loving father welcomes his son that has come in the tenth year from a far country, his only son and well-beloved, for whose sake he has had great sorrow and travail, even so did the goodly swineherd fall upon the neck of godlike Telemachus, and kiss him all over as one escaped from death, and he wept aloud and spake to him winged words:

‘Thou art come, Telemachus, a sweet light in the dark; methought I should see thee never again, after thou hadst gone in thy ship to Pylos. Nay now enter, dear child, that my heart may be glad at the sight of thee in mine house, who hast newly come from afar. For thou dost not often visit the field and the herdsmen, but abidest in the town; so it seems has thy good pleasure been, to look on the ruinous throng of the wooers.’

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: ‘So be it, father, as thou sayest; and for thy sake am I come hither to see thee with mine eyes, and to hear from thy lips whether my mother yet abides in the halls or another has already wedded her, and the couch of Odysseus, perchance, lies in lack of bedding and deep in foul spider-webs.’

Then the swineherd, a master of men, answered him: ‘Yea verily, she abides with patient spirit in thy halls, and wearily for her the nights wane always and the days, in shedding of tears.’

So he spake and took from him the spear of bronze. Then Telemachus passed within and crossed the threshold of stone. As he came near, his father Odysseus arose from his seat to give him place; but Telemachus, on his part, stayed him and spake saying:

‘Be seated, stranger, and we will find a seat some other where in our steading, and there is a man here to set it for us.’

So he spake, and Odysseus went back and sat him down again. And the swineherd strewed for Telemachus green brushwood below, and a fleece thereupon, and there presently the dear son of Odysseus sat him down. Next the swineherd set by them platters of roast flesh, the fragments that were left from the meal of yesterday. And wheaten bread he briskly heaped up in baskets, and mixed the honey-sweet wine in a goblet of ivy wood, and himself sat down over against divine Odysseus. So they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer set before them. Now when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, Telemachus spake to the goodly swineherd, saying:

‘Father, whence came this stranger to thee? How did sailors bring him to Ithaca? and who did they avow them to be? For in no wise, I deem, did he come hither by land.’

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus: ‘Yea now, my son, I will tell thee all the truth. Of wide Crete he avows him to be by lineage, and he says that round many cities of mortals he has wandered at adventure; even so has some god spun for him the thread of fate. But now, as a runaway from a ship of the Thesprotians, has he come to my steading, and I will give him to thee for thy man; do with him as thou wilt; he avows him for thy suppliant.’

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: ‘Eumaeus, verily a bitter word is this that thou speakest. How indeed shall I receive this guest in my house? Myself I am young, and trust not yet to my strength of hands to defend me against the man who does violence without a cause. And my mother has divisions of heart, whether to abide here with me and keep the house, respecting the bed of her lord and the voice of the people, or straightway to go with whomsoever of the Achaeans that woo her in the halls is the best man, and gives most bridal gifts. But behold, as for this guest of thine, now that he has come to thy house, I will clothe him in a mantle and a doublet, goodly raiment, and I will give him a two-edged sword, and shoes for his feet, and send him on his way, whithersoever his heart and his spirit bid him go. Or, if thou wilt, hold him here in the steading and take care of him, and raiment I will send hither, and all manner of food to eat, that he be not ruinous to thee and to thy fellows. But thither into the company of the wooers would I not suffer him to go, for they are exceeding full of infatuate insolence, lest they mock at him, and that would be a sore grief to me. And hard it is for one man, how valiant soever, to achieve aught among a multitude, for verily they are far the stronger.’

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him: ‘My friend, since it is indeed my right to answer thee withal, of a truth my heart is rent as I hear your words, such infatuate deeds ye say the wooers devise in the halls, in despite of thee, a man so noble. Say, dost thou willingly submit thee to oppression, or do the people through the township hate thee, obedient to the voice of a god? Or hast thou cause to blame thy brethren, in whose battle a man puts trust, even if a great feud arise? Ah, would that I had the youth, as now I have the spirit, and were either the son of noble Odysseus or Odysseus’ very self, {*} straightway then might a stranger sever my head from off my neck, if I went not to the halls of Odysseus, son of Laertes, and made myself the bane of every man among them! But if they should overcome me by numbers, being but one man against so many, far rather would I die slain in mine own halls, than witness for ever these unseemly deeds, strangers shamefully entreated, and men haling the handmaidens in foul wise through the fair house, and wine drawn wastefully and the wooers devouring food all recklessly without avail, at a work that knows no ending.’

{* We omit line 101, which spoils the sense of the passage, and was rejected by antiquity.}

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: ‘Yea now, stranger I will plainly tell thee all. There is no grudge and hatred borne my by the whole people, neither have I cause to blame my brethren, in whose battle a man puts trust, even if a great feud arise. For thus, as thou seest, Cronion has made us a house of but one heir. Arceisius got him one only son Laertes, and one only son Odysseus was begotten of his father, and Odysseus left me the only child of his getting in these halls, and had no joy of me; wherefore now are foemen innumerable in the house. For all the noblest that are princes in the islands, in Dulichium and Same and wooded Zacynthus, and as many as lord it in rocky Ithaca, all these woo my mother and waste my house. But as for her she neither refuseth the hated bridal, nor hath the heart to make and end; so they devour and minish my house; and ere long will they make havoc likewise of myself. Howbeit these things surely lie on the knees of the gods. Nay, father, but do thou go with haste and tell the constant Penelope that she hath got me safe and that I am come up out of Pylos. As for me, I will tarry here, and do thou return hither when thou hast told the tidings to her alone; but of the other Achaeans let no man learn it, for there be many that devise mischief against me.’

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus: ‘I mark, I heed, all this thou speakest to one with understanding. But come, declare me this and tell it plainly; whether or no I shall go the same road with tidings to Laertes, that hapless man, who till lately, despite his great sorrow for Odysseus' sake, yet had oversight of the tillage, and did eat and drink with the thralls in his house, as often as his heart within him bade him. But now, from the day that thou wentest in thy ship to Pylos, never to this hour, they say, hath he so much as eaten and drunken, nor looked to the labours of the field, but with groaning and lamentation he sits sorrowing, and the flesh wastes away about his bones.'

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: 'All the more grievous it is! yet will we let him be, though we sorrow thereat. For if men might in any wise have all their will, we should before ought else choose the day of my father's returning. But do thou when thou hast told the tidings come straight back, and go not wandering through the fields after Laertes. But speak to my mother that with all speed she send forth the house-dame her handmaid, secretly, for she might bear tidings to the old man.'

With that word he roused the swineherd, who took his sandals in his hands and bound them beneath his feet and departed for the city. Now Athene noted Eumaeus the swineherd pass from the steading, and she drew nigh in the semblance of a woman fair and tall, and skilled in splendid handiwork. And she stood in presence manifest to Odysseus over against the doorway of the hut; but it was so that Telemachus saw her not before him and marked her not; for the gods in no wise appear visibly to all. But Odysseus was ware of her and the dogs likewise, which barked not, but with a low whine shrank cowering to the far side of the steading. Then she nodded at him with bent brows, and goodly Odysseus perceived it, and came forth from the room, past the great wall of the yard, and stood before her, and Athene spake to him, saying:

'Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, now is the hour to reveal thy word to thy son, and hide it not, that ye twain having framed death and doom for the wooers, may fare to the famous town. Nor will I, even I, be long away from you, being right eager for battle.'

Therewith Athene touched him with her golden wand. First she cast about his breast a fresh linen robe and a doublet, and she increased his bulk and bloom. Dark his colour grew again, and his cheeks filled out, and the black beard spread thick around his chin.

Now she, when she had so wrought, withdrew again, but Odysseus went into the hut, and his dear son marvelled at him and looked away for very fear lest it should be a god, and he uttered his voice and spake to him winged words:

'Even now, stranger, thou art other in my sight than that thou wert a moment since, and other garments thou hast, and the colour of thy skin is no longer the same. Surely thou art a god of those that keep the wide heaven. Nay then, be gracious, that we may offer to thee well-pleasing sacrifices and golden gifts, beautifully wrought; and spare us I pray thee.’

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him, saying: ‘Behold, no god am I; why likenest thou me to the immortals? nay, thy father am I, for whose sake thou sufferest many pains and groanest sore, and submittest thee to the despite of men,’

At the word he kissed his son, and from his cheeks let a tear fall to earth: before, he had stayed the tears continually. But Telemachus (for as yet he believed not that it was his father) answered in turn and spake, saying:

‘Thou art not Odysseus my father, but some god beguiles me, that I may groan for more exceeding sorrow. For it cannot be that a mortal man should contrive this by the aid of his own wit, unless a god were himself to visit him, and lightly of his own will to make him young or old. For truly, but a moment gone, thou wert old and foully clad, but now thou art like the gods who keep the wide heaven.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘Telemachus, it fits thee not to marvel overmuch that thy father is come home, or to be amazed. Nay for thou shalt find no other Odysseus come hither any more; but lo, I, all as I am, after sufferings and much wandering have come in the twentieth year to mine own country. Behold, this is the work of Athene, driver of the spoil, who makes me such manner of man as she will, — for with her it is possible, — now like a beggar, and now again like a young man, and one clad about in rich raiment. Easy it is for the gods who keep the wide heaven to glorify or to abase a mortal man.’

With this word then he sat down again; but Telemachus, flinging himself upon his noble father’s neck, mourned and shed tears, and in both their hearts arose the desire of lamentation. And they wailed aloud, more ceaselessly than birds, sea-eagles or vultures of crooked claws, whose younglings the country folk have taken from the nest, ere yet they are fledged. Even so pitifully fell the tears beneath their brows. And now would the sunlight have gone down upon their sorrowing, had not Telemachus spoken to his father suddenly:

‘And in what manner of ship, father dear, did sailors at length bring thee hither to Ithaca? and who did they avow them to be? For in no wise, I deem, didst thou come hither by land.’

And the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him: ‘Yea now, my child, I will tell thee all the truth. The Phaeacians brought me hither, mariners renowned, who speed other men too upon their way, whosoever comes to them. Asleep in the swift ship they bore me over the seas and set me down in Ithaca, and gave me splendid gifts, bronze and gold in plenty and woven raiment. And these treasures are lying by the gods' grace in the caves. But now I am come hither by the promptings of Athene, that we may take counsel for the slaughter of the foemen. But come, tell me all the tale of the wooers and their number, that I may know how many and what men they be, and that so I may commune with my good heart and advise me, whether we twain shall be able alone to make head against them without aid, or whether we should even seek succour of others.'

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: 'Verily, father, I have ever heard of thy great fame, for a warrior hardy of thy hands, and sage in counsel. But this is a hard saying of thine: awe comes over me; for it may not be that two men should do battle with many men and stalwart. For of the wooers there are not barely ten nor twice ten only, but many a decad more: and straight shalt thou learn the tale of them ere we part. From Dulichium there be two and fifty chosen lords, and six serving men go with them; and out of Same four and twenty men; and from Zacynthus there are twenty lords of the Achaeans; and from Ithaca itself full twelve men of the best, and with them Medon the henchman, and the divine minstrel, and two squires skilled in carving viands. If we shall encounter all these within the halls, see thou to it, lest bitter and baneful for us be the vengeance thou takest on their violence at thy coming. But do thou, if thou canst think of some champion, advise thee of any that may help us with all his heart.'

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him, saying: 'Yea now, I will tell thee, and do thou mark and listen to me, and consider whether Athene with Father Zeus will suffice for us twain, or whether I shall cast about for some other champion.'

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: 'Valiant helpers, in sooth, are these two thou namest, whose seat is aloft in the clouds, and they rule among all men and among the deathless gods!'

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him: 'Yet will the twain not long keep aloof from the strong tumult of war, when between the wooers and us in my halls is held the trial of the might of Ares. But as now, do thou go homeward at the breaking of the day, and consort with the proud wooers. As for me, the swineherd will lead me to the town later in the day, in the likeness of a beggar, a wretched man and an old. And if they shall evil entreat me in the house, let thy heart harden itself to endure while I am shamefully handled, yea even if they drag me by the feet through the house to the doors, or cast at me and smite me: still do thou bear the sight. Howbeit thou shalt surely bid them cease from their folly, exhorting them with smooth words; yet no whit will they hearken, nay for the day of their doom is at hand. Yet another thing will I tell thee, and do thou ponder it in thy heart. When Athene, of deep counsel, shall put it into my heart, I will nod to thee with my head and do thou note it, and carry away all thy weapons of war that lie in the halls, and lay them down every one in the secret place of the lofty chamber. And when the wooers miss them and ask thee concerning them, thou shalt beguile them with soft words, saying:

'"Out of the smoke I laid them by, since they were no longer like those that Odysseus left behind him of old when he went to Troy, but they are wholly marred: so mightily hath passed upon them the vapour of fire. Moreover Cronion hath put into my heart this other and greater care, that perchance, when ye are heated with wine, ye set a quarrel between you and wound one the other and thereby shame the feast and the wooing; for iron of itself draws a man thereto." But for us twain alone leave two swords and two spears and two shields of oxhide to grasp, that we may rush upon the arms and seize them; and then shall Pallas Athene and Zeus the counsellor enchant the wooers to their ruin. Yet another thing will I tell thee, and do thou ponder it in thy heart. If in very truth thou art my son and of our blood, then let no man hear that Odysseus is come home; neither let Laertes know it, nor the swineherd nor any of the household nor Penelope herself, but let me and thee alone discover the intent of the women. Yea, and we would moreover make trial of certain of the men among the thralls, and learn who {*} of them chances to honour us and to fear us heartily, and who regards us not at all and holds even thee in no esteem, so noble a man as thou art.'

{* Reading [Greek]}

Then his renowned son answered him, and said: 'O my father, of a truth thou shalt learn, methinks, even hereafter what spirit I am of, for no whit doth folly possess me. But I deem not that this device of thine will be gainful to us twain, so I bid thee to give heed. For thou shalt be long time on thy road to little purpose, making trial of each man, while thou visitest the farm lands; but at ease in thy halls the wooers devour thy goods with insolence, and now there is no sparing. Howbeit I would have thee take knowledge of the women, who they be that dishonour thee, and who are guiltless. But of the men I would not that we should make trial in the steadings, but that we should see to this task afterwards, if indeed thou knowest some sign from Zeus, lord of the aegis.'

Thus they spake one to the other. And now the well-builded ship was being brought to land at Ithaca, the ship that bare Telemachus from Pylos with all his company. When they were now come within the deep harbour, the men drew up the black ship on the shore, while squires, haughty of heart, bare away their weapons, and straightway carried the glorious gifts to the house of Clytius. Anon they sent forward a herald to the house of Odysseus to bear the tidings to prudent Penelope, namely, how Telemachus was in the field, and had bidden the ship sail to the city, lest the noble queen should be afraid, and let the round tears fall. So these two met, the herald and the goodly swineherd, come on the same errand to tell all to the lady. Now when they were got to the house of the divine king, the herald spake out among all the handmaids saying:

‘Verily, O queen, thy son hath come out of Pylos.’

But the swineherd went up to Penelope, and told her all that her dear son had bidden him say. So, when he had declared all that had been enjoined him, he went on his way to the swine and left the enclosure and the hall.

Now the wooers were troubled and downcast in spirit, and forth they went from the hall past the great wall of the court, and there in front of the gates they held their session. And Eurymachus son of Polybus first spake among them saying:

‘Verily, friends, a proud deed hath Telemachus accomplished with a high hand, even this journey, and we said that he should never bring it to pass. But come, launch we a black ship, the best there is, and let us get together oarsmen of the sea, who shall straightway bear word to our friends to return home with speed.’

The word was yet on his lips, when Amphinomus turned in his place and saw the ship within the deep harbour, and the men lowering the sails and with the oars in their hands. Then sweetly he laughed out and spake among his fellows:

‘Nay, let us now send no message any more, for lo, they are come home. Either some god has told them all or they themselves have seen the ship of Telemachus go by, and have not been able to catch her.’

Thus he spake, and they arose and went to the sea-banks. Swiftly the men drew up the black ship on the shore, and squires, haughty of heart, bare away their weapons. And the wooers all together went to the assembly-place, and suffered none other to sit with them, either of the young men or of the elders. Then Antinous spake among them, the son of Eupeithes:

‘Lo now, how the gods have delivered this man from his evil case! All day long did scouts sit along the windy headlands, ever in quick succession, and at the going down of the sun we never rested for a night upon the shore, but sailing with our swift ship on the high seas we awaited the bright Dawn, as we lay in wait for Telemachus, that we might take and slay the man himself; but meanwhile some god has brought him home. But even here let us devise an evil end for him, even for Telemachus, and let him not escape out of our hands, for methinks that while he lives we shall never achieve this task of ours. For he himself has understanding in counsel and wisdom, and the people no longer show us favour in all things. Nay come, before he assembles all the Achaeans to the gathering; for methinks that he will in nowise be slack, but will be exceeding wroth, and will stand up and speak out among them all, and tell how we plotted against him sheer destruction but did not overtake him. Then will they not approve us, when they hear these evil deeds. Beware then lest they do us a harm, and drive us forth from our country, and we come to the land of strangers. Nay, but let us be beforehand and take him in the field far from the city, or by the way; and let us ourselves keep his livelihood and his possessions, making fair division among us, but the house we would give to his mother to keep and to whomsoever marries her. But if this saying likes you not, but ye chose rather that he should live and keep the heritage of his father, no longer then let us gather here and eat all his store of pleasant substance, but let each one from his own hall woo her with his bridal gifts and seek to win her; so should she wed the man that gives the most and comes as the chosen of fate.’

So he spake, and they all held their peace. Then Amphinomus made harangue and spake out among them; he was the famous son of Nisus the prince, the son of Aretias, and he led the wooers that came from out Dulichium, a land rich in wheat and in grass, and more than all the rest his words were pleasing to Penelope, for he was of an understanding mind. And now of his good will he made harangue, and spake among them:

‘Friends, I for one would not choose to kill Telemachus; it is a fearful thing to slay one of the stock of kings! Nay, first let us seek to the counsel of the gods, and if the oracles of great Zeus approve, myself I will slay him and bid all the rest to aid. But if the gods are disposed to avert it, I bid you to refrain.’

So spake Amphinomus, and his saying pleased them well. Then straightway they arose and went to the house of Odysseus, and entering in sat down on the polished seats.

Then the wise Penelope had a new thought, namely, to show herself to the wooers, so despiteful in their insolence; for she had heard of the death of her son that was to be in the halls, seeing that Medon the henchman had told her of it; who heard their counsels. So she went on her way to the hall, with the women her handmaids. Now when that fair lady had come unto the wooers, she stood by the pillar of the well-builded roof, holding up her glistening tire before her face, and rebuked Antinous and spake and hailed him:

‘Antinous, full of all insolence, deviser of mischief! and yet they say that in the land of Ithaca thou art chiefest among thy peers in counsel and in speech. Nay, no such man dost thou show thyself. Fool! why indeed dost thou contrive death and doom for Telemachus, and hast no regard unto suppliants who have Zeus to witness? Nay but it is an impious thing to contrive evil one against another. What! knowest thou not of the day when thy father fled to this house in fear of the people, for verily they were exceeding wroth against him, because he had followed with Taphian sea robbers and harried the Thesprotians, who were at peace with us. So they wished to destroy thy father and wrest from him his dear life, and utterly to devour all his great and abundant livelihood; but Odysseus stayed and withheld them, for all their desire. His house thou now consumest without atonement, and his wife thou wooest, and wouldst slay his son, and dost greatly grieve me. But I bid thee cease, and command the others to do likewise.’

Then Eurymachus, son of Polybus, answered her saying: ‘Daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, take courage, and let not thy heart be careful for these things. The man is not, nor shall be, nor ever shall be born, that shall stretch forth his hands against Telemachus, thy son, while I live and am on earth and see the light. For thus will I declare to thee, and it shall surely come to pass. Right quickly shall the black blood of such an one flow about our spear; for Odysseus, waster of cities, of a truth did many a time set me too upon his knees, and gave me roasted flesh into my hand, and held the red wine to my lips. Wherefore Telemachus is far the dearest of all men to me, and I bid him have no fear of death, not from the wooers’ hands; but from the gods none may avoid it.’

Thus he spake comforting her, but was himself the while framing death for her son.

Now she ascended to her shining upper chamber, and then was bewailing Odysseus, her dear lord, till grey-eyed Athene cast sweet sleep upon her eyelids.

And in the evening the goodly swineherd came back to Odysseus and his son, and they made ready and served the supper, when they had sacrificed a swine of a year old. Then Athene drew near Odysseus, son of Laertes, and smote him with her wand, and made him into an old man again. In sorry raiment she clad him about his body, lest the swineherd should look on him and know him, and depart to tell the constant Penelope, and not keep the matter in his heart.

Then Telemachus spake first to the swineherd, saying: ‘Thou hast come, goodly Eumaeus. What news is there in the town? Are the lordly wooers now come in from their ambush, or do they still watch for me as before on my homeward way?’

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus: ‘I had no mind to go down the city asking and inquiring hereof; my heart bade me get me home again, as quick as might be, when once I had told the tidings. And the swift messenger from thy company joined himself unto me, the henchman, who was the first to tell the news to thy mother. Yet this, too, I know, if thou wouldest hear; for I beheld it with mine eyes. Already had I come in my faring above the city, where is the hill Hermaean, when I marked a swift ship entering our haven, and many men there were in her, and she was laden with shields and two-headed spears, and methought they were the wooers, but I know not at all.’

So spake he, and the mighty prince Telemachus smiled, and glanced at his father, while he shunned the eye of the swineherd.

Now when they had ceased from the work and got supper ready, they fell to feasting, and their hearts lacked not ought of the equal banquet. But when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, they bethought them of rest, and took the boon of sleep.

BOOK XVII

Telemachus relates to his mother what he had heard at Pylos and Sparta.

So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, then Telemachus, the dear son of divine Odysseus, bound beneath his feet his goodly sandals, and took up his mighty spear that fitted his grasp, to make for the city; and he spake to his swineherd, saying:

‘Verily, father, I am bound for the city, that my mother may see me, for methinks that she will not cease from grievous wailing and tearful lament, until she beholds my very face. But this command I give thee: Lead this stranger, the hapless one, to the city, that there he may beg his meat, and whoso chooses will give him a morsel of bread and a cup of water. As for myself, I can in no wise suffer every guest who comes to me, so afflicted am I in spirit. But if the stranger be sore angered hereat, the more grievous will it be for himself; howbeit I for one love to speak the truth.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘I too, my friend, have no great liking to be left behind here. It is better that a beggar should beg his meat in the town than in the fields, and whoso chooses will give it me. For I am not now of an age to abide at the steading, and to obey in all things the word of the master. Nay go, and this man that thou biddest will lead me, so soon as I shall be warmed with the fire, and the sun waxes hot. For woefully poor are these garments of mine, and I fear lest the hoar frost of the dawn overcome me; moreover ye say the city is far away.’

So he spake, and Telemachus passed out through the steading, stepping forth at a quick pace, and was sowing the seeds of evil for the wooers. Now when he was come to the fair-lying house, he set his spear against the tall pillar and leaned it there, and himself went in and crossed the threshold of stone.

And the nurse Eurycleia saw him far before the rest, as she was strewing skin coverlets upon the carven chairs, and straightway she drew near him, weeping, and all the other maidens of Odysseus, of the hardy heart, were gathered about him, and kissed him lovingly on the head and shoulders. Now wise Penelope came forth from her chamber, like Artemis or golden Aphrodite, and cast her arms about her dear son, and fell a weeping, and kissed his face and both his beautiful eyes, and wept aloud, and spake to him winged words:

‘Thou art come, Telemachus, a sweet light in the dark; methought I should see thee never again, after thou hadst gone in thy ship to Pylos, secretly and without my will, to seek tidings of thy dear father. Come now, tell me, what sight thou didst get of him?'

And wise Telemachus answered her, saying: 'Mother mine, wake not wailing in my soul, nor stir the heart within the breast of me, that have but now fled from utter death. Nay, but wash thee in water, and take to thee fresh raiment, and go aloft to thine upper chamber with the women thy handmaids, and vow to all the gods an acceptable sacrifice of hecatombs, if haply Zeus may grant that deeds of requital be made. But I will go to the assembly-place to bid a stranger to our house, one that accompanied me as I came hither from Pylos. I sent him forward with my godlike company, and commanded Piraeus to lead him home, and to take heed to treat him lovingly and with worship till I should come.'

Thus he spake, and wingless her speech remained. And she washed her in water, and took to her fresh raiment, and vowed to all the gods an acceptable sacrifice of hecatombs, if haply Zeus might grant that deeds of requital should be made.

Now Telemachus went out through the hall with the spear in his hand: and two swift hounds bare him company. And Athene shed on him a wondrous grace, and all the people marvelled at him as he came. And the lordly wooers gathered about him with fair words on their lips, but brooding evil in the deep of their heart. Then he avoided the great press of the wooers, but where Mentor sat, and Antiphus, and Halitherses, who were friends of his house from of old, there he went and sat down; and they asked him of all his adventures. Then Piraeus, the famed spearsman, drew nigh, leading the stranger to the assembly-place by the way of the town; and Telemachus kept not aloof from him long, but went up to him.

Then Piraeus first spake to him, saying: 'Bestir the women straightway to go to my house, that I may send thee the gifts that Menelaus gave thee.'

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: 'Piraeus, we know not how these matters will fall out. If the lordly wooers shall slay me by guile in the halls, and divide among them the heritage of my father, then I should wish thee to keep and enjoy the gifts thyself, rather than any of these. But if I shall sow the seeds of death and fate for the wooers, then gladly bring me to the house the gifts that I will gladly take.'

Therewith he led the travel-worn stranger to the house. Now when they came to the fair-lying palace, they laid aside their mantles on the chairs and high seats, and went to the polished baths, and bathed them. So when the maidens had bathed them and anointed them with olive oil, and cast about them thick mantles and doublets, they came forth from the baths, and sat upon the seats. Then the handmaid bare water for the hands in a goodly golden ewer, and poured it forth over a silver basin to wash withal, and drew to their side a polished table. And the grave dame bare wheaten bread, and set it by them, and laid on the board many dainties, giving freely of such things as she had by her. And the mother of Telemachus sat over against him by the pillar of the hall, leaning against a chair, and spinning the slender threads from the yarn. And they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer set before them. Now when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, the wise Penelope first spake among them:

‘Telemachus, verily I will go up to my upper chamber, and lay me in my bed, the place of my groanings, that is ever watered by my tears, since the day that Odysseus departed with the sons of Atreus for Ilios. Yet thou hadst no care to tell me clearly, before the lordly wooers came to this house, concerning the returning of thy father, if haply thou hast heard thereof.’

And wise Telemachus answered her, saying: ‘Yea now, mother, I will tell thee all the truth. We went to Pylos and to Nestor, the shepherd of the people, and he received me in his lofty house, and was diligent to entreat me lovingly, as a father might his son that had but newly come from strange lands after many years; even so diligently he cared for me with his renowned sons. Yet he said that he had heard no word from any man on earth concerning Odysseus, of the hardy heart, whether alive or dead. But he sent me forward on my way with horses and a chariot, well compact, to Menelaus, son of Atreus, spearman renowned. There I saw Argive Helen, for whose sake the Argives and Trojans bore much travail by the gods’ designs. Then straightway Menelaus, of the loud war-cry, asked me on what quest I had come to goodly Lacedaemon. And I told him all the truth. Then he made answer, and spake, saying:

‘“Out upon them, for truly in the bed of a brave-hearted man were they minded to lie, very cravens as they are! Even as when a hind hath couched her newborn fawns unweaned in a strong lion’s lair, and searcheth out the mountain-knees and grassy hollows, seeking pasture; and afterward the lion cometh back to his bed, and sendeth forth unsightly death upon that pair, even so shall Odysseus send forth unsightly death upon the wooers. Would to our father Zeus, and Athene, and Apollo, would that in such might as when of old in stablished Lesbos he rose up in strife and wrestled with Philomeleides, and threw him mightily, and all the Achaeans rejoiced; would that in such strength Odysseus might consort with the wooers; then should they all have swift fate and bitter wedlock! But for that whereof thou askest and entreatest me, be sure I will not swerve from the truth in aught that I say, nor deceive thee; but of all that the ancient one of the sea, whose speech is sooth, declared to me, not a word will I hide or keep from thee. He said that he saw Odysseus in an island, suffering strong pains in the halls of the nymph Calypso, who holds him there perforce; so that he may not come to his own country, for he has by him no ships with oars, and no companions to send him on his way over the broad back of the sea.” So spake Menelaus, son of Atreus, spearsman renowned. Then having fulfilled all, I set out for home, and the deathless gods gave me a fair wind, and brought me swiftly to mine own dear country.’

So he spake, and stirred her heart within her breast. And next the godlike Theoclymenus spake among them:

‘O wife revered of Odysseus, son of Laertes, verily he hath no clear knowledge; but my word do thou mark, for I will prophesy to thee most truly and hide nought. Now Zeus be witness before any god, and this hospitable board and this hearth of noble Odysseus, whereunto I am come, that Odysseus is even now of a surety in his own country, resting or faring, learning of these evil deeds, and sowing the seeds of evil for all the wooers. So clear was the omen of the bird that I saw as I sat on the decked ship, and I proclaimed it to Telemachus.’

Then wise Penelope answered him, saying: ‘Ah, stranger, would that this thy word may be accomplished! Soon shouldest thou be aware of kindness and of many a gift at my hands, so that whoso met with thee would call thee blessed.’

Thus they spake one to the other. But the wooers meantime were before the palace of Odysseus, taking their pleasure in casting of weights and of spears on a levelled place, as heretofore, in their insolence. But when it was now the hour for supper, and the flocks came home from the fields all around, and the men led them whose custom it was, then Medon, who of all the henchmen was most to their mind, and was ever with them at the feast, spake to them, saying:

‘Noble youths, now that ye have had sport to your hearts’ content, get you into the house, that we may make ready a feast; for truly it is no bad thing to take meat in season.’

Even so he spake, and they rose up and departed, and were obedient to his word. Now when they were come into the fair-lying house, they laid aside their mantles on the chairs and high seats, and they sacrificed great sheep and stout goats, yea, and the fatlings of the boars and an heifer of the herd, and got ready the feast.

Now all this while Odysseus and the goodly swineherd were bestirring them to go from the field to the city; and the swineherd, a master of men, spake first saying:

‘Well, my friend, forasmuch as I see thou art eager to be going to the city to-day, even as my master gave command; — though myself I would well that thou shouldest be left here to keep the steading, but I hold him in reverence and fear, lest he chide me afterwards, and grievous are the rebukes of masters — come then, let us go on our way, for lo, the day is far spent, and soon wilt thou find it colder toward evening.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘I mark, I heed: all this thou speakest to one with understanding. But let us be going, and be thou my guide withal to the end. And if thou hast anywhere a staff ready cut, give it me to lean upon, for truly ye said that slippery was the way.’

Therewith he cast about his shoulders a mean scrip, all tattered, and a cord withal to hang it, and Eumaeus gave him a staff to his mind. So these twain went on their way, and the dogs and the herdsmen stayed behind to guard the steading. And the swineherd led his lord to the city in the guise of a beggar, a wretched man and an old, leaning on a staff; and sorry was the raiment wherewith he was clothed upon. But as they fared along the rugged path they drew near to the town, and came to the fair flowing spring, with a basin fashioned, whence the people of the city drew water. This well Ithacus and Neritus and Polyctor had builded. And around it was a thicket of alders that grow by the waters, all circlewise, and down the cold stream fell from a rock on high, and above was reared an altar to the Nymphs, whereat all wayfarers made offering. In that place Melanthius, son of Dolius, met them, leading his goats to feast the wooers, the best goats that were in all the herds; and two herdsmen bare him company. Now when he saw them he reviled them, and spake and hailed them, in terrible and evil fashion, and stirred the heart of Odysseus, saying:

‘Now in very truth the vile is leading the vile, for god brings ever like to like! Say, whither art thou leading this glutton, — thou wretched swineherd, — this plaguy beggar, a kill-joy of the feast? He is one to stand about and rub his shoulders against many doorposts, begging for scraps of meat, not for swords or cauldrons. If thou wouldst give me the fellow to watch my steading and sweep out the stalls, and carry fresh fodder to the kids, then he might drink whey and get him a stout thigh. Howbeit, since he is practised only in evil, he will not care to betake him to the labour of the farm, but rather chooses to go louting through the land asking alms to fill his insatiate belly. But now I will speak out and my word shall surely be accomplished. If ever he fares to the house of divine Odysseus, many a stool that men’s hands hurl shall fly about his head, and break upon his ribs, {*} as they pelt him through the house.’

{* Reading [Greek]}

Therewith, as he went past, he kicked Odysseus on the hip, in his witlessness, yet he drave him not from the path, but he abode steadfast. And Odysseus pondered whether he should rush upon him and take away his life with the staff, or lift him in his grasp {*} and smite his head to the earth. Yet he hardened his heart to endure and refrained himself. And the swineherd looked at the other and rebuked him, and lifting up his hands prayed aloud:

{* [Greek] is perhaps best taken as an adverb in [Greek] formed from [Greek], though some letters of the word are still left obscure. Most modern commentators, however, derive it from [Greek] and [Greek] ‘near the ground; hence, in this context, ‘lift him by the feet.’}

‘Nymphs of the well-water, daughters of Zeus, if ever Odysseus burned on your altars pieces of the thighs of rams or kids, in their covering of rich fat, fulfil for me this wish: — oh that he, even he, may come home, and that some god may bring him! Then would he scatter all thy bravery, which now thou flauntest insolently, wandering ever about the city, while evil shepherds destroy the flock.’

Then Melanthius, the goatherd, answered: ‘Lo now, what a word has this evil-witted dog been saying! Some day I will take him in a black decked ship far from Ithaca, that he may bring me in much livelihood. Would God that Apollo, of the silver bow, might smite Telemachus to-day in the halls, or that he might fall before the wooers, so surely as for Odysseus the day of returning has in a far land gone by!’

So he spake and left them there as they walked slowly on. But Melanthius stepped forth, and came very speedily to the house of the prince, and straightway he went in and sat down among the wooers, over against Eurymachus, who chiefly showed him kindness. And they that ministered set by him a portion of flesh, and the grave dame brought wheaten bread and set it by him to eat. Now Odysseus and the goodly swineherd drew near and stood by, and the sound of the hollow lyre rang around them, for Phemius was lifting up his voice amid the company in song, and Odysseus caught the swineherd by the hand, and spake, saying:

‘Eumaeus, verily this is the fair house of Odysseus, and right easily might it be known and marked even among many. There is building beyond building, and the court of the house is cunningly wrought with a wall and battlements, and well-fenced are the folding doors; no man may hold it in disdain. And I see that many men keep revel within, for the savour of the fat rises upward, {*} and the voice of the lyre is heard there, which the gods have made to be the mate of the feast.’

{* Reading [Greek]}

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus: ‘Easily thou knowest it, for indeed thou never lackest understanding. But come, let us advise us, how things shall fall out here. Either do thou go first within the fair-lying halls, and join the company of the wooers, so will I remain here, or if thou wilt, abide here, and I will go before thy face, and tarry not long, lest one see thee without, and hurl at thee or strike thee. Look well to this, I bid thee.’

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him, saying: ‘I mark, I heed, all this thou speakest to one with understanding. Do thou then go before me, and I will remain here, for well I know what it is to be smitten and hurled at. My heart is full of hardiness, for much evil have I suffered in perils of waves and war; let this be added to the tale of those. But a ravening belly may none conceal, a thing accursed, that works much ill for men. For this cause too the benched ships are furnished, that bear mischief to foemen over the unharvested seas.’

Thus they spake one to the other. And lo, a hound raised up his head and pricked his ears, even where he lay, Argos, the hound of Odysseus, of the hardy heart, which of old himself had bred, but had got no joy of him, for ere that, he went to sacred Ilios. Now in time past the young men used to lead the hound against wild goats and deer and hares; but as then, despised he lay (his master being afar) in the deep dung of mules and kine, whereof an ample bed was spread before the doors, till the thralls of Odysseus should carry it away to dung therewith his wide demesne. There lay the dog Argos, full of vermin. Yet even now when he was ware of Odysseus standing by, he wagged his tail and dropped both his ears, but nearer to his master he had not now the strength to draw. But Odysseus looked aside and wiped away a tear that he easily hid from Eumaeus, and straightway he asked him, saying:

‘Eumaeus, verily this is a great marvel, this hound lying here in the dung. Truly he is goodly of growth, but I know not certainly if he have speed with this beauty, or if he be comely only, like as are men’s trencher dogs that their lords keep for the pleasure of the eye.’

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus: ‘In very truth this is the dog of a man that has died in a far land. If he were what once he was in limb and in the feats of the chase, when Odysseus left him to go to Troy, soon wouldst thou marvel at the sight of his swiftness and his strength. There was no beast that could flee from him in the deep places of the wood, when he was in pursuit; for even on a track he was the keenest hound. But now he is holden in an evil case, and his lord hath perished far from his own country, and the careless women take no charge of him. Nay, thralls are no more inclined to honest service when their masters have lost the dominion, for Zeus, of the far-borne voice, takes away the half of a man’s virtue, when the day of slavery comes upon him.’

Therewith he passed within the fair-lying house, and went straight to the hall, to the company of the proud wooers. But upon Argos came the fate of black death even in the hour that he beheld Odysseus again, in the twentieth year.

Now godlike Telemachus was far the first to behold the swineherd as he came into the hall, and straightway then he beckoned and called him to his side. So Eumaeus looked about and took a settle that lay by him, where the carver was wont to sit dividing much flesh among the wooers that were feasting in the house. This seat he carried and set by the table of Telemachus over against him, and there sat down himself. And the henchman took a mess and served it him, and wheaten bread out of the basket.

And close behind him Odysseus entered the house in the guise of a beggar, a wretched man and an old, leaning on his staff, and clothed on with sorry raiment. And he sat down on the ashen threshold within the doorway, leaning against a pillar of cypress wood, which the carpenter on a time had deftly planed, and thereon made straight the line. And Telemachus called the swineherd to him, and took a whole loaf out of the fair basket, and of flesh so much as his hands could hold in their grasp, saying:

‘Take and give this to the stranger, and bid him go about and beg himself of all the wooers in their turn, for shame is an ill mate of a needy man.’

So he spake, and the swineherd went when he heard that saying, and stood by and spake to him winged words:

‘Stranger, Telemachus gives thee these and bids thee go about and beg of all the wooers in their turn, for, he says, “shame ill becomes a beggar man.”’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him and said: ‘King Zeus, grant me that Telemachus may be happy among men, and may he have all his heart’s desire!’

Therewith he took the gift in both hands, and set it there before his feet on his unsightly scrip. Then he ate meat so long as the minstrel was singing in the halls. When he had done supper, and the divine minstrel was ending his song, then the wooers raised a clamour through the halls; but Athene stood by Odysseus, son of Laertes, and moved him to go gathering morsels of bread among the wooers, and learn which were righteous and which unjust. Yet not even so was she fated to redeem one man of them from an evil doom. So he set out, beginning on the right, to ask of each man, stretching out his hand on every side, as though he were a beggar from of old. And they in pity gave him somewhat, and were amazed at the man, asking one another who he was and whence he came?

Then Melanthius, the goatherd, spake among them:

‘Listen, ye wooers of the renowned queen, concerning this stranger, for verily I have seen him before. The swineherd truly was his guide hither, but of him I have no certain knowledge, whence he avows him to be born.’

So spake he, but Antinous rebuked the swineherd, saying: ‘Oh notorious swineherd, wherefore, I pray thee, didst thou bring this man to the city? Have we not vagrants enough besides, plaguy beggars, kill-joys of the feast? Dost thou count it a light thing that they assemble here and devour the living of thy master, but thou must needs {*} call in this man too?'

{* [Greek] can hardly have a local meaning here. If retained, it must be nearly equivalent to [Greek], 'it seems,' with a touch of irony. Cf. i.348. The v. 1. [Greek] is a simpler reading, but by no means certain.}

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus: 'Antinous, no fair words are these of thine, noble though thou art. For who ever himself seeks out and bids to the feast a stranger from afar, save only one of those that are craftsmen of the people, a prophet or a healer of ills, or a shipwright or even a godlike minstrel, who can delight all with his song? Nay, these are the men that are welcome over all the wide earth. But none would call a beggar to the banquet, to waste his substance. But thou art ever hard above all the other wooers to the servants of Odysseus, and, beyond all, to me; but behold, I care not, so long as my mistress, the constant Penelope, lives in the halls and godlike Telemachus.'

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: 'Be silent, answer him not, I pray thee, with many words, for Antinous is wont ever to chide us shamefully with bitter speech, yea, and urges the others thereto.'

Therewithal he spake winged words to Antinous: 'Antinous, verily thou hast a good care for me, as it were a father for his son, thou that biddest me drive our guest from the hall with a harsh command. God forbid that such a thing should be! Take somewhat and give it him: lo, I grudge it not; nay, I charge thee to do it. And herein regard not my mother, nor any of the thralls that are in the house of divine Odysseus. Nay, but thou hast no such thought in thy heart, for thou art far more fain to eat thyself than to give to another.'

Then Antinous answered him and spake, saying: 'Telemachus, proud of speech, and unrestrained in fury, what word hast thou spoken? If all the wooers should vouchsafe him as much as I, this house would keep him far enough aloof even for three months' space.'

So he spake, and seized the footstool whereon he rested his sleek feet as he sat at the feast, and showed it from beneath the table where it lay. But all the others gave somewhat and filled the wallet with bread and flesh; yea, and even now, Odysseus as he returned to the threshold, was like to escape scot free, making trial of the Achaeans, but he halted by Antinous, and spake to him, saying:

'Friend, give me somewhat; for methinks thou art not the basest of the Achaeans, but the best man of them all, for thou art like a king. Wherefore thou shouldest give me a portion of bread, and that a better than the others; so would I make thee renowned over all the wide earth. For I too, once had a house of mine own among men, a rich man with a wealthy house, and many a time would I give to a wanderer, what manner of man soever he might be, and in whatsoever need he came. And I had thralls out of number, and all else in plenty, wherewith folk live well and have a name for riches. But Zeus, the son of Cronos, made me desolate of all, — for surely it was his will, — who sent me with wandering sea-robbers to go to Egypt, a far road, to my ruin. And in the river Aegyptus I stayed my curved ships. Then verily I bade my loved companions to abide there by the ships, and to guard the ship, and I sent forth scouts to range the points of outlook. Now they gave place to wantonness, being the fools of their own force, and soon they fell to wasting the fields of the Egyptians, exceeding fair, and carried away their wives and infant children, and slew the men. And the cry came quickly to the city, and the people heard the shout and came forth at the breaking of the day; and all the plain was filled with footmen and horsemen and with the glitter of bronze. And Zeus, whose joy is in the thunder, sent an evil panic upon my company, and none durst stand and face the foe: for danger encompassed us on every side. There they slew many of us with the edge of the sword, and others they led up with them alive to work for them perforce. But they gave me to a friend who met them, to take to Cyprus, even to Dmetor son of Iasus, who ruled mightily over Cyprus; and thence, behold, am I now come hither in sore distress.’

Then Antinous answered, and spake, saying: ‘What god hath brought this plague hither to trouble the feast? Stand forth thus in the midst, away from my table, lest thou come soon to a bitter Egypt and a sad Cyprus; for a bold beggar art thou and a shameless. Thou standest by all in turn and recklessly they give to thee, for they hold not their hand nor feel any ruth in giving freely of others’ goods, for that each man has plenty by him.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels drew back and answered him: ‘Lo now, I see thou hast not wisdom with thy beauty! From out of thine own house thou wouldest not give even so much as a grain of salt to thy suppliant, thou who now even at another’s board dost sit, and canst not find it in thy heart to take of the bread and give it me, where there is plenty to thy hand.’

He spake, and Antinous was mightily angered at heart, and looked fiercely on him and spake winged words:

‘Henceforth, methinks, thou shalt not get thee out with honour from the hall, seeing thou dost even rail upon me.’

Therewith he caught up the footstool and smote Odysseus at the base of the right shoulder by the back. But he stood firm as a rock, nor reeled he beneath the blow of Antinous, but shook his head in silence, brooding evil in the deep of his heart. Then he went back to the threshold, and sat him there, and laid down his well-filled scrip, and spake among the wooers:

‘Hear me, ye wooers of the renowned queen, and I will say what my spirit within me bids me. Verily there is neither pain nor grief of heart, when a man is smitten in battle fighting for his own possessions, whether cattle or white sheep. But now Antinous hath stricken me for my wretched belly’s sake, a thing accursed, that works much ill for men. Ah, if indeed there be gods and Avengers of beggars, may the issues of death come upon Antinous before his wedding!’

Then Antinous, son of Eupeithes, answered him: ‘Sit and eat thy meat in quiet, stranger, or get thee elsewhere, lest the young men drag thee by hand or foot through the house for thy evil words, and strip all thy flesh from off thee.’

Even so he spake, and they were all exceeding wroth at his word. And on this wise would one of the lordly young men speak:

‘Antinous, thou didst ill to strike the hapless wanderer, doomed man that thou art, — if indeed there be a god in heaven. Yea and the gods, in the likeness of strangers from far countries, put on all manner of shapes, and wander through the cities, beholding the violence and the righteousness of men.’

So the wooers spake, but he heeded not their words. Now Telemachus nursed in his heart a mighty grief at the smiting of Odysseus, yet he let no tear fall from his eyelids to the ground, but shook his head in silence, brooding evil in the deep of his heart.

Now when wise Penelope heard of the stranger being smitten in the halls, she spake among her maidens, saying:

‘Oh that Apollo, the famed archer, may so smite thee thyself, Antinous!’

And the house-dame, Eurynome, answered her, saying: ‘Oh that we might win fulfilment of our prayers! So should not one of these men come to the fair-throned Dawn.’

And wise Penelope answered her: ‘Nurse, they are all enemies, for they all devise evil continually, but of them all Antinous is the most like to black fate. Some hapless stranger is roaming about the house, begging alms of the men, as his need bids him; and all the others filled his wallet and gave him somewhat, but Antinous smote him at the base of the right shoulder with a stool.’

So she spake among her maidens, sitting in her chamber, while goodly Odysseus was at meat. Then she called to her the goodly swineherd and spake, saying:

‘Go thy way, goodly Eumaeus, and bid the stranger come hither, that I may speak him a word of greeting, and ask him if haply he has heard tidings of Odysseus of the hardy heart, or seen him with his eyes; for he seems like one that has wandered far.’

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus: ‘Queen, oh that the Achaeans would hold their peace! so would he charm thy very heart, such things doth he say. For I kept him three nights and three days I held him in the steading, for to me he came first when he fled from the ship, yet he had not made an end of the tale of his affliction. Even as when a man gazes on a singer, whom the gods have taught to sing words of yearning joy to mortals, and they have a ceaseless desire to hear him, so long as he will sing; even so he charmed me, sitting by me in the halls. He says that he is a friend of Odysseus and of his house, one that dwells in Crete, where is the race of Minos. Thence he has come hither even now, with sorrow by the way, onward and yet onward wandering; and he stands to it that he has heard tidings of Odysseus nigh at hand and yet alive in the fat land of the men of Thesprotia; and he is bringing many treasures to his home.’

Then wise Penelope answered him, saying: ‘Go, call him hither, that he may speak to me face to face. But let these men sit in the doorway and take their pleasure, or even here in the house, since their heart is glad. For their own wealth lies unspoiled at home, bread and sweet wine, and thereon do their servants feed. But they resorting to our house day by day sacrifice oxen and sheep and fat goats, and keep revel and drink the dark wine recklessly; and, lo, our great wealth is wasted, for there is no man now alive, such as Odysseus was, to keep ruin from the house. Oh, if Odysseus might come again to his own country; soon would he and his son avenge the violence of these men!’

Even so she spake, and Telemachus sneezed loudly, and around the roof rang wondrously. And Penelope laughed, and straightway spake to Eumaeus winged words:

‘Go, call me the stranger, even so, into my presence. Dost thou not mark how my son has sneezed a blessing on all my words? Wherefore no half-wrought doom shall befal the wooers every one, nor shall any avoid death and the fates. Yet another thing will I say, and do thou ponder it in thy heart. If I shall find that he himself speaks nought but truth, I will clothe him with a mantle and a doublet, goodly raiment.’

So she spake, and the swineherd departed when he heard that saying, and stood by the stranger and spake winged words:

‘Father and stranger, wise Penelope, the mother of Telemachus, is calling for thee, and her mind bids her inquire as touching her lord, albeit she has sorrowed much already. And if she shall find that thou dost speak nought but truth, she will clothe thee in a mantle and a doublet, whereof thou standest most in need. Moreover thou shalt beg thy bread through the land and shalt fill thy belly, and whosoever will, shall give to thee.’

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him, saying: ‘Eumaeus, soon would I tell all the truth to the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, for well I know his story, and we have borne our travail together. But I tremble before the throng of the froward wooers, whose outrage and violence reach even to the iron heaven. For even now, as I was going through the house, when this man struck and pained me sore, and that for no ill deed, neither Telemachus nor any other kept off the blow. Wherefore now, bid Penelope tarry in the chambers, for all her eagerness, till the going down of the sun, and then let her ask me concerning her lord, as touching the day of his returning, and let her give me a seat yet nearer to the fire, for behold, I have sorry raiment, and thou knowest it thyself, since I made my supplication first to thee.'

Even so he spake, and the swineherd departed when he heard that saying. And as he crossed the threshold Penelope spake to him:

'Thou bringest him not, Eumaeus: what means the wanderer hereby? Can it be that he fears some one out of measure, or is he even ashamed of tarrying in the house? A shamefaced man makes a bad beggar.'

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumaeus: 'He speaks aright, and but as another would deem, in that he shuns the outrage of overweening men. Rather would he have thee wait till the going down of the sun. Yea, and it is far meeter for thyself, O queen, to utter thy word to the stranger alone, and to listen to his speech.'

Then the wise Penelope answered: 'Not witless is the stranger; even as he deems, so it well may be. {*} For there are no mortal men, methinks, so wanton as these, and none that devise such infatuate deeds.'

{* Placing at colon at [Greek], and reading [Greek] (cf. xix.312).}

So she spake, and the goodly swineherd departed into the throng of the wooers, when he had showed her all his message. And straightway he spake to Telemachus winged words, holding his head close to him, that the others might not hear:

'Friend, I am going hence to look after thy swine and the things of the farm, thy livelihood and mine; but do thou take charge of all that is here. Yet first look to thyself and take heed that no evil comes nigh thee, for many of the Achaeans have ill will against us, whom may Zeus confound before their mischief falls on us!'

And wise Telemachus answered him, and said: 'Even so shall it be, father; and do thou get thee on thy way, when thou hast supped. And in the morning come again, and bring fair victims for sacrifice. And all these matters will be a care to me and to the deathless gods.'

Thus he spake, and the other sat down again on the polished settle; and when he had satisfied his heart with meat and drink, he went on his way to the swine, leaving the courts and the hall full of feasters; and they were making merry with dance and song, for already it was close on eventide.

BOOK XVIII

The fighting at fists of Odysseus with Irus. His admonitions to Amphinomus. Penelope appears before the wooers, and draws presents from them.

Then up came a common beggar, who was wont to beg through the town of Ithaca, one that was known among all men for ravening greed, for his endless eating and drinking, yet he had no force or might, though he was bulky enough to look on. Arnaeus was his name, for so had his good mother given it him at his birth, but all the young men called him Irus, because he ran on errands, whensoever any might bid him. So now he came, and would have driven Odysseus from his own house, and began reviling him, and spake winged words:

'Get thee hence, old man, from the doorway, lest thou be even haled out soon by the foot. Seest thou not that all are now giving me the wink, and bidding me drag thee forth? Nevertheless, I feel shame of the task. Nay get thee up, lest our quarrel soon pass even to blows.'

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on him, and spake saying: 'Sir, neither in deed nor word do I harm thee, nor do I grudge that any should give to thee, yea though it were a good handful. But this threshold will hold us both, and thou hast no need to be jealous for the sake of other men's goods. Thou seemest to me to be a wanderer, even as I am, and the gods it is that are like to give us gain. Only provoke me not overmuch to buffeting, lest thou anger me, and old though I be I defile thy breast and lips with blood. Thereby should I have the greater quiet to-morrow, for methinks that thou shalt never again come to the hall of Odysseus, son of Laertes'.

Then the beggar Irus spake unto him in anger: 'Lo now, how trippingly and like an old cinder-wife this glutton speaks, on whom I will work my evil will, and smite him right and left, and drive all the teeth from his jaws to the ground, like the tusks of a swine that spoils the corn. Gird thyself now, that even these men all may know our mettle in fight. Nay, how shouldst thou do battle with a younger man than thou?'

Thus did they whet each the other's rage right manfully before the lofty doors upon the polished threshold. And the mighty prince Antinous heard the twain, and sweetly he laughed out, and spake among the wooers:

'Friends, never before has there been such a thing; such goodly game has a god brought to this house. The stranger yonder and Irus are bidding each other to buffets. Quick, let us match them one against the other.’

Then all at the word leaped up laughing, and gathered round the ragged beggars, and Antinous, son of Eupeithes, spake among them saying: ‘Hear me, ye lordly wooers, and I will say somewhat. Here are goats’ bellies lying at the fire, that we laid by at supper-time and filled with fat and blood. Now whichsoever of the twain wins, and shows himself the better man, let him stand up and take his choice of these puddings. And further, he shall always eat at our feasts, nor will we suffer any other beggar to come among us and ask for alms.’

So spake Antinous, and the saying pleased them well. Then
Odysseus of many counsels spake among them craftily:

‘Friends, an old man and foredone with travail may in no wise fight with a younger. But my belly’s call is urgent on me, that evil-worker, to the end that I may be subdued with stripes. But come now, swear me all of you a strong oath, so that none, for the sake of shewing a favour to Irus, may strike me a foul blow with heavy hand and subdue me by violence to my foe.’

So he spake, and they all swore not to strike him, as he bade them. Now when they had sworn and done that oath, the mighty prince Telemachus once more spake among them:

‘Stranger, if thy heart and lordly spirit urge thee to rid thee of this fellow, then fear not any other of the Achaeans, for whoso strikes thee shall have to fight with many. Thy host am I, and the princes consent with me, Antinous and Eurymachus, men of wisdom both.’

So spake he and they all consented thereto. Then Odysseus girt his rags about his loins, and let his thighs be seen, goodly and great, and his broad shoulders and breast and mighty arms were manifest. And Athene came nigh and made greater the limbs of the shepherd of the people. Then the wooers were exceedingly amazed, and thus would one speak looking to his neighbour:

‘Right soon will Irus, un-Irused, have a bane of his own bringing, such a thigh as that old man shows from out his rags!’

So they spake, and the mind of Irus was pitifully stirred; but even so the servants girded him and led him out perforce in great fear, his flesh trembling on his limbs. Then Antinous chid him, and spake and hailed him:

‘Thou lubber, better for thee that thou wert not now, nor ever hadst been born, if indeed thou tremblest before this man, and art so terribly afraid; an old man too he is, and foredone with the travail that is come upon him. But I will tell thee plainly, and it shall surely be accomplished. If this man prevail against thee and prove thy master, I will cast thee into a black ship, and send thee to the mainland to Echetus the king, the maimer of all mankind, who will cut off thy nose and ears with the pitiless steel, and draw out thy vitals and give them raw to dogs to rend.’

So he spake, and yet greater trembling gat hold of the limbs of Irus, and they led him into the ring, and the twain put up their hands. Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus mused in himself whether he should smite him in such wise that his life should leave his body, even there where he fell, or whether he should strike him lightly, and stretch him on the earth. And as he thought thereon, this seemed to him the better way, to strike lightly, that the Achaeans might not take note of him, who he was. Then the twain put up their hands, and Irus struck at the right shoulder, but the other smote him on his neck beneath the ear, and crushed in the bones, and straightway the red blood gushed up through his mouth, and with a moan he fell in the dust, and drave together his teeth as he kicked the ground. But the proud wooers threw up their hands, and died outright for laughter. Then Odysseus seized him by the foot, and dragged him forth through the doorway, till he came to the courtyard and the gates of the gallery, and he set him down and rested him against the courtyard wall, and put his staff in his hands, and uttering his voice spake to him winged words:

‘Sit thou there now, and scare off swine and dogs, and let not such an one as thou be lord over strangers and beggars, pitiful as thou art, lest haply some worse thing befal thee.’

Thus he spake, and cast about his shoulders his mean scrip all tattered, and the cord therewith to hang it, and he gat him back to the threshold, and sat him down there again. Now the wooers went within laughing sweetly, and greeted him, saying:

‘May Zeus, stranger, and all the other deathless gods give thee thy dearest wish, even all thy heart’s desire, seeing that thou hast made that insatiate one to cease from his begging in the land! Soon will we take him over to the mainland, to Echetus the king, the maimer of all mankind.’

So they spake, and goodly Odysseus rejoiced in the omen of the words. And Antinous set by him the great pudding, stuffed with fat and blood, and Amphinomus took up two loaves from the basket, and set them by him and pledged him in a golden cup, and spake saying:

‘Father and stranger, hail! may happiness be thine in the time to come; but as now, thou art fast holden in many sorrows.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘Amphinomus, verily thou seemest to me a prudent man enough; for such too was the father of whom thou art sprung, for I have heard the fair fame of him, how that Nisus of Dulichium was a good man and a rich, and his son they say thou art, and thou seemest a man of understanding. Wherefore I will tell thee, and do thou mark and listen to me. Nought feebler doth the earth nurture than man, of all the creatures that breathe and move upon the face of the earth. Lo, he thinks that he shall never suffer evil in time to come, while the gods give him happiness, and his limbs move lightly. But when again the blessed gods have wrought for him sorrow, even so he bears it, as he must, with a steadfast heart. For the spirit of men upon the earth is even as their day, that comes upon them from the father of gods and men. Yea, and I too once was like to have been prosperous among men, but many an infatuate deed I did, giving place to mine own hardihood and strength, and trusting to my father and my brethren. Wherefore let no man for ever be lawless any more, but keep quietly the gifts of the gods, whatsoever they may give. Such infatuate deeds do I see the wooers devising, as they waste the wealth, and hold in no regard the wife of a man, who, methinks, will not much longer be far from his friends and his own land; nay he is very near. But for thee, may some god withdraw thee hence to thy home, and mayst thou not meet him in the day when he returns to his own dear country! For not without blood, as I deem, will they be sundered, the wooers and Odysseus, when once he shall have come beneath his own roof.'

Thus he spake, and poured an offering and then drank of the honey-sweet wine, and again set the cup in the hands of the arrayer of the people. But the other went back through the hall, sad at heart and bowing his head; for verily his soul boded evil. Yet even so he avoided not his fate, for Athene had bound him likewise to be slain outright at the hands and by the spear of Telemachus. So he sat down again on the high seat whence he had arisen.

Now the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, put it into the heart of the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, to show herself to the wooers, that she might make their heart all flutter with hope, and that she might win yet more worship from her lord and her son than heretofore. To she laughed an idle laugh, and spake to the nurse, and hailed her, saying:

'Eurynome, my heart yearns, though before I had no such desire, to show myself to the wooers, hateful as they are. I would also say a word to my son, that will be for his weal, namely, that he should not for ever consort with the proud wooers, who speak friendly with their lips, but imagine evil in the latter end.'

Then the housewife, Eurynome, spake to her saying: 'Yea my child, all this thou hast spoken as is meet. Go then, and declare thy word to thy son and hide it not, but first wash thee and anoint thy face, and go not as thou art with thy cheeks all stained with tears. Go, for it is little good to sorrow always, and never cease. And lo, thy son is now of an age to hear thee, he whom thou hast above all things prayed the gods that thou mightest see with a beard upon his chin.'

Then wise Penelope answered her, saying: 'Eurynome, speak not thus comfortably to me, for all thy love, bidding me to wash and be anointed with ointment. For the gods that keep Olympus destroyed my bloom, since the day that he departed in the hollow ships. But bid Autonoe and Hippodameia come to me, to stand by my side in the halls. Alone I will not go among men, for I am ashamed.’

So she spake, and the old woman passed through the chamber to tell the maidens, and hasten their coming.

Thereon the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, had another thought. She shed a sweet slumber over the daughter of Icarius, who sank back in sleep, and all her joints were loosened as she lay in the chair, and the fair goddess the while was giving her gifts immortal, that all the Achaeans might marvel at her. Her fair face first she steeped with beauty imperishable, such as that wherewith the crowned Cytherea is anointed, when she goes to the lovely dances of the Graces. And she made her taller and greater to behold, and made her whiter than new-sawn ivory. Now when she had wrought thus, that fair goddess departed, and the white-armed handmaidens came forth from the chamber and drew nigh with a sound of voices. Then sweet sleep left hold of Penelope, and she rubbed her cheeks with her hands, and said:

‘Surely soft slumber wrapped me round, most wretched though I be. Oh! that pure Artemis would give me so soft a death even now, that I might no more waste my life in sorrow of heart, and longing for the manifold excellence of my dear lord, for that he was foremost of the Achaeans.’

With this word she went down from the shining upper chamber, not alone, for two handmaidens likewise bare her company. But when the fair lady had now come to the wooers, she stood by the pillar of the well-builded roof, holding her glistening tire before her face, and on either side of her stood a faithful handmaid. And straightway the knees of the wooers were loosened, and their hearts were enchanted with love, and each one uttered a prayer that he might be her bed-fellow. But she spake to Telemachus, her dear son:

‘Telemachus, thy mind and thy thoughts are no longer stable as they were. While thou wast still a child, thou hadst a yet quicker and more crafty wit, but now that thou art great of growth, and art come to the measure of manhood, and a stranger looking to thy stature and thy beauty might say that thou must be some rich man’s son, thy mind and thy thoughts are no longer right as of old. For lo, what manner of deed has been done in these halls, in that thou hast suffered thy guest to be thus shamefully dealt with. How would it be now, if the stranger sitting thus in our house, were to come to some harm all through this evil handling? Shame and disgrace would be thine henceforth among men.’

Then wise Telemachus answered her: ‘Mother mine, as to this matter I count it no blame that thou art angered. Yet have I knowledge and understanding of each thing, of the good and of the evil; but heretofore I was a child. Howbeit I cannot devise all things according to wisdom, for these men in their evil counsel drive me from my wits, on this side and on that, and there is none to aid me. Howsoever this battle between Irus and the stranger did not fall out as the wooers would have had it, but the stranger proved the better man. Would to Father Zeus and Athene and Apollo, that the wooers in our halls were even now thus vanquished, and wagging their heads, some in the court, and some within the house, and that the limbs of each man were loosened in such fashion as Irus yonder sits now, by the courtyard gates wagging his head, like a drunken man, and cannot stand upright on his feet, nor yet get him home to his own place, seeing that his limbs are loosened!'

Thus they spake one to another. But Eurymachus spake to
Penelope, saying:

'Daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, if all the Achaeans in Iasian Argos could behold thee, even a greater press of wooers would feast in your halls from to-morrow's dawn, since thou dost surpass all women in beauty and stature, and within in wisdom of mind.'

Then wise Penelope answered him: 'Eurymachus, surely my excellence, both of face and form, the gods destroyed in the day when the Argives embarked for Ilios, and with them went my lord Odysseus. If but he might come and watch over this my life, greater thus would be my fame and fairer! But now am I in sorrow; such a host of ills some god has sent against me. Ah, well do I remember, when he set forth and left his own country, how he took me by the right hand at the wrist and spake, saying:

'"Lady, methinks that all the goodly-greaved Achaeans will not win a safe return from Troy; for the Trojans too, they say, are good men at arms, as spearsmen, and bowmen, and drivers of fleet horses, such as ever most swiftly determine the great strife of equal battle. Wherefore I know not if the gods will suffer me to return, or whether I shall be cut off there in Troy; so do thou have a care for all these things. Be mindful of my father and my mother in the halls, even as now thou art, or yet more than now, while I am far away. But when thou seest thy son a bearded man, marry whom thou wilt and leave thine own house."

'Even so did he speak, and now all these things have an end. The night shall come when a hateful marriage shall find me out, me most luckless, whose good hap Zeus has taken away. But furthermore this sore trouble has come on my heart and soul; for this was not the manner of wooers in time past. Whoso wish to woo a good lady and the daughter of a rich man, and vie one with another, themselves bring with them oxen of their own and goodly flocks, a banquet for the friends of the bride, and they give the lady splendid gifts, but do not devour another’s livelihood without atonement.’

Thus she spake, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus rejoiced because she drew from them gifts, and beguiled their souls with soothing words, while her heart was set on other things.

Then Antinous, son of Eupeithes, answered her again: ‘Daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, the gifts which any of the Achaeans may choose to bring hither, do thou take; for it were ill to withhold a gift. But we for our part will neither go to our lands nor otherwhere, before thou art wedded to the best man of the Achaeans.’

So spake Antinous, and the saying pleased them well, and each man sent a henchman to bring his gifts. For Antinous his henchman bare a broidered robe, great and very fair, wherein were golden brooches, twelve in all, fitted with well bent clasps. And the henchman straightway bare Eurymachus a golden chain of curious work, strung with amber beads, shining like the sun. And his squires bare for Eurydamas a pair of ear-rings, with three drops well wrought, and much grace shone from them. And out of the house of Peisander the prince, the son of Polyctor, the squire brought a necklet, a very lovely jewel. And likewise the Achaeans brought each one some other beautiful gift.

Then the fair lady went aloft to her upper chamber, and her attendant maidens bare for her the lovely gifts, while the wooers turned to dancing and the delight of song, and therein took their pleasure, and awaited the coming of eventide. And dark evening came on them at their pastime. Anon they set up three braziers in the halls, to give them light, and on these they laid firewood all around, faggots seasoned long since and sere, and new split with the axe. And midway by the braziers they placed torches, and the maids of Odysseus, of the hardy heart, held up the lights in turn. Then the prince Odysseus of many counsels himself spake among them saying:

‘Ye maidens of Odysseus, the lord so long afar, get ye into the chambers where the honoured queen abides, and twist the yarn at her side, and gladden her heart as ye sit in the chamber, or card the wools with your hands; but I will minister light to all these that are here. For even if they are minded to wait the throned Dawn, they shall not outstay me, so long enduring am I.’

So he spake, but they laughed and looked one at the other. And the fair Melantho chid him shamefully, Melantho that Dolius begat, but Penelope reared, and entreated her tenderly as she had been her own child, and gave her playthings to her heart’s desire. Yet, for all that, sorrow for Penelope touched not her heart, but she loved Eurymachus and was his paramour. Now she chid Odysseus with railing words:

‘Wretched guest, surely thou art some brain-struck man, seeing that thou dost not choose to go and sleep at a smithy, or at some place of common resort, but here thou pratest much and boldly among many lords and hast no fear at heart. Verily wine has got about thy wits, or perchance thou art always of this mind, and so thou dost babble idly. Art thou beside thyself for joy, because thou hast beaten the beggar Irus? Take heed lest a better man than Irus rise up presently against thee, to lay his mighty hands about thy head and bedabble thee with blood, and send thee hence from the house.'

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on her, and said: 'Yea, straight will I go yonder and tell Telemachus hereof, thou shameless thing, for this thy speech, that forthwith he may cut thee limb from limb.'

So he spake, and with his saying scared away the women, who fled through the hall, and the knees of each were loosened for fear, for they deemed that his words were true. But Odysseus took his stand by the burning braziers, tending the lights, and gazed on all the men: but far other matters he pondered in his heart, things not to be unfulfilled.

Now Athene would in no wise suffer the lordly wooers to abstain from biting scorn, that the pain might sink yet the deeper into the heart of Odysseus, son of Laertes. So Eurymachus, son of Polybus, began to speak among them, girding at Odysseus, and so made mirth for his friends:

'Hear me ye wooers of the queen renowned, that I may say that which my spirit within me bids me. Not without the gods' will has this man come to the house of Odysseus; methinks at least that the torchlight flares forth from {*} that head of his, for there are no hairs on it, nay never so thin.'

{* Accepting the conjecture [Greek] = [Greek] for the MSS.
[Greek]}

He spake and withal addressed Odysseus, waster of cities: 'Stranger, wouldest thou indeed be my hireling, if I would take thee for my man, at an upland farm, and thy wages shall be assured thee, and there shalt thou gather stones for walls and plant tall trees? There would I provide thee bread continual, and clothe thee with raiment, and give thee shoes for thy feet. Howbeit, since thou art practised only in evil, thou wilt not care to go to the labours of the field, but wilt choose rather to go louting through the land, that thou mayst have wherewithal to feed thine insatiate belly.'

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him and said: 'Eurymachus, would that there might be a trial of labour between us twain, in the season of spring, when the long days begin! In the deep grass might it be, and I should have a crooked scythe, and thou another like it, that we might try each the other in the matter of labour, fasting till late eventide, and grass there should be in plenty. Or would again, that there were oxen to drive, the best there may be, large and tawny, both well filled with fodder, of equal age and force to bear the yoke and of strength untiring! And it should be a field of four ploughgates, and the clod should yield before the ploughshare. Then shouldest thou see me, whether or no I would cut a clean furrow unbroken before me. Or would that this very day Cronion might waken war whence he would, and that I had a shield and two spears, and a helmet all of bronze, close fitting on my temples! Then shouldest thou see me mingling in the forefront of the battle, nor speak and taunt me with this my belly. Nay, thou art exceeding wanton and thy heart is hard, and thou thinkest thyself some great one and mighty, because thou consortest with few men and feeble. Ah, if Odysseus might but return and come to his own country, right soon would yonder doors full wide as they are, prove all too strait for thee in thy flight through the doorway!'

Thus he spake, and Eurymachus waxed yet the more wroth at heart, and looking fiercely on him spake to him winged words:

'Ah, wretch that thou art, right soon will I work thee mischief, so boldly thou pratest among many lords, and hast no fear at heart. Verily wine has got about thy wits, or perchance thou art always of this mind, and so thou dost babble idly. Art thou beside thyself for joy, because thou hast beaten the beggar Irus?'

Therewith he caught up a footstool, but Odysseus sat him down at the knees of Amphinomus of Dulichium, in dread of Eurymachus. And Eurymachus cast and smote the cup-bearer on the right hand, and the ladle cup dropped to the ground with a clang, while the young man groaned and fell backwards in the dust. Then the wooers clamoured through the shadowy halls, and thus one would say looking to his neighbour:

'Would that our wandering guest had perished otherwhere, or ever he came hither; so should he never have made all this tumult in our midst! But now we are all at strife about beggars, and there will be no more joy of the good feast, for worse things have their way.'

Then the mighty prince Telemachus spake among them:

'Sirs, ye are mad; now doth your mood betray that ye have eaten and drunken; some one of the gods is surely moving you. Nay, now that ye have feasted well, go home and lay you to rest, since your spirit so bids; for as for me, I drive no man hence.'

Thus he spake, and they all bit their lips and marvelled at Telemachus, in that he spake boldly. Then Amphinomus made harangue, and spake among them, Amphinomus, the famous son of Nisus the prince, the son of Aretias:

'Friends, when a righteous word has been spoken, none surely would rebuke another with hard speech and be angry. Misuse ye not this stranger, neither any of the thralls that are in the house of godlike Odysseus. But come, let the wine-bearer pour for libation into each cup in turn, that after the drink-offering we may get us home to bed. But the stranger let us leave in the halls of Odysseus for a charge to Telemachus: for to his home has he come.’

Thus he spake, and his word was well-pleasing to them all. Then the lord Mulius mixed for them the bowl, the henchman out of Dulichium, who was squire of Amphinomus. And he stood by all and served it to them in their turn; and they poured forth before the blessed gods, and drank the honey-sweet wine. Now when they had poured forth and had drunken to their hearts’ content, they departed to lie down, each one to his own house.

BOOK XIX

Telemachus removes the arms out of the hall. Odysseus disburseth with Penelope. And is known by his nurse, but concealed. And the hunting of the boar upon that occasion related.

Now the goodly Odysseus was left behind in the hall, devising with Athene's aid the slaying of the wooers, and straightway he spake winged words to Telemachus:

'Telemachus, we must needs lay by the weapons of war within, every one; and when the wooers miss them and ask thee concerning them, thou shalt beguile them with soft words, saying:

'Out of the smoke I laid them by, since they were no longer like those that Odysseus left behind him of old, when he went to Troy, but they are wholly marred, so mightily hath passed upon them the vapour of fire. Moreover some god hath put into my heart this other and greater care, that perchance when ye are heated with wine, ye set a quarrel between you and wound one the other, and thereby shame the feast and the wooing; for iron of itself draws a man thereto.'

Thus he spake, and Telemachus hearkened to his dear father, and called forth to him the nurse Eurycleia and spake to her, saying:

'Nurse, come now I pray thee, shut up the women in their chambers till I shall have laid by in the armoury the goodly weapons of my father, which all uncared for the smoke dims in the hall, since my father went hence, and I was still but a child. Now I wish to lay them by where the vapour of the fire will not reach them.'

Then the good nurse Eurycleia answered him, saying: 'Ah, my child, if ever thou wouldest but take careful thought in such wise as to mind the house, and guard all this wealth! But come, who shall fetch the light and bear it, if thou hast thy way, since thou wouldest not that the maidens, who might have given light, should go before thee?'

Then wise Telemachus made answer to her: 'This stranger here, for I will keep no man in idleness who eats of my bread, even if he have come from afar.'

Thus he spake, and wingless her speech remained, and she closed the doors of the fair-lying chambers. Then they twain sprang up, Odysseus and his renowned son, and set to carry within the helmets and the bossy shields, and the sharp-pointed spears; and before them Pallas Athene bare a golden cresset and cast a most lovely light. Thereon Telemachus spake to his father suddenly:

‘Father, surely a great marvel is this that I behold with mine eyes; meseems, at least, that the walls of the hall and the fair main-beams of the roof and the cross-beams of pine, and the pillars that run aloft, are bright as it were with flaming fire. Verily some god is within, of those that hold the wide heaven.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him and said: ‘Hold thy peace and keep thy thoughts in check and ask not hereof. Lo, this is the wont of the gods that hold Olympus. But do thou go and lay thee down, and I will abide here, that I may yet further provoke the maids ant thy mother to answer; and she in her sorrow will ask me concerning each thing, one by one.’

So he spake, and Telemachus passed out through the hall to his chamber to lie down, by the light of the flaming torches, even to the chamber where of old he took his rest, when sweet sleep came over him. There now too he lay down and awaited the bright Dawn. But goodly Odysseus was left behind in the hall, devising with Athene’s aid the slaying of the wooers.

Now forth from her chamber came the wise Penelope, like Artemis or golden Aphrodite, and they set a chair for her hard by before the fire, where she was wont to sit, a chair well-wrought and inlaid with ivory and silver, which on a time the craftsman Icmalius had fashioned, and had joined thereto a footstool, that was part of the chair, whereon a great fleece was used to be laid. Here then, the wise Penelope sat her down, and next came white-armed handmaids from the women’s chamber, and began to take away the many fragments of food, and the tables and the cups whence the proud lords had been drinking, and they raked out the fire from the braziers on to the floor, and piled many fresh logs upon them, to give light and warmth.

Then Melantho began to revile Odysseus yet a second time, saying: ‘Stranger, wilt thou still be a plague to us here, circling round the house in the night, and spying the women? Nay, get thee forth, thou wretched thing, and be thankful for thy supper, or straightway shalt thou even be smitten with a torch and so fare out of the doors.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on her, and said: ‘Good woman, what possesses thee to assail me thus out of an angry heart? Is it because I go filthy and am clothed about in sorry raiment, and beg through the land, for necessity is laid on me? This is the manner of beggars and of wandering men. For I too once had a house of mine own among men, a rich man with a wealthy house, and many a time would I give to a wanderer, what manner of man soever he might be, and in whatsoever need he came. And I had countless thralls, and all else in plenty, whereby folk live well and have a name for riches. But Zeus, the son of Cronos, made me desolate of all, for surely it was his will. Wherefore, woman, see lest some day thou too lose all thy fine show wherein thou now excellest among the handmaids, as well may chance, if thy mistress be provoked to anger with thee, or if Odysseus come home, for there is yet a place for hope. And even if he hath perished as ye deem, and is never more to return, yet by Apollo’s grace he hath a son like him, Telemachus, and none of the women works wantonness in his halls without his knowledge, for he is no longer of an age not to mark it,

Thus he spake, and the wise Penelope heard him, and rebuked the handmaid, and spake and hailed her:

‘Thou reckless thing and unabashed, be sure thy great sin is not hidden from me, and thy blood shall be on thine own head for the same! Four thou knewest right well, in that thou hadst heard it from my lips, how that I was minded to ask the stranger in my halls for tidings of my lord; for I am grievously afflicted.’

Therewith she spake likewise to the housedame, Eurynome, saying:

‘Eurynome, bring hither a settle with a fleece thereon, that the stranger may sit and speak with me and hear my words, for I would ask him all his story.’

So she spake, and the nurse made haste and brought a polished settle, and cast a fleece thereon; and then the steadfast goodly Odysseus sat him down there, and the wise Penelope spake first, saying:

‘Stranger, I will make bold first to ask thee this: who art thou of the sons of men, and whence? Where is thy city, and where are they that begat thee?’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her and said: ‘Lady, no one of mortal men in the wide world could find fault with thee, for lo, thy fame goes up to the wide heaven, as doth the fame of a blameless king, one that fears the gods and reigns among many men and mighty, maintaining right, and the black earth bears wheat and barley, and the trees are laden with fruit, and the sheep bring forth and fail not, and the sea gives store of fish, and all out of his good guidance, and the people prosper under him. Wherefore do thou ask me now in thy house all else that thou wilt, but inquire not concerning my race and mine own country, lest as I think thereupon thou fill my heart the more with pains, for I am a man of many sorrows. Moreover it beseems me not to sit weeping and wailing in another’s house, for it is little good to mourn always without ceasing, lest perchance one of the maidens, or even thyself, be angry with me and say that I swim in tears, as one that is heavy with wine.’

Then wise Penelope answered him, and said: ‘Stranger, surely my excellence, both of face and form, the gods destroyed, in the day when the Argives embarked for Ilios, and with them went my lord Odysseus. If but he might come and watch over this my life, greater and fairer thus would be my fame! But now am I in sorrow, such a host of ills some god has sent against me. For all the noblest that are princes in the isles, in Dulichium and Same and wooded

Zacynthus, and they that dwell around even in clear-seen Ithaca, these are wooing me against my will, and devouring the house. Wherefore I take no heed of strangers, nor suppliants, nor at all of heralds, the craftsmen of the people. But I waste my heart away in longing for Odysseus; so they speed on my marriage and I weave a web of wiles. First some god put it into my heart to set up a great web in the halls, and thereat to weave a robe fine of woof and very wide; and anon I spake among them, saying: “Ye princely youths, my wooers, now that goodly Odysseus is dead, do ye abide patiently, how eager soever to speed on this marriage of mine, till I finish the robe. I would not that the threads perish to no avail, even this shroud for the hero Laertes, against the day when the ruinous doom shall bring him low, of death that lays men at their length. So shall none of the Achaean women in the land count it blame in me, as well might be, were he to lie without a winding sheet, a man that had gotten great possessions.”

‘So spake I, and their high hearts consented thereto. So then in the daytime I would weave the mighty web, and in the night unravel the same, when I had let place the torches by me. Thus for the space of three years I hid the thing by craft and beguiled the minds of the Achaeans. But when the fourth year arrived, and the seasons came round as the months waned, and many days were accomplished, then it was that by help of the handmaids, shameless things and reckless, the wooers came and trapped me, and chid me loudly. Thus did I finish the web by no will of mine, for so I must. And now I can neither escape the marriage nor devise any further counsel, and my parents are instant with me to marry, and my son chafes that these men devour his livelihood, as he takes note of all; for by this time he has come to man’s estate; and is full able to care for a household, for one to which Zeus vouchsafes honour. But even so tell me of thine own stock, whence thou art, for thou art not sprung of oak or rock, whereof old tales tell.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her and said:

‘O wife revered of Odysseus, son of Laertes, wilt thou never have done asking me about mine own race? Nay, but I will tell thee: yet surely thou wilt give me over to sorrows yet more than those wherein I am holden, for so it ever is when a man has been afar from his own country, so long as now I am, wandering in sore pain to many cities of mortals. Yet even so I will tell thee what thou askest and inquirest. There is a land called Crete in the midst of the wine-dark sea, a fair land and a rich, begirt with water, and therein are many men innumerable, and ninety cities. And all have not the same speech, but there is confusion of tongues; there dwell Achaeans and there too Cretans of Crete, high of heart, and Cydonians there and Dorians of waving plumes and goodly Pelasgians. And among these cities is the mighty city Cnosus, wherein Minos when he was nine years old began to rule, he who held converse with great Zeus, and was the father of my father, even of Deucalion, high of heart. Now Deucalion begat me and Idomeneus the prince. Howbeit, he had gone in his beaked ships up into Ilios, with the sons of Atreus; but my famed name is Aethon, being the younger of the twain and he was the first born and the better man. There I saw Odysseus, and gave him guest-gifts, for the might of the wind bare him too to Crete, as he was making for Troy land, and had driven him wandering past Malea. So he stayed his ships in Amnisus, whereby is the cave of Eilithyia, in havens hard to win, and scarce he escaped the tempest. Anon he came up to the city and asked for Idomeneus, saying that he was his friend and held by him in love and honour. But it was now the tenth or the eleventh dawn since Idomeneus had gone in his beaked ships up into Ilios. Then I led him to the house, and gave him good entertainment with all loving-kindness out of the plenty in my house, and for him and for the rest of his company, that went with him, I gathered and gave barley meal and dark wine out of the public store, and oxen to sacrifice to his heart's desire. There the goodly Achaeans abode twelve days, for the strong North Wind penned them there, and suffered them not to stay upon the coast, for some angry god had roused it. On the thirteenth day the wind fell, and then they lifted anchor.'

So he told many a false tale in the likeness of truth, and her tears flowed as she listened, and her flesh melted. And even as the snow melts in the high places of the hills, the snow that the South-East wind has thawed, when the West has scattered it abroad, and as it wastes the river streams run full, even so her fair cheeks melted beneath her tears, as she wept her own lord, who even then was sitting by her. Now Odysseus had compassion of heart upon his wife in her lamenting, but his eyes kept steadfast between his eyelids as it were horn or iron, and craftily he hid his tears. But she, when she had taken her fill of tearful lamentation, answered him in turn and spake, saying:

'Friend as thou art, even now I think to make trial of thee, and learn whether in very truth thou didst entertain my lord there in thy halls with his godlike company, as thou sayest. Tell me what manner of raiment he was clothed in about his body, and what manner of man he was himself, and tell me of his fellows that went with him.'

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: 'Lady, it is hard for one so long parted from him to tell thee all this, for it is now the twentieth year since he went thither and left my country. Yet even so I will tell thee as I see him in spirit. Goodly Odysseus wore a thick purple mantle, twofold, which had a brooch fashioned in gold, with two sheathes for the pins, and on the face of it was a curious device: a hound in his forepaws held a dappled fawn and gazed on it as it writhed. And all men marvelled at the workmanship, how, wrought as they were in gold, the hound was gazing on the fawn and strangling it, and the fawn was writhing with his feet and striving to flee. Moreover, I marked the shining doublet about his body, like the gleam over the skin of a dried onion, so smooth it was, and glistering as the sun; truly many women looked thereon and wondered. Yet another thing will I tell thee, and do thou ponder it in thy heart. I know not if Odysseus was thus clothed upon at home, or if one of his fellows gave him the raiment as he went on board the swift ship, or even it may be some stranger, seeing that to many men was Odysseus dear, for few of the Achaeans were his peers. I, too, gave him a sword of bronze, and a fair purple mantle with double fold, and a tasseled doublet, and I sent him away with all honour on his decked ship. Moreover, a henchman bare him company, somewhat older than he, and I will tell thee of him too, what manner of man he was. He was round-shouldered, black-skinned, and curly-headed, his name Eurybates; and Odysseus honoured him above all his company, because in all things he was like-minded with himself.'

So he spake, and in her heart he stirred yet more the desire of weeping, as she knew the certain tokens that Odysseus showed her. So when she had taken her fill of tearful lament, then she answered him, and spake saying:

'Now verily, stranger, thou that even before wert held in pity, shalt be dear and honourable in my halls, for it was I who gave him these garments, as judging from thy words, and folded them myself, and brought them from the chamber, and added besides the shining brooch to be his jewel. But him I shall never welcome back, returned home to his own dear country. Wherefore with an evil fate it was that Odysseus went hence in the hollow ship to see that evil Ilios, never to be named.'

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: 'Wife revered of Odysseus, son of Laertes, destroy not now thy fair flesh any more, nor waste thy heart with weeping for thy lord; — not that I count it any blame in thee, for many a woman weeps that has lost her wedded lord, to whom she has borne children in her love, — albeit a far other man than Odysseus, who, they say, is like the gods. Nay, cease from thy lamenting, and lay up my word in thy heart; for I will tell thee without fail, and will hide nought, how but lately I heard tell of the return of Odysseus, that he is nigh at hand, and yet alive in the fat land of the men of Thesprotia, and is bringing with him many choice treasures, as he begs through the land. But he has lost his dear companions and his hollow ship on the wine-dark sea, on his way from the isle Thrinacia: for Zeus and Helios had a grudge against him, because his company had slain the kine of Helios. They for their part all perished in the wash of the sea, but the wave cast him on the keel of the ship out upon the coast, on the land of the Phaeacians that are near of kin to the gods, and they did him all honour heartily as unto a god, and gave him many gifts, and themselves would fain have sent him scathless home. Yea and Odysseus would have been here long since, but he thought it more profitable to gather wealth, as he journeyed over wide lands; so truly is Odysseus skilled in gainful arts above all men upon earth, nor may any mortal men contend with him. So Pheidon king of the Thesprotians told me. Moreover he sware, in mine own presence, as he poured the drink-offering in his house, that the ship was drawn down to the sea and his company were ready, who were to convey him to his own dear country. But me he first sent off, for it chanced that a ship of the Thesprotians was on her way to Dulichium, a land rich in grain. And he showed me all the wealth that Odysseus had gathered, yea it would suffice for his children after him, even to the tenth generation, so great were the treasures he had stored in the chambers of the king. As for him he had gone, he said, to Dodona to hear the counsel of Zeus, from the high leafy oak tree of the god, how he should return to his own dear country, having now been long afar, whether openly or by stealth.

‘In this wise, as I tell thee, he is safe and will come shortly, and very near he is and will not much longer be far from his friends and his own country; yet withal I will give thee my oath on it. Zeus be my witness first, of gods the highest and best, and the hearth of noble Odysseus whereunto I am come, that all these things shall surely be accomplished even as I tell thee. In this same year Odysseus shall come hither, as the old moon wanes and the new is born.’

Then wise Penelope answered him: ‘Ah! stranger, would that this word may be accomplished. Soon shouldst thou be aware of kindness and many a gift at my hands, so that whoso met with thee would call thee blessed. But on this wise my heart has a boding, and so it shall be. Neither shall Odysseus come home any more, nor shalt thou gain an escort hence, since there are not now such masters in the house as Odysseus was among men, — if ever such an one there was, — to welcome guests revered and speed them on their way. But do ye, my handmaids, wash this man’s feet and strew a couch for him, bedding and mantles and shining blankets, that well and warmly he may come to the time of golden-throned Dawn. And very early in the morning bathe him and anoint him, that within the house beside Telemachus he may eat meat, sitting quietly in the hall. And it shall be the worse for any hurtful man of the wooers, that vexes the stranger, yea he shall not henceforth profit himself here, for all his sore anger. For how shalt thou learn concerning me, stranger, whether indeed I excel all women in wit and thrifty device, if all unkempt and evil clad thou sittest at supper in my halls? Man’s life is brief enough! And if any be a hard man and hard at heart, all men cry evil on him for the time to come, while yet he lives, and all men mock him when he is dead. But if any be a blameless man and blameless of heart, his guests spread abroad his fame over the whole earth and many people call him noble.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her and said: ‘O wife revered of Odysseus, son of Laertes, mantles verily and shining blankets are hateful to me, since first I left behind me the snowy hills of Crete, voyaging in the long-oared galley; nay, I will lie as in time past I was used to rest through the sleepless nights. For full many a night I have lain on an unsightly bed, and awaited the bright throned Dawn. And baths for the feet are no longer my delight, nor shall any women of those who are serving maidens in thy house touch my foot, unless there chance to be some old wife, true of heart, one that has borne as much trouble as myself; I would not grudge such an one to touch my feet.’

Then wise Penelope answered him: ‘Dear stranger, for never yet has there come to my house, of strangers from afar, a dearer man or so discreet as thou, uttering so heedfully the words of wisdom. I have an ancient woman of an understanding heart, that diligently nursed and tended that hapless man my lord, she took him in her arms in the hour when his mother bare him. She will wash thy feet, albeit her strength is frail. Up now, wise Eurycleia, and wash this man, whose years are the same as thy master’s. Yea and perchance such even now are the feet of Odysseus, and such too his hands, for quickly men age in misery.’

So she spake, and the old woman covered her face with her hands and shed hot tears, and spake a word of lamentation, saying:

‘Ah, woe is me, child, for thy sake, all helpless that I am! Surely Zeus hated thee above all men, though thou hadst a god-fearing spirit! For never yet did any mortal burn so many fat pieces of the thigh and so many choice hecatombs to Zeus, whose joy is in the thunder, as thou didst give to him, praying that so thou mightest grow to a smooth old age and rear thy renowned son. But now from thee alone hath Zeus wholly cut off the day of thy returning. Haply at him too did the women mock in a strange land afar, whensoever he came to the famous palace of any lord, even as here these shameless ones all mock at thee. To shun their insults and many taunts it is that thou sufferest them not to wash thy feet, but the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, hath bidden me that am right willing to this task. Wherefore I will wash thy feet, both for Penelope’s sake and for thine own, for that my heart within me is moved and troubled. But come, mark the word that I shall speak. Many strangers travel-worn have ere now come hither, but I say that I have never seen any so like another, as thou art like Odysseus, in fashion in voice and in feet.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: ‘Old wife, even so all men declare, that have beheld us twain, that we favour each other exceedingly, even as thou dost mark and say.’

Thereupon the crone took the shining cauldron, wherefrom {*} she set to wash his feet, and poured in much cold water and next mingled therewith the warm. Now Odysseus sat aloof from the hearth, and of a sudden he turned his face to the darkness, for anon he had a misgiving of heart lest when she handled him she might know the scar again, and all should be revealed. Now she drew near her lord to wash him, and straightway she knew the scar of the wound, that the boar had dealt him with his white tusk long ago, when Odysseus went to Parnassus to see Autolycus, and the sons of Autolycus, his mother’s noble father, who outdid all men in thievery and skill in swearing. This skill was the gift of the god himself, even Hermes, for that he burned to him the well-pleasing sacrifice of the thighs of lambs and kids; wherefore Hermes abetted him gladly. Now Autolycus once had gone to the rich land of Ithaca, and found his daughter’s son a child new-born, and when he was making an end of supper, behold, Eurycleia set the babe on his knees, and spake and hailed him: ‘Autolycus find now a name thyself to give thy child’s own son; for lo, he is a child of many prayers.’

{* Reading [Greek]}

Then Autolycus made answer and spake: ‘My daughter and my daughter’s lord, give ye him whatsoever name I tell you. Forasmuch as I am come hither in wrath against many a one, both man and woman, over the fruitful earth, wherefore let the child’s name be “a man of wrath,” Odysseus. But when the child reaches his full growth, and comes to the great house of his mother’s kin at Parnassus, whereby are my possessions, I will give him a gift out of these and send him on his way rejoicing.’

Therefore it was that Odysseus went to receive the splendid gifts. And Autolycus and the sons of Autolycus grasped his hands and greeted him with gentle words, and Amphithea, his mother’s mother, clasped him in her arms and kissed his face and both his fair eyes. Then Autolycus called to his renowned sons to get ready the meal, and they hearkened to the call. So presently they led in a five-year-old bull, which they flayed and busily prepared, and cut up all the limbs and deftly chopped them small, and pierced them with spits and roasted them cunningly, dividing the messes. So for that livelong day they feasted till the going down of the sun, and their soul lacked not ought of the equal banquet. But when the sun sank and darkness came on, they laid them to rest and took the boon of sleep.

Now so soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, they all went forth to the chase, the hounds and the sons of Autolycus, and with them went the goodly Odysseus. So they fared up the steep hill of wood-clad Parnassus, and quickly they came to the windy hollows. Now the sun was but just striking on the fields, and was come forth from the soft flowing stream of deep Oceanus. Then the beaters reached a glade of the woodland, and before them went the hounds tracking a scent, but behind came the sons of Autolycus, and among them goodly Odysseus followed close on the hounds, swaying a long spear. Thereby in a thick lair was a great boar lying, and through the coppice the force of the wet winds blew never, neither did the bright sun light on it with his rays, nor could the rain pierce through, so thick it was, and of fallen leaves there was great plenty therein. Then the tramp of the men’s feet and of the dogs’ came upon the boar, as they pressed on in the chase, and forth from his lair he sprang towards them with crest well bristled and fire shining in his eyes, and stood at bay before them all. Then Odysseus was the first to rush in, holding his spear aloft in his strong hand, most eager to stab him; but the boar was too quick and drave a gash above the knee, ripping deep into the flesh with his tusk as he charged sideways, but he reached not to the bone of the man. Then Odysseus aimed well and smote him on his right shoulder, so that the point of the bright spear went clean through, and the boar fell in the dust with a cry, and his life passed from him. Then the dear sons of Autolycus began to busy them with the carcase, and as for the wound of the noble godlike Odysseus, they bound it up skilfully, and stayed the black blood with a song of healing, and straightway returned to the house of their dear father. Then Autolycus and the sons of Autolycus got him well healed of his hurt, and gave him splendid gifts, and quickly sent him with all love to Ithaca, gladly speeding a glad guest. There his father and lady mother were glad of his returning, and asked him of all his adventures, and of his wound how he came by it, and duly he told them all, namely how the boar gashed him with his white tusk in the chase, when he had gone to Parnassus with the sons of Autolycus.

Now the old woman took the scarred limb and passed her hands down it, and knew it by the touch and let the foot drop suddenly, so that the knee fell into the bath, and the brazen vessel rang, being turned over on the other side, and behold, the water was spilled on the ground. Then joy and anguish came on her in one moment, and both her eyes filled up with tears, and the voice of her utterance was stayed, and touching the chin of Odysseus she spake to him, saying:

‘Yea verily, thou art Odysseus, my dear child, and I knew thee not before, till I had handled all the body of my lord.’

Therewithal she looked towards Penelope, as minded to make a sign that her husband was now home. But Penelope could not meet her eyes nor take note of her, for Athene had bent her thoughts to other things. But Odysseus feeling for the old woman’s throat gript it with his right hand and with the other drew her closer to him and spake, saying:

‘Woman, why wouldest thou indeed destroy me? It was thou that didst nurse me there at thine own breast, and now after travail and much pain I am come in the twentieth year to mine own country. But since thou art ware of me, and the god has put this in thy heart, be silent, lest another learn the matter in the halls. For on this wise I will declare it, and it shall surely be accomplished: — if the gods subdue the lordly wooers unto me, I will not hold my hand from thee, my nurse though thou art, when I slay the other handmaids in my halls.’

Then wise Eurycleia answered, saying: ‘My child, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips? Thou knowest how firm is my spirit and unyielding, and I will keep me fast as stubborn stone or iron. Yet another thing will I tell thee, and do thou ponder it in thine heart. If the gods subdue the lordly wooers to thy hand, then will I tell thee all the tale of the women in the halls, which of them dishonour thee and which be guiltless.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: ‘Nurse, wherefore I pray thee wilt thou speak of these? Thou needest not, for even I myself will mark them well and take knowledge of each. Nay, do thou keep thy saying to thyself, and leave the rest to the gods.’

Even so he spake, and the old woman passed forth from the hall to bring water for his feet, for that first water was all spilled. So when she had washed him and anointed him well with olive-oil, Odysseus again drew up his settle nearer to the fire to warm himself, and covered up the scar with his rags. Then the wise Penelope spake first, saying:

‘Stranger, there is yet a little thing I will make bold to ask thee, for soon will it be the hour for pleasant rest, for him on whomsoever sweet sleep falls, though he be heavy with care. But to me has the god given sorrow, yea sorrow measureless, for all the day I have my fill of wailing and lamenting, as I look to mine own housewiferies and to the tasks of the maidens in the house. But when night comes and sleep takes hold of all, I lie on my couch, and shrewd cares, thick thronging about my inmost heart, disquiet me in my sorrowing. Even as when the daughter of Pandareus, the nightingale of the greenwood, sings sweet in the first season of the spring, from her place in the thick leafage of the trees, and with many a turn and trill she pours forth her full-voiced music bewailing her child, dear Itylus, whom on a time she slew with the sword unwitting, Itylus the son of Zethus the prince; even as her song, my troubled soul sways to and fro. Shall I abide with my son, and keep all secure, all the things of my getting, my thralls and great high-roofed home, having respect unto the bed of my lord and the voice of the people, or even now follow with the best of the Achaeans that woos me in the halls, and gives a bride-price beyond reckoning? Now my son, so long as he was a child and light of heart, suffered me not to marry and leave the house of my husband; but now that he is great of growth, and is come to the full measure of manhood, lo now he prays me to go back home from these walls, being vexed for his possessions that the Achaeans devour before his eyes. But come now, hear a dream of mine and tell me the interpretation thereof. Twenty geese I have in the house, that eat wheat, coming forth from the water, and I am gladdened at the sight. Now a great eagle of crooked beak swooped from the mountain, and brake all their necks and slew them; and they lay strewn in a heap in the halls, while he was borne aloft to the bright air. Thereon I wept and wailed, in a dream though it was, and around me were gathered the fair-tressed Achaean women as I made piteous lament, for that the eagle had slain my geese. But he came back and sat him down on a jutting point of the roof-beam, and with the voice of a man he spake, and stayed my weeping:

'"Take heart, O daughter of renowned Icarius; this is no dream but a true vision, that shall be accomplished for thee. The geese are the wooers, and I that before was the eagle am now thy husband come again, who will let slip unsightly death upon all the wooers." With that word sweet slumber let me go, and I looked about, and beheld the geese in the court pecking their wheat at the trough, where they were wont before.'

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her and said: 'Lady, none may turn aside the dream to interpret it otherwise, seeing that Odysseus himself hath showed thee how he will fulfil it. For the wooers destruction is clearly boded, for all and every one; not a man shall avoid death and the fates.'

Then wise Penelope answered him: 'Stranger, verily dreams are hard, and hard to be discerned; nor are all things therein fulfilled for men. Twain are the gates of shadowy dreams, the one is fashioned of horn and one of ivory. Such dreams as pass through the portals of sawn ivory are deceitful, and bear tidings that are unfulfilled. But the dreams that come forth through the gates of polished horn bring a true issue, whosoever of mortals beholds them. Yet methinks my strange dream came not thence; of a truth that would be most welcome to me and to my son. But another thing will I tell thee, and do thou ponder it in thy heart. Lo, even now draws nigh the morn of evil name, that is to sever me from the house of Odysseus, for now I am about to ordain for a trial those axes that he would set up in a row in his halls, like stays of oak in ship-building, twelve in all, and he would stand far apart and shoot his arrow through them all. And now I will offer this contest to the wooers; whoso shall most easily string the bow in his hands, and shoot through all twelve axes, with him will I go and forsake this house, this house of my wedlock, so fair and filled with all livelihood, which methinks I shall yet remember, aye, in a dream.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her and said: ‘Wife revered of Odysseus son of Laertes, no longer delay this contest in thy halls; for, lo, Odysseus of many counsels will be here, before these men, for all their handling of this polished bow, shall have strung it, and shot the arrow through the iron.’

Then the wise Penelope answered him: ‘Stranger, if only thou wert willing still to sit beside me in the halls and to delight me, not upon my eyelids would sleep be shed. But men may in no wise abide sleepless ever, for the immortals have made a time for all things for mortals on the grain-giving earth. Howbeit I will go aloft to my upper chamber, and lay me on my bed, the place of my groanings, that is ever watered by my tears, since the day that Odysseus went to see that evil Ilios, never to be named. There will I lay me down, but do thou lie in this house; either strew thee somewhat on the floor, or let them lay bedding for thee.’

Therewith she ascended to her shining upper chamber, not alone, for with her likewise went her handmaids. So she went aloft to her upper chamber with the women her handmaids, and there was bewailing Odysseus, her dear lord, till grey-eyed Athene cast sweet sleep upon her eyelids.

BOOK XX

Pallas and Odysseus consult of the killing of the wooers.

But the goodly Odysseus laid him down to sleep in the vestibule of the house. He spread an undressed bull’s hide on the ground and above it many fleeces of sheep, that the Achaeans were wont to slay in sacrifice, and Eurynome threw a mantle over him where he lay. There Odysseus lay wakeful, with evil thoughts against the wooers in his heart. And the women came forth from their chamber, that aforetime were wont to lie with the wooers, making laughter and mirth among themselves. Then the heart of Odysseus was stirred within his breast, and much he communed with his mind and soul, whether he should leap forth upon them and deal death to each, or suffer them to lie with the proud wooers, now for the last and latest time. And his heart growled sullenly within him. And even as a bitch stands over her tender whelps growling, when she spies a man she knows not, and she is eager to assail him, so growled his heart within him in his wrath at their evil deeds. Then he smote upon his breast and rebuked his own heart, saying:

‘Endure, my heart; yea, a baser thing thou once didst bear, on that day when the Cyclops, unrestrained in fury, devoured the mighty men of my company; but still thou didst endure till thy craft found a way for thee forth from out the cave, where thou thoughtest to die.’

So spake he, chiding his own spirit within him, and his heart verily abode steadfast in obedience to his word. But Odysseus himself lay tossing this way and that. And as when a man by a great fire burning takes a paunch full of fat and blood, and turns it this way and that and longs to have it roasted most speedily, so Odysseus tossed from side to side, musing how he might stretch forth his hands upon the shameless wooers, being but one man against so many. Then down from heaven came Athene and drew nigh him, fashioned in the likeness of a woman. And she stood over his head and spake to him, saying:

‘Lo now again, wherefore art thou watching, most luckless of all men living? Is not this thy house and is not thy wife there within and thy child, such a son as men wish to have for their own?’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: ‘Yea, goddess, all this thou hast spoken as is meet. But my heart within me muses in some measure upon this, how I may stretch forth my hands upon the shameless wooers, being but one man, while they abide ever in their companies within. Moreover this other and harder matter I ponder in my heart: even if I were to slay them by thy will and the will of Zeus, whither should I flee from the avengers? Look well to this, I pray thee.’

Then answered the goddess, grey-eyed Athene: ‘O hard of belief! yea, many there be that trust even in a weaker friend than I am, in one that is a mortal and knows not such craft as mine; but I am a god, that preserve thee to the end, in all manner of toils. And now I will tell thee plainly; even should fifty companies of mortal men compass us about eager to slay us in battle, even their kine shouldst thou drive off and their brave flocks. But let sleep in turn come over thee; to wake and to watch all night, this too is vexation of spirit; and soon shalt thou rise from out of thy troubles.’

So she spake and poured slumber upon his eyelids, but for her part the fair goddess went back to Olympus.

While sleep laid hold of him loosening the cares of his soul, sleep that loosens the limbs of men, his good wife awoke and wept as she sat on her soft bed. But when she had taken her fill of weeping, to Artemis first the fair lady made her prayer:

‘Artemis, lady and goddess, daughter of Zeus, would that even now thou wouldst plant thy shaft within my breast and take my life away, even in this hour! Or else, would that the stormwind might snatch me up, and bear me hence down the dusky ways, and cast me forth where the back-flowing Oceanus mingles with the sea. It should be even as when the stormwinds bare away the daughters of Pandareus. Their father and their mother the gods had slain, and the maidens were left orphans in the halls, and fair Aphrodite cherished them with curds and sweet honey and delicious wine. And Here gave them beauty and wisdom beyond the lot of women, and holy Artemis dowered them with stature, and Athene taught them skill in all famous handiwork. Now while fair Aphrodite was wending to high Olympus, to pray that a glad marriage might be accomplished for the maidens, — and to Zeus she went whose joy is in the thunder, for he knows all things well, what the fates give and deny to mortal men — in the meanwhile the spirits of the storm snatched away these maidens, and gave them to be handmaids to the hateful Erinyes. Would that in such wise they that hold the mansions of Olympus would take me from the sight of men, or that fair-stressed Artemis would strike me, that so with a vision of Odysseus before mine eyes I might even pass beneath the dreadful earth, nor ever make a baser man’s delight! But herein is an evil that may well be borne, namely, when a man weeps all the day long in great sorrow of heart, but sleep takes him in the night, for sleep makes him forgetful of all things, of good and evil, when once it has overshadowed his eyelids. But as for me, even the dreams that the gods send upon me are evil. For furthermore, this very night one seemed to lie by my side, in the likeness of my lord, as he was when he went with the host, and then was my heart glad, since methought it was no vain dream but a clear vision at the last.'

So she spake, and anon came the golden throned Dawn. Now goodly Odysseus caught the voice of her weeping, and then he fell a musing, and it seemed to him that even now she knew him and was standing by his head. So he took up the mantle and the fleeces whereon he was lying, and set them on a high seat in the hall, and bare out the bull's hide out of doors and laid it there, and lifting up his hands he prayed to Zeus:

'Father Zeus, if ye gods of your good will have led me over wet and dry, to mine own country, after ye had plagued me sore, let some one I pray of the folk that are waking show me a word of good omen within, and without let some sign also be revealed to me from Zeus.'

So he spake in prayer, and Zeus, the counsellor, heard him. Straightway he thundered from shining Olympus, from on high from the place of clouds; and goodly Odysseus was glad. Moreover a woman, a grinder at the mill, uttered a voice of omen from within the house hard by, where stood the mills of the shepherd of the people. At these handmills twelve women in all plied their task, making meal of barley and of wheat, the marrow of men. Now all the others were asleep, for they had ground out their task of grain, but one alone rested not yet, being the weakest of all. She now stayed her quern and spake a word, a sign to her lord:

'Father Zeus, who rulest over gods and men, loudly hast thou thundered from the starry sky, yet nowhere is there a cloud to be seen: this surely is a portent thou art showing to some mortal. Fulfil now, I pray thee, even to miserable me, the word that I shall speak. May the wooers, on this day, for the last and latest time make their sweet feasting in the halls of Odysseus! They that have loosened my knees with cruel toil to grind their barley meal, may they now sup their last!'

Thus she spake, and goodly Odysseus was glad in the omen of the voice and in the thunder of Zeus; for he thought that he had gotten his vengeance on the guilty.

Now the other maidens in the fair halls of Odysseus had gathered, and were kindling on the hearth the never-resting fire. And Telemachus rose from his bed, a godlike man, and put on his raiment, and slung a sharp sword about his shoulders, and beneath his shining feet he bound his goodly sandals. And he caught up his mighty spear shod with sharp bronze, and went and stood by the threshold, and spake to Eurycleia:

‘Dear nurse, have ye honoured our guest in the house with food and couch, or does he lie uncared for, as he may? For this is my mother’s way, wise as she is: blindly she honours one of mortal men, even the worse, but the better she sends without honour away.’

Then the prudent Eurycleia answered: ‘Nay, my child, thou shouldst not now blame her where no blame is. For the stranger sat and drank wine, so long as he would, and of food he said he was no longer fain, for thy mother asked him. Moreover, against the hour when he should bethink him of rest and sleep, she bade the maidens strew for him a bed. But he, as one utterly wretched and ill-fated, refused to lie on a couch and under blankets, but on an undressed hide and on the fleeces of sheep he slept in the vestibule, and we cast a mantle over him.’

So she spake, and Telemachus passed out through the hall with his lance in his hand, and two fleet dogs bare him company. He went on his way to the assembly-place to join the goodly-greaved Achaeans. But the good lady Eurycleia, daughter of Ops son of Peisenor, called aloud to her maidens:

‘Come hither, let some of you go busily and sweep the hall, and sprinkle it, and on the fair-fashioned seats throw purple coverlets, and others with sponges wipe all the tables clean, and cleanse the mixing bowls and well-wrought double beakers, and others again go for water to the well, and return with it right speedily. For the wooers will not long be out of the hall but will return very early, for it is a feast day, yea for all the people.’

So she spake, and they all gave ready ear and hearkened. Twenty of them went to the well of dark water, and the others there in the halls were busy with skilful hands.

Then in came the serving-men of the Achaeans. Thereon they cleft the faggots well and cunningly, while, behold, the women came back from the well. Then the swineherd joined them leading three fatted boars, the best in all the flock. These he left to feed at large in the fair courts, but as for him he spake to Odysseus gently, saying:

‘Tell me, stranger, do the Achaeans at all look on thee with more regard, or do they dishonour thee in the halls, as heretofore?’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying:

‘Oh, that the gods, Eumaeus, may avenge the scorn wherewith these men deal insolently, and devise infatuate deeds in another’s house, and have no place for shame!’

On such wise they spake one to another. And Melanthius drew near them, the goatherd, leading the goats that were most excellent in all the herds to be a dinner for the wooers, and two shepherds bare him company. So he tethered the goats beneath the echoing gallery, and himself spake to Odysseus and taunted him, saying:

‘Stranger, wilt thou still be a plague to us here in the hall, with thy begging of men, and wilt not get thee gone? In no wise do I think we twain will be sundered, till we taste each the other’s fists, for thy begging is out of all order. Also there are elsewhere other feasts of the Achaeans.’

So he spake, but Odysseus of many counsels answered him not a word, but in silence he shook his head, brooding evil in the deep of his heart.

Moreover a third man came up, Philoetius, a master of men, leading a barren heifer for the wooers and fatted goats. Now ferrymen had brought them over from the mainland, boatmen who send even other folks on their way, whosoever comes to them. The cattle he tethered carefully beneath the echoing gallery, and himself drew close to the swineherd, and began to question him:

‘Swineherd, who is this stranger but newly come to our house? From what men does he claim his birth? Where are his kin and his native fields? Hapless is he, yet in fashion he is like a royal lord; but the gods mar the goodliness of wandering men, when even for kings they have woven the web of trouble.’

So he spake, and came close to him offering his right hand in welcome, and uttering his voice spake to him winged words:

‘Father and stranger, hail! may happiness be thine in the time to come; but as now, thou art fast holden in many sorrows! Father Zeus, none other god is more baneful than thou; thou hast no compassion on men, that are of thine own begetting, but makest them to have fellowship with evil and with bitter pains. The sweat brake out on me when I beheld him, and mine eyes stand full of tears for memory of Odysseus, for he too, methinks, is clad in such vile raiment as this, and is wandering among men, if haply he yet lives and sees the sunlight. But if he be dead already and in the house of Hades, then woe is me for the noble Odysseus, who set me over his cattle while I was but a lad in the land of the Cephallenians. And now these wax numberless; in no better wise could the breed of broad-browed cattle of any mortal increase, even as the ears of corn. But strangers command me to be ever driving these for themselves to devour, and they care nothing for the heir in the house, nor tremble at the vengeance of the gods, for they are eager even now to divide among themselves the possessions of our lord who is long afar. Now my heart within my breast often revolves this thing. Truly it were an evil deed, while a son of the master is yet alive, to get me away to the land of strangers, and go off, with cattle and all, to alien men. But this is more grievous still, to abide here in affliction watching over the herds of other men. Yea, long ago I would have fled and gone forth to some other of the proud kings, for things are now past sufferance; but still my thought is of that hapless one, if he might come I know not whence, and make a scattering of the wooers in the halls.'

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying:

'Neatherd, seeing thou art not like to an evil man or a foolish, and of myself I mark how that thou hast gotten understanding of heart, therefore I will tell thee somewhat, and swear a great oath to confirm it. Be Zeus now my witness before any god, and the hospitable board and the hearth of noble Odysseus, whereunto I am come, that while thou art still in this place Odysseus shall come home, and thou shalt see with thine eyes, if thou wilt, the slaying of the wooers who lord it here.'

Then the neatherd made answer, saying:

'Ah, would, stranger, that Cronion may accomplish this word! So shouldst thou know what my might is, and how my hands follow to obey.'

In like manner Eumaeus prayed to all the gods, that wise
Odysseus might return to his own home.

On such wise they spake one to the other, but the wooers at that time were framing death and doom for Telemachus. Even so there came by them a bird on their left, an eagle of lofty flight, with a cowering dove in his clutch. Then Amphinomus made harangue and spake among them:

'Friends, this counsel of ours will not go well, namely, the slaying of Telemachus; rather let us bethink us of the feast.'

So spake Amphinomus, and his saying pleased them well. They passed into the halls of godlike Odysseus and laid by their mantles on the chairs and high seats, and sacrificed great sheep and stout goats and the fatlings of the boars and the heifer of the herd; then they roasted the entrails and served them round and mixed wine in the bowl, and the swineherd set a cup by each man. And Philoetius, a master of men, handed them wheaten bread in beautiful baskets, and Melanthius poured out the wine. So they put forth their hands on the good cheer set before them.

Now Telemachus, in his crafty purpose, made Odysseus to sit down within the stablished hall by the threshold of stone, and placed for him a mean settle and a little table. He set by him his mess of the entrails, and poured wine into a golden cup and spake to him, saying:

'There, sit thee down, drinking thy wine among the lords, and the taunts and buffets of all the wooers I myself will ward off from thee, for this is no house of public resort, but the very house of Odysseus, and for me he won it. But, ye wooers, refrain your minds from rebukes and your hands from buffets, that no strife and feud may arise.'

So he said, and they all bit their lips and marvelled at
Telemachus, in that he spake boldly. Then Antinous, son of

Eupeithes, spake among them, saying:

‘Hard though the word be, let us accept it, Achaeans, even the word of Telemachus, though mightily he threatens us in his speech. For Zeus Cronion hath hindered us of our purpose, else would we have silenced him in our halls, shrill orator as he is.’

So spake Antinous, but Telemachus took no heed of his words. Now the henchmen were leading through the town the holy hecatomb of the gods, and lo, the long-haired Achaeans were gathered beneath the shady grove of Apollo, the prince of archery.

Now when they had roasted the outer flesh and drawn it off the spits, they divided the messes and shared the glorious feast. And beside Odysseus they that waited set an equal share, the same as that which fell to themselves, for so Telemachus commanded, the dear son of divine Odysseus.

Now Athene would in nowise suffer the lordly wooers to abstain from biting scorn, that the pain might sink yet the deeper into the heart of Odysseus, son of Laertes. There was among the wooers a man of a lawless heart, Ctesippus was his name, and in Same was his home, who trusting, forsooth, to his vast possessions, was wooing the wife of Odysseus the lord long afar. And now he spake among the proud wooers:

‘Hear me, ye lordly wooers, and I will say somewhat. The stranger verily has long had his due portion, as is meet, an equal share; for it is not fair nor just to rob the guests of Telemachus of their right, whosoever they may be that come to this house. Go to then, I also will bestow on him a stranger’s gift, that he in turn may give a present either to the bath-woman, or to any other of the thralls within the house of godlike Odysseus.’

Therewith he caught up an ox’s foot from the dish, where it lay, and hurled it with strong hand. But Odysseus lightly avoided it with a turn of his head, and smiled right grimly in his heart, and the ox’s foot smote the well-builded wall. Then Telemachus rebuked Ctesippus, saying:

‘Verily, Ctesippus, it has turned out happier for thy heart’s pleasure as it is! Thou didst not smite the stranger, for he himself avoided that which was cast at him, else surely would I have struck thee through the midst with the sharp spear, and in place of wedding banquet thy father would have had to busy him about a funeral feast in this place. Wherefore let no man make show of unseemly deeds in this my house, for now I have understanding to discern both good and evil, but in time past I was yet a child. But as needs we must, we still endure to see these deeds, while sheep are slaughtered and wine drunken and bread devoured, for hard it is for one man to restrain many. But come, no longer work me harm out of an evil heart; but if ye be set on slaying me, even me, with the sword, even that would I rather endure, and far better would it be to die than to witness for ever these unseemly deeds — strangers shamefully entreated, and men haling the handmaidens in foul wise through the fair house.’

So he spake, and they were all hushed in silence. And late and at last spake among them Agelaus, son of Damastor:

‘Friends, when a righteous word has been spoken, none surely would rebuke another with hard speech and be angry. Misuse ye not this stranger, nor any of the thralls that are in the house of godlike Odysseus. But to Telemachus himself I would speak a soft word and to his mother, if perchance it may find favour with the mind of those twain. So long as your hearts within you had hope of the wise Odysseus returning to his own house, so long none could be wroth that ye waited and held back the wooers in the halls, for so had it been better, if Odysseus had returned and come back to his own home. But now the event is plain, that he will return no more. Go then, sit by thy mother and tell her all, namely, that she must wed the best man that wooes her, and whose gives most gifts; so shalt thou with gladness live on the heritage of thy father, eating and drinking, while she cares for another’s house.’

Then wise Telemachus answered, and said: ‘Nay by Zeus, Agelaus, and by the griefs of my father, who far away methinks from Ithaca has perished or goes wandering, in nowise do I delay my mother’s marriage; nay, I bid her be married to what man she will, and withal I offer gifts without number. But I do indeed feel shame to drive her forth from the hall, despite her will, by a word of compulsion; God forbid that ever this should be.’

So spake Telemachus, but among the wooers Pallas Athene roused laughter unquenchable, and drave their wits wandering. And now they were laughing with alien lips, and blood-bedabbled was the flesh they ate, and their eyes were filled with tears and their soul was fain of lamentation. Then the godlike Theoclymenus spake among them:

‘Ah, wretched men, what woe is this ye suffer? Shrouded in night are your heads and your faces and your knees, and kindled is the voice of wailing, and all cheeks are wet with tears, and the walls and the fair main-beams of the roof are sprinkled with blood. And the porch is full, and full is the court, of ghosts that hasten hellwards beneath the gloom, and the sun has perished out of heaven, and an evil mist has overspread the world.’

So spake he, and they all laughed sweetly at him. Then Eurymachus, son of Polybus, began to speak to them, saying:

‘The guest that is newly come from a strange land is beside himself. Quick, ye young men, and convey him forth out of doors, that he may go to the place of the gathering, since here he finds it dark as night.’

Then godlike Theoclymenus answered him: ‘Eurymachus, in nowise do I seek guides of thee to send me on my way. Eyes have I, and ears, and both my feet, and a stable mind in my breast of no mean fashioning. With these I will go forth, for I see evil coming on you, which not one man of the wooers may avoid or shun, of all you who in the house of divine Odysseus deal insolently with men and devise infatuate deeds.’

Therewith he went forth from out the fair-lying halls, and came to Peiraeus who received him gladly. Then all the wooers, looking one at the other, provoked Telemachus to anger, laughing at his guests. And thus some one of the haughty youths would speak:

‘Telemachus, no man is more luckless than thou in his guests, seeing thou keepest such a filthy wanderer, whosoever he be, always longing for bread and wine, and skilled in no peaceful work nor any deed of war, but a mere burden of the earth. And this other fellow again must stand up to play the seer! Nay, but if thou wouldest listen to me, much better it were. Let us cast these strangers on board a benched ship, and send them to the Sicilians, whence they would fetch thee their price.’ {*}

{* Reading [Greek], which is a correction. Or keeping the MSS. [Greek] ‘and this should bring thee in a goodly price,’ the subject to [Greek] being, probably, THE SALE, which is suggested by the context.}

So spake the wooers, but he heeded not their words, in silence he looked towards his father, expecting evermore the hour when he should stretch forth his hands upon the shameless wooers.

Now the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, had set her fair chair over against them, and heard the words of each one of the men in the halls. For in the midst of laughter they had got ready the midday meal, a sweet meal and abundant, for they had sacrificed many cattle. But never could there be a banquet less gracious than that supper, such an one as the goddess and the brave man were soon to spread for them; for that they had begun the devices of shame.

BOOK XXI

Penelope bringeth forth her husband's bow, which the suitors could not bend, but was bent by Odysseus.

Now the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, put it into the heart of the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, to set the bow and the axes of grey iron, for the wooers in the halls of Odysseus, to be the weapons of the contest, and the beginning of death. So she descended the tall staircase of her chamber, and took the well-bent key in her strong hand, a goodly key of bronze, whereon was a handle of ivory. And she betook her, with her handmaidens, to the treasure-chamber in the uttermost part of the house, where lay the treasures of her lord, bronze and gold and well-wrought iron. And there lay the back-bent bow and the quiver for the arrows, and many shafts were therein, winged for death, gifts of a friend of Odysseus, that met with him in Lacedaemon, Iphitus son of Eurytus, a man like to the gods. These twain fell in with one another in Messene, in the house of wise Ortilochus. Now Odysseus had gone thither to recover somewhat that was owing to him from all the people, for the men of Messene had lifted three hundred sheep in benched ships from out of Ithaca, with the shepherds of the flock. In quest of these it was that Odysseus went on a far embassy, being yet a lad; for his father and the other elders sent him forth. Moreover, Iphitus came thither in his search for twelve brood mares, which he had lost, with sturdy mules at the teat. These same it was that brought him death and destiny in the latter end, when he came to the child of Zeus, hardy of heart, the man Heracles, that had knowledge of great adventures, who smote Iphitus though his guest in his house, in his frowardness, and had no regard for the vengeance of the gods, nor for the table which he spread before him; for after the meal he slew him, his guest though he was, and kept for himself in the halls the horses strong of hoof. After these was Iphitus asking, when he met with Odysseus, and he gave him the bow, which of old great Eurytus bare and had left at his death to his son in his lofty house. And Odysseus gave Iphitus a sharp sword and a mighty spear, for the beginning of a loving friendship; but never had they acquaintance one of another at the board; ere that might be, the son of Zeus slew Iphitus son of Eurytus, a man like to the immortals, the same that gave Odysseus the bow. But goodly Odysseus would never take it with him on the black ships, as he went to the wars, but the bow was laid by at home in the halls as a memorial of a dear guest, and he carried it on his own land.

Now when the fair lady had come even to the treasure-chamber, and had stept upon the threshold of oak, which the carpenter had on a time planed cunningly, and over it had made straight the line, — doorposts also had he fitted thereby, whereon he set shining doors, — anon she quickly loosed the strap from the handle of the door, and thrust in the key, and with a straight aim shot back the bolts. And even as a bull roars that is grazing in a meadow, so mightily roared the fair doors smitten by the key; and speedily they flew open before her. Then she stept on to the high floor, where the coffers stood, wherein the fragrant raiment was stored. Thence she stretched forth her hand, and took the bow from off the pin, all in the bright case which sheathed it around. And there she sat down, and set the case upon her knees, and cried aloud and wept, and took out the bow of her lord. Now when she had her fill of tearful lament, she set forth to go to the hall to the company of the proud wooers, with the back-bent bow in her hands, and the quiver for the arrows, and many shafts were therein winged for death. And her maidens along with her bare a chest, wherein lay much store of iron and bronze, the gear of combat of their lord. Now when the fair lady had come unto the wooers, she stood by the pillar of the well-builded roof, holding up her glistening tire before her face; and a faithful maiden stood on either side of her, and straightway she spake out among the wooers and declared her word, saying:

‘Hear me, ye lordly wooers, who have vexed this house, that ye might eat and drink here evermore, forasmuch as the master is long gone, nor could ye find any other mark {*} for your speech, but all your desire was to wed me and take me to wife. Nay come now, ye wooers, seeing that this is the prize that is put before you. I will set forth for you the great bow of divine Odysseus, and whoso shall most easily string the bow in his hands, and shoot through all twelve axes, with him will I go and forsake this house, this house of my wedlock, so fair and filled with all livelihood, which methinks I shall yet remember, aye, in a dream.’

{* The accepted interpretation of [Greek] (a word which occurs only here) is ‘pretext’; but this does not agree with any of the meanings of the verb from which the noun is derived. The usage of [Greek] in Od. xix. 71, xxii. 75, of [Greek] in Il. xvii. 465, and of [Greek] in Od. xxii. 15, suggests rather for [Greek] the idea of ‘aiming at a mark.’}

So spake she, and commanded Eumaeus, the goodly swineherd, to set the bow for the wooers and the axes of grey iron. And Eumaeus took them with tears, and laid them down; and otherwhere the neatherd wept, when he beheld the bow of his lord. Then Antinous rebuked them, and spake and hailed them:

‘Foolish boors, whose thoughts look not beyond the day, ah, wretched pair, wherefore now do ye shed tears, and stir the soul of the lady within her, when her heart already lies low in pain, for that she has lost her dear lord? Nay sit, and feast in silence, or else get ye forth and weep, and leave the bow here behind, to be a terrible contest for the wooers, for methinks that this polished bow does not lightly yield itself to be strung. For there is no man among all these present such as Odysseus was, and I myself saw him, yea I remember it well, though I was still but a child.'

So spake he, but his heart within him hoped that he would string the bow, and shoot through the iron. Yet verily, he was to be the first that should taste the arrow at the hands of the noble Odysseus, whom but late he was dishonouring as he sat in the halls, and was inciting all his fellows to do likewise.

Then the mighty prince Telemachus spake among them, saying: 'Lo now, in very truth, Cronion has robbed me of my wits! My dear mother, wise as she is, declares that she will go with a stranger and forsake this house; yet I laugh and in my silly heart I am glad. Nay come now, ye wooers, seeing that this is the prize which is set before you, a lady, the like of whom there is not now in the Achaean land, neither in sacred Pylos, nor in Argos, nor in Mycenae, nor yet in Ithaca, nor in the dark mainland. Nay but ye know all this yourselves, — why need I praise my mother? Come therefore, delay not the issue with excuses, nor hold much longer aloof from the drawing of the bow, that we may see the thing that is to be. Yea and I myself would make trial of this bow. If I shall string it, and shoot through the iron, then should I not sorrow if my lady mother were to quit these halls and go with a stranger, seeing that I should be left behind, well able now to lift my father's goodly gear of combat.'

Therewith he cast from off his neck his cloak of scarlet, and sprang to his full height, and put away the sword from his shoulders. First he dug a good trench and set up the axes, one long trench for them all, and over it he made straight the line and round about stamped in the earth. And amazement fell on all that beheld how orderly he set the axes, though never before had he seen it so. Then he went and stood by the threshold and began to prove the bow. Thrice he made it to tremble in his great desire to draw it, and thrice he rested from his effort, though still he hoped in his heart to string the bow, and shoot through the iron. And now at last he might have strung it, mightily straining thereat for the fourth time, but Odysseus nodded frowning and stayed him, for all his eagerness. Then the strong prince Telemachus spake among them again:

'Lo you now, even to the end of my days I shall be a coward and a weakling, or it may be I am too young, and have as yet no trust in my hands to defend me from such an one as does violence without a cause. But come now, ye who are mightier men than I, essay the bow and let us make an end of the contest.'

Therewith he put the bow from him on the ground, leaning it against the smooth and well-compacted doors, and the swift shaft he propped hard by against the fair bow-tip, and then he sat down once more on the high seat, whence he had risen.

Then Antinous, son of Eupeithes, spake among them, saying: ‘Rise up in order, all my friends, beginning from the left, even from the place whence the wine is poured.’

So spake Antinous, and the saying pleased them well. Then first stood up Leiodes, son of Oenops, who was their soothsayer and ever sat by the fair mixing bowl at the extremity of the hall; he alone hated their infatuate deeds and was indignant with all the wooers. He now first took the bow and the swift shaft, and he went and stood by the threshold, and began to prove the bow; but he could not bend it; or ever that might be, his hands grew weary with the straining, his unworn, delicate hands; so he spake among the wooers, saying:

‘Friends, of a truth I cannot bend it, let some other take it. Ah, many of our bravest shall this bow rob of spirit and of life, since truly it is far better for us to die, than to live on and to fail of that for which we assemble evermore in this place, day by day expecting the prize. Many there be even now that hope in their hearts and desire to wed Penelope, the bedfellow of Odysseus: but when such an one shall make trial of the bow and see the issue, thereafter let him woo some other fair-robed Achaean woman with his bridal gifts and seek to win her. So may our lady wed the man that gives most gifts, and comes as the chosen of fate.’

So he spake, and put from him the bow leaning it against the smooth and well-compacted doors, and the swift shaft he propped hard by against the fair bow-tip, and then he sat down once more on the high seat, whence he had risen.

But Antinous rebuked him, and spake and hailed him: ‘Leiodes, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips; a hard word, and a grievous? Nay, it angers me to hear it, and to think that a bow such as this shall rob our bravest of spirit and of life, and all because thou canst not draw it. For I tell thee that thy lady mother bare thee not of such might as to draw a bow and shoot arrows: but there be others of the proud wooers that shall draw it soon.’

So he spake, and commanded Melanthius, the goatherd, saying: ‘Up now, light a fire in the halls, Melanthius; and place a great settle by the fire and a fleece thereon, and bring forth a great ball of lard that is within, that we young men may warm and anoint the bow therewith and prove it, and make an end of the contest.’

So he spake, and Melanthius soon kindled the never-resting fire, and drew up a settle and placed it near, and put a fleece thereon, and he brought forth a great ball of lard that was within. Therewith the young men warmed the bow, and made essay, but could not string it, for they were greatly lacking of such might. And Antinous still held to the task and godlike Eurymachus, chief men among the wooers, who were far the most excellent of all.

But those other twain went forth both together from the house, the neatherd and the swineherd of godlike Odysseus; and Odysseus passed out after them. But when they were now gotten without the gates and the courtyard, he uttered his voice and spake to them in gentle words:

'Neatherd and thou swineherd, shall I say somewhat or keep it to myself? Nay, my spirit bids me declare it. What manner of men would ye be to help Odysseus, if he should come thus suddenly, I know not whence, and some god were to bring him? Would ye stand on the side of the wooers or of Odysseus? Tell me even as your heart and spirit bid you.'

Then the neatherd answered him, saying: 'Father Zeus, if but thou wouldst fulfil this wish: {*} — oh, that that man might come, and some god lead him hither! So shouldest thou know what my might is, and how my hands follow to obey.'

{* Placing a colon at [Greek]}

In like manner Eumaeus prayed to all the gods that wise
Odysseus might return to his own home.

Now when he knew for a surety what spirit they were of, once more he answered and spake to them, saying:

'Behold, home am I come, even I; after much travail and sore am I come in the twentieth year to mine own country. And I know how that my coming is desired by you alone of all my thralls, for from none besides have I heard a prayer that I might return once more to my home. And now I will tell you all the truth, even as it shall come to pass. If the god shall subdue the proud wooers to my hands, I will bring you each one a wife, and will give you a heritage of your own and a house builded near to me, and ye twain shall be thereafter in mine eyes as the brethren and companions of Telemachus. But behold, I will likewise show you a most manifest token, that ye may know me well and be certified in heart, even the wound that the boar dealt me with his white tusk long ago, when I went to Parnassus with the sons of Autolycus.'

Therewith he drew aside the rags from the great scar. And when the twain had beheld it and marked it well, they cast their arms about the wise Odysseus, and fell a weeping; and kissed him lovingly on head and shoulders. And in like manner Odysseus too kissed their heads and hands. And now would the sunlight have gone down upon their sorrowing, had not Odysseus himself stayed them saying:

‘Cease ye from weeping and lamentation, lest some one come forth from the hall and see us, and tell it likewise in the house. Nay, go ye within one by one and not both together, I first and you following, and let this be the token between us. All the rest, as many as are proud wooers, will not suffer that I should be given the bow and quiver; do thou then, goodly Eumaeus, as thou bearest the bow through the hall, set it in my hands and speak to the women that they bar the well-fitting doors of their chamber. And if any of them hear the sound of groaning or the din of men within our walls, let them not run forth but abide where they are in silence at their work. But on thee, goodly Philoetius, I lay this charge, to bolt and bar the outer gate of the court and swiftly to tie the knot.’

Therewith he passed within the fair-lying halls, and went and sat upon the settle whence he had risen. And likewise the two thralls of divine Odysseus went within.

And now Eurymachus was handling the bow, warming it on this side and on that at the light of the fire; yet even so he could not string it, and in his great heart he groaned mightily; and in heaviness of spirit he spake and called aloud, saying:

‘Lo you now, truly am I grieved for myself and for you all! Not for the marriage do I mourn so greatly, afflicted though I be; there are many Achaean women besides, some in sea-begirt Ithaca itself and some in other cities. Nay, but I grieve, if indeed we are so far worse than godlike Odysseus in might, seeing that we cannot bend the bow. It will be a shame even for men unborn to hear thereof.’

Then Antinous, son of Eupeithes, answered him: ‘Eurymachus, this shall not be so, and thou thyself too knowest it. For to-day the feast of the archer god is held in the land, a holy feast. Who at such a time would be bending bows? Nay, set it quietly by; what and if we should let the axes all stand as they are? None methinks will come to the hall of Odysseus, son of Laertes, and carry them away. Go to now, let the wine-bearer pour for libation into each cup in turn, that after the drink-offering we may set down the curved bow. And in the morning bid Melanthius, the goatherd, to lead hither the very best goats in all his herds, that we may lay pieces of the thighs on the altar of Apollo the archer, and assay the bow and make an end of the contest.’

So spake Antinous, and the saying pleased them well. Then the henchmen poured water on their hands, and pages crowned the mixing-bowls with drink, and served out the wine to all, when they had poured for libation into each cup in turn. But when they had poured forth and had drunken to their hearts’ desire, Odysseus of many counsels spake among them out of a crafty heart, saying:

‘Hear me, ye wooers of the renowned queen, that I may say that which my heart within me bids. And mainly to Eurymachus I make my prayer and to the godlike Antinous, forasmuch as he has spoken even this word aright, namely, that for this present ye cease from your archery and leave the issue to the gods; and in the morning the god will give the victory to whomsoever he will. Come therefore, give me the polished bow, that in your presence I may prove my hands and strength, whether I have yet any force such as once was in my supple limbs, or whether my wanderings and needy fare have even now destroyed it.'

So spake he and they all were exceeding wroth, for fear lest he should string the polished bow. And Antinous rebuked him, and spake and hailed him:

'Wretched stranger, thou hast no wit, nay never so little. Art thou not content to feast at ease in our high company, and to lack not thy share of the banquet, but to listen to our speech and our discourse, while no guest and beggar beside thee hears our speech? Wine it is that wounds thee, honey sweet wine, that is the bane of others too, even of all who take great draughts and drink out of measure. Wine it was that darkened the mind even of the Centaur, renowned Eurytion, in the hall of high-hearted Peirithous, when he went to the Lapithae; and after that his heart was darkened with wine, he wrought foul deeds in his frenzy, in the house of Peirithous. Then wrath fell on all the heroes, and they leaped up and dragged him forth through the porch, when they had shorn off his ears and nostrils with the pitiless sword, and then with darkened mind he bare about with him the burden of his sin in foolishness of heart. Thence was the feud begun between the Centaurs and mankind; but first for himself gat he hurt, being heavy with wine. And even so I declare great mischief unto thee if thou shalt string the bow, for thou shalt find no courtesy at the hand of anyone in our land, and anon we will send thee in a black ship to Echetus, the maimer of all men, and thence thou shalt not be saved alive. Nay then, drink at thine ease, and strive not still with men that are younger than thou.'

Then wise Penelope answered him: 'Antinous, truly it is not fair nor just to rob the guests of Telemachus of their due, whosoever he may be that comes to this house. Dost thou think if yonder stranger strings the great bow of Odysseus, in the pride of his might and of his strength of arm, that he will lead me to his home and make me his wife? Nay he himself, methinks, has no such hope in his breast; so, as for that, let not any of you fret himself while feasting in this place; that were indeed unmeet.'

Then Eurymachus, son of Polybus, answered her, saying: 'Daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, it is not that we deem that he will lead thee to his home, — far be such a thought from us, — but we dread the speech of men and women, lest some day one of the baser sort among the Achaeans say: "Truly men far too mean are wooing the wife of one that is noble, nor can they string the polished bow. But a stranger and a beggar came in his wanderings, and lightly strung the bow, and shot through the iron.” Thus will they speak, and this will turn to our reproach.’

Then wise Penelope answered him: ‘Eurymachus, never can there be fair fame in the land for those that devour and dishonour the house of a prince, but why make ye this thing into a reproach? But, behold, our guest is great of growth and well-knit, and avows him to be born the son of a good father. Come then, give ye him the polished bow, that we may see that which is to be. For thus will I declare my saying, and it shall surely come to pass. If he shall string the bow and Apollo grant him renown, I will clothe him in a mantle and a doublet, goodly raiment, and I will give him a sharp javelin to defend him against dogs and men, and a two-edged sword and sandals to bind beneath his feet, and I will send him whithersoever his heart and spirit bid him go.’

Then wise Telemachus answered her, saying: ‘My mother, as for the bow, no Achaean is mightier than I to give or to deny it to whomso I will, neither as many as are lords in rocky Ithaca nor in the isles on the side of Elis, the pastureland of horses. Not one of these shall force me in mine own despite, if I choose to give this bow, yea once and for all, to the stranger to bear away with him. But do thou go to thine own chamber and mind thine own housewiferies, the loom and distaff, and bid thine handmaids ply their tasks. But the bow shall be for men, for all, but for me in chief, for mine is the lordship in the house.’

Then in amaze she went back to her chamber, for she laid up the wise saying of her son in her heart. She ascended to her upper chamber with the women her handmaids, and then was bewailing Odysseus, her dear lord, till grey-eyed Athene cast sweet sleep upon her eyelids.

Now the goodly swineherd had taken the curved bow, and was bearing it, when the wooers all cried out upon him in the halls. And thus some one of the haughty youths would speak: ‘Whither now art thou bearing the curved bow, thou wretched swineherd, crazed in thy wits? Lo, soon shall the swift hounds of thine own breeding eat thee hard by thy swine, alone and away from men, if Apollo will be gracious to us and the other deathless gods.’

Even so they spake, and he took and set down the bow in that very place, being affrighted because many cried out on him in the halls. Then Telemachus from the other side spake threateningly, and called aloud:

‘Father, bring hither the bow, soon shalt thou rue it that thou servest many masters. Take heed, lest I that am younger than thou pursue thee to the field, and pelt thee with stones, for in might I am the better. If only I were so much mightier in strength of arm than all the wooers that are in the halls, soon would I send many an one forth on a woeful way from out our house, for they imagine mischief against us.’

So he spake, and all the wooers laughed sweetly at him, and ceased now from their cruel anger toward Telemachus. Then the swineherd bare the bow through the hall, and went up to wise Odysseus, and set it in his hands. And he called forth the nurse Eurycleia from the chamber and spake to her:

‘Wise Eurycleia, Telemachus bids thee bar the well-fitting doors of thy chamber, and if any of the women hear the sound of groaning or the din of men within our walls, let them not go forth, but abide where they are in silence at their work.’

So he spake, and wingless her speech remained, and she barred the doors of the fair-lying chambers.

Then Philoetius hasted forth silently from the house, and barred the outer gates of the fenced court. Now there lay beneath the gallery the cable of a curved ship, fashioned of the byblus plant, wherewith he made fast the gates, and then himself passed within. Then he went and sat on the settle whence he had risen, and gazed upon Odysseus. He already was handling the bow, turning it every way about, and proving it on this side and on that, lest the worms might have eaten the horns when the lord of the bow was away. And thus men spake looking each one to his neighbour:

‘Verily he has a good eye, and a shrewd turn for a bow! Either, methinks, he himself has such a bow lying by at home or else he is set on making one, in such wise does he turn it hither and thither in his hands, this evil-witted beggar.’

And another again of the haughty youths would say: ‘Would that the fellow may have profit thereof, just so surely as he shall ever prevail to bend this bow!’

So spake the wooers, but Odysseus of many counsels had lifted the great bow and viewed it on every side, and even as when a man that is skilled in the lyre and in minstrelsy, easily stretches a cord about a new peg, after tying at either end the twisted sheep-gut, even so Odysseus straightway bent the great bow, all without effort, and took it in his right hand and proved the bow-string, which rang sweetly at the touch, in tone like a swallow. Then great grief came upon the wooers, and the colour of their countenance was changed, and Zeus thundered loud showing forth his tokens. And the steadfast goodly Odysseus was glad thereat, in that the son of deep-counselling Cronos had sent him a sign. Then he caught up a swift arrow which lay by his table, bare, but the other shafts were stored within the hollow quiver, those whereof the Achaeans were soon to taste. He took and laid it on the bridge of the bow, and held the notch and drew the string, even from the settle whereon he sat, and with straight aim shot the shaft and missed not one of the axes, beginning from the first axe-handle, and the bronze-weighted shaft passed clean through and out at the last. Then he spake to

Telemachus, saying:

‘Telemachus, thy guest that sits in the halls does thee no shame. In nowise did I miss my mark, nor was I wearied with long bending of the bow. Still is my might steadfast — not as the wooers say scornfully to slight me. But now is it time that supper too be got ready for the Achaeans, while it is yet light, and thereafter must we make other sport with the dance and the lyre, for these are the crown of the feast.’

Therewith he nodded with bent brows, and Telemachus, the dear son of divine Odysseus, girt his sharp sword about him and took the spear in his grasp, and stood by his high seat at his father’s side, armed with the gleaming bronze.

BOOK XXII

The killing of the wooers.

Then Odysseus of many counsels stripped him of his rags and leaped on to the great threshold with his bow and quiver full of arrows, and poured forth all the swift shafts there before his feet, and spake among the wooers:

‘Lo, now is this terrible trial ended at last; and now will I know of another mark, which never yet man has smitten, if perchance I may hit it and Apollo grant me renown.’

With that he pointed the bitter arrow at Antinous. Now he was about raising to his lips a fair twy-eared chalice of gold, and behold, he was handling it to drink of the wine, and death was far from his thoughts. For who among men at feast would deem that one man amongst so many, how hardy soever he were, would bring on him foul death and black fate? But Odysseus aimed and smote him with the arrow in the throat, and the point passed clean out through his delicate neck, and he fell sidelong and the cup dropped from his hand as he was smitten, and at once through his nostrils there came up a thick jet of slain man’s blood, and quickly he spurned the table from him with his foot, and spilt the food on the ground, and the bread and the roast flesh were defiled. Then the wooers raised a clamour through the halls when they saw the man fallen, and they leaped from their high seats, as men stirred by fear, all through the hall, peering everywhere along the well-builded walls, and nowhere was there a shield or mighty spear to lay hold on. Then they reviled Odysseus with angry words:

‘Stranger, thou shootest at men to thy hurt. Never again shalt thou enter other lists, now is utter doom assured thee. Yea, for now hast thou slain the man that was far the best of all the noble youths in Ithaca; wherefore vultures shall devour thee here.’

So each one spake, for indeed they thought that Odysseus had not slain him wilfully; but they knew not in their folly that on their own heads, each and all of them, the bands of death had been made fast. Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on them, and spake:

‘Ye dogs, ye said in your hearts that I should never more come home from the land of the Trojans, in that ye wasted my house, and lay with the maidservants by force, and traitorously wooed my wife while I was yet alive, and ye had no fear of the gods, that hold the wide heaven, nor of the indignation of men hereafter. But now the bands of death have been made fast upon you one and all.’

Even so he spake, and pale fear gat hold on the limbs of all, and each man looked about, where he might shun utter doom. And Eurymachus alone answered him, and spake: ‘If thou art indeed Odysseus of Ithaca, come home again, with right thou speakest thus, of all that the Achaeans have wrought, many infatuate deeds in thy halls and many in the field. Howbeit, he now lies dead that is to blame for all, Antinous; for he brought all these things upon us, not as longing very greatly for the marriage nor needing it sore, but with another purpose, that Cronion has not fulfilled for him, namely, that he might himself be king over all the land of stablished Ithaca, and he was to have lain in wait for thy son and killed him. But now he is slain after his deserving, and do thou spare thy people, even thine own; and we will hereafter go about the township and yield thee amends for all that has been eaten and drunken in thy halls, each for himself bringing atonement of twenty oxen worth, and requiting thee in gold and bronze till thy heart is softened, but till then none may blame thee that thou art angry.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on him, and said: ‘Eurymachus, not even if ye gave me all your heritage, all that ye now have, and whatsoever else ye might in any wise add thereto, not even so would I henceforth hold my hands from slaying, ere the wooers had paid for all their transgressions. And now the choice lies before you, whether to fight in fair battle or to fly, if any may avoid death and the fates. But there be some, methinks, that shall not escape from utter doom.’

He spake, and their knees were straightway loosened and their hearts melted within them. And Eurymachus spake among them yet again:

‘Friends, it is plain that this man will not hold his unconquerable hands, but now that he has caught up the polished bow and quiver, he will shoot from the smooth threshold, till he has slain us all; wherefore let us take thought for the delight of battle. Draw your blades, and hold up the tables to ward off the arrows of swift death, and let us all have at him with one accord, and drive him, if it may be, from the threshold and the doorway and then go through the city, and quickly would the cry be raised. Thereby should this man soon have shot his latest bolt.’

Therewith he drew his sharp two-edged sword of bronze, and leapt on Odysseus with a terrible cry, but in the same moment goodly Odysseus shot the arrow forth and struck him on the breast by the pap, and drave the swift shaft into his liver. So he let the sword fall from his hand, and grovelling over the table he bowed and fell, and spilt the food and the two-handled cup on the floor. And in his agony he smote the ground with his brow, and spurning with both his feet he overthrew the high seat, and the mist of death was shed upon his eyes.

Then Amphinomus made at renowned Odysseus, setting straight at him, and drew his sharp sword, if perchance he might make him give ground from the door. But Telemachus was beforehand with him, and cast and smote him from behind with a bronze-shod spear between the shoulders, and drave it out through the breast, and he fell with a crash and struck the ground full with his forehead. Then Telemachus sprang away, leaving the long spear fixed in Amphinomus, for he greatly dreaded lest one of the Achaeans might run upon him with his blade, and stab him as he drew forth the spear, or smite him with a down stroke {*} of the sword. So he started and ran and came quickly to his father, and stood by him, and spake winged words:

{* Or, reading [Greek], smite him as he stooped over the corpse.}

‘Father, lo, now I will bring thee a shield and two spears and a helmet all of bronze, close fitting on the temples, and when I return I will arm myself, and likewise give arms to the swineherd and to the neatherd yonder: for it is better to be clad in full armour.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘Run and bring them while I have arrows to defend me, lest they thrust me from the doorway, one man against them all.’

So he spake, and Telemachus obeyed his dear father, and went forth to the chamber, where his famous weapons were lying. Thence he took out four shields and eight spears, and four helmets of bronze, with thick plumes of horse hair, and he started to bring them and came quickly to his father. Now he girded the gear of bronze about his own body first, and in like manner the two thralls did on the goodly armour, and stood beside the wise and crafty Odysseus. Now he, so long as he had arrows to defend him, kept aiming and smote the wooers one by one in his house, and they fell thick one upon another. But when the arrows failed the prince in his archery, he leaned his bow against the doorpost of the stablished hall, against the shining faces of the entrance. As for him he girt his fourfold shield about his shoulders and bound on his mighty head a well wrought helmet, with horse hair crest, and terribly the plume waved aloft. And he grasped two mighty spears tipped with bronze.

Now there was in the well-builded wall a certain postern raised above the floor, and there by the topmost level of the threshold of the stablished hall, was a way into an open passage, closed by well-fitted folding doors. So Odysseus bade the goodly swineherd stand near thereto and watch the way, for thither there was but one approach. Then Agelaus spake among them, and declared his word to all:

‘Friends, will not some man climb up to the postern, and give word to the people, and a cry would be raised straightway; so should this man soon have shot his latest bolt?’

Then Melanthius, the goatherd, answered him, saying: ‘It may in no wise be, prince Agelaus; for the fair gate of the courtyard is terribly nigh, and perilous is the entrance to the passage, and one man, if he were valiant, might keep back a host. But come, let me bring you armour from the inner chamber, that ye may be clad in hauberks, for, methinks, within that room and not elsewhere did Odysseus and his renowned son lay by the arms.’

Therewith Melanthius, the goatherd, climbed up by the clerestory of the hall to the inner chambers of Odysseus, whence he took twelve shields and as many spears, and as many helmets of bronze with thick plumes of horse hair, and he came forth and brought them speedily, and gave them to the wooers. Then the knees of Odysseus were loosened and his heart melted within him, when he saw them girding on the armour and brandishing the long spears in their hands, and great, he saw, was the adventure. Quickly he spake to Telemachus winged words:

‘Telemachus, sure I am that one of the women in the halls is stirring up an evil battle against us, or perchance it is Melanthius.’

Then wise Telemachus answered him: ‘My father, it is I that have erred herein and none other is to blame, for I left the well-fitted door of the chamber open, and there has been one of them but too quick to spy it. Go now, goodly Eumaeus, and close the door of the chamber, and mark if it be indeed one of the women that does this mischief, or Melanthius, son of Dolius, as methinks it is.’

Even so they spake one to the other. And Melanthius, the goatherd, went yet again to the chamber to bring the fair armour. But the goodly swineherd was ware thereof, and quickly he spake to Odysseus who stood nigh him:

‘Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus, of many devices, lo, there again is that baleful man, whom we ourselves suspect, going to the chamber; do thou tell me truly, shall I slay him if I prove the better man, or bring him hither to thee, that he may pay for the many transgressions that he has devised in thy house?’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered saying: ‘Verily, I and Telemachus will keep the proud wooers within the halls, for all their fury, but do ye twain tie his feet and arms behind his back and cast him into the chamber, and close the doors after you,{*} and make fast to his body a twisted rope, and drag him up the lofty pillar till he be near the roof beams, that he may hang there and live for long, and suffer grievous torment.’

{* Or, as Mr. Merry suggests in his note, ‘tie boards behind him’ as a method of torture. He compares Aristoph. Thesm. 931,940.}

So he spake, and they gave good heed and hearkened. So they went forth to the chamber, but the goatherd who was within knew not of their coming. Now he was seeking for the armour in the secret place of the chamber, but they twain stood in waiting on either side the doorposts. And when Melanthius, the goatherd, was crossing the threshold with a goodly helm in one hand, and in the other a wide shield and an old, stained with rust, the shield of the hero Laertes that he bare when he was young — but at that time it was laid by, and the seams of the straps were loosened, — then the twain rushed on him and caught him, and dragged him in by the hair, and cast him on the floor in sorrowful plight, and bound him hand and foot in a bitter bond, tightly winding each limb behind his back, even as the son of Laertes bade them, the steadfast goodly Odysseus. And they made fast to his body a twisted rope, and dragged him up the lofty pillar till he came near the roof beams. Then didst thou speak to him and gird at him, swineherd Eumaeus:

‘Now in good truth, Melanthius, shalt thou watch all night, lying in a soft bed as beseems thee, nor shall the early-born Dawn escape thy ken, when she comes forth from the streams of Oceanus, on her golden throne, in the hour when thou art wont to drive the goats to make a meal for the wooers in the halls.’

So he was left there, stretched tight in the deadly bond. But they twain got into their harness, and closed the shining door, and went to Odysseus, wise and crafty chief. There they stood breathing fury, four men by the threshold, while those others within the halls were many and good warriors. Then Athene, daughter of Zeus, drew nigh them, like Mentor in fashion and in voice, and Odysseus was glad when he saw her and spake, saying:

‘Mentor, ward from us hurt, and remember me thy dear companion, that befriended thee often, and thou art of like age with me.’

So he spake, deeming the while that it was Athene, summoner of the host. But the wooers on the other side shouted in the halls, and first Agelaus son of Damastor rebuked Athene, saying:

‘Mentor, let not the speech of Odysseus beguile thee to fight against the wooers, and to succour him. For methinks that on this wise we shall work our will. When we shall have slain these men, father and son, thereafter shalt thou perish with them, such deeds thou art set on doing in these halls; nay, with thine own head shalt thou pay the price. But when with the sword we shall have overcome your violence, we will mingle all thy possessions, all that thou hast at home or in the field, with the wealth of Odysseus, and we will not suffer thy sons nor thy daughters to dwell in the halls, nor thy good wife to gad about in the town of Ithaca.’

So spake he, and Athene was mightily angered at heart, and chid Odysseus in wrathful words: ‘Odysseus, thou hast no more steadfast might nor any prowess, as when for nine whole years continually thou didst battle with the Trojans for high born Helen, of the white arms, and many men thou slewest in terrible warfare, and by thy device the wide-wayed city of Priam was taken. How then, now that thou art come to thy house and thine own possessions, dost thou bewail thee and art of feeble courage to stand before the wooers? Nay, come hither, friend, and stand by me, and I will show thee a thing, that thou mayest know what manner of man is Mentor, son of Alcimus, to repay good deeds in the ranks of foemen.’

She spake, and gave him not yet clear victory in full, but still for a while made trial of the might and prowess of Odysseus and his renowned son. As for her she flew up to the roof timber of the murky hall, in such fashion as a swallow flies, and there sat down.

Now Agelaus, son of Damastor, urged on the wooers, and likewise Eurynomus and Amphimedon and Demoptolemus and Peisandrus son of Polyctor, and wise Polybus, for these were in valiancy far the best men of the wooers, that still lived and fought for their lives; for the rest had fallen already beneath the bow and the thick rain of arrows. Then Agelaus spake among them, and made known his word to all:

‘Friends, now at last will this man hold his unconquerable hands. Lo, now has Mentor left him and spoken but vain boasts, and these remain alone at the entrance of the doors. Wherefore now, throw not your long spears all together, but come, do ye six cast first, if perchance Zeus may grant us to smite Odysseus and win renown. Of the rest will we take no heed, so soon as that man shall have fallen.’

So he spake and they all cast their javelins, as he bade them, eagerly; but behold, Athene so wrought that they were all in vain. One man smote the doorpost of the stablished hall, and another the well-fastened door, and the ashen spear of yet another wooer, heavy with bronze, stuck fast in the wall. So when they had avoided all the spears of the wooers, the steadfast goodly Odysseus began first to speak among them:

‘Friends, now my word is that we too cast and hurl into the press of the wooers, that are mad to slay and strip us beyond the measure of their former iniquities.’

So he spake, and they all took good aim and threw their sharp spears, and Odysseus smote Demoptolemus, and Telemachus Euryades, and the swineherd slew Elatus, and the neatherd Peisandrus. Thus they all bit the wide floor with their teeth, and the wooers fell back into the inmost part of the hall. But the others dashed upon them and drew forth the shafts from the bodies of the dead.

Then once more the wooers threw their sharp spears eagerly; but behold, Athene so wrought that many of them were in vain. One man smote the doorpost of the stablished hall, and another the well-fastened door, and the ashen spear of another wooer, heavy with bronze, struck in the wall. Yet Amphimedon hit Telemachus on the hand by the wrist lightly, and the shaft of bronze wounded the surface of the skin. And Ctesippus grazed the shoulder of Eumaeus with a long spear high above the shield, and the spear flew over and fell to the ground. Then again Odysseus, the wise and crafty, he and his men cast their swift spears into the press of the wooers, and now once more Odysseus, waster of cities, smote Eurydamas, and Telemachus Amphimedon, and the swineherd slew Polybus, and last, the neatherd struck Ctesippus in the breast and boasted over him, saying:

‘O son of Polytherses, thou lover of jeering, never give place at all to folly to speak so big, but leave thy case to the gods, since in truth they are far mightier than thou. This gift is thy recompense for the ox-foot that thou gavest of late to the divine Odysseus, when he went begging through the house.’

So spake the keeper of the shambling kine. Next Odysseus wounded the son of Damastor in close fight with his long spear, and Telemachus wounded Leocritus son of Euenor, right in the flank with his lance, and drave the bronze point clean through, that he fell prone and struck the ground full with his forehead. Then Athene held up her destroying aegis on high from the roof, and their minds were scared, and they fled through the hall, like a drove of kine that the flitting gadfly falls upon and scatters hither and thither in spring time, when the long days begin. But the others set on like vultures of crooked claws and curved beak, that come forth from the mountains and dash upon smaller birds, and these scour low in the plain, stooping in terror from the clouds, while the vultures pounce on them and slay them, and there is no help nor way of flight, and men are glad at the sport; even so did the company of Odysseus set upon the wooers and smite them right and left through the hall; and there rose a hideous moaning as their heads were smitten, and the floor all ran with blood.

Now Leiodes took hold of the knees of Odysseus eagerly, and besought him and spake winged words: ‘I entreat thee by thy knees, Odysseus, and do thou show mercy on me and have pity. For never yet, I say, have I wronged a maiden in thy halls by froward word or deed, nay I bade the other wooers refrain, whoso of them wrought thus. But they hearkened not unto me to keep their hands from evil. Wherefore they have met a shameful death through their own infatuate deeds. Yet I, the soothsayer among them, that have wrought no evil, shall fall even as they, for no grace abides for good deeds done.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked askance at him, and said: ‘If indeed thou dost avow thee to be the soothsayer of these men, thou art like to have often prayed in the halls that the issue of a glad return might be far from me, and that my dear wife should follow thee and bear thee children; wherefore thou shalt not escape the bitterness of death.’

Therewith he caught up a sword in his strong hand, that lay where Agelaus had let it fall to the ground when he was slain, and drave it clean through his neck, and as he yet spake his head fell even to the dust.

But the son of Terpes, the minstrel, still sought how he might shun black fate, Phemius, who sang among the wooers of necessity. He stood with the loud lyre in his hand hard by the postern gate, and his heart was divided within him, whether he should slip forth from the hall and sit down by the well-wrought altar of great Zeus of the household court, whereon Laertes and Odysseus had burnt many pieces of the thighs of oxen, or should spring forward and beseech Odysseus by his knees. And as he thought thereupon this seemed to him the better way, to embrace the knees of Odysseus, son of Laertes. So he laid the hollow lyre on the ground between the mixing-bowl and the high seat inlaid with silver, and himself sprang forward and seized Odysseus by the knees, and besought him and spake winged words:

‘I entreat thee by thy knees, Odysseus, and do thou show mercy on me and have pity. It will be a sorrow to thyself in the aftertime if thou slayest me who am a minstrel, and sing before gods and men. Yea none has taught me but myself, and the god has put into my heart all manner of lays, and methinks I sing to thee as to a god, wherefore be not eager to cut off my head. And Telemachus will testify of this, thine own dear son, that not by mine own will or desire did I resort to thy house to sing to the wooers at their feasts; but being so many and stronger than I they led me by constraint.’

So he spake, and the mighty prince Telemachus heard him and quickly spake to his father at his side: ‘Hold thy hand, and wound not this blameless man with the sword; and let us save also the henchman Medon, that ever had charge of me in our house when I was a child, unless perchance Philoetius or the swineherd have already slain him, or he hath met thee in thy raging through the house.’

So he spake, and Medon, wise of heart, heard him. For he lay crouching beneath a high seat, clad about in the new-flayed hide of an ox and shunned black fate. So he rose up quickly from under the seat, and cast off the ox-hide, and sprang forth and caught Telemachus by the knees, and besought him and spake winged words:

‘Friend, here am I; prithee stay thy hand and speak to thy father, lest he harm me with the sharp sword in the greatness of his strength, out of his anger for the wooers that wasted his possessions in the halls, and in their folly held thee in no honour.’

And Odysseus of many counsels smiled on him and said: ‘Take courage, for lo, he has saved thee and delivered thee, that thou mayst know in thy heart, and tell it even to another, how far more excellent are good deeds than evil. But go forth from the halls and sit down in the court apart from the slaughter, thou and the full-voiced minstrel, till I have accomplished all that I must needs do in the house.’

Therewith the two went forth and gat them from the hall. So they sat down by the altar of great Zeus, peering about on every side, still expecting death. And Odysseus peered all through the house, to see if any man was yet alive and hiding away to shun black fate. But he found all the sort of them fallen in their blood in the dust, like fishes that the fishermen have drawn forth in the meshes of the net into a hollow of the beach from out the grey sea, and all the fish, sore longing for the salt sea waves, are heaped upon the sand, and the sun shines forth and takes their life away; so now the wooers lay heaped upon each other. Then Odysseus of many counsels spake to Telemachus:

‘Telemachus, go, call me the nurse Eurycleia, that I may tell her a word that is on my mind.’

So he spake, and Telemachus obeyed his dear father, and smote at the door, and spake to the nurse Eurycleia: ‘Up now, aged wife, that overlookest all the women servants in our halls, come hither, my father calls thee and has somewhat to say to thee.’

Even so he spake, and wingless her speech remained, and she opened the doors of the fair-lying halls, and came forth, and Telemachus led the way before her. So she found Odysseus among the bodies of the dead, stained with blood and soil of battle, like a lion that has eaten of an ox of the homestead and goes on his way, and all his breast and his cheeks on either side are flecked with blood, and he is terrible to behold; even so was Odysseus stained, both hands and feet. Now the nurse, when she saw the bodies of the dead and the great gore of blood, made ready to cry aloud for joy, beholding so great an adventure. But Odysseus checked and held her in her eagerness, and uttering his voice spake to her winged words:

‘Within thine own heart rejoice, old nurse, and be still, and cry not aloud; for it is an unholy thing to boast over slain men. Now these hath the destiny of the gods overcome, and their own cruel deeds, for they honoured none of earthly men, neither the bad nor yet the good, that came among them. Wherefore they have met a shameful death through their own infatuate deeds. But come, tell me the tale of the women in my halls, which of them dishonour me, and which be guiltless.’

Then the good nurse Eurycleia answered him: ‘Yea now, my child, I will tell thee all the truth. Thou hast fifty women-servants in thy halls, that we have taught the ways of housewifery, how to card wool and to bear bondage. Of these twelve in all have gone the way of shame, and honour not me, nor their lady Penelope. And Telemachus hath but newly come to his strength, and his mother suffered him not to take command over the women in this house. But now, let me go aloft to the shining upper chamber, and tell all to thy wife, on whom some god hath sent a sleep.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: ‘Wake her not yet, but bid the women come hither, who in time past behaved themselves unseemly.’

So he spake, and the old wife passed through the hall, to tell the women and to hasten their coming. Then Odysseus called to him Telemachus, and the neatherd, and the swineherd, and spake to them winged words:

‘Begin ye now to carry out the dead, and bid the women help you, and thereafter cleanse the fair high seats and the tables with water and porous sponges. And when ye have set all the house in order, lead the maidens without the stablished hall, between the vaulted room and the goodly fence of the court, and there slay them with your long blades, till they shall have all given up the ghost and forgotten the love that of old they had at the bidding of the wooers, in secret dalliance.’

Even so he spake, and the women came all in a crowd together, making a terrible lament and shedding big tears. So first they carried forth the bodies of the slain, and set them beneath the gallery of the fenced court, and propped them one on another; and Odysseus himself hasted the women and directed them, and they carried forth the dead perforce. Thereafter they cleansed the fair high seats and the tables with water and porous sponges. And Telemachus, and the neatherd, and the swineherd, scraped with spades the floor of the well-builded house, and, behold, the maidens carried all forth and laid it without the doors.

Now when they had made an end of setting the hall in order, they led the maidens forth from the stablished hall, and drove them up in a narrow space between the vaulted room and the goodly fence of the court, whence none might avoid; and wise Telemachus began to speak to his fellows, saying: ‘God forbid that I should take these women’s lives by a clean death, these that have poured dishonour on my head and on my mother, and have lain with the wooers.’

With that word he tied the cable of a dark-prowed ship to a great pillar and flung it round the vaulted room, and fastened it aloft, that none might touch the ground with her feet. And even as when thrushes, long of wing, or doves fall into a net that is set in a thicket, as they seek to their roosting-place, and a loathly bed harbours them, even so the women held their heads all in a row, and about all their necks nooses were cast, that they might die by the most pitiful death. And they writhed with their feet for a little space, but for no long while.

Then they led out Melanthius through the doorway and the court, and cut off his nostrils and his ears with the pitiless sword, and drew forth his vitals for the dogs to devour raw, and cut off his hands and feet in their cruel anger.

Thereafter they washed their hands and feet, and went into the house to Odysseus, and all the adventure was over. So Odysseus called to the good nurse Eurycleia: ‘Bring sulphur, old nurse, that cleanses all pollution and bring me fire, that I may purify the house with sulphur, and do thou bid Penelope come here with her handmaidens, and tell all the women to hasten into the hall.’

Then the good nurse Eurycleia made answer: ‘Yea, my child, herein thou hast spoken aright. But go to, let me bring thee a mantle and a doublet for raiment, and stand not thus in the halls with thy broad shoulders wrapped in rags; it were blame in thee so to do.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: ‘First let a fire now be made me in the hall.’

So he spake, and the good nurse Eurycleia was not slow to obey, but brought fire and brimstone; and Odysseus thoroughly purged the women’s chamber and the great hall and the court.

Then the old wife went through the fair halls of Odysseus to tell the women, and to hasten their coming. So they came forth from their chamber with torches in their hands, and fell about Odysseus, and embraced him and kissed and clasped his head and shoulders and his hands lovingly, and a sweet longing came on him to weep and moan, for he remembered them every one.

BOOK XXIII

Odysseus maketh himself known to Penelope, tells his adventures briefly, and in the morning goes to Laertes and makes himself known to him.

Then the ancient woman went up into the upper chamber laughing aloud, to tell her mistress how her dear lord was within, and her knees moved fast for joy, and her feet stumbled one over the other; and she stood above the lady's head and spake to her, saying:

'Awake, Penelope, dear child, that thou mayest see with thine own eyes that which thou desirest day by day. Odysseus hath come, and hath got him to his own house, though late hath he come, and hath slain the proud wooers that troubled his house, and devoured his substance, and oppressed his child.'

Then wise Penelope answered her: 'Dear nurse, the gods have made thee distraught, the gods that can make foolish even the wisdom of the wise, and that stablish the simple in understanding. They it is that have marred thy reason, though heretofore thou hadst a prudent heart. Why dost thou mock me, who have a spirit full of sorrow, to speak these wild words, and rousest me out of sweet slumber, that had bound me and overshadowed mine eyelids? Never yet have I slept so sound since the day that Odysseus went forth to see that evil Ilios, never to be named. Go to now, get thee down and back to the women's chamber, for if any other of the maids of my house had come and brought me such tidings, and wakened me from sleep, straightway would I have sent her back woefully to return within the women's chamber; but this time thine old age shall stand thee in good stead.'

Then the good nurse Eurycleia answered her: 'I mock thee not, dear child, but in very deed Odysseus is here, and hath come home, even as I tell thee. He is that guest on whom all men wrought such dishonour in the halls. But long ago Telemachus was ware of him, that he was within the house, yet in his prudence he hid the counsels of his father, that he might take vengeance on the violence of the haughty wooers.'

Thus she spake, and then was Penelope glad, and leaping from her bed she fell on the old woman's neck, and let fall the tears from her eyelids, and uttering her voice spake to her winged words: 'Come, dear nurse, I pray thee, tell me all truly — if indeed he hath come home as thou sayest — how he hath laid his hands on the shameless wooers, he being but one man, while they abode ever in their companies within the house.’

Then the good nurse Eurycleia answered her: ‘I saw not, I wist not, only I heard the groaning of men slain. And we in an inmost place of the well-builded chambers sat all amazed, and the close-fitted doors shut in the room, till thy son called me from the chamber, for his father sent him out to that end. Then I found Odysseus standing among the slain, who around him, stretched on the hard floor, lay one upon the other; it would have comforted thy heart to see him, all stained like a lion with blood and soil of battle. And now are all the wooers gathered in an heap by the gates of the court, while he is purifying his fair house with brimstone, and hath kindled a great fire, and hath sent me forth to call thee. So come with me, that ye may both enter into your heart’s delight, {*} for ye have suffered much affliction. And even now hath this thy long desire been fulfilled; thy lord hath come alive to his own hearth, and hath found both thee and his son in the halls; and the wooers that wrought him evil he hath slain, every man of them in his house.’

{* Reading [Greek] . . . [Greek].}

Then wise Penelope answered her: ‘Dear nurse, boast not yet over them with laughter. Thou knowest how welcome the sight of him would be in the halls to all, and to me in chief, and to his son that we got between us. But this is no true tale, as thou declarest it, nay but it is one of the deathless gods that hath slain the proud wooers, in wrath at their bitter insolence and evil deeds. For they honoured none of earthly men, neither the good nor yet the bad, that came among them. Wherefore they have suffered an evil doom through their own infatuate deeds. But Odysseus, far away hath lost his homeward path to the Achaean land, and himself is lost.’

Then the good nurse Eurycleia made answer to her: ‘My child, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips, in that thou saidest that thy lord, who is even now within, and by his own hearthstone, would return no more? Nay, thy heart is ever hard of belief. Go to now, and I will tell thee besides a most manifest token, even the scar of the wound that the boar on a time dealt him with his white tusk. This I spied while washing his feet, and fain I would have told it even to thee, but he laid his hand on my mouth, and in the fulness of his wisdom suffered me not to speak. But come with me and I will stake my life on it; and if I play thee false, do thou slay me by a death most pitiful.’

Then wise Penelope made answer to her: ‘Dear nurse, it is hard for thee, how wise soever, to observe the purposes of the everlasting gods. None the less let us go to my child, that I may see the wooers dead, and him that slew them.’

With that word she went down from the upper chamber, and much her heart debated, whether she should stand apart, and question her dear lord or draw nigh, and clasp and kiss his head and hands. But when she had come within and had crossed the threshold of stone, she sat down over against Odysseus, in the light of the fire, by the further wall. Now he was sitting by the tall pillar, looking down and waiting to know if perchance his noble wife would speak to him, when her eyes beheld him. But she sat long in silence, and amazement came upon her soul, and now she would look upon him steadfastly with her eyes, and now again she knew him not, for that he was clad in vile raiment. And Telemachus rebuked her, and spake and hailed her:

‘Mother mine, ill mother, of an ungentle heart, why turnest thou thus away from my father, and dost not sit by him and question him and ask him all? No other woman in the world would harden her heart to stand thus aloof from her lord, who after much travail and sore had come to her in the twentieth year to his own country. But thy heart is ever harder than stone.’

Then wise Penelope answered him, saying: ‘Child, my mind is amazed within me, and I have no strength to speak, nor to ask him aught, nay nor to look on him face to face. But if in truth this be Odysseus, and he hath indeed come home, verily we shall be ware of each other the more surely, for we have tokens that we twain know, even we, secret from all others.’

So she spake, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus smiled, and quickly he spake to Telemachus winged words: ‘Telemachus, leave now thy mother to make trial of me within the chambers; so shall she soon come to a better knowledge than heretofore. But now I go filthy, and am clad in vile raiment, wherefore she has me in dishonour, and as yet will not allow that I am he. Let us then advise us how all may be for the very best. For whoso has slain but one man in a land, even that one leaves not many behind him to take up the feud for him, turns outlaw and leaves his kindred and his own country; but we have slain the very stay of the city, the men who were far the best of all the noble youths in Ithaca. So this I bid thee consider.’

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: ‘Father, see thou to this, for they say that thy counsel is far the best among men, nor might any other of mortal men contend with thee. But right eagerly will we go with thee now, and I think we shall not lack prowess, so far as might is ours.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘Yea now, I will tell on what wise methinks it is best. First, go ye to the bath and array you in your doublets, and bid the maidens in the chambers to take to them their garments. Then let the divine minstrel, with his loud lyre in hand, lead off for us the measure of the mirthful dance. So shall any man that hears the sound from without, whether a wayfarer or one of those that dwell around, say that it is a wedding feast. And thus the slaughter of the wooers shall not be noised abroad through the town before we go forth to our well-wooded farm-land. Thereafter shall we consider what gainful counsel the Olympian may vouchsafe us.’

So he spake, and they gave good ear and hearkened to him. So first they went to the bath, and arrayed them in doublets, and the women were apparelled, and the divine minstrel took the hollow harp, and aroused in them the desire of sweet song and of the happy dance. Then the great hall rang round them with the sound of the feet of dancing men and of fair-girdled women. And whoso heard it from without would say:

‘Surely some one has wedded the queen of many wooers. Hard of heart was she, nor had she courage to keep the great house of her wedded lord continually till his coming.’

Even so men spake, and knew not how these things were ordained. Meanwhile, the house-dame Eurynome had bathed the great-hearted Odysseus within his house, and anointed him with olive-oil, and cast about him a goodly mantle and a doublet. Moreover Athene shed great beauty from his head downwards, and made him greater and more mighty to behold, and from his head caused deep curling locks to flow, like the hyacinth flower. And as when some skilful man overlays gold upon silver, one that Hephaestus and Pallas Athene have taught all manner of craft, and full of grace is his handiwork, even so did Athene shed grace about his head and shoulders, and forth from the bath he came, in form like to the immortals. Then he sat down again on the high seat, whence he had arisen, over against his wife, and spake to her, saying:

‘Strange lady, surely to thee above all womankind the Olympians have given a heart that cannot be softened. No other woman in the world would harden her heart to stand thus aloof from her husband, who after much travail and sore had come to her, in the twentieth year, to his own country. Nay come, nurse, strew a bed for me to lie all alone, for assuredly her spirit within her is as iron.’

Then wise Penelope answered him again: ‘Strange man, I have no proud thoughts nor do I think scorn of thee, nor am I too greatly astonied, but I know right well what manner of man thou wert, when thou wentest forth out of Ithaca, on the long-oared galley. But come, Eurycleia, spread for him the good bedstead outside the stablished bridal chamber that he built himself. Thither bring ye forth the good bedstead and cast bedding thereon, even fleeces and rugs and shining blankets.’

So she spake and made trial of her lord, but Odysseus in sore displeasure spake to his true wife, saying: ‘Verily a bitter word is this, lady, that thou hast spoken. Who has set my bed otherwhere? Hard it would be for one, how skilled so ever, unless a god were to come that might easily set it in another place, if so he would. But of men there is none living, howsoever strong in his youth, that could lightly upheave it, for a great token is wrought in the fashioning of the bed, and it was I that made it and none other. There was growing a bush of olive, long of leaf, and most goodly of growth, within the inner court, and the stem as large as a pillar. Round about this I built the chamber, till I had finished it, with stones close set, and I roofed it over well and added thereto compacted doors fitting well. Next I sheared off all the light wood of the long-leaved olive, and rough-hewed the trunk upwards from the root, and smoothed it around with the adze, well and skilfully, and made straight the line thereto and so fashioned it into the bedpost, and I bored it all with the auger. Beginning from this bedpost, I wrought at the bedstead till I had finished it, and made it fair with inlaid work of gold and of silver and of ivory. Then I made fast therein a bright purple band of oxhide. Even so I declare to thee this token, and I know not, lady, if the bedstead be yet fast in his place, or if some man has cut away the stem of the olive tree, and set the bedstead otherwhere.'

So he spake, and at once her knees were loosened, and her heart melted within her, as she knew the sure tokens that Odysseus showed her. Then she fell a weeping, and ran straight toward him and cast her hands about his neck, and kissed his head and spake, saying:

'Be not angry with me, Odysseus, for thou wert ever at other times the wisest of men. It is the gods that gave us sorrow, the gods who begrudged us that we should abide together and have joy of our youth, and come to the threshold of old age. So now be not wroth with me hereat nor full of indignation, because at the first, when I saw thee, I did not welcome thee straightway. For always my heart within my breast shuddered, for fear lest some man should come and deceive me with his words, for many they be that devise gainful schemes and evil. Nay even Argive Helen, daughter of Zeus, would not have lain with a stranger, and taken him for a lover, had she known that the warlike sons of the Achaeans would bring her home again to her own dear country. Howsoever, it was the god that set her upon this shameful deed; nor ever, ere that, did she lay up in her heart the thought of this folly, a bitter folly, whence on us too first came sorrow. But now that thou hast told all the sure tokens of our bed, which never was seen by mortal man, save by thee and me and one maiden only, the daughter of Actor, that my father gave me ere yet I had come hither, she who kept the doors of our strong bridal chamber, even now dost thou bend my soul, all ungentle as it is.'

Thus she spake, and in his heart she stirred yet a greater longing to lament, and he wept as he embraced his beloved wife and true. And even as when the sight of land is welcome to swimmers, whose well-wrought ship Poseidon hath smitten on the deep, all driven with the wind and swelling waves, and but a remnant hath escaped the grey sea-water and swum to the shore, and their bodies are all crusted with the brine, and gladly have they set foot on land and escaped an evil end; so welcome to her was the sight of her lord, and her white arms she would never quite let go from his neck. And now would the rosy-fingered Dawn have risen upon their weeping, but the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, had other thoughts. The night she held long in the utmost West, and on the other side she stayed the golden-throned Dawn by the stream Oceanus, and suffered her not to harness the swift-footed steeds that bear light to men, Lampus and Phaethon, the steeds ever young, that bring the morning.

Then at the last, Odysseus of many counsels spake to his wife, saying: ‘Lady, we have not yet come to the issue of all our labours; but still there will be toil unmeasured, long and difficult, that I must needs bring to a full end. Even so the spirit of Teiresias foretold to me, on that day when I went down into the house of Hades, to inquire after a returning for myself and my company. Wherefore come, lady, let us to bed, that forthwith we may take our joy of rest beneath the spell of sweet sleep.’

Then wise Penelope answered him: ‘Thy bed verily shall be ready whensoever thy soul desires it, forasmuch as the gods have indeed caused thee to come back to thy stablished home and thine own country. But now that thou hast noted it and the god has put it into thy heart, come, tell me of this ordeal, for methinks the day will come when I must learn it, and timely knowledge is no hurt.’

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: ‘Ah, why now art thou so instant with me to declare it? Yet I will tell thee all and hide nought. Howbeit thy heart shall have no joy of it, as even I myself have no pleasure therein. For Teiresias bade me fare to many cities of men, carrying a shapen oar in my hands, till I should come to such men as know not the sea, neither eat meat savoured with salt, nor have they knowledge of ships of purple cheek nor of shapen oars, which serve for wings to ships. And he told me this with manifest token, which I will not hide from thee. In the day when another wayfarer should meet me and say that I had a winnowing fan on my stout shoulder, even then he bade me make fast my shapen oar in the earth, and do goodly sacrifice to the lord Poseidon, even with a ram and a bull and a boar, the mate of swine, and depart for home, and offer holy hecatombs to the deathless gods, that keep the wide heaven, to each in order due. And from the sea shall mine own death come, the gentlest death that may be, which shall end me, foredone, with smooth old age, and the folk shall dwell happily around. All this, he said, was to be fulfilled.’

Then wise Penelope answered him saying: ‘If indeed the gods will bring about for thee a happier old age at the last, then is there hope that thou mayest yet have an escape from evil.’

Thus they spake one to the other. Meanwhile, Eurynome and the nurse spread the bed with soft coverlets, by the light of the torches burning. But when they had busied them and spread the good bed, the ancient nurse went back to her chamber to lie down, and Eurynome, the bower-maiden, guided them on their way to the couch, with torches in her hands, and when she had led them to the bridal-chamber she departed. And so they came gladly to the rites of their bed, as of old. But Telemachus, and the neatherd, and the swineherd stayed their feet from dancing, and made the women to cease, and themselves gat them to rest through the shadowy halls.

Now when the twain had taken their fill of sweet love, they had delight in the tales, which they told one to the other. The fair lady spoke of all that she had endured in the halls at the sight of the ruinous throng of wooers, who for her sake slew many cattle, kine and goodly sheep; and many a cask of wine was broached. And in turn, Odysseus, of the seed of Zeus, recounted all the griefs he had wrought on men, and all his own travail and sorrow, and she was delighted with the story, and sweet sleep fell not upon her eyelids till the tale was ended.

He began by setting forth how he overcame the Cicones, and next arrived at the rich land of the Lotus-eaters, and all that the Cyclops wrought, and what a price he got from him for the good companions that he devoured, and showed no pity. Then how he came to Aeolus, who received him gladly and sent him on his way; but it was not yet ordained that he should reach his own country, for the storm-wind seized him again, and bare him over the teeming seas, making grievous moan. Next how he came to Telepylus of the Laestrygonians, who brake his ships and slew all his goodly-greaved companions, and Odysseus only escaped with his black ship. Then he told all the wiles and many contrivances of Circe, and how in a benched ship he fared to the dank house of Hades, to seek to the soul of Theban Teiresias. There he beheld all those that had been his companions, and his mother who bore him and nurtured him, while yet he was a little one. Then how he heard the song of the full-voiced Sirens, and came to the Rocks Wandering, and to terrible Charybdis, and to Scylla, that never yet have men avoided scatheless. Next he told how his company slew the kine of Helios, and how Zeus, that thunders on high, smote the swift ship with the flaming bolt, and the good crew perished all together, and he alone escaped from evil fates. And how he came to the isle Ogygia, and to the nymph Calypso, who kept him there in her hollow caves, longing to have him for her lord, and nurtured him and said that she would make him never to know death or age all his days: yet she never won his heart within his breast. Next how with great toil he came to the Phaeacians, who gave him all worship heartily, as to a god, and sent him with a ship to his own dear country, with gifts of bronze, and of gold, and raiment in plenty. This was the last word of the tale, when sweet sleep came speedily upon him, sleep that loosens the limbs of men, unknitting the cares of his soul.

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, turned to new thoughts. When she deemed that Odysseus had taken his fill of love and sleep, straightway she aroused from out Oceanus the golden-throned Dawn, to bear light to men. Then Odysseus gat him from his soft bed, and laid this charge on his wife, saying:

‘Lady, already have we had enough of labours, thou and I; thou, in weeping here, and longing for my troublous return, I, while Zeus and the other gods bound me fast in pain, despite my yearning after home, away from mine own country. But now that we both have come to the bed of our desire, take thou thought for the care of my wealth within the halls. But as for the sheep that the proud wooers have slain, I myself will lift many more as spoil, and others the Achaeans will give, till they fill all my folds. But now, behold, I go to the well-wooded farm-land, to see my good father, who for love of me has been in sorrow continually. And this charge I lay on thee, lady, too wise though thou art to need it. Quickly will the bruit go forth with the rising sun, the bruit concerning the wooers, whom I slew in the halls. Wherefore ascend with the women thy handmaids into the upper chamber, and sit there and look on no man, nor ask any question.’

Therewith he girded on his shoulder his goodly armour, and roused Telemachus and the neatherd and the swineherd, and bade them all take weapons of war in their hands. So they were not disobedient to his word, but clad themselves in mail, and opened the doors and went forth, and Odysseus led the way. And now there was light over all the earth; but them Athene hid in night, and quickly conducted out of the town.

BOOK XXIV

The Ithacans bury the wooers, and sitting in council resolve on revenge. And coming near the house of Laertes, are met by Odysseus, and Laertes with Telemachus and servants, the whole number twelve, and are overcome, and submit.

Now Cyllenian Hermes called forth from the halls the souls of the wooers, and he held in his hand his wand that is fair and golden, wherewith he lulls the eyes of men, of whomso he will, while others again he even wakens out of sleep. Herewith he roused and led the souls who followed gibbering. And even as bats flit gibbering in the secret place of a wondrous cave, when one has fallen down from the cluster on the rock, where they cling each to each up aloft, even so the souls gibbered as they fared together, and Hermes, the helper, led them down the dank ways. Past the streams of Oceanus and the White Rock, past the gates of the Sun they sped and the land of dreams, and soon they came to the mead of asphodel, where dwell the souls, the phantoms of men outworn. There they found the soul of Achilles son of Peleus, and the souls of Patroclus, and of noble Antilochus, and of Aias, who in face and form was goodliest of all the Danaans after the noble son of Peleus.

So these were flocking round Achilles, and the spirit of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, drew nigh sorrowful; and about him were gathered all the other shades, as many as perished with him in the house of Aegisthus, and met their doom. Now the soul of the son of Peleus spake to him first, saying:

‘Son of Atreus, verily we deemed that thou above all other heroes wast evermore dear to Zeus, whose joy is in the thunder, seeing that thou wast lord over warriors, many and mighty men, in the land of the Trojans where we Achaeans suffered affliction. But lo, thee too was deadly doom to visit early, {*} the doom that none avoids of all men born. Ah, would that in the fulness of thy princely honour, thou hadst met death and fate in the land of the Trojans! So would all the Achaean host have builded thee a barrow, yea and for thy son thou wouldst have won great glory in the aftertime. But now it has been decreed for thee to perish by a most pitiful death.’

{* Reading [Greek]}

Then the soul of the son of Atreus answered, and spake: ‘Happy art thou son of Peleus, godlike Achilles, that didst die in Troy-land far from Argos, and about thee fell others, the best of the sons of Trojans and Achaeans, fighting for thy body; but thou in the whirl of dust layest mighty and mightily fallen, forgetful of thy chivalry. And we strove the livelong day, nor would we ever have ceased from the fight, if Zeus had not stayed us with a tempest. Anon when we had borne thee to the ships from out of the battle, we laid thee on a bier and washed thy fair flesh clean with warm water and unguents, and around thee the Danaans shed many a hot tear and shore their hair. And forth from the sea came thy mother with the deathless maidens of the waters, when they heard the tidings; and a wonderful wailing rose over the deep, and trembling fell on the limbs of all the Achaeans. Yea, and they would have sprung up and departed to the hollow ships, had not one held them back that knew much lore from of old, Nestor, whose counsel proved heretofore the best. Out of his good will he made harangue, and spake among them:

'"Hold, ye Argives, flee not, young lords of the Achaeans. Lo, his mother from the sea is she that comes, with the deathless maidens of the waters, to behold the face of her dead son."

'So he spake, and the high-hearted Achaeans ceased from their flight. Then round thee stood the daughters of the ancient one of the sea, holding a pitiful lament, and they clad thee about in raiment incorruptible. And all the nine Muses one to the other replying with sweet voices began the dirge; there thou wouldest not have seen an Argive but wept, so mightily rose up the clear chant. Thus for seventeen days and nights continually did we all bewail thee, immortal gods and mortal men. On the eighteenth day we gave thy body to the flames, and many well-fatted sheep we slew around thee, and kine of shambling gait. So thou wert burned in the garments of the gods, and in much unguents and in sweet honey, and many heroes of the Achaeans moved mail-clad around the pyre when thou wast burning, both footmen and horse, and great was the noise that arose. But when the flame of Hephaestus had utterly abolished thee, lo, in the morning we gathered together thy white bones, Achilles, and bestowed them in unmixed wine and in unguents. Thy mother gave a twy-handled golden urn, and said that it was the gift of Dionysus, and the workmanship of renowned Hephaestus. Therein lie thy white bones, great Achilles, and mingled therewith the bones of Patroclus son of Menoetias, that is dead, but apart is the dust of Antilochus, whom thou didst honour above all thy other companions, after Patroclus that was dead. Then over them did we pile a great and goodly tomb, we the holy host of Argive warriors, high on a jutting headland over wide Hellespont, that it might be far seen from off the sea by men that now are, and by those that shall be hereafter. Then thy mother asked the gods for glorious prizes in the games, and set them in the midst of the lists for the champions of the Achaeans. In days past thou hast been at the funeral games of many a hero, whenso, after some king's death, the young men gird themselves and make them ready for the meed of victory; but couldst thou have seen these gifts thou wouldst most have marvelled in spirit, such glorious prizes did the goddess set there to honour thee, even Thetis, the silver-footed; for very dear wert thou to the gods. Thus not even in death hast thou lost thy name, but to thee shall be a fair renown for ever among all men, Achilles. But what joy have I now herein, that I have wound up the clew of war, for on my return Zeus devised for me an evil end at the hands of Aegisthus and my wife accursed?'

So they spake one to the other. And nigh them came the Messenger, the slayer of Argos, leading down the ghosts of the wooers by Odysseus slain, and the two heroes were amazed at the sight and went straight toward them. And the soul of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, knew the dear son of Melaneus, renowned Amphimedon, who had been his host, having his dwelling in Ithaca. The soul of the son of Atreus spake to him first, saying:

'Amphimedon, what hath befallen you, that ye have come beneath the darkness of earth, all of you picked men and of like age? it is even as though one should choose out and gather together the best warriors in a city. Did Poseidon smite you in your ships and rouse up contrary winds and the long waves? Or did unfriendly men, perchance, do you hurt upon the land as ye were cutting off their oxen and fair flocks of sheep, or while they fought to defend their city and the women thereof? Answer and tell me, for I avow me a friend of thy house. Rememberest thou not the day when I came to your house in Ithaca with godlike Menelaus, to urge Odysseus to follow with me to Ilios on the decked ships? And it was a full month ere we had sailed all across the wide sea, for scarce could we win to our cause Odysseus, waster of cities.'

Then the ghost of Amphimedon answered him, and spake: 'Most famous son of Atreus, king of men, Agamemnon, I remember all these things, O fosterling of Zeus, as thou declarest them, and I in turn will tell thee all the tale well and truly, even our death and evil end, on what wise it befell. We wooed the wife of Odysseus that was long afar, and she neither refused the hated bridal nor was minded to make an end, devising for us death and black fate. Also this other wile she contrived in her heart. She set up in her halls a mighty web, fine of woof and very wide, whereat she would weave, and anon she spake among us:

'"Ye princely youths, my wooers, now that goodly Odysseus is dead, do ye abide patiently, how eager soever to speed on this marriage of mine, till I finish the robe. I would not that the threads perish to no avail, even this shroud for the hero Laertes, against the day when the ruinous doom shall bring him low, of death that lays men at their length. So shall none of the Achaean women in the land count it blame in me, as well might be, were he to lie without a winding-sheet, a man that had gotten great possessions."

‘So spake she, and our high hearts consented thereto. So then in the daytime she would weave the mighty web, and in the night unravel the same, when she had let place the torches by her. Thus for the space of three years she hid the thing by guile and won the minds of the Achaeans; but when the fourth year arrived and the seasons came round, as the months waned and many days were accomplished, then it was that one of her women who knew all declared it, and we found her unravelling the splendid web. Thus she finished it perforce and sore against her will. Now when she brought the robe to light, after she had woven the great web and washed it, and it shone even as sun or moon, at that very hour some evil god led Odysseus, I know not whence, to the upland farm, where the swineherd abode in his dwelling. Thither too came the dear son of divine Odysseus out of sandy Pylos, voyaging with his black ship. These twain framed an evil death for the wooers, and came to the renowned town. Odysseus verily came the later, and Telemachus went before and led the way. Now the swineherd brought Odysseus clad in vile raiment, in the likeness of a beggar, a wretched man and an old, leaning on a staff, and behold, he was clad about in sorry raiment. And none of us, not even the elders, could know him for that he was, on this his sudden appearing, but with evil words we assailed him and hurled things at him. Yet for a while he hardened his heart to endure both the hurlings and the evil words in his own halls; but at the last, when the spirit of Zeus, lord of the aegis, aroused him, by the help of Telemachus he took up all the goodly weapons, and laid them by in the inner chamber and drew the bolts. Next in his great craft he bade his wife to offer his bow and store of grey iron to the wooers to be the weapons of our contest, luckless that we were, and the beginning of death. Now not one of us could stretch the string of the strong bow; far short we fell of that might. But when the great bow came to the hands of Odysseus, then we all clamoured and forbade to give him the bow, how much soever he might speak, but Telemachus alone was instant with him and commanded him to take it. Then he took the bow into his hands, the steadfast goodly Odysseus, and lightly he strung it, and sent the arrow through the iron. Then straight he went to the threshold and there took his stand, and poured forth the swift arrows, glancing terribly around, and smote the king Antinous. Thereafter on the others he let fly his bolts, winged for death, with straight aim, and the wooers fell thick one upon another. Then was it known how that some god was their helper, for pressing on as their passion drave them, they slew the men right and left through the halls, and thence there arose a hideous moaning, as heads were smitten and the floor all ran with blood. So we perished, Agamemnon, and even now our bodies lie uncared for in the halls of Odysseus, for the friends of each one at home as yet know nought, even they who might wash the black-clotted blood out of our wounds, and lay out the bodies and wail the dirge, for that is the due of the dead.’

Then the ghost of the son of Atreus answered him: ‘Ah, happy son of Laertes, Odysseus of many devices, yea, for a wife most excellent hast thou gotten, so good was the wisdom of constant Penelope, daughter of Icarius, that was duly mindful of Odysseus, her wedded lord. Wherefore the fame of her virtue shall never perish, but the immortals will make a gracious song in the ears of men on earth to the fame of constant Penelope. In far other wise did the daughter of Tyndareus devise ill deeds, and slay her wedded lord, and hateful shall the song of her be among men, and an evil repute hath she brought upon all womankind, even on the upright.’

Even so these twain spake one to the other, standing in the house of Hades, beneath the secret places of the earth.

Now when those others had gone down from the city, quickly they came to the rich and well-ordered farm land of Laertes, that he had won for himself of old, as the prize of great toil in war. There was his house, and all about it ran the huts wherein the thralls were wont to eat and dwell and sleep, bondsmen that worked his will. And in the house there was an old Sicilian woman, who diligently cared for the old man, in the upland far from the city. There Odysseus spake to his thralls and to his son, saying:

‘Do ye now get you within the well-builded house, and quickly sacrifice the best of the swine for the midday meal, but I will make trial of my father, whether he will know me again and be aware of me when he sees me, or know me not, so long have I been away,’

Therewith he gave the thralls his weapons of war. Then they went speedily to the house, while Odysseus drew near to the fruitful vineyard to make trial of his father. Now he found not Dolius there, as he went down into the great garden, nor any of the thralls nor of their sons. It chanced that they had all gone to gather stones for a garden fence, and the old man at their head. So he found his father alone in the terraced vineyard, digging about a plant. He was clothed in a filthy doublet, patched and unseemly, with clouted leggings of oxhide bound about his legs, against the scratches of the thorns, and long sleeves over his hands by reason of the brambles, and on his head he wore a goatskin cap, and so he nursed his sorrow. Now when the steadfast goodly Odysseus saw his father thus wasted with age and in great grief of heart, he stood still beneath a tall pear tree and let fall a tear. Then he communed with his heart and soul, whether he should fall on his father’s neck and kiss him, and tell him all, how he had returned and come to his own country, or whether he should first question him and prove him in every word. And as he thought within himself, this seemed to him the better way, namely, first to prove his father and speak to him sharply. So with this intent the goodly Odysseus went up to him. Now he was holding his head down and kept digging about the plant, while his renowned son stood by him and spake, saying:

'Old man, thou hast no lack of skill in tending a garden; lo, thou carest well for all, {*} nor is there aught whatsoever, either plant or fig-tree, or vine, yea, or olive, or pear, or garden-bed in all the close, that is not well seen to. Yet another thing will I tell thee and lay not up wrath thereat in thy heart. Thyself art scarce so well cared for, but a pitiful old age is on thee, and withal thou art withered and unkempt, and clad unseemly. It cannot be to punish thy sloth that thy master cares not for thee; there shows nothing of the slave about thy face and stature, for thou art like a kingly man, even like one who should lie soft, when he has washed and eaten well, as is the manner of the aged. But come declare me this and plainly tell it all. Whose thrall art thou, and whose garden dost thou tend? Tell me moreover truly, that I may surely know, if it be indeed to Ithaca that I am now come, as one yonder told me who met with me but now on the way hither. He was but of little understanding, for he deigned not to tell me all nor to heed my saying, when I questioned him concerning my friend, whether indeed he is yet alive or is even now dead and within the house of Hades. For I will declare it and do thou mark and listen: once did I kindly entreat a man in mine own dear country, who came to our home, and never yet has any mortal been dearer of all the strangers that have drawn to my house from afar. He declared him to be by lineage from out of Ithaca, and said that his own father was Laertes son of Arceisius. So I led him to our halls and gave him good entertainment, with all loving-kindness, out of the plenty that was within. Such gifts too I gave him as are the due of guests; of well wrought gold I gave him seven talents, and a mixing bowl of flowered work, all of silver, and twelve cloaks of single fold, and as many coverlets, and as many goodly mantles and doublets to boot, and besides all these, four women skilled in all fair works and most comely, the women of his choice.'

{* Supplying [Greek] from the preceding clause as object to
[Greek]. Other constructions are possible.}

Then his father answered him, weeping: 'Stranger, thou art verily come to that country whereof thou askest, but outrageous men and froward hold it. And these thy gifts, thy countless gifts, thou didst bestow in vain. For if thou hadst found that man yet living in the land of Ithaca he would have sent thee on thy way with good return of thy presents, and with all hospitality, as is due to the man that begins the kindness. But come, declare me this and plainly tell me all; how many years are passed since thou didst entertain him, thy guest ill-fated and my child, — if ever such an one there was, — hapless man, whom far from his friends and his country’s soil, the fishes, it may be, have devoured in the deep sea, or on the shore he has fallen the prey of birds and beasts. His mother wept not over him nor clad him for burial, nor his father, we that begat him. Nor did his bride, whom men sought with rich gifts, the constant Penelope, bewail her lord upon the bier, as was meet, nor closed his eyes, as is the due of the departed. Moreover, tell me this truly, that I may surely know, who art thou and whence of the sons of men? Where is thy city and where are they that begat thee? Where now is thy swift ship moored, that brought thee thither with thy godlike company? Hast thou come as a passenger on another’s ship, while they set thee ashore and went away?

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: ‘Yea now, I will tell thee all most plainly. From out of Alybas I come, where I dwell in a house renowned, and am the son of Apheidas the son of Polypemon, the prince, and my own name is Eperitus. But some god drave me wandering hither from Sicania against my will, and yonder my ship is moored toward the upland away from the city. But for Odysseus, this is now the fifth year since he went thence and departed out of my country. Ill-fated was he, and yet he had birds of good omen when he fared away, birds on the right; wherefore I sped him gladly on his road, and gladly he departed, and the heart of us twain hoped yet to meet in friendship on a day and to give splendid gifts.’

So he spake, and on the old man fell a black cloud of sorrow. With both his hands he clutched the dust and ashes and showered them on his gray head, with ceaseless groaning. Then the heart of Odysseus was moved, and up through his nostrils throbbed anon the keen sting of sorrow at the sight of his dear father. And he sprang towards him and fell on his neck and kissed him, saying:

‘Behold, I here, even I, my father, am the man of whom thou askest; in the twentieth year am I come to mine own country. But stay thy weeping and tearful lamentation, for I will tell thee all clearly, though great need there is of haste. I have slain the wooers in our halls and avenged their bitter scorn and evil deeds.’

Then Laertes answered him and spake, saying: ‘If thou art indeed Odysseus, mine own child, that art come hither, show me now a manifest token, that I may be assured.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘Look first on this scar and consider it, that the boar dealt me with his white tusk on Parnassus, whither I had gone, and thou didst send me forth, thou and my lady mother, to Autolycus my mother’s father, to get the gifts which when he came hither he promised and covenanted to give me. But come, and I will even tell thee the trees through all the terraced garden, which thou gavest me once for mine own, and I was begging of thee this and that, being but a little child, and following thee through the garden. Through these very trees we were going, and thou didst tell me the names of each of them. Pear-trees thirteen thou gavest me and ten apple-trees and figs two-score, and, as we went, thou didst name the fifty rows of vines thou wouldest give me, whereof each one ripened at divers times, with all manner of clusters on their boughs, when the seasons of Zeus wrought mightily on them from on high.’

So he spake, and straightway his knees were loosened, and his heart melted within him, as he knew the sure tokens that Odysseus showed him. About his dear son he cast his arms, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus caught him fainting to his breast. Now when he had got breath and his spirit came to him again, once more he answered and spake, saying:

‘Father Zeus, verily ye gods yet bear sway on high Olympus, if indeed the wooers have paid for their infatuate pride! But now my heart is terribly afraid, lest straightway all the men of Ithaca come up against us here, and haste to send messengers everywhere to the cities of the Cephallenians.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: ‘Take courage, and let not thy heart be careful about these matters. But come, let us go to the house that lies near the garden, for thither I sent forward Telemachus and the neatherd and the swineherd to get ready the meal as speedily as may be.’

After these words the twain set out to the goodly halls. Now when they had come to the fair-lying house, they found Telemachus and the neatherd and the swineherd carving much flesh, and mixing the dark wine. Meanwhile the Sicilian handmaid bathed high-hearted Laertes in his house, and anointed him with olive-oil, and cast a fair mantle about him. Then Athene drew nigh, and made greater the limbs of the shepherd of the people, taller she made him than before and mightier to behold. Then he went forth from the bath, and his dear son marvelled at him, beholding him like to the deathless gods in presence. And uttering his voice he spake to him winged words:

‘Father, surely one of the gods that are from everlasting hath made thee goodlier and greater to behold.’

Then wise Laertes answered him, saying: ‘Ah, would to father Zeus and Athene and Apollo, that such as I was when I took Nericus, the stablished castle on the foreland of the continent, being then the prince of the Cephallenians, would that in such might, and with mail about my shoulders, I had stood to aid thee yesterday in our house, and to beat back the wooers; so should I have loosened the knees of many an one of them in the halls, and thou shouldest have been gladdened in thine inmost heart!’

So they spake each with the other. But when the others had ceased from their task and made ready the feast, they sat down all orderly on chairs and on high seats. Then they began to put forth their hands on the meat, and the old man Dolius drew nigh, and the old man’s sons withal came tired from their labour in the fields, for their mother, the aged Sicilian woman, had gone forth and called them, she that saw to their living and diligently cared for the old man, now that old age had laid hold on him. So soon as they looked on Odysseus and took knowledge of him, they stood still in the halls in great amazement. But Odysseus addressed them in gentle words, saying:

‘Old man, sit down to meat and do ye forget your marvelling, for long have we been eager to put forth our hands on the food, as we abode in the hall alway expecting your coming.’

So he spake, and Dolius ran straight toward him stretching forth both his hands, and he grasped the hand of Odysseus and kissed it on the wrist, and uttering his voice spake to him winged words:

‘Beloved, forasmuch as thou hast come back to us who sore desired thee, and no longer thought to see thee, and the gods have led thee home again; — hail to thee and welcome manifold, and may the gods give thee all good fortune! Moreover tell me this truly, that I may be assured, whether wise Penelope yet knows well that thou hast come back hither, or whether we shall dispatch a messenger.’

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered saying: ‘Old man, already she knows all; what need to busy thyself herewith?’

Thereon the other sat him down again on his polished settle. And in like wise the sons of Dolius gathered about the renowned Odysseus, and greeted him well and clasped his hands, and then sat down all orderly by Dolius their father.

So they were busy with the meal in the halls. Now Rumour the messenger went swiftly all about the city, telling the tale of the dire death and fate of the wooers. And the people heard it, and all at once gathered together from every side with sighing and groaning before the house of Odysseus. And each brought forth his dead from the halls, and buried them; but those that came out of other cities they placed on swift ships and sent with fisherfolk, each to be carried to his own home. As for them they all fared together to the assembly-place, in sorrow of heart. When they were all gathered and come together, Eupeithes arose and spake among them, for a comfortless grief lay heavy on his heart for his son Antinous, the first man that goodly Odysseus had slain. Weeping for him he made harangue and spake among them:

‘Friends, a great deed truly hath this man devised against the Achaeans. Some with his ships he led away, many men, and noble, and his hollow ships hath he lost, and utterly lost of his company, and others again, and those far the best of the Cephallenians he hath slain on his coming home. Up now, before ever he gets him swiftly either to Pylos or to fair Elis, where the Epeians bear sway, let us go forth; else even hereafter shall we have shame of face for ever. For a scorn this is even for the ears of men unborn to hear, if we avenge not ourselves on the slayers of our sons and of our brethren. Life would no more be sweet to me, but rather would I die straightway and be with the departed. Up, let us be going, lest these fellows be beforehand with us and get them over the sea.'

Thus he spake weeping, and pity fell on all the Achaeans. Then came near to them Medon and the divine minstrel, forth from the halls of Odysseus, for that sleep had let them go. They stood in the midst of the gathering, and amazement seized every man. Then Medon, wise of heart, spake among them, saying:

'Hearken to me now, ye men of Ithaca, for surely Odysseus planned not these deeds without the will of the gods. Nay I myself beheld a god immortal, who stood hard by Odysseus, in the perfect semblance of Mentor; now as a deathless god was he manifest in front of Odysseus, cheering him, and yet again scaring the wooers he stormed through the hall, and they fell thick one on another.'

Thus he spake, and pale fear gat hold of the limbs of all. Then the old man, the lord Halitherses, spake among them, the son of Mastor, for he alone saw before and after. Out of his good will be made harangue and spake among them, saying:

'Hearken to me now, ye men of Ithaca, to the word that I will say. Through your own cowardice, my friends, have these deeds come to pass. For ye obeyed not me, nor Mentor, the shepherd of the people, to make your sons cease from their foolish ways. A great villainy they wrought in their evil infatuation, wasting the wealth and holding in no regard the wife of a prince, while they deemed that he would never more come home. And now let things be on this wise, and obey my counsel. Let us not go forth against him, lest haply some may find a bane of their own bringing.'

So he spake, but they leapt up with a great cry, the more part of them, while the rest abode there together; for his counsel was not to the mind of the more part, but they gave ear to Eupeithes, and swiftly thereafter they rushed for their armour. So when they had arrayed them in shining mail, they assembled together in front of the spacious town. And Eupeithes led them in his witlessness, for he thought to avenge the slaying of his son, yet himself was never to return, but then and there to meet his doom.

Now Athene spake to Zeus, the son of Cronos, saying: 'O Father, our father Cronides, throned in the highest, answer and tell me what is now the hidden counsel of thy heart? Wilt thou yet further rouse up evil war and the terrible din of battle, or art thou minded to set them at one again in friendship?'

Then Zeus, the gatherer of the clouds, answered her saying: 'My child, why dost thou thus straitly question me, and ask me this? Nay didst not thou thyself devise this very thought, namely, that Odysseus should indeed take vengeance on these men at his coming? Do as thou wilt, but I will tell thee of the better way. Now that goodly Odysseus hath wreaked vengeance on the wooers, let them make a firm covenant together with sacrifice, and let him be king all his days, and let us bring about oblivion of the slaying of their children and their brethren; so may both sides love one another as of old, and let peace and wealth abundant be their portion.'

Therewith he roused Athene to yet greater eagerness, and from the peaks of Olympus she came glancing down.

Now when they had put from them the desire of honey-sweet food, the steadfast goodly Odysseus began to speak among them, saying:

'Let one go forth and see, lest the people be already drawing near against us.'

So he spake, and the son of Dolius went forth at his bidding, and stood on the outer threshold and saw them all close at hand. Then straightway he spake to Odysseus winged words:

'Here they be, close upon us! Quick, let us to arms!'

Thereon they rose up and arrayed them in their harness, Odysseus and his men being four, and the six sons of Dolius, and likewise Laertes and Dolius did on their armour, grey-headed as they were, warriors through stress of need. Now when they had clad them in shining mail, they opened the gates and went forth and Odysseus led them.

Then Athene, daughter of Zeus, drew near them in the likeness of Mentor, in fashion and in voice. And the steadfast goodly Odysseus beheld her and was glad, and straightway he spake to Telemachus his dear son:

'Telemachus, soon shalt thou learn this, when thou thyself art got to the place of the battle where the best men try the issue, — namely, not to bring shame on thy father's house, on us who in time past have been eminent for might and hardihood over all the world.'

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: 'Thou shalt see me, if thou wilt, dear father, in this my mood no whit disgracing thy line, according to thy word.'

So spake he, and Laertes was glad and spake, saying: 'What a day has dawned for me, kind gods; yea, a glad man am I! My son and my son's son are vying with one another in valour.'

Then grey-eyed Athene stood beside Laertes, and spake to him: 'O son of Arceisius that art far the dearest of all my friends, pray first to the grey-eyed maid and to father Zeus, then swing thy long spear aloft and hurl its straightway.'

Therewith Pallas Athene breathed into him great strength. Then he prayed to the daughter of mighty Zeus, and straightway swung his long spear aloft and hurled it, and smote Eupeithes through his casque with the cheek-piece of bronze. The armour kept not out the spear that went clean through, and he fell with a crash, and his arms rattled about his body. Then Odysseus and his renowned son fell on the fore-fighters, and smote them with swords and two-headed spears. And now would they have slain them all and cut off their return, had not Athene called aloud, the daughter of Zeus lord of the aegis, and stayed all the host of the enemy, saying:

‘Hold your hands from fierce fighting, ye men of Ithaca, that so ye may be parted quickly, without bloodshed.’

So spake Athene, and pale fear gat hold of them all. The arms flew from their hands in their terror and fell all upon the ground, as the goddess uttered her voice. To the city they turned their steps, as men fain of life, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus with a terrible cry gathered himself together and hurled in on them, like an eagle of lofty flight. Then in that hour the son of Cronos cast forth a flaming bolt, and it fell at the feet of the grey-eyed goddess, the daughter of the mighty Sire. Then grey-eyed Athene spake to Odysseus, saying:

‘Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, refrain thee now and stay the strife of even-handed war, lest perchance the son of Cronos be angry with thee, even Zeus of the far-borne voice.’

So spake Athene, and he obeyed and was glad at heart. And thereafter Pallas Athene set a covenant between them with sacrifice, she, the daughter of Zeus lord of the aegis, in the likeness of Mentor, both in fashion and in voice.

Homer, thy song men liken to the sea,
With every note of music in his tone,
With tides that wash the dim dominion
Of Hades, and light waves that laugh in glee
Around the isles enchanted: nay, to me
Thy verse seems as the River of source unknown
That glasses Egypt’s temples overthrown,
In his sky-nurtur’d stream, eternally.
No wiser we than men of heretofore
To find thy mystic fountains guarded fast;
Enough — thy flood makes green our human shore
As Nilus, Egypt, rolling down his vast,
His fertile waters, murmuring evermore
Of gods dethroned, and empires of the Past.

A. L.

THEOCRITUS BION AND MOSCHUS

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LIFE OF THEOCRITUS

(*From Suidas*)

Theocritus, the Chian. But there is another Theocritus, the son of Praxagoras and Philinna (see Epigram XXIII), or as some say of Simichus. (This is plainly derived from the assumed name Simichidas in Idyl VII.) He was a Syracusan, or, as others say, a Coan settled in Syracuse. He wrote the so-called *Bucolics* in the Dorian dialect. Some attribute to him the following works:- *The Proetidae, The Pleasures of Hope (‘•»À¹´µÂ), Hymns, The Heroines, Dirges, Ditties, Elegies, Iambics, Epigrams*. But it known that there are three Bucolic poets: this Theocritus, Moschus of Sicily, and Bion of Smyrna, from a village called Phlossa.

LIFE OF THEOCRITUS
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(*Usually prefixed to the Idyls*)

Theocritus the Bucolic poet was a Syracusan by extraction, and the son of Simichidas, as he says himself, *Simichidas, pray whither through the noon dost thou dray thy feet*? (Idyl VII). Some say that this was an assumed name, for he seems to have been snub-nosed (Ã¹¼¿Â), and that his father was Praxagoras, and his mother Philinna. He became the pupil of Philetas and Asclepiades, of whom he speaks (Idyl VII), and flourished about the time of Ptolemy Lagus. He gained much fame for his skill in bucolic poetry. According to some his original name was Moschus, and Theocritus was a name he later assumed.

THEOCRITUS AND HIS AGE

At the beginning of the third century before Christ, in the years just preceding those in which Theocritus wrote, the genius of Greece seemed to have lost her productive force. Nor would it have been strange if that force had really been exhausted. Greek poetry had hitherto enjoyed a peculiarly free development, each form of art succeeding each without break or pause, because each - epic, lyric, dithyramb, the drama - had responded to some new need of the state and of religion. Now in the years that followed the fall of Athens and the conquests of Macedonia, Greek religion and the Greek state had ceased to be themselves. Religion and the state had been the patrons of poetry; on their decline poetry seemed dead. There were no heroic kings, like those for whom epic minstrels had chanted. The cities could no longer welcome an Olympian winner with Pindaric hymns. There was no imperial Athens to fill the theatres with a crowd of citizens and strangers eager to listen to new tragic masterpieces. There was no humorous democracy to laugh at all the world, and at itself, with Aristophanes. The very religion of Sophocles and Aeschylus was debased. A vulgar usurper had stripped the golden ornaments from Athene of the Parthenon. The ancient faith in the protecting gods of Athens, of Sparta, and of Thebes, had become a lax readiness to bow down in the temple of any Oriental Rimmon, of Serapis or Adonis. Greece had turned her face, with Alexander of Macedon, to the East; Alexander had fallen, and Greece had become little better than the western portion of a divided Oriental empire. The centre of intellectual life had been removed from Athens to Alexandria *(founded* 332 B.C.) The new Greek cities of Egypt and Asia, and above all Alexandria, seemed no cities at all to Greeks who retained the pure Hellenic traditions. Alexandria was thirty times larger than the size assigned by Aristotle to a well-balanced state. Austere spectators saw in Alexandria an Eastern capital and mart, a place of harems and bazaars, a home of tyrants, slaves, dreamers, and pleasure-seekers. Thus a Greek of the old school must have despaired of Greek poetry. There was nothing (he would have said) to evoke it; no dawn of liberty could flush this silent Memnon into song. The collectors, critics, librarians of Alexandria could only produce literary imitations of the epic and the hymn, or could at best write epigrams or inscriptions for the statue of some alien and luxurious god. Their critical activity in every field of literature was immense, their original genius sterile. In them the intellect of the Hellenes still faintly glowed, like embers on an altar that shed no light on the way. Yet over these embers the god poured once again the sacred oil, and from the dull mass leaped, like a many-coloured frame, the genius of THEOCRITUS.

To take delight in that genius, so human, so kindly, so musical in expression, requires, it may be said, no long preparation. The art of Theocritus scarcely needs to be illustrated by any description of the conditions among which it came to perfection. It is always impossible to analyse into its component parts the genius of a poet. But it is not impossible to detect some of the influences that worked on Theocritus. We can study his early ‘environment’; the country scenes he knew, and the songs of the neatherds which he elevated into art. We can ascertain the nature of the demand for poetry in the chief cities and in the literary society of the time. As a result, we can understand the broad twofold division of the poems of Theocritus into rural and epic idyls, and with this we must rest contented.

It is useless to attempt a regular biography of Theocritus. Facts and dates are alike wanting, the ancient accounts (p. ix) are clearly based on his works, but it is by no means impossible to construct a 'legend' or romance of his life, by aid of his own verses, and of hints and fragments which reach us from the past and the present. The genius of Theocritus was so steeped in the colours of human life, he bore such true and full witness as to the scenes and men he knew, that life (always essentially the same) becomes in turn a witness to his veracity. He was born in the midst of nature that, through all the changes of things, has never lost its sunny charm. The existence he loved best to contemplate, that of southern shepherds, fishermen, rural people, remains what it always has been in Sicily and in the isles of Greece. The habits and the passions of his countryfolk have not altered, the echoes of their old love-songs still sound among the pines, or by the sea-banks, where Theocritus 'watched the visionary flocks.'

Theocritus was probably born in an early decade of the third century, or, according to Couat, about 315 B.C., and was a native of Syracuse, 'the greatest of Greek cities, the fairest of all cities.' So Cicero calls it, describing the four quarters that were encircled by its walls, - each quarter as large as a town, - the fountain Arethusa, the stately temples with their doors of ivory and gold. On the fortunate dwellers in Syracuse, Cicero says, the sun shone every day, and there was never a morning so tempestuous but the sunlight conquered at last, and broke through the clouds. That perennial sunlight still floods the poems of Theocritus with its joyous glow. His birthplace was the proper home of an idyllic poet, of one who, with all his enjoyment of the city life of Greece, had yet been 'breathed on by the rural Pan,' and best loved the sights and sounds and fragrant air of the forests and the coast. Thanks to the mountainous regions of Sicily, to Etna, with her volcanic cliffs and snow-fed streams, thanks also to the hills of the interior, the populous island never lost the charm of nature. Sicily was not like the overcrowded and over-cultivated Attica; among the Sicilian heights and by the coast were few enclosed estates and narrow farms. The character of the people, too, was attuned to poetry. The Dorian settlers had kept alive the magic of rivers, of pools where the Nereids dance, and uplands haunted by Pan. This popular poetry influenced the literary verse of Sicily. The songs of Stesichorus, a minstrel of the early period, and the little rural 'mimes' or interludes of Sophron are lost, and we have only fragments of Epicharmus. But it seems certain that these poets, predecessors of Theocritus, liked to mingle with their own composition strains of rustic melody, *volks-lieder*, ballads, love-songs, ditties, and dirges, such as are still chanted by the peasants of Greece and Italy. Thus in Syracuse and the other towns of the coast, Theocritus would have always before his eyes the spectacle of refined and luxurious manners, and always in his ears the babble of the Dorian women, while he had only to pass the gates, and wander through the fens of Lysimeleia, by the brackish mere, or ride into the hills, to find himself in the golden world of pastoral. Thinking of his early years, and of the education that nature gives the poet, we can imagine him, like Callicles in Mr. Arnold's poem, singing at the banquet of a merchant or a general -

'With his head full of wine, and his hair crown'd,
Touching his harp as the whim came on him,
And praised and spoil'd by master and by guests,
Almost as much as the new dancing girl.'

We can recover the world that met his eyes and inspired his poems, though the dates of the composition of these poems are unknown. We can follow him, in fancy, as he breaks from the revellers and wanders out into the night. Wherever he turned his feet, he could find such scenes as he has painted in the idyls. If the moon rode high in heaven, as he passed through the outlying gardens he might catch a glimpse of some deserted girl shredding the magical herbs into the burning brazier, and sending upward to the 'lady Selene' the song which was to charm her lover home. The magical image melted in the burning, the herbs smouldered, the tale of love was told, and slowly the singer 'drew the quiet night into her blood.' Her lay ended with a passage of softened melancholy -

'Do thou farewell, and turn thy steeds to Ocean, lady, and my pain I will endure, even as I have declared. Farewell, Selene beautiful; farewell, ye other stars that follow the wheels of Night.'

A grammarian says that Theocritus borrowed this second idyl, the story of Simaetha, from a piece by Sophron. But he had no need to borrow from anything but the nature before his eyes. Ideas change so little among the Greek country people, and the hold of superstition is so strong, that betrayed girls even now sing to the Moon their prayer for pity and help. Theocritus himself could have added little passion to this incantation, still chanted in the moonlit nights of Greece: {0a}

'Bright golden Moon, that now art near to thy setting, go thou and salute my lover, he that stole my love, and that kissed me, and said, "Never will I leave thee.” And, lo, he has left me, like a field reaped and gleaned, like a church where no man comes to pray, like a city desolate. Therefore I would curse him, and yet again my heart fails me for tenderness, my heart is vexed within me, my spirit is moved with anguish. Nay, even so I will lay my curse on him, and let God do even as He will, with my pain and with my crying, with my flame, and mine imprecations.’

It is thus that the women of the islands, like the girl of Syracuse two thousand years ago, hope to lure back love or avenged love betrayed, and thus they ‘win more ease from song than could be bought with gold.’

In whatever direction the path of the Syracusan wanderer lay, he would find then, as he would find now in Sicily, some scene of the idyllic life, framed between the distant Etna and the sea. If he strayed in the faint blue of the summer dawn, through the fens to the shore, he might reach the wattled cabin of the two old fishermen in the twenty-first idyl. There is nothing in Wordsworth more real, more full of the incommunicable sense of nature, rounding and softening the toilsome days of the aged and the poor, than the Theocritean poem of the Fisherman’s Dream. It is as true to nature as the statue of the naked fisherman in the Vatican. One cannot read these verses but the vision returns to one, of sandhills by the sea, of a low cabin roofed with grass, where fishing-rods of reed are leaning against the door, while the Mediterranean floats up her waves that fill the waste with sound. This nature, grey and still, seems in harmony with the wise content of old men whose days are waning on the limit of life, as they have all been spent by the desolate margin of the sea.

The twenty-first idyl is one of the rare poems of Theocritus that are not filled with the sunlight of Sicily, or of Egypt. The landscapes he prefers are often seen under the noonday heat, when shade is most pleasant to men. His shepherds invite each other to the shelter of oak-trees or of pines, where the dry fir-needles are strown, or where the feathered ferns make a luxurious ‘couch more soft than sleep,’ or where the flowers bloom whose musical names sing in the idyls. Again, Theocritus will sketch the bare beginnings of the hillside, as in the third idyl, just where the olive-gardens cease, and where the short grass of the heights alternates with rocks, and thorns, and aromatic plants. None of his pictures seem complete without the presence of water. It may be but the wells that the maidenhair fringes, or the babbling runnel of the fountain of the Nereids. The shepherds may sing of Crathon, or Sybaris, or Himeras, waters so sweet that they seem to flow with milk and honey. Again, Theocritus may encounter his rustics fluting in rivalry, like Daphnis and Menalcas in the eighth idyl, ‘on the long ranges of the hills.’ Their kine and sheep have fed upwards from the lower valleys to the place where

‘The track winds down to the clear stream,
To cross the sparkling shallows; there
The cattle love to gather, on their way
To the high mountain pastures and to stay,
Till the rough cow-herds drive them past,
Knee-deep in the cool ford; for ’tis the last
Of all the woody, high, well-water’d dells
On Etna, . . .
. . . glade,
And stream, and sward, and chestnut-trees,
End here; Etna beyond, in the broad glare
Of the hot noon, without a shade,
Slope behind slope, up to the peak, lies bare;
The peak, round which the white clouds play.’ {0b}

Theocritus never drives his flock so high, and rarely muses on such thoughts as come to wanderers beyond the shade of trees and the sound of water among the scorched rocks and the barren lava. The day is always cooled and soothed, in his idyls, with the ‘music of water that falleth from the high face of the rock,’ or with the murmurs of the sea. From the cliffs and their seat among the bright red berries on the arbutus shrubs, his shepherds flute to each other, as they watch the tunny fishers cruising far below, while the echo floats upwards of the sailors’ song. These shepherds have some touch in them of the satyr nature; we might fancy that their ears are pointed like those of Hawthorne’s Donatello, in ‘Transformation.’

It should be noticed, as a proof of the truthfulness of Theocritus, that the songs of his shepherds and goatherds are all such as he might really have heard on the shores of Sicily. This is the real answer to the criticism which calls him affected. When mock pastorals flourished at the court of France, when the long dispute as to the merits of the ancients and moderns was raging, critics vowed that the hinds of Theocritus were too sentimental and polite in their wooings. Refinement and sentiment were to be reserved for princely shepherds dancing, crook in hand, in the court ballets. Louis XIV sang of himself -

‘*A son labeur il passe tout d’un coup,*
Et n’ira pas dormir sur la fougere,
Ny s’oublier aupres d’une Bergere,
Jusques au point d’en oublier le Loup.’ {0c}

Accustomed to royal goatherds in silk and lace, Fontenelle (a severe critic of Theocritus) could not believe in the delicacy of a Sicilian who wore a skin ‘stripped from the roughest of he-goats, with the smell of the rennet clinging to it still.’ Thus Fontenelle cries, ‘Can any one suppose that there ever was a shepherd who could say “Would I were the humming bee, Amaryllis, to flit to thy cave, and dip beneath the branches, and the ivy leaves that hide thee”?’ and then he quotes other graceful passages from the love-verses of Theocritean swains. Certainly no such fancies were to be expected from the French peasants of Fontenelle’s age, ‘creatures blackened with the sun, and bowed with labour and hunger.’ The imaginative grace of Battus is quite as remote from our own hinds. But we have the best reason to suppose that the peasants of Theocritus’s time expressed refined sentiment in language adorned with colour and music, because the modern love-songs of Greek shepherds sound like memories of Theocritus. The lover of Amaryllis might have sung this among his ditties -

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± Ãµ Æ¹»·ÃÉ ¼¹± º±¹ ´Å¿, º±¹ À±»µ ½± ÀµÄ±¾É

‘To flit towards these lips of thine, I fain would be a swallow,
To kiss thee once, to kiss thee twice, and then go flying homeward.’ {0d}

In his despair, when Love ‘clung to him like a leech of the fen,’ he might have murmured -

‘—¸µ»± ½± µ¹¼±¹ Ã’ Ä± ²¿Å½±, ¼’ ±»±Æ¹± ½± º¿¹¼¿Å¼±¹
š±¹ Ä¿ ´¹º¿½ Ã¿Å Ä¿ º¿Á¼¹ ½± ¼· Ä¿ ÃÅ»»¿³¹¿Å¼±¹

‘Would that I were on the high hills, and lay where lie the stags, and no more was troubled with the thought of thee.’

Here, again, is a love-complaint from modern Epirus, exactly in the tone of Battus’s song in the tenth idyl -

‘White thou art not, thou art not golden haired,
Thou art brown, and gracious, and meet for love.’

Here is a longer love-ditty -

'I will begin by telling thee first of thy perfections: thy body is as fair as an angel's; no painter could design it. And if any man be sad, he has but to look on thee, and despite himself he takes courage, the hapless one, and his heart is joyous. Upon thy brows are shining the constellated Pleiades, thy breast is full of the flowers of May, thy breasts are lilies. Thou hast the eyes of a princess, the glance of a queen, and but one fault hast thou, that thou deignest not to speak to me.'

Battus might have cried thus, with a modern Greek singer, to the shade of the dead Amaryllis (Idyl IV), the 'gracious Amaryllis, unforgotten even in death' -

'Ah, light of mine eyes, what gift shall I send thee; what gift to the other world? The apple rots, and the quince decayeth, and one by one they perish, the petals of the rose! I send thee my tears bound in a napkin, and what though the napkin burns, if my tears reach thee at last!'

The difficulty is to stop choosing, where all the verses of the modern Greek peasants are so rich in Theocritean memories, so ardent, so delicate, so full of flowers and birds and the music of fountains. Enough has been said, perhaps, to show what the popular poetry of Sicily could lend to the genius of Theocritus.

From her shepherds he borrowed much, - their bucolic melody; their love-complaints; their rural superstitions; their system of answering couplets, in which each singer refines on the utterance of his rival. But he did not borrow their 'pastoral melancholy.' There is little of melancholy in Theocritus. When Battus is chilled by the thought of the death of Amaryllis, it is but as one is chilled when a thin cloud passes over the sun, on a bright day of early spring. And in an epigram the dead girl is spoken of as the kid that the wolf has seized, while the hounds bay all too late. Grief will not bring her back. The world must go its way, and we need not darken its sunlight by long regret. Yet when, for once, Theocritus adopted the accent of pastoral lament, when he raised the rural dirge for Daphnis into the realm of art, he composed a masterpiece, and a model for all later poets, as for the authors of Lycidas, Thyrsis, and Adonais.

Theocritus did more than borrow a note from the country people. He brought the gifts of his own spirit to the contemplation of the world. He had the clearest vision, and he had the most ardent love of poetry, 'of song may all my dwelling be full, for neither is sleep more sweet, nor sudden spring, nor are flowers more delicious to the bees, so dear to me are the Muses.’ . . . ‘Never may we be sundered, the Muses of Pieria and I.’ Again, he had perhaps in greater measure than any other poet the gift of the undisturbed enjoyment of life. The undertone of all his idyls is joy in the sunshine and in existence. His favourite word, the word that opens the first idyl, and, as it were, strikes the keynote, is ±´Å, sweet. He finds all things delectable in the rural life:

‘Sweet are the voices of the calves, and sweet the heifers’ lowing; sweet plays the shepherd on the shepherd’s pipe, and sweet is the echo.’

Even in courtly poems, and in the artificial hymns of which we are to speak in their place, the memory of the joyful country life comes over him. He praises Hiero, because Hiero is to restore peace to Syracuse, and when peace returns, then ‘thousands of sheep fattened in the meadows will bleat along the plain, and the kine, as they flock in crowds to the stalls, will make the belated traveller hasten on his way.’ The words evoke a memory of a narrow country lane in the summer evening, when light is dying out of the sky, and the fragrance of wild roses by the roadside is mingled with the perfumed breath of cattle that hurry past on their homeward road. There was scarcely a form of the life he saw that did not seem to him worthy of song, though it might be but the gossip of two rude hinds, or the drinking bout of the Thessalian horse-jobber, and the false girl Cynisca and her wild lover Æschines. But it is the sweet country that he loves best to behold and to remember. In his youth Sicily and Syracuse were disturbed by civil and foreign wars, wars of citizens against citizens, of Greeks against Carthaginians, and against the fierce ‘men of Mars,’ the banded mercenaries who possessed themselves of Messana. But this was not matter for his joyous Muse -

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º±¹ ²¿ÅÄ±Ã µ»¹³±¹½µ º±¹ ±µ¹´É½ µ½¿¼µÅµ

‘Not of wars, not of tears, but of Pan would he chant, and of the neatherds he sweetly sang, and singing he shepherded his flocks.’

This was the training that Sicily, her hills, her seas, her lovers, her poet-shepherds, gave to Theocritus. Sicily showed him subjects which he imitated in truthful art. Unluckily the later pastoral poets of northern lands have imitated *him,* and so have gone far astray from northern nature. The pupil of nature had still to be taught the ‘rules’ of the critics, to watch the temper and fashion of his time, and to try his fortune among the courtly poets and grammarians of the capital of civilisation. Between the years of early youth in Sicily and the years of waiting for court patronage at Alexandria, it seems probable that we must place a period of education in the island of Cos. The testimonies of the Grammarians who handed on to us the scanty traditions about Theocritus, agree in making him the pupil of Philetas of Cos. This Philetas was a critic, a commentator on Homer, and an elegiac poet whose love-songs were greatly admired by the Romans of the Augustan age. He is said to have been the tutor of Ptolemy Philadelphus, who was himself born, as Theocritus records, in the isle of Cos. It has been conjectured that Ptolemy and Theocritus were fellow pupils, and that the poet may have hoped to obtain court favour at Alexandria from this early connection. About this point nothing is certainly known, nor can we exactly understand the sort of education that was given in the school of the poet Philetas. The ideas of that artificial age make it not improbable that Philetas professed to teach the art of poetry. A French critic and poet of our own time, M. Baudelaire, was willing to do as much 'in thirty lessons.' Possibly Philetas may have imparted technical rules then in vogue, and the fashionable knack of introducing obscure mythological allusions. He was a logician as well as a poet, and is fabled to have died of vexation because he could not unriddle one of the metaphysical catches or puzzles of the sophists. His varied activity seems to have worn him to a shadow; the contemporary satirists bantered him about his leanness, and it was alleged that he wore leaden soles to his sandals lest the wind should blow him, as it blew the calves of Daphnis (Idyl IX) over a cliff against the rocks, or into the sea. {0e} Philetas seems a strange master for Theocritus, but, whatever the qualities of the teacher, Cos, the home of the luxurious old age of Meleager, was a beautiful school. The island was one of the most ancient colonies of the Dorians, and the Syracusan scholar found himself among a people who spoke his own broad and liquid dialect. The sides of the limestone hills were clothed with vines, and with shadowy plane-trees which still attain extraordinary size and age, while the wine-presses where Demeter smiled, 'with sheaves and poppies in her hands,' yielded a famous vintage. The people had a soft industry of their own, they fashioned the 'Coan stuff,' transparent robes for woman's wear, like the Å´±Ä¹½± ²Á±º·, the thin undulating tissues which Theugenis was to weave with the ivory distaff, the gift of Theocritus. As a colony of Epidaurus, Cos naturally cultivated the worship of Asclepius, the divine physician, the child of Apollo. In connection with his worship and with the clan of the Asclepiadae (that widespread stock to which Aristotle belonged, and in which the practice of leechcraft was hereditary), Cos possessed a school of medicine. In the temple of Asclepius patients hung up as votive offerings representations of their diseased limbs, and thus the temple became a museum of anatomical specimens. Cos was therefore resorted to by young students from all parts of the East, and Theocritus cannot but have made many friends of his own age. Among these he alludes in various passages to Nicias, afterwards a physician at Miletus, to Philinus, noted in later life as the head of a medical sect, and to Aratus. Theocritus has sung of Aratus's love-affairs, and St. Paul has quoted him as a witness to man's instinctive consent in the doctrine of the universal fatherhood of God. These strangely various notices have done more for the memory of Aratus than his own didactic poem on the meteorological theories of his age. He lives, with Philinus and the rest of the Coan students, because Theocritus introduced them into the picture of a happy summer's day. In the seventh idyl, that one day of Demeter's harvest-feast is immortal, and the sun never goes down on its delight. We see Theocritus

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when he 'had not yet reached the mid-point of the way, nor had the tomb yet risen on his sight.' He reveals himself as he was at the height of morning, at the best moment of the journey, in midsummer of a genius still unchecked by doubt, or disappointment, or neglect. Life seems to accost him with the glance of the goatherd Lycidas, 'and still he smiled as he spoke, with laughing eyes, and laughter dwelling on his lips.' In Cos, Theocritus found friendship, and met Myrto, 'the girl he loved as dearly as goats love the spring.' Here he could express, without any afterthought, an enthusiastic adoration for the disinterested joys, the enchanted moments of human existence. Before he entered the thronged streets of Alexandria, and tuned his shepherd's pipe to catch the ear of princes, and to sing the epithalamium of a royal and incestuous love, he rested with his friends in the happy island. Deep in a cave, among the ruins of ancient aqueducts, there still bubbles up, from the Coan limestone, the well-spring of the Nymphs. 'There they reclined on beds of fragrant rushes, lowly strown, and rejoicing they lay in new stript leaves of the vine. And high above their heads waved many a poplar, many an elm-tree, while close at hand the sacred water from the nymph's own cave welled forth with murmurs musical' (Idyl VII).

The old Dorian settlers in Syracuse pleased themselves with the fable that their fountain, Arethusa, had been a Grecian nymph, who, like themselves, had crossed the sea to Sicily. The poetry of Theocritus, read or sung in sultry Alexandria, must have seemed like a new welling up of the waters of Arethusa in the sandy soil of Egypt. We cannot certainly say when the poet first came from Syracuse, or from Cos, to Alexandria. It is evident however from the allusions in the fifteenth and seventeenth idyls that he was living there after Ptolemy Philadelphus married his own sister, Arsinoë. It is not impossible to form some idea of the condition of Alexandrian society, art, religion, literature and learning at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus. The vast city, founded some sixty years before, was now completed. The walls, many miles in circuit, protected a population of about eight hundred thousand souls. Into that changing crowd were gathered adventurers from all the known world. Merchantmen brought to Ptolemy the wares of India and the porcelains of China. Marauders from upper Egypt skulked about the native quarters, and sallied forth at night to rob the wayfarer. The king's guards were recruited with soldiers from turbulent Greece, from Asia, from Italy. Settlers were attracted from Syracuse by the prospect of high wages and profitable labour. The Jewish quarters were full of Israelites who did not disdain Greek learning. The city in which this multitude found a home was beautifully constructed. The Mediterranean filled the northern haven, the southern walls were washed by the Mareotic lake. If the isle of Pharos shone dazzling white, and wearied the eyes, there was shade beneath the long marble colonnades, and in the groves and cool halls of the Museum and the Libraries. The Etesian winds blew fresh in summer from the north, across the sea, and refreshed the people in their gardens. No town seemed greater nor wealthier to the voyager, who (like the hero of the Greek novel Clitophon and Leucippe) entered by the gate of the Sun, and found that, after nightfall, the torches borne by men and women hastening to some religious feast, filled the dusk with a light like that of 'the sun cut up into fragments.' At the same time no town was more in need of the memories of the country, which came to her in well-watered gardens, in landscape-paintings, and in the verse of Theocritus.

It is impossible to give a clearer idea of the opulence and luxury of Alexandria and her kings, than will be conveyed by the description of the coronation-feast of Ptolemy Philadelphus. This great masquerade and banquet was prepared by the elder Ptolemy on the occasion of his admitting his son to share his throne. The entertainment was described (in a work now lost) by Callixenus of Rhodes, and the record has been preserved by Atheneaus (v. 25). The inner pavilion in which the guests of Ptolemy reclined, contained one hundred and thirty-five couches. Over the roof was placed a scarlet awning, with a fringe of white, and there were many other awnings, richly embroidered with mythological designs. The pillars which sustained the roof were shaped in the likeness of palm-trees, and of thyrsi, the weapons of the wine-god Dionysus. Round three outer sides ran arcades, draped with purple tissues, and with the skins of strange beasts. The fourth side, open to the air, was shady with the foliage of myrtles and laurels. Everywhere the ground was carpeted with flowers, though the season was mid-winter, with roses and white lilies and blossoms of the gardens. By the columns round the whole pavilion were arrayed a hundred effigies in marble, executed by the most famous sculptors, and on the middle spaces were hung works by the painters of Sicyon and tapestry woven with stories of the adventures of the gods. Above these, again, ran a frieze of gold and silver shields, while in the higher niches were placed comic, tragic, and satiric sculptured groups ‘dressed in real clothes,’ says the historian, much admiring this realism. It is impossible to number the tripods, and flagons, and couches of gold, resting on golden figures of sphinxes, the salvers, the bowls, the jewelled vases. The masquerade of this winter festival began with the procession of the Morning-star, Heosphoros, and then followed a masque of kings and a revel of various gods, while the company of Hesperus, the Evening-star followed, and ended all. The revel of Dionysus was introduced by men disguised as Sileni, wild woodland beings in raiment of purple and scarlet. Then came scores of satyrs with gilded lamps in their hands. Next appeared beautiful maidens, attired as Victories, waving golden wings and swinging vessels of burning incense. The altar of the God of the Vine was borne behind them, crowned and covered with leaves of gold, and next boys in purple robes scattered fragrant scents from golden salvers. Then came a throng of gold-crowned satyrs, their naked bodies stained with purple and vermilion, and among them was a tall man who represented the year and carried a horn of plenty. He was followed by a beautiful woman in rich attire, carrying in one hand branches of the palm-tree, in the other a rod of the peach-tree, starred with its constellated flowers. Then the masque of the Seasons swept by, and Philiscus followed, Philiscus the Corcyraean, the priest of Dionysus, and the favourite tragic poet of the court. After the prizes for the athletes had been borne past, Dionysus himself was charioted along, a gigantic figure clad in purple, and pouring libations out of a golden goblet. Around him lay huge drinking-cups, and smoking censers of gold, and a bower of vine leaves grew up, and shaded the head of the god. Then hurried by a crowd of priests and priestesses, Maenads, Bacchantes, Bassarids, women crowned with the vine, or with garlands of snakes, and girls bearing the mystic vannus Iacchi. And still the procession was not ended. A mechanical figure of Nysa passed, in a chariot drawn by eighty men, among clusters of grapes formed of precious stones, and the figure arose, and poured milk out of a golden horn. The Satyrs and Sileni followed close, and behind them six hundred men dragged on a wain, a silver vessel that held six hundred measures of wine. This was only the first of countless symbolic vessels that were carried past, till last came a multitude of sixteen hundred boys clad in white tunics, and garlanded with ivy, who bore and handed to the guests golden and silver vessels full of sweet wine. All this was only part of one procession, and the festival ended when Ptolemy and Berenice and Ptolemy Philadelphus had been crowned with golden crowns from many subject cities and lands.

This festival was obviously arranged to please the taste of a prince with late Greek ideas of pictorial display, and with barbaric wealth at his command. Theocritus himself enables us in the seventeenth idyl to estimate the opulence and the dominion of Ptolemy. He was not master of fertile Aegypt alone, where the Nile breaks the rich dank soil, and where myriad cities pour their taxes into his treasuries. Ptolemy held lands also in Phoenicia, and Arabia; he claimed Syria and Libya and Aethiopia; he was lord of the distant Pamphylians, of the Cilicians, the Lycians and the Carians, and the Cyclades owned his mastery. Thus the wealth of the richest part of the world flowed into Alexandria, attracting thither the priests of strange religions, the possessors of Greek learning, the painters and sculptors whose work has left its traces on the genius of Theocritus.

Looking at this early Alexandrian age, three points become clear to us. First, the fashion of the times was Oriental, Oriental in religion and in society. Nothing could be less Hellenic, than the popular cult of Adonis. The fifteenth idyl of Theocritus shows us Greek women worshipping in their manner at an Assyrian shrine, the shrine of that effeminate lover of Aphrodite, whom Heracles, according to the Greek proverb, thought ‘no great divinity.’ The hymn of Bion, with its luxurious lament, was probably meant to be chanted at just such a festival as Theocritus describes, while a crowd of foreigners gossiped among the flowers and embroideries, the strangely-shaped sacred cakes, the ebony, the gold, and the ivory. Not so much Oriental as barbarous was the impulse which made Ptolemy Philadelphus choose his own sister, Arsinoë, for wife, as if absolute dominion had already filled the mind of the Macedonian royal race with the incestuous pride of the Incas, or of Queen Hatasu, in an elder Egyptian dynasty. This nascent barbarism has touched a few of the Alexandrian poems even of Theocritus, and his panegyric of Ptolemy, of his divine ancestors, and his sister-bride is not much more Greek in sentiment than are those old native hymns of Pentaur to ‘the strong Bull,’ or the ‘Risen Sun,’ to Rameses or Thothmes.

Again, the early Alexandrian was what we call a ‘literary’ age. Literature was not an affair of religion and of the state, but ministered to the pleasure of individuals, and at their pleasure was composed. {0f} The temper of the time was crudely critical. The Museum and the Libraries, with their hundreds of thousands of volumes, were hot-houses of grammarians and of learned poets. Callimachus, the head librarian, was also the most eminent man of letters.

Unable, himself, to compose a poem of epic length and copiousness, he discouraged all long poems. He shone in epigrams, pedantic hymns, and didactic verses. He toyed with anagrams, and won court favour by discovering that the letters of ‘Arsinoë,’ the name of Ptolemy’s wife, made the words ¹¿½ — Á±Â, the violet of Hera. In another masterpiece the genius of Callimachus followed the stolen tress of Queen Berenice to the skies, where the locks became a constellation. A contemporary of Callimachus was Zenodotus, the critic, who was for improving the Iliad and Odyssey by cutting out all the epic commonplaces which seemed to him to be needless repetitions. It is pretty plain that, in literary society, Homer was thought out of date and rococo. The favourite topics of poets were now, not the tales of Troy and Thebes, but the amorous adventures of the gods. When Apollonius Rhodius attempted to revive the epic, it is said that the influence of Callimachus quite discomfited the young poet. A war of epigrams began, and while Apollonius called Callimachus a ‘blockhead’ (so finished was his invective), the veteran compared his rival to the Ibis, the scavenger-bird. Other singers satirised each others’ legs, and one, the Aretino of the time, mocked at king Ptolemy and scourged his failings in verse. The literary quarrels (to which Theocritus seems to allude in Idyl VII, where Lycidas says he ‘hates the birds of the Muses that cackle in vain rivalry with Homer’) were as stupid as such affairs usually are. The taste for artificial epic was to return; although many people already declared that Homer was the world’s poet, and that the world needed no other. This epic reaction brought into favour Apollonius Rhodius, author of the *Argonautica.* Theocritus has been supposed to aim at him as a vain rival of Homer, but M. Couat points out that Theocritus was seventy when Apollonius began to write. The literary fashions of Alexandria are only of moment to us so far as they directly affected Theocritus. They could not make him obscure, affected, tedious, but his nature probably inclined him to obey fashion so far as only to write short poems. His rural poems are µ¹´Å»»¹±, ‘little pictures.’ His fragments of epic, or imitations of the epic hymns are not

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- not full and sonorous as the songs of Homer and the sea. ‘Ce poète est le moins naïf qui se puisse rencontrer, et il se dégage de son oeuvre un parfum de naïveté rustique.’ {0g} They are, what a German critic has called them, *mythologischen genre-bilder,* cabinet pictures in the manner called *genre,* full of pretty detail and domestic feeling. And this brings us to the third characteristic of the age, - its art was elaborately pictorial. Poetry seems to have sought inspiration from painting, while painting, as we have said, inclined to *genre,* to luxurious representations of the amours of the gods or the adventures of heroes, with backgrounds of pastoral landscape. Shepherds fluted while Perseus slew Medusa.

The old order of things in Greece had been precisely the opposite of this Alexandrian manner. Homer and the later Homeric legends, with the tragedians, inspired the sculptors, and even the artisans who decorated vases. When a new order of subjects became fashionable, and when every rich Alexandrian had pictures or frescoes on his walls, it appears that the painters took the lead, that the initiative in art was theirs. The Alexandrian pictures perished long ago, but the relics of Alexandrian style which remain in the buried cities of Campania, in Pompeii especially, bear testimony to the taste of the period. {0h} Out of nearly two thousand Pompeian pictures, it is calculated that some fourteen hundred (roughly speaking) are mythological in subject. The loves of the gods are repeated in scores of designs, and these designs closely correspond to the mythological poems of Theocritus and his younger contemporaries Bion and Moschus. Take as an example the adventure of Europa: Lord Tennyson's lines, in *The Palace of Art* are intended to describe *picture* -

'Or sweet Europa's mantle blew unclasp'd,
  From off her shoulder backward borne:
From one hand droop'd a crocus: one hand grasp'd
    The mild bull's golden horn.'

The words of Moschus also seem as if they might have derived their inspiration from a painting, the touches are so minute, and so picturesque -

'Meanwhile Europa, riding on the back of the divine bull, with one hand clasped the beast's great horn, and with the other caught up her garment's purple fold, lest it might trail and be drenched in the hoar sea's infinite spray. And her deep robe was blown out in the wind, like the sail of a ship, and lightly ever it wafted the maiden onward.'

Now every single 'motive' of this description, - Europa with one hand holding the bull's horn, with the other lifting her dress, the wind puffing out her shawl like a sail, is repeated in the Pompeian wall-pictures, which themselves are believed to be derived from Alexandrian originals. There are more curious coincidences than this. In the sixth idyl of Theocritus, Damoetas makes the Cyclops say that Galatea 'will send him many a messenger.' The mere idea of describing the monstrous cannibal Polyphemus in love, is artificial and

Alexandrian. But who were the ‘messengers’ of the sea-nymph Galatea? A Pompeian picture illustrates the point, by representing a little Love riding up to the shore on the back of a dolphin, with a letter in his hand for Polyphemus. Greek art in Egypt suffered from an Egyptian plague of Loves. Loves flutter through the Pompeian pictures as they do through the poems of Moschus and Bion. They are carried about in cages, for sale, like birds. They are caught in bird-traps. They don the lion-skin of Heracles. They flutter about baskets laden with roses; round rosy Loves, like the cupids of Boucher. They are not akin to ‘the grievous Love,’ the mighty wrestler who threw Daphnis a fall, in the first idyl of Theocritus. They are ‘the children that flit overhead, the little Loves, like the young nightingales upon the budding trees,’ which flit round the dead Adonis in the fifteenth idyl. They are the birds that shun the boy fowler, in Bion’s poem, and perch uncalled (as in a bronze in the Uffizi) on the grown man. In one or other of the sixteen Pompeian pictures of Venus and Adonis, the Loves are breaking their bows and arrows for grief, as in the hymn of Bion.

Enough has perhaps been said about the social and artistic taste of Alexandria to account for the remarkable differences in manner between the rustic idyls of Theocritus and the epic idyls of himself and his followers Moschus and Bion. In the rural idyls, Theocritus was himself and wrote to please himself. In the epic idyls, as in the Hymn to the Dioscuri, and in the two poems on Heracles, he was writing to please the taste of Alexandria. He had to choose epic topics, but he was warned by the famous saying of Callimachus (‘a great book is a great evil’) not to imitate the length of the epic. {0i} He was also to shun close imitation of what are so easily imitated, the regular recurring formulae, the commonplace of Homer. He was to add minute pictorial touches, as in the description of Alcmena’s waking when the serpents attacked her child, - a passage rich in domestic pathos and incident which contrast strongly with Pindar’s bare narrative of the same events. We have noted the same pictorial quality in the Europa of Moschus. Our own age has often been compared to the Alexandrian epoch, to that era of large cities, wealth, refinement, criticism, and science; and the pictorial Idylls of the King very closely resemble the epico-idyllic manner of Alexandria. We have tried to examine the society in which Theocritus lived. But our impressions about the poet are more distinct. In him we find the most genial character; pious as Greece counted piety; tender as became the poet of love; glad as the singer of a happy southern world should be; gifted, above all, with humour, and with dramatic power. ‘His lyre has all the chords’; his is the last of all the perfect voices of Hellas; after him no man saw life with eyes so steady and so mirthful.

About the lives of the three idyllic poets literary history says little. About their deaths she only tells us through the dirge by Moschus, that Bion was poisoned. The lovers of Theocritus would willingly hope that he returned from Alexandria to Sicily, about the time when he wrote the sixteenth idyl, and that he lived in the enjoyment of the friendship and the domestic happiness and honour which he sang so well, through the golden age of Hiero (264 B.C.) No happier fortune could befall him who wrote the epigram of the lady of heavenly love, who worshipped with the noble wife of Nicias under the green roof of Milesian Aphrodite, and who prophesied of the return of peace and of song to Sicily and Syracuse.

THEOCRITUS

IDYL I

The shepherd Thyrsis meets a goatherd, in a shady place beside a spring, and at his invitation sings the Song of Daphnis. This ideal hero of Greek pastoral song had won for his bride the fairest of the Nymphs. Confident in the strength of his passion, he boasted that Love could never subdue him to a new question. Love avenged himself by making Daphnis desire a strange maiden, but to this temptation he never yielded, and so died a constant lover. The song tells how the cattle and the wild things of the wood bewailed him, how Hermes and Priapus gave him counsel in vain, and how with his last breath he retorted the taunts of the implacable Aphrodite.

The scene is in Sicily.

Thyrsis. Sweet, meseems, is the whispering sound of yonder pine tree, goatherd, that murmureth by the wells of water; and sweet are thy pipings. After Pan the second prize shalt thou bear away, and if he take the horned goat, the she-goat shalt thou win; but if he choose the she-goat for his meed, the kid falls to thee, and dainty is the flesh of kids e’er the age when thou milkest them.

The Goatherd. Sweeter, O shepherd, is thy song than the music of yonder water that is poured from the high face of the rock! Yea, if the Muses take the young ewe for their gift, a stall-fed lamb shalt thou receive for thy meed; but if it please them to take the lamb, thou shalt lead away the ewe for the second prize.

Thyrsis. Wilt thou, goatherd, in the nymphs’ name, wilt thou sit thee down here, among the tamarisks, on this sloping knoll, and pipe while in this place I watch thy flocks?

Goatherd. Nay, shepherd, it may not be; we may not pipe in the noontide. ’Tis Pan we dread, who truly at this hour rests weary from the chase; and bitter of mood is he, the keen wrath sitting ever at his nostrils. But, Thyrsis, for that thou surely wert wont to sing *The Affliction of Daphnis*, and hast most deeply meditated the pastoral muse, come hither, and beneath yonder elm let us sit down, in face of Priapus and the fountain fairies, where is that resting-place of the shepherds, and where the oak trees are. Ah! if thou wilt but sing as on that day thou sangest in thy match with Chromis out of Libya, I will let thee milk, ay, three times, a goat that is the mother of twins, and even when she has suckled her kids her milk doth fill two pails. A deep bowl of ivy-wood, too, I will give thee, rubbed with sweet bees’-wax, a twy-eared bowl newly wrought, smacking still of the knife of the graver. Round its upper edges goes the ivy winding, ivy besprent with golden flowers; and about it is a tendril twisted that joys in its saffron fruit. Within is designed a maiden, as fair a thing as the gods could fashion, arrayed in a sweeping robe, and a snood on her head. Beside her two youths with fair love-locks are contending from either side, with alternate speech, but her heart thereby is all untouched. And now on one she glances, smiling, and anon she lightly flings the other a thought, while by reason of the long vigils of love their eyes are heavy, but their labour is all in vain.

Beyond these an ancient fisherman and a rock are fashioned, a rugged rock, whereon with might and main the old man drags a great net for his cast, as one that labours stoutly. Thou wouldst say that he is fishing with all the might of his limbs, so big the sinews swell all about his neck, grey-haired though he be, but his strength is as the strength of youth. Now divided but a little space from the sea-worn old man is a vineyard laden well with fire-red clusters, and on the rough wall a little lad watches the vineyard, sitting there. Round him two she-foxes are skulking, and one goes along the vine-rows to devour the ripe grapes, and the other brings all her cunning to bear against the scrip, and vows she will never leave the lad, till she strand him bare and breakfastless. But the boy is plaiting a pretty locust-cage with stalks of asphodel, and fitting it with reeds, and less care of his scrip has he, and of the vines, than delight in his plaiting.

All about the cup is spread the soft acanthus, a miracle of varied work, a thing for thee to marvel on. For this bowl I paid to a Calydonian ferryman a goat and a great white cream cheese. Never has its lip touched mine, but it still lies maiden for me. Gladly with this cup would I gain thee to my desire, if thou, my friend, wilt sing me that delightful song. Nay, I grudge it thee not at all. Begin, my friend, for be sure thou canst in no wise carry thy song with thee to Hades, that puts all things out of mind!

The Song of Thyrsis.

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song! Thyrsis of Etna am I, and this is the voice of Thyrsis. Where, ah! where were ye when Daphnis was languishing; ye Nymphs, where were ye? By Peneus's beautiful dells, or by dells of Pindus? for surely ye dwelt not by the great stream of the river Anapus, nor on the watch-tower of Etna, nor by the sacred water of Acis.

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

For him the jackals, for him the wolves did cry; for him did even the lion out of the forest lament. Kine and bulls by his feet right many, and heifers plenty, with the young calves bewailed him.

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

Came Hermes first from the hill, and said, 'Daphnis, who is it that torments thee; child, whom dost thou love with so great desire?' The neatherds came, and the shepherds; the goatherds came: all they asked what ailed him. Came also Priapus, -

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

And said: 'Unhappy Daphnis, wherefore dost thou languish, while for thee the maiden by all the fountains, through all the glades is fleeting, in search of thee? Ah! thou art too laggard a lover, and thou nothing availest! A neatherd wert thou named, and now thou art like the goatherd:

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

‘For the goatherd, when he marks the young goats at their pastime, looks on with yearning eyes, and fain would be even as they; and thou, when thou beholdest the laughter of maidens, dost gaze with yearning eyes, for that thou dost not join their dances.’

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

Yet these the herdsman answered not again, but he bare his bitter love to the end, yea, to the fated end he bare it.

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

Ay, but she too came, the sweetly smiling Cypris, craftily smiling she came, yet keeping her heavy anger; and she spake, saying: ‘Daphnis, methinks thou didst boast that thou wouldst throw Love a fall, nay, is it not thyself that hast been thrown by grievous Love?’

Begin ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

But to her Daphnis answered again: ‘Implacable Cypris, Cypris terrible, Cypris of mortals detested, already dost thou deem that my latest sun has set; nay, Daphnis even in Hades shall prove great sorrow to Love.

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

‘Where it is told how the herdsman with Cypris - Get thee to Ida, get thee to Anchises! There are oak trees - here only galingale blows, here sweetly hum the bees about the hives!

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

‘Thine Adonis, too, is in his bloom, for he herds the sheep and slays the hares, and he chases all the wild beasts. Nay, go and confront Diomedes again, and say, "The herdsman Daphnis I conquered, do thou join battle with me."

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

'Ye wolves, ye jackals, and ye bears in the mountain caves, farewell! The herdsman Daphnis ye never shall see again, no more in the dells, no more in the groves, no more in the woodlands. Farewell Arethusa, ye rivers, good-night, that pour down Thymbris your beautiful waters.

Begin, ye Muses dear, begin the pastoral song!

'That Daphnis am I who here do herd the kine, Daphnis who water here the bulls and calves.

'O Pan, Pan! whether thou art on the high hills of Lycaeus, or rangest mighty Maenalus, haste hither to the Sicilian isle! Leave the tomb of Helice, leave that high cairn of the son of Lycaon, which seems wondrous fair, even in the eyes of the blessed.

Give o'er, ye Muses, come, give o'er the pastoral song!

'Come hither, my prince, and take this fair pipe, honey-breathed with wax-stopped joints; and well it fits thy lip: for verily I, even I, by Love am now haled to Hades.

Give o'er, ye Muses, come, give o'er the pastoral song!

'Now violets bear, ye brambles, ye thorns bear violets; and let fair narcissus bloom on the boughs of juniper! Let all things with all be confounded, - from pines let men gather pears, for Daphnis is dying! Let the stag drag down the hounds, let owls from the hills contend in song with the nightingales.'

Give o’er, ye Muses, come, give o’er the pastoral song!

So Daphnis spake, and ended; but fain would Aphrodite have given him back to life. Nay, spun was all the thread that the Fates assigned, and Daphnis went down the stream. The whirling wave closed over the man the Muses loved, the man not hated of the nymphs.

Give o’er, ye Muses, come, give o’er the pastoral song!

And thou, give me the bowl, and the she-goat, that I may milk her and poor forth a libation to the Muses. Farewell, oh, farewells manifold, ye Muses, and I, some future day, will sing you yet a sweeter song.

The Goatherd. Filled may thy fair mouth be with honey, Thyrsis, and filled with the honeycomb; and the sweet dried fig mayst thou eat of Aegilus, for thou vanquishest the cicala in song! Lo here is thy cup, see, my friend, of how pleasant a savour! Thou wilt think it has been dipped in the well-spring of the Hours. Hither, hither, Cissaetha: do thou milk her, Thyrsis. And you young she-goats, wanton not so wildly lest you bring up the he-goat against you.

IDYL II

Simaetha, madly in love with Delphis, who has forsaken her, endeavours to subdue him to her by magic, and by invoking the Moon, in her character of Hecate, and of Selene. She tells the tale of the growth of her passion, and vows vengeance if her magic arts are unsuccessful.

The scene is probably some garden beneath the moonlit shy, near the town, and within sound of the sea. The characters are Simaetha, and Thestylis, her handmaid.

Where are my laurel leaves? come, bring them, Thestylis; and where are the love-charms? Wreath the bowl with bright-red wool, that I may knit the witch-knots against my grievous lover, who for twelve days, oh cruel, has never come hither, nor knows whether I am alive or dead, nor has once knocked at my door, unkind that he is! Hath Love flown off with his light desires by some other path - Love and Aphrodite? To-morrow I will go to the wrestling school of Timagetus, to see my love and to reproach him with all the wrong he is doing me. But now I will bewitch him with my enchantments! Do thou, Selene, shine clear and fair, for softly, Goddess, to thee will I sing, and to Hecate of hell. The very whelps shiver before her as she fares through black blood and across the barrows of the dead.

Hail, awful Hecate! to the end be thou of our company, and make this medicine of mine no weaker than the spells of Circe, or of Medea, or of Perimede of the golden hair.

My magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love!

Lo, how the barley grain first smoulders in the fire, - nay, toss on the barley, Thestylis! Miserable maid, where are thy wits wandering? Even to thee, wretched that I am, have I become a laughing-stock, even to thee? Scatter the grain, and cry thus the while, ‘’Tis the bones of Delphis I am scattering!’

My magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love!

Delphis troubled me, and I against Delphis am burning this laurel; and even as it crackles loudly when it has caught the flame, and suddenly is burned up, and we see not even the dust thereof, lo, even thus may the flesh of Delphis waste in the burning!

My magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love!

Even as I melt this wax, with the god to aid, so speedily may he by love be molten, the Myndian Delphis! And as whirls this brazen wheel, so restless, under Aphrodite’s spell, may he turn and turn about my doors.

My magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love!

Now will I burn the husks, and thou, O Artemis, hast power to move hell’s adamantine gates, and all else that is as stubborn. Thestylis, hark, ’tis so; the hounds are baying up and down the town! The Goddess stands where the three ways meet! Hasten, and clash the brazen cymbals.

My magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love!

Lo, silent is the deep, and silent the winds, but never silent the torment in my breast. Nay, I am all on fire for him that made me, miserable me, no wife but a shameful thing, a girl no more a maiden.

My magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love!

Three times do I pour libation, and thrice, my Lady Moon, I speak this spell:- Be it with a friend that he lingers, be it with a leman he lies, may he as clean forget them as Theseus, of old, in Dia - so legends tell - did utterly forget the fair-tressed Ariadne.

My magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love!

Coltsfoot is an Arcadian weed that maddens, on the hills, the young stallions and fleet-footed mares. Ah! even as these may I see Delphis; and to this house of mine, may he speed like a madman, leaving the bright palaestra.

My magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love!

This fringe from his cloak Delphis lost; that now I shred and cast into the cruel flame. Ah, ah, thou torturing Love, why clingest thou to me like a leech of the fen, and drainest all the black blood from my body?

My magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love!

Lo, I will crush an eft, and a venomous draught to-morrow I will bring thee!

But now, Thestylis, take these magic herbs and secretly smear the juice on the jambs of his gate (whereat, even now, my heart is captive, though nothing he recks of me), and spit and whisper, ‘’Tis the bones of Delphis that I smear.’

My magic wheel, draw home to me the man I love!

And now that I am alone, whence shall I begin to bewail my love? Whence shall I take up the tale: who brought on me this sorrow? The maiden-bearer of the mystic vessel came our way, Anaxo, daughter of Eubulus, to the grove of Artemis; and behold, she had many other wild beasts paraded for that time, in the sacred show, and among them a lioness.

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

And the Thracian servant of Theucharidas, - my nurse that is but lately dead, and who then dwelt at our doors, - besought me and implored me to come and see the show. And I went with her, wretched woman that I am, clad about in a fair and sweeping linen stole, over which I had thrown the holiday dress of Clearista.

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

Lo! I was now come to the mid-point of the highway, near the dwelling of Lycon, and there I saw Delphis and Eudamippus walking together. Their beards were more golden than the golden flower of the ivy; their breasts (they coming fresh from the glorious wrestler's toil) were brighter of sheen than thyself Selene!

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

Even as I looked I loved, loved madly, and all my heart was wounded, woe is me, and my beauty began to wane. No more heed took I of that show, and how I came home I know not; but some parching fever utterly overthrew me, and I lay a-bed ten days and ten nights.

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

And oftentimes my skin waxed wan as the colour of boxwood, and all my hair was falling from my head, and what was left of me was but skin and bones. Was there a wizard to whom I did not seek, or a crone to whose house I did not resort, of them that have art magical? But this was no light malady, and the time went fleeting on.

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

Thus I told the true story to my maiden, and said, 'Go, Thestylis, and find me some remedy for this sore disease. Ah me, the Myndian possesses me, body and soul! Nay, depart, and watch by the wrestling-ground of Timagetus, for there is his resort, and there he loves to loiter.

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

'And when thou art sure he is alone, nod to him secretly, and say, "Simaetha bids thee to come to her," and lead him hither privily.' So I spoke; and she went and brought the bright-limbed Delphis to my house. But I, when I beheld him just crossing the threshold of the door, with his light step, -

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

Grew colder all than snow, and the sweat streamed from my brow like the dank dews, and I had no strength to speak, nay, nor to utter as much as children murmur in their slumber, calling to their mother dear: and all my fair body turned stiff as a puppet of wax.

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

Then when he had gazed on me, he that knows not love, he fixed his eyes on the ground, and sat down on my bed, and spake as he sat him down: 'Truly, Simaetha, thou didst by no more outrun mine own coming hither, when thou badst me to thy roof, than of late I outran in the race the beautiful Philinus:

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

'For I should have come; yea, by sweet Love, I should have come, with friends of mine, two or three, as soon as night drew on, bearing in my breast the apples of Dionysus, and on my head silvery poplar leaves, the holy boughs of Heracles, all twined with bands of purple.

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

‘And if you had received me, they would have taken it well, for among all the youths unwed I have a name for beauty and speed of foot. With one kiss of thy lovely mouth I had been content; but an if ye had thrust me forth, and the door had been fastened with the bar, then truly should torch and axe have broken in upon you.

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

‘And now to Cypris first, methinks, my thanks are due, and after Cypris it is thou that hast caught me, lady, from the burning, in that thou badst me come to this thy house, half consumed as I am! Yea, Love, ’tis plain, lights oft a fiercer blaze than Hephaestus the God of Lipara.

Bethink thee of my love, and whence it came, my Lady Moon!

‘With his madness dire, he scares both the maiden from her bower and the bride from the bridal bed, yet warm with the body of her lord!’

So he spake, and I, that was easy to win, took his hand, and drew him down on the soft bed beside me. And immediately body from body caught fire, and our faces glowed as they had not done, and sweetly we murmured. And now, dear Selene, to tell thee no long tale, the great rites were accomplished, and we twain came to our desire. Faultless was I in his sight, till yesterday, and he, again, in mine. But there came to me the mother of Philista, my flute player, and the mother of Melixo, to-day, when the horses of the Sun were climbing the sky, bearing Dawn of the rosy arms from the ocean stream. Many another thing she told me; and chiefly this, that Delphis is a lover, and whom he loves she vowed she knew not surely, but this only, that ever he filled up his cup with the unmixed wine, to drink a toast to his dearest. And at last he went off hastily, saying that he would cover with garlands the dwelling of his love.

This news my visitor told me, and she speaks the truth. For indeed, at other seasons, he would come to me thrice, or four times, in the day, and often would leave with me his Dorian oil flask. But now it is the twelfth day since I have even looked on him! Can it be that he has not some other delight, and has forgotten me? Now with magic rites I will strive to bind him, but if still he vexes me, he shall beat, by the Fates I vow it, at the gate of Hell. Such evil medicines I store against him in a certain coffer, the use whereof, my lady, an Assyrian stranger taught me.

But do thou farewell, and turn thy steeds to Ocean, Lady, and my pain I will bear, as even till now I have endured it. Farewell, Selene bright and fair, farewell ye other stars, that follow the wheels of quiet Night.

IDYL III

A goatherd, leaving his goats to feed on the hillside, in the charge of Tityrus, approaches the cavern of Amaryllis, with its veil of ferns and ivy, and attempts to win back the heart of the girl by song. He mingles promises with harmless threats, and repeats, in exquisite verses, the names of the famous lovers of old days, Milanion and Endymion. Failing to move Amaryllis, the goatherd threatens to die where he has thrown himself down, beneath the trees.

Courting Amaryllis with song I go, while my she-goats feed on the hill, and Tityrus herds them. Ah, Tityrus, my dearly beloved, feed thou the goats, and to the well-side lead them, Tityrus, and ‘ware the yellow Libyan he-goat, lest he butt thee with his horns.

Ah, lovely Amaryllis, why no more, as of old, dust thou glance through this cavern after me, nor callest me, thy sweetheart, to thy side. Can it be that thou hatest me? Do I seem snub-nosed, now thou hast seen me near, maiden, and under-hung? Thou wilt make me strangle myself!

Lo, ten apples I bring thee, plucked from that very place where thou didst bid me pluck them, and others to-morrow I will bring thee.

Ah, regard my heart’s deep sorrow! ah, would I were that humming bee, and to thy cave might come dipping beneath the fern that hides thee, and the ivy leaves!

Now know I Love, and a cruel God is he. Surely he sucked the lioness’s dug, and in the wild wood his mother reared him, whose fire is scorching me, and bites even to the bone.

Ah, lovely as thou art to look upon, ah heart of stone, ah dark-browed maiden, embrace me, thy true goatherd, that I may kiss thee, and even in empty kisses there is a sweet delight!

Soon wilt thou make me rend the wreath in pieces small, the wreath of ivy, dear Amaryllis, that I keep for thee, with rose-buds twined, and fragrant parsley. Ah me, what anguish! Wretched that I am, whither shall I turn! Thou dust not hear my prayer!

I will cast off my coat of skins, and into yonder waves I will spring, where the fisher Olpis watches for the tunny shoals, and even if I die not, surely thy pleasure will have been done.

I learned the truth of old, when, amid thoughts of thee, I asked, ‘Loves she, loves she not?’ and the poppy petal clung not, and gave no crackling sound, but withered on my smooth forearm, even so.

And she too spoke sooth, even Agroeo, she that divineth with a sieve, and of late was binding sheaves behind the reapers, who said that I had set all my heart on thee, but that thou didst nothing regard me.

Truly I keep for thee the white goat with the twin kids that Mermnon’s daughter too, the brown-skinned Erithacis, prays me to give her; and give her them I will, since thou dost flout me.

My right eyelid throbs, is it a sign that I am to see her? Here will I lean me against this pine tree, and sing, and then perchance she will regard me, for she is not all of adamant.

Lo, Hippomenes when he was eager to marry the famous maiden, took apples in his hand, and so accomplished his course; and Atalanta saw, and madly longed, and leaped into the deep waters of desire. Melampus too, the soothsayer, brought the herd of oxen from Othrys to Pylos, and thus in the arms of Bias was laid the lovely mother of wise Alphesiboea.

And was it not thus that Adonis, as he pastured his sheep upon the hills, led beautiful Cytherea to such heights of frenzy, that not even in his death doth she unclasp him from her bosom? Blessed, methinks is the lot of him that sleeps, and tosses not, nor turns, even Endymion; and, dearest maiden, blessed I call Iason, whom such things befell, as ye that be profane shall never come to know.

My head aches, but thou carest not. I will sing no more, but dead will I lie where I fall, and here may the wolves devour me.

Sweet as honey in the mouth may my death be to thee.

IDYL IV

Battus and Corydon, two rustic fellows, meeting in a glade, gossip about their neighbour, Aegon, who has gone to try his fortune at the Olympic games. After some random banter, the talk turns on the death of Amaryllis, and the grief of Battus is disturbed by the roaming of his cattle. Corydon removes a thorn that has run into his friend's foot, and the conversation comes back to matters of rural scandal.

The scene is in Southern Italy.

Battus. Tell me, Corydon, whose kine are these, - the cattle of Philondas?

Corydon. Nay, they are Aegon's, he gave me them to pasture.

Battus. Dost thou ever find a way to milk them all, on the sly, just before evening?

Corydon. No chance of that, for the old man puts the calves beneath their dams, and keeps watch on me.

Battus. But the neatherd himself, - to what land has he passed out of sight?

Corydon. Hast thou not heard? Milon went and carried him off to the Alpheus.

Battus. And when, pray, did *he* ever set eyes on the wrestlers' oil?

Corydon. They say he is a match for Heracles, in strength and hardihood.

Battus. And I, so mother says, am a better man than Polydeuces.

Corydon. Well, off he has gone, with a shovel, and with twenty sheep from his flock here.

Battus. Milo, thou'lt see, will soon be coaxing the wolves to rave!

Corydon. But Aegon's heifers here are lowing pitifully, and miss their master.

Battus. Yes, wretched beasts that they are, how false a neatherd was theirs!

Corydon. Wretched enough in truth, and they have no more care to pasture.

Battus. Nothing is left, now, of that heifer, look you, bones, that's all. She does not live on dewdrops, does she, like the grasshopper?

Corydon. No, by Earth, for sometimes I take her to graze by the banks of Aesarus, fair handfuls of fresh grass I give her too, and otherwhiles she wantons in the deep shade round Latymnus.

Battus. How lean is the red bull too! May the sons of Lampriades, the burghers to wit, get such another for their sacrifice to Hera, for the township is an ill neighbour.

Corydon. And yet that bull is driven to the mere's mouth, and to the meadows of Physcus, and to the Neaethus, where all fair herbs bloom, red goat-wort, and endive, and fragrant bees-wort.

Battus. Ah, wretched Aegon, thy very kine will go to Hades, while thou too art in love with a luckless victory, and thy pipe is flecked with mildew, the pipe that once thou madest for thyself!

Corydon. Not the pipe, by the nymphs, not so, for when he went to Pisa, he left the same as a gift to me, and I am something of a player. Well can I strike up the air of *Glaucé* and well the strain of *Pyrrhus,* and *the praise of Croton I sing,* and *Zacynthus is a goodly town,* and *Lacinium that fronts the dawn*! There Aegon the boxer, unaided, devoured eighty cakes to his own share, and there he caught the bull by the hoof, and brought him from the mountain, and gave him to Amaryllis. Thereon the women shrieked aloud, and the neatherd, - he burst out laughing.

Battus. Ah, gracious Amaryllis! Thee alone even in death will we ne’er forget. Dear to me as my goats wert thou, and thou art dead! Alas, too cruel a spirit hath my lot in his keeping.

Corydon. Dear Battus, thou must needs be comforted. The morrow perchance will bring better fortune. The living may hope, the dead alone are hopeless. Zeus now shows bright and clear, and anon he rains.

Battus. Enough of thy comforting! Drive the calves from the lower ground, the cursed beasts are grazing on the olive-shoots. Hie on, white face.

Corydon. Out, Cymaetha, get thee to the hill! Dost thou not hear? By Pan, I will soon come and be the death of you, if you stay there! Look, here she is creeping back again! Would I had my crook for hare killing: how I would cudgel thee.

Battus. In the name of Zeus, prithee look here, Corydon! A thorn has just run into my foot under the ankle. How deep they grow, the arrow-headed thorns. An ill end befall the heifer; I was pricked when I was gaping after her. Prithee dost see it?

Corydon. Yes, yes, and I have caught it in my nails, see, here it is.

Battus. How tiny is the wound, and how tall a man it masters!

Corydon. When thou goest to the hill, go not barefoot, Battus, for on the hillside flourish thorns and brambles plenty.

Battus. Come, tell me, Corydon, the old man now, does he still run after that little black-browed darling whom he used to dote on?

Corydon. He is after her still, my lad; but yesterday I came upon them, by the very byre, and right loving were they.

Battus. Well done, thou ancient lover! Sure, thou art near akin to the satyrs, or a rival of the slim-shanked Pans!

IDYL V

This Idyl begins with a ribald debate between two hirelings, who, at last, compete with each other in a match of pastoral song. No other idyl of Theocritus is so frankly true to the rough side of rustic manners. The scene is in Southern Italy.

Comatas. Goats of mine, keep clear of that notorious shepherd of Sibyrtas, that Lacon; he stole my goat-skin yesterday.

Lacon. Will ye never leave the well-head? Off, my lambs, see ye not Comatas; him that lately stole my shepherd's pipe?

Comatas. What manner of pipe might that be, for when gat'st *thou* a pipe, thou slave of Sibyrtas? Why does it no more suffice thee to keep a flute of straw, and whistle with Corydon?

Lacon. What pipe, free sir? why, the pipe that Lycon gave me. And what manner of goat-skin hadst thou, that Lacon made off with? Tell me, Comatas, for truly even thy master, Eumarides, had never a goat-skin to sleep in.

Comatas. 'Twas the skin that Crocylus gave me, the dappled one, when he sacrificed the she-goat to the nymphs; but thou, wretch, even then wert wasting with envy, and now, at last, thou hast stripped me bare!

Lacon. Nay verily, so help me Pan of the seashore, it was not Lacon the son of Calaethis that filched the coat of skin. If I lie, sirrah, may I leap frenzied down this rock into the Crathis!

Comatas. Nay verily, my friend, so help me these nymphs of the mere (and ever may they be favourable, as now, and kind to me), it was not Comatas that pilfered thy pipe.

Lacon. If I believe thee, may I suffer the afflictions of Daphnis! But see, if thou carest to stake a kid - though indeed ’tis scarce worth my while - then, go to, I will sing against thee, and cease not, till thou dust cry ‘enough!’

Comatas. *The sow defied Athene*! See, there is staked the kid, go to, do thou too put a fatted lamb against him, for thy stake.

Lacon. Thou fox, and where would be our even betting then? Who ever chose hair to shear, in place of wool? and who prefers to milk a filthy bitch, when he can have a she-goat, nursing her first kid?

Comatas. Why, he that deems himself as sure of getting the better of his neighbour as thou dost, a wasp that buzzes against the cicala. But as it is plain thou thinkst the kid no fair stake, lo, here is this he-goat. Begin the match!

Lacon. No such haste, thou art not on fire! More sweetly wilt thou sing, if thou wilt sit down beneath the wild olive tree, and the groves in this place. Chill water falls there, drop by drop, here grows the grass, and here a leafy bed is strown, and here the locusts prattle.

Comatas. Nay, no whit am I in haste, but I am sorely vexed, that thou shouldst dare to look me straight in the face, thou whom I used to teach while thou wert still a child. See where gratitude goes! As well rear wolf-whelps, breed hounds, that they may devour thee!

Lacon. And what good thing have I to remember that I ever learned or heard from thee, thou envious thing, thou mere hideous manikin!

*

But come this way, come, and thou shalt sing thy last of country song.

Comatas. That way I will not go! Here be oak trees, and here the galingale, and sweetly here hum the bees about the hives. There are two wells of chill water, and on the tree the birds are warbling, and the shadow is beyond compare with that where thou liest, and from on high the pine tree pelts us with her cones.

Lacon. Nay, but lambs' wool, truly, and fleeces, shalt thou tread here, if thou wilt but come, - fleeces more soft than sleep, but the goat-skins beside thee stink - worse than thyself. And I will set a great bowl of white milk for the nymphs, and another will I offer of sweet olive oil.

Comatas. Nay, but an if thou wilt come, thou shalt tread here the soft feathered fern, and flowering thyme, and beneath thee shall be strown the skins of she-goats, four times more soft than the fleeces of thy lambs. And I will set out eight bowls of milk for Pan, and eight bowls full of the richest honeycombs.

Lacon. Thence, where thou art, I pray thee, begin the match, and there sing thy country song, tread thine own ground and keep thine oaks to thyself. But who, who shall judge between us? Would that Lycopas, the neatherd, might chance to come this way!

Comatas. I want nothing with him, but that man, if thou wilt, that woodcutter we will call, who is gathering those tufts of heather near thee. It is Morson.

Lacon. Let us shout, then!

Comatas. Call thou to him.

Lacon. Ho, friend, come hither and listen for a little while, for we two have a match to prove which is the better singer of country song. So Morson, my friend, neither judge me too kindly, no, nor show him favour.

Comatas. Yes, dear Morson, for the nymphs' sake neither lean in thy judgment to Comatas, nor, prithee, favour *him*. The flock of sheep thou seest here belongs to Sibyrtas of Thurii, and the goats, friend, that thou beholdest are the goats of Eumarides of Sybaris.

Lacon. Now, in the name of Zeus did any one ask thee, thou make-mischief, who owned the flock, I or Sibyrtas? What a chatterer thou art!

Comatas. Best of men, I am for speaking the whole truth, and boasting never, but thou art too fond of cutting speeches.

Lacon. Come, say whatever thou hast to say, and let the stranger get home to the city alive; oh, Paean, what a babbler thou art, Comatas!

THE SINGING MATCH.

Comatas. The Muses love me better far than the minstrel Daphnis; but a little while ago I sacrificed two young she-goats to the Muses.

Lacon. Yea, and me too Apollo loves very dearly, and a noble ram I rear for Apollo, for the feast of the Carnea, look you, is drawing nigh.

Comatas. The she-goats that I milk have all borne twins save two. The maiden saw me, and 'alas,' she cried, 'dost thou milk alone?'

Lacon. Ah, ah, but Lacon here hath nigh twenty baskets full of cheese, and Lacon lies with his darling in the flowers!

Comatas. Clearista, too, pelts the goatherd with apples as he drives past his she-goats, and a sweet word she murmurs.

Lacon. And wild with love am I too, for my fair young darling, that meets the shepherd, with the bright hair floating round the shapely neck.

Comatas. Nay, ye may not liken dog-roses to the rose, or wind-flowers to the roses of the garden; by the garden walls their beds are blossoming.

Lacon. Nay, nor wild apples to acorns, for acorns are bitter in the oaken rind, but apples are sweet as honey.

Comatas. Soon will I give my maiden a ring-dove for a gift; I will take it from the juniper tree, for there it is brooding.

Lacon. But I will give my darling a soft fleece to make a cloak, a free gift, when I shear the black ewe.

Comatas. Forth from the wild olive, my bleating she-goats, feed here where the hillside slopes, and the tamarisks grove.

Lacon. Conarus there, and Cynaetha, will you never leave the oak? Graze here, where Phalarus feeds, where the hillside fronts the dawn.

Comatas. Ay, and I have a vessel of cypress wood, and a mixing bowl, the work of Praxiteles, and I hoard them for my maiden.

Lacon. I too have a dog that loves the flock, the dog to strangle wolves; him I am giving to my darling to chase all manner of wild beasts.

Comatas. Ye locusts that overleap our fence, see that ye harm not our vines, for our vines are young.

Lacon. Ye cicalas, see how I make the goatherd chafe: even so, methinks, do ye vex the reapers.

Comatas. I hate the foxes, with their bushy brushes, that ever come at evening, and eat the grapes of Micon.

Lacon. And I hate the lady-birds that devour the figs of Philondas, and flit down the wind.

Comatas. Dost thou not remember how I cudgelled thee, and thou didst grin and nimbly writhe, and catch hold of yonder oak?

Lacon. That I have no memory of, but how Eumarides bound thee there, upon a time, and flogged thee through and through, that I do very well remember.

Comatas. Already, Morson, some one is waxing bitter, dust thou see no sign of it? Go, go, and pluck, forthwith, the squills from some old wife's grave.

Lacon. And I too, Morson, I make some one chafe, and thou dost perceive it. Be off now to the Hales stream, and dig cyclamen.

Comatas. Let Himera flow with milk instead of water, and thou, Crathis, run red with wine, and all thy reeds bear apples.

Lacon. Would that the fount of Sybaris may flow with honey, and may the maiden's pail, at dawning, be dipped, not in water, but in the honeycomb.

Comatas. My goats eat cytisus, and goatswort, and tread the lentisk shoots, and lie at ease among the arbutus.

Lacon. But my ewes have honey-wort to feed on, and luxuriant creepers flower around, as fair as roses.

Comatas. I love not Alcippe, for yesterday she did not kiss me, and take my face between her hands, when I gave her the dove.

Lacon. But deeply I love my darling, for a kind kiss once I got, in return for the gift of a shepherd's pipe.

Comatas. Lacon, it never was right that pyes should contend with the nightingale, nor hoopoes with swans, but thou, unhappy swain, art ever for contention.

Morson's Judgement. I bid the shepherd cease. But to thee, Comatas, Morson presents the lamb. And thou, when thou hast sacrificed her to the nymphs, send Morson, anon, a goodly portion of her flesh.

Comatas. I will, by Pan. Now leap, and snort, my he-goats, all the herd of you, and see here how loud I ever will laugh, and exult over Lacon, the shepherd, for that, at last, I have won the lamb. See, I will leap sky high with joy. Take heart, my horned goats, to-morrow I will dip you all in the fountain of Sybaris. Thou white he-goat, I will beat thee if thou dare to touch one of the herd before I sacrifice the lamb to the nymphs. There he is at it again! Call me Melanthius, not Comatas, if I do not cudgel thee.

IDYL VI

Daphnis and Damoetas, two herdsmen of the golden age, meet by a well-side, and sing a match, their topic is the Cyclops, Polyphemus, and his love for the sea-nymph, Galatea.

The scene is in Sicily.

Damoetas, and Daphnis the herdsman, once on a time, Aratus, led the flock together into one place. Golden was the down on the chin of one, the beard of the other was half-grown, and by a well-head the twain sat them down, in the summer noon, and thus they sang. 'Twas Daphnis that began the singing, for the challenge had come from Daphnis.

Daphnis's Song of the Cyclops.

Galatea is pelting thy flock with apples, Polyphemus, she says the goatherd is a laggard lover! And thou dost not glance at her, oh hard, hard that thou art, but still thou sittest at thy sweet piping. Ah see, again, she is pelting thy dog, that follows thee to watch thy sheep. He barks, as he looks into the brine, and now the beautiful waves that softly plash reveal him, as he runs upon the shore. Take heed that he leap not on the maiden's limbs as she rises from the salt water, see that he rend not her lovely body! Ah, thence again, see, she is wantoning, light as dry thistle-down in the scorching summer weather. She flies when thou art wooing her; when thou woo'st not she pursues thee, she plays out all her game and leaves her king unguarded. For truly to Love, Polyphemus, many a time doth foul seem fair!

He ended and Damoetas touched a prelude to his sweet song.

I saw her, by Pan, I saw her when she was pelting my flock. Nay, she escaped not me, escaped not my one dear eye, - wherewith I shall see to my life’s end, - let Telemus the soothsayer, that prophesies hateful things, hateful things take home, to keep them for his children! But it is all to torment her, that I, in my turn, give not back her glances, pretending that I have another love. To hear this makes her jealous of me, by Paean, and she wastes with pain, and springs madly from the sea, gazing at my caves and at my herds. And I hiss on my dog to bark at her, for when I loved Galatea he would whine with joy, and lay his muzzle on her lap. Perchance when she marks how I use her she will send me many a messenger, but on her envoys I will shut my door till she promises that herself will make a glorious bridal-bed on this island for me. For in truth, I am not so hideous as they say! But lately I was looking into the sea, when all was calm; beautiful seemed my beard, beautiful my one eye - as I count beauty - and the sea reflected the gleam of my teeth whiter than the Parian stone. Then, all to shun the evil eye, did I spit thrice in my breast; for this spell was taught me by the crone, Cottytaris, that piped of yore to the reapers in Hippocoon’s field.

Then Damoetas kissed Daphnis, as he ended his song, and he gave Daphnis a pipe, and Daphnis gave him a beautiful flute. Damoetas fluted, and Daphnis piped, the herdsman, - and anon the calves were dancing in the soft green grass. Neither won the victory, but both were invincible.

IDYL VII

The poet making his way through the noonday heat, with two friends, to a harvest feast, meets the goatherd, Lycidas. To humour the poet Lycidas sings a love song of his own, and the other replies with verses about the passion of Aratus, the famous writer of didactic verse. After a courteous parting from Lycidas, the poet and his two friends repair to the orchard, where Demeter is being gratified with the first-fruits of harvest and vintaging.

In this idyl, Theocritus, speaking of himself by the name of Simichidas, alludes to his teachers in poetry, and, perhaps, to some of the literary quarrels of the time.

*The scene is in the isle of Cos. G. Hermann fancied that the scene was in Lucania, and Mr. W. R. Paton thinks he can identify the places named by the aid of inscriptions (*Classical Review*, ii. 8, 265). See also Rayet,* Mémoire sur l'île de Cos*, p. 18, Paris, 1876.*

The Harvest Feast.

It fell upon a time when Eucritus and I were walking from the city to the Hales water, and Amyntas was the third in our company. The harvest-feast of Deo was then being held by Phrasidemus and Antigenes, two sons of Lycopeus (if aught there be of noble and old descent), whose lineage dates from Clytia, and Chalcon himself - Chalcon, beneath whose foot the fountain sprang, the well of Buriné. He set his knee stoutly against the rock, and straightway by the spring poplars and elm trees showed a shadowy glade, arched overhead they grew, and pleached with leaves of green. We had not yet reached the mid-point of the way, nor was the tomb of Brasilas yet risen upon our sight, when, - thanks be to the Muses - we met a certain wayfarer, the best of men, a Cydonian. Lycidas was his name, a goatherd was he, nor could any that saw him have taken him for other than he was, for all about him bespoke the goatherd. Stripped from the roughest of he-goats was the tawny skin he wore on his shoulders, the smell of rennet clinging to it still, and about his breast an old cloak was buckled with a plaited belt, and in his right hand he carried a crooked staff of wild olive: and quietly he accosted me, with a smile, a twinkling eye, and a laugh still on his lips:-

‘Simichidas, whither, pray, through the noon dost thou trail thy feet, when even the very lizard on the rough stone wall is sleeping, and the crested larks no longer fare afield? Art thou hastening to a feast, a bidden guest, or art thou for treading a townsman’s wine-press? For such is thy speed that every stone upon the way spins singing from thy boots!’

‘Dear Lycidas,’ I answered him, ‘they all say that thou among herdsmen, yea, and reapers art far the chiefest flute-player. In sooth this greatly rejoices our hearts, and yet, to my conceit, meseems I can vie with thee. But as to this journey, we are going to the harvest-feast, for, look you some friends of ours are paying a festival to fair-robed Demeter, out of the first-fruits of their increase, for verily in rich measure has the goddess filled their threshing-floor with barley grain. But come, for the way and the day are thine alike and mine, come, let us vie in pastoral song, perchance each will make the other delight. For I, too, am a clear-voiced mouth of the Muses, and they all call me the best of minstrels, but I am not so credulous; no, by Earth, for to my mind I cannot as yet conquer in song that great Sicelidas - the Samian - nay, nor yet Philetas. ’Tis a match of frog against cicala!’

So I spoke, to win my end, and the goatherd with his sweet laugh, said, ‘I give thee this staff, because thou art a sapling of Zeus, and in thee is no guile. For as I hate your builders that try to raise a house as high as the mountain summit of Oromedon, so I hate all birds of the Muses that vainly toil with their cackling notes against the Minstrel of Chios! But come, Simichidas, without more ado let us begin the pastoral song. And I - nay, see friend - if it please thee at all, this ditty that I lately fashioned on the mountain side!’

The Song of Lycidas.

Fair voyaging befall Ageanax to Mytilene, both when the *Kids* are westering, and the south wind the wet waves chases, and when Orion holds his feet above the Ocean! Fair voyaging betide him, if he saves Lycidas from the fire of Aphrodite, for hot is the love that consumes me.

The halcyons will lull the waves, and lull the deep, and the south wind, and the east, that stirs the sea-weeds on the farthest shores, the halcyons that are dearest to the green-haired mermaids, of all the birds that take their prey from the salt sea. Let all things smile on Ageanax to Mytilene sailing, and may he come to a friendly haven. And I, on that day, will go crowned with anise, or with a rosy wreath, or a garland of white violets, and the fine wine of Ptelea I will dip from the bowl as I lie by the fire, while one shall roast beans for me, in the embers. And elbow-deep shall the flowery bed be thickly strewn, with fragrant leaves and with asphodel, and with curled parsley; and softly will I drink, toasting Ageanax with lips clinging fast to the cup, and draining it even to the lees.

Two shepherds shall be my flute-players, one from Acharnae, one from Lycope, and hard by Tityrus shall sing, how the herdsman Daphnis once loved a strange maiden, and how on the hill he wandered, and how the oak trees sang his dirge - the oaks that grow by the banks of the river Himeras - while he was wasting like any snow under high Haemus, or Athos, or Rhodope, or Caucasus at the world's end.

And he shall sing how, once upon a time, the great chest prisoned the living goatherd, by his lord's infatuate and evil will, and how the blunt-faced bees, as they came up from the meadow to the fragrant cedar chest, fed him with food of tender flowers, because the Muse still dropped sweet nectar on his lips.

O blessed Comatas, surely these joyful things befell thee, and thou wast enclosed within the chest, and feeding on the honeycomb through the springtime didst thou serve out thy bondage. Ah, would that in my days thou hadst been numbered with the living, how gladly on the hills would I have herded thy pretty she-goats, and listened to thy voice, whilst thou, under oaks or pine trees lying, didst sweetly sing, divine Comatas!

When he had chanted thus much he ceased, and I followed after him again, with some such words as these:-

'Dear Lycidas, many another song the Nymphs have taught me also, as I followed my herds upon the hillside, bright songs that Rumour, perchance, has brought even to the throne of Zeus. But of them all this is far the most excellent, wherewith I will begin to do thee honour: nay listen as thou art dear to the Muses.'

The Song of Simichidas.

For Simichidas the Loves have sneezed, for truly the wretch loves Myrto as dearly as goats love the spring. But Aratus, far the dearest of my friends, deep, deep his heart he keeps Desire, - and Aratus's love is young! Aristis knows it, an honourable man, nay of men the best, whom even Phoebus would permit to stand and sing lyre in hand, by his tripods. Aristis knows how deeply love is burning Aratus to the bone. Ah, Pan, thou lord of the beautiful plain of Homole, bring, I pray thee, the darling of Aratus unbidden to his arms, whosoe'er it be that he loves. If this thou dost, dear Pan, then never may the boys of Arcady flog thy sides and shoulders with stinging herbs, when scanty meats are left them on thine altar. But if thou shouldst otherwise decree, then may all thy skin be frayed and torn with thy nails, yea, and in nettles mayst thou couch! In the hills of the Edonians mayst thou dwell in mid-winter time, by the river Hebrus, close neighbour to the Polar star! But in summer mayst thou range with the uttermost Æthiopians beneath the rock of the Blemyes, whence Nile no more is seen.

And you, leave ye the sweet fountain of Hyetis and Byblis, and ye that dwell in the steep home of golden Dione, ye Loves as rosy as red apples, strike me with your arrows, the desired, the beloved; strike, for that ill-starred one pities not my friend, my host! And yet assuredly the pear is over-ripe, and the maidens cry 'alas, alas, thy fair bloom fades away!'

Come, no more let us mount guard by these gates, Aratus, nor wear our feet away with knocking there. Nay, let the crowing of the morning cock give others over to the bitter cold of dawn. Let Molon alone, my friend, bear the torment at that school of passion! For us, let us secure a quiet life, and some old crone to spit on us for luck, and so keep all unlovely things away.

Thus I sang, and sweetly smiling, as before, he gave me the staff, a pledge of brotherhood in the Muses. Then he bent his way to the left, and took the road to

Pyxa, while I and Eucritus, with beautiful Amyntas, turned to the farm of Phrasidemus. There we reclined on deep beds of fragrant lentisk, lowly strown, and rejoicing we lay in new stript leaves of the vine. And high above our heads waved many a poplar, many an elm tree, while close at hand the sacred water from the nymphs' own cave welled forth with murmurs musical. On shadowy boughs the burnt cicalas kept their chattering toil, far off the little owl cried in the thick thorn brake, the larks and finches were singing, the ring-dove moaned, the yellow bees were flitting about the springs. All breathed the scent of the opulent summer, of the season of fruits; pears at our feet and apples by our sides were rolling plentiful, the tender branches, with wild plums laden, were earthward bowed, and the four-year-old pitch seal was loosened from the mouth of the wine-jars.

Ye nymphs of Castaly that hold the steep of Parnassus, say, was it ever a bowl like this that old Chiron set before Heracles in the rocky cave of Pholus? Was it nectar like this that beguiled the shepherd to dance and foot it about his folds, the shepherd that dwelt by Anapus, on a time, the strong Polyphemus who hurled at ships with mountains? Had these ever such a draught as ye nymphs bade flow for us by the altar of Demeter of the threshing-floor?

Ah, once again may I plant the great fan on her corn-heap, while she stands smiling by, with sheaves and poppies in her hands.

IDYL VIII

The scene is among the high mountain pastures of Sicily:-

‘On the sword, at the cliff top
Lie strewn the white flocks,’

and far below shines and murmurs the Sicilian sea. Here Daphnis and Menalcas, two herdsmen of the golden age, meet, while still in their earliest youth, and contend for the prize of pastoral. Their songs, in elegiac measure, are variations on the themes of love and friendship (for Menalcas sings of Milon, Daphnis of Nais), and of nature. Daphnis is the winner,- it is his earliest victory, and the prelude to his great renown among nymphs and shepherds. In this version the strophes are arranged as in Fritzsche’s text. Some critics take the poem to be a patchwork by various hands.

As beautiful Daphnis was following his kine, and Menalcas shepherding his flock, they met, as men tell, on the long ranges of the hills. The beards of both had still the first golden bloom, both were in their earliest youth, both were pipe-players skilled, both skilled in song. Then first Menalcas, looking at Daphnis, thus bespoke him.

‘Daphnis, thou herdsman of the lowing kine, art thou minded to sing a match with me? Methinks I shall vanquish thee, when I sing in turn, as readily as I please.’

Then Daphnis answered him again in this wise, ‘Thou shepherd of the fleecy sheep, Menalcas, the pipe-player, never wilt thou vanquish me in song, not thou, if thou shouldst sing till some evil thing befall thee!’

Menalcas. Dost thou care then, to try this and see, dost thou care to risk a stake?

Daphnis. I do care to try this and see, a stake I am ready to risk.

Menalcas. But what shall we stake, what pledge shall we find equal and sufficient?

Daphnis. I will pledge a calf, and do thou put down a lamb, one that has grown to his mother’s height.

Menalcas. Nay, never will I stake a lamb, for stern is my father, and stern my mother, and they number all the sheep at evening.

Daphnis. But what, then, wilt thou lay, and where is to be the victor’s gain?

Menalcas. The pipe, the fair pipe with nine stops, that I made myself, fitted with white wax, and smoothed evenly, above as below. This would I readily wager, but never will I stake aught that is my father’s.

Daphnis. See then, I too, in truth, have a pipe with nine stops, fitted with white wax, and smoothed evenly, above as below. But lately I put it together, and this finger still aches, where the reed split, and cut it deeply.

Menalcas. But who is to judge between us, who will listen to our singing?

Daphnis. That goatherd yonder, he will do, if we call him hither, the man for whom that dog, a black hound with a white patch, is barking among the kids.

Then the boys called aloud, and the goatherd gave ear, and came, and the boys began to sing, and the goatherd was willing to be their umpire. And first Menalcas sang (for he drew the lot) the sweet-voiced Menalcas, and Daphnis took up the answering strain of pastoral song - and ’twas thus Menalcas began:

Menalcas. Ye glades, ye rivers, issue of the Gods, if ever Menalcas the flute-player sang a song ye loved, to please him, feed his lambs; and if ever Daphnis come hither with his calves, nay he have no less a boon.

Daphnis. Ye wells and pastures, sweet growth o' the world, if Daphnis sings like the nightingales, do ye fatten this herd of his, and if Menalcas hither lead a flock, may he too have pasture ungrudging to his full desire!

Menalcas. There doth the ewe bear twins, and there the goats; there the bees fill the hives, and there oaks grow loftier than common, wheresoever beautiful Milon's feet walk wandering; ah, if he depart, then withered and lean is the shepherd, and lean the pastures

Daphnis. Everywhere is spring, and pastures everywhere, and everywhere the cows' udders are swollen with milk, and the younglings are fostered, wheresoever fair Nais roams; ah, if she depart, then parched are the kine, and he that feeds them!

Menalcas. O bearded goat, thou mate of the white herd, and O ye blunt-faced kids, where are the manifold deeps of the forest, thither get ye to the water, for thereby is Milon; go, thou hornless goat, and say to him, 'Milon, Proteus was a herdsman, and that of seals, though he was a god.'

Daphnis. . . .

Menalcas. Not mine be the land of Pelops, not mine to own talents of gold, nay, nor mine to outrun the speed of the winds! Nay, but beneath this rock will I sing, with thee in mine arms, and watch our flocks feeding together, and, before us, the Sicilian sea.

Daphnis . . . .

Menalcas . . . .

Daphnis. Tempest is the dread pest of the trees, drought of the waters, snares of the birds, and the hunter's net of the wild beasts, but ruinous to man is the love of a delicate maiden. O father, O Zeus, I have not been the only lover, thou too hast longed for a mortal woman.

Thus the boys sang in verses amoebaean, and thus Menalcas began the crowning lay:

Menalcas. Wolf, spare the kids, spare the mothers of my herd, and harm not me, so young as I am to tend so great a flock. Ah, Lampurus, my dog, dost thou then sleep so soundly? a dog should not sleep so sound, that helps a boyish shepherd. Ewes of mine, spare ye not to take your fill of the tender herb, ye shall not weary, 'ere all this grass grows again. Hist, feed on, feed on, fill, all of you, your udders, that there may be milk for the lambs, and somewhat for me to store away in the cheese-crates.

Then Daphnis followed again, and sweetly preluded to his singing:

Daphnis. Me, even me, from the cave, the girl with meeting eyebrows spied yesterday as I was driving past my calves, and she cried, 'How fair, how fair he is!' But I answered her never the word of railing, but cast down my eyes, and plodded on my way.

Sweet is the voice of the heifer, sweet her breath, sweet to lie beneath the sky in summer, by running water.

Acorns are the pride of the oak, apples of the apple tree, the calf of the heifer, and the neatherd glories in his kine.

So sang the lads; and the goatherd thus bespoke them, 'Sweet is thy mouth, O Daphnis, and delectable thy song! Better is it to listen to thy singing, than to taste the honeycomb. Take thou the pipe, for thou hast conquered in the singing match. Ah, if thou wilt but teach some lay, even to me, as I tend the goats beside thee, this blunt-horned she-goat will I give thee, for the price of thy teaching, this she-goat that ever fills the milking pail above the brim.'

Then was the boy as glad, - and leaped high, and clapped his hands over his victory, - as a young fawn leaps about his mother.

But the heart of the other was wasted with grief, and desolate, even as a maiden sorrows that is newly wed.

From this time Daphnis became the foremost among the shepherds, and while yet in his earliest youth, he wedded the nymph Nais.

IDYL IX

Daphnis and Menalcas, at the bidding of the poet, sing the joys of the neatherds and of the shepherds life. Both receive the thanks of the poet, and rustic prizes - a staff and a horn, made of a spiral shell. Doubts have been expressed as to the authenticity of the prelude and concluding verses. The latter breathe all Theocritus's enthusiastic love of song.

Sing, Daphnis, a pastoral lay, do thou first begin the song, the song begin, O Daphnis; but let Menalcas join in the strain, when ye have mated the heifers and their calves, the barren kine and the bulls. Let them all pasture together, let them wander in the coppice, but never leave the herd. Chant thou for me, first, and on the other side let Menalcas reply.

Daphnis. Ah, sweetly lows the calf, and sweetly the heifer, sweetly sounds the neatherd with his pipe, and sweetly also I! My bed of leaves is strown by the cool water, and thereon are heaped fair skins from the white calves that were all browsing upon the arbutus, on a time, when the south-west wind dashed me them from the height.

And thus I heed no more the scorching summer, than a lover cares to heed the words of father or of mother.

So Daphnis sang to me, and thus, in turn, did Menalcas sing.

Menalcas. Aetna, mother mine, I too dwell in a beautiful cavern in the chamber of the rock, and, lo, all the wealth have I that we behold in dreams; ewes in plenty and she-goats abundant, their fleeces are strown beneath my head and feet. In the fire of oak-faggots puddings are hissing-hot, and dry beech-nuts roast therein, in the wintry weather, and, truly, for the winter season I care not even so much as a toothless man does for walnuts, when rich pottage is beside him.

Then I clapped my hands in their honour, and instantly gave each a gift, to Daphnis a staff that grew in my father’s close, self-shapen, yet so straight, that perchance even a craftsman could have found no fault in it. To the other I gave a goodly spiral shell, the meat that filled it once I had eaten after stalking the fish on the Icarian rocks (I cut it into five shares for five of us), - and Menalcas blew a blast on the shell.

Ye pastoral Muses, farewell! Bring ye into the light the song that I sang there to these shepherds on that day! Never let the pimple grow on my tongue-tip.

Cicala to cicala is dear, and ant to ant, and hawks to hawks, but to me the Muse and song. Of song may all my dwelling be full, for sleep is not more sweet, nor sudden spring, nor flowers are more delicious to the bees - so dear to me are the Muses. Whom they look on in happy hour, Circe hath never harmed with her enchanted potion.

IDYL X - THE REAPERS

This is an idyl of the same genre as Idyl IV. The sturdy reaper, Milon, as he levels the swathes of corn, derides his languid and love-worn companion, Buttus. The latter defends his gipsy love in verses which have been the keynote of much later poetry, and which echo in the fourth book of Lucretius, and in the Misanthrope of Molière. Milon replies with the song of Lityerses - a string, apparently, of popular rural couplets, such as Theocritus may have heard chanted in the fields.

Milan. Thou toilsome clod; what ails thee now, thou wretched fellow? Canst thou neither cut thy swathe straight, as thou wert wont to do, nor keep time with thy neighbour in thy reaping, but thou must fall out, like an ewe that is foot-pricked with a thorn and straggles from the herd? What manner of man wilt thou prove after mid-noon, and at evening, thou that dost not prosper with thy swathe when thou art fresh begun?

Battus. Milon, thou that canst toil till late, thou chip of the stubborn stone, has it never befallen thee to long for one that was not with thee?

Milan. Never! What has a labouring man to do with hankering after what he has not got?

Battus. Then it never befell thee to lie awake for love?

Milan. Forbid it; ’tis an ill thing to let the dog once taste of pudding.

Battus. But I, Milon, am in love for almost eleven days!

Milan. ’Tis easily seen that thou drawest from a wine-cask, while even vinegar is scarce with me.

Battus. And for Love’s sake, the fields before my doors are untilled since seed-time.

Milan. But which of the girls afflicts thee so?

Battus. The daughter of Polybotas, she that of late was wont to pipe to the reapers on Hippocoon’s farm.

Milan. God has found out the guilty! Thou hast what thou’st long been seeking, that grasshopper of a girl will lie by thee the night long!

Battus. Thou art beginning thy mocks of me, but Plutus is not the only blind god; he too is blind, the heedless Love! Beware of talking big.

Milan. Talk big I do not! Only see that thou dust level the corn, and strike up some love-ditty in the wench’s praise. More pleasantly thus wilt thou labour, and, indeed, of old thou wert a melodist.

Battus. Ye Muses Pierian, sing ye with me the slender maiden, for whatsoever ye do but touch, ye goddesses, ye make wholly fair.

They all call thee a *gipsy,* gracious Bombyca, and *lean,* and *sunburnt*, ’tis only I that call thee *honey-pale.*

Yea, and the violet is swart, and swart the lettered hyacinth, but yet these flowers are chosen the first in garlands.

The goat runs after cytisus, the wolf pursues the goat, the crane follows the plough, but I am wild for love of thee.

Would it were mine, all the wealth whereof once Croesus was lord, as men tell! Then images of us twain, all in gold, should be dedicated to Aphrodite, thou with thy flute, and a rose, yea, or an apple, and I in fair attire, and new shoon of Amyclae on both my feet.

Ah gracious Bombyca, thy feet are fashioned like carven ivory, thy voice is drowsy sweet, and thy ways, I cannot tell of them!

Milan. Verily our clown was a maker of lovely songs, and we knew it not! How well he meted out and shaped his harmony; woe is me for the beard that I have grown, all in vain! Come, mark thou too these lines of godlike Lityerses

THE LITYERSES SONG.

Demeter, rich in fruit, and rich in grain, may this corn be easy to win, and fruitful exceedingly!

Bind, ye bandsters, the sheaves, lest the wayfarer should cry, 'Men of straw were the workers here, ay, and their hire was wasted!'

See that the cut stubble faces the North wind, or the West, 'tis thus the grain waxes richest.

They that thresh corn should shun the noon-day steep; at noon the chaff parts easiest from the straw.

As for the reapers, let them begin when the crested lark is waking, and cease when he sleeps, but take holiday in the heat.

Lads, the frog has a jolly life, he is not cumbered about a butler to his drink, for he has liquor by him unstinted!

Boil the lentils better, thou miserly steward; take heed lest thou chop thy fingers, when thou’rt splitting cumin-seed.

’Tis thus that men should sing who labour i’ the sun, but thy starveling love, thou clod, ‘twere fit to tell to thy mother when she stirs in bed at dawning.

IDYL XI - THE CYCLOPS IN LOVE

Nicias, the physician and poet, being in love, Theocritus reminds him that in song lies the only remedy. It was by song, he says, that the Cyclops, Polyphemus, got him some ease, when he was in love with Galatea, the sea-nymph.

The idyl displays, in the most graceful manner, the Alexandrian taste for turning Greek mythology into love stories. No creature could be more remote from love than the original Polyphemus, the cannibal giant of the Odyssey.

There is none other medicine, Nicias, against Love, neither unguent, methinks, nor salve to sprinkle, - none, save the Muses of Pieria! Now a delicate thing is their minstrelsy in man’s life, and a sweet, but hard to procure. Methinks thou know’st this well, who art thyself a leech, and beyond all men art plainly dear to the Muses nine.

’Twas surely thus the Cyclops fleeted his life most easily, he that dwelt among us, - Polyphemus of old time, - when the beard was yet young on his cheek and chin; and he loved Galatea. He loved, not with apples, not roses, nor locks of hair, but with fatal frenzy, and all things else he held but trifles by the way. Many a time from the green pastures would his ewes stray back, self-shepherded, to the fold. But he was singing of Galatea, and pining in his place he sat by the sea-weed of the beach, from the dawn of day, with the direst hurt beneath his breast of mighty Cypris’s sending, - the wound of her arrow in his heart!

Yet this remedy he found, and sitting on the crest of the tall cliff, and looking to the deep, ’twas thus he would sing:-

Song of the Cyclops.

O milk-white Galatea, why cast off him that loves thee? More white than is pressed milk to look upon, more delicate than the lamb art thou, than the young calf wantoner, more sleek than the unripened grape! Here dust thou resort, even so, when sweet sleep possesses me, and home straightway dost thou depart when sweet sleep lets me go, fleeing me like an ewe that has seen the grey wolf.

I fell in love with thee, maiden, I, on the day when first thou camest, with my mother, and didst wish to pluck the hyacinths from the hill, and I was thy guide on the way. But to leave loving thee, when once I had seen thee, neither afterward, nor now at all, have I the strength, even from that hour. But to thee all this is as nothing, by Zeus, nay, nothing at all!

I know, thou gracious maiden, why it is that thou dust shun me. It is all for the shaggy brow that spans all my forehead, from this to the other ear, one long unbroken eyebrow. And but one eye is on my forehead, and broad is the nose that overhangs my lip. Yet I (even such as thou seest me) feed a thousand cattle, and from these I draw and drink the best milk in the world. And cheese I never lack, in summer time or autumn, nay, nor in the dead of winter, but my baskets are always overladen.

Also I am skilled in piping, as none other of the Cyclopes here, and of thee, my love, my sweet-apple, and of myself too I sing, many a time, deep in the night. And for thee I tend eleven fawns, all crescent-browed, and four young whelps of the bear.

Nay, come thou to me, and thou shalt lack nothing that now thou hast. Leave the grey sea to roll against the land; more sweetly, in this cavern, shalt thou fleet the night with me! Thereby the laurels grow, and there the slender cypresses, there is the ivy dun, and the sweet clustered grapes; there is chill water, that for me deep-wooded Ætna sends down from the white snow, a draught divine! Ah who, in place of these, would choose the sea to dwell in, or the waves of the sea?

But if thou dust refuse because my body seems shaggy and rough, well, I have faggots of oakwood, and beneath the ashes is fire unwearied, and I would endure to let thee burn my very soul, and this my one eye, the dearest thing that is mine.

Ah me, that my mother bore me not a finny thing, so would I have gone down to thee, and kissed thy hand, if thy lips thou would not suffer me to kiss! And I would have brought thee either white lilies, or the soft poppy with its scarlet petals. Nay, these are summer's flowers, and those are flowers of winter, so I could not have brought thee them all at one time.

Now, verily, maiden, now and here will I learn to swim, if perchance some stranger come hither, sailing with his ship, that I may see why it is so dear to thee, to have thy dwelling in the deep.

Come forth, Galatea, and forget as thou comest, even as I that sit here have forgotten, the homeward way! Nay, choose with me to go shepherding, with me to milk the flocks, and to pour the sharp rennet in, and to fix the cheeses.

There is none that wrongs me but that mother of mine, and her do I blame. Never, nay, never once has she spoken a kind word for me to thee, and that though day by day she beholds me wasting. I will tell her that my head, and both my feet are throbbing, that she may somewhat suffer, since I too am suffering.

O Cyclops, Cyclops, whither are thy wits wandering? Ah that thou wouldst go, and weave thy wicker-work, and gather broken boughs to carry to thy lambs: in faith, if thou didst this, far wiser wouldst thou be!

Milk the ewe that thou hast, why pursue the thing that shuns thee? Thou wilt find, perchance, another, and a fairer Galatea. Many be the girls that bid me play with them through the night, and softly they all laugh, if perchance I answer them. On land it is plain that I too seem to be somebody!

Lo, thus Polyphemus still shepherded his love with song, and lived lighter than if he had given gold for ease.

IDYL XII - THE PASSIONATE FRIEND

This is rather a lyric than an idyl, being an expression of that singular passion which existed between men in historical Greece. The next idyl, like the Myrmidons of Aeschylus, attributes the same manners to mythical and heroic Greece. It should be unnecessary to say that the affection between Homeric warriors, like Achilles and Patroclus, was only that of companions in arms and was quite unlike the later sentiment.

Hast thou come, dear youth, with the third night and the dawning; hast thou come? but men in longing grow old in a day! As spring than the winter is sweeter, as the apple than the sloe, as the ewe is deeper of fleece than the lamb she bore; as a maiden surpasses a thrice-wedded wife, as the fawn is nimbler than the calf; nay, by as much as sweetest of all fowls sings the clear-voiced nightingale, so much has thy coming gladdened me! To thee have I hastened as the traveller hastens under the burning sun to the shadow of the ilex tree.

Ah, would that equally the Loves may breathe upon us twain, may we become a song in the ears of all men unborn.

‘Lo, a pair were these two friends among the folk of former time,’ the one ‘the Knight’ (so the Amyclaeans call him), the other, again, ‘the Page,’ so styled in speech of Thessaly.

‘An equal yoke of friendship they bore: ah, surely then there were golden men of old, when friends gave love for love!’

And would, O father Cronides, and would, ye ageless immortals, that this might be; and that when two hundred generations have sped, one might bring these tidings to me by Acheron, the irremeable stream.

‘The loving-kindness that was between thee and thy gracious friend, is even now in all men’s mouths, and chiefly on the lips of the young.’

Nay, verily, the gods of heaven will be masters of these things, to rule them as they will, but when I praise thy graciousness no blotch that punishes the perjurer shall spring upon the tip of my nose! Nay, if ever thou hast somewhat pained me, forthwith thou healest the hurt, giving a double delight, and I depart with my cup full and running over!

Nisaean men of Megara, ye champions of the oars, happily may ye dwell, for that ye honoured above all men the Athenian stranger, even Diodes, the true lover. Always about his tomb the children gather in their companies, at the coming in of the spring, and contend for the prize of kissing. And whoso most sweetly touches lip to lip, laden with garlands he returneth to his mother. Happy is he that judges those kisses of the children; surely he prays most earnestly to bright-faced Ganymedes, that his lips may be as the Lydian touchstone wherewith the money-changers try gold lest, perchance base metal pass for true.

IDYL XIII - HYLAS AND HERACLES

As in the eleventh Idyl, Nicias is again addressed, by way of introduction to the story of Hylas. This beautiful lad, a favourite companion of Heracles, took part in the Quest of the Fleece of Gold. As he went to draw water from a fountain, the water-nymphs dragged him down to their home, and Heracles, after a long and vain search, was compelled to follow the heroes of the Quest on foot to Phasis.

Not for us only, Nicias, as we were used to deem, was Love begotten, by whomsoever of the Gods was the father of the child; not first to us seemed beauty beautiful, to us that are mortal men and look not on the morrow. Nay, but the son of Amphitryon, that heart of bronze, who abode the wild lion's onset, loved a lad, beautiful Hylas - Hylas of the braided locks, and he taught him all things as a father teaches his child, all whereby himself became a mighty man, and renowned in minstrelsy. Never was he apart from Hylas, not when midnoon was high in heaven, not when Dawn with her white horses speeds upwards to the dwelling of Zeus, not when the twittering nestlings look towards the perch, while their mother flaps her wings above the smoke-browned beam; and all this that the lad might be fashioned to his mind, and might drive a straight furrow, and come to the true measure of man.

But when Iason, Aeson's son, was sailing after the fleece of gold (and with him followed the champions, the first chosen out of all the cities, they that were of most avail), to rich Iolcos too came the mighty man and adventurous, the son of the woman of Midea, noble Alcmene. With him went down Hylas also, to Argo of the goodly benches, the ship that grazed not on the clashing rocks Cyanean, but through she sped and ran into deep Phasis, as an eagle over the mighty gulf of the sea. And the clashing rocks stand fixed, even from that hour!

Now at the rising of the Pleiades, when the upland fields begin to pasture the young lambs, and when spring is already on the wane, then the flower divine of Heroes bethought them of sea-faring. On board the hollow Argo they sat down to the oars, and to the Hellespont they came when the south wind had been for three days blowing, and made their haven within Propontis, where the oxen of the Cianes wear bright the ploughshare, as they widen the furrows. Then they went forth upon the shore, and each couple busily got ready supper in the late evening, and many as they were one bed they strewed lowly on the ground, for they found a meadow lying, rich in couches of strown grass and leaves. Thence they cut them pointed flag-leaves, and deep marsh-galingale. And Hylas of the yellow hair, with a vessel of bronze in his hand, went to draw water against suppertime, for Heracles himself, and the steadfast Telamon, for these comrades twain supped ever at one table. Soon was he ware of a spring, in a hollow land, and the rushes grew thickly round it, and dark swallow-wort, and green maiden-hair, and blooming parsley, and deer-grass spreading through the marshy land. In the midst of the water the nymphs were arraying their dances, the sleepless nymphs, dread goddesses of the country people, Eunice, and Malis, and Nycheia, with her April eyes. And now the boy was holding out the wide-mouthed pitcher to the water, intent on dipping it, but the nymphs all clung to his hand, for love of the Argive lad had fluttered the soft hearts of all of them. Then down he sank into the black water, headlong all, as when a star shoots flaming from the sky, plumb in the deep it falls, and a mate shouts out to the seamen, ‘Up with the gear, my lads, the wind is fair for sailing.’

Then the nymphs held the weeping boy on their laps, and with gentle words were striving to comfort him. But the son of Amphitryon was troubled about the lad, and went forth, carrying his bended bow in Scythian fashion, and the club that is ever grasped in his right hand. Thrice he shouted ‘Hylas!’ as loud as his deep throat could call, and thrice again the boy heard him, and thin came his voice from the water, and, hard by though he was, he seemed very far away. And as when a bearded lion, a ravening lion on the hills, hears the bleating of a fawn afar off, and rushes forth from his lair to seize it, his readiest meal, even so the mighty Heracles, in longing for the lad, sped through the trackless briars, and ranged over much country.

Reckless are lovers: great toils did Heracles bear, in hills and thickets wandering, and Iason’s quest was all postponed to this. Now the ship abode with her tackling aloft, and the company gathered there, but at midnight the young men were lowering the sails again, awaiting Heracles. But he wheresoever his feet might lead him went wandering in his fury, for the cruel Goddess of love was rending his heart within him.

Thus loveliest Hylas is numbered with the Blessed, but for a runaway they girded at Heracles, the heroes, because he roamed from Argo of the sixty oarsmen. But on foot he came to Colchis and inhospitable Phasis.

IDYL XIV

This Idyl, like the next, is dramatic in form. One Aeschines tells Thyonichus the story of his quarrel with his mistress Cynisca. He speaks of taking foreign service, and Thyonichus recommends that of Ptolemy. The idyl was probably written at Alexandria, as a compliment to Ptolemy, and an inducement to Greeks to join his forces. There is nothing, however, to fix the date.

Aeschines. All hail to the stout Thyonichus!

Thyonichus. As much to you, Aeschines.

Aeschines. How long it is since we met!

Thyonichus. Is it so long? But why, pray, this melancholy?

Aeschines. I am not in the best of luck, Thyonichus.

Thyonichus. 'Tis for that, then, you are so lean, and hence comes this long moustache, and these love-locks all adust. Just such a figure was a Pythagorean that came here of late, barefoot and wan, - and said he was an Athenian. Marry, he too was in love, methinks, with a plate of pancakes.

Aeschines. Friend, you will always have your jest, - but beautiful Cynisca, - she flouts me! I shall go mad some day, when no man looks for it; I am but a hair's-breadth on the hither side, even now.

Thyonichus. You are ever like this, dear Aeschines, now mad, now sad, and crying for all things at your whim. Yet, tell me, what is your new trouble?

Aeschines. The Argive, and I, and the Thessalian rough rider, Apis, and Cleunichus the free lance, were drinking together, at my farm. I had killed two chickens, and a sucking pig, and had opened the Bibline wine for them, - nearly four years old, - but fragrant as when it left the wine-press. Truffles and shellfish had been brought out, it was a jolly drinking match. And when things were now getting forwarder, we determined that each of us should toast whom he pleased, in unmixed wine, only he must name his toast. So we all drank, and called our toasts as had been agreed. Yet She said nothing, though I was there; how think you I liked that? 'Won't you call a toast? You have seen the wolf!' some one said in jest, 'as the proverb goes,' then she kindled; yes, you could easily have lighted a lamp at her face. There is one Wolf, one Wolf there is, the son of Labes our neighbour, - he is tall, smooth-skinned, many think him handsome. His was that illustrious love in which she was pining, yes, and a breath about the business once came secretly to my ears, but I never looked into it, beshrew my beard!

Already, mark you, we four men were deep in our cups, when the Larissa man out of mere mischief, struck up, 'My Wolf,' some Thessalian catch, from the very beginning. Then Cynisca suddenly broke out weeping more bitterly than a six-year-old maid, that longs for her mother's lap. Then I, - you know me, Thyonichus, - struck her on the cheek with clenched fist, - one two! She caught up her robes, and forth she rushed, quicker than she came. 'Ah, my undoing' (cried I), 'I am not good enough for you, then - you have a dearer playfellow? well, be off and cherish your other lover, 'tis for him your tears run big as apples!'

And as the swallow flies swiftly back to gather a morsel, fresh food, for her young ones under the eaves, still swifter sped she from her soft chair, straight through the vestibule and folding-doors, wherever her feet carried her. So, sure, the old proverb says, 'the bull has sought the wild wood.'

Since then there are twenty days, and eight to these, and nine again, then ten others, to-day is the eleventh, add two more, and it is two months since we parted, and I have not shaved, not even in Thracian fashion. {74a}

And now Wolf is everything with her. Wolf finds the door open o' nights, and I am of no account, not in the reckoning, like the wretched men of Megara, in the place dishonourable. {74b}

And if I could cease to love, the world would wag as well as may be. But now, - now, - as they say, Thyonichus, I am like the mouse that has tasted pitch. And what remedy there may be for a bootless love, I know not; except that Simus, he who was in love with the daughter of Epicalchus, went over seas, and came back heart-whole, - a man of my own age. And I too will cross the water, and prove not the first, maybe, nor the last, perhaps, but a fair soldier as times go.

Thyonichus. Would that things had gone to your mind, Aeschines. But if, in good earnest, you are thus set on going into exile, PTOLEMY is the free man's best paymaster!

Aeschines. And in other respects, what kind of man?

Thyonichus. The free man's best paymaster! Indulgent too, the Muses' darling, a true lover, the top of good company, knows his friends, and still better knows his enemies. A great giver to many, refuses nothing that he is asked which to give may beseem a king, but, Aeschines, we should not always be asking. Thus, if you are minded to pin up the top corner of your cloak over the right shoulder, and if you have the heart to stand steady on both feet, and bide the brunt of a hardy targeteer, off instantly to Egypt! From the temples downward we all wax grey, and on to the chin creeps the rime of age, men must do somewhat while their knees are yet nimble.

IDYL XV

This famous idyl should rather, perhaps, be called a mimus. It describes the visit paid by two Syracusan women residing in Alexandria, to the festival of the resurrection of Adonis. The festival is given by Arsinoë, wife and sister of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and the poem cannot have been written earlier than his marriage, in 266 B.C. [?] Nothing can be more gay and natural than the chatter of the women, which has changed no more in two thousand years than the song of birds. Theocritus is believed to have had a model for this idyl in the Isthmiazusae of Sophron, an older poet. In the Isthmiazusae two ladies described the spectacle of the Isthmian games.

Gorgo. Is Praxinoë at home?

Praxinoë. Dear Gorgo, how long it is since you have been here! She *is* at home. The wonder is that you have got here at last! Eunoë, see that she has a chair. Throw a cushion on it too.

Gorgo. It does most charmingly as it is.

Praxinoë. Do sit down.

Gorgo. Oh, what a thing spirit is! I have scarcely got to you alive, Praxinoë! What a huge crowd, what hosts of four-in-hands! Everywhere cavalry boots, everywhere men in uniform! And the road is endless: yes, you really live *too* far away!

Praxinoë. It is all the fault of that madman of mine. Here he came to the ends of the earth and took - a hole, not a house, and all that we might not be neighbours. The jealous wretch, always the same, ever for spite!

Gorgo. Don't talk of your husband, Dinon, like that, my dear girl, before the little boy, - look how he is staring at you! Never mind, Zopyrion, sweet child, she is not speaking about papa.

Praxinoë. Our Lady! the child takes notice.

Gorgo. Nice papa!

Praxinoë. That papa of his the other day - we call every day 'the other day' - went to get soap and rouge at the shop, and back he came to me with salt - the great big endless fellow!

Gorgo. Mine has the same trick, too, a perfect spendthrift - Diocleides! Yesterday he got what he meant for five fleeces, and paid seven shillings a piece for - what do you suppose? - dogskins, shreds of old leather wallets, mere trash - trouble on trouble. But come, take your cloak and shawl. Let us be off to the palace of rich Ptolemy, the King, to see the Adonis; I hear the Queen has provided something splendid!

Praxinoë. Fine folks do everything finely.

Gorgo. What a tale you will have to tell about the things you have seen, to any one who has not seen them! It seems nearly time to go.

Praxinoë. Idlers have always holiday. Eunoë, bring the water and put it down in the middle of the room, lazy creature that you are. Cats like always to sleep soft! {78a} Come, bustle, bring the water; quicker. I want water first, and how she carries it! give it me all the same; don't pour out so much, you extravagant thing. Stupid girl! Why are you wetting my dress? There, stop, I have washed my hands, as heaven would have it. Where is the key of the big chest? Bring it here.

Gorgo. Praxinoë, that full body becomes you wonderfully. Tell me how much did the stuff cost you just off the loom?

Praxinoë. Don't speak of it, Gorgo! More than eight pounds in good silver money, - and the work on it! I nearly slaved my soul out over it!

Gorgo. Well, it is *most* successful; all you could wish. {78b}

Praxinoë. Thanks for the pretty speech! Bring my shawl, and set my hat on my head, the fashionable way. No, child, I don't mean to take you. Boo! Bogies! There's a horse that bites! Cry as much as you please, but I cannot have you lamed. Let us be moving. Phrygia take the child, and keep him amused, call in the dog, and shut the street door.

[They go into the street.

Ye gods, what a crowd! How on earth are we ever to get through this coil? They are like ants that no one can measure or number. Many a good deed have you done, Ptolemy; since your father joined the immortals, there's never a malefactor to spoil the passer-by, creeping on him in Egyptian fashion - oh! the tricks those perfect rascals used to play. Birds of a feather, ill jesters, scoundrels all! Dear Gorgo, what will become of us? Here come the King's war-horses! My dear man, don't trample on me. Look, the bay's rearing, see, what temper! Eunoë, you foolhardy girl, will you never keep out of the way? The beast will kill the man that's leading him. What a good thing it is for me that my brat stays safe at home.

Gorgo. Courage, Praxinoë. We are safe behind them, now, and they have gone to their station.

Praxinoë. There! I begin to be myself again. Ever since I was a child I have feared nothing so much as horses and the chilly snake. Come along, the huge mob is overflowing us.

Gorgo (to an old Woman). Are you from the Court, mother?

Old Woman. I am, my child.

Praxinoë. Is it easy to get there?

Old Woman. The Achaeans got into Troy by trying, my prettiest of ladies. Trying will do everything in the long run.

Gorgo. The old wife has spoken her oracles, and off she goes.

Praxinoë. Women know everything, yes, and how Zeus married Hera!

Gorgo. See Praxinoë, what a crowd there is about the doors.

Praxinoë. Monstrous, Gorgo! Give me your hand, and you, Eunoë, catch hold of Eutychis; never lose hold of her, for fear lest you get lost. Let us all go in together; Eunoë, clutch tight to me. Oh, how tiresome, Gorgo, my muslin veil is torn in two already! For heaven's sake, sir, if you ever wish to be fortunate, take care of my shawl!

Stranger. I can hardly help myself, but for all that I will be as careful as I can.

Praxinoë. How close-packed the mob is, they hustle like a herd of swine.

Stranger. Courage, lady, all is well with us now.

Praxinoë. Both this year and for ever may all be well with you, my dear sir, for your care of us. A good kind man! We're letting Eunoë get squeezed - come, wretched girl, push your way through. That is the way. We are all on the right side of the door, quoth the bridegroom, when he had shut himself in with his bride.

Gorgo. Do come here, Praxinoë. Look first at these embroideries. How light and how lovely! You will call them the garments of the gods.

Praxinoë. Lady Athene, what spinning women wrought them, what painters designed these drawings, so true they are? How naturally they stand and move, like living creatures, not patterns woven. What a clever thing is man! Ah, and himself - Adonis - how beautiful to behold he lies on his silver couch, with the first down on his cheeks, the thrice-beloved Adonis, - Adonis beloved even among the dead.

A Stranger. You weariful women, do cease your endless cooing talk! They bore one to death with their eternal broad vowels!

Gorgo. Indeed! And where may this person come from? What is it to you if we *are* chatterboxes! Give orders to your own servants, sir. Do you pretend to command ladies of Syracuse? If you must know, we are Corinthians by descent, like Bellerophon himself, and we speak Peloponnesian. Dorian women may lawfully speak Doric, I presume?

Praxinoë. Lady Persephone, never may we have more than one master. I am not afraid of *your* putting me on short commons.

Gorgo. Hush, hush, Praxinoë - the Argive woman's daughter, the great singer, is beginning the *Adonis;* she that won the prize last year for dirge-singing. I am sure she will give us something lovely; see, she is preluding with her airs and graces.

The Psalm of Adonis.

O Queen that lovest Golgi, and Idalium, and the steep of Eryx, O Aphrodite, that playest with gold, lo, from the stream eternal of Acheron they have brought back to thee Adonis - even in the twelfth month they have brought him, the dainty-footed Hours. Tardiest of the Immortals are the beloved Hours, but dear and desired they come, for always, to all mortals, they bring some gift with them. O Cypris, daughter of Diônê, from mortal to immortal, so men tell, thou hast changed Berenice, dropping softly in the woman's breast the stuff of immortality.

Therefore, for thy delight, O thou of many names and many temples, doth the daughter of Berenice, even Arsinoë, lovely as Helen, cherish Adonis with all things beautiful.

Before him lie all ripe fruits that the tall trees' branches bear, and the delicate gardens, arrayed in baskets of silver, and the golden vessels are full of incense of Syria. And all the dainty cakes that women fashion in the kneading-tray, mingling blossoms manifold with the white wheaten flour, all that is wrought of honey sweet, and in soft olive oil, all cakes fashioned in the semblance of things that fly, and of things that creep, lo, here they are set before him.

Here are built for him shadowy bowers of green, all laden with tender anise, and children flit overhead - the little Loves - as the young nightingales perched upon the trees fly forth and try their wings from bough to bough.

O the ebony, O the gold, O the twin eagles of white ivory that carry to Zeus the son of Cronos his darling, his cup-bearer! O the purple coverlet strewn above, more soft than sleep! So Miletus will say, and whoso feeds sheep in Samos.

Another bed is strewn for beautiful Adonis, one bed Cypris keeps, and one the rosy-armed Adonis. A bridegroom of eighteen or nineteen years is he, his kisses are not rough, the golden down being yet upon his lips! And now, good-night to Cypris, in the arms of her lover! But lo, in the morning we will all of us gather with the dew, and carry him forth among the waves that break upon the beach, and with locks unloosed, and ungirt raiment falling to the ankles, and bosoms bare will we begin our shrill sweet song.

Thou only, dear Adonis, so men tell, thou only of the demigods dost visit both this world and the stream of Acheron. For Agamemnon had no such lot, nor Aias, that mighty lord of the terrible anger, nor Hector, the eldest born of the twenty sons of Hecabe, nor Patroclus, nor Pyrrhus, that returned out of Troyland, nor the heroes of yet more ancient days, the Lapithae and Deucalion’s sons, nor the sons of Pelops, and the chiefs of Pelasgian Argus. Be gracious now, dear Adonis, and propitious even in the coming year. Dear to us has thine advent been, Adonis, and dear shall it be when thou comest again.

Gorgo. Praxinoë, the woman is cleverer than we fancied! Happy woman to know so much, thrice happy to have so sweet a voice. Well, all the same, it is time to be making for home. Diocleides has not had his dinner, and the man is all vinegar, - don’t venture near him when he is kept waiting for dinner. Farewell, beloved Adonis, may you find us glad at your next coming!

IDYL XVI

In 265 B.C. Sicily was devastated by the Carthaginians, and by the companies of disciplined free-lances who called themselves Mamertines, or Mars's men. The hopes of the Greek inhabitants of the island were centred in Hiero, son of Hierocles, who was about to besiege Messana (then held by the Carthaginians) and who had revived the courage of the Syracusans. To him Theocritus addressed this idyl, in which he complains of the sordid indifference of the rich, rehearses the merits of song, dilates on the true nature of wealth, and of the happy lift, and finally expresses his hope that Hiero will rid the isle of the foreign foe, and will restore peace and pastoral joys. The idyl contains some allusions to Simonides, the old lyric poet, and to his relations with the famous Hiero tyrant of Syracuse.

Ever is this the care of the maidens of Zeus, ever the care of minstrels, to sing the Immortals, to sing the praises of noble men. The Muses, lo, are Goddesses, of Gods the Goddesses sing, but we on earth are mortal men; let us mortals sing of mortals. Ah, who of all them that dwell beneath the grey morning, will open his door and gladly receive our Graces within his house? who is there that will not send them back again without a gift? And they with looks askance, and naked feet come homewards, and sorely they upbraid me when they have gone on a vain journey, and listless again in the bottom of their empty coffer, they dwell with heads bowed over their chilly knees, where is their drear abode, when gainless they return.

Where is there such an one, among men to-day? Where is he that will befriend him that speaks his praises? I know not, for now no longer, as of old, are men eager to win the renown of noble deeds, nay, they are the slaves of gain! Each man clasps his hands below the purse-fold of his gown, and looks about to spy whence he may get him money: the very rust is too precious to be rubbed off for a gift. Nay, each has his ready saw; *the shin is further than the knee; first let me get my own*! 'Tis *the Gods' affair to honour minstrels*! *Homer is enough for every one, who wants to hear any other*? *He is the best of bards who takes nothing that is mine.*

O foolish men, in the store of gold uncounted, what gain have ye? Not in this do the wise find the true enjoyment of wealth, but in that they can indulge their own desires, and something bestow on one of the minstrels, and do good deeds to many of their kin, and to many another man; and always give altar-rites to the Gods, nor ever play the churlish host, but kindly entreat the guest at table, and speed him when he would be gone. And this, above all, to honour the holy interpreters of the Muses, that so thou mayest have a goodly fame, even when hidden in Hades, nor ever moan without renown by the chill water of Acheron, like one whose palms the spade has hardened, some landless man bewailing the poverty that is all his heritage.

Many were the thralls that in the palace of Antiochus, and of king Aleuas drew out their monthly dole, many the calves that were driven to the penns of the Scopiadae, and lowed with the horned kine: countless on the Crannonian plain did shepherds pasture beneath the sky the choicest sheep of the hospitable Creondae, yet from all this they had no joy, when once into the wide raft of hateful Acheron they had breathed sweet life away! Yea, unremembered (though they had left all that rich store), for ages long would they have lain among the dead forlorn, if a name among later men the skilled Ceian minstrel had spared to bestow, singing his bright songs to a harp of many strings. Honour too was won by the swift steeds that came home to them crowned from the sacred contests.

And who would ever have known the Lycian champions of time past, who Priam’s long-haired sons, and Cycnus, white of skin as a maiden, if minstrels had not chanted of the war cries of the old heroes? Nor would Odysseus have won his lasting glory, for all his ten years wandering among all folks; and despite the visit he paid, he a living man, to inmost Hades, and for all his escape from the murderous Cyclops’s cave, - unheard too were the names of the swineherd Eumaeus, and of Philoetius, busy with the kine of the herds; yea, and even of Laertes, high of heart; if the songs of the Ionian man had not kept them in renown.

From the Muses comes a goodly report to men, but the living heirs devour the possessions of the dead. But, lo, it is as light labour to count the waves upon the beach, as many as wind and grey sea-tide roll upon the shore, or in violet-hued water to cleanse away the stain from a potsherd, as to win favour from a man that is smitten with the greed of gain. Good-day to such an one, and countless be his coin, and ever may he be possessed by a longing desire for more! But I for my part would choose honour and the loving-kindness of men, far before wealth in mules and horses.

I am seeking to what mortal I may come, a welcome guest, with the help of the Muses, for hard indeed do minstrels find the ways, who go uncompanioned by the daughters of deep-counselling Zeus. Not yet is the heaven aweary of rolling the months onwards, and the years, and many a horse shall yet whirl the chariot wheels, and the man shall yet be found, who will take me for his minstrel; a man of deeds like those that great Achilles wrought, or puissant Aias, in the plain of Simois, where is the tomb of Phrygian Ilus.

Even now the Phoenicians that dwell beneath the setting sun on the spur of Libya, shudder for dread, even now the Syracusans poise lances in rest, and their arms are burdened by the linden shields. Among them Hiero, like the mighty men of old, girds himself for fight, and the horse-hair crest is shadowing his helmet. Ah, Zeus, our father renowned, and ah, lady Athene, and O thou Maiden that with the Mother dost possess the great burg of the rich Ephyreans, by the water of Lusimeleia, would that dire necessity may drive our foemen from the isle, along the Sardinian wave, to tell the doom of their friends to children and to wives - messengers easy to number out of so many warriors! But as for our cities may they again be held by their ancient masters, - all the cities that hostile hands have utterly spoiled. May our people till the flowering fields, and may thousands of sheep unnumbered fatten ‘mid the herbage, and bleat along the plain, while the kine as they come in droves to the stalls warn the belated traveller to hasten on his way. May the fallows be broken for the seed-time, while the cicala, watching the shepherds as they toil in the sun, in the shade of the trees doth sing on the topmost sprays. May spiders weave their delicate webs over martial gear, may none any more so much as name the cry of onset!

But the fame of Hiero may minstrels bear aloft, across the Scythian sea, and where Semiramis reigned, that built the mighty wall, and made it fast with slime for mortar. I am but one of many that are loved by the daughters of Zeus, and they all are fain to sing of Sicilian Arethusa, with the people of the isle, and the warrior Hiero. O Graces, ye Goddesses, adored of Eteocles, ye that love Orchomenos of the Minyae, the ancient enemy of Thebes, when no man bids me, let me abide at home, but to the houses of such as bid me, boldly let me come with my Muses. Nay, neither the Muses nor you Graces will I leave behind, for without the Graces what have men that is desirable? with the Graces of song may I dwell for ever!

IDYL XVII

The poet praises Ptolemy Philadelphus in a strain of almost religious adoration. Hauler, in his Life of Theocritus, dates the poem about 259 B.C., but it may have been many years earlier.

From Zeus let us begin, and with Zeus make end, ye Muses, whensoever we chant in songs the chiefest of immortals! But of men, again, let Ptolemy be named, among the foremost, and last, and in the midmost place, for of men he hath the pre-eminence. The heroes that in old days were begotten of the demigods, wrought noble deeds, and chanced on minstrels skilled, but I, with what skill I have in song, would fain make my hymn of Ptolemy, and hymns are the glorious meed, yea, of the very immortals.

When the feller hath come up to wooded Ida, he glances around, so many are the trees, to see whence he should begin his labour. Where first shall *I* begin the tale, for there are countless things ready for the telling, wherewith the Gods have graced the most excellent of kings?

Even by virtue of his sires, how mighty was he to accomplish some great work, - Ptolemy son of Lagus, - when he had stored in his mind such a design, as no other man was able even to devise! Him hath the Father stablished in the same honour as the blessed immortals, and for him a golden mansion in the house of Zeus is builded; beside him is throned Alexander, that dearly loves him, Alexander, a grievous god to the white-turbaned Persians.

And over against them is set the throne of Heracles, the slayer of the Bull, wrought of stubborn adamant. There holds he festival with the rest of the heavenly host, rejoicing exceedingly in his far-off children's children, for that the son of Cronos hath taken old age clean away from their limbs, and they are called immortals, being his offspring. For the strong son of Heracles is ancestor of the twain, I and both are reckoned to Heracles, on the utmost of the lineage.

Therefore when he hath now had his fill of fragrant nectar, and is going from the feast to the bower of his bed-fellow dear, to one of his children he gives his bow, and the quiver that swings beneath his elbow, to the other his knotted mace of iron. Then they to the ambrosial bower of white-ankled Hera, convey the weapons and the bearded son of Zeus.

Again, how shone renowned Berenice among the wise of womankind, how great a boon was she to them that begat her! Yea, in her fragrant breast did the Lady of Cyprus, the queenly daughter of Dione, lay her slender hands, wherefore they say that never any woman brought man such delight as came from the love borne to his wife by Ptolemy. And verily he was loved again with far greater love, and in such a wedlock a man may well trust all his house to his children, whensoever he goes to the bed of one that loves him as he loves her. But the mind of a woman that loves not is set ever on a stranger, and she hath children at her desire, but they are never like the father.

O thou that amongst the Goddesses hast the prize of beauty, O Lady Aphrodite, thy care was she, and by thy favour the lovely Berenice crossed not Acheron, the river of mourning, but thou didst catch her away, ere she came to the dark water, and to the still-detested ferryman of souls outworn, and in thy temple didst thou instal her, and gavest her a share of thy worship. Kindly is she to all mortals, and she breathes into them soft desires, and she lightens the cares of him that is in longing.

O dark-browed lady of Argos, in wedlock with Tydeus didst thou bear slaying Diomede, a hero of Calydon, and, again, deep-bosomed Thetis to Peleus, son of Aeacus, bare the spearman Achilles. But thee, O warrior Ptolemy, to Ptolemy the warrior bare the glorious Berenice! And Cos did foster thee, when thou wert still a child new-born, and received thee at thy mother’s hand, when thou saw’st thy first dawning. For there she called aloud on Eilithyia, loosener of the girdle; she called, the daughter of Antigone, when heavy on her came the pangs of childbirth. And Eilithyia was present to help her, and so poured over all her limbs release from pain. Then the beloved child was born, his father’s very counterpart. And Cos brake forth into a cry, when she beheld it, and touching the child with kind hands, she said:

‘Blessed, O child, mayst thou be, and me mayst thou honour even as Phoebus Apollo honours Delos of the azure crown, yea, stablish in the same renown the Triopean hill, and allot such glory to the Dorians dwelling nigh, as that wherewithal Prince Apollo favours Rhenaea.’

Lo, thus spake the Isle, but far aloft under the clouds a great eagle screamed thrice aloud, the ominous bird of Zeus. This sign, methinks, was of Zeus; Zeus, the son of Cronos, in his care hath awful kings, but he is above all, whom Zeus loved from the first, even from his birth. Great fortune goes with him, and much land he rules, and wide sea.

Countless are the lands, and tribes of men innumerable win increase of the soil that waxeth under the rain of Zeus, but no land brings forth so much as low-lying Egypt, when Nile wells up and breaks the sodden soil. Nor is there any land that hath so many towns of men skilled in handiwork; therein are three centuries of cities builded, and thousands three, and to these three myriads, and cities twice three, and beside these, three times nine, and over them all high-hearted Ptolemy is king.

Yea, and he taketh him a portion of Phoenicia, and of Arabia, and of Syria, and of Libya, and the black Aethiopians. And he is lord of all the Pamphylians, and the Cilician warriors, and the Lycians, and the Carians, that joy in battle, and lord of the isles of the Cyclades, - since his are the best of ships that sail over the deep, - yea, all the sea, and land and the sounding rivers are ruled by Ptolemy. Many are his horsemen, and many his targeteers that go clanging in harness of shining bronze. And in weight of wealth he surpasses all kings; such treasure comes day by day from every side to his rich palace, while the people are busy about their labours in peace. For never hath a foeman marched up the bank of teaming Nile, and raised the cry of war in villages not his own, nor hath any cuirassed enemy leaped ashore from his swift ship, to harry the kine of Egypt. So mighty a hero hath his throne established in the broad plains, even Ptolemy of the fair hair, a spearman skilled, whose care is above all, as a good king’s should be, to keep all the heritage of his fathers, and yet more he himself doth win. Nay, nor useless in *his* wealthy house, is the gold, like piled stores of the still toilsome ants, but the glorious temples of the gods have their rich share, for constant first-fruits he renders, with many another due, and much is lavished on mighty kings, much on cities, much on faithful friends. And never to the sacred contests of Dionysus comes any man that is skilled to raise the shrill sweet song, but Ptolemy gives him a guerdon worthy of his art. And the interpreters of the Muses sing of Ptolemy, in return for his favours. Nay, what fairer thing might befall a wealthy man, than to win a goodly renown among mortals?

This abides even by the sons of Atreus, but all those countless treasures that they won, when they took the mighty house of Priam, are hidden away in the mist, whence there is no returning.

Ptolemy alone presses his own feet in the footmarks, yet glowing in the dust, of his fathers that were before him. To his mother dear, and his father he hath stablished fragrant temples; therein has he set their images, splendid with gold and ivory, to succour all earthly men. And many fat thighs of kine doth he burn on the empurpled altars, as the months roll by, he and his stately wife; no nobler lady did ever embrace a bridegroom in the halls, who loves, with her whole heart, her brother, her lord. On this wise was the holy bridal of the Immortals, too, accomplished, even of the pair that great Rhea bore, the rulers of Olympus; and one bed for the slumber of Zeus and of Hera doth Iris strew, with myrrh-anointed hands, the virgin Iris.

Prince Ptolemy, farewell, and of thee will I make mention, even as of the other demigods; and a word methinks I will utter not to be rejected of men yet unborn, - excellence, howbeit, thou shalt gain from Zeus.

IDYL XVIII

This epithalamium may have been written for the wedding of a friend of the poet's. The idea is said to have been borrowed from an old poem by Stesichorus. The epithalamium was chanted at night by a chorus of girls, outside the bridal chamber. Compare the conclusion of the hymn of Adonis, in the fifteenth Idyl.

In Sparta, once, to the house of fair-haired Menelaus, came maidens with the blooming hyacinth in their hair, and before the new painted chamber arrayed their dance, - twelve maidens, the first in the city, the glory of Laconian girls, - what time the younger Atrides had wooed and won Helen, and closed the door of the bridal-bower on the beloved daughter of Tyndarus. Then sang they all in harmony, beating time with woven paces, and the house rang round with the bridal song.

The Chorus.

Thus early art thou sleeping, dear bridegroom, say are thy limbs heavy with slumber, or art thou all too fond of sleep, or hadst thou perchance drunken over well, ere thou didst fling thee to thy rest? Thou shouldst have slept betimes, and alone, if thou wert so fain of sleep; thou shouldst have left the maiden with maidens beside her mother dear, to play till deep in the dawn, for to-morrow, and next day, and for all the years, Menelaus, she is thy bride.

O happy bridegroom, some good spirit sneezed out on thee a blessing, as thou wert approaching Sparta whither went the other princes, that so thou mightst win thy desire! Alone among the demigods shalt thou have Zeus for father! Yea, and the daughter of Zeus has come beneath one coverlet with thee, so fair a lady, peerless among all Achaean women that walk the earth. Surely a wondrous child would she bear thee, if she bore one like the mother!

For lo, we maidens are all of like age with her, and one course we were wont to run, anointed in manly fashion, by the baths of Eurotas. Four times sixty girls were we, the maiden flower of the land, but of us all not one was faultless, when matched with Helen.

As the rising Dawn shows forth her fairer face than thine, O Night, or as the bright Spring, when Winter relaxes his hold, even so amongst us still she shone, the golden Helen. Even as the crops spring up, the glory of the rich plough land; or, as is the cypress in the garden; or, in a chariot, a horse of Thessalian breed, even so is rose-red Helen the glory of Lacedaemon. No other in her basket of wool winds forth such goodly work, and none cuts out, from between the mighty beams, a closer warp than that her shuttle weaves in the carven loom. Yea, and of a truth none other smites the lyre, hymning Artemis and broad-breasted Athene, with such skill as Helen, within whose eyes dwell all the Loves.

O fair, O gracious damsel, even now art thou a wedded wife; but we will go forth right early to the course we ran, and to the grassy meadows, to gather sweet-breathing coronals of flowers, thinking often upon thee, Helen, even as youngling lambs that miss the teats of the mother-ewe. For thee first will we twine a wreath of lotus flowers that lowly grow, and hang it on a shadowy plane tree, for thee first will we take soft oil from the silver phial, and drop it beneath a shadowy plane tree, and letters will we grave on the bark, in Dorian wise, so that the wayfarer may read:

WORSHIP ME, I AM THE TREE OF HELEN.

Good night, thou bride, good night, thou groom that hast won a mighty sire! May Leto, Leto, the nurse of noble offspring, give you the blessing of children; and may Cypris, divine Cypris, grant you equal love, to cherish each the other; and may Zeus, even Zeus the son of Cronos, give you wealth imperishable, to be handed down from generation to generation of the princes.

Sleep ye, breathing love and desire each into the other’s breast, but forget not to wake in the dawning, and at dawn we too will come, when the earliest cock shrills from his perch, and raises his feathered neck.

Hymen, O Hymenae, rejoice thou in this bridal.

IDYL XIX

This little piece is but doubtfully ascribed to Theocritus. The motif is that of a well-known Anacreontic Ode. The idyl has been translated by Ronsard.

The thievish Love, - a cruel bee once stung him, as he was rifling honey from the hives, and pricked his finger-tips all; then he was in pain, and blew upon his hand, and leaped, and stamped the ground. And then he showed his hurt to Aphrodite, and made much complaint, how that the bee is a tiny creature, and yet what wounds it deals! And his mother laughed out, and said, ‘Art thou not even such a creature as the bees, for tiny art thou, but what wounds thou dealest!’

IDYL XX

A herdsman, who had been contemptuously rejected by Eunica, a girl of the town, protests that he is beautiful, and that Eunica is prouder than Cybele, Selene, and Aphrodite, all of whom loved mortal herdsmen. For grammatical and other reasons, some critics consider this idyl apocryphal.

Eunica laughed out at me when sweetly I would have kissed her, and taunting me, thus she spoke: ‘Get thee gone from me! Wouldst thou kiss me, wretch; thou - a neatherd? I never learned to kiss in country fashion, but to press lips with city gentlefolks. Never hope to kiss my lovely mouth, nay, not even in a dream. How thou dost look, what chatter is thine, how countrified thy tricks are, how delicate thy talk, how easy thy tattle! And then thy beard - so soft! thy elegant hair! Why, thy lips are like some sick man’s, thy hands are black, and thou art of evil savour. Away with thee, lest thy presence soil me!’ These taunts she mouthed, and thrice spat in the breast of her gown, and stared at me all over from head to feet; shooting out her lips, and glancing with half-shut eyes, writhing her beautiful body, and so sneered, and laughed me to scorn. And instantly my blood boiled, and I grew red under the sting, as a rose with dew. And she went off and left me, but I bear angry pride deep in my heart, that I, the handsome shepherd, should have been mocked by a wretched light-o’-love.

Shepherds, tell me the very truth; am I not beautiful? Has some God changed me suddenly to another man? Surely a sweet grace ever blossomed round me, till this hour, like ivy round a tree, and covered my chin, and about my temples fell my locks, like curling parsley-leaves, and white shone my forehead above my dark eyebrows. Mine eyes were brighter far than the glance of the grey-eyed Athene, my mouth than even pressed milk was sweeter, and from my lips my voice flowed sweeter than honey from the honeycomb. Sweet too, is my music, whether I make melody on pipe, or discourse on the flute, or reed, or flageolet. And all the mountain-maidens call me beautiful, and they would kiss me, all of them. But the city girl did not kiss me, but ran past me, because I am a neatherd, and she never heard how fair Dionysus in the dells doth drive the calves, and knows not that Cypris was wild with love for a herdsman, and drove afield in the mountains of Phrygia; ay, and Adonis himself, - in the oakwood she kissed, in the oakwood she bewailed him. And what was Endymion? was he not a neatherd? whom nevertheless as he watched his herds Selene saw and loved, and from Olympus descending she came to the Latmian glade, and lay in one couch with the boy; and thou, Rhea, dust weep for thy herdsman.

And didst not thou, too, Son of Cronos, take the shape of a wandering bird, and all for a cowherd boy?

But Eunica alone would not kiss the herdsman; Eunica, she that is greater than Cybele, and Cypris, and Selene!

Well, Cypris, never mayst thou, in city or on hillside, kiss thy darling, and lonely all the long night mayst thou sleep!

IDYL XXI

After some verses addressed to Diophantus, a friend about whom nothing is known, the poet describes the toilsome life of two old fishermen. One of them has dreamed of catching a golden fish, and has sworn, in his dream, never again to tempt the sea. The other reminds him that his oath is as empty as his vision, and that he must angle for common fish, if he would not starve among his golden dreams. The idyl is, unfortunately, corrupt beyond hope of certain correction.

'Tis Poverty alone, Diophantus, that awakens the arts; Poverty, the very teacher of labour. Nay, not even sleep is permitted, by weary cares, to men that live by toil, and if, for a little while, one close his eyes in the night, cares throng about him, and suddenly disquiet his slumber.

Two fishers, on a time, two old men, together lay and slept; they had strown the dry sea-moss for a bed in their wattled cabin, and there they lay against the leafy wall. Beside them were strewn the instruments of their toilsome hands, the fishing-creels, the rods of reed, the hooks, the sails bedraggled with sea-spoil, {106a} the lines, the weds, the lobster pots woven of rushes, the seines, two oars, {106b} and an old coble upon props. Beneath their heads was a scanty matting, their clothes, their sailor's caps. Here was all their toil, here all their wealth. The threshold had never a door, nor a watch-dog; {106c} all things, all, to them seemed superfluity, for Poverty was their sentinel. They had no neighbour by them, but ever against their narrow cabin gently floated up the sea.

The chariot of the moon had not yet reached the mid-point of her course, but their familiar toil awakened the fishermen; from their eyelids they cast out slumber, and roused their souls with speech. {106d}

Asphalion. They lie all, my friend, who say that the nights wane short in summer, when Zeus brings the long days. Already have I seen ten thousand dreams, and the dawn is not yet. Am I wrong, what ails them, the nights are surely long?

The Friend. Asphalion, thou blamest the beautiful summer! It is not that the season hath wilfully passed his natural course, but care, breaking thy sleep, makes night seem long to thee.

Asphalion. Didst ever learn to interpret dreams? for good dreams have I beheld. I would not have thee to go without thy share in my vision; even as we go shares in the fish we catch, so share all my dreams! Sure, thou art not to be surpassed in wisdom; and he is the best interpreter of dreams that hath wisdom for his teacher. Moreover, we have time to idle in, for what could a man find to do, lying on a leafy bed beside the wave and slumbering not? Nay, the ass is among the thorns, the lantern in the town hall, for, they say, it is always sleepless.

The Friend. Tell me, then, the vision of the night; nay, tell all to thy friend.

Asphalion. As I was sleeping late, amid the labours of the salt sea (and truly not too full-fed, for we supped early if thou dost remember, and did not overtax our bellies), I saw myself busy on a rock, and there I sat and watched the fishes, and kept spinning the bait with the rods. And one of the fish nibbled, a fat one, for in sleep dogs dream of bread, and of fish dream I. Well, he was tightly hooked, and the blood was running, and the rod I grasped was bent with his struggle. So with both hands I strained, and had a sore tussle for the monster. How was I ever to land so big a fish with hooks all too slim? Then just to remind him he was hooked, I gently pricked him, {108a} pricked, and slackened, and, as he did not run, I took in line. My toil was ended with the sight of my prize; I drew up a golden fish, lo you, a fish all plated thick with gold! Then fear took hold of me, lest he might be some fish beloved of Posidon, or perchance some jewel of the sea-grey Amphitrite. Gently I unhooked him, lest ever the hooks should retain some of the gold of his mouth. Then I dragged him on shore with the ropes, {108b} and swore that never again would I set foot on sea, but abide on land, and lord it over the gold.

This was even what wakened me, but, for the rest, set thy mind to it, my friend, for I am in dismay about the oath I swore.

The Friend. Nay, never fear, thou art no more sworn than thou hast found the golden fish of thy vision; dreams are but lies. But if thou wilt search these waters, wide awake, and not asleep, there is some hope in thy slumbers; seek the fish of flesh, lest thou die of famine with all thy dreams of gold!

IDYL XXII - THE DIOSCURI

This is a hymn, in the Homeric manner, to Castor and Polydeuces. Compare the life and truth of the descriptions of nature, and of the boxing-match, with the frigid manner of Apollonius Rhodius. - Argonautica, II. I. *seq.*

We hymn the children twain of Leda, and of aegis-bearing Zeus, - Castor, and Pollux, the boxer dread, when he hath harnessed his knuckles in thongs of ox-hide. Twice hymn we, and thrice the stalwart sons of the daughter of Thestias, the two brethren of Lacedaemon. Succourers are they of men in the very thick of peril, and of horses maddened in the bloody press of battle, and of ships that, defying the stars that set and rise in heaven, have encountered the perilous breath of storms. The winds raise huge billows about their stern, yea, or from the prow, or even as each wind wills, and cast them into the hold of the ship, and shatter both bulwarks, while with the sail hangs all the gear confused and broken, and the storm-rain falls from heaven as night creeps on, and the wide sea rings, being lashed by the gusts, and by showers of iron hail.

Yet even so do ye draw forth the ships from the abyss, with their sailors that looked immediately to die; and instantly the winds are still, and there is an oily calm along the sea, and the clouds flee apart, this way and that, also the *Bears* appear, and in the midst, dimly seen, the *Asses' manger*, declaring that all is smooth for sailing.

O ye twain that aid all mortals, O beloved pair, ye knights, ye harpers, ye wrestlers, ye minstrels, of Castor, or of Polydeuces first shall I begin to sing? Of both of you will I make my hymn, but first will I sing of Polydeuces.

Even already had Argo fled forth from the Clashing Rocks, and the dread jaws of snowy Pontus, and was come to the land of the Bebryces, with her crew, dear children of the gods. There all the heroes disembarked, down one ladder, from both sides of the ship of Iason. When they had landed on the deep seashore and a sea-bank sheltered from the wind, they strewed their beds, and their hands were busy with firewood.

Then Castor of the swift steeds, and swart Polydeuces, these twain went wandering alone, apart from their fellows, and marvelling at all the various wildwood on the mountain. Beneath a smooth cliff they found an ever-flowing spring filled with the purest water, and the pebbles below shone like crystal or silver from the deep. Tall fir trees grew thereby, and white poplars, and planes, and cypresses with their lofty tufts of leaves, and there bloomed all fragrant flowers that fill the meadows when early summer is waning - dear work-steads of the hairy bees. But there a monstrous man was sitting in the sun, terrible of aspect; the bruisers' hard fists had crushed his ears, and his mighty breast and his broad back were domed with iron flesh, like some huge statue of hammered iron. The muscles on his brawny arms, close by the shoulder, stood out like rounded rocks, that the winter torrent has rolled, and worn smooth, in the great swirling stream, but about his back and neck was draped a lion's skin, hung by the claws. Him first accosted the champion, Polydeuces.

Polydeuces. Good luck to thee, stranger, whosoe'er thou art! What men are they that possess this land?

Amycus. What sort of luck, when I see men that I never saw before?

Polydeuces. Fear not! Be sure that those thou look'st on are neither evil, nor the children of evil men.

Amycus. No fear have I, and it is not for thee to teach me that lesson.

Polydeuces. Art thou a savage, resenting all address, or some vainglorious man?

Amycus. I am that thou see'st, and on thy land, at least, I trespass not.

Polydeuces. Come, and with kindly gifts return homeward again!

Amycus. Gift me no gifts, none such have I ready for thee.

Polydeuces. Nay, wilt thou not even grant us leave to taste this spring?

Amycus. That shalt thou learn when thirst has parched thy shrivelled lips.

Polydeuces. Will silver buy the boon, or with what price, prithee, may we gain thy leave?

Amycus. Put up thy hands and stand in single combat, man to man.

Polydeuces. A boxing-match, or is kicking fair, when we meet eye to eye?

Amycus. Do thy best with thy fists and spare not thy skill!

Polydeuces. And who is the man on whom I am to lay my hands and gloves?

Amycus. Thou see’st him close enough, the boxer will not prove a maiden!

Polydeuces. And is the prize ready, for which we two must fight?

Amycus. Thy man shall I be called (shouldst thou win), or thou mine, if I be victor.

Polydeuces. On such terms fight the red-crested birds of the game.

Amycus. Well, be we like birds or lions, we shall fight for no other stake.

So Amycus spoke, and seized and blew his hollow shell, and speedily the long-haired Bebryces gathered beneath the shadowy planes, at the blowing of the shell. And in likewise did Castor, eminent in war, go forth and summon all the heroes from the Magnesian ship. And the champions, when they had strengthened their fists with the stout ox-skin gloves, and bound long leathern thongs about their arms, stepped into the ring, breathing slaughter against each other. Then had they much ado, in that assault, - which should have the sun's light at his back. But by thy skill, Polydeuces, thou didst outwit the giant, and the sun's rays fell full on the face of Amycus. Then came he eagerly on in great wrath and heat, making play with his fists, but the son of Tyndarus smote him on the chin as he charged, maddening him even more, and the giant confused the fighting, laying on with all his weight, and going in with his head down. The Bebryces cheered their man, and on the other side the heroes still encouraged stout Polydeuces, for they feared lest the giant's weight, a match for Tityus, might crush their champion in the narrow lists. But the son of Zeus stood to him, shifting his ground again and again, and kept smiting him, right and left, and somewhat checked the rush of the son of Posidon, for all his monstrous strength. Then he stood reeling like a drunken man under the blows, and spat out the red blood, while all the heroes together raised a cheer, as they marked the woful bruises about his mouth and jaws, and how, as his face swelled up, his eyes were half closed. Next, the prince teased him, feinting on every side but seeing now that the giant was all abroad, he planted his fist just above the middle of the nose, beneath the eyebrows, and skinned all the brow to the bone. Thus smitten, Amycus lay stretched on his back, among the flowers and grasses. There was fierce fighting when he arose again, and they bruised each other well, laying on with the hard weighted gloves; but the champion of the Bebryces was always playing on the chest, and outside the neck, while unconquered Polydeuces kept smashing his foeman's face with ugly blows. The giant's flesh was melting away in his sweat, till from a huge mass he soon became small enough, but the limbs of the other waxed always stronger, and his colour better, as he warmed to his work.

How then, at last, did the son of Zeus lay low the glutton? say goddess, for thou knowest, but I, who am but the interpreter of others, will speak all that thou wilt, and in such wise as pleases thee.

Now behold the giant was keen to do some great feat, so with his left hand he grasped the left of Polydeuces, stooping slantwise from his onset, while with his other hand he made his effort, and drove a huge fist up from his right haunch. Had his blow come home, he would have harmed the King of Amyclae, but he slipped his head out of the way, and then with his strong hand struck Amycus on the left temple, putting his shoulder into the blow. Quick gushed the black blood from the gaping temple, while Polydeuces smote the giant's mouth with his left, and the close-set teeth rattled. And still he punished his face with quick-repeated blows, till the cheeks were fairly pounded. Then Amycus lay stretched all on the ground, fainting, and held out both his hands, to show that he declined the fight, for he was near to death.

There then, despite thy victory, didst thou work him no insensate wrong, O boxer Polydeuces, but to thee he swore a mighty oath, calling his sire Posidon from the deep, that assuredly never again would he be violent to strangers.

Thee have I hymned, my prince; but thee now, Castor, will I sing, O son of Tyndarus, O lord of the swift steeds, O wielder of the spear, thou that wearest the corselet of bronze.

Now these twain, the sons of Zeus, had seized and were bearing away the two daughters of Lycippus, and eagerly in sooth these two other brethren were pursuing them, the sons of Aphareus, even they that should soon have been the bridegrooms, - Lynceus and mighty Idas. But when they were come to the tomb of the dead Aphareus, then forth from their chariots they all sprang together, and set upon each other, under the weight of their spears and hollow shields. But Lynceus again spake, and shouted loud from under his vizor:-

'Sirs, wherefore desire ye battle, and how are ye thus violent to win the brides of others with naked swords in your hands. To us, behold, did Leucippus betroth these his daughters long before; to us this bridal is by oath confirmed. And ye did not well, in that to win the wives of others ye perverted him with gifts of oxen, and mules, and other wealth, and so won wedlock by bribes. Lo many a time, in face of both of you, I have spoken thus, I that am not a man of many words, saying, - “Not thus, dear friends, does it become heroes to woo their wives, wives that already have bridegrooms betrothed. Lo Sparta is wide, and wide is Elis, a land of chariots and horses, and Arcadia rich in sheep, and there are the citadels of the Achaeans, and Messenia, and Argos, and all the sea-coast of Sisyphus. There be maidens by their parents nurtured, maidens countless, that lack not aught in wisdom or in comeliness. Of these ye may easily win such as ye will, for many are willing to be the fathers-in-law of noble youths, and ye are the very choice of heroes all, as your fathers were, and all your father’s kin, and all your blood from of old. But, friends, let this our bridal find its due conclusion, and for you let all of us seek out another marriage.”

‘Many such words I would speak, but the wind’s breath bare them away to the wet wave of the sea, and no favour followed with my words. For ye twain are hard and ruthless, - nay, but even now do ye listen, for ye are our cousins, and kin by the father’s side. But if your heart yet lusts for war, and with blood we must break up the kindred strife, and end the feud, then Idas and his cousin, mighty Polydeuces, shall hold their hands and abstain from battle, but let us twain, Castor and I, the younger born, try the ordeal of war! Let us not leave the heaviest of grief to our fathers! Enough is one slain man from a house, but the others will make festival for all their friends, and will be bridegrooms, not slain men, and will wed these maidens. Lo, it is fitting with light loss to end a great dispute.’

So he spake, and these words the gods were not to make vain. For the elder pair laid down their harness from their shoulders on the ground, but Lynceus stepped into the midst, swaying his mighty spear beneath the outer rim of his shield, and even so did Castor sway his spear-points, and the plumes were nodding above the crests of each. With the sharp spears long they laboured and tilted at each other, if perchance they might anywhere spy a part of the flesh unarmed. But ere either was wounded the spear-points were broken, fast stuck in the linden shields. Then both drew their swords from the sheaths, and again devised each the other’s slaying, and there was no truce in the fight. Many a time did Castor smite on broad shield and horse-hair crest, and many a time the keen-sighted Lynceus smote upon his shield, and his blade just shore the scarlet plume. Then, as he aimed the sharp sword at the left knee, Castor drew back with his left foot, and hacked the fingers off the hand of Lynceus. Then he being smitten cast away his sword, and turned swiftly to flee to the tomb of his father, where mighty Idas lay, and watched this strife of kinsmen. But the son of Tyndarus sped after him, and drove the broad sword through bowels and navel, and instantly the bronze cleft all in twain, and Lynceus bowed, and on his face he lay fallen on the ground, and forthwith heavy sleep rushed down upon his eyelids.

Nay, nor that other of her children did Laocoosa see, by the hearth of his fathers, after he had fulfilled a happy marriage. For lo, Messenian Idas did swiftly break away the standing stone from the tomb of his father Aphareus, and now he would have smitten the slayer of his brother, but Zeus defended him and drave the polished stone from the hands of Idas, and utterly consumed him with a flaming thunderbolt.

Thus it is no light labour to war with the sons of Tyndarus, for a mighty pair are they, and mighty is he that begat them.

Farewell, ye children of Leda, and all goodly renown send ye ever to our singing. Dear are all minstrels to the sons of Tyndarus, and to Helen, and to the other heroes that sacked Troy in aid of Menelaus.

For you, O princes, the bard of Chios wrought renown, when he sang the city of Priam, and the ships of the Achaeans, and the Ilian war, and Achilles, a tower of battle. And to you, in my turn, the charms of the clear-voiced Muses, even all that they can give, and all that my house has in store, these do I bring. The fairest meed of the gods is song.

IDYL XXIII - THE VENGEANCE OF LOVE

A lover hangs himself at the gate of his obdurate darling who, in turn, is slain by a statue of Love.

This poem is not attributed with much certainty to Theocritus, and is found in but a small proportion of manuscripts.

A love-sick youth pined for an unkind love, beautiful in form, but fair no more in mood. The beloved hated the lover, and had for him no gentleness at all, and knew not Love, how mighty a God is he, and what a bow his hands do wield, and what bitter arrows he dealeth at the young. Yea, in all things ever, in speech and in all approaches, was the beloved unyielding. Never was there any assuagement of Love's fires, never was there a smile of the lips, nor a bright glance of the eyes, never a blushing cheek, nor a word, nor a kiss that lightens the burden of desire. Nay, as a beast of the wild wood hath the hunters in watchful dread, even so did the beloved in all things regard the man, with angered lips, and eyes that had the dreadful glance of fate, and the whole face was answerable to this wrath, the colour fled from it, sicklied o'er with wrathful pride. Yet even thus was the loved one beautiful, and the lover was the more moved by this haughtiness. At length he could no more endure so fierce a flame of the Cytherean, but drew near and wept by the hateful dwelling, and kissed the lintel of the door, and thus he lifted up his voice:

'O cruel child, and hateful, thou nursling of some fierce lioness, O child all of stone unworthy of love; I have come with these my latest gifts to thee, even this halter of mine; for, child, I would no longer anger thee and work thee pain. Nay, I am going where thou hast condemned me to fare, where, as men say, is the path, and there the common remedy of lovers, the River of Forgetfulness. Nay, but were I to take and drain with my lips all the waters thereof, not even so shall I quench my yearning desire. And now I bid my farewell to these gates of thine.

‘Behold I know the thing that is to be.

‘Yea, the rose is beautiful, and Time he withers it; and fair is the violet in spring, and swiftly it waxes old; white is the lily, it fadeth when it falleth; and snow is white, and melteth after it hath been frozen. And the beauty of youth is fair, but lives only for a little season.

‘That time will come when thou too shalt love, when thy heart shall burn, and thou shalt weep salt tears.

‘But, child, do me even this last favour; when thou comest forth, and see’st me hanging in thy gateway, - pass me not careless by, thy hapless lover, but stand, and weep a little while; and when thou hast made this libation of thy tears, then loose me from the rope, and cast over me some garment from thine own limbs, and so cover me from sight; but first kiss me for that latest time of all, and grant the dead this grace of thy lips.

‘Fear me not, I cannot live again, no, not though thou shouldst be reconciled to me, and kiss me. A tomb for me do thou hollow, to be the hiding-place of my love, and if thou departest, cry thrice above me, -

O friend, thou liest low!

And if thou wilt, add this also, -

Alas, my true friend is dead!

‘And this legend do thou write, that I will scratch on thy walls, -

This man Love slew! *Wayfarer, pass not heedless by,*
But stand, and say, “he had a cruel darling.”’

Therewith he seized a stone, and laid it against the wall, as high as the middle of the doorposts, a dreadful stone, and from the lintel he fastened the slender halter, and cast the noose about his neck, and kicked away the support from under his foot, and there was he hanged dead.

But the beloved opened the door, and saw the dead man hanging there in the court, unmoved of heart, and tearless for the strange, woful death; but on the dead man were all the garments of youth defiled. Then forth went the beloved to the contests of the wrestlers, and there was heart-set on the delightful bathing-places, and even thereby encountered the very God dishonoured, for Love stood on a pedestal of stone above the waters. And lo, the statue leaped, and slew that cruel one, and the water was red with blood, but the voice of the slain kept floating to the brim.

Rejoice, ye lovers, for he that hated is slain. Love, all ye beloved, for the God knoweth how to deal righteous judgment.

IDYL XXIV - THE INFANT HERACLES

This poem describes the earliest feat of Heracles, the slaying of the snakes sent against him by Hera, and gives an account of the hero's training. The vivacity and tenderness of the pictures of domestic life, and the minute knowledge of expiatory ceremonies seem to stamp this idyl as the work of Theocritus. As the following poem also deals with an adventure of Heracles, it seems not impossible that Theocritus wrote, or contemplated writing, a Heraclean epic, in a series of idyls.

When Heracles was but ten months old, the lady of Midea, even Alcmena, took him, on a time, and Iphicles his brother, younger by one night, and gave them both their bath, and their fill of milk, then laid them down in the buckler of bronze, that goodly piece whereof Amphitryon had strippen the fallen Pterelaus. And then the lady stroked her children's heads, and spoke, saying:-

'Sleep, my little ones, a light delicious sleep; sleep, soul of mine, two brothers, babes unharmed; blessed be your sleep, and blessed may ye come to the dawn.'

So speaking she rocked the huge shield, and in a moment sleep laid hold on them.

But when the *Bear* at midnight wheels westward over against *Orion* that shows his mighty shoulder, even then did crafty Hera send forth two monstrous things, two snakes bristling up their coils of azure; against the broad threshold, where are the hollow pillars of the house-door she urged them; with intent that they should devour the young child Heracles. Then these twain crawled forth, writhing their ravenous bellies along the ground, and still from their eyes a baleful fire was shining as they came, and they spat out their deadly venom. But when with their flickering tongues they were drawing near the children, then Alcmena's dear babes wakened, by the will of Zeus that knows all things, and there was a bright light in the chamber. Then truly one child, even Iphicles, screamed out straightway, when he beheld the hideous monsters above the hollow shield, and saw their pitiless fangs, and he kicked off the woollen coverlet with his feet, in his eagerness to flee. But Heracles set his force against them, and grasped them with his hands, binding them both in a grievous bond, having got them by the throat, wherein lies the evil venom of baleful snakes, the venom detested even by the gods. Then the serpents, in their turn, wound with their coils about the young child, the child unweaned, that wept never in his nursling days; but again they relaxed their spines in stress, of pain, and strove to find some issue from the grasp of iron.

Now Alcmena heard the cry, and wakened first, -

‘Arise, Amphitryon, for numbing fear lays hold of me: arise, nor stay to put shoon beneath thy feet! Hearest thou not how loud the younger child is wailing? Mark’st thou not that though it is the depth of the night, the walls are all plain to see as in the clear dawn? There is some strange thing I trow within the house, there is, my dearest lord!’

Thus she spake, and at his wife’s bidding he stepped down out of his bed, and made for his richly dight sword that he kept always hanging on its pin above his bed of cedar. Verily he was reaching out for his new-woven belt, lifting with the other hand the mighty sheath, a work of lotus wood, when lo, the wide chamber was filled again with night. Then he cried aloud on his thralls, who were drawing the deep breath of sleep, -

‘Lights! Bring lights as quick as may be from the hearth, my thralls, and thrust back the strong bolts of the doors. Arise, ye serving-men, stout of heart, ’tis the master calls.’

Then quick the serving-men came speeding with torches burning, and the house waxed full as each man hasted along. Then truly when they saw the young child Heracles clutching the snakes twain in his tender grasp, they all cried out and smote their hands together. But he kept showing the creeping things to his father, Amphitryon, and leaped on high in his childish glee, and laughing, at his father’s feet he laid them down, the dread monsters fallen on the sleep of death. Then Alcmena in her own bosom took and laid Iphicles, dry-eyed and wan with fear; but Amphitryon, placing the other child beneath a lamb’s-wool coverlet, betook himself again to his bed, and gat him to his rest.

The cocks were now but singing their third welcome to the earliest dawn, when Alcmena called forth Tiresias, the seer that cannot lie, and told him of the new portent, and bade him declare what things should come to pass.

‘Nay, and even if the gods devise some mischief, conceal it not from me in ruth and pity; and how that mortals may not escape the doom that Fate speeds from her spindle, O soothsayer Euerides, I am teaching thee, that thyself knowest it right well.’

Thus spake the Queen, and thus he answered her:

‘Be of good cheer, daughter of Perseus, woman that hast borne the noblest of children [and lay up in thy heart the better of the things that are to be]. For by the sweet light that long hath left mine eyes, I swear that many Achaean women, as they card the soft wool about their knees, shall sing at eventide, of Alcmena’s name, and thou shalt be honourable among the women of Argos. Such a man, even this thy son, shall mount to the starry firmament, the hero broad of breast, the master of all wild beasts, and of all mankind. Twelve labours is he fated to accomplish, and thereafter to dwell in the house of Zeus, but all his mortal part a Trachinian pyre shall possess.

‘And the son of the Immortals, by virtue of his bride, shall he be called, even of them that urged forth these snakes from their dens to destroy the child. Verily that day shall come when the ravening wolf, beholding the fawn in his lair, will not seek to work him harm.

‘But lady, see that thou hast fire at hand, beneath the embers, and let make ready dry fuel of gorse, or thorn, or bramble, or pear boughs dried with the wind’s buffeting, and on the wild fire burn these serpents twain, at midnight, even at the hour when they would have slain thy child. But at dawn let one of thy maidens gather the dust of the fire, and bear and cast it all, every grain, over the river from the brow of the broken cliff, beyond the march of your land, and return again without looking behind. Then cleanse your house with the fire of unmixed sulphur first, and then, as is ordained, with a filleted bough sprinkle holy water over all, mingled with salt. And to Zeus supreme, moreover, do ye sacrifice a young boar, that ye may ever have the mastery over all your enemies.'

So spake he, and thrust back his ivory chair, and departed, even Tiresias, despite the weight of all his many years.

But Heracles was reared under his mother's care, like some young sapling in a garden close, being called the son of Amphitryon of Argos. And the lad was taught his letters by the ancient Linus, Apollo's son, a tutor ever watchful. And to draw the bow, and send the arrow to the mark did Eurytus teach him, Eurytus rich in wide ancestral lands. And Eumolpus, son of Philammon, made the lad a minstrel, and formed his hands to the boxwood lyre. And all the tricks wherewith the nimble Argive cross-buttockers give each other the fall, and all the wiles of boxers skilled with the gloves, and all the art that the rough and tumble fighters have sought out to aid their science, all these did Heracles learn from Harpalacus of Phanes, the son of Hermes. Him no man that beheld, even from afar, would have confidently met as a wrestler in the lists, so grim a brow overhung his dreadful face. And to drive forth his horses 'neath the chariot, and safely to guide them round the goals, with the naves of the wheels unharmed, Amphitryon taught his son in his loving-kindness, Amphitryon himself, for many a prize had he borne away from the fleet races in Argos, pasture-land of steeds, and unbroken were the chariots that he mounted, till time loosened their leathern thongs.

But to charge with spear in rest, against a foe, guarding, meanwhile, his back with the shield, to bide the biting swords, to order a company, and to measure, in his onslaught, the ambush of foemen, and to give horsemen the word of command, he was taught by knightly Castor. An outlaw came Castor out of Argos, when Tydeus was holding all the land and all the wide vineyards, having received Argos, a land of steeds, from the hand of Adrastus. No peer in war among the demigods had Castor, till age wore down his youth.

Thus did his dear mother let train Heracles, and the child's bed was made hard by his father's; a lion's skin was the coverlet he loved; his dinner was roast meat, and a great Dorian loaf in a basket, a meal to satisfy a delving hind. At the close of day he would take a meagre supper that needed no fire to the cooking, and his plain kirtle fell no lower than the middle of his shin.

IDYL XXV - HERACLES THE LION-SLAVER

This is another idyl of the epic sort. The poet's interest in the details of the rural life, and in the description of the herds of King Augeas, seem to mark it as the work of Theocritus. It has, however, been attributed by learned conjecture to various writers of an older age. The idyl, or fragment, is incomplete. Heracles visits the herds of Augeas (to clean their stalls was one of his labours), and, after an encounter with a bull, describes to the king's son his battle with the lion of Nemea.

. . . Him answered the old man, a husbandman that had the care of the tillage, ceasing a moment from the work that lay betwixt his hands - 'Right readily will I tell thee, stranger, concerning the things whereof thou inquirest, for I revere the awful wrath of Hermes of the roadside. Yea he, they say, is of all the heavenly Gods the most in anger, if any deny the wayfarer that asks eagerly for the way.

'The fleecy flocks of the king Augeas feed not all on one pasture, nor in one place, but some there be that graze by the river-banks round Elisus, and some by the sacred stream of divine Alpheius, and some by Buprasium rich in clusters of the vine, and some even in this place. And behold, the pens for each herd after its kind are builded apart. Nay, but for all the herds of Augeas, overflowing as they be, these pasture lands are ever fresh and flowering, around the great marsh of Peneus, for with herbage honey-sweet the dewy water-meadows are ever blossoming abundantly, and this fodder it is that feeds the strength of horned kine. And this their steading, on thy right hand stands all plain to view, beyond the running river, there, where the plane-trees grow luxuriant, and the green wild olive, a sacred grove, O stranger, of Apollo of the pastures, a God most gracious unto prayer. Next thereto are builded long rows of huts for the country folk, even for us that do zealously guard the great and marvellous wealth of the king; casting in season the seed in fallow lands, thrice, ay, and four times broken by the plough. As for the marches, truly, the ditchers know them, men of many toils, who throng to the wine-press at the coming of high summer tide. For, behold, all this plain is held by gracious Augeas, and the wheat-bearing plough-land, and the orchards with their trees, as far as the upland farm of the ridge, whence the fountains spring; over all which lands we go labouring, the whole day long, as is the wont of thralls that live their lives among the fields.

‘But, prithee, tell thou me, in thy turn (and for thine own gain it will be), whom comest thou hither to seek; in quest, perchance, of Augeas, or one of his servants? Of all these things, behold, I have knowledge, and could tell thee plainly, for methinks that thou, for thy part, comest of no churlish stock, nay, nor hath thy shape aught of the churl, so excellent in might shows thy form. Lo, now, even such are the children of the immortal Gods among mortal men.’ Then the mighty son of Zeus answered him, saying -

‘Yea, old man, I fain would see Augeas, prince of the Epeans, for truly ’twas need of him that brought me hither. If he abides at the town with his citizens, caring for his people, and settling the pleas, do thou, old man, bid one of the servants to guide me on the way, a head-man of the more honourable sort in these fields, to whom I may both tell my desire, and learn in turn what I would, for God has made all men dependent, each on each.’

Then the old man, the worthy husbandman, answered him again -

‘By the guidance of some one of the immortals hast thou come hither, stranger, for verily all that thou requirest hath quickly been fulfilled. For hither hath come Augeas, the dear son of Helios, with his own son, the strong and princely Phyleus. But yesterday he came hither from the city, to be overseeing after many days his substance, that he hath uncounted in the fields. Thus do even kings in their inmost hearts believe that the eye of the master makes the house more prosperous. Nay come, let us hasten to him, and I will lead thee to our dwelling, where methinks we shall find the king.’

So he spake, and began to lead the way, but in his mind, as he marked the lion’s hide, and the club that filled the stranger’s fist, the old man was deeply pondering as to whence he came, and ever he was eager to inquire of him. But back again he kept catching the word as it rose to his lips, in fear lest he should speak somewhat out of season (his companion being in haste) for hard it is to know another’s mood.

Now as they began to draw nigh, the dogs from afar were instantly aware of them, both by the scent, and by the sound of footsteps, and, yelling furiously, they charged from all sides against Heracles, son of Amphitryon, while with faint yelping, on the other side, they greeted the old man, and fawned around him. But he just lifted stones from the ground, and scared them away, and, raising his voice, he right roughly chid them all, and made them cease from their yelping, being glad in his heart withal for that they guarded his dwelling, even when he was afar. Then thus he spake -

‘Lo, what a comrade for men have the Gods, the lords of all, made in this creature, how mindful is he! If he had but so much wit within him as to know against whom he should rage, and with whom he should forbear, no beast in the world could vie with his deserts. But now he is something over-fierce and blindly furious.’

So he spake, and they hastened, and came even to that dwelling whither they were faring.

Now Helios had turned his steeds to the west, bringing the late day, and the fatted sheep came up from the pastures to the pens and folds. Next thereafter the kine approaching, ten thousand upon ten thousand, showed for multitude even like the watery clouds that roll forward in heaven under the stress of the South Wind, or the Thracian North (and countless are they, and ceaseless in their airy passage, for the wind’s might rolls up the rear as numerous as the van, and hosts upon hosts again are moving in infinite array), even so many did herds upon herds of kine move ever forwards. And, lo, the whole plain was filled, and all the ways, as the cattle fared onwards, and the rich fields could not contain their lowing, and the stalls were lightly filled with kine of trailing feet, and the sheep were being penned in the folds.

There no man, for lack of labour, stood idle by the cattle, though countless men were there, but one was fastening guards of wood, with shapely thongs, about the feet of the kine, that he might draw near and stand by, and milk them. And another beneath their mothers kind was placing the calves right eager to drink of the sweet milk. Yet another held a milking pail, while his fellow was fixing the rich cheese, and another led in the bulls apart from the cows. Meanwhile

Augeas was going round all the stalls, and marking the care his herdsmen bestowed upon all that was his. And the king's son, and the mighty, deep-pondering Heracles, went along with the king, as he passed through his great possessions. Then though he bore a stout spirit in his heart, and a mind stablished always imperturbable, yet the son of Amphitryon still marvelled out of measure, as he beheld these countless troops of cattle. Yea none would have deemed or believed that the substance of one man could be so vast, nay, nor ten men's wealth, were they the richest in sheep of all the kings in the world. But Helios to his son gave this gift pre-eminent, namely to abound in flocks far above all other men, and Helios himself did ever and always give increase to the cattle, for upon his herds came no disease, of them that always minish the herdman's toil. But always more in number waxed the horned kine, and goodlier, year by year, for verily they all brought forth exceeding abundantly, and never cast their young, and chiefly bare heifers.

With the kine went continually three hundred bulls, white-shanked, and curved of horn, - and two hundred others, red cattle, - and all these already were of an age to mate with the kine. Other twelve bulls, again, besides these, went together in a herd, being sacred to Helios. They were white as swans, and shone among all the herds of trailing gait. And these disdaining the herds grazed still on the rich herbage in the pastures, and they were exceeding high of heart. And whensoever the swift wild beasts came down from the rough oakwood to the plain, to seek the wilder cattle, afield went these bulls first to the fight, at the smell of the savour of the beasts, bellowing fearfully, and glancing slaughter from their brows.

Among these bulls was one pre-eminent for strength and might, and for reckless pride, even the mighty Phaethon, that all the herdsmen still likened to a star, because he always shone so bright when he went among the other cattle, and was right easy to be discerned. Now when this bull beheld the dried skin of the fierce-faced lion, he rushed against the keen-eyed Heracles himself, to dash his head and stalwart front against the sides of the hero. Even as he charged, the prince forthwith grasped him with strong hand by the left horn, and bowed his neck down to the ground, puissant as he was, and, with the weight of his shoulder, crushed him backwards, while clear stood out the strained muscle over the sinews on the hero's upper arm. Then marvelled the king himself, and his son, the warlike Phyleus, and the herdsmen that were set over the horned kine, -

when they beheld the exceeding strength of the son of Amphitryon.

Now these twain, even Phyleus and mighty Heracles, left the fat fields there, and were making for the city. But just where they entered on the highway, after quickly speeding over the narrow path that stretched through the vineyard from the farmhouses, a dim path through the green wood, thereby the dear son of Augeas bespake the child of supreme Zeus, who was behind him, slightly turning his head over his right shoulder,

‘Stranger, long time ago I heard a tale, which, as of late I guess, surely concerneth thee. For there came hither, in his wayfaring out of Argos, a certain young Achaean, from Helicé, by the seashore, who verily told a tale and that among many Epeians here, - how, even in his presence, a certain Argive slew a wild beast, a lion dread, a curse of evil omen to the country folk. The monster had its hollow lair by the grove of Nemean Zeus, but as for him that slew it, I know not surely whether he was a man of sacred Argos, there, or a dweller in Tiryns city, or in Mycenae, as he that told the tale declared. By birth, howbeit, he said (if rightly, I recall it) that the hero was descended from Perseus. Methinks that none of the Aegialeis had the hardihood for this deed save thyself; nay, the hide of the beast that covers thy sides doth clearly proclaim the mighty deed of thy hands. But come now, hero, tell thou me first, that truly I may know, whether my foreboding be right or wrong, - if thou art that man of whom the Achaean from Helicé spake in our hearing, and if I read thee aright. Tell me how single-handed thou didst slay this ruinous pest, and how it came to the well-watered ground of Nemea, for not in Apis couldst thou find, - not though thou soughtest after it, - so great a monster. For the country feeds no such large game, but bears, and boars, and the pestilent race of wolves. Wherefore all were in amaze that listened to the story, and there were some who said that the traveller was lying, and pleasing them that stood by with the words of an idle tongue.’

Thus Phyleus spake, and stepped out of the middle of the road, that there might be space for both to walk abreast, and that so he might hear the more easily the words of Heracles who now came abreast with him, and spake thus,

‘O son of Augeas, concerning that whereof thou first didst ask me, thyself most easily hast discerned it aright. Nay then, about this monster I will tell thee all, even how all was done, - since thou art eager to hear, - save, indeed, as to whence he came, for, many as the Argives be, not one can tell that clearly. Only we guess that some one of the Immortals, in wrath for sacrifice unoffered, sent this bane against the children of Phoroneus. For over all the men of Pisa the lion swept, like a flood, and still ravaged insatiate, and chiefly spoiled the Bembinaeans, that were his neighbours, and endured things intolerable.

'Now this labour did Eurystheus enjoin on me to fulfil the first of all, and bade me slay the dreadful monster. So I took my supple bow, and hollow quiver full of arrows, and set forth; and in my other hand I held my stout club, well balanced, and wrought, with unstripped bark, from a shady wild olive-tree, that I myself had found, under sacred Helicon, and dragged up the whole tree, with the bushy roots. But when I came to the place whereby the lion abode, even then I grasped my bow and slipped the string up to the curved tip, and straightway laid thereon the bitter arrow. Then I cast my eyes on every side, spying for the baneful monster, if perchance I might see him, or ever he saw me. It was now midday, and nowhere might I discern the tracks of the monster, nor hear his roaring. Nay, nor was there one man to be seen with the cattle, and the tillage through all the furrowed lea, of whom I might inquire, but wan fear still held them all within the homesteads. Yet I stayed not in my going, as I quested through the deep-wooded hill, till I beheld him, and instantly essayed my prowess. Now early in the evening he was making for his lair, full fed with blood and flesh, and all his bristling mane was dashed with carnage, and his fierce face, and his breast, and still with his tongue he kept licking his bearded chin. Then instantly I hid me in the dark undergrowth, on the wooded hill, awaiting his approach, and as he came nearer I smote him on the left flank, but all in vain, for naught did the sharp arrow pierce through his flesh, but leaped back, and fell on the green grass. Then quickly he raised his tawny head from the ground, in amaze, glancing all around with his eyes, and with jaws distent he showed his ravenous teeth. Then I launched against him another shaft from the string, in wrath that the former flew vainly from my hand, and I smote him right in the middle of the breast, where the lung is seated, yet not even so did the cruel arrow sink into his hide, but fell before his feet, in vain, to no avail. Then for the third time was I making ready to draw my bow again, in great shame and wrath, but the furious beast glanced his eyes around, and spied me. With his long tail he lashed his flanks, and straightway bethought him of battle. His neck was clothed with wrath, and his tawny hair bristled round his lowering brow, and his spine was curved like a bow, his whole force being gathered up from under towards his flanks and loins. And as when a wainwright, one skilled in many an art, doth bend the saplings of seasoned fig-tree, having first tempered them in the fire, to make tires for the axles of his chariot, and even then the fig-tree wood is like to leap from his hands in the bending, and springs far away at a single bound, even so the dread lion leaped on me from afar, huddled in a heap, and keen to glut him with my flesh. Then with one hand I thrust in front of me my arrows, and the double folded cloak from my shoulder, and with the other raised the seasoned club above my head, and drove at his crest, and even on the shaggy scalp of the insatiate beast brake my grievous cudgel of wild olive-tree. Then or ever he reached me, he fell from his flight, on to the ground, and stood on trembling feet, with wagging head, for darkness gathered about both his eyes, his brain being shaken in his skull with the violence of the blow. Then when I marked how he was distraught with the grievous torment, or ever he could turn and gain breath again, I fell on him, and seized him by the column of his stubborn neck. To earth I cast my bow, and woven quiver, and strangled him with all my force, gripping him with stubborn clasp from the rear, lest he should rend my flesh with his claws, and I sprang on him and kept firmly treading his hind feet into the soil with my heels, while I used his sides to guard my thighs, till I had strained his shoulders utterly, then lifted him up, all breathless, - and Hell took his monstrous life.

‘And then at last I took thought how I should strip the rough hide from the dead beast’s limbs, a right hard labour, for it might not be cut with steel, when I tried, nor stone, nor with aught else. Thereon one of the Immortals put into my mind the thought to cleave the lion’s hide with his own claws. With these I speedily flayed it off, and cast it about my limbs, for my defence against the brunt of wounding war.

‘Friend, lo even thus befel the slaying of the Nemean Lion, that aforetime had brought many a bane on flocks and men.’

IDYL XXVI

This idyl narrates the murder of Pentheus, who was torn to pieces (after the Dionysiac Ritual) by his mother, Agave, and other Theban women, for having watched the celebration of the mysteries of Dionysus. It is still dangerous for an Australian native to approach the women of the tribe while they are celebrating their savage rites. The conservatism of Greek religion is well illustrated by Theocritus's apology for the truly savage revenge commemorated in the old Theban legend.

Ino, and Autonoe, and Agave of the apple cheeks, - three bands of Maenads to the mountain-side they led, these ladies three. They stripped the wild leaves of a rugged oak, and fresh ivy, and asphodel of the upper earth, and in an open meadow they built twelve altars; for Semele three, and nine for Dionysus. The mystic cakes from the mystic chest they had taken in their hands, and in silence had laid them on the altars of new-stripped boughs; so Dionysus ever taught the rite, and herewith was he wont to be well pleased.

Now Pentheus from a lofty cliff was watching all, deep hidden in an ancient lentisk hush, a plant of that land. Autonoe first beheld him, and shrieked a dreadful yell, and, rushing suddenly, with her feet dashed all confused the mystic things of Bacchus the wild. For these are things unbeholden of men profane. Frenzied was she, and then forthwith the others too were frenzied. Then Pentheus fled in fear, and they pursued after him, with raiment kirtled through the belt above the knee.

This much said Pentheus, 'Women, what would ye?' and thus answered Autonoe, 'That shalt thou straightway know, ere thou hast heard it.'

The mother seized her child's head, and cried loud, as is the cry of a lioness over her cubs, while Ino, for her part, set her heel on the body, and brake asunder the broad shoulder, shoulder-blade and all, and in the same strain wrought Autonoe. The other women tore the remnants piecemeal, and to Thebes they came, all bedabbled with blood, from the mountains bearing not Pentheus but repentance.

I care for none of these things, nay, nor let another take thought to make himself the foe of Dionysus, not though one should suffer yet greater torments than these, - being but a child of nine years old or entering, perchance, on his tenth year. For me, may I be pure and holy, and find favour in the eyes of the pure!

From aegis-bearing Zeus hath this augury all honour, ‘to the children of the godly the better fortune, but evil befall the offspring of the ungodly.’

‘Hail to Dionysus, whom Zeus supreme brought forth in snowy Dracanus, when he had unburdened his mighty thigh, and hail to beautiful Semele: and to her sisters, - Cadmeian ladies honoured of all daughters of heroes, - who did this deed at the behest of Dionysus, a deed not to be blamed; let no man blame the actions of the gods.’

IDYL XXVII - THE WOOING OF DAPHNIS

The authenticity of this idyl has been denied, partly because the Daphnis of the poem is not identical in character with the Daphnis of the first idyl. But the piece is certainly worthy of a place beside the work of Theocritus. The dialogue is here arranged as in the text of Fritzsche.

The Maiden. Helen the wise did Paris, another neatherd, ravish!

Daphnis. ’Tis rather this Helen that kisses her shepherd, even me!

The Maiden. Boast not, little satyr, for kisses they call an empty favour.

Daphnis. Nay, even in empty kisses there is a sweet delight.

The Maiden. I wash my lips, I blow away from me thy kisses!

Daphnis. Dost thou wash thy lips? Then give me them again to kiss!

The Maiden. ’Tis for thee to caress thy kine, not a maiden unwed.

Daphnis. Boast not, for swiftly thy youth flits by thee, like a dream.

The Maiden. The grapes turn to raisins, not wholly will the dry rose perish.

Daphnis. Come hither, beneath the wild olives, that I may tell thee a tale.

The Maiden. I will not come; ay, ere now with a sweet tale didst thou beguile me.

Daphnis. Come hither, beneath the elms, to listen to my pipe!

The Maiden. Nay, please thyself, no woful tune delights me.

Daphnis. Ah maiden, see that thou too shun the anger of the Paphian.

The Maiden. Good-bye to the Paphian, let Artemis only be friendly!

Daphnis. Say not so, lest she smite thee, and thou fall into a trap whence there is no escape.

The Maiden. Let her smite an she will; Artemis again would be my defender. Lay no hand on me; nay, if thou do more, and touch me with thy lips, I will bite thee.

Daphnis. From Love thou dost not flee, whom never yet maiden fled.

The Maiden. Escape him, by Pan, I do, but thou dost ever bear his yoke.

Daphnis. This is ever my fear lest he even give thee to a meaner man.

The Maiden. Many have been my wooers, but none has won my heart.

Daphnis. Yea I, out of many chosen, come here thy wooer.

The Maiden. Dear love, what can I do? Marriage has much annoy.

Daphnis. Nor pain nor sorrow has marriage, but mirth and dancing.

The Maiden. Ay, but they say that women dread their lords.

Daphnis. Nay, rather they always rule them, - whom do women fear?

The Maiden. Travail I dread, and sharp is the shaft of Eilithyia.

Daphnis. But thy queen is Artemis, that lightens labour.

The Maiden. But I fear childbirth, lest, perchance, I lose my beauty.

Daphnis. Nay, if thou bearest dear children thou wilt see the light revive in thy sons.

The Maiden. And what wedding gift dost thou bring me if I consent?

Daphnis. My whole flock, all my groves, and all my pasture land shall be thine.

The Maiden. Swear that thou wilt not win me, and then depart and leave me forlorn.

Daphnis. So help me Pan I would not leave thee, didst thou even choose to banish me!

The Maiden. Dost thou build me bowers, and a house, and folds for flocks?

Daphnis. Yea, bowers I build thee, the flocks I tend are fair.

The Maiden. But to my grey old father, what tale, ah what, shall I tell?

Daphnis. He will approve thy wedlock when he has heard my name.

The Maiden. Prithee, tell me that name of thine; in a name there is often delight.

Daphnis. Daphnis am I, Lycidas is my father, and Nomaea is my mother.

The Maiden. Thou comest of men well-born, but there I am thy match.

Daphnis. I know it, thou art of high degree, for thy father is Menalcas. {150a}

The Maiden. Show me thy grove, wherein is thy cattle-stall.

Daphnis. See here, how they bloom, my slender cypress-trees.

The Maiden. Graze on, my goats, I go to learn the herdsman's labours.

Daphnis. Feed fair, my bulls, while I show my woodlands to my lady!

The Maiden. What dost thou, little satyr; why dost thou touch my breast?

Daphnis. I will show thee that these earliset apples are ripe. {150b}

The Maiden. By Pan, I swoon; away, take back thy hand.

Daphnis. Courage, dear girl, why fearest thou me, thou art over fearful!

The Maiden. Thou makest me lie down by the water-course, defiling my fair raiment!

Daphnis. Nay, see, ‘neath thy raiment fair I am throwing this soft fleece.

The Maiden. Ah, ah, thou hast snatched my girdle too; why hast thou loosed my girdle?

Daphnis. These first-fruits I offer, a gift to the Paphian.

The Maiden. Stay, wretch, hark; surely a stranger cometh; nay, I hear a sound.

Daphnis. The cypresses do but whisper to each other of thy wedding.

The Maiden. Thou hast torn my mantle, and unclad am I.

Daphnis. Another mantle I will give thee, and an ampler far than thine.

The Maiden. Thou dost promise all things, but soon thou wilt not give me even a grain of salt.

Daphnis. Ah, would that I could give thee my very life.

The Maiden. Artemis, be not wrathful, thy votary breaks her vow.

Daphnis. I will slay a calf for Love, and for Aphrodite herself a heifer.

The Maiden. A maiden I came hither, a woman shall I go homeward.

Daphnis. Nay, a wife and a mother of children shalt thou be, no more a maiden.

So, each to each, in the joy of their young fresh limbs they were murmuring: it was the hour of secret love. Then she arose, and stole to herd her sheep; with shamefast eyes she went, but her heart was comforted within her. And he went to his herds of kine, rejoicing in his wedlock.

IDYL XXVIII

This little piece of Aeolic verse accompanied the present of a distaff which Theocritus brought from Syracuse to Theugenis, the wife of his friend Nicias, the physician of Miletus. On the margin of a translation by Longepierre (the famous book-collector), Louis XIV wrote that this idyl is a model of honourable gallantry.

O distaff, thou friend of them that spin, gift of grey-eyed Athene to dames whose hearts are set on housewifery; come, boldly come with me to the bright city of Neleus, where the shrine of the Cyprian is green ‘neath its roof of delicate rushes. Thither I pray that we may win fair voyage and favourable breeze from Zeus, that so I may gladden mine eyes with the sight of Nicias my friend, and be greeted of him in turn; - a sacred scion is he of the sweet-voiced Graces. And thee, distaff, thou child of fair carven ivory, I will give into the hands of the wife of Nicias: with her shalt thou fashion many a thing, garments for men, and much rippling raiment that women wear. For the mothers of lambs in the meadows might twice be shorn of their wool in the year, with her goodwill, the dainty-ankled Theugenis, so notable is she, and cares for all things that wise matrons love.

Nay, not to houses slatternly or idle would I have given thee, distaff, seeing that thou art a countryman of mine. For that is thy native city which Archias out of Ephyre founded, long ago, the very marrow of the isle of the three capes, a town of honourable men. But now shalt thou abide in the house of a wise physician, who has learned all the spells that ward off sore maladies from men, and thou shalt dwell in glad Miletus with the Ionian people, to this end, - that of all the townsfolk Theugenis may have the goodliest distaff and that thou mayst keep her ever mindful of her friend, the lover of song.

This proverb will each man utter that looks on thee, ‘Surely great grace goes with a little gift, and all the offerings of friends are precious.’

IDYL XXIX

This poem, like the preceding one, is written in the Aeolic dialect. The first line is quoted from Alcaeus. The idyl is attributed to Theocritus on the evidence of the scholiast on the Symposium of Plato.

‘Wine and truth,’ dear child, says the proverb, and in wine are we, and the truth we must tell. Yes, I will say to thee all that lies in my soul’s inmost chamber. Thou dost not care to love me with thy whole heart! I know, for I live half my life in the sight of thy beauty, but all the rest is ruined. When thou art kind, my day is like the days of the Blessed, but when thou art unkind, ’tis deep in darkness. How can it be right thus to torment thy friend? Nay, if thou wilt listen at all, child, to me, that am thine elder, happier thereby wilt thou be, and some day thou wilt thank me. Build one nest in one tree, where no fierce snake can come; for now thou dost perch on one branch to-day, and on another to-morrow, always seeking what is new. And if a stranger see and praise thy pretty face, instantly to him thou art more than a friend of three years’ standing, while him that loved thee first thou holdest no higher than a friend of three days. Thou savourest, methinks, of the love of some great one; nay, choose rather all thy life ever to keep the love of one that is thy peer. If this thou dost thou wilt be well spoken of by thy townsmen, and Love will never be hard to thee, Love that lightly vanquishes the minds of men, and has wrought to tenderness my heart that was of steel. Nay, by thy delicate mouth I approach and beseech thee, remember that thou wert younger yesteryear, and that we wax grey and wrinkled, or ever we can avert it; and none may recapture his youth again, for the shoulders of youth are winged, and we are all too slow to catch such flying pinions.

Mindful of this thou shouldst be gentler, and love me without guile as I love thee, so that, when thou hast a manly beard, we may be such friends as were Achilles and Patroclus!

But, if thou dost cast all I say to the winds to waft afar, and cry, in anger, ‘Why, why, dost thou torment me?’ then I, - that now for thy sake would go to fetch the golden apples, or to bring thee Cerberus, the watcher of the dead, - would not go forth, didst thou stand at the court-doors and call me. I should have rest from my cruel love.

FRAGMENT OF THE BERENICE.

Athenaeus (vii. 284 A) quotes this fragment, which probably was part of a panegyric on Berenice, the mother of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

And if any man that hath his livelihood from the salt sea, and whose nets serve him for ploughs, prays for wealth, and luck in fishing, let him sacrifice, at midnight, to this goddess, the sacred fish that they call ‘silver white,’ for that it is brightest of sheen of all, - then let the fisher set his nets, and he shall draw them full from the sea.

IDYL XXX - THE DEAD ADONIS

This idyl is usually printed with the poems of Theocritus, but almost certainly is by another hand. I have therefore ventured to imitate the metre of the original.

When Cypris saw Adonis,
In death already lying
With all his locks dishevelled,
And cheeks turned wan and ghastly,
She bade the Loves attendant
To bring the boar before her.

And lo, the winged ones, fleetly
They scoured through all the wild wood;
The wretched boar they tracked him,
And bound and doubly bound him.
One fixed on him a halter,
And dragged him on, a captive,
Another drave him onward,
And smote him with his arrows.
But terror-struck the beast came,
For much he feared Cythere.
To him spake Aphrodite, -
‘Of wild beasts all the vilest,
This thigh, by thee was ‘t wounded?
Was ‘t thou that smote my lover?’
To her the beast made answer -
‘I swear to thee, Cythere,
By thee, and by thy lover,
Yea, and by these my fetters,
And them that do pursue me, -
Thy lord, thy lovely lover
I never willed to wound him;
I saw him, like a statue,
And could not bide the burning,

Nay, for his thigh was naked,
And mad was I to kiss it,
And thus my tusk it harmed him.
Take these my tusks, O Cypris,
And break them, and chastise them,
For wherefore should I wear them,
These passionate defences?
If this doth not suffice thee,
Then cut my lips out also,
Why dared they try to kiss him?’

Then Cypris had compassion;
She bade the Loves attendant
To loose the bonds that bound him.
From that day her he follows,
And flees not to the wild wood
But joins the Loves, and always
He bears Love’s flame unflinching.

EPIGRAMS

The Epigrams of Theocritus are, for the most part, either inscriptions for tombs or cenotaphs, or for the pedestals of statues, or (as the third epigram) are short occasional pieces. Several of them are but doubtfully ascribed to the poet of the Idyls. The Greek has little but brevity in common with the modern epigram.

I - *For a rustic Altar.*

These dew-drenched roses and that tufted thyme are offered to the ladies of Helicon. And the dark-leaved laurels are thine, O Pythian Paean, since the rock of Delphi bare this leafage to thine honour. The altar this white-horned goat shall stain with blood, this goat that browses on the tips of the terebinth boughs.

II - *For a Herdsman's Offering.*

Daphnis, the white-limbed Daphnis, that pipes on his fair flute the pastoral strains offered to Pan these gifts, - his pierced reed-pipes, his crook, a javelin keen, a fawn-skin, and the scrip wherein he was wont, on a time, to carry the apples of Love.

III - *For a Picture.*

Thou sleepest on the leaf-strewn ground, O Daphnis, resting thy weary limbs, and the stakes of thy nets are newly fastened on the hills. But Pan is on thy track, and Priapus, with the golden ivy wreath twined round his winsome head, - both are leaping at one bound into thy cavern. Nay, flee them, flee, shake off thy slumber, shake off the heavy sleep that is falling upon thee.

IV - *Priapus.*

When thou hast turned yonder lane, goatherd, where the oak-trees are, thou wilt find an image of fig-tree wood, newly carven; three-legged it is, the bark still covers it, and it is earless withal, yet meet for the arts of Cypris. A right holy precinct runs round it, and a ceaseless stream that falleth from the rocks on every side is green with laurels, and myrtles, and fragrant cypress. And all around the place that child of the grape, the vine, doth flourish with its tendrils, and the merles in spring with their sweet songs utter their wood-notes wild, and the brown nightingales reply with their complaints, pouring from their bills the honey-sweet song. There, prithee, sit down and pray to gracious Priapus, that I may be delivered from my love of Daphnis, and say that instantly thereon I will sacrifice a fair kid. But if he refuse, ah then, should I win Daphnis's love, I would fain sacrifice three victims, - and offer a calf, a shaggy he-goat, and a lamb that I keep in the stall, and oh that graciously the god may hear my prayer.

V - *The rural Concert.*

Ah, in the Muses' name, wilt thou play me some sweet air on the double flute, and I will take up the harp, and touch a note, and the neatherd Daphnis will charm us the while, breathing music into his wax-bound pipe. And beside this rugged oak behind the cave will we stand, and rob the goat-foot Pan of his repose.

VI - *The Dead are beyond hope.*

Ah hapless Thyrsis, where is thy gain, shouldst thou lament till thy two eyes are consumed with tears? She has passed away, - the kid, the youngling beautiful, - she has passed away to Hades. Yea, the jaws of the fierce wolf have closed on her, and now the hounds are baying, but what avail they when nor bone nor cinder is left of her that is departed?

VII - *For a statue of Asclepius.*

Even to Miletus he hath come, the son of Paeon, to dwell with one that is a healer of all sickness, with Nicias, who even approaches him day by day with sacrifices, and hath let carve this statue out of fragrant cedar-wood; and to Eetion he promised a high guerdon for his skill of hand: on this work Eetion has put forth all his craft.

VIII - *Orthon's Grave.*

Stranger, the Syracusan Orthon lays this behest on thee; go never abroad in thy cups on a night of storm. For thus did I come by my end, and far from my rich fatherland I lie, clothed on with alien soil.

IX - *The Death of Cleonicus.*

Man, husband thy life, nor go voyaging out of season, for brief are the days of men! Unhappy Cleonicus, thou wert eager to win rich Thasus, from Coelo-Syria sailing with thy merchandise, - with thy merchandise, O Cleonicus, at the setting of the Pleiades didst thou cross the sea, - and didst sink with the sinking Pleiades!

X - *A Group of the Muses.*

For your delight, all ye Goddesses Nine, did Xenocles offer this statue of marble, Xenocles that hath music in his soul, as none will deny. And inasmuch as for his skill in this art he wins renown, he forgets not to give their due to the Muses.

XI - *The Grave of Eusthenes.*

This is the memorial stone of Eusthenes, the sage; a physiognomist was he, and skilled to read the very spirit in the eyes. Nobly have his friends buried him - a stranger in a strange land - and most dear was he, yea, to the makers of song. All his dues in death has the sage, and, though he was no great one, ’tis plain he had friends to care for him.

XII - *The Offering of Demoteles.*

’Twas Demoteles the choregus, O Dionysus, who dedicated this tripod, and this statue of thee, the dearest of the blessed gods. No great fame he won when he gave a chorus of boys, but with a chorus of men he bore off the victory, for he knew what was fair and what was seemly.

XIII - *For a statue of Aphrodite.*

This is Cypris, - not she of the people; nay, venerate the goddess by her name - the Heavenly Aphrodite. The statue is the offering of chaste Chrysogone, even in the house of Amphicles, whose children and whose life were hers! And always year by year went well with them, who began each year with thy worship, Lady, for mortals who care for the Immortals have themselves thereby the better fortune.

XIV - *The Grave of Euryrnedon.*

An infant son didst thou leave behind, and in the flower of thine own age didst die, Eurymedon, and win this tomb. For thee a throne is set among men made perfect, but thy son the citizens will hold in honour, remembering the excellence of his father.

XV - *The Grave of Eurymedon.*

Wayfarer, I shall know whether thou dost reverence the good, or whether the coward is held by thee in the same esteem. ‘Hail to this tomb,’ thou wilt say, for light it lies above the holy head of Eurymedon.

XVI - *For a statue of Anacreon.*

Mark well this statue, stranger, and say, when thou hast returned to thy home, ‘In Teos I beheld the statue of Anacreon, who surely excelled all the singers of times past.’ And if thou dost add that he delighted in the young, thou wilt truly paint all the man.

XVII - *For a statue of Epicharmus.*

Dorian is the strain, and Dorian the man we sing; he that first devised Comedy, even Epicharmus. O Bacchus, here in bronze (as the man is now no more) they have erected his statue, the colonists that dwell in Syracuse, to the honour of one that was their fellow-citizen. Yea, for a gift he gave, wherefore we should be mindful thereof and pay him what wage we may, for many maxims he spoke that were serviceable to the life of all men. Great thanks be his.

XVIII - *The Grave of Cleita.*

The little Medeus has raised this tomb by the wayside to the memory of his Thracian nurse, and has added the inscription -

HERE LIES CLEITA.

The woman will have this recompense for all her careful nurture of the boy, - and why? - because she was serviceable even to the end.

XIX - *The statue of Archilochus.*

Stay, and behold Archilochus, him of old time, the maker of iambics, whose myriad fame has passed westward, alike, and towards the dawning day. Surely the Muses loved him, yea, and the Delian Apollo, so practised and so skilled he grew in forging song, and chanting to the lyre.

XX - *The statue of Pisander.*

This man, behold, Pisander of Corinth, of all the ancient makers was the first who wrote of the son of Zeus, the lion-slayer, the ready of hand, and spake of all the adventures that with toil he achieved. Know this therefore, that the people set him here, a statue of bronze, when many months had gone by and many years.

XXI - *The Grave of Hipponax.*

Here lies the poet Hipponax! If thou art a sinner draw not near this tomb, but if thou art a true man, and the son of righteous sires, sit boldly down here, yea, and sleep if thou wilt.

XXII - *For the Bank of Caicus.*

To citizens and strangers alike this counter deals justice. If thou hast deposited aught, draw out thy money when the balance-sheet is cast up. Let others make false excuse, but Caicus tells back money lent, ay, even if one wish it after nightfall.

XXIII - *On his own Poems*.

The Chian is another man, but I, Theocritus, who wrote these songs, am a Syracusan, a man of the people, being the son of Praxagoras and renowned Philinna. Never laid I claim to any Muse but mine own.

BION

¹´±º¿Â µ¾ ¹µÁ·Â ¿»¹³· »¹²±Â ±ºÁ¿½ ±ÉÄ¿½. - *Callimachus.*

Bion was born at Smyrna, one of the towns which claimed the honour of being Homer’s birthplace. On the evidence of a detached verse (94) of the dirge by Moschus, some have thought that Theocritus survived Bion. In that case Theocritus must have been a preternaturally aged man. The same dirge tells us that Bion was poisoned by certain enemies, and that while he left to others his wealth, to Moschus he left his minstrelsy.

THE LAMENT FOR ADONIS

This poem was probably intended to be sung at one of the spring celebrations of the festival of Adonis, like that described by Theocritus in his fifteenth idyl.

Woe, woe for Adonis, he hath perished, the beauteous Adonis, dead is the beauteous Adonis, the Loves join in the lament. No more in thy purple raiment, Cypris, do thou sleep; arise, thou wretched one, sable-stoled, and beat thy breasts, and say to all, 'He hath perished, the lovely Adonis!'

Woe, woe for Adonis, the Loves join in the lament!

Low on the hills is lying the lovely Adonis, and his thigh with the boar's tusk, his white thigh with the boar's tusk is wounded, and sorrow on Cypris he brings, as softly he breathes his life away.

His dark blood drips down his skin of snow, beneath his brows his eyes wax heavy and dim, and the rose flees from his lip, and thereon the very kiss is dying, the kiss that Cypris will never forego.

To Cypris his kiss is dear, though he lives no longer, but Adonis knew not that she kissed him as he died.

Woe, woe for Adonis, the Loves join in the lament!

A cruel, cruel wound on his thigh hath Adonis, but a deeper wound in her heart doth Cytherea bear. About him his dear hounds are loudly baying, and the nymphs of the wild wood wail him; but Aphrodite with unbound locks through the glades goes wandering, - wretched, with hair unbraided, with feet unsandaled, and the thorns as she passes wound her and pluck the blossom of her sacred blood. Shrill she wails as down the long woodlands she is borne, lamenting her Assyrian lord, and again calling him, and again. But round his navel the dark blood leapt forth, with blood from his thighs his chest was scarlet, and beneath Adonis's breast, the spaces that afore were snow-white, were purple with blood.

Woe, woe for Cytherea, the Loves join in the lament!

She hath lost her lovely lord, with him she hath lost her sacred beauty. Fair was the form of Cypris, while Adonis was living, but her beauty has died with Adonis! *Woe, woe for Cypris*, the mountains all are saying, and the oak-trees answer, *Woe for Adonis*. And the rivers bewail the sorrows of Aphrodite, and the wells are weeping Adonis on the mountains. The flowers flush red for anguish, and Cytherea through all the mountain-knees, through every dell doth shrill the piteous dirge.

Woe, woe for Cytherea, he hath perished, the lovely Adonis!

And Echo cried in answer, *He hath perished, the lovely Adonis*. Nay, who but would have lamented the grievous love of Cypris? When she saw, when she marked the unstaunched wound of Adonis, when she saw the bright red blood about his languid thigh, she cast her arms abroad and moaned, 'Abide with me, Adonis, hapless Adonis abide, that this last time of all I may possess thee, that I may cast myself about thee, and lips with lips may mingle. Awake Adonis, for a little while, and kiss me yet again, the latest kiss! Nay kiss me but a moment, but the lifetime of a kiss, till from thine inmost soul into my lips, into my heart, thy life-breath ebb, and till I drain thy sweet love-philtre, and drink down all thy love. This kiss will I treasure, even as thyself; Adonis, since, ah ill-fated, thou art fleeing me, thou art fleeing far, Adonis, and art faring to Acheron, to that hateful king and cruel, while wretched I yet live, being a goddess, and may not follow thee! Persephone, take thou my lover, my lord, for thy self art stronger than I, and all lovely things drift down to thee. But I am all ill-fated, inconsolable is my anguish, and I lament mine Adonis, dead to me, and I have no rest for sorrow.

'Thou diest, O thrice-desired, and my desire hath flown away as a dream. Nay, widowed is Cytherea, and idle are the Loves along the halls! With thee has the girdle of my beauty perished. For why, ah overbold, didst thou follow the chase, and being so fair, why wert thou thus overhardy to fight with beasts?’

So Cypris bewailed her, the Loves join in the lament:

Woe, woe for Cytherea, he hath perished the lovely Adonis!

A tear the Paphian sheds for each blood-drop of Adonis, and tears and blood on the earth are turned to flowers. The blood brings forth the rose, the tears, the wind-flower.

Woe, woe for Adonis, he hath perished; the lovely Adonis!

No more in the oak-woods, Cypris, lament thy lord. It is no fair couch for Adonis, the lonely bed of leaves! Thine own bed, Cytherea, let him now possess, - the dead Adonis. Ah, even in death he is beautiful, beautiful in death, as one that hath fallen on sleep. Now lay him down to sleep in his own soft coverlets, wherein with thee through the night he shared the holy slumber in a couch all of gold, that yearns for Adonis, though sad is he to look upon. Cast on him garlands and blossoms: all things have perished in his death, yea all the flowers are faded. Sprinkle him with ointments of Syria, sprinkle him with unguents of myrrh. Nay, perish all perfumes, for Adonis, who was thy perfume, hath perished.

He reclines, the delicate Adonis, in his raiment of purple, and around him the Loves are weeping, and groaning aloud, clipping their locks for Adonis. And one upon his shafts, another on his bow is treading, and one hath loosed the sandal of Adonis, and another hath broken his own feathered quiver, and one in a golden vessel bears water, and another laves the wound, and another from behind him with his wings is fanning Adonis.

Woe, woe for Cytherea, the Loves join in the lament!

Every torch on the lintels of the door has Hymenaeus quenched, and hath torn to shreds the bridal crown, and *Hymen* no more, *Hymen* no more is the song, but a new song is sung of wailing.

‘*Woe, woe for Adonis*,’ rather than the nuptial song the Graces are shrilling, lamenting the son of Cinyras, and one to the other declaring*, He hath perished, the lovely Adonis.*

And *woe, woe for Adonis,* shrilly cry the Muses, neglecting Paeon, and they lament Adonis aloud, and songs they chant to him, but he does not heed them, not that he is loth to hear, but that the Maiden of Hades doth not let him go.

Cease, Cytherea, from thy lamentations, to-day refrain from thy dirges. Thou must again bewail him, again must weep for him another year.

THE LOVE OF ACHILLES

Lycidas sings to Myrson a fragment about the loves of Achilles and Deidamia.

Myrson. Wilt thou be pleased now, Lycidas, to sing me sweetly some sweet Sicilian song, some wistful strain delectable, some lay of love, such as the Cyclops Polyphemus sang on the sea-banks to Galatea?

Lycidas. Yes, Myrson, and I too fain would pipe, but what shall I sing?

Myrson. A song of Scyra, Lycidas, is my desire, - a sweet love-story, - the stolen kisses of the son of Peleus, the stolen bed of love how he, that was a boy, did on the weeds of women, and how he belied his form, and how among the heedless daughters of Lycomedes, Deidamia cherished Achilles in her bower.

Lycidas. The herdsman bore off Helen, upon a time, and carried her to Ida, sore sorrow to OEnone. And Lacedaemon waxed wroth, and gathered together all the Achaean folk; there was never a Hellene, not one of the Mycenaeans, nor any man of Elis, nor of the Laconians, that tarried in his house, and shunned the cruel Ares.

But Achilles alone lay hid among the daughters of Lycomedes, and was trained to work in wools, in place of arms, and in his white hand held the bough of maidenhood, in semblance a maiden. For he put on women's ways, like them, and a bloom like theirs blushed on his cheek of snow, and he walked with maiden gait, and covered his locks with the snood. But the heart of a man had he, and the love of a man. From dawn to dark he would sit by Deidamia, and anon would kiss her hand, and oft would lift the beautiful warp of her loom and praise the sweet threads, having no such joy in any other girl of her company. Yea, all things he essayed, and all for one end, that they twain might share an undivided sleep.

Now he once even spake to her, saying -

‘With one another other sisters sleep, but I lie alone, and alone, maiden, dost thou lie, both being girls unwedded of like age, both fair, and single both in bed do we sleep. The wicked Nysa, the crafty nurse it is that cruelly severs me from thee. For not of thee have I . . .’

THE SEASONS

Cleodamus and Myrson discuss the charms of the seasons, and give the palm to a southern spring.

Cleodamus. Which is sweetest, to thee, Myrson, spring, or winter or the late autumn or the summer; of which dost thou most desire the coming? Summer, when all are ended, the toils whereat we labour, or the sweet autumn, when hunger weighs lightest on men, or even idle winter, for even in winter many sit warm by the fire, and are lulled in rest and indolence. Or has beautiful spring more delight for thee? Say, which does thy heart choose? For our leisure lends us time to gossip.

Myrson. It beseems not mortals to judge the works of God; for sacred are all these things, and all are sweet, yet for thy sake I will speak out, Cleodamus, and declare what is sweeter to me than the rest. I would not have summer here, for then the sun doth scorch me, and autumn I would not choose, for the ripe fruits breed disease. The ruinous winter, bearing snow and frost, I dread. But spring, the thrice desirable, be with me the whole year through, when there is neither frost, nor is the sun so heavy upon us. In springtime all is fruitful, all sweet things blossom in spring, and night and dawn are evenly meted to men.

THE BOY AND LOVE

A fowler, while yet a boy, was hunting birds in a woodland glade, and there he saw the winged Love, perched on a box-tree bough. And when he beheld him, he rejoiced, so big the bird seemed to him, and he put together all his rods at once, and lay in wait for Love, that kept hopping, now here, now there. And the boy, being angered that his toil was endless, cast down his fowling gear, and went to the old husbandman, that had taught him his art, and told him all, and showed him Love on his perch. But the old man, smiling, shook his head, and answered the lad, ‘Pursue this chase no longer, and go not after this bird. Nay, flee far from him. ’Tis an evil creature. Thou wilt be happy, so long as thou dost not catch him, but if thou comest to the measure of manhood, this bird that flees thee now, and hops away, will come uncalled, and of a sudden, and settle on thy head.’

THE TUTOR OF LOVE

Great Cypris stood beside me, while still I slumbered, and with her beautiful hand she led the child Love, whose head was earthward bowed. This word she spake to me, ‘Dear herdsman, prithee, take Love, and teach him to sing.’ So said she, and departed, and I - my store of pastoral song I taught to Love, in my innocence, as if he had been fain to learn. I taught him how the cross-flute was invented by Pan, and the flute by Athene, and by Hermes the tortoise-shell lyre, and the harp by sweet Apollo. All these things I taught him as best I might; but he, not heeding my words, himself would sing me ditties of love, and taught me the desires of mortals and immortals, and all the deeds of his mother. And I clean forgot the lore I was teaching to Love, but what Love taught me, and his love ditties, I learned them all.

LOVE AND THE MUSES

The Muses do not fear the wild Love, but heartily they cherish, and fleetly follow him. Yea, and if any man sing that hath a loveless heart, him do they flee, and do not choose to teach him. But if the mind of any be swayed by Love, and sweetly he sings, to him the Muses all run eagerly. A witness hereto am I, that this saying is wholly true, for if I sing of any other, mortal or immortal, then falters my tongue, and sings no longer as of old, but if again to Love, and Lycidas I sing, then gladly from my lips flows forth the voice of song.

BION'S FRAGMENTS

VII

I know not the way, nor is it fitting to labour at what we have not learned.

VIII

If my ditties be fair, lo these alone will win me glory, these that the Muse aforetime gave to me. And if these be not sweet, what gain is it to me to labour longer?

IX

Ah, if a double term of life were given us by Zeus, the son of Cronos, or by changeful Fate, ah, could we spend one life in joy and merriment, and one in labour, then perchance a man might toil, and in some later time might win his reward. But if the gods have willed that man enters into life but once (and that life brief, and too short to hold all we desire), then, wretched men and weary that we are, how sorely we toil, how greatly we cast our souls away on gain, and laborious arts, continually coveting yet more wealth! Surely we have all forgotten that we are men condemned to die, and how short in the hour, that to us is allotted by Fate.

X

Happy are they that love, when with equal love they are rewarded. Happy was Theseus, when Pirithous was by his side, yea, though he went down to the house of implacable Hades. Happy among hard men and inhospitable was Orestes, for that Pylades chose to share his wanderings. And *he* was happy, Achilles Æacides, while his darling lived, - happy was he in his death, because he avenged the dread fate of Patroclus.

XI

Hesperus, golden lamp of the lovely daughter of the foam, dear Hesperus, sacred jewel of the deep blue night, dimmer as much than the moon, as thou art among the stars pre-eminent, hail, friend, and as I lead the revel to the shepherd's hut, in place of the moonlight lend me thine, for to-day the moon began her course, and too early she sank. I go not free-booting, nor to lie in wait for the benighted traveller, but a lover am I, and 'tis well to favour lovers.

XII

Mild goddess, in Cyprus born, - thou child, not of the sea, but of Zeus, - why art thou thus vexed with mortals and immortals? Nay, my word is too weak, why wert thou thus bitterly wroth, yea, even with thyself, as to bring forth Love, so mighty a bane to all, - cruel and heartless Love, whose spirit is all unlike his beauty? And wherefore didst thou furnish him with wings, and give him skill to shoot so far, that, child as he is, we never may escape the bitterness of Love.

XIII

Mute was Phoebus in this grievous anguish. All herbs he sought, and strove to win some wise healing art, and he anointed all the wound with nectar and ambrosia, but remedeless are all the wounds of Fate.

XIV

But I will go my way to yon sloping hill; by the sand and the sea-banks murmuring my song, and praying to the cruel Galatea. But of my sweet hope never will I leave hold, till I reach the uttermost limit of old age.

XV

It is not well, my friend, to run to the craftsman, whatever may befall, nor in every matter to need another's aid, nay, fashion a pipe thyself, and to thee the task is easy.

XVI

May Love call to him the Muses, may the Muses bring with them Love. Ever may the Muses give song to me that yearn for it, - sweet song, - than song there is no sweeter charm.

XVII

The constant dropping of water, says the proverb, it wears a hole in a stone.

XVIII

Nay, leave me not unrewarded, for even Phoebus sang for his reward. And the meed of honour betters everything.

XIX

Beauty is the glory of womankind, and strength of men.

XX

All things, god-willing, all things may be achieved by mortals. From the hands of the blessed come tasks most easy, and that find their accomplishment.

MOSCHUS

Our only certain information about Moschus is contained in his own Dirge for Bion. He speaks of his verse as ‘Ausonian song,’ and of himself as Mion’s pupil and successor. It is plain that he was acquainted with the poems of Theocritus.

IDYL I - LOVE THE RUNAWAY

Cypris was raising the hue and cry for Love, her child, - ‘Who, where the three ways meet, has seen Love wandering? He is my runaway, whosoever has aught to tell of him shall win his reward. His prize is the kiss of Cypris, but if thou bringest him, not the bare kiss, O stranger, but yet more shalt thou win. The child is most notable, thou couldst tell him among twenty together, his skin is not white, but flame coloured, his eyes are keen and burning, an evil heart and a sweet tongue has he, for his speech and his mind are at variance. Like honey is his voice, but his heart of gall, all tameless is he, and deceitful, the truth is not in him, a wily brat, and cruel in his pastime. The locks of his hair are lovely, but his brow is impudent, and tiny are his little hands, yet far he shoots his arrows, shoots even to Acheron, and to the King of Hades.

‘The body of Love is naked, but well is his spirit hidden, and winged like a bird he flits and descends, now here, now there, upon men and women, and nestles in their inmost hearts. He hath a little bow, and an arrow always on the string, tiny is the shaft, but it carries as high as heaven. A golden quiver on his back he bears, and within it his bitter arrows, wherewith full many a time he wounds even me.

‘Cruel are all these instruments of his, but more cruel by far the little torch, his very own, wherewith he lights up the sun himself.

‘And if thou catch Love, bind him, and bring him, and have no pity, and if thou see him weeping, take heed lest he give thee the slip; and if he laugh, hale him along.

‘Yea, and if he wish to kiss thee, beware, for evil is his kiss, and his lips enchanted.

‘And should he say, “Take these, I give thee in free gift all my armoury,” touch not at all his treacherous gifts, for they all are dipped in fire.’

IDYL II - EUROPA AND THE BULL

To Europa, once on a time, a sweet dream was sent by Cypris, when the third watch of the night sets in, and near is the dawning; when sleep more sweet than honey rests on the eyelids, limb-loosening sleep, that binds the eyes with his soft bond, when the flock of truthful dreams fares wandering.

At that hour she was sleeping, beneath the roof-tree of her home, Europa, the daughter of Phoenix, being still a maid unwed. Then she beheld two Continents at strife for her sake, Asia, and the farther shore, both in the shape of women. Of these one had the guise of a stranger, the other of a lady of that land, and closer still she clung about her maiden, and kept saying how ‘she was her mother, and herself had nursed Europa.’ But that other with mighty hands, and forcefully, kept haling the maiden, nothing loth; declaring that, by the will of Ægis-bearing Zeus, Europa was destined to be her prize.

But Europa leaped forth from her strown bed in terror, with beating heart, in such clear vision had she beheld the dream. Then she sat upon her bed, and long was silent, still beholding the two women, albeit with waking eyes; and at last the maiden raised her timorous voice

‘Who of the gods of heaven has sent forth to me these phantoms? What manner of dreams have scared me when right sweetly slumbering on my strown bed, within my bower? Ah, and who was the alien woman that I beheld in my sleep? How strange a longing for her seized my heart, yea, and how graciously she herself did welcome me, and regard me as it had been her own child.

‘Ye blessed gods, I pray you, prosper the fulfilment of the dream.’

Therewith she arose, and began to seek the dear maidens of her company, girls of like age with herself, born in the same year, beloved of her heart, the daughters of noble sires, with whom she was always wont to sport, when she was arrayed for the dance, or when she would bathe her bright body at the mouths of the rivers, or would gather fragrant lilies on the leas.

And soon she found them, each bearing in her hand a basket to fill with flowers, and to the meadows near the salt sea they set forth, where always they were wont to gather in their company, delighting in the roses, and the sound of the waves. But Europa herself bore a basket of gold, a marvel well worth gazing on, a choice work of Hephaestus. He gave it to Libya, for a bridal-gift, when she approached the bed of the Shaker of the Earth, and Libya gave it to beautiful Telephassa, who was of her own blood; and to Europa, still an unwedded maid, her mother, Telephassa, gave the splendid gift.

Many bright and cunning things were wrought in the basket: therein was Io, daughter of Inachus, fashioned in gold; still in the shape of a heifer she was, and had not her woman's shape, and wildly wandering she fared upon the salt sea-ways, like one in act to swim; and the sea was wrought in blue steel. And aloft upon the double brow of the shore, two men were standing together and watching the heifer's sea-faring. There too was Zeus, son of Cronos, lightly touching with his divine hand the cow of the line of Inachus, and her, by Nile of the seven streams, he was changing again, from a horned heifer to a woman. Silver was the stream of Nile, and the heifer of bronze and Zeus himself was fashioned in gold. And all about, beneath the rim of the rounded basket, was the story of Hermes graven, and near him lay stretched out Argus, notable for his sleepless eyes. And from the red blood of Argus was springing a bird that rejoiced in the flower-bright colour of his feathers, and spreading abroad his tail, even as some swift ship on the sea doth spread all canvas, was covering with his plumes the lips of the golden vessel. Even thus was wrought the basket of the lovely Europa.

Now the girls, so soon as they were come to the flowering meadows, took great delight in various sorts of flowers, whereof one would pluck sweet-breathed narcissus, another the hyacinth, another the violet, a fourth the creeping thyme, and on the ground there fell many petals of the meadows rich with spring. Others again were emulously gathering the fragrant tresses of the yellow crocus; but in the midst of them all the princess culled with her hand the splendour of the crimson rose, and shone pre-eminent among them all like the foam-born goddess among the Graces. Verily she was not for long to set her heart's delight upon the flowers, nay, nor long to keep untouched her maiden girdle. For of a truth, the son of Cronos, so soon as he beheld her, was troubled, and his heart was subdued by the sudden shafts of Cypris, who alone can conquer even Zeus. Therefore, both to avoid the wrath of jealous Hera, and being eager to beguile the maiden's tender heart, he concealed his godhead, and changed his shape, and became a bull. Not such an one as feeds in the stall nor such as cleaves the furrow, and drags the curved plough, nor such as grazes on the grass, nor such a bull as is subdued beneath the yoke, and draws the burdened wain. Nay, but while all the rest of his body was bright chestnut, a silver circle shone between his brows, and his eyes gleamed softly, and ever sent forth lightning of desire. From his brow branched horns of even length, like the crescent of the horned moon, when her disk is cloven in twain. He came into the meadow, and his coming terrified not the maidens, nay, within them all wakened desire to draw nigh the lovely bull, and to touch him, and his heavenly fragrance was scattered afar, exceeding even the sweet perfume of the meadows. And he stood before the feet of fair Europa, and kept licking her neck, and cast his spell over the maiden. And she still caressed him, and gently with her hands she wiped away the deep foam from his lips, and kissed the bull. Then he lowed so gently, ye would think ye heard the Mygdonian flute uttering a dulcet sound.

He bowed himself before her feet, and, bending back his neck, he gazed on Europa, and showed her his broad back. Then she spake among her deep-tressed maidens, saying -

'Come, dear playmates, maidens of like age with me, let us mount the bull here and take our pastime, for truly, he will bear us on his back, and carry all of us; and how mild he is, and dear, and gentle to behold, and no whit like other bulls. A mind as honest as a man's possesses him, and he lacks nothing but speech.'

So she spake, and smiling, she sat down on the back of the bull, and the others were about to follow her. But the bull leaped up immediately, now he had gotten her that he desired, and swiftly he sped to the deep. The maiden turned, and called again and again to her dear playmates, stretching out her hands, but they could not reach her. The strand he gained, and forward he sped like a dolphin, faring with unwetted hooves over the wide waves. And the sea, as he came, grew smooth, and the sea-monsters gambolled around, before the feet of Zeus, and the dolphin rejoiced, and rising from the deeps, he tumbled on the swell of the sea. The Nereids arose out of the salt water, and all of them came on in orderly array, riding on the backs of sea-beasts. And himself, the thund’rous Shaker of the World, appeared above the sea, and made smooth the wave, and guided his brother on the salt sea path; and round him were gathered the Tritons, these hoarse trumpeters of the deep, blowing from their long conches a bridal melody.

Meanwhile Europa, riding on the back of the divine bull, with one hand clasped the beast’s great horn, and with the other caught up the purple fold of her garment, lest it might trail and be wet in the hoar sea’s infinite spray. And her deep robe was swelled out by the winds, like the sail of a ship, and lightly still did waft the maiden onward. But when she was now far off from her own country, and neither sea-beat headland nor steep hill could now be seen, but above, the air, and beneath, the limitless deep, timidly she looked around, and uttered her voice, saying -

‘Whither bearest thou me, bull-god? What art thou? how dost thou fare on thy feet through the path of the sea-beasts, nor fearest the sea? The sea is a path meet for swift ships that traverse the brine, but bulls dread the salt sea-ways. What drink is sweet to thee, what food shalt thou find from the deep? Nay, art thou then some god, for godlike are these deeds of thine? Lo, neither do dolphins of the brine fare on land, nor bulls on the deep, but dreadless dost thou rush o’er land and sea alike, thy hooves serving thee for oars.

‘Nay, perchance thou wilt rise above the grey air, and flee on high, like the swift birds. Alas for me, and alas again, for mine exceeding evil fortune, alas for me that have left my father’s house, and following this bull, on a strange sea-faring I go, and wander lonely. But I pray thee that rulest the grey salt sea, thou Shaker of the Earth, propitious meet me, and methinks I see thee smoothing this path of mine before me. For surely it is not without a god to aid, that I pass through these paths of the waters!’

So spake she, and the horned bull made answer to her again -

‘Take courage, maiden, and dread not the swell of the deep. Behold I am Zeus, even I, though, closely beheld, I wear the form of a bull, for I can put on the semblance of what thing I will. But ’tis love of thee that has compelled me to measure out so great a space of the salt sea, in a bull’s shape. Lo, Crete shall presently receive thee, Crete that was mine own foster-mother, where thy bridal chamber shall be. Yea, and from me shalt thou bear glorious sons, to be sceptre-swaying kings over earthly men.

So spake he, and all he spake was fulfilled. And verily Crete appeared, and Zeus took his own shape again, and he loosed her girdle, and the Hours arrayed their bridal bed. She that before was a maiden straightway became the bride of Zeus, and she bare children to Zeus, yea, anon she was a mother.

IDYL III - THE LAMENT FOR BION

Wail, let me hear you wail, ye woodland glades, and thou Dorian water; and weep ye rivers, for Bion, the well beloved! Now all ye green things mourn, and now ye groves lament him, ye flowers now in sad clusters breathe yourselves away. Now redden ye roses in your sorrow, and now wax red ye wind-flowers, now thou hyacinth, whisper the letters on thee graven, and add a deeper *ai ai* to thy petals; he is dead, the beautiful singer.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Ye nightingales that lament among the thick leaves of the trees, tell ye to the Sicilian waters of Arethusa the tidings that Bion the herdsman is dead, and that with Bion song too has died, and perished hath the Dorian minstrelsy.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Ye Strymonian swans, sadly wail ye by the waters, and chant with melancholy notes the dolorous song, even such a song as in his time with voice like yours he was wont to sing. And tell again to the Œagrian maidens, tell to all the Nymphs Bistonian, how that he hath perished, the Dorian Orpheus.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

No more to his herds he sings, that beloved herdsman, no more ‘neath the lonely oaks he sits and sings, nay, but by Pluteus’s side he chants a refrain of oblivion. The mountains too are voiceless: and the heifers that wander by the bulls lament and refuse their pasture.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Thy sudden doom, O Bion, Apollo himself lamented, and the Satyrs mourned thee, and the Priapi in sable raiment, and the Panes sorrow for thy song, and the fountain fairies in the wood made moan, and their tears turned to rivers of waters. And Echo in the rocks laments that thou art silent, and no more she mimics thy voice. And in sorrow for thy fall the trees cast down their fruit, and all the flowers have faded. From the ewes hath flowed no fair milk, nor honey from the hives, nay, it hath perished for mere sorrow in the wax, for now hath thy honey perished, and no more it behoves men to gather the honey of the bees.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Not so much did the dolphin mourn beside the sea-banks, nor ever sang so sweet the nightingale on the cliffs, nor so much lamented the swallow on the long ranges of the hills, nor shrilled so loud the halcyon o’er his sorrows;

(*Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge*.)

Nor so much, by the grey sea-waves, did ever the sea-bird sing, nor so much in the dells of dawn did the bird of Memnon bewail the son of the Morning, fluttering around his tomb, as they lamented for Bion dead.

Nightingales, and all the swallows that once he was wont to delight, that he would teach to speak, they sat over against each other on the boughs and kept moaning, and the birds sang in answer, ‘Wail, ye wretched ones, even ye!’

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Who, ah who will ever make music on thy pipe, O thrice desired Bion, and who will put his mouth to the reeds of thine instrument? who is so bold?

For still thy lips and still thy breath survive, and Echo, among the reeds, doth still feed upon thy songs. To Pan shall I bear the pipe? Nay, perchance even he would fear to set his mouth to it, lest, after thee, he should win but the second prize.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Yea, and Galatea laments thy song, she whom once thou wouldst delight, as with thee she sat by the sea-banks. For not like the Cyclops didst thou sing - him fair Galatea ever fled, but on thee she still looked more kindly than on the salt water. And now hath she forgotten the wave, and sits on the lonely sands, but still she keeps thy kine.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

All the gifts of the Muses, herdsman, have died with thee, the delightful kisses of maidens, the lips of boys; and woful round thy tomb the loves are weeping. But Cypris loves thee far more than the kiss wherewith she kissed the dying Adonis.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

This, O most musical of rivers, is thy second sorrow, this, Meles, thy new woe. Of old didst thou lose Homer, that sweet mouth of Calliope, and men say thou didst bewail thy goodly son with streams of many tears, and didst fill all the salt sea with the voice of thy lamentation - now again another son thou weepest, and in a new sorrow art thou wasting away.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Both were beloved of the fountains, and one ever drank of the Pegasean fount, but the other would drain a draught of Arethusa. And the one sang the fair daughter of Tyndarus, and the mighty son of Thetis, and Menelaus Atreus’s son, but that other, - not of wars, not of tears, but of Pan, would he sing, and of herdsmen would he chant, and so singing, he tended the herds. And pipes he would fashion, and would milk the sweet heifer, and taught lads how to kiss, and

Love he cherished in his bosom and woke the passion of Aphrodite.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Every famous city laments thee, Bion, and all the towns. Ascra laments thee far more than her Hesiod, and Pindar is less regretted by the forests of Boeotia. Nor so much did pleasant Lesbos mourn for Alcaeus, nor did the Teian town so greatly bewail her poet, while for thee more than for Archilochus doth Paros yearn, and not for Sappho, but still for thee doth Mytilene wail her musical lament;

[Here seven verses are lost.]

And in Syracuse Theocritus; but I sing thee the dirge of an Ausonian sorrow, I that am no stranger to the pastoral song, but heir of the Doric Muse which thou didst teach thy pupils. This was thy gift to me; to others didst thou leave thy wealth, to me thy minstrelsy.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Ah me, when the mallows wither in the garden, and the green parsley, and the curled tendrils of the anise, on a later day they live again, and spring in another year; but we men, we, the great and mighty, or wise, when once we have died, in hollow earth we sleep, gone down into silence; a right long, and endless, and unawakening sleep. And thou too, in the earth wilt be lapped in silence, but the nymphs have thought good that the frog should eternally sing. Nay, him I would not envy, for ’tis no sweet song he singeth.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

Poison came, Bion, to thy mouth, thou didst know poison. To such lips as thine did it come, and was not sweetened? What mortal was so cruel that could mix poison for thee, or who could give thee the venom that heard thy voice? surely he had no music in his soul.

Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the dirge.

But justice hath overtaken them all. Still for this sorrow I weep, and bewail thy ruin. But ah, if I might have gone down like Orpheus to Tartarus, or as once Odysseus, or Alcides of yore, I too would speedily have come to the house of Pluteus, that thee perchance I might behold, and if thou singest to Pluteus, that I might hear what is thy song. Nay, sing to the Maiden some strain of Sicily, sing some sweet pastoral lay.

And she too is Sicilian, and on the shores by Aetna she was wont to play, and she knew the Dorian strain. Not unrewarded will the singing be; and as once to Orpheus's sweet minstrelsy she gave Eurydice to return with him, even so will she send thee too, Bion, to the hills. But if I, even I, and my piping had aught availed, before Pluteus I too would have sung.

IDYL IV

A sad dialogue between Megara the wife and Alcmena the mother of the wandering Heracles. Megara had seen her own children slain by her lord, in his frenzy, while Alcmena was constantly disquieted by ominous dreams.

My mother, wherefore art thou thus smitten in thy soul with exceeding sorrow, and the rose is no longer firm in thy cheeks as of yore? why, tell me, art thou thus disquieted? Is it because thy glorious son is suffering pains unnumbered in bondage to a man of naught, as it were a lion in bondage to a fawn? Woe is me, why, ah why have the immortal gods thus brought on me so great dishonour, and wherefore did my parents get me for so ill a doom? Wretched woman that I am, who came to the bed of a man without reproach and ever held him honourable and dear as mine own eyes, - ay and still worship and hold him sacred in my heart - yet none other of men living hath had more evil hap or tasted in his soul so many griefs. In madness once, with the bow Apollo's self had given him - dread weapon of some Fury or spirit of Death - he struck down his own children, and took their dear life away, as his frenzy raged through the house till it swam in blood. With mine own eyes, I saw them smitten, woe is me, by their father's arrows - a thing none else hath suffered even in dreams. Nor could I aid them as they cried ever on their mother; the evil that was upon them was past help. As a bird mourneth for her perishing little ones, devoured in the thicket by some terrible serpent while as yet they are fledglings, and the kind mother flutters round them making most shrill lament, but cannot help her nestlings, yea, and herself hath great fear to approach the cruel monster; so I unhappy mother, wailing for my brood, with frenzied feet went wandering through the house. Would that by my children's side I had died myself, and were lying with the envenomed arrow through my heart. Would that this had been, O Artemis, thou that art queen chief of power to womankind. Then would our parents have embraced and wept for us and with ample obsequies have laid us on one common pyre, and have gathered the bones of all of us into one golden urn, and buried them in the place where first we came to be. But now they dwell in Thebes, fair nurse of youth, ploughing the deep soil of the Aonian plain, while I in Tiryns, rocky city of Hera, am ever thus wounded at heart with many sorrows, nor is any respite to me from tears. My husband I behold but a little time in our house, for he hath many labours at his hand, whereat he laboureth in wanderings by land and sea, with his soul strong as rock or steel within his breast. But thy grief is as the running waters, as thou lamentest through the nights and all the days of Zeus.

Nor is there any one of my kinsfolk nigh at hand to cheer me: for it is not the house wall that severs them, but they all dwell far beyond the pine-clad Isthmus, nor is there any to whom, as a woman all hapless, I may look up and refresh my heart, save only my sister Pyrrha; nay, but she herself grieves yet more for her husband Iphicles thy son: for methinks ’tis thou that hast borne the most luckless children of all, to a God, and a mortal man.

Thus spake she, and ever warmer the tears were pouring from her eyes into her sweet bosom, as she bethought her of her children and next of her own parents. And in like manner Alcmena bedewed her pale cheeks with tears, and deeply sighing from her very heart she thus bespoke her dear daughter with thick-coming words:

‘Dear child, what is this that hath come into the thoughts of thy heart? How art thou fain to disquiet us both with the tale of griefs that cannot be forgotten? Not for the first time are these woes wept for now. Are they not enough, the woes that possess us from our birth continually to our day of death? In love with sorrow surely would he be that should have the heart to count up our woes; such destiny have we received from God. Thyself, dear child, I behold vext by endless pains, and thy grief I can pardon, yea, for even of joy there is satiety. And exceedingly do I mourn over and pity thee, for that thou hast partaken of our cruel lot, the burden whereof is hung above our heads. For so witness Persephone and fair-robed Demeter (by whom the enemy that wilfully forswears himself, lies to his own hurt), that I love thee no less in my heart than if thou hadst been born of my womb, and wert the maiden darling of my house: nay, and methinks that thou knowest this well. Therefore say never, my flower, that I heed thee not, not even though I wail more ceaselessly than Niobe of the lovely locks. No shame it is for a mother to make moan for the affliction of her son: for ten months I went heavily, even before I saw him, while I bare him under my girdle, and he brought me near the gates of the warden of Hell; so fierce the pangs I endured in my sore travail of him. And now my son is gone from me in a strange land to accomplish some new labour; nor know I in my sorrow whether I shall again receive him returning here or no. Moreover in sweet sleep a dreadful dream hath fluttered me; and I exceedingly fear for the ill-omened vision that I have seen, lest something that I would not be coming on my children.

It seemed to me that my son, the might of Heracles, held in both hands a well-wrought spade, wherewith, as one labouring for hire, he was digging a ditch at the edge of a fruitful field, stripped of his cloak and belted tunic. And when he had come to the end of all his work and his labours at the stout defence of the vine-filled close, he was about to lean his shovel against the upstanding mound and don the clothes he had worn. But suddenly blazed up above the deep trench a quenchless fire, and a marvellous great flame encompassed him. But he kept ever giving back with hurried feet, striving to flee the deadly bolt of Hephaestus; and ever before his body he kept his spade as it were a shield; and this way and that he glared around him with his eyes, lest the angry fire should consume him. Then brave Iphicles, eager, methought, to help him, stumbled and fell to earth ere he might reach him, nor could he stand upright again, but lay helpless, like a weak old man, whom joyless age constrains to fall when he would not; so he lieth on the ground as he fell, till one passing by lift him up by the hand, regarding the ancient reverence for his hoary beard. Thus lay on the earth Iphicles, wielder of the shield. But I kept wailing as I beheld my sons in their sore plight, until deep sleep quite fled from my eyes, and straightway came bright morn. Such dreams, beloved, flitted through my mind all night; may they all turn against Eurystheus nor come nigh our dwelling, and to his hurt be my soul prophetic, nor may fate bring aught otherwise to pass.

IDYL V

When the wind on the grey salt sea blows softly, then my weary spirits rise, and the land no longer pleases me, and far more doth the calm allure me. But when the hoary deep is roaring, and the sea is broken up in foam, and the waves rage high, then lift I mine eyes unto the earth and trees, and fly the sea, and the land is welcome, and the shady wood well pleasing in my sight, where even if the wind blow high the pine-tree sings her song. Surely an evil life lives the fisherman, whose home is his ship, and his labours are in the sea, and fishes thereof are his wandering spoil. Nay, sweet to me is sleep beneath the broad-leaved plane-tree; let me love to listen to the murmur of the brook hard by, soothing, not troubling the husbandman with its sound.

IDYL VI

Pan loved his neighbour Echo; Echo loved
A gamesome Satyr; he, by her unmoved,
Loved only Lyde; thus through Echo, Pan,
Lyde, and Satyr, Love his circle ran.
Thus all, while their true lovers’ hearts they grieved,
Were scorned in turn, and what they gave received.
O all Love’s scorners, learn this lesson true;
Be kind to Love, that he be kind to you.

IDYL VII

Alpheus, when he leaves Pisa and makes his way through beneath the deep, travels on to Arethusa with his waters that the wild olives drank, bearing her bridal gifts, fair leaves and flowers and sacred soil. Deep in the waves he plunges, and runs beneath the sea, and the salt water mingles not with the sweet. Nought knows the sea as the river journeys through. Thus hath the knavish boy, the maker of mischief, the teacher of strange ways - thus hath Love by his spell taught even a river to dive.

IDYL VIII

Leaving his torch and his arrows, a wallet strung on his back,
One day came the mischievous Love-god to follow the plough-share’s track:
And he chose him a staff for his driving, and yoked him a sturdy steer,
And sowed in the furrows the grain to the Mother of Earth most dear.
Then he said, looking up to the sky: ‘Father Zeus, to my harvest be good,
Lest I yoke that bull to my plough that Europa once rode through the flood!’

IDYL IX

Would that my father had taught me the craft of a keeper of sheep,
For so in the shade of the elm-tree, or under the rocks on the steep,
Piping on reeds I had sat, and had lulled my sorrow to sleep.

BALLADS IN BLUE CHINA

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“Rondeaux, BALLADES,
Chansons dizains, propos menus,
Compte moy qu’ils sont devenuz:
Se faict il plus rien de nouveau?”
CLEMENT MAROT, Dialogue de deux
Amoureux.

“I love a ballad but even too well; if it be doleful matter, merrily set down, or a very pleasant thing indeed, and sung lamentably.” A Winter’s Tale, Act iv. sc. 3.

INTRODUCTION

Thirty years have passed, like a watch in the night, since the earlier of the two sets of verses here reprinted, Ballades in Blue China, was published. At first there were but twenty-two Ballades; ten more were added later. They appeared in a little white vellum wrapper, with a little blue Chinese singer copied from a porcelain jar; and the frontispiece was a little design by an etcher now famous.

Thirty years ago blue china was a kind of fetish in some circles, aesthetic circles, of which the balladist was not a member.

The ballade was an old French form of verse, in France revived by Theodore de Banville, and restored to an England which had long forgotten the Middle Ages, by my friends Mr. Austin Dobson and Mr. Edmund Gosse. They, so far as I can trust my memory, were the first to reintroduce these pleasant old French nugae, while an anonymous author let loose upon the town a whole winged flock of ballades of amazing dexterity. This unknown balladist was Mr. Henley; perhaps he was the first Englishman who ever burst into a double ballade, and his translations of two of Villon's ballades into modern thieves' slang were marvels of dexterity. Mr. Swinburne wrote a serious ballade, but the form, I venture to think, is not 'wholly serious,' of its nature, in modern days; and he did not persevere. Nor did the taste for these trifles long endure. A good ballade is almost as rare as a good sonnet, but a middling ballade is almost as easily written as the majority of sonnets. Either form readily becomes mechanical, cheap and facile. I have heard Mr. George Meredith improvise a sonnet, a Petrarchian sonnet, obedient to the rules, without pen and paper. He spoke 'and the numbers came'; he sonneted as easily as a living poet, in his Eton days, improvised Latin elegiacs and Greek hexameters.

The sonnet endures. Mr. Horace Hutchinson wrote somewhere: "When you have read a sonnet, you feel that though there does not seem to be much of it, you have done a good deal, as when you have eaten a cold hard-boiled egg." Still people keep on writing sonnets, because the sonnet is wholly serious. In an English sonnet you cannot easily be flippant of pen. A few great poets have written immortal sonnets — among them are Milton, Wordsworth, and Keats. Thus the sonnet is a thing which every poet thinks it worth while to try at; like Felix Arvers, he may be made immortal by a single sonnet. Even I have written one too many! Every anthologist wants to anthologise it (The Odyssey); it never was a favourite of my own, though it had the honour to be kindly spoken of by Mr. Matthew Arnold.

On the other hand, no man since Francois Villon has been immortalised by a single ballade — Mais ou sont les neiges d'antan?

To speak in any detail about these poor ballades would be to indite a part of an autobiography. Looking back at the little book, 'what memories it stirs' in one to whom

'Fate has done this wrong,
That I should write too much and live too long.'

The Ballade of the Tweed, and the Rhymes a la Mode, were dedicated to the dearest of kinsmen, a cricketer and angler. The Ballade of Roulette was inscribed to R. R., a gallant veteran of the Indian Mutiny, a leader of Light Horse, whose father was a friend of Sir Walter Scott. He was himself a Borderer, in whose defeats on the green field of Roulette I often shared, long, long ago.

So many have gone 'into the world of light' that it is a happiness to think of him to whom The Ballade of Golf was dedicated, and to remember that he is still capable of scoring his double century at cricket, and of lifting the ball high over the trees beyond the boundaries of a great cricket-field. Perhaps Mr. Leslie Balfour-Melville will pardon me for mentioning his name, linked as it is with so many common memories. 'One is taken and another left.'

A different sort of memory attaches itself to A Ballade of Dead Cities. It was written in a Theocritean amoebean way, in competition with Mr. Edmund Gosse; he need not be ashamed of the circumstance, for another shepherd, who was umpire, awarded the prize (two kids just severed from their dams) to his victorious muse.

The Ballade of the Midnight Forest, the Ballade of the Huntress Artemis, was translated from Theodore de Banville, whose beautiful poem came so near the Greek, that when the late Provost of Oriel translated a part of its English shadow into Greek hexameters, you might suppose, as you read, that they were part of a lost Homeric Hymn.

I never wrote a double ballade, and stanzas four and five of the Double Ballade of Primitive Man were contributed by the learned doyen of Anthropology, Mr. E. B. Tylor, author of Primitive Culture.

A tout seigneur tout honneur!

In Ballade of his Choice of a Sepulchre, the Windburg is a hill in Teviotdale. A Portrait of 1783 was written on a French engraving after Morland, and Benedetta Ramus was addressed to a mezzotint (an artist's proof, 'very rare'). It is after Romney and is 'My Beauty,' as Charles Lamb said (once, unluckily, to a Scot) of an engraving, after Lionardo, of some fair dead lady.

The sonnet, Natural Theology, is the germ of what the author has since written, in The Making of Religion, on the long neglected fact that many of the lowest savages known share the belief in a benevolent All Father and Judge of men.

Concerning verses in Rhymes a la Mode, visitors to St. Andrews may be warned not to visit St. Leonard’s Chapel, described in the second stanza of Almae Matres. In the writer’s youth, and even in middle age,

He loitered idly where the tall
Fresh-budded mountain-ashes blow
Within its desecrated wall.

The once beautiful ruins carpeted with grass and wild flowers have been doubly desecrated by persons, academic persons, having authority and a plentiful lack of taste. The slim mountain-ashes, fair as the young palm-tree that Odysseus saw beside the shrine of Apollo in Delos, have been cut down by the academic persons to whom power is given. The grass and flowers have been rooted up. Hideous little wooden fences enclose the grave slabs: a roof of a massive kind has been dumped down on the old walls, and the windows, once so graceful in their airy lines, have been glazed in a horrible manner, while the ugly iron gate precludes entrance to a shrine which is now a black and dismal dungeon.

“Oh, be that roof as lead to lead
Above the dull Restorer’s head,
A Minstrel’s malison is said!”

Notes explanatory are added to the Rhymes, and their information, however valuable, need not here be repeated.

A BALLADE OF XXXII BALLADES.

Friend, when you bear a care-dulled eye,
And brow perplexed with things of weight,
And fain would bid some charm untie
The bonds that hold you all too strait,
Behold a solace to your fate,
Wrapped in this cover’s china blue;
These ballades fresh and delicate,
This dainty troop of Thirty-two!

The mind, unwearied, longs to fly
And commune with the wise and great;
But that same ether, rare and high,
Which glorifies its worthy mate,
To breath forspent is disparate:
Laughing and light and airy-new
These come to tickle the dull pate,
This dainty troop of Thirty-two.

Most welcome then, when you and I,
Forestalling days for mirth too late,
To quips and cranks and fantasy
Some choice half-hour dedicate,
They weave their dance with measured rate
Of rhymes enlinked in order due,
Till frowns relax and cares abate,
This dainty troop of Thirty-two.

ENVOY.

Princes, of toys that please your state

Quainter are surely none to view
Than these which pass with tripping gait,
This dainty troop of Thirty-two.

F. P.

TO
AUSTIN DOBSON.
Un Livre est un ami qui change — quelquefois.
1880.
1888

BALLADE TO THEOCRITUS, IN WINTER.

Id. viii. 56.

Ah! leave the smoke, the wealth, the roar
Of London, and the bustling street,
For still, by the Sicilian shore,
The murmur of the Muse is sweet.
Still, still, the suns of summer greet
The mountain-grave of Helike,
And shepherds still their songs repeat
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea.

What though they worship Pan no more,
That guarded once the shepherd’s seat,
They chatter of their rustic lore,
They watch the wind among the wheat:
Cicalas chirp, the young lambs bleat,
Where whispers pine to cypress tree;
They count the waves that idly beat
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea.

Theocritus! thou canst restore
The pleasant years, and over-fleet;
With thee we live as men of yore,

We rest where running waters meet:
And then we turn unwilling feet
And seek the world — so must it be -
WE may not linger in the heat
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea!

ENVOY.

Master, — when rain, and snow, and sleet
And northern winds are wild, to thee
We come, we rest in thy retreat,
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea!

BALLADE OF CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.

Ye giant shades of RA and TUM,
Ye ghosts of gods Egyptian,
If murmurs of our planet come
To exiles in the precincts wan
Where, fetish or Olympian,
To help or harm no more ye list,
Look down, if look ye may, and scan
This monument in London mist!

Behold, the hieroglyphs are dumb
That once were read of him that ran
When seistron, cymbal, trump, and drum
Wild music of the Bull began;
When through the chanting priestly clan
Walk'd Ramses, and the high sun kiss'd
This stone, with blessing scored and ban -
This monument in London mist.

The stone endures though gods be numb;
Though human effort, plot, and plan
Be sifted, drifted, like the sum
Of sands in wastes Arabian.
What king may deem him more than man,
What priest says Faith can Time resist
While THIS endures to mark their span -
This monument in London mist?

ENVOY.

Prince, the stone's shade on your divan

Falls; it is longer than ye wist:
It preaches, as Time’s gnomon can,
This monument in London mist!

BALLADE OF ROULETTE. TO R. R.

This life — one was thinking to-day,
In the midst of a medley of fancies -
Is a game, and the board where we play
Green earth with her poppies and pansies.
Let manque be faded romances,
Be passe remorse and regret;
Hearts dance with the wheel as it dances -
The wheel of Dame Fortune’s roulette.

The lover will stake as he may
His heart on his Peggies and Nancies;
The girl has her beauty to lay;
The saint has his prayers and his trances;
The poet bets endless expanses
In Dreamland; the scamp has his debt:
How they gaze at the wheel as it glances -
The wheel of Dame Fortune’s roulette!

The Kaiser will stake his array
Of sabres, of Krupps, and of lances;
An Englishman punts with his pay,
And glory the jeton of France is;
Your artists, or Whistlers or Vances,
Have voices or colours to bet;
Will you moan that its motion askance is -
The wheel of Dame Fortune’s roulette?

ENVOY.

The prize that the pleasure enhances?

The prize is — at last to forget
The changes, the chops, and the chances -
The wheel of Dame Fortune’s roulette.

BALLADE OF SLEEP.

The hours are passing slow,
I hear their weary tread
Clang from the tower, and go
Back to their kinsfolk dead.
Sleep! death’s twin brother dread!
Why dost thou scorn me so?
The wind’s voice overhead
Long wakeful here I know,
And music from the steep
Where waters fall and flow.
Wilt thou not hear sue, Sleep?

All sounds that might bestow
Rest on the fever’d bed,
All slumb’rous sounds and low
Are mingled here and wed,
And bring no drowsihed.
Shy dreams flit to and fro
With shadowy hair dispread;
With wistful eyes that glow,
And silent robes that sweep.
Thou wilt not hear me; no?
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

What cause hast thou to show
Of sacrifice unsped?
Of all thy slaves below
I most have laboured
With service sung and said;
Have cull’d such buds as blow,
Soft poppies white and red,
Where thy still gardens grow,

And Lethe’s waters weep.
Why, then, art thou my foe?
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep?

ENVOY.

Prince, ere the dark be shred
By golden shafts, ere now
And long the shadows creep:
Lord of the wand of lead,
Soft-footed as the snow,
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep!

BALLADE OF THE MIDNIGHT FOREST. AFTER THEODORE DE BANVILLE.

Still sing the mocking fairies, as of old,
Beneath the shade of thorn and holly-tree;
The west wind breathes upon them, pure and cold,
And wolves still dread Diana roaming free
In secret woodland with her company.
’Tis thought the peasants’ hovels know her rite
When now the wolds are bathed in silver light,
And first the moonrise breaks the dusky grey,
Then down the dells, with blown soft hair and bright,
And through the dim wood Dian threads her way.

With water-weeds twined in their locks of gold
The strange cold forest-fairies dance in glee,
Sylphs over-timorous and over-bold
Haunt the dark hollows where the dwarf may be,
The wild red dwarf, the nixies’ enemy;
Then ‘mid their mirth, and laughter, and affright,
The sudden Goddess enters, tall and white,
With one long sigh for summers pass’d away;
The swift feet tear the ivy nets outright
And through the dim wood Dian threads her way.

She gleans her silvan trophies; down the wold
She hears the sobbing of the stags that flee
Mixed with the music of the hunting roll’d,
But her delight is all in archery,
And naught of ruth and pity wotteth she
More than her hounds that follow on the flight;
The goddess draws a golden bow of might
And thick she rains the gentle shafts that slay.
She tosses loose her locks upon the night,

And through the dim wood Dian threads her way.

ENVOY.

Prince, let us leave the din, the dust, the spite,
The gloom and glare of towns, the plague, the blight:
Amid the forest leaves and fountain spray
There is the mystic home of our delight,
And through the dim wood Dian threads her way.

BALLADE OF THE TWEED. (LOWLAND SCOTCH.) TO T. W. LANG.

The ferox rins in rough Loch Awe,
A weary cry frae ony toun;
The Spey, that loups o’er linn and fa’,
They praise a’ ither streams aboon;
They boast their braes o’ bonny Doon:
Gie ME to hear the ringing reel,
Where shilfas sing, and cushats croon
By fair Tweed-side, at Ashiesteel!

There’s Ettrick, Meggat, Ail, and a’,
Where trout swim thick in May and June;
Ye’ll see them take in showers o’ snaw
Some blinking, cauldrife April noon:
Rax ower the palmer and march-broun,
And syne we’ll show a bonny creel,
In spring or simmer, late or soon,
By fair Tweed-side, at Ashiesteel!

There’s mony a water, great or sma’,
Gaes singing in his siller tune,
Through glen and heugh, and hope and shaw,
Beneath the sun-licht or the moon:
But set us in our fishing-shoon
Between the Caddon-burn and Peel,
And syne we’ll cross the heather broun
By fair Tweed-side at Ashiesteel!

ENVOY.

Deil take the dirty, trading loon
Wad gar the water ca’ his wheel,
And drift his dyes and poisons doun
By fair Tweed-side at Ashiesteel!

BALLADE OF THE BOOK-HUNTER.

In torrid heats of late July,
In March, beneath the bitter bise,
He book-hunts while the loungers fly, -
He book-hunts, though December freeze;
In breeches baggy at the knees,
And heedless of the public jeers,
For these, for these, he hoards his fees, -
Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs.

No dismal stall escapes his eye,
He turns o'er tomes of low degrees,
There soiled romanticists may lie,
Or Restoration comedies;
Each tract that flutters in the breeze
For him is charged with hopes and fears,
In mouldy novels fancy sees
Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs.

With restless eyes that peer and spy,
Sad eyes that heed not skies nor trees,
In dismal nooks he loves to pry,
Whose motto evermore is Spes!
But ah! the fabled treasure flees;
Grown rarer with the fleeting years,
In rich men's shelves they take their ease, -
Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs!

ENVOY.

Prince, all the things that tease and please, -

Fame, hope, wealth, kisses, cheers, and tears,
What are they but such toys as these -
Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs?

BALLADE OF THE VOYAGE TO CYTHERA.
AFTER THEODORE DE BANVILLE.

I know Cythera long is desolate;
I know the winds have stripp’d the gardens green.
Alas, my friends! beneath the fierce sun’s weight
A barren reef lies where Love’s flowers have been,
Nor ever lover on that coast is seen!
So be it, but we seek a fabled shore,
To lull our vague desires with mystic lore,
To wander where Love’s labyrinths beguile;
There let us land, there dream for evermore:
“It may be we shall touch the happy isle.”

The sea may be our sepulchre. If Fate,
If tempests wreak their wrath on us, serene
We watch the bolt of heaven, and scorn the hate
Of angry gods that smite us in their spleen.
Perchance the jealous mists are but the screen
That veils the fairy coast we would explore.
Come, though the sea be vex’d, and breakers roar,
Come, for the air of this old world is vile,
Haste we, and toil, and faint not at the oar;
“It may be we shall touch the happy isle.”

Grey serpents trail in temples desecrate
Where Cypris smiled, the golden maid, the queen,
And ruined is the palace of our state;
But happy Loves flit round the mast, and keen
The shrill wind sings the silken cords between.
Heroes are we, with wearied hearts and sore,
Whose flower is faded and whose locks are hoar,
Yet haste, light skiffs, where myrtle thickets smile;
Love’s panthers sleep ‘mid roses, as of yore:

“It may be we shall touch the happy isle!”

ENVOY.

Sad eyes! the blue sea laughs, as heretofore.
Ah, singing birds your happy music pour!
Ah, poets, leave the sordid earth awhile;
Flit to these ancient gods we still adore:
“It may be we shall touch the happy isle!”

BALLADE OF THE SUMMER TERM.

(Being a Petition, in the form of a Ballade, praying the University Commissioners to spare the Summer Term.)

When Lent and Responsions are ended,
When May with fritillaries waits,
When the flower of the chestnut is splendid,
When drags are at all of the gates
(Those drags the philosopher “slates”
With a scorn that is truly sublime),
Life wins from the grasp of the Fates
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time!

When wickets are bowl’d and defended,
When Isis is glad with “the Eights,”
When music and sunset are blended,
When Youth and the summer are mates,
When Freshmen are heedless of “Greats,”
And when note-books are cover’d with rhyme,
Ah, these are the hours that one rates -
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time!

When the brow of the Dean is unbended
At luncheons and mild tete-a-tetes,
When the Tutor’s in love, nor offended
By blunders in tenses or dates;
When bouquets are purchased of Bates,
When the bells in their melody chime,
When unheeded the Lecturer prates -
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time!

ENVOY.

Reformers of Schools and of States,
Is mirth so tremendous a crime?
Ah! spare what grim pedantry hates -
Sweet hours and the fleetest of time!

BALLADE OF THE MUSE

Quem tu, Melpomene, semel.

The man whom once, Melpomene,
Thou look’st on with benignant sight,
Shall never at the Isthmus be
A boxer eminent in fight,
Nor fares he foremost in the flight
Of Grecian cars to victory,
Nor goes with Delian laurels dight,
The man thou lov’st, Melpomene!

Not him the Capitol shall see,
As who hath crush’d the threats and might
Of monarchs, march triumphantly;
But Fame shall crown him, in his right
Of all the Roman lyre that smite
The first; so woods of Tivoli
Proclaim him, so her waters bright,
The man thou lov’st, Melpomene!

The sons of queenly Rome count ME,
Me too, with them whose chants delight, -
The poets’ kindly company;
Now broken is the tooth of spite,
But thou, that temperest aright
The golden lyre, all, all to thee
He owes — life, fame, and fortune’s height -
The man thou lov’st, Melpomene!

ENVOY.

Queen, that to mute lips could’st unite
The wild swan’s dying melody!
Thy gifts, ah! how shall he requite -
The man thou lov’st, Melpomene?

BALLADE AGAINST THE JESUITS. AFTER LA FONTAINE.

Rome does right well to censure all the vain
Talk of Jansenius, and of them who preach
That earthly joys are damnable! ’Tis plain
We need not charge at Heaven as at a breach;
No, amble on! We’ll gain it, one and all;
The narrow path’s a dream fantastical,
And Arnauld’s quite superfluously driven
Mirth from the world. We’ll scale the heavenly wall,
Escobar makes a primrose path to heaven!

He does not hold a man may well be slain
Who vexes with unseasonable speech,
You MAY do murder for five ducats gain,
NOT for a pin, a ribbon, or a peach;
He ventures (most consistently) to teach
That there are certain cases that befall
When perjury need no good man appal,
And life of love (he says) may keep a leaven.
Sure, hearing this, a grateful world will bawl,
“Escobar makes a primrose path to heaven!”

“For God’s sake read me somewhat in the strain
Of his most cheering volumes, I beseech!”
Why should I name them all? a mighty train -
So many, none may know the name of each.
Make these your compass to the heavenly beach,
These only in your library instal:
Burn Pascal and his fellows, great and small,
Dolts that in vain with Escobar have striven;
I tell you, and the common voice doth call,
Escobar makes a primrose path to heaven!

ENVOY.

SATAN, that pride did hurry to thy fall,
Thou porter of the grim infernal hall -
Thou keeper of the courts of souls unshriven!
To shun thy shafts, to ‘scape thy hellish thrall,
Escobar makes a primrose path to heaven!

BALLADE OF DEAD CITIES. TO E. W. GOSSE.

The dust of Carthage and the dust
Of Babel on the desert wold,
The loves of Corinth, and the lust,
Orchomenos increased with gold;
The town of Jason, over-bold,
And Cherson, smitten in her prime -
What are they but a dream half-told?
Where are the cities of old time?

In towns that were a kingdom's trust,
In dim Atlantic forests' fold,
The marble wasteth to a crust,
The granite crumbles into mould;
O'er these — left nameless from of old -
As over Shinar's brick and slime,
One vast forgetfulness is roll'd -
Where are the cities of old time?

The lapse of ages, and the rust,
The fire, the frost, the waters cold,
Efface the evil and the just;
From Thebes, that Eriphyle sold,
To drown'd Caer-Is, whose sweet bells toll'd
Beneath the wave a dreamy chime
That echo'd from the mountain-hold, -
"Where are the cities of old time?"

ENVOY.

Prince, all thy towns and cities must
Decay as these, till all their crime,

And mirth, and wealth, and toil are thrust
Where are the cities of old time.

BALLADE OF THE ROYAL GAME OF GOLF.
(EAST FIFESHIRE.)

There are laddies will drive ye a ba'
To the burn frae the farthermost tee,
But ye mauna think driving is a',
Ye may heel her, and send her ajee,
Ye may land in the sand or the sea;
And ye're dune, sir, ye're no worth a preen,
Tak' the word that an auld man'll gie,
Tak' aye tent to be up on the green!

The auld folk are crouse, and they craw
That their putting is pawky and slee;
In a bunker they're nae gude ava',
But to girn, and to gar the sand flee.
And a lassie can putt — ony she, -
Be she Maggy, or Bessie, or Jean,
But a cleek-shot's the billy for me,
Tak' aye tent to be up on the green!

I hae play'd in the frost and the thaw,
I hae play'd since the year thirty-three,
I hae play'd in the rain and the snaw,
And I trust I may play till I dee;
And I tell ye the truth and nae lee,
For I speak o' the thing I hae seen -
Tom Morris, I ken, will agree -
Tak' aye tent to be up on the green!

ENVOY.

Prince, faith you’re improving a wee,
And, Lord, man, they tell me you’re keen;
Tak’ the best o’ advice that can be,
Tak’ aye tent to be up on the green!

DOUBLE BALLADE OF PRIMITIVE MAN. TO J. A. FARRER.

He lived in a cave by the seas,
He lived upon oysters and foes,
But his list of forbidden degrees,
An extensive morality shows;
Geological evidence goes
To prove he had never a pan,
But he shaved with a shell when he chose, -
’Twas the manner of Primitive Man.

He worshipp’d the rain and the breeze,
He worshipp’d the river that flows,
And the Dawn, and the Moon, and the trees,
And bogies, and serpents, and crows;
He buried his dead with their toes
Tucked-up, an original plan,
Till their knees came right under their nose, -
’Twas the manner of Primitive Man.

His communal wives, at his ease,
He would curb with occasional blows;
Or his State had a queen, like the bees
(As another philosopher trows):
When he spoke, it was never in prose,
But he sang in a strain that would scan,
For (to doubt it, perchance, were morose)
’Twas the manner of Primitive Man!

On the coasts that incessantly freeze,
With his stones, and his bones, and his bows;
On luxuriant tropical leas,

Where the summer eternally glows,
He is found, and his habits disclose
(Let theology say what she can)
That he lived in the long, long agos,
’Twas the manner of Primitive Man!

From a status like that of the Crees,
Our society’s fabric arose, -
Develop’d, evolved, if you please,
But deluded chronologists chose,
In a fancied accordance with Mos
es, 4000 B. C. for the span
When he rushed on the world and its woes, -
’Twas the manner of Primitive Man!

But the mild anthropologist, — HE’S
Not RECENT inclined to suppose
Flints Palaeolithic like these,
Quaternary bones such as those!
In Rhinoceros, Mammoth and Co.’s,
First epoch, the Human began,
Theologians all to expose, -
’Tis the MISSION of Primitive Man.

ENVOY.

MAX, proudly your Aryans pose,
But their rigs they undoubtedly ran,
For, as every Darwinian knows,
’Twas the manner of Primitive Man!

BALLADE OF AUTUMN.

We built a castle in the air,
In summer weather, you and I,
The wind and sun were in your hair, -
Gold hair against a sapphire sky:
When Autumn came, with leaves that fly
Before the storm, across the plain,
You fled from me, with scarce a sigh -
My Love returns no more again!

The windy lights of Autumn flare:
I watch the moonlit sails go by;
I marvel how men toil and fare,
The weary business that they ply!
Their voyaging is vanity,
And fairy gold is all their gain,
And all the winds of winter cry,
“My Love returns no more again!”

Here, in my castle of Despair,
I sit alone with memory;
The wind-fed wolf has left his lair,
To keep the outcast company.
The brooding owl he hoots hard by,
The hare shall kindle on thy hearth-stane,
The Rhymer’s soothest prophecy, —
My Love returns no more again!

ENVOY.

Lady, my home until I die
Is here, where youth and hope were slain:

They flit, the ghosts of our July,
My Love returns no more again!

BALLADE OF TRUE WISDOM.

While others are asking for beauty or fame,
Or praying to know that for which they should pray,
Or courting Queen Venus, that affable dame,
Or chasing the Muses the weary and grey,
The sage has found out a more excellent way -
To Pan and to Pallas his incense he showers,
And his humble petition puts up day by day,
For a house full of books, and a garden of flowers.

Inventors may bow to the God that is lame,
And crave from the fire on his stithy a ray;
Philosophers kneel to the God without name,
Like the people of Athens, agnostics are they;
The hunter a fawn to Diana will slay,
The maiden wild roses will wreathe for the Hours;
But the wise man will ask, ere libation he pay,
For a house full of books, and a garden of flowers.

Oh! grant me a life without pleasure or blame
(As mortals count pleasure who rush through their day
With a speed to which that of the tempest is tame)!
O grant me a house by the beach of a bay,
Where the waves can be surly in winter, and play
With the sea-weed in summer, ye bountiful powers!
And I'd leave all the hurry, the noise, and the fray,
For a house full of books, and a garden of flowers.

ENVOY.

Gods, grant or withhold it; your "yea" and your "nay"

Are immutable, heedless of outcry of ours:
But life IS worth living, and here we would stay
For a house full of books, and a garden of flowers.

BALLADE OF WORLDLY WEALTH. (OLD FRENCH.)

Money taketh town and wall,
Fort and ramp without a blow;
Money moves the merchants all,
While the tides shall ebb and flow;
Money maketh Evil show
Like the Good, and Truth like lies:
These alone can ne’er bestow
Youth, and health, and Paradise.

Money maketh festival,
Wine she buys, and beds can strow;
Round the necks of captains tall,
Money wins them chains to throw,
Marches soldiers to and fro,
Gaineth ladies with sweet eyes:
These alone can ne’er bestow
Youth, and health, and Paradise.

Money wins the priest his stall;
Money mitres buys, I trow,
Red hats for the Cardinal,
Abbeys for the novice low;
Money maketh sin as snow,
Place of penitence supplies:
These alone can ne’er bestow
Youth, and health, and Paradise.

BALLADE OF LIFE.

"'Dead and gone,' — a sorry burden of the Ballad of Life."
Death's Jest Book.

Say, fair maids, maying
In gardens green,
In deep dells straying,
What end hath been
Two Mays between
Of the flowers that shone
And your own sweet queen -
"They are dead and gone!"

Say, grave priests, praying
In dule and teen,
From cells decaying
What have ye seen
Of the proud and mean,
Of Judas and John,
Of the foul and clean? -
"They are dead and gone!"

Say, kings, arraying
Loud wars to win,
Of your manslaying
What gain ye glean?
"They are fierce and keen,
But they fall anon,
On the sword that lean, -
They are dead and gone!"

ENVOY.

Through the mad world’s scene,
We are drifting on,
To this tune, I ween,
“They are dead and gone!”

BALLADE OF BLUE CHINA.

There’s a joy without canker or cark,
There’s a pleasure eternally new,
’Tis to gloat on the glaze and the mark
Of china that’s ancient and blue;
Unchipp’d all the centuries through
It has pass’d, since the chime of it rang,
And they fashion’d it, figure and hue,
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

These dragons (their tails, you remark,
Into bunches of gillyflowers grew), -
When Noah came out of the ark,
Did these lie in wait for his crew?
They snorted, they snapp’d, and they slew,
They were mighty of fin and of fang,
And their portraits Celestials drew
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

Here’s a pot with a cot in a park,
In a park where the peach-blossoms blew,
Where the lovers eloped in the dark,
Lived, died, and were changed into two
Bright birds that eternally flew
Through the boughs of the may, as they sang:
’Tis a tale was undoubtedly true
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

ENVOY.

Come, snarl at my ecstasies, do,

Kind critic, your “tongue has a tang”
But — a sage never heeded a shrew
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

BALLADE OF DEAD LADIES. (AFTER VILLON.)

Nay, tell me now in what strange air
The Roman Flora dwells to-day.
Where Archippiada hides, and where
Beautiful Thais has passed away?
Whence answers Echo, afield, astray,
By mere or stream, — around, below?
Lovelier she than a woman of clay;
Nay, but where is the last year’s snow?

Where is wise Heloise, that care
Brought on Abeilard, and dismay?
All for her love he found a snare,
A maimed poor monk in orders grey;
And where’s the Queen who willed to slay
Buridan, that in a sack must go
Afloat down Seine, — a perilous way -
Nay, but where is the last year’s snow?

Where’s that White Queen, a lily rare,
With her sweet song, the Siren’s lay?
Where’s Bertha Broad-foot, Beatrice fair?
Alys and Ermengarde, where are they?
Good Joan, whom English did betray
In Rouen town, and burned her? No,
Maiden and Queen, no man may say;
Nay, but where is the last year’s snow?

ENVOY.

Prince, all this week thou need’st not pray,
Nor yet this year the thing to know.

One burden answers, ever and aye,
“Nay, but where is the last year’s snow?”

VILLON’S BALLADE OF GOOD COUNSEL, TO HIS FRIENDS OF EVIL LIFE.

Nay, be you pardoner or cheat,
Or cogger keen, or mumper shy,
You’ll burn your fingers at the feat,
And howl like other folks that fry.
All evil folks that love a lie!
And where goes gain that greed amasses,
By wile, and trick, and thievery?
’Tis all to taverns and to lasses!

Rhyme, rail, dance, play the cymbals sweet,
With game, and shame, and jollity,
Go jigging through the field and street,
With MYST’RY and MORALITY;
Win gold at GLEEK, — and that will fly,
Where all you gain at PASSAGE passes, -
And that’s? You know as well as I,
’Tis all to taverns and to lasses!

Nay, forth from all such filth retreat,
Go delve and ditch, in wet or dry,
Turn groom, give horse and mule their meat,
If you’ve no clerkly skill to ply;
You’ll gain enough, with husbandry,
But — sow hempseed and such wild grasses,
And where goes all you take thereby? -
’Tis all to taverns and to lasses!

ENVOY.

Your clothes, your hose, your broidery,
Your linen that the snow surpasses,
Or ere they’re worn, off, off they fly,
’Tis all to taverns and to lasses!

BALLADE OF THE BOOKWORM.

Far in the Past I peer, and see
A Child upon the Nursery floor,
A Child with books upon his knee,
Who asks, like Oliver, for more!
The number of his years is IV,
And yet in Letters hath he skill,
How deep he dives in Fairy-lore!
The Books I loved, I love them still!

One gift the Fairies gave me: (Three
They commonly bestowed of yore)
The Love of Books, the Golden Key
That opens the Enchanted Door;
Behind it BLUEBEARD lurks, and o’er
And o’er doth JACK his Giants kill,
And there is all ALADDIN’S store, -
The Books I loved, I love them still!

Take all, but leave my Books to me!
These heavy creels of old we bore
We fill not now, nor wander free,
Nor wear the heart that once we wore;
Not now each River seems to pour
His waters from the Muses’ hill;
Though something’s gone from stream and shore,
The Books I loved, I love them still!

ENVOY.

Fate, that art Queen by shore and sea,

We bow submissive to thy will,
Ah grant, by some benign decree,
The Books I loved — to love them still.

VALENTINE IN FORM OF BALLADE.

The soft wind from the south land sped,
He set his strength to blow,
From forests where Adonis bled,
And lily flowers a-row:
He crossed the straits like streams that flow,
The ocean dark as wine,
To my true love to whisper low,
To be your Valentine.

The Spring half-raised her drowsy head,
Besprent with drifted snow,
“I’ll send an April day,” she said,
“To lands of wintry woe.”
He came, — the winter’s overthrow
With showers that sing and shine,
Pied daisies round your path to strow,
To be your Valentine.

Where sands of Egypt, swart and red,
‘Neath suns Egyptian glow,
In places of the princely dead,
By the Nile’s overflow,
The swallow preened her wings to go,
And for the North did pine,
And fain would brave the frost her foe,
To be your Valentine.

ENVOY.

Spring, Swallow, South Wind, even so,

Their various voice combine;
But that they crave on ME bestow,
To be your Valentine.

BALLADE OF OLD PLAYS.

(Les OEuvres de Monsieur Moliere. A Paris, chez Louys Billaine, a la Palme. M.D.C. LXVI.)

LA COUR.

When these Old Plays were new, the King,
Beside the Cardinal’s chair,
Applauded, ‘mid the courtly ring,
The verses of Moliere;
Point-lace was then the only wear,
Old Corneille came to woo,
And bright Du Parc was young and fair,
When these Old Plays were new!

LA COMEDIE.

How shrill the butcher’s cat-calls ring,
How loud the lackeys swear!
Black pipe-bowls on the stage they fling,
At Brecourt, fuming there!
The Porter’s stabbed! a Mousquetaire
Breaks in with noisy crew -
’Twas all a commonplace affair
When these Old Plays were new!

LA VILLE.

When these Old Plays were new! They bring
A host of phantoms rare:
Old jests that float, old jibes that sting,
Old faces peaked with care:
Menage’s smirk, de Vise’s stare,
The thefts of Jean Ribou, —
Ah, publishers were hard to bear
When these Old Plays were new.

ENVOY.

Ghosts, at your Poet’s word ye dare
To break Death’s dungeons through,
And frisk, as in that golden air,
When these Old Plays were new!

BALLADE OF HIS BOOKS.

Here stand my books, line upon line
They reach the roof, and row by row,
They speak of faded tastes of mine,
And things I did, but do not, know:
Old school books, useless long ago,
Old Logics, where the spirit, railed in,
Could scarcely answer “yes” or “no” -
The many things I’ve tried and failed in!

Here’s Villon, in morocco fine,
(The Poet starved, in mud and snow,)
Glatigny does not crave to dine,
And Rene’s tears forget to flow.
And here’s a work by Mrs. Crowe,
With hosts of ghosts and bogies jailed in;
Ah, all my ghosts have gone below -
The many things I’ve tried and failed in!

He’s touched, this mouldy Greek divine,
The Princess D’Este’s hand of snow;
And here the arms of D’Hoym shine,
And there’s a tear-bestained Rousseau:
Here’s Carlyle shrieking “woe on woe”
(The first edition, this, he wailed in);
I once believed in him — but oh,
The many things I’ve tried and failed in!

ENVOY.

Prince, tastes may differ; mine and thine
Quite other balances are scaled in;

May you succeed, though I repine -
“The many things I’ve tried and failed in!”

BALLADE OF THE DREAM.

Swift as sound of music fled
When no more the organ sighs,
Sped as all old days are sped,
So your lips, love, and your eyes,
So your gentle-voiced replies
Mine one hour in sleep that seem,
Rise and flit when slumber flies,
Following darkness like a dream!

Like the scent from roses red,
Like the dawn from golden skies,
Like the semblance of the dead
From the living love that hies,
Like the shifting shade that lies
On the moonlight-silvered stream,
So you rise when dreams arise,
Following darkness like a dream!

Could some spell, or sung or said,
Could some kindly witch and wise,
Lull for aye this dreaming head
In a mist of memories,
I would lie like him who lies
Where the lights on Latmos gleam, -
Wake not, find not Paradise
Following darkness like a dream!

ENVOY.

Sleep, that giv’st what Life denies,

Shadowy bounties and supreme,
Bring the dearest face that flies
Following darkness like a dream!

BALLADE OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

Fair islands of the silver fleece,
Hoards of unsunned, uncounted gold,
Whose havens are the haunts of Peace,
Whose boys are in our quarrel bold;
OUR bolt is shot, our tale is told,
Our ship of state in storms may toss,
But ye are young if we are old,
Ye Islands of the Southern Cross!

Ay, WE must dwindle and decrease,
Such fates the ruthless years unfold;
And yet we shall not wholly cease,
We shall not perish unconsoled;
Nay, still shall Freedom keep her hold
Within the sea's inviolate fosse,
And boast her sons of English mould,
Ye Islands of the Southern Cross!

All empires tumble — Rome and Greece -
Their swords are rust, their altars cold!
For us, the Children of the Seas,
Who ruled where'er the waves have rolled,
For us, in Fortune's books enscrolled,
I read no runes of hopeless loss;
Nor — while YE last — our knell is tolled,
Ye Islands of the Southern Cross!

ENVOY.

Britannia, when thy hearth's a-cold,

When o’er thy grave has grown the moss,
Still Rule Australia shall be trolled
In Islands of the Southern Cross!

BALLADE OF AUCASSIN

Where smooth the southern waters run
By rustling leagues of poplars grey,
Beneath a veiled soft southern sun,
We wandered out of yesterday,
Went maying through that ancient May
Whose fallen flowers are fragrant yet,
And loitered by the fountain spray
With Aucassin and Nicolette.

The grass-grown paths are trod of none
Where through the woods they went astray.
The spider’s traceries are spun
Across the darkling forest way.
There come no knights that ride to slay,
No pilgrims through the grasses wet,
No shepherd lads that sang their say
With Aucassin and Nicolette!

’Twas here by Nicolette begun
Her bower of boughs and grasses gay;
‘Scaped from the cell of marble dun
’Twas here the lover found the fay,
Ah, lovers fond! ah, foolish play!
How hard we find it to forget
Who fain would dwell with them as they,
With Aucassin and Nicolette.

ENVOY.

Prince, ’tis a melancholy lay!

For youth, for love we both regret.
How fair they seem, how far away,
With Aucassin and Nicolette!

BALLADE AMOUREUSE. AFTER FROISSART.

Not Jason nor Medea wise,
I crave to see, nor win much lore,
Nor list to Orpheus’ minstrelsies;
Nor Her’cles would I see, that o’er
The wide world roamed from shore to shore;
Nor, by St. James, Penelope, -
Nor pure Lucrece, such wrong that bore:
To see my Love suffices me!

Virgil and Cato, no man vies
With them in wealth of clerkly store;
I would not see them with mine eyes;
Nor him that sailed, sans sail nor oar,
Across the barren sea and hoar,
And all for love of his ladye;
Nor pearl nor sapphire takes me more:
To see my Love suffices me!

I heed not Pegasus, that flies
As swift as shafts the bowmen pour;
Nor famed Pygmalion’s artifice,
Whereof the like was ne’er before;
Nor Oleus, that drank of yore
The salt wave of the whole great sea:
Why? dost thou ask? ’Tis as I swore -
To see my Love suffices me!

BALLADE OF QUEEN ANNE.

The modish Airs,
The Tansey Brew,
The SWAINS and FAIRS
In curtained Pew;
Nymphs KNELLER drew,
Books BENTLEY read, -
Who knows them, who?
QUEEN ANNE is dead!

We buy her Chairs,
Her China blue,
Her red-brick Squares
We build anew;
But ah! we rue,
When all is said,
The tale o'er-true,
QUEEN ANNE is dead!

Now BULLS and BEARS,
A ruffling Crew,
With Stocks and Shares,
With Turk and Jew,
Go bubbling through
The Town ill-bred:
The World's askew,
QUEEN ANNE is dead!

ENVOY.

Friend, praise the new;

The old is fled:
Vivat FROU-FROU!
QUEEN ANNE is dead!

BALLADE OF BLIND LOVE. (AFTER LYONNET DE COISMES.)

Who have loved and ceased to love, forget
That ever they loved in their lives, they say;
Only remember the fever and fret,
And the pain of Love, that was all his pay;
All the delight of him passes away
From hearts that hoped, and from lips that met -
Too late did I love you, my love, and yet
I shall never forget till my dying day.

Too late were we ‘ware of the secret net
That meshes the feet in the flowers that stray;
There were we taken and snared, Lisette,
In the dungeon of La Fausse Amistie;
Help was there none in the wide world’s fray,
Joy was there none in the gift and the debt;
Too late we knew it, too long regret -
I shall never forget till my dying day!

We must live our lives, though the sun be set,
Must meet in the masque where parts we play,
Must cross in the maze of Life’s minuet;
Our yea is yea, and our nay is nay:
But while snows of winter or flowers of May
Are the sad year’s shroud or coronet,
In the season of rose or of violet,
I shall never forget till my dying day!

ENVOY.

Queen, when the clay is my coverlet,

When I am dead, and when you are grey,
Vow, where the grass of the grave is wet,
“I shall never forget till my dying day!”

BALLADE OF HIS CHOICE OF A SEPULCHRE.

Here I’d come when weariest!
   Here the breast
Of the Windburg’s tufted over
Deep with bracken; here his crest
   Takes the west,
Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover.

Silent here are lark and plover;
   In the cover
Deep below the cushat best
Loves his mate, and croons above her
   O’er their nest,
Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover.

Bring me here, Life’s tired-out guest,
   To the blest
Bed that waits the weary rover,
Here should failure be confessed;
   Ends my quest,
Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover!

ENVOY.

Friend, or stranger kind, or lover,
Ah, fulfil a last behest,
   Let me rest
Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover!

DIZAIN.

As, to the pipe, with rhythmic feet
In windings of some old-world dance,
The smiling couples cross and meet,
Join hands, and then in line advance,
So, to these fair old tunes of France,
Through all their maze of to-and-fro,
The light-heeled numbers laughing go,
Retreat, return, and ere they flee,
One moment pause in panting row,
And seem to say — Vos plaudite!

A.D.

ORONTE — Ce ne sont point de ces grands vers pompeux,
Mais de petits vers!
“Le Misanthrope,” Acte i., Sc. 2.

A PORTRAIT OF 1783.

Your hair and chin are like the hair
And chin Burne-Jones’s ladies wear;
You were unfashionably fair
   In ‘83;
And sad you were when girls are gay,
You read a book about Le vrai
Merite de l’homme, alone in May.
What CAN it be,
Le vrai merite de l’homme? Not gold,
Not titles that are bought and sold,
Not wit that flashes and is cold,
   But Virtue merely!
Instructed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau
(And Jean-Jacques, surely, ought to know),
You bade the crowd of foplings go,
   You glanced severely,
Dreaming beneath the spreading shade
Of ‘that vast hat the Graces made;’
So Rouget sang — while yet he played
   With courtly rhyme,
And hymned great Doisi’s red perruque,
And Nice’s eyes, and Zulme’s look,
And dead canaries, ere he shook
   The sultry time
With strains like thunder. Loud and low
Methinks I hear the murmur grow,
The tramp of men that come and go

With fire and sword.
They war against the quick and dead,
Their flying feet are dashed with red,
As theirs the vintaging that tread
Before the Lord.
O head unfashionably fair,
What end was thine, for all thy care?
We only see thee dreaming there:
We cannot see
The breaking of thy vision, when
The Rights of Man were lords of men,
When virtue won her own again
In ‘93.

THE MOON’S MINION. (FROM THE PROSE OF C. BAUDELAIRE.)

Thine eyes are like the sea, my dear,
  The wand’ring waters, green and grey;
Thine eyes are wonderful and clear,
  And deep, and deadly, even as they;
The spirit of the changeful sea
  Informs thine eyes at night and noon,
She sways the tides, and the heart of thee,
  The mystic, sad, capricious Moon!

The Moon came down the shining stair
  Of clouds that fleck the summer sky,
She kissed thee, saying, “Child, be fair,
  And madden men’s hearts, even as I;
Thou shalt love all things strange and sweet,
  That know me and are known of me;
The lover thou shalt never meet,
  The land where thou shalt never be!”

She held thee in her chill embrace,
  She kissed thee with cold lips divine,
She left her pallor on thy face,
  That mystic ivory face of thine;
And now I sit beside thy feet,
  And all my heart is far from thee,
Dreaming of her I shall not meet,
  And of the land I shall not see!

IN ITHACA.

“And now am I greatly repenting that ever I left my life with thee, and the immortality thou didst promise me.” — Letter of Odysseus to Calypso. Luciani Vera Historia.

’Tis thought Odysseus when the strife was o’er
   With all the waves and wars, a weary while,
   Grew restless in his disenchanted isle,
And still would watch the sunset, from the shore,
Go down the ways of gold, and evermore
   His sad heart followed after, mile on mile,
   Back to the Goddess of the magic wile,
Calypso, and the love that was of yore.

Thou too, thy haven gained, must turn thee yet
   To look across the sad and stormy space,
   Years of a youth as bitter as the sea,
Ah, with a heavy heart, and eyelids wet,
   Because, within a fair forsaken place
   The life that might have been is lost to thee.

HOMER.

Homer, thy song men liken to the sea
   With all the notes of music in its tone,
   With tides that wash the dim dominion
Of Hades, and light waves that laugh in glee
Around the isles enchanted; nay, to me
   Thy verse seems as the River of source unknown
   That glasses Egypt’s temples overthrown
In his sky-nurtured stream, eternally.

No wiser we than men of heretofore
   To find thy sacred fountains guarded fast;
Enough, thy flood makes green our human shore,
   As Nilus Egypt, rolling down his vast
His fertile flood, that murmurs evermore
   Of gods dethroned, and empires in the past.

THE BURIAL OF MOLIERE. (AFTER J. TRUFFIER.)

Dead — he is dead! The rouge has left a trace
   On that thin cheek where shone, perchance, a tear,
   Even while the people laughed that held him dear
But yesterday. He died, — and not in grace,
And many a black-robed caitiff starts apace
   To slander him whose Tartuffe made them fear,
   And gold must win a passage for his bier,
And bribe the crowd that guards his resting-place.

Ah, Moliere, for that last time of all,
   Man’s hatred broke upon thee, and went by,
And did but make more fair thy funeral.
   Though in the dark they hid thee stealthily,
Thy coffin had the cope of night for pall,
   For torch, the stars along the windy sky!

BION.

The wail of Moschus on the mountains crying
   The Muses heard, and loved it long ago;
They heard the hollows of the hills replying,
   They heard the weeping water’s overflow;
They winged the sacred strain — the song undying,
   The song that all about the world must go, -
When poets for a poet dead are sighing,
   The minstrels for a minstrel friend laid low.

And dirge to dirge that answers, and the weeping
   For Adonais by the summer sea,
The plaints for Lycidas, and Thyrsis (sleeping
   Far from ‘the forest ground called Thessaly’),
These hold thy memory, Bion, in their keeping,
   And are but echoes of the moan for thee.

SPRING. (AFTER MELEAGER.)

Now the bright crocus flames, and now
  The slim narcissus takes the rain,
And, straying o’er the mountain’s brow,
  The daffodilies bud again.
  The thousand blossoms wax and wane
On wold, and heath, and fragrant bough,
But fairer than the flowers art thou,
  Than any growth of hill or plain.

Ye gardens, cast your leafy crown,
That my Love’s feet may tread it down,
  Like lilies on the lilies set:
My Love, whose lips are softer far
Than drowsy poppy petals are,
  And sweeter than the violet!

BEFORE THE SNOW. (AFTER ALBERT GLATIGNY.)

The winter is upon us, not the snow,
   The hills are etched on the horizon bare,
   The skies are iron grey, a bitter air,
The meagre cloudlets shudder to and fro.
One yellow leaf the listless wind doth blow,
   Like some strange butterfly, unclassed and rare.
   Your footsteps ring in frozen alleys, where
The black trees seem to shiver as you go.

Beyond lie church and steeple, with their old
   And rusty vanes that rattle as they veer,
A sharper gust would shake them from their hold,
   Yet up that path, in summer of the year,
And past that melancholy pile we strolled
   To pluck wild strawberries, with merry cheer.

VILLANELLE. TO LUCIA.

Apollo left the golden Muse
   And shepherded a mortal's sheep,
Theocritus of Syracuse!

To mock the giant swain that woo's
   The sea-nymph in the sunny deep,
Apollo left the golden Muse.

Afield he drove his lambs and ewes,
   Where Milon and where Battus reap,
Theocritus of Syracuse!

To watch thy tunny-fishers cruise
   Below the dim Sicilian steep
Apollo left the golden Muse.

Ye twain did loiter in the dews,
   Ye slept the swain's unfever'd sleep,
Theocritus of Syracuse!

That Time might half with HIS confuse
   Thy songs, — like his, that laugh and leap, -
Theocritus of Syracuse,
   Apollo left the golden Muse!

NATURAL THEOLOGY.
[Greek text which cannot be reproduced] OD. III. 47.

“Once CAGN was like a father, kind and good,
But He was spoiled by fighting many things;
He wars upon the lions in the wood,
And breaks the Thunder-bird’s tremendous wings;
But still we cry to Him,— ‘We are thy brood -
O Cagn, be merciful!’ and us He brings
To herds of elands, and great store of food,
And in the desert opens water-springs.”

So Qing, King Nqsha’s Bushman hunter, spoke,
Beside the camp-fire, by the fountain fair,
When all were weary, and soft clouds of smoke
Were fading, fragrant, in the twilit air:
And suddenly in each man’s heart there woke
A pang, a sacred memory of prayer.

THE ODYSSEY.

As one that for a weary space has lain
   Lulled by the song of Circe and her wine
   In gardens near the pale of Proserpine,
Where that AEaean isle forgets the main,
And only the low lutes of love complain,
   And only shadows of wan lovers pine,
   As such an one were glad to know the brine
Salt on his lips, and the large air again, -
So gladly, from the songs of modern speech
   Men turn, and see the stars, and feel the free
      Shrill wind beyond the close of heavy flowers,
      And through the music of the languid hours,
They hear like ocean on a western beach
   The surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

IDEAL.

Suggested by a female head in wax, of unknown date, but supposed to be either of the best Greek age, or a work of Raphael or Leonardo. It is now in the Lille Museum.

Ah, mystic child of Beauty, nameless maid,
   Dateless and fatherless, how long ago,
A Greek, with some rare sadness overweighed,
   Shaped thee, perchance, and quite forgot his woe!
   Or Raphael thy sweetness did bestow,
While magical his fingers o’er thee strayed,
   Or that great pupil taught of Verrocchio
Redeemed thy still perfection from the shade

That hides all fair things lost, and things unborn,
   Where one has fled from me, that wore thy grace,
   And that grave tenderness of thine awhile;
Nay, still in dreams I see her, but her face
   Is pale, is wasted with a touch of scorn,
   And only on thy lips I find her smile.

THE FAIRY’S GIFT.

“Take short views.” — SYDNEY SMITH.

The Fays that to my christ’ning came
   (For come they did, my nurses taught me),
They did not bring me wealth or fame,
   ’Tis very little that they brought me.
But one, the crossest of the crew,
   The ugly old one, uninvited,
Said, “I shall be avenged on YOU,
   My child; you shall grow up short-sighted!”

With magic juices did she lave
   Mine eyes, and wrought her wicked pleasure.
Well, of all gifts the Fairies gave,
   HERS is the present that I treasure!

The bore whom others fear and flee,
   I do not fear, I do not flee him;
I pass him calm as calm can be;
   I do not cut — I do not see him!
And with my feeble eyes and dim,
   Where YOU see patchy fields and fences,
For me the mists of Turner swim -
   MY “azure distance” soon commences!
Nay, as I blink about the streets
   Of this befogged and miry city,
Why, almost every girl one meets
   Seems preternaturally pretty!
“Try spectacles,” one’s friends intone;
   ”You’ll see the world correctly through them.”
But I have visions of my own,
   And not for worlds would I undo them.

BENEDETTA RAMUS. AFTER ROMNEY.

Mysterious Benedetta! who
That Reynolds or that Romney drew
Was ever half so fair as you,
   Or is so well forgot?
These eyes of melancholy brown,
These woven locks, a shadowy crown,
Must surely have bewitched the town;
   Yet you’re remembered not.

Through all that prattle of your age,
Through lore of fribble and of sage
I’ve read, and chiefly Walpole’s page,
   Wherein are beauties famous;
I’ve haunted ball, and rout, and sale;
I’ve heard of Devonshire and Thrale,
And all the Gunnings’ wondrous tale,
   But nothing of Miss Ramus.

And yet on many a lattice pane
‘Fair Benedetta,’ scrawled in vain
By lovers’ diamonds, must remain
   To tell us you were cruel.
But who, of all that sighed and swore -
Wits, poets, courtiers by the score -
Did win and on his bosom wore
   This hard and lovely jewel?

Why, dilettante records say
An Alderman, who came that way,
Woo’d you and made you Lady Day;
   You crowned his civic flame.
It suits a melancholy song

To think your heart had suffered wrong,
And that you lived not very long
   To be a City dame!

Perchance you were a Mourning Bride,
And conscious of a heart that died
With one who fell by Rodney’s side
   In blood-stained Spanish bays.
Perchance ’twas no such thing, and you
Dwelt happy with your knight and true,
And, like Aurora, watched a crew
   Of rosy little Days!

Oh, lovely face and innocent!
Whatever way your fortunes went,
And if to earth your life was lent
   For little space or long,
In your kind eyes we seem to see
What Woman at her best may be,
And offer to your memory
   An unavailing song!

PARTANT POUR LA SCRIBIE. [Scribie, on the north-east littoral of Bohemia, is the land of stage conventions. It is named after the discoverer, M. Scribe.]

A pleasant land is Scribie, where
   The light comes mostly from below,
And seems a sort of symbol rare
   Of things at large, and how they go,
In rooms where doors are everywhere
   And cupboards shelter friend or foe.

This is a realm where people tell
   Each other, when they chance to meet,
Of things that long ago befell -

And do most solemnly repeat
Secrets they both know very well,
Aloud, and in the public street!

A land where lovers go in fours,
Master and mistress, man and maid;
Where people listen at the doors
Or ‘neath a table’s friendly shade,
And comic Irishmen in scores
Roam o’er the scenes all undismayed:

A land where Virtue in distress
Owes much to uncles in disguise;
Where British sailors frankly bless
Their limbs, their timbers, and their eyes;
And where the villain doth confess,
Conveniently, before he dies!

A land of lovers false and gay;
A land where people dread a “curse;”
A land of letters gone astray,
Or intercepted, which is worse;
Where weddings false fond maids betray,
And all the babes are changed at nurse.

Oh, happy land, where things come right!
We of the world where things go ill;
Where lovers love, but don’t unite;
Where no one finds the Missing Will -
Dominion of the heart’s delight,
Scribie, we’ve loved, and love thee still!

ST. ANDREW’S BAY.

NIGHT.

Ah, listen through the music, from the shore,
The “melancholy long-withdrawing roar”;
Beneath the Minster, and the windy caves,
The wide North Ocean, marshalling his waves
Even so forlorn — in worlds beyond our ken -
May sigh the seas that are not heard of men;
Even so forlorn, prophetic of man’s fate,
Sounded the cold sea-wave disconsolate,
When none but God might hear the boding tone,
As God shall hear the long lament alone,
When all is done, when all the tale is told,
And the gray sea-wave echoes as of old!

MORNING.

This was the burden of the Night,
   The saying of the sea,
But lo! the hours have brought the light,
The laughter of the waves, the flight
Of dipping sea-birds, foamy white,
   That are so glad to be!
“Forget!” the happy creatures cry,
   ”Forget Night’s monotone,
With us be glad in sea and sky,
The days are thine, the days that fly,
The days God gives to know him by,
   And not the Night alone!”

WOMAN AND THE WEED. (FOUNDED ON A NEW ZEALAND MYTH.)

In the Morning of Time, when his fortunes began,
How bleak, how un-Greek, was the Nature of Man!
From his wigwam, if ever he ventured to roam,
There was nobody waiting to welcome him home;
For the Man had been made, but the woman had NOT,
And Earth was a highly detestable spot.
Man hated his neighbours; they met and they scowled,
They did not converse but they struggled and howled,
For Man had no tact — he would ne’er take a hint,
And his notions he backed with a hatchet of flint.

So Man was alone, and he wished he could see
On the Earth some one like him, but fairer than he,
With locks like the red gold, a smile like the sun,
To welcome him back when his hunting was done.
And he sighed for a voice that should answer him still,
Like the affable Echo he heard on the hill:
That should answer him softly and always agree,
AND OH, Man reflected, HOW NICE IT WOULD BE!

So he prayed to the Gods, and they stooped to his prayer,
And they spoke to the Sun on his way through the air,
And he married the Echo one fortunate morn,
And Woman, their beautiful daughter, was born!
The daughter of Sunshine and Echo she came
With a voice like a song, with a face like a flame;
With a face like a flame, and a voice like a song,
And happy was Man, but it was not for long!

For weather’s a painfully changeable thing,

Not always the child of the Echo would sing;
And the face of the Sun may be hidden with mist,
And his child can be terribly cross if she list.
And unfortunate Man had to learn with surprise
That a frown’s not peculiar to masculine eyes;
That the sweetest of voices can scold and can sneer,
And cannot be answered — like men — with a spear.

So Man went and called to the Gods in his woe,
And they answered him— “Sir, you would needs have it so:
And the thing must go on as the thing has begun,
She’s immortal — your child of the Echo and Sun.
But we’ll send you another, and fairer is she,
This maiden with locks that are flowing and free.
This maiden so gentle, so kind, and so fair,
With a flower like a star in the night of her hair.
With her eyes like the smoke that is misty and blue,
With her heart that is heavenly, and tender, and true.
She will die in the night, but no need you should mourn,
You shall bury her body and thence shall be born
A weed that is green, that is fragrant and fair,
With a flower like the star in the night of her hair.
And the leaves must ye burn till they offer to you
Soft smoke, like her eyes that are misty and blue.

“And the smoke shall ye breathe and no more shall ye fret,
But the child of the Echo and Sun shall forget:
Shall forget all the trouble and torment she brings,
Shall bethink ye of none but delectable things;
And the sound of the wars with your brethren shall cease,
While ye smoke by the camp-fire the great pipe of peace.”
So the last state of Man was by no means the worst,
The second gift softened the sting of the first.

Nor the child of the Echo and Sun doth he heed
When he dreams with the Maid that was changed to the weed;
Though the Echo be silent, the Sun in a mist,

The Maid is the fairest that ever was kissed.
And when tempests are over and ended the rain,
And the child of the Sunshine is sunny again,
He comes back, glad at heart, and again is at one
With the changeable child of the Echo and Sun.

HELEN OF TROY

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"Le joyeulx temps passé souloit estre occasion que je faisoie de plaisants diz et gracieuses chançonnetes et ballades. Mais je me suis mis à faire cette traittié d'affliction contre ma droite nature . . . et suis content de l'avoir prinse, car mes douleurs me semblent en estre allegées." — *Le Romant de Troilus*.

To all old Friends; to all who dwell
   Where Avon dhu and Avon gel
   Down to the western waters flow
Through valleys dear from long ago;
To all who hear the whisper'd spell
Of Ken; and Tweed like music swell
Hard by the Land Debatable,
   Or gleaming Shannon seaward go, —
      To all old Friends!

To all that yet remember well
What secrets Isis had to tell,
   How lazy Cherwell loiter'd slow
   Sweet aisles of blossom'd May below —
Whate'er befall, whate'er befell,
      To *all* old Friends.

BOOK I — THE COMING OF PARIS

Of the coming of Paris to the house of Menelaus, King of Lacedaemon, and of the tale Paris told concerning his past life.

I.

All day within the palace of the King
   In Lacedaemon, was there revelry,
Since Menelaus with the dawn did spring
   Forth from his carven couch, and, climbing high
   The tower of outlook, gazed along the dry
White road that runs to Pylos through the plain,
   And mark'd thin clouds of dust against the sky,
And gleaming bronze, and robes of purple stain.

II.

Then cried he to his serving men, and all
   Obey'd him, and their labour did not spare,
And women set out tables through the hall,
   Light polish'd tables, with the linen fair.
   And water from the well did others bear,
And the good house-wife busily brought forth
   Meats from her store, and stinted not the rare
Wine from Ismarian vineyards of the North.

III.

The men drave up a heifer from the field
   For sacrifice, and sheath'd her horns with gold;

And strong Boethous the axe did wield
   And smote her; on the fruitful earth she roll’d,
   And they her limbs divided; fold on fold
They laid the fat, and cast upon the fire
   The barley grain. Such rites were wrought of old
When all was order’d as the Gods desire.

IV.

And now the chariots came beneath the trees
   Hard by the palace portals, in the shade,
And Menelaus knew King Diocles
   Of Pherae, sprung of an unhappy maid
   Whom the great Elian River God betray’d
In the still watches of a summer night,
   When by his deep green water-course she stray’d
And lean’d to pluck his water-lilies white.

V.

Besides King Diocles there sat a man
   Of all men mortal sure the fairest far,
For o’er his purple robe Sidonian
   His yellow hair shone brighter than the star
   Of the long golden locks that bodeth war;
His face was like the sunshine, and his blue
   Glad eyes no sorrow had the spell to mar
Were clear as skies the storm hath thunder’d through.

VI.

Then Menelaus spake unto his folk,
   And eager at his word they ran amain,
And loosed the sweating horses from the yoke,

   And cast before them spelt, and barley grain.
   And lean’d the polish’d car, with golden rein,
Against the shining spaces of the wall;
   And called the sea-rovers who follow’d fain
Within the pillar’d fore-courts of the hall.

VII.

The stranger-prince was follow’d by a band
   Of men, all clad like rovers of the sea,
And brown’d were they as is the desert sand,
   Loud in their mirth, and of their bearing free;
   And gifts they bore, from the deep treasury
And forests of some far-off Eastern lord,
   Vases of gold, and bronze, and ivory,
That might the Pythian fane have over-stored.

VIII.

Now when the King had greeted Diocles
   And him that seem’d his guest, the twain were led
To the dim polish’d baths, where, for their ease,
   Cool water o’er their lustrous limbs was shed;
   With oil anointed was each goodly head
By Asteris and Phylo fair of face;
   Next, like two gods for loveliness, they sped
To Menelaus in the banquet-place.

IX.

There were they seated at the King’s right hand,
   And maidens bare them bread, and meat, and wine,
Within that fair hall of the Argive land
   Whose doors and roof with gold and silver shine

As doth the dwelling-place of Zeus divine.
And Helen came from forth her fragrant bower
The fairest lady of immortal line,
Like morning, when the rosy dawn doth flower.

X.

Adraste set for her a shining chair,
Well-wrought of cedar-wood and ivory;
And beautiful Alcippe led the fair,
The well-beloved child, Hermione, —
A little maiden of long summers three —
Her star-like head on Helen’s breast she laid,
And peep’d out at the strangers wistfully
As is the wont of children half afraid.

XI.

Now when desire of meat and drink was done,
And ended was the joy of minstrelsy,
Queen Helen spake, beholding how the sun
Within the heaven of bronze was riding high:
“Truly, my friends, methinks the hour is nigh
When men may crave to know what need doth bring
To Lacedaemon, o’er wet ways and dry,
This prince that bears the sceptre of a king?

XII.

“Yea, or perchance a God is he, for still
The great Gods wander on our mortal ways,
And watch their altars upon mead or hill
And taste our sacrifice, and hear our lays,
And now, perchance, will heed if any prays,

And now will vex us with unkind control,
   But anywise must man live out his days,
For Fate hath given him an enduring soul.

XIII.

“Then tell us, prithee, all that may be told,
   And if thou art a mortal, joy be thine!
And if thou art a God, then rich with gold
   Thine altar in our palace court shall shine,
   With roses garlanded and wet with wine,
And we shall praise thee with unceasing breath;
   Ah, then be gentle as thou art divine,
And bring not on us baneful Love or Death!”

XIV.

Then spake the stranger, — as when to a maid
   A young man speaks, his voice was soft and low, —
“Alas, no God am I; be not afraid,
   For even now the nodding daisies grow
   Whose seed above my grassy cairn shall blow,
When I am nothing but a drift of white
   Dust in a cruse of gold; and nothing know
But darkness, and immeasurable Night.

XV.

“The dawn, or noon, or twilight, draweth near
   When one shall smite me on the bridge of war,
Or with the ruthless sword, or with the spear,
   Or with the bitter arrow flying far.
   But as a man’s heart, so his good days are,
That Zeus, the Lord of Thunder, giveth him,

Wherefore I follow Fortune, like a star,
Whate’er may wait me in the distance dim.

XVI.

“Now all men call me Paris, Priam’s son,
Who widely rules a peaceful folk and still.
Nay, though ye dwell afar off, there is none
But hears of Ilios on the windy hill,
And of the plain that the two rivers fill
With murmuring sweet streams the whole year long,
And walls the Gods have wrought with wondrous skill
Where cometh never man to do us wrong.

XVII.

“Wherefore I sail’d not here for help in war,
Though well the Argives in such need can aid.
The force that comes on me is other far;
One that on all men comes: I seek the maid
Whom golden Aphrodite shall persuade
To lay her hand in mine, and follow me,
To my white halls within the cedar shade
Beyond the waters of the barren sea.”

XVIII.

Then at the Goddess’ name grew Helen pale,
Like golden stars that flicker in the dawn,
Or like a child that hears a dreadful tale,
Or like the roses on a rich man’s lawn,
When now the suns of Summer are withdrawn,
And the loose leaves with a sad wind are stirr’d,
Till the wet grass is strewn with petals wan, —

So paled the golden Helen at his word.

XIX.

But swift the rose into her cheek return’d
   And for a little moment, like a flame,
The perfect face of Argive Helen burn’d,
   As doth a woman’s, when some spoken name
   Brings back to mind some ancient love or shame,
But none save Paris mark’d the thing, who said,
   “My tale no more must weary this fair dame,
With telling why I wander all unwed.”

XX.

But Helen, bending on him gracious brows,
   Besought him for the story of his quest,
“For sultry is the summer, that allows
   To mortal men no sweeter boon than rest;
   And surely such a tale as thine is best
To make the dainty-footed hours go by,
   Till sinks the sun in darkness and the West,
And soft stars lead the Night along the sky.”

XXI.

Then at the word of Helen Paris spoke,
   “My tale is shorter than a summer day, —
My mother, ere I saw the light, awoke,
   At dawn, in Ilios, shrieking in dismay,
   Who dream’d that ‘twixt her feet there fell and lay
A flaming brand, that utterly burn’d down
   To dust of crumbling ashes red and grey,
The coronal of towers and all Troy town.

XXII.

“Then the interpretation of this dream
  My father sought at many priestly hands,
Where the white temple doth in Pytho gleam,
  And at the fane of Ammon in the sands,
  And where the oak tree of Dodona stands
With boughs oracular against the sky, —
  And with one voice the Gods from all the lands,
Cried out, ‘The child must die, the child must die.’

XXIII.

“Then was I born to sorrow; and in fear
  The dark priest took me from my sire, and bore
A wailing child through beech and pinewood drear,
  Up to the knees of Ida, and the hoar
  Rocks whence a fountain breaketh evermore,
And leaps with shining waters to the sea,
  Through black and rock-wall’d pools without a shore, —
And there they deem’d they took farewell of me.

XXIV.

“But round my neck they tied a golden ring
  That fell from Ganymedes when he soar’d
High over Ida on the eagle’s wing,
  To dwell for ever with the Gods adored,
  To be the cup-bearer beside the board
Of Zeus, and kneel at the eternal throne, —
  A jewel ’twas from old King Tros’s hoard,
That ruled in Ilios ages long agone.

XXV.

“And there they left me in that dell untrod, —
Shepherd nor huntsman ever wanders there,
For dread of Pan, that is a jealous God, —
Yea, and the ladies of the streams forbear
The Naiad nymphs, to weave their dances fair,
Or twine their yellow tresses with the shy
Fronds of forget-me-not and maiden-hair, —
There had the priests appointed me to die.

XXVI.

“But vainly doth a man contend with Fate!
My father had less pity on his son
Than wild things of the woodland desolate.
’Tis said that ere the Autumn day was done
A great she-bear, that in these rocks did wonn,
Beheld a sleeping babe she did convey
Down to a den beheld not of the sun,
The cavern where her own soft litter lay.

XXVII.

“And therein was I nurtured wondrously,
So Rumour saith: I know not of these things,
For mortal men are ever wont to lie,
Whene’er they speak of sceptre-bearing kings:
I tell what I was told, for memory brings
No record of those days, that are as deep
Lost as the lullaby a mother sings
In ears of children that are fallen on sleep.

XXVIII.

“Men say that now five autumn days had pass’d,
   When Agelaus, following a hurt deer,
Trod soft on crackling acorns, and the mast
   That lay beneath the oak and beech-wood sere,
   In dread lest angry Pan were sleeping near,
Then heard a cry from forth a cavern grey,
   And peeping round the fallen rocks in fear,
Beheld where in the wild beast’s tracks I lay.

XXIX.

“So Agelaus bore me from the wild,
   Down to his hut; and with his children I
Was nurtured, being, as was deem’d, the child
   Of Hermes, or some mountain deity;
   For these with the wild nymphs are wont to lie
Within the holy caverns, where the bee
   Can scarcely find a darkling path to fly
Through veils of bracken and the ivy-tree.

XXX.

“So with the shepherds on the hills I stray’d,
   And drave the kine to feed where rivers run,
And play’d upon the reed-pipe in the shade,
   And scarcely knew my manhood was begun,
   The pleasant years still passing one by one,
Till I was chiefest of the mountain men,
   And clomb the peaks that take the snow and sun,
And braved the anger’d lion in his den.

XXXI.

“Now in my herd of kine was one more dear

By far than all the rest, and fairer far;
A milkwhite bull, the captive of my spear,
And all the wondering shepherds called him *Star*:
And still he led his fellows to the war,
When the lean wolves against the herds came down,
Then would he charge, and drive their hosts afar
Beyond the pastures to the forests brown.

XXXII.

“Now so it chanced that on an autumn morn,
King Priam sought a goodly bull to slay
In memory of his child, no sooner born
Than midst the lonely mountains cast away,
To die ere scarce he had beheld the day;
And Priam’s men came wandering afar
To that green pool where by the flocks I lay,
And straight they coveted the goodly *Star*,

XXXIII.

“And drave him, no word spoken, to the town:
One man mine arrow lit on, and he fell;
His comrades held me off, and down and down,
Through golden windings of the autumn dell,
They spurr’d along the beast that loved me well,
Till red were his white sides; I following,
Wrath in my heart, their evil deeds to tell
In Ilios, at the footstool of the King.

XXXIV.

“But ere they came to the God-builded wall,
They spied a meadow by the water-side,

And there the men of Troy were gathered all
   For joust and play; and Priam’s sons defied
   All other men in all Maeonia wide
To strive with them in boxing and in speed.
   Victorious with the shepherds had I vied,
So boldly followed to that flowery mead.

XXXV.

“Maeonia, Phrygia, Troia there were met,
   And there the King, child of Laomedon,
Rich prizes for the vanquishers had set,
   Damsels, and robes, and cups that like the sun
   Shone, but the white bull was the chiefest one;
And him the victor in the games should slay
   To Zeus, the King of Gods, when all was done,
And so with sacrifice should crown the day.

XXXVI.

“Now it were over long, methinks, to tell
   The contest of the heady charioteers,
Of them the goal that turn’d, and them that fell.
   But I outran the young men of my years,
   And with the bow did I out-do my peers,
And wrestling; and in boxing, over-bold,
   I strove with Hector of the ashen spears,
Yea, till the deep-voiced Heralds bade us hold.

XXXVII.

“Then Priam hail’d me winner of the day;
   Mine were the maid, the cup, and chiefest prize,
Mine own fair milkwhite bull was mine to slay;

But then the murmurs wax’d to angry cries,
And hard men set on me in deadly wise,
My brethren, though they knew it not; I turn’d,
And fled unto the place of sacrifice,
Where altars to the God of strangers burn’d.

XXXVIII.

“At mine own funeral feast, had I been slain,
But, fearing Zeus, they halted for a space,
And lo, Apollo’s priestess with a train
Of holy maidens came into that place,
And far did she outshine the rest in grace,
But in her eyes such dread was frozen then
As glares eternal from the Gorgon’s face
Wherewith Athene quells the ranks of men.

XXXIX.

“She was old Priam’s daughter, long ago
Apollo loved her, and did not deny
His gifts, — the things that are to be to know,
The tongue of sooth-saying that cannot lie,
And knowledge gave he of all birds that fly
‘Neath heaven; and yet his prayer did she disdain.
So he his gifts confounded utterly,
And sooth she saith, but evermore in vain.

XL.

“She, when her dark eyes fell on me, did stand
At gaze a while, with wan lips murmuring,
And then came nigh to me, and took my hand,
And led me to the footstool of the King,

And call’d me ‘brother,’ and drew forth the ring
That men had found upon me in the wild,
For still I bore it as a precious thing,
The token of a father to his child.

XLI.

“This sign Cassandra show’d to Priam: straight
The King wax’d pale, and ask’d what this might be?
And she made answer, ‘Sir, and King, thy fate
That comes to all men born hath come on thee;
This shepherd is thine own child verily:
How like to thine his shape, his brow, his hands!
Nay there is none but hath the eyes to see
That here the child long lost to Troia stands.’

XLII.

“Then the King bare me to his lofty hall,
And there we feasted in much love and mirth,
And Priam to the mountain sent for all
That knew me, and the manner of my birth:
And now among the great ones of the earth
In royal robe and state behold me set,
And one fell thing I fear not; even dearth,
Whate’er the Gods remember or forget.

XLIII.

“My new rich life had grown a common thing,
The pleasant years still passing one by one,
When deep in Ida was I wandering
The glare of well-built Ilios to shun,
In summer, ere the day was wholly done,

When I beheld a goodly prince, — the hair
   To bloom upon his lip had scarce begun, —
The season when the flower of youth is fair.

XLIV.

"Then knew I Hermes by his golden wand
   Wherewith he lulls the eyes of men to sleep;
But, nodding with his brows, he bade me stand,
   And spake, 'To-night thou hast a tryst to keep,
   With Goddesses within the forest deep;
And Paris, lovely things shalt thou behold,
   More fair than they for which men war and weep,
Kingdoms, and fame, and victories, and gold.

XLV.

"'For, lo! to-night within the forest dim
   Do Aphrodite and Athene meet,
And Hera, who to thee shall bare each limb,
   Each grace from golden head to ivory feet,
   And thee, fair shepherd Paris, they entreat
As thou 'mongst men art beauteous, to declare
   Which Queen of Queens immortal is most sweet,
And doth deserve the meed of the most fair.

XLVI.

"'For late between them rose a bitter strife
   In Peleus' halls upon his wedding day,
When Peleus took him an immortal wife,
   And there was bidden all the God's array,
   Save Discord only; yet she brought dismay,
And cast an apple on the bridal board,

With “Let the fairest bear the prize away”
Deep on its golden rind and gleaming scored.

XLVII.

“‘Now in the sudden night, whenas the sun
In Tethys’ silver arms hath slept an hour,
Shalt thou be had into the forest dun,
And brought unto a dark enchanted bower,
And there of Goddesses behold the flower
With very beauty burning in the night,
And these will offer Wisdom, Love, and Power;
Then, Paris, be thou wise, and choose aright!’

XLVIII.

“He spake, and pass’d, and Night without a breath,
Without a star drew on; and now I heard
The voice that in the springtime wandereth,
The crying of Dame Hera’s shadowy bird;
And soon the silence of the trees was stirred
By the wise fowl of Pallas; and anigh,
More sweet than is a girl’s first loving word,
The doves of Aphrodite made reply.

XLIX.

“These voices did I follow through the trees,
Threading the coppice ‘neath a starless sky,
When, lo! the very Queen of Goddesses,
In golden beauty gleaming wondrously,
Even she that hath the Heaven for canopy,
And in the arms of mighty Zeus doth sleep, —
And then for dread methought that I must die,

But Hera called me with soft voice and deep:

L.

“‘Paris, give me the prize, and thou shalt reign
   O’er many lordly peoples, far and wide,
From them that till the black and crumbling plain,
   Where the sweet waters of Aegyptus glide,
   To those that on the Northern marches ride,
And the Ceteians, and the blameless men
   That round the rising-place of Morn abide,
And all the dwellers in the Asian fen.

LI.

“‘And I will love fair Ilios as I love
   Argos and rich Mycenae, that doth hoard
Deep wealth; and I will make thee king above
   A hundred peoples; men shall call thee lord
   In tongues thou know’st not; thou shalt be adored
With sacrifice, as are the Gods divine,
   If only thou wilt speak a little word,
And say the prize of loveliness is mine.’

LII.

“Then, as I doubted, like a sudden flame
   Of silver came Athene, and methought
Beholding her, how stately, as she came,
   That dim wood to a fragrant fane was wrought;
   So pure the warlike maiden seem’d, that nought
But her own voice commanding made me raise
   Mine eyes to see her beauty, who besought
In briefest words the guerdon of all praise.

LIII.

“She spake: ‘Nor wealth nor crowns are in my gift;
   But wisdom, but the eyes that glance afar,
But courage, and the spirit that is swift
   To cleave her path through all the waves of war;
   Endurance that the Fates can never mar;
These, and my loving friendship, — these are thine,
   And these shall guide thee, steadfast as a star,
If thou hast eyes to know the prize is mine.’

LIV.

“Last, in a lovely mist of rosy fire,
   Came Aphrodite through the forest glade,
The queen of all delight and all desire,
   More fair than when her naked foot she laid
   On the blind mere’s wild wave that sank dismay’d,
What time the sea grew smoother than a lake;
   I was too happy to be sore afraid.
And like a song her voice was when she spake:

LV.

“‘Oh Paris, what is power? Tantalus
   And Sisyphus were kings long time ago,
But now they lie in the Lake Dolorous,
   The hills of hell are noisy with their woe;
   Ay, swift the tides of Empire ebb and flow,
And that is quickly lost was hardly won,
   As Ilios herself o’erwell did know
When high walls help’d not King Laomedon.

LVI.

"'And what are strength and courage? for the child
   Of mighty Zeus, the strong man Herakles,
Knew many days and evil, ere men piled
   The pyre in Oeta, where he got his ease
   In death, where all the ills of brave men cease.
Nay, Love I proffer thee; beyond the brine
   Of all the currents of the Western seas,
The fairest woman in the world is thine!'

LVII.

"She spake, and touched the prize, and all grew dim
   I heard no voice of anger'd Deity,
But round me did the night air swoon and swim,
   And, when I waken'd, lo! the sun was high,
   And in that place accursed did I lie,
Where Agelaus found the naked child;
   Then with swift foot I did arise and fly
Forth from the deeps of that enchanted wild.

LVIII.

"And down I sped to Ilios, down the dell
   Where, years agone, the white bull guided me,
And through green boughs beheld where foam'd and fell
   The merry waters of the Western sea;
   Of Love the sweet birds sang from sky and tree,
And swift I reach'd the haven and the shore,
   And call'd my mariners, and follow'd free
Where Love might lead across the waters hoar.

LIX.

“Three days with fair winds ran we, then we drave
   Before the North that made the long waves swell
Round Malea; but hardly from the wave
   We ‘scaped at Pylos, Nestor’s citadel;
   And there the son of Neleus loved us well,
And brought us to the high prince, Diocles,
   Who led us hither, and it thus befell
That here, below thy roof, we sit at ease.”

LX.

Then all men gave the stranger thanks and praise,
   And Menelaus for red wine bade call;
And the sun fell, and dark were all the ways;
   Then maidens set forth braziers in the hall,
   And heap’d them high with lighted brands withal;
But Helen pass’d, as doth the fading day
   Pass from the world, and softly left them all
Loud o’er their wine amid the twilight grey.

LXI.

So night drew on with rain, nor yet they ceased
   Within the hall to drink the gleaming wine,
And late they pour’d the last cup of the feast,
   To Argus-bane, the Messenger divine;
   And last, ‘neath torches tall that smoke and shine,
The maidens strew’d the beds with purple o’er,
   That Diocles and Paris might recline
All night, beneath the echoing corridor.

BOOK II — THE SPELL OF APHRODITE

The coming of Aphrodite, and how she told Helen that she must depart in company with Paris, but promised withal that Helen, having fallen into a deep sleep, should awake forgetful of her old life, and ignorant of her shame, and blameless of those evil deeds that the Goddess thrust upon her.

I.

Now in the upper chamber o’er the gate
   Lay Menelaus on his carven bed,
And swift and sudden as the stroke of Fate
   A deep sleep fell upon his weary head.
   But the soft-wingèd God with wand of lead
Came not near Helen; wistful did she lie,
   Till dark should change to grey, and grey to red,
And golden thronèd Morn sweep o’er the sky.

II.

Slow pass’d the heavy night: like one who fears
   The step of murder, she lies quivering,
If any cry of the night bird she hears;
   And strains her eyes to mark some dreadful thing,
   If but the curtains of the window swing,
Stirr’d by the breath of night, and still she wept
   As she were not the daughter of a king,
And no strong king, her lord, beside her slept.

III.

Now in that hour, the folk who watch the night,
   Shepherds and fishermen, and they that ply
Strange arts and seek their spells in the star-light,
   Beheld a marvel in the sea and sky,
   For all the waves of all the seas that sigh
Between the straits of Hellé and the Nile,
   Flush'd with a flame of silver suddenly,
From soft Cythera to the Cyprian isle.

IV.

And Hesperus, the kindest star of heaven,
   That bringeth all things good, wax'd pale, and straight
There fell a flash of white malignant levin
   Among the gleaming waters desolate;
   The lights of sea and sky did mix and mate
And change to rosy flame, and thence did fly
   The lovely Queen of Love that turns to hate,
Like summer lightnings 'twixt the sea and sky.

V.

And now the bower of Helen fill'd with light,
   And now she knew the thing that she did fear
Was close upon her (for the black of night
   Doth burn like fire, whene'er the Gods are near);
   Then shone like flame each helm and shield and spear
That hung within the chamber of the King,
   But he, — though all the bower as day was clear, —
Slept as they sleep that know no wakening.

VI.

But Helen leap'd from her fair carven bed

As some tormented thing that fear makes bold,
And on the ground she beat her golden head
And pray'd with bitter moanings manifold.
Yet knew that she could never move the cold
Heart of the lovely Goddess, standing there,
Her feet upon a little cloud, a fold
Of silver cloud about her bosom bare.

VII.

So stood Queen Aphrodite, as she stands
Unmoved in her bright mansion, when in vain
Some naked maiden stretches helpless hands
And shifts the magic wheel, and burns the grain,
And cannot win her lover back again,
Nor her old heart of quiet any more,
Where moonlight floods the dim Sicilian main,
And the cool wavelets break along the shore.

VIII.

Then Helen ceased from unavailing prayer,
And rose and faced the Goddess steadily,
Till even the laughter-loving lady fair
Half shrank before the anger of her eye,
And Helen cried with an exceeding cry,
"Why does Zeus live, if we indeed must be
No more than sullen spoils of destiny,
And slaves of an adulteress like thee?

IX.

"What wilt thou with me, mistress of all woe?
Say, wilt thou bear me to another land

Where thou hast other lovers? Rise and go
   Where dark the pine trees upon Ida stand,
   For there did one unloose thy girdle band;
Or seek the forest where Adonis bled,
   Or wander, wander on the yellow sand,
Where thy first lover strew’d thy bridal bed.

X.

“Ah, thy first lover! who is first or last
   Of men and gods, unnumber’d and unnamed?
Lover by lover in the race is pass’d,
   Lover by lover, outcast and ashamed.
   Oh, thou of many names, and evil famed!
What wilt thou with me? What must I endure
   Whose soul, for all thy craft, is never tamed?
Whose heart, for all thy wiles, is ever pure?

XI.

“Behold, my heart is purer than the plume
   Upon the stainless pinions of the swan,
And thou wilt smirch and stain it with the fume
   Of all thy hateful lusts Idalian.
   My name shall be a hissing that a man
Shall smile to speak, and women curse and hate,
   And on my little child shall come a ban,
And all my lofty home be desolate.

XII.

“Is it thy will that like a golden cup
   From lip to lip of heroes I must go,
And be but as a banner lifted up,

To beckon where the winds of war may blow?
Have I not seen fair Athens in her woe,
And all her homes aflame from sea to sea,
When my fierce brothers wrought her overthrow
Because Athenian Theseus carried me —

XIII.

“Me, in my bloomless youth, a maiden child,
From Artemis’ pure altars and her fane,
And bare me, with Pirithous the wild
To rich Aphidna? Many a man was slain,
And wet with blood the fair Athenian plain,
And fired was many a goodly temple then,
But fire nor blood can purify the stain
Nor make my name reproachless among men.”

XIV.

Then Helen ceased, her passion like a flame
That slays the thing it lives by, blazed and fell,
As faint as waves at dawn, though fierce they came,
By night to storm some rocky citadel;
For Aphrodite answer’d, — like a spell
Her voice makes strength of mortals pass away, —
“Dost thou not know that I have loved thee well,
And never loved thee better than to-day?

XV.

“Behold, thine eyes are wet, thy cheeks are wan,
Yet art thou born of an immortal sire,
The child of Nemesis and of the Swan;
Thy veins should run with ichor and with fire.

Yet this is thy delight and thy desire,
To love a mortal lord, a mortal child,
To live, unpraised of lute, unhymn’d of lyre,
As any woman pure and undefiled.

XVI.

“Thou art the toy of Gods, an instrument
Wherewith all mortals shall be plagued or blest,
Even at my pleasure; yea, thou shalt be bent
This way and that, howe’er it like me best:
And following thee, as tides the moon, the West
Shall flood the Eastern coasts with waves of war,
And thy vex’d soul shall scarcely be at rest,
Even in the havens where the deathless are.

XVII.

“The instruments of men are blind and dumb,
And this one gift I give thee, to be blind
And heedless of the thing that is to come,
And ignorant of that which is behind;
Bearing an innocent forgetful mind
In each new fortune till I visit thee
And stir thy heart, as lightning and the wind
Bear fire and tumult through a sleeping sea.

XVIII.

“Thou shalt forget Hermione; forget
Thy lord, thy lofty palace, and thy kin;
Thy hand within a stranger’s shalt thou set,
And follow him, nor deem it any sin;
And many a strange land wand’ring shalt thou win,

And thou shalt come to an unhappy town,
   And twenty long years shalt thou dwell therein,
Before the Argives mar its towery crown.

XIX.

“And of thine end I speak not, but thy name, —
   Thy name which thou lamentest, — that shall be
A song in all men’s speech, a tongue of flame
   Between the burning lips of Poesy;
   And the nine daughters of Mnemosyne,
With Prince Apollo, leader of the nine,
   Shall make thee deathless in their minstrelsy!
Yea, for thou shalt outlive the race divine,

XX.

“The race of Gods, for like the sons of men
   We Gods have but our season, and go by;
And Cronos pass’d, and Uranus, and then
   Shall Zeus and all his children utterly
   Pass, and new Gods be born, and reign, and die, —
But thee shall lovers worship evermore
   What Gods soe’er usurp the changeful sky,
Or flit to the irremeable shore.

XXI.

“Now sleep and dream not, sleep the long day through,
   And the brief watches of the summer night,
And then go forth amid the flowers and dew,
   Where the red rose of Dawn outburns the white.
   Then shalt thou learn my mercy and my might
Between the drowsy lily and the rose;
   There shalt thou spell the meaning of delight,

And know such gladness as a Goddess knows!”

XXII.

Then Sleep came floating from the Lemnian isle,
   And over Helen crush’d his poppy crown,
Her soft lids waver’d for a little while,
   Then on her carven bed she laid her down,
   And Sleep, the comforter of king and clown,
Kind Sleep the sweetest, near akin to Death,
   Held her as close as Death doth men that drown,
So close that none might hear her inward breath —

XXIII.

So close no man might tell she was not dead!
   And then the Goddess took her zone, — where lies
All her enchantment, love and lustihead,
   And the glad converse that beguiles the wise,
   And grace the very Gods may not despise,
And sweet Desire that doth the whole world move, —
   And therewith touch’d she Helen’s sleeping eyes
And made her lovely as the Queen of Love.

XXIV.

Then laughter-loving Aphrodite went
   To far Idalia, over land and sea,
And scarce the fragrant cedar-branches bent
   Beneath her footsteps, faring daintily;
   And in Idalia the Graces three
Anointed her with oil ambrosial, —
   So to her house in Sidon wended she
To mock the prayers of lovers when they call.

XXV.

And all day long the incense and the smoke
   Lifted, and fell, and soft and slowly roll'd,
And many a hymn and musical awoke
   Between the pillars of her house of gold,
   And rose-crown'd girls, and fair boys linen-stoled,
Did sacrifice her fragrant courts within,
   And in dark chapels wrought rites manifold
The loving favour of the Queen to win.

XXVI.

But Menelaus, waking suddenly,
   Beheld the dawn was white, the day was near,
And rose, and kiss'd fair Helen; no good-bye
   He spake, and never mark'd a fallen tear, —
   Men know not when they part for many a year, —
He grasp'd a bronze-shod lance in either hand,
   And merrily went forth to drive the deer,
With Paris, through the dewy morning land.

XXVII.

So up the steep sides of Taygetus
   They fared, and to the windy hollows came,
While from the streams of deep Oceanus
   The sun arose, and on the fields did flame;
   And through wet glades the huntsmen drave the game,
And with them Paris sway'd an ashen spear,
   Heavy, and long, and shod with bronze to tame
The mountain-dwelling goats and forest deer.

XXVIII.

Now in a copse a mighty boar there lay,
  For through the boughs the wet winds never blew,
Nor lit the bright sun on it with his ray,
  Nor rain might pierce the woven branches through,
  But leaves had fallen deep the lair to strew:
Then questing of the hounds and men’s foot-fall
  Aroused the boar, and forth he sprang to view,
With eyes that burn’d, at bay, before them all.

XXIX.

Then Paris was the first to rush on him,
  With spear aloft in his strong hand to smite,
And through the monster pierced the point; and dim
  The flame fell in his eyes, and all his might
  With his last cry went forth; forgetting fight,
Forgetting strength, he fell, and gladly then
  They gather’d round, and dealt with him aright;
Then left his body with the serving men.

XXX.

Now birds were long awake, that with their cry
  Were wont to waken Helen; and the dew
Where fell the sun upon the lawn was dry,
  And all the summer land was glad anew;
  And maidens’ footsteps rang the palace through,
And with their footsteps chimed their happy song,
  And one to other cried, “A marvel new
That soft-wing’d Sleep hath held the Queen so long!”

XXXI.

Then Phylo brought the child Hermione,
   And close unto her mother’s side she crept,
And o’er her god-like beauty tumbled she,
   Chiding her sweetly that so late she slept,
   And babbling still a merry coil she kept;
But like a woman stiff beneath her shroud
   Lay Helen; till the young child fear’d and wept,
And ran, and to her nurses cried aloud.

XXXII.

Then came the women quickly, and in dread
   Gather’d round Helen, but might naught avail
To wake her; moveless as a maiden dead
   That Artemis hath slain, yet nowise pale,
   She lay; but Aethra did begin the wail,
And all the women with sad voice replied,
   Who deem’d her pass’d unto the poplar vale
Wherein doth dread Persephone abide.

XXXIII.

Ah! slowly pass’d the miserable day
   In the rich house that late was full of pride;
Then the sun fell, and all the paths were grey,
   And Menelaus from the mountain-side
   Came, and through palace doors all open wide
Rang the wild dirge that told him of the thing
   That Helen, that the Queen had strangely died.
Then on his threshold fell he grovelling,

XXXIV.

And cast the dust upon his yellow hair,
   And, but that Paris leap’d and held his hand,
His hunter’s knife would he have clutch’d, and there
   Had slain himself, to follow to that land
   Where flit the ghosts of men, a shadowy band
That have no more delight, no more desire,
   When once the flesh hath burn’d down like a brand,
Drench’d by the dark wine on the funeral pyre:

XXXV.

So on the ashen threshold lay the king,
   And all within the house was chill and drear;
The women watchers gather’d in a ring
   About the bed of Helen and her bier;
   And much had they to tell, and much to hear,
Of happy queens and fair, untimely dead, —
   Such joy they took amid their evil cheer, —
While the low thunder muttered overhead.

BOOK III — THE FLIGHT OF HELEN

The flight of Helen and Paris from Lacedaemon, and of what things befell them in their voyaging, and how they came to Troy.

I.

The grey Dawn's daughter, rosy Morn awoke
   In old Tithonus' arms, and suddenly
Let harness her swift steeds beneath the yoke,
   And drave her shining chariot through the sky.
   Then men might see the flocks of Thunder fly,
All gold and rose, the azure pastures through,
   What time the lark was carolling on high
Above the gardens drench'd with rainy dew.

II.

But Aphrodite sent a slumber deep
   On all in the King's palace, young and old,
And one by one the women fell asleep, —
   Their lamentable tales left half untold, —
   Before the dawn, when folk wax weak and cold,
But Helen waken'd with the shining morn,
   Forgetting quite her sorrows manifold,
And light of heart as was the day new-born.

III.

She had no memory of unhappy things,
   She knew not of the evil days to come,

Forgotten were her ancient wanderings,
   And as Lethaean waters wholly numb
   The sense of spirits in Elysium,
That no remembrance may their bliss alloy,
   Even so the rumour of her days was dumb,
And all her heart was ready for new joy.

IV.

The young day knows not of an elder dawn,
   Joys of old noons, old sorrows of the night,
And so from Helen was the past withdrawn,
   Her lord, her child, her home forgotten quite,
   Lost in the marvel of a new delight:
She was as one who knows he shall not die,
   When earthly colours melt into the bright
Pure splendour of his immortality.

V.

Then Helen rose, and all her body fair
   She bath’d in the spring water, pure and cold,
And with her hand bound up her shining hair
   And clothed her in the raiment that of old
   Athene wrought with marvels manifold,
A bridal gift from an immortal hand,
   And all the front was clasp’d with clasps of gold,
And for the girdle was a golden band.

VI.

Next from her upper chamber silently
   Went Helen, moving like a morning dream.
She did not know the golden roof, the high

Walls, and the shields that on the pillars gleam,
Only she heard the murmur of the stream
That waters all the garden’s wide expanse,
This song, and cry of singing birds, did seem
To guide her feet as music guides the dance.

VII.

The music drew her on to the glad air
From forth the chamber of enchanted death,
And lo! the world was waking everywhere;
The wind went by, a cool delicious breath,
Like that which in the gardens wandereth,
The golden gardens of the Hesperides,
And in its song unheard of things it saith,
The myriad marvels of the fairy seas.

VIII.

So through the courtyard to the garden close
Went Helen, where she heard the murmuring
Of water ‘twixt the lily and the rose;
For thereby doth a double fountain spring.
To one stream do the women pitchers bring
By Menelaus’ gates, at close of day;
The other through the close doth shine and sing,
Then to the swift Eurotas fleets away.

IX.

And Helen sat her down upon the grass,
And pluck’d the little daisies white and red,
And toss’d them where the running waters pass,
To watch them racing from the fountain-head,

And whirl’d about where little streams dispread;
And still with merry birds the garden rang,
And, *marry*, *marry*, in their song they said,
Or so do maids interpret that they sang.

X.

Then stoop’d she down, and watch’d the crystal stream,
And fishes poising where the waters ran,
And lo! upon the glass a golden gleam,
And purple as of robes Sidonian,
Then, sudden turning, she beheld a man,
That knelt beside her; as her own face fair
Was his, and o’er his shoulders for a span
Fell the bright tresses of his yellow hair.

XI.

Then either look’d on other with amaze
As each had seen a God; for no long while
They marvell’d, but as in the first of days,
The first of men and maids did meet and smile,
And Aphrodite did their hearts beguile,
So hands met hands, lips lips, with no word said
Were they enchanted ‘neath that leafy aisle,
And silently were woo’d, betroth’d, and wed.

XII.

Ah, slowly did their silence wake to words
That scarce had more of meaning than the song
Pour’d forth of the innumerable birds
That fill the palace gardens all day long;
So innocent, so ignorant of wrong,

Was she, so happy each in other’s eyes,
   Thus wrought the mighty Goddess that is strong,
Even to make naught the wisdom of the wise.

XIII.

Now in the midst of that enchanted place
   Right gladly had they linger’d all day through,
And fed their love upon each other’s face,
   But Aphrodite had a counsel new,
   And silently to Paris’ side she drew,
In guise of Aethra, whispering that the day
   Pass’d on, while his ship waited, and his crew
Impatient, in the narrow Gythian bay.

XIV.

For thither had she brought them by her skill;
   But Helen saw her not, — nay, who can see
A Goddess come or go against her will?
   Then Paris whisper’d, “Come, ah, Love, with me!
   Come to a shore beyond the barren sea;
There doth the bridal crown await thy head,
   And there shall all the land be glad of thee!”
Then, like a child, she follow’d where he led.

XV.

For, like a child’s her gentle heart was glad.
   So through the courtyard pass’d they to the gate;
And even there, as Aphrodite bade,
   The steeds of Paris and the chariots wait;
   Then to the well-wrought car he led her straight,
And grasped the shining whip and golden rein,

   And swift they drave until the day was late
By clear Eurotas through the fruitful plain.

XVI.

But now within the halls the magic sleep
   Was broken, and men sought them everywhere;
Yet Aphrodite cast a cloud so deep
   About their chariot none might see them there.
   And strangely did they hear the trumpets blare,
And noise of racing wheels; yet saw they nought:
   Then died the sounds upon the distant air,
And safe they won the haven that they sought.

XVII.

Beneath a grassy cliff, beneath the down,
   Where swift Eurotas mingles with the sea,
There climb’d the grey walls of a little town,
   The sleepy waters wash’d it languidly,
   For tempests in that haven might not be.
The isle across the inlet guarded all,
   And the shrill winds that roam the ocean free
Broke and were broken on the rocky wall.

XVIII.

Then Paris did a point of hunting blow,
   Nor yet the sound had died upon the hill
When round the isle they spied a scarlet prow,
   And oars that flash’d into that haven still,
   The oarsmen bending forward with a will,
And swift their black ship to the haven-side
   They brought, and steer’d her in with goodly skill,

And bare on board the strange Achaean bride.

XIX.

Now while the swift ship through the waters clave,
   All happy things that in the waters dwell,
Arose and gamboll’d on the glassy wave,
   And Nereus led them with his sounding shell:
   Yea, the sea-nymphs, their dances weaving well,
In the green water gave them greeting free.
   Ah, long light linger’d, late the darkness fell,
That night, upon the isle of Cranaë!

XX.

And Hymen shook his fragrant torch on high,
   Till all its waves of smoke and tongues of flame,
Like clouds of rosy gold fulfill’d the sky;
   And all the Nereids from the waters came,
   Each maiden with a musical sweet name;
Doris, and Doto, and Amphithoë;
   And their shrill bridal song of love and shame
Made music in the silence of the sea.

XXI.

For this was like that night of summer weather,
   When mortal men and maidens without fear,
And forest-nymphs, and forest-gods together,
   Do worship Pan in the long twilight clear.
   And Artemis this one night spares the deer,
And every cave and dell, and every grove
   Is glad with singing soft and happy cheer,
With laughter, and with dalliance, and with love.

*

XXII.

Now when the golden-thronèd Dawn arose
   To waken gods and mortals out of sleep,
Queen Aphrodite sent the wind that blows
   From fairy gardens of the Western deep.
   The sails are spread, the oars of Paris leap
Past many a headland, many a haunted fane:
   And, merrily all from isle to isle they sweep
O’er the wet ways across the barren plain.

XXIII.

By many an island fort, and many a haven
   They sped, and many a crowded arsenal:
They saw the loves of Gods and men engraven
   On friezes of Astarte’s temple wall.
   They heard that ancient shepherd Proteus call
His flock from forth the green and tumbling lea,
   And saw white Thetis with her maidens all
Sweep up to high Olympus from the sea.

XXIV.

They saw the vain and weary toil of men,
   The ships that win the rich man all he craves;
They pass’d the red-prow’d barks Egyptian,
   And heard afar the moaning of the slaves
   Pent in the dark hot hold beneath the waves;
And scatheless the Sardanian fleets among
   They sail’d; by men that sow the sea with graves,

Bearing black fate to folk of alien tongue.

XXV.

Then all day long a rolling cloud of smoke
   Would hang on the sea-limits, faint and far,
But through the night the beacon-flame upbroke
   From some rich island-town begirt with war;
   And all these things could neither make nor mar
The joy of lovers wandering, but they
   Sped happily, and heedless of the star
That hung o’er their glad haven, far away.

XXVI.

The fisher-sentinel upon the height
   Watch’d them with vacant eyes, and little knew
They bore the fate of Troy; to him the bright
   Plashed waters, with the silver shining through
   When tunny shoals came cruising in the blue,
Was more than Love that doth the world unmake;
   And listless gazed he as the gulls that flew
And shriek’d and chatter’d in the vessel’s wake.

XXVII.

So the wind drave them, and the waters bare
   Across the great green plain unharvested,
Till through an after-glow they knew the fair
   Faint rose of snow on distant Ida’s head.
   And swifter then the joyous oarsmen sped;
But night was ended, and the waves were fire
   Beneath the fleet feet of a dawning red
Or ere they won the land of their desire.

XXVIII.

Now when the folk about the haven knew
   The scarlet prow of Paris, swift they ran
And the good ship within the haven drew,
   And merrily their welcoming began.
   But none the face of Helen dared to scan;
Their bold eyes fell before they had their fill,
   For all men deem’d her that Idalian
Who loved Anchises on the lonely hill.

XXIX.

But when her sweet smile and her gentleness
   And her kind speech had won them from dismay,
They changed their minds, and ‘gan the Gods to bless
   Who brought to Ilios that happy day.
   And all the folk fair Helen must convey,
Crown’d like a bride, and clad with flame-hued pall,
   Through the rich plain, along the water-way
Right to the great gates of the Ilian wall.

XXX.

And through the vines they pass’d, where old and young
   Had no more heed of the glad vintaging,
But all unpluck’d the purple clusters hung,
   Nor more of Linus did the minstrel sing,
   For he and all the folk were following,
Wine-stain’d and garlanded, in merry bands,
   Like men when Dionysus came as king,
And led his revel from the sun-burnt lands,

XXXI.

So from afar the music and the shout
   Roll’d up to Ilios and the Scaean gate,
And at the sound the city folk came out
   And bore sweet Helen — such a fairy weight
   As none might deem the burden of Troy’s fate —
Across the threshold of the town, and all
   Flock’d with her, where King Priam sat in state,
Girt by his elders, on the Ilian wall.

XXXII.

No man but knew him by his crown of gold,
   And golden-studded sceptre, and his throne;
Ay, strong he seem’d as those great kings of old,
   Whose image is eternal on the stone
   Won from the dust that once was Babylon;
But kind of mood was he withal, and mild,
   And when his eyes on Argive Helen shone,
He loved her as a father doth a child.

XXXIII.

Round him were set his peers, as Panthous,
   Antenor, and Agenor, hardly grey,
Scarce touch’d as yet with age, nor garrulous
   As are cicalas on a sunny day:
   Such might they be when years had slipp’d away,
And made them over-weak for war or joy,
   Content to watch the Leaguer as it lay
Beside the ships, beneath the walls of Troy.

XXXIV.

Then Paris had an easy tale to tell,
   Which then might win upon men’s wond’ring ears,
Who deem’d that Gods with mortals deign to dwell,
   And that the water of the West enspheres
   The happy Isles that know not Death nor tears;
Yea, and though monsters do these islands guard,
   Yet men within their coasts had dwelt for years
Uncounted, with a strange love for reward.

XXXV.

And there had Paris ventured: so said he, —
   Had known the Sirens’ song, and Circe’s wile;
And in a cove of that Hesperian sea
   Had found a maiden on a lonely isle;
   A sacrifice, if so men might beguile
The wrath of some beast-god they worshipp’d there,
   But Paris, ‘twixt the sea and strait defile,
Had slain the beast, and won the woman fair.

XXXVI.

Then while the happy people cried “Well done,”
   And Priam’s heart was melted by the tale —
For Paris was his best-belovèd son —
   Came a wild woman, with wet eyes, and pale
   Sad face, men look’d on when she cast her veil,
Not gladly; and none mark’d the thing she said,
   Yet must they hear her long and boding wail
That follow’d still, however fleet they fled.

XXXVII.

She was the priestess of Apollo’s fane,
   Cassandra, and the God of prophecy
Spurr’d her to speak and rent her! but in vain
   She toss’d her wasted arms against the sky,
   And brake her golden circlet angrily,
And shriek’d that they had brought within the gate
   Helen, a serpent at their hearts to lie!
Helen, a hell of people, king, and state!

XXXVIII.

But ere the God had left her; ere she fell
   And foam’d among her maidens on the ground,
The air was ringing with a merry swell
   Of flute, and pipe, and every sweetest sound,
   In Aphrodite’s fane, and all around
Were roses toss’d beneath the glimmering green
   Of that high roof, and Helen there was crown’d
The Goddess of the Trojans, and their Queen.

BOOK IV — THE DEATH OF CORYTHUS

How Helen was made an outcast by the Trojan women, and how Œnone, the old love of Paris, sent her son Corythus to him as her messenger, and how Paris slew him unwittingly; and of the curses of Œnone, and the coming of the Argive host against Troy.

I.

For long in Troia was there peace and mirth,
   The pleasant hours still passing one by one;
And Helen joy’d at each fresh morning’s birth,
   And almost wept at setting of the sun,
   For sorrow that the happy day was done;
Nor dream’d of years when she should hate the light,
   And mourn afresh for every day begun,
Nor fare abroad save shamefully by night.

II.

And Paris was not one to backward cast
   A fearful glance; nor pluck sour fruits of sin,
Half ripe; but seized all pleasures while they last,
   Nor boded evil ere ill days begin.
   Nay, nor lamented much when caught therein,
In each adventure always finding joy,
   And hopeful still through waves of war to win
By strength of Hector, and the star of Troy.

III.

Now as the storms drive white sea-birds afar
   Within green upland glens to seek for rest,
So rumours pale of an approaching war
   Were blown across the islands from the west:
   For Agamemnon summon’d all the best
From towns and tribes he ruled, and gave command
   That free men all should gather at his hest
Through coasts and islets of the Argive land.

IV.

Sidonian merchant-men had seen the fleet
   Black war-galleys that sped from town to town;
Had heard the hammers of the bronze-smiths beat
   The long day through, and when the sun went down;
   And thin, said they, would show the leafy crown
On many a sacred mountain-peak in spring,
   For men had fell’d the pine-trees tall and brown
To fashion them curved ships for seafaring.

V.

And still the rumour grew; for heralds came,
   Old men from Argos, bearing holy boughs,
Demanding great atonement for the shame
   And sore despite done Menelaus’ house;
   But homeward soon they turn’d their scarlet prows,
And all their weary voyaging was vain;
   For Troy had bound herself with awful vows
To cleave to Helen till the walls were ta’en.

VI.

And now, like swallows ere the winter weather,

   The women in shrill groups were gathering,
With eager tongues still communing together,
   And many a taunt at Helen would they fling,
   Ay, through her innocence she felt the sting,
And shamed was now her gentle face and sweet,
   For e’en the children evil songs would sing
To mock her as she hasted down the street.

VII.

Also the men who worshipp’d her of old
   As she had been a goddess from above,
Gazed at her now with lustful eyes and bold,
   As she were naught but Paris’ light-o’-love;
   And though in truth they still were proud enough,
Of that fair gem in their old city set,
   Yet well she knew that wanton word and scoff
Went round the camp-fire when the warriors met.

VIII.

There came a certain holiday when Troy
   Was wont to send her noble matrons all,
Young wives and old, with clamour and with joy,
   To clothe Athene in her temple hall,
   And robe her in a stately broider’d pall.
But now they drove fair Helen from their train,
   “Better,” they scream’d, “to cast her from the wall,
Than mock the Gods with offerings in vain.”

IX.

One joy she had, that Paris yet was true,
   Ay, fickle Paris, true unto the end;

And in the court of Ilios were two
   Kind hearts, still eager Helen to defend,
   And help and comfort in all need to lend: —
The gentle Hector with soft speech and mild,
   And the old king that ever was her friend,
And loved her as a father doth his child.

X.

These, though they knew not all, these blamed her not,
   But cast the heavy burden on the God,
Whose wrath, they deem'd, had verily waxed hot
   Against the painful race on earth that trod,
   And in God's hand was Helen but the rod
To scourge a people that, in unknown wise,
   Had vex'd the far Olympian abode
With secret sin or stinted sacrifice.

XI.

The days grew into months, and months to years,
   And still the Argive army did delay,
Till folk in Troia half forgot their fears,
   And almost as of old were glad and gay;
   And men and maids on Ida dared to stray,
But Helen dwelt within her inmost room,
   And there from dawning to declining day,
Wrought at the patient marvels of her loom.

XII.

Yet even there in peace she might not be:
   There was a nymph, Œnone, in the hills,
The daughter of a River-God was she,
   Of Cebren, — that the mountain silence fills

With murmur’d music, for the countless rills
Of Ida meet him, dancing to the plain, —
Her Paris wooed, yet ignorant of ills,
Among the shepherd’s huts, nor wooed in vain.

XIII.

Nay, Summer often found them by the fold
In these glad days, ere Paris was a king,
And oft the Autumn, in his car of gold,
Had pass’d them, merry at the vintaging:
And scarce they felt the breath of the white wing
Of Winter, in the cave where they would lie
On beds of heather by the fire, till Spring
Should crown them with her buds in passing by.

XIV.

For elbow-deep their flowery bed was strown
With fragrant leaves and with crush’d asphodel,
And sweetly still the shepherd-pipe made moan,
And many a tale of Love they had to tell, —
How Daphnis loved the strange, shy maiden well,
And how she loved him not, and how he died,
And oak-trees moan’d his dirge, and blossoms fell
Like tears from lindens by the water-side!

XV.

But colder, fleeter than the Winter’s wing,
Time pass’d; and Paris changed, and now no more
Œnone heard him on the mountain sing,
Not now she met him in the forest hoar.
Nay, but she knew that on an alien shore

An alien love he sought; yet was she strong
   To live, who deem'd that even as of yore
In days to come might Paris love her long.

XVI.

For dark Œnone from her Father drew
   A power beyond all price; the gift to deal
With wounded men, though now the dreadful dew
   Of Death anoint them, and the secret seal
   Of Fate be set on them; these might she heal;
And thus Œnone trusted still to save
   Her lover at the point of death, and steal
His life from Helen, and the amorous grave.

XVII.

And she had borne, though Paris knew it not,
   A child, fair Corythus, to be her shame,
And still she mused, whenas her heart was hot,
   "He hath no child by that Achaean dame:"
   But when her boy unto his manhood came,
Then sorer yet Œnone did repine,
   And bade him "fare to Ilios, and claim
Thy father's love, and all that should be thine!"

XVIII.

Therewith a golden bodkin from her hair
   She drew, and from a green-tress'd birchen tree
She pluck'd a strip of smooth white bark and fair,
   And many signs and woful gravèd she,
   A message of the evil things to be.
Then deftly closed the birch-bark, fold on fold,

And bound the tokens well and cunningly,
Three times and four times, with a thread of gold.

XIX.

“Give these to Argive Helen’s hand,” she cried:
And so embraced her child, and with no fear
Beheld him leaping down the mountain-side,
Like a king’s son that goes to hunt the deer,
Clad softly, and in either hand a spear,
With two swift-footed hounds that follow’d him,
So leap’d he down the grassy slopes and sheer,
And won the precinct of the forest dim.

XX.

He trod that ancient path his sire had trod,
Far, far below he saw the sea, the town;
He moved as light as an immortal god,
For mansions in Olympus gliding down.
He left the shadow of the forest brown,
And through the shallow waters did he cross,
And stood, ere twilight fell, within the crown
Of towers, the sacred keep of Ilios.

XXI.

Now folk that mark’d him hasting deem’d that he
Had come to tell the host was on its way,
As one that from the hills had seen the sea
Beclouded with the Danaan array,
So straight to Paris’ house with no delay
They led him, and did eagerly await
Within the forecourt, in the twilight grey,

To hear some certain message of their fate.

XXII.

Now Paris was asleep upon his bed
   Tired with a listless day; but all along
The palace chambers Corythus was led,
   And still he heard a music, shrill and strong,
   That seem’d to clamour of an old-world wrong,
And hearts a long time broken; last they came
   To Helen’s bower, the fountain of the song
That cried so loud against an ancient shame.

XXIII.

And Helen fared before a mighty loom,
   And sang, and cast her shuttle wrought of gold,
And forth unto the utmost secret room
   The wave of her wild melody was roll’d;
   And still she fashion’d marvels manifold,
Strange shapes of fish and serpent, bear and swan,
   The loves of the immortal Gods of old,
Wherefrom the peoples of the world began.

XXIV.

Now Helen met the stranger graciously
   With gentle speech, and bade set forth a chair
Well wrought of cedar wood and ivory
   That wise Icmalius had fashion’d fair.
   But when young Corythus had drunk the rare
Wine of the princes, and had broken bread,
   Then Helen took the word, and bade declare
His instant tidings; and he spake and said,

XXV.

“Lady and Queen, I have a secret word,
   And bear a token sent to none but thee,
Also I bring message to my Lord
   That spoken to another may not be.”
   Then Helen gave a sign unto her three
Bower-maidens, and they went forth from that place,
   Silent they went; and all forebodingly,
They left the man and woman face to face.

XXVI.

Then from his breast the birchen scroll he took
   And gave to Helen; and she read therein:
“Oh thou that on those hidden runes dost look,
   Hast thou forgotten quite thine ancient sin,
   Thy Lord, thy lofty palace, and thy kin,
Even as thy Love forgets the words he spoke
   The strong oath broken one weak heart to win,
The lips that kiss’d him, and the heart that broke?

XXVII.

“Nay, but methinks thou shalt not quite forget
   The curse wherewith I curse thee till I die;
The tears that on the wood-nymph’s cheeks are wet,
   Shall burn thy hateful beauty deathlessly,
   Nor shall God raise up seed to thee; but I
Have borne thy love this messenger: my son,
   Who yet shall make him glad, for Time goes by
And soon shall thine enchantments all be done:

XXVIII.

“Ay, soon ‘twixt me and Death must be his choice,
   And little in that hour will Paris care
For thy sweet lips, and for thy singing voice,
   Thine arms of ivory, thy golden hair.
   Nay, me will he embrace, and will not spare,
But bid the folk that hate thee have their joy,
   And give thee to the mountain beasts to tear,
Or burn thy body on a tower of Troy.”

XXIX.

Even as she read, by Aphrodite’s will
   The cloud roll’d back from Helen’s memory:
She saw the city of the rifted hill,
   Fair Lacedaemon, ‘neath her mountain high;
   She knew the swift Eurotas running by
To mix his sacred waters with the sea,
   And from the garden close she heard the cry
Of her beloved child, Hermione.

XXX.

Then instantly the horror of her shame
   Fell on her, and she saw the coming years;
Famine, and fire, and plague, and all men’s blame,
   The wounds of warriors and the women’s fears;
   And through her heart her sorrow smote like spears,
And in her soul she knew the utmost smart
   Of wives left lonely, sires bereaved, the tears
Of maidens desolate, of loves that part.

XXXI.

She drain’d the dregs out of the cup of hate;
   The bitterness of sorrow, shame, and scorn;
Where’er the tongues of mortals curse their fate,
   She saw herself an outcast and forlorn;
   And hating sore the day that she was born,
Down in the dust she cast her golden head,
   There with rent raiment and fair tresses torn,
At feet of Corythus she lay for dead.

XXXII.

But Corythus, beholding her sweet face,
   And her most lovely body lying low,
Had pity on her grief and on her grace,
   Nor heeded now she was his mother’s foe,
   But did what might be done to ease her woe,
While, as he thought, with death for life she strove,
   And loosed the necklet round her neck of snow,
As who that saw had deem’d, with hands of love.

XXXIII.

And there was one that saw: for Paris woke
   Half-deeming and half-dreaming that the van
Of the great Argive host had scared the folk,
   And down the echoing corridor he ran
   To Helen’s bower, and there beheld the man
That kneel’d beside his lady lying there:
   No word he spake, but drove his sword a span
Through Corythus’ fair neck and cluster’d hair.

XXXIV.

Then fell fair Corythus, as falls the tower
   An earthquake shaketh from a city’s crown,
Or as a tall white fragrant lily-flower
   A child hath in the garden trampled down,
   Or as a pine-tree in the forest brown,
Fell’d by the sea-rovers on mountain lands,
   When they to harry foreign folk are boune,
Taking their own lives in their reckless hands.

XXXV.

But still in Paris did his anger burn,
   And still his sword was lifted up to slay,
When, like a lot leap’d forth of Fate’s own urn,
   He mark’d the graven tokens where they lay,
   ‘Mid Helen’s hair in golden disarray,
And looking on them, knew what he had done,
   Knew what dire thing had fallen on that day,
Knew how a father’s hand had slain a son.

XXXVI.

Then Paris on his face fell grovelling,
   And the night gather’d, and the silence grew
Within the darkened chamber of the king.
   But Helen rose, and a sad breath she drew,
   And her new woes came back to her anew:
Ah, where is he but knows the bitter pain
   To wake from dreams, and find his sorrow true,
And his ill life returned to him again!

XXXVII.

She needed none to tell her whence it fell,

The thick red rain upon the marble floor:
She knew that in her bower she might not dwell,
Alone with her own heart for ever more;
No sacrifice, no spell, no priestly lore
Could banish quite the melancholy ghost
Of Corythus; a herald sent before
Them that should die for her, a dreadful host.

XXXVIII.

But slowly Paris raised him from the earth,
And read her face, and knew that she knew all,
No more her eyes, in tenderness or mirth,
Should answer his, in bower or in hall.
Nay, Love had fallen when his child did fall,
The stream Love cannot cross ran ‘twixt them red;
No more was Helen his, whate’er befall,
Not though the Goddess drove her to his bed.

XXXIX.

This word he spake, “the Fates are hard on us” —
Then bade the women do what must be done
To the fair body of dead Corythus.
And then he hurl’d into the night alone,
Wailing unto the spirit of his son,
That somewhere in dark mist and sighing wind
Must dwell, nor yet to Hades had it won,
Nor quite had left the world of men behind.

XL.

But wild Œnone by the mountain-path
Saw not her son returning to the wold,

And now was she in fear, and now in wrath
   She cried, “He hath forgot the mountain fold,
   And goes in Ilios with a crown of gold:”
But even then she heard men’s axes smite
   Against the beeches slim and ash-trees old,
These ancient trees wherein she did delight.

XLI.

Then she arose and silently as Sleep,
   Unseen she follow’d the slow-rolling wain,
Beneath an ashen sky that ‘gan to weep,
   Too heavy laden with the latter rain;
   And all the folk of Troy upon the plain
She found, all gather’d round a funeral pyre,
   And thereon lay her son, her darling slain,
The goodly Corythus, her heart’s desire!

XLII.

Among the spices and fair robes he lay,
   His arm beneath his head, as though he slept.
For so the Goddess wrought that no decay,
   No loathly thing about his body crept;
   And all the people look’d on him and wept,
And, weeping, Paris lit the pine-wood dry,
   And lo, a rainy wind arose and swept
The flame and fragrance far into the sky.

XLIII.

But when the force of flame was burning low,
   Then did they drench the pyre with ruddy wine,
And the white bones of Corythus bestow

Within a gold cruse, wrought with many a sign,
And wrapp’d the cruse about with linen fine
And bare it to the tomb: when, lo, the wild
Œnone sprang, with burning eyes divine,
And shriek’d unto the slayer of her child:

XLIV.

“Oh Thou, that like a God art sire and slayer,
That like a God, dost give and take away!
Methinks that even now I hear the prayer
Thou shalt beseech me with, some later day;
When all the world to thy dim eyes grow grey,
And thou shalt crave thy healing at my hand,
Then gladly will I mock, and say thee nay,
And watch thine hours run down like running sand!

XLV.

“Yea, thou shalt die, and leave thy love behind,
And little shall she love thy memory!
But, oh ye foolish people, deaf and blind,
What Death is coming on you from the sea?”
Then all men turned, and lo, upon the lee
Of Tenedos, beneath the driving rain,
The countless Argive ships were racing free,
The wind and oarsmen speeding them amain.

XLVI.

Then from the barrow and the burial,
Back like a bursting torrent all men fled
Back to the city and the sacred wall.
But Paris stood, and lifted not his head.

   Alone he stood, and brooded o’er the dead,
As broods a lion, when a shaft hath flown,
   And through the strong heart of his mate hath sped,
Then will he face the hunters all alone.

XLVII.

But soon the voice of men on the sea-sand
   Came round him; and he turned, and gazed, and lo!
The Argive ships were dashing on the strand:
   Then stealthily did Paris bend his bow,
   And on the string he laid a shaft of woe,
And drew it to the point, and aim’d it well.
   Singing it sped, and through a shield did go,
And from his barque Protesilaus fell.

XLVIII.

Half gladdened by the omen, through the plain
   Went Paris to the walls and mighty gate,
And little heeded he that arrowy rain
   The Argive bowmen shower’d in helpless hate.
   Nay; not yet feather’d was the shaft of Fate,
His bane, the gift of mighty Heracles
   To Philoctetes, lying desolate,
Within a far off island of the seas.

BOOK V — THE WAR

The war round Troy, and how many brave men fell, and chiefly Sarpedon, Patroclus, Hector, Memnon, and Achilles. The coming of the Amazon, and the wounding of Paris, and his death, and concerning the good end that Œnone made.

I.

For ten long years the Argive leaguer lay
   Round Priam’s folk, and wrought them many woes,
While, as a lion crouch’d above his prey,
   The Trojans yet made head against their foes;
   And as the swift sea-water ebbs and flows
Between the Straits of Hellé and the main,
   Even so the tide of battle sank and rose,
And fill’d with waifs of war the Ilian plain.

II.

And horse on horse was driven, as wave on wave;
   Like rain upon the deep the arrows fell,
And like the wind, the war-cry of the brave
   Rang out above the battle’s ebb and swell,
   And long the tale of slain, and sad to tell;
Yet seem’d the end scarce nearer than of yore
   When nine years pass’d and still the citadel
Frown’d on the Argive huts beside the shore.

III.

And still the watchers on the city’s crown
   Afar from sacred Ilios might spy
The flame from many a fallen subject town
   Flare on the starry verges of the sky,
   And still from rich Maeonia came the cry
Of cities sack’d where’er Achilles led.
   Yet none the more men deem’d the end was nigh
While knightly Hector fought unvanquished.

IV.

But ever as each dawn bore grief afar,
   And further back, wax’d Paris glad and gay,
And on the fringes of the cloud of war
   His arrows, like the lightning, still would play;
   Yet fled he Menelaus on a day,
And there had died, but Aphrodite’s power
   Him in a golden cloud did safe convey
Within the walls of Helen’s fragrant bower.

V.

But she, in longing for her lord and home,
   And scorn of her wild lover, did withdraw
From all men’s eyes: but in the night would roam
   Till drowsy watchmen of the city saw
   A shadowy shape that chill’d the night with awe,
Treading the battlements; and like a ghost,
   She stretch’d her lovely arms without a flaw,
In shame and longing, to the Argive host.

VI.

But all day long within her bower she wept,

Still dreaming of the dames renown’d of old,
Whom hate or love of the Immortals swept
Within the toils of Atê manifold;
And most she loved the ancient tales that told
How the great Gods, at length to pity stirr’d,
Changed Niobe upon the mountains cold,
To a cold stone; and Procne to a bird,

VII.

And Myrrha to an incense-breathing tree; —
“And ah,” she murmur’d, “that the Gods were kind,
And bade the Harpies lay their hands on me,
And bear me with the currents of the wind
To the dim end of all things, and the blind
Land where the Ocean turneth in his bed:
Then should I leave mine evil days behind,
And Sleep should fold his wings above my head.”

VIII.

And once she heard a Trojan woman bless
The fair-haired Menelaus, her good lord,
As brave among brave men, not merciless,
Not swift to slay the captives of his sword,
Nor wont was he to win the gold abhorr’d
Of them that sell their captives over sea,
And Helen sighed, and bless’d her for that word,
“Yet will he ne’er be merciful to me!”

IX.

In no wise found she comfort; to abide
In Ilios was to dwell with shame and fear,
And if unto the Argive host she hied,

Then should she die by him that was most dear.
And still the days dragg’d on with bitter cheer,
Till even the great Gods had little joy,
So fast their children fell beneath the spear,
Below the windy battlements of Troy.

X.

Yet many a prince of south lands, or of east,
For dark Cassandra’s love came trooping in,
And Priam made them merry at the feast,
And all night long they dream’d of wars to win,
And with the morning hurl’d into the din,
And cried their lady’s name for battle-cry,
And won no more than this: for Paris’ sin,
By Diomede’s or Aias’ hand to die.

XI.

But for one hour within the night of woes
The hope of Troy burn’d steadfast as a star;
When strife among the Argive lords arose,
And dread Achilles held him from the war;
Yea, and Apollo from his golden car
And silver bow his shafts of evil sped,
And all the plain was darken’d, near and far,
With smoke above the pyres of heroes dead.

XII.

And many a time through vapour of that smoke
The shafts of Troy fell fast; and on the plain
All night the Trojan watch fires burn’d and broke
Like evil stars athwart a mist of rain.

And through the arms and blood, and through the slain,
Like wolves among the fragments of the fight,
Crept spies to slay whoe’er forgat his pain
One hour, and fell on slumber in the night.

XIII.

And once, when wounded chiefs their tents did keep,
And only Aias might his weapons wield,
Came Hector with his host, and smiting deep,
Brake bow and spear, brake axe and glaive and shield,
Bulwark and battlement must rend and yield,
And by the ships he smote the foe and cast
Fire on the ships; and o’er the stricken field,
The Trojans saw that flame arise at last!

XIV.

But when Achilles saw the soaring flame,
And knew the ships in peril, suddenly
A change upon his wrathful spirit came,
Nor will’d he that the Danaans should die:
But call’d his Myrmidons, and with a cry
They follow’d where, like foam on a sea-wave
Patroclus’ crest was dancing, white and high,
Above the tide that back the Trojans drave.

XV.

But like a rock amid the shifting sands,
And changing springs, and tumult of the deep,
Sarpedon stood, till ‘neath Patroclus’ hands,
Smitten he fell; then Death and gentle Sleep
Bare him from forth the battle to the steep

Where shines his castle o’er the Lycian dell;
   There hath he burial due, while all folk weep
Around the kindly Prince that loved them well.

XVI.

Not unavenged he fell, nor all alone
   To Hades did his soul indignant fly,
For soon was keen Patroclus overthrown
   By Hector, and the God of archery;
   And Hector stripp’d his shining panoply,
Bright arms Achilles lent: ah! naked then,
   Forgetful wholly of his chivalry,
Patroclus lay, nor heard the strife of men.

XVII.

Then Hector from the war a little space
   Withdrew, and clad him in Achilles’ gear,
And braced the gleaming helmet on his face,
   And donn’d the corslet, and that mighty spear
   He grasped — the lance that makes the boldest fear;
And home his comrades bare his arms of gold,
   Those Priam once had worn, his father dear,
But in his father’s arms he waxed not old!

XVIII.

Then round Patroclus’ body, like a tide
   That storms the swollen outlet of a stream
When the winds blow, and the rains fall, and wide
   The river runs, and white the breakers gleam, —
   Trojans and Argives battled till the beam
Of Helios was sinking to the wave,

And now they near’d the ships: yet few could deem
That arms of Argos might the body save.

XIX.

But even then the tidings sore were borne
To great Achilles, of Patroclus dead,
And all his goodly raiment hath he torn,
And cast the dust upon his golden head,
And many a tear and bitter did he shed.
Ay; there by his own sword had he been slain,
But swift his Goddess-mother, Thetis, sped
Forth with her lovely sea-nymphs from the main.

XX.

For, as a mother when her young child calls
Hearkens to that, and hath no other care:
So Thetis, from her green and windless halls
Rose, at the first word of Achilles’ prayer,
To comfort him, and promise gifts of fair
New armour wrought by an immortal hand;
Then like a silver cloud she scaled the air,
Where bright the dwellings of Olympus stand.

XXI.

But, as a beacon from a ‘leaguer’d town
Within a sea-girt isle, leaps suddenly,
A cloud by day; but when the sun goes down,
The tongues of fire flash out, and soar on high,
To summon warlike men that dwell thereby
And bid them bring a rescue over-seas, —
So now Athene sent a flame to fly

From brow and temples of Aeacides.

XXII.

Then all unarm’d he sped, and through the throng,
   He pass’d to the dyke’s edge, beyond the wall,
Nor leap’d the ranks of fighting men among,
   But shouted clearer than the clarion’s call
   When foes on a beleaguer’d city fall.
Three times he cried, and terror fell on these
   That heard him; and the Trojans, one and all,
Fled from that shouting of Aeacides.

XXIII.

Backward the Trojans reel’d in headlong flight,
   Chariots and men, and left their bravest slain;
And the sun fell; but Troy through all the night
   Watch’d by her fires upon the Ilian plain,
   For Hector did the sacred walls disdain
Of Ilios; nor knew that he should stand
   Ere night return’d, and burial crave in vain,
Unarm’d, forsaken, at Achilles’ hand.

XXIV.

But all that night within his chamber high
   Hephaestus made his iron anvils ring;
And, ere the dawn, had wrought a panoply,
   The goodliest ever worn by mortal king.
   This to the Argive camp did Thetis bring,
And when her child had proved it, like the star
   That heralds day, he went forth summoning
The host Achaean to delight of war.

XXV.

And as a mountain torrent leaves its bed,
   And seaward sweeps the toils of men in spate,
Or as a forest-fire, that overhead
   Burns in the boughs, a thing insatiate,
   So raged the fierce Achilles in his hate;
And Xanthus, angry for his Trojans slain,
   Brake forth, while fire and wind made desolate
What war and wave had spared upon the plain.

XXVI.

Now through the fume and vapour of the smoke
   Between the wind’s voice and the water’s cry,
The battle shouting of the Trojans broke,
   And reached the Ilian walls confusedly,
   But over soon the folk that watch’d might spy
Thin broken bands that fled, avoiding death,
   Yet many a man beneath the spear must die,
Ere by the sacred gateway they drew breath.

XXVII.

And as when fire doth on a forest fall
   And hot winds bear it raging in its flight,
And beechen boughs, and pines are ruin’d all,
   So raged Achilles’ anger in that fight;
   And many an empty car, with none to smite
The madden’d horses, o’er the bridge of war
   Was wildly whirled, and many a maid’s delight
That day to the red wolves was dearer far.

*

XXVIII.

Some Muse that loved not Troy hath done thee wrong,
   Homer! who whisper’d thee that Hector fled
Thrice round the sacred walls he kept so long;
   Nay, when he saw his people vanquishèd
   Alone he stood for Troy; alone he sped
One moment, to the struggle of the spear,
   And, by the Gods deserted, fell and bled,
A warrior stainless of reproach and fear.

XXIX.

Then all the people from the battlement
   Beheld what dreadful things Achilles wrought,
For on the body his revenge he spent,
   The anger of the high Gods heeding nought,
   To whom was Hector dearest, while he fought,
Of all the Trojan men that were their joy,
   But now no more their favour might be bought
By savour of his hecatombs in Troy.

XXX.

So for twelve days rejoiced the Argive host,
   And now Patroclus hath to Hades won,
But Hector naked lay, and still his ghost
   Must wail where waters of Cocytus run;
   Till Priam did what no man born hath done,
Who dared to pass among the Argive bands,
   And clasp’d the knees of him that slew his son,
And kiss’d his awful homicidal hands.

XXXI.

At such a price was Hector’s body sent
   To Ilios, where the women wail’d him shrill;
And Helen’s sorrow brake into lament
   As bursts a lake the barriers of a hill,
   For lost, lost, lost was that one friend who still
Stood by her with kind speech and gentle heart,
   The sword of war, pure faith, and steadfast will,
That strove to keep all evil things apart.

*

XXXII.

And so men buried Hector. But they came,
   The Amazons, from frozen fields afar.
A match for heroes in the dreadful game
   Of spears, the darlings of the God of War,
   Whose coming was to Priam dearer far
Than light to him that is a long while blind,
   When leech’s hand hath taën away the bar
That vex’d him, or the healing God is kind;

XXXIII.

And Troy was glad, and with the morning light
   The Amazons went forth to slay and slay;
And wondrously they drave the foe in flight,
   Until the Sun had wander’d half his way;
   But when he stoop’d to twilight and the grey
Hour when men loose the steer beneath the yoke,
   No more Achilles held him from the fray,
But dreadful through the women’s ranks he broke.

XXXIV.

Then comes eclipse upon the crescent shield,
  And death on them that bear it, and they fall
One here, one there, about the stricken field,
  As in that art, of Love memorial,
  Which moulders on the holy Carian wall.
Ay, still we see, still love, still pity there
  The warrior-maids, so brave, so god-like tall,
In Time’s despite imperishably fair.

XXXV.

But, as a dove that braves a falcon, stood
  Penthesilea, wrath outcasting fear,
Or as a hind, that in the darkling wood
  Withstands a lion for her younglings dear;
  So stood the girl before Achilles’ spear;
In vain, for singing from his hand it sped,
  And crash’d through shield and breastplate till the sheer
Cold bronze drank blood, and down the queen fell dead.

XXXVI.

Then from her locks the helm Achilles tore
  And boasted o’er the slain; but lo, the face
Of her thus lying in the dust and gore
  Seem’d lovelier than is the maiden grace
  Of Artemis, when weary from the chase,
She sleepeth in a haunted dell unknown.
  And all the Argives marvell’d for a space,
But most Achilles made a heavy moan:

XXXVII.

And in his heart there came the weary thought
   Of all that was, and all that might have been,
Of all the sorrow that his sword had wrought,
   Of Death that now drew near him: of the green
   Vales of Larissa, where, with such a queen,
With such a love as now his spear had slain,
   He had been happy, who must wind the skein
Of grievous wars, and ne’er be glad again.

XXXVIII.

Yea, now wax’d Fate half weary of her game,
   And had no care but aye to kill and kill,
And many young kings to the battle came,
   And of that joy they quickly had their fill,
   And last came Memnon: and the Trojans still
Took heart, like wearied mariners that see
   (Long toss’d on unknown waves at the winds’ will)
Through clouds the gleaming crest of Helikê.

XXXIX.

For Memnon was the child of the bright Dawn,
   A Goddess wedded to a mortal king,
Who dwells for ever on the shores withdrawn
   That border on the land of sun-rising;
   And he was nurtured nigh the sacred spring
That is the hidden fountain of all seas,
   By them that in the Gods’ own garden sing,
The lily-maidens call’d Hesperides.

XL.

But him the child of Thetis in the fight
   Met on a windy winter day, when high
The dust was whirled, and wrapp’d them like the night
   That falleth on the mountains stealthily
   When the floods come, and down their courses dry
The torrents roar, and lightning flasheth far:
   So rang, so shone their harness terribly
Beneath the blinding thunder-cloud of war.

XLI.

Then the Dawn shudder’d on her golden throne,
   And called unto the West Wind, and he blew
And brake the cloud asunder; and alone
   Achilles stood, but Memnon, smitten through,
   Lay beautiful amid the dreadful dew
Of battle, and a deathless heart was fain
   Of tears, to Gods impossible, that drew
From mortal hearts a little of their pain.

XLII.

But now, their leader slain, the Trojans fled,
   And fierce Achilles drove them in his hate,
Avenging still his dear Patroclus dead,
   Nor knew the hour with his own doom was great,
   Nor trembled, standing in the Scaean gate,
Where ancient prophecy foretold his fall;
   Then suddenly there sped the bolt of Fate,
And smote Achilles by the Ilian wall:

XLIII.

From Paris’ bow it sped, and even there,
   Even as he grasp’d the skirts of victory,

Achilles fell, nor any man might dare
   From forth the Trojan gateway to draw nigh;
   But, as the woodmen watch a lion die,
Pierced with the hunter’s arrow, nor come near
   Till Death hath veil’d his eyelids utterly,
Even so the Trojans held aloof in fear.

XLIV.

But there his fellows on his wondrous shield
   Laid the fair body of Achilles slain,
And sadly bare him through the trampled field,
   And lo! the deathless maidens of the main
   Rose up, with Thetis, from the windy plain,
And round the dead man beautiful they cried,
   Lamenting, and with melancholy strain
The sweet-voiced Muses mournfully replied.

XLV.

Yea, Muses and Sea-maidens sang his dirge,
   And mightily the chant arose and shrill,
And wondrous echoes answer’d from the surge
   Of the grey sea, and from the holy hill
   Of Ida; and the heavy clouds and chill
Were gathering like mourners, sad and slow,
   And Zeus did thunder mightily, and fill
The dells and glades of Ida deep with snow.

XLVI.

Now Paris was not sated with the fame
   And rich reward Troy gave his archery;
But o’er the wine he boasted that the game

That very night he deem’d to win, or die;
“For scarce their watch the tempest will defy,”
He said, “and all undream’d of might we go,
And fall upon the Argives where they lie,
Unseen, unheard, amid the silent snow.”

XLVII.

So, flush’d with wine, and clad in raiment white
Above their mail, the young men follow’d him,
Their guide a fading camp-fire in the night,
And the sea’s moaning in the distance dim.
And still with eddying snow the air did swim,
And darkly did they wend they knew not where,
White in that cursed night: an army grim,
‘Wilder’d with wine, and blind with whirling air.

XLVIII.

There was an outcast in the Argive host,
One Philoctetes; whom Odysseus’ wile,
(For, save he help’d, the Leaguer all was lost,)
Drew from his lair within the Lemnian isle.
But him the people, as a leper vile,
Hated, and drave to a lone hut afar,
For wounded sore was he, and many a while
His cries would wake the host foredone with war.

XLIX.

Now Philoctetes was an archer wight;
But in his quiver had he little store
Of arrows tipp’d with bronze, and feather’d bright;
Nay, his were blue with mould, and fretted o’er

With many a spell Melampus wrought of yore,
Singing above his task a song of bane;
And they were venom’d with the Centaur’s gore,
And tipp’d with bones of men a long while slain.

L.

This wretch for very pain might seldom sleep,
And that night slept not: in the moaning blast
He deem’d the dead about his hut did creep,
And silently he rose, and round him cast
His raiment foul, and from the door he pass’d,
And peer’d into the night, and soothly heard
A whisper’d voice; then gripp’d his arrows fast
And strung his bow, and cried a bitter word:

LI.

“Art thou a gibbering ghost with war outworn,
And thy faint life in Hades not begun?
Art thou a man that holdst my grief in scorn,
And yet dost live, and look upon the sun?
If man, — methinks thy pleasant days are done,
And thou shalt writhe in torment worse than mine;
If ghost, — new pain in Hades hast thou won,
And there with double woe shalt surely pine.”

LII.

He spake, and drew the string, and sent a shaft
At venture through the midnight and the snow,
A little while he listen’d, then he laugh’d
Within himself, a dreadful laugh and low;
For over well the answer did he know
That midnight gave his message, the sharp cry
And armour rattling on a fallen foe

That now was learning what it is to die.

LIII.

Then Philoctetes crawl’d into his den
   And hugg’d himself against the bitter cold,
While round their leader came the Trojan men
   And bound his wound, and bare him o’er the wold,
   Back to the lights of Ilios; but the gold
Of Dawn was breaking on the mountains white,
   Or ere they won within the guarded fold,
Long ‘wilder’d in the tempest and the night.

LIV.

And through the gate, and through the silent street,
   And houses where men dream’d of war no more,
The bearers wander’d with their weary feet,
   And Paris to his high-roof’d house they bore.
   But vainly leeches on his wound did pore,
And vain was Argive Helen’s magic song,
   Ah, vain her healing hands, and all her lore,
To help the life that wrought her endless wrong.

LV.

Slow pass’d the fever’d hours, until the grey
   Cold light was paling, and a sullen glow
Of livid yellow crown’d the dying day,
   And brooded on the wastes of mournful snow.
   Then Paris whisper’d faintly, “I must go
And face that wild wood-maiden of the hill;
   For none but she can win from overthrow
Troy’s life, and mine that guards it, if she will.”

LVI.

So through the dumb white meadows, deep with snow,
   They bore him on a pallet shrouded white,
And sore they dreaded lest an ambush’d foe
   Should hear him moan, or mark the moving light
   That waved before their footsteps in the night;
And much they joy’d when Ida’s knees were won,
   And ‘neath the pines upon an upland height,
They watch’d the star that heraldeth the sun.

LVII.

For under woven branches of the pine,
   The soft dry needles like a carpet spread,
And high above the arching boughs did shine
   In frosty fret of silver, that the red
   New dawn fired into gold-work overhead:
Within that vale where Paris oft had been
   With fair Œnone, ere the hills he fled
To be the sinful lover of a Queen.

LVIII.

Not here they found Œnone: “Nay, not here,”
   Said Paris, faint and low, “shall she be found;
Nay, bear me up the mountain, where the drear
   Winds walk for ever on a haunted ground.
   Methinks I hear her sighing in their sound;
Or some God calls me there, a dying man.
   Perchance my latest journeying is bound
Back where the sorrow of my life began.”

LIX.

They reach’d the gateway of that highest glen
   And halted, wond’ring what the end should be;
But Paris whisper’d Helen, while his men
   Fell back: “Here judged I Gods, here shalt thou see
   What judgment mine old love will pass on me.
But hide thee here; thou soon the end shalt know,
   Whether the Gods at length will set thee free
From that old net they wove so long ago.”

LX.

Ah, there with wide snows round her like a pall,
   Œnone crouch’d in sable robes; as still
As Winter brooding o’er the Summer’s fall,
   Or Niobe upon her haunted hill,
   A woman changed to stone by grief, where chill
The rain-drops fall like tears, and the wind sighs:
   And Paris deem’d he saw a deadly will
Unmoved in wild Œnone’s frozen eyes.

LXI.

“Nay, prayer to her were vain as prayer to Fate,”
   He murmur’d, almost glad that it was so,
Like some sick man that need no longer wait,
   But his pain lulls as Death draws near his woe.
   And Paris beckon’d to his men, and slow
They bore him dying from that fatal place,
   And did not turn again, and did not know
The soft repentance on Œnone’s face.

LXII.

But Paris spake to Helen: “Long ago,
   Dear, we were glad, who never more shall be
Together, where the west winds fainter blow
   Round that Elysian island of the sea,
   Where Zeus from evil days shall set thee free.
Nay, kiss me once, it is a weary while,
   Ten weary years since thou hast smiled on me,
But, Helen, say good-bye, with thine old smile!”

LXIII.

And as the dying sunset through the rain
   Will flush with rosy glow a mountain height,
Even so, at his last smile, a blush again
   Pass’d over Helen’s face, so changed and white;
   And through her tears she smiled, his last delight,
The last of pleasant life he knew, for grey
   The veil of darkness gather’d, and the night
Closed o’er his head, and Paris pass’d away.

LXIV.

Then for one hour in Helen’s heart re-born,
   Awoke the fatal love that was of old,
Ere she knew all, and the cold cheeks outworn,
   She kiss’d, she kiss’d the hair of wasted gold,
   The hands that ne’er her body should enfold;
Then slow she follow’d where the bearers led,
   Follow’d dead Paris through the frozen wold
Back to the town where all men wish’d her dead.

LXV.

Perchance it was a sin, I know not, this!
   Howe’er it be, she had a woman’s heart,
And not without a tear, without a kiss,
   Without some strange new birth of the old smart,
   From her old love of the brief days could part
For ever; though the dead meet, ne’er shall they
   Meet, and be glad by Aphrodite’s art,
Whose souls have wander’d each its several way.

*

LXVI.

And now was come the day when on a pyre
   Men laid fair Paris, in a broider’d pall,
And fragrant spices cast into the fire,
   And round the flame slew many an Argive thrall.
   When, like a ghost, there came among them all,
A woman, once beheld by them of yore,
   When first through storm and driving rain the tall
Black ships of Argos dash’d upon the shore.

LXVII.

Not now in wrath Œnone came; but fair
   Like a young bride when nigh her bliss she knows,
And in the soft night of her fallen hair
   Shone flowers like stars, more white than Ida’s snows,
   And scarce men dared to look on her, of those
The pyre that guarded; suddenly she came,
   And sprang upon the pyre, and shrill arose
Her song of death, like incense through the flame.

LXVIII.

And still the song, and still the flame went up,
   But when the flame wax'd fierce, the singing died;
And soon with red wine from a golden cup
   Priests drench'd the pyre; but no man might divide
   The ashes of the Bridegroom from the Bride.
Nay, they were wedded, and at rest again,
   As in those old days on the mountain-side,
Before the promise of their youth was vain.

BOOK VI — THE SACK OF TROY. THE RETURN OF HELEN

The sack of Troy, and of how Menelaus would have let stone Helen, but Aphrodite saved her, and made them at one again, and how they came home to Lacedaemon, and of their translation to Elysium.

I.

There came a day, when Trojan spies beheld
   How, o’er the Argive leaguer, all the air
Was pure of smoke, no battle-din there swell’d,
   Nor any clarion-call was sounding there!
   Yea, of the serried ships the strand was bare,
And sea and shore were still, as long ago
   When Ilios knew not Helen, and the fair
Sweet face that makes immortal all her woe.

II.

So for a space the watchers on the wall
   Were silent, wond’ring what these things might mean.
But, at the last, sent messengers to call
   Priam, and all the elders, and the lean
   Remnant of goodly chiefs, that once had been
The shield and stay of Ilios, and her joy,
   Nor yet despair’d, but trusted Gods unseen,
And cast their spears, and shed their blood for Troy.

III.

They came, the more part grey, grown early old,
  In war and plague; but with them was the young
Coroebus, that but late had left the fold
  And flocks of sheep Maeonian hills among,
  And valiantly his lot with Priam flung,
For love of a lost cause and a fair face, —
  The eyes that once the God of Pytho sung,
That now look’d darkly to the slaughter-place.

IV.

Now while the elders kept their long debate,
  Coroebus stole unheeded to his band,
And led a handful by a postern gate
  Across the plain, across the barren land
  Where once the happy vines were wont to stand,
And ‘mid the clusters once did maidens sing, —
  But now the plain was waste on every hand,
Though here and there a flower would breathe of Spring.

V.

So swift across the trampled battle-field
  Unchallenged still, but wary, did they pass,
By many a broken spear or shatter’d shield
  That in Fate’s hour appointed faithless was:
  Only the heron cried from the morass
By Xanthus’ side, and ravens, and the grey
  Wolves left their feasting in the tangled grass,
Grudging; and loiter’d, nor fled far away.

VI.

There lurk’d no spears in the high river-banks,

No ambush by the cairns of men outworn,
But empty stood the huts, in dismal ranks,
Where men through all these many years had borne
Fierce summer, and the biting winter’s scorn;
And here a sword was left, and there a bow,
But ruinous seem’d all things and forlorn,
As in some camp forsaken long ago.

VII.

Gorged wolves crept round the altars, and did eat
The flesh of victims that the priests had slain,
And wild dogs fought above the sacred meat
Late offer’d to the deathless Gods in vain,
By men that, for reward of all their pain,
Must haul the ropes, and weary at the oar,
Or, drowning, clutch at foam amid the main,
Nor win their haven on the Argive shore.

VIII.

Not long the young men marvell’d at the sight,
But grasping one a sword, and one the spear
Aias, or Tydeus’ son, had borne in fight,
They sped, and fill’d the town with merry cheer,
For folk were quick the happy news to hear,
And pour’d through all the gates into the plain,
Rejoicing as they wander’d far and near,
O’er the long Argive toils endured in vain.

IX.

Ah, sweet it was, without the city walls,
To hear the doves coo, and the finches sing;

Ah, sweet, to twine their true-loves coronals
   Of woven wind-flowers, and each fragrant thing
   That blossoms in the footsteps of the spring;
And sweet, to lie, forgetful of their grief,
   Where violets trail by waters wandering,
And the wild fig-tree putteth forth his leaf!

X.

Now while they wander'd as they would, they found
   A wondrous thing: a marvel of man's skill,
That stood within a vale of hollow ground,
   And bulk'd scarce smaller than the bitter-hill, —
   The common barrow that the dead men fill
Who died in the long leaguer, — not of earth,
   Was this new portent, but of tree, and still
The Trojans stood, and marvell'd 'mid their mirth.

XI.

Ay, much they wonder'd what this thing might be,
   Shaped like a Horse it was; and many a stain
There show'd upon the mighty beams of tree,
   For some with fire were blacken'd, some with rain
   Were dank and dark amid white planks of plane,
New cut among the trees that now were few
   On wasted Ida; but men gazed in vain,
Nor truth thereof for all their searching knew.

XII.

At length they deem'd it was a sacred thing,
   Vow'd to Poseidon, monarch of the deep,
And that herewith the Argives pray'd the King

Of wind and wave to lull the seas to sleep;
So this, they cried, within the sacred keep
Of Troy must rest, memorial of the war;
And sturdily they haled it up the steep,
And dragg’d the monster to their walls afar.

XIII.

All day they wrought: and children crown’d with flowers
Laid light hands on the ropes; old men would ply
Their feeble force; so through the merry hours
They toil’d, midst laughter and sweet minstrelsy,
And late they drew the great Horse to the high
Crest of the hill, and wide the tall gates swang;
But thrice, for all their force, it stood thereby
Unmoved, and thrice like smitten armour rang.

XIV.

Natheless they wrought their will; then altar fires
The Trojans built, and did the Gods implore
To grant fulfilment of all glad desires.
But from the cups the wine they might not pour,
The flesh upon the spits did writhe and roar,
The smoke grew red as blood, and many a limb
Of victims leap’d upon the temple floor,
Trembling; and groans amid the chapels dim

XV.

Rang low, and from the fair Gods’ images
And from their eyes, dropp’d sweat and many a tear;
The walls with blood were dripping, and on these
That sacrificed, came horror and great fear;

The holy laurels to Apollo dear
Beside his temple faded suddenly,
And wild wolves from the mountains drew anear,
And ravens through the temples seem’d to fly.

XVI.

Yet still the men of Troy were glad at heart,
And o’er strange meat they revell’d, like folk fey,
Though each would shudder if he glanced apart,
For round their knees the mists were gather’d grey,
Like shrouds on men that Hell-ward take their way;
But merrily withal they feasted thus,
And laugh’d with crooked lips, and oft would say
Some evil-sounding word and ominous.

XVII.

And Hecuba among her children spake,
“Let each man choose the meat he liketh best,
For bread no more together shall we break.
Nay, soon from all my labour must I rest,
But eat ye well, and drink the red wine, lest
Ye blame my house-wifery among men dead.”
And all they took her saying for a jest,
And sweetly did they laugh at that she said.

XVIII.

Then, like a raven on the of night,
The wild Cassandra flitted far and near,
Still crying, “Gather, gather for the fight,
And brace the helmet on, and grasp the spear,
For lo, the legions of the Night are here!”

So shriek'd the dreadful prophetess divine.
   But all men mock'd, and were of merry cheer;
Safe as the Gods they deem'd them, o'er their wine.

XIX.

For now with minstrelsy the air was sweet,
   The soft spring air, and thick with incense smoke;
And bands of happy dancers down the street
   Flew from the flower-crown'd doors, and wheel'd, and broke;
   And loving words the youths and maidens spoke,
For Aphrodite did their hearts beguile,
   As when beneath grey cavern or green oak
The shepherd men and maidens meet and smile.

XX.

No guard they set, for truly to them all
   Did Love and slumber seem exceeding good;
There was no watch by open gate nor wall,
   No sentinel by Pallas' image stood;
   But silence grew, as in an autumn wood
When tempests die, and the vex'd boughs have ease,
   And wind and sunlight fade, and soft the mood
Of sacred twilight falls upon the trees.

XXI.

Then the stars cross'd the zenith, and there came
   On Troy that hour when slumber is most deep,
But any man that watch'd had seen a flame
   Spring from the tall crest of the Trojan keep;
   While from the belly of the Horse did leap
Men arm'd, and to the gates went stealthily,

While up the rocky way to Ilios creep
The Argives, new return’d across the sea.

XXII.

Now when the silence broke, and in that hour
When first the dawn of war was blazing red,
There came a light in Helen’s fragrant bower,
As on that evil night before she fled
From Lacedaemon and her marriage bed;
And Helen in great fear lay still and cold,
For Aphrodite stood above her head,
And spake in that sweet voice she knew of old:

XXIII.

“Beloved one that dost not love me, wake!
Helen, the night is over, the dawn is near,
And safely shalt thou fare with me, and take
Thy way through fire and blood, and have no fear:
A little hour, and ended is the drear
Tale of thy sorrow and thy wandering.
Nay, long hast thou to live in happy cheer,
By fair Eurotas, with thy lord, the King.”

XXIV.

Then Helen rose, and in a cloud of gold,
Unseen amid the vapour of the fire,
Did Aphrodite veil her, fold on fold;
And through the darkness, thronged with faces dire,
And o’er men’s bodies fallen in a mire
Of new spilt blood and wine, the twain did go
Where Lust and Hate were mingled in desire,

And dreams and death were blended in one woe.

XXV.

Fire and the foe were masters now: the sky
   Flared like the dawn of that last day of all,
When men for pity to the sea shall cry,
   And vainly on the mountain tops shall call
   To fall and end the horror in their fall;
And through the vapour dreadful things saw they,
   The maidens leaping from the city wall,
The sleeping children murder’d where they lay.

XXVI.

Yea, cries like those that make the hills of Hell
   Ring and re-echo, sounded through the night,
The screams of burning horses, and the yell
   Of young men leaping naked into fight,
   And shrill the women shriek’d, as in their flight
Shriek the wild cranes, when overhead they spy
   Between the dusky cloud-land and the bright
Blue air, an eagle stooping from the sky.

XXVII.

And now the red glare of the burning shone
   On deeds so dire the pure Gods might not bear,
Save Ares only, long to look thereon,
   But with a cloud they darken’d all the air.
   And, even then, within the temple fair
Of chaste Athene, did Cassandra cower,
   And cried aloud an unavailing prayer;
For Aias was the master in that hour.

XXVIII.

Man’s lust won what a God’s love might not win,
   And heroes trembled, and the temple floor
Shook, when one cry went up into the din,
   And shamed the night to silence; then the roar
   Of war and fire wax’d great as heretofore,
Till each roof fell, and every palace gate
   Was shatter’d, and the King’s blood shed; nor more
Remain’d to do, for Troy was desolate.

XXIX.

Then dawn drew near, and changed to clouds of rose
   The dreadful smoke that clung to Ida’s head;
But Ilios was ashes, and the foes
   Had left the embers and the plunder’d dead;
   And down the steep they drove the prey, and sped
Back to the swift ships, with a captive train, —
   While Menelaus, slow, with drooping head,
Follow’d, like one lamenting, through the plain.

XXX.

Where death might seem the surest, by the gate
   Of Priam, where the spears raged, and the tall
Towers on the foe were falling, sought he fate
   To look on Helen once, and then to fall,
   Nor see with living eyes the end of all,
What time the host their vengeance should fulfil,
   And cast her from the cliff below the wall,
Or burn her body on the windy hill.

XXXI.

But Helen found he never, where the flame
   Sprang to the roofs, and Helen ne'er he found
Where flock'd the wretched women in their shame
   The helpless altars of the Gods around,
   Nor lurk'd she in deep chambers underground,
Where the priests trembled o'er their hidden gold,
   Nor where the armed feet of foes resound
In shrines to silence consecrate of old.

XXXII.

So wounded to his hut and wearily
   Came Menelaus; and he bow'd his head
Beneath the lintel neither fair nor high;
   And, lo! Queen Helen lay upon his bed,
   Flush'd like a child in sleep, and rosy-red,
And at his footstep did she wake and smile,
   And spake: "My lord, how hath thy hunting sped,
Methinks that I have slept a weary while!"

XXXIII.

For Aphrodite made the past unknown
   To Helen, as of old, when in the dew
Of that fair dawn the net was round her thrown:
   Nay, now no memory of Troy brake through
   The mist that veil'd from her sweet eyes and blue
The dreadful days and deeds all over-past,
   And gladly did she greet her lord anew,
And gladly would her arms have round him cast.

XXXIV.

Then leap’d she up in terror, for he stood
   Before her, like a lion of the wild,
His rusted armour all bestain’d with blood,
   His mighty hands with blood of men defiled,
   And strange was all she saw: the spears, the piled
Raw skins of slaughter’d beasts with many a stain;
   And low he spake, and bitterly he smiled,
“The hunt is ended, and the spoil is ta’en.”

XXXV.

No more he spake; for certainly he deem’d
   That Aphrodite brought her to that place,
And that of her loved archer Helen dream’d,
   Of Paris; at that thought the mood of grace
   Died in him, and he hated her fair face,
And bound her hard, not slacking for her tears;
   Then silently departed for a space,
To seek the ruthless counsel of his peers.

XXXVI.

Now all the Kings were feasting in much joy,
   Seated or couch’d upon the carpets fair
That late had strown the palace floors of Troy,
   And lovely Trojan ladies served them there,
   And meat from off the spits young princes bare;
But Menelaus burst among them all,
   Strange, ‘mid their revelry, and did not spare,
But bade the Kings a sudden council call.

XXXVII.

To mar their feast the Kings had little will,
   Yet did they as he bade, in grudging wise,
And heralds call'd the host unto the hill
   Heap'd of sharp stones, where ancient Ilus lies.
   And forth the people flock'd, as throng'd as flies
That buzz about the milking-pails in spring,
   When life awakens under April skies,
And birds from dawning into twilight sing.

XXXVIII.

Then Helen through the camp was driven and thrust,
   Till even the Trojan women cried in glee,
"Ah, where is she in whom thou put'st thy trust,
   The Queen of love and laughter, where is she?
   Behold the last gift that she giveth thee,
Thou of the many loves! to die alone,
   And round thy flesh for robes of price to be
The cold close-clinging raiment of sharp stone."

XXXIX.

Ah, slowly through that trodden field and bare
   They pass'd, where scarce the daffodil might spring,
For war had wasted all, but in the air
   High overhead the mounting lark did sing;
   Then all the army gather'd in a ring
Round Helen, round their torment, trapp'd at last,
   And many took up mighty stones to fling
From shards and flints on Ilus' barrow cast.

XL.

Then Menelaus to the people spoke,

And swift his wing’d words came as whirling snow,
“Oh ye that overlong have borne the yoke,
Behold the very fountain of your woe!
For her ye left your dear homes long ago,
On Argive valley or Boeotian plain;
But now the black ships rot from stern to prow,
Who knows if ye shall see your own again?

XLI.

“Ay, and if home ye win, ye yet may find,
Ye that the winds waft, and the waters bear
To Argos! ye are quite gone out of mind;
Your fathers, dear and old, dishonour’d there;
Your children deem you dead, and will not share
Their lands with you; on mainland or on isle,
Strange men are wooing now the women fair,
And love doth lightly woman’s heart beguile.

XLII.

“These sorrows hath this woman wrought alone:
So fall upon her straightway that she die,
And clothe her beauty in a cloak of stone!”
He spake, and truly deem’d to hear her cry
And see the sharp flints straight and deadly fly;
But each man stood and mused on Helen’s face,
And her undream’d-of beauty, brought so nigh
On that bleak plain, within that ruin’d place.

LXIII.

And as in far off days that were to be,
The sense of their own sin did men constrain,

That they must leave the sinful woman free
   Who, by their law, had verily been slain,
   So Helen’s beauty made their anger vain,
And one by one his gather’d flints let fall;
   And like men shamed they stole across the plain,
Back to the swift ships and their festival.

XLIV.

But Menelaus look’d on her and said,
   “Hath no man then condemn’d thee, — is there none
To shed thy blood for all that thou hast shed,
   To wreak on thee the wrongs that thou hast done.
   Nay, as mine own soul liveth, there is one
That will not set thy barren beauty free,
   But slay thee to Poseidon and the Sun
Before a ship Achaian takes the sea!”

XLV.

Therewith he drew his sharp sword from his thigh
   As one intent to slay her: but behold,
A sudden marvel shone across the sky!
   A cloud of rosy fire, a flood of gold,
   And Aphrodite came from forth the fold
Of wondrous mist, and sudden at her feet
   Lotus and crocus on the trampled wold
Brake, and the slender hyacinth was sweet.

XLVI.

Then fell the point that never bloodless fell
   When spear bit harness in the battle din,
For Aphrodite spake, and like a spell

   Wrought her sweet voice persuasive, till within
   His heart there lived no memory of sin,
No thirst for vengeance more, but all grew plain,
   And wrath was molten in desire to win
The golden heart of Helen once again.

XLVII.

Then Aphrodite vanish’d as the day
   Passes, and leaves the darkling earth behind;
And overhead the April sky was grey,
   But Helen’s arms about her lord were twined,
   And his round her as clingingly and kind,
As when sweet vines and ivy in the spring
   Join their glad leaves, nor tempests may unbind
The woven boughs, so lovingly they cling.

*

XLVIII.

Noon long was over-past, but sacred night
   Beheld them not upon the Ilian shore;
Nay, for about the waning of the light
   Their swift ships wander’d on the waters hoar,
   Nor stay’d they the Olympians to adore,
So eagerly they left that cursed land,
   But many a toil, and tempests great and sore,
Befell them ere they won the Argive strand.

XLIX.

To Cyprus and Phoenicia wandering
   They came, and many a ship, and many a man

They lost, and perish’d many a precious thing
   While bare before the stormy North they ran,
   And further far than when their quest began
From Argos did they seem, — a weary while, —
   Becalm’d in sultry seas Egyptian,
A long day’s voyage from the mouths of Nile.

L.

But there the Gods had pity on them, and there
   The ancient Proteus taught them how to flee
From that so distant deep, — the fowls of air
   Scarce in one year can measure out that sea;
   Yet first within Aegyptus must they be,
And hecatombs must offer, — quickly then
   The Gods abated of their jealousy,
Wherewith they scourge the negligence of men.

LI.

And strong and fair the south wind blew, and fleet
   Their voyaging, so merrily they fled
To win that haven where the waters sweet
   Of clear Eurotas with the brine are wed,
   And swift their chariots and their horses sped
To pleasant Lacedaemon, lying low
   Grey in the shade of sunset, but the head
Of tall Taygetus like fire did glow.

LII.

And what but this is sweet: at last to win
   The fields of home, that change not while we change;
To hear the birds their ancient song begin;

   To wander by the well-loved streams that range
   Where not one pool, one moss-clad stone is strange,
Nor seem we older than long years ago,
   Though now beneath the grey roof of the grange
The children dwell of them we used to know?

LIII.

Came there no trouble in the later days
   To mar the life of Helen, when the old
Crowns and dominions perish'd, and the blaze
   Lit by returning Heraclidae roll'd
   Through every vale and every happy fold
Of all the Argive land? Nay, peacefully
   Did Menelaus and the Queen behold
The counted years of mortal life go by.

LIV.

"Death ends all tales," but this he endeth not;
   They grew not grey within the valley fair
Of hollow Lacedaemon, but were brought
   To Rhadamanthus of the golden hair,
   Beyond the wide world's end; ah never there
Comes storm nor snow; all grief is left behind,
   And men immortal, in enchanted air,
Breathe the cool current of the Western wind.

LV.

But Helen was a Saint in Heathendom,
   A kinder Aphrodite; without fear
Maidens and lovers to her shrine would come
   In fair Therapnae, by the waters clear

   Of swift Eurotas; gently did she hear
All prayers of love, and not unheeded came
   The broken supplication, and the tear
Of man or maiden overweigh’d with shame.

O’er Helen’s shrine the grass is growing green,
   In desolate Therapnae; none the less
Her sweet face now unworshipp’d and unseen
   Abides the symbol of all loveliness,
   Of Beauty ever stainless in the stress
Of warring lusts and fears; — and still divine,
   Still ready with immortal peace to bless
Them that with pure hearts worship at her shrine.

NOTE

[In this story in rhyme of the fortunes of Helen, the theory that she was an unwilling victim of the Gods has been preferred. Many of the descriptions of manners are versified from the Iliad and the Odyssey. The description of the events after the death of Hector, and the account of the sack of Troy, is chiefly borrowed from Quintus Smyrnaeus.]

The character and history of Helen of Troy have been conceived of in very different ways by poets and mythologists. In attempting to trace the chief current of ancient traditions about Helen, we cannot really get further back than the Homeric poems, the Iliad and Odyssey. Philological conjecture may assure us that Helen, like most of the characters of old romance, is “merely the Dawn,” or Light, or some other bright being carried away by Paris, who represents Night, or Winter, or the Cloud, or some other power of darkness. Without discussing these ideas, it may be said that the Greek poets (at all events before allegorical explanations of mythology came in, about five hundred years before Christ) regarded Helen simply as a woman of wonderful beauty. Homer was not thinking of the Dawn, or the Cloud when he described Helen among the Elders on the Ilian walls, or repeated her lament over the dead body of Hector. The Homeric poems are our oldest literary documents about Helen, but it is probable enough that the poet has modified and purified more ancient traditions which still survive in various fragments of Greek legend. In Homer Helen is always the daughter of Zeus. Isocrates tells us (“Helena,” 211 b) that “while many of the demigods were children of Zeus, he thought the paternity of none of his daughters worth claiming, save that of Helen only.” In Homer, then, Helen is the daughter of Zeus, but Homer says nothing of the famous legend which makes Zeus assume the form of a swan to woo the mother of Helen. Unhomeric as this myth is, we may regard it as extremely ancient. Very similar tales of pursuit and metamorphosis, for amatory or other purposes, among the old legends of Wales, and in the “Arabian Nights,” as well as in the myths of Australians and Red Indians. Again, the belief that different families of mankind descend from animals, as from the Swan, or from gods in the shape of animals, is found in every quarter of the world, and among the rudest races. Many Australian natives of to-day claim descent, like the royal house of Sparta, from the Swan. The Greek myths hesitated as to whether Nemesis or Leda was the bride of the

Swan. Homer only mentions Leda among “the wives and daughters of mighty men,” whose ghosts Odysseus beheld in Hades: “And I saw Leda, the famous bedfellow of Tyndareus, who bare to Tyndareus two sons, hardy of heart, Castor, tamer of steeds, and the boxer Polydeuces.” These heroes Helen, in the Iliad (iii. 238), describes as her mother’s sons. Thus, if Homer has any distinct view on the subject, he holds that Leda is the mother of Helen by Zeus, of the Dioscuri by Tyndareus.

Greek ideas as to the character of Helen varied with the various moods of Greek literature. Homer’s own ideas about his heroine are probably best expressed in the words with which Priam greets her as she appears among the assembled elders, who are watching the Argive heroes from the wall of Troy:— “In nowise, dear child, do I blame thee; nay, the Gods are to blame, who have roused against me the woful war of the Achaeans.” Homer, like Priam, throws the guilt of Helen on the Gods, but it is not very easy to understand exactly what he means by saying “the Gods are to blame.” In the first place, Homer avoids the psychological problems in which modern poetry revels, by attributing almost all changes of the moods of men to divine inspiration. Thus when Achilles, in a famous passage of the first book of the Iliad, puts up his half-drawn sword in the sheath, and does not slay Agamemnon, Homer assigns his repentance to the direct influence of Athene. Again, he says in the Odyssey, about Clytemnestra, that “she would none of the foul deed;” that is of the love of Aegisthus, till “the doom of the Gods bound her to her ruin.” So far the same excuse is made for the murderous Clytemnestra as for the amiable Helen. Again, Homer is, in the strictest sense, and in strong contrast to the Greek tragedians and to Virgil, a chivalrous poet. It would probably be impossible to find a passage in which he speaks harshly or censoriously of the conduct of any fair and noble lady. The sordid treachery of Eriphyle, who sold her lord for gold, wins for her the epithet “hateful;” and Achilles, in a moment of strong grief, applies a term of abhorrence to Helen. But Homer is too chivalrous to judge the life of any lady, and only shows the other side of the chivalrous character — its cruelty to persons not of noble birth — in describing the “foul death” of the waiting women of Penelope. “God forbid that I should take these women’s lives by a clean death,” says Telemachus (Odyssey, xxii. 462). So “about all their necks nooses were cast that they might die by the death most pitiful. And they writhed with their feet for a little space, but for no long while.” In trying to understand Homer’s estimate of Helen, therefore, we must make allowance for his theory of divine intervention, and for his chivalrous judgment of ladies. But there are two passages in the Iliad which may be taken as indicating Homer's opinion that Helen was literally a victim, an unwilling victim, of Aphrodite, and that she was carried away by force a captive from Lacedaemon. These passages are in the Iliad, ii. 356, 590. In the former text Nestor says, "let none be eager to return home ere he has couched with a Trojan's wife, and *avenged the longings and sorrows of Helen*" — Ä¯ÃÃ¸±¹ ´˜»½·Â ¿Á¼·¼±Ä± Äµ ÃÄ¿½±Ç±Â Äµ. It is thus that Mr. Gladstone, a notable champion of Helen's, would render this passage, and the same interpretation was favoured by the ancient "Separatists" (Chorizontes), who wished to prove that the Iliad and Odyssey were by different authors; but many authorities prefer to translate "to avenge our labours and sorrows for Helen's sake"— "to avenge all that we have endured in the attempt to win back Helen." Thus the evidence of this passage is ambiguous. The fairer way to seek for Homer's real view of Helen is to examine all the passages in which she occurs. The result will be something like this: — Homer sees in Helen a being of the rarest personal charm and grace of character; a woman who imputes to herself guilt much greater than the real measure of her offence. She is ever gentle except with the Goddess who betrayed her, and the unworthy lover whose lot she is compelled to share. Against them her helpless anger breaks out in flashes of eloquent scorn. Homer was apparently acquainted with the myth of Helen's capture by Theseus, a myth illustrated in the decorations of the coffer of Cypselus. But we first see Helen, the cause of the war, when Menelaus and Paris are about to fight their duel for her sake, in the tenth year of the Leaguer (Iliad, iii. 121). Iris is sent to summon Helen to the walls. She finds Helen in her chamber, weaving at a mighty loom, and embroidering on tapestry the adventures of the siege — the battles of horse-taming Trojans and bronze-clad Achaeans. The message of Iris renews in Helen's heart "a sweet desire for her lord and her own city, and them that begat her;" so, draped in silvery white, Helen goes with her three maidens to the walls. There, above the gate, like some king in the Old Testament, Paris sits among his counsellors, and they are all amazed at Helen's beauty; "no marvel is it that Trojans and Achaeans suffer long and weary toils for such a woman, so wondrous like to the immortal goddesses." Then Priam, assuring Helen that he holds her blameless, bids her name to him her kinsfolk and the other Achaean warriors. In her reply, Helen displays that grace of penitence which is certainly not often found in ancient literature:— "Would that evil death had been my choice, when I followed thy son, and left my bridal bower and my kin, and my daughter dear, and the maidens of like age with me." Agamemnon she calls, "the husband's brother of me shameless; alas, that such an one should be." She names many of the warriors, but misses her brothers Castor and Polydeuces, "own brothers of mine, one mother bare us. Either they followed not from pleasant Lacedaemon, or hither they followed in swift ships, but now they have no heart to go down into the battle for dread of the shame and many reproaches that are mine.”

“So spake she, but already the life-giving earth did cover them, there in Lacedaemon, in their own dear country.”

Menelaus and Paris fought out their duel, the Trojan was discomfited, but was rescued from death and carried to Helen’s bower by Aphrodite. Then the Goddess came in disguise to seek Helen on the wall, and force her back into the arms of her defeated lover. Helen turned on the Goddess with an abruptness and a force of sarcasm and invective which seem quite foreign to her gentle nature. “Wilt thou take me further yet to some city of Phrygia or pleasant Maeonia, if there any man is dear to thee . . . Nay, go thyself and sit down by Paris, and forswear the paths of the Gods, but ever lament for him and cherish him, till he make thee his wife, yea, or perchance his slave, but to him will I never go.” But this anger of Helen is soon overcome by fear, when the Goddess, in turn, waxes wrathful, and Helen is literally driven by threats— “for the daughter of Zeus was afraid,” — into the arms of Paris. Yet even so she taunts her lover with his cowardice, a cowardice which she never really condones. In the sixth book of the Iliad she has been urging him to return to the war. She then expresses her penitence to Hector, “would that the fury of the wind had borne me afar to the mountains, or the wave of the roaring sea — ere ever these ill deeds were done!” In this passage too, she prophesies that her fortunes will be ±¿¯´¹¼¿¹ µÃÃ¿¼½¿¹Ã¹ famous in the songs, good or evil, of men unborn. In the last book of the Iliad we meet Helen once more, as she laments over the dead body of Hector. “‘Never, in all the twenty years since I came hither, have I heard from thee one taunt or one evil word: nay, but if any other rebuked me in the halls, any one of my husband’s brothers, or of their sisters, or their wives, or the mother of my husband (but the king was ever gentle to me as a father), then wouldst thou restrain them with thy loving kindness and thy gentle speech.’ So spake she; weeping.”

In the Odyssey, Helen is once more in Lacedaemon, the honoured but still penitent wife of Menelaus. How they became reconciled (an extremely difficult point in the story), there is nothing in Homer to tell us.

Sir John Lubbock has conjectured that in the morals of the heroic age Helen was not really regarded as guilty. She was lawfully married, by "capture," to Paris. Unfortunately for this theory there is abundant proof that, in the heroic age, wives were nominally *bought* for so many cattle, or given as a reward for great services. There is no sign of marriage by capture, and, again, marriage by capture is a savage institution which applies to unmarried women, not to women already wedded, as Helen was to Menelaus. Perhaps the oldest evidence we have for opinion about the later relations of Helen and Menelaus, is derived from Pausanias's (174. a.d.) description of the Chest of Cypselus. This ancient coffer, a work of the seventh century, b.c., was still preserved at Olympia, in the time of Pausanias. On one of the bands of cedar or of ivory, was represented (Pausanias, v. 18), "Menelaus with a sword in his hand, rushing on to kill Helen — clearly at the sacking of Ilios." How Menelaus passed from a desire to kill Helen to his absolute complacency in the Odyssey, Homer does not tell us. According to a statement attributed to Stesichorus (635, 554, b.c.?), the army of the Achaeans purposed to stone Helen, but was overawed and compelled to relent by her extraordinary beauty: "when they beheld her, they cast down their stones on the ground." It may be conjectured that the reconciliation followed this futile attempt at punishing a daughter of Zeus. Homer, then, leaves us without information about the adventures of Helen, between the sack of Tiny and the reconciliation with Menelaus. He hints that she was married to Deiphobus, after the death of Paris, and alludes to the tradition that she mimicked the voices of the wives of the heroes, and so nearly tempted them to leave their ambush in the wooden horse. But in the fourth book of the Odyssey, when Telemachus visits Lacedaemon, he finds Helen the honoured wife of Menelaus, rich in the marvellous gifts bestowed on her, in her wanderings from Troy, by the princes of Egypt.

"While yet he pondered these things in his mind and in his heart, Helen came forth from her fragrant vaulted chamber, like Artemis of the golden arrows; and with her came Adraste and set for her the well-wrought chair, and Alcippe bare a rug of soft wool, and Phylo bare a silver basket which Alcandre gave her, the wife of Polybus, who dwelt in Thebes of Egypt, where is the chiefest store of wealth in the houses. He gave two silver baths to Menelaus, and tripods twain, and ten talents of gold. And besides all this, his wife bestowed on Helen lovely gifts; a golden distaff did she give, and a silver basket with wheels beneath, and the rims thereof were finished with gold. This it was that the handmaid Phylo bare and set beside her, filled with dressed yarn, and across it was laid a distaff charged with wool of violet blue. So Helen sat her down in the chair, and beneath was a footstool for the feet.”

When the host and guests begin to weep the ready tears of the heroic age over the sorrows of the past, and dread of the dim future, Helen comforts them with a magical potion.

“Then Helen, daughter of Zeus, turned to new thoughts. Presently she cast a drug into the wine whereof they drank, a drug to lull all pain and anger, and bring forgetfulness of every sorrow. Whoso should drink a draught thereof, when it is mingled in the bowl, on that day he would let no tear fall down his cheeks, not though his mother and his father died, not though men slew his brother or dear son with the sword before his face, and his own eyes beheld it. Medicines of such virtue and so helpful had the daughter of Zeus, which Polydamna, the wife of Thon, had given her, a woman of Egypt, where Earth the grain-giver yields herbs in greatest plenty, many that are healing in the cup, and many baneful.”

So Telemachus was kindly entertained by Helen and Menelaus, and when he left them it was not without a gift.

“And Helen stood by the coffers wherein were her robes of curious needlework which she herself had wrought. Then Helen, the fair lady, lifted one and brought it out, the widest and most beautifully embroidered of all, and it shone like a star, and lay far beneath the rest.”

Presently, we read, “Helen of the fair face came up with the robe in her hands, and spake: ‘Lo! I too give thee this gift, dear child, a memorial of the hands of Helen, for thy bride to wear upon the day of thy desire, even of thy marriage. But meanwhile let it lie with thy mother in her chamber. And may joy go with thee to thy well-builded house, and thine own country.’”

Helen’s last words, in Homer, are words of good omen, her prophecy to Telemachus that Odysseus shall return home after long wanderings, and take vengeance on the rovers. We see Helen no more, but Homer does not leave us in doubt as to her later fortunes. He quotes the prophecy which Proteus, the ancient one of the sea, delivered to Menelaus: —

“But thou, Menelaus, son of Zeus, art not ordained to die and meet thy fate in Argos, the pasture-land of horses, but the deathless gods will convey thee to the Elysian plain and the world’s end, where is Rhadamanthus of the fair hair, where life is easiest for men. No snow is there, nor yet great storm, nor any rain; but alway ocean sendeth forth the breeze of the shrill West to blow cool on men: yea, for thou hast Helen to wife, and thereby they deem thee to be son of Zeus.”

We must believe, with Isocrates, that Helen was translated, with her lord, to that field of Elysium, “where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow.” This version of the end of Helen’s history we have adopted, but many other legends were known in Greece. Pausanias tells us that, in a battle between the Crotoniats and the Locrians, one Leonymus charged the empty space in the Locrian line, which was entrusted to the care of the ghost of Aias. Leonymus was wounded by the invisible spear of the hero, and could not be healed of the hurt. The Delphian oracle bade him seek the Isle of Leuke in the Euxine Sea, where Aias would appear to him, and heal him. When Leonymus returned from Leuke he told how Achilles dwelt there with his ancient comrades, and how he was now wedded to Helen of Troy. Yet the local tradition of Lacedaemon showed the sepulchre of Helen in Therapnae. According to a Rhodian legend (adopted by the author of the “Epic of Hades”), Helen was banished from Sparta by the sons of Menelaus, came wandering to Rhodes, and was there strangled by the servants of the queen Polyxo, who thus avenged the death of her husband at Troy. It is certain, as we learn both from Herodotus (vi. 61) and from Isocrates, that Helen was worshipped in Therapnae. In the days of Ariston the king, a deformed child was daily brought by her nurse to the shrine of Helen. And it is said that, as the nurse was leaving the shrine, a woman appeared unto her, and asked what she bore in her arms, who said, “she bore a child.” Then the woman said, “show it to me,” which the nurse refused, for the parents of the child had forbidden that she should be seen of any. But the woman straitly commanding that the child should be shown, and the other beholding her eagerness, at length the nurse showed the child, and the woman caressed its face and said, “she shall be the fairest woman in Sparta.” And from that day the fashion of its countenance was changed, “and the child became the fairest of all the Spartan women.”

It is a characteristic of Greek literature that, with the rise of democracy, the old epic conception of the ancient heroes altered. We can scarcely recognize the Odysseus of Homer in the Odysseus of Sophocles. The kings are regarded by the tragedians with some of the distrust and hatred which the unconstitutional tyrants of Athens had aroused. Just as the later *chansons de geste* of France, the poems written in an age of feudal opposition to central authority, degraded heroes like Charles, so rhetorical, republican, and sophistical Greece put its quibbles into the lips of Agamemnon and Helen, and slandered the stainless and fearless Patroclus and Achilles.

The Helen of Euripides, in the “Troades,” is a pettifogging sophist, who pleads her cause to Menelaus with rhetorical artifice. In the “Helena,” again, Euripides quite deserts the Homeric traditions, and adopts the late myths which denied that Helen ever went to Troy. She remained in Egypt, and Achaeans and Trojans fought for a mere shadow, formed by the Gods out of clouds and wind. In the “Cyclops” of Euripides, a satirical drama, the cynical giant is allowed to speak of Helen in a strain of coarse banter. Perhaps the essay of Isocrates on Helen may be regarded as a kind of answer to the attacks of several speakers in the works of the tragedians. Isocrates defends Helen simply on the plea of her beauty: “To Heracles Zeus gave strength, to Helen beauty, which naturally rules over even strength itself.” Beauty, he declares, the Gods themselves consider the noblest thing in the world, as the Goddesses showed when they contended for the prize of loveliness. And so marvellous, says Isocrates, was the beauty of Helen, that for her glory Zeus did not spare his beloved son, Sarpedon; and Thetis saw Achilles die, and the Dawn bewailed her Memnon. “Beauty has raised more mortals to immortality than all the other virtues together.” And that Helen is now a Goddess, Isocrates proves by the fact that the sacrifices offered to her in Therapnae, are such as are given, not to heroes, but to immortal Gods.

When Rome took up the legends of Greece, she did so in no chivalrous spirit. Few poets are less chivalrous than Virgil; no hero has less of chivalry than his pious and tearful Aeneas. In the second book of the Aeneid, the pious one finds Helen hiding in the shrine of Vesta, and determines to slay “the common curse of Troy and of her own country.” There is no glory, he admits, in murdering a woman: —

Extinxisse nefas tamen et sumpsisse merentis
Laudabor poenas, animumqne explesse juvabit

Ultricis flammae, et cineres satiasse meorum.

But Venus appears and rescues the unworthy lover of Dido from the crowning infamy which he contemplates. Hundreds of years later, Helen found a worthier poet in Quintus Smyrnaeus, who in a late age sang the swan-song of Greek epic minstrelsy. It is thus that (in the fourth century a.d.) Quintus describes Helen, as she is led with the captive women of Ilios, to the ships of the Achaeans:— “Now Helen lamented not, but shame dwelt in her dark eyes, and reddened her lovely cheeks, . . . while around her the people marvelled as they beheld the flawless grace and winsome beauty of the woman, and none dared upbraid her with secret taunt or open rebuke. Nay, as she had been a Goddess they beheld her gladly, for dear and desired was she in their sight. And as when their own country appeareth to men long wandering on the sea, and they, being escaped from death and the deep, gladly put forth their hands to greet their own native place; even so all the Danaans were glad at the sight of her, and had no more memory of all their woful toil, and the din of war: such a spirit did Cytherea put into their hearts, out of favour to fair Helen and father Zeus.” Thus Quintus makes amends for the trivial verses in which Coluthus describes the flight of a frivolous Helen with an effeminate Paris.

To follow the fortunes of Helen through the middle ages would demand much space and considerable research. The poets who read Dares Phrygius believed, with the scholar of Dr. Faustus, that “Helen of Greece was the admirablest lady that ever lived.” When English poetry first found the secret of perfect music, her sweetest numbers were offered by Marlowe at the shrine of Helen. The speech of Faustus is almost too hackneyed to be quoted, and altogether too beautiful to be omitted: —

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium!
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
Her lips suck forth my soul! see where it flies;
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again;
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in those lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.

*

Oh thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

The loves of Faustus and Helen are readily allegorized into the passion of the Renaissance for classical beauty, the passion to which all that is not beauty seemed very dross. This is the idea of the second part of “Faust,” in which Helen once more became, as she prophesied in the Iliad, a song in the mouths of later men. Almost her latest apparition in English poetry, is in the “Hellenics” of Landor. The sweetness of the character of Helen; the tragedy of the death of Corythus by the hand of his father Paris; and the omnipotence of beauty and charm which triumph over the wrath of Menelaus, are the subjects of Landor’s verse. But Helen, as a woman, has hardly found a nobler praise, in three thousand years, than Helen, as a child, has received from Mr. Swinburne in “Atalanta in Calydon.” Meleager is the speaker: —

Even such (for sailing hither I saw far hence,
And where Eurotas hollows his moist rock
Nigh Sparta, with a strenuous-hearted stream)
Even such I saw their sisters; one swan-white,
The little Helen, and less fair than she
Fair Clytemnestra, grave as pasturing fawns
Who feed and fear some arrow; but at whiles,
As one smitten with love or wrung with joy,
She laughs and lightens with her eyes, and then
Weeps; whereat Helen, having laughed, weeps too,
And the other chides her, and she being chid speaks naught,
But cheeks and lips and eyelids kisses her
Laughing, so fare they, as in their bloomless bud
And full of unblown life, the blood of gods.

There is all the irony of Fate in Althaeas’ reply

Sweet days befall them and good loves and lords,
Tender and temperate honours of the hearths,
Peace, and a perfect life and blameless bed.

THE ILIAD

The Iliad is the first epic poem in dactylic hexameters, which is traditionally attributed to the Greek poet Homer. Set in the Trojan War, the ten-year siege of the city of Troy (Ilium) by an alliance of Greek states, it tells of the battles and events during the weeks of a quarrel between King Agamemnon and the warrior Achilles. Although the story covers only a few weeks in the final year of the war, the Iliad mentions or alludes to many of the Greek legends about the siege. Along with the Odyssey, also attributed to Homer, the Iliad is among the oldest extant works of Western literature, and its written version is usually dated to around the eighth century BC. The epic poem contains over 15,000 lines and is often considered to be the beginning of fine literature.

In 1883, Lang collaborated with E. Myers and Walter Leaf to write this scholarly prose translation of Homer’s great epic.

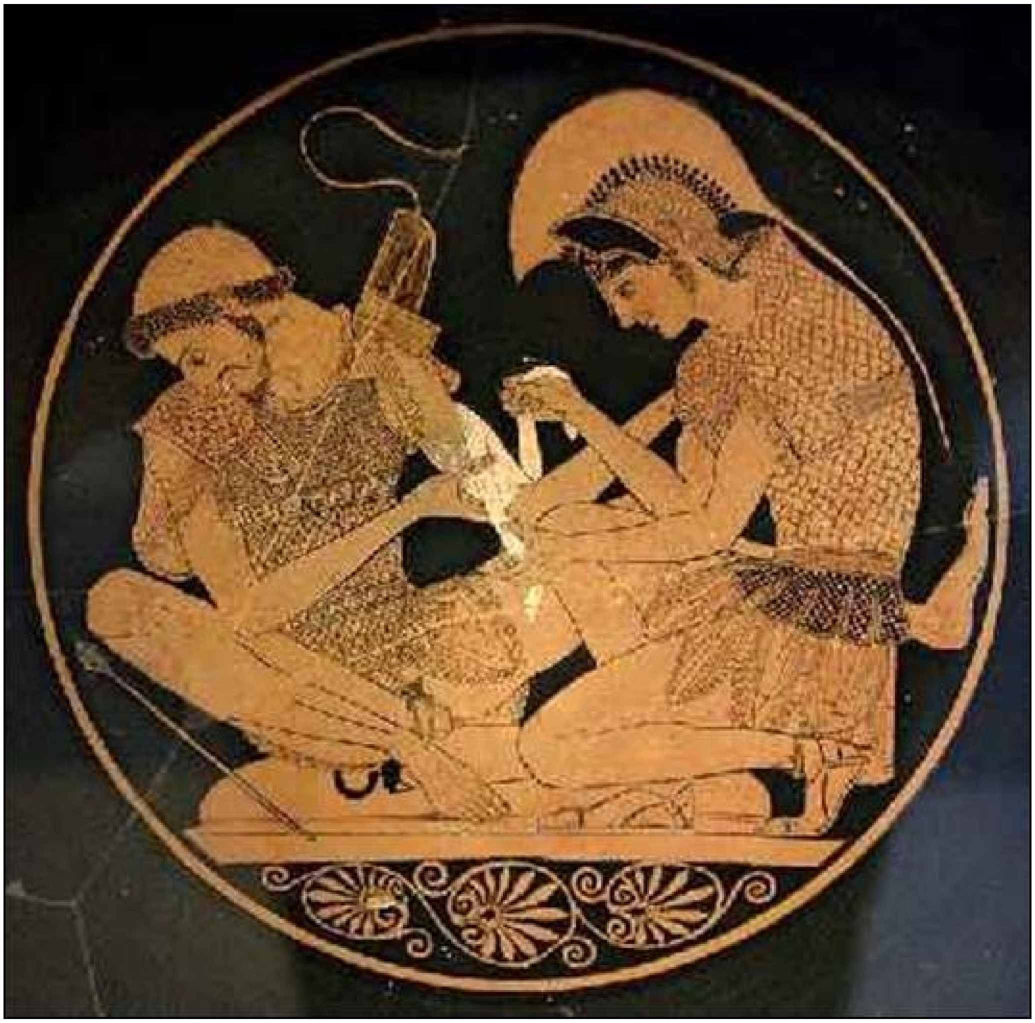

Achilles tending the wounded Patroclus

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PREFATORY NOTE

The execution of this version of the ILIAD has been entrusted to the three Translators in the following three parts:

Books I. - IX. . . . . W. Leaf.
Books X. - XVI. . . . . A. Lang.
Books XVII. - XXIV. . . . . E. Myers.

Each Translator is therefore responsible for his own portion; but the whole has been revised by all three Translators, and the rendering of passages or phrases recurring in more than one portion has been determined after deliberation in common. Even in these, however, a certain elasticity has been deemed desirable.

On a few doubtful points, though very rarely, the opinion of two of the translators has had to be adopted to the suppression of that held by the third. Thus, for instance, the Translator of Books X. - XVI. Would have preferred “c” and “us” to “k” and “os” in the spelling of all proper names.

The text followed has been that of La Roche (Leipzig, 1873), except where the adoption of a different reading has been specified in a footnote. Where the balance of evidence, external and internal, has seemed to the Translator to be against the genuineness of the passage, such passage has been enclosed in brackets.

The Translator of Books X. - XVI. Has to thank Mr. R.W. Raper, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, for his valuable aid in revising the proof-sheets of these Books.

NOTE TO REVISED EDITION

In the present Edition the translation has been carefully revised throughout, and numerous minor corrections have been made. The Notes at the end of the volume have been, with a few exceptions, omitted; one of the Translators hopes to publish very shortly a Companion to the Iliad for English readers, which will deal fully with most of the points therein referred to.

The use of square brackets has in this edition been restricted to passages where there is external evidence, such as absence from the best MSS., for believing in interpolation. One or two departures from this Rule are noticed in footnotes.

November 1891

The reader will perhaps also be helped by the following list of the Greek and Latin names of the gods and goddesses who play important parts in the narrative. When the Greek names are new to him, the corresponding Latin names may be more familiar.

Greek	Latin
Zeus.	Jupiter.
Hera.	Juno.
(Pallas) Athene.	Minerva.
Aphrodite.	Venus.
Poseidon.	Neptune.
Ares.	Mars.
Hephaestus.	Vulcan.

The sacred soil of Ilios is rent
With shaft and pit; foiled waters wander slow
Through plains where Simois and Scamander went
To war with gods and heroes long ago.
Not yet to dark Cassandra lying low
In rich Mycenae do the Fates relent;
The bones of Agamemnon are a show,
And ruined is his royal monument.
The dust and awful treasures of the dead
Hath learning scattered wide; but vainly thee,
Homer, she meteth with her Lesbian lead,
And strives to rend thy songs, too blind is she
To know the crown on thine immortal head
Of indivisible supremacy. A.L.
Athwart the sunrise of our western day
The form of great Achilles, high and clear,
Stands forth in arms, wielding the Pelian spear.
The sanguine tides of that immortal fray,
Swept on by gods, around him surge and sway,
Wherethrough the helms of many a warrior peer,
Strong men and swift, their tossing plumes uprear.
But stronger, swifter, goodlier he than they,
More awful, more divine. Yet mark anigh;
Some fiery pang hath rent his soul within,
Some hovering shade his brows encompasseth.
What gifts hath Fate for all his chivalry?
Even such as hearts heroic oftenest win;
Honour, a friend, anguish, untimely death.

E.M.

BOOK I.

How Agamemnon and Achilles fell out at the siege of Troy; and Achilles withdrew himself from battle, and won from Zeus a pledge that his wrong should be avenged on Agamemnon and the Achaians.

Sing, goddess, the wrath of Achilles Peleus' son, the ruinous wrath that brought on the Achaians woes innumerable, and hurled down into Hades many strong souls of heroes, and gave their bodies to be a prey to dogs and all winged fowls; and so the counsel of Zeus wrought out its accomplishment from the day when first strife parted Atreides king of men and noble Achilles.

Who among the gods set the twain at strife and variance? Apollo, the son of Leto and of Zeus; for he in anger at the king sent a sore plague upon the host, so that the folk began to perish, because Atreides had done dishonour to Chryses the priest. For the priest had come to the Achaians' fleet ships to win his daughter's freedom, and brought a ransom beyond telling; and bare in his hands the fillet of Apollo the Far-darter upon a golden staff; and made his prayer unto all the Achaians, and most of all to the two sons of Atreus, orderers of the host; "Ye sons of Atreus and all ye well-greaved Achaians, now may the gods that dwell in the mansions of Olympus grant you to lay waste the city of Priam, and to fare happily homeward; only set ye my dear child free, and accept the ransom in reverence to the son of Zeus, far-darting Apollo."

Then all the other Achaians cried assent, to reverence the priest and accept his goodly ransom; yet the thing pleased not the heart of Agamemnon son of Atreus, but he roughly sent him away, and laid stern charge upon him, saying: "Let me not find thee, old man, amid the hollow ships, whether tarrying now or returning again hereafter, lest the staff and fillet of the god avail thee naught. And her will I not set free; nay, ere that shall old age come on her in our house, in Argos, far from her native land, where she shall ply the loom and serve my couch. But depart, provoke me not, that thou mayest the rather go in peace."

So said he, and the old man was afraid and obeyed his word, and fared silently along the shore of the loud-sounding sea. Then went that aged man apart and prayed aloud to king Apollo, whom Leto of the fair locks bare: "Hear me, god of the silver bow, that standest over Chryse and holy Killa, and rulest Tenedos with might, O Smintheus! If ever I built a temple gracious in thine eyes, or if ever I burnt to thee fat flesh of thighs of bulls or goats, fulfil thou this my desire; let the Danaans pay by thine arrows for my tears."

So spake he in prayer, and Phoebus Apollo heard him, and came down from the peaks of Olympus wroth at heart, bearing on his shoulders his bow and covered quiver. And the arrows clanged upon his shoulders in wrath, as the god moved; and he descended like to night. Then he sate him aloof from the ships, and let an arrow fly; and there was heard a dread clanging of the silver bow. First did the assail the mules and fleet dogs, but afterward, aiming at the men his piercing dart, he smote; and the pyres of the dead burnt continually in multitude.

Now for nine days ranged the god’s shafts through the host; but on the tenth Achilles summoned the folk to assembly, for in his mind did goddess Hera of white arms put the thought, because she had pity on the Danaans when she beheld them perishing. Now when they had gathered and were met in assembly, then Achilles fleet of foot stood up and spake among them: “Son of Atreus, now deem I that we shall return wandering home again — if verily we might escape death — if war at once and pestilence must indeed ravage the Achaians. But come, let us now inquire of some soothsayer or priest, yea, or an interpreter of dreams — seeing that a dream too is of Zeus — who shall say wherefore Phoebus Apollo is so wroth, whether he blame us by reason of vow or hecatomb; if perchance he would accept the savour of lambs or unblemished goats, and so would take away the pestilence from us.”

So spake he and sate him down; and there stood up before them Kalchas son of Thestor, most excellent far of augurs, who knew both things that were and that should be and that had been before, and guided the ships of the Achaians to Ilios by his soothsaying that Phoebus Apollo bestowed on him. He of good intent made harangue and spake amid them: “Achilles, dear to Zeus, thou biddest me tell the wrath of Apollo, the king that smiteth afar. Therefore will I speak; but do thou make covenant with me, and swear that verily with all thy heart thou wilt aid me both by word and deed. For of a truth I deem that I shall provoke one that ruleth all the Argives with might, and whom the Achaians obey. For a king is more of might when he is wroth with a meaner man; even though for the one day he swallow his anger, yet doth he still keep his displeasure thereafter in his breast till he accomplish it. Consider thou, then, if thou wilt hold me safe.”

And Achilles fleet of foot made answer and spake to him: “Yea, be of good courage, speak whatever soothsaying thou knowest; for by Apollo dear to Zeus, him by whose worship thou, O Kalchas, declarest thy soothsaying to the Danaans, not even if thou mean Agamemnon, that now avoweth him to be greatest far of the Achaians.”

Then was the noble seer of good courage, and spake: “Neither by reason of a vow is he displeased, nor for any hecatomb, but for his priest’s sake to whom Agamemnon did despite, and set not his daughter free and accepted not the ransom; therefore hath the Far-darter brought woes upon us, yea, and will bring.

Nor will he ever remove the loathly pestilence from the Danaans till we have given the bright-eyed damsel to her father, unbought, unransomed, and carried a holy hecatomb to Chryse; then might we propitiate him to our prayer.”

So said he and sate him down, and there stood up before them the hero son of Atreus, wide-ruling Agamemnon, sore displeased; and his dark heart within him was greatly filled with anger, and his eyes were like flashing fire. To Kalchas first spake he with look of ill: “Thou seer of evil, never yet hast thou told me the thing that is pleasant. Evil is ever the joy of thy heart to prophesy, but never yet didst thou tell any good matter nor bring to pass. And now with soothsaying thou makest harangue among the Danaans, how that the Far-darter bringeth woes upon them because, forsooth, I would not take the goodly ransom of the damsel Chryseis, seeing I am the rather fain to keep her own self within mine house. Yea, I prefer her before Klytaimnestra my wedded wife; in no wise is she lacking beside her, neither in favour nor stature, nor wit nor skill. Yet for all this will I give her back, if that is better; rather would I see my folk whole than perishing. Only make ye me ready a prize of honour forthwith, lest I alone of all the Argives be disprized, which thing beseemeth not; for ye all behold how my prize is departing from me.”

To him then made answer fleet-footed goodly Achilles: “Most noble son of Atreus, of all men most covetous, how shall the great-hearted Achaians give thee a meed of honour? We know naught of any wealth of common store, but what spoil soe’er we took from captured cities hath been apportioned, and it beseemeth not to beg all this back from the folk. Nay, yield thou the damsel to the god, and we Achaians will pay thee back threefold and fourfold, if ever Zeus grant us to sack some well-walled town of Troy-land.”

To him lord Agamemnon made answer and said: “Not in this wise, strong as thou art, O godlike Achilles, beguile thou me by craft; thou shalt not outwit me nor persuade me. Dost thou wish, that thou mayest keep thy meed of honour, for me to sit idle in bereavement, and biddest me give her back? Nay, if the great-hearted Achaians will give me a meed suited to my mind, that the recompense be equal — but if they give it not, then I myself will go and take a meed of honour, thine be it or Aias’, or Odysseus’ that I will take unto me; wroth shall he be to whomsoever I come. But for this we will take counsel hereafter; now let us launch a black ship on the great sea, and gather picked oarsmen, and set therein a hecatomb, and embark Chryseis of the fair cheeks herself, and let one of our counsellors be captain, Aias or Idomeneus or goodly Odysseus, or thou, Peleides, most redoubtable of men, to do sacrifice for us and propitiate the Far-darter.”

Then Achilles fleet of foot looked at him scowling and said: “Ah me, thou clothed in shamelessness, thou of crafty mind, how shall any Achaian hearken to thy bidding with all his heart, be it to go a journey or to fight the foe amain? Not by reason of the Trojan spearmen came I hither to fight, for they have not wronged me; never did they harry mine oxen nor my horses, nor ever waste my harvest in deep-soiled Phthia, the nurse of men; seeing there lieth between us long space of shadowy mountains and sounding sea; but thee, thou shameless one, followed we hither to make thee glad, by earning recompense at the Trojans' hands for Menelaos and for thee, thou dog-face! All this thou threatenest thyself to take my meed of honour, wherefor I travailed much, and the sons of the Achaians gave it me. Never win I meed like unto thine, when the Achaians sack any populous citadel of Trojan men; my hands bear the brunt of furious war, but when the apportioning cometh then is thy meed far ampler, and I betake me to the ships with some small thing, yet my own, when I have fought to weariness. Now will I depart to Phthia, seeing it is far better to return home on my beaked ships; nor am I minded here in dishonour to draw thee thy fill of riches and wealth."

Then Agamemnon king of men made answer to him "yea, flee, if thy soul be set thereon. It is not I that beseech thee to tarry for my sake; I have others by my side that shall do me honour, and above all Zeus, lord of counsel. Most hateful art thou to me of all kings, fosterlings of Zeus; thou ever lovest strife and wars and fightings. Though thou be very strong, yet that I ween is a gift to thee of God. Go home with thy ships and company and lord it among thy Myrmidons; I reck not aught of thee nor care I for thine indignation; and all this shall be my threat to thee: seeing Phoebus Apollo bereaveth me of Chryseis, her with my ship and my company will I send back; and mine own self will I go to thy hut and take Briseis of the fair cheeks, even that thy meed of honour, that thou mayest well know how far greater I am than thou, and so shall another hereafter abhor to match his words with mine and rival me to my face."

So said he, and grief came upon Peleus' son, and his heart within his shaggy breast was divided in counsel, whether to draw his keen blade from his thigh and set the company aside and so slay Atreides, or to assuage his anger and curb his soul. While yet he doubted thereof in heart and soul, and was drawing his great sword from his sheath, Athene came to him from heaven, sent forth of the white-armed goddess Hera, whose heart loved both alike and had care for them. She stood behind Peleus' son and caught him by his golden hair, to him only visible, and of the rest no man beheld her. Then Achilles marvelled, and turned him about, and straightway knew Pallas Athene; and terribly shone her eyes. He spake to her winged words, and said: "Why now art thou come hither, thou daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus? Is it to behold the insolence of Agamemnon, son of Atreus. Yea, I will tell thee that I deem shall even be brought to pass: by his own haughtinesses shall he soon lose his life.”

Then the bright-eyed goddess Athene spake to him again: “I came from heaven to stay thine anger, if perchance thou wilt hearken to me, being sent forth if the white-armed goddess Hera, that loveth you twain alike and careth for you. Go to now, cease from strife, and let not thine hand draw the sword; yet with words indeed revile him, even as it shall come to pass. For thus will I say to thee, and so it shall be fulfilled; hereafter shall goodly gifts come to thee, yea in threefold measure, by reason of this despite; hold thou thine hand, and hearken to us.”

And Achilles fleet of foot made answer and said to her: “Goddess, needs must a man observe the saying of you twain, even though he be very wroth at heart; for so is the better way. Whosoever obeyeth the gods, to him they gladly hearken.”

He said, and stayed his heavy hand on the silver hilt, and thrust the great Sword back into the sheath, and was not disobedient to the saying of Athene; and she forthwith was departed to Olympus, to the other gods in the palace of aegis-bearing Zeus.

Then Peleus’ son spake again with bitter words to Atreus’ son, and in no wise ceased from anger: “Thou heavy with wine, thou with face of dog and heart of deer, never didst thou take courage to arm for battle among thy folk or to lay ambush with the princes of the Achaians; that to thee were even as death. Far better booteth it, for sooth, to seize for thyself the meed of honour of every man through the wide host of the Achaians that speaketh contrary to thee. Folk-devouring king! seeing thou rulest men of naught; else were this despite, thou son of Atreus, thy last. But I will speak my word to thee, and swear a mighty oath therewith: verily by this staff that shall no more put forth leaf or twig, seeing it hath for ever left its trunk among the hills, neither shall it grow green again, because the axe hath stripped it of leaves and bark; and now the sons of the Achaians that exercise judgment bear it in their hands, even they that by Zeus’ command watch over the traditions — so shall this be a mighty oath in thine eyes — verily shall longing for Achilles come hereafter upon the sons of the Achaians one and all; and then wilt thou in no wise avail to save them, for all thy grief, when multitudes fall dying before manslaying Hector. Then shalt thou tear thy heart within thee for anger that thou didst in no wise honour the best of the Achaians.”

So said Peleides and dashed to earth the staff studded with golden nails, and himself sat down; and over against him Atreides waxed furious. Then in their midst rose up Nestor, pleasant of speech, the clear-voiced orator of the Pylians, he from whose tongue flowed discourse sweeter than honey. Two generations of mortal men already had he seen perish, that had been of old time born and nurtured with him in goodly Pylos, and he was king among the third. He of good intent made harangue to them and said: “Alas, of a truth sore lamentation cometh upon the land of Achaia. Verily Priam would be glad and Priam’s sons, and all the Trojans would have great joy of heart, were they to hear all this tale of strife between you twain that are chiefest of the Danaans in counsel and chiefest in battle. Nay, hearken to me; ye are younger both than I. Of old days held I converse with better men even than you, and never did they make light of me. Yea, I never beheld such warriors, nor shall behold, as were Peirithoos and Dryas shepherd of the host and Kaineus and Exadios and godlike Polyphemos [and Theseus son of Aigeus, like to the Immortals]. Mightiest of growth were they of all men upon the earth; mightiest they were and with the mightiest fought they, even the wild tribes of the Mountain caves, and destroyed them utterly. And with these held I converse, being come from Pylos, from a distant land afar; for of themselves they summoned me. So I played my part in fight; and with them could none of men that are now on earth do battle. And they laid to heart my counsels and hearkened to my voice. Even so hearken ye also, for better is it to hearken. Neither do thou, though thou art very great, seize from him his damsel, but leave her as she was given at the first by the sons of the Achaians to be a meed of honour; nor do thou, son of Peleus, think to strive with a king, might against might; seeing that no common honour pertaineth to a sceptred king to whom Zeus apportioneth glory. Though thou be strong, and a goddess mother bare thee, yet his is the greater place, for he is king over more. And thou, Atreides, abate thy fury; nay, it is even I that beseech thee to let go thine anger with Achilles, who is made unto all the Achaians a mighty bulwark of evil war.”

Then lord Agamemnon answered and said: “Yea verily, old man, all this thou sayest is according unto right. But this fellow would be above all others, he would be lord of all and king among all and captain to all; wherein I deem none will hearken to him. Though the immortal gods made him a spearman, do they therefore put revilings in his mouth for him to utter?”

Then goodly Achilles brake in on him and answered: “Yea, for I should be called coward and man of naught, if I yield to thee in every matter, howsoe’er thou bid. To others give now thine orders, not to me [play master; for thee I deem that I shall no more obey]. This, moreover, will I say to thee, and do thou lay it to thy heart. Know that not by violence will I strive for the damsel’s sake, neither with thee nor any other; ye gave and ye have taken away. But of all else that is mine beside my fleet black ship, thereof shalt thou not take anything or bear it away against my will. Yea, go to now, make trial, that all these may see;

forthwith thy dark blood shall gush about my spear.”

Now when the twain had thus finished the battle of violent words, they stood up and dissolved the assembly beside the Achaian ships. Peleides went his way to his huts and trim ships with Menoitios’ son [Patroklos] and his company; and Atreides launched a fleet ship on the sea, and picked twenty oarsmen therefor, and embarked the hecatomb for the god, and brought Chryseis of the fair cheeks and set her therein; and Odysseus of many devices went to be their captain.

So these embarked and sailed over the wet ways; and Atreides bade the folk purify themselves. So they purified themselves, and cast the defilements into the sea and did sacrifice to Apollo, even unblemished hecatombs of bulls and goats, along the shore of the unvintaged sea; and the sweet savour arose to heaven eddying amid the smoke.

Thus were they busied throughout the host; but Agamemnon ceased not from the strife wherewith he threatened Achilles at the first; he spake to Talthybios and Eurybates that were his heralds and nimble squires: “Go ye to the tent of Achilles Peleus’ son, and take Briseis of the fair cheeks by the hand and lead her hither; and if he give her not, then will I myself go, and more with me, and seize her; and that will be yet more grievous for him.”

So saying he sent them forth, and laid stern charge upon them. Unwillingly went they along the beach of the unvintaged sea, and came to the huts and ships of the Myrmidons. Him found they sitting beside his hut and black ship; nor when he saw them was Achilles glad. So they in dread and reverence of the king stood, and spake to him no word, nor questioned him. But he knew in his heart, and spake to them: “All hail, ye heralds, messengers of Zeus and men, come near; ye are not guilty in my sight, but Agamemnon that sent you for the sake of the damsel Briseis. Go now, heaven-sprung Patroklos, bring forth the damsel, and give them her to lead away. Moreover, let the twain themselves be my witnesses before the face of the blessed gods and mortal men, yea and of him, that king untoward, against the day when there cometh need of me hereafter to save them all from shameful wreck. Of a truth he raveth with baleful mind, and hath not knowledge to look before and after, that so his Achaians might battle in safety beside their ships.”

So said he, and Patroklos hearkened to his dear comrade, and led forth from the hut Briseis of the fair cheeks, and gave them her to lead away. So these twain took their way back along the Achaians’ ships, and with them went the woman all unwilling. Then Achilles wept anon, and sat him down apart, aloof from his comrades on the beach of the grey sea, gazing across the boundless main; he stretched forth his hands and prayed instantly to his dear mother: “Mother, seeing thou didst of a truth bear me to so brief span of life, honour at the least ought the Olympian to have granted me, even Zeus that thundereth on high; but now doth he not honour me, no, not one whit. Verily Atreus’ son, wide-ruling Agamemnon, hath done me dishonour; for he hath taken away my meed of honour and keepeth her of his own violent deed.”

So spake he weeping, and his lady mother heard him as she sate in the sea-depths beside her aged sire. With speed arose she from the grey sea, like a mist, and sate her before the face of her weeping son, and stroked him with her hand, and spake and called on his name: “My child, why weepest thou? What sorrow hath entered into they heart? Speak it forth, hide it not in thy mind, that both may know it.”

Then with heavy moan Achilles fleet of foot spake to her: “Thou knowest it; why should I tell this to thee that knowest all! We had fared to Thebe, the holy city of Eetion, and laid it waste and carried hither all the spoils. So the sons of the Achaians divided among them all aright; and for Atreides they set apart Chryseis of the fair cheeks. But Chryses, priest of Apollo the Far-darter, came unto the fleet ships of the mail-clad Achaians to win his daughter’s freedom, and brought a ransom beyond telling, and bare in his hands the fillet of Apollo the Far-darter upon a golden staff, and made his prayer unto all the Achaians, and most of all to the two sons of Atreus, orderers of the host. Then all the other Achaians cried assent, to reverence the priest and accept his goodly ransom; yet the thing pleased not the heart of Agamemnon son of Atreus, but he roughly sent him away and laid stern charge upon him. So the old man went back in anger; and Apollo heard his prayers, seeing he loved him greatly, and he aimed against the Argives his deadly darts. So the people began to perish in multitudes, and the god’s shafts ranged everywhither throughout the wide host of the Achaians. Then of full knowledge the seer declared to us the oracle of the Far-darter. Forthwith I first bade propitiate the god; but wrath gat hold upon Atreus’ son thereat, and anon he stood up and spake a threatening word, that hath now been accomplished. Her the glancing-eyed Achaians are bringing on their fleet ship to Chryse, and bear with them offerings to the king; and the other but now the heralds went and took from my hut, even the daughter of Briseus, whom the sons of the Achaians gave me. Thou therefore, if indeed thou canst, guard thine own son; betake thee to Olympus and beseech Zeus by any word whereby thou ever didst make glad his heart. For oft have I heard thee proclaiming in my father’s halls and telling that thou alone amid the immortals didst save the son of Kronos, lord of the storm-cloud, from shameful wreck, when all the other Olympians would have bound him, even Hera and Poseidon and Pallas Athene. Then didst thou, O goddess, enter in and loose him from his bonds, having with speed summoned to high Olympus him of the hundred arms whom gods call Briareus, but all men call Aigaion; for he is mightier even than his father — so he sate him by Kronion's side rejoicing in his triumph, and the blessed gods feared him withal and bound not Zeus. This bring thou to his remembrance and sit by him and clasp his knees, if perchance he will give succour to the Trojans; and for the Achaians, hem them among their ships' sterns about the bay, given over to slaughter; that they may make trial of their king, and that even Atreides, wide-ruling Agamemnon, may perceive his blindness, in that he honoured not at all the best of the Achaians."

Then Thetis weeping made answer to him: "Ah me, my child, why reared I thee, cursed in my motherhood? Would thou hadst been left tearless and griefless amid the ships, seeing thy lot is very brief and endureth no long while; but now art thou made short-lived alike and lamentable beyond all men; in an evil hour I bare thee in our halls. But I will go myself to snow-clad Olympus to tell this thy saying to Zeus, whose joy is in the thunder, [perhaps rather, "hurler of the thunderbolt."] if perchance he may hearken to me. But tarry thou now amid thy fleet-faring ships, and continue wroth with the Achaians, and refrain utterly from battle: for Zeus went yesterday to Okeanos, unto the noble Ethiopians for a feast, and all the gods followed with him; but on the twelfth day will he return to Olympus, and then will I fare to Zeus' palace of the bronze threshold, and will kneel to him and think to win him."

So saying she went her way and left him there, vexed in spirit for the fair-girdled woman's sake, whom they had taken perforce despite his will: and meanwhile Odysseus came to Chryse with the holy hecatomb. When they were now entered within the deep haven, they furled their sails and laid them in the black ship, and lowered the mast by the forestays and brought it to the crutch with speed, and rowed her with oars to the anchorage. Then they cast out the mooring stones and made fast the hawsers, and so themselves went forth on to the sea-beach, and forth they brought the hecatomb for the Far-darter Apollo, and forth came Chryseis withal from the seafaring ship. Then Odysseus of many counsels brought her to the altar and gave her into her father's arms, and spake unto him: "Chryses, Agamemnon king of men sent me hither to bring thee thy daughter, and to offer to Phoebus a holy hecatomb on the Danaans' behalf, wherewith to propitiate the king that hath now brought sorrow and lamentation on the Argives."

So saying he gave her to his arms, and he gladly took his dear child; and anon they set in order for the god the holy hecatomb about his well-builded altar; next washed they their hands and took up the barley meal. Then Chryses lifted up his hands and prayed aloud for them: "Hearken to me, god of the silver bow that standest over Chryse and holy Killa, and rulest Tenedos with might; even as erst thou heardest my prayer, and didst me honour, and mightily afflictest the people of the Achaians, even so now fulfil me this my desire: remove thou from the Danaans forthwith the loathly pestilence.”

So spake he in prayer, and Phoebus Apollo heard him. Now when they had prayed and sprinkled the barley meal, first they drew back the victims’ heads and slaughtered them and flayed them, and cut slices from the thighs and wrapped them in fat, making a double fold, and laid raw collops thereon, and the old man burnt them on cleft wood and made libation over them of gleaming wine; and at his side the young men in their hands held five-pronged forks. Now when the thighs were burnt and they had tasted the vitals, then sliced they all the rest and pierced it through with spits, and roasted it carefully, and drew all off again. So when they had rest from the task and had made ready the banquet, they feasted, nor was their heart aught stinted of the fair banquet. But when they had put away from them the desire of meat and drink, the young men crowned the bowls with wine, and gave each man his portion after the drink-offering had been poured into the cups. So all day long worshipped they the god with music, singing the beautiful paean, the sons of the Achaians making music to the Far-darter [or, “the Averter” (of pestilence)]; and his heart was glad to hear. And when the sun went down and darkness came on them, they laid them to sleep beside the ship’s hawsers; and when rosy-fingered Dawn appeared, the child of morning, then set they sail for the wide camp of the Achaians; and Apollo the Far-darter sent them a favouring gale. They set up their mast and spread the white sails forth, and the wind filled the sail’s belly and the dark wave sang loud about the stem as the ship made way, and she sped across the wave, accomplishing her journey. So when they were now come to the wide camp of the Achaians, they drew up their black ship to land high upon the sands, and set in line the long props beneath her; and themselves were scattered amid their huts and ships.

But he sat by his swift-faring ships, still wroth, even the heaven-sprung son of Peleus, Achilles fleet of foot; he betook him neither to the assembly that is the hero’s glory, neither to war, but consumed his heart in tarrying in his place, and yearned for the war-cry and for battle.

Now when the twelfth morn thereafter was come, then the gods that are for ever fared to Olympus all in company, led of Zeus. And Thetis forgat not her son’s charge, but rose up from the sea-wave, and at early morn mounted up to great heaven and Olympus. There found she Kronos’ son of the far-sounding voice sitting apart from all on the topmost peak of many-ridged Olympus. So she sat before his face and with her left hand clasped his knees, and with her right touched him beneath his chin, and spake in prayer to king Zeus son of Kronos: “Father Zeus, if ever I gave thee aid amid the immortal gods, whether by word or deed, fulfil thou this my desire: do honour to my son, that is doomed to earliest death of all men: now hath Agamemnon king of men done him dishonour, for he hath taken away his meed of honour and keepeth her of his own violent deed. But honour thou him, Zeus of Olympus, lord of counsel; grant thou victory to the Trojans the while until the Achaians do my son honour and exalt him with recompense.”

So spake she; but Zeus the cloud-gatherer said no word to her, and sat long time in silence. But even as Thetis had clasped his knees, so held she by him clinging, and questioned him yet a second time: “Promise me now this thing verily, and bow thy head thereto; or else deny me, seeing there is naught for thee to fear; that I may know full well how I among all gods am least in honour.”

Then Zeus the cloud-gatherer, sore troubled, spake to her: “Verily it is a sorry matter, if thou wilt set me at variance with Hera, whene’er she provoketh me with taunting words. Even now she upbraideth me ever amid the immortal gods, and saith that I aid the Trojans in battle. But do thou now depart again, lest Hera mark aught; and I will take thought for these things to fulfil them. Come now, I will bow my head to thee, that thou mayest be of good courage; for that, of my part, is the surest token amid the immortals; no word of mine is revocable nor false nor unfulfilled when the bowing of my head hath pledged it.”

Kronion spake, and bowed his dark brow, and the ambrosial locks waved from the king’s immortal head; and he made great Olympus quake.

Thus the twain took counsel and parted; she leapt therewith into the deep sea from glittering Olympus, and Zeus fared to his own palace. All the gods in company arose from their seats before their father’s face; neither ventured any to await his coming, but stood up all before him. So he sate him there upon his throne; but Hera saw, and was not ignorant how that the daughter of the Ancient of the sea, Thetis the silver-footed, had devised counsel with him. Anon with taunting words spake she to Zeus the son of Kronos: “Now who among the gods, thou crafty of mind, hath devised counsel with thee? It is ever thy good pleasure to hold aloof from me and in secret meditation to give thy judgments, nor of thine own good will hast thou ever brought thyself to declare unto me the thing thou purposest.”

Then the father of gods and men made answer her: “Hera, think not thou to know all my sayings; hard they are for thee, even though thou art my wife. But whichsoever it is seemly for thee to hear, none sooner than thou shall know, be he god or man. Only when I will to take thought aloof from the gods, then do not thou ask of every matter nor make question.”

Then Hera the ox-eyed queen made answer to him. “Most dread son of Kronos, what word is this thou hast spoken? Yea, surely of old I have not asked thee nor made question, but in my heart sore afraid lest thou have been won over by silver-footed Thetis, daughter of the Ancient of the sea, for she at early morn sat by thee and clasped thy knees. To her I deem thou gavest a sure pledge that thou wilt do honour to Achilles, and lay many low beside the Achaians' ships."

To her made answer Zeus the cloud-gatherer: "Lady, Good lack! ever art thou imagining, nor can I escape thee; yet shalt thou in no wise have power to fulfil, but wilt be the further from my heart; that shall be even the worse for thee. And if it be so, then such must my good pleasure be. Abide thou in silence and hearken to my bidding, lest all the gods that are in Olympus keep not off from thee my visitation, when I put forth my hands unapproachable against thee."

He said, and Hera the ox-eyed queen was afraid, and sat in silence, curbing her heart; but throughout Zeus' palace the gods of heaven were troubled. Then Hephaistos the famed craftsman began to make harangue among them, to do kindness to his mother, white-armed Hera: "Verily this will be a sorry matter, neither any more endurable, if ye twain thus fight for mortals' sakes, and bring wrangling among the gods; neither will there any more be joy of the goodly feast, seeing that evil triumpheth. So I give counsel to my mother, though herself is wise, to do kindness to our dear father Zeus, that our father upbraid us not again and cast the banquet in confusion. What if the Olympian, the lord of the lightning, will to dash us from our seats! for he is strongest far. Nay, approach thou him with gentle words, then will the Olympian forthwith be gracious unto us."

So speaking he rose up and sat in his dear mother's hand the twy-handled cup, and spake to her: "Be of good courage, mother mine, and endure, though thou art vexed, lest I behold thee, thou art so dear, chastised before mine eyes, and then shall I not be able for all my sorrow to save thee; for the Olympian is a hard foe to face. Yea, once ere this, when I was fain to save thee, he caught me by my foot and hurled me from the heavenly threshold; all day I flew, and at the set of sun I fell in Lemnos, and little life was in me. There did the Sintian folk forthwith tend me for my fall."

He spake, and the white-armed goddess Hera smiled, and smiling took the cup at her son's hand. Then he poured wine to all the other gods from right to left, ladling the sweet nectar from the bowl. And laughter unquenchable arose amid the blessed gods to see Hephaistos bustling through the palace.

So feasted they all day till the setting of the sun; nor was their soul aught stinted of the fair banquet, nor of the beauteous lyre that Apollo held, and the Muses singing alternately with sweet voice.

Now when the bright light of the sun was set, these went each to his own house to sleep, where each one had his palace made with cunning device by famed Hephaistos the lame god; and Zeus the Olympian, the lord of lightning, departed to his couch where he was wont of old to take his rest, whenever sweet sleep visited him. There went he up and slept, and beside him was Hera of the golden throne.

BOOK II.

How Zeus beguiled Agamemnon by a dream; and of the assembly of the Achaians and their marching forth to battle. And of the names and numbers of the hosts of the Achaians and the Trojans.

Now all other gods and chariot-driving men slept all night long, only Zeus was not holden of sweet sleep; rather was he pondering in his heart how he should do honour to Achilles and destroy many beside the Achaians' ships. And this design seemed to his mind the best, to wit, to send a baneful dream upon Agamemnon son of Atreus. So he spake, and uttered to him winged words: "Come now, thou baneful Dream, go to the Achaians' fleet ships, enter into the hut of Agamemnon son of Atreus, and tell him every word plainly as I charge thee. Bid him call to arms the flowing-haired Achaians with all speed, for that now he may take the wide-wayed city of the Trojans. For the immortals that dwell in the halls of Olympus are no longer divided in counsel, since Hera hath turned the minds of all by her beseeching, and over the Trojans sorrows hang."

So spake he, and the Dream went his way when he had heard the charge. With speed he came to the Achaians' fleet ships, and went to Agamemnon son of Atreus, and found him sleeping in his hut, and ambrosial slumber poured over him. So he stood over his head in seeming like unto the son of Neleus, even Nestor, whom most of all the elders Agamemnon honoured; in his likeness spake to him the heavenly Dream:

"Sleepest thou, son of wise Atreus tamer of horses? To sleep all night through beseemeth not one that is a counsellor, to whom peoples are entrusted and so many cares belong. But now hearken straightway to me, for I am a messenger to thee from Zeus, who though he be afar yet hath great care for thee and pity. He biddeth thee call to arms the flowing-haired Achaians with all speed, for that now thou mayest take the wide-wayed city of the Trojans. For the immortals that dwell in the halls of Olympus are no longer divided in counsel, since Hera hath turned the minds of all by her beseeching, and over the Trojans sorrows hang by the will of Zeus. But do thou keep this in thy heart, not let forgetfulness come upon thee when honeyed sleep shall leave thee."

So spake the Dream, and departed and left him there, deeming in his mind things that were not to be fulfilled. For indeed he thought to take Priam's city that very day; fond man, in that he knew not the plans that Zeus had in mind, who was willed to bring yet more grief and wailing on Trojans alike and Danaans throughout the course of stubborn fights. Then woke he from sleep, and the heavenly voice was in his ears. So he rose up sitting, and donned his soft tunic, fair and bright, and cast around him his great cloak, and beneath his glistering feet he bound his fair sandals, and over his shoulders cast his silver-studded sword, and grasped his sires' sceptre, imperishable for ever, wherewith he took his way amid the mail-clad Achaians' ships.

Now went the goddess Dawn to high Olympus, foretelling daylight to Zeus and all the immortals; and the king bade the clear-voiced heralds summon to the assembly the flowing-haired Achaians. So did those summon, and these gathered with speed.

But first the council of the great-hearted elders met beside the ship of king Nestor the Pylos-born. And he that had assembled them framed his cunning counsel: "Hearken, my friends. A dream from heaven came to me in my sleep through the ambrosial night, and chiefly to goodly Nestor was very like in shape and bulk and stature. And it stood over my head and charged me saying: 'Sleepest thou, son of wise Atreus tamer of horses? To sleep all night through beseemeth not one that is a counsellor, to whom peoples are entrusted and so many cares belong. But now hearken straightway to me, for I am a messenger to thee from Zeus, who though he be afar yet hath great care for thee and pity. He biddeth thee call to arms the flowing-haired Achaians with all speed, for that now thou mayest take the wide-wayed city of the Trojans. For the immortals that dwell in the palaces of Olympus are no longer divided in counsel, since Hera hath turned the minds of all by her beseeching, and over the Trojans sorrows hang by the will of Zeus. But do thou keep this in thy heart.' So spake the dream and was flown away, and sweet sleep left me. So come, let us now call to arms as we may the sons of the Achaians. But first I will speak to make trial of them as is fitting, and bid them flee with their benched ships; only do ye from this side and from that speak to hold them back."

So spake he and sate him down; and there stood up among them Nestor, who was king of sandy Pylos. He of good intent made harangue to them and said: "My friends, captains and rulers of the Argives, had any other of the Achaians told us this dream we might deem it a false thing, and rather turn away therefrom; but now he hath seen it who of all Achaians avoweth himself far greatest. So come, let us call to arms as we may the sons of the Achaians."

So spake he, and led the way forth from the council, and all the other sceptred chiefs rose with him and obeyed the shepherd of the host; and the people hastened to them. Even as when the tribes of thronging bees issue from the hollow rock, ever in fresh procession, and fly clustering among the flowers of spring, and some on this hand and some on that fly thick; even so from ships and huts before the low beach marched forth their many tribes by companies to the place of assembly. And in their midst blazed forth Rumour, messenger of Zeus, urging them to go; and so they gathered. And the place of assemblage was in an uproar, and the earth echoed again as the hosts sate them down, and there was turmoil. Nine heralds restrained them with shouting, if perchance they might refrain from clamour, and hearken to their kings, the fosterlings of Zeus. And hardly at the last would the people sit, and keep them to their benches and cease from noise. Then stood up lord Agamemnon bearing his sceptre, that Hephaistos had wrought curiously. Hephaistos gave it to king Zeus son of Kronos, and then Zeus gave it to the messenger-god the slayer of Argus [Or, possibly, “the swift-appearing”]; and king Hermes gave it to Pelops the charioteer, and Pelops again gave it to Atreus shepherd of the host. And Atreus dying left it to Thyestes rich in flocks, and Thyestes in his turn left it to Agamemnon to bear, that over many islands and all Argos he should be lord. Thereon he leaned and spake his saying to the Argives:

“My friends, Danaan warriors, men of Ares’ company, Zeus Kronos’ son hath bound me with might in grievous blindness of soul; hard of heart is he, for that erewhile he promised me and pledged his nod that not till I had wasted well-walled Ilios should I return; but now see I that he planned a cruel wile and biddeth me return to Argos dishonoured, with the loss of many of my folk. So meseems it pleaseth most mighty Zeus, who hath laid low the head of many a city, yea, and shall lay low; for his is highest power. Shame is this even for them that come after to hear; how so goodly and great a folk of the Achaians thus vainly warred a bootless war, and fought scantier enemies, and no end thereof is yet seen. For if perchance we were minded, both Achaians and Trojans, to swear a solemn truce, and to number ourselves, and if the Trojans should gather together all that have their dwellings in the city, and we Achaians should marshal ourselves by tens, and every company choose a Trojan to pour their wine, then would many tens lack a cup-bearer: so much, I say, do the sons of the Achaians outnumber the Trojans that dwell within the city. But allies from many cities, even warriors that wield the spear, are therein, and they hinder me perforce, and for all my will suffer me not to waste the populous citadel of Ilios. Already have nine years of great Zeus passed away, and our ships’ timbers have rotted and the tackling is loosed; while there our wives and little children sit in our halls awaiting us; yet is our task utterly unaccomplished wherefor we came hither. So come, even as I bid let us all obey. Let us flee with our ships to our dear native land; for now shall we never take wide-wayed Troy.”

So spake he, and stirred the spirit in the breasts of all throughout the multitude, as many as had not heard the council. And the assembly swayed like high sea-waves of the Icarian Main that east wind and south wind raise, rushing upon them from the clouds of father Zeus; and even as when the west wind cometh to stir a deep cornfield with violent blast, and the ears bow down, so was all the assembly stirred, and they with shouting hasted toward the ships; and the dust from beneath their feet rose and stood on high. And they bade each man his neighbor to seize the ships and drag them into the bright salt sea, and cleared out the launching-ways, and the noise went up to heaven of their hurrying homewards; and they began to take the props from beneath the ships.

Then would the Argives have accomplished their return against the will of fate, but that Hera spake a word to Athene: “Out on it, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, unwearied maiden! Shall the Argives thus indeed flee homeward to their dear native land over the sea’s broad back? But they would leave to Priam and the Trojans their boast, even Helen of Argos, for whose sake many an Achaian hath perished in Troy, far away from his dear native land. But go thou now amid the host of the mail-clad Achaians; with thy gentle words refrain thou every man, neither suffer them to draw their curved ships down to the salt sea.”

So spake she, and the bright-eyed goddess Athene disregarded not; but went darting down from the peaks of Olympus, and came with speed to the fleet ships of the Achaians. There found she Odysseus standing, peer of Zeus in counsel, neither laid he any hand upon his decked black ship, because grief had entered into his heart and soul. And bright-eyed Athene stood by him and said: “Heaven-sprung son of Laertes, Odysseus of many devices, will ye indeed fling yourselves upon your benched ships to flee homeward to your dear native land? But ye would leave to Priam and the Trojans their boast, even Helen of Argos, for whose sake many an Achaian hath perished in Troy, far from his dear native land. But go thou now amid the host of the Achaians, and tarry not; and with gentle words refrain every man, neither suffer them to draw their curved ships down to the salt sea.”

So said she, and he knew the voice of the goddess speaking to him, and set him to run, and cast away his mantle, the which his herald gathered up, even Eurybated of Ithaca, that waited on him. And himself he went to meet Agamemnon son of Atreus, and at his hand received the sceptre of his sires, imperishable for ever, wherewith he took his way amid the ships of the mail-clad Achaians.

Whenever he found one that was a captain and a man of mark, he stood by his side, and refrained him with gentle words: “Good sir, it is not seemly to affright thee like a coward, but do thou sit thyself and make all thy folk sit down. For thou knowest not yet clearly what is the purpose of Atreus’ son; now is he but making trial, and soon he will afflict the sons of the Achaians. And heard we not all of us what he spake in the council? Beware lest in his anger he evilly entreat the sons of the Achaians. For proud is the soul of heaven-fostered kings; because their honour is of Zeus, and the god of counsel loveth them."

But whatever man of the people he saw and found him shouting, him he drave with his sceptre and chode him with loud words: "Good sir, sit still and hearken to the words of others that are thy betters; but thou art no warrior, and a weakling, never reckoned whether in battle or in council. In no wise can we Achaians all be kings here. A multitude of masters is no good thing; let there be one master, one king, to whom the son of crooked-counselling Kronos hath granted it, [even the sceptre and judgments, that he may rule among you"].

So masterfully ranged he the host; and they hasted back to the assembly from ships and huts, with noise as when a wave of loud-sounding sea roareth on the long beach and the main resoundeth.

Now all the rest sat down and kept their place upon the benches, only Thersites still chattered on, the uncontrolled speech, whose mind was full of words many and disorderly, wherewith to strive against the chiefs idly and in no good order, but even as he deemed that he should make the Argives laugh. And he was ill-favored beyond all men that came to Ilios. Bandy-legged was he, and lame of one foot, and his two shoulders rounded, arched down upon his chest; and over them his head was warped, and a scanty stubble sprouted on it. Hateful was he to Achilles above all and to Odysseus, for them he was wont to revile. But now with shrill shout he poured forth his upbraidings upon goodly Agamemnon. With him the Achaians were sore vexed and had indignation in their souls. But he with loud shout spake and reviled Agamemnon: "Atreides, for what art thou now ill content and lacking? Surely thy huts are full of bronze and many women are in they huts, the chosen spoils that we Achaians give thee first of all, whene'er we take a town. Can it be that thou yet wantest gold as well, such as some one of the horse-taming Trojans may bring from Ilios to ransom his son, whom I perchance or some other Achaian have led captive; or else some young girl, to know in love, whom thou mayest keep apart to thyself? But it is not seemly for one that is their captain to bring the sons of the Achaians to ill. Soft fools, base things of shame, ye women of Achaia and men no more, let us depart home with our ships, and leave this fellow here in Troy-land to gorge him with meeds of honour, that he may see whether our aid avail him aught or no; even he that hath now done dishonour to Achilles, a far better man than he; for he hath taken away his meed of honour and keepeth it by his own violent deed. Of a very surety is there no wrath at all in Achilles' mind, but he is slack; else this despite, thou son of Atreus, were thy last."

So spake Thersites, reviling Agamemnon shepherd of the host. But goodly Odysseus came straight to his side, and looking sternly at him with hard words rebuked him: “Thersites, reckless in words, shrill orator though thou art, refrain thyself, nor aim to strive singly against kings. For I deem that no mortal is baser than thou of all that with the sons of Atreus came before Ilios. Therefore were it well that thou shouldest not have kings in thy mouth as thou talkest, and utter revilings against them and be on the watch for departure. We know not yet clearly how these things shall be, whether we sons of the Achaians shall return for good or ill. Therefore now dost thou revile continually Agamemnon son of Atreus, shepherd of the host, because the Danaan warriors give him many gifts, and so thou talkest tauntingly. But I will tell thee plain, and that I say shall even be brought to pass: if I find thee again raving as now thou art, then may Odysseus’ head no longer abide upon his shoulders, nor may I any more be called father of Telemachos, if I take thee not and strip from thee thy garments, thy mantle and tunic that cover thy nakedness, and for thyself send thee weeping to the fleet ships, and beat thee out of the assembly with shameful blows.”

So spake he, and with his staff smote his back and shoulders: and he bowed down and a big tear fell from him, and a bloody weal stood up from his back beneath the golden sceptre. Then he sat down and was amazed, and in pain with helpless look wiped away the tear. But the rest, though they were sotty, laughed lightly at him, and thus would one speak looking at another standing by: “Go to, of a truth Odysseus hath wrought good deeds without number ere now, standing foremost in wise counsels and setting battle in array, but now is this thing the best by far that he hath wrought among the Argives, to wit, that he hath stayed this prating railer from his harangues. Never again, forsooth, will his proud soul henceforth bid him revile the kings with slanderous words.”

So said the common sort; but up rose Odysseus waster of cities, with sceptre in his hand. And by his side bright-eyed Athene in the likeness of a herald bade the multitude keep silence, that the sons of the Achaians, both the nearest and the farthest, might hear his words together and give heed to his counsel. He of good intent made harangue to them and said: “Atreides, now surely are the Achaians for making thee, O king, most despised among all mortal men, nor will they fulfil the promise that they pledged thee when they still were marching hither from horse-pasturing Argos; that thou shouldest not return till thou hadst laid well-walled Ilios waste. For like young children or widow women do they wail each to the other of returning home. Yea, here is toil to make a man depart disheartened. For he that stayeth away but one single month far from his wife in his benched ship fretteth himself when winter storms and the furious sea imprison him; but for us, the ninth year of our stay here is upon us in its course.

Therefore do I not marvel that the Achaians should fret beside their beaked ships; yet nevertheless is it shameful to wait long and to depart empty. Be of good heart, my friends, and wait a while, until we learn whether Kalchas be a true prophet or no. For this thing verily we know well in our hearts, and ye all are witnesses thereof, even as many as the fates of death have not borne away. It was as it were but yesterday or the day before that the Achaians' ships were gathering in Aulis, freighted with trouble for Priam and the Trojans; and we round about a spring were offering on the holy altars unblemished hecatombs to the immortals, beneath a fair plane-tree whence flowed bright water, when there was seen a great portent: a snake blood-red on the back, terrible, whom the god of Olympus himself had sent forth to the light of day, sprang from beneath the altar and darted to the plane-tree. Now there were there the brood of a sparrow, tender little ones, upon the topmost branch, nestling beneath the leaves; eight were they and the mother of the little ones was the ninth, and the snake swallowed these cheeping pitifully. And the mother fluttered around wailing for her dear little ones; but he coiled himself and caught her by the wing as she screamed about him. Now when he had swallowed the sparrow's little ones and the mother with them, the god who revealed him made of him a sign; for the son of crooked-counselling Kronos turned him to stone, and we stood by and marvelled to see what was done. So when the dread portent brake in upon the hecatombs of the gods, then did Kalchas forthwith prophesy, and said: 'Why hold ye your peace, ye flowing-haired Achaians? To us hath Zeus the counsellor shown this great sign, late come, of late fulfilment, the fame whereof shall never perish. Even as he swallowed the sparrow's little ones and herself, the eight wherewith the mother that bare the little ones was the ninth, so shall we war there so many years, but in the tenth year shall we take the wide-wayed city.' So spake the seer; and now are all these things being fulfilled. So come, abide ye all, ye well-greaved Achaians, even where ye are, until we have taken the great city of Priam."

So spake he, and the Argives shouted aloud, and all round the ships echoed terribly to the voice of the Achaians as they praised the saying of godlike Odysseus. And then spake among them knightly Nestor of Gerenia: "Out on it; in very truth ye hold assembly like silly boys that have no care for deeds of war. What shall come of our covenants and our oaths? Let all counsels be cast into the fire and all devices of warriors and the pure drink-offerings and the right hands of fellowship wherein we trusted. For we are vainly striving with words nor can we find any device at all, for all our long tarrying here. Son of Atreus, do thou still, as erst, keep steadfast purpose and lead the Argives amid the violent fray; and for these, let them perish, the one or two Achaians that take secret counsel — to depart to Argos first, before they know whether the promise of aegis-bearing Zeus be a lie or no. Yea, for I say that most mighty Kronion pledged us his word that day when the Argives embarked upon their fleet ships, bearing unto the Trojans death and fate; for by his lightning upon our right he manifested signs of good. Therefore let Trojan's wife and paid back his strivings and groans for Helen's sake. But if any man is overmuch desirous to depart homewards, let him lay his hand upon his decked black ship, that before all men he may encounter death and fate. But do thou, my king, take good counsel thyself, and whate'er it be, shall not be cast away. Separate thy warriors by tribes and by clans, Agamemnon, that clan may give aid to clan and tribe to tribe. If thou do thus and the Achaians hearken to thee, then wilt thou know who among thy captains and who of the common sort is a coward, and who too is brave; for they will fight each after their sort. So wilt thou know whether it is even by divine command that thou shalt not take the city, or by the baseness of thy warriors and their ill skill in battle."

And lord Agamemnon answered and said to him: "Verily hast thou again outdone the sons of the Achaians in speech, old man. Ah, father Zeus and Athene and Apollo, would that among the Achaians I had ten such councillors; then would the city of king Priam soon bow beneath our hands, captive and wasted. But aegis-bearing Zeus, the son of Kronos, hath brought sorrows upon me, in that he casteth my lot amid fruitless wranglings and strifes. For in truth I and Achilles fought about a damsel with violent words, and I was first to be angry; but if we can only be at one in council, then will there no more be any putting off the day of evil for the Trojans, no not for an instant. But now go ye to your meal that we may join battle. Let each man sharpen well his spear and bestow well his shield, and let him well give his fleet-footed steeds their meal, and look well to his chariot on every side and take thought for battle, that all day long we may contend in hateful war. For of respite shall there intervene no, not a whit, only that the coming of night shall part the fury of warriors. On each man's breast shall the baldrick of his covering shield be wet with sweat, and his hand shall grow faint about the spear, and each man's horse shall sweat as he draweth the polished chariot. And whomsoever I perceive minded to tarry far from the fight beside the beaked ships, for him shall there be no hope hereafter to escape the dogs and birds of prey."

So spake he, and the Argives shouted aloud, like to a wave on a steep shore, when the south wind cometh and stirreth it; even on a jutting rock, that is never left at peace by the waves of all winds that rise from this side and from that. And they did sacrifice each man to one of the everlasting gods, praying for escape from death and the tumult of battle. But Agamemnon king of men slew a fat bull of five years to most mighty Kronion, and called the elders, the princes of the Achaian host, Nestor first and king Idomeneus, and then the two Aiantes and Tydeus' son, and sixthly Odysseus peer of Zeus in counsel. And Menelaos of the loud war-cry came to him unbidden, for he knew in his heart how his brother toiled. Then stood they around the bull and took the barley-meal. And Agamemnon made his prayer in their midst and said: "Zeus, most glorious, most great, god of the storm-cloud, that dwellest in the heaven, vouchsafe that the sun set not upon us nor the darkness come near, till I have laid low upon the earth Priam's palace smirched with smoke, and burnt the doorways thereof with consuming fire, and rent on Hector's breast his doublet cleft with the blade; and about him may full many of his comrades prone in the dust bite the earth."

So spake he, but not as yet would Kronion grant him fulfilment; he accepted the sacrifice, but made toil to wax increasingly.

Now when they had prayed and sprinkled the barley-meal they first drew back the bull's head and cut his throat and flayed him, and cut slices from the thigh's and wrapped them in fat, making a double fold, and laid raw collops thereon. And these they burnt on cleft wood stript of leaves, and spitted the vitals and held them over Hephaistos' flame. Now when the thighs were burnt and they had tasted the vitals, then sliced they all the rest and pierced it through with spits, and roasted it carefully and drew all off again. So when they had rest from the task and had made ready the banquet, they feasted, nor was their heart aught stinted of the fair banquet. But when they had put away from them the desire of meat and drink, then did knightly Nestor of Gerenia open his saying to them: "Most noble son of Atreus, Agamemnon king of men, let us not any more hold long converse here, nor for long delay the work that god putteth in our hands; but come, let the heralds of the mail-clad Achaians make proclamation to the folk and gather them throughout the ships; and let us go thus in concert through the wide host of the Achaians, that the speedier we may arouse keen war."

So spake he and Agamemnon king of men disregarded not. Straightway he bade the clear-voiced heralds summon to battle the flowing-haired Achaians. So those summoned and these gathered with all speed. And the kings, the fosterlings of Zeus that were about Atreus' son, eagerly marshalled them, and bright-eyed Athene in the midst, bearing the holy aegis that knoweth neither age nor death, whereon wave an hundred tassels of pure gold, all deftly woven and each one an hundred oxen worth. Therewith she passed dazzling through the Achaian folk, urging them forth; and in every man's heart she roused strength to battle without ceasing and to fight. So was war made sweeter to them than to depart in their hollow ships to their dear native land. Even as ravaging fire kindleth a boundless forest on a mountain's peaks, and the blaze is seen from afar, even so as they marched went the dazzling gleam from the innumerable bronze through the sky even unto the heavens.

And as the many tribes of feathered birds, wild geese or cranes or long-necked swans, on the Asian mead by Kaystrios’ stream, fly hither and thither joying in their plumage, and with loud cries settle ever onwards, and the mead resounds; even so poured forth the many tribes of warriors from ships and huts into the Skamandrian plain. And the earth echoed terribly beneath the tread of men and horses. So stood they in the flowery Skamandrian plain, unnumbered as are leaves and flowers in their season. Even as the many tribes of thick flies that hover about a herdsman’s steading in the spring season, when milk drencheth the pails, even in like number stood the flowing-haired Achaians upon the plain in face of the Trojans, eager to rend them asunder. And even as the goatherds easily divide the ranging flocks of goats when they mingle in the pasture, so did their captains marshal them on this side and that, to enter into the fray, and in their midst lord Agamemnon, his head and eyes like unto Zeus whose joy is in the thunder, and his waist like unto Ares and his breast unto Poseidon. Even as a bull standeth out far foremost amid the herd, for his is pre-eminent amid the pasturing kine, even such did Zeus make Atreides on that day, pre-eminent among many and chief amid heroes.

Tell me now, ye Muses that dwell in the mansions of Olympus — seeing that ye are goddesses and are at hand and know all things, but we hear only a rumour and know not anything — who were the captains of the Danaans and their lords. But the common sort could I not number nor name, nay, not if ten tongues were mine and ten mouths, and a voice unwearied, and my heart of bronze within me, did not the Muses of Olympus, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus, put into my mind all that came to Ilios. So will I tell the captains of the ships and all the ships in order.

Of the Boiotians Peneleos and Leitos were captains, and Arkesilaos and Prothoenor and Klonios; these were they that dwelt in Hyria and rocky Aulis and Schoinos and Skolos and Eteonos full of ridges, Thespeia and Graia and Mykalessos with wide lawns; and that dwelt about Harma and Eilesion and Erythrai, and they that possessed Eleon and Peteon and Hyle, Okalea and the stablished fortress of Medeon, Kopai and Eutresis and Thisbe haunt of doves; and they of Koroneia and grassy Haliartos, and that possessed Plataia and that dwelt in Glisas, and that possessed the stablished fortress of lesser Thebes and holy Onchestos, Poseidon’s bright grove; and that possessed Arne rich in vineyards, and Mideia and sacred Nisa and Anthedon on the furthest borders. Of these there came fifty ships, and in each one embarked young men of the Boiotians an hundred and twenty. And they that dwelt in Aspledon and

Orchomenos of the Minyai were led of Askalaphos and Ialmenos, sons of Ares, whom Astyoche conceived of the mighty god in the palace of Aktor son of Azeus, having entered her upper chamber, a stately maiden; for mighty Ares lay with her privily. And with them sailed thirty hollow ships.

And the Phokians were led of Schedios and Epistrophos, sons of great-hearted Iphitos son of Naubolos; these were they that possessed Kyparissos and rocky Pytho and sacred Krisa and Daulis and Panopeus, and they that dwelt about Anemoreia and Hyampolis, yea, and they that lived by the goodly river Kephisos and possessed Lilaia by Kephisos’ springs. And with them followed thirty black ships. So they marshalled the ranks of the Phokians diligently, and had their station hard by the Boiotians on the left.

And of the Lokrians the fleet son of Oileus was captain, Aias the less, that was not so great as was the Telamonian Aias but far less. Small was he, with linen corslet, but with the spear he far outdid all the Hellenes and Achaians. These were they that dwelt in Kynos and Opus and Kalliaros and Bessa and Skarphe and lovely Augeiai and Tarphe and Thronion, about the streams of Boagrios. And with Aias followed forty black ships of the Lokrians that dwell over against holy Euboia.

And the Abantes breathing fury, they that possessed Euboia and Chalkis and Eiretria and Histiaia rich in vines, and Kerinthos by the sea and the steep fortress of Dios and they that possessed Karytos, and they that dwelt in Styra, all these again were led of Elephenor of the stock of Ares, even the son of Chalkodon, and captain of the proud Abantes. And with him followed the fleet Abantes with hair flowing behind, spearmen eager with ashen shafts outstretched to tear the corslets on the breasts of the foes. And with him forty black ships followed.

And they that possessed the goodly citadel of Athens, the domain of Erechtheus the high-hearted, whom erst Athene daughter of Zeus fostered when Earth, the grain-giver, brought him to birth; — and she gave him a resting-place in Athens in her own rich sanctuary; and there the sons of the Athenians worship him with bulls and rams as the years turn in their courses — these again were led of Menestheus son of Peteos. And there was no man upon the face of earth that was like him for the marshalling of horsemen and warriors that bear the shield. Only Nestor rivalled him, for he was the elder by birth. And with him rivalled him, for he was the elder by birth. And with him fifty black ships followed.

And Aias led twelve ships from Salamis, [and brought them and set them where the battalions of the Athenians stood.]

And they that possessed Argos and Tiryns of the great walls, Hermione and Asine that enfold the deep gulf, Troizen and Eionai and Epidauros full of vines, and the youths of the Achaians that possessed Aigina and Mases, these were led of Diomedes of the loud war-cary and Sthenelos, dear son of famous Kapaneus. And the third with them came Euryalos, a godlike warrior, the son of king Mekisteus son of Talaos. But Diomedes of the loud war-cry was lord over all. And with them eighty black ships followed.

And of them that possessed the stablished fortress of Mykene and wealthy Corinth and stablished Kleonai, and dwelt in Orneiai and lovely Araithyrea and Sikyon, wherein Adrestos was king at the first; and of them that possessed Hyperesie and steep Gonoessa and Pellene, and dwelt about Aigion and through all the coast-land and about broad Helike, of them did lord Agamemnon son of Atreus lead an hundred ships. With him followed most and goodliest folk by far; and in their midst himself was clad in flashing bronze, all glorious, and was pre-eminent amid all warriors, because he was goodliest and led folk far greatest in number.

And of them that possessed Lakedaimon lying low amid the rifted hills, and Pharis and Sparta and Messe, the haunt of doves, and dwelt in Bryseiai and lovely Augeiai, and of them too that possessed Amyklai and the sea-coast fortress of Helos, and that possessed Laas and dwelt about Oitylos, of these was the king’s brother leader, even Menelaos of the loud war-cry, leader of sixty ships, and these were arrayed apart. And himself marched among them confident in his zeal, urging his men to battle: and his heart most of all was set to take vengeance for his strivings and groans for Helen’s sake [Or, “for Helen’s searchings of heart and groans.”].

And of them that dwelt in Pylos and lovely Arene and Thryon the fording-place of Alpheios, and in established Aipy, and were inhabitants of Kyparisseis and Amphigeneia and Pteleos and Helos and Dorion — where the Muses met Thamyris the Thracian, and made an end of his singing, as he was faring from Oichalia, from Eurytos the Oichalian; for he averred with boasting that he would conquer, even did the Muses themselves sing against him, the daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus; but they in their anger maimed him, moreover they took from him the high gift of song and made him to forget his harping — of all these was knightly Nestor of Gerenia leader, and with him sailed ninety hollow ships.

And of them that possessed Arkadia beneath the steep mountain of Kyllene, beside the tomb of Aipytos, where are warriors that fight hand to hand; and of them that dwelt in Pheneos and Orchomenos abounding in flocks, and Rhipe and Stratie and windy Enispe, and that possessed Tegea and lovely Mantineia, and possessed Stymphelos and dwelt in Parhasie, of these was Ankaios’ son lord Agapenor leader, even of sixty ships; and in each ship embarked many Arkadian warriors skilled in fight. For Agamemnon king of men himself gave them benched ships wherewith to cross the wine-dark sea, even he the son of Atreus;

for matters of seafaring concerned them not.

And they too that inhabited Bouprasion and goodly Elis, so much thereof as Hyrmine and Myrsinos upon the borders and the Olenian rock and Aleision bound between them, of these men there were four captains, and ten swift ships followed each one, and many Epeians embarked thereon. So some were led of Amphimachos and Thalpios, of the lineage of Aktor, sons one of Kteatos and one of Eurytos; and of some was stalwart Diores captain, son of Amarynkes; and of the fourth company godlike Polyxeinos was captain, son of king Agasthenes Augeias’ son.

And them of Doulichion and the holy Echinean Isles that stand beyond the sea over against Elis, even these did Meges lead, the peer of Ares, Phyleides to wit, for he was begotten of knightly Phyleus dear to Zeus, him that erst changed his habitation to Doulichion for anger against his father. And with him followed forty black ships.

And Odysseus led the great-hearted Kephallenians, them that possessed Ithaka and Neriton with quivering leafage, and dwelt in Krokyleia and rugged Aigilips, and them that possessed Zakynthos and that dwelt in Samos, and possessed the mainland and dwelt in the parts over against the isles. Them did Odysseus lead, the peer of Zeus in counsel, and with him followed twelve ships with vermillion prow.

And of the Aitolians Thoas was captain, the son of Andraimon, even of them that dwelt in Pleuron and Olenos and Pylene, and Chalkis on the sea-shore and rocky Kalydon. For the sons of great-hearted Oineus were no more, neither did he still live, and golden-haired Meleagros was dead, to whose hands all had been committed, for him to be king of the Aitolians. And with Thoas there followed forty black ships.

And of the Cretans Idomeneus the famous spearman was leader, even of them that possessed Knosos and Gortys of the great walls, Lyktos and Miletos and chalky Lykastos and Phaistos and Rhytion, stablished cities all; and of all others that dwelt in Crete of the hundred cities. Of these men was Idomeneus the famous spearman leader, and Meriones peer of the man-slaying war-god. With these followed eighty black ships.

And Tlepolemmos, Herakles’ son goodly and tall, led from Rhodes nine ships of the lordly Rhodians, that dwelt in Rhodes in threefold ordering, in Lindos and Ialysos and chalky Kameiros. These were led of Tlepolemos the famous spearman, that was born to great Herakles by Astyocheia, whom he had brought away from Ephyre by the river Selleeis, when he laid waste many cities of strong men, fosterlings of Zeus. Now when Tlepolemos had grown to manhood within the strong palace walls, anon he slew his own father’s dear uncle, an old man now, Likymnios of the stock of Ares. Then with speed built he ships and gathered much folk together, and went fleeing across the deep, because the other sons and grandsons of great Herakles threatened him. So he came to Rhodes a wanderer, enduring hardships, and his folk settled by kinship in three tribes, and were loved of Zeus that is king among gods and men; and Kronion poured upon them exceeding great wealth.

Nireus, moreover, led three trim ships from Syme, Nireus son of Aglaia and king Charopos, Nireus the most beauteous man that came up under Ilios of all the Danaans, after the noble son of Peleus. Howbeit he was a weakling, and a scanty host followed him.

And of them that possessed Nisyros and Krapathos and Kasos and Kos the city of Eurypylos, and the Kalydnian Isles, of them Pheidippos and Antiphos were leaders, the two sons of king Thessalos son of Herakles. With them were arrayed thirty hollow ships.

Now all moreover that dwelt in the Pelasgian Argos and inhabited Alos and Alope and Trachis and possessed Phthia and Hellas the home of fair women, and were called Myrmidons and Hellenes and Achaians; of all these, even fifty ships, Achilles was captain. But these took no thought of noisy war; for there was no man to array them in line of battle. For fleet-footed goodly Achilles lay idle amid the ships, wroth for the sake of a damsel, Briseis of the lovely hair, whom he had won from Lyrnessos and the walls of Thebe, and overthrew Mynes and Epistrophos, warriors that bare the spear, sons of king Euenos Selepos’ son. For her sake lay Achilles sorrowing; but soon was he to arise again.

And of them that possessed Phylake and flowery Pyrasos, Demeter’s sanctuary, and Iton mother of flocks, and Antron by the sea-shore and Pteleos couched in grass, of all these was warlike Protesilaos leader while yet he lived; but now ere this the black earth held him fast. His wife with marred visage was left alone in Phylake, yea, and his bridal chamber half builded; for a Dardanian warrior slew him as he leapt from his ship far first of the Achaians. Yet neither were his men leaderless, though they sorrowed for their leader; for Podarkes of the stock of Ares marshalled them, son of Phylakos’ son Iphiklos was he, the lord of many flocks, own brother of great-hearted Protesilaos, and younger-born than he: but the other was alike the elder and the braver, even Protesilaos, that mighty man of war. Yet did not the host lack at all a leader, only they yearned for the noble dead. With him followed forty black ships.

And of them that dwelt in Pherai by the Boibeian mere, in Boibe and Glaphyre and stablished Iolkos, of them, even eleven ships, Admetos’ dear son was leader, Eumelos whom Alkestis, fair among women, bare to Admetos, she that was most beauteous to look upon of the daughters of

Pelias.

And of them that dwelt in Methone and Thaumakie, and possessed Meliboia and rugged Olizon, of these, even seven ships, was Philoktetes leader, the cunning archer; and in each ship sailed fifty oarsmen skilled to fight amain with the bow. But their captain lay enduring sore pain in the isle of goodly Lemnos, where the sons of the Achaians left him sick of a grievous wound from a deadly water-snake. There lay he pining; yet were the Argives soon to bethink them beside their ships of king Philoktetes. Yet neither were his men leaderless, only they sorrowed for their leader; but Medon marshalled them, Oileus' bastard son, whom Rhene bare to Oileus waster of cities.

And of them that possessed Trikke and terraced ithome and that possessed Oichalia city of Eurytos the Oichalian, of these again Asklepios' two sons were leaders, the cunning leeches Podaleirios and Machaon. And with them were arrayed thirty hollow ships.

And of them that possessed Ormenios and the fountain of Hypereia, and possessed Asterion and the white crests of Titanos, of these was Eurypylos leader, Euaimon's glorious son; and with him, forty black ships followed.

And of them that possessed Argissa and dwelt in Gyrtona, Orthe and Elone and the white city of Olooson, of these was captain unflinching Polypoites, son of Peirithoos that immortal Zeus begat: and Polypoites did famed Hippodameia conceive of Peirithoos on that day when he took vengeance of the shaggy wild folk, and thrust them forth from Pelion and drave them to the Aithikes. And Polypoites ruled not alone, but with him was Leonteus of the stock of Ares, son of high-hearted Koronos Kaineus' son. And with them forty black ships followed.

And Gouneus from Kyphos led two-and-twenty ships, and with him followed the Enienes and unflinching Peraibians that had pitched their homes about wintry Dodona, and dwelt on the tilth about lovely Titaresios that poureth his fair-flowing stream into Peneios. Yet doth he not mingle with the silver eddies of Peneios, but floweth on over him like unto oil, seeing that he is an offspring from the water of Styx, the dread river of the oath.

And the Magnetes were led of Prothoos son of Tenthredon, even they that dwelt about Peneios and Pelion with trembling leafage. These did fleet Prothoos lead, and with him forty black ships followed.

So these were the leaders of the Danaans and their captains. Now tell me, O Muse, who among them was first and foremost, of warriors alike and horses that followed the sons of Atreus. Of horses they of Pheres' son were far goodliest, those that Eumelos drave, swift as birds, like of coat, like of age, matched to the measure of a levelling line across their backs. These were reared in Peraia by

Apollo of the silver bow, two mares carrying onward the terror of battle. But of warriors far best was the Telamonian Aias, while the wrath of Achilles yet endured; for he was greatest of all, he and his horses that bore him, even Peleus' noble son. But he lay idle among his seafaring ships, in sore wrath against Agamemnon Atreus' son, shepherd of the host; and his folk along the sea-shore sported with quoits and with casting of javelins and archery; and the horses each beside his own chariot stood idle, champing clover and parsley of the marsh, and their lords' chariots lay well covered up within the huts, while the men yearned for their warrior chief, and wandered hither and thither through the camp and fought not.

So marched they then as though all the land were consuming with fire; and the earth groaned beneath them as at the wrath of Zeus whose joy is in the thunder, when he lasheth the earth about Typhoeus in the country of the Arimoi, where men say is Typhoeus' couch. Even so groaned the earth aloud at their tread as they went: and with speed advanced they across the plain.

Now fleet Iris the wind-footed went to the Trojans, a messenger from aegis-bearing Zeus, with a grievous message. These were holding assembly at Priam's gate, being gathered all together both young men and old. And fleet-footed Iris stood hard by and spake to them; and she made her voice like to the voice of Polites son of Priam, who was the sentinel of the Trojans and was wont to sit trusting in his fleetness upon the barrow of Aisyetes of old, and on the top thereof wait the sallying of the Achaians forth from their ships. Even in his likeness did fleet-footed Iris speak to Priam: "Old man, words beyond number are still pleasant to thee as erst in the days of peace; but war without respite is upon us. Of a truth have I very oft ere now entered into battles of the warriors, yet have I never seen so goodly a host and so great; for in the very likeness of the leaves of the forest or the sands of the sea are they marching along the plain to fight against the city. But Hector, thee do I charge beyond all to do even as I shall say. Seeing that the allies are very many throughout Priam's great city, and diverse men, being scattered abroad, have diverse tongues; therefore let each one give the word to those whose chieftain he is, and them let him lead forth and have the ordering of his countrymen."

So spake she, and Hector failed not to know the voice of the goddess, and straightway dismissed the assembly, and they rushed to arms. And the gates were thrown open wide, and the host issued forth, footmen and horsemen, and mighty din arose.

Now there is before the city a certain steep mound apart in the plain, with a clear way about it on this side and on that; and men indeed call this "Batieia," but the immortals call it "The tomb of lithe Myrine." There did the Trojans and their allies divide their companies.

Amid the Trojans great Hector of the glancing helm was leader, the son of Priam; with him the greatest hosts by far and the goodliest were arrayed, eager warriors of the spear.

But the Dardanians were led of the princely son of Anchises, Aineias, whom bright Aphrodite conceived to Anchises amids the spurs of Ida, a goddess wedded to a mortal. Neither was he alone; with him were Antenor's two sons, Archelochos and Akamas, well skilled in all the ways of war.

And of them that dwelt in Zeleia beneath the nethermost foot of Ida, the men of substance that drink the dark waters of Aisepos, even the Troes; of these Lykaon's glorious son was leader, Pandaros, to whom Apollo himself gave the bow.

And of them that possessed Adresteia and the land of Apaisos and possessed Pityeia and the steep hill of Tereia, of these Adrestos was captain, and Amphios of the linen corslet, the two sons of Merops of Perkote, that beyond all men knew soothsaying, and would have hindered his children marching to murderous war. But they gave him no heed, for the fates of black death led them on.

And they that dwelt about Perkote and Praktios and possessed Sestos and Abydos and bright Arisbe, these were led of Hyrtakos' son Asios, a prince of men, Asios son of Hyrtakos, whom his tall sorrel steeds brought from Arisbe, from the river Selleeis.

And Hippothoos led the tribes of the Pelasgians that fight with spears, them that inhabited deep-soiled Larisa. These were led of Hippothoos and Pylaios of the stock of Ares, twain sons of Pelasgian Lethos son of Teutamos.

And the Thracians were led of Akamas and hero Peiroos, even all they that the strong stream of Hellespont shutteth in. And Euphemos was captain of the Kikonian spearmen, the son of Troizenos Keos' son, fosterling of Zeus.

But Pyraichmes led the Paionians with curving bows, from far away in Amydon, from the broad stream of Axios, Axios whose water is the fairest that floweth over the face of the earth.

And Pylaimenes of rugged heart led the Paphlagonians from the land of the Eneti, whence is the breed of wild mules. This folk were they that possessed Kytoros and dwelt about Sesamon, and inhabited their famed dwellings round the river Parthenios and Kromna and Aigialos and lofty Erythini.

And the Alizones were led of Odios and Epistrophos, from far away in Alybe, where is the birthplace of silver.

And the Mysians were led of Chromis and Ennomos the augur, yet with all his auguries warded he not black fate from him, but was vanguished by the hand of fleet-footed Aiakides in the river, when he made havoc of the Trojans there and of the rest.

And Phorkys and godlike Askanios led the Phrygians from far Askania, and these were eager to fight in the battle-throng.

And the Maionians were commanded of Mesthles and Antiphos, Talaimenes' two sons, whose mother was the Gygaian mere. So these led the Maionians, whose birthplace was under Tmolos.

But Nastes led the Karians, uncouth of speech, that possessed Miletos and the mountain of Phthires, of leafage numberless, and the streams of Maiandros and the steep crest of Mykale. These were led of Amphimachos and Nastes: Nastes and Amphimachos the glorious children of Nomion. And he came, forsooth, to battle with golden attire like a girl — fond man: that held not back in any wise grievous destruction, but he was vanguished by the hands of fleet-footed Aiakides in the river, and wise-hearted Achilles carried away his gold.

And Sarpedon and blameless Glaukos led the Lykians from far away in Lykia by eddying Xanthos.

BOOK III.

How Menelaos and Paris fought in single combat; and Aphrodite rescued Paris. And how Helen and Priam beheld the Achaian host from the walls of Troy.

Now when they were arrayed, each company with their captains, the Trojans marched with clamour and with shouting like unto birds, even as when there goeth up before heaven a clamour of cranes which flee from the coming of winter and sudden rain, and fly with clamour towards the streams of ocean, bearing slaughter and fate to the Pigmy men, and in early morn offer cruel battle. But on the other side marched the Achaians in silence breathing courage, eager at heart to give succour man to man.

Even as when the south wind sheddeth mist over the crests of a mountain, mist unwelcome to the shepherd, but to the robber better than night, and a man can see no further than he casteth a stone; even so thick arose the gathering dust-clouds at their tread as they went; and with all speed they advanced across the plain.

So when they were now come nigh in onset on each other, godlike Alexandros played champion to the Trojans, wearing upon his shoulders panther-skin and curved bow and sword; and he brandished two bronze-headed spears and challenged all the chieftains of the Argives to fight him man to man in deadly combat. But when Menelaos dear to Ares marked him coming in the forefront of the multitude with long strides, then even as a lion is glad when he lighteth upon a great carcase, a horned stag, or a wild goat that he hath found, being an hungered; and so he devoureth it amain, even though the fleet hounds and lusty youths set upon him; even thus was Menelaos glad when his eyes beheld godlike Alexandros; for he thought to take vengeance upon the sinner. So straightway he leap in his armour from his chariot to the ground.

But when godlike Alexandros marked him appear amid the champions, his heart was smitten, and he shrank back into the host of his comrades, avoiding death. And even as a man that hath seen a serpent in a mountain glade starteth backward and trembling seizeth his feet beneath him, and he retreateth back again, and paleness hath hold of his cheeks, even so did godlike Alexandros for fear of Atreus’ son shrink back into the throng of lordly Trojans. But Hector beheld and upbraided him with scornful words: “Ill Paris, most fair in semblance, thou deceiver woman-mad, would thou hadst been unborn and died unwed. Yea, that were my desire, and it were far better than thus to be our shame and looked at askance of all men. I ween that the flowing-haired Achaians laugh, deeming that a prince is our champion only because a goodly favour is his; but in his heart is there no strength nor any courage. Art thou indeed such an one that in thy seafaring ships thou didst sail over the deep with the company of thy trusty comrades, and in converse with strangers didst bring back a fair woman from a far country, one that was by marriage daughter to warriors that bear the spear, that she might be a sore mischief to they father and city and all the realm, but to our foes a rejoicing, and to thyself a hanging of the head? And canst thou not indeed abide Menelaos dear to Ares? Thou mightest see what sort of warrior is he whose lovely wife thou hast. Thy lyre will not avail thee nor the gifts of Aphrodite, those thy locks and fair favour, when thou grovellest in the dust. But the Trojans are very cowards: else ere this hadst thou donned a robe of stone [i.e., been stoned by the people] for all the ill thou hast wrought.”

And godlike Alexandros made answer to him again: “Hector, since in measure thou chidest me and not beyond measure — they heart is ever keen, even as an axe that pierceth a beam at the hand of a man that shapeth a ship’s timber with skill, and thereby is the man’s blow strengthened; even such is thy heart undaunted in thy breast. Cast not in my teeth the lovely gifts of golden Aphrodite; not to be flung aside are the gods’ glorious gifts that of their own good will they give; for by his desire can no man win them. But now if thou wilt have me do battle and fight, make the other Trojans sit down and all the Achaians, and set ye me in the midst, and Menelaos dear to Ares, to fight for Helen and all her wealth. And whichsoever shall vanquish and gain the upper hand, let him take all the wealth aright, and the woman, and bear them home. And let the rest pledge friendship and sure oaths; so may ye dwell in deep-soiled Troy, and let them depart to Argos pasture-land of horses, and Achaia home of fair women.”

So spake he, and Hector rejoiced greatly to hear his saying, and went into the midst and restrained the battalions of the Trojans, with his spear grasped by the middle; and they all sate them down. But the flowing-haired Achaians kept shooting at him, aiming with arrows and casting stones. But Agamemnon king of men cried aloud: “Refrain, ye Argives; shoot not, ye sons of the Achaians; for Hector of the glancing helm hath set himself to say somewhat.”

So spake he, and they refrained from battle and made silence speedily. And Hector spake between the two hosts, “Hear of me, Trojans and well-greaved Achaians, the saying of Alexandros, for whose sake strife hath come about. He biddeth the other Trojans and all the Achaians to lay down their goodly armour on the bounteous earth, and himself in the midst and Menelaos dear to Ares to fight alone for Helen and all her wealth. And whichsoever shall vanquish and gain the upper hand, let him take all the wealth aright, and the woman, and bear them home; but let all of us pledge friendship and sure oaths.”

So spake he, and they all kept silence and were still. Then in their midst spake Menelaos of the loud war-cry: “Hearken ye now to me, too; for into my heart most of all is grief entered; and I deem that the parting of Argives and Trojans hath come at last; seeing ye have endured many ills because of my quarrel and the first sin of Alexandros. And for whichsoever of us death and fate are prepared, let him lie dead: and be ye all parted with speed. Bring ye two lambs, one white ram and one black ewe, for earth and sun; and let us bring one for Zeus. And call hither great Priam, that he may pledge the oath himself, seeing he hath sons that are overweening and faithless, lest any by transgression do violence to the oath of Zeus; for young men’s hearts are ever lifted up. But wheresoever an old man entereth in, he looketh both before and after, whereby the best issue shall come for either side.”

So spake he, and Achaians and Trojans were glad, deeming that they should have rest from grievous war. So they refrained their chariots to the ranks, and themselves alighted and doffed their arms. And these they laid upon the earth each close to each, and there was but small space between. And Hector sent two heralds to the city will all speed, to bring the lambs, and to call Priam. And lord Agamemnon sent forth Talthybios to go to the hollow ships, and bade him bring a ram; and he was not disobedient to noble Agamemnon.

Now Iris went with a message to white-armed Helen in the likeness of her husband’s sister, the spouse of Antenor’s son, even her that lord Helikaon Antenor’s son had to wife, Laodike fairest favoured of Priam’s daughters. And in the hall she found Helen weaving a great purple web of double fold, and embroidering thereon many battles of horse-taming Trojans and mail-clad Achaians, that they had endured for her sake at the hands of Ares. So fleet-footed Iris stood by her side and said: “Come hither, dear sister, that thou mayest see the wondrous doings of horse-taming Trojans and mail-clad Achaians. They that erst waged tearful war upon each other in the plain, eager for deadly battle, even they sit now in silence, and the tall spears are planted by their sides. But Alexandros and Menelaos dear to Ares will fight with their tall spears for thee; and thou wilt be declared the dear wife of him that conquereth.”

So spake the goddess, and put into her heart sweet longing for her former husband and her city and parents.

Forthwith she veiled her face in shining linen, and hastened from her chamber, letting fall a round tear; not unattended, for there followed with her two handmaidens, Aithre daughter of Pittheus and ox-eyed Klymene. Then came she straightway to the place of the Skaian gates. And they that were with Priam and Panthoos and Thymoites and Lampos and Klytios and Hiketaon of the stock of Ares, Oukalegon withal and Antenor, twain sages, being elders of the people, sat at the Skaian gates. These had now ceased from battle for old age, yet were they right good orators, like grasshoppers that in a forest sit upon a tree and utter their lily-like [supposed to mean "delicate" or "tender"] voice; even so sat the elders of the Trojans upon the tower. Now when they saw Helen coming to the tower they softly spake winged words one to the other: "Small blame is it that Trojans and well-greaved Achaians should for such a woman long time suffer hardships; marvellously like is she to the immortal goddesses to look upon. Yet even so, though she be so goodly, let her go upon their ships and not stay to vex us and our children after us."

So said they, and Priam lifted up his voice and called to Helen: "Come hither, dear child, and sit before me, that thou mayest see thy former husband and they kinsfolk and thy friends. I hold thee not to blame; nay, I hold the gods to blame who brought on me the dolorous war of the Achaians — so mayest thou now tell me who is this huge hero, this Achaian warrior so goodly and great. Of a truth there are others even taller by a head; yet mine eyes never behold a man so beautiful nor so royal; for he is like unto one that is a king."

And Helen, fair among women, spake and answered him: "Reverend art thou to me and dread, dear father of my lord; would that sore death had been my pleasure when I followed thy son hither, and left my home and my kinsfolk and my daughter in her girlhood and the lovely company of mine age-fellows. But that was not so, wherefore I pine with weeping. Now will I tell thee that whereof thou askest me and enquirest. This is Atreides, wide-ruling Agamemnon, one that is both a goodly king and mighty spearman. And he was my husband's brother to me, ah shameless me; if ever such an one there was."

So said she, and the old man marvelled at him, and said: "Ah, happy Atreides, child of fortune, blest of heaven; now know I that many sons of the Achaians are subject to thee. Erewhile fared I to Phrygia, the land of vines, and there saw I that the men of Phrygia, they of the nimble steeds, were very many, even the hosts of Otreus and godlike Mygdon, that were then encamped along the banks of Sangarios. For I too being their ally was numbered among them on the day that the Amazons came, the peers of men. Yet were not even they so many as are the glancing-eyed Achaians."

And next the old man saw Odysseus, and asked: "Come now, tell me of this man too, dear child, who is he, shorter by a head than Agamemnon son of Atreus, but broader of shoulder and of chest to behold? His armour lieth upon the bounteous earth, and himself like a bell-wether rangeth the ranks of warriors. Yea, I liken him to a thick-fleeced ram ordering a great flock of ewes.”

Then Helen sprung of Zeus made answer to him: “Now this is Laertes’ son, crafty Odysseus, that was reared in the realm of Ithaka, rugged though it be, and skilled in all the ways of wile and cunning device.”

Then sage Antenor made answer to her: “Lady, verily the thing thou sayest is true indeed, for erst came goodly Odysseus hither also on an embassage for thee, in the company of Menelaos dear to Ares; and I gave them entertainment and welcomed them in my halls, and learnt the aspect of both and their wise devices. Now when they mingled with the Trojans in the assembly, while all stood up Menelaos overpassed them all by the measure of his broad shoulders; but when both sat down, Odysseus was the more stately. And when they began to weave the web of words and counsel in the face of all, then Menelaos harangued fluently, in few words, but very clearly, seeing he was not long of speech, neither random, though in years he was the younger. But whenever Odysseus full of wiles rose up, he stood and looked down, with eyes fixed upon the ground, and waved not his staff whether backwards or forwards, but held it stiff, like to a man of no understanding; one would deem him to be churlish, and naught but a fool. But when he uttered his great voice from his chest, and words like unto the snowflakes of winter, then could no mortal man contend with Odysseus; then marvelled we not thus to behold Odysseus’ aspect.”

And thirdly the old man say Aias, and asked: “Who then is this other Achaian warrior, goodly and great, preeminent among the Archives by the measure of his head and broad shoulders?”

And long-robed Helen, fair among women, answered: “This is huge Aias, bulwark of the Achaians. And on the other side amid the Cretans standeth Idomeneus like a god, and about him are gathered the captains of the Cretans. Oft did Menelaos dear to Ares entertain him in our house whene’er he came from Crete. And now behold I all the other glancing-eyed Achaians, whom well I could discern and tell their names; but two captains of the host can I not see, even Kastor tamer of horses and Polydeukes the skilful boxer, mine own brethren, whom the same mother bare. Either they came not in the company from lovely Lakedaimon; or they came hither indeed in their seafaring ships, but now will not enter into the battle of the warriors, for fear of the many scornings and revilings that are mine.”

So said she; but them the life-giving earth held fast there in Lakedaimon, in their dear native land.

Meanwhile were the heralds bearing through the city the holy oath-offerings, two lambs and strong-hearted wine, the fruit of the earth, in a goat-skin bottle.

And the herald Idaios bare the shining bowl and golden cups; and came to the old man and summoned him and said: “Rise, thou son of Laomedon. The chieftains of the horse-taming Trojans and mail-clad Achaians call on thee to go down into the plain, that ye may pledge a trusty oath. But Alexandros and Menelaos dear to Ares will fight with their long spears for the lady’s sake; and let lady and treasure go with him that shall conquer. And may we that are left pledge friendship and trusty oaths and dwell in deep-soiled Troy, and they shall depart to Argos pasture-land of horses and Achaia home of fair women.”

So said he, and the old man shuddered and base his companions yoke the horses; and they with speed obeyed. Then Priam mounted and drew back the reins, and by his side Antenor mounted the splendid chariot. So the two drave the fleet horses through the Skaian gates to the plain. And when they had come even to the Trojans and Achaians, they went down from the chariots upon the bounteous earth, and marched into the midst of Trojans and Achaians. Then forthwith rose up Agamemnon king of men, and up rose Odysseus the man of wiles; and the lordly heralds gathered together the holy oath-offerings of the gods, and mingled the wine in a bowl, and poured water over the princes’ hands. And Atreides put forth his hand and drew his knife that hung ever beside his sword’s great sheath, and cut the hair from off the lambs’ heads; and then the heralds portioned it among the chief of the Trojans and Achaians. Then in their midst Atreus’ son lifted up his hands and prayed aloud: “Father Zeus, that rulest from Ida, most glorious, most great, and thou Sun that seest all things and hearest all things, and ye Rivers and thou Earth, and ye that in the underworld punish men outworn, whosoever sweareth falsely; be ye witnesses, and watch over the faithful oath. If Alexandros slay Menelaos, then let him have Helen to himself and all her possessions; and we will depart on our seafaring ships. But if golden-haired Menelaos slay Alexandros, then let the Trojans give back Helen and all her possessions and pay the Argives the recompense that is seemly, such as shall live among men that shall be hereafter. But if so be that Priam and Priam’s sons will not pay the recompense unto me when Alexandros falleth, then will I fight on thereafter for the price of sin, and abide here till I compass the end of war.”

So said he, and cut the lambs’ throats with the pitiless knife. Them he laid gasping upon the ground, failing of breath, for the knife had taken their strength from them; and next they drew the wine from the bowl into the cups, and poured it forth and prayed to the gods that live for ever. And thus would say many an one of Achaians and Trojans: “Zeus most glorious, most great, and all ye immortal gods, which folk soe’er be first to sin against the oaths, may their brains be so poured forth upon the earth even as this wine, theirs and their children’s; and let their wives be made subject unto strangers.”

So spake they, but the son of Kronos vouchsafed not yet fulfilment. And in their midst Priam of the seed of Dardanos uttered his saying: “Hearken to me, Trojans and well-greaved Achaians. I verily will return back to windy Ilios, seeing that I can in no wise bear to behold with mine eyes my dear son fighting with Menelaos dear to Ares. But Zeus knoweth, and all the immortal gods, for whether of the twain the doom of death is appointed.”

So spake the godlike man, and laid the lambs in his chariot, and entered in himself, and drew back the reins; and by his side Antenor mounted the splendid chariot. So they departed back again to Ilios; and Hector son of Priam and goodly Odysseus first meted out a space, and then they took the lots, and shook them in a bronze-bound helmet, to know whether of the twain should first cast his spear of bronze. And the people prayed and lifted up their hands to the gods; and thus would say many an one of Achaians and Trojans: “Father Zeus, that rulest from Ida, most glorious, most great; whichsoe’er it be that brought this trouble upon both peoples, vouchsafe that he may die and enter the house of Hades; that so for us peace may be assured and trusty oaths.”

So said they; and great Hector of the glancing plume shook the helmet, looking behind him; and quickly leapt forth the lot of Paris. Then the people sat them down by ranks where each man’s high-stepping horses and inwrought armour lay. And upon his shoulders goodly Alexandros donned his beauteous armour, even he that was lord to Helen of the lovely hair. First upon his legs set he his greaves, beautiful, fastened with silver ankle-clasps; next upon his breast he donned the corslet of his brother Lykaon, and fitted it upon himself. And over his shoulders cast he his silver-studded sword of bronze, and then a shield great and sturdy. And on his mighty head he set a wrought helmet of horse-hair crest, whereover the plume nodded terribly, and he took him a strong spear fitted to his grasp. And in like wise warlike Menelaos donned his armour.

So when they had armed themselves on either side in the throng, they strode between Trojans and Achaians, fierce of aspect, and wonder came on them that beheld, both on the Trojans tamers of horses and on the well-greaved Achaians. Then took they their stand near together in the measured space, brandishing their spears in wrath each against other. First Alexandros hurled his far shadowing spear, and smote on Atreides’ round shield; but the bronze brake not through, for its point was turned in the stout shield. Next Menelaos son of Atreus lifted up his hand to cast, and made prayer to father Zeus: “King Zeus, grant me revenge on him that was first to do me wrong, even on goodly Alexandros, and subdue thou him at my hands; so that many an one of men that shall be hereafter may shudder to wrong his host that hath shown him kindness.”

So said he, and poised his far-shadowing spear, and hurled, and smote on the round shield of the son of Priam. Through the bright shield went the ponderous spear and through the inwrought breastplate it pressed on; and straight beside his flank the spear rent the tunic, but he swerved and escaped black death. Then Atreides drew his silver-studded sword, and lifted up his hand and smote the helmet-ridge; but the sword shattered upon it into three, yea four, and fell from his hand. Thereat Atreides looked up to the wide heaven and cried: “Father Zeus, surely none of the gods is crueller than thou. Verily I thought to have gotten vengeance on Alexandros for his wickedness, but now my sword breaketh in my hand, and my spear sped from my grasp in vain, and I have not smitten him.”

So saying, he leapt upon him and caught him by his horse-hair crest, and swinging him round dragged him towards the well-greaved Achaians; and he was strangled by the embroidered strap beneath his soft throat, drawn tight below his chin to hold his helm. Now would Menelaos have dragged him away and won glory unspeakable, but that Zeus’ daughter Aphrodite was swift to mark, and tore asunder for him the strap of slaughtered ox’s hide; so the helmet came away empty in his stalwart hand. Thereat Menelaos cast it with a swing toward the well-greaved Achaians, and his trusty comrades took it up; and himself sprang back again eager to slay him with spear of bronze. But Aphrodite snatched up Paris, very easily as a goddess may, and hid him in thick darkness, and sent him down in his fragrant perfumed chamber; and herself went to summon Helen. Her she found on the high tower, and about her the Trojan women thronged. So with her hand she plucked her perfumed raiment and shook it and spake to her in the likeness of an aged dame, a wool-comber that was wont to work for her fair wool when she dwelt in Lakedaimon, whom too she greatly loved. Even in her likeness fair Aphrodite spake: “Come hither; Alexandros summoneth thee to go homeward. There is he in his chamber and inlaid bed, radiant in beauty and vesture; nor wouldst thou deem him to be come from fighting his foe, but rather to be faring to the dance, or from the dance to be just resting and set down.”

So said she, and stirred Helen’s soul within her breast; and when now she marked the fair neck and lovely breast and sparkling eyes of the goddess, she marvelled straightway and spake a word and called upon her name: “Strange queen, why art thou desirous now to beguile me? Verily thou wilt lead me further on to some one of the people cities of Phrygia or lovely Maionia, if there too thou hast perchance some other darling among mortal men, because even now Menelaos hath conquered goodly Alexandros, and will lead me, accursed me, to his home. Therefore thou comest hither with guileful intent. Go and sit thou by his side and depart from the way of the gods; neither let thy feet ever bear thee back to Olympus, but still be vexed for his sake and guard him till he make thee his wife or perchance his slave. But thither will I not go — that were a sinful thing — to array the bed of him; all the women of Troy will blame me thereafter; and I have griefs untold within my soul."

Then in wrath bright Aphrodite spake to her: "Provoke me not, rash woman, lest in mine anger I desert thee, and hate thee even as now I love thee beyond measure, and lest I devise grievous enmities between both, even betwixt Trojans and Achaians, and so thou perish in evil wise."

So said she, and Helen sprung of Zeus was afraid, and went wrapped in her bright radiant vesture, silently, and the Trojan women marked her not; and the goddess led the way.

Now when they were come to the beautiful house of Alexandros the handmaidens turned straightway to their tasks, and the fair lady went to the high-roofed chamber; and laughter-loving Aphrodite took for her a chair and brought it, even she the goddess, and set it before the face of Paris. There Helen took her seat, the child of aegis-bearing Zeus, and with eyes turned askance spake and chode her lord: "Thou comest back from battle; would thou hadst perished there, vanquished of that great warrior that was my former husband. Verily it was once thy boast that thou wast a better man than Menelaos dear to Ares, in the might of thine arm and thy spear. But go now, challenge Menelaos, dear to Ares to fight thee again face to face. Nay, but I, even I, bid thee refrain, nor fight a fight with golden-haired Menelaos man to man, neither attack him recklessly, lest perchance thou fall to his spear anon."

And Paris made answer to her and said: "Chide not my soul, lady, with cruel taunts. For now indeed hath Menelaos vanquished me with Athene's aid, but another day may I do so unto him; for we too have gods with us. But come now, let us have joy of love upon our couch; for never yet hath love so enwrapped my heart — not even then when first I snatched thee from lovely Lakedaimon and sailed with thee on my seafaring ships, and in the isle of Kranae had converse with thee upon thy couch in love — as I love thee now and sweet desire taketh hold upon me." So saying he led the way to the couch, and the lady followed with him.

Thus laid they them upon their fretted couch; but Atreides the while strode through the host like to a wild beast, if anywhere he might set eyes on godlike Alexandros. But none of the Trojans or their famed allies could discover Alexandros to Menelaos dear to Ares. Yet surely did they in no wise hide him for kindliness, could any have seen him; for he was hated of all even as black death. So Agamemnon king of men spake among them there: "Hearken to me, Trojans and Dardanians and allies. Now is victory declared for Menelaos dear to

Ares; give ye back Helen of Argos and the possessions with her, and pay ye the recompense such as is seemly, that it may live even among men that shall be hereafter.” So said Atreides, and all the Achaians gave assent.

BOOK IV.

How Pandaros wounded Menelaos by treachery; and Agamemnon exhorted his chief captains to battle.

Now the gods sat by Zeus and held assembly on the golden floor, and in the midst the lady Hebe poured them their nectar: they with golden goblets pledged one another, and gazed upon the city of the Trojans. Then did Kronos' son essay to provoke Hera with vexing words, and spake maliciously: "Twain goddesses hath Menelaos for his helpers, even Hera of Argos and Alalkomenean Athene. Yet these sit apart and take there pleasure in beholding; but beside that other ever standeth laughter-loving Aphrodite and wardeth off fate from him, and now hath she saved him as he thought to perish. But of a truth the victory is to Menelaos dear to Ares; so let us take thought how these things shall be; whether once more we shall arouse ill war and the dread battle-din, or put friendship between the foes. Moreover if this were welcome to all and well pleasing, may the city of king Priam yet be an habitation, and Menelaos take back Helen of Argos."

So said he, but Athene and Hera murmured thereat, who were sitting by him and devising ills for the Trojans. Now Athene held her peace and said not anything, for wrath at father Zeus, and fierce anger gat hold upon her: But Hera's breast contained not her anger, and she spake: "Most dread son of Kronos, what word is this thou hast spoken? How hast thou the will to make my labour void and of none effect, and the sweat of my toil that I sweated, when my horses were wearied with my summoning of the host, to be the plague of Priam and his sons? Do as thou wilt; but we other gods do not all approve thee."

Then in sore anger Zeus the cloud-gatherer spake to her: "Good lack, how have Priam and Priam's sons done thee such great wrong that thou art furiously minded to sack the established citadel of Ilios? Perchance wert thou to enter within the gates and long walls and devour Priam raw, and Priam's sons and all the Trojans, then mightest thou assuage thine anger. Do as thou art minded, only let not this quarrel hereafter be to me and thee a sore strife between us both. And this moreover will I say to thee, and do thou lay it to they heart; whene'er I too be of eager mind to lay waste to a city where is the race of men that are dear to thee, hinder thou not my wrath, but let me be, even as I yield to thee of free will, yet with soul unwilling. For all cities beneath sun and starry heaven that are the dwelling of mortal men, holy Ilios was most honoured of my heart, and Priam and the folk of Priam of the good ashen spear. For never did mine altar lack the seemly feast, even drink-offering and burnt-offering, the worship that is our due.”

Then Helen the ox-eyed queen made answer to him: “Of a surety three cities are there that are dearest far to me, Argos and Sparta and wide-wayed Mykene; these lay thou waste whene’er they are found hateful to thy heart; not for them will I stand forth, nor do I grudge thee them. For even if I be jealous and would forbid thee to overthrow them, yet will my jealousy not avail, seeing that thou art stronger far than I. Still must my labour too not be made of none effect; for I also am a god, and my lineage is even as thine, and Kronos the crooked counsellor begat me to the place of honour in double wise, by birthright, and because I am named thy spouse, and thou art king among all the immortals. Let us indeed yield each to other herein, I to thee and thou to me, and the rest of the immortal gods will follow with us; and do thou with speed charge Athene to betake her to the fierce battle din of Trojans and Achaians, and to essay that the Trojans may first take upon them to do violence to the Achaians in their triumph, despite the oaths.”

So said she, and the father of men and gods disregarded not; forthwith he spake to Athene winged words: “Betake thee with all speed to the host, to the midst of Trojans and Achaians, and essay that the Trojans may first take upon them to do violence to the Achaians in their triumph, despite the oaths.”

So spake he, and roused Athene that already was set thereon; and from Olympus’ heights she darted down. Even as the son of Kronos the crooked counsellor sendeth a star, a portent for mariners or a wide host of men, bright shining, and therefrom are scattered sparks in multitude; even in such guise sped Pallas Athene to earth, and leapt into their midst; and astonishment came on them that beheld, on horse-taming Trojans and well-greaved Achaians. And thus would many an one say, looking at his neighbor: “Of a surety either shall sore war and the fierce battle din return again; or else Zeus doth stablish peace between the foes, even he that is men’s dispenser of battle.”

Thus would many an one of Achaians and Trojans say. Then the goddess entered the throng of Trojans in the likeness of a man, even Antenor’s son Laodokos, a stalwart warrior, and sought for godlike Pandaros, if haply she might find him. Lykaon’s son found she, the noble and stalwart, standing, and about him the stalwart ranks of the shield-bearing host that followed him from the streams of Aisepos. So she came near and spake winged words: “Wilt thou now hearken to me, thou wise son of Lykaon? Then wouldst thou take heart to shoot a swift arrow at Menelaos, and wouldst win favour and glory before all the

Trojans, and before king Alexandros most of all. Surely from him first of any wouldst thou receive glorious gifts, if perchance he see Menelaos, Atreus' warrior son, vanquished by thy dart and brought to the grievous pyre. Go to now, shoot at glorious Menelaos, and vow to Apollo, the son of light [Or, perhaps, "the Wolf-born"], the lord of archery, to sacrifice a goodly hecatomb of firstling lambs when thou art returned to thy home, in the city of holy Zeleia."

So spake Athene, and persuaded his fool's heart. Forthwith he unsheathed his polished bow of horn of a wild ibex that he himself had erst smitten beneath the breast as it came forth from a rock, the while he awaited in a lurking-place; and had pierced it in the chest, so that it fell backward on the rock. Now from its head sprang there horns of sixteen palms; these the artificer, even the worker in horn, joined cunningly together, and polished them all well and set the top of gold thereon. So he laid it down when he had well strung it, by resting it upon the ground; and his staunch comrades held their shields before him, lest the warrior sons of the Achaians should first set on them, ere Menelaos, Atreus' son, were smitten. Then opened he the lid of his quiver and took forth a feathered arrow, never yet shot, a source of grievous pangs; and anon he laid the bitter dart upon the string and vowed to Apollo, the son of light, the lord of archery, to sacrifice a goodly hecatomb of firstling lambs when he should have returned to his home in the city of holy Zeleia. Then he took the notch and string of oxes' sinew together, and drew, bringing to his breast the string, and to the bow the iron head. So when he had now bent the great bow into a round, the horn twanged, and the string sang aloud, and the keen arrow leapt eager to wing his way amid the throng.

But the blessed gods immortal forgat not thee, Menelaos; and before all the daughter of Zeus, the driver of the spoil, who stood before thee and warded off the piercing dart. She turned it just aside from the flesh, even as a mother driveth a fly from her child that lieth in sweet slumber; and with her own hand guided it where the golden buckles of the belt were clasped and the doubled breastplate met them. So the bitter arrow lighted upon the firm belt; through the inwrought belt it sped and through the curiously wrought breastplate it pressed on and through the taslet [and apron or belt set with metal, worn below the corslet] he wore to shield his flesh, a barrier against darts; and this best shielded him, yet it passed on even through this. Then did the arrow graze the warrior's outermost flesh, and forthwith the dusky blood flowed from the wound.

As when some woman of Maionia or Karia staineth ivory with purple, to make a cheek-piece for horses, and it is laid up in the treasure chamber, and many a horseman prayeth for it to wear; but it is laid up to be a king's boast, alike an adornment for his horse and a glory for his charioteer; even in such wise, Menelaos, were thy shapely thighs stained with blood and thy legs and thy fair ankles beneath.

Thereat shuddered Agamemnon king of men when he saw the black blood flowing from the wound. And Menelaos dear to Ares likewise shuddered; but when he saw how thread [by which the iron head was attached to the shaft] and bards were without, his spirit was gathered in his breast again. Then lord Agamemnon moaned deep, and spake among them, holding Menelaos by the hand; and his comrades made moan the while: “Dear brother, to thy death, meseemeth, pledged I these oaths, setting thee forth to fight the Trojans alone before the face of the Achaians; seeing that the Trojans have so smitten thee, and trodden under floor the trusty oaths. Yet in no wise is an oath of none effect, and the blood of lambs and pure drink-offerings and the right hands of fellowship wherein we trusted. For even if the Olympian bring not about the fulfilment forthwith, yet doth he fulfil at last, and men make dear amends, even with their own heads and their wives and little ones. Yea of a surety I know this in heart and soul; the day shall come for holy Ilios to be laid low, and Priam and the folk of Priam of the good ashen spear; and Zeus the son of Kronos enthroned on high, that dwelleth in the heaven, himself shall brandish over them all his lowring aegis, in indignation at this deceit. Then shall all this not be void; yet shall I have sore sorrow for thee, Menelaos, if thou die and fulfil the lot of life. Yea in utter shame should I return to thirsty Argos, seeing that the Achaians will forthwith bethink them of their native land, and so should we leave to Priam and the Trojans their boast, even Helen of Argos. And the earth shall rot thy bones as thou liest in Troy with thy task unfinished: and thus shall many an overweening Trojan say as he leapeth upon the tomb of glorious Menelaos: ‘Would to God Agamemnon might so fulfil his wrath in every matter, even as now he led hither the host of the Achaians for naught, and hath gone home again to his dear native land with empty ships, and hath left noble Menelaos behind.’ Thus shall men say hereafter: in that day let the wide earth gape for me.”

But golden-haired Menelaos encouraged him and said: “Be of good courage, neither dismay at all the host of the Achaians. The keen dart lighted not upon a deadly spot; my glistening belt in front stayed it, and the kirtle of mail beneath, and the taslet that the coppersmiths fashioned.”

Then lord Agamemnon answered him and said: “Would it may be so, dear Menelaos. But the leech shall feel the wound, and lay thereon drugs that shall assuage thy dire pangs.”

So saying he spake to godlike Talthybios, his herald: “Talthybios, with all speed call Machaon hither, the hero son of Asklepios the noble leech, to see Menelaos, Atreus’ warrior son, whom one well skilled in archery, some Trojan or Lykian, hath wounded with a bow-shot, to his glory and our grief.”

So said he, and the herald heard him and disregarded not, and went his way through the host of mail-clad Achaians to spy out the hero Machaon. Him he found standing, and about him the stalwart ranks of the shield-bearing host that followed him from Trike, pasture land of horses. So he came near and spake his winged words: “Arise, thou son of Asklepios. Lord Agamemnon calleth thee to see Menelaos, captain of the Achaians, whom one well skilled in archery, some Trojan or Lykian, hath wounded with a bow-shot, to his glory and our grief.”

So saying he aroused his spirit in his breast, and they went their way amid the throng, through the wide host of the Achaians. And when they were now come where was golden-haired Menelaos wounded, and all as many as were chieftains gathered around him in a circle, the godlike hero came and stood in their midst, and anon drew forth the arrow from the clasped belt; and as it was drawn forth the keen barbs were broken backwards. Then he loosed the glistering belt and kirtle of mail beneath and taslet that the coppersmiths fashioned; and when he saw the wound where the bitter arrow had lighted, he sucked out the blood and cunningly spread thereon soothing drugs, such as Cheiron of his good will had imparted to his sire.

While these were tending Menelaos of the loud war-cry, the ranks of shield-bearing Trojans came on; so the Achaians donned their arms again, and bethought them of the fray. Now wouldest thou not see noble Agamemnon slumbering, nor cowering, unready to fight, but very eager for glorious battle. He left his horses and his chariot adorned with bronze; and his squire, even Eurymedon son of Ptolemaios Peiraieus’ son, kept apart the snorting steeds; and he straitly charged him to have them at hand whenever weariness should come upon his limbs with marshalling so many; and thus on foot ranged he through the ranks of warriors. And whomsoever of all the fleet-horsed Danaans he found eager, he stood by them and by his words encouraged them: “Ye Argives, relax not in any wise your impetuous valour; for father Zeus will be no helper of liars, but as these were first to transgress against the oaths, so shall their own tender flesh be eaten of the vultures, and we shall bear away their dear wives and little children in our ships, when once we take the stronghold.”

But whomsoever he found shrinking from hateful battle, these he chode sore with angry words: “Ye Argives, warriors of the bow, ye men of dishonour, have ye no shame? Why stand ye thus dazed like fawns that are weary with running over the long plain and so stand still, and no valour is found in their hearts at all? Even thus stand ye dazed, and fight not. Is it that ye wait for the Trojans to come near where your good ships’ sterns are drawn up on the shore of the grey sea, to see if Kronion will stretch his arm over you indeed?”

So masterfully ranged he through the ranks of warriors. Then came he to the Cretans as he went through the throng of warriors; and these were taking arms around wise Idomeneus; Idomeneus amid the foremost, valiant as a wild boar, and Meriones the while was hastening his hindermost battalions. Then Agamemnon king of men rejoiced to see them, and anon spake to Idomeneus with kindly words: “Idomeneus, more than all the fleet-horsed Danaans do I honour thee, whether in war or in task of other sort or in the feast, when the chieftains of the Argives mingle in the bowl the gleaming wine of the counsellor. For even though all the other flowing-haired Achaians drink one allotted portion, yet thy cup standeth ever full even as mine, to drink as oft as they soul biddeth thee. Now arouse thee to war like such an one as thou avowest thyself to be of old.”

And Idomeneus the captain of the Cretans made answer to him: “Atreides, of very truth will I be to thee a trusty comrade even as at the first I promised and gave my pledge; but do thou urge on all the flowing-haired Achaians, that we may fight will all speed, seeing the Trojans have disannulled the oaths. But for all that death and sorrow hereafter shall be their lot, because they were the first to transgress against the oaths.”

So said he, and Agamemnon passed on glad at heart. Then came he to the Aiantes as he went through the throng of warriors; and these twain were arming, and a cloud of footmen followed with them. Even as when a goatherd from a place of outlook seeth a cloud coming across the deep before the blast of the west wind; and to him being afar it seemeth ever blacker, even as pitch, as it goeth along the deep, and bringeth a great whirlwind, and he shuddereth to see it and driveth his flock beneath a cave; even in such wise moved the serried battalions of young men, the fosterlings of Zeus, by the side of the Aiantes into furious war, battalions dark of line, bristling with shields and spears. And lord Agamemnon rejoiced to see them and spake to them winged words, and said: “Aiantes, leaders of the mail-clad Argives, to you twain, seeing it is not seemly to urge you, give I no charge; for of your own selves ye do indeed bid your folk to fight amain. Ah, father Zeus and Athene and Apollo, would that all had like spirit in their breasts; then would king Priam’s city soon bow captive and wasted beneath our hands.”

So saying he left them there, and went to others. Then found he Nestor, the clear-voiced orator of the Pylians, arraying his comrades, and urging them to fight, around great Pelegon and Alastor and Chromios and lord Haimon and Bias shepherd of the host. And first he arrayed the horsemen with horses and chariots, and behind them the footmen many and brave, to be a bulwark of battle; but the cowards he drave into the midst, that every man, even though he would not, yet of necessity must fight. First he laid charge upon the horsemen; these he bade hold in their horses nor be entangled in the throng. “Neither let any man, trusting in his horsemanship and manhood, be eager to fight the Trojans alone and before the rest, nor yet let him draw back, for so will ye be enfeebled. But whomsoever a warrior from the place of his own car can come at a chariot of the foe, let him thrust forth with his spear; even so is the far better way. Thus moreover did men of old time lay low cities and walls, because they had this mind and spirit in their breasts.”

So did the old man charge them, being well skilled of yore in battles. And lord Agamemnon rejoiced to see hem, and spake to him winged words, and said: “Old man, would to god that, even as thy spirit is in thine own breast, thy limbs might obey and thy strength be unabated. But the common lot of age is heavy upon thee; would that it had come upon some other man, and thou wert amid the young.”

Then knightly Nestor of Gerenia answered him: “Atreides, I verily, even I too, would wish to be as on the day when I slew noble Ereuthalion. But the gods in no wise grant men all things at once. As I was then a youth, so doth old age now beset me. Yet even so will I abide among the horsemen and urge them by counsel and words; for that is the right of elders. But the young men shall wield the spear, they that are more youthful than I and have confidence in their strength.”

So spake he, and Atreides passed on glad at heart. He found Menestheus the charioteer, the son of Peteos, standing still, and round him were the Athenians, masters of the battle-cry. And hard by stood crafty Odysseus, and round about him the ranks of Kephallenians, no feeble folk, stood still; for their host had not yet heard the battle-cry, seeing the battalions of horse-taming Trojans and Achaians had but just bestirred them to move; so these stood still tarrying till some other column of the Achaians should advance to set upon the Trojans and begin the battle. But when Agamemnon king of men saw it, he upbraided them, and spake to them winged words, saying: “O son of king Peteos fosterling of Zeus, and thou skilled in evil wiles, thou cunning of mind, why stand ye shrinking apart, and tarry for others? You beseemeth it to stand in your place amid the foremost and to front the fiery battle; for ye are the first to hear my bidding to the feast, as oft as we Achaians prepare a feast for the counsellors. Then are ye glad to eat roast meat and drink your cups of honey-sweet wine as long as ye will. But now would ye gladly behold it, yea, if ten columns of Achaians in front of you were fighting with the pitiless sword.”

But Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely at him and said: “Atreides, what word is this that hath escaped the barrier of thy lips? How sayest thou that we are slack in battle? When once our [Or, “that we are slack in battle, when once we Achaians,” putting the note of interrogation after “tamers of horses.”] Achaians launch furious war on the Trojans, tamers of horses, then shalt thou, if thou wilt, and if thou hast any care therefor, behold Telemachos’ dear father mingling with the champions of the Trojans, the tamers of horses. But that thou sayest is empty as air.”

Then lord Agamemnon spake to him smiling, seeing how he was wroth, and took back his saying: “Heaven-sprung son of Laertes, Odysseus full of devices, neither do I chide thee beyond measure nor urge thee; for I know that thy heart within thy breast is kindly disposed; for thy thoughts are as my thoughts. Go to, we will make amends hereafter, if any ill word hath been spoken now; may the gods bring it all to none effect.”

So saying he left them there and went on to others. The son of Tydeus found he, high-hearted Diomedes, standing still with horses and chariot well compact; and by him stood Sthenelos son of Kapaneus. Him lord Agamemnon saw and upbraided, and spake to him winged words, and said: “Ah me, thou son of wise Tydeus tamer of horses, why shrinkest thou, why gazest thou at the highways of the battle? Not thus was Tydeus wont to shrink, but rather to fight his enemies far in front of his dear comrades, as they say that beheld him at the task; for never did I meet him nor behold him, but men say that he was preeminent amid all. Of a truth he came to Mykene, not in enmity, but as a guest with godlike Polyneikes, to raise him an army for the war that they were levying against the holy walls of Thebes; and they besought earnestly that valiant allies might be given them, and our folk were fain to grant them and made assent to their entreaty, only Zeus showed omens of ill and turned their minds. So when these were departed and were come on their way, and had attained to Asopos deep in rushes, that maketh his bed in grass, there did the Achaians appoint Tydeus to be their ambassador. So he went and found the multitude of the sons of Kadmos feasting in the palace of mighty Eteokles. Yet was knightly Tydeus, even though a stranger, not afraid, being alone amid the multitude of the Kadmeians, but challenged them all to feats of strength, and in every one vanquished he them easily; so present a helper was Athene unto him. But the Kadmeians, the urgers of horses, were wroth, and as he fared back again they brought and set a strong ambush, even fifty young men, whose leaders were twain, Maion son of Haimon, like to the immortals, and Autophonos’ son Polyphontes staunch in battle. Still even on the Tydeus brought shameful death; he slew them all, save one that he sent home alone; Maion to wit he sent away in obedience to the omens of heaven. Such was Tydeus of Aitolia; but he begat a son that in battle is worse than he; only in harangue is he the better.”

So said he, and stalwart Diomedes made no answer, but had respect to the chiding of the king revered. But the son of glorious Kapaneus answered him: “Atreides, utter not falsehood, seeing thou knowest how to speak truly. We avow ourselves to be better men by far than our fathers were: we did take the seat of Thebes the seven gated, though we led a scantier host against a stronger wall, because we followed the omens of the gods and the salvation of Zeus; but they perished by their own iniquities. Do not thou therefore in any wise have our fathers in like honour with us.”

But stalwart Diomedes looked sternly at him, and said: “Brother, sit silent and obey my saying. I grudge not that Agamemnon shepherd of the host should urge on the well-greaved Achaians to fight; for him the glory will attend if the Achaians lay the Trojans low and take holy Ilios; and his will be the great sorrow if the Achaians be laid low. Go to now, let us too bethink us of impetuous valour.”

He spake and leapt in his armour from the chariot to earth, and terribly rang the bronze upon the chieftain’s breast as he moved; thereat might fear have come even upon one stout-hearted.

As when on the echoing beach the sea-wave lifteth up itself in close array before the driving of the west wind; out on the deep doth it first raise its head, and then breaketh upon the land and belloweth aloud and goeth with arching crest about the promontories, and speweth the foaming brine afar; even so in close array moved the battalions of the Danaans without pause to battle. Each captain gave his men the word, and the rest went silently; thou wouldest not deem that all the great host following them had any voice within their breasts; in silence feared they their captains. On every man glittered the inwrought armour wherewith they went clad. But for the Trojans, like sheep beyond number that stand in the courtyard of a man of great substance, to be milked of their white milk, and bleat without ceasing to hear their lambs’ cry, even so arose the clamour of the Trojans through the wide host. For they had not all like speech nor one language, but their tongues were mingled, and they were brought from many lands. These were urged on of Ares, and those of bright-eyed Athene, and Terror and Rout, and Strife whose fury wearieth not, sister and friend of murderous Ares; her crest is but lowly at the first, but afterward she holdeth up her head in heaven and her feet walk upon the earth. She now cast common discord in their midst, as she fared through the throng and made the lamentation of men to wax.

Now when they were met together and come unto one spot, then clashed they targe and spear and fury of bronze-clad warrior; the bossed shields pressed each on each and mighty din arose. Then were heard the voice of groaning and the voice of triumph together of the slayers and the slain, and the earth streamed with blood. As when two winter torrents flow down the mountains to a watersmeet and join their furious flood within the ravine from their great springs, and the shepherd heareth the roaring far off among the hills: even so from the joining of battle came there forth shouting and travail. Antilochos first slew a Trojan warrior in full array, valiant amid the champions, Echepolos son of Thalysios; him was he first to smite upon the ridge of his crested helmet, and he drave the spear into his brow and the point of bronze passed within the bone; darkness clouded his eyes, and he crashed like a tower amid the press of fight. As he fell lord Elephenor caught him by the foot, Chalkodon’s son, captain of the great-hearted Abantes, and dragged him from beneath the darts, eager with all speed to despoil him of his armour. Yet but for a little endured his essay; great-hearted Agenor saw him haling away the corpse, and where his side was left uncovered of his buckler as he bowed him down, there smote he him with bronze-tipped spear-shaft and unstrung his limbs. So his life departed from him, and over his corpse the task of Trojans and Achaians grew hot; like wolves leapt they one at another, and man lashed at man.

Next Telamonian Aias smote Anthemion’s son, the lusty stripling Simoeisios, whose erst is mother bare beside the banks of Simoeis on the way down from Ida whither she had followed with her parents to see their flocks. Therefore they called him Simoeisios, but he repaid not his dear parents the recompense of his nurture; scanty was his span of life by reason of the spear of great-hearted Aias that laid him low. For as he went he first was smitten on his right breast beside the pap; straight though his shoulder passed the spear of bronze, and he fell to the ground in the dust like a poplar-tree, that hath grown up smooth in the lowland of a great marsh, and its branches grow upon the top thereof; this hath a wainwright felled with gleaming steel, to bend him a felloe for a goodly chariot, and so it lies drying by a river’s banks. In such a fashion did heaven-sprung Aias slay Simoeisios son of Anthemion; then at him Antiphos of the glancing corslet, Priam’s son, made a cast with his keen javelin across the throng. Him he missed, but smote Odysseus’ valiant comrade Leukos in the groin as he drew the corpse his way, so that he fell upon it and the body dropped from his hands. Then Odysseus was very wroth at heart for the slaying of him, and strode through the forefront of the battle harnessed in flashing bronze, and went and stood hard by and glanced around him, and cast his bright javelin; and the Trojans shrank before the casting of the hero. He sped not the dart in vain, but smote Demokoon, Priam’s bastard son that had come to him from tending his fleet mares in Abydos. Him Odysseus, being wroth for his comrade’s sake, smote with his javelin on one temple; and through both temples passed the point of bronze, and darkness clouded his eyes, and he fell with a crash and his armour clanged upon him. Then the forefighters and glorious Hector yielded, and the Argives shouted aloud, and drew the bodies unto them, and pressed yet further onward. But Apollo looked down from Pergamos, and had indignation, and with a shout called to the Trojans: “Arise, ye Trojans, tamers of horses; yield not to the Argives in fight; not of stone nor iron is their flesh, that it should resist the piercing bronze when they are smitten. Moreover Achilles, son of Thetis of the fair tresses, fighteth not, but amid the ships broodeth on his bitter anger.”

So spake the dread god from the city; and the Achaians likewise were urged on of Zeus’ daughter the Triton-born, most glorious, as she passed through the throng wheresoever she beheld them slackening.

Next was Diores son of Amrynkeus caught in the snare of fate; for he was smitten by a jagged stone on the right leg hard by the ankle, and the caster thereof was captain of the men of Thrace, Peirros son of Imbrasos that had come from Ainos. The pitiless stone crushed utterly the two sinews and the bones; back fell he in the dust, and stretched out both his hands to his dear comrades, gasping out his soul. Then he that smote him, even Peiroos, sprang at him and pierced him with a spear beside the navel; so all his bowels gushed forth upon the ground, and darkness clouded his eyes. But even as Peiroos departed from him Thoas of Aitolia smote with a spear his chest above the pap, and the point fixed in his lung. Then Thoas came close, and plucked out from his breast the ponderous spear, and drew his sharp sword, wherewith he smote his belly in the midst, and took his life. Yet he stripped not off his armour; for his comrades, the men of Thrace that wear the top-knot, stood around, their long spears in their hands, and albeit he was great and valiant and proud they drave him off from them and he gave ground reeling. So were the two captains stretched in the dust side by side, he of the Thracians and he of the mail-clad Epeians; and around them were many others likewise slain.

Now would none any more enter in and make light of the battle, could it be that a man yet unwounded by dart or thrust of keen bronze might roam in the midst, being led of Pallas Athene by the hand, and by her guarded from the flying shafts. For many Trojans that day and many Achaians were laid side by side upon their faces in the dust.

BOOK V.

How Diomedes by his great valour made havoc of the Trojans, and wounded even Aphrodite and Ares by the help of Athene.

But now to Tydeus’ son Diomedes Athene gave might and courage, for him to be pre-eminent amid all the Argives and win glorious renown. She kindled flame unwearied from his helmet and shield, like to the star of summer that above all others glittereth bright after he hath bathed in the ocean stream. In such wise kindled she flame from his head and shoulders and sent him into the midst, where men thronged the thickest.

Now there was amid the Trojans one Dares, rich and noble, priest of Hephaistos; and he had two sons, Phegeus and Idaios, well skilled in all the art of battle. These separated themselves and assailed him face to face, they setting on him from their car and he on foot upon the ground. And when they were now come near in onset on each other, first Phegeus hurled his far-shadowing spear; and over Tydeides’ left shoulder the spear point passed, and smote not his body. Then next Tydeides made a spear-cast, and the javelin sped not from his hand in vain, but smote his breast between the nipples, and thrust him from the chariot. So Idaios sprang away, leaving his beautiful car, and dared not to bestride his slain brother; else had neither he himself escaped black fate: but Hephaistos guarded him and saved him in a veil of darkness, that he might not have his aged priest all broken with sorrow. And the son of great-hearted Tydeus drave away the horses and gave them to his men to take to the hollow ships. But when the great-hearted Trojans beheld the sons of Dares, how one was fled, and one was slain beside his chariot, the spirit of all was stirred. But bright-eyed Athene took impetuous Ares by the hand and spake to him and said: “Ares, Ares, blood-stained bane of mortals, thou stormer of walls, can we not now leave the Trojans and Achaians to fight, on whichsoever it be that father Zeus bestoweth glory? But let us twain give place, and escape the wrath of Zeus.”

So saying she led impetuous Ares from the battle. Then she made him sit down beside loud Skamandros, and the Danaans pushed the Trojans back.

So they laboured in the violent mellay; but of Tydeides man could not tell with whom he were joined, whether he consorted with Trojans or with Achaians. For he stormed across the plain like a winter torrent at the full, that in swift course scattereth the causeys [Causeways.]; neither can the long lines of causeys hold it in, nor the fences of fruitful orchards stay its sudden coming when the rain of heaven driveth it; and before it perish in multitudes the fair works of the sons of men. Thus before Tydeides the serried battalions of the Trojans were overthrown, and they abode him not for all they were so many.

But when Lykaon's glorious son marked him storming across the plain, overthrowing battalions before him, anon he bent his crooked bow against Tydeides, and smote him as he sped onwards, hitting hard by his right shoulder the plate of his corslet; the bitter arrow flew through and held straight upon its way, and the corslet was dabbled with blood. Over him then loudly shouted Lykaon's glorious son: "Bestir you, great-hearted Trojans, urgers of horses; the best man of the Achaians is wounded, and I deem that he shall not for long endure the violent dart."

So spake he boasting; yet was the other not vanquished of the swift dart, only he gave place and stood before his horses and his chariot and spake to Sthenelos son of Kapaneus: "Haste thee, dear son of Kapaneus; descend from thy chariot, to draw me from my shoulder the bitter arrow."

So said he, and Sthenelos leapt from his chariot to earth and stood beside him and drew the swift shaft right through, out of his shoulder; and the blood darted up through the pliant tunic. Then Diomedes of the loud war-cry prayed thereat: "Hear me, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, unwearied maiden! If ever in kindly mood thou stoodest by my father in the heat of battle, even so now be thou likewise kind to me, Athene. Grant me to slay this man, and bring within my spear-cast him that took advantage to shoot me, and boasteth over me, deeming that not for long shall I see the bright light of the sun."

So spake he in prayer, and Pallas Athene heard him, and made his limbs nimble, his feet and his hands withal, and came near and spake winged words: "Be of good courage now, Diomedes, to fight the Trojans; for in thy breast I have set thy father's courage undaunted, even as it was in knightly Tydeus, wielder of the buckler. Moreover I have taken from thine eyes the mist that erst was on them, that thou mayest well discern both god and man. Therefore if any god come hither to make trial of thee, fight not thou face to face with any of the immortal gods; save only if Aphrodite daughter of Zeus enter into the battle, her smite thou with the keen bronze."

So saying bright-eyed Athene went her way and Tydeides returned and entered the forefront of the battle; even though erst his soul was eager to do battle with the Trojans, yet now did threefold courage come upon him, as upon a lion whom some shepherd in the field guarding his fleecy sheep hath wounded, being sprung into the fold, yet hath not vanquished him; he hath roused his might, and then cannot beat him back, but lurketh amid the steading, and his forsaken flock is affrighted; so the sheep are cast in heaps, one upon the other, and the lion in his fury leapeth out of the high fold; even so in fury mingled mighty Diomedes with the Trojans.

Him Aineias beheld making havoc of the ranks of warriors, and went his way along the battle and amid the hurtling of spears, seeking godlike Pandaros, if haply he might find him. Lykaon's son he found, the noble and stalwart, and stood before his face, and spake a word unto him. "Pandaros, where now are thy bow and thy winged arrows, and the fame wherein no man of this land rivalleth thee, nor any in Lykia boasteth to be thy better? Go to now, lift thy hands in prayer to Zeus and shoot thy dart at this fellow, whoe'er he be that lordeth it here and hath already wrought the Trojans much mischief, seeing he hath unstrung the knees of many a brave man; if indeed it be not some god wroth with the Trojans, in anger by reason of sacrifices; the wrath of god is a sore thing to fall on men."

And Lykaon's glorious son made answer to him: "Aineias, counsellor of the mail-clad Trojans, in everything liken I him to the wise son of Tydeus; I discern him by his shield and crested helmet, and by the aspect of his horses; yet know I not surely if it be not a god. But if it be the man I deem, even the wise son of Tydeus, then not without help of a god is he thus furious, but some immortal standeth beside him with a cloud wrapped about his shoulders and turned aside from him my swift dart even as it lighted. For already have I shot my dart at him and smote his right shoulder right through the breastplate of his corslet, yea and I thought to hurl him headlong to Aidoneus, yet I vanquished him not; surely it is some wrathful god. Already have I aimed at two princes, Tydeus' and Atreus' sons, and both I smote and surely drew forth blood, yet only roused them the more. Therefore in an evil hour I took from the peg my curved bow on that day when I led my Trojans to lovely Ilios, to do noble Hector pleasure. But if I return and mine eyes behold my native land and wife and great palace lofty-roofed, then may an alien forthwith cut my head from me if I break not this bow with mine hands and cast it upon the blazing fire; worthless is its service to me as air."

Then Aineias captain of the Trojans answered him: "Nay, talk not thus; naught shall be mended before that we with horses and chariot have gone to face this man, and made trial of him in arms. Come then, mount upon my car that thou mayest see of what sort are the steeds of Tros, well skilled for following or for fleeing hither or thither very fleetly across the plain; they will e'en bring us to the city safe and sound, even though Zeus hereafter give victory to Diomedes son of Tydeus. Come therefore, take thou the lash and shining reins, and I will stand upon the car to fight; or else withstand thou him, and to the horses will I look."

To him made answer Lykaon's glorious son: "Aineias, take thou thyself the reins and thine own horses; better will they draw the curved car for their wonted charioteer, if perchance it hap that we must flee from Tydeus' son; lest they go wild for fear and will not take us from the fight, for lack of thy voice, and so the son of great-hearted Tydeus attack us and slay us both and drive away the whole-hooved horses. So drive thou thyself thy chariot and thy horses, and I will await his onset with my keen spear." So saying mounted they upon the well dight chariot, and eagerly drave the fleet horses against Tydeides, And Sthenelos, the glorious son of Kapaneus, saw them, and anon spake to Tydeides winged words: "Diomedes son of Tydeus, dear to mine heart, I behold two stalwart warriors eager to fight against thee, endued with might beyond measure. The one is well skilled in the bow, even Pandaros, and he moreover boasteth him to be Lykaon's son; and Aineias boasteth himself to be born son of great-hearted Anchises, and his mother is Aphrodite. Come now, let us give place upon the chariot, neither rage thou thus, I pray thee, in the forefront of battle, lest perchance thou lose thy life."

Then stalwart Diomedes looked sternly at him and said: "Speak to me no word of flight, for I ween that thou shalt not at all persuade me; not in my blood is it to fight a skulking fight or cower down; my force is steadfast still. I have no mind to mount the chariot, nay, even as I am will I go to face them; Pallas Athene biddeth me not be afraid. And as for these, their fleet horses shall not take both back from us again, even if one or other escape. And this moreover tell I thee, and lay thou it to heart: if Athene rich in counsel grant me this glory, to slay them both, then refrain thou here these my fleet horses, and bind the reins tight to the chariot rim; and be mindful to leap upon Aineias' horses, and drive them forth from the Trojans amid the well-greaved Achaians. For they are of that breed whereof farseeing Zeus gave to Tros recompense for Ganymede his child, because they were the best of all horses beneath the daylight and the sun."

In such wise talked they one to the other, and anon those other twain came near, driving their fleet horses. First to him spake Lykaon's glorious son: "O thou strong-souled and cunning, son of proud Tydeus, verily my swift dart vanquished thee not, the bitter arrow; so now will I make trial with my spear if I can hit thee."

He spake and poised and hurled his far-shadowing spear, and smote upon Tydeides' shield; right through it sped the point of bronze and reached the breastplate. So over him shouted loudly Lykaon's glorious son: "Thou art smitten on the belly right through, and I ween thou shalt not long hold up thine head; so thou givest me great renown."

But mighty Diomedes unaffrighted answered him: "Thou hast missed, and not hit; but ye twain I deem shall not cease till one or other shall have fallen and glutted with blood Ares the stubborn god of war."

So spake he and hurled; and Athene guided the dart upon his nose beside the eye, and it pierced through his white teeth. So the hard bronze cut through his tongue at the root and the point issued forth by the base of the chin. He fell from his chariot, and his splendid armour gleaming clanged upon him, and the fleet-footed horses swerved aside; so there his soul and strength were unstrung.

Then Aineias leapt down with shield and long spear, fearing lest perchance the Achaians might take from him the corpse; and strode over him like a lion confident in his strength, and held before him his spear and the circle of his shield, eager to slay whoe'er should come to face him, crying his terrible cry. Then Tydeides grasped in his hand a stone — a mighty deed — such as two men, as men now are, would not avail to lift; yet he with ease wielded it all alone. Therewith he smote Aineias on the hip where the thigh turneth in the hip joint, and this men call the "cup-bone." So he crushed his cup-bone, and brake both sinews withal, and the jagged stone tore apart the skin. Then the hero stayed fallen upon his knees and with stout hand leant upon the earth; and the darkness of night veiled his eyes. And now might Aineias king of men have perished, but that Aphrodite daughter of Zeus was swift to mark. About her dear son wound she her white arms, and spread before his face a fold of her radiant vesture, to be a covering from the darts, lest any of the fleet-horsed Danaans might hurl the spear into his breast and take away his life.

So was she bearing her dear son away from battle; but the son of Kapaneus forgat not the behest that Diomedes of the loud war-cry had laid upon him; he refrained his own whole-hooved horses away from the tumult, binding the reins tight to the chariot-rim, and leapt on the sleek-coated horses of Aineias, and drave them from the Trojans to the well-greaved Achaians, and gave them to Deipylos his dear comrade whom he esteemed above all that were his age-fellows, because he was like-minded with himself; and bade him drive them to the hollow ships. Then did the hero mount his own chariot and take the shining reins and forthwith drive his strong-hooved horses in quest of Tydeides, eagerly. Now Tydeides had made onslaught with pitiless weapon on Kypris [Aphrodite], knowing how she was a coward goddess and none of those that have mastery in battle of the warriors. Now when he had pursued her through the dense throng and come on her, then great-hearted Tydeus' son thrust with his keen spear, and leapt on her and wounded the skin of her weak hand; straight through the ambrosial raiment that the Graces themselves had woven her pierced the dart into the flesh, above the springing of the palm. Then flowed the goddess's immortal blood, such ichor as floweth in the blessed gods; for they eat no bread neither drink they gleaming wine, wherefore they are bloodless and are named immortals. And she with a great cry let fall her son: him Phoebus Apollo took into his arms and saved him in a dusky cloud, lest any of the fleet-horsed Danaans might hurl the spear into his breast and take away his life. But over her Diomedes of the loud war-cry shouted afar: "Refrain thee, thou daughter of Zeus, from war and fighting. Is it not enough that thou beguilest feeble women? But if in battle thou wilt mingle, verily I deem that thou shalt shudder at the name of battle, if thou hear it even afar off."

So spake he, and she departed in amaze and was sore troubled: and wind-footed Iris took her and led her from the throng tormented with her pain, and her fair skin was stained. There found she impetuous Ares sitting, on the battle's left; and his spear rested upon a cloud, and his fleet steeds. Then she fell on her knees and with instant prayer besought of her dear brother his golden-frontleted steeds: "Dear brother, save me and give me thy steeds, that I may win to Olympus, where is the habitation of the immortals. Sorely am I afflicted with a wound wherewith a mortal smote me, even Tydeides, who now would fight even with father Zeus."

So spake she, and Ares gave her his golden-frontleted steeds, and she mounted on the chariot sore at heart. By her side mounted Iris, and in her hands grasped the reins and lashed the horses to start them; and they flew onward nothing loth. Thus soon they came to the habitation of the gods, even steep Olympus. There wind-footed fleet Iris loosed the horses from the chariot and stabled them, and set ambrosial forage before them; but fair Aphrodite fell upon Dione's knees that was her mother. She took her daughter in her arms and stroked her with her hand, and spake and called upon her name: "Who now of the sons of heaven, dear child, hath entreated thee thus wantonly, as though thou wert a wrong-doer in the face of all?"

Then laughter-loving Aphrodite made answer to her: "Tydeus' son wounded me, high-hearted Diomedes, because I was saving from the battle my dear son Aineias, who to me is dearest far of all men. For no more is the fierce battle-cry for Trojans and Achaians, but the Danaans now are fighting even the immortals."

Then the fair goddess Dione answered her: "Be of good heart, my child, and endure for all thy pain; for many of us that inhabit the mansions of Olympus have suffered through men, in bringing grievous woes one upon another."

So saying with both hands she wiped the ichor from the arm; her arm was comforted, and the grievous pangs assuaged. But Athene and Hera beheld, and with bitter words provoked Zeus the son, of Kronos. Of them was the bright-eyed goddess Athene first to speak: “Father Zeus, wilt thou indeed be wroth with me whate’er I say? Verily I ween that Kypris was urging some woman of Achaia to join her unto the Trojans whom she so marvellously loveth; and stroking such an one of the fair-robed women of Achaia, she tore upon the golden brooch her delicate hand.”

So spake she, and the father of gods and men smiled, and called unto him golden Aphrodite and said: “Not unto thee, my child, are given the works of war; but follow thou after the loving tasks of wedlock, and to all these things shall fleet Ares and Athene look.”

Now while they thus spake in converse one with the other, Diomedes of the loud war-cry leapt upon Aineias, knowing full well that Apollo himself had spread his arms over him; yet reverenced he not even the great god, but still was eager to slay Aineias and strip from him his glorious armour. So thrice he leapt on him, fain to slay him, and thrice Apollo beat back his glittering shield. And when the fourth time he sprang at him like a god, then Apollo the Far-darter spake to him with terrible shout: “Think, Tydeides, and shrink, nor desire to match thy spirit with gods; seeing there is no comparison of the race of immortal gods and of men that walk upon the earth.”

So said he, and Tydeides shrank a short space backwards, to avoid the wrath of Apollo the Far-darter. Then Apollo set Aineias away from the throng in holy Pergamos where his temple stood. There Leto and Archer Artemis healed him in the mighty sanctuary, and gave him glory; but Apollo of the silver bow made a wraith like unto Aineias’ self, and in such armour as his; and over the wraith Trojans and goodly Achaians each hewed the others’ bucklers on their breasts, their round shields and fluttering targes.

Then to impetuous Ares said Phoebus Apollo: “Ares, Ares, blood-stained bane of mortals, thou stormer of walls, wilt thou not follow after this man and withdraw him from the battle, this Tydeides, who now would fight even with father Zeus? First in close fight he wounded Kypris in her hand hard by the wrist, and then sprang he upon myself like unto a god.”

So saying he sate himself upon the height of Pergamos, and baleful Ares entered among the Trojan ranks and aroused them in the likeness of fleet Akamas, captain of the Thracians. On the heaven-nurtured sons of Priam he called saying: “O ye sons of Priam, the heaven-nurtured king, how long will ye yet suffer your host to be slain of the Achaians? Shall it be even until they fight about our well-builded gates? Low lieth the warrior whom we esteemed like unto goodly Hector, even Aineias son of Anchises great of heart. Go to now, let us save from the tumult our valiant comrade.”

So saying he aroused the spirit and soul of every man. Thereat Sarpedon sorely chode noble Hector: “Hector, where now is the spirit gone that erst thou hadst? Thou saidst forsooth that without armies or allies thou wouldest hold the city, alone with thy sisters’ husbands and thy brothers; but now can I not see any of these neither perceive them, but they are cowering like hounds about a lion; and we are fighting that are but allies among you.”

So spake Sarpedon, and his word stung Hector to the heart, Forthwith he leapt from his chariot in his armour to the earth, and brandishing two keen spears went everywhere through the host, urging them to fight, and roused the dread battle-cry. So they were rallied and stood to face the Achaians: and the Argives withstood them in close array and fled not. Even as a wind carrieth the chaff about the sacred threshing-floors when men are winnowing, and the chaff-heaps grow white — so now grew the Achaians white with falling dust which in their midst the horses’ hooves beat up into the brazen heaven, as fight was joined again, and the charioteers wheeled round. Thus bare they forward the fury of their hands: and impetuous Ares drew round them a veil of night to aid the Trojans in the battle, ranging everywhere. And Apollo himself sent forth Aineias from his rich sanctuary and put courage in the heart of him, shepherd of the hosts. So Aineias took his place amid his comrades, and they were glad to see him come among them alive and sound and full of valiant spirit. Yet they questioned him not at all, for all the toil forbade them that the god of the silver bow was stirring and Ares bane of men and Strife raging insatiably.

And on the other side the two Aiantes and Odysseus and Diomedes stirred the Danaans to fight; yet these of themselves feared neither the Trojans’ violence nor assaults, but stood like mists that Kronos’ son setteth in windless air on the mountain tops, at peace, while the might of the north wind sleepeth and of all the violent winds that blow with keen breath and scatter apart the shadowing clouds. Even so the Danaans withstood the Trojans steadfastly and fled not. And Atreides ranged through the throng exhorting instantly: “My friends, quit you like men and take heart of courage, and shun dishonour in one another’s eyes amid the stress of battle. Of men that shun dishonour more are saved than slain, but for them that flee is neither glory found nor any safety.”

So saying he darted swiftly with his javelin and smote a foremost warrior, even great-hearted Aineias’ comrade Deikoon son of Pergasos, whom the Trojans held in like honour with Priam’s sons, because he was swift to do battle amid the foremost. Him lord Agamemnon smote with his dart upon the shield, and it stayed not the spear, but the point passed through, so that he drave it through the belt into his nethermost belly: and he fell with a crash and his armour clanged upon him.

Then did Aineias slay two champions of the Danaans, even the sons of Diokles, Krethon and Orsilochos. Like them, two lions on the mountain tops are nurtured by their dam in the deep forest thickets; and these harry the kine and goodly sheep and make havoc of the farmsteads of men, till in their turn they too are slain at men’s hands with the keen bronze; in such wise were these twain vanquished at Aineias’ hands and fell like tall pine-trees.

But Menelaos dear to Ares had pity of them in their fall, and strode through the forefront, harnessed in flashing bronze, brandishing his spear; and Ares stirred his courage, with intent that he might fall beneath Aineias’ hand. But Antilochos, great-hearted Nestor’s son, beheld him, and strode through the forefront; because he feared exceedingly for the shepherd of the host, lest aught befall him and disappoint them utterly of their labour. So those two were now holding forth their hands and sharp spears each against the other, eager to do battle; when Antilochos came and stood hard by the shepherd of the host. But Aineias faced them not, keen warrior though he was, when he beheld two men abiding side by side; so these haled away the corpses to the Achaians’ host, and laid the hapless twain in their comrades’ arms, and themselves turned back and fought on amid the foremost.

But Hector marked them across the ranks, and sprang on them with a shout, and the battalions of the Trojans followed him in their might: and Ares led them on and dread Enyo, she bringing ruthless turmoil of war, the while Ares wielded in his hands his monstrous spear, and ranged now before Hector’s face, and now behind.

Then Diomedes of the loud war-cry shuddered to behold him; and even as a shiftless man crossing a great plain cometh on a swift-streaming river flowing on to the sea, and seeing it boil with foam springeth backwards, even so now Tydeides shrank back and spake to the host: “Friends, how marvel we that noble Hector is a spearman and bold man of war! Yet ever is there beside him some god that wardeth off destruction; even as now Ares is there by him in likeness of a mortal man. But with faces towards the Trojans still give ground backwards, neither be desirous to fight amain with gods.”

Now the Argives before the face of Ares and mail-clad Hector neither turned them round about toward their black ships, nor charged forward in battle, but still fell backward, when they heard of Ares amid the Trojans. But when the white-armed goddess Hera marked them making havoc of the Argives in the press of battle, anon she spake winged words to Athene: “Out on it, thou daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, unwearied maiden! Was it for naught we pledged our word to Menelaos, that he should not depart till he had laid waste well-walled Ilios, — if thus we let baleful Ares rage? Go to now, let us twain also take thought of impetuous valour."

So said she, and the bright-eyed goddess Athene disregarded not. So Hera the goddess queen, daughter of Kronos, went her way to harness the gold-frontleted steeds. And Athene, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, cast down at her father's threshold her woven vesture many-coloured, that herself had wrought and her hands had fashioned, and put on her the tunic of Zeus the cloud-gatherer, and arrayed her in her armour for dolorous battle. About her shoulders cast she the tasselled aegis terrible, whereon is Panic as a crown all round about, and Strife is therein and Valour and horrible Onslaught withal, and therein is the dreadful monster's Gorgon head, dreadful and grim, portent of aegis-bearing Zeus. Upon her head set she the two-crested golden helm with fourfold plate, bedecked with men-at-arms of a hundred cities. Upon the flaming chariot set she her foot, and grasped her heavy spear, great and stout, wherewith she vanquisheth the ranks of men, even of heroes with whom she of the awful sire is wroth. Then Hera swiftly smote the horses with the lash; self-moving groaned upon their hinges the gates of heaven whereof the Hours are warders, to whom is committed great heaven and Olympus, whether to throw open the thick cloud or set it to. There through the gates guided they their horses patient of the lash. And they found the son of Kronos sitting apart from all the gods on the topmost peak of many-ridged Olympus. Then the white-armed goddess Hera stayed her horses and questioned the most high Zeus, the son of Kronos, and said: "Father Zeus, hast thou no indignation with Ares for these violent deeds? How great and goodly a company of Achaians hath he destroyed recklessly and in unruly wise, unto my sorrow. But here in peace Kypris and Apollo of the silver bow take their pleasure, having set on this mad one that knoweth not any law. Father Zeus, wilt thou at all be wroth with me if I smite Ares and chase him from the battle in sorry plight?"

And Zeus the cloud-gatherer answered and said to her: "Go to now, set upon him Athene driver of the spoil, who most is wont to bring sore pain upon him."

So spake he, and the white-armed goddess Hera disregarded not, and lashed her horses; they nothing loth flew on between earth and starry heaven. As far as a man seeth with his eyes into the haze of distance as he sitteth on a place of outlook and gazeth over the wine-dark sea, so far leap the loudly neighing horses of the gods. Now when they came to Troy and the two flowing rivers, even to where Simoeis and Skamandros join their streams, there the white-armed goddess Hera stayed her horses and loosed them from the car and poured thick mist round about them, and Simoeis made ambrosia spring up for them to graze. So the goddesses went their way with step like unto turtle-doves, being fain to bring succour to the men of Argos. And when they were now come where the most and most valiant stood, thronging about mighty Diomedes tamer of horses, in the semblance of ravening lions or wild boars whose strength is nowise feeble, then stood the white-armed goddess Hera and shouted in the likeness of great-hearted Stentor with voice of bronze, whose cry was loud as the cry of fifty other men: “Fie upon you, Argives, base things of shame, so brave in semblance! While yet noble Achilles entered continually into battle, then issued not the Trojans even from the Dardanian gate; for they had dread of his terrible spear. But now fight they far from the city at the hollow ships.”

So saying she aroused the spirit and soul of every man. And to Tydeides’ side sprang the bright-eyed goddess Athene. That lord she found beside his horses and chariot, cooling the wound that Pandaros with his dart had pierced, for his sweat vexed it by reason of the broad baldrick of his round shield; therewith was he vexed and his arm grew weary, so he was lifting up the baldrick and wiping away the dusky blood. Then the goddess laid her hand on his horses’ yoke, and said: “Of a truth Tydeus begat a son little after his own likeness. Tydeus was short of stature, but a man of war.”

And stalwart Diomedes made answer to her and said: “I know thee, goddess daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus: therefore with my whole heart will I tell thee my thought and hide it not. Neither hath disheartening terror taken hold upon me, nor any faintness, but I am still mindful of thy behest that thou didst lay upon me. Thou forbadest me to fight face to face with all the blessed gods, save only if Zeus’ daughter Aphrodite should enter into battle, then to wound her with the keen bronze. Therefore do I now give ground myself and have bidden all the Argives likewise to gather here together; for I discern Ares lording it in the fray.”

Then the bright-eyed goddess Athene answered him: “Diomedes son of Tydeus, thou joy of mine heart, fear thou, for that, neither Ares nor any other of the immortals; so great a helper am I to thee. Go to now, at Ares first guide thou thy whole-hooved horses, and smite him hand to hand, nor have any awe of impetuous Ares, raving here, a curse incarnate, the renegade that of late in converse with me and Hera pledged him to fight against the Trojans and give succour to the Argives, but now consorteth with the Trojans and hath forgotten these.”

So speaking, with her hand she drew back Sthenelos and thrust him from the chariot to earth, and instantly leapt he down; so the goddess mounted the car by noble Diomedes’ side right eagerly. The oaken axle creaked loud with its burden, bearing the dread goddess and the man of might. Then Athene grasped the whip and reins; forthwith against Ares first guided she the whole-hooved horses. Now he was stripping huge Periphas, most valiant far of the Aitolians, Ochesios’ glorious son. Him was blood-stained Ares stripping; and Athene donned the helm of Hades, that terrible Ares might not behold her. Now when Ares scourge of mortals beheld noble Diomedes, he left huge Periphas lying there, where at the first he had slain him and taken away his life, and made straight at Diomedes tamer of horses. Now when they were come nigh in onset on one another, first Ares thrust over the yoke and horse's reins with spear of bronze, eager to take away his life. But the bright-eyed goddess Athene with her hand seized the spear and thrust it up over the car, to spend itself in vain. Next Diomedes of the loud war-cry attacked with spear of bronze; and Athene drave it home against Ares' nethermost belly, where his taslets were girt about him. There smote he him and wounded him, rending through his fair skin, and plucked forth the spear again. Then brazen Ares bellowed loud as nine thousand warriors or ten thousand cry in battle as they join in strife and fray. Thereat trembling gat hold of Achaians and Trojans for fear, so mightily bellowed Ares insatiate of battle.

Even as gloomy mist appeareth from the clouds when after beat a stormy wind ariseth, even so to Tydeus' son Diomedes brazen Ares appeared amid clouds, faring to wide heaven. Swiftly came he to the gods' dwelling, steep Olympus, and sat beside Zeus son of Kronos with grief at heart, and shewed the immortal blood flowing from the wound, and piteously spake to him winged words: "Father Zeus, hast thou no indignation to behold these violent deeds? For ever cruelly suffer we gods by one another's devices, in shewing men grace. With thee are we all at variance, because thou didst beget that reckless maiden and baleful, whose thought is ever of iniquitous deeds. For all the other gods that are in Olympus hearken to thee, and we are subject every one; only her thou chastenest not, neither in deed nor word, but settest her on, because this pestilent one is thine own offspring. Now hath she urged on Tydeus' son, even overweening Diomedes, to rage furiously against the immortal gods. Kypris first he wounded in close fight, in the wrist of her hand, and then assailed he me, even me, with the might of a god. Howbeit my swift feet bare me away; else had I long endured anguish there amid the grisly heaps of dead, or else had lived strengthless from the smitings of the spear."

Then Zeus the cloud-gatherer looked sternly at him and said: "Nay, thou renegade, sit not by me and whine. Most hateful to me art thou of all gods that dwell in Olympus: thou ever lovest strife and wars and battles. Truly thy mother's spirit is intolerable, unyielding, even Hera's; her can I scarce rule with words. Therefore I deem that by her prompting thou art in this plight. Yet will I no longer endure to see thee in anguish; mine offspring art thou, and to me thy mother bare thee."

So spake he and bade Paieon heal him. And Paieon laid assuaging drugs upon the wound. Even as fig juice maketh haste to thicken white milk, that is liquid but curdleth speedily as a man stirreth, even so swiftly healed he impetuous Ares. And Hebe bathed him, and clothed him in gracious raiment, and he sate him down by Zeus son of Kronos, glorying in his might.

Then fared the twain back to the mansion of great Zeus, even Hera and Athene, having stayed Ares scourge of mortals from his man-slaying.

BOOK VI.

How Diomedes and Glaukos, being about to fight, were known to each other, and parted in friendliness. And how Hector returning to the city bade farewell to Andromache his wife.

So was the dread fray of Trojans and Achaians left to itself, and the battle swayed oft this way and that across the plain, as they aimed against each other their bronze-shod javelins, between Simoeis and the streams of Xanthos.

Now had the Trojans been chased again by the Achaians, dear to Ares, up into Ilios, in their weakness overcome, but that Prism's son Helenos, far best of augurs, stood by Aineias' side and Hector's, and spake to them: "Aineias and Hector, seeing that on you lieth the task of war in chief of Trojans and Lykians, because for every issue ye are foremost both for fight and counsel, stand ye your ground, and range the host everywhither to rally them before the gates, ere yet they fall fleeing in their women's arms, and be made a rejoicing to the foe. Then when ye have aroused all our battalions we will abide here and fight the Danaans, though in sore weariness; for necessity presseth us hard: but thou, Hector, go into the city, and speak there to thy mother and mine; let her gather the aged wives to bright-eyed Athene's temple in the upper city, and with her key open the doors of the holy house; and let her lay the robe, that seemeth to her the most gracious and greatest in her hall and far dearest unto herself, upon the knees of beauteous-haired Athene; and vow to her to sacrifice in her temple twelve sleek kine, that have not felt the goad, if she will have mercy on the city and the Trojans' wives and little children. So may she perchance hold back Tydeus' son from holy Ilios, the furious spearman, the mighty deviser of rout, whom in good sooth I deem to have proved himself mightiest of the Achaians. Never in this wise feared we Achilles, prince of men, who they say is born of a goddess; nay, but he that we see is beyond measure furious; none can match him for might."

So spake he, and Hector disregarded not his brother's word, but leapt forthwith from his chariot in his armour to earth, and brandishing two sharp spears passed everywhere through the host, rousing them to battle, and stirred the dread war-cry. So they were rallied and stood to face the Achaians, and the Argives gave ground and ceased from slaughter, and deemed that some immortal had descended from starry heaven to bring the Trojans succour, in such wise rallied they. Then Hector called to the Trojans with far-reaching shout: “O high-souled Trojans and ye far-famed allies, quit you like men, my friends, and take thought of impetuous courage, while I depart to Ilios and bid the elders of the council and our wives pray to the gods and vow them hecatombs.”

So saying Hector of the glancing helm departed, and the black hide beat on either side against his ankles and his neck, even the rim that ran uttermost about his bossed shield.

Now Glaukos son of Hippolochos and Tydeus’ son met in the mid-space of the foes, eager to do battle. Thus when the twain were come nigh in onset on each other, to him first spake Diomedes of the loud war-cry: “Who art thou, noble sir, of mortal men? For never have I beheld thee in glorious battle ere this, yet now hast thou far outstripped all men in thy hardihood, seeing thou abidest my far-shadowing spear. Luckless are the fathers whose children face my might. But if thou art some immortal come down from heaven, then will not I fight with heavenly gods. But if thou art of men that eat the fruit of the field, come nigh, that anon thou mayest enter the toils of destruction.”

Then Hippolochos’ glorious son made answer to him: “Great-hearted Tydeides, why enquirest thou of my generation? Even as are the generations of leaves such are those likewise of men; the leaves that be the wind scattereth on the earth, and the forest buddeth and putteth forth more again, when the season of spring is at hand; so of the generations of men one putteth forth and another ceaseth. Yet if thou wilt, have thine answer, that thou mayest well know our lineage, whereof many men have knowledge. Hippolochos, son of Bellerophon, begat me, and of him do I declare me to be sprung; he sent me to Troy and bade me very instantly to be ever the best and to excel all other men, nor put to shame the lineage of my fathers that were of noblest blood in Ephyre and in wide Lykia. This is the lineage and blood whereof I avow myself to be.”

So said he, and Diomedes of the loud war-cry was glad. He planted his spear in the bounteous earth and with soft words spake to the shepherd of the host: “Surely then thou art to me a guest-friend of old times through my father: for goodly Oineus of yore entertained noble Bellerophon in his halls and kept him twenty days. Moreover they gave each the other goodly gifts of friendship; Oineus gave a belt bright with purple, and Bellerophon a gold two-handled cup. Therefore now am I to thee a dear guest-friend in midmost Argos, and thou in Lykia, whene’er I fare to your land. So let us shun each other’s spears, even amid the throng; Trojans are there in multitudes and famous allies for me to slay, whoe’er it be that God vouchsafeth me and my feet overtake; and for thee are there Achaians in multitude, to slay whome’er thou canst. But let us make exchange of arms between us, that these also may know how we avow ourselves to be guest-friends by lineage.”

So spake the twain, and leaping from their cars clasped each the other by his hand, and pledged their faith. But now Zeus son of Kronos took from Glaukos his wits, in that he made exchange with Diomedes Tydeus’ son of golden armour for bronze, the price of five score oxen for the price of nine.

Now when Hector came to the Skaian gates and to the oak tree, there came running round about him the Trojans’ wives and daughters, enquiring of sons and brethren and friends and husbands. But he bade them thereat all in turn pray to the gods; but sorrow hung over many.

But when he came to Priam’s beautiful palace, adorned with polished colonnades — and in it were fifty chambers of polished stone, builded hard by one another, wherein Priam’s sons slept beside their wedded wives; and for his daughters over against them on the other side within the courtyard were twelve roofed chambers of polished stone builded hard by one another, wherein slept Priam’s sons-in-law beside their chaste wives — then came there to meet him his bountiful mother, leading with her Laodike, fairest of her daughters to look on; and she clasped her hand in his, and spake, and called upon his name: “My son, why hast thou left violent battle to come hither. Surely the sons of the Achaians — name of evil! — press thee hard in fight about thy city, and so thy spirit hath brought thee hither, to come and stretch forth thy hands to Zeus from the citadel. But tarry till I bring thee honey-sweet wine, that thou mayest pour libation to Zeus and all the immortals first, and then shalt thou thyself also be refreshed if thou wilt drink. When a man is awearied wine greatly maketh his strength to wax, even as thou art awearied in fighting for thy fellows.”

Then great Hector of the glancing helm answered her: “Bring me no honey-hearted wine, my lady mother, lest thou cripple me of my courage and I be forgetful of my might. But go thou to the temple of Athene, driver of the spoil, with offerings, and gather the aged wives together; and the robe that seemeth to thee the most gracious and greatest in thy palace, and dearest unto thyself, that lay thou upon the knees of beauteous-haired Athene, and vow to her to sacrifice in her temple twelve sleek kine, that have not felt the goad, if she will have mercy on the city and the Trojans’ wives and little children. So go thou to the temple of Athene, driver of the spoil; and I will go after Paris, to summon him, if perchance he will hearken to my voice. Would that the earth forthwith might swallow him up! The Olympian fostered him to be a sore bane to the Trojans and to great-hearted Priam, and to Priam’s sons. If I but saw him going down to the gates of death, then might I deem that my heart had forgotten its sorrows.”

So said he, and she went unto the hall, and called to her handmaidens, and they gathered the aged wives throughout the city. Then she herself went down to her fragrant chamber where were her embroidered robes, the work of Sidonian women, whom godlike Alexandros himself brought from Sidon, when he sailed over the wide sea, that journey wherein he brought home high-born Helen. Of these Hekabe took one to bear for an offering to Athene, the one that was fairest for adornment and greatest, and shone like a star, and lay nethermost of all. Then went she her way and the multitude of aged wives hasted after her. And Hector was come to Alexandros' fair palace, that himself had builded with them that were most excellent carpenters then in deep-soiled Troy-land; these made him his chamber and hall and courtyard hard by to Priam and Hector, in the upper city. There entered in Hector dear to Zeus, and his hand bare his spear, eleven cubits long: before his face glittered the bronze spear-point, and a ring of gold ran round about it. And he found Paris in his chamber busied with his beauteous arms, his shield and breastplate, and handling his curved bow; and Helen of Argos sate among her serving-women and appointed brave handiwork for her handmaidens. Then when Hector saw him he rebuked him with scornful words: "Good sir, thou dost not well to cherish this rancour in thy heart. The folk are perishing about the city and high wall in battle, and for thy sake the battle-cry is kindled and war around this city; yes thyself wouldest thou fall out with another, didst thou see him shrinking from hateful war. Up then, lest the city soon be scorched with burning fire."

And godlike Alexandros answered him: "Hector, since in measure thou chidest me and not beyond measure, therefore will I tell thee; lay thou it to thine heart and hearken to me. Not by reason so much of the Trojans, for wrath and indignation, sate I me in my chamber, but fain would I yield me to my sorrow. Even now my wife hath persuaded me with soft words, and urged me into battle; and I moreover, even I, deem that it will be better so; for victory shifteth from man to man. Go to then, tarry awhile, let me put on my armour of war; or else fare thou forth, and I will follow; and I think to overtake thee."

So said he, but Hector of the glancing helm answered him not a word. But Helen spake to him with gentle words: "My brother, even mine that am a dog, mischievous and abominable, would that on the day when my mother bare me at the first, an evil storm-wind had caught me away to a mountain or a billow of the loud-sounding sea, where the billow might have swept me away before all these things came to pass. Howbeit, seeing the gods devised all these ills in this wise, would that then I had been mated with a better man, that felt dishonour and the multitude of men's reproachings. But as for him, neither hath he now sound heart, nor ever will have; thereof deem I moreover that he will reap the fruit. But now come, enter in and sit thee here upon this bench, my brother, since thy heart chiefly trouble hath encompassed, for the sake of me, that am a dog, and for

Alexandros’ sin; on whom Zeus bringeth evil doom, that even in days to come we may be a song in the ears of men that shall be hereafter.”

Then great Hector of the glancing helm answered her: “Bid me not sit, Helen, of thy love; thou wilt not persuade me. Already my heart is set to succour the men of Troy, that have great desire for me that am not with them. But rouse thou this fellow, yea let himself make speed, to overtake me yet within the city. For I shall go into mine house to behold my housefolk and my dear wife, and infant boy; for I know not if I shall return home to them again, or if the gods will now overthrow me at the hands of the Achaians.”

So spake Hector of the glancing helm and departed; and anon he came to his well-stablished house. But he found not white-armed Andromache in the halls; she with her boy and fair-robed handmaiden had taken her stand upon the tower, weeping and wailing. And when Hector found not his noble wife within, he came and stood upon the threshold and spake amid the serving women: “Come tell me now true, my serving women. Whither went white-armed Andromache forth from the hall? Hath she gone out to my sisters or unto my brothers’ fair-robed wives, or to Athene’s temple, where all the fair-tressed Trojan women propitiate the awful goddess?”

Then a busy housedame spake in answer to him: “Hector, seeing thou straitly chargest us tell thee true, neither hath she gone out to any of thy sisters or thy brothers’ fair-robed wives, neither to Athene’s temple, where all the fair-tressed Trojan women are propitiating the awful goddess; but she went to the great tower of Ilios, because she heard the Trojans were hard pressed, and great victory was for the Achaians. So hath she come in haste to the wall, like unto one frenzied; and the nurse with her beareth the child.”

So spake the housedame, and Hector hastened from his house back by the same way down the well-builded streets. When he had passed through the great city and was come to the Skaian gates, whereby he was minded to issue upon the plain, then came his dear-won wife, running to meet him, even Andromache daughter of great-hearted Eetion. So she met him now, and with her went the handmaid bearing in her bosom the tender boy, the little child, Hector’s loved son, like unto a beautiful star. Him Hector called Skamandrios, but all the folk Astyanax [Astyanax = “City King.”]; for only Hector guarded Ilios. So now he smiled and gazed at his boy silently, and Andromache stood by his side weeping, and clasped her hand in his, and spake and called upon his name. “Dear my lord, this thy hardihood will undo thee, neither hast thou any pity for thine infant boy, nor for me forlorn that soon shall be thy widow; for soon will the Achaians all set upon thee and slay thee. But it were better for me to go down to the grave if I lose thee; for never more will any comfort be mine, when once thou, even thou, hast met thy fate, but only sorrow. Nay, Hector, thou art to me father and lady mother, yea and brother, even as thou art my goodly husband. Come now, have pity and abide here upon the tower, lest thou make thy child an orphan and thy wife a widow.”

Then great Hector of the glancing helm answered her: “Surely I take thought for all these things, my wife; but I have very sore shame of the Trojans and Trojan dames with trailing robes, if like a coward I shrink away from battle. Moreover mine own soul forbiddeth me, seeing I have learnt ever to be valiant and fight in the forefront of the Trojans, winning my father’s great glory and mine own. Yea of a surety I know this in heart and soul; the day shall come for holy Ilios to be laid low, and Priam and the folk of Priam of the good ashen spear. Yet doth the anguish of the Trojans hereafter not so much trouble me, neither Hekabe’s own, neither king Priam’s, neither my brethren’s, the many and brave that shall fall in the dust before their foemen, as doth thine anguish in the day when some mail-clad Achaian shall lead thee weeping and rob thee of the light of freedom. So shalt thou abide in Argos and ply the loom at another woman’s bidding, and bear water from fount Messeis or Hypereia, being grievously entreated, and sore constraint shall be laid upon thee. And then shall one say that beholdeth thee weep: ‘This is the wife of Hector, that was foremost in battle of the horse-taming Trojans when men fought about Ilios.’ Thus shall one say hereafter, and fresh grief will be thine for lack of such an husband as thou hadst to ward off the day of thraldom. But me in death may the heaped-up earth be covering, ere I hear thy crying and thy carrying into captivity.”

So spake glorious Hector, and stretched out his arm to his boy. But the child shrunk crying to the bosom of his fair-girdled nurse, dismayed at his dear father’s aspect, and in dread at the bronze and horse-hair crest that he beheld nodding fiercely from the helmet’s top. Then his dear father laughed aloud, and his lady mother; forthwith glorious Hector took the helmet from his head, and laid it, all gleaming, upon the earth; then kissed he his dear son and dandled him in his arms, and spake in prayer to Zeus and all the gods, “O Zeus and all ye gods, vouchsafe ye that this my son may likewise prove even as I, pre-eminent amid the Trojans, and as valiant in might, and be a great king of Ilios. Then may men say of him, ‘Far greater is he than his father’ as he returneth home from battle; and may he bring with him blood-stained spoils from the foeman he hath slain, and may his mother’s heart be glad.”

So spake he, and laid his son in his dear wife’s arms; and she took him to her fragrant bosom, smiling tearfully. And her husband had pity to see her, and caressed her with his hand, and spake and called upon her name: “Dear one, I pray thee be not of oversorrowful heart; no man against my fate shall hurl me to

Hades; only destiny, I ween, no man hath escaped, be he coward or be he valiant, when once he hath been born. But go thou to thine house and see to thine own tasks, the loom and distaff, and bid thine handmaidens ply their work; but for war shall men provide, and I in chief of all men that dwell in Ilios.”

So spake glorious Hector, and took up his horse-hair crested helmet; and his dear wife departed to her home, oft looking back, and letting fall big tears. Anon she came to the well-stablished house of man-slaying Hector, and found therein her many handmaidens, and stirred lamentation in them all. So bewailed they Hector, while yet he lived, within his house: for they deemed that he would no more come back to them from battle, nor escape the fury of the hands of the Achaians.

Neither lingered Paris long in his lofty house, but clothed on him his brave armour, bedight with bronze, and hasted through the city, trusting to his nimble feet. Even as when a stalled horse, full-fed at the manger, breaketh his tether and speedeth at the gallop across the plain, being wont to bathe him in the fair-flowing stream, exultingly; and holdeth his head on high, and his mane floateth about his shoulders, and he trusteth in his glory, and nimbly his limbs bear him to the haunts and pasturages of mares; even so Priam’s son Paris, glittering in his armour like the shining sun, strode down from high Pergamos laughingly, and his swift feet bare him. Forthwith he overtook his brother noble Hector, even as he was on the point to turn him away from the spot where he had dallied with his wife. To him first spake godlike Alexandros: “Sir, in good sooth I have delayed thee in thine haste by my tarrying, and came not rightly as thou badest me.”

And Hector of the glancing helm answered him and said: “Good brother, no man that is rightminded could make light of thy doings in fight, seeing thou art strong: but thou art wilfully remiss and hast no care; and for this my heart is grieved within me, that I hear shameful words concerning thee in the Trojans’ mouths, who for thy sake endure much toil. But let us be going; all this will we make good hereafter, if Zeus ever vouchsafe us to set before the heavenly gods that are for everlasting the cup of deliverance in our halls, when we have chased out of Troy-land the well-greaved Achaians.”

BOOK VII.

Of the single combat between Aias and Hector, and of the burying of the dead, and the building of a wall about the Achaian ships.

So spake glorious Hector and issued from the gates, and with him went his brother Alexandros; and both were eager of soul for fight and battle. Even as God giveth to longing seamen fair wind when they have grown weary of beating the main with polished oars, and their limbs are fordone with toil, even so appeared these to the longing Trojans.

Now when the goddess bright-eyed Athene marked them making havoc of the Argives in the press of battle, she darted down from the crests of Olympus to holy Ilios. But Apollo rose to meet her, for he beheld her from Pergamos, and would have victory for the Trojans. So the twain met each the other by the oak-tree. To her spake first king Apollo son of Zeus: “Why now art thou come thus eagerly from Olympus, thou daughter of great Zeus, and why hath thy high heart sent thee? Surely it is to give the Danaans unequal victory in battle! seeing thou hast no mercy on the Trojans, that perish. But if thou wouldest hearken to me — and it were far better so — let us now stay battle and warring for the day; hereafter shall they fight again, till they reach the goal of Ilios, since thus it seemeth good to your hearts, goddesses immortal, to lay waste this city.”

And the goddess bright-eyed Athene made answer to him: “So be it, Far-darter; in this mind I likewise came from Olympus to the midst of Trojans and Achaians. But come, how thinkest thou to stay the battle of the warriors?”

And king Apollo, son of Zeus, made answer to her: “Let us arouse the stalwart spirit of horse-taming Hector, if so be he will challenge some one of the Danaans in single fight man to man to meet him in deadly combat. So shall the bronze-greaved Achaians be jealous and stir up one to fight singly with goodly Hector.” So spake he and the bright-eyed goddess Athene disregarded not. Now Helenos Priam’s dear son understood in spirit their resolve that the gods in counsel had approved; and he went to Hector and stood beside him, and spake a word to him: “Hector son of Priam, peer of Zeus in counsel, wouldest thou now hearken at all to me? for I am thy brother. Make the other Trojans sit, and all the Achaians, and thyself challenge him that is best of the Achaians to meet thee man to man in deadly combat. It is not yet thy destiny to die and meet thy doom; for thus heard I the voice of the gods that are from everlasting.” So said he, and Hector rejoiced greatly to hear his saying, and went into the midst and refrained the battalions of the Trojans with his spear grasped by the middle; and they all sate them down: and Agamemnon made the well-greaved Achaians sit. And Athene withal and Apollo of the silver bow, in the likeness of vulture birds, sate them upon a tall oak holy to aegis-bearing father Zeus, rejoicing in their warriors; and the ranks of all of them sate close together, bristling with shields and plumes and spears. Even as there spreadeth across the main the ripple of the west wind newly risen, and the sea grows black beneath it, so sate the ranks of Achaians and Trojans upon the plain. And Hector spake between both hosts: “Hearken to me, Trojans and well-greaved Achaians, that I may speak what my mind within my breast biddeth me. Our oaths of truce Kronos’ son, enthroned on high, accomplished not; but evil is his intent and ordinance for both our hosts, until either ye take fair-towered Troy or yourselves be vanquished beside your seafaring ships. But in the midst of you are the chiefest of all the Achaians; therefore now let the man whose heart biddeth him fight with me come hither from among you all to be your champion against goodly Hector. And this declare I, and be Zeus our witness thereto; if that man slay me with the long-edged sword, let him spoil me of my armour and bear it to the hollow ships, but give back my body to my home, that Trojans and Trojans’ wives may give me my due of burning in my death. But if I slay him and Apollo vouchsafe me glory, I will spoil him of his armour and bear it to holy Ilios and hang it upon the temple of far-darting Apollo, but his corpse will I render back to the well-decked ships, that the flowing-haired Achaians may entomb him, and build him a barrow beside wide Hellespont. So shall one say even of men that be late born, as he saileth in his benched ship over the wine-dark sea: ‘This is the barrow of a man that died in days of old, a champion whom glorious Hector slew.’ So shall a man say hereafter, and this my glory shall never die.”

So spake he and they all were silent and held their peace; to deny him they were ashamed, and feared to meet him. But at the last stood up Menelaos and spake amid them and chiding upbraided them, and groaned deep at heart: “Ah me, vain threateners, ye women of Achaia and no more men, surely all this shall be a shame, evil of evil, if no one of the Danaans now goeth to meet Hector. Nay, turn ye all to earth and water, sitting there each man disheartened, helplessly inglorious; against him will I myself array me; and from on high the threads of victory are guided of the immortal gods.”

So spake he and donned his fair armour. And now, O Menelaos, had the end of life appeared for thee at Hector’s hands, seeing he was stronger far, but that the princes of the Achaians started up and caught thee. And Atreus' son himself, wide-ruling Agamemnon, took him by his right hand and spake a word and called upon his name: "Thou doest madly, Menelaos fosterling of Zeus; yet is it no time for this thy madness. Draw back, though it be with pain, nor think for contention's sake to fight with one better than thou, with Hector Priam's son, whom others beside thee abhor. Yea, this man even Achilles dreadeth to meet in battle, wherein is the warrior's glory; and Achilles is better far than thou. Go therefore now and sit amid the company of thy fellows; against him shall the Achaians put forth another champion. Fearless though he be and insatiate of turmoil, I ween that he shall be fain to rest his knees, if he escape from the fury of war and terrible fray."

So spake the hero and persuaded his brother's heart with just counsel; and he obeyed. So his squires thereat with gladness took his armour from his shoulders; and Nestor stood up and spake amid the Argives: "Fie upon it, verily sore lamentation cometh on the land of Achaia. Verily old Peleus driver of chariots would groan sore, that goodly counsellor of the Myrmidons and orator, who erst questioned me in his house, and rejoiced greatly, inquiring of the lineage and birth of all the Argives. If he heard now of those that all were cowering before Hector, then would he lift his hands to the immortals, instantly praying that his soul might depart from his limbs down to the house of Hades. Would to God I were thus young and my strength were sound; then would Hector of the glancing helm soon find his combat. But of those of you that be chieftains of the host of the Achaians, yet desireth no man of good heart to meet Hector face to face." So the old man upbraided them, and there stood up nine in all. Far first arose Agamemnon king of men, and after him rose Tydeus' son stalwart Diomedes, and after them the Aiantes clothed with impetuous might, and after them Idomeneus and Idomeneus' brother-in-arms Meriones, peer of Enyalios slayer of men, and after them Eurypylos Euaimon's glorious son; and up rose Thoas Andraimon's son and goodly Odysseus. So all these were fain to fight with goodly Hector. And among them spake again knightly Nestor of Gerenia: "Now cast ye the lot from the first unto the last, for him that shall be chosen: for he shall in truth profit the well-greaved Achaians, yea and he shall have profit of his own soul, if he escape from the fury of war and terrible fray."

So said he, and they marked each man his lot and cast them in the helmet of Agamemnon Atreus' son; and the hosts prayed and lifted up their hands to the gods. And thus would one say, looking up to wide heaven: "O father Zeus, vouchsafe that the lot fall upon Aias or Tydeus' son, or else on the king of Mykene rich in gold."

So spake they, and knightly Nestor of Gerenia shook the helmet, and there leapt forth the lot that themselves desired, even the lot of Aias. And Aias saw and knew the token upon the lot, and rejoiced in heart, and spake: “My friends, verily the lot is mine, yea and myself am glad at heart, because I deem that I shall vanquish goodly Hector. But come now, while I clothe me in my armour of battle, pray ye the while to Kronos’ son king Zeus, in silence to yourselves, that the Trojans hear you not — nay rather, openly if ye will, for we have no fear of any man soever. For none by force shall chase me, he willing me unwilling, neither by skill; seeing I hope that not so skill-less, either, was I born in Salamis nor nurtured.”

So said he, and they prayed to Kronos’ son, king Zeus; and thus would one speak, looking up to wide heaven: “O father Zeus that rulest from Ida, most glorious, most great, vouchsafe to Aias victory and the winning of great glory. But if thou so lovest Hector indeed, and carest for him, grant unto either equal prowess and renown.”

So said they, while Aias arrayed him in flashing bronze. And when he had now clothed upon his flesh all his armour, then marched he as huge Ares coming forth, when he goeth to battle amid heroes whom Kronos’ son setteth to fight in fury of heart-consuming strife. So rose up huge Aias, bulwark of the Achaians, with a smile on his grim face: and went with long strides of his feet beneath him, shaking his far-shadowing spear. Then moreover the Argives rejoiced to look upon him, but sore trembling came upon the Trojans, on the limbs of every man, and Hector’s own heart beat within his breast. But in no wise could he now flee nor shrink back into the throng of the host, seeing he had challenged him to battle. And Aias came near bearing his tower-like shield of bronze, with sevenfold ox-hide, and stood near to Hector, and spake to him threatening: “Hector, now verily shalt thou well know, man to man, what manner of princes the Danaans likewise have among them, even after Achilles, render of men, the lion-hearted. But he amid his beaked seafaring ships lieth in sore wrath with Agamemnon shepherd of the host; yet are we such as to face thee, yea and many of us. But make thou beginning of war and battle.”

And great Hector of the glancing helm answered him: “Aias of the seed of Zeus, son of Telamon, chieftain of the host, tempt not thou me like some puny boy or woman that knoweth not deeds of battle. But I well know wars and slaughterings. To right know I, to left know I the wielding of my tough targe; therein I deem is stalwart soldiership. And I know how to charge into the mellay of fleet chariots, and how in close battle to join in furious Ares’ dance. Howbeit, I have no mind to smite thee, being such an one as thou art, by spying thee unawares; but rather openly, if perchance I may hit thee.”

He spake, and poised his far-shadowing spear, and hurled and smote Aias’ dread shield of sevenfold hide upon the uttermost bronze, the eighth layer that was thereon. Through six folds went the stubborn bronze cleaving, but in the seventh hide it stayed. Then heaven-sprung Aias hurled next his far-shadowing spear, and smote upon the circle of the shield of Priam’s son. Through the bright shield passed the violent spear, and through the curiously wrought corslet pressed it on; and straight forth beside the flank the spear rent his doublet; but he swerved aside and escaped black death. Then both together with their hands plucked forth their long spears and fell to like ravening lions or wild boars whose might is nowise feeble. Then Priam’s son smote the shield’s midst with his dart, but the bronze brake not through, for the point turned back; but Aias leapt on him and pierced his buckler, and straight through went the spear and staggered him in his onset, and cleft its way unto his neck, so that the dark blood gushed up. Yet even then did not Hector of the glancing helm cease from fight, but yielded ground and with stout hand seized a stone lying upon the plain, black and rugged and great; therewith hurled he and smote Aias’ dread shield of sevenfold ox-hide in the midst upon the boss, and the bronze resounded. Next Aias lifted a far greater stone, and swung and hurled it, putting might immeasurable therein. So smote he the buckler and burst it inwards with the rock like unto a millstone, and beat down his knees; and he was stretched upon his back, pressed into his shield; but Apollo straightway raised him up. And now had they been smiting hand to hand with swords, but that the heralds, messengers of gods and men, came, one from the Trojans, one from the mail-clad Achaians, even Talthybios and Idaios, both men discreet. Between the two held they their staves, and herald Idaios spake a word, being skilled in wise counsel: “Fight ye no more, dear sons, neither do battle; seeing Zeus the cloud-gatherer loveth you both, and both are men of war; that verily know we all. But night already is upon us: it is well withal to obey the hest [behest] of night.”

Then Telamonian Aias answered and said to him: “Idaios, bid ye Hector to speak those words; of his own self he challenged to combat all our best. Let him be first, and I will surely follow as he saith.”

Then great Hector of the glancing helm said to him: “Aias, seeing God gave thee stature and might and wisdom, and with the spear thou art excellent above all the Achaians, let us now cease from combat and battle for the day; but hereafter will we fight until God judge between as, giving to one of us the victory: But come, let us give each the other famous gifts, that men may thus say, Achaians alike and Trojans: ‘These, having fought for sake of heart-consuming strife, parted again reconciled in friendship.’”

So said he, and gave him his silver-studded sword, with scabbard and well-cut baldrick; and Aias gave his belt bright with purple. So they parted, and one went to the Achaian host, and one betook him to the throng of Trojans. And these rejoiced to behold him come to them alive and sound, escaped from the fury of Aias and his hands unapproachable; and they brought him to the city saved beyond their hope. And Aias on their side the well-greaved Achaians brought to noble Agamemnon, exulting in his victory.

So when these were come unto the huts of Atreides, then did Agamemnon king of men slay them an ox, a male of five years old, for the most mighty son of Kronos. This they flayed and made ready, and divided it all, and minced it cunningly, and pierced it through with spits, and roasted it carefully, and drew all off again. Then as soon as they had rest from the task and had made ready the meal, they began the feast, nor was their soul aught stinted of the equal banquet. And the hero son of Atreus, wide-ruling Agamemnon, gave to Aias slices of the chine's full length for his honour. And when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, then first the old man began to weave the web of counsel, even Nestor whose rede [counsel] of old time was proved most excellent. He made harangue among them and said: "Son of Atreus and ye other princes of the Achaians, seeing that many flowing-haired Achaians are dead, and keen Ares hath spilt their dusky blood about fair-flowing Skamandros, and their souls have gone down to the house of Hades; therefore it behoveth thee to make the battle of the Achaians cease with daybreak; and we will assemble to wheel hither the corpses with oxen and mules; so let us burn them; and let us heap one barrow about the pyre, rearing it from the plain for all alike; and thereto build with speed high towers, a bulwark for our ships and for ourselves. In the midst thereof let us make gates well compact, that through them may be a way for chariot-driving. And without let us dig a deep foss hard by, to be about it and to hinder horses and footmen, lest the battle of the lordly Trojans be heavy on us hereafter."

So spake he and all the chiefs gave assent. But meanwhile there was in the high town of Ilios an assembly of the Trojans, fierce, confused, beside Priam's gate. To them discreet Antenor began to make harangue: "Hearken to me, Trojans and Dardanians and allies, that I may tell you that my soul within my breast commandeth me. Lo, go to now, let us give Helen of Argos and the wealth with her for the sons of Atreus to take away. Now fight we in guilt against the oaths of faith; therefore is there no profit for us that I hope to see fulfilled, unless we do thus."

So spake he and sate him down; and there stood up among them noble Alexandros, lord of Helen beautiful-haired; he made him answer and spake winged words: "Antenor, these words from thee are no longer to my pleasure; yet thou hast it in thee to devise other sayings more excellent than this. But if indeed thou sayest this in earnest, then verily the gods themselves have destroyed thy wit. But I will speak forth amid the horse-taming Trojans, and declare outright; my wife will I not give back; but the wealth I brought from Argos to our home, all that I have a mind to give, and add more of mine own substance."

So spake he and sate him down, and there stood up among them Priam of the seed of Dardanos, the peer of gods in counsel; he made harangue to them, and said: "Hearken to me, Trojans and Dardanians and allies, that I may tell you that my soul within my breast commandeth me. Now eat your supper throughout the city as of old, and take thought to keep watch, and be wakeful every man. And at dawn let Idaios fare to the hollow ships to tell to Atreus' sons Agamemnon and Menelaos the saying of Alexandros, for whose sake strife is come about: and likewise to ask them this wise word, whether they are minded to refrain from noisy war till we have burned our dead; afterwards will we fight again, till heaven part us and give one or other victory."

So spake he, and they hearkened diligently to him and obeyed: and at dawn Idaios fared to the hollow ships. He found the Danaans in assembly, the men of Ares' company, beside the stern of Agamemnon's ship; and so the loud-voiced herald stood in their midst and said unto them: "Atreides and ye other princes of the Achaians, Priam and all the noble Trojans bade me tell you-if perchance it might find favour and acceptance with you-the saying of Alexandros, for whose sake strife hath come about. The wealth that Alexandros brought in his hollow ships to Troy-would he had perished first!-all that he hath a mind to give, and to add more thereto of his substance. But the wedded wife of glorious Menelaos he saith he will not give; yet verily the Trojans bid him do it. Moreover they bade me ask this thing of you; whether ye are minded to refrain from noisy war until we have burned our dead; afterwards will we fight again, till heaven part us and give one or other victory."

So said he and they all kept silence and were still. But at the last spake Diomedes of the loud war-cry in their midst: "Let no man now accept Alexandros' substance, neither Helen's self; known is it, even to him that hath no wit at all, how that the issues of destruction hang already over the Trojans."

So spake he, and all the sons of the Achaians shouted, applauding the saying of horse-taming Diomedes. And then lord Agamemnon spake to Idaios: "Idaios, thyself thou hearest the saying of the Achaians, how they answer thee; and the like seemeth good to me. But as concerning the dead, I grudge you not to burn them; for dead corpses is there no stinting; when they once are dead, of the swift propitiation of fire. And for the oaths let Zeus be witness, the loud-thundering lord of Hera."

So saying he lifted up his sceptre in the sight of all the gods, and Idaios departed back to holy Ilios. Now Trojans and Dardanians sate in assembly, gathered all together to wait till Idaios should come; and he came and stood in their midst and declared his message. Then they made them ready very swiftly for either task, some to bring the dead, and some to seek for wood. And on their part the Argives hasted from their well-decked ships, some to bring the dead and some to seek for wood.

Now the sun was newly beating on the fields as he climbed heaven from the deep stream of gently-flowing Ocean, when both sides met together. Then was it a hard matter to know each man again; but they washed them with water clean of clotted gore, and with shedding of hot tears lifted them upon the wains. But great Priam bade them not wail aloud; so in silence heaped they the corpses on the pyre, stricken at heart; and when they had burned them with fire departed to holy Ilios. And in like manner on their side the well-greaved Achaians heaped the corpses on the pyre, stricken at heart, and when they had burned them with fire departed to the hollow ships.

And when day was not yet, but still twilight of night, then was the chosen folk of the Achaians gathered together around the pyre, and made one barrow about it, rearing it from the plain for all alike; and thereto built they a wall and lofty towers, a bulwark for their ships and for themselves. In the midst thereof made they gates well-compacted, that through them might be a way for chariot-driving. And without they dug a deep foss beside it, broad and great, and planted a palisade therein.

Thus toiled the flowing-haired Achaians: and the gods sate by Zeus, the lord of lightning, and marvelled at the great work of the mail-clad Achaians. And Poseidon shaker of earth spake first to them: “O father Zeus, is there any man throughout the boundless earth that will any more declare to the immortals his mind and counsel? Seest thou not how the flowing-haired Achaians have now again built them a wall before their ships, and drawn a foss around it, but gave not excellent hecatombs to the gods? Verily the fame thereof shall reach as far as the dawn spreadeth, and men will forget the wall that I and Phoebus Apollo built with travail for the hero Laomedon.”

And Zeus the cloud-gatherer said to him, sore troubled: “Out on it, far-swaying Shaker of earth, for this thing thou sayest. Well might some other god fear this device, one that were far feebler than thou in the might of his hands: but thine shall be the fame as far as the dawn spreadeth. Go to now, hereafter when the flowing-haired Achaians be departed upon their ships to their dear native land, then burst thou this wall asunder and scatter it all into the sea, and cover the great sea-beach over with sand again, that the great wall of the Achaians be brought to naught.”

BOOK VIII.

How Zeus bethought him of his promise to avenge Achilles’ wrong on Agamemnon; and therefore bade the gods refrain from war, and gave victory to the Trojans.

Now Dawn the saffron-robed was spreading over all the earth, and Zeus whose joy is in the thunder let call an assembly of the gods upon the topmost peak of many-ridged Olympus, and himself made harangue to them and all the gods gave ear: “Hearken to me, all gods and all ye goddesses, that I may tell you what my heart within my breast commandeth me. One thing let none essay, be it goddess or be it god, to wit, to thwart my saying; approve ye it all together, that with all speed I may accomplish these things. Whomsoever I shall perceive minded to go, apart from the gods, to succour Trojans or Danaans, chastened in no seemly wise shall he return to Olympus, or I will take and cast him into misty Tartaros, right far away, where is the deepest gulf beneath the earth; there are the gate of iron and threshold of bronze, as far beneath Hades as heaven is high above the earth: then shall he know how far I am mightiest of all gods. Go to now, ye gods, make trial that ye all may know. Fasten ye a rope of gold from heaven, and all ye gods lay hold thereof and all goddesses; yet could ye not drag from heaven to earth Zeus, counsellor supreme, not though ye toiled sore. But once I likewise were minded to draw with all my heart, then should I draw you up with very earth and sea withal. Thereafter would I bind the rope about a pinnacle of Olympus, and so should all those things be hung in air. By so much am I beyond gods and beyond men.”

So saying he let harness to his chariot his bronze-shod horses, fleet of foot, with flowing manes of gold; and himself clad him with gold upon his flesh, and grasped the whip of gold, well wrought, and mounted upon his car, and lashed the horses to start them; they nothing loth sped on between earth and starry heaven. So fared he to many-fountained Ida, mother of wild beasts, even unto Gargaros, where is his demesne and fragrant altar. There did the father of men and gods stay his horses, and unloose them from the car, and cast thick mist about them; and himself sate on the mountain-tops rejoicing in his glory, to behold the city of the Trojans and ships of the Achaians.

Now the flowing-haired Achaians took meat hastily among the huts and thereafter arrayed themselves. Likewise the Trojans on their side armed them throughout the town — a smaller host, yet for all that were they eager to fight in battle, of forceful need, for their children's sake and their wives'. And the gates were opened wide and the host issued forth, footmen and horsemen; and mighty din arose.

So when they were met together and come unto one spot, then clashed they targe and spear and fury of bronze-clad warrior; the bossed shields pressed each on each, and mighty din arose. Then were heard the voice of groaning and the voice of triumph together of the slayers and the slain, and the earth streamed with blood.

Now while it yet was morn and the divine day waxed, so long from either side lighted the darts amain and the people fell. But when the sun bestrode mid-heaven, then did the Father balance his golden scales, and put therein two fates of death that layeth men at their length, one for horse-taming Trojans, one for mail-clad Achaians; and he took the scale-yard by the midst and lifted it, and the Achaians' day of destiny sank down. So lay the Achaians' fates on the bounteous earth, and the Trojans' fates were lifted up towards wide heaven. And the god thundered aloud from Ida, and sent his blazing flash amid the host of the Achaians; and they saw and were astonished, and pale fear gat hold upon all.

Then had Idomeneus no heart to stand, neither Agamemnon, neither stood the twain Aiantes, men of Ares' company. Only Nestor of Gerenia stood his ground, he the Warden of the Achaians; neither he of purpose, but his horse was fordone, which noble Alexandros, beauteous-haired Helen's lord, had smitten with an arrow upon the top of the crest where the foremost hairs of horses grow upon the skull; and there is the most deadly spot. So the horse leapt up in anguish and the arrow sank into his brain, and he brought confusion on the steeds as he writhed upon the dart. While the old man leapt forth and with his sword began to hew the traces, came Hector's fleet horses through the tumult, bearing a bold charioteer, even Hecktor. And now had the old man lost his life, but that Diomedes of the loud war-cry was swift to mark. Terribly shouted he, summoning Odysseus: "Heaven-born son of Laertes, Odysseus of many wiles, whither fleest thou with thy back turned, like a coward in the throng? Beware lest as thou fleest one plant a spear between thy shoulders. Nay, stand thy ground, till we thrust back from the old man his furious foe."

So spake he, but much-enduring noble Odysseus heard him not, but hastened by to the hollow ships of the Achaians. Yet Tydeides, though but one, mingled amid the fighters in the forefront, and took his stand before the steeds of the old man, Neleus' son, and spake to him winged words, and said: "Old man, of a truth young warriors beset thee hard; and thy force is abated, and old age is sore upon thee, and thy squire is but a weakling, and thy steeds are slow. Come then, mount upon my car, that thou mayest see of what sort are the steeds of Tros, well skilled for following or fleeing hither or thither very fleetly across the plain, even those that erst I took from Aineias inspirer of fear. Thine let our squires tend, and these let us guide straight against the horse-taming Trojans, that even Hector may know whether my spear also rageth in my hands.”

So said he, and knightly Nestor of Gerenia disregarded not. Then the two squires tended Nestor’s horses, even Sthenelos the valiant and kindly Eurymedon: and the other twain both mounted upon Diomedes’ car. And Nestor took into his hands the shining reins, and lashed the horses; and soon they drew nigh Hector. Then Tydeus’ son hurled at him as he charged straight upon them: him missed he, but his squire that drave his chariot, Eniopeus, high-hearted Thebaios’ son, even him as he held the reins, he smote upon the breast beside the nipple. So he fell from out the car, and his fleet-footed horses swerved aside; and there his soul and spirit were unstrung. Then sore grief encompassed Hector’s soul for sake of his charioteer. Yet left he him there lying, though he sorrowed for his comrade, and drave in quest of a bold charioteer; and his horses lacked not long a master, for anon he found Iphitos’ son, bold Archeptolemos, and him he made mount behind his fleet horses, and gave the reins into his hands.

Then had destruction come and deeds beyond remedy been wrought, and so had they been penned in Ilios like lambs, had not the father of gods and men been swift to mark. So he thundered terribly and darted his white lightning and hurled it before Diomedes’ steeds to earth; and there arose a terrible flame of sulphur burning, and the two horses were affrighted and cowered beneath the car. And the shining reins dropped from Nestor’s hands, and he was afraid at heart and spake to Diomedes: “Come now Tydeides, turn back thy whole-hooved horses to flight: seest thou not that victory from Zeus attendeth not on thee? Now doth Kronos’ son vouchsafe glory to this Hector, for the day; hereafter shall he grant it us likewise, if he will. A man may not at all ward off the will of Zeus, not though one be very valiant; he verily is mightier far.”

Then Diomedes of the loud war-cry answered him: “Yea verily, old man, all this thou sayest is according unto right. But this is the sore grief that entereth my heart and soul: Hector some day shall say as he maketh harangue amid the Trojans: ‘Tydeides betook him to the ships in flight before my face.’ So shall he boast — in that day let the wide earth yawn for me.”

So spake he and turned the whole-hooved horses to flight, back through the tumult; and the Trojans and Hector with wondrous uproar poured upon them their dolorous darts. And over him shouted loudly great Hector of the glancing helm: “Tydeides, the fleet-horsed Danaans were wont to honour thee with the highest place, and meats, and cups brimful, but now will they disdain thee; thou art after all no better than a woman. Begone, poor puppet; not for my flinching shalt thou climb on our towers, neither carry our wives away upon thy ships; ere that will I deal thee thy fate.”

So said he, and Tydeides was of divided mind, whether to wheel his horses and fight him face to face. Thrice doubted he in heart and soul, and thrice from Ida’s mountains thundered Zeus the lord of counsel, and gave to the Trojans a sign, the turning of the course of battle. And Hector with loud shout called to the Trojans: “Trojans and Lykians and Dardanians that love close fight, be men, my friends, and bethink you of impetuous valour. I perceive that of good will Kronion vouchsafest me victory and great glory, and to the Danaans destruction. Fools, that devised these walls weak and of none account; they shall not withhold our fury, and lightly shall our steeds overleap the delved foss. But when I be once come amid the hollow ships, then be thought taken of consuming fire, that with fire I may burn the ships and slay the men.”

So spake he and shouted to his steeds, and said: “Xanthos, and thou Podargos, and Aithon and goodly Lampos, now pay me back your tending, even the abundance that Andromache, great-hearted Eetion’s daughter, set before you of honey-hearted wheat, and mingled wine to drink at the heart’s bidding. Pursue ye now and haste, that we may seize Nestor’s shield, the fame whereof now reacheth unto heaven, how that it is of gold throughout, armrods and all; and may seize moreover from horse-taming Diomedes’ shoulders his richly dight breastplate that Hephaistos wrought cunningly. Could we but take these, then might I hope this very night to make the Achaians to embark on their fleet ships.”

And now had he burned the trim ships with blazing fire, but that queen Hera put it in Agamemnon’s heart himself to bestir him and swiftly arouse the Achaians. So he went his way along the huts and ships of the Achaians, holding a great cloak of purple in his stalwart hand, and stood by Odysseus’ black ship of mighty burden, that was in the midst, so that a voice could be heard to either end. Then shouted he in a piercing voice, and called to the Danaans aloud: “Fie upon you, Argives, ye sorry things of shame, so brave in semblance! Whither are gone our boastings when we said that we were bravest, the boasts ye uttered vaingloriously when in Lemnos, as ye ate your fill of flesh of tall-horned oxen and drank goblets crowned with wine, and said that every man should stand in war to face fivescore yea tenscore Trojans? yet now can we not match one, even this Hector that anon will burn our ships with flame of fire. O Father Zeus, didst ever thou blind with such a blindness any mighty king, and rob him of great glory? Nay, Zeus, this hope fulfil thou me; suffer that we ourselves at least flee and escape, neither suffer that the Achaians be thus vanquished of the Trojans.”

So spake he, and the Father had pity on him as he wept, and vouchsafed him that his folk should be saved and perish not. Forthwith sent he an eagle — surest sign among winged fowl — holding in his claws a fawn, the young of a fleet hind; beside the beautiful altar of Zeus he let fall the fawn, where the Achaians did sacrifice unto Zeus lord of all oracles. So when they saw that the bird was come from Zeus, they sprang the more upon the Trojans and bethought them of the joy of battle.

Now could no man of the Danaans, for all they were very many, boast that he before Tydeus' son had guided his fleet horses forth, and driven them across the trench and fought man to man; first by far was Tydeides to slay a warrior of the Trojans in full array, even Agelaos son of Phradmon. Now he had turned his steeds to flee; but as he wheeled the other plunged the spear into his back between his shoulders, and drave it through his breast. So fell he from his chariot, and his armour clanged upon him.

And after him came Atreus' sons, even Agamemnon and Menelaos, and after them the Aiantes clothed upon with impetuous valour, and after them Idomeneus and Idomeneus' brother in arms Meriones, peer of Enyalios slayer of men, and after them Eurypylos, Euaimon's glorious son. And ninth came Teukros, stretching his back-bent bow, and took his stand beneath the shield of Aias son of Telamon. And so Aias would stealthily withdraw the shield, and Teukros would spy his chance; and when he had shot and smitten one in the throng, then fell such an one and gave up the ghost, and Teukros would return, and as a child beneath his mother, so gat he him to Aias; who hid him with the shining shield.

And Agamemnon king of men rejoiced to behold him making havoc with his stalwart bow of the battalions of the Trojans, and he came and stood by his side and spake to him, saying: "Teukros, dear heart, thou son of Telamon, prince of the host, shoot on in this wise, if perchance thou mayest be found the salvation of the Danaans and glory of thy father Telamon."

And noble Teukros made answer and said to him: "Most noble son of Atreus, why urgest thou me that myself am eager? Verily with such strength as is in me forbear I not, but ever since we drave them towards Ilios I watch with my bow to slay the foemen. Eight long-barbed arrows have I now sped, and all are buried in the flesh of young men swift in battle; only this mad dog can I not smite."

He said, and shot another arrow from the string right against Hector; and his heart was fain to smite him. Yet missed he once again, for Apollo turned the dart away; but Archeptolemos, Hector's bold charioteer, he smote on the breast beside the nipple as he hasted into battle: so he fell from his car and his fleet-footed horses swerved aside; and there his soul and spirit were unstrung. Then sore grief encompassed Hector's soul for his charioteer's sake; yet left he him, though he sorrowed for his comrade, and bade Kebriones his own brother, being hard by, take the chariot reins; and he heard and disregarded not. And himself he leapt to earth from the resplendent car, with a terrible shout; and in his hand he caught a stone, and made right at Teukros, and his heart bade him smite him. Now Teukros had plucked forth from his quiver a keen arrow, and laid it on the string; but even as he drew it back, Hector of the glancing helm smote him with the jagged stone, as he aimed eagerly against him, even beside his shoulder, where the collar-bone fenceth off neck and breast, and where is the most deadly spot; and he brake the bowstring, and his hand from the wrist grew numb, and he stayed fallen upon his knee, and his bow dropped from his hand. But Aias disregarded not his brother's fall, but ran and strode across him and hid him with his shield. Then two trusty comrades bent down to him, even Mekisteus son of Echios and goodly Alastor, and bare him, groaning sorely, to the hollow ships. And once again the Olympian aroused the spirit of the Trojans. So they drove the Achaians straight toward the deep foss, and amid the foremost went Hector exulting in his strength. And even as when a hound behind wild boar or lion, with swift feet pursuing snatcheth at him, at flank or buttock, and watcheth for him as he wheeleth, so Hector pressed hard on the flowing-haired Achaians, slaying ever the hindmost, and they fled on. But when they were passed in flight through palisade and foss, and many were fallen beneath the Trojans' hands, then halted they and tarried beside the ships, calling one upon another, and lifting up their hands to all the gods prayed each one instantly. But Hector wheeled round his beauteous-maned steeds this way and that, and his eyes were as the eyes of Gorgon or Ares bane of mortals.

Now at the sight of them the white-armed goddess Hera had compassion, and anon spake winged words to Athene: "Out on it, thou child of aegis-bearing Zeus, shall not we twain any more take thought for the Danaans that perish, if only for this last time? Now will they fill up the measure of evil destiny and perish by one man's onslaught; seeing that he is furious now beyond endurance, this Hector son of Priam, and verily hath wrought many a deed of ill."

And the bright-eyed goddess Athene made answer to her, "Yea in good sooth, may this fellow yield up strength and life, and perish at the Argives' hands in his native land; only mine own sire is furious, with no good intent, headstrong, ever sinful, the foiler of my purposes. But now make thou ready our whole-hooved horses, while I enter into the palace of aegis-bearing Zeus and gird me in my armour for battle, that I may see if Priam's son, Hector of the glancing helm, shall be glad at the appearing of us twain amid the highways of the battle. Surely shall many a Trojan likewise glut dogs and birds with fat and flesh, fallen dead at the ships of the Achaians."

So said she, and the white-armed goddess Hera disregarded not. But when father Zeus beheld from Ida, he was sore wroth, and sped Iris golden-winged to bear a message: “Go thy way, fleet Iris, turn them back, neither suffer them to face me; for in no happy wise shall we join in combat. For thus will I declare, and even so shall the fulfilment be; I will maim their fleet horses in the chariot, and them will I hurl out from the car, and will break in pieces the chariot; neither within the courses of ten years shall they heal them of the wounds the thunderbolt shall tear; that the bright-eyed one may know the end when she striveth against her father. But with Hera have I not so great indignation nor wrath: seeing it ever is her wont to thwart me, whate’er I have decreed.”

So said he, and whirlwind-footed Iris arose to bear the message, and departed from the mountains of Ida unto high Olympus. And even at the entrance of the gates of Olympus many-folded she met them and stayed them, and told them the saying of Zeus.

And father Zeus drave from Ida his fair-wheeled chariot and horses unto Olympus, and came unto the session of the gods. For him also the noble Shaker of Earth unyoked the steeds, and set the car upon the stand, and spread a cloth thereover; and far-seeing Zeus himself sate upon his golden throne, and beneath his feet great Olympus quaked. Only Athene and Hera sate apart from Zeus, and spake no word to him neither questioned him. But he was ware thereof in his heart, and said, “Why are ye thus vexed, Athene and Hera? Surely ye are not wearied of making havoc in glorious battle of the Trojans, for whom ye cherish bitter hate! Howsoever, seeing that my might is so great and my hands invincible, all the gods that are in Olympus could not turn me: and for you twain, trembling erst gat hold upon your bright limbs ere that ye beheld war and war’s fell deeds. For thus will I declare, and even so had the fulfilment been — never had ye, once smitten with the thunderbolt, fared on your chariots back unto Olympus where is the habitation of the immortals.”

So spake he, and Athene and Hera murmured, that were sitting by him and devising ills for the Trojans. Now Athene held her peace, and said not anything, for wrath at father Zeus, and fierce anger gat hold upon her; but Hera’s heart contained not her anger, and she spake: “Most dread son of Kronos, what word is this thou hast said? Well know we, even we, that thy might is no wise puny; yet still have we pity for the Danaan spearmen, that now shall perish and fill up the measure of grievous fate.”

And Zeus the cloud-gatherer answered and said: “At morn shalt thou behold most mighty Kronion, if thou wilt have it so, O Hera, ox-eyed queen, making yet more havoc of the vast army of Argive spearmen; for headlong Hector shall not refrain from battle till that Peleus’ son fleet of foot have arisen beside the ships, that day when these shall fight amid the sterns in most grievous stress, around Patroklos fallen. Such is the doom of heaven. And for thine anger reck I not, not even though thou go to the nethermost bounds of earth and sea, where sit Iapetos and Kronos and have no joy in the beams of Hyperion the Sun-god, neither in any breeze, but deep Tartaros is round about them. Though thou shouldest wander till thou come even thither, yet reck I not of thy vexation, seeing there is no thing more unabashed than thou."

So said he, but white-armed Hera spake him no word. And the sun's bright light dropped into Ocean, drawing black night across Earth the grain-giver. Against the Trojans' will daylight departed, but welcome, thrice prayed for, to the Achaians came down the murky night.

Now glorious Hector made an assembly of the Trojans, taking them apart from the ships, beside the eddying river, in an open space where was found a spot clear of dead. And they came down from their chariots to the ground to hear the word that Hector, dear unto Zeus, proclaimed. He in his hand held his spear eleven cubits long; before his face gleamed the spearhead of bronze, and a ring of gold ran round about it. Thereon he leaned and spake to the Trojans, saying: "Hearken to me, Trojans and Dardanians and allies. I thought but now to make havoc of the ships and all the Achaians and depart back again to windy Ilios; but dusk came too soon, and that in chief hath now saved the Argives and the ships beside the beach of the sea. So let us now yield to black night, and make our supper ready; unyoke ye from the chariots your fair-maned horses, and set fodder beside them. And from the city bring kine and goodly sheep with speed; and provide you with honey-hearted wine, and corn from your houses, and gather much wood withal, that all night long until early-springing dawn we may burn many fires, and the gleam may reach to heaven; lest perchance even by night the flowing-haired Achaians strive to take flight over the broad back of the sea. Verily must they not embark upon their ships unvexed, at ease: but see ye that many a one of them have a wound to nurse even at home, being stricken with arrow or keen-pointed spear as he leapeth upon his ship; that so many another man may dread to wage dolorous war on the horse-taming men of Troy. And let the heralds dear to Zeus proclaim throughout the city that young maidens and old men of hoary heads camp round the city on the battlements builded of the gods; and let the women folk burn a great fire each in her hall; and let there be a sure watch set, lest an ambush enter the city when the host is absent. Howbeit for the night will we guard our own selves, and at morn by daybreak, arrayed in our armour, let us awake keen battle at the hollow ships. I will know whether Tydeus' son stalwart Diomedes shall thrust me from the ships back to the wall, or I shall lay him low with my spear and bear away his gory spoils. To-morrow shall he prove his valour, whether he can abide the onslaught of my spear. Would that I were immortal and ageless all my days and honoured like as Athene is honoured and Apollo, so surely as this day bringeth the Argives ill.”

So Hector made harangue, and the Trojans clamoured applause. And they loosed their sweating steeds from the yoke, and tethered them with thongs, each man beside his chariot; and from the city they brought kine and goodly sheep with speed, and provided them with honey-hearted wine and corn from their houses, and gathered much wood withal. And from the plain the winds bare into heaven the sweet savour. But these with high hopes sate them all night along the highways of the battle, and their watchfires burned in multitude. Even as when in heaven the stars about the bright moon shine clear to see, when the air is windless, and all the peaks appear and the tall headlands and glades, and from heaven breaketh open the infinite air, and all stars are seen, and the shepherd’s heart is glad; even in like multitude between the ships and the streams of Xanthos appeared the watchfires that the Trojans kindled in front of Ilios. A thousand fires burned in the plain and by the side of each sate fifty in the gleam of blazing fire. And the horses champed white barley and spelt, and standing by their chariots waited for the throned Dawn.

BOOK IX.

How Agamemnon sent an embassage to Achilles, beseeching him
to be appeased; and how Achilles denied him.

Thus kept the Trojans watch; but the Achaians were holden of heaven-sent panic, handmaid of palsying fear, and all their best were stricken to the heart with grief intolerable. Like as two winds stir up the main, the home of fishes, even the north wind and the west wind that blow from Thrace, coming suddenly; and the dark billow straightway lifteth up its crest and casteth much tangle out along the sea; even so was the Achaians’ spirit troubled in their breast.

But Atreides was stricken to the heart with sore grief, and went about bidding the clear-voiced heralds summon every man by name to the assembly, but not to shout aloud; and himself he toiled amid the foremost. So they sat sorrowful in assembly, and Agamemnon stood up weeping like unto a fountain of dark water that from a beetling cliff poureth down its black stream; even so with deep groaning he spake amid the Argives and said: “My friends, leaders and captains of the Argives, Zeus son of Kronos hath bound me with might in grievous blindness of soul; hard of heart is he, for that erewhile he promised and gave his pledge that not till I had laid waste well-walled Ilios should I depart, but now hath planned a cruel wile, and biddeth me return in dishonour to Argos with the loss of many of my folk. Such meseemeth is the good pleasure of most mighty Zeus, that hath laid low the heads of many cities, yea and shall lay low; for his is highest power. So come, even as I shall bid let us all obey; let us flee with our ships to our dear native land, for now shall we never take wide-wayed Troy.”

So said he, and they all held their peace and kept silence. Long time were the sons of the Achaians voiceless for grief, but at the last Diomedes of the loud war-cry spake amid them and said: “Atreides: with thee first in thy folly will I contend, where it is just, O king, even in the assembly; be not thou wroth therefor. My valour didst thou blame in chief amid the Danaans, and saidst that I was no man of war but a coward; and all this know the Argives both young and old. But the son of crooked-counselling Kronos hath endowed thee but by halves; he granted thee to have the honour of the sceptre above all men, but valour he gave thee not, wherein is highest power. Sir, deemest thou that the sons of the Achaians are thus indeed cowards and weaklings as thou sayest? If thine own heart be set on departing, go thy way; the way is before thee, and thy ships stand beside the sea, even the great multitude that followed thee from Mykene. But all the other flowing-haired Achaians will tarry here until we lay waste Troy. Nay, let them too flee on their ships to their dear native land; yet will we twain, even I and Sthenelos, fight till we attain the goal of Ilios; for in God’s name are we come.”

So said he, and all the sons of the Achaians shouted aloud, applauding the saying of horse-taming Diomedes. Then knightly Nestor arose and said amid them: “Tydeides, in battle art thou passing mighty, and in council art thou best among thine equals in years; none of all the Achaians will make light of thy word nor gainsay it. Now let us yield to black night and make ready our meal; and let the sentinels bestow them severally along the deep-delved foss without the wall. This charge give I to the young men; and thou, Atreides, lead then the way, for thou art the most royal. Spread thou a feast for the councillors; that is thy place and seemly for thee. Thy huts are full of wine that the ships of the Achaians bring thee by day from Thrace across the wide sea; all entertainment is for thee, being king over many. In the gathering of many shalt thou listen to him that deviseth the most excellent counsel; sore need have all the Achaians of such as is good and prudent, because hard by the ships our foemen are burning their watch-fires in multitude; what man can rejoice thereat? This night shall either destroy or save the host.”

So said he, and they gladly hearkened to him and obeyed. Forth sallied the sentinels in their harness. Seven were the captains of the sentinels, and with each went fivescore young men bearing their long spears in their hands; and they took post midway betwixt foss and wall, and kindled a fire and made ready each man his meal.

Then Atreides gathered the councillors of the Achaians, and led them to his hut, and spread before them an abundant feast. So they put forth their hands to the good cheer that lay before them. And when they had put away from them the desire of meat and drink, then the old man first began to weave his counsel, even Nestor, whose rede of old time was approved the best. He spake to them and said: “Most noble son of Atreus, Agamemnon king of men, in thy name will I end and with thy name begin, because thou art king over many hosts, and to thy hand Zeus hath entrusted sceptre and law, that thou mayest take counsel for thy folk. Thee therefore more than any it behoveth both to speak and hearken, and to accomplish what another than thou may say. No other man shall have a more excellent thought than this that I bear in mind from old time even until now, since the day when thou, O heaven-sprung king, didst go and take the damsel Briseis from angry Achilles’ hut by no consent of ours. Nay, I right heartily dissuaded thee; but thou yieldedst to thy proud spirit, and dishonouredst a man of valour whom even the immortals honoured; for thou didst take and keepest from him his meed of valour. Still let us even now take thought how we may appease him and persuade him with gifts of friendship and kindly words.”

And Agamemnon king of men answered and said to him: “Old sir, in no false wise hast thou accused my folly. Fool was I, I myself deny it not. Worth many hosts is he whom Zeus loveth in his heart, even as now he honoureth this man and destroyeth the host of the Achaians. But seeing I was a fool in that I yielded to my sorry passion, I will make amends and give a recompense beyond telling. In the midst of you all I will name the excellent gifts; seven tripods untouched of fire, and ten talents of gold and twenty gleaming caldrons, and twelve stalwart horses, winners in the race, that have taken prizes by their speed. No lackwealth were that man whose substance were as great as the prizes my whole-hooved steeds have borne me off. And seven women will I give, skilled in excellent handiwork, Lesbians whom I chose me from the spoils the day that he himself took stablished Lesbos, surpassing womankind in beauty. These will I give him, and with them shall be she whom erst I took from him, even the daughter of Briseus. All these things shall be set straightway before him; and if hereafter the gods grant us to lay waste the great city of Priam, then let him enter in when we Achaians be dividing the spoil, and lade his ship full of gold and bronze, and himself choose twenty Trojan women, the fairest that there be after Helen of Argos. And if we win to the richest of lands, even Achaian Argos, he shall be my son and I will hold him in like honour with Orestes, my stripling boy that is nurtured in all abundance. Three daughters are mine in my well-builded hall, Chrysothemis and Laodike and Iphianassa; let him take of them which he will, without gifts of wooing, to Peleus’ house; and I will add a great dower such as no man ever yet gave with his daughter. And seven well-peopled cities will I give him, Kardamyle and Enope and grassy Hire and holy Pherai and Antheia deep in meads, and fair Aipeia and Pedasos land of vines. And all are nigh to the salt sea, on the uttermost border of sandy Pylos; therein dwell men abounding in flocks and kine, men that shall worship him like a god with gifts, and beneath his sway fulfil his prosperous ordinances. All this will I accomplish so he but cease from wrath. Let him yield; Hades I ween is not to be softened neither overcome, and therefore is he hatefullest of all gods to mortals. Yea, let him be ruled by me, inasmuch as I am more royal and avow me to be the elder in years.”

Then knightly Nestor of Gerenia answered and said: “Most noble son of Atreus, Agamemnon king of men, now are these gifts not lightly to be esteemed that thou offerest king Achilles. Come therefore, let us speed forth picked men to go with all haste to the hut of Peleus’ son Achilles. Lo now, whomsoever I appoint let them consent. First let Phoinix dear to Zeus lead the way, and after him great Aias and noble Odysseus; and for heralds let Odios and Eurybates be their companions. And now bring water for our hands, and bid keep holy silence, that we may pray unto Zeus the son of Kronos, if perchance he will have mercy upon us."

So said he, and spake words that were well-pleasing unto all. Forthwith the heralds poured water on their hands, and the young men crowned the bowls with drink and gave each man his portion after they had poured the libation in the cups. And when they had made libation and drunk as their heart desired, they issued forth from the hut of Agamemnon son of Atreus. And knightly Nestor of Gerenia gave them full charge, with many a glance to each, and chiefest to Odysseus, how they should essay to prevail on Peleus' noble son.

So the twain went along the shore of the loud-sounding sea, making instant prayer to the earth-embracer, the Shaker of the Earth, that they might with ease prevail on Aiakides' great heart. So they came to the huts and ships of the Myrmidons, and found their king taking his pleasure of a loud lyre, fair, of curious work, with a silver cross-bar upon it. Therein he was delighting his soul, and singing the glories of heroes. And over against him sate Patroklos alone in silence, watching till Aiakides should cease from singing. So the twain came forward, and noble Odysseus led the way, and they stood before his face; and Achilles sprang up amazed with the lyre in his hand, and left the seat where he was sitting, and in like manner Patroklos when he beheld the men arose. Then Achilles fleet of foot greeted them and said: "Welcome; verily ye are friends that are come — sore indeed is the need — even ye that are dearest of the Achaians to me even in my wrath."

So spake noble Achilles and led them forward, and made them sit on settles and carpets of purple; and anon he spake to Patroklos being near: "Bring forth a greater bowl, thou son of Menoitios; mingle stronger drink, and prepare each man a cup, for dearest of men are these that are under my roof."

Then put they forth their hands to the good cheer lying before them. And when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, Aias nodded to Phoinix. But noble Odysseus marked it, and filled a cup with wine and pledged Achilles: "Hail, O Achilles! The fair feast lack we not either in the hut of Agamemnon son of Atreus neither now in thine; for feasting is there abundance to our heart's desire, but our thought is not for matters of the delicious feast; nay, we behold very sore destruction, thou fosterling of Zeus, and are afraid. Now is it in doubt whether we save the benched ships or behold them perish, if thou put not on thy might. Nigh unto ships and wall have the high-hearted Trojans and famed allies pitched their camp, and kindled many fires throughout their host, and ween that they shall no more be withheld but will fall on our black ships. And Zeus son of Kronos sheweth them signs upon the right by lightning, and Hector greatly exulteth in his might and rageth furiously, trusting in Zeus, and recketh not of god nor man, for mighty madness hath possessed him. He prayeth bright Dawn to shine forth with all speed, for he bath passed his word to smite off from the ships the ensigns' tops, and to fire the hulls with devouring flame, and hard thereby to make havoc of the Achaians confounded by the smoke. Therefore am I sore afraid in my heart lest the gods fulfil his boastings, and it be fated for us to perish here in Troy-land, far from Argos pasture-land of horses. Up then! if thou art minded even at the last to save the failing sons of the Achaians from the war-din of the Trojans. Eschew thy grievous wrath; Agamemnon offereth thee worthy gifts, so thou wilt cease from anger. Lo now, hearken thou to me, and I will tell thee all the gifts that in his hut Agamemnon promised thee. But if Agamemnon be too hateful to thy heart, both he and his gifts, yet have thou pity on all the Achaians that faint throughout the host; these shall honour thee as a god, for verily thou wilt earn exceeding great glory at their hands. Yea now mightest thou slay Hector, for he would come very near thee in his deadly madness, because he deemeth that there is no man like unto him among the Danaans that the ships brought hither."

And Achilles fleet of foot answered and said unto him: "Heaven-sprung son of Laertes, Odysseus of many wiles, in openness must I now declare unto you my saying, even as I am minded and as the fulfilment thereof shall be, that ye may not sit before me and coax this way and that. For hateful to me even as the gates of hell is he that hideth one thing in his heart and uttereth another: but I will speak what meseemeth best. Not me, I ween, shall Agamemnon son of Atreus persuade, nor the other Danaans, seeing we were to have no thank for battling with the foemen ever without respite. He that abideth at home hath equal share with him that fighteth his best, and in like honour are held both the coward and the brave; death cometh alike to the untoiling and to him that hath toiled long. Neither have I any profit for that I endured tribulation of soul, ever staking my life in fight. Even as a hen bringeth her unfledged chickens each morsel as she winneth it, and with herself it goeth hard, even so I was wont to watch out many a sleepless night and pass through many bloody days of battle, warring with folk for their women's sake. Twelve cities of men have I laid waste from ship-board, and from land eleven, throughout deep-soiled Troy-land; out of all these took I many goodly treasures and would bring and give them all to Agamemnon son of Atreus, and he staying behind amid the fleet ships would take them and portion out some few but keep the most. Now some he gave to be meeds of honour to the princes and the kings, and theirs are left untouched; only from me of all the

Achaians took he my darling lady and keepeth her. But why must the Argives make war on the Trojans? why hath Atreides gathered his host and led them hither? is it not for lovely-haired Helen’s sake? Do then the sons of Atreus alone of mortal men love their wives? surely whatsoever man is good and sound of mind loveth his own and cherisheth her, even as I too loved mine with all my heart, though but the captive of my spear. But now that he hath taken my meed of honour from mine arms and hath deceived me, let him not tempt me that know him full well; he shall not prevail. Nay, Odysseus, let him take counsel with thee and all the princes to ward from the ships the consuming fire. Verily without mine aid he hath wrought many things, and built a wall and dug a foss about it wide and deep, and set a palisade therein; yet even so can he not stay murderous Hector’s might. But so long as I was fighting amid the Achaians, Hector had no mind to array his battle far from the wall, but scarce came unto the Skaian gates and to the oak-tree; there once he awaited me alone and scarce escaped my onset. But now, seeing I have no mind to fight with noble Hector, I will to-morrow do sacrifice to Zeus and all the gods, and store well my ships when I have launched them on the salt sea — then shalt thou see, if thou wilt and hast any care therefor, my ships sailing at break of day over Hellespont, the fishes’ home, and my men right eager at the oar; and if the great Shaker of the Earth grant me good journey, on the third day should I reach deep-soiled Phthia. There are my great possessions that I left when I came hither to my hurt; and yet more gold and ruddy bronze shall I bring from hence, and fair-girdled women and grey iron, all at least that were mine by lot; only my meed of honour hath he that gave it me taken back in his despitefulness, even lord Agamemnon son of Atreus. To him declare ye everything even as I charge you, openly, that all the Achaians likewise may have indignation, if haply he hopeth to beguile yet some other Danaan, for that he is ever clothed in shamelessness. Verily not in my face would he dare to look, though he have the front of a dog. Neither will I devise counsel with him nor any enterprise, for utterly he hath deceived me and done wickedly; but never again shall he beguile me with fair speech — let this suffice him. Let him begone in peace; Zeus the lord of counsel hath taken away his wits. Hateful to me are his gifts, and I hold him at a straw’s worth. Not even if he gave me ten times, yea twenty, all that now is his, and all that may come to him otherwhence, even all the revenue of Orchomenos or Egyptian Thebes where the treasure-houses are stored fullest — Thebes of the hundred gates, whence sally forth two hundred warriors through each with horses and chariots — nay, nor gifts in number as sand or dust; not even so shall Agamemnon persuade my soul till he have paid me back all the bitter despite. And the daughter of Agamemnon son of Atreus will I not wed, not were she rival of golden Aphrodite for fairness and for handiwork matched bright-eyed Athene — not even then will I wed her; let him choose him of the Achaians another that is his peer and is more royal than I. For if the gods indeed preserve me and I come unto my home, then will Peleus himself seek me a wife. Many Achaian maidens are there throughout Hellas and Phthia, daughters of princes that ward their cities; whomsoever of these I wish will I make my dear lady. Very often was my high soul moved to take me there a wedded wife, a help meet for me, and have joy of the possessions that the old man Peleus possesseth. For not of like worth with life hold I even all the wealth that men say was possessed of the well-peopled city of Ilios in days of peace gone by, before the sons of the Achaians came; neither all the treasure that the stone threshold of the archer Phoebus Apollo encompasseth in rocky Pytho. For kine and goodly flocks are to be had for the harrying, and tripods and chestnut horses for the purchasing; but to bring back man’s life neither harrying nor earning availeth when once it hath passed the barrier of his lips. For thus my goddess mother telleth me, Thetis the silver-footed, that twain fates are bearing me to the issue of death. If I abide here and besiege the Trojans’ city, then my returning home is taken from me, but my fame shall be imperishable; but if I go home to my dear native land, my high fame is taken from me, but my life shall endure long while, neither shall the issue of death soon reach me. Moreover I would counsel you all to set sail homeward, seeing ye shall never reach your goal of steep Ilios; of a surety far-seeing Zeus holdeth his hand over her and her folk are of good courage. So go your way and tell my answer to the princes of the Achaians, even as is the office of elders, that they may devise in their hearts some other better counsel, such as shall save them their ships and the host of the Achaians amid the hollow ships: since this counsel availeth them naught that they have now devised, by reason of my fierce wrath. But let Phoinix now abide with us and lay him to rest, that he may follow with me on my ships to our dear native land to-morrow, if he will; for I will not take him perforce.”

So spake he, and they all held their peace and were still, and marvelled at his saying; for he denied them very vehemently. But at the last spake to them the old knight Phoinix, bursting into tears, because he was sore afraid for the ships of the Achaians: “If indeed thou ponderest departure in thy heart, glorious Achilles, and hast no mind at all to save the fleet ships from consuming fire, because that wrath bath entered into thy heart; how can I be left of thee, dear son, alone thereafter? To thee did the old knight Peleus send me the day he sent thee to Agamemnon forth from Phthia, a stripling yet unskilled in equal war and in debate wherein men wax pre-eminent. Therefore sent he me to teach thee all these things, to be both a speaker of words and a doer of deeds. Yea, I reared thee to this greatness, thou godlike Achilles, with my heart’s love; for with none other wouldest thou go unto the feast, neither take meat in the hall, till that I had set thee upon my knees and stayed thee with the savoury morsel cut first for thee, and put the wine-cup to thy lips. Oft hast thou stained the doublet on my breast with sputtering of wine in thy sorry helplessness. Thus I suffered much with thee, and much I toiled, being mindful that the gods in nowise created any issue of my body; but I made thee my son, thou godlike Achilles, that thou mayest yet save me from grievous destruction. Therefore, Achilles, rule thy high spirit; neither beseemeth it thee to have a ruthless heart. Nay, even the very gods can bend, and theirs withal is loftier majesty and honour and might. Nay, come for the gifts; the Achaians shall honour thee even as a god. But if without gifts thou enter into battle the bane of men, thou wilt not be held in like honour, even though thou avert the fray.”

And Achilles fleet of foot made answer and said to him: “Phoinix my father, thou old man fosterling of Zeus, such honour need I in no wise; for I deem that I have been honoured by the judgment of Zeus, which shall abide upon me amid my beaked ships as long as breath tarrieth in my body and my limbs are strong. Moreover I will say this thing to thee and lay thou it to thine heart; trouble not my soul by weeping and lamentation, to do the pleasure of warrior Atreides; neither beseemeth it thee to cherish him, lest thou be hated of me that cherish thee. It were good that thou with me shouldest vex him that vexeth me. Be thou king even as I, and share my sway by halves, but these shall bear my message. So tarry thou here and lay thee to rest in a soft bed, and with break of day will we consider whether to depart unto our own, or to abide.”

He spake, and nodded his brow in silence unto Patroklos to spread for Phoinix a thick couch, that the others might bethink them to depart from the hut with speed. Then spake to them Aias, Telamon’s godlike son, and said: “Heaven-sprung son of Laertes, Odysseus of many wiles, let us go hence; for methinks the purpose of our charge will not by this journey be accomplished; and we must tell the news, though it be no wise good, with all speed unto the Danaans, that now sit awaiting. But Achilles hath wrought his proud soul to fury within him — stubborn man, that recketh naught of his comrades’ love, wherein we worshipped him beyond all men amid the ships — unmerciful! Yet doth a man accept recompense of his brother’s murderer or for his dead son; and so the man-slayer for a great price abideth in his own land, and the kinsman’s heart is appeased, and his proud soul, when he hath taken the recompense. But for thee, the gods have put within thy breast a spirit implacable and evil, by reason of one single damsel. And now we offer thee seven damsels, far best of all, and many other gifts besides; entertain thou then a kindly spirit, and have respect unto thine home; because we are guests of thy roof, sent of the multitude of Danaans, and we would fain be nearest to thee and dearest beyond all other Achaians, as many as there be.”

And Achilles fleet of foot made answer and said to him: “Aias sprung of Zeus, thou son of Telamon, prince of the folk, thou seemest to speak all this almost after mine own mind; but my heart swelleth with wrath as oft as I bethink me of those things, how Atreides entreated me arrogantly among the Argives, as though I were some worthless sojourner. But go ye and declare my message; I will not take thought of bloody war until that wise Priam’s son, noble Hector, come to the Myrmidons’ huts and ships, slaying the Argives, and smirch the ships with fire. But about mine hut and black ship I ween that Hector, though he be very eager for battle, shall be refrained.”

So said he, and they took each man a two-handled cup, and made libation and went back along the line of ships; and Odysseus led the way. And Patroklos bade his fellows and handmaidens spread with all speed a thick couch for Phoinix; and they obeyed and spread a couch as he ordained, fleeces and rugs and fine flock of linen. Then the old man laid him down and tarried for bright Dawn.

Now when those were come unto Atreides’ huts, the sons of the Achaians stood up on this side and on that, and pledged them in cups of gold, and questioned them; and Agamemnon king of men asked them first: “Come now, tell me, Odysseus full of praise, thou great glory of the Achaians; will he save the ships from consuming fire, or said he nay, and hath wrath yet hold of his proud spirit?”

And steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him: “Most noble son of Atreus, Agamemnon king of men, he yonder hath no mind to quench his wrath, but is yet more filled of fury, and spurneth thee and thy gifts. He biddeth thee take counsel for thyself amid the Argives, how to save the ships and folk of the Achaians. And for himself he threateneth that at break of day he will launch upon the sea his trim well-benched ships. Moreover he said that he would counsel all to sail for home, because ye now shall never reach your goal of steep Ilios; surely far-seeing Zeus holdeth his hand over her and her folk are of good courage. Even so said he, and here are also these to tell the tale that were my companions, Aias and the two heralds, both men discreet. But the old man Phoinix laid him there to rest, even as Achilles bade him, that he may follow with him on his ships to his dear native land to-morrow, if he will; for he will not take him perforce.”

So said he, and they all held their peace and were still, marvelling at his saying, for he harangued very vehemently. Long were the sons of the Achaians voiceless for grief, but at the last Diomedes of the loud war-cry spake amid them: “Most noble son of Atreus, Agamemnon king of men, would thou hadst never besought Peleus’ glorious son with offer of gifts innumerable; proud is he at any time, but now hast thou yet far more encouraged him in his haughtiness. Howbeit we will let him bide, whether he go or tarry; hereafter he shall fight, whenever his heart within him biddeth and god arouseth him. Come now, even as I shall say let us all obey. Go ye now to rest, full to your hearts’ desire of meat and wine, wherein courage is and strength; but when fair rosy-fingered Dawn appeareth, array thou with all speed before the ships thy folk and horsemen, and urge them on; and fight thyself amid the foremost.”

So said he, and all the princes gave assent, applauding the saying of Diomedes tamer of horses. And then they made libation and went every man to his hut, and there laid them to rest and took the boon of sleep.

BOOK X.

How Diomedes and Odysseus slew Dolon, a spy of the Trojans, and themselves spied on the Trojan camp, and took the horses of Rhesos, the Thracian king.

Now beside the ships the other leaders of the whole Achaian host were sleeping all night long, by soft Sleep overcome, but Agamemnon son of Atreus, shepherd of the host, sweet Sleep held not, so many things he debated in his mind. And even as when the lord of fair-tressed Hera lighteneth, fashioning either a mighty rain unspeakable, or hail, or snow, when the flakes sprinkle all the ploughed lands, or fashioning perchance the wide mouth of bitter war, even so oft in his breast groaned Agamemnon, from the very deep of his heart, and his spirits trembled within him. And whensoever he looked toward that Trojan plain, he marvelled at the many fires that blazed in front of Ilios, and at the sound of flutes and pipes, and the noise of men; but whensoever to the ships he glanced and the host of the Achaians, then rent he many a lock clean forth from his head, to Zeus that is above, and greatly groaned his noble heart.

And this in his soul seemed to him the best counsel, to go first of all to Nestor son of Neleus, if perchance he might contrive with him some right device that should be for the warding off of evil from all the Danaans.

Then he rose, and did on his doublet about his breast, and beneath his shining feet he bound on fair sandals, and thereafter clad him in the tawny skin of a lion fiery and great, a skin that reached to the feet, and he grasped his spear.

And even in like wise did trembling fear take hold on Menelaos, (for neither on his eyelids did Sleep settle down,) lest somewhat should befall the Argives, who verily for his sake over wide waters were come to Troy-land, with fierce war in their thoughts.

With a dappled pard’s akin first he covered his broad shoulders, and he raised and set on his head a casque of bronze, and took a spear in his strong hand. Then went he on his way to rouse his brother, that mightily ruled over all the Argives, and as a god was honoured by the people. Him found he harnessing his goodly gear about his shoulders, by the stern of the ship, and glad to his brother was his coming. Then Menelaos of the loud war-cry first accosted him: “Wherefore thus, dear brother, art thou arming? Wilt thou speed forth any of thy comrades to spy on the Trojans? Nay, terribly I fear lest none should undertake for thee this deed, even to go and spy out the foeman alone through the ambrosial night; needs must he be a man right hardy of heart."

Then the lord Agamemnon answered him and spake: "Need of good counsel have I and thou, Menelaos fosterling of Zeus, of counsel that will help and save the Argives and the ships, since the heart of Zeus hath turned again. Surely on the sacrifices of Hector hath he set his heart rather than on ours. For never did I see, nor heard any tell, that one man devised so many terrible deeds in one day, as Hector, dear to Zeus, hath wrought on the sons of the Achaians, unaided; though no dear son of a goddess is he, nor of a god. He hath done deeds that methinks will be a sorrow to the Argives, lasting and long, such evils hath he devised against the Achaians. But go now, run swiftly by the ships, and summon Aias and Idomeneus, but I will betake me to noble Nestor, and bid him arise, if perchance he will be fain to go to the sacred company of the sentinels and lay on them his command. For to him above others would they listen, for his own son is chief among the sentinels, he and the brother in arms of Idomeneus, even Meriones, for to them above all we entrusted this charge."

Then Menelaos of the loud war-cry answered him: "How meanest thou this word wherewith thou dost command and exhort me? Am I to abide there with them, waiting till thou comest, or run back again to thee when I have well delivered to them thy commandment?"

Then the king of men, Agamemnon, answered him again: "There do thou abide lest we miss each other as we go, for many are the paths through the camp. But call aloud, wheresoever thou goest, and bid men awake, naming each man by his lineage, and his father's name, and giving all their dues of honour, nor be thou proud of heart. Nay rather let us ourselves be labouring, for even thus did Zeus from our very birth dispense to us the heaviness of toil."

So he spake, and sent his brother away, having clearly laid on him his commandment. Then went he himself after Nestor, the shepherd of the host, whom he found by his hut and black ship, in his soft bed: beside him lay his arms, a shield, and two spears, and a shining helmet. Beside him lay his glittering girdle wherewith the old man was wont to gird himself when he harnessed him for war, the bane of men, and led on the host, for he yielded not to grievous old age. Then he raised him on his elbow, lifting his head, and spake to the son of Atreus, inquiring of him with this word: "Who art thou that farest alone by the ships, through the camp in the dark night, when other mortals are sleeping? Seekest thou one of thy mules, or of thy comrades? speak, and come not silently upon me. What need hast thou?"

Then the king of men, Agamemnon, answered him: "O Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Achaians, thou shalt know Agamemnon, son of Atreus, whom above all men Zeus hath planted for ever among labours, while my breath abides within my breast, and my knees move. I wander thus, for that sweet sleep rests not on mine eyes, but war is my care, and the troubles of the Achaians. Yea, greatly I fear for the sake of the Danaans, nor is my heart firm, but I am tossed to and fro, and my heart is leaping from my breast, and my good knees tremble beneath me. But if thou wilt do aught, since neither on thee cometh sleep, let us go thither to the sentinels, that we may see them, lest they be fordone with toil, and so are slumbering, and have quite forgotten to keep watch. And hostile men camp hard by, nor know we at all but that they are keen to do battle in the night."

Then knightly Nestor of Gerenia answered him: "Verily will I follow after thee, but let us also rouse others again, both the son of Tydeus, spearman renowned, and Odysseus, and swift Aias, and the strong son of Phyleus. But well it would be if one were to go and call those also, the godlike Aias, and Idomeneus the prince; for their ships are furthest of all, and nowise close at hand. But Menelaos will I blame, dear as he is and worshipful, yea, even if thou be angry with me, nor will I hide my thought, for that he slumbereth, and to thee alone hath left the toil; now should he be toiling among all the chiefs and beseeching them, for need no longer tolerable is coming upon us."

And the king of men, Agamemnon, answered him again: "Old man, another day I even bid thee blame him, for often is he slack, and willeth not to labour, yielding neither to unreadiness nor heedlessness of heart, but looking toward me, and expecting mine instance. But now he awoke far before me, and came to me, and him I sent forward to call those concerning whom thou inquirest. But let us be gone, and them shall we find before the gates, among the sentinels, for there I bade them gather."

Then knightly Nestor of Gerenia answered him: "So will none of the Argives be wroth with him or disobey him, when soever he doth urge any one, and give him his commands."

So spake he, and did on his doublet about his breast, and beneath his bright feet he bound goodly shoon, and all around him buckled a purple cloak, with double folds and wide, and thick down all over it.

And he took a strong spear, pointed with sharp bronze, and he went among the ships of the mail-clad Achaians. Then Odysseus first, the peer of Zeus in counsel, did knightly Gerenian Nestor arouse out of sleep, with his voice, and quickly the cry came all about his heart, and he came forth from the hut and spake to them saying: "Wherefore thus among the ships and through the camp do ye wander alone, in the ambrosial night; what so great need cometh upon you?"

Then knightly Nestor of Gerenia answered him: "Laertes' son, be not wroth, for great trouble besetteth the Achaians. Nay follow, that we may arouse others too, even all that it behoveth to take counsel, whether we should fly, or fight.”

So spake he, and Odysseus of the many counsels came to the hut, and cast a shield about his shoulders, and went after them.

And they went to seek Diomedes, son of Tydeus, and him they found outside his hut, with his arms, and around him his comrades were sleeping with their shields beneath their heads, but their spears were driven into the ground erect on the spikes of the butts, and afar shone the bronze, like the lightning of father Zeus. Now that hero was asleep, and under him was strewn the hide of an ox of the field, but beneath his head was stretched a shining carpet. Beside him went and stood knightly Nestor of Gerenia and stirred him with a touch of his foot, and aroused him, chiding him to his face, saying: “Wake, son of Tydeus, why all night long dost thou sleep? Knowest thou not that the Trojans on the high place of the plain are camped near the ships, and but a little space holdeth them apart?”

So spake he, and Diomedes sprang swiftly up out of sleep, and spake to him winged words: “Hard art thou, old man, and from toil thou never ceasest. Now are there not other younger sons of the Achaians, who might rouse when there is need each of the kings, going all around the host? but thou, old man, art indomitable.”

And him knightly Nestor of Gerenia answered again, “Nay verily, my son, all this that thou sayest is according unto right. Noble sons have I, and there be many of the host, of whom each man might go and call the others. But a right great need hath assailed the Achaians. For now to all of us it standeth on a razor’s edge, either pitiful ruin for the Achaians, or life. But come now, if indeed thou dost pity me, rouse swift Aias, and the son of Phyleus, for thou art younger than I.”

So spake he, and Diomedes cast round his shoulders the skin of a great fiery lion, that reached to his feet, and he grasped his spear, and started on his way, and roused the others from their place and led them on.

Now when they had come among the assembled sentinels, they found not the leaders of the sentinels asleep, but they all sat wide awake with their arms. And even as hounds keep difficult guard round the sheep in a fold, having heard a hardy wild beast that cometh through the wood among the hills, and much clamour riseth round him of hounds and men, and sleep perisheth from them, even so sweet sleep did perish from their eyes, as they watched through the wicked night, for ever were they turning toward the plains, when they heard the Trojans moving.

And that old man was glad when he saw them, and heartened them with his saying, and calling out to them he spake winged words: “Even so now, dear children, do ye keep watch, nor let sleep take any man, lest we become a cause of rejoicing to them that hate us.”

So saying he sped through the moat, and they followed with him, the kings of the Argives, who had been called to the council. And with them went Meriones, and the glorious son of Nestor, for they called them to share their counsel. So they went clean out of the delved foss, and sat down in the open, where the mid-space was clear of dead men fallen, where fierce Hector had turned again from destroying the Argives, when night covered all. There sat they down, and declared their saying each to the other, and to them knightly Nestor of Gerenia began discourse: “O friends, is there then no man that would trust to his own daring spirit, to go among the great-hearted Trojans, if perchance he might take some straggler of the enemy, yea, or hear perchance some rumour among the Trojans, and what things they devise among themselves, whether they are fain to abide there by the ships, away from the city, or will retreat again to the city, now that they have conquered the Achaians? All this might such an one learn, and back to us come scathless: great would be his fame under heaven among all men, and a goodly gift will be given him. For all the best men that bear sway by the ships, each and all of them will give him a black ewe, with her lamb at her foot, and ever will he be present at feasts and clan-drinkings.”

So spake he, and thereon were they all silent, holding their peace, but to them spake Diomedes of the loud war-cry: “Nestor, my heart and manful spirit urge me to enter the camp of the foemen hard by, even of the Trojans: and if some other man will follow with me, more comfort and more courage will there be. If two go together, one before another perceiveth a matter, how there may be gain therein; but if one alone perceive aught, even so his wit is shorter, and weak his device.”

So spake he, and many were they that wished to follow Diomedes. The two Aiantes were willing, men of Ares’ company, and Meriones was willing, and right willing the son of Nestor, and the son of Atreus, Menelaos, spearman renowned, yea and the hardy Odysseus was willing to steal into the throng of Trojans, for always daring was his heart within him. But among them spake the king of men, Agamemnon: “Diomedes son of Tydeus, joy of mine heart, thy comrade verily shalt thou choose, whomsoever thou wilt, the best of them that be here, for many are eager. But do not thou, out of reverent heart, leave the better man behind, and give thyself the worse companion, yielding to regard for any, and looking to their lineage, even if one be more kingly born.”

So spake he, but was in fear for the sake of fair-haired Menelaos. But to them again answered Diomedes of the loud war-cry: “If indeed ye bid me choose myself a comrade, how then could I be unmindful of godlike Odysseus, whose heart is passing eager, and his spirit so manful in all manner of toils; and Athene loveth him. But while he cometh with me, even out of burning fire might we both return, for he excelleth in understanding.”

Then him again answered the steadfast noble Odysseus: “Son of Tydeus, praise me not overmuch, neither blame me aught, for thou speakest thus among the Argives that themselves know all. But let us be going, for truly the night is waning, and near is the dawn, and the stars have gone onward, and the night has advanced more than two watches, but the third watch is yet left.”

So spake they, and harnessed them in their dread armour. To the son of Tydeus did Thrasymedes steadfast in war give a two-edged sword (for his own was left by his ship) and a shield, and about his head set a helm of bull’s hide, without cone or crest, that is called a skull-cap, and keeps the heads of stalwart youths. And Meriones gave Odysseus a bow and a quiver, and a sword, and on his head set a helm made of leather, and with many a thong was it stiffly wrought within, while without the white teeth of a boar of flashing tusks were arrayed thick set on either side, well and cunningly, and in the midst was fixed a cap of felt.

So when these twain had harnessed them in their dread armour, they set forth to go, and left there all the best of the host. And to them did Pallas Athene send forth an omen on the right, a heron hard by the way, and they beheld it not with their eyes, through the dark night, but they heard its shrill cry. And Odysseus was glad in the omen of the bird, and prayed to Athene: “Listen to me, thou child of aegis-bearing Zeus, that ever in all toils dost stand by me, nor doth any motion of mine escape thee: but now again above all be thou friendly to me, Athene, and grant that we come back with renown to the ships, having wrought a great work, that shall be sorrow to the Trojans.”

Next again prayed Diomedes of the loud war-cry: “Listen now likewise to me, thou child of Zeus, unwearied maiden, and follow with me as when with my father thou didst follow, even noble Tydeus, into Thebes, when he went forth as a messenger from the Achaians. Even so now stand thou by me willingly, and protect me. And to thee will I sacrifice a yearling heifer, broad of brow, unbroken, that never yet hath man led below the yoke. Her will I sacrifice to thee, and gild her horns with gold.”

So spake they in their prayer, and Pallas Athene heard them. And when they had prayed to the daughter of mighty Zeus, they went forth on their way, like two lions, through the dark night, amid the slaughter, amid the slain men, through the arms and the black blood.

Nay, nor the stout-hearted Trojans did Hector suffer to sleep, but he called together all the best of them, all that were chiefs and leaders of the Trojans, them did he call together, and contrived a crafty counsel: “Who is there that would promise and perform for me this deed, for a great gift? yea his reward shall be sufficient. For I will give him a chariot, and two horses of arching neck, the best that be at the swift ships of the Achaians, to whosoever shall dare the deed, and for himself shall win glory. And the deed is this; to go near the swift-faring ships, and seek out whether the swift ships are guarded, as of old, or whether already, being subdued beneath our hands, the foes are devising of flight among themselves, and have no care to watch through the night, being fordone with dread weariness.”

So spake he, but they were all silent and held their peace. Now there was among the Trojans one Dolon, the son of Eumedes the godlike herald, and he was rich in gold, and rich in bronze: and verily he was ill favoured to look upon, but swift of foot. So he spake then a word to the Trojans and to Hector: “Hector, my heart and manful spirit urge me to go near the swift-faring ships, and spy out all. But come, I pray thee, hold up the staff, and swear to me, that verily thou wilt give me the horses and the chariots bedight with bronze that bear the noble son of Peleus. But to thee I will prove no vain spy, nor disappoint thy hope. For I will go straight to the camp, until I may come to the ship of Agamemnon, where surely the chiefs are like to hold council, whether to fight or flee.”

So spake he, and Hector took the staff in his hand, and sware to him: “Now let Zeus himself be witness, the loud-thundering lord of Hera, that no other man of the Trojans shall mount those horses, but thou, I declare, shalt rejoice in them for ever.”

So spake he, and sware a bootless oath thereto, and aroused Dolon to go. And straightway he cast on his shoulders his crooked bow, and did on thereover the skin of a grey wolf, and on his head a helm of ferret-skin, and took a sharp javelin, and went on his way to the ships from the host. But he was not like to come back from the ships and bring word to Hector.

But when he had left the throng of men and horses, he went forth eagerly on the way, and Odysseus of the seed of Zeus was ware of him as he approached, and said unto Diomedes: “Lo, here is some man, Diomedes, coming from the camp, I know not whether as a spy to our ships, or to strip certain of the dead men fallen. But let us suffer him to pass by us a little way on the plain, and thereafter may we rush on him and take him speedily, and if it chance that he outrun us by speed of foot, ever do thou hem him in towards the ships and away from the camp, rushing on him with thy spear, lest in any wise he escape towards the city.”

So they spake, and turning out of the path they lay down among the bodies of the dead; and swiftly Dolon ran past them in his witlessness. But when he was as far off as is the length of the furrow made by mules, these twain ran after him, and he stood still when he heard the sound, supposing in his heart that they were friends come from among the Trojans to turn him back, at the countermand of Hector. But when they were about a spear-cast off, or even less, he knew them for foe-men, and stirred his swift limbs to fly, and speedily they started in pursuit.

And as when two sharp-toothed hounds, well skilled in the chase, press ever hard on a doe or a hare through a wooded land, and it runs screaming before them, even so Tydeus' son and Odysseus the sacker of cities cut Dolon off from the host, and ever pursued hard after him. But when he was just about to come among the sentinels, in his flight towards the ships, then Athene poured strength into the son of Tydeus, that none of the mail-clad Achaians might boast himself the first to smite, and he come second. And strong Diomedes leaped upon him with the spear, and said: "Stand, or I shall overtake thee with the spear, and methinks that thou shalt not long avoid sheer destruction at my hand."

So spake he, and threw his spear, but of his own will he missed the man, and passing over his right shoulder the point of the polished spear stuck fast in the ground: and Dolon stood still, in great dread and trembling, and the teeth chattered in his mouth, and he was green with fear. Then the twain came up with him, panting, and gripped his hands, and weeping he spake: "Take me alive, and I will ransom myself, for within our house there is bronze, and gold, and smithied iron, wherefrom my father would do you grace with ransom untold, if he should learn that I am alive among the ships of the Achaians."

Then Odysseus of the many counsels answered him and said: "Take courage, let not death be in thy mind, but come speak and tell me truly all the tale, why thus from the host lost thou come all alone among the ships, through the black night, when other mortals are sleeping? Comest thou to strip certain of the dead men fallen, or did Hector send thee forth to spy out everything at the hollow ships, or did thine own spirit urge thee on?"

Then Dolon answered him, his limbs trembling beneath him: "With many a blind hope did Hector lead my wits astray, who vowed to give me the whole-hooved horses of the proud son of Peleus, and his car bedight with bronze: and he bade me fare through the swift black night, and draw nigh the foemen, and seek out whether the swift ships are guarded, as of old, or whether, already, being subdued beneath our hands, they are devising of flight among themselves, and have no care to watch through the night, being fordone with dread weariness."

And smiling thereat did Odysseus of the many counsels make him answer: "Verily now thy soul was set on great rewards, even the horses of the wise son of Aiakos, but hard are they for mortal men to master, and hard to drive, for any but Achilles only, whom a deathless mother bare. But come, tell me all this truly, all the tale: where when thou camest hither didst thou leave Hector, shepherd of the host, and where lie his warlike gear, and where his horses? And how are disposed the watches, and the beds of the other Trojans? And what counsel take they among themselves; are they fain to abide there nigh the ships afar from the city, or will they return to the city again, seeing that they have subdued unto them the Achaiana?"

Then Dolon son of Eumedes made him answer again: "Lo, now all these things will I recount to thee most truly. Hector with them that are counsellors holdeth council by the barrow of godlike Ilos, apart from the din, but as for the guards whereof thou askest, oh hero, no chosen watch nor guard keepeth the host. As for all the watch fires of the Trojans — on them is necessity, so that they watch and encourage each other to keep guard; but, for the allies called from many lands, they are sleeping and to the Trojans they leave it to keep watch, for no wise near dwell the children and wives of the allies." Then Odysseus of the many counsels answered him and said: "How stands it now, do they sleep amidst the horse-taming Trojans, or apart? tell me clearly, that I may know."

Then answered him Dolon son of Eumedes: "Verily all this likewise will I recount to thee truly. Towards the sea lie the Karians, and Paionians of the bended bow, and the Leleges and Kaukones, and noble Pelasgoi. And towards Thymbre the Lykians have their place, and the haughty Mysians, and the Phrygians that fight from chariots, and Maionians lords of chariots. But wherefore do ye inquire of me throughly concerning all these things? for if ye desire to steal into the throng of Trojans, lo, there be those Thracians, new comers, at the furthest point apart from the rest, and among them their king Rhesos, son of Eioneus. His be the fairest horses that ever I beheld, and the greatest, whiter than snow, and for speed like the winds. And his chariot is fashioned well with gold and silver, and golden is his armour that he brought with him, marvellous, a wonder to behold; such as it is in no wise fit for mortal men to bear, but for the deathless gods. But bring me now to the swift ships, or leave me here, when ye have bound me with a ruthless bond, that ye may go and make trial of me whether I have spoken to you truth, or lies."

Then strong Diomedes, looking grimly on him, said: "Put no thought of escape, Dolon, in thy heart, for all the good tidings thou hast brought, since once thou halt come into our hands. For if now we release thee or let thee go, on some later day wilt thou come to the swift ships of the Achaians, either to play the spy, or to fight in open war, but if subdued beneath my hands thou lose thy life, never again wilt thou prove a bane to the Argives."

He spake, and that other with strong hand was about to touch his chin, and implore his mercy, but Diomedes smote him on the midst of the neck, rushing on him with the sword, and cut through both the sinews, and the head of him still speaking was mingled with the dust. And they stripped him of the casque of ferret's skin from off his head, and of his wolf-skin, and his bended bow, and his long spear, and these to Athene the Giver of Spoil did noble Odysseus hold aloft in his hand, and he prayed and spake a word: "Rejoice, O goddess, in these, for to thee first of all the immortals in Olympus will we call for aid; nay, but yet again send us on against the horses and the sleeping places of the Thracian men."

So spake he aloud, and lifted from him the spoils on high, and set them on a tamarisk bush, and raised thereon a mark right plain to see, gathering together reeds, and luxuriant shoots of tamarisk, lest they should miss the place as they returned again through the swift dark night.

So the twain went forward through the arms, and the black blood, and quickly they came to the company of Thracian men. Now they were slumbering, fordone with toil, but their goodly weapons lay by them on the ground, all orderly, in three rows, and by each man his pair of steeds. And Rhesos slept in the midst, and beside him his swift horses were bound with thongs to the topmost rim of the chariot. Him Odysseus spied from afar, and showed him unto Diomedes: "Lo, Diomedes, this is the man, and these are the horses whereof Dolon that we slew did give us tidings. But come now, put forth thy great strength; it doth not behove thee to stand idle with thy weapons: nay, loose the horses; or do thou slay the men, and of the horses will I take heed."

So spake he, and into that other bright-eyed Athene breathed might, and he began slaying on this side and on that, and hideously went up their groaning, as they were smitten with the sword, and the earth was reddened with blood. And like as a lion cometh on flocks without a herdsman, on goats or sheep, and leaps upon them with evil will, so set the son of Tydeus on the men of Thrace, till he had slain twelve. But whomsoever the son of Tydeus drew near and smote with the sword, him did Odysseus of the many counsels seize by the foot from behind, and drag him out of the way, with this design in his heart, that the fair-maned horses might lightly issue forth, and not tremble in spirit, when they trod over the dead; for they were not yet used to dead men. But when the son of Tydeus came upon the king, he was the thirteenth from whom he took sweet life away, as he was breathing hard, for an evil dream stood above his head that night through the device of Athens. Meanwhile the hardy Odysseus loosed the whole-hooved horses, and bound them together with thongs, and drave them out of the press, smiting them with his bow, since he had not taken thought to lift the shining whip with his hands from the chariot; then he whistled for a sign to noble Diomedes.

But Diomedes stood and pondered what most daring deed he might do, whether he should take the chariot, where lay the armour, and drag it out by the pole, or lift it upon high, and so bear it forth, or whether he should take the life away from yet more of the Thracians. And while he was pondering this in his heart, then Athene drew near, and stood, and spake to noble Diomedes: “Bethink thee of returning, O son of great-hearted Tydeus, to the hollow ships, lest perchance thou come thither in flight, and perchance another god rouse up the Trojans likewise.”

So spake she, and he observed the voice of the utterance of the goddess, and swiftly he sprang upon the steeds, and Odysseus smote them with his bow, and they sped to the swift ships of the Achaians.

Nay, nor a vain watch kept Apollo of the silver bow, when he beheld Athene caring for the son of Tydeus; in wrath against her he stole among the crowded press of Trojans, and aroused a counsellor of the Thracians, Hippokoon, the noble kinsman of Rhesos. And he started out of sleep, when he beheld the place desolate where the swift horses had stood, and beheld the men gasping in the death struggle; then he groaned aloud, and called out by name to his comrade dear. And a clamour arose and din unspeakable of the Trojans hasting together, and they marvelled at the terrible deeds, even all that the heroes had wrought, and had gone thereafter to the hollow ships.

But when those others came to the place where they had slain the spy of Hector, there Odysseus, dear to Zeus, checked the swift horses, and Tydeus’ son, leaping to the ground, set the bloody spoil in the hands of Odysseus, and again mounted, and lashed the horses, and they sped onward nothing loth. But Nestor first heard the sound, and said: “O friends, leaders and counsellors of the Argives, shall I be wrong or speak sooth? for my heart bids me speak. The sound of swift-footed horses strikes upon mine ears. Would to god that Odysseus and that strong Diomedes may even instantly be driving the whole-hooved horses from among the Trojans; but terribly I fear in mine heart lest the bravest of the Argives suffer aught through the Trojans’ battle din.”

Not yet was his whole word spoken, when they came themselves, and leaped down to earth, but gladly the others welcomed them with hand-clasping, and with honeyed words. And first did knightly Nestor of Gerenia make question: “Come, tell me now, renowned Odysseus, great glory of the Achaians, how ye twain took those horses? Was it by stealing into the press of Trojans? Or did some god meet you, and give you them? Wondrous like are they to rays of the sun. Ever with the Trojans do I mix in fight, nor methinks do I tarry by the ships, old warrior as I am. But never yet saw I such horses, nor deemed of such. Nay, methinks some god must have encountered you and given you these. For both of you doth Zeus the cloud-gatherer love, and the maiden of aegis-bearing Zeus, bright-eyed Athene.”

And him answered Odysseus of the many counsels: “O Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Achaians, lightly could a god, if so he would, give even better steeds than these, for the gods are far stronger than we. But as for these new-come horses, whereof, old man, thou askest me, they are Thracian, but their lord did brave Diomedes slay, and beside him all the twelve best men of his company. The thirteenth man was a spy we took near the ships, one that Hector and the other haughty Trojans sent forth to pry upon our camp.”

So spake he, and drave the whole-hooved horses through the foss, laughing; and the other Achaians went with him joyfully. But when they had come to the well-built hut of the son of Tydeus, they bound the horses with well-cut thongs, at the mangers where the swift horses of Diomedes stood eating honey-sweet barley.

And Odysseus placed the bloody spoils of Dolon in the stern of the ship, that they might make ready a sacred offering to Athene. But for themselves, they went into the sea, and washed off the thick sweat from shins, and neck, and thighs. But when the wave of the sea had washed the thick sweat from their skin, and their hearts revived again, they went into polished baths, and were cleansed.

And when they had washed, and anointed them with olive oil, they sat down at supper, and from the full mixing bowl they drew off the honey-sweet wine, and poured it forth to Athene.

BOOK XI.

Despite the glorious deeds of Agamemnon, the Trojans press hard on the Achaians, and the beginning of evil comes on Patroklos.

Now Dawn arose from her couch beside proud Tithonos, to bring light to the immortals and to mortal men. But Zeus sent forth fierce Discord unto the fleet ships of the Achaians, and in her hands she held the signal of war. And she stood upon the huge black ship of Odysseus, that was in the midst, to make her voice heard on either side, both to the huts of Aias, son of Telamon, and to the huts of Achilles, for these twain, trusting in their valour and the might of their hands, had drawn up their trim ships at the two ends of the line. There stood the goddess and cried shrilly in a great voice and terrible, and mighty strength she set in the heart of each of the Achaians, to war and fight unceasingly. And straightway to them war grew sweeter than to depart in the hollow ships to their dear native land.

Then each man gave in charge his horses to his charioteer, to hold them in by the foss, well and orderly, and themselves as heavy men at arms were hasting about, being harnessed in their gear, and unquenchable the cry arose into the Dawn. And long before the charioteers were they arrayed at the foss, but after them a little way came up the drivers. And among them the son of Kronos aroused an evil din, and from above rained down dew danked with blood out of the upper air, for that he was about to send many strong men down to Hades.

But the Trojans on the other side, on the high ground of the plain, gathered them around great Hector, and noble Polydamus, and Aineias that as a god was honoured by the people of the Trojans, and the three sons of Antenor, Polybos, and noble Agenor, and young Akamas like unto the immortals. And Hector in the foremost rank bare the circle of his shield. And as from amid the clouds appeareth glittering a baneful star, and then again sinketh within the shadowy clouds, even so Hector would now appear among the foremost ranks, and again would be giving command in the rear, and all in bronze he shone, like the lightning of aegis-bearing father Zeus.

And even as when reapers over against each other drive their swaths through a rich man’s field of wheat or barley, and thick fall the handfuls, even so the Trojans and Achaians leaped upon each other, destroying, and neither side took thought of ruinous flight; and equal heads had the battle, and they rushed on like wolves. And woful Discord was glad at the sight, for she alone of the gods was with them in the war; for the other gods were not beside them, but in peace they sat within their halls, where the goodly mansion of each was builded in the folds of Olympus. And they all were blaming the son of Kronos, lord of the storm-cloud, for that he willed to give glory to the Trojans. But of them took the father no heed, but aloof from the others he sat apart, glad in his glory, looking toward the city of the Trojans, and the ships of the Achaians, and the glitter of bronze, and the slayers and the slain.

So long as morning was, and the sacred day still waxed, so long did the shafts of both hosts strike, and the folk fell, but about the hour when a woodman maketh ready his meal, in the dells of a mountain, when he hath tired his hands with felling tall trees, and weariness cometh on his soul, and desire of sweet food taketh his heart, even then the Danaans by their valour brake the battalions, and called on their comrades through the lines. And in rushed Agamemnon first of all, where thickest clashed the battalions, there he set on, and with him all the well-greaved Achaians. Footmen kept slaying footmen as they were driven in flight, and horsemen slaying horsemen with the sword, and from beneath them rose up the dust from the plain, stirred by the thundering hooves of horses. And the lord Agamemnon, ever slaying, followed after, calling on the Argives. And as when ruinous fire falleth on dense woodland, and the whirling wind beareth it everywhere, and the thickets fall utterly before it, being smitten by the onset of the fire, even so beneath Agamemnon son of Atreus fell the heads of the Trojans as they fled; and many strong-necked horses rattled empty cars along the highways of the battle, lacking their noble charioteers; but they on the earth were lying, far more dear to the vultures than to their wives. But Hector did Zeus draw forth from the darts and the dust, from the man-slaying, and the blood, and the din, and the son of Atreus followed on, crying eagerly to the Danaans. And past the tomb of ancient Ilos, son of Dardanos, across the mid plain, past the place of the wild fig-tree they sped, making for the city, and ever the son of Atreus followed shouting, and his invincible hands were defiled with gore. But when they were come to the Skaian gates, and the oak-tree, there then they halted, and awaited each other. But some were still in full flight through the mid plain, like kine that a lion hath scattered, coming on them in the dead of night; all hath he scattered, but to one sheer death appeareth instantly, and he breaketh her neck first, seizing her with strong teeth, and thereafter swalloweth greedily the blood and all the guts; even so lord Agamemnon son of Atreus followed hard on the Trojans, ever slaying the hindmost man, and they were scattered in flight, and on face or back many of them fell from their chariots beneath the hands of

Agamemnon, for mightily he raged with the spear. But when he was nowabout coming below the city, and the steep wall, then did the father of men and gods sit him down on the crests of many-fountained Ida, from heaven descending, with the thunderbolt in his hands.

Then sent he forth Iris of the golden wings, to bear his word: “Up and go, swift Iris, and tell this word unto Hector: So long as he sees Agamemnon, shepherd of the host, raging among the foremost fighters, and ruining the ranks of men, so long let him hold back, but bid the rest of the host war with the foe in strong battle. But when, or smitten with the spear or wounded with arrow shot, Agamemnon leapeth into his chariot, then will I give Hector strength to slay till he come even to the well-timbered ships, and the sun go down, and sacred darkness draw on.”

So swift-footed Iris spake to Hector the words of Zeus and departed, but Hector with his harness leaped from the chariot to the ground, and, shaking his sharp spears went through all the host, stirring up his men to fight, and he roused the dread din of battle. And they wheeled round, and stood and faced the Achaians, while the Argives on the other side strengthened their battalions. And battle was made ready, and they stood over against each other, and Agamemnon first rushed in, being eager to fight far in front of all.

Tell me now, ye Muses that inhabit mansions in Olympus, who was he that first encountered Agamemnon, whether of the Trojans themselves, or of their allies renowned? It was Iphidamas, son of Antenor, great and mighty, who was nurtured in Thrace rich of soil, the mother of sheep; he it was that then encountered Agamemnon son of Atreus. And when they were come near in onset against each other, Atreus’ son missed, and his spear was turned aside, but Iphidamas smote him on the girdle, below the corslet, and himself pressed on, trusting to his heavy hand, but pierced not the gleaming girdle, for long ere that the point struck on the silver, and was bent like lead. Then wide-ruling Agamemnon caught the spear with his hand and drew it toward him furiously, like a lion, and snatched it out of the hand of Iphidamas, and smote his neck with the sword, and unstrung his limbs. So even there he fell, and slept a sleep of bronze most piteously. Then did Agamemnon son of Atreus strip him, and went bearing his goodly harness into the throng of the Achaians.

Now when Koon beheld him, Koon Antenor’s eldest son, illustrious among men, strong sorrow came on him, covering his eyes, for his brother’s fall: and he stood on one side with his spear, and unmarked of noble Agamemnon smote him on the mid-arm, beneath the elbow, and clean through went the point of the shining spear. Then Agamemnon king of men shuddered, yet not even so did he cease from battle and war, but rushed against Koon, grasping his wind-nurtured spear. Verily then Koon seized right lustily by the foot Iphidamas, his brother, and his father’s son, and called to all the best of his men; but him, as he dragged the dead through the press, beneath his bossy shield Agamemnon wounded with a bronze-shod spear, and unstrung his limbs, and drew near and cut off his head over Iphidamas. There the sons of Antenor, at the hands of Agamemnon the king, filled up the measure of their fate, and went down within the house of Hades.

But Agamemnon ranged among the ranks of men, with spear, and sword, and great stones for throwing, while yet the blood welled warm from his wound. But when the wound waxed dry, and the blood ceased to flow, then keen pangs came on the might of the son of Atreus. Then leaped he into his chariot, and bade his charioteer drive to the hollow ships, for he was sore vexed at heart. And he called in a piercing voice, and shouted to the Danaans: “O friends, leaders and counsellors of the Argives, do ye now ward from the seafaring ships the harsh din of battle, for Zeus the counsellor suffers me not all day to war with the Trojans.”

So spake he, and his charioteer lashed the fair-maned steeds toward the hollow ships, and they flew onward nothing loth, and their breasts were covered with foam, and their bellies were stained with dust, as they bore the wounded king away from the war.

But Hector, when he beheld Agamemnon departed, cried to the Trojans and Lykians with a loud shout: “Ye Trojans and Lykians, and Dardanians that war in close fight, be men, my friends, and be mindful of your impetuous valour. The best man of them hath departed and to me hath Zeus, the son of Kronos, given great renown. But straightway drive ye the whole-hooved horses against the mighty Danaans, that ye may be the masters and bear away the higher glory.”

So spake he, and aroused the might and spirit of every man. Himself with high thoughts he fared among the foremost, and fell upon the fight; like a roaring blast, that leapeth down and stirreth the violet-coloured deep. There whom first, whom last did he slay, even Hector, son of Priam, when Zeus vouchsafed him renown?

Asaios first, and Autonoos, and Opites, and Dolops, son of Klytios, and Opheltios, and Agelaos, and Aisymnos, and Oros, and Hipponoos steadfast in the fight; these leaders of the Danaans he slew, and thereafter smote the multitude, even as when the West Wind driveth the clouds of the white South Wind, smiting with deep storm, and the wave swelleth huge, rolling onward, and the spray is scattered on high beneath the rush of the wandering wind; even so many heads of the host were smitten by Hector.

There had ruin begun, and deeds remedeless been wrought, and now would all the Achaians have fled and fallen among the ships, if Odysseus had not called to Diomedes, son of Tydeus: “Tydeus’ son, what ails us that we forget our impetuous valour? Nay, come hither, friend, and take thy stand by me, for verily it will be shame if Hector of the glancing helm take the ships.”

And to him strong Diomedes spake in answer: “Verily will I abide and endure, but short will be all our profit, for Zeus, the cloud-gatherer, clearly desireth to give victory to the Trojans rather than to us.”

He spake, and drave Thymbraios from his chariot to the ground, smiting him with the spear in the left breast, and Odysseus smote Molion the godlike squire of that prince. These then they let be, when they had made them cease from war, and then the twain fared through the crowd with a din, as when two boars full of valour fall on the hunting hounds; so rushed they on again, and slew the Trojans, while gladly the Achaians took breath again in their flight from noble Hector.

But Hector quickly spied them among the ranks, and rushed upon them shouting, and with him followed the battalions of the Trojans. And beholding him, Diomedes of the loud war-cry shuddered, and straightway spake to Odysseus that was hard by: “Lo, on us this ruin, even mighty Hector, is rolling: let us stand, and await him, and ward off his onset.”

So spake he, and swayed and sent forth his far-shadowing spear, and smote him nor missed, for he aimed at the head, on the summit of the crest, and bronze by bronze was turned, nor reached his fair flesh, for it was stopped by the threefold helm with its socket, that Phoebus Apollo to Hector gave. But Hector sprang back a wondrous way, and mingled with the throng, and he rested, fallen on his knee, and leaned on the ground with his stout hand, and dark night veiled his eyes.

But while Tydeus’ son was following after his spear-cast, far through the foremost fighters, where he saw it sink into the earth, Hector gat breath again, and leaping back into his chariot drave out into the throng, and avoided black Fate. Then rushing on with his spear mighty Diomedes spake to him: “Dog, thou art now again escaped from death; yet came ill very nigh thee: but now hath Phoebus Apollo saved thee, to whom thou must surely pray when thou goest amid the clash of spears. Verily I will slay thee yet when I meet thee hereafter, if any god is helper of me too. Now will I make after the rest, whomsoever I may seize.”

So spake he, and stripped the son of Paeon, spearman renowned. But Alexandros, the lord of fair-tressed Helen, aimed with his arrows at Tydeides, shepherd of the host; leaning as he aimed against a pillar on the barrow, by men fashioned, of Ilos, son of Dardanos, an elder of the people in time gone by. Now Diomedes was stripping the shining corslet of strong Agastrophos from about his breast, and the shield from his shoulders, and his strong helmet, when Paris drew the centre of his bow; nor vainly did the shaft fly from his hand, for he smote the flat of the right foot of Diomedes, and the arrow went clean through, and stood fixed in the earth; and right sweetly laughing Paris leaped up from his lair, and boasted, and said: “Thou art smitten, nor vainly hath the dart flown forth; would that I had smitten thee in the nether belly, and taken thy life away. So should the Trojans have breathed again from their trouble, they that shudder at thee, as bleating goats at a lion.”

But him answered strong Diomedes, no wise dismayed: “Bowman, reviler, proud in thy bow of horn, thou gaper after girls, verily if thou madest trial in full harness, man to man, thy bow and showers of shafts would nothing avail thee, but now thou boastest vainly, for that thou hast grazed the sole of my foot. I care not, more than if a woman had struck me or a senseless boy, for feeble is the dart of a craven man and a worthless. In other wise from my hand, yea, if it do but touch, the sharp shaft flieth, and straightway layeth low its man, and torn are the cheeks of his wife, and fatherless his children, and he, reddening the earth with his blood, doth rot away, more birds than women round him.”

So spake he, and Odysseus, spearman renowned, drew near, and stood in front of him, and Diomedes sat down behind him, and drew the sharp arrow from his foot, and a sore pang passed through his flesh. Then sprang he into his car, and bade his charioteer drive back to the hollow ships, for he was hurt at heart. Then Odysseus, spearman renowned, was left alone, nor did one of the Argives abide by him, for fear had fallen on them all. Then in heaviness he spoke to his own great-hearted spirit: “Ah me, what thing shall befall me! A great evil it is if I flee, in dread of the throng; yet worse is this, if I be taken all alone, for the other Danaans bath Kronion scattered in flight. But wherefore doth my heart thus converse with herself? for I know that they are cowards, who flee the fight, but whosoever is a hero in war, him it mainly behoves to stand stubbornly, whether he be smitten, or whether he smite another.”

While he pondered thus in heart and spirit, the ranks came on of the Trojans under shield, and hemmed him in the midst, setting among them their own bane. And even as when hounds and young men in their bloom press round a boar, and he cometh forth from his deep lair, whetting his white tusk between crooked jaws, and round him they rush, and the sound of the gnashing of tusks ariseth, and straightway they await his assault, so dread as he is, even so then round Odysseus, dear to Zeus, rushed the Trojans. And first he wounded noble Deiopites, from above, in the shoulder, leaping on him with sharp spear, and next he slew Thoon and Ennomos, and next Chersidamas, being leapt down from his chariot, he smote with the spear on the navel beneath the bossy shield, and he fell in the dust and clutched the ground with the hollow of his hand. These left he, and wounded Charops, son of Hippasos, with the spear, the brother of high-born Sokos. And to help him came Sokos, a godlike man, and stood hard by him, and spake saying: “O renowned Odysseus, insatiable of craft and toil, to-day shalt thou either boast over two sons of Hippasos, as having slain two such men of might, and stripped their harness, or smitten by my spear shaft lose thy life.”

So spake he, and smote him on the circle of his shield; through the shining shield passed the strong spear, and through the fair-dight corslet it was thrust, and tore clean off the flesh of the flanks, but Pallas Athens did not suffer it to mingle with the bowels of the hero, and Odysseus knew that the dart had in nowise lighted on a deadly spot, and drawing backward, he spake unto Sokos “Ah, wretched one, verily sheer destruction is come upon thee. Surely thou hast made me to cease from warring among the Trojans, but here to thee I declare that slaying and black Fate will be upon thee this day, and beneath my spear overthrown shalt thou give glory to me, and thy soul to Hades of the noble steeds.”

He spake, and the other turned, and started to flee, and in his back as he turned he fixed the spear, between the shoulders, and drave it through the breast. Then he fell with a crash, and noble Odysseus boasted over him: “Ah, Sokos, son of wise-hearted Hippasos the tamer of horses, the end of death hath come upon and caught thee, nor hast thou avoided. Ah, wretch, thy father and lady mother shall not close thine eyes in death, but birds that eat flesh raw shall tear thee, shrouding thee in the multitude of their wings. But to me, if I die, the noble Achaians will yet give due burial.”

So spake he, and drew the mighty spear of wise-hearted Sokos forth from his flesh, and from his bossy shield, and his blood flowed forth when the spear was drawn away, and afflicted his spirit. And the great-hearted Trojans when they beheld the blood of Odysseus, with clamour through the throng came all together against him. But he gave ground, and shouted unto his comrades: thrice he shouted then, as loud as man’s mouth might cry, and thrice did Menelaos dear to Zeus hear his call, and quickly he spake to Aias that was hard by him: “Aias, of the seed of Zeus, child of Telamon, lord of the hosts, the shout of Odysseus of the hardy heart rings round me, like as though the Trojans were oppressing him alone among them, and had cut him off in the strong battle. Nay, let us speed into the throng, for better it is to rescue him. I fear lest he suffer some evil, being alone among the Trojans, so brave as he is, and lest great sorrow for his loss come upon the Danaans.”

So spake he, and led the way, and the other followed him, a godlike man. Then found they Odysseus dear to Zeus, and the Trojans beset him like tawny jackals from the hills round a wounded horned stag, that a man hath smitten with an arrow from the bowstring, and the stag hath fled from him by speed of foot, as long as the blood is warm and his limbs are strong, but when the swift arrow hath overcome him, then do the ravening jackals rend him in the hills, in a dark wood, and then god leadeth a murderous lion thither, and the jackals flee before him, but he rendeth them, so then, round wise-hearted Odysseus of the crafty counsels, did the Trojans gather, many and mighty, but that hero thrusting on with the spear held off the pitiless day. Then Aias drew near, bearing his shield like a tower, and stood thereby, and the Trojans fled from him, where each man might. Then warlike Menelaos led Odysseus out of the press, holding him by the hand, till the squire drave up the horses.

Then Aias leaped on the Trojans, and slew Doyrklos, bastard son of Priam, and thereafter wounded he Pandokos, and he wounded Lysandros, and Pyrasos, and Pylartes. And as when a brimming river cometh down upon the plain, in winter flood from the hills, swollen by the rain of Zeus, and many dry oaks and many pines it sucketh in, and much soil it casteth into the sea, even so renowned Aias charged them, pursuing through the plain, slaying horses and men. Nor wist Hector thereof at all, for he was fighting on the left of all the battle, by the banks of the river Skamandros, whereby chiefly fell the heads of men, and an unquenchable cry arose, around great Nestor and warlike Idomeneus. And Hector with them was warring, and terrible things did he, with the spear and in horsemanship, and he ravaged the battalions of the young men. Nor would the noble Achaians have yet given ground from the path, if Alexandros, the lord of fair-tressed Helen, had not stayed Machaon shepherd of the host in his valorous deeds, and smitten him on the right shoulder with a three-barbed arrow. Therefore were the Achaians, breathing valour, in great fear, lest men should seize Machaon in the turning of the fight.

Then Idomeneus spake to noble Nestor: “O Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Achaians, arise, get thee up into thy chariot, and with thee let Machaon go, and swiftly drive to the ships the whole-hooved horses. For a leech is worth many other men, to cut out arrows, and spread soothing medicaments.”

So spake he, nor did knightly Nestor of Gerenia disobey him, but straightway gat up into his chariot, and with him went Machaon, son of Asklepios the good leech, and he lashed the horses, and willingly flew they forward to the hollow ships, where they desired to be.

But Kebriones, the charioteer of Hector, beheld the Trojans driven in flight, and spake to him, and said: “Hector, here do we contend with the Danaans, at the limit of the wailful war, but, lo, the other Trojans are driven in flight confusedly, men and horses. And Aias son of Telamon is driving them; well I know him, for wide is the shield round his shoulders. Nay, let us too urge thither the horses and chariot, there where horsemen and footmen thickest in the forefront of evil strife are slaying each other, and the cry goes up unquenchable.”

So spake he, and smote the fair-maned horses with the shrill-sounding whip, and they felt the lash, and fleetly bore the swift chariot among the Trojans and Achaians, treading on the dead, and the shields, and with blood was sprinkled all the axle-tree beneath, and the rims round the car with the drops from the hooves of the horses, and with drops from the tires about the wheels. And Hector was eager to enter the press of men, and to leap in and break through, and evil din of battle he brought among the Danaans, and brief space rested he from smiting with the spear. Nay, but he ranged among the ranks of other men, with spear, and sword, and with great stones, but he avoided the battle of Aias son of Telamon.

Now father Zeus, throned in the highest, roused dread in Aias, and he stood in amaze, and cast behind him his sevenfold shield of bull’s hide, and gazed round in fear upon the throng, like a wild beast, turning this way and that, and slowly retreating step by step. And as when hounds and country folk drive a tawny lion from the mid-fold of the kine, and suffer him not to carry away the fattest of the herd; all night they watch, and he in great desire for the flesh maketh his onset, but takes nothing thereby, for thick the darts fly from strong hands against him, and the burning brands, and these he dreads for all his fury, and in the dawn he departeth with vexed heart; even so at that time departed Aias, vexed at heart, from among the Trojans, right unwillingly, for he feared sore for the ships of the Achaians. And as when a lazy ass going past a field hath the better of the boys with him, an ass that hath had many a cudgel broken about his sides, and he fareth into the deep crop, and wasteth it, while the boys smite him with cudgels, and feeble is the force of them, but yet with might and main they drive him forth, when he hath had his fill of fodder, even so did the high-hearted Trojans and allies, called from many lands, smite great Aias, son of Telamon, with darts on the centre of his shield, and ever followed after him. And Aias would now be mindful of his impetuous valour, and turn again, and hold at bay the battalions of the horse-taming Trojans, and once more he would turn him again to flee. Yet he hindered them all from making their way to the fleet ships, and himself stood and smote between the Trojans and the Achaians, and the spears from strong hands stuck some of them in his great shield, fain to win further, and many or ever they reached his white body stood fast halfway in the earth, right eager to sate themselves with his flesh.

So they fought like unto burning fire.

But the mares of Neleus all sweating bare Nestor out of the battle, and also carried they Machaon, shepherd of the host. Then the noble Achilles, swift of foot, beheld and was ware of him, for Achilles was standing by the stern of his great ship, watching the dire toil, and the woful rout of battle. And straightway he spake to his own comrade, Patroklos, calling to him from beside the ship, and he heard, and from the hut he came, like unto Ares; and this to him was the beginning of evil. Then the strong son of Menoitios spake first to Achilles: “Why dost thou call me, Achilles, what need hast thou of me?”

Then swift-footed Achilles answered him and spake: “Noble son of Menoitios, dear to my heart, now methinks that the Achaians will stand in prayer about my knees, for need no longer tolerable cometh upon them. But go now, Patroklos dear to Zeus, and ask Nestor who is this that he bringeth wounded from the war. Verily from behind he is most like Machaon, that child of Asklepios, but I beheld not the eyes of the man, for the horses sped past me, straining forward eagerly.”

So spake he and Patroklos obeyed his dear comrade, and started and ran past the ships, and the huts of the Achaians.

Now when they came to the hut of the son of Neleus, they lighted down on the bounteous earth, and the squire, Eurymedon, loosed the horses of that old man from the car, and they dried the sweat from their doublets, standing before the breeze, by the shore of the sea, and thereafter came they to the hut, and sat them down on chairs. And fair-tressed Hekamede mixed for them a mess, Hekamede that the old man won from Tenedos, when Achilles sacked it, and she was the daughter of great-hearted Arsinoos, and her the Achaians chose out for him, because always in counsel he excelled them all. First she drew before them a fair table, polished well, with feet of cyanus, and thereon a vessel of bronze, with onion, for relish to the drink, and pale honey, and the grain of sacred barley, and beside it a right goodly cup, that the old man brought from home, embossed with studs of gold, and four handles there were to it, and round each two golden doves were feeding, and to the cup were two feet below. Another man could scarce have lifted the cup from the table, when it was full, but Nestor the Old raised it easily. In this cup the woman, like unto the goddesses, mixed a mess for them, with Pramnian wine, and therein grated cheese of goats’ milk, with a grater of bronze, and scattered white barley thereover, and bade them drink, whenas she had made ready the mess.

So when the twain had drunk, and driven away parching thirst, they took their pleasure in discourse, speaking each to the other. Now Patroklos stood at the doors, a godlike man, and when the old man beheld him, he arose from his shining chair, and took him by the hand, and led him in, and bade him be seated. But Patroklos, from over against him, was for refusing, and spake and said: “No time to sit have I, old man, fosterling of Zeus, nor wilt thou persuade me. Revered and dreaded is he that sent me forth to ask thee who this man is that thou bringest home wounded. Nay, but I know myself, for I see Machaon, shepherd of the host. And now will I go back again, a messenger, to speak a word to Achilles. And well dost thou know, old man, fosterling of Zeus, how terrible a man he is; lightly would he blame even one that is blameless.”

Then knightly Nestor of Gerenia answered him again: “Wherefore is Achilles thus sorry for the sons of the Achaians, for as many as are wounded with darts? He knoweth not at all what grief hath arisen in the camp: for the best men lie in the ships, wounded by shaft or smitten by spear. Wounded with the shaft is strong Diomedes, son of Tydeus, and smitten is Odysseus, spearman renowned, and Agamemnon, and this other have I but newly carried out of battle, wounded with an arrow from the bowstring. But Achilles, for all his valiance, careth not for the Danaans, nor pities them at all. Doth he wait till the fleet ships hard by the shore shall burn in the consuming fire, and till we be slain one upon another? Nay, but even now speak thou thus and thus to wise-hearted Achilles, if perchance he will obey thee. Who knows but that, God helping, thou mightst stir his spirit with thy persuading? and good is the persuasion of a friend. But if in his heart he be shunning some oracle of God, and his lady mother hath told him somewhat from Zeus, natheless let him send forth thee, and let the rest of the host of the Myrmidons follow with thee, if perchance any light shall arise from thee to the Danaans; and let him give thee his fair harness, to bear into the war, if perchance the Trojans may take thee for him, and withhold them from the strife, and the warlike sons of the Achaians might take breath, being wearied; for brief is the breathing time in battle. And lightly might ye, being unwearied, drive men wearied in the war unto the city, away from the ships and the huts.”

So spake he, and roused his heart within his breast, and he started and ran by the ships to Achilles of the seed of Aiakos.

BOOK XII.

How the Trojans and allies broke within the wall of the Achaians.

So in the huts the strong son of Menortios was tending the wounded Eurypylos, but still they fought confusedly, the Argives and Trojans. Nor were the fosse of the Danaans and their wide wall above long to protect them, the wall they had builded for defence of the ships, and the fosse they had drawn round about; for neither had they given goodly hecatombs to the gods, that it might guard with its bounds their swift ships and rich spoil. Nay, maugre the deathless gods was it builded, wherefore it abode steadfast for no long time. While Hector yet lived, and yet Achilles kept his wrath, and unsacked was the city of Priam the king, so long the great wall of the Achaians likewise abode steadfast. But when all the bravest of the Trojans died, and many of the Argives, — some were taken, and some were left, — and the city of Priam was sacked in the tenth year, and the Argives had gone back in their ships to their own dear country, then verily did Poseidon and Apollo take counsel to wash away the wall, bringing in the might of the rivers, of all that flow from the hills of Ida to the sea. Rhesos there was, and Heptaporos, and Karesos, and Rhodios, Grenikos, and Aisepos, and goodly Skamandros, and Simoeis, whereby many shields and helms fell in the dust, and the generation of men half divine; the mouths of all these waters did Phoebus Apollo turn together, and for nine days he drave their stream against the wall; and still Zeus rained unceasingly, that the quicker he might mingle the wall with the salt sea. And the Shaker of the earth, with his trident in his hands, was himself the leader, and sent forth into the waves all the foundations of beams and stones that the Achaians had laid with toil, and made all smooth by the strong current of the Hellespont, and covered again the great beach with sand, when he had swept away the wall, and turned the rivers back to flow in their channel, where of old they poured down their fair flow of water.

So were Poseidon and Apollo to do in the aftertime; but then war and the din of war sounded about the well-builded wall, and the beams of the towers rang beneath the strokes; while the Argives, subdued by the scourge of Zeus, were penned and driven in by the hollow ships, in dread of Hector, the mighty maker of flight, but he, as aforetime, fought like a whirlwind. And as when, among hounds and hunting men, a boar or lion wheeleth him about, raging in his strength, and these array themselves in fashion like a tower, and stand up against him, casting many javelins from their hands; but never is his stout heart confused nor afraid, and his courage is his bane, and often he wheeleth him about, and maketh trial of the ranks of men, and wheresoever he maketh onset there the ranks of men give way, even so Hector went and besought his comrades through the press, and spurred them on to cross the dyke. But his swift-footed horses dared not, but loud they neighed, standing by the sheer edge, for the wide fosse affrighted them, neither easy to leap from hard by, nor to cross, for overhanging banks stood round about it all on either hand, and above it was furnished with sharp stakes that the sons of the Achaians had planted there, thick set and great, a bulwark against hostile men. Thereby not lightly might a horse enter, drawing a well-wheeled chariot; but the footmen were eager, if they might accomplish it. Then Polydamas drew near valiant Hector, and spake to him: “Hector and ye other leaders of the Trojans and allies, foolishly do we drive our fleet horses through the dyke; nay right hard it is to cross, for sharp stakes stand in it, and over against them the wall of the Achaians. Thereby none may go down and fight in chariots, for strait is the place wherein, methinks, we might come by a mischief. For if Zeus that thunders on high is utterly to destroy them in his evil will, and is minded to help the Trojans, verily then I too would desire that even instantly this might be, that the Achaians should perish here nameless far from Argos: but and if they turn again, and we flee back from among the ships, and rush into the delved ditch, then methinks that not even one from among us to bear the tidings will win back to the city before the force of the Achaians when they rally. But come as I declare, let us all obey. Let our squires hold the horses by the dyke, while we being harnessed in our gear as foot soldiers follow all together with Hector, and the Achaians will not withstand us, if indeed the bands of death be made fast upon them.”

So spake Polydamas, and his wise word pleased Hector well, and straightway in his harness he leaped from his chariot to the ground. Nor were the other Trojans gathered upon the chariots, but they all leaped forth, when they beheld goodly Hector. There each gave it into the charge of his own charioteer, to keep the horses orderly there by the fosse. And they divided, and arrayed themselves, and ordered in five companies they followed with the leaders.

Now they that went with Hector and noble Polydamas, these were most, and bravest, and most were eager to break the wall, and fight by the hollow ships; and with them followed Kebriones for the third, for Hector had left another man with his chariot, a weaker warrior than Kebriones. The second company Paris led, and Alkathoos, and Agenor: and the third company Helenos led, and godlike

Deiphobos, — two sons of Priam, — the third was the warrior Asios, Asios Hyrtakos' son, whom his tall sorrel steeds brought out of Arisbe, from the river Selleeis. And of the fourth company was the brave son of Anchises leader, even Aineias; and with him were two sons of Antenor, Archelochos and Akamas, both well skilled in all warfare.

And Sarpedon led the glorious allies, and to be with him he chose Glaukos and warlike Asteropaios, for they seamed to him to be manifestly the bravest of all after himself but he was excellent, yea, above all the host. And these when they had arrayed one another with well-fashioned shields of bulls' hide, went straight and eager against the Danaans, nor deemed that they could longer resist them, but that themselves should fall on the black ships.

Then the rest of the Trojans and the far-famed allies obeyed the counsel of blameless Polydamas, but Asios, son of Hyrtakos, leader of men, willed not to leave his horses there, and his squire the charioteer, but with them he drew near the swift ships, fond man! for never was he, avoiding evil Fates, to return, rejoicing in his horses and chariot, back from the ships to windy Ilios. Nay, ere that the Fate of ill name over-shadowed him, by the spear of Idomeneus, the haughty son of Deukalion. For Asios went against the left flank of the ships, whereby the Achaians returned out of the plain with chariots and horses: there he drave through his horses and his car, nor found he the doors shut on the gates, and the long bar, but men were holding them open if perchance they might save any of their comrades fleeing out of the battle towards the ships. Straight thereby held he his horses with unswerving aim, and his men followed him, crying shrilly, for they deemed that the Achaians could no longer hold them off, but that themselves would fall on the black ships: fools, for in the gates they found two men of the bravest, the high-hearted sons of the warrior Lapithae, one the son of Peirithoos, strong Polypoites, and one Leonteus, peer of Ares the bane of men. These twain stood in front of the lofty gates, like high-crested oak trees in the hills, that for ever abide the wind and rain, firm fixed with roots great and long; even so these twain, trusting to the mightiness of their hands, abode the coming of great Asios, and fled not. But straight came the Trojans against the well-builded wall, holding their shields of dry bulls' hide on high, with mighty clamour, round the prince Asios, and Iamenos, and Orestes, and Adamas, son of Asios, and Thoon, and Oinomaos. But the other twain for a while, being within the wall, urged the well-greaved Achaians to fight for the ships; but when they saw the Trojans assailing the wall, while the Danaans cried and turned in flight, then forth rushed the twain, and fought in front of the gates like wild boars that in the mountains abide the assailing crew of men and dogs, and charging on either flank they crush the wood around them, cutting it at the root, and the clatter of their tusks wages loud, till one smite them and take their life away: so clattered the bright bronze on the breasts of the twain, as they were smitten in close fight, for right hardily they fought, trusting to the host above them, and to their own strength.

For the men above were casting with stones from the well-builded towers, in defence of themselves and of the huts, and of the swift-faring ships. And like snowflakes the stones fell earthward, flakes that a tempestuous wind, as it driveth the dark clouds, rains thickly down on the bounteous earth: so thick fell the missiles from the hands of Achaians and Trojans alike, and their helms rang harsh and their bossy shields, being smitten with mighty stones. Verily then Asios, son of Hyrtakos, groaned and smote both his thighs, and indignantly he spake: “Zeus, verily thou too dost greatly love a lie, for I deemed not that the Achaian heroes could withstand our might and our hands invincible. But they like wasps of nimble body, or bees that have made their dwellings in a rugged path, and leave not their hollow hold, but abide and keep the hunters at bay for the sake of their little ones, even so these men have no will to give ground from the gates, though they are but two, ere they slay or be slain.”

So spake he, nor with his speech did he persuade the mind of Zeus, for his will was to give renown to Hector.

But the others were fighting about the other gates, and hard it were for me like a god to tell all these things, for everywhere around the wall of stone rose the fire divine; the Argives, for all their sorrow, defending the ships of necessity; and all the gods were grieved at heart, as many as were defenders of the Danaans in battle. And together the Lapithae waged war and strife.

There the son of Peirithoos, mighty Polypoites, smote Damasos with the spear, through the helmet with cheekpieces of bronze; nor did the bronze helm stay the spear, but the point of bronze brake clean through the bone, and all the brain within was scattered, and the spear overcame him in his eagerness. Thereafter he slew Pylon and Ormenos. And Leonteus of the stock of Ares smote Hippomachos, son of Antimachos, with the spear, striking him on the girdle. Then again he drew his sharp sword from the sheath, and smote Antiphates first in close fight, rushing on him through the throng, that he fell on his back on the ground; and thereafter he brought down Menon, and Iamenos, and Orestes one after the other, to the bounteous earth.

While they were stripping from these the shining arms, the young men who followed with Polydamas and Hector, they that were most in number and bravest, and most were eager to break the wall and set the ships on fire, these still stood doubtful by the fosse, for as they were eager to pass over a bird had appeared to them, an eagle of lofty flight, skirting the host on the left hand. In its talons it bore a blood-red monstrous snake, alive, and struggling still; yea, not yet had it forgotten the joy of battle, but writhed backward and smote the bird that held it on the breast, beside the neck, and the bird cast it from him down to the earth, in sore pain, and dropped it in the midst of the throng; then with a cry sped away down the gusts of the wind. And the Trojans shuddered when they saw the gleaming snake lying in the midst of them; an omen of aegis-bearing Zeus.

Then verily Polydamas stood by brave Hector, and spake: “Hector, ever dost thou rebuke me in the assemblies, though I counsel wisely; since it by no means beseemeth one of the people to speak contrary to thee, in council or in war, but always to increase thy power; but now again will I say all that seemeth to me to be best. Let us not advance and fight with the Danaans for the ships. For even thus, methinks, the end will be, if indeed this bird hath come for the Trojans when they were eager to cross the dyke, this eagle of lofty flight, skirting the host on the left hand, bearing in his talons a blood-red monstrous snake, yet living; then straightway left he hold of him, before he reached his own nest, nor brought him home in the end to give to his nestlings. Even so shall we, though we burst with mighty force the gates and wall of the Achaians, and the Achaians give ground, even so we shall return in disarray from the ships by the way we came; for many of the Trojans shall we leave behind, whom the Achaians will slay with the sword, in defence of the ships. Even so would a soothsayer interpret that in his heart had clear knowledge of omens, and whom the people obeyed.”

Then Hector of the glancing helm lowered on him and said: “Polydamas, that thou speakest is no longer pleasing to me; yea, thou knowest how to conceive another counsel better than this. But if thou verily speakest thus in earnest, then the gods themselves have utterly destroyed thy wits; thou that bidst us forget the counsels of loud-thundering Zeus, that himself promised me, and confirmed with a nod of his head! But thou bidst us be obedient to birds long of wing, whereto I give no heed, nor take any care thereof, whether they fare to the right, to the dawn and to the sun, or to the left, to mist and darkness. Nay, for us, let us trust to the counsel of mighty Zeus, who is king over all mortals and immortals. One omen is best, to fight for our own country. And wherefore dost thou fear war and battle? For if all the rest of us be slain by the ships of the Argives, yet needst thou not fear to perish, for thy heart is not warlike, nor enduring in battle. But if thou dost hold aloof from the fight, or winnest any other with thy words to turn him from war, straightway by my spear shalt thou be smitten, and lose thy life.”

So spake he, and led on, and they followed with a wondrous din; and Zeus that joyeth in the thunder roused from the hills of Ida, a blast of wind, which bare the dust straight against the ships; and he made weak the heart of the Achaians, but gave renown to the Trojans and to Hector. Trusting then in his omens, and their might, they strove to break the great wall of the Achaians. They dragged down the machicolations [projecting galleries] of the towers, and overthrew the battlements, and heaved up the projecting buttresses, that the Achaians set first in the earth, to be the props of the towers. These they overthrew, and hoped to break the wall of the Achaians. Nor even now did the Danaans give ground from the path, but closed up the battlements with shields of bulls' hides, and cast from them at the foemen as they went below the walls.

Now the two Aiantes went everywhere on the towers, ever urging, and arousing the courage of the Achaians. One they would accost with honeyed words, another with hard words they would rebuke, whomsoever they saw utterly giving ground from the fight: "O friends, whosoever is eminent, or whosoever is of middle station among the Argives, ay, or lower yet, for in no wise are all men equal in war, now is there work for all, and this yourselves well know. Let none turn back to the ships, for that he hath heard one threatening aloud; nay, get ye forward, and cheer another on, if perchance Olympian Zeus, the lord of lightning, will grant us to drive back the assault, and push the foe to the city."

So these twain shouted in the front, and aroused the battle of the Achaians. But as flakes of snow fall thick on a winter day, when Zeus the Counsellor bath begun to snow, showing forth these arrows of his to men, and he hath lulled the winds, and he snoweth continually, till he hath covered the crests of the high hills, and the uttermost headlands, and the grassy plains, and rich tillage of men; and the snow is scattered over the havens and shores of the grey sea, and only the wave as it rolleth in keeps off the snow, but all other things are swathed over, when the shower of Zeus cometh heavily, so from both sides their stones flew thick, some towards the Trojans, and some from the Trojans against the Achaians, while both sides were smitten, and over all the wall the din arose.

Yet never would the Trojans, then, and renowned Hector have broken the gates of the wall, and the long bar, if Zeus the Counsellor had not roused his son Sarpedon against the Argives, like a lion against the kine of crooked horn. Straightway he held forth his fair round shield, of hammered bronze, that the bronze-smith had hammered out, and within had stitched many bulls' hides with rivets of gold, all round the circle, this held he forth, and shook two spears; and sped on his way, like a mountain-nurtured lion, that long lacketh meat, and his brave spirit urgeth him to make assail on the sheep, and come even against a well-builded homestead. Nay, even if he find herdsmen thereby, guarding the sheep with hounds and spears, yet hath he no mind to be driven without an effort from the steading, but he either leapeth on a sheep, and seizeth it, or himself is smitten in the foremost place with a dart from a strong hand. So did his heart then urge on the godlike Sarpedon to rush against the wall, and break through the battlements. And instantly he spake to Glaukos, son of Hippolochos: “Glaukos, wherefore have we twain the chiefest honour, — seats of honour, and messes, and full cups in Lykia, and all men look on us as gods? And wherefore hold we a great demesne by the banks of Xanthos, a fair demesne of orchard-land, and wheat-bearing tilth? Therefore now it behoveth us to take our stand in the first rank of the Lykians, and encounter fiery battle, that certain of the well-corsleted Lykians may say, ‘Verily our kings that rule Lykia be no inglorious men, they that eat fat sheep, and drink the choice wine honey-sweet: nay, but they are also of excellent might, for they war in the foremost ranks of the Lykians.’ Ah, friend, if once escaped from this battle we were for ever to be ageless and immortal, neither would I fight myself in the foremost ranks, nor would I send thee into the war that giveth men renown, but now — for assuredly ten thousand fates of death do every way beset us, and these no mortal may escape nor avoid — now let us go forward, whether we shall give glory to other men, or others to us.”

So spake he, and Glaukos turned not apart, nor disobeyed him, and they twain went straight forward, leading the great host of the Lykians.

Then Menestheus son of Peteos shuddered when he beheld them, for against his tower they went, bringing with them ruin; and he looked along the tower of the Achaians if perchance he might see any of the leaders, that would ward off destruction from his comrades, and he beheld the two Aiantes, insatiate of war, standing there, and Teukros hard by, newly come from his hut; but he could not cry to be heard of them, so great was the din, and the noise went up unto heaven of smitten shields and helms with horse-hair crests, and of the gates, for they had all been shut, and the Trojans stood beside them, and strove by force to break them, and enter in. Swiftly then to Aias he sent the herald Thootes: “Go, noble Thootes, and run, and call Aias: or rather the twain, for that will be far the best of all, since quickly here will there be wrought utter ruin. For hereby press the leaders of the Lykians, who of old are fierce in strong battle. But if beside them too war and toil arise, yet at least let the strong Telamonian Aias come alone and let Teukros the skilled bowman follow with him.”

So spake he, and the herald listened and disobeyed him not, but started and ran by the wall of the mail-clad Achaians, and came, and stood by the Aiantes, and straightway spake: “Ye twain Aiantes, leaders of the mail-clad Achaians, the dear son of Peteos, fosterling of Zeus, biddeth you go thither, that, if it be but for a little while, ye may take your part in battle: both of you he more desireth, for that will be far the best of all, since quickly there will there be wrought utter ruin. For thereby press the leaders of the Lykians, who of old are fierce in strong battle. But if beside you too war and toil arise, yet at least let the strong Telamonian Aias come alone, and let Teukros the skilled bowman follow with him.”

So spake he, nor did the strong Telamonian Aias disobey, but instantly spake winged words to the son of Oileus: “Aias, do ye twain stand here, thyself and strong Lykomedes, and urge the Danaans to war with all their might; but I go thither, to take my part in battle, and quickly will I come again, when I have well aided them.”

So spake Telamonian Aias and departed, and Teukros went with him, his brother by the same father, and with them Pandion bare the bended bow of Teukros.

Now when they came to the tower of great-hearted Menestheus, passing within the wall, — and to men sore pressed they came, — the foe were climbing upon the battlements, like a dark whirlwind, even the strong leaders and counsellors of the Lykians; and they hurled together into the war and the battle-cry arose. Now first did Aias Telamon’s son slay a man, Epikles great of heart, the comrade of Sarpedon. With a jagged stone he smote him, a great stone that lay uppermost within the wall, by the battlements. Not lightly could a man hold it in both hands, however strong in his youth, of such mortals as now are, but Aias lifted it, and cast it from above, and shattered the helm of fourfold crest, and broke the bones of the head, and he fell like a diver from the lofty tower, and his life left his bones. And Teukros smote Glaukos, the strong son of Hippolochos, as he came on, with an arrow from the lofty wall; even where he saw his shoulder bare he smote him, and made him cease from delight in battle. Back from the wall he leapt secretly, lest any of the Achaians should see him smitten, and speak boastfully. But sorrow came on Sarpedon when Glaukos departed, so soon as he was aware thereof, but he forgot not the joy of battle. He aimed at Alkmaon, son of Thestor, with the spear, and smote him, and drew out the spear. And Alkmaon following the spear fell prone, and his bronze-dight arms rang round him. Then Sarpedon seized with strong hands the battlement, and dragged, and it all gave way together, while above the wall was stripped bare, and made a path for many.

Then Aias and Teukros did encounter him: Teukros smote him with an arrow, on the bright baldric of his covering shield, about the breast, but Zeus warded off the Fates from his son, that he should not be overcome beside the ships’ sterns. Then Aias leaped on and smote his shield, nor did the spear pass clean through, yet shook he Sarpedon in his eagerness. He gave ground a little way from the battlement, yet retreated not wholly, since his heart hoped to win renown. Then he turned and cried to the godlike Lykians: “O Lykians, wherefore thus are ye slack in impetuous valour. Hard it is for me, stalwart as I am, alone to break through, and make a path to the ships, nay, follow hard after me, for the more men, the better work.”

So spake he, and they, dreading the rebuke of their king, pressed on the harder around the counsellor and king. And the Argives on the other side made strong their battalions within the wall, and mighty toil began for them. For neither could the strong Lykians burst through the wall of the Danaans, and make a way to the ships, nor could the warlike Danaans drive back the Lykians from the wall, when once they had drawn near thereto. But as two men contend about the marches of their land, with measuring rods in their hands, in a common field, when in narrow space they strive for equal shares, even so the battlements divided them, and over those they smote the round shields of ox hide about the breasts of either side, and the fluttering bucklers. And many were wounded in the flesh with the ruthless bronze, whensoever the back of any of the warriors was laid bare as he turned, ay, and many clean through the very shield. Yea, everywhere the towers and battlements swam with the blood of men shed on either side, by Trojans and Achaians. But even so they could not put the Argives to rout, but they held their ground, as an honest woman that laboureth with her hands holds the balance, and raises the weight and the wool together, balancing them, that she may win scant wages for her children; so evenly was strained their war and battle, till the moment when Zeus gave the greater renown to Hector, son of Priam, who was the first to leap within the wall of the Achaians. In a piercing voice he cried aloud to the Trojans: “Rise, ye horse-taming Trojans, break the wall of the Argives, and cast among the ships fierce blazing fire.”

So spake he, spurring them on, and they all heard him with their ears, and in one mass rushed straight against the wall, and with sharp spears in their hands climbed upon the machicolations of the towers. And Hector seized and carried a stone that lay in front of the gates, thick in the hinder part, but sharp at point: a stone that not the two best men of the people, such as mortals now are, could lightly lift from the ground on to a wain, but easily he wielded it alone, for the son of crooked-counselling Kronos made it light for him. And as when a shepherd lightly beareth the fleece of a ram, taking it in one hand, and little doth it burden him, so Hector lifted the stone, and bare it straight against the doors that closely guarded the stubborn-set portals, double gates and tall, and two cross bars held them within, and one bolt fastened them. And he came, and stood hard by, and firmly planted himself, and smote them in the midst, setting his legs well apart, that his cast might lack no strength. And he brake both the hinges, and the stone fell within by reason of its weight, and the gates rang loud around, and the bars held not, and the doors burst this way and that beneath the rush of the stone. Then glorious Hector leaped in, with face like the sudden night, shining in wondrous mail that was clad about his body, and with two spears in his hands. No man that met him could have held him back when once he leaped within the gates: none but the gods, and his eyes shone with fire. Turning towards the throng he cried to the Trojans to overleap the wall, and they obeyed his summons, and speedily some overleaped the wall, and some poured into the fair-wrought gateways, and the Danaans fled in fear among the hollow ships, and a ceaseless clamour arose.

BOOK XIII.

Poseidon stirreth up the Achaians to defend the ships.
The valour of Idomeneus.

Now Zeus, after that he had brought the Trojans and Hector to the ships, left them to their toil and endless labour there, but otherwhere again he turned his shining eyes, and looked upon the land of the Thracian horsebreeders, and the Mysians, fierce fighters hand to hand, and the proud Hippemolgoi that drink mare’s milk, and the Abioi, the most righteous of men. To Troy no more at all he turned his shining eyes, for he deemed in his heart that not one of the Immortals would draw near, to help either Trojans or Danaans.

But the mighty Earth-shaker held no blind watch, who sat and marvelled on the war and strife, high on the topmost crest of wooded Samothrace, for thence all Ida was plain to see; and plain to see were the city of Priam, and the ships of the Achaians. Thither did he go from the sea and sate him down, and he had pity on the Achaians, that they were subdued to the Trojans, and strong was his anger against Zeus.

Then forthwith he went down from the rugged hill, faring with swift steps, and the high hills trembled, and the woodland, beneath the immortal footsteps of Poseidon as he moved. Three strides he made, and with the fourth he reached his goal, even Aigae, and there was his famous palace in the deeps of the mere, his glistering golden mansions builded, imperishable for ever. Thither went he, and let harness to the car his bronze-hooved horses, swift of flight, clothed with their golden manes. He girt his own golden array about his body, and seized the well-wrought lash of gold, and mounted his chariot, and forth he drove across the waves. And the sea beasts frolicked beneath him, on all sides out of the deeps, for well they knew their lord, and with gladness the sea stood asunder, and swiftly they sped, and the axle of bronze was not wetted beneath, and the bounding steeds bare him on to the ships of the Achaians.

Now there is a spacious cave in the depths of the deep mere, between Tenedos and rugged Imbros; there did Poseidon, the Shaker of the earth, stay his horses, and loosed them out of the chariot, and cast before them ambrosial food to graze withal, and golden tethers he bound about their hooves, tethers neither to be broken nor loosed, that there the horses might continually await their lord’s return. And he went to the host of the Achaians.

Now the Trojans like flame or storm-wind were following in close array, with fierce intent, after Hector, son of Priam. With shouts and cries they came, and thought to take the ships of the Achaians, and to slay thereby all the bravest of the host. But Poseidon, that girdleth the world, the Shaker of the earth, was urging on the Argives, and forth he came from the deep salt sea, in form and untiring voice like unto Kalchas. First he spake to the two Aiantes, that themselves were eager for battle: “Ye Aiantes twain, ye shall save the people of the Achaians, if ye are mindful of your might, and reckless of chill fear. For verily I do not otherwhere dread the invincible hands of the Trojans, that have climbed the great wall in their multitude, nay, the well-greaved Achaians will hold them all at bay; but hereby verily do I greatly dread lest some evil befall us, even here where that furious one is leading like a flame of fire, Hector, who boasts him to be son of mighty Zeus. Nay, but here may some god put it into the hearts of you twain, to stand sturdily yourselves, and urge others to do the like; thereby might ye drive him from the fleet-faring ships, despite his eagerness, yea, even if the Olympian himself is rousing him to war.”

Therewith the Shaker of the world, the girdler of the earth, struck the twain with his staff, and filled them with strong courage, and their limbs he made light, and their feet, and their hands withal. Then, even as a swift-winged hawk speeds forth to fly, poised high above a tall sheer rock, and swoops to chase some other bird across the plain, even so Poseidon sped from them, the Shaker of the world. And of the twain Oileus’ son, the swift-footed Aias, was the first to know the god, and instantly he spake to Aias, son of Telamon: “Aias, since it is one of the gods who hold Olympus, that in the semblance of a seer commands us now to fight beside the ships-not Kalchas is he, the prophet and sooth-sayer, for easily I knew the tokens of his feet and knees as he turned away, and the gods are easy to discern — lo, then mine own heart within my breast is more eagerly set on war and battle, and my feet beneath and my hands above are lusting for the fight.”

Then Aias, son of Telamon, answered him saying: “Even so, too, my hands invincible now rage about the spear-shaft, and wrath has risen within me, and both my feet are swift beneath me; yea, I am keen to meet, even in single fight, the ceaseless rage of Hector son of Priam.”

So they spake to each other, rejoicing in the delight of battle, which the god put in their heart. Then the girdler of the earth stirred up the Achaians that were in the rear and were renewing their strength beside the swift ships. Their limbs were loosened by their grievous toil, yea, and their souls filled with sorrow at the sight of the Trojans, that had climbed over the great wall in their multitude. And they looked on them, and shed tears beneath their brows, thinking that never would they escape destruction. But the Shaker of the earth right easily came among them, and urged on the strong battalions of warriors. Teukros first he came and summoned, and Leitos, and the hero Peneleos, and Thoas, and Deipyros, and Meriones, and Antilochos, lords of the war-cry, all these he spurred on with winged words: “Shame on you, Argives, shame, ye striplings, in your battle had I trusted for the salvation of our ships. But if you are to withdraw from grievous war, now indeed the day doth shine that shall see us conquered by the Trojans. Out on it, for verily a great marvel is this that mine eyes behold, a terrible thing that methought should never come to pass, the Trojans advancing against our ships! Of yore they were like fleeting hinds, that in the wild wood are the prey of jackals, and pards, and wolves, and wander helpless, strengthless, empty of the joy of battle. Even so the Trojans of old cared never to wait and face the wrath and the hands of the Achaians, not for a moment. But now they are fighting far from the town, by the hollow ships, all through the baseness of our leader and the remissness of the people, who, being at strife with the chief, have no heart to defend the swift-faring ships, nay, thereby they are slain. But if indeed and in truth the hero Agamemnon, the wide-ruling son of Atreus, is the very cause of all, for that he did dishonour the swift-footed son of Peleus, not even so may we refrain in any wise from war. Nay, let us right our fault with speed, for easily righted are the hearts of the brave. No longer do ye well to refrain from impetuous might, all ye that are the best men of the host. I myself would not quarrel with one that, being a weakling, abstained from war, but with you I am heartily wroth. Ah, friends, soon shall ye make the mischief more through this remissness, — but let each man conceive shame in his heart, and indignation, for verily great is the strife that hath arisen. Lo, the mighty Hector of the loud war-cry is fighting at the ships, and the gates and the long bar he hath burst in sunder.”

On this wise did the Earth-enfolder call to and spur on the Achaians. And straightway they made a stand around the two Aiantes, strong bands that Ares himself could not enter and make light of, nor Athene that marshals the host. Yea, they were the chosen best that abode the Trojans and goodly Hector, and spear on spear made close-set fence, and shield on serried shield, buckler pressed on buckler, and helm on helm, and man on man. The horse-hair crests on the bright helmet-ridges touched each other as they nodded, so close they stood each by other, and spears brandished in bold hands were interlaced; and their hearts were steadfast and lusted for battle.

Then the Trojans drave forward in close array, and Hector led them, pressing straight onwards, like a rolling rock from a cliff, that the winter-swollen water thrusteth from the crest of a hill, having broken the foundations of the stubborn rock with its wondrous flood; leaping aloft it flies, and the wood echoes under it, and unstayed it runs its course, till it reaches the level plain, and then it rolls no more for all its eagerness, — even so Hector for a while threatened lightly to win to the sea through the huts and the ships of the Achaians, slaying as he came, but when he encountered the serried battalions, he was stayed when he drew near against them. But they of the other part, the sons of the Achaians, thrust with their swords and double-pointed spears, and drave him forth from them, that he gave ground and reeled backward. Then he cried with a piercing voice, calling on the Trojans: “Trojans, and Lykians, and close-fighting Dardanians, hold your ground, for the Achaians will not long ward me off, nay, though they have arrayed themselves in fashion like a tower. Rather, methinks, they will flee back before the spear, if verily the chief of gods has set me on, the loud-thundering lord of Hera.”

Therewith he spurred on the heart and spirit of each man; and Deiphobos, the son of Priam, strode among them with high thoughts, and held in front of him the circle of his shield, and lightly he stepped with his feet, advancing beneath the cover of his shield. Then Meriones aimed at him with a shining spear, and struck, and missed not, but smote the circle of the bulls-hide shield, yet no whit did he pierce it; nay, well ere that might be, the long spear-shaft snapped in the socket. Now Deiphobos was holding off from him the bulls-hide shield, and his heart feared the lance of wise Meriones, but that hero shrunk back among the throng of his comrades, greatly in wrath both for the loss of victory, and of his spear, that he had shivered. So he set forth to go to the huts and the ships of the Achaians, to bring a long spear, that he had left in his hut.

Meanwhile the others were fighting on, and there arose an inextinguishable cry. First Teukros, son of Telamon, slew a man, the spearman Imbrios, the son of Mentor rich in horses. In Pedaion he dwelt, before the coming of the sons of the Achaians, and he had for wife a daughter of Priam, born out of wedlock, Medesikaste; but when the curved ships of the Danaans came, he returned again to Ilios, and was pre-eminent among the Trojans, and dwelt with Priam, who honoured him like his own children. Him the son of Telemon pierced below the ear with his long lance, and plucked back the spear. Then he fell like an ash that on the crest of a far-seen hill is smitten with the axe of bronze, and brings its delicate foliage to the ground; even so he fell, and round him rang his armour bedight with bronze. Then Teukros rushed forth, most eager to strip his armour, and Hector cast at him as he came with his shining spear. But Teukros, steadily regarding him, avoided by a little the spear of bronze; so Hector struck Amphimachos, son of Kteatos, son of Aktor, in the breast with the spear, as he was returning to the battle. With a crash he fell, and his armour rang upon him.

Then Hector sped forth to tear from the head of great-hearted Amphimachos the helmet closely fitted to his temples, but Aias aimed at Hector as he came, with a shining spear, yet in no wise touched his body, for he was all clad in dread armour of bronze; but he smote the boss of his shield, and drave him back by main force, and he gave place from behind the two dead men, and the Achaians drew them out of the battle. So Stichios and goodly Menestheus, leaders of the Athenians, conveyed Amphimachos back among the host of the Achaians, but Imbrios the two Aiantes carried, with hearts full of impetuous might. And as when two lions have snatched away a goat from sharp-toothed hounds, and carry it through the deep thicket, holding the body on high above the ground in their jaws, so the two warrior Aiantes held Imbrios aloft and spoiled his arms. Then the son of Oileus cut his head from his delicate neck, in wrath for the sake of Amphimachos, and sent it rolling like a ball through the throng, and it dropped in the dust before the feet of Hector.

Then verily was Poseidon wroth at heart, when his son's son fell in the terrible fray. [Kteatos, father of Amphimachos, was Poseidon's son.] So he set forth to go by the huts and the ships of the Achaians, to spur on the Danaans, and sorrows he was contriving for the Trojans. Then Idomeneus, spearman renowned, met him on his way from his comrade that had but newly returned to him out of the battle, wounded on the knee with the sharp bronze. Him his comrades carried forth, and Idomeneus gave charge to the leeches, and so went on to his hut, for he still was eager to face the war. Then the mighty Shaker of the earth addressed him, in the voice of Thoas, son of Andraimon, that ruled over the Aitolians in all Pleuron, and mountainous Kalydon, and was honoured like a god by the people: "Idomeneus, thou counsellor of the Cretans, say, whither have thy threats fared, wherewith the sons of the Achaians threatened the Trojans?"

Then Idomeneus, leader of the Cretans, answered him again: "O Thaos, now is there no man to blame, that I wot of, for we all are skilled in war. Neither is there any man that spiritless fear holds aloof, nor any that gives place to cowardice, and shuns the cruel war, nay, but even thus, methinks, must it have seemed good to almighty Kronion, even that the Achaians should perish nameless here, far away from Argos. But Thoas, seeing that of old thou wert staunch, and dost spur on some other man, wheresoever thou mayst see any give ground, therefore slacken not now, but call aloud to every warrior."

Then Poseidon, the Shaker of the earth, answered him again: "Idomeneus, never may that man go forth out of Troy-land, but here may he be the sport of dogs, who this day wilfully is slack in battle. Nay, come, take thy weapons and away: herein we must play the man together, if any avail there may be, though we are no more than two. Ay, and very cowards get courage from company, but we twain know well how to battle even with the brave."

Therewith the god went back again into the strife of men, but Idomeneus, so soon as he came to his well-builded hut, did on his fair armour about his body, and grasped two spears, and set forth like the lightning that Kronion seizes in his hand and brandishes from radiant Olympus, showing forth a sign to mortal men, and far seen are the flames thereof. Even so shone the bronze about the breast of Idomeneus as he ran, and Meriones, his good squire, met him, while he was still near his hut, — he was going to bring his spear of bronze, — and mighty Idomeneus spake to him: "Meriones son of Molos, fleet of foot, dearest of my company, wherefore hast thou come hither and left the war and strife? Art thou wounded at all, and vexed by a dart's point, or dost thou come with a message for me concerning aught? Verily I myself have no desire to sit in the huts, but to fight."

Then wise Meriones answered him again, saying: "I have come to fetch a spear, if perchance thou hast one left in the huts, for that which before I carried I have shivered in casting at the shield of proud Deiphobos."

Then Idomeneus, leader of the Cretans, answered him again: "Spears, if thou wilt, thou shalt find, one, ay, and twenty, standing in the hut, against the shining side walls, spears of the Trojans whereof I have spoiled their slain. Yea, it is not my mood to stand and fight with foemen from afar, wherefore I have spears, and bossy shields, and helms, and corslets of splendid sheen."

Then wise Meriones answered him again: "Yea, and in mine own hut and my black ship are many spoils of the Trojans, but not ready to my hand. Nay, for methinks that neither am I forgetful of valour; but stand forth among the foremost to face the glorious war, whensoever ariseth the strife of battle. Any other, methinks, of the mail-clad Achaians should sooner forget my prowess, but thou art he that knoweth it."

Then Idomeneus, leader of the Cretans, answered him again: "I know what a man of valour thou art, wherefore shouldst thou tell me thereof? Nay, if now beside the ships all the best of us were being chosen for an ambush — wherein the valour of men is best discerned; there the coward, and the brave man most plainly declare themselves: for the colour of the coward changes often, and his spirit cannot abide firm within him, but now he kneels on one knee, now on the other, and rests on either foot, and his heart beats noisily in his breast, as he thinks of doom, and his teeth chatter loudly. But the colour of the brave man does not change, nor is he greatly afraid, from the moment that he enters the ambush of heroes, but his prayer is to mingle instantly in woeful war. Were we being chosen for such an ambush, I say, not even then would any man reckon lightly of thy courage and thy strength. Nay, and even if thou wert stricken in battle from afar, or smitten in close fight, the dart would not strike thee in the hinder part of the neck, nor in the back, but would encounter thy breast or belly, as thou dost press on, towards the gathering of the foremost fighters. But come, no more let us talk thus, like children, loitering here, lest any man be vehemently wroth, but go thou to the hut, and bring the strong spear."

Thus he spake, and Meriones, the peer of swift Ares, quickly bare the spear of bronze from the hut, and went after Idomeneus, with high thoughts of battle. And even as Ares, the bane of men, goes forth into the war, and with him follows his dear son Panic, stark and fearless, that terrifies even the hardy warrior; and these twain leave Thrace, and harness them for fight with the Ephyri, or the great-hearted Phlegyans, yet hearken not to both peoples, but give honour to one only; like these gods did Meriones and Idomeneus, leaders of men, set forth into the fight, harnessed in gleaming bronze. And Meriones spake first to Idomeneus saying: "Child of Deukalion, whither art thou eager to enter into the throng: on the right of all the host, or in the centre, or on the left? Ay, and no other where, methinks, are the flowing-haired Achaians so like to fail in fight."

Then Idomeneus, the leader of the Cretans, answered him again: "In the centre of the ships there are others to bear the brunt, the two Aiantes, and Teukros, the best bowman of the Achaians, ay, and a good man in close fight; these will give Hector Priam's son toil enough, howsoever keen he be for battle; yea, though he be exceeding stalwart. Hard will he find it, with all his lust for war, to overcome their strength and their hands invincible, and to fire the ships, unless Kronion himself send down on the swift ships a burning brand. But not to a man would he yield, the great Telamonian Aias, to a man that is mortal and eateth Demeter's grain, and may be chosen with the sword of bronze, and with hurling of great stones. Nay, not even to Achilles the breaker of the ranks of men would he give way, not in close fight; but for speed of foot none may in any wise strive with Achilles. But guide us twain, as thou sayest, to the left hand of the host, that speedily we may learn whether we are to win glory from others, or other men from us."

So he spake, and Meriones, the peer of swift Ares, led the way, till they came to the host, in that place whither he bade him go.

And when the Trojans saw Idomeneus, strong as flame, and his squire with him, and their glorious armour, they all shouted and made for him through the press. Then their mellay began, by the sterns of the ships. And as the gusts speed on, when shrill winds blow, on a day when dust lies thickest on the roads, and the winds raise together a great cloud of dust, even so their battle clashed together, and all were fain of heart to slay each other in the press with the keen bronze. And the battle, the bane of men, bristled with the long spears, the piercing spears they grasped, and the glitter of bronze from gleaming helmets dazzled the eyes, and the sheen of new-burnished corslets, and shining shields, as the men thronged all together. Right hardy of heart would he have been that joyed and sorrowed not at the sight of this labour of battle.

Thus the two mighty sons of Kronos, with contending will, were contriving sorrow and anguish for the heroes. Zeus desired victory for the Trojans and Hector, giving glory to swift-footed Achilles; yet he did not wish the Achaian host to perish utterly before Ilios, but only to give renown to Thetis and her strong-hearted son. But Poseidon went among the Argives and stirred them to war, stealing secretly forth from the grey salt sea: for he was sore vexed that they were overcome by the Trojans, and was greatly in wrath against Zeus. Verily both were of the same lineage and the same place of birth, but Zeus was the elder and the wiser. Therefore also Poseidon avoided to give open aid, but secretly ever he spurred them on, throughout the host, in the likeness of a man. These twain had strained the ends of the cords of strong strife and equal war, and had stretched them over both Trojans and Achaians, a knot that none might break nor undo, for the loosening of the knees of many.

Even then Idomeneus, though his hair was flecked with grey, called on the Danaans, and leaping among the Trojans, roused their terror. For he slew Othryoneus of Kabesos, a sojourner there, who but lately had followed after the rumour of war, and asked in marriage the fairest of the daughters of Priam, Kassandra, without gifts of wooing, but with promise of mighty deed, namely that he would drive perforce out of Troy-land the sons of the Achaians. To him the old man Priam had promised and appointed that he would give her, so he fought trusting in his promises. And Idomeneus aimed at him with a bright spear, and cast and smote him as he came proudly striding on, and the corslet of bronze that he wore availed not, but the lance struck in the midst of his belly. And he fell with a crash, and Idomeneus boasted over him, and lifted up his voice, saying: “Othryoneus, verily I praise thee above all mortal men, if indeed thou shalt accomplish all that thou hast promised Priam, son of Dardanos, that promised thee again his own daughter. Yea, and we likewise would promise as much to thee, and fulfil it, and would give thee the fairest daughter of the son of Atreus, and bring her from Argos, and wed her to thee, if only thou wilt aid us to take the fair-set citadel of Ilios. Nay, follow us that we may make a covenant of marriage by the seafaring ships, for we are no hard exacters of gifts of wooing.”

Therewith the hero Idomeneus dragged him by the foot across the fierce mellay. But Asios came to his aid, on foot before his horses that the charioteer guided so that still their breath touched the shoulders of Asios. And the desire of his heart was to cast at Idomeneus, who was beforehand with him, and smote him with the spear in the throat, below the chin, and drove the point straight through. And he fell as an oak falls, or a poplar, or tall pine tree, that craftsmen have felled on the hills with new whetted axes, to be a ship's timber; even so he lay stretched out before the horses and the chariot, groaning, and clutching the bloody dust. And the charioteer was amazed, and kept not his wits, as of old, and dared not turn his horses and avoid out of the hands of foemen; and Antilochos the steadfast in war smote him, and pierced the middle of his body with a spear. Nothing availed the corslet of bronze he was wont to wear, but he planted the spear fast in the midst of his belly. Therewith he fell gasping from the well-wrought chariot, and Antilochos, the son of great-hearted Nestor, drave the horses out from the Trojans, among the well-greaved Achaians. Then Deiphobos, in sorrow for Asios, drew very nigh Idomeneus, and cast at him with his shining spear. But Idomeneus steadily watching him, avoided the spear of bronze, being hidden beneath the circle of his shield, the shield covered about with ox-hide and gleaming bronze, that he allows bore, fitted with two arm-rods: under this he crouched together, and the spear of bronze flew over. And his shield rang sharply, as the spear grazed thereon. Yet it flew not vainly from the heavy hand of Deiphobos, but smote Hypsenor, son of Hippasos, the shepherd of the hosts, in the liver, beneath the midriff, and instantly unstrung his knees. And Deiphobos boasted over him terribly, crying aloud: "Ah, verily, not unavenged lies Asios, nay, methinks, that even on his road to Hades, strong Warden of the gate, he will rejoice at heart, since, lo, I have sent him escort for the way!"

So spake he, but grief came on the Argives by reason of his boast, and stirred above all the soul of the wise-hearted Antilochos, yet, despite his sorrow, he was not heedless of his dear comrade, but ran and stood over him, and covered him with his buckler. Then two trusty companions, Mekisteus, son of Echios, and goodly Alastor, stooped down and lifted him, and with heavy groaning bare him to the hollow ships.

And Idomeneus relaxed not his mighty force, but ever was striving, either to cover some one of the Trojans with black night, or himself to fall in warding off death from the Achaians. There the dear son of Aisyetes, fosterling of Zeus, even the hero Alkathoos, was slain, who was son-in-law of Anchises, and had married the eldest of his daughters, Hippodameia, whom her father and her lady mother dearly loved in the halls, for she excelled all the maidens of her age in beauty, and skill, and in wisdom, wherefore the best man in wide Troy took her to wife. This Alkathoos did Poseidon subdue to Idomeneus, throwing a spell over his shining eyes, and snaring his glorious limbs; so that he might neither flee backwards, nor avoid the stroke, but stood steady as a pillar, or a tree with lofty crown of leaves, when the hero Idomeneus smote him in the midst of the breast with the spear, and rent the coat of bronze about him, that aforetime warded death from his body, but now rang harsh as it was rent by the spear. And he fell with a crash, and the lance fixed in his heart, that, still beating, shook the butt-end of the spear. Then at length mighty Ares spent its fury there; but Idomeneus boasted terribly, and cried aloud: "Deiphobos, are we to deem it fair acquittal that we have slain three men for one, since thou boastest thus? Nay, sir, but stand thou up also thyself against me, that thou mayst know what manner of son of Zeus am I that have come hither! For Zeus first begat Minos, the warden of Crete, and Minos got him a son, the noble Deukalion, and Deukalion begat me, a prince over many men in wide Crete, and now have the ships brought me hither, a bane to thee and thy father, and all the Trojans."

Thus he spake, but the thoughts of Deiphobos were divided, whether he should retreat, and call to his aid some one of the great-hearted Trojans, or should try the adventure alone. And on this wise to his mind it seemed the better, to go after Aineias, whom he found standing the last in the press, for Aineias was ever wroth against goodly Priam, for that Priam gave him no honour, despite his valour among men. So Deiphobos stood by him, and spake winged words to him: "Aineias, thou counsellor of the Trojans, now verily there is great need that thou shouldst succour thy sister's husband, if any care for kin doth touch thee. Nay follow, let us succour Alkathoos, thy sister's husband, who of old did cherish thee in his hall, while thou wert but a little one, and now, lo, spear-famed Idomeneus hath stripped him of his arms!"

So he spake, and roused the spirit in the breast of Aineias, who went to seek Idomeneus, with high thoughts of war. But fear took not hold upon Idomeneus, as though he had been some tender boy, but he stood at bay, like a boar on the hills that trusteth to his strength, and abides the great assailing throng of men in a lonely place, and he bristles up his back, and his eyes shine with fire, while he whets his tusks, and is right eager to keep at bay both men and hounds. Even so stood spear-famed Idomeneus at bay against Aineias, that came to the rescue, and gave ground no whit, but called on his comrades, glancing to Askalaphos, and Aphareus, and Deipyros, and Meriones, and Antilochos, all masters of the war-cry; them he spurred up to battle, and spake winged words: "Hither, friends, and rescue me, all alone as I am, and terribly I dread the onslaught of swift-footed Aineias, that is assailing me; for he is right strong to destroy men in battle, and he hath the flower of youth, the greatest avail that may be. Yea, if he and I were of like age, and in this spirit whereof now we are, speedily should he or I achieve high victory."

So he spake, and they all, being of one spirit in their hearts, stood hard by each other, with buckler laid on shoulder. But Aineias, on the other side, cried to his comrades, glancing to Deiphobos, and Paris, and noble Agenor, that with him were leaders of the Trojans; and then the hosts followed them, as sheep follow their leader to the water from the pasture, and the shepherd is glad at heart; even so the heart of Aineias was glad in his breast, when he saw the hosts of the people following to aid him.

Then they rushed in close fight around Alkathoos with their long spears, and round their breasts the bronze rang terribly, as they aimed at each other in the press, while two men of war beyond the rest, Aineias and Idomeneus, the peers of Ares, were each striving to hew the flesh of the other with the pitiless bronze. Now Aineias first cast at Idomeneus, who steadily watching him avoided the spear of bronze, and the point of Aineias went quivering in the earth, since vainly it had flown from his stalwart hand. But Idomeneus smote Oinomaos in the midst of the belly, and brake the plate of his corslet, and the bronze let forth the bowels through the corslet, and he fell in the dust and clutched the earth in his palms. And Idomeneus drew forth the far-shadowing spear from the dead, but could not avail to strip the rest of the fair armour from his shoulders, for the darts pressed hard on him. Nay, and his feet no longer served him firmly in a charge, nor could he rush after his own spear, nor avoid the foe. Wherefore in close fight he still held off the pitiless day of destiny, but in retreat: his feet no longer bore him swiftly from the battle. And as he was slowly departing, Deiphobos aimed at him with his shining spear, for verily he ever cherished a steadfast hatred against Idomeneus. But this time, too, he missed him, and smote Askalapbos, the son of Enyalios, with his dart, and the strong spear passed through his shoulder, and he fell in the dust, and clutched the earth in his outstretched hand. But loud-voiced awful Ares was not yet aware at all that his son had fallen in strong battle, but he was reclining on the peak of Olympus, beneath the golden clouds, being held there by the design of Zeus, where also were the other deathless gods, restrained from the war.

Now the people rushed in close fight around Askalaphos, and Deiphobos tore from Askalaphos his shining helm, but Meriones, the peer of swift Ares, leaped forward and smote the arm of Deiphobos with his spear, and from his hand the vizored casque fell clanging to the ground. And Meriones sprang forth instantly, like a vulture, and drew the strong spear from the shoulder of Deiphobos, and fell back among the throng of his comrades. But the own brother of Deiphobos, Polites, stretched his hands round his waist, and led him forth from the evil din of war, even till he came to the swift horses, that waited for him behind the battle and the fight, with their charioteer, and well-dight chariot. These bore him heavily groaning to the city, worn with his hurt, and the blood ran down from his newly wounded arm.

But the rest still were fighting, and the war-cry rose unquenched. There Aineias rushed on Aphareus, son of Kaletor, and struck his throat, that chanced to be turned to him, with the keen spear, and his head dropped down and his shield and helm fell with him, and death that slays the spirit overwhelmed him. And Antilochos watched Thoon as he turned the other way, and leaped on him, and wounded him, severing all the vein that runs up the back till it reaches the neck; this he severed clean, and Thoon fell on his back in the dust, stretching out both his hands to his comrades dear. Then Antilochos rushed on, and stripped the armour from his shoulders, glancing around while the Trojans gathered from here and there, and smote his wide shining shield, yet did not avail to graze, behind the shield, the delicate flesh of Antilochos with the pitiless bronze. For verily Poseidon, the Shaker of the earth, did guard on every side the son of Nestor, even in the midst of the javelins. And never did Antilochos get free of the foe, but turned him about among them, nor ever was his spear at rest, but always brandished and shaken, and the aim of his heart was to smite a foeman from afar, or to set on him at close quarters. But as he was aiming through the crowd, he escaped not the ken of Adamas, son of Asios, who smote the midst of his shield with the sharp bronze, setting on nigh at hand; but Poseidon of the dark locks made his shaft of no avail, grudging him the life of Antilochos. And part of the spear abode there, like a burned stake, in the shield of Antilochos, and half lay on the earth, and back retreated Adamas to the ranks of his comrades, avoiding Fate. But Meriones following after him as he departed, smote him with a spear between the privy parts and the navel, where a wound is most baneful to wretched mortals. Even there he fixed the spear in him and he fell, and writhed about the spear, even as a bull that herdsmen on the hills drag along perforce when they have bound him with withes, so he when he was smitten writhed for a moment, not for long, till the hero Meriones came near, and drew the spear out of his body. And darkness covered his eyes.

And Helenos in close fight smote Deipyros on the temple, with a great Thracian sword, and tore away the helm, and the helm, being dislodged, fell on the ground, and one of the Achaians in the fight picked it up as it rolled between his feet. But dark night covered the eyes of Deipyros.

Then grief took hold of the son of Atreus, Menelaos of the loud war-cry, and he went with a threat against the warrior Helenos, the prince, shaking his sharp spear, while the other drew the centre-piece of his bow. And both at once were making ready to let fly, one with his sharp spear, the other with the arrow from the string. Then the son of Priam smote Menelaos on the breast with his arrow, on the plate of the corslet, and off flew the bitter arrow. Even as from a broad shovel in a great threshing floor, fly the black-skinned beans and pulse, before the whistling wind, and the stress of the winnower’s shovel, even so from the corslet of the renowned Menelaos flew glancing far aside the bitter arrow. But the son of Atreus, Menelaos of the loud war-cry, smote the hand of Helenos wherein he held the polished bow, and into the bow, clean through the hand, was driven the spear of bronze. Back he withdrew to the ranks of his comrades, avoiding Fate, with his hand hanging down at his side, for the ashen spear dragged after him. And the great-hearted Agenor drew the spear from his hand, and himself bound up the hand with a band of twisted sheep’s-wool, a sling that a squire carried for him, the shepherd of the host.

Then Peisandros made straight for renowned Menelaos, but an evil Fate was leading him to the end of Death; by thee, Menelaos, to be overcome in the dread strife of battle. Now when the twain had come nigh in onset upon each other, the son of Atreus missed, and his spear was turned aside, but Peisandros smote the shield of renowned Menelaos, yet availed not to drive the bronze clean through, for the wide shield caught it, and the spear brake in the socket, yet Peisandros rejoiced in his heart, and hoped for the victory. But the son of Atreus drew his silver-studded sword, and leaped upon Peisandros. And Peisandros, under his shield, clutched his goodly axe of fine bronze, with long and polished haft of olive-wood, and the twain set upon each other. Then Peisandros smote the crest of the helmet shaded with horse hair, close below the very plume, but Menelaos struck the other, as he came forward, on the brow, above the base of the nose, and the bones cracked, and the eyes, all bloody, fell at his feet in the dust. Then he bowed and fell, and Menelaos set his foot on his breast, and stripped him of his arms, and triumphed, saying: “Even thus then surely, ye will leave the ships of the Danaans of the swift steeds, ye Trojans overweening, insatiate of the dread din of war. Yea, and ye shall not lack all other reproof and shame, wherewith ye made me ashamed, ye hounds of evil, having no fear in your hearts of the strong wrath of loud-thundering Zeus, the god of guest and host, who one day will destroy your steep citadel. O ye that wantonly carried away my wedded wife and many of my possessions, when ye were entertained by her, now again ye are fain to throw ruinous fire on the seafaring ships, and to slay the Achaian heroes. Nay, but ye will yet refrain you from battle, for as eager as ye be. O Zeus, verily they say that thou dost excel in wisdom all others, both gods and men, and all these things are from thee. How wondrously art thou favouring men of violence, even the Trojans, whose might is ever iniquitous, nor can they have their fill of the din of equal war. Of all things there is satiety, yea, even of love and sleep, and of sweet song, and dance delectable, whereof a man would sooner have his fill than of war, but the Trojans are insatiable of battle.”

Thus noble Menelaos spake, and stripped the bloody arms from the body, and gave them to his comrades, and instantly himself went forth again, and mingled in the forefront of the battle. Then Harpalion, the son of king Pylaimenes, leaped out against him, Harpalion that followed his dear father to Troy, to the war, nor ever came again to his own country. He then smote the middle of the shield of Atreus’ son with his spear, in close fight, yet availed not to drive the bronze clean through, but fell back into the host of his comrades, avoiding Fate, glancing round every way, lest one should wound his flesh with the bronze. But Meriones shot at him as he retreated with a bronze-shod arrow, and smote him in the right buttock, and the arrow went right through the bladder and came out under the bone. And sitting down, even there, in the arms of his dear comrades, he breathed away his soul, lying stretched like a worm on the earth, and out flowed the black blood, and wetted the ground. And the Paphlagonians great of heart, tended him busily, and set him in a chariot, and drove him to sacred Ilios sorrowing, and with them went his father, shedding tears, and there was no atonement for his dead son.

Now Paris was very wroth at heart by reason of his slaying, for he had been his host among the many Paphlagonions, wherefore, in wrath for his sake, he let fly a bronze-shod arrow. Now there was a certain Euchenor, the son of Polyidos the seer, a rich man and a good, whose dwelling was in Corinth. And well he knew his own ruinous fate, when he went on ship-board, for often would the old man, the good Polyidos, tell him, that he must either perish of a sore disease in his halls, or go with the ships of the Achaians, and be overcome by the Trojans. Wherefore he avoided at once the heavy war-fine of the Achaians, and the hateful disease, that so he might not know any anguish. This man did Paris smite beneath the jaw and under the ear, and swiftly his spirit departed from his limbs, and, lo, dread darkness overshadowed him.

So they fought like flaming fire, but Hector, beloved of Zeus had not heard nor knew at all that, on the left of the ships, his host was being subdued by the Argives, and soon would the Achaians have won renown, so mighty was the Holder and Shaker of the earth that urged on the Argives; yea, and himself mightily defended them. But Hector kept where at first he had leaped within the walls and the gate, and broken the serried ranks of shield-bearing Danaans, even where were the ships of Aias and Protesilaos, drawn up on the beach of the hoary sea, while above the wall was builded lowest, and thereby chiefly the heroes and their horses were raging in battle.

There the Boiotians, and Ionians with trailing tunics, and Lokrians and Phthians and illustrious Epeians scarcely availed to stay his onslaught on the ships, nor yet could they drive back from them noble Hector, like a flame of fire. And there were the picked men of the Athenians; among them Menestheus son of Peteos was the leader; and there followed with him Pheidas and Stichios, and brave Bias, while the Epeians were led by Meges, son of Phyleus, and Amphion and Drakios, and in front of the Phthians were Medon, and Podarkes resolute in war. Now the one, Medon, was the bastard son of noble Oileus, and brother of Aias, and he dwelt in Phylake, far from his own country, for that he had slain a man, the brother of his stepmother Eriopis, wife of Oileus. But the other, Podarkes, was the son of Iphiklos son of Phylakos, and they in their armour, in the van of the great-hearted Phthians, were defending the ships, and fighting among the Boiotians.

Now never at all did Aias, the swift son of Oileus, depart from the side of Aias, son of Telamon, nay, not for an instant, but even as in fallow land two wine-dark oxen with equal heart strain at the shapen plough, and round the roots of their horns springeth up abundant sweat, and nought sunders them but the polished yoke, as they labour through the furrow, till the end of the furrow brings them up, so stood the two Aiantes close by each other. Now verily did many and noble hosts of his comrades follow with the son of Telamon, and bore his shield when labour and sweat came upon his limbs. But the Lokrians followed not with the high-hearted son of Oileus, for their hearts were not steadfast in close brunt of battle, seeing that they had no helmets of bronze, shadowy with horse-hair plumes, nor round shields, nor ashen spears, but trusting in bows and well-twisted slings of sheep’s wool, they followed with him to Ilios. Therewith, in the war, they shot thick and fast, and brake the ranks of the Trojans. So the one party in front contended with the Trojans, and with Hector arrayed in bronze, while the others from behind kept shooting from their ambush, and the Trojans lost all memory of the joy of battle, for the arrows confounded them.

There then right ruefully from the ships and the huts would the Trojans have withdrawn to windy Ilios, had not Polydamas come near valiant Hector and said: “Hector, thou art hard to be persuaded by them that would counsel thee; for that god has given thee excellence in the works of war, therefore in council also thou art fain to excel other men in knowledge. But in nowise wilt thou be able to take everything on thyself. For to one man has god given for his portion the works of war, [to another the dance, to another the lute and song,] but in the heart of yet another hath far-seeing Zeus placed an excellent understanding, whereof many men get gain, yea he saveth many an one, and himself best knoweth it. But, lo, I will speak even as it seemeth best to me. Behold all about thee the circle of war is blazing, but the great-hearted Trojans, now that they have got down the wall, are some with their arms standing aloof and some are fighting, few men against a host, being scattered among the ships. Nay, withdraw thee, and call hither all the best of the warriors. Thereafter shall we take all counsel carefully, whether we should fall on the ships of many benches, if indeed god willeth to give us victory, or after counsel held, should return unharmed from the ships. For verily I fear lest the Achaians repay their debt of yesterday, since by the ships there tarrieth a man insatiate of war, and never, methinks, will he wholly stand aloof from battle.”

So spake Polydamas, and his safe counsel pleased Hector well, who spake to him winged words and said: “Polydamas, do thou stay here all the best of the host, but I will go thither to face the war, and swiftly will return again, when I have straitly laid on them my commands.”

So he spake, and set forth, in semblance like a snowy mountain, and shouting aloud he flew through the Trojans and allies. And they all sped to Polydamas, the kindly son of Panthoos, when they heard the voice of Hector. But he went seeking Deiphobos, and the strong prince Helenos, and Adamas son of Asios, and Asios son of Hyrtakos, among the warriors in the foremost line, if anywhere he might find them. But them he found not at all unharmed, nor free of bane, but, lo, some among the sterns of the ships of the Achaians lay lifeless, slain by the hands of the Argives, and some were within the wall wounded by thrust or cast. But one he readily found, on the left of the dolorous battle, goodly Alexandros, the lord of fair-tressed Helen, heartening his comrades and speeding them to war. And he drew near to him, and addressed him with words of shame: “Thou evil Paris, fairest of face, thou that lustest for women, thou seducer, where, prithee, are Deiphobos, and the strong prince Helenos, and Adamas son of Asios, and Asios son of Hyrtakos, and where is Othryoneus? Now hath all high Ilios perished utterly. Now, too, thou seest, is sheer destruction sure.”

Then godlike Alexandros answered him again saying: “Hector, since thy mind is to blame one that is blameless, some other day might I rather withdraw me from the war, since my mother bare not even me wholly a coward. For from the time that thou didst gather the battle of thy comrades about the ships, from that hour do we abide here, and war with the Danaans ceaselessly; and our comrades concerning whom thou inquirest are slain. Only Deiphobos and the strong prince Helenos have both withdrawn, both of them being wounded in the hand with long spears, for Kronion kept death away from them. But now lead on, wheresoever thy heart and spirit bid thee, and we will follow with thee eagerly, nor methinks shall we lack for valour, as far as we have strength; but beyond his strength may no man fight, howsoever eager he be.”

So spake the hero, and persuaded his brother’s heart, and they went forth where the war and din were thickest, round Kebriones, and noble Polydamas, and Phalkes, and Orthaios, and godlike Polyphetes, and Palmys, and Askanios, and Morys, son of Hippotion, who had come in their turn, out of deep-soiled Askanie, on the morn before, and now Zeus urged them to fight. And these set forth like the blast of violent winds, that rushes earthward beneath the thunder of Zeus, and with marvellous din doth mingle with the salt sea, and therein are many swelling waves of the loud roaring sea, arched over and white with foam, some vanward, others in the rear; even so the Trojans arrayed in van and rear and shining with bronze, followed after their leaders.

And Hector son of Priam was leading them, the peer of Ares, the bane of men. In front he held the circle of his shield, thick with hides, and plates of beaten bronze, and on his temples swayed his shining helm. And everywhere he went in advance and made trial of the ranks, if perchance they would yield to him as he charged under cover of his shield. But he could not confound the heart within the breast of the Achaians. And Aias, stalking with long strides, challenged him first: “Sir, draw nigh, wherefore dost thou vainly try to dismay the Argives? We are in no wise ignorant of war, but by the cruel scourge of Zeus are we Achaians vanquished. Surely now thy heart hopes utterly to spoil the ships, but we too have hands presently to hold our own. Verily your peopled city will long ere that beneath our hands be taken and sacked. But for thee, I tell thee that the time is at hand, when thou shalt pray in thy flight to Zeus, and the other immortal gods, that thy fair-maned steeds may be fleeter than falcons: thy steeds that are to bear thee to the city, as they storm in dust across the plain.”

And even as he spake, a bird flew forth on the right hand, an eagle of lofty flight, and the host of the Achaians shouted thereat, encouraged by the omen, but renowned Hector answered: “Aias, thou blundering boaster, what sayest thou! Would that indeed I were for ever as surely the son of aegis-bearing Zeus, and that my mother were lady Hera, and that I were held in such honour as Apollo and Athene, as verily this day is to bring utter evil on all the Argives! And thou among them shalt be slain, if thou hast the heart to await my long spear, which shall rend thy lily skin, and thou shalt glut with thy fat and flesh the birds and dogs of the Trojans, falling among the ships of the Achaians.”

So he spake and led the way, and they followed with wondrous din, and the whole host shouted behind. And the Argives on the other side answered with a shout, and forgot not their valiance, but abode the onslaught of the bravest of the Trojans. And the cry of the two hosts went up through the higher air, to the splendour of Zeus.

BOOK XIV.

How Sleep and Hera beguiled Zeus to slumber on the heights of Ida, and Poseidon spurred on the Achaians to resist Hector, and how Hector was wounded.

Yet the cry of battle escaped not Nestor, albeit at his wine, but he spake winged words to the son of Asklepios: “Bethink thee, noble Machaon, what had best be done; lo, louder waxes the cry of the strong warriors by the ships. Nay, now sit where thou art, and drink the bright wine, till Hekamede of the fair tresses shall heat warm water for the bath, and wash away the clotted blood, but I will speedily go forth and come to a place of outlook.”

Therewith he took the well-wrought shield of his son, horse-taming Thrasymedes, which was lying in the hut, all glistering with bronze, for the son had the shield of his father. And he seized a strong spear, with a point of keen bronze, and stood outside the hut, and straightway beheld a deed of shame, the Achaians fleeing in rout, and the high-hearted Trojans driving them, and the wall of the Achaians was overthrown. And as when the great sea is troubled with a dumb wave, and dimly bodes the sudden paths of the shrill winds, but is still unmoved nor yet rolled forward or to either side, until some steady gale comes down from Zeus, even so the old man pondered, — his mind divided this way and that, — whether he should fare into the press of the Danaans of the swift steeds, or go after Agamemnon, son of Atreus, shepherd of the host. And thus as he pondered, it seemed to him the better counsel to go to the son of Atreus. Meanwhile they were warring and slaying each other, and the stout bronze rang about their bodies as they were thrust with swords and double-pointed spears.

Now the kings, the fosterlings of Zeus, encountered Nestor, as they went up from the ships, even they that were wounded with the bronze, Tydeus’ son, and Odysseus, and Agamemnon, son of Atreus. For far apart from the battle were their ships drawn up, on the shore of the grey sea, for these were the first they had drawn up to the plain, but had builded the wall in front of the hindmost. For in no wise might the beach, wide as it was, hold all the ships, and the host was straitened. Wherefore they drew up the ships row within row, and filled up the wide mouth of all the shore that the headlands held between them. Therefore the kings were going together, leaning on their spears, to look on the war and fray, and the heart of each was sore within his breast. And the old man met them, even

Nestor, and caused the spirit to fail within the breasts of the Achaians.

And mighty Agamemnon spake and accosted him: “O Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Achaians, wherefore dost thou come hither and hast deserted the war, the bane of men? Lo, I fear the accomplishment of the word that dread Hector spake, and the threat wherewith he threatened us, speaking in the assembly of the Trojans, namely, that never would he return to Ilios from the ships, till he had burned the ships with fire, and slain the men. Even so he spake, and, lo, now all these things are being fulfilled. Alas, surely even the other well-greaved Achaians store wrath against me in their hearts, like Achilles, and have no desire to fight by the rearmost ships.”

Then Nestor of Gerenia the knight answered him saying “Verily these things are now at hand, and being accomplished, nor otherwise could Zeus himself contrive them, he that thundereth on high. For, lo, the wall is overthrown, wherein we trusted that it should be an unbroken bulwark of the ships and of our own bodies. But let us take counsel, how these things may best be done, if wit may do aught: but into the war I counsel not that we should go down, for in no wise may a wounded man do battle.”

Then Agamemnon king of men answered him again: “Nestor, for that they are warring by the rearmost ships, and the well-builded wall hath availed not, nor the trench, whereat the Achaians endured so much labour, hoping in their hearts that it should be the unbroken bulwark of the ships, and of their own bodies — such it seemeth must be the will of Zeus supreme, [that the Achaians should perish here nameless far from Argos]. For I knew it when he was forward to aid the Danaans, and now I know that he is giving to the Trojans glory like that of the blessed gods, and hath bound our hands and our strength. But come, as I declare, let us all obey. Let us drag down the ships that are drawn up in the first line near to the sea, and speed them all forth to the salt sea divine, and moor them far out with stones, till the divine night comes, if even at night the Trojans will refrain from war, and then might we drag down all the ships. For there is no shame in fleeing from ruin, yea, even in the night. Better doth he fare who flees from trouble, than he that is overtaken.”

Then, looking on him sternly, spake Odysseus of many counsels: “Atreus’ son, what word hath passed the door of thy lips? Man of mischief, sure thou shouldst lead some other inglorious army, not be king among us, to whom Zeus hath given it, from youth even unto age, to wind the skein of grievous wars, till every man of us perish. Art thou indeed so eager to leave the wide-wayed city of the Trojans, the city for which we endure with sorrow so many evils? Be silent, lest some other of the Achaians hear this word, that no man should so much as suffer to pass through his mouth, none that understandeth in his heart how to speak fit counsel, none that is a sceptred king, and hath hosts obeying him so many as the Argives over whom thou reignest. And now I wholly scorn thy thoughts, such a word as thou hast uttered, thou that, in the midst of war and battle, dost bid us draw down the well-timbered ships to the sea, that even more than ever the Trojans may possess their desire, albeit they win the mastery even now, and sheer destruction fall upon us. For the Achaians will not make good the war, when the ships are drawn down to the salt sea, but will look round about to flee, and withdraw from battle. There will thy counsel work a mischief, O marshal of the host!"

Then the king of men, Agamemnon, answered him: "Odysseus, right sharply hast thou touched my heart with thy stern reproof: nay, I do not bid the sons of the Achaians to drag, against their will, the well-timbered ships to the salt sea. Now perchance there may be one who will utter a wiser counsel than this of mine, — a young man or an old, — welcome would it be to me."

Then Diomedes of the loud war-cry spake also among them: "The man is near, — not long shall we seek him, if ye be willing to be persuaded of me, and each of you be not resentful at all, because in years I am the youngest among you. Nay, but I too boast me to come by lineage of a noble sire, Tydeus, whom in Thebes the piled-up earth doth cover. For Portheus had three well-born children, and they dwelt in Pleuron, and steep Kalydon, even Agrios and Melas, and the third was Oineus the knight, the father of my father, and in valour he excelled the others. And there he abode, but my father dwelt at Argos, whither he had wandered, for so Zeus and the other gods willed that it should be. And he wedded one of the daughters of Adrastos, and dwelt in a house full of livelihood, and had wheat-bearing fields enow, and many orchards of trees apart, and many sheep were his, and in skill with the spear he excelled all the Achaians: these things ye must have heard, if I speak sooth. Therefore ye could not say that I am weak and a coward by lineage, and so dishonour my spoken counsel, that well I may speak. Let us go down to the battle, wounded as we are, since we needs must; and then might we hold ourselves aloof from the battle, beyond the range of darts, lest any take wound upon wound; but the others will we spur on, even them that aforetime gave place to their passion, and stand apart, and fight not."

So he spake, and they all heard him readily, and obeyed him. And they set forth, led by Agamemnon the king of men.

Now the renowned Earth-shaker held no vain watch, but went with them in the guise of an ancient man, and he seized the right hand of Agamemnon, Atreus' son, and uttering winged words he spake to him, saying: "Atreides, now methinks the ruinous heart of Achilles rejoices in his breast, as he beholds the slaughter and flight of the Achaians, since he hath no wisdom, not a grain. Nay, even so may he perish likewise, and god mar him. But with thee the blessed gods are not utterly wroth, nay, even yet methinks the leaders and rulers of the Trojans will cover the wide plain with dust, and thyself shalt see them fleeing to the city from the ships and the huts.”

So spake he, and shouted mightily, as he sped over the plain. And loud as nine thousand men, or ten thousand cry in battle, when they join the strife of war, so mighty was the cry that the strong Shaker of the earth sent forth from his breast, and great strength he put into the heart of each of the Achaians, to strive and war unceasingly.

Now Hera of the golden throne stood on the peak of Olympus, and saw with her eyes, and anon knew him that was her brother and her lord’s going to and fro through the glorious fight, and she rejoiced in her heart. And she beheld Zeus sitting on the topmost crest of many-fountained Ida, and to her heart he was hateful. Then she took thought, the ox-eyed lady Hera, how she might beguile the mind of aegis-bearing Zeus. And this seemed to her in her heart to be the best counsel, namely to fare to Ida, when she had well adorned herself, if perchance a sweet sleep and a kindly she could pour on his eye lids and his crafty wits. And she set forth to her bower, that her dear son Hephaistos had fashioned, and therein had made fast strong doors on the pillars, with a secret bolt, that no other god might open. There did she enter in and closed the shining doors. With ambrosia first did she cleanse every stain from her winsome body, and anointed her with olive oil, ambrosial, soft, and of a sweet savour; if it were but shaken, in the bronze-floored mansion of Zeus, the savour thereof went right forth to earth and heaven. Therewith she anointed her fair body, and combed her hair, and with her hands plaited her shining tresses, fair and ambrosial, flowing from her immortal head. Then she clad her in her fragrant robe that Athene wrought delicately for her, and therein set many things beautifully made, and fastened it over her breast with clasps of gold. And she girdled it with a girdle arrayed with a hundred tassels, and she set earrings in her pierced ears, earrings of three drops, and glistering, therefrom shone grace abundantly. And with a veil over all the peerless goddess veiled herself, a fair new veil, bright as the sun, and beneath her shining feet she bound goodly sandals. But when she had adorned her body with all her array, she went forth from her bower, and called Aphrodite apart from the other gods, and spake to her, saying: “Wilt thou obey me, dear child, in that which I shall tell thee? or wilt thou refuse, with a grudge in thy heart, because I succour the Danaans, and thou the Trojans?”

Then Aphrodite the daughter of Zeus answered her: “Hera, goddess queen, daughter of mighty Kronos, say the thing that is in thy mind, my heart bids me fulfil it, if fulfil it I may, and if it may be accomplished.”

Then with crafty purpose the lady Hera answered her: “Give me now Love and Desire wherewith thou dost overcome all the Immortals, and mortal men. For I am going to visit the limits of the bountiful Earth, and Okeanos, father of the gods, and mother Tethys, who reared me well and nourished me in their halls, having taken me from Rhea, when far-seeing Zeus imprisoned Kronos beneath the earth and the unvintaged sea. Them am I going to visit, and their endless strife will I loose, for already this long time they hold apart from each other, since wrath hath settled in their hearts. If with words I might persuade their hearts, and bring them back to love, ever should I be called dear to them and worshipful.”

Then laughter-loving Aphrodite answered her again: “It may not be, nor seemly were it, to deny that thou askest, for thou steepest in the arms of Zeus, the chief of gods.”

Therewith from her breast she loosed the broidered girdle, fair-wrought, wherein are all her enchantments; therein are love, and desire, and loving converse, that steals the wits even of the wise. This girdle she laid in her hands, and spake, and said: “Lo now, take this girdle and lay it up in thy bosom, this fair-wrought girdle, wherein all things are fashioned; methinks thou wilt not return with that unaccomplished, which in thy heart thou desirest.”

So spake she, and the ox-eyed lady Hera smiled, and smiling laid up the zone within her breast.

Then the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite, went to her house, and Hera, rushing down, left the peak of Olympus, and sped’ over the snowy hills of the Thracian horsemen, even over the topmost crests, nor grazed the ground with her feet, and from Athos she fared across the foaming sea, and came to Lemnos, the city of godlike Thoas. There she met Sleep, the brother of Death, and clasped her hand in his, and spake and called him by name: “Sleep, lord of all gods and of all men, if ever thou didst hear my word, obey me again even now, and I will be grateful to thee always. Lull me, I pray thee, the shining eyes of Zeus beneath his brows. And gifts I will give to thee, even a fair throne, imperishable for ever, a golden throne, that Hephaistos the Lame, mine own child, shall fashion skilfully, and will set beneath it a footstool for the feet, for thee to set thy shining feet upon, when thou art at a festival. Nay come, and I will give thee one of the younger of the Graces, to wed and to be called thy wife.”

So she spake, and Sleep was glad, and answered and said:— “Come now, swear to me by the inviolable water of Styx, and with one of thy hands grasp the bounteous earth, and with the other the shining sea, that all may be witnesses to us, even all the gods below that are with Kronos, that verily thou wilt give me one of the younger of the Graces, even Pasithea, that myself do long for all my days.”

So spake he, nor did she disobey, the white-armed goddess Hera; she sware as he bade her, and called all the gods by name, even those below Tartaros that are called Titans. But when she had sworn and ended that oath, the twain left the citadel of Lemnos, and of Imbros, clothed on in mist, and swiftly they accomplished the way. To many-fountained Ida they came, the mother of wild beasts, to Lekton, where first they left the sea, and they twain fared above the dry land, and the topmost forest waved beneath their feet. There Sleep halted, ere the eyes of Zeus beheld him, and alighted on a tall pine tree, the loftiest pine that then in all Ida rose through the nether to the upper air. But Hera swiftly drew nigh to topmost Gargaros, the highest crest of Ida, and Zeus the cloud-gatherer beheld her. And as he saw her, so love came over his deep heart, and he stood before her, and spoke, and said: “Hera, with what desire comest thou thus hither from Olympus, and thy horses and chariot are not here, whereon thou mightst ascend?”

Then with crafty purpose lady Hera answered him: “I am going to visit the limits of the bountiful Earth, and Okeanos, father of the gods, and mother Tethys, who reared me well and cherished me in their halls. Them am I going to visit, and their endless strife will I loose, for already this long time they hold apart from each other, since wrath hath settled in their hearts. But my horses are standing at the foot of many-fountained Ida, my horses that shall bear me over wet and dry. And now it is because of thee that I am thus come hither, down from Olympus, lest perchance thou mightest be wroth with me hereafter, if silently I were gone to the mansion of deep-flowing Okeanos.”

Then Zeus, the gatherer of the clouds, answered her and said: “Hera, thither mayst thou go on a later day. For never once as thus did the love of goddess or woman so mightily overflow and conquer the heart within my breast.”

Thus slept the Father in quiet on the crest of Gargaros, by Sleep and love overcome. But sweet Sleep started and ran to the ships of the Achaians, to tell his tidings to the god that holdeth and shaketh the earth. And he stood near him, and spake winged words: “Eagerly now, Poseidon, do thou aid the Danaans, and give them glory for a little space, while yet Zeus sleepeth, for over him have I shed soft slumber, and Hera hath beguiled him.”

So he spake, and passed to the renowned tribes of men, and still the more did he set on Poseidon to aid the Danaans, who straightway sprang far afront of the foremost, and called to them: “Argives, are we again to yield the victory to Hector, son of Priam, that he may take our ships and win renown? Nay, even so he saith and declareth that he will do, for that Achilles by the hollow ships abides angered at heart. But for him there will be no such extreme regret, if we spur us on to aid each the other. Nay come, as I command, let us all obey. Let us harness us in the best shields that are in the host, and the greatest, and cover our heads with shining helms, and take the longest spears in our hands, and so go forth. Yea, and I will lead the way, and methinks that Hector, son of Priam, will not long await us, for all his eagerness. And whatsoever man is steadfast in battle, and hath a small buckler on his shoulder, let him give it to a worse man, and harness him in a larger shield.”

So spake he, and they heard him eagerly and obeyed him. And them the kings themselves arrayed, wounded as they were, Tydeus’ son, and Odysseus, and Agamemnon, son of Atreus. They went through all the host, and made exchange of weapons of war. The good arms did the good warrior harness him in, the worse he gave to the worse. But when they had done on the shining bronze about their bodies, they started on the march, and Poseidon led them, the Shaker of the earth, with a dread sword of fine edge in his strong hand, like unto lightning; wherewith it is not permitted that any should mingle in woful war, but fear holds men afar therefrom. But the Trojans on the other side was renowned Hector arraying. Then did they now strain the fiercest strife of war, even dark-haired Poseidon and glorious Hector, one succouring the Trojans, the other with the Argives. And the sea washed up to the huts and ships of the Argives, and they gathered together with a mighty cry. Not so loudly bellows the wave of the sea against the land, stirred up from the deep by the harsh breath of the north wind, nor so loud is the roar of burning fire in the glades of a mountain, when it springs to burn up the forest, nor calls the wind so loudly in the high leafy tresses of the trees, when it rages and roars its loudest, as then was the cry of the Trojans and Achaians, shouting dreadfully as they rushed upon each other.

First glorious Hector cast with his spear at Aias, who was facing him full, and did not miss, striking him where two belts were stretched across his breast, the belt of his shield, and of his silver-studded sword; these guarded his tender flesh. And Hector was enraged because his swift spear had flown vainly from his hand, and he retreated into the throng of his fellows, avoiding Fate.

Then as he was departing the great Telamonian Aias smote him with a huge stone; for many stones, the props of swift ships, were rolled among the feet of the fighters; one of these he lifted, and smote Hector on the breast, over the shield-rim, near the neck, and made him spin like a top with the blow, that he reeled round and round. And even as when an oak falls uprooted beneath the stroke of father Zeus, and a dread savour of brimstone arises therefrom, and whoso stands near and beholds it has no more courage, for dread is the bolt of great Zeus, even so fell mighty Hector straightway in the dust. And the spear fell from his hand, but his shield and helm were made fast to him, and round him rang his arms adorned with bronze.

Then with a loud cry they ran up, the sons of the Achaians, hoping to drag him away, and they cast showers of darts. But not one availed to wound or smite the shepherd of the host, before that might be the bravest gathered about him, Polydamas, and Aineias, and goodly Agenor, and Sarpedon, leader of the Lykians, and noble Glaukos, and of the rest not one was heedless of him, but they held their round shields in front of him, and his comrades lifted him in their arms, and bare him out of the battle, till he reached his swift horses that were standing waiting for him, with the charioteer and the fair-dight chariot at the rear of the combat and the war. These toward the city bore him heavily moaning. Now when they came to the ford of the fair-flowing river, of eddying Xanthos, that immortal Zeus begat, there they lifted him from the chariot to the ground, and poured water over him, and he gat back his breath, and looked up with his eyes, and sitting on his heels kneeling, he vomited black blood. Then again he sank back on the ground, and black night covered his eyes, the stroke still conquering his spirit.

BOOK XV.

Zeus awakening, biddeth Apollo revive Hector, and restore the fortunes of the Trojans. Fire is thrown on the ship of Protesilaos.

Now when they had sped in flight across the palisade and trench, and many were overcome at the hands of the Danaans, the rest were stayed, and abode beside the chariots in confusion, and pale with terror, and Zeus awoke, on the peaks of Ida, beside Hera of the golden throne. Then he leaped up, and stood, and beheld the Trojans and Achaians, those in flight, and these driving them on from the rear, even the Argives, and among them the prince Poseidon. And Hector he saw lying on the plain, and around him sat his comrades, and he was gasping with difficult breath, and his mind wandering, and was vomiting blood, for it was not the weakest of the Achaians that had smitten him. Beholding him, the father of men and gods had pity on him, and terribly he spoke to Hera, with fierce look: "O thou ill to deal with, Hera, verily it is thy crafty wile that has made noble Hector cease from the fight, and has terrified the host. Nay, but yet I know not whether thou mayst not be the first to reap the fruits of thy cruel treason, and I beat thee with stripes. Dost thou not remember, when thou wert hung from on high, and from thy feet I suspended two anvils, and round thy hands fastened a golden bond that might not be broken? And thou didst hang in the clear air and the clouds, and the gods were wroth in high Olympus, but they could not come round and unloose thee."

So spake he, and the ox-eyed lady Hera shuddered, and spake unto him winged words, saying: "Let earth now be witness hereto, and wide heaven above, and that falling water of Styx, the greatest oath and the most terrible to the blessed gods, and thine own sacred head, and our own bridal bed, whereby never would I forswear myself, that not by my will does earth-shaking Poseidon trouble the Trojans and Hector, and succour them of the other part. Nay, it is his own soul that urgeth and commandeth him, and he had pity on the Achaians, when he beheld them hard pressed beside the ships. I would even counsel him also to go even where thou, lord of the storm-cloud, mayst lead him."

So spake she, and the father of gods and men smiled, and answering her he spake winged words: "If thou, of a truth, O ox-eyed lady Hera, wouldst hereafter abide of one mind with me among the immortal gods, thereon would Poseidon, howsoever much his wish be contrariwise, quickly turn his mind otherwhere, after thy heart and mine. But if indeed thou speakest the truth and soothly, go thou now among the tribes of the gods, and call Iris to come hither, and Apollo, the renowned archer, that Iris may go among the host of mail-clad Achaians and tell Poseidon the prince to cease from the war, and get him unto his own house. But let Phoebus Apollo spur Hector on to the war, and breathe strength into him again, and make him forget his anguish, that now wears down his heart, and drive the Achaians back again, when he hath stirred in them craven fear. Let them flee and fall among the many-benched ships of Achilles son of Peleus, and he shall rouse his own comrade, Patroklos; and him shall renowned Hector slay with the spear, in front of Ilios, after that he has slain many other youths, and among them my son, noble Sarpedon. In wrath therefor shall goodly Achilles slay Hector. From that hour verily will I cause a new pursuit from the ships, that shall endure continually, even until the Achaians take steep Ilios, through the counsels of Athene. But before that hour neither do I cease in my wrath, nor will I suffer any other of the Immortals to help the Danaans there, before I accomplish that desire of the son of Peleus, as I promised him at the first, and confirmed the same with a nod of my head, on that day when the goddess Thetis clasped my knees, imploring me to honour Achilles, the sacker of cities."

So spake he, nor did the white-armed goddess Hera disobey him, and she sped down from the hills of Ida to high Olympus, and went among the gathering of the immortal gods. And she called Apollo without the hall and Iris, that is the messenger of the immortal gods, and she spake winged words, and addressed them, saying: "Zeus bids you go to Ida as swiftly as may be, and when ye have gone, and looked on the face of Zeus, do ye whatsoever he shall order and command."

And these twain came before the face of Zeus the cloud gatherer, and stood there, and he was nowise displeased at heart when he beheld them, for that speedily they had obeyed the words of his dear wife. And to Iris first he spake winged words: "Go, get thee, swift Iris, to the prince Poseidon, and tell him all these things, nor be a false messenger. Command him to cease from war and battle, and to go among the tribes of the gods, or into the bright sea. But if he will not obey my words, but will hold me in no regard, then let him consider in his heart and mind, lest he dare not for all his strength to abide me when I come against him, since I deem me to be far mightier than he, and elder born."

So spake he, nor did the wind-footed fleet Iris disobey him, but went down the hills of Ida to sacred Ilios. And as when snow or chill hail fleets from the clouds beneath the stress of the North Wind born in the clear air, so fleetly she fled in her eagerness, swift Iris, and drew near the renowned Earth-shaker and spake to him the message of Zeus. And he left the host of the Achaians, and passed to the sea, and sank, and sorely they missed him, the heroes of the Achaians.

Then Zeus, the gatherer of the clouds, spake to Apollo, saying: “Go now, dear Phoebus, to Hector of the helm of bronze. Let glorious Hector be thy care, and rouse in him great wrath even till the Achaians come in their flight to the ships, and the Hellespont. And from that moment will I devise word and deed wherewithal the Achaians may take breath again from their toil.”

So spake he, nor was Apollo deaf to the word of the Father, but he went down the hills of Ida like a fleet falcon, the bane of doves, that is the swiftest of flying things. And he found the son of wise-hearted Priam, noble Hector, sitting up, no longer lying, for he had but late got back his life, and knew the comrades around him, and his gasping and his sweat had ceased, from the moment when the will of aegis-bearing Zeus began to revive him. Then far-darting Apollo stood near him, and spake to him: “Hector, son of Priam, why dost thou sit fainting apart from the others? Is it perchance that some trouble cometh upon thee?”

Then, with faint breath answered him Hector of the glancing helm: “Nay, but who art thou, best of the gods, who enquirest of me face to face? Dost thou not know that by the hindmost row of the ships of the Achaians, Aias of the loud war-cry smote me on the breast with a stone, as I was slaying his comrades, and made me cease from mine impetuous might? And verily I deemed that this very day I should pass to the dead, and the house of Hades, when I had gasped my life away.”

Then prince Apollo the Far-darter answered him again: “Take courage now, so great an ally hath the son of Kronos sent thee out of Ida, to stand by thee and defend thee, even Phoebus Apollo of the golden sword, me who of old defend thee, thyself and the steep citadel. But come now, bid thy many charioteers drive their swift steeds against the hollow ships, and I will go before and make smooth all the way for the chariots, and will put to flight the Achaian heroes.”

So he spake, and breathed great might into the shepherd of the host, and even as when a stalled horse, full fed at the manger, breaks his tether and speedeth at the gallop over the plain exultingly, being wont to bathe in the fair-flowing stream, and holds his head on high, and the mane floweth about his shoulders, and he trusteth in his glory, and nimbly his knees bear him to the haunts and pasture of the mares, even so Hector lightly moved his feet and knees, urging on his horsemen, when he heard the voice of the god. But as when hounds and country folk pursue a horned stag, or a wild goat, that steep rock and shady wood save from them, nor is it their lot to find him, but at their clamour a bearded lion hath shown himself on the way, and lightly turned them all despite their eagerness, even so the Danaans for a while followed on always in their companies, smiting with swords and double-pointed spears, but when they saw Hector going up and down the ranks of men, then were they afraid, and the hearts of all fell to their feet.

Then to them spake Thoas, son of Andraimon, far the best of the Aitolians, skilled in throwing the dart, and good in close fight, and in council did few of the Achaians surpass him, when the young men were striving in debate; he made harangue and spake among them: “Alas, and verily a great marvel is this I behold with mine eyes, how he hath again arisen, and hath avoided the Fates, even Hector. Surely each of us hoped in his heart, that he had died beneath the hand of Aias, son of Telamon. But some one of the gods again hath delivered and saved Hector, who verily hath loosened the knees of many of the Danaans, as methinks will befall even now, for not without the will of loud-thundering Zeus doth he rise in the front ranks, thus eager for battle. But come, as I declare let us all obey. Let us bid the throng turn back to the ships, but let us as many as avow us to be the best in the host, take our stand, if perchance first we may meet him, and hold him off with outstretched spears, and he, methinks, for all his eagerness, will fear at heart to enter into the press of the Danaans.”

So spake he, and they heard him eagerly, and obeyed him. They that were with Aias and the prince Idomeneus, and Teukros, and Neriones, and Meges the peer of Ares, called to all the best of the warriors and sustained the fight with Hector and the Trojans, but behind them the multitude returned to the ships of the Achaians.

Now the Trojans drave forward in close ranks, and with long strides Hector led them, while in front of him went Phoebus Apollo, his shoulders wrapped in cloud, and still he held the fell aegis, dread, circled with a shaggy fringe, and gleaming, that Hephaistos the smith gave to Zeus, to bear for the terror of men; with this in his hands did he lead the host.

Now the Argives abode them in close ranks, and shrill the cry arose on both sides, and the arrows leaped from the bow-strings, and many spears from stalwart hands, whereof some stood fast in the flesh of young men swift in fight, but many halfway, ere ever they reached the white flesh, stuck in the ground, longing to glut themselves with flesh. Now so long as Phoebus Apollo held the aegis unmoved in his hands, so long the darts smote either side amain, and the folk fell. But when he looked face to face on the Danaans of the swift steeds, and shook the aegis, and himself shouted mightily, he quelled their heart in their breast, and they forgot their impetuous valour. And as when two wild beasts drive in confusion a herd of kine, or a great flock of sheep, in the dark hour of black night, coming swiftly on them when the herdsman is not by, even so were the Achaians terror-stricken and strengthless, for Apollo sent a panic among them, but still gave renown to the Trojans and Hector.

And Hector smote his horses on the shoulder with the lash, and called aloud on the Trojans along the ranks. And they all cried out, and level with his held the steeds that drew their chariots, with a marvellous din, and in front of them Phoebus Apollo lightly dashed down with his feet the banks of the deep ditch, and cast them into the midst thereof, making a bridgeway long and wide as is a spear-cast, when a man throws to make trial of his strength. Thereby the Trojans poured forward in their battalions, while in their van Apollo held the splendid aegis. And most easily did he cast down the wall of the Achaians, as when a boy scatters the sand beside the sea, first making sand buildings for sport in his childishness, and then again, in his sport, confounding them with his feet and hands; even so didst thou, archer Apollo, confound the long toil and labour of the Argives, and among them rouse a panic fear.

So they were halting, and abiding by the ships, calling each to other; and lifting their hands to all the gods did each man pray vehemently, and chiefly prayed Nestor, the Warden of the Achaians, stretching his hand towards the starry heaven: “O father Zeus, if ever any one of us in wheat-bearing Argos did burn to thee fat thighs of bull or sheep, and prayed that he might return, and thou didst promise and assent thereto, of these things be thou mindful, and avert, Olympian, the pitiless day, nor suffer the Trojans thus to overcome the Achaians.”

So spake he in his prayer, and Zeus, the Lord of counsel, thundered loudly, hearing the prayers of the ancient son of Neleus.

But the Trojans when they heard the thunder of aegis-bearing Zeus, rushed yet the more eagerly upon the Argives, and were mindful of the joy of battle. And as when a great wave of the wide sea sweeps over the bulwarks of a ship, the might of the wind constraining it, which chiefly swells the waves, even so did the Trojans with a great cry bound over the wall, and drave their horses on, and at the hindmost row of the ships were fighting hand to hand with double-pointed spears, the Trojans from the chariots, but the Achaians climbing up aloft, from the black ships with long pikes that they had lying in the ships for battle at sea, jointed pikes shod at the head with bronze.

Now the Trojans, like ravening lions, rushed upon the ships, fulfilling the behests of Zeus, that ever was rousing their great wrath, but softened the temper of the Argives, and took away their glory, while he spurred on the others. For the heart of Zeus was set on giving glory to Hector, the son of Priam, that withal he might cast fierce-blazing fire, unwearied, upon the beaked ships, and so fulfil all the presumptuous prayer of Thetis; wherefore wise-counselling Zeus awaited, till his eyes should see the glare of a burning ship. For even from that hour was he to ordain the backward chase of the Trojans from the ships, and to give glory to the Danaans. With this design was he rousing Hector, Priam’s son, that himself was right eager, against the hollow ships. For short of life was he to be, yea, and already Pallas Athene was urging against him the day of destiny, at the hand of the son of Peleus. And fain he was to break the ranks of men, trying them wheresoever he saw the thickest press, and the goodliest harness. Yet not even so might he break them for all his eagerness. Nay, they stood firm, and embattled like a steep rock and a great, hard by the hoary sea, a rock that abides the swift paths of the shrill winds, and the swelling waves that roar against it. Even so the Danaans steadfastly abode the Trojans and fled not away. But Hector shining with fire on all sides leaped on the throng, and fell upon them, as when beneath the storm-clouds a fleet wave reared of the winds falls on a swift ship, and she is all hidden with foam, and the dread blast of the wind roars against the sail, and the sailors fear, and tremble in their hearts, for by but a little way are they borne forth from death, even so the spirit was torn in the breasts of the Achaians.

So again keen battle was set by the ships. Thou wouldst deem that unwearied and unworn they met each other in war, so eagerly they fought. And in their striving they were minded thus; the Achaians verily deemed that never would they flee from the danger, but perish there, but the heart of each Trojan hoped in his breast, that they should fire the ships, and slay the heroes of the Achaians. With these imaginations they stood to each other, and Hector seized the stern of a seafaring ship, a fair ship, swift on the brine, that had borne Protesilaos to Troia, but brought him not back again to his own country. Now round his ship the Achaians and Trojans warred on each other hand to hand, nor far apart did they endure the flights of arrows, nor of darts, but standing hard each by other, with one heart, with sharp axes and hatchets they fought, and with great swords, and double-pointed spears. And many fair brands, dark-scabbarded and hilted, fell to the ground, some from the hands, some from off the shoulders of warring men, and the black earth ran with blood. But Hector, after that once he had seized the ship’s stern, left not his hold, keeping the ensign in his hands, and he called to the Trojans: “Bring fire, and all with one voice do ye raise the war-cry; now hath Zeus given us the dearest day of all, — to take the ships that came hither against the will of the gods, and brought many woes upon us, by the cowardice of the elders, who withheld me when I was eager to fight at the sterns of the ships, and kept back the host. But if even then far-seeing Zeus did harm our wits, now he himself doth urge and command us onwards.” So spake he, and they set yet the fiercer on the Argives. And Aias no longer abode their onset, for he was driven back by the darts, but he withdrew a little, — thinking that now he should die, — on to the oarsman’s bench of seven feet long, and he left the decks of the trim ship. There then he stood on the watch, and with his spear he ever drave the Trojans from the ships, whosoever brought unwearied fire, and ever he shouted terribly, calling to the Danaans: “O friends, Danaan heroes, men of Ares’ company, play the man, my friends, and be mindful of impetuous valour. Do we deem that there be allies at our backs, or some wall stronger than this to ward off death from men? Verily there is not hard by any city arrayed with towers, whereby we might defend ourselves, having a host that could turn the balance of battle. Nay, but we are set down in the plain of the mailed men of Troy, with our backs against the sea, and far off from our own land. Therefore is safety in battle, and not in slackening from the fight.” So spake he, and rushed on ravening for battle, with his keen spear. And whosoever of the Trojans was coming against the ship with blazing fire, to pleasure Hector at his urging, him would Aias wound, awaiting him with his long spear, and twelve men in front of the ships at close quarters did he wound.

BOOK XVI.

How Patroklos fought in the armour of Achilles, and drove the Trojans from the ships, but was slain at last by Hector.

So they were warring round the well-timbered ship, but Patroklos drew near Achilles, shepherd of the host, and he shed warm tears, even as a fountain of dark water that down a steep cliff pours its cloudy stream. And noble swift-footed Achilles when he beheld him was grieved for his sake, and accosted him, and spake winged words, saying: “Wherefore weepest thou, Patroklos, like a fond little maid, that runs by her mother’s side, and bids her mother take her up, snatching at her gown, and hinders her in her going, and tearfully looks at her, till the mother takes her up? like her, Patroklos, dost thou let fall soft tears. Hast thou aught to tell to the Myrmidons, or to me myself, or is it some tidings out of Phthia that thou alone hast beard? Or dost thou lament for the sake of the Argives, — how they perish by the hollow ships through their own transgression? Speak out, and hide it not within thy spirit, that we may both know all.”

But with a heavy groan didst thou speak unto him, O knight Patroklos: “O Achilles, son of Peleus, far the bravest of the Achaians, be not wroth, seeing that so great calamity has beset the Achaians. For verily all of them that aforetime were the best are lying among the ships, smitten and wounded. Smitten is the son of Tydeus, strong Diomedes, and wounded is Odysseus, spearman renowned, and Agamemnon; and smitten is Eurypylos on the thigh with an arrow. And about them the leeches skilled in medicines are busy, healing their wounds, but thou art hard to reconcile, Achilles. Never then may such wrath take hold of me as that thou nursest; thou brave to the hurting of others. What other men later born shall have profit of thee, if thou dost not ward off base ruin from the Argives? Pitiless that thou art, the knight Peleus was not then thy father, nor Thetis thy mother, but the grey sea bare thee, and the sheer cliffs, so untoward is thy spirit. But if in thy heart thou art shunning some oracle, and thy lady mother hath told thee somewhat from Zeus, yet me do thou send forth quickly, and make the rest of the host of the Myrmidons follow me, if yet any light may arise from me to the Danaans. And give me thy harness to buckle about my shoulders, if perchance the Trojans may take me for thee, and so abstain from battle, and the warlike sons of the Achaians may take breath, wearied as they be, for brief is the breathing in war. And lightly might we that are fresh drive men wearied with the battle back to the citadel, away from the ships and the huts."

So he spake and besought him, in his unwittingness, for truly it was to be his own evil death and fate that he prayed for. Then to him in great heaviness spake swift-footed Achilles: "Ah me, Patroklos of the seed of Zeus, what word hast thou spoken? Neither take I heed of any oracle that I wot of, nor yet has my lady mother told me somewhat from Zeus, but this dread sorrow comes upon my heart and spirit, from the hour that a man wishes to rob me who am his equal, and to take away my prize, for that he excels me in power. A dread sorrow to me is this, after all the toils that my heart hath endured. The maiden that the sons of the Achaians chose out for me as my prize, and that I won with my spear when I sacked a well-walled city, her has mighty Agamemnon the son of Atreus taken back out of my hands, as though I were but some sojourner dishonourable. But we will let bygones be bygones. No man may be angry of heart for ever, yet verily I said that I would not cease from my wrath, until that time when to mine own ships should come the war-cry and the battle. But do thou on thy shoulders my famous harness, and lead the war-loving Myrmidons to the fight, to ward off destruction from the ships, lest they even burn the ships with blazing fire, and take away our desired return. But when thou hast driven them from the ships, return, and even if the loud-thundering lord of Hera grant thee to win glory, yet long not thou apart from me to fight with the war-loving Trojans; thereby wilt thou minish mine honour. Neither do thou, exulting in war and strife, and slaying the Trojans, lead on toward Ilios, lest one of the eternal gods from Olympus come against thee; right dearly doth Apollo the Far-darter love them. Nay, return back when thou halt brought safety to the ships, and suffer the rest to fight along the plain. For would, O father Zeus, and Athene, and Apollo, would that not one of all the Trojans might escape death, nor one of the Argives, but that we twain might avoid destruction, that alone we might undo the sacred coronal of Troy."

So spake they each to other, but Aias no longer abode the onset, for he was overpowered by darts; the counsel of Zeus was subduing him, and the shafts of the proud Trojans; and his bright helmet, being smitten, kept ringing terribly about his temples: for always it was smitten upon the fair-wrought cheek-pieces. Moreover his left shoulder was wearied, as steadfastly he held up his glittering shield, nor yet could they make him give ground, as they pressed on with their darts around him. And ever he was worn out with difficult breath, and much sweat kept running from all his limbs, nor had he a moment to draw breath, so on all sides was evil heaped on evil.

Tell me now, ye Muses that have mansions in Olympus, how first fire fell on the ships of the Achaians. Hector drew near, and the ashen spear of Aias he smote with his great sword, hard by the socket, behind the point, and shore it clean away, and the son of Telamon brandished in his hand no more than a pointless spear, and far from him the head of bronze fell ringing on the ground.

And Aias knew in his noble heart, and shuddered at the deeds of the gods, even how Zeus that thundereth on high did utterly cut off from him avail in war, and desired victory for the Trojans. Then Aias gave back out of the darts. But the Trojans cast on the swift ship unwearying fire, and instantly the inextinguishable flame streamed over her: so the fire begirt the stern, whereon Achilles smote his thighs, and spake to Patroklos: “Arise, Patroklos of the seed of Zeus, commander of the horsemen, for truly I see by the ships the rush of the consuming fire. Up then, lest they take the ships, and there be no more retreat; do on thy harness speedily, and I will summon the host.”

So spake he, while Patroklos was harnessing him in shining bronze. His goodly greaves, fitted with silver clasps, he first girt round his legs, and next did on around his breast the well-dight starry corslet of the swift-footed son of Aiakos. And round his shoulders he cast a sword of bronze, with studs of silver, and next took the great and mighty shield, and on his proud head set a well-wrought helm with a horse-hair crest, and terribly nodded the crest from above. Then seized he two strong lances that fitted his grasp, only he took not the spear of the noble son of Aiakos, heavy, and huge, and stalwart, that none other of the Achaians could wield. And Patroklos bade Automedon to yoke the horses speedily, even Automedon whom most he honoured after Achilles, the breaker of the ranks of men, and whom he held trustiest in battle to abide his call. And for him Automedon led beneath the yoke the swift horses, Xanthos and Balios, that fly as swift as the winds, the horses that the harpy Podarge bare to the West Wind, as she grazed on the meadow by the stream of Okeanos. And in the side-traces he put the goodly Pedasos, that Achilles carried away, when he took the city of Eetion; and being but a mortal steed, he followed with the immortal horses.

Meanwhile Achilles went and harnessed all the Myrmidons in the huts with armour, and they gathered like ravening wolves with strength in their hearts unspeakable. And among them all stood warlike Achilles urging on the horses and the targeteers. And he aroused the heart and valour of each of them, and the ranks were yet the closer serried when they heard the prince. And as when a man builds the wall of a high house with close-set stones, to avoid the might of the winds, even so close were arrayed the helmets and bossy shields, and shield pressed on shield, helm on helm, and man on man, and the horse-hair crests on the bright helmet-ridges touched each other when they nodded, so close they stood by each other.

And straightway they poured forth like wasps that have their dwelling by the wayside, and that boys are ever wont to vex, always tormenting them in their nests beside the way in childish sport, and a common evil they make for many. With heart and spirit like theirs the Myrmidons poured out now from the ships, and a cry arose unquenchable, and Patroklos called on his comrades, shouting aloud: “Myrmidons, ye comrades of Achilles son of Peleus, be men, my friends, and be mindful of your impetuous valour, that so we may win honour for the son of Peleus, that is far the bravest of the Argives by the ships, and whose close-fighting squires are the best. And let wide-ruling Agamemnon the son of Atreus learn his own blindness of heart, in that he nothing honoured the best of the Achaians.”

So spake he, and aroused each man’s heart and courage, and all in a mass they fell on the Trojans, and the ships around echoed wondrously to the cry of the Achaians. But when the Trojans beheld the strong son of Menoitios, himself and his squire, shining in their armour, the heart was stirred in all of them, and the companies wavered, for they deemed that by the ships the swift-footed son of Peleus had cast away his wrath, and chosen reconcilement: then each man glanced round, to see where he might flee sheer destruction.

But Patroklos first with a shining spear cast straight into the press, where most men were thronging, even by the stern of the ship of great-hearted Protesilaos, and he smote Pyraichmes, who led his Paionian horsemen out of Amydon, from the wide water of Axios; him he smote on the right shoulder, and he fell on his back in the dust with a groan, and his comrades around him, the Paionians, were afraid, for Patroklos sent fear among them all, when he slew their leader that was ever the best in fight. Then he drove them out from the ships, and quenched the burning fire. And the half-burnt ship was left there, and the Trojans fled, with a marvellous din, and the Danaans poured in among the hollow ships, and ceaseless was the shouting. And as when from the high crest of a great hill Zeus, the gatherer of the lightning, hath stirred a dense cloud, and forth shine all the peaks, and sharp promontories, and glades, and from heaven the infinite air breaks open, even so the Danaans, having driven the blazing fire from the ships, for a little while took breath, but there was no pause in the battle. For not yet were the Trojans driven in utter rout by the Achaians, dear to Ares, from the black ships, but they still stood up against them, and only perforce gave ground from the ships. But even as robber wolves fall on the lambs or kids, choosing them out of the herds, when they are scattered on hills by the witlessness of the shepherd, and the wolves behold it, and speedily harry the younglings that have no heart of courage, — even so the Danaans fell on the Trojans, and they were mindful of ill-sounding flight, and forgot their impetuous valour.

But that great Aias ever was fain to cast his spear at Hector of the helm of bronze, but he, in his cunning of war, covered his broad shoulders with his shield of bulls’ hide, and watched the hurtling of the arrows, and the noise of spears. And verily well he knew the change in the mastery of war, but even so he abode, and was striving to rescue his trusty comrades.

And as when from Olympus a cloud fares into heaven, from the sacred air, when Zeus spreadeth forth the tempest, even so from the ships came the war-cry and the rout, nor in order due did they cross the ditch again. But his swift-footed horses bare Hector forth with his arms, and he left the host of Troy, whom the delved trench restrained against their will. And in the trench did many swift steeds that draw the car break the fore-part of the pole, and leave the chariots of their masters.

But Patroklos followed after, crying fiercely to the Danaans, and full of evil will against the Trojans, while they with cries and flight filled all the ways, for they were scattered, and on high the storm of dust was scattered below the clouds, and the whole-hooved horses strained back towards the city, away from the ships and the huts.

But even where Patroklos saw the folk thickest in the rout, thither did he guide his horses with a cry, and under his axle-trees men fell prone from their chariots, and the cars were overturned with a din of shattering. But straight over the ditch, in forward flight, leaped the swift horses. And the heart of Patroklos urged him against Hector, for he was eager to smite him, but his swift steeds bore Hector forth and away. And even as beneath a tempest the whole black earth is oppressed, on an autumn day, when Zeus pours forth rain most vehemently, and all the rivers run full, and many a scaur the torrents tear away, and down to the dark sea they rush headlong from the hills, roaring mightily, and minished are the works of men, even so mighty was the roar of the Trojan horses as they ran.

Now Patroklos when he had cloven the nearest companies, drave them backward again to the ships, nor suffered them to approach the city, despite their desire, but between the ships, and the river, and the lofty wall, he rushed on them, and slew them, and avenged many a comrade slain. There first he smote Pronoos with a shining spear, where the shield left bare the breast, and loosened his limbs, and he fell with a crash. Then Thestor the son of Enops he next assailed, as he sat crouching in the polished chariot, for he was struck distraught, and the reins flew from his hands. Him he drew near, and smote with the lance on the right jaw, and clean pierced through his teeth. And Patroklos caught hold of the spear and dragged him over the rim of the car, as when a man sits on a jutting rock, and drags a sacred fish forth from the sea, with line and glittering hook of bronze; so on the bright spear dragged he Thestor gaping from the chariot, and cast him down on his face and life left him as he fell. Next, as Euryalos came on, he smote him on the midst of the head with a stone, and all his head was shattered within the strong helmet, and prone on the earth he fell, and death that slayeth the spirit overwhelmed him. Next Erymas, and Amphoteros, and Epaltes and Tlepolemos son of Damastor, and Echios and Pyris, and Ipheus and Euippos, and Polymelos son of Argeas, all these in turn he brought low to the bounteous earth. But when Sarpedon beheld his comrades with ungirdled doublets, subdued beneath the hands of Patroklos son of Menoitios, he cried aloud, upbraiding the godlike Lykians: “Shame, ye Lykians, whither do ye flee? Now be ye strong, for I will encounter this man that I may know who he is that conquers here, and verily many evils hath he wrought the Trojans, in that he hath loosened the knees of many men and noble.”

So spake he, and leaped with his arms from the chariot to the ground. But Patroklos, on the other side, when he beheld him leaped from his chariot. And they, like vultures of crooked talons and curved beaks, that war with loud yells on some high cliff, even so they rushed with cries against each other. And beholding then the son of Kronos of the crooked counsels took pity on them, and he spake to Hera, his sister and wife: “Ah woe is me for that it is fated that Sarpedon, the best-beloved of men to me, shall be subdued under Patroklos son of Menoitios. And in two ways my heart within my breast is divided, as I ponder whether I should catch him up alive out of the tearful war, and set him down in the rich land of Lykia, or whether I should now subdue him beneath the hands of the son of Menoitios.”

Then the ox-eyed lady Hera made answer to him: “Most dread son of Kronos, what word is this thou hast spoken? A mortal man long doomed to fate dost thou desire to deliver again from death of evil name? Work thy will, but all we other gods will in no wise praise thee. And another thing I will tell thee, and do thou lay it up in thy heart; if thou dost send Sarpedon living to his own house, consider lest thereon some other god likewise desire to send his own dear son away out of the strong battle. For round the great citadel of Priam war many sons of the Immortals, and among the Immortals wilt thou send terrible wrath. But if he be dear to thee, and thy heart mourns for him, truly then suffer him to be subdued in the strong battle beneath the hands of Patroklos son of Menoitios, but when his soul and life leave that warrior, send Death and sweet Sleep to bear him, even till they come to the land of wide Lykia, there will his kindred and friends bury him, with a barrow and a pillar, for this is the due of the dead.”

So spake she, nor did the father of gods and men disregard her. But he shed bloody raindrops on the earth, honouring his dear son, that Patroklos was about to slay in the deep-soiled land of Troia, far off from his own country. Now when they were come near each other in onset, there verily did Patroklos smite the renowned Thrasymelos, the good squire of the prince Sarpedon, on the lower part of the belly, and loosened his limbs. But Sarpedon missed him with his shining javelin, as he in turn rushed on, but wounded the horse Pedasos on the right shoulder with the spear, and he shrieked as he breathed his life away, and fell crying in the dust, and his spirit fled from him. But the other twain reared this way and that, and the yoke creaked, and the reins were confused on them, when their trace-horse lay in the dust. But thereof did Automedon, the spearman renowned, find a remedy, and drawing his long-edged sword from his stout thigh, he leaped forth, and cut adrift the horse, with no delay, and the pair righted themselves, and strained in the reins, and they met again in life-devouring war.

Then again Sarpedon missed with his shining dart, and the point of the spear flew over the left shoulder of Patroklos and smote him not, but he in turn arose with the bronze, and his javelin flew not vainly from his hand, but struck Sarpedon even where the midriff clasps the beating heart. And he fell as falls an oak, or a silver poplar, or a slim pine tree, that on the hills the shipwrights fell with whetted axes, to be timber for ship-building; even so before the horses and chariot he lay at length, moaning aloud, and clutching at the bloody dust. And as when a lion hath fallen on a herd, and slain a bull, tawny and high of heart, among the kine of trailing gait, and he perishes groaning beneath the claws of the lion, even so under Patroklos did the leader of the Lykian shieldmen rage, even in death, and he called to his dear comrade: “Dear Glaukos, warrior among warlike men, now most doth it behove thee to be a spearman, and a hardy fighter: now let baneful war be dear to thee, if indeed thou art a man of might. First fare all about and urge on the heroes that be leaders of the Lykians, to fight for Sarpedon, and thereafter thyself do battle for me with the sword. For to thee even in time to come shall I be shame and disgrace for ever, all thy days, if the Achaians strip me of mine armour, fallen in the gathering of the ships. Nay, hold out manfully, and spur on all the host.”

Even as he spake thus, the end of death veiled over his eyes and his nostrils, but Patroklos, setting foot on his breast drew the spear out of his flesh, and the midriff followed with the spear, so that he drew forth together the spear point, and the soul of Sarpedon; and the Myrmidons held there his panting steeds, eager to fly afar, since the chariot was reft of its lords.

Then dread sorrow came on Glaukos, when he heard the voice of Sarpedon, and his heart was stirred, that he availed not to succour him. And with his hand he caught and held his arm, for the wound galled him, the wound of the arrow wherewith, as he pressed on towards the lofty wall, Teukros had smitten him, warding off destruction from his fellows. Then in prayer spake Glaukos to far-darting Apollo: “Hear, O Prince that art somewhere in the rich land of Lykia, or in Troia, for thou canst listen everywhere to the man that is in need, as even now need cometh upon me. For I have this stark wound, and mine arm is thoroughly pierced with sharp pains, nor can my blood be stanched, and by the wound is my shoulder burdened, and I cannot hold my spear firm, nor go and fight against the enemy. And the best of men has perished, Sarpedon, the son of Zeus, and he succours not even his own child. But do thou, O Prince, heal me this stark wound, and lull my pains, and give me strength, that I may call on my Lykian kinsmen, and spur them to the war, and myself may fight about the dead man fallen.”

So spake he in his prayer, and Phoebus Apollo heard him. Straightway he made his pains to cease, and in the grievous wound stanched the black blood, and put courage into his heart. And Glaukos knew it within him, and was glad, for that the great god speedily heard his prayer. First went he all about and urged on them that were leaders of the Lykians to fight around Sarpedon, and thereafter he went with long strides among the Trojans, to Polydamas son of Panthoos and noble Agenor, and he went after Aineias, and Hector of the helm of bronze, and standing by them spake winged words: “Hector, now surely art thou utterly forgetful of the allies, that for thy sake, far from their friends and their own country, breathe their lives away! but thou carest not to aid them! Sarpedon lies low, the leader of the Lykian shieldmen, he that defended Lykia by his dooms and his might, yea him hath mailed Ares subdued beneath the spear of Patroklos. But, friends, stand by him, and be angry in your hearts lest the Myrmidons strip him of his harness, and dishonour the dead, in wrath for the sake of the Danaans, even them that perished, whom we slew with spears by the swift ships.”

So spake he, and sorrow seized the Trojans utterly, ungovernable and not to be borne; for Sarpedon was ever the stay of their city, all a stranger as he was, for many people followed with him, and himself the best warrior of them all. Then they made straight for the Danaans eagerly, and Hector led them, being wroth for Sarpedon’s sake. But the fierce heart of Patrokloa son of Menoitios urged on the Achaians. And he spake first to the twain Aiantes that themselves were right eager: “Aiantes, now let defence be your desire, and be such as afore ye were among men, or even braver yet. That man lies low who first leaped on to the wall of the Achaians, even Sarpedon. Nay, let us strive to take him, and work his body shame, and strip the harness from his shoulders, and many a one of his comrades fighting for his sake let us subdue with the pitiless bronze.”

So spake he, and they themselves were eager in defence. So on both sides they strengthened the companies, Trojans and Lykians, Myrmidons and Achaians, and they joined battle to fight around the dead man fallen; terribly they shouted, and loud rang the harness of men. And as the din ariseth of woodcutters in the glades of a mountain, and the sound thereof is heard far away, so rose the din of them from the wide-wayed earth, the noise of bronze and of well-tanned bulls' hides smitten with swords and double-pointed spears. And now not even a clear-sighted man could any longer have known noble Sarpedon, for with darts and blood and dust was he covered wholly from head to foot. And ever men thronged about the dead, as in a steading flies buzz around the full milk-pails, in the season of spring, when the milk drenches the bowls, even so thronged they about the dead. Nor ever did Zeus turn from the strong fight his shining eyes, but ever looked down on them, and much in his heart he debated of the slaying of Patroklos, whether there and then above divine Sarpedon glorious Hector should slay him likewise in strong battle with the sword, and strip his harness from his shoulders, or whether to more men yet he should deal sheer labour of war. And thus to him as he pondered it seemed the better way, that the gallant squire of Achilles, Peleus' son, should straightway drive the Trojans and Hector of the helm of bronze towards the city, and should rob many of their life. And in Hector first he put a weakling heart, and leaping into his car Hector turned in flight, and cried on the rest of the Trojans to flee, for he knew the turning of the sacred scales of Zeus. Thereon neither did the strong Lykians abide, but fled all in fear, when they beheld their king stricken to the heart, lying in the company of the dead, for many had fallen above him, when Kronion made fierce the fight. Then the others stripped from the shoulders of Sarpedon his shining arms of bronze, and these the strong son of Menoitios gave to his comrades to bear to the hollow ships. Then Zeus that gathereth the clouds spake to Apollo: "Prithee, dear Phoebus, go take Sarpedon out of range of darts, and cleanse the black blood from him, and thereafter bear him far away, and bathe him in the streams of the river, and anoint him with ambrosia, and clothe him in garments that wax not old, and send him to be wafted by fleet convoy, by the twin brethren Sleep and Death, that quickly will set him in the rich land of wide Lykia. There will his kinsmen and clansmen give him burial, with barrow and pillar, for such is the due of the dead."

So spake he, nor was Apollo disobedient to his father. He went down the hills of Ida to the dread battle din, and straight way bore goodly Sarpedon out of the darts, and carried him far away and bathed him in the streams of the river, and anointed him with ambrosia, and clad him in garments that wax not old, and sent him to be wafted by fleet convoy, the twin brethren Sleep and Death, that swiftly set him down in the rich land of wide Lykia. But Patroklos cried to his horses and Automedon, and after the Trojans and Lykians went he, and so was blindly forgetful, in his witlessness, for if he had kept the saying of the son of Peleus, verily he should have escaped the evil fate of black death. But ever is the wit of Zeus stronger than the wit of men, so now he roused the spirit of Patroklos in his breast. There whom first, whom last didst thou slay, Patroklos, when the gods called thee deathward? Adrestos first, and Autonoos, and Echeklos, and Perimos, son of Megas, and Epistor, and Melanippos, and thereafter Elasos, and Moulios, and Pylartes; these he slew, but the others were each man of them fain of flight. Then would the sons of the Achaians have taken high-gated Troy, by the hands of Patroklos, for around and before him he raged with the spear, but that Phoebus Apollo stood on the well-builded wall, with baneful thoughts towards Patroklos, and succouring the Trojans. Thrice clomb Patroklos on the corner of the lofty wall, and thrice did Apollo force him back and smote the shining shield with his immortal hands. But when for the fourth time he came on like a god, then cried far-darting Apollo terribly, and spake winged words: “Give back, Patroklos of the seed of Zeus! Not beneath thy spear is it fated that the city of the valiant Trojans shall fall, nay nor beneath Achilles, a man far better than thou.”

So spake he, and Patroklos retreated far back, avoiding the wrath of far-darting Apollo. But Hector within the Skaian gates was restraining his whole-hooved horses, pondering whether he should drive again into the din and fight, or should call unto the host to gather to the wall. While thus he was thinking, Phoebus Apollo stood by him in the guise of a young man and a strong, Asios, who was the mother’s brother of horse-taming Hector, being own brother of Hekabe, and son of Dymas, who dwelt in Phrygia, on the streams of Sangarios. In his guise spake Apollo, son of Zeus, to Hector: “Hector, wherefore dost thou cease from fight? It doth not behove thee. Would that I were as much stronger than thou as I am weaker, thereon quickly shouldst thou stand aloof from war to thy hurt. But come, turn against Patroklos thy strong-hooved horses, if perchance thou mayst slay him, and Apollo give thee glory.”

So spake the god, and went back again into the moil of men. But renowned Hector bade wise-hearted Kebriones to lash his horses into the war. Then Apollo went and passed into the press, and sent a dread panic among the Argives, but to the Trojans and Hector gave he renown. And Hector let the other Argives be, and slew none of them, but against Patroklos he turned his strong-hooved horses, and Patroklos on the other side leaped from his chariot to the ground, with a spear in his left hand, and in his other hand grasped a shining jagged stone, that his hand covered. Firmly he planted himself and hurled it, nor long did he shrink from his foe, nor was his cast in vain, but he struck Kebriones the charioteer of

Hector, the bastard son of renowned Priam, on the brow with the sharp stone, as he held the reins of the horses. Both his brows the stone drave together, and his bone held not, but his eyes fell to the ground in the dust, there, in front of his feet. Then he, like a diver, fell from the well-wrought car, and his spirit left his bones. Then taunting him didst thou address him, knightly Patroklos: "Out on it, how nimble a man, how lightly he diveth! Yea, if perchance he were on the teeming deep, this man would satisfy many by seeking for oysters, leaping from the ship, even if it were stormy weather, so lightly now he diveth from the chariot into the plain. Verily among the Trojans too there be diving men."

So speaking he set on the hero Kebriones with the rush of a lion, that while wasting the cattle-pens is smitten in the breast, and his own valour is his bane, even so against Kebriones, Patroklos, didst thou leap furiously. But Hector, on the other side, leaped from his chariot to the ground. And these twain strove for Kebriones like lions, that on the mountain peaks fight, both hungering, both high of heart, for a slain hind. Even so for Kebriones' sake these two masters of the war-cry, Patroklos son of Menoitios, and renowned Hector, were eager each to hew the other's flesh with the ruthless bronze.

Hector then seized him by the head, and slackened not hold, while Patroklos on the other side grasped him by the foot, and thereon the others, Trojans and Danaans, joined strong battle. And as the East wind and the South contend with one another in shaking a deep wood in the dells of a mountain, shaking beech, and ash, and smooth-barked cornel tree, that clash against each other their long boughs with marvellous din, and a noise of branches broken, so the Trojans and Achaians were leaping on each other and slaying, nor had either side any thought of ruinous flight. And many sharp darts were fixed around Kebriones, and winged arrows leaping from the bow-string, and many mighty stones smote the shields of them that fought around him. But he in the whirl of dust lay mighty and mightily fallen, forgetful of his chivalry.

Now while the sun was going about mid-heaven, so long the darts smote either side, and the host fell, but when the sun turned to the time of the loosing of oxen, lo, then beyond their doom the Achaians proved the better. The hero Kebriones drew they forth from the darts, out of the tumult of the Trojans, and stripped the harness from his shoulders, and with ill design against the Trojans, Patroklos rushed upon them. Three times then rushed he on, peer of swift Ares, shouting terribly, and thrice he slew nine men. But when the fourth time he sped on like a god, thereon to thee, Patroklos, did the end of life appear, for Phoebus met thee in the strong battle, in dreadful wise. And Patroklos was not ware of him coming through the press, for hidden in thick mist did he meet him, and stood behind him, and smote his back and broad shoulders with a down-stroke of his hand,

and his eyes were dazed. And from his head Phoebus Apollo smote the helmet that rolled rattling away with a din beneath the hooves of the horses, the helm with upright socket, and the crests were defiled with blood and dust. And all the long-shadowed spear was shattered in the hands of Patroklos, the spear great and heavy and strong, and sharp, while from his shoulders the tasselled shield with the baldric fell to the ground.

And the prince Apollo, son of Zeus, loosed his corslet, and blindness seized his heart and his shining limbs were unstrung, and he stood in amaze, and at close quarters from behind a Dardanian smote him on the back, between the shoulders, with a sharp spear, even Euphorbos, son of Panthoos, who excelled them of his age in casting the spear, and in horsemanship, and in speed of foot. Even thus, verily, had he cast down twenty men from their chariots, though then first had he come with his car to learn the lesson of war. He it was that first smote a dart into thee, knightly Patroklos, nor overcame thee, but ran back again and mingled with the throng, first drawing forth from the flesh his ashen spear, nor did he abide the onset of Patroklos, unarmed as he was, in the strife. But Patroklos, being overcome by the stroke of the god, and by the spear, gave ground, and retreated to the host of his comrades, avoiding Fate. But Hector, when he beheld great-hearted Patroklos give ground, being smitten with the keen bronze, came nigh unto him through the ranks, and wounded him with a spear, in the lowermost part of the belly, and drave the bronze clean through. And he fell with a crash, and sorely grieved the host of Achaians. And as when a lion hath overcome in battle an untiring boar, they twain fighting with high heart on the crests of a hill, about a little well, and both are desirous to drink, and the lion hath by force overcome the boar that draweth difficult breath; so after that he had slain many did Hector son of Priam take the life away from the strong son of Menoitios, smiting him at close quarters with the spear; and boasting over him he spake winged words: “Patroklos, surely thou saidst that thou wouldst sack my town, and from Trojan women take away the day of freedom, and bring them in ships to thine own dear country: fool! nay, in front of these were the swift horses of Hector straining their speed for the fight; and myself in wielding the spear excel among the war-loving Trojans, even I who ward from them the day of destiny: but thee shall vultures here devour. Ah, wretch, surely Achilles for all his valour, availed thee not, who straitly charged thee as thou camest, he abiding there, saying, ‘Come not to me, Patroklos lord of steeds, to the hollow ships, till thou hast torn the gory doublet of man-slaying Hector about his breast;’ so, surely, he spake to thee, and persuaded the wits of thee in thy witlessness.”

Then faintly didst thou answer him, knightly Patroklos: “Boast greatly, as now, Hector, for to thee have Zeus, son of Kronos, and Apollo given the victory, who lightly have subdued me; for themselves stripped my harness from my shoulders. But if twenty such as thou had encountered me, here had they all perished, subdued beneath my spear. But me have ruinous Fate and the son of Leto slain, and of men Euphorbos, but thou art the third in my slaying. But another thing will I tell thee, and do thou lay it up in thy heart: verily thou thyself art not long to live, but already doth Death stand hard by thee, and strong Fate, that thou art to be subdued by the hands of noble Achilles, of the seed of Aiakos.”

Even as so he spake the end of death overshadowed him. And his soul, fleeting from his limbs, went down to the house of Hades, wailing its own doom, leaving manhood and youth.

Then renowned Hector spake to him even in his death: “Patroklos, wherefore to me dolt thou prophesy sheer destruction? who knows but that Achilles, the child of fair-tressed Thetis, will first be smitten by my spear, and lose his life?”

So spake he, and drew the spear of bronze from the wound, setting his foot on the dead, and cast him off on his back from the spear. And straightway with the spear he went after Automedon, the godlike squire of the swift-footed Aiakides, for he was eager to smite him; but his swift-footed immortal horses bare him out of the battle, horses that the gods gave to Peleus, a splendid gift.

BOOK XVII.

Of the battle around the body of Patroklos.

But Atreus’ son, Menelaos dear to Ares, was not unaware of the slaying of Patroklos by the Trojans in the fray. He went up through the front of the fight harnessed in flashing bronze, and strode over the body as above a first-born calf standeth lowing its mother. Thus above Patroklos strode fair-haired Menelaos, and before him held his spear and the circle of his shield, eager to slay whoever should encounter him. Then was Panthoos’ son of the stout ashen spear not heedless of noble Patroklos as he lay, and he smote on the circle of the shield of Menelaos, but the bronze spear brake it not, but the point was bent back in the stubborn shield. And Menelaos Atreus’ son in his turn made at him with his bronze spear, having prayed unto father Zeus, and as he gave back pierced the nether part of his throat, and threw his weight into the stroke, following his heavy hand; and sheer through the tender neck went the point of the spear. And he fell with a crash, and his armour rang upon him. In blood was his hair drenched that was like unto the hair of the Graces, and his tresses closely knit with bands of silver and gold.

Then easily would the son of Atreus have borne off the noble spoils of Panthoos’ son, had not Phoebus Apollo grudged it to him, and aroused against him Hector peer of swift Ares, putting on the semblance of a man, of Mentes chief of the Kikones. And he spake aloud to him winged words: “Hector, now art thou hasting after things unattainable, even the horses of wise Aiakides; for hard are they to be tamed or driven by mortal man, save only Achilles whom an immortal mother bare. Meanwhile hath warlike Menelaos Atreus’ son stridden over Patroklos and slain the best of the Trojans there, even Panthoos’ son Euphorbos, and hath stayed him in his impetuous might.”

Thus saying the god went back into the strife of men, but dire grief darkened Hectors inmost soul, and then he gazed searchingly along the lines, and straightway was aware of the one man stripping off the noble arms, and the other lying on the earth; and blood was flowing about the gaping wound. Then he went through the front of the fight harnessed in flashing bronze, crying a shrill cry, like unto Hephaistos’ flame unquenchable. Not deaf to his shrill cry was Atreus’ son, and sore troubled he spake to his great heart: “Ay me, if I shall leave behind me these goodly arms, and Patroklos who here lieth for my vengeance' sake, I fear lest some Danaan beholding it be wroth against me. But if for honour's sake I do battle alone with Hector and the Trojans, I fear lest they come about me many against one; for all the Trojans is bright-helmed Hector leading hither. But if I might somewhere find Aias of the loud war-cry, then both together would we go and be mindful of battle even were it against the power of heaven, if haply we might save his dead for Achilles Peleus' son: that were best among these ills."

While thus he communed with his mind and heart, therewithal the Trojan ranks came onward, and Hector at their head. Then Menelaos gave backward, and left the dead man, turning himself ever about like a deep-waned lion which men and dogs chase from a fold with spears and cries; and his strong heart within him groweth chill, and loth goeth he from the steading; so from Patroklos went fair-haired Menelaos, and turned and stood, when he came to the host of his comrades, searching for mighty Aias Telamon's son. Him very speedily he espied on the left of the whole battle, cheering his comrades and rousing them to fight, for great terror had Phoebus Apollo sent on them; and he hasted him to run, and straightway stood by him and said: "This way, beloved Aias; let us bestir us for the dead Patroklos, if haply his naked corpse at least we may carry to Achilles, though his armour is held by Hector of the glancing helm."

Thus spake he, and aroused the heart of wise Aias. And he went up through the front of the fight, and with him fair-haired Menelaos. Now Hector, when he had stripped from Patroklos his noble armour, was dragging him thence that he might cut off the head from the shoulders with the keen bronze and carry his body to give to the dogs of Troy. But Aias came anigh, and the shield that he bare was as a tower; then Hector gave back into the company of his comrades, and sprang into his chariot; and the goodly armour he gave to the Trojans to carry to the city, to be great glory unto him. But Aias spread his broad shield over the son of Menoitios and stood as it were a lion before his whelps when huntsmen in a forest encounter him as he leadeth his young. And by his side stood Atreus' son, Menelaos dear to Ares, nursing great sorrow in his breast.

Then Hector called on the Trojans with a mighty shout; "Trojans and Lykians and Dardanians that fight hand to hand, be men, my friends, and bethink you of impetuous valour, until I do on me the goodly arms of noble Achilles that I stripped from brave Patroklos when I slew him."

Thus having spoken went Hector of the glancing helm forth out of the strife of war, and ran and speedily with fleet feet following overtook his comrades, not yet far off, who were bearing to the city Peleides' glorious arms. And standing apart from the dolorous battle he changed his armour; his own he gave the warlike Trojans to carry to sacred Ilios, and he put on the divine arms of Achilles, Peleus’ son.

But when Zeus that gathereth the clouds beheld from afar off Hector arming him in the armour of Peleus’ godlike son, he shook his head and spake thus unto his soul: “Ah, hapless man, no thought is in thy heart of death that yet draweth nigh unto thee; thou doest on thee the divine armour of a peerless man before whom the rest have terror. His comrade, gentle and brave, thou hast slain, and unmeetly hast stripped the armour from his head and shoulders; yet now for a while at least I will give into thy hands great might, in recompense for this, even that nowise shalt thou come home out of the battle, for Andromache to receive from thee Peleides’ glorious arms.”

Thus spake the son of Kronos, and bowed his dark brows therewithal.

But the armour fitted itself unto Hectors body, and Ares the dread war-god entered into him, and his limbs were filled within with valour and strength. Then he sped among the noble allies with a mighty cry, and in the flashing of his armour he seemed to all of them like unto Peleus’ great-hearted son. And he came to each and encouraged him with his words — Mesthles and Glaukos and Medon and Thersilochos and Asteropaios and Deisenor and Hippothoos and Phorkys and Chromios and the augur Ennomos — these encouraged he and spake to them winged words: “Listen, ye countless tribes of allies that dwell round about. It was not for mere numbers that I sought or longed when I gathered each of you from your cities, but that ye might zealously guard the Trojans’ wives and infant little ones from the war-loving Achaians. For this end am I wearying my people by taking gifts and food from them, and nursing thereby the courage of each of you. Now therefore let all turn straight against the foe and live or die, for such is the dalliance of war. And whoso shall drag Patroklos, dead though he be, among the horse-taming men of Troy, and make Aias yield, to him will I award half the spoils and keep half myself; so shall his glory be great as mine.”

Thus spake he, and they against the Danaans charged with all their weight, levelling their spears, and their hearts were high of hope to drag the corpse from under Aias, Telamon’s son. Fond men! from full many reft he life over that corpse. And then spake Aias to Menelaos of the loud war-cry: “Dear Menelaos, fosterling of Zeus, no longer count I that we two of ourselves shall return home out of the war. Nor have I so much dread for the corpse of Patroklos, that shall soon glut the dogs and birds of the men of Troy, as for thy head and mine lest some evil fall thereon, for all is shrouded by a storm-cloud of war, even by Hector, and sheer doom stareth in our face. But come, call thou to the best men of the Danaans, if haply any hear.”

Thus spake he, and Menelaos of the loud war-cry disregarded him not, but shouted unto the Danaans, crying a far-heard cry: “O friends, ye leaders and counsellors of the Argives, who by the side of the sons of Atreus, Agamemnon and Menelaos, drink at the common cost and are all commanders of the host, on whom wait glory and honour from Zeus, hard is it for me to distinguish each chief amid the press — such blaze is there of the strife of war. But let each go forward of himself and be wroth at heart that Patroklos should become a sport among the dogs of Troy.”

Thus spake he, and Oileus’ son fleet Aias heard him clearly, and was first to run along the mellay to meet him, and after him Idomeneus, and Idomeneus’ brother-in-arms, Meriones, peer of the man-slaying war-god. And who shall of his own thought tell the names of the rest, even of all that after these aroused the battle of the Achaians?

Now the Trojans charged forward in close array, and Hector led them. And as when at the mouth of some heaven-born river a mighty wave roareth against the stream, and arouseth the high cliffs’ echo as the salt sea belloweth on the beach, so loud was the cry wherewith the Trojans came. But the Achaians stood firm around Menoitios’ son with one soul all, walled in with shields of bronze. And over their bright helmets the son of Kronos shed thick darkness, for in the former time was Menoitios’ son not unloved of him, while he was yet alive and squire of Aiakides. So was Zeus loth that he should become a prey of the dogs of his enemies at Troy, and stirred his comrades to do battle for him.

Now first the Trojans thrust back the glancing-eyed Achaians, who shrank before them and left the dead, yet the proud Trojans slew not any of them with spears, though they were fain, but set to hale the corpse. But little while would the Achaians hold back therefrom, for very swiftly Aias rallied them, Aias the first in presence and in deeds of all the Danaans after the noble son of Peleus. Right through the fighters in the forefront rushed he like a wild boar in his might that in the mountains when he turneth at bay scattereth lightly dogs and lusty young men through the glades. Thus did proud Telamon’s son the glorious Aias press on the Trojan battalions and lightly scatter them, as they had bestrode Patroklos and were full fain to drag him to their city and win renown.

Then would the Trojans in their turn in their weakness overcome have been driven back into Ilios by the Achaians dear to Ares, and the Argives would have won glory even against the appointment of Zeus by their power and might. But Apollo himself aroused Aineias, putting on the semblance of Periphas the herald, the son of Epytos, who grew old with his old father in his heraldship, of friendly thought toward Aineias. In his similitude spake Apollo, son of Zeus: “Aineias, how could ye ever guard high Ilios if it were against the will of God? Other men have I seen that trust in their own might and power and valour, and in their host, even though they have scant folk to lead. But here, albeit Zeus is fainer far to give victory to us than to the Danaans, yet ye are dismayed exceedingly and fight not.”

Thus spake he, and Aineias knew far-darting Apollo when he looked upon his face, and spake unto Hector, shouting loud “Hector and ye other leaders of the Trojans and their allies, shame were this if in our weakness overcome we were driven back into Ilios by the Achaians dear to Ares. Nay, thus saith a god, who standeth by my side: Zeus, highest Orderer, is our helper in this fight. Therefore let us go right onward against the Danaans. Not easily at least let them take the dead Patroklos to the ships.”

Thus spake he, and leapt forth far before the fighters in the front. And the Trojans rallied and stood up against the Achaians. Thus strove they as it had been fire, nor wouldst thou have thought there was still sun or moon, for over all the battle where the chiefs stood around the slain son of Menoitios they were shrouded in darkness, while the other Trojans and well-greaved Achaians fought at ease in the clear air, and piercing sunlight was spread over them, and on all the earth and hills there was no cloud seen; and they ceased fighting now sad again, avoiding each other’s dolorous darts and standing far apart. But they who were in the midst endured affliction of the darkness and the battle, and all the best men of them were wearied by the pitiless weight of their bronze arms.

Thus all day long waxed the mighty fray of their sore strife; and unabatingly ever with the sweat of toil were the knees and legs and feet of each man and arms anal eyes bedewed as the two hosts did battle around the brave squire of fleet Aiakides. And as when a man giveth the hide of a great bull to his folk to stretch, all soaked in fat, and they take and stretch it standing in a circle, and straightway the moisture thereof departeth and the fat entereth in under the haling of many hands, and it is all stretched throughout, — thus they on both sides haled the dead man this way and that in narrow space, for their hearts were high of hope, the Trojans that they should drag him to Ilios and the Achaians to the hollow ships; and around him the fray waxed wild, nor might Ares rouser of hosts nor Athene despise the sight thereof, albeit their anger were exceeding great.

Such was the grievous travail of men and horses over Patroklos that Zeus on that day wrought. But not as yet knew noble Achilles aught of Patroklos’ death, for far away from the swift ships they were fighting beneath the wall of the men of Troy. Therefore never deemed he in his heart that he was dead, but that he should come back alive, after that he had touched the gates; for neither that other thought had he anywise, that Patroklos should sack the stronghold without his aid.

Now the rest continually around the dead man with their keen spears made onset relentlessly and slew each the other. And thus would one speak among the mail-clad Achaians: “Friends, it were verily not glorious for us to go back to the hollow ships; rather let the black earth yawn for us all beneath our feet. Far better were that straightway for us if we suffer the horse-taming Trojans to hale this man to their city and win renown.”

And thus on the other side would one of the great-hearted Trojans say: “Friends, though it were our fate that all together we be slain beside this man, let none yet give backward from the fray.”

Thus would one speak, and rouse the spirit of each. So they fought on, and the iron din went up through the high desert air unto the brazen heaven. But the horses of Aiakides that were apart from the battle were weeping, since first they were aware that their charioteer was fallen in the dust beneath the hand of man-slaying Hector. Verily Automedon, Diores’ valiant son, plied them oft with blows of the swift lash, and oft with gentle words he spake to them and oft with chiding, yet would they neither go back to the ships at the broad Hellespont nor yet to the battle after the Achaians, but as a pillar abideth firm that standeth on the tomb of a man or woman dead, so abode they immovably with the beautiful chariot, abasing their heads unto the earth. And hot tears flowed from their eyes to the ground as they mourned in sorrow for their charioteer, and their rich manes were soiled as they drooped from beneath the yoke-cushion on both sides beside the yoke. And when the son of Kronos beheld them mourning he had compassion on them, and shook his head and spake to his own heart: “Ah, hapless pair, why gave we you to king Peleus, a mortal man, while ye are deathless and ever young? Was it that ye should suffer sorrows among ill-fated men? For methinketh there is nothing more piteous than a man among all things that breathe and creep upon the earth. But verily Hector Priam’s son shall not drive you and your deftly-wrought car; that will I not suffer. Is it a small thing that he holdeth the armour and vaunteth himself vainly thereupon? Nay, I will put courage into your knees and heart that ye may bring Automedon also safe out of the war to the hollow ships. For yet further will I increase victory to the men of Troy, so that they slay until they come unto the well-timbered ships, and the sun set and divine night come down.”

Thus saying he breathed good courage into the horses. And they shook to earth the dust from their manes, and lightly bare the swift car amid Trojans and Achaians. And behind them fought Automedon, albeit in grief for his comrade, swooping with his chariot as a vulture on wild geese; for lightly he would flee out of the onset of the Trojans and lightly charge, pursuing them through the thick mellay. Yet could he not slay any man as he halted to pursue them, for it was impossible that being alone in his sacred car he should at once assail them with the spear and hold his fleet horses. Then at last espied him a comrade, even Alkimedon son of Laerkes, son of Haimon, and he halted behind the car and spake unto Automedon: “Automedon, what god hath put into thy breast unprofitable counsel and taken from thee wisdom, that thus alone thou art fighting against the Trojans in the forefront of the press? Thy comrade even now was slain, and Hector goeth proudly, wearing on his own shoulders the armour of Aiakides.”

And Automedon son of Diores answered him, saying: “Alkimedon, what other Achaian hath like skill to guide the spirit of immortal steeds, save only Patroklos, peer of gods in counsel, while he yet lived? but now have death and fate overtaken him. But take thou the lash and shining reins, and I will get me down from my horses, that I may fight.”

Thus spake he, and Alkimedon leapt on the fleet war-chariot and swiftly took the lash and reins in his hands, and Automedon leapt down. And noble Hector espied them, and straightway spake unto Aineias as he stood near: “Aineias, counsellor of mail-clad Trojans, I espy here the two horses of fleet Aiakides come forth to battle with feeble charioteers. Therefore might I hope to take them if thou in thy heart art willing, since they would not abide our onset and stand to do battle against us.”

Thus spake he, and the brave son of Anchises disregarded him not. And they twain went right onward, their shoulders shielded by ox-hides dried and tough, and bronze thick overlaid. And with them went both Chromios and godlike Aretos, and their hearts were of high hope to slay the men and drive off the strong-necked horses — fond hope, for not without blood lost were they to get them back from Automedon. He praying to father Zeus was filled in his inmost heart with valour and strength. And straightway he spake to Alkimedon, his faithful comrade: “Alkimedon, hold the horses not far from me, but with their very breath upon my back; for I deem that Hector the son of Priam will not refrain him from his fury until he mount behind Achilles’ horses of goodly manes after slaying us twain, and dismay the ranks of Argive men, or else himself fall among the foremost.”

Thus said he, and called upon the Aiantes and Menelaos: “Aiantes, leaders of the Argives, and Menelaos, lo now, commit ye the corpse unto whoso may best avail to bestride it and resist the ranks of men, and come ye to ward the day of doom from us who are yet alive, for here in the dolorous war are Hector and Aineias, the best men of the Trojans, pressing hard. Yet verily these issues lie in the lap of the gods: I too will cast my spear, and the rest shall Zeus decide.”

He said, and poised his far-shadowing spear and hurled it, and smote on the circle of the shield of Aretos, and the shield sustained not the spear, but right through went the bronze, and he forced it into his belly low down through his belt. And as when a strong man with a sharp axe smiting behind the horns of an ox of the homestead cleaveth the sinew asunder, and the ox leapeth forward and falleth, so leapt Aretos forward and fell on his back; and the spear in his entrails very piercingly quivering unstrung his limbs. And Hector hurled at Automedon with his bright spear, but he looked steadfastly on the bronze javelin as it came at him and avoided it, for he stooped forward, and the long spear fixed itself in the ground behind, and the javelin-butt quivered, and there dread Ares took away its force. And then had they lashed at each other with their swords hand to hand, had not the Aiantes parted them in their fury, when they were come through the mellay at their comrades' call. Before them Hector and Aineias and godlike Chromios shrank backward and gave ground and left Aretos wounded to the death as he lay. And Automedon, peer of swift Ares, stripped off the armour of the dead, and spake exultingly: "Verily, I have a little eased my heart of grief for the death of Menoitios' son, albeit a worse man than him have I slain."

Thus saying he took up the gory spoils and set them in his car, and gat him thereon, with feet and hands all bloody, as a lion that hath devoured a bull.

Now great-hearted Aias and Menelaos were aware of Zeus how he gave the Trojans their turn to victory. First of these to speak was great Aias son of Telamon: "Ay me, now may any man, even though he be a very fool, know that father Zeus himself is helping the Trojans. Come, let us ourselves devise some excellent means, that we may both hale the corpse away and ourselves return home to the joy of our friends, who grieve as they look hitherward and deem that no longer shall the fury of man-slaying Hector's unapproachable hand refrain itself, but fall upon the black ships. And would there were some comrade to carry tidings with all speed unto the son of Peleus, since I deem that he hath not even heard the grievous tidings, how his dear comrade is slain. But nowhere can I behold such an one among the Achaians, for themselves and their horses likewise are wrapped in darkness. O father Zeus, deliver thou the sons of the Achaians from the darkness, and make clear sky and vouchsafe sight unto our eyes. In the light be it that thou slayest us, since it is thy good pleasure that we die."

Then fair-haired Menelaos departed glancing everywhither, as an eagle which men say hath keenest sight of all birds under heaven, and though he be far aloft the fleet-footed hare eludeth him not by crouching beneath a leafy bush, but the eagle swoopeth thereon and swiftly seizeth her and taketh her life. Thus in that hour, Menelaos fosterling of Zeus, ranged thy shining eyes everywhither through the multitude of the host of thy comrades, if haply they might behold Nestor's son yet alive. Him quickly he perceived at the left of the whole battle, heartening his comrades and rousing them to fight. And fair-haired Menelaos came and stood nigh and said unto him: "Antilochos, fosterling of Zeus, come hither that thou mayest learn woful tidings — would it had never been. Ere now, I ween, thou too hast known by thy beholding that God rolleth mischief upon the Danaans, and with the Trojans is victory. And slain is the best man of the Achaians, Patroklos, and great sorrow is wrought for the Danaans. But run thou to the ships of the Achaians and quickly tell this to Achilles, if haply he may straightway rescue to his ship the naked corpse: but his armour is held by Hector of the glancing helmet."

Thus spake he, and Antilochos had horror of the word he heard. And long time speechlessness possessed him, and his eyes were filled with tears, and his full voice choked. Yet for all this disregarded he not the bidding of Menelaos, but set him to run, when he had given his armour to a noble comrade, Laodokos, who close anigh him was wheeling his whole-hooved horses.

So him his feet bare out of the battle weeping, to Achilles son of Peleus carrying an evil tale. But thy heart, Menelaos fosterling of Zeus, chose not to stay to aid the wearied comrades from whom Antilochos departed, and great sorrow was among the Pylians. But to them Menelaos sent noble Thrasymedes, and himself went again to bestride the hero Patroklos. And he hasted and stood beside the Aiantes and straightway spake to them: "So have I sent that man to the swift ships to go to fleet-footed Achilles. Yet deem I not that he will now come, for all his wrath against noble Hector, for he could not fight unarmed against the men of Troy. But let us ourselves devise some excellent means, both how we may hale the dead away, and how we ourselves may escape death and fate amid the Trojans' battle-cry."

Then answered him great Aias Telamon's son, saying: "All this hast thou said well, most noble Menelaos. But do thou and Meriones put your shoulders beneath the dead and lift him and bear him swiftly out of the fray, while we twain behind you shall do battle with the Trojans and noble Hector, one in heart as we are in name, for from of old time we are wont to await fierce battle side by side."

Thus spake he, and the others took the dead man in their arms and lifted him mightily on high. But the Trojan host behind cried aloud when they saw the Achaians lifting the corpse, and charged like hounds that spring in front of hunter-youths upon a wounded wild boar, and for a while run in haste to rend him, but when he wheeleth round among them, trusting in his might, then they give ground and shrink back here and there. Thus for a while the Trojans pressed on with all their power, striking with swords and double-headed spears, but when the Aiantes turned about and halted over against them, then they changed colour, and none dared farther onset to do battle around the dead.

BOOK XVIII.

How Achilles grieved for Patroklos, and how Thetis asked for him new armour of Hephaistos; and of the making of the armour.

Thus fought the rest in the likeness of blazing fire, while to Achilles came Antilochos, a messenger fleet of foot. Him found he in front of his ships of upright horns, boding in his soul the things which even now were accomplished. And sore troubled he spake to his great heart: “Ay me, wherefore again are the flowing-haired Achaians flocking to the ships and flying in rout over the plain? May the gods not have wrought against me the grievous fears at my heart, even as my mother revealed and told me that while I am yet alive the best man of the Myrmidons must by deed of the men of Troy forsake the light of the sun. Surely now must Menoitios’ valiant son be dead — foolhardy! surely I bade him when he should have beaten off the fire of the foe to come back to the ships nor with Hector fight amain.”

While thus he held debate in his heart and soul, there drew nigh unto him noble Nestor’s son, shedding hot tears, and spake his grievous tidings: “Ay me, wise Peleus’ son, very bitter tidings must thou hear, such as I would had never been. Fallen is Patroklos, and they are fighting around his body, naked, for his armour is held by Hector of the glancing helm.”

Thus spake he, and a black cloud of grief enwrapped Achilles, and with both hands he took dark dust and poured it over his head and defiled his comely face, and on his fragrant doublet black ashes fell. And himself in the dust lay mighty and mightily fallen, and with his own hands tore and marred his hair. And the handmaidens, whom Achilles and Patroklos took captive, cried aloud in the grief of their hearts, and ran forth around valiant Achilles, and all beat on their breasts with their hands, and the knees of each of them were unstrung. And Antilochos on the other side wailed and shed tears, holding Achilles’ hands while he groaned in his noble heart, for he feared lest he should cleave his throat with the sword. Then terribly moaned Achilles; and his lady mother heard him as she sate in the depths of the sea beside her ancient sire. And thereon she uttered a cry, and the goddesses flocked around her, all the daughters of Nereus that were in the deep of the sea. With these the bright cave was filled, and they all beat together on their breasts, and Thetis led the lament: “Listen, sister Nereids, that ye all hear and know well what sorrows are in my heart. Ay me unhappy, ay me that bare to my sorrow the first of men! For after I had borne a son noble and strong, the chief of heroes, and he shot up like a young branch, then when I had reared him as a plant in a very fruitful field I sent him in beaked ships to Ilios to fight against the men of Troy; but never again shall I welcome him back to his home, to the house of Peleus. And while he yet liveth in my sight and beholdeth the light of the sun, he sorroweth, neither can I help him any whit though I go unto him. But I will go, that I may look upon my dear child, and learn what sorrow hath come to him though he abide aloof from the war."

Thus spake she and left the cave; and the nymphs went with her weeping, and around them the surge of the sea was sundered. And when they came to deep-soiled Troy-land they went up upon the shore in order, where the ships of the Myrmidons were drawn up thickly around fleet Achilles. And as he groaned heavily his lady mother stood beside him, and with a shrill cry clasped the bead of her child, and spake unto him winged words of lamentation: "My child, why weepest thou? what sorrow hath come to thy heart? Tell it forth, hide it not. One thing at least hath been accomplished of Zeus according to the prayer thou madest, holding up to him thy hands, that the sons of the Achaians should all be pent in at the ships, through lack of thee, and should suffer hateful things."

Then groaning heavily spake unto her Achilles fleet of foot: "My mother, that prayer truly hath the Olympian accomplished for me. But what delight have I therein, since my dear comrade is dead, Patroklos, whom I honoured above all my comrades as it were my very self! Him have I lost, and Hector that slew him hath stripped from him the armour great and fair, a wonder to behold, that the gods gave to Peleus a splendid gift, on the day when they laid thee in the bed of a mortal man. Would thou hadst abode among the deathless daughters of the sea, and Peleus had wedded a mortal bride! But now, that thou mayest have sorrow a thousand fold in thy heart for a dead son, never shalt thou welcome him back home, since my soul biddeth me also live no longer nor abide among men, if Hector be not first smitten by my spear and yield his life, and pay for his slaughter of Patroklos, Menoitios' son."

Then answered unto him Thetis shedding tears: "Short-lived, I ween, must thou be then, my child, by what thou sayest, for straightway after Hector is death appointed unto thee."

Then mightily moved spake unto her Achilles fleet of foot: "Straightway may I die, since I might not succour my comrade at his slaying. He hath fallen afar from his country and lacked my help in his sore need. Now therefore, since I go not back to my dear native land, neither have at all been succour to Patroklos nor to all my other comrades that have been slain by noble Hector, but I sit beside my ships a profitless burden of the earth, I that in war am such an one as is none else of the mail-clad Achaians, though in council are others better — may strife perish utterly among gods and men, and wrath that stirreth even a wise man to be vexed, wrath that far sweeter than trickling honey waxeth like smoke in the breasts of men, even as I was wroth even now against Agamemnon king of men. But bygones will we let be, for all our pain, curbing the heart in our breasts under necessity. Now go I forth, that I may light on the destroyer of him I loved, on Hector: then will I accept my death whensoever Zeus willeth to accomplish it and the other immortal gods. For not even the mighty Herakles escaped death, albeit most dear to Kronian Zeus the king, but Fate overcame him and Hera's cruel wrath. So also shall I, if my fate hath been fashioned likewise, lie low when I am dead. But now let me win high renown, let me set some Trojan woman, some deep-bosomed daughter of Dardanos, staunching with both hands the tears upon her tender cheeks and wailing bitterly; yea, let them know that I am come back, though I tarried long from the war. Hold not me then from the battle in thy love, for thou shalt not prevail with me."

Then Thetis the silver-footed goddess answered him, saying: "Yea verily, my child, no blame is in this, that thou ward sheer destruction from thy comrades in their distress. But thy fair glittering armour of bronze is held among the Trojans. Hector of the glancing helm beareth it on his shoulders in triumph, yet not for long, I ween, shall he glory therein, for death is hard anigh him. But thou, go not yet down into the mellay of war until thou see me with thine eyes come hither. In the morning will I return, at the coming up of the sun, bearing fair armour from the king Hephaistos."

Thus spake she and turned to go from her son, and as she turned she spake among her sisters of the sea: "Ye now go down within the wide bosom of the deep, to visit the Ancient One of the Sea and our father's house, and tell him all. I am going to high Olympus to Hephaistos of noble skill, if haply he will give unto my son noble armour shining gloriously."

Thus spake she, and they forthwith went down beneath the surge of the sea. And the silver-footed goddess Thetis went on to Olympus that she might bring noble armour to her son.

So her unto Olympus her feet bore. But the Achaians with terrible cries were fleeing before man-slaying Hector till they came to the ships and to the Hellespont. Nor might the well-greaved Achaians drag the corpse of Patroklos Achilles' squire out of the darts, for now again overtook him the host and the horses of Troy, and Hector son of Priam, in might as it were a flame of fire. Thrice did glorious Hector seize him from behind by the feet, resolved to drag him away, and mightily called upon the men of Troy. Thrice did the two

Aiantes, clothed on with impetuous might, beat him off from the dead man, but he nathless, trusting in his might, anon would charge into the press, anon would stand and cry aloud, but he gave ground never a whit. As when shepherds in the field avail nowise to chase a fiery lion in fierce hunger away from a carcase, so availed not the two warrior Aiantes to scare Hector son of Priam from the dead. And now would he have won the body and gained renown unspeakable, had not fleet wind-footed Iris come speeding from Olympus with a message to the son of Peleus to array him, unknown of Zeus and the other gods, for Hera sent her. And she stood anigh and spake to him winged words: “Rouse thee, son of Peleus, of all men most redoubtable! Succour Patroklos, for whose body is terrible battle afoot before the ships. There slay they one another, these guarding the dead corpse, while the men of Troy are fierce to hale him unto windy Ilios, and chiefliest noble Hector is fain to drag him, and his heart biddeth him fix the head on the stakes of the wall when he hath sundered it from the tender neck. But arise, lie thus no longer! let awe enter thy heart to forbid that Patroklos become the sport of dogs of Troy. Thine were the shame if he go down mangled amid the dead.”

Then answered her fleet-footed noble Achilles: “Goddess Iris, what god sent thee a messenger unto me?”

And to him again spake wind-footed fleet Iris: “It was Hera that sent me, the wise wife of Zeus, nor knoweth the high-throned son of Kronos nor any other of the Immortals that on snowy Olympus have their dwelling-place.”

And Achilles fleet of foot made answer to her and said: “And how may I go into the fray? The Trojans hold my arms; and my dear mother bade me forbear to array me until I behold her with my eyes returned, for she promised to bring fair armour from Hephaistos. Other man know I none whose noble armour I might put on, save it were the shield of Aias Telamon’s son. But himself, I ween, is in the forefront of the press, dealing death with his spear around Patroklos dead.”

Then again spake unto him wind-footed fleet Iris: “Well are we also aware that thy noble armour is held from thee. But go forth unto the trench as thou art and show thyself to the men of Troy, if haply they will shrink back and refrain them from battle, and the warlike sons of the Achaians take breath.”

Thus spake fleet-footed Iris and went her way. But Achilles dear to Zeus arose, and around his strong shoulders Athene cast her tasselled aegis, and around his head the bright goddess set a crown of a golden cloud, and kindled therefrom a blazing flame. And as when a smoke issueth from a city and riseth up into the upper air, from an island afar off that foes beleaguer, while the others from their city fight all day in hateful war, — but with the going down of the sun blaze out the beacon-fires in line, and high aloft rusheth up the glare for dwellers round about to behold, if haply they may come with ships to help in need — thus from the head of Achilles soared that blaze toward the heavens. And he went and stood beyond the wall beside the trench, yet mingled not among the Achaians, for he minded the wise bidding of his mother. There stood he and shouted aloud, and afar off Pallas Athene uttered her voice, and spread terror unspeakable among the men of Troy. Clear as the voice of a clarion when it soundeth by reason of slaughterous foemen that beleaguer a city, so clear rang forth the voice of Aiakides. And when they heard the brazen voice of Aiakides, the souls of all of them were dismayed, and the horses of goodly manes were fain to turn the chariots backward, for they boded anguish in their hearts, And the charioteers were amazed when they saw the unwearying fire blaze fierce on the head of the great-hearted son of Peleus, for the bright-eyed goddess Athene made it blaze. Thrice from over the trench shouted mightily noble Achilles, and thrice were the men of Troy confounded and their proud allies. Yea there and then perished twelve men of their best by their own chariot wheels and spears. But the Achaians with joy drew Patroklos forth of the darts and laid him on a litter, and his dear comrades stood around lamenting him; and among them followed fleet-footed Achilles, shedding hot tears, for his true comrade he saw lying on the bier, mangled by the keen bronze. Him sent he forth with chariot and horses unto the battle, but home again welcomed never more.

Then Hera the ox-eyed queen sent down the unwearying Sun to be gone unwillingly unto the streams of Ocean. So the Sun set, and the noble Achaians made pause from the stress of battle and the hazardous war.

But the Achaians all night made moan in lamentation for Patroklos. And first of them in the loud lamentation was the son of Peleus, laying upon the breast of his comrade his man-slaying hands and moaning very sore, even as a deep-bearded lion whose whelps some stag-hunter hath snatched away out of a deep wood; and the lion coming afterward grieveth and through many glens he rangeth on the track of the footsteps of the man, if anywhere he might find him, for most bitter anger seizeth him; — thus Achilles moaning heavily spake among the Myrmidons: “Ay me, vain verily was the word I uttered on that day when I cheered the hero Menoitios in his halls and said that I would bring back to Opoeis his son in glory from the sack of Ilios with the share of spoil that should fall unto him. Not all the purposes of men doth Zeus accomplish for them. It is appointed that both of us redden the same earth with our blood here in Troy-land, for neither shall the old knight Peleus welcome me back home within his halls, nor my mother Thetis, but even here shall earth keep hold on me. Yet now, O Patroklos, since I follow thee under earth, I will not hold thy funeral till I have brought hither the armour and the head of Hector, thy high-hearted slayer, and before thy pyre I will cut the throats of twelve noble sons of the men of Troy, for mine anger thou art slain. Till then beside the beaked ships shalt thou lie as thou art, and around thee deep-bosomed women, Trojan and Dardanian, shall mourn thee weeping night and day, even they whom we toiled to win by our strength and, our long spears when we sacked rich cities of mortal men."

Thus spake noble Achilles, and bade his comrades set a great tripod on the fire, that with all speed they might wash from Patroklos the bloody gore. So they set a tripod of ablution on the burning fire, and poured therein water and took wood and kindled it beneath; and the fire wrapped the belly of the tripod, and the water grew hot. And when the water boiled in the bright bronze, then washed they him and anointed with olive oil, and filled his wounds with fresh ointment, and laid him on a bier and covered him with soft cloth from head to foot, and thereover a white robe. Then all night around Achilles fleet of foot the Myrmidons made lament and moan for Patroklos.

Meanwhile Zeus spake unto Hera his sister and wife: "Thou hast accomplished this, O Hera, ox-eyed queen, thou hast aroused Achilles fleet of foot. Verily of thine own children must the flowing-haired Achaians be."

Then answered unto him Hera the ox-eyed queen: "Most dread son of Kronos, what is this word thou hast said? Truly even a man, I ween, is to accomplish what he may for another man, albeit he is mortal and hath not wisdom as we. How then was I who avow me the first of goddesses both by birth and for that I am called thy wife, and thou art king among all Immortals — how was I not in mine anger to devise evil against the men of Troy?"

So debated they on this wise with one another. But Thetis of the silver feet came unto the house of Hephaistos, imperishable, starlike, far seen among the dwellings of Immortals, a house of bronze, wrought by the crook-footed god himself. Him found she sweating in toil and busy about his bellows, for he was forging tripods twenty in all to stand around the wall of his stablished hall, and beneath the base of each he had set golden wheels, that of their own motion they might enter the assembly of the gods and again return unto his house, a marvel to look upon. Thus much were they finished that not yet were away from the fire, and gathered all his gear wherewith he worked into a silver chest; and with a sponge he wiped his face and hands and sturdy neck and shaggy breast, and did on his doublet, and took a stout staff and went forth limping; but there were handmaidens of gold that moved to help their lord, the semblances of living maids. In them is understanding at their hearts, in them are voice and strength, and they have skill of the immortal gods. These moved beneath their lord, and he gat him haltingly near to where Thetis was, and set him on a bright seat, and clasped her hand in his and spake and called her by her name: “Wherefore, long-robed Thetis, comest thou to our house, honoured that thou art and dear? No frequent comer art thou hitherto. Speak what thou hast at heart; my soul is fain to accomplish it; if accomplish it I can, and if it be appointed for accomplishment.”

Then answered unto him Thetis shedding tears: “Hephaistos, hath there verily been any of all goddesses in Olympus that hath endured so many grievous sorrows at heart as are the woes that Kronian Zeus hath laid upon me above all others? He chose me from among the sisters of the sea to enthrall me to a man, even Peleus Aiakos’ son, and with a man I endured wedlock sore against my will. Now lieth he in his halls forspent with grievous age, but other griefs are mine. A son he gave me to bear and nourish, the chief of heroes, and he shot up like a young branch. Like a plant in a very fruitful field I reared him and sent him forth on beaked ships to Ilios to fight against the men of Troy, but never again shall I welcome him back to his home within the house of Peleus. And while he yet liveth in my sight and beholdeth the light of the sun, he sorroweth, neither can I help him any whit though I go unto him. The maiden whom the sons of the Achaians chose out to be his prize, her hath the lord Agamemnon taken back out of his hands. In grief for her wasted he his heart, while the men of Troy were driving the Achaians on their ships, nor suffered them to come forth. And the elders of the Argives entreated him, and told over many noble gifts. Then albeit himself he refused to ward destruction from them, he put his armour on Patroklos and sent him to the war, and much people with him. All day they fought around the Skaian gates and that same day had sacked the town, but that when now Menoitios’ valiant son had wrought much harm, Apollo slew him in the forefront of the battle, and gave glory unto Hector. Therefore now come I a suppliant unto thy knees, if haply thou be willing to give my short-lived son shield and helmet, and goodly greaves fitted with ankle-pieces, and cuirass. For the armour that he had erst, his trusty comrade lost when he fell beneath the men of Troy; and my son lieth on the earth with anguish in his soul.”

Then made answer unto her the lame god of great renown: “Be of good courage, let not these things trouble thy heart. Would that so might I avail to hide him far from dolorous death, when dread fate cometh upon him, as surely shall goodly armour be at his need, such as all men afterward shall marvel at, whatsoever may behold.”

Thus saying he left her there and went unto his bellows and turned them upon the fire and bade them work. And the bellows, twenty in all, blew on the crucibles, sending deft blasts on every side, now to aid his labour and now anon howsoever Hephaistos willed and the work went on. And he threw bronze that weareth not into the fire, and tin and precious gold and silver, and next he set on an anvil-stand a great anvil, and took in his hand a sturdy hammer, and in the other he took the tongs.

First fashioned he a shield great and strong, adorning it all over, and set thereto a shining rim, triple, bright-glancing, and therefrom a silver baldric. Five were the folds of the shield itself; and therein fashioned he much cunning work from his wise heart.

There wrought he the earth, and the heavens, and the sea, and the unwearying sun, and the moon waxing to the full, and the signs every one wherewith the heavens are crowned, Pleiads and Hyads and Orion's might, and the Bear that men call also the Wain, her that turneth in her place and watcheth Orion, and alone hath no part in the baths of Ocean.

Also he fashioned therein two fair cities of mortal men. In the one were espousals and marriage feasts, and beneath the blaze of torches they were leading the brides from their chambers through the city, and loud arose the bridal song. And young men were whirling in the dance, and among them flutes and viols sounded high; and women standing each at her door were marvelling. But the folk were gathered in the assembly place; for there a strife was arisen, two men striving about the blood-price of a man slain; the one claimed to pay full atonement, expounding to the people, but the other denied him and would take naught. And the folk were cheering both, as they took part on either side. And heralds kept order among the folk, while the elders on polished stones were sitting in the sacred circle, and holding in their hands staves from the loud-voiced heralds. Then before the people they rose up and gave judgment each in turn. And in the midst lay two talents of gold, to be given unto him who should plead among them most righteously.

But around the other city were two armies in siege with glittering arms. And two counsels found favour among them, either to sack the town or to share all with the townsfolk even whatsoever substance the fair city held within. But the besieged were not yet yielding, but arming for an ambushment. On the wall there stood to guard it their dear wives and infant children, and with these the old men; but the rest went forth, and their leaders were Ares and Pallas Athene, both wrought in gold, and golden was the vesture they had on. Goodly and great were they in their armour, even as gods, far seen around, and the folk at their feet were smaller. And when they came where it seemed good to them to lay ambush, in a river bed where there was a common watering-place of herds, there they set them, clad in glittering bronze. And two scouts were posted by them afar off to spy the coming of flocks and of oxen with crooked horns. And presently came the cattle, and with them two herdsmen playing on pipes, that took no thought of the guile. Then the others when they beheld these ran upon them and quickly cut off the herds of oxen and fair flocks of white sheep, and slew the shepherds withal. But the besiegers, as they sat before the speech-places [from which the orators spoke] and heard much din among the oxen, mounted forthwith behind their high-stepping horses, and came up with speed. Then they arrayed their battle and fought beside the river banks, and smote one another with bronze-shod spears. And among them mingled Strife and Tumult, and fell Death, grasping one man alive fresh-wounded, another without wound, and dragging another dead through the mellay by the feet; and the raiment on her shoulders was red with the blood of men. Like living mortals they hurled together and fought, and haled the corpses each of the other’s slain.

Furthermore he set in the shield a soft fresh-ploughed field, rich tilth and wide, the third time ploughed; and many ploughers therein drave their yokes to and fro as they wheeled about. Whensoever they came to the boundary of the field and turned, then would a man come to each and give into his hands a goblet of sweet wine, while others would be turning back along the furrows, fain to reach the boundary of the deep tilth. And the field grew black behind and seemed as it were a-ploughing, albeit of gold, for this was the great marvel of the work.

Furthermore he set therein the demesne-land of a king, where hinds were reaping with sharp sickles in their hands. Some armfuls along the swathe were falling in rows to the earth, whilst others the sheaf-binders were binding in twisted bands of straw. Three sheaf-binders stood over them, while behind boys gathering corn and bearing it in their arms gave it constantly to the binders; and among them the king in silence was standing at the swathe with his staff, rejoicing in his heart. And henchmen apart beneath an oak were making ready a feast, and preparing a great ox they had sacrificed; while the women were strewing much white barley to be a supper for the hinds.

Also he set therein a vineyard teeming plenteously with clusters, wrought fair in gold; black were the grapes, but the vines hung throughout on silver poles. And around it he ran a ditch of cyanus, and round that a fence of tin; and one single pathway led to it, whereby the vintagers might go when they should gather the vintage. And maidens and striplings in childish glee bare the sweet fruit in plaited baskets. And in the midst of them a boy made pleasant music on a clear-toned viol, and sang thereto a sweet Linos-song [probably a lament for departing summer] with delicate voice; while the rest with feet falling together kept time with the music and song.

Also he wrought therein a herd of kine with upright horns, and the kine were fashioned of gold and tin, and with lowing they hurried from the byre to pasture beside a murmuring river, beside the waving reed. And herdsmen of gold were following with the kine, four of them, and nine dogs fleet of foot came after them. But two terrible lions among the foremost kine had seized a loud-roaring bull that bellowed mightily as they haled him, and the dogs and the young men sped after him. The lions rending the great bull's hide were devouring his vitals and his black blood; while the herdsmen in vain tarred on their fleet dogs to set on, for they shrank from biting the lions but stood hard by and barked and swerved away.

Also the glorious lame god wrought therein a pasture in a fair glen, a great pasture of white sheep, and a steading, and roofed huts, and folds.

Also did the glorious lame god devise a dancing-place like unto that which once in wide Knosos Daidalos wrought for Ariadne of the lovely tresses. There were youths dancing and maidens of costly wooing, their hands upon one another's wrists. Fine linen the maidens had on, and the youths well-woven doublets faintly glistening with oil. Fair wreaths had the maidens, and the youths daggers of gold hanging from silver baldrics. And now would they run round with deft feet exceeding lightly, as when a potter sitting by his wheel that fitteth between his hands maketh trial of it whether it run: and now anon they would run in lines to meet each other. And a great company stood round the lovely dance in joy; and through the midst of them, leading the measure, two tumblers whirled.

Also he set therein the great might of the River of Ocean around the uttermost rim of the cunningly-fashioned shield.

Now when he had wrought the shield great and strong, then wrought he him a corslet brighter than a flame of fire, and he wrought him a massive helmet to fit his brows, goodly and graven, and set thereon a crest of gold, and he wrought him greaves of pliant tin.

So when the renowned lame god had finished all the armour, he took and laid it before the mother of Achilles. Then she like a falcon sprang down from snowy Olympus, bearing from Hephaistos the glittering arms.

BOOK XIX.

How Achilles and Agamemnon were reconciled before the assembly of the Achaians, and Achilles went forth with them to battle.

Now Morning saffron-robed arose from the streams of Ocean to bring light to gods and men, and Thetis came to the ships, bearing his gift from the god. Her dear son she found fallen about Patroklos and uttering loud lament; and round him many of his company made moan. And the bright goddess stood beside him in their midst, and clasped her hand in his and spake and called upon his name: “My child, him who lieth here we must let be, for all our pain, for by the will of gods from the beginning was he brought low. But thou take from Hephaistos arms of pride, arms passing goodly, such as no man on his shoulders yet hath borne.”

Thus spake the goddess and in front of Aehifies laid the arms, and they rang all again in their glory. And awe fell on all the Myrmidons, nor dared any to gaze thereon, for they were awe-stricken. But when Achilles looked thereon, then came fury upon him the more, and his eyes blazed terribly forth as it were a flame beneath their lids: glad was he as he held in his hands that splendid gift of a god. But when he had satisfied his soul in gazing on the glory of the arms, straightway to his mother spake he winged words: “My mother, the arms the god has given are such as it beseemeth that the work of Immortals should be, and that no mortal man should have wrought. Now therefore will I arm me in them, but I have grievous fear lest meantime on the gashed wounds of Menoitios’ valiant son flies light and breed worms therein, and defile his corpse — for the life is slain out of him — and so all his flesh shall rot.”

Then answered him Thetis, goddess of the silver feet: “Child, have no care for this within thy mind. I will see to ward from him the cruel tribes of flies which prey on men slain in fight: for even though he lie till a whole year’s course be run, yet his flesh shall be sound continually, or better even than now. But call thou the Achaian warriors to the place of assembly, and unsay thy wrath against Agamemnon shepherd of the host, and then arm swiftly for battle, and clothe thee with thy strength.”

Thus saying she filled him with adventurous might, while on Patroklos she shed ambrosia and red nectar through his nostrils, that his flesh might abide the same continually.

But noble Achilles went down the beach of the sea, crying his terrible cry, and roused the Achaian warriors. And they who before were wont to abide in the circle of the ships, and they who were helmsmen and kept the steerage of the ships, or were stewards there and dealt out food, even these came then to the place of assembly, because Achilles was come forth, after long ceasing from grievous war. Limping came two of Ares' company, Tydeus' son staunch in fight and noble Odysseus, each leaning on his spear, for their wounds were grievous still; and they went and sate them down in the forefront of the assembly. And last came Agamemnon king of men, with his wound upon him, for him too in the stress of battle Kooen Antenor's son had wounded with his bronze-tipped spear. But when all the Achaians were gathered, then uprose fleet-footed Achilles and spake in their midst: "Son of Atreus, was this in any wise the better way for both thee and me, what time with grief at our hearts we waxed fierce in soul-devouring strife for the sake of a girl? Would that Artemis had slain her with her arrow at the ships, on the day whereon I took her to me, when I had spoiled Lyrnessos; so should not then so many Achaians have bitten the wide earth beneath their enemies' hands, by reason of my exceeding wrath. It hath been well for Hector and the Trojans, but the Achaians I think shall long remember the strife that was betwixt thee and me. But bygones will we let be, for all our pain, and curb under necessity the spirit within our breasts. I now will stay my anger: it beseems me not implacably for ever to be wroth; but come rouse speedily to the fight the flowing-haired Achaians, that I may go forth against the men of Troy and put them yet again to the proof, if they be fain to couch hard by the ships. Methinks that some among them shall be glad to rest their knees when they are fled out of the fierceness of the battle, and from before our spear."

He spake, and the well-greaved Achaians rejoiced that the great-hearted son of Peleus had made renouncement of his wrath. Then among them spake Agamemnon king of men, speaking from the place where he sat, not arisen to stand forth in their midst: "O Danaan friends and heroes, men of Ares' company, seemly is it to listen to him who standeth up to speak, nor behoveth it to break in upon his words: even toward a skilled man that were hard. For amid the uproar of many men how should one listen, or yet speak? even the clearest-voiced speech is marred. To the son of Peleus I will declare myself, but ye other Argives give heed, and each mark well my word. Oft have the Achaians spoken thus to me, and upbraided me; but it is not I who am the cause, but Zeus and Destiny and Erinys that walketh in the darkness, who put into my soul fierce madness on the day when in the assembly I, even I, bereft Achilles of his meed.

What could I do? it is God who accomplisheth all. Eldest daughter of Zeus is Ate who blindeth all, a power of bane: delicate are her feet, for not upon the earth she goeth, but walketh over the heads of men, making men fall; and entangleth this one or that. Ye even Zeus was blinded upon a time, he who they say is greatest among gods and men; yet even him Hera with a female wile deceived, on the day when Alkmene in fair-crowned Thebes was to bring forth the strength of Herakles. For then proclaimed he solemnly among the gods: ‘Here me ye all, both gods and goddesses, while I utter the council of my soul within my heart. This day shall Eileithuia, the help of travailing women, bring to the light a man who shall be lord over all that dwell round about, among the raise of men who are sprung of me by blood.’ And to him in subtlety queen Hera spake: ‘Though wilt play the cheat and not accomplish thy word. Come now, Olympian, swear me a firm oath that verily and indeed shall that man be lord over all that dwell round about, who this day shall fall between a woman’s feet, even he among all men who are of the lineage of thy blood.’ So spake she, and Zeus no wise perceived her subtlety but sware a mighty oath, and therewith was he sore blinded. For Hera darted from Olympus’ peak and came swiftly to Achaian Argus, were she knew was the stately wife of Sthenelos son of Perseus, who was also great with child, and her seventh month had come. Her son Hera brought to the light, though his tale of months was untold, but she stayed Alkmene’s bearing and kept the Eileithuiai from her aid. Then she brought the tidings herself and to Kronos’ son Zeus she spake: ‘Father Zeus of the bright lightning, a word will I speak to thee for my heed. Today is born a man of valor who shall rule among the Archives, Eurystheus, son of Sthenelos the son of Perseus, of thy lineage; not unmeet is it that he be lord among Argives.’ She said, but sharp pain smote him in the depths of his soul, and straightway he seized Ate by her bright-haired head in the anger of his soul, and sware a mighty oath that never again to Olympus and the starry heaven should Ate come, who blindeth all alike. He said, and whirling her in his hand flung her from the starry heaven, and quickly came she down among the works of men. Yet ever he groaned against her when he beheld his beloved son in cruel travail at Eurystheus’ hest. Thus also I, what time great Hector of the glancing helm was slaying Argives at the sterns of our ships, could not be unmindful of Ate, who blinded me at the first. But since thus blinded was I, and Zeus bereft me of my wit, fain am I to make amends, and recompense manifold for the wrong. Only arise thou to the battle and rouse the rest of the host. Gifts am I ready to offer, even all that noble Odysseus went yesterday to promise in thy hut. So, if thou wilt, stay awhile, though eager, from battle, and squires shall take the gifts from my ship and carry them to thee, that thou mayest see that what I give sufficeth thee.”

Then answered him Achilles swift of foot: “Most noble son of Atreus, Agamemnon king of men, for the gifts, to give them as it beseemeth, if so thou wilt, or to withhold, is in thy choice. But now let us bethink us of battle with all speed; this is no time to dally here with subtleties, for a great work is yet undone. Once more must Achilles be seen in the forefront of the battle, laying waste with his brazen spear the battalions of the men of Troy. Thereof let each of you think as he fighteth with his man.”

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him and said: “Nay yet, for all thy valour, godlike Achilles, not against Ilios lead thou the sons of Achaians fasting to fight the men of Troy, since not of short spell shall the battle be, when once the ranks of men are met, and God shall breathe valour into both. But bid the Achaians taste at the swift ships food and wine; for thence is vigour and might. For no man fasting from food shall be able to fight with the foe all day till the going down of the sun; for though his spirit be eager for battle yet his limbs unaware grow weary, and thirst besetteth him, and hunger, and his knees in his going fail. But the man who having his fill of food and wine fighteth thus all day against the enemy, his heart is of good cheer within him, nor anywise tire his limbs, ere all give back from battle. So come, disperse the host and bid them make ready their meal. And the gifts let Agamemnon king of men bring forth into the midst of the assembly, that all Achaians may behold them with their eyes, and thou be glad at heart. And let him swear to thee an oath, standing in the midst of the Argives, that he hath never gone up into the damsel’s bed or lain with her, [O prince, as is the wont of man with woman]; and let thine own spirit be placable within thy breast. Then let him make thee a rich feast of reconcilement in his hut, that thou have nothing lacking of thy right. And thou, son of Atreus, toward others also shalt be more righteous hereafter; for no shame it is that a man that is a king should make amends if he have been the first to deal violently.”

Then to him spake Agamemnon king of men: “Son of Laertes, I rejoice to listen to thy speech; for rightfully hast thou told over all. And the oath I am willing to swear, yea my heart biddeth it, nor will I forswear myself before God. Let Achilles abide for a space, eager for battle though he be, and all ye others abide together, until the gifts come forth from my hut, and we make faithful oath with sacrifice. But thee thyself I thus charge and bid. Choose thee young men, princes of the Achaian folk, and bear my gifts from my ship, even all that we promised yesterday to Achilles, and take with thee the women. And let Talthybios speedily make me ready a boar-swine in the midst of the wide Achaian host, to sacrifice to Zeus and to the Sun.”

And to him in answer swift-footed Achilles spake: “Most noble son of Atreus, Agamemnon king of men, at some other time were it even better ye should be busied thus, when haply there shall be some pause of war, and the spirit within my breast shall be less fierce. But now they lie mangled on the field — even they whom Hector son of Priam slew, when Zeus gave him glory — and ye call men to their food. Verily for my part I would bid the sons of the Achaians to fight now unfed and fasting, and with the setting sun make ready a mighty meal, when we shall have avenged the shame. Till then down my throat at least nor food nor drink shall go, since my comrade is dead, who in my hut is lying mangled by the sharp spear, with his feet toward the door, and round him our comrades mourn, wherefore in my heart to no thought of those matters, but of slaying, and blood, and grievous moans of men."

Then answered him Odysseus of many counsels: "O Achilles, Peleus' son, mightiest of Achaians far, better and mightier not a little art thou than I with the spear, but in counsel I may surpass thee greatly, since I was born first and know more things: wherefore let thy heart endure to listen to my speech. Quickly have men surfeit of battle, of that wherein the sword streweth most straw yet is the harvest scantiest, [i.e., in a pitched battle there is little plunder, the hope of which might help to sustain men's efforts in storming a town] when Zeus inclineth his balance, who is disposer of the wars of men. But it cannot be that the Achaians fast to mourn a corpse; for exceeding many and thick fall such on every day; when then should there be rest from toil? Nay, it behoveth to bury him who is dead, steeling our hearts, when once we have wept him for a day; but such as are left alive from hateful war must take thought of meat and drink, that yet more against our foes we may fight relentlessly ever, clad in unyielding bronze. Then let none of the host hold back awaiting other summons; this is the summons, and ill shall it be for whoso is left behind at the Argive ships; but all together as one we will rouse against the horse-taming Trojans the fury of war."

He spoke, and took with him the sons of noble Nestor, and Meges son of Phyleus, and Thoas, and Meriones, and Lykomedes son of Kreiontes, and Melanippos. And they went on their way to the hut of Agamemnon, Atreus' son. Forthwith as the word was spoken so was the deed done. Seven tripods they bare from the hut, as he promised him, and twenty bright caldrons, and twelve horses, and anon they led forth women skilled in goodly arts, seven, and the eighth was fair-faced Briseis. Then Odysseus, having weighed ten talents of gold in all, led the way, and with him young men of the Achaians bare the gifts. These they set in the midst of the place of assembly, and Agamemnon rose up, and beside that shepherd of the host stood Talthybios, whose voice was like a god's, and held a boar between his hands. And the son of Atreus drawing with his hands his knife, which ever hung beside the mighty scabbard of his sword, cut off the first hairs from the boar, and lifting up his hands he prayed to Zeus, and all the Argives sat silent in their places, duly hearkening to the king. And he prayed aloud, looking up to the wide heaven: “Be Zeus before all witness, highest and best of the gods, and Earth, and Sun, and Erinyes, who under earth take vengeance upon men, whosoever for-sweareth himself, that never have I laid hand on the damsel Briseis, neither to lie with her nor anywise else, but she has abode untouched within my huts. And if aught that I swear be false, may the gods give me all sorrows manifold, that they send on him who sinneth against them in his oath.”

He said, and cut the boar’s throat with the pitiless knife. And the body Taithybios whirled and threw into the great wash of the hoary sea, to be the food of fishes; but Achilles arose up and spake in the midst of the warrior Argives: “Father Zeus, sore madness dealest thou verily to men. Never could the son of Atreus have stirred the soul within my breast, nor led off the damsel implacably against my will, had not Zeus willed that on many of the Achaians death should come. But now go forth to your meal, that we may join battle thereupon.”

Thus he spake and dispersed the assembly with all speed. The rest were scattered each to his own ship, but the great-hearted Myrmidons took up the gifts, and bare them to the ship of godlike Achilles. And they laid them in the huts and set the women there, and gallant squires drave the horses among their troop.

But Briseis that was like unto golden Aphrodite, when she beheld Patroklos mangled by the keen spear, fell about him and made shrill lament, and tore with her hands her breast and tender neck, and beautiful face. And she spake amid her weeping, that woman like unto goddesses: “Patroklos, dearest to my hapless heart, alive I left thee when I left this hut, but now, O prince of the people, I am come back to find thee dead; thus evil ever followeth evil in my lot. My husband, unto whom my father and lady mother gave me, I beheld before our city mangled with the keen spear, and my three brothers whom my own mother bore, my near and dear, who all met their day of doom. But thou, when swift Achilles slew my husband and wasted godlike Mynes’ city, wouldest ever that I should not even weep, and saidest that thou wouldst make me godlike Achilles’ wedded wife, and that ye would take me in your ships to Phthia and make me a marriage feast among the Myrmidons. Therefore with all my soul I mourn thy death, for thou wert ever kind.”

Thus spake she weeping, and thereon the women wailed, in semblance for Patroklos, but each for her own woe. But round Achilles gathered the elders of the Achaians, praying him that he would eat; but he denied them with a groan: “I pray you, if any kind comrade will hearken to me, bid me not sate my heart with meat and drink, since terrible grief is come upon me. Till the sun go down I will abide, and endure continually until then."

He spoke, and his speech made the other chiefs depart, but the two sons of Atreus stayed, and noble Odysseus, and Nestor and Idomeneus and Phoinox, ancient knight, soothing him in his exceeding sorrow, but he could no whit be soothed until he had entered the mouth of bloody war. And bethinking him he sighed very heavily and spake aloud: "Thou too, O hapless, dearest of my friends, thyself wouldst verily of yore set forth in out hut with ready speed a savoury meal, what time the Achaians hasted to wage against the horse-taming Trojans dolorous war. But now thou liest mangled, and my heart will none of meat and drink, that stand within, for desire of thee. Nought worse than this could I endure, not though I should hear of my father's death, who now I ween in Phthia is shedding big tears for lack of a son so dear, even me that in an alien land for sake of baleful Helen do battle with the men of Troy; nor though it were my beloved son who is reared for me in Skyros (if still at least is godlike Neoptolemos alive). For hitherto had my soul within me trusted that I alone should perish far from horse-pasturing Argos, here in the Trojan land, but that thou shouldest return to Phthia, so that thou mightest take me the child in thy swift black ship from Skyros and show him everything — my substance and servants, and high-roofed mighty hall. For Peleus I ween already must be dead and gone, or else in feeble life he hath sorrow of age, and of waiting ever for bitter news of me, till he hear that I am dead."

Thus spake he weeping, and the elders mourned with him, bethinking them what each had left at home. And when the son of Kronos beheld them sorrowing he pitied them, and forthwith to Athene spake he winged words: "My child, thou hast then left utterly the man of thy heart. Hath Achilles then no longer a place within thy thought? He before the steep-prowed ships sits mourning his dear comrade; the rest are gone to their meal, but he is fasting and unfed. But go, distil into his breast nectar and pleasant ambrosia, that no pains of hunger come on him."

Thus saying he sped forward Athene who before was fain. And she, like a falcon wide-winged and shrill-voiced, hurled herself forth from heaven through the upper air. So while the Achaians were arming presently throughout the camp, she in Achilles' breast distilled nectar and pleasant ambrosia, that grievous hunger might not assail his knees, and then herself was gone to the firm house of her mighty father. Then the Achaians poured forth from the swift ships. As when thick snowflakes flutter down from Zeus, chill beneath the blast of Boreas born in the upper air, so thick from the ships streamed forth bright glittering helms and bossy shields, strong-plaited cuirasses and ashen spears. And the sheen thereof went up to heaven and all the earth around laughed in the flash of bronze, and there went a sound beneath the feet of the men, and in the midst of them noble Achilles harnessed him. His teeth gnashed together, and his eyes blazed as it were the flame of a fire, for into his heart was intolerable anguish entered in. Thus wroth against the men of Troy he put on the gift of the god, which Hephaistos wrought him by his art. First on his legs he set the fair greaves fitted with silver ankle-pieces, and next he donned the cuirass about his breast. Then round his shoulders he slung the bronze sword silver-studded; then lastly he took the great and strong shield, and its brightness shone afar off as the moon's. Or as when over the sea there appeareth to sailors the brightness of a burning fire, and it burneth on high among the mountains in some lonely steading — sailors whom storm-blasts bear unwilling over the sea, the home of fishes, afar from them they love: — so from Achilles' goodly well-dight shield the brightness thereof shot up toward heaven. And he lifted the stout helmet and set it on his head, and like a star it shone, the horse-hair crested helmet, and around it waved plumes of gold that Hephaistos had set thick about the crest. Then noble Achilles proved him in his armour to know whether it fitted unto him, and whether his glorious limbs ran free; and it became to him as it were wings, and buoyed up the shepherd of hosts.

And forth from its stand he drew his father's spear, heavy and great and strong: that spear could none other of the Achaians wield, but Achilles alone awaited to wield it, the Pelian ashen spear that Cheiron gave to his father dear, from a peak of Pelion, to be the death of warriors. And Automedon and Alkimos went about to yoke the horses, and put on them fair breast-straps, and bits within their jaws, and stretched the reins behind to the firm-built chariot. Then Automedon took the bright lash, fitted to his hand, and sprang up behind the horses, and after him mounted Achilles armed, effulgent in his armour like bright Hyperion. And terribly he called upon the horses of his sire: "Xanthos and Balios, famed children of Podarge, in other sort take heed to bring your charioteer safe back to the Danaan host, when we have done with battle, and leave him not as ye left Patroklos to lie there dead."

Then the horse Xanthos of glancing feet made answer unto him from beneath the yoke; — and he bowed with his head, and all his mane fell from the yoke-cushion beside the yoke and touched the ground; — for the white-armed goddess Hera gave him speech: "Yea verily for this hour, dread Achilles, we will still bear thee safe, yet is thy death day nigh at hand, neither shall we be cause thereof, but a mighty god, and forceful Fate. For not through sloth or heedlessness of ours did the men of Troy from Patrokios' shoulders strip his arms, but the best of the gods, whom bright-haired Leto bore, slew him in the forefront of the battle, and to Hector gave renown. We even with the wind of

Zephyr, swiftest, they say, of all winds, well might run; nathless to thee thyself it is appointed to be slain in fight by a god and by a man.”

Now when he had thus spoken the Erinyes stayed his voice. And sore troubled did fleet-footed Achilles answer him: “Xanthos, why prophesiest thou my death? no wise behoveth it thee. Well know I of myself that it is appointed me to perish here, far from my father dear and mother; howbeit anywise I will not refrain till I give the Trojans surfeit of war.”

He said, and with a cry among the foremost held on his whole-hooved steeds.

BOOK XX.

How Achilles made havoc among the men of Troy.

So by the beaked ships around thee, son of Peleus, hungry for war, the Achaians armed; and over against them the men of Troy, upon the high ground of the plain.

But Zeus bade Themis call the gods to council from many-folded Olympus' brow; and she ranged all about and bade them to the house of Zeus. There was no River came not up, save only Ocean, nor any nymph, of all that haunt fair thickets and springs of rivers and grassy water-meadows. And they came to the house of Zeus who gathereth the clouds, and sat them down in the polished colonnades which Hephaistos in the cunning of his heart had wrought for father Zeus.

Thus gathered they within the doors of Zeus; nor was the Earthshaker heedless of the goddess' call, but from the salt sea came up after the rest, and set him in the midst, and inquired concerning the purpose of Zeus: "Wherefore, O Lord of the bright lightning, hast thou called the gods again to council? Say, ponderest thou somewhat concerning the Trojans and Achaians? for lo, the war and the fighting of them are kindled very nigh."

And Zeus, who gathered the clouds, answered him, saying: "Thou knowest, O Earthshaker, the purpose within my breast, wherefor I gathered you hither; even in their perishing have I regard unto them. But for me I will abide here, sitting within a fold of Olympus, where I will gladden my heart with gazing; but go all ye forth that ye come among the Trojans and Achaians and succour these or those, howsoever each of you hath a mind. For if Achilles alone shall fight against the Trojans, not even a little while shall they hold back the son of Peleus, the fleet of foot. Nay, but even aforetime they trembled when they looked upon him; now therefore that his wrath for his friend is waxen terrible I fear me lest he overleap the bound of fate, and storm the wall."

Thus spake the son of Kronos, and roused unabating war. For on this side and on that the gods went forth to war: to the company of the ships went Hera, and Pallas Athene, and Poseidon, Earth-enfolder, and the Helper Hermes, pro-eminent in subtle thoughts; and with these went Hephaistos in the greatness of his strength, halting, but his shrunk legs moved nimbly under him: but to the

Trojans went Ares of the glancing helm, and with him Phoebus of the unshorn hair, and archer Artemis, and Leto and Xanthos and laughter-loving Aphrodite.

Now for so long as gods were afar from mortal men, so long waxed the Achaians glorious, for that Achilles was come forth among them, and his long ceasing from grim battle was at an end. And the Trojans were smitten with sore trembling in the limbs of every one of them, in terror when they beheld the son of Peleus, fleet of foot, blazing in his arms, peer of man-slaying Ares. But when among the mellay of men the Olympians were come down, then leapt up in her might Strife, rouser of hosts, then sent forth Athene a cry, now standing by the hollowed trench without the wall, and now on the echoing shores she shouted aloud. And a shout uttered Ares against her, terrible as the blackness of the storm, now from the height of the city to the Trojans calling clear, or again along Simois shore over Kallikolon he sped.

So urged the blessed gods both hosts to battle, then themselves burst into fierce war. And terribly thundered the father of gods and men from heaven above; and from beneath Poseidon made the vast earth shake and the steep mountain tops. Then trembled all the spurs of many-fountained Ida, and all her crests, and the city of the Trojans, and the ships of the Achaians. And the Lord of the Underworld, Aiedoneus, had terror in hell, and leapt from his throne in that terror and cried aloud, lest the world be cloven above him by Poseidon, Shaker of earth, and his dwelling-place be laid bare to mortals and immortals — grim halls, and vast, and lothly to the gods. So loud the roar rose of that battle of gods. For against King Poseidon stood Phoebus Apollo with his winged arrows, and against Enyalios stood Athene, bright-eyed goddess, and against Hera she of the golden shafts and echoing chase, even archer Artemis, sister of the Far-darter; and against Leto the strong Helper Hermes, and against Hephaistos the great deep-eddying River, whom gods call Xanthos and men Skamandros.

Thus gods with gods were matched. Meanwhile Achilles yearned above all to meet Hector, son of Priam, in the fray; for with that blood chiefliest his spirit bade him sate Ares, stubborn lord of war. But straightway Apollo, rouser of hosts, moved Aineias to go to meet the son of Peleus, and filled him with brave spirit: and he made his own voice like the voice of Lykaon the son of Priam; in his semblance spake Apollo, son of Zeus: “Aineias, counsellor of Trojans, where now are thy threats wherewith thou didst boast to the Trojan lords over thy wine, saying thou wouldest stand up in battle against Achilles, Peleus’ son?”

And to him Aineias answered and said: “Son of Priam, why biddest thou me thus face the fierce son of Peleus in battle, though I be not fain thereto? Not for the first time now shall I match me with Achilles, fleet of foot; once before drave he me with his spear from Ida, when he harried our kine and wasted Lyrnessos and Pedasos; but Zeus delivered me out of his hand and put strength into my knees that they were swift. Else had I fallen beneath the hands of Achilles, and of Athene who went before and gave him light, and urged him to slay Leleges and Trojans with his spear of bronze. Therefore it is impossible for man to face Achilles in fight, for that ever some god is at his side to ward off death. Ay, and at any time his spear flieth straight, neither ceaseth till it have pierced through flesh of man. But if God once give us fair field of battle, not lightly shall he overcome me, not though he boast him made of bronze throughout."

And to him in answer spake Apollo son of Zeus: "Yea, hero, pray thou too to the everliving gods; for thou too, men say, wast born of Aphrodite daughter of Zeus, and Achilles' mother is of less degree among the gods. For thy mother is child of Zeus, his but of the Ancient One of the Sea. Come, bear up thy unwearying spear against him, let him no wise turn thee back with revilings and bitter words."

He said, and breathed high spirit into the shepherd of the host, and he went onward through the forefront of the fighting, harnessed in flashing bronze. But white-armed Hera failed not to discern Anchises' son as he went through the press of men to meet the son of Peleus, and gathering the gods about her she spake among them thus: "Consider ye twain, Poseidon and Athene, within your hearts, what shall come of these things that are done. Here is Aineias gone forth harnessed in flashing bronze, to meet the son of Peleus, and it is Phoebus Apollo that hath sent him. Come then, be it ours to turn him back straightway; or else let some one of us stand likewise beside Achilles and give him mighty power, so that he fail not in his spirit, but know that they who love him are the best of the Immortals, and that they who from of old ward war and fighting from the Trojans are vain as wind. All we from Olympus are come down to mingle in this fight that he take no hurt among the Trojans on this day — afterward he shall suffer whatsoever things Fate span for him with her thread, at his beginning, when his mother bare him. If Achilles learn not this from voice divine, then shall he be afraid when some god shall come against him in the battle; for gods revealed are hard to look upon."

Then to her made answer Poseidon, Shaker of the earth: "Hera, be not fierce beyond wisdom; it behoveth thee not. Not fain am I at least to match gods with gods in strife. Let us go now into some high place apart and seat us there to watch, and battle shall be left to men. Only if Ares or Phoebus Apollo fall to fighting, or put constraint upon Achilles and hinder him from fight, then straightway among us too shall go up the battle-cry of strife; right soon, methinks, shall they hie them from the issue of the fray back to Olympus to the company of the gods, overcome by the force of our hands."

Thus spake the blue-haired god, and led the way to the mounded wall of heaven-sprung Herakles, that lofty wall built him by the Trojans and Pallas Athene, that he might escape the monster and be safe from him, what time he should make his onset from the beach to the plain. There sate them down Poseidon and the other gods, and clothed their shoulders with impenetrable cloud. And they of the other part sat down on the brows of Kallikolon around thee, Archer Phoebus, and Ares waster of cities. Thus they on either side sat devising counsels, but shrank all from falling to grievous war, and Zeus from his high seat commanded them.

Meanwhile the whole plain was filled with men and horses and ablaze with bronze; and the earth rang with the feet of them as they rushed together in the fray. Two men far better than the rest were meeting in the midst between the hosts, eager for battle, Aineias, Anchises' son, and noble Achilles. First came on Aineias threateningly, tossing his strong helm; his rapid shield he held before his breast, and brandished his bronze spear. And on the other side the son of Peleus rushed to meet him like a lion, a ravaging lion whom men desire to slay, a whole tribe assembled: and first he goeth his way unheeding, but when some warrior youth hath smitten him with a spear, the he gathereth himself open-mouthed, and foam cometh forth about his teeth, and his stout spirit groaneth in his heart, and with his tail he scourgeth either side his ribs and flanks and goadeth himself on to fight, and glaring is borne straight on them by his passion, to try whether he shall slay some man of them, or whether himself shall perish in the forefront of the throng: thus was Achilles driven of his passion and valiant spirit to go forth to meet Aineias great of heart. And when they were come near against each other, then first to Aineias spake fleet-footed noble Achilles: “Aineias, wherefore hast thou so far come forward from the crowd to stand against me: doth thy heart bid thee fight with me in hope of holding Priam's honour and lordship among the horse-taming Trojans? Nay, though thou slay me, not for that will Priam lay his kingdom in thy hands, for he hath sons, and is sound and of unshaken mind. Or have the Trojans allotted thee some lot of ground more choice than all the rest, fair land of tilth and orchard, that thou mayest dwell therein, if thou slay me? But methinks thou wilt find the slaying hard; for once before, I ween, have I made thee flee before my spear. Host thou forgotten the day when thou wert alone with the kine, and I made thee run swift-footed down Ida's steeps in haste? — then didst thou not look behind thee in thy flight. Thence fleddest thou to Lernessos, but I wasted it, having fought against it with the help of Athene and of father Zeus, and carried away women captive, bereaving them of their day of freedom: only thee Zeus shielded, and other gods. But not this time, methinks, shall they shield thee, as thou imaginest in thy heart:

therefore I bid thee go back into the throng and come not forth against me, while as yet thou art unhurt — after the event even a fool is wise.”

Then to him in answer again Aineias spake: “Son of Peleus, think not with words to affright me as a child, since I too well know myself how to speak taunts and unjust speech. We know each other’s race and lineage in that we have heard the fame proclaimed by mortal men, but never hast thou set eyes on my parents, or I on thine. Thou, they say, art son of nobie Peleus, and of Thetis of the fair tresses, the daughter of the sea: the sire I boast is Anchises great of heart, and my mother is Aphrodite. Of these shall one pair or the other mourn their dear son today; for verily not with idle words shall we two satisfy our strife and depart out of the battle. But, if thou wilt, learn also this, that thou mayest well know our lineage, known to full many men: First Zeus the cloud-gatherer begat Dardanos, and he stablished Dardania, for not yet was holy Ilios built upon the plain to be a city of mortal men, but still they dwelt on slopes of many-fountained Ida. Then Dardanos begat a son, king Erichthonios, who became richest of mortal men. Three thousand mares had he that pastured along the marsh meadow, rejoicing in their tender foals. Of them was Boreas enamoured as they grazed, and in semblance of a dark-maned horse he covered them: then they having conceived bare twelve fillies. These when they bounded over Earth the grain-giver would run upon the topmost ripened ears of corn and break them not; and when they bounded over the broad backs of the sea they would run upon the crests of the breakers of the hoary brine. Then Erichthonios begat Tros to be load over the Trojans, and to Tros three noble sons were born, Ilos and Assarakos and godlike Ganymedes, who became the most beautiful of mortal men. Him the gods caught up to be cupbearer to Zeus, for sake of his beauty, that he might dwell among immortals. Then Ilos again begat a son, noble Laomedon, and Laomedon begat Tithonos and Priam and Lamppos and Klytios and Hiketaon, of the stock of Ares. And Assarakos begat Kapys, and Kapys Anchises, and Anchises me; but Priam begat the goodly Hector.

“Lo then of this blood and lineage declare I myself unto thee. But for valour, Zeus increaseth it in men or minisheth it according as he will, for he is lord of all. But come, let us talk thus together no longer like children, standing in mid onset of war. For there are revilings in plenty for both of us to utter — a hundred-thwarted ship would not suffice for the load of them. Glib is the tongue of man, and many words are therein of every kind, and wide is the range of his speech hither and thither. Whatsoever word thou speak, such wilt thou hear in answer. But what need that we should bandy strife and wrangling each against each. Not by speech shalt thou turn me from the battle that I desire, until we have fought together, point to point: come then, and straightway we will each try the other with bronze-headed spears.”

He said, and against that other’s dread and mighty shield hurled his great spear, and the shield rang loud beneath the spear-point. And the son of Peleus held away the shield from him with his stout hand, in fear, for he thought that the far-shadowing spear of Aineias great of heart would lightly pierce it through — fond man, and knew not in his mind and heart that not lightly do the glorious gifts of gods yield to force of mortal men. So did not the great spear of wise Aineias pierce that shield, for the gold resisted it, even the gift of the god. Yet through two folds he drave it, but three remained, for five folds had the lame god welded, two bronze, and two inside of tin, and one of gold; therein was stayed the ashen spear.

Then Achilles in his turn hurled his far-shadowing spear, and smote upon the circle of the shield of Aineias, beneath the edge of the rim, where the bronze ran thinnest round, and the bull-hide was thinnest thereon; and right through sped the Pelian ashen spear, and the shield cracked under it. And Aineias crouched and held up the shield away from him in dread; and the spear flew over his back and fixed itself in the earth, having divided asunder the two circles of the sheltering shield. And having escaped the long spear he stood still, and a vast anguish drowned his eyes, affrighted that the spear was planted by him so nigh. But Achilles drew his sharp sword and furiously made at him, crying his terrible cry: then Aineias grasped in his hand a stone (a mighty deed) such as two men, as men now are, would not avail to lift, but he with ease wielded it all alone. Then would Aineias have smitten him with the stone as he charged, either on helm or shield, which had warded from him bitter death, and then would the son of Peleus have closed and slain him with his sword, had not Poseidon, Shaker of earth, marked it with speed, and straightway spoken among the immortal gods: “Alas, woe is me for Aineias great of heart, who quickly will go down to Hades slain by the son of Peleus, for that he will obey the words of Apollo the far-darter, fond man, but nowise shall the god help him from grievous death. But wherefore now is he to suffer ill in his innocence, causelessly for others’ wickedness, yet welcome ever are his offerings to the gods who inhabit the spacious heaven? Come, let us guide him out of death’s way, lest the son of Kronos be wroth, if Achilles slay him; for it is appointed to him to escape, that the race of Dardanos perish not without seed or sign, even Dardanos whom the son of Kronos loved above all the children born to him from the daughters of men. For the race of Priam hath Zeus already hated. But thus shall the might of Aineias reign among the Trojans, and his children’s children, who shall be born in the aftertime.”

And him then answered Hera the ox-eyed queen: “Shaker of earth, thyself with thine own mind take counsel, whether thou wilt save Aineias, or leave him [to be slain, brave though he be, by Achilles, Peleus' son]. For by many oaths among all the Immortals have we two sworn, even Pallas Athene and I, never to help the Trojans from their evil day, not even when all Troy shall burn in the burning of fierce fire, and they that burn her shall be the warlike sons of the Achaians."

Now when Poseidon Shaker of earth heard that, he went up amid the battle and the clash of spears, and came where Aineias and renowned Achilles were. Then presently he shed mist over the eyes of Achilles, Peleus' son, and drew the bronze-headed ashen spear from the shield of Aineias great of heart, and set it before Achilles' feet, and lifted Aineias and swung him high from off the earth. Over many ranks of warriors, of horses many, sprang Aineias soaring in the hand of the god, and lighted at the farthest verge of the battle of many onsets, where the Kaukones were arraying them for the fight. Then hard beside him came Poseidon, Shaker of earth, and spake aloud to him winged words: "Aineias, what god is it that biddeth thee fight infatuate against Peleus' vehement son, who is both a better man than thou and dearer to Immortals? Rather withdraw thee whensoever thou fallest in with him, lest even contrary to thy fate thou enter the house of Hades. But when Achilles shall have met his death and doom, then be thou of good courage to fight among the foremost, for there shall none other of the Achaians slay thee."

He spoke, and left him there, when he had shown him all these things. Then quickly from Achilles' eyes he purged the magic mist; and he stared with wide eyes, and in trouble spake unto his proud soul: "Ha! verily a great marvel behold I here with mine eyes. My spear lieth here upon the ground, nor can I anywise see the man at whom I hurled it with intent to slay him. Truly then is Aineias likewise dear to the immortal gods, howbeit I deemed that his boosting thereof was altogether vanity. Away with him! not again will he find heart to make trial of me, now that once more he has escaped death to his joy. But come, I will call on the warlike Danaans and go forth to make trial of some other Trojan face to face."

He said, and leapt along the lines, and called upon each man: "No longer stand afar from the men of Troy, noble Achaians, but come let man match man and throw his soul into the fight. Hard is it for me, though I be strong, to assail so vast a folk and fight them all: not even Ares, though an immortal god, nor Athene, could plunge into the jaws of such a fray and toil therein. But to my utmost power with hands and feet and strength no whit, I say, will I be slack, nay, never so little, but right through their line will I go forward, nor deem I that any Trojan shall be glad who shall come nigh my spear."

Thus spake he urging them. But to the Trojans glorious Hector called aloud, and proclaimed that he would go forth against Achilles: “High-hearted Trojans, fear not Peleus’ son. I too in words could fight even Immortals, but with the spear it were hard, for they are stronger far. Neither shall Achilles accomplish all his talk, but part thereof he is to accomplish, and part to break asunder in the midst. And against him will I go forth, though the hands of him be even as fire, yea though his hands be as fire and his fierceness as the flaming steel.”

Thus spake he urging them, and the Trojans raised their spears for battle; and their fierceness was mingled confusedly, and the battle-cry arose. Then Phoebus Apollo stood by Hector and spake to him: “Hector, no longer challenge Achilles at all before the lines, but in the throng await him and from amid the roar of the battle, lest haply he spear thee or come near and smite thee with his sword.”

Thus spake he, and Hector again fell back into the crowd of men, for he was amazed when he heard the sound of a god’s voice.

But Achilles sprang in among the Trojans, his heart clothed with strength, crying his terrible cry, and first he took Iphition, Otrynteus’ valiant son, a leader of much people, born of a Naiad nymph to Otrynteus waster of cities, beneath snowy Tmolos, in Hyde’s rich domain. Him as he came right on did goodly Achilles smite with his hurled spear, down through the midst of his head, and it was rent asunder utterly. And he fell with a crash, and goodly Achilles exulted over him; “here is thy death, thy birth was on the Gygaian lake, where is thy sire’s demesne, by Hyllos rich in fish and eddying Hermos.”

Thus spake he exultant, but darkness fell upon the eyes of Iphition: him the chariots of the Achaians clave with their tires asunder in the forefront of the battle, and over him Achilles pierced in the temples, through his bronze-cheeked helmet, Demoleon, brave stemmer of battle, Antenor’s son. No stop made the bronze helmet, but therethrough sped the spear-head and clave the bone, and the brain within was all scattered: that stroke made ending of his zeal. Then Hippodamas, as he leapt from his chariot and fled before him, Achilles wounded in the back with his spear: and he breathed forth his spirit with a roar, as when a dragged bull roareth that the young men drag to the altar of the Lord of Helike; for in such hath the Earthshaker his delight: thus roared Hippodamas as from his bones fled forth his haughty spirit. But Achilles with his spear went on after godlike Polydoros, Priam’s son. Him would his sire continually forbid to fight, for that among his children he was youngest born and best beloved, and overcame all in fleetness of foot. Just then in boyish folly, displaying the swiftness of his feet, he was rushing through the forefighters, until he lost his life. Him in the midst did fleet-footed noble Achilles smite with a javelin, in his back as he darted by, where his belt’s golden buckles clasped, and the breast and back plates overlapped: and right through beside the navel went the spear-head, and he fell on his knee with a cry, and dark cloud covered him round about, and he clasped his bowels to him with his hands as he sank.

Then when Hector saw his brother Polydoros clasping his bowels with his hands, and sinking to the earth, a mist fell over his eyes, nor longer might he endure to range so far apart, but he came up against Achilles brandishing his sharp spear, and like flame of fire. And Achilles when he saw him, sprang up, and spake exultingly: “Behold the man who hath deepest stricken into my soul, who slew my dear-prized friend; not long shall we now shrink from each other along the highways of the war.”

He said, and looking grimly spake unto goodly Hector: “Come thou near, that the sooner thou mayest arrive at the goal of death.”

Then to him, unterrified, said Hector of the glancing helm: “Son of Peleus, think not with words to affright me as a child, since I too know myself how to speak taunts and unjust speech. And I know that thou art a man of might, and a far better man than I. Yet doth this issue lie in the lap of the gods, whether I though weaker shall take thy life with my hurled spear, for mine too hath been found keen ere now.”

He said, and poised his spear and hurled it, and Athene with a breath turned it back from glorious Achilles, breathing very lightly; and it came back to goodly Hector, and fell there before his feet. Then Achilles set fiercely upon him, eager to slay him, crying his terrible cry. But Apollo caught Hector up, very easily, as a god may, and hid him in thick mist. Thrice then did fleet-footed noble Achilles make onset with his spear of bronze, and thrice smote the thick mist. [But when the fourth time he had come godlike on,] then with dread shout he spake to him winged words: “Dog, thou art now again escaped from death; yet came ill very nigh thee; but now hath Phoebus Apollo saved thee, to whom thou must surely pray when thou goest forth amid the clash of spears. Verily I will slay thee yet when I meet thee hereafter, if any god is helper of me too. Now will I make after the rest, whomsoever I may seize.”

Thus speaking he pierced Dryops in the midst of his neck with his spear, and he fell down before his feet. But he left him where he lay, and hurled at Demuchos Philetor’s son, a good man and a tall, and stayed him with a stroke upon his knees; then smote him with his mighty sword and reft him of life. Then springing on Laogonos and Dardanos, sons of Bias, he thrust both from their chariot to the ground, one with a spear-cast smiting and the other in close battle with his sword. Then Tros, Alastor’s son — he came and clasped his knees to pray him to spare him, and let him live, and slay him not, having compassion on his like age, fond fool, and knew not that he might not gain his prayers; for nowise soft of heart or tender was that man, but of fierce mood — with his hands he touched Achilles' knees, eager to entreat him, but he smote him in the liver with his sword, and his liver fell from him, and black blood therefrom filled his bosom, and he swooned, and darkness covered his eyes. Then Achilles came near and struck Mulios in the ear, and right through the other ear went the bronze spear-head. Then he smote Agenor's son Echeklos on the midst of the head with his hilted sword, and all the sword grew hot thereat with blood; and dark death seized his eyes, and forceful fate. Then next Deukalion, just where the sinews of the elbow join, there pierced he him through the forearm with his bronze spear-head; so abode he with his arm weighed down, beholding death before him; and Achilles smiting the neck with his sword swept far both head and helm, and the marrow rose out of the backbone, and the corpse lay stretched upon the earth. Then went he onward after Peires' noble son, Rhigmos, who had come from deep-soiled Thrace: him in the midst he smote with his hurled javelin, and the point fixed in his lung, and he fell forth of his chariot. And Areithoos his squire, as he turned the horses round, he pierced in the back with his sharp spear, and thrust him from the car, and the horse ran wild with fear.

As through deep glens rageth fierce fire on some parched mountain-side, and the deep forest burneth, and the wind driving it whirleth every way the flame, so raged he every way with his spear, as it had been a god, pressing hard on the men he slew; and the black earth ran with blood. For even as when one yoketh wide-browed bulls to tread white barley in a stablished threshing-floor, and quickly is it trodden out beneath the feet of the loud-lowing bulls, thus beneath great-hearted Achilles his whole-hooved horses trampled corpses and shields together; and with blood all the axletree below was sprinkled and the rims that ran around the car, for blood-drops from the horses' hooves splashed them, and blood-drops from the tires of the wheels. But the son of Peleus pressed on to win him glory, flecking with gore his irresistible hands.

BOOK XXI.

How Achilles fought with the River, and chased the men of Troy within their gates.

But when now they came unto the ford of the fair-flowing river, even eddying Xanthos, whom immortal Zeus begat, there sundering them he chased the one part to the plain toward the city, even where the Achaians were flying in affright the day before, when glorious Hector was in his fury — thither poured some in flight, and Hera spread before them thick mist to hinder them: — but half were pent into the deep-flowing silver eddied river, and fell therein with a mighty noise, and the steep channel sounded, and the banks around rang loudly; for with shouting they swam therein hither and thither whirled round the eddies. And as when at the rush of fire locusts take wing to fly unto a river, and the unwearying fire flameth forth on them with sudden onset, and they huddle in the water; so before Achilles was the stream of deep-eddying Xanthos filled with the roar and the throng of horses and men.

Then the seed of Zeus left behind him his spear upon the bank, leant against tamarisk bushes, and leapt in, as it were a god, keeping his sword alone, and devised grim work at heart, and smote as he turned him every way about: and their groaning went up ghastly as they were stricken by the sword, and the water reddened with blood. As before a dolphin of huge maw fly other fish and fill the nooks of some fair-havened bay, in terror, for he devoureth amain whichsoever of them he may catch; so along the channels of that dread stream the Trojans crouched beneath the precipitous sides. And when his hands were weary of slaughter he chose twelve young men alive out of the river, an atonement for Patroklos, Menoitios’ son that was dead. These brought he forth amazed like fawns, and bound behind them their hands with well-cut thongs, which they themselves wore on their pliant doublets, and gave them to his comrades to lead down to the hollow ships. Then again he made his onset, athirst for slaying.

There met he a son of Dardanid Priam, in flight out of the river, Lykaon, whom once himself he took and brought unwilling out of his father’s orchard, in a night assault; he was cutting with keen bronze young shoots of a wild fig tree, to be hand-rails of a chariot; but to him an unlooked-for bane came goodly Achilles. And at that time he sold him into well-peopled Lemnos, sending him on ship board, and the son of Jason gave a price for him; and thence a guest friend freed him with a great ransom, Eetion of Imbros, and sent him to goodly Arisbe; whence flying secretly he came to his father's house. Eleven days he rejoiced among his friends after he was come from Lemnos, but on the twelfth once more God brought him into the hands of Achilles, who was to send him to the house of Hades though nowise fain to go. Him when fleet-footed noble Achilles saw bare of helm and shield, neither had he a spear, but had thrown all to the ground; for he sweated grievously as he tried to flee out of the river, and his knees were failing him for weariness: then in wrath spake Achilles to his great heart: "Ha! verily great marvel is this that I behold with my eyes. Surely then will the proud Trojans whom I have slain rise up again from beneath the murky gloom, since thus hath this man come back escaped from his pitiless fate, though sold into goodly Lemnos, neither hath the deep of the hoary sea stayed him, that holdeth many against their will. But come then, of our spear's point shall he taste, that I may see and learn in my mind whether likewise he shall come back even from beneath, or whether the life-giving Earth shall hold him down, she that holdeth so even the strong."

Thus pondered he in his place; but the other came near amazed, fain to touch his knees, for his soul longed exceedingly to flee from evil death and black destruction. Then goodly Achilles lifted his long spear with intent to smite him, but he stooped and ran under it and caught his knees; and the spear went over his back and stood in the ground, hungering for flesh of men. Then Lykaon besought him, with one hand holding his knees, while with the other he held the sharp spear and loosed it not, and spake to him winged words: "I cry thee mercy, Achilles; have thou regard and pity for me: to thee, O fosterling of Zeus, am I in the bonds of suppliantship. For at thy table first I tasted meal of Demeter on the day when thou didst take me captive in the well-ordered orchard, and didst sell me away from my father and my friends unto goodly Lemnos, and I fetched thee the price of a hundred oxen. And now have I been ransomed for thrice that, and this is my twelfth morn since I came to Ilios after much pain. Now once again hath ruinous fate delivered me unto thy hands; surely I must be hated of father Zeus, that he hath given me a second time unto thee; and to short life my mother bare me, Laothoe, old Altes' daughter — Altes who ruleth among the war-loving Leleges, holding steep Pedasos on the Satnioeis. His daughter Priam had to wife, with many others, and of her were we two born, and thou wilt butcher both. Him among the foremost of the foot-soldiers didst thou lay low, even godlike Polydoros, when thou smotest him with they sharp spear: and now will it go hard with me here, for no hope have I to escape thy hands, since God hath delivered me thereunto. Yet one thing will I tell thee, and do thou lay it to heart: slay me not, since I am not of the same mother as Hector, who slew thy comrade the gentle and brave."

Thus spake to him the noble son of Priam, beseeching him with words, but he heard a voice implacable: "Fond fool, proffer me no ransom, nor these words. Until Patroklos met his fated day, then was it welcomer to my soul to spare the men of Troy, and many I took alive and sold beyond the sea: but now there is none shall escape death, whomsoever before Ilios God shall deliver into my hands — yes, even among all Trojans, but chiefest among Priam's sons. Ay, friend, thou too must die: why lamentest thou? Patroklos is dead, who was better far than thou. Seest thou not also what manner of man am I for might and goodliness? and a good man was my father, and a goddess mother bare me. Yet over me too hang death and forceful fate. There cometh morn or eve or some noonday when my life too some man shall take in battle, whether with spear he smite or arrow from the string."

Thus spake he, and the other's knees and heart were unstrung. He let go Achilles' spear, and sat with both hands outspread. But Achilles drew his sharp sword and smote on the collar-bone beside the neck, and all the two-edged sword sank into him, and he lay stretched prone upon the earth, and blood flowed dark from him and soaked the earth. Him seized Achilles by the foot and sent him down the stream, and over him exulting spake winged words: "There lie thou among the fishes, which shall lick off thy wound's blood heedlessly, nor shall thy mother lay thee on a bed and mourn for thee, but Skamandros shall bear thee on his eddies into the broad bosom of the sea. Leaping along the wave shall many a fish dart up to the dark ripple to eat of the white flesh of Lykaon. So perish all, until we reach the citadel of sacred Ilios, ye flying and I behind destroying. Nor even the River, fair-flowing, silver-eddied, shall avail you, to whom long time forsooth ye sacrifice many bulls, and among his eddies throw whole-hooved horses down alive. For all this yet shall ye die the death, until ye pay all for Patroklos' slaying and the slaughter of Achaians whom at the swift ships ye slew while I tarried afar."

Thus spake he, but the River waxed ever more wroth in his heart, and sought in his soul how he should stay goodly Achilles from his work, and ward destruction from the Trojans. Meanwhile the son of Peleus with his far-shadowing spear leapt, fain to slay him, upon Asteropaios son of Pelegon, whom wide-flowing Axios begat of Periboia eldest of the daughters of Akessamenos. Upon him set Achilles, and Asteropaios stood against him from the river, holding two spears; for Xanthos put courage into his heart, being angered for the slaughtered youths whom Achilles was slaughtering along the stream and had no pity on them. Then when the twain were come nigh in onset on each other, unto him first spake fleet-footed noble Achilles: “Who and whence art thou of men, that darest to come against me? Ill-fated are they whose children match them with my might.”

And to him, made answer Pelegon’s noble son: “High-hearted son of Peleus, why askest thou my lineage? I come from deep-soiled Paionia, a land far off, leading Paionian men with their long spears, and this now is the eleventh morn since I am come to Ilios. My lineage is of wide-flowing Axios, who begat Pelegon famous with the spear, and he, men say, was my father. Now fight we, noble Achilles!”

Thus spake he in defiance, and goodly Achilles lifted the Pelian ash: but the warrior Asteropaios hurled with both spears together, for he could use both hands alike, and with the one spear smote the shield, but pierced it not right through, for the gold stayed it, the gift of a god; and with the other he grazed the elbow of Achilles’ right arm, and there leapt forth dark blood, but the point beyond him fixed itself in the earth, eager to batten on flesh. Then in his turn Achilles hurled on Asteropaios his straight-flying ash, fain to have slain him, but missed the man and struck the high bank, and quivering half its length in the bank he left the ashen spear. Then the son of Peleus drew his sharp sword from his thigh and leapt fiercely at him, and he availed not to draw with his stout hand Achilles’ ashen shaft from the steep bank. Thrice shook he it striving to draw it forth, and thrice gave up the strain, but the fourth time he was fain to bend and break the ashen spear of the seed of Aiakos, but ere that Achilles closing on him reft him of life with his sword. For in the belly he smote him beside the navel, and all his bowels gushed out to the earth, and darkness covered his eyes as he lay gasping. Then Achilles trampling on his breast stripped off his armour and spake exultingly: “Lie there! It is hard to strive against children of Kronos’ mighty son, even though one be sprung from a River-god. Thou truly declarest thyself the seed of a wide-flowing River, but I avow me of the linkage of great Zeus. My sire is a man ruling many Myrmidons, Peleus the son of Aiakos, and Aiakos was begotten of Zeus. As Zeus is mightier than seaward-murmuring rivers, so is the seed of Zeus made mightier than the seed of a river. Nay, there is hard beside thee a great river, if he may anywise avail; but against Zeus the son of Kronos it is not possible to fight. For him not even king Acheloios is match, nor yet the great strength of deep-flowing Ocean, from whom all rivers flow and every sea, and all springs and deep wells: yea, even he hath fear of the lightning of great Zeus and his dread thunder, when it pealeth out of heaven.”

He said, and from the steep bank drew his bronze spear, and left there Asteropaios whom he had slain, lying in the sands, and the dark water flooded him. Around him eels and fishes swarmed, tearing and gnawing the fat about his kidneys. But Achilles went on after the charioted Paiones who still along the eddying river huddled in fear, when they saw their best man in the stress of battle slain violently by the hands and the sword of the son of Peleus. There slew he Thersilochos and Mydon and Astypylos and Mnesos and Thrasios and Ainios and Ophelestes; and more yet of the Paiones would swift Achilles have slain, had not the deep-eddying River called unto him in wrath, in semblance of a man, and from an eddy's depth sent forth a voice: "O Achilles, thy might and thy evil work are beyond the measure of men; for gods themselves are ever helping thee. If indeed the son of Kronos hath delivered thee all the Trojans to destroy, at least drive them forth from me and do thy grim deeds on the plain, for filled with dead men is my pleasant bed, nor can I pour my stream to the great sea, being choked with dead, and thou slayest ruthlessly. Come then, let be; I am astonished, O captain of hosts."

And to him answered Achilles fleet of foot: "So be it, heaven-sprung Skamandros, even as thou biddest. But the proud Trojans I will not cease from slaying until I have driven them into their city, and have made trial with Hector face to face whether he is to vanquish me or I him."

Thus saying, he set upon the Trojans, like a god. Then unto Apollo spake the deep-eddying River: "Out on it, lord of the silver bow, child of Zeus, thou hast not kept the ordinance of Kronos' son, who charged thee straitly to stand by the Trojans and to help them, until eve come with light late-setting, and darken the deep-soiled earth."

He said, and spear-famed Achilles sprang from the bank and leapt into his midst; but he rushed on him in a furious wave, and stirred up all his streams in tumult, and swept down the many dead who lay thick in him, slain by Achilles; these out to land he cast with bellowing like a bull, and saved the living under his fair streams, hiding them within eddies deep and wide. But terribly around Achilles arose his tumultuous wave, and the stream smote violently against his shield, nor availed he to stand firm upon his feet. Then he grasped a tall fair-grown elm, and it fell uprooted and tore away all the bank, and reached over the fair river bed with its thick shoots, and stemmed the River himself, falling all within him: and Achilles, struggling out of the eddy, made haste to fly over the plain with his swift feet, for he was afraid. But the great god ceased not, but arose upon him with darkness on his crest, that he might stay noble Achilles from slaughter, and ward destruction from the men of Troy. And the son of Peleus rushed away a spear's throw, with the swoop of a black eagle, the mighty hunter, strongest at once and swiftest of winged birds. Like him he sped, and on his breast the bronze rang terribly as he fled from beneath the onset, and behind him the River rushed on with a mighty roar. As when a field-waterer from a dark spring leadeth water along a bed through crops and garden grounds, a mattock in his hands, casting forth hindrances from the ditch, and as it floweth all pebbles are swept down, and swiftly gliding it murmureth down a sloping place, and outrunneth him that is its guide: — thus ever the river wave caught up Achilles for all his speed; for gods are mightier than men. For whensoever fleet-footed noble Achilles struggled to stand against it, and know whether all immortals be upon him who inhabit spacious heaven, then would a great wave of the heaven-sprung River beat upon his shoulders from above, and he sprang upward with his feet, sore vexed at heart; and the River was wearying his knees with violent rush beneath, devouring the earth from under his feet. Then the son of Peleus cried aloud, looking up to the broad heaven: “Zeus, Father, how doth none of the gods take it on him in pity to save me from the River! after that let come to me what may. None other of the inhabitants of Heaven is chargeable so much, but only my dear mother, who beguiled me with false words, saying that under the wall of the mail-clad men of Troy I must die by the swift arrows of Apollo. Would that Hector had slain me, the best of men bred here: then brave had been the slayer, and a brave man had he slain. But now by a sorry death am I doomed to die, pent in this mighty river, like a swineherd boy whom a torrent sweepeth down as he essayeth to cross it in a storm.”

Thus spake he, and quickly Poseidon and Athene came near and stood beside him, in the likeness of men, and taking his hands in theirs pledged him in words. And the first that spake was Poseidon, Shaker of the earth: “Son of Peleus, tremble not, neither be afraid; such helpers of thee are we from the gods, approved of Zeus, even Pallas Athene and I, for to be vanquished of a river is not appointed thee, but he will soon give back, and thou wilt thyself perceive it: but we will give thee wise counsel, if thou wilt obey it; hold not thy hand from hazardous battle until within Ilios’ famous walls thou have pent the Trojan host, even all that flee before thee. But do thou, when thou hast taken the life of Hector, go back unto the ships; this glory we give unto thee to win.”

They having thus spoken departed to the immortals, but he toward the plain — for the bidding of gods was strong upon him — went onward; and all the plain was filled with water-flood, and many beautiful arms and corpses of slain youths were drifting there. So upward sprang his knees as he rushed against the stream right on, nor stayed him the wide-flowing River, for Athene put great strength in him. Neither did Skamandros slacken his fierceness, but yet more raged against the son of Peleus, and he curled crestwise the billow of his stream, lifting himself on high, and on Simoeis he called with a shout: “Dear brother, the strength of this man let us both join to stay, since quickly he will lay waste the great city of king Priam, and the Trojans abide not in the battle. Help me with speed, and fill thy streams with water from thy springs, and urge on all thy torrents, and raise up a great wave, and stir huge roaring of tree-stumps and stones, that we may stay the fierce man who now is lording it, and deeming himself match for gods. For neither, I ween, will strength avail him nor comeliness anywise, nor that armour beautiful, which deep beneath the flood shall be o'erlaid with slime, and himself I will wrap him in my sands and pour round him countless shingle without stint, nor shall the Achaians know where to gather his bones, so vast a shroud of silt will I heap over them. Where he dieth there shall be his tomb, neither shall he have need of any barrow to be raised, when the Achaians make his funeral."

He said, and rushed in tumult on Achilles, raging from on high, thundering with foam and blood and bodies of dead men. Then did a dark wave of the heaven-sprung River stand towering up and overwhelm the son of Peleus. But Hera cried aloud in terror of Achilles, lest the great deep-eddying River sweep him away, and straightway she called to Hephaistos, her dear son: "Rise, lame god, O my son; it was against thee we thought that eddying Xanthos was matched in fight. Help with all speed, put forth large blast of flame. Then will I go to raise a strong storm out of the sea of the west wind and the white south which shall utterly consume the dead Trojans and their armour, blowing the angry flame. Thou along Xanthos' banks burn up his trees and wrap himself in fire, nor let him anywise turn thee back by soft words or by threat, nor stay thy rage — only when I cry to thee with my voice, then hold the unwearying fire."

Thus spake she, and Hephaistos made ready fierce-blazing fire. First on the plain fire blazed, and burnt the many dead who lay there thick, slain by Achilles; and all the plain was parched and the bright water stayed. And as when in late summer the north wind swiftly parcheth a new watered orchard, and he that tilleth it is glad, thus was the whole plain parched, and Hephaistos consumed the dead; then against the river he turned his gleaming flame. Elms burnt and willow trees and tamarisks, and lotos burnt and rush and galingale which round the fair streams of the river grew in multitude. And the eels and fishes beneath the eddies were afflicted, which through the fair streams tumbled this way and that, in anguish at the blast of crafty Hephaistos. And the strong River burned, and spake and called to him by name: "Hephaistos, there is no god can match with thee, nor will I fight thee thus ablaze with fire. Cease strife, yea, let noble Achilles drive the Trojans forthwith out of their city; what have I to do with strife and succour?"

Thus spake he, burnt with fire, for his fair streams were bubbling. And as a cauldron boileth within, beset with much fire, melting the lard of some fatted hog spurting up on all sides, and logs of firewood lie thereunder, — so burned his fair streams in the fire, and the water boiled. He had no mind to flow, but refrained him, for the breath of cunning Hephaistos violently afflicted him. Then unto Hera, earnestly beseeching her,’ he spake winged words: “Hera, wherefore hath thy son assailed my stream to vex it above others? I am less chargeable than all the rest that are helpers of the Trojans. But lo, I will give over, if thou wilt, and let thy son give over too. And I further will swear even this, that never will I ward the day of evil from the Trojans, not even when all Troy is burning in the blaze of hungry fire, and the warlike sons of Achaians are the burners thereof.”

Then when the white-armed goddess Hera heard his speech, straightway she spake unto Hephaistos her dear son: “Hephaistos, hold, famed son; it befitteth not thus for mortals’ sake to do violence to an immortal god.”

Thus said she and Hephaistos quenched the fierce-blazing fire, and the wave once more rolled down the fair river-bed.

So when the rage of Xanthos was overcome, both ceased, for Hera stayed them, though in wrath. But among the other gods fell grievous bitter strife, and their hearts were carried diverse in their breasts. And they clashed together with a great noise, and the wide earth groaned, and the clarion of great Heaven rang around. Zeus heard as he sate upon Olympus, and his heart within him laughed pleasantly when he beheld that strife of gods. Then no longer stood they asunder, for Ares piercer of shields began the battle and first made for Athene with his bronze spear, and spake a taunting word: “Wherefore, O dogfly, dost thou match gods with gods in strife, with stormy daring, as thy great spirit moveth thee? Rememberest thou not how thou movedst Diomedes Tydeus’ son to wound me, and thyself didst take a visible spear and thrust it straight at me and pierce through my fair skin? Therefore deem I now that thou shalt pay me for all that thou hast done.”

Thus saying he smote on the dread tasselled aegis that not even the lightning of Zeus can overcome — thereon smote bloodstained Ares with his long spear. But she, giving back, grasped with stout hand a stone that lay upon the plain, black, rugged, huge, which men of old time set to be the landmark of a field; this hurled she, and smote impetuous Ares on the neck, and unstrung his limbs. Seven roods he covered in his fall, and soiled his hair with dust, and his armour rang upon him. And Pallas Athene laughed, and spake to him winged words exultingly: “Fool, not even yet hast thou learnt how far better than thou I claim to be, that thus thou matchest thy might with mine. Thus shalt thou satisfy thy mother’s curses, who deviseth mischief against thee in her wrath, for that thou hast left the Achaians and givest the proud Trojan’s aid.”

Thus having said she turned from him her shining eyes. Him did Aphrodite daughter of Zeus take by the hand and lead away, groaning continually, for scarce gathered he his spirit back to him. But when the white-armed goddess Hera was aware of them, straightway she spake unto Athene winged words: “Out on it, child of aegis-bearing Zeus, maiden invincible, lo there the dogfly is leading Ares destroyer of men out of the fray of battle down the throng — nay then, pursue her.”

She said, and Athene sped after her with heart exultant, and made at her and smote her with stout hand upon the breast, and straightway her knees and heart were unstrung. So they twain lay on the bounteous earth, and she spake winged words exultingly: “Such let all be who give the Trojans aid when they fight against the mailed Argives. Be they even so bold and brave as Aphrodite when she came to succour Ares and defied my might. Then should we long ago have ceased from war, having laid waste the stablished citadel of Ilios.”

[She said, and the white-armed goddess Hera smiled.] Then to Apollo spake the earth-shaking lord: “Phoebus, why stand we apart? It befitteth not after the rest have begun: that were the more shameful if without fighting we should go to Olympus to the bronze-thresholded house of Zeus. Begin, for thou art younger; it were not meet for me, since I was born first and know more. Fond god, how foolish is thy heart! Thou rememberest not all the ills we twain alone of gods endured at Ilios, when by ordinance of Zeus we came to proud Laomedon and served him through a year for promised recompense, and he laid on us his commands. I round their city built the Trojans a wall, wide and most fair, that the city might be unstormed, and thou Phoebus, didst herd shambling crook-horned kine among the spurs of woody many-folded Ida. But when the joyous seasons were accomplishing the term of hire, then redoubtable Laomedon robbed us of all hire, and sent us off with threats. He threatened that he would bind together our feet and hands and sell us into far-off isles, and the ears of both of us he vowed to shear off with the sword. So we went home with angry hearts, wroth for the hire he promised and gave us not. To his folk not thou showest favour, nor essayest with us how the proud Trojans may be brought low and perish miserably with their children and noble wives.”

Then to him answered King Apollo the Far-darter: “Shaker of the earth, of no sound mind wouldst thou repute me if I should fight against thee for the sake of pitiful mortals, who like unto leaves now live in glowing life, consuming the fruit of the earth, and now again pine into death. Let us with all speed cease from combat, and let them do battle by themselves.”

Thus saying he turned away, for he felt shame to deal in blows with his father’s brother. But his sister upbraided him sore, the queen of wild beasts, huntress Artemis, and spake a taunting word: “So then thou fleest, Far-darter, hast quite yielded to Poseidon the victory, and given him glory for naught! Fond god, why bearest thou an ineffectual bow in vain? Let me not hear thee again in the halls of our sire boast as before among the immortal gods thou wouldst stand up to fight against Poseidon."

Thus spake she, but far-darting Apollo answered her not. But angrily the noble spouse of Zeus [upbraided the Archer Queen with taunting words:] "How now art thou fain, bold vixen, to set thyself against me? Hard were it for thee to match my might, bow-bearer though thou art, since against women Zeus made thee a lion, and giveth thee to slay whomso of them thou wilt. Truly it is better on the mountains to slay wild beasts and deer than to fight amain with mightier than thou. But if thou wilt, try war, that thou mayest know well how far stronger am I, since thou matchest thy might with mine."

She said, and with her left hand caught both the other's hands by the wrist, and with her right took the bow from off her shoulders, and therewith, smiling, beat her on the ears as she turned this way and that; and the swift arrows fell out of her quiver. And weeping from before her the goddess fled like a dove that from before a falcon flieth to a hollow rock, a cleft — for she was not fated to be caught; — thus Artemis fled weeping, and left her bow and arrows where they lay. Then to Leto spake the Guide, the slayer of Argus: "Leto, with thee will I no wise fight; a grievous thing it is to come to blows with wives of cloud-gathering Zeus; but boast to thy heart's content among the immortal gods that thou didst vanquish me by might and main."

Thus said he, and Leto gathered up the curved bow and arrows fallen hither and thither amid the whirl of dust: so taking her daughter's bow she went back. And the maiden came to Olympus, to the bronze-thresholded house of Zeus, and weeping set herself on her father's knee, while round her her divine vesture quivered: and her father, Kronos' son, took her to him and asked of her, laughing gently: "Who of the inhabitants of heaven, dear child, hath dealt with thee thus [hastily, as though thou hadst been doing some wrong thing openly]?"

And to him in answer spake the fair-crowned queen of the echoing chase: "It was thy wife that buffeted me, father, the white-armed Hera, from whom are strife and contention come upon the immortals."

Thus talked they unto one another. Then Phoebus Apollo entered into sacred Ilios, for he was troubled for the wall of the well-builded city, lest the Danaans waste it before its hour upon that day. But the other ever-living gods went to Olympus, some angry and some greatly triumphing, and sat down beside Zeus who hideth himself in dark clouds.

Now Achilles was still slaying the Trojans, both themselves and their whole-hooved horses. And as when a smoke goeth up to the broad heaven, when a city burneth, kindled by the wrath of gods, and causeth toil to all, and griefs to many, thus caused Achilles toil and griefs to the Trojans. And the old man Priam stood on the sacred tower, and was aware of dread Achilles, how before him the Trojans thronged in rout, nor was any succour found of them. Then with a cry he went down from the tower, to rouse the gallant warders along the walls: “Hold open the gates in your hands until the folk come to the city in their rout, for closely is Achilles chasing them — now trow I there will be deadly deeds. And when they are gathered within the wall and are taking breath, then again shut back the gate-wings firmly builded; for I fear lest that murderous man spring in within the wall.”

Thus spake he, and they opened the gates and thrust back the bolts; and the gates flung back gave safety. Then Apollo leapt forth to the front that he might ward destruction from the Trojans. They straight for the city and the high wall were fleeing, parched with thirst and dust-grimed from the plain, and Achilles chased them vehemently with his spear, for strong frenzy possessed his heart continually, and he thirsted to win him renown. Then would the sons of the Achaians have taken high-gated Troy, had not Phoebus Apollo aroused goodly Agenor, Antenor’s son, a princely man and strong. In his heart he put good courage, and himself stood by his side that he might ward off the grievous visitations of death, leaning against the oak, and he was shrouded in thick mist. So when Agenor was aware of Achilles waster of cities, he halted, and his heart much wavered as he stood; and in trouble he spake to his great heart: “Ay me, if I flee before mighty Achilles, there where the rest are driven terror-struck, nathless will he overtake me and slaughter me as a coward. Or what if I leave these to be driven before Achilles the son of Peleus, and flee upon my feet from the wall by another way to the Ileian plain, until I come to the spurs of Ida, and hide me in the underwood? So then at evening, having bathed in the river and refreshed me of sweat, I might return to Ilios. Nay, why doth my heart debate thus within me? Lest he might be aware of me as I get me from the city for the plain, and speeding after overtake me with swift feet; then will it no more be possible to avoid the visitation of death, for he is exceeding mighty above all mankind. What then if in front of the city I go forth to meet him? Surely his flesh too is penetrable by sharp bronze, and there is but one life within, and men say he is mortal, howbeit Zeus the son of Kronos giveth him renown.”

Thus saying, he gathered himself to await Achilles, and within him his stout heart was set to strive and fight. As a leopardess goeth forth from a deep thicket to affront a huntsman, nor is afraid at heart, nor fleeth when she heareth the bay of hounds; for albeit the man first smite her with thrust or throw, yet even pierced through with the spear she ceaseth not from her courage until she either grapple or be slain, so noble Antenor’s son, goodly Agenor, refused to flee till he should put Achilles to the proof, but held before him the circle of his shield, and aimed at him with his spear, and cried aloud: “Doubtless thou hopest in thy heart, noble Achilles, on this day to sack the city of the proud men of Troy. Fond man, there shall many woful things yet be wrought before it, for within it we are many men and staunch, who in front of our parents dear and wives and sons keep Ilios safe; but thou shalt here meet death, albeit so redoubtable and bold a man of war.”

He said, and hurled his sharp spear with weighty hand, and smote him on the leg beneath the knee, nor missed his mark, and the greave of new-wrought tin rang terribly on him; but the bronze bounded back from him it smote, nor pierced him, for the god’s gift drave it back. Then the son of Peleus in his turn made at godlike Agenor, but Apollo suffered him not to win renown, but caught away Agenor, and shrouded him in thick mist, and sent him in peace to be gone out of the war. Then by wile kept the son of Peleus away from the folk, for in complete semblance of Agenor himself he stood before the feet of Achilles, who hasted to run upon him and chase him. And while he chased him over the wheat-bearing plain, edging him toward the deep-eddying river Skamandros, as he ran but a little in front of him (for by wile Apollo beguiled him that he kept ever hoping to overtake him in the race), meantime the other Trojans in common rout came gladly unto their fastness, and the city was filled with the throng of them. Neither had they heart to await one another outside the city and wall, and to know who might have escaped and who had perished in the fight, but impetuously they poured into the city, whomsoever of them his feet and knees might save.

BOOK XXII.

How Achilles fought with Hector, and slew him, and brought his body to the ships.

Thus they throughout the city, scared like fawns, were cooling their sweat and drinking and slaking their thirst, leaning on the fair battlements, while the Achaians drew near the wall, setting shields to shoulders. But Hector deadly fate bound to abide in his place, in front of Ilios and the Skaian gates. Then to the son of Peleus spake Phoebus Apollo: “Wherefore, son of Peleus, pursuest thou me with swift feet, thyself being mortal and I a deathless god? Thou hast not even yet known me, that I am a god, but strivest vehemently. Truly thou regardest not thy task among the affliction of the Trojans whom thou affrightedst, who now are gathered into the city, while thou heat wandered hither. Me thou wilt never slay, for I am not subject unto death.”

Then mightily moved spake unto him Achilles fleet of foot: “Thou hast baulked me, Far-darter, most mischievous of all the gods, in that thou hast turned me hither from the wall: else should full many yet have bitten the dust or ever within Ilios had they come. Now hast thou robbed me of great renown, and lightly hast saved them, because thou hadst no vengeance to fear thereafter. Verily I would avenge me on thee, had I but the power.”

Thus saying toward the city he was gone in pride of heart, rushing like some victorious horse in a chariot, that runneth lightly at full speed over the plain; so swiftly plied Achilles his feet and knees. Him the old man Priam first beheld as he sped across the plain, blazing as the star that cometh forth at harvest-time, and plain seen his rays shine forth amid the host of stars in the darkness of night, the star whose name men call Orion’s Dog. Brightest of all is he, yet for an evil sign is he set, and bringeth much fever upon hapless men. Even so on Achilles’ breast the bronze gleamed as he ran. And the old man cried aloud and beat upon his head with his hands, raising them on high, and with a cry called aloud beseeching his dear son; for he before the gates was standing, all hot for battle with Achilles. And the old man spake piteously unto him, stretching forth his hands: “Hector, beloved son, I pray thee await not this man alone with none beside thee, lest thou quickly meet thy doom, slain by the son of Peleus, since he is mightier far, a merciless man. Would the gods loved him even as do I! then quickly would dogs and vultures devour him on the field — thereby would cruel pain go from my heart — the man who hath bereft me of many valiant sons, slaying them and selling them captive into far-off isles. Ay even now twain of my children, Lykaon and Polydoros, I cannot see among the Trojans that throng into the fastness, sons whom Laothoe bare me, a princess among women. If they be yet alive amid the enemy’s host, then will we ransom them with bronze and gold, for there is store within, for much goods gave the old man famous Altes to his child. If they be dead, then even in the house of Hades shall they be a sorrow to my soul and to their mother, even to us who gave them birth, but to the rest of the folk a briefer sorrow, if but thou die not by Achilles’ hand. Nay, come within the wall, my child, that thou preserve the men and women of Troy, neither give great triumph to the son of Peleus, and be thyself bereft of sweet life. Have compassion also on me, the helpless one, who still can feel, ill-fated; whom the father, Kronos’ son, will bring to naught by a grievous doom in the path of old age, having seen full many ills, his sons perishing and his daughters carried away captive, and his chambers laid waste and infant children hurled to the ground in terrible war, and his sons’ wives dragged away by the ruinous hands of the Achaians. Myself then last of all at the street door will ravening dogs tear, when some one by stroke or throw of the sharp bronze hath bereft my limbs of life — even the dogs I reared in my halls about my table and to guard my door, which then having drunk my blood, maddened at heart shall lie in the gateway. A young man all beseemeth, even to be slain in war, to be torn by the sharp bronze and lie on the field; though he be dead yet is all honourable to him, whate’er be seen: but when dogs defile the hoary head and hoary beard of an old man slain, this is the most piteous thing that cometh upon hapless men.”

Thus spake the old man, and grasped his hoary hairs, plucking them from his head, but he persuaded not Hector’s soul. Then his mother in her turn wailed tearfully, loosening the folds of her robe, while with the other hand she showed her breast; and through her tears spake to him winged words: “Hector, my child, have regard unto this bosom and pity me, if ever I gave thee consolation of my breast. Think of it, dear child, and from this side the wall drive back the foe, nor stand in front to meet him. He is merciless; if he slay thee it will not be on a bed that I or thy wife shall bewail thee, my own dear child, but far away from us by the ships of the Argives will swift dogs devour thee.”

Thus they with wailing spake to their dear son, beseeching him sore, yet they persuaded not Hector’s soul, but he stood awaiting Achilles as he drew nigh in giant might. As a serpent of the mountains upon his den awaiteth a man, having fed on evil poisons, and fell wrath hath entered into him, and terribly he glared as he coileth himself about his den, so Hector with courage unquenchable gave not back, leaning his shining shield against a jutting tower. Then sore troubled he spake to his great heart: “Ay me, if I go within the gates and walls, Polydamas will be first to bring reproach against me, since he bade me lead the Trojans to the city during this ruinous night, when noble Achilles arose. But I regarded him not, yet surely it had been better far. And now that I have undone the host by my wantonness, I am ashamed before the men of Troy and women of trailing robes, lest at any time some worse man than I shall say: ‘Hector by trusting his own might undid the host.’ So will they speak; then to me would it be better far to face Achilles and either slay him and go home, or myself die gloriously before the city. Or what if I lay down my bossy shield and my stout helm, and lean my spear against the wall, and go of myself to meet noble Achilles and promise him that Helen, and with her all possessions that Alexandros brought in hollow ships to Troy, the beginning of strife, we will give to the Sons of Atreus to take away, and therewithal to divide in half with the Achaians all else that this city holdeth: and if thereafter I obtain from the Trojans an oath of the Elders that they will hide nothing but divide all in twain [whatever wealth the pleasant city hold within]? But wherefore doth my heart debate thus? I might come unto him and he would not pity or regard me at all, but presently slay me unarmed as it were but a woman, if I put off my armour. No time is it now to dally with him from oaktree or from rock, like youth with maiden, as youth and maiden hold dalliance one with another. Better is it to join battle with all speed: let us know upon which of us twain the Olympian shall bestow renown.”

Thus pondered he as he stood, but nigh on him came Achilles, peer of Enyalios warrior of the waving helm, brandishing from his right shoulder the Pelian ash, his terrible spear; and all around the bronze on him flashed like the gleam of blazing fire or of the Sun as he ariseth. And trembling seized Hector as he was aware of him, nor endured he to abide in his place, but left the gates behind him and fled in fear. And the son of Peleus darted after him, trusting in his swift feet. As a falcon upon the mountains, swiftest of winged things, swoopeth fleetly after a trembling dove; and she before him fleeth, while he with shrill screams hard at hand still darteth at her, for his heart urgeth him to seize her; so Achilles in hot haste flew straight for him, and Hector fled beneath the Trojans’ wall, and plied swift knees. They past the watch-place and wind-waved wild fig-tree sped ever, away from under the wall, along the waggon-track, and came to the two fair-flowing springs, where two fountains rise that feed deep-eddying Skamandros. The one floweth with warm water, and smoke goeth up therefrom around as it were from a blazing fire, while the other even in summer floweth forth like cold hail or snow or ice that water formeth. And there beside the springs are broad washing-troughs hard by, fair troughs of stone, where wives and fair daughters of the men of Troy were wont to wash bright raiment, in the old time of peace, before the sons of the Achaians came. Thereby they ran, he flying, he pursuing. Valiant was the flier but far mightier he who fleetly pursued him. For not for beast of sacrifice or for an oxhide were they striving, such as are prizes for men's speed of foot, but for the life of horse-taming Hector was their race. And as when victorious whole-hooved horses run rapidly round the turning-points, and some great prize lieth in sight, be it a tripod or a woman, in honour of a man that is dead, so thrice around Priam's city circled those twain with flying feet, and all the gods were gazing on them. Then among them spake first the father of gods and men: "Ay me, a man beloved I see pursued around the wall. My heart is woe for Hector, who hath burnt for me many thighs of oxen amid the crests of many-folded Ida, and other times on the city-height; but now is goodly Achilles pursuing him with swift feet round Priam's town. Come, give your counsel, gods, and devise whether we shall save him from death or now at last slay him, valiant though he be, by the hand of Achilles Peleus' son."

Then to him answered the bright-eyed goddess Athene: "O Father, Lord of the bright lightning and the dark cloud, what is this thou hast said? A man that is a mortal, doomed long ago by fate, wouldst thou redeem back from ill-boding death? Do it, but not all we other gods approve."

And unto her in answer spake cloud-gathering Zeus: "Be of good cheer, Trito-born, dear child: not in full earnest speak I, and I would fain be kind to thee. Do as seemeth good to thy mind, and draw not back."

Thus saying he roused Athene, that already was set thereon, and from the crests of Olympus she darted down.

But after Hector sped fleet Achilles chasing him vehemently. And as when on the mountains a hound hunteth the fawn of a deer, having started it from its covert, through glens and glades, and if it crouch to baffle him under a bush, yet scenting it out the hound runneth constantly until he find it; so Hector baffled not Peleus' fleet-footed son. Oft as he set himself to dart under the well-built walls over against the Dardanian gates, if haply from above they might succour him with darts, so oft would Achilles gain on him and turn him toward the plain, while himself he sped ever on the city-side. And as in a dream one faileth in chase of a flying man, the one faileth in his flight and the other in his chase — so failed Achilles to overtake him in the race, and Hector to escape. And thus would Hector have avoided the visitation of death, had not this time been utterly the last wherein Apollo came nigh to him, who nerved his strength and his swift knees. For to the host did noble Achilles sign with his head, and forbade them to hurl bitter darts against Hector, lest any smiting him should gain renown, and he himself come second. But when the fourth time they had reached the springs, then the Father hung his golden balances, and set therein two lots of dreary death, one of Achilles, one of horse-taming Hector, and held them by the midst and poised. Then Hector's fated day sank down, and fell to the house of Hades, and Phoebus Apollo left him. But to Peleus' son came the bright-eyed goddess Athene, and standing near spake to him winged words: "Now verily, glorious Achilles dear to Zeus, I have hope that we twain shall carry off great glory to the ships for the Achaians, having slain Hector, for all his thirst for fight. No longer is it possible for him to escape us, not even though far-darting Apollo should travail sore, grovelling before the Father, aegis-bearing Zeus. But do thou now stand and take breath, and I will go and persuade this man to confront thee in fight."

Thus spake Athene, and he obeyed, and was glad at heart, and stood leaning on his bronze-pointed ashen-spear. And she left him and came to noble Hector, like unto Deiphobos in shape and in strong voice, and standing near spake to him winged words: "Dear brother, verily fleet Achilles doth thee violence, chasing thee round Priam's town with swift feet: but come let us make a stand and await him on our defence."

Then answered her great Hector of the glancing helm: "Deiphobos, verily aforetime wert thou far dearest of my brothers, but now methinks I shall honour thee even more, in that thou hast dared for my sake, when thou sawest me, to come forth of the wall, while the others tarry within."

Then to him again spake the bright-eyed goddess Athene: "Dear brother, of a truth my father and lady mother and my comrades around besought me much, entreating me in turn, to tarry there, so greatly do they all tremble before him; but my heart within was sore with dismal grief. And now fight we with straight-set resolve and let there be no sparing of spears, that we may know whether Achilles is to slay us and carry our bloody spoils to the hollow ships, or whether he might be vanquished by thy spear."

Thus saying Athene in her subtlety led him on. And when they were come nigh in onset on one another, to Achilles first spake great Hector of the glancing helm: "No longer, son of Peleus, will I fly thee, as before I thrice ran round the great town of Priam, and endured not to await thy onset. Now my heart biddeth me stand up against thee; I will either slay or be slain. But come hither and let us pledge us by our gods, for they shall be best witnesses and beholders of covenants: I will entreat thee in no outrageous sort, if Zeus grant me to outstay thee, and if I take thy life, but when I have despoiled thee of thy glorious armour, O Achilles, I will give back thy dead body to the Achaians, and do thou the same."

But unto him with grim gaze spake Achilles fleet of foot: "Hector, talk not to me, thou madman, of covenants. As between men and lions there is no pledge of faith, nor wolves and sheep can be of one mind, but imagine evil continually against each other, so is it impossible for thee and me to be friends, neither shall be any pledge between us until one or other shall have fallen and glutted with blood Ares, the stubborn god of war. Bethink thee of all thy soldiership: now behoveth it thee to quit thee as a good spearman and valiant man of war. No longer is there way of escape for thee, but Pallas Athene will straightway subdue thee to my spear; and now in one hour shalt thou pay back for all my sorrows for my friends whom thou hast slain in the fury of thy spear."

He said, and poised his far-shadowing spear and hurled. And noble Hector watched the coming thereof and avoided it; for with his eye on it he crouched, and the bronze spear flew over him, and fixed itself in the earth; but Pallas Athene caught it up and gave it back to Achilles, unknown of Hector shepherd of hosts. Then Hector spake unto the noble son of Peleus: "Thou hast missed, so no wise yet, godlike Achilles, has thou known from Zeus the hour of my doom, though thou thoughtest it. Cunning of tongue art thou and a deceiver in speech, that fearing thee I might forget my valour and strength. Not as I flee shalt thou plant thy spear in my reins, but drive it straight through my breast as I set on thee, if God hath given thee to do it. Now in thy turn avoid my spear of bronze. O that thou mightst take it all into thy flesh! Then would the war be lighter to the Trojans, if but thou wert dead, for thou art their greatest bane."

He said, and poised his long-shadowed spear and hurled it, and smote the midst of the shield of Peleus' son, and missed him not: but far from the shield the spear leapt back. And Hector was wroth that his swift weapon had left his hand in vain, and he stood downcast, for he had no second ashen spear. And he called with a loud shout to Deiphobos of the white shield, and asked of him a long spear, but he was no wise nigh. Then Hector knew he truth in his heart, and spake and said: "Ay me, now verily the gods have summoned me to death. I deemed the warrior Deiphobos was by my side, but he is within the wall, and it was Athene who played me false. Now therefore is evil death come very nigh me, not far off, nor is there way of escape. This then was from of old the pleasure of Zeus and of the far-darting son of Zeus, who yet before were fain to succour me: but now my fate hath found me. At least let me not die without a struggle or ingloriously, but in some great deed of arms whereof men yet to be born shall hear."

Thus saying he drew his sharp sword that by his flank hung great and strong, and gathered himself and swooped like a soaring eagle that darteth to the plain through the dark clouds to seize a tender lamb or crouching hare. So Hector swooped, brandishing his sharp sword. And Achilles made at him, for his heart was filled with wild fierceness, and before his breast he made a covering with his fair graven shield, and tossed his bright four-plated helm; and round it waved fair golden plumes [that Hephaistos had set thick about the crest.]. As a star goeth among stars in the darkness of night, Hesperos, fairest of all stars set in heaven, so flashed there forth a light from the keen spear Achilles poised in his right hand, devising mischief against noble Hector, eyeing his fair flesh to find the fittest place. Now for the rest of him his flesh was covered by the fair bronze armour he stripped from strong Patroklos when he slew him, but there was an opening where the collar bones coming from the shoulders clasp the neck, even at the gullet, where destruction of life cometh quickliest; there, as he came on, noble Achilles drave at him with his spear, and right through the tender neck went the point. Yet the bronze-weighted ashen spear clave not the windpipe, so that he might yet speak words of answer to his foe. And he fell down in the dust, and noble Achilles spake exultingly: “Hector, thou thoughtest, whilst thou wert spoiling Patroklos, that thou wouldst be safe, and didst reck nothing of me who was afar, thou fool. But away among the hollow ships his comrade, a mightier far, even I, was left behind, who now have unstrung thy knees. Thee shall dogs and birds tear foully, but his funeral shall the Achaians make.”

Then with faint breath spake unto him Hector of the glancing helm: “I pray thee by thy life and knees and parents leave me not for dogs of the Achaians to devour by the ships, but take good store of bronze and gold, gifts that my father and lady mother shall give to thee, and give them home my body back again, that the Trojans and Trojans’ wives give me my due of fire after my death.”

But unto him with grim gaze spake Achilles fleet of foot: “Entreat me not, dog, by knees or parents. Would that my heart’s desire could so bid me myself to carve and eat raw thy flesh, for the evil thou hast wrought me, as surely is there none that shall keep the dogs from thee, not even should they bring ten or twenty fold ransom and here weigh it out, and promise even more, not even were Priam Dardanos’ son to bid pay thy weight in gold, not even so shall thy lady mother lay thee on a bed to mourn her son, but dogs and birds shall devour thee utterly.”

Then dying spake unto him Hector of the glancing helm: “Verily I know thee and behold thee as thou art, nor was I destined to persuade thee; truly thy heart is iron in thy breast. Take heed now lest I draw upon thee wrath of gods, in the day when Paris and Phoebus Apollo slay thee, for all thy valour, at the Skaian gate.”

He ended, and the shadow of death came down upon him, and his soul flew forth of his limbs and was gone to the house of Hades, wailing her fate, leaving her vigour and youth. Then to the dead man spake noble Achilles: “Die: for my death, I will accept it whensoever Zeus and the other immortal gods are minded to accomplish it.”

He said, and from the corpse drew forth his bronze spear, and set it aside, and stripped the bloody armour from the shoulders. And other sons of Achaians ran up around, who gazed upon the stature and marvellous goodliness of Hector. Nor did any stand by but wounded him, and thus would many a man say looking toward his neighbour: “Go to, of a truth far easier to handle is Hector now than when he burnt the ships with blazing fire.” Thus would many a man say, and wound him as he stood hard by. And when fleet noble Achilles had despoiled him, he stood up among the Achaians and spake winged words: “Friends, chiefs and counsellors of the Argives, since the gods have vouchsafed us to vanquish this man who hath done us more evil than all the rest together, come let us make trial in arms round about the city, that we may know somewhat of the Trojans’ purpose, whether since he hath fallen they will forsake the citadel, or whether they are minded to abide, albeit Hector is no more. But wherefore doth my heart debate thus? There lieth by the ships a dead man unbewailed, unburied, Patroklos; him will I not forget, while I abide among the living and my knees can stir. Nay if even in the house of Hades the dead forget their dead, yet will I even there be mindful of my dear comrade. But come, ye sons of the Achaians, let us now, singing our song of victory, go back to the hollow ships and take with us our foe. Great glory have we won; we have slain the noble Hector, unto whom the Trojans prayed throughout their city, as he had been a god.”

He said, and devised foul entreatment of noble Hector. The tendons of both feet behind he slit from heel to ankle-joint, and thrust therethrough thongs of ox-hide, and bound him to his chariot, leaving his head to trail. And when he had mounted the chariot and lifted therein the famous armour, he lashed his horses to speed, and they nothing loth flew on. And dust rose around him that was dragged, and his dark hair flowed loose on either side, and in the dust lay all his once fair head, for now had Zeus given him over to his foes to entreat foully in his own native land.

Thus was his head all grimed with dust. But his mother when she beheld her son, tore her hair and cast far from her her shining veil, and cried aloud with an exceeding bitter cry. And piteously moaned his father, and around them the folk fell to crying and moaning throughout the town. Most like it seemed as though all beetling Ilios were burning utterly in fire. Scarcely could the folk keep back the old man in his hot desire to get him forth of the Dardanian gates. For he besought them all, casting himself down in the mire, and calling on each man by his name: “Hold, friends, and though you love me leave me to get me forth of the city alone and go unto the ships of the Achaians. Let me pray this accursed horror-working man, if haply he may feel shame before his age-fellows and pity an old man. He also hath a father such as I am, Peleus, who begat and reared him to be a bane of Trojans — and most of all to me hath he brought woe. So many sons of mine hath he slain in their flower — yet for all my sorrow for the rest I mourn them all less than this one alone, for whom my sharp grief will bring me down to the house of Hades — even Hector. Would that he had died in my arms; then would we have wept and wailed our fill, his mother who bore him to her ill hap, and I myself."

Thus spake he wailing, and all the men of the city made moan with him. And among the women of Troy, Hekabe led the wild lament: "My child, ah, woe is me! wherefore should I live in my pain, now thou art dead, who night and day wert my boast through the city, and blessing to all, both men and women of Troy throughout the town, who hailed thee as a god, for verily an exceeding glory to them wert thou in thy life: — now death and fate have overtaken thee."

Thus spake she wailing. But Hector's wife knew not as yet, for no true messenger had come to tell her how her husband abode without the gates, but in an inner chamber of the lofty house she was weaving a double purple web, and broidering therein manifold flowers. Then she called to her goodly-haired handmaids through the house to set a great tripod on the fire, that Hector might have warm washing when he came home out of the battle fond heart, and was unaware how, far from all washings, bright-eyed Athene had slain him by the hand of Achilles. But she heard shrieks and groans from the battlements, and her limbs reeled, and the shuttle fell from her hands to earth. Then again among her goodly-haired maids she spake: "Come two of ye this way with me that I may see what deeds are done. It was the voice of my husband's noble mother that I heard, and in my own breast my heart leapeth to my mouth and my knees are numbed beneath me: surely some evil thing is at hand against the children of Priam. Would that such word might never reach my ear! yet terribly I dread lest noble Achilles have cut off bold Hector from the city by himself and chased him to the plain and ere this ended his perilous pride that possessed him, for never would he tarry among the throng of men but ran out before them far, yielding place to no man in his hardihood."

Thus saying she sped through the chamber like one mad, with beating heart, and with her went her handmaidens. But when she came to the battlements and the throng of men, she stood still upon the wall and gazed, and beheld him dragged before the city: — swift horses dragged him recklessly toward the hollow ships of the Achaians. Then dark night came on her eyes and shrouded her, and she fell backward and gasped forth her spirit. From off her head she shook the bright attiring thereof, frontlet and net and woven band, and veil, the veil that golden Aphrodite gave her on the day when Hector of the glancing helm led her forth of the house of Eetion, having given bride-gifts untold. And around her thronged her husband’s sisters and his brothers’ wives, who held her up among them, distraught even to death. But when at last she came to herself and her soul returned into her breast, then wailing with deep sobs she spake among the women of Troy: “O Hector, woe is me! to one fate then were we both born, thou in Troy in the house of Priam, and I in Thebe under woody Plakos, in the house of Eetion, who reared me from a little one — ill-fated sire of cruel-fated child. Ah, would he have begotten me not. Now thou to the house of Hades beneath the secret places of the earth departest, and me in bitter mourning thou leavest a widow in thy halls: and thy son is but an infant child — son of unhappy parents, thee and me — nor shalt thou profit him, Hector, since thou art dead, neither he thee. For even if he escape the Achaians’ woful war, yet shall labour and sorrow cleave unto him hereafter, for other men shall seize his lands. The day of orphanage sundereth a child from his fellows, and his head is bowed down ever, and his cheeks are wet with tears. And in his need the child seeketh his father’s friends, plucking this one by cloak and that by coat, and one of them that pity him holdeth his cup a little to his mouth, and moisteneth his lips, but his palate he moisteneth not. And some child unorphaned thrusteth him from the feast with blows and taunting words, ‘Out with thee! no father of thine is at our board.’ Then weeping to his widowed mother shall he return, even Astyanax, who erst upon his father’s knee ate only marrow and fat flesh of sheep; and when sleep fell on him and he ceased from childish play, then in bed in his nurse’s arms he would slumber softly nested, having satisfied his heart with good things; but now that he hath lost his father he will suffer many ills, Astyanax — that name the Trojans gave him, because thou only wet the defence of their gates and their long walls. But now by the beaked ships, far from thy parents, shall coiling worms devour thee when the dogs have had their fill, as thou liest naked; yet in these halls lieth raiment of thine, delicate and fair, wrought by the hands of women. But verily all these will I consume with burning fire — to thee no profit, since thou wilt never lie therein, yet that his be honour to thee from the men and the women of Troy.”

Thus spake she wailing, and the women joined their moan.

BOOK XXIII.

Of the funeral of Patroklos, and the funeral games.

Thus they throughout the city made moan: but the Achaians when they were come to the ships and to the Hellespont were scattered each to his own ship: only the Myrmidons Achilles suffered not to be scattered, but spake among his comrades whose delight was in war: “Fleet-horsed Myrmidons, my trusty comrades, let us not yet unyoke our whole-hooved steeds from their cars, but with horses and chariots let us go near and mourn Patroklos, for such is the honour of the dead. Then when we have our fill of grievous wailing, we will unyoke the horses and all sup here.”

He said, and they with one accord made lamentation, and Achilles led their mourning. So thrice around the dead they drave their well-maned steeds, moaning; and Thetis stirred among them desire of wailing. Bedewed were the sands with tears, bedewed the warriors’ arms; so great a lord of fear they sorrowed for. And Peleus’ son led their loud wail, laying his man-slaying hands on his comrade’s breast: “All hail, Patroklos, even in the house of Hades; for all that I promised thee before am I accomplishing, seeing I have dragged hither Hector to give raw unto dogs to devour, and twelve noble children of the Trojans to slaughter before thy pyre, because of mine anger at thy slaying.”

He said, and devised foul entreatment of noble Hector, stretching him prone in the dust beside the bier of Menoitios’ son. And the rest put off each his glittering bronze arms, and unyoked their high-neighing horses, and sate them down numberless beside the ship of fleet-footed Aiakides, and he gave them ample funeral feast. Many sleek oxen were stretched out, their throats cut with steel, and many sheep and bleating goats, and many white-tusked boars well grown in fat were spitted to singe in the flame of Hephaistos; so on all sides round the corpse in cupfuls blood was flowing.

But the fleet-footed prince, the son of Peleus, was brought to noble Agamemnon by the Achaian chiefs, hardly persuading him thereto, for his heart was wroth for his comrade. And when they were come to Agamemnon’s hut, forthwith they bade clear-voiced heralds set a great tripod on the fire, if haply they might persuade the son of Peleus to wash from him the bloody gore. But he denied them steadfastly, and sware moreover an oath: “Nay, verily by Zeus, who is highest and best of gods, not lawful is it that water should come nigh my head or ever I shall have laid Patroklos on the fire, and heaped a barrow, and shaved my hair, since never again shall second grief thus reach my heart, while I remain among the living. Yet now for the present let us yield us to our mournful meal: but with the morning, O king of men Agamemnon, rouse the folk to bring wood and furnish all that it beseemeth a dead man to have when he goeth beneath the misty gloom, to the end that untiring fire may burn him quickly from sight, and the host betake them to their work."

Thus spake he, and they listened readily to him and obeyed, and eagerly making ready each his meal they supped, and no lack had their soul of equal feast. But when they had put off from them the desire of meat and drink, the rest went down each man to his tent to take his rest, but the son of Peleus upon the beach of the sounding sea lay groaning heavily, amid the host of Myrmidons, in an open place, where waves were breaking on the shore. Now when sleep took hold on him, easing the cares of his heart, deep sleep that fell about him, (for sore tired were his glorious knees with onset upon Hector toward windy Ilios), then came there unto him the spirit of hapless Patroklos, in all things like his living self, in stature, and fair eyes, and voice, and the raiment of his body was the same; and he stood above Achilles' head and spake to him: "Thou sleepest, and hast forgotten me, O Achilles. Not in my life wast thou ever unmindful of me, but in my death. Bury me with all speed, that I pass the gates of Hades. Far off the spirits banish me, the phantoms of men outworn, nor suffer me to mingle with them beyond the River, but vainly I wander along the wide-gated dwelling of Hades. Now give me, I pray pitifully of thee, thy hand, for never more again shall I come back from Hades, when ye have given me my due of fire. Never among the living shall we sit apart from our dear comrades and take counsel together, but me hath the harsh fate swallowed up which was appointed me even from my birth. Yea and thou too thyself, Achilles peer of gods, beneath the wall of the noble Trojans art doomed to die. Yet one thing will I say, and charge thee, if haply thou wilt have regard thereto. Lay not my bones apart from thine, Achilles, but together, even as we were nurtured in your house, when Menoitios brought me yet a little one from Opoeis to your country by reason of a grievous man-slaying, on the day when I slew Amphidamas' son, not willing it, in childish wrath over the dice. Then took me the knight Peleus into his house and reared me kindly and named me thy squire: so therefore let one coffer hide our bones [a golden coffer, two handled, thy lady mother's gift]."

Then made answer unto him Achilles fleet of foot: "Wherefore, O my brother, hast thou come hither, and chargest me everything that I should do? Verily I will accomplish all, and have regard unto thy bidding. But stand more nigh me; for one moment let us throw our arms around each other, and take our fill of dolorous lament.”

He spake, and reached forth with his hands, but clasped him not; for like a vapour the spirit was gone beneath the earth with a faint shriek. And Achilles sprang up marvelling, and smote his hands together, and spake a word of woe: “Ay me, there remaineth then even in the house of Hades a spirit and phantom of the dead, albeit the life be not anywise therein: for all night long hath the spirit of hapless Patroklos stood over me, wailing and making moan, and charged me everything that I should do, and wondrous like his living self it seemed.”

Thus said he, and stirred in all of them yearning to make lament; and rosy-fingered Morn shone forth on them while they still made moan around the piteous corpse. Then lord Agamemnon sped mules and men from all the huts to fetch wood; and a man of valour watched thereover, even Meriones, squire of kindly Idomeneus. And they went forth with wood-cutting axes in their hands and well-woven ropes, and before them went the mules, and uphill and downhill and sideways and across they went. But when they came to the spurs of many-fountained Ida, straightway they set them lustily to hew high-foliaged oaks with the long-edged bronze, and with loud noise fell the trees. Then splitting them asunder the Achaians bound them behind the mules, and they tore up the earth with their feet as they made for the plain through the thick underwood. And all the wood-cutters bare logs; for thus bade Meriones, squire of kindly Idomeneus. And on the Shore they threw them down in line, where Achilles purposed a mighty tomb for Patroklos and for himself.

Then when they had laid down all about great piles of wood, they sate them down all together and abode. Then straightway Achilles bade the warlike Myrmidons gird on their arms and each yoke the horses to his chariot; and they arose and put their armour on, and mounted their chariots, both fighting men and charioteers. In front were the men in chariots, and a cloud of footmen followed after, numberless; and in the midst his comrades bare Patroklos. And they heaped all the corpse with their hair that they cut off and threw thereon; and behind did goodly Achilles bear the head, sorrowing; for a noble comrade was he speeding forth unto the realm of Hades.

And when they came to the place where Achilles had bidden them, they set down the dead, and piled for him abundant wood. Then fleet-footed noble Achilles bethought him of one thing more: standing apart from the pyre he shore off a golden lock, the lock whose growth he nursed to offer unto the River Spercheios, and sore troubled spake be, looking forth over the wine-dark sea: “Spercheios, in other wise vowed my father Peleus unto thee that I returning thither to my native land should shear my hair for thee and offer a holy hecatomb, and fifty rams should sacrifice there above thy springs, where is the sacred close and altar burning spice. So vowed the old man, but thou hast not accomplished him his desire. And now since I return not to my dear native land, unto the hero Patroklos I may give this hair to take away.”

Thus saying he set the hair in the hands of his dear comrade, and stirred in all of them yearning to make lament. And so would the light of the sun have gone down on their lamentation, had not Achilles said quickly to Agamemnon as he stood beside him: “Son of Atreus — for to thy words most will the host of the Achaians have regard — of lamentation they may sate them to the full. But now disperse them from the burning and bid them make ready their meal, and we to whom the dead is dearest will take pains for these things; yet let the chiefs tarry nigh unto us.”

Then when Agamemnon king of men heard that, he forthwith dispersed the host among the trim ships, but the nearest to the dead tarried there and piled the wood, and made a pyre a hundred feet this way and that, and on the pyre’s top set the corpse, with anguish at their hearts. And many lusty sheep and shambling crook-horned oxen they flayed and made ready before the pyre; and taking from all of them the fat, great hearted Achilles wrapped the corpse therein from head to foot, and heaped the flayed bodies round. And he set therein two-handled jars of honey and oil, leaning them against the bier; and four strong-necked horses he threw swiftly on the pyre, and groaned aloud. Nine house-dogs had the dead chief: of them did Achilles slay twain and throw them on the pyre. And twelve valiant sons of great-hearted Trojans he slew with the sword — for he devised mischief in his heart and he set to the merciless might of the fire, to feed thereon. Then moaned he aloud, and called on his dear comrade by his name: “All hail to thee, O Patroklos, even in the house of Hades, for all that I promised thee before am I now accomplishing. Twelve valiant sons of great-hearted Trojans, behold these all in company with thee the fire devoureth: but Hector son of Priam will I nowise give to the fire to feed upon, but to dogs.”

Thus spake he threatening, but no dogs might deal with Hector, for day and night Aphrodite daughter of Zeus kept off the dogs, and anointed him with rose-sweet oil ambrosial that Achilles might not tear him when he dragged him. And over him Phoebus Apollo brought a dark cloud from heaven to earth and covered all that place whereon the dead man lay, lest meanwhile the sun’s strength shrivel his flesh round about upon his sinews and limbs.

But the pyre of dead Patroklos kindled not. Then fleet-footed noble Achilles had a further thought: standing aside from the pyre he prayed to the two Winds of North and West, and promised them fair offerings, and pouring large libations from a golden cup besought them to come, that the corpses might blaze up speedily in the fire, and the wood make haste to be enkindled. Then Iris, when she heard his prayer, went swiftly with the message to the Winds. They within the house of the gusty West Wind were feasting all together at meat, when Iris sped thither, and halted on the threshold of stone. And when they saw her with their eyes, they sprang up and called to her every one to sit by him. But she refused to sit, and spake her word: “No seat for me; I must go back to the streams of Ocean, to the Ethiopians’ land where they sacrifice hecatombs to the immortal gods, that I too may feast at their rites. But Achilles is praying the North Wind and the loud West to come, and promising them fair offerings, that ye may make the pyre be kindled whereon lieth Patroklos, for whom all the Achaians are making moan.”

She having thus said departed, and they arose with a mighty sound, rolling the clouds before them. And swiftly they came blowing over the sea, and the wave rose beneath their shrill blast; and they came to deep-soiled Troy, and fell upon the pile, and loudly roared the mighty fire. So all night drave they the flame of the pyre together, blowing shrill; and all night fleet Achilles, holding a two-handled cup, drew wine from a golden bowl, and poured it forth and drenched the earth, calling upon the spirit of hapless Patroklos. As a father waileth when he burneth the bones of his son, new-married, whose death is woe to his hapless parents, so wailed Achilles as he burnt the bones of his comrade, going heavily round the burning pile, with many moans.

But at the hour when the Morning star goeth forth to herald light upon the earth, the star that saffron-mantled Dawn cometh after, and spreadeth over the salt sea, then grew the burning faint, and the flame died down. And the Winds went back again to betake them home over the Thracian main, and it roared with a violent swell. Then the son of Peleus turned away from the burning and lay down wearied, and sweet sleep leapt on him. But they who were with Atreus’ son gathered all together, and the noise and clash of their approach aroused him; and he sate upright and spake a word to them: “Son of Atreus and ye other chiefs of the Achaians, first quench with gleaming wine all the burning so far as the fire’s strength hath reached, and then let us gather up the bones of Patroklos, Menoitios’ son, singling them well, and easy are they to discern, for he lay in the middle of the pyre, while the rest apart at the edge burnt-confusedly, horses and men. And his bones let us put within a golden urn, and double-folded fat, until that I myself be hidden in Hades. But no huge barrow I bid you toil to raise — a seemly one, no more: then afterward do ye Achaians build it broad and high, whosoever of you after I am gone may be left in the benched ships.”

Thus spake he, and they hearkened to the fleet-footed son of Peleus. First quenched they with gleaming wine the burning so far as the flame went, and the ash had settled deep: then with lamentation they gathered up the white bones of their gentle comrade into a golden urn and double-folded fat, and placed the urn in the hut and covered it with a linen veil. And they marked the circle of the barrow, and set the foundations thereof around the pyre, and straightway heaped thereon a heap of earth. Then when they had heaped up the barrow they were for going back. But Achilles stayed the folk in that place, and made them sit in wide assembly, and from his ships he brought forth prizes, caldrons and tripods, and horses and mules and strong oxen, and fair-girdled women, and grey iron.

First for fleet chariot-racers he ordained a noble prize, a woman skilled in fair handiwork for the winner to lead home, and an eared tripod that held two-and-twenty measures; these for the first man; and for the second he ordained a six-year-old mare unbroke with a mule foal in her womb; and for the third he gave a goodly caldron yet untouched by fire, holding four measures, bright as when first made; and for the fourth he ordained two talents of gold; and for the fifth a two-handled urn untouched of fire, Then he stood up and spake a word among the Argives: “Son of Atreus and ye other well-greaved Achaians, for the chariot-racers these prizes lie awaiting them in the lists. If in some other’s honour we Achaians were now holding our games, it would be I who should win the first prize and bear it to my hut; for ye know how far my pair of horses are first in excellence, for they are immortal and Poseidon gave them to my father Peleus, and he again to me. But verily I will abide, I and my whole-hooved horses, so glorious a charioteer have they lost, and one so kind, who on their manes full often poured smooth oil, when he had washed them in clear water. For him they stand and mourn, and their manes are trailing on the ground, and there stand they with sorrow at their hearts. But ye others throughout the host get ye to your places, whosoever of the Achalans hath trust in his horses and firm-jointed car.”

Thus spake the son of Peleus, and the fleet chariot-racers were gathered. First of all arose up Eumelos king of men, Admetos’ son, a skilful charioteer; and next to him arose Tydeus’ son, valiant Diomedes, and yoked his horses of the breed of Tros, which on a time he seized from Aineias, when Apollo saved their lord. And after him arose Atreus’ son, fair-haired heaven-sprung Menelaos, and yoked him a swift pair Aithe, Agamemnon’s mare, and his own horse Podargos. Her unto Agamemnon did Anchises’ son Echepolos give in fee, that he might escape from following him to windy Ilios and take his pleasure at home; for great wealth had Zeus given him, and he dwelt in Sikyon of spacious lawns: — so Menelaos yoked her, and she longed exceedingly for the race. And fourth, Antilochos made ready his fair-maned horses, even the noble son of Nestor, high-hearted king, who was the son of Neleus; and fleet horses bred at Pylos drew his car. And his father standing by his side spake counselling him to his profit, though himself was well advised: “Antilochos, verily albeit thou art young, Zeus and Poseidon have loved thee and taught thee all skill with horses; wherefore to teach thee is no great need, for thou well knowest how to wheel round the post; yet are thy horses very slow in the race: therefore methinks there will be sad work for thee. For the horses of the others are fleeter, yet the men know not more cunning than thou hast. So come, dear son, store thy mind with all manner of cunning, that the prize escape thee not. By cunning is a woodman far better than by force; by cunning doth a helmsman on the wine-dark deep steer his swift ship buffeted by winds; by cunning hath charioteer the better of charioteer. For whoso trusting in his horses and car alone wheeleth heedlessly and wide at either end, his horses swerve on the course, and he keepeth them not in hand. But whoso is of crafty mind, though he drive worse horses, he ever keeping his eye upon the post turneth closely by it, neither is unaware how far at first to force his horses by the ox-hide reins, but holdeth them safe in hand and watcheth the leader in the race. Now will I tell thee a certain sign, and it shall not escape thee. A fathom’s height above the ground standeth a withered stump, whether of oak or pine: it decayeth not in the rain, and two white stones on either side thereof are fixed at the joining of the track, and all round it is smooth driving ground. Whether it be a monument of some man dead long ago, or have been made their goal in the race by ancient men, this now is the mark fixed by fleet-footed Achilles. Wherefore do thou drive close and bear thy horses and chariot hard thereon, and lean thy body on the well-knit car slightly to their left, and call upon the off-horse with voice and lash, and give him rein from thy hand. But let the near horse hug the post so that the nave of the well-wrought wheel seem to graze it — yet beware of touching the stone, lest thou wound the horses and break the chariot; so would that be triumph to the rest and reproach unto thyself. But, dear son, be wise and on thy guard; for if at the turning-post thou drive past the rest, there is none shall overtake thee from behind or pass thee by, not though he drave the goodly Arion in pursuit, the fleet horse of Adrastos, of divine descent, or the horses of Laomedon, best of all bred in this land.”

Thus spake Neleian Nestor and sate him down again in his place, when he had told his son the sum of every matter.

And Meriones was the fifth to make ready his sleek-coated steeds. Then went they up into their chariots, and cast in the lots: and Achilles shook them, and forth leapt the lot of Antilochos Nestor’s son, and the next lot had lord Eumelos, and next to him the son of Atreus, spear-famed Menelaos, and next to him drew Meriones his place; then lastly Tydeides, far the best of all, drew his lot for his chariot’s place. Then they stood side by side, and Achilles showed to them the turning post, far off in the smooth plain; and beside it he placed an umpire, godlike Phoinix, his father’s follower, that he might note the running and tell the truth thereof.

Then all together lifted the lash above their steeds, and smote them with the reins, and called on them eagerly with words: and they forthwith sped swiftly over the plain, leaving the ships behind; and beneath their breasts stood the rising dust like a cloud or whirlwind, and their manes waved on the blowing wind. And the chariots ran sometimes on the bounteous earth, and other whiles would bound into the air. And the drivers stood in the cars, and the heart of every man beat in desire of victory, and they called every man to his horses, that flew amid their dust across the plain.

But when the fleet horses were now running the last part of the course, back toward the grey sea, then was manifest the prowess of each, and the horses strained in the race; and presently to the front rushed the fleet mares of Pheres’ grandson, and next to them Diomedes’ stallions of the breed of Tros, not far apart, but hard anigh, for they seemed ever as they would mount Eumelos’ car, and with their breath his back was warm and his broad shoulders, for they bent their heads upon him as they flew along. Thus would Tydeus’ son have either outstripped the other or made it a dead heat, had not Phoebus Apollo been wroth with him and smitten from his hand the shining lash. Then from his eyes ran tears of anger, for that he saw the mares still at speed, even swiftlier than before, while his own horses were thrown out, as running without spur. But Athene was not unaware of Apollo’s guile against Tydeides, and presently sped after the shepherd of hosts, and gave him back the lash, and put spirit into his steeds. Then in wrath after the son of Admetos was the goddess gone, and brake his steeds’ yoke, and the mares ran sideways off the course, and the pole was twisted to the ground. And Eumelos was hurled out of the car beside the wheel, and his elbows and mouth and nose were flayed, and his forehead bruised above his eyebrows; and his eyes filled with tears and his lusty voice was choked. Then Tydeides held his whole-hooved horses on one side, darting far out before the rest, for Athene put spirit into his steeds and shed glory on himself. Now next after him came golden-haired Menelaos Atreus’ son. But Antilochos called to his father’s horses: “Go ye too in, strain to your fleetest pace. Truly I nowise bid you strive with those, the horses of wise Tydeides, unto which Athene hath now given speed, and shed glory on their charioteer. But overtake Atreides’ horses with all haste, and be not outstripped by them, lest Aithe that is but a mare pour scorn on you. Why are ye outstripped, brave steeds? Thus will I tell you, and verily it shall be brought to pass — ye will find no tendance with Nestor shepherd of hosts, but straightway he will slay you with the edge of the sword if through heedlessness we win but the worse prize. Have after them at your utmost speed, and I for my part will devise a plan to pass them in the strait part of the course, and this shall fail me not.”

Thus spake he, and they fearing the voice of the prince ran swiftlier some little while; and presently did the good warrior Antilochos espy a strait place in a sunk part of the way. There was a rift in the earth, where torrent water gathered and brake part of the track away, and hollowed all the place; there drave Menelaos, shunning the encounter of the wheels. But Antilochos turned his whole-hooved horses out of the track, and followed him a little at one side. And the son of Atreus took alarm and shouted to Antilochos: “Antilochos, thou art driving recklessly — hold in thy horses! The road is straitened, soon thou mayest pass me in a wider place, lest thou foul my chariot and undo us both.”

Thus spake he, but Antilochos drave even fiercelier than before, plying his lash, as though he heard him not. As far as is the range of a disk swung from the shoulder when a young man hurleth it, making trial of his force, even so far ran they on; then the mares of Atreus’ son gave back, for he ceased of himself to urge them on, lest the whole-hooved steeds should encounter on the track, and overset the well-knit cars, and the drivers fall in the dust in their zeal for victory. So upbraiding Antilochos spake golden-haired Menelaos: “Antilochos, no mortal man is more malicious than thou. Go thy mad way, since falsely have we Achaians called thee wise. Yet even so thou shalt not bear off the prize unchallenged to an oath.”

Thus saying he called aloud to his horses: “Hold ye not back nor stand still with sorrow at heart. Their feet and knees will grow weary before yours, for they both lack youth.”

Thus spake he, and they fearing the voice of the prince sped faster on, and were quickly close upon the others.

Now the Argives sitting in concourse were gazing at the horses, and they came flying amid their dust over the plain. And the first aware of them was Idomeneus, chief of the Cretans, for he was sitting outside the concourse in the highest place of view, and when he heard the voice of one that shouted, though afar off, he knew it; and he was aware of a horse showing plainly in the front, a chestnut all the rest of him, but in the forehead marked with a white star round like the moon. And he stood upright and spoke among the Argives: “Friends, chiefs, and counsellors of the Argives, is it I alone who see the horses, or do ye also? A new pair seem to me now to be in front, and a new charioteer appeareth; the mares which led in the outward course must have been thrown out there in the plain. For I saw them turning first the hither post, but now can see them nowhere, though my eyes are gazing everywhere along the Trojan plain. Did the reins escape the charioteer so that he could not drive aright round the post and failed in the turn? There, methinks, must he have been cast forth, and have broken his chariot, and the mares must have left the course, in the wildness of their heart. But stand up ye too and look, for myself I discern not certainly, but the first man seemeth to me one of Aitolian race, and he ruleth among Argives, the son of horse-taming Tydeus, stalwart Diomedes."

Then fleet Aias Oileus' son rebuked him in unseemly sort: "Idomeneus, why art thou a braggart of old? As yet far off the high-stepping mares are coursing over the wide plain. Neither art thou so far the youngest among the Argives, nor do thy eyes look so far the keenliest from thy head, yet continually braggest thou. It beseemeth thee not to be a braggart, for there are here better men. And the mares leading are they that led before, Eumelos' mares, and he standeth and holdeth the reins within the car."

Then wrathfully in answer spake the chief of Cretans: "Aias, master of railing, ill-counselled, in all else art thou behind other Argives, for thy mind is unfriendly. Come then let us wager a tripod or caldron, and make Agamemnon Atreus' son our umpire, which mares are leading, that thou mayest pay and learn."

Thus said he, and straightway fleet Aias Oileus' son arose angrily to answer with harsh words: and strife between the twain would have gone further, had not Achilles himself stood up and spake a word: "No longer answer each other with harsh words, Aias and Idomeneus, ill words, for it beseemeth not. Surely ye are displeased with any other who should do thus. Sit ye in the concourse and keep your eyes upon the horses; soon they in zeal for victory will come hither, and then shall ye know each of you the Argives' horses, which follow, and which lead."

He said, and the son of Tydeus came driving up, and with his lash smote now and again from the shoulder, and his horses were stepping high as they sped swiftly on their way. And sprinklings of dust smote ever the charioteer, and his chariot overlaid with gold and tin ran behind his fleet-footed steeds, and small trace was there of the wheel-tires behind in the fine dust, as they flew speeding on. Then he drew up in the mid concourse, and much sweat poured from the horses' heads and chests to the ground. And Diomedes leapt to earth from the shining car, and leant his lash against the yoke. Then stalwart Sthenelos tarried not, but promptly took the prize, and gave to his proud comrades the woman to lead and the eared tripod to bear away, and he loosed the horses from the yoke.

And next after him drave Neleian Antilochos his horses, by craft, not swiftness, having passed by Menelaos; yet even now Menelaos held his swift steeds hard anigh. As far as a horse is from the wheel, which draweth his master, straining with the car over the plain — his hindmost tail-hairs touch the tire, for the wheel runneth hard anigh nor is much space between, as he speedeth far over the plain — by so much was Menelaos behind high-born Antilochos, howbeit at first he was a whole disk-cast behind, but quickly he was catching Antilochos up, for the high mettle of Agamemnon’s mare, sleek-coated Aithe, was rising in her. And if yet further both had had to run he would have passed his rival nor left it even a dead heat. But Meriones, stout squire of Idomeneus, came in a spear-throw behind famous Menelaos, for tardiest of all were his sleek-coated horses, and slowest he himself to drive a chariot in the race. Last of them all came Admetos’ son, dragging his goodly car driving his steeds in front. Him when fleet-footed noble Achilles beheld he pitied him, and he stood up and spake winged words among the Argives: “Last driveth his whole-hooved horses the best man of them all. But come let us give him a prize, as is seemly, prize for the second place, but the first let the son of Tydeus take.”

Thus spake he, and all applauded that he bade. And he would have given him the mare, for the Achaians applauded, had not Antilochos, son of great-hearted Nestor; risen up and answered Peleian Achilles on behalf of his right: “O Achilles, I shall be sore angered with thee if thou accomplish this word, for thou art minded to take away my prize, because thou thinkest of how his chariot and fleet steeds miscarried, and himself withal, good man though he be. Nay, it behoved him to pray to the Immortals, then would he not have come in last of all in the race. But if thou pitiest him and he be dear to thy heart, there is much gold in thy hut, bronze is there and sheep, hand-maids are there and whole-hooved horses. Thereof take thou and give unto him afterward even a richer prize, or even now at once, that the Achaians may applaud thee. But the mare I will not yield; for her let what man will essay the battle at my hands.”

Thus spake he, and fleet-footed noble Achilles smiled, pleased with Antilochos, for he was his dear comrade; and spake in answer to him winged words: “Antilochos, if thou wouldst have me give Eumelos some other thing beside from out my house, that also will I do. I will give unto him a breast-plate that I took from Asteropaios, of bronze, whereon a casting of bright tin is overlaid, and of great worth will it be to him.” He said, and bade his dear comrade Automedon bring it from the hut, and he went and brought it. [Then he placed it in Eumelos’ hands, and he received it gladly.]

But Menelaos also arose among them, sore at heart, angered exceedingly against Antilochos; and the herald set the staff in his hand, and called for silence among the Argives; then spake among them that godlike man: “Antilochos, who once wert wise, what thing is this thou hast done? Thou hast shamed my skill and made my horses fail, thrusting thine own in front that are far worse. Come now, ye chiefs and counsellors of the Argives, give judgment between us both, and favour neither: lest some one of the mail-clad Achalans say at any time: ‘By constraining Antilochos through false words hath Menelaos gone off with the mare, for his horses were far worse, howbeit he hath advantage in rank and power.’ Nay, I myself will bring the issue about, and I deem that none other of the Danaans shall reproach me, for the trial shall be just. Antilochos, fosterling of Zeus, come thou hither and as it is ordained stand up before thy horses and chariot and take in thy hand the pliant lash wherewith thou dravest erst, and touching thy horses swear by the Enfolder and Shaker of the earth that not wilfully didst thou hinder my chariot by guile.”

Then answered him wise Antilochos: “Bear with me now, for far younger am I than thou, king Menelaos, and thou art before me and my better. Thou knowest how a young man’s transgressions come about, for his mind is hastier and his counsel shallow. So let thy heart suffer me, and I will of myself give to thee the mare I have taken. Yea, if thou shouldst ask some other greater thing from my house, I were fain to give it thee straightway, rather than fall for ever from my place in thy heart, O fosterling of Zeus, and become a sinner against the gods.”

Thus spake great-hearted Nestor’s son, and brought the mare and put her in the hand of Menelaos. And his heart was gladdened as when the dew cometh upon the ears of ripening harvest-corn, what time the fields are bristling. So gladdened was thy soul, Menelaos, within thy heart. And he spake unto Antilochos and uttered winged words: “Antilochos, now will I of myself put away mine anger against thee, since no wise formerly wert thou flighty or light-minded, howbeit now thy reason was overcome of youthfulness. Another time be loth to outwit better men. Not easily should another of the Achaians have persuaded me, but thou hast suffered and toiled greatly, and thy brave father and brother, for my sake: therefore will I hearken to thy prayer, and will even give unto thee the mare, though she is mine, that these also may know that my heart was never overweening or implacable.”

He said, and gave the mare to Noemon Antilochos’ comrade to lead away, and then took the shining caldron. And Meriones took up the two talents of gold in the fourth place, as he had come in. So the fifth prize was left unclaimed, a two-handled cup; to Nester gave Achilles this, bearing it to him through the concourse of Argives, and stood by him and said: “Lo now for thee too, old man, be this a treasure, a memorial of Patroklos’ burying; for no more shalt thou behold him among the Argives. Now give I thee this prize unwon, for not in boxing shalt thou strive, neither wrestle, nor enter on the javelin match, nor race with thy feet; for grim old age already weigheth on thee.”

Thus saying he placed it in his hand, and Nestor received it gladly, and spake unto him winged words: “Ay, truly all this, my son, thou hast meetly said; for no longer are my limbs, friend, firm, nor my feet, nor do my arms at all swing lightly from my shoulders either side. Would that my youth were such and my force so firm as when the Epeians were burying lord Amarynkes at Buprasion, and his sons held the king's funeral games. Then was no man found like me, neither of the Epeians nor of the Pylians themselves or the great-hearted Aitolians. In boxing I overcame Klytomedes, son of Enops, and in wrestling Ankaios of Pleuron, who stood up against me, and in the foot-race I outran Iphiklos, a right good man, and with the spear outthrew Phyleus and Polydoros; only in the chariot-race the two sons of Aktor beat me [by crowding their horses in front of me, jealous for victory, because the chief prizes were left at home.] Now they were twins — one ever held the reins, the reins he ever held, the other called on the horses with the lash. Thus was I once, but now let younger men join in such feats; I must bend to grievous age, but then was I of mark among heroes. But come hold funeral for thy comrade too with with games. This gift do I accept with gladness, and my heart rejoiceth that thou rememberest ever my friendship to thee — (nor forget I thee) — and the honour wherewith it is meet that I be honoured among the Achaians. And may the gods for this grant thee due grace."

Thus spake he, and Peleides was gone down the full concourse of Achaians, when he had hearkened to all the thanks of Neleus' son. Then he ordained prizes of the violent boxing match; a sturdy mule he led forth and tethered amid the assembly, a six-year mule unbroken, hardest of all to break; and for the loser set a two-handled cup. Then he stood up and spake a word among the Argives: "Son of Atreus and ye other well-greaved Achaians, for these rewards we summon two men of the best to lift up their hands to box amain. He to whom Apollo shall grant endurance to the end, and all the Achaians acknowledge it, let him take the sturdy mule and return with her to his hut; and the loser shall take with him the two-handled-cup."

Thus spake he, and forthwith arose a man great and valiant and skilled in boxing, Epeios son of Panopeus, and laid his hand on the sturdy mule and said aloud: "Let one come nigh to bear off the two-handled cup; the mule I say none other of the Achaians shall take for victory with his fists, for I claim to be the best man here. Sufficeth it not that I fall short of you in battle? Not possible is it that in all arts a man be skilled. Thus proclaim I, and it shall be accomplished: I will utterly bruise mine adversary's flesh and break his bones, so let his friends abide together here to bear him forth when vanquished by my hands."

Thus spake he, and they all kept deep silence. And alone arose against him Euryalos, a godlike man, son of king Mekisteus the son of Talaos, Mekisteus, who came on a time to Thebes when Oedipus had fallen, to his burial, and there he overcame all the sons of Kadmos. Thus Tydeides famous with the spear made ready Euryalos for the fight, cheering him with speech, and greatly desired for him victory. And first he cast about him a girdle, and next gave him well-cut thongs of the hide of an ox of the field. And the two boxers being girt went into the midst of the ring, and both lifting up their stalwart hands fell to, and their hands joined battle grievously. Then was there terrible grinding of teeth, and sweat flowed from all their limbs. And noble Epeios came on, and as the other spied for an opening, smote him on the cheek, nor could he much more stand, for his limbs failed straightway under him. And as when beneath the North Wind's ripple a fish leapeth on a tangle-covered beach, and then the black wave hideth it, so leapt up Euryalos at that blow. But great-hearted Epeios took him in his hands and set him upright, and his dear comrades stood around him, and led him through the ring with trailing feet, spitting out clotted blood, drooping his head awry, and they set him down in his swoon among them and themselves went forth and fetched the two-handled cup.

Then Peleus' son ordained straightway the prizes for a third contest, offering them to the Danaans, for the grievous wrestling match: for the winner a great tripod for standing on the fire, prized by the Achaians among them at twelve oxens' worth; and for the loser he brought a woman into the midst, skilled in manifold work, and they prized her at four oxen. And he stood up and spake a word among the Argives: "Rise, ye who will essay this match."

Thus said he, and there arose great Aias son of Telamon, and Odysseus of many wiles stood up, the crafty-minded. And the twain being girt went into the midst of the ring, and clasped each the other in his arms with stalwart hands, like gable rafters of a lofty house which some famed craftsman joineth, that he may baffle the wind's force. And their backs creaked, gripped firmly under the vigorous hands, and sweat ran down in streams, and frequent weals along their ribs and shoulders sprang up, red with blood, while ever they strove amain for victory, to win the wrought tripod. Neither could Odysseus trip Aias and bear him to the ground, nor Aias him, for Odysseus' strength withheld him. But when they began to irk the well-greaved Achaians, then said to Odysseus great Aias, Telamon's son: "Heaven-sprung son of Laertes, Odysseus of many wiles, or lift thou me, or I will thee, and the issue shall be with Zeus."

Having thus said he lifted him, but Odysseus was not unmindful of his craft. He smote deftly from behind the hollow of Aias' knee, and loosed his limbs, and threw him down backward, and Odysseus fell upon his chest, and the folk gazed and marvelled. Then in his turn much-enduring noble Odysseus tried to lift, and moved him a little from the ground, but lifted him not, so he crooked his knee within the other's, and both fell on the ground nigh to each other, and were soiled with dust, And now starting up again a third time would they have wrestled, had not Achilles himself arisen and held them back: “No longer press each the other, nor wear you out with pain. Victory is with both; take equal prizes and depart, that other Achaians may contend.”

Thus spake he, and they were fain to hear and to obey, and wiped the dust from them and put their doublets on.

Then straightway the son of Peleus set forth other prizes for fleetness of foot; a mixing-bowl of silver, chased; six measures it held, and in beauty it was far the best in all the earth, for artificers of Sidon wrought it cunningly, and men of the Phoenicians brought it over the misty sea, and landed it in harbour, and gave it a gift to Thoas; and Euneos son of Jason gave it to the hero Patroklos a ransom for Lykaon Priam’s son. Now this cup did Achilles set forth as a prize in honour of his friend, for whoso should be fleetest in speed of foot. For the second he set an ox great and very fat, and for the last prize half a talent of gold. And he stood up and spake a word among the Argives: “Rise, ye who will essay this match.”

Thus spake he, and straightway arose fleet Aias Oileus’ son, and Odysseus of many wiles, and after them Nestor’s son Antilochos, for he was best of all the youth in the foot-race. Then they stood side by side, and Achilles showed to them the goal. Right eager was the running from the start, but Oileus’ son forthwith shot to the front, and close behind him came noble Odysseus, as close as is a weaving-rod to a fair-girdled woman’s breast when she pulleth it deftly with her hands, drawing the spool along the warp, and holdeth the rod nigh her breast — so close ran Odysseus behind Aias and trod in his footsteps or ever the dust had settled there, and on his head fell the breath of noble Odysseus as he ran ever lightly on, and all the Achaians applauded his struggle for the victory and called on him as he laboured hard. But when they were running the last part of the course, forthwith Odysseus prayed in his soul to bright-eyed Athene: “Hearken, goddess, come thou a good helper of my feet.”

Thus prayed he, and Pallas Athene hearkened to him, and made his limbs feel light, both feet and hands. But when they, were now nigh darting on the prize, then Aias slipped as he ran, for Athene marred his race, where filth was strewn from the slaughter of loud-bellowing oxen that fleet Achilles slew in honour of Patroklos: and Aias’ mouth and nostrils were filled with that filth of oxen. So much-enduring noble Odysseus, as he came in first, took up the mixing-bowl, and famous Aias took the ox. And he stood holding in his hand the horn of the ox of the field, sputtering away the filth, and spake among the Argives: “Out on it, it was the goddess who marred my running, she who from of old like a mother standeth by Odysseus’ side and helpeth him.”

So spake he, but they all laughed pleasantly to behold him. Then Antilochos smiling bore off the last prize, and spake his word among the Argives: “Friends, ye will all bear me witness when I say that even herein also the immortals favour elder men. For Aias is a little older than I, but Odysseus of an earlier generation and earlier race of men. A green old age is his, they say, and hard were it for any Achaian to rival him in speed, save only Achilles.”

Thus spake he, and gave honour to the fleet son of Peleus. And Achilles answered him and said: “Antilochos, not unheeded shall thy praise be given; a half-talent of gold I will give thee over and above.” He said, and set it in his hands, and Antilochos received it gladly.

Then Peleus’ son brought and set in the ring a far-shadowing spear and a chaldron that knew not the fire, an ox’s worth, embossed with flowers; and men that were casters of the javelin arose up. There rose Atreus’ son wide-ruling Agamemnon, and Meriones, Idomeneus’ brave squire. And swift-footed noble Achilles spake among them: “Son of Atreus, for that we know how far thou excellest all, and how far the first thou art in the might of thy throw, take thou this prize with thee to the hollow ships, and to the hero Meriones let us give the spear, if thou art willing in thy heart: thus I at least advise.”

Thus spake he, nor disregarded him Agamemnon king of men. So to Meriones he gave the spear of bronze, but to the herald Talthybios the hero gave the goodliest prize.

BOOK XXIV.

How the body of Hector was ransomed, and of his funeral.

Then the assembly was broken up, and the tribes were scattered to betake them each to their own swift ships. The rest bethought them of supper and sweet sleep to have joy thereof; but Achilles wept, remembering his dear comrade, nor did sleep that conquereth all take hold on him, but he kept turning him to this side and to that, yearning for Patroklos’ manhood and excellent valour, and all the toils he achieved with him and the woes he bare, cleaving the battles of men and the grievous waves. As he thought thereon be shed big tears, now lying on his side, now on his back, now on his face; and then anon he would arise upon his feet and roam wildly beside the beach of the salt sea. Nor would he be unaware of the Dawn when she arose over the sea and shores. But when he had yoked the swift steeds to his car he would bind Hector behind his chariot to drag him withal; and having thrice drawn him round the barrow of the dead son of Menoitios he rested again in his hut, and left Hector lying stretched on his face in the dust. But Apollo kept away all defacement from his flesh, for he had pity on him even in death, and covered him all with his golden aegis, that Achilles might not tear him when he dragged him.

Thus Achilles in his anger entreated noble Hector shamefully; but the blessed gods when they beheld him pitied him, and urged the clear-sighted slayer of Argus to steal the corpse away. So to all the others seemed it good, yet not to Hera or Poseidon or the bright-eyed Maiden, but they continued as when at the beginning sacred Ilios became hateful to them, and Priam and his people, by reason of the sin of Alexandros in that he contemned those goddesses when they came to his steading, and preferred her who brought him deadly lustfulness. But when the twelfth morn from that day arose, then spake among the Immortals Phoebus Apollo: “Hard of heart are ye, O gods, and cruel Hath Hector never burnt for you thigh-bones of unblemished bulls and goats? Now have ye not taken heart to rescue even his corpse for his wife to look upon and his mother and his child and his father Priam and his people, who speedily would burn him in the fire and make his funeral. But fell Achilles, O gods, ye are fain to abet, whose mind is nowise just nor the purpose in his breast to be turned away, but he is cruelly minded as a lion that in great strength and at the bidding of his proud heart goeth forth against men’s flocks to make his meal; even thus Achilles hath cast out pity, neither hath he shame, that doth both harm and profit men greatly. It must be that many a man lose even some dearer one than was this, a brother of the same womb born or perchance a son; yet bringeth he his wailing and lamentation to an end, for an enduring soul have the Fates given unto men. But Achilles after bereaving noble Hector of his life bindeth him behind his horses and draggeth him around the tomb of his dear comrade: not, verily, is that more honourable or better for him. Let him take heed lest we wax wroth with him, good man though he be, for in his fury he is entreating shamefully the senseless clay.”

Then in anger spake unto him white-armed Hera: “Even thus mightest thou speak, O Lord of the silver bow, if ye are to give equal honour to Achilles and to Hector. Hector is but a mortal and was suckled at a woman’s breast, but Achilles is child of a goddess whom I myself bred up and reared and gave to a man to be his wife, even to Peleus who was dearest of all men to the Immortals’ heart. And all ye gods came to her bridal, and thou among them wert feasting with thy lyre, O lover of ill company, faithless ever.”

Then to her in answer spake Zeus who gathereth the clouds: “Hera, be not wroth utterly with the gods: for these men’s honour is not to be the same, yet Hector also was dearest to the gods of all mortals that are in Ilios. So was he to me at least, for nowise failed he in the gifts I loved. Never did my altar lack seemly feast, drink-offering and the steam of sacrifice, even the honour that falleth to our due. But verily we will say no more of stealing away brave Hector, for it cannot be hidden from Achilles, for his mother abideth ever nigh to him night and day. But I were fain that some one of the gods would call Thetis to come near to me, that I may speak unto her a wise word, so that Achilles may take gifts from Priam and give Hector back.” Thus spake he, and airy-footed Iris sped forth upon the errand and between Samothrace and rocky Imbros leapt into the black sea, and the waters closed above her with a noise. And she sped to the bottom like a weight of lead that mounted on horn of a field-ox goeth down bearing death to ravenous fishes. And she found Thetis in a hollow cave; about her sat gathered other goddesses of the seas and she in their midst was wailing for the fate of her noble son who must perish in deep-soiled Troy, far from his native land. And standing near, fleet-footed Iris spake to her: “Rise, Thetis; Zeus of immortal counsels calleth thee.”

And to her made answer Thetis the silver-footed goddess: “Wherefore biddeth me that mighty god? I shrink from mingling among the Immortals, for I have countless woes at heart. Yet go I, nor shall his word be in vain, whatsoever he saith.”

Thus having said the noble goddess took to her a dark-hued robe, no blacker raiment was there found than that. Then she went forth, and wind-footed swift Iris led the way before her, and around them the surge of the sea was sundered. And when they had come forth upon the shore they sped up to heaven, and found the far-seeing son of Kronos, and round him sat gathered all the other blessed gods that are for ever. Then she sat down beside father Zeus, and Athene gave her place. And Hera set a fair golden cup in her hand and cheered her with words, and Thetis drank, and gave back the cup. Then began speech to them the father of gods and men: “Thou art come to Olympus, divine Thetis, in thy sorrow, with violent grief at thy heart; I know it of myself. Nevertheless will I tell thee wherefore I called thee hither. Nine days hath dispute arisen among the Immortals concerning the corpse of Hector and Achilles waster of cities. Fain are they to send clear-sighted Hermes to steal the body away, but now hear what glory I accord herein to Achilles, that I may keep through times to come thy honour and good will. Go with all speed to the host and bear to thy son my bidding. Say to him that the gods are displeased at him, and that I above all Immortals am wroth, because with furious heart be holdeth Hector at the beaked ships and hath not given him back, if haply he may fear me and give Hector back. But I will send Iris to great-hearted Priam to bid him go to the ships of the Achaians to ransom his dear son, and carry gifts to Achilles that may gladden his heart.”

Thus spake he, and Thetis the silver-footed goddess was not disobedient to his word, and sped darting upon her way down from the peaks of Olympus. And she came to her son’s hut; there found she him making grievous moan, and his dear comrades round were swiftly making ready and furnishing their early meal, and a sheep great and fleecy was being sacrificed in the hut. Then his lady-mother sate her down close beside him, and stroked him with her hand and spake to him by his name: “My child, how long with lamentation and woe wilt thou devour thine heart, taking thought of neither food nor rest? good were even a woman’s embrace, for not long shalt thou be left alive to me; already death and forceful fate are standing nigh thee. But hearken forthwith unto me, for I am the messenger of Zeus to thee. He saith that the gods are displeased at thee, and that himself above all Immortals is wroth, because with furious heart thou holdest Hector at the beaked ships and hast not given him back. But come restore him, and take ransom for the dead.”

Then to her in answer spake fleet-footed Achilles: “So be it: whoso bringeth ransom let him take back the dead, if verily with heart’s intent the Olympian biddeth it himself.”

So they in the assembly of the ships, mother and son, spake to each other many winged words. But the son of Kronos thus bade Iris go to holy Ilios: “Go forth, fleet Iris, leave the abode of Olympus and bear my message within Ilios to great-hearted Priam that he go to the ships of the Achaians and ransom his dear son and carry gifts to Achilles that may gladden his heart; let him go alone, and no other man of the Trojans go with him. Only let some elder herald attend on him to guide the mules and smooth-wheeled waggon and carry back to the city the dead man whom noble Achilles slew. Let not death be in his thought nor any fear; such guide will we give unto him, even the slyer of Argus who shall lead him until his leading bring him to Achilles. And when he shall have led him within the hut, neither shall Achilles himself slay him nor suffer any other herein, for not senseless is he or unforeseeing or wicked, but with all courtesy he will spare a suppliant man.”

Thus spake he, and airy-footed Iris sped forth upon the errand. And she came to the house of Priam, and found therein crying and moan. His children sitting around their father within the court were bedewing their raiment with their tears, and the old man in their midst was close wrapped all over in his cloak; and on his head and neck was much mire that he had gathered in his hands as he grovelled upon the earth. And his daughters and his sons’ wives were wailing throughout the house, bethinking them of all those valiant men who had lost their lives at the hands of the Argives and were lying low. And the messenger of Zeus stood beside Priam and spake softly unto him, and trembling came upon his limbs: “Be of good cheer in thy heart, O Priam son of Dardanos, and be not dismayed for anything, for no evil come I hither to forebode to thee, but with good will. I am the messenger of Zeus to thee, who, though he be afar off, hath great care and pity for thee. The Olympian biddeth thee ransom noble Hector and carry gifts to Achilles that may gladden his heart: go thou alone, let none other of the Trojans go with thee. Only let some elder herald attend on thee to guide the mules and the smooth-wheeled waggon to carry back to the city the dead man whom noble Achilles slew. Let not death be in thy thought, nor any fear; such guide shall go with thee, even the slayer of Argus, who shall lead thee until his leading bring thee to Achilles. And when he shall have led thee into the hut, neither shall Achilles himself slay thee, nor suffer any other herein, for not senseless is he or unforeseeing or wicked, but with all courtesy he will spare a suppliant man.”

Thus having spoken fleet Iris departed from him; and he bade his sons make ready the smooth-wheeled mule waggon, and bind the wicker carriage thereon. And himself he went down to his fragrant chamber, of cedar wood, high-roofed, that held full many jewels: and to Hekabe his wife he called and spake: “Lady, from Zeus hath an Olympian messenger come to me, that I go to the ships of the

Achaians and ransom my dear son, and carry gifts to Achilles that may gladden his heart. Come tell me how seemeth it to thy mind, for of myself at least my desire and heart bid me mightily to go thither to the ships and enter the wide camp of the Achaians."

Thus spake he, but his wife lamented aloud and made answer to him: "Woe is me, whither is gone thy mind whereby aforetime thou wert famous among stranger men and among them thou rulest? How art thou fain to go alone to the ships of the Achaians, to meet the eyes of the man who hath slain full many of thy brave sons? of iron verily is thy heart. For if he light on thee and behold thee with his eyes, a savage and ill-trusted man is this, and he will not pity thee, neither reverence thee at all. Nay, now let us sit in the hall and make lament afar off. Even thus did forceful Fate erst spin for Hector with her thread at his beginning when I bare him, even I, that he should glut fleet-footed dogs, far from his parents, in the dwelling of a violent man whose inmost vitals I were fain to fasten and feed upon; then would his deeds against my son be paid again to him, for not playing the coward was he slain of him, but championing the men and deep-bosomed women of Troy, neither bethought he him of shelter or of flight."

The to her in answer spake the old man godlike Priam: "Stay me not, for I am fain to go, neither be thyself a bird of ill boding in my halls, for thou wilt not change my mind. Were it some other and a child of earth that bade me this, whether some seer or of the priests that divine from sacrifice, then would we declare it false and have no part therein; but now, since I have heard the voice of the goddess myself and looked upon her face, I will go forth, and her word shall not be void. And if it be my fate to die by the ships of the mail-clad Achaians, so would I have it; let Achilles slay me with all speed, when once I have taken in my arms my son, and have satisfied my desire with moan."

He spake, and opened fair lids of chests wherefrom he chose twelve very goodly women's robes and twelve cloaks of single fold and of coverlets a like number and of fair sheets, and of doublets thereupon. And he weighed and brought forth talents of gold ten in all, and two shining tripods and four caldrons, and a goblet exceeding fair that men of Thrace had given him when he went thither on an embassy, a chattel of great price, yet not that even did the old man grudge from his halls, for he was exceeding fain at heart to ransom his dear son. Then he drave out all the Trojans from the colonnade, chiding them with words of rebuke: "Begone, ye that dishonour and do me shame! Have ye no mourning of your own at home that ye come to vex me here? Think ye it a small thing that Zeus Kronos' son hath given me this sorrow, to lose him that was the best man of my sons? Nay, but ye too shall feel it, for easier far shall ye be to the

Achaians to slay now he is dead. But for me, ere I behold with mine eyes the city sacked and wasted, let me go down into the house of Hades.”

He said, and with his staff chased forth the men, and they went forth before the old man in his haste. Then he called unto his sons, chiding Helenos and Paris and noble Agathon and Pammon and Antiphonos, and Polites of the loud war-cry, and Deiphobos and Hippothoos and proud Dios; nine were they whom the old man called and bade unto him: “Haste ye, ill sons, my shame; would that ye all in Hector’s stead had been slain at the swift ships! Woe is me all unblest, since I begat sons the best men in wide Troy-land, but none of them is left for me to claim, neither godlike Mestor, nor Troilos with his chariot of war, nor Hector who was a god among men, neither seemed he as the son of a mortal man but of a god: — all these hath Ares slain, and here are my shames all left to me, false-tongued, light-heeled, the heroes of dance, plunderers of your own people’s sheep and kids. Will ye not make me ready a wain with all speed, and lay all these thereon, that we get us forward on our way?”

Thus spake he, and they fearing their father’s voice brought forth the smooth-running mule chariot, fair and new, and bound the body thereof on the frame; and from its peg they took down the mule yoke, a boxwood yoke with knob well fitted with guiding-rings; and they brought forth the yoke-band of nine cubits with the yoke. The yoke they set firmly on the polished pole on the rest at the end thereof, and slipped the ring over the upright pin, which with three turns of the band they lashed to the knob, and then belayed it close round the pole and turned the tongue thereunder. Then they brought from the chamber and heaped on the polished wain the countless ransom of Hector’s head, and yoked strong-hooved harness mules, which on a time the Mysians gave to Priam, a splendid gift. But to Priam’s car they yoked the horses that the old man kept for his use and reared at the polished crib.

Thus in the high palace were Priam and the herald letting yoke their cars, with wise thoughts at their hearts, when nigh came Hekabe sore at heart, with honey-sweet wine in her right hand in a golden cup that they might make libation ere they went. And she stood before the horses and spake a word to Priam by name: “Lo now make libation to father Zeus and pray that thou mayest come back home from among the enemy, since thy heart speedeth thee forth to the ships, though fain were I thou wentest not. And next pray to Kronion of the Storm-cloud, the gods of Ida, that beholdeth all Troy-land beneath, and ask of him a bird of omen, even the swift messenger that is dearest of all birds to him and of mightiest strength, to appear upon thy right, that seeing the sign with thine own eyes thou mayest go in trust thereto unto the ships of the fleet-horsed Danaans. But if far-seeing Zeus shall not grant unto thee his messenger, I at least shall not bid thee on to go among the ships of the Achaians how fain soever thou mayest be.”

Then answered and spake unto her godlike Priam: “Lady, I will not disregard this hest of thine, for good it is to lift up hands to Zeus, if haply he will have pity.”

Thus spake the old man, and bade a house-dame that served him pour pure water on his hands; and she came near to serve him with water in a ewer to wash withal. And when he had washed his hands he took a goblet from his wife: then he stood in the midst of the court and prayed and poured forth wine as he looked up to heaven, and spake a word aloud: “Father Zeus that bearest sway from Ida, most glorious and most great, grant that I find welcome and pity under Achilles’ roof, and send a bird of omen, even the swift messenger that is dearest of all birds to thee and of mightiest strength, to appear upon the right, that seeing this sign with mine eyes I may go trusting therein unto the ships of the fleet-horsed Danaans.”

Thus spake he praying, and Zeus of wise counsels hearkened unto him, and straightway sent forth an eagle, surest omen of winged birds, the dusky hunter called of men the Black Eagle. Wide as the door, well locking, fitted close, of some rich man’s high-roofed hall, so wide were his wings either way; and he appeared to them speeding on the right hand above the city. And when they saw the eagle they rejoiced and all their hearts were glad within their breasts.

Then the old man made haste to go up into his car, and drave forth from the doorway and the echoing portico. In front the mules drew the four-wheeled wain, and wise Idaios drave them; behind came the horses which the old man urged with the lash at speed along the city: and his friends all followed lamenting loud as though he were faring to his death. And when they were come down from the city and were now on the plain, then went back again to Ilios his sons and marriage kin. But the two coming forth upon the plain were not unbeheld of far-seeing Zeus. But he looked upon the old man and had compassion on him, and straightway spake unto Hermes his dear son: “Hermes, since unto thee especially is it dear to companion men, and thou hearest whomsoever thou wilt, go forth and so guide Priam to the hollow ships of the Achaians that no man behold or be aware of him, among all the Danaans’ host, until he come to the son of Peleus.”

Thus spake he, and the Messenger, the slayer of Argus, was not disobedient unto his word. Straightway beneath his feet he bound on his fair sandals, golden, divine, that bare him over wet sea and over the boundless land with the breathings of the wind. And he took up his wand wherewith he entranceth the eyes of such men as he will, and others he likewise waketh out of sleep: this did the strong slayer of Argus take in his hand, and flew. And quickly came he to Troy-land and the Hellespont, and went on his way in semblance as a young man that is a prince, with the new down on his chin, as when the youth of men is the comeliest.

Now the others, when they had driven beyond the great barrow of Ilios, halted the mules and horses at the river to drink; for darkness was come down over the earth. Then the herald beheld Hermes from hard by, and marked him, and spake and said to Priam: “Consider, son of Dardanos; this is matter of prudent thought. I see a man, methinks we shall full soon be rent in pieces. Come, let us flee in our chariot, or else at least touch his knees and entreat him that he have mercy on us.”

Thus spake he, and the old man was confounded, and he was dismayed exceedingly, and the hair on his pliant limbs stood up, and he stood still amazed. But the Helper came nigh of himself and took the old man’s hand, and spake and questioned him: “Whither, father, dost thou thus guide these horses and mules through the divine night, when other mortals are asleep? Hadst thou no fear of the fierce-breathing Achaians, thy bitter foes that are hard anigh thee? If one of them should espy thee carrying such treasures through the swift black night, what then would be thy thought? Neither art thou young thyself, and thy companion here is old, that ye should make defence against a man that should assail thee first. But I will no wise harm thee, yea I will keep any other from thy hurt: for the similitude of my dear father I see in thee.”

And to him in answer spake the old man, godlike Priam: “Even so, kind son, are all these things as thou sayest. Nevertheless hath some god stretched forth his hand even over me in that he hath sent a wayfarer such as thou to meet me, a bearer of good luck, by the nobleness of thy form and semblance; and thou art wise of heart and of blessed parents art thou sprung.”

And to him again spake the Messenger, the slayer of Argus: “All this, old sire, hast thou verily spoken aright. But come say this and tell me truly whether thou art taking forth a great and goodly treasure unto alien men, where it may abide for thee in safety, or whether by this ye are all forsaking holy Ilios in fear; so far the best man among you hath perished, even thy son; for of battle with the Achaians abated he never a jot.”

And to him in answer spake the old man, godlike Priam, “Who art thou, noble sir, and of whom art born? For meetly hast thou spoken of the fate of my hapless son.”

And to him again spake the Messenger, the slayer of Argus: “Thou art proving me, old sire, in asking me of noble Hector. Him have I full oft seen with mine eyes in glorious battle, and when at the ships he was slaying the Argives he drave thither, piercing them with the keen bronze, and we stood still and marvelled thereat, for Achilles suffered us not to fight, being wroth against Atreus’ son. His squire am I, and came in the same well-wrought ship. From the Myrmidons I come, and my father is Polyktor. Wealthy is he, and an old man even as thou, and six other sons hath he, and I am his seventh. With the others I cast lots, and it fell to me to fare hither with the host. And now am I come from the ships to the plain, for at day-break the glancing-eyed Achaians will set the battle in array around the town. For it chafeth them to be sitting here, nor can the Achaian lords hold in their fury for the fray.”

And the old man, godlike Priam, answered him, saying: “If verily thou art a squire of Achilles Peleus’ son, come tell me all the truth, whether still my son is by the ships, or whether ere now Achilles hath riven him limb from limb and cast him to the dogs.”

Then to him again spake the Messenger the slayer of Argus: “Old sire, not yet have dogs or birds devoured him, but there lieth he still by Achilles’ ship, even as he fell, among the huts, and the twelfth morn now hath risen upon him, nor doth his flesh corrupt at all, neither worms consume it, such as devour men slain in war. Truly Achilles draggeth him recklessly around the barrow of his dear comrade so oft as divine day dawneth, yet marreth he him not; thou wouldst marvel if thou couldst go see thyself how dewy fresh he lieth, and is washed clean of blood, nor anywhere defiled; and all his wounds wherewith he was stricken are closed; howbeit many of thy son, though he be but a dead corpse, for they held him dear at heart.”

Thus spake he, and the old man rejoiced, and answered him, saying: “My son, it is verily a good thing to give due offerings withal to the Immortals, for never did my child — if that child indeed I had — forget in our halls the gods who inhabit Olympus. Therefore have they remembered this for him, albeit his portion is death. But come now take from me this goodly goblet, and guard me myself and guide me, under Heaven, that I may come unto the hut of Peleus’ son.”

Then spake unto him again the Messenger the slayer of Argus: “Thou art proving me, old sire, who am younger than thou, but thou wilt not prevail upon me, in that thou biddest me take gifts from thee without Achilles’ privity. I were afraid and shamed at heart to defraud him, lest some evil come to pass on me hereafter. But as thy guide I would go even unto famous Argos, accompanying thee courteously in swift ship or on foot. Not from scorn of thy guide would any assail thee then.”

Thus spake the Helper, and leaping on the chariot behind the horses he swiftly took lash and reins into his hand, and breathed brave spirit into horses and mules. But when they were come to the towers and trench of the ships, there were the sentinels just busying them about their supper. Then the Messenger, the slayer of Argus, shed sleep upon them all, and straightway opened the gates and thrust back the bars, and brought within Priam and the splendid gifts upon his wain. And they came to the lofty hut of the son of Peleus, which the Myrmidons made for their king and hewed therefor timber of the pine, and thatched it with downy thatching-rush that they mowed in the meadows, and around it made for him their lord a great court with close-set palisades; and the door was barred by a single bolt of pine that three Achaians wont to drive home, and three drew back that mighty bar — three of the rest, but Achilles by himself would drive it home. Then opened the Helper Hermes the door for the old man, and brought in the splendid gifts for Peleus' fleet-footed son, and descended from the chariot to the earth and spake aloud: "Old sire, I that have come to thee am an immortal god, even Hermes, for my father sent me to companion thee on thy way. But now will I depart from thee nor come within Achilles' sight; it were cause of wrath that an immortal god should thus show favour openly unto mortals. But thou go in and clasp the knees of Peleus' son and entreat him for his father's sake and his mother's of the lovely hair and for his child's sake that thou mayest move his soul."

Thus Hermes spake, and departed unto high Olympus. But Priam leapt from the car to the earth, and left Idaios in his place; he stayed to mind the horses and mules; but the old man made straight for the house where Achilles dear to Zeus was wont to sit. And therein he found the man himself, and his comrades sate apart: two only, the hero Automedon and Alkimos, of the stock of Ares, were busy in attendance; and he was lately ceased from meat, even from eating and drinking: and still the table stood beside him. But they were unaware of great Priam as he came in, and so stood he anigh and clasped in his hands the knees of Achilles, and kissed his hands, terrible, man-slaying, that slew many of Priam's sons. And as when a grievous curse cometh upon a man who in his own country hath slain another and escapeth to a land of strangers, to the house of some rich man, and wonder possesseth them that look on him — so Achilles wondered when he saw godlike Priam, and the rest wondered likewise, and looked upon one another. Then Priam spake and entreated him, saying: "Bethink thee, O Achilles like to gods, of thy father that is of like years with me, on the grievous pathway of old age. Him haply are the dwellers round about entreating evilly, nor is there any to ward from him ruin and bane. Nevertheless while he heareth of thee as yet alive he rejoiceth in his heart, and hopeth withal day after day that he shall see his dear son returning from Troy-land. But I, I am utterly unblest, since I begat sons the best men in wide Troy-land, but declare unto thee that none of them is left. Fifty I had, when the sons of the Achaians came; nineteen were born to me of one mother, and concubines bare the rest within my halls. Now of the more part had impetuous Ares unstrung the knees, and he who was yet left and guarded city and men, him slewest thou but now as he fought for his country, even Hector. For his sake come I unto the ships of the Achaians that I may win him back from thee, and I bring with me untold ransom. Yea, fear thou the gods, Achilles, and have compassion on me, even me, bethinking thee of thy father. Lo, I am yet more piteous than he, and have braved what none other man on earth hath braved before, to stretch forth my hand toward the face of the slayer of my sons."

Thus spake he, and stirred within Achilles desire to make lament for his father. And he touched the old man's hand and gently moved him back. And as they both bethought them of their dead, so Priam for man-slaying Hector wept sore as he was fallen before Achilles' feet, and Achilles wept for his own father, and now again for Patroklos, and their moan went up throughout the house. But when noble Achilles had satisfied him with lament, and the desire thereof departed from his heart and limbs, straightway he sprang from his seat and raised the old man by his hand, pitying his hoary head and hoary beard, and spake unto him winged words and said: "Ah hapless! many ill things verily thou hast endured in thy heart. How durst thou come alone to the ships of the Achaians and to meet the eyes of the man who hath slain full many of the brave sons? of iron verily is thy heart. But come then set thee on a seat, and we will let our sorrows lie quiet in our hearts for all our pain, for no avail cometh of chill lament. This is the lot the gods have spun for miserable men, that they should live in pain; yet themselves are sorrowless. For two urns stand upon the floor of Zeus filled with his evil gifts, and one with blessings. To whomsoever Zeus whose joy is in the lightning dealeth a mingled lot, that man chanceth now upon ill and now again on good, but to whom he giveth but of the bad kind him he bringeth to scorn, and evil famine chaseth him over the goodly earth, and he is a wanderer honoured of neither gods nor men. Even thus to Peleus gave the gods splendid gifts from his birth, for he excelled all men in good fortune and wealth, and was king of the Myrmidons, and mortal though he was the gods gave him a goddess to be his bride. Yet even on him God brought evil, seeing that there arose to him no offspring of princely sons in his halls, save that he begat one son to an untimely death. Neither may I tend him as he groweth old, since very far from my country I am dwelling in Troy-land, to vex thee and thy children. And of thee, old sire, we have heard how of old time thou wert happy, even how of all that Lesbos, seat of Makar, boundeth to the north thereof and Phrygia farther up and the vast Hellespont — of all these folk, men say, thou wert the richest in wealth and in sons, but after that the Powers of Heaven brought this bane on thee, ever are battles and man-slayings around thy city. Keep courage, and lament not unabatingly in thy heart. For nothing wilt thou avail by grieving for thy son, neither shalt thou bring him back to life or ever some new evil come upon thee."

Then made answer unto him the old man, godlike Priam: "Bid me not to a seat, O fosterling of Zeus, so long as Hector lieth uncared for at the huts, but straightway give him back that I may behold him with mine eyes; and accept thou the great ransom that we bring. So mayest thou have pleasure thereof, and come unto thy native land, since thou hast spared me from the first."

Then fleet-footed Achilles looked sternly upon him and said: "No longer chafe me, old sire; of myself am I minded to give Hector back to thee, for there came to me a messenger from Zeus, even my mother who bare me, daughter of the Ancient One of the Sea. And I know, O Priam, in my mind, nor am unaware that some god it is that hath guided thee to the swift ships of the Achaians. For no mortal man, even though in prime of youth, would dare to come among the host, for neither could he escape the watch, nor easily thrust back the bolt of our doors. Therefore now stir my heart no more amid my troubles, lest I leave not even thee in peace, old sire, within my hut, albeit thou art my suppliant, and lest I transgress the commandment of Zeus."

Thus spake he, and the old man feared, and obeyed his word. And the son of Peleus leapt like a lion through the door of the house, not alone, for with him went two squires, the hero Automedon and Alkimos, they whom above all his comrades Achilles honoured, save only Patroklos that was dead. They then loosed from under the yoke the horses and mules, and led in the old man's crier-herald and set him on a chair, and from the wain of goodly felloes they took the countless ransom set on Hector's head. But they left two robes and a well-spun doublet, that Achilles might wrap the dead therein when he gave him to be carried home. And he called forth handmaids and bade them wash and anoint him when they had borne him apart, so that Priam should not look upon his son, lest he should not refrain the wrath at his sorrowing heart when he should look upon his son, and lest Achilles' heart be vexed thereat and he slay him and transgress the commandment of Zeus. So when the handmaids had washed the body and anointed it with oil, and had thrown over it a fair robe and a doublet, then Achilles himself lifted it and laid it on a bier, and his comrades with him lifted it on to the polished waggon. Then he groaned aloud and called on his dear comrade by his name: "Patroklos, be not vexed with me if thou hear even in the house of Hades that I have given back noble Hector unto his dear father, for not unworthy is the ransom he hath given me, whereof I will deal to thee again thy rightful share."

Thus spake noble Achilles, and went back into the hut, and sate him down on the cunningly-wrought couch whence he had arisen by the opposite wall, and spake a word to Priam: "Thy son, old sire, is given back as thou wouldest and lieth on a bier, and with the break of day thou shalt see him thyself as thou carriest him. But now bethink we us of supper. For even fair-haired Niobe bethought her of meat, she whose twelve children perished in her halls, six daughters and six lusty sons. The sons Apollo, in his anger against Niobe, slew with arrows from his silver bow, and the daughters archer Artemis, for that Niobe matched herself against fair-cheeked Leto, saying that the goddess bare but twain but herself many children: so they though they were but twain destroyed the other all. Nine days they lay in their blood, nor was there any to bury them, for Kronion turned the folk to stones. Yet on the tenth day the gods of heaven buried them, and she then bethought her of meat, when she was wearied out with weeping tears. And somewhere now among the cliffs, on the lonely mountains, even on Sipylos, where they say are the couching-places of nymphs that dance around Acheloos, there she, albeit a stone, broodeth still over her troubles from the gods. But come let us too, noble father, take thought of meat, and afterward thou shalt mourn over thy dear son as thou carriest him to Ilios; and many tears shall be his due."

Thus spake fleet Achilles, and sprang up, and slew a pure white sheep, and his comrades skinned and made it ready in seemly fashion, and divided it cunningly and pierced it with spits, and roasted it carefully and drew all off. And Automedon took bread and served it on a table in fair baskets, while Achilles dealt out the flesh. And they stretched forth their hands to the good cheer lying ready before them. But when they had put off the desire of meat and drink, then Priam son of Dardanos marvelled at Achilles to see how great he was and how goodly, for he was like a god to look upon. And Achilles marvelled at Priam son of Dardanos, beholding his noble aspect and hearkening to his words. But when they had gazed their fill upon one another, then first spake the old man, godlike Priam, to Achilles: "Now presently give me whereon to lie, fosterling of Zeus, that of sweet sleep also we may now take our fill at rest: for never yet have mine eyes closed beneath their lids since at thy hands my son lost his life, but I continually mourn and brood over countless griefs, grovelling in the courtyard-close amid the mire. Now at last have I tasted bread and poured bright wine down my throat, but till now I had tasted naught."

He said, and Achilles bade his comrades and handmaids to set a bedstead beneath the portico, and to cast thereon fair shining rugs and spread coverlets above and thereon to lay thick mantles to be a clothing over all. And the maids went forth from the inner hail with torches in their hands, and quickly spread two beds in haste. Then with bitter meaning [in his reference to Agamemnon] said fleet-footed Achilles unto Priam: “Lie thou without, dear sire, lest there come hither one of the counsellors of the Achaians, such as ever take counsel with me by my side, as custom is. If any of such should behold thee through the swift black night, forthwith he might haply tell it to Agamemnon shepherd of the host, and thus would there be delay in giving back the dead. But come say this to me and tell it true, how many days’ space thou art fain to make funeral for noble Hector, so that for so long I may myself abide and may keep back the host.”

And the old man, godlike Priam, answered him, saying: “If thou art verily willing that I accomplish noble Hector’s funeral, by doing as thou sayest, O Achilles, thou wilt do me grace. For thou knowest how we are pent within the city, and wood from the mountain is far to fetch, and the Trojans are much in fear. Nine days will we make moan for him in our halls, and on the tenth we will hold funeral and the folk shall feast, and on the eleventh we will make, a barrow over him, and on the twelfth we will do battle if need be.”

Then again spake the fleet noble Achilles unto him, saying: “All this, O ancient Priam, shall be as thou biddest; for I will hold back the battle even so long a time as thou tellest me.”

Thus speaking he clasped the old man’s right hand at the wrist, lest he should be anywise afraid at heart. So they in the forepart of the house laid them down, Priam and the herald, with wise thoughts at their hearts, but Achilles slept in a recess of the firm-wrought hut, and beside him lay fair-cheeked Briseis.

Now all other gods and warriors lords of chariots slumbered all night, by soft sleep overcome. But not on the Helper Hermes did sleep take hold as he sought within his heart how he should guide forth king Priam from the ships unespied of the trusty sentinels. And he stood above his head and spake a word to him: “Old sire, no thought then hast thou of any evil, seeing thou yet sleepest among men that are thine enemies, for that Achilles spared thee. Truly now hast thou won back thy dear son, and at great price. But for thy life will thy sons thou hast left behind be offering threefold ransom, if but Agamemnon Atreus’ son be aware of thee, and aware be all the Achaians.”

Thus spake he, and the old man feared, and roused the herald. And Hermes yoked the horses and mules for them, and himself drave them lightly through the camp, and none was aware of them.

But when they came to the ford of the fair-flowing river, [even eddying Xanthos, begotten of immortal Zeus,] then Hermes departed up to high Olympus, and Morning of the saffron robe spread over all the earth. And they with wail and moan drave the horses to the city, and the mules drew the dead.

Nor marked them any man or fair-girdled woman until Kassandra, peer of golden Aphrodite, having gone up upon Pergamos, was aware of her dear father as he stood in the car, and the herald that was crier to the town. Then beheld she him that lay upon the bier behind the mules, and thereat she wailed and cried aloud throughout all the town: “O men and women of Troy, come ye hither and look upon Hector, if ever while he was alive ye rejoiced when he came back from battle, since great joy was he to the city and all the folk.”

Thus spake she, nor was man or woman left within the city, for upon all came unendurable grief. And near the gates they met Priam bringing home the dead. First bewailed him his dear wife and lady mother, as they cast them on the fair-wheeled wain and touched his head; and around them stood the throng and wept. So all day long unto the setting of the sun they had lamented Hector in tears without the gate, had not the old man spoken from the car among the folk: “Give me place for the mules to pass through; hereafter ye shall have your fill of wailing, when I have brought him unto his home.”

Thus spake he, and they parted asunder and gave place to the wain. And the others when they had brought him to the famous house, laid him on a fretted bed, and set beside him minstrel leaders of the dirge, who wailed a mournful lay, while the women made moan with them. And among the women white-armed Andromache led the lamentation, while in her hands she held the head of Hector slayer of men: “Husband, thou art gone young from life, and leavest me a widow in thy halls. And the child is yet but a little one, child of ill-fated parents, thee and me; nor methinks shall he grow up to manhood, for ere then shall this city be utterly destroyed. For thou art verily perished who didst watch over it, who guardedst it and keptest safe its noble wives and infant little ones. These soon shall be voyaging in the hollow ships, yea and I too with them, and thou, my child, shalt either go with me unto a place where thou shalt toil at unseemly tasks, labouring before the face of some harsh lord, or else some Achaian will take thee by the arm and hurl thee from the battlement, a grievous death, for that he is wroth because Hector slew his brother or father or son, since full many of the Achaians in Hector’s hands have bitten the firm earth. For no light hand had thy father in the grievous fray. Therefore the folk lament him throughout the city, and woe unspeakable and mourning hast thou left to thy parents, Hector, but with me chiefliest shall grievous pain abide. For neither didst thou stretch thy hands to me from a bed in thy death, neither didst speak to me some memorable word that I might have thought on evermore as my tears fall night and day.”

Thus spake she wailing, and the women joined their moan. And among them Hekabe again led the loud lament: “Hector, of all my children far dearest to my heart, verily while thou wert alive dear wert thou to the gods, and even in thy doom of death have they had care for thee. For other sons of mine whom he took captive would fleet Achilles sell beyond the unvintaged sea unto Samos and Imbros and smoking Lemnos, but when with keen-edged bronze he had bereft thee of thy life he was fain to drag thee oft around the tomb of his comrade, even Patroklos whom thou slewest, yet might he not raise him up thereby. But now all dewy and fresh thou liest in our halls, like one on whom Apollo, lord of the silver bow, hath descended and slain him with his gentle darts."

Thus spake she wailing, and stirred unending moan. Then thirdly Helen led their sore lament: "Hector, of all my brethren of Troy far dearest to my heart! Truly my lord is godlike Alexandros who brought me to Troy-land — would I had died ere then. For this is now the twentieth year since I went thence and am gone from my own native land, but never yet heard I evil or despiteful word from thee; nay, if any other haply upbraided me in the palace-halls, whether brother or sister of thine or brother's fair-robed wife, or thy mother — but thy father is ever kind to me as he were my own — then wouldst thou soothe such with words and refrain them, by the gentleness of thy spirit and by thy gentle words. Therefore bewail I thee with pain at heart, and my hapless self with thee, for no more is any left in wide Troy-land to be my friend and kind to me, but all men shudder at me."

Thus spake she wailing, and therewith the great multitude of the people groaned. But the old man Priam spake a word among the folk: "Bring wood, men of Troy, unto the city, and be not anywise afraid at heart of a crafty ambush of the Achaians; for this message Achilles gave me when he sent me from the black ships, that they should do us no hurt until the twelfth morn arise."

Thus spake he, and they yoked oxen and mules to wains, and quickly then they flocked before the city. So nine days they gathered great store of wood. But when the tenth morn rose with light for men, then bare they forth brave Hector, weeping tears, and on a lofty pyre they laid the dead man, and thereon cast fire.

But when the daughter of Dawn, rosy-fingered Morning, shone forth, then gathered the folk around glorious Hector's pyre. First quenched they with bright wine all the burning, so far as the fire's strength went, and then his brethren and comrades gathered his white bones lamenting, and big tears flowed down their cheeks. And the bones they took and laid in a golden urn, shrouding them in soft purple robes, and straightway laid the urn in a hollow grave and piled thereon great close-set stones, and heaped with speed a barrow, while watchers were set everywhere around, lest the well-greaved Achaians should make onset before the time. And when they had heaped the barrow they went back, and gathered them together and feasted right well in noble feast at the palace of Priam, Zeus-fostered king.

Thus held they funeral for Hector tamer of horses.

RHYMES A LA MODE

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BALLADE DEDICATORY — TO MRS. ELTON OF WHITE STAUNTON

The painted Briton built his mound,
And left his celts and clay,
On yon fair slope of sunlit ground
That fronts your garden gay;
The Roman came, he bore the sway,
He bullied, bought, and sold,
Your fountain sweeps his works away
Beside your manor old!

But still his crumbling urns are found
Within the window-bay,
Where once he listened to the sound
That lulls you day by day; -
The sound of summer winds at play,
The noise of waters cold
To Yarty wandering on their way,
Beside your manor old!

The Roman fell: his firm-set bound
Became the Saxon’s stay;
The bells made music all around
For monks in cloisters grey,
Till fled the monks in disarray
From their warm chantry’s fold,
Old Abbots slumber as they may,
Beside your manor old!

ENVOY

Creeds, empires, peoples, all decay,
Down into darkness, rolled;
May life that’s fleet be sweet, I pray,
Beside your manor old.

A DREAM IN JUNE

In twilight of the longest day
I lingered over Lucian,
Till ere the dawn a dreamy way
My spirit found, untrod of man,
Between the green sky and the grey.

Amid the soft dusk suddenly
More light than air I seemed to sail,
Afloat upon the ocean sky,
While through the faint blue, clear and pale,
I saw the mountain clouds go by:
My barque had thought for helm and sail,
And one mist wreath for canopy.

Like torches on a marble floor
Reflected, so the wild stars shone,
Within the abysmal hyaline,
Till the day widened more and more,
And sank to sunset, and was gone,
And then, as burning beacons shine
On summits of a mountain isle,
A light to folk on sea that fare,
So the sky's beacons for a while
Burned in these islands of the air.

Then from a starry island set
Where one swift tide of wind there flows,
Came scent of lily and violet,
Narcissus, hyacinth, and rose,
Laurel, and myrtle buds, and vine,
So delicate is the air and fine:
And forests of all fragrant trees

Sloped seaward from the central hill,
And ever clamorous were these

With singing of glad birds; and still
Such music came as in the woods
Most lonely, consecrate to Pan,
The Wind makes, in his many moods,
Upon the pipes some shepherd Man,
Hangs up, in thanks for victory!
On these shall mortals play no more,
But the Wind doth touch them, over and o’er,
And the Wind’s breath in the reeds will sigh.

Between the daylight and the dark
That island lies in silver air,
And suddenly my magic barque
Wheeled, and ran in, and grounded there;
And by me stood the sentinel
Of them who in the island dwell;
All smiling did he bind my hands,
With rushes green and rosy bands,
They have no harsher bonds than these
The people of the pleasant lands
Within the wash of the airy seas!

Then was I to their city led:
Now all of ivory and gold
The great walls were that garlanded
The temples in their shining fold,
(Each fane of beryl built, and each
Girt with its grove of shadowy beech,)
And all about the town, and through,
There flowed a River fed with dew,
As sweet as roses, and as clear
As mountain crystals pure and cold,
And with his waves that water kissed
The gleaming altars of amethyst

That smoke with victims all the year,
And sacred are to the Gods of old.

There sat three Judges by the Gate,
And I was led before the Three,
And they but looked on me, and straight
The rosy bonds fell down from me
Who, being innocent, was free;
And I might wander at my will
About that City on the hill,
Among the happy people clad
In purple weeds of woven air
Hued like the webs that Twilight weaves
At shut of languid summer eves
So light their raiment seemed; and glad
Was every face I looked on there!

There was no heavy heat, no cold,
The dwellers there wax never old,
Nor wither with the waning time,
But each man keeps that age he had
When first he won the fairy clime.
The Night falls never from on high,
Nor ever burns the heat of noon.
But such soft light eternally
Shines, as in silver dawns of June
Before the Sun hath climbed the sky!

Within these pleasant streets and wide,
The souls of Heroes go and come,
Even they that fell on either side
Beneath the walls of Ilium;
And sunlike in that shadowy isle
The face of Helen and her smile
Makes glad the souls of them that knew
Grief for her sake a little while!
And all true Greeks and wise are there;

And with his hand upon the hair
Of Phaedo, saw I Socrates,
About him many youths and fair,
Hylas, Narcissus, and with these
Him whom the quoit of Phoebus slew
By fleet Eurotas, unaware!

All these their mirth and pleasure made
Within the plain Elysian,
The fairest meadow that may be,
With all green fragrant trees for shade
And every scented wind to fan,
And sweetest flowers to strew the lea;
The soft Winds are their servants fleet
To fetch them every fruit at will
And water from the river chill;
And every bird that singeth sweet
Throstle, and merle, and nightingale
Brings blossoms from the dewy vale, -
Lily, and rose, and asphodel -
With these doth each guest twine his crown
And wreathe his cup, and lay him down
Beside some friend he loveth well.

There with the shining Souls I lay
When, lo, a Voice that seemed to say,
In far-off haunts of Memory,
Whoso death taste the Dead Men’s bread,
Shall dwell for ever with these Dead,
Nor ever shall his body lie
Beside his friends, on the grey hill
Where rains weep, and the curlews shrill
And the brown water wanders by!

Then did a new soul in me wake,
The dead men’s bread I feared to break,

Their fruit I would not taste indeed
Were it but a pomegranate seed.
Nay, not with these I made my choice
To dwell for ever and rejoice,
For otherwhere the River rolls
That girds the home of Christian souls,
And these my whole heart seeks are found
On otherwise enchanted ground.

Even so I put the cup away,
The vision wavered, dimmed, and broke,
And, nowise sorrowing, I woke
While, grey among the ruins grey
Chill through the dwellings of the dead,
The Dawn crept o’er the Northern sea,
Then, in a moment, flushed to red,
Flushed all the broken minster old,
And turned the shattered stones to gold,
And wakened half the world with me!

L’ENVOI — To E. W. G.

(Who also had rhymed on the Fortune Islands of Lucian).

Each in the self-same field we glean
The field of the Samosatene,
Each something takes and something leaves
And this must choose, and that forego
In Lucian’s visionary sheaves,
To twine a modern posy so;
But all any gleanings, truth to tell,
Are mixed with mournful asphodel,
While yours are wreathed with poppies red,
With flowers that Helen’s feet have kissed,
With leaves of vine that garlanded

The Syrian Pantagruelist,
The sage who laughed the world away,
Who mocked at Gods, and men, and care,
More sweet of voice than Rabelais,
And lighter-hearted than Voltaire.

A VISION IN THE STRAND

The jaded light of late July
Shone yellow down the dusty Strand,
The anxious people bustled by,
Policeman, Pressman, you and I,
And thieves, and judges of the land.

So swift they strode they had not time
To mark the humours of the Town,
But I, that mused an idle rhyme,
Looked here and there, and up and down,
And many a rapid cart I spied
That drew, as fast as ponies can,
The Newspapers of either side,
These joys of every Englishman!

The Standard here, the Echo there,
And cultured ev’ning papers fair,
With din and fuss and shout and blare
Through all the eager land they bare,
The rumours of our little span.

‘Midst these, but ah, more slow of speed,
A biggish box of sanguine hue
Was tugged on a velocipede,
And in and out the crowd, and through,
An earnest stripling urged it well
Perched on a cranky tricycle!

A seedy tricycle he rode,
Perchance some three miles in the hour,

But, on the big red box that glowed
Behind him, was a name of Power,
JUSTICE, (I read it e’er I wist,)
THE ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST!

The paper carts fled fleetly by
And vanished up the roaring Strand,
And eager purchasers drew nigh
Each with his penny in his hand,
But JUSTICE, scarce more fleet than I,
Began to permeate the land,
And dark, methinks, the twilight fell,
Or ever JUSTICE reached Pall Mall.

Oh Man, (I stopped to moralize,)
How eager thou to fight with Fate,
To bring Astraea from the skies;
Yet ah, how too inadequate
The means by which thou fain wouldst cope
With Laws and Morals, King and Pope!
“JUSTICE!” — how prompt the witling’s sneer, -
“Justice! Thou wouldst have Justice here!
And each poor man should be a squire,
Each with his competence a year,
Each with sufficient beef and beer,
And all things matched to his desire,
While all the Middle Classes should
With every vile Capitalist
Be clean reformed away for good,
And vanish like a morning mist!

“Ah splendid Vision, golden time,
An end of hunger, cold, and crime.
An end of Rent, an end of Rank,
An end of balance at the Bank,
An end of everything that’s meant
To bring Investors five per cent!”

How fair doth Justice seem, I cried,
Yet oh, how strong the embattled powers
That war against on every side
Justice, and this great dream of ours,
And what have we to plead our cause
‘Gainst Masters, Capital, and laws,
What but a big red box indeed,
With copies of a weekly screed,
That’s slowly jolted, up and down,
Behind an old velocipede
To clamour JUSTICE through the town:
How touchingly inadequate
These arms wherewith we’d vanquish Fate!

Nay, the old Order shall endure
And little change the years shall know,
And still the Many shall be poor,
And still the Poor shall dwell in woe;
Firm in the iron Law of things
The strong shall be the wealthy still,
And (called Capitalists or Kings)
Shall seize and hoard the fruits of skill.
Leaving the weaker for their gain,
Leaving the gentler for their prize
Such dens and husks as beasts disdain, -
Till slowly from the wrinkled skies
The fireless frozen Sun shall wane,
Nor Summer come with golden grain;
Till men be glad, mid frost and snow
To live such equal lives of pain
As now the hutted Eskimo!
Then none shall plough nor garner seed,
Then, on some last sad human shore,
Equality shall reign indeed,
The Rich shall be with us no more,
Thus, and not otherwise, shall come
The new, the true Millennium!

ALMAE MATRES — (ST. ANDREWS, 1862. OXFORD, 1865)

St. Andrews by the Northern sea,
A haunted town it is to me!
A little city, worn and grey,
The grey North Ocean girds it round.
And o’er the rocks, and up the bay,
The long sea-rollers surge and sound.
And still the thin and biting spray
Drives down the melancholy street,
And still endure, and still decay,
Towers that the salt winds vainly beat.
Ghost-like and shadowy they stand
Dim mirrored in the wet sea-sand.

St. Leonard’s chapel, long ago
We loitered idly where the tall
Fresh budded mountain ashes blow
Within thy desecrated wall:
The tough roots rent the tomb below,
The April birds sang clamorous,
We did not dream, we could not know
How hardly Fate would deal with us!

O, broken minster, looking forth
Beyond the bay, above the town,
O, winter of the kindly North,
O, college of the scarlet gown,
And shining sands beside the sea,
And stretch of links beyond the sand,
Once more I watch you, and to me
It is as if I touched his hand!

And therefore art thou yet more dear,
O, little city, grey and sere,
Though shrunken from thine ancient pride
And lonely by thy lonely sea,
Than these fair halls on Isis’ side,
Where Youth an hour came back to me!

A land of waters green and clear,
Of willows and of poplars tall,
And, in the spring time of the year,
The white may breaking over all,
And Pleasure quick to come at call.
And summer rides by marsh and wold,
And Autumn with her crimson pall
About the towers of Magdalen rolled;
And strange enchantments from the past,
And memories of the friends of old,
And strong Tradition, binding fast
The “flying terms” with bands of gold, -

All these hath Oxford: all are dear,
But dearer far the little town,
The drifting surf, the wintry year,
The college of the scarlet gown,
St. Andrews by the Northern sea,
That is a haunted town to me!

DESIDERIUM — IN MEMORIAM S. F. A.

The call of homing rooks, the shrill
Song of some bird that watches late,
The cries of children break the still
Sad twilight by the churchyard gate.

And o’er your far-off tomb the grey
Sad twilight broods, and from the trees
The rooks call on their homeward way,
And are you heedless quite of these?

The clustered rowan berries red
And Autumn’s may, the clematis,
They droop above your dreaming head,
And these, and all things must you miss?

Ah, you that loved the twilight air,
The dim lit hour of quiet best,
At last, at last you have your share
Of what life gave so seldom, rest!

Yes, rest beyond all dreaming deep,
Or labour, nearer the Divine,
And pure from fret, and smooth as sleep,
And gentle as thy soul, is thine!

So let it be! But could I know
That thou in this soft autumn eve,
This hush of earth that pleased thee so,
Hadst pleasure still, I might not grieve.

BALLADE OF MIDDLE AGE

Our youth began with tears and sighs,
With seeking what we could not find;
Our verses all were threnodies,
In elegiacs still we whined;
Our ears were deaf, our eyes were blind,
We sought and knew not what we sought.
We marvel, now we look behind:
Life’s more amusing than we thought!

Oh, foolish youth, untimely wise!
Oh, phantoms of the sickly mind!
What? not content with seas and skies,
With rainy clouds and southern wind,
With common cares and faces kind,
With pains and joys each morning brought?
Ah, old, and worn, and tired we find
Life’s more amusing than we thought!

Though youth “turns spectre-thin and dies,”
To mourn for youth we’re not inclined;
We set our souls on salmon flies,
We whistle where we once repined.
Confound the woes of human-kind!
By Heaven we’re “well deceived,” I wot;
Who hum, contented or resigned,
“Life’s more amusing than we thought!”

ENVOY

O nate mecum, worn and lined

Our faces show, but THAT is naught;
Our hearts are young ‘neath wrinkled rind:
Life’s more amusing than we thought!

THE LAST CAST — THE ANGLER’S APOLOGY

Just one cast more! how many a year
Beside how many a pool and stream,
Beneath the falling leaves and sere,
I’ve sighed, reeled up, and dreamed my dream!

Dreamed of the sport since April first
Her hands fulfilled of flowers and snow,
Adown the pastoral valleys burst
Where Ettrick and where Teviot flow.

Dreamed of the singing showers that break,
And sting the lochs, or near or far,
And rouse the trout, and stir “the take”
From Urigil to Lochinvar.

Dreamed of the kind propitious sky
O’er Ari Innes brooding grey;
The sea trout, rushing at the fly,
Breaks the black wave with sudden spray!

*

Brief are man’s days at best; perchance
I waste my own, who have not seen
The castled palaces of France
Shine on the Loire in summer green.

And clear and fleet Eurotas still,
You tell me, laves his reedy shore,
And flows beneath his fabled hill

Where Dian drave the chase of yore.

And “like a horse unbroken” yet
The yellow stream with rush and foam,
‘Neath tower, and bridge, and parapet,
Girdles his ancient mistress, Rome!

I may not see them, but I doubt
If seen I’d find them half so fair
As ripples of the rising trout
That feed beneath the elms of Yair.

Nay, Spring I’d meet by Tweed or Ail,
And Summer by Loch Assynt’s deep,
And Autumn in that lonely vale
Where wedded Avons westward sweep,

Or where, amid the empty fields,
Among the bracken of the glen,
Her yellow wreath October yields,
To crown the crystal brows of Ken.

Unseen, Eurotas, southward steal,
Unknown, Alpheus, westward glide,
You never heard the ringing reel,
The music of the water side!

Though Gods have walked your woods among,
Though nymphs have fled your banks along;
You speak not that familiar tongue
Tweed murmurs like my cradle song.

My cradle song, — nor other hymn
I’d choose, nor gentler requiem dear

Than Tweed’s, that through death’s twilight dim,
Mourned in the latest Minstrel’s ear!

TWILIGHT — SONNET (AFTER RICHEPIN)

Light has flown!
Through the grey
The wind's way
The sea's moan
Sound alone!
For the day
These repay
And atone!

Scarce I know,
Listening so
To the streams
Of the sea,
If old dreams
Sing to me!

BALLADE OF SUMMER — TO C. H. ARKCOLL

When strawberry pottles are common and cheap,
Ere elms be black, or limes be sere,
When midnight dances are murdering sleep,
Then comes in the sweet o’ the year!
And far from Fleet Street, far from here,
The Summer is Queen in the length of the land,
And moonlit nights they are soft and clear,
When fans for a penny are sold in the Strand!

When clamour that doves in the lindens keep
Mingles with musical plash of the weir,
Where drowned green tresses of crowsfoot creep,
Then comes in the sweet o’ the year!
And better a crust and a beaker of beer,
With rose-hung hedges on either hand,
Than a palace in town and a prince’s cheer,
When fans for a penny are sold in the Strand!

When big trout late in the twilight leap,
When cuckoo clamoureth far and near,
When glittering scythes in the hayfield reap,
Then comes in the sweet o’ the year!
And it’s oh to sail, with the wind to steer,
Where kine knee deep in the water stand,
On a Highland loch, on a Lowland mere,
When fans for a penny are sold in the Strand!

ENVOY.

Friend, with the fops while we dawdle here,

Then comes in the sweet o’ the year!
And the Summer runs out, like grains of sand,
When fans for a penny are sold in the Strand!

BALLADE OF CHRISTMAS GHOSTS

Between the moonlight and the fire
In winter twilights long ago,
What ghosts we raised for your desire
To make your merry blood run slow!
How old, how grave, how wise we grow!
No Christmas ghost can make us chill,
Save THOSE that troop in mournful row,
The ghosts we all can raise at will!

The beasts can talk in barn and byre
On Christmas Eve, old legends know,
As year by year the years retire,
We men fall silent then I trow,
Such sights hath Memory to show,
Such voices from the silence thrill,
Such shapes return with Christmas snow, -
The ghosts we all can raise at will.

Oh, children of the village choir,
Your carols on the midnight throw,
Oh bright across the mist and mire
Ye ruddy hearths of Christmas glow!
Beat back the dread, beat down the woe,
Let’s cheerily descend the hill;
Be welcome all, to come or go,
The ghosts we all can raise at will!

ENVOY.

Friend, sursum corda, soon or slow

We part, like guests who’ve joyed their fill;
Forget them not, nor mourn them so,
The ghosts we all can raise at will!

LOVE’S EASTER — SONNET

Love died here
Long ago; -
O’er his bier,
Lying low,
Poppies throw;
Shed no tear;
Year by year,
Roses blow!

Year by year,
Adon — dear
To Love’s Queen -
Does not die!
Wakes when green
May is nigh!

BALLADE OF THE GIRTON GIRL

She has just “put her gown on” at Girton,
She is learned in Latin and Greek,
But lawn tennis she plays with a skirt on
That the prudish remark with a shriek.
In her accents, perhaps, she is weak
(Ladies ARE, one observes with a sigh),
But in Algebra — THERE she’s unique,
But her forte’s to evaluate pi.

She can talk about putting a “spirt on”
(I admit, an unmaidenly freak),
And she dearly delighteth to flirt on
A punt in some shadowy creek;
Should her bark, by mischance, spring a leak,
She can swim as a swallow can fly;
She can fence, she can put with a cleek,
But her forte’s to evaluate pi.

She has lectured on Scopas and Myrton,
Coins, vases, mosaics, the antique,
Old tiles with the secular dirt on,
Old marbles with noses to seek.
And her Cobet she quotes by the week,
And she’s written on [Greek text: kev] and on [Greek text: kai],
And her service is swift and oblique,
But her forte’s to evaluate pi.

ENVOY.

Princess, like a rose is her cheek,

And her eyes are as blue as the sky,
And I’d speak, had I courage to speak,
But — her forte’s to evaluate pi.

RONSARD’S GRAVE

Ye wells, ye founts that fall
From the steep mountain wall,
That fall, and flash, and fleet
With silver feet,

Ye woods, ye streams that lave
The meadows with your wave,
Ye hills, and valley fair,
Attend my prayer!

When Heaven and Fate decree
My latest hour for me,
When I must pass away
From pleasant day,

I ask that none my break
The marble for my sake,
Wishful to make more fair
My sepulchre.

Only a laurel tree
Shall shade the grave of me,
Only Apollo’s bough
Shall guard me now!

Now shall I be at rest
Among the spirits blest,
The happy dead that dwell -
Where, — who may tell?

The snow and wind and hail

May never there prevail,
Nor ever thunder fall
Nor storm at all.

But always fadeless there
The woods are green and fair,
And faithful ever more
Spring to that shore!

There shall I ever hear
Alcaeus’ music clear,
And sweetest of all things
There SAPPHO sings.

SAN TERENZO

(The village in the bay of Spezia, near which Shelley was living before the wreck of the Don Juan.)

Mid April seemed like some November day,
When through the glassy waters, dull as lead,
Our boat, like shadowy barques that bear the dead,
Slipped down the long shores of the Spezian bay,
Rounded a point, — and San Terenzo lay
Before us, that gay village, yellow and red,
The roof that covered Shelley’s homeless head, -
His house, a place deserted, bleak and grey.

The waves broke on the door-step; fishermen
Cast their long nets, and drew, and cast again.
Deep in the ilex woods we wandered free,
When suddenly the forest glades were stirred
With waving pinions, and a great sea bird
Flew forth, like Shelley’s spirit, to the sea!

1880

ROMANCE

My Love dwelt in a Northern land.
A grey tower in a forest green
Was hers, and far on either hand
The long wash of the waves was seen,
And leagues on leagues of yellow sand,
The woven forest boughs between!

And through the silver Northern night
The sunset slowly died away,
And herds of strange deer, lily-white,
Stole forth among the branches grey;
About the coming of the light,
They fled like ghosts before the day!

I know not if the forest green
Still girdles round that castle grey;
I know not if the boughs between
The white deer vanish ere the day;
Above my Love the grass is green,
My heart is colder than the clay!

BALLADE OF HIS OWN COUNTRY

I scribbled on a fly-book’s leaves
Among the shining salmon-flies;
A song for summer-time that grieves
I scribbled on a fly-book’s leaves.
Between grey sea and golden sheaves,
Beneath the soft wet Morvern skies,
I scribbled on a fly-book’s leaves
Among the shining salmon-flies.

TO C. H. ARKCOLL

Let them boast of Arabia, oppressed
By the odour of myrrh on the breeze;
In the isles of the East and the West
That are sweet with the cinnamon trees
Let the sandal-wood perfume the seas;
Give the roses to Rhodes and to Crete,
We are more than content, if you please,
With the smell of bog-myrtle and peat!

Though Dan Virgil enjoyed himself best
With the scent of the limes, when the bees
Hummed low ‘round the doves in their nest,
While the vintagers lay at their ease,
Had he sung in our northern degrees,
He’d have sought a securer retreat,
He’d have dwelt, where the heart of us flees,
With the smell of bog-myrtle and peat!

Oh, the broom has a chivalrous crest
And the daffodil’s fair on the leas,
And the soul of the Southron might rest,
And be perfectly happy with these;
But WE, that were nursed on the knees
Of the hills of the North, we would fleet
Where our hearts might their longing appease
With the smell of bog-myrtle and peat!

ENVOY

Ah Constance, the land of our quest
It is far from the sounds of the street,
Where the Kingdom of Galloway's blest
With the smell of bog-myrtle and peat!

VILLANELLE — (To M. Joseph Boulmier, author of "Les Villanelles.")

Villanelle, why art thou mute?
Hath the singer ceased to sing?
Hath the Master lost his lute?

Many a pipe and scrannel flute
On the breeze their discords fling;
Villanelle, why art THOU mute?

Sound of tumult and dispute,
Noise of war the echoes bring;
Hath the Master lost his lute?

Once he sang of bud and shoot
In the season of the Spring;
Villanelle, why art thou mute?

Fading leaf and falling fruit
Say, "The year is on the wing,
Hath the Master lost his lute?"

Ere the axe lie at the root,
Ere the winter come as king,
Villanelle, why art thou mute?
Hath the Master lost his lute?

TRIOLETS AFTER MOSCHUS

[Paragraph of Greek text]

Alas, for us no second spring,
Like mallows in the garden-bed,
For these the grave has lost his sting,
Alas, for US no second spring,
Who sleep without awakening,
And, dead, for ever more are dead,
Alas, for us no second spring,
Like mallows in the garden-bed!

Alas, the strong, the wise, the brave
That boast themselves the sons of men!
Once they go down into the grave -
Alas, the strong, the wise, the brave, -
They perish and have none to save,
They are sown, and are not raised again;
Alas, the strong, the wise, the brave,
That boast themselves the sons of men!

BALLADE OF CRICKET — TO T. W. LANG

The burden of hard hitting: slog away!
Here shalt thou make a “five” and there a “four,”
And then upon thy bat shalt lean, and say,
That thou art in for an uncommon score.
Yea, the loud ring applauding thee shall roar,
And thou to rival THORNTON shalt aspire,
When lo, the Umpire gives thee “leg before,” -
“This is the end of every man’s desire!”

The burden of much bowling, when the stay
Of all thy team is “collared,” swift or slower,
When “bailers” break not in their wonted way,
And “yorkers” come not off as here-to-fore,
When length balls shoot no more, ah never more,
When all deliveries lose their former fire,
When bats seem broader than the broad barn-door, -
“This is the end of every man’s desire!”

The burden of long fielding, when the clay
Clings to thy shoon in sudden shower’s downpour,
And running still thou stumblest, or the ray
Of blazing suns doth bite and burn thee sore,
And blind thee till, forgetful of thy lore,
Thou dost most mournfully misjudge a “skyer,”
And lose a match the Fates cannot restore, -
“This is the end of every man’s desire!”

ENVOY.

Alas, yet liefer on Youth’s hither shore
Would I be some poor Player on scant hire,
Than King among the old, who play no more, -

“THIS is the end of every man’s desire!”

THE LAST MAYING

“It is told of the last Lovers which watched May-night in the forest, before men brought the tidings of the Gospel to this land, that they beheld no Fairies, nor Dwarfs, nor no such Thing, but the very Venus herself, who bade them ‘make such cheer as they might, for’ said she, ‘I shall live no more in these Woods, nor shall ye endure to see another May time.’” — EDMUND GORLIOT, “Of Phantasies and Omens,” p. 149. (1573.)

“Whence do ye come, with the dew on your hair?
From what far land are the boughs ye bear,
The blossoms and buds upon breasts and tresses,
The light burned white in your faces fair?”

“In a falling fane have we built our house,
With the dying Gods we have held carouse,
And our lips are wan from their wild caresses,
Our hands are filled with their holy boughs.

As we crossed the lawn in the dying day
No fairy led us to meet the May,
But the very Goddess loved by lovers,
In mourning raiment of green and grey.

She was not decked as for glee and game,
She was not veiled with the veil of flame,
The saffron veil of the Bride that covers
The face that is flushed with her joy and shame.

On the laden branches the scent and dew
Mingled and met, and as snow to strew
The woodland rides and the fragrant grasses,
White flowers fell as the night wind blew.

Tears and kisses on lips and eyes
Mingled and met amid laughter and sighs
For grief that abides, and joy that passes,
For pain that tarries and mirth that flies.

It chanced as the dawning grew to grey
Pale and sad on our homeward way,
With weary lips, and palled with pleasure
The Goddess met us, farewell to say.

“Ye have made your choice, and the better part,
Ye chose” she said, “and the wiser art;
In the wild May night drank all the measure,
The perfect pleasure of heart and heart.

“Ye shall walk no more with the May,” she said,
“Shall your love endure though the Gods be dead?
Shall the flitting flocks, mine own, my chosen,
Sing as of old, and be happy and wed?

“Yea, they are glad as of old; but you,
Fair and fleet as the dawn or the dew,
Abide no more, for the springs are frozen,
And fled the Gods that ye loved and knew.

Ye shall never know Summer again like this;
Ye shall play no more with the Fauns, I wis,
No more in the nymphs’ and dryads’ playtime
Shall echo and answer kiss and kiss.

“Though the flowers in your golden hair be bright,
Your golden hair shall be waste and white
On faded brows ere another May time

Bring the spring, but no more delight.”

HOMERIC UNITY

The sacred keep of Ilion is rent
By shaft and pit; foiled waters wander slow
Through plains where Simois and Scamander went
To war with Gods and heroes long ago.
Not yet to tired Cassandra, lying low
In rich Mycenae, do the Fates relent:
The bones of Agamemnon are a show,
And ruined is his royal monument.

The dust and awful treasures of the Dead,
Hath Learning scattered wide, but vainly thee,
Homer, she meteth with her tool of lead,
And strives to rend thy songs; too blind to see
The crown that burns on thine immortal head
Of indivisible supremacy!

IN TINTAGEL

LUI.

Ah lady, lady, leave the creeping mist,
And leave the iron castle by the sea!

ELLE.

Nay, from the sea there came a ghost that kissed
My lips, and so I cannot come to thee!

LUI.

Ah lady, leave the cruel landward wind
That crusts the blighted flowers with bitter foam!

ELLE.

Nay, for his arms are cold and strong to bind,
And I must dwell with him and make my home!

LUI.

Come, for the Spring is fair in Joyous Guard
And down deep alleys sweet birds sing again.

ELLE.

But I must tarry with the winter hard,
And with the bitter memory of pain,
Although the Spring be fair in Joyous Guard,
And in the gardens glad birds sing again!

PISIDICE

The incident is from the Love Stories of Parthenius, who preserved fragments of a lost epic on the expedition of Achilles against Lesbos, an island allied with Troy.

The daughter of the Lesbian king
Within her bower she watched the war,
Far off she heard the arrows ring,
The smitten harness ring afar;
And, fighting from the foremost car,
Saw one that smote where all must flee;
More fair than the Immortals are
He seemed to fair Pisidice!

She saw, she loved him, and her heart
Before Achilles, Peleus' son,
Threw all its guarded gates apart,
A maiden fortress lightly won!
And, ere that day of fight was done,
No more of land or faith recked she,
But joyed in her new life begun, -
Her life of love, Pisidice!

She took a gift into her hand,
As one that had a boon to crave;
She stole across the ruined land
Where lay the dead without a grave,
And to Achilles' hand she gave
Her gift, the secret postern's key.
"To-morrow let me be thy slave!"
Moaned to her love Pisidice.

Ere dawn the Argives’ clarion call
Rang down Methymna’s burning street;
They slew the sleeping warriors all,
They drove the women to the fleet,
Save one, that to Achilles’ feet
Clung, but, in sudden wrath, cried he:
“For her no doom but death is meet,”
And there men stoned Pisidice.

In havens of that haunted coast,
Amid the myrtles of the shore,
The moon sees many a maiden ghost
Love’s outcast now and evermore.
The silence hears the shades deplore
Their hour of dear-bought love; but THEE
The waves lull, ‘neath thine olives hoar,
To dreamless rest, Pisidice!

FROM THE EAST TO THE WEST

Returning from what other seas
Dost thou renew thy murmuring,
Weak Tide, and hast thou aught of these
To tell, the shores where float and cling
My love, my hope, my memories?

Say does my lady wake to note
The gold light into silver die?
Or do thy waves make lullaby,
While dreams of hers, like angels, float
Through star-sown spaces of the sky?

Ah, would such angels came to me
That dreams of mine might speak with hers,
Nor wake the slumber of the sea
With words as low as winds that be
Awake among the gossamers!

LOVE THE VAMPIRE [Greek text]

The level sands and grey,
Stretch leagues and leagues away,
Down to the border line of sky and foam,
A spark of sunset burns,
The grey tide-water turns,
Back, like a ghost from her forbidden home!

Here, without pyre or bier,
Light Love was buried here,
Alas, his grave was wide and deep enough,
Thrice, with averted head,

We cast dust on the dead,
And left him to his rest. An end of Love.

“No stone to roll away,
No seal of snow or clay,
Only soft dust above his wearied eyes,
But though the sudden sound
Of Doom should shake the ground,
And graves give up their ghosts, he will not rise!”

So each to each we said!
Ah, but to either bed
Set far apart in lands of North and South,
Love as a Vampire came
With haggard eyes aflame,
And kissed us with the kisses of his mouth!

Thenceforth in dreams must we
Each other’s shadow see
Wand’ring unsatisfied in empty lands,
Still the desired face
Fleets from the vain embrace,
And still the shape evades the longing hands.

BALLADE OF THE BOOK-MAN’S PARADISE

There IS a Heaven, or here, or there, -
A Heaven there is, for me and you,
Where bargains meet for purses spare,
Like ours, are not so far and few.
Thuanus’ bees go humming through
The learned groves, ‘neath rainless skies,
O’er volumes old and volumes new,
Within that Book-man’s Paradise!

There treasures bound for Longepierre
Keep brilliant their morocco blue,
There Hookes’ AMANDA is not rare,
Nor early tracts upon Peru!
Racine is common as Rotrou,
No Shakespeare Quarto search defies,
And Caxtons grow as blossoms grew,
Within that Book-man’s Paradise!

There’s Eve, — not our first mother fair, -
But Clovis Eve, a binder true;
Thither does Bauzonnet repair,
Derome, Le Gascon, Padeloup!
But never come the cropping crew
That dock a volume’s honest size,
Nor they that “letter” backs askew,
Within that Book-man’s Paradise!

ENVOY

Friend, do not Heber and De Thou,
And Scott, and Southey, kind and wise,
La chasse au bouquin still pursue
Within that Book-man’s Paradise?

BALLADE OF A FRIAR

(Clement Marot’s Frere Lubin, though translated by Longfellow and others, has not hitherto been rendered into the original measure, of ballade e double refrain.)

Some ten or twenty times a day,
To bustle to the town with speed,
To dabble in what dirt he may, -
Le Frere Lubin’s the man you need!
But any sober life to lead
Upon an exemplary plan,
Requires a Christian indeed, -
Le Frere Lubin is NOT the man!

Another’s wealth on his to lay,
With all the craft of guile and greed,
To leave you bare of pence or pay, -
Le Frere Lubin’s the man you need!
But watch him with the closest heed,
And dun him with what force you can, -
He’ll not refund, howe’er you plead, -
Le Frere Lubin is NOT the man!

An honest girl to lead astray,
With subtle saw and promised meed,
Requires no cunning crone and grey, -
Le Frere Lubin’s the man you need!
He preaches an ascetic creed,
But, — try him with the water can -
A dog will drink, whate’er his breed, -
Le Frere Lubin is NOT the man!

ENVOY

In good to fail, in ill succeed,
Le Frere Lubin’s the man you need!
In honest works to lead the van,
Le Frere Lubin is NOT the man!

BALLADE OF NEGLECTED MERIT

I have scribbled in verse and in prose,
I have painted “arrangements in greens,”
And my name is familiar to those
Who take in the high class magazines;
I compose; I’ve invented machines;
I have written an “Essay on Rhyme”;
For my county I played, in my teens,
But — I am not in “Men of the Time!”

I have lived, as a chief, with the Crows;
I have “interviewed” Princes and Queens;
I have climbed the Caucasian snows;
I abstain, like the ancients, from beans, -
I’ve a guess what Pythagoras means,
When he says that to eat them’s a crime, -
I have lectured upon the Essenes,
But — I am not in “Men of the Time!”

I’ve a fancy as morbid as Poe’s,
I can tell what is meant by “Shebeens,”
I have breasted the river that flows
Through the land of the wild Gadarenes;
I can gossip with Burton on skenes,
I can imitate Irving (the Mime),
And my sketches are quainter than Keene’s,
But — I am not in “Men of the Time!”

ENVOY

So the tower of mine eminence leans

Like the Pisan, and mud is its lime;
I’m acquainted with Dukes and with Deans,
But — I am not in “Men of the Time!”

BALLADE OF RAILWAY NOVELS

Let others praise analysis
And revel in a “cultured” style,
And follow the subjective Miss
From Boston to the banks of Nile,
Rejoice in anti-British bile,
And weep for fickle hero’s woe,
These twain have shortened many a mile,
Miss Braddon and Gaboriau.

These damsels of “Democracy’s,”
How long they stop at every stile!
They smile, and we are told, I wis,
Ten subtle reasons WHY they smile.
Give ME your villains deeply vile,
Give me Lecoq, Jottrat, and Co.,
Great artists of the ruse and wile,
Miss Braddon and Gaboriau!

Oh, novel readers, tell me this,
Can prose that’s polished by the file,
Like great Boisgobey’s mysteries,
Wet days and weary ways beguile,
And man to living reconcile,
Like these whose every trick we know?
The agony how high they pile,
Miss Braddon and Gaboriau!

ENVOY

Ah, friend, how many and many a while
They’ve made the slow time fleetly flow,
And solaced pain and charmed exile,
Miss Braddon and Gaboriau.

THE CLOUD CHORUS (FROM ARISTOPHANES)

Socrates speaks.

Hither, come hither, ye Clouds renowned, and unveil yourselves here;
Come, though ye dwell on the sacred crests of Olympian snow,
Or whether ye dance with the Nereid choir in the gardens clear,
Or whether your golden urns are dipped in Nile’s overflow,
Or whether you dwell by Maeotis mere
Or the snows of Mimas, arise! appear!
And hearken to us, and accept our gifts ere ye rise and go.

The Clouds sing.

Immortal Clouds from the echoing shore
Of the father of streams, from the sounding sea,
Dewy and fleet, let us rise and soar.
Dewy and gleaming, and fleet are we!
Let us look on the tree-clad mountain crest,
On the sacred earth where the fruits rejoice,
On the waters that murmur east and west
On the tumbling sea with his moaning voice,
For unwearied glitters the Eye of the Air,
And the bright rays gleam;
Then cast we our shadows of mist, and fare
In our deathless shapes to glance everywhere
From the height of the heaven, on the land and air,
And the Ocean stream.

Let us on, ye Maidens that bring the Rain,
Let us gaze on Pallas’ citadel,

In the country of Cecrops, fair and dear
The mystic land of the holy cell,
Where the Rites unspoken securely dwell,
And the gifts of the Gods that know not stain
And a people of mortals that know not fear.
For the temples tall, and the statues fair,
And the feasts of the Gods are holiest there,
The feasts of Immortals, the chaplets of flowers
And the Bromian mirth at the coming of spring,
And the musical voices that fill the hours,
And the dancing feet of the Maids that sing!

BALLADE OF LITERARY FAME

“All these for Fourpence.”

Oh, where are the endless Romances
Our grandmothers used to adore?
The Knights with their helms and their lances,
Their shields and the favours they wore?
And the Monks with their magical lore?
They have passed to Oblivion and Nox,
They have fled to the shadowy shore, -
They are all in the Fourpenny Box!

And where the poetical fancies
Our fathers rejoiced in, of yore?
The lyric’s melodious expanses,
The Epics in cantos a score?
They have been and are not: no more
Shall the shepherds drive silvery flocks,
Nor the ladies their languors deplore, -
They are all in the Fourpenny Box!

And the Music! The songs and the dances?
The tunes that Time may not restore?
And the tomes where Divinity prances?
And the pamphlets where Heretics roar?
They have ceased to be even a bore, -
The Divine, and the Sceptic who mocks, -
They are “cropped,” they are “foxed” to the core, -
They are all in the Fourpenny Box!

ENVOY

Suns beat on them; tempests downpour,
On the chest without cover or locks,
Where they lie by the Bookseller’s door, -
They are ALL in the Fourpenny Box!

[Greek title]

I would my days had been in other times,
A moment in the long unnumbered years
That knew the sway of Horus and of hawk,
In peaceful lands that border on the Nile.

I would my days had been in other times,
Lulled by the sacrifice and mumbled hymn
Between the Five great Rivers, or in shade
And shelter of the cool Himalayan hills.

I would my days had been in other times,
That I in some old abbey of Touraine
Had watched the rounding grapes, and lived my life,
Ere ever Luther came or Rabelais!

I would my days had been in other times,
When quiet life to death not terrible
Drifted, as ashes of the Santhal dead
Drift down the sacred Rivers to the Sea!

A VERY WOFUL BALLADE OF THE ART CRITIC
(TO E. A. ABBEY.)

A spirit came to my sad bed,
And weary sad that night was I,
Who’d tottered, since the dawn was red,
Through miles of Grosvenor Gallery,
Yea, leagues of long Academy
Awaited me when morn grew white,
’Twas then the Spirit whispered nigh,
“Take up the pen, my friend, and write!

“Of many a portrait grey as lead,
Of many a mustard-coloured sky,
Say much, where little should be said,
Lay on thy censure dexterously,
With microscopic glances pry
At textures, Tadema’s delight,
Praise foreign swells they always sky,
Take up the pen, my friend, and write!”

I answered, “’Tis for daily bread,
A sorry crust, I ween, and dry,
That still, with aching feet and head,
I push this lawful industry,
‘Mid pictures hung or low, or high,
But, touching that which I indite,
Do artists hold me lovingly?
Take up the pen, my friend, and write.”

[The Spirit writeth in form of]

ENVOY

“They fain would black thy dexter eye,
They hate thee with a bitter spite,
But scribble since thou must, or die,
Take tip the pen, my friend, and write!”

ART'S MARTYR

Telleth of a young man that fain would be fairly tattooed on his flesh, after the heathen manner, in devices of blue, and that, falling among the Dyacks, a folk of Borneo, was by them tattooed in modern fashion and device, and of his misery that fell upon him, and his outlawry.

He said, The China on the shelf
Is very fair to view,
And wherefore should mine outer self,
Not correspond thereto?
In blue
My frame I must tattoo.

Where may tattooing men abound,
And ah, where might they be?
Nay, well I wot they are not found
In lands of Christentie,
(Quoth he)
But I must cross the sea!

So forth he sailed to Borneo,
(A land that culture lacks,)
And there his money did bestow
To purchase pricks and hacks,
(Dyacks
Are famed tattooing blacks.)

But European commerce had
Debased the savage kind,
And they this most unhappy lad
Before (and eke behind)
Designed
In colours to their mind!

Such awful colours as are blent
On terrible placards
Where flames the fierce advertisement
Yea, or on Christmas cards
(Not Ward’s,
But common Christmas cards!)

Thus never more to Chelsea might
The luckless boy return,
He knew himself too dreadful, quite,
A thing his friends would spurn,
And turn
To praise some Grecian urn!

But still he dwells in Borneo,
A land that culture lacks,
And there they all admire him so,
They bring him heads in sacks,
Dyacks
Are NOT aesthetic blacks!

THE PALACE O BRIC-A-BRAC

Here, where old Nankin glitters,
Here, where men’s tumult seems
As faint as feeble twitters
Of sparrows heard in dreams,
We watch Limoges enamel,
An old chased silver camel,
A shawl, the gift of Schamyl,
And manuscripts in reams.

Here, where the hawthorn pattern
On flawless cup and plate
Need fear no housemaid slattern,
Fell minister of fate,
‘Mid webs divinely woven,
And helms and hauberks cloven,
On music of Beethoven
We dream and meditate.

We know not, and we need not
To know how mortals fare,
Of Bills that pass, or speed not,
Time finds us unaware,
Yea, creeds and codes may crumble,
And Dilke and Gladstone stumble,
And eat the pie that’s humble,
We neither know nor care!

Can kings or clergies alter
The crackle on one plate?
Can creeds or systems palter
With what is truly great?
With Corots and with Millets,

With April daffodillies,
Or make the maiden lilies
Bloom early or bloom late?

Nay, here ‘midst Rhodian roses,
‘Midst tissues of Cashmere,
The Soul sublime reposes,
And knows not hope nor fear;
Here all she sees her own is,
And musical her moan is,
O’er Caxtons and Bodonis,
Aldine and Elzevir!

RONDEAUX OF THE GALLERIES

Camelot

In Camelot how grey and green
The Damsels dwell, how sad their teen,
In Camelot how green and grey
The melancholy poplars sway.
I wis I wot not what they mean
Or wherefore, passionate and lean,
The maidens mope their loves between,
Not seeming to have much to say,
In Camelot.
Yet there hath armour goodly sheen
The blossoms in the apple treen,
(To spell the Camelotian way)
Show fragrant through the doubtful day,
And Master's work is often seen
In Camelot!

Philistia

Philistia! Maids in muslin white
With flannelled oarsmen oft delight
To drift upon thy streams, and float
In Salter’s most luxurious boat;
In buff and boots the cheery knight
Returns (quite safe) from Naseby fight;
Thy humblest folk are clean and bright,
Thou still must win the public vote,
Philistia!
Observe the High Church curate’s coat,
The realistic hansom note!
Ah, happy land untouched of blight,
Smirks, Bishops, Babies, left and right,
We know thine every charm by rote,
Philistia!

THE BARBAROUS BIRD-GODS: A SAVAGE PARABASIS

In the Aves of Aristophanes, the Bird Chorus declare that they are older than the Gods, and greater benefactors of men. This idea recurs in almost all savage mythologies, and I have made the savage Bird-gods state their own case.

The Birds sing:

We would have you to wit, that on eggs though we sit, and are spiked on the spit, and are baked in the pan, Birds are older by far than your ancestors are, and made love and made war ere the making of Man! For when all things were dark, not a glimmer nor spark, and the world like a barque without rudder or sail Floated on through the night, 'twas a Bird struck a light, 'twas a flash from the bright feather'd Tonatiu's tail! Then the Hawk with some dry wood flew up in the sky, and afar, safe and high, the Hawk lit Sun and Moon, And the Birds of the air they rejoiced everywhere, and they recked not of care that should come on them soon. For the Hawk, so they tell, was then known as Pundjel, and a-musing he fell at the close of the day; Then he went on the quest, as we thought, of a nest, with some bark of the best, and a clawful of clay. And with these did he frame two birds lacking a name, without feathers (his game was a puzzle to all); Next around them he fluttered a-dancing, and muttered; and, lastly, he uttered a magical call: Then the figures of clay, as they featherless lay, they leaped up, who but they, and embracing they fell, And THIS was the baking of Man, and his making; but now he's forsaking his Father, Pundjel! Now these creatures of mire, they kept whining for fire, and to crown their desire who was found but the Wren? To the high heaven he came, from the Sun stole he flame, and for this has a name in the memory of men! And in India who for the Soma juice flew, and to men brought it through without falter or fail? Why the Hawk 'twas again, and great Indra to men would appear, now and then, in the shape of a Quail, While the Thlinkeet's delight is the Bird of the Night, the beak and the bright ebon plumage of Yehl. And who for man's need brought the famed Suttung's mead? why 'tis told in the creed of the Sagamen strong, 'Twas the Eagle god who brought the drink from the blue, and gave mortals the brew that's the fountain of song. Next, who gave men their laws? and what reason or cause the young brave overawes when in need of a squaw, Till he thinks it a shame to wed one of his name, and his conduct you blame if he thus breaks the law? For you still hold it wrong if a lubra belong to the self-same kobong that is Father of you, To take HER as a bride to your ebony side; nay, you give her a wide berth; quite right of you, too. For her father, you know, is YOUR father, the Crow, and no blessing but woe from the wedding would spring. Well, these rules they were made in the wattle-gum shade, and were strictly obeyed, when the Crow was the King. Thus on Earth’s little ball to the Birds you owe all, yet your gratitude’s small for the favours they’ve done, And their feathers you pill, and you eat them at will, yes, you plunder and kill the bright birds one by one; There’s a price on their head, and the Dodo is dead, and the Moa has fled from the sight of the sun!

MAN AND THE ASCIDIAN — A MORALITY

“The Ancestor remote of Man,”
Says Darwin, “is th’ Ascidian,”
A scanty sort of water-beast
That, ninety million years at least
Before Gorillas came to be,
Went swimming up and down the sea.

Their ancestors the pious praise,
And like to imitate their ways;
How, then, does our first parent live,
What lesson has his life to give?

Th’ Ascidian tadpole, young and gay,
Doth Life with one bright eye survey,
His consciousness has easy play.
He’s sensitive to grief and pain,
Has tail, and spine, and bears a brain,
And everything that fits the state
Of creatures we call vertebrate.
But age comes on; with sudden shock
He sticks his head against a rock!
His tail drops off, his eye drops in,
His brain’s absorbed into his skin;
He does not move, nor feel, nor know
The tidal water’s ebb and flow,
But still abides, unstirred, alone,
A sucker sticking to a stone.

And we, his children, truly we
In youth are, like the Tadpole, free.
And where we would we blithely go,
Have brains and hearts, and feel and know.

Then Age comes on! To Habit we
Affix ourselves and are not free;
Th’ Ascidian’s rooted to a rock,
And we are bond-slaves of the clock;
Our rocks are Medicine — Letters — Law,
From these our heads we cannot draw:
Our loves drop off, our hearts drop in,
And daily thicker grows our skin.

Ah, scarce we live, we scarcely know
The wide world’s moving ebb and flow,
The clanging currents ring and shock,
But we are rooted to the rock.
And thus at ending of his span,
Blind, deaf, and indolent, does Man
Revert to the Ascidian.

BALLADE OF THE PRIMITIVE JEST

“What did the dark-haired Iberian laugh at before the tall blonde Aryan drove him into the corners of Europe?” — Brander Matthews.

I am an ancient Jest!
Palaeolithic man
In his arboreal nest
The sparks of fun would fan;
My outline did he plan,
And laughed like one possessed,
’Twas thus my course began,
I am a Merry Jest!

I am an early Jest!
Man delved, and built, and span;
Then wandered South and West
The peoples Aryan,
I journeyed in their van;
The Semites, too, confessed, -
From Beersheba to Dan, -
I am a Merry Jest!

I am an ancient Jest,
Through all the human clan,
Red, black, white, free, oppressed,
Hilarious I ran!
I’m found in Lucian,
In Poggio, and the rest,
I’m dear to Moll and Nan!
I am a Merry Jest!

ENVOY

Prince, you may storm and ban -
Joe Millers ARE a pest,
Suppress me if you can!
I am a Merry Jest!

CAMEOS — SONNETS FROM THE ANTIQUE

These versions from classical passages are pretty close to the original, except where compression was needed, as in the sonnets from Pausanias and Apuleius, or where, as in the case of fragments of AEschylus and Sophocles, a little expansion was required.

CAMEOS

The graver by Apollo’s shrine,
Before the Gods had fled, would stand,
A shell or onyx in his hand,
To copy there the face divine,
Till earnest touches, line by line,
Had wrought the wonder of the land
Within a beryl’s golden band,
Or on some fiery opal fine.
Ah! would that as some ancient ring
To us, on shell or stone, doth bring,
Art’s marvels perished long ago,
So I, within the sonnet’s space,
The large Hellenic lines might trace,
The statue in the cameo!

HELEN ON THE WALLS

— (Iliad, iii. 146.)

Fair Helen to the Scaean portals came,
Where sat the elders, peers of Priamus,
Thymoetas, Hiketaon, Panthous,
And many another of a noble name,
Famed warriors, now in council more of fame.
Always above the gates, in converse thus
They chattered like cicalas garrulous;
Who marking Helen, swore “it is no shame
That armed Achaean knights, and Ilian men
For such a woman’s sake should suffer long.
Fair as a deathless goddess seemeth she.
Nay, but aboard the red-prowed ships again
Home let her pass in peace, not working wrong
To us, and children’s children yet to be.”

THE ISLES OF THE BLESSED

— (Pindar, Fr., 106, 107 (95): B. 4, 129-130, 109 (97): B. 4, 132)

Now the light of the sun, in the night of the Earth, on the souls of the True
Shines, and their city is girt with the meadow where reigneth the rose;
And deep is the shade of the woods, and the wind that flits o’er them and through
Sings of the sea, and is sweet from the isles where the frankincense blows:
Green is their garden and orchard, with rare fruits golden it glows,
And the souls of the Blessed are glad in the pleasures on Earth that they knew,
And in chariots these have delight, and in dice and in minstrelsy those,
And the savour of sacrifice clings to the altars and rises anew.

But the Souls that Persephone cleanses from ancient pollution and stain,
These at the end of the age be they prince, be they singer, or seer;
These to the world, shall be born as of old, shall be sages again;
These of their hands shall be hardy, shall live, and shall die, and shall hear
Thanks of the people, and songs of the minstrels that praise them amain,
And their glory shall dwell in the land where they dwelt, while year calls unto year!

DEATH

— (AEsch., Fr., 156.)

Of all Gods Death alone
Disdaineth sacrifice:
No man hath found or shown
The gift that Death would prize.
In vain are songs or sighs,
Paaen, or praise, or moan,
Alone beneath the skies
Hath Death no altar-stone!

There is no head so dear
That men would grudge to Death;
Let Death but ask, we give
All gifts that we may live;
But though Death dwells so near,
We know not what he saith.

NYSA

— (Soph., Fr., 235; AEsch., Fr., 56.)

On these Nysaean shores divine
The clusters ripen in a day.
At dawn the blossom shreds away;
The berried grapes are green and fine
And full by noon; in day’s decline
They’re purple with a bloom of grey,
And e’er the twilight plucked are they,
And crushed, by nightfall, into wine.

But through the night with torch in hand
Down the dusk hills the Maenads fare;
The bull-voiced mummers roar and blare,
The muffled timbrels swell and sound,
And drown the clamour of the band
Like thunder moaning underground.

COLONUS

— (OEd. Col., 667-705.)

I.

Here be the fairest homes the land can show,
The silvery-cliffed Colonus; always here
The nightingale doth haunt and singeth clear,
For well the deep green gardens doth she know.
Groves of the God, where winds may never blow,
Nor men may tread, nor noontide sun may peer
Among the myriad-berried ivy dear,
Where Dionysus wanders to and fro.

For here he loves to dwell, and here resort
These Nymphs that are his nurses and his court,
And golden eyed beneath the dewy boughs
The crocus burns, and the narcissus fair
Clusters his blooms to crown thy clustered hair,
Demeter, and to wreathe the Maiden’s brows!

II.

Yea, here the dew of Heaven upon the grain
Fails never, nor the ceaseless water-spring,
Near neighbour of Cephisus wandering,
That day by day revisiteth the plain.
Nor do the Goddesses the grove disdain,
But chiefly here the Muses quire and sing,
And here they love to weave their dancing ring,
With Aphrodite of the golden rein.

And here there springs a plant that knoweth not
The Asian mead, nor that great Dorian isle,
Unsown, untilled, within our garden plot
It dwells, the grey-leaved olive; ne’er shall guile
Nor force of foemen root it from the spot:
Zeus and Athene guarding it the while!

THE PASSING OF OEDIPOUS

(OEd. Col., 1655-1666.)

How OEdipous departed, who may tell
Save Theseus only? for there neither came
The burning bolt of thunder, and the flame
To blast him into nothing, nor the swell
Of sea-tide spurred by tempest on him fell.
But some diviner herald none may name
Called him, or inmost Earth’s abyss became
The painless place where such a soul might dwell.

Howe’er it chanced, untouched of malady,
Unharmed by fear, unfollowed by lament,
With comfort on the twilight way he went,
Passing, if ever man did, wondrously;
From this world’s death to life divinely rent,
Unschooled in Time’s last lesson, how we die.

THE TAMING OF TYRO

— (Soph., Fr., 587.)

(Sidero, the stepmother of Tyro, daughter of Salmoneus, cruelly entreated her in all things, and chiefly in this, that she let sheer her beautiful hair.)

At fierce Sidero's word the thralls drew near,
And shore the locks of Tyro, — like ripe corn
They fell in golden harvest, — but forlorn
The maiden shuddered in her pain and fear,
Like some wild mare that cruel grooms in scorn
Hunt in the meadows, and her mane they sheer,
And drive her where, within the waters clear,
She spies her shadow, and her shame doth mourn.

Ah! hard were he and pitiless of heart
Who marking that wild thing made weak and tame,
Broken, and grieving for her glory gone,
Could mock her grief; but scornfully apart
Sidero stood, and watched a wind that came
And tossed the curls like fire that flew and shone!

TO ARTEMIS

— (Hippol., Eurip., 73-87.)

For thee soft crowns in thine untrampled mead
I wove, my lady, and to thee I bear;
Thither no shepherd drives his flocks to feed,
Nor scythe of steel has ever laboured there;
Nay, through the spring among the blossoms fair
The brown bee comes and goes, and with good heed
Thy maiden, Reverence, sweet streams doth lead
About the grassy close that is her care!

Souls only that are gracious and serene
By gift of God, in human lore unread,
May pluck these holy blooms and grasses green
That now I wreathe for thine immortal head,
I that may walk with thee, thyself unseen,
And by thy whispered voice am comforted.

CRITICISM OF LIFE

— (Hippol, Eurip .P., 252-266.)

Long life hath taught me many things, and shown
That lukewarm loves for men who die are best,
Weak wine of liking let them mix alone,
Not Love, that stings the soul within the breast;
Happy, who wears his love-bonds lightliest,
Now cherished, now away at random thrown!
Grievous it is for other's grief to moan,
Hard that my soul for thine should lose her rest!

Wise ruling this of life: but yet again
Perchance too rigid diet is not well;
He lives not best who dreads the coming pain
And shunneth each delight desirable:
FLEE THOU EXTREMES, this word alone is plain,
Of all that God hath given to Man to spell!

AMARYLLIS

— (Theocritus, Idyll, iii.)

Fair Amaryllis, wilt thou never peep
From forth the cave, and call me, and be mine?
Lo, apples ten I bear thee from the steep,
These didst thou long for, and all these are thine.
Ah, would I were a honey-bee to sweep
Through ivy, and the bracken, and woodbine;
To watch thee waken, Love, and watch thee sleep,
Within thy grot below the shadowy pine.
Now know I Love, a cruel god is he,
The wild beast bare him in the wild wood drear;
And truly to the bone he burneth me.
But, black-browed Amaryllis, ne’er a tear,
Nor sigh, nor blush, nor aught have I from thee;
Nay, nor a kiss, a little gift and dear.

THE CANNIBAL ZEUS — A.D. 160

[Greek text] — Paus. viii. 38

None elder city doth the Sun behold
Than ancient Lycosura; ’twas begun
Ere Zeus the meat of mortals learned to shun,
And here hath he a grove whose haunted fold
The driven deer seek and huntsmen dread: ’tis told
That whoso fares within that forest dun
Thenceforth shall cast no shadow in the Sun,
Ay, and within the year his life is cold!

Hard by dwelt he who, while the Gods deigned eat
At good men’s tables, gave them dreadful meat,
A child he slew: — his mountain altar green
Here still hath Zeus, with rites untold of me,
Piteous, but as they are let these things be,
And as from the beginning they have been!

INVOCATION OF ISIS

— (Apuleius, Metamorph. XI.)

Thou that art sandalled on immortal feet
With leaves of palm, the prize of Victory;
Thou that art crowned with snakes and blossoms sweet,
Queen of the silver dews and shadowy sky,
I pray thee by all names men name thee by!
Demeter, come, and leave the yellow wheat!
Or Aphrodite, let thy lovers sigh!
Or Dian, from thine Asian temple fleet!

Or, yet more dread, divine Persephone
From worlds of wailing spectres, ah, draw near;
Approach, Selene, from thy subject sea;
Come, Artemis, and this night spare the deer:
By all thy names and rites I summon thee;
By all thy rites and names, Our Lady, hear!

THE COMING OF ISIS

So Lucius prayed, and sudden, from afar,
Floated the locks of Isis, shone the bright
Crown that is tressed with berry, snake, and star;
She came in deep blue raiment of the night,
Above her robes that now were snowy white,
Now golden as the moons of harvest are,
Now red, now flecked with many a cloudy bay,
Now stained with all the lustre of the light.

Then he who saw her knew her, and he knew
The awful symbols borne in either hand;
The golden urn that laves Demeter’s dew,
The handles wreathed with asps, the mystic wand;
The shaken seistron’s music, tinkling through
The temples of that old Osirian land.

THE SPINET

My heart an old Spinet with strings
To laughter chiefly turned, but some
That Fate has practised hard on, dumb,
They answer not whoever sings.
The ghosts of half-forgotten things
Will touch the keys with fingers numb,
The little mocking spirits come
And thrill it with their fairy wings.

A jingling harmony it makes
My heart, my lyre, my old Spinet,
And now a memory it wakes,
And now the music means “forget,”
And little heed the player takes
Howe’er the thoughtful critic fret.

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETE

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THE SONG-STORY OF AUCASSIN AND NICOLETE

Dedicated to the Hon. James Russell Lowell.

INTRODUCTION

There is nothing in artistic poetry quite akin to “Aucassin and Nicolete.”

By a rare piece of good fortune the one manuscript of the Song-Story has escaped those waves of time, which have wrecked the bark of Menander, and left of Sappho but a few floating fragments. The very form of the tale is peculiar; we have nothing else from the twelfth or thirteenth century in the alternate prose and verse of the *cante-fable*. We have fabliaux in verse, and prose Arthurian romances. We have *Chansons de Geste*, heroic poems like “Roland,” unrhymed assonant *laisses*, but we have not the alternations of prose with *laisses* in seven-syllabled lines. It cannot be certainly known whether the form of “Aucassin and Nicolete” was a familiar form — used by many *jogleors*, or wandering minstrels and story-tellers such as Nicolete, in the tale, feigned herself to be, — or whether this is a solitary experiment by “the old captive” its author, a contemporary, as M. Gaston Paris thinks him, of Louis VII (1130). He was original enough to have invented, or adopted from popular tradition, a form for himself; his originality declares itself everywhere in his one surviving masterpiece. True, he uses certain traditional formulae, that have survived in his time, as they survived in Homer’s, from the manner of purely popular poetry, of *Volkslieder*. Thus he repeats snatches of conversation always in the same, or very nearly the same words. He has a stereotyped form, like Homer, for saying that one person addressed another, “ains traist au visconte de la vile si l’apela” Ä¿½ ´±À±yµ¹²¿¼µ½¿Â ÀÁ¿ÃµÆµ . . . Like Homer, and like popular song, he deals in recurrent epithets, and changeless courtesies. To Aucassin the hideous plough-man is “Biax frère,” “fair brother,” just as the treacherous Aegisthus is ±¼Å¼É½ in Homer; these are complimentary terms, with no moral sense in particular. The *jogleor* is not more curious than Homer, or than the poets of the old ballads, about giving novel descriptions of his characters. As Homer’s ladies are “fair-tressed,” so Nicolete and Aucassin have, each of them, close yellow curls, eyes of vair (whatever that may mean), and red lips. War cannot be mentioned except as war “where knights do smite and are smitten,” and so forth. The author is absolutely conventional in such matters, according to the convention of his age and profession.

Nor is his matter more original. He tells a story of thwarted and finally fortunate love, and his hero is “a Christened knight” — like Tamlane, — his heroine a Paynim lady. To be sure, Nicolete was baptized before the tale begins, and it is she who is a captive among Christians, not her lover, as usual, who is a captive among Saracens. The author has reversed the common arrangement, and he appears to have cared little more than his reckless hero, about creeds and differences of faith. He is not much interested in the recognition of Nicolete by her great Paynim kindred, nor indeed in any of the "business" of the narrative, the fighting, the storms and tempests, and the burlesque of the kingdom of Torelore.

What the nameless author does care for, is his telling of the love-story, the passion of Aucassin and Nicolete. His originality lies in his charming medley of sentiment and humour, of a smiling compassion and sympathy with a touch of mocking mirth. The love of Aucassin and Nicolete — "Des grans paines qu'il soufri,"

that is the one thing serious to him in the whole matter, and that is not so very serious. The story-teller is no Mimnermus, Love and Youth are the best things he knew,— "deport du viel caitif," — and now he has "come to forty years," and now they are with him no longer. But he does not lament like Mimnermus, like Alcman, like Llwyarch Hen. "What is Life, what is delight without golden Aphrodite? May I die!" says Mimnermus, "when I am no more conversant with these, with secret love, and gracious gifts, and the bed of desire." And Alcman, when his limbs waver beneath him, is only saddened by the faces and voices of girls, and would change his lot for the sea-birds.

"Maidens with voices like honey for sweetness that breathe desire,
Would that I were a sea-bird with limbs that never could tire,
Over the foam-flowers flying with halcyons ever on wing,
Keeping a careless heart, a sea-blue bird of the spring."

But our old captive, having said farewell to love, has yet a kindly smiling interest in its fever and folly. Nothing better has he met, even now that he knows "a lad is an ass." He tells a love story, a story of love overmastering, without conscience or care of aught but the beloved. And the *viel caitif* tells it with sympathy, and with a smile. "Oh folly of fondness," he seems to cry, "oh merry days of desolation"

"When I was young as you are young,

When lutes were touched and songs were sung,
And love lamps in the windows hung."

It is the very tone of Thackeray, when Thackeray is tender, and the world heard it first from this elderly, nameless minstrel, strolling with his viol and his singing boys, perhaps, like a blameless d'Assoucy, from castle to castle in "the happy poplar land." One seems to see him and hear him in the twilight, in the court of some château of Picardy, while the ladies on silken cushions sit around him listening, and their lovers, fettered with silver chains, lie at their feet. They listen, and look, and do not think of the minstrel with his grey head and his green heart, but we think of him. It is an old man's work, and a weary man's work. You can easily tell the places where he has lingered, and been pleased as he wrote. They are marked, like the bower Nicolete built, with flowers and broken branches wet with dew. Such a passage is the description of Nicolete at her window, in the strangely painted chamber,

"ki faite est par grant devisse
panturee a miramie."

Thence

”she saw the roses blow,
Heard the birds sing loud and low.”

Again, the minstrel speaks out what many must have thought, in those incredulous ages of Faith, about Heaven and Hell, Hell where the gallant company makes up for everything. When he comes to a battle-piece he makes Aucassin “mightily and knightly hurl through the press,” like one of Malory’s men. His hero must be a man of his hands, no mere sighing youth incapable of arms. But the minstrels heart is in other things, for example, in the verses where Aucassin transfers to Beauty the wonder-working powers of Holiness, and makes the sight of his lady heal the palmer, as the shadow of the Apostle, falling on the sick people, healed them by the Gate Beautiful. The Flight of Nicolete is a familiar and beautiful picture, the daisy flowers look black in the ivory moonlight against her feet, fair as Bombyca’s “feet of carven ivory” in the Sicilian idyll, long ago. It is characteristic of the poet that the two lovers begin to wrangle about which loves best, in the very mouth of danger, while Aucassin is yet in prison, and the patrol go down the moonlit street, with swords in their hands, sworn to slay Nicolete. That is the place and time chosen for this ancient controversy. Aucassin’s threat that if he loses Nicolete he will not wait for sword or knife, but will dash his head against a wall, is in the very temper of the prisoned warrior-poet, who actually chose this way of death. Then the night scene, with its fantasy, and shadow, and moonlight on flowers and street, yields to a picture of the day, with the birds singing, and the shepherds laughing, in the green links between wood and water. There the shepherds take Nicolete for a fairy, so bright a beauty shines about her. Their mockery, their independence, may make us consider again our ideas of early Feudalism. Probably they were in the service of townsmen, whose good town treated the Count as no more than an equal of its corporate dignity. The bower of branches built by Nicolete is certainly one of the places where the minstrel himself has rested and been pleased with his work. One can feel it still, the cool of that clear summer night, the sweet smell of broken boughs, and trodden grass, and deep dew, and the shining of the star that Aucassin deemed was the translated spirit of his lady. Romance has touched the book here with her magic, as she has touched the lines where we read how Consuelo came by moonlight to the Canon’s garden and the white flowers. The pleasure here is the keener for contrast with the luckless hind whom Aucassin encountered in the forest: the man who had lost his master’s ox, the ungainly man who wept, because his mother’s bed had been taken from under her to pay his debt. This man was in that estate which Achilles, in Hades, preferred above the kingship of the dead outworn. He was hind and hireling to a villein,

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It is an unexpected touch of pity for the people, and for other than love-sorrows, in a poem intended for the great and courtly people of chivalry.

At last the lovers meet, in the lodge of flowers beneath the stars. Here the story should end, though one could ill spare the pretty lecture the girl reads her lover as they ride at adventure, and the picture of Nicolete, with her brown stain, and jogleor’s attire, and her viol, playing before Aucassin in his own castle of Biaucaire. The burlesque interlude of the country of Torelore is like a page out of Rabelais, stitched into the *cante-fable* by mistake. At such lands as Torelore Pantagruel and Panurge touched many a time in their vague voyaging. Nobody, perhaps, can care very much about Nicolete’s adventures in Carthage, and her recognition by her Paynim kindred. If the old captive had been a prisoner among the Saracens, he was too indolent or incurious to make use of his knowledge. He hurries on to his journey’s end; “Journeys end in lovers meeting.”

So he finishes the tale. What lives in it, what makes it live, is the touch of poetry, of tender heart, of humorous resignation. The old captive says the story will gladden sad men:-

“Nus hom n’est si esbahis,
tant dolans ni entrepris,
de grant mal amaladis,
se il l’oit, ne soit garis,
et de joie resbaudis,
   tant par est douce.”

This service it did for M. Bida, the painter, as he tells us when he translated Aucassin in 1870. In dark and darkening days, *patriai tempore iniquo*, we too have turned to *Aucassin et Nicolete*.

BALLADE OF AUCASSIN

Where smooth the Southern waters run
   Through rustling leagues of poplars gray,
Beneath a veiled soft Southern sun,
   We wandered out of Yesterday;
   Went Maying in that ancient May
Whose fallen flowers are fragrant yet,
   And lingered by the fountain spray
With Aucassin and Nicolete.

The grassgrown paths are trod of none
   Where through the woods they went astray;
The spider's traceries are spun
   Across the darkling forest way;
   There come no Knights that ride to slay,
No Pilgrims through the grasses wet,
   No shepherd lads that sang their say
With Aucassin and Nicolete.

'Twas here by Nicolete begun
   Her lodge of boughs and blossoms gay;
'Scaped from the cell of marble dun
   'Twas here the lover found the Fay;
   O lovers fond, O foolish play!
How hard we find it to forget,
   Who fain would dwell with them as they,
With Aucassin and Nicolete.

ENVOY.

Prince, 'tis a melancholy lay!

For Youth, for Life we both regret:
How fair they seem; how far away,
With Aucassin and Nicolete.

A. L.

BALLADE OF NICOLETE

All bathed in pearl and amber light
She rose to fling the lattice wide,
And leaned into the fragrant night,
Where brown birds sang of summertide;
(’Twas Love’s own voice that called and cried)
“Ah, Sweet!” she said, “I’ll seek thee yet,
Though thorniest pathways should betide
The fair white feet of Nicolete.”

They slept, who would have stayed her flight;
(Full fain were they the maid had died!)
She dropped adown her prison’s height
On strands of linen featly tied.
And so she passed the garden-side
With loose-leaved roses sweetly set,
And dainty daisies, dark beside
The fair white feet of Nicolete!

Her lover lay in evil plight
(So many lovers yet abide!)
I would my tongue could praise aright
Her name, that should be glorified.
Those lovers now, whom foes divide
A little weep, — and soon forget.
How far from these faint lovers glide
The fair white feet of Nicolete.

ENVOY.

My Princess, doff thy frozen pride,

Nor scorn to pay Love’s golden debt,
Through his dim woodland take for guide
The fair white feet of Nicolete.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON

THE SONG-STORY OF AUCASSIN AND NICOLETE

’Tis of Aucassin and Nicolete.

Who would list to the good lay
Gladness of the captive grey?
’Tis how two young lovers met,
Aucassin and Nicolete,
Of the pains the lover bore
And the sorrows he outwore,
For the goodness and the grace,
Of his love, so fair of face.

Sweet the song, the story sweet,
There is no man hearkens it,
No man living ‘neath the sun,
So outwearied, so foredone,
Sick and woful, worn and sad,
But is healèd, but is glad
   ’Tis so sweet.

So say they, speak they, tell they the Tale:

How the Count Bougars de Valence made war on Count Garin de Biaucaire, war so great, and so marvellous, and so mortal that never a day dawned but alway he was there, by the gates and walls, and barriers of the town with a hundred knights, and ten thousand men at arms, horsemen and footmen: so burned he the Count’s land, and spoiled his country, and slew his men. Now the Count Garin de Biaucaire was old and frail, and his good days were gone over. No heir had he, neither son nor daughter, save one young man only; such an one as I shall tell you. Aucassin was the name of the damoiseau: fair was he, goodly, and great, and featly fashioned of his body, and limbs. His hair was yellow, in little curls, his eyes blue and laughing, his face beautiful and shapely, his nose high and well set, and so richly seen was he in all things good, that in him was none evil at all. But so suddenly overtaken was he of Love, who is a great master, that he would not, of his will, be dubbed knight, nor take arms, nor follow tourneys, nor do whatsoever him beseemed. Therefore his father and mother said to him;

“Son, go take thine arms, mount thy horse, and hold thy land, and help thy men, for if they see thee among them, more stoutly will they keep in battle their lives, and lands, and thine, and mine.”

“Father,” said Aucassin, “I marvel that you will be speaking. Never may God give me aught of my desire if I be made knight, or mount my horse, or face stour and battle wherein knights smite and are smitten again, unless thou give me Nicolete, my true love, that I love so well.”

“Son,” said the father, “this may not be. Let Nicolete go, a slave girl she is, out of a strange land, and the captain of this town bought her of the Saracens, and carried her hither, and hath reared her and let christen the maid, and took her for his daughter in God, and one day will find a young man for her, to win her bread honourably. Herein hast thou naught to make or mend, but if a wife thou wilt have, I will give thee the daughter of a King, or a Count. There is no man so rich in France, but if thou desire his daughter, thou shalt have her.”

“Faith! my father,” said Aucassin, “tell me where is the place so high in all the world, that Nicolete, my sweet lady and love, would not grace it well? If she were Empress of Constantinople or of Germany, or Queen of France or England, it were little enough for her; so gentle is she and courteous, and debonaire, and compact of all good qualities.”

Here singeth one:

Aucassin was of Biaucaire
Of a goodly castle there,
But from Nicolete the fair
None might win his heart away
Though his father, many a day,

And his mother said him nay,
“Ha! fond child, what wouldest thou?
Nicolete is glad enow!
Was from Carthage cast away,
Paynims sold her on a day!
Wouldst thou win a lady fair
Choose a maid of high degree
Such an one is meet for thee.”
“Nay of these I have no care,
Nicolete is debonaire,
Her body sweet and the face of her
Take my heart as in a snare,
Loyal love is but her share
   That is so sweet.”

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

When the Count Garin de Biaucaire knew that he would avail not to withdraw Aucassin his son from the love of Nicolete, he went to the Captain of the city, who was his man, and spake to him, saying:

“Sir Count; away with Nicolete thy daughter in God; cursed be the land whence she was brought into this country, for by reason of her do I lose Aucassin, that will neither be dubbed knight, nor do aught of the things that fall to him to be done. And wit ye well,” he said, “that if I might have her at my will, I would burn her in a fire, and yourself might well be sore adread.”

“Sir,” said the Captain, “this is grievous to me that he comes and goes and hath speech with her. I had bought the maiden at mine own charges, and nourished her, and baptized, and made her my daughter in God. Yea, I would have given her to a young man that should win her bread honourably. With this had Aucassin thy son naught to make or mend. But, sith it is thy will and thy pleasure, I will send her into that land and that country where never will he see her with his eyes.”

“Have a heed to thyself,” said the Count Garin, “thence might great evil come on thee."

So parted they each from other. Now the Captain was a right rich man: so had he a rich palace with a garden in face of it; in an upper chamber thereof he let place Nicolete, with one old woman to keep her company, and in that chamber put bread and meat and wine and such things as were needful. Then he let seal the door, that none might come in or go forth, save that there was one window, over against the garden, and strait enough, where through came to them a little air.

Here singeth one:

Nicolete as ye heard tell
Prisoned is within a cell
That is painted wondrously
With colours of a far countrie,
And the window of marble wrought,
There the maiden stood in thought,
With straight brows and yellow hair
Never saw ye fairer fair!
On the wood she gazed below,
And she saw the roses blow,
Heard the birds sing loud and low,
Therefore spoke she wofully:
"Ah me, wherefore do I lie
Here in prison wrongfully:
Aucassin, my love, my knight,
Am I not thy heart's delight,
Thou that lovest me aright!
'Tis for thee that I must dwell
In the vaulted chamber cell,
Hard beset and all alone!
By our Lady Mary's Son
Here no longer will I wonn,
   If I may flee!

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

Nicolete was in prison, as ye have heard soothly, in the chamber. And the noise and bruit of it went through all the country and all the land, how that Nicolete was lost. Some said she had fled the country, and some that the Count Garin de Biaucaire had let slay her. Whosoever had joy thereof, Aucassin had none, so he went to the Captain of the town and spoke to him, saying:

“Sir Captain, what hast thou made of Nicolete, my sweet lady and love, the thing that best I love in all the world? Hast thou carried her off or ravished her away from me? Know well that if I die of it, the price shall be demanded of thee, and that will be well done, for it shall be even as if thou hadst slain me with thy two hands, for thou hast taken from me the thing that in this world I loved the best.”

“Fair Sir,” said the Captain, “let these things be. Nicolete is a captive that I did bring from a strange country. Yea, I bought her at my own charges of the Saracens, and I bred her up and baptized her, and made her my daughter in God. And I have cherished her, and one of these days I would have given her a young man, to win her bread honourably. With this hast thou naught to make, but do thou take the daughter of a King or a Count. Nay more, what wouldst thou deem thee to have gained, hadst thou made her thy leman, and taken her to thy bed? Plentiful lack of comfort hadst thou got thereby, for in Hell would thy soul have lain while the world endures, and into Paradise wouldst thou have entered never.”

“In Paradise what have I to win? Therein I seek not to enter, but only to have Nicolete, my sweet lady that I love so well. For into Paradise go none but such folk as I shall tell thee now: Thither go these same old priests, and halt old men and maimed, who all day and night cower continually before the altars, and in the crypts; and such folk as wear old amices and old clouted frocks, and naked folk and shoeless, and covered with sores, perishing of hunger and thirst, and of cold, and of little ease. These be they that go into Paradise, with them have I naught to make. But into Hell would I fain go; for into Hell fare the goodly clerks, and goodly knights that fall in tourneys and great wars, and stout men at arms, and all men noble. With these would I liefly go. And thither pass the sweet ladies and courteous that have two lovers, or three, and their lords also thereto. Thither goes the gold, and the silver, and cloth of vair, and cloth of gris, and harpers, and makers, and the prince of this world. With these I would gladly go, let me but have with me, Nicolete, my sweetest lady.”

“Certes,” quoth the Captain, “in vain wilt thou speak thereof, for never shalt thou see her; and if thou hadst word with her, and thy father knew it, he would let burn in a fire both her and me, and thyself might well be sore adread.”

“That is even what irketh me,” quoth Aucassin. So he went from the Captain sorrowing.

Here singeth one:

Aucassin did so depart
Much in dole and heavy at heart
For his love so bright and dear,
None might bring him any cheer,
None might give good words to hear,
To the palace doth he fare
Climbeth up the palace-stair,
Passeth to a chamber there,
Thus great sorrow doth he bear,
For his lady and love so fair.

“Nicolete how fair art thou,
Sweet thy footfall, sweet thine eyes,
Sweet the mirth of thy replies,
Sweet thy laughter, sweet thy face,
Sweet thy lips and sweet thy brow,
And the touch of thine embrace,
All for thee I sorrow now,
Captive in an evil place,
Whence I ne’er may go my ways
Sister, sweet friend!”

So say they, speak they, tell they the Tale:

While Aucassin was in the chamber sorrowing for Nicolete his love, even then the Count Bougars de Valence, that had his war to wage, forgat it no whit, but had called up his horsemen and his footmen, so made he for the castle to storm it. And the cry of battle arose, and the din, and knights and men at arms busked them, and ran to walls and gates to hold the keep. And the towns-folk mounted to the battlements, and cast down bolts and pikes. Then while the assault was great, and even at its height, the Count Garin de Biaucaire came into the chamber where Aucassin was making lament, sorrowing for Nicolete, his sweet lady that he loved so well.

“Ha! son,” quoth he, “how caitiff art thou, and cowardly, that canst see men assail thy goodliest castle and strongest. Know thou that if thou lose it, thou losest all. Son, go to, take arms, and mount thy horse, and defend thy land, and help thy men, and fare into the stour. Thou needst not smite nor be smitten. If they do but see thee among them, better will they guard their substance, and their lives, and thy land and mine. And thou art so great, and hardy of thy hands, that well mightst thou do this thing, and to do it is thy devoir.”

“Father,” said Aucassin, “what is this thou sayest now? God grant me never aught of my desire, if I be dubbed knight, or mount steed, or go into the stour where knights do smite and are smitten, if thou givest me not Nicolete, my sweet lady, whom I love so well.”

“Son,” quoth his father, “this may never be: rather would I be quite disinherited and lose all that is mine, than that thou shouldst have her to thy wife, or to love *par amours*.”

So he turned him about. But when Aucassin saw him going he called to him again, saying,

“Father, go to now, I will make with thee fair covenant.”

“What covenant, fair son?”

“I will take up arms, and go into the stour, on this covenant, that, if God bring me back sound and safe, thou wilt let me see Nicolete my sweet lady, even so long that I may have of her two words or three, and one kiss.”

“That will I grant,” said his father.

At this was Aucassin glad.

Here one singeth:

Of the kiss heard Aucassin
That returning he shall win.
None so glad would he have been
Of a myriad marks of gold
Of a hundred thousand told.
Called for raiment brave of steel,
Then they clad him, head to heel,
Twyfold hauberk doth he don,
Firmly braced the helmet on.
Girt the sword with hilt of gold,
Horse doth mount, and lance doth wield,
Looks to stirrups and to shield,
Wondrous brave he rode to field.
Dreaming of his lady dear
Setteth spurs to the destrere,
Rideth forward without fear,
Through the gate and forth away
  To the fray.

So speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

Aucassin was armed and mounted as ye have heard tell. God! how goodly sat the shield on his shoulder, the helm on his head, and the baldric on his left haunch! And the damoiseau was tall, fair, featly fashioned, and hardy of his hands, and the horse whereon he rode swift and keen, and straight had he spurred him forth of the gate. Now believe ye not that his mind was on kine, nor cattle of the booty, nor thought he how he might strike a knight, nor be stricken again: nor no such thing. Nay, no memory had Aucassin of aught of these; rather he so dreamed of Nicolete, his sweet lady, that he dropped his reins, forgetting all there was to do, and his horse that had felt the spur, bore him into the press and hurled among the foe, and they laid hands on him all about, and took him captive, and seized away his spear and shield, and straightway they led him off a prisoner, and were even now discoursing of what death he should die.

And when Aucassin heard them,

“Ha! God,” said he, “sweet Saviour. Be these my deadly enemies that have taken me, and will soon cut off my head? And once my head is off, no more shall I speak with Nicolete, my sweet lady, that I love so well. Natheless have I here a good sword, and sit a good horse unwearied. If now I keep not my head for her sake, God help her never, if she love me more!”

The damoiseau was tall and strong, and the horse whereon he sat was right eager. And he laid hand to sword, and fell a-smiting to right and left, and smote through helm and *nasal*, and arm and clenched hand, making a murder about him, like a wild boar when hounds fall on him in the forest, even till he struck down ten knights, and seven be hurt, and straightway he hurled out of the press, and rode back again at full speed, sword in hand. The Count Bougars de Valence heard say they were about hanging Aucassin, his enemy, so he came into that place, and Aucassin was ware of him, and gat his sword into his hand, and lashed at his helm with such a stroke that he drave it down on his head, and he being stunned, fell grovelling. And Aucassin laid hands on him, and caught him by the *nasal* of his helmet, and gave him to his father.

“Father,” quoth Aucassin, “lo here is your mortal foe, who hath so warred on you with all malengin. Full twenty years did this war endure, and might not be ended by man.”

“Fair son,” said his father, “thy feats of youth shouldst thou do, and not seek after folly.”

“Father,” saith Aucassin, “sermon me no sermons, but fulfil my covenant.”

“Ha! what covenant, fair son?”

“What, father, hast thou forgotten it? By mine own head, whosoever forgets, will I not forget it, so much it hath me at heart. Didst thou not covenant with me when I took up arms, and went into the stour, that if God brought me back safe and sound, thou wouldst let me see Nicolete, my sweet lady, even so long that I may have of her two words or three, and one kiss? So didst thou covenant, and my mind is that thou keep thy word.”

“I!” quoth the father, “God forsake me when I keep this covenant! Nay, if she were here, I would let burn her in the fire, and thyself shouldst be sore adread.”

“Is this thy last word?” quoth Aucassin.

“So help me God,” quoth his father, “yea!”

“Certes,” quoth Aucassin, “this is a sorry thing meseems, when a man of thine age lies!”

“Count of Valence,” quoth Aucassin, “I took thee?”

“In sooth, Sir, didst thou,” saith the Count.

“Give me thy hand,” saith Aucassin.

“Sir, with good will.”

So he set his hand in the other’s.

“Now givest thou me thy word,” saith Aucassin, “that never whiles thou art living man wilt thou avail to do my father dishonour, or harm him in body, or in goods, but do it thou wilt?”

“Sir, in God’s name,” saith he, “mock me not, but put me to my ransom; ye cannot ask of me gold nor silver, horses nor palfreys, *vair* nor *gris*, hawks nor hounds, but I will give you them.”

“What?” quoth Aucassin. “Ha, knowest thou not it was I that took thee?”

“Yea, sir,” quoth the Count Bougars.

“God help me never, but I will make thy head fly from thy shoulders, if thou makest not troth,” said Aucassin.

“In God’s name,” said he, “I make what promise thou wilt.”

So they did the oath, and Aucassin let mount him on a horse, and took another and so led him back till he was all in safety.

Here one singeth:

When the Count Garin doth know
That his child would ne’er forego
Love of her that loved him so,
Nicolete, the bright of brow,
In a dungeon deep below
Childe Aucassin did he throw.
Even there the Childe must dwell
In a dun-walled marble cell.
There he waileth in his woe
Crying thus as ye shall know.

“Nicolete, thou lily white,
My sweet lady, bright of brow,

Sweeter than the grape art thou,
Sweeter than sack posset good
In a cup of maple wood!
Was it not but yesterday
That a palmer came this way,
Out of Limousin came he,
And at ease he might not be,
For a passion him possessed
That upon his bed he lay,
Lay, and tossed, and knew not rest
In his pain discomforted.
But thou camest by the bed,
Where he tossed amid his pain,
Holding high thy sweeping train,
And thy kirtle of ermine,
And thy smock of linen fine,
Then these fair white limbs of thine,
Did he look on, and it fell
That the palmer straight was well,
Straight was hale — and comforted,
And he rose up from his bed,
And went back to his own place,
Sound and strong, and full of face!
My sweet lady, lily white,
Sweet thy footfall, sweet thine eyes,
And the mirth of thy replies.
Sweet thy laughter, sweet thy face,
Sweet thy lips and sweet thy brow,
And the touch of thine embrace.
Who but doth in thee delight?
I for love of thee am bound
In this dungeon underground,
All for loving thee must lie
Here where loud on thee I cry,
Here for loving thee must die
   For thee, my love.”

Then say they, speak they, tell they the Tale:

Aucassin was cast into prison as ye have heard tell, and Nicolete, of her part, was in the chamber. Now it was summer time, the month of May, when days are warm, and long, and clear, and the night still and serene. Nicolete lay one night on her bed, and saw the moon shine clear through a window, yea, and heard the nightingale sing in the garden, so she minded her of Aucassin her lover whom she loved so well. Then fell she to thoughts of Count Garin de Biaucaire, that hated her to the death; therefore deemed she that there she would no longer abide, for that, if she were told of, and the Count knew whereas she lay, an ill death would he make her die. Now she knew that the old woman slept who held her company. Then she arose, and clad her in a mantle of silk she had by her, very goodly, and took napkins, and sheets of the bed, and knotted one to the other, and made therewith a cord as long as she might, so knitted it to a pillar in the window, and let herself slip down into the garden, then caught up her raiment in both hands, behind and before, and kilted up her kirtle, because of the dew that she saw lying deep on the grass, and so went her way down through the garden.

Her locks were yellow and curled, her eyes blue and smiling, her face featly fashioned, the nose high and fairly set, the lips more red than cherry or rose in time of summer, her teeth white and small; her breasts so firm that they bore up the folds of her bodice as they had been two apples; so slim she was in the waist that your two hands might have clipped her, and the daisy flowers that brake beneath her as she went tip-toe, and that bent above her instep, seemed black against her feet, so white was the maiden. She came to the postern gate, and unbarred it, and went out through the streets of Biaucaire, keeping always on the shadowy side, for the moon was shining right clear, and so wandered she till she came to the tower where her lover lay. The tower was flanked with buttresses, and she cowered under one of them, wrapped in her mantle. Then thrust she her head through a crevice of the tower that was old and worn, and so heard she Aucassin wailing within, and making dole and lament for the sweet lady he loved so well. And when she had listened to him she began to say:

Here one singeth:

Nicolete the bright of brow

On a pillar leanest thou,
All Aucassin’s wail dost hear
For his love that is so dear,
Then thou spakest, shrill and clear,
“Gentle knight withouten fear
Little good befalleth thee,
Little help of sigh or tear,
Ne’er shalt thou have joy of me.
Never shalt thou win me; still
Am I held in evil will
Of thy father and thy kin,
Therefore must I cross the sea,
And another land must win.”
Then she cut her curls of gold,
Cast them in the dungeon hold,
Aucassin doth clasp them there,
Kissed the curls that were so fair,
Them doth in his bosom bear,
Then he wept, even as of old,
   All for his love!

Then say they, speak they, tell they the Tale:

When Aucassin heard Nicolete say that she would pass into a far country, he was all in wrath.

“Fair sweet friend,” quoth he, “thou shalt not go, for then wouldst thou be my death. And the first man that saw thee and had the might withal, would take thee straightway into his bed to be his leman. And once thou camest into a man’s bed, and that bed not mine, wit ye well that I would not tarry till I had found a knife to pierce my heart and slay myself. Nay, verily, wait so long I would not: but would hurl myself on it so soon as I could find a wall, or a black stone, thereon would I dash my head so mightily, that the eyes would start, and my brain burst. Rather would I die even such a death, than know thou hadst lain in a man’s bed, and that bed not mine.”

“Aucassin,” she said, “I trow thou lovest me not as much as thou sayest, but I love thee more than thou lovest me.”

“Ah, fair sweet friend,” said Aucassin, “it may not be that thou shouldst love me even as I love thee. Woman may not love man as man loves woman, for a woman’s love lies in the glance of her eye, and the bud of her breast, and her foot’s tip-toe, but the love of man is in his heart planted, whence it can never issue forth and pass away.”

Now while Aucassin and Nicolete held this parley together, the town’s guards came down a street, with swords drawn beneath their cloaks, for the Count Garin had charged them that if they could take her they should slay her. But the sentinel that was on the tower saw them coming, and heard them speaking of Nicolete as they went, and threatening to slay her.

“God!” quoth he, “this were great pity to slay so fair a maid! Right great charity it were if I could say aught to her, and they perceive it not, and she should be on her guard against them, for if they slay her, then were Aucassin, my damoiseau, dead, and that were great pity.”

Here one singeth:

Valiant was the sentinel,
Courteous, kind, and practised well,
So a song did sing and tell
Of the peril that befell.
“Maiden fair that lingerest here,
Gentle maid of merry cheer,
Hair of gold, and eyes as clear
As the water in a mere,
Thou, meseems, hast spoken word
To thy lover and thy lord,
That would die for thee, his dear;
Now beware the ill accord,
Of the cloaked men of the sword,
These have sworn and keep their word,
They will put thee to the sword

Save thou take heed!”

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

“Ha!” quoth Nicolete, “be the soul of thy father and the soul of thy mother in the rest of Paradise, so fairly and so courteously hast thou spoken me! Please God, I will be right ware of them, God keep me out of their hands.”

So she shrank under her mantle into the shadow of the pillar till they had passed by, and then took she farewell of Aucassin, and so fared till she came unto the castle wall. Now that wall was wasted and broken, and some deal mended, so she clomb thereon till she came between wall and fosse, and so looked down, and saw that the fosse was deep and steep, whereat she was sore adread.

“Ah God,” saith she, “sweet Saviour! If I let myself fall hence, I shall break my neck, and if here I abide, to-morrow they will take me and burn me in a fire. Yet liefer would I perish here than that to-morrow the folk should stare on me for a gazing-stock.”

Then she crossed herself, and so let herself slip into the fosse, and when she had come to the bottom, her fair feet, and fair hands that had not custom thereof, were bruised and frayed, and the blood springing from a dozen places, yet felt she no pain nor hurt, by reason of the great dread wherein she went. But if she were in cumber to win there, in worse was she to win out. But she deemed that there to abide was of none avail, and she found a pike sharpened, that they of the city had thrown out to keep the hold. Therewith made she one stepping place after another, till, with much travail, she climbed the wall. Now the forest lay within two crossbow shots, and the forest was of thirty leagues this way and that. Therein also were wild beasts, and beasts serpentine, and she feared that if she entered there they would slay her. But anon she deemed that if men found her there they would hale her back into the town to burn her.

Here one singeth:

Nicolete, the fair of face,

Climbed upon the coping stone,
There made she lament and moan
Calling on our Lord alone
For his mercy and his grace.

“Father, king of Majesty,
Listen, for I nothing know
Where to flee or whither go.
If within the wood I fare,
Lo, the wolves will slay me there,
Boars and lions terrible,
Many in the wild wood dwell,
But if I abide the day,
Surely worse will come of it,
Surely will the fire be lit
That shall burn my body away,
Jesus, lord of Majesty,
Better seemeth it to me,
That within the wood I fare,
Though the wolves devour me there
Than within the town to go,
  Ne’er be it so!”

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

Nicolete made great moan, as ye have heard; then commended she herself to God, and anon fared till she came unto the forest. But to go deep in it she dared not, by reason of the wild beasts, and beasts serpentine. Anon crept she into a little thicket, where sleep came upon her, and she slept till prime next day, when the shepherds issued forth from the town and drove their bestial between wood and water. Anon came they all into one place by a fair fountain which was on the fringe of the forest, thereby spread they a mantle, and thereon set bread. So while they were eating, Nicolete wakened, with the sound of the singing birds, and the shepherds, and she went unto them, saying, “Fair boys, our Lord keep you!”

“God bless thee,” quoth he that had more words to his tongue than the rest.

“Fair boys,” quoth she, “know ye Aucassin, the son of Count Garin de Biaucaire?”

“Yea, well we know him.”

“So may God help you, fair boys,” quoth she, “tell him there is a beast in this forest, and bid him come chase it, and if he can take it, he would not give one limb thereof for a hundred marks of gold, nay, nor for five hundred, nor for any ransom.”

Then looked they on her, and saw her so fair that they were all astonied.

“Will I tell him thereof?” quoth he that had more words to his tongue than the rest; “foul fall him who speaks of the thing or tells him the tidings. These are but visions ye tell of, for there is no beast so great in this forest, stag, nor lion, nor boar, that one of his limbs is worth more than two deniers, or three at the most, and ye speak of such great ransom. Foul fall him that believes your word, and him that telleth Aucassin. Ye be a Fairy, and we have none liking for your company, nay, hold on your road.”

“Nay, fair boys,” quoth she, “nay, ye will do my bidding. For this beast is so mighty of medicine that thereby will Aucassin be healed of his torment. And lo! I have five sols in my purse, take them, and tell him: for within three days must he come hunting it hither, and if within three days he find it not, never will he be healed of his torment.”

“My faith,” quoth he, “the money will we take, and if he come hither we will tell him, but seek him we will not.”

“In God’s name,” quoth she; and so took farewell of the shepherds, and went her way.

Here singeth one:

Nicolete the bright of brow
From the shepherds doth she pass
All below the blossomed bough
Where an ancient way there was,
Overgrown and choked with grass,
Till she found the cross-roads where
Seven paths do all way fare,
Then she deemeth she will try,
Should her lover pass thereby,
If he love her loyally.
So she gathered white lilies,
Oak-leaf, that in green wood is,
Leaves of many a branch I wis,
Therewith built a lodge of green,
Goodlier was never seen,
Swore by God who may not lie,
“If my love the lodge should spy,
He will rest awhile thereby
If he love me loyally.”
Thus his faith she deemed to try,
“Or I love him not, not I,
   Nor he loves me!”

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

Nicolete built her lodge of boughs, as ye have heard, right fair and feteously, and wove it well, within and without, of flowers and leaves. So lay she hard by the lodge in a deep coppice to know what Aucassin will do. And the cry and the bruit went abroad through all the country and all the land, that Nicolete was lost. Some told that she had fled, and some that the Count Garin had let slay her. Whosoever had joy thereof, no joy had Aucassin. And the Count Garin, his father, had taken him out of prison, and had sent for the knights of that land, and the ladies, and let make a right great feast, for the comforting of Aucassin his son. Now at the high time of the feast, was Aucassin leaning from a gallery, all woful and discomforted. Whatsoever men might devise of mirth, Aucassin had no joy thereof, nor no desire, for he saw not her that he loved. Then a knight looked on him, and came to him, and said:

“Aucassin, of that sickness of thine have I been sick, and good counsel will I give thee, if thou wilt hearken to me—”

“Sir,” said Aucassin, “gramercy, good counsel would I fain hear.”

“Mount thy horse,” quoth he, “and go take thy pastime in yonder forest, there wilt thou see the good flowers and grass, and hear the sweet birds sing. Perchance thou shalt hear some word, whereby thou shalt be the better.”

“Sir,” quoth Aucassin, “gramercy, that will I do.”

He passed out of the hall, and went down the stairs, and came to the stable where his horse was. He let saddle and bridle him, and mounted, and rode forth from the castle, and wandered till he came to the forest, so rode till he came to the fountain and found the shepherds at point of noon. And they had a mantle stretched on the grass, and were eating bread, and making great joy.

Here one singeth:

There were gathered shepherds all,
Martin, Esmeric, and Hal,
Aubrey, Robin, great and small.
Saith the one, “Good fellows all,
God keep Aucassin the fair,
And the maid with yellow hair,
Bright of brow and eyes of vair.
She that gave us gold to ware.
Cakes therewith to buy ye know,
Goodly knives and sheaths also.
Flutes to play, and pipes to blow,
   May God him heal!”

Here speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

When Aucassin heard the shepherds, anon he bethought him of Nicolete, his sweet lady he loved so well, and he deemed that she had passed thereby; then set he spurs to his horse, and so came to the shepherds.

“Fair boys, God be with you.”

“God bless you,” quoth he that had more words to his tongue than the rest.

“Fair boys,” quoth Aucassin, “say the song again that anon ye sang.”

“Say it we will not,” quoth he that had more words to his tongue than the rest, “foul fall him who will sing it again for you, fair sir!”

“Fair boys,” quoth Aucassin, “know ye me not?”

“Yea, we know well that you are Aucassin, out damoiseau, natheless we be not your men, but the Count’s.”

“Fair boys, yet sing it again, I pray you.”

“Hearken! by the Holy Heart,” quoth he, “wherefore should I sing for you, if it likes me not? Lo, there is no such rich man in this country, saving the body of Garin the Count, that dare drive forth my oxen, or my cows, or my sheep, if he finds them in his fields, or his corn, lest he lose his eyes for it, and wherefore should I sing for you, if it likes me not?”

“God be your aid, fair boys, sing it ye will, and take ye these ten sols I have here in a purse.”

“Sir, the money will we take, but never a note will I sing, for I have given my oath, but I will tell thee a plain tale, if thou wilt.”

“By God,” saith Aucassin, “I love a plain tale better than naught.”

“Sir, we were in this place, a little time agone, between prime and tierce, and were eating our bread by this fountain, even as now we do, and a maid came past, the fairest thing in the world, whereby we deemed that she should be a fay, and all the wood shone round about her. Anon she gave us of that she had, whereby we made covenant with her, that if ye came hither we would bid you hunt in this forest, wherein is such a beast that, an ye might take him, ye would not give one limb of him for five hundred marks of silver, nor for no ransom; for this beast is so mighty of medicine, that, an ye could take him, ye should be healed of your torment, and within three days must ye take him, and if ye take him not then, never will ye look on him. So chase ye the beast, an ye will, or an ye will let be, for my promise have I kept with her.”

“Fair boys,” quoth Aucassin, “ye have said enough. God grant me to find this quarry.”

Here one singeth:

Aucassin when he had heard,
Sore within his heart was stirred,
Left the shepherds on that word,
Far into the forest spurred
Rode into the wood; and fleet
Fled his horse through paths of it,
Three words spake he of his sweet,
“Nicolete the fair, the dear,
’Tis for thee I follow here
Track of boar, nor slot of deer,
But thy sweet body and eyes so clear,
All thy mirth and merry cheer,
That my very heart have slain,
So please God to me maintain
I shall see my love again,
   Sweet sister, friend!”

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

Aucassin fared through the forest from path to path after Nicolete, and his horse bare him furiously. Think ye not that the thorns him spared, nor the briars, nay, not so, but tare his raiment, that scarce a knot might be tied with the soundest part thereof, and the blood sprang from his arms, and flanks, and legs, in forty places, or thirty, so that behind the Childe men might follow on the track of his blood in the grass. But so much he went in thoughts of Nicolete, his lady sweet, that he felt no pain nor torment, and all the day hurled through the forest in this fashion nor heard no word of her. And when he saw Vespers draw nigh, he began to weep for that he found her not. All down an old road, and grassgrown he fared, when anon, looking along the way before him, he saw such an one as I shall tell you. Tall was he, and great of growth, laidly and marvellous to look upon: his head huge, and black as charcoal, and more than the breadth of a hand between his two eyes, and great cheeks, and a big nose and broad, big nostrils and ugly, and thick lips redder than a collop, and great teeth yellow and ugly, and he was shod with hosen and shoon of bull's hide, bound with cords of bark over the knee, and all about him a great cloak twy-fold, and he leaned on a grievous cudgel, and Aucassin came unto him, and was afraid when he beheld him.

"Fair brother, God aid thee."

"God bless you," quoth he.

"As God he helpeth thee, what makest thou here?"

"What is that to thee?"

"Nay, naught, naught," saith Aucassin, "I ask but out of courtesy."

"But for whom weepest thou," quoth he, "and makest such heavy lament? Certes, were I as rich a man as thou, the whole world should not make me weep."

"Ha! know ye me?" saith Aucassin.

“Yea, I know well that ye be Aucassin, the son of the Count, and if ye tell me for why ye weep, then will I tell you what I make here.”

“Certes,” quoth Aucassin, “I will tell you right gladly. Hither came I this morning to hunt in this forest; and with me a white hound, the fairest in the world; him have I lost, and for him I weep.”

“By the Heart our Lord bare in his breast,” quoth he, “are ye weeping for a stinking hound? Foul fall him that holds thee high henceforth! for there is no such rich man in the land, but if thy father asked it of him, he would give thee ten, or fifteen, or twenty, and be the gladder for it. But I have cause to weep and make dole.”

“Wherefore so, brother?”

“Sir, I will tell thee. I was hireling to a rich vilain, and drove his plough; four oxen had he. But three days since came on me great misadventure, whereby I lost the best of mine oxen, Roger, the best of my team. Him go I seeking, and have neither eaten nor drunken these three days, nor may I go to the town, lest they cast me into prison, seeing that I have not wherewithal to pay. Out of all the wealth of the world have I no more than ye see on my body. A poor mother bare me, that had no more but one wretched bed; this have they taken from under her, and she lies in the very straw. This ails me more than mine own case, for wealth comes and goes; if now I have lost, another tide will I gain, and will pay for mine ox whenas I may; never for that will I weep. But you weep for a stinking hound. Foul fall whoso thinks well of thee!”

“Certes thou art a good comforter, brother, blessed be thou! And of what price was thine ox?”

“Sir, they ask me twenty sols for him, whereof I cannot abate one doit.”

“Nay, then,” quoth Aucassin, “take these twenty sols I have in my purse, and pay for thine ox.”

“Sir,” saith he, “gramercy. And God give thee to find that thou seekest.”

So they parted each from other, and Aucassin rode on: the night was fair and still, and so long he went that he came to the lodge of boughs, that Nicolete had builded and woven within and without, over and under, with flowers, and it was the fairest lodge that might be seen. When Aucassin was ware of it, he stopped suddenly, and the light of the moon fell therein.

“God!” quoth Aucassin, “here was Nicolete, my sweet lady, and this lodge builded she with her fair hands. For the sweetness of it, and for love of her, will I alight, and rest here this night long.”

He drew forth his foot from the stirrup to alight, and the steed was great and tall. He dreamed so much on Nicolete his right sweet lady, that he slipped on a stone, and drave his shoulder out of his place. Then knew he that he was hurt sore, natheless he bore him with what force he might, and fastened with the other hand the mare’s son to a thorn. Then turned he on his side, and crept backwise into the lodge of boughs. And he looked through a gap in the lodge and saw the stars in heaven, and one that was brighter than the rest; so began he to say:

Here one singeth:

“Star, that I from far behold,
Star, the Moon calls to her fold,
Nicolete with thee doth dwell,
My sweet love with locks of gold,
God would have her dwell afar,
Dwell with him for evening star,
Would to God, whate’er befell,
Would that with her I might dwell.
I would clip her close and strait,
Nay, were I of much estate,
Some king’s son desirable,
Worthy she to be my mate,
Me to kiss and clip me well,
   Sister, sweet friend!”

So speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

When Nicolete heard Aucassin, right so came she unto him, for she was not far away. She passed within the lodge, and threw her arms about his neck, and clipped and kissed him.

“Fair sweet friend, welcome be thou.”

“And thou, fair sweet love, be thou welcome.”

So either kissed and clipped the other, and fair joy was them between.

“Ha! sweet love,” quoth Aucassin, “but now was I sore hurt, and my shoulder wried, but I take no force of it, nor have no hurt therefrom since I have thee.”

Right so felt she his shoulder and found it was wried from its place. And she so handled it with her white hands, and so wrought in her surgery, that by God’s will who loveth lovers, it went back into its place. Then took she flowers, and fresh grass, and leaves green, and bound these herbs on the hurt with a strip of her smock, and he was all healed.

“Aucassin,” saith she, “fair sweet love, take counsel what thou wilt do. If thy father let search this forest to-morrow, and men find me here, they will slay me, come to thee what will.”

“Certes, fair sweet love, therefore should I sorrow heavily, but, an if I may, never shall they take thee.”

Anon gat he on his horse, and his lady before him, kissing and clipping her, and so rode they at adventure.

Here one singeth:

Aucassin the frank, the fair,
Aucassin of the yellow hair,
Gentle knight, and true lover,
From the forest doth he fare,
Holds his love before him there,
Kissing cheek, and chin, and eyes,
But she spake in sober wise,
“Aucassin, true love and fair,
To what land do we repair?”
Sweet my love, I take no care,
Thou art with me everywhere!
So they pass the woods and downs,
Pass the villages and towns,
Hills and dales and open land,
Came at dawn to the sea sand,
Lighted down upon the strand,
   Beside the sea.

Then say they, speak they, tell they the Tale:

Aucassin lighted down and his love, as ye have heard sing. He held his horse by the bridle, and his lady by the hands; so went they along the sea shore, and on the sea they saw a ship, and he called unto the sailors, and they came to him. Then held he such speech with them, that he and his lady were brought aboard that ship, and when they were on the high sea, behold a mighty wind and tyrannous arose, marvellous and great, and drave them from land to land, till they came unto a strange country, and won the haven of the castle of Torelore. Then asked they what this land might be, and men told them that it was the country of the King of Torelore. Then he asked what manner of man was he, and was there war afoot, and men said,

“Yea, and mighty!”

Therewith took he farewell of the merchants, and they commended him to God. Anon Aucassin mounted his horse, with his sword girt, and his lady before him, and rode at adventure till he was come to the castle. Then asked he where the King was, and they said that he was in childbed.

"Then where is his wife?"

And they told him she was with the host, and had led with her all the force of that country.

Now when Aucassin heard that saying, he made great marvel, and came into the castle, and lighted down, he and his lady, and his lady held his horse. Right so went he up into the castle, with his sword girt, and fared hither and thither till he came to the chamber where the King was lying.

Here one singeth:

Aucassin the courteous knight
To the chamber went forthright,
To the bed with linen dight
Even where the King was laid.
There he stood by him and said:
"Fool, what mak'st thou here abed?"
Quoth the King: "I am brought to bed
Of a fair son, and anon
When my month is over and gone,
And my healing fairly done,
To the Minster will I fare
And will do my churching there,
As my father did repair.
Then will sally forth to war,
Then will drive my foes afar
   From my countrie!"

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

When Aucassin heard the King speak on this wise, he took all the sheets that covered him, and threw them all abroad about the chamber. Then saw he behind him a cudgel, and caught it into his hand, and turned, and took the King, and beat him till he was well-nigh dead.

“Ha! fair sir,” quoth the King, “what would you with me? Art thou beside thyself, that beatest me in mine own house?”

“By God’s heart,” quoth Aucassin, “thou ill son of an ill wench, I will slay thee if thou swear not that never shall any man in all thy land lie in of child henceforth for ever.”

So he did that oath, and when he had done it,

“Sir,” said Aucassin, “bring me now where thy wife is with the host.”

“Sir, with good will,” quoth the King.

He mounted his horse, and Aucassin gat on his own, and Nicolete abode in the Queen’s chamber. Anon rode Aucassin and the King even till they came to that place where the Queen was, and lo! men were warring with baked apples, and with eggs, and with fresh cheeses, and Aucassin began to look on them, and made great marvel.

Here one singeth:

Aucassin his horse doth stay,
From the saddle watched the fray,
All the stour and fierce array;
Right fresh cheeses carried they,
Apples baked, and mushrooms grey,
Whoso splasheth most the ford
He is master called and lord.
Aucassin doth gaze awhile,
Then began to laugh and smile
   And made game.

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

When Aucassin beheld these marvels, he came to the King, and said, “Sir, be these thine enemies?”

“Yea, Sir,” quoth the King.

“And will ye that I should avenge you of them?”

“Yea,” quoth he, “with all my heart.”

Then Aucassin put hand to sword, and hurled among them, and began to smite to the right hand and the left, and slew many of them. And when the King saw that he slew them, he caught at his bridle and said,

“Ha! fair sir, slay them not in such wise.”

“How,” quoth Aucassin, “will ye not that I should avenge you of them?”

“Sir,” quoth the King, “overmuch already hast thou avenged me. It is nowise our custom to slay each other.”

Anon turned they and fled. Then the King and Aucassin betook them again to the castle of Torelore, and the folk of that land counselled the King to put Aucassin forth, and keep Nicolete for his son’s wife, for that she seemed a lady high of lineage. And Nicolete heard them, and had no joy of it, so began to say:

Here singeth one:

Thus she spake the bright of brow:
“Lord of Torelore and king,
Thy folk deem me a light thing,
When my love doth me embrace,

Fair he finds me, in good case,
Then am I in such derray,
Neither harp, nor lyre, nor lay,
Dance nor game, nor rebeck play
   Were so sweet."

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

Aucassin dwelt in the castle of Torelore, in great ease and great delight, for that he had with him Nicolete his sweet love, whom he loved so well. Now while he was in such pleasure and such delight, came a troop of Saracens by sea, and laid siege to the castle and took it by main strength. Anon took they the substance that was therein and carried off the men and maidens captives. They seized Nicolete and Aucassin, and bound Aucassin hand and foot, and cast him into one ship, and Nicolete into another. Then rose there a mighty wind over sea, and scattered the ships. Now that ship wherein was Aucassin, went wandering on the sea, till it came to the castle of Biaucaire, and the folk of the country ran together to wreck her, and there found they Aucassin, and they knew him again. So when they of Biaucaire saw their damoiseau, they made great joy of him, for Aucassin had dwelt full three years in the castle of Torelore, and his father and mother were dead. So the people took him to the castle of Biaucaire, and there were they all his men. And he held the land in peace.

Here singeth one:

Lo ye, Aucassin hath gone
To Biaucaire that is his own,
Dwelleth there in joy and ease
And the kingdom is at peace.
Swears he by the Majesty
Of our Lord that is most high,
Rather would he they should die
All his kin and parentry,
So that Nicolete were nigh.
"Ah sweet love, and fair of brow,
I know not where to seek thee now,

God made never that countrie,
Not by land, and not by sea,
Where I would not search for thee,
   If that might be!”

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

Now leave we Aucassin, and speak we of Nicolete. The ship wherein she was cast pertained to the King of Carthage, and he was her father, and she had twelve brothers, all princes or kings. When they beheld Nicolete, how fair she was, they did her great worship, and made much joy of her, and many times asked her who she was, for surely seemed she a lady of noble line and high parentry. But she might not tell them of her lineage, for she was but a child when men stole her away. So sailed they till they won the City of Carthage, and when Nicolete saw the walls of the castle, and the country-side, she knew that there had she been nourished and thence stolen away, being but a child. Yet was she not so young a child but that well she knew she had been daughter of the King of Carthage; and of her nurture in that city.

Here singeth one:

Nicolete the good and true
To the land hath come anew,
Sees the palaces and walls,
And the houses and the halls!
Then she spake and said, “Alas!
That of birth so great I was,
Cousin of the Amiral
And the very child of him
Carthage counts King of Paynim,
Wild folk hold me here withal;
Nay Aucassin, love of thee
Gentle knight, and true, and free,
Burns and wastes the heart of me.
Ah God grant it of his grace,
That thou hold me, and embrace,

That thou kiss me on the face
   Love and lord!”

Then speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

When the King of Carthage heard Nicolete speak in this wise, he cast his arms about her neck.

“Fair sweet love,” saith he, “tell me who thou art, and be not adread of me.”

“Sir,” said she, “I am daughter to the King of Carthage, and was taken, being then a little child, it is now fifteen years gone.”

When all they of the court heard her speak thus, they knew well that she spake sooth: so made they great joy of her, and led her to the castle in great honour, as the King’s daughter. And they would have given her to her lord a King of Paynim, but she had no mind to marry. There dwelt she three days or four. And she considered by what means she might seek for Aucassin. Then she got her a viol, and learned to play on it, till they would have married her on a day to a great King of Paynim, and she stole forth by night, and came to the sea-port, and dwelt with a poor woman thereby. Then took she a certain herb, and therewith smeared her head and her face, till she was all brown and stained. And she let make coat, and mantle, and smock, and hose, and attired herself as if she had been a harper. So took she the viol and went to a mariner, and so wrought on him that he took her aboard his vessel. Then hoisted they sail, and fared on the high seas even till they came to the land of Provence. And Nicolete went forth and took the viol, and went playing through all that country, even till she came to the castle of Biaucaire, where Aucassin lay.

Here singeth one:

At Biaucaire below the tower
Sat Aucassin, on an hour,
Heard the bird, and watched the flower,
With his barons him beside,
Then came on him in that tide,

The sweet influence of love
And the memory thereof;
Thought of Nicolete the fair,
And the dainty face of her
He had loved so many years,
Then was he in dule and tears!
Even then came Nicolete
On the stair a foot she set,
And she drew the viol bow
Through the strings and chanted so;
“Listen, lords and knights, to me,
Lords of high or low degree,
To my story list will ye
All of Aucassin and her
That was Nicolete the fair?
And their love was long to tell
Deep woods through he sought her well,
Paynims took them on a day
In Torelore and bound they lay.
Of Aucassin nought know we,
But fair Nicolete the free
Now in Carthage doth she dwell,
There her father loves her well,
Who is king of that countrie.
Her a husband hath he found,
Paynim lord that serves Mahound!
Ne’er with him the maid will go,
For she loves a damoiseau,
Aucassin, that ye may know,
Swears to God that never mo
With a lover will she go
Save with him she loveth so
   In long desire.”

So speak they, say they, tell they the Tale:

When Aucassin heard Nicolete speak in this wise, he was right joyful, and drew her on one side, and spoke, saying:

"Sweet fair friend, know ye nothing of this Nicolete, of whom ye have thus sung?"

"Yea, Sir, I know her for the noblest creature, and the most gentle, and the best that ever was born on ground. She is daughter to the King of Carthage that took her there where Aucassin was taken, and brought her into the city of Carthage, till he knew that verily she was his own daughter, whereon he made right great mirth. Anon wished he to give her for her lord one of the greatest kings of all Spain, but she would rather let herself be hanged or burned, than take any lord, how great soever."

"Ha! fair sweet friend," quoth the Count Aucassin, "if thou wilt go into that land again, and bid her come and speak to me, I will give thee of my substance, more than thou wouldst dare to ask or take. And know ye, that for the sake of her, I have no will to take a wife, howsoever high her lineage. So wait I for her, and never will I have a wife, but her only. And if I knew where to find her, no need would I have to seek her."

"Sir," quoth she, "if ye promise me that, I will go in quest of her for your sake, and for hers, that I love much."

So he sware to her, and anon let give her twenty livres, and she departed from him, and he wept for the sweetness of Nicolete. And when she saw him weeping, she said:

"Sir, trouble not thyself so much withal. For in a little while shall I have brought her into this city, and ye shall see her."

When Aucassin heard that, he was right glad thereof. And she departed from him, and went into the city to the house of the Captain's wife, for the Captain her father in God was dead. So she dwelt there, and told all her tale; and the Captain's wife knew her, and knew well that she was Nicolete that she herself had nourished. Then she let wash and bathe her, and there rested she eight full days. Then took she an herb that was named *Eyebright* and anointed herself therewith, and was as fair as ever she had been all the days of her life. Then she clothed herself in rich robes of silk whereof the lady had great store, and then sat herself in the chamber on a silken coverlet, and called the lady and bade her go and bring Aucassin her love, and she did even so. And when she came to the Palace she found Aucassin weeping, and making lament for Nicolete his love, for that she delayed so long. And the lady spake unto him and said:

“Aucassin, sorrow no more, but come thou on with me, and I will shew thee the thing in the world that thou lovest best; even Nicolete thy dear love, who from far lands hath come to seek of thee.” And Aucassin was right glad.

Here singeth one:

When Aucassin heareth now
That his lady bright of brow
Dwelleth in his own countrie,
Never man was glad as he.
To her castle doth he hie
With the lady speedily,
Passeth to the chamber high,
Findeth Nicolete thereby.
Of her true love found again
Never maid was half so fain.
Straight she leaped upon her feet:
When his love he saw at last,
Arms about her did he cast,
Kissed her often, kissed her sweet
Kissed her lips and brows and eyes.
Thus all night do they devise,
Even till the morning white.
Then Aucassin wedded her,
Made her Lady of Biaucaire.
Many years abode they there,
Many years in shade or sun,
In great gladness and delight
Ne’er hath Aucassin regret
Nor his lady Nicolete.

Now my story all is done,
   Said and sung!

A COLLECTION OF BALLADS

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Ballad: Sir Roland
Ballad: Rose The Red And White Lily
Ballad: The Battle Of Harlaw — Evergreen Version
Ballad: Traditionary Version
Ballad: Dickie Macphalion
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Ballad: The Laird Of Waristoun
Ballad: May Colven
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Ballad: Robin Hood And The Potter
Ballad: Robin Hood And The Butcher

INTRODUCTION

When the learned first gave serious attention to popular ballads, from the time of Percy to that of Scott, they laboured under certain disabilities. The Comparative Method was scarcely understood, and was little practised. Editors were content to study the ballads of their own countryside, or, at most, of Great Britain. Teutonic and Northern parallels to our ballads were then adduced, as by Scott and Jamieson. It was later that the ballads of Europe, from the Faroes to Modern Greece, were compared with our own, with European *Märchen*, or children's tales, and with the popular songs, dances, and traditions of classical and savage peoples. The results of this more recent comparison may be briefly stated. Poetry begins, as Aristotle says, in improvisation. Every man is his own poet, and, in moments of stronge motion, expresses himself in song. A typical example is the Song of Lamech in Genesis —

"I have slain a man to my wounding,
And a young man to my hurt."

Instances perpetually occur in the Sagas: Grettir, Egil, Skarphedin, are always singing. In *Kidnapped*, Mr. Stevenson introduces "The Song of the Sword of Alan," a fine example of Celtic practice: words and air are beaten out together, in the heat of victory. In the same way, the women sang improvised dirges, like Helen; lullabies, like the lullaby of Danae in Simonides, and flower songs, as in modern Italy. Every function of life, war, agriculture, the chase, had its appropriate magical and mimetic dance and song, as in Finland, among Red Indians, and among Australian blacks. "The deeds of men" were chanted by heroes, as by Achilles; stories were told in alternate verse and prose; girls, like Homer's Nausicaa, accompanied dance and ball play, priests and medicine-men accompanied rites and magical ceremonies by songs.

These practices are world-wide, and world-old. The thoroughly popular songs, thus evolved, became the rude material of a professional class of minstrels, when these arose, as in the heroic age of Greece. A minstrel might be attached to a Court, or a noble; or he might go wandering with song and harp among the people. In either case, this class of men developed more regular and ample measures. They evolved the hexameter; the *laisse* of the *Chansons de Geste*; the strange technicalities of Scandinavian poetry; the metres of Vedic hymns; the choral odes of Greece. The narrative popular chant became in their hands the Epic, or the mediaeval rhymed romance. The metre of improvised verse changed into the artistic lyric. These lyric forms were fixed, in many cases, by the art of writing. But poetry did not remain solely in professional and literary hands. The mediaeval minstrels and *jongleurs* (who may best be studied in Léon Gautier's Introduction to his *Epopées Françaises*) sang in Court and Camp. The poorer, less regular brethren of the art, harped and played conjuring tricks, in farm and grange, or at street corners. The foreign newer metres took the place of the old alliterative English verse. But unprofessional men and women did not cease to make and sing.

Some writers have decided, among them Mr. Courthope, that our traditional ballads are degraded popular survivals of literary poetry. The plots and situations of some ballads are, indeed, the same as those of some literary mediaeval romances. But these plots and situations, in Epic and Romance, are themselves the final literary form of *märchen*, myths and inventions originally *popular*, and still, in certain cases, extant in popular form among races which have not yet evolved, or borrowed, the ampler and more polished and complex *genres* of literature. Thus, when a literary romance and a ballad have the same theme, the ballad may be a popular degradation of the romance; or, it may be the original popular shape of it, still surviving in tradition. A well-known case in prose, is that of the French fairy tales.

Perrault, in 1697, borrowed these from tradition and gave them literary and courtly shape. But *Cendrillon* or *Chaperon Rouge* in the mouth of a French peasant, is apt to be the old traditional version, uncontaminated by the refinements of Perrault, despite Perrault's immense success and circulation. Thus tradition preserves pre-literary forms, even though, on occasion, it may borrow from literature. Peasant poets have been authors of ballads, without being, for all that, professional minstrels. Many such poems survive in our ballad literature.

The material of the ballad may be either romantic or historical. The former class is based on one of the primeval invented situations, one of the elements of the *Märchen* in prose. Such tales or myths occur in the stories of savages, in the legends of peasants, are interwoven later with the plot in Epic or Romance, and may also inspire ballads. Popular superstitions, the witch, metamorphosis, the returning ghost, the fairy, all of them survivals of the earliest thought, naturally play a great part. The Historical ballad, on the other hand, has a basis of resounding fact, murder, battle, or fire-raising, but the facts, being derived from popular rumour, are immediately corrupted and distorted, sometimes out of all knowledge. Good examples are the ballads on Darnley's murder and the youth of James VI.

In the romantic class, we may take *Tamlane*. Here the idea of fairies stealing children is thoroughly popular; they also steal young men as lovers, and again, men may win fairy brides, by clinging to them through all transformations. A classical example is the seizure of Thetis by Peleus, and Child quotes a modern Cretan example. The dipping in milk and water, I may add, has precedent in ancient Egypt (in *The Two Brothers*), and in modern Senegambia. The fairy tax, tithe, or teind, paid to Hell, is illustrated by old trials for witchcraft, in Scotland. Now, in literary forms and romance, as in *Ogier le Danois*, persons are carried away by the Fairy King or Queen. But here the literary romance borrows from popular superstition; the ballad has no need to borrow a familiar fact from literary romance. On the whole subject the curious may consult "The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns, and Fairies," by the Reverend Robert Kirk of Aberfoyle, himself, according to tradition, a victim of the fairies.

Thus, in *Tamlane*, the whole *donnée* is popular. But the current version, that of Scott, is contaminated, as Scott knew, by incongruous modernisms. Burns's version, from tradition, already localizes the events at Carterhaugh, the junction of Ettrick and Yarrow. But Burns's version does not make the Earl of Murray father of the hero, nor the Earl of March father of the heroine. Roxburgh is the hero's father in Burns's variant, which is more plausible, and the modern verses do not occur. This ballad apparently owes nothing to literary romance.

In *Mary Hamilton* we have a notable instance of the Historical Ballad. No Marie of Mary Stuart's suffered death for child murder.

She had no Marie Hamilton, no Marie Carmichael among her four Maries, though a lady of the latter name was at her court. But early in the reign a Frenchwoman of the queen's was hanged, with her paramour, an apothecary, for slaying her infant. Knox mentions the fact, which is also recorded in letters from the English ambassador, uncited by Mr. Child. Knox adds that there were ballads against the Maries. Now, in March 1719, a Mary Hamilton, of Scots descent, a maid of honour of Catherine of Russia, was hanged for child murder (*Child*, vi. 383). It has therefore been supposed, first by Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe long ago, later by Professor Child, and then by Mr. Courthope, that our ballad is of 1719, or later, and deals with the Russian, not the Scotch, tragedy.

To this we may reply (1) that we have no example of such a throwing back of a contemporary event, in ballads. (2) There is a version (*Child*, viii. 507) in which Mary Hamilton's paramour is a "pottinger," or apothecary, as in the real old Scotch affair. (3) The number of variants of a ballad is likely to be proportionate to its antiquity and wide distribution. Now only *Sir Patrick Spens* has so many widely different variants as *Mary Hamilton*. These could hardly have been evolved between 1719 and 1790, when Burns quotes the poem as an old ballad. (4) We have no example of a poem so much in the old ballad manner, for perhaps a hundred and fifty years before 1719. The style first degraded and then expired: compare *Rob Roy* and *Killiecrankie*, in this collection, also the ballads of *Loudoun Hill*, *The Battle of Philiphaugh*, and others much earlier than 1719. New styles of popular poetry on contemporary events as *Sherriffmuir* and *Tranent Brae* had arisen. (5) The extreme historic inaccuracy of *Mary Hamilton* is paralleled by that of all the ballads on real events. The mention of the Pottinger is a trace of real history which has no parallel in the Russian affair, and there is no room, says Professor Child, for the supposition that it was voluntarily inserted by reciter or copyist, to tally with the narrative in Knox's History.

On the other side, we have the name of Mary Hamilton occurring in a tragic event of 1719, but then the name does not uniformly appear in the variants of the ballad. The lady is there spoken of generally as Mary Hamilton, but also as Mary Myle, Lady Maisry, as daughter of the Duke of York (Stuart), as Marie Mild, and so forth. Though she bids sailors carry the tale of her doom, she is not abroad, but in Edinburgh town. Nothing can be less probable than that a Scots popular ballad-maker in 1719, telling the tale of a yesterday's tragedy in Russia, should throw the time back by a hundred and fifty years, should change the scene to Scotland (the heart of the sorrow would be Mary's exile), and, above all, should compose a ballad in a style long obsolete. This is not the method of the popular poet, and such imitations of the old ballad as *Hardyknute* show that literary poets of 1719 had not knowledge or skill enough to mimic the antique manner with any success.

We may, therefore, even in face of Professor Child, regard *Mary Hamilton* as an old example of popular perversion of history in ballad, not as "one of the very latest," and also "one of the very best" of Scottish popular ballads.

Rob Roy shows the same power of perversion. It was not Rob Roy but his sons, Robin Oig (who shot Maclaren at the plough-tail), and James Mohr (alternately the spy, the Jacobite, and the Hanoverian spy once more), who carried off the heiress of Edenbelly. Indeed a kind of added epilogue, in a different measure, proves that a poet was aware of the facts, and wished to correct his predecessor.

Such then are ballads, in relation to legend and history. They are, on the whole, with exceptions, absolutely popular in origin, composed by men of the people for the people, and then diffused among and altered by popular reciters. In England they soon won their way into printed stall copies, and were grievously handled and moralized by the hack editors.

No ballad has a stranger history than *The Loving Ballad of Lord Bateman*, illustrated by the pencils of Cruikshank and Thackeray. Their form is a ludicrous cockney perversion, but it retains the essence. Bateman, a captive of "this Turk," is beloved by the Turk's daughter (a staple incident of old French romance), and by her released. The lady after seven years rejoins Lord Bateman: he has just married a local bride, but "orders another marriage," and sends home his bride "in a coach and three." This incident is stereotyped in the ballads and occurs in an example in the Romaic.

Now Lord Bateman is *Young Bekie* in the Scotch ballads, who becomes *Young Beichan*, *Young Bichem*, and so forth, and has adventures identical with those of Lord Bateman, though the proud porter in the Scots version is scarcely so prominent and illustrious. As Motherwell saw, Bekie (Beichan, Buchan, Bateman) is really Becket, Gilbert Becket, father of Thomas of Canterbury. Every one has heard how *his* Saracen bride sought him in London. (Robert of Gloucester's *Life and Martyrdom of Thomas Becket*, Percy Society. See Child's Introduction, IV., i. 1861, and *Motherwell's Minstrelsy*, p. xv., 1827.) The legend of the dissolved marriage is from the common stock of ballad lore, Motherwell found an example in the state of *Cantefable*, alternate prose and verse, like *Aucassin and Nicolette*. Thus the cockney rhyme descends from the twelfth century.

Such are a few of the curiosities of the ballad. The examples selected are chiefly chosen for their romantic charm, and for the spirit of the Border raids which they record. A few notes are added in an appendix. The text is chosen from among the many variants in Child's learned but still unfinished collection, and an effort has been made to choose the copies which contain most poetry with most signs of uncontaminated originality. In a few cases Sir Walter Scott's versions, though confessedly "made up," are preferred. Perhaps the editor may be allowed to say that he does not merely plough with Professor Child's heifer, but has made a study of ballads from his boyhood.

This fact may exempt him, even in the eyes of too patriotic American critics, from "the common blame of a plagiary." Indeed, as Professor Child has not yet published his general theory of the Ballad, the editor does not know whether he agrees with the ideas here set forth.

So far the Editor had written, when news came of Professor Child's regretted death. He had lived to finish, it is said, the vast collection of all known traditional Scottish and English Ballads, with all accessible variants, a work of great labour and research, and a distinguished honour to American scholarship. We are not told, however, that he had written a general study of the topic, with his conclusions as to the evolution and diffusion of the Ballads: as to the influences which directed the selection of certain themes of *Märchen* for poetic treatment, and the processes by which identical ballads were distributed throughout Europe. No one, it is to be feared, is left, in Europe at least, whose knowledge of the subject is so wide and scientific as that of Professor Child. It is to be hoped that some pupil of his may complete the task in his sense, if, indeed, he has left it unfinished.

Ballad: Sir Patrick Spens

(Border Minstrelsy.)

The king sits in Dunfermline town,
Drinking the blude-red wine o:
“O whare will I get a skeely skipper
To sail this new ship of mine o?”

O up and spake an eldern-knight,
Sat at the king’s right knee:
“Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor
That ever saild the sea.”

Our king has written a braid letter,
And seald it with his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the strand.

“To Noroway, to Noroway,
To Noroway oer the faem;
The king’s daughter of Noroway,
’Tis thou maun bring her hame.”

The first word that Sir Patrick read,
Sae loud, loud laughed he;
The neist word that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his ee.

“O wha is this has done this deed,
And tauld the king o me,
To send us out, at this time of the year,
To sail upon the sea?”

“Be it wind, be it weet, be it hall, be it sleet,
Our ship must sail the faem;
The king’s daughter of Noroway,
’Tis we must fetch her hame.”

They hoysed their sails on Monenday morn,
Wi’ a’ the speed they may;
They hae landed in Noroway,
Upon a Wodensday.

They hadna been a week, a week
In Noroway but twae,
When that the lords o Noroway
Began aloud to say:

“Ye Scottishmen spend a’ our king’s goud,
And a’ our queenis fee.”
“Ye lie, ye lie, ye liars loud!
Fu’ loud I hear ye lie!

“For I brought as much white monie
As gane my men and me,
And I brought a half-fou’ o’ gude red goud,
Out o’er the sea wi’ me.

“Make ready, make ready, my merry-men a’!
Our gude ship sails the morn.”
“Now ever alake, my master dear,
I fear a deadly storm!

I saw the new moon, late yestreen,
Wi’ the auld moon in her arm;
And if we gang to sea, master,
I fear we’ll come to harm.”

They hadna sail’d a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When the lift grew dark, and the wind blew loud,
And gurly grew the sea.

The ankers brak, and the top-masts lap,
It was sic a deadly storm;
And the waves cam o’er the broken ship,
Till a’ her sides were torn.

“O where will I get a gude sailor,
To take my helm in hand,
Till I get up to the tall top-mast;
To see if I can spy land?”

“O here am I, a sailor gude,
To take the helm in hand,
Till you go up to the tall top-mast
But I fear you’ll ne’er spy land.”

He hadna gane a step, a step,
A step but barely ane,
When a bout flew out of our goodly ship,
And the salt sea it came in.

“Gae, fetch a web o’ the silken claith,
Another o’ the twine,
And wap them into our ship’s side,
And let na the sea come in.”

They fetchd a web o the silken claith,
Another o the twine,
And they wapped them roun that gude ship’s side
But still the sea came in.

O laith, laith, were our gude Scots lords
To weet their cork-heel'd shoon!
But lang or a the play was play'd
They wat their hats aboon,

And mony was the feather-bed
That fluttered on the faem,
And mony was the gude lord's son
That never mair cam hame.

The ladyes wrang their fingers white,
The maidens tore their hair,
A' for the sake of their true loves,
For them they'll see na mair.

O lang, lang may the ladyes sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Before they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the strand!

And lang, lang may the maidens sit,
Wi' their goud kaims in their hair,
A' waiting for their ain dear loves!
For them they'll see na mair.

O forty miles off Aberdeen,
'Tis fifty fathoms deep,
And there lies gude Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

Ballad: Battle Of Otterbourne

(Child, vol. vi.)

It fell about the Lammas tide,
When the muir-men win their hay,
The doughty Douglas bound him to ride
Into England, to drive a prey.

He chose the Gordons and the Graemes,
With them the Lindesays, light and gay;
But the Jardines wald nor with him ride,
And they rue it to this day.

And he has burn’d the dales of Tyne,
And part of Bambrough shire:
And three good towers on Reidswire fells,
He left them all on fire.

And he march’d up to Newcastle,
And rode it round about:
“O wha’s the lord of this castle?
Or wha’s the lady o’t ?”

But up spake proud Lord Percy then,
And O but he spake hie!
“I am the lord of this castle,
My wife’s the lady gaye.”

“If thou’rt the lord of this castle,
Sae weel it pleases me!
For, ere I cross the Border fells,

The tane of us sall die."

He took a lang spear in his hand,
Shod with the metal free,
And for to meet the Douglas there,
He rode right furiouslie.

But O how pale his lady look'd,
Frae aff the castle wa',
When down, before the Scottish spear,
She saw proud Percy fa'.

"Had we twa been upon the green,
And never an eye to see,
I wad hae had you, flesh and fell;
But your sword sall gae wi' mee."

"But gae ye up to Otterbourne,
And wait there dayis three;
And, if I come not ere three dayis end,
A fause knight ca' ye me."

"The Otterbourne's a bonnie burn;
'Tis pleasant there to be;
But there is nought at Otterbourne,
To feed my men and me.

"The deer rins wild on hill and dale,
The birds fly wild from tree to tree;
But there is neither bread nor kale,
To feed my men and me.

"Yet I will stay it Otterbourne,
Where you shall welcome be;

And, if ye come not at three dayis end,
A fause lord I'll ca' thee."

"Thither will I come," proud Percy said,
"By the might of Our Ladye!" —
"There will I bide thee," said the Douglas,
"My troth I plight to thee."

They lighted high on Otterbourne,
Upon the bent sae brown;
They lighted high on Otterbourne,
And threw their pallions down.

And he that had a bonnie boy,
Sent out his horse to grass,
And he that had not a bonnie boy,
His ain servant he was.

But up then spake a little page,
Before the peep of dawn:
"O waken ye, waken ye, my good lord,
For Percy's hard at hand."

"Ye lie, ye lie, ye liar loud!
Sae loud I hear ye lie;
For Percy had not men yestreen,
To dight my men and me.

"But I have dream'd a dreary dream,
Beyond the Isle of Sky;
I saw a dead man win a fight,
And I think that man was I."

He belted on his guid braid sword,
And to the field he ran;

But he forgot the helmet good,
That should have kept his brain.

When Percy wi the Douglas met,
I wat he was fu fain!
They swakked their swords, till sair they swat,
And the blood ran down like rain.

But Percy with his good broad sword,
That could so sharply wound,
Has wounded Douglas on the brow,
Till he fell to the ground.

Then he calld on his little foot-page,
And said— “Run speedilie,
And fetch my ain dear sister’s son,
Sir Hugh Montgomery.

“My nephew good,” the Douglas said,
“What recks the death of ane!
Last night I dreamd a dreary dream,
And I ken the day’s thy ain.

“My wound is deep; I fain would sleep;
Take thou the vanguard of the three,
And hide me by the braken bush,
That grows on yonder lilye lee.

“O bury me by the braken-bush,
Beneath the blooming brier;
Let never living mortal ken
That ere a kindly Scot lies here.”

He lifted up that noble lord,

Wi the saut tear in his e’e;
He hid him in the braken bush,
That his merrie men might not see.

The moon was clear, the day drew near,
The spears in flinders flew,
But mony a gallant Englishman
Ere day the Scotsmen slew.

The Gordons good, in English blood,
They steepd their hose and shoon;
The Lindesays flew like fire about,
Till all the fray was done.

The Percy and Montgomery met,
That either of other were fain;
They swapped swords, and they twa swat,
And aye the blood ran down between.

“Yield thee, now yield thee, Percy,” he said,
“Or else I vow I’ll lay thee low!”
“To whom must I yield,” quoth Earl Percy,
“Now that I see it must be so ?”

“Thou shalt not yield to lord nor loun,
Nor yet shalt thou yield to me;
But yield thee to the braken-bush,
That grows upon yon lilye lee!”

“I will not yield to a braken-bush,
Nor yet will I yield to a brier;
But I would yield to Earl Douglas,
Or Sir Hugh the Montgomery, if he were here.”

As soon as he knew it was Montgomery,
He stuck his sword’s point in the gronde;
The Montgomery was a courteous knight,
And quickly took him by the honde.

This deed was done at Otterbourne,
About the breaking of the day;
Earl Douglas was buried at the braken bush,
And the Percy led captive away.

Ballad: Tam Lin

(Child, Part II., p. 340, Burns's Version.)

O I forbid you, maidens a',
That wear gowd on your hair,
To come or gae by Carterhaugh,
For young Tam Lin is there.

There's nane that gaes by Carterhaugh
But they leave him a wad,
Either their rings, or green mantles,
Or else their maidenhead.

Janet has kilted her green kirtle
A little aboon her knee,
And she has braided her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree,
And she's awa' to Carterhaugh,
As fast as she can hie.

When she came to Carterhaugh
Tam Lin was at the well,
And there she fand his steed standing,
But away was himsel.

She had na pu'd a double rose,
A rose but only twa,
Till up then started young Tam Lin,
Says, "Lady, thou's pu nae mae.

"Why pu's thou the rose, Janet,

And why breaks thou the wand?
Or why comes thou to Carterhaugh
Withoutten my command?”

“Carterhaugh, it is my ain,
My daddie gave it me;
I’ll come and gang by Carterhaugh,
And ask nae leave at thee.”

*

Janet has kilted her green kirtle
A little aboon her knee,
And she has snooded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree,
And she is to her father’s ha,
As fast as she can hie.

Four and twenty ladies fair
Were playing at the ba,
And out then cam the fair Janet,
Ance the flower amang them a’.

Four and twenty ladies fair
Were playing at the chess,
And out then cam the fair Janet,
As green as onie grass.

Out then spak an auld grey knight,
Lay oer the castle wa,
And says, “Alas, fair Janet, for thee
But we’ll be blamed a’.”

“Haud your tongue, ye auld-fac’d knight,
Some ill death may ye die!

Father my bairn on whom I will,
I'll father nane on thee."

Out then spak her father dear,
And he spak meek and mild;
"And ever alas, sweet Janet," he says.
"I think thou gaes wi child."

"If that I gae wi' child, father,
Mysel maun bear the blame;
There's neer a laird about your ha
Shall get the bairn's name.

"If my love were an earthly knight,
As he's an elfin grey,
I wad na gie my ain true-love
For nae lord that ye hae.

"The steed that my true-love rides on
Is lighter than the wind;
Wi siller he is shod before
Wi burning gowd behind."

Janet has kilted her green kirtle
A little aboon her knee,
And she has snooded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree,
And she's awa' to Carterhaugh,
As fast as she can hie.

When she cam to Carterhaugh,
Tam Lin was at the well,
And there she fand his steed standing,
But away was himsel.

She had na pu’d a double rose,
A rose but only twa,
Till up then started young Tam Lin,
Says, “Lady, thou pu’s nae mae.

“Why pu’s thou the rose, Janet,
Amang the groves sae green,
And a’ to kill the bonie babe
That we gat us between?”

“O tell me, tell me, Tam Lin,” she says,
“For’s sake that died on tree,
If eer ye was in holy chapel,
Or christendom did see?”

“Roxbrugh he was my grandfather,
Took me with him to bide,
And ance it fell upon a day
That wae did me betide.

“And ance it fell upon a day,
A cauld day and a snell,
When we were frae the hunting come,
That frae my horse I fell;
The Queen o Fairies she caught me,
In yon green hill to dwell.

“And pleasant is the fairy land,
But, an eerie tale to tell,
Ay at the end of seven years
We pay a tiend to hell;
I am sae fair and fu’ o flesh
I’m feared it be mysel.

“But the night is Halloween, lady,
The morn is Hallowday;
Then win me, win me, an ye will,
For weel I wat ye may.

“Just at the mirk and midnight hour
The fairy folk will ride,
And they that wad their true love win,
At Miles Cross they maun bide.”

“But how shall I thee ken, Tam Lin,
Or how my true-love know,
Amang sae mony unco knights
The like I never saw?”

“O first let pass the black, lady,
And syne let pass the brown,
But quickly run to the milk-white steed,
Pu ye his rider down.

“For I’ll ride on the milk-white steed,
And ay nearest the town;
Because I was an earthly knight
They gie me that renown.

“My right hand will be gloyd, lady,
My left hand will be bare,
Cockt up shall my bonnet be,
And kaimd down shall my hair;
And thae’s the takens I gie thee,
Nae doubt I will be there.

“They’ll turn me in your arms, lady,
Into an esk and adder;

But hold me fast, and fear me not,
I am your bairn’s father.

“They’ll turn me to a bear sae grim,
And then a lion bold;
But hold me fast, and fear me not,
As ye shall love your child.

“Again they’ll turn me in your arms
To a red het gaud of airn;
But hold me fast, and fear me not,
I’ll do to you nae harm.

“And last they’ll turn me in your arms
Into the burning gleed;
Then throw me into well water,
O throw me in wi speed.

“And then I’ll be your ain true-love,
I’ll turn a naked knight;
Then cover me wi your green mantle,
And cover me out o sight.”

Gloomy, gloomy was the night,
And eerie was the way,
As fair Jenny in her green mantle
To Miles Cross she did gae.

About the middle o’ the night
She heard the bridles ring;
This lady was as glad at that
As any earthly thing.

First she let the black pass by,

And syne she let the brown;
But quickly she ran to the milk-white steed,
And pu’d the rider down,

Sae weel she minded whae he did say,
And young Tam Lin did win;
Syne coverd him wi her green mantle,
As blythe’s a bird in spring.

Out then spak the Queen o Fairies,
Out of a bush o broom:
“Them that has gotten young Tam Lin
Has gotten a stately groom.”

Out then spak the Queen o Fairies,
And an angry woman was she;
“Shame betide her ill-far’d face,
And an ill death may she die,
For she’s taen awa the bonniest knight
In a’ my companie.

“But had I kend, Tam Lin,” she says,
“What now this night I see,
I wad hae taen out thy twa grey e’en,
And put in twa een o tree.”

Ballad: Thomas The Rhymer

(Child, Part II., p. 317.)

True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank;
A ferlie he spied wi’ his ee;
And there he saw a lady bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Her skirt was o the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o the velvet fyne,
At ilka tett of her horse’s mane
Hang fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas he pulld aff his cap,
And louted low down to his knee:
“All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heaven!
For thy peer on earth I never did see.”

“O no, O no, Thomas,” she said,
“That name does not belang to me;
I am but the queen of fair Elfland,
That am hither come to visit thee.

“Harp and carp, Thomas,” she said,
“Harp and carp, along wi’ me,
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your bodie I will be!”

“Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird sall never daunton me;
Syne he has kissed her rosy lips,

All underneath the Eildon Tree.

“Now, ye maun go wi me,” she said,
“True Thomas, ye maun go wi me,
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Thro weal or woe as may chance to be.”

She mounted on her milk-white steed,
She’s taen True Thomas up behind,
And aye wheneer her bride rung,
The steed flew swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on —
The steed gaed swifter than the wind —
Until they reached a desart wide,
And living land was left behind.

“Light down, light down, now, True Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee;
Abide and rest a little space,
And I will shew you ferlies three.

“O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorns and briers?
That is the path of righteousness,
Tho after it but few enquires.

“And see ye not that braid braid road,
That lies across that lily leven?
That is the path of wickedness,
Tho some call it the road to heaven.

“And see not ye that bonny road,
That winds about the fernie brae?

That is the road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night maun gae.

“But, Thomas, ye maun hold your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see,
For, if you speak word in Elflyn land,
Ye’ll neer get back to your ain countrie.”

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded thro rivers aboon the knee,
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk mirk night, and there was nae stern light,
And they waded thro red blude to the knee;
For a’ the blude that’s shed an earth
Rins thro the springs o that countrie.

Syne they came on to a garden green,
And she pu’d an apple frae a tree:
“Take this for thy wages, True Thomas,
It will give the tongue that can never lie.”

“My tongue is mine ain,” True Thomas said,
“A gudely gift ye wad gie me!
I neither dought to buy nor sell,
At fair or tryst where I may be.

“I dought neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace from fair ladye:”
“Now hold thy peace,” the lady said,
“For as I say, so must it be.”

He has gotten a coat of the even cloth,
And a pair of shoes of velvet green,

And till seven years were gane and past
True Thomas on earth was never seen.

Ballad: “Sir Hugh; Or The Jew’s Daughter”

(Child, vol. v.)

Four-and-twenty bonny boys
Were playing at the ba,
And by it came him sweet Sir Hugh,
And he playd o’er them a’.

He kickd the ba with his right foot
And catchd it wi his knee,
And throuch-and-thro the Jew’s window
He gard the bonny ba flee.

He’s doen him to the Jew’s castell
And walkd it round about;
And there he saw the Jew’s daughter,
At the window looking out.

“Throw down the ba, ye Jew’s daughter,
Throw down the ba to me!”
“Never a bit,” says the Jew’s daughter,
“Till up to me come ye.”

“How will I come up? How can I come up?
How can I come to thee?
For as ye did to my auld father,
The same ye’ll do to me.”

She’s gane till her father’s garden,
And pu’d an apple red and green;
’Twas a’ to wyle him sweet Sir Hugh,

And to entice him in.

She’s led him in through ae dark door,
And sae has she thro nine;
She’s laid him on a dressing-table,
And stickit him like a swine.

And first came out the thick, thick blood,
And syne came out the thin;
And syne came out the bonny heart’s blood;
There was nae mair within.

She’s rowd him in a cake o lead,
Bade him lie still and sleep;
She’s thrown him in Our Lady’s draw-well,
Was fifty fathom deep.

When bells were rung, and mass was sung,
And a’ the bairns came hame,
When every lady gat hame her son,
The Lady Maisry gat nane.

She’s taen her mantle her about,
Her coffer by the hand,
And she’s gane out to seek her son,
And wandered o’er the land.

She’s doen her to the Jew’s castell,
Where a’ were fast asleep:
“Gin ye be there, my sweet Sir Hugh,
I pray you to me speak.”

“Gae hame, gae hame, my mither dear,
Prepare my winding-sheet,

And at the back o merry Lincoln
The morn I will you meet.”

Now Lady Maisry is gane hame,
Make him a winding-sheet,
And at the back o merry Lincoln,
The dead corpse did her meet.

And a the bells o merry Lincoln
Without men’s hands were rung,
And a’ the books o merry Lincoln
Were read without man’s tongue,
And neer was such a burial
Sin Adam’s days begun.

Ballad: Son Davie! Son Davie!

(Mackay.)

“What bluid’s that on thy coat lap?
Son Davie! Son Davie!
What bluid’s that on thy coat lap?
And the truth come tell to me, O.”

“It is the bluid of my great hawk,
Mother lady, Mother lady!
It is the bluid of my great hawk,
And the truth I hae tald to thee, O.”

“Hawk’s bluid was ne’er sae red,
Son Davie! Son Davie!
Hawk’s bluid was ne’er sae red,
And the truth come tell to me, O.”

“It is the bluid of my grey hound,
Mother lady! Mother lady!
It is the bluid of my grey hound,
And it wudna rin for me, O.”

“Hound’s bluid was ne’er sae red,
Son Davie! Son Davie!
Hound’s bluid was ne’er sae red,
And the truth come tell to me, O.”

“It is the bluid o’ my brother John,
Mother lady! Mother lady!
It is the bluid o’ my brother John,
And the truth I hae tald to thee, O.”

“What about did the plea begin?
Son Davie! Son Davie!”
“It began about the cutting o’ a willow wand,
That would never hae been a tree, O.”

“What death dost thou desire to die?
Son Davie! Son Davie!
What death dost thou desire to die?
And the truth come tell to me, O.”

“I’ll set my foot in a bottomless ship,
Mother lady! mother lady!
I’ll set my foot in a bottomless ship,
And ye’ll never see mair o’ me, O.”

“What wilt thou leave to thy poor wife?
Son Davie! Son Davie!”
“Grief and sorrow all her life,
And she’ll never get mair frae me, O.”

“What wilt thou leave to thy young son?
Son Davie! son Davie!”
“The weary warld to wander up and down,
And he’ll never get mair o’ me, O.”

“What wilt thou leave to thy mother dear?
Son Davie! Son Davie!”
“A fire o’ coals to burn her wi’ hearty cheer,
And she’ll never get mair o’ me, O.”

Ballad: The Wife Of Usher’s Well

(Child, vol. iii.)

There lived a wife at Usher’s Well,
And a wealthy wife was she;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them oer the sea,

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely ane,
When word came to the carline wife
That her three sons were gane.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
Whan word came to the carlin wife
That her sons she’d never see.

“I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fashes in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me,
In earthly flesh and blood!”

It fell about the Martinmass,
Whan nights are lang and mirk,
The carline wife’s three sons came hame,
And their hats were o the birk.

It neither grew in syke nor ditch,
Nor yet in ony sheugh;
But at the gates o Paradise
That birk grew fair eneugh.

*

“Blow up the fire, my maidens!
Bring water from the well;
For a’ my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well.”

And she has made to them a bed,
She’s made it large and wide;
And she’s taen her mantle her about,
Sat down at the bedside.

*

Up then crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the gray;
The eldest to the youngest said,
“’Tis time we were away.”

The cock he hadna crawd but once,
And clapp’d his wings at a’,
Whan the youngest to the eldest said,
“Brother, we must awa.

“The cock doth craw, the day doth daw,
The channerin worm doth chide;
Gin we be mist out o our place,
A sair pain we maun bide.

“Fare ye weel, my mother dear!
Fareweel to barn and byre!
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
That kindles my mother’s fire!”

Ballad: The Twa Corbies

(Child, vol. i.)

As I was walking all alane,
I heard twa corbies making a mane;
The tane unto the t’other say,
“Where sall we gang and dine the day?”

“In behint yon auld fail dyke,
I wot there lies a new-slain knight;
And naebody kens that he lies there
But his hawk, his hound, and his lady fair.

“His hound is to the hunting gane,
His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,
His lady’s ta’en another mate,
So we may make our dinner sweet.

“Ye’ll sit on his white hause-bane,
And I’ll pike out his bonny blue een;
Wi ae lock o his gowden hair
We’ll theek our nest when it grows bare.

“Mony a one for him makes mane,
But nane sall ken whae he is gane,
Oer his white banes, when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair.”

Ballad: The Bonnie Earl Moray

(Child, vol. vi.)

A.

Ye Highlands, and ye Lawlands
Oh where have you been?
They have slain the Earl of Murray,
And they layd him on the green.

“Now wae be to thee, Huntly!
And wherefore did you sae?
I bade you bring him wi you,
But forbade you him to slay.”

He was a braw gallant,
And he rid at the ring;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
Oh he might have been a King!

He was a braw gallant,
And he playd at the ba;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
Was the flower amang them a’.

He was a braw gallant,
And he playd at the glove;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
Oh he was the Queen’s love!

Oh lang will his lady
Look oer the castle Down,
Eer she see the Earl of Murray
Come sounding thro the town!
Eer she, *etc.*

B.

“Open the gates
and let him come in;
He is my brother Huntly,
he’ll do him nae harm.”

The gates they were opent,
they let him come in,
But fause traitor Huntly,
he did him great harm.

He’s ben and ben,
and ben to his bed,
And with a sharp rapier
he stabbed him dead.

The lady came down the stair,
wringing her hands:
“He has slain the Earl o Murray,
the flower o Scotland.”

But Huntly lap on his horse,
rade to the King:
“Ye’re welcome hame, Huntly,
and whare hae ye been?

“Where hae ye been?
and how hae ye sped?”
“I’ve killed the Earl o Murray

dead in his bed.”

“Foul fa you, Huntly!
and why did ye so?
You might have taen the Earl o Murray,
and saved his life too.”

“Her bread it’s to bake,
her yill is to brew;
My sister’s a widow,
and sair do I rue.

“Her corn grows ripe,
her meadows grow green,
But in bonnie Dinnibristle
I darena be seen.”

Ballad: Clerk Saunders

(Child, vol. iii.)

Clerk Saunders and may Margaret
Walked ower yon garden green;
And sad and heavy was the love
That fell thir twa between.

“A bed, a bed,” Clerk Saunders said,
“A bed for you and me!”
“Fye na, fye na,” said may Margaret,
“‘Till anes we married be.

“For in may come my seven bauld brothers,
Wi’ torches burning bright;
They’ll say,— ‘We hae but ae sister,
And behold she’s wi a knight!’”

“Then take the sword frae my scabbard,
And slowly lift the pin;
And you may swear, and save your aith.
Ye never let Clerk Saunders in.

“And take a napkin in your hand,
And tie up baith your bonny e’en,
And you may swear, and save your aith,
Ye saw me na since late yestreen.”

It was about the midnight hour,
When they asleep were laid,
When in and came her seven brothers,

Wi’ torches burning red.

When in and came her seven brothers,
Wi’ torches burning bright:
They said, “We hae but ae sister,
And behold her lying with a knight!”

Then out and spake the first o’ them,
“I bear the sword shall gar him die!”
And out and spake the second o’ them,
“His father has nae mair than he!”

And out and spake the third o’ them,
“I wot that they are lovers dear!”
And out and spake the fourth o’ them,
“They hae been in love this mony a year!”

Then out and spake the fifth o’ them,
“It were great sin true love to twain!”
And out and spake the sixth o’ them,
“It were shame to slay a sleeping man!”

Then up and gat the seventh o’ them,
And never a word spake he;
But he has striped his bright brown brand
Out through Clerk Saunders’ fair bodye.

Clerk Saunders he started, and Margaret she turned
Into his arms as asleep she lay;
And sad and silent was the night
That was atween thir twae.

And they lay still and sleeped sound
Until the day began to daw;
And kindly to him she did say,

“It is time, true love, you were awa’.”

But he lay still, and sleeped sound,
Albeit the sun began to sheen;
She looked atween her and the wa’,
And dull and drowsie were his e’en.

Then in and came her father dear;
Said,— “Let a’ your mourning be:
I’ll carry the dead corpse to the clay,
And I’ll come back and comfort thee.”

“Comfort weel your seven sons;
For comforted will I never be:
I ween ’twas neither knave nor loon
Was in the bower last night wi’ me.”

The clinking bell gaed through the town,
To carry the dead corse to the clay;
And Clerk Saunders stood at may Margaret’s window,
I wot, an hour before the day.

“Are ye sleeping, Margaret?” he says,
“Or are ye waking presentlie?
Give me my faith and troth again,
I wot, true love, I gied to thee.”

“Your faith and troth ye sall never get,
Nor our true love sall never twin,
Until ye come within my bower,
And kiss me cheik and chin.”

“My mouth it is full cold, Margaret,
It has the smell, now, of the ground;
And if I kiss thy comely mouth,
Thy days of life will not be lang.

“O, cocks are crowing a merry midnight,
I wot the wild fowls are boding day;
Give me my faith and troth again,
And let me fare me on my way.”

“Thy faith and troth thou sall na get,
And our true love sall never twin,
Until ye tell what comes of women,
I wot, who die in strong traivelling?

“Their beds are made in the heavens high,
Down at the foot of our good lord’s knee,
Weel set about wi’ gillyflowers;
I wot, sweet company for to see.

“O, cocks are crowing a merry midnight,
I wot the wild fowl are boding day;
The psalms of heaven will soon be sung,
And I, ere now, will be missed away.”

Then she has ta’en a crystal wand,
And she has stroken her troth thereon;
She has given it him out at the shot-window,
Wi’ mony a sad sigh, and heavy groan.

“I thank ye, Marg’ret, I thank ye, Marg’ret;
And aye I thank ye heartilie;
Gin ever the dead come for the quick,
Be sure, Mag’ret, I’ll come for thee.”

It’s hosen and shoon, and gown alone,
She climb’d the wall, and followed him,
Until she came to the green forest,
And there she lost the sight o’ him.

“Is there ony room at your head, Saunders?
Is there ony room at your feet?
Is there ony room at your side, Saunders,
Where fain, fain I wad sleep?”

“There’s nae room at my head, Marg’ret,
There’s nae room at my feet;
My bed it is full lowly now,
Amang the hungry worms I sleep.

“Cauld mould is my covering now,
But and my winding-sheet;
The dew it falls nae sooner down
Than my resting-place is weet.

“But plait a wand o’ bonnie birk,
And lay it on my breast;
And shed a tear upon my grave,
And wish my saul gude rest.

“And fair Marg’ret, and rare Marg’ret,
And Marg’ret, o’ veritie,
Gin ere ye love another man,
Ne’er love him as ye did me.”

Then up and crew the milk-white cock,
And up and crew the gray;
Her lover vanish’d in the air,
And she gaed weeping away.

Ballad: Waly, Waly

(Mackay.)

O waly, waly, up the bank,
O waly, waly, down the brae.
And waly, waly, yon burn side,
Where I and my love wont to gae.
I leaned my back unto an aik,
An’ thocht it was a trustie tree,
But first it bow’d and syne it brak,
Sae my true love did lichtly me.

O waly, waly, but love is bonnie
A little time while it is new,
But when it’s auld it waxes cauld,
And fades away like morning dew.
O wherefore should I busk my head,
O wherefore should I kame my hair,
For my true love has me forsook,
And says he’ll never love me mair.

Now Arthur’s Seat shall be my bed,
The sheets shall ne’er be pressed by me,
St. Anton’s well shall be my drink,
Since my true love has forsaken me.
Martinmas wind, when wilt thou blaw,
And shake the green leaves off the tree!
O gentle Death, when wilt thou come?
For of my life I am wearie!

’Tis not the frost that freezes fell,

Nor blawing snaw’s inclemencie,
’Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry,
But my love’s heart’s grown cauld to me.
When we came in by Glasgow toun
We were a comely sicht to see;
My love was clad in the black velvet,
And I mysel in cramasie.

But had I wist before I kist
That love had been sae ill to win,
I’d locked my heart in a case of gold,
And pinned it wi’ a siller pin.
Oh, oh! if my young babe were born,
And set upon the nurse’s knee;
And I myself were dead and gane,
And the green grass growing over me!

Ballad: Love Gregor; Or, The Lass Of Lochroyan

(Child, Part III., p. 220.)

“O wha will shoe my fu’ fair foot?
And wha will glove my hand?
And wha will lace my middle jimp,
Wi’ the new-made London band?

“And wha will kaim my yellow hair,
Wi’ the new made silver kaim?
And wha will father my young son,
Till Love Gregor come hame?”

“Your father will shoe your fu’ fair foot,
Your mother will glove your hand;
Your sister will lace your middle jimp
Wi’ the new-made London band.

“Your brother will kaim your yellow hair,
Wi’ the new made silver kaim;
And the king of heaven will father your bairn,
Till Love Gregor come haim.”

“But I will get a bonny boat,
And I will sail the sea,
For I maun gang to Love Gregor,
Since he canno come hame to me.”

O she has gotten a bonny boat,
And sailld the sa’t sea fame;
She langd to see her ain true-love,
Since he could no come hame.

“O row your boat, my mariners,
And bring me to the land,
For yonder I see my love’s castle,
Close by the sa’t sea strand.”

She has ta’en her young son in her arms,
And to the door she’s gone,
And lang she’s knocked and sair she ca’d,
But answer got she none.

“O open the door, Love Gregor,” she says,
“O open, and let me in;
For the wind blaws thro’ my yellow hair,
And the rain draps o’er my chin.”

“Awa, awa, ye ill woman,
You’r nae come here for good;
You’r but some witch, or wile warlock,
Or mer-maid of the flood.”

“I am neither a witch nor a wile warlock,
Nor mer-maid of the sea,
I am Fair Annie of Rough Royal;
O open the door to me.”

“Gin ye be Annie of Rough Royal —
And I trust ye are not she —
Now tell me some of the love-tokens
That past between you and me.”

“O dinna you mind now, Love Gregor,
When we sat at the wine,
How we changed the rings frae our fingers?
And I can show thee thine.

“O yours was good, and good enough,
But ay the best was mine;
For yours was o’ the good red goud,
But mine o’ the diamonds fine.

“But open the door now, Love Gregor,
O open the door I pray,
For your young son that is in my arms
Will be dead ere it be day.”

“Awa, awa, ye ill woman,
For here ye shanno win in;
Gae drown ye in the raging sea,
Or hang on the gallows-pin.”

When the cock had crawn, and day did dawn,
And the sun began to peep,
Then up he rose him, Love Gregor,
And sair, sair did he weep.

“O I dreamd a dream, my mother dear,
The thoughts o’ it gars me greet,
That Fair Annie of Rough Royal
Lay cauld dead at my feet.”

“Gin it be for Annie of Rough Royal
That ye make a’ this din,
She stood a’ last night at this door,
But I trow she wan no in.”

“O wae betide ye, ill woman,
An ill dead may ye die!
That ye woudno open the door to her,
Nor yet woud waken me.”

O he has gone down to yon shore-side,
As fast as he could fare;
He saw Fair Annie in her boat,
But the wind it tossd her sair.

And “Hey, Annie!” and “How, Annie!
O Annie, winna ye bide?”
But ay the mair that he cried “Annie,”
The braider grew the tide.

And “Hey, Annie!” and “How, Annie!
Dear Annie, speak to me!”
But ay the louder he cried “Annie,”
The louder roard the sea.

The wind blew loud, the sea grew rough,
And dashd the boat on shore;
Fair Annie floats on the raging sea,
But her young son rose no more.

Love Gregor tare his yellow hair,
And made a heavy moan;
Fair Annie’s corpse lay at his feet,
But his bonny young son was gone.

O cherry, cherry was her cheek,
And gowden was her hair,
But clay cold were her rosey lips,
Nae spark of life was there,

And first he’s kissd her cherry cheek,
And neist he’s kissed her chin;
And saftly pressd her rosey lips,

But there was nae breath within.

“O wae betide my cruel mother,
And an ill dead may she die!
For she turnd my true-love frae my door,
When she came sae far to me.”

Ballad: The Queen’s Marie

(Child, vi., Border Minstrelsy.)

Marie Hamilton’s to the kirk gane,
Wi ribbons in her hair;
The king thought mair o Marie Hamilton,
Than ony that were there.

Marie Hamilton’s to the kirk gane,
Wi ribbons on her breast;
The king thought mair o Marie Hamilton,
Than he listend to the priest.

Marie Hamilton’s to the kirk gane,
Wi gloves upon her hands;
The king thought mair o Marie Hamilton,
Than the queen and a’ her lands.

She hadna been about the king’s court
A month, but barely one,
Till she was beloved by a’ the king’s court,
And the king the only man.

She hadna been about the king’s court
A month, but barely three,
Till frae the king’s court Marie Hamilton,
Marie Hamilton durst na be.

The king is to the Abbey gane,
To pu the Abbey tree,

To scale the babe frae Marie’s heart;
But the thing it wadna be.

O she has rowd it in her apron,
And set it on the sea:
“Gae sink ye, or swim ye, bonny babe,
Ye’s get na mair o me.”

Word is to the kitchen gane,
And word is to the ha,
And word is to the noble room,
Amang the ladyes a’,
That Marie Hamilton’s brought to bed,
And the bonny babe’s mist and awa.

Scarcely had she lain down again,
And scarcely faen asleep,
When up then started our gude queen,
Just at her bed-feet,
Saying “Marie Hamilton, where’s your babe?
For I am sure I heard it greet.”

“O no, O no, my noble queen!
Think no such thing to be!
’Twas but a stitch into my side,
And sair it troubles me.”

“Get up, get up, Marie Hamilton,
Get up, and follow me,
For I am going to Edinburgh town,
A rich wedding for to see.”

O slowly, slowly raise she up,
And slowly put she on;
And slowly rode she out the way,
Wi mony a weary groan.

The queen was clad in scarlet,
Her merry maids all in green;
And every town that they cam to,
They took Marie for the queen.

“Ride hooly, hooly, gentlemen,
Ride hooly now wi’ me!
For never, I am sure, a wearier burd
Rade in your cumpanie.”

But little wist Marie Hamilton,
When she rade on the brown,
That she was ga’en to Edinburgh town,
And a’ to be put down.

“Why weep ye so, ye burgess-wives,
Why look ye so on me?
O, I am going to Edinburgh town,
A rich wedding for to see!”

When she gaed up the Tolbooth stairs,
The corks frae her heels did flee;
And lang or eer she cam down again,
She was condemned to die.

When she cam to the Netherbow Port,
She laughed loud laughters three;
But when she cam to the gallows-foot,
The tears blinded her ee.

“Yestreen the queen had four Maries,
The night she’ll hae but three;
There was Marie Seaton, and Marie Beaten,
And Marie Carmichael, and me.

“O, often have I dressd my queen,
And put gold upon her hair;
But now I’ve gotten for my reward
The gallows to be my share.

“Often have I dressd my queen,
And often made her bed:
But now I’ve gotten for my reward
The gallows-tree to tread.

“I charge ye all, ye mariners,
When ye sail ower the faem,
Let neither my father nor mother get wit,
But that I’m coming hame.

“I charge ye all, ye mariners,
That sail upon the sea,
Let neither my father nor mother get wit,
This dog’s death I’m to die.

“For if my father and mother got wit,
And my bold brethren three,
O mickle wad be the gude red blude,
This day wad be spilt for me!

“O little did my mother ken,
The day she cradled me,
The lands I was to travel in,
Or the death I was to die!”

Ballad: Kinmont Willie

(Child, vol. vi.)

O have ye na heard o the fause Sakelde?
O have ye na heard o the keen Lord Scroop?
How they hae taen bauld Kinmont Willie,
On Hairibee to hang him up?

Had Willie had but twenty men,
But twenty men as stout as be,
Fause Sakelde had never the Kinmont taen
Wi eight score in his companie.

They band his legs beneath the steed,
They tied his hands behind his back;
They guarded him, fivesome on each side,
And they brought him ower the Liddel-rack.

They led him thro the Liddel-rack.
And also thro the Carlisle sands;
They brought him to Carlisle castell.
To be at my Lord Scroope’s commands.

“My hands are tied; but my tongue is free,
And whae will dare this deed avow?
Or answer by the border law?
Or answer to the bauld Buccleuch?”

“Now haud thy tongue, thou rank reiver!
There’s never a Scot shall set ye free:
Before ye cross my castle-yate,

I trow ye shall take farewell o me.”

“Fear na ye that, my lord,” quo Willie:
“By the faith o my body, Lord Scroope,” he said,
“I never yet lodged in a hostelrie —
But I paid my lawing before I gaed.”

Now word is gane to the bauld Keeper,
In Branksome Ha where that he lay,
That Lord Scroope has taen the Kinmont Willie,
Between the hours of night and day.

He has taen the table wi his hand,
He garrd the red wine spring on hie;
“Now Christ’s curse on my head,” he said,
“But avenged of Lord Scroope I’ll be!

“O is my basnet a widow’s curch?
Or my lance a wand of the willow-tree?
Or my arm a lady’s lilye hand,
That an English lord should lightly me?

“And have they taen him, Kinmont Willie,
Against the truce of Border tide?
And forgotten that the bauld Bacleuch
Is keeper here on the Scottish side?

“And have they een taen him, Kinmont Willie,
Withouten either dread or fear,
And forgotten that the bauld Bacleuch
Can back a steed, or shake a spear?

“O were there war between the lands,
As well I wot that there is none,

I would slight Carlisle castell high,
Tho it were builded of marble stone.

“I would set that castell in a low,
And sloken it with English blood;
There’s nevir a man in Cumberland
Should ken where Carlisle castell stood.

“But since nae war’s between the lands,
And there is peace, and peace should be;
I’ll neither harm English lad or lass,
And yet the Kinmont freed shall be!”

He has calld him forty marchmen bauld,
I trow they were of his ain name,
Except Sir Gilbert Elliot, calld
The Laird of Stobs, I mean the same.

He has calld him forty marchmen bauld,
Were kinsmen to the bauld Buccleuch,
With spur on heel, and splent on spauld,
And gleuves of green, and feathers blue.

There were five and five before them a’,
Wi hunting-horns and bugles bright;
And five and five came wi Buccleuch,
Like Warden’s men, arrayed for fight.

And five and five, like a mason-gang,
That carried the ladders lang and hie;
And five and five, like broken men;
And so they reached the Woodhouselee.

And as we crossd the Bateable Land,
When to the English side we held,
The first o men that we met wi,
Whae sould it be but fause Sakelde!

“Where be ye gaun, ye hunters keen?”
Quo fause Sakelde; “come tell to me!”
“We go to hunt an English stag,
Has trespassed on the Scots countrie.”

“Where be ye gaun, ye marshal-men?”
Quo fause Sakelde; “come tell me true!”
“We go to catch a rank reiver,
Has broken faith wi the bauld Buccleuch.”

“Where are ye gaun, ye mason-lads,
Wi a’ your ladders lang and hie?”
“We gang to herry a corbie’s nest,
That wons not far frae Woodhouselee.”

“Where be ye gaun, ye broken men?”
Quo fause Sakelde; “come tell to me?”
Now Dickie of Dryhope led that band,
And the nevir a word o lear had he.

“Why trespass ye on the English side?
Row-footed outlaws, stand!” quo he;
The neer a word had Dickie to say,
Sae he thrust the lance thro his fause bodie.

Then on we held for Carlisle toun,
And at Staneshaw-bank the Eden we crossd;
The water was great and meikle of spait,
But the nevir a horse nor man we lost.

And when we reachd the Staneshaw-bank,
The wind was rising loud and hie;
And there the laird garrd leave our steeds,
For fear that they should stamp and nie.

And when we left the Staneshaw-bank,
The wind began full loud to blaw;
But ’twas wind and weet, and fire and sleet,
When we came beneath the castell-wa.

We crept on knees, and held our breath,
Till we placed the ladders against the wa;
And sae ready was Buccleuch himsell
To mount she first, before us a’.

He has taen the watchman by the throat,
He flung him down upon the lead:
“Had there not been peace between our lands,
Upon the other side thou hadst gaed.

“Now sound out, trumpets!” quo Buccleuch;
“Let’s waken Lord Scroope right merrilie!”
Then loud the warden’s trumpet blew
“O whae dare meddle wi me?”

Then speedilie to wark we gaed,
And raised the slogan ane and a’,
And cut a hole through a sheet of lead,
And so we wan to the castel-ha.

They thought King James and a’ his men
Had won the house wi bow and speir;
It was but twenty Scots and ten
That put a thousand in sic a stear!

Wi coulters, and wi fore-hammers,
We garrd the bars bang merrilie,
Until we came to the inner prison,
Where Willie o Kinmont he did lie.

And when we came to the lower prison,
Where Willie o Kinmont he did lie,
“O sleep ye, wake ye, Kinmont Willie,
Upon the morn that thou’s to die?”

“O I sleep saft, and I wake aft,
It’s lang since sleeping was fley’d frae me;
Gie my service back to my wyfe and bairns
And a’ gude fellows that speer for me.”

Then Red Rowan has hente him up,
The starkest man in Teviotdale:
“Abide, abide now, Red Rowan,
Till of my Lord Scroope I take farewell.

“Farewell, farewell, my gude Lord Scroope!
My gude Lord Scroope, farewell!” he cried;
“I’ll pay you for my lodging-maill,
When first we meet on the border-side.”

Then shoulder high, with shout and cry,
We bore him down the ladder lang;
At every stride Red Rowan made,
I wot the Kinmont’s airms playd clang!

“O mony a time,” quo Kinmont Willie.
“I have ridden horse baith wild and wood;
But a rougher beast than Red Rowan,
I ween my legs have neer bestrode.

“And mony a time,” quo Kinmont Willie,
“I’ve pricked a horse out oure the furs;
But since the day I backed a steed
I nevir wore sic cumbrous spurs!”

We scarce had won the Staneshaw-bank,
When a’ the Carlisle bells were rung,
And a thousand men, in horse and foot,
Cam wi the keen Lord Scroope along.

Buccleuch has turned to Eden Water,
Even where it flowd frae bank to brim,
And he has plunged in wi a’ his band,
And safely swam them thro the stream.

He turned him on the other side,
And at Lord Scroope his glove flung he:
“If ye like na my visit in merry England,
In fair Scotland come visit me!”

All sore astonished stood Lord Scroope,
He stood as still as rock of stane;
He scarcely dared to trew his eyes,
When thro the water they had gane.

“He is either himsell a devil frae hell,
Or else his mother a witch maun be;
I wad na have ridden that wan water
For a’ the gowd in Christentie.”

Ballad: Jamie Telfer

(Child, vol. vi. Early Edition.)

It fell about the Martinmas tyde,
When our Border steeds get corn and hay
The captain of Bewcastle hath bound him to ryde,
And he’s ower to Tividale to drive a prey.

The first ae guide that they met wi’,
It was high up Hardhaughswire;
The second guide that we met wi’,
It was laigh down in Borthwick water.

“What tidings, what tidings, my trusty guide?”
“Nae tidings, nae tidings, I hae to thee;
But, gin ye’ll gae to the fair Dodhead,
Mony a cow’s cauf I’ll let thee see.”

And whan they cam to the fair Dodhead,
Right hastily they clam the peel;
They loosed the kye out, ane and a’,
And ranshackled the house right weel.

Now Jamie Telfer’s heart was sair,
The tear aye rowing in his e’e;
He pled wi’ the captain to hae his gear,
Or else revenged he wad be.

The captain turned him round and leugh;
Said— “Man, there’s naething in thy house,
But ae auld sword without a sheath,

That hardly now wad fell a mouse!”

The sun was na up, but the moon was down,
It was the gryming o’ a new fa’n snaw,
Jamie Telfer has run three myles a-foot,
Between the Dodhead and the Stobs’s Ha’

And whan he cam to the fair tower yate,
He shouted loud, and cried weel hie,
Till out bespak auld Gibby Elliot —
“Wha’s this that brings the fraye to me?”

“It’s I, Jamie Telfer o’ the fair Dodhead,
And a harried man I think I be!
There’s naething left at the fair Dodhead,
But a waefu’ wife and bairnies three.

“Gae seek your succour at Branksome Ha’.
For succour ye’se get nane frae me!
Gae seek your succour where ye paid black-mail,
For, man! ye ne’er paid money to me.”

Jamie has turned him round about,
I wat the tear blinded his e’e —
“I’ll ne’er pay mail to Elliot again,
And the fair Dodhead I’ll never see!

“My hounds may a’ rin masterless,
My hawks may fly frae tree to tree;
My lord may grip my vassal lands,
For there again maun I never be.”

He has turned him to the Tiviot side,
E’en as fast as he could drie,
Till he came to the Coultart Cleugh
And there he shouted baith loud and hie.

Then up bespak him auld Jock Grieve —
“Wha’s this that brings the fray to me?”
“It’s I, Jamie Telfer o’ the fair Dodhead,
A harried man I trow I be.

“There’s naething left in the fair Dodhead,
But a greeting wife and bairnies three,
And sax poor câ’s stand in the sta’,
A’ routing loud for their minnie.”

“Alack a wae!” quo’ auld Jock Grieve,
“Alack! my heart is sair for thee!
For I was married on the elder sister,
And you on the youngest of a’ the three.”

Then he has ta’en out a bonny black,
Was right weel fed wi’ corn and hay,
And he’s set Jamie Telfer on his back,
To the Catslockhill to tak’ the fray.

And whan he cam to the Catslockhill,
He shouted loud and weel cried he,
Till out and spak him William’s Wat —
“O wha’s this brings the fraye to me?”

“It’s I, Jamie Telfer o’ the fair Dodhead,
A harried man I think I be!
The captain of Bewcastle has driven my gear;
For God’s sake rise, and succour me!”

“Alas for wae!” quo’ William’s Wat,
“Alack, for thee my heart is sair!
I never cam by the fair Dodhead,
That ever I fand thy basket bare.”

He’s set his twa sons on coal-black steeds,
Himsel’ upon a freckled gray,
And they are on wi, Jamie Telfer,
To Branksome Ha to tak the fray.

And whan they cam to Branksome Ha’,
They shouted a’ baith loud and hie,
Till up and spak him auld Buccleuch,
Said— “Wha’s this brings the fray to me?

“It’s I, Jamie Telfer o’ the fair Dodhead,
And a harried man I think I be!
There’s nought left in the fair Dodhead,
But a greeting wife and bairnies three.”

“Alack for wae!” quoth the gude auld lord,
“And ever my heart is wae for thee!
But fye gar cry on Willie, my son,
And see that he come to me speedilie!

“Gar warn the water, braid and wide,
Gar warn it soon and hastily!
They that winna ride for Telfer’s kye,
Let them never look in the face o’ me!

“Warn Wat o’ Harden, and his sons,
Wi’ them will Borthwick water ride;
Warn Gaudilands, and Allanhaugh,
And Gilmanscleugh, and Commonside.

“Ride by the gate at Priesthaughswire,
And warn the Currors o’ the Lee;
As ye come down the Hermitage Slack,

Warn doughty Willie o’ Gorrinbery.”

The Scots they rade, the Scots they ran,
Sae starkly and sae steadilie!
And aye the ower-word o’ the thrang,
Was— “Rise for Branksome readilie!”

The gear was driven the Frostylee up,
Frae the Frostylee unto the plain,
Whan Willie has looked his men before,
And saw the kye right fast driving.

“Wha drives thir kye?” ‘gan Willie say,
“To mak an outspeckle o’ me?”
“It’s I, the captain o’ Bewcastle, Willie;
I winna layne my name for thee.”

“O will ye let Telfer’s kye gae back,
Or will ye do aught for regard o’ me?
Or, by the faith o’ my body,” quo’ Willie Scott,
“I se ware my dame’s cauf’s-skin on thee!”

“I winna let the kye gae back,
Neither for thy love, nor yet thy fear,
But I will drive Jamie Telfer’s kye,
In spite of every Scot that’s here.”

“Set on them, lads!” quo’ Willie than,
“Fye, lads, set on them cruellie!
For ere they win to the Ritterford,
Mony a toom saddle there sall be!

But Willie was stricken ower the head,
And through the knapscap the sword has gane;
And Harden grat for very rage,

Whan Willie on the ground lay slain.

But he’s ta’en aff his gude steel-cap,
And thrice he’s waved it in the air —
The Dinlay snaw was ne’er mair white,
Nor the lyart locks of Harden’s hair.

“Revenge! revenge!” auld Wat ‘gan cry;
“Fye, lads, lay on them cruellie!
We’ll ne’er see Tiviotside again,
Or Willie’s death revenged shall be.”

O mony a horse ran masterless,
The splintered lances flew on hie;
But or they wan to the Kershope ford,
The Scots had gotten the victory.

John o’ Brigham there was slain,
And John o’ Barlow, as I hear say;
And thirty mae o’ the captain’s men,
Lay bleeding on the grund that day.

The captain was run thro’ the thick of the thigh —
And broken was his right leg bane;
If he had lived this hundred year,
He had never been loved by woman again.

“Hae back thy kye!” the captain said;
“Dear kye, I trow, to some they be!
For gin I suld live a hundred years,
There will ne’er fair lady smile on me.”

Then word is gane to the captain’s bride,
Even in the bower where that she lay,
That her lord was prisoner in enemy’s land,

Since into Tividale he had led the way.

"I wad lourd have had a winding-sheet,
And helped to put it ower his head,
Ere he had been disgraced by the Border Scot,
When he ower Liddel his men did lead!"

There was a wild gallant amang us a',
His name was Watty wi' the Wudspurs,
Cried— "On for his house in Stanegirthside,
If ony man will ride with us!"

When they cam to the Stanegirthside,
They dang wi' trees, and burst the door;
They loosed out a' the captain's kye,
And set them forth our lads before.

There was an auld wife ayont the fire,
A wee bit o' the captain's kin —
"Wha daur loose out the captain's kye,
Or answer to him and his men?"

"It's I, Watty Wudspurs, loose the kye,
I winna layne my name frae thee!
And I will loose out the captain's kye,
In scorn of a' his men and he."

When they cam to the fair Dodhead,
They were a wellcum sight to see!
For instead of his ain ten milk-kye,
Jamie Telfer has gotten thirty and three.

And he has paid the rescue shot,
Baith wi' goud, and white monie;
And at the burial o' Willie Scott,

I wot was mony a weeping e’e.

Ballad: The Douglas Tragedy

(Child, vol. ii. Early Edition.)

“Rise up, rise up now, Lord Douglas,” she says,
“And put on your armour so bright;
Let it never be said that a daughter of thine
Was married to a lord under night.

“Rise up, rise up, my seven bold sons,
And put on your armour so bright,
And take better care of your youngest sister,
For your eldest’s awa the last night.” —

He’s mounted her on a milk-white steed,
And himself on a dapple grey,
With a bugelet horn hung down by his side,
And lightly they rode away.

Lord William lookit o’er his left shoulder,
To see what he could see,
And there be spy’d her seven brethren bold,
Come riding o’er the lee.

“Light down, light down, Lady Marg’ret,” he said,
“And hold my steed in your hand,
Until that against your seven brothers bold,
And your father I make a stand.” —

She held his steed in her milk white hand,
And never shed one tear,
Until that she saw her seven brethren fa’,
And her father hard fighting, who loved her so dear.

“O hold your hand, Lord William!” she said,
“For your strokes they are wondrous sair;
True lovers I can get many a ane,
But a father I can never get mair.” —

O she’s ta’en out her handkerchief,
It was o’ the holland sae fine,
And aye she dighted her father’s bloody wounds,
That were redder than the wine.

“O chuse, O chuse, Lady Marg’ret,” he said,
“O whether will ye gang or bide?”
“I’ll gang, I’ll gang, Lord William,” she said,
“For ye have left me no other guide.” —

He’s lifted her on a milk-white steed,
And himself on a dapple grey.
With a bugelet horn hung down by his side,
And slowly they baith rade away.

O they rade on, and on they rade,
And a’ by the light of the moon,
Until they came to yon wan water,
And there they lighted down.

They lighted down to tak a drink
Of the spring that ran sae clear:
And down the stream ran his gude heart’s blood,
And sair she ‘gan to fear.

“Hold up, hold up, Lord William,” she says,
“For I fear that you are slain!”
“’Tis naething but the shadow of my scarlet cloak
That shines in the water sae plain.”

O they rade on, and on they rade,

And a’ by the light of the moon,
Until they cam to his mother’s ha’ door,
And there they lighted down.

“Get up, get up, lady mother,” he says,
“Get up, and let me in! —
Get up, get up, lady mother,” he says,
“For this night my fair ladye I’ve win.

“O mak my bed, lady mother,” he says,
“O mak it braid and deep!
And lay Lady Marg’ret close at my back,
And the sounder I will sleep.” —

Lord William was dead lang ere midnight,
Lady Marg’ret lang ere day —
And all true lovers that go thegither,
May they have mair luck than they!

Lord William was buried in St. Marie’s kirk,
Lady Margaret in Marie’s quire;
Out o’ the lady’s grave grew a bonny red rose,
And out o’ the knight’s a brier.

And they twa met, and they twa plat,
And fain they wad be near;
And a’ the warld might ken right weel,
They were twa lovers dear.

But by and rade the Black Douglas,
And wow but he was rough!
For he pull’d up the bonny brier,
An flang’t in St. Marie’s Loch.

Ballad: The Bonny Hind

(Child, vol. ii.)

O May she comes, and may she goes,
Down by yon gardens green,
And there she spied a gallant squire
As squire had ever been.

And may she comes, and may she goes,
Down by yon hollin tree,
And there she spied a brisk young squire,
And a brisk young squire was he.

“Give me your green manteel, fair maid,
Give me your maidenhead;
Gif ye winna gie me your green manteel,
Gi me your maidenhead.”

He has taen her by the milk-white hand,
And softly laid her down,
And when he’s lifted her up again
Given her a silver kaim.

“Perhaps there may be bairns, kind sir,
Perhaps there may be nane;
But if you be a courtier,
You’ll tell to me your name.”

“I am na courtier, fair maid,
But new come frae the sea;
I am nae courtier, fair maid,

But when I court’ith thee.

“They call me Jack when I’m abroad,
Sometimes they call me John;
But when I’m in my father’s bower
Jock Randal is my name.”

“Ye lee, ye lee, ye bonny lad,
Sae loud’s I hear ye lee!
For I’m Lord Randal’s yae daughter,
He has nae mair nor me.”

“Ye lee, ye lee, ye bonny may,
Sae loud’s I hear ye lee!
For I’m Lord Randal’s yae yae son,
Just now come oer the sea.”

She’s putten her hand down by her spare
And out she’s taen a knife,
And she has putn’t in her heart’s bluid,
And taen away her life.

And he’s taen up his bonny sister,
With the big tear in his een,
And he has buried his bonny sister
Amang the hollins green.

And syne he’s hyed him oer the dale,
His father dear to see:
“Sing O and O for my bonny hind,
Beneath yon hollin tree!”

“What needs you care for your bonny hyn?
For it you needna care;
There’s aught score hyns in yonder park,
And five score hyns to spare.

“Fourscore of them are siller-shod,
Of thae ye may get three;”
“But O and O for my bonny hyn,
Beneath yon hollin tree!”

“What needs you care for your bonny hyn?
For it you needna care;
Take you the best, gi me the warst,
Since plenty is to spare.”

“I care na for your hyns, my lord,
I care na for your fee;
But O and O for my bonny hyn,
Beneath the hollin tree!”

“O were ye at your sister’s bower,
Your sister fair to see,
Ye’ll think na mair o your bonny hyn
Beneath the hollin tree.”

Ballad: Young Bicham

(Child, vol. ii.)

In London city was Bicham born,
He longd strange countries for to see,
But he was taen by a savage Moor,
Who handld him right cruely.

For thro his shoulder he put a bore,
An thro the bore has pitten a tree,
And he’s gard him draw the carts o wine,
Where horse and oxen had wont to be.

He’s casten [him] in a dungeon deep,
Where he coud neither hear nor see;
He’s shut him up in a prison strong,
An he’s handld him right cruely.

O this Moor he had but ae daughter,
I wot her name was Shusy Pye;
She’s doen her to the prison-house,
And she’s calld young Bicham one word by.

“O hae ye ony lands or rents,
Or citys in your ain country,
Coud free you out of prison strong,
An coud maintain a lady free?”

O London city is my own,
An other citys twa or three,
Coud loose me out o prison strong,

An could maintain a lady free.”

O she has bribed her father’s men
Wi meikle goud and white money,
She’s gotten the key o the prison doors,
And she has set Young Bicham free.

She’s gi’n him a loaf o good white bread,
But an a flask o Spanish wine,
An she bad him mind on the ladie’s love
That sae kindly freed him out o pine.

“Go set your foot on good ship-board,
An haste you back to your ain country,
An before that seven years has an end,
Come back again, love, and marry me.”

It was long or seven years had an end
She longd fu sair her love to see;
She’s set her foot on good ship-board,
An turnd her back on her ain country.

She’s saild up, so has she down,
Till she came to the other side;
She’s landed at Young Bicham’s gates,
An I hop this day she sal be his bride.

“Is this Young Bicham’s gates?” says she.
“Or is that noble prince within?”
“He’s up the stair wi his bonny bride,
An monny a lord and lady wi him.”

“O has he taen a bonny bride,
An has he clean forgotten me?”
An sighing said that gay lady,

“I wish I were in my ain country!”

She’s pitten her ban in her pocket,
An gin the porter guineas three;
Says, “Take ye that, ye proud porter,
An bid the bridegroom speak to me.”

O whan the porter came up the stair,
He’s fa’n low down upon his knee:
“Won up, won up, ye proud porter,
And what makes a’ this courtesy?”

“O I’ve been porter at your gates
This mair nor seven years an three,
But there is a lady at them now
The like of whom I never did see.

“For on every finger she has a ring,
An on the mid-finger she has three,
An there’s as meikle goud aboon her brow
As woud buy an earldom o lan to me.”

Then up it started Young Bicham,
An sware so loud by Our Lady,
“It can be nane but Shusy Pye
That has come oor the sea to me.”

O quickly ran he down the stair,
O fifteen steps he has made but three,
He’s tane his bonny love in his arms
An a wot he kissd her tenderly.

“O hae you tane a bonny bride?
An hae you quite forsaken me?
An hae ye quite forgotten her
That gae you life an liberty?”

She’s lookit oer her left shoulder
To hide the tears stood in her ee;
“Now fare thee well, Young Bicham,” she says,
“I’ll strive to think nae mair on thee.”

“Take back your daughter, madam,” he says,
“An a double dowry I’ll gie her wi;
For I maun marry my first true love,
That’s done and suffered so much for me.”

He’s tak his bonny love by the han,
And led her to yon fountain stane;
He’s changed her name frae Shusy Pye,
An he’s cald her his bonny love, Lady Jane.

Ballad: The Loving Ballad Of Lord Bateman

(Child, vol. ii. Cockney copy.)

Lord Bateman was a noble lord,
A noble lord of high degree;
He shipped himself all aboard of a ship,
Some foreign country for to see.

He sailed east, he sailed west,
Until he came to famed Turkey,
Where he was taken and put to prison,
Until his life was quite weary.

All in this prison there grew a tree,
O there it grew so stout and strong!
Where he was chained all by the middle,
Until his life was almost gone.

This Turk he had one only daughter,
The fairest my two eyes eer see;
She steal the keys of her father’s prison,
And swore Lord Bateman she would let go free.

O she took him to her father’s cellar,
And gave to him the best of wine;
And every health she drank unto him
Was “I wish, Lord Bateman, as you was mine.”

“O have you got houses, have you got land,
And does Northumberland belong to thee?
And what would you give to the fair young lady

As out of prison would let you go free?”

“O I’ve got houses and I’ve got land,
And half Northumberland belongs to me;
And I will give it all to the fair young lady
As out of prison would let me go free.”

“O in seven long years I’ll make a vow
For seven long years, and keep it strong,
That if you’ll wed no other woman,
O I will wed no other man.”

O she took him to her father’s harbor,
And gave to him a ship of fame,
Saying, “Farewell, farewell to you, Lord Bateman,
I fear I shall never see you again.”

Now seven long years is gone and past,
And fourteen days, well known to me;
She packed up all her gay clothing,
And swore Lord Bateman she would go see.

O when she arrived at Lord Bateman’s castle,
How boldly then she rang the bell!
“Who’s there? who’s there?” cries the proud young porter,
“O come unto me pray quickly tell.”

“O is this here Lord Bateman’s castle,
And is his lordship here within?”
“O yes, O yes,” cries the proud young porter,
“He’s just now taking his young bride in.”

“O bid him to send me a slice of bread,
And a bottle of the very best wine,
And not forgetting the fair young lady
As did release him when close confine.”

O away and away went this proud young porter,
O away and away and away went he,
Until he came to Lord Bateman’s chamber,
Where he went down on his bended knee.

“What news, what news, my proud young porter?
What news, what news? come tell to me:”
“O there is the fairest young lady
As ever my two eyes did see.

“She has got rings on every finger,
And on one finger she has got three;
With as much gay gold about her middle
As would buy half Northumberlee.

“O she bids you to send her a slice of bread,
And a bottle of the very best wine,
And not forgetting the fair young lady
As did release you when close confine.”

Lord Bateman then in passion flew,
And broke his sword in splinters three,
Saying, “I will give half of my father’s land,
If so be as Sophia has crossed the sea.”

Then up and spoke this young bride’s mother,
Who never was heard to speak so free;
Saying, “You’ll not forget my only daughter,
If so be Sophia has crossed the sea.”

“O it’s true I made a bride of your daughter,
But she’s neither the better nor the worse for me;
She came to me with a horse and saddle,
But she may go home in a coach and three.”

Lord Bateman then prepared another marriage,
With both their hearts so full of glee,
Saying, “I will roam no more to foreign countries,
Now that Sophia has crossed the sea.”

Ballad: The Bonnie House O’ Airly

(Child, vol. vii. Early Edition.)

It fell on a day, and a bonnie summer day,
When the corn grew green and yellow,
That there fell out a great dispute
Between Argyle and Airly.

The Duke o’ Montrose has written to Argyle
To come in the morning early,
An’ lead in his men, by the back O’ Dunkeld,
To plunder the bonnie house o’ Airly.

The lady look’d o’er her window sae hie,
And O but she looked weary!
And there she espied the great Argyle
Come to plunder the bonnie house o’ Airly.

“Come down, come down, Lady Margaret,” he says,
“Come down and kiss me fairly,
Or before the morning clear daylight,
I’ll no leave a standing stane in Airly.”

“I wadna kiss thee, great Argyle,
I wadna kiss thee fairly,
I wadna kiss thee, great Argyle,
Gin you shouldna leave a standing stane Airly.”

He has ta’en her by the middle sae sma’,
Says, “Lady, where is your drury?”
“It’s up and down by the bonnie burn side,

Amang the planting of Airly.”

They sought it up, they sought it down,
They sought it late and early,
And found it in the bonnie balm-tree,
That shines on the bowling-green o’ Airly,

He has ta’en her by the left shoulder,
And O but she grat sairly,
And led her down to yon green bank,
Till he plundered the bonnie house o’ Airly.

“O it’s I hae seven braw sons,” she says,
“And the youngest ne’er saw his daddie,
And altho’ I had as mony mae,
I wad gie them a’ to Charlie.

“But gin my good lord had been at hame,
As this night he is wi’ Charlie,
There durst na a Campbell in a’ the west
Hae plundered the bonnie house o’ Airly.

Ballad: Rob Roy

(Child, vol. vi. Early Edition.)

Rob Roy from the Highlands cam,
Unto the Lawlan’ border,
To steal awa a gay ladie
To haud his house in order.
He cam oure the lock o’ Lynn,
Twenty men his arms did carry;
Himsel gaed in, an’ fand her out,
Protesting he would many.

“O will ye gae wi’ me,” he says,
“Or will ye be my honey?
Or will ye be my wedded wife?
For I love you best of any.”
“I winna gae wi’ you,” she says,
“Nor will I be your honey,
Nor will I be your wedded wife;
You love me for my money.”

*

But he set her on a coal-black steed,
Himsel lap on behind her,
An’ he’s awa to the Highland hills,
Whare her frien’s they canna find her.

*

“Rob Roy was my father ca’d,
Macgregor was his name, ladie;

He led a band o’ heroes bauld,
An’ I am here the same, ladie.
Be content, be content,
Be content to stay, ladie,
For thou art my wedded wife
Until thy dying day, ladie.

“He was a hedge unto his frien’s,
A heckle to his foes, ladie,
Every one that durst him wrang,
He took him by the nose, ladie.
I’m as bold, I’m as bold,
I’m as bold, an more, ladie;
He that daurs dispute my word,
Shall feel my guid claymore, ladie.”

Ballad: The Battle Of Killie-Crankie

(Child, vol. vii. Early Edition.)

Clavers and his Highlandmen
Came down upo’ the raw, man,
Who being stout, gave mony a clout;
The lads began to claw then.
With sword and terge into their hand,
Wi which they were nae slaw, man,
Wi mony a fearful heavy sigh,
The lads began to claw then.

O’er bush, o’er bank, o’er ditch, o’er stark,
She flang amang them a’, man;
The butter-box got many knocks,
Their riggings paid for a’ then.
They got their paiks, wi sudden straiks,
Which to their grief they saw, man:
Wi clinkum, clankum o’er their crowns,
The lads began to fa’ then.

Hur skipt about, hur leapt about,
And flang amang them a’, man;
The English blades got broken beads,
Their crowns were cleav’d in twa then.
The durk and door made their last hour,
And prov’d their final fa’, man;
They thought the devil had been there,
That play’d them sic a paw then.

The Solemn League and Covenant

Came whigging up the hills, man;
Thought Highland trews durst not refuse
For to subscribe their bills then.
In Willie’s name, they thought nag ane
Durst stop their course at a’, man,
But hur-nane-sell, wi mony a knock,
Cry’d, “Furich — Whigs awa’,” man.

Sir Evan Du, and his men true,
Came linking up the brink, man;
The Hogan Dutch they feared such,
They bred a horrid stink then.
The true Maclean and his fierce men
Came in amang them a’, man;
Nane durst withstand his heavy hand.
All fled and ran awa’ then.

Oh’ on a ri, Oh’ on a ri,
Why should she lose King Shames, man?
Oh’ rig in di, Oh’ rig in di,
She shall break a’ her banes then;
With *furichinish*, an’ stay a while,
And speak a word or twa, man,
She’s gi’ a straike, out o’er the neck,
Before ye win awa’ then.

Oh fy for shame, ye’re three for ane,
Hur-nane-sell’s won the day, man;
King Shames’ red-coats should be hung up,
Because they ran awa’ then.
Had bent their brows, like Highland trows,
And made as lang a stay, man,
They’d sav’d their king, that sacred thing,
And Willie’d ran awa’ then.

Ballad: Annan Water

(Child, vol. ii. Early Edition.)

“Annan water’s wading deep,
And my love Annie’s wondrous bonny;
And I am laith she suld weet her feet,
Because I love her best of ony.

“Gar saddle me the bonny black, —
Gar saddle sune, and make him ready:
For I will down the Gatehope-Slack,
And all to see my bonny ladye.” —

He has loupen on the bonny black,
He stirr’d him wi’ the spur right sairly;
But, or he wan the Gatehope-Slack,
I think the steed was wae and weary.

He has loupen on the bonny gray,
He rade the right gate and the ready;
I trow he would neither stint nor stay,
For he was seeking his bonny ladye.

O he has ridden o’er field and fell,
Through muir and moss, and mony a mire;
His spurs o’ steel were sair to bide,
And fra her fore-feet flew the fire.

“Now, bonny grey, now play your part!
Gin ye be the steed that wins my deary,
Wi’ corn and hay ye’se be fed for aye,
And never spur sall make you wearie.”

The gray was a mare, and a right good mare;
But when she wan the Annan water,
She couldna hae ridden a furlong mair,
Had a thousand merks been wadded at her.

“O boatman, boatman, put off your boat!
Put off your boat for gowden monie!
I cross the drumly stream the night,
Or never mair I see my honey.” —

“O I was sworn sae late yestreen,
And not by ae aith, but by many;
And for a’ the gowd in fair Scotland,
I dare na take ye through to Annie.”

The side was stey, and the bottom deep,
Frae bank to brae the water pouring;
And the bonny grey mare did sweat for fear,
For she heard the water-kelpy roaring.

O he has pou’d aff his dapperpy coat,
The silver buttons glancèd bonny;
The waistcoat bursted aff his breast,
He was sae full of melancholy.

He has ta’en the ford at that stream tail;
I wot he swam both strong and steady;
But the stream was broad, and his strength did fail,
And he never saw his bonny ladye.

“O wae betide the frush saugh wand!
And wae betide the bush of brier!
It brake into my true love’s hand,
When his strength did fail, and his limbs did tire.

“And wae betide ye, Annan water,
This night that ye are a drumlie river!
For over thee I’ll build a bridge,
That ye never more true love may sever.” —

Ballad: The Elphin Nourrice

(C. K. Sharpe.)

I heard a cow low, a bonnie cow low,
An’ a cow low down in yon glen;
Lang, lang will my young son greet,
Or his mither bid him come ben.

I heard a cow low, a bonnie cow low,
An’ a cow low down in yon fauld;
Lang, lang will my young son greet,
Or is mither take him frae cauld.

Waken, Queen of Elfan,
An hear your Nourrice moan.
O moan ye for your meat,
Or moan ye for your fee,
Or moan ye for the ither bounties
That ladies are wont to gie?

I moan na for my meat,
Nor yet for my fee,
But I mourn for Christened land —
It’s there I fain would be.

O nurse my bairn, Nourice, she says,
Till he stan’ at your knee,
An’ ye’s win hame to Christen land,
Whar fain it’s ye wad be.

O keep my bairn, Nourice,
Till he gang by the hauld,
An’ ye’s win hame to your young son,
Ye left in four nights auld.

Ballad: Cospatrick

(Mackay.)

Cospatrick has sent o’er the faem;
Cospatrick brought his ladye hame;
And fourscore ships have come her wi’,
The ladye by the green-wood tree.

There were twal’ and twal’ wi’ baken bread,
And twal’ and twal’ wi’ gowd sae red,
And twal’ and twal’ wi’ bouted flour,
And twal’ and twal’ wi’ the paramour.

Sweet Willy was a widow’s son,
And at her stirrup he did run;
And she was clad in the finest pall,
But aye she loot the tears down fall.

“O is your saddle set awrye?
Or rides your steed for you owre high?
Or are you mourning, in your tide,
That you suld be Cospatrick’s bride?”

“I am not mourning, at this tide,
That I suld he Cospatrick’s bride;
But I am sorrowing in my mood,
That I suld leave my mother good.”

“But, gentle boy, come tell to me,
What is the custom of thy countrie?”
“The custom thereof, my dame,” he says,

"Will ill a gentle ladye please.

"Seven king's daughters has our lord wedded,
And seven king's daughters has our lord bedded;
But he's cutted their breasts frae their breast-bane,
And sent them mourning hame again.

"Yet, gin you're sure that you're a maid,
Ye may gae safely to his bed;
But gif o' that ye be na sure,
Then hire some damsel o' your bour."

The ladye's called her bour-maiden,
That waiting was unto her train.
"Five thousand marks I'll gie to thee,
To sleep this night with my lord for me."

When bells were rung, and mass was sayne,
And a' men unto bed were gane,
Cospatrick and the bonny maid,
Into ae chamber they were laid.

"Now speak to me, blankets, and speak to me, bed,
And speak, thou sheet, enchanted web;
And speak, my sword, that winna lie,
Is this a true maiden that lies by me?"

"It is not a maid that you hae wedded,
But it is a maid that you hae bedded;
It is a leal maiden that lies by thee,
But not the maiden that it should be."

O wrathfully he left the bed,
And wrathfully his claes on did;
And he has ta'en him through the ha',
And on his mother he did ca'.

"I am the most unhappy man,
That ever was in Christen land?
I courted a maiden, meik and mild,
And I hae gotten naething but a woman wi' child."

"O stay, my son, into this ha',
And sport ye wi' your merry men a';
And I will to the secret bour,
To see how it fares wi' your paramour."

The carline she was stark and stare,
She aff the hinges dang the dure.
"O is your bairn to laird or loun,
Or is it to your father's groom?"

"O hear me, mother, on my knee,
Till my sad story I tell to thee:
O we were sisters, sisters seven,
We were the fairest under heaven.

"It fell on a summer's afternoon,
When a' our toilsome work was done,
We coost the kevils us amang,
To see which suld to the green-wood gang.

"Ohon! alas, for I was youngest,
And aye my weird it was the strongest!
The kevil it on me did fa',
Whilk was the cause of a' my woe.

"For to the green-wood I maun gae,
To pu' the red rose and the slae;
To pu' the red rose and the thyme,

To deck my mother's bour and mine.

"I hadna pu'd a flower but ane,
When by there came a gallant hinde,
Wi' high colled hose and laigh colled shoon,
And he seemed to be some king's son.

"And be I maid, or be I nae,
He kept me there till the close o' day;
And be I maid, or be I nane,
He kept me there till the day was done.

"He gae me a lock o' his yellow hair,
And bade me keep it ever mair;
He gae me a carknet o' bonny beads,
And bade me keep it against my needs.

"He gae to me a gay gold ring,
And bade me keep it abune a' thing."
"What did ye wi' the tokens rare,
That ye gat frae that gallant there?"

"O bring that coffer unto me,
And a' the tokens ye sall see."
"Now stay, daughter, your bour within,
While I gae parley wi' my son."

O she has ta'en her thro' the ha',
And on her son began to ca':
"What did ye wi' the bonny beads,
I bade ye keep against your needs?

"What did you wi' the gay gold ring,
I bade you keep abune a' thing?"
"I gae them to a ladye gay,

I met in green-wood on a day.

“But I wad gie a’ my halls and tours,
I had that ladye within my bours,
But I wad gie my very life,
I had that ladye to my wife.”

“Now keep, my son, your ha’s and tours;
Ye have that bright burd in your bours;
And keep, my son, your very life;
Ye have that ladye to your wife.”

Now, or a month was come and gane,
The ladye bore a bonny son;
And ’twas written on his breast-bane,
“Cospatrick is my father’s name.”

Ballad: Johnnie Armstrang

Some speak of lords, some speak of lairds,
And sic like men of high degree;
Of a gentleman I sing a sang,
Some time call'd Laird of Gilnockie.

The king he writes a loving letter,
With his ain hand sae tenderlie,
And he hath sent it to Johnnie Armstrang,
To come and speak with him speedilie.

The Elliots and Armstrangs did convene,
They were a gallant companie:
"We'll ride and meet our lawful king,
And bring him safe to Gilnockie.

"Make kinnen and capon ready, then,
And venison in great plentie;
We'll welcome here our royal king;
I hope he'll dine at Gilnockie!"

They ran their horse on the Langholm howm,
And brake their spears with meikle main;
The ladies lookit frae their loft windows —
"God bring our men weel hame again!"

When Johnnie came before the king,
With all his men sae brave to see,
The king he moved his bonnet to him;
He ween'd he was a king as well as he.

“May I find grace, my sovereign liege,
Grace for my loyal men and me?
For my name it is Johnnie Armstrang,
And a subject of yours, my liege,” said he.

“Away, away, thou traitor strang!
Out of my sight soon may’st thou be!
I granted never a traitor’s life,
And now I’ll not begin with thee.”

“Grant me my life, my liege, my king!
And a bonnie gift I’ll gi’e to thee;
Full four-and-twenty milk-white steeds,
Were all foal’d in ae year to me.

“I’ll gi’e thee all these milk-white steeds,
That prance and nicher at a spear;
And as meikle gude Inglish gilt,
As four of their braid backs dow bear.”

“Away, away, thou traitor strang!
Out of my sight soon may’st thou be!
I granted never a traitor’s life,
And now I’ll not begin with thee.”

“Grant me my life, my liege, my king!
And a bonnie gift I’ll gi’e to thee:
Gude four-and-twenty ganging mills,
That gang thro’ all the year to me.

“These four-and-twenty mills complete,
Shall gang for thee thro’ all the year;
And as meikle of gude red wheat,
As all their happers dow to bear.”

“Away, away, thou traitor strang!

Out of my sight soon may’st thou be!
I granted never a traitor’s life,
And now I’ll not begin with thee.”

“Grant me my life, my liege, my king!
And a great gift I’ll gi’e to thee:
Bauld four-and-twenty sisters’ sons
Shall for thee fecht, tho’ all shou’d flee.”

“Away, away, thou traitor strang!
Out of my sight soon may’st thou be!
I granted never a traitor’s life,
And now I’ll not begin with thee.”

“Grant me my life, my liege, my king!
And a brave gift I’ll gi’e to thee:
All between here and Newcastle town
Shall pay their yearly rent to thee.”

“Away, away, thou traitor strang!
Out of my sight soon may’st thou be!
I granted never a traitor’s life,
And now I’ll not begin with thee.”

“Ye lied, ye lied, now, king,” he says,
“Altho’ a king and prince ye be!
For I’ve loved naething in my life,
I weel dare say it, but honestie.

“Save a fat horse, and a fair woman,
Twa bonnie dogs to kill a deer;
But England shou’d have found me meal and mault,
Gif I had lived this hundred year.

“She shou’d have found me meal and mault,

And beef and mutton in all plentie;
But never a Scots wife cou’d have said,
That e’er I skaith’d her a puir flee.

“To seek het water beneath cauld ice,
Surely it is a great follie:
I have ask’d grace at a graceless face,
But there is nane for my men and me.

“But had I kenn’d, ere I came frae hame,
How unkind thou wou’dst been to me,
I wou’d ha’e keepit the Border side,
In spite of all thy force and thee.

“Wist England’s king that I was ta’en,
Oh, gin a blythe man he wou’d be!
For ance I slew his sister’s son,
And on his breast-bane brak a tree.”

John wore a girdle about his middle,
Embroider’d o’er with burning gold,
Bespangled with the same metal,
Maist beautiful was to behold.

There hang nine targats at Johnnie’s hat,
An ilk ane worth three hundred pound:
“What wants that knave that a king shou’d have,
But the sword of honour and the crown?

“Oh, where got thee these targats, Johnnie.
That blink sae brawly aboon thy brie?”
“I gat them in the field fechting,
Where, cruel king, thou durst not be.

“Had I my horse and harness gude,
And riding as I wont to be,
It shou’d have been tauld this hundred year,
The meeting of my king and me!

“God be with thee, Kirsty, my brother,
Lang live thou laird of Mangertoun!
Lang may’st thou live on the Border side,
Ere thou see thy brother ride up and down!

“And God he with thee, Kirsty, my son,
Where thou sits on thy nurse’s knee!
But an thou live this hundred year,
Thy father’s better thou’lt never be.

“Farewell, my bonnie Gilnock hall,
Where on Esk side thou standest stout!
Gif I had lived but seven years mair,
I wou’d ha’e gilt thee round about.”

John murder’d was at Carlinrigg,
And all his gallant companie;
But Scotland’s heart was ne’er sae wae,
To see sae mony brave men die;

Because they saved their country dear
Frae Englishmen! Nane were sae bauld
While Johnnie lived on the Border side,
Nane of them durst come near his hauld.

Ballad: Edom O’ Gordon

It fell about the Martinmas,
When the wind blew shrill and cauld,
Said Edom o’ Gordon to his men, —
“We maun draw to a hald.

“And whatna hald shall we draw to,
My merry men and me?
We will gae straight to Towie house,
To see that fair ladye.”

[The ladye stood on her castle wall,
Beheld baith dale and down;
There she was ‘ware of a host of men
Came riding towards the town.

“Oh, see ye not, my merry men all,
Oh, see ye not what I see?
Methinks I see a host of men;
I marvel who they be.”

She thought it had been her own wed lord.
As he came riding hame;
It was the traitor, Edom o’ Gordon,
Wha reck’d nae sin nor shame.]

She had nae sooner buskit hersel’,
And putten on her gown,
Till Edom o’ Gordon and his men
Were round about the town.

They had nae sooner supper set,
Nae sooner said the grace,
Till Edom o’ Gordon and his men
Were round about the place.

The ladye ran to her tower head,
As fast as she cou’d hie,
To see if, by her fair speeches,
She cou’d with him agree.

As soon as he saw this ladye fair.
And her yetts all lockit fast,
He fell into a rage of wrath,
And his heart was all aghast.

“Come down to me, ye ladye gay,
Come down, come down to me;
This night ye shall lye within my arms,
The morn my bride shall be.”

“I winna come down, ye false Gordon,
I winna come down to thee;
I winna forsake my ain dear lord,
That is sae far frae me.”

“Gi’e up your house, ye ladye fair,
Gi’e up your house to me;
Or I shall burn yoursel’ therein,
Bot and your babies three.”

“I winna gi’e up, ye false Gordon,
To nae sic traitor as thee;
Tho’ you shou’d burn mysel’ therein,
Bot and my babies three.

[“But fetch to me my pistolette,
And charge to me my gun;
For, but if I pierce that bluidy butcher,
My babes we will be undone.”

She stiffly stood on her castle wall,
And let the bullets flee;
She miss’d that bluidy butcher’s heart,
Tho’ she slew other three.]

“Set fire to the house!” quo’ the false Gordon,
“Since better may nae be;
And I will burn hersel’ therein,
Bot and her babies three.”

“Wae worth, wae worth ye, Jock, my man,
I paid ye weel your fee;
Why pull ye out the grund-wa’-stance,
Lets in the reek to me?

“And e’en wae worth ye, Jock, my man,
I paid ye weel your hire;
Why pull ye out my grund-wa’-stane,
To me lets in the fire?”

“Ye paid me weel my hire, ladye,
Ye paid me weel my fee;
But now I’m Edom o’ Gordon’s man,
Maun either do or dee.”

Oh, then out spake her youngest son,
Sat on the nurse’s knee:
Says— “Mither dear, gi’e o’er this house,
For the reek it smothers me.”

[“I wou’d gi’e all my gold, my bairn,

Sae wou’d I all my fee,
For ae blast of the westlin’ wind,
To blaw the reek frae thee.]

“But I winna gi’e up my house, my dear,
To nae sic traitor as he;
Come weal, come woe, my jewels fair,
Ye maun take share with me.”

Oh, then out spake her daughter dear,
She was baith jimp and small:
“Oh, row me in a pair of sheets,
And tow me o’er the wall.”

They row’d her in a pair of sheets,
And tow’d her o’er the wall;
But on the point of Gordon’s spear
She got a deadly fall.

Oh, bonnie, bonnie was her mouth,
And cherry were her cheeks;
And clear, clear was her yellow hair,
Whereon the red bluid dreeps.

Then with his spear he turn’d her o’er,
Oh, gin her face was wan!
He said— “You are the first that e’er
I wish’d alive again.”

He turn’d her o’er and o’er again,
Oh, gin her skin was white!
“I might ha’e spared that bonnie face
To ha’e been some man’s delight.

“Busk and boun, my merry men all,

For ill dooms I do guess;
I canna look on that bonnie face,
As it lyes on the grass!”

“Wha looks to freits, my master dear,
Their freits will follow them;
Let it ne’er be said brave Edom o’ Gordon
Was daunted with a dame.”

[But when the ladye saw the fire
Come flaming o’er her head,
She wept, and kissed her children twain;
Said— “Bairns, we been but dead.”

The Gordon then his bugle blew,
And said— “Away, away!
The house of Towie is all in a flame,
I hald it time to gae.”]

Oh, then he spied her ain dear lord,
As he came o’er the lea;
He saw his castle all in a flame,
As far as he could see.

Then sair, oh sair his mind misgave,
And oh, his heart was wae!
“Put on, put on, my wighty men,
As fast as ye can gae.

“Put on, put on, my wighty men,
As fast as ye can drie;
For he that is hindmost of the thrang
Shall ne’er get gude of me!”

Then some they rade, and some they ran,

Full fast out o’er the bent;
But ere the foremost could win up,
Baith ladye and babes were brent.

[He wrang his hands, he rent his hair,
And wept in tearful mood;
“Ah, traitors! for this cruel deed,
Ye shall weep tears of bluid.”

And after the Gordon he has gane,
Sae fast as he might drie;
And soon in the Gordon’s foul heart’s bluid
He’s wroken his dear layde.]

And mony were the mudie men
Lay gasping on the green;
And mony were the fair ladyes
Lay lemanless at hame.

And mony were the mudie men
Lay gasping on the green;
For of fifty men the Gordon brocht,
There were but five gaed hame.

And round, and round the walls he went,
Their ashes for to view;
At last into the flames he flew,
And bade the world adieu.

Ballad: Lady Anne Bothwell’s Lament

(Child, vol. iv. Early Edition.)

Balow, my boy, ly still and sleep,
It grieves me sore to hear thee weep,
If thou’lt be silent, I’ll be glad,
Thy mourning makes my heart full sad.
Balow, my boy, thy mother’s joy,
Thy father bred one great annoy.
Balow, my boy, ly still and sleep,
It grieves me sore to hear thee weep.

Balow, my darling, sleep a while,
And when thou wak’st then sweetly smile;
But smile not as thy father did,
To cozen maids, nay, God forbid;
For in thine eye his look I see,
The tempting look that ruin’d me.
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

When he began to court my love,
And with his sugar’d words to move,
His tempting face, and flatt’ring chear,
In time to me did not appear;
But now I see that cruel he
Cares neither for his babe nor me.
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

Fareweel, fareaeel, thou falsest youth
That ever kist a woman’s mouth.
Let never any after me
Submit unto thy courtesy!
For, if hey do, O! cruel thou

Wilt her abuse and care not how!
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

I was too cred’lous at the first,
To yield thee all a maiden durst.
Thou swore for ever true to prove,
Thy faith unchang’d, unchang’d thy love;
But quick as thought the change is wrought,
Thy love’s no mair, thy promise nought.
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

I wish I were a maid again!
From young men’s flatt’ry I’d refrain;
For now unto my grief I find
They all are perjur’d and unkind;
Bewitching charms bred all my harms; —
Witness my babe lies in my arms.
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

I take my fate from bad to worse,
That I must needs be now a nurse,
And lull my young son on my lap:
From me, sweet orphan, take the pap.
Balow, my child, thy mother mild
Shall wail as from all bliss exil’d.
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

Balow, my boy, weep not for me,
Whose greatest grief’s for wronging thee.
Nor pity her deserved smart,
Who can blame none but her fond heart;
For, too soon tursting latest finds
With fairest tongues are falsest minds.
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

Balow, my boy, thy father’s fled,
When he the thriftless son has played;

Of vows and oaths forgetful, he
Preferr’d the wars to thee and me.
But now, perhaps, thy curse and mine
Make him eat acorns with the swine.
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

But curse not him; perhaps now he,
Stung with remorse, is blessing thee:
Perhaps at death; for who can tell
Whether the judge of heaven or hell,
By some proud foe has struck the blow,
And laid the dear deceiver low?
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

I wish I were into the bounds
Where he lies smother’d in his wounds,
Repeating, as he pants for air,
My name, whom once he call’d his fair;
No woman’s yet so fiercely set
But she’ll forgive, though not forget.
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

If linen lacks, for my love’s sake
Then quickly to him would I make
My smock, once for his body meet,
And wrap him in that winding-sheet.
Ah me! how happy had I been,
If he had ne’er been wrapt therein.
Balow, my boy, *etc.*

Balow, my boy, I’ll weep for thee;
Too soon, alake, thou’lt weep for me:
Thy griefs are growing to a sum,
God grant thee patience when they come;
Born to sustain thy mother’s shame,
A hapless fate, a bastard’s name.
Balow, my boy, ly still and sleep,

It grieves me sore to hear thee weep.

Ballad: Jock O The Side

(Child, Part VI., p. 479.)

Now Liddisdale has ridden a raid,
But I wat they had better staid at hame;
For Mitchell o Winfield he is dead,
And my son Johnie is prisner tane?
With my fa ding diddle, la la dew diddle.

For Mangerton house auld Downie is gane,
Her coats she has kilted up to her knee;
And down the water wi speed she rins,
While tears in spaits fa fast frae her eie.

Then up and bespake the lord Mangerton:
“What news, what news, sister Downie, to me?”
“Bad news, bad news, my lord Mangerton;
Mitchel is killd, and tane they hae my son Johnie.”

“Neer fear, sister Downie,” quo Mangerton;
“I hae yokes of oxen, four-and-twentie,
My barns, my byres, and my faulds, a’ weel filld,
And I’ll part wi them a’ ere Johnie shall die.

“Three men I’ll take to set him free,
Weel harnessd a’ wi best of steel;
The English rogues may hear, and drie
The weight o their braid swords to feel

“The Laird’s Jock ane, the Laird’s Wat twa,
O Hobie Noble, thou ane maun be!

Thy coat is blue, thou has been true,
Since England banishd thee, to me.”

Now, Hobie was an English man,
In Bewcastle-dale was bred and born;
But his misdeeds they were sae great,
They banished him neer to return.

Lord Mangerton then orders gave, —
“Your horses the wrang way maun a’ be shod;
Like gentlemen ye must not seem,
But look like corn-caugers gawn ae road.

“Your armour gude ye maunna shaw,
Nor ance appear like men o weir;
As country lads be all arrayd,
Wi branks and brecham on ilk mare.”

Sae now a’ their horses are shod the wrang way,
And Hobie has mounted his grey sae fine,
Jock his lively bay, Wat’s on his white horse behind,
And on they rode for the water o Tyne.

At the Cholerford they a’ light down,
And there, wi the help o the light o the moon,
A tree they cut, wi fifteen naggs upon each side,
To climb up the wall of Newcastle toun.

But when they came to Newcastle toun,
And were alighted at the wa,
They fand their tree three ells oer laigh,
They fand their stick baith short aid sma.

Then up and spake the Laird’s ain Jock,

“There’s naething for’t; the gates we maun force.”
But when they cam the gate unto,
A proud porter withstood baith men and horse.

His neck in twa I wat they hae wrung;
Wi foot or hand he neer play’d paw;
His life and his keys at anes they hae taen,
And cast his body ahind the wa.

Now soon they reached Newcastle jail,
And to the prisner thus they call:
“Sleips thou, wakes thou, Jock o the Side,
Or is thou wearied o thy thrall?”

Jock answers thus, wi dolefu tone:
“Aft, aft I wake, I seldom sleip;
But wha’s this kens my name sae weel,
And thus to hear my waes does seek?”

Then up and spake the good Laird’s Jock:
“Neer fear ye now, my billie,” quo he;
“For here’s the Laird’s Jock, the Laird’s Wat,
And Hobie Noble, come to set thee free.”

“Oh, had thy tongue, and speak nae mair,
And o thy talk now let me be!
For if a’ Liddesdale were here the night,
The morn’s the day that I maun die.

“Full fifteen stane o Spanish iron,
They hae laid a’ right sair on me;
Wi locks and keys I am fast bound
Into this dungeon mirk and drearie.”

“Fear ye no that,” quo the Laird’s Jock;

“A faint heart neer wan a fair ladie;
Work thou within, we’ll work without,
And I’ll be sworn we set thee free.”

The first strong dore that they came at,
They loosed it without a key;
The next chaind dore that they cam at,
They gard it a’ in flinders flee.

The prisner now, upo his back,
The Laird’s Jock’s gotten up fu hie;
And down the stair him, irons and a’,
Wi nae sma speed and joy brings he.

“Now, Jock, I wat,” quo Hobie Noble,
“Part o the weight ye may lay on me,”
“I wat weel no,” quo the Laird’s Jock
“I count him lighter than a flee.”

Sae out at the gates they a’ are gane,
The prisner’s set on horseback hie;
And now wi speed they’ve tane the gate;
While ilk ane jokes fu wantonlie.

“O Jock, sae winsomely’s ye ride,
Wi baith your feet upo ae side!
Sae weel’s ye’re harnessd, and sae trig!
In troth ye sit like ony bride.”

The night, tho wat, they didna mind,
But hied them on fu mirrilie,
Until they cam to Cholerford brae,
Where the water ran like mountains hie.

But when they came to Cholerford,

There they met with an auld man;
Says, “Honest man, will the water ride?
Tell us in haste, if that ye can.”

“I wat weel no,” quo the good auld man;
“Here I hae livd this threty yeirs and three,
And I neer yet saw the Tyne sae big,
Nor rinning ance sae like a sea.”

Then up and spake the Laird’s saft Wat,
The greatest coward in the company;
“Now halt, now halt, we needna try’t;
The day is comd we a’ maun die!”

“Poor faint-hearted thief!” quo the Laird’s Jock,
“There’ll nae man die but he that’s fie;
I’ll lead ye a’ right safely through;
Lift ye the prisner on ahint me.

Sae now the water they a’ hae tane,
By anes and ’twas they a’ swam through
“Here are we a’ safe,” says the Laird’s Jock,
“And, poor faint Wat, what think ye now?”

They scarce the ither side had won,
When twenty men they saw pursue;
Frae Newcastle town they had been sent,
A’ English lads right good and true.

But when the land-sergeant the water saw,
“It winna ride, my lads,” quo he;
Then out he cries, “Ye the prisner may take,
But leave the irons, I pray, to me.”

“I wat weel no,” cryd the Laird’s Jock,
“I’ll keep them a’; shoon to my mare they’ll be;

My good grey mare; for I am sure,
She’s bought them a’ fu dear frae thee.”

Sae now they’re away for Liddisdale,
Een as fast as they coud them hie;
The prisner’s brought to his ain fireside,
And there o’s airns they make him free.

“Now, Jock, my billie,” quo a’ the three,
“The day was comd thou was to die;
But thou’s as weel at thy ain fireside,
Now sitting, I think, ‘tween thee and me.”

They hae gard fill up ae punch-bowl,
And after it they maun hae anither,
And thus the night they a’ hae spent,
Just as they had been brither and brither.

Ballad: Lord Thomas And Fair Annet

(Child, Part III., p. 182.)

Lord Thomas and Fair Annet
Sate a’ day on a hill;
Whan night was cum, and sun was sett,
They had not talkt their fill.

Lord Thomas said a word in jest,
Fair Annet took it ill:
“A, I will nevir wed a wife
Against my ain friend’s will.”

“Gif ye wull nevir wed a wife,
A wife wull neir wed yee;”
Sae he is hame to tell his mither,
And knelt upon his knee.

“O rede, O rede, mither,” he says,
“A gude rede gie to mee;
O sall I tak the nut-browne bride,
And let Faire Annet bee?”

“The nut-browne bride haes gowd and gear,
Fair Annet she has gat nane;
And the little beauty Fair Annet haes
O it wull soon be gane.”

And he has till his brother gane:
“Now, brother, rede ye mee;
A, sall I marrie the nut-browne bride,
And let Fair Annet bee?”

“The nut-browne bride has oxen, brother,
The nut-browne bride has kye;
I wad hae ye marrie the nut-browne bride,
And cast Fair Annet bye.”

“Her oxen may dye i’ the house, billie,
And her kye into the byre;
And I sall hae nothing to mysell
Bot a fat fadge by the fyre.”

And he has till his sister gane:
“Now, sister, rede ye mee;
O sall I marrie the nut-browne bride,
And set Fair Annet free?”

“I’se rede ye tak Fair Annet, Thomas,
And let the browne bride alane;
Lest ye sould sigh, and say, Alace,
What is this we brought hame!”

“No, I will tak my mither’s counsel,
And marrie me owt o hand;
And I will tak the nut-browne bride,
Fair Annet may leive the land.”

Up then rose Fair Annet’s father,
Twa hours or it wer day,
And he is gane unto the bower
Wherein Fair Annet lay.

“Rise up, rise up, Fair Annet,” he says
“Put on your silken sheene;
Let us gae to St. Marie’s Kirke,
And see that rich weddeen.”

“My maides, gae to my dressing-roome,
And dress to me my hair;
Whaireir yee laid a plait before,
See yee lay ten times mair.

“My maids, gae to my dressing-room,
And dress to me my smock;
The one half is o the holland fine,
The other o needle-work.”

The horse Fair Annet rade upon,
He amblit like the wind;
Wi siller he was shod before,
Wi burning gowd behind.

Four and twanty siller bells
Wer a’ tyed till his mane,
And yae tift o the norland wind,
They tinkled ane by ane.

Four and twanty gay gude knichts
Rade by Fair Annet’s side,
And four and twanty fair ladies,
As gin she had bin a bride.

And whan she cam to Marie’s Kirk,
She sat on Marie’s stean:
The cleading that Fair Annet had on
It skinkled in their een.

And whan she cam into the kirk,
She shimmerd like the sun;
The belt that was about her waist
Was a’ wi pearles bedone.

She sat her by the nut-browne bride,
And her een they wer sae clear,
Lord Thomas he clean forgat the bride,
When Fair Annet drew near.

He had a rose into his hand,
He gae it kisses three,
And reaching by the nut-browne bride,
Laid it on Fair Annet’s knee.

Up then spak the nut-browne bride,
She spak wi meikle spite:
“And whair gat ye that rose-water,
That does mak yee sae white?”

“O I did get the rose-water
Whair ye wull neir get nane,
For I did get that very rose-water
Into my mither’s wame.”

The bride she drew a long bodkin
Frae out her gay head-gear,
And strake Fair Annet unto the heart,
That word spak nevir mair.

Lord Thomas he saw Fair Annet wex pale,
And marvelit what mote bee;
But when he saw her dear heart’s blude,
A’ wood-wroth wexed bee.

He drew his dagger that was sae sharp,
That was sae sharp and meet,
And drave it into the nut-browne bride,

That fell deid at his feit.

“Now stay for me, dear Annet,” he sed,
“Now stay, my dear,” he cry’d;
Then strake the dagger untill his heart,
And fell deid by her side.

Lord Thomas was buried without kirk-wa,
Fair Annet within the quiere,
And o the ane thair grew a birk,
The other a bonny briere.

And ay they grew, and ay they threw,
As they wad faine be neare;
And by this ye may ken right weil
They were twa luvers deare.

Ballad: Fair Annie

(Child, Part III., p. 69.)

“It’s narrow, narrow, make your bed,
And learn to lie your lane:
For I’m ga’n oer the sea, Fair Annie,
A braw bride to bring hame.
Wi her I will get gowd and gear;
Wi you I neer got nane.

“But wha will bake my bridal bread,
Or brew my bridal ale?
And wha will welcome my brisk bride,
That I bring oer the dale?”

“It’s I will bake your bridal bread,
And brew your bridal ale,
And I will welcome your brisk bride,
That you bring oer the dale.”

“But she that welcomes my brisk bride
Maun gang like maiden fair;
She maun lace on her robe sae jimp,
And braid her yellow hair.”

“But how can I gang maiden-like,
When maiden I am nane?
Have I not born seven sons to thee,
And am with child again?”

She’s taen her young son in her arms,
Another in her hand,

And she’s up to the highest tower,
To see him come to land.

“Come up, come up, my eldest son,
And look oer yon sea-strand,
And see your father’s new-come bride,
Before she come to land.”

“Come down, come down, my mother dear,
Come frae the castle wa!
I fear, if langer ye stand there,
Ye’ll let yoursell down fa.”

And she gaed down, and farther down,
Her love’s ship for to see,
And the topmast and the mainmast
Shone like the silver free.

And she’s gane down, and farther down,
The bride’s ship to behold,
And the topmast and the mainmast
They shone just like the gold.

She’s taen her seven sons in her hand,
I wot she didna fail;
She met Lord Thomas and his bride,
As they came oer the dale.

“You’re welcome to your house, Lord Thomas,
You’re welcome to your land;
You’re welcome with your fair ladye,
That you lead by the hand.

“You’re welcome to your ha’s, ladye,

You’re welcome to your bowers;
Your welcome to your hame, ladye,
For a’ that’s here is yours.”

“I thank thee, Annie; I thank thee, Annie,
Sae dearly as I thank thee;
You’re the likest to my sister Annie,
That ever I did see.

“There came a knight out oer the sea,
And steald my sister away;
The shame scoup in his company,
And land where’er he gae!”

She hang ae napkin at the door,
Another in the ha,
And a’ to wipe the trickling tears,
Sae fast as they did fa.

And aye she served the lang tables
With white bread and with wine,
And aye she drank the wan water,
To had her colour fine.

And aye she served the lang tables,
With white bread and with brown;
And aye she turned her round about,
Sae fast the tears fell down.

And he’s taen down the silk napkin,
Hung on a silver pin,
And aye he wipes the tear trickling
A’down her cheek and chin.

And aye he turn’d him round about,

And smiled amang his men;
Says, “Like ye best the old ladye,
Or her that’s new come hame?”

When bells were rung, and mass was sung,
And a’ men bound to bed,
Lord Thomas and his new-come bride
To their chamber they were gaed.

Annie made her bed a little forbye,
To hear what they might say;
“And ever alas!” Fair Annie cried,
“That I should see this day!

“Gin my seven sons were seven young rats,
Running on the castle wa,
And I were a grey cat mysell,
I soon would worry them a’.

“Gin my young sons were seven young hares,
Running oer yon lilly lee,
And I were a grew hound mysell,
Soon worried they a’ should be.”

And wae and sad Fair Annie sat,
And drearie was her sang,
And ever, as she sobbd and grat,
“Wae to the man that did the wrang!”

“My gown is on,” said the new-come bride,
“My shoes are on my feet,
And I will to Fair Annie’s chamber,
And see what gars her greet.

“What ails ye, what ails ye, Fair Annie,

That ye make sic a moan?
Has your wine-barrels cast the girds,
Or is your white bread gone?

“O wha was’t was your father, Annie,
Or wha was’t was your mother?
And had ye ony sister, Annie,
Or had ye ony brother?”

“The Earl of Wemyss was my father,
The Countess of Wemyss my mother;
And a’ the folk about the house
To me were sister and brother.”

“If the Earl of Wemyss was your father,
I wot sae was he mine;
And it shall not be for lack o gowd
That ye your love sall fyne.

“For I have seven ships o mine ain,
A’ loaded to the brim,
And I will gie them a’ to thee
Wi four to thine eldest son:
But thanks to a’ the powers in heaven
That I gae maiden hame!”

Ballad: The Dowie Dens Of Yarrow

(Child, Part III. Early Edition.)

Late at e’en, drinking the wine,
And ere they paid the lawing,
They set a combat them between,
To fight it in the dawing.

“Oh, stay at hame, my noble lord,
Oh, stay at hame, my marrow!
My cruel brother will you betray
On the dowie houms of Yarrow.”

“Oh, fare ye weel, my ladye gaye!
Oh, fare ye weel, my Sarah!
For I maun gae, though I ne’er return,
Frae the dowie banks of Yarrow.”

She kiss’d his cheek, she kaim’d his hair,
As oft she had done before, O;
She belted him with his noble brand,
And he’s away to Yarrow.

As he gaed up the Tennies bank,
I wot he gaed wi’ sorrow,
Till, down in a den, he spied nine arm’d men,
On the dowie houms of Yarrow.

“Oh, come ye here to part your land,
The bonnie Forest thorough?
Or come ye here to wield your brand,
On the dowie houms of Yarrow?”

"I come not here to part my land,
And neither to beg nor borrow;
I come to wield my noble brand,
On the bonnie banks of Yarrow.

"If I see all, ye're nine to ane;
An that's an unequal marrow:
Yet will I fight, while lasts my brand,
On the bonnie banks of Yarrow."

Four has he hurt, and five has slain,
On the bloody braes of Yarrow;
Till that stubborn knight came him behind,
And ran his body thorough.

"Gae hame, gae hame, good-brother John,
And tell your sister Sarah,
To come and lift her leafu' lord;
He's sleepin' sound on Yarrow."

"Yestreen I dream'd a dolefu' dream;
I fear there will be sorrow!
I dream'd I pu'd the heather green,
Wi' my true love, on Yarrow.

"O gentle wind, that bloweth south,
From where my love repaireth,
Convey a kiss from his dear mouth,
And tell me how he fareth!

"But in the glen strive armed men;
They've wrought me dole and sorrow;
They've slain — the comeliest knight they've slain —
He bleeding lies on Yarrow."

As she sped down yon high, high hill,
She gaed wi’ dole and sorrow,
And in the den spied ten slain men,
On the dowie banks of Yarrow.

She kiss’d his cheek, she kaim’d his hair,
She search’d his wounds all thorough,
She kiss’d them, till her lips grew red,
On the dowie houms of Yarrow.

“Now, haud your tongue, my daughter dear!
For a’ this breeds but sorrow;
I’ll wed ye to a better lord
Than him ye lost on Yarrow.”

“Oh, haud your tongue, my father dear!
Ye mind me but of sorrow:
A fairer rose did never bloom
Than now lies cropp’d on Yarrow.”

Ballad: Sir Roland

(Child, vol. i. Early Edition.)

Whan he cam to his ain luve's bouir
He tirled at the pin,
And sae ready was his fair fause luve
To rise and let him in.

"O welcome, welcome, Sir Roland," she says,
"Thrice welcome thou art to me;
For this night thou wilt feast in my secret bouir,
And to-morrow we'll wedded be."

"This night is hallow-eve," he said,
"And to-morrow is hallow-day;
And I dreamed a drearie dream yestreen,
That has made my heart fu' wae.

"I dreamed a drearie dream yestreen,
And I wish it may cum to gude:
I dreamed that ye slew my best grew hound,
And gied me his lappered blude."

*

"Unbuckle your belt, Sir Roland," she said,
And set you safely down."
O your chamber is very dark, fair maid,
And the night is wondrous lown."

"Yes, dark, dark is my secret bouir,
And lown the midnight may be;

For there is none waking in a’ this tower
But thou, my true love, and me.”

*

She has mounted on her true love’s steed,
By the ae light o’ the moon;
She has whipped him and spurred him,
And roundly she rade frae the toun.

She hadna ridden a mile o’ gate,
Never a mile but ane,
When she was aware of a tall young man,
Slow riding o’er the plain,

She turned her to the right about,
Then to the left turn’d she;
But aye, ‘tween her and the wan moonlight,
That tall knight did she see.

And he was riding burd alane,
On a horse as black as jet,
But tho’ she followed him fast and fell,
No nearer could she get.

“O stop! O stop! young man,” she said;
“For I in dule am dight;
O stop, and win a fair lady’s luve,
If you be a leal true knight.”

But nothing did the tall knight say,
And nothing did he blin;
Still slowly ride he on before
And fast she rade behind.

She whipped her steed, she spurred her steed,
Till his breast was all a foam;
But nearer unto that tall young knight,
By Our Ladye she could not come.

“O if you be a gay young knight,
As well I trow you be,
Pull tight your bridle reins, and stay
Till I come up to thee.”

But nothing did that tall knight say,
And no whit did he blin,
Until he reached a broad river’s side
And there he drew his rein.

“O is this water deep?” he said,
“As it is wondrous dun?
Or is it sic as a saikless maid,
And a leal true knight may swim?”

“The water it is deep,” she said,
“As it is wondrous dun;
But it is sic as a saikless maid,
And a leal true knight may swim.”

The knight spurred on his tall black steed;
The lady spurred on her brown;
And fast they rade unto the flood,
And fast they baith swam down.

“The water weets my tae,” she said;
“The water weets my knee,
And hold up my bridle reins, sir knight,
For the sake of Our Ladye.”

“If I would help thee now,” he said,

“It were a deadly sin,
For I’ve sworn neir to trust a fair may’s word,
Till the water weets her chin.”

“Oh, the water weets my waist,” she said,
“Sae does it weet my skin,
And my aching heart rins round about,
The burn maks sic a din.

“The water is waxing deeper still,
Sae does it wax mair wide;
And aye the farther that we ride on,
Farther off is the other side.

“O help me now, thou false, false knight,
Have pity on my youth,
For now the water jawes owre my head,
And it gurgles in my mouth.”

The knight turned right and round about,
All in the middle stream;
And he stretched out his head to that lady,
But loudly she did scream.

“O this is hallow-morn,” he said,
“And it is your bridal-day,
But sad would be that gay wedding,
If bridegroom and bride were away.

“And ride on, ride on, proud Margaret!
Till the water comes o’er your bree,
For the bride maun ride deep, and deeper yet,
Wha rides this ford wi’ me.

“Turn round, turn round, proud Margaret!
Turn ye round, and look on me,
Thou hast killed a true knight under trust,
And his ghost now links on with thee.”

Ballad: Rose The Red And White Lily

(Child, Part IV.)

O Rose the Red and White Lilly,
Their mother dear was dead,
And their father married an ill woman,
Wishd them twa little guede.

Yet she had twa as fu fair sons
As eer brake manis bread,
And the tane of them loed her White Lilly,
And the tither lood Rose the Red.

O, biggit ha they a bigly bowr,
And strawn it oer wi san,
And there was mair mirth i the ladies' bowr
Than in a' their father's lan.

But out it spake their step-mother,
Wha stood a little foreby:
"I hope to live and play the prank
Sal gar your loud sang ly."

She's calld upon her eldest son:
"Come here, my son, to me;
It fears me sair, my eldest son,
That ye maun sail the sea."

"Gin it fear you sair, my mither dear,
Your bidding I maun dee;
But be never war to Rose the Red

Than ye ha been to me."

"O had your tongue, my eldest son,
For sma sal be her part;
You'll nae get a kiss o her comely mouth
Gin your very fair heart should break."

She's calld upon her youngest son:
"Come here, my son, to me;
It fears me sair, my youngest son,
That ye maun sail the sea."

"Gin it fear you sair, my mither dear,
Your bidding I maun dee;
But be never war to White Lilly
Than ye ha been to me."

"O haud your tongue, my youngest son,
For sma sall be her part;
You'll neer get a kiss o her comely mouth
Tho your very fair heart should break."

When Rose the Red and White Lilly
Saw their twa loves were gane,
Then stopped ha they their loud, loud sang,
And tane up the still moarnin;
And their step-mother stood listnin by,
To hear the ladies' mean.

Then out it spake her, White Lily;
"My sister, we'll be gane;
Why shou'd we stay in Barnsdale,
To waste our youth in pain?"

Then cutted ha they their green cloathing,
A little below their knee;

And sae ha they their yallow hair,
A little aboon there bree;
And they’ve doen them to haely chapel
Was christened by Our Ladye.

There ha they changed their ain twa names,
Sae far frae ony town;
And the tane o them hight Sweet Willy,
And the tither o them Roge the Roun.

Between this twa a vow was made,
An they sware it to fulfil;
That at three blasts o a buglehorn,
She’d come her sister till.

Now Sweet Willy’s gane to the kingis court,
Her true-love for to see,
And Roge the Roun to good green wood,
Brown Robin’s man to be.

As it fell out upon a day,
They a did put the stane;
Full seven foot ayont them a
She gard the puttin-stane gang.

She leand her back against an oak,
And gae a loud Ohone!
Then out it spake him Brown Robin,
“But that’s a woman’s moan!”

“Oh, ken ye by my red rose lip?
Or by my yallow hair;
Or ken ye by my milk-white breast?
For ye never saw it bare?”

“I ken no by your red rose lip,
Nor by your yallow hair;
Nor ken I by your milk-white breast,
For I never saw it bare;
But, come to your bowr whaever sae likes,
Will find a ladye there.”

“Oh, gin ye come to my bowr within,
Thro fraud, deceit, or guile,
Wi this same bran that’s in my han
I swear I will thee kill.”

“But I will come thy bowr within,
An spear nae leave,” quoth he;
“An this same bran that’s i my ban,
I sall ware back on the.”

About the tenth hour of the night,
The ladie’s bowr door was broken,
An eer the first hour of the day
The bonny knave bairn was gotten.

When days were gane and months were run,
The ladye took travailing,
And sair she cry’d for a bow’r-woman,
For to wait her upon.

Then out it spake him, Brown Robin:
“Now what needs a’ this din?
For what coud any woman do
But I coud do the same?”

“Twas never my mither’s fashion,” she says,
“Nor sall it ever be mine,

That belted knights shoud eer remain
Where ladies dreed their pine.

“But ye take up that buglehorn,
An blaw a blast for me;
I ha a brother i the kingis court
Will come me quickly ti.”

“O gin ye ha a brither on earth
That ye love better nor me,
Ye blaw the horn yoursel,” he says,
“For ae blast I winna gie.”

She’s set the horn till her mouth,
And she’s blawn three blasts sae shrill;
Sweet Willy heard i the kingis court,
And came her quickly till.

Then up it started Brown Robin,
An an angry man was he:
“There comes nae man this bowr within
But first must fight wi me.”

O they hae fought that bowr within
Till the sun was gaing down,
Till drops o blude frae Rose the Red
Cam trailing to the groun.

She leand her back against the wa,
Says, “Robin, let a’ be;
For it is a lady born and bred
That’s foughten sae well wi thee.”

O seven foot he lap a back;
Says, “Alas, and wae is me!
I never wisht in a’ my life,

A woman’s blude to see;
An ae for the sake of ae fair maid
Whose name was White Lilly.”

Then out it spake her White Lilly,
An a hearty laugh laugh she:
“She’s lived wi you this year an mair,
Tho ye kenntna it was she.”

Now word has gane thro a’ the lan,
Before a month was done,
That Brown Robin’s man, in good green wood,
Had born a bonny young son.

The word has gane to the kingis court,
An to the king himsel;
“Now, by my fay,” the king could say,
“The like was never heard tell!”

Then out it spake him Bold Arthur,
An a hearty laugh laugh he:
“I trow some may has playd the loun,
And fled her ain country.”

“Bring me my steed,” then cry’d the king,
“My bow and arrows keen;
I’ll ride mysel to good green wood,
An see what’s to be seen.”

“An’t please your grace,” said Bold Arthur,
“My liege, I’ll gang you wi,
An try to fin a little foot-page,
That’s strayd awa frae me.”

O they’ve hunted i the good green wood
The buck but an the rae,

An they drew near Brown Robin’s bowr,
About the close of day.

Then out it spake the king in hast,
Says, “Arthur look an see
Gin that be no your little foot-page
That leans against yon tree.”

Then Arthur took his buglehorn,
An blew a blast sae shrill;
Sweet Willy started at the sound,
An ran him quickly till.

“O wanted ye your meat, Willy?
Or wanted ye your fee?
Or gat ye ever an angry word,
That ye ran awa frae me?”

“I wanted nought, my master dear;
To me ye ay was good;
I came but to see my ae brother,
That wons in this green wood.”

Then out it spake the king again,
Says, “Bonny boy, tell to me,
Wha lives into yon bigly bowr,
Stands by yon green oak tree?”

“Oh, pardon me,” says Sweet Willie,
“My liege, I dare no tell;
An I pray you go no near that bowr,
For fear they do you fell.”

“Oh, haud your tongue, my bonny boy,
For I winna be said nay;
But I will gang that bowr within,

Betide me weal or wae."

They've lighted off their milk-white steeds,
An saftly enterd in,
And there they saw her White Lilly,
Nursing her bonny young son.

"Now, by the rood," the king coud say,
"This is a comely sight;
I trow, instead of a forrester's man,
This is a lady bright!"

Then out it spake her, Rose the Red,
An fell low down on her knee:
"Oh, pardon us, my gracious liege,
An our story I'll tell thee.

"Our father was a wealthy lord,
That wond in Barnsdale;
But we had a wicked step-mother,
That wrought us meickle bale.

"Yet she had twa as fu fair sons
As ever the sun did see,
An the tane of them lood my sister dear,
An the tother said he lood me."

Then out it spake him Bold Arthur,
As by the king he stood:
"Now, by the faith o my body,
This shoud be Rose the Red!"

Then in it came him Brown Robin,
Frae hunting O the deer;
But whan he saw the king was there,
He started back for fear.

The king has taen him by the hand,
An bide him naithing dread;
Says, “Ye maun leave the good greenwood,
Come to the court wi speed.”

Then up he took White Lilly’s son,
An set him on his knee;
Says— “Gin ye live to wield a bran,
My bowman ye sall bee.”

The king he sent for robes of green,
An girdles o shinning gold;
He gart the ladies be arrayd
Most comely to behold.

They’ve done them unto Mary kirk,
An there gat fair wedding,
An fan the news spread oer the lan,
For joy the bells did ring.

Then out it spake her Rose the Red,
An a hearty laugh laugh she:
“I wonder what would our step-dame say,
Gin she his sight did see!”

Ballad: The Battle Of Harlaw — Evergreen Version

(Child, vol. vii. Early Edition, Appendix.)

Frae Dunidier as I cam throuch,
Doun by the hill of Banochie,
Allangst the lands of Garioch.
Grit pitie was to heir and se
The noys and dulesum hermonie,
That evir that dreiry day did daw!
Cryand the corynoch on hie,
Alas! alas! for the Harlaw.

I marvlit what the matter meant;
All folks were in a fiery fariy:
I wist nocht wha was fae or freind,
Yet quietly I did me carrie.
But sen the days of auld King Hairy,
Sic slauchter was not hard nor sene,
And thair I had nae tyme to tairy,
For bissiness in Aberdene.

Thus as I walkit on the way,
To Inverury as I went,
I met a man, and bad him stay,
Requeisting him to mak me quaint
Of the beginning and the event
That happenit thair at the Harlaw;
Then he entreited me to tak tent,
And he the truth sould to me schaw.

Grit Donald of the Ysles did claim

Unto the lands of Ross sum richt,
And to the governour he came,
Them for to haif, gif that he micht,
Wha saw his interest was but slicht,
And thairfore answerit with disdain.
He hastit hame baith day and nicht,
And sent nae bodward back again.

But Donald richt impatient
Of that answer Duke Robert gaif,
He vow'd to God Omniyotent,
All the hale lands of Ross to half,
Or ells be graithed in his graif:
He wald not quat his richt for nocht,
Nor be abusit like a slaif;
That bargin sould be deirly bocht.

Then haistylie he did command
That all his weir-men should convene;
Ilk an well harnisit frae hand,
To melt and heir what he did mein.
He waxit wrath and vowit tein;
Sweirand he wald surpryse the North,
Subdew the brugh of Aberdene,
Mearns, Angus, and all Fyfe to Forth.

Thus with the weir-men of the yles,
Wha war ay at his bidding bown,
With money maid, with forss and wyls,
Richt far and neir, baith up and doun,
Throw mount and muir, frae town to town,
Allangst the lands of Ross he roars,
And all obey'd at his bandown,
Evin frae the North to Suthren shoars.

Then all the countrie men did yield;
For nae resistans durst they mak,
Nor offer batill in the feild,
Be forss of arms to beir him bak.
Syne they resolvit all and spak,
That best it was for thair behoif,
They sould him for thair chiftain tak,
Believing weil he did them luve.

Then he a proclamation maid,
All men to meet at Inverness,
Throw Murray land to mak a raid,
Frae Arthursyre unto Spey-ness.
And further mair, he sent express,
To schaw his collours and ensenzie,
To all and sindry, mair and less,
Throchout the bounds of Byne and Enzie.

And then throw fair Strathbogie land
His purpose was for to pursew,
And whatsoevir durst gainstand,
That race they should full sairly rew.
Then he bad all his men be trew,
And him defend by forss and slicht,
And promist them rewardis anew,
And mak them men of mekle micht.

Without resistans, as he said,
Throw all these parts he stoutly past,
Where sum war wae, and sum war glaid,
But Garioch was all agast.
Throw all these feilds be sped him fast,
For sic a sicht was never sene;
And then, forsuith, he langd at last
To se the bruch of Aberdene.

To hinder this prowd enterprise,
The stout and michty Erl of Marr
With all his men in arms did ryse,
Even frae Curgarf to Craigyvar:
And down the syde of Don richt far,
Angus and Mearns did all convene
To fecht, or Donald came sae nar
The ryall bruch of Aberdene.

And thus the martial Erle of Marr
Marcht with his men in richt array;
Befoir his enemis was aware,
His banner bauldly did display.
For weil enewch they kent the way,
And all their semblance well they saw:
Without all dangir or delay,
Come haistily to the Harlaw.

With him the braif Lord Ogilvy,
Of Angus sheriff principall,
The constable of gude Dundè,
The vanguard led before them all.
Suppose in number they war small,
Thay first richt bauldlie did pursew,
And maid thair faes befor them fall,
Wha then that race did sairly rew.

And then the worthy Lord Salton,
The strong undoubted Laird of Drum,
The stalwart Laird of Lawristone,
With ilk thair forces all and sum.
Panmuir with all his men, did cum,
The provost of braif Aberdene,
With trumpets and with tuick of drum,
Came schortly in thair armour schene.

These with the Earle of Marr came on,
In the reir-ward richt orderlie,
Thair enemies to sett upon;
In awfull manner hardilie,
Togither vowit to live and die,
Since they had marchit mony mylis,
For to suppress the tyrannie
Of douted Donald of the Ysles.

But he, in number ten to ane,
Right subtilè alang did ryde,
With Malcomtosch, and fell Maclean,
With all thair power at thair syde;
Presumeand on their strenth and pryde,
Without all feir or ony aw,
Richt bauldie battil did abyde,
Hard by the town of fair Harlaw.

The armies met, the trumpet sounds,
The dandring drums alloud did touk,
Baith armies byding on the bounds,
Till ane of them the feild sould bruik.
Nae help was thairfor, nane wald jouk,
Ferss was the fecht on ilka syde,
And on the ground lay mony a bouk
Of them that thair did battil byd.

With doutsum victorie they dealt,
The bludy battil lastit lang;
Each man fits nibours forss thair felt,
The weakest aft-tymes gat the wrang:
Thair was nae mowis thair them amang,
Naithing was hard but heavy knocks,
That eccho mad a dulefull sang,
Thairto resounding frae the rocks.

But Donalds men at last gaif back,
For they war all out of array:
The Earl of Marris men throw them brak,
Pursewing shairply in thair way,
Thair enemys to tak or slay,
Be dynt of forss to gar them yield;
Wha war richt blyth to win away,
And sae for feirdness tint the feild.

Then Donald fled, and that full fast,
To mountains hich for all his micht;
For he and his war all agast,
And ran till they war out of sicht;
And sae of Ross he lost his richt,
Thocht mony men with hem he brocht;
Towards the yles fled day and nicht,
And all he wan was deirlie bocht.

This is (quod he) the richt report
Of all that I did heir and knaw;
Thocht my discourse be sumthing schort,
Tak this to be a richt suthe saw:
Contrairie God and the kings law,
Thair was spilt mekle Christian blude,
Into the battil of Harlaw:
This is the sum, sae I conclude.

But yet a bonnie while abide,
And I sall mak thee cleirly ken
What slaughter was on ilkay syde,
Of Lowland and of Highland men,
Wha for thair awin haif evir bene;
These lazie lowns micht weil be spared,
Chased like deers into their dens,
And gat their wages for reward.

Malcomtosh, of the clan heid-cheif,
Macklean with his grit hauchty heid,
With all thair succour and relief,
War dulefully dung to the deid;
And now we are freid of thair feid,
They will not lang to cum again;
Thousands with them, without remeid,
On Donald’s syd, that day war slain.

And on the uther syde war lost,
Into the feild that dismal day,
Chief men of worth, of mekle cost,
To be lamentit sair for ay.
The Lord Saltoun of Rothemay,
A man of micht and mekle main;
Grit dolour was for his decay,
That sae unhappylie was slain.

Of the best men amang them was
The gracious gude Lord Ogilvy,
The sheriff-principal of Angus,
Renownit for truth and equitie,
For faith and magnanimitie;
He had few fallows in the field,
Yet fell by fatall destinie,
For he naeways wad grant to yield.

Sir James Scrimgeor of Duddap, knicht,
Grit constabill of fair Dundè,
Unto the dulefull deith was dicht;
The kingis cheif bannerman was he,
A valiant man of chevalrie,
Whose predecessors wan that place
At Spey, with gude King William frie
‘Gainst Murray, and Macduncan’s race.

Gude Sir Allexander Irving,
The much renowit laird of Drum,
Nane in his days was bettir sene
When they war semblit all and sum.
To praise him we sould not be dumm,
For valour, witt, and worthyness;
To end his days he ther did cum
Whose ransom is remeidyless.

And thair the knicht of Lawriston
Was slain into his armour schene,
And gude Sir Robert Davidson,
Wha provost was of Aberdene:
The knicht of Panmure, as was sene,
A mortall man in armour bricht,
Sir Thomas Murray, stout and kene,
Left to the warld thair last gude nicht.

Thair was not sen King Keneths days
Sic strange intestine crewel stryf
In Scotland sene, as ilk man says,
Whare mony liklie lost thair lyfe;
Whilk maid divorce twene man and wyfe,
And mony childrene fatherless,
Whilk in this realme has bene full ryfe:
Lord help these lands, our wrangs redress.

In July, on Saint James his even,
That four and twenty dismall day,
Twelve hundred, ten score and eleven
Of theirs sen Chryst, the suthe to say,
Men will remember, as they may,
When thus the ventie they knaw,
And mony a ane may murn for ay,
The brim battil of the Harlaw.

Ballad: Traditionary Version

(Child, Part VI.)

As I came in by Dunidier,
An doun by Netherha,
There was fifty thousand Hielanmen
A marching to Harlaw.
(Chorus) Wi a dree dree dradie drumtie dree.

As I cam on, an farther on,
An doun an by Balquhain,
Oh there I met Sir James the Rose,
Wi him Sir John the Gryme.

“O cam ye frae the Hielans, man?
And cam ye a’ the wey?
Saw ye Macdonell an his men,
As they cam frae the Skee?”

“Yes, me cam frae ta Hielans, man,
An me cam a ta wey,
An she saw Macdonell an his men,
As they cam frae ta Skee.”

“Oh, was ye near Macdonell’s men?
Did ye their numbers see?
Come, tell to me, John Hielanman,
What micht their numbers be?”

“Yes, me was near, an near eneuch,
An me their numbers saw;

There was fifty thousand Hielanmen
A marching to Harlaw."

"Gin that be true," says James the Rose,
"We'll no come meikle speed;
We'll cry upo our merry men,
And lichtly mount our steed."

"Oh no, oh no!" quo' John the Gryme,
"That thing maun never be;
The gallant Grymes were never bate,
We'll try what we can dee."

As I cam on, an farther on,
An doun an by Harlaw,
They fell fu close on ilka side;
Sic fun ye never saw.

They fell fu close on ilka side,
Sic fun ye never saw;
For Hielan swords gied clash for clash,
At the battle o Harlaw.

The Hielanmen, wi their lang swords,
They laid on us fu sair,
An they drave back our merry men
Three acres breadth an mair.

Brave Forbës to his brither did say,
"Noo brither, dinna ye see?
They beat us back on ilka side,
An we'se be forced to flee."

"Oh no, oh no, my brither dear,
That thing maun never be;

Tak ye your good sword in your hand,
An come your wa’s wi me.”

“Oh no, oh no, my brither dear,
The clans they are ower strang,
An they drive back our merry men,
Wi swords baith sharp an lang.”

Brave Forbës drew his men aside,
Said, “Tak your rest a while,
Until I to Drumminnor send,
To fess my coat o mail.”

The servan he did ride,
An his horse it did na fail,
For in twa hours an a quarter
He brocht the coat o mail.

Then back to back the brithers twa
Gaed in amo the thrang,
An they hewed doun the Hielanmen,
Wi swords baith sharp an lang.

Macdonell he was young an stout,
Had on his coat o mail,
And he has gane oot throw them a’
To try his han himsell.

The first ae straik that Forbës strack,
He garrt Macdonell reel;
An the neist ae straik that Forbës strack,
The great Macdonell fell.

And siccan a lierachie,

I’m sure ye never sawe
As wis amo the Hielanmen,
When they saw Macdonell fa.

An whan they saw that he was deid,
They turnd and ran awa,
An they buried him in Legget’s Den,
A large mile frae Harlaw.

They rade, they ran, an some did gang,
They were o sma record;
But Forbës and his merry men,
They slew them a’ the road.

On Monanday, at mornin,
The battle it began,
On Saturday at gloamin’,
Ye’d scarce kent wha had wan.

An sic a weary buryin,
I’m sure ye never saw,
As wis the Sunday after that,
On the muirs aneath Harlaw.

Gin anybody speer at ye
For them ye took awa,
Ye may tell their wives and bairnies,
They’re sleepin at Harlaw.

Ballad: Dickie Macphalion

(Sharpe's Ballad Book, No. XIV.)

I went to the mill, but the miller was gone,
I sat me down, and cried ochone!
To think on the days that are past and gone,
Of Dickie Macphalion that's slain.
Shoo, shoo, shoolaroo,
To think on the days that are past and gone,
Of Dickie Macphalion that's slain.

I sold my rock, I sold my reel,
And sae hae I my spinning wheel,
And a' to buy a cap of steel
For Dickie Macphalion that's slain!
Shoo, shoo, shoolaroo,
And a' to buy a cap of steel
For Dickie Macphalion that's slain.

Ballad: A Lyke-Wake Dirge

(Border Minstrelsy, vol. ii., p. 357.)

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Every nighte and alle,
Fire, and sleet, and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thye saule.

When thou from hence away art paste,
Every nighte and alle,
To Whinny-muir thou comest at laste;
And Christe receive thye saule.

If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon,
Every nighte and alle,
Sit thee down and put them on;
And Christe receive thye saule.

If hosen and shoon thou ne’er gavest nane,
Every nighte and alle,
The whinnes sall pricke thee to the bare bane;
And Christe receive thye saule.

From Whinny-muir when thou mayst passe,
Every nighte and alle,
To Brigg o’ Dread thou comest at laste,
And Christe receive thye saule.

From Brigg o’ Dread when thou mayst passe,
Every nighte and alle,
To Purgatory fire thou comest at last,
And Christe receive thye saule.

If ever thou gavest meat or drink,
Every nighte and alle,
The fire sall never make thee shrinke;
And Christe receive thye saule.

If meate or drinke thou never gavest nane,
Every nighte and alle,
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane;
And Christe receive thye saule.

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Every nighte and alle,
Fire, and sleet, and candle-lighte,
And Christe receive thye saule.

Ballad: The Laird Of Waristoun

(Child, vol. iii. Early Edition.)

Down by yon garden green,
Sae merrily as she gaes;
She has twa weel-made feet,
And she trips upon her taes.

She has twa weel-made feet;
Far better is her hand;
She's as jimp in the middle
As ony willow wand.

"Gif ye will do my bidding,
At my bidding for to be,
It's I will make you lady
Of a' the lands you see."

*

He spak a word in jest;
Her answer was na good;
He threw a plate at her face,
Made it a' gush out o' blood.

She wasna frae her chamber
A step but barely three,
When up and at her richt hand
There stood Man's Enemy.

“Gif ye will do my bidding,
At my bidding for to be,
I’ll learn you a wile,
Avenged for to be.”

The foul thief knotted the tether;
She lifted his head on hie;
The nourice drew the knot
That gar’d lord Waristoun die.

Then word is gane to Leith,
Also to Edinburgh town
That the lady had kill’d the laird,
The laird o’ Waristoun.

*

Tak aff, tak aff my hood
But lat my petticoat be;
Pat my mantle o’er my head;
For the fire I downa see.

Now, a’ ye gentle maids,
Tak warning now by me,
And never marry ane
But wha pleases your e’e.

“For he married me for love,
But I married him for fee;
And sae brak out the feud
That gar’d my dearie die.”

Ballad: May Colven

(Child, Part I., p. 56.)

False Sir John a wooing came
To a maid of beauty fair;
May Colven was this lady’s name,
Her father’s only heir.

He wood her butt, he wood her ben,
He wood her in the ha,
Until he got this lady’s consent
To mount and ride awa.

He went down to her father’s bower,
Where all the steeds did stand,
And he’s taken one of the best steeds
That was in her father’s land.

He’s got on and she’s got on,
As fast as they could flee,
Until they came to a lonesome part,
A rock by the side of the sea.

“Loup off the steed,” says false Sir John,
“Your bridal bed you see;
For I have drowned seven young ladies,
The eighth one you shall be.

“Cast off, cast off, my May Colven,
All and your silken gown,

For it’s oer good and oer costly
To rot in the salt sea foam.

“Cast off, cast off, my May Colven.
All and your embroiderd shoen,
For oer good and oer costly
To rot in the salt sea foam.”

“O turn you about, O false Sir John,
And look to the leaf of the tree,
For it never became a gentleman
A naked woman to see.”

He turned himself straight round about,
To look to the leaf of the tree,
So swift as May Colven was
To throw him in the sea.

“O help, O help, my May Colven,
O help, or else I’ll drown;
I’ll take you home to your father’s bower,
And set you down safe and sound.”

“No help, no help, O false Sir John,
No help, nor pity thee;
Tho’ seven kings’ daughters you have drownd,
But the eighth shall not be me.”

So she went on her father’s steed,
As swift as she could flee,
And she came home to her father’s bower
Before it was break of day.

Up then and spoke the pretty parrot:
“May Colven, where have you been?
What has become of false Sir John,

That woo’d you so late the streen?

“He woo’d you butt, he woo’d you ben,
He woo’d you in the ha,
Until he got your own consent
For to mount and gang awa.”

“O hold your tongue, my pretty parrot,
Lay not the blame upon me;
Your cup shall be of the flowered gold,
Your cage of the root of the tree.”

Up then spake the king himself,
In the bed-chamber where he lay:
“What ails the pretty parrot,
That prattles so long or day?”

“There came a cat to my cage door,
It almost a worried me,
And I was calling on May Colven
To take the cat from me.”

Ballad: Johnie Faa

(Child, vol. iv. Early Edition.)

The gypsies came to our good lord's gate
And wow but they sang sweetly!
They sang sae sweet and sae very complete
That down came the fair lady.

And she came tripping doun the stair,
And a' her maids before her;
As soon as they saw her weel-far'd face,
They coost the glamer o'er her.

"O come with me," says Johnie Faw,
"O come with me, my dearie;
For I vow and I swear by the hilt of my sword,
That your lord shall nae mair come near ye."

Then she gied them the beer and the wine,
And they gied her the ginger;
But she gied them a far better thing,
The goud ring aff her finger.

"Gae take frae me this yay mantle,
And bring to me a plaidie;
For if kith and kin, and a' had sworn,
I'll follow the gypsy laddie.

"Yestreen I lay in a weel-made bed,
Wi' my good lord beside me;
But this night I'll lye in a tenant's barn,

Whatever shall betide me!”

“Come to your bed,” says Johnie Faw,
“Oh, come to your bed, my dearie:
For I vow and swear by the hilt of my sword,
Your lord shall nae mair come near ye.”

“I’ll go to bed to my Johnie Faw,
I’ll go to bed to my dearie;
For I vow and I swear by the fan in my hand,
My lord shall nae mair come near me.

“I’ll mak a hap to my Johnie Faw,
I’ll mak a hap to my dearie;
And he’s get a’ the coat gaes round,
And my lord shall nae mair come near me.”

And when our lord came hame at e’en,
And spier’d for his fair lady,
The tane she cry’d, and the other reply’d,
“She’s awa’ wi’ the gypsy laddie!”

“Gae saddle to me the black black steed,
Gae saddle and make him ready;
Before that I either eat or sleep,
I’ll gae seek my fair lady.”

And we were fifteen weel-made men,
Altho’ we were na bonny;
And we were a’ put down but ane,
For a fair young wanton lady.

Ballad: Hobbie Noble

(Child, vi. Early Edition.)

Foul fa’ the breast first treason bred in!
That Liddesdale may safely say:
For in it there was baith meat and drink,
And corn unto our geldings gay.

We were stout-hearted men and true,
As England it did often say;
But now we may turn our backs and fly,
Since brave Noble is seld away.

Now Hobie he was an English man,
And born into Bewcastle dale;
But his misdeeds they were sae great,
They banish’d him to Liddisdale.

At Kershope foot the tryst was set,
Kershope of the lilye lee;
And there was traitour Sim o’ the Mains,
With him a private companie.

Then Hobie has graith’d his body weel,
I wat it was wi’ baith good iron and steel;
And he has pull’d out his fringed grey,
And there, brave Noble, he rade him weel.

Then Hobie is down the water gane,
E’en as fast as he may drie;

Tho’ they shoud a’ brusten and broken their hearts,
Frae that tryst Noble he would na be.

“Weel may ye be, my feiries five!
And aye, what is your wills wi’ me?”
Then they cry’d a’ wi’ ae consent,
“Thou’rt welcome here, brave Noble, to me.

“Wilt thou with us in England ride,
And thy safe warrand we will be?
If we get a horse worth a hundred punds,
Upon his back that thou shalt be.”

“I dare not with you into England ride;
The Land-sergeant has me at feid:
I know not what evil may betide,
For Peter of Whitfield, his brother, is dead.

“And Anton Shiel he loves not me,
For I gat twa drifts o his sheep;
The great Earl of Whitfield loves me not,
For nae gear frae me he e’er could keep.

“But will ye stay till the day gae down,
Until the night come o’er the grund,
And I’ll be a guide worth ony twa,
That may in Liddesdale be fund?

“Tho’ dark the night as pitch and tar,
I’ll guide ye o’er yon hills fu’ hie;
And bring ye a’ in safety back,
If ye’ll be true and follow me.”

He’s guided them o’er moss and muir,
O’er hill and houp, and mony a down;

Til they came to the Foulbogshiel,
And there, brave Noble, he lighted down.

But word is gane to the Land-sergeant,
In Askirton where that he lay —
“The deer that ye hae hunted lang,
Is seen into the Waste this day.”

“Then Hobbie Noble is that deer!
I wat he carries the style fu’ hie;
Aft has he beat your slough-hounds back,
And set yourselves at little lee.

“Gar warn the bows of Hartlie-burn;
See they shaft their arrows on the wa’!
Warn Willeva and Spear Edom,
And see the morn they meet me a’.

“Gar meet me on the Rodric-haugh,
And see it be by break o’ day;
And we will on to Conscowthart-Green,
For there, I think, we’ll get our prey.”

Then Hobbie Noble has dream’d a dream,
In the Foulbogshiel, where that he lay;
He thought his horse was neath him shot,
And he himself got hard away.

The cocks could crow, the day could dawn,
And I wot so even down fell the rain;
If Hobbie had no waken’d at that time,
In the Foulbogshiel he had been tane or slain.

“Get up, get up, my feiries five!
For I wot here makes a fu’ ill day;

Yet the warst cloak of this companie,
I hope, shall cross the Waste this day.”

Now Hobie thought the gates were clear;
But, ever alas! it was not sae:
They were beset wi’ cruel men and keen,
That away brave Hobbie could not gae.

“Yet follow me, my feiries five,
And see of me ye keep good ray;
And the worst cloak o’ this companie
I hope shall cross the Waste this day.”

There was heaps of men now Hobbie before,
And other heaps was him behind,
That had he wight as Wallace was,
Away brave Noble he could not win.

Then Hobie he had but a laddies sword;
But he did more than a laddies deed;
In the midst of Conscouthart-Green,
He brake it oer Jersawigham’s head.

Now they have tane brave Hobie Noble,
Wi’ his ain bowstring they band him sae;
And I wat heart was ne’er sae sair,
As when his ain five band him on the brae.

They have tane him on for West Carlisle;
They ask’d him if he knew the why?
Whate’er he thought, yet little he said;
He knew the way as well as they.

They hae ta’en him up the Ricker gate;

The wives they cast their windows wide;
And every wife to anither can say,
“That’s the man loos’d Jock o’ the Side!”

“Fye on ye, women! why ca’ ye me man?
For it’s nae man that I’m used like;
I am but like a forfoughen hound,
Has been fighting in a dirty syke.”

Then they hae tane him up thro’ Carlisle town,
And set him by the chimney fire;
They gave brave Noble a wheat loaf to eat,
And that was little his desire.

Then they gave him a wheat loaf to eat,
And after that a can o beer;
Then they cried a’ with ae consent,
“Eat, brave Noble, and make gude cheer!

“Confess my lord’s horse, Hobie,” they said,
“And the morn in Carlisle thou’s no die;”
“How shall I confess them,” Hobie says,
“For I never saw them with mine eye?”

Then Hobie has sworn a fu’ great aith,
By the day that he was gotten and born,
He never had ony thing o’ my lord’s,
That either eat him grass or corn.

“Now fare thee weel, sweet Mangerton!
For I think again I’ll ne’er thee see:
I wad betray nae lad alive,
For a’ the goud in Christentie.

“And fare thee weel, sweet Liddesdale!
Baith the hie land and the law;
Keep ye weel frae traitor Mains!
For goud and gear he’ll sell ye a’.

“Yet wad I rather be ca’d Hobie Noble,
In Carlisle where he suffers for his faut,
Before I’d be ca’d traitor Mains,
That eats and drinks of the meal and maut.”

Ballad: The Twa Sisters

(Sharpe’s Ballad Book, No. X., p. 30.)

There liv’d twa sisters in a bower,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
There liv’d twa sisters in a bower,
Stirling for aye:
The youngest o’ them, O, she was a flower!
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.

There came a squire frae the west,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
There cam a squire frae the west,
Stirling for aye:
He lo’ed them baith, but the youngest best,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.

He gied the eldest a gay gold ring,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
He gied the eldest a gay gold ring,
Stirling for aye:
But he lo’ed the youngest aboon a’ thing,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.

“Oh sister, sister, will ye go to the sea?
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
Oh sister, sister, will ye go to the sea?
Stirling for aye:
Our father’s ships sail bonnilie,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.”

The youngest sat down upon a stane,

Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
The youngest sat down upon a stane,
Stirling for aye:
The eldest shot the youngest in,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.

“Oh sister, sister, lend me your hand,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
Oh, sister, sister, lend me your hand,
Stirling for aye:
And you shall hae my gouden fan,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.

“Oh, sister, sister, save my life,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
Oh sister, sister, save my life,
Stirling for aye:
And ye shall be the squire’s wife,
Bonny Sweet Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.”

First she sank, and then she swam,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
First she sank, and then she swam,
Stirling for aye:
Until she cam to Tweed mill dam,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.

The millar’s daughter was baking bread,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
The millar’s daughter was baking bread,
Stirling for aye:
She went for water, as she had need,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.

“Oh father, father, in our mill dam,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch,

Oh father, father, in our mill dam,
Stirling for aye:
There’s either a lady, or a milk-white swan,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.”

They could nae see her fingers small,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
They could nae see her fingers small,
Stirling for aye:
Wi’ diamond rings they were cover’d all,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.

They could nae see her yellow hair,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
They could nae see her yellow hair,
Stirling for aye:
Sae mony knots and platts war there,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.

Bye there cam a fiddler fair,
Hey Edinbruch, how Edinbruch.
Bye there cam a fiddler fair,
Stirling for aye:
And he’s ta’en three tails o’ her yellow hair,
Bonny Sanct Johnstonne that stands upon Tay.

Ballad: Mary Ambree

(Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, vol. ii. p. 230.)

When captaines couragious, whom death cold not daunte,
Did march to the siege of the citty of Gaunt,
They mustred their souldiers by two and by three,
And the formost in battle was Mary Ambree.

When [the] brave sergeant-major was slaine in her sight,
Who was her true lover, her joy, and delight,
Because he was slaine most treacherouslie
Then vowd to revenge him Mary Ambree.

She clothed herselfe from the top to the toe
In buffe of the bravest, most seemelye to showe;
A faire shirt of male then slipped on shee:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

A helmett of proofe shee strait did provide,
A stronge arminge-sword shee girt by her side,
On her hand a goodly faire gauntlett put shee:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

Then tooke shee her sworde and her targett in hand,
Bidding all such, as wold, [to] bee of her band;
To wayte on her person came thousand and three:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

“My soldiers,” she saith, “soe valliant and bold,
Nowe followe your captaine, whom you doe beholde;

Still formost in battell myselfe will I bee:”
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

Then cryed out her souldiers, and loude they did say,
“Soe well thou becomest this gallant array,
Thy harte and thy weapons so well do agree,
No mayden was ever like Mary Ambree.”

She cheared her souldiers, that foughten for life,
With ancyent and standard, with drum and with fife,
With brave clanging trumpetts, that sounded so free;
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

“Before I will see the worst of you all
To come into danger of death or of thrall,
This hand and this life I will venture so free:”
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

Shee ledd upp her souldiers in battaile array,
Gainst three times theyr number by breake of the daye;
Seven howers in skirmish continued shee:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

She filled the skyes with the smoke of her shott,
And her enemyes bodyes with bulletts so hott;
For one of her own men a score killed shee:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

And when her false gunner, to spoyle her intent,
Away all her pellets and powder had sent,
Straight with her keen weapon she slasht him in three:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

Being falselye betrayed for lucre of hyre,

At length she was forced to make a retyre;
Then her souldiers into a strong castle drew shee:
Was not this a brave bonny lasse, Mary Ambree?

Her foes they besett her on everye side,
As thinking close siege shee cold never abide;
To beate down the walles they all did decree:
But stoutlye deffyd them brave Mary Ambree.

Then tooke shee her sword and her targett in hand,
And mounting the walls all undaunted did stand,
There daring their captaines to match any three:
O what a brave captaine was Mary Ambree!

“Now saye, English captaine, what woldest thou give
To ransome thy selfe, which else must not live?
Come yield thy selfe quicklye, or slaine thou must bee:”
Then smiled sweetlye brave Mary Ambree.

“Ye captaines couragious, of valour so bold,
Whom thinke you before you now you doe behold?
“A knight, sir, of England, and captaine soe free,
Who shortlye with us a prisoner must bee.”

“No captaine of England; behold in your sight
Two brests in my bosome, and therefore no knight:
Noe knight, sirs, of England, nor captaine you see,
But a poor simple mayden called Mary Ambree.”

“But art thou a woman, as thou dost declare,
Whose valor hath proved so undaunted in warre?
If England doth yield such brave maydens as thee,
Full well mey they conquer, faire Mary Ambree.”

The Prince of Great Parma heard of her renowne,
Who long had advanced for England’s fair crowne;
Hee wooed her and sued her his mistress to bee,
And offered rich presents to Mary Ambree.

But this virtuous mayden despised them all:
“‘Ile nere sell my honour for purple nor pall;
A maiden of England, sir, never will bee
The wench of a monarcke,” quoth Mary Ambree.

Then to her owne country shee back did returne,
Still holding the foes of rare England in scorne!
Therfore English captaines of every degree
Sing forth the brave valours of Mary Ambree.

Ballad: Alison Gross

O Alison Gross, that lives in yon tow’r,
The ugliest witch in the north countrie,
She trysted me ae day up till her bow’r,
And mony fair speeches she made to me.

She straik’d my head, and she kaim’d my hair,
And she set me down saftly on her knee;
Says— “If ye will be my leman sae true,
Sae mony braw things as I will you gi’e.”

She shaw’d me a mantle of red scarlet,
With gowden flowers and fringes fine;
Says— “If ye will be my leman sae true,
This goodly gift it shall be thine.”

“Awa, awa, ye ugly witch,
Hand far awa, and let me be;
I never will be your leman sae true,
And I wish I were out of your company.”

She neist brocht a sark of the saftest silk,
Weel wrought with pearls about the band;
Says— “If ye will be my ain true love,
This goodly gift ye shall command.”

She show’d me a cup of the good red gowd,
Weel set with jewels sae fair to see;
Says— “If ye will be my leman sae true,
This goodly gift I will you gi’e.”

“Awa, awa, ye ugly witch,

Haud far awa, and let me be;
For I wadna ance kiss your ugly mouth,
For all the gifts that ye cou’d gi’e.”

She’s turn’d her richt and round about,
And thrice she blew on a grass-green horn;
And she sware by the moon and the stars aboon,
That she’d gar me rue the day I was born.

Then out has she ta’en a silver wand,
And she turn’d her three times round and round;
She mutter’d sic words, that my strength it fail’d,
And I fell down senseless on the ground.

She turn’d me into an ugly worm,
And gar’d me toddle about the tree;
And aye on ilka Saturday night,
Auld Alison Gross she came to me,

With silver basin, and silver kame,
To kame my headie upon her knee;
But rather than kiss her ugly mouth,
I’d ha’e toddled for ever about the tree.

But as it fell out on last Hallow-e’en,
When the seely court was ridin’ by,
The queen lighted down on a gowan bank,
Near by the tree where I wont to lye.

She took me up in her milk-white hand,
And she straik’d me three times o’er her knee;
She chang’d me again to my ain proper shape,
And nae mair do I toddle about the tree.

Ballad: The Heir Of Lynne

Of all the lords in faire Scotland
A song I will begin:
Amongst them all dwelled a lord
Which was the unthrifty Lord of Lynne.

His father and mother were dead him froe,
And so was the head of all his kinne;
He did neither cease nor blinne
To the cards and dice that he did run.

To drinke the wine that was so cleere!
With every man he would make merry.
And then bespake him John of the Scales,
Unto the heire of Lynne say’d hee,

Sayes “how dost thou, Lord of Lynne,
Doest either want gold or fee?
Wilt thou not sell thy land so brode
To such a good fellow as me?

“For . . I . . “ he said,
“My land, take it unto thee;
I draw you to record, my lords all;”
With that he cast him a Gods pennie.

He told him the gold upon the bord,
It wanted never a bare penny.
“That gold is thine, the land is mine,
The heire of Lynne I will bee.”

“Heeres gold enough,” saithe the heire of Lynne,

"Both for me and my company."
He drunke the wine that was so cleere,
And with every man he made merry.

Within three quarters of a yeare
His gold and fee it waxed thinne,
His merry men were from him gone,
And left himselfe all alone.

He had never a penny left in his purse,
Never a penny but three,
And one was brasse and another was lead
And another was white mony.

"Now well-a-day!" said the heire of Lynne,
"Now well-a-day, and woe is mee!
For when I was the Lord of Lynne,
I neither wanted gold nor fee;

"For I have sold my lands so broad,
And have not left me one penny!
I must go now and take some read
Unto Edenborrow and beg my bread."

He had not beene in Edenborrow
Nor three quarters of a yeare,
But some did give him and some said nay,
And some bid "to the deele gang yee!

"For if we should hang some land selfeer,
The first we would begin with thee."
"Now well-a-day!" said the heire of Lynne,
"Now well-a-day, and woe is mee!

"For now I have sold my lands so broad
That merry man is irke with mee;
But when that I was the Lord of Lynne
Then on my land I lived merrily;

"And now I have sold my land so broade
That I have not left me one pennye!
God be with my father!" he said,
"On his land he lived merrily."

Still in a study there as he stood,
He unbethought him of a bill,
He unbethought him of a bill
Which his father had left with him.

Bade him he should never on it looke
Till he was in extreame neede,
"And by my faith," said the heire of Lynne,
"Then now I had never more neede."

He tooke the bill and looked it on,
Good comfort that he found there;
It told him of a castle wall
Where there stood three chests in feare:

Two were full of the beaten gold,
The third was full of white money.
He turned then downe his bags of bread
And filled them full of gold so red.

Then he did never cease nor blinne
Till John of the Scales house he did winne.
When that he came John of the Scales,
Up at the speere he looked then;

There sate three lords upon a rowe,

And John o’ the Scales sate at the bord’s head,
And John o’ the Scales sate at the bord’s head
Because he was the lord of Lynne.

And then bespake the heire of Lynne
To John o’ the Scales wife thus sayd hee,
Sayd “Dame, wilt thou not trust me one shott
That I may sit downe in this company?”

“Now Christ’s curse on my head,” she said,
“If I do trust thee one pennye,”
Then bespake a good fellowe,
Which sate by John o’ the Scales his knee,

Said “have thou here, thou heire of Lynne,
Forty-pence I will lend thee, —
Some time a good fellow thou hast beene
And other forty if it need bee.”

They drunken wine that was so cleere,
And every man they made merry,
And then bespake him John o’ the Scales
Unto the Lord of Lynne said hee;

Said “how doest thou heire of Lynne,
Since I did buy thy lands of thee?
I will sell it to thee twenty better cheepe,
Nor ever did I buy it of thee.”

“I draw you to recorde, lords all:”
With that he cast him god’s penny;
Then he tooke to his bags of bread,
And they were full of the gold so red.

He told him the gold then over the borde
It wanted never a broad pennye;
“That gold is thine, the land is mine,

And the heire of Lynne againe I will bee.”

“Now well-a-day!” said John o’ the Scales’ wife,
“Well-a-day, and woe is me!
Yesterday I was the lady of Lynne,
And now I am but John o’ the Scales wife!”

Says “have thou here, thou good fellow,
Forty pence thou did lend me;
Forty pence thou did lend me,
And forty I will give thee,
I’ll make thee keeper of my forrest,
Both of the wild deere and the tame.”

But then bespake the heire of Lynne,
These were the words and thus spake hee,
“Christ’s curse light upon my crowne
If ere my land stand in any jeopardye!”

Ballad: Gordon Of Brackley

Down Deeside cam Inveraye
Whistlin’ and playing,
An’ called loud at Brackley gate
Ere the day dawning —
“Come, Gordon of Brackley.
Proud Gordon, come down,
There’s a sword at your threshold
Mair sharp than your own.”

“Arise now, gay Gordon,”
His lady ‘gan cry,
“Look, here is bold Inveraye
Driving your kye.”
“How can I go, lady,
An’ win them again,
When I have but ae sword,
And Inveraye ten?”

“Arise up, my maidens,
Wi’ roke and wi’ fan,
How blest had I been
Had I married a man!
Arise up, my maidens,
Tak’ spear and tak’ sword,
Go milk the ewes, Gordon,
An’ I will be lord.”

The Gordon sprung up
Wi’ his helm on his head,
Laid his hand on his sword,
An’ his thigh on his steed,
An’ he stooped low, and said,
As he kissed his young dame,

“There’s a Gordon rides out
That will never ride hame.”

There rode with fierce Inveraye
Thirty and three,
But wi’ Brackley were nane
But his brother and he;
Twa gallanter Gordons
Did never blade draw,
But against three-and-thirty
Wae’s me! what are twa?

Wi’ sword and wi’ dagger
They rushed on him rude;
The twa gallant Gordons
Lie bathed in their blude.
Frae the springs o’ the Dee
To the mouth o’ the Tay,
The Gordons mourn for him,
And curse Inveraye.

“O were ye at Brackley?
An’ what saw ye there?
Was his young widow weeping
An’ tearing her hair?”
“I looked in at Brackley,
I looked in, and oh!
There was mirth, there was feasting,
But naething o’ woe.

“As a rose bloomed the lady,
An’ blithe as a bride,
As a bridegroom bold Inveraye
Smiled by her side.
Oh! she feasted him there
As she ne’er feasted lord,

While the blood of her husband
Was moist on his sword.

“In her chamber she kept him
Till morning grew gray,
Thro’ the dark woods of Brackley
She shewed him the way.
‘Yon wild hill,’ she said,
‘Where the sun’s shining on,
Is the hill of Glentanner, —
One kiss, and begone!’”

There’s grief in the cottage,
There’s grief in the ha’,
For the gude, gallant Gordon
That’s dead an’ awa’.
To the bush comes the bud,
An’ the flower to the plain,
But the gude and the brave
They come never again.

Ballad: Edward, Edward

“Why does your brand sae drop wi’ blude,
Edward, Edward?
Why does your brand sae drop wi’ blude
And why sae sad gang ye, O?”
“O I hae killed my hawk sae gude,
Mither, mither;
O I hae killed my hawk sae gude,
And I hae nae mair but he, O.”

“Your hawk’s blude was never sae red,
Edward, Edward;
Your hawk’s blude was never sae red,
My dear son, I tell thee, O.”
“O I hae killed my red-roan steed,
Mither, mither;
O I hae killed my red-roan steed,
That was sae fair and free, O.”

“Your steed was auld, and ye’ve plenty mair,
Edward, Edward;
Your steed was auld, and ye’ve plenty mair;
Some ither dule ye dree, O.”
“O I hae killed my father dear,
Mither, mither;
O I hae killed my father dear,
Alas, and wae is me, O!”

“And whatten penance will ye dree for that,
Edward, Edward?
Whatten penance will ye dree for that?
My dear son, now tell me, O.”
“I’ll set my feet in yonder boat,
Mither, mither;

I’ll set my feet in yonder boat,
And I’ll fare over the sea, O.”

“And what will ye do wi’ your tow’rs and your ha’,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye do wi’ your tow’rs and your ha’,
That were sae fair to see, O?”
“I’ll let them stand till they doun fa’,
Mither, mither;
I’ll let them stand till they doun fa’,
For here never mair maun I be, O.”

“And what will ye leave to your bairns and your wife,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye leave to your bairns and your wife,
When ye gang ower the sea, O?”
“The warld’s room: let them beg through life,
Mither, mither;
The warld’s room: let them beg through life;
For them never mair will I see, O.”

“And what will ye leave to your ain mither dear,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye leave to your ain mither dear,
My dear son, now tell me, O?”
“The curse of hell frae me sall ye bear,
Mither, mither;
The curse of hell frae me sall ye bear:
Sic counsels ye gave to me, O!”

Ballad: Young Benjie

Of all the maids of fair Scotland,
The fairest was Marjorie;
And young Benjie was her ae true love,
And a dear true love was he.

And wow but they were lovers dear,
And lov’d full constantlie;
But aye the mair when they fell out,
The sairer was their plea.

And they ha’e quarrell’d on a day,
Till Marjorie’s heart grew wae;
And she said she’d chuse another luve,
And let young Benjie gae.

And he was stout and proud-hearted,
And thought o’t bitterlie;
And he’s gane by the wan moonlight,
To meet his Marjorie.

“Oh, open, open, my true love,
Oh, open and let me in!”
“I darena open, young Benjie,
My three brothers are within.”

“Ye lee, ye lee, ye bonnie burd,
Sae loud’s I hear ye lee;
As I came by the Louden banks,
They bade gude e’en to me.

“But fare ye weel, my ae fause love,
That I have lov’d sae lang!
It sets ye chuse another love,
And let young Benjie gang.”

Then Marjorie turn’d her round about,
The tear blinding her e’e;
“I darena, darena let thee in,
But I’ll come down to thee.”

Then salt she smil’d, and said to him —
“Oh, what ill ha’e I done?”
He took her in his arms twa,
And threw her o’er the linn.

The stream was strong, the maid was stout,
And laith, laith to be dang;
But ere she wan the Louden banks,
Her fair colour was wan.

Then up bespake her eldest brother —
“Oh, see na ye what I see?”
And out then spake her second brother —
“It is our sister Marjorie!”

Out then spake her eldest brother —
“Oh, how shall we her ken?”
And out then spake her youngest brother —
“There’s a honey mark on her chin.”

Then they’ve ta’en the comely corpse,
And laid it on the ground;
Saying— “Wha has kill’d our ae sister?
And how can he be found?

“The night it is her low lykewake,

The morn her burial day;
And we maun watch at mirk midnight,
And hear what she will say.”

With doors ajar, and candles light,
And torches burning clear,
The streekit corpse, till still midnight,
They waked, but naething hear.

About the middle of the night
The cocks began to craw;
And at the dead hour of the night,
The corpse began to thraw.

“Oh, wha has done thee wrang, sister,
Or dared the deadly sin?
Wha was sae stout, and fear’d nae dout,
As throw ye o’er the linn?”

“Young Benjie was the first ae man
I laid my love upon;
He was sae stout and proud-hearted,
He threw me o’er the linn.”

“Shall we young Benjie head, sister?
Shall we young Benjie hang?
Or shall we pike out his twa gray een,
And punish him ere he gang?”

“Ye maunna Benjie head, brothers,
Ye maunna Benjie hang;
But ye maun pike out his twa gray een.
And punish him ere he gang.

“Tie a green gravat round his neck,

And lead him out and in,
And the best ae servant about your house
To wait young Benjie on.

“And aye at every seven years’ end,
Ye’ll take him to the linn;
For that’s the penance he maun dree,
To scug his deadly sin.”

Ballad: Auld Maitland

There lived a king in southern land,
King Edward hight his name;
Unwordily he wore the crown,
Till fifty years were gane.

He had a sister’s son o’s ain,
Was large of blood and bane;
And afterward, when he came up,
Young Edward hight his name.

One day he came before the king,
And kneel’d low on his knee:
“A boon, a boon, my good uncle,
I crave to ask of thee!

“At our lang wars, in fair Scotland,
I fain ha’e wish’d to be,
If fifteen hundred waled wight men
You’ll grant to ride with me.”

“Thou shall ha’e thae, thou shall ha’e mae;
I say it sickerlie;
And I myself, an auld gray man,
Array’d your host shall see.”

King Edward rade, King Edward ran —
I wish him dool and pyne!
Till he had fifteen hundred men
Assembled on the Tyne.

And thrice as many at Berwicke
Were all for battle bound,
[Who, marching forth with false Dunbar,
A ready welcome found.]

They lighted on the banks of Tweed,
And blew their coals sae het,
And fired the Merse and Teviotdale,
All in an evening late.

As they fared up o'er Lammermoor,
They burn'd baith up and down,
Until they came to a darksome house,
Some call it Leader-Town.

"Wha hauds this house?" young Edward cried,
"Or wha gi'est o'er to me?"
A gray-hair'd knight set up his head,
And crackit right crousely:

"Of Scotland's king I haud my house;
He pays me meat and fee;
And I will keep my gude auld house,
While my house will keep me."

They laid their sowies to the wall,
With mony a heavy peal;
But he threw o'er to them agen
Baith pitch and tar barrel.

With springalds, stanes, and gads of airn,
Amang them fast he threw;
Till mony of the Englishmen
About the wall he slew.

Full fifteen days that braid host lay,
Sieging Auld Maitland keen;
Syne they ha’e left him, hail and feir,
Within his strength of stane.

Then fifteen barks, all gaily good,
Met them upon a day,
Which they did lade with as much spoil
As they you’d bear away.

“England’s our ain by heritage;
And what can us withstand,
Now we ha’e conquer’d fair Scotland,
With buckler, bow, and brand?”

Then they are on to the land of France,
Where auld king Edward lay,
Burning baith castle, tower, and town,
That he met in his way.

Until he came unto that town,
Which some call Billop-Grace:
There were Auld Maitland’s sons, all three,
Learning at school, alas!

The eldest to the youngest said,
“Oh, see ye what I see?
If all be true yon standard says,
We’re fatherless all three.

“For Scotland’s conquer’d up and down;
Landmen we’ll never be!
Now, will you go, my brethren two,
And try some jeopardy?”

Then they ha’e saddled twa black horse,
Twa black horse and a gray;
And they are on to king Edward’s host,
Before the dawn of day.

When they arrived before the host,
They hover’d on the lay:
“Wilt thou lend me our king’s standard,
To bear a little way?”

“Where wast thou bred? where wast thou born?
Where, or in what countrie?”
“In north of England I was born;”
(It needed him to lee.)

“A knight me gat, a ladye bore,
I am a squire of high renown;
I well may bear’t to any king
That ever yet wore crown.”

“He ne’er came of an Englishman,
Had sic an e’e or bree;
But thou art the likest Auld Maitland,
That ever I did see.

“But sic a gloom on ae browhead,
Grant I ne’er see again!
For mony of our men he slew,
And mony put to pain.”

When Maitland heard his father’s name,
An angry man was he;
Then, lifting up a gilt dagger,
Hung low down by his knee,

He stabb’d the knight the standard bore,
He stabb’d him cruellie;

Then caught the standard by the neuk,
And fast away rode he.

“Now, is’t na time, brothers,” he cried,
“Now, is’t na time to flee?”
“Ay, by my sooth!” they baith replied,
“We’ll bear you companye.”

The youngest turn’d him in a path,
And drew a burnish’d brand,
And fifteen of the foremost slew,
Till back the lave did stand.

He spurr’d the gray into the path,
Till baith his sides they bled:
“Gray! thou maun carry me away,
Or my life lies in wad!”

The captain lookit o’er the wall,
About the break of day;
There he beheld the three Scots lads
Pursued along the way.

“Pull up portcullize! down draw-brig!
My nephews are at hand;
And they shall lodge with me to-night,
In spite of all England.”

Whene’er they came within the yate,
They thrust their horse them frae,
And took three lang spears in their hands,
Saying— “Here shall come nae me!”

And they shot out, and they shot in,
Till it was fairly day;
When mony of the Englishmen

About the draw-brig lay.

Then they ha’e yoked the carts and wains,
To ca’ their dead away,
And shot auld dykes abune the lave,
In gutters where they lay.

The king, at his pavilion door,
Was heard aloud to say:
“Last night, three of the lads of France
My standard stole away.

“With a fause tale, disguised they came,
And with a fauser trayne;
And to regain my gaye standard,
These men where all down slayne.”

“It ill befits,” the youngest said,
A crownèd king to lee;
But, or that I taste meat and drink,
Reprovèd shall he be.”

He went before king Edward straight,
And kneel’d low on his knee:
“I wou’d ha’e leave, my lord,” he said,
“To speak a word with thee.”

The king he turn’d him round about,
And wistna what to say:
Quo’ he, “Man, thou’s ha’e leave to speak,
Though thou should speak all day.”

“Ye said that three young lads of France
Your standard stole away,
With a fause tale and fauser trayne,

And mony men did slay;

“But we are nane the lads of France,
Nor e’er pretend to be:
We are three lads of fair Scotland, —
Auld Maitland’s sons are we.

“Nor is there men in all your host
Daur fight us three to three.”
“Now, by my sooth,” young Edward said,
“Weel fitted ye shall be!

“Piercy shall with the eldest fight,
And Ethert Lunn with thee;
William of Lancaster the third,
And bring your fourth to me!

“Remember, Piercy, aft the Scot
Has cower’d beneath thy hand;
For every drap of Maitland blood,
I’ll gi’e a rig of land.”

He clanked Piercy o’er the head
A deep wound and a sair,
Till the best blood of his body
Came running down his hair.

“Now, I’ve slayne ane; slay ye the twa;
And that’s gude companye;
And if the twa shou’d slay ye baith,
Ye’se get nae help frae me.”

But Ethert Lunn, a baited bear,
Had many battles seen;
He set the youngest wonder sair,

Till the eldest he grew keen.

“I am nae king, nor nae sic thing:
My word it shanna stand!
For Ethert shall a buffet bide,
Come he beneath my brand.”

He clankit Ethert o’er the head
A deep wound and a sair,
Till the best blood in his body
Came running o’er his hair.

“Now, I’ve slayne twa; slay ye the ane;
Isna that gude companye?
And though the ane shou’d slay ye baith.
Ye’se get nae help of me.”

The twa-some they ha’e slayne the ane,
They maul’d him cruellie;
Then hung him over the draw-brig,
That all the host might see.

They rade their horse, they ran their horse,
Then hover’d on the lee:
“We be three lads of fair Scotland,
That fain wou’d fighting see.”

This boasting when young Edward heard,
An angry man was he:
“I’ll take yon lad, I’ll bind yon lad,
And bring him bound to thee!

“Now, God forbid,” king Edward said,
“That ever thou shou’d try!
Three worthy leaders we ha’e lost,
And thou the forth wou’d lie.

“If thou shou’dst hang on yon draw-brig,
Blythe wou’d I never be.”
But, with the poll-axe in his hand,
Upon the brig sprang be.

The first stroke that young Edward ga’e,
He struck with might and main;
He clove the Maitland’s helmet stout,
And bit right nigh the brain.

When Maitland saw his ain blood fall,
An angry man was he;
He let his weapon frae him fall,
And at his throat did flee.

And thrice about he did him swing,
Till on the ground he light,
Where he has halden young Edward,
Tho’ he was great in might.

“Now let him up,” king Edward cried,
“And let him come to me;
And for the deed that thou hast done,
Thou shalt ha’e earldomes three!”

“It’s ne’er be said in France, nor e’er
In Scotland, when I’m hame,
That Edward once lay under me,
And e’er gat up again!”

He pierced him through and through the heart,
He maul’d him cruellie;
Then hung him o’er the draw-brig,
Beside the other three.

“Now take frae me that feather-bed,
Make me a bed of strae!
I wish I hadna lived this day,
To make my heart sae wae.

“If I were ance at London Tow’r,
Where I was wont to be,
I never mair shou’d gang frae hame,
Till borne on a bier-tree.”

Ballad: The Broomfield Hill

There was a knight and lady bright
Set trysts amo the broom,
The one to come at morning eav,
The other at afternoon.

“I’ll wager a wager wi’ you,” he said,
“An hundred marks and ten,
That ye shall not go to Broomfield Hills,
Return a maiden again.”

“I’ll wager a wager wi’ you,” she said,
“A hundred pounds and ten,
That I will gang to Broomfield Hills,
A maiden return again.”

The lady stands in her bower door,
And thus she made her mane:
“Oh, shall I gang to Broomfield Hills,
Or shall I stay at hame?

“If I do gang to Broomfield Hills
A maid I’ll not return;
But if I stay from Broomfield Hills,
I’ll be a maid mis-sworn.”

Then out it speaks an auld witch wife,
Sat in the bower aboon:
“O ye shall gang to Broomfield Hills,
Ye shall not stay at hame.

“But when ye gang to Broomfield Hills,
Walk nine times round and round;
Down below a bonny burn bank,
Ye’ll find your love sleeping sound.

“Ye’ll pu the bloom frae off the broom,
Strew’t at his head and feet,
And aye the thicker that ye do strew,
The sounder he will sleep.

“The broach that is on your napkin,
Put it on his breast bane,
To let him know, when he does wake,
That’s true love’s come and gane.

“The rings that are on your fingers,
Lay them down on a stane,
To let him know, when he does wake,
That’s true love’s come and gane.

“And when he hae your work all done,
Ye’ll gang to a bush o’ broom,
And then you’ll hear what he will say,
When he sees ye are gane.”

When she came to Broomfield Hills,
She walked it nine times round,
And down below yon burn bank,
She found him sleeping sound.

She pu’d the bloom frae off the broom,
Strew’d it at ‘s head and feet,
And aye the thicker that she strewd,
The sounder he did sleep.

The broach that was on her napkin,
She put it on his breast-bane,
To let him know, when he did wake,
His love was come and gane.

The rings that were on her fingers,
She laid upon a stane,
To let him know, when he did wake,
His love was come and gane.

Now when she had her work all dune,
She went to a bush o’ broom,
That she might hear what he did say,
When he saw that she was gane.

“O where were ye my guid grey hound,
That I paid for sae dear,
Ye didna waken me frae my sleep
When my true love was sae near?”

“I scraped wi’ my foot, master,
Till a’ my collars rang,
But still the mair that I did scrape,
Waken woud ye nane.”

“Where were ye, my bony brown steed,
That I paid for sae dear,
That ye woudna waken me out o’ my sleep
When my love was sae near?”

“I patted wi my foot, master,
Till a’ my bridles rang,
But the mair that I did patt,
Waken woud ye nane.”

“O where were ye, my gay goss-hawk
That I paid for sae dear,
That ye woudna waken me out o’ my sleep
When ye saw my love near?”

“I flapped wi my wings, master,
Till a’ my bells they rang,
But still, the mair that I did flap,
Waken woud ye nane.”

“O where were ye, my merry young men
That I pay meat and fee,
That ye woudna waken me out o’ my sleep
When my love ye did see?”

“Ye’ll sleep mair on the night, master,
And wake mair on the day;
Gae sooner down to Broomfield Hills
When ye’ve sic pranks to play.

“If I had seen any armèd men
Come riding over the hill —
But I saw but a fair lady
Come quietly you until.”

“O wae mat worth yow, my young men,
That I pay meat and fee,
That ye woudna waken me frae sleep
When ye my love did see?

“O had I waked when she was nigh,
And o her got my will,
I shoudna cared upon the morn
The sma birds o her were fill.”

When she went out, right bitter she wept,
But singing came she hame;
Says, “I hae been at Broomfield Hills,
And maid returned again.”

Ballad: Willie’s Ladye

Willie has ta’en him o’er the faem,
He’s wooed a wife, and brought her hame;
He’s wooed her for her yellow hair,
But his mother wrought her meikle care;

And meikle dolour gar’d her dree,
For lighter she can never be;
But in her bow’r she sits with pain,
And Willie mourns o’er her in vain.

And to his mother he has gane,
That vile rank witch, of vilest kind!
He says— “My lady has a cup,
With gowd and silver set about;
This gudely gift shall be your ain,
And let her be lighter of her bairn.”

“Of her bairn she’s never be lighter,
Nor in her bow’r to shine the brighter
But she shall die, and turn to clay,
And you shall wed another may.”

“Another may I’ll never wed,
Another may I’ll never bring hame.”
But, sighing, said that weary wight —
“I wish my life were at an end.”

“Yet gae ye to your mother again,
That vile rank witch, of vilest kind
And say, your ladye has a steed,
The like of him’s no in the land of Leed.

“For he is silver shod before,
And he is gowden shod behind;
At every tuft of that horse mane
There’s a golden chess, and a bell to ring.
This gudely gift shall be her ain,
And let me be lighter of my bairn.”

“Of her young bairn she’s ne’er be lighter,
Nor in her bow’r to shine the brighter;
But she shall die, and turn to clay,
And ye shall wed another may.”

“Another may I’ll never wed,
Another may I’ll never bring hame.”
But, sighing, said that weary wight —
I wish my life were at an end!”

“Yet gae ye to your mother again,
That vile rank witch, of rankest kind!
And say, your ladye has a girdle,
It’s all red gowd to the middle;

“And aye, at ilka siller hem,
Hang fifty siller bells and ten;
This gudely gift shall be her ain,
And let me be lighter of my bairn.”

“Of her young bairn she’s ne’er be lighter,
Nor in your bow’r to shine the brighter;
For she shall die, and turn to clay,
And thou shall wed another may.”

“Another may I’ll never wed,
Another may I’ll never bring hame.”
But, sighing, said that weary wight —
“I wish my days were at an end!”

Then out and spak the Billy Blind,
He spak aye in good time [his mind]:-
“Yet gae ye to the market place,
And there do buy a loaf of wace;
Do shape it bairn and bairnly like,
And in it two glassen een you’ll put.

“Oh, wha has loosed the nine witch-knots
That were amang that ladye’s locks?
And wha’s ta’en out the kames of care,
That were amang that ladye’s hair?

“And wha has ta’en down that bush of woodbine
That hung between her bow’r and mine?
And wha has kill’d the master kid
That ran beneath that ladye’s bed?
And wha has loosed her left foot shee,
And let that ladye lighter be?”

Syne, Willie’s loosed the nine witch-knots
That were amang that ladye’s locks;
And Willie’s ta’en out the kames of care
That were into that ladye’s hair;
And he’s ta’en down the bush of woodbine,
Hung atween her bow’r and the witch carline.

And he has killed the master kid
That ran beneath that ladye’s bed;
And he has loosed her left foot shee,
And latten that ladye lighter be;
And now he has gotten a bonnie son,
And meikle grace be him upon.

Ballad: Robin Hood And The Monk

In somer when the shawes be sheyne,
And leves be large and longe,
Hit is full mery in feyre foreste
To here the foulys song.

To se the dere draw to the dale,
And leve the hilles hee,
And shadow hem in the leves grene,
Vndur the grene-wode tre.

Hit befell on Whitsontide,
Erly in a may mornyng,
The son vp fayre can shyne,
And the briddis mery can syng.

“This is a mery mornyng,” seid Litulle Johne,
“Be hym that dyed on tre;
A more mery man than I am one
Lyves not in Cristianté.”

“Pluk vp thi hert, my dere mayster,”
Litulle Johne can sey,
“And thynk hit is a fulle fayre tyme
In a mornynge of may.”

“Ze on thynge greves me,” seid Robyne,
“And does my hert mych woo,
That I may not so solem day
To mas nor matyns goo.

“Hit is a fourtnet and more,” seyd hee,
“Syn I my Sauyour see;
To day will I to Notyngham,” seid Robyn,
“With the myght of mylde Mary.”

Then spake Moche the mylner sune,
Euer more wel hym betyde,
“Take xii thi wyght zemen
Well weppynd be thei side.
Such on wolde thi selfe slon
That xii dar not abyde.”

“Off alle my mery men,” seid Robyne,
“Be my feithe I wil non haue;
But Litulle Johne shall beyre my bow
Til that me list to drawe.”

*

“Thou shalle beyre thin own,” seid Litulle Jon,
“Maister, and I wil beyre myne,
And we wille shete a peny,” seid Litulle Jon,
“Vnder the grene wode lyne.”

“I wil not shete a peny,” seyde Robyn Hode,
“In feith, Litulle Johne, with thee,
But euer for on as thou shetes,” seid Robyn,
“In feith I holde the thre.”

Thus shet thei forthe, these zemen too,
Bothe at buske and brome,
Til Litulle Johne wan of his maister
V s. to hose and shone.

A ferly strife fel them betwene,
As they went bi the way;

Litull Johne seid he had won v shyllyngs,
And Robyn Hode seid schortly nay.

With that Robyn Hode lyed Litul Jone,
And smote him with his honde;
Litul John waxed wroth therwith,
And pulled out his bright bronde.

“Were thou not my maister,” seid Litulle Johne,
“Thou shuldis by hit ful sore;
Get the a man where thou wilt, Robyn,
For thou getes me no more.”

Then Robyn goes to Notyngham,
Hymselfe mornynge allone,
And Litulle Johne to mery Scherewode,
The pathes he knowe alkone.

Whan Robyn came to Notyngham,
Sertenly withoutene layne,
He prayed to God and myld Mary
To brynge hym out saue agayne.

He gos into seynt Mary chirche,
And knelyd downe before the rode;
Alle that euer were the churche within
Beheld wel Robyne Hode.

Beside hym stode a gret-hedid munke,
I pray to God woo he be;
Full sone he knew gode Robyn
As sone as he hym se.

Out at the durre he ran
Ful sone and anon;
Alle the zatis of Notyngham
He made to be sparred euerychone.

“Rise vp,” he seid, “thou prowde schereff,
Buske the and make the bowne;
I haue spyed the kynges felone,
For sothe he is in this towne.

“I haue spyed the false felone,
As he stondes at his masse;
Hit is longe of the,” seide the munke,
“And euer he fro vs passe.

“This traytur[s] name is Robyn Hode;
Vnder the grene wode lynde,
He robbyt me onys of a C pound,
Hit shalle neuer out of my mynde.”

Vp then rose this prowd schereff,
And zade towarde hym zare;
Many was the modur son
To the kyrk with him can fare.

In at the durres thei throly thrast
With staves ful gode ilkone,
“Alas, alas,” seid Robin Hode,
“Now mysse I Litulle Johne.”

But Robyne toke out a too-hond sworde
That hangit down be his kne;
Ther as the schereff and his men stode thyckust,
Thidurward wold he.

Thryes thorow at them he ran,
Then for sothe as I yow say,
And woundyt many a modur sone,
And xii he slew that day.

Hys sworde vpon the schireff hed
Sertanly he brake in too;
“The smyth that the made,” seid Robyn,
“I pray God wyrke him woo.

“For now am I weppynlesse,” seid Robyne,
“Alasse, agayn my wylle;
But if I may fle these traytors fro,
I wot thei wil me kylle.”

Robyns men to the churche ran
Throout hem euerilkon;
Sum fel in swonyng as thei were dede,
And lay still as any stone.

*

Non of theym were in her mynde
But only Litulle Jon.

“Let be your dule,” seid Litulle Jon,
“For his luf that dyed on tre;
Ze that shulde be duzty men,
Hit is gret shame to se.

“Oure maister has bene hard bystode,
And zet scapyd away;
Pluk up your hertes and leve this mone,
And herkyn what I shal say.

“He has seruyd our lady many a day,
And zet wil securly;
Therefore I trust in her specialy
No wycked deth shal he dye.

“Therfor be glad,” seid Litul Johne,
“And let this mournyng be,
And I shall be the munkes gyde,
With the myght of mylde Mary.

“And I mete hym,” seid Litull Johne,
“We will go but we too

*

“Loke that ze kepe wel our tristil tre
Vnder the levys smale,
And spare non of this venyson
That gose in thys vale.”

Forthe thei went these zemen too,
Litul Johne and Moche onfere,
And lokid on Moche emys hows
The hyeway lay fulle nere.

Litul John stode at a window in the mornynge,
And lokid forth at a stage;
He was war wher the munke came ridynge,
And with him a litul page.

“Be my feith,” said Litul Johne to Moche,
“I can the tel tithyngus gode;
I se wher the munk comys rydyng,
I know hym be his wyde hode.”

Thei went into the way these zemen bothe
As curtes men and hende,
Thei spyrred tithyngus at the munke,
As thei hade bene his frende.

“Fro whens come ze,” seid Litul Johne,
“Tel vs tithyngus, I yow pray,
Off a false owtlay [called Robyn Hode],
Was takyn zisturday.

“He robbyt me and my felowes bothe
Of xx marke in serten;
If that false owtlay be takyn,
For sothe we wolde be fayne.”

“So did he me,” seid the munke,
“Of a C pound and more;
I layde furst hande hym apon,
Ze may thonke me therefore.”

“I pray God thanke yow,” seid Litulle Johne,
“And we wil when we may;
We wil go with yow, with your leve,
And brynge yow on your way.

“For Robyn Hode hase many a wilde felow,
I telle yow in certen;
If thei wist ze rode this way,
In feith ze shulde be slayn.”

As thei went talkyng be the way,
The munke an Litulle Johne,
Johne toke the munkes horse be the hede
Ful sone and anone.

Johne toke the munkes horse be the hed,
For sothe as I yow say,
So did Muche the litulle page,
For he shulde not stirre away.

Be the golett of the hode
Johne pulled the munke downe;
Johne was nothynge of hym agast,
He lete hym falle on his crowne.

Litulle Johne was sore agrevyd,
And drew out his swerde in hye;
The munke saw he shulde be ded,
Lowd mercy can he crye.

“He was my maister,” said Litulle Johne,
“That thou hase browzt in bale;
Shalle thou neuer cum at our kynge
For to telle hym tale.”

John smote of the munkes hed,
No longer wolde he dwelle;
So did Moche the litulle page,
For ferd lest he wold tell.

Ther thei beryed hem both
In nouther mosse nor lynge,
And Litulle Johne and Muche infere
Bare the letturs to oure kyng.

*

He kneled down vpon — his kne,

“God zow sane, my lege lorde,
Jesus yow saue and se.

“God yow saue, my lege kyng,”
To speke Johne was fulle bolde;
He gaf hym tbe letturs in his hond,
The kyng did hit unfold.

The kyng red the letturs anon,
And seid, “so met I the,
Ther was neuer zoman in mery Inglond
I longut so sore to see.

“Wher is the munke that these shuld haue browzt?”
Oure kynge gan say;
“Be my trouthe,” seid Litull Jone,
“He dyed aftur the way.”

The kyng gaf Moche and Litul Jon
xx pound in sertan,
And made theim zemen of the crowne,
And bade theim go agayn.

He gaf Johne the seel in hand,
The scheref for to bere,
To brynge Robyn hym to,
And no man do hym dere.

Johne toke his leve at cure kyng,
The sothe as I yow say;
The next way to Notyngham
To take he zede the way.

When Johne came to Notyngham
The zatis were sparred ychone;
Johne callid vp the porter,
He answerid sone anon.

“What is the cause,” seid Litul John,
“Thou sparris the zates so fast?”
“Because of Robyn Hode,” seid [the] porter,
“In depe prison is cast.

“Johne, and Moche, and Wylle Scathlok,
For sothe as I yow say,
Thir slew oure men vpon oure wallis,
And sawtene vs euery day.”

Litulle Johne spyrred aftur the schereff,
And sone he hym fonde;
He oppyned the kyngus privè seelle,
And gaf hyn in his honde.

When the schereft saw the kyngus seelle,
He did of his hode anon;
“Wher is the munke that bare the letturs?”
He said to Litulle Johne.

“He is so fayn of hym,” seid Litulle Johne,
“For sothe as I yow sey,
He has made hym abot of Westmynster,
A lorde of that abbay.”

The scheref made John gode chere,
And gaf hym wine of the best;
At nyzt thei went to her bedde,
And euery man to his rest.

When the scheref was on-slepe
Dronken of wine and ale,
Litul Johne and Moche for sothe
Toke the way vnto the jale.

Litul Johne callid vp the jayler,
And bade him ryse anon;
He seid Robyn Hode had brokyn preson,
And out of hit was gon.

The portere rose anon sertan,
As sone as he herd John calle;
Litul Johne was redy with a swerd,
And bare hym to the walle.

“Now will I be porter,” seid Litul Johne,
“And take the keyes in honde;”
He toke the way to Robyn Hode,
And sone he hym vnbonde.

He gaf hym a gode swerd in his hond,
His hed with for to kepe,
And ther as the walle was lowyst
Anon down can thei lepe.

Be that the cok began to crow,
The day began to sprynge,
The scheref fond the jaylier ded,
The comyn belle made he rynge.

He made a crye thoroowt al the tow[n],
Whedur he be zoman or knave,
That cowthe brynge hyrn Robyn Hode,
His warisone he shuld haue.

“For I dar neuer,” said the scheref,
“Cum before oure kynge,
For if I do, I wot serten,
For sothe he wil me henge.”

The scheref made to seke Notyngham,
Bothe be strete and stye,
And Robyn was in mery Scherwode
As lizt as lef on lynde.

Then bespake gode Litulle Johne,
To Robyn Hode can he say,
“I haue done the a gode turne for an euylle,
Quyte me whan thou may.

“I haue done the a gode turne,” said Litulle Johne,
“For sothe as I you saie;
I haue brouzt the vnder grene wode lyne;
Fare wel, and haue gode day.”

“Nay, be my trouthe,” seid Robyn Hode,
“So shalle hit neuer be;
I make the maister,” seid Robyn Hode,
“Off alle my men and me.”

“Nay, be my trouthe,” seid Litulle Johne,
“So shall hit neuer be,
But lat me be a felow,” seid Litulle Johne,
“Non odur kepe I’ll be.”

Thus Johne gate Robyn Hode out of prisone,
Sertan withoutyn layne;
When his men saw hym hol and sounde,
For sothe they were ful fayne.

They filled in wyne, and made him glad,
Vnder the levys smale,
And zete pastes of venysone,
That gode was with ale.

Than worde came to oure kynge,
How Robyn Hode was gone,
And how the scheref of Notyngham
Durst neuer loke hyme vpone.

Then bespake oure cumly kynge,
In an angur hye,
“Litulle Johne hase begyled the schereff,
In faith so hase he me.

“Litulle Johne has begyled vs bothe,
And that fulle wel I se,
Or ellis the schereff of Notyngham
Hye hongut shuld he be.

“I made hem zemen of the crowne,
And gaf hem fee with my hond,
I gaf hem grithe,” seid oure kyng,
“Thorowout alle mery Inglond.

“I gaf hem grithe,” then seide oure kyng,
“I say, so mot I the,
For sothe soche a zeman as he is on
In alle Ingland ar not thre.

“He is trew to his maister,” seide oure kynge,
“I say, be swete seynt Johne;

He louys bettur Robyn Hode,
Then he dose vs ychone.

“Robyne Hode is euer bond to him,
Bothe in strete and stalle;
Speke no more of this matter,” seid oure kynge,
“But John has begyled vs alle.”

Thus endys the talkyng of the munke
And Robyne Hode i-wysse;
God, that is euer a crowned kyng,
Bryng vs alle to his blisse.

Ballad: Robin Hood And The Potter

In schomer, when the leves spryng,
The bloschems on every bowe,
So merey doyt the berdys syng
Yn wodys merey now.

Herkens, god yemen,
Comley, corteysse, and god,
On of the best that yever bar bou,
Hes name was Roben Hode.

Roben Hood was the yemans name,
That was boyt corteys and fre;
For the loffe of owr ladey,
All wemen werschep he.

Bot as the god yemen stod on a day,
Among hes mery manèy,
He was war of a prowd potter,
Cam dryfyng owyr the ley.

“Yonder comet a prod potter,” seyde Roben,
“That long hayt hantyd this wey;
He was never so corteys a man
On peney of pawage to pay.”

“Y met hem bot at Wentbreg,” seyde Lytyll John,
“And therfor yeffell mot he the,
Seche thre strokes he me gafe,
Yet they cleffe by my seydys.

“Y ley forty shillings,” seyde Lytyll John,
“To pay het thes same day,
Ther ys nat a man arnong hus all
A wed schall make hem ley.”

“Her ys forty shillings,” seyde Roben,
“Mor, and thow dar say,
That y schall make that prowde potter,
A wed to me schall he ley.”

Ther thes money they leyde,
They toke bot a yeman to kepe;
Roben befor the potter he breyde,
And bad hem stond stell.

Handys apon hes horse he leyde,
And bad the potter stonde foll stell;
The potter schorteley to hem seyde,
“Felow, what ys they well?”

“All thes thre yer, and mor, potter,” he seyde,
“Thow hast hantyd thes wey,
Yet wer tow never so cortys a man
One peney of pauage to pay.”

“What ys they name,” seyde the potter,
“For pauage thow ask of me?”
“Roben Hod ys mey name,
A wed schall thow leffe me.”

“Well well y non leffe,” seyde the potter,
“Nor pavag well y non pay;
Away they honde fro mey horse,
Y well the tene eyls, be me fay.”

The potter to hes cart he went,

He was not to seke;
A god to-hande staffe therowt he hent,
Befor Roben he lepe.

Roben howt with a swerd bent,
A bokeler en hes honde [therto];
The potter to Roben he went,
And seyde, “Felow, let mey horse go.”

Togeder then went thes two yemen,
Het was a god seyt to se;
Therof low Robyn hes men,
Ther they stod onder a tre.

Leytell John to hes felowhes seyde,
“Yend potter welle steffeley stonde:”
The potter, with an acward stroke,
Smot the bokeler owt of hes honde;

And ar Roben meyt get hem agen
Hes bokeler at hes fette,
The potter yn the neke hem toke,
To the gronde sone he yede.

That saw Roben hes men,
As they stode ender a bow;
“Let us helpe owr master,” seyed Lytell John,
“Yonder potter els well hem sclo.”

Thes yemen went with a breyde,
To ther master they cam.
Leytell John to hes master seyde,
“He haet the wager won?

“Schall y haff yowr forty shillings,” seyde Lytel John,
“Or ye, master, schall haffe myne?”
“Yeff they wer a hundred,” seyde Roben,

“Y feythe, they ben all theyne.”

“Het ys fol leytell cortesey,” seyde the potter,
“As y haffe harde weyse men saye,
Yeff a por yeman com drywyng ower the wey,
To let hem of hes gorney.”

“Be mey trowet, thow seys soyt,” seyde Roben,
“Thow seys god yemenrey;
And thow dreyffe forthe yevery day,
Thow schalt never be let for me.

“Y well prey the, god potter,
A felischepe well thow haffe?
Geffe me they clothyng, and thow schalt hafe myne;
Y well go to Notynggam.”

“Y grant therto,” seyde the potter,
“Thow schalt feynde me a felow gode;
But thow can sell mey pottes well,
Come ayen as thow yode.”

“Nay, be mey trowt,” seyde Roben,
“And then y bescro mey hede
Yeffe y bryng eney pottes ayen,
And eney weyffe well hem chepe.”

Than spake Leytell John,
And all hes felowhes heynd,
“Master, be well war of the screffe of Notynggam,
For he ys leytell howr frende.”

“Heyt war howte,” seyde Roben,
“Felowhes, let me alone;
Thorow the helpe of howr ladey,
To Notynggam well y gon.”

Robyn went to Notynggam,
Thes pottes for to sell;
The potter abode with Robens men,
Ther he fered not eylle.

Tho Roben droffe on hes wey,
So merey ower the londe:
Heres mor and affter ys to saye,
The best ys beheynde.

[THE SECOND FIT.]

When Roben cam to Netynggam,
The soyt yef y scholde saye,
He set op hes horse anon,
And gaffe hem hotys and haye.

Yn the medys of the towne,
Ther he schowed hes war;
“Pottys! pottys!” he gan crey foll sone,
“Haffe hansell for the mar.”

Foll effen agenest the screffeys gate
Schowed he hes chaffar;
Weyffes and wedowes abowt hem drow,
And chepyd fast of hes war.

Yet, “Pottys, gret chepe!” creyed Robyn,
“Y loffe yeffell thes to stonde;”
And all that saw hem sell,
Seyde he had be no potter long.

The pottys that wer werthe pens feyffe,
He sold tham for pens thre;

Preveley seyde man and weyffe,
“Ywnder potter schall never the.”

Thos Roben solde foll fast,
Tell he had pottys bot feyffe;
On he hem toke of his car,
And sende hem to the screffeys weyffe.

Therof sche was foll fayne,
“Gramarsey, sir,” than seyde sche;
“When ye com to thes contre ayen,
Y schall bey of they pottys, so mot y the.”

“Ye schall haffe of the best,” seyde Roben,
And swar be the treneytè;
Foll corteysley she gan hem call,
“Com deyne with the screfe and me.”

“Godamarsey,” seyde Roben,
“Yowr bedyng schalle be doyn;”
A mayden yn the pottys gan ber,
Roben and the screffe weyffe folowed anon.

Whan Roben ynto the hall cam,
The screffe sone he met;
The potter cowed of corteysey,
And sone the screffe he gret.

“Loketh what thes potter hayt geffe yow and me;
Feyffe pottys smalle and grete!”
“He ys fol wellcom, seyd the screffe,
“Let os was, and go to mete.”

As they sat at her methe,
With a nobell cher,

Two of the screffes men gan speke
Off a gret wagèr,

Was made the thother daye,
Off a schotyng was god and feyne,
Off forty shillings, the soyt to saye,
Who scholde thes wager wen.

Styll than sat thes prowde po,
Thos than thowt he;
“As y am a trow Cerstyn man,
Thes schotyng well y se.”

Whan they had fared of the best,
With bred and ale and weyne,
To the bottys they made them prest,
With bowes and boltys full feyne.

The screffes men schot foll fast,
As archares that weren godde;
Ther cam non ner ney the marke
Bey halfe a god archares bowe.

Stell then stod the prowde potter,
Thos than seyde he;
“And y had a bow, be the rode,
On schot scholde yow se.”

“Thow schall haffe a bow,” seyde the screffe,
“The best that thow well cheys of thre;
Thou semyst a stalward and a stronge,
Asay schall thow be.”

The screffe commandyd a yeman that stod hem bey
Affter bowhes to wende;

The best bow that the yeman browthe
Roben set on a stryng.

“Now schall y wet and thow be god,
And polle het op to they ner;”
“So god me helpe,” seyde the prowde potter,
“Thys ys bot rygzt weke ger.”

To a quequer Roben went,
A god bolt owthe he toke;
So ney on to the marke he went,
He fayled not a fothe.

All they schot abowthe agen,
The screffes men and he;
Off the marke he welde not fayle,
He cleffed the preke on thre.

The screffes men thowt gret schame,
The potter the mastry wan;
The screffe lowe and made god game,
And seyde, “Potter, thow art a man;
Thow art worthey to ber a bowe,
Yn what plas that thow gang.”

“Yn mey cart y haffe a bowe,
Forsoyt,” he seyde, “and that a godde;
Yn mey cart ys the bow
That I had of Robyn Hode.”

“Knowest thow Robyn Hode?” seyde the screffe,
“Potter, y prey the tell thou me;”
“A hundred torne y haffe schot with hem,
Under hes tortyll tree.”

“Y had lever nar a hundred ponde,” seyde the screffe,
And swar be the trenitè,
[“Y had lever nar a hundred ponde,” he seyde,]
“That the fals owtelawe stod be me.

“And ye well do afftyr mey red,” seyde the potter,
“And boldeley go with me,
And to morow, or we het bred,
Roben Hode wel we se.”

“Y well queyt the,” kod the screffe,
And swer be god of meythe;
Schetyng thay left, and hom they went,
Her scoper was redey deythe.

Upon the morow, when het was day,
He boskyd hem forthe to reyde;
The potter hes carte forthe gan ray,
And wolde not [be] leffe beheynde.

He toke leffe of the screffys wyffe,
And thankyd her of all thyng:
“Dam, for mey loffe, and ye well thys wer,
Y geffe yow her a golde ryng.”

“Gramarsey,” seyde the weyffe,
“Sir, god eylde het the;”
The screffes hart was never so leythe,
The feyr forest to se.

And when he cam ynto the foreyst,
Yonder the leffes grene,
Berdys ther sange on bowhes prest,
Het was gret joy to sene.

“Her het ys mercy to be,” seyde Roben,
“For a man that had hawt to spende;
Be mey horne we schall awet
Yeff Roben Hode be ner hande.”

Roben set hes horne to hes mowthe,
And blow a blast that was full god,
That herde hes men that ther stode,
Fer downe yn the wodde;
“I her mey master,” seyde Leytell John;
They ran as thay wer wode.

Whan thay to thar master cam,
Leytell John wold not spar;
“Master, how haffe yow far yn Notynggam?
How haffe yow solde yowr war?”

“Ye, be mey trowthe, Leytyll John,
Loke thow take no car;
Y haffe browt the screffe of Notynggam,
For all howr chaffar.”

“He ys foll wellcom,” seyde Lytyll John,
“Thes tydyng ys foll godde;”
The screffe had lever nar a hundred ponde
[He had never sene Roben Hode.]

“Had I west that beforen,
At Notynggam when we wer,
Thow scholde not com yn feyr forest
Of all thes thowsande eyr.”

“That wot y well,” seyde Roben,
“Y thanke god that ye be her;
Therfor schall ye leffe yowr horse with hos,
And all your hother ger.”

“That fend I godys forbode,” kod the screffe,
“So to lese mey godde;”
“Hether ye cam on horse foll hey,
And hom schall ye go on fote;
And gret well they weyffe at home,
The woman ys foll godde.

“Y schall her sende a wheyt palffrey,
Het hambellet as the weynde;
Ner for the loffe of yowr weyffe,
Off mor sorow scholde yow seyng.”

Thes parted Robyn Hode and the screffe,
To Notynggam he toke the waye;
Hes weyffe feyr welcomed hem hom,
And to hem gan sche saye:

“Seyr, how haffe yow fared yn grene foreyst?
Haffe ye browt Roben hom?”
“Dam, the deyell spede him, bothe bodey and bon,
Y haffe hade a foll grete skorne.

“Of all the god that y haffe lade to grene wod,
He hayt take het fro me,
All bot this feyr palffrey,
That he hayt sende to the.”

With that sche toke op a lowde lawhyng,
And swhar be hem that deyed on tre,
“Now haffe yow payed for all the pottys
That Roben gaffe to me.

“Now ye be corn hom to Notynggam,
Ye schall haffe god ynowe;”

Now speke we of Roben Hode,
And of the pottyr onder the grene bowhe.

“Potter, what was they pottys worthe
To Notynggam that y ledde with me?”
“They wer worth two nobellys,” seyd he,
“So mot y treyffe or the;
So cowde y had for tham,
And y had ther be.”

“Thow schalt hafe ten ponde,” seyde Roben,
“Of money feyr and fre;
And yever whan thou comest to grene wod,
Wellcom, potter to me.”

Thes partyd Robyn, the screffe, and the potter,
Ondernethe the grene-wod tre;
God haffe mersey on Robyn Hodys solle,
And saffe all god yemanrey!

Ballad: Robin Hood And The Butcher

Come, all you brave gallants, and listen awhile,
With hey down, down, an a down,
That are in the bowers within;
For of Robin Hood, that archer good,
A song I intend for to sing.

Upon a time it chancèd so,
Bold Robin in forrest did ‘spy
A jolly butcher, with a bonny fine mare,
With his flesh to the market did hye.

“Good morrow, good fellow,” said jolly Robin,
“What food hast ? tell unto me;
Thy trade to me tell, and where thou dost dwell,
For I like well thy company.”

The butcher he answer’d jolly Robin,
“No matter where I dwell;
For a butcher I am, and to Nottingham
I am going, my flesh to sell.”

“What’s [the] price of thy flesh?” said jolly Robin,
“Come, tell it soon unto me;
And the price of thy mare, be she never so dear,
For a butcher fain would I be.”

“The price of my flesh,” the butcher repli’d,
“I soon will tell unto thee;
With my bonny mare, and they are not too dear,
Four mark thou must give unto me.”

“Four mark I will give thee,” saith jolly Robin,
“Four mark it shall be thy fee;
The mony come count, and let me mount,
For a butcher I fain would be.”

Now Robin he is to Nottingham gone,
His butchers trade to begin;
With good intent to the sheriff he went,
And there he took up his inn.

When other butchers did open their meat,
Bold Robin he then begun;
But how for to sell he knew not well,
For a butcher he was but young.

When other butchers no meat could sell,
Robin got both gold and fee;
For he sold more meat for one peny
Then others could do for three.

But when he sold his meat so fast,
No butcher by him could thrive;
For he sold more meat for one peny
Than others could do for five.

Which made the butchers of Nottingham
To study as they did stand,
Saying, “Surely he ‘is’ some prodigal,
That hath sold his fathers land.”

The butchers stepped to jolly Robin,
Acquainted with him for to be;
“Come, brother,” one said, “we be all of one trade,
Come, will you go dine with me?”

“Accurst of his heart,” said jolly Robin,
“That a butcher doth deny;
I will go with you, my brethren true,
As fast as I can hie.”

But when to the sheriffs house they came,
To dinner they hied apace,
And Robin Hood he the man must be
Before them all to say grace.

“Pray God bless us all,” said jolly Robin,
“And our meat within this place;
A cup of sack so good will nourish our blood,
And so do I end my grace.”

“Come fill us more wine,” said jolly Robin,
“Let us be merry while we do stay;
For wine and good cheer, be it never so dear,
I vow I the reck’ning will pay.

“Come, ‘brothers,’ be merry,” said jolly Robin,
“Let us drink, and never give ore;
For the shot I will pay, ere I go my way,
If it cost me five pounds and more.”

“This is a mad blade,” the butchers then said;
Saies the sheriff, “He is some prodigàl,
That some land has sold for silver and gold,
And now he doth mean to spend all.

“Hast thou any horn beasts,” the sheriff repli’d,
“Good fellow, to sell unto me?”
“Yes, that I have, good master sheriff,
I have hundreds two or three;

“And a hundred aker of good free land,
If you please it to see:
And Ile make you as good assurance of it,
As ever my father made me.”

The sheriff he saddled his good palfrèy,
And, with three hundred pound in gold,
Away he went with bold Robin Hood,
His horned beasts to behold.

Away then the sheriff and Robin did ride,
To the forrest of merry Sherwood;
Then the sheriff did say, “God bless us this day
From a man they call Robin Hood!”

But when a little farther they came,
Bold Robin he chancèd to spy
A hundred head of good red deer,
Come tripping the sheriff full nigh.

“How like you my horn’d beasts, good master sheriff?
They be fat and fair for to see;”
“I tell thee, good fellow, I would I were gone,
For I like not thy company.”

Then Robin set his horn to his mouth,
And blew but blasts three;
Then quickly anon there came Little John,
And all his company.

“What is your will, master?” then said Little John,
“Good master come tell unto me;”
“I have brought hither the sheriff of Nottingham
This day to dine with thee.”

“He is welcome to me,” then said Little John,

“I hope he will honestly pay;
I know he has gold, if it be but well told,
Will serve us to drink a whole day.”

Then Robin took his mantle from his back,
And laid it upon the ground:
And out of the sheriffs portmantle
He told three hundred pound.

Then Robin he brought him thorow the wood,
And set him on his dapple gray;
“O have me commanded to your wife at home;”
So Robin went laughing away.

GRASS OF PARNASSUS

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To E. M. S.

Primâ dicta mihi, summâ dicenda Camenâ.

The years will pass, and hearts will range,
You conquer Time, and Care, and Change.
Though Time doth still delight to shed
The dust on many a younger head;
Though Care, oft coming, hath the guile
From younger lips to steal the smile;
Though Change makes younger hearts wax cold,
And sells new loves for loves of old,
Time, Change, nor Care, hath learned the art
To fleck your hair, to chill your heart,
To touch your tresses with the snow,
To mar your mirth of long ago.
Change, Care, nor Time, while life endure,
Shall spoil our ancient friendship sure,
The love which flows from sacred springs,
In ‘old unhappy far-off things,’
From sympathies in grief and joy,
Through all the years of man and boy.

Therefore, to you, the rhymes I strung
When even this ‘brindled’ head was young
I bring, and later rhymes I bring
That flit upon as weak a wing,
But still for you, for yours, they sing!

Many of the verses and translations in this volume were published first in *Ballads and Lyrics of Old France* (1872). Though very sensible that they have the demerits of imitative and even of undergraduate rhyme, I print them again because people I like have liked them. The rest are of different dates, and lack (though doubtless they need) the excuse of having been written, like some of the earlier pieces, during College Lectures. I would gladly have added to this volume what other more or less serious rhymes I have written, but circumstances over which I have no control have bound them up with *Ballades*, and other toys of that sort.

It may be as well to repeat in prose, what has already been said in verse, that Grass of Parnassus, the pretty Autumn flower, grows in the marshes at the foot of the Muses' Hill, and other hills, not at the top by any means.

Several of the versions from the Greek Anthology have been published in the *Fortnightly Review*, and the sonnet on Colonel Burnaby appeared in *Punch*. These, with pieces from other serials, are reprinted by the courteous permission of the Editors.

The verses that were published in *Ballades and Lyrics*, and in *Ballads and Verses Vain* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York), are marked in the contents with an asterisk.

GRASS OF PARNASSUS.

Pale star that by the lochs of Galloway,
In wet green places ‘twixt the depth and height
Dost keep thine hour while Autumn ebbs away,
When now the moors have doffed the heather bright,
Grass of Parnassus, flower of my delight,
How gladly with the unpermitted bay —
Garlands not mine, and leaves that not decay —
How gladly would I twine thee if I might!

The bays are out of reach! But far below
The peaks forbidden of the Muses’ Hill,
Grass of Parnassus, thy returning snow
Between September and October chill
Doth speak to me of Autumns long ago,
And these kind faces that are with me still.

DEEDS OF MEN

±µ¹´µ ´’ ±Á± º»µ± ±½´ÁÉ½

To Colonel Ian Hamilton.

To you, who know the face of war,
You, that for England wander far,
You that have seen the Ghazis fly
From English lads not sworn to die,
You that have lain where, deadly chill,
The mist crept o’er the Shameful Hill,
You that have conquered, mile by mile,
The currents of unfriendly Nile,
And cheered the march, and eased the strain
When Politics made valour vain,
Ian, to you, from banks of Ken,
We send our lays of Englishmen!

SEEKERS FOR A CITY.

“Believe me, if that blissful, that beautiful place, were set on a hill visible to all the world, I should long ago have journeyed thither. . . But the number and variety of the ways! For you know, *There is but one road that leads to Corinth*.”

HERMOTIMUS (Mr Pater’s Version).

“The Poet says, *dear city of Cecrops*, and wilt thou not say, *dear city of Zeus*?”

M. ANTONINUS.

“*To Corinth leads one road,*” you say:
Is there a Corinth, or a way?
Each bland or blatant preacher hath
His painful or his primrose path,
And not a soul of all of these
But knows the city ‘twixt the seas,
Her fair unnumbered homes and all
Her gleaming amethystine wall!

Blind are the guides who know the way,
The guides who write, and preach, and pray,
I watch their lives, and I divine
They differ not from yours and mine!

One man we knew, and only one,
Whose seeking for a city’s done,
For what he greatly sought he found,
A city girt with fire around,
A city in an empty land
Between the wastes of sky and sand,

A city on a river-side,
Where by the folk he loved, he died.

Alas! it is not ours to tread
That path wherein his life he led,
Not ours his heart to dare and feel,
Keen as the fragrant Syrian steel;
Yet are we not quite city-less,
Not wholly left in our distress —
Is it not said by One of old,
“Sheep have I of another fold?”
Ah! faint of heart, and weak of will,
For us there is a city still!

“Dear city of Zeus,” the Stoic says,
The Voice from Rome’s imperial days,
In Thee meet all things, and disperse,
In Thee, for Thee, O Universe!
To me all’s fruit thy seasons bring,
Alike thy summer and thy spring;
The winds that wail, the suns that burn,
From Thee proceed, to Thee return.

“Dear city of Zeus,” shall *we* not say,
Home to which none can lose the way!
Born in that city’s flaming bound,
We do not find her, but are found.
Within her wide and viewless wall
The Universe is girdled all.
All joys and pains, all wealth and dearth,
All things that travail on the earth,
God’s will they work, if God there be,
If not, what is my life to me?

Seek we no further, but abide

Within this city great and wide,
In her and for her living, we
Have no less joy than to be free;
Nor death nor grief can quite appal
The folk that dwell within her wall,
Nor aught but with our will befall!

THE WHITE PACHA.

Vain is the dream! However Hope may rave,
He perished with the folk he could not save,
And though none surely told us he is dead,
And though perchance another in his stead,
Another, not less brave, when all was done,
Had fled unto the southward and the sun,
Had urged a way by force, or won by guile
To streams remotest of the secret Nile,
Had raised an army of the Desert men,
And, waiting for his hour, had turned again
And fallen on that False Prophet, yet we know
GORDON is dead, and these things are not so!
Nay, not for England’s cause, nor to restore
Her trampled flag — for he loved Honour more —
Nay, not for Life, Revenge, or Victory,
Would he have fled, whose hour had dawned to die.
He will not come again, whate’er our need,
He will not come, who is happy, being freed
From the deathly flesh and perishable things,
And lies of statesmen and rewards of kings.
Nay, somewhere by the sacred River’s shore
He sleeps like those who shall return no more,
No more return for all the prayers of men —
Arthur and Charles — they never come again!
They shall not wake, though fair the vision seem:
Whate’er sick Hope may whisper, vain the dream!

MIDNIGHT, JANUARY 25, 1886.

To-morrow is a year since Gordon died!
A year ago to-night, the Desert still
Crouched on the spring, and panted for its fill
Of lust and blood. Their old art statesmen plied,
And paltered, and evaded, and denied;
Guiltless as yet, except for feeble will,
And craven heart, and calculated skill
In long delays, of their great homicide.

A year ago to-night ’twas not too late.
The thought comes through our mirth, again, again;
Methinks I hear the halting foot of Fate
Approaching and approaching us; and then
Comes cackle of the House, and the Debate!
Enough; he is forgotten amongst men.

ADVANCE, AUSTRALIA.

On the offer of help from the Australians after the fall of Khartoum.

Sons of the giant Ocean isle
In sport our friendly foes for long,
Well England loves you, and we smile
When you outmatch us many a while,
So fleet you are, so keen and strong.

You, like that fairy people set
Of old in their enchanted sea
Far off from men, might well forget
An elder nation’s toil and fret,
Might heed not aught but game and glee.

But what your fathers were you are
In lands the fathers never knew,
‘Neath skies of alien sign and star
You rally to the English war;
Your hearts are English, kind and true.

And now, when first on England falls
The shadow of a darkening fate,
You hear the Mother ere she calls,
You leave your ocean-girdled walls,
And face her foemen in the gate.

COLONEL BURNABY.

ÃÅ ´’ µ½ ÃÄÁ¿Æ±»¹³³¹ º¿½¹·Â
ºµ¹Ã¿ ¼µ³±Â ¼µ³±»ÉÃÄ¹, »µ»±Ã¼µ½¿Â ¹ÀÀ¿ÃÅ½±É½

Thou that on every field of earth and sky
Didst hunt for Death, who seemed to flee and fear,
How great and greatly fallen dost thou lie
Slain in the Desert by some wandering spear:
‘Not here, alas!’ may England say, ‘not here
Nor in this quarrel was it meet to die,
But in that dreadful battle drawing nigh
To thunder through the Afghan passes sheer:

Like Aias by the ships shouldst thou have stood,
And in some glen have stayed the stream of flight,
The bulwark of thy people and their shield,
When Indus or when Helmund ran with blood,
Till back into the Northland and the Night
The smitten Eagles scattered from the field.’

MELVILLE AND COGHILL.

(The place of the little hand.)

Dead, with their eyes to the foe,
Dead, with the foe at their feet,
Under the sky laid low
Truly their slumber is sweet,
Though the wind from the Camp of the Slain Men blow,
And the rain on the wilderness beat.

Dead, for they chose to die
When that wild race was run;
Dead, for they would not fly,
Deeming their work undone,
Nor cared to look on the face of the sky,
Nor loved the light of the sun.

Honour we give them and tears,
And the flag they died to save,
Rent from the rain of the spears,
Wet from the war and the wave,
Shall waft men’s thoughts through the dust of the years,
Back to their lonely grave!

RHODOCLEIA

TO RHODOCLEIA — ON HER MELANCHOLY SINGING.

(Rhodocleia was beloved by Rufinus, one of the late poets of the Greek Anthology.)

Still, Rhodocleia, brooding on the dead,
Still singing of the meads of asphodel,
Lands desolate of delight?
Say, hast thou dreamed of, or rememberèd,
The shores where shadows dwell,
Nor know the sun, nor see the stars of night?

There, ‘midst thy music, doth thy spirit gaze
As a girl pines for home,
Looking along the way that she hath come,
Sick to return, and counts the weary days!
So wouldst thou flee
Back to the multitude whose days are done,
Wouldst taste the fruit that lured Persephone,
The sacrament of death; and die, and be
No more in the wind and sun!

Thou hast not dreamed it, but rememberèd
I know thou hast been there,
Hast seen the stately dwellings of the dead
Rise in the twilight air,
And crossed the shadowy bridge the spirits tread,
And climbed the golden stair!

Nay, by thy cloudy hair
And lips that were so fair,

Sad lips now mindful of some ancient smart,
And melancholy eyes, the haunt of Care,
I know thee who thou art!
That Rhodocleia, Glory of the Rose,
Of Hellas, ere her close,
That Rhodocleia who, when all was done
The golden time of Greece, and fallen her sun,
Swayed her last poet's heart.

With roses did he woo thee, and with song,
With thine own rose, and with the lily sweet,
The dark-eyed violet,
Garlands of wind-flowers wet,
And fragrant love-lamps that the whole night long
Burned till the dawn was burning in the skies,
Praising *thy golden eyes*,
And feet more silvery than Thetis' feet!

But thou didst die and flit
Among the tribes outworn,
The unavailing myriads of the past:
Oft he beheld thy face in dreams of morn,
And, waking, wept for it,
Till his own time came at last,
And then he sought thee in the dusky land!
Wide are the populous places of the dead
Where souls on earth once wed
May never meet, nor each take other's hand,
Each far from the other fled!

So all in vain he sought for thee, but thou
Didst never taste of the Lethaean stream,
Nor that forgetful fruit,
The mystic pom'granate;
But from the Mighty Warden fledst; and now,
The fugitive of Fate,
Thou farest in our life as in a dream,

Still wandering with thy lute,
Like that sweet paynim lady of old song,
Who sang and wandered long,
For love of her Aucassin, seeking him!
So with thy minstrelsy
Thou roamest, dreaming of the country dim,
Below the veilèd sky!

There doth thy lover dwell,
Singing, and seeking still to find thy face
In that forgetful place:
Thou shalt not meet him here,
Not till thy singing clear
Through all the murmur of the streams of hell
Wins to the Maiden’s ear!
May she, perchance, have pity on thee and call
Thine eager spirit to sit beside her feet,
Passing throughout the long unechoing hall
Up to the shadowy throne,
Where the lost lovers of the ages meet;
Till then thou art alone!

AVE.

‘Our Faith and Troth
All time and space controules
Above the highest sphere we meet
Unseen, unknowne, and greet as Angels greet’

Col. Richard Lovelace. 1649

CLEVEDON CHURCH.

[In memoriam H. B.]

Westward I watch the low green hills of Wales,
The low sky silver grey,
The turbid Channel with the wandering sails
Moans through the winter day.
There is no colour but one ashen light
On tower and lonely tree,
The little church upon the windy height
Is grey as sky or sea.
But there hath he that woke the sleepless Love
Slept through these fifty years,
There is the grave that has been wept above
With more than mortal tears.
And far below I hear the Channel sweep
And all his waves complain,
As Hallam’s dirge through all the years must keep
Its monotone of pain.

*

Grey sky, brown waters, as a bird that flies,
My heart flits forth from these
Back to the winter rose of northern skies,
Back to the northern seas.
And lo, the long waves of the ocean beat
Below the minster grey,
Caverns and chapels worn of saintly feet,
And knees of them that pray.
And I remember me how twain were one
Beside that ocean dim,
I count the years passed over since the sun
That lights me looked on him,

And dreaming of the voice that, save in sleep,
Shall greet me not again,
Far, far below I hear the Channel sweep
And all his waves complain.

TWILIGHT ON TWEED.

Three crests against the saffron sky,
Beyond the purple plain,
The kind remembered melody
Of Tweed once more again.

Wan water from the border hills,
Dear voice from the old years,
Thy distant music lulls and stills,
And moves to quiet tears.

Like a loved ghost thy fabled flood
Fleets through the dusky land;
Where Scott, come home to die, has stood,
My feet returning stand.

A mist of memory broods and floats,
The Border waters flow;
The air is full of ballad notes,
Borne out of long ago.

Old songs that sung themselves to me,
Sweet through a boy’s day dream,
While trout below the blossom’d tree
Plashed in the golden steam.

*

Twilight, and Tweed, and Eildon Hill,
Fair and too fair you be;
You tell me that the voice is still

That should have welcomed me.

1870.

METEMPSYCHOSIS.

I shall not see thee, nay, but I shall know
Perchance, the grey eyes in another’s eyes,
Shall guess thy curls in gracious locks that flow
On purest brows, yea, and the swift surmise
Shall follow and track, and find thee in disguise
Of all sad things, and fair, where sunsets glow,
When through the scent of heather, faint and low,
The weak wind whispers to the day that dies.

From all sweet art, and out of all old rhyme,
Thine eyes and lips are light and song to me;
The shadows of the beauty of all time,
In song or story are but shapes of thee;
Alas, the shadowy shapes! ah, sweet my dear,
Shall life or death bring all thy being near?

LOST IN HADES.

I dreamed that somewhere in the shadowy place,
Grief of farewell unspoken was forgot
In welcome, and regret remembered not;
And hopeless prayer accomplished turned to praise
On lips that had been songless many days;
Hope had no more to hope for, and desire
And dread were overpast, in white attire
New born we walked among the new world’s ways.

Then from the press of shades a spirit threw
Towards me such apples as these gardens bear;
And turning, I was ‘ware of her, and knew
And followed her fleet voice and flying hair, —
Followed, and found her not, and seeking you
I found you never, dearest, anywhere.

A STAR IN THE NIGHT.

The perfect piteous beauty of thy face
Is like a star the dawning drives away;
Mine eyes may never see in the bright day
Thy pallid halo, thy supernal grace;
But in the night from forth the silent place
Thou comest, dim in dreams, as doth a stray
Star of the starry flock that in the grey
Is seen, and lost, and seen a moment’s space.

And as the earth at night turns to a star,
Loved long ago, and dearer than the sun,
So in the spiritual place afar,
At night our souls are mingled and made one,
And wait till one night fall, and one dawn rise,
That brings no noon too splendid for your eyes.

A SUNSET ON YARROW.

The wind and the day had lived together,
They died together, and far away
Spoke farewell in the sultry weather,
Out of the sunset, over the heather,
The dying wind and the dying day.

Far in the south, the summer levin
Flushed, a flame in the grey soft air:
We seemed to look on the hills of heaven;
You saw within, but to me ’twas given
To see your face, as an angel’s, there.

Never again, ah surely never
Shall we wait and watch, where of old we stood,
The low good-night of the hill and the river,
The faint light fade, and the wan stars quiver,
Twain grown one in the solitude.

ANOTHER WAY.

Come to me in my dreams, and then,
One saith, I shall be well again,
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

Nay, come not *thou* in dreams, my sweet,
With shadowy robes, and silent feet,
And with the voice, and with the eyes
That greet me in a soft surprise.

Last night, last night, in dreams we met,
And how, to-day, shall I forget,
Or how, remembering, restrain
Mine incommunicable pain?

Nay, where thy land and people are,
Dwell thou remote, apart, afar,
Nor mingle with the shapes that sweep
The melancholy ways of Sleep.

But if, perchance, the shadows break,
If dreams depart, and men awake,
If face to face at length we see,
Be thine the voice to welcome me.

HESPEROTHEN

By the example of certain Grecian mariners, who, being safely returned from the war about Troy, leave yet again their old lands and gods, seeking they know not what, and choosing neither to abide in the fair Phæacian island, nor to dwell and die with the Sirens, at length end miserably in a desert country by the sea, is set forth the *Vanity of Melancholy*. And by the land of Phæacia is to be understood the place of Art and of fair Pleasures; and by Circe's Isle, the place of bodily delights, whereof men, falling aweary, attain to Eld, and to the darkness of that age. Which thing Master Françoys Rabelais feigned, under the similitude of the Isle of the Macraeones.

THE SEEKERS FOR PHÆACIA.

There is a land in the remotest day,
Where the soft night is born, and sunset dies;
The eastern shore sees faint tides fade away,
That wash the lands where laughter, tears, and sighs
Make life, — the lands below the blue of common skies.

But in the west is a mysterious sea,
(What sails have seen it, or what shipmen known?)
With coasts enchanted where the Sirens be,
With islands where a Goddess walks alone,
And in the cedar trees the magic winds make moan.

Eastward the human cares of house and home,
Cities, and ships, and unknown gods, and loves;
Westward, strange maidens fairer than the foam,
And lawless lives of men, and haunted groves,
Wherein a god may dwell, and where the Dryad roves.

The gods are careless of the days and death
Of toilsome men, beyond the western seas;
The gods are heedless of their painful breath,
And love them not, for they are not as these;
But in the golden west they live and lie at ease.

Yet the Phæacians well they love, who live
At the light’s limit, passing careless hours,
Most like the gods; and they have gifts to give,
Even wine, and fountains musical, and flowers,
And song, and if they will, swift ships, and magic powers.

It is a quiet midland; in the cool
Of the twilight comes the god, though no man prayed,
To watch the maids and young men beautiful
Dance, and they see him, and are not afraid,
For they are neat of kin to gods, and undismayed.

Ah, would the bright red prows might bring us nigh
The dreamy isles that the Immortals keep!
But with a mist they hide them wondrously,
And far the path and dim to where they sleep, —
The loved, the shadowy lands, along the shadowy deep.

A SONG OF PHÆACIA.

The languid sunset, mother of roses,
Lingers, a light on the magic seas,
The wide fire flames, as a flower uncloses,
Heavy with odour, and loose to the breeze.

The red rose clouds, without law or leader,
Gather and float in the airy plain;
The nightingale sings to the dewy cedar,
The cedar scatters his scent to the main.

The strange flowers' perfume turns to singing,
Heard afar over moonlit seas:
The Siren's song, grown faint in winging,
Falls in scent on the cedar trees.

As waifs blown out of the sunset, flying,
Purple, and rosy, and grey, the birds
Brighten the air with their wings; their crying
Wakens a moment the weary herds.

Butterflies flit from the fairy garden,
Living blossoms of flying flowers;
Never the nights with winter harden,
Nor moons wax keen in this land of ours.

Great fruits, fragrant, green and golden,
Gleam in the green, and droop and fall;
Blossom, and bud, and flower unfolden,
Swing, and cling to the garden wall.

Deep in the woods as twilight darkens,
Glades are red with the scented fire;
Far in the dells the white maid hearkens,
Song and sigh of the heart’s desire.

Ah, and as moonlight fades in morning,
Maiden’s song in the matin grey,
Faints as the first bird’s note, a warning,
Wakes and wails to the new-born day.

The waking song and the dying measure
Meet, and the waxing and waning light
Meet, and faint with the hours of pleasure,
The rose of the sea and the sky is white.

THE DEPARTURE FROM PHÆACIA.

The Phæacians.

Why from the dreamy meadows,
More fair than any dream,
Why seek ye for the shadows
Beyond the ocean stream?

Through straits of storm and peril,
Through firths unsailed before,
Why make you for the sterile,
The dark Kimmerian shore?

There no bright streams are flowing,
There day and night are one,
No harvest time, no sowing,
No sight of any sun;

No sound of song or tabor,
No dance shall greet you there;
No noise of mortal labour
Breaks on the blind chill air.

Are ours not happy places,
Where gods with mortals trod?
Saw not our sires the faces
Of many a present god?

The Seekers.

Nay, now no god comes hither,
In shape that men may see;
They fare we know not whither,
We know not what they be.

Yea, though the sunset lingers
Far in your fairy glades,
Though yours the sweetest singers,
Though yours the kindest maids,

Yet here be the true shadows,
Here in the doubtful light;
Amid the dreamy meadows
No shadow haunts the night.

We seek a city splendid,
With light beyond the sun;
Or lands where dreams are ended,
And works and days are done.

A BALLAD OF DEPARTURE.

Fair white bird, what song art thou singing
In wintry weather of lands o’er sea?
Dear white bird, what way art thou winging,
Where no grass grows, and no green tree?

I looked at the far-off fields and grey,
There grew no tree but the cypress tree,
That bears sad fruits with the flowers of May,
And whoso looks on it, woe is he.

And whoso eats of the fruit thereof
Has no more sorrow, and no more love;
And who sets the same in his garden stead,
In a little space he is waste and dead.

THEY HEAR THE SIRENS FOR THE SECOND TIME.

The weary sails a moment slept,
The oars were silent for a space,
As past Hesperian shores we swept,
That were as a remembered face
Seen after lapse of hopeless years,
In Hades, when the shadows meet,
Dim through the mist of many tears,
And strange, and though a shadow, sweet.

So seemed the half-remembered shore,
That slumbered, mirrored in the blue,
With havens where we touched of yore,
And ports that over well we knew.
Then broke the calm before a breeze
That sought the secret of the west;
And listless all we swept the seas
Towards the Islands of the Blest.

Beside a golden sanded bay
We saw the Sirens, very fair
The flowery hill whereon they lay,
The flowers set upon their hair.
Their old sweet song came down the wind,
Remembered music waxing strong, —
Ah now no need of cords to bind,
No need had we of Orphic song.

It once had seemed a little thing
To lay our lives down at their feet,
That dying we might hear them sing,

And dying see their faces sweet;
But now, we glanced, and passing by,
No care had we to tarry long;
Faint hope, and rest, and memory
Were more than any Siren’s song.

CIRCE’S ISLE REVISITED.

Ah, Circe, Circe! in the wood we cried;
Ah, Circe, Circe! but no voice replied;
No voice from bowers o’ergrown and ruinous
As fallen rocks upon the mountain side.

There was no sound of singing in the air;
Faded or fled the maidens that were fair,
No more for sorrow or joy were seen of us,
No light of laughing eyes, or floating hair.

The perfume, and the music, and the flame
Had passed away; the memory of shame
Alone abode, and stings of faint desire,
And pulses of vague quiet went and came.

Ah, Circe! in thy sad changed fairy place,
Our dead youth came and looked on us a space,
With drooping wings, and eyes of faded fire.
And wasted hair about a weary face.

Why had we ever sought the magic isle
That seemed so happy in the days erewhile?
Why did we ever leave it, where we met
A world of happy wonders in one smile?

Back to the westward and the waning light
We turned, we fled; the solitude of night
Was better than the infinite regret,
In fallen places of our dead delight.

THE LIMIT OF LANDS.

Between the circling ocean sea
And the poplars of Persephone
There lies a strip of barren sand,
Flecked with the sea’s last spray, and strown
With waste leaves of the poplars, blown
From gardens of the shadow land.

With altars of old sacrifice
The shore is set, in mournful wise
The mists upon the ocean brood;
Between the water and the air
The clouds are born that float and fare
Between the water and the wood.

Upon the grey sea never sail
Of mortals passed within our hail,
Where the last weak waves faint and flow;
We heard within the poplar pale
The murmur of a doubtful wail
Of voices loved so long ago.

We scarce had care to die or live,
We had no honey cake to give,
No wine of sacrifice to shed;
There lies no new path over sea,
And now we know how faint they be,
The feasts and voices of the dead.

Ah, flowers and dance! ah, sun and snow!
Glad life, sad life we did forego

To dream of quietness and rest;
Ah, would the fleet sweet roses here
Poured light and perfume through the drear
Pale year, and wan land of the west.

Sad youth, that let the spring go by
Because the spring is swift to fly,
Sad youth, that feared to mourn or love,
Behold how sadder far is this,
To know that rest is nowise bliss,
And darkness is the end thereof.

VERSES

MARTIAL IN TOWN.

Last night, within the stifling train,
Lit by the foggy lamp o'erhead,
Sick of the sad Last News, I read
Verse of that joyous child of Spain,

Who dwelt when Rome was waxing cold,
Within the Roman din and smoke.
And like my heart to me they spoke,
These accents of his heart of old:-

"*Brother, had we but time to live,*
And fleet the careless hours together,
With all that leisure has to give
Of perfect life and peaceful weather,

"*The Rich Man's halls, the anxious faces,*
The weary Forum, courts, and cases
Should know us not; but quiet nooks,
But summer shade by field and well,
But county rides, and talk of books,
At home, with these, we fain would dwell!

"*Now neither lives, but day by day*
Sees the suns wasting in the west,
And feels their flight, and doth delay
To lead the life he loveth best."

So from thy city prison broke,
Martial, thy wail for life misspent,
And so, through London's noise and smoke
My heart replies to the lament.

For dear as Tagus with his gold,
And swifter Salo, were to thee,
So dear to me the woods that fold
The streams that circle Fernielea!

APRIL ON TWEED.

As birds are fain to build their nest
The first soft sunny day,
So longing wakens in my breast
A month before the May,
When now the wind is from the West,
And Winter melts away.

The snow lies yet on Eildon Hill,
But soft the breezes blow.
If melting snows the waters fill,
We nothing heed the snow,
But we must up and take our will, —
A fishing will we go!

Below the branches brown and bare,
Beneath the primrose lea,
The trout lies waiting for his fare,
A hungry trout is he;
He’s hooked, and springs and splashes there
Like salmon from the sea!

Oh, April tide’s a pleasant tide,
However times may fall,
And sweet to welcome Spring, the Bride,
You hear the mavis call;
But all adown the water-side
The Spring’s most fair of all.

TIRED OF TOWNS.

‘When we spoke to her of the New Jerusalem, she said she would rather go to a country place in Heaven.’

Letters from the Black Country.

I’m weary of towns, it seems a’most a pity
We didn’t stop down i’ the country and clem,
And you say that I’m bound for another city,
For the streets o’ the New Jerusalem.

And the streets are never like Sheffield, here,
Nor the smoke don’t cling like a smut to *them*;
But the water o’ life flows cool and clear
Through the streets o’ the New Jerusalem.

And the houses, you say, are of jasper cut,
And the gates are gaudy wi’ gold and gem;
But there’s times I could wish as the gates was shut —
The gates o’ the New Jerusalem.

For I come from a country that’s over-built
Wi’ streets that stifle, and walls that hem,
And the gorse on a common’s worth all the gilt
And the gold of your New Jerusalem.

And I hope that they’ll bring me, in Paradise,
To green lanes leafy wi’ bough and stem —
To a country place in the land o’ the skies,
And not to the New Jerusalem.

SCYTHE SONG.

Mowers, weary and brown, and blithe,
What is the word methinks ye know,
Endless over-word that the Scythe
Sings to the blades of the grass below?
Scythes that swing in the grass and clover,
Something, still, they say as they pass;
What is the word that, over and over,
Sings the Scythe to the flowers and grass?

Hush, ah hush, the Scythes are saying,
Hush, and heed not, and fall asleep;
Hush, they say to the grasses swaying,
Hush, they sing to the clover deep!
Hush— *’tis* the lullaby Time is singing —
Hush, and heed not, for all things pass,
Hush, ah hush! and the Scythes are swinging
Over the clover, over the grass!

PEN AND INK.

Ye wanderers that were my sires,
Who read men’s fortunes in the hand,
Who voyaged with your smithy fires
From waste to waste across the land,
Why did you leave for garth and town
Your life by heath and river’s brink,
Why lay your gipsy freedom down
And doom your child to Pen and Ink?

You wearied of the wild-wood meal
That crowned, or failed to crown, the day;
Too honest or too tame to steal
You broke into the beaten way;
Plied loom or awl like other men,
And learned to love the guineas’ chink —
Oh, recreant sires, who doomed me then
To earn so few — with Pen and Ink!

Where it hath fallen the tree must lie.
’Tis over late for *me* to roam,
Yet the caged bird who hears the cry
Of his wild fellows fleeting home,
May feel no sharper pang than mine,
Who seem to hear, whene’er I think,
Spate in the stream, and wind in pine,
Call me to quit dull Pen and Ink.

For then the spirit wandering,
That slept within the blood, awakes;
For then the summer and the spring
I fain would meet by streams and lakes;
But ah, my Birthright long is sold,

But custom chains me, link on link,
And I must get me, as of old,
Back to my tools, to Pen and Ink.

A DREAM.

Why will you haunt my sleep?
You know it may not be,
The grave is wide and deep,
That sunders you and me;
In bitter dreams we reap
The sorrow we have sown,
And I would I were asleep,
Forgotten and alone!

We knew and did not know,
We saw and did not see,
The nets that long ago
Fate wove for you and me;
The cruel nets that keep
The birds that sob and moan,
And I would we were asleep,
Forgotten and alone!

THE SINGING ROSE.

‘La Rose qui chante et l’herbe qui égare.’

White Rose on the grey garden wall,
Where now no night-wind whispereth,
Call to the far-off flowers, and call
With murmured breath and musical
Till all the Roses hear, and all
Sing to my Love what the White Rose saith.

White Rose on the grey garden wall
That long ago we sung!
Again you come at Summer’s call, —
Again beneath my windows all
With trellised flowers is hung,
With clusters of the roses white
Like fragrant stars in a green night.

Once more I hear the sister towers
Each unto each reply,
The bloom is on those limes of ours,
The weak wind shakes the bloom in showers,
Snow from a cloudless sky;
There is no change this happy day
Within the College Gardens grey!

St. Mary’s, Merton, Magdalen — still
Their sweet bells chime and swing,
The old years answer them, and thrill
A wintry heart against its will
With memories of the Spring —

That Spring we sought the gardens through
For flowers which ne’er in gardens grew!

For we, beside our nurse’s knee,
In fairy tales had heard
Of that strange Rose which blossoms free
On boughs of an enchanted tree,
And sings like any bird!
And of the weed beside the way
That leadeth lovers’ steps astray!

In vain we sought the Singing Rose
Whereof old legends tell,
Alas, we found it not mid those
Within the grey old College close,
That budded, flowered, and fell, —
We found that herb called ‘Wandering’
And meet no more, no more in Spring!

Yes, unawares the unhappy grass
That leadeth steps astray,
We trod, and so it came to pass
That never more we twain, alas,
Shall walk the self-same way.
And each must deem, though neither knows,
That *neither* found the Singing Rose!

A REVIEW IN RHYME.

A little of Horace, a little of Prior,
A sketch of a Milkmaid, a lay of the Squire —
These, these are ‘on draught’ ‘At the Sign of the Lyre!’

A child in Blue Ribbons that sings to herself,
A talk of the Books on the Sheraton shelf,
A sword of the Stuarts, a wig of the Guelph,

A *lai*, a *pantoum*, a *ballade*, a *rondeau*,
A pastel by Greuze, and a sketch by Moreau,
And the chimes of the rhymes that sing sweet as they go,

A fan, and a folio, a ringlet, a glove,
‘Neath a dance by Laguerre on the ceiling above,
And a dream of the days when the bard was in love,

A scent of dead roses, a glance at a pun,
A toss of old powder, a glint of the sun,
They meet in the volume that Dobson has done!

If there’s more that the heart of a man can desire,
He may search, in his Swinburne, for fury and fire;
If he’s wise — he’ll alight ‘At the Sign of the Lyre!’

COLINETTE.

For a sketch by Mr. G. Leslie, R.A.

France your country, as we know;
Room enough for guessing yet,
What lips now or long ago,
Kissed and named you — Colinette.
In what fields from sea to sea,
By what stream your home was set,
Loire or Seine was glad of thee,
Marne or Rhone, O Colinette?

Did you stand with maidens ten,
Fairer maids were never seen,
When the young king and his men
Passed among the orchards green?
Nay, old ballads have a note
Mournful, we would fain forget;
No such sad old air should float
Round your young brows, Colinette.

Say, did Ronsard sing to you,
Shepherdess, to lull his pain,
When the court went wandering through
Rose pleasances of Touraine?
Ronsard and his famous Rose
Long are dust the breezes fret;
You, within the garden close,
You are blooming, Colinette.

Have I seen you proud and gay,

With a patched and perfumed beau,
Dancing through the summer day,
Misty summer of Watteau?
Nay, so sweet a maid as you
Never walked a minuet
With the splendid courtly crew;
Nay, forgive me, Colinette.

Not from Greuze’s canvases
Do you cast a glance, a smile;
You are not as one of these,
Yours is beauty without guile.
Round your maiden brows and hair
Maidenhood and Childhood met
Crown and kiss you, sweet and fair,
New art’s blossom, Colinette.

A SUNSET OF WATTEAU.

LUI.

The silk sail fills, the soft winds wake,
Arise and tempt the seas;
Our ocean is the Palace lake,
Our waves the ripples that we make
Among the mirrored trees.

ELLE.

Nay, sweet the shore, and sweet the song,
And dear the languid dream;
The music mingled all day long
With paces of the dancing throng,
And murmur of the stream.

An hour ago, an hour ago,
We rested in the shade;
And now, why should we seek to know
What way the wilful waters flow?
There is no fairer glade.

LUI.

Nay, pleasure flits, and we must sail,
And seek him everywhere;
Perchance in sunset’s golden pale
He listens to the nightingale,
Amid the perfumed air.

Come, he has fled; you are not you,
And I no more am I;
Delight is changeful as the hue
Of heaven, that is no longer blue
In yonder sunset sky.

ELLE.

Nay, if we seek we shall not find,
If we knock none openeth;
Nay, see, the sunset fades behind
The mountains, and the cold night wind
Blows from the house of Death.

NIGHTINGALE WEATHER.

‘Serai-je nonnette, oui ou non?
Semi-je nonnette? je crois que non.
Derrière chez mon père
Il est un bois taillis,
Le rossignol y chante
Et le jour et la nuit.
Il chante pour les filles
Qui n’ont pas d’ami;
Il ne chant pas pour moi,
J’en ai un, Dieu merci.’ — *Old French*.

I’ll never be a nun, I trow,
While apple bloom is white as snow,
But far more fair to see;
I’ll never wear nun’s black and white
While nightingales make sweet the night
Within the apple tree.

Ah, listen! ’tis the nightingale,
And in the wood he makes his wail,
Within the apple tree;
He singeth of the sore distress
Of many ladies loverless;
Thank God, no song for me.

For when the broad May moon is low,
A gold fruit seen where blossoms blow
In the boughs of the apple tree,
A step I know is at the gate;
Ah love, but it is long to wait
Until night’s noon bring thee!

Between lark’s song and nightingale’s
A silent space, while dawning pales,
The birds leave still and free
For words and kisses musical,
For silence and for sighs that fall
In the dawn, ‘twixt him and me.

LOVE AND WISDOM.

‘When last we gathered roses in the garden
I found my wits, but truly you lost yours.’

The Broken Heart.

July and June brought flowers and love
To you, but I would none thereof,
Whose heart kept all through summer time
A flower of frost and winter rime.
Yours was true wisdom — was it not?
Even love; but I had clean forgot,
Till seasons of the falling leaf,
All loves, but one that turned to grief.
At length at touch of autumn tide
When roses fell, and summer died,
All in a dawning deep with dew,
Love flew to me, Love fled from you.
The roses drooped their weary heads,
I spoke among the garden beds;
You would not hear, you could not know,
Summer and love seemed long ago,
As far, as faint, as dim a dream,
As to the dead this world may seem.
Ah sweet, in winter’s miseries,
Perchance you may remember this,
How Wisdom was not justified
In summer time or autumn tide,
Though for this once below the sun,
Wisdom and Love were made at one;
But Love was bitter-bought enough,
And Wisdom light of wing as Love.

GOOD-BYE.

Kiss me, and say good-bye;
Good-bye, there is no word to say but this,
Nor any lips left for my lips to kiss,
Nor any tears to shed, when these tears dry;
Kiss me, and say, good-bye.

Farewell, be glad, forget;
There is no need to say ‘forget,’ I know,
For youth is youth, and time will have it so,
And though your lips are pale, and your eyes wet,
Farewell, you must forget.

You shall bring home your sheaves,
Many, and heavy, and with blossoms twined
Of memories that go not out of mind;
Let this one sheaf be twined with poppy leaves
When you bring home your sheaves.

In garnered loves of thine,
The ripe good fruit of many hearts and years,
Somewhere let this lie, grey and salt with tears;
It grew too near the sea wind, and the brine
Of life, this love of mine.

This sheaf was spoiled in spring,
And over-long was green, and early sere,
And never gathered gold in the late year
From autumn suns, and moons of harvesting,
But failed in frosts of spring.

Yet was it thine, my sweet,
This love, though weak as young corn withered,
Whereof no man may gather and make bread;
Thine, though it never knew the summer heat;
Forget not quite, my sweet.

AN OLD PRAYER.

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Odyssey, XIII.

My prayer an old prayer borroweth,
Of ancient love and memory —
'Do thou farewell, till Eld and Death,
That come to all men, come to thee.'
Gently as winter's early breath,
Scarce felt, what time the swallows flee,
To lands whereof no man knoweth
Of summer, over land and sea;
So with thy soul may summer be,
Even as the ancient singer saith,
'Do thou farewell, till Eld and Death,
That come to all men, come to thee.'

À LA BELLE HÉLÈNE.

After Ronsard.

More closely than the clinging vine
About the wedded tree,
Clasp thou thine arms, ah, mistress mine!
About the heart of me.
Or seem to sleep, and stoop your face
Soft on my sleeping eyes,
Breathe in your life, your heart, your grace,
Through me, in kissing wise.
Bow down, bow down your face, I pray,
To me, that swoon to death,
Breathe back the life you kissed away,
Breathe back your kissing breath.
So by your eyes I swear and say,
My mighty oath and sure,
From your kind arms no maiden may
My loving heart allure.
I’ll bear your yoke, that’s light enough,
And to the Elysian plain,
When we are dead of love, my love,
One boat shall bear us twain.
They’ll flock around you, fleet and fair,
All true loves that have been,
And you of all the shadows there,
Shall be the shadow queen.
Ah, shadow-loves and shadow-lips!
Ah, while ’tis called to-day,
Love me, my love, for summer slips,
And August ebbs away.

SYLVIE ET AURÉLIE.

In memory of Gérard De Nerval.

Two loves there were, and one was born
Between the sunset and the rain;
Her singing voice went through the corn,
Her dance was woven ‘neath the thorn,
On grass the fallen blossoms stain;
And suns may set, and moons may wane,
But this love comes no more again.

There were two loves and one made white,
Thy singing lips, and golden hair;
Born of the city’s mire and light,
The shame and splendour of the night,
She trapped and fled thee unaware;
Not through the lamplight and the rain
Shalt thou behold this love again.

Go forth and seek, by wood and hill,
Thine ancient love of dawn and dew;
There comes no voice from mere or rill,
Her dance is over, fallen still
The ballad burdens that she knew:
And thou must wait for her in vain,
Till years bring back thy youth again.

That other love, afield, afar
Fled the light love, with lighter feet.
Nay, though thou seek where gravesteads are,
And flit in dreams from star to star,

That dead love shalt thou never meet,
Till through bleak dawn and blowing rain
Thy soul shall find her soul again.

A LOST PATH.

Plotinus, the Greek philosopher, had a certain proper mode of ecstasy, whereby, as Porphyry saith, his soul, becoming free from the deathly flesh, was made one with the Spirit that is in the world.

Alas, the path is lost, we cannot leave
Our bright, our clouded life, and pass away
As through strewn clouds, that stain the quiet eve,
To heights remoter of the purer day.
The soul may not, returning whence she came,
Bathe herself deep in Being, and forget
The joys that fever, and the cares that fret,
Made once more one with the eternal flame
That breathes in all things ever more the same.
She would be young again, thus drinking deep
Of her old life; and this has been, men say,
But this we know not, who have only sleep
To soothe us, sleep more terrible than day,
Where dead delights, and fair lost faces stray,
To make us weary at our wakening;
And of that long lost path to the Divine
We dream, as some Greek shepherd erst might sing,
Half credulous, of easy Proserpine,
And of the lands that lie ‘beneath the day’s decline.’

THE SHADE OF HELEN.

Some say that Helen went never to Troy, but abode in Egypt; for the gods, having made in her semblance a woman out of clouds and shadows, sent the same to be wife to Paris. For this shadow then the Greeks and Trojans slew each other.

Why from the quiet hollows of the hills,
And extreme meeting place of light and shade,
Wherein soft rains fell slowly, and became
Clouds among sister clouds, where fair spent beams
And dying glories of the sun would dwell,
Why have they whom I know not, nor may know,
Strange hands, unseen and ruthless, fashioned me,
And borne me from the silent shadowy hills,
Hither, to noise and glow of alien life,
To harsh and clamorous swords, and sound of war?

One speaks unto me words that would be sweet,
Made harsh, made keen with love that knows me not,
And some strange force, within me or around,
Makes answer, kiss for kiss, and sigh for sigh,
And somewhere there is fever in the halls
That troubles me, for no such trouble came
To vex the cool far hollows of the hills.

The foolish folk crowd round me, and they cry,
That house, and wife, and lands, and all Troy town,
Are little to lose, if they may keep me here,
And see me flit, a pale and silent shade,
Among the streets bereft, and helpless shrines.

At other hours another life seems mine,
Where one great river runs unswollen of rain,
By pyramids of unremembered kings,
And homes of men obedient to the Dead.
There dark and quiet faces come and go
Around me, then again the shriek of arms,
And all the turmoil of the Ilian men.

What are they? even shadows such as I.
What make they? Even this — the sport of gods —
The sport of gods, however free they seem.
Ah, would the game were ended, and the light,
The blinding light, and all too mighty suns,
Withdrawn, and I once more with sister shades,
Unloved, forgotten, mingled with the mist,
Dwelt in the hollows of the shadowy hills.

SONNETS

SHE.

To H. R. H.

Not in the waste beyond the swamps and sand,
The fever-haunted forest and lagoon,
Mysterious Kôr thy walls forsaken stand,
Thy lonely towers beneath the lonely moon,
Not there doth Ayesha linger, rune by rune
Spelling strange scriptures of a people banned.
The world is disenchanted; over soon
Shall Europe send her spies through all the land.

Nay, not in Kôr, but in whatever spot,
In town or field, or by the insatiate sea,
Men brood on buried loves, and unforgot,
Or break themselves on some divine decree,
Or would o’erleap the limits of their lot,
There, in the tombs and deathless, dwelleth SHE!

HERODOTUS IN EGYPT.

He left the land of youth, he left the young,
The smiling gods of Greece; he passed the isle
Where Jason loitered, and where Sappho sung,
He sought the secret-founted wave of Nile,
And of their old world, dead a weary while,
Heard the priests murmur in their mystic tongue,
And through the fanes went voyaging, among
Dark tribes that worshipped Cat and Crocodile.

He learned the tales of death Divine and birth,
Strange loves of Hawk and Serpent, Sky and Earth,
The marriage, and the slaying of the Sun.
The shrines of gods and beasts he wandered through,
And mocked not at their godhead, for he knew
Behind all creeds the Spirit that is One.

GÉRARD DE NERVAL.

Of all that were thy prisons — ah, untamed,
Ah, light and sacred soul! — none holds thee now;
No wall, no bar, no body of flesh, but thou
Art free and happy in the lands unnamed,
Within whose gates, on weary wings and maimed,
Thou still would’st bear that mystic golden bough
The Sibyl doth to singing men allow,
Yet thy report folk heeded not, but blamed.
And they would smile and wonder, seeing where
Thou stood’st, to watch light leaves, or clouds, or wind,
Dreamily murmuring a ballad air,
Caught from the Valois peasants; dost thou find
A new life gladder than the old times were,
A love more fair than Sylvie, and as kind?

RONSARD.

Master, I see thee with the locks of grey,
Crowned by the Muses with the laurel-wreath;
I see the roses hiding underneath,
Cassandra’s gift; she was less dear than they.
Thou, Master, first hast roused the lyric lay,
The sleeping song that the dead years bequeath,
Hast sung thine answer to the lays that breathe
Through ages, and through ages far away.

And thou hast heard the pulse of Pindar beat,
Known Horace by the fount Bandusian!
Their deathless line thy living strains repeat,
But ah, thy voice is sad, thy roses wan,
But ah, thy honey is not honey-sweet,
Thy bees have fed on yews Sardinian!

LOVE’S MIRACLE.

With other helpless folk about the gate,
The gate called Beautiful, with weary eyes
That take no pleasure in the summer skies,
Nor all things that are fairest, does she wait;
So bleak a time, so sad a changeless fate
Makes her with dull experience early wise,
And in the dawning and the sunset, sighs
That all hath been, and shall be, desolate.

Ah, if Love come not soon, and bid her live,
And know herself the fairest of fair things,
Ah, if he have no healing gift to give,
Warm from his breast, and holy from his wings,
Or if at least Love’s shadow in passing by
Touch not and heal her, surely she must die.

DREAMS.

He spake not truth, however wise, who said
That happy, and that hapless men in sleep
Have equal fortune, fallen from care as deep
As countless, careless, races of the dead.
Not so, for alien paths of dreams we tread,
And one beholds the faces that he sighs
In vain to bring before his daylit eyes,
And waking, he remembers on his bed;

And one with fainting heart and feeble hand
Fights a dim battle in a doubtful land
Where strength and courage were of no avail;
And one is borne on fairy breezes far
To the bright harbours of a golden star
Down fragrant fleeting waters rosy pale.

TWO SONNETS OF THE SIRENS.

‘Les Sirènes estoient tant intimes amies et fidelles compagnes de Proserpine, qu’elles estoient toujours ensemble. Esmues du juste deul de la perte de leur chère compagne, et enuyées jusques au desepoir, elles s’arrestèrent à la mer Sicilienne, où par leurs chants elles attiroient les navigans, mais l’unique fin de la volupté de leur musique est la Mort.’

Pontus De Tyard, 1570

The Sirens once were maidens innocent
That through the water-meads with Proserpine
Plucked no fire-hearted flowers, but were content
Cool fritillaries and flag-flowers to twine,
With lilies woven and with wet woodbine;
Till once they sought the bright AEtnaean flowers,
And their glad mistress fled from summer hours
With Hades, far from olive, corn, and vine.
And they have sought her all the wide world through
Till many years, and wisdom, and much wrong
Have filled and changed their song, and o’er the blue
Rings deadly sweet the magic of the song,
And whoso hears must listen till he die
Far on the flowery shores of Sicily.

So is it with this singing art of ours,
That once with maids went maidenlike, and played
With woven dances in the poplar-shade,
And all her song was but of lady’s bowers
And the returning swallows, and spring flowers,
Till forth to seek a shadow-queen she strayed,
A shadowy land; and now hath overweighed
Her singing chaplet with the snow and showers.
Yes, fair well-water for the bitter brine
She left, and by the margin of life’s sea

Sings, and her song is full of the sea’s moan,
And wild with dread, and love of Proserpine;
And whoso once has listened to her, he
His whole life long is slave to her alone.

TRANSLATIONS

HYMN TO THE WINDS.

THE WINDS ARE INVOKED BY THE WINNOWERS OF CORN.

Du Bellay, 1550.

To you, troop so fleet,
That with winged wandering feet,
Through the wide world pass,
And with soft murmuring
Toss the green shades of spring
In woods and grass,
Lily and violet
I give, and blossoms wet,
Roses and dew;
This branch of blushing roses,
Whose fresh bud uncloses,
Wind-flowers too.

Ah, winnow with sweet breath,
Winnow the holt and heath,
Round this retreat;
Where all the golden mom
We fan the gold o’ the corn,
In the sun’s heat.

MOONLIGHT.

Jacques Tahureau.

The high Midnight was garlanding her head
With many a shining star in shining skies,
And, of her grace, a slumber on mine eyes,
And, after sorrow, quietness was shed.
Far in dim fields cicalas jargonèd
A thin shrill clamour of complaints and cries;
And all the woods were pallid, in strange wise,
With pallor of the sad moon overspread.

Then came my lady to that lonely place,
And, from her palfrey stooping, did embrace
And hang upon my neck, and kissed me over;
Wherefore the day is far less dear than night,
And sweeter is the shadow than the light,
Since night has made me such a happy lover.

THE GRAVE AND THE ROSE.

Victor Hugo.

The Grave said to the Rose,
‘What of the dews of morn,
Love’s flower, what end is theirs?’
‘And what of souls outworn,
Of them whereon doth close
The tomb’s mouth unawares?’
The Rose said to the Grave.

The Rose said, ‘In the shade
From the dawn’s tears is made
A perfume faint and strange,
Amber and honey sweet.’
‘And all the spirits fleet
Do suffer a sky-change,
More strangely than the dew,
To God’s own angels new,’
The Grave said to the Rose.

A VOW TO HEAVENLY VENUS.

Du Bellay.

We that with like hearts love, we lovers twain,
New wedded in the village by thy fane,
Lady of all chaste love, to thee it is
We bring these amaranths, these white lilies,
A sign, and sacrifice; may Love, we pray,
Like amaranthine flowers, feel no decay;
Like these cool lilies may our loves remain,
Perfect and pure, and know not any stain;
And be our hearts, from this thy holy hour,
Bound each to each, like flower to wedded flower.

OF HIS LADY’S OLD AGE.

Ronsard.

When you are very old, at evening
You’ll sit and spin beside the fire, and say,
Humming my songs, ‘Ah well, ah well-a-day!
When I was young, of me did Ronsard sing.’
None of your maidens that doth hear the thing,
Albeit with her weary task foredone,
But wakens at my name, and calls you one
Blest, to be held in long remembering.

I shall be low beneath the earth, and laid
On sleep, a phantom in the myrtle shade,
While you beside the fire, a grandame grey,
My love, your pride, remember and regret;
Ah, love me, love! we may be happy yet,
And gather roses, while ‘t is called to-day.

SHADOWS OF HIS LADY.

Jacques Tahureau.

Within the sand of what far river lies
The gold that gleams in tresses of my Love?
What highest circle of the Heavens above
Is jewelled with such stars as are her eyes?
And where is the rich sea whose coral vies
With her red lips, that cannot kiss enough?
What dawn-lit garden knew the rose, whereof
The fled soul lives in her cheeks’ rosy guise?

What Parian marble that is loveliest
Can match the whiteness of her brow and breast?
When drew she breath from the Sabaean glade?
Oh happy rock and river, sky and sea,
Gardens, and glades Sabaean, all that be
The far-off splendid semblance of my maid!

APRIL.

Rémy Belleau, 1560.

April, pride of woodland ways,
Of glad days,
April, bringing hope of prime,
To the young flowers that beneath
Their bud sheath
Are guarded in their tender time;

April, pride of fields that be
Green and free,
That in fashion glad and gay,
Stud with flowers red and blue,
Every hue,
Their jewelled spring array;

April, pride of murmuring
Winds of spring,
That beneath the winnowed air,
Trap with subtle nets and sweet
Flora’s feet,
Flora’s feet, the fleet and fair;

April, by thy hand caressed,
From her breast,
Nature scatters everywhere
Handfuls of all sweet perfumes,
Buds and blooms,
Making faint the earth and air.

April, joy of the green hours,
Clothes with flowers
Over all her locks of gold

My sweet Lady; and her breast
With the blest
Buds of summer manifold.

April, with thy gracious wiles,
Like the smiles,
Smiles of Venus; and thy breath
Like her breath, the gods’ delight,
(From their height
They take the happy air beneath;)

It is thou that, of thy grace,
From their place
In the far-off isles dost bring
Swallows over earth and sea,
Glad to be
Messengers of thee, and Spring.

Daffodil and eglantine,
And woodbine,
Lily, violet, and rose
Plentiful in April fair,
To the air,
Their pretty petals to unclose.

Nightingales ye now may hear,
Piercing clear,
Singing in the deepest shade;
Many and many a babbled note
Chime and float,
Woodland music through the glade.

April, all to welcome thee,
Spring sets free
Ancient flames, and with low breath
Wakes the ashes grey and old

That the cold
Chilled within our hearts to death.

Thou beholdest in the warm
Hours, the swarm
Of the thievish bees, that flies
Evermore from bloom to bloom
For perfume,
Hid away in tiny thighs.

Her cool shadows May can boast,
Fruits almost
Ripe, and gifts of fertile dew,
Manna-sweet and honey-sweet,
That complete
Her flower garland fresh and new.

Nay, but I will give my praise
To these days,
Named with the glad name of Her
That from out the foam o’ the sea
Came to be
Sudden light on earth and air.

AN OLD TUNE.

Gérard De Nerval.

There is an air for which I would disown
Mozart’s, Rossini’s, Weber’s melodies, —
A sweet sad air that languishes and sighs,
And keeps its secret charm for me alone.

Whene’er I hear that music vague and old,
Two hundred years are mist that rolls away;
The thirteenth Louis reigns, and I behold
A green land golden in the dying day.

An old red castle, strong with stony towers,
The windows gay with many-coloured glass;
Wide plains, and rivers flowing among flowers,
That bathe the castle basement as they pass.

In antique weed, with dark eyes and gold hair,
A lady looks forth from her window high;
It may be that I knew and found her fair,
In some forgotten life, long time gone by.

OLD LOVES.

Henri Murger.

Louise, have you forgotten yet
The corner of the flowery land,
The ancient garden where we met,
My hand that trembled in your hand?
Our lips found words scarce sweet enough,
As low beneath the willow-trees
We sat; have you forgotten, love?
Do you remember, love Louise?

Marie, have you forgotten yet
The loving barter that we made?
The rings we changed, the suns that set,
The woods fulfilled with sun and shade?
The fountains that were musical
By many an ancient trysting tree —
Marie, have you forgotten all?
Do you remember, love Marie?

Christine, do you remember yet
Your room with scents and roses gay?
My garret — near the sky ’twas set —
The April hours, the nights of May?
The clear calm nights — the stars above
That whispered they were fairest seen
Through no cloud-veil? Remember, love!
Do you remember, love Christine?

Louise is dead, and, well-a-day!

Marie a sadder path has ta’en;
And pale Christine has passed away
In southern suns to bloom again.
Alas! for one and all of us —
Marie, Louise, Christine forget;
Our bower of love is ruinous,
And I alone remember yet.

A LADY OF HIGH DEGREE.

I be pareld most of prise,
I ride after the wild fee.

Will ye that I should sing
Of the love of a goodly thing,
Was no vilein’s may?
’Tis all of a knight so free,
Under the olive tree,
Singing this lay.

Her weed was of samite fine,
Her mantle of white ermine,
Green silk her hose;
Her shoon with silver gay,
Her sandals flowers of May,
Laced small and close.

Her belt was of fresh spring buds,
Set with gold clasps and studs,
Fine linen her shift;
Her purse it was of love,
Her chain was the flower thereof,
And Love’s gift.

Upon a mule she rode,
The selle was of brent gold,
The bits of silver made;
Three red rose trees there were
That overshadowed her,
For a sun shade.

She riding on a day,
Knights met her by the way,
They did her grace:
‘Fair lady, whence be ye?’
‘France it is my countrie,
I come of a high race.

‘My sire is the nightingale,
That sings, making his wail,
In the wild wood, clear;
The mermaid is mother to me,
That sings in the salt sea,
In the ocean mere.’

‘Ye come of a right good race,
And are born of a high place,
And of high degree;
Would to God that ye were
Given unto me, being fair,
My lady and love to be.’

IANNOULA.

Romaic folk-song.

All the maidens were merry and wed
All to lovers so fair to see;
The lover I took to my bridal bed
He is not long for love and me.

I spoke to him and he nothing said,
I gave him bread of the wheat so fine;
He did not eat of the bridal bread,
He did not drink of the bridal wine.

I made him a bed was soft and deep,
I made him a bed to sleep with me;
‘Look on me once before you sleep,
And look on the flower of my fair body.

‘Flowers of April, and fresh May-dew,
Dew of April and buds of May;
Two white blossoms that bud for you,
Buds that blossom before the day.’

THE MILK-WHITE DOE.

French Volks-Lied.

It was a mother and a maid
That walked the woods among,
And still the maid went slow and sad,
And still the mother sung.

‘What ails you, daughter Margaret?
Why go you pale and wan?
Is it for a cast of bitter love,
Or for a false leman?’

‘It is not for a false lover
That I go sad to see;
But it is for a weary life
Beneath the greenwood tree.

‘For ever in the good daylight
A maiden may I go,
But always on the ninth midnight
I change to a milk-white doe.

‘They hunt me through the green forest
With hounds and hunting men;
And ever it is my fair brother
That is so fierce and keen.’

*

‘Good-morrow, mother.’ ‘Good-morrow, son;

Where are your hounds so good?’
‘Oh, they are hunting a white doe
Within the glad greenwood.

‘And three times have they hunted her,
And thrice she’s won away;
The fourth time that they follow her
That white doe they shall slay.’

*

Then out and spoke the forester,
As he came from the wood,
‘Now never saw I maid’s gold hair
Among the wild deer’s blood.

‘And I have hunted the wild deer
In east lands and in west;
And never saw I white doe yet
That had a maiden’s breast.’

Then up and spake her fair brother,
Between the wine and bread:
‘Behold I had but one sister,
And I have been her dead.

‘But ye must bury my sweet sister
With a stone at her foot and her head,
And ye must cover her fair body
With the white roses and red.

‘And I must out to the greenwood,
The roof shall never shelter me;
And I shall lie for seven long years
On the grass below the hawthorn tree.’

HELIODORE.

(Meleager.)

Pour wine, and cry again, again, again!
To Heliodore!
And mingle the sweet word ye call in vain
With that ye pour!
And bring to me her wreath of yesterday
That’s dank with myrrh;
Hesternae Rosae, ah my friends, but they
Remember her!
Lo the kind roses, loved of lovers, weep
As who repine,
For if on any breast they see her sleep
It is not mine!

THE PROPHET.

(Antiphilus.)

I knew it in your childish grace
The dawning of Desire,
‘Who lives,’ I said, ‘will see that face
Set all the world on fire!’
They mocked; but Time has brought to pass
The saying over-true;
Prophet and martyr now, alas,
I burn for Truth, — and you!

LAIS.

(Pompeius.)

Lais that bloomed for all the world’s delight,
Crowned with all love lilies, the fair and dear,
Sleeps the predestined sleep, nor knows the flight
Of Helios, the gold-reined charioteer:
Revel, and kiss, and love, and hate, one Night
Darkens, that never lamp of Love may cheer!

CLEARISTA.

(Meleager.)

For Death, not for Love, hast thou
Loosened thy zone!
Flutes filled thy bower but now,
Morning brings moan!
Maids round thy bridal bed
Hushed are in gloom,
Torches to Love that led
Light to the tomb!

THE FISHERMAN’S TOMB.

(Leonidas of Tarentum.)

Theris the Old, the waves that harvested
More keen than birds that labour in the sea,
With spear and net, by shore and rocky bed,
Not with the well-manned galley laboured he;
Him not the star of storms, nor sudden sweep
Of wind with all his years hath smitten and bent,
But in his hut of reeds he fell asleep,
As fades a lamp when all the oil is spent:
This tomb nor wife nor children raised, but we
His fellow-toilers, fishers of the sea.

OF HIS DEATH.

(Meleager.)

Ah Love, my Master, hear me swear
By all the locks of Timo’s hair,
By Demo, and that fragrant spell
Wherewith her body doth enchant
Such dreams as drowsy lovers haunt,
By Ilias’ mirth delectable.
And by the lamp that sheds his light
On love and lovers all the night,
By those, ah Love, I swear that thou
Hast left me but one breath, and now
Upon my lips it fluttereth,
Yet *this* I’ll yield, my latest breath,
Even this, oh Love, for thee to Death!

RHODOPE.

(Rufinus.)

Thou hast Hera’s eyes, thou hast Pallas’ hands,
And the feet of the Queen of the yellow sands,
Thou hast beautiful Aphrodite’s breast,
Thou art made of each goddess’s loveliest!
Happy is he who sees thy face,
Happy who hears thy words of grace,
And he that shall kiss thee is half divine,
But a god who shall win that heart of thine!

TO A GIRL.

(Asclepiades.)

Believe me, love, it is not good
To hoard a mortal maidenhood;
In Hades thou wilt never find,
Maiden, a lover to thy mind;
Love’s for the living! presently
Ashes and dust in death are we!

TO THE SHIPS.

(Meleager.)

O gentle ships that skim the seas,
And cleave the strait where Hellé fell,
Catch in your sails the Northern breeze,
And speed to Cos, where she doth dwell,
My Love, and see you greet her well!
And if she looks across the blue,
Speak, gentle ships, and tell her true,
‘He comes, for Love hath brought him back,
No sailor, on the landward tack.’

If thus, oh gentle ships, ye do,
Then may ye win the fairest gales,
And swifter speed across the blue,
While Zeus breathes friendly on your sails.

A LATE CONVERT.

(Paulus Silentiarius.)

I that in youth had never been
The servant of the Paphian Queen,
I that in youth had never felt
The shafts of Eros pierce and melt,
Cypris! in later age, half grey,
I bow the neck to *thee* to-day.
Pallas, that was my lady, thou
Dost more triumphant vanquish now,
Than when thou gained’st, over seas,
The apple of the Hesperides.

THE LIMIT OF LIFE.

Thirty-six is the term that the prophets assign,
And the students of stars to the years that are mine;
Nay, let thirty suffice, for the man who hath passed
Thirty years is a Nestor, and *he* died at last!

TO DANIEL ELZEVIR.

(From the Latin of Ménage.)

What do I see! Oh gods divine
And goddesses, — this Book of mine, —
This child of many hopes and fears, —
Is published by the Elzevirs!
Oh perfect Publishers complete!
Oh dainty volume, new and neat!
The Paper doth outshine the snow,
The Print is blacker than the crow,
The Title-Page, with crimson bright,
The vellum cover smooth and white,
All sorts of readers do invite,
Ay, and will keep them reading still,
Against their will, or with their will!
Thus what of grace the Rhymes may lack
The Publisher has given them back,
As Milliners adorn the fair
Whose charms are something skimp and spare.
Oh *dulce decus*, Elzevirs!
The pride of dead and dawning years,
How can a poet best repay
The debt he owes your House to-day?
May this round world, while aught endures,
Applaud, and buy, these books of yours!
May purchasers incessant pop,
My Elzevirs, within your shop,
And learned bards salute, with cheers,
The volumes of the Elzevirs,
Till your renown fills earth and sky,
Till men forget the Stephani,
And all that Aldus wrought, and all
Turnebus sold in shop or stall,

While still may Fate’s (and Binders’) shears
Respect, and spare, the Elzevirs!

THE LAST CHANCE.

Within the streams, Pausanias saith,
That down Cocytus valley flow,
Girdling the grey domain of Death,
The spectral fishes come and go;
The ghosts of trout flit to and fro.
Persephone, fulfil my wish,
And grant that in the shades below
My ghost may land the ghosts of fish.

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L. C.

BAN AND ARRIERE BAN

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DEDICATION: TO ELEANOR CHARLOTTE SELLAR

‘Ban and Arriere Ban!’ a host
Broken, beaten, all unled,
They return as doth a ghost
From the dead.

Sad or glad my rallied rhymes,
Sought our dusty papers through,
For the sake of other times
Come to you.

Times and places new we know,
Faces fresh and seasons strange
But the friends of long ago
Do not change.

ERRATUM: Reader, a blot hath escaped the watchfulness of the setter forth: if thou wilt thou mayst amend it. The sonnet on the forty-fourth page, against all right Italianate laws, hath but thirteen lines withal: add another to thy liking, if thou art a Maker; or, if thou art none, even be content with what is set before thee. If it be scant measure, be sure it is choicely good.

A SCOT TO JEANNE D’ARC

Dark Lily without blame,
Not upon us the shame,
Whose sires were to the Auld Alliance true,
They, by the Maiden’s side,
Victorious fought and died,
One stood by thee that fiery torment through,
Till the White Dove from thy pure lips had passed,
And thou wert with thine own St. Catherine at the last.

Once only didst thou see
In artist’s imagery,
Thine own face painted, and that precious thing
Was in an Archer’s hand
From the leal Northern land.
Alas, what price would not thy people bring
To win that portrait of the ruinous
Gulf of devouring years that hide the Maid from us!

Born of a lowly line,
Noteless as once was thine,
One of that name I would were kin to me,
Who, in the Scottish Guard
Won this for his reward,
To fight for France, and memory of thee:
Not upon us, dark Lily without blame,
Not on the North may fall the shadow of that shame.

On France and England both
The shame of broken troth,
Of coward hate and treason black must be;
If England slew thee, France
Sent not one word, one lance,

One coin to rescue or to ransom thee.
And still thy Church unto the Maid denies
The halo and the palms, the Beatific prize.

But yet thy people calls
Within the rescued walls
Of Orleans; and makes its prayer to thee;
What though the Church have chidden
These orisons forbidden,
Yet art thou with this earth’s immortal Three,
With him in Athens that of hemlock died,
And with thy Master dear whom the world crucified.

HOW THEY HELD THE BASS FOR KING JAMES — 1691-1693

[Time of Narrating — 1743]

Ye hae heard Whigs crack o' the Saints in the Bass, my faith, a gruesome tale;
How the Remnant paid at a tippeny rate, for a quart o' ha'penny ale!
But I'll tell ye anither tale o' the Bass, that'll hearten ye up to hear,
Sae I pledge ye to Middleton first in a glass, and a health to the Young Chevalier!

The Bass stands frae North Berwick Law a league or less to sea,
About its feet the breakers beat, abune the sea-maws flee,
There's castle stark and dungeon dark, wherein the godly lay,
That made their rant for the Covenant through mony a weary day.
For twal' years lang the caverns rang wi' preaching, prayer, and psalm,
Ye'd think the winds were soughing wild, when a' the winds were calm,
There wad they preach, each Saint to each, and glower as the soldiers pass,
And Peden wared his malison on a bonny leaguer lass,
As she stood and daffed, while the warders laughed, and wha sae blithe as she,
But a wind o' ill worked his warlock will, and flang her out to sea.
Then wha sae bright as the Saints that night, and an angel came, say they,
And sang in the cell where the Righteous dwell, but he took na a Saint away.
There yet might they be, for nane could flee, and nane daur'd break

the jail,
And still the sobbing o’ the sea might mix wi’ their warlock wail,
But then came in black echty-echt, and bluidy echty-nine,
Wi’ Cess, and Press, and Presbytery, and a’ the dule sin’ syne,
The Saints won free wi’ the power o’ the key, and cavaliers maun pine!
It was Halyburton, Middleton, and Roy and young Dunbar,
That Livingstone took on Cromdale haughs, in the last fight of the war:
And they were warded in the Bass, till the time they should be slain,
Where bluidy Mitchell, and Blackader, and Earlston lang had lain;
Four lads alone, ‘gainst a garrison, but Glory crowns their names,
For they brought it to pass that they took the Bass, and they held it for King James!

It isna by preaching half the night, ye’ll burst a dungeon door,
It wasna by dint o’ psalmody they broke the hold, they four,
For lang years three that rock in the sea bade Wullie Wanbeard gae swing,
And England and Scotland fause may be, but the Bass Rock stands for the King!

There’s but ae pass gangs up the Bass, it’s guarded wi’ strong gates four,
And still as the soldiers went to the sea, they steikit them, door by door,
And this did they do when they helped a crew that brought their coals on shore.
Thither all had gone, save three men alone: then Middleton gripped his man,
Halyburton felled the sergeant lad, Dunbar seized the gunner, Swan;
Roy bound their hands, in hempen bands, and the Cavaliers were free.
And they trained the guns on the soldier loons that were down wi’ the boat by the sea!
Then Middleton cried frae the high cliff-side, and his voice garr’d the auld rocks ring,

‘Will ye stand or flee by the land or sea, for I hold the Bass for the King?’

They had nae desire to face the fire; it was mair than men might do,
So they e’en sailed back in the auld coal-smack, a sorry and shame-faced crew,
And they hirpled doun to Edinburgh toun, wi’ the story of their shames,
How the prisoners bold had broken hold, and kept the Bass for King James.

King James he has sent them guns and men, and the Whigs they guard the Bass,
But they never could catch the Cavaliers, who took toll of ships that pass,
They fared wild and free as the birds o’ the sea, and at night they went on the wing,
And they lifted the kye o’ Whigs far and nigh, and they revelled and drank to the King.

Then Wullie Wanbeard sends his ships to siege the Bass in form,
And first shall they break the fortress down, and syne the Rock they’ll storm.
After twa days’ fight they fled in the night, and glad eneuch to go,
With their rigging rent, and their powder spent, and many a man laid low.

So for lang years three did they sweep the sea, but a closer watch was set,
Till nae food had they, but twa ounce a day o’ meal was the maist they’d get.
And men fight but tame on an empty wame, so they sent a flag o’ truce,

And blithe were the Privy Council then, when the Whigs had heard that news.
Twa Lords they sent wi’ a strang intent to be dour on each Cavalier,
But wi’ French cakes fine, and his last drap o’ wine, did Middleton make them cheer,
On the muzzles o’ guns he put coats and caps, and he set them aboot the wa’s,
And the Whigs thocht then he had food and men to stand for the Rightfu’ Cause.
So he got a’ he craved, and his men were saved, and nane might say them nay,
Wi’ sword by side, and flag o’ pride, free men might they gang their way,
They might fare to France, they might bide at hame, and the better their grace to buy,
Wullie Wanbeard’s purse maun pay the keep o’ the men that did him defy!

Men never hae gotten sic terms o’ peace since first men went to war,
As got Halyburton, and Middleton, and Roy, and the young Dunbar.
Sae I drink to ye here, To the Young Chevalier! I hae said ye an auld man’s say,
And there may hae been mightier deeds of arms, but there never was nane sae gay!

THREE PORTRAITS OF PRINCE CHARLES

1731

Beautiful face of a child,
Lighted with laughter and glee,
Mirthful, and tender, and wild,
My heart is heavy for thee!

1744

Beautiful face of a youth,
As an eagle poised to fly forth,
To the old land loyal of truth,
To the hills and the sounds of the North:
Fair face, daring and proud,
Lo! the shadow of doom, even now,
The fate of thy line, like a cloud,
Rests on the grace of thy brow!

1773

Cruel and angry face,
Hateful and heavy with wine,
Where are the gladness, the grace,
The beauty, the mirth that were thine?

Ah, my Prince, it were well, —
Hadst thou to the gods been dear, -
To have fallen where Keppoch fell,
With the war-pipe loud in thine ear!
To have died with never a stain
On the fair White Rose of Renown,
To have fallen, fighting in vain,
For thy father, thy faith, and thy crown!
More than thy marble pile,
With its women weeping for thee,
Were to dream in thine ancient isle,
To the endless dirge of the sea!
But the Fates deemed otherwise,
Far thou sleepest from home,
From the tears of the Northern skies,
In the secular dust of Rome.

*

A city of death and the dead,
But thither a pilgrim came,
Wearing on weary head
The crowns of years and fame:
Little the Lucrine lake
Or Tivoli said to him,
Scarce did the memories wake
Of the far-off years and dim.
For he stood by Avernus’ shore,
But he dreamed of a Northern glen
And he murmured, over and o’er,
‘For Charlie and his men:’
And his feet, to death that went,
Crept forth to St. Peter’s shrine,
And the latest Minstrel bent
O’er the last of the Stuart line.

FROM OMAR KHAYYAM

[Rhymed from the prose version of Mr. Justin Huntly M’Carthy]

The Paradise they bid us fast to win
Hath Wine and Women; is it then a sin
To live as we shall live in Paradise,
And make a Heaven of Earth, ere Heaven begin?

The wise may search the world from end to end,
From dusty nook to dusty nook, my friend,
And nothing better find than girls and wine,
Of all the things they neither make nor mend.

Nay, listen thou who, walking on Life’s way,
Hast seen no lovelock of thy love’s grow grey
Listen, and love thy life, and let the Wheel
Of Heaven go spinning its own wilful way.

Man is a flagon, and his soul the wine,
Man is a lamp, wherein the Soul doth shine,
Man is a shaken reed, wherein that wind,
The Soul, doth ever rustle and repine.

Each morn I say, to-night I will repent,
Repent! and each night go the way I went -
The way of Wine; but now that reigns the rose,
Lord of Repentance, rage not, but relent.

I wish to drink of wine — so deep, so deep -
The scent of wine my sepulchre shall steep,

And they, the revellers by Omar’s tomb,
Shall breathe it, and in Wine shall fall asleep.

Before the rent walls of a ruined town
Lay the King’s skull, whereby a bird flew down
‘And where,’ he sang, ‘is all thy clash of arms?
Where the sonorous trumps of thy renown?’

AESOP

He sat among the woods, he heard
The sylvan merriment: he saw
The pranks of butterfly and bird,
The humours of the ape, the daw.

And in the lion or the frog -
In all the life of moor and fen,
In ass and peacock, stork and dog,
He read similitudes of men.

‘Of these, from those,’ he cried, ‘we come,
Our hearts, our brains descend from these.’
And lo! the Beasts no more were dumb,
But answered out of brakes and trees:

‘Not ours,’ they cried; ‘Degenerate,
If ours at all,’ they cried again,
‘Ye fools, who war with God and Fate,
Who strive and toil: strange race of men.

‘For WE are neither bond nor free,
For WE have neither slaves nor kings,
But near to Nature’s heart are we,
And conscious of her secret things.

‘Content are we to fall asleep,
And well content to wake no more,
We do not laugh, we do not weep,
Nor look behind us and before;

‘But were there cause for moan or mirth,
’Tis WE, not you, should sigh or scorn,

Oh, latest children of the Earth,
Most childish children Earth has borne.’

*

They spoke, but that misshapen slave
Told never of the thing he heard,
And unto men their portraits gave,
In likenesses of beast and bird!

LES ROSES DE SADI

This morning I vowed I would bring thee my Roses,
They were thrust in the band that my bodice encloses,
But the breast-knots were broken, the Roses went free.
The breast-knots were broken; the Roses together
Floated forth on the wings of the wind and the weather,
And they drifted afar down the streams of the sea.

And the sea was as red as when sunset uncloses,
But my raiment is sweet from the scent of the Roses,
Thou shalt know, Love, how fragrant a memory can be.

THE HAUNTED TOWER

[Suggested by a poem of Theophile Gautier]

In front he saw the donjon tall
Deep in the woods, and stayed to scan
The guards that slept along the wall,
Or dozed upon the bartizan.
He marked the drowsy flag that hung
Unwaved by wind, unfrayed by shower,
He listened to the birds that sung
Go forth and win the haunted tower!
The tangled brake made way for him,
The twisted brambles bent aside;
And lo, he pierced the forest dim,
And lo, he won the fairy bride!
For HE was young, but ah! we find,
All we, whose beards are flecked with grey,
Our fairy castle’s far behind,
We watch it from the darkling way:
’Twas ours, that palace, in our youth,
We revelled there in happy cheer:
Who scarce dare visit now in sooth,
Le Vieux Chateau de Souvenir!
For not the boughs of forest green
Begird that castle far away,
There is a mist where we have been
That weeps about it, cold and grey.
And if we seek to travel back
’Tis through a thicket dim and sere,
With many a grave beside the track,
And many a haunting form of fear.
Dead leaves are wet among the moss,
With weed and thistle overgrown -
A ruined barge within the fosse,

A castle built of crumbling stone!
The drawbridge drops from rusty chains,
There comes no challenge from the hold;
No squire, nor dame, nor knight remains,
Of all who dwelt with us of old.
And there is silence in the hall
No sound of songs, no ray of fire;
But gloom where all was glad, and all
Is darkened with a vain desire.
And every picture’s fading fast,
Of fair Jehanne, or Cydalise.
Lo, the white shadows hurrying past,
Below the boughs of dripping trees!

*

Ah rise, and march, and look not back,
Now the long way has brought us here;
We may not turn and seek the track
To the old Chateau de Souvenir!

BOAT-SONG

Adrift, with starlit skies above,
With starlit seas below,
We move with all the suns that move,
With all the seas that flow:
For, bond or free, earth, sky, and sea,
Wheel with one central will,
And thy heart drifteth on to me,
And only Time stands still.

Between two shores of death we drift,
Behind are things forgot,
Before, the tide is racing swift
To shores man knoweth not.
Above, the sky is far and cold,
Below, the moaning sea
Sweeps o’er the loves that were of old,
But thou, Love, love thou me.

Ah, lonely are the ocean ways,
And dangerous the deep,
And frail the fairy barque that strays
Above the seas asleep.
Ah, toil no more with helm or oar,
We drift, or bond or free,
On yon far shore the breakers roar,
But thou, Love, love thou me!

LOST LOVE

Who wins his Love shall lose her,
Who loses her shall gain,
For still the spirit woos her,
A soul without a stain;
And Memory still pursues her
With longings not in vain!

He loses her who gains her,
Who watches day by day
The dust of time that stains her,
The griefs that leave her grey,
The flesh that yet enchains her
Whose grace hath passed away!

Oh, happier he who gains not
The Love some seem to gain:
The joy that custom stains not
Shall still with him remain,
The loveliness that wanes not,
The Love that ne’er can wane.

In dreams she grows not older
The lands of Dream among,
Though all the world wax colder,
Though all the songs be sung,
In dreams doth he behold her
Still fair and kind and young.

THE PROMISE OF HELEN

Whom hast thou longed for most,
True love of mine?
Whom hast thou loved and lost?
Lo, she is thine!

She that another wed
Breaks from her vow;
She that hath long been dead
Wakes for thee now.

Dreams haunt the hapless bed,
Ghosts haunt the night,
Life crowns her living head,
Love and Delight.

Nay, not a dream nor ghost,
Nay, but Divine,
She that was loved and lost
Waits to be thine!

THE RESTORATION OF ROMANCE. TO H. R. H., R. L. S., A. C. D., AND S. W.

King Romance was wounded deep,
All his knights were dead and gone,
All his court was fallen on sleep,
In a vale of Avalon!
Nay, men said, he will not come,
Any night or any morn.
Nay, his puissant voice is dumb,
Silent his enchanted horn!

King Romance was forfeited,
Banished from his Royal home,
With a price upon his head,
Driven with sylvan folk to roam.
King Romance is fallen, banned,
Cried his foemen overbold,
Broken is the wizard wand,
All the stories have been told!

Then you came from South and North,
From Tugela, from the Tweed,
Blazoned his achievements forth,
King Romance is come indeed!
All his foes are overthrown,
All their wares cast out in scorn,
King Romance hath won his own,
And the lands where he was born!

Marsac at adventure rides,
Felon men meet felon scathe,
Micah Clarke is taking sides

For King Monmouth and the Faith;
For a Cause or for a lass
Men are willing to be slain,
And the dungeons of the Bass
Hold a prisoner again.

King Romance with wand of gold
Sways the realms he ruled of yore.
Hills Dalgetty roamed of old,
Valleys of enchanted Kor:
Waves his sceptre o’er the isles,
Claims the pirates’ treasuries,
Through innumerable miles
Of the siren-haunted seas!

Elfin folk of coast and cave,
Laud him in the woven dance,
All the tribes of wold and wave
Bow the knee to King Romance!
Wand’ring voices Chaucer knew
On the mountain and the main,
Cry the haunted forest through,
KING ROMANCE HAS COME AGAIN!

CENTRAL AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES IN SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

‘Youth and crabbed age
Cannot live together;’
So they say.

On this little page
See you when and whether
That they may.

Age was very old -
Stones from Chichimec
Hardly wrung;

Youth had hair of gold
Knotted on her neck -
Fair and young!

Age was carved with odd
Slaves, and priests that slew them -
God and Beast;

Man and Beast and God -
There she sat and drew them,
King and Priest!

There she sat and drew
Many a monstrous head
And antique;

Horrors from Peru,
HUACAS doubly dead,
Dead cacique!

Ere Pizarro came
These were lords of men
Long ago;

Gods without a name,
Born or how or when,
None may know!

Now from Yucatan
These doth Science bear
Over seas;

And methinks a man
Finds youth doubly fair,
Sketching these!

ON CALAIS SANDS

On Calais Sands the grey began,
Then rosy red above the grey,
The morn with many a scarlet van
Leap’d, and the world was glad with May!
The little waves along the bay
Broke white upon the shelving strands;
The sea-mews flitted white as they
On Calais Sands!

On Calais Sands must man with man
Wash honour clean in blood to-day;
On spaces wet from waters wan
How white the flashing rapiers play,
Parry, riposte! and lunge! The fray
Shifts for a while, then mournful stands
The Victor: life ebbs fast away
On Calais Sands!

On Calais Sands a little space
Of silence, then the plash and spray,
The sound of eager waves that ran
To kiss the perfumed locks astray,
To touch these lips that ne’er said ‘Nay,’
To dally with the helpless hands;
Till the deep sea in silence lay
On Calais Sands!

Between the lilac and the may
She waits her love from alien lands;
Her love is colder than the clay
On Calais Sands!

BALLADE OF YULE

This life’s most jolly, Amiens said,
Heigh-ho, the Holly! So sang he.
As the good Duke was comforted
In forest exile, so may we!
The years may darken as they flee,
And Christmas bring his melancholy:
But round the old mahogany tree
We drink, we sing Heigh-ho, the Holly!

Though some are dead and some are fled
To lands of summer over sea,
The holly berry keeps his red,
The merry children keep their glee;
They hoard with artless secresy
This gift for Maude, and that for Molly,
And Santa Claus he turns the key
On Christmas Eve, Heigh-ho, the Holly!

Amid the snow the birds are fed,
The snow lies deep on lawn and lea,
The skies are shining overhead,
The robin’s tame that was so free.
Far North, at home, the ‘barley bree’
They brew; they give the hour to folly,
How ‘Rab and Allan cam to pree,’
They sing, we sing Heigh-ho, the Holly!

ENVOI

Friend, let us pay the wonted fee,
The yearly tithe of mirth: be jolly!
It is a duty so to be,
Though half we sigh, Heigh-ho, the Holly!

POSCIMUR — FROM HORACE

Hush, for they call! If in the shade,
My lute, we twain have idly strayed,
And song for many a season made,
Once more reply;
Once more we'll play as we have played,
My lute and I!

Roman the song: the strain you know,
The Lesbian wrought it long ago.
Now singing as he charged the foe,
Now in the bay,
Where safe in the shore-water's flow
His galleys lay.

So sang he Bacchus and the Nine,
And Venus and her boy divine,
And Lycus of the dusky eyne,
The dusky hair;
So shalt thou sing, ah, Lute of mine,
Of all things fair;

Apollo's glory! Sounding shell,
Thou lute, to Jove desirable,
When soft thine accents sigh and swell
At festival -
Delight more dear than words can tell,
Attend my call!

ON HIS DEAD SEA-MEW FROM THE GREEK

I

Bird of the graces, dear sea-mew, whose note
Was like the halcyon’s song,
In death thy wings and thy sweet spirit float
Still paths of the night along!

II

THE SAILOR’S GRAVE

Tomb of a shipwrecked seafarer am I,
But thou, sail on!
For homeward safe did other vessels fly,
Though we were gone.

FROM MELEAGER

I love not the wine-cup, but if thou art fain
I should drink, do thou taste it, and bring it to me;
If it touch but thy lips it were hard to refrain,
It were hard from the sweet maid who bears it to flee;
For the cup ferries over the kisses, and plain
Does it speak of the grace that was given it by thee.

ON THE GARLAND SENT TO RHODOCLEIA — RUFINUS

GOLDEN EYES

‘Ah, Golden Eyes, to win you yet,
I bring mine April coronet,
The lovely blossoms of the spring,
For you I weave, to you I bring
These roses with the lilies set,
The dewy dark-eyed violet,
Narcissus, and the wind-flower wet:
Wilt thou disdain mine offering?
Ah, Golden Eyes!

Crowned with thy lover’s flowers, forget
The pride wherein thy heart is set,
For thou, like these or anything,
Has but a moment of thy spring,
Thy spring, and then — the long regret!
Ah, Golden Eyes!’

A GALLOWAY GARLAND

We know not, on these hills of ours,
The fabled asphodel of Greece,
That filleth with immortal flowers
Fields where the heroes are at peace!
Not ours are myrtle buds like these
That breathe o’er isles where memories dwell
Of Sappho, in enchanted seas!

We meet not, on our upland moor,
The singing Maid of Helicon,
You may not hear her music pure
Float on the mountain meres withdrawn;
The Muse of Greece, the Muse is gone!
But we have songs that please us well
And flowers we love to look upon.

More sweet than Southern myrtles far
The bruised Marsh-myrtle breatheth keen;
Parnassus names the flower, the star,
That shines among the well-heads green
The bright Marsh-asphodels between -
Marsh-myrtle and Marsh-asphodel
May crown the Northern Muse a queen

CELIA’S EYES — PASTICHE

Tell me not that babies dwell
In the deeps of Celia’s eyes;
Cupid in each hazel well
Scans his beauties with surprise,
And would, like Narcissus, drown
In my Celia’s eyes of brown.

Tell me not that any goes
Safe by that enchanted place;
Eros dwells with Anteros
In the garden of her Face,
Where like friends who late were foes
Meet the white and crimson Rose.

BRITANNIA — FROM JULES LEMAITRE

Thy mouth is fresh as cherries on the bough,
Red cherries in the dawning, and more white
Than milk or white camellias is thy brow;
And as the golden corn thy hair is bright,
The corn that drinks the Sun’s less fair than thou;
While through thine eyes the child-soul gazeth now -
Eyes like the flower that was Rousseau’s delight.

Sister of sad Ophelia, say, shall these
Thy pearly teeth grow like piano keys
Yellow and long; while thou, all skin and bone,
Angles and morals, in a sky-blue veil,
Shalt hosts of children to the sermon hale,
Blare hymns, read chapters, backbite, and intone?

GALLIA

Lady, lady neat
Of the roguish eye,
Wherefore dost thou hie,
Stealthy, down the street,
On well-booted feet?
From French novels I
Gather that you fly,
Guy or Jules to meet.

Furtive dost thou range,
Oft thy cab dost change;
So, at least, ’tis said:
Oh, the sad old tale
Passionately stale,
We’ve so often read!

THE FAIRY MINISTER

[The Rev. Mr. Kirk of Aberfoyle was carried away by the Fairies in 1692.]

People of Peace! a peaceful man,
Well worthy of your love was he,
Who, while the roaring Garry ran
Red with the life-blood of Dundee,
While coats were turning, crowns were falling,
Wandered along his valley still,
And heard your mystic voices calling
From fairy knowe and haunted hill.
He heard, he saw, he knew too well
The secrets of your fairy clan;
You stole him from the haunted dell,
Who never more was seen of man.
Now far from heaven, and safe from hell,
Unknown of earth, he wanders free.
Would that he might return and tell
Of his mysterious Company!
For we have tired the Folk of Peace;
No more they tax our corn and oil;
Their dances on the moorland cease,
The Brownie stints his wonted toil.
No more shall any shepherd meet
The ladies of the fairy clan,
Nor are their deathly kisses sweet
On lips of any earthly man.
And half I envy him who now,
Clothed in her Court’s enchanted green,
By moonlit loch or mountain’s brow
Is Chaplain to the Fairy Queen.

TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON WITH KIRK’S ‘SECRET COMMONWEALTH’

O Louis! you that like them maist,
Ye’re far frae kelpie, wraith, and ghaist,
And fairy dames, no unco chaste,
And haunted cell.
Among a heathen clan ye’re placed,
That kensna hell!

Ye hae nae heather, peat, nor birks,
Nae trout in a’ yer burnies lurks,
There are nae bonny U.P. kirks,
An awfu’ place!
Nane kens the Covenant o’ Works
Frae that o’ Grace!

But whiles, maybe, to them ye’ll read
Blads o’ the Covenanting creed,
And whiles their pagan wames ye’ll feed
On halesome parritch;
And syne ye’ll gar them learn a screed
O’ the Shorter Carritch.

Yet thae uncovenanted shavers
Hae rowth, ye say, o’ clash and clavers
O’ gods and etins — auld wives’ havers,
But their delight;
The voice o’ him that tells them quavers
Just wi’ fair fright.

And ye might tell, ayont the faem,

Thae Hieland clashes o’ our hame
To speak the truth, I takna shame
To half believe them;
And, stamped wi’ Tusitala’s name,
They’ll a’ receive them.

And folk to come ayont the sea
May hear the yowl o’ the Banshie,
And frae the water-kelpie flee,
Ere a’ things cease,
And island bairns may stolen be
By the Folk o’ Peace.

FOR MARK TWAIN’S JUBILEE

To brave Mark Twain, across the sea,
The years have brought his jubilee;
One hears it half with pain,
That fifty years have passed and gone
Since danced the merry star that shone
Above the babe, Mark Twain!

How many and many a weary day,
When sad enough were we, ‘Mark’s way’
(Unlike the Laureate’s Mark’s)
Has made us laugh until we cried,
And, sinking back exhausted, sighed,
Like Gargery, Wot larx!

We turn his pages, and we see
The Mississippi flowing free;
We turn again, and grin
O’er all Tom Sawyer did and planned,
With him of the Ensanguined Hand,
With Huckleberry Finn!

Spirit of mirth, whose chime of bells
Shakes on his cap, and sweetly swells
Across the Atlantic main,
Grant that Mark’s laughter never die,
That men, through many a century,
May chuckle o’er Mark Twain!

MIST

Mist, though I love thee not, who puttest down
Trout in the Lochs, (they feed not, as a rule,
At least on fly, in mere or river-pool
When fogs have fallen, and the air is lown,
And on each Ben, a pillow not a crown,
The fat folds rest,) thou, Mist, hast power to cool
The blatant declamations of the fool
Who raves reciting through the heather brown.

Much do I bar the matron, man, or lass
Who cries ‘How lovely!’ and who does not spare
When light and shadow on the mountain pass, —
Shadow and light, and gleams exceeding fair,
O’er rock, and glade, and glen, — to shout, the Ass,
To me, to me the Poet, ‘Oh, look there!’

LINES

[Written under the influence of Wordsworth, with a slate-pencil on a window of the dining-room at the Lowood Hotel, Windermere, while waiting for tea, after being present at the Grasmere Sports on a very wet day, and in consequence of a recent perusal of Belinda, a Novel, by Miss Broughton, whose absence is regretted.]

How solemn is the front of this Hotel,
When now the hills are swathed in modest mist,
And none can speak of scenery, nor tell
Of ‘tints of amber,’ or of ‘amethyst.’
Here once thy daughters, young Romance, did dwell,
Here Sara flirted with whoever list,
Belinda loved not wisely but too well,
And Mr. Ford played the Philologist!
Haunted the house is, and the balcony
Where that fond Matron knew her Lover near,
And here we sit, and wait for tea, and sigh,
While the sad rain sobs in the sullen mere,
And all our hearts go forth into the cry,
Would that the teller of the tale were here!

LINES

[Written on the window pane of a railway carriage after reading an advertisement of sunlight soap, and Poems, by William Wordsworth.]

I passed upon the wings of Steam
Along Tay’s valley fair,
The book I read had such a theme
As bids the Soul despair.

A tale of miserable men
Of hearts with doubt distraught,
Wherein a melancholy pen
With helpless problems fought.

Where many a life was brought to dust,
And many a heart laid low,
And many a love was smirched with lust -
I raised mine eyes, and, oh! -

I marked upon a common wall,
These simple words of hope,
That mute appeal to one and all,
Cheer up! Use Sunlight Soap!

Our moral energies have range
Beyond their seeming scope,
How tonic were the words, how strange,
Cheer up! Use Sunlight Soap!

‘Behold,’ I cried, ‘the inner touch
That lifts the Soul through cares!

I loved that Soap-boiler so much
I blessed him unawares!

Perchance he is some vulgar man,
Engrossed in pounds s. d.
But, ah! through Nature’s holy plan
He whispered hope to me!

ODE TO GOLF

‘Delusive Nymph, farewell!’
How oft we’ve said or sung,
When balls evasive fell,
Or in the jaws of ‘Hell,’
Or salt sea-weeds among,
‘Mid shingle and sea-shell!

How oft beside the Burn,
We play the sad ‘two more’;
How often at the turn,
The heather must we spurn;
How oft we’ve ‘topped and swore,’
In bent and whin and fern!

Yes, when the broken head
Bounds further than the ball,
The heart has inly bled.
Ah! and the lips have said
Words we would fain recall -
Wild words, of passion bred!

In bunkers all unknown,
Far beyond ‘Walkinshaw,
Where never ball had flown -
Reached by ourselves alone -
Caddies have heard with awe
The music of our moan!

Yet, Nymph, if once alone,
The ball hath featly fled -

Not smitten from the bone -
That drive doth still atone;
And one long shot laid dead
Our grief to the winds hath blown!

So, still beside the tee,
We meet in storm or calm,
Lady, and worship thee;
While the loud lark sings free,
Piping his matin psalm
Above the grey sad sea!

FRESHMAN’S TERM

Return again, thou Freshman’s year,
When bloom was on the rye,
When breakfast came with bottled beer,
When Pleasure walked the High;
When Torpid Bumps were more by far
To every opening mind
Than Trade, or Shares, or Peace, or War,
To senior humankind;
When ribbons of outrageous hues
Were worn with honest pride,
When much was talked of boats and crews,
When Proctors were defied:
When Tick was in its early bloom,
When Schools were far away,
As vaguely distant as the tomb,
Nor more regarded — they!
When arm was freely linked with arm
Beneath the College limes,
When Sunday grinds possessed a charm
Denied to College Rhymes:
When ices were in much request
Beside the April fire,
When men were very strangely dressed
By Standen or by Prior.
Return, ye Freshman’s Terms! They DO
Return, and much the same,
To boys, who, just like me and you,
Play the absurd old game!

A TOAST

[Kate Kennedy is the Patron Saint of St. Leonard’s and St. Salvator. Her history is quite unknown.]

The learned are all ‘in a swither,’
(They don’t very often agree,)
They know not her ‘whence’ nor her ‘whither,’
The Maiden we drink to together,
The College’s Kate Kennedie!

Did she shine in days early or later?
Did she ever achieve a degree?
Was she pretty or plain? Did she mate, or
Live lonely? And who was the pater
Of mystical Kate Kennedie?

The learned may scorn her and scout her,
But true to her colours are WE,
The learned may mock her and flout her,
But surely we’ll rally about her,
In the College that stands by the Sea!

So here’s to her memory! here to
The mystical Maiden drink we,
We pledge her, and we’ll persevere too,
Though the reason is not very clear to
The critical mind, nor to ME.
Here’s to Kate! she’s our own, and she’s dear to
The College that stands by the Sea.

DEATH IN JUNE — FOR CRICKETERS ONLY

[June is the month of Suicides]

Why do we slay ourselves in June,
When life, if ever, seems so sweet?
When “Moon,” and “tune,” and “afternoon,”
And other happy rhymes we meet,
When strawberries are coming soon?
Why do we do it?’ you repeat!

Ah, careless butterfly, to thee
The strawberry seems passing good;
And sweet, on Music’s wings, to flee
Amid the waltzing multitude,
And revel late — perchance till three -
For Love is monarch of thy mood!

Alas! to US no solace shows
For sorrows we endure — at Lord’s,
When Oxford’s bowling ALWAYS goes
For ‘fours,’ for ever to the cords -
Or more, perhaps, with ‘overthrows’; -
These things can pierce the heart like swords!

And thus it is though woods are green,
Though mayflies down the Test are rolling,
Though sweet, the silver showers between,
The finches sing in strains consoling,
We cut our throats for very spleen,
And very shame of Oxford’s bowling!

TO CORRESPONDENTS

My Postman, though I fear thy tread,
And tremble as thy foot draws nearer,
’Tis not the Christmas Dun I dread,
MY mortal foe is much severer, -
The Unknown Correspondent, who,
With undefatigable pen,
And nothing in the world to do,
Perplexes literary men.

From Pentecost and Ponder’s End
They write: from Deal, and from Dacotah,
The people of the Shetlands send
No inconsiderable quota;
They write for AUTOGRAPHS; in vain,
In vain does Phyllis write, and Flora,
They write that Allan Quatermain
Is not at all the book for Brora.

They write to say that ‘they have met
This writer ‘at a garden party,
And though’ this writer ‘MAY forget,’
THEIR recollection’s keen and hearty.
‘And will you praise in your reviews
A novel by our distant cousin?’
These letters from Provincial Blues
Assail us daily by the dozen!

O friends with time upon your hands,
O friends with postage-stamps in plenty,
O poets out of many lands,
O youths and maidens under twenty,
Seek out some other wretch to bore,

Or wreak yourselves upon your neighbours,
And leave me to my dusty lore
And my unprofitable labours!

BALLADE OF DIFFICULT RHYMES

With certain rhymes ’tis hard to deal;
For ‘silver’ we have ne’er a rhyme.
On ‘orange’ (as on orange peel)
The bard has slipped full many a time.
With ‘babe’ there’s scarce a sound will chime,
Though ‘astrolabe’ fits like a glove;
But, ye that on Parnassus climb,
Why, why are rhymes so rare to LOVE?

A rhyme to ‘cusp,’ to beg or steal,
I’ve sought, from evensong to prime,
But vain is my poetic zeal,
There’s not one sound is worth a ‘dime’:
‘Bilge,’ ‘coif,’ ‘scarf,’ ‘window’ — deeds of crime
I’d do to gain the rhymes thereof;
Nor shrink from acts of moral grime -
Why, why are rhymes so rare to LOVE?

To ‘dove’ my fancies flit, and wheel
Like butterflies on banks of thyme.
‘Above’? — or ‘shove’ — alas! I feel,
They’re too much used to be sublime.
I scorn with angry pantomime,
The thought of ‘move’ (pronounced as muv).
Ah, in Apollo’s golden clime
Why, why are rhymes so rare to LOVE?

ENVOI

Prince of the lute and lyre, reveal
New rhymes, fresh minted, from above,
Nor still be deaf to our appeal.
Why, WHY are rhymes so rare to LOVE?

BALLANT O’ BALLANTRAE — TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

[Written in wet weather, this conveyed to the Master of Ballantrae a wrong idea of a very beautiful and charming place, with links, a river celebrated by Burns, good sea-fishing, and, on the river, a ruined castle at every turn of the stream. ‘Try Ballantrae’ is a word of wisdom.]

Whan suthern wunds gar spindrift flee
Abune the clachan, faddums hie,
Whan for the cluds I canna see
The bonny lift,
I’d fain indite an Ode to THEE
Had I the gift!

Ken ye the coast o’ wastland Ayr?
Oh mon, it’s unco bleak and bare!
Ye daunder here, ye daunder there,
And mak’ your moan,
They’ve rain and wund eneuch to tear
The suthern cone!

Ye’re seekin’ sport! There’s nane ava’,
Ye’ll sit and glower ahint the wa’
At bleesin’ breakers till ye staw,
If that’s yer wush;
‘There’s aye the Stinchar.’ Hoot awa’,
She wunna fush!

She wunna fush at ony gait,
She’s roarin’ reid in wrathfu’ spate;
Maist like yer kimmer when ye’re late

Frae Girvan Fair!
Forbye to speer for leave I’m blate
For fushin’ there!

O Louis, you that writes in Scots,
Ye’re far awa’ frae stirks and stots,
Wi’ drookit hurdies, tails in knots,
An unco way!
MY mirth’s like thorns aneth the pots
In Ballantrae!

SONG BY THE SUB-CONSCIOUS SELF — RHYMES MADE IN A DREAM

I know not what my secret is,
I know but it is mine;
I know to dwell with it were bliss,
To die for it divine.
I cannot yield it in a kiss,
Nor breathe it in a sigh.
I know that I have lived for this;
For this, my love, I die.

THE HAUNTED HOMES OF ENGLAND

The Haunted Homes of England,
How eerily they stand,
While through them flit their ghosts — to wit,
The Monk with the Red Hand,
The Eyeless Girl — an awful spook -
To stop the boldest breath,
The boy that inked his copybook,
And so got ‘wopped’ to death!

Call them not shams — from haunted Glamis
To haunted Woodhouselea,
I mark in hosts the grisly ghosts
I hear the fell Banshie!
I know the spectral dog that howls
Before the death of Squires;
In my ‘Ghosts’-guide’ addresses hide
For Podmore and for Myers!

I see the Vampire climb the stairs
From vaults below the church;
And hark! the Pirate’s spectre swears!
O Psychical Research,
Canst THOU not hear what meets my ear,
The viewless wheels that come?
The wild Banshie that wails to thee?
The Drummer with his drum?

O Haunted Homes of England,
Though tenantless ye stand,
With none content to pay the rent,
Through all the shadowy land,
Now, Science true will find in you

A sympathetic perch,
And take you all, both Grange and Hall,
For Psychical Research!

THE DISAPPOINTMENT

A house I took, and many a spook
Was deemed to haunt that House,
I bade the glum Researchers come
With Bogles to carouse.
That House I'd sought with anxious thought,
'Twas old, 'twas dark as sin,
And deeds of bale, so ran the tale,
Had oft been done therein.

Full many a child its mother wild,
Men said, had strangled there,
Full many a sire, in heedless ire,
Had slain his daughter fair!
'Twas rarely let: I can't forget
A recent tenant's dread,
This widow lone had heard a moan
Proceeding from her bed.

The tenants next were chiefly vexed
By spectres grim and grey.
A Headless Ghost annoyed them most,
And so they did not stay.
The next in turn saw corpse lights burn,
And also a Banshie,
A spectral Hand they could not stand,
And left the House to me.

Then came my friends for divers ends,
Some curious, some afraid;
No direr pest disturbed their rest
Than a neat chambermaid.
The grisly halls were gay with balls,

One melancholy nook
Where ghosts GALORE were seen before
Now yielded ne’er a spook.

When man and maid, all unafraid,
‘Sat out’ upon the stairs,
No spectre dread, with feet of lead,
Came past them unawares.
I know not why, but alway I
Have found that it is so,
That when the glum Researchers come
The brutes of bogeys — go!

TO THE GENTLE READER

‘A French writer (whom I love well) speaks of three kinds of companions, — men, women, and books.’ — Sir John Davys.

Three kinds of companions, men, women, and books,
Were enough, said the elderly Sage, for his ends.
And the women we deem that he chose for their looks,
And the men for their cellars: the books were his friends:
‘Man delights me not,’ often, ‘nor woman,’ but books
Are the best of good comrades in loneliest nooks.

For man will be wrangling — for woman will fret
About anything infinitesimal small:
Like the Sage in our Plato, I’m ‘anxious to get
On the side’ — on the sunnier side— ‘of a wall.’
Let the wind of the world toss the nations like rooks,
If only you’ll leave me at peace with my Books.

And which are my books? why, ’tis much as you please,
For, given ’tis a book, it can hardly be wrong,
And Bradshaw himself I can study with ease,
Though for choice I might call for a Sermon or Song;
And Locker on London, and Sala on Cooks,
‘Tom Brown,’ and Plotinus, they’re all of them Books.

There’s Fielding to lap one in currents of mirth;
There’s Herrick to sing of a flower or a fay;
Or good Maitre Francoys to bring one to earth,
If Shelley or Coleridge have snatched one away:
There’s Muller on Speech, there is Gurney on Spooks,
There is Tylor on Totems, there’s all sorts of Books.

There’s roaming in regions where every one’s been,
Encounters where no one was ever before,
There’s ‘Leaves’ from the Highlands we owe to the Queen,
There’s Holly’s and Leo’s adventures in Kor:
There’s Tanner who dwelt with Pawnees and Chinooks,
You can cover a great deal of country in Books.

There are books, highly thought of, that nobody reads,
There is Geusius’ dearly delectable tome
Of the Cannibal — he on his neighbour who feeds -
And in blood-red morocco ’tis bound, by Derome;
There’s Montaigne here (a Foppens), there’s Roberts (on Flukes),
There’s Elzevirs, Aldines, and Gryphius’ Books.

There’s Bunyan, there’s Walton, in early editions,
There’s many a quarto uncommonly rare;
There’s quaint old Quevedo adream with his visions,
There’s Johnson the portly, and Burton the spare;
There’s Boston of Ettrick, who preached of the ‘Crooks
In the Lots’ of us mortals, who bargain for Books.

There’s Ruskin to keep one exclaiming ‘What next?’
There’s Browning to puzzle, and Gilbert to chaff,
And Marcus Aurelius to soothe one if vexed,
And good MARCUS TVAINUS to lend you a laugh;
There be capital tomes that are filled with fly-hooks,
And I’ve frequently found them the best kind of Books.

THE SONNET

Poet, beware! The sonnet’s primrose path
Is all too tempting for thy feet to tread.
Not on this journey shalt thou earn thy bread,
Because the sated reader roars in wrath:
‘Little indeed to say the singer hath,
And little sense in all that he hath said;
Such rhymes are lightly writ but hardly read,
And naught but stubble is his aftermath!’

Then shall he cast that bonny book of thine
Where the extreme waste-paper basket gapes,
There shall thy futile fancies peak and pine,
With other minor poets, pallid shapes,
Who come a long way short of the divine,
Tormented souls of imitative apes.

THE TOURNAY OF THE HEROES

Ho, warders, cry a tournay! ho, heralds, call the knights!
What gallant lance for old Romance ‘gainst modern fiction fights?
The lists are set, the Knights are met, I ween, a dread array,
St. Chad to shield, a stricken field shall we behold to-day!
First to the Northern barriers pricks Roland of Roncesvaux,
And by his side, in knightly pride, Wilfred of Ivanhoe,
The Templar rideth by his rein, two gallant foes were they;
And proud to see, le brave Bussy his colours doth display.

Ready at need he comes with speed, William of Deloraine,
And Hereward the Wake himself is pricking o’er the plain.
The good knight of La Mancha’s here, here is Sir Amyas Leigh,
And Eric of the gold hair, pride of Northern chivalry.
There shines the steel of Alan Breck, the sword of Athos shines,
Dalgetty on Gustavus rides along the marshalled lines,
With many a knight of sunny France the Cid has marched from Spain,
And Gotz the Iron-handed leads the lances of Almain.

But who upon the Modern side are champions? With the sleeve
Adorned of his false lady-love, rides glorious David Grieve,
A bookseller sometime was he, in a provincial town,
But now before his iron mace go horse and rider down.
Ho, Robert Elsmere! count thy beads; lo, champion of the fray,
With brandished colt, comes Felix Holt, all of the Modern day.
And Silas Lapham’s six-shooter is cocked: the Colonel’s spry!
There spurs the wary Egoist, defiance in his eye;
There Zola’s ragged regiment comes, with dynamite in hand,
And Flaubert’s crew of country doctors devastate the land.
On Robert Elsmere Friar Tuck falls with his quarter-staff,
Nom De! to see the clerics fight might make the sourest laugh!
They meet, they shock, full many a knight is smitten on the crown,
So keep us good St. Genevieve, Umslopogaas is down!

About the mace of David Grieve his blood is flowing red,
Alas for ancient chivalry, le brave Bussy is sped!
Yet where the sombre Templar rides the Modern caitiffs fly,
The Mummer (of The Mummer’s Wife) has got it in the eye,
From Felix Holt his patent Colt hath not averted fate,
And Silas Lapham’s smitten fair, right through his gallant pate.
There Dan Deronda reels and falls, a hero sore surprised;
Ha, Beauseant! still may such fate befall the Circumcised!
The Egoist is flying fast from him of Ivanhoe:
Beneath the axe of Skalagrim fall prigs at every blow:
The ragged Zolaists have fled, screaming ‘We are betrayed,’
But loyal Alan Breck is shent, stabbed through the Stuart plaid;
In sooth it is a grimly sight, so fast the heroes fall,
Three volumes fell could scarcely tell the fortunes of them all.
At length but two are left on ground, and David Grieve is one.
Ma foy, what deeds of derring-do that bookseller hath done!
The other, mark the giant frame, the great portentous fist!
’Tis Porthos! David Grieve may call on Kuenen an he list.
The swords are crossed; Doublez, degagez, vite! great Porthos calls,
And David drops, that secret botte hath pierced his overalls!
And goodly Porthos, as of old the famed Orthryades,
Raises the trophy of the fight, then falling on his knees,
He writes in gore upon his shield, ‘Romance, Romance, has won!’
And blood-red on that stricken field goes down the angry sun.
Night falls upon the field of death, night on the darkling lea:
Oh send us such a tournay soon, and send me there to see!

BALLAD OF THE PHILANTHROPIST

Pomona Road and Gardens, N.,
Were pure as they were fair -
In other districts much I fear,
That vulgar language shocks the ear,
But brawling wives or noisy men
Were never heard of THERE.

No burglar fixed his dread abode
In that secure retreat,
There were no public-houses nigh,
But chapels low and churches high,
You might have thought Pomona Road
A quite ideal beat!

Yet that was not at all the view
Taken by B. 13.
That active and intelligent
Policeman deemed that he was meant
Profound detective deeds to do,
And that repose was mean.

Now there was nothing to detect
Pomona Road along -
None faked a cly, nor cracked a crib,
Nor prigged a wipe, nor told a fib, —
Minds cultivated and select
Slip rarely into wrong!

Thus bored to desolation went
The Peeler on his beat;

He know not Love, he did not care,
If Love be born on mountains bare;
Nay, crime to punish, or prevent,
Was more than dalliance sweet!

The weary wanderer, day by day,
Was marked by Howard Fry -
A neighbouring philanthropist,
Who saw what that Policeman missed -
A sympathetic ‘Well-a-day’
He’d moan, and pipe his eye.

‘What CAN I do,’ asked Howard Fry,
‘To soothe that brother’s pain?
His glance when first we met was keen,
Most martial and erect his mien’
(What mien may mean, I know not I)
‘But HE must joy again.’

‘I’ll start on a career of crime,
I will,’ said Howard Fry -
He spake and acted! Deeds of bale
(With which I do not stain my tale)
He wrought like mad time after time,
Yet wrought them blushfully.

And now when ‘buses night by night
Were stopped, conductors slain,
When youths and men, and maids unwed,
Were stabbed or knocked upon the head,
Then B. 13 grew sternly bright,
And was himself again!

Pomona Road and Gardens, N.,
Are now a name of fear.
Commercial travellers flee in haste,

Revolvers girt about the waist
Are worn by city gentlemen
Who have their mansions near.

But B. 13 elated goes,
Detection in his eye;
While Howard Fry does deeds of bale
(With which I do not stain my tale)
To lighten that Policeman’s woes,
But does them blushfully.

MORAL

Such is Philanthropy, my friends,
Too often such her plan,
She shoots, and stabs, and robs, and flings
Bombs, and all sorts of horrid things.
Ah, not to serve her private ends,
But for the good of Man!

IN ERCILDOUNE

In light of sunrise and sunsetting,
The long days lingered, in forgetting
That ever passion, keen to hold
What may not tarry, was of old
Beyond the doubtful stream whose flood
Runs red waist-high with slain men’s blood.

Was beauty once a thing that died?
Was pleasure never satisfied?
Was rest still broken by the vain
Desire of action, bringing pain,
To die in vapid rest again?
All this was quite forgotten, there
No winter brought us cold and care,
Nor spring gave promise unfulfilled,
Nor, with the heavy summer killed,
The languid days droop autumnwards.
So magical a season guards
The constant prime of a green June.
So slumbrous is the river’s tune,
That knows no thunder of rushing rains,
Nor ever in the summer wanes,
Like waters of the summer-time
In lands far from the fairy clime.

Alas! no words can bring the bloom
Of Fairyland, the lost perfume.
The sweet low light, the magic air,
To minds of who have not been there:
Alas! no words, nor any spell
Can lull the heart that knows too well
The towers that by the river stand,

The lost fair world of Fairyland.

Ah, would that I had never been
The lover of the Fairy Queen.
Or would that I again might be
Asleep below the Eildon Tree,
And see her ride the forest way
As on that morning of the May!

Or would that through the little town,
The grey old place of Ercildoune,
And all along the sleepy street
The soft fall of the white deer’s feet
Came, with the mystical command,
That I must back to Fairy Land!

FOR A ROSE’S SAKE — FRENCH FOLK-SONG

I laved my hands
By the water-side,
With willow leaves
My hands I dried.

The nightingale sang
On the bough of a tree,
Sing, sweet nightingale,
It is well with thee.

Thou hast heart’s delight,
I have sad heart’s sorrow,
For a false false maid
That will wed to-morrow.

It is all for a rose
That I gave her not,
And I would that it grew
In the garden plot,

And I would the rose-tree
Were still to set,
That my love Marie
Might love me yet!

THE BRIGAND’S GRAVE — MODERN GREEK

The moon came up above the hill,
The sun went down the sea,
‘Go, maids, and draw the well-water,
But, lad, come here to me.

Gird on my jack, and my old sword,
For I have never a son,
And you must be the chief of all
When I am dead and gone.

But you must take my old broadsword,
And cut the green boughs of the tree,
And strew the green boughs on the ground,
To make a soft death-bed for me.

And you must bring the holy priest,
That I may sained be,
For I have lived a roving life
Fifty years under the greenwood tree.

And you shall make a grave for me,
And dig it deep and wide,
That I may turn about and dream
With my old gun by my side.

And leave a window to the east
And the swallows will bring the spring,
And all the merry month of May
The nightingales will sing.’

THE NEW-LIVERIED YEAR — FROM CHARLES D’ORLEANS

The year has changed his mantle cold
Of wind, of rain, of bitter air,
And he goes clad in cloth of gold
Of laughing suns and season fair;
No bird or beast of wood or wold
But doth in cry or song declare
‘The year has changed his mantle cold!’
All founts, all rivers seaward rolled
Their pleasant summer livery wear
With silver studs on broidered vair,
The world puts off its raiment old,
The year has changed his mantle cold.

MORE STRONG THAN DEATH — FROM VICTOR HUGO

Since I have set my lips to your full cup, my sweet,
Since I my pallid face between your hands have laid,
Since I have known your soul and all the bloom of it,
And all the perfume rare, now buried in the shade,

Since it was given to me to hear one happy while
The words wherein your heart spoke all its mysteries,
Since I have seen you weep, and since I have seen you smile,
Your lips upon my lips, and your eyes upon my eyes;

Since I have known above my forehead glance and gleam,
A ray, a single ray of your star veiled always,
Since I have felt the fall upon my lifetime's stream
Of one rose-petal plucked from the roses of your days;

I now am bold to say to the swift-changing hours,
Pass, pass upon your way, for I grow never old.
Fleet to the dark abyss with all your fading flowers,
One rose that none may pluck within my heart I hold.

Your flying wings may smite, but they can never spill
The cup fulfilled of love from which my lips are wet,
My heart has far more fire than you have frost to chill.
My soul more love than you can make my soul forget.

SILENTIA LUNAE — FROM RONSARD

Hide this one night thy crescent, kindly Moon,
So shall Endymion faithful prove, and rest
Loving and unawakened on thy breast;
So shall no foul enchanter importune
Thy quiet course, for now the night is boon,
And through the friendly night unseen I fare
Who dread the face of foemen unaware,
And watch of hostile spies in the bright noon.

Thou know’st, O Moon, the bitter power of Love.
’Tis told how shepherd Pan found ways to move
With a small gift thy heart; and of your grace,
Sweet stars, be kind to this not alien fire,
Because on earth ye did not scorn desire,
Bethink ye, now ye hold your heavenly place.

HIS LADY'S TOMB — FROM RONSARD

As in the gardens, all through May, the Rose,
Lovely, and young, and rich apparelled,
Makes sunrise jealous of her rosy red,
When dawn upon the dew of dawning glows;
Graces and Loves within her breast repose,
The woods are faint with the sweet odour shed,
Till rains and heavy suns have smitten dead
The languid flower and the loose leaves unclose, -

So this, the perfect beauty of our days,
When heaven and earth were vocal of her praise,
The fates have slain, and her sweet soul reposes:
And tears I bring, and sighs, and on her tomb
Pour milk, and scatter buds of many a bloom,
That, dead as living, Rose may be with roses.

THE POET’S APOLOGY

No, the Muse has gone away,
Does not haunt me much to-day.
Everything she had to say
Has been said!
’Twas not much at any time
She could hitch into a rhyme,
Never was the Muse sublime,
Who has fled!

Any one who takes her in
May observe she’s rather thin;
Little more than bone and skin
Is the Muse;
Scanty sacrifice she won
When her very best she’d done,
And at her they poked their fun,
In Reviews.

‘Rhymes,’ in truth, ‘are stubborn things.’
And to Rhyme she clung, and clings,
But whatever song she sings
Scarcely sells.
If her tone be grave, they say
‘Give us something rather gay.’
If she’s skittish, then they pray
‘Something else!’

Much she loved, for wading shod,
To go forth with line and rod,
Loved the heather, and the sod,
Loved to rest
On the crystal river’s brim
Where she saw the fishes swim,

And she heard the thrushes’ hymn,
By the Test!

She, whatever way she went,
Friendly was and innocent,
Little need the Bard repent
Of her lay.
Of the babble and the rhyme,
And the imitative chime
That amused him on a time, -
Now he’s grey.

THE NURSERY RHYME BOOK

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TO read the old Nursery Rhymes brings back queer lost memories of a man’s own childhood. One seems to see the loose floppy picture-books of long ago, with their boldly coloured pictures. The books were tattered and worn, and my first library consisted of a wooden box full of these volumes. And I can remember being imprisoned for some crime in the closet where the box was, and how my gaolers found me, happy and impenitent, sitting on the box, with its contents all round me, reading.

There was “Who Killed Cock Robin?” which I knew by heart before I could read, and I learned to read (entirely “without tears”) by picking out the letters in the familiar words. I remember the Lark dressed as a clerk, but what a clerk might be I did not ask. Other children, who are little now, will read this book, and remember it well when they have forgotten a great deal of history and geography. We do not know what poets wrote the old Nursery Rhymes, but certainly some of them were written down, or even printed, three hundred years ago. Grandmothers have sung them to their grandchildren, and they again to theirs, for many centuries. In Scotland an old fellow will take a child on his knee for a ride, and sing —

“This is the way the ladies ride,
Jimp and sma’,—”

a smooth ride, then a rough trot, —

“This is the way the cadgers ride.
Creels and a’!”

Such songs are sometimes not printed, but they are never forgotten.

About the people mentioned in this book: — We do not exactly know who Old King Cole was, but King Arthur must have reigned some time about 500 to 600 A.D. As a child grows up, he will, if he is fond of poetry, read thousands of lines about this Prince, and the Table Round where his Knights dined, and how four weeping Queens carried him from his last fight to Avalon, a country where the apple-trees are always in bloom. But the reader will never forget the bag-pudding, which “the Queen next morning fried.” Her name was Guinevere, and the historian says that she “was a true lover, and therefore made she a good end.” But she had a great deal of unhappiness in her life.

I cannot tell what King of France went up the hill with twenty thousand men, and did nothing when he got there. But I do know who Charley was that “loved good ale and wine,” and also “loved good brandy,” and was fond of a pretty girl, "as sweet as sugar-candy." This was the banished Prince of Wales, who tried to win back his father's kingdom more than a hundred years ago, and gained battles, and took cities, and would have recovered the throne if his officers had followed him. But he was as unfortunate as he was brave, and when he had no longer a chance, perhaps he did love good ale and wine rather too dearly. As for the pretty girls, they all ran after him, and he could not run away like Georgey Porgey. There is plenty of poetry about Charley, as well as about King Arthur.

About King Charles the First, "upon a black horse," a child will soon hear at least as much as he can want, and perhaps his heart "will be ready to burst," as the rhyme says, with sorrow for the unhappy King. After he had his head cut off, "the Parliament soldiers went to the King," that is, to his son Charles, and crowned him in his turn, but he was thought a little too gay. Then we come to the King "who had a daughter fair, and gave the Prince of Orange her."

There is another rhyme about him: —

"O what's the rhyme to porringer?
Ken ye the rhyme to porringer?
King James the Seventh had ae dochter,
And he gave her to an Oranger.
Ken ye how he requited him?
Ken ye how he requited him?
The lad has into England come,
And ta'en the crown in spite o' him.
The dog, he shall na keep it lang,
To flinch we'll make him fain again;
We'll hing him hie upon a tree,
And James shall have his ain again."

The truth is, that the Prince of Orange and the King's daughter fair (really a very pretty lady, with a very ugly husband) were not at all kind to the King, but turned him out of England. He was the grandfather of Charley who loved good ale and wine, and who very nearly turned out King Georgey Porgey, a German who "kissed the girls and made them cry," as the poet likewise says. Georgey was not a handsome King, and nobody cared much for him; and if any poetry was made about him, it was very bad stuff, and all the world has forgotten it. He had a son called Fred, who was killed by a cricket-ball — an honourable death. A poem was made when Fred died: —

"Here lies Fred,
Who was alive and is dead.
If it had been his father,
I would much rather;

If it had been his brother,
Still better than another;
If it had been his sister,
No one would have missed her;
If it had been the whole generation,
So much the better for the nation.
But as it’s only Fred,
Who was alive and is dead,
Why there’s no more to be said.”

This poet seems to have preferred Charley, who wore a white rose in his bonnet, and was much handsomer than Fred.

Another rhyme tells about Jim and George, and how Jim got George by the nose. This Jim was Charley’s father, and the George whom he “got by the nose” was Georgey Porgey, the fat German. Jim was born on June 10; so another song says —

“Of all the days that’s in the year,
The Tenth of June to me’s most dear,
When our White Roses will appear
To welcome Jamie the Rover.”

But, somehow, George really got Jim by the nose, in spite of what the poet says; for it does not do to believe all the history in song-books.

After these songs there is not much really useful information in the Nursery Rhymes. Simple Simon was not Simon Fraser of Lovat, who was sometimes on Jim’s side, and sometimes on George’s, till he got his head cut off by King George. That Simon was not simple.

The Babes in the Wood you may read about here and in longer poems; for instance, in a book called “The Ingoldsby Legends.” It was their wicked uncle who lost them in the wood, because he wanted their money. Uncles were exceedingly bad long ago, and often smothered their nephews in the Tower, or put out their eyes with red-hot irons. But now uncles are the kindest people in the world, as every child knows.

About Brian O’Lin there is more than this book says: —

“Brian O’Lin had no breeches to wear;
He bought him a sheepskin to make him a pair,
The woolly side out, and the other side in:
‘It’s pleasant and cool,’ says Brian O’Lin.”

He is also called Tom o’ the Lin, and seems to have been connected with Young Tamlane, who was carried away by the Fairy Queen, and brought back to earth by his true love. Little Jack Horner lived at a place called Mells, in Somerset, in the time of Henry VIII. The plum he got was an estate which had belonged to the priests. I find nobody else here about whom history teaches us till we come to Dr. Faustus. He was *not* “a very good man”; that is a mistake, or the poem was written by a friend of the Doctor’s. In reality he was a wizard, and raised up Helen of Troy from the other world, the most beautiful woman who ever was seen. Dr. Faustus made an agreement with Bogie, who, after the Doctor had been gay for a long time, came and carried him off in a flash of fire. You can read about it all in several books, when you are a good deal older. Dr. Faustus was a German, and the best play about him is by a German poet.

As to Tom the Piper’s Son, he was probably the son of a Highlander, for they were mostly on Charley’s side, who was “Over the hills and far away.” Another song says —

“There was a wind, it came to me
Over the south and over the sea,
And it has blown my corn and hay
Over the hills and far away.
But though it left me bare indeed,
And blew my bonnet off my head,
There’s something hid in Highland brae,
It has not blown my sword away.
Then o’er the hills and over the dales,
Over all England, and thro’ Wales,
The broadsword yet shall bear the sway,
Over the hills and far away!”

Tom piped this tune, and pleased both the girls and boys.

About the two birds that sat on a stone, on the “All-Alone Stone,” you can read in a book called “The Water-Babies.”

Concerning the Frog that lived in a well, and how he married a King’s daughter and was changed into a beautiful Prince, there is a fairy tale which an industrious child ought to read. The frog in the rhyme is not nearly so lucky.

After these rhymes there come a number of riddles, of which the answers are given. Then there are charms, which people used to think would help in butter-making or would cure diseases. It is not generally thought now that they are of much use, but there can be no harm in trying. Nobody will be burned now for saying these charms, like the poor old witches long ago. The Queen Anne mentioned on page 172 was the sister of the other Princess who married the

Prince of Orange, and she was Charley’s aunt. She had seventeen children, and only one lived to be as old as ten years. He was a nice boy, and had a regiment of boy-soldiers.

“Hickory Dickory Dock” is a rhyme for counting out a lot of children. The child on whom the last word falls has to run after the others in the game of “Tig” or “Chevy.” There is another of the same kind: —

“Onery
Twoery
Tickery
Tin
Alamacrack
Tenamalin
Pin
Pan
Musky Dan
Tweedleum
Twiddleum
Twenty-one
Black fish
White trout
Eery, Ory
You are out.”

Most of the rhymes in this part of the book are sung in games and dances by children, and are very pretty to see and hear. They are very old, too, and in an old book of travels in England by a Danish gentleman, he gives one which he heard sung by children when Charles II. was king. They still sing it in the North of Scotland.

In this collection there are nonsense songs to sing to babies to make them fall asleep.

Bessy Bell and Mary Gray, on page 207, were two young ladies in Scotland long ago. The plague came to Perth, where they lived, so they built a bower in a wood, far off the town. But their lovers came to see them in the bower, and brought the infection of the plague, and they both died. There is a little churchyard and a ruined church in Scotland, where the people who died of the plague, more than two hundred years ago, were buried, and we used to believe that if the ground was stirred, the plague would fly out again, like a yellow cloud, and kill everybody.

There is a French rhyme like “Blue-Eye Beauty” —

“*Les yeux bleus*

Vont aux cieux.
Les yeux gris
Vont à Paradis.
Les yeux noirs
Vont à Purgatoire.”

None of the other rhymes seem to be anything but nonsense, and nonsense is a very good thing in its way, especially with pictures. Any child who likes can get Mrs. Markham’s “History of England,” and read about the Jims, and Georges, and Charleys, but I scarcely think that such children are very common. However, the facts about these famous people are told here shortly, and if there is any more to be said about Jack and Jill, I am sure I don’t know what it is, or where the hill they sat on is to be found in the geography books.

HISTORICAL NURSERY RHYMES

OLD King Cole
Was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he;
He called for his pipe,
And he called for his bowl,
And he called for his fiddlers three.

Every fiddler, he had a fiddle,
And a very fine fiddle had he;
Twee tweedle dee, tweedle dee, went the fiddlers.
Oh, there’s none so rare,
As can compare
With King Cole and his fiddlers three!

WHEN good King Arthur ruled this land,
He was a goodly king;
He stole three pecks of barley-meal,
To make a bag-pudding.
A bag-pudding the king did make,
And stuff’d it well with plums:
And in it put great lumps of fat,
As big as my two thumbs.
The king and queen did eat thereof,
And noblemen beside;
And what they could not eat that night,
The queen next morning fried.

I HAD a little nut-tree, nothing would it bear
But a silver nutmeg and a golden pear;
The King of Spain’s daughter came to visit me,
And all was because of my little nut-tree.
I skipp’d over water, I danced over sea,
And all the birds in the air couldn’t catch me.

THE King of France, and four thousand men,
They drew their swords, and put them up again.

THE King of France went up the hill,
With twenty thousand men;
The King of France came down the hill,
And ne’er went up again.

PLEASE to remember
The Fifth of November.
Gunpowder treason and plot;
I know no reason
Why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.

OVER the water, and over the sea,
And over the water to Charley;
Charley loves good ale and wine,
And Charley loves good brandy,
And Charley loves a pretty girl,

As sweet as sugar-candy.

Over the water, and over the sea,
And over the water to Charley;
I'll have none of your nasty beef,
Nor I'll have none of your barley;
But I'll have some of your very best flour,
To make a white cake for my Charley.

AS I was going by Charing Cross,
I saw a black man upon a black horse;
They told me it was King Charles the First;
Oh, dear! my heart was ready to burst!

HIGH diddle ding,
Did you hear the bells ring?
The parliament soldiers are gone to the King!
Some they did laugh, some they did cry,
To see the parliament soldiers pass by.

HECTOR PROTECTOR was dressed all in green;
Hector Protector was sent to the Queen.
The Queen did not like him,
Nor more did the King;
So Hector Protector was sent back again.

WHAT is the rhyme *for poringer*?

The King he had a daughter fair,
And gave the Prince of Orange her.

AS I walked by myself,
And talked to myself,
Myself said unto me,
Look to thyself,
Take care of thyself,
For nobody cares for thee.

I answered myself,
And said to myself,
In the self-same repartee,
Look to thyself,
Or not look to thyself,
The self-same thing will be.

POOR old Robinson Crusoe!
Poor old Robinson Crusoe!
They made him a coat
Of an old nanny goat,
I wonder how they could do so!
With a ring a ting tang,
And a ring a ting tang,
Poor old Robinson Crusoe!

THERE was a monkey climbed up a tree,
When he fell down, then down fell he.
There was a crow sat on a stone,
When he was gone, then there was none.

There was an old wife did eat an apple,
When she had eat two, she had eat a couple.
There was a horse going to the mill,
When he went on, he stood not still.
There was a butcher cut his thumb,
When it did bleed, then blood did come.
There was a lackey ran a race,
When he ran fast, he ran apace.
There was a cobbler clouting shoon,
When they were mended, they were done.
There was a chandler making candle,
When he them strip, he did them handle.
There was a navy went into Spain,
When it returned, it came again.

JIM and George were two great lords,
They fought all in a churn;
And when that Jim got George by the nose,
Then George began to girn.

See saw, sack-a-day;
Monmouth is a pretie boy,
Richmond is another,
Grafton is my onely joy;
And why should I these three destroy,
To please a pious brother!

The boys are sons of Charles II. The pious brother is James, Duke of York.

LITERARY AND SCHOLASTIC NURSERY RHYMES

GREAT A, little a,
Bouncing B!
The cat's in the cupboard,
And can't see me.

IF ifs and ands,
Were pots and pans,
There would be no need for tinkers!

TELL tale, tit!
Your tongue shall be slit,
And all the dogs in the town
Shall have a little bit.

BIRCH and green holly, boys,
Birch and green holly.
If you get beaten, boys,
'Twill be your own folly.

COME when you’re called,
Do what you’re bid,
Shut the door after you,
Never be chid.

WAS an Archer, and shot at a frog,
B was a Butcher, and had a great dog.
C was a Captain, all covered with lace,
D was a Drunkard, and had a red face.
E was an Esquire, with pride on his brow,
F was a Farmer, and followed the plough.
G was a Gamester, who had but ill luck,
H was a Hunter, and hunted a buck.
I was an Innkeeper, who loved to bouse,
J was a Joiner, and built up a house.
K was King William, once governed this land,
L was a Lady, who had a white hand.
M was a Miser, and hoarded up gold,
N was a Nobleman, gallant and bold.
O was an Oyster Wench, and went about town,
P was a Parson, and wore a black gown.
Q was a Queen, who was fond of good flip,
R was a Robber, and wanted a whip.
S was a Sailor, and spent all he got,
T was a Tinker, and mended a pot.
U was an Usurer, a miserable elf,
V was a Vintner, who drank all himself.
W was a Watchman, and guarded the door,
X was expensive, and so became poor.
Y was a Youth, that did not love school,
Z was a Zany, a poor harmless fool.

A WAS an apple-pie;
B bit it;

C cut it;
D dealt it;
E ate it;
F fought for it;
G got it;
H had it;
J joined it;
K kept it;
L longed for it;
M mourned for it;
N nodded at it;
O opened it;
P peeped in it;
Q quartered it;
R ran for it;
S stole it;
T took it;
V viewed it,
W wanted it;
X, Y, Z, and amperse-and,
All wish’d for a piece in hand.

PAT-A-CAKE, pat-a-cake, baker’s man!
(So I will, master), as fast as I can:
Pat it, and prick it, and mark it with T,
Put in the oven for Tommy and me.

MULTIPLICATION is vexation,
Division is as bad;
The Rule of Three doth puzzle me,
And Practice drives me mad.

DOCTOR FAUSTUS was a good man,
He whipt his scholars now and then;
When he whipp’d them he made them dance,
Out of Scotland into France,
Out of France into Spain,
And then he whipp’d them back again!

A DILLER, a dollar,
A ten o’clock scholar,
What makes you come so soon?
You used to come at ten o’clock,
But now you come at noon.

WHEN V and I together meet,
They make the number Six compleat.
When I with V doth meet once more,
Then ’tis they Two can make but Four.
And when that V from I is gone,
Alas! poor I can make but One.

THIRTY days hath September,
April, June, and November;
February has twenty-eight alone,
All the rest have thirty-one,
Excepting leap-year, that’s the time
When February’s days are twenty-nine.

MISTRESS MARY, quite contrary,

How does your garden grow?
With cockle-shells, and silver bells,
And pretty maids all a row.

IN fir tar is,
In oak none is.
In mud eel is,
In clay none is.
Goat eat ivy,
Mare eat oats.

CROSS patch,
Draw the latch,
Sit by the fire and spin;
Take a cup,
And drink it up,
Then call your neighbours in.

I LOVE my love with an A, because he’s Agreeable.
I hate him because he’s Avaricious.
He took me to the Sign of the Acorn,
And treated me with Apples.
His name’s Andrew,
And he lives at Arlington.

ONE, two,
Buckle my shoe;
Three, four,
Shut the door;

Five, six,
Pick up sticks;
Seven, eight,
Lay them straight;
Nine, ten,
A good fat hen;
Eleven, twelve,
Who will delve?
Thirteen, fourteen,
Maids a-courting;
Fifteen, sixteen,
Maids a-kissing;
Seventeen, eighteen,
Maid a-waiting;
Nineteen, twenty,
My stomach’s empty.

TALES - NURSERY RHYMES

THE man in the moon,
Came tumbling down,
And ask’d his way to Norwich,
He went by the south,
And burnt his mouth
With supping cold pease-porridge.

MY dear, do you know,
How a long time ago,
Two poor little children,
Whose names I don’t know,

Were stolen away on a fine summer’s day,
And left in a wood, as I’ve heard people say.

And when it was night,
So sad was their plight,
The sun it went down,
And the moon gave no light.
They sobbed and they sighed, and they bitterly cried,
And the poor little things, they lay down and died.

And when they were dead,
The Robins so red
Brought strawberry-leaves
And over them spread;
And all the day long
They sung them this song:
“Poor babes in the wood! Poor babes in the wood!
And don’t you remember the babes in the wood?”

THERE was a crooked man, and he went a crooked mile,
He found a crooked sixpence against a crooked stile;
He bought a crooked cat, which caught a crooked mouse,
And they all lived together in a little crooked house.

SIMPLE SIMON met a pieman,
Going to the fair;
Says Simple Simon to the pieman,
“Let me taste your ware.”

Says the pieman to Simple Simon,
“Show me first your penny.”
Says Simple Simon to the pieman,
“Indeed I have not any.”

Simple Simon went a-fishing
For to catch a whale:
All the water he had got
Was in his mother’s pail!

I’LL tell you a story
About Jack a Nory, —
And now my story’s begun:
I’ll tell you another
About Jack his brother, —
And now my story’s done.

SIMPLE SIMON

THERE was a man, and he had nought,
And robbers came to rob him;
He crept up to the chimney-pot,
And then they thought they had him.

But he got down on t’ other side,
And then they could not find him.
He ran fourteen miles in fifteen days,
And never looked behind him.

THE lion and the unicorn
Were fighting for the crown;
The lion beat the unicorn
All round about the town.

Some gave them white bread,
And some gave them brown;
Some gave them plum-cake,
And sent them out of town.

THERE was a fat man of Bombay,
Who was smoking one sunshiny day,
When a bird, called a snipe,
Flew away with his pipe,
Which vexed the fat man of Bombay.

TOM, Tom, the piper's son,
Stole a pig, and away he run!
The pig was eat, and Tom was beat,
And Tom went roaring down the street.

BRYAN O'LIN, and his wife, and wife's mother,
They all went over a bridge together;
The bridge was broken, and they all fell in,
The deuce go with all! quoth Bryan O'Lin.

THERE was a little man,
And he had a little gun,
And his bullets were made of

He went to the brook
And saw a little duck,

And he shot it right through the head, head, head.
He carried it home
To his old wife Joan,
And bid her a fire for to make, make, make;
To roast the little duck
He had shot in the brook,
And he'd go and fetch her the drake, drake, drake.

THREE wise men of Gotham
Went to sea in a bowl:
And if the bowl had been stronger,
My song would have been longer.

DOCTOR FOSTER went to Glo'ster
In a shower of rain;
He stepped in a puddle, up to his middle,
And never went there again.

ROBIN the Bobbin, the big-bellied Ben,
He ate more meat than fourscore men;
He ate a cow, he ate a calf,
He ate a butcher and a half;
He ate a church, he ate a steeple,
He ate the priest and all the people!
A cow and a calf,
An ox and a half,
A church and a steeple,
And all the good people,
And yet he complained that his stomach wasn't full.

ROBIN and Richard were two pretty men;
They laid in bed till the clock struck ten;
Then up starts Robin and looks at the sky,
Oh! brother Richard, the sun's very high:
    The bull's in the barn threshing the corn,
The cock's on the dunghill blowing his horn,
The cat's at the fire frying of fish,
The dog's in the pantry breaking his dish.

OLD Mother Goose, when
She wanted to wander,
Would ride through the air
On a very fine gander.
    Mother Goose had a house,
'Twas built in a wood,
Where an owl at the door
For sentinel stood.
    This is her son Jack,
A plain-looking lad,
He is not very good,
Nor yet very bad.
    She sent him to market,
A live goose he bought,
Here, mother, says he,
It will not go for nought.
    Jack's goose and her gander
Grew very fond;
They'd both eat together,
Or swim in one pond.
    Jack found one morning,
As I have been told,
His goose had laid him
An egg of pure gold.
    Jack rode to his mother
The news for to tell;
She call'd him a good boy,

And said it was well.
Jack sold his gold egg
To a rogue of a Jew,
Who cheated him out of
The half of his due.
Then Jack went a-courting
A lady so gay,
As fair as the lily,
And sweet as the May.
The Jew and the Squire
Came behind his back,
And began to belabour
The sides of poor Jack.
The old Mother Goose
That instant came in,
And turned her son Jack
Into famed Harlequin.
She then with her wand
Touch'd the lady so fine,
And turn'd her at once
Into sweet Columbine.
The gold egg into the sea
Was thrown then, —
When Jack jump'd in,
And got the egg back again.
The Jew got the goose,
Which he vow'd he would kill,
Resolving at once
His pockets to fill.
Jack's mother came in,
And caught the goose soon,
And mounting its back,
Flow up to the moon.

OLD Abram Brown is dead and gone,
You'll never see him more;

He used to wear a long brown coat,
That button'd down before.

MY lady Wind, my lady Wind,
Went round about the house to find
A chink to get her foot in:
She tried the key-hole in the door,
She tried the crevice in the floor,
And drove the chimney soot in.

And then one night when it was dark,
She blew up such a tiny spark,
That all the house was pothered:
From it she raised up such a flame,
As flamed away to Belting Lane,
And White Cross folks were smothered.

And thus when once, my little dears,
A whisper reaches itching ears,
The same will come, you'll find:
Take my advice, restrain the tongue,
Remember what old nurse has sung
Of busy lady Wind.

PUNCH and Judy
Fought for a pie;
Punch gave Judy
A sad blow on the eye.

TAFFY was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief;

Taffy came to my house and stole a piece of beef:
I went to Taffy's house, Taffy was not at home;
Taffy came to my house and stole a marrow-bone.

I went to Taffy's house, Taffy was not in;
Taffy came to my house and stole a silver pin:
I went to Taffy's house, Taffy was in bed,
I took up a poker and flung it at his head.

LITTLE Tommy Tittlemouse
Lived in a little house;
He caught fishes
In other men's ditches.

LITTLE Jack Horner sat in a corner,
Eating a Christmas pie;
He put in his thumb, and he pulled out a plum,
And said, "What a good boy am I!"

SOLOMON GRUNDY,
Born on a Monday,
Christened on Tuesday,
Married on Wednesday,
Took ill on Thursday,
Worse on Friday,
Died on Saturday,
Buried on Sunday:
This is the end
Of Solomon Grundy.

PROVERBS NURSERY RHYMES

TO make your candles last for a’,
You wives and maids give ear-o!
To put ’em out’s the only way,
Says honest John Boldero.

ST. SWITHIN’s day, if thou dost rain,
For forty days it will remain:
St. Swithin’s day, if thou be fair,
For forty days ‘twill rain na mair.

IF wishes were horses,
Beggars would ride;
If turnips were watches,
I would wear one by my side.

NATURE requires five,
Custom gives seven!
Laziness takes nine,
And Wickedness eleven. [*Hours of Sleep.*

SEE a pin and pick it up,
All the day you’ll have good luck;
See a pin and let it lay,
Bad luck you’ll have all the day!

NEEDLES and pins, needles and pins.
When a man marries his trouble begins.

BOUNCE buckram, velvet’s dear;
Christmas comes but once a year.

A MAN of words and not of deeds,
Is like a garden full of weeds;

And when the weeds begin to grow,
It’s like a garden full of snow;
And when the snow begins to fall,
It’s like a bird upon the wall;
And when the bird away does fly,
It’s like an eagle in the sky;
And when the sky begins to roar,
It’s like a lion at the door;
And when the door begins to crack,
It’s like a stick across your back;
And when your back begins to smart,
It’s like a penknife in your heart;
And when your heart begins to bleed,
You’re dead, and dead, and dead, indeed.

IF you sneeze on Monday, you sneeze for danger;
Sneeze on a Tuesday, kiss a stranger;
Sneeze on a Wednesday, sneeze for a letter;
Sneeze on a Thursday, something better;
Sneeze on a Friday, sneeze for sorrow;
Sneeze on a Saturday, see your sweetheart to-morrow.

WHEN the wind is in the east,
’Tis neither good for man nor beast;
When the wind is in the north,
The skilful fisher goes not forth;
When the wind is in the south,
It blows the bait in the fishes’ mouth;
When the wind is in the west,
Then ’tis at the very best.

HE that would thrive
Must rise at five;
He that hath thriven
May lie till seven;
And he that by the plough would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive.

A SWARM of bees in May
Is worth a load of hay;
A swarm of bees in June
Is worth a silver spoon;
A swarm of bees in July
Is not worth a fly.
Is not worth a fly.

YEOW mussent sing a’ Sunday,
Becaze it is a sin,
But yeow may sing a’ Monday
Till Sunday cums agin.

A SUNSHINY shower
Won’t last half an hour.

FOR every evil under the sun,
There is a remedy, or there is none.
If there be one, try and find it;
If there be none, never mind it.

THE art of good driving’s a paradox quite,
Though custom has prov’d it so long;
If you go to the left, you’re sure to go right,
If you go to the right, you go wrong.

AS the days lengthen,
So the storms strengthen.

THE fair maid who, the first of May,
Goes to the fields at break of day,
And washes in dew from the hawthorn tree,
Will ever after handsome be.

FRIDAY night’s dream,
On the Saturday told,
Is sure to come true,
Be it never so old.

EARLY to bed, and early to rise,
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.

MONDAY’S bairn is fair of face,
Tuesday’s bairn is full of grace,
Wednesday’s bairn is full of woe,
Thursday’s bairn has far to go,
Friday’s bairn is loving and giving,
Saturday’s bairn works hard for its living,
But the bairn that is born on the Sabbath day
Is bonny and blithe, and good and gay.

FOR want of a nail, the shoe was lost;
For want of the shoe, the horse was lost;
For want of the horse, the rider was lost;
For want of the rider, the battle was lost;
For want of the battle, the kingdom was lost;
And all from the want of a horseshoe nail.

MARCH winds and April showers
Bring forth May flowers.

SONGS - NURSERY RHYMES

ONE misty moisty morning,
When cloudy was the weather,
There I met an old man
Clothed all in leather;
Clothed all in leather,
With cap under his chin, —
How do you do, and how do you do,
And how do you do again!

THE fox and his wife they had a great strife,
They never eat mustard in all their whole life;
They eat their meat without fork or knife,
And loved to be picking a bone, e-ho!
    The fox jumped up on a moonlight night;
The stars they were shining, and all things bright;
Oh, ho! said the fox, it’s a very fine night
For me to go through the town, e-ho!
    The fox when he came to yonder stile,
He lifted his lugs and he listened a while!
Oh, ho! said the fox, it’s but a short mile
From this unto yonder wee town, e-ho!
    The fox when he came to the farmer’s gate,
Who should he see but the farmer’s drake;
I love you well for your master’s sake,
And long to be picking your bone, e-ho!
    The grey goose she ran round the hay-stack,
Oh, ho! said the fox, you are very fat;

You’ll grease my beard and ride on my back
From this into yonder wee town, e-ho!
Old Gammer Hipple-hopple hopped out of bed,
She opened the casement, and popped out her head;
Oh! husband, oh! husband, the grey goose is dead,
And the fox is gone through the town, oh!
Then the old man got up in his red cap,
And swore he would catch the fox in a trap;
But the fox was too cunning, and gave him the slip,
And ran through the town, the town, oh!
When he got up to the top of the hill,
He blew his trumpet both loud and shrill,
For joy that he was safe
Through the town, oh!
When the fox came back to his den,
He had young ones both nine and ten,
“You’re welcome home, daddy, you may go again,
If you bring us such nice meat
From the town, oh!”

MY father he died, but I can’t tell you how;
He left me six horses to drive in my plough:
With my wing wang waddle oh,
Jack sing saddle oh,
Blowsey boys buble oh,
Under the broom.
I sold my six horses and I bought me a cow,
I’d fain have made a fortune but did not know how:
With my, &c.
I sold my cow, and I bought me a calf;
I’d fain have made a fortune, but lost the best half!
With my, &c.
I sold my calf, and I bought me a cat;
A pretty thing she was, in my chimney corner sat:
With my, &c.
I sold my cat, and bought me a mouse;

He carried fire in his tail, and burnt down my house:
With my, &c.

SAYS t’auld man tit oak tree,
Young and lusty was I when I kenn’d thee;
I was young and lusty, I was fair and clear,
Young and lusty was I mony a lang year;
But sair fail’d am I, sair fail’d now,
Sair fail’d am I sen I kenn’d thou.

POLLY put the kettle on,
Polly put the kettle on,
Polly put the kettle on,
And let’s drink tea.

Sukey take it off again,
Sukey take it off again,
Sukey take it off again,
They’re all gone away.

LITTLE Bo-Peep has lost her sheep,
And can’t tell where to find them;
Leave them alone, and they’ll come home,
And bring their tails behind them.
Little Bo-peep fell fast asleep,
And dreamt she heard them bleating;
But when she awoke, she found it a joke,
For they were still a-fleeting.
Then up she took her little crook,
Determin’d for to find them;

She found them indeed, but it made her heart bleed,
For they’d left all their tails behind ‘em.

SING a song of sixpence,
A bag full of rye;
Four and twenty blackbirds
Baked in a pie;

When the pie was open’d,
The birds began to sing;
Was not that a dainty dish,
To set before the king?

The king was in his counting-house
Counting out his money;
The queen was in the parlour
Eating bread and honey;

The maid was in the garden
Hanging out the clothes,
There came a little blackbird,
And snapt off her nose.

JOHNNY shall have a new bonnet,
And Johnny shall go to the fair,
And Johnny shall have a blue ribbon
To tie up his bonny brown hair.
And why may not I love Johnny?
And why may not Johnny love me?
And why may not I love Johnny
As well as another body?
And here’s a leg for a stocking,
And here is a leg for a shoe,
And he has a kiss for his daddy,
And two for his mammy, I trow.

And why may not I love Johnny?
And why may not Johnny love me?
And why may not I love Johnny,
As well as another body?

ELSIE MARLEY is grown so fine,
She won’t get up to serve the swine,
But lies in bed till eight or nine,
And surely she does take her time.
    And do you ken Elsie Marley, honey?
The wife who sells the barley, honey?
She won’t get up to serve her swine,
And do you ken Elsie Marley, honey?

TOM he was a piper’s son,
He learn’d to play when he was young,
But all the tunes that he could play,
Was “Over the hills and far away;”

Over the hills, and a great way off,
And the wind will blow my top-knot off.
    Now Tom with his pipe made such a noise,
That he pleas’d both the girls and boys,
And they stopp’d to hear him play
“Over the hills and far away.”
    Tom with his pipe did play with such skill,
That those who heard him could never keep still;
Whenever they heard they began for to dance,
Even pigs on their hind legs would after him prance.

As Dolly was milking her cow one day,
Tom took out his pipe and began for to play;
So Doll and the cow danced “the Cheshire round,”
Till the pail was broke, and the milk ran on the ground.
He met old Dame Trot with a basket of eggs;
He used his pipe, and she used her legs;
She danced about till the eggs were all broke;
She began for to fret, but he laughed at the joke.

He saw a cross fellow was beating an ass,
Heavy laden with pots, pans, dishes, and glass;
He took out his pipe and played them a tune,
And the jackass’s load was lightened full soon.

LONDON BRIDGE is broken down,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee;
London Bridge is broken down,
With a gay lady.

How shall we build it up again?
Dance o’er my Lady Lee;
How shall we build it up again?
With a gay lady.

Build it up with silver and gold,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee;
Build it up with silver and gold,
With a gay lady.

Silver and gold will be stole away,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee;
Silver and gold will be stole away,

With a gay lady.

Build it up with iron and steel,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee;
Build it up with iron and steel,
With a gay lady.

Iron and steel will bend and bow,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee;
Iron and steel will bend and bow,
With a gay lady.

Build it up with wood and clay,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee;
Build it up with wood and clay,
With a gay lady.

Wood and clay will wash away,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee;
Wood and clay will wash away,
With a gay lady.

Build it up with stone so strong,
Dance o’er my Lady Lee;
Huzza! ‘twill last for ages long,
With a gay lady.

I love sixpence, pretty little sixpence,
I love sixpence better than my life;
I spent a penny of it, I spent another,
And took fourpence home to my wife.

Oh, my little fourpence, pretty little fourpence,

I love fourpence better than my life;
I spent a penny of it, I spent another,
And I took twopence home to my wife.

Oh, my little twopence, my pretty little twopence,
I love twopence better than my life;
I spent a penny of it, I spent another,
And I took nothing home to my wife.

Oh, my little nothing, my pretty little nothing,
What will nothing buy for my wife?
I have nothing, I spend nothing,
I love nothing better than my wife.

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will poor Robin do then?
Poor thing!
He'll sit in a barn,
And to keep himself warm,
Will hide his head under his wing.
Poor thing!

HE'LL SIT IN A BARN.

A CARRION crow sat on an oak,
Fol de riddle, lol de riddle, hi ding do,
Watching a tailor shape his cloak;
Sing heigh ho, the carrion crow,
Fol de riddle, lol de riddle, hi ding do.
Wife, bring me my old bent bow,
Fol de riddle, lol de riddle, hi ding do,
That I may shoot yon carrion crow;
Sing heigh ho, the carrion crow,
Fol de riddle, lol de riddle, hi ding do.
The tailor he shot and missed his mark,

Fol de riddle, lol de riddle, hi ding do,
And shot his own sow quite through the heart;
Sing heigh ho, the carrion crow,
Fol de riddle, lol de riddle, hi ding do.
Wife, bring brandy in a spoon,
Fol de riddle, lol de riddle, hi ding do,
For our old sow is in a swoon;
Sing heigh ho, the carrion crow,
Fol de riddle, lol de riddle, hi ding do.

MERRY are the bells, and merry would they ring;
Merry was myself, and merry could I sing;
With a merry ding-dong, happy, gay, and free,
And a merry sing-song, happy let us be!

Waddle goes your gait, and hollow are your hose;
Noddle goes your pate, and purple is your nose;
Merry is your sing-song, happy, gay, and free,
With a merry ding-dong, happy let us be!

Merry have we met, and merry have we been;
Merry let us part, and merry meet again;
With our merry sing-song, happy, gay, and free,
And a merry ding-dong, happy let us be!

HOT-CROSS Buns!
Hot-cross Buns!
One a penny, two a penny,
Hot-cross Buns!

Hot-cross Buns!

Hot-cross Buns!
If ye have no daughters,
Give them to your sons.

THREE blind mice, see how they run!
They all ran after the farmer’s wife,
Who cut off their tails with the carving-knife;
Did you ever see such fools in your life?
Three blind mice.

YOU shall have an apple,
You shall have a plum,
You shall have a rattle-basket,
When your dad comes home.

THERE was a frog liv’d in a well,
Kitty alone, Kitty alone;
There was a frog liv’d in a well,
Kitty alone, and I!

There was a frog liv’d in a well,
And a farce mouse in a mill;
Cock me cary, Kitty alone,
Kitty alone and I.

This frog he would a-wooing ride,
Kitty alone, &c.;
This frog he would a-wooing ride,
And on a snail he got astride,
Cock me cary, &c.

He rode till he came to my Lady Mouse hall,
Kitty alone, &c;
He rode till he came to my Lady Mouse hall,
And there he did both knock and call;
Cock me cary, &c.

Quoth he, “Miss Mouse, I’m come to thee,”
Kitty alone, &c.;
Quoth he, “Miss Mouse, I’m come to thee,
To see if thou canst fancy me;”
Cock me cary, &c.
Quoth she, “Answer I’ll give you none,”
Kitty alone, &c.;
Quoth she, “Answer I’ll give you none,
Until my uncle Rat come home;”
Cock me cary, &c.
And when her uncle Rat came home,
Kitty alone, &c.;
And when her uncle Rat came home,
“Who’s been here since I’ve been gone?”
Cock me cary, &c.
“Sir, there’s been a worthy gentleman,”
Kitty alone, &c.;
“Sir, there’s been a worthy gentleman,
That’s been here since you’ve been gone;”
Cock me cary, &c.
The frog he came whistling through the brook,
Kitty alone, &c.
The frog he came whistling through the brook,
And there he met with a dainty duck,
Cock me cary, &c.
This duck she swallow’d him up with a pluck,
Kitty alone, Kitty alone;
This duck she swallow’d him up with a pluck,
So there’s an end of my history book.
Cock me cary, Kitty alone,

Kitty alone and I.
Merry.

THERE were two birds sat on a stone,
Fa, la, la, la, lal, de;
One flew away, and then there was one,
Fa, la, la, la, lal, de;
The other flew after, and then there was none,
Fa, la, la, la, lal, de;
And so the poor stone was left all alone,
Fa, la, la, la, lal, de!

“WHERE are you going, my pretty maid?”
“I’m going a-milking, sir,” she said.
“May I go with you, my pretty maid?”
“You’re kindly welcome, sir,” she said.
“What is your father, my pretty maid?”
“My father’s a farmer, sir,” she said.
“Say, will you marry me, my pretty maid?”
“Yes, if you please, kind sir,” she said.
“What is your fortune, my pretty maid?”
“My face is my fortune, sir,” she said.
“Then I can’t marry you, my pretty maid!”
“Nobody asked you, sir,” she said.

THERE was a jolly miller
Lived on the river Dee:
He worked and sung from morn till night,
No lark so blithe as he;
And this the burden of his song
For ever used to be —
I jump mejerrime jee!

I care for nobody — no! not I,
Since nobody cares for me.

IF I’d as much money as I could spend,
I never would cry old chairs to mend;
Old chairs to mend, old chairs to mend,
I never would cry old chairs to mend.

If I’d as much money as I could tell,
I never would cry old clothes to sell;
Old clothes to sell, old clothes to sell,
I never would cry old clothes to sell.

MY maid Mary
She minds her dairy,
While I go a-hoeing and mowing each morn.

Merrily run the reel
And the little spinning-wheel
Whilst I am singing and mowing my corn.

UP at Piccadilly oh!
The coachman takes his stand,
And when he meets a pretty girl,
He takes her by the hand.
Whip away for ever oh!
Drive away so clever oh!
All the way to Bristol oh!
He drives her four-in-hand.

“JACKY, come give me thy fiddle,
If ever thou mean to thrive:”
“Nay; I’ll not give my fiddle
To any man alive.
    “If I should give my fiddle,
They’ll think that I’m gone mad,
For many a joyful day
My fiddle and I have had.”

I’LL sing you a song,
Though not very long,
Yet I think it as pretty as any.
Put your hand in your purse,
You’ll never be worse,
And give the poor singer a penny.

LITTLE Polly Flinders
Sat among the cinders,
Warming her pretty little toes.
Her mother came and caught her,
And whipped her little daughter
For spoiling her nice new clothes.

JOHN COOK had a little grey mare; he, haw, hum!
Her back stood up, and her bones they were bare; he, haw, hum!
    John Cook was riding up Shuter’s bank; he, haw, hum!
And there his nag did kick and prank; he, haw, hum!
    John Cook was riding up Shuter’s hill; he, haw, hum!

His mare fell down, and she made her will; he, haw, hum!

The bridle and saddle were laid on the shelf; he, haw, hum!
If you want any more you may sing it yourself; he, haw, hum!

RIDE away, ride away, Johnny shall ride,
And he shall have pussy-cat tied to one side,
And he shall have little dog tied to the other,
And Johnny shall ride to see his grandmother.

THE Queen of Hearts,
She made some tarts,
All on a summer’s day;
The Knave of Hearts,
He stole those tarts,
And took them clean away.

The King of Hearts
Called for the tarts,
And beat the Knave full sore;
The Knave of Hearts
Brought back the tarts,
And vowed he’d steal no more.

THERE was a little woman, as I’ve been told,
Who was not very young, nor yet very old;
Now this little woman her living got,
By selling codlins, hot, hot, hot.

DAME, get up and bake your pies,
Bake your pies, bake your pies;
Dame, get up and bake your pies
On Christmas Day in the morning.

Dame, what makes your maidens lie,
Maidens lie, maidens lie;
Dame, what makes your maidens lie
On Christmas Day in the morning?

Dame, what makes your ducks to die,
Ducks to die, ducks to die;
Dame, what makes your ducks to die
On Christmas Day in the morning?

Their wings are cut and they cannot fly,
Cannot fly, cannot fly;
Their wings are cut and they cannot fly
On Christmas Day in the morning.

COLD and raw the north wind doth blow,
Bleak in a morning early;
All the hills are covered with snow,
And winter’s now come fairly.

I saw three ships come sailing by,
Come sailing by, come sailing by;
I saw three ships come sailing by,

On New Year’s Day in the morning.

And what do you think was in them then,
Was in them then, was in them then?
And what do you think was in them then,
On New Year’s Day in the morning?

Three pretty girls were in them then,
Were in them then, were in them then;
Three pretty girls were in them then,
On New Year’s Day in the morning.

And one could whistle, and one could sing,
And one could play on the violin —
Such joy there was at my wedding,
On New Year’s day in the morning.

WEE Willie Winkie runs through the town,
Upstairs and downstairs in his nightgown,
Rapping at the window, crying through the lock,
“Are the children in their beds, for now it’s eight o’clock?”

WHEN Little Fred was called to bed,
He always acted right;
He kissed Mamma, and then Papa,
And wished them all good night.

He made no noise, like naughty boys,
But gently upstairs
Directly went, when he was sent,

And always said his prayers.

RIDDLES AND PARADOXES

I WENT to the wood and got it;
I sat me down and looked at it;
The more I looked at it the less I liked it;
And I brought it home because I couldn’t help it.
[*A thorn.*

HICK-A-MORE, Hack-a-more,
On the king’s kitchen door;
All the king’s horses,
And all the king’s men,
Couldn’t drive Hick-a-more, Hack-a-more,
Off the king’s kitchen door!
[*Sunshine.*

AS soft as silk, as white as milk,
As bitter as gall, a thick wall,
And a green coat covers me all.
[*A walnut.*

LONG legs, crooked thighs,
Little head, and no eyes.
[*Pair of tongs.*

ARTHUR O'BOWER has broken his band,
He comes roaring up the land; —
The King of Scots, with all his power,
Cannot turn Arthur of the Bower!
[*A storm of wind.*

ARTHUR O'BOWER HAS BROKEN HIS BAND

THERE was a king met a king
In a narrow lane;
Says this king to that king,
"Where have you been?"

"Oh! I've been a hunting
With my dog and my doe."
"Pray lend him to me,
That I may do so."

"There's the dog *take* the dog."
"What's the dog's name?"
"I've told you already."
"Pray tell me again."

IN marble walls as white as milk,
Lined with a skin as soft as silk;
Within a fountain crystal clear,
A golden apple doth appear.
No doors there are to this stronghold.
Yet things break in and steal the gold.
[*An egg.*

FLOUR of England, fruit of Spain,
Met together in a shower of rain;
Put in a bag tied round with a string,
If you’ll tell me this riddle, I’ll give you a ring.
[*A plum-pudding.*

I HAVE a little sister, they call her Peep, Peep;
She wades the waters deep, deep, deep;
She climbs the mountains high, high, high;
Poor little creature she has but one eye.
[*A star.*

HIGGLEDY piggledy
Here we lie,
Pick’d and pluck’d,
And put in a pie.
My first is snapping, snarling, growling,
My second’s industrious, romping, and prowling.
Higgledy piggledy
Here we lie,
Pick’d and pluck’d,
And put in a pie. [*Currants.*

HUMPTY DUMPTY sate on a wall;
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall;
Three score men and three score more
Cannot place Humpty Dumpty as he was before.
[*An egg.*

THIRTY white horses upon a red hill,
Now they tramp, now they champ, now they stand still.
[*Teeth and gums.*

THOMAS A TATTAMUS took two T's,
To tie two tups to two tall trees,
To frighten the terrible Thomas a Tattamus!
Tell me how many T's there are in all that.

OLD mother Twitchett had but one eye,
And a long tail which she let fly;
And every time she went over a gap,
She left a bit of her tail in a trap.
[*A needle and thread.*

LITTLE Nancy Etticoat
In a white petticoat,
And a red rose.
The longer she stands
The shorter she grows.
[*A candle.*

BLACK we are but much admired;
Men seek for us till they are tired.
We tire the horse, but comfort man;
Tell me this riddle if you can.
[*Coals.*

THERE were three sisters in a hall;
There came a knight amongst them all:
Good morrow, aunt, to the one;
Good morrow, aunt, to the other;
Good morrow, gentlewoman, to the third;
If you were my aunt,
As the other two be,
I would say good morrow,
Then, aunts, all three.

FORMED long ago, yet made to-day,
Employed while others sleep;
What few would like to give away,
Nor any wish to keep.
[*A Bed.*

AS I was going to St. Ives,
I met a man with seven wives;
Every wife had seven sacks,
Every sack had seven cats,
Every cat had seven kits:
Kits, cats, sacks, and wives.
How many were there going to St. Ives?

AS I went through the garden gap,
Who should I meet but Dick Red-cap!
A stick in his hand, a stone in his throat,
If you’ll tell me this riddle, I’ll give you a groat.

[*A cherry.*

AS I was going o’er Westminster bridge,
I met with a Westminster scholar;
He pulled off his cap, *an’ drew* off his glove,
And wished me a very good morrow.
What is his name?

TWO legs sat upon three legs,
With one leg in his lap;
In comes four legs,
And runs away with one leg.
Up jumps two legs,
Catches up three legs,
Throws it after four legs,
And makes him bring back one leg.
[*One leg is a leg of mutton*; *two legs, a man*; *three legs, a stool; four legs, a dog*.

ELIZABETH, Elspeth, Betsy, and Bess,
They all went together to seek a bird’s nest.
They found a bird’s nest with five eggs in,
They all took one, and left four in.

THERE was a man of Thessaly,
And he was wond’rous wise;
He jump’d into a quickset hedge,

And scratch'd out both his eyes.
But when he saw his eyes were out,
With all his might and main
He jump'd into another hedge,
And scratch'd 'em in again.

I WOULD if I cou'd,
If I cou'dn't, how cou'd I?
I cou'dn't, without I cou'd, cou'd I?
Cou'd you, without you cou'd, cou'd ye?
Cou'd ye, cou'd ye?
Cou'd you, without you cou'd, cou'd ye?

THREE children sliding on the ice
Upon a summer's day,
As it fell out, they all fell in,
The rest they ran away.
    Now had these children been at home,
Or sliding on dry ground,
Ten thousand pounds to one penny
They had not all been drown'd.
    You parents all that children have,
And you that have got none,
If you would have them safe abroad,
Pray keep them safe at home.

IF all the world was apple-pie,
And all the sea was ink,
And all the trees were bread and cheese,
What should we have for drink?

PETER WHITE will ne’er go right.
Would you know the reason why?
He follows his nose where’er he goes,
And that stands all awry.

THERE was a little Guinea-pig,
Who, being little, was not big;
He always walked upon his feet,
And never fasted when he eat.
    When from a place he ran away,
He never at that place did stay;
And while he ran, as I am told,
He ne’er stood still for young or old.
    He often squeak’d and sometimes vi’lent,
And when he squeak’d he ne’er was silent;
Though ne’er instructed by a cat,
He knew a mouse was not a rat.
    One day, as I am certified,
He took a whim and fairly died;
And, as I’m told by men of sense,
He never has been living since.

THE man in the wilderness asked me
How many strawberries grew in the sea.
I answered him as I thought good,
As many as red herrings grew in the wood.

MY true love lives far from me,
Perrie, Merrie, Dixie, Dominie.

Many a rich present he sends to me,
Petrum, Partrum, Paradise, Temporie,
Perrie, Merrie, Dixie, Dominie.

He sent me a goose without a bone;
He sent me a cherry without a stone.
Petrum, &c.

He sent me a Bible no man could read;
He sent me a blanket without a thread.
Petrum, &c.

How could there be a goose without a bone?
How could there be a cherry without a stone?
Petrum, &c.

How could there be a Bible no man could read?
How could there be a blanket without a thread?
Petrum, &c.

When the goose is in the egg-shell, there is no bone;
When the cherry is in the blossom, there is no stone.
Petrum, &c.

When the Bible is in the press no man it can read;
When the wool is on the sheep's back, there is no thread.
Petrum, &c.

I SAW a ship a-sailing,
A-sailing on the sea;
And, oh! it was all laden
With pretty things for thee!
There were comfits in the cabin,

And apples in the hold
The sails were made of silk,
And the masts were made of gold.
    The four-and-twenty sailors
That stood between the decks,
Were four-and-twenty white mice
With chains about their necks.
    The captain was a duck,
With a packet on his back;
And when the ship began to move,
The captain said, “Quack! quack!”

HERE am I, little jumping Joan.
When nobody’s with me,
I’m always alone.

O THAT I was where I would be,
Then would I be where I am not!
But where I am there I must be,
And where I would be I cannot.

TOBACCO reek! tobacco reek!
When you’re well, ‘twill make you sick.
Tobacco reek! tobacco reek!
‘Twill make you well when you are sick.

THERE was an old woman, and what do you think?
She lived upon nothing but victuals and drink:
Victuals and drink were the chief of her diet;

This tiresome old woman could never be quiet.

[*Mind your punctuation.*]
I SAW a peacock with a fiery tail,
I saw a blazing comet drop down hail,
I saw a cloud wrapped with ivy round,
I saw an oak creep upon the ground,
I saw a pismire swallow up a whale,
I saw the sea brimful of ale,
I saw a Venice glass full fifteen feet deep,
I saw a well full of men’s tears that weep,
I saw red eyes all of a flaming fire,
I saw a house bigger than the moon and higher,
I saw the sun at twelve o’clock at night,
I saw the man that saw this wondrous sight.

THERE was a man and he was mad,
And he jump’d into a pea-swad;
The pea-swad was over-full,
So he jump’d into a roaring bull;
The roaring bull was over-fat,
So he jump’d into a gentleman’s hat;
The gentleman’s hat was over-fine,
So he jump’d into a bottle of wine;
The bottle of wine was over-dear,
So he jump’d into a bottle of beer;
The bottle of beer was over-thick,
So he jump’d into a club-stick;
The club-stick was over-narrow,
So he jump’d into a wheel-barrow;
The wheel-barrow began to crack,
So he jump’d on to a hay-stack;
The hay-stack began to blaze,
So he did nothing but cough and sneeze!

The pod or shell of a pea.

CHARMS AND LULLABIES

CUSHY cow bonny, let down thy milk,
And I will give thee a gown of silk;
A gown of silk and a silver tee,
If thou wilt let down thy milk to me.
If you love me, pop and fly;
If you hate me, lie and die.
[*Said to pips placed in the fire; a species of divination practised by children.*

PETER PIPER picked a peck of pickled pepper;
A peck of pickled pepper Peter Piper picked;

If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper,
Where's the peck of pickled pepper Peter Piper picked?

MATTHEW, Mark, Luke, and John,
Guard the bed that I lay on!
Four corners to my bed,
Four angels round my head;
One to watch, one to pray,
And two to bear my soul away!

COME, butter, come,
Come, butter, come!
Peter stands at the gate,
Waiting for a butter'd cake;
Come, butter, come!

BYE, baby bunting,
Daddy's gone a hunting,
To get a little hare's skin
To wrap a baby bunting in.

HUSHY baby, my doll, I pray you don't cry,
And I'll give you some bread and some milk by-and-by;
Or perhaps you like custard, or maybe a tart, —

Then to either you’re welcome, with all my whole heart.

DANCE to your daddy,
My little babby;
Dance to your daddy,
My little lamb.
You shall have a fishy,
In a little dishy;
You shall have a fishy
When the boat comes in.

HUSH-A-BYE, baby, on the tree top;
When the wind blows, the cradle will rock;
When the bough bends, the cradle will fall;
Down will come baby, bough, cradle, and all.

RABBIT, rabbit, rabbit-pie!
Come, my ladies, come and buy,
Else your babies they will cry.

HEY, my kitten, my kitten,
And hey, my kitten, my deary!
Such a sweet pet as this
Was neither far nor neary.

Here we go up, up, up,
And here we go down, down, downy;
And here we go backwards and forwards,
And here we go round, round, roundy.

YOUNG lambs to sell!
Young lambs to sell!
If I’d as much money as I can tell,
I never would cry, Young lambs to sell!

Rock-a-bye, baby, thy cradle is green;

Father’s a nobleman, mother’s a queen;
And Betty’s a lady, and wears a gold ring;
And Johnny’s a drummer, and drums for the king.

To market, to market,
To buy a plum bun;
Home again, come again,
Market is done.

Hickup, hickup, go away!
Come again another day;
Hickup, hickup, when I bake,
I’ll give to you a butter-cake.

Hickup, snicup,
Rise up, right up,
Three drops in the cup
Are good for the hiccup.

Swan swam over the sea —
Swim, swan, swim,
Swan swam back again,
Well swam swan.

GAFFERS AND GAMMERS

THERE was an old woman
Lived under a hill,
And if she’s not gone
She lives there still.

THERE was an old woman, as I’ve heard tell,
She went to market her eggs for to sell;
She went to market all on a market-day,
And she fell asleep on the king’s highway.
    There came by a pedlar whose name was Stout;
He cut her petticoats all round about;
He cut her petticoats up to the knees,
Which made the old woman to shiver and freeze.
    When this little woman first did wake,
She began to shiver and she began to shake;
She began to wonder and she began to cry,
“Oh! deary, deary me, this is none of I!
    “But if it be I, as I do hope it be,
I’ve a little dog at home, and he’ll know me;
If it be I, he’ll wag his little tail,
And if it be not I, he’ll loudly bark and wail.”
    Home went the little woman all in the dark;
Up got the little dog, and he began to bark;
He began to bark, so she began to cry,
“Oh! deary, deary me, this is none of I!”

“OLD woman, old woman, shall we go a shearing?”
“Speak a little louder, sir, I am very thick of hearing.”
“Old woman, old woman, shall I love you dearly?”
“Thank you, kind sir, I hear you very clearly.”

THERE was an old woman toss’d up in a basket
Nineteen times as high as the moon;
Where she was going I couldn’t but ask it,
For in her hand she carried a broom.

“Old woman, old woman, old woman,” quoth I,
“O whither, O whither, O whither, so high?”
“To brush the cobwebs off the sky!”
“Shall I go with thee?” “Ay, by-and-by.”

A LITTLE old man and I fell out;
“How shall we bring this matter about?”
“Bring it about as well as you can;
Get you gone, you little old man!”

THERE was an old woman of Leeds
Who spent all her time in good deeds;
She worked for the poor
Till her fingers were sore,
This pious old woman of Leeds!

THERE was an old woman

Lived under a hill;
She put a mouse in a bag,
And sent it to mill.

The miller declar’d
By the point of his knife,
He never took toll
Of a mouse in his life.

THERE was an old woman who lived in a shoe;
She had so many children she didn’t know what to do;
She gave them some broth without any bread;
She whipped them all soundly and put them to bed.

SHE HAD SO MANY CHILDREN SHE DIDN’T KNOW WHAT TO DO

THERE was an old woman had three sons,
Jerry, and James, and John:
Jerry was hung, James was drowned,
John was lost and never was found,
And there was an end of the three sons,
Jerry, and James, and John!

THERE was an old man of Tobago,
Who lived on rice, gruel, and sago,
Till, much to his bliss,
His physician said this —
“To a leg, sir, of mutton you may go.”

THERE was an old woman of Norwich,
Who lived upon nothing but porridge;
Parading the town,
She turned cloak into gown,
This thrifty old woman of Norwich.

THERE was an old woman called Nothing-at-all,
Who rejoiced in a dwelling exceedingly small;
A man stretched his mouth to its utmost extent,
And down at one gulp house and old woman went.

THERE was an old man,
And he had a calf,
And that’s half;
He took him out of the stall,
And put him on the wall;
And that’s all.

OLD Betty Blue
Lost a holiday shoe,
What can old Betty do?
Give her another
To match the other,
And then she may swagger in two.

OLD Mother Hubbard

Went to the cupboard
To get her poor dog a bone;
But when she came there
The cupboard was bare,
And so the poor dog had none.
    She went to the baker’s
To buy him some bread,
But when she came back
The poor dog was dead.
    She went to the joiner’s
To buy him a coffin,
But when she came back
The poor dog was laughing.
    She took a clean dish
To get him some tripe,
But when she came back
He was smoking his pipe.
    She went to the fishmonger’s
To buy him some fish,
And when she came back
He was licking the dish.
    She went to the ale-house
To get him some beer,
But when she came back
The dog sat in a chair.
    She went to the tavern
For white wine and red,
But when she came back
The dog stood on his head.
    She went to the hatter’s
To buy him a hat,
But when she came back
He was feeding the cat.
    She went to the barber’s
To buy him a wig,
But when she came back
He was dancing a jig.
    She went to the fruiterer’s
To buy him some fruit,

But when she came back
He was playing the flute.

She went to the tailor's
To buy him a coat,
But when she came back
He was riding a goat.

She went to the cobbler's
To buy him some shoes,
But when she came back
He was reading the news.

She went to the sempstress
To buy him some linen,
But when she came back
The dog was spinning.

She went to the hosier's
To buy him some hose,
But when she came back
He was dress'd in his clothes.

The dame made a curtsey,
The dog made a bow;
The dame said, "Your servant,"
The dog said, "Bow, wow."

GAMES - NURSERY RHYMES

THERE were three jovial Welshmen,
As I have heard them say,
And they would go a-hunting
Upon St. David’s day.

All the day they hunted,
And nothing could they find
But a ship a-sailing,
A-sailing with the wind.

One said it was a ship;
The other he said nay;
The third said it was a house,
With the chimney blown away.

And all the night they hunted,
And nothing could they find
But the moon a-gliding,
A-gliding with the wind.

One said it was the moon;
The other he said nay;
The third said it was a cheese,
And half o’t cut away.

And all the day they hunted,

And nothing could they find
But a hedgehog in a bramble-bush,
And that they left behind.

The first said it was a hedgehog;
The second he said nay;
The third it was a pin-cushion,
And the pins stuck in wrong way.

And all the night they hunted,
And nothing could they find
But a hare in a turnip field,
And that they left behind.

The first said it was a hare;
The second he said nay;
The third said it was a calf,
And the cow had run away.

And all the day they hunted,
And nothing could they find
But an owl in a holly-tree,
And that they left behind.

One said it was an owl;
The other he said nay;
The third said ’twas an old man,
And his beard growing grey.

JACK, be nimble,
And, Jack, be quick;
And, Jack, jump over
The candlestick.

QUEEN ANNE, Queen Anne, you sit in the sun,
As fair as a lily, as white as a wand.
I send you three letters, and pray read one;
You must read one, if you can't read all;
So pray, Miss or Master, throw up the ball.

[*Children hunting bats.*]

BAT, bat (*clap hands*),
Come under my hat,
And I'll give you a slice of bacon;
And when I bake,
I'll give you a cake,
If I am not mistaken.

[*At the conclusion, the captive is privately asked if he will have oranges or lemons (the two leaders of the arch having previously agreed which designation shall belong to each), and he goes behind the one he may chance to name. When all are thus divided into two parties, they conclude the game by trying to pull each other beyond a certain line.*]

GAY go up and gay go down,
To ring the bells of London town.
Bull's eyes and targets,
Say the bells of St. Marg'ret's.
Brickbats and tiles,
Say the bells of St. Giles'.
Halfpence and farthings,
Say the bells of St. Martin's.
Oranges and lemons,
Say the bells of St. Clement's.
Pancakes and fritters,
Say the bells of St. Peter's.
Two sticks and an apple,
Say the bells at Whitechapel.

Old Father Baldpate,
Say the slow bells at Aldgate.
You owe me ten shillings,
Say the bells at St. Helen’s.
Pokers and tongs,
Say the bells at St. John’s.
Kettles and pans,
Say the bells at St. Ann’s.
When will you pay me?
Say the bells at Old Bailey.
When I grow rich,
Say the bells at Shoreditch.
Pray when will that be?
Say the bells of Stepney.
I am sure I don’t know,
Says the great bell at Bow.
Here comes a candle to light you to bed,
And here comes a chopper to chop off your head.

[*Game on a child’s features.*]

HERE sits the Lord Mayor; [*Forehead.*
Here sit his two men; [*Eyes.*
Here sits the cock; [*Right cheek.*
Here sits the hen; [*Left cheek.*
Here sit the little chickens; [*Tip of nose.*
Here they run in, [*Mouth.*
Chinchopper, chinchopper, [*Chuck the chin.*
Chinchopper, chin!

DANCE, Thumbkin, dance; [*Keep the thumb in motion.*
Dance, ye merrymen, every one; [*All the fingers in motion.*
For Thumbkin, he can dance alone, [*The thumb only moving.*
Thumbkin, he can dance alone; [*Ditto.*

Dance, Foreman, dance, [*The first finger moving.*
Dance, ye merrymen, every one; [*The whole moving.*
But, Foreman, he can dance alone,
Foreman, he can dance alone.

[*And so on with the others, naming the second finger "Longman," the third finger "Ringman," and the fourth finger "Littleman." Littleman cannot dance alone.*]

[*Children stand round, and are counted one by one, by means of this rhyme. The child upon whom the last number falls is out, for "Hide and Seek," or any other game where a victim is required.*]

HICKORY (1), Dickory (2), Dock (3),
The mouse ran up the clock (4);
The clock struck one (5);
The mouse was gone (6);
O(7), u(8), t(9), spells out!

[*A game at ball.*]

CUCKOO, cherry-tree,
Catch a bird, and give it to me;
Let the tree be high or low,
Let it hail, rain, or snow.

[*A song set to five fingers.*]

1. THIS pig went to market;
2. This pig stayed at home;
3. This pig had a bit of meat,
4. And this pig had none;
5. This pig said, "Wee, wee, wee!
I can't find my way home."

THE FIVE PIGS

[*A play with the face. The child exclaims:*]

RING the bell! [*Giving a lock of its hair a pull.*
Knock at the door! [*Tapping its forehead.*
Draw the latch! [*Pulling up its nose.*
And walk in! [*Opening its mouth and putting in its finger.*

[*Game with the hands.*]

PEASE-PUDDING hot,
Pease-pudding cold,
Pease-pudding in the pot,
Nine days old.
Some like it hot,
Some like it cold,
Some like it in the pot,
Nine days old.

IS John Smith within?" —
"Yes, that he is."
"Can he set a shoe?" —
"Ay, marry, two,
Here a nail, there a nail,
Tick, tack, too."

1. I WENT up one pair of stairs.

2. Just like me.
1. I went up two pair of stairs.
2. Just like me.
1. I went into a room.
2. Just like me.
1. I looked out of a window.
2. Just like me.
1. And there I saw a monkey.
2. Just like me.

1. I AM a gold lock.
2. I am a gold key.
1. I am a silver lock.
2. I am a silver key.
1. I am a brass lock.
2. I am a brass key.
1. I am a lead lock.
2. I am a lead key.
1. I am a monk lock.
2. I am a monk key!

Suitors.
WE are three brethren out of Spain,
Come to court your daughter Jane.
Mother.
My daughter Jane she is too young,
And has not learned her mother-tongue.
Suitors.
Be she young, or be she old,
For her beauty she must be sold.
So fare you well, my lady gay,
We’ll call again another day.
Mother.

Turn back, turn back, thou scornful knight,
And rub thy spurs till they be bright.
Suitors.
Of my spurs take you no thought,
For in this town they were not bought;
So fare you well, my lady gay,
We’ll call again another day.
Mother.
Turn back, turn back, thou scornful knight,
And take the fairest in your sight.
Suitor.
The fairest maid that I can see,
Is pretty Nancy — come to me.

Here comes your daughter safe and sound,
Every pocket with a thousand pound,
Every finger with a gay gold ring.
Please to take your daughter in.

RIDE a cock-horse to Banbury Cross,
To buy little Johnny a galloping-horse;
It trots behind, and it ambles before,
And Johnny shall ride till he can ride no more.

RIDE a cock-horse to Banbury Cross,
To see what Tommy can buy;
A penny white loaf, a penny white cake,
And a twopenny apple-pie.

[*The following is a game played thus: A string of boys and girls, each holding by his predecessor’s skirts,* *approaches two others, who with joined and elevated hands form a double arch. After the dialogue, the line passes through, and the last is caught by a sudden lowering of the arms — if possible.*]

HOW many miles is it to Babylon?" —
"Threescore miles and ten."
"Can I get there by candle-light?" —
"Yes, and back again!
If your heels are nimble and light,
You may get there by candle-light."

RIDE a cock-horse to Banbury Cross,
To see an old lady upon a white horse;
Rings on her fingers, and bells on her toes,
And so she makes music wherever she goes.

[*A string of children, hand in hand, stand in a row. A child* (a) *stands in front of them, as leader; two other children* (b *and* c) *form an arch, each holding both the hands of the other.*]

A. DRAW a pail of water
For my lady's daughter.
My father's a king, and my mother's a queen;
My two little sisters are dress'd in green,
Stamping grass and parsley,
Marigold leaves and daisies.
One rush, two rush,
Pray thee, fine lady, come under my bush.

[a *passes by under the arch, followed by the whole string of children, the last of whom is taken captive by* b *and* c. *The verses are repeated, until all are taken.*]

SEE-SAW sacradown,
Which is the way to London town?
One foot up and the other down,
And that is the way to London town.

SEE, saw, Margery Daw
Sold her bed and lay upon straw.
Was not she a dirty slut,
To sell her bed and lie in the dirt!

SEE, saw, Margery Daw,
Little Jackey shall have a new master;
Little Jackey shall have but a penny a day,
Because he can’t work any faster.

[*The following is used by schoolboys, when two are starting to run a race.*]
ONE to make ready,
And two to prepare;
Good luck to the rider,
And away goes the mare.

[*A game on the slate.*]
EGGS, butter, bread,
Stick, stock, stone dead!
Stick him up, stick him down,
Stick him in the old man’s crown!

WHO goes round my house this night?
None but bloody Tom!
Who steals all the sheep at night?
None but this poor one.

WHOOP, whoop, and hollow,
Good dogs won’t follow,
Without the hare cries “Pee-wit.”

THIS is the way the ladies ride:
Tri, tre, tre, tree,
Tri, tre, tre, tree!
This is the way the ladies ride:
Tri, tre, tre, tre, tri-tre-tre-tree!

This is the way the gentlemen ride:
Gallop-a-trot,
Gallop-a-trot!
This is the way the gentlemen ride:
Gallop-a-gallop-a-trot!

This is the way the farmers ride:
Hobbledy-hoy,
Hobbledy-hoy!
This is the way the farmers ride:
Hobbledy hobbledy-hoy!

HERE stands a post.
“Who put it there?”
“A better man than you:
Touch it if you dare!”

THERE were two blackbirds
Sitting on a hill,
The one nam’d Jack,
The other nam’d Jill.
Fly away Jack!
Fly away Jill!
Come again Jack!
Come again Jill!

JINGLES

DEEDLE, deedle, dumpling, my son John
Went to bed with his trousers on;
One shoe off, the other shoe on,
Deedle, deedle, dumpling, my son John.

COCK-a-doodle-doo!
My dame has lost her shoe;
My master's lost his fiddling-stick,
And don't know what to do.
    Cock-a-doodle-doo!
What is my dame to do?
Till master finds his fiddling-stick,
She'll dance without her shoe.
    Cock-a-doodle-doo!
My dame has lost her shoe,
And master's found his fiddling-stick;
Sing doodle-doodle-doo!
    Cock-a-doodle-doo!
My dame will dance with you,
While master fiddles his fiddling-stick,
For dame and doodle-doo.
    Cock-a-doodle-doo!
Dame has lost her shoe;
Gone to bed and scratch'd her head,
And can't tell what to do.

HEY! diddle, diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon;
The little dog laugh'd
To see the sport,
While the dish ran after the spoon.

PUSSICAT, wussicat, with a white foot,
When is your wedding? for I'll come to 't.
The beer's to brew, the bread's to bake,
Pussy-cat, pussy-cat, don't be too late.

DING, dong, bell,
Pussy's in the well!
Who put her in? —
Little Tommy Lin.
Who pulled her out? —
Dog with long snout.
What a naughty boy was that
To drown poor pussy-cat,
Who never did any harm,
But kill'd the mice in his father's barn.

DIDDLEDY, diddledy, dumpty;
The cat ran up the plum-tree.
I'll lay you a crown
I'll fetch you down;
So diddledy, diddledy, dumpty.

FIDDLE-DE-DEE, fiddle-de-dee,
The fly shall marry the humble-bee.
They went to the church, and married was she:
The fly has married the humble-bee.

TO market, to market, to buy a fat pig;
Home again, home again, dancing a jig
Ride to the market to buy a fat hog;
Home again, home again, jiggety-jog.

HANDY spandy, Jack-a-dandy,
Loved plum-cake and sugar-candy;
He bought some at a grocer’s shop,
And out he came, hop, hop, hop.

TWEEDLE-DUM and Tweedle-dee
Resolved to have a battle
For Tweedle-dum said Tweedle-dee
Had spoiled his nice new rattle.

Just then flew by a monstrous crow
As big as a tar-barrel,
Which frightened both the heroes so
They quite forgot their quarrel.

RUB a dub dub,
Three men in a tub:
And who do you think they be?
The butcher, the baker,
The candlestick-maker;
Turn ’em out, knaves all three!

LOVE AND MATRIMONY NURSERY RHYMES

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water;
Jack fell down and broke his crown,
And Jill came tumbling after.

ROSEMARY green,
And lavender blue,
Thyme and sweet marjoram,
Hyssop and rue.

BRAVE news is come to town;
Brave news is carried;
Brave news is come to town
Jemmy Dawson’s married.

SYLVIA, sweet as morning air,
Do not drive me to despair:
Long have I sighed in vain,
Now I am come again:
Will you be mine or no, no-a-no, —
Will you be mine or no?
    Simon, pray leave off your suit,

For of your courting you’ll reap no fruit.
I would rather give a crown
Than be married to a clown;
Go for a booby, go, no-a-no, —
Go, for a booby, go.

THERE was a little boy and a little girl
Lived in an alley;
Says the little boy to the little girl,
“Shall I, oh! shall I?”

Says the little girl to the little boy,
“What shall we do?”
Says the little boy to the little girl,
“I will kiss you.”

WHEN I was a bachelor I lived by myself,
And all the meat I got I put upon a shelf;
The rats and the mice did lead me such a life
That I went to London to get myself a wife.

The streets were so broad and the lanes were so narrow,
I could not get my wife home without a wheelbarrow;
The wheelbarrow broke, my wife got a fall,
Down tumbled wheelbarrow, little wife, and all.

BLUE eye beauty,
Grey eye greedy,
Black eye blackie,
Brown eye brownie.

AS Tommy Snooks and Bessy Brooks
Were walking out one Sunday,
Says Tommy Snooks to Bessy Brooks,
“To-morrow will be Monday.”

OH, madam, I will give you the keys of Canterbury,
To set all the bells ringing when we shall be merry,
If you will but walk abroad with me,
If you will but walk with me.
Sir, I’ll not accept of the keys of Canterbury,
To set all the bells ringing when we shall be merry;
Neither will I walk abroad with thee,
Neither will I talk with thee!
Oh, madam, I will give you a fine carved comb,
To comb out your ringlets when I am from home,
If you will but walk with me, &c.
Sir, I’ll not accept, &c.
Oh, madam, I will give you a pair of shoes of cork,
One made in London, the other made in York,
If you will but walk with me, &c.
Sir, I’ll not accept, &c.
Madam, I will give you a sweet silver bell,
To ring up your maidens when you are not well,
If you will but walk with me, &c.
Sir, I’ll not accept, &c.
Oh, my man John, what can the matter be?
I love the lady and the lady loves not me!
Neither will she walk abroad with me,
Neither will she talk with me.
Oh, master dear, do not despair,
The lady she shall be, shall be your only dear;
And she will walk and talk with thee,

And she will walk with thee!
    Oh, madam, I will give you the keys of my chest,
To count my gold and silver when I am gone to rest,
If you will but walk abroad with me,
If you will but talk with me.
    Oh, sir, I will accept of the keys of your chest,
To count your gold and silver when you are gone to rest,
And I will walk abroad with thee,
And I will talk with thee!

JACK in the pulpit, out and in,
Sold his wife for a minikin pin.

JACK SPRAT could eat no fat,
His wife could eat no lean:

And so, betwixt them both, you see,
They lick’d the platter clean.

BESSY BELL and Mary Gray,
They were two bonny lasses;
They built their house upon the lea,
And covered it with rashes.
    Bessy kept the garden gate,
And Mary kept the pantry;
Bessy always had to wait,
While Mary lived in plenty.

THERE was a little man,
And he woo’d a little maid,
And he said, “Little maid, will you wed, wed, wed?
I have little more to say,
Than will you, yea or nay,
For least said is soonest mended-ded, ded, ded.”

The little maid replied,
Some say a little sighed,
“But what shall we have for to eat, eat, eat?
Will the love that you’re so rich in
Make a fire in the kitchen?
Or the little god of love turn the spit, spit, spit?”

UP hill and down dale,
Butter is made in every vale,
And if that Nancy Cook
Is a good girl,
She shall have a spouse,
And make butter anon,
Before her old grandmother
Grows a young man.

AS I was going up Pippen-hill,
Pippen-hill was dirty
There I met a pretty miss,
And she dropt me a curtsey.
Little miss, pretty miss,
Blessings light upon you!
If I had half-a-crown a day
I’d spend it all on you.

HERE comes a lusty wooer,
My a dildin, my a daldin;
Here comes a lusty wooer,
Lily bright and shine a'.
"Pray, who do you woo,
My a dildin, my a daldin?
Pray, who do you woo,
Lily bright and shine a'?"
"For your fairest daughter,
My a dildin, my a daldin;
For your fairest daughter,
Lily bright and shine a'."
"Then there she is for you,
My a dildin, my a daldin;
Then there she is for you,
Lily bright and shine a'."

HERE COMES A LUSTY WOOER

MASTER I have, and I am his man,
Gallop a dreary dun;
Master I have, and I am his man,
And I'll get a wife as fast as I can;
With a heighly gaily gamberally,
Higgledy piggledy, niggledy, niggledy,
Gallop a dreary dun.

I HAD a little husband,
No bigger than my thumb;
I put him in a pint pot,
And there I bid him drum.
I bought a little horse,
That galloped up and down;
I bridled him, and saddled him,
And sent him out of town.
I gave him some garters
To garter up his hose,

And a little handkerchief
To wipe his pretty nose.

DID you see my wife, did you see, did you see,
Did you see my wife looking for me?
She wears a straw bonnet, with white ribbands on it,
And dimity petticoats over her knee.

I DOUBT, I doubt, my fire is out;
My little wife isn’t at home;
I’ll saddle my dog, and I’ll bridle my cat,
And I’ll go fetch my little wife home.

LOVE your own, kiss your own,
Love your own mother, hinny,
For if she was dead and gone,
You’d ne’er get such another, hinny.

CURLY locks! curly locks! wilt thou be mine?
Thou shalt not wash dishes, nor yet feed the swine,
But sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam,
And feed upon strawberries, sugar, and cream!

GEORGEY PORGEY, pudding and pie,
Kissed the girls and made them cry;
When the girls come out to play,

Georgey Porgey runs away.

THERE was a lady loved a swine:
“Honey,” quoth she,
“Pig-hog, wilt thou be mine?”
“Grunt,” quoth he.
    “I’ll build thee a silver stye,
Honey,” quoth she;
“And in it thou shall lie;”
“Grunt,” quoth he.
    “Pinned with a silver pin,
Honey,” quoth she,
“That you may go out and in;”
“Grunt,” quoth he.
    “Wilt thou now have me,
Honey,” quoth she;
“Grunt, grunt, grunt,” quoth he,
And went his way.

WHERE have you been all the day,
My boy Willy?”
“I’ve been all the day
Courting of a lady gay:
But, oh! she’s too young
To be taken from her mammy.”

    “What work can she do,
My boy Willy?
Can she bake and can she brew,
My boy Willy?”
“She can brew and she can bake,
And she can make our wedding-cake:
But, oh! she’s too young
To be taken from her mammy.”

“What age may she be? What age may she be?
My boy Willy?”
“Twice two, twice seven,
Twice ten, twice eleven:
But, oh! she’s too young
To be taken from her mammy.”

NATURAL HISTORY NURSERY RHYMES

I HAD a little dog, and they called him Buff;
I sent him to the shop for a hap'orth of snuff;
But he lost the bag, and spill'd the snuff:
"So take that cuff — and that's enough."

BURNIE bee, burnie bee,
Tell me when your wedding be?
If it be to-morrow day,
Take your wings and fly away.

SOME little mice sat in a barn to spin;
Pussy came by, and popped her head in;
"Shall I come in and cut your threads off?"
"Oh no, kind sir, you will snap our heads off?"

ALL of a row,
Bend the bow,
Shot at a pigeon,
And killed a crow.

GREY goose and gander,
Waft your wings together,
And carry the good king’s daughter
Over the one strand river.

PUSSY-CAT, pussy-cat, where have you been?
I’ve been to London to look at the queen.
Pussy-cat, pussy-cat, what did you there?
I frighten’d a little mouse under the chair.

CUCKOO, Cuckoo,
What do you do?
“In April
I open my bill;
In May
I sing night and day;
In June
I change my tune;
In July
Away I fly;
In August
Away I must.”

HICKETY, pickety, my black hen,
She lays eggs for gentlemen;
Gentlemen come every day
To see what my black hen doth lay.

THE cock doth crow,
To let you know,
If you be wise,
’Tis time to rise.

ROBERT BARNES, fellow fine,
Can you shoe this horse of mine?
“Yes, good sir, that I can,
As well as any other man:
There’s a nail, and there’s a prod,
And now, good sir, your horse is shod.”

[*Bird boy’s song.*]
EAT, birds, eat, and make no waste;
I lie here and make no haste:
If my master chance to come,
You must fly, and I must run.

“HIE, hie,” says Anthony,
“Puss in the pantry,
Gnawing, gnawing
A mutton mutton-bone;
See now she tumbles it,
See now she mumbles it,
See how she tosses
The mutton mutton-bone.”

FOUR and twenty tailors went to kill a snail;
The best man among them durst not touch her tail.

She put out her horns like a little Kyloe cow;
Run, tailors, run, or she’ll kill you all e’en now.

THE cuckoo’s a fine bird:
He sings as he flies;
He brings us good tidings;
He tells us no lies.

He sucks little birds’ eggs
To make his voice clear;
And when he sings “Cuckoo!”
The summer is near.

“CROAK!” said the Toad, “I’m hungry, I think;
To-day I’ve had nothing to eat or to drink;
I’ll crawl to a garden and jump through the pales,
And there I’ll dine nicely on slugs and on snails.”
“Ho, ho!” quoth the Frog, “is that what you mean?
Then I’ll hop away to the next meadow stream;
There I will drink, and eat worms and slugs too,
And then I shall have a good dinner like you.”

THERE was a piper, he’d a cow,
And he’d no hay to give her;
He took his pipes and played a tune:
“Consider, old cow, consider!”

The cow considered very well,
For she gave the piper a penny,
That he might play the tune again,

Of “Corn rigs are bonnie.”

A PIE sate on a pear-tree,
A pie sate on a pear-tree,
A pie sate on a pear-tree.
Heigh O, heigh O, heigh O!
Once so merrily hopp’d she,
Twice so merrily hopp’d she,
Thrice so merrily hopp’d she.
Heigh O, heigh O, heigh O!

ONCE I saw a little bird
Come hop, hop, hop;
So I cried, “Little bird,
Will you stop, stop, stop?”
And was going to the window,
To say, “How do you do?”
But he shook his little tail,
And far away he flew.

THE winds they did blow;
The leaves they did wag;
Along came a beggar boy,
And put me in his bag.

He took me up to London;
A lady did me buy,
Put me in a silver cage,
And hung me up on high,

With apples by the fire,
And nuts for to crack,

Besides a little feather bed
To rest my little back.

COCK ROBIN got up early
At the break of day,
And went to Jenny’s window,
To sing a roundelay.
He sang Cock Robin’s love
To the pretty Jenny Wren;
And when he got unto the end,
Then he began again.

BETTY PRINGLE had a little pig,
Not very little and not very big;
When he was alive he lived in clover;
But now he’s dead, and that’s all over.
So Billy Pringle he laid down and cried,
And Betty Pringle she laid down and died;
So there was an end of one, two, and three:
Billy Pringle he,
Betty Pringle she,
And the piggy wiggy.

A LONG-TAIL’D pig, or a short-tail’d pig,
Or a pig without e’er a tail,
A sow-pig, or a boar-pig,
Or a pig with a curly tail.

A LITTLE cock-sparrow sat on a green tree (*tris*),

And he cherruped, he cherruped, so merry was he (*tris*);
A little cock-sparrow sat on a green tree,
And he cherruped, he cherruped, so merry was he.

A naughty boy came with his wee bow and arrow (*tris*),
Determined to shoot this little cock-sparrow (*tris*);
A naughty, &c.
Determined, &c.

“This little cock-sparrow shall make me a stew (*tris*),
And his giblets shall make me a little pie too” (*tris*);
“Oh, no,” said the sparrow, “I *won’t* make a stew;”
So he flapped his wings, and away he flew.

LITTLE Robin Red-Breast
Sat upon a rail:
Niddle-naddle went his head!
Wiggle-waggle went his tail.

DAME, what makes your ducks to die?
What the pize ails ‘em? what the pize ails ‘em?
They kick up their heels, and there they lie;
What the pize ails ’em now?
Heigh, ho! heigh, ho!
Dame, what makes your ducks to die?
What a pize ails ‘em? what a pize ails ‘em?
Heigh, ho! heigh, ho!
Dame, what ails your ducks to die?
Eating o’ polly-wigs, eating o’ polly-wigs.
Heigh, ho! heigh, ho!

IN the month of February,
When green leaves begin to spring,
Little lambs do skip like fairies,
Birds do couple, build, and sing.

PUSSY cat sits by the fire;
How did she come there?
In walks the little dog,
Says, “Pussy! are you there?”

“How do you do, Mistress Pussy?
Mistress Pussy, how d’ye do?”
“I thank you kindly, little dog,
I fare as well as you!”

THERE was a little boy went into a barn,
And lay down on some hay;
An owl came out and flew about,
And the little boy ran away.

THE dove says, “Coo, coo, what shall I do?
I can scarce maintain two.”
“Pooh, pooh,” says the wren; “I have got ten,
And keep them all like gentlemen!”

BOW, wow, wow,
Whose dog art thou?
“Little Tom Tinker’s dog,
Bow, wow, wow.”

LEG over leg,
As the dog went to Dover;
When he came to a stile,
Jump he went over.

I LOVE little pussy, her coat is so warm;
And if I don’t hurt her she’ll do me no harm.
So I’ll not pull her tail nor drive her away,
But pussy and I very gently will play.

[*Imitated from a pigeon.*]
CURR dhoo, curr dhoo,
Love me, and I’ll love you!

LADY bird, lady bird, fly away home;
Thy house is on fire, thy children all gone —
All but one, and her name is Ann,
And she crept under the pudding-pan.

PUSSY sits behind the fire —
How can she be fair?
In comes the little dog:
“Pussy, are you there?
“So, so, Mistress Pussy,
Pray how do you do?”

“Thank you, thank you, little dog,
I’m very well just now.”

LITTLE Robin-Redbreast sat upon a tree;
Up went Pussy cat, and down went he;
Down came Pussy cat, and away Robin ran:
Says little Robin-Redbreast, “Catch me if you can.”
Little Robin-Redbreast jump’d upon a wall;
Pussy cat jump’d after him, and almost got a fall;
Little Robin chirp’d and sang, and what did Pussy say?
Pussy cat said “Mew,” and Robin jump’d away.

MARY had a pretty bird
With feathers bright and yellow —
Slender legs — upon my word —
He was a pretty fellow.

I HAD a little hen, the prettiest ever seen;
She washed me the dishes, and kept the house clean;
She went to the mill to fetch me some flour;
She brought it home in less than an hour;
She baked me my bread, she brew’d me my ale;
She sat by the fire, and told many a fine tale.

HIGGLEY PIGGLEY,
My black hen,
She lays eggs
For gentlemen;
Sometimes nine,

And sometimes ten.
Higgley Piggley,
My black hen!

COME, take up your hats, and away let us haste
To the Butterfly's ball, and the Grasshopper's feast;
The trumpeter, Gad-fly, has summoned the crew,
And the revels are now only waiting for you.
On the smooth-shaven grass, by the side of a wood,
Beneath a broad oak which for ages had stood,
See the children of earth, and the tenants of air,
To an evening's amusement together repair.
And there came the Beetle, so blind and so black,
Who carried the Emmet, his friend, on his back;
And there came the Gnat and the Dragon-fly too,
With all their relations, green, orange, and blue.
And there came the Moth, with her plumage of down,
And the Hornet with jacket of yellow and brown;
And with him the Wasp, his companion, did bring;
But they promised that evening to lay by their sting.
Then the sly little Dormouse peeped out of his hole,
And led to the feast his blind cousin the Mole;
And the Snail, with her horns peeping out of her shell,
Came, fatigued with the distance, the length of an ell.
A mushroom the table, and on it was spread
A water-dock leaf, which their table-cloth made.
The viands were various, to each of their taste,
And the Bee brought the honey to sweeten the feast.
With steps most majestic the Snail did advance,
And he promised the gazers a minuet to dance;
But they all laughed so loud that he drew in his head,
And went in his own little chamber to bed.
Then, as evening gave way to the shadows of night,
Their watchman, the Glow-worm, come out with his light.
So home let us hasten, while yet we can see,
For no watchman is waiting for you or for me.

BAH, bah, black sheep,
Have you any wool?
“Yes, marry, have I,
Three bags full:
One for my master,
And one for my dame,
But none for the little boy
Who cries in the lane.”

Little boy blue, come, blow up your horn;
The sheep’s in the meadow, the cow’s in the corn.
“Where’s the little boy that looks after the sheep?”
“He’s under the hay-cock fast asleep.”
“Will you wake him?” “No, not I;
For if I do, he’ll be sure to cry.”

GOD bless the master of this house,
The mistress bless also,
And all the little children
That round the table go;

And all your kin and kinsmen,
That dwell both far and near;
I wish you a merry Christmas,
And a happy New Year.

LITTLE girl, little girl, where have you been?
“Gathering roses to give to the queen.”

“Little girl, little girl, what gave she you?”
“She gave me a diamond as big as my shoe.”

GOOSEY, goosey, gander,
Where shall I wander?
Upstairs, downstairs,
And in my lady’s chamber.
There I meet an old man
That would not say his prayers;
I took him by the left leg,
And threw him downstairs.

JENNY WREN fell sick,
Upon a merry time;
In came Robin-Redbreast
And brought her sops and wine.

“Eat well of the sops, Jenny,
Drink well of the wine.”
“Thank you, Robin, kindly,
You shall be mine.”

Jenny she got well,
And stood upon her feet,
And told Robin plainly
She loved him not a bit.

Robin, being angry,
Hopped upon a twig,
Saying, “Out upon you. Fie upon you.
Bold-faced jig.”

THE hart he loves the high wood,
The hare she loves the hill,
The knight he loves his bright sword,
The lady — loves her will.

I HAD a little pony,
His name was Dapple-grey
I lent him to a lady,
To ride a mile away.
She whipped him, she slashed him,
She rode him through the mire;
I would not lend my pony now
For all the lady’s hire.

A FARMER went trotting
Upon his grey mare;
Bumpety, bumpety, bump!
With his daughter behind him,
So rosy and fair;
Lumpety, lumpety, lump!

A raven cried “Croak;”
And they all tumbled down;
Bumpety, bumpety, bump!
The mare broke her knees,
And the farmer his crown;
Lumpety, lumpety, lump.

The mischievous raven
Flew laughing away;
Bumpety, bumpety, bump!
And vowed he would serve them

The same the next day;
Bumpety, bumpety, bump!

ACCUMALATIVE STORIES

THIS is the house that Jack built.
2. This is the malt
That lay in the house that Jack built.
3. This is the rat,
That ate the malt,
That lay in the house that Jack built.
4. This is the cat,
That kill’d the rat,
That ate the malt,
That lay in the house that Jack built.
5. This is the dog,
That worried the cat,
That kill’d the rat,
That ate the malt,
That lay in the house that Jack built.
6. This is the cow with the crumpled horn,
That toss’d the dog,
That worried the cat,
That kill’d the rat,
That ate the malt,
That lay in the house that Jack built.
7. This is the maiden all forlorn,
That milk’d the cow with the crumpled horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That kill’d the rat,
That ate the malt,
That lay in the house that Jack built.
8. This is the man all tatter’d and torn,
That kissed the maiden all forlorn,

That milk’d the cow with the crumpled horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That kill’d the rat,
That ate the malt,
That lay in the house that Jack built.
9. This is the priest all shaven and shorn,
That married the man all tatter’d and torn,
That kiss’d the maiden all forlorn,
That milk’d the cow with the crumpled horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That kill’d the rat,
That ate the malt,
That lay in the house that Jack built.
10. This is the cock that crow’d in the morn,
That waked the priest all shaven and shorn,
That married the man all tatter’d and torn,
That kiss’d the maiden all forlorn,
That milk’d the cow with the crumpled horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That kill’d the rat,
That ate the malt,
That lay in the house that Jack built.
11. This is the farmer sowing his corn,
That kept the cock that crow’d in the morn,
That waked the priest all shaven and shorn,
That married the man all tatter’d and torn,
That kissed the maiden all forlorn,
That milk’d the cow with the crumpled horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That kill’d the rat,
That ate the malt,
That lay in the house that Jack built.

AN old woman was sweeping her house, and she found a little crooked sixpence. “What,” said she, “shall I do with this little sixpence? I will go to market, and buy a little pig.”

As she was coming home, she came to a stile; but the pig would not go over the stile.

She went a little farther, and she met a dog. So she said to the dog —

“Dog, dog, bite pig!
Pig won’t get over the stile;
And I shan’t get home to-night.”

But the dog would not.

She went a little farther, and she met a stick. So she said —

“Stick, stick, beat dog!
Dog won’t bite pig?
Pig won’t get over the stile,
And I shan’t get home to-night.”

But the stick would not.

She went a little farther, and she met a fire. So she said —

“Fire, fire, burn stick!
Stick won’t beat dog;
Dog won’t bite pig;
Pig won’t get over the stile,
And I shan’t get home to-night.”

But the fire would not.

She went a little farther, and she met some water. So she said —

“Water, water, quench fire!
Fire won’t burn stick;
Stick won’t beat dog;
Dog won’t bite pig;
Pig won’t get over the stile,
And I shan’t get home to-night.”

But the water would not.

She went a little farther, and she met an ox. So she said —

“Ox, ox, drink water!
Water won’t quench fire;
Fire won’t burn stick;
Stick won’t beat dog;
Dog won’t bite pig;
Pig won’t get over the stile,

And I shan’t get home to-night.”

But the ox would not.
She went a little farther, and she met a butcher. So she said —
“Butcher, butcher, kill ox!
Ox won’t drink water;
Water won’t quench fire;
Fire won’t burn stick;
Stick won’t beat dog;
Dog won’t bite pig;
Pig won’t get over the stile,
And I shan’t get home to-night.”
But the butcher would not.
She went a little farther, and she met a rope. So she said —
“Rope, rope, hang butcher!
Butcher won’t kill ox;
Ox won’t drink water;
Water won’t quench fire;
Fire won’t burn stick;
Stick won’t beat dog;
Dog won’t bite pig;
Pig won’t get over the stile,
And I shan’t get home to-night.”
But the rope would not.
She went a little farther, and she met a rat. So she said —
“Rat, rat, gnaw rope!
Rope won’t hang butcher;
Butcher won’t kill ox;
Ox won’t drink water;
Water won’t quench fire;
Fire won’t burn stick;
Stick won’t beat dog;
Dog won’t bite pig;
Pig won’t get over the stile,
And I shan’t get home to-night.”
But the rat would not.
She went a little farther, and she met a cat. So she said —

“Cat, cat, kill rat;
Rat won’t gnaw rope;
Rope won’t hang butcher;
Butcher won’t kill ox;
Ox won’t drink water;
Water won’t quench fire;
Fire won’t burn stick;
Stick won’t beat dog;
Dog won’t bite pig;
Pig won’t get over the stile,
And I shan’t get home to-night.”

The cat said, “If you will give me a saucer of milk, I will kill the rat.”

So the old woman gave the cat the milk, and when she had lapped up the milk —

The cat began to kill the rat;
The rat began to gnaw the rope;
The rope began to hang the butcher;
The butcher began to kill the ox;
The ox began to drink the water;
The water began to quench the fire;
The fire began to burn the stick;
The stick began to beat the dog;
The dog began to bite the pig;
The pig jumped over the stile,
And so the old woman got home that night.

THIS is the key of the kingdom.
In that kingdom there is a city.
In that city there is a town.
In that town there is a street.
In that street there is a lane.
In that lane there is a yard.
In that yard there is a house.
In that house there is a room.
In that room there is a bed.
On that bed there is a basket.

In that basket there are some flowers.
Flowers in the basket, basket in the bed, bed in the room, &c. &c.

RELICS

WILLY boy, Willy boy, where are you going?
I'll go with you, if I may.
"I'm going to the meadow to see them a mowing;
I'm going to help them, make hay."

THE girl in the lane, that couldn't speak plain,
Cried, "Gobble, gobble, gobble."
The man on the hill, that couldn't stand still,
Went hobble, hobble, hobble.

HINK, minx! the old witch winks,
The fat begins to fry:
There's nobody at home but little jumping Joan,
Father, mother, and I.

HANNAH BANTRY in the pantry,
Eating a mutton bone;
How she gnawed it, how she clawed it,

When she found she was alone!

LITTLE Miss Muffet
Sat on a tuffet,
Eating of curds and whey;
There came a spider,
And sat down beside her,
And frightened Miss Muffet away.

“What are Little Boys made of?”

WHAT are little boys made of, made of;
What are little boys made of?
“Snaps and snails, and puppy-dogs’ tails;
And that’s what little boys are made of, made of.”
What are little girls made of, made of, made of;
What are little girls made of?
“Sugar and spice, and all that’s nice;
And that’s what little girls are made of, made of.”

WHAT’S the news of the day,
Good neighbour, I pray?
“They say the balloon
Is gone up to the moon.”

KING’S SUTTON is a pretty town,
And lies all in a valley;
There is a pretty ring of bells,
Besides a bowling-alley:
Wine and liquor in good store,
Pretty maidens plenty;
Can a man desire more?

There ain’t such a town in twenty.

COME, let’s to bed,
Says Sleepy-head;
“Tarry a while,” says Slow;
“Put on the pot,”
Says Greedy-gut,
“Let’s sup before we go.”

Girls and boys, come out to play;
The moon doth shine as bright as day;
Leave your supper, and leave your sleep,
And come with your playfellows into the street.
Come with a whoop, come with a call,
Come with a good will or not at all.
Up the ladder and down the wall,
A halfpenny roll will serve us all.
You find milk, and I’ll find flour,
And we’ll have a pudding in half-an-hour.

HOW many days has my baby to play?
Saturday, Sunday, Monday,
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday,
Saturday, Sunday, Monday.

AROUND the green gravel the grass grows green,
And all the pretty maids are plain to be seen;
Wash them with milk, and clothe them with silk,
And write their names with a pen and ink.

AS I was going to sell my eggs,
I met a man with bandy legs,
Bandy legs and crooked toes;
I tripped up his heels, and he fell on his nose.

MY little old man and I fell out;
I’ll tell you what ’twas all about:
I had money, and he had none,
And that’s the way the row begun.

DAFFY-
Down-
Dilly
has come
up to
town
In a
yellow
petticoat
and a
green
gown.

DARBY and Joan were dress’d in black,
Sword and buckle behind their back;
Foot for foot, and knee for knee,
Turn about Darby’s company.

IF all the seas were one sea,
What a *great* sea that would be!
And if all the trees were one tree,
What a *great* tree that would be!
And if all the axes were one axe,
What a *great* axe that would be!
And if all the men were one man,
What a *great* man he would be!
And if the *great* man took the *great* axe,
And cut down *the great* tree,
And let it fall into *the great* sea,
What a splish splash *that* would be!

RAIN, rain, go away;
Come again another day;
Little Arthur wants to play.

BARBER, barber, shave a pig;
How many hairs will make a wig?
“Four-and-twenty, that’s enough:”
Give the barber a pinch of snuff.

LITTLE Tom Tucker
Sings for his supper;
What shall he eat?
White bread and butter.
How shall he cut it,
Without e’er a knife?

How will he be married
Without e’er a wife?

WHO comes here?
“A grenadier.”
“What do you want?”
“A pot of beer.”
“Where is your money?”
“I’ve forgot.”
“Get you gone,
You drunken sot!”

TO market, to market, to buy a plum-cake;
Back again, back again, baby is late;
To market, to market, to buy a plum-bun,
Back again, back again, market is done.

BLOW, wind, blow! and go, mill, go!
That the miller may grind his corn;
That the baker may take it,
And into rolls make it,
And send us some hot in the morn.

A MAN went a hunting at Reigate,
And wished to leap over a high gate;
Says the owner, “Go round,
With your gun and your hound,
For you never shall leap over my gate.”

THERE was a little nobby colt,
His name was Nobby Gray;
His head was made of pouce straw,
His tail was made of hay.
He could ramble, he could trot,
He could carry a mustard-pot,
Round the town of Woodstock,
Hey, Jenny, hey!

WE’RE all in the dumps,
For diamonds are trumps;
The kittens are gone to St. Paul’s!
The babies are bit,
The moon’s in a fit,
And the houses are built without walls.

THE origin of the right nursery rhymes is, of course, popular, like the origin of ballads, tales (*Märchen*), riddles, proverbs, and, indeed, of literature in general. They are probably, in England, of no great antiquity, except in certain cases, where they supply the words to some child's *ballet*, some dance game. A game may be of prehistoric antiquity, as appears in the rudimentary forms of backgammon, *Pachin* and *Patullo*, common to Asia, and to the Aztecs, as Dr. Tylor has demonstrated. The child's game —

"Buck, buck,
How many fingers do I hold up?"

was known in ancient Rome as *bucca*, though it would be audacious to infer that it arrived in Britain since the Norman Conquest. Hop-scotch is also exceedingly ancient, and the curious will find the theories of its origin in Mr. Gomme's learned work on Children's Dances and Songs, published by the Folk-Lore Society. Dr. Nicholson's book on the Folk-Lore of Children in Sutherland, still unpublished when I write, may also be consulted. One of the songs collected by Dr. Nicholson was copied down by a Danish traveller in London during the reign of Charles II. Robert Chambers's "Popular Rhymes of Scotland" is also a treasure of this kind of antiquities. It is probable that the Lowland rhymes have occasionally Gaelic counterparts, as the nursery tales certainly have, but I am unacquainted with any researches on this topic by Celtic scholars.

In Mr. Halliwell's Collection, from which this volume is abridged, no manuscript authority goes further back than the reign of Henry VIII., though King Arthur and Robin Hood are mentioned. The obscure Scottish taunt, levelled at Edward I. when besieging Berwick, is much in the manner of a nursery rhyme: —

"Kyng Edward,
When thu havest Berwic,
Pike thee!
When thu havest geton,
Dike thee!"

This, as Sir Herbert Maxwell says, "seems deficient in salt," but was felt to be irritating by the greatest of the Plantagenets. The jingles on the King of France, against the Scots in the time of James I., against the Tory, or Irish rapparee, and about the Gunpowder Plot, are of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The Great Rebellion supplies “Hector Protector” and “The Parliament soldiers are gone to the king;” “Over the water and over the sea” (or lee) is a parody of a Jacobite ditty of 1748, and refers genially to that love of ale and wine which Prince Charles displayed as early as he showed military courage, at the age of fourteen, when he distinguished himself at the siege of Gaeta. His grandfather, James II., lives in “The rhyme for porringer;” his father in “Jim and George were two great lords.” Tout finit par des chansons.

Of non-historical jingles, Mr. Halliwell found traces in MSS. as old as the fifteenth century. But it would be a very rare accident that led to their being written down when nobody dreamed of studying Folk-Lore with solemnity. “Thirty days hath September” occurs in the “Return from Parnassus,” of Shakspeare’s date, and a few snatches, like “When I was a little boy,” occur in Shakspeare himself, just as a German version of “My Minnie me slew” comes in Goethe’s Faust. Indeed, the scraps of magical versified spells in Märchen are entirely of the character of nursery rhymes, and are of dateless antiquity. The rhyme of “Dr. Faustus” may be nearly as old as the mediæval legend dramatised by Marlowe. The Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists put nursery rhymes in the mouths of characters; a few jingles creep into the Miscellanies, such as “The Pills to purge Melancholy.” Among these (1719) is “Tom the piper’s son,” who played “Over the hills and far away,” a song often adapted to Jacobite uses. In 1719, when the Spanish plan of aid to James III. collapsed, pipers must have been melancholy enough.

Melismata (1611) already knows the “Frog who lived in a well,” and in Deuteromelia (1609) occurs the “Three blind mice.” On the Riddles, or Devinettes, chapters might be, and have been written. They go back to Samson’s time, at least, and are as widely distributed as proverbs, even among Wolufs and Fijians. The most recent discussion is in Mr. Max Müller’s “Contributions to the Science of Mythology” (1897). For using “charms,” like “Come, butter, come,” many an old woman was burned by the wisdom of our ancestors. Such versified charms, deducunt carmima lunam, are the karakias of the Maoris, and the mantras of Indian superstition. The magical papyri of ancient Egypt are full of them. In our own rhyme, “Hiccup,” regarded as a personal kind of fiend (“Animism”), is charmed away by a promise of a butter-cake. There is a collection of such things in Reginald Scot’s “Discovery of Witchcraft.” Thus our old nursery rhymes are smooth stones from the brook of time, worn round by constant friction of tongues long silent. We cannot hope to make new nursery rhymes, any more than we can write new fairy tales.

NEW COLLECTED RHYMES

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PREFACE

This poor little flutter of rhymes would not have been let down the wind: the project would have been abandoned but for the too flattering encouragement of a responsible friend. I trust that he may not “live to rue the day,” like Keith of Craigentolly in the ballad.

The “Loyal Lyrics” on Charles and James and the White Rose must not be understood as implying a rebellious desire for the subversion of the present illustrious dynasty.

“These are but symbols that I sing,
These names of Prince, and rose, and King;
Types of things dear that do not die,
But reign in loyal memory.
ACROSS THE WATER surely they
Abide their twenty-ninth of May;
And we shall hail their happy reign,
When Life comes to his own again,” -

over the water that divides us from the voices and faces of our desires and dreams.

Of the ballads, The Young Ruthven and The Queen of Spain were written in competition with the street minstrels of the close of the sixteenth century. The legend on which The Young Ruthven is based is well known; The Queen of Spain is the story of the Florencia, a ship of the Spanish Armada, wrecked in Tobermory Bay, as it was told to me by a mariner in the Sound of Mull. In Keith of Craigentolly the family and territorial names of the hero or villain are purposely altered, so as to avoid injuring susceptibilities and arousing unavailing regrets.

IN AUGUSTINUM DOBSON — JAM RUDE DONATUM

Dear Poet, now turned out to grass
(Like him who reigned in Babylon),
Forget the seasons overlaid
By business and the Board of Trade:
And sing of old-world lad and lass
As in the summers that are gone.

Back to the golden prime of Anne!
When you ambassador had been,
And brought o’er sea the King again,
Beatrix Esmond in his train,
Ah, happy bard to hold her fan,
And happy land with such a Queen!

We live too early, or too late,
You should have shared the pint of Pope,
And taught, well pleased, the shining shell
To murmur of the fair Lepel,
And changed the stars of St. John’s fate
To some more happy horoscope.

By duchesses with roses crowned,
And fed with chicken and champagne,
Urbane and witty, and too wary
To risk the feud of Lady Mary,
You should have walked the courtly ground
Of times that cannot come again.

Bring back these years in verse or prose,

(I very much prefer your verse!)
As on some Twenty-Ninth of May
Restore the splendour and the sway,
Forget the sins, the wars, the woes -
The joys alone must you rehearse.

Forget the dunces (there is none
So stupid as to snarl at YOU);
So may your years with pen and book
Run pleasant as an English brook
Through meadows floral in the sun,
And shadows fragrant of the dew.

And thus at ending of your span -
As all must end — the world shall say,
“His best he gave: he left us not
A line that saints could wish to blot,
For he was blameless, though a man,
And though the poet, he was gay!”

HOW THE MAID MARCHED FROM BLOIS

(Supposed to be narrated by James Power, or Polwarth, her Scottish banner-painter.)

The Maiden called for her great destrier,
But he lashed like a fiend when the Maid drew near:
“Lead him forth to the Cross!” she cried, and he stood
Like a steed of bronze by the Holy Rood!

Then I saw the Maiden mount and ride,
With a good steel sperthe that swung by her side,
And girt with the sword of the Heavenly Bride,
That is sained with crosses five for a sign,
The mystical sword of St. Catherine.
And the lily banner was blowing wide,
With the flowers of France on the field of fame
And, blent with the blossoms, the Holy Name!
And the Maiden’s blazon was shown on a shield,
ARGENT, A DOVE, ON AN AZURE FIELD;
That banner was wrought by this hand, ye see,
For the love of the Maid and chivalry.

Her banner was borne by a page of grace,
With hair of gold, and a lady’s face;
And behind it the ranks of her men were dressed -
Never a man but was clean confessed,
Jackman and archer, lord and knight,
Their souls were clean and their hearts were light:
There was never an oath, there was never a laugh,
And La Hire swore soft by his leading staff!
Had we died in that hour we had won the skies,
And the Maiden had marched us through Paradise!

A moment she turned to the people there,
Who had come to gaze on the Maiden fair;
A moment she glanced at the ring she wore,
She murmured the Holy Name it bore,
Then, “For France and the King, good people pray!”
She spoke, and she cried to us, “ON AND AWAY!”
And the shouts broke forth, and the flowers rained down,
And the Maiden led us to Orleans town.

LONE PLACES OF THE DEER

Lone places of the deer,
Corrie, and Loch, and Ben,
Fount that wells in the cave,
Voice of the burn and the wave,
Softly you sing and clear
Of Charlie and his men!

Here has he lurked, and here
The heather has been his bed,
The wastes of the islands knew
And the Highland hearts were true
To the bonny, the brave, the dear,
The royal, the hunted head.

AN OLD SONG — 1750

Oh, it's hame, hame, hame,
And it's hame I wadna be,
Till the Lord calls King James
To his ain countrie,
Bids the wind blaw frae France,
Till the Firth keps the faem,
And Loch Garry and Lochiel
Bring Prince Charlie hame.

May the lads Prince Charlie led
That were hard on Willie's track,
When frae Laffen field he fled,
Wi' the claymore at his back,
May they stand on Scottish soil
When the White Rose bears the gree,
And the Lord calls the King
To his ain countrie!

Bid the seas arise and stand
Like walls on ilka side,
Till our Highland lad pass through
With Jehovah for his guide.
Dry up the River Forth,
As Thou didst the Red Sea,
When Israel cam hame
To his ain countrie. {1}

JACOBITE “AULD LANG SYNE.” — LOCHIEL’S REGIMENT, 1747

Though now we take King Lewie’s fee
And drink King Lewie’s wine,
We’ll bring the King frae ower the sea,
As in auld lang syne.

For, he that did proud Pharaoh crush,
And save auld Jacob’s line,
Will speak to Charlie in the Bush,
Like Moses, lang syne.

For oft we’ve garred the red coats run,
Frae Garry to the Rhine,
Frae Bauge brig to Falkirk moor,
No that lang syne.

The Duke may with the Devil drink,
And wi’ the deil may dine,
But Charlie’s dine in Holyrood,
As in auld lang syne.

For he who did proud Pharaoh crush,
To save auld Jacob’s line,
Shall speak to Charlie in the Bush,
Like Moses, lang syne.

THE PRINCE'S BIRTHDAY — ROME, 31ST DECEMBER, 1721

(A new-born star shone, which is figured on an early Medal of Prince Charles.)

A wonderful star shone forth
From the frozen skies of the North
Upon Rome, for an Old Year's night:
And a flower on the dear white Rose
Broke, in the season of snows,
To bloom for a day's delight.

Lost is the star in the night,
And the Rose of a day's delight
Fled "where the roses go":
But the fragrance and light from afar,
Born of the Rose and the Star,
Breathe o'er the years and the snow.

THE TENTH OF JUNE, 1715

(Being a Song writ for a lady born on June 10th, the birthday of his Most Sacred Majesty King James III. and VIII.)

Day of the King and the flower!
And the girl of my heart’s delight,
The blackbird sings in the bower,
And the nightingale sings in the night
A song to the roses white.

Day of the flower and the King!
When shall the sails of white
Shine on the seas and bring
In the day, in the dawn, in the night,
The King to his land and his right?

Day of my love and my may,
After the long years’ flight,
Born on the King’s birthday,
Born for my heart’s delight,
With the dawn of the roses white!

Black as the blackbird’s wing
Is her hair, and her brow as white
As the white rose blossoming,
And her eyes as the falcon’s bright
And her heart is leal to the right.

When shall the joy bells ring?
When shall the hours unite
The right with the might of my King,
And my heart with my heart’s delight;

In the dawn, in the day, in the night?

WHITE ROSE DAY — JUNE 10, 1688

’Twas a day of faith and flowers,
Of honour that could not die,
Of Hope that counted the hours,
Of sorrowing Loyalty:
And the Blackbird sang in the closes,
The Blackbird piped in the spring,
For the day of the dawn of the Roses,
The dawn of the day of the King!

White roses over the heather,
And down by the Lowland lea,
And far in the faint blue weather,
A white sail guessed on the sea!
But the deep night gathers and closes,
Shall ever a morning bring
The lord of the leal white roses,
The face of the rightful King?

RED AND WHITE ROSES

Red roses under the sun
For the King who is lord of land;
But he dies when his day is done,
For his memory careth none
When the glass runs empty of sand.

White roses under the moon
For the King without lands to give;
But he reigns with the reign of June,
With the rose and the Blackbird's tune,
And he lives while Faith shall live.

Red roses for beef and beer;
Red roses for wine and gold;
But they drank of the water clear,
In exile and sorry cheer,
To the kings of our sires of old.

Red roses for wealth and might;
White roses for hopes that flee;
And the dreams of the day and the night,
For the Lord of our heart's delight -
For the King that is o'er the sea.

THE BONNIE BANKS O’ LOCH LOMOND — 1746

There’s an ending o’ the dance, and fair Morag’s safe in France,
And the Clans they hae paid the lawing,
And the wuddy has her ain, and we twa are left alane,
Free o’ Carlisle gaol in the dawing.

So ye’ll tak the high road, and I’ll tak the laigh road,
An’ I’ll be in Scotland before ye:
But me and my true love will never meet again,
By the bonnie, bonnie banks o’ Loch Lomond.

For my love’s heart brake in twa, when she kenned the Cause’s fa’,
And she sleeps where there’s never nane shall waken,
Where the glen lies a’ in wrack, wi’ the houses toom and black,
And her father’s ha’s forsaken.

While there’s heather on the hill shall my vengeance ne’er be still,
While a bush hides the glint o’ a gun, lad;
Wi’ the men o’ Sergeant Mor shall I work to pay the score,
Till I wither on the wuddy in the sun, lad!

So ye’ll tak the high road, and I’ll tak the laigh road,
An’ I’ll be in Scotland before ye:
But me and my true love will never meet again,
By the bonnie, bonnie banks o’ Loch Lomond.

KENMURE — 1715

“The heather’s in a blaze, Willie,
The White Rose decks the tree,
The Fiery Cross is on the braes,
And the King is on the sea!

“Remember great Montrose, Willie,
Remember fair Dundee,
And strike one stroke at the foreign foes
Of the King that’s on the sea.

“There’s Gordons in the North, Willie,
Are rising frank and free,
Shall a Kenmure Gordon not go forth
For the King that’s on the sea?

“A trusty sword to draw, Willie,
A comely weird to dree,
For the Royal Rose that’s like the snaw,
And the King that’s on the sea!”

He cast ae look across his lands,
Looked over loch and lea,
He took his fortune in his hands,
For the King was on the sea.

Kenmures have fought in Galloway
For Kirk and Presbyt’rie,
This Kenmure faced his dying day,
For King James across the sea.

It little skills what faith men vaunt,
If loyal men they be
To Christ’s ain Kirk and Covenant,
Or the King that’s o’er the sea.

CULLODEN

Dark, dark was the day when we looked on Culloden
And chill was the mist drop that clung to the tree,
The oats of the harvest hung heavy and sodden,
No light on the land and no wind on the sea.

There was wind, there was rain, there was fire on their faces,
When the clans broke the bayonets and died on the guns,
And ’tis Honour that watches the desolate places
Where they sleep through the change of the snows and the suns.

Unfed and unmarshalled, outworn and outnumbered,
All hopeless and fearless, as fiercely they fought,
As when Falkirk with heaps of the fallen was cumbered,
As when Gledsmuir was red with the havoc they wrought.

Ah, woe worth you, Sleat, and the faith that you vowed,
Ah, woe worth you, Lovat, Traquair, and Mackay;
And woe on the false fairy flag of Macleod,
And the fat squires who drank, but who dared not to die!

Where the graves of Clan Chattan are clustered together,
Where Macgillavray died by the Well of the Dead,
We stooped to the moorland and plucked the pale heather
That blooms where the hope of the Stuart was sped.

And a whisper awoke on the wilderness, sighing,
Like the voice of the heroes who battled in vain,
“Not for Tearlach alone the red claymore was plying,
But to bring back the old life that comes not again.”

THE LAST OF THE LEAL — DECEMBER 31, 1787

Here’s a health to every man
Bore the brunt of wind and weather;
Winnowed sore by Fortune’s fan,
Faded faith of chief and clan:
Nairne and Caryl stand together;
Here’s a health to every man
Bore the brunt of wind and weather!

Oh, round Charlie many ran,
When his foot was on the heather,
When his sword shone in the van.
Now at ending of his span,
Gask and Caryl stand together!

Ne’er a hope from plot or plan,
Ne’er a hope from rose or heather;
Ay, the King’s a broken man;
Few will bless, and most will ban.
Nairne and Caryl stand together!

Help is none from Crown or clan,
France is false, a fluttered feather;
But Kings are not made by man,
Till God end what God began,
Nairne and Caryl stand together,
Gask and Caryl stand together;
Here’s a health to every man
Bore the brunt of wind and weather!

JEANNE d’ARC

The honour of a loyal boy,
The courage of a paladin,
With maiden's mirth, the soul of joy,
These dwelt her happy breast within.
From shame, from doubt, from fear, from sin,
As God's own angels was she free;
Old worlds shall end, and new begin
To be

Ere any come like her who fought
For France, for freedom, for the King;
Who counsel of redemption brought
Whence even the armed Archangel's wing
Might weary sore in voyaging;
Who heard her Voices cry "Be free!"
Such Maid no later human spring
Shall see!

Saints Michael, Catherine, Margaret,
Who sowed the seed that Thou must reap,
If eyes of angels may be wet,
And if the Saints have leave to weep,
In Paradise one pain they keep,
Maiden! one mortal memory,
One sorrow that can never sleep,
For Thee!

TO HELEN

(After seeing her bowl with her usual success.)

ST. LEONARD’S HALL

Helen, thy bowling is to me
Like that wise Alfred Shaw’s of yore,
Which gently broke the wickets three:
From Alfred few could smack a four:
Most difficult to score!

The music of the moaning sea,
The rattle of the flying bails,
The grey sad spires, the tawny sails -
What memories they bring to me,
Beholding thee!

Upon our old monastic pitch,
How sportsmanlike I see thee stand!
The leather in thy lily hand,
Oh, Helen of the yorkers, which
Are nobly planned!

BALLADE OF DEAD CRICKETERS

Ah, where be Beldham now, and Brett,
Barker, and Hogsflesh, where be they?
Brett, of all bowlers fleetest yet
That drove the bails in disarray?
And Small that would, like Orpheus, play
Till wild bulls followed his minstrelsy? {2}
Booker, and Quiddington, and May?
Beneath the daisies, there they lie!

And where is Lambert, that would get
The stumps with balls that broke astray?
And Mann, whose balls would ricochet
In almost an unholy way
(So do baseballers “pitch” to-day)
George Lear, that seldom let a bye,
And Richard Nyren, grave and gray?
Beneath the daisies, there they lie!

Tom Sueter, too, the ladies’ pet,
Brown that would bravest hearts affray;
Walker, invincible when set,
(Tom, of the spider limbs and splay);
Think ye that we could match them, pray,
These heroes of Broad-halfpenny,
With Buck to hit, and Small to stay?
Beneath the daisies, there they lie!

ENVOY.

Prince, canst thou moralise the lay?
How all things change below the sky!

Of Fry and Grace shall mortals say,
“Beneath the daisies, there they lie!”

BRAHMA — AFTER EMERSON

If the wild bowler thinks he bowls,
Or if the batsman thinks he’s bowled,
They know not, poor misguided souls,
They too shall perish unconsoled.
I am the batsman and the bat,
I am the bowler and the ball,
The umpire, the pavilion cat,
The roller, pitch, and stumps, and all.

GAINSBOROUGH GHOSTS — IN THE GROSVENOR GALLERY

They smile upon the western wall,
The lips that laughed an age agone,
The fops, the dukes, the beauties all,
Le Brun that sang, and Carr that shone.
We gaze with idle eyes: we con
The faces of an elder time -
Alas! and OURS is flitting on;
Oh, moral for an empty rhyme!

Think, when the tumult and the crowd
Have left the solemn rooms and chill,
When dilettanti are not loud,
When lady critics are not shrill -
Ah, think how strange upon the still
Dim air may sound these voices faint;
Once more may Johnson talk his fill
And fair Dalrymple charm the Saint!

Of us they speak as we of them,
Like us, perchance, they criticise:
Our wit, they vote, is Brummagem;
Our beauty — dim to Devon’s eyes!
Their silks and lace our cloth despise,
Their pumps — our boots that pad the mud,
What modern fop with Walpole vies?
With St. Leger what modern blood?

Ah, true, we lack the charm, the wit,
Our very greatest, sure, are small;
And Mr. Gladstone is not Pitt,

And Garrick comes not when we call.
Yet — pass an age — and, after all,
Even WE may please the folk that look
When we are faces on the wall,
And voices in a history book!

In Art the statesman yet shall live,
With collars keen, with Roman nose;
To Beauty yet shall Millais give
The roses that outlast the rose:
The lords of verse, the slaves of prose,
On canvas yet shall seem alive,
And charm the mob that comes and goes,
And lives — in 1985.

A REMONSTRANCE WITH THE FAIR

There are thoughts that the mind cannot fathom,
The mind of the animal male;
But woman abundantly hath ‘em,
And mostly her notions prevail.
And why ladies read what they DO read
Is a thing that no man may explain,
And if any one asks for a true rede
He asketh in vain.

Ah, why is each “passing depression”
Of stories that gloomily bore
Received as the subtle expression
Of almost unspeakable lore?
In the dreary, the sickly, the grimy
Say, why do our women delight,
And wherefore so constantly ply me
With Ships in the Night?

Dear ladies, in vain you approach us,
With books to your taste in your hands;
For, alas! though you offer to coach us,
Yet the soul of no man understands
Why the grubby is always the moral,
Why the nasty’s preferred to the nice,
While you keep up a secular quarrel
With a gay little Vice;

Yes, a Vice with her lips full of laughter,
A Vice with a rose in her hair,
You condemn in the present and after,
To darkness of utter despair:
But a sin, if no rapture redeem it,
But a passion that’s pale and played out,

Or in surgical hands — you esteem it
Worth scribbling about!

What is sauce for the goose, for the gander
Is sauce, ye inconsequent fair!
It is better to laugh than to maunder,
And better is mirth than despair;
And though Life’s not all beer and all skittles,
Yet the Sun, on occasion, can shine,
And, mon Dieu! he’s a fool who belittles
This cosmos of Thine!

There are cakes, there is ale — ay, and ginger
Shall be hot in the mouth, as of old:
And a villain, with cloak and with whinger,
And a hero, in armour of gold,
And a maid with a face like a lily,
With a heart that is stainless and gay,
Make a tale worth a world of the silly
Sad trash of to-day!

RHYME OF RHYMES

Wild on the mountain peak the wind
Repeats its old refrain,
Like ghosts of mortals who have sinned,
And fain would sin again.

For “wind” I do not rhyme to “mind,”
Like many mortal men,
“Again” (when one reflects) ‘twere kind
To rhyme as if “agen.”

I never met a single soul
Who SPOKE of “wind” as “wined,”
And yet we use it, on the whole,
To rhyme to “find” and “blind.”

We SAY, “Now don’t do that AGEN,”
When people give us pain;
In poetry, nine times in ten,
It rhymes to “Spain” or “Dane.”

Oh, which are wrong or which are right?
Oh, which are right or wrong?
The sounds in prose familiar, quite,
Or those we meet in song?

To hold that “love” can rhyme to “prove”
Requires some force of will,
Yet in the ancient lyric groove
We meet them rhyming still.

This was our learned fathers’ wont
In prehistoric times,
We follow it, or if we don’t,
We oft run short of rhymes.

RHYME OF OXFORD COCKNEY RHYMES — (EXHIBITED IN THE OXFORD MAGAZINE)

Though Keats rhymed “ear” to “Cytherea,”
And Morris “dawn” to “morn,”
A worse example, it is clear,
By Oxford Dons is “shorn.”
G-y, of Magdalen, goes beyond
These puny Cockneys far,
And to “Magrath” rhymes — Muse despond! -
“Magrath” he rhymes to “star”!

Another poet, X. Y. Z.,
Employs the word “researcher,”
And then, — his blood be on his head, -
He makes it rhyme to “nurture.”
Ah, never was the English tongue
So flayed, and racked, and tortured,
Since one I love (who should be hung)
Made “tortured” rhyme to “orchard.”

Unkindly G-y’s raging pen
Next craves a rhyme to “sooner;”
Rejecting “Spooner,” (best of men,)
He fastens on LACUNA(R).
Nay, worse, in his infatuate mind
He ends a line “explainer,”
Nor any rhyme can G-y find
Until he reaches Jena(r).

Yes, G-y shines the worst of all,
He needs to rhyme “embargo;”
The man had “Margot” at his call,
He had the good ship ARGO;

Largo he had; yet doth he seek
Further, and no embargo
Restrains him from the odious, weak,
And Cockney rhyme, “Chicago”!

Ye Oxford Dons that Cockneys be,
Among your gardens tidy,
If you would ask a maid to tea,
D’ye call the girl “a lydy”?
And if you’d sing of Mr. Fry,
And need a rhyme to “swiper,”
Are you so cruel as to try
To fill the blank with “paper”?

Oh, Hoxford was a pleasant plice
To many a poet dear,
And Saccharissa had the grice
In Hoxford to appear.
But Waller, if to Cytherea
He prayed at any time,
Did not implore “her friendly ear,”
And think he had a rhyme.

Now, if you ask to what are due
The horrors which I mention,
I think we owe them to the U-
Niversity extension.
From Hoxton and from Poplar come
The ‘Arriets and ‘Arries,
And so the Oxford Muse is dumb,
Or, when she sings, miscarries.

ROCOCO

(“My name is also named ‘Played Out.’”)

When first we heard Rossetti sing,
We twanged the melancholy lyre,
We sang like this, like anything,
When first we heard Rossetti sing.
And all our song was faded Spring,
And dead delight and dark desire,
When first we heard Rossetti sing,
We twanged the melancholy lyre.

(And this is how we twanged it) -

THE NEW ORPHEUS TO HIS EURYDICE

Why wilt thou woo, ah, strange Eurydice,
A languid laurell’d Orpheus in the shades,
For here is company of shadowy maids,
Hero, and Helen and Psamathoe:

And life is like the blossom on the tree,
And never tumult of the world invades,
The low light wanes and waxes, flowers and fades,
And sleep is sweet, and dreams suffice for me;

“Go back, and seek the sunlight,” as of old,
The wise ghost-mother of Odysseus said,
Here am I half content, and scarce a-cold,
But one light fits the living, one the dead;
Good-bye, be glad, forget! thou canst not hold
In thy kind arms, alas! this powerless head.

When first we heard Rossetti sing,
We also wrote this kind of thing!

THE FOOD OF FICTION

To breakfast, dinner, or to lunch
My steps are languid, once so speedy;
E’en though, like the old gent in PUNCH,
“Not hungry, but, thank goodness! greedy.”
I gaze upon the well-spread board,
And have to own — oh, contradiction!
Though every dainty it afford,
There’s nothing like the food of fiction.

“The better half” — how good the sound!
Of Scott’s or Ainsworth’s “venison pasty,”
In cups of old Canary drowned,
(Which probably was very nasty).
The beefsteak pudding made by Ruth
To cheer Tom Pinch in his affliction,
Ah me, in all the world of truth,
There’s nothing like the food of fiction!

The cakes and ham and buttered toast
That graced the board of Gabriel Varden,
In Bracebridge Hall the Christmas roast,
Fruits from the Goblin Market Garden.
And if you’d eat of luscious sweets
And yet escape from gout’s infliction,
Just read “St. Agnes’ Eve” by Keats -
There’s nothing like the food of fiction.

What cups of tea were ever brewed
Like Sairey Gamp’s — the dear old sinner?
What savoury mess was ever stewed
Like that for Short’s and Codlin’s dinner?
What was the flavour of that “poy” -

To use the Fotheringay’s own diction -
Pendennis ate, the love-sick boy?
There’s nothing like the food of fiction.

Prince, you are young — but you will find
After life’s years of fret and friction,
That hunger wanes — but never mind!
There’s nothing like the food of fiction.

A HIGHLY VALUABLE CHAIN OF THOUGHTS

Had cigarettes no ashes,
And roses ne’er a thorn,
No man would be a funker
Of whin, or burn, or bunker.
There were no need for mashies,
The turf would ne’er be torn,
Had cigarettes no ashes,
And roses ne’er a thorn.

Had cigarettes no ashes,
And roses ne’er a thorn,
The big trout would not ever
Escape into the river.
No gut the salmon smashes
Would leave us all forlorn,
Had cigarettes no ashes,
And roses ne’er a thorn.

But ’tis an unideal,
Sad world in which we’re born,
And things will “go contrairy”
With Martin and with Mary:
And every day the real
Comes bleakly in with morn,
And cigarettes have ashes,
And every rose a thorn.

MATRIMONY

(Matrimony — Advertiser would like to hear from well-educated Protestant lady, under thirty, fair, with view to above, who would have no objection to work Remington type-writer, at home. Enclose photo. T. 99. This Office. Cork newspaper.)

T. 99 would gladly hear
From one whose years are few,
A maid whose doctrines are severe,
Of Presbyterian blue,
Also — with view to the above -
Her photo he would see,
And trusts that she may live and love
His Protestant to be!
But ere the sacred rites are done
(And by no Priest of Rome)
He'd ask, if she a Remington
Type-writer works — at home?

If she have no objections to
This task, and if her hair -
In keeping with her eyes of blue -
Be delicately fair,
Ah, THEN, let her a photo send
Of all her charms divine,
To him who rests her faithful friend,
Her own T. 99.

PISCATORI PISCATOR — IN MEMORY OF THOMAS TOD STODDART

An angler to an angler here,
To one who longed not for the bays,
I bring a little gift and dear,
A line of love, a word of praise,
A common memory of the ways,
By Elibank and Yair that lead;
Of all the burns, from all the braes,
That yield their tribute to the Tweed.

His boyhood found the waters clean,
His age deplored them, foul with dye;
But purple hills, and copses green,
And these old towers he wandered by,
Still to the simple strains reply
Of his pure unrepining reed,
Who lies where he was fain to lie,
Like Scott, within the sound of Tweed.

THE CONTENTED ANGLER

The Angler hath a jolly life
Who by the rail runs down,
And leaves his business and his wife,
And all the din of town.
The wind down stream is blowing straight,
And nowhere cast can he:
Then lo, he doth but sit and wait
In kindly company.

The miller turns the water off,
Or folk be cutting weed,
While he doth at misfortune scoff,
From every trouble freed.
Or else he waiteth for a rise,
And ne’er a rise may see;
For why, there are not any flies
To bear him company.

Or, if he mark a rising trout,
He straightway is caught up,
And then he takes his flasket out,
And drinks a rousing cup.
Or if a trout he chance to hook,
Weeded and broke is he,
And then he finds a godly book
Instructive company.

OFF MY GAME

“I’m of my game,” the golfer said,
And shook his locks in woe;
“My putter never lays me dead,
My drives will never go;
Howe’er I swing, howe’er I stand,
Results are still the same,
I’m in the burn, I’m in the sand -
I’m off my game!

“Oh, would that such mishaps might fall
On Laidlay or Macfie,
That they might toe or heel the ball,
And sclaff along like me!
Men hurry from me in the street,
And execrate my name,
Old partners shun me when we meet -
I’m off my game!

“Why is it that I play at all?
Let memory remind me
How once I smote upon my ball,
And bunkered it — BEHIND ME.
I mostly slice into the whins,
And my excuse is lame -
It cannot cover half my sins -
I’m off my game!

“I hate the sight of all my set,
I grow morose as Byron;
I never loved a brassey yet,
And now I hate an iron.
My cleek seems merely made to top,

My putting’s wild or tame;
It’s really time for me to stop -
I’m off my game!”

THE PROPERTY OF A GENTLEMAN WHO HAS GIVEN UP COLLECTING

Oh blessed be the cart that takes
Away my books, my curse, my clog,
Blessed the auctioneer who makes
Their inefficient catalogue.

Blessed the purchasers who pay
However little — less were fit -
Blessed the rooms, the rainy day,
The knock-out and the end of it.

For I am weary of the sport,
That seemed a while agone so sweet,
Of Elzevirs an inch too short,
And First Editions — incomplete.

Weary of crests and coats of arms,
“Attributed to Padeloup”
The sham Deromes have lost their charms,
The things Le Gascon did not do.

I never read the catalogues
Of rubbish that come thick as rooks,
But most I loathe the dreary dogs
That write in prose, or worse, on books.

Large paper surely cannot hide
Their grammar, nor excuse their rhyme,
The anecdotes that they provide

Are older than the dawn of time.

Ye bores, of every shape and size,
Who make a tedium of delight,
Good-bye, the last of my good-byes.
Good night, to all your clan good night!

*

Thus in a sullen fit we swore,
But on mature reflection,
Went on collecting more and more,
And kept our old collection!

THE BALLADE OF THE SUBCONSCIOUS SELF

Who suddenly calls to our ken
The knowledge that should not be there;
Who charms Mr. Stead with the pen,
Of the Prince of the Powers of the Air;
Who makes Physiologists stare -
Is he ghost, is he demon, or elf,
Who fashions the dream of the fair?
It is just the Subconscious Self.

He’s the ally of Medicine Men
Who consult the Australian bear,
And ’tis he, with his lights on the fen,
Who helps Jack o’ Lanthorn to snare
The peasants of Devon, who swear
Under Commonwealth, Stuart, or Guelph,
That they never had half such a scare -
It is just the Subconscious Self.

It is he, from his cerebral den,
Who raps upon table and chair,
Who frightens the housemaid, and then
Slinks back, like a thief, to his lair:
’Tis the Brownie (according to Mair)
Who rattles the pots on the shelf,
But the Psychical sages declare
“It is just the Subconscious Self.”

Prince, each of us all is a pair -
The Conscious, who labours for pelf,
And the other, who charmed Mr. Blair,
It is just the Subconscious Self.

BALLADE OF THE OPTIMIST

Heed not the folk who sing or say
In sonnet sad or sermon chill,
“Alas, alack, and well-a-day,
This round world’s but a bitter pill.”
Poor porcupines of fretful quill!
Sometimes we quarrel with our lot:
We, too, are sad and careful; still
We’d rather be alive than not.

What though we wish the cats at play
Would some one else’s garden till;
Though Sophonisba drop the tray
And all our worshipped Worcester spill,
Though neighbours “practise” loud and shrill,
Though May be cold and June be hot,
Though April freeze and August grill,
We’d rather be alive than not.

And, sometimes on a summer’s day
To self and every mortal ill
We give the slip, we steal away,
To walk beside some sedgy rill:
The darkening years, the cares that kill,
A little while are well forgot;
When deep in broom upon the hill,
We’d rather be alive than not.

Pistol, with oaths didst thou fulfil
The task thy braggart tongue begot,
We eat our leek with better will,
We’d rather be alive than not.

ZIMBABWE

(The ruined Gold Cities of Rhodesia. The Ophir of Scripture.)

Into the darkness whence they came,
They passed, their country knoweth none,
They and their gods without a name
Partake the same oblivion.
Their work they did, their work is done,
Whose gold, it may be, shone like fire
About the brows of Solomon,
And in the House of God’s Desire.

Hence came the altar all of gold,
The hinges of the Holy Place,
The censer with the fragrance rolled
Skyward to seek Jehovah’s face;
The golden Ark that did encase
The Law within Jerusalem,
The lilies and the rings to grace
The High Priest’s robe and diadem.

The pestilence, the desert spear,
Smote them; they passed, with none to tell
The names of them who laboured here:
Stark walls and crumbling crucible,
Strait gates, and graves, and ruined well,
Abide, dumb monuments of old,
We know but that men fought and fell,
Like us, like us, for love of Gold.

LOVE’S CRYPTOGRAM

[The author (if he can be so styled) awoke from a restless sleep, with the first stanza of the following piece in his mind. He has no memory of composing it, either awake or asleep. He had long known the perhaps Pythagorean fable of the bean-juice, but certainly never thought of applying it to an amorous correspondence! The remaining verses are the contribution of his Conscious Self!]

ELLE.

I cannot write, I may not write,
I dare not write to thee,
But look on the face of the moon by night,
And my letters shalt thou see.
For every letter that lovers write,
By their loves on the moon is seen,
If they pen their thought on the paper white,
With the magic juice of the bean!

LUI.

Oh, I had written this many a year,
And my letters you had read.
Had you only told me the spell, my dear,
Ere ever we twain were wed!
But I have a lady and you have a lord,
And their eyes are of the green,
And we dared not trust to the written word,
Lest our long, long love be seen!

ELLE.

“Oh, every thought that your heart has thought,
Since the world came us between,
The birds of the air to my heart have brought,
With no word heard or seen.”
’Twas thus in a dream we spoke and said
Myself and my love unseen,
But I woke and sighed on my weary bed,
For the spell of the juice of the bean!

TUSITALA

We spoke of a rest in a fairy knowe of the North, but he,
Far from the firths of the East, and the racing tides of the West,
Sleeps in the sight and the sound of the infinite Southern Sea,
Weary and well content in his grave on the Vaea crest.

Tusitala, the lover of children, the teller of tales,
Giver of counsel and dreams, a wonder, a world’s delight,
Looks o’er the labours of men in the plain and the hill; and the sails
Pass and repass on the sea that he loved, in the day and the night.

Winds of the West and the East in the rainy season blow
Heavy with perfume, and all his fragrant woods are wet,
Winds of the East and West as they wander to and fro,
Bear him the love of the land he loved, and the long regret.

Once we were kindest, he said, when leagues of the limitless sea
Flowed between us, but now that no wash of the wandering tides
Sunders us each from each, yet nearer we seem to be,
Whom only the unbridged stream of the river of Death divides.

DISDAINFUL DIAPHENIA

There is no venom in the Rose
That any bee should shrink from it;
No poison from the Lily flows,
She hath not a disdainful wit;
But thou, that Rose and Lily art,
Thy tongue doth poison Cupid’s dart!

Nature herself to deadly flowers
Refuseth beauty lest the vain
Insects that hum through August hours
With beauty should suck in their bane;
But thou, as Rose or Lily fair,
Art circled with envenomed air!

Like Progne didst thou lose thy tongue,
Thy lovers might adore and live;
Like that witch Circe, oft besung,
Thou hast dear gifts, if thou wouldst give;
But since thou hast a wicked wit,
Thy lovers fade, or flee from it.

TALL SALMACIS

Were an apple tree a pine,
Tall and slim, and softly swaying,
Then her beauty were like thine,
Salmacis, when boune a Maying,
Tall as any poplar tree,
Sweet as apple blossoms be!

Had the Amazonian Queen
Seen thee ‘midst thy maiden peers,
Thou the Coronel hadst been
Of that lady’s Grenadiers;
Troy had never mourned her fall,
With thine axe to guard her wall.

As Penthesilea brave
Is the maiden (in her dreams);
Ilium she well might save,
Though Achilles’ armour gleams,
‘Midst the Greeks; all vain it is,
‘Gainst the glance of Salmacis!

WHAT FRANCESCO SAID OF THE JUBILEE — BY R. B.

What if we call it fifty years! ’Tis steep!
To climb so high a gradient? Prate of Guides?
Are we not roped? The Danger? Nay, the Turf,
No less nor more than mountain peaks, my friend,
Hears talk of Roping, — but the Jubilee!
Nay, there you have me: old Francesco once
(This was in Milan, in Visconti’s time,
Our wild Visconti, with one lip askance,
And beard tongue-twisted in the nostril’s nook)
Parlous enough, — these times — what? “So are ours”?
Or any times, i’fegs, to him who thinks, -
Well ’twas in Spring “the frolic myrtle trees
There gendered the grave olive stocks,” — you cry
“A miracle!” — Sordello writeth thus, -
Believe me that indeed ’twas thus, and he,
Francesco, you are with me? Well, there’s gloom
No less than gladness in your fifty years,
“And so,” said he, “to supper as we may.”
“Voltairean?” So you take it; but ’tis late,
And dinner seven, sharp, at Primrose Hill.

THE POET AND THE JUBILEE

POSCIMUR! BY A. D.

A Birthday Ode for MEG or NAN,
A Rhyme for Lady FLORA's Fan,
A Verse on Smut, who's gone astray,
These Things are in the Poet's way;
At Home with praise of JULIA's Lace,
Or DELIA's Ankles, ROSE's Face,
But "Something overparted" He,
When asked to rhyme the jubilee!

He therefore turns, the Poet wary,
And Thumbs his Carmen Seculare,
To PHOEBUS and to DIAN prays,
Who tune Men's Lyres of Holidays,
He reads of the Sibylline Shades,
Of Stainless Boys and chosen Maids.
He turns, and reads the other Page,
Of docile Youth, and placid Age,
Then Sings how, in this golden Year
Fides Pudorque reappear, -
And if they don't appear, you know it
Were quite unjust to blame the Poet!

ON ANY BEACH — BY M. A.

Yes, in the stream and stress of things,
That breaks around us like the sea,
There comes to Peasants and to Kings,
The solemn Hour of Jubilee.
If they, till strenuous Nature give
Some fifty harvests, chance to live!

Ah, Fifty harvests! But the corn
Is grown beside the barren main,
Is salt with sea-spray, blown and borne
Across the green unvintaged plain.
And life, lived out for fifty years,
Is briny with the spray of tears!

Ah, such is Life, to us that live
Here, in the twilight of the Gods,
Who weigh each gift the world can give,
And sigh and murmur, What’s the odds
So long’s you’re happy? Nay, what Man
Finds Happiness since Time began?

ODE OF JUBILEE — BY A. C. S.

Me, that have sung and shrieked, and foamed in praise of Freedom,
ME do you ask to sing
Parochial pomps, and waste, the wail of Jubileedom
For Queen, or Prince, or King!

*

Nay, by the foam that fleeting oars have feathered,
In Grecian seas;
Nay, by the winds that barques Athenian weathered -
By all of these
I bid you each be mute, Bards tamed and tethered,
And fee'd with fees!

For you the laurel smirched, for you the gold, too,
Of Magazines;
For me the Spirit of Song, unbought, unsold to
Pale Priests or Queens!

For you the gleam of gain, the fluttering cheque
Of Mr. Knowles,
For me, to soar above the ruins and wreck
Of Snobs and "Souls"!

When aflush with the dew of the dawn, and the
Rose of the Mystical Vision,
The spirit and soul of the Men of the
Future shall rise and be free,
They shall hail me with hymning and harping,
With eloquent Art and Elysian, -
The Singer who sung not but spurned them,

The slaves that could sing “Jubilee;”
With pinchbeck lyre and tongue,
Praising their tyrant sung,
They shall fail and shall fade in derision,
As wind on the ways of the sea!

JUBILEE BEFORE REVOLUTION — BY W. M.

“Tell me, O Muse of the Shifty, the Man who wandered afar,”
So have I chanted of late, and of Troy burg wasted of war -
Now of the sorrows of Menfolk that fifty years have been,
Now of the Grace of the Commune I sing, and the days of a Queen!
Surely I curse rich Menfolk, “the Wights of the Whirlwind” may they -
This is my style of translating [Greek text], — snatch them away!
The Rich Thieves rolling in wealth that make profit of labouring men,
Surely the Wights of the Whirlwind shall swallow them quick in their den!
O baneful, O wit-straying, in the Burg of London ye dwell,
And ever of Profits and three per cent. are the tales ye tell,
But the stark, strong Polyphemus shall answer you back again,
Him whom “No man slayeth by guile and not by main.”
(By “main” I mean “main force,” if aught at all do I mean.
In the Greek of the blindfold Bard it is simpler the sense to glean.)
You Polyphemus shall swallow and fill his mighty maw,
What time he maketh an end of the Priests, the Police, and the Law,
And then, ah, who shall purchase the poems of old that I sang,
Who shall pay twelve-and-six for an epic in Saga slang?
But perchance even “Hermes the Flitter” could scarcely expound what I mean,
And I trow that another were fitter to sing you a song for a Queen.

FRENCH PEASANT SONGS

I.

Oh, fair apple tree, and oh, fair apple tree,
As heavy and sweet as the blossoms on thee,
My heart is heavy with love.
It wanteth but a little wind
To make the blossoms fall;
It wanteth but a young lover
To win me heart and all.

II.

I send my love letters
By larks on the wing;
My love sends me letters
When nightingales sing.

Without reading or writing,
Their burden we know:
They only say, “Love me,
Who love you so.”

III.

And if they ask for me, brother,
Say I come never home,
For I have taken a strange wife
Beyond the salt sea foam.

The green grass is my bridal bed,
The black tomb my good mother,
The stones and dust within the grave
Are my sister and my brother.

THE YOUNG RUTHVEN

The King has gi’en the Queen a gift,
For her May-day’s propine,
He’s gi’en her a band o’ the diamond-stane,
Set in the siller fine.

The Queen she walked in Falkland yaird,
Beside the Hollans green,
And there she saw the bonniest man
That ever her eyes had seen.

His coat was the Ruthven white and red,
Sae sound asleep was he
The Queen she cried on May Beatrix,
That seely lad to see.

“Oh! wha sleeps here, May Beatrix,
Without the leave o’ me?”
“Oh! wha suld it be but my young brother
Frae Padua ower the sea!

“My father was the Earl Gowrie,
An Earl o’ high degree,
But they hae slain him by fause treason,
And gar’d my brothers flee.

“At Padua hae they learned their leir
In the fields o’ Italie;
And they hae crossed the saut sea-faem,
And a’ for love o’ me!”

*

The Queen has cuist her siller band
About his craig o’ snaw;
But still he slept and naething kenned,
Aneth the Hollans shaw.

The King he daundered thro’ the yaird,
He saw the siller shine;
“And wha,” quoth he, “is this galliard
That wears yon gift o’ mine?”

The King has gane till the Queen’s ain bower,
An angry man that day;
But bye there cam’ May Beatrix
And stole the band away.

And she’s run in by the dern black yett,
Straight till the Queen ran she:
“Oh! tak ye back your siller band,
Or it gar my brother dee!”

The Queen has linked her siller band
About her middle sma’;
And then she heard her ain gudeman
Come rowting through the ha’.

“Oh! whare,” he cried, “is the siller band
I gied ye late yestreen?
The knops was a’ o’ the diamond stane,
Set in the siller sheen.”

“Ye hae camped birling at the wine,
A’ nicht till the day did daw;
Or ye wad ken your siller band
About my middle sma’!”

The King he stude, the King he glowered,
Sae hard as a man micht stare.
“Deil hae me! Like is a richt ill mark, -
Or I saw it itherwhere!

“I saw it round young Ruthven’s neck
As he lay sleeping still;
And, faith, but the wine was wondrous guid,
Or my wife is wondrous ill!”

*

There was na gane a week, a week,
A week but barely three;
The King has hounded John Ramsay out,
To gar young Ruthven dee!

They took him in his brother’s house,
Nae sword was in his hand,
And they hae slain him, young Ruthven,
The bonniest in the land!

And they hae slain his fair brother,
And laid him on the green,
And a’ for a band o’ the siller fine
And a blink o’ the eye o’ the Queen!

Oh! had they set him man to man,
Or even ae man to three,
There was na a knight o’ the Ramsay bluid
Had gar’d Earl Gowrie dee!

THE QUEEN O’ SPAIN AND THE BAULD MCLEAN

A BALLAD OF THE SOUND OF MULL — 1588

The Queen o’ Spain had an ill gude-man.
The carle was auld and grey.
She has keeked in the glass at Hallow-een
A better chance to spae.

She’s kaimit out her lang black hair,
That fell below her knee.
She’s ta’en the apple in her hand,
To see what she might see.

Then first she saw her ain fair face,
And then the glass grew white,
And syne as black as the mouth o’ Hell
Or the sky on a winter night.

But last she saw the bonniest man
That ever her eyes had seen,
His hair was gold, and his eyes were grey,
And his plaid was red and green.

“Oh! the Spanish men are unco black
And unco blate,” she said;
“And they wear their mantles swart and side,
No the bonny green and red.”

“Oh! where shall I find sic a man?
That is the man for me!”

She has filled a ship wi’ the gude red gold,
And she has ta’en the sea.

And she’s sailed west and she’s sailed east,
And mony a man she’s seen;
But never the man wi’ the hair o’ gold,
And the plaid o’ red and green.

And she’s sailed east and she’s sailed west,
Till she cam’ to a narrow sea,
The water ran like a river in spate,
And the hills were wondrous hie.

And there she spied a bonny bay,
And houses on the strand,
And there the man in the green and red
Came rowing frae the land.

Says “Welcome here, ye bonny maid,
Ye’re welcome here for me.
Are ye the Lady o’ merry Elfland,
Or the Queen o’ some far countrie?”

“I am na the Lady o’ fair Elfland,
But I am the Queen o’ Spain.”
He’s lowted low, and kissed her hand,
Says “They ca’ me the McLean!”

“Then it’s a’ for the aefold love o’ thee
That I hae sailed the faem!”
“But, out and alas!” he has answered her,
“For I hae a wife at hame.”

“Ye maun cast her into a massymore,
Or away on a tide-swept isle;”

"But, out and alas!" he's answered her,
"For my wife's o' the bluid o' Argyll!"

Oh! they twa sat, and they twa grat,
And made their weary maen,
Till McLean has ridden to Dowart Castle,
And left the Queen her lane.

His wife was a Campbell, fair and fause,
Says "Lachlan, where hae ye been?"
"Oh! I hae been at Tobermory,
And kissed the hand o' a Queen!"

"Oh! we maun send the Queen a stag,
And grouse for her propine,
And we'll send her a cask o' the usquebaugh,
And a butt o' the red French wine!"

She has put a bomb in the clairet butt,
And eke a burning lowe,
She has sent them away wi' her little foot-page
That cam' frae the black Lochow.

*

The morn McLean rade forth to see
The last blink o' his Queen,
There stude her ship in the harbour gude,
Upon the water green.

But there cam' a crash like a thunder-clap,
And a cloud on the water green.
The bonny ship in flinders flew,
And drooned was the bonny Queen.

McLean he speirit nor gude nor bad,
His skian dubh he’s ta’en,
And he’s cuttit the throat o’ that fause foot-page,
And sundered his white hausebane.

KEITH OF CRAIGENTOLLY

O Keith o’ Craigentolly!
Ye sall live to rue the day
When ye brak the berried holly
Beside St. Andrew’s bay!
When Pitcullo’s kine
Card down to the brine,
And were drooned in the driving spray!

In the bower o’ Craigentolly
Is a wan and waefu’ bride,
Singing, O waly! waly!
Through the whole country side;
And a river to wade
For a dying maid,
And a weary way to ride!

O Keith o’ Craigentolly,
The bairn’s grave by the sea!
O Keith o’ Craigentolly,
The graves of maidens three!
And a bluidy shift,
And a sainless shrift,
For Keith o’ Craigentolly!

The Poetry

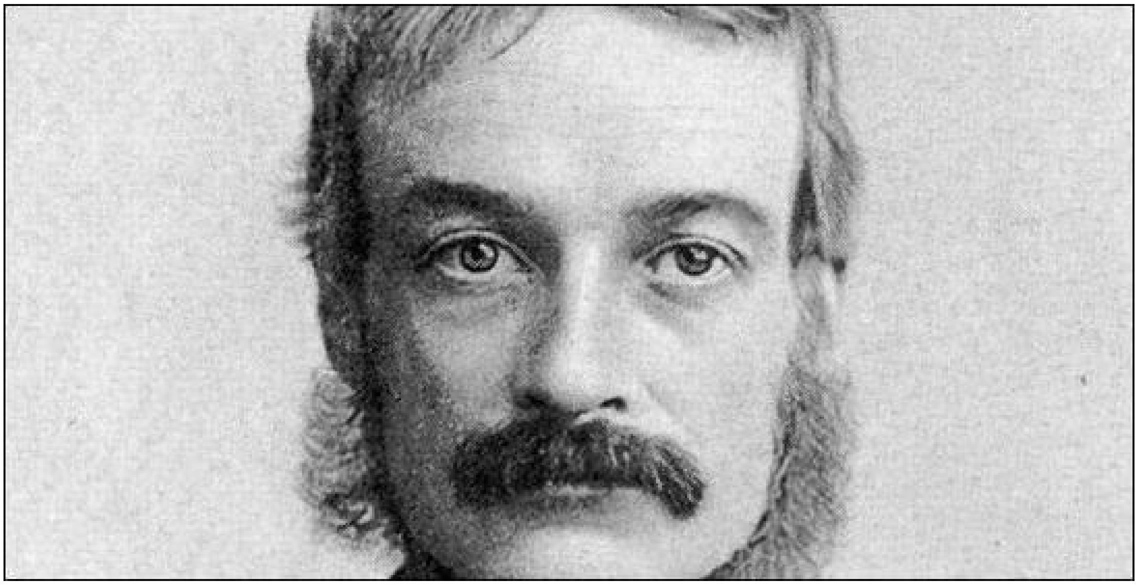

Lang in his late thirties

LIST OF POEMS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

SPRING.
RONDEL.
RONDEL.
ARBOR AMORIS.
BALLAD OF THE GIBBET.
HYMN TO THE WINDS.
A VOW TO HEAVENLY VENUS.
TO HIS FRIEND IN ELYSIUM.
A SONNET TO HEAVENLY BEAUTY.
APRIL.
ROSES.
THE ROSE.
TO THE MOON.
TO HIS YOUNG MISTRESS.
DEADLY KISSES.
OF HIS LADY’S OLD AGE.
ON HIS LADY’S WAKING.
HIS LADY’S DEATH.
LADY’S TOMB.
SHADOWS OF HIS LADY.
MOONLIGHT.
LOVE IN MAY.
THE GRAVE AND THE ROSE.
THE GENESIS OF BUTTERFLIES.
MORE STRONG THAN TIME.
AN OLD TUNE.
JUANA.
SPRING IN THE STUDENT’S QUARTER.
OLD LOVES.
MUSETTE.
THE THREE CAPTAINS.
THE BRIDGE OF DEATH.
LE PÈRE SÉVÈRE.
KING LOUIS’ DAUGHTER.

THE MILK WHITE DOE.
A LADY OF HIGH DEGREE.
LOST FOR A ROSE’S SAKE.
BALLADS OF MODERN GREECE.
THE BRIGAND’S GRAVE.
THE SUDDEN BRIDAL.
GREEK FOLK SONGS.
IANNOULA.
THE TELL-TALES.
TWILIGHT ON TWEED.
ONE FLOWER.
METEMPSYCHOSIS.
LOST IN HADES.
A STAR IN THE NIGHT.
A SUNSET ON YARROW.
HESPEROTHEN.
THE SEEKERS FOR PHAEACIA.
A SONG OF PHAEACIA.
THE DEPARTURE FROM PHAEACIA.
A BALLAD OF DEPARTURE.
THEY HEAR THE SIRENS FOR THE SECOND TIME.
CIRCE’S ISLE REVISITED.
THE LIMIT OF LANDS.
VERSES ON PICTURES.
COLINETTE.
A SUNSET OF WATTEAU.
A NATIVITY OF SANDRO BOTTICELLI.
SONGS AND SONNETS
TWO HOMES.
SUMMER’S ENDING.
NIGHTINGALE WEATHER.
LOVE AND WISDOM.
GOOD-BYE.
AN OLD PRAYER.
LOVE’S MIRACLE.
DREAMS.
FAIRY LAND.
TWO SONNETS OF THE SIRENS.
A LA BELLE HÉLÈNE.

SYLVIE ET AURÉLIE.
A LOST PATH.
THE SHADE OF HELEN.
SONNETS TO POETS.
JACQUES TAHUREAU. 1530.
FRANÇOIS VILLON. 1450.
PIERRE RONSARD. 1560.
GÉRARD DE NERVAL.
THE DEATH OF MIRANDOLA. 1494.
IDYL I
IDYL II
IDYL III
IDYL IV
IDYL V
IDYL VI
IDYL VII
IDYL VIII
IDYL IX
IDYL X - THE REAPERS
IDYL XI - THE CYCLOPS IN LOVE
IDYL XII - THE PASSIONATE FRIEND
IDYL XIII - HYLAS AND HERACLES
IDYL XIV
IDYL XV
IDYL XVI
IDYL XVII
IDYL XVIII
IDYL XIX
IDYL XX
IDYL XXI
IDYL XXII - THE DIOSCURI
IDYL XXIII - THE VENGEANCE OF LOVE
IDYL XXIV - THE INFANT HERACLES
IDYL XXV - HERACLES THE LION-SLAVER
IDYL XXVI
IDYL XXVII - THE WOOING OF DAPHNIS
IDYL XXVIII
IDYL XXIX
IDYL XXX - THE DEAD ADONIS

THE LAMENT FOR ADONIS
THE LOVE OF ACHILLES
THE SEASONS
THE BOY AND LOVE
THE TUTOR OF LOVE
LOVE AND THE MUSES
BION’S FRAGMENTS
IDYL I - LOVE THE RUNAWAY
IDYL II - EUROPA AND THE BULL
IDYL III - THE LAMENT FOR BION
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IDYL V
IDYL VI
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A BALLADE OF XXXII BALLADES.
BALLADE OF CLEOPATRA’S NEEDLE.
BALLADE OF ROULETTE. TO R. R.
BALLADE OF SLEEP.
BALLADE OF THE MIDNIGHT FOREST. AFTER THEODORE DE BANVILLE.
BALLADE OF THE TWEED. (LOWLAND SCOTCH.) TO T. W. LANG.
BALLADE OF THE BOOK-HUNTER.
BALLADE OF THE VOYAGE TO CYTHERA. AFTER THEODORE DE BANVILLE.
BALLADE OF THE SUMMER TERM.
BALLADE OF THE MUSE
BALLADE AGAINST THE JESUITS. AFTER LA FONTAINE.
BALLADE OF DEAD CITIES. TO E. W. GOSSE.
BALLADE OF THE ROYAL GAME OF GOLF. (EAST FIFESHIRE.)
DOUBLE BALLADE OF PRIMITIVE MAN. TO J. A. FARRER.
BALLADE OF AUTUMN.
BALLADE OF TRUE WISDOM.
BALLADE OF WORLDLY WEALTH. (OLD FRENCH.)
BALLADE OF LIFE.
BALLADE OF BLUE CHINA.
BALLADE OF DEAD LADIES. (AFTER VILLON.)
VILLON’S BALLADE OF GOOD COUNSEL, TO HIS FRIENDS OF EVIL

LIFE.
BALLADE OF THE BOOKWORM.
VALENTINE IN FORM OF BALLADE.
LA COUR.
LA COMEDIE.
LA VILLE.
BALLADE OF HIS BOOKS.
BALLADE OF THE DREAM.
BALLADE OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS.
BALLADE OF AUCASSIN
BALLADE AMOUREUSE. AFTER FROISSART.
BALLADE OF QUEEN ANNE.
BALLADE OF BLIND LOVE. (AFTER LYONNET DE COISMES.)
BALLADE OF HIS CHOICE OF A SEPULCHRE.
DIZAIN.
A PORTRAIT OF 1783.
THE MOON’S MINION. (FROM THE PROSE OF C. BAUDELAIRE.)
IN ITHACA.
HOMER.
THE BURIAL OF MOLIERE. (AFTER J. TRUFFIER.)
BION.
SPRING. (AFTER MELEAGER.)
BEFORE THE SNOW. (AFTER ALBERT GLATIGNY.)
VILLANELLE. TO LUCIA.
THE ODYSSEY.
IDEAL.
BENEDETTA RAMUS. AFTER ROMNEY.
ST. ANDREW’S BAY.
NIGHT.
MORNING.
WOMAN AND THE WEED. (FOUNDED ON A NEW ZEALAND MYTH.)
BOOK I — THE COMING OF PARIS
BOOK II — THE SPELL OF APHRODITE
BOOK III — THE FLIGHT OF HELEN
BOOK IV — THE DEATH OF CORYTHUS
BOOK V — THE WAR
BOOK VI — THE SACK OF TROY. THE RETURN OF HELEN
BALLADE DEDICATORY — TO MRS. ELTON OF WHITE STAUNTON
A DREAM IN JUNE

A VISION IN THE STRAND
ALMAE MATRES — (ST. ANDREWS, 1862. OXFORD, 1865)
DESIDERIUM — IN MEMORIAM S. F. A.
BALLADE OF MIDDLE AGE
THE LAST CAST — THE ANGLER’S APOLOGY
TWILIGHT — SONNET (AFTER RICHEPIN)
BALLADE OF SUMMER — TO C. H. ARKCOLL
BALLADE OF CHRISTMAS GHOSTS
LOVE’S EASTER — SONNET
BALLADE OF THE GIRTON GIRL
RONSARD’S GRAVE
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TO C. H. ARKCOLL
TRIOLETS AFTER MOSCHUS
BALLADE OF CRICKET — TO T. W. LANG
THE LAST MAYING
HOMERIC UNITY
IN TINTAGEL
PISIDICE
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BALLADE OF THE BOOK-MAN’S PARADISE
BALLADE OF A FRIAR
BALLADE OF NEGLECTED MERIT
BALLADE OF RAILWAY NOVELS
THE CLOUD CHORUS (FROM ARISTOPHANES)
BALLADE OF LITERARY FAME
A VERY WOFUL BALLADE OF THE ART CRITIC (TO E. A. ABBEY.)
ART’S MARTYR
THE PALACE O BRIC-A-BRAC
RONDEAUX OF THE GALLERIES
THE BARBAROUS BIRD-GODS: A SAVAGE PARABASIS
MAN AND THE ASCIDIAN — A MORALITY
BALLADE OF THE PRIMITIVE JEST
CAMEOS — SONNETS FROM THE ANTIQUE
CAMEOS
HELEN ON THE WALLS
THE ISLES OF THE BLESSED

DEATH
NYSA
COLONUS
THE PASSING OF OEDIPOUS
THE TAMING OF TYRO
TO ARTEMIS
THE CANNIBAL ZEUS — A.D. 160
INVOCATION OF ISIS
THE COMING OF ISIS
THE SPINET
BALLADE OF AUCASSIN
BALLADE OF NICOLETE
THE SONG-STORY OF AUCASSIN AND NICOLETE
BALLAD: SIR PATRICK SPENS
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BALLAD: TAM LIN
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VILLON’S BALLADE OF GOOD COUNSEL, TO HIS FRIENDS OF EVIL LIFE.
WHAT FRANCESCO SAID OF THE JUBILEE — BY R. B.
WHITE ROSE DAY — JUNE 10, 1688
WOMAN AND THE WEED. (FOUNDED ON A NEW ZEALAND MYTH.)
ZIMBABWE

The Non-Fiction

Tor-na-Coille Hotel, Banchory, where Lang was residing at the end of his life

OXFORD

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PREFACE

These papers do not profess even to sketch the outlines of a history of Oxford. They are merely records of the impressions made by this or that aspect of the life of the University as it has been in different ages. Oxford is not an easy place to design in black and white, with the pen or the etcher’s needle. On a wild winter or late autumn day (such as Father Faber has made permanent in a beautiful poem) the sunshine fleets along the plain, revealing towers, and floods, and trees, in a gleam of watery light, and leaving them once more in shadow. The melancholy mist creeps over the city, the damp soaks into the heart of everything, and such suicidal weather ensues as has been described, once for all, by the author of John-a-Dreams. How different Oxford looks when the road to Cowley Marsh is dumb with dust, when the heat seems almost tropical, and by the drowsy banks of the Cherwell you might almost expect some shy southern water-beast to come crashing through the reeds! And such a day, again, is unlike the bright weather of late September, when all the gold and scarlet of Bagley Wood are concentrated in the leaves that cover the walls of Magdalen with an imperial vesture.

Our memories of Oxford, if we have long made her a Castle of Indolence, vary no less than do the shifting aspects of her scenery. Days of spring and of mere pleasure in existence have alternated with days of gloom and loneliness, of melancholy, of resignation. Our mental pictures of the place are tinged by many moods, as the landscape is beheld in shower and sunshine, in frost, and in the colourless drizzling weather. Oxford, that once seemed a pleasant porch and entrance into life, may become a dingy ante-room, where we kick our heels with other weary, waiting people. At last, if men linger there too late, Oxford grows a prison, and it is the final condition of the loiterer to take “this for a hermitage.” It is well to leave the enchantress betimes, and to carry away few but kind recollections. If there be any who think and speak ungently of their Alma Mater, it is because they have outstayed their natural “welcome while,” or because they have resisted her genial influence in youth.

CHAPTER I — THE TOWN BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY

Most old towns are like palimpsests, parchments which have been scrawled over again and again by their successive owners. Oxford, though not one of the most ancient of English cities, shows, more legibly than the rest, the handwriting, as it were, of many generations. The convenient site among the interlacing waters of the Isis and the Cherwell has commended itself to men in one age after another. Each generation has used it for its own purpose: for war, for trade, for learning, for religion; and war, trade, religion, and learning have left on Oxford their peculiar marks. No set of its occupants, before the last two centuries began, was very eager to deface or destroy the buildings of its predecessors. Old things were turned to new uses, or altered to suit new tastes; they were not overthrown and carted away. Thus, in walking through Oxford, you see everywhere, in colleges, chapels, and churches, doors and windows which have been builded up; or again, openings which have been cut where none originally existed. The upper part of the round Norman arches in the Cathedral has been preserved, and converted into the circular bull’s-eye lights which the last century liked. It is the same everywhere, except where modern restorers have had their way. Thus the life of England, for some eight centuries, may be traced in the buildings of Oxford. Nay, if we are convinced by some antiquaries, the eastern end of the High Street contains even earlier scratches on this palimpsest of Oxford; the rude marks of savages who scooped out their damp nests, and raised their low walls in the gravel, on the spot where the new schools are to stand. Here half-naked men may have trapped the beaver in the Cherwell, and hither they may have brought home the boars which they slew in the trackless woods of Headington and Bagley. It is with the life of historical Oxford, however, and not with these fancies, that we are concerned, though these papers have no pretension to be a history of Oxford. A series of pictures of men’s life here is all they try to sketch.

It is hard, though not impossible, to form a picture in the mind of Oxford as she was when she is first spoken of by history. What she may have been when legend only knows her; when St. Frideswyde built a home for religious maidens; when she fled from King Algar and hid among the swine, and after a whole fairy tale of adventures died in great sanctity, we cannot even guess. This legend of St. Frideswyde, and of her foundation, the germ of the Cathedral and of Christ Church, is not, indeed, without its value and significance for those who care for

Oxford. This home of religion and of learning was a home of religion from the beginning, and her later life is but a return, after centuries of war and trade, to her earliest purpose. What manner of village of wooden houses may have surrounded the earliest rude chapels and places of prayer, we cannot readily guess, but imagination may look back on Oxford as she was when the English Chronicle first mentions her. Even then it is not unnatural to think Oxford might well have been a city of peace. She lies in the very centre of England, and the Northmen, as they marched inland, burning church and cloister, must have wandered long before they came to Oxford. On the other hand, the military importance of the site must have made it a town that would be eagerly contended for. Any places of strength in Oxford would command the roads leading to the north and west, and the secure, raised paths that ran through the flooded fens to the ford or bridge, if bridge there then was, between Godstowe and the later Norman grand pont, where Folly Bridge now spans the Isis. Somewhere near Oxford, the roads that ran towards Banbury and the north, or towards Bristol and the west, would be obliged to cross the river. The water-way, too, and the paths by the Thames' side, were commanded by Oxford. The Danes, as they followed up the course of the Thames from London, would be drawn thither, sooner or later, and would covet a place which is surrounded by half a dozen deep natural moats. Lastly, Oxford lay in the centre of England indeed, but on the very marches of Mercia and Wessex. A border town of natural strength and of commanding situation, she can have been no mean or poor collection of villages in the days when she is first spoken of, when Eadward the Elder "incorporated with his own kingdom the whole Mercian lands on both sides of Watling Street" (Freeman's Norman Conquest, vol. i.), and took possession of London and of Oxford as the two most important parts of a scientific frontier. If any man had stood, in the days of Eadward, on the hill that was not yet "Shotover," and had looked along the plain to the place where the grey spires of Oxford are clustered now, as it were in a purple cup of the low hills, he would have seen little but "the smoke floating up through the oakwood and the coppice,"

The low hills were not yet cleared, nor the fens and the wolds trimmed and enclosed. Centuries later, when the early students came, they had to ride "through the thick forest and across the moor, to the East Gate of the city" (Munimenta Academica, Oxon., vol. i.). In the midst of a country still wild, Oxford was already no mean city; but the place where the hostile races of the land met to settle their differences, to feast together and forget their wrongs over the mead and ale, or to devise treacherous murder, and close the banquet with fire and sword.

Again and again, after Eadward the Elder took Mercia, the Danes went about burning and wasting England. The wooden towns were flaming through the night, and sending up a thick smoke through the day, from Thamesmouth to Cambridge. “And next was there no headman that force would gather, and each fled as swift as he might, and soon was there no shire that would help another.” When the first fury of the plundering invaders was over, when the Northmen had begun to wish to settle and till the land and have some measure of peace, the early meetings between them and the English rulers were held in the border-town, in Oxford. Thus Sigeferth and Morkere, sons of Earngrim, came to see Eadric in Oxford, and there were slain at a banquet, while their followers perished in the attempt to avenge them. “Into the tower of St. Frideswyde they were driven, and as men could not drive them thence, the tower was fired, and they perished in the burning.” So says William of Malmesbury, who, so many years later, read the story, as he says, in the records of the Church of St. Frideswyde. There is another version of the story in the Codex Diplomaticus (DCCIX.). Aethelred is made to say, in a deed of grant of lands to St. Frideswyde’s Church (“mine own minster”), that the Danes were slain in the massacre of St. Brice. On that day Aethelred, “by the advice of his satraps, determined to destroy the tares among the wheat, the Danes in England.” Certain of these fled into the minster, as into a fortress, and therefore it was burned and the books and monuments destroyed. For this cause Aethelred gives lands to the minster, “fro Charwell brigge andlong the streame, fro Merewell to Rugslawe, fro the lawe to the foule putte,” and so forth. It is pleasant to see how old are the familiar names “Cherwell,” “Hedington,” “Couelee” or Cowley, where the college cricket-grounds are. Three years passed, and the headmen of the English and of the Danes met at Oxford again, and more peacefully, and agreed to live together, obedient to the laws of Eadgar; to the law, that is, as it was administered in older days, that seem happier and better ruled to men looking back on them from an age of confusion and bloodshed. At Oxford, too, met the peaceful gathering of 1035, when Danish and English claims were in some sort reconciled, and at Oxford Harold Harefoot, the son of Cnut, died in March 1040. The place indeed was fatal to kings, for St. Frideswyde, in her anger against King Algar, left her curse on it. Just as the old Irish kings were forbidden by their customs to do this or that, to cross a certain moor on May morning, or to listen to the winnowing of the night-fowl’s wings in the dusk above the lake of Tara; so the kings of England shunned to enter Oxford, and to come within the walls of Frideswyde the maiden. Harold died there, as we have seen, but there he was not buried. His body was laid at Westminster, where it could not rest, for his enemies dug it up, and cast it forth upon the fens, or threw it into the river. Many years later, when Henry III. entered Oxford, not without fear, the curse of Frideswyde lighted also upon him. He came in 1263, with Edward the prince, and misfortune fell upon him, so that his barons defeated and took him prisoner at the battle of Lewes. The chronicler of Oseney Abbey mentions his contempt of superstitions, and how he alone of English kings entered the city: “Quod nullus rex attemptavit a tempore Regis Algari,” an error, for Harold attemptavit, and died. When Edward I. was king, he was less audacious than his father, and in 1275 he rode up to the East Gate and turned his horse’s head about, and sought a lodging outside the town, reflexis habenis equitans extra moenia aulam regiain in suburbio positam introivit. In 1280, however, he seems to have plucked up courage and attended a Chapter of Dominicans in Oxford.

The last of the meetings between North and South was held at Oxford in October 1065. “In urle quae famoso nomine Oxnaford nuncupatur,” to quote a document of Cnut’s. (Cod. Dipl. DCCXLVI. in 1042.) There the Northumbrian rebels met Harold in the last days of Edward the Confessor. With this meeting we leave that Oxford before the Conquest, of which possibly not one stone, or one rafter, remains. We look back through eight hundred years on a city, rich enough, it seems, and powerful, and we see the narrow streets full of armed bands of men — men that wear the cognisance of the horse or of the raven, that carry short swords, and are quick to draw them; men that dress in short kirtles of a bright colour, scarlet or blue; that wear axes slung on their backs, and adorn their bare necks and arms with collars and bracelets of gold. We see them meeting to discuss laws and frontiers, and feasting late when business is done, and chaffering for knives with ivory handles, for arrows, and saddles, and wadmal, in the booths of the citizens. Through the mist of time this picture of ancient Oxford may be distinguished. We are tempted to think of a low, grey twilight above that wet land suddenly lit up with fire; of the tall towers of St. Frideswyde’s Minster flaring like a torch athwart the night; of poplars waving in the same wind that drives the vapour and smoke of the holy place down on the Danes who have taken refuge there, and there stand at bay against the English and the people of the town. The material Oxford of our times is not more unlike the Oxford of low wooden booths and houses, and of wooden spires and towers, than the life led in its streets was unlike the academic life of to-day. The Conquest brought no more quiet times, but the whole city was wrecked, stormed, and devastated, before the second period of its history began, before it was the seat of a Norman stronghold, and one of the links of the chain by which England was bound. “Four hundred and seventy-eight houses were so ruined as to be unable to pay taxes,” while, “within the town or without the wall, there were but two hundred and forty-three houses which did yield tribute.”

With the buildings of Robert D’Oily, a follower of the Conqueror’s, and the husband of an English wife, the heiress of Wigod of Wallingford, the new Oxford begins. Robert’s work may be divided roughly into two classes. First, there are the strong places he erected to secure his possessions, and, second, the sacred places he erected to secure the pardon of Heaven for his robberies. Of the castle, and its “shining coronal of towers,” only one tower remains. From the vast strength of this picturesque edifice, with the natural moat flowing at its feet, we may guess what the castle must have been in the early days of the Conquest, and during the wars of Stephen and Matilda. We may guess, too, that the burghers of Oxford, and the rustics of the neighbourhood, had no easy life in those days, when, as we have seen, the town was ruined, and when, as the extraordinary thickness of the walls of its remaining tower demonstrates, the castle was built by new lords who did not spare the forced labour of the vanquished. The strength of the position of the castle is best estimated after viewing the surrounding country from the top of the tower. Through the more modern embrasures, or over the low wall round the summit, you look up and down the valley of the Thames, and gaze deep into the folds of the hills. The prospect is pleasant enough, on an autumn morning, with the domes and spires of modern Oxford breaking, like islands, through the sea of mist that sweeps above the roofs of the good town. In the old times, no movement of the people who had their fastnesses in the fens, no approach of an army from any direction could have evaded the watchman. The towers guarded the fords and the bridge and were themselves almost impregnable, except when a hard winter made the Thames, the Cherwell, and the many deep and treacherous streams passable, as happened when Matilda was beleaguered in Oxford. This natural strength of the site is demonstrated by the vast mound within the castle walls, which tradition calls the Jews’ Mound, but which is probably earlier than the Norman buildings. Some other race had chosen the castle site for its fortress in times of which we know nothing. Meanwhile, some of the practical citizens of Oxford wish to level the Jews’ Mound, and to “utilise” the gravel of which it is largely composed. There is nothing to be said against this economic project which could interest or affect the persons who entertain it. M. Brunet-Debaines’ illustration shows the mill on a site which must be as old as the tower. Did the citizens bring their corn to be tolled and ground at the lord’s mill?

Though Robert was bent on works of war, he had a nature inclined to piety, and, his piety beginning at home, he founded the church of St. George within the castle. The crypt of the church still remains, and is not without interest for persons who like to trace the changing fortunes of old buildings. The site of Robert’s Castle is at present occupied by the County Gaol. When you have inspected the tower (which does not do service as a dungeon) you are taken, by the courtesy of the Governor, to the crypt, and satisfy your archaeological curiosity. The place is much lower, and worse lighted, than the contemporary crypt of St. Peter's-in-the-East, but not, perhaps, less interesting. The square-headed capitals have not been touched, like some of those in St. Peter's, by a later chisel. The place is dank and earthy, but otherwise much as Robert D'Oily left it. There is an odd-looking arrangement of planks on the floor. It is THE NEW DROP, which is found to work very well, and gives satisfaction to the persons who have to employ it. Sinister the Norman castle was in its beginning, "it was from the castle that men did wrong to the poor around them; it was from the castle that they bade defiance to the king, who, stranger and tyrant as he might be, was still a protector against smaller tyrants." Sinister the castle remains; you enter it through ironed and bolted doors, you note the prisoners at their dreary exercises, and, when you have seen the engines of the law lying in the old crypt you pass out into the place of execution. Here, in a corner made by Robert's tower and by the wall of the prison, is a dank little quadrangle. The ground is of the yellow clay and gravel which floors most Oxford quadrangles. A few letters are scratched on the soft stone of the wall — the letters "H. R." are the freshest. These are the initials of the last man who suffered death in this corner — a young rustic who had murdered his sweetheart. "H. R." on the prison wall is all his record, and his body lies under your feet, and the feet of the men who are to die here in after days pass over his tomb. It is thus that malefactors are buried, "within the walls of the gaol."

One is glad enough to leave the remains of Robert's place of arms — as glad as Matilda may have been when "they let her down at night from the tower with ropes, and she stole out, and went on foot to Wallingford." Robert seems at first to have made the natural use of his strength. "Rich he was, and spared not rich or poor, to take their livelihood away, and to lay up treasures for himself." He stole the lands of the monks of Abingdon, but of what service were moats, and walls, and dungeons, and instruments of torture, against the powers that side with monks?

The Chronicle of Abingdon has a very diverting account of Robert's punishment and conversion. "He filched a certain field without the walls of Oxford that of right belonged to the monastery, and gave it over to the soldiers in the castle. For which loss the brethren were greatly grieved — the brethren of Abingdon. Therefore, they gathered in a body before the altar of St. Michael — the very altar that St. Dunstan the archbishop dedicated — and cast themselves weeping on the ground, accusing Robert D'Oily, and praying that his robbery of the monastery might be avenged, or that he might be led to make atonement."

So, in a dream, Robert saw himself taken before Our Lady by two brethren of Abingdon, and thence carried into the very meadow he had coveted, where “most nasty little boys,” turpissimi pueri, worked their will on him. Thereon Robert was terrified and cried out, and wakened his wife, who took advantage of his fears, and compelled him to make restitution to the brethren.

After this vision, Robert gave himself up to pampering the monastery and performing other good works. He it was who built a bridge over the Isis, and he restored the many ruined parish churches in Oxford — churches which, perhaps, he and his men had helped to ruin. The tower of St. Michael’s, in “the Corn,” is said to be of his building; perhaps he only “restored” it, for it is in the true primitive style- -gaunt, unadorned, with round-headed windows, good for shooting from with the bow. St. Michael’s was not only a church, but a watchtower of the city wall; and here the old northgate, called Bocardo, spanned the street. The rooms above the gate were used till within quite recent times, and the poor inmates used to let down a greasy old hat from the window in front of the passers-by, and cry, “Pity the Bocardo birds”:

“Pigons qui sont en 1’essoine,
Enserrez soubz trappe voliere,”

as a famous Paris student, Francois Villon, would have called them. Of Bocardo no trace remains, but St. Michael’s is likely to last as long as any edifice in Oxford. Our illustrations represent it as it was in the last century. The houses huddle up to the church, and hide the lines of the tower. Now it stands out clear, less picturesque than it was in the time of Bocardo prison. Within the last two years the windows have been cleared, and the curious and most archaic pillars, shaped like balustrades, may be examined. It is worth while to climb the tower and remember the times when arrows were sent like hail from the narrow windows on the foes who approached Oxford from the north, while prayers for their confusion were read in the church below.

That old Oxford of war was also a trading town. Nothing more than the fact that it was a favourite seat of the Jews is needed to prove its commercial prosperity. The Jews, however, demand a longer notice in connection with the still unborn University. Meanwhile, it may be remarked that Oxford trade made good use of the river. The Abingdon Chronicle (ii. 129) tells us that “from each barque of Oxford city, which makes the passage by the river Thames past Abingdon, a hundred herrings must yearly be paid to the cellarer. The citizens had much litigation about land and houses with the abbey, and one Roger Maledoctus (perhaps a very early sample of the pass-man) gave Abingdon tenements within the city.” Thus we leave the pre-Academic Oxford a flourishing town, with merchants and moneylenders. As for the religious, the brethren of St. Frideswyde had lived but loosely (pro libito viverunt), says William of Malmesbury, and were to be superseded by regular canons, under the headship of one Guimond, and the patronage of the Bishop of Salisbury. Whoever goes into Christ Church new buildings from the river-side, will see, in the old edifice facing him, a certain bulging in the wall. That is the mark of the pulpit, whence a brother used to read aloud to the brethren in the refectory of St. Frideswyde. The new leaven of learning was soon to ferment in an easy Oxford, where men lived pro libito, under good lords, the D’Oilys, who loved the English, and built, not churches and bridges only, but the great and famous Oseney Abbey, beyond the church of St. Thomas, and not very far from the modern station of the Great Western Railway. Yet even after public teaching in Oxford certainly began, after Master Robert Puleyn lectured in divinity there (1133; cf. Oseney Chronicle), the tower was burned down by Stephen’s soldiery in 1141 (Oseney Chronicle,).

CHAPTER II — THE EARLY STUDENTS — A DAY WITH A MEDIEVAL UNDERGRADUATE

Oxford, some one says, “is bitterly historical.” It is difficult to escape the fanaticism of Antony Wood, and of “our antiquary,” Bryan Twyne, when one deals with the obscure past of the University. Indeed, it is impossible to understand the strange blending of new and old at Oxford — the old names with the new meanings — if we avert our eyes from what is “bitterly historical.” For example, there is in most, perhaps in all, colleges a custom called “collections.” On the last days of term undergraduates are called into the Hall, where the Master and the Dean of the Chapel sit in solemn state. Examination papers are set, but no one heeds them very much. The real ordeal is the awful interview with the Master and the Dean. The former regards you with the eyes of a judge, while the Dean says, “Master, I am pleased to say that Mr. Brown’s PAPERS are very fair, very fair. But in the matters of CHAPELS and of CATECHETICS, Mr. Brown sets — for a SCHOLAR — a very bad example to the other undergraduates. He has only once attended divine service on Sunday morning, and on that occasion, Master, his dress consisted exclusively of a long great-coat and a pair of boots.” After this accusation the Master will turn to the culprit and observe, with emphasis ill represented by italics, “Mr. Brown, the COLLEGE cannot hear with pleasure of such behaviour on the part of a SCHOLAR. You are GATED, Mr. Brown, for the first fortnight of next term.” Now why should this tribunal of the Master and the Dean, and this dread examination, be called collections? Because (Munimenta Academica, Oxon., i. 129) in 1331 a statute was passed to the effect that “every scholar shall pay at least twelve pence a-year for lectures in logic, and for physics eighteenpence a-year,” and that “all Masters of Arts except persons of royal or noble family, shall be obliged to COLLECT their salary from the scholars.” This collection would be made at the end of term; and the name survives, attached to the solemn day of doom we have described, though the college dues are now collected by the bursar at the beginning of each term.

By this trivial example the perversions of old customs at Oxford are illustrated. To appreciate the life of the place, then, we must glance for a moment at the growth of the University. As to its origin, we know absolutely nothing. That Master Puleyn began to lecture there in 1133 we have seen, and it is not likely that he would have chosen Oxford if Oxford had possessed no schools. About these schools, however, we have no information. They may have grown up out of the seminary which, perhaps, was connected with St. Frideswyde’s, just as Paris University may have had some connection with “the School of the Palace.” Certainly to Paris University the academic corporation of Oxford, the Universitas, owed many of her regulations; while, again, the founder of the college system, Walter de Merton (who visited Paris in company with Henry III.), may have compared ideas with Robert de Sorbonne, the founder of the college of that name. In the early Oxford, however, of the twelfth and most of the thirteenth centuries, colleges with their statutes were unknown. The University was the only corporation of the learned, and she struggled into existence after hard fights with the town, the Jews, the Friars, the Papal courts. The history of the University begins with the thirteenth century. She may be said to have come into being as soon as she possessed common funds and rents, as soon as fines were assigned, or benefactions contributed to the maintenance of scholars. Now the first recorded fine is the payment of fifty-two shillings by the townsmen of Oxford as part of the compensation for the hanging of certain clerks. In the year 1214 the Papal Legate, in a letter to his “beloved sons in Christ, the burgesses of Oxford,” bade them excuse the “scholars studying in Oxford” half the rent of their halls, or hospitia, for the space of ten years. The burghers were also to do penance, and to feast the poorer students once a year; but the important point is, that they had to pay that large yearly fine “propter suspendium clericorum” — all for the hanging of the clerks. Twenty-six years after this decision of the Legate, Robert Grossteste, the great Bishop of Lincoln, organised the payment and distribution of the fine, and founded the first of the CHESTS, the chest of St. Frideswyde. These chests were a kind of Mont de Piete, and to found them was at first the favourite form of benefaction. Money was left in this or that chest, from which students and masters would borrow, on the security of pledges, which were generally books, cups, daggers, and so forth.

Now, in this affair of 1214 we have a strange passage of history, which happily illustrates the growth of the University. The beginning of the whole affair was the quarrel with the town, which, in 1209, had hanged two clerks, “in contempt of clerical liberty.” The matter was taken up by the Legate — in those bad years of King John the Pope’s viceroy in England — and out of the humiliation of the town the University gained money, privileges, and halls at low rental. These were precisely the things that the University wanted. About these matters there was a constant strife, in which the Kings, as a rule, took part with the University. The University possessed the legal knowledge, which the monarchs liked to have on their side, and was therefore favoured by them. Thus, in 1231 (Wood, Annals, i. 205), “the King sent out his Breve to the Mayor and

Burghers commanding them not to overrate their houses”; and thus gradually the University got the command of the police, obtained privileges which enslaved the city, and became masters where they had once been despised, starveling scholars. The process was always the same. On the feast of St. Scholastica, for example, in 1354, Walter de Springheuse, Roger de Chesterfield, and other clerks, swaggered into the Swyndlestock tavern in Carfax, began to speak ill of John de Croydon’s wine, and ended by pitching the tankard at the head of that vintner. In ten minutes the town bell at St. Martin’s was rung, and the most terrible of all Town-and-Gown rows began. The Chancellor could do no less than bid St. Mary’s bell reply to St. Martin’s, and shooting commenced. The Gown held their own very well at first, and “defended themselves till Vespertide,” when the citizens called in their neighbours, the rustics of Cowley, Headington, and Hincksey. The results have been precisely described in anticipation by Homer:

Which is as much as to say, “The townsfolk call for help to their neighbours, the yokels, that were more numerous than they, and better men in battle . . . so when the sun turned to the time of the loosing of oxen the Town drave in the ranks of the Gown, and won the victory.” They were strong, the townsmen, but not merciful. “The crowns of some chaplains, *viz.* all the skin so far as the tonsure went, these diabolical imps flayed off in scorn of their clergy,” and “some poor innocents these confounded sons of Satan knocked down, beat, and most cruelly wounded.” The result, in the long run, was that the University received from Edward III. “a most large charter, containing many liberties, some that they had before, and OTHERS THAT HE HAD TAKEN AWAY FROM THE TOWN.” Thus Edward granted to the University “the custody of the assize of bread, wine, and ale,” the supervising of measures and weights, the sole power of clearing the streets of the town and suburbs. Moreover, the Mayor and the chief Burghers were condemned yearly to a sort of public penance and humiliation on St. Scholastica’s Day. Thus, by the middle of the fourteenth century, the strife of Town and Gown had ended in the complete victory of the latter.

Though the University owed its success to its clerkly character, and though the Legate backed it with all the power of Rome, yet the scholars were Englishmen and Liberals first, Catholics next. Thus they had all English sympathy with them when they quarrelled with the Legate in 1238, and shot his cook (who, indeed, had thrown hot broth at them); and thus, in later days, the undergraduates were with Simon de Montfort against King Henry, and aided the barons with a useful body of archers. The University, too, constantly withstood the Friars, who had settled in Oxford on pretence of wishing to convert the Jews, and had attempted to get education into their hands. “The Preaching Friars, who had lately obtained from the Pope divers privileges, particularly an exemption, as they pretended, from being subject to the jurisdiction of the University, began to behave themselves very insolent against the Chancellors and Masters.” (Wood, Annals, i. 399.) The conduct of the Friars caused endless appeals to Rome, and in this matter, too, Oxford was stoutly national, and resisted the Pope, as it had, on occasions, defied the King. The King’s Jews, too, the University kept in pretty good order, and when, in 1268, a certain Hebrew snatched the crucifix from the hand of the Chancellor and trod it under foot, his tribesmen were compelled to raise “a fair and stately cross of marble, very curiously wrought,” on the scene of the sacrilege.

The growth in power and importance of academic corporations having now been sketched, let us try to see what the outer aspect of the town was like in these rude times, and what manner of life the undergraduates led. For this purpose we may be allowed to draw a rude, but not unfaithful, picture of a day in a student’s life. No incident will be introduced for which there is not authority, in Wood, or in Mr. Anstey’s invaluable documents, the Munimenta Academica, published in the collection of the Master of the Rolls. Some latitude as to dates must be allowed, it is true, and we are not of course to suppose that any one day of life was ever so gloriously crowded as that of our undergraduate.

The time is the end of the fourteenth century. The forest and the moor stretch to the east gate of the city. Magdalen bridge is not yet built, nor of course the tower of Magdalen, which M. Brunet-Debaines has sketched from Christ Church walks. Not till about 1473 was the tower built, and years would pass after that before choristers saluted with their fresh voices from its battlements the dawn of the first of May, or sermons were preached from the beautiful stone pulpit in the open air. When our undergraduate, Walter de Stoke, or, more briefly, Stoke, was at Oxford, the spires of the city were few. Where Magdalen stands now, the old Hospital of St. John then stood — a foundation of Henry III. — but the Jews were no longer allowed to bury their dead in the close, which is now the “Physic Garden.” “In 1289,” as Wood says, “the Jews were banished from England for various enormities and crimes committed by them.” The Great and Little Jewries — those dim, populous streets behind the modern Post Office — had been sacked and gutted. No clerk would ever again risk his soul for a fair Jewess’s sake, nor lose his life for his love at the hands of that eminent theologian, Fulke de Breaute. The beautiful tower of Merton was still almost fresh, and the spires of St. Mary’s, of old All Saints, of St. Frideswyde, and the strong tower of New College on the city wall, were the most prominent features in a bird’s-eye view of the town. But though part of Merton, certainly the chapel tower as we have seen, the odd muniment-room with the steep stone roof, and, perhaps, the Library, existed; though New was built; and though Balliol and University owned some halls, on, or near, the site of the present colleges, Oxford was still an university of poor scholars, who lived in town's-people's dwellings.

Thus, in the great quarrel with the Legate in 1238, John Currey, of Scotland, boarded with Will Maynard, while Hugh le Verner abode in the house of Osmund the Miller, with Raynold the Irishman and seven of his fellows. John Mortimer and Rob Norensis lodged with Augustine Gosse, and Adam de Wolton lodged in Cat Street, where you can still see the curious arched doorway of Catte's, or St. Catherine's Hall. By the time of my hero, Walter Stoke, the King had not yet decreed that all scholars of years of discretion should live in the house of some sufficient principal (1421); so let him lodge at Catte Hall, at the corner of the street that leads to New College out of the modern Broad Street, which was then the City Ditch. It is six o'clock on a summer morning, and the bells waken Stoke, who is sleeping on a flock bed, in his little camera. His room, though he is not one of the luxurious clerks whom the University scolds in various statutes, is pretty well furnished. His bed alone is worth not less than fifteenpence; he has a "cofer" valued at twopence (we have plenty of those old valuations), and in his cofer are his black coat, which no one would think dear at fourpence, his tunic, cheap at tenpence, "a roll of the seven Psalms," and twelve books only "at his beddes heed." Stoke has not

"Twenty bookes, clothed in blak and reed,
Of Aristotil and of his philosophie,"

like Chaucer's Undergraduate, who must have been a bibliophile. There are not many records of "as many as twenty bookes" in the old valuations. The great ornament of the room is a neat trophy of buckler, bow, arrows, and two daggers, all hanging conveniently on the wall. Stoke opens his eyes, yawns, looks round for his clothes, and sees, with no surprise, that his laundress has not sent home his clean linen. No; Christina, of the parish of St. Martin, who used to be Stoke's lotrix, has been detected at last. "Under pretence of washing for scholars, multa mala perpetrata fuerunt," she has committed all manner of crimes, and is now in the Spinning House, carcerata fuit. Stoke wastes a malediction on the laundress, and, dressing as well as he may, runs down to Parson's Pleasure, I hope, and has a swim, for I find no tub in his room, or, indeed, in the camera of any other scholar. It is now time to go, not to chapel — for Catte's has no chapel — but to parish Church, and Stoke goes very devoutly to St. Peter's, where we shall find him again, later in the day, in another mood. About eight o'clock he "commonises" with a Paris man, Henricus de Bourges, who has an admirable mode of cooking omelettes, which makes his company much sought after at breakfast-time. The University, in old times, was full of French students, as Paris was thronged by Englishmen. Lectures begin at nine, and first there is lecture in the hall by the principal of Catte's. That scholar receives his pupils in a bare room, where it is very doubtful whether the students are allowed to sit down. From the curious old seal of the University of St. Andrews, however, it appears that the luxury of forms was permitted, in Scotland, to all but the servitors, who held the lecturer's candles. The principal of Catte's is in academic dress, and wears a black cape, boots, and a hood. The undergraduates have no distinguishing costume. After an hour or two of viva voce exercises in the grammar of Priscian, preparatory lecture is over, and a reading man will hurry off to the "schools," a set of low-roofed buildings between St. Mary's and Brasenose. There he will find the Divinity "school" or lecture-room in the place of honour, with Medicine on one hand and Law on the other; the lecture-rooms for grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy, for metaphysics, ethics, and "the tongues," stretching down School Street on either side. Here the Praelectors are holding forth, and all newly made Masters of Arts are bound to teach their subject regere scholas, whether they like it or not. Our friend, Master Stoke, however, is on pleasure bent, and means to pay his fine of twopence for omitting lecture, and go off to the festival of his nation (he is of the Southern nation, and hates Scotch, Welsh, and Irish) in the parish Church. He stops in the Flower Market and at a barber's shop on his way to St. Peter's, and comes forth a wonderful pagan figure with a Bacchic mask covering his honest countenance, with horns protruding through a wig of tow, with vine-leaves twisted in and out of the horns, and roses stuck wherever there is room for roses. Henricus de Bourges, and half a dozen Picardy men, with some merry souls from the Southern side of the Thames, are jigging down the High, playing bag-pipes and guitars. To these Stoke joins himself, and they waltz joyously into the church, and in and out of the gateways of the different halls, singing, -

"Mihi est propositum in taberna mori,
Vinum sit appositum morientis ori,
Ut dicant, quum venerint, angelorum chori
Deus sit propitius huic potatori."

The students of the Northern nations mock, of course, at these revellers, thumbs are bitten, threats exchanged, and we shall see what comes of the quarrel. But the hall bells chime half-past noon; it is dinner-time in Oxford, and Stoke, as he throws off his mask (larva) and vine-leaves, mutters to himself the equivalent for “there WILL be a row about this.” There will, indeed, for the penalty is not “crossing at the buttery,” nor “gating,” but — excommunication! (Munim. Academ., i. 18.) Dinner is not a very quiet affair, for the Catte’s men have had to fight for their beer in the public streets with some Canterbury College fellows who were set on by their Warden, of all people, to commit this violence (ut vi et violentia raperent cerevisiam aliorum scholarum in vico): however, Catte’s has had the best of it, and there is beer in plenty. It is possible, however, that fish is scarce, for certain “forestallers” (regratarii) have been buying up salmon and soles, and refusing to sell them at less than double the proper price. On the whole, however, there a rude abundance of meat and bread; indeed, Stoke may have fared better in Catte’s than the modern undergraduate does in the hall of the college protected by St. Catherine. After dinner there would be lecture in Lent, but we are not in Lent. A young man’s fancy lightly turns to the Beaumont, north of the modern Beaumont Street, where there are wide playing-fields, and space for archery, foot-ball, stool-ball, and other sports. Stoke rushes out of hall, and runs upstairs into the camera of Roger de Freshfield, a reading man, but a good fellow. He knocks and enters, and finds Freshfield over his favourite work, the Posterior Analytics, and a pottle of strawberries. “Come down to the Beaumont, old man,” he says, “and play pyked staffe.” Roger is disinclined to move, he MUST finish the Posterior Analytics. Stoke lounges about, in the eternal fashion of undergraduates after luncheon, and picking up the Philobiblon of Richard de Bury (then quite a new book), clinches his argument in favour of pyke and staffe with a quotation: “You will perhaps see a stiff-necked youth lounging sluggishly in his study . . . He is not ashamed to eat fruit and cheese over an open book, and to transfer his cup from side to side upon it.” Thus addressed, Roger lays aside his Analytics, and the pair walk down by Balliol, to the Beaumont, where pyked staffe, or sword and buckler, is played. At the Beaumont they find two men who say that “sword and buckler can be played sofft and ffayre,” that is, without hard hitting, and with one of these Stoke begins to fence. Alas! a dispute arose about a stroke, the by-standers interfered, and Stoke’s opponent drew his hanger (extraxit cultellum vocatum hangere), and hit one John Felerd over the sconce. On this the Proctors come up, and the assailant is put in Bocardo, while Stoke goes off to a “pass-supper” given by an inceptor, who has just taken his degree. These suppers were not voluntary entertainments, but enforced by law. At supper the talk ranges over University gossip, they tell of the scholar who lately tried to raise the devil in Grope Lane, and was pleased by the gentlemanly manner of the foul fiend. They speak of the Queen’s man, who has just been plucked for maintaining that Ego currit, or ego est currens, is as good Latin as ego curro. Then the party breaks up, and Stoke goes towards Merton, with some undergraduates of that college, Bridlington, Alderberk, and Lymby. At the corner of Grope Lane, out come many men of the Northern nations, armed with shields, and bows and arrows. Stoke and his friends run into Merton for weapons, and “standing in a window of that hall, shot divers arrows, and one that Bridlington shot hit Henry de l’Isle, and David Kirkby unmercifully perished, for after John de Benton had given him a dangerous wound in the head with his faulchion, came Will de la Hyde and wounded him in the knee with his sword.”

These were rough times, and it is not improbable that Stoke had a brush with the Town before he got safely back to Catte’s Hall. The old rudeness gave way gradually, as the colleges swallowed up the irregular halls, and as the scholars unattached, infando nomine Chamber-Dekyns, ceased to exist. Learning, however, dwindled, as colleges increased, under the clerical and reactionary rule of the House of Lancaster.

CHAPTER III — THE RENAISSANCE AND THE REFORMATION

We have now arrived at a period in the history of Oxford which is confused and unhappy, but for us full of interest, and perhaps of instruction. The hundred years that passed by between the age of Chaucer and the age of Erasmus were, in Southern Europe, years of the most eager life. We hear very often — too often, perhaps — of what is called the Renaissance. The energy of delight with which Italy welcomed the new birth of art, of literature, of human freedom, has been made familiar to every reader. It is not with Italy, but with England and with Oxford, that we are concerned. How did the University and the colleges prosper in that strenuous time when the world ran after loveliness of form and colour, as, in other ages, it has run after warlike renown, or the far-off rewards of the saintly life? What was Oxford doing when Florence, Venice, and Rome were striving towards no meaner goal than perfection?

It must be said that “the spring came slowly up this way.” The University merely reflected the very practical character of the people. In contemplating the events of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in their influence on English civilisation, we are reminded once more of the futility of certain modern aspirations. No amount of University Commissions, nor of well-meant reforms, will change the nature of Englishmen. It is impossible, by distributions of University prizes and professorships, to attract into the career of letters that proportion of industry and ingenuity which, in Germany for example, is devoted to the scholastic life. Politics, trade, law, sport, religion, will claim their own in England, just as they did at the Revival of Letters. The illustrious century which Italy employed in unburying, appropriating, and enjoying the treasures of Greek literature and art, our fathers gave, in England, to dynastic and constitutional squabbles, and to religious broils. The Renaissance in England, and chiefly in Oxford, was like a bitter and changeful spring. There was an hour of genial warmth, there breathed a wind from the south, in the lifetime of Chaucer; then came frosts and storms; again the brief sunshine of court favour shone on literature for a while, when Henry VIII. encouraged study, and Wolsey and Fox founded Christ Church and Corpus Christi College; once more the bad days of religious strife returned, and the promise of learning was destroyed. Thus the chief result of the awakening thought of the fourteenth century in England was not a lively delight in literature, but the appearance of the Lollards. The intensely practical genius of our race turned not to letters, but to questions about the soul and its future, about property and its distribution. The Lollards were put down in Oxford; “the tares were weeded out” by the House of Lancaster, and in the process the germs of free thought, of originality, and of a rational education, were destroyed. “Wyclevism did domineer among us,” says Wood; and, in fact, the intellect of the University was absorbed, like the intellect of France during the heat of the Jansenist controversy, in defending or assailing “267 damned conclusions,” drawn from the books of Wyclif. The University “lost many of her children through the profession of Wyclevism.” Those who remained were often “beneficed clerks.” The Friars lifted up their heads again, and Oxford was becoming a large ecclesiastical school. As the University declared to Archbishop Chichele (1438), “Our noble mother, that was blessed in so goodly an offspring, is all but utterly destroyed and desolate.” Presently the foreign wars and the wars of the Roses drained the University of the youth of England. The country was overrun with hostile forces, or infested by disbanded soldiers. Plague and war, war and plague, and confusion, alternate in the annals. Sickly as Oxford is to-day by climate and situation, she is a city of health compared to what she was in the middle ages. In 1448 “a pestilence broke out, occasioned by the overflowing of waters, . . . also by the lying of many scholars in one room or dormitory in almost every Hall, which occasioned nasty air and smells, and consequently diseases.” In the general dulness and squalor two things were remarkable: one, the last splendour of the feudal time; the other, the first dawn of the new learning from Italy. In 1452, George Neville of Balliol, brother of the King-maker, gave the most prodigious pass-supper that was ever served in Oxford. On the first day there were 600 messes of meat, divided into three courses. The second course is worthy of the attention of the epicure:

SECOND COURSE

Vian in brase. Carcell.
Crane in sawce. Partrych.
Young Pocock. Venson baked.
Coney. Fryed meat in paste.
Pigeons. Lesh Lumbert.
Byttor. A Frutor.
Curlew. A Sutteltee.

Against this prodigious gormandising we must set that noble gift, the Library presented to Oxford by Duke Humfrey of Gloucester. In the Catalogue, drawn up in 1439, we mark many books of the utmost value to the impoverished students. Here are the works of Plato, and the Ethics and Politics of Aristotle, translated by Leonard the Aretine. Here, among the numerous writings of the Fathers, are Tully and Seneca, Averroes and Avicenna, Bellum Trojae cum secretis secretorum, Apuleius, Aulus Gellius, Livy, Boccaccio, Petrarch. Here, with Ovid's verses, is the Commentary on Dante, and his Divine Comedy. Here, rarest of all, is a Greek Dictionary, the silent father of Liddel's and Scott's to be.

The most hopeful fact in the University annals, after the gift of those manuscripts (to which the very beauty of their illuminations proved ruinous in Puritan times), was the establishment of a printing-press at Oxford, and the arrival of certain Italians, “to propagate and settle the studies of true and genuine humanity among us.” The exact date of the introduction of printing let us leave to be determined by the learned writer who is now at work on the history of Oxford. The advent of the Italians is dated by Wood in 1488. Polydore Virgil had lectured in New College. “He first of all taught literature in Oxford. Cyprianus and Nicholaus, Italici, also arrived and dined with the Vice-President of Magdalen on Christmas Day. Lily and Colet, too, one of them the founder, the other the first Head Master, of St. Paul's School, were about this time studying in Italy, under the great Politian and Hermolaus Barbarus. Oxford, which had so long been in hostile communication with Italy as represented by the Papal Courts, at last touched, and was thrilled by the electric current of Italian civilisation. At this conjuncture of affairs, who but is reminded of the youth and the education of Gargantua? Till the very end of the fifteenth century Oxford had been that “huge barbarian pupil,” and had revelled in vast Rabelaisian suppers: “of fat beeves he had killed three hundred sixty seven thousand and fourteen, that in the entering in of spring he might have plenty of powdered beef.” The bill of fare of George Neville's feast is like one of the catalogues dear to the Cure of Meudon. For Oxford, as for Gargantua, “they appointed a great sophister-doctor, that read him Donatus, Theodoletus, and Alanus, in parabolis.” Oxford spent far more than Gargantua's eighteen years and eleven months over “the book de Modis significandis, with the commentaries of Berlinguandus and a rabble of others.” Now, under Colet, and Erasmus (1497), Oxford was put, like Gargantua, under new masters, and learned that the old scholarship “had been but brutishness, and the old wisdom but blunt, foppish toys serving only to bastardise noble spirits, and to corrupt all the flower of youth.”

The prospects of classical learning at Oxford (and, whatever may be the case to-day, on classical learning depended, in the fifteenth century, the fortunes of European literature) now seemed fair enough. People from the very source of knowledge were lecturing in Oxford. Wolsey was Bursar of Magdalen. The colleges, to which B. N. C. was added in 1509, and C. C. C. in 1516, were competing with each other for success in the New Learning. Fox, the founder of C. C. C., established in his college two chairs of Greek and Latin, “to extirpate barbarism.” Meanwhile, Cambridge had to hire an Italian to write public speeches at twenty pence each! Henry VIII. in his youth was, like Francis I., the patron of literature, as literature was understood in Italy. He saw in learning a new splendour to adorn his court, a new source of intellectual luxury, though even Henry had an eye on the theological aspect of letters. Between 1500 and 1530 Oxford was noisy with the clink of masons’ hammers and chisels. Brasenose, Corpus, and the magnificent kitchen of Christ Church, were being erected. (The beautiful staircase, which M. Brunet-Debaines has sketched, was not finished till 1640. The world owes it to Dr. Fell. The Oriel niches, designed in the illustration, are of rather later date.) The streets were crowded with carts, dragging in from all the neighbouring quarries stones for the future homes of the fair humanities. Erasmus found in Oxford a kind of substitute for the Platonic Society of Florence. “He would hardly care much about going to Italy at all, except for the sake of having been there. When I listen to Colet, it seems to me like listening to Plato himself”; and he praises the judgment and learning of those Englishmen, Grocyn and Linacre, who had been taught in Italy.

In spite of all this promise, the Renaissance in England was rotten at the root. Theology killed it, or, at the least, breathed on it a deadly blight. Our academic forefathers “drove at practice,” and saw everything with the eyes of party men, and of men who recognised no interest save that of religion. It is Mr. Seebohm (Oxford Reformers, 1867), I think, who detects, in Colet’s concern with the religious side of literature, the influence of Savonarola. When in Italy “he gave himself entirely to the study of the Holy Scriptures.” He brought to England from Italy, not the early spirit of Pico of Mirandola, the delightful freedom of his youth, but his later austerity, his later concern with the harmony of scripture and philosophy. The book which the dying Petrarch held wistfully in his hands, revering its very material shape, though he could not spell its contents, was the Iliad of Homer. The book which the young Renaissance held in its hands in England, with reverence and eagerness as strong and tender, contained the Epistles of St. Paul. It was on the Epistles that Colet lectured in 1496-97, when doctors and abbots flocked to hear him, with their note-books in their hands.

Thus Oxford differed from Florence, England from Italy: the former all intent on what it believed to be the very Truth, the latter all absorbed on what it knew to be no other than Beauty herself.

We cannot afford to regret the choice that England and Oxford made. The search for Truth was as certain to bring “not peace but a sword” as the search for Beauty was to bring the decadence of Italy, the corruption of manners, the slavery of two hundred years. Still, our practical earnestness did rob Oxford of the better side of the Renaissance. It is not possible here to tell the story of religious and social changes, which followed so hard upon each other, in the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth. A few moments in these stormy years are still memorable for some terrible or ludicrous event.

That Oxford was rather “Trojan” than “Greek,” that men were more concerned about their dinners and their souls than their prosody and philosophy, in 1531, is proved by the success of Grynaeus. He visited the University and carried off quantities of MSS., chiefly Neoplatonic, on which no man set any value. Yet, in 1535, Layton, a Commissioner, wrote to Cromwell that he and his companions had established the New Learning in the University. A Lecture in Greek was founded in Magdalen, two chairs of Greek and Latin in New, two in All Souls, and two already existed, as we have seen, in C. C. C. This Layton is he that took a Rabelaisian and unquotable revenge on that old tyrant of the Schools, Duns Scotus. “We have set Dunce in Bocardo, and utterly banished him from Oxford for ever, with all his blind glosses . . . And the second time we came to New College we found all the great quadrant full of the leaves of Dunce, the wind blowing them into every corner. And there we found a certain Mr. Greenfield, a gentleman of Buckinghamshire, gathering up part of the same books’ leaves, as he said, therewith to make him sewers or blanshers, to keep the deer within his wood, thereby to have the better cry with his hounds.” Ah! if the University Commissioners would only set Aristotle, and Messrs. Ritter and Preller, “in Bocardo,” many a young gentleman out of Buckinghamshire and other counties would joyously help in the good work, and use the pages, if not for blanshers, for other sportive purposes!

“Habent sua fata libelli,” as Terentianus Maurus says, in a frequently quoted verse. If Cromwell’s Commissioners were hard on Duns, the Visitors of Edward VI. were ruthless in their condemnation of everything that smacked of Popery or of magic. Evangelical religion in England has never been very favourable to learning. Thus, in 1550 “the ancient libraries were by their appointment rifled. Many manuscripts, guilty of no other superstition than red letters in the front or titles, were condemned to the fire . . . Such books wherein appeared angles were thought sufficient to be destroyed, because accounted Papish or diabolical, or both.” A cart-load of MSS., lucubrations of the Fellows of Merton, chiefly in controversial divinity, was taken away; but, by the good services of one Herks, a Dutchman, many books were preserved, and, later, entered the Bodleian Library. The world can spare the controversial manuscripts of the Fellows of Merton, but who knows what invaluable scrolls may have perished in the Puritan bonfire! Persons, the librarian of Balliol, sold old books to buy Protestant ones. Two noble libraries were sold for forty shillings, for waste paper. Thus the reign of Edward VI. gave free play to that ascetic and intolerable hatred of letters which had now and again made its voice heard under Henry VIII. Oxford was almost empty. The schools were used by laundresses, as a place wherein clothes might conveniently be dried. The citizens encroached on academic property. Some schools were quite destroyed, and the sites converted into gardens. Few men took degrees. The college plate and the jewels left by pious benefactors were stolen, and went to the melting-pot. Thus flourished Oxford under Edward VI.

The reign of Mary was scarcely more favourable to letters. No one knew what to be at in religion. In Magdalen no one could be found to say Mass, the fellows were turned out, the undergraduates were whipped — boyish martyrs — and crossed at the buttery. What most pleases, in this tragic reign, is the anecdote of Edward Anne of Corpus. Anne, with the conceit of youth, had written a Latin satire on the Mass. He was therefore sentenced to be publicly flogged in the hall of his college, and to receive one lash for each line in his satire. Never, surely, was a poet so sharply taught the merit of brevity. How Edward Anne must have regretted that he had not knocked off an epigram, a biting couplet, or a smart quatrain with the sting of the wit in the tail!

Oxford still retains a memory of the hideous crime of this reign. In Broad Street, under the windows of Balliol, there is a small stone cross in the pavement. This marks the place where, some years ago, a great heap of wooden ashes was found. These ashes were the remains of the fire of October 16th, 1555 — the day when Ridley and Latimer were burned. “They were brought,” says Wood, “to a place over against Balliol College, where now stands a row of poor cottages, a little before which, under the town wall, ran so clear a stream that it gave the name of Canditch, candida fossa, to the way leading by it.” To recover the memory of that event, let the reader fancy himself on the top of the tower of St. Michael’s, that is, immediately above the city wall. No houses interfere between him and the open country, in which Balliol stands; not with its present frontage, but much farther back. A clear stream runs through the place where is now Broad Street, and the road above is dark with a swaying crowd, out of which rises the vapour of smoke from the martyrs’ pile. At your feet, on the top of Bocardo prison (which spanned the street at the North Gate), Cranmer stands manacled, watching the fiery death which is soon to purge away the memory of his own faults and crimes. He, too, joined that “noble army of martyrs” who fought all, though they knew it not, for one cause — the freedom of the human spirit.

It was in a night-battle that they fell, and “confused was the cry of the paean,” but they won the victory, and we have entered into the land for which they contended. When we think of these martyrdoms, can we wonder that the Fellows of Lincoln did not spare to ring a merry peal on their gaudy-day, the day of St. Hugh, even though Mary the Queen had just left her bitter and weary life?

It would be pleasant to have to say that learning returned to Oxford on the rising of “that bright Occidental star, Queen Elizabeth.” On the other hand, the University recovered slowly, after being “much troubled,” as Wood says, “AND HURRIED UP AND DOWN by the changes of religion.” We get a glimpse, from Wood, of the Fellows of Merton singing the psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins round a fire in the College Hall. We see the sub-warden snatching the book out of the hands of a junior fellow, and declaring “that he would never dance after that pipe.” We find Oxford so illiterate, that she could not even provide an University preacher! A country gentleman, Richard Taverner of Woodeaton, would stroll into St. Mary’s, with his sword and damask gown, and give the Academicians, destitute of academical advice, a sermon beginning with these words:

“Arriving at the mount of St. Mary’s, I have brought you some fine bisketts baked in the Oven of Charitie, carefully conserved for the chickens of the Church, the sparrows of the spirit, and the sweet swallows of salvation.

In spite of these evil symptoms, a Greek oration and plenty of Latin plays were ready for Queen Elizabeth when she visited Oxford in 1566. The religious refugees, who had “eaten mice at Zurich” in Mary’s time, had returned, and their influence was hostile to learning. A man who had lived on mice for his faith was above Greek. The court which contained Sydney, and which welcomed Bruno, was strong enough to make the classics popular. That famed Polish Count, Alasco, was “received with Latin orations and disputes (1583) in the best manner,” and only a scoffing Italian, like Bruno, ventured to call the Heads of Houses THE DROWSY HEADS — dormitantes. Bruno was a man whom nothing could teach to speak well of people in authority. Oxford enjoyed the religious peace (not extended to “Seminarists”) of Elizabeth’s and James’s reigns, and did not foresee that she was about to become the home of the Court and a place of arms.

CHAPTER IV — JACOBEAN OXFORD

The gardens of Wadham College on a bright morning in early spring are a scene in which the memory of old Oxford pleasantly lingers, and is easily revived. The great cedars throw their secular shadow on the ancient turf, the chapel forms a beautiful background; the whole place is exactly what it was two hundred and sixty years ago. The stones of Oxford walls, when they do not turn black and drop off in flakes, assume tender tints of the palest gold, red, and orange. Along a wall, which looks so old that it may well have formed a defence of the ancient Augustinian priory, the stars of the yellow jasmine flower abundantly. The industrious hosts of the bees have left their cells, to labour in this first morning of spring; the doves coo, the thrushes are noisy in the trees. All breathes of the year renewal, and of the coming April; and all that gladdens us may have gladdened some indolent scholar in the time of King James.

In the reign of the first Stuart king of England, Oxford became the town that we know. Even in Elizabeth's days, could we ascend the stream of centuries, we should find ourselves much at home in Oxford. The earliest trustworthy map, that of Agas (1578), is worth studying, if we wish to understand the Oxford that Elizabeth left, and that the architects of James embellished, giving us the most interesting examples of collegiate buildings, which are both stately and comfortable. Let us enter Oxford by the Iffley Road, in the year 1578. We behold, as Agas enthusiastically writes:

“A citie seated, rich in everything,
Girt with wood and water, meadow, corn, and hill.”

The way is not bordered, of course, by the long, straggling streets of rickety cottages, which now stretch from the bridge half-way to Cowley and Iffley. The church, called by ribalds “the boiled rabbit,” from its peculiar shape, lies on the right; there is a gate in the city wall, on the place where the road now turns to Holywell. At this time the walls still existed, and ran from Magdalen past “St. Mary's College, called Newe,” through Exeter, through the site of Mr. Parker's shop, and all along the south side of Broad Street to St. Michael's, and Bocardo Gate. There the wall cut across to the castle. On the southern side of the city, it skirted Corpus and Merton Gardens, and was interrupted by Christ Church. Probably if it were possible for us to visit Elizabethan Oxford, the walls and the five castle towers would seem the most curious features in the place. Entering the East Gate, Magdalen and Magdalen Grammar School would be familiar objects. St. Edmund’s Hall would be in its present place, and Queen’s would present its ancient Gothic front. It is easy to imagine the change in the High Street which would be produced by a Queen’s not unlike Oriel, in the room of the highly classical edifice of Wren. All Souls would be less remarkable; at St. Mary’s we should note the absence of the “scandalous image” of Our Lady over the door. At Merton the fellows’ quadrangle did not yet exist, and a great wood-yard bordered on Corpus. In front of Oriel was an open space with trees, and there were a few scattered buildings, such as Peckwater’s Inn (on the site of “Peck”), and Canterbury College. Tom Quad was stately but incomplete. Turning from St. Mary’s past B. N. C., we miss the attics in Brasenose front, we miss the imposing Radcliffe, we miss all the quadrangle of the Schools, except the Divinity school, and we miss the Theatre. If we go down South Street, past Ch. Ch. we find an open space where Pembroke stands. Where Wadham is now, the most uniform, complete, and unchanged of all the colleges, there are only the open pleasances, and perhaps a few ruins of the Augustinian priory. St. John’s lacks its inner quadrangle, and Balliol, in place of its new buildings, has its old delightful grove. As to the houses of the town, they are not unlike the tottering and picturesque old roofs and gables of King Street.

To the Oxford of Elizabeth’s reign, then, the founders and architects of her successor added, chiefly, the Schools’ quadrangle, with the great gate of the five orders, a building beautiful, as it were, in its own despite. They added a smaller curiosity of the same sort, at Merton; they added Wadham, perhaps their most successful achievement. Their taste was a medley of new and old: they made a not uninteresting effort to combine the exquisiteness of Gothic decoration with the proportions of Greek architecture. The tower of the five orders reminds the spectator, in a manner, of the style of Milton. It is rich and overloaded, yet its natural beauty is not abated by the relics out of the great treasures of Greece and Rome, which are built into the mass. The Ionic and Corinthian pillars are like the Latinisms of Milton, the double-gilding which once covered the figures and emblems of the upper part of the tower gave them the splendour of Miltonic ornament. “When King James came from Woodstock to see this quadrangular pile, he commanded the gilt figures to be whitened over,” because they were so dazzling, or, as Wood expresses it, “so glorious and splendid that none, especially when the sun shone, could behold them.” How characteristic of James is this anecdote! He was by no means le roi soleil, as courtiers called Louis XIV., as divines called the pedantic Stuart. It is easy to fancy the King issuing from the Library of Bodley, where he has been turning over books of theology, prosing, and displaying his learning for hours. The rheumy, blinking eyes are dazzled in the sunlight, and he peevishly commands the gold work to be "whitened over." Certainly the translators of the Bible were but ill-advised when they compared his Majesty to the rising sun in all his glory.

James was rather fond of visiting Oxford and the royal residence at Woodstock. We shall see that his Court, the most dissolute, perhaps, that England ever tolerated, corrupted the manners of the students. On one of his Majesty's earliest visits he had a chance of displaying the penetration of which he was so proud. James was always finding out something or somebody, till it almost seemed as if people had discovered that the best way to flatter him was to try to deceive him. In 1604, there was in Oxford a certain Richard Haydock, a Bachelor of Physic. This Haydock practised his profession during the day like other mortals, but varied from the kindly race of men by a pestilent habit of preaching all night. It was Haydock's contention that he preached unconsciously in his sleep, when he would give out a text with the greatest gravity, and declare such sacred matters as were revealed to him in slumber, "his preaching coming by revelation." Though people went to hear Haydock, they were chiefly influenced by curiosity. "His auditory were willing to silence him by pulling, haling, and pinching him, yet would he pertinaciously persist to the end, and sleep still." The King was introduced into Haydock's bedroom, heard him declaim, and next day cross-examined him in private. Awed by the royal acuteness, Haydock confessed that he was a humbug, and that he had taken to preaching all night by way of getting a little notoriety, and because he felt himself to be "a buried man in the University."

That a man should hope to get reputation by preaching all night is itself a proof that the University, under James, was too theologically minded. When has it been otherwise? The religious strife of the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Mary, was not asleep; the troubles of Charles's time were beginning to stir. Oxford was as usual an epitome of English opinion. We see the struggle of the wildest Puritanism, of Arminianism, of Pelagianism, of a dozen "isms," which are dead enough, but have left their pestilent progeny to disturb a place of religion, learning, and amusement. By whatever names the different sects were called, men's ideas and tendencies were divided into two easily recognisable classes. Calvinism and Puritanism on one side, with the Puritanic haters of letters and art, were opposed to Catholicism in germ, to literature, and mundane studies. How difficult it is to take a side in this battle, where both parties had one foot on firm ground, the other in chaos, where freedom, or what was to become freedom of thought, was allied with narrow bigotry, where learning was chained to superstition!

As early as 1606, Mr. William Laud, B.D., of St. John's College, began to disturb the University. The young man preached a sermon which was thought to look Romewards. Laud became SUSPECT, it was thought a “scandalous” thing to give him the usual courteous greetings in the street or in the college quadrangle. From this time the history of Oxford, for forty years, is mixed up with the history of Laud. The divisions of Roundhead and of Cavalier have begun. The majority of the undergraduates are on the side of Laud; and the Court, the citizens, and many of the elder members of the University, are with the Puritans.

The Court and the King, we have said, were fond of being entertained in the college halls. James went from libraries to academic disputations, thence to dinner, and from dinner to look on at comedies played by the students. The Cambridge men did not care to see so much royal favour bestowed on Oxford. When James visited the University in 1641, a Cambridge wit produced a remarkable epigram. For some mysterious reason the playful fancies of the sister University have never been greatly admired at Oxford, where the brisk air, men flatter themselves, breeds nimbler humours. Here is part of the Cantab’s epigram:

“To Oxenford the King has gone,
With all his mighty peers,
That hath in peace maintained us,
These five or six long years.”

The poem maunders on for half a dozen lines, and “loses itself in the sands,” like the River Rhine, without coming to any particular point or conclusion. How much more lively is the Oxford couplet on the King, who, being bored by some amateur theatricals, twice or thrice made as if he would leave the hall, where men failed dismally to entertain him.

“The King himself did offer,”— “What, I pray?”
“He offered twice or thrice — to go away!”

As a result of the example of the Court, the students began to wear love-locks. In Elizabeth’s time, when men wore their hair “no longer than their ears,” long locks had been a mark, says Wood, of “swaggerers.” Drinking and gambling were now very fashionable, undergraduates were whipped for wearing boots, while “Puritans were many and troublesome,” and Laud publicly declared (1614) that “Presbyterians were as bad as Papists.” Did Laud, after all, think Papists so very bad? In 1617 he was President of his college, St. John’s, on which he set his mark. It is to Laud and to Inigo Jones that Oxford owes the beautiful garden-front, perhaps the most lovely thing in Oxford. From the gardens — where for so many summers the beauty of England has rested in the shadow of the chestnut-trees, amid the music of the chimes, and in air heavy with the scent of the acacia flowers — from the gardens, Laud’s building looks rather like a country-house than a college.

If St. John’s men have lived in the University too much as if it were a large country-house, if they have imitated rather the Toryism than the learning of their great Archbishop, the blame is partly Laud’s. How much harm to study he and Waynflete have unwittingly done, and how much they have added to the romance of Oxford! It is easy to understand that men find it a weary task to read in sight of the beauty of the groves of Magdalen and of St. John’s. When Kubla Khan “a stately pleasure-dome decreed,” he did not mean to settle students there, and to ask them for metaphysical essays, and for Greek and Latin prose compositions. Kubla Khan would have found a palace to his desire in the gardens of Laud, or where Cherwell, “meandering with a mazy motion,” stirs the green weeds, and flashes from the mill-wheel, and flows to the Isis through meadows white and purple with fritillaries.

“And here are gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossoms many an incense-bearing tree”;

but here is scarcely the proper training-ground of first-class men!

Oxford returned to her ancient uses in 1625. Soon after the accession of Charles I. the plague broke out in London, and Oxford entertained the Parliament, as six hundred years before she had received the Witan. There seemed something ominous in all that Charles did in his earlier years — the air, or men’s minds, was full of the presage of fate. It was observed that the House of Commons met in the Divinity School, and that the place seemed to have infected them with theological passion. After 1625 there was never a Parliament but had its committee to discuss religion, and to stray into the devious places of divinity. The plague pursued Charles to Oxford. In those days, and long afterwards, it was a common complaint that the citizens built rows of poor cottages within the walls, and that these cottages were crowded by dirty and indigent people. Plague was bred almost yearly at Oxford, and Charles really seems to have improved the sanitary arrangements of the city.

Laud, the President of St. John’s, became, by some intrigue, Chancellor of the University. He made Oxford many presents of Greek, Chinese, Hebrew, Latin, and Arabic MSS. There may have been — let us hope there were — quiet bookworms who enjoyed these gifts, while the town and University were bubbling over with religious feuds. People grumbled that “Popish darts were whet afresh on a Dutch grindstone.” A series of anti-Romish and anti-Royal sermons and pamphlets, followed as a rule by a series of recantations, kept men’s minds in a ferment. The good that Laud did by his gifts — and he was a munificent patron of learning — he destroyed by his dogmatism. Scholars could not decipher Greek texts while they were torturing biblical ones into arguments for and against the opinions of the Chancellor. What is the true story about the gorgeous vestments which were found in a box in the house of the President of St. John’s, and which are now preserved in the library of that college? Did they belong to the last of the old Catholic presidents of what was Chichele’s College of St. Bernard before the Reformation? Were they, on the other hand, the property of Laud himself? It has been said that Laud would not have known how to wear them. Fancy sees him treasuring that bright ecclesiastical raiment, , in some place of security. At night, perhaps, when candles were lit and curtains drawn, and he was alone, he may have arrayed himself in the gorgeous chasuble before the mirror, as Hetty wore her surreptitious finery. “There is a great deal of human nature in man.” If Laud really strutted in solitude, draped rather at random in these vestments, the ecclesiastical gear is even more interesting than the thin ivory-headed staff which supported him on his way to the scaffold; more curious than the diary in which he recorded the events of night and day, of dreaming hours and waking. In the library at St. John’s they show his bust — a tarnished, gilded work of art. He has a neat little cocked-up moustache, not like a prelate’s; the face is that of a Bismarck without strength of character.

In speaking of Oxford before the civil war, let us not forget that true students and peaceable men found a welcome retreat beyond the din of theological fictions. Lord Falkland’s house was within ten miles of the town. “In this time,” says Clarendon, in his immortal panegyric, “in this time he contracted familiarity and friendship with the most polished men of the University, who found such an immenseness of wit and such a solidity of judgment in him, so infinite a fancy, bound in by a most logical ratiocination, such a vast knowledge that he was not ignorant in anything, yet such an excessive humility as if he had known nothing, that they frequently resorted and dwelt with him, as in a college situated in a purer air; so that his house was a university in a less volume, whither they came not so much for repose as study; and to examine and refine those grosser propositions, which laziness and consent made current in vulgar conversation.”

The signs of the times grew darker. In 1636 the King and Queen visited Oxford, “with no applause.” In 1640 Laud sent the University his last present of manuscripts. He was charged with many offences. He had repaired crucifixes; he had allowed the “scandalous image” to be set up in the porch of St. Mary’s; and

Alderman Nixon, the Puritan grocer, had seen a man bowing to the scandalous image — so he declared. In 1642 Charles asked for money from the colleges, for the prosecution of the war with the Parliament. The beautiful old college plate began its journey to the melting-pot. On August 9th the scholars armed themselves. There were two bands of musqueteers, one of pikemen, one of halberdiers. In the reign of Henry III. the men had been on the other side. Magdalen bridge was blocked up with heaps of wood. Stones, for the primitive warfare of the time, were transported to the top of Magdalen tower. The stones were never thrown at any foemen. Royalists and Roundheads in turn occupied the place; and while grocer Nixon fled before the Cavaliers, he came back and interceded for All Souls College (which dealt with him for figs and sugar) when the Puritans wished to batter the graven images on the gate. On October 29th the King came, after Edgehill fight, the Court assembled, and Oxford was fortified. The place was made impregnable in those days of feeble artillery. The author of the Gesta Stephani had pointed out, many centuries before, that Oxford, if properly defended, could never be taken, thanks to the network of streams that surrounds her. Though the citizens worked grudgingly and slowly, the trenches were at last completed. The earthworks — a double line — ran in and out of the interlacing streams. A Parliamentary force on Headington Hill seems to have been unable to play on the city with artillery. Barbed arrows were served out to the scholars, who formed a regiment of more than six hundred men. The Queen held her little court in Merton, in the Warden’s lodgings. Clarendon gives rather a humorous account of the discontent of the fine ladies “The town was full of lords (besides those of the Council), and of persons of the best quality, with very many ladies, who, when not pleased themselves, kept others from being so.” Oxford never was so busy and so crowded; letters, society, war, were all confused; there were excursions against Brown at Abingdon, and alarms from Fairfax on Headington Hill. The siege, from May 22nd to June 5th, was almost a farce. The Parliamentary generals “fought with perspective glasses.” Neither Cromwell at Wytham, nor Brown at Wolvercot, pushed matters too hard. When two Puritan regiments advanced on Hinksey, Mr. Smyth blazed away at them from his house. As in Zululand, any building made a respectable fort, when cannon-balls had so little penetrative power, or when artillery was not at the front. Oxford was surrendered, with other places of arms, after Naseby, and — Presbyterians became heads of colleges!

CHAPTER V — SOME SCHOLARS OF THE RESTORATION

In Merton Chapel a little mural tablet bears the crest, the name, and the dates of the birth and death, of Antony Wood. He has been our guide in these sketches of Oxford life, as he must be the guide of the gravest and most exact historians. No one who cares for the past of the University should think without pity and friendliness of this lonely scholar, who in his lifetime was unpitied and unbefriended. We have reached the period in which he lived and died, in the midst of changes of Church and State, and surrounded by more worldly scholars, whose letters remain to testify that, in the reign of the Second Charles, Oxford was modern Oxford. In the epistles of Humphrey Prideaux, student of Christ Church, we recognise the foibles of the modern University, the love of gossip, the internecine criticism, the greatness of little men whom rien ne peut plaire.

Antony Wood was a scholar of a different sort, of a sort that has never been very common in Oxford. He was a perfect dungeon of books; but he wrote as well as read, which has never been a usual practice in his University. Wood was born in 1632, in one of the old houses opposite Merton, perhaps in the curious ancient hall which has been called Beham, Bream, and Bohemiae Aula, by various corruptions of the original spelling. As a boy, Wood must have seen the siege of Oxford, which he describes not without humour. As a young man, he watched the religious revolution which introduced Presbyterian Heads of Houses, and sent Puritanical captains of horse, like Captain James Wadsworth, to hunt for “Papistical reliques” and “massing stuffs” among the property of the President of C. C. C. and the Dean of Ch. Ch. (1646-1648). In 1650 he saw the Chancellorship of Oliver Cromwell; in 1659 he welcomed the Restoration, and rejoiced that “the King had come to his own again.” The tastes of an antiquary combined, with the natural reaction against Puritanism, to make Antony Wood a High Churchman, and not averse to Rome, while he had sufficient breadth of mind to admire Thomas Hobbes, the patriarch of English learning. But Wood had little room in his heart or mind for any learning save that connected with the University. Oxford, the city, and the colleges, the remains of the old religious art, the customs, the dresses — these things he adored with a loverlike devotion, which was utterly unrewarded. He owed no office to the University, and he was even expelled (1693) for having written sharply against Clarendon. This did not abate his zeal, nor prevent him from passing all his days, and much of his nights, in the study and compilation of University history.

The author of Wood’s biography has left a picture of his sombre and laborious old age. He rose at four o’clock every morning. He scarcely tasted food till supper-time. At the hour of the college dinner he visited the booksellers’ shops, where he was sure not to be disturbed by the gossip of dons, young and old. After supper he would smoke his pipe and drink his pot of ale in a tavern. It was while he took this modest refreshment, before old age came upon him, that Antony once fell in, and fell out, with Dick Peers. This Dick was one of the men employed by Dr. Fell, the Dean of Ch. Ch., to translate Wood’s History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford into Latin. The translation gave rise to a number of literary quarrels. As Dean of Ch. Ch., Dr. Fell yielded to the besetting sin of deans, and fancied himself the absolute master of the University, if not something superior to mortal kind. An autocrat of this sort had no scruples about changing Wood’s copy whenever he differed from Wood in political or religious opinion. Now Antony, as we said, had eyes to discern the greatness of Hobbes, whom the Dean considered no better than a Deist or an Atheist. The Dean therefore calmly altered all that Wood had written of the Philosopher of Malmesbury, and so maligned Hobbes that the old man, meeting the King in Pall Mall, begged leave to reply in his own defence. Charles allowed the dispute to go on, and Hobbes hit Fell rather hard. The Dean retorted with the famous expression about irritabile illud et vanissimum Malmesburiense animal. This controversy amused Oxford, but bred bad feeling between Antony Wood and Dick Peers, the translator of his work, and the tool of the Dean of Ch. Ch. Prideaux (Letters to John Ellis; Camden Society, 1875) describes the battles in city taverns between author and translator:

“I suppose that you have heard of the continuall feuds, and often battles, between the author and the translator; they had a skirmish at Sol Hardeing , another at the printeing house , and several other places.”

From the record of these combats, we learn that the recluse Antony was a man of his hands:

“As Peers always cometh off with a bloody nose or a black eye, he was a long time afraid to goe annywhere where he might chance to meet his too powerful adversary, for fear of another drubbing, till he was pro-proctor, and now Woods (sic) is as much afraid to meet him, least he should exercise his authority upon him. And although he be a good bowzeing blad, yet it hath been observed that never since his adversary hath been in office hath he dared to be out after nine, least he should meet him and exact the rigor of the statute upon him.”

The statute required all scholars to be in their rooms before Tom had ceased ringing. It was, perhaps, too rash to say that the Oxford of the Restoration was already modern Oxford. The manners of the students were, so to speak, more accentuated. However much the lecturer in Idolology may dislike the method and person of the Reader in the Mandingo language, these two learned men do not box in taverns, nor take off their coats if they meet each other at the Clarendon Press. People are careful not to pitch into each other in that way, though the temper which confounds opponents for their theory of irregular verbs is not at all abated. As Wood grew in years he did not increase in honours. “He was a mere scholar,” and consequently might expect from the greater number of men disrespect. When he was but sixty-four, he looked eighty at least. His dress was not elegant, “cleanliness being his chief object.” He rarely left his rooms, that were papered with MSS., and where every table and chair had its load of books and yellow parchments from the College muniment rooms. When strangers came to Oxford with letters of recommendation, the recluse would leave his study, and gladly lead them about the town, through Logic Lane to Queen’s, which had not then the sublimely classical front, built by Hawksmoor, “but suggested by Sir Christopher Wren.” It is worthy of his genius. Wood died in 1695, “forgiving every one.” He could well afford to do so. In his Athenae Oxonienses he had written the lives of all his enemies.

Wood, “being a mere scholar,” could, of course, expect nothing but disrespect in a place like Oxford. His younger contemporary, Humphrey Prideaux, was, in the Oxford manner, a man of the world. He was the son of a Cornish squire, was educated at Westminster under Busby (that awful pedagogue, whose birch seems so near a memory), got a studentship at Christ Church in 1668, and took his B.A. degree in 1672. Here it may be observed that men went up quite as late in life then as they do now, for Prideaux was twenty-four years old when he took his degree. Fell was Dean of Christ Church, and was showing laudable zeal in working the University Press. What a pity it is that the University Press of to-day has become a trading concern, a shop for twopenny manuals and penny primers! It is scarcely proper that the University should at once organise examinations and sell the manuals which contain the answers to the questions most likely to be set. To return to Fell; he made Prideaux edit Lucius Florus, and publish the Marmora Oxoniensia, which came out 1676. We must not suppose, however, that Prideaux was an enthusiastic archaeologist. He did the Marmora because the Dean commanded it, and because educated people were at that period not uninterested in Greek art. At the present hour one may live a lifetime in Oxford and only learn, by the accident of examining passmen in the Arundel Room, that the University possesses any marbles. In the walls of the Arundel Room (on the ground-floor in the Schools’ quadrangle) these touching remains of Hellas are interred. There are the funereal stelae, with their quiet expression of sorrow, of hope, of resignation. The young man, on his tombstone, is represented in the act of rising and taking the hand of a friend. He is bound on his latest journey.

“He goeth forth unto the unknown land,
Where wife nor child may follow; thus far tell
The lingering clasp of hand in faithful hand,
And that brief carven legend, Friend, farewell.

O pregnant sign, profound simplicity!
All passionate pain and fierce remonstrating
Being wholly purged, leave this mere memory,
Deep but not harsh, a sad and sacred thing.”

The lady chooses from a coffer a trinket, or a ribbon. It is her last toilette she is making, with no fear and no regret. Again, the long-severed souls are meeting with delight in the home of the just made perfect.

Even in the Schools these scraps of Greek lapidary’s work seem beautiful to us, in their sober and cheerful acceptance of life and death. We hope, in Oxford, that the study of ancient art, as well as of ancient literature, may soon be made possible. These tangible relics of the past bring us very near to the heart and the life of Greece, and waken a kindly enthusiasm in every one who approaches them. In Humphrey Prideaux’s letters there is not a trace of any such feeling. He does his business, but it is hack-work. In this he differs from the modern student, but in his caustic description of the rude and witless society of the place he is modern enough. In his letters to his friend, John Ellis, of the State Paper Office, it is plain that Prideaux wants to get preferment. His taste and his ambition alike made him detest the heavy, beer-drinking doctors, the fast “All Souls gentlemen,” and the fossils of stupidity who are always plentifully imbedded in the soil of University life. Fellowships were then sold, at Magdalen and New, when they were not given by favour. Prideaux grumbles (July 28th, 1674) at the laxness of the Commissioners, who should have exposed this abuse: “In town, one of their inquirys is whether any of the scholars weare pantaloons or periwigues, or keep dogs.” The great dispute about dogs, which raged at a later date in University College, had already begun to disturb dons and undergraduates. The choice language of Oxford contempt was even then extant, and Prideaux, like Grandison in Daniel Deronda, spoke curtly of the people whom he did not like as “brutes.” “Pembroke — the fittest colledge in the town for brutes.” The University did not encourage certain “players” who had paid the place a visit, and the players, in revenge, had gone about the town at night and broken the windows.

When the journey from London to Oxford is so easily performed, it is amusing to read of Prideaux's miserable adventures, in the diligence, between a lady of easy manners, a "pitiful rogue," and two undergraduates who "sordidly affected debauchery."

"This ill company made me very miserable all the way. Only once I could not but heartily laugh to see Fincher be sturdyly belaboured by five or six carmen with whips and prong staves for provoking them with some of his extravagant frolics."

The "violent affection to vice" in the University, or in the country, was, of course, the reaction against the godliness of Puritan captains of horse. Another form of the reaction is discernible in the revived High Church sentiments of Prideaux, Wood, and most of the students of the time.

The manners of the undergraduates were not much better than those of the pot-house-haunting seniors. Dr. Good, the Master of Balliol, "a good old toast," had much trouble with his students.

"There is, over against Balliol College, a dingy, horrid, scandalous ale-house, fit for none but draymen and tinkers, and such as, by going there, have made themselves equally scandalous. Here the Balliol men continually, and by perpetuall bubbing, add art to their natural stupidity, to make themselves perfect sots."

The envy and jealousy of the inferior colleges, alas! have put about many things, in these latter days, to the discredit of the Balliol men, but not even Humphrey Prideaux would, out of all his stock of epithets, choose "sottish" and "stupid." In these old times, however, Dr. Good had to call the men together, and -

"Inform them of the mischiefs of that hellish liquor called ale; but one of them, not so tamely to be preached out of his beloved liquor, made answer that the Vice-Chancelour's men drank ale at the "Split Crow," and why should not they too?"

On this, old Dr. Good posted off to the Vice-Chancellor, who, "being a lover of old ale" himself, returned a short answer to the head of Balliol. The old man went back to his college, and informed his fellows, "that he was assured there were no hurt in ale, so that now they may be sots by authority." Christ Church men were not more sober. David Whitford, who had been the tutor of Shirley the poet, was found lying dead in his bed: "he had been going to take a dram for refreshment, but death came between the cup and the lips, and this is the end of Davy." Prideaux records, in the same feeling style, that smallpox carried off many of the undergraduates, "besides my brother," a student at Corpus.

The University Press supplied Prideaux with gossip. They printed “a book against Hobs,” written by Clarendon. Hobbes was the heresiarch of the time, and when an unhappy fellow of Merton hanged himself, the doctrines of Hobbes were said to have prompted him to the deed. To return to the Press. “Our Christmas book will be Cornelius Nepos . . . Our marbles are now printing.” Prideaux, as has been said, took no interest in his own work.

“I coat (quote) a multitude of authors; if people think the better of me for that, I will think the worse of them for their judgement. It beeing soe easyly a thinge to make this specious show, he must be a fool that cannot gain whatsoever repute is to be gotten by it. If people will admire him for this, they may; I shall admire such for nothing else but their good indexs. As long as books have these, on what subject may we not coat as many others as we please, and never have read one of them?”

It is not easy to gather from this confession whether Prideaux had or had not read the books he “coated.” It is certain that Dean Aldrich (and here again we recognise the eternal criticism of modern Oxford) held a poor opinion of Humphrey Prideaux. Aldrich said Prideaux was “incorrect,” “muddy-headed,” “he would do little or nothing besides heaping up notes”; “as for MSS. he would not trouble himself about any, but rest wholly upon what had been done to his hands by former editors.” This habit of carping, this trick of collecting notes, this inability to put a work through, this dawdling erudition, this horror of manuscripts, every Oxford man knows them, and feels those temptations which seem to be in the air. Oxford is a discouraging place. College drudgery absorbs the hours of students in proportion to their conscientiousness. They have only the waste odds-and-ends of time for their own labours. They live in an atmosphere of criticism. They collect notes, they wait, they dream; their youth goes by, and the night comes when no man can work. The more praise to the tutors and lecturers who decipher the records of Assyria, or patiently collate the manuscripts of the Iliad, who not only teach what is already known, but add to the stock of knowledge, and advance the boundaries of scholarship and science.

One lesson may be learned from Prideaux’s cynical letters, which is still worth the attention of every young Oxford student who is conscious of ambition, of power, and of real interest in letters. He can best serve his University by coming out of her, by declining college work, and by devoting himself to original study in some less exhausted air, in some less critical society.

Among the aversions of Humphrey Prideaux were the “gentlemen of All Souls.” They certainly showed extraordinary impudence when they secretly employed the University Press to print off copies of Marc Antonio’s engravings after Giulio Romano’s drawings. It chanced that Fell visited the press rather late one evening, and found “his press working at such an imployment. The prints and plates he hath seased, and threatened the owners of them with expulsion.” “All Souls,” adds Prideaux, “is a scandalous place.” Yet All Souls was the college of young Mr. Guise, an Arabic scholar, “the greatest miracle in the knowledge of that I ever heard of.” Guise died of smallpox while still very young.

Thus Prideaux prattles on, about Admiral Van Tromp, “a drunken greazy Dutchman,” whom Speed, of St. John’s, conquered in boozing; of the disputes about races in Port Meadow; of the breaking into the Mermaid Tavern. “We Christ Church men bear the blame of it, our ticks, as the noise of the town will have it, amounting to 1,500 pounds.” Thus Christ Church had little cause to throw the first stone at Balliol. Prideaux shows little interest in letters, little in the press, though he lived in palmy days of printing, in the time of the Elzevirs; none at all in the educational work of the place. He sneers at the Puritans, and at the controversy on “The Foundations of Hell Torments shaken and removed.” He admits that Locke “is a man of very good converse, but is chiefly concerned to spy out the movements of the philosopher, suspected of sedition, and to report them to Ellis in town. About the new buildings, as of the beautiful western gateway, where Great Tom is hung, the work of Wren, Prideaux says little; St. Mary’s was suffering restoration, and “the old men,” including Wood, we may believe, “exceedingly exclaim against it.” That is the way of Oxford, a college is constantly rebuilding amid the protests of the rest of the University. There is no question more common, or less agreeable than this, “What are you doing to your tower?” or “What are you doing to your hall, library, or chapel?” No one ever knows; but we are always doing something, and working men for ever sit, and drink beer, on the venerable roofs.

Long intercourse with Prideaux’s letters, and mournful memories of
Oxford new buildings, tempt a writer to imitate Prideaux’s spirit.
Let us shut up his book, where he leaves Oxford, in 1686, to become
rector of Saham-Toney, in Norfolk, and marry a wife, though, says he,
“I little thought I should ever come to this.”

CHAPTER VI — HIGH TORY OXFORD

The name of her late Majesty Queen Anne has for some little time been a kind of party watch-word. Many harmless people have an innocent loyalty to this lady, make themselves her knights (as Mary Antoinette has still her sworn champions in France and Mary Stuart in Scotland), buy the plate of her serene period, and imitate the dress. To many moral critics in the press, however, Queen Anne is a kind of abomination. I know not how it is, but the terms “Queen Anne furniture and blue china” have become words of almost slanderous railing. Any didactic journalist who uses them is certain at once to fall heavily on the artistic reputation of Mr. Burne Jones, to rebuke the philosophy of Mr. Pater, and to hint that the entrance-hall of the Grosvenor Gallery is that “by-way” with which Bunyan has made us familiar. In the changes of things our admiration of the Augustan age of our literature, the age of Addison and Steele, of Marlborough and Aldrich, has become a sort of reproach. It may be that our modern preachers know but little of that which they traduce. At all events, the Oxford of Queen Anne’s time was not what they call “un-English,” but highly conservative, and as dull and beer-bemused as the most manly taste could wish it to be.

The Spectator of the ingenious Sir Richard Steele gives us many a glimpse of non-juring Oxford. The old fashion of Sanctity (Mr. Addison says, in the Spectator, No. 494) had passed away; nor were appearances of Mirth and Pleasure looked upon as the Marks of a Carnal Mind. Yet the Puritan Rule was not so far forgotten, but that Mr. Anthony Henley (a Gentleman of Property) could remember how he had stood for a Fellowship in a certain College whereof a great Independent Minister was Governor. As Oxford at this Moment is much vexed in her Mind about Examinations, wherein, indeed, her whole Force is presently expended, I make no scruple to repeat the account of Mr. Henley’s Adventure:

“The Youth, according to Custom, waited on the Governor of his College, to be examined. He was received at the Door by a Servant, who was one of that gloomy Generation that were then in Fashion. He conducted him with great Silence and Seriousness to a long Gallery which was darkened at Noon-day, and had only a single Candle burning in it. After a short stay in this melancholy Apartment, he was led into a Chamber hung with black, where he entertained himself for some time by the glimmering of a Taper, till at length the Head of the College came out to him from an inner Room, with half a dozen Night Caps upon his Head, and a religious Horror in his Countenance. The Young Man trembled; but his Fears increased when, instead of being asked what progress he had made in Learning, he was ask'd "how he abounded in Grace?" His Latin and Greek stood him in little stead. He was to give an account only of the state of his Soul — whether he was of the Number of the Elect; what was the Occasion of his Conversion; upon what Day of the Month and Hour of the Day it happened; how it was carried on, and when completed. The whole Examination was summed up in one short Question, namely, WHETHER HE WAS PREPARED FOR DEATH? The Boy, who had been bred up by honest Parents, was frighted out of his wits by the solemnity of the Proceeding, and by the last dreadful Interrogatory, so that, upon making his Escape out of this House of Mourning, he could never be brought a second Time to the Examination, as not being able to go through the Terrors of it."

By the year 1705, when Tom Hearne, of St. Edmund's Hall, began to keep his diary, the "honest folk" — that is, the High Churchmen — had the better of the Independent Ministers. The Dissenters had some favour at Court, but in the University they were looked upon as utterly reprobate. From the Reliquiae of Hearne (an antiquarian successor of Antony Wood, a bibliophile, an archaeologist, and as honest a man as Jacobitism could make him) let us quote an example of Heaven's wrath against Dissenters

"Aug. 6, 1706. We have an account from Whitchurch, in Shropshire, that the Dissenters there having prepared a great quantity of bricks to erect a spacious conventicle, a destroying angel came by night and spoiled them all, and confounded their Babel in the beginning, to their great mortification.

Hearne's common-place books are an amusing source of information about Oxford society in the years of Queen Anne, and of the Hanoverian usurper. Tom Hearne was a Master of Arts of St. Edmund's Hall, and at one time Deputy-Librarian of the Bodleian. He lost this post because he would not take "the wicked oaths" required of him, but he did not therefore leave Oxford. His working hours were passed in preparing editions of antiquarian books, to be printed in very limited number, on ordinary and LARGE PAPER. It was the joy of Tom's existence to see his editions become first scarce, then VERY SCARCE, while the price augmented in proportion to the rarity. When he was not reading in his rooms he was taking long walks in the country, tracing Roman walls and roads, and exploring Woodstock Park for the remains of "the labyrinth," as he calls the Maze of Fair Rosamund. In these strolls he was sometimes accompanied by undergraduates, even gentlemen of noble family, "which gave cause to some to envy our happiness." Hearne was a social creature, and had a heart, as he shows by the entry about the death of his "very dear friend, Mr. Thomas Cherry, A.M., to the great grief of all that knew him, being a gentleman of great beauty, singular modesty, of wonderful good nature, and most excellent principles.”

The friends of Hearne were chiefly, perhaps solely, what he calls “honest men,” supporters of the Stuart family, and always ready to drink his Majesty’s (King James’) health. They would meet in “Antiquity Hall,” an old house near Wadham, and smoke their honest pipes. They held certain of the opinions of “the Hebdomadal Meeting,” satirised by Steele in the Spectator (No. 43). “We are much offended at the Act for importing French wines. A bottle or two of good solid Edifying Port, at honest George’s, made a Night cheerful, and threw off Reserve. But this plaguy French Claret will not only cost us more Money but do us less good.” Hearne had a poor opinion of “Captain Steele,” and of “one Tickle: this Tickle is a pretender to poetry.” He admits that, though “Queen’s people are angry at the Spectator, and the common-room say ’tis silly dull stuff, men that are indifferent commend it highly, as it deserves.” Some other satirist had a plate etched, representing Antiquity Hall — a caricature of Tom’s antiquarian engravings. It may be seen in Skelton’s book.

Thanks to Hearne, it is easy to reproduce the common-room gossip, and the more treasonable talk of honest men at Antiquity Hall. The learned were much interested, as they usually are at Oxford, in theological discussion. Some one proved, by an ingenious syllogism, that all men are to be saved; but Hearne had the better of this Latitudinarian, easily demonstrating that the comfortable argument does not meet the case of madmen, and of deaf-mutes, whom Tom did not expect to meet in a future state. The ingenious, though depressing speculations of Mr. Dodwell were also discussed: “He makes the air the receptacle of all souls, good and bad, and that they are under the power of the D — l, he being prince of the air.” “The less perfectly good” hang out, if we may say so, “in the space between earth and the clouds,” all which is subtle, and creditable to Mr. Dodwell’s invention, but not susceptible of exact demonstration. The whole controversy is an interesting specimen of Queen Anne philosophy, which, with all respect for the taste of the period, we need not wish to see revived. The Bishop of Worcester, for example, “expects the end of the world about nine years hence.” While the theology of Oxford is being mentioned, the zeal of Dr. Miller, Regius Professor of Greek, must not be forgotten. The learned Professor endeavoured to convert, and even “writ a Letter to Mrs. Bracegirdle, giving her great encomiums (as having himself been often to see plays acted whilst they continued here) upon account of her excellent qualifications, and persuading her to give over this loose way of living, and betake herself to such a kind of life as was more innocent, and would gain her more credit.” The Professor’s advice was wasted on “Bracegirdle the brown.”

Politics were naturally much discussed in these doubtful years, when the Stuarts, it was thought, had still a chance to win their own again. In 1706, Tom says, “The great health now is “The Cube of Three,” which is the number 27, *i.e.* the number of the protesting Lords.” The University was most devoted, as far as drinking toasts constitutes loyalty. In Hearne’s common-place book is carefully copied out this “Scotch Health to K. J.”:

“He’s o’er the seas and far awa’,
He’s o’er the seas and far awa’;
Altho’ his back be at the wa’
We’ll drink his health that’s far awa’.”

The words live, and ring strangely out of that dusty past. The song survives the throne, and sounds pathetically, somehow, as one has heard it chanted, in days as dead as the year 1711, at suppers that seem as ancient almost as the festivities of Thomas Hearne. It is not unpleasant to remember that the people who sang could also fight, and spilt their blood as well as their “edifying port.” If the Southern “honest men” had possessed hearts for anything but tippling, the history of England would have been different.

When “the allyes and the French fought a bloudy battle near Mons” (1709, “Malplaquet”), the Oxford honest men, like Colonel Henry Esmond, thought “there was not any the least reason of bragging.” The young King of England, under the character of the Chevalier St. George, “shewed abundance of undaunted courage and resolution, led up his troups with unspeakable bravery, appeared in the utmost dangers, and at last was wounded.” Marlborough’s victories were sneered at, his new palace of Blenheim was said to be not only ill-built, but haunted by signs of evil omen.

It was not always safe to say what one thought about politics at Oxford. One Mr. A. going to one Mr. Tonson, a barber, put the barber and his wife in a ferment (they being rascally Whigs) by maintaining that the hereditary right was in the P. of W. Tonson laid information against the gentleman; “which may be a warning to honest men not to enter into topicks of this nature with barbers.” One would not willingly, even now, discuss the foreign policy of her Majesty’s Ministers with the person who shaves one. There are opportunities and temptations to which no decent person should be wantonly exposed. The bad effect of Whiggery on the temper was evident in this, that “the Mohocks are all of the Whiggish gang, and indeed all Whigs are looked upon as such Mohocks, their principles and doctrines leading thus to all manner of barbarity and inhumanity.” So true is it that Conservatives are all lovers of peace and quiet, that (May 29th, 1715) “last night a good part of the Presbyterian meeting-house in Oxford was pulled down. The people ran up and down the streets, crying, King James the Third! The true king! No Usurper. In the evening they pulled a good part of the Quakers’ and Anabaptists’ meeting-houses down. The heads of houses have represented that it was begun by the Whiggs.” Probably the heads of houses reasoned on a priori principles when they arrived at this remarkable conclusion.

In consequence of the honesty, frankness, and consistency of his opinions, Mr. Hearne ran his head in danger when King George came to the throne, which has ever since been happily settled in the possession of the Hanoverian line. A Mr. Urry, a Non-juror, had to warn him, saying, “Do you not know that they have a mind to hang you if they can, and that you have many enemies who are very ready to do it?” In spite of this, Hearne, in his diaries, still calls George I. the Duke of Brunswick, and the Whigs, “that fanatical crew.” John, Duke of Marlborough, he styles “that villain the Duke.” We have had enough, perhaps, of Oxford politics, which were not much more prejudiced in the days of the Duke than in those of Mr. Gladstone. Hearne’s allusions to the contemporary state of buildings and of college manners are often rather instructive. In All Souls the Whigs had a feast on the day of King Charles’s martyrdom. They had a dinner dressed of woodcock, “whose heads they cut off, in contempt of the memory of the blessed martyr.” These men were “low Churchmen, more shame to them.” The All Souls men had already given up the custom of wandering about the College on the night of January 14th, with sticks and poles, in quest of the mallard. That “swopping” bird, still justly respected, was thought, for many ages, to linger in the college of which he is the protector. But now all hope of recovering him alive is lost, and it is reserved for the excavator of the future to marvel over the fossil bones of the “swopping, swopping mallard.”

As an example of the paganism of Queen Anne’s reign — quite a different thing from the “Neo-paganism” which now causes so much anxiety to the moral press-man — let us note the affecting instance of Geffery Ammon. “He was a merry companion, and his conversation was much courted.” Geffery had but little sense of religion. He is now buried on the west side of Binsey churchyard, near St. Margaret’s well. Geffery selected Binsey for the place of his sepulchre, because he was partial to the spot, having often shot snipe there. In order to moisten his clay, he desired his friend Will Gardner, a boatman of Oxford, who was accustomed to row him down the river, to put now and then a bottle of ale by his grave when he came that way; an injunction which was punctually complied with.

Oxford lost in Hearne’s time many of her old buildings. It is said, with a dreadful appearance of truth, that Oxford is now to lose some of the few that are left. Corpus and Merton, if they are not belied, mean to pull down the old houses opposite Merton, halls and houses consecrated to the memory of Antony Wood, and to build lecture-rooms AND HOUSES FOR MARRIED DONS on the site. The topic, for one who is especially bound to pray for Merton (and who now does so with unusual fervour), is most painful. A view of the “proposed new buildings,” in the Exhibition of the Royal Academy (1879), depresses the soul. In the same spirit Hearne says (March 28th, 1671), “It always grieves me when I go through Queen’s College, to see the ruins of the old chapell next to High Street, the area of which now lies open (the building being most of it pulled down) and trampled upon by dogs, etc., as if the ground had never been consecrated. Nor do the Queen’s Coll. people take any care, but rather laught at it when ’tis mentioned.” In 1722 “the famous postern-gate called the Turl Gate” (a corruption for Thorold Gate) was “pulled down by one Dr. Walker, who lived by it, and pretended that it was a detriment to his house. As long ago as 1705, they had pulled down the building of Peckwater quadrangle, in Ch. Ch.” Queen’s also “pulled down the old refectory, which was on the west side of the old quadrangle, and was a fine old structure that I used to admire much.” It appears that the College was also anxious to pull down the chamber of King Henry V. This is a strange craze for destruction, that some time ago endangered the beautiful library of Merton, a place where one can fancy that Chaucer or Wyclif may have studied. Oxford will soon have little left of the beauty and antiquity of Patey’s Quad in Merton, as represented in our illustration. What the next generation will think of the multitudinous new buildings, it is not hard to conjecture. Imitative experiments, without style or fancy in structure or decoration, and often more than medievally uncomfortable, they will seem but evidences of Oxford’s love of destruction. People of Hearne’s way of thinking, people who respect antiquity, protest in vain, and, like Hearne, must be content sadly to enjoy what is left of grace and dignity. He died before Oxford had quite become the Oxford of Gibbon’s autobiography.

CHAPTER VII — GEORGIAN OXFORD

Oxford has usually been described either by her lovers or her malcontents. She has suffered the extremes of filial ingratitude and affection. There is something in the place that makes all her children either adore or detest her; and it is difficult, indeed, to pick out the truth concerning her past social condition from the satires and the encomiums. Nor is it easy to say what qualities in Oxford, and what answering characteristics in any of her sons, will beget the favourable or the unfavourable verdict. Gibbon, one might have thought, saw the sunny, and Johnson the shady, side of the University. With youth, and wealth, and liberty, with a set of three beautiful rooms in that "stately pile, the new building of Magdalen College," Gibbon found nothing in Oxford to please him — nothing to admire, nothing to love. From his poor and lofty rooms in Pembroke Gate-tower the hypochondriac Johnson — rugged, anxious, and conscious of his great unemployed power — looked down on a much more pleasant Oxford, on a city and on schools that he never ceased to regard with affection. This contrast is found in the opinions of our contemporaries. One man will pass his time in sneering at his tutors and his companions, in turning listlessly from study to study, in following false tendencies, and picking up scraps of knowledge which he despises, and in later life he will detest his University. There are wiser and more successful students, who yet bear away a grudge against the stately mother of us all, that so easily can disregard our petty spleens and ungrateful rancour. Mr. Lowe's most bitter congratulatory addresses to the "happy Civil Engineers," and his unkindest cuts at ancient history, and at the old philosophies which "on Argive heights divinely sung," move her not at all. Meanwhile, the majority of men are more kindly compact, and have more natural affections, and on them the memory of their earliest friendships, and of that beautiful environment which Oxford gave to their years of youth, is not wholly wasted.

There are more Johnsons, happily, in this matter, than Gibbons. There is little need to repeat the familiar story of Johnson's life at Pembroke. He went up in the October term of 1728, being then nineteen years of age, and already full of that wide and miscellaneous classical reading which the Oxford course, then as now, somewhat discouraged. "His figure and manner appeared strange" to the company in which he found himself; and when he broke silence it was with a quotation from Macrobius. To his tutor's lectures, as a later poet says, "with freshman zeal he went"; but his zeal did not last out the discovery that the tutor was “a heavy man,” and the fact that there was “sliding on Christ Church Meadow.” Have any of the artists who repeat, with perseverance, the most famous scenes in the Doctor’s life — drawn him sliding on Christ Church meadows, sliding in these worn and clouted shoes of his, and with that figure which even the exercise of skating could not have made “swan-like,” to quote the young lady in “Pickwick”? Johnson was “sconced” in the sum of twopence for cutting lecture; and it is rather curious that the amount of the fine was the same four hundred years earlier, when Master Stoke, of Catte Hall (whose career we touched on in the second of these sketches), deserted his lessons. It was when he was thus sconced that Johnson made that reply which Boswell preserves “as a specimen of the antithetical character of his wit”— “Sir, you have sconced me twopence for non-attendance on a lecture not worth a penny.”

Sconcing seems to have been the penalty for offences very various in degree. “A young fellow of Balliol College having, upon some discontent, cut his throat very dangerously, the master of his College sent his servitor to the buttery-book to sconce him five shillings; and,” says the Doctor, “tell him that the next time he cuts his throat I’ll sconce him ten!” This prosaic punishment might perhaps deter some Werthers from playing with edged tools.

From Boswell’s meagre account of Johnson’s Oxford career we gather some facts which supplement the description of Gibbon. The future historian went into residence twenty-three years after Johnson departed without taking his degree. Gibbon was a gentleman commoner, and was permitted by the easy discipline of Magdalen to behave just as he pleased. He “eloped,” as he says, from Oxford, as often as he chose, and went up to town, where he was by no means the ideal of “the Manly Oxonian in London.” The fellows of Magdalen, possessing a revenue which private avarice might easily have raised to 30,000 pounds, took no interest in their pupils. Gibbon’s tutor read a few Latin plays with his pupil, in a style of dry and literal translation. The other fellows, less conscientious, passed their lives in tippling and tattling, discussing the “Oxford Toasts,” and drinking other toasts to the king over the water. “Some duties,” says Gibbon, “may possibly have been imposed on the poor scholars,” but “the velvet cap was the cap of liberty,” and the gentleman commoner consulted only his own pleasure. Johnson was a poor scholar, and on him duties were imposed. He was requested to write an ode on the Gunpowder Plot, and Boswell thinks “his vivacity and imagination must have produced something fine.” He neglected, however, with his usual indolence, this opportunity of producing something fine. Another exercise imposed on the poor was the translation of Mr. Pope’s “Messiah,” in which the young Pembroke man succeeded so well that, by Mr. Pope’s own generous confession, future ages would doubt whether the English or the Latin piece was the original. Johnson complained that no man could be properly inspired by the Pembroke "coll," or college beer, which was then commonly drunk by undergraduates, still guiltless of Rhine wines, and of collecting Chinese monsters.

Carmina vis nostri scribant meliora poetae
Ingenium jubeas purior baustus alat.

In spite of the muddy beer, the poverty, and the "bitterness mistaken for frolic," with which Johnson entertained the other undergraduates round Pembroke gate, he never ceased to respect his college. "His love and regard for Pembroke he entertained to the last," while of his old tutor he said, "a man who becomes Jorden's pupil becomes his son." Gibbon's sneer is a foil to Johnson's kindliness. "I applaud the filial piety which it is impossible for me to imitate . . . To the University of Oxford I acknowledge no obligations, and she will as cheerfully renounce me for a son, as I am willing to disclaim her for a mother."

Johnson was a man who could take the rough with the smooth, and, to judge by all accounts, the Oxford of the earlier half of the eighteenth century was excessively rough. Manners were rather primitive: a big fire burned in the centre of Balliol Hall, and round this fire, one night in every year, it is said that all the world was welcome to a feast of ale and bread and cheese. Every guest paid his shot by singing a song or telling a story; and one can fancy Johnson sharing in this barbaric hospitality. "What learning can they have who are destitute of all principles of civil behaviour?" says a writer from whose journal (printed in 1746) Southey has made some extracts. The diarist was a Puritan of the old leaven, who visited Oxford shortly before Johnson's period, and who speaks of "a power of gross darkness that may be felt constantly prevailing in that place of wisdom and of subtlety, but not of God . . . In this wicked place the scholars are the rudest, most giddy, and unruly rabble, and most mischievous." But this strange and unfriendly critic was a Nonconformist, in times when good Churchmen showed their piety by wrecking chapels and "rabbling" ministers. In our days only the Davenport Brothers and similar professors of strange creeds suffer from the manly piety of the undergraduates.

Of all the carping, cross-grained, scandal-loving, Whiggish assailants of Alma Mater, the author of Terrae Filius was the most persistent. The first little volume which contains the numbers of this bi-weekly periodical (printed for R. Franklin, under Tom's Coffee-house, in Russell Street, Covent Garden, MDCCXXVI.) is not at all rare, and is well worth a desultory reading. What strikes one most in Terrae Filius is the religious discontent of the bilious author. One thinks, foolishly of course, of even Georgian Whigs as orthodox men, at least in their undergraduate days. The mere aspect of Mr. Leslie Stephen’s work on the philosophers of the eighteenth century is enough to banish this pleasing delusion. The Deists and Freethinkers had their followers in Johnson’s day among the undergraduates, though scepticism, like Whiggery, was unpopular, and might be punished. Johnson says, that when he was a boy he was a lax TALKER, rather than a lax THINKER, against religion; “but lax talking against religion at Oxford would not be suffered.” The author of Terrae Filius, however, never omits a chance of sneering at our faith, and at the Church of England as by law established. In his description of the exercises of the Club of Wits, only one respectably clever epigram is quoted, beginning, -

“Since in religion all men disagree,
And some one God believe, some thirty, and some three.”

This production “was voted heretical,” and burned by the hands of the small-beer drawer, while the author was expelled. In the author’s advice to freshmen, he gives a not uninteresting sketch of these rudimentary creatures. The chrysalis, as described by the preacher of a University sermon, “never, in his wildest moments, dreamed of being a butterfly”; but the public schoolboy of the last century sometimes came up in what he conceived to be gorgeous attire. “I observe, in the first place, that you no sooner shake off the authority of the birch but you affect to distinguish yourselves from your dirty school-fellows by a new drugget, a pair of prim ruffles, a new bob-wig, and a brazen-hilted sword.” As soon as they arrived in Oxford, these youths were hospitably received “amongst a parcel of honest, merry fellows, who think themselves obliged, in honour and common civility, to make you DAMNABLE DRUNK, and carry you, as they call it, a CORPSE to bed.” When this period of jollity is ended, the freshman must declare his views. He must see that he is in the fashion; “and let your declarations be, that you are CHURCHMEN, and that you believe as the CHURCH believes. For instance, you have subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles; but never venture to explain the sense in which you subscribed them, because there are various senses; so many, indeed, that scarce two men understand them in the same, and no TRUE CHURCHMAN in that which the words bear, and in that which they were written.”

This is pretty plain speaking, and Terrae Filius enforces, by an historical example, the dangers of even political freethought. In 1714 the Constitution Club kept King George’s birthday. The Constitutional Party was then the name which the Whigs took to themselves, though, thanks to the advance of civilisation, the Tories have fallen back upon the same. The Conservative undergraduates attacked the club, sallying forth from their Jacobite stronghold in Brasenose (as seen in our illustration), where the "silly statue," as Hearne calls it, was about that time erected. The Whigs took refuge in Oriel, the Tories assaulted the gates, and an Oriel man, firing out of his window, wounded a gownsman of Brasenose. The Tories, "under terror of this dangerous and unexpected resistance, retreated from Oriel." Yet such was the academic strength of the Jacobites and the Churchmen, that a Freethinker, or a "Constitutioner," could scarcely take his degree.

Terrae Filius, who lashes the dons for covetousness, greed, dissipation, rudeness, and stupidity, often corroborates the Puritan's report about the bad manners of the undergraduates. Yet Oxford, then as now, did not lack her exquisites, and her admirers of the fair. Terrae Filius thus describes a "smart," as these dandies were called — Mr. Frippery:

"He is one of those who come in their academical undress, every morning between ten and eleven, to Lyne's Coffee-house; after which he takes a turn or two upon the park, or under Merton Wall, whilst the dull REGULARS are at dinner in their hall, according to statute; about one he dines alone in his chamber upon a boiled chicken or some pettitoes; after which he allows himself an hour at least to dress in, to make his afternoon's appearance at Lyne's; from whence he adjourns to Hamilton's about five; from whence (after strutting about the room for a while, and drinking a dram of citron), he goes to chapel, to show how genteelly he dresses, and how well he can chaunt. After prayers he drinks tea with some celebrated toast, and then waits upon her to Magdalen Grove or Paradise Garden, and back again. He seldom eats any supper, and never reads anything but novels and romances."

The dress of this hero and his friends must have made the streets more gay than do the bright-coloured flannel coats of our boating men.

"He is easily distinguished by a stiff silk gown, which rustles in the wind as he struts along; a flax tie-wig, or sometimes a long natural one, which reaches down below his ; a broad bully-cock'd hat, or a square cap of about twice the usual size; white stockings; thin Spanish leather shoes. His clothes lined with tawdry silk, and his shirt ruffled down the bosom as well as at the wrists."

These "smarts" cut no such gallant figure when they first arrived in Oxford, with their fathers (rusty old country farmers), in linsey-woolsey coats, greasy, sun-burnt heads of hair, clouted shoes, yarn stockings, flapping hats, with silver hatbands, and long muslin neck-cloths run with red at the bottom.

After this satire of the undergraduates we may look at the contemporary account-book of a Proctor. In 1752 Gilbert White of Selborne was Proctor, and may have fined young Gibbon of Magdalen, who little thought that Oxford boasted an official who was to become an English classic. White paid some attention to dress, and got a feather-topp'd, grizzled wig from London; cost him 2 pounds, 5s. He bought "mountain wine, very old and good," and had his crest engraved on his teaspoons, that everything might be handsome about him. When he treated the Masters of Arts in Oriel Hall they ate a hundred pounds weight of biscuits — not, we trust, without marmalade. "A bowl of rum-punch from Horsman's" cost half a crown. Fancy a jolly Proctor sending out for bowls of rum-punch, and that in April! Eggs cost a penny each, and "three oranges and a mouse-trap" ninepence.

White, a generous man, gave the Vice-Chancellor "seven pounds of double-refined white sugar." I like to fancy my learned friend, the Proctor, going to the present Vice-Chancellor's with a donation of white sugar! Manners have certainly changed in the direction of severity. "Share of the expense for Mr. Butcher's release" came to ten and sixpence. What had Mr. Butcher been doing? The Proctor went "to Blenheim with Nan," and it cost him fifteen and sixpence. Perhaps she was one of the "Oxford Toasts" of a contemporary satire. Strawberries were fourpence a basket on the ninth of June; and on November 6, White lost one shilling "at cards, in common room." He went from Selborne to Oxford, "in a post-chaise with Jenny Croke"; and he gave Jenny a "round Chinaturene." Tea cost eight shillings a pound in 1752, while rum-punch was but half a crown a bowl. White's highest terminal battels were but 12 pounds, though he was a hospitable man, and would readily treat the other Proctor to a bowl of punch. It is well to remember White and Johnson when the Gibbon of that or any other day bewails the intellectual poverty of Oxford.

CHAPTER VIII — POETS AT OXFORD: SHELLEY AND LANDOR

At any given time a large number of poets may be found among the undergraduates at Oxford, and the younger dons. It is not easy to say what becomes of all these pious bards, who are a marked and peculiar people while they remain in residence. The undergraduate poet is a not uninteresting study. He wears his hair long, and divides it down the middle. His eye is wild and wandering, and his manner absent, especially when he is called on to translate a piece of an ancient author in lecture. He does not “read” much, in the technical sense of the term, but consumes all the novels that come in his way, and all the minor poetry. His own verses the poet may be heard declaiming aloud, at unholy midnight hours, so that his neighbours have been known to break his windows with bottles, and then to throw in all that remained of the cold meats of a supper party, without interfering with the divine afflatus. When the college poet has composed a sonnet, ode, or what not, he sends it to the Editor of the Nineteenth Century, and it returns to him after many days. At last it appears in print, in College Rhymes, a collection of mild verse, which is (or was) printed at regular or irregular intervals, and was never seen except in the rooms of contributors. The poet also speaks at the Union, where his sentiments are either revolutionary, or so wildly conservative that he looks on Magna Charta as the first step on the path that leads to England’s ruin. As a politician, the undergraduate poet knows no mean between Mr. Peter Taylor and King John. He has been known to found a Tory club, and shortly afterwards to swallow the formulae of Mr. Bradlaugh.

The life of the poet is, not unnaturally, one long warfare with his dons. He cannot conform himself to pedantic rules, which demand his return to college before midnight. Though often the possessor of a sweet vein of clerical and Kebleian verse, the poet does not willingly attend chapel; for indeed, as he sits up all night, it is cruel to expect him to arise before noon. About the poet’s late habits a story is told, which seems authentic. A remarkable and famous contemporary singer was known to his fellow-undergraduates only by this circumstance, that his melodious voice was heard declaiming anapaests all through the ambrosial night. When the voice of the singer was lulled, three sharp taps were heard in the silence. This noise was produced by the bard’s Scotch friend and critic in knocking the ashes out of his pipe. These feasts of reason are almost incompatible with the early devotion which, strangely enough, Shelley found time and inclination to attend.

Now it is (or was) the belief of undergraduates that you might break the decalogue and the laws of man in every direction with safety and the approval of the dons, if you only went regularly to chapel. As the poet cannot do this (unless he is a “sleepless man”), his existence is a long struggle with the fellows and tutors of his college. The manners of poets vary, of course, with the tastes of succeeding generations. I have heard of two (Thyrsis and Corydon) “who lived in Oxford as if it were a large country-house.”

Of other singers, the latest of the heavenly quire, it is invidiously said that they build shrines to Blue China and other ceramic abominations of the Philistine, and worship the same in their rooms. Of this sort it is not the moment to speak. Time has not proved them. But the old poets of ten years ago lived a militant life; they rarely took good classes (though they competed industriously for the Newdigate, writing in the metre of Dolores), and it not uncommonly happened that they left Oxford without degrees. They were often very agreeable fellows, as long as one was in no way responsible for them; but it was almost impossible — human nature being what it is — that they should be much appreciated by tutors, proctors, and heads of houses. How could these worthy, learned, and often kind and courteous persons know when they were dealing with a lad of genius, and when they had to do with an affected and pretentious donkey?

These remarks are almost the necessary preface to a consideration of the existence of Shelley and Landor at Oxford — the Oxford of 1793-1810. Whatever the effects may be on Shelleyan commentators, it must be said that, to the donnish eye, Percy Bysshe Shelley was nothing more or less than the ordinary Oxford poet, of the quieter type. In Walter Savage Landor, authority recognised a noisier and rowdier specimen of the same class. People who have to do with hundreds of young men at a time are unavoidably compelled to generalise. No don, that was a don, could have seen Shelley or Landor as they are described to us without hastily classing them in the category of poets who would come to no good and do little credit to the college. Landor went up to Trinity College in 1793. It was the dreadful year of the Terror, when good Englishmen hated the cruel murderers of kings and queens. Landor was a good Englishman, of course, and he never forgave the French the public assassination of Marie Antoinette. But he must needs be a Jacobin, and wear his own unpowdered hair — the Poet thus declaring himself at once in the regular recognised fashion. “For a portion of the time he certainly read hard, but the results he kept to himself; for here, as at Rugby, he declined everything in the shape of competition.” (Now competition is the essence of modern University study.) “Though I wrote better Latin verses than any undergraduate or graduate in the University," says Landor, "I could never be persuaded by my tutor or friends to contend for any prize whatever." The pleasantest and most profitable hours that Landor could remember at Oxford "were passed with Walter Birch in the Magdalen Walk, by the half-hidden Cherwell." Hours like these are indeed the pleasantest and most profitable that any of us pass at Oxford. The one duty which that University, by virtue of its very nature, has never neglected, is the assembling of young men together from all over England, and giving them three years of liberty of life, of leisure, and of discussion, in scenes which are classical and peaceful. For these hours, the most fruitful of our lives, we are grateful to Oxford, as long as friendship lives; that is, as long as life and memory remain with us. And, "if anything endure, if hope there be," our conscious existence in the after-world would ask for no better companions than those who walked with us by the Isis and the Cherwell.

Landor called himself "a Jacobin," though his own letters show that he was as far as the most insolent young "tuft" from relishing doctrines of human equality. He had the reputation, however, of being not only a Jacobin, but "a mad Jacobin"; too mad for Southey, who was then young, and a Liberal. "Landor was obliged to leave the University for shooting at one of the Fellows through a window," is the account which Southey gave of Landor's rustication. Now fellows often put up with a great deal of horse-play. There is scarcely a more touching story than that of the don who for the first time found himself "screwed up," and fastened within his own oak. "What am I to do?" the victim asked his sympathising scout, who was on the other, the free side of the oak. "Well, sir, Mr. Muff, sir, when 'e's screwed up 'e sends for the blacksmith," replied the servant. What a position for a man having authority, to be in the constant habit of sending for the blacksmith! Fellows have not very unfrequently been fired at with Roman candles, or bombarded with soda-water bottles full of gunpowder. One has also known sparrows shot from Balliol windows on the Martyrs' Memorial of our illustration. In this case, too, the sportsman was a poet. But deliberately to pot at a fellow, "to go for him with a shot gun," as the repentant American said he would do in future, after his derringer missed fire, is certainly a strong measure. No college which pretended to maintain discipline could allow even a poet to shoot thus wildly. In truth, Landor's offence has been exaggerated by Southey. It was nothing out of the common. The poet was giving "an after-dinner party" in his rooms. The men were mostly from Christ Church; for Landor was intimate, he says, with only one undergraduate of his own college, Trinity. On the opposite side of the quadrangle a Tory and a butt, named Leeds, was entertaining persons whom the Jacobin Landor calls "servitors and other raff of every description." The guests at the rival wine-parties began to "row" each other, Landor says, adding, “All the time I was only a spectator, for I should have blushed to have had any conversation with them, particularly out of a window. But my gun was lying on a table in the room, and I had in a back closet some little shot. I proposed, as they had closed the casements, and as the shutters were on the outside, to fire a volley. It was thought a good trick, and accordingly I went into my bedroom and fired.” Mr. Leeds very superfluously complained to the President. Landor adopted the worst possible line of defence, and so the University and this poet parted company.

It seems to have been generally understood that Landor’s affair was a boyish escapade. A copious literature is engaged with the subject of Shelley’s expulsion. As the story is told by Mr. Hogg, in his delightful book, the Life of Shelley, that poet’s career at Oxford was a typical one. There are in every generation youths like him, in unworldliness, wildness, and dreaminess, though unlike him, of course, in genius. The divine spark has not touched them, but they, like Shelley, are still of the band whom the world has not tamed. As Mr. Hogg’s book is out of print, and rare, it would be worth while, did space permit, to reproduce some of his wonderfully life-like and truthful accounts of Oxford as she was in 1810. The University has changed in many ways, and in most ways for the better. Perhaps that old, indolent, and careless Oxford was better adapted to the life of such an almost unexampled genius as Shelley. When his Eton friends asked him whether he still meant to be “the Atheist,” that is, the rebel he had been at school, he said, “No; the college authorities were civil, and left him alone.” Let us remember this when the learned Professor of Poetry at Oxford, Mr. Shairp, calls Shelley “an Atheist.” Mr. Hogg sometimes complains that undergraduates were left too much alone. But who could have safely advised or securely guided Shelley?

Undergraduates are now more closely looked after, as far as reading goes, than perhaps they like — certainly much more than Shelley would have liked. But when we turn from study to the conduct of life, is it not plain that no OFFICIAL interference can be of real value? Friendship and confidence may, and often does, exist between tutors and pupils. There are tutors so happily gifted with sympathy, and with a kind of eternal youth of heart and intellect, that they become the friends of generation after generation of freshmen. This is fortunate; but who can wonder that middle-aged men, seeing the generations succeed and resemble each other, lose their powers of understanding, of directing, of aiding the young, who are thus cast at once on their own resources? One has occasionally heard clever men complain that they were neglected by their seniors, that their hearts and brains were full of perilous stuff, which no one helped them to unpack. And it is true that modern education, when it meets the impatience of youth, often produces an unhappy ferment in the minds of men. To put it shortly, clever students have to go through their age of Sturm und Drang, and they are sometimes disappointed when older people, their tutors, for example, do not help them to weather the storm. It is a tempest in which every one must steer for himself, after all; and Shelley "was borne darkly, fearfully afar," into unplumbed seas of thought and experience. When Mr. Hogg complains that his friend was too much left to himself to study and think as he pleased, let us remember that no one could have helped Shelley. He was better at Oxford without his old Dr. Lind, "with whom he used to curse George III. after tea."

There are few chapters in literary history more fascinating than those which tell the story of Shelley at Oxford. We see him entering the hall of University College — a tall, shy stripling, bronzed with the September sun, with long elf-locks. He takes his seat by a stranger, and in a moment holds him spell-bound, while he talks of Plato, and Goethe, and Alfieri, of Italian poetry, and Greek philosophy. Mr. Hogg draws a curious sketch of Shelley at work in his rooms, where seven-shilling pieces were being dissolved in acid in the teacups, where there was a great hole in the floor that the poet had burned with his chemicals. The one-eyed scout, "the Arimaspian," must have had a time of tribulation (being a conscientious and fatherly man) with this odd master. How characteristic of Shelley it was to lend the glow of his fancy to science, to declare that things, not thoughts, mineralogy, not literature, must occupy human minds for the future, and then to leave a lecture on mineralogy in the middle, and admit that "stones are dull things after all!" Not less Shelleyan was the adventure on Magdalen Bridge, the beautiful bridge of our illustration, from which Oxford, with the sunset behind it, looks like a fairy city of the Arabian Nights — a town of palaces and princesses, rather than of proctors.

"One Sunday we had been reading Plato together so diligently, that the usual hour of exercise passed away unperceived: we sallied forth hastily to take the air for half-an-hour before dinner. In the middle of Magdalen Bridge we met a woman with a child in her arms. Shelley was more attentive at that instant to our conduct in a life that was past, or to come, than to a decorous regulation of the present, according to the established usages of society, in that fleeting moment of eternal duration styled the nineteenth century. With abrupt dexterity he caught hold of the child. The mother, who might well fear that it was about to be thrown over the parapet of the bridge into the sedgy waters below, held it fast by its long train.

""Will your baby tell us anything about pre-existence, Madam?" he asked, in a piercing voice, and with a wistful look."

Shelley and Hogg seem almost to have lived in reality the life of the Scholar Gipsy. In Mr. Arnold’s poem, which has made permanent for all time the charm, the sentiment of Oxfordshire scenery, the poet seems to be following the track of Shelley. In Mr. Hogg’s memoirs we hear little of summer; it seems always to have been in winter that the friends took their long rambles, in which Shelley set free, in talk, his inspiration. One thinks of him

“in winter, on the causeway chill, Where home through flooded fields foot travellers go,”

returning to the supper in Hogg’s rooms, to the curious desultory meals, the talk, and the deep slumber by the roaring fire, the small head lying perilously near the flames. One would not linger here over the absurd injustice of his expulsion from the University. It is pleasant to know, on Mr. Hogg’s testimony, that “residence at Oxford was exceedingly delightful to Shelley, and on all accounts most beneficial.” At Oxford, at least, he seems to have been happy, he who so rarely knew happiness, and who, if he made another suffer, himself suffered so much for others. The memory of Shelley has deeply entered into the sentiment of Oxford. Thinking of him in his glorious youth, and of his residence here, may we not say, with the shepherd in Theocritus, of the divine singer:

“Ah, would that in my days thou hadst been numbered with the living, how gladly on the hills would I have herded thy pretty she-goats, and listened to thy voice, whilst thou, under oaks and pine-trees lying, didst sweetly sing, divine Comatas!”

CHAPTER IX — A GENERAL VIEW

We have looked at Oxford life in so many different periods, that now, perhaps, we may regard it, like our artist, as a whole, and take a bird’s-eye view of its present condition. We may ask St. Bernard’s question, WHITHER HAST THOU COME? a question to which there are so many answers readily given, from within and without the University. It is not probable that the place will vary, in essential character, from that which has all along been its own. We shall have considered Oxford to very little purpose, if it is not plain that the University has been less a home of learning, on the whole, than a microcosm of English intellectual life. At Oxford the men have been thinking what England was to think a few months later, and they have been thinking with the passion and the energy of youth. The impulse to thought has not, perhaps, very often been given by any mind or minds within the college walls; it has come from without — from Italy, from France, from London, from a country vicarage, perhaps, from the voice of a wandering preacher. Whencesoever the leaven came, Oxford (being so small, and in a way so homogeneous) has always fermented readily, and promptly distributed the new forces, religious or intellectual, throughout England.

It is characteristic of England that the exciting topics, the questions that move the people most, have always been religious, or deeply tinctured with religion. Conservative as Oxford is, the home of “impossible causes,” she has always given asylum to new doctrines, to all the thoughts which comfortable people call “dangerous.” We have seen her agitated by Lollardism, which never quite died, perhaps, till its eager protest against the sacerdotal ideal was fused into the fire of the Reformation. Oxford was literally devastated by that movement, and by the Catholic reaction, and then was disturbed for a century and a half by the war of Puritanism, and of Tory Anglicanism. The latter had scarcely had time to win the victory, and to fall into a doze by her pipe of port, when Evangelical religion came to vex all that was moderate, mature, and fond of repose. The revolutionary enthusiasm of Shelley’s time was comparatively feeble, because it had no connection with religion; or, at least, no connection with the religion to which our countrymen were accustomed. Between the era of the Revolution and our own day, two religious tempests and one secular storm of thought have swept over Oxford, and the University is at present, if one may say so, like a ship in a heavy swell, the sea looking much more tranquil than it really is.

The Tractarian movement was, of course, the first of the religious disturbances to which we refer, and much the most powerful.

It is curious to read about that movement in the Apologia, for example, of Cardinal Newman. On what singular topics men’s minds were bent! what queer survivals of the speculations of the Schools agitated them as they walked round Christ Church meadows! They enlightened each other on things transcendental, yet material, on matters unthinkable, and, properly speaking, unspeakable. It is as if they “spoke with tongues,” which had a meaning then, and for them, but which to us, some forty years later, seem as meaningless as the inscriptions of Easter Island.

This was the shape, the Tractarian movement was the shape, in which the great Romantic reaction laid hold on England and Oxford. The father of all the revival of old doctrines and old rituals in our Church, the originator of that wistful return to things beautiful and long dead, was — Walter Scott. Without him, and his wonderful wand which made the dry bones of history live, England and France would not have known this picturesque reaction. The stir in these two countries was curiously characteristic of their genius. In France it put on, in the first place, the shape of art, of poetry, painting, sculpture. Romanticism blossomed in 1830, and bore fruit for ten years. The religious reaction was a punier thing; the great Abbe, who was the Newman of France, was himself unable to remain within the fantastic church that he built out of medieval ruins. In England, and especially in Oxford, the aesthetic admiration of the Past was promptly transmuted into religion. Doctrines which men thought dead were resuscitated; and from Oxford came, not poetry or painting, but the sermons of Newman, the Tracts, the whole religious force which has transformed and revivified the Church of England. That force is still working, it need hardly be said, in the University of to-day, under conditions much changed, but not without thrills of the old volcanic energy.

Probably the Anglican ideas ceased to be the most powerfully agitating of intellectual forces in Oxford about 1845. A new current came in from Rugby, and the influence of Dr. Arnold and the natural tide of reaction began to run very strong. If we had the apologiae of the men who thought most, about the time when Clough was an undergraduate, we should see that the influence of the Anglican divines had become a thing of sentiment and curiosity. The life had not died out of it, but the people whom it could permanently affect were now limited in number and easily recognisable. This form of religion might tempt and attract the strongest men for a while, but it certainly would not retain them. It is by this time a matter of history, though we are speaking of our contemporaries, that the abyss between the Lives of the English Saints, and the Nemesis of Faith, was narrow, and easily crossed. There was in Oxford that enthusiasm for certain German ideas which had previously been felt for medieval ideas. Liberalism in history, philosophy, and religion was the ruling power; and people believed in Liberalism. What is, or used to be, called the Broad Church, was the birth of some ten or fifteen years of Liberalism in religion at Oxford. The Essays and Reviews were what the Tracts had been; and Homeric battles were fought over the income of the Regius Professor of Greek. When that affair was settled Liberalism had had her innings, there was no longer a single dominant intellectual force; but the old storms, slowly subsiding, left the ship of the University lurching and rolling in a heavy swell.

People believed in Liberalism! Their faith worked miracles; and the great University Commission performed many wonderful works, bidding close fellowships be open, and giving all power into the hands of Examiners. Their dispensation still survives; the large examining-machine works night and day, in term time and vacation, and yet we are not happy. The age in Oxford, as in the world at large, is the age of collapsed opinions. Never men believed more fervidly in any revelation than the men of twenty years ago believed in political economy, free trade, open competition, and the reign of Common-sense and of Mr. Cobden. Where is that faith now? Many of the middle-aged disciples of the Church of Common-sense are still in our midst. They say the old sayings, they intone the old responses, but somehow it seems that scepticism is abroad; it seems that the world is wider than their system. Not even open examinations for fellowships and scholarships, not half a dozen new schools, and science, and the Museum, and the Slade Professorship of Art, have made Oxford that ideal University which was expected to come down from Heaven like the New Jerusalem.

We have glanced at the history of Oxford to little purpose if we have not learned that it is an eminently discontented place. There is room in colleges and common rooms for both sorts of discontent — the ignoble, which is the child of vanity and weakness; and the noble, which is the unassuaged thirst for perfection. The present result of the last forty years in Oxford is a discontent which is constantly trying to improve the working, and to widen the intellectual influence, of the University. There are more ways than one in which this feeling gets vent. The simplest, and perhaps the most honest and worthy impulse, is that which makes the best of the present arrangements. Great religious excitement and religious discussion being in abeyance, for once, the energy of the place goes out in teaching. The last reforms have made Oxford a huge collection of schools, in which physical science, history, philosophy, philology, scholarship, theology, and almost everything in the world but archaeology, are being taught and learned with very great vigour. The hardest worked of men is a conscientious college tutor; and almost all tutors are conscientious. The professors being an ornamental, but (with few exceptions) MERELY ornamental, order of beings, the tutors have to do the work of a University, which, for the moment, is a teaching-machine. They deliver I know not how many sets of lectures a year, and each lecture demands a fresh and full acquaintance with the latest ideas of French, German, and Italian scholars. No one can afford, or is willing, to lag behind; every one is "gladly learning," like Chaucer's clerk, as well as earnestly teaching. The knowledge and the industry of these gentlemen is a perpetual marvel to the "bellelettristic trifler." New studies, like that of Celtic, and of the obscurer Oriental tongues, have sprung up during recent years, have grown into strength and completeness. It is unnecessary to say, perhaps, that these facts dispose of the popular idea about the luxury of the long vacation. During the more part of the long vacation the conscientious teacher must be toiling after the great mundane movement in learning. He must be acquiring the very freshest ideas about Sanscrit and Greek; about the Ogham characters and the Cyprian syllabary; about early Greek inscriptions and the origins of Roman history, in addition to reading the familiar classics by the light of the latest commentaries.

What is the tangible result, and what the gain of all these labours? The answer is the secret of University discontent. All this accumulated knowledge goes out in teaching, is scattered abroad in lectures, is caught up in note-books, and is poured out, with a difference, in examinations. There is not an amount of original literary work produced by the University which bears any due proportion to the solid materials accumulated. It is just the reverse of Falstaff's case — but one halfpenny-worth of sack to an intolerable deal of bread; but a drop of the spirit of learning to cart-loads of painfully acquired knowledge. The time and energy of men is occupied in amassing facts, in lecturing, and then in eternal examinations. Even if the results are satisfactory on the whole, even if a hundred well-equipped young men are turned out of the examining-machine every year, these arrangements certainly curb individual ambition. If a resident in Oxford is to make an income that seems adequate, he must lecture, examine, and write manuals and primers, till he is grey, and till the energy that might have added something new and valuable to the acquisitions of the world has departed.

This state of things has produced the demand for the "Endowment of Research." It is not necessary to go into that controversy. Englishmen, as a rule, believe that endowed cats catch no mice. They would rather endow a theatre than a Gelehrter, if endow something they must. They have a British sympathy with these beautiful, if useless beings, the heads of houses, whom it would be necessary to abolish if Researchers were to get the few tens of thousands they require. Finally, it is asked whether the learned might not find great endowment in economy; for it is a fact that a Frenchman, a German, or an Italian will "research" for life on no larger income than a simple fellowship bestows.

The great obstacle to this "plain living" is perhaps to be found in the traditional hospitality of Oxford. All her doors are open, and every stranger is kindly entreated by her, and she is like the "discreet housewife" in Homer -

In some languages the same word serves for "stranger" and "enemy," but in the Oxford dialect "stranger" and "guest" are synonymous. Such is the custom of the place, and it does not make plain living very easy. Some critics will be anxious here to attack the "aesthetic" movement. One will be expected to say that, after the ideas of Newman, after the ideas of Arnold, and of Jowett, came those of the wicked, the extravagant, the effeminate, the immoral "Blue China School." Perhaps there is something in this, but sermons on the subject are rather luxuries than necessaries in the present didactic mood of the Press. "They were friends of ours, moreover," as Aristotle says, "who brought these ideas in"; so the subject may be left with this brief notice. As a piece of practical advice, one may warn the young and ardent advocate of the Endowment of Research that he will find it rather easier to curtail his expenses than to get a subsidy from the Commission.

The last important result of the "modern spirit" at Oxford, the last stroke of the sanguine Liberal genius, was the removal of the celibate condition from certain fellowships. One can hardly take a bird's-eye view of Oxford without criticising the consequences of this innovation. The topic, however, is, for a dozen reasons, very difficult to handle. One reason is, that the experiment has not been completely tried. It is easy enough to marry on a fellowship, a tutorship, and a few small miscellaneous offices. But how will it be when you come to forty years, or even fifty? No materials exist which can be used by the social philosopher who wants an answer to this question. In the meantime, the common rooms are perhaps more dreary than of old, in many a college, for lack of the presence of men now translated to another place. As to the "society" of Oxford, that is, no doubt, very much more charming and vivacious than it used to be in the days when Tony Wood was the surly champion of celibacy.

Looking round the University, then, one finds in it an activity that would once have seemed almost feverish, a highly conscientious industry, doing that which its hand finds to do, but not absolutely certain that it is not neglecting nobler tasks. Perhaps Oxford has never been more busy with its own work, never less distracted by religious politics. If we are to look for a less happy sign, we shall find it in the tendency to run up “new buildings.” The colleges are landowners: they must suffer with other owners of real property in the present depression; they will soon need all their savings. That is one reason why they should be chary of building; another is, that the fellows of a college at any given moment are not necessarily endowed with architectural knowledge and taste. They should think twice, or even thrice, before leaving on Oxford for many centuries the uncomely mark of an unfortunate judgment.

CHAPTER X — UNDERGRADUATE LIFE — CONCLUSION

A hundred pictures have been drawn of undergraduate life at Oxford, and a hundred caricatures. Novels innumerable introduce some Oxford scenes. An author generally writes his first romance soon after taking his degree; he writes about his own experience and his own memories; he mixes his ingredients at will and tints according to fancy. This is one of the two reasons why pictures of Oxford, from the undergraduate side, are generally false. They are either drawn by an aspirant who is his own hero, and who idealises himself and his friends, or they are designed by ladies who have read Verdant Green, and who, at some period, have paid a flying visit to Cambridge. An exhaustive knowledge of Verdant Green, and a hasty view of the Fitzwilliam Museum and “the backs of the Colleges” (which are to Cambridge what the Docks are to Liverpool), do not afford sufficient materials for an accurate sketch of Oxford. The picture daubed by the emancipated undergraduate who dabbles in fiction is as unrecognisable. He makes himself and his friends too large, too noisy, too bibulous, too learned, too extravagant, too pugnacious. They seem to stride down the High, prodigious, disproportionate figures, like the kings of Egypt on the monuments, overshadowing the crowd of dons, tradesmen, bargees, and cricket-field or river-side cads. Often one dimly recognises the scenes, and the acquaintances of years ago, in University novels. The mildest of men suddenly pose as heroes of the Guy Livingstone type, fellows who “screw up” timid dons, box with colossal watermen, and read all night with wet towels bound round their fevered brows. These sketches are all nonsense. Men who do these things do not write about them; and men who write about them never did them.

There is yet another cause which increases the difficulty of describing undergraduate life with truth. There are very many varieties of undergraduates, who have very various ways of occupying and amusing themselves. A steady man that reads his five or six hours a day, and takes his pastime chiefly on the river, finds that his path scarcely ever crosses that of him who belongs to the Bullingdon Club, hunts thrice a week, and rarely dines in hall. Then the “pale student,” who is hard at work in his rooms or in the Bodleian all day, and who has only two friends, out-college men, with whom he takes walks and tea, — he sees existence in a very different aspect. The Union politician, who is for ever hanging about his club, dividing the house on questions of blotting-paper and quill pens, discussing its affairs at breakfast, intriguing for the place of Librarian, writing rubbish in the suggestion-book, to him Oxford is only a soil carefully prepared for the growth of that fine flower, the Union. He never encounters the undergraduate who haunts billiard-rooms and shy taverns, who buys jewelry for barmaids, and who is admired for the audacity with which he smuggled a fox-terrier into college in a brown-paper parcel. There are many other species of undergraduate, scarcely more closely resembling each other in manners and modes of thought than the little Japanese student resembles the metaphysical Scotch exhibitioner, or than the hereditary war minister of Siam (whose career, though brief, was vivacious) resembled the Exeter Sioux, a half-reclaimed savage, who disappeared on the warpath after failing to scalp the Junior Proctor. When The Wet Blanket returned to his lodge in the land of Sitting Bull, he doubtless described Oxford life in his own way to the other Braves, while the squaws hung upon his words and the papooses played around. His account would vary, in many ways, from that of

“Whiskered Tomkins from the hail
Of seedy Magdalene.”

And he, again, would not see Oxford life steadily, and see it whole, as a more cultivated and polished undergraduate might. Thus there are countless pictures of the works and ways of undergraduates at the University. The scene is ever the same — boat-races and foot-ball matches, scouts, schools, and proctors, are common to all, — but in other respects the sketches must always vary, must generally be one-sided, and must often seem inaccurate.

It appears that a certain romance is attached to the three years that are passed between the estate of the freshman and that of the Bachelor of Arts. These years are spent in a kind of fairyland, neither quite within nor quite outside of the world. College life is somewhat, as has so often been said, like the old Greek city life. For three years men are in the possession of what the world does not enjoy — leisure; and they are supposed to be using that leisure for the purposes of perfection. They are making themselves and their characters. We are all doing that, all the days of our lives; but at the Universities there is, or is expected to be, more deliberate and conscious effort. Men are in a position to “try all things” before committing themselves to any. Their new-found freedom does not merely consist in the right to poke their own fires, order their own breakfasts, and use their own cheque-books. These things, which make so much impression on the mind at first, are only the outward signs of freedom. The boy who has just left school, and the thoughtless life of routine in work and play, finds himself in the midst of books, of thought, and discussion. He has time to look at all the common problems of the hour, and yet he need not make up his mind hurriedly, nor pledge himself to anything. He can flirt with young opinions, which come to him with candid faces, fresh as Queen Entelechy in Rabelais, though, like her, they are as old as human thought. Here first he meets Metaphysics, and perhaps falls in love with that enchantress, "who sifts time with a fine large blue silk sieve." There is hardly a clever lad but fancies himself a metaphysician, and has designs on the Absolute. Most fall away very early from this, their first love; and they follow Science down one of her many paths, or concern themselves with politics, and take a side which, as a rule, is the opposite of that to which they afterwards adhere. Thus your Christian Socialist becomes a Court preacher, and puts his trust in princes; the young Tory of the old type will lapse into membership of a School Board. It is the time of liberty, and of intellectual attachments too fierce to last long.

Unluckily there are subjects more engrossing, and problems more attractive, than politics, and science, art, and pure metaphysics. The years of undergraduate life are those in which, to many men, the enigmas of religion present themselves. They bring their boyish faith into a place (if one may quote Pantagruel's voyage once more) like the Isle of the Macraeones. On that mournful island were confusedly heaped the ruins of altars, fanes, temples, shrines, sacred obelisks, barrows of the dead, pyramids, and tombs. Through the ruins wandered, now and again, the half-articulate words of the Oracle, telling how Pan was dead. Oxford, like the Isle of the Macraeones, is a lumber-room of ruinous philosophies, decrepit religions, forlorn beliefs. The modern system of study takes the pupil through all the philosophic and many of the religious systems of belief, which, in the distant and the nearer past, have been fashioned by men, and have sheltered men for a day. You are taught to mark each system crumbling, to watch the rise of the new temple of thought on its ruins, and to see that also perish, breached by assaults from without or sapped by the slow approaches of Time. This is not the place in which we can well discuss the merits of modern University education. But no man can think of his own University days, or look with sympathetic eyes at those who fill the old halls and rooms, and not remember, with a twinge of the old pain, how religious doubt insists on thrusting itself into the colleges. And it is fair to say that, for this, no set of teachers or tutors is responsible. It is the modern historical spirit that must be blamed, that too clear-sighted vision which we are all condemned to share of the past of the race. We are compelled to look back on old philosophies, on India, Athens, Alexandria, and on the schools of men who thought so hard within our own ancient walls. We are compelled to see that their systems were only plausible, that their truths were but half-truths. It is the long vista of failure thus revealed which suggests these doubts that weary, and torture, and embitter the naturally happy life of discussion, amusement, friendship, sport, and study. These doubts, after all, dwell on the threshold of modern existence, and on the threshold — namely, at the Universities — men subdue them, or evade them.

The amusements of the University have been so often described that little need be said of them here. Unhealthy as the site of Oxford is, the place is rather fortunately disposed for athletic purposes. The river is the chief feature in the scenery, and in the life of amusement. From the first day of term, in October, it is crowded with every sort of craft. The freshman admires the golden colouring of the woods and Magdalen tower rising, silvery, through the blue autumnal haze. As soon as he appears on the river, his weight, strength, and "form" are estimated. He soon finds himself pulling in a college "challenge four," under the severe eye of a senior cox, and by the middle of December he has rowed his first race, and is regularly entered for a serious vocation. The thorough-going boating-man is the creature of habit. Every day, at the same hour, after a judicious luncheon, he is seen, in flannels, making for the barge. He goes out, in a skiff, or a pair, or a four-oar, or to a steeplechase through the hedges when Oxford, as in our illustration, is under water. The illustration represents Merton, and the writer recognises his old rooms, with the Venetian blinds which Mr. Ruskin denounced. Chief of all the boating-man goes out in an eight, and rows down to Iffley, with the beautiful old mill and Norman church, or accomplishes "the long course." He rows up again, lounges in the barge, rows down again (if he has only pulled over the short course), and goes back to dinner in hall. The table where men sit who are in training is a noisy table, and the athletes verge on "bear-fighting" even in hall. A statistician might compute how many steaks, chops, pots of beer, and of marmalade, an orthodox man will consume in the course of three years. He will, perhaps, pretend to suffer from the monotony of boating shop, boating society, and broad-blown boating jokes. But this appears to be a harmless affectation. The old breakfasts, wines, and suppers, the honest boating slang, will always have an attraction for him. The summer term will lose its delight when the May races are over. Boating-men are the salt of the University, so steady, so well disciplined, so good-tempered are they. The sport has nothing selfish or personal in it; men row for their college, or their University; not like running — men, who run, as it were, each for his own hand. Whatever may be his work in life, a boating-man will stick to it. His favourite sport is not expensive, and nothing can possibly be less luxurious. He is often a reading man, though it may be doubted whether "he who runs may read" as a rule. Running is, perhaps, a little overdone, and Strangers' cups are, or lately were, given with injudicious generosity. To the artist's eye, however, few sights in modern life are more graceful than the University quarter-of-a-mile race. Nowhere else, perhaps, do you see figures so full of a Hellenic grace and swiftness.

The cream of University life is the first summer term. Debts, as yet, are not; the Schools are too far off to cast their shadow over the unlimited enjoyment, which begins when lecture is over, at one o'clock. There are so many things to do, -

"When wickets are bowled and defended,
When Isis is glad with the eights,
When music and sunset are blended,
When Youth and the Summer are mates,
When freshmen are heedless of "Greats,"
When note-books are scribbled with rhyme,
Ah! these are the hours that one rates
Sweet hours, and the fleetest of Time!"

There are drags at every college gate to take college teams down to Cowley. There is the beautiful scenery of the "stripling Thames" to explore; the haunts of the immortal "Scholar Gipsy," and of Shelley, and of Clough's Piper, who -

"Went in his youth and the sunshine rejoicing, to Nuneham and
Godstowe."

Further afield men seldom go in summer, there is so much to delight and amuse in Oxford. What day can be happier than that of which the morning is given (after a lively college breakfast, or a "commonising" with a friend) to study, while cricket occupies the afternoon, till music and sunset fill the grassy stretches above Iffley, and the college eights flash past among cheering and splashing? Then there is supper in the cool halls, darkling, and half-lit up; and after supper talk, till the birds twitter in the elms, and the roofs and the chapel spire look unfamiliar in the blue of dawn. How long the days were then! almost like the days of childhood; how distinct is the impression all experience used to make! In later seasons Care is apt to mount the college staircase, and the "oak" which Shelley blessed cannot keep out this visitor. She comes in many a shape — as debt, and doubt, and melancholy; and often she comes as bereavement. Life and her claims wax importunate; to many men the Schools mean a cruel and wearing anxiety, out of all proportion to the real importance of academic success. We cannot see things as they are, and estimate their value, in youth; and if pleasures are more keen then, grief is more hopeless, doubt more desolate, uncertainty more gnawing, than in later years, when we have known and survived a good deal of the worst of mortal experience. Often on men still in their pupilage the weight of the first misfortunes falls heavily; the first touch of Dame Fortune's whip is the most poignant. We cannot recover the first summer term; but it has passed into ourselves and our memories, into which Oxford, with her beauty and her romance, must also quickly pass. He is not to be envied who has known and does not love her. Where her children have quarrelled with her the fault is theirs, not hers. They have chosen the accidental evils to brood on, in place of acquiescing in her grace and charm. These are crowded and hustled out of modern life; the fever and the noise of our struggles fill all the land, leaving still, at the Universities, peace, beauty, and leisure.

If any word in these papers has been unkindly said, it has only been spoken, I hope, of the busybodies who would make Oxford cease to be herself; who would rob her of her loveliness and her repose.

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Books, books again, and books once more!
These are our theme, which some miscall
Mere madness, setting little store
By copies either short or tall.
But you, O slaves of shelf and stall!
We rather write for you that hold
Patched folios dear, and prize “the small,
Rare volume, black with tarnished gold.”
A. D.

PREFATORY NOTE

The pages in this volume on illuminated and other MSS. (with the exception of some anecdotes about Bussy Rabutin and Julie de Rambouillet) have been contributed by the Rev. W. J. Loftie, who has also written on early printed books (p-95). The pages on the Biblioklept (p-56) are reprinted, with the Editor’s kind permission, from the Saturday Review; and a few remarks on the moral lessons of bookstalls are taken from an essay in the same journal.

Mr. Ingram Bywater, Fellow of Exeter College, and lately sub-Librarian of the Bodleian, has very kindly read through the proofs of chapters I., II., and III., and suggested some alterations.

Thanks are also due to Mr. T. R. Buchanan, Fellow of All Souls College, for two plates from his “Book-bindings in All Souls Library” (printed for private circulation), which he has been good enough to lend me. The plates are beautifully drawn and coloured by Dr. J. J. Wild. Messrs. George Bell & Sons, Messrs. Bradbury, Agnew, & Co., and Messrs. Chatto & Windus, must be thanked for the use of some of the woodcuts which illustrate the concluding chapter.
A. L.

AN APOLOGY FOR THE BOOK-HUNTER

“All men,” says Dr. Dibdin, “like to be their own librarians.” A writer on the library has no business to lay down the law as to the books that even the most inexperienced amateurs should try to collect. There are books which no lover of literature can afford to be without; classics, ancient and modern, on which the world has pronounced its verdict. These works, in whatever shape we may be able to possess them, are the necessary foundations of even the smallest collections. Homer, Dante and Milton Shakespeare and Sophocles, Aristophanes and Moliere, Thucydides, Tacitus, and Gibbon, Swift and Scott, — these every lover of letters will desire to possess in the original languages or in translations. The list of such classics is short indeed, and when we go beyond it, the tastes of men begin to differ very widely. An assortment of broadsheet ballads and scrap-books, bought in boyhood, was the nucleus of Scott’s library, rich in the works of poets and magicians, of alchemists, and anecdotists. A childish liking for coloured prints of stage characters, may be the germ of a theatrical collection like those of Douce, and Malone, and Cousin. People who are studying any past period of human history, or any old phase or expression of human genius, will eagerly collect little contemporary volumes which seem trash to other amateurs. For example, to a student of Moliere, it is a happy chance to come across “La Carte du Royaume des Pretieuses” — (The map of the kingdom of the “Precieuses”) — written the year before the comedian brought out his famous play “Les Precieuses Ridicules.” This geographical tract appeared in the very “Recueil des Pieces Choisies,” whose authors Magdelon, in the play, was expecting to entertain, when Mascarille made his appearance. There is a faculty which Horace Walpole named “serendipity,” — the luck of falling on just the literary document which one wants at the moment. All collectors of out of the way books know the pleasure of the exercise of serendipity, but they enjoy it in different ways. One man will go home hugging a volume of sermons, another with a bulky collection of catalogues, which would have distended the pockets even of the wide great-coat made for the purpose, that Charles Nodier used to wear when he went a book-hunting. Others are captivated by black letter, others by the plays of such obscurities as Nabbes and Glapthorne. But however various the tastes of collectors of books, they are all agreed on one point, — the love of printed paper. Even an Elzevir man can sympathise with Charles Lamb’s attachment to “that folio Beaumont and Fletcher which he dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden." But it is another thing when Lamb says, "I do not care for a first folio of Shakespeare." A bibliophile who could say this could say anything.

No, there are, in every period of taste, books which, apart from their literary value, all collectors admit to possess, if not for themselves, then for others of the brotherhood, a peculiar preciousness. These books are esteemed for curiosity, for beauty of type, paper, binding, and illustrations, for some connection they may have with famous people of the past, or for their rarity. It is about these books, the method of preserving them, their enemies, the places in which to hunt for them, that the following pages are to treat. It is a subject more closely connected with the taste for curiosities than with art, strictly so called. We are to be occupied, not so much with literature as with books, not so much with criticism as with bibliography, the quaint duenna of literature, a study apparently dry, but not without its humours. And here an apology must be made for the frequent allusions and anecdotes derived from French writers. These are as unavoidable, almost, as the use of French terms of the sport in tennis and in fencing. In bibliography, in the care for books AS books, the French are still the teachers of Europe, as they were in tennis and are in fencing. Thus, Richard de Bury, Chancellor of Edward III., writes in his "Philobiblon:" "Oh God of Gods in Zion! what a rushing river of joy gladdens my heart as often as I have a chance of going to Paris! There the days seem always short; there are the goodly collections on the delicate fragrant book-shelves." Since Dante wrote of -

"L'onor di quell' arte
Ch' allumare e chiamata in Parisi,"

"the art that is called illuminating in Paris," and all the other arts of writing, printing, binding books, have been most skilfully practised by France. She improved on the lessons given by Germany and Italy in these crafts. Twenty books about books are written in Paris for one that is published in England. In our country Dibdin is out of date (the second edition of his "Bibliomania" was published in 1811), and Mr. Hill Burton's humorous "Book-hunter" is out of print. Meanwhile, in France, writers grave and gay, from the gigantic industry of Brunet to Nodier's quaint fancy, and Janin's wit, and the always entertaining bibliophile Jacob (Paul Lacroix), have written, or are writing, on books, manuscripts, engravings, editions, and bindings. In England, therefore, rare French books are eagerly sought, and may be found in all the booksellers' catalogues. On the continent there is no such care for our curious or beautiful editions, old or new. Here a hint may be given to the collector. If he "picks up" a rare French book, at a low price, he would act prudently in having it bound in France by a good craftsman. Its value, when “the wicked day of destiny” comes, and the collection is broken up, will thus be made secure. For the French do not suffer our English bindings gladly; while we have no narrow prejudice against the works of Lortic and Cape, but the reverse. For these reasons then, and also because every writer is obliged to make the closest acquaintance with books in the direction where his own studies lie, the writings of French authorities are frequently cited in the following pages.

This apology must be followed by a brief defence of the taste and passion of book-collecting, and of the class of men known invidiously as book-worms and book-hunters. They and their simple pleasures are the butts of a cheap and shrewish set of critics, who cannot endure in others a taste which is absent in themselves. Important new books have actually been condemned of late years because they were printed on good paper, and a valuable historical treatise was attacked by reviewers quite angrily because its outward array was not mean and forbidding. Of course, critics who take this view of new books have no patience with persons who care for “margins,” and “condition,” and early copies of old books. We cannot hope to convert the adversary, but it is not necessary to be disturbed by his clamour. People are happier for the possession of a taste as long as they possess it, and it does not, like the demons of Scripture, possess them. The wise collector gets instruction and pleasure from his pursuit, and it may well be that, in the long run, he and his family do not lose money. The amusement may chance to prove a very fair investment.

As to this question of making money by collecting, Mr. Hill Burton speaks very distinctly in “The Book-hunter:” “Where money is the object let a man speculate or become a miser. . . Let not the collector ever, unless in some urgent and necessary circumstances, part with any of his treasures. Let him not even have recourse to that practice called barter, which political philosophers tell us is the universal resource of mankind preparatory to the invention of money. Let him confine all his transactions in the market to purchasing only. No good comes of gentlemen-amateurs buying and selling.” There is room for difference of opinion here, but there seems to be most reason on the side of Mr. Hill Burton. It is one thing for the collector to be able to reflect that the money he expends on books is not lost, and that his family may find themselves richer, not poorer, because he indulged his taste. It is quite another thing to buy books as a speculator buys shares, meaning to sell again at a profit as soon as occasion offers. It is necessary also to warn the beginner against indulging extravagant hopes. He must buy experience with his books, and many of his first purchases are likely to disappoint him. He will pay dearly for the wrong “Caesar” of 1635, the one WITHOUT errors in pagination; and this is only a common example of the beginner’s blunders. Collecting is like other forms of sport; the aim is not certain at first, the amateur is nervous, and, as in angling, is apt to “strike” (a bargain) too hurriedly.

I often think that the pleasure of collecting is like that of sport. People talk of “book-hunting,” and the old Latin motto says that “one never wearies of the chase in this forest.” But the analogy to angling seems even stronger. A collector walks in the London or Paris streets, as he does by Tweed or Spey. Many a lordly mart of books he passes, like Mr. Quaritch’s, Mr. Toovey’s, or M. Fontaine’s, or the shining store of M.M. Morgand et Fatout, in the Passage des Panoramas. Here I always feel like Brassicanus in the king of Hungary’s collection, “non in Bibliotheca, sed in gremio Jovis;” “not in a library, but in paradise.” It is not given to every one to cast angle in these preserves. They are kept for dukes and millionaires. Surely the old Duke of Roxburghe was the happiest of mortals, for to him both the chief bookshops and auction rooms, and the famous salmon streams of Floors, were equally open, and he revelled in the prime of book-collecting and of angling. But there are little tributary streets, with humbler stalls, shy pools, as it were, where the humbler fisher of books may hope to raise an Elzevir, or an old French play, a first edition of Shelley, or a Restoration comedy. It is usually a case of hope unfulfilled; but the merest nibble of a rare book, say Marston’s poems in the original edition, or Beddoes’s “Love’s Arrow Poisoned,” or Bankes’s “Bay Horse in a Trance,” or the “Mel Heliconicum” of Alexander Ross, or “Les Oeuvres de Clement Marot, de Cahors, Vallet de Chambre du Roy, A Paris, Ches Pierre Gaultier, 1551;” even a chance at something of this sort will kindle the waning excitement, and add a pleasure to a man’s walk in muddy London. Then, suppose you purchase for a couple of shillings the “Histoire des Amours de Henry IV, et autres pieces curieuses, A Leyde, Chez Jean Sambyx (Elzevir), 1664,” it is certainly not unpleasant, on consulting M. Fontaine’s catalogue, to find that he offers the same work at the ransom of 10 pounds. The beginner thinks himself in singular luck, even though he has no idea of vending his collection, and he never reflects that CONDITION — spotless white leaves and broad margins, make the market value of a book.

Setting aside such bare considerations of profit, the sport given by bookstalls is full of variety and charm. In London it may be pursued in most of the cross streets that stretch a dirty net between the British Museum and the Strand. There are other more shy and less frequently poached resorts which the amateur may be allowed to find out for himself. In Paris there is the long sweep of the Quais, where some eighty bouquinistes set their boxes on the walls of the embankment of the Seine. There are few country towns so small but that books, occasionally rare and valuable, may be found lurking in second-hand furniture warehouses. This is one of the advantages of living in an old country. The Colonies are not the home for a collector. I have seen an Australian bibliophile enraptured by the rare chance of buying, in Melbourne, an early work on — the history of Port Jackson! This seems but poor game. But in Europe an amateur has always occupation for his odd moments in town, and is for ever lured on by the radiant apparition of Hope. All collectors tell their anecdotes of wonderful luck, and magnificent discoveries. There is a volume “Voyages Litteraires sur les Quais de Paris” (Paris, Durand, 1857), by M. de Fontaine de Resbecq, which might convert the dullest soul to book-hunting. M. de Resbecq and his friends had the most amazing good fortune. A M. N-found six original plays of Moliere (worth perhaps as many hundreds of pounds), bound up with Garth’s “Dispensary,” an English poem which has long lost its vogue. It is worth while, indeed, to examine all volumes marked “Miscellanea,” “Essays,” and the like, and treasures may possibly lurk, as Snuffy Davy knew, within the battered sheepskin of school books. Books lie in out of the way places. Poggio rescued “Quintilian” from the counter of a wood merchant. The best time for book-hunting in Paris is the early morning. “The take,” as anglers say, is “on” from half-past seven to half-past nine a.m. At these hours the vendors exhibit their fresh wares, and the agents of the more wealthy booksellers come and pick up everything worth having. These agents quite spoil the sport of the amateur. They keep a strict watch on every country dealer’s catalogue, snap up all he has worth selling, and sell it over again, charging pounds in place of shillings. But M. de Resbecq vows that he once picked up a copy of the first edition of La Rochefoucauld’s “Maxims” out of a box which two booksellers had just searched. The same collector got together very promptly all the original editions of La Bruyere, and he even found a copy of the Elzevir “Pastissier Francais,” at the humble price of six sous. Now the “ Pastissier Francais,” an ill-printed little cookery-book of the Elzevirs, has lately fetched 600 pounds at a sale. The Antiquary’s story of Snuffy Davy and the “Game of Chess,” is dwarfed by the luck of M. de Resbecq. Not one amateur in a thousand can expect such good fortune. There is, however, a recent instance of a Rugby boy, who picked up, on a stall, a few fluttering leaves hanging together on a flimsy thread. The old woman who kept the stall could hardly be induced to accept the large sum of a shilling for an original quarto of Shakespeare’s “King John.” These stories are told that none may despair. That none may be over confident, an author may recount his own experience. The only odd trouvaille that ever fell to me was a clean copy of “La Journee Chretienne,” with the name of Leon Gambetta, 1844, on its catholic fly-leaf. Rare books grow rarer every day, and often ’tis only Hope that remains at the bottom of the fourpenny boxes. Yet the Paris book-hunters cleave to the game. August is their favourite season; for in August there is least competition. Very few people are, as a rule, in Paris, and these are not tempted to loiter. The bookseller is drowsy, and glad not to have the trouble of chaffering. The English go past, and do not tarry beside a row of dusty boxes of books. The heat threatens the amateur with sunstroke. Then, says M. Octave Uzanne, in a prose ballade of book-hunters — then, calm, glad, heroic, the bouquineurs prowl forth, refreshed with hope. The brown old calf-skin wrinkles in the sun, the leaves crackle, you could poach an egg on the cover of a quarto. The dome of the Institute glitters, the sickly trees seem to wither, their leaves wax red and grey, a faint warm wind is walking the streets. Under his vast umbrella the book-hunter is secure and content; he enjoys the pleasures of the sport unvexed by poachers, and thinks less of the heat than does the deer-stalker on the bare hill-side.

There is plenty of morality, if there are few rare books in the stalls. The decay of affection, the breaking of friendship, the decline of ambition, are all illustrated in these fourpenny collections. The presentation volumes are here which the author gave in the pride of his heart to the poet who was his “Master,” to the critic whom he feared, to the friend with whom he was on terms of mutual admiration. The critic has not even cut the leaves, the poet has brusquely torn three or four apart with his finger and thumb, the friend has grown cold, and has let the poems slip into some corner of his library, whence they were removed on some day of doom and of general clearing out. The sale of the library of a late learned prelate who had Boileau’s hatred of a dull book was a scene to be avoided by his literary friends. The Bishop always gave the works which were offered to him a fair chance. He read till he could read no longer, cutting the pages as he went, and thus his progress could be traced like that of a backwoodsman who “blazes” his way through a primeval forest. The paper-knife generally ceased to do duty before the thirtieth page. The melancholy of the book-hunter is aroused by two questions, “Whence?” and “Whither?” The bibliophile asks about his books the question which the metaphysician asks about his soul. Whence came they? Their value depends a good deal on the answer. If they are stamped with arms, then there is a book (“Armorial du Bibliophile,” by M. Guigard) which tells you who was their original owner. Any one of twenty coats-of-arms on the leather is worth a hundred times the value of the volume which it covers. If there is no such mark, the fancy is left to devise a romance about the first owner, and all the hands through which the book has passed. That Vanini came from a Jesuit college, where it was kept under lock and key. That copy of Agrippa “De Vanitate Scientiarum” is marked, in a crabbed hand and in faded ink, with cynical Latin notes. What pessimist two hundred years ago made his grumbling so permanent? One can only guess, but part of the imaginative joys of the book-hunter lies ‘ in the fruitless conjecture. That other question “Whither?” is graver. Whither are our treasures to be scattered? Will they find kind masters? or, worst fate of books, fall into the hands of women who will sell them to the trunk-maker? Are the leaves to line a box or to curl a maiden’s locks? Are the rarities to become more and more rare, and at last fetch prodigious prices? Some unlucky men are able partly to solve these problems in their own lifetime. They are constrained to sell their libraries — an experience full of bitterness, wrath, and disappointment.

Selling books is nearly as bad as losing friends, than which life has no worse sorrow. A book is a friend whose face is constantly changing. If you read it when you are recovering from an illness, and return to it years after, it is changed surely, with the change in yourself. As a man’s tastes and opinions are developed his books put on a different aspect. He hardly knows the “Poems and Ballads” he used to declaim, and cannot recover the enigmatic charm of “Sordello.” Books change like friends, like ourselves, like everything; but they are most piquant in the contrasts they provoke, when the friend who gave them and wrote them is a success, though we laughed at him; a failure, though we believed in him; altered in any case, and estranged from his old self and old days. The vanished past returns when we look at the pages. The vicissitudes of years are printed and packed in a thin octavo, and the shivering ghosts of desire and hope return to their forbidden home in the heart and fancy. It is as well to have the power of recalling them always at hand, and to be able to take a comprehensive glance at the emotions which were so powerful and full of life, and now are more faded and of less account than the memory of the dreams of childhood. It is because our books are friends that do change, and remind us of change, that we should keep them with us, even at a little inconvenience, and not turn them adrift in the world to find a dusty asylum in cheap bookstalls. We are a part of all that we have read, to parody the saying of Mr. Tennyson’s Ulysses, and we owe some respect, and house-room at least, to the early acquaintances who have begun to bore us, and remind us of the vanity of ambition and the weakness of human purpose. Old school and college books even have a reproachful and salutary power of whispering how much a man knew, and at the cost of how much trouble, that he has absolutely forgotten, and is neither the better nor the worse for it. It will be the same in the case of the books he is eager about now; though, to be sure, he will read with less care, and forget with an ease and readiness only to be acquired by practice.

But we were apologising for book-hunting, not because it teaches moral lessons, as “dauncyng” also does, according to Sir Thomas Elyot, in the “Boke called the Gouvernour,” but because it affords a kind of sportive excitement. Bookstalls are not the only field of the chase. Book catalogues, which reach the collector through the post, give him all the pleasures of the sport at home. He reads the booksellers’ catalogues eagerly, he marks his chosen sport with pencil, he writes by return of post, or he telegraphs to the vendor. Unfortunately he almost always finds that he has been forestalled, probably by some bookseller’s agent. When the catalogue is a French one, it is obvious that Parisians have the pick of the market before our slow letters reach M. Claudin, or M. Labitte. Still the catalogues themselves are a kind of lesson in bibliography. You see from them how prices are ruling, and you can gloat, in fancy, over De Luyne’s edition of Moliere, 1673, two volumes in red morocco, double (“Trautz Bauzonnet”), or some other vanity hopelessly out of reach. In their catalogues, MM. Morgand and Fatout print a facsimile of the frontispiece of this very rare edition. The bust of Moliere occupies the centre, and portraits of the great actor, as Sganarelle and Mascarille (of the “Precieuses Ridicules”), stand on either side. In the second volume are Moliere, and his wife Armande, crowned by the muse Thalia. A catalogue which contains such exact reproductions of rare and authentic portraits, is itself a work of art, and serviceable to the student. When the shop of a bookseller, with a promising catalogue which arrives over night, is not too far distant, bibliophiles have been known to rush to the spot in the grey morning, before the doors open. There are amateurs, however, who prefer to stay comfortably at home, and pity these poor fanatics, shivering in the rain outside a door in Oxford Street or Booksellers’ Row. There is a length to which enthusiasm cannot go, and many collectors draw the line at rising early in the morning. But, when we think of the sport of book-hunting, it is to sales in auction-rooms that the mind naturally turns. Here the rival buyers feel the passion of emulation, and it was in an auction-room that Guibert de Pixerecourt, being outbid, said, in tones of mortal hatred, “I will have the book when your collection is sold after your death.” And he kept his word. The fever of gambling is not absent from the auction-room, and people “bid jealous” as they sometimes “ride jealous” in the hunting-field. Yet, the neophyte, if he strolls by chance into a sale-room, will be surprised at the spectacle. The chamber has the look of a rather seedy “hell.” The crowd round the auctioneer’s box contains many persons so dingy and Semitic, that at Monte Carlo they would be refused admittance; while, in Germany, they would be persecuted by Herr von Treitschke with Christian ardour. Bidding is languid, and valuable books are knocked down for trifling sums. Let the neophyte try his luck, however, and prices will rise wonderfully. The fact is that the sale is a “knock out.” The bidders are professionals, in a league to let the volumes go cheap, and to distribute them afterwards among themselves. Thus an amateur can have a good deal of sport by bidding for a book till it reaches its proper value, and by then leaving in the lurch the professionals who combine to “run him up.” The amusement has its obvious perils, but the presence of gentlemen in an auction-room is a relief to the auctioneer and to the owner of the books. A bidder must be able to command his temper, both that he may be able to keep his head cool when tempted to bid recklessly, and that he may disregard the not very carefully concealed sneers of the professionals.

In book-hunting the nature of the quarry varies with the taste of the collector. One man is for bibles, another for ballads. Some pursue plays, others look for play bills. “He was not,” says Mr. Hill Burton, speaking of Kirkpatrick Sharpe, “he was not a black-letter man, or a tall copyist, or an uncut man, or a rough-edge man, or an early-English dramatist, or an Elzevirian, or a broadsider, or a pasquinader, or an old brown calf man, or a Grangerite, or a tawny moroccoite, or a gilt topper, or a marbled insider, or an editio princeps man.” These nicknames briefly dispose into categories a good many species of collectors. But there are plenty of others. You may be a historical-bindings man, and hunt for books that were bound by the great artists of the past and belonged to illustrious collectors. Or you may be a Jametist, and try to gather up the volumes on which Jamet, the friend of Louis Racine, scribbled his cynical “Marginalia.” Or you may covet the earliest editions of modern poets — Shelley, Keats, or Tennyson, or even Ebenezer Jones. Or the object of your desires may be the books of the French romanticists, who flourished so freely in 1830. Or, being a person of large fortune and landed estate, you may collect country histories. Again, your heart may be set on the books illustrated by Eisen, Cochin, and Gravelot, or Stothard and Blake, in the last century. Or you may be so old-fashioned as to care for Aldine classics, and for the books of the Giunta press. In fact, as many as are the species of rare and beautiful books, so many are the species of collectors. There is one sort of men, modest but not unwise in their generations, who buy up the pretty books published in very limited editions by French booksellers, like MM. Lemerre and Jouaust. Already their reprints of Rochefoucauld’s first edition, of Beaumarchais, of La Fontaine, of the lyrics attributed to Moliere, and other volumes, are exhausted, and fetch high prices in the market. By a singular caprice, the little volumes of Mr. Thackeray’s miscellaneous writings, in yellow paper wrappers (when they are first editions), have become objects of desire, and their old modest price is increased twenty fold. It is not always easy to account for these freaks of fashion; but even in book-collecting there are certain definite laws. “Why do you pay a large price for a dingy, old book," outsiders ask, "when a clean modern reprint can be procured for two or three shillings?" To this question the collector has several replies, which he, at least, finds satisfactory. In the first place, early editions, published during a great author's lifetime, and under his supervision, have authentic texts. The changes in them are the changes that Prior or La Bruyere themselves made and approved. You can study, in these old editions, the alterations in their taste, the history of their minds. The case is the same even with contemporary authors. One likes to have Mr. Tennyson's "Poems, chiefly Lyrical" (London: Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange, Cornhill, 1830). It is fifty years old, this little book of one hundred and fifty-four pages, this first fruit of a stately tree. In half a century the poet has altered much, and withdrawn much, but already, in 1830, he had found his distinctive note, and his "Mariana" is a masterpiece. "Mariana" is in all the collections, but pieces of which the execution is less certain must be sought only in the old volume of 1830. In the same way "The Strayed Reveller, and other poems, by A." (London: B. Fellowes, Ludgate Street, 1849) contains much that Mr. Matthew Arnold has altered, and this volume, like the suppressed "Empedocles on Etna, and other Poems, by A." (1852), appeals more to the collector than do the new editions which all the world may possess. There are verses, curious in their way, in Mr. Clough's "Ambarvalia" (1849), which you will not find in his posthumous edition, but which "repay perusal." These minutiae of literary history become infinitely more important in the early editions of the great classical writers, and the book-collector may regard his taste as a kind of handmaid of critical science. The preservation of rare books, and the collection of materials for criticism, are the useful functions, then, of book-collecting. But it is not to be denied that the sentimental side of the pursuit gives it most of its charm. Old books are often literary relics, and as dear and sacred to the lover of literature as are relics of another sort to the religious devotee. The amateur likes to see the book in its form as the author knew it. He takes a pious pleasure in the first edition of "Les Precieuses Ridicules," (M.DC.LX.) just as Moliere saw it, when he was fresh in the business of authorship, and wrote "Mon Dieu, qu'un Autheur est neuf, la premiere fois qu'on l'imprime." All editions published during a great man's life have this attraction, and seem to bring us closer to his spirit. Other volumes are relics, as we shall see later, of some famed collector, and there is a certain piety in the care we give to books once dear to Longepierre, or Harley, or d'Hoym, or Buckle, to Madame de Maintenon, or Walpole, to Grolier, or Askew, or De Thou, or Heber. Such copies should be handed down from worthy owners to owners not unworthy; such servants of literature should never have careless masters. A man may prefer to read for pleasure in a good clear reprint. M.

Charpentier’s “Montaigne” serves the turn, but it is natural to treasure more “Les Essais de Michel Seigneur de Montaigne,” that were printed by Francoise le Febre, of Lyon, in 1595. It is not a beautiful book; the type is small, and rather blunt, but William Drummond of Hawthornden has written on the title-page his name and his device, Cipresso e Palma. There are a dozen modern editions of Moliere more easily read than the four little volumes of Wetstein (Amsterdam, 1698), but these contain reduced copies of the original illustrations, and here you see Arnolphe and Agnes in their habits as they lived, Moliere and Mdlle. de Brie as the public of Paris beheld them more than two hundred years ago. Suckling’s “Fragmenta Aurea” contain a good deal of dross, and most of the gold has been gathered into Miscellanies, but the original edition of 1646, “after his own copies,” with the portrait of the jolly cavalier who died aetatis suae 28, has its own allurement. Theocritus is more easily read, perhaps, in Wordsworth’s edition, or Ziegler’s; but that which Zacharias Calliergi printed in Rome (1516), with an excommunication from Leo X. against infringement of copyright, will always be a beautiful and desirable book, especially when bound by Derome. The gist of the pious Prince Conti’s strictures on the wickedness of comedy may be read in various literary histories, but it is natural to like his “Traite de la Comedie selon la tradition de l’Eglise, Tiree des Conciles et des saints Peres,” published by Lovys Billaine in 1660, especially when the tract is a clean copy, arrayed in a decorous black morocco.

These are but a few common examples, chosen from a meagre little library, a “twopenny treasure-house,” but they illustrate, on a minute scale, the nature of the collector’s passion, — the character of his innocent pleasures. He occasionally lights on other literary relics of a more personal character than mere first editions. A lucky collector lately bought Shelley’s copy of Ossian, with the poet’s signature on the title-page, in Booksellers’ Row. Another possesses a copy of Foppens’s rare edition of Petrarch’s “Le Sage Resolu contre l’une et l’autre Fortune,” which once belonged to Sir Hudson Lowe, the gaoler of Napoleon, and may have fortified, by its stoical maxims, the soul of one who knew the extremes of either fortune, the captive of St. Helena. But the best example of a book, which is also a relic, is the “Imitatio Christi,” which belonged to J. J. Rousseau. Let M. Tenant de Latour, lately the happy owner of this possession, tell his own story of his treasure: It was in 1827 that M. de Latour was walking on the quai of the Louvre. Among the volumes in a shop, he noticed a shabby little copy of the “Imitatio Christi.” M. de Latour, like other bibliophiles, was not in the habit of examining stray copies of this work, except when they were of the Elzevir size, for the Elzevirs published a famous undated copy of the “Imitatio,” a book which brings considerable prices. However, by some lucky chance, some Socratic daemon whispering, may be, in his ear, he picked up the little dingy volume of the last century. It was of a Paris edition, 1751, but what was the name on the fly-leaf. M. de Latour read a J. J. Rousseau. There was no mistake about it, the good bibliophile knew Rousseau’s handwriting perfectly well; to make still more sure he paid his seventy-five centimes for the book, and walked across the Pont des Arts, to his bookbinder’s, where he had a copy of Rousseau’s works, with a facsimile of his handwriting. As he walked, M. de Latour read in his book, and found notes of Rousseau’s on the margin. The facsimile proved that the inscription was genuine. The happy de Latour now made for the public office in which he was a functionary, and rushed into the bureau of his friend the Marquis de V. The Marquis, a man of great strength of character, recognised the signature of Rousseau with but little display of emotion. M. de Latour now noticed some withered flowers among the sacred pages; but it was reserved for a friend to discover in the faded petals Rousseau’s favourite flower, the periwinkle. Like a true Frenchman, like Rousseau himself in his younger days, M. de Latour had not recognised the periwinkle when he saw it. That night, so excited was M. de Latour, he never closed an eye! What puzzled him was that he could not remember, in all Rousseau’s works, a single allusion to the “Imitatio Christi.” Time went on, the old book was not rebound, but kept piously in a case of Russia leather. M. de Latour did not suppose that “dans ce bas monde it fut permis aux joies du bibliophile d’aller encore plus loin.” He imagined that the delights of the amateur could only go further, in heaven. It chanced, however, one day that he was turning over the “Oeuvres Inedites” of Rousseau, when he found a letter, in which Jean Jacques, writing in 1763, asked Motiers-Travers to send him the “Imitatio Christi.” Now the date 1764 is memorable, in Rousseau’s “Confessions,” for a burst of sentiment over a periwinkle, the first he had noticed particularly since his residence at Les Charmettes, where the flower had been remarked by Madame de Warens. Thus M. Tenant de Latour had recovered the very identical periwinkle, which caused the tear of sensibility to moisten the fine eyes of Jean Jacques Rousseau.

We cannot all be adorers of Rousseau. But M. de Latour was an enthusiast, and this little anecdote of his explains the sentimental side of the bibliophile’s pursuit. Yes, it is SENTIMENT that makes us feel a lively affection for the books that seem to connect us with great poets and students long ago dead. Their hands grasp ours across the ages. I never see the first edition of Homer, that monument of typography and of enthusiasm for letters, printed at Florence (1488) at the expense of young Bernardo and Nerio Nerli, and of their friend Giovanni Acciajuoli, but I feel moved to cry with Heyne, “salvete juvenes, nobiles et generosi; .”

Such is our apology for book-collecting. But the best defence of the taste would be a list of the names of great collectors, a “vision of mighty book-hunters.” Let us say nothing of Seth and Noah, for their reputation as amateurs is only based on the authority of the tract De Bibliothecis Antediluvianis. The library of Assurbanipal I pass over, for its volumes were made, as Pliny says, of coctiles laterculi, of baked tiles, which have been deciphered by the late Mr. George Smith. Philosophers as well as immemorial kings, Pharaohs and Ptolemys, are on our side. It was objected to Plato, by persons answering to the cheap scribblers of to-day, that he, though a sage, gave a hundred minae (360 pounds) for three treatises of Philolaus, while Aristotle paid nearly thrice the sum for a few books that had been in the library of Speusippus. Did not a Latin philosopher go great lengths in a laudable anxiety to purchase an Odyssey “as old as Homer,” and what would not Cicero, that great collector, have given for the Ascraean editio princeps of Hesiod, scratched on mouldy old plates of lead? Perhaps Dr. Schliemann may find an original edition of the “Iliad” at Orchomenos; but of all early copies none seems so attractive as that engraved on the leaden plates which Pausanias saw at Ascra. Then, in modern times, what “great allies” has the collector, what brethren in book-hunting? The names are like the catalogue with which Villon fills his “Ballade des Seigneurs du Temps Jadis.” A collector was “le preux Charlemaigne” and our English Alfred. The Kings of Hungary, as Mathias Corvinus; the Kings of France, and their queens, and their mistresses, and their lords, were all amateurs. So was our Henry VIII., and James I., who “wished he could be chained to a shelf in the Bodleian.” The middle age gives us Richard de Bury, among ecclesiastics, and the Renaissance boasts Sir Thomas More, with that “pretty fardle of books, in the small type of Aldus,” which he carried for a freight to the people of Utopia. Men of the world, like Bussy Rabutin, queens like our Elizabeth; popes like Innocent X.; financiers like Colbert (who made the Grand Turk send him Levant morocco for bindings); men of letters like Scott and Southey, Janin and Nodier, and Paul Lacroix; warriors like Junot and Prince Eugene; these are only leaders of companies in the great army of lovers of books, in which it is honourable enough to be a private soldier.

THE LIBRARY

The Library which is to be spoken of in these pages, is all unlike the halls which a Spencer or a Huth fills with treasure beyond price. The age of great libraries has gone by, and where a collector of the old school survives, he is usually a man of enormous wealth, who might, if he pleased, be distinguished in parliament, in society, on the turf itself, or in any of the pursuits where unlimited supplies of money are strictly necessary. The old amateurs, whom La Bruyere was wont to sneer at, were not satisfied unless they possessed many thousands of books. For a collector like Cardinal Mazarin, Naude bought up the whole stock of many a bookseller, and left great towns as bare of printed paper as if a tornado had passed, and blown the leaves away. In our modern times, as the industrious Bibliophile Jacob, says, the fashion of book-collecting has changed; "from the vast hall that it was, the library of the amateur has shrunk to a closet, to a mere bookcase. Nothing but a neat article of furniture is needed now, where a great gallery or a long suite of rooms was once required. The book has become, as it were, a jewel, and is kept in a kind of jewel-case." It is not quantity of pages, nor lofty piles of ordinary binding, nor theological folios and classic quartos, that the modern amateur desires. He is content with but a few books of distinction and elegance, masterpieces of printing and binding, or relics of famous old collectors, of statesmen, philosophers, beautiful dead ladies; or, again, he buys illustrated books, or first editions of the modern classics. No one, not the Duc d'Aumale, or M. James Rothschild himself, with his 100 books worth 40,000 pounds, can possess very many copies of books which are inevitably rare. Thus the adviser who would offer suggestions to the amateur, need scarcely write, like Naude and the old authorities, about the size and due position of the library. He need hardly warn the builder to make the salle face the east, "because the eastern winds, being warm and dry of their nature, greatly temper the air, fortify the senses, make subtle the humours, purify the spirits, preserve a healthy disposition of the whole body, and, to say all in one word, are most wholesome and salubrious." The east wind, like the fashion of book-collecting, has altered in character a good deal since the days when Naude was librarian to Cardinal Mazarin. One might as well repeat the learned Isidorus his counsels about the panels of green marble (that refreshes the eye), and Boethius his censures on library walls of ivory and glass, as fall back on the ancient ideas of librarians dead and gone.

The amateur, then, is the person we have in our eye, and especially the bibliophile who has but lately been bitten with this pleasant mania of collecting. We would teach him how to arrange and keep his books orderly and in good case, and would tell him what to buy and what to avoid. By the LIBRARY we do not understand a study where no one goes, and where the master of the house keeps his boots, an assortment of walking-sticks, the “Waverley Novels,” “Pearson on the Creed,” “Hume’s Essays,” and a collection of sermons. In, alas! too many English homes, the Library is no more than this, and each generation passes without adding a book, except now and then a Bradshaw or a railway novel, to the collection on the shelves. The success, perhaps, of circulating libraries, or, it may be, the Aryan tendencies of our race, “which does not read, and lives in the open air,” have made books the rarest of possessions in many houses. There are relics of the age before circulating libraries, there are fragments of the lettered store of some scholarly great-grandfather, and these, with a few odd numbers of magazines, a few primers and manuals, some sermons and novels, make up the ordinary library of an English household. But the amateur, whom we have in our thoughts, can never be satisfied with these commonplace supplies. He has a taste for books more or less rare, and for books neatly bound; in short, for books, in the fabrication of which ART has not been absent. He loves to have his study, like Montaigne’s, remote from the interruption of servants, wife, and children; a kind of shrine, where he may be at home with himself, with the illustrious dead, and with the genius of literature. The room may look east, west, or south, provided that it be dry, warm, light, and airy. Among the many enemies of books the first great foe is DAMP, and we must describe the necessary precautions to be taken against this peril. We will suppose that the amateur keeps his ordinary working books, modern tomes, and all that serve him as literary tools, on open shelves. These may reach the roof, if he has books to fill them, and it is only necessary to see that the back of the bookcases are slightly removed from contact with the walls. The more precious and beautifully bound treasures will naturally be stored in a case with closely-fitting glass-doors. The shelves should be lined with velvet or chamois leather, that the delicate edges of the books may not suffer from contact with the wood. A leather lining, fitted to the back of the case, will also help to keep out humidity. Most writers recommend that the bookcases should be made of wood close in the grain, such as well-seasoned oak; or, for smaller tabernacles of literature, of mahogany, satin-wood lined with cedar, ebony, and so forth. These close-grained woods are less easily penetrated by insects, and it is fancied that book-worms dislike the aromatic scents of cedar, sandal wood, and Russia leather. There was once a bibliophile who said that a man could only love one book at a time, and the darling of the moment he used to carry about in a charming leather case. Others, men of few books, preserve them in long boxes with glass fronts, which may be removed from place to place as readily as the household gods of Laban. But the amateur who not only worships but reads books, needs larger receptacles; and in the open oak cases for modern authors, and for books with common modern papers and bindings, in the closed armoire for books of rarity and price, he will find, we think, the most useful mode of arranging his treasures. His shelves will decline in height from the lowest, where huge folios stand at case, to the top ranges, while Elzevirs repose on a level with the eye. It is well that each upper shelf should have a leather fringe to keep the dust away.

As to the shape of the bookcases, and the furniture, and ornaments of the library, every amateur will please himself. Perhaps the satin-wood or mahogany tabernacles of rare books are best made after the model of what furniture-dealers indifferently call the “Queen Anne” or the “Chippendale” style. There is a pleasant quaintness in the carved architectural ornaments of the top, and the inlaid flowers of marquetry go well with the pretty florid editions of the last century, the books that were illustrated by Stothard and Gravelot. Ebony suits theological tomes very well, especially when they are bound in white vellum. As to furniture, people who can afford it will imitate the arrangements of Lucullus, in Mr. Hill Burton’s charming volume “The Book-hunter” (Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1862).— “Everything is of perfect finish, — the mahogany-railed gallery, the tiny ladders, the broad winged lecterns, with leathern cushions on the edges to keep the wood from grazing the rich bindings, the books themselves, each shelf uniform with its facings, or rather backings, like well-dressed lines at a review.” The late Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, a famous bibliophile, invented a very nice library chair. It is most comfortable to sit on; and, as the top of the back is broad and flat, it can be used as a ladder of two high steps, when one wants to reach a book on a lofty shelf. A kind of square revolving bookcase, an American invention, manufactured by Messrs. Trubner, is useful to the working man of letters. Made in oak, stained green, it is not unsightly. As to ornaments, every man to his taste. You may have a “pallid bust of Pallas” above your classical collection, or fill the niches in a shrine of old French light literature, pastoral and comedy, with delicate shepherdesses in Chelsea china. On such matters a modest writer, like Mr. Jingle when Mr. Pickwick ordered dinner, “will not presume to dictate.”

Next to damp, dust and dirt are the chief enemies of books. At short intervals, books and shelves ought to be dusted by the amateur himself. Even Dr. Johnson, who was careless of his person, and of volumes lent to him, was careful about the cleanliness of his own books. Boswell found him one day with big gloves on his hands beating the dust out of his library, as was his custom. There is nothing so hideous as a dirty thumb-mark on a white page. These marks are commonly made, not because the reader has unwashed hands, but because the dust which settles on the top edge of books falls in, and is smudged when they are opened. Gilt-top edges should be smoothed with a handkerchief, and a small brush should be kept for brushing the tops of books with rough edges, before they are opened. But it were well that all books had the top edge gilt. There is no better preservative against dust. Dust not only dirties books, it seems to supply what Mr. Spencer would call a fitting environment for book-worms. The works of book-worms speak for themselves, and are manifest to all. How many a rare and valuable volume is spoiled by neat round holes drilled through cover and leaves! But as to the nature of your worm, authorities differ greatly. The ancients knew this plague, of which Lucian speaks. Mr. Blades mentions a white book-worm, slain by the librarian of the Bodleian. In Byzantium the black sort prevailed. Evenus, the grammarian, wrote an epigram against the black book-worm (“Anthol. Pal.,” ix. 251):-

Pest of the Muses, devourer of pages, in crannies that lurkest,
Fruits of the Muses to taint, labour of learning to spoil;
Wherefore, oh black-fleshed worm! wert thou born for the evil thou workest?
Wherefore thine own foul form shap’st thou with envious toil?

The learned Mentzelius says he hath heard the book-worm crow like a cock unto his mate, and “I knew not,” says he, “whether some local fowl was clamouring or whether there was but a beating in mine ears. Even at that moment, all uncertain as I was, I perceived, in the paper whereon I was writing, a little insect that ceased not to carol like very chanticleer, until, taking a magnifying glass, I assiduously observed him. He is about the bigness of a mite, and carries a grey crest, and the head low, bowed over the bosom; as to his crowing noise, it comes of his clashing his wings against each other with an incessant din.” Thus far Mentzelius, and more to the same purpose, as may be read in the “Memoirs of famous Foreign Academies” (Dijon, 1755-59, 13 vol. in quarto). But, in our times, the learned Mr. Blades having a desire to exhibit book-worms in the body to the Caxtonians at the Caxton celebration, could find few men that had so much as seen a book-worm, much less heard him utter his native wood-notes wild. Yet, in his “Enemies of Books,” he describes some rare encounters with the worm. Dirty books, damp books, dusty books, and books that the owner never opens, are most exposed to the enemy; and "the worm, the proud worm, is the conqueror still," as a didactic poet sings, in an ode on man's mortality. As we have quoted Mentzelius, it may not be amiss to give D'Alembert's theory of book-worms: "I believe," he says, "that a little beetle lays her eggs in books in August, thence is hatched a mite, like the cheese-mite, which devours books merely because it is compelled to gnaw its way out into the air." Book-worms like the paste which binders employ, but D'Alembert adds that they cannot endure absinthe. Mr. Blades finds too that they disdain to devour our adulterate modern paper.

"Say, shall I sing of rats," asked Grainger, when reading to Johnson his epic, the "Sugar-cane." "No," said the Doctor; and though rats are the foe of the bibliophile, at least as much as of the sugar-planter, we do not propose to sing of them. M. Fertiault has done so already in "Les Sonnets d'un Bibliophile," where the reader must be pleased with the beautiful etchings of rats devouring an illuminated MS., and battening on morocco bindings stamped with the bees of De Thou. It is unnecessary and it would be undignified, to give hints on rat-catching, but the amateur must not forget that these animals have a passion for bindings.

The book-collector must avoid gas, which deposits a filthy coat of oil that catches dust. Mr. Blades found that three jets of gas in a small room soon reduced the leather on his book-shelves to a powder of the consistency of snuff, and made the backs of books come away in his hand. Shaded lamps give the best and most suitable light for the library. As to the risks which books run at the hands of the owner himself, we surely need not repeat the advice of Richard de Bury. Living in an age when tubs (if not unknown as M. Michelet declares) were far from being common, the old collector inveighed against the dirty hands of readers, and against their habit of marking their place in a book with filthy straws, or setting down a beer pot in the middle of the volume to keep the pages open. But the amateur, however refined himself, must beware of men who love not fly leaves neither regard margins, but write notes over the latter, and light their pipes with the former. After seeing the wreck of a book which these persons have been busy with, one appreciates the fine Greek hyperbole. The Greeks did not speak of "thumbing" but of "walking up and down" on a volume (). To such fellows it matters not that they make a book dirty and greasy, cutting the pages with their fingers, and holding the boards over the fire till they crack. All these slatternly practices, though they destroy a book as surely as the flames of Caesar's soldiers at Alexandria, seem fine manly acts to the grobians who use them. What says Jules Janin, who has written "Contre l'indifference des

Philistins," "il faut a l'homme sage et studieux un tome honorable et digne de sa louange." The amateur, and all decent men, will beware of lending books to such rude workers; and this consideration brings us to these great foes of books, the borrowers and robbers. The lending of books, and of other property, has been defended by some great authorities; thus Panurge himself says, "it would prove much more easy in nature to have fish entertained in the air, and bullocks fed in the bottom of the ocean, than to support or tolerate a rascally rabble of people that will not lend." Pirckheimer, too, for whom Albert Durer designed a book-plate, was a lender, and took for his device Sibi et Amicis; and Jo. Grolierii et amicorum, was the motto of the renowned Grolier, whom mistaken writers vainly but frequently report to have been a bookbinder. But as Mr. Leicester Warren says, in his "Study of Book-plates" (Pearson, 1880), "Christian Charles de Savigny leaves all the rest behind, exclaiming non mihi sed aliis." But the majority of amateurs have chosen wiser, though more churlish devices, as "the ungodly borroweth and payeth not again," or "go to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." David Garrick engraved on his book-plate, beside a bust of Shakspeare, these words of Menage, "La premiere chose qu'on doit faire, quand on a emprunte' un livre, c'est de le lire, afin de pouvoir le rendre plutot." But the borrower is so minded that the last thing he thinks of is to read a borrowed book, and the penultimate subject of his reflections is its restoration. Menage (Menagiana, Paris, 1729, vol. i.), mentions, as if it were a notable misdeed, this of Angelo Politian's, "he borrowed a 'Lucretius' from Pomponius Laetus, and kept it for four years." Four years! in the sight of the borrower it is but a moment. Menage reports that a friend kept his "Pausanias" for three years, whereas four months was long enough.

"At quarto saltem mense redire decet."

There is no satisfaction in lending a book; for it is rarely that borrowers, while they deface your volumes, gather honey for new stores, as De Quincey did, and Coleridge, and even Dr. Johnson, who "greased and dogs-eared such volumes as were confided to his tender mercies, with the same indifference wherewith he singed his own wigs." But there is a race of mortals more annoying to a conscientious man than borrowers. These are the spontaneous lenders, who insist that you shall borrow their tomes. For my own part, when I am oppressed with the charity of such, I lock their books up in a drawer, and behold them not again till the day of their return. There is no security against borrowers, unless a man like Guibert de Pixerecourt steadfastly refuses to lend. The device of Pixerecourt was un livre est un ami qui ne change jamais. But he knew that our books change when they have been borrowed, like our friends when they have been married; when "a lady borrows them," as the fairy queen says in the ballad of

“Tamlane.”

“But had I kenn’d, Tamlane,” she says,
“A lady wad borrowed thee,
I wad ta’en out thy twa gray een,
Put in twa een o’ tree!

“Had I but kenn’d, Tamlane,” she says,
“Before ye came frae hame,
I wad ta’en out your heart o’ flesh,
Put in a heart o’ stane!”

Above the lintel of his library door, Pixerecourt had this couplet carved -

“Tel est le triste sort de tout livre prete,
Souvent il est perdu, toujours il est gate.”

M. Paul Lacroix says he would not have lent a book to his own daughter. Once Lacroix asked for the loan of a work of little value. Pixerecourt frowned, and led his friend beneath the doorway, pointing to the motto. “Yes,” said M. Lacroix, “but I thought that verse applied to every one but me.” So Pixerecourt made him a present of the volume.

We cannot all imitate this “immense” but unamiable amateur. Therefore, bibliophiles have consoled themselves with the inventions of book-plates, quaint representations, perhaps heraldic, perhaps fanciful, of their claims to the possession of their own dear volumes. Mr. Leicester Warren and M. Poulet Malassis have written the history of these slender works of art, and each bibliophile may have his own engraved, and may formulate his own anathemas on people who borrow and restore not again. The process is futile, but may comfort the heart, like the curses against thieves which the Greeks were wont to scratch on leaden tablets, and deposit in the temple of Demeter. Each amateur can exercise his own taste in the design of a book-plate; and for such as love and collect rare editions of “Homer,” I venture to suggest this motto, which may move the heart of the borrower to send back an Aldine copy of the epic -

Mr. William Blades, in his pleasant volume, “The Enemies of Books” (Trubner), makes no account of the book-thief or biblioklept. “If they injure the owners,” says Mr. Blades, with real tolerance, “they do no harm to the books themselves, by merely transferring them from one set of book-shelves to another.” This sentence has naturally caused us to reflect on the ethical character of the biblioklept. He is not always a bad man. In old times, when language had its delicacies, and moralists were not devoid of sensibility, the French did not say “un voleur de livres,” but “un chipeur de livres;” as the papers call lady shoplifters “kleptomaniacs.” There are distinctions. M. Jules Janin mentions a great Parisian bookseller who had an amiable weakness. He was a bibliokleptomaniac. His first motion when he saw a book within reach was to put it in his pocket. Every one knew his habit, and when a volume was lost at a sale the auctioneer duly announced it, and knocked it down to the enthusiast, who regularly paid the price. When he went to a private view of books about to be sold, the officials at the door would ask him, as he was going out, if he did not happen to have an Elzevir Horace or an Aldine Ovid in his pocket. Then he would search those receptacles and exclaim, “Yes, yes, here it is; so much obliged to you; I am so absent.” M. Janin mentions an English noble, a “Sir Fitzgerald,” who had the same tastes, but who unluckily fell into the hands of the police. Yet M. Janin has a tenderness for the book-stealer, who, after all, is a lover of books. The moral position of the malefactor is so delicate and difficult that we shall attempt to treat of it in the severe, though rococo, manner of Aristotle’s “Ethics.” Here follows an extract from the lost Aristotelian treatise “Concerning Books”:-

“Among the contemplative virtues we reckon the love of books. Now this virtue, like courage or liberality, has its mean, its excess, and its defect. The defect is indifference, and the man who is defective as to the love of books has no name in common parlance. Therefore, we may call him the Robustious Philistine. This man will cut the leaves of his own or his friend’s volumes with the butter-knife at breakfast. Also he is just the person wilfully to mistake the double sense of the term ‘fly-leaves,’ and to stick the ‘fly-leaves’ of his volumes full of fly-hooks. He also loves dogs’-ears, and marks his place with his pipe when he shuts a book in a hurry; or he will set the leg of his chair on a page to keep it open. He praises those who tear off margins for pipe-lights, and he makes cigarettes with the tissue-paper that covers engravings. When his books are bound, he sees that the margin is cut to the quick. He tells you too, that ‘HE buys books to read them.’ But he does not say why he thinks it needful to spoil them. Also he will drag off bindings — or should we perhaps call this crime , or brutality, rather than mere vice? for vice is essentially human, but to tear off bindings is bestial. Thus they still speak of a certain monster who lived during the French Revolution, and who, having purchased volumes attired in morocco, and stamped with the devices of the oligarchs, would rip off the leather or vellum, and throw them into the fire or out of the window, saying that ‘now he could read with unwashed hands at his ease.’ Such a person, then, is the man indifferent to books, and he sins by way of defect, being deficient in the contemplative virtue of book-loving. As to the man who is exactly in the right mean, we call him the book-lover. His happiness consists not in reading, which is an active virtue, but in the contemplation of bindings, and illustrations, and title-pages. Thus his felicity partakes of the nature of the bliss we attribute to the gods, for that also is contemplative, and we call the book-lover ‘happy,’ and even ‘blessed,’ but within the limits of mortal happiness. But, just as in the matter of absence of fear there is a mean which we call courage, and a defect which we call cowardice, and an excess which is known as foolhardiness; so it is in the case of the love of books. As to the mean, we have seen that it is the virtue of the true book-lover, while the defect constitutes the sin of the Robustious Philistine. But the extreme is found in covetousness, and the covetous man who is in the extreme state of book-loving, is the biblioklept, or book-stealer. Now his vice shows itself, not in contemplation (for of contemplation there can be no excess), but in action. For books are procured, as we say, by purchase, or by barter, and these are voluntary exchanges, both the seller and the buyer being willing to deal. But books are, again, procured in another way, by involuntary contract — that is, when the owner of the book is unwilling to part with it, but he whose own the book is not is determined to take it. The book-stealer is such a man as this, and he possesses himself of books with which the owner does not intend to part, by virtue of a series of involuntary contracts. Again, the question may be raised, whether is the Robustious Philistine who despises books, or the biblioklept who adores them out of measure and excessively, the worse citizen? Now, if we are to look to the consequences of actions only (as the followers of Bentham advise), clearly the Robustious Philistine is the worse citizen, for he mangles, and dirties, and destroys books which it is the interest of the State to preserve. But the biblioklept treasures and adorns the books he has acquired; and when he dies, or goes to prison, the State receives the benefit at his sale. Thus Libri, who was the greatest of biblioklepts, rescued many of the books he stole from dirt and misuse, and had them bound royally in purple and gold. Also, it may be argued that books naturally belong to him who can appreciate them; and if good books are in a dull or indifferent man’s keeping, this is the sort of slavery which we call “unnatural” in our POLITICS, and which is not to be endured. Shall we say, then, that the Robustious Philistine is the worse citizen, while the Biblioklept is the worse man? But this is perhaps matter for a separate disquisition.”

This fragment of the lost Aristotelian treatise “Concerning Books,” shows what a difficulty the Stagirite had in determining the precise nature of the moral offence of the biblioklept. Indeed, both as a collector and as an intuitive moralist, Aristotle must have found it rather difficult to condemn the book-thief. He, doubtless, went on to draw distinctions between the man who steals books to sell them again for mere pecuniary profit (which he would call “chrematistic,” or “unnatural,” book-stealing), and the man who steals them because he feels that he is their proper and natural possessor. The same distinction is taken by Jules Janin, who was a more constant student of Horace than of Aristotle. In his imaginary dialogue of bibliophiles, Janin introduces a character who announces the death of M. Libri. The tolerant person who brings the sad news proposes “to cast a few flowers on the melancholy tomb. He was a bibliophile, after all. What do you say to it? Many a good fellow has stolen books, and died in grace at the last.” “Yes,” replies the president of the club, “but the good fellows did not sell the books they stole . . . Cest une grande honte, une grande misere.” This Libri was an Inspector-General of French Libraries under Louis Philippe. When he was tried, in 1848, it was calculated that the sum of his known thefts amounted to 20,000 pounds. Many of his robberies escaped notice at the time. It is not long since Lord Ashburnham, according to a French journal, “Le Livre,” found in his collection some fragments of a Pentateuch. These relics had been in the possession of the Lyons Library, whence Libri stole them in 1847. The late Lord Ashburnham bought them, without the faintest idea of Libri’s dishonesty; and when, after eleven years, the present peer discovered the proper owners of his treasure, he immediately restored the Pentateuch to the Lyons Library.

Many eminent characters have been biblioklepts. When Innocent X. was still Monsignor Pamphilio, he stole a book — so says Tallemant des Reaux — from Du Monstier, the painter. The amusing thing is that Du Monstier himself was a book-thief. He used to tell how he had lifted a book, of which he had long been in search, from a stall on the Pont-Neuf; “but,” says Tallemant (whom Janin does not seem to have consulted), “there are many people who don’t think it thieving to steal a book unless you sell it afterwards.” But Du Monstier took a less liberal view where his own books were concerned. The Cardinal Barberini came to Paris as legate, and brought in his suite Monsignor Pamphilio, who afterwards became Innocent X. The Cardinal paid a visit to Du Monstier in his studio, where Monsignor Pamphilio spied, on a table, “L’Histoire du Concile de Trent” — the good edition, the London one. “What a pity,” thought the young ecclesiastic, “that such a man should be, by some accident, the possessor of so valuable a book.” With these sentiments Monsignor Pamphilio slipped the work under his soutane. But little Du Monstier observed him, and said furiously to the Cardinal, that a holy man should not bring thieves and robbers in his company. With these words, and with others of a violent and libellous character, he recovered the “History of the Council of Trent,” and kicked out the future Pope. Amelot de la Houssaie traces to this incident the hatred borne by Innocent X. to the Crown and the people of France. Another Pope, while only a cardinal, stole a book from Menage — so M. Janin reports — but we have not been able to discover Menage’s own account of the larceny. The anecdotist is not so truthful that cardinals need flush a deeper scarlet, like the roses in Bion’s “Lament for Adonis,” on account of a scandal resting on the authority of Menage. Among Royal persons, Catherine de Medici, according to Brantome, was a biblioklept. “The Marshal Strozzi had a very fine library, and after his death the Queen-Mother seized it, promising some day to pay the value to his son, who never got a farthing of the money.” The Ptolemies, too, were thieves on a large scale. A department of the Alexandrian Library was called “The Books from the Ships,” and was filled with rare volumes stolen from passengers in vessels that touched at the port. True, the owners were given copies of their ancient MSS., but the exchange, as Aristotle says, was an “involuntary” one, and not distinct from robbery.

The great pattern of biblioklepts, a man who carried his passion to the most regrettable excesses, was a Spanish priest, Don Vincente, of the convent of Pobla, in Aragon. When the Spanish revolution despoiled the convent libraries, Don Vincente established himself at Barcelona, under the pillars of Los Encantes, where are the stalls of the merchants of bric-a-brac and the seats of them that sell books. In a gloomy den the Don stored up treasures which he hated to sell. Once he was present at an auction where he was out-bid in the competition for a rare, perhaps a unique, volume. Three nights after that, the people of Barcelona were awakened by cries of “Fire!” The house and shop of the man who had bought “Ordinacions per los gloriosos reys de Arago” were blazing. When the fire was extinguished, the body of the owner of the house was found, with a pipe in his blackened hand, and some money beside him. Every one said, “He must have set the house on fire with a spark from his pipe.” Time went on, and week by week the police found the bodies of slain men, now in the street, now in a ditch, now in the river. There were young men and old, all had been harmless and inoffensive in their lives, and — all had been bibliophiles. A dagger in an invisible hand had reached their hearts but the assassin had spared their purses, money, and rings. An organised search was made in the city, and the shop of Don Vincente was examined. There, in a hidden recess, the police discovered the copy of “Ordinacions per los gloriosis reys de Arago,” which ought by rights to have been burned with the house of its purchaser. Don Vincente was asked how he got the book. He replied in a quiet voice, demanded that his collection should be made over to the Barcelona Library, and then confessed a long array of crimes. He had strangled his rival, stolen the “Ordinacions,” and burned the house. The slain men were people who had bought from him books which he really could not bear to part with. At his trial his counsel tried to prove that his confession was false, and that he might have got his books by honest means. It was objected that there was in the world only one book printed by Lambert Palmart in 1482, and that the prisoner must have stolen this, the only copy, from the library where it was treasured. The defendant’s counsel proved that there was another copy in the Louvre; that, therefore, there might be more, and that the defendant’s might have been honestly procured. Here Don Vincente, previously callous, uttered an hysterical cry. Said the Alcalde:- “At last, Vincente, you begin to understand the enormity of your offence?” “Ah, Senor Alcalde, my error was clumsy indeed. If you only knew how miserable I am!” “If human justice prove inflexible, there is another justice whose pity is inexhaustible. Repentance is never too late.” “Ah, Senor Alcalde, but my copy was not unique!” With the story of this impenitent thief we may close the roll of biblioklepts, though Dibdin pretends that Garrick was of the company, and stole Alleyne’s books at Dulwich.

There is a thievish nature more hateful than even the biblioklept. The Book-Ghoul is he who combines the larceny of the biblioklept with the abominable wickedness of breaking up and mutilating the volumes from which he steals. He is a collector of title-pages, frontispieces, illustrations, and book-plates. He prowls furtively among public and private libraries, inserting wetted threads, which slowly eat away the illustrations he covets; and he broods, like the obscene demon of Arabian superstitions, over the fragments of the mighty dead. His disgusting tastes vary. He prepares books for the American market. Christmas books are sold in the States stuffed with pictures cut out of honest volumes. Here is a quotation from an American paper:-

“Another style of Christmas book which deserves to be mentioned, though it is out of the reach of any but the very rich, is the historical or literary work enriched with inserted plates. There has never, to our knowledge, been anything offered in America so supremely excellent as the $5000 book on Washington, we think — exhibited by Boston last year, but not a few fine specimens of books of this class are at present offered to purchasers. Scribner has a beautiful copy of Forster’s ‘Life of Dickens,’ enlarged from three volumes octavo to nine volumes quarto, by taking to pieces, remounting, and inlaying. It contains some eight hundred engravings, portraits, views, playbills, title-pages, catalogues, proof illustrations from Dickens’s works, a set of the Onwhyn plates, rare engravings by Cruikshank and ‘Phiz,’ and autograph letters. Though this volume does not compare with Harvey’s Dickens, offered for $1750 two years ago, it is an excellent specimen of books of this sort, and the veriest tyro in bibliographical affairs knows how scarce are becoming the early editions of Dickens's works and the plates illustrating them. Anything about Dickens in the beginning of his career is a sound investment from a business point of view. Another work of the same sort, valued at $240, is Lady Trevelyan's edition of Macaulay, illustrated with portraits, many of them very rare. Even cheaper, all things considered, is an extra-illustrated copy of the 'Histoire de la Gravure,' which, besides its seventy-three reproductions of old engravings, is enriched with two hundred fine specimens of the early engravers, many of the impressions being in first and second states. At $155 such a book is really a bargain, especially for any one who is forming a collection of engravings. Another delightful work is the library edition of Bray's 'Evelyn,' illustrated with some two hundred and fifty portraits and views, and valued at $175; and still another is Boydell's 'Milton,' with plates after Westall, and further illustrations in the shape of twenty-eight portraits of the painter and one hundred and eighty-one plates, and many of them before letter. The price of this book is $325."

But few book-ghouls are worse than the moral ghoul. He defaces, with a pen, the passages, in some precious volume, which do not meet his idea of moral propriety. I have a Pine's "Horace," with the engravings from gems, which has fallen into the hands of a moral ghoul. Not only has he obliterated the verses which hurt his delicate sense, but he has actually scraped away portions of the classical figures, and "the breasts of the nymphs in the brake." The soul of Tartuffe had entered into the body of a sinner of the last century. The antiquarian ghoul steals title-pages and colophons. The aesthetic ghoul cuts illuminated initials out of manuscripts. The petty, trivial, and almost idiotic ghoul of our own days, sponges the fly-leaves and boards of books for the purpose of cribbing the book-plates. An old "Complaint of a Book-plate," in dread of the wet sponge of the enemy, has been discovered by Mr. Austin Dobson:-

THE BOOK-PLATE'S PETITION.

By a Gentleman of the Temple.

While cynic CHARLES still trimm'd the vane
'Twixt Querouaille and Castlemaine,
In days that shocked JOHN EVELYN,
My First Possessor fix'd me in.
In days of Dutchmen and of frost,
The narrow sea with JAMES I cross'd,

Returning when once more began
The Age of Saturn and of ANNE.
I am a part of all the past;
I knew the GEORGES, first and last;
I have been oft where else was none
Save the great wig of ADDISON;
And seen on shelves beneath me grope
The little eager form of POPE.
I lost the Third that own'd me when
French NOAILLES fled at Dettingen;
The year JAMES WOLFE surpris'd Quebec,
The Fourth in hunting broke his neck;
The day that WILLIAM HOGARTH dy'd,
The Fifth one found me in Cheapside.
This was a Scholar, one of those
Whose Greek is sounder than their hose;
He lov'd old Books and nappy ale,
So liv'd at Streatham, next to THRALE.
'Twas there this stain of grease I boast
Was made by Dr. JOHNSON'S toast.
(He did it, as I think, for Spite;
My Master call'd him Jacobite!)
And now that I so long to-day
Have rested post discrimina,
Safe in the brass-wir'd bookcase where
I watch'd the Vicar's whit'ning hair,
Must I these travell'd bones inter
In some Collector's sepulchre!
Must I be torn from hence and thrown
With frontispiece and colophon!
With vagrant E's, and I's, and O's,
The spoil of plunder'd Folios!
With scraps and snippets that to ME
Are naught but kitchen company!
Nay, rather, FRIEND, this favour grant me:
Tear me at once; but don't transplant me.

CHELTENHAM, Sept. 31, 1792.

The conceited ghoul writes his notes across our fair white margins, in pencil, or in more baneful ink. Or he spills his ink bottle at large over the pages, as Andre Chenier’s friend served his copy of Malherbe. It is scarcely necessary to warn the amateur against the society of book-ghouls, who are generally snuffy and foul in appearance, and by no means so insinuating as that fair lady-ghoul, Amina, of the Arabian Nights.

Another enemy of books must be mentioned with the delicacy that befits the topic. Almost all women are the inveterate foes, not of novels, of course, nor peerages and popular volumes of history, but of books worthy of the name. It is true that Isabelle d’Este, and Madame de Pompadour, and Madame de Maintenon, were collectors; and, doubtless, there are other brilliant exceptions to a general rule. But, broadly speaking, women detest the books which the collector desires and admires. First, they don’t understand them; second, they are jealous of their mysterious charms; third, books cost money; and it really is a hard thing for a lady to see money expended on what seems a dingy old binding, or yellow paper scored with crabbed characters. Thus ladies wage a skirmishing war against booksellers’ catalogues, and history speaks of husbands who have had to practise the guile of smugglers when they conveyed a new purchase across their own frontier. Thus many married men are reduced to collecting Elzevirs, which go readily into the pocket, for you cannot smuggle a folio volume easily. This inveterate dislike of books often produces a very deplorable result when an old collector dies. His “womankind,” as the Antiquary called them, sell all his treasures for the price of waste-paper, to the nearest country bookseller. It is a melancholy duty which forces one to introduce such topics into a volume on “Art at Home.” But this little work will not have been written in vain if it persuades ladies who inherit books not to sell them hastily, without taking good and disinterested opinion as to their value. They often dispose of treasures worth thousands, for a ten pound note, and take pride in the bargain. Here, let history mention with due honour the paragon of her sex and the pattern to all wives of book-collecting men — Madame Fertiault. It is thus that she addresses her lord in a charming triolet (“Les Amoureux du Livre,”):-

“Le livre a ton esprit . . . tant mieux!
Moi, j’ai ton coeur, et sans partage.
Puis-je desirer davantage?
Le livre a ton esprit . . . tant mieux!
Heureuse de te voir joyeux,
Je t’en voudrais . . . tout un etage.
Le livre a ton esprit . . . tant mieux!
Moi, j’ai ton coeur, et sans partage.”

Books rule thy mind, so let it be!
Thy heart is mine, and mine alone.
What more can I require of thee?
Books rule thy mind, so let it be!
Contented when thy bliss I see,
I wish a world of books thine own.
Books rule thy mind, so let it be!
Thy heart is mine, and mine alone.

There is one method of preserving books, which, alas, only tempts the borrower, the stealer, the rat, and the book-worm; but which is absolutely necessary as a defence against dust and neglect. This is binding. The bookbinder's art too often destroys books when the artist is careless, but it is the only mode of preventing our volumes from falling to pieces, and from being some day disregarded as waste-paper. A well-bound book, especially a book from a famous collection, has its price, even if its literary contents be of trifling value. A leather coat fashioned by Derome, or Le Gascon, or Duseuil, will win respect and careful handling for one specimen of an edition whereof all the others have perished. Nothing is so slatternly as the aspect of a book merely stitched, in the French fashion, when the threads begin to stretch, and the paper covers to curl and be torn. Worse consequences follow, whole sheets are lost, the volume becomes worthless, and the owner must often be at the expense of purchasing another copy, if he can, for the edition may now be out of print. Thus binding of some sort not only adds a grace to the library, presenting to the eye the cheerful gilded rows of our volumes, but is a positive economy. In the case of our cloth-covered English works, the need of binding is not so immediately obvious. But our publishers have a taste for clothing their editions in tender tones of colour, stamped, often, with landscapes printed in gold, in white, or what not. Covers like this, may or may not please the eye while they are new and clean, but they soon become dirty and hideous. When a book is covered in cloth of a good dark tint it may be allowed to remain unbound, but the primrose and lilac hues soon call out for the aid of the binder.

Much has been written of late about bookbinding. In a later part of this manual we shall have something to say about historical examples of the art, and the performances of the great masters. At present one must begin by giving the practical rule, that a book should be bound in harmony with its character and its value. The bibliophile, if he could give the rein to his passions, would bind every book he cares to possess in a full coat of morocco, or (if it did not age so fast) of

Russia leather. But to do this is beyond the power of most of us. Only works of great rarity or value should be full bound in morocco. If we have the luck to light on a Shakespeare quarto, on some masterpiece of Aldus Manutius, by all means let us entrust it to the most competent binder, and instruct him to do justice to the volume. Let old English books, as More’s “Utopia,” have a cover of stamped and blazoned calf. Let the binder clothe an early Rabelais or Marot in the style favoured by Grolier, in leather tooled with geometrical patterns. Let a Moliere or Corneille be bound in the graceful contemporary style of Le Gascon, where the lace-like pattern of the gilding resembles the Venetian point-lace, for which La Fontaine liked to ruin himself. Let a binding, a la fanfare, in the style of Thouvenin, denote a novelist of the last century, let panelled Russia leather array a folio of Shakespeare, and let English works of a hundred years ago be clothed in the sturdy fashion of Roger Payne. Again, the bibliophile may prefer to have the leather stamped with his arms and crest, like de Thou, Henri III., D’Hoym, Madame du Barry, and most of the collectors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Yet there are books of great price which one would hesitate to bind in new covers. An Aldine or an Elzevir, in its old vellum or paper wrapper, with uncut leaves, should be left just as it came from the presses of the great printers. In this condition it is a far more interesting relic. But a morocco case may be made for the book, and lettered properly on the back, so that the volume, though really unbound, may take its place with the bound books on the shelves. A copy of any of Shelley’s poems, in the original wrappers, should I venture to think be treated thus, and so should the original editions of Keats’s and of Mr. Tennyson’s works. A collector, who is also an author, will perhaps like to have copies of his own works in morocco, for their coats will give them a chance of surviving the storms of time. But most other books, not of the highest rarity and interest, will be sufficiently clothed in half-bindings, that is, with leather backs and corners, while the rest of the cover is of cloth or paper, or whatever other substance seems most appropriate. An Oxford tutor used to give half-binding as an example of what Aristotle calls , or “shabbiness,” and when we recommend such coverings for books it is as a counsel of expediency, not of perfection. But we cannot all be millionaires; and, let it be remembered, the really wise amateur will never be extravagant, nor let his taste lead him into “the ignoble melancholy of pecuniary embarrassment.” Let the example of Charles Nodier be our warning; nay, let us remember that while Nodier could get out of debt by selling his collection, OURS will probably not fetch anything like what we gave for it. In half-bindings there is a good deal of room for the exercise of the collector’s taste. M. Octave Uzanne, in a tract called “Les Caprices d’un Bibliophile,” gives some hints on this topic, which may be taken or let alone. M. Uzanne has noticed the monotony, and the want of meaning and suggestion in ordinary half-bindings. The paper or cloth which covers the greater part of the surface of half-bound books is usually inartistic and even ugly. He proposes to use old scraps of brocade, embroidery, Venice velvet, or what not; and doubtless a covering made of some dead fair lady’s train goes well with a romance by Crebillon, and engravings by Marillier. “Voici un cartonnage Pompadour de notre invention,” says M. Uzanne, with pride; but he observes that it needs a strong will to make a bookbinder execute such orders. For another class of books, which our honest English shelves reject with disgust, M. Uzanne proposes a binding of the skin of the boa constrictor; undoubtedly appropriate and “admonishing.” The leathers of China and Japan, with their strange tints and gilded devices may be used for books of fantasy, like “Gaspard de la Nuit,” or the “Opium Eater,” or Poe’s poems, or the verses of Gerard de Nerval. Here, in short, is an almost unexplored field for the taste of the bibliophile, who, with some expenditure of time, and not much of money, may make half-binding an art, and give modern books a peculiar and appropriate raiment.

M. Ambrose Firmin Didot has left some notes on a more serious topic, — the colours to be chosen when books are full-bound in morocco. Thus he would have the “Iliad” clothed in red, the “Odyssey” in blue, because the old Greek rhapsodists wore a scarlet cloak when they recited the Wrath of Achilles, a blue one when they chanted of the Return of Odysseus. The writings of the great dignitaries of the Church, M. Didot would array in violet; scarlet goes well with the productions of cardinals; philosophers have their sober suit of black morocco, poets like Panard may be dressed in rose colour. A collector of this sort would like, were it possible, to attire Goldsmith’s poems in a “coat of Tyrian bloom, satin grain.” As an antithesis to these extravagant fancies, we may add that for ordinary books no binding is cheaper, neater, and more durable, than a coat of buckram.

The conditions of a well bound book may be tersely enumerated. The binding should unite solidity and elegance. The book should open easily, and remain open at any page you please. It should never be necessary, in reading, to squeeze back the covers; and no book, however expensively bound, has been properly treated, if it does not open with ease. It is a mistake to send recently printed books to the binder, especially books which contain engravings. The printing ink dries slowly, and, in the process called “beating,” the text is often transferred to the opposite page. M. Rouveyre recommends that one or two years should pass before the binding of a newly printed book. The owner will, of course, implore the binder to, spare the margins; and, almost equally of course, the binder, durus arator, will cut them down with his abominable plough. One is almost tempted to say that margins should always be left untouched, for if once the binder begins to clip he is unable to resist the seductive joy, and cuts the paper to the quick, even into the printed matter. Mr. Blades tells a very sad story of a nobleman who handed over some Caxtons to a provincial binder, and received them back MINUS 500 pounds worth of margin. Margins make a book worth perhaps 400 pounds, while their absence reduces the same volume to the box marked “all these at fourpence.” Intonsis capillis, with locks unshorn, as Motteley the old dealer used to say, an Elzevir in its paper wrapper may be worth more than the same tome in morocco, stamped with Longepierre’s fleece of gold. But these things are indifferent to bookbinders, new and old. There lies on the table, as I write, “Les Provinciales, ou Les Lettres Ecrites par Louis de Montalte a un Provincial de ses amis, & aux R.R. P.P. Jesuites. A Cologne, Ches PIERRE de la VALLEE, M.DC.LVIII.” It is the Elzevir edition, or what passes for such; but the binder has cut down the margin so that the words “Les Provinciales” almost touch the top of the page. Often the wretch — he lived, judging by his style, in Derome’s time, before the Revolution — has sliced into the head-titles of the pages. Thus the book, with its old red morocco cover and gilded flowers on the back, is no proper companion for “Les Pensees de M. PASCAL (Wolfganck, 1672),” which some sober Dutchman has left with a fair allowance of margin, an inch “taller” in its vellum coat than its neighbour in morocco. Here once more, is “LES FASCHEUX, Comedie de I. B. P. MOLIERE, Representee sur Le Theatre du Palais Royal. A Paris, Chez GABRIEL QUINET, au Palais, dans la Galerie des Prisonniers, a l’Ange Gabriel, M.DCLXIII. Avec privilege du Roy.” What a crowd of pleasant memories the bibliophile, and he only, finds in these dry words of the title. Quinet, the bookseller, lived “au Palais,” in that pretty old arcade where Corneille cast the scene of his comedy, “La Galerie du Palais.” In the Geneva edition of Corneille, 1774, you can see Gravelot’s engraving of the place; it is a print full of exquisite charm (engraved by Le Mure in 1762). Here is the long arcade, in shape exactly like the galleries of the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The bookseller’s booth is arched over, and is open at front and side. Dorimant and Cleante are looking out; one leans on the books on the window-sill, the other lounges at the door, and they watch the pretty Hippolyte who is chaffering with the lace-seller at the opposite shop. “Ce visage vaut mieux que toutes vos chansons,” says Dorimant to the bookseller. So they loitered, and bought books, and flirted in their lace ruffles, and ribbons, and flowing locks, and wide canons, when Moliere was young, and when this little old book was new, and lying on the shelves of honest Quinet in the Palace Gallery. The very title-page, and pagination, not of this second edition, but of the first of “Les Fascheux,” had their own fortunes, for the dedication to Fouquet was perforce withdrawn. That favourite entertained La Valliere and the King with the comedy at his house of Vaux, and then instantly fell from power and favour, and, losing his place and his freedom, naturally lost the flattery of a dedication. But retombons a nos coches, as Montaigne says. This pleasant little copy of the play, which is a kind of relic of Moliere and his old world, has been ruthlessly bound up with a treatise, “Des Pierres Precieuses,” published by Didot in 1776. Now the play is naturally a larger book than the treatise on precious stones, so the binder has cut down the margins to the size of those of the work on amethysts and rubies. As the Italian tyrant chained the dead and the living together, as Procrustes maimed his victims on his cruel bed, so a hard-hearted French binder has tied up, and mutilated, and spoiled the old play, which otherwise would have had considerable value as well as interest.

We have tried to teach the beginner how to keep his books neat and clean; what men and monsters he should avoid; how he should guard himself against borrowers, book-worms, damp, and dirt. But we are sometimes compelled to buy books already dirty and dingy, foxed, or spotted with red, worn by greasy hands, stained with ink spots, or covered with MS. notes. The art of man has found a remedy for these defects. I have never myself tried to wash a book, and this care is best left to professional hands. But the French and English writers give various recipes for cleaning old books, which the amateur may try on any old rubbish out of the fourpenny box of a bookstall, till he finds that he can trust his own manipulations. There are “fat stains” on books, as thumb marks, traces of oil (the midnight oil), flakes of old pasty crust left in old Shakespeares, and candle drippings. There are “thin stains,” as of mud, scaling-wax, ink, dust, and damp. To clean a book you first carefully unbind it, take off the old covers, cut the old stitching, and separate sheet from sheet. Then take a page with “fat stains” of any kind of grease (except finger-marks), pass a hot flat iron over it, and press on it a clean piece of blotting paper till the paper sucks up the grease. Then charge a camel-hair brush with heated turpentine, and pass it over the places that were stained. If the paper loses its colour press softly over it a delicate handkerchief, soaked in heated spirits of wine. Finger-marks you will cover with clean soap, leave this on for some hours, and then rub with a sponge filled with hot water. Afterwards dip in weak acid and water, and then soak the page in a bath of clean water. Ink-stained pages you will first dip in a strong solution of oxalic acid and then in hydrochloric acid mixed in six times its quantity of water. Then bathe in clean water and allow to dry slowly.

Some English recipes may also be given. “Grease or wax spots,” says Hannett, in “Bibliopegia,” “may be removed by washing the part with ether, chloroform, or benzine, and placing it between pieces of white blotting paper, then pass a hot iron over it." "Chlorine water," says the same writer, removes ink stains, and bleaches the paper at the same time. Of chloride of lime, "a piece the size of a nut" (a cocoa nut or a hazel nut?) in a pint of water, may be applied with a camel's hair pencil, and plenty of patience. To polish old bindings, "take the yolk of an egg, beat it up with a fork, apply it with a sponge, having first cleaned the leather with a dry flannel." The following, says a writer in "Notes and Queries," with perfect truth, is "an easier if not a better method; purchase some bookbinder's varnish," and use it as you did the rudimentary omelette of the former recipe. Vellum covers may be cleaned with soap and water, or in bad cases by a weak solution of salts of lemon.

Lastly, the collector should acquire such books as Lowndes's "Bibliography," Brunet's "Manuel," and as many priced catalogues as he can secure. The catalogues of Mr. Quaritch, Mr. Bohn, M. Fontaine, M.M. Morgand et Fatout, are excellent guides to a knowledge of the market value of books. Other special works, as Renouard's for Aldines, Willems's for Elzevirs, and Cohen's for French engravings, will be mentioned in their proper place. Dibdin's books are inaccurate and long-winded, but may occasionally be dipped into with pleasure.

THE BOOKS OF THE COLLECTOR

The easiest way to bring order into the chaos of desirable books, is, doubtless, to begin historically with manuscripts. Almost every age that has left any literary remains, has bequeathed to us relics which are cherished by collectors. We may leave the clay books of the Chaldeans out of the account. These tomes resemble nothing so much as sticks of chocolate, and, however useful they may be to the student, the clay MSS. of Assurbanipal are not coveted by the collector. He finds his earliest objects of desire in illuminated manuscripts. The art of decorating manuscripts is as old as Egypt; but we need not linger over the beautiful papyri, which are silent books to all but a few Egyptologists. Greece, out of all her tomes, has left us but a few ill-written papyri. Roman and early Byzantine art are represented by a “Virgil,” and fragments of an “Iliad”; the drawings in the latter have been reproduced in a splendid volume (Milan 1819), and shew Greek art passing into barbarism. The illumination of MSS. was a favourite art in the later empire, and is said to have been practised by Boethius. The iconoclasts of the Eastern empire destroyed the books which contained representations of saints and of the persons of the Trinity, and the monk Lazarus, a famous artist, was cruelly tortured for his skill in illuminating sacred works. The art was decaying in Western Europe when Charlemagne sought for painters of MSS. in England and Ireland, where the monks, in their monasteries, had developed a style with original qualities. The library of Corpus Christi at Cambridge, contains some of the earliest and most beautiful of extant English MSS. These parchments, stained purple or violet, and inscribed with characters of gold; are too often beyond the reach of the amateur for whom we write. The MSS. which he can hope to acquire are neither very early nor very sumptuous, and, as a rule, MSS. of secular books are apt to be out of his reach.

Yet a collection of MSS. has this great advantage over a collection of printed books, that every item in it is absolutely unique, no two MSS. being ever really the same. This circumstance alone would entitle a good collection of MSS. to very high consideration on the part of book-collectors. But, in addition to the great expense of such a collection, there is another and even more serious drawback. It is sometimes impossible, and is often extremely difficult, to tell whether a MS. is perfect or not.

This difficulty can only be got over by an amount of learning on the part of the collector to which, unfortunately, he is too often a stranger. On the other hand, the advantages of collecting MSS. are sometimes very great.

In addition to the pleasure — a pleasure at once literary and artistic — which the study of illuminated MSS. affords, there is the certainty that, as years go on, the value of such a collection increases in a proportion altogether marvellous.

I will take two examples to prove this point. Some years ago an eminent collector gave the price of 30 pounds for a small French book of Hours, painted in grisaille. It was in a country town that he met with this treasure, for a treasure he considered the book, in spite of its being of the very latest school of illumination. When his collection was dispersed a few years ago this one book fetched 260 pounds.

In the celebrated Perkins sale, in 1873, a magnificent early MS., part of which was written in gold on a purple ground, and which was dated in the catalogue “ninth or tenth century,” but was in reality of the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh, was sold for 565 pounds to a dealer. It found its way into Mr. Bragge’s collection, at what price I do not know, and was resold, three years later, for 780 pounds.

Any person desirous of making a collection of illuminated MSS., should study seriously for some time at the British Museum, or some such place, until he is thoroughly acquainted (1) with the styles of writing in use in the Middle Ages, so that he can at a glance make a fairly accurate estimate of the age of the book submitted to him; and (2) with the proper means of collating the several kinds of service-books, which, in nine cases out of ten, were those chosen for illumination.

A knowledge of the styles of writing can be acquired at second hand in a book lately published by Mr. Charles Trice Martin, F.S.A., being a new edition of “Astle’s Progress of Writing.” Still better, of course, is the actual inspection and comparison of books to which a date can be with some degree of certainty assigned.

It is very common for the age of a book to be misstated in the catalogues of sales, for the simple reason that the older the writing, the plainer, in all probability, it is. Let the student compare writing of the twelfth century with that of the sixteenth, and he will be able to judge at once of the truth of this assertion. I had once the good fortune to “pick up” a small Testament of the early part of the twelfth century, if not older, which was catalogued as belonging to the fifteenth, a date which would have made it of very moderate value.

With regard to the second point, the collation of MSS., I fear there is no royal road to knowing whether a book is perfect or imperfect. In some cases the catchwords remain at the foot of the pages. It is then of course easy to see if a page is lost, but where no such clue is given the student’s only chance is to be fully acquainted with what a book OUGHT to contain. He can only do this when he has a knowledge of the different kinds of service-books which were in use, and of their most usual contents.

I am indebted to a paper, read by the late Sir William Tite at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, for the collation of “Books of Hours,” but there are many kinds of MSS. besides these, and it is well to know something of them. The Horae, or Books of Hours, were the latest development of the service-books used at an earlier period. They cannot, in fact, be strictly called service-books, being intended only for private devotion. But in the thirteenth century and before it, Psalters were in use for this purpose, and the collation of a Psalter is in truth more important than that of a Book of Hours. It will be well for a student, therefore, to begin with Psalters, as he can then get up the Hours in their elementary form. I subjoin a bibliographical account of both kinds of MSS. In the famous Exhibition at the Burlington Club in 1874, a number of volumes was arranged to show how persistent one type of the age could be. The form of the decorations, and the arrangement of the figures in borders, once invented, was fixed for generations. In a Psalter of the thirteenth century there was, under the month of January in the calendar, a picture of a grotesque little figure warming himself at a stove. The hearth below, the chimney-pot above, on which a stork was feeding her brood, with the intermediate chimney shaft used as a border, looked like a scientific preparation from the interior anatomy of a house of the period. In one of the latest of the MSS. exhibited on that occasion was the self-same design again. The little man was no longer a grotesque, and the picture had all the high finish and completeness in drawing that we might expect in the workmanship of a contemporary of Van Eyck. There was a full series of intermediate books, showing the gradual growth of the picture.

With regard to chronology, it may be roughly asserted that the earliest books which occur are Psalters of the thirteenth century. Next to them come Bibles, of which an enormous issue took place before the middle of the fourteenth century. These are followed by an endless series of books of Hours, which, as the sixteenth century is reached, appear in several vernacular languages. Those in English, being both very rare and of great importance in liturgical history, are of a value altogether out of proportion to the beauty of their illuminations. Side by side with this succession are the Evangelistina, which, like the example mentioned above, are of the highest merit, beauty, and value; followed by sermons and homilies, and the Breviary, which itself shows signs of growth as the years go on. The real Missal, with which all illuminated books used to be confounded, is of rare occurrence, but I have given a collation of it also. Besides these devotional or religious books, I must mention chronicles and romances, and the semi-religious and moral allegories, such as the “Pelerinage de l’Ame,” which is said to have given Bunyan the machinery of the “Pilgrim’s Progress.” Chaucer’s and Gower’s poetry exists in many MSS., as does the “Polychronicon” of Higden; but, as a rule, the mediaeval chronicles are of single origin, and were not copied. To collate MSS. of these kinds is quite impossible, unless by carefully reading them, and seeing that the pages run on without break.

I should advise the young collector who wishes to make sure of success not to be too catholic in his tastes at first, but to confine his attention to a single period and a single school. I should also advise him to make from time to time a careful catalogue of what he buys, and to preserve it even after he has weeded out certain items. He will then be able to make a clear comparative estimate of the importance and value of his collection, and by studying one species at a time, to become thoroughly conversant with what it can teach him. When he has, so to speak, burnt his fingers once or twice, he will find himself able to distinguish at sight what no amount of teaching by word of mouth or by writing could ever possibly impart to any advantage.

One thing I should like if possible to impress very strongly upon the reader. That is the fact that a MS. which is not absolutely perfect, if it is in a genuine state, is of much more value than one which has been made perfect by the skill of a modern restorer. The more skilful he is, that is to say the better he can forge the style of the original, the more worthless he renders the volume.

Printing seems to have superseded the art of the illuminator more promptly and completely in England than on the Continent. The dames galantes of Brantome’s memoirs took pleasure in illuminated Books of Hours, suited to the nature of their devotions. As late as the time of Louis XIV., Bussy Rabutin had a volume of the same kind, illuminated with portraits of “saints,” of his own canonisation. The most famous of these modern examples of costly MSS. was “La Guirlande de Julie,” a collection of madrigals by various courtly hands, presented to the illustrious Julie, daughter of the Marquise de Rambouillet, most distinguished of the Precieuses, and wife of the Duc de Montausier, the supposed original of Moliere’s Alceste. The MS. was copied on vellum by Nicholas Jarry, the great calligraph of his time. The flowers on the margin were painted by Robert. Not long ago a French amateur was so lucky as to discover the MS. book of prayers of Julie’s noble mother, the Marquise de Rambouillet. The Marquise wrote these prayers for her own devotions, and Jarry, the illuminator, declared that he found them most edifying, and delightful to study. The manuscript is written on vellum by the famous Jarry, contains a portrait of the fair Julie herself, and is bound in morocco by Le Gascon. The happy collector who possesses the volume now, heard vaguely that a manuscript of some interest was being exposed for sale at a trifling price in the shop of a country bookseller. The description of the book, casual as it was, made mention of the monogram on the cover. This was enough for the amateur. He rushed to a railway station, travelled some three hundred miles, reached the country town, hastened to the bookseller’s shop, and found that the book had been withdrawn by its owner. Happily the possessor, unconscious of his bliss, was at home. The amateur sought him out, paid the small sum demanded, and returned to Paris in triumph. Thus, even in the region of manuscript-collecting, there are extraordinary prizes for the intelligent collector.

TO KNOW IF A MANUSCRIPT IS PERFECT

If the manuscript is of English or French writing of the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, or fifteenth centuries, it is probably either — (1) a Bible, (2) a Psalter, (3) a book of Hours, or (4), but rarely, a Missal. It is not worth while to give the collation of a gradual, or a hymnal, or a processional, or a breviary, or any of the fifty different kinds of service-books which are occasionally met with, but which are never twice the same.

To collate one of them, the reader must go carefully through the book, seeing that the catch-words, if there are any, answer to the head lines; and if there are "signatures," that is, if the foot of the leaves of a sheet of parchment has any mark for enabling the binder to "gather" them correctly, going through them, and seeing that each signed leaf has its corresponding "blank."

1. To collate a Bible, it will be necessary first to go through the catch-words, if any, and signatures, as above; then to notice the contents. The first page should contain the Epistle of St. Jerome to the reader. It will be observed that there is nothing of the nature of a title-page, but I have often seen title-pages supplied by some ignorant imitator in the last century, with the idea that the book was imperfect without one. The books of the Bible follow in order — but the order not only differs from ours, but differs in different copies. The Apocryphal books are always included. The New Testament usually follows on the Old without any break; and the book concludes with an index of the Hebrew names and their signification in Latin, intended to help preachers to the figurative meaning of the biblical types and parables. The last line of the Bible itself usually contains a colophon, in which sometimes the name of the writer is given, sometimes the length of time it has taken him to write, and sometimes merely the "Explicit. Laus Deo," which has found its way into many modern books. This colophon, which comes as a rule immediately before the index, often contains curious notes, hexameters giving the names of all the books, biographical or local memoranda, and should always be looked for by the collector. One such line occurs to me. It is in a Bible written in Italy in the thirteenth century -

"Qui scripsit scribat. Vergilius spe domini vivat."

Vergilius was, no doubt, in this case the scribe. The Latin and the writing are often equally crabbed. In the Bodleian there is a Bible with this colophon -

"Finito libro referemus gratias Christo m.cc.lxv. indict. viij.
Ego Lafracus de Pacis de Cmoa scriptor scripsi."

This was also written in Italy. English colophons are often very quaint— “Qui scripsit hunc librum fiat collocatus in Paradisum,” is an example. The following gives us the name of one Master Gerard, who, in the fourteenth century, thus poetically described his ownership:-

“Si Ge ponatur — et rar simul associatur -
Et dus reddatur — cui pertinet ita vocatur.”

In a Bible written in England, in the British Museum, there is a long colophon, in which, after the name of the writer— “hunc librum scripsit Wills de Hales,” — there is a prayer for Ralph of Nebham, who had called Hales to the writing of the book, followed by a date- -”Fes. fuit liber anno M.cc.i. quarto ab incarnatione domini.” In this Bible the books of the New Testament were in the following order:- the Evangelists, the Acts, the Epistles of S. Peter, S. James, and S. John, the Epistles of S. Paul, and the Apocalypse. In a Bible at Brussels I found the colophon after the index:- “Hic expliciunt interpretationes Hebrayorum nominum Do gris qui potens est p. sup. omia.” Some of these Bibles are of marvellously small dimensions. The smallest I ever saw was at Ghent, but it was very imperfect. I have one in which there are thirteen lines of writing in an inch of the column. The order of the books of the New Testament in Bibles of the thirteenth century is usually according to one or other of the three following arrangements:-

(1.) The Evangelists, Romans to Hebrews, Acts, Epistles of S. Peter, S. James, and S. John, Apocalypse.

(2.) The Evangelists, Acts, Epistles of S. Peter, S. James, and S. John, Epistles of S. Paul, Apocalypse. This is the most common.

(3.) The Evangelists, Acts, Epistles of S. Peter, S. James, and S. John, Apocalypse, and Epistles of S. Paul.

On the fly leaves of these old Bibles there are often very curious inscriptions. In one I have this:- “Haec biblia emi Haquinas prior monasterii Hatharbiensis de dono domini regis Norwegie.” Who was this King of Norway who, in 1310, gave the Prior of Hatherby money to buy a Bible, which was probably written at Canterbury? And who was Haquinas? His name has a Norwegian sound, and reminds us of St. Thomas of that surname. In another manuscript I have seen

“Articula Fidei:-
Nascitur, abluitur, patitur, descendit at ima
Surgit et ascendit, veniens discernere cuncta.”

In another this:-

“Sacramenta ecclesiae:-
Abluo, fumo, cibo, piget, ordinat, uxor et ungit.”

I will conclude these notes on MS. Bibles with the following colophon from a copy written in Italy in the fifteenth century:-

“Finito libro vivamus semper in Christo -
Si semper in Christo carebimus ultimo leto.
Explicit Deo gratias; Amen. Stephanus de
Tantaldis scripsit in pergamo.”

2. The “Psalter” of the thirteenth century is usually to be considered a forerunner of the “Book of Hours.” It always contains, and usually commences with, a Calendar, in which are written against certain days the “obits” of benefactors and others, so that a well-filled Psalter often becomes a historical document of high value and importance. The first page of the psalms is ornamented with a huge B, which often fills the whole page, and contains a representation of David and Goliath ingeniously fitted to the shape of the letter. At the end are usually to be found the hymns of the Three Children, and others from the Bible together with the Te Deum; and sometimes, in late examples, a litany. In some psalters the calendar is at the end. These Psalters, and the Bibles described above, are very frequently of English work; more frequently, that is, than the books of Hours and Missals. The study of the Scriptures was evidently more popular in England than in the other countries of Europe during the Middle Ages; and the early success of the Reformers here, must in part, no doubt, be attributed to the wide circulation of the Bible even before it had been translated from the Latin. I need hardly, perhaps, observe that even fragments of a Psalter, a Testament, or a Bible in English, are so precious as to be practically invaluable.

3. We are indebted to Sir W. Tite for the following collation of a Flemish “Book of Hours”:-

1. The Calendar.
2. Gospels of the Nativity and the Resurrection.
3. Preliminary Prayers (inserted occasionally).
4. Horae — (Nocturns and Matins).
5. (Lauds).
6. (Prime).
7. (Tierce).

8. (Sexte).
9. (None).
10. (Vespers).
11. (Compline).

12. The seven penitential Psalms

13. The Litany.
14. Hours of the Cross.
15. Hours of the Holy Spirit.
16. Office of the Dead.
17. The Fifteen Joys of B. V. M.
18. The seven requests to our Lord.
19. Prayers and Suffrages to various Saints.
20. Several prayers, petitions, and devotions.

This is an unusually full example, but the calendar, the hours, the seven psalms, and the litany, are in almost all the MSS. The buyer must look carefully to see that no miniatures have been cut out; but it is only by counting the leaves in their gatherings that he can make sure. This is often impossible without breaking the binding.

The most valuable “Horae” are those written in England. Some are of the English use (Sarum or York, or whatever it may happen to be), but were written abroad, especially in Normandy, for the English market. These are also valuable, even when imperfect. Look for the page before the commencement of the Hours (No. 4 in the list above), and at the end will be found a line in red,— “Incipit Horae secundum usum Sarum,” or otherwise, as the case may be.

4. Missals do not often occur, and are not only very valuable but very difficult to collate, unless furnished with catch-words or signatures. But no Missal is complete without the Canon of the Mass, usually in the middle of the book, and if there are any illuminations throughout the volume, there will be a full page Crucifixion, facing the Canon. Missals of large size and completeness contain —(1) a Calendar; (2) “the proper of the Season;” (3) the ordinary and Canon of the Mass; (4) the Communal of Saints; (5) the proper of Saints and special occasions; (6) the lessons, epistles, and gospels; with (7) some hymns, “proses,” and canticles. This is Sir W. Tite’s list; but, as he remarks, MS. Missals seldom contain so much. The collector will look for the Canon, which is invariable.

Breviaries run to an immense length, and are seldom illuminated. It would be impossible to give them any kind of collation, and the same may be said of many other kinds of old service-books, and of the chronicles, poems, romances, and herbals, in which mediaeval literature abounded, and which the collector must judge as best he can.

The name of “missal” is commonly and falsely given to all old service-books by the booksellers, but the collector will easily distinguish one when he sees it, from the notes I have given. In a Sarum Missal, at Alnwick, there is a colophon quoted by my lamented friend Dr. Rock in his “Textile Fabrics.” It is appropriate both to the labours of the old scribes and also to those of their modern readers:-

“Librum Scribendo — Jon Whas Monachus laborabat -
Et mane Surgendo — multum corpus macerabat.”

It is one of the charms of manuscripts that they illustrate, in their minute way, all the art, and even the social condition, of the period in which they were produced. Apostles, saints, and prophets wear the contemporary costume, and Jonah, when thrown to the hungry whale, wears doublet and trunk hose. The ornaments illustrate the architectural taste of the day. The backgrounds change from diapered patterns to landscapes, as the modern way of looking at nature penetrates the monasteries and reaches the scriptorium where the illuminator sits and refreshes his eyes with the sight of the slender trees and blue distant hills. Printed books have not such resources. They can only show varieties of type, quaint frontispieces, printers’ devices, and fleurons at the heads of chapters. These attractions, and even the engravings of a later day, seem meagre enough compared with the allurements of manuscripts. Yet printed books must almost always make the greater part of a collection, and it may be well to give some rules as to the features that distinguish the productions of the early press. But no amount of “rules” is worth six months’ practical experience in bibliography. That experience the amateur, if he is wise, will obtain in a public library, like the British Museum or the Bodleian. Nowhere else is he likely to see much of the earliest of printed books, which very seldom come into the market.

Those of the first German press are so rare that practically they never reach the hands of the ordinary collector. Among them are the famous Psalters printed by Fust and Schoffer, the earliest of which is dated 1457; and the bible known as the Mazarine Bible. Two copies of this last were in the Perkins sale. I well remember the excitement on that occasion. The first copy put up was the best, being printed upon vellum. The bidding commenced at 1000 pounds, and very speedily rose to 2200 pounds, at which point there was a long pause; it then rose in hundreds with very little delay to 3400 pounds, at which it was knocked down to a bookseller. The second copy was on paper, and there were those present who said it was better than the other, which had a suspicion attaching to it of having been "restored" with a facsimile leaf. The first bid was again 1000 pounds, which the buyer of the previous copy made guineas, and the bidding speedily went up to 2660 pounds, at which price the first bidder paused. A third bidder had stepped in at 1960 pounds, and now, amid breathless excitement, bid 10 pounds more. This he had to do twice before the book was knocked down to him at 2690 pounds.

A scene like this has really very little to do with book-collecting. The beginner must labour hard to distinguish different kinds of printing; he must be able to recognise at a glance even fragments from the press of Caxton. His eye must be accustomed to all the tricks of the trade and others, so that he may tell a facsimile in a moment, or detect a forgery.

But now let us return to the distinctive marks of early printed books. The first is, says M. Rouveyre, -

1. The absence of a separate title-page. It was not till 1476-1480 that the titles of books were printed on separate pages. The next mark is -

2. The absence of capital letters at the beginnings of divisions. For example, in an Aldine Iliad, the fifth book begins thus -

It was intended that the open space, occupied by the small epsilon (), should be filled up with a coloured and gilded initial letter by the illuminator. Copies thus decorated are not very common, but the Aldine "Homer" of Francis I., rescued by M. Didot from a rubbish heap in an English cellar, had its due illuminations. In the earliest books the guide to the illuminator, the small printed letter, does not appear, and he often puts in the wrong initial.

3. Irregularity and rudeness of type is a "note" of the primitive printing press, which very early disappeared. Nothing in the history of printing is so remarkable as the beauty of almost its first efforts. Other notes are -

4. The absence of figures at the top of the pages, and of signatures at the foot. The thickness and solidity of the paper, the absence of the printer's name, of the date, and of the name of the town where the press stood, and the abundance of crabbed abbreviations, are all marks, more or less trustworthy, of the antiquity of books. It must not be supposed that all books published, let us say before 1500, are rare, or deserve the notice of the collector. More than 18,000 works, it has been calculated, left the press before the end of the fifteenth century. All of these cannot possibly be of interest, and many of them that are "rare," are rare precisely because they are uninteresting. They have not been preserved because they were thought not worth preserving. This is a great cause of rarity; but we must not hastily conclude that because a book found no favour in its own age,

therefore it has no claim on our attention. A London bookseller tells me that he bought the “remainder” of Keats’s “Endymion” for fourpence a copy! The first edition of “Endymion” is now rare and valued. In trying to mend the binding of an old “Odyssey” lately, I extracted from the vellum covers parts of two copies of a very scarce and curious French dictionary of slang, “Le Jargon, ou Langage de l’Argot Reforme.” This treatise may have been valueless, almost, when it appeared, but now it is serviceable to the philologist, and to all who care to try to interpret the slang ballades of the poet Villon. An old pamphlet, an old satire, may hold the key to some historical problem, or throw light on the past of manners and customs. Still, of the earliest printed books, collectors prefer such rare and beautiful ones as the oldest printed Bibles: German, English, — as Taverner’s and the Bishop’s, — or Hebrew and Greek, or the first editions of the ancient classics, which may contain the readings of MSS. now lost or destroyed. Talking of early Bibles, let us admire the luck and prudence of a certain Mr. Sandford. He always longed for the first Hebrew Bible, but would offer no fancy price, being convinced that the book would one day fall in his way. His foreboding was fulfilled, and he picked up his treasure for ten shillings in a shop in the Strand. The taste for incunabula, or very early printed books, slumbered in the latter half of the sixteenth, and all the seventeenth century. It revived with the third jubilee of printing in 1740, and since then has refined itself, and only craves books very early, very important, or works from the press of Caxton, the St. Albans Schoolmaster, or other famous old artists. Enough has been said to show the beginner, always enthusiastic, that all old books are not precious. For further information, the “Biography and Typography of William Caxton,” by Mr. Blades (Trubner, London, 1877), may be consulted with profit.

Following the categories into which M. Brunet classifies desirable books in his invaluable manual, we now come to books printed on vellum, and on peculiar papers. At the origin of printing, examples of many books, probably presentation copies, were printed on vellum. There is a vellum copy of the celebrated Florentine first edition of Homer; but it is truly sad to think that the twin volumes, Iliad and Odyssey, have been separated, and pine in distant libraries. Early printed books on vellum often have beautifully illuminated capitals. Dibdin mentions in “Bibliomania” (London, 1811), , that a M. Van Praet was compiling a catalogue of works printed on vellum, and had collected more than 2000 articles. When hard things are said about Henry VIII., let us remember that this monarch had a few copies of his book against Luther printed on vellum. The Duke of Marlborough’s library possessed twenty-five books on vellum, all printed before 1496. The chapter-house at Padua has a “Catullus” of 1472 on vellum; let Mr. Robinson Ellis think wistfully of that treasure. The notable Count M’Carthy of Toulouse had a wonderful library of books in membranis, including a book much coveted for its rarity, oddity, and the beauty of its illustrations, the “Hypnerotomachia” of Poliphilus (Venice, 1499). Vellum was the favourite “vanity” of Junot, Napoleon’s general. For reasons connected with its manufacture, and best not inquired into, the Italian vellum enjoyed the greatest reputation for smooth and silky whiteness. Dibdin calls “our modern books on vellum little short of downright wretched.” But the editor of this series could, I think, show examples that would have made Dibdin change his opinion.

Many comparatively expensive papers, large in format, are used in choice editions of books. Whatman papers, Dutch papers, Chinese papers, and even papier verge, have all their admirers. The amateur will soon learn to distinguish these materials. As to books printed on coloured paper — green, blue, yellow, rhubarb-coloured, and the like, they are an offence to the eyes and to the taste. Yet even these have their admirers and collectors, and the great Aldus himself occasionally used azure paper. Under the head of “large paper,” perhaps “uncut copies” should be mentioned. Most owners of books have had the edges of the volumes gilded or marbled by the binders. Thus part of the margin is lost, an offence to the eye of the bibliomaniac, while copies untouched by the binder’s shears are rare, and therefore prized. The inconvenience of uncut copies is, that one cannot easily turn over the leaves. But, in the present state of the fashion, a really rare uncut Elzevir may be worth hundreds of pounds, while a cropped example scarcely fetches as many shillings. A set of Shakespeare’s quartoes, uncut, would be worth more than a respectable landed estate in Connemara. For these reasons the amateur will do well to have new books of price bound “uncut.” It is always easy to have the leaves pared away; but not even the fabled fountain at Argos, in which Hera yearly renewed her maidenhood, could restore margins once clipped away. So much for books which are chiefly precious for the quantity and quality of the material on which they are printed. Even this rather foolish weakness of the amateur would not be useless if it made our publishers more careful to employ a sound clean hand-made paper, instead of drugged trash, for their more valuable new productions. Indeed, a taste for hand-made paper is coming in, and is part of the revolt against the passion for everything machine-made, which ruined art and handiwork in the years between 1840 and 1870.

The third of M. Brunet’s categories of books of prose, includes livres de luxe, and illustrated literature. Every Christmas brings us livres de luxe in plenty, books which are no books, but have gilt and magenta covers, and great staring illustrations. These are regarded as drawing-room ornaments by people who never read. It is scarcely necessary to warn the collector against these gaudy baits of unregulated Christmas generosity. All ages have not produced quite such garish livres de luxe as ours. But, on the whole, a book brought out merely for the sake of display, is generally a book ill "got up," and not worth reading. Moreover, it is generally a folio, or quarto, so large that he who tries to read it must support it on a kind of scaffolding. In the class of illustrated books two sorts are at present most in demand. The ancient woodcuts and engravings, often the work of artists like Holbein and Durer, can never lose their interest. Among old illustrated books, the most famous, and one of the rarest, is the "Hypnerotomachia Poliphili," "wherein all human matters are proved to be no more than a dream." This is an allegorical romance, published in 1499, for Francesco Colonna, by Aldus Manucius. Poliam Frater Franciscus Columna peramavit. "Brother Francesco Colonna dearly loved Polia," is the inscription and device of this romance. Poor Francesco, of the order of preachers, disguised in this strange work his passion for a lady of uncertain name. Here is a translation of the passage in which the lady describes the beginning of his affection. "I was standing, as is the manner of women young and fair, at the window, or rather on the balcony, of my palace. My yellow hair, the charm of maidens, was floating round my shining shoulders. My locks were steeped in unguents that made them glitter like threads of gold, and they were slowly drying in the rays of the burning sun. A handmaid, happy in her task, was drawing a comb through my tresses, and surely these of Andromeda seemed not more lovely to Perseus, nor to Lucius the locks of Photis. On a sudden, Poliphilus beheld me, and could not withdraw from me his glances of fire, and even in that moment a ray of the sun of love was kindled in his heart."

The fragment is itself a picture from the world of the Renaissance. We watch the blonde, learned lady, dreaming of Perseus, and Lucius, Greek lovers of old time, while the sun gilds her yellow hair, and the young monk, passing below, sees and loves, and "falls into the deep waters of desire." The lover is no less learned than the lady, and there is a great deal of amorous archaeology in his account of his voyage to Cythera. As to the designs in wood, quaint in their vigorous effort to be classical, they have been attributed to Mantegna, to Bellini, and other artists. Jean Cousin is said to have executed the imitations, in the Paris editions of 1546, 1556, and 1561.

The "Hypnerotomachia" seems to deserve notice, because it is the very type of the books that are dear to collectors, as distinct from the books that, in any shape, are for ever valuable to the world. A cheap Tauchnitz copy of the Iliad and Odyssey, or a Globe Shakespeare, are, from the point of view of literature, worth a wilderness of "Hypnerotomachiae." But a clean copy of the "Hypnerotomachia," especially on VELLUM, is one of the jewels of bibliography. It has all the right qualities; it is very rare, it is very beautiful as a work of art, it is curious and even bizarre, it is the record of a strange time, and a strange passion; it is a relic, lastly, of its printer, the great and good Aldus Manutius.

Next to the old woodcuts and engravings, executed in times when artists were versatile and did not disdain even to draw a book-plate (as Durer did for Pirckheimer), the designs of the French "little masters," are at present in most demand. The book illustrations of the seventeenth century are curious enough, and invaluable as authorities on manners and costume. But the attitudes of the figures are too often stiff and ungainly; while the composition is frequently left to chance. England could show nothing much better than Ogilby's translations of Homer, illustrated with big florid engravings in sham antique style. The years between 1730 and 1820, saw the French "little masters" in their perfection. The dress of the middle of the eighteenth century, of the age of Watteau, was precisely suited to the gay and graceful pencils of Gravelot, Moreau, Eisen, Boucher, Cochin, Marillier, and Choffard. To understand their merits, and the limits of their art, it is enough to glance through a series of the designs for Voltaire, Corneille, or Moliere. The drawings of society are almost invariably dainty and pleasing, the serious scenes of tragedy leave the spectator quite unmoved. Thus it is but natural that these artists should have shone most in the illustration of airy trifles like Dorat's "Baisers," or tales like Manon Lescaut, or in designing tailpieces for translations of the Greek idyllic poets, such as Moschus and Bion. In some of his illustrations of books, especially, perhaps, in the designs for "La Physiologie de Gout" (Jouaust, Paris, 1879), M. Lalauze has shown himself the worthy rival of Eisen and Cochin. Perhaps it is unnecessary to add that the beauty and value of all such engravings depends almost entirely on their "state." The earlier proofs are much more brilliant than those drawn later, and etchings on fine papers are justly preferred. For example, M. Lalauze's engravings on "Whatman paper," have a beauty which could scarcely be guessed by people who have only seen specimens on "papier verge." Every collector of the old French vignettes, should possess himself of the "Guide de l'amateur," by M. Henry Cohen (Rouquette, Paris, 1880). Among English illustrated books, various tastes prefer the imaginative works of William Blake, the etchings of Cruikshank, and the woodcuts of Bewick. The whole of the last chapter of this sketch is devoted, by Mr. Austin Dobson, to the topic of English illustrated books. Here it may be said, in passing, that an early copy of William Blake's "Songs of Innocence," written, illustrated, printed, coloured, and boarded by the author's own hand, is one of the most charming objects that a bibliophile can hope to possess. The verses of Blake, in a framework of birds, and flowers, and plumes, all softly and magically tinted, seem like some book out of King Oberon's library in fairyland, rather than the productions of a mortal press. The pictures in Blake's "prophetic books," and even his illustrations to "Job," show an imagination more heavily weighted by the technical difficulties of drawing.

The next class of rare books is composed of works from the famous presses of the Aldi and the Elzevirs. Other presses have, perhaps, done work as good, but Estienne, the Giunta, and Plantin, are comparatively neglected, while the taste for the performances of Baskerville and Foulis is not very eager. A safe judgment about Aldines and Elzevirs is the gift of years and of long experience. In this place it is only possible to say a few words on a wide subject. The founder of the Aldine press, Aldus Pius Manutius, was born about 1450, and died at Venice in 1514. He was a man of careful and profound learning, and was deeply interested in Greek studies, then encouraged by the arrival in Italy of many educated Greeks and Cretans. Only four Greek authors had as yet been printed in Italy, when (1495) Aldus established his press at Venice. Theocritus, Homer, AEsop, and Isocrates, probably in very limited editions, were in the hands of students. The purpose of Aldus was to put Greek and Latin works, beautifully printed in a convenient shape, within the reach of all the world. His reform was the introduction of books at once cheap, studiously correct, and convenient in actual use. It was in 1498 that he first adopted the small octavo size, and in his "Virgil" of 1501, he introduced the type called Aldine or Italic. The letters were united as in writing, and the type is said to have been cut by Francesco da Bologna, better known as Francia, in imitation of the hand of Petrarch. For full information about Aldus and his descendants and successors, the work of M. Firmin Didot, ("Alde Manuce et l'Hellenisme a Venise: Paris 1875)," and the Aldine annals of Renouard, must be consulted. These two works are necessary to the collector, who will otherwise be deceived by the misleading assertions of the booksellers. As a rule, the volumes published in the lifetime of Aldus Manutius are the most esteemed, and of these the Aristotle, the first Homer, the Virgil, and the Ovid, are perhaps most in demand. The earlier Aldines are consulted almost as studiously as MSS. by modern editors of the classics.

Just as the house of Aldus waned and expired, that of the great Dutch printers, the Elzevirs, began obscurely enough at Leyden in 1583. The Elzevirs were not, like Aldus, ripe scholars and men of devotion to learning. Aldus laboured for the love of noble studies; the Elzevirs were acute, and too often "smart" men of business. The founder of the family was Louis (born at Louvain, 1540, died 1617). But it was in the second and third generations that Bonaventura and Abraham Elzevir began to publish at Leyden, their editions in small duodecimo.

Like Aldus, these Elzevirs aimed at producing books at once handy, cheap, correct, and beautiful in execution. Their adventure was a complete success. The Elzevirs did not, like Aldus, surround themselves with the most learned scholars of their time. Their famous literary adviser, Heinsius, was full of literary jealousies, and kept students of his own calibre at a distance. The classical editions of the Elzevirs, beautiful, but too small in type for modern eyes, are anything but exquisitely correct. Their editions of the contemporary. French authors, now classics themselves, are lovely examples of skill in practical enterprise. The Elzevirs treated the French authors much as American publishers treat Englishmen. They stole right and left, but no one complained much in these times of slack copyright; and, at all events, the piratic larcenous publications of the Dutch printers were pretty, and so far satisfactory. They themselves, in turn, were the victims of fraudulent and untradesmanlike imitations. It is for this, among other reasons, that the collector of Elzevirs must make M. Willems's book ("Les Elzevier," Brussels and Paris, 1880) his constant study. Differences so minute that they escape the unpractised eye, denote editions of most various value. In Elzevirs a line's breadth of margin is often worth a hundred pounds, and a misprint is quoted at no less a sum. The fantastic caprice of bibliophiles has revelled in the bibliography of these Dutch editions. They are at present very scarce in England, where a change in fashion some years ago had made them common enough. No Elzevir is valuable unless it be clean and large in the margins. When these conditions are satisfied the question of rarity comes in, and Remy Belleau's Macaronic poem, or "Le Pastissier Francais," may rise to the price of four or five hundred pounds. A Rabelais, Moliere, or Corneille, of a "good" edition, is now more in request than the once adored "Imitatio Christi" (dateless), or the "Virgil"' of 1646, which is full of gross errors of the press, but is esteemed for red characters in the letter to Augustus, and another passage at page 92. The ordinary marks of the Elzevirs were the sphere, the old hermit, the Athena, the eagle, and the burning faggot. But all little old books marked with spheres are not Elzevirs, as many booksellers suppose. Other printers also stole the designs for the tops of chapters, the Aegipan, the Siren, the head of Medusa, the crossed sceptres, and the rest. In some cases the Elzevirs published their books, especially when they were piracies, anonymously. When they published for the Jansenists, they allowed their clients to put fantastic pseudonyms on the title pages. But, except in four cases, they had only two pseudonyms used on the titles of books published by and for themselves. These disguises are "Jean Sambix" for Jean and Daniel Elzevir, at Leyden, and for the Elzevirs of Amsterdam, "Jacques le Jeune." The last of the great representatives of the house, Daniel, died at Amsterdam, 1680. Abraham, an unworthy scion, struggled on at Leyden till 1712. The family still prospers, but no longer prints, in Holland. It is common to add duodecimos of Foppens, Wolfgang, and other printers, to the collections of the Elzevirs. The books of Wolfgang have the sign of the fox robbing a wild bee’s nest, with the motto Quaerendo.

Curious and singular books are the next in our classification. The category is too large. The books that be “curious” (not in the booksellers’ sense of “prurient” and “disgusting,”) are innumerable. All suppressed and condemned books, from “Les Fleurs du Mal” to Vanini’s “Amphitheatrum,” or the English translation of Bruno’s “Spaccia della Bestia Trionfante,” are more or less rare, and more or less curious. Wild books, like William Postel’s “Three Marvellous Triumphs of Women,” are “curious.” Freakish books, like macaronic poetry, written in a medley of languages, are curious. Books from private presses are singular. The old English poets and satirists turned out many a book curious to the last degree, and priced at a fantastic value. Such are “Jordan’s Jewels of Ingenuity,” “Micro-cynicon, six Snarling Satyres” (1599), and the “Treatize made of a Galaunt,” printed by Wynkyn de Worde, and found pasted into the fly-leaf, on the oak-board binding of an imperfect volume of Pynson’s “Statutes.” All our early English poems and miscellanies are curious; and, as relics of delightful singers, are most charming possessions. Such are the “Songes and Sonnettes of Surrey” (1557), the “Paradyce of daynty Deuices” (1576), the “Small Handful of Fragrant Flowers,” and “The Handful of Dainty Delights, gathered out of the lovely Garden of Sacred Scripture, fit for any worshipful Gentlewoman to smell unto,” (1584). “The Teares of Ireland” (1642), are said, though one would not expect it, to be “extremely rare,” and, therefore, precious. But there is no end to the list of such desirable rarities. If we add to them all books coveted as early editions, and, therefore, as relics of great writers, Bunyan, Shakespeare, Milton, Sterne, Walton, and the rest, we might easily fill a book with remarks on this topic alone. The collection of such editions is the most respectable, the most useful, and, alas, the most expensive of the amateur’s pursuits. It is curious enough that the early editions of Swift, Scott, and Byron, are little sought for, if not wholly neglected; while early copies of Shelley, Tennyson, and Keats, have a great price set on their heads. The quartoes of Shakespeare, like first editions of Racine, are out of the reach of any but very opulent purchasers, or unusually lucky, fortunate book-hunters. Before leaving the topic of books which derive their value from the taste and fantasy of collectors, it must be remarked that, in this matter, the fashion of the world changes. Dr. Dibdin lamented, seventy years ago, the waning respect paid to certain editions of the classics. He would find that things have become worse now, and modern German editions, on execrable paper, have supplanted his old favourites. Fifty years ago, M. Brunet expressed his contempt for the designs of Boucher; now they are at the top of the fashion. The study of old booksellers' catalogues is full of instruction as to the changes of caprice. The collection of Dr. Rawlinson was sold in 1756. “The Vision of Pierce Plowman” (1561), and the “Creede of Pierce Plowman” (1553), brought between them no more than three shillings and sixpence. Eleven shillings were paid for the “Boke of Chivalrie” by Caxton. The “Boke of St. Albans,” by Wynkyn de Worde, cost 1 pounds: 1s., and this was the highest sum paid for any one of two hundred rare pieces of early English literature. In 1764, a copy of the “Hypnerotomachia” was sold for two shillings, “A Pettie Pallace of Pettie his Pleasures,” (ah, what a thought for the amateur!) went for three shillings, while “Palmerin of England” (1602), attained no more than the paltry sum of fourteen shillings. When Osborne sold the Harley collection, the scarcest old English books fetched but three or four shillings. If the wandering Jew had been a collector in the last century he might have turned a pretty profit by selling his old English books in this age of ours. In old French, too, Ahasuerus would have done a good stroke of business, for the prices brought by old Villons, Romances of the Rose, “Les Marguerites de Marguerite,” and so forth, at the M'Carthy sale, were truly pitiable. A hundred years hence the original editions of Thackeray, or of Miss Greenaway's Christmas books, or “Modern Painters,” may be the ruling passion, and Aldines and Elzevirs, black letter and French vignettes may all be despised. A book which is commonplace in our century is curious in the next, and disregarded in that which follows. Old books of a heretical character were treasures once, rare unholy possessions. Now we have seen so many heretics that the world is indifferent to the audacities of Bruno, and the veiled impieties of Vanini.

The last of our categories of books much sought by the collector includes all volumes valued for their ancient bindings, for the mark and stamp of famous amateurs. The French, who have supplied the world with so many eminent binders, — as Eve, Padeloup, Duseuil, Le Gascon, Derome, Simier, Bozerian, Thouvenin, Trautz-Bauzonnet, and Lortic — are the chief patrons of books in historical bindings. In England an historical binding, a book of Laud's, or James's, or Garrick's, or even of Queen Elizabeth's, does not seem to derive much added charm from its associations. But, in France, peculiar bindings are now the objects most in demand among collectors. The series of books thus rendered precious begins with those of Maioli and of Grolier (1479-1565), remarkable for their mottoes and the geometrical patterns on the covers. Then comes De Thou (who had three sets of arms), with his blazon, the bees stamped on the morocco. The volumes of Marguerite of Angouleme are sprinkled with golden daisies. Diane de Poictiers had her crescents and her bow, and the initial of her royal lover was intertwined with her own. The three daughters of Louis XV. had each their favourite colour, and their books wear liveries of citron, red, and olive morocco. The Abbe Cotin, the original of Moliere’s Trissotin, stamped his books with intertwined C’s. Henri III. preferred religious emblems, and sepulchral mottoes — skulls, crossbones, tears, and the insignia of the Passion. Mort m’est vie is a favourite device of the effeminate and voluptuous prince. Moliere himself was a collector, il n’es pas de bouquin qui s’echappe de ses mains,— “never an old book escapes him,” says the author of “La Guerre Comique,” the last of the pamphlets which flew from side to side in the great literary squabble about “L’Ecole des Femmes.” M. Soulie has found a rough catalogue of Moliere’s library, but the books, except a little Elzevir, have disappeared. Madame de Maintenon was fond of bindings. Mr. Toovey possesses a copy of a devotional work in red morocco, tooled and gilt, which she presented to a friendly abbess. The books at Saint-Cyr were stamped with a crowned cross, besprent with fleurs-de-lys. The books of the later collectors — Longepierre, the translator of Bion and Moschus; D’Hoym the diplomatist; McCarthy, and La Valliere, are all valued at a rate which seems fair game for satire.

Among the most interesting bibliophiles of the eighteenth century is Madame Du Barry. In 1771, this notorious beauty could scarcely read or write. She had rooms, however, in the Chateau de Versailles, thanks to the kindness of a monarch who admired those native qualities which education may polish, but which it can never confer. At Versailles, Madame Du Barry heard of the literary genius of Madame de Pompadour. The Pompadour was a person of taste. Her large library of some four thousand works of the lightest sort of light literature was bound by Biziaux. Mr. Toovey possesses the Brantome of this dame galante. Madame herself had published etchings by her own fair hands; and to hear of these things excited the emulation of Madame Du Barry. She might not be CLEVER, but she could have a library like another, if libraries were in fashion. One day Madame Du Barry astonished the Court by announcing that her collection of books would presently arrive at Versailles. Meantime she took counsel with a bookseller, who bought up examples of all the cheap “remainders,” as they are called in the trade, that he could lay his hands upon. The whole assortment, about one thousand volumes in all, was hastily bound in rose morocco, elegantly gilt, and stamped with the arms of the noble house of Du Barry. The bill which Madame Du Barry owed her enterprising agent is still in existence. The thousand volumes cost about three francs each; the binding (extremely cheap) came to nearly as much. The amusing thing is that the bookseller, in the catalogue which he sent with the improvised library, marked the books which Madame Du Barry possessed BEFORE her large order was so punctually executed. There were two “Memoires de Du Barry,” an old newspaper, two or three plays, and “L’Historie Amoureuse de Pierre le Long.” Louis XV. observed with pride that, though Madame Pompadour had possessed a larger library, that of Madame Du Barry was the better selected. Thanks to her new collection, the lady learned to read with fluency, but she never overcame the difficulties of spelling.

A lady collector who loved books not very well perhaps, but certainly not wisely, was the unhappy Marie Antoinette. The controversy in France about the private character of the Queen has been as acrimonious as the Scotch discussion about Mary Stuart. Evidence, good and bad, letters as apocryphal as the letters of the famous “casket,” have been produced on both sides. A few years ago, under the empire, M. Louis Lacour found a manuscript catalogue of the books in the Queen’s boudoir. They were all novels of the flimsiest sort,— “L’Amitie Dangereuse,” “Les Suites d’un Moment d’Erreur,” and even the stories of Louvet and of Retif de la Bretonne. These volumes all bore the letters “C. T.” (Chateau de Trianon), and during the Revolution they were scattered among the various public libraries of Paris. The Queen’s more important library was at the Tuileries, but at Versailles she had only three books, as the commissioners of the Convention found, when they made an inventory of the property of la femme Capet. Among the three was the “Gerusalemme Liberata,” printed, with eighty exquisite designs by Cochin, at the expense of “Monsieur,” afterwards Louis XVIII. Books with the arms of Marie Antoinette are very rare in private collections; in sales they are as much sought after as those of Madame Du Barry.

With these illustrations of the kind of interest that belongs to books of old collectors, we may close this chapter. The reader has before him a list, with examples, of the kinds of books at present most in vogue among amateurs. He must judge for himself whether he will follow the fashion, by aid either of a long purse or of patient research, or whether he will find out new paths for himself. A scholar is rarely a rich man. He cannot compete with plutocrats who buy by deputy. But, if he pursues the works he really needs, he may make a valuable collection. He cannot go far wrong while he brings together the books that he finds most congenial to his own taste and most useful to his own studies. Here, then, in the words of the old “sentiment,” I bid him farewell, and wish “success to his inclinations, provided they are virtuous.” There is a set of collectors, alas! whose inclinations are not virtuous. The most famous of them, a Frenchman, observed that his own collection of bad books was unique. That of an English rival, he admitted, was respectable,— “mais milord se livre a des autres preoccupations!” He thought a collector’s whole heart should be with his treasures.

En bouquinant se trouve grand soulas.
Soubent m’en vay musant, a petis pas,
Au long des quais, pour flairer maint bieux livre.
Des Elzevier la Sphere me rend yure,
Et la Sirene aussi m’esmeut. Grand cas
Fais-je d’Estienne, Aide, ou Dolet. Mais Ias!
Le vieux Caxton ne se rencontre pas,
Plus qu’ agneau d’or parmi jetons de cuivre,
En bouquinant!

Pour tout plaisir que l’on goute icy-bas
La Grace a Dieu. Mieux vaut, sans altercas,
Chasser bouquin: Nul mal n’en peult s’ensuivre.
Dr sus au livre: il est le grand appas.
Clair est le ciel. Amis, qui veut me suivre
En bouquinant?

A. L.

ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

Modern English book-illustration — to which the present chapter is restricted - has no long or doubtful history, since to find its first beginnings, it is needless to go farther back than the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Not that “illustrated” books of a certain class were by any means unknown before that period. On the contrary, for many years previously, literature had boasted its “sculptures” of be-wigged and be-laurelled “worthies,” its “prospects” and “land-skips,” its phenomenal monsters and its “curious antiques.” But, despite the couplet in the “Dunciad” respecting books where

“ . . . the pictures for the page atone, And Quarles is saved by beauties not his own;” -

illustrations, in which the designer attempted the actual delineation of scenes or occurrences in the text, were certainly not common when Pope wrote, nor were they for some time afterwards either very numerous or very noteworthy. There are Hogarth’s engravings to “Hudibras” and “Don Quixote;” there are the designs of his crony Frank Hayman to Theobald’s “Shakespeare,” to Milton, to Pope, to Cervantes; there are Pine’s “Horace” and Sturt’s “Prayer-Book” (in both of which text and ornament were alike engraved); there are the historical and topographical drawings of Sandby, Wale, and others; and yet — notwithstanding all these — it is with Bewick’s cuts to Gay’s “Fables” in 1779, and Stothard’s plates to Harrison’s “Novelist’s Magazine” in 1780, that book-illustration by imaginative compositions really begins to flourish in England. Those little masterpieces of the Newcastle artist brought about a revival of wood-engraving which continues to this day; but engraving upon metal, as a means of decorating books, practically came to an end with the “Annuals” of thirty years ago. It will therefore be well to speak first of illustrations upon copper and steel.

Stothard, Blake, and Flaxman are the names that come freshest to memory in this connection. For a period of fifty years Stothard stands pre-eminent in illustrated literature. Measuring time by poets, he may be said to have lent something of his fancy and amenity to most of the writers from Cowper to Rogers. As a draughtsman he is undoubtedly weak: his figures are often limp and invertebrate, and his type of beauty insipid. Still, regarded as groups, the majority of his designs are exquisite, and he possessed one all-pervading and un-English quality — the quality of grace. This is his dominant note. Nothing can be more seductive than the suave flow of his line, his feeling for costume, his gentle and chastened humour. Many of his women and children are models of purity and innocence. But he works at ease only within the limits of his special powers; he is happier in the pastoral and domestic than the heroic and supernatural, and his style is better fitted to the formal salutations of “Clarissa” and “Sir Charles Grandison,” than the rough horse-play of “Peregrine Pickle.” Where Rowlandson would have revelled, Stothard would be awkward and constrained; where Blake would give us a new sensation, Stothard would be poor and mechanical. Nevertheless the gifts he possessed were thoroughly recognised in his own day, and brought him, if not riches, at least competence and honour. It is said that more than three thousand of his drawings have been engraved, and they are scattered through a hundred publications. Those to the “Pilgrim’s Progress” and the poems of Rogers are commonly spoken of as his best, though he never excelled some of the old-fashioned plates (with their pretty borders in the style of Gravelot and the Frenchmen) to Richardson’s novels, and such forgotten “classics” as “Joe Thompson”, “Jessamy,” “Betsy Thoughtless,” and one or two others in Harrison’s very miscellaneous collection.

Stothard was fortunate in his engravers. Besides James Heath, his best interpreter, Schiavonetti, Sharp, Finden, the Cookes, Bartolozzi, most of the fashionable translators into copper were busily employed upon his inventions. Among the rest was an artist of powers far greater than his own, although scarcely so happy in turning them to profitable account. The genius of William Blake was not a marketable commodity in the same way as Stothard’s talent. The one caught the trick of the time with his facile elegance; the other scorned to make any concessions, either in conception or execution, to the mere popularity of prettiness.

“Give pensions to the learned pig,
Or the hare playing on a tabor;
Anglus can never see perfection
But in the journeyman’s labour,” -

he wrote in one of those rough-hewn and bitter epigrams of his. Yet the work that was then so lukewarmly received — if, indeed, it can be said to have been received at all — is at present far more sought after than Stothard’s, and the prices now given for the “Songs of Innocence and Experience,” the “Inventions to the Book of Job,” and even “The Grave,” would have brought affluence to the struggling artist, who (as Cromek taunted him) was frequently “reduced so low as to be obliged to live on half a guinea a week.” Not that this was entirely the fault of his contemporaries. Blake was a visionary, and an untuneable man; and, like others who work for the select public of all ages, he could not always escape the consequence that the select public of his own, however willing, were scarcely numerous enough to support him. His most individual works are the “Songs of Innocence,” 1789, and the “Songs of Experience,” 1794. These, afterwards united in one volume, were unique in their method of production; indeed, they do not perhaps strictly come within the category of what is generally understood to be copperplate engraving. The drawings were outlined and the songs written upon the metal with some liquid that resisted the action of acid, and the remainder of the surface of the plate was eaten away with aqua-fortis, leaving the design in bold relief, like a rude stereotype. This was then printed off in the predominant tone — blue, brown, or yellow, as the case might be — and delicately tinted by the artist in a prismatic and ethereal fashion peculiarly his own. Stitched and bound in boards by Mrs. Blake, a certain number of these leaflets — twenty-seven in the case of the first issue — made up a tiny octavo of a wholly exceptional kind. Words indeed fail to exactly describe the flower-like beauty — the fascination of these “fairy missals,” in which, it has been finely said, “the thrilling music of the verse, and the gentle bedazzlement of the lines and colours so intermingle, that the mind hangs in a pleasant uncertainty as to whether it is a picture that is singing, or a song which has newly budded and blossomed into colour and form.” The accompanying woodcut, after one of the illustrations to the “Songs of Innocence,” gives some indication of the general composition, but it can convey no hint of the gorgeous purple, and crimson, and orange of the original.

Of the “Illustrations to the Book of Job,” 1826, there are excellent reduced facsimiles by the recently-discovered photo-intaglio process, in the new edition of Gilchrist’s “Life.” The originals were engraved by Blake himself in his strong decisive fashion, and they are his best work. A kind of deisidaimonia — a sacred awe — falls upon one in turning over these wonderful productions of the artist’s declining years and failing hand.

“Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,
That stand upon the threshold of the new,”

sings Waller; and it is almost possible to believe for a moment that their creator was (as he said) “under the direction of messengers from Heaven.” But his designs for Blair’s “Grave,” 1808, popularised by the burin of Schiavonetti, attracted greater attention at the time of publication; and, being less rare, they are even now perhaps better known than the others. The facsimile here given is from the latter book. The worn old man, the trustful woman, and the guileless child are sleeping peacefully; but the king with his sceptre, and the warrior with his hand on his sword-hilt, lie open-eyed, waiting the summons of the trumpet. One cannot help fancying that the artist's long vigils among the Abbey tombs, during his apprenticeship to James Basire, must have been present to his mind when he selected this impressive monumental subject.

To one of Blake's few friends — to the "dear Sculptor of Eternity," as he wrote to Flaxman from Felpham — the world is indebted for some notable book illustrations. Whether the greatest writers — the Homers, the Shakespeares, the Dantes — can ever be "illustrated" without loss may fairly be questioned. At all events, the showy dexterities of the Dores and Gilberts prove nothing to the contrary. But now and then there comes to the graphic interpretation of a great author an artist either so reverential, or so strongly sympathetic at some given point, that, in default of any relation more narrowly intimate, we at once accept his conceptions as the best attainable. In this class are Flaxman's outlines to Homer and AEschylus. Flaxman was not a Hellenist as men are Hellenists to-day. Nevertheless, his Roman studies had saturated him with the spirit of antique beauty, and by his grand knowledge of the nude, his calm, his restraint, he is such an illustrator of Homer as is not likely to arise again. For who — with all our added knowledge of classical antiquity — who, of our modern artists, could hope to rival such thoroughly Greek compositions as the ball-play of Nausicaa in the "Odyssey," or that lovely group from AEschylus of the tender-hearted, womanly Oceanides, cowering like flowers beaten by the storm under the terrible anger of Zeus? In our day Flaxman's drawings would have been reproduced by some of the modern facsimile processes, and the gain would have been great. As it is, something is lost by their transference to copper, even though the translators be Piroli and Blake. Blake, in fact, did more than he is usually credited with, for (beside the acknowledged and later "Hesiod," 1817) he really engraved the whole of the "Odyssey," Piroli's plates having been lost on the voyage to England. The name of the Roman artist, nevertheless, appears on the title-page (1793). But Blake was too original to be a successful copyist of other men's work, and to appreciate the full value of Flaxman's drawings, they should be studied in the collections at University College, the Royal Academy, and elsewhere.

Flaxman and Blake had few imitators. But a host of clever designers, such as Cipriani, Angelica Kauffmann, Westall, Uwins, Smirke, Burney, Corbould, Dodd, and others, vied with the popular Stothard in "embellishing" the endless "Poets," "novelists," and "essayists" of our forefathers. Some of these, and most of the recognised artists of the period, lent their aid to that boldly-planned but unhappily-executed “Shakespeare” of Boydell,— “black and ghastly gallery of murky Opies, glum Northcotes, straddling Fuselis,” as Thackeray calls it. They are certainly not enlivening- -those cumbrous “atlas” folios of 1803-5, and they helped to ruin the worthy alderman. Even courtly Sir Joshua is clearly ill at ease among the pushing Hamiltons and Mortimers; and, were it not for the whimsical discovery that Westall’s “Ghost of Caesar” strangely resembles Mr. Gladstone, there would be no resting-place for the modern student of these dismal masterpieces. The truth is, Reynolds excepted, there were no contemporary painters strong enough for the task, and the honours of the enterprise belong almost exclusively to Smirke’s “Seven Ages” and one or two plates from the lighter comedies. The great “Bible” of Macklin, a rival and even more incongruous publication, upon which some of the same designers were employed, has fallen into completer oblivion. A rather better fate attended another book of this class, which, although belonging to a later period, may be briefly referred to here. The “Milton” of John Martin has distinct individuality, and some of the needful qualities of imagination. Nevertheless, posterity has practically decided that scenic grandeur and sombre effects alone are not a sufficient pictorial equipment for the varied story of “Paradise Lost.”

It is to Boydell of the Shakespeare gallery that we owe the “Liber Veritatis” of Claude, engraved by Richard Earlom; and indirectly, since rivalry of Claude prompted the attempt, the famous “Liber Studiorum” of Turner. Neither of these, however — which, like the “Rivers of France” and the “Picturesque Views in England and Wales” of the latter artist, are collections of engravings rather than illustrated books — belongs to the present purpose. But Turner’s name may fitly serve to introduce those once familiar “Annuals” and “Keepsakes,” that, beginning in 1823 with Ackermann’s “Forget-me- Not,” enjoyed a popularity of more than thirty years. Their general characteristics have been pleasantly satirised in Thackeray’s account of the elegant miscellany of Bacon the publisher, to which Mr. Arthur Pendennis contributed his pretty poem of “The Church Porch.” His editress, it will be remembered, was the Lady Violet Lebas, and his colleagues the Honourable Percy Popjoy, Lord Dodo, and the gifted Bedwin Sands, whose “Eastern Ghazuls” lent so special a distinction to the volume in watered-silk binding. The talented authors, it is true, were in most cases under the disadvantage of having to write to the plates of the talented artists, a practice which even now is not extinct, though it is scarcely considered favourable to literary merit. And the real “Annuals” were no exception to the rule. As a matter of fact, their general literary merit was not obtrusive, although, of course, they sometimes contained work which afterwards became famous. They are now so completely forgotten and out of date, that one scarcely expects to find that Wordsworth, Coleridge, Macaulay, and Southey, were among the occasional contributors. Lamb’s beautiful “Album verses” appeared in the “Bijou,” Scott’s “Bonnie Dundee” in the “Christmas Box,” and Tennyson’s “St. Agnes’ Eve” in the “Keepsake.” But the plates were, after all, the leading attraction. These, prepared for the most part under the superintendence of the younger Heath, and executed on the steel which by this time had supplanted the old “coppers,” were supplied by, or were “after,” almost every contemporary artist of note. Stothard, now growing old and past his prime, Turner, Etty, Stanfield, Leslie, Roberts, Danby, Maclise, Lawrence, Cattermole, and numbers of others, found profitable labour in this fashionable field until 1856, when the last of the “Annuals” disappeared, driven from the market by the rapid development of wood engraving. About a million, it is roughly estimated, was squandered in producing them.

In connection with the “Annuals” must be mentioned two illustrated books which were in all probability suggested by them — the “Poems” and “Italy” of Rogers. The designs to these are chiefly by Turner and Stothard, although there are a few by Prout and others. Stothard’s have been already referred to; Turner’s are almost universally held to be the most successful of his many vignettes. It has been truly said — in a recent excellent life of this artist — that it would be difficult to find in the whole of his works two really greater than the “Alps at Daybreak,” and the “Datur Hora Quieti,” in the former of these volumes. Almost equally beautiful are the “Valombre Falls” and “Tornaro’s misty brow.” Of the “Italy” set Mr. Ruskin writes:- “They are entirely exquisite; poetical in the highest and purest sense, exemplary and delightful beyond all praise.” To such words it is not possible to add much. But it is pretty clear that the poetical vitality of Rogers was secured by these well-timed illustrations, over which he is admitted by his nephew Mr. Sharpe to have spent about 7000 pounds, and far larger sums have been named by good authorities. The artist received from fifteen to twenty guineas for each of the drawings; the engravers (Goodall, Miller, Wallis, Smith, and others), sixty guineas a plate. The “Poems” and the “Italy,” in the original issues of 1830 and 1834, are still precious to collectors, and are likely to remain so. Turner also illustrated Scott, Milton, Campbell, and Byron; but this series of designs has not received equal commendation from his greatest eulogist, who declares them to be “much more laboured, and more or less artificial and unequal.” Among the numerous imitations directly induced by the Rogers books was the “Lyrics of the Heart,” by Alaric Attila Watts, a forgotten versifier and sometime editor of “Annuals,” but it did not meet with similar success.

Many illustrated works, originating in the perfection and opportunities of engraving on metal, are necessarily unnoticed in this rapid summary. As far, however, as book-illustration is concerned, copper and steel plate engraving may be held to have gone out of fashion with the “Annuals.” It is still, indeed, to be found lingering in that mine of modern art-books — the “Art Journal;” and, not so very long ago, it made a sumptuous and fugitive reappearance in Dore’s “Idylls of the King,” Birket Foster’s “Hood,” and one or two other imposing volumes. But it was badly injured by modern wood-engraving; it has since been crippled for life by photography; and it is more than probable that the present rapid rise of modern etching will give it the coup de grace.

By the end of the seventeenth century the art of engraving on wood had fallen into disuse. Writing circa 1770, Horace Walpole goes so far as to say that it “never was executed in any perfection in England;” and, speaking afterwards of Papillon’s “Traite de la Gravure,” 1766, he takes occasion to doubt if that author would ever “persuade the world to return to wooden cuts.” Nevertheless, with Bewick, a few years later, wood-engraving took a fresh departure so conspicuous that it amounts to a revival. In what this consisted it is clearly impossible to show here with any sufficiency of detail; but between the method of the old wood-cutters who reproduced the drawings of Durer, and the method of the Newcastle artist, there are two marked and well-defined differences. One of these is a difference in the preparation of the wood and the tool employed. The old wood-cutters carved their designs with knives and chisels on strips of wood sawn lengthwise — that is to say, upon the PLANK; Bewick used a graver, and worked upon slices of box or pear cut across the grain, — that is to say upon the END of the wood. The other difference, of which Bewick is said to have been the inventor, is less easy to describe. It consisted in the employment of what is technically known as “white line.” In all antecedent wood-cutting the cutter had simply cleared away those portions of the block left bare by the design, so that the design remained in relief to be printed from like type. Using the smooth box block as a uniform surface from which, if covered with printing ink, a uniformly black impression might be obtained, Bewick, by cutting white lines across it at greater or lesser intervals, produced gradations of shade, from the absolute black of the block to the lightest tints. The general result of this method was to give a greater depth of colouring and variety to the engraving, but its advantages may perhaps be best understood by a glance at the background of the “Woodcock” on the following page.

Bewick’s first work of any importance was the Gay’s “Fables” of 1779. In 1784 he did another series of “Select Fables.” Neither of these books, however, can be compared with the “General History of Quadrupeds,” 1790, and the “British Land and Water Birds,” 1797 and 1804. The illustrations to the

“Quadrupeds” are in many instances excellent, and large additions were made to them in subsequent issues. But in this collection Bewick laboured to a great extent under the disadvantage of representing animals with which he was familiar only through the medium of stuffed specimens or incorrect drawings. In the “British Birds,” on the contrary, his facilities for study from the life were greater, and his success was consequently more complete. Indeed, it may be safely affirmed that of all the engravers of the present century, none have excelled Bewick for beauty of black and white, for skilful rendering of plumage and foliage, and for fidelity of detail and accessory. The “Woodcock” (here given), the “Partridge,” the “Owl,” the “Yellow-Hammer,” the “Yellow-Bunting,” the “Willow-Wren,” are popular examples of these qualities. But there are a hundred others nearly as good.

Among sundry conventional decorations after the old German fashion in the first edition of the “Quadrupeds,” there are a fair number of those famous tail-pieces which, to a good many people, constitute Bewick’s chief claim to immortality. That it is not easy to imitate them is plain from the failure of Branston’s attempts, and from the inferior character of those by John Thompson in Yarrell’s “Fishes.” The genius of Bewick was, in fact, entirely individual and particular. He had the humour of a Hogarth in little, as well as some of his special characteristics, — notably his faculty of telling a story by suggestive detail. An instance may be taken at random from vol. I. of the “Birds.” A man, whose wig and hat have fallen off, lies asleep with open mouth under some bushes. He is manifestly drunk, and the date “4 June,” on a neighbouring stone, gives us the reason and occasion of his catastrophe. He has been too loyally celebrating the birthday of his majesty King George III. Another of Bewick’s gifts is his wonderful skill in foreshadowing a tragedy. Take as an example, this truly appalling incident from the “Quadrupeds.” The tottering child, whose nurse is seen in the background, has strayed into the meadow, and is pulling at the tail of a vicious-looking colt, with back-turned eye and lifted heel. Down the garden-steps the mother hurries headlong; but she can hardly be in time. And of all this — sufficient, one would say, for a fairly-sized canvas — the artist has managed to give a vivid impression in a block of three inches by two! Then, again, like Hogarth once more, he rejoices in multiplications of dilemma. What, for instance, can be more comically pathetic than the head-piece to the “Contents” in vol. I. of the “Birds”? The old horse has been seized with an invincible fit of stubbornness. The day is both windy and rainy. The rider has broken his stick and lost his hat; but he is too much encumbered with his cackling and excited stock to dare to dismount. Nothing can help him but a Deus ex machina, — of whom there is no sign.

Besides his humour, Bewick has a delightfully rustic side, of which Hogarth gives but little indication. From the starved ewe in the snow nibbling forlornly at a worn-out broom, to the cow which has broken through the rail to reach the running water, there are numberless designs which reveal that faithful lover of the field and hillside, who, as he said, “would rather be herding sheep on Mickle bank top” than remain in London to be made premier of England. He loved the country and the country-life; and he drew them as one who loved them. It is this rural quality which helps to give such a lasting freshness to his quaint and picturesque fancies; and it is this which will continue to preserve their popularity, even if they should cease to be valued for their wealth of whimsical invention.

In referring to these masterpieces of Bewick’s, it must not be forgotten that he had the aid of some clever assistants. His younger brother John was not without talent, as is clear from his work for Somervile’s “Chace,” 1796, and that highly edifying book, the “Blossoms of Morality.” Many of the tail-pieces to the “Water Birds” were designed by Robert Johnson, who also did most of the illustrations to Bewick’s “Fables” of 1818, which were engraved by Temple and Harvey, two other pupils. Another pupil was Charlton Nesbit, an excellent engraver, who was employed upon the “Birds,” and did good work in Ackermann’s “Religious Emblems” of 1808, and the second series of Northcote’s “Fables.” But by far the largest portion of the tail-pieces in the second volume of the “Birds” was engraved by Luke Clennell, a very skilful but unfortunate artist, who ultimately became insane. To him we owe the woodcuts, after Stothard’s charming sketches, to the Rogers volume of 1810, an edition preceding those already mentioned as illustrated with steel-plates, and containing some of the artist’s happiest pictures of children and amorini. Many of these little groups would make admirable designs for gems, if indeed they are not already derived from them, since one at least is an obvious copy of a well-known sardonyx — (“The Marriage of Cupid and Psyche.”) This volume, generally known by the name of the “Firebrand” edition, is highly prized by collectors; and, as intelligent renderings of pen and ink, there is little better than these engravings of Clennell’s. Finally, among others of Bewick’s pupils, must be mentioned William Harvey, who survived to 1866. It has been already stated that he engraved part of the illustrations to Bewick’s “Fables,” but his best known block is the large one of Haydon’s “Death of Dentatus.” Soon after this he relinquished wood-engraving in favour of design, and for a long period was one of the most fertile and popular of book-illustrators. His style, however, is unpleasantly mannered; and it is sufficient to make mention of his masterpiece, the “Arabian Nights” of Lane, the illustrations to which, produced under the supervision of the translator, are said to be so accurate as to give the appropriate turbans for every hour of the day. They show considerable freedom of invention and a large fund of Orientalism.

Harvey came to London in 1817; Clennell had preceded him by some years; and Nesbit lived there for a considerable time. What distinguishes these pupils of Bewick especially is, that they were artists as well as engravers, capable of producing the designs they engraved. The "London School" of engravers, on the contrary, were mostly engravers, who depended upon others for their designs. The foremost of these was Robert Branston, a skilful renderer of human figures and indoor scenes. He worked in rivalry with Bewick and Nesbit; but he excelled neither, while he fell far behind the former. John Thompson, one of the very best of modern English engravers on wood, was Branston's pupil. His range was of the widest, and he succeeded as well in engraving fishes and birds for Yarrell and Walton's "Angler," as in illustrations to Moliere and "Hudibras." He was, besides, a clever draughtsman, though he worked chiefly from the designs of Thurston and others. One of the most successful of his illustrated books is the "Vicar of Wakefield," after Mulready, whose simplicity and homely feeling were well suited to Goldsmith's style. Another excellent engraver of this date is Samuel Williams. There is an edition of Thomson's "Seasons," with cuts both drawn and engraved by him, which is well worthy of attention, and (like Thompson and Branston) he was very skilful in reproducing the designs of Cruikshank. Some of his best work in this way is to be found in Clarke's "Three Courses and a Dessert," published by Vizetelly in 1830.

From this time forth, however, one hears less of the engraver and more of the artist. The establishment of the "Penny Magazine" in 1832, and the multifarious publications of Charles Knight, gave an extraordinary impetus to wood-engraving. Ten years later came "Punch," and the "Illustrated London News," which further increased its popularity. Artists of eminence began to draw on or for the block, as they had drawn, and were still drawing, for the "Annuals." In 1842-6 was issued the great "Abbotsford" edition of the "Waverley Novels," which, besides 120 plates, contained nearly 2000 wood-engravings; and with the "Book of British Ballads," 1843, edited by Mr. S. C. Hall, arose that long series of illustrated Christmas books, which gradually supplanted the "Annuals," and made familiar the names of Gilbert, Birket Foster, Harrison Weir, John Absolon, and a crowd of others. The poems of Longfellow, Montgomery, Burns, "Barry Cornwall," Poe, Miss Ingelow, were all successively "illustrated." Besides these, there were numerous selections, such as Willmott's "Poets of the Nineteenth Century," Wills's "Poets' Wit and Humour," and so forth. But the field here grows too wide to be dealt with in detail, and it is impossible to do more than mention a few of the books most prominent for merit or originality. Amongst these there is the “Shakespeare” of Sir John Gilbert. Regarded as an interpretative edition of the great dramatist, this is little more than a brilliant tour de force; but it is nevertheless infinitely superior to the earlier efforts of Kenny Meadows in 1843, and also to the fancy designs of Harvey in Knight’s “Pictorial Shakespeare.” The “Illustrated Tennyson” of 1858 is also a remarkable production. The Laureate, almost more than any other, requires a variety of illustrators; and here, for his idylls, he had Mulready and Millais, and for his romances Rossetti and Holman Hunt. His “Princess” was afterwards illustrated by Maclise, and his “Enoch Arden” by Arthur Hughes; but neither of these can be said to be wholly adequate. The “Lalla Rookh” of John Tenniel, 1860, albeit somewhat stiff and cold, after this artist’s fashion, is a superb collection of carefully studied oriental designs. With these may be classed the illustrations to Aytoun’s “Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers,” by Sir Noel Paton, which have the same finished qualities of composition and the same academic hardness. Several good editions of the “Pilgrim’s Progress” have appeared, — notably those of C. H. Bennett, J. D. Watson, and G. H. Thomas. Other books are Millais’s “Parables of our Lord,” Leighton’s “Romola,” Walker’s “Philip” and “Denis Duval,” the “Don Quixote,” “Dante,” “La Fontaine” and other works of Dore, Dalziel’s “Arabian Nights,” Leighton’s “Lyra Germanica” and “Moral Emblems,” and the “Spiritual Conceits” of W. Harry Rogers. These are some only of the number, which does not include books like Mrs. Hugh Blackburn’s “British Birds,” Wolf’s “Wild Animals,” Wise’s “New Forest,” Linton’s “Lake Country,” Wood’s “Natural History,” and many more. Nor does it take in the various illustrated periodicals which have multiplied so freely since, in 1859, “Once a Week” first began to attract and train such younger draughtsmen as Sandys, Lawless, Pinwell, Houghton, Morten, and Paul Grey, some of whose best work in this way has been revived in the edition of Thornbury’s “Ballads and Songs,” recently published by Chatto and Windus. Ten years later came the “Graphic,” offering still wider opportunities to woodcut art, and bringing with it a fresh school of artists. Herkomer, Fildes, Small, Green, Barnard, Barnes, Crane, Caldecott, Hopkins, and others, — quos nunc perscribere longum est — have contributed good work to this popular rival of the older, but still vigorous, “Illustrated.” And now again, another promising serial, the “Magazine of Art,” affords a supplementary field to modern refinements and younger energies.

Not a few of the artists named in the preceding paragraph have also earned distinction in separate branches of the pictorial art, and specially in that of humorous design, — a department which has always been so richly recruited in this country that it deserves more than a passing mention. From the days of

Hogarth onwards there has been an almost unbroken series of humorous draughtsmen, who, both on wood and metal, play a distinguished part in our illustrated literature. Rowlandson, one of the earliest, was a caricaturist of inexhaustible facility, and an artist who scarcely did justice to his own powers. He illustrated several books, but he is chiefly remembered in this way by his plates to Combe's "Three Tours of Dr. Syntax." Gillray, his contemporary, whose bias was political rather than social, is said to have illustrated "The Deserted Village" in his youth; but he is not famous as a book-illustrator. Another of the early men was Bunbury, whom "quality"-loving Mr. Walpole calls "the second Hogarth, and first imitator who ever fully equalled his original (!);" but whose prints to "Tristram Shandy," are nevertheless completely forgotten, while, if he be remembered at all, it is by the plate of "The Long Minuet," and the vulgar "Directions to Bad Horsemen." With the first years of the century, however, appears the great master of modern humorists, whose long life ended only a few years since, "the veteran George Cruikshank" — as his admirers were wont to style him. He indeed may justly be compared to Hogarth, since, in tragic power and intensity he occasionally comes nearer to him than any artist of our time. It is manifestly impossible to mention here all the more important efforts of this indefatigable worker, from those far-away days when he caricatured "Boney" and championed Queen Caroline, to that final frontispiece for "The Rose and the Lily"— "designed and etched (according to the inscription) by George Cruikshank, age 83;" but the plates to the "Points of Humour," to Grimm's "Goblins," to "Oliver Twist," "Jack Sheppard," Maxwell's "Irish Rebellion," and the "Table Book," are sufficiently favourable and varied specimens of his skill with the needle, while the woodcuts to "Three Courses and a Dessert," one of which is here given, are equally good examples of his work on the block. The "Triumph of Cupid," which begins the "Table Book," is an excellent instance of his lavish wealth of fancy, and it contains beside, one — nay more than one — of the many portraits of the artist. He is shown en robe de chambre, smoking (this was before his regenerate days!) in front of a blazing fire, with a pet spaniel on his knee. In the cloud which curls from his lips is a motley procession of sailors, sweeps, jockeys, Greenwich pensioners, Jew clothesmen, flunkies, and others more illustrious, chained to the chariot wheels of Cupid, who, preceded by cherubic acolytes and banner-bearers, winds round the top of the picture towards an altar of Hymen on the table. When, by the aid of a pocket-glass, one has mastered these swarming figures, as well as those in the foreground, it gradually dawns upon one that all the furniture is strangely vitalised. Masks laugh round the border of the tablecloth, the markings of the mantelpiece resolve themselves into rows of madly-racing figures, the tongs leers in a degage and cavalier way at the artist, the shovel and poker grin in sympathy; there are faces in the smoke, in the fire, in the fireplace, — the very fender itself is a ring of fantastic creatures who jubilantly hem in the ashes. And it is not only in the grotesque and fanciful that Cruikshank excels; he is master of the strange, the supernatural, and the terrible. In range of character (the comparison is probably a hackneyed one), both by his gifts and his limitations, he resembles Dickens; and had he illustrated more of that writer's works the resemblance would probably have been more evident. In "Oliver Twist," for example, where Dickens is strong, Cruikshank is strong; where Dickens is weak, he is weak too. His Fagin, his Bill Sikes, his Bumble, and their following, are on a level with Dickens's conceptions; his Monk and Rose Maylie are as poor as the originals. But as the defects of Dickens are overbalanced by his merits, so Cruikshank's strength is far in excess of his weakness. It is not to his melodramatic heroes or wasp-waisted heroines that we must look for his triumphs; it is to his delineations, from the moralist's point of view, of vulgarity and vice, — of the "rank life of towns," with all its squalid tragedy and comedy. Here he finds his strongest ground, and possibly, notwithstanding his powers as a comic artist and caricaturist, his loftiest claim to recollection.

Cruikshank was employed on two only of Dickens's books— "Oliver Twist" and the "Sketches by Boz." The great majority of them were illustrated by Hablot K. Browne, an artist who followed the ill-fated Seymour on the "Pickwick Papers." To "Phiz," as he is popularly called, we are indebted for our pictorial ideas of Sam Weller, Mrs. Gamp, Captain Cuttle, and most of the author's characters, down to the "Tale of Two Cities." "Phiz" also illustrated a great many of Lever's novels, for which his skill in hunting and other Lever-like scenes especially qualified him.

With the name of Richard Doyle we come to the first of a group of artists whose main work was, or is still, done for the time-honoured miscellany of Mr. Punch. So familiar an object is "Punch" upon our tables, that one is sometimes apt to forget how unfailing, and how good on the whole, is the work we take so complacently as a matter of course. And of this good work, in the earlier days, a large proportion was done by Mr. Doyle. He is still living, although he has long ceased to gladden those sprightly pages. But it was to "Punch" that he contributed his masterpiece, the "Manners and Customs of ye Englyshe," a series of outlines illustrating social life in 1849, and cleverly commented by a shadowy "Mr. Pips," a sort of fetch or double of the bustling and garrulous old Caroline diarist. In these captivating pictures the life of thirty years ago is indeed, as the title-page has it, "drawn from ye quick." We see the Molesworths and Cantilupes of the day parading the Park; we watch Brougham fretting at a hearing in the Lords, or Peel holding forth to the Commons (where the Irish members are already obstructive); we squeeze in at the Haymarket to listen to Jenny Lind, or we run down the river to Greenwich Fair, and visit “Mr. Richardson, his show.” Many years after, in the “Bird’s Eye Views of Society,” which appeared in the early numbers of the “Cornhill Magazine,” Mr. Doyle returned to this attractive theme. But the later designs were more elaborate, and not equally fortunate. They bear the same relationship to Mr. Pips’s pictorial chronicle, as the laboured “Temperance Fairy Tales” of Cruikshank’s old age bear to the little-worked Grimm’s “Goblins” of his youth. So hazardous is the attempt to repeat an old success! Nevertheless, many of the initial letters to the “Bird’s Eye Views” are in the artist’s best and most frolicsome manner. “The Foreign Tour of Brown, Jones, and Robinson” is another of his happy thoughts for “Punch;” and some of his most popular designs are to be found in Thackeray’s “Newcomes,” where his satire and fancy seem thoroughly suited to his text. He has also illustrated Locker’s well-known “London Lyrics,” Ruskin’s “King of the Golden River,” and Hughes’s “Scouring of the White Horse,” from which last the initial at the beginning of this chapter has been borrowed. His latest important effort was the series of drawings called “In Fairy Land,” to which Mr. William Allingham contributed the verses.

In speaking of the “Newcomes,” one is reminded that its illustrious author was himself a “Punch” artist, and would probably have been a designer alone, had it not been decreed “that he should paint in colours which will never crack and never need restoration.” Everyone knows the story of the rejected illustrator of “Pickwick,” whom that and other rebuffs drove permanently to letters. To his death, however, he clung fondly to his pencil. In technique he never attained to certainty or strength, and his genius was too quick and creative — perhaps also too desultory — for finished work, while he was always indifferent to costume and accessory. But many of his sketches for “Vanity Fair,” for “Pendennis,” for “The Virginians,” for “The Rose and the Ring,” the Christmas books, and the posthumously published “Orphan of Pimlico,” have a vigour of impromptu, and a happy suggestiveness which is better than correct drawing. Often the realisation is almost photographic. Look, for example, at the portrait in “Pendennis” of the dilapidated Major as he crawls downstairs in the dawn after the ball at Gaunt House, and then listen to the inimitable context: “That admirable and devoted Major above all, — who had been for hours by Lady Clavering’s side ministering to her and feeding her body with everything that was nice, and her ear with everything that was sweet and flattering — oh! what an object he was! The rings round his eyes were of the colour of bistre; those orbs themselves were like the plovers' eggs whereof Lady Clavering and Blanche had each tasted; the wrinkles in his old face were furrowed in deep gashes; and a silver stubble, like an elderly morning dew, was glittering on his chin, and alongside the dyed whiskers, now limp and out of curl." A good deal of this — that fine touch in italics especially — could not possibly be rendered in black and white, and yet how much is indicated, and how thoroughly the whole is felt! One turns to the woodcut from the words, and back again to the words from the woodcut with ever-increasing gratification. Then again, Thackeray's little initial letters are charmingly arch and playful. They seem to throw a shy side-light upon the text, giving, as it were, an additional and confidential hint of the working of the author's mind. To those who, with the present writer, love every tiny scratch and quirk and flourish of the Master's hand, these small but priceless memorials are far beyond the frigid appraising of academics and schools of art.

After Doyle and Thackeray come a couple of well-known artists — John Leech and John Tenniel. The latter still lives (may he long live!) to delight and instruct us. Of the former, whose genial and manly "Pictures of Life and Character" are in every home where good-humoured raillery is prized and appreciated, it is scarcely necessary to speak. Who does not remember the splendid languid swells, the bright-eyed rosy girls ("with no nonsense about them!") in pork pie hats and crinolines, the superlative "Jeames's," the hairy "Mossoos," the music-grinding Italian desperadoes whom their kind creator hated so? And then the intrepidity of "Mr. Briggs," the Roman rule of "Paterfamilias," the vagaries of the "Rising Generation!" There are things in this gallery over which the severest misanthrope must chuckle — they are simply irresistible. Let any one take, say that smallest sketch of the hapless mortal who has turned on the hot water in the bath and cannot turn it off again, and see if he is able to restrain his laughter. In this one gift of producing instant mirth Leech is almost alone. It would be easy to assail his manner and his skill, but for sheer fun, for the invention of downright humorous situation, he is unapproached, except by Cruikshank. He did a few illustrations to Dickens's Christmas books; but his best-known book-illustrations properly so called are to "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the "Comic Histories" of A'Beckett, the "Little Tour in Ireland," and certain sporting novels by the late Mr. Surtees. Tenniel now confines himself almost exclusively to the weekly cartoons with which his name is popularly associated. But years ago he used to invent the most daintily fanciful initial letters; and many of his admirers prefer the serio-grotesque designs of "Punch's Pocket-Book," "Alice in Wonderland," and "Through the Looking-Glass," to the always correctly-drawn but sometimes stiffly-conceived cartoons. What, for example, could be more delightful than the picture, in “Alice in Wonderland,” of the “Mad Tea Party?” Observe the hopelessly distraught expression of the March hare, and the eager incoherence of the hatter! A little further on the pair are trying to squeeze the dormouse into the teapot; and a few pages back the blue caterpillar is discovered smoking his hookah on the top of a mushroom. He was exactly three inches long, says the veracious chronicle, but what a dignity! — what an oriental flexibility of gesture! Speaking of animals, it must not be forgotten that Tenniel is a master in this line. His “British Lion,” in particular, is a most imposing quadruped, and so often in request that it is not necessary to go back to the famous cartoons on the Indian mutiny to seek for examples of that magnificent presence. As a specimen of the artist’s treatment of the lesser felidae, the reader’s attention is invited to this charming little kitten from “Through the Looking-Glass.”

Mr. Tenniel is a link between Leech and the younger school of “Punch” artists, of whom Mr. George du Maurier, Mr. Linley Sambourne, and Mr. Charles Keene are the most illustrious. The first is nearly as popular as Leech, and is certainly a greater favourite with cultivated audiences. He is not so much a humorist as a satirist of the Thackeray type, — unsparing in his denunciation of shams, affectations, and flimsy pretences of all kinds. A master of composition and accomplished draughtsman, he excels in the delineation of “society” — its bishops, its “professional beauties” and “aesthetes,” its nouveaux riches, its distinguished foreigners,- -while now and then (but not too often) he lets us know that if he chose he could be equally happy in depicting the lowest classes. There was a bar-room scene not long ago in “Punch” which gave the clearest evidence of this. Some of those for whom no good thing is good enough complain, it is said, that he lacks variety — that he is too constant to one type of feminine beauty. But any one who will be at the pains to study a group of conventional “society” faces from any of his “At Homes” or “Musical Parties” will speedily discover that they are really very subtly diversified and contrasted. For a case in point, take the decorously sympathetic group round the sensitive German musician, who is “veeping” over one of his own compositions. Or follow the titter running round that amused assembly to whom the tenor warbler is singing “Me-e-e-et me once again,” with such passionate emphasis that the domestic cat mistakes it for a well-known area cry. As for his ladies, it may perhaps be conceded that his type is a little persistent. Still it is a type so refined, so graceful, so attractive altogether, that in the jarring of less well-favoured realities it is an advantage to have it always before our eyes as a standard to which we can appeal. Mr. du Maurier is a fertile book-illustrator, whose hand is frequently seen in the “Cornhill,” and elsewhere. Some of his best work of this kind is in Douglas Jerrold's "Story of a Feather," in Thackeray's "Ballads," and the large edition of the "Ingoldsby Legends," to which Leech, Tenniel, and Cruikshank also contributed. One of his prettiest compositions is the group here reproduced from "Punch's Almanack" for 1877. The talent of his colleague, Mr. Linley Sambourne, may fairly be styled unique. It is difficult to compare it with anything in its way, except some of the happier efforts of the late Mr. Charles Bennett, to which, nevertheless, it is greatly superior in execution. To this clever artist's invention everything seems to present itself with a train of fantastic accessory so whimsically inexhaustible that it almost overpowers one with its prodigality. Each fresh examination of his designs discloses something overlooked or unexpected. Let the reader study for a moment the famous "Birds of a Feather" of 1875, or that ingenious skit of 1877 upon the rival Grosvenor Gallery and Academy, in which the late President of the latter is shown as the proudest of peacocks, the eyes of whose tail are portraits of Royal Academicians, and whose body-feathers are paint brushes and shillings of admission. Mr. Sambourne is excellent, too, at adaptations of popular pictures, — witness the more than happy parodies of Herrman's "A Bout d'Arguments," and "Une Bonne Histoire." His book-illustrations have been comparatively few, those to Burnand's laughable burlesque of "Sandford and Merton" being among the best. Rumour asserts that he is at present engaged upon Kingsley's "Water Babies," a subject which might almost be supposed to have been created for his pencil. There are indications, it may be added, that Mr. Sambourne's talents are by no means limited to the domain in which for the present he chooses to exercise them, and it is not impossible that he may hereafter take high rank as a cartoonist. Mr. Charles Keene, a selection from whose sketches has recently been issued under the title of "Our People," is unrivalled in certain bourgeois, military, and provincial types. No one can draw a volunteer, a monthly nurse, a Scotchman, an "ancient mariner" of the watering-place species, with such absolutely humorous verisimilitude. Personages, too, in whose eyes — to use Mr. Swiveller's euphemism— "the sun has shone too strongly," find in Mr. Keene a merciless satirist of their "pleasant vices." Like Leech, he has also a remarkable power of indicating a landscape background with the fewest possible touches. His book-illustrations have been .mainly confined to magazines and novels. Those in "Once a Week" to a "Good Fight," the tale subsequently elaborated by Charles Reade into the "Cloister and the Hearth," present some good specimens of his earlier work. One of these, in which the dwarf of the story is seen climbing up a wall with a lantern at his back, will probably be remembered by many.

After the "Punch" school there are other lesser luminaries. Mr. W. S. Gilbert's drawings to his own inimitable “Bab Ballads” have a perverse drollery which is quite in keeping with that erratic text. Mr. F. Barnard, whose exceptional talents have not been sufficiently recognised, is a master of certain phases of strongly marked character, and, like Mr. Charles Green, has contributed some excellent sketches to the “Household Edition” of Dickens. Mr. Sullivan of “Fun,” whose grotesque studies of the “British Tradesman” and “Workman” have recently been republished, has abounding vis comica, but he has hitherto done little in the way of illustrating books. For minute pictorial stocktaking and photographic retention of detail, Mr. Sullivan’s artistic memory may almost be compared to the wonderful literary memory of Mr. Sala. Mr. John Proctor, who some years ago (in “Will o’ the Wisp”) seemed likely to rival Tenniel as a cartoonist, has not been very active in this way; while Mr. Matthew Morgan, the clever artist of the “Tomahawk,” has transferred his services to the United States. Of Mr. Bowcher of “Judy,” and various other professedly humorous designers, space permits no further mention.

There remains, however, one popular branch of book-illustration, which has attracted the talents of some of the most skilful and original of modern draughtsmen, *i.e.* the embellishment of children’s books. From the days when Mulready drew the old “Butterfly’s Ball” and “Peacock at Home” of our youth, to those of the delightfully Blake-like fancies of E. V. B., whose “Child’s Play” has recently been republished for the delectation of a new generation of admirers, this has always been a popular and profitable employment; but of late years it has been raised to the level of a fine art. Mr. H. S. Marks, Mr. J. D. Watson, Mr. Walter Crane, have produced specimens of nursery literature which, for refinement of colouring and beauty of ornament, cannot easily be surpassed. The equipments of the last named, especially, are of a very high order. He began as a landscapist on wood; he now chiefly devotes himself to the figure; and he seems to have the decorative art at his fingers’ ends as a natural gift. Such work as “King Luckieboy’s Party” was a revelation in the way of toy books, while the “Baby’s Opera” and “Baby’s Bouquet” are petits chefs d’oeuvre, of which the sagacious collector will do well to secure copies, not for his nursery, but his library. Nor can his “Mrs. Mundi at Home” be neglected by the curious in quaint and graceful invention. Another book — the “Under the Window” of Miss Kate Greenaway — comes within the same category. Since Stothard, no one has given us such a clear-eyed, soft-faced, happy-hearted childhood; or so poetically “apprehended” the coy reticences, the simplicities, and the small solemnities of little people. Added to this, the old-world costume in which she usually elects to clothe her characters, lends an arch piquancy of contrast to their innocent rites and ceremonies. Her taste in tinting, too, is very sweet and spring-like; and there is a fresh, pure fragrance about all her pictures as of new-gathered nosegays; or, perhaps, looking to the fashions that she favours, it would be better to say “bow-pots.” But the latest “good genius” of this branch of book-illustrating is Mr. Randolph Caldecott, a designer assuredly of the very first order. There is a spontaneity of fun, an unforced invention about everything he does, that is infinitely entertaining. Other artists draw to amuse us; Mr. Caldecott seems to draw to amuse himself, — and this is his charm. One feels that he must have chuckled inwardly as he puffed the cheeks of his “Jovial Huntsmen;” or sketched that inimitably complacent dog in the “House that Jack Built;” or exhibited the exploits of the immortal “train-band captain” of “famous London town.” This last is his masterpiece. Cowper himself must have rejoiced at it, — and Lady Austen. There are two sketches in this book — they occupy the concluding pages — which are especially fascinating. On one, John Gilpin, in a forlorn and flaccid condition, is helped into the house by the sympathising (and very attractive) Betty; on the other he has donned his slippers, refreshed his inner man with a cordial, and over the heaving shoulder of his “spouse,” who lies dissolved upon his martial bosom, he is taking the spectators into his confidence with a wink worthy of the late Mr. Buckstone. Nothing more genuine, more heartily laughable, than this set of designs has appeared in our day. And Mr. Caldecott has few limitations. Not only does he draw human nature admirably, but he draws animals and landscapes equally well, so one may praise him without reserve. Though not children’s books, mention should here be made of his “Bracebridge Hall,” and “Old Christmas,” the illustrations to which are the nearest approach to that beau-ideal, perfect sympathy between the artist and the author, with which the writer is acquainted. The cut on page 173 is from the former of these works.

Many of the books above mentioned are printed in colours by various processes, and they are not always engraved on wood. But — to close the account of modern wood-engraving — some brief reference must be made to what is styled the “new American School,” as exhibited for the most part in “Scribner’s” and other Transatlantic magazines. Authorities, it is reported, shake their heads over these performances. “C’est magnifique, mais ce nest pas la gravure,” they whisper. Into the matter in dispute, it is perhaps presumptuous for an “atechnic” to adventure himself. But to the outsider it would certainly seem as if the chief ground of complaint is that the new comers do not play the game according to the old rules, and that this (alleged) irregular mode of procedure tends to lessen the status of the engraver as an artist. False or true, this, it may fairly be advanced, has nothing whatever to do with the matter, as far, at least, as the public are concerned. For them the question is, simply and solely — What is the result obtained? The new school, availing themselves largely of the assistance of photography, are able to dispense, in a great measure, with the old tedious method of drawing on the block, and to leave the artist to choose what medium he prefers for his design — be it oil, water-colour, or black and white — concerning themselves only to reproduce its characteristics on the wood. This is, of course, a deviation from the method of Bewick. But would Bewick have adhered to his method in these days? Even in his last hours he was seeking for new processes. What we want is to get nearest to the artist himself with the least amount of interpretation or intermediation on the part of the engraver. Is engraving on copper to be reproduced, we want a facsimile if possible, and not a rendering into something which is supposed to be the orthodox utterance of wood-engraving. Take, for example, the copy of Schiavonetti’s engraving of Blake’s Death’s Door in “Scribner’s Magazine” for June 1880, or the cut from the same source at page 131 of this book. These are faithful line for line transcriptions, as far as wood can give them, of the original copperplates; and, this being the case, it is not to be wondered at that the public, who, for a few pence can have practical facsimiles of Blake, of Cruikshank, or of Whistler, are loud in their appreciation of the “new American School.” Nor are its successes confined to reproduction in facsimile. Those who look at the exquisite illustrations, in the same periodical, to the “Tile Club at Play,” to Roe’s “Success with Small Fruits,” and Harris’s “Insects Injurious to Vegetation,” — to say nothing of the selected specimens in the recently issued “Portfolios” — will see that the latest comers can hold their own on all fields with any school that has gone before.

Besides copperplate and wood, there are many processes which have been and are still employed for book-illustrations, although the brief limits of this chapter make any account of them impossible. Lithography was at one time very popular, and, in books like Roberts’s “Holy Land,” exceedingly effective. The “Etching Club” issued a number of books circa 1841-52; and most of the work of “Phiz” and Cruikshank was done with the needle. It is probable that, as we have already seen, the impetus given to modern etching by Messrs. Hamerton, Seymour Haden, and Whistler, will lead to a specific revival of etching as a means of book-illustration. Already beautiful etchings have for some time appeared in “L’Art,” the “Portfolio,” and the “Etcher;” and at least one book of poems has been entirely illustrated in this way, — the poems of Mr. W. Bell Scott. For reproducing old engravings, maps, drawings, and the like, it is not too much to say that we shall never get anything much closer than the facsimiles of M. Amand-Durand and the Typographic Etching and Autotype Companies. But further improvements will probably have to be made before these can compete commercially with wood-engraving as practised by the “new American School.”

“Of making many books,” ‘twais said,
“There is no end;” and who thereon
The ever-running ink doth shed
But probes the words of Solomon:
Wherefore we now, for colophon,
From London’s city drear and dark,
In the year Eighteen Eight-One,
Reprint them at the press of Clark.

A. D.

CUSTOM AND MYTH

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CUSTOM AND MYTH

TO E. B. TYLOR
AUTHOR OF ‘PRIMITIVE CULTURE,’ THESE STUDIES OF THE OLDEST STORIES ARE DEDICATED.

INTRODUCTION.

Though some of the essays in this volume have appeared in various serials, the majority of them were written expressly for their present purpose, and they are now arranged in a designed order. During some years of study of Greek, Indian, and savage mythologies, I have become more and more impressed with a sense of the inadequacy of the prevalent method of comparative mythology. That method is based on the belief that myths are the result of a disease of language, as the pearl is the result of a disease of the oyster. It is argued that men at some period, or periods, spoke in a singular style of coloured and concrete language, and that their children retained the phrases of this language after losing hold of the original meaning. The consequence was the growth of myths about supposed persons, whose names had originally been mere ‘appellations.’ In conformity with this hypothesis the method of comparative mythology examines the proper names which occur in myths. The notion is that these names contain a key to the meaning of the story, and that, in fact, of the story the names are the germs and the oldest surviving part.

The objections to this method are so numerous that it is difficult to state them briefly. The attempt, however, must be made. To desert the path opened by the most eminent scholars is in itself presumptuous; the least that an innovator can do is to give his reasons for advancing in a novel direction. If this were a question of scholarship merely, it would be simply foolhardy to differ from men like Max Müller, Adalbert Kuhn, Bréal, and many others. But a revolutionary mythologist is encouraged by finding that these scholars usually differ from each other. Examples will be found chiefly in the essays styled ‘The Myth of Cronus,’ ‘A Far-travelled Tale,’ and ‘Cupid and Psyche.’ Why, then, do distinguished scholars and mythologists reach such different goals? Clearly because their method is so precarious. They all analyse the names in myths; but, where one scholar decides that the name is originally Sanskrit, another holds that it is purely Greek, and a third, perhaps, is all for an Accadian etymology, or a Semitic derivation. Again, even when scholars agree as to the original root from which a name springs, they differ as much as ever as to the meaning of the name in its present place. The inference is, that the analysis of names, on which the whole edifice of philological ‘comparative mythology’ rests, is a foundation of shifting sand. The method is called ‘orthodox,’ but, among those who practise it, there is none of the beautiful unanimity of orthodoxy.

These objections are not made by the unscholarly anthropologist alone. Curtius has especially remarked the difficulties which beset the ‘etymological operation’ in the case of proper names. ‘Peculiarly dubious and perilous is mythological etymology. Are we to seek the sources of the divine names in aspects of nature, or in moral conceptions; in special Greek geographical conditions, or in natural circumstances which are everywhere the same: in dawn with her rays, or in clouds with their floods; are we to seek the origin of the names of heroes in things historical and human, or in physical phenomena?’ Professor Tiele, of Leyden, says much the same thing: ‘The uncertainties are great, and there is a constant risk of taking mere *jeux d’esprit* for scientific results.’ Every name has, if we can discover or conjecture it, a meaning. That meaning — be it ‘large’ or ‘small,’ ‘loud’ or ‘bright,’ ‘wise’ or ‘dark,’ ‘swift’ or ‘slow’ — is always capable of being explained as an epithet of the sun, or of the cloud, or of both. Whatever, then, a name may signify, some scholars will find that it originally denoted the cloud, if they belong to one school, or the sun or dawn, if they belong to another faction. Obviously this process is a mere *jeu d’esprit*. This logic would be admitted in no other science, and, by similar arguments, any name whatever might be shown to be appropriate to a solar hero.

The scholarly method has now been applied for many years, and what are the results? The ideas attained by the method have been so popularised that they are actually made to enter into the education of children, and are published in primers and catechisms of mythology. But what has a discreet scholar to say to the whole business? ‘The difficult task of interpreting mythical names has, so far, produced few certain results’ — so writes Otto Schrader. Though Schrader still has hopes of better things, it is admitted that the present results are highly disputable. In England, where one set of these results has become an article of faith, readers chiefly accept the opinions of a single etymological school, and thus escape the difficulty of making up their minds when scholars differ. But differ scholars do, so widely and so often, that scarcely any solid advantages have been gained in mythology from the philological method.

The method of philological mythology is thus discredited by the disputes of its adherents. The system may be called orthodox, but it is an orthodoxy which alters with every new scholar who enters the sacred enclosure. Even were there more harmony, the analysis of names could throw little light on myths. In stories the names may well be, and often demonstrably are, the latest, not the original, feature. Tales, at first told of ‘Somebody,’ get new names attached to them, and obtain a new local habitation, wherever they wander. ‘One of the leading personages to be met in the traditions of the world is really no more than — Somebody. There is nothing this wondrous creature cannot achieve; one only restriction binds him at all — that the name he assumes shall have some sort of congruity with the office he undertakes, *and even from this he oftentimes breaks loose*.' We may be pretty sure that the adventures of Jason, Perseus, Œdipous, were originally told only of 'Somebody.' The names are later additions, and vary in various lands. A glance at the essay on 'Cupid and Psyche' will show that a history like theirs is known, where neither they nor their counterparts in the Veda, Urvasi and Pururavas, were ever heard of; while the incidents of the Jason legend are familiar where no Greek word was ever spoken. Finally, the names in common use among savages are usually derived from natural phenomena, often from clouds, sky, sun, dawn. If, then, a name in a myth can be proved to mean cloud, sky, sun, or what not (and usually one set of scholars find clouds, where others see the dawn), we must not instantly infer that the myth is a nature-myth. Though, doubtless, the heroes in it were never real people, the names are as much common names of real people in the savage state, as Smith and Brown are names of civilised men.

For all these reasons, but chiefly because of the fact that stories are usually anonymous at first, that names are added later, and that stories naturally crystallise round any famous name, heroic, divine, or human, the process of analysis of names is most precarious and untrustworthy. A story is told of Zeus: Zeus means sky, and the story is interpreted by scholars as a sky myth. The modern interpreter forgets, first, that to the myth-maker sky did not at all mean the same thing as it means to him. Sky meant, not an airy, infinite, radiant vault, but a person, and, most likely, a savage person. Secondly, the interpreter forgets that the tale (say the tale of Zeus, Demeter, and the mutilated Ram) may have been originally anonymous, and only later attributed to Zeus, as unclaimed jests are attributed to Sheridan or Talleyrand. Consequently no heavenly phenomena will be the basis and explanation of the story. If one thing in mythology be certain, it is that myths are always changing masters, that the old tales are always being told with new names. Where, for example, is the value of a philological analysis of the name of Jason? As will be seen in the essay 'A Far-travelled Tale,' the analysis of the name of Jason is fanciful, precarious, disputed, while the essence of his myth is current in Samoa, Finland, North America, Madagascar, and other lands, where the name was never heard, and where the characters in the story have other names or are anonymous.

For these reasons, and others too many to be adduced here, I have ventured to differ from the current opinion that myths must be interpreted chiefly by philological analysis of names. The system adopted here is explained in the first essay, called 'The Method of Folklore.' The name, Folklore, is not a good one, but 'comparative mythology' is usually claimed exclusively by the philological interpreters.

The second essay, ‘The Bull-Roarer,’ is intended to show that certain peculiarities in the Greek mysteries occur also in the mysteries of savages, and that on Greek soil they are survivals of savagery.

‘The Myth of Cronus’ tries to prove that the first part of the legend is a savage nature-myth, surviving in Greek religion, while the sequel is a set of ideas common to savages.

‘Cupid and Psyche’ traces another Aryan myth among savage races, and attempts to show that the myth may have had its origin in a rule of barbarous etiquette.

‘A Far-travelled Tale’ examines a part of the Jason myth. This myth appears neither to be an explanation of natural phenomena (like part of the Myth of Cronus), nor based on a widespread custom (like Cupid and Psyche.) The question is asked whether the story may have been diffused by slow filtration from race to race all over the globe, as there seems no reason why it should have been invented separately (as a myth explanatory of natural phenomena or of customs might be) in many different places.

‘Apollo and the Mouse’ suggests hypothetically, as a possible explanation of the tie between the God and the Beast, that Apollo-worship superseded, but did not eradicate, Totemism. The suggestion is little more than a conjecture.

‘Star Myths’ points out that Greek myths of stars are a survival from the savage stage of fancy in which such stories are natural.

‘Moly and Mandragora’ is a study of the Greek, the modern, and the Hottentot folklore of magical herbs, with a criticism of a scholarly and philological hypothesis, according to which Moly is the dog-star, and Circe the moon.

‘The Kalevala’ is an account of the Finnish national poem; of all poems that in which the popular, as opposed to the artistic, spirit is strongest. The Kalevala is thus a link between *Märchen* and *Volkslieder* on one side, and epic poetry on the other.

‘The Divining Rod’ is a study of a European and civilised superstition, which is singular in its comparative lack of copious savage analogues.

‘Hottentot Mythology’ is a criticism of the philological method, applied to savage myth.

‘Fetichism and the Infinite,’ is a review of Mr. Max Müller’s theory that a sense of the Infinite is the germ of religion, and that Fetichism is secondary, and a corruption. This essay also contains a defence of the *evidence* on which the anthropological method relies.

The remaining essays are studies of the ‘History of the Family,’ and of ‘Savage Art.’

The essay on ‘Savage Art’ is reprinted, by the kind permission of Messrs. Cassell & Co., from two numbers (April and May, 1882) of the *Magazine of Art*. I have to thank the editors and publishers of the *Contemporary Review*, the *Cornhill Magazine*, and *Fraser’s Magazine*, for leave to republish ‘The Early History of the Family,’ ‘The Divining Rod,’ and ‘Star Myths,’ and ‘The Kalevala.’ A few sentences in ‘The Bull-Roarer,’ and ‘Hottentot Mythology,’ appeared in essays in the *Saturday Review*, and some lines of ‘The Method of Folklore’ in the *Guardian*. To the editors of those journals also I owe thanks for their courteous permission to make this use of my old articles.

To Mr. E. B. Tylor and Mr. W. R. S. Ralston I must express my gratitude for the kindness with which they have always helped me in all difficulties.

I must apologise for the controversial matter in the volume. Controversy is always a thing to be avoided, but, in this particular case, when a system opposed to the prevalent method has to be advocated, controversy is unavoidable. My respect for the learning of my distinguished adversaries is none the less great because I am not convinced by their logic, and because my doubts are excited by their differences.

Perhaps, it should be added, that these essays are, so to speak, only flint-flakes from a neolithic workshop. This little book merely skirmishes (to change the metaphor) in front of a much more methodical attempt to vindicate the anthropological interpretation of myths. But lack of leisure and other causes make it probable that my ‘Key to All Mythologies’ will go the way of Mr. Casaubon’s treatise.

THE METHOD OF FOLKLORE.

After the heavy rain of a thunderstorm has washed the soil, it sometimes happens that a child, or a rustic, finds a wedge-shaped piece of metal or a few triangular flints in a field or near a road. There was no such piece of metal, there were no such flints, lying there yesterday, and the finder is puzzled about the origin of the objects on which he has lighted. He carries them home, and the village wisdom determines that the wedge-shaped piece of metal is a ‘thunderbolt,’ or that the bits of flint are ‘elf-shots,’ the heads of fairy arrows. Such things are still treasured in remote nooks of England, and the ‘thunderbolt’ is applied to cure certain maladies by its touch.

As for the fairy arrows, we know that even in ancient Etruria they were looked on as magical, for we sometimes see their points set, as amulets, in the gold of Etruscan necklaces. In Perugia the arrowheads are still sold as charms. All educated people, of course, have long been aware that the metal wedge is a celt, or ancient bronze axe-head, and that it was not fairies, but the forgotten peoples of this island who used the arrows with the tips of flint. Thunder is only so far connected with them that the heavy rains loosen the surface soil, and lay bare its long hidden secrets.

There is a science, Archæology, which collects and compares the material relics of old races, the axes and arrowheads. There is a form of study, Folklore, which collects and compares the similar but immaterial relics of old races, the surviving superstitions and stories, the ideas which are in our time but not of it. Properly speaking, folklore is only concerned with the legends, customs, beliefs, of the Folk, of the people, of the classes which have least been altered by education, which have shared least in progress. But the student of folklore soon finds that these unprogressive classes retain many of the beliefs and ways of savages, just as the Hebridean people use spindle-whorls of stone, and bake clay pots without the aid of the wheel, like modern South Sea Islanders, or like their own prehistoric ancestors. The student of folklore is thus led to examine the usages, myths, and ideas of savages, which are still retained, in rude enough shape, by the European peasantry. Lastly, he observes that a few similar customs and ideas survive in the most conservative elements of the life of educated peoples, in ritual, ceremonial, and religious traditions and myths. Though such remains are rare in England, we may note the custom of leading the dead soldier’s horse behind his master to the grave, a relic of days when the horse would have been sacrificed. We may observe the persistence of the ceremony by which the monarch, at his coronation, takes his seat on the sacred stone of Scone, probably an ancient fetich stone. Not to speak, here, of our own religious traditions, the old vein of savage rite and belief is found very near the surface of ancient Greek religion. It needs but some stress of circumstance, something answering to the storm shower that reveals the flint arrowheads, to bring savage ritual to the surface of classical religion. In sore need, a human victim was only too likely to be demanded; while a feast-day, or a mystery, set the Greeks dancing serpent-dances or bear-dances like Red Indians, or swimming with sacred pigs, or leaping about in imitation of wolves, or holding a dog-feast, and offering dog's flesh to the gods. Thus the student of folklore soon finds that he must enlarge his field, and examine, not only popular European story and practice, but savage ways and ideas, and the myths and usages of the educated classes in civilised races. In this extended sense the term 'folklore' will frequently be used in the following essays. The idea of the writer is that mythology cannot fruitfully be studied apart from folklore, while some knowledge of anthropology is required in both sciences.

The science of Folklore, if we may call it a science, finds everywhere, close to the surface of civilised life, the remains of ideas as old as the stone elf-shots, older than the celt of bronze. In proverbs and riddles, and nursery tales and superstitions, we detect the relics of a stage of thought, which is dying out in Europe, but which still exists in many parts of the world. Now, just as the flint arrowheads are scattered everywhere, in all the continents and isles, and everywhere are much alike, and bear no very definite marks of the special influence of race, so it is with the habits and legends investigated by the student of folklore. The stone arrowhead buried in a Scottish cairn is like those which were interred with Algonquin chiefs. The flints found in Egyptian soil, or beside the tumulus on the plain of Marathon, nearly resemble the stones which tip the reed arrow of the modern Samoyed. Perhaps only a skilled experience could discern, in a heap of such arrowheads, the specimens which are found in America or Africa from those which are unearthed in Europe. Even in the products of more advanced industry, we see early pottery, for example, so closely alike everywhere that, in the British Museum, Mexican vases have, ere now, been mixed up on the same shelf with archaic vessels from Greece. In the same way, if a superstition or a riddle were offered to a student of folklore, he would have much difficulty in guessing its *provenance*, and naming the race from which it was brought. Suppose you tell a folklorist that, in a certain country, when anyone sneezes, people say 'Good luck to you,' the student cannot say *à priori* what country you refer to, what race you have in your thoughts. It may be Florida, as Florida was when first discovered; it may be Zululand, or West Africa, or ancient Rome, or Homeric Greece, or Palestine. In all these, and many other regions, the sneeze was welcomed as an auspicious omen. The little superstition is as widely distributed as the flint arrowheads. Just as the object and use of the arrowheads became intelligible when we found similar weapons in actual use among savages, so the salutation to the sneezer becomes intelligible when we learn that the savage has a good reason for it. He thinks the sneeze expels an evil spirit. Proverbs, again, and riddles are as universally scattered, and the Wolufs puzzle over the same *devinettes* as the Scotch schoolboy or the Breton peasant. Thus, for instance, the Wolufs of Senegal ask each other, 'What flies for ever, and rests never?' — Answer, 'The Wind.' 'Who are the comrades that always fight, and never hurt each other?'— 'The Teeth.' In France, as we read in the 'Recueil de Calembours,' the people ask, 'What runs faster than a horse, crosses water, and is not wet?' — Answer, 'The Sun.' The Samoans put the riddle, 'A man who stands between two ravenous fishes?' — Answer, 'The tongue between the teeth.' Again, 'There are twenty brothers, each with a hat on his head?' — Answer, 'Fingers and toes, with nails for hats.' This is like the French '*un père a douze fils*?'— '*l'an*.' A comparison of M. Rolland's 'Devinettes' with the Woluf conundrums of Boilat, the Samoan examples in Turner's' Samoa,' and the Scotch enigmas collected by Chambers, will show the identity of peasant and savage humour.

A few examples, less generally known, may be given to prove that the beliefs of folklore are not peculiar to any one race or stock of men. The first case is remarkable: it occurs in Mexico and Ceylon — nor are we aware that it is found elsewhere. In *Macmillan's Magazine* is published a paper by Mrs. Edwards, called 'The Mystery of the Pezazi.' The events described in this narrative occurred on August 28, 1876, in a bungalow some thirty miles from Badiella. The narrator occupied a new house on an estate called Allagalla. Her native servants soon asserted that the place was haunted by a Pezazi. The English visitors saw and heard nothing extraordinary till a certain night: an abridged account of what happened then may be given in the words of Mrs. Edwards: —

Wrapped in dreams, I lay on the night in question tranquilly sleeping, but gradually roused to a perception that discordant sounds disturbed the serenity of my slumber. Loth to stir, I still dozed on, the sounds, however, becoming, as it seemed, more determined to make themselves heard; and I awoke to the consciousness that they proceeded from a belt of adjacent jungle, and resembled the noise that would be produced by some person felling timber.

Shutting my ears to the disturbance, I made no sign, until, with an expression of impatience, E — suddenly started up, when I laid a detaining grasp upon his arm, murmuring that there was no need to think of rising at present — it must be quite early, and the kitchen cooly was doubtless cutting fire-wood in good time. E — responded, in a tone of slight contempt, that no one could be cutting fire-wood at that hour, and the sounds were more suggestive of felling jungle; and he then inquired how long I had been listening to them. Now thoroughly aroused, I replied that I had heard the sounds for some time, at first confusing them with my dreams, but soon sufficiently awakening to the fact that they were no mere phantoms of my imagination, but a reality. During our conversation the noises became more distinct and loud; blow after blow resounded, as of the axe descending upon the tree, followed by the crash of the falling timber. Renewed blows announced the repetition of the operations on another tree, and continued till several were devastated.

It is unnecessary to tell more of the tale. In spite of minute examinations and close search, no solution of the mystery of the noises, on this or any other occasion, was ever found. The natives, of course, attributed the disturbance to the *Pezazi*, or goblin. No one, perhaps, has asserted that the Aztecs were connected by ties of race with the people of Ceylon. Yet, when the Spaniards conquered Mexico, and when Sahagun (one of the earliest missionaries) collected the legends of the people, he found them, like the Cingalese, strong believers in the mystic tree-felling. We translate Sahagun’s account of the ‘midnight axe’: —

When so any man heareth the sound of strokes in the night, as if one were felling trees, he reckons it an evil boding. And this sound they call youaltepuztli (youalli, night; and tepuztli, copper), which signifies ‘the midnight hatchet.’ This noise cometh about the time of the first sleep, when all men slumber soundly, and the night is still. The sound of strokes smitten was first noted by the temple-servants, called tlamacazque, at the hour when they go in the night to make their offering of reeds or of boughs of pine, for so was their custom, and this penance they did on the neighbouring hills, and that when the night was far spent. Whenever they heard such a sound as one makes when he splits wood with an axe (a noise that may be heard afar off), they drew thence an omen of evil, and were afraid, and said that the sounds were part of the witchery of Tezeatlipoca, that often thus dismayeth men who journey in the night. Now, when tidings of these things came to a certain brave man, one exercised in war, he drew near, being guided by the sound, till he came to the very cause of the hubbub. And when he came upon it, with difficulty he caught it, for the thing was hard to catch: natheless at last he overtook that which ran before him; and behold, it was a man without a heart, and, on either side of the chest, two holes that opened and shut, and so made the noise. Then the man put his hand within the breast of the figure and grasped the breast and shook it hard, demanding some grace or gift.

As a rule, the grace demanded was power to make captives in war. The curious coincidence of the ‘midnight axe,’ occurring in lands so remote as Ceylon and Mexico, and the singular attestation by an English lady of the actual existence of the disturbance, makes this *youaltepuztli* one of the quaintest things in the province of the folklorist. But, whatever the cause of the noise, or of the beliefs connected with the noise, may be, no one would explain them as the result of community of *race* between Cingalese and Aztecs. Nor would this explanation be offered to account for the Aztec and English belief that the creaking of furniture is an omen of death in a house. Obviously, these opinions are the expression of a common state of superstitious fancy, not the signs of an original community of origin.

Let us take another piece of folklore. All North-country English folk know the *Kernababy*. The custom of the ‘Kernababy’ is commonly observed in England, or, at all events, in Scotland, where the writer has seen many a kernababy. The last gleanings of the last field are bound up in a rude imitation of the human shape, and dressed in some tag-rags of finery. The usage has fallen into the conservative hands of children, but of old ‘the Maiden’ was a regular image of the harvest goddess, which, with a sickle and sheaves in her arms, attended by a crowd of reapers, and accompanied with music, followed the last carts home to the farm. It is odd enough that the ‘Maiden’ should exactly translate š¿Á·, the old Sicilian name of the daughter of Demeter. ‘The Maiden’ has dwindled, then, among us to the rudimentary kernababy; but ancient Peru had her own Maiden, her Harvest Goddess. Here it is easy to trace the natural idea at the basis of the superstitious practice which links the shores of the Pacific with our own northern coast. Just as a portion of the yule-log and of the Christmas bread were kept all the year through, a kind of nest-egg of plenteous food and fire, so the kernababy, English or Peruvian, is an earnest that corn will not fail all through the year, till next harvest comes. For this reason the kernababy used to be treasured from autumn’s end to autumn’s end, though now it commonly disappears very soon after the harvest home. It is thus that Acosta describes, in Grimston’s old translation (1604), the Peruvian kernababy and the Peruvian harvest home: —

This feast is made comming from the chacra or farme unto the house, saying certaine songs, and praying that the Mays (maize) may long continue, the which they call Mama cora.

What a chance this word offers to etymologists of the old school: how promptly they would recognise, in *mama* mother — ¼·Ä·Á, and in *cora* — º¿Á·, the Mother and the Maiden, the feast of Demeter and Persephone! However, the days of that old school of antiquarianism are numbered. To return to the Peruvian harvest home: —

They take a certaine portion of the most fruitefull of the Mays that growes in their farmes, the which they put in a certaine granary which they do calle Pirua, with certaine ceremonies, watching three nightes; they put this Mays in the richest garments they have, and, being thus wrapped and dressed, they worship this Pirua, and hold it in great veneration, saying it is the Mother of the Mays of their inheritances, and that by this means the Mays augments and is preserved. In this moneth they make a particular sacrifice, and the witches demand of this Pirua, ‘if it hath strength sufficient to continue until the next yeare,’ and if it answers ‘no,’ then they carry this Mays to the farme to burne, whence they brought it, according to every man’s power, then they make another Pirua, with the same ceremonies, saying that they renue it, to the ende that the seede of the Mays may not perish.

The idea that the maize can speak need not surprise us; the Mexican held much the same belief, according to Sahagun: —

It was thought that if some grains of maize fell on the ground, he who saw them lying there was bound to lift them, wherein, if he failed, he harmed the maize, which plained itself of him to God, saying, ‘Lord, punish this man, who saw me fallen and raised me not again; punish him with famine, that he may learn not to hold me in dishonour.’

Well, in all this affair of the Scotch kernababy, and the Peruvian *Mama cora*, we need no explanation beyond the common simple ideas of human nature. We are not obliged to hold, either that the Peruvians and Scotch are akin by blood, nor that, at some forgotten time, they met each other, and borrowed each other’s superstitions. Again, when we find Odysseus sacrificing a black sheep to the dead, and when we read that the Ovahereroes in South Africa also appease with a black sheep the spirits of the departed, we do not feel it necessary to hint that the Ovahereroes are of Greek descent, or have borrowed their ritual from the Greeks. The connection between the colour black, and mourning for the dead, is natural and almost universal.

Examples like these might be adduced in any number. We might show how, in magic, negroes of Barbadoes make clay effigies of their enemies, and pierce them, just as Greeks did in Plato’s time, or the men of Accad in remotest antiquity. We might remark the Australian black putting sharp bits of quartz in the tracks of an enemy who has gone by, that the enemy may be lamed; and we might point to Boris Godunof forbidding the same practice among the Russians. We might watch Scotch, and Australians, and Jews, and French, and Aztecs spreading dust round the body of a dead man, that the footprints of his ghost, or of other ghosts, may be detected next morning. We might point to a similar device in a modern novel, where the presence of a ghost is suspected, as proof of the similar workings of the Australian mind and of the mind of Mrs. Riddell. We shall later turn to ancient Greece, and show how the serpent-dances, the habit of smearing the body with clay, and other odd rites of the mysteries, were common to Hellenic religion, and to the religion of African, Australian, and American tribes.

Now, with regard to all these strange usages, what is the method of folklore? The method is, when an apparently irrational and anomalous custom is found in any country, to look for a country where a similar practice is found, and where the practice is no longer irrational and anomalous, but in harmony with the manners and ideas of the people among whom it prevails. That Greeks should dance about in their mysteries with harmless serpents in their hands looks quite unintelligible. When a wild tribe of Red Indians does the same thing, as a trial of courage, with real rattlesnakes, we understand the Red Man's motives, and may conjecture that similar motives once existed among the ancestors of the Greeks. Our method, then, is to compare the seemingly meaningless customs or manners of civilised races with the similar customs and manners which exist among the uncivilised and still retain their meaning. It is not necessary for comparison of this sort that the uncivilised and the civilised race should be of the same stock, nor need we prove that they were ever in contact with each other. Similar conditions of mind produce similar practices, apart from identity of race, or borrowing of ideas and manners.

Let us return to the example of the flint arrowheads. Everywhere neolithic arrowheads are pretty much alike. The cause of the resemblance is no more than this, that men, with the same needs, the same materials, and the same rude instruments, everywhere produced the same kind of arrowhead. No hypothesis of interchange of ideas nor of community of race is needed to explain the resemblance of form in the missiles. Very early pottery in any region is, for the same causes, like very early pottery in any other region. The same sort of similarity was explained by the same resemblances in human nature, when we touched on the identity of magical practices and of superstitious beliefs. This method is fairly well established and orthodox when we deal with usages and superstitious beliefs; but may we apply the same method when we deal with myths?

Here a difficulty occurs. Mythologists, as a rule, are averse to the method of folklore. They think it scientific to compare only the myths of races which speak languages of the same family, and of races which have, in historic times, been actually in proved contact with each other. Thus, most mythologists hold it correct to compare Greek, Slavonic, Celtic, and Indian stories, because Greeks, Slavs, Celts, and Hindoos all speak languages of the same family. Again, they hold it correct to compare Chaldæan and Greek myths, because the Greeks and the Chaldæans were brought into contact through the Phœnicians, and by other intermediaries, such as the Hittites. But the same mythologists will vow that it is unscientific to compare a Maori or a Hottentot or an Eskimo myth with an Aryan story, because Maoris and Eskimo and Hottentots do not speak languages akin to that of Greece, nor can we show that the ancestors of Greeks, Maoris, Hottentots, and Eskimo were ever in contact with each other in historical times.

Now the peculiarity of the method of folklore is that it will venture to compare (with due caution and due examination of evidence) the myths of the most widely severed races. Holding that myth is a product of the early human fancy, working on the most rudimentary knowledge of the outer world, the student of folklore thinks that differences of race do not much affect the early mythopœic faculty. He will not be surprised if Greeks and Australian blacks are in the same tale.

In each case, he holds, all the circumstances of the case must be examined and considered. For instance, when the Australians tell a myth about the Pleiades very like the Greek myth of the Pleiades, we must ask a number of questions. Is the Australian version authentic? Can the people who told it have heard it from a European? If these questions are answered so as to make it apparent that the Australian Pleiad myth is of genuine native origin, we need not fly to the conclusion that the Australians are a lost and forlorn branch of the Aryan race. Two other hypotheses present themselves. First, the human species is of unknown antiquity. In the moderate allowance of 250,000 years, there is time for stories to have wandered all round the world, as the Aggry beads of Ashanti have probably crossed the continent from Egypt, as the Asiatic jade (if Asiatic it be) has arrived in Swiss lake-dwellings, as an African trade-cowry is said to have been found in a Cornish barrow, as an Indian Ocean shell has been discovered in a prehistoric bone-cave in Poland. This slow filtration of tales is not absolutely out of the question. Two causes would especially help to transmit myths. The first is slavery and slave-stealing, the second is the habit of capturing brides from alien stocks, and the law which forbids marriage with a woman of a man’s own family. Slaves and captured brides would bring their native legends among alien peoples.

But there is another possible way of explaining the resemblance (granting that it is proved) of the Greek and Australian Pleiad myth. The object of both myths is to account for the grouping and other phenomena of the constellations. May not similar explanatory stories have occurred to the ancestors of the Australians, and to the ancestors of the Greeks, however remote their home, while they were still in the savage condition? The best way to investigate this point is to collect all known savage and civilised stellar myths, and see what points they have in common. If they all agree in character, though the Greek tales are full of grace, while those of the Australians or Brazilians are rude enough, we may plausibly account for the similarity of myths, as we accounted for the similarity of flint arrowheads. The myths, like the arrowheads, resemble each other because they were originally framed to meet the same needs out of the same material. In the case of the arrowheads, the need was for something hard, heavy, and sharp — the material was flint. In the case of the myths, the need was to explain certain phenomena — the material (so to speak) was an early state of the human mind, to which all objects seemed equally endowed with human personality, and to which no metamorphosis appeared impossible.

In the following essays, then, the myths and customs of various peoples will be compared, even when these peoples talk languages of alien families, and have never (as far as history shows us) been in actual contact. Our method throughout will be to place the usage, or myth, which is unintelligible when found among a civilised race, beside the similar myth which is intelligible enough when it is found among savages. A mean term will be found in the folklore preserved by the non-progressive classes in a progressive people. This folklore represents, in the midst of a civilised race, the savage ideas out of which civilisation has been evolved. The conclusion will usually be that the fact which puzzles us by its presence in civilisation is a relic surviving from the time when the ancestors of a civilised race were in the state of savagery. By this method it is not necessary that ‘some sort of genealogy should be established’ between the Australian and the Greek narrators of a similar myth, nor between the Greek and Australian possessors of a similar usage. The hypothesis will be that the myth, or usage, is common to both races, not because of original community of stock, not because of contact and borrowing, but because the ancestors of the Greeks passed through the savage intellectual condition in which we find the Australians.

The questions may be asked, Has race nothing, then, to do with myth? Do peoples never consciously borrow myths from each other? The answer is, that race has a great deal to do with the development of myth, if it be race which confers on a people its national genius, and its capacity of becoming civilised. If race does this, then race affects, in the most powerful manner, the ultimate development of myth. No one is likely to confound a Homeric myth with a myth from the Edda, nor either with a myth from a Brahmana, though in all three cases the substance, the original set of ideas, may be much the same. In all three you have anthropomorphic gods, capable of assuming animal shapes, tricky, capricious, limited in many undivine ways, yet endowed with magical powers. So far the mythical gods of Homer, of the Edda, of any of the Brahmanas, are on a level with each other, and not much above the gods of savage mythology. This stuff of myth is *quod semper*, *quod ubique*, *quod ab omnibus*, and is the original gift of the savage intellect. But the final treatment, the ultimate literary form of the myth, varies in each race. Homeric gods, like Red Indian, Thlinkeet, or Australian gods, can assume the shapes of birds. But when we read, in Homer, of the arming of Athene, the hunting of Artemis, the vision of golden Aphrodite, the apparition of Hermes, like a young man when the flower of youth is loveliest, then we recognise the effect of race upon myth, the effect of the Greek genius at work on rude material. Between the Olympians and a Thlinkeet god there is all the difference that exists between the Demeter of Cnidos and an image from Easter Island. Again, the Scandinavian gods, when their tricks are laid aside, when Odin is neither assuming the shape of worm nor of raven, have a martial dignity, a noble enduring spirit of their own. Race comes out in that, as it does in the endless sacrifices, soma drinking, magical austerities, and puerile follies of Vedic and Brahmanic gods, the deities of a people fallen early into its sacerdotage and priestly second childhood. Thus race declares itself in the ultimate literary form and character of mythology, while the common savage basis and stuff of myths may be clearly discerned in the horned, and cannibal, and shape-shifting, and adulterous gods of Greece, of India, of the North. They all show their common savage origin, when the poet neglects Freya’s command and tells of what the gods did ‘in the morning of Time.’

As to borrowing, we have already shown that in prehistoric times there must have been much transmission of myth. The migrations of peoples, the traffic in slaves, the law of exogamy, which always keeps bringing alien women into the families — all these things favoured the migration of myth. But the process lies behind history: we can only guess at it, we can seldom trace a popular legend on its travels. In the case of the cultivated ancient peoples, we know that they themselves believed they had borrowed their religions from each other. When the Greeks first found the Egyptians practising mysteries like their own, they leaped to the conclusion that their own rites had been imported from Egypt. We, who know that both Greek and Egyptian rites had many points in common with those of Mandans, Zunis, Bushmen, Australians — people quite unconnected with Egypt — feel less confident about the hypothesis of borrowing. We may, indeed, regard Adonis, and Zeus Bagæus, and Melicertes, as importations from Phœnicia. In later times, too, the Greeks, and still more the Romans, extended a free hospitality to alien gods and legends, to Serapis, Isis, the wilder Dionysiac revels, and so forth. But this habit of borrowing was regarded with disfavour by pious conservatives, and was probably, in the width of its hospitality at least, an innovation. As Tiele remarks, we cannot derive Dionysus from the Assyrian *Daian nisi*, ‘judge of men,’ a name of the solar god Samas, without ascertaining that the wine-god exercised judicial functions, and was a god of the sun. These derivations, ‘shocking to common sense,’ are to be distrusted as part of the intoxication of new learning. Some Assyrian scholars actually derive *Hades* from *Bit Edi* or *Bit Hadi*— ‘though, unluckily,’ says Tiele, ‘there is no such word in the Assyrian text.’ On the whole topic Tiele’s essay deserves to be consulted. Granting, then, that elements in the worship of Dionysus, Aphrodite, and other gods, may have been imported with the strange Ægypto-Assyrian vases and jewels of the Sidonians, we still find the same basis of rude savage ideas. We may push back a god from Greece to Phœnicia, from Phœnicia to Accadia, but, at the end of the end, we reach a legend full of myths like those which Bushmen tell by the camp-fire, Eskimo in their dark huts, and Australians in the shade of the *gunyeh* — myths cruel, puerile, obscene, like the fancies of the savage myth-makers from which they sprang.

THE BULL-ROARER.

A Study of the Mysteries.

As the belated traveller makes his way through the monotonous plains of Australia, through the Bush, with its level expanses and clumps of grey-blue gum trees, he occasionally hears a singular sound. Beginning low, with a kind of sharp tone thrilling through a whirring noise, it grows louder and louder, till it becomes a sort of fluttering windy roar. If the traveller be a new comer, he is probably puzzled to the last degree. If he be an Englishman, country-bred, he says to himself, ‘Why, that is the bull-roarer.’ If he knows the colony and the ways of the natives, he knows that the blacks are celebrating their tribal mysteries. The roaring noise is made to warn all women to keep out of the way. Just as Pentheus was killed (with the approval of Theocritus) because he profaned the rites of the women-worshippers of Dionysus, so, among the Australian blacks, men must, at their peril, keep out of the way of female, and women out of the way of male, celebrations.

The instrument which produces the sounds that warn women to remain afar is a toy familiar to English country lads. They call it the bull-roarer. The common bull-roarer is an inexpensive toy which anyone can make. I do not, however, recommend it to families, for two reasons. In the first place, it produces a most horrible and unexampled din, which endears it to the very young, but renders it detested by persons of mature age. In the second place, the character of the toy is such that it will almost infallibly break all that is fragile in the house where it is used, and will probably put out the eyes of some of the inhabitants. Having thus, I trust, said enough to prevent all good boys from inflicting bull-roarers on their parents, pastors, and masters, I proceed (in the interests of science) to show how the toy is made. Nothing can be less elaborate. You take a piece of the commonest wooden board, say the lid of a packing-case, about a sixth of an inch in thickness, and about eight inches long and three broad, and you sharpen the ends. When finished, the toy may be about the shape of a large bay-leaf, or a ‘fish’ used as a counter (that is how the New Zealanders make it), or the sides may be left plain in the centre, and only sharpened towards the extremities, as in an Australian example lent me by Mr. Tylor. Then tie a strong piece of string, about thirty inches long, to one end of the piece of wood and the bull-roarer (the Australian natives call it *turndun*, and the Greeks called it Á¿¼²¿Â) is complete. Now twist the end of the string tightly about your finger, and whirl the bull-roarer rapidly round and round. For a few moments nothing will happen. In a very interesting lecture delivered at the Royal Institution, Mr. Tylor once exhibited a bull-roarer. At first it did nothing particular when it was whirled round, and the audience began to fear that the experiment was like those chemical ones often exhibited at institutes in the country, which contribute at most a disagreeable odour to the education of the populace. But when the bull-roarer warmed to its work, it justified its name, producing what may best be described as a mighty rushing noise, as if some supernatural being ‘fluttered and buzzed his wings with fearful roar.’ Grown-up people, of course, are satisfied with a very brief experience of this din, but boys have always known the bull-roarer in England as one of the most efficient modes of making the hideous and unearthly noises in which it is the privilege of youth to delight.

The bull-roarer has, of all toys, the widest diffusion, and the most extraordinary history. To study the bull-roarer is to take a lesson in folklore. The instrument is found among the most widely severed peoples, savage and civilised, and is used in the celebration of savage and civilised mysteries. There are students who would found on this a hypothesis that the various races that use the bull-roarer all descend from the same stock. But the bull roarer is introduced here for the very purpose of showing that similar minds, working with simple means towards similar ends, might evolve the bull-roarer and its mystic uses anywhere. There is no need for a hypothesis of common origin, or of borrowing, to account for this widely diffused sacred object.

The bull-roarer has been, and is, a sacred and magical instrument in many and widely separated lands. It is found, always as a sacred instrument, employed in religious mysteries, in New Mexico, in Australia, in New Zealand, in ancient Greece, and in Africa; while, as we have seen, it is a peasant-boy’s plaything in England. A number of questions are naturally suggested by the bull-roarer. Is it a thing invented once for all, and carried abroad over the world by wandering races, or handed on from one people and tribe to another? Or is the bull-roarer a toy that might be accidentally hit on in any country where men can sharpen wood and twist the sinews of animals into string? Was the thing originally a toy, and is its religious and mystical nature later; or was it originally one of the properties of the priest, or medicine-man, which in England has dwindled to a plaything? Lastly, was this mystical instrument at first employed in the rites of a civilised people like the Greeks, and was it in some way borrowed or inherited by South Africans, Australians, and New Mexicans? Or is it a mere savage invention, surviving (like certain other features of the Greek mysteries) from a distant stage of savagery? Our answer to all these questions is that in all probability the presence of the Á¿¼²¿Â, or bull-roarer, in Greek mysteries was a survival from the time when Greeks were in the social condition of Australians.

In the first place, the bull-roarer is associated with mysteries and initiations. Now mysteries and initiations are things that tend to dwindle and to lose their characteristic features as civilisation advances. The rites of baptism and confirmation are not secret and hidden; they are common to both sexes, they are publicly performed, and religion and morality of the purest sort blend in these ceremonies. There are no other initiations or mysteries that civilised modern man is expected necessarily to pass through. On the other hand, looking widely at human history, we find mystic rites and initiations numerous, stringent, severe, and magical in character, in proportion to the lack of civilisation in those who practise them. The less the civilisation, the more mysterious and the more cruel are the rites. The more cruel the rites, the less is the civilisation. The red-hot poker with which Mr. Bouncer terrified Mr. Verdant Green at the sham masonic rites would have been quite in place, a natural instrument of probationary torture, in the Freemasonry of Australians, Mandans, or Hottentots. In the mysteries of Demeter or Bacchus, in the mysteries of a civilised people, the red-hot poker, or any other instrument of torture, would have been out of place. But in the Greek mysteries, just as in those of South Africans, Red Indians, and Australians, the disgusting practice of bedaubing the neophyte with dirt and clay was preserved. We have nothing quite like that in modern initiations. Except at Sparta, Greeks dropped the tortures inflicted on boys and girls in the initiations superintended by the cruel Artemis. But Greek mysteries retained the daubing with mud and the use of the bull-roarer. On the whole, then, and on a general view of the subject, we prefer to think that the bull-roarer in Greece was a survival from savage mysteries, not that the bull-roarer in New Mexico, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa is a relic of civilisation.

Let us next observe a remarkable peculiarity of the *turndun*, or Australian bull-roarer. The bull-roarer in England is a toy. In Australia, according to Howitt and Fison, the bull-roarer is regarded with religious awe. ‘When, on lately meeting with two of the surviving Kurnai, I spoke to them of the turndun, they first looked cautiously round them to see that no one else was looking, and then answered me in undertones.’ The chief peculiarity in connection with the turndun is that women may never look upon it. The Chepara tribe, who call it *bribbun*, have a custom that, ‘if seen by a woman, or shown by a man to a woman, the punishment to both is *death*.’

Among the Kurnai, the sacred mystery of the turndun is preserved by a legend, which gives a supernatural sanction to secrecy. When boys go through the mystic ceremony of initiation they are shown turnduns, or bull-roarers, and made to listen to their hideous din. They are then told that, if ever a woman is allowed to see a turndun, the earth will open, and water will cover the globe. The old men point spears at the boy's eyes, saying: 'If you tell this to any woman you will die, you will see the ground broken up and like the sea; if you tell this to any woman, or to any child, you will be killed!' As in Athens, in Syria, and among the Mandans, the deluge-tradition of Australia is connected with the mysteries. In Gippsland there is a tradition of the deluge. 'Some children of the Kurnai in playing about found a turndun, which they took home to the camp and showed the women. Immediately the earth crumbled away, and it was all water, and the Kurnai were drowned.'

In consequence of all this mummery the Australian women attach great sacredness to the very name of the turndun. They are much less instructed in their own theology than the men of the tribe. One woman believed she had heard Pundjel, the chief supernatural being, descend in a mighty rushing noise, that is, in the sound of the turndun, when boys were being 'made men,' or initiated. On turnduns the Australian sorcerers can fly up to heaven. Turnduns carved with imitations of water-flowers are used by medicine-men in rain-making. New Zealand also has her bull-roarers; some of them, carved in relief, are in the Christy Museum, and one is engraved here. I have no direct evidence as to the use of these Maori bull-roarers in the Maori mysteries. Their employment, however, may perhaps be provisionally inferred.

One can readily believe that the New Zealand bull-roarer may be whirled by any man who is repeating a *Karakia*, or 'charm to raise the wind': —

Loud wind,
Lasting wind,
Violent whistling wind,
Dig up the calm reposing sky,
  Come, come.

In New Zealand 'the natives regarded the wind as an indication of the presence of their god,' a superstition not peculiar to Maori religion. The 'cold wind' felt blowing over the hands at spiritualistic *séances* is also regarded (by psychical researchers) as an indication of the presence of supernatural beings. The windy roaring noise made by the bull-roarer might readily be considered by savages, either as an invitation to a god who should present himself in storm, or as a proof of his being at hand. We have seen that this view was actually taken by an Australian woman. The hymn called 'breath,' or *haha*, a hymn to the mystic wind, is pronounced by Maori priests at the moment of the initiation of young men in the tribal mysteries. It is a mere conjecture, and possibly enough capable of disproof, but we have a suspicion that the use of the *mystica vannus Iacchi* was a mode of raising a sacred wind analogous to that employed by whirlers of the turndun.

Servius, the ancient commentator on Virgil, mentions, among other opinions, this — that the *vannus* was a sieve, and that it symbolised the purifying effect of the mysteries. But it is clear that Servius was only guessing; and he offers other explanations, among them that the *vannus* was a crate to hold offerings, *primitias frugum.*

We have studied the bull-roarer in Australia, we have caught a glimpse of it in England. Its existence on the American continent is proved by letters from New Mexico, and by a passage in Mr. Frank Cushing's 'Adventures in Zuni.' In Zuni, too, among a semi-civilised Indian tribe, or rather a tribe which has left the savage for the barbaric condition, we find the bull-roarer. Here, too, the instrument — a 'slat,' Mr. Gushing calls it — is used as a call to the ceremonial observance of the tribal ritual. The Zunis have various 'orders of a more or less sacred and sacerdotal character.' Mr. Cushing writes: —

These orders were engaged in their annual ceremonials, of which little was told or shown me; but, at the end of four days, I heard one morning a deep whirring noise. Running out, I saw a procession of three priests of the bow, in plumed helmets and closely-fitting cuirasses, both of thick buckskin — gorgeous and solemn with sacred embroideries and war-paint, begirt with bows, arrows, and war-clubs, and each distinguished by his badge of degree — coming down one of the narrow streets. The principal priest carried in his arms a wooden idol, ferocious in aspect, yet beautiful with its decorations of shell, turquoise, and brilliant paint. It was nearly hidden by symbolic slats and prayer-sticks most elaborately plumed. He was preceded by a guardian with drawn bow and arrows, while another followed, twirling the sounding slat, which had attracted alike my attention and that of hundreds of the Indians, who hurriedly flocked to the roofs of the adjacent houses, or lined the street, bowing their heads in adoration, and scattering sacred prayer-meal on the god and his attendant priests. Slowly they wound their way down the hill, across the river, and off toward the mountain of Thunder. Soon an identical procession followed and took its way toward the western hills. I watched them long until they disappeared, and a few hours afterward there arose from the top of 'Thunder Mountain' a dense column of smoke, simultaneously with another from the more distant western mesa of 'U-ha-na-mi,' or 'Mount of the Beloved.'

Then they told me that for four days I must neither touch nor eat flesh or oil of any kind, and for ten days neither throw any refuse from my doors, nor permit a spark to leave my house, for 'This was the season of the year when the “grandmother of men” (fire) was precious.’

Here then, in Zuni, we have the bull-roarer again, and once more we find it employed as a summons to the mysteries. We do not learn, however, that women in Zuni are forbidden to look upon the bull-roarer. Finally, the South African evidence, which is supplied by letters from a correspondent of Mr. Tylor’s, proves that in South Africa, too, the bull-roarer is employed to call the men to the celebration of secret functions. A minute description of the instrument, and of its magical power to raise a wind, is given in Theal’s ‘Kaffir Folklore,’ . The bull-roarer has not been made a subject of particular research; very probably later investigations will find it in other parts of the modern world besides America, Africa, New Zealand, and Australia. I have myself been fortunate enough to encounter the bull-roarer on the soil of ancient Greece and in connection with the Dionysiac mysteries. Clemens of Alexandria, and Arnobius, an early Christian father who follows Clemens, describe certain toys of the child Dionysus which were used in the mysteries. Among these are *turbines*, ºÉ½¿¹, and Á¿¼²¿¹. The ordinary dictionaries interpret all these as whipping-tops, adding that Á¿¼²¿Â is sometimes ‘a magic wheel.’ The ancient scholiast on Clemens, however, writes: ‘The ºÉ½¿Â is a little piece of wood, to which a string is fastened, and in the mysteries it is whirled round to make a roaring noise.’ Here, in short, we have a brief but complete description of the bull-roarer of the Australian *turndun*. No single point is omitted. The ºÉ½¿Â, like the *turndun*, is a small object of wood, it is tied to a string, when whirled round it produces a roaring noise, and it is used at initiations. This is not the end of the matter.

In the part of the Dionysiac mysteries at which the toys of the child Dionysus were exhibited, and during which (as it seems) the ºÉ½¿Â, or bull-roarer, was whirred, the performers daubed themselves all over with clay. This we learn from a passage in which Demosthenes describes the youth of his hated adversary, Æschines. The mother of Æschines, he says, was a kind of ‘wise woman,’ and dabbler in mysteries. Æschines used to aid her by bedaubing the initiate over with clay and bran. The word ±À¿¼±ÄÄÉ½, here used by Demosthenes, is explained by Harpocration as the ritual term for daubing the initiated. A story was told, as usual, to explain this rite. It was said that, when the Titans attacked Dionysus and tore him to pieces, they painted themselves first with clay, or gypsum, that they might not be recognised. Nonnus shows, in several places, that down to his time the celebrants of the Bacchic mysteries retained this dirty trick. Precisely the same trick prevails in the mysteries of savage peoples. Mr. Winwood Reade reports the evidence of Mongilomba. When initiated, Mongilomba was ‘severely flogged in the Fetich House’ (as young Spartans were flogged before the animated image of Artemis), and then he was ‘plastered over with goat-dung.’ Among the natives of Victoria, the ‘body of the initiated is bedaubed with clay, mud, charcoal powder, and filth of every kind.’ The girls are plastered with charcoal powder and white clay, answering to the Greek gypsum. Similar daubings were performed at the mysteries by the Mandans, as described by Catlin; and the Zunis made raids on Mr. Cushing’s black paint and Chinese ink for like purposes. On the Congo, Mr. Johnson found precisely the same ritual in the initiations. Here, then, not to multiply examples, we discover two singular features in common between Greek and savage mysteries. Both Greeks and savages employ the bull-roarer, both bedaub the initiated with dirt or with white paint or chalk. As to the meaning of the latter very un-Aryan practice, one has no idea. It is only certain that war parties of Australian blacks bedaub themselves with white clay to alarm their enemies in night attacks. The Phocians, according to Herodotus (viii. 27), adopted the same ‘aisy stratagem,’ as Captain Costigan has it. Tellies, the medicine-man (¼±½Ä¹Â), chalked some sixty Phocians, whom he sent to make a night attack on the Thessalians. The sentinels of the latter were seized with supernatural horror, and fled, ‘and after the sentinels went the army.’ In the same way, in a night attack among the Australian Kurnai, ‘they all rapidly painted themselves with pipe-clay: red ochre is no use, it cannot frighten an enemy.’ If, then, Greeks in the historic period kept up Australian tactics, it is probable that the ancient mysteries of Greece might retain the habit of daubing the initiated which occurs in savage rites.

‘Come now,’ as Herodotus would say, ‘I will show once more that the mysteries of the Greeks resemble those of Bushmen.’ In Lucian’s Treatise on Dancing, we read, ‘I pass over the fact that you cannot find a single ancient mystery in which there is not dancing. . . . To prove this I will not mention the secret acts of worship, on account of the uninitiated. But this much all men know, that most people say of those who reveal the mysteries, that they “dance them out.”’ Here Liddell and Scott write, rather weakly, ‘to dance out, let out, betray, probably of some dance which burlesqued these ceremonies.’ It is extremely improbable that, in an age when it was still forbidden to reveal the ¿Áy¹±, or secret rites, those rites would be mocked in popular burlesques. Lucian obviously intends to say that the matter of the mysteries was set forth in *ballets d’action*. Now this is exactly the case in the surviving mysteries of the Bushmen. Shortly after the rebellion of Langalibalele’s tribe, Mr. Orpen, the chief magistrate in St. John’s Territory, made the acquaintance of Qing, one of the last of an all but exterminated tribe. Qing ‘had never seen a white man, except fighting,’ when he became Mr. Orpen’s guide. He gave a good deal of information about the myths of his people, but refused to answer certain questions. ‘You are now asking the secrets that are not spoken of.’ Mr. Orpen asked, ‘Do you know the secrets?’ Qing replied, ‘No, only the initiated men of that dance know these things.’ To ‘dance’ this or that means, ‘to be acquainted with this or that mystery;’ the dances were originally taught by Cagn, the mantis, or grasshopper god. In many mysteries, Qing, as a young man, was not initiated. He could not ‘dance them out.’

There are thus undeniably close resemblances between the Greek mysteries and those of the lowest contemporary races.

As to the bull-roarer, its recurrence among Greeks, Zunis, Kamilaroi, Maoris, and South African races, would be regarded, by some students, as a proof that all these tribes had a common origin, or had borrowed the instrument from each other. But this theory is quite unnecessary. The bull-roarer is a very simple invention. Anyone might find out that a bit of sharpened wood, tied to a string, makes, when whirred, a roaring noise. Supposing that discovery made, it is soon turned to practical use. All tribes have their mysteries. All want a signal to summon the right persons together and warn the wrong persons to keep out of the way. The church bell does as much for us, so did the shaken *seistron* for the Egyptians. People with neither bells nor *seistra* find the bull-roarer, with its mysterious sound, serve their turn. The hiding of the instrument from women is natural enough. It merely makes the alarm and absence of the curious sex doubly sure. The stories of supernatural consequences to follow if a woman sees the turndun lend a sanction. This is not a random theory, without basis. In Brazil, the natives have no bull-roarer, but they have mysteries, and the presence of the women at the mysteries of the men is a terrible impiety. To warn away the women, the Brazilians make loud ‘devil-music’ on what are called ‘jurupari pipes.’ Now, just as in Australia, *the women may not see the jurupari pipes on pain of death*. When the sound of the jurupari pipes is heard, as when the turndun is heard in Australia, every woman flees and hides herself. The women are always executed if they see the pipes. Mr. Alfred Wallace bought a pair of these pipes, but he had to embark them at a distance from the village where they were procured. The seller was afraid that some unknown misfortune would occur if the women of his village set eyes on the juruparis.

The conclusion from all these facts seems obvious. The bull-roarer is an instrument easily invented by savages, and easily adopted into the ritual of savage mysteries. If we find the bull-roarer used in the mysteries of the most civilised of ancient peoples, the most probable explanation is, that the Greeks retained both the mysteries, the bull-roarer, the habit of bedaubing the initiate, the torturing of boys, the sacred obscenities, the antics with serpents, the dances, and the like, from the time when their ancestors were in the savage condition. That more refined and religious ideas were afterwards introduced into the mysteries seems certain, but the rites were, in many cases, simply savage. Unintelligible (except as survivals) when found among Hellenes, they become intelligible enough among savages, because they correspond to the intellectual condition and magical fancies of the lower barbarism. The same sort of comparison, the same kind of explanation, will account, as we shall see, for the savage myths as well as for the savage customs which survived among the Greeks.

THE MYTH OF CRONUS.

In a Maori pah, when a little boy behaves rudely to his parents, he is sometimes warned that he is 'as bad as cruel Tutenganahau.' If he asks who Tutenganahau was, he is told the following story: —

'In the beginning, the Heaven, Rangi, and the Earth, Papa, were the father and mother of all things. "In these days the Heaven lay upon the Earth, and all was darkness. They had never been separated." Heaven and Earth had children, who grew up and lived in this thick night, and they were unhappy because they could not see. Between the bodies of their parents they were imprisoned, and there was no light. The names of the children were Tumatuenga, Tane Mahuta, Tutenganahau, and some others. So they all consulted as to what should be done with their parents, Rangi and Papa. "Shall we slay them, or shall we separate them?" "Go to," said Tumatuenga, "let us slay them." "No," cried Tane Mahuta, "let us rather separate them. Let one go upwards, and become a stranger to us; let the other remain below, and be a parent to us." Only Tawhiri Matea (the wind) had pity on his own father and mother. Then the fruit-gods, and the war-god, and the sea-god (for all the children of Papa and Rangi were gods) tried to rend their parents asunder. Last rose the forest-god, cruel Tutenganahau. He severed the sinews which united Heaven and Earth, Rangi and Papa. Then he pushed hard with his head and feet. Then wailed Heaven and exclaimed Earth, "Wherefore this murder? Why this great sin? Why destroy us? Why separate us?" But Tane pushed and pushed: Rangi was driven far away into the air. "*They became visible, who had hitherto been concealed between the hollows of their parents' breasts*." Only the storm-god differed from his brethren: he arose and followed his father, Rangi, and abode with him in the open spaces of the sky.'

This is the Maori story of the severing of the wedded Heaven and Earth. The cutting of them asunder was the work of Tutenganahau and his brethren, and the conduct of Tutenganahau is still held up as an example of filial impiety. The story is preserved in sacred hymns of very great antiquity, and many of the myths are common to the other peoples of the Pacific.

Now let us turn from New Zealand to Athens, as she was in the days of Pericles. Socrates is sitting in the porch of the King Archon, when Euthyphro comes up and enters into conversation with the philosopher. After some talk, Euthyphro says, 'You will think me mad when I tell you whom I am prosecuting and pursuing!' 'Why, has the fugitive wings?' asks Socrates. 'Nay, he is not very volatile at his time of life!' 'Who is he?' 'My father.' 'Good heavens! you don't mean that. What is he accused of?' 'Murder, Socrates.' Then Euthyphro explains the case, which quaintly illustrates Greek civilisation. Euthyphro's father had an agricultural labourer at Naxos. One day this man, in a drunken passion, killed a slave. Euthyphro's father seized the labourer, bound him, threw him into a ditch, 'and then sent to Athens to ask a diviner what should be done with him.' Before the answer of the diviner arrived, the labourer literally 'died in a ditch' of hunger and cold. For this offence, Euthyphro was prosecuting his own father. Socrates shows that he disapproves, and Euthyphro thus defends the piety of his own conduct: 'The impious, whoever he may be, ought not to go unpunished. For do not men regard Zeus as the best and most righteous of gods? Yet even they admit that Zeus bound his own father Cronus, because he wickedly devoured his sons; and that Cronus, too, had punished his own father, Uranus, for a similar reason, in a nameless manner. And yet when *I* proceed against *my* father, people are angry with me. This is their inconsistent way of talking, when the gods are concerned, and when I am concerned.'

Here Socrates breaks in. He 'cannot away with these stories about the gods,' and so he has just been accused of impiety, the charge for which he died. Socrates cannot believe that a god, Cronus, mutilated his father Uranus, but Euthyphro believes the whole affair: 'I can tell you many other things about the gods which would quite amaze you.'

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We have here a typical example of the way in which mythology puzzled the early philosophers of Greece. Socrates was anxious to be pious, and to respect the most ancient traditions of the gods. Yet at the very outset of sacred history he was met by tales of gods who mutilated and bound their own parents. Not only were such tales hateful to him, but they were of positively evil example to people like Euthyphro. The problem remained, how did the fathers of the Athenians ever come to tell such myths?

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Let us now examine the myth of Cronus, and the explanations which have been given by scholars. Near the beginning of things, according to Hesiod (whose cosmogony was accepted in Greece), Earth gave birth to Heaven. Later, Heaven, Uranus, became the husband of Gæa, Earth. Just as Rangi and Papa, in New Zealand, had many children, so had Uranus and Gæa. As in New Zealand, some of these children were gods of the various elements. Among them were

Oceanus, the deep, and Hyperion, the sun — as among the children of Earth and Heaven, in New Zealand, were the Wind and the Sea. The youngest child of the Greek Heaven and Earth was ‘Cronus of crooked counsel, who ever hated his mighty sire.’ Now even as the children of the Maori Heaven and Earth were ‘concealed between the hollows of their parents’ breasts,’ so the Greek Heaven used to ‘hide his children from the light in the hollows of Earth.’ Both Earth and her children resented this, and, as in New Zealand, the children conspired against Heaven, taking Earth, however, into their counsels. Thereupon Earth produced iron, and bade her children avenge their wrongs. Now fear fell on all of them, except Cronus, who, like Tutenganahau, was all for action. Cronus determined to end the embraces of Heaven and Earth. But, while the Maori myth conceives of Heaven and Earth as of two beings which have never been separated before, Hesiod makes Heaven amorously approach his wife from a distance. Then Cronus stretched out his hand, armed with a sickle of iron, or steel, and mutilated Uranus. Thus were Heaven and Earth practically divorced. But as in the Maori myth one of the children of Heaven clave to his sire, so, in Greek, Oceanus remained faithful to his father.

This is the first portion of the Myth of Cronus. Can it be denied that the story is well illustrated and explained by the New Zealand parallel, the myth of the cruelty of Tutenganahau? By means of this comparison, the meaning of the myth is made clear enough. Just as the New Zealanders had conceived of Heaven and Earth as at one time united, to the prejudice of their children, so the ancestors of the Greeks had believed in an ancient union of Heaven and Earth. Both by Greeks and Maoris, Heaven and Earth were thought of as living persons, with human parts and passions. Their union was prejudicial to their children, and so the children violently separated the parents. This conduct is regarded as impious, and as an awful example to be avoided, in Maori pahs. In Naxos, on the other hand, Euthyphro deemed that the conduct of Cronus deserved imitation. If ever the Maoris had reached a high civilisation, they would probably have been revolted, like Socrates, by the myth which survived from their period of savagery. Mr. Tylor well says, ‘Just as the adzes of polished jade, and the cloaks of tied flax-fibre, which these New Zealanders were using but yesterday, are older in their place in history than the bronze battle-axes and linen mummy-cloths of ancient Egypt, so the Maori poet’s shaping of nature into nature-myth belongs to a stage of intellectual history which was passing away in Greece five-and-twenty centuries ago. The myth-maker’s fancy of Heaven and Earth as father and mother of all things naturally suggested the legend that they in old days abode together, but have since been torn asunder.’

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That this view of Heaven and Earth is natural to early minds, Mr. Tylor proves by the presence of the myth of the union and violent divorce of the pair in China.

Puang-ku is the Chinese Cronus, or Tutenganahau. In India, Dyaus and Prithivi, Heaven and Earth, were once united, and were severed by Indra, their own child.

This, then, is our interpretation of the exploit of Cronus. It is an old surviving nature-myth of the severance of Heaven and Earth, a myth found in China, India, New Zealand, as well as in Greece. Of course it is not pretended that Chinese and Maoris borrowed from Indians and Greeks, or came originally of the same stock. Similar phenomena, presenting themselves to be explained by human minds in a similar stage of fancy and of ignorance, will account for the parallel myths.

The second part of the myth of Cronus was, like the first, a stumbling-block to the orthodox in Greece. Of the second part we offer no explanation beyond the fact that the incidents in the myth are almost universally found among savages, and that, therefore, in Greece they are probably survivals from savagery. The sequel of the myth appears to account for nothing, as the first part accounts for the severance of Heaven and Earth. In the sequel a world-wide *Märchen*, or tale, seems to have been attached to Cronus, or attracted into the cycle of which he is centre, without any particular reason, beyond the law which makes detached myths crystallise round any celebrated name. To look further is, perhaps, *chercher raison où il n'y en a pas.*

The conclusion of the story of Cronus runs thus: — He wedded his sister, Rhea, and begat children — Demeter, Hera, Hades, Poseidon, and, lastly, Zeus. 'And mighty Cronus swallowed down each of them, each that came to their mother's knees from her holy womb, with this intent, that none other of the proud children of Uranus should hold kingly sway among the Immortals.' Cronus showed a ruling father's usual jealousy of his heirs. It was a case of Friedrich Wilhelm and Friedrich. But Cronus (acting in a way natural in a story perhaps first invented by cannibals) swallowed his children instead of merely imprisoning them. Heaven and Earth had warned him to beware of his heirs, and he could think of no safer plan than that which he adopted. When Rhea was about to become the mother of Zeus, she fled to Crete. Here Zeus was born, and when Cronus (in pursuit of his usual policy) asked for the baby, he was presented with a stone wrapped up in swaddling bands. After swallowing the stone, Cronus was easy in his mind; but Zeus grew up, administered a dose to his father, and compelled him to disgorge. 'The stone came forth first, as he had swallowed it last.’ The other children also emerged, all alive and well. Zeus fixed the stone at Delphi, where, long after the Christian era, Pausanias saw it. It was not a large stone, Pausanias tells us, and the Delphians used to anoint it with oil and wrap it up in wool on feast-days. All Greek temples had their fetich-stones, and each stone had its legend. This was the story of the Delphian stone, and of the fetichism which survived the early years of Christianity. A very pretty story it is. Savages more frequently smear their fetich-stones with red paint than daub them with oil, but the latter, as we learn from Theophrastus’s account of the ‘superstitious man,’ was the Greek ritual.

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This anecdote about Cronus was the stumbling-block of the orthodox Greek, the jest of the sceptic, and the butt of the early Christian controversialists. Found among Bushmen or Australians the narrative might seem rather wild, but it astonishes us still more when it occurs in the holy legends of Greece. Our explanation of its presence there is simple enough. Like the erratic blocks in a modern plain, like the flint-heads in a meadow, the story is a relic of a very distant past. The glacial age left the boulders on the plain, the savage tribes of long ago left the arrowheads, the period of savage fancy left the story of Cronus and the rites of the fetich-stone. Similar rites are still notoriously practised in the South Sea Islands, in Siberia, in India and Africa and Melanesia, by savages. And by savages similar tales are still told.

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We cannot go much lower than the Bushmen, and among Bushman divine myths is room for the ‘swallowing trick’ attributed to Cronus by Hesiod. The chief divine character in Bushman myth is the Mantis insect. His adopted daughter is the child of Kwai Hemm, a supernatural character, ‘the all-devourer.’ The Mantis gets his adopted daughter to call the swallower to his aid; but Kwai Hemm swallows the Mantis, the god-insect. As Zeus made his own wife change herself into an insect, for the convenience of swallowing her, there is not much difference between Bushman and early Greek mythology. Kwai Hemm is killed by a stratagem, and all the animals whom he has got outside of, in a long and voracious career, troop forth from him alive and well, like the swallowed gods from the maw of Cronus. Now, story for story, the Bushman version is much less offensive than that of Hesiod. But the Bushman story is just the sort of story we expect from Bushmen, whereas the Hesiodic story is not at all the kind of tale we look for from Greeks. The explanation is, that the Greeks had advanced out of a savage state of mind and society, but had retained their old myths, myths evolved in the savage stage, and in harmony with that condition of fancy. Among the Kaffirs we find the same ‘swallow-myth.’ The Igongqongqo swallows all and sundry; a woman cuts the swallower with a knife, and ‘people came out, and cattle, and dogs.’ In Australia, a god is swallowed. As in the myth preserved by Aristophanes in the ‘Birds,’ the Australians believe that birds were the original gods, and the eagle, especially, is a great creative power. The Moon was a mischievous being, who walked about the world, doing what evil he could. One day he swallowed the eagle-god. The wives of the eagle came up, and the Moon asked them where he might find a well. They pointed out a well, and, as he drank, they hit the Moon with a stone tomahawk, and out flew the eagle. This is oddly like Grimm’s tale of ‘The Wolf and the Kids.’ The wolf swallowed the kids, their mother cut a hole in the wolf, let out the kids, stuffed the wolf with stones, and sewed him up again. The wolf went to the well to drink, the weight of the stones pulled him in, and he was drowned. Similar stories are common among the Red Indians, and Mr. Im Thurn has found them in Guiana. How savages all over the world got the idea that men and beasts could be swallowed and disgorged alive, and why they fashioned the idea into a divine myth, it is hard to say. Mr. Tylor, in ‘Primitive Culture,’ adds many examples of the narrative. The Basutos have it; it occurs some five times in Callaway’s ‘Zulu Nursery Tales.’ In Greenland the Eskimo have a shape of the incident, and we have all heard of the escape of Jonah.

It has been suggested that night, covering up the world, gave the first idea of the swallowing myth. Now in some of the stories the night is obviously conceived of as a big beast which swallows all things. The notion that night is an animal is entirely in harmony with savage metaphysics. In the opinion of the savage speculator, all things are men and animals. ‘Ils se persuadent que non seulement les hommes et les autres animaux, mais aussi que toutes les autres choses sont animées,’ says one of the old Jesuit missionaries in Canada. ‘The wind was formerly a person; he became a bird,’ say the Bushmen.

G’ oö ka! *Kui* (a very respectable Bushman, whose name seems a little hard to pronounce), once saw the wind-person at Haarfontein. Savages, then, are persuaded that night, sky, cloud, fire, and so forth, are only the *schein*, or sensuous appearance, of things that, in essence, are men or animals. A good example is the bringing of Night to Vanua Lava, by Qat, the ‘culture-hero’ of Melanesia. At first it was always day, and people tired of it. Qat heard that Night was at the Torres Islands, and he set forth to get some. Qong (Night) received Qat well, blackened his eyebrows, showed him Sleep, and sent him off with fowls to bring Dawn after the arrival of Night should make Dawn a necessary. Next day Qat’s brothers saw the sun crawl away west, and presently

Night came creeping up from the sea. ‘What is this?’ cried the brothers. ‘It is Night,’ said Qat; ‘sit down, and when you feel something in your eyes, lie down and keep quiet.’ So they went to sleep. ‘When Night had lasted long enough, Qat took a piece of red obsidian, and cut the darkness, and the Dawn came out.’

Night is more or less personal in this tale, and solid enough to be cut, so as to let the Dawn out. This savage conception of night, as the swallower and disgorger, might start the notion of other swallowing and disgorging beings. Again the Bushmen, and other savage peoples, account for certain celestial phenomena by saying that ‘a big star has swallowed his daughter, and spit her out again.’ While natural phenomena, explained on savage principles, might give the data of the swallow-myth, we must not conclude that all beings to whom the story is attached are, therefore, the Night. On this principle Cronus would be the Night, and so would the wolf in Grimm. For our purposes it is enough that the feat of Cronus is a feat congenial to the savage fancy and repugnant to the civilised Greeks who found themselves in possession of the myth. Beyond this, and beyond the inference that the Cronus myth was first evolved by people to whom it seemed quite natural, that is, by savages, we do not pretend to go in our interpretation.

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To end our examination of the Myth of Cronus, we may compare the solutions offered by scholars. As a rule, these solutions are based on the philological analysis of the names in the story. It will be seen that very various and absolutely inconsistent etymologies and meanings of Cronus are suggested by philologists of the highest authority. These contradictions are, unfortunately, rather the rule than the exception in the etymological interpretation of myths.

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The opinion of Mr. Max Müller has always a right to the first hearing from English inquirers. Mr. Müller, naturally, examines first the name of the god whose legend he is investigating. He writes: ‘There is no such being as Kronos in Sanskrit. Kronos did not exist till long after Zeus in Greece. Zeus was called by the Greeks the son of Time (šÁ¿½¿Â). This is a very simple and very common form of mythological expression. It meant originally, not that time was the origin or source of Zeus, but šÁ¿½¹É½ or šÁ¿½¹´·Â was used in the sense of “connected with time, representing time, existing through all time.” Derivatives in -¹É½ and -¹´·Â took, in later times, the more exclusive meaning of patronymics. . . . When this (the meaning of šÁ¿½¹´·Â as equivalent to Ancient of Days) ceased to be understood, . . . people asked themselves the question, Why is –µÅÂ called šÁ¿½¹´·Â? And the natural and almost inevitable answer was, Because he is the son, the offspring of a more ancient god, šÁ¿½¿Â. This may be a very old myth in Greece; but the misunderstanding which gave rise to it could have happened in Greece only. We cannot expect, therefore, a god šÁ¿½¿Â in the Veda.' To expect Greek in the Veda would certainly be sanguine. 'When this myth of šÁ¿½¿Â had once been started, it would roll on irresistibly. If –µÅÂ had once a father called šÁ¿½¿Â, šÁ¿½¿Â must have a wife.' It is added, as confirmation, that 'the name of šÁ¿½¹´·Â belongs originally to Zeus only, and not to his later' (in Hesiod elder) 'brothers, Poseidon and Hades.'

Mr. Müller says, in his famous essay on 'Comparative Mythology' : 'How can we imagine that a few generations before that time' (the age of Solon) 'the highest notions of the Godhead among the Greeks were adequately expressed by the story of Uranos maimed by Kronos, — of Kronos eating his children, swallowing a stone, and vomiting out alive his whole progeny. Among the lowest tribes of Africa and America, we hardly find anything more hideous and revolting.' We have found a good deal of the sort in Africa and America, where it seems not out of place.

One objection to Mr. Müller's theory is, that it makes the mystery no clearer. When Greeks were so advanced in Hellenism that their own early language had become obsolete and obscure, they invented the god šÁ¿½¿Â, to account for the patronymic (as they deemed it) šÁ¿½¹´·Â, son of šÁ¿½¿Â. But why did they tell such savage and revolting stories about the god they had invented? Mr. Müller only says the myth 'would roll on irresistibly.' But why did the rolling myth gather such very strange moss? That is the problem; and, while Mr. Müller's hypothesis accounts for the existence of a god called šÁ¿½¿Â, it does not even attempt to show how full-blown Greeks came to believe such hideous stories about the god.

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This theory, therefore, is of no practical service. The theory of Adalbert Kuhn, one of the most famous of Sanskrit scholars, and author of 'Die Herabkunft des Feuers,' is directly opposed to the ideas of Mr. Müller. In Cronus, Mr. Müller recognises a god who could only have come into being among Greeks, when the Greeks had begun to forget the original meaning of 'derivatives in -¹É½ and -¹´·Â.' Kuhn, on the other hand, derives šÁ¿½¿Â from the same root as the Sanskrit *Krna*. *Krna* means, it appears, *der für sich schaffende*, he who creates for himself, and Cronus is compared to the Indian Pragapati, about whom even more abominable stories are told than the myths which circulate to the prejudice of Cronus. According to Kuhn, the ‘swallow-myth’ means that Cronus, the lord of light and dark powers, swallows the divinities of light. But in place of Zeus (that is, according to Kuhn, of the daylight sky) he swallows a stone, that is, the sun. When he disgorges the stone (the sun), he also disgorges the gods of light whom he had swallowed.

I confess that I cannot understand these distinctions between the father and lord of light and dark (Cronus) and the beings he swallowed. Nor do I find it easy to believe that myth-making man took all those distinctions, or held those views of the Creator. However, the chief thing to note is that Mr. Müller’s etymology and Kuhn’s etymology of Cronus can hardly both be true, which, as their systems both depend on etymological analysis, is somewhat discomfiting.

The next etymological theory is the daring speculation of Mr. Brown. In ‘The Great Dionysiak Myth’ Mr. Brown writes: ‘I regard Kronos as the equivalent of Karnos, Karnaios, Karnaivis, the Horned God; Assyrian, KaRNu; Hebrew, KeReN, horn; Hellenic, KRoNos, or KaRNos.’ Mr. Brown seems to think that Cronus is ‘the ripening power of harvest,’ and also ‘a wily savage god,’ in which opinion one quite agrees with him. Why the name of Cronus should mean ‘horned,’ when he is never represented with horns, it is hard to say. But among the various foreign gods in whom the Greeks recognised their own Cronus, one Hea, ‘regarded by Berosos as Kronos,’ seems to have been ‘horn-wearing.’ Horns are lacking in Seb and Il, if not in Baal Hamon, though Mr. Brown would like to behorn them.

Let us now turn to Preller. According to Preller, šÁ¿½¿Â is connected with ºÁ±¹½É, to fulfil, to bring to completion. The harvest month, the month of ripening and fulfilment, was called *ºÁ¿½¹É½* in some parts of Greece, and the jolly harvest-feast, with its memory of Saturn’s golden days, was named ºÁ¿½¹±. The sickle of Cronus, the sickle of harvest-time, works in well with this explanation, and we have a kind of pun in Homer which points in the direction of Preller’s derivation from ºÁ±¹½É: —

¿Å´ ±Á± ÀÉ ¿¹ µÀµºÁ±¹±¹½µ šÁ¿½¹É½

and in Sophocles (‘Tr.’ 126) —

¿ À±½Ä± ºÁ±¹½É½ ²±Ã¹»µÅÂ šÁ¿½¹´±Â.

Preller illustrates the mutilation of Uranus by the Maori tale of Tutenganahau. The child-swallowing he connects with Punic and Phœnician influence, and Semitic sacrifices of men and children. Porphyry speaks of human sacrifices to Cronus in Rhodes, and the Greeks recognised Cronus in the Carthaginian god to whom children were offered up.

Hartung takes Cronus, when he mutilates Uranus, to be the fire of the sun, scorching the sky of spring. This, again, is somewhat out of accord with

Schwartz’s idea, that Cronus is the storm-god, the cloud-swallowing deity, his sickle the rainbow, and the blood of Uranus the lightning. According to Prof. Sayce, again, the blood-drops of Uranus are rain-drops. Cronus is the sun-god, piercing the dark cloud, which is just the reverse of Schwartz’s idea. Prof. Sayce sees points in common between the legend of Moloch, or of Baal under the name of Moloch, and the myth of Cronus. But Moloch, he thinks, is not a god of Phœnician origin, but a deity borrowed from ‘the primitive Accadian population of Babylonia.’ Mr. Isaac Taylor, again, explains Cronus as the sky which swallows and reproduces the stars. The story of the sickle may be derived from the crescent moon, the ‘silver sickle,’ or from a crescent-shaped piece of meteoric iron — for, in this theory, the fetich-stone of Delphi is a piece of that substance.

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It will be observed that any one of these theories, if accepted, is much more ‘minute in detail’ than our humble suggestion. He who adopts any one of them, knows all about it. He knows that Cronus is a purely Greek god, or that he is connected with the Sanskrit *Krna*, which Tiele, unhappily, says is ‘a very dubious word.’ Or the mythologist may be quite confident that Cronus is neither Greek nor, in any sense, Sanskrit, but Phœnician. A not less adequate interpretation assigns him ultimately to Accadia. While the inquirer who can choose a system and stick to it knows the exact nationality of Cronus, he is also well acquainted with his character as a nature-god. He may be Time, or perhaps he is the Summer Heat, and a horned god; or he is the harvest-god, or the god of storm and darkness, or the midnight sky, — the choice is wide; or he is the lord of dark and light, and his children are the stars, the clouds, the summer months, the light-powers, or what you will. The mythologist has only to make his selection.

The system according to which we tried to interpret the myth is less *ondoyant et divers*. We do not even pretend to explain everything. We do not guess at the meaning and root of the word Cronus. We only find parallels to the myth among savages, whose mental condition is fertile in such legends. And we only infer that the myth of Cronus was originally evolved by persons also in the savage intellectual condition. The survival we explain as, in a previous essay, we explained the survival of the bull-roarer by the conservatism of the religious instinct.

CUPID, PSYCHE, AND THE ‘SUN-FROG.’

‘Once upon a time there lived a king and a queen,’ says the old woman in Apuleius, beginning the tale of Cupid and Psyche with that ancient formula which has been dear to so many generations of children. In one shape or other the tale of Cupid and Psyche, of the woman who is forbidden to see or to name her husband, of the man with the vanished fairy bride, is known in most lands, ‘even among barbarians.’ According to the story the mystic prohibition is always broken: the hidden face is beheld; light is brought into the darkness; the forbidden name is uttered; the bride is touched with the tabooed metal, iron, and the union is ended. Sometimes the pair are re-united, after long searchings and wanderings; sometimes they are severed for ever. Such are the central situations in tales like that of Cupid and Psyche.

In the attempt to discover how the ideas on which this myth is based came into existence, we may choose one of two methods. We may confine our investigations to the Aryan peoples, among whom the story occurs both in the form of myth and of household tale. Again, we may look for the shapes of the legend which hide, like Peau d’Ane in disguise, among the rude kraals and wigwams, and in the strange and scanty garb of savages. If among savages we find both narratives like Cupid and Psyche, and also customs and laws out of which the myth might have arisen, we may provisionally conclude that similar customs once existed among the civilised races who possess the tale, and that from these sprang the early forms of the myth.

In accordance with the method hitherto adopted, we shall prefer the second plan, and pursue our quest beyond the limits of the Aryan peoples.

The oldest literary shape of the tale of Psyche and her lover is found in the Rig Veda (x. 95). The characters of a singular and cynical dialogue in that poem are named Urvasi and Pururavas. The former is an Apsaras, a kind of fairy or sylph, the mistress (and a *folle maîtresse*, too) of Pururavas, a mortal man. In the poem Urvasi remarks that when she dwelt among men she ‘ate once a day a small piece of butter, and therewith well satisfied went away.’ This slightly reminds one of the common idea that the living may not eat in the land of the dead, and of Persephone’s tasting the pomegranate in Hades.

Of the dialogue in the Rig Veda it may be said, in the words of Mr. Toots, that ‘the language is coarse and the meaning is obscure.’ We only gather that Urvasi, though she admits her sensual content in the society of Pururavas, is leaving him ‘like the first of the dawns’; that she ‘goes home again, hard to be caught, like the winds.’ She gives her lover some hope, however — that the gods promise immortality even to him, ‘the kinsman of Death’ as he is. ‘Let thine offspring worship the gods with an oblation; in Heaven shalt thou too have joy of the festival.’

In the Rig Veda, then, we dimly discern a parting between a mortal man and an immortal bride, and a promise of reconciliation.

The story, of which this Vedic poem is a partial dramatisation, is given in the Brahmana of the Yajur Veda. Mr. Max Müller has translated the passage. According to the Brahmana, ‘Urvasi, a kind of fairy, fell in love with Pururavas, and when she met him she said: Embrace me three times a day, but never against my will, and let me never see you without your royal garments, *for this is the manner of women*.’ The Gandharvas, a spiritual race, kinsmen of Urvasi, thought she had lingered too long among men. They therefore plotted some way of parting her from Pururavas. Her covenant with her lord declared that she was never to see him naked. If that compact were broken she would be compelled to leave him. To make Pururavas break this compact the Gandharvas stole a lamb from beside Urvasi’s bed: Pururavas sprang up to rescue the lamb, and, in a flash of lightning, Urvasi saw him naked, contrary to the *manner of women*. She vanished. He sought her long, and at last came to a lake where she and her fairy friends were playing *in the shape of birds*. Urvasi saw Pururavas, revealed herself to him, and, according to the Brahmana, part of the strange Vedic dialogue was now spoken. Urvasi promised to meet him on the last night of the year: a son was to be the result of the interview. Next day, her kinsfolk, the Gandharvas, offered Pururavas the wish of his heart. He wished to be one of them. They then initiated him into the mode of kindling a certain sacred fire, after which he became immortal and dwelt among the Gandharvas.

It is highly characteristic of the Indian mind that the story should be thus worked into connection with ritual. In the same way the Bhagavata Purana has a long, silly, and rather obscene narrative about the sacrifice offered by Pururavas, and the new kind of sacred fire. Much the same ritual tale is found in the Vishnu Purana (iv. 6, 19).

Before attempting to offer our own theory of the legend, we must examine the explanations presented by scholars. The philological method of dealing with myths is well known. The hypothesis is that the names in a myth are ‘stubborn things,’ and that, as the whole narrative has probably arisen from forgetfulness of the meaning of language, the secret of a myth must be sought in analysis of the proper names of the persons. On this principle Mr. Max Müller interprets the myth of Urvasi and Pururavas, their loves, separation, and reunion. Mr. Müller says that the story ‘expresses the identity of the morning dawn and the evening twilight.’ To prove this, the names are analysed. It is Mr. Müller’s object to show that though, even in the Veda, Urvasi and Pururavas are names of persons, they were originally ‘appellations’; and that Urvasi meant ‘dawn,’ and Pururavas ‘sun.’ Mr. Müller’s opinion as to the etymological sense of the names would be thought decisive, naturally, by lay readers, if an opposite opinion were not held by that other great philologist and comparative mythologist, Adalbert Kuhn. Admitting that ‘the etymology of Urvasi is difficult,’ Mr. Müller derives it from ‘*uru*, wide (*μÅÁÅ*), and a root *as* = to pervade.’ Now the dawn is ‘widely pervading,’ and has, in Sanskrit, the epithet urû*k*î, ‘far-going.’ Mr. Müller next assumes that ‘Eurykyde,’ ‘Eurynome,’ ‘Eurydike,’ and other heroic Greek female names, are ‘names of the dawn’; but this, it must be said, is merely an assumption of his school. The main point of the argument is that Urvasi means ‘far-going,’ and that ‘the far and wide splendour of dawn’ is often spoken of in the Veda. ‘However, the best proof that Urvasi was the dawn is the legend told of her and of her love to Pururavas, a story that is true only of the sun and the dawn’ (i. 407).

We shall presently see that a similar story is told of persons in whom the dawn can scarcely be recognised, so that ‘the best proof’ is not very good.

The name of Pururavas, again, is ‘an appropriate name for a solar hero.’ . . . Pururavas meant the same as ¿»Å´µÅº·Â, ‘endowed with much light,’ for, though *rava* is generally used of sound, yet the root *ru*, which means originally ‘to cry,’ is also applied to colour, in the sense of a loud or crying colour, that is, red. Violet also, according to Sir G. W. Cox, is a loud or crying colour. ‘The word (¹¿Â), as applied to colour, is traced by Professor Max Müller to the root *i*, as denoting a “crying hue,” that is, a loud colour.’ It is interesting to learn that our Aryan fathers spoke of ‘loud colours,’ and were so sensitive as to think violet ‘loud.’ Besides, Pururavas calls himself Vasistha, which, as we know, is a name of the sun; and if he is called Aido, the son of Ida, the same name is elsewhere given to Agni, the fire. ‘The conclusion of the argument is that antiquity spoke of the naked sun, and of the chaste dawn hiding her face when she had seen her husband. Yet she says she will come again. And after the sun has travelled through the world in search of his beloved, when he comes to the threshold of Death and is going to end his solitary life, she appears again, in the gloaming, the same as the dawn, as Eos in Homer, begins and ends the day, and she carries him away to the golden seats of the Immortals.’

Kuhn objects to all this explanation, partly on what we think the inadequate ground that there is no necessary connection between the story of Urvasi (thus interpreted) and the ritual of sacred fire-lighting. Connections of that sort were easily invented at random by the compilers of the Brahmanas in their existing form. Coming to the analysis of names, Kuhn finds in Urvasi 'a weakening of Urvankî (*uru* + *anc*), like *yuvaça* from *yuvanka*, Latin *juvencus* . . . the accent is of no decisive weight.' Kuhn will not be convinced that Pururavas is the sun, and is unmoved by the ingenious theory of 'a crying colour,' denoted by his name, and the inference, supported by such words as *rufus*, that crying colours are red, and therefore appropriate names of the red sun. The connection between Pururavas and Agni, fire, is what appeals to Kuhn — and, in short, where Mr. Müller sees a myth of sun and dawn, Kuhn recognises a fire-myth. Roth, again (whose own name means *red*), far from thinking that Urvasi is 'the chaste dawn,' interprets her name as *die geile*, that is, 'lecherous, lascivious, lewd, wanton, obscene'; while Pururavas, as 'the Roarer,' suggests 'the Bull in rut.' In accordance with these views Roth explains the myth in a fashion of his own.

Here, then, as Kuhn says, 'we have three essentially different modes of interpreting the myth,' all three founded on philological analysis of the names in the story. No better example could be given to illustrate the weakness of the philological method. In the first place, that method relies on names as the primitive relics and germs of the tale, although the tale may occur where the names have never been heard, and though the names are, presumably, late additions to a story in which the characters were originally anonymous. Again, the most illustrious etymologists differ absolutely about the true sense of the names. Kuhn sees fire everywhere, and fire-myths; Mr. Müller sees dawn and dawn-myths; Schwartz sees storm and storm-myths, and so on. As the orthodox teachers are thus at variance, so that there is no safety in orthodoxy, we may attempt to use our heterodox method.

None of the three scholars whose views we have glanced at — neither Roth, Kuhn, nor Mr. Müller — lays stress on the saying of Urvasi, 'never let me see you without your royal garments, *for this is the custom of women*.' To our mind, these words contain the gist of the myth. There must have been, at some time, a custom which forbade women to see their husbands without their garments, or the words have no meaning. If any custom of this kind existed, a story might well be evolved to give a sanction to the law. 'You must never see your husband naked: think what happened to Urvasi — she vanished clean away!' This is the kind of warning which might be given. If the customary prohibition had grown obsolete, the punishment might well be assigned to a being of another, a spiritual, race, in which old human ideas lingered, as the neolithic dread of iron lingers in the Welsh fairies.

Our method will be, to prove the existence of singular rules of etiquette, corresponding to the etiquette accidentally infringed by Pururavas. We shall then investigate stories of the same character as that of Urvasi and Pururavas, in which the infringement of the etiquette is chastised. It will be seen that, in most cases, the bride is of a peculiar and perhaps supernatural race. Finally, the tale of Urvasi will be taken up again, will be shown to conform in character to the other stories examined, and will be explained as a myth told to illustrate, or sanction, a nuptial etiquette.

The lives of savages are bound by the most closely-woven fetters of custom. The simplest acts are 'tabooed,' a strict code regulates all intercourse. Married life, especially, moves in the strangest fetters. There will be nothing remarkable in the wide distribution of a myth turning on nuptial etiquette, if this law of nuptial etiquette proves to be also widely distributed. That it is widely distributed we now propose to demonstrate by examples.

The custom of the African people of the kingdom of Futa is, or was, even stricter than the Vedic *custom of women*— 'wives never permit their husbands to see them unveiled for three years after their marriage.'

In his 'Travels to Timbuctoo' (i. 94), Caillié says that the bridegroom 'is not allowed to see his intended during the day.' He has a tabooed hut apart, and 'if he is obliged to come out he covers his face.' He 'remains with his wife only till daybreak' — like Cupid — and flees, like Cupid, before the light. Among the Australians the chief deity, if deity such a being can be called, Pundjel, 'has a wife whose face he has never seen,' probably in compliance with some primæval etiquette or taboo.

Among the Yorubas 'conventional modesty forbids a woman to speak to her husband, or even to see him, if it can be avoided.' Of the Iroquois Lafitau says: 'Ils n'osent aller dans les cabanes particulières où habitent leurs épouses que durant l'obscurité de la nuit.' The Circassian women live on distant terms with their lords till they become mothers. Similar examples of reserve are reported to be customary among the Fijians.

In backward parts of Europe a strange custom forbids the bride to speak to her lord, as if in memory of a time when husband and wife were always of alien tribes, and, as among the Caribs, spoke different languages.

In the Bulgarian 'Volkslied,' the Sun marries Grozdanka, a mortal girl. Her mother addresses her thus: —

Grozdanka, mother's treasure mine,
For nine long years I nourished thee,
For nine months see thou do not speak
To thy first love that marries thee.

M. Dozon, who has collected the Bulgarian songs, says that this custom of prolonged silence on the part of the bride is very common in Bulgaria, though it is beginning to yield to a sense of the ludicrous. In Sparta and in Crete, as is well known, the bridegroom was long the victim of a somewhat similar taboo, and was only permitted to seek the company of his wife secretly, and in the dark, like the Iroquois described by Lafitau.

Herodotus tells us (i. 146) that some of the old Ionian colonists 'brought no women with them, but took wives of the women of the Carians, whose fathers they had slain. Therefore the women made a law for themselves, and handed it down to their daughters, that they should never sit at meat with their husbands, and *that none should ever call her husband by his name*.' In precisely the same way, in Zululand the wife may not mention her husband's name, just as in the Welsh fairy tale the husband may not even know the name of his fairy bride, on pain of losing her for ever. These ideas about names, and freakish ways of avoiding the use of names, mark the childhood of languages, according to Mr. Max Müller, and, therefore, the childhood of Society. The Kaffirs call this etiquette 'Hlonipa.' It applies to women as well as men. A Kaffir bride is not called by her own name in her husband's village, but is spoken of as 'mother of so and so,' even before she has borne a child. The universal superstition about names is at the bottom of this custom. The Aleutian Islanders, according to Dall, are quite distressed when obliged to speak to their wives in the presence of others. The Fijians did not know where to look when missionaries hinted that a man might live under the same roof as his wife. Among the Turkomans, for six months, a year, or two years, a husband is only allowed to visit his wife by stealth.

The number of these instances could probably be increased by a little research. Our argument is that the widely distributed myths in which a husband or a wife transgresses some 'custom' — sees the other's face or body, or utters the forbidden name — might well have arisen as tales illustrating the punishment of breaking the rule. By a very curious coincidence, a Breton sailor's tale of the 'Cupid and Psyche' class is confessedly founded on the existence of the rule of nuptial etiquette.

In this story the son of a Boulogne pilot marries the daughter of the King of Naz — wherever that may be. In Naz a man is never allowed to see the face of his wife till she has borne him a child — a modification of the Futa rule. The inquisitive French husband unveils his wife, and, like Psyche in Apuleius, drops wax from a candle on her cheek. When the pair return to Naz, the king of that country discovers the offence of the husband, and, by the aid of his magicians, transforms the Frenchman into a monster. Here we have the old formula — the infringement of a 'taboo,' and the magical punishment — adapted to the ideas of Breton peasantry. The essential point of the story, for our purpose, is that the veiling of the bride is 'the custom of women,' in the mysterious land of Naz. 'C'est l'usage du pays: les maris ne voient leurs femmes sans voile que lorsqu'elles sont devenues mères.' Now our theory of the myth of Urvasi is simply this: 'the custom of women,' which Pururavas transgresses, is probably a traditional Aryan law of nuptial etiquette, *l'usage du pays*, once prevalent among the people of India.

If our view be correct, then several rules of etiquette, and not one alone, will be illustrated in the stories which we suppose the rules to have suggested. In the case of Urvasi and Pururavas, the rule was, not to see the husband naked. In 'Cupid and Psyche,' the husband was not to be looked upon at all. In the well-known myth of Mélusine, the bride is not to be seen naked. Mélusine tells her lover that she will only abide with him *dum ipsam nudam non viderit*. The same taboo occurs in a Dutch *Märchen*.

We have now to examine a singular form of the myth, in which the strange bride is not a fairy, or spiritual being, but an animal. In this class of story the husband is usually forbidden to perform some act which will recall to the bride the associations of her old animal existence. The converse of the tale is the well-known legend of the Forsaken Merman. The king of the sea permits his human wife to go to church. The ancient sacred associations are revived, and the woman returns no more.

She will not come though you call all day
Come away, come away.

Now, in the tales of the animal bride, it is her associations with her former life among the beasts that are not to be revived, and when they are reawakened by the commission of some act which she has forbidden, or the neglect of some precaution which she has enjoined, she, like Urvasi, disappears.

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The best known example of this variant of the tale is the story of Bheki, in Sanskrit. Mr. Max Müller has interpreted the myth in accordance with his own method. His difficulty is to account for the belief that a king might marry a frog. Our ancestors, he remarks, 'were not idiots,' how then could they tell such a story? We might reply that our ancestors, if we go far enough back, were savages, and that such stories are the staple of savage myth. Mr. Müller, however, holds that an accidental corruption of language reduced Aryan fancy to the savage level. He explains the corruption thus: 'We find, in Sanskrit, that Bheki, the frog, was a beautiful girl, and that one day, when sitting near a well, she was discovered by a king, who asked her to be his wife. She consented, *on condition that he should never show her a drop of water*. One day, being tired, she asked the king for water; the king forgot his promise, brought water, and Bheki disappeared.' This myth, Mr. Müller holds, 'began with a short saying, such as that "Bheki, the sun, will die at the sight of water," as we should say that the sun will set, when it approaches the water from which it rose in the morning.' But how did the sun come to be called Bheki, 'the frog'? Mr. Müller supposes that this name was given to the sun by some poet or fisherman. He gives no evidence for the following statement: 'It can be shown that "frog" was used as a name for the sun. Now at sunrise and sunset, when the sun was squatting on the water, it was called the "frog."' At what historical period the Sanskrit-speaking race was settled in seats where the sun rose and set in water, we do not know, and 'chapter and verse' are needed for the statement that 'frog' was actually a name of the sun. Mr. Müller's argument, however, is that the sun was called 'the frog,' that people forgot that the frog and sun were identical, and that Frog, or Bheki, was mistaken for the name of a girl to whom was applied the old saw about dying at sight of water. 'And so,' says Mr. Müller, 'the change from sun to frog, and from frog to man, which was at first due to the mere spell of language, would in our nursery tales be ascribed to miraculous charms more familiar to a later age.' As a matter of fact, magical metamorphoses are infinitely more familiar to the lowest savages than to people in a 'later age.' Magic, as Castren observes, 'belongs to the lowest known stages of civilisation.' Mr. Müller's theory, however, is this — that a Sanskrit-speaking people, living where the sun rose out of and set in some ocean, called the sun, as he touched the water, Bheki, the frog, and said he would die at the sight of water. They ceased to call the sun the frog, or Bheki, but kept the saying, 'Bheki will die at sight of water.' Not knowing who or what Bheki might be, they took her for a frog, who also was a pretty wench. Lastly, they made the story of Bheki's distinguished wedding and mysterious disappearance. For this interpretation, historical and linguistic evidence is not offered. When did a Sanskrit-speaking race live beside a great sea? How do we know that 'frog' was used as a name for 'sun'?

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We have already given our explanation. To the savage intellect, man and beast are on a level, and all savage myth makes men descended from beasts; while stories of the loves of gods in bestial shape, or the unions of men and animals, incessantly occur. ‘Unnatural’ as these notions seem to us, no ideas are more familiar to savages, and none recur more frequently in Indo-Aryan, Scandinavian, and Greek mythology. An extant tribe in North-West America still claims descent from a frog. The wedding of Bheki and the king is a survival, in Sanskrit, of a tale of this kind. Lastly, Bheki disappears, when her associations with her old amphibious life are revived in the manner she had expressly forbidden.

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Our interpretation may be supported by an Ojibway parallel. A hunter named Otter-heart, camping near a beaver lodge, found a pretty girl loitering round his fire. She keeps his wigwam in order, and ‘lays his blanket near the deerskin she had laid for herself. “Good,” he muttered, “this is my wife.”’ She refuses to eat the beavers he has shot, but at night he hears a noise, ‘*krch, krch*, as if beavers were gnawing wood.’ He sees, by the glimmer of the fire, his wife nibbling birch twigs. In fact, the good little wife is a beaver, as the pretty Indian girl was a frog. The pair lived happily till spring came and the snow melted and the streams ran full. Then his wife implored the hunter to build her a bridge over every stream and river, that she might cross dry-footed. ‘For,’ she said, ‘if my feet touch water, this would at once cause thee great sorrow.’ The hunter did as she bade him, but left unbridged one tiny runnel. The wife stumbled into the water, and, as soon as her foot was wet, she immediately resumed her old shape as a beaver, her son became a beaverling, and the brooklet, changing to a roaring river, bore them to the lake. Once the hunter saw his wife again among her beast kin. ‘To thee I sacrificed all,’ she said, ‘and I only asked thee to help me dry-footed over the waters. Thou didst cruelly neglect this. Now I must remain for ever with my people.’

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This tale was told to Kohl by ‘an old insignificant squaw among the Ojibways.’ Here we have a precise parallel to the tale of Bheki, the frog-bride, and here the reason of the prohibition to touch water is made perfectly unmistakable. The touch magically revived the bride’s old animal life with the beavers. Or was the Indian name for beaver (*temaksé*) once a name for the sun?

A curious variant of this widely distributed *Märchen* of the animal bride is found in the mythical genealogy of the Raja of Chutia Nagpur, a chief of the Naga, or snake race. It is said that Raja Janameja prepared a *yajnya*, or great malevolently magical incantation, to destroy all the people of the serpent race. To prevent this annihilation, the supernatural being, Pundarika Nag, took a human form, and became the husband of the beautiful Parvati, daughter of a Brahman. But Pundarika Nag, being a serpent by nature, could not divest himself, even in human shape, of his forked tongue and venomed breath. And, just as Urvasi could not abide with her mortal lover, after he transgressed the prohibition to appear before her naked, so Pundarika Nag was compelled by fate to leave his bride, if she asked him any questions about his disagreeable peculiarities. She did, at last, ask questions, in circumstances which made Pundarika believe that he was bound to answer her. Now the curse came upon him, he plunged into a pool, like the beaver, and vanished. His wife became the mother of the serpent Rajas of Chutia Nagpur. Pundarika Nag, in his proper form as a great hooded snake, guarded his first-born child. The crest of the house is a hooded snake with human face.

Here, then, we have many examples of the disappearance of the bride or bridegroom in consequence of infringement of various mystic rules. Sometimes the beloved one is seen when he or she should not be seen. Sometimes, as in a Maori story, the bride vanishes, merely because she is in a bad temper. Among the Red Men, as in Sanskrit, the taboo on water is broken, with the usual results. Now for an example in which the rule against using *names* is infringed.

This formula constantly occurs in the Welsh fairy tales published by Professor Rhys. Thus the heir of Corwrion fell in love with a fairy: ‘They were married on the distinct understanding that the husband was not to know her name, . . . and was not to strike her with iron, on pain of her leaving him at once.’ Unluckily the man once tossed her a bridle, the iron bit touched the wife, and ‘she at once flew through the air, and plunged headlong into Corwrion Lake.’

A number of tales turning on the same incident are published in ‘Cymmrodor,’ v. I. In these we have either the taboo on the name, or the taboo on the touch of iron. In a widely diffused superstition iron ‘drives away devils and ghosts,’ according to the Scholiast on the eleventh book of the ‘Odyssey,’ and the Oriental Djinn also flee from iron. Just as water is fatal to the Aryan frog-bride and to the Red Indian beaver-wife, restoring them to their old animal forms, so the magic touch of iron breaks love between the Welshman and his fairy mistress, the representative of the stone age.

In many tales of fairy-brides, they are won by a kind of force. The lover in the familiar Welsh and German *Märchen* sees the swan-maidens throw off their swan plumage and dance naked.. He steals the feather-garb of one of them, and so compels her to his love. Finally, she leaves him, in anger, or because he has broken some taboo. Far from being peculiar to Aryan mythology, this legend occurs, as Mr. Farrer has shown, in Algonquin and Bornoese tradition. The Red Indian story told by Schoolcraft in his ‘Algic Researches’ is most like the Aryan version, but has some native peculiarities. Wampee was a great hunter, who, on the lonely prairie, once heard strains of music. Looking up he saw a speck in the sky: the speck drew nearer and nearer, and proved to be a basket containing twelve heavenly maidens. They reached the earth and began to dance, inflaming the heart of Wampee with love. But Wampee could not draw near the fairy girls in his proper form without alarming them. Like Zeus in his love adventures, Wampee exercised the medicine-man’s power of metamorphosing himself. He assumed the form of a mouse, approached unobserved, and caught one of the dancing maidens. After living with Wampee for some time she wearied of earth, and, by virtue of a ‘mystic chain of verse,’ she ascended again to her heavenly home.

Now is there any reason to believe that this incident was once part of the myth of Pururavas and Urvasi? Was the fairy-love, Urvasi, originally caught and held by Pururavas among her naked and struggling companions? Though this does not appear to have been much noticed, it seems to follow from a speech of Pururavas in the Vedic dialogue (x. 95, 8, 9). Mr. Max Müller translates thus: ‘When I, the mortal, threw my arms round those flighty immortals, they trembled away from me like a trembling doe, like horses that kick against the cart.’ Ludwig’s rendering suits our view — that Pururavas is telling how he first caught Urvasi — still better: ‘When I, the mortal, held converse with the immortals who had laid aside their raiment, like slippery serpents they glided from me, like horses yoked to the car.’ These words would well express the adventure of a lover among the naked flying swan-maidens, an adventure familiar to the Red Men as to Persian legends of the Peris.

To end our comparison of myths like the tale of ‘Cupid and Psyche,’ we find an example among the Zulus. Here the mystic lover came in when all was dark, and felt the damsel’s face. After certain rites, ‘in the morning he went away, he speaking continually, the girl not seeing him. During all those days he would not allow the girl (*sic*), when she said she would light a fire. Finally, after a magical ceremony, he said, “Light the fire!” and stood before her revealed, a shining shape.’ This has a curious resemblance to the myth of Cupid and Psyche; but a more curious detail remains. In the Zulu story of Ukcombekcansini, the friends of a bride break a taboo and kill a tabooed animal. Instantly, like Urvasi and her companions in the Yajur Veda, the bride and her maidens disappear *and are turned into birds*! They are afterwards surprised in human shape, and the bride is restored to her lover.

Here we conclude, having traced parallels to Cupid and Psyche in many non-

Aryan lands. Our theory of the myth does not rest on etymology. We have seen that the most renowned scholars, Max Müller, Kuhn, Roth, all analyse the names Urvasi and Pururavas in different ways, and extract different interpretations. We have found the story where these names were probably never heard of. We interpret it as a tale of the intercourse between mortal men and immortal maids, or between men and metamorphosed animals, as in India and North America. We explain the separation of the lovers as the result of breaking a taboo, or law of etiquette, binding among men and women, as well as between men and fairies.

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The taboos are, to see the beloved unveiled, to utter his or her name, to touch her with a metal 'terrible to ghosts and spirits,' or to do some action which will revive the associations of a former life. We have shown that rules of nuptial etiquette resembling these in character do exist, and have existed, even among Greeks — as where the Milesian, like the Zulu, women made a law not to utter their husbands' names. Finally, we think it a reasonable hypothesis that tales on the pattern of 'Cupid and Psyche' might have been evolved wherever a curious nuptial taboo required to be sanctioned, or explained, by a myth. On this hypothesis, the stories may have been separately invented in different lands; but there is also a chance that they have been transmitted from people to people in the unknown past of our scattered and wandering race. This theory seems at least as probable as the hypothesis that the meaning of an Aryan proverbial statement about sun and dawn was forgotten, and was altered unconsciously into a tale which is found among various non-Aryan tribes. That hypothesis again, learned and ingenious as it is, has the misfortune to be opposed by other scholarly hypotheses not less ingenious and learned.

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As for the sun-frog, we may hope that he has sunk for ever beneath the western wave.

A FAR-TRAVELLED TALE.

A modern novelist has boasted that her books are read ‘from Tobolsk to Tangiers.’ This is a wide circulation, but the widest circulation in the world has probably been achieved by a story whose author, unlike Ouida, will never be known to fame. The tale which we are about to examine is, perhaps, of all myths the most widely diffused, yet there is no ready way of accounting for its extraordinary popularity. Any true ‘nature-myth,’ any myth which accounts for the processes of nature or the aspects of natural phenomena, may conceivably have been invented separately, wherever men in an early state of thought observed the same facts, and attempted to explain them by telling a story. Thus we have seen that the earlier part of the Myth of Cronus is a nature-myth, setting forth the cause of the separation of Heaven and Earth. Star-myths again, are everywhere similar, because men who believed all nature to be animated and personal, accounted for the grouping of constellations in accordance with these crude beliefs.   Once more, if a story like that of ‘Cupid and Psyche’ be found among the most diverse races, the distribution becomes intelligible if the myth was invented to illustrate or enforce a widely prevalent custom. But in the following story no such explanation is even provisionally acceptable.

The gist of the tale (which has many different ‘openings,’ and conclusions in different places) may be stated thus: A young man is brought to the home of a hostile animal, a giant, cannibal, wizard, or a malevolent king. He is put by his unfriendly host to various severe trials, in which it is hoped that he will perish. In each trial he is assisted by the daughter of his host. After achieving the adventures, he elopes with the girl, and is pursued by her father. The runaway pair throw various common objects behind them, which are changed into magical obstacles and check the pursuit of the father. The myth has various endings, usually happy, in various places. Another form of the narrative is known, in which the visitors to the home of the hostile being are, not wooers of his daughter, but brothers of his wife.   The incidents of the flight, in this variant, are still of the same character. Finally, when the flight is that of a brother from his sister’s malevolent ghost, in Hades (Japan), or of two sisters from a cannibal mother or step-mother (Zulu and Samoyed), the events of the flight and the magical aids to escape remain little altered. We shall afterwards see that attempts have been made to interpret one of these narratives as a nature-myth; but the attempts seem unsuccessful. We are therefore at a loss to account for the wide diffusion of this tale, unless it has been transmitted slowly from people to people, in the immense unknown prehistoric past of the human race.

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Before comparing the various forms of the myth in its first shape — that which tells of the mortal lover and the giant's or wizard's daughter — let us give the Scottish version of the story. This version was written down for me, many years ago, by an aged lady in Morayshire. I published it in the 'Revue Celtique'; but it is probably new to story-comparers, in its broad Scotch variant.

NICHT NOUGHT NOTHING.

There once lived a king and a queen. They were long married and had no bairns; but at last the queen had a bairn, when the king was away in far countries. The queen would not christen the bairn till the king came back, and she said, ‘We will just call him Nicht Nought Nothing until his father comes home.’ But it was long before he came home, and the boy had grown a nice little laddie. At length the king was on his way back; but he had a big river to cross, and there was a spate, and he could not get over the water. But a giant came up to him, and said, ‘If you will give me Nicht Nought Nothing, I will carry you over the water on my back.’ The king had never heard that his son was called Nicht Nought Nothing, and so he promised him. When the king got home again, he was very happy to see his wife again, and his young son. She told him that she had not given the child any name but Nicht Nought Nothing, until he should come home again himself. The poor king was in a terrible case. He said, ‘What have I done? I promised to give the giant who carried me over the river on his back, Nicht Nought Nothing.’ The king and the queen were sad and sorry, but they said, ‘When the giant comes we will give him the hen-wife’s bairn; he will never know the difference.’ The next day the giant came to claim the king’s promise, and he sent for the hen-wife’s bairn; and the giant went away with the bairn on his back. He travelled till he came to a big stone, and there he sat down to rest. He said,

‘Hidge, Hodge, on my back, what time of day is it?’ The poor little bairn said, ‘It is the time that my mother, the hen-wife, takes up the eggs for the queen’s breakfast.’

The giant was very angry, and dashed the bairn on the stone and killed it.

. . . . .

The same adventure is repeated with the gardener’s son.

. . . . .

Then the giant went back to the king’s house, and said he would destroy them all if they did not give him Nicht Nought Nothing this time. They had to do it; and when he came to the big stone, the giant said, ‘What time of day is it?’ Nicht Nought Nothing said, ‘It is the time that my father the king will be sitting down to supper.’ The giant said, ‘I’ve got the richt ane noo;’ and took Nicht Nought Nothing to his own house and brought him up till he was a man.

The giant had a bonny dochter, and she and the lad grew very fond of each other. The giant said one day to Nicht Nought Nothing, ‘I’ve work for you to-morrow. There is a stable seven miles long and seven miles broad, and it has not been cleaned for seven years, and you must clean it to-morrow, or I will have you for my supper.’

The giant’s dochter went out next morning with the lad’s breakfast, and found him in a terrible state, for aye as he cleaned out a bit, it aye fell in again. The giant’s dochter said she would help him, and she cried a’ the beasts of the field, and a’ the fowls o’ the air, and in a minute they a’ came, and carried awa’ everything that was in the stable and made a’ clean before the giant came home. He said, ‘Shame for the wit that helped you; but I have a worse job for you to-morrow.’ Then he told Nicht Nought Nothing that there was a loch seven miles long, and seven miles deep, and seven miles broad, and he must drain it the next day, or else he would have him for his supper. Nicht Nought Nothing began early next morning and tried to lave the water with his pail, but the loch was never getting any less, and he did no ken what to do; but the giant’s dochter called on all the fish in the sea to come and drink the water, and very soon they drank it dry. When the giant saw the work done he was in a rage, and said, ‘I’ve a worse job for you to-morrow; there is a tree seven miles high, and no branch on it, till you get to the top, and there is a nest, and you must bring down the eggs without breaking one, or else I will have you for my supper.’ At first the giant’s dochter did not know how to help Nicht Nought Nothing; but she cut off first her fingers and then her toes, and made steps of them, and he clomb the tree, and got all the eggs safe till he came to the bottom, and then one was broken. The giant’s dochter advised him to run away, and she would follow him. So he travelled till he came to a king’s palace, and the king and queen took him in and were very kind to him. The giant’s dochter left her father’s house, and he pursued her and was drowned. Then she came to the king’s palace where Nicht Nought Nothing was. And she went up into a tree to watch for him. The gardener’s dochter, going to draw water in the well, saw the shadow of the lady in the water, and thought it was herself, and said, ‘If I’m so bonny, if I’m so brave, do you send me to draw water?’ The gardener’s wife went out, and she said the same thing. Then the gardener went himself, and brought the lady from the tree, and led her in. And he told her that a stranger was to marry the king’s dochter, and showed her the man: and it was Nicht Nought Nothing asleep in a chair. And she saw him, and cried to him, ‘Waken, waken, and speak to me!’ But he would not waken, and syne she cried,

‘I cleaned the stable, I laved the loch, and I clamb the tree,
    And all for the love of thee,

And thou wilt not waken and speak to me.’

The king and the queen heard this, and came to the bonny young lady, and she said,

‘I canna get Nicht Nought Nothing to speak to me for all that I can do.’

Then were they greatly astonished when she spoke of Nicht Nought Nothing, and asked where he was, and she said, ‘He that sits there in the chair.’ Then they ran to him and kissed him and called him their own dear son, and he wakened, and told them all that the giant’s dochter had done for him, and of all her kindness. Then they took her in their arms and kissed her, and said she should now be their dochter, for their son should marry her.

And they lived happy all their days.

In this variant of the story, which we may use as our text, it is to be noticed that a *lacuna* exists. The narrative of the flight omits to mention that the runaways threw things behind them which became obstacles in the giant’s way. One of these objects probably turned into a lake, in which the giant was drowned. A common incident is the throwing behind of a comb, which changes into a thicket. The formula of leaving obstacles behind occurs in the Indian collection, the ‘Kathasarit sagara’ (vii. xxxix.). The ‘Battle of the Birds,’ in Campbell’s ‘Tales of the West Highlands,’ is a very copious Gaelic variant. Russian parallels are ‘Vasilissa the Wise and the Water King,’ and ‘The King Bear.’ The incident of the flight and the magical obstacles is found in Japanese mythology. The ‘ugly woman of Hades’ is sent to pursue the hero. He casts down his black head-dress, and it is instantly turned into grapes; he fled while she was eating them. Again, ‘he cast down his multitudinous and close-toothed comb, and it instantly turned into bamboo sprouts.’ In the Gaelic version, the pursuer is detained by talkative objects which the pursued leave at home, and this marvel recurs in Zululand, and is found among the Bushmen. The Zulu versions are numerous. Oddly enough, in the last variant, the girl performs no magic feat, but merely throws sesamum on the ground to delay the cannibals, for cannibals are very fond of sesamum.

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Here, then, we have the remarkable details of the flight, in Zulu, Gaelic, Norse, Malagasy, Russian, Italian, Japanese. Of all incidents in the myth, the incidents of the flight are most widely known. But the whole connected series of events — the coming of the wooer; the love of the hostile being’s daughter; the tasks imposed on the wooer; the aid rendered by the daughter; the flight of the pair; the defeat or destruction of the hostile being — all these, or most of these, are extant, in due sequence, among the following races. The Greeks have the tale, the people of Madagascar have it, the Lowland Scotch, the Celts, the Russians, the Italians, the Algonquins, the Finns, and the Samoans have it. Now if the story were confined to the Aryan race, we might account for its diffusion, by supposing it to be the common heritage of the Indo-European peoples, carried everywhere with them in their wanderings. But when the tale is found in Madagascar, North America, Samoa, and among the Finns, while many scattered incidents occur in even more widely severed races, such as Zulus, Bushmen, Japanese, Eskimo, Samoyeds, the Aryan hypothesis becomes inadequate.

To show how closely, all things considered, the Aryan and non-Aryan possessors of the tale agree, let us first examine the myth of Jason.

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The earliest literary reference to the myth of Jason is in the ‘Iliad’ (vii. 467, xxiii. 747). Here we read of Euneos, a son whom Hypsipyle bore to Jason in Lemnos. Already, even in the ‘Iliad,’ the legend of Argo’s voyage has been fitted into certain well-known geographical localities. A reference in the ‘Odyssey’ (xii. 72) has a more antique ring: we are told that of all barques Argo alone escaped the jaws of the Rocks Wandering, which clashed together and destroyed ships. Argo escaped, it is said, ‘because Jason was dear to Hera.’ It is plain, from various fragmentary notices, that Hesiod was familiar with several of the adventures in the legend of Jason. In the ‘Theogony’ (993-998) Hesiod mentions the essential facts of the legend: how Jason carried off from Æetes his daughter, ‘after achieving the adventures, many and grievous,’ which were laid upon him. At what period the home of Æetes was placed in Colchis, it is not easy to determine. Mimnermus, a contemporary of Solon, makes the home of Æetes lie ‘on the brink of ocean,’ a very vague description. Pindar, on the other hand, in the splendid Fourth Pythian Ode, already knows Colchis as the scene of the loves and flight of Jason and Medea.

‘Long were it for me to go by the beaten track,’ says Pindar, ‘and I know a certain short path.’ Like Pindar, we may abridge the tale of Jason. He seeks the golden fleece in Colchis: Æetes offers it to him as a prize for success in certain labours. By the aid of Medea, the daughter of Æetes, the wizard-king, Jason tames the fire-breathing oxen, yokes them to the plough, and drives a furrow. By Medea’s help he conquers the children of the teeth of the dragon, subdues the snake that guards the fleece of gold, and escapes, but is pursued by Æetes. To detain Æetes, Medea throws behind the mangled remains of her own brother, Apsyrtos, and the Colchians pursue no further than the scene of this bloody deed. The savagery of this act survives even in the work of a poet so late as Apollonius Rhodius (iv. 477), where we read how Jason performed a rite of savage magic, mutilating the body of Apsyrtos in a manner which was believed to appease the avenging ghost of the slain. ‘Thrice he tasted the blood, thrice spat it out between his teeth,’ a passage which the Scholiast says contains the description of an archaic custom popular among murderers.

Beyond Tomi, where a popular etymology fixed the ‘cutting up’ of Apsyrtos, we need not follow the fortunes of Jason and Medea. We have already seen the wooer come to the hostile being, win his daughter’s love, achieve the adventures by her aid, and flee in her company, delaying, by a horrible device, the advance of the pursuers. To these incidents in the tale we confine our attention.

Many explanations of the Jason myth have been given by Scholars who thought they recognised elemental phenomena in the characters. As usual these explanations differ widely. Whenever a myth has to be interpreted, it is certain that one set of Scholars will discover the sun and the dawn, where another set will see the thunder-cloud and lightning. The moon is thrown in at pleasure. Sir G. W. Cox determines ‘that the name Jason (Iasôn) must be classed with the many others, Iasion, Iamus, Iolaus, Iaso, belonging to the same root.’ Well, what is the root? Apparently the root is ‘the root *i*, as denoting a crying colour, that is, a loud colour’ (ii. 81). Seemingly (i. 229) violet is a loud colour, and, wherever you have the root *i*, you have ‘the violet-tinted morning from which the sun is born.’ Medea is ‘the daughter of the sun,’ and most likely, in her ‘beneficent aspect,’ is the dawn. But (ii. 81, note) *ios* has another meaning, ‘which, as a spear, represents the far-darting ray of the sun’; so that, in one way or another, Jason is connected with the violet-tinted morning or with the sun’s rays. This is the gist of the theory of Sir George Cox.

Preller is another Scholar, with another set of etymologies. Jason is derived, he thinks, from ¹±¿¼±¹, to heal, because Jason studied medicine under the Centaur Chiron. This is the view of the Scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius (i. 554). Jason, to Preller’s mind, is a form of Asclepius, ‘a spirit of the spring with its soft suns and fertile rains.’ Medea is the moon. Medea, on the other hand, is a lightning goddess, in the opinion of Schwartz. No philological reason is offered. Meanwhile, in Sir George Cox’s system, the equivalent of Medea, ‘in her beneficent aspect,’ is the dawn.

We must suppose, it seems, that either the soft spring rains and the moon, or the dawn and the sun, or the lightning and the thunder-cloud, in one arrangement or another, irresistibly suggested, to early Aryan minds, the picture of a wooer, arriving in a hostile home, winning a maiden’s love, achieving adventures by her aid, fleeing with her from her angry father and delaying his pursuit by various devices. Why the spring, the moon, the lightning, the dawn — any of them or all of them — should have suggested such a tale, let Scholars determine when they have reconciled their own differences. It is more to our purpose to follow the myth among Samoans, Algonquins, and Finns. None of these races speak an Aryan language, and none can have been beguiled into telling the same sort of tale by a disease of Aryan speech.

Samoa, where we find our story, is the name of a group of volcanic islands in Central Polynesia. They are about 3,000 miles from Sidney, were first observed by Europeans in 1722, and are as far removed as most spots from direct Aryan influences. Our position is, however, that in the shiftings and migrations of peoples, the Jason tale has somehow been swept, like a piece of drift-wood, on to the coasts of Samoa. In the islands, the tale has an epical form, and is chanted in a poem of twenty-six stanzas. There is something Greek in the free and happy life of the Samoans — something Greek, too, in this myth of theirs. There was once a youth, Siati, famous for his singing, a young Thamyris of Samoa. But as, according to Homer, ‘the Muses met Thamyris the Thracian, and made an end of his singing, for he boasted and said that he would vanquish even the Muses if he sang against them,’ so did the Samoan god of song envy Siati. The god and the mortal sang a match: the daughter of the god was to be the mortal’s prize if he proved victorious. Siati won, and he set off, riding on a shark, as Arion rode the dolphin, to seek the home of the defeated deity. At length he reached the shores divine, and thither strayed Puapae, daughter of the god, looking for her comb which she had lost. ‘Siati,’ said she, ‘how camest thou hither?’ ‘I am come to seek the song-god, and to wed his daughter.’ ‘My father,’ said the maiden, ‘is more a god than a man; eat nothing he hands you, never sit on a high seat, lest death follow.’ So they were united in marriage. But the god, like Æetes, was wroth, and began to set Siati upon perilous tasks: ‘Build me a house, and let it be finished this very day, else death and the oven await thee.’

Siati wept, but the god’s daughter had the house built by the evening. The other adventures were to fight a fierce dog, and to find a ring lost at sea. Just as the Scotch giant’s daughter cut off her fingers to help her lover, so the Samoan god’s daughter bade Siati cut her body into pieces and cast her into the sea. There she became a fish, and recovered the ring. They set off to the god’s house, but met him pursuing them, with the help of his other daughter. ‘Puapae and Siati threw down the comb, and it became a bush of thorns in the way to intercept the god and Puanli,’ the other daughter. Next they threw down a bottle of earth which became a mountain; ‘and then followed their bottle of water, and that became a sea, and drowned the god and Puanli.’

This old Samoan song contains nearly the closest savage parallel to the various household tales which find their heroic and artistic shape in the Jason saga. Still more surprising in its resemblances is the Malagasy version of the narrative. In the Malagasy story, the conclusion is almost identical with the winding up of the Scotch fairy tale. The girl hides in a tree; her face, seen reflected in a well, is mistaken by women for their own faces, and the recognition follows in due course.

Like most Red Indian versions of popular tales, the Algonquin form of the Jason saga is strongly marked with the peculiarities of the race. The story is recognisable, and that is all.

The opening, as usual, differs from other openings. Two children are deserted in the wilderness, and grow up to manhood. One of them loses an arrow in the water; the elder brother, Panigwun, wades after it. A magical canoe flies past: an old magician, who is alone in the canoe, seizes Panigwun and carries him off. The canoe fleets along, like the barques of the Phæacians, at the will of the magician, and reaches the isle where, like the Samoan god of song, he dwells with his two daughters. ‘Here, my daughter,’ said he, ‘is a young man for your husband.’ But the daughter knew that the proposed husband was but another victim of the old man’s magic arts. By the daughter’s advice, Panigwun escaped in the magic barque, consoled his brother, and returned to the island. Next day the magician, Mishosha, set the young man to hard tasks and perilous adventures. He was to gather gulls’ eggs; but the gulls attacked him in dense crowds. By an incantation he subdued the birds, and made them carry him home to the island. Next day he was sent to gather pebbles, that he might be attacked and eaten by the king of the fishes. Once more the young man, like the Finnish Ilmarinen in Pohjola, subdued the mighty fish, and went back triumphant. The third adventure, as in ‘Nicht Nought Nothing,’ was to climb a tree of extraordinary height in search of a bird’s nest. Here, again, the youth succeeded, and finally conspired with the daughters to slay the old magician. Lastly the boy turned the magician into a sycamore tree, and won his daughter. The other daughter was given to the brother who had no share in the perils. Here we miss the incident of the flight; and the magician’s daughter, though in love with the hero, does not aid him to perform the feats. Perhaps an Algonquin brave would scorn the assistance of a girl. In the ‘Kalevala,’ the old hero, Wäinämöinen, and his friend Ilmarinen, set off to the mysterious and hostile land of Pohjola to win a bride. The maiden of Pohjola loses her heart to Ilmarinen, and, by her aid, he bridles the wolf and bear, ploughs a field of adders with a plough of gold, and conquers the gigantic pike that swims in the Styx of Finnish mythology. After this point the story is interrupted by a long sequel of popular bridal songs, and, in the wandering course of the rather aimless epic, the flight and its incidents have been forgotten, or are neglected. These incidents recur, however, in the thread of somewhat different plots. We have seen that they are found in Japan, among the Eskimo, among the Bushmen, the Samoyeds, and the Zulus, as well as in Hungarian, Magyar, Celtic, and other European household tales.

The conclusion appears to be that the central part of the Jason myth is incapable of being explained, either as a nature-myth, or as a myth founded on a disease of language. So many languages could not take the same malady in the same way; nor can we imagine any series of natural phenomena that would inevitably suggest this tale to so many diverse races.

We must suppose, therefore, either that all wits jumped and invented the same romantic series of situations by accident, or that all men spread from one centre, where the story was known, or that the story, once invented, has drifted all round the world. If the last theory be approved of, the tale will be like the Indian Ocean shell found lately in the Polish bone-cave, or like the Egyptian beads discovered in the soil of Dahomey. The story will have been carried hither and thither, in the remotest times, to the remotest shores, by traders, by slaves, by captives in war, or by women torn from their own tribe and forcibly settled as wives among alien peoples.

Stories of this kind are everywhere the natural property of mothers and grandmothers. When we remember how widely diffused is the law of exogamy, which forbids marriage between a man and woman of the same stock, we are impressed by the number of alien elements which must have been introduced with alien wives. Where husband and wife, as often happened, spoke different languages, the woman would inevitably bring the hearthside tales of her childhood among a people of strange speech. By all these agencies, working through dateless time, we may account for the diffusion, if we cannot explain the origin, of tales like the central arrangement of incidents in the career of Jason.

APOLLO AND THE MOUSE.

Why is Apollo, especially the Apollo of the Troad, he who showered the darts of pestilence among the Greeks, so constantly associated with a mouse? The very name, Smintheus, by which his favourite priest calls on him in the 'Iliad' (i. 39), might be rendered 'Mouse Apollo,' or 'Apollo, Lord of Mice.' As we shall see later, mice lived beneath the altar, and were fed in the holy of holies of the god, and an image of a mouse was placed beside or upon his sacred tripod. The ancients were puzzled by these things, and, as will be shown, accounted for them by 'mouse-stories,' £¼¹½¸¹±º¿¹ »¿y¿¹, so styled by Eustathius, the mediæval interpreter of Homer. Following our usual method, let us ask whether similar phenomena occur elsewhere, in countries where they are intelligible. Did insignificant animals elsewhere receive worship: were their effigies elsewhere placed in the temples of a purer creed? We find answers in the history of Peruvian religion.

After the Spanish conquest of Peru, one of the European adventurers, Don Garcilasso de la Vega, married an Inca princess. Their son, also named Garcilasso, was born about 1540. His famous book, 'Commentarias Reales,' contains the most authentic account of the old Peruvian beliefs. Garcilasso was learned in all the learning of the Europeans, and, as an Inca on the mother's side, had claims on the loyalty of the defeated race. He set himself diligently to collect both their priestly and popular traditions, and his account of them is the more trustworthy as it coincides with what we know to have been true in lands with which Garcilasso had little acquaintance.

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To Garcilasso's mind, Peruvian religion seems to be divided into two periods — the age before, and the age which followed the accession of the Incas, and their establishment of sun-worship as the creed of the State. In the earlier period, the pre-Inca period, he tells us 'an Indian was not accounted honourable unless he was descended from a fountain, river, or lake, or even from the sea, or from a wild animal, such as a bear, lion, tiger, eagle, or the bird they call *cuntur* (condor), or some other bird of prey.' To these worshipful creatures 'men offered what they usually saw them eat' (i. 53). But men were not content to adore large and dangerous animals. 'There was not an animal, how vile and filthy soever, that they did not worship as a god,' including 'lizards, toads, and frogs.' In the midst of these superstitions the Incas appeared. Just as the tribes claimed descent from animals, great or small, so the Incas drew *their* pedigree from the sun, which they adored like the *gens* of the Aurelii in Rome. Thus every Indian had his *pacarissa*, or, as the North American Indians say, *totem*, a natural object from which he claimed descent, and which, in a certain degree, he worshipped. Though sun-worship became the established religion, worship of the animal *pacarissas* was still tolerated. The sun-temples also contained *huacas*, or images, of the beasts which the Indians had venerated. In the great temple of Pachacamac, the most spiritual and abstract god of Peruvian faith, 'they worshipped a she-fox and an emerald. The devil also appeared to them, and spoke in the form of a tiger, very fierce.' This toleration of an older and cruder, in subordination to a purer, faith is a very common feature in religious evolution. In Catholic countries, to this day, we may watch, in Holy Week, the Adonis feast described by Theocritus, and the procession and entombment of the old god of spring.

'The Incas had the good policy to collect all the tribal animal gods into their temples in and round Cuzco, in which the two leading gods were the Master of Life, and the Sun.' Did a process of this sort ever occur in Greek religion, and were older animal gods ever collected into the temples of such deities as Apollo?

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While a great deal of scattered evidence about many animals consecrated to Greek gods points in this direction, it will be enough, for the present, to examine the case of the Sacred Mice. Among races which are still in the totemistic stage, which still claim descent from animals and from other objects, a peculiar marriage law generally exists, or can be shown to have existed. No man may marry a woman who is descended from the same ancestral animal, and who bears the same totem-name, and carries the same badge or family crest, as himself. A man descended from the Crane, and whose family name is Crane, cannot marry a woman whose family name is Crane. He must marry a woman of the Wolf, or Turtle, or Swan, or other name, and her children keep her family title, not his. Thus, if a Crane man marries a Swan woman, the children are Swans, and none of them may marry a Swan; they must marry Turtles, Wolves, or what not, and *their* children, again, are Turtles, or Wolves. Thus there is necessarily an eternal come and go of all the animal names known in a district. As civilisation advances these rules grow obsolete. People take their names from the father, as among ourselves. Finally the dwellers in a given district, having become united into a local tribe, are apt to drop the various animal titles and to adopt, as the name of the whole tribe, the name of the chief, or of the predominating family. Let us imagine a district of some twenty miles in which there are Crane, Wolf, Turtle, and Swan families. Long residence together, and common interests, have welded them into a local tribe. The chief is of the Wolf family, and the tribe, sinking family differences and family names, calls itself ‘the Wolves.’ Such tribes were probably, in the beginning, the inhabitants of the various Egyptian towns which severally worshipped the wolf, or the sheep, or the crocodile, and abstained religiously (except on certain sacrificial occasions) from the flesh of the animal that gave them its name.

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It has taken us long to reach the Sacred Mice of Greek religion, but we are now in a position to approach their august divinity. We have seen that the sun-worship superseded, without abolishing, the tribal *pacarissas* in Peru, and that the *huacas*, or images, of the sacred animals were admitted under the roof of the temple of the Sun. Now it is recognised that the temples of the Sminthian Apollo contained images of sacred mice among other animals, and our argument is that here, perhaps, we have another example of the Peruvian religious evolution. Just as, in Peru, the tribes adored ‘vile and filthy’ animals, just as the solar worship of the Incas subordinated these, just as the *huacas* of the beasts remained in the temples of the Peruvian Sun; so, we believe, the tribes along the Mediterranean coasts had, at some very remote prehistoric period, their animal *pacarissas*; these were subordinated to the religion (to some extent solar) of Apollo; and the *huacas*, or animal idols, survived in Apollo’s temples.

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If this theory be correct, we shall probably find the mouse, for example, revered as a sacred animal in many places. This would necessarily follow, if the marriage customs which we have described ever prevailed on Greek soil, and scattered the mouse-name far and wide. Traces of the Mouse families, and of adoration, if adoration there was of the mouse, would linger on in the following shapes: — (1) Places would be named from mice, and mice would be actually held sacred in themselves. (2) The mouse-name would be given locally to the god who superseded the mouse. (3) The figure of the mouse would be associated with the god, and used as a badge, or a kind of crest, or local mark, in places where the mouse has been a venerated animal. (4) Finally, myths would be told to account for the sacredness of a creature so undignified.

Let us take these considerations in their order: —

(1) If there were local mice tribes, deriving their name from the worshipful mouse, certain towns settled by these tribes would retain a reverence for mice.

In Chrysa, a town of the Troad, according to Heraclides Ponticus, mice were held sacred, the local name for mouse being Ã¼¹½¸¿Â. Many places bore this mouse-name, according to Strabo. This is precisely what would have occurred had the Mouse totem, and the Mouse stock, been widely distributed. The Scholiast mentions Sminthus as a place in the Troad. Strabo speaks of two places deriving their name from Sminthus, or mouse, near the Sminthian temple, and others near Larissa. In Rhodes and Lindus, the mouse place-name recurs, ‘and in many other districts’ (š±¹ ±»»¿¸¹ ´µ À¿»»±Ç¿¸¹). Strabo (x. 486) names Caressus, and Poeessa, in Ceos, among the other places which had Sminthian temples, and, presumably, were once centres of tribes named after the mouse.

Here, then, are a number of localities in which the Mouse Apollo was adored, and where the old mouse-name lingered. That the mice were actually held sacred in their proper persons we learn from Ælian. ‘The dwellers in Hamaxitus of the Troad worship mice,’ says Ælian. ‘In the temple of Apollo Smintheus, mice are nourished, and food is offered to them, at the public expense, and white mice dwell beneath the altar.’ In the same way we found that the Peruvians fed their sacred beasts on what they usually saw them eat.

(2) The second point in our argument has already been sufficiently demonstrated. The mouse-name ‘Smintheus’ was given to Apollo in all the places mentioned by Strabo, ‘and many others.’

(3) The figure of the mouse will be associated with the god, and used as a badge, or crest, or local mark, in places where the mouse has been a venerated animal.

The passage already quoted from Ælian informs us that there stood ‘an effigy of the mouse beside the tripod of Apollo.’ In Chrysa, according to Strabo (xiii. 604), the statue of Apollo Smintheus had a mouse beneath his foot. The mouse on the tripod of Apollo is represented on a bas-relief illustrating the plague, and the offerings of the Greeks to Apollo Smintheus, as described in the first book of the ‘Iliad.’

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The mouse is a not uncommon local badge or crest in Greece. The animals whose figures are stamped on coins, like the Athenian owl, are the most ancient marks of cities. It is a plausible conjecture that, just as the Iroquois when they signed treaties with the Europeans used their totems — bear, wolf, and turtle — as seals, so the animals on archaic Greek city coins represented crests or badges which, at some far more remote period, had been totems.

The Argives, according to Pollux, stamped the mouse on their coins. As there was a temple of Apollo Smintheus in Tenedos, we naturally hear of a mouse on the coins of the island. Golzio has published one of these mouse coins. The people of Metapontum stamped their money with a mouse gnawing an ear of corn. The people of Cumæ employed a mouse dormant. Paoli fancied that certain mice on Roman medals might be connected with the family of *Mus*, but this is rather guesswork.

We have now shown traces, at least, of various ways in which an early tribal religion of the mouse — the mouse *pacarissa*, as the Peruvians said — may have been perpetuated. When we consider that the superseding of the mouse by Apollo must have occurred, if it did occur, long before Homer, we may rather wonder that the mouse left his mark on Greek religion so long. We have seen mice revered, a god with a mouse-name, the mouse-name recurring in many places, the *huaca*, or idol, of the mouse preserved in the temples of the god, and the mouse-badge used in several widely severed localities. It remains (4) to examine the myths about mice. These, in our opinion, were probably told to account for the presence of the *huaca* of the mouse in temples, and for the occurrence of the animal in religion, and his connection with Apollo.

A singular mouse-myth, narrated by Herodotus, is worth examining for reasons which will appear later, though the events are said to have happened on Egyptian soil. According to Herodotus, one Sethos, a priest of Hephæstus (Ptah), was king of Egypt. He had disgraced the military class, and he found himself without an army when Sennacherib invaded his country. Sethos fell asleep in the temple, and the god, appearing to him in a vision, told him that divine succour would come to the Egyptians. In the night before the battle, field-mice gnawed the quivers and shield-handles of the foe, who fled on finding themselves thus disarmed. ‘And now,’ says Herodotus, ‘there standeth a stone image of this king in the temple of Hephæstus, and in the hand of the image a mouse, and there is this inscription, “Let whoso looketh on me be pious.”’

Prof. Sayce holds that there was no such person as Sethos, but that the legend ‘is evidently Egyptian, not Greek, and the name of Sennacherib, as well as the fact of the Assyrian attack, is correct.’ The legend also, though Egyptian, is ‘an echo of the biblical account of the destruction of the Assyrian army,’ an account which omits the mice. ‘As to the mice, here,’ says Prof. Sayce, ‘we have to do again with the Greek dragomen (*sic*). The story of Sethos was attached to the statue of some deity which was supposed to hold a mouse in its hand.’ It must have been easy to verify this supposition; but Mr. Sayce adds, ‘mice were not sacred in Egypt, nor were they used as symbols, or found on the monuments.’ To this remark we may suggest some exceptions. Apparently this one mouse *was* found on the monuments. Wilkinson (iii. 264) says mice do occur in the sculptures, but they were not sacred. Rats, however, were certainly sacred, and as little distinction is taken, in myth, between rats and mice as between rabbits and hares. The rat was sacred to Ra, the Sun-god, and (like all totems) was not to be eaten. This association of the rat and the Sun cannot but remind us of Apollo and his mouse. According to Strabo, a certain city of Egypt did worship the shrew-mouse. The Athribitæ, or dwellers in Crocodilopolis, are the people to whom he attributes this cult, which he mentions (xvii. 813) among the other local animal-worships of Egypt. Several porcelain examples of the field-mouse sacred to Horus (commonly called Apollo by the Greeks) may be seen in the British Museum.

That rats and field-mice were sacred in Egypt, then, we may believe on the evidence of the Ritual, of Strabo, and of many relics of Egyptian art. Herodotus, moreover, is credited when he says that the statue 'had a mouse on its hand.' Elsewhere, it is certain that the story of mice gnawing the bowstrings occurs frequently as an explanation of mouse-worship. One of the Trojan 'mouse-stories' ran — That emigrants had set out in prehistoric times from Crete. The oracle advised them to settle 'wherever they were attacked by the children of the soil.' At Hamaxitus in the Troad, they were assailed in the night by mice, which ate all that was edible of their armour and bowstrings. The colonists made up their mind that these mice were 'the children of the soil,' settled there, and adored the mouse Apollo. A myth of this sort may either be a story invented to explain the mouse-name; or a Mouse tribe, like the Red Indian Wolves, or Crows, may actually have been settled on the spot, and may even have resisted invasion. Another myth of the Troad accounted for the worship of the mouse Apollo on the hypothesis that he had once freed the land from mice, like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, whose pipe (still serviceable) is said to have been found in his grave by men who were digging a mine.

Stories like these, stories attributing some great deliverance to the mouse, or some deliverance from mice to the god, would naturally spring up among people puzzled by their own worship of the mouse-god or of the mouse. We have explained the religious character of mice as the relics of a past age in which the mouse had been a totem and mouse family names had been widely diffused. That there are, and have been, mice totems and mouse family names among Semitic stocks round the Mediterranean is proved by Prof. Robertson Smith: 'Achbor, the mouse, is an Edomite name, apparently a stock name, as the jerboa and another mouse-name are among the Arabs. The same name occurs in Judah.' Where totemism exists, the members of each stock either do not eat the ancestral animal at all, or only eat him on rare sacrificial occasions. The totem of a hostile stock may be eaten by way of insult. In the case of the mouse, Isaiah seems to refer to one or other of these practices (lxvi.): 'They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine’s flesh, and the abomination, and the *mouse*, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.’ This is like the Egyptian prohibition to eat ‘the abominable’ (that is, tabooed or forbidden) ‘Rat of Ra.’ If the unclean animals of Israel were originally the totems of each clan, then the mouse was a totem, for the chosen people were forbidden to eat ‘the weasel, and the mouse, and the tortoise after his kind.’ That unclean beasts, beasts not to be eaten, were originally totems, Prof. Robertson Smith infers from Ezekiel (viii. 10, 11), where ‘we find seventy of the elders of Israel — that is, the heads of houses — worshipping in a chamber which had on its walls the figures of all manner of unclean’ (tabooed) ‘creeping things, and quadrupeds, *even all the idols of the House of Israel*.’ Some have too hastily concluded that the mouse was a sacred animal among the neighbouring Philistines. After the Philistines had captured the Ark and set it in the house of Dagon, the people were smitten with disease. They therefore, in accordance with a well-known savage magical practice, made five golden representations of the diseased part, and five golden mice, as ‘a trespass offering to the Lord of Israel,’ and so restored the Ark. Such votive offerings are common still in Catholic countries, and the mice of gold by no means prove that the Philistines had ever worshipped mice.

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Turning to India from the Mediterranean basin, and the Aryan, Semitic, and Egyptian tribes on its coasts, we find that the mouse was the sacred animal of Rudra. ‘The mouse, Rudra, is thy beast,’ says the Yajur Veda, as rendered by Grohmann in his ‘Apollo Smintheus.’ Grohmann recognises in Rudra a deity with most of the characteristics of Apollo. In later Indian mythology, the mouse is an attribute of Ganeça, who, like Apollo Smintheus, is represented in art with his foot upon a mouse.

Such are the chief appearances of the mouse in ancient religion. If he really was a Semitic totem, it may, perhaps, be argued that his prevalence in connection with Apollo is the result of a Semitic leaven in Hellenism. Hellenic invaders may have found Semitic mouse-tribes at home, and incorporated the alien stock deity with their own Apollo-worship. In that case the mouse, while still originally a totem, would not be an Aryan totem. But probably the myths and rites of the mouse, and their diffusion, are more plausibly explained on our theory than on that of De Gubernatis: ‘The Pagan sun-god crushes under his foot the Mouse of Night. When the cat’s away, the mice may play; the shadows of night dance when the moon is absent.’ This is one of the quaintest pieces of mythological logic. Obviously, when the cat (the moon) is away, the mice (the shadows) *cannot* play: there is no light to produce a shadow. As usually chances, the scholars who try to resolve all the features of myth into physical phenomena do not agree among themselves about the mouse. While the mouse is the night, according to M. de Gubernatis, in Grohmann’s opinion the mouse is the lightning. He argues that the lightning was originally regarded by the Aryan race as the ‘flashing tooth of a beast,’ especially of a mouse. Afterwards men came to identify the beast with his teeth, and, behold, the lightning and the mouse are convertible mythical terms! Now it is perfectly true that savages regard many elemental phenomena, from eclipses to the rainbow, as the result of the action of animals. The rainbow is a serpent; thunder is caused by the thunder-bird, who has actually been shot in Dacotah, and who is familiar to the Zulus; while rain is the milk of a heavenly cow — an idea recurring in the ‘Zend Avesta.’ But it does not follow because savages believe in these meteorological beasts that all the beasts in myth were originally meteorological. Man raised a serpent to the skies, perhaps, but his interest in the animal began on earth, not in the clouds. It is excessively improbable, and quite unproved, that any race ever regarded lightning as the flashes of a mouse’s teeth. The hypothesis is a *jeu d’esprit*, like the opposite hypothesis about the mouse of Night. In these, and all the other current theories of the Sminthian Apollo, the widely diffused worship of ordinary mice, and such small deer, has been either wholly neglected, or explained by the first theory of symbolism that occurred to the conjecture of a civilised observer. The facts of savage animal-worship, and their relations to totemism, seem still unknown to or unappreciated by scholars, with the exception of Mr. Sayce, who recognises totemism as the origin of the zoomorphic element in Egyptian religion.

Our explanation, whether adequate or not, is not founded on an isolated case. If Apollo superseded and absorbed the worship of the mouse, he did no less for the wolf, the ram, the dolphin, and several other animals whose images were associated with his own. The Greek religion was more refined and anthropomorphic than that of Egypt. In Egypt the animals were still adored, and the images of the gods had bestial heads. In Greece only a few gods, and chiefly in very archaic statues, had bestial heads; but beside the other deities the sculptor set the owl, eagle, wolf, serpent, tortoise, mouse, or whatever creature was the local favourite of the deity. Probably the deity had, in the majority of cases, superseded the animal and succeeded to his honours. But the conservative religious sentiment retained the beast within the courts and in the suit and service of the anthropomorphic god.

The process by which the god ousted the beasts may perhaps be observed in Samoa. There (as Dr. Turner tells us in his ‘Samoa’) each family has its own sacred animal, which it may not eat. If this law be transgressed, the malefactor is supernaturally punished in a variety of ways. But, while each family has thus its totem, four or five different families recognise, in owl, crab, lizard, and so on, incarnations of the same god, say of Tongo. If Tongo had a temple among these families, we can readily believe that images of the various beasts in which he was incarnate would be kept within the consecrated walls. Savage ideas like these, if they were ever entertained in Greece, would account for the holy animals of the different deities. But it is obvious that the phenomena which we have been studying may be otherwise explained. It may be said that the Sminthian Apollo was only revered as the enemy and opponent of mice. St. Gertrude (whose heart was eaten by mice) has the same *rôle* in France. The worship of Apollo, and the badge of the mouse, would, on this principle, be diffused by colonies from some centre of the faith. The images of mice in Apollo's temples would be nothing more than votive offerings. Thus, in the church of a Saxon town, the verger shows a silver mouse dedicated to Our Lady. 'This is the greatest of our treasures,' says the verger. 'Our town was overrun with mice till the ladies of the city offered this mouse of silver. Instantly all the mice disappeared.' 'And are you such fools as to believe that the creatures went away because a silver mouse was dedicated?' asked a Prussian officer. 'No,' replied the verger, rather neatly; 'or long ago we should have offered a silver Prussian.'

STAR MYTHS.

Artemus Ward used to say that, while there were many things in the science of astronomy hard to be understood, there was one fact which entirely puzzled him. He could partly perceive how we ‘weigh the sun,’ and ascertain the component elements of the heavenly bodies, by the aid of *spectrum* analysis. ‘But what beats me about the stars,’ he observed plaintively, ‘is how we come to know their names.’ This question, or rather the somewhat similar question, ‘How did the constellations come by their very peculiar names?’ has puzzled Professor Pritchard and other astronomers more serious than Artemus Ward. Why is a group of stars called the *Bear*, or the *Swan*, or the *Twins*, or named after the *Pleiades*, the fair daughters of the Giant Atlas?   These are difficulties that meet even children when they examine a ‘celestial globe.’ There they find the figure of a bear, traced out with lines in the intervals between the stars of the constellations, while a very imposing giant is so drawn that Orion’s belt just fits his waist. But when he comes to look at the heavens, the infant speculator sees no sort of likeness to a bear in the stars, nor anything at all resembling a giant in the neighbourhood of Orion. The most eccentric modern fancy which can detect what shapes it will in clouds, is unable to find any likeness to human or animal forms in the stars, and yet we call a great many of the stars by the names of men and beasts and gods. Some resemblance to terrestrial things, it is true, everyone can behold in the heavens. *Corona*, for example, is like a crown, or, as the Australian black fellows know, it is like a boomerang, and we can understand why they give it the name of that curious curved missile. The *Milky Way*, again, does resemble a path in the sky; our English ancestors called it *Watling Street* — the path of the Watlings, mythical giants — and Bushmen in Africa and Red Men in North America name it the ‘ashen path,’ or ‘the path of souls.’ The ashes of the path, of course, are supposed to be hot and glowing, not dead and black like the ash-paths of modern running-grounds. Other and more recent names for certain constellations are also intelligible. In Homer’s time the Greeks had two names for the *Great Bear*; they called it the *Bear*, or the *Wain*: and a certain fanciful likeness to a wain may be made out, though no resemblance to a bear is manifest. In the United States the same constellation is popularly styled the *Dipper*, and every one may observe the likeness to a dipper or toddy-ladle.

But these resemblances take us only a little way towards appellations. We know that we derive many of the names straight from the Greek; but whence did the Greeks get them? Some, it is said, from the Chaldæans; but whence did they reach the Chaldæans? To this we shall return later, but, as to early Greek star-lore, Goguet, the author of ‘L’Origine des Lois,’ a rather learned but too speculative work of the last century, makes the following characteristic remarks: ‘The Greeks received their astronomy from Prometheus. This prince, as far as history teaches us, made his observations on Mount Caucasus.’ That was the eighteenth century’s method of interpreting mythology. The myth preserved in the ‘Prometheus Bound’ of Æschylus tells us that Zeus crucified the Titan on Mount Caucasus. The French philosopher, rejecting the supernatural elements of the tale, makes up his mind that Prometheus was a prince of a scientific bent, and that he established his observatory on the frosty Caucasus. But, even admitting this, why did Prometheus give the stars animal names? Goguet easily explains this by a hypothetical account of the manners of primitive men. ‘The earliest peoples,’ he says, ‘must have used writing for purposes of astronomical science. They would be content to design the constellations of which they wished to speak by the hieroglyphical symbols of their names; hence the constellations have insensibly taken the names of the chief symbols.’ Thus, a drawing of a bear or a swan was the hieroglyphic of the name of a star, or group of stars. But whence came the name which was represented by the hieroglyphic? That is precisely what our author forgets to tell us. But he remarks that the meaning of the hieroglyphic came to be forgotten, and ‘the symbols gave rise to all the ridiculous tales about the heavenly signs.’ This explanation is attained by the process of reasoning in a vicious circle from hypothetical premises ascertained to be false. All the known savages of the world, even those which have scarcely the elements of picture-writing, call the constellations by the names of men and animals, and all tell ‘ridiculous tales’ to account for the names.

As the star-stories told by the Greeks, the ancient Egyptians, and other civilised people of the old world, exactly correspond in character, and sometimes even in incident, with the star-stories of modern savages, we have the choice of three hypotheses to explain this curious coincidence. Perhaps the star-stories, about nymphs changed into bears, and bears changed into stars, were invented by the civilised races of old, and gradually found their way amongst people like the Eskimo, and the Australians, and Bushmen. Or it may be insisted that the ancestors of Australians, Eskimo, and Bushmen were once civilised, like the Greeks and Egyptians, and invented star-stories, still remembered by their degenerate descendants. These are the two forms of the explanation which will be advanced by persons who believe that the star-stories were originally the fruit of the civilised imagination. The third theory would be, that the 'ridiculous tales' about the stars were originally the work of the savage imagination, and that the Greeks, Chaldæans, and Egyptians, when they became civilised, retained the old myths that their ancestors had invented when they were savages. In favour of this theory it may be said, briefly, that there is no proof that the fathers of Australians, Eskimo, and Bushmen had ever been civilised, while there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that the fathers of the Greeks had once been savages. And, if we incline to the theory that the star-myths are the creation of savage fancy, we at once learn why they are, in all parts of the world, so much alike. Just as the flint and bone weapons of rude races resemble each other much more than they resemble the metal weapons and the artillery of advanced peoples, so the mental products, the fairy tales, and myths of rude races have everywhere a strong family resemblance. They are produced by men in similar mental conditions of ignorance, curiosity, and credulous fancy, and they are intended to supply the same needs, partly of amusing narrative, partly of crude explanation of familiar phenomena.

Now it is time to prove the truth of our assertion that the star-stories of savage and of civilised races closely resemble each other. Let us begin with that well-known group the *Pleiades*. The peculiarity of the *Pleiades* is that the group consists of seven stars, of which one is so dim that it seems entirely to disappear, and many persons can only detect its presence through a telescope. The Greeks had a myth to account for the vanishing of the lost Pleiad. The tale is given in the 'Catasterismoi' (stories of metamorphoses into stars) attributed to Eratosthenes. This work was probably written after our era; but the author derived his information from older treatises now lost. According to the Greek myth, then, the seven stars of the Pleiad were seven maidens, daughters of the Giant Atlas. Six of them had gods for lovers; Poseidon admired two of them, Zeus three, and Ares one; but the seventh had only an earthly wooer, and when all of them were changed into stars, the maiden with the mortal lover hid her light for shame.

Now let us compare the Australian story. According to Mr. Dawson ('Australian Aborigines'), a writer who understands the natives well, 'their knowledge of the heavenly bodies greatly exceeds that of most white people,' and 'is taught by men selected for their intelligence and information. The knowledge is important to the aborigines on their night journeys;' so we may be sure that the natives are careful observers of the heavens, and are likely to be conservative of their astronomical myths. The 'Lost Pleiad' has not escaped them, and this is how they account for her disappearance. The *Pirt Kopan noot* tribe have a tradition that the *Pleiades* were a queen and her six attendants.

Long ago the *Crow* (our *Canopus*) fell in love with the queen, who refused to be his wife. The *Crow* found that the queen and her six maidens, like other Australian *gins*, were in the habit of hunting for white edible grubs in the bark of trees. The Crow at once changed himself into a grub (just as Jupiter and Indra used to change into swans, horses, ants, or what not) and hid in the bark of a tree. The six maidens sought to pick him out with their wooden hooks, but he broke the points of all the hooks. Then came the queen, with her pretty bone hook; he let himself be drawn out, took the shape of a giant, and ran away with her. Ever since there have only been six stars, the six maidens, in the *Pleiad*. This story is well known, by the strictest inquiry, to be current among the blacks of the West District and in South Australia.

Mr. Tylor, whose opinion is entitled to the highest respect, thinks that this may be a European myth, told by some settler to a black in the Greek form, and then spread about among the natives. He complains that the story of the loss of the *brightest* star does not fit the facts of the case.

We do not know, and how can the Australians know, that the lost star was once the brightest? It appears to me that the Australians, remarking the disappearances of a star, might very naturally suppose that the *Crow* had selected for his wife that one which had been the most brilliant of the cluster. Besides, the wide distribution of the tale among the natives, and the very great change in the nature of the incidents, seem to point to a native origin. Though the main conception — the loss of one out of seven maidens — is identical in Greek and in *Murri*, the manner of the disappearance is eminently Hellenic in the one case, eminently savage in the other. However this may be, nothing of course is proved by a single example. Let us next examine the stars *Castor* and *Pollux*. Both in Greece and in Australia these are said once to have been two young men. In the ‘Catasterismoi,’ already spoken of, we read: ‘The *Twins*, or *Dioscouroi*. — They were nurtured in Lacedæmon, and were famous for their brotherly love, wherefore, Zeus, desiring to make their memory immortal, placed them both among the stars.’ In Australia, according to Mr. Brough Smyth (‘Aborigines of Victoria’), *Turree* (*Castor*) and *Wanjel* (*Pollux*) are two young men who pursue *Purra* and kill him at the commencement of the great heat. *Coonar toorung* (the mirage) is the smoke of the fire by which they roast him. In Greece it was not Castor and Pollux, but *Orion* who was the great hunter placed among the stars. Among the Bushmen of South Africa, *Castor* and *Pollux* are not young men, but young women, the wives of the Eland, the great native antelope. In Greek star-stories the *Great Bear* keeps watch, Homer says, on the hunter Orion for fear of a sudden attack. But how did the Bear get its name in Greece? According to Hesiod, the oldest Greek poet after Homer, the

Bear was once a lady, daughter of Lycaon, King of Arcadia. She was a nymph of the train of chaste Artemis, but yielded to the love of Zeus, and became the ancestress of all the Arcadians (that is, *Bear-folk*). In her bestial form she was just about to be slain by her own son when Zeus rescued her by raising her to the stars. Here we must notice first, that the Arcadians, like Australians, Red Indians, Bushmen, and many other wild races, and like the Bedouins, believed themselves to be descended from an animal. That the early Egyptians did the same is not improbable; for names of animals are found among the ancestors in the very oldest genealogical papyrus, as in the genealogies of the old English kings. Next the Arcadians transferred the ancestral bear to the heavens, and, in doing this, they resembled the Peruvians, of whom Acosta says: 'They adored the star *Urchuchilly*, feigning it to be a *Ram*, and worshipped two others, and say that one of them is a *sheep*, and the other a lamb . . . others worshipped the star called the *Tiger*. *They were of opinion that there was not any beast or bird upon the earth, whose shape or image did not shine in the heavens*.'

But to return to our bears. The Australians have, properly speaking, no bears, though the animal called the native bear is looked up to by the aborigines with superstitious regard. But among the North American Indians, as the old missionaries Lafitau and Charlevoix observed, 'the four stars in front of our constellation are a bear; those in the tail are hunters who pursue him; the small star apart is the pot in which they mean to cook him.'

It may be held that the Red Men derived their bear from the European settlers. But, as we have seen, an exact knowledge of the stars has always been useful if not essential to savages; and we venture to doubt whether they would confuse their nomenclature and sacred traditions by borrowing terms from trappers and squatters. But, if this is improbable, it seems almost impossible that all savage races should have borrowed their whole conception of the heavenly bodies from the myths of Greece. It is thus that Egede, a missionary of the last century, describes the Eskimo philosophy of the stars: 'The notions that the Greenlanders have as to the origin of the heavenly lights — as sun, moon, and stars — are very nonsensical; in that they pretend they have formerly been as many of their own ancestors, who, on different accounts, were lifted up to heaven, and became such glorious celestial bodies.' Again, he writes: 'Their notions about the stars are that some of them have been men, and others different sorts, of animals and fishes.' But every reader of Ovid knows that this was the very mythical theory of the Greeks and Romans. The Egyptians, again, worshipped Osiris, Isis, and the rest as *ancestors*, and there are even modern scholars, like Mr. Loftie in his 'Essay of Scarabs,' who hold Osiris to have been originally a real historical person. But the Egyptian priests who showed Plutarch the grave of Osiris, showed him, too, the stars into which Osiris, Isis, and Horus had been metamorphosed. Here, then, we have Greeks, Egyptians, and Eskimo, all agreed about the origin of the heavenly lights, all of opinion that ‘they have formerly been as many of their own ancestors.’

The Australian general theory is: ‘Of the good men and women, after the deluge, Pundjel (a kind of Zeus, or rather a sort of Prometheus of Australian mythology) made stars. Sorcerers (*Biraark*) can tell which stars were once good men and women.’ Here the sorcerers have the same knowledge as the Egyptian priests. Again, just as among the Arcadians, ‘the progenitors of the existing tribes, whether birds, or beasts, or men, were set in the sky, and made to shine as stars.’

We have already given some Australian examples in the stories of the *Pleiades*, and of *Castor* and *Pollux*. We may add the case of the *Eagle*. In Greece the *Eagle* was the bird of Zeus, who carried off Ganymede to be the cup-bearer of Olympus. Among the Australians this same constellation is called *Totyarguil*; he was a man who, when bathing, was killed by a fabulous animal, a kind of kelpie; as Orion, in Greece, was killed by the *Scorpion*. Like Orion, he was placed among the stars. The Australians have a constellation named *Eagle*, but he is our *Sinus*, or *Dog-star*.

The Indians of the Amazon are in one tale with the Australians and Eskimo. ‘Dr. Silva de Coutinho informs me,’ says Professor Hartt, ‘that the Indians of the Amazonas not only give names to many of the heavenly bodies, but also tell stories about them. The two stars that form the shoulders of Orion are said to be an old man and a boy in a canoe, chasing *a peixe boi*, by which name is designated a dark spot in the sky near the above constellation.’ The Indians also know monkey-stars, crane-stars, and palm-tree stars.

The Bushmen, almost the lowest tribe of South Africa, have the same star-lore and much the same myths as the Greeks, Australians, Egyptians, and Eskimo. According to Dr. Bleek, ‘stars, and even the sun and moon, were once mortals on earth, or even animals or inorganic substances, which happened to get translated to the skies. The sun was once a man, whose arm-pit radiated a limited amount of light round his house. Some children threw him into the sky, and there he shines.’ The Homeric hymn to Helios, in the same way, as Mr. Max Müller observes, ‘looks on the sun as a half-god, almost a hero, who had once lived on earth.’ The pointers of the Southern Cross were ‘two men who were lions,’ just as Callisto, in Arcadia, was a woman who was a bear. It is not at all rare in those queer philosophies, as in that of the Scandinavians, to find that the sun or moon has been a man or woman. In Australian fable the moon was a man, the sun a woman of indifferent character, who appears at dawn in a coat of red kangaroo skins, the present of an admirer. In an old Mexican text the moon was a man, across whose face a god threw a rabbit, thus making the marks in the moon.

Many separate races seem to recognise the figure of a hare, where we see 'the Man in the Moon.' In a Buddhist legend, an exemplary and altruistic hare was translated to the moon. 'To the common people in India the spots on the moon look like a hare, and Chandras, the god of the moon, carries a hare: hence the moon is called *sasin* or *sasanka,* hare-mark. The Mongolians also see in these shadows the figure of a hare.' Among the Eskimo, the moon is a girl, who always flees from her cruel brother, the sun, because he disfigured her face. Elsewhere the sun is the girl, beloved by her own brother, the moon; she blackens her face to avert his affection. On the Rio Branco, and among the Tomunda, the moon is a girl who loved her brother and visited him in the dark. He detected her wicked passion by drawing his blackened hand over her face. The marks betrayed her, and, as the spots on the moon, remain to this day.

Among the New Zealanders and North American Indians the sun is a great beast, whom the hunters trapped and thrashed with cudgels. His blood is used in some New Zealand incantations; and, according to an Egyptian myth, was kneaded into clay at the making of man. But there is no end to similar sun-myths, in all of which the sun is regarded as a man, or even as a beast.

To return to the stars — The Red Indians, as Schoolcraft says, 'hold many of the planets to be transformed adventurers.' The Iowas 'believed stars to be a sort of living creatures.' One of them came down and talked to a hunter, and showed him where to find game. The Gallinomeros of Central California, according to Mr. Bancroft, believe that the sun and moon were made and lighted up by the Hawk and the Coyote, who one day flew into each other's faces in the dark, and were determined to prevent such accidents in the future. But the very oddest example of the survival of the notion that the stars are men or women is found in the 'Pax' of Aristophanes. Trygæus in that comedy has just made an expedition to heaven. A slave meets him, and asks him, 'Is not the story true, then, that we become stars when we die?' The answer is 'Certainly;' and Trygæus points out the star into which Ios of Chios has just been metamorphosed. Aristophanes is making fun of some popular Greek superstition. But that very superstition meets us in New Zealand. 'Heroes,' says Mr. Taylor, 'were thought to become stars of greater or less brightness, according to the number of their victims slain in fight.' The Aryan race is seldom far behind, when there are ludicrous notions to be credited or savage tales to be told. We have seen that Aristophanes, in Greece, knew the Eskimo doctrine that stars are souls of the dead. The Persians had the same belief, 'all the unnumbered stars were reckoned ghosts of men.' The German folklore clings to the same belief, 'Stars are souls; when a child dies God makes a new star.' Kaegi quotes the same idea from the Veda, and from the Satapatha Brahmana the thoroughly Australian notion that 'good men become stars.' For a truly savage conception, it would be difficult, in South Africa or on the Amazons, to beat the following story from the 'Aitareya Brahmana' (iii. 33.) Pragapati, the Master of Life, conceived an incestuous passion for his own daughter. Like Zeus, and Indra, and the Australian wooer in the Pleiad tale, he concealed himself under the shape of a beast, a roebuck, and approached his own daughter, who had assumed the form of a doe. The gods, in anger at the awful crime, made a monster to punish Pragapati. The monster sent an arrow through the god's body; he sprang into heaven, and, like the Arcadian bear, this Aryan roebuck became a constellation. He is among the stars of Orion, and his punisher, also now a star, is, like the Greek Orion, a hunter. The daughter of Pragapati, the doe, became another constellation, and the avenging arrow is also a set of stars in the sky. What follows, about the origin of the gods called Adityas, is really too savage to be quoted by a chaste mythologist.

It would be easy to multiply examples of this stage of thought among Aryans and savages. But we have probably brought forward enough for our purpose, and have expressly chosen instances from the most widely separated peoples. These instances, it will perhaps be admitted, suggest, if they do not prove, that the Greeks had received from tradition precisely the same sort of legends about the heavenly bodies as are current among Eskimo and Bushmen, New Zealanders and Iowas. As much, indeed, might be inferred from our own astronomical nomenclature. We now give to newly discovered stars names derived from distinguished people, as *Georgium Sidus*, or *Herschel*; or, again, merely technical appellatives, as *Alpha*, *Beta*, and the rest. We should never think when 'some new planet swims into our ken' of calling it *Kangaroo*, or *Rabbit*, or after the name of some hero of romance, as *Rob Roy*, or *Count Fosco*. But the names of stars which we inherit from Greek mythology — the *Bear*, the *Pleiads*, *Castor* and *Pollux*, and so forth — are such as no people in our mental condition would originally think of bestowing. When Callimachus and the courtly astronomers of Alexandria pretended that the golden locks of Berenice were raised to the heavens, that was a mere piece of flattery constructed on the inherited model of legends about the crown (*Corona*) of Ariadne. It seems evident enough that the older Greek names of stars are derived from a time when the ancestors of the Greeks were in the mental and imaginative condition of Iowas, Kanekas, Bushmen, Murri, and New Zealanders. All these, and all other savage peoples, believe in a kind of equality and intercommunion among all things animate and inanimate. Stones are supposed in the Pacific Islands to be male and female and to propagate their species. Animals are believed to have human or superhuman intelligence, and speech, if they choose to exercise the gift. Stars are just on the same footing, and their movements are explained by the same ready system of universal anthropomorphism. Stars, fishes, gods, heroes, men, trees, clouds, and animals, all play their equal part in the confused dramas of savage thought and savage mythology. Even in practical life the change of a sorcerer into an animal is accepted as a familiar phenomenon, and the power of soaring among the stars is one on which the Australian Biraark, or the Eskimo Shaman, most plumes himself. It is not wonderful that things which are held possible in daily practice should be frequent features of mythology. Hence the ready invention and belief of star-legends, which in their turn fix the names of the heavenly bodies. Nothing more, except the extreme tenacity of tradition and the inconvenience of changing a widely accepted name, is needed to account for the human and animal names of the stars. The Greeks received from the dateless past of savage intellect the myths, and the names of the constellations, and we have taken them, without inquiry, from the Greeks. Thus it happens that our celestial globes are just as queer menageries as any globes could be that were illustrated by Australians or American Indians, by Bushmen or Peruvian aborigines, or Eskimo. It was savages, we may be tolerably certain, who first handed to science the names of the constellations, and provided Greece with the raw material of her astronomical myths — as Bacon prettily says, that we listen to the harsh ideas of earlier peoples ‘blown softly through the flutes of the Grecians.’

This position has been disputed by Mr. Brown, in a work rather komically called ‘The Law of Kosmic Order.’ Mr. Brown’s theory is that the early Accadians named the zodiacal signs after certain myths and festivals connected with the months. Thus the crab is a figure of ‘the darkness power’ which seized the Akkadian solar hero, Dumuzi, and ‘which is constantly represented in monstrous and drakontic form.’ The bull, again, is connected with night and darkness, ‘in relation to the horned moon,’ and is, for other reasons, ‘a nocturnal potency.’ Few stars, to tell the truth, are diurnal potencies. Mr. Brown’s explanations appear to me far-fetched and unconvincing. But, granting that the zodiacal signs reached Greece from Chaldæa, Mr. Brown will hardly maintain that Australians, Melanesians, Iowas, Amazon Indians, Eskimo, and the rest, borrowed their human and animal stars from ‘Akkadia.’ The belief in animal and human stars is practically universal among savages who have not attained the ‘Akkadian’ degree of culture. The belief, as Mr. Tylor has shown, is a natural result of savage ideas. We therefore infer that the ‘Akkadians,’ too, probably fell back for star-names on what they inherited from the savage past. If the Greeks borrowed certain star-names from the Akkadians, they also, like the Aryans of India, retained plenty of savage star-myths of their own, fables derived from the earliest astronomical guesses of early thought.

The first moment in astronomical science arrives when the savage, looking at a star, says, like the child in the nursery poem, ‘How I wonder what you are!’ The next moment comes when the savage has made his first rough practical observations of the movements of the heavenly body. His third step is to explain these to himself. Now science cannot offer any but a fanciful explanation beyond the sphere of experience. The experience of the savage is limited to the narrow world of his tribe, and of the beasts, birds, and fishes of his district. His philosophy, therefore, accounts for all phenomena on the supposition that the laws of the animate nature he observes are working everywhere. But his observations, misguided by his crude magical superstitions, have led him to believe in a state of equality and kinship between men and animals, and even inorganic things. He often worships the very beasts he slays; he addresses them as if they understood him; he believes himself to be descended from the animals, and of their kindred. These confused ideas he applies to the stars, and recognises in them men like himself, or beasts like those with which he conceives himself to be in such close human relations. There is scarcely a bird or beast but the Red Indian or the Australian will explain its peculiarities by a myth, like a page from Ovid’s ‘Metamorphoses.’ It was once a man or a woman, and has been changed to bird or beast by a god or a magician. Men, again, have originally been beasts, in his philosophy, and are descended from wolves, frogs or serpents, or monkeys. The heavenly bodies are traced to precisely the same sort of origin; and hence, we conclude, come their strange animal names, and the strange myths about them which appear in all ancient poetry. These names, in turn, have curiously affected human beliefs. Astrology is based on the opinion that a man’s character and fate are determined by the stars under which he is born. And the nature of these stars is deduced from their names, so that the bear should have been found in the horoscope of Dr. Johnson. When Giordano Bruno wrote his satire against religion, the famous ‘Spaccio della bestia trionfante,’ he proposed to banish not only the gods but the beasts from heaven. He would call the stars, not the *Bear*, or the *Swan*, or the *Pleiads*, but Truth, Mercy, Justice, and so forth, that men might be born, not under bestial, but moral influences. But the beasts have had too long possession of the stars to be easily dislodged, and the tenure of the *Bear* and the *Swan* will probably last as long as there is a science of Astronomy. Their names are not likely again to delude a philosopher into the opinion of Aristotle that the stars are animated.

This argument had been worked out to the writer's satisfaction when he chanced to light on Mr. Max Müller's explanation of the name of the *Great Bear*. We have explained that name as only one out of countless similar appellations which men of every race give to the stars. These names, again, we have accounted for as the result of savage philosophy, which takes no great distinction between man and the things in the world, and looks on stars, beasts, birds, fishes, flowers, and trees as men and women in disguise. Mr. Müller's theory is based on philological considerations. He thinks that the name of the *Great Bear* is the result of a mistake as to the meaning of words. There was in Sanskrit, he says, a root *ark*, or *arch*, meaning 'to be bright.' The stars are called *riksha,* that is, bright ones, in the Veda. 'The constellations here called the Rikshas, in the sense of the "bright ones," would be homonymous in Sanskrit with the Bears. Remember also that, apparently without rhyme or reason, the same constellation is called by Greeks and Romans the Bear. . . . There is not the shadow of a likeness with a bear. You will now perceive the influence of words on thought, or the spontaneous growth of mythology. The name *Riksha* was applied to the bear in the sense of the bright fuscous animal, and in that sense it became most popular in the later Sanskrit, and in Greek and Latin. The same name, "in the sense of the bright ones," had been applied by the Vedic poets to the stars in general, and more particularly to that constellation which in the northern parts of India was the most prominent. The etymological meaning, "the bright stars," was forgotten; the popular meaning of Riksha (bear) was known to everyone. And thus it happened that, when the Greeks had left their central home and settled in Europe, they retained the name of Arktos for the same unchanging stars; but, not knowing why those stars had originally received that name, they ceased to speak of them as *arktoí*, or many bears, and spoke of them as the Bear.'

This is a very good example of the philological way of explaining a myth. If once we admit that *ark*, or *arch*, in the sense of 'bright' and of 'bear,' existed, not only in Sanskrit, but in the undivided Aryan tongue, and that the name Riksha, bear, 'became in that sense most popular in Greek and Latin,' this theory seems more than plausible. But the explanation does not look so well if we examine, not only the Aryan, but all the known myths and names of the Bear and the other stars. Professor Sayce, a distinguished philologist, says we may not compare non-Aryan with Aryan myths. We have ventured to do so, however, in this paper, and have shown that the most widely severed races give the stars animal names, of which the *Bear* is one example. Now, if the philologists wish to persuade us that it was decaying and half-forgotten language which caused men to give the names of animals to the stars, they must prove their case on an immense collection of instances — on Iowa, Kaneka, Murri, Maori, Brazilian, Peruvian, Mexican, Egyptian, Eskimo, instances. It would be the most amazing coincidence in the world if forgetfulness of the meaning of their own speech compelled tribes of every tongue and race to recognise men and beasts, cranes, cockatoos, serpents, monkeys, bears, and so forth, in the heavens. How came the misunderstood words always to be misunderstood in the same way? Does the philological explanation account for the enormous majority of the phenomena? If it fails, we may at least doubt whether it solves the one isolated case of the Great Bear among the Greeks and Romans. It must be observed that the philological explanation of Mr. Müller does not clear up the Arcadian story of their own descent from a she-bear who is now a star. Yet similar stories of the descent of tribes from animals are so widespread that it would be difficult to name the race or the quarter of the globe where they are not found. Are they all derived from misunderstood words meaning 'bright'? These considerations appear to be a strong argument for comparing not only Aryan, but all attainable myths. We shall often find, if we take a wide view, that the philological explanation which seemed plausible in a single case is hopelessly narrow when applied to a large collection of parallel cases in languages of various families.

Finally, in dealing with star myths, we adhere to the hypothesis of Mr. Tylor: 'From savagery up to civilisation,' Akkadian, Greek, or English, 'there may be traced in the mythology of the stars a course of thought, changed, indeed, in application, yet never broken in its evident connection from first to last. The savage sees individual stars as animate beings, or combines star-groups into living celestial creatures, or limbs of them, or objects connected with them; while at the other extremity of the scale of civilisation the modern astronomer keeps up just such ancient fancies, turning them to account in useful survival, as a means of mapping out the celestial globe.'

MOLY AND MANDRAGORA.

‘I have found out a new cure for rheumatism,’ said the lady beside whom it was my privilege to sit at dinner. ‘You carry a potato about in your pocket!’

Some one has written an amusing account of the behaviour of a man who is finishing a book. He takes his ideas everywhere with him and broods over them, even at dinner, in the pauses of conversation. But here was a lady who kindly contributed to my studies and offered me folklore and survivals in cultivated Kensington.

My mind had strayed from the potato cure to the New Zealand habit of carrying a baked yam at night to frighten away ghosts, and to the old English belief that a bit of bread kept in the pocket was sovereign against evil spirits. Why should ghosts dread the food of mortals when it is the custom of most races of mortals to feed ancestral ghosts? The human mind works pretty rapidly, and all this had passed through my brain while I replied, in tones of curiosity: ‘A potato!’

‘Yes; but it is not every potato that will do. I heard of the cure in the country, and when we came up to town, and my husband was complaining of rheumatism, I told one of the servants to get me a potato for Mr. Johnson’s rheumatism. “Yes, ma’am,” said the man; “but it must be a *stolen* potato.” I had forgotten that. Well, one can’t ask one’s servants to steal potatoes. It is easy in the country, where you can pick one out of anybody’s field.’ ‘And what did you do?’ I asked. ‘Oh, I drove to Covent Garden and ordered a lot of fruit and flowers. While the man was not looking, I stole a potato — a very little one. I don’t think there was any harm in it.’ ‘And did Mr. Johnson try the potato cure?’ ‘Yes, he carried it in his pocket, and now he is quite well. I told the doctor, and he says he knows of the cure, but he dares not recommend it.’

How oddly superstitions survive! The central idea of this modern folly about the potato is that you must pilfer the root. Let us work the idea of the healing or magical herb backwards, from Kensington to European folklore, and thence to classical times, to Homer, and to the Hottentots. Turning first to Germany, we note the beliefs, not about the potato, but about another vegetable, the mandrake. Of all roots, in German superstition, the Alraun, or mandrake, is the most famous. The herb was conceived of, in the savage fashion, as a living human person, a kind of old witch-wife.

Again, the root has a human shape. ‘If a hereditary thief who has preserved his chastity gets hung,’ the broad-leafed, yellow-flowered mandrake grows up, in his likeness, beneath the gallows from which he is suspended. The mandrake, like the moly, the magical herb of the Odyssey, is ‘hard for men to dig.’ He who desires to possess a mandrake must stop his ears with wax, so that he may not hear the deathly yells which the plant utters as it is being dragged out of the earth. Then before sunrise, on a Friday, the amateur goes out with a dog, ‘all black,’ makes three crosses round the mandrake, loosens the soil about the root, ties the root to the dog’s tail, and offers the beast a piece of bread. The dog runs at the bread, drags out the mandrake root, and falls dead, killed by the horrible yell of the plant. The root is now taken up, washed with wine, wrapped in silk, laid in a casket, bathed every Friday, ‘and clothed in a little new white smock every new moon.’ The mandrake acts, if thus considerately treated, as a kind of familiar spirit. ‘Every piece of coin put to her over night is found doubled in the morning.’ Gipsy folklore, and the folklore of American children, keep this belief in doubling deposits. The gipsies use the notion in what they call ‘The Great Trick.’ Some foolish rustic makes up his money in a parcel which he gives to the gipsy. The latter, after various ceremonies performed, returns the parcel, which is to be buried. The money will be found doubled by a certain date. Of course when the owner unburies the parcel he finds nothing in it but brass buttons. In the same way, and with pious confidence, the American boy buries a marble in a hollow log, uttering the formula, ‘What hasn’t come here, *come*! what’s here, *stay* here!’ and expects to find all the marbles he has ever lost. Let us follow the belief in magical roots into the old Pagan world.

The ancients knew mandragora and the superstitions connected with it very well. Dioscorides mentions *mandragorus*, or *antimelon*, or *dircæa*, or *Circæa*, and says the Egyptians call it *apemoum*, and Pythagoras ‘anthropomorphon.’ In digging the root, Pliny says, ‘there are some ceremonies observed, first they that goe about this worke, look especially to this that the wind be not in their face, but blow upon their backs. Then with the point of a sword they draw three circles round about the plant, which don, they dig it up afterwards with their face unto the west.’ Pliny says nothing of the fetich qualities of the plant, as credited in modern and mediæval Germany, but mentions ‘sufficient it is with some bodies to cast them into sleep with the smel of mandrago.’ This is like Shakespeare’s ‘poppy and mandragora, and all the drowsy syrups of the world.’ Plato and Demosthenes also speak of mandragora as a soporific. It is more to the purpose of magic that Columella mentions ‘the *half-human* mandragora.’ Here we touch the origin of the mandrake superstitions. The roots have a kind of fantastic resemblance to the human shape; Pliny describes them as being ‘of a fleshy substance and tender.’ Now it is one of the recognised principles in magic, that things like each other, however superficially, affect each other in a mystic way, and possess identical properties. Thus, in Melanesia, according to Mr. Codrington, 'a stone in the shape of a pig, of a bread-fruit, of a yam, was a most valuable find,' because it made pigs prolific, and fertilised bread-fruit trees and yam-plots. In Scotland, too, 'stones were called by the names of the limbs they resembled, as "eye-stane," "head-stane." A patient washed the affected part of his body, and rubbed it well with the stone corresponding.' In precisely the same way, the mandrake root, being thought to resemble the human body, was credited with human and superhuman powers. Josephus mentions a plant 'not easily caught, which slips away from them that wish to gather it, and never stands still' till certain repulsive rites are performed. These rites cannot well be reported here, but they are quite familiar to Red Indian and to Bushman magic. Another way to dig the plant spoken of by Josephus is by aid of the dog, as in the German superstition quoted from Grimm. Ælian also recommends the use of the dog to pluck the herb aglaophotis, which shines at night. When the dog has dragged up the root, and died of terror, his body is to be buried on the spot with religious honours and secret sacred rites.

So much for mandragora, which, like the healing potato, has to be acquired stealthily and with peril. Now let us examine the Homeric herb moly. The plant is thus introduced by Homer: In the tenth book of the 'Odyssey,' Circe has turned Odysseus's men into swine. He sets forth to rescue them, trusting only to his sword. The god Hermes meets him, and offers him 'a charmed herb,' 'this herb of grace' (Æ±Á¼±º¿½ µÃ¸»¿½) whereby he may subdue the magic wiles of Circe.

The plant is described by Homer with some minuteness. 'It was black at the root, but the flower was like to milk. "Moly," the gods call it, but it is hard for mortal men to dig, howbeit with the gods all things are possible.' The etymologies given of 'moly' are almost as numerous as the etymologists. One derivation, from the old 'Turanian' tongue of Accadia, will be examined later. The Scholiast offers the derivation '¼É»Åµ¹½, to make charms of no avail'; but this is exactly like Professor Blackie's etymological discovery that Erinys is derived from µÁ¹½Åµ¹½: 'he might as well derive *critic* from *criticise*.' The Scholiast adds that moly caused death to the person who dragged it out of the ground. This identification of moly with mandrake is probably based on Homer's remark that moly is 'hard to dig.' The black root and white flower of moly are quite unlike the yellow flower and white fleshy root ascribed by Pliny to mandrake. Only confusion is caused by regarding the two magical herbs as identical.

But why are any herbs or roots magical? While some scholars, like De

Gubernatis, seek an explanation in supposed myths about clouds and stars, it is enough for our purpose to observe that herbs really have medicinal properties, and that untutored people invariably confound medicine with magic. A plant or root is thought to possess virtue, not only when swallowed in powder or decoction, but when carried in the hand. St. John's wort and rowan berries, like the Homeric moly, still 'make evil charms of none avail;'

Rowan, ash, and red threed
Keep the devils from their speed,

says the Scotch rhyme. Any fanciful resemblance of leaf or flower or root to a portion of the human body, any analogy based on colour, will give a plant reputation for magical virtues. This habit of mind survives from the savage condition. The Hottentots are great herbalists. Like the Greeks, like the Germans, they expect supernatural aid from plants and roots. Mr. Hahn, in his 'Tsui Goam, the Supreme Being of the Khoi Khoi' (), gives the following examples: —

Dapper, in his description of Africa, , tells us:— 'Some of them wear round the neck roots, which they find far inland, in rivers, and being on a journey they light them in a fire or chew them, if they must sleep the night out in the field. They believe that these roots keep off the wild animals. The roots they chew are spit out around the spot where they encamp for the night; and in a similar way if they set the roots alight, they blow the smoke and ashes about, believing that the smell will keep the wild animals off.

I had often occasion to observe the practice of these superstitious ceremonies, especially when we were in a part of the country where we heard the roaring of the lions, or had the day previously met with the footprints of the king of the beasts.

The Korannas also have these roots as safeguards with them. If a Commando (a warlike expedition) goes out, every man will put such roots in his pockets and in the pouch where he keeps his bullets, believing that the arrows or bullets of the enemy have no effect, but that his own bullets will surely kill the enemy. And also before they lie down to sleep, they set these roots alight, and murmur, 'My grandfather's root, bring sleep on the eyes of the lion and leopard and the hyena. Make them blind, that they cannot find us, and cover their noses, that they cannot smell us out.' Also, if they have carried off large booty, or stolen cattle of the enemy, they light these roots and say: 'We thank thee, our grandfather's root, that thou hast given us cattle to eat. Let the enemy sleep, and lead him on the wrong track, that he may not follow us until we have safely escaped.’

Another sort of shrub is called bib. Herdsmen, especially, carry pieces of its wood as charms, and if cattle or sheep have gone astray, they burn a piece of it in the fire, that the wild animals may not destroy them. And they believe that the cattle remain safe until they can be found the next morning.

Schweinfurth found the same belief in magic herbs and roots among the Bongoes and Niam Niams in ‘The Heart of Africa.’ The Bongoes believe, like the Homeric Greeks, that ‘certain roots ward off the evil influences of spirits.’ Like the German amateurs of the mandrake, they assert that ‘there is no other resource for obtaining communication with spirits, except by means of certain roots’ (i. 306).

Our position is that the English magical potato, the German mandrake, the Greek moly, are all survivals from a condition of mind like that in which the Hottentots still pray to roots.

Now that we have brought mandragora and moly into connection with the ordinary magical superstitions of savage peoples, let us see what is made of the subject by another method. Mr. R. Brown, the learned and industrious author of ‘The Great Dionysiak Myth,’ has investigated the traditions about the Homeric moly. He first ‘turns to Aryan philology.’ Many guesses at the etymology of ‘moly’ have been made. Curtius suggests *mollis*, *molvis*, ¼É»Å-Â, akin to ¼±»±º¿Â, ‘soft.’ This does not suit Mr. Brown, who, to begin with, is persuaded that the herb is not a magical herb, *sans phrase*, like those which the Hottentots use, but that the basis of the myth ‘is simply the effect of night upon the world of day.’ Now, as moly is a name in use among the gods, Mr. Brown thinks ‘we may fairly examine the hypothesis of a foreign origin of the term.’ Anyone who holds that certain Greek gods were borrowed from abroad, may be allowed to believe that the gods used foreign words, and, as Mr. Brown points out, there are foreign elements in various Homeric names of imported articles, peoples, persons, and so forth. Where, then, is a foreign word like moly, which might have reached Homer? By a long process of research, Mr. Brown finds his word in ancient ‘Akkadian.’ From Professor Sayce he borrows a reference to Apuleius Barbarus, about whose life nothing is known, and whose date is vague. Apuleius Barbarus may have lived about four centuries after our era, and *he* says that ‘wild rue was called moly by the Cappadocians.’ Rue, like rosemary, and indeed like most herbs, has its magical repute, and if we supposed that Homer’s moly was rue, there would be some interest in the knowledge. Rue was called ‘herb of grace’ in English, holy water was sprinkled with it, and the name is a translation of Homer’s Æ±Á¼±º¿½ µÃ¸»¿½. Perhaps rue was used in sprinkling, because in pre-Christian times rue had, by itself, power against sprites and powers of evil. Our ancestors may have thought it as well to combine the old charm of rue and the new Christian potency of holy water. Thus there would be a distinct analogy between Homeric moly and English ‘herb of grace.’

‘Euphrasy and rue’ were employed to purge and purify mortal eyes. Pliny is very learned about the magical virtues of rue. Just as the stolen potato is sovran for rheumatism, so ‘rue stolen thriveth the best.’ The Samoans think that their most valued vegetables were stolen from heaven by a Samoan visitor.   It is remarkable that rue, according to Pliny, is killed by the touch of a woman in the same way as, according to Josephus, the mandrake is tamed.   These passages prove that the classical peoples had the same extraordinary superstitions about women as the Bushmen and Red Indians. Indeed Pliny describes a magical manner of defending the crops from blight, by aid of women, which is actually practised in America by the Red Men.

Here, then, are proofs enough that rue was magical outside of Cappadocia. But this is not an argument on Mr. Brown’s lines. The Cappadocians called rue ‘moly’; what language, he asks, was spoken by the Cappadocians? Prof. Sayce (who knows so many tongues) says that ‘we know next to nothing of the language of the Cappadocians, or of the Moschi who lived in the same locality.’ But where Prof. Sayce is, the Hittites, if we may say so respectfully, are not very far off. In this case he thinks the Moschi (though he admits we know next to nothing about it) ‘seem to have spoken a language allied to that of the Cappadocians and Hittites.’ That is to say, it is not impossible that the language of the Moschi, about which next to nothing is known, may have been allied to that of the Cappadocians, about which we know next to nothing. All that we do know in this case is, that four hundred years after Christ the dwellers in Cappadocia employed a word ‘moly,’ which had been Greek for at least twelve hundred years. But Mr. Brown goes on to quote that one of the languages of which we know next to nothing, Hittite, was ‘probably allied to Proto-Armenian, and perhaps Lykian, and was above all not Semitic.’ In any case ‘the cuneiform mode of writing was used in Cappadocia at an early period.’ As even Professor Sayce declines to give more than a tentative reading of a Cappadocian cuneiform inscription, it seems highly rash to seek in this direction for an interpretation of a Homeric word ‘moly,’ used in Cappadocia very many centuries after the tablets were scratched. But, on the evidence of the Babylonian character of the cuneiform writing on Cappadocian tablets, Mr. Brown establishes a connection between the people of Accadia (who probably introduced the cuneiform style) and the people of Cappadocia. The connection amounts to this. Twelve hundred years after Homer, the inhabitants of Cappadocia are said to have called rue 'moly.' At some unknown period, the Accadians appear to have influenced the art of writing in Cappadocia. Apparently Mr. Brown thinks it not too rash to infer that the Cappadocian use of the word 'moly' is not derived from the Greeks, but from the Accadians. Now in Accadian, according to Mr. Brown, *mul* means 'star.' 'Hence *ulu* or *mulu* = ¼É»Å, the mysterious Homerik counter-charm to the charms of Kirkê' (). Mr. Brown's theory, therefore, is that moly originally meant 'star.' Circe is the moon, Odysseus is the sun, and 'what *watches over* the solar hero at night when exposed to the hostile lunar power, but the stars?' especially the dog-star.

The truth is, that Homer's moly, whatever plant he meant by the name, is only one of the magical herbs in which most peoples believe or have believed. Like the Scottish rowan, or like St. John's wort, it is potent against evil influences. People have their own simple reasons for believing in these plants, and have not needed to bring down their humble, early botany from the clouds and stars. We have to imagine, on the other hand (if we follow Mr. Brown), that in some unknown past the Cappadocians turned the Accadian word for a star into a local name of a plant, that this word reached Homer, that the supposed old Accadian myth of the star which watches over the solar hero retained its vitality in Greek, and leaving the star clung to the herb, that Homer used an 'Akkado-Kappadokian' myth, and that, many ages after, the Accadian star-name in its perverted sense of 'rue' survived in Cappadocia. This structure of argument is based on tablets which even Prof. Sayce cannot read, and on possibilities about the alliances of tongues concerning which we 'know next to nothing.' A method which leaves on one side the common, natural, widely-diffused beliefs about the magic virtue of herbs (beliefs which we have seen at work in Kensington and in Central Africa), to hunt for moly among stars and undeciphered Kappadokian inscriptions, seems a dubious method. We have examined it at full length because it is a specimen of an erudite, but, as we think, a mistaken way in folklore. M. Halévy's warnings against the shifting mythical theories based on sciences so new as the lore of Assyria and 'Akkadia' are by no means superfluous. 'Akkadian' is rapidly become as ready a key to all locks as 'Aryan' was a few years ago.

'KALEVALA'; OR, THE FINNISH NATIONAL EPIC.

It is difficult to account for the fact that the scientific curiosity which is just now so busy in examining all the monuments of the primitive condition of our race, should, in England at least, have almost totally neglected to popularise the ‘Kalevala,’ or national poem of the Finns. Besides its fresh and simple beauty of style, its worth as a storehouse of every kind of primitive folklore, being as it is the production of an *Urvolk*, a nation that has undergone no violent revolution in language or institutions — the ‘Kalevala’ has the peculiar interest of occupying a position between the two kinds of primitive poetry, the ballad and the epic. So much difficulty has been introduced into the study of the first developments of song, by confusing these distinct sorts of composition under the name of popular poetry, that it may be well, in writing of a poem which occupies a middle place between epic and ballad, to define what we mean by each.

The author of our old English ‘Art of Poesie’ begins his work with a statement which may serve as a text: ‘Poesie,’ says Puttenham, writing in 1589, ‘is more ancient than the *artificiall* of the Greeks and Latines, coming by instinct of nature, and used by the savage and uncivill, who were before all science and civilitie. This is proved by certificate of merchants and travellers, who by late navigations have surveyed the whole world, and discovered large countries, and strange people, wild and savage, affirming that the American, the Perusine, and the very canniball, do sing, and also say, their highest and holiest matters in certain riming versicles.’ Puttenham is here referring to that instinct of primitive men, which compels them in all moments of high-wrought feeling, and on all solemn occasions, to give utterance to a kind of chant. Such a chant is the song of Lamech, when he had ‘slain a man to his wounding.’ So in the Norse sagas, Grettir and Gunnar *sing* when they have anything particular to say; and so in the *Märchen* — the primitive fairy tales of all nations — scraps of verse are introduced where emphasis is wanted. This craving for passionate expression takes a more formal shape in the lays which, among all primitive peoples, as among the modern Greeks to-day, are sung at betrothals, funerals, and departures for distant lands. These songs have been collected in Scotland by Scott and Motherwell; their Danish counterparts have been translated by Mr. Prior. In Greece, M. Fauriel and Dr. Ulrichs; in Provence, Damase Arbaud; in Italy, M. Nigra; in Servia, Talvj; in France, Gérard de Nerval — have done for their separate countries what Scott did for the Border. Professor Child, of Harvard, is publishing a beautiful critical collection of English *Volkslieder*, with all known variants from every country.

A comparison of the collections proves that among all European lands the primitive ‘versicles’ of the people are identical in tone, form, and incident. It is this kind of early expression of a people’s life — careless, abrupt, brief, as was necessitated by the fact that they were sung to the accompaniment of the dance — that we call ballads. These are distinctly, and in every sense, popular poems, and nothing can cause greater confusion than to apply the same title, ‘popular,’ to early epic poetry. Ballads are short; a long ballad, as Mr. Matthew Arnold has said, creeps and halts. A true epic, on the other hand, is long, and its tone is grand, noble, and sustained. Ballads are not artistic; while the form of the epic, whether we take the hexameter or the rougher *laisse* of the French *chansons de geste*, is full of conscious and admirable art. Lastly, popular ballads deal with vague characters, acting and living in vague places; while the characters of an epic are heroes of definite station, *whose descendants are still in the land*, whose home is a recognisable place, Ithaca, or Argos. Now, though these two kinds of early poetry — the ballad, the song of the people; the epic, the song of the chiefs of the people, of the ruling race — are distinct in kind, it does not follow that they have no connection, that the nobler may not have been developed out of the materials of the lower form of expression. And the value of the ‘Kalevala’ is partly this, that it combines the continuity and unison of the epic with the simplicity and popularity of the ballad, and so forms a kind of link in the history of the development of poetry. This may become clearer as we proceed to explain the literary history of the Finnish national poem.

Sixty years ago, it may be said, no one was aware that Finland possessed a national poem at all. Her people — who claim affinity with the Magyars of Hungary, but are possibly a back-wave of an earlier tide of population — had remained untouched by foreign influences since their conquest by Sweden, and their somewhat lax and wholesale conversion to Christianity: events which took place gradually between the middle of the twelfth and the end of the thirteenth centuries. Under the rule of Sweden, the Finns were left to their quiet life and undisturbed imaginings, among the forests and lakes of the region which they aptly called Pohja, ‘the end of things’; while their educated classes took no very keen interest in the native poetry and mythology of their race. At length the annexation of Finland by Russia, in 1809, awakened national feeling, and stimulated research into the songs and customs which were the heirlooms of the people.

It was the policy of Russia to encourage, rather than to check, this return on a distant past; and from the north of Norway to the slopes of the Altai, ardent explorers sought out the fragments of unwritten early poetry. These runes, or *Runots*, were chiefly sung by old men called *Runoias*, to beguile the weariness of the long dark winters. The custom was for two champions to engage in a contest of memory, clasping each other’s hands, and reciting in turn till he whose memory first gave in slackened his hold. The ‘Kalevala’ contains an instance of this practice, where it is said that no one was so hardy as to clasp hands with Wäinämöinen, who is at once the Orpheus and the Prometheus of

Finnish mythology. These Runoias, or rhapsodists, complain, of course, of the degeneracy of human memory; they notice how any foreign influence, in religion or politics, is destructive to the native songs of a race. ‘As for the lays of old time, a thousand have been scattered to the wind, a thousand buried in the snow; . . . as for those which the Munks (the Teutonic knights) swept away, and the prayer of the priest overwhelmed, a thousand tongues were not able to recount them.’ In spite of the losses thus caused, and in spite of the suspicious character of the Finns, which often made the task of collection a dangerous one, enough materials remained to furnish Dr. Lönnrot, the most noted explorer, with thirty-five *Runots*, or cantos. These were published in 1835, but later research produced the fifteen cantos which make up the symmetrical fifty of the ‘Kalevala.’ In the task of arranging and uniting these, Dr. Lönnrot played the part traditionally ascribed to the commission of Pisistratus in relation to the ‘Iliad’ and ‘Odyssey.’ Dr. Lönnrot is said to have handled with singular fidelity the materials which now come before us as one poem, not absolutely without a certain unity and continuous thread of narrative. It is this unity (so faint compared with that of the ‘Iliad’ and ‘Odyssey’) which gives the ‘Kalevala’ a claim to the title of epic.

It cannot be doubted that, at whatever period the Homeric poems took shape in Greece, they were believed to record the feats of the supposed ancestors of existing families. Thus, for example, Pisistratus, as a descendant of the Nelidæ, had an interest in securing certain parts, at least, of the ‘Iliad’ and the ‘Odyssey’ from oblivion. The same family pride embellished and preserved the epic poetry of early France. There were in France but three heroic houses, or *gestes*; and three corresponding cycles of *épopées*. Now, in the ‘Kalevala,’ there is no trace of the influence of family feeling; it was no one’s peculiar care and pride to watch over the records of the fame of this or that hero. The poem begins with a cosmogony as wild as any Indian dream of creation; and the human characters who move in the story are shadowy inhabitants of no very definite lands, whom no family claim as their forefathers. The very want of this idea of family and aristocratic pride gives the ‘Kalevala’ a unique place among epics. It is emphatically an epic of the people, of that class whose life contains no element of progress, no break in continuity; which from age to age preserves, in solitude and close communion with nature, the earliest beliefs of grey antiquity. The Greek epic, on the other hand, has, as M. Preller points out, ‘nothing to do with natural man, but with an ideal world of heroes, with sons of the gods, with consecrated kings, heroes, elders, *a kind of specific race of men*. The people exist only as subsidiary to the great houses, as a mere background against which stand out the shining figures of heroes; as a race of beings fresh and rough from the hands of nature, with whom, and with whose concerns, the great houses and their bards have little concern.' This feeling — so universal in Greece, and in the feudal countries of mediæval Europe, that there are two kinds of men, the golden and the brazen race, as Plato would have called them — is absent, with all its results, in the 'Kalevala.'

Among the Finns we find no trace of an aristocracy; there is scarcely a mention of kings, or priests; the heroes of the poem are really popular heroes, fishers, smiths, husbandmen, 'medicine-men,' or wizards; exaggerated shadows of the people, pursuing on a heroic scale, not war, but the common daily business of primitive and peaceful men. In recording their adventures, the 'Kalevala,' like the shield of Achilles, reflects all the life of a race, the feasts, the funerals, the rites of seed-time and harvest of marriage and death, the hymn, and the magical incantation. Were this all, the epic would only have the value of an exhaustive collection of the popular ballads which, as we have seen, are a poetical record of the intenser moments in the existence of unsophisticated tribes. But the 'Kalevala' is distinguished from such a collection, by presenting the ballads as they are produced by the events of a continuous narrative, and thus it takes a distinct place between the aristocratic epics of Greece, or of the Franks, and the scattered songs which have been collected in Scotland, Sweden, Denmark, Greece, and Italy.

Besides the interest of its unique position as a popular epic, the 'Kalevala' is very valuable, both for its literary beauties and for the confused mass of folklore which it contains.

Here old cosmogonies, attempts of man to represent to himself the beginning of things, are mingled with the same wild imaginings as are found everywhere in the shape of fairy-tales. We are hurried from an account of the mystic egg of creation, to a hymn like that of the Ambarval Brothers, to a strangely familiar scrap of a nursery story, to an incident which we remember as occurring in almost identical words in a Scotch ballad. We are among a people which endows everything with human characters and life, which is in familiar relations with birds, and beasts, and even with rocks and plants. Ravens and wolves and fishes of the sea, sun, moon, and stars, are kindly or churlish; drops of blood find speech, man and maid change to snake or swan and resume their forms, ships have magic powers, like the ships of the Phæacians.

Then there is the oddest confusion of every stage of religious development: we find a supreme God, delighting in righteousness; Ukko, the lord of the vault of air, who stands apart from men, and sends his son, Wäinämöinen, to be their teacher in music and agriculture.

Across this faith comes a religion of petrified abstractions like those of the

Roman Pantheon. There are gods of colour, a goddess of weaving, a goddess of man’s blood, besides elemental spirits of woods and waters, and the *manes* of the dead. Meanwhile, the working faith of the people is the belief in magic — generally a sign of the lower culture. It is supposed that the knowledge of certain magic words gives power over the elemental bodies which obey them; it is held that the will of a distant sorcerer can cross the lakes and plains like the breath of a fantastic frost, with power to change an enemy to ice or stone. Traces remain of the worship of animals: there is a hymn to the bear; a dance like the bear-dance of the American Indians; and another hymn tells of the birth and power of the serpent. Across all, and closing all, comes a hostile account of the origin of Christianity — the end of joy and music.

How primitive was the condition of the authors of this medley of beliefs is best proved by the survival of the custom called exogamy. This custom, which is not peculiar to the Finns, but is probably a universal note of early society, prohibits marriage between members of the same tribe. Consequently, the main action, such as it is, of the ‘Kalevala’ turns on the efforts made by the men of Kaleva to obtain brides from the hostile tribe of Pohja.

Further proof of ancient origin is to be found in what is the great literary beauty of the poem — its pure spontaneity and simplicity. It is the production of an intensely imaginative race, to which song came as the most natural expression of joy and sorrow, terror or triumph — a class which lay near to nature’s secret, and was not out of sympathy with the wild kin of woods and waters.

‘These songs,’ says the prelude, ‘were found by the wayside, and gathered in the depths of the copses; blown from the branches of the forest, and culled among the plumes of the pine-trees. These lays came to me as I followed the flocks, in a land of meadows honey-sweet, and of golden hills. . . . The cold has spoken to me, and the rain has told me her runes; the winds of heaven, the waves of the sea, have spoken and sung to me; the wild birds have taught me, the music of many waters has been my master.’

The metre in which the epic is chanted resembles, to an English ear, that of Mr. Longfellow’s ‘Hiawatha’ — there is assonance rather than rhyme; and a very musical effect is produced by the liquid character of the language, and by the frequent alliterations.

This rough outline of the main characteristics of the ‘Kalevala’ we shall now try to fill up with an abstract of its contents. The poem is longer than the ‘Iliad,’ and much of interest must necessarily be omitted; but it is only through such an abstract that any idea can be given of the sort of unity which does prevail amid the most utter discrepancy.

In the first place, what is to be understood by the word ‘Kalevala’? The affix *la* signifies ‘abode.’ Thus, ‘Tuonela’ is ‘the abode of Tuoni,’ the god of the lower world; and as ‘kaleva’ means ‘heroic,’ ‘magnificent,’ ‘Kalevala’ is ‘The Home of Heroes.’ The poem is the record of the adventures of the people of Kalevala — of their strife with the men of Pohjola, the place of the world’s end. We may fancy two old Runoias, or singers, clasping hands on one of the first nights of the Finnish winter, and beginning (what probably has never been accomplished) the attempt to work through the ‘Kalevala’ before the return of summer. They commence *ab ovo*, or, rather, before the egg. First is chanted the birth of Wäinämöinen, the benefactor and teacher of men. He is the son of Luonnotar, the daughter of Nature, who answers to the first woman of the Iroquois cosmogony. Beneath the breath and touch of wind and tide, she conceived a child; but nine ages of man passed before his birth, while the mother floated on ‘the formless and the multiform waters.’ Then Ukko, the supreme God, sent an eagle, which laid her eggs in the maiden’s bosom, and from these eggs grew earth and sky, sun and moon, star and cloud. Then was Wäinämöinen born on the waters, and reached a barren land, and gazed on the new heavens and the new earth. There he sowed the grain that is the bread of man, chanting the hymn used at seed-time, calling on the mother earth to make the green herb spring, and on Ukko to send clouds and rain. So the corn sprang, and the golden cuckoo — which in Finland plays the part of the popinjay in Scotch ballads, or of the three golden birds in Greek folksongs — came with his congratulations. In regard to the epithet ‘golden,’ it may be observed that gold and silver, in the Finnish epic, are lavished on the commonest objects of daily life.

This is a universal note of primitive poetry, and is not a peculiar Finnish idiom, as M. Leouzon le Duc supposes; nor, as Mr. Tozer seems to think, in his account of Romaic ballads, a trace of Oriental influence among the modern Greeks. It is common to all the ballads of Europe, as M. Ampère has pointed out, and may be observed in the ‘Chanson de Roland,’ and in Homer.

While the corn ripened, Wäinämöinen rested from his labours, and took the task of Orpheus. ‘He sang,’ says the ‘Kalevala,’ of the origin of things, of the mysteries hidden from babes, that none may attain to in this sad life, in the hours of these perishable days. The fame of the Runoia’s singing excited jealousy in the breast of one of the men around him, of whose origin the ‘Kalevala’ gives no account. This man, Joukahainen, provoked him to a trial of song, boasting, like Empedocles, or like one of the old Celtic bards, that he had been all things. ‘When the earth was made I was there; when space was unrolled I launched the sun on his way.’ Then was Wäinämöinen wroth, and by the force of his enchantment he rooted Joukahainen to the ground, and suffered him not to go free without promising him the hand of his sister Aino. The mother was delighted; but the girl wept that she must now cover her long locks, her curls, her glory, and be the wife of ‘the old imperturbable Wäinämöinen.’ It is in vain that her mother offers her dainty food and rich dresses; she flees from home, and wanders till she meets three maidens bathing, and joins them, and is drowned, singing a sad song: ‘Ah, never may my sister come to bathe in the sea-water, for the drops of the sea are the drops of my blood.’ This wild idea occurs in the Romaic ballad, · º¿Á· Ä±¾¹´µÅÄÁ¹±, where a drop of blood on the lips of the drowned girl tinges all the waters of the world. To return to the fate of Aino. A swift hare runs (as in the Zulu legend of the Origin of Death) with the tale of sorrow to the maiden’s mother, and from the mother’s tears flow rivers of water, and therein are isles with golden hills where golden birds make melody. As for the old, the imperturbable Runoia, he loses his claim to the latter title, he is filled with sorrow, and searches through all the elements for his lost bride. At length he catches a fish which is unknown to him, who, like Atlas, ‘knew the depths of all the seas.’ The strange fish slips from his hands, a ‘tress of hair, of drowned maiden’s hair,’ floats for a moment on the foam, and too late he recognises that ‘there was never salmon yet that shone so fair, above the nets at sea.’ His lost bride has been within his reach, and now is doubly lost to him. Suddenly the waves are cloven asunder, and the mother of Nature and of Wäinämöinen appears, to comfort her son, like Thetis from the deep. She bids him go and seek, in the land of Pohjola, a bride alien to his race. After many a wild adventure, Wäinämöinen reaches Pohjola and is kindly entreated by Loutri, the mother of the maiden of the land. But he grows homesick, and complains, almost in Dante’s words, of the bitter bread of exile. Loutri will only grant him her daughter’s hand on condition that he gives her a *sampo*. A sampo is a mysterious engine that grinds meal, salt, and money. In fact, it is the mill in the well-known fairy tale, ‘Why the Sea is Salt.’

Wäinämöinen cannot fashion this mill himself, he must seek aid at home from Ilmarinen, the smith who forged ‘the iron vault of hollow heaven.’ As the hero returns to Kalevala, he meets the Lady of the Rainbow, seated on the arch of the sky, weaving the golden thread. She promises to be his, if he will accomplish certain tasks, and in the course of those he wounds himself with an axe. The wound can only be healed by one who knows the mystic words that hold the secret of the birth of iron. The legend of this evil birth, how iron grew from the milk of a maiden, and was forged by the primeval smith, Ilmarinen, to be the bane of warlike men, is communicated by Wäinämöinen to an old magician. The wizard then solemnly curses the iron, *as a living thing*, and invokes the aid of the supreme God Ukko, thus bringing together in one prayer the extremes of early religion. Then the hero is healed, and gives thanks to the Creator, ‘in whose hands is the end of a matter.'

Returning to Kalevala, Wäinämöinen sends Ilmarinen to Pohjola to make the sampo, 'a mill for corn one day, for salt the next, for money the next.' The fatal treasure is concealed by Loutri, and is obviously to play the part of the fairy hoard in the 'Nibelungen Lied.'

With the eleventh canto a new hero, Ahti, or Lemminkainen, and a new cycle of adventures, is abruptly introduced. Lemminkainen is a profligate wanderer, with as many loves as Hercules. The fact that he is regarded as a form of the sea-god makes it strange that his most noted achievement, the seduction of the whole female population of his island, should correspond with a like feat of Krishna's. 'Sixteen thousand and one hundred,' says the Vishnu Purana, 'was the number of the maidens; and into so many forms did the son of Madhu multiply himself, so that every one of the damsels thought that he had wedded her in her single person.' Krishna is the sun, of course, and the maidens are the dew-drops; it is to be hoped that Lemminkainen's connection with sea-water may save him from the solar hypothesis. His first regular marriage is unhappy, and he is slain in trying to capture a bride from the people of Pohjola. The black waters of the river of forgetfulness sweep him away, and his comb, which he left with his mother, bursts out bleeding — a frequent incident in Russian and other fairy tales. In many household tales, the hero, before setting out on a journey, erects a stick which will fall down when he is in distress, or death. The natives of Australia use this form of divination in actual practice, tying round the stick some of the hair of the person whose fate is to be ascertained. Then, like Demeter seeking Persephonê, the mother questions all the beings of the world, and their answers show a wonderful poetic sympathy with the silent life of Nature. 'The moon said, I have sorrows enough of my own, without thinking of thy child. My lot is hard, my days are evil. I am born to wander companionless in the night, to shine in the season of frost, to watch through the endless winter, to fade when summer comes as king.' The sun is kinder, and reveals the place of the hero's body. The mother collects the scattered limbs, the birds bring healing balm from the heights of heaven, and after a hymn to the goddess of man's blood, Lemminkainen is made sound and well, as the scattered 'fragments of no more a man' were united by the spell of Medea, like those of Osiris by Isis, or of the fair countess by the demon blacksmith in the Russian *Märchen*, or of the Carib hero mentioned by Mr. McLennan, or of the ox in the South African household tale.

With the sixteenth canto we return to Wäinämöinen, who, like all epic heroes, visits the place of the dead, Tuonela. The maidens who play the part of Charon are with difficulty induced to ferry over a man bearing no mark of death by fire or sword or water. Once among the dead, Wäinämöinen refuses — being wiser than Psyche or Persephonê — to taste of drink. This ‘taboo’ is found in Japanese, Melanesian, and Red Indian accounts of the homes of the dead. Thus the hero is able to return and behold the stars. Arrived in the upper world, he warns men to ‘beware of perverting innocence, of leading astray the pure of heart; they that do these things shall be punished eternally in the depths of Tuoni. There is a place prepared for evil-doers, a bed of stones burning, rocks of fire, worms and serpents.’ This speech throws but little light on the question of how far a doctrine of rewards and punishments enters into primitive ideas of a future state. The ‘Kalevala,’ as we possess it, is necessarily, though faintly, tinged with Christianity; and the peculiar vices which are here threatened with punishment are not those which would have been most likely to occur to the early heathen singers of this *runot.*

Wäinämöinen and Ilmarinen now go together to Pohjola, but the fickle maiden of the land prefers the young forger of the sampo to his elder and imperturbable companion. Like a northern Medea, or like the Master-maid in Dr. Dasent’s ‘Tales from the Norse,’ or like the hero of the Algonquin tale and the Samoan ballad, she aids her alien lover to accomplish the tasks assigned to him. He ploughs with a plough of gold the adder-close, or field of serpents; he bridles the wolf and the bear of the lower world, and catches the pike that swim in the waters of forgetfulness. After this, the parents cannot refuse their consent, the wedding-feast is prepared, and all the world, except the *séduisant* Lemminkainen, is bidden to the banquet. The narrative now brings in the ballads that are sung at a Finnish marriage.

First, the son-in-law enters the house of the parents of the bride, saying, ‘Peace abide with you in this illustrious hall.’ The mother answers, ‘Peace be with you even in this lowly hut.’ Then Wäinämöinen began to sing, and no man was so hardy as to clasp hands and contend with him in song. Next follow the songs of farewell, the mother telling the daughter of what she will have to endure in a strange home: ‘Thy life was soft and delicate in thy father’s house. Milk and butter were ready to thy hand; thou wert as a flower of the field, as a strawberry of the wood; all care was left to the pines of the forest, all wailing to the wind in the woods of barren lands. But now thou goest to another home, to an alien mother, to doors that grate strangely on their hinges.’ ‘My thoughts,’ the maiden replies, ‘are as a dark night of autumn, as a cloudy day of winter; my heart is sadder than the autumn night, more weary than the winter day.’ The maid and the bridegroom are then lyrically instructed in their duties: the girl is to be long-suffering, the husband to try five years’ gentle treatment before he cuts a willow wand for his wife’s correction. The bridal party sets out for home, a new feast is spread, and the bridegroom congratulated on the courage he must have shown in stealing a girl from a hostile tribe.

While all is merry, the mischievous Lemminkainen sets out, an unbidden guest, for Pohjola. On his way he encounters a serpent, which he slays by the song of serpent-charming. In this ‘mystic chain of verse’ the serpent is not addressed as the gentle reptile, god of southern peoples, but is spoken of with all hatred and loathing: ‘Black creeping thing of the low lands, monster flecked with the colours of death, thou that hast on thy skin the stain of the sterile soil, get thee forth from the path of a hero.’ After slaying the serpent, Lemminkainen reaches Pohjola, kills one of his hosts, and fixes his head on one of a thousand stakes for human skulls that stood about the house, as they might round the hut of a Dyak in Borneo. He then flees to the isle of Saari, whence he is driven for his heroic profligacy, and by the hatred of the only girl whom he has *not* wronged. This is a very pretty touch of human nature.

He now meditates a new incursion into Pohjola. The mother of Pohjola (it is just worth noticing that the leadership assumed by this woman points to a state of society when the family was scarcely formed) calls to her aid ‘her child the Frost;’ but the frost is put to shame by a hymn of the invader’s, a song against the Cold: ‘The serpent was his foster-mother, the serpent with her barren breasts; the wind of the north rocked his cradle, and the ice-wind sang him to sleep, in the midst of the wild marsh-land, where the wells of the waters begin.’ It is a curious instance of the animism, the vivid power of personifying all the beings and forces of nature, which marks the ‘Kalevala,’ that the Cold speaks to Lemminkainen in human voice, and seeks a reconciliation.

At this part of the epic there is an obvious lacuna. The story goes to Kullervo, a luckless man, who serves as shepherd to Ilmarinen. Thinking himself ill-treated by the heroic smith’s wife, the shepherd changes his flock into bears and wolves, which devour their mistress. Then he returns to his own home, where he learns that his sister has been lost for many days, and is believed to be dead. Travelling in search of her he meets a girl, loves her, and all unwittingly commits an inexpiable offence. ‘Then,’ says the ‘Kalevala,’ ‘came up the new dawn, and the maiden spoke, saying, “What is thy race, bold young man, and who is thy father?” Kullervo said, “I am the wretched son of Kalerva; but tell me, what is thy race, and who is thy father?” Then said the maiden, “I am the wretched daughter of Kalerva. Ah! would God that I had died, then might I have grown with the green grass, and blossomed with the flowers, and never known this sorrow.” With this she sprang into the midst of the foaming waves, and found peace in Tuoni, and rest in the waters of forgetfulness.’ Then there was no word for Kullervo, but the bitter moan of the brother in the terrible Scotch ballad of the *Bonny Hind*, and no rest but in death by his own sword, where grass grows never on his sister's tomb.

The epic now draws to a close. Ilmarinen seeks a new wife in Pohja, and endeavours with Wäinämöinen's help to recover the mystic sampo. On the voyage, the Runoia makes a harp out of the bones of a monstrous fish, so strange a harp that none may play it but himself. When he played, all four-footed things came about him, and the white birds dropped down 'like a storm of snow.' The maidens of the sun and the moon paused in their weaving, and the golden thread fell from their hands. The Ancient One of the sea-water listened, and the nymphs of the wells forgot to comb their loose locks with the golden combs. All men and maidens and little children wept, amid the silent joy of nature; nay, the great harper wept, and *of his tears were pearls made.*

In the war with Pohjola the heroes were victorious, but the sampo was broken in the fight, and lost in the sea, and that, perhaps, is 'why the sea is salt.' Fragments were collected, however, and Loutri, furious at the success of the heroes of Kalevala, sent against them a bear, destructive as the boar of Calydon. But Wäinämöinen despatched the monster, and the body was brought home with the bear-dance, and the hymn of the bear. 'Oh, Otso,' cry the singers, 'be not angry that we come near thee. The bear, the honey-footed bear, was born in lands between sun and moon, and he died not by men's hands, but of his own will.' The Finnish savants are probably right, who find here a trace of the beast-worship which in many lands has placed the bear among the number of the stars. Propitiation of the bear is practised by Red Indians, by the Ainos of Japan, and (in the case of the 'native bear') by Australians. The Red Indians have a myth to prove that the bear is immortal, does not die, but, after his apparent death, rises again in another body. There is no trace, however, that the Finns claimed, like the Danes, descent from the bear. The Lapps, a people of confused belief, worshipped him along with Thor, Christ, the sun, and the serpent.

But another cult, an alien creed, is approaching Kalevala. There is no part of the epic more strange than the closing canto, which tells in the wildest language, and through the most exaggerated forms of savage imagination, the tale of the introduction of Christianity. Marjatta was a maiden, 'as pure as the dew is, as holy as stars are that live without stain.' As she fed her flocks, and listened to the singing of the golden cuckoo, a berry fell into her bosom. After many days she bore a child, and the people despised and rejected her, and she was thrust forth, and her babe was born in a stable, and cradled in the manger. Who should baptize the babe? The god of the wilderness refused, and Wäinämöinen would have had the young child slain. Then the infant rebuked the ancient Demigod, who fled in anger to the sea, and with his magic song he built a magic barque, and he sat therein, and took the helm in his hand. The tide bore him out to sea, and he lifted his voice and sang: ‘Times go by, and suns shall rise and set, and then shall men have need of me, and shall look for the promise of my coming that I may make a new sampo, and a new harp, and bring back sunlight and moonshine, and the joy that is banished from the world.’ Then he crossed the waters, and gained the limits of the sea, and the lower spaces of the sky.

Here the strange poem ends at its strangest moment, with the cry, which must have been uttered so often, but is heard here alone, of a people reluctantly deserting the gods that it has fashioned in its own likeness, for a faith that has not sprung from its needs or fears. Yet it cherishes the hope that this tyranny shall pass over: ‘they are gods, and behold they shall die, and the waves be upon them at last.’

As the ‘Kalevala,’ and as all relics of folklore, all *Märchen* and ballads prove, the lower mythology — the elemental beliefs of the people — do survive beneath a thin covering of Christian conformity. There are, in fact, in religion, as in society, two worlds, of which the one does not know how the other lives. The class whose literature we inherit, under whose institutions we live, at whose shrines we worship, has changed as outworn raiment its manners, its gods, its laws; has looked before and after, has hoped and forgotten, has advanced from the wilder and grosser to the purest faith. Beneath the progressive class, and beneath the waves of this troublesome world, there exists an order whose primitive form of human life has been far less changeful, a class which has put on a mere semblance of new faiths, while half-consciously retaining the remains of immemorial cults.

Obviously, as M. Fauriel has pointed out in the case of the modern Greeks, the life of such folk contains no element of progress, admits no break in continuity. Conquering armies pass and leave them still reaping the harvest of field and river; religions appear, and they are baptized by thousands, but the lower beliefs and dreads that the progressive class has outgrown remain unchanged.

Thus, to take the instance of modern Greece, the high gods of the divine race of Achilles and Agamemnon are forgotten, but the descendants of the Penestæ, the *villeins* of Thessaly, still dread the beings of the popular creed, the Nereids, the Cyclopes, and the Lamia.

The last lesson we would attempt to gather from the ‘Kalevala’ is this: that a comparison of the *thoroughly popular* beliefs of all countries, the beliefs cherished by the non-literary classes whose ballads and fairy tales have only recently been collected, would probably reveal a general identity, concealed by diversity of name, among the ‘lesser people of the skies,’ the elves, fairies, Cyclopes, giants, nereids, brownies, lamiæ. It could then be shown that some of these spirits survive among the lower beings of the mythology of what the Germans call a *cultur-volk* like the Greeks or Romans. It could also be proved that much of the narrative element in the classic epics is to be found in a popular or childish form in primitive fairy tales. The question would then come to be, Have the higher mythologies been developed, by artistic poets, out of the materials of a race which remained comparatively untouched by culture; or are the lower spirits, and the more simple and puerile forms of myth, degradations of the inventions of a cultivated class?

THE DIVINING ROD.

There is something remarkable, and not flattering to human sagacity, in the periodical resurrection of superstitions. Houses, for example, go on being ‘haunted’ in country districts, and no educated man notices the circumstance. Then comes a case like that of the Drummer of Tedworth, or the Cock Lane Ghost, and society is deeply moved, philosophers plunge into controversy, and he who grubs among the dusty tracts of the past finds a world of fugitive literature on forgotten bogies. Chairs move untouched by human hands, and tables walk about in lonely castles of Savoy, and no one marks them, till a day comes when the furniture of some American cottage is similarly afflicted, and then a shoddy new religion is based on the phenomenon. The latest revival among old beliefs is faith in the divining rod. ‘Our liberal shepherds give it a *shorter* name,’ and so do our conservative peasants, calling the ‘rod of Jacob’ the ‘twig.’ To ‘work the twig’ is rural English for the craft of Dousterswivel in the ‘Antiquary,’ and perhaps from this comes our slang expression to ‘twig,’ or divine, the hidden meaning of another. Recent correspondence in the newspapers has proved that, whatever may be the truth about the ‘twig,’ belief in its powers is still very prevalent. Respectable people are not ashamed to bear signed witness of its miraculous powers of detecting springs of water and secret mines. It is habitually used by the miners in the Mendips, as Mr. Woodward found ten years ago; and forked hazel divining rods from the Mendips are a recognised part of ethnological collections. There are two ways of investigating the facts or fancies about the rod. One is to examine it in its actual operation — a task of considerable labour, which will doubtless be undertaken by the Society for Psychical Research; the other, and easier, way is to study the appearances of the divining wand in history, and that is what we propose to do in this article.

When a superstition or belief is widely spread in Europe, as the faith in the divining rod certainly is (in Germany rods are hidden under babies’ clothes when they are baptized), we naturally expect to find traces of it in ancient times and among savages all over the modern world. We have already examined, in ‘The Bull-Roarer,’ a very similar example. We saw that there is a magical instrument — a small fish-shaped piece of thin flat wood tied to a thong — which, when whirled in the air, produces a strange noise, a compound of roar and buzz. This instrument is sacred among the natives of Australia, where it is used to call together the men, and to frighten away the women from the religious mysteries of the males. The same instrument is employed for similar purposes in New Mexico, and in South Africa and New Zealand — parts of the world very widely distant from each other, and inhabited by very diverse races. It has also been lately discovered that the Greeks used this toy, which they called *Á¿¼²¿Â*, in the Mysteries of Dionysus, and possibly it may be identical with the *mystica vannus Iacchi* (Virgil, 'Georgics,' i. 166). The conclusion drawn by the ethnologist is that this object, called *turndun* by the Australians, is a very early savage invention, probably discovered and applied to religious purposes in various separate centres, and retained from the age of savagery in the mystic rites of Greeks and perhaps of Romans. Well, do we find anything analogous in the case of the divining rod?

Future researches may increase our knowledge, but at present little or nothing is known of the divining rod in classical ages, and not very much (though that little is significant) among uncivilised races. It is true that in all countries rods or wands, the Latin *virga*, have a magical power. Virgil obtained his mediæval repute as a wizard because his name was erroneously connected with *virgula*, the magic wand. But we do not actually know that the ancient wand of the enchantress Circe, in Homer, or the wand of Hermes, was used, like the divining rod, to indicate the whereabouts of hidden wealth or water. In the Homeric hymn to Hermes (line 529), Apollo thus describes the *caduceus*, or wand of Hermes: 'Thereafter will I give thee a lovely wand of wealth and riches, a golden wand with three leaves, which shall keep thee ever unharmed.' In later art this wand, or *caduceus*, is usually entwined with serpents; but on one vase, at least, the wand of Hermes is simply the forked twig of our rustic miners and water-finders. The same form is found on an engraved Etruscan mirror.

Now, was a wand of this form used in classical times to discover hidden objects of value? That wands were used by Scythians and Germans in various methods of casting lots is certain; but that is not the same thing as the working of the twig. Cicero speaks of a fabled wand by which wealth can be procured; but he says nothing of the method of its use, and possibly was only thinking of the rod of Hermes, as described in the Homeric hymn already quoted. There was a Roman play, by Varro, called 'Virgula Divina'; but it is lost, and throws no light on the subject. A passage usually quoted from Seneca has no more to do with the divining rod than with the telephone. Pliny is a writer extremely fond of marvels; yet when he describes the various modes of finding wells of water, he says nothing about the divining wand. The isolated texts from Scripture which are usually referred to clearly indicate wands of a different sort, if we except Hosea iv. 12, the passage used as motto by the author of 'Lettres qui découvrent l'illusion des Philosophes sur la Baguette' (1696). This text is translated in our

Bible, ‘My people ask counsel at their stocks, *and their staff declareth unto them*! Now, we have here no reference to the search for wells and minerals, but to a form of divination for which the modern twig has ceased to be applied. In rural England people use the wand to find water, but not to give advice, or to detect thieves or murderers; but, as we shall see, the rod has been very much used for these purposes within the last three centuries.

This brings us to the moral powers of the twig; and here we find some assistance in our inquiry from the practices of uncivilised races. In 1719 John Bell was travelling across Asia; he fell in with a Russian merchant, who told him of a custom common among the Mongols. The Russian had lost certain pieces of cloth, which were stolen out of his tent. The Kutuchtu Lama ordered the proper steps to be taken to find out the thief. ‘One of the Lamas took a bench with four feet, and after turning it in several directions, at last it pointed directly to the tent where the stolen goods were concealed. The Lama now mounted across the bench, and soon carried it, or, as was commonly believed, it carried him, to the very tent, where he ordered the damask to be produced. The demand was directly complied with; for it is vain in such cases to offer any excuse.’ Here we have not a wand, indeed, but a wooden object which turned in the direction, not of water or minerals, but of human guilt. A better instance is given by the Rev. H. Rowley, in his account of the Mauganja. A thief had stolen some corn. The medicine-man, or sorcerer, produced two sticks, which he gave to four young men, two holding each stick. The medicine-man danced and sang a magical incantation, while a zebra-tail and a rattle were shaken over the holders of the sticks. ‘After a while, the men with the sticks had spasmodic twitchings of the arms and legs; these increased nearly to convulsions. . . . According to the native idea, *it was the sticks which were possessed primarily*, and through them the men, *who could hardly hold them*. The sticks whirled and dragged the men round and round like mad, through bush and thorny shrub, and over every obstacle; nothing stopped them; their bodies were torn and bleeding. At last they came back to the assembly, whirled round again, and rushed down the path to fall panting and exhausted in the hut of one of a chief’s wives. The sticks, rolling to her very feet, denounced her as a thief. She denied it; but the medicine-man answered, “The spirit has declared her guilty; the spirit never lies.”’ The woman, however, was acquitted, after a proxy trial by ordeal: a cock, used as her proxy, threw up the *muavi*, or ordeal-poison.

Here the points to be noted are, first, the violent movement of the sticks, which the men could hardly hold; next, the physical agitation of the men. The former point is illustrated by the confession of a civil engineer writing in the ‘Times.’ This gentleman had seen the rod successfully used for water; he was asked to try it himself, and he determined that it should not twist in his hands 'if an ocean rolled under his feet.' Twist it did, however, in spite of all his efforts to hold it, when he came above a concealed spring. Another example is quoted in the 'Quarterly Review,' vol. xxii. . A narrator, in whom the editor had 'implicit confidence,' mentions how, when a lady held the twig just over a hidden well, 'the twig turned so quick as to snap, breaking near her fingers.' There seems to be no indiscretion in saying, as the statement has often been printed before, that the lady spoken of in the 'Quarterly Review' was Lady Milbanke, mother of the wife of Byron. Dr. Hutton, the geologist, is quoted as a witness of her success in the search for water with the divining rod. He says that, in an experiment at Woolwich, 'the twigs twisted themselves off below her fingers, which were considerably indented by so forcibly holding the rods between them.' Next, the violent excitement of the four young men of the Mauganja is paralleled by the physical experience of the lady quoted in the 'Quarterly Review.' 'A degree of agitation was visible in her face when she first made the experiment; she says this agitation was great' when she began to practise the art, or whatever we are to call it. Again, in 'Lettres qui découvrent l'illusion' (), we read that Jacques Aymar (who discovered the Lyons murderer in 1692) *se sent tout ému* — feels greatly agitated — when he comes on that of which he is in search. On page 97 of the same volume, the body of the man who holds the divining rod is described as 'violently agitated.' When Aymar entered the room where the murder, to be described later, was committed, 'his pulse rose as if he were in a burning fever, and the wand turned rapidly in his hands' ('Lettres,'). But the most singular parallel to the performance of the African wizard must be quoted from a curious pamphlet already referred to, a translation of the old French 'Verge de Jacob,' written, annotated, and published by a Mr. Thomas Welton. Mr. Welton seems to have been a believer in mesmerism, animal magnetism, and similar doctrines, but the coincidence of his story with that of the African sorcerer is none the less remarkable. It is a coincidence which must almost certainly be 'undesigned.' Mr. Welton's wife was what modern occult philosophers call a 'Sensitive.' In 1851, he wished her to try an experiment with the rod in a garden, and sent a maid-servant to bring 'a certain stick that stood behind the parlour door. In great terror she brought it to the garden, her hand firmly clutched on the stick, nor could she let it go . . . ' The stick was given to Mrs. Welton, 'and it drew her with very considerable force to nearly the centre of the garden, to a bed of poppies, where she stopped.' Here water was found, and the gardener, who had given up his lease as there was no well in the garden, had the lease renewed.

We have thus evidence to show (and much more might be adduced) that the belief in the divining rod, or in analogous instruments, is not confined to the

European races. The superstition, or whatever we are to call it, produces the same effects of physical agitation, and the use of the rod is accompanied with similar phenomena among Mongols, English people, Frenchmen, and the natives of Central Africa. The same coincidences are found in almost all superstitious practices, and in the effects of these practices on believers. The Chinese use a form of *planchette*, which is half a divining rod — a branch of the peach tree; and 'spiritualism' is more than three-quarters of the religion of most savage tribes, a Maori *séance* being more impressive than anything the civilised Sludge can offer his credulous patrons. From these facts different people draw different inferences. Believers say that the wide distribution of their favourite mysteries is a proof that 'there is something in them.' The incredulous look on our modern 'twigs' and turning-tables and ghost stories as mere 'survivals' from the stage of savage culture, or want of culture, when the fancy of half-starved man was active and his reason uncritical.

The great authority for the modern history of the divining rod is a work published by M. Chevreuil, in Paris, in 1854. M. Chevreuil, probably with truth, regarded the wand as much on a par with the turning-tables, which, in 1854, attracted a good deal of attention. He studied the topic historically, and his book, with a few accessible French tracts and letters of the seventeenth century, must here be our guide. A good deal of M. Chevreuil's learning, it should be said, is reproduced in Mr. Baring Gould's 'Curious Myths of the Middle Ages,' but the French author is much more exhaustive in his treatment of the topic. M. Chevreuil could find no earlier book on the twig than the 'Testament du Frère Basil Valentin,' a holy man who flourished (the twig) about 1413; but whose treatise is possibly apocryphal. According to Basil Valentin, the twig was regarded with awe by ignorant labouring men, which is still true. Paracelsus, though he has a reputation for magical daring, thought the use of the twig 'uncertain and unlawful'; and Agricola, in his 'De Re Metallica' (1546) expresses a good deal of scepticism about the use of the rod in mining. A traveller of 1554 found that the wand was *not* used — and this seems to have surprised him — in the mines of Macedonia. Most of the writers of the sixteenth century accounted for the turning of the rod by 'sympathy,' which was then as favourite an explanation of everything as evolution is to-day. In 1630 the Baron de Beau Soleil of Bohemia (his name sounds rather Bohemian) came to France with his wife, and made much use of the rod in the search for water and minerals. The Baroness wrote a little volume on the subject, afterwards reprinted in a great storehouse of this lore, 'La Physique Occulte,' of Vallemont. Kircher, a Jesuit, made experiments which came to nothing; but Gaspard Schott, a learned writer, cautiously declined to say that the Devil was always 'at the bottom of it' when the rod turned successfully. The problem of the rod was placed before our own Royal Society by Boyle, in 1666, but the Society was not more successful here than in dealing with the philosophical difficulty proposed by Charles II. In 1679 De Saint Remain, deserting the old hypothesis of secret 'sympathies,' explained the motion of the rod (supposing it to move) by the action of *corpuscules*. From this time the question became the playing ground of the Cartesian and other philosophers. The struggle was between theories of 'atoms,' magnetism, 'corpuscules,' electric effluvia, and so forth, on one side, and the immediate action of devils or of conscious imposture, on the other. The controversy, comparatively simple as long as the rod only indicated hidden water or minerals, was complicated by the revival of the savage belief that the wand could 'smell out' moral offences. As long as the twig turned over material objects, you could imagine sympathies and 'effluvia' at pleasure. But when the wand twirled over the scene of a murder, or dragged the expert after the traces of the culprit, fresh explanations were wanted. Le Brun wrote to Malebranche on July 8, 1689, to tell him that the wand only turned over what the holder had the *intention* of discovering. If he were following a murderer, the wand good-naturedly refused to distract him by turning over hidden water. On the other hand, Vallemont says that when a peasant was using the wand to find water, it turned over a spot in a wood where a murdered woman was buried, and it conducted the peasant to the murderer's house. These events seem inconsistent with Le Brun's theory of *intention*. Malebranche replied, in effect, that he had only heard of the turning of the wand over water and minerals; that it then turned (if turn it did) by virtue of some such force as electricity; that, if such force existed, the wand would turn over open water. But it does not so turn; and, as physical causes are constant, it follows that the turning of the rod cannot be the result of a physical cause. The only other explanation is an intelligent cause — either the will of an impostor, or the action of a spirit. Good spirits would not meddle with such matters; therefore either the Devil or an impostor causes the motion of the rod, if it *does* move at all. This logic of Malebranche's is not agreeable to believers in the twig; but there the controversy stood, till, in 1692, Jacques Aymar, a peasant of Dauphine, by the use of the twig discovered one of the Lyons murderers.

Though the story of this singular event is pretty well known, it must here be briefly repeated. No affair can be better authenticated, and our version is abridged from the 'Relations' of 'Monsieur le Procureur du Roi, Monsieur l'Abbé de la Garde, Monsieur Panthot, Doyen des Médecins de Lyon, et Monsieur Aubert, Avocat célèbre.'

On July 5, 1692, a vintner and his wife were found dead in the cellar of their shop at Lyons. They had been killed by blows from a hedging-knife, and their money had been stolen. The culprits could not be discovered, and a neighbour took upon him to bring to Lyons a peasant out of Dauphiné, named Jacques Aymar, a man noted for his skill with the divining rod. The Lieutenant-Criminel and the Procureur du Roi took Aymar into the cellar, furnishing him with a rod of the first wood that came to hand. According to the Procureur du Roi, the rod did not move till Aymar reached the very spot where the crime had been committed. His pulse then rose, and the wand twisted rapidly. 'Guided by the wand or by some internal sensation,' Aymar now pursued the track of the assassins, entered the court of the Archbishop's palace, left the town by the bridge over the Rhone, and followed the right bank of the river. He reached a gardener's house, which he declared the men had entered, and some children confessed that three men (*whom they described*) had come into the house one Sunday morning. Aymar followed the track up the river, pointed out all the places where the men had landed, and, to make a long story short, stopped at last at the door of the prison of Beaucaire. He was admitted, looked at the prisoners, and picked out as the murderer a little hunchback (had the children described a hunchback?) who had just been brought in for a small theft. The hunchback was taken to Lyons, and he was recognised, on the way, by the people at all the stages where he had stopped. At Lyons he was examined in the usual manner, and confessed that he had been an accomplice in the crime, and had guarded the door. Aymar pursued the other culprits to the coast, followed them by sea, landed where they had landed, and only desisted from his search when they crossed the frontier. As for the hunchback, he was broken on the wheel, being condemned on his own confession. It does not appear that he was put to the torture to make him confess. If this had been done his admissions would, of course, have been as valueless as those of the victims in trials for witchcraft.

This is, in brief, the history of the famous Lyons murders. It must be added that many experiments were made with Aymar in Paris, and that they were all failures. He fell into every trap that was set for him; detected thieves who were innocent, failed to detect the guilty, and invented absurd excuses; alleging, for example, that the rod would not indicate a murderer who had confessed, or who was drunk when he committed his crime. These excuses seem to annihilate the wild contemporary theory of Chauvin and others, that the body of a murderer naturally exhales an invisible *matière meurtrière* — peculiar indestructible atoms, which may be detected by the expert with the rod. Something like the same theory, we believe, has been used to explain the pretended phenomena of haunted houses. But the wildest philosophical credulity is staggered by a *matière meurtrière* which is disengaged by the body of a sober, but not by that of an intoxicated, murderer, which survives tempests in the air, and endures for many years, but is dissipated the moment the murderer confesses. Believers in Aymar have conjectured that his real powers were destroyed by the excitements of Paris, and that he took to imposture; but this is an effort of too easy good-nature. When Vallemont defended Aymar (1693) in the book called 'La Physique Occulte,' he declared that Aymar was physically affected to an unpleasant extent by *matière meurtrière*, but was not thus agitated when he used the rod to discover minerals. We have seen that, if modern evidence can be trusted, holders of the rod are occasionally much agitated even when they are only in search of wells. The story gave rise to a prolonged controversy, and the case remains a judicial puzzle, but little elucidated by the confession of the hunchback, who may have been insane, or morbid, or vexed by constant questioning till he was weary of his life. He was only nineteen years of age.

The next use of the rod was very much like that of 'tipping' and turning tables. Experts held it (as did Le Père Ménestrier, 1694), questions were asked, and the wand answered by turning in various directions. By way of showing the inconsistency of all philosophies of the wand, it may be said that one girl found that it turned over concealed gold if she held gold in her hand, while another found that it indicated the metal so long as she did *not* carry gold with her in the quest. In the search for water, ecclesiastics were particularly fond of using the rod. The Maréchal de Boufflers dug many wells, and found no water, on the indications of a rod in the hands of the Prieur de Dorenic, near Guise. In 1700 a curé, near Toulouse, used the wand to answer questions, which, like *planchette*, it often answered wrong. The great *sourcier*, or water-finder, of the eighteenth century was one Bleton. He declared that the rod was a mere index, and that physical sensations of the searcher communicated themselves to the wand. This is the reverse of the African theory, that the stick is inspired, while the men who hold it are only influenced by the stick. On the whole, Bleton's idea seems the less absurd, but Bleton himself often failed when watched with scientific care by the incredulous. Paramelle, who wrote on methods of discovering wells, in 1856, came to the conclusion that the wand turns in the hands of certain individuals of peculiar temperament, and that it is very much a matter of chance whether there are, or are not, wells in the places where it turns.

On the whole, the evidence for the turning of the wand is a shade better than that for the magical turning of tables. If there are no phenomena of this sort at all, it is remarkable that the belief in them is so widely diffused. But if the phenomena are purely subjective, owing to the conscious or unconscious action of nervous patients, then they are precisely of the sort which the cunning medicine-man observes, and makes his profit out of, even in the earliest stages of society. Once introduced, these practices never die out among the conservative and unprogressive class of peasants; and, every now and then, they attract the curiosity of philosophers, or win the belief of the credulous among the educated classes. Then comes, as we have lately seen, a revival of ancient superstition. For it were as easy to pluck the comet out of the sky by the tail, as to eradicate superstition from the mind of man.

Perhaps one good word may be said for the divining rod. Considering the chances it has enjoyed, the rod has done less mischief than might have been expected. It might very well have become, in Europe, as in Asia and Africa, a kind of ordeal, or method of searching for and trying malefactors. Men like Jacques Aymar might have played, on a larger scale, the part of Hopkins, the witch-finder. Aymar was, indeed, employed by some young men to point out, by help of the wand, the houses of ladies who had been more frail than faithful. But at the end of the seventeenth century in France, this research was not regarded with favour, and put the final touch on the discomfiture of Aymar. So far as we know, the hunchback of Lyons was the only victim of the ‘twig’ who ever suffered in civilised society. It is true that, in rural England, the movements of a Bible, suspended like a pendulum, have been thought to point out the guilty. But even that evidence is not held good enough to go to a jury.

HOTTENTOT MYTHOLOGY.

‘What makes mythology mythological, in the true sense of the word, is what is utterly unintelligible, absurd, strange, or miraculous.’ So says Mr. Max Müller in the January number of the *Nineteenth Century* for 1882. Men’s attention would never have been surprised into the perpetual study and questioning of mythology if it had been intelligible and dignified, and if its report had been in accordance with the reason of civilised and cultivated races. What mythologists wish to discover is the origin of the countless disgusting, amazing, and incongruous legends which occur in the myths of all known peoples. According to Mr. Müller —

There are only two systems possible in which the irrational element in mythology can be accounted for. One school takes the irrational as a matter of fact; and if we read that Daphne fled before Phœbus, and was changed into a laurel tree, that school would say that there probably was a young lady called Aurora, like, for instance, Aurora Königsmark; that a young man called Robin, or possibly a man with red hair, pursued her, and that she hid behind a laurel tree that happened to be there. This was the theory of Euhemeros, re-established by the famous Abbé Bernier , and not quite extinct even now. According to another school, the irrational element in mythology is inevitable, and due to the influence of language on thought, so that many of the legends of gods and heroes may be rendered intelligible if only we can discover the original meaning of their proper names. The followers of this school try to show that Daphne, the laurel tree, was an old name for the dawn, and that Phoibos was one of the many names of the sun, who pursued the dawn till she vanished before his rays. Of these two schools, the former has always appealed to the mythologies of savage nations, as showing that gods and heroes were originally human beings, worshipped after their death as ancestors and as gods, while the latter has confined itself chiefly to an etymological analysis of mythological names in Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit, and other languages, such as had been sufficiently studied to admit of a scientific, grammatical, and etymological treatment.

This is a long text for our remarks on Hottentot mythology; but it is necessary to prove that there are not two schools only of mythologists: that there are inquirers who neither follow the path of the Abbé Banier, nor of the philologists, but a third way, unknown to, or ignored by Mr. Müller. We certainly were quite unaware that Banier and Euhemeros were very specially concerned, as Mr.

Müller thinks, with savage mythology; but it is by aid of savage myths that the school unknown to Mr. Müller examines the myths of civilised peoples like the Greeks. The disciples of Mr. Müller interpret all the absurdities of Greek myth, the gods who are beasts on occasion, the stars who were men, the men who become serpents or deer, the deities who are cannibals and parricides and adulterers, as the result of the influence of Aryan speech upon Aryan thought. Men, in Mr. Müller's opinion, had originally pure ideas about the gods, and expressed them in language which we should call figurative. The figures remained, when their meaning was lost; the names were then supposed to be gods, the *nomina* became *numina*, and out of the inextricable confusion of thought which followed, the belief in cannibal, bestial, adulterous, and incestuous gods was evolved. That is Mr. Müller's hypothesis; with him the evolution, a result of a disease of language, has been from early comparative purity to later religious abominations. Opposed to him is what may be called the school of Mr. Herbert Spencer: the modern Euhemerism, which recognises an element of historical truth in myths, as if the characters had been real characters, and which, in most gods, beholds ancestral ghosts raised to a higher power.

There remains a third system of mythical interpretation, though Mr. Müller says only two methods are possible. The method, in this third case, is to see whether the irrational features and elements of civilised Greek myth occur also in the myths of savages who speak languages quite unlike those from whose diseases Mr. Müller derives the corruption of religion. If the same features recur, are they as much in harmony with the mental habits of savages, such as Bushmen and Hottentots, as they are out of accord with the mental habits of civilised Greeks? If this question can be answered in the affirmative, then it may be provisionally assumed that the irrational elements of savage myth are the legacy of savage modes of thought, and have survived in the religion of Greece from a time when the ancestors of the Greeks were savages. But inquirers who use this method do not in the least believe that either Greek or savage gods were, for the more part, originally real men. Both Greeks and savages have worshipped the ghosts of the dead. Both Greeks and savages assign to their gods the miraculous powers of transformation and magic, which savages also attribute to their conjurers or shamans. The mantle (if he had a mantle) of the medicine-man has fallen on the god; but Zeus, or Indra, was not once a real medicine-man. A number of factors combine in the conception of Indra, or Zeus, as either god appears in Sanskrit or Greek literature, of earlier or later date. Our school does not hold anything so absurd as that Daphne was a real girl pursued by a young man. But it has been observed that, among most savage races, metamorphoses like that of Daphne not only exist in mythology, but are believed to occur very frequently in actual life. Men and women are supposed to be capable of turning into plants (as the bamboo in Sarawak), into animals, and stones, and stars, and those metamorphoses happen as contemporary events — for example, in Samoa.

When Mr. Lane was living at Cairo, and translating the ‘Arabian Nights,’ he found that the people still believed in metamorphosis. Any day, just as in the ‘Arabian Nights,’ a man might find himself turned by an enchanter into a pig or a horse. Similar beliefs, not derived from language, supply the matter of the senseless incidents in Greek myths.

Savage mythology is also full of metamorphoses. Therefore the mythologists whose case we are stating, when they find identical metamorphoses in the classical mythologies, conjecture that these were first invented when the ancestors of the Aryans were in the imaginative condition in which a score of rude races are to-day. This explanation they apply to many other irrational elements in mythology. They do not say, ‘Something like the events narrated in these stories once occurred,’ nor ‘A disease of language caused the belief in such events,’ but ‘These stories were invented when men were capable of believing in their occurrence as a not unusual sort of incident’

Philologists attempt to explain the metamorphoses as the result of some oblivion and confusion of language. Apollo, they say, was called the ‘wolf-god’ (Lukeios) by accident: his name really meant the ‘god of light.’ A similar confusion made the ‘seven shiners’ into the ‘seven bears.’ These explanations are distrusted, partly because the area to be covered by them is so vast. There is scarcely a star, tree, or beast, but it has been a man or woman once, if we believe civilised and savage myth. Two or three possible examples of myths originating in forgetfulness of the meaning of words, even if admitted, do not explain the incalculable crowd of metamorphoses. We account for these by saying that, to the savage mind, which draws no hard and fast line between man and nature, all such things are possible; possible enough, at least, to be used as incidents in story. Again, as has elsewhere been shown, the laxity of philological reasoning is often quite extraordinary; while, lastly, philologists of the highest repute flatly contradict each other about the meaning of the names and roots on which they agree in founding their theory.

By way of an example of the philological method as applied to savage mythology, we choose a book in many ways admirable, Dr. Hahn’s ‘Tsuni Goam, the Supreme Being of the Khoi Khoi.’ This book is sometimes appealed to as a crushing argument against the mythologists who adopt the method we have just explained. Let us see if the blow be so very crushing. To put the case in a nutshell, the Hottentots have commonly been described as a race which worshipped a dead chief, or conjurer — Tsui Goab his name is, meaning Wounded Knee, a not unlikely name for a savage. Dr. Hahn, on the other hand, labours to show that the Hottentots originally worshipped no dead chief, but (as a symbol of the Infinite) the Red Dawn. The meaning of the name Red Dawn, he says, was lost; the words which meant Red Dawn were erroneously supposed to mean Wounded Knee, and thus arose the adoration and the myths of a dead chief, or wizard, Tsui Goab, Wounded Knee. Clearly, if this can be proved, it is an excellent case for the philological school, an admirable example of a myth produced by forgetfulness of the meaning of words. Our own opinion is that, even if Tsui Goab originally meant Red Dawn, the being, as now conceived of by his adorers, is bedizened in the trappings of the dead medicine-man, and is worshipped just as ghosts of the dead are worshipped. Thus, whatever his origin, his myth is freely coloured by the savage fancy and by savage ideas, and we ask no more than this colouring to explain the wildest Greek myths. What truly 'primitive' religion was, we make no pretence to know. We only say that, whether Greek religion arose from a pure fountain or not, its stream had flowed through and been tinged by the soil of savage thought, before it widens into our view in historical times. But it will be shown that the logic which connects Tsui Goab with the Red Dawn is far indeed from being cogent.

Tsui Goab is thought by the Hottentots themselves to be a dead man, and it is admitted that among the Hottentots dead men are adored. 'Cairns are still objects of worship,' and Tsui Goab lies beneath several cairns. Again, soothsayers are believed in (), and Tsui Goab is regarded as a deceased soothsayer. As early as 1655, a witness quoted by Hahn saw women worshipping at one of the cairns of Heitsi Eibib, another supposed ancestral being. Kolb, the old Dutch traveller, found that the Hottentots, like the Bushmen, revered the mantis insect. This creature they called Gaunab. They also had some moon myths, practised adoration of the moon, and danced at dawn. Thunberg (1792) saw the cairn-worship, and, on asking its meaning, was told that a Hottentot lay buried there. Thunberg also heard of the worship of the mantis, or grey grasshopper. In 1803 Liechtenstein noted the cairn-worship, and was told that a renowned Hottentot doctor of old times rested under the cairn. Appleyard's account of 'the name God in Khoi Khoi, or Hottentot,' deserves quoting in full: —

Hottentot: Tsoei'koap.
Namaqua: Tsoei'koap.
Koranna: Tshu'koab, and the author adds: 'This is the word from which the Kafirs have probably derived their u-Tixo, a term which they have universally

applied, like the Hottentots, to designate the Divine Being, since the introduction of Christianity. Its derivation is curious. It consists of two words, which together mean the "wounded knee." It is said to have been originally applied to a doctor or sorcerer of considerable notoriety and skill amongst the Hottentots or Namaquas some generations back, in consequence of his having received some injury in his knee. Having been held in high repute for extraordinary powers during life, he appeared to be invoked even after death, as one who could still relieve and protect; and hence, in process of time, he became nearest in idea to their first conceptions of God.'

Other missionaries make old Wounded Knee a good sort of being on the whole, who fights Gaunab, a bad being. Dr. Moffat heard that 'Tsui Kuap' was 'a notable warrior,' who once received a wound in the knee. Sir James Alexander found that the Namaquas believed their 'great father' lay below the cairns on which they flung boughs. This great father was Heitsi Eibib, and, like other medicine-men, 'he could take many forms.' Like Tsui Goab, he died several times and rose again. Hahn gives () a long account of the Wounded Knee from an old chief, and a story of the battle between Tsui Goab, who 'lives in a beautiful heaven,' and Gaunab, who 'lives in a dark heaven.' As this chief had dwelt among missionaries very long, we may perhaps discount his remarks on 'heaven' as borrowed. Hahn thinks they refer to the red sky in which Tsui Goab lived, and to the black sky which was the home of Gaunab. The two characters in this crude religious dualism thus inhabit light and darkness respectively.

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As far as we have gone, Tsui Goab, like Heitsi Eibib among the Namas, is a dead sorcerer, whose graves are worshipped, while, with a common inconsistency, he is also thought of as dwelling in the sky. Even Christians often speak of the dead with similar inconsistency. Tsui Goab's worship is intelligible enough among a people so credulous that they took Hahn himself for a conjurer (), and so given to ancestor-worship that Hahn has seen them worship their own fathers' graves, and expect help from men recently dead (p, 113). But, while the Khoi Khoi think that Tsui Goab was once a real man, we need not share their Euhemerism. More probably, like Unkulunkulu among the Zulus, Tsui Goab is an ideal, imaginary ancestral sorcerer and god. No one man requires many graves, and Tsui Goab has more than Osiris possessed in Egypt.

If the Egyptians in some immeasurably distant past were once on the level of Namas and Hottentots, they would worship Osiris at as many barrows as Heitsi

Eibib and Tsui Goab are adored. In later times the numerous graves of one being would require explanation, and explanations would be furnished by the myth that the body of Osiris was torn to pieces and each fragment buried in a separate tomb.

Again, lame gods occur in Greek, Australian, and Brazilian creeds, and the very coincidence of Tsui Goab's lameness makes us sceptical about his claims to be a real dead man. On the other hand, when Hahn tells us that epical myths are now sung in the dances in honour of warriors lately slain (), and that similar dances and songs were performed in the past to honour Tsui Goab, this looks more as if Tsui Goab had been an actual person. Against this we must set () the belief that Tsui Goab made the first man and woman, and was the Prometheus of the Hottentots.

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So far Dr. Hahn has given us facts which entirely fit in with our theory that an ancestor-worshipping people, believing in metamorphosis and sorcery, adores a god who is supposed to be a deceased ancestral sorcerer with the power of magic and metamorphosis. But now Dr. Hahn offers his own explanation. According to the philological method, he will 'study the names of the persons, until we arrive at the naked root and original meanings of the words.' Starting then with Tsui Goab, whom all evidence declares to be a dead lame conjurer and warrior, Dr. Hahn avers that 'Tsui Goab, originally Tsuni Goam, was the name by which the Red Men called the Infinite.' As the Frenchman said of the derivation of *jour* from *dies*, we may hint that the Infinite thus transformed into a lame Hottentot 'bush-doctor' is *diablement changé en route*. To a dead lame sorcerer from the Infinite is a fall indeed. The process of the decline is thus described. *Tsui Goab* is composed of two roots, *tsu* and *goa*. *Goa* means 'to go on,' 'to come on.' In Khoi Khoi *goa-b* means 'the coming on one,' the dawn, and *goa-b* also means 'the knee.' Dr. Hahn next writes (making a logical leap of extraordinary width), 'it is now obvious that, //*goab* in Tsui Goab cannot be translated with knee,' — why not?— 'but we have to adopt the other metaphorical meaning, the *approaching* day, *i.e.* the dawn.' Where is the necessity? In ordinary philology, we should here demand a number of attested examples of *goab*, in the sense of dawn, but in Khoi Khoi we cannot expect such evidence, as there are probably no texts. Next, after arbitrarily deciding that all Khoi Khois misunderstand their own tongue (for that is what the rendering here of *goab* by 'dawn' comes to), Dr. Hahn examines *tsu*, in *Tsui*. *Tsu* means 'sore,' 'wounded,' 'painful,' as in 'wounded knee' — Tsui Goab. This does not help Dr Hahn, for 'wounded dawn' means nothing. But he reflects that a wound is red, *tsu* means wounded: therefore *tsu* means red, therefore Tsui Goab is the Red Dawn. Q.E.D.

This kind of reasoning is obviously fallacious. Dr. Hahn's point could only be made by bringing forward examples in which *tsu* is employed to mean red in Khoi Khoi. Of this use of the word *tsu* he does not give one single instance, though on this point his argument depends. His etymology is not strengthened by the fact that Tsui Goab has once been said to live in the red sky. A red house is not necessarily tenanted by a red man. Still less is the theory supported by the hymn which says Tsui Goab paints himself with red ochre. Most idols, from those of the Samoyeds to the Greek images of Dionysus, are and have been daubed with red. By such reasoning is Tsui Goab proved to be the Red Dawn, while his gifts of prophecy (which he shares with all soothsayers) are accounted for as attributes of dawn, of the Vedic *Saranyu.*

Turning from Tsui Goab to his old enemy Gaunab, we learn that his name is derived from *//gau*, 'to destroy,' and, according to old Hottentot ideas, 'no one was the destroyer but the night' (). There is no apparent reason why the destroyer should be the night, and the night alone, any more than why 'a lame broken knee' should be 'red' (). Besides (), Gaunab is elsewhere explained, not as the night, but as the malevolent ghost which is thought to kill people who die what we call a 'natural' death. Unburied men change into this sort of vampire, just as Elpenor, in the Odyssey, threatens, if unburied, to become mischievous. There is another Gaunab, the mantis insect, which is worshipped by Hottentots and Bushmen (). It appears that the two Gaunabs are differently pronounced. However that may be, a race which worships an insect might well worship a dead medicine-man.

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The conclusion, then, to be drawn from an examination of Hottentot mythology is merely this, that the ideas of a people will be reflected in their myths. A people which worships the dead, believes in sorcerers and in prophets, and in metamorphosis, will have for its god (if he can be called a god) a being who is looked on as a dead prophet and sorcerer. He will be worshipped with such rites as dead men receive; he will be mixed up in such battles as living men wage, and will be credited with the skill which living sorcerers claim. All these things meet in the legend of Tsui Goab, the so-called 'supreme being' of the Hottentots. His connection with the dawn is not supported by convincing argument or evidence. The relation of the dawn to the Infinite again rests on nothing but a theory of Mr. Max Müller's. His adversary, though recognised as the night, is elsewhere admitted to have been, originally, a common vampire.

Finally, the Hottentots, a people not much removed from savagery, have a mythology full of savage and even disgusting elements. And this is just what we expect from Hottentots. The puzzle is when we find myths as low as the story of the incest of Heitsi Eibib among the Greeks. The reason for this coincidence is that, in Dr. Hahn's words, 'the same objects and the same phenomena in nature will give rise to the same ideas, whether social or mythical, among different races of mankind,' especially when these races are in the same well-defined state of savage fancy and savage credulity.

Dr. Hahn's book has been regarded as a kind of triumph over inquirers who believe that ancestor-worship enters into myth, and that the purer element in myth is the later. But where is the triumph? Even on Dr. Hahn's own showing, ancestor-worship among the Hottentots has swamped the adoration of the Infinite. It may be said that Dr. Hahn has at least proved the adoration of the Infinite to be earlier than ancestor-worship. But it has been shown that his attempt to establish a middle stage, to demonstrate that the worshipped ancestor was really the Red Dawn, is not logical nor convincing. Even if that middle stage were established, it is a far cry from the worship of Dawn (supposed by the Australians to be a woman of bad character in a cloak of red' possum-skin) to the adoration of the Infinite. Our own argument has been successful if we have shown that there are not only two possible schools of mythological interpretation — the Euhemeristic, led by Mr. Spencer, and the Philological, led by Mr. Max Müller. We have seen that it is possible to explain the legend of Tsui Goab without either believing him to have been a real historical person (as Mr. Spencer may perhaps believe), or his myth to have been the result of a 'disease of language' as Mr. Müller supposes. We have explained the legend and worship of a supposed dead conjurer as natural to a race which believes in conjurers and worships dead men. Whether he was merely an ideal ancestor and warrior, or whether an actual man has been invested with what divine qualities Tsui Goab enjoys, it is impossible to say; but, if he ever lived, he has long been adorned with ideal qualities and virtues which he never possessed. The conception of the powerful ancestral ghost has been heightened and adorned with some novel attributes of power: the conception of the Infinite has not been degraded, by forgetfulness of language, to the estate of an ancestral ghost with a game leg.

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If this view be correct, myth is the result of thought, far more than of a disease of language. The comparative importance of language and thought was settled long ago, in our sense, by no less a person than Pragapati, the Sanskrit Master of

Life.

‘Now a dispute once took place between Mind and Speech, as to which was the better of the two. Both Mind and Speech said, “I am excellent!” Mind said, “Surely I am better than thou, for thou dost not speak anything that is not understood by me; and since thou art only an imitator of what is done by me and a follower in my wake, I am surely better than thou!” Speech said, “Surely I am better than thou, for what thou knowest I make known, I communicate.” They went to appeal to Pragapati for his decision. He (Pragapati) decided in favour of Mind, saying (to Speech), “Mind is indeed better than thou, for thou art an imitator of its deeds, and a follower in its wake; and inferior, surely, is he who imitates his better’s deeds, and follows in his wake.”’

So saith the ‘Satapatha Brahmana.’

FETICHISM AND THE INFINITE.

What is the true place of Fetichism, to use a common but unscientific term, in the history of religious evolution? Some theorists have made fetichism, that is to say, the adoration of odds and ends (with which they have confused the worship of animals, of mountains, and even of the earth), the first moment in the development of worship. Others, again, think that fetichism is ‘a corruption of religion, in Africa, as elsewhere.’ The latter is the opinion of Mr Max Müller, who has stated it in his ‘Hibbert Lectures,’ on ‘The Origin and Growth of Religion, especially as illustrated by the Religions of India.’ It seems probable that there is a middle position between these two extremes. Students may hold that we hardly know enough to justify us in talking about the *origin* of religion, while at the same time they may believe that Fetichism is one of the earliest traceable steps by which men climbed to higher conceptions of the supernatural. Meanwhile Mr. Max Müller supports his own theory, that fetichism is a ‘parasitical growth,’ a ‘corruption’ of religion, by arguments mainly drawn from historical study of savage creeds, and from the ancient religious documents of India.

These documents are to English investigators ignorant of Sanskrit ‘a book sealed with seven seals.’ The Vedas are interpreted in very different ways by different Oriental scholars. It does not yet appear to be known whether a certain word in the Vedic funeral service means ‘goat’ or ‘soul’! Mr. Max Müller’s rendering is certain to have the first claim on English readers, and therefore it is desirable to investigate the conclusions which he draws from his Vedic studies. The ordinary anthropologist must first, however, lodge a protest against the tendency to look for *primitive* matter in the Vedas. They are the elaborate hymns of a specially trained set of poets and philosophers, living in an age almost of civilisation. They can therefore contain little testimony as to what man, while still ‘primitive,’ thought about God, the world, and the soul. One might as well look for the first germs of religion, for *primitive* religion strictly so called, in ‘Hymns Ancient and Modern’ as in the Vedas. It is chiefly, however, by way of deductions from the Vedas, that Mr. Max Müller arrives at ideas which may be briefly and broadly stated thus: he inclines to derive religion from man’s sense of the Infinite, as awakened by natural objects calculated to stir that sense. Our position is, on the other hand, that the germs of the religious sense in early man are developed, not so much by the vision of the Infinite, as by the idea of Power. Early religions, in short, are selfish, not disinterested. The worshipper is not contemplative, so much as eager to gain something to his advantage. In fetiches, he ignorantly recognises something that possesses power of an abnormal sort, and the train of ideas which leads him to believe in and to treasure fetiches is one among the earliest springs of religious belief.

Mr. Müller's opinion is the very reverse: he believes that a contemplative and disinterested emotion in the presence of the Infinite, or of anything that suggests infinitude or is mistaken for the Infinite, begets human religion, while of this religion fetichism is a later corruption.

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In treating of fetichism Mr. Müller is obliged to criticise the system of De Brosses, who introduced this rather unfortunate term to science, in an admirable work, 'Le Culte des Dieux Fetiches' (1760). We call the work 'admirable,' because, considering the contemporary state of knowledge and speculation, De Brosses's book is brilliant, original, and only now and then rash or confused. Mr. Müller says that De Brosses 'holds that all nations had to begin with fetichism, to be followed afterwards by polytheism and monotheism.' This sentence would lead some readers to suppose that De Brosses, in his speculations, was looking for the origin of religion; but, in reality, his work is a mere attempt to explain a certain element in ancient religion and mythology. De Brosses was well aware that heathen religions were a complex mass, a concretion of many materials. He admits the existence of regard for the spirits of the dead as one factor, he gives Sabaeism a place as another. But what chiefly puzzles him, and what he chiefly tries to explain, is the worship of odds and ends of rubbish, and the adoration of animals, mountains, trees, the sun, and so forth. When he masses all these worships together, and proposes to call them all Fetichism (a term derived from the Portuguese word for a talisman), De Brosses is distinctly unscientific. But De Brosses is distinctly scientific when he attempts to explain the animal-worship of Egypt, and the respect paid by Greeks and Romans to shapeless stones, as survivals of older savage practices.

The position of De Brosses is this: Old mythology and religion are a tissue of many threads. Sabaeism, adoration of the dead, mythopœic fancy, have their part in the fabric. Among many African tribes, a form of theism, Islamite or Christian, or self-developed, is superimposed on a mass of earlier superstitions. Among these superstitions, is the worship of animals and plants, and the cult of rough stones and of odds and ends of matter. What is the origin of this element, so prominent in the religion of Egypt, and present, if less conspicuous, in the most ancient temples of Greece? It is the survival, answers De Brosses, of ancient practices like those of untutored peoples, as Brazilians, Samoyeds, Negroes, whom the Egyptians and Pelasgians once resembled in lack of culture.

This, briefly stated, is the hypothesis of De Brosses. If he had possessed our wider information, he would have known that, among savage races, the worships of the stars, of the dead, and of plants and animals, are interlaced by the strange metaphysical processes of wild men. He would, perhaps, have kept the supernatural element in magical stones, feathers, shells, and so on, apart from the triple thread of Sabaeism, ghost-worship, and totemism, with its later development into the regular worship of plants and animals. It must be recognised, however, that De Brosses was perfectly well aware of the confused and manifold character of early religion. He had a clear view of the truth that what the religious instinct has once grasped, it does not, as a rule, abandon, but subordinates or disguises, when it reaches higher ideas. And he avers, again and again, that men laid hold of the coarser and more material objects of worship, while they themselves were coarse and dull, and that, as civilisation advanced, they, as a rule, subordinated and disguised the ruder factors in their system. Here it is that Mr. Max Müller differs from De Brosses. He holds that the adoration of stones, feathers, shells, and (as I understand him) the worship of animals are, even among the races of Africa, a corruption of an earlier and purer religion, a ‘parasitical development’ of religion.

However, Mr. Max Müller himself held ‘for a long time’ what he calls ‘De Brosses’s theory of fetichism.’ What made him throw the theory overboard? It was ‘the fact that, while in the earliest accessible documents of religious thought we look in vain for any very clear traces of fetichism, they become more and more frequent everywhere in the later stages of religious development, and are certainly more visible in the later corruptions of the Indian religion, beginning with the Âtharva*n*a, than in the earliest hymns of the Rig Veda.’ Now, by the earliest accessible documents of religious thought, Professor Max Müller means the hymns of the Rig Veda. These hymns are composed in the most elaborate metre, by sages of old repute, who, I presume, occupied a position not unlike that of the singers and seers of Israel. They lived in an age of tolerably advanced cultivation. They had wide geographical knowledge. They had settled government. They dwelt in States. They had wealth of gold, of grain, and of domesticated animals. Among the metals, they were acquainted with that which, in most countries, has been the latest worked — they used iron poles in their chariots. How then can the hymns of the most enlightened singers of a race thus far developed be called ‘the earliest religious documents’? Oldest they may be, the oldest that are accessible, but that is a very different thing. How can we possibly argue that what is absent in these hymns, is absent because it had not yet come into existence? Is it not the very office of *pii vates et Phœbo digna locuti* to purify religion, to cover up decently its rude shapes, as the unhewn stone was concealed in the fane of Apollo of Delos? If the race whose noblest and oldest extant hymns were pure, exhibits traces of fetichism in its later documents, may not that as easily result from a recrudescence as from a corruption? Professor Max Müller has still, moreover, to explain how the process of corruption which introduced the same fetichistic practices among Samoyeds, Brazilians, Kaffirs, and the people of the Âtharva*n*a Veda came to be everywhere identical in its results.

Here an argument often urged against the anthropological method may be shortly disposed of. ‘You examine savages,’ people say, ‘but how do you know that these savages were not once much more cultivated; that their whole mode of life, religion and all, is not debased and decadent from an earlier standard?’ Mr. Müller glances at this argument, which, however, cannot serve his purpose. Mr. Müller has recognised that savage, or ‘nomadic,’ languages represent a much earlier state of language than anything that we find, for example, in the oldest Hebrew or Sanskrit texts. ‘For this reason,’ he says, ‘the study of what I call *nomad* languages, as distinguished from *State* languages, becomes so instructive. We see in them what we can no longer expect to see even in the most ancient Sanskrit or Hebrew. We watch the childhood of language with all its childish freaks.’ Yes, adds the anthropologist, and for this reason the study of savage religions, as distinguished from State religions, becomes so instructive. We see in them what we can no longer expect to see even in the most ancient Sanskrit or Hebrew faiths. We watch the childhood of religion with all its childish freaks. If this reasoning be sound when the Kaffir tongue is contrasted with ancient Sanskrit, it should be sound when the Kaffir faith is compared with the Vedic faith. By parity of reasoning, the religious beliefs of peoples as much less advanced than the Kaffirs as the Kaffirs are less advanced than the Vedic peoples, should be still nearer the infancy of faith, still ‘nearer the beginning.’

We have been occupied, perhaps, too long with De Brosses and our apology for De Brosses. Let us now examine, as shortly as possible, Mr. Max Müller’s reasons for denying that fetichism is ‘a primitive form of religion.’ The negative side of his argument being thus disposed of, it will then be our business to consider (1) his psychological theory of the subjective element in religion, and (2) his account of the growth of Indian religion. The conclusion of the essay will be concerned with demonstrating that Mr. Max Müller’s system assigns little or no place to the superstitious beliefs without which, in other countries than India, society could not have come into organised existence.

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In his polemic against Fetichism, it is not always very easy to see against whom Mr. Müller is contending. It is one thing to say that fetichism is a ‘primitive form of religion,’ and quite another to say that it is ‘the very beginning of all religion.’ Occasionally he attacks the ‘Comtian theory,’ which, I think, is not now held by many people who study the history of man, and which I am not concerned to defend. He says that the Portuguese navigators who discovered among the negroes ‘no other trace of any religious worship’ except what they called the worship of *feitiços*, concluded that this was the whole of the religion of the negroes (). Mr. Müller then goes on to prove that ‘no religion consists of fetichism only,’ choosing his examples of higher elements in negro religion from the collections of Waitz. It is difficult to see what bearing this has on his argument. De Brosses () shows that *he*, at least, was well aware that many negro tribes have higher conceptions of the Deity than any which are implied in fetich-worship. Even if no tribe in the world is exclusively devoted to fetiches, the argument makes no progress. Perhaps no extant tribe is in the way of using unpolished stone weapons and no others, but it does not follow that unpolished stone weapons are not primitive. It is just as easy to maintain that the purer ideas have, by this time, been reached by aid of the stepping-stones of the grosser, as that the grosser are the corruption of the purer. Mr. Max Müller constantly asserts that the ‘human mind advanced by small and timid steps from what is intelligible, to what is at first sight almost beyond comprehension’ (). Among the objects which aided man to take these small and timid steps, he reckons rivers and trees, which excited, he says, religious awe. What he will not suppose is that the earliest small and timid steps were not unaided by such objects as the fetichist treasures — stones, shells, and so forth, which suggest no idea of infinity. Stocks he will admit, but not, if he can help it, stones, of the sort that negroes and Kanekas and other tribes use as fetiches. His reason is, that he does not see how the scraps of the fetichist can appeal to the feeling of the Infinite, which feeling is, in his theory, the basis of religion.

After maintaining (what is readily granted) that negroes have a religion composed of many elements, Mr. Müller tries to discredit the evidence about the creeds of savages, and discourses on the many minute shades of progress which exist among tribes too often lumped together as if they were all in the same condition. Here he will have all scientific students of savage life on his side. It remains true, however, that certain elements of savage practice, fetichism being one of them, are practically ubiquitous. Thus, when Mr. Müller speaks of ‘the influence of public opinion’ in biassing the narrative of travellers, we must not forget that the strongest evidence about savage practice is derived from the 'undesigned coincidence' of the testimonies of all sorts of men, in all ages, and all conditions of public opinion. 'Illiterate men, ignorant of the writings of each other, bring the same reports from various quarters of the globe,' wrote Millar of Glasgow. When sailors, merchants, missionaries, describe, as matters unprecedented and unheard of, such institutions as polyandry, totemism, and so forth, the evidence is so strong, because the witnesses are so astonished. They do not know that anyone but themselves has ever noticed the curious facts before their eyes. And when Mr. Müller tries to make the testimony about savage faith still more untrustworthy, by talking of the 'absence of recognised authority among savages,' do not let us forget that custom (½¿¼¿Â) is a recognised authority, and that the punishment of death is inflicted for transgression of certain rules. These rules, generally speaking, are of a religious nature, and the religion to which they testify is of the sort known (too vaguely) as 'fetichistic.' Let us keep steadily before our minds, when people talk of lack of evidence, that we have two of the strongest sorts of evidence in the world for the kind of religion which least suits Mr. Müller's argument — (1) the undesigned coincidences of testimony, (2) the irrefutable witness and sanction of elementary criminal law. Mr. Müller's own evidence is that much-disputed work, where 'all men see what they want to see, as in the clouds,' and where many see systematised fetichism — the Veda.

The first step in Mr. Max Müller's polemic was the assertion that Fetichism is nowhere unmixed. We have seen that the fact is capable of an interpretation that will suit either side. Stages of culture overlap each other. The second step in his polemic was the effort to damage the evidence. We have seen that we have as good evidence as can be desired. In the third place he asks, What are the antecedents of fetich-worship? He appears to conceive himself to be arguing with persons () who 'have taken for granted that every human being was miraculously endowed with the concept of what forms the predicate of every fetich, call it power, spirit, or god.' If there are reasoners so feeble, they must be left to the punishment inflicted by Mr. Müller. On the other hand, students who regard the growth of the idea of power, which is the predicate of every fetish, as a slow process, as the result of various impressions and trains of early half-conscious reasoning, cannot be disposed of by the charge that they think that 'every human being was miraculously endowed' with any concept whatever. They, at least, will agree with Mr. Max Müller that there are fetiches and fetiches, that to one reverence is assigned for one reason, to another for another. Unfortunately, it is less easy to admit that Mr. Max Müller has been happy in his choice of ancient instances. He writes (): 'Sometimes a stock or a stone was worshipped because it was a forsaken altar or an ancient place of judgment, sometimes because it marked the place of a great battle or a murder, or the burial of a king.' Here he refers to Pausanias, book i. 28, 5, and viii. 13, 3. In both of these passages, Pausanias, it is true, mentions stones — in the first passage stones on which men stood ¿Ã¿¹ ´¹º±Â ÅÀµÇ¿ÅÃ¹ º±¹ ¿¹ ´¹Éº¿½ÄµÂ, in the second, barrows heaped up in honour of men who fell in battle. In neither case, however, do I find anything to show that the stones were worshipped. These stones, then, have no more to do with the argument than the milestones which certainly exist on the Dover road, but which are not the objects of superstitious reverence. No! the fetich-stones of Greece were those which occupied the holy of holies of the most ancient temples, the mysterious fanes within dark cedar or cypress groves, to which men were hardly admitted. They were the stones and blocks which bore the names of gods, Hera, or Apollo, names perhaps given, as De Brosses says, to the old fetichistic objects of worship, *after* the anthropomorphic gods entered Hellas. This, at least is the natural conclusion from the fact that the Apollo and Hera of untouched wood or stone were confessedly the *oldest*. Religion, possessing an old fetich did not run the risk of breaking the run of luck by discarding it, but wisely retained and renamed it. Mr. Max Müller says that the unhewn lump may indicate a higher power of abstraction than the worship paid to the work of Phidias; but in that case all the savage adorers of rough stones *may* be in a stage of more abstract thought than these contemporaries of Phidias who had such very hard work to make Greek thought abstract.

Mr Müller founds a very curious argument on what he calls 'the ubiquity of fetichism.' Like De Brosses, he compiles (from Pausanias) a list of the rude stones worshipped by the early Greeks. He mentions various examples of fetichistic superstitions in Rome. He detects the fetichism of popular Catholicism, and of Russian orthodoxy among the peasants. Here, he cries, in religions the history of which is known to us, fetichism is secondary, 'and why should fetiches in Africa, where we do not know the earlier development of religion, be considered as primary?' What a singular argument! According to Pausanias, this fetichism (if fetichism it is) *was* primary, in Greece. The *oldest* temples, in their holiest place, held the oldest fetich. In Rome, it is at least probable that fetichism, as in Greece, was partly a survival, partly a new growth from the primal root of human superstitions. As to Catholicism, the records of Councils, the invectives of the Church, show us that, from the beginning, the secondary religion in point of time, the religion of the Church, laboured vainly to suppress, and had in part to tolerate, the primary religion of childish superstitions. The documents are before the world. As to the Russians, the history of their conversion is pretty well known. Jaroslaf, or Vladimir, or some other evangelist, had whole villages baptized in groups, and the pagan peasants naturally kept up their primary semi-savage ways of thought and worship, under the secondary varnish of orthodoxy. In all Mr. Max Müller's examples, then, fetichism turns out to be *primary* in point of time; *secondary* only, as subordinate to some later development of faith, or to some lately superimposed religion. Accepting his statement that fetichism is ubiquitous, we have the most powerful *a priori* argument that fetichism is primitive. As religions become developed they are differentiated; it only fetichism that you find the same everywhere. Thus the bow and arrow have a wide range of distribution: the musket, one not so wide; the Martini-Henry rifle, a still narrower range: it is the primitive stone weapons that are ubiquitous, that are found in the soil of England, Egypt, America, France, Greece, as in the hands of Dieyries and Admiralty Islanders. And just as rough stone knives are earlier than iron ones (though the same race often uses both), so fetichism is more primitive than higher and purer faiths, though the same race often combines fetichism and theism. No one will doubt the truth of this where weapons are concerned; but Mr. Max Müller will not look at religion in this way.

Mr. Max Müller's remarks on 'Zoolatry,' as De Brosses calls it, or animal-worship, require only the briefest comment. De Brosses, very unluckily, confused zoolatry with other superstitions under the head of Fetichism. This was unscientific; but is it scientific of Mr. Max Müller to discuss animal-worship without any reference to totemism? The worship of sacred animals is found, in every part of the globe, to be part of the sanction of the most stringent and important of all laws, the laws of marriage. It is an historical truth that the society of Ashantees, Choctaws, Australians, is actually constructed by the operation of laws which are under the sanction of various sacred plants and animals. There is scarcely a race so barbarous that these laws are not traceable at work in its society, nor a people (especially an ancient people) so cultivated that its laws and religion are not full of strange facts most easily explained as relics of totemism. Now note that actual living totemism is always combined with the rudest ideas of marriage, with almost repulsive ideas about the family. Presumably, this rudeness is earlier than culture, and therefore this form of animal-worship is one of the earliest religions that we know. The almost limitless distribution of the phenomena, their regular development, their gradual disappearance, all point to the fact that they are all very early and everywhere produced by similar causes.

Of all these facts, Mr. Max Müller only mentions one — that many races have called themselves Snakes, and he thinks they might naturally adopt the snake for ancestor, and finally for god. He quotes the remark of Diodorus that ‘the snake may either have been made a god because he was figured on the banners, or may have been figured on the banners because he was a god’; to which De Brosses, with his usual sense, rejoins— ‘we represent saints on our banners because we revere them; we do not revere them because we represent them on our banners.’

In a discussion about origins, and about the corruption of religion, it would have been well to account for institutions and beliefs almost universally distributed. We know, what De Brosses did not, that zoolatry is inextricably blent with laws and customs which surely must be early, if not primitive, because they make the working faith of societies in which male descent and the modern family are not yet established. Anyone who wishes to show that this sort of society is a late corruption, not an early stage in evolution towards better things, has a difficult task before him, which, however, he must undertake, before he can prove zoolatry to be a corruption of religion.

As to the worship of ancestral and embodied human spirits, which (it has been so plausibly argued) is the first moment in religion, Mr. Max Müller dismisses it, here, in eleven lines and a half. An isolated but important allusion at the close of his lectures will be noticed in its place.

The end of the polemic against the primitiveness of fetichism deals with the question, ‘Whence comes the supernatural predicate of the fetich?’ If a negro tells us his fetich is a god, whence got he the idea of ‘god’? Many obvious answers occur. Mr. Müller says, speaking of the Indians (): ‘The concept of *gods* was no doubt growing up while men were assuming a more and more definite attitude towards these semi-tangible and intangible objects’ — trees, rivers, hills, the sky, the sun, and so on, which he thinks suggested and developed, by aid of a kind of awe, the religious feeling of the infinite. We too would say that, among people who adore fetiches and ghosts, the concept of gods no doubt silently grew up, as men assumed a more and more definite attitude towards the tangible and intangible objects they held sacred. Again, negroes have had the idea of god imported among them by Christians and Islamites, so that, even if they did not climb (as De Brosses grants that many of them do) to purer religious ideas unaided, these ideas are now familiar to them, and may well be used by them, when they have to explain a fetich to a European. Mr. Max Müller explains the origin of religion by a term (‘the Infinite ‘) which, he admits, the early people would not have comprehended. The negro, if he tells a white man that a fetich is a god, transposes terms in the same unscientific way. Mr. Müller asks, ‘How do these people, when they have picked up their stone or their shell, pick up, at the same time, the concepts of a supernatural power, of spirit, of god, and of worship paid to some unseen being?' But who says that men picked up these ideas *at the same time*? These ideas were evolved by a long, slow, complicated process. It is not at all impossible that the idea of a kind of 'luck' attached to this or that object, was evolved by dint of meditating on a mere series of lucky accidents. Such or such a man, having found such an object, succeeded in hunting, fishing, or war. By degrees, similar objects might be believed to command success. Thus burglars carry bits of coal in their pockets, 'for luck.' This random way of connecting causes and effects which have really no inter-relation, is a common error of early reasoning. Mr. Max Müller says that 'this process of reasoning is far more in accordance with modern thought'; if so, modern thought has little to be proud of. Herodotus, however, describes the process of thought as consecrated by custom among the Egyptians. But there are many other practical ways in which the idea of supernatural power is attached to fetiches. Some fetich-stones have a superficial resemblance to other objects, and thus (on the magical system of reasoning) are thought to influence these objects. Others, again, are pointed out as worthy of regard in dreams or by the ghosts of the dead. To hold these views of the origin of the supernatural predicate of fetiches is not 'to take for granted that every human being was miraculously endowed with the concept of what forms the predicate of every fetich.'

Thus we need not be convinced by Mr. Max Müller that fetichism (though it necessarily has its antecedents in the human mind) is 'a corruption of religion.' It still appears to be one of the most primitive steps towards the idea of the supernatural.

What, then, is the subjective element of religion in man? How has he become capable of conceiving of the supernatural? What outward objects first awoke that dormant faculty in his breast? Mr. Max Müller answers, that man has 'the faculty of apprehending the infinite' — that by dint of this faculty he is capable of religion, and that sensible objects, 'tangible, semi-tangible, intangible,' first roused the faculty to religious activity, at least among the natives of India. He means, however, by the 'infinite' which savages apprehend, not our metaphysical conception of the infinite, but the mere impression that there is 'something beyond.' 'Every thing of which his senses cannot perceive a limit, is to a primitive savage or to any man in an early stage of intellectual activity *unlimited* or *infinite*? Thus, in all experience, the idea of 'a beyond' is forced on men. If Mr. Max Müller would adhere to this theory, then we should suppose him to mean (what we hold to be more or less true) that savage religion, like savage science, is merely a fanciful explanation of what lies beyond the horizon of experience. For example, if the Australians mentioned by Mr. Max Müller believe in a being who created the world, a being whom they do not worship, and to whom they pay no regard (for, indeed, he has become ‘decrepit’), their theory is scientific, not religious. They have looked for the causes of things, and are no more religious (in so doing) than Newton was when he worked out his theory of gravitation. The term ‘infinite’ is wrongly applied, because it is a term of advanced thought used in explanation of the ideas of men who, Mr. Max Müller says, were incapable of conceiving the meaning of such a concept. Again, it is wrongly applied, because it has some modern religious associations, which are covertly and fallaciously introduced to explain the supposed emotions of early men. Thus, Mr. Müller says () — he is giving his account of the material things that awoke the religious faculty— ‘the mere sight of the torrent or the stream would have been enough to call forth in the hearts of the early dwellers on the earth . . . a feeling that they were surrounded on all sides by powers invisible, infinite, or divine.’ Here, if I understand Mr. Müller, ‘infinite’ is used in our modern sense. The question is, How did men ever come to believe in powers infinite, invisible, divine? If Mr. Müller’s words mean anything, they mean that a dormant feeling that there were such existences lay in the breast of man, and was wakened into active and conscious life, by the sight of a torrent or a stream. How, to use Mr. Müller’s own manner, did these people, when they saw a stream, have mentally, at the same time, ‘a feeling of *infinite* powers?’ If this is not the expression of a theory of ‘innate religion’ (a theory which Mr. Müller disclaims), it is capable of being mistaken for that doctrine by even a careful reader. The feeling of ‘powers infinite, invisible, divine,’ *must* be in the heart, or the mere sight of a river could not call it forth. How did the feeling get into the heart? That is the question. The ordinary anthropologist distinguishes a multitude of causes, a variety of processes, which shade into each other and gradually produce the belief in powers invisible, infinite, and divine. What tribe is unacquainted with dreams, visions, magic, the apparitions of the dead? Add to these the slow action of thought, the conjectural inferences, the guesses of crude metaphysics, the theories of isolated men of religious and speculative genius. By all these and other forces manifold, that emotion of awe in presence of the hills, the stars, the sea, is developed. Mr. Max Müller cuts the matter shorter. The early inhabitants of earth saw a river, and the ‘mere sight’ of the torrent called forth the feelings which (to us) seem to demand ages of the operation of causes disregarded by Mr. Müller in his account of the origin of Indian religion.

The mainspring of Mr. Müller’s doctrine is his theory about ‘apprehending the infinite.’ Early religion, or at least that of India, was, in his view, the extension of an idea of Vastness, a disinterested emotion of awe. Elsewhere, we think, early religion has been a development of ideas of Force, an interested search, not for something wide and far and hard to conceive, but for something practically *strong* for good and evil. Mr. Müller (taking no count in this place of fetiches, ghosts, dreams and magic) explains that the sense of 'wonderment' was wakened by objects only semi-tangible, trees, which are *taller* than we are, 'whose roots are beyond our reach, and which have a kind of life in them.' 'We are dealing with a quartenary, it may be a tertiary troglodyte,' says Mr. Müller. If a tertiary troglodyte was like a modern Andaman Islander, a Kaneka, a Dieyrie, would he stand and meditate in awe on the fact that a tree was taller than he, or had 'a kind of life,' 'an unknown and unknowable, yet undeniable something'? Why, this is the sentiment of modern Germany, and perhaps of the Indian sages of a cultivated period! A troglodyte would look for a 'possum in the tree, he would tap the trunk for honey, he would poke about in the bark after grubs, or he would worship anything odd in the branches. Is Mr. Müller not unconsciously transporting a kind of modern malady of thought into the midst of people who wanted to find a dinner, and who might worship a tree if it had a grotesque shape, that, for them, had a magical meaning, or if *boilyas* lived in its boughs, but whose practical way of dealing with the problem of its life was to burn it round the stem, chop the charred wood with stone axes, and use the bark, branches, and leaves as they happened to come handy?

Mr. Müller has a long list of semi-tangible objects 'overwhelming and overawing,' like the tree. There are mountains, where 'even a stout heart shivers before the real presence of the *infinite*'; there are rivers, those instruments of so sudden a religious awakening; there is earth. These supply the material for semi-deities. Then come sky, stars, dawn, sun, and moon: 'in these we have the germs of what, hereafter, we shall have to call by the name of deities.'

Before we can transmute, with Mr. Müller, these objects of a somewhat vague religious regard into a kind of gods, we have to adopt Noiré's philological theories, and study the effects of auxiliary verbs on the development of personification and of religion. Noiré's philological theories are still, I presume, under discussion. They are necessary, however, to Mr. Müller's doctrine of the development of the vague 'sense of the infinite' (wakened by fine old trees, and high mountains) into *devas,* and of *devas* (which means 'shining ones') into the Vedic gods. Our troglodyte ancestors, and their sweet feeling for the spiritual aspect of landscape, are thus brought into relation with the Rishis of the Vedas, the sages and poets of a pleasing civilisation. The reverence felt for such comparatively refined or remote things as fire, the sun, wind, thunder, the dawn, furnished a series of stepping-stones to the Vedic theology, if theology it can be called. It is impossible to give each step in detail; the process must be studied in Mr. Müller's lectures. Nor can we discuss the later changes of faith. As to the processes which produced the fetichistic 'corruption' (that universal and everywhere identical form of decay), Mr. Müller does not afford even a hint. He only says that, when the Indians found that their old gods were mere names, 'they built out of the scattered bricks a new altar to the Unknown God' — a statement which throws no light on the parasitical development of fetichism. But his whole theory is deficient if, having called fetichism a *corruption*, he does not show how corruption arose, how it operated, and how the disease attacked all religions everywhere.

We have contested, step by step, many of Mr. Müller's propositions. If space permitted, it would be interesting to examine the actual attitude of certain contemporary savages, Bushmen and others, towards the sun. Contemporary savages may be degraded, they certainly are not primitive, but their *legends*, at least, are the oldest things they possess. The supernatural elements in their ideas about the sun are curiously unlike those which, according to Mr. Müller, entered into the development of Aryan religion.

The last remark which has to be made about Mr. Müller's scheme of the development of Aryan religion is that the religion, as explained by him, does not apparently aid the growth of society, nor work with it in any way. Let us look at a sub-barbaric society — say that of Zululand, of New Zealand, of the Iroquois League, or at a savage society like that of the Kanekas, or of those Australian tribes about whom we have very many interesting and copious accounts. If we begin with the Australians, we observe that society is based on certain laws of marriage enforced by capital punishment. These laws of marriage forbid the intermixing of persons belonging to the stock which worships this or that animal, or plant. Now this rule, as already observed, *made* the 'gentile' system (as Mr. Morgan erroneously calls it) the system which gradually reduces tribal hostility, by making tribes homogeneous. The same system (with the religious sanction of a kind of zoolatry) is in force and has worked to the same result, in Africa, Asia, America, and Australia, while a host of minute facts make it a reasonable conclusion that it prevailed in Europe. Among these facts certain peculiarities of Greek and Roman and Hindoo marriage law, Greek, Latin, and English tribal names, and a crowd of legends are the most prominent. Mr. Max Müller's doctrine of the development of Indian religion (while admitting the existence of Snake or Naga tribes) takes no account of the action of this universal zoolatry on religion and society.

After marriage and after tribal institutions, look at *rank*. Is it not obvious that the religious elements (magic and necromancy) left out of his reckoning by Mr. Müller are most powerful in developing rank? Even among those democratic paupers, the Fuegians, 'the doctor-wizard of each party has much influence over his companions.' Among those other democrats, the Eskimo, a class of wizards, called Angakuts, become ‘a kind of civil magistrates,’ because they can cause fine weather, and can magically detect people who commit offences. Thus the germs of rank, in these cases, are sown by the magic which is fetichism in action. Try the Zulus: ‘the heaven is the chief’s,’ he can call up clouds and storms, hence the sanction of his authority. In New Zealand, every Rangatira has a supernatural power. If he touches an article, no one else dares to appropriate it, for fear of terrible supernatural consequences. A head chief is ‘tapued an inch thick, and perfectly unapproachable.’ Magical power abides in and emanates from him. By this superstition, an aristocracy is formed, and property (the property, at least, of the aristocracy) is secured. Among the Red Indians, as Schoolcraft says, ‘priests and jugglers are the persons that make war and have a voice in the sale of the land.’ Mr. E. W. Robertson says much the same thing about early Scotland. If Odin was not a god with the gifts of a medicine-man, and did not owe his chiefship to his talent for dealing with magic, he is greatly maligned. The Irish Brehons also sanctioned legal decisions by magical devices, afterwards condemned by the Church. Among the Zulus, ‘the *Itongo* (spirit) dwells with the great man; he who dreams is the chief of the village.’ The chief alone can ‘read in the vessel of divination.’ The Kaneka chiefs are medicine-men.

Here then, in widely distant regions, in early European, American, Melanesian, African societies, we find those factors in religion which the primitive Aryans are said to have dispensed with, helping to construct society, rank, property. Is it necessary to add that the ancestral spirits still ‘rule the present from the past,’ and demand sacrifice, and speak to ‘him who dreams,’ who, therefore, is a strong force in society, if not a chief? Mr. Herbert Spencer, Mr. Tylor, M. Fustel de Coulanges, a dozen others, have made all this matter of common notoriety. As Hearne the traveller says about the Copper River Indians, ‘it is almost necessary that they who rule them should profess something a little supernatural to enable them to deal with the people.’ The few examples we have given show how widely, and among what untutored races, the need is felt. The rudimentary government of early peoples requires, and, by aid of dreams, necromancy, ‘medicine’ (*i.e.* fetiches), *tapu*, and so forth, obtains, a supernatural sanction.

Where is the supernatural sanction that consecrated the chiefs of a race which woke to the sense of the existence of infinite beings, in face of trees, rivers, the dawn, the sun, and had none of the so-called late and corrupt fetichism that does such useful social work?

To the student of other early societies, Mr. Müller’s theory of the growth of Aryan religion seems to leave society without cement, and without the most necessary sanctions. One man is as good as another, before a tree, a river, a hill. The savage organisers of other societies found out fetiches and ghosts that were ‘respecters of persons.’ Zoolatry is intertwisted with the earliest and most widespread law of prohibited degrees. How did the Hindoos dispense with the aid of these superstitions? Well, they did not quite dispense with them. Mr. Max Müller remarks, almost on his last page (376), that ‘in India also . . . the thoughts and feelings about those whom death had separated from us for a time, supplied some of the earliest and most important elements of religion.’ If this was the case, surely the presence of those elements and their influence should have been indicated along with the remarks about the awfulness of trees and the suggestiveness of rivers. Is nothing said about the spirits of the dead and their cult in the Vedas? Much is said, of course. But, were it otherwise, then other elements of savage religion may also have been neglected there, and it will be impossible to argue that fetichism did not exist because it is not mentioned. It will also be impossible to admit that the ‘Hibbert Lectures’ give more than a one-sided account of the Origin of Indian Religion.

The perusal of Mr. Max Müller’s book deeply impresses one with the necessity of studying early religions and early societies simultaneously. If it be true that early Indian religion lacked precisely those superstitions, so childish, so grotesque, and yet so useful, which we find at work in contemporary tribes, and which we read of in history, the discovery is even more remarkable and important than the author of the ‘Hibbert Lectures’ seems to suppose. It is scarcely necessary to repeat that the negative evidence of the Vedas, the religious utterances of sages, made in a time of what we might call ‘heroic culture,’ can never disprove the existence of superstitions which, if current in the former experience of the race, the hymnists, as Barth observes, would intentionally ignore. Our object has been to defend the ‘primitiveness of fetichism.’ By this we do not mean to express any opinion as to whether fetichism (in the strictest sense of the word) was or was not earlier than totemism, than the worship of the dead, or than the involuntary sense of awe and terror with which certain vast phenomena may have affected the earliest men. We only claim for the powerful and ubiquitous practices of fetichism a place *among* the early elements of religion, and insist that what is so universal has not yet been shown to be ‘a corruption’ of something older and purer.

One remark of Mr. Max Müller’s fortifies these opinions. If fetichism be indeed one of the earliest factors of faith in the supernatural; if it be, in its rudest forms, most powerful in proportion to other elements of faith among the least cultivated races (and *that* Mr. Müller will probably allow) — among what class of cultivated peoples will it longest hold its ground? Clearly, among the least cultivated, among the fishermen, the shepherds of lonely districts, the peasants of outlying lands — in short, among the *people*. Neglected by sacred poets in the culminating period of purity in religion, it will linger among the superstitions of the rustics. There is no real break in the continuity of peasant life; the modern folklore is (in many points) the savage ritual. Now Mr. Müller, when he was minimising the existence of fetichism in the Rig Veda (the oldest collection of hymns), admitted its existence in the Âtharva*n*a (). On , we read 'the Atharva-veda-Sanhita is a later collection, containing, besides a large number of Rig Veda verses, *some curious relics of popular poetry connected with charms, imprecations, and other superstitious usages*.' The italics are mine, and are meant to emphasise this fact: — When we leave the sages, the Rishis, and look at what is *popular*, look at what that class believed which of savage practice has everywhere retained so much, we are at once among the charms and the fetiches! This is precisely what one would have expected. If the history of religion and of mythology is to be unravelled, we must examine what the unprogressive classes in Europe have in common with Australians, and Bushmen, and Andaman Islanders. It is the function of the people to retain in folklore these elements of religion, which it is the high duty of the sage and the poet to purify away in the fire of refining thought. It is for this very reason that *ritual* has (though Mr. Max Müller curiously says that it seems not to possess) an immense scientific interest. Ritual holds on, with the tenacity of superstition, to all that has ever been practised. Yet, when Mr. Müller wants to know about *origins*, about actual ancient *practice*, he deliberately turns to that 'great collection of ancient poetry' (the Rig Veda) 'which has no special reference to sacrificial acts,' not to the Brahmanas which are full of ritual.

To sum up briefly: — (1) Mr. Müller's arguments against the evidence for, and the primitiveness of, fetichism seem to demonstrate the opposite of that which he intends them to prove. (2) His own evidence for *primitive* practice is chosen from the documents of a *cultivated* society. (3) His theory deprives that society of the very influences which have elsewhere helped the Tribe, the Family, Rank, and Priesthoods to grow up, and to form the backbone of social existence.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE FAMILY.

What are the original forms of the human family? Did man begin by being monogamous or polygamous, but, in either case, the master of his own home and the assured central point of his family relations? Or were the unions of the sexes originally shifting and precarious, so that the wisest child was not expected to know his own father, and family ties were reckoned through the mother alone? Again (setting aside the question of what was 'primitive' and 'original'), did the needs and barbarous habits of early men lead to a scarcity of women, and hence to polyandry (that is, the marriage of one woman to several men), with the consequent uncertainty about male parentage? Once more, admitting that these loose and strange relations of the sexes do prevail, or have prevailed, among savages, is there any reason to suppose that the stronger races, the Aryan and Semitic stocks, ever passed through this stage of savage customs? These are the main questions debated between what we may call the 'historical' and the 'anthropological' students of ancient customs.

When Sir Henry Maine observed, in 1861, that it was difficult to say what society of men had *not been*, originally, based on the patriarchal family, he went, of course, outside the domain of history. What occurred in the very origin of human society is a question perhaps quite inscrutable. Certainly, history cannot furnish the answer. Here the anthropologist and physiologist come in with their methods, and even those, we think, can throw but an uncertain light on the very 'origin' of institutions, and on strictly primitive man.

For the purposes of this discussion, we shall here re-state the chief points at issue between the adherents of Sir Henry Maine and of Mr. M'Lennan, between historical and anthropological inquirers.

1. Did man *originally* live in the patriarchal family, or did he live in more or less modified promiscuity, with uncertainty of blood-ties, and especially of male parentage?

2. Did circumstances and customs at some time compel or induce man (whatever his *original* condition) to resort to practices which made paternity uncertain, and so caused kinship to be reckoned through women?

3. Granting that some races have been thus reduced to matriarchal forms of the family — that is, to forms in which the woman is the permanent recognised centre — is there any reason to suppose that the stronger peoples, like the Aryans and the Semites, ever passed through a stage of culture in which female,

not male, kinship was chiefly recognised, probably as a result of polyandry, of many husbands to one wife?

On this third question, it will be necessary to produce much evidence of very different sorts: evidence which, at best, can perhaps only warrant an inference, or presumption, in favour of one or the other opinion. For the moment, the impartial examination of testimony is more important and practicable than the establishment of any theory.

(1.) Did man *originally* live in the patriarchal family, the male being master of his female mate or mates, and of his children? On this first point Sir Henry Maine, in his new volume, may be said to come as near proving his case as the nature and matter of the question will permit. Bachofen, M'Lennan, and Morgan, all started from a hypothetical state of more or less modified sexual promiscuity. Bachofen's evidence (which may be referred to later) was based on a great mass of legends, myths, and travellers' tales, chiefly about early Aryan practices. He discovered *Hetärismus*, as he called it, or promiscuity, among Lydians, Etruscans, Persians, Thracians, Cyrenian nomads, Egyptians, Scythians, Troglodytes, Nasamones, and so forth. Mr. M'Lennan's view is, perhaps, less absolutely stated than Sir Henry Maine supposes. M'Lennan says 'that there has been a stage in the development of the human races, when there was no such appropriation of women to particular men; when, in short, marriage, *as it exists among civilised nations*, was not practised. Marriage, *in this sense*, was yet undreamt of.' Mr. M'Lennan adds (p, 131), 'as among other gregarious animals, the unions of the sexes were probably, in the earliest times, loose, transitory, and, *in some degree*, promiscuous.'

Sir Henry Maine opposes to Mr. M'Lennan's theory the statement of Mr. Darwin: 'From all we know of the passions of all male quadrupeds, promiscuous intercourse in a state of Nature is highly improbable.' On this first question, let us grant to Sir Henry Maine, to Mr. Darwin, and to common sense that if the very earliest men were extremely animal in character, their unions while they lasted were probably monogamous or polygamous. The sexual jealousy of the male would secure that result, as it does among many other animals. Let the first point, then, be scored to Sir Henry Maine: let it be granted that if man was created perfect, he lived in the monogamous family before the Fall: and that, if he was evolved as an animal, the unchecked animal instincts would make for monogamy or patriarchal polygamy in the strictly primitive family.

(2.) Did circumstances and customs ever or anywhere compel or induce man (whatever his original condition) to resort to practices which made paternity uncertain, and so caused the absence of the patriarchal family, kinship being reckoned through women? If this question be answered in the affirmative, and if the sphere of action of the various causes be made wide enough, it will not matter much to Mr. M'Lennan's theory whether the strictly primitive family was patriarchal or not. If there occurred a fall from the primitive family, and if that fall was extremely general, affecting even the Aryan race, Mr. M'Lennan's adherents will be amply satisfied. Their object is to show that the family, even in the Aryan race, was developed through a stage of loose savage connections. If that can be shown, they do not care much about primitive man properly so called. Sir Henry Maine admits, as a matter of fact, that among certain races, in certain districts, circumstances have overridden the sexual jealousy which secures the recognition of male parentage. Where women have been few, and where poverty has been great, jealousy has been suppressed, even in the Venice of the eighteenth century. Sir H. Maine says, 'The usage' (that of polyandry — many husbands to a single wife) 'seems to me one which circumstances overpowering morality and decency might at any time call into existence. It is known to have arisen in the native Indian army.' The question now is, what are the circumstances that overpower morality and decency, and so produce polyandry, with its necessary consequences, when it is a recognised institution — the absence of the patriarchal family, and the recognition of kinship through women? Any circumstances which cause great scarcity of women will conduce to those results. Mr. M'Lennan's opinion was, that the chief cause of scarcity of women has been the custom of female infanticide — of killing little girls as *bouches inutiles*. Sir Henry Maine admits that 'the cause assigned by M'Lennan is a *vera causa* — it is capable of producing the effects.' Mr. M'Lennan collected a very large mass of testimony to prove the wide existence of this cause of paucity of women. Till that evidence is published, I can only say that it was sufficient, in Mr. M'Lennan's opinion, to demonstrate the wide prevalence of the factor which is the mainspring of his whole system. How frightfully female infanticide has prevailed in India, everyone may read in the official reports of Col. M'Pherson, and other English authorities. Mr. Fison's 'Kamilaroi and Kurnai' contains some notable, though not to my mind convincing, arguments on the other side. Sir Henry Maine adduces another cause of paucity of women: the wanderings of our race, and expeditions across sea. This cause would not, however, be important enough to alter forms of kinship, where the invaders (like the early English in Britain) found a population which they could conquer and whose women they could appropriate.

Apart from any probable inferences that may be drawn from the presumed practice of female infanticide, actual ascertained facts prove that many races do not now live, or that recently they did not live, in the patriarchal or modern family. They live, or did live, in polyandrous associations. The Thibetans, the

Nairs, the early inhabitants of Britain (according to Cæsar), and many other races, as well as the inhabitants of the Marquesas Islands, and the Iroquois (according to Lafitau), practise, or have practised, polyandry.

We now approach the third and really important problem — (3.) Is there any reason to suppose that the stronger peoples, like the Aryans and the Semites, ever passed through a stage of culture in which female, not male, kinship was chiefly recognised, probably as a result of polyandry?

Now the nature of the evidence which affords a presumption that Aryans have all passed through Australian institutions such as polyandry, is of extremely varied character. Much of it may undoubtedly be explained away. But such strength as the evidence has (which we do not wish to exaggerate) is derived from its convergence to one point — namely, the anterior existence of polyandry and the matriarchal family among Aryans before and after the dawn of real history.

For the sake of distinctness we may here number the heads of the evidence bearing on this question. We have —

1. The evidence of inference from the form of capture in bridal ceremonies.
2. The evidence from exogamy: the law which forbids marriage between persons of the same family name.
3. The evidence from totemism — that is, the derivation of the family name and crest or badge, from some natural object, plant or animal. Persons bearing the name may not intermarry, nor, as a rule, may they eat the object from which they derive their family name and from which they claim to be descended.
4. The evidence from the *gens* of Rome, or yµ½¿Â of ancient Greece, in connection with Totemism.
5. The evidence from myth and legend.
6. The evidence from direct historical statements as to the prevalence of the matriarchal family, and inheritance through the maternal line.

To take these various testimonies in their order, let us begin with

(1.) The form of capture in bridal ceremonies. That this form survived in Sparta, Crete, in Hindoo law, in the traditions of Ireland, in the popular rustic customs of Wales, is not denied.

If we hold, with Mr. M'Lennan, that scarcity of women (produced by female infanticide or otherwise) is the cause of the habit of capturing wives, we may see, in survivals of this ceremony of capture among Aryans, a proof of early scarcity of women, and of probable polyandry. But an opponent may argue, like Mr. J. A. Farrer in 'Primitive Manners,' that the ceremony of capture is mainly a concession to maiden modesty among early races. Here one may observe that the girls of savage tribes are notoriously profligate and immodest about illicit connections. Only honourable marriage brings a blush to the cheek of these young persons. This is odd, but, in the present state of the question, we cannot lean on the evidence of the ceremony of capture. We cannot demonstrate that it is derived from a time when paucity of women made capture of brides necessary. Thus ‘honours are easy’ in this first deal.

(2.) The next indication is very curious, and requires much more prolonged discussion. The custom of *Exogamy* was first noted and named by Mr. M’Lennan. Exogamy is the prohibition of marriage within the supposed blood-kinship, as denoted by the family name. Such marriage, among many backward races, is reckoned incestuous, and is punishable by death. Certain peculiarities in connection with the family name have to be noted later. Now, Sir Henry Maine admits that exogamy, as thus defined, exists among the Hindoos. ‘A Hindoo may not marry a woman belonging to the same *gotra*, all members of the *gotra* being theoretically supposed to have descended from the same ancestor.’ The same rule prevails in China. ‘There are in China large bodies of related clansmen, each generally bearing the same clan-name. They are exogamous; no man will marry a woman having the same clan-name with himself.’ It is admitted by Sir Henry Maine that this wide prohibition of marriage was the early Aryan rule, while advancing civilisation has gradually permitted marriage within limits once forbidden. The Greek Church now (according to Mr. M’Lennan), and the Catholic Church in the past, forbade intermarriages ‘as far as relationship could be known.’ The Hindoo rule appears to go still farther, and to prohibit marriage as far as the common *gotra* name seems merely to indicate relationship.

As to the ancient Romans, Plutarch says: Formerly they did not marry women connected with them by blood, any more than they now marry aunts or sisters. It was long before they would even intermarry with cousins.’ Plutarch also remarks that, in times past, Romans did not marry ÃÅyyµ½¹´±Â, and if we may render this ‘women of the same *gens*,’ the exogamous prohibition in Rome was as complete as among the Hindoos. I do not quite gather from Sir Henry Maine’s account of the Slavonic house communities (p, 255) whether they dislike *all* kindred marriages, or only marriage within the ‘greater blood’ — that is, within the kinship on the male side. He says: ‘The South Slavonians bring their wives into the group, in which they are socially organised, from a considerable distance outside. . . . Every marriage which requires an ecclesiastical dispensation is regarded as disreputable.’

On the whole, wide prohibitions of marriage are archaic: the widest are savage; the narrowest are modern and civilised. Thus the Hindoo prohibition is old, barbarous, and wide. ‘The barbarous Aryan,’ says Sir Henry Maine, ‘is generally exogamous. He has a most extensive table of prohibited degrees.' Thus exogamy seems to be a survival of barbarism. The question for us is, Can we call exogamy a survival from a period when (owing to scarcity of women and polyandry) clear ideas of kinship were impossible? If this can be proved, exogamous Aryans either passed through polyandrous institutions, or borrowed a savage custom derived from a period when ideas of kinship were obscure.

If we only knew the origin of the prohibition to marry within the family name all would be plain sailing. At present several theories of the origin of exogamy are before the world. Mr. Morgan, the author of 'Ancient Society,' inclines to trace the prohibition to a great early physiological discovery, acted on by primitive men by virtue of a *contrat social*. Early man discovered that children of unsound constitutions were born of nearly related parents. Mr. Morgan says: 'Primitive men very early discovered the evils of close interbreeding.' Elsewhere Mr. Morgan writes: 'Intermarriage in the *gens* was prohibited, to secure the benefits of marrying out with unrelated persons.' This arrangement was 'a product of high intelligence,' and Mr. Morgan calls it a 'reform.'

Let us examine this very curious theory. First: Mr. Morgan supposes early man to have made a discovery (the evils of the marriage of near kin) which evades modern physiological science. Modern science has not determined that the marriages of kinsfolk are pernicious. Is it credible that savages should discover a fact which puzzles science? It may be replied that modern care, nursing, and medical art save children of near marriages from results which were pernicious to the children of early man. Secondly: Mr. Morgan supposes that barbarous man (so notoriously reckless of the morrow as he is), not only made the discovery of the evils of interbreeding, but acted on it with promptitude and self-denial. Thirdly: Mr. Morgan seems to require, for the enforcement of the exogamous law, a *contrat social*. The larger communities meet, and divide themselves into smaller groups, within which wedlock is forbidden. This 'social pact' is like a return to the ideas of Rousseau. Fourthly: The hypothesis credits early men with knowledge and discrimination of near degrees of kin, which they might well possess if they lived in patriarchal families. But it represents that they did not act on their knowledge. Instead of prohibiting marriage between parents and children, cousins, nephews and aunts, uncles and nieces, they prohibited marriage within the limit of the name of the kin. This is still the Hindoo rule, and, if the Romans really might not at one time marry within the *gens*, it was the Roman rule. Now observe, this rule fails to effect the very purpose for which *ex hypothesi* it was instituted. Where the family name goes by the male side, marriages between cousins are permitted, as in India and China. These are the very marriages which some theorists now denounce as pernicious. But, if the family name goes by the female side, marriages between half-brothers and half-sisters are permitted, as in ancient Athens and among the Hebrews of Abraham's time. Once more, the exogamous prohibition excludes, in China, America, Africa, Australia, persons who are in no way akin (according to our ideas) from intermarriage. Thus Mr. Doolittle writes: 'Males and females of the same surname will never intermarry in China. Cousins who have not the same ancestral surname may intermarry. Though the ancestors of persons of the same surname have not known each other for thousands of years, they may not intermarry.' The Hindoo *gotra* rule produces the same effects.

For all these reasons, and because of the improbability of the physiological discovery, and of the moral 'reform' which enforced it; and again, because the law is not of the sort which people acquainted with near degrees of kinship would make; and once more, because the law fails to effect its presumed purpose, while it does attain ends at which it does not aim — we cannot accept Mr. Morgan's suggestion as to the origin of exogamy. Mr. M'Lennan did not live to publish a subtle theory of the origin of exogamy, which he had elaborated. In 'Studies in Ancient History,' he hazarded a conjecture based on female infanticide: —

'We believe the restrictions on marriage to be connected with the practice in early times of female infanticide, which, rendering women scarce, led at once to polyandry within the tribe, and the capturing of women from without. . . . Hence the cruel custom which, leaving the primitive human hordes with very few young women of their own, occasionally with none, and in any case seriously disturbing the balance of the sexes within the hordes, forces them to prey upon one another for wives. Usage, induced by necessity, would in time establish a prejudice among the tribes observing it, a prejudice strong as a principle of religion — as every prejudice relating to marriage is apt to be — against marrying women of their own stock.'

Mr. M'Lennan describes his own hypothesis as 'a suggestion thrown out at what it was worth.' In his later years, as we have said, he developed a very subtle and ingenious theory of the origin of exogamy, still connecting it with scarcity of women, but making use of various supposed stages and processes in the development of the law. That speculation remains unpublished. To myself, the suggestion given in 'Studies in Ancient History' seems inadequate. I find it difficult to conceive that the frequent habit of stealing women should indispose men to marry the native women they had at hand. That this indisposition should grow into a positive law, and the infringement of the law be regarded as a capital offence, seems still more inconceivable. My own impression is, that exogamy may be connected with some early superstition or idea of which we have lost the touch, and which we can no longer explain.

Thus far, the consideration of exogamy has thrown no clear light on the main question — the question whether the customs of civilised races contain relics of female kinship. On Sir Henry Maine's theory of exogamy, that Aryan custom is unconnected with female kinship, polyandry, and scarcity of women. On Mr. M'Lennan's theory, exogamy is the result of scarcity of women, and implies polyandry and female kinship. But neither theory has seemed satisfactory. Yet we need not despair of extracting some evidence from exogamy, and that evidence, on the whole, is in favour of Mr. M'Lennan's general hypothesis. (1.) The exogamous prohibition must have first come into force *when kinship was only reckoned on one side of the family*. This is obvious, whether we suppose it to have arisen in a society which reckoned by male or by female kinship. In the former case, the law only prohibits marriage with persons of the father's, in the second case with persons of the mother's, family name, and these only it recognises as kindred. (2.) Our second point is much more important. The exogamous prohibition must first have come into force *when kinship was so little understood that it could best be denoted by the family name*. This would be self-evident, if we could suppose the prohibition to be intended to prevent marriages of relations. Had the authors of the prohibition been acquainted with the nature of near kinships, they would simply (as we do) have forbidden marriage between persons in those degrees. The very nature of the prohibition, on the other hand, shows that kinship was understood in a manner all unlike our modern system. The limit of kindred was everywhere the family name: a limit which excludes many real kinsfolk and includes many who are not kinsfolk at all. In Australia especially, and in America, India, and Africa, to a slighter extent, that definition of kindred by the family name actually includes alligators, smoke, paddy melons, rain, crayfish, sardines, and what you please. Will anyone assert, then, that people among whom the exogamous prohibition arose were organised on the system of the patriarchal family, which permits the nature of kinship to be readily understood at a glance? Is it not plain that the exogamous prohibition (confessedly Aryan) must have arisen in a stage of culture when ideas of kindred were confused, included kinship with animals and plants, and were to us almost, if not quite, unintelligible? It is even possible, as Mr. M'Lennan says, 'that the prejudice against marrying women of the same group may have been established *before the facts of blood relationship had made any deep impression on the human mind*.' How the exogamous prohibition tends to confirm this view will next be set forth in our consideration of *Totemism.*

The Evidence from Totemism. — Totemism is the name for the custom by which a stock (scattered through many local tribes) claims descent from and kindred with some plant, animal, or other natural object. This object, of which the effigy is sometimes worn as a badge or crest, members of the stock refuse to eat. As a general rule, marriage is prohibited between members of the stock — between all, that is, who claim descent from the same object and wear the same badge. The exogamous limit, therefore, is denoted by the stock-name and crest, and kinship is kinship in the wolf, bear, potato, or whatever other object is recognised as the original ancestor. Finally, as a general rule, the stock-name is derived through the mother, and where it is derived through the father there are proofs that the custom is comparatively modern. It will be acknowledged that this sort of kindred, which is traced to a beast, bird, or tree, which is recognised in every person bearing the same stock-name, which is counted through females, and which governs marriage customs, is not the sort of kindred which would naturally arise among people regulated on the patriarchal or monandrous family system. Totemism, however, is a widespread institution prevailing all over the north of the American continent, also in Peru (according to Garcilasso de la Vega); in Guiana (the negroes have brought it from the African Gold Coast, where it is in full force, as it also is among the Bechuanas); in India among Hos, Garos, Kassos, and Oraons; in the South Sea Islands, where it has left strong traces in Mangaia; in Siberia, and especially in the great island continent of Australia. The Semitic evidences for totemism (animal-worship, exogamy, descent claimed through females) are given by Professor Robertson Smith, in the 'Journal of Philology,' ix. 17, 'Animal Worship and Animal Tribes among the Arabs, and in the Old Testament.' Many other examples of totemism might be adduced (especially from Egypt), but we must restrict ourselves to the following questions: —

(1.) What light is thrown on the original form of the family by totemism? (2.) Where we find survivals of totemism among civilised races, may we conclude that these races (through scarcity of women) had once been organised on other than the patriarchal model?

As to the first question, we must remember that the origin and determining causes of totemism are still unknown. Mr. M'Lennan's theory of the origin of totemism has never been published. It may be said without indiscretion that Mr. M'Lennan thought totemism arose at a period when ideas of kinship scarcely existed at all. 'Men only thought of marking one off from another,' as Garcilasso de la Vega says: the totem was but a badge worn by all the persons who found themselves existing in close relations; perhaps in the same cave or set of caves. People united by contiguity, and by the blind sentiment of kinship not yet brought into explicit consciousness, might mark themselves by a badge, and might thence derive a name, and, later, might invent a myth of their descent from the object which the badge represented. I do not know whether it has been observed that the totems are, as a rule, objects which may be easily drawn or tattooed, and still more easily indicated in gesture-language. Some interesting facts will be found in the 'First Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology,' (Washington, 1881). Here we read how the 'Crow' tribe is indicated in sign-language by 'the hands held out on each side, striking the air in the manner of flying.' The Bunaks (another bird tribe) are indicated by an imitation of the cry of the bird. In mentioning the Snakes, the hand imitates the crawling motion of the serpent, and the fingers pointed up behind the ear denote the Wolves. Plainly names of the totem sort are well suited to the convenience of savages, who converse much in gesture-language. Above all, the very nature of totemism shows that it took its present shape at a time when men, animals, and plants were conceived of as physically akin; when names were handed on through the female line; when exogamy was the rule of marriage, and when the family theoretically included all persons bearing the same family name, that is, all who claimed kindred with the same plant, animal, or object, whether the persons are really akin or not. These ideas and customs are not the ideas natural to men organised in the patriarchal family.

The second question now arises: Can we infer from survivals of totemism among Aryans that these Aryans had once been organised on the full totemistic principle, probably with polyandry, and certainly with female descent? Where totemism now exists in full force, there we find exogamy and derivation of the family name through women, the latter custom indicating uncertainty of male parentage in the past. Are we to believe that the same institutions have existed wherever we find survivals of totemism? If this be granted, and if the supposed survivals of totemism among Aryans be accepted as genuine, then the Aryans have distinctly come through a period of kinship reckoned through women, with all that such an institution implies. For indications that the Aryans of Greece and India have passed through the stage of totemism, the reader may be referred to Mr. M'Lennan's 'Worship of Plants and Animals' ('Fortnightly Review,' 1869, 1870). The evidence there adduced is not all of the same value, and the papers are only a hasty rough sketch based on the first testimonies that came to hand. Probably the most important 'survival' of totemism in Greek legend is the body of stories about the amours of Zeus in animal form. Various noble houses traced their origin to Zeus or Apollo, who, as a bull, tortoise, serpent, swan, or ant, had seduced the mother of the race. The mother of the Arcadians became a she-bear, like the mother of the bear stock of the Iroquois. As we know plenty of races all over the world who trace their descent from serpents, tortoises, swans, and so forth, it is a fair hypothesis that the ancestors of the Greeks once believed in the same fables. In later times the swan, serpent, ant, or tortoise was explained as an *avatar* of Zeus. The process by which an anthropomorphic god or hero succeeds to the exploits of animals, of theriomorphic gods and heroes, is the most common in mythology, and is illustrated by actual practice in modern India. When the Brahmins convert a pig-worshipping tribe of aboriginals, they tell their proselytes that the pig was an avatar of Vishnu. The same process is found active where the Japanese have influenced the savage Ainos, and persuaded them that their bear-or dog-father was a manifestation of a deity. We know from Plutarch ('Theseus') that, in addition to families claiming descent from divine animals, one Athenian yµ½¿Â, the Ioxidæ, revered an ancestral plant, the asparagus. A vaguer indication of totemism may perhaps be detected in the ancient theriomorphic statues of Greek gods, as the Ram-Zeus and the Horse-headed Demeter, and in the various animals and plants which were sacred to each god and represented as his companions.

The hints of totemism among the ancient Irish are interesting. One hero, Conaire, was the son of a bird, and before his birth his father (the bird) told the woman (his mother) that the child must never eat the flesh of fowls. 'Thy son shall be named Conaire, and that son shall not kill birds.' The hero Cuchullain, being named after the dog, might not eat the flesh of the dog, and came by his ruin after transgressing this totemistic taboo. Races named after animals were common in ancient Ireland. The red-deer and the wolves were tribes dwelling near Ossory, and Professor Rhys, from the frequency of dog names, inclines to believe in a dog totem in Erin. According to the ancient Irish 'Wonders of Eri,' in the 'Book of Glendaloch,' 'the descendants of the wolf are in Ossory,' and they could still transform themselves into wolves. As to our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, there is little evidence beyond the fact that the patronymic names of many of the early settlements of Billings, Arlings, and the rest, are undeniably derived from animals and plants. The manner in which those names are scattered locally is precisely like what results in America, Africa, and Australia from the totemistic organisation. In Italy the ancient custom by which animals were the leaders of the *Ver sacrum* or armed migration is well known. The Piceni had for their familiar animal or totem (if we may call it so) a woodpecker; the Hirpini were like the 'descendants of the wolf' in Ossory, and practised a wolf-dance in which they imitated the actions of the animal.

Such is a summary of the evidence which shows that Aryans had once been totemists, therefore savages, and therefore, again, had probably been in a stage when women were scarce and each woman had many husbands.

Evidence from the Gens or yµ½¿Â. — There is no more puzzling topic in the history of the ancient world than the origin and nature of the community called by the Romans the *gens*, and by the Greeks the yµ½¿Â. To the present writer it seems that no existing community of men, neither totem kin, nor clan, nor house community, nor *gotra*, precisely answers to the *gens* or the yµ½¿Â. Our information about these forms of society is slight and confused. The most essential thing to notice for the moment is the fact that both in Greece and Rome the yµ½¿Â and *gens* were extremely ancient, so ancient that the yµ½¿Â was decaying in Greece when history begins, while in Rome we can distinctly see the rapid decadence and dissolution of the *gens*. In the Laws of the Twelve Tables, the *gens* is a powerful and respected corporation. In the time of Cicero the nature of the *gens* is a matter but dimly understood. Tacitus begins to be confused about the gentile nomenclature. In the Empire gentile law fades away. In Greece, especially at Athens, the early political reforms transferred power from the yµ½¿Â to a purely local organisation, the Deme. The Greek of historical times did not announce his yµ½¿Â in his name (as the Romans always did), but gave his own name, that of his father, and that of his deme. Thus we may infer that in Greek and Roman society the yµ½¿Â and *gens* were dying, not growing, organisations. In very early times it is probable that foreign *gentes* were adopted *en bloc* into the Roman Commonwealth. Very probably, too, a great family, on entering the Roman bond, may have assumed, by a fiction, the character and name of a *gens*. But that Roman society in historical times, or that Greek society, could evolve a new *gens* or yµ½¿Â in a normal natural way, seems excessively improbable.

Keeping in mind the antique and ‘obsolescent’ character of the *gens* and yµ½¿Â, let us examine the theories of the origin of these associations. The Romans themselves knew very little about the matter. Cicero quotes the dictum of Scævola the Pontifex, according to which the *gens* consisted of *all persons of the same gentile name* who were not in any way disqualified. Thus, in America, or Australia, or Africa, all persons bearing the same totem name belong to that totem kin. Festus defines members of a *gens* as persons of the same stock and same family name. Varro says (in illustration of the relationships of words and cases) ‘Ab Æmilio homines orti Æmilii sunt gentiles.’ The two former definitions answer to the conception of a totem kin, which is united by its family name and belief in identity of origin. Varro adds the element, in the Roman *gens*, of common descent from one male ancestor. Such was the conception of the *gens* in historical times. It was in its way an association of kinsfolk, real or supposed. According to the Laws of the Twelve Tables the gentiles inherited the property of an intestate man without agnates, and had the custody of lunatics in the same circumstances. The *gens* had its own *sacellum* or chapel, and its own *sacra* or religious rites. The whole *gens* occasionally went into mourning when one of its members was unfortunate. It would be interesting if it could be shown that the *sacra* were usually examples of ancestor-worship, but the faint indications on the subject scarcely permit us to assert this.

On the whole, Sir Henry Maine strongly clings to the belief that the *gens* commonly had 'a real core of agnatic consanguinity from the very first.' But he justly recognises the principle of imitation, which induces men to copy any fashionable institution. Whatever the real origin of the *gens*, many *gentes* were probably copies based on the fiction of common ancestry.

On Sir Henry Maine's system, then, the *gens* rather proves the constant existence of recognised male descents among the peoples where it exists.

The opposite theory of the *gens* is that to which Mr. M'Lennan inclined. 'The composition and organisation of Greek and Roman tribes and commonwealths cannot well be explained except on the hypothesis that they resulted from the joint operation, in early times, of exogamy, and the system of kinship through females only.' 'The *gens*', he adds, 'was composed of all the persons in the tribe bearing the same name and accounted of the same stock. Were the *gentes* really of different stocks, as their names would imply and as the people believed? If so, how came clans of different stocks to be united in the same tribe? . . . How came a variety of such groups, of different stocks, to coalesce in a local tribe?' These questions, Mr. M'Lennan thought, could not be answered on the patriarchal hypothesis. His own theory, or rather his theory as understood by the present writer, may be stated thus. In the earliest times there were homogeneous groups, which became, totem kin. Let us say that, in a certain district, there were groups called woodpeckers, wolves, bears, suns, swine, each with its own little territory. These groups were exogamous, and derived the name through the mother. Thus, in course of time, when sun men married a wolf girl, and her children were wolves, there would be wolves in the territory of the suns, and thus each stock would be scattered through all the localities, just as we see in Australia and America. Let us suppose that (as certainly is occurring in Australia and America) paternal descent comes to be recognised in custom. This change will not surprise Sir Henry Maine, who admits that a system of male may alter, under stress of circumstances, to a system of female descents. In course of time, and as knowledge and common sense advance, the old superstition of descent from a woodpecker, a bear, a wolf, the sun, or what not, becomes untenable. A human name is assumed by the group which had called itself the woodpeckers or the wolves, or perhaps by a local tribe in which several of these stocks are included. Then a fictitious human ancestor is adopted, and perhaps even adored. Thus the wolves might call themselves Claudii, from their chief's name, and, giving up belief in descent from a wolf, might look back to a fancied ancestor named Claudius. The result of these changes will be that an exogamous totem kin, with female descent, has become a *gens*, with male kinship, and only the faintest trace of exogamy. An example of somewhat similar processes must have occurred in the Highland clans after the introduction of Christianity, when the chief's Christian name became the patronymic of the people who claimed kinship with him and owned his sway.

Are there any traces at all of totemism in what we know of the Roman *gentes*? Certainly the traces are very slight; perhaps they are only visible to the eye of the intrepid anthropologist. I give them for what they are worth, merely observing that they do tally, as far as they go, with the totemistic theory. The reader interested in the subject may consult the learned Streinnius's 'De Gentibus Romanis,' (Aldus, Venice, 1591).

Among well-known savage totems none is more familiar than the sun. Men claim descent from the sun, call themselves by his name, and wear his effigy as a badge. Were there suns in Rome? The Aurelian *gens* is thus described on the authority of Festus Pompeius:— 'The Aurelii were of Sabine descent. The Aurelii were so named from the sun (*aurum*, *urere*, the burning thing), because a place was set apart for them in which to pay adoration to the sun.' Here, at least, is an odd coincidence. Among other gentile names, the Fabii, Cornelii, Papirii, Pinarii, Cassii, are possibly connected with plants; while wild etymology may associate Porcii, Aquilii, and Valerii with swine and eagles. Pliny ('H. N.' xviii. 3) gives a fantastic explanation of the vegetable names of Roman *gentes*. We must remember that vegetable names are very common in American, Indian, African, and Australian totem kin. Of sun names the Natchez and the Incas of Peru are familiar examples. Turning from Rome to Greece, we find the yµ½¿Â less regarded and more decadent than the *gens*. Yet, according to Grote (iii. 54) the *yµ½¿Â* had — (l) *sacra*, 'in honour of the same god, supposed to be the primitive ancestor.' (2) A common burial-place. (3) Certain rights of succession to property. (4) Obligations of mutual help and defence. (5) Mutual rights and obligations to intermarry in certain cases. (6) Occasionally possession of common property.

Traces of the totem among the Greek yµ½· are, naturally, few. Almost all the known yµ½· bore patronymics derived from personal names. But it is not without significance that the Attic demes often adopted the names of obsolescent yµ½·, and that those names were, as Mr. Grote says, often 'derived from the plants and shrubs which grew in their neighbourhood.' We have already seen that at least one Attic yµ½¿Â, the Ioxidæ, revered the plant from which they derived their lineage. One thing is certain, the totem names, and a common explanation of the totem names in Australia, correspond with the names and Mr.

Grote's explanation of the names of the Attic demes. 'One origin of family names,' says Sir George Grey (ii. 228), 'frequently ascribed by the natives, is that they were derived from some vegetable or animal being common in the district which the family inhabited.' Some writers attempt to show that the Attic yµ½¿Â was once exogamous and counted kin on the mother's side, by quoting the custom which permitted a man to marry his half-sister, the child of his father but not of his mother. They infer that this permission is a survival from the time when a man's *father's* children were not reckoned as his kindred, and when kinship was counted through mothers. Sir Henry Maine () prefers M. Fustel De Coulanges' theory, that the marriage of half-brothers and sisters on the father's side was intended to save the portion of the girl to the family estate. Proof of this may be adduced from examination of all the recorded cases of such marriages in Athens. But the reason thus suggested would have equally justified marriage between brothers and sisters on both sides, and this was reckoned incest. A well-known line in Aristophanes shows how intense was Athenian feeling about the impiety of relations with a sister uterine.

On the whole, the evidence which we have adduced tends to establish some links between the ancient yµ½¿Â and *gens*, and the totem kindreds of savages. The indications are not strong, but they all point in one direction. Considering the high civilisation of Rome and Greece at the very dawn of history — considering the strong natural bent of these peoples toward refinement — it is almost remarkable that even the slight testimonies we have been considering should have survived.

(5.) On the evidence from myth and legend we propose to lay little stress. But, as legends were not invented by anthropologists to prove a point, it is odd that the traditions of Athens, as preserved by Varro, speak of a time when names were derived from the mother, and when promiscuity prevailed. Marriage itself was instituted by Cecrops, the serpent, just as the lizard, in Australia, is credited with this useful invention. Similar legends among non-Aryan races, Chinese and Egyptian, are very common.

(6.) There remains the evidence of actual fact and custom among Aryan peoples. The Lycians, according to Herodotus, 'have this peculiar custom, *wherein they resemble no other men*, they derive their names from their mothers, and not from their fathers, and through mothers reckon their kin.' Status also was derived through the mothers. The old writer's opinion that the custom (so common in Australia, America, and Africa) was unique, is itself a proof of his good faith. Bachofen () remarks that several Lycian inscriptions give the names of mothers only. Polybius attributes (assigning a fantastic reason) the same custom of counting kin through mothers to the Locrians. The British and Irish custom of deriving descents through women is well known, and a story is told to account for the practice. The pedigrees of the British kings show that most did not succeed to their fathers, and the various records of early Celtic morals go to prove that no other system of kinship than the maternal would have possessed any value, so uncertain was fatherhood. These are but hints of the prevalence of institutions which survived among Teutonic races in the importance attached to the relationship of a man's sister's son. Though no longer his legal heir, the sister's son was almost closer than any other kinsman.

We have now summarised and indicated the nature of the evidence which, on the whole, inclines us to the belief of Mr. M'Lennan rather than of Sir Henry Maine. The point to which all the testimony adduced converges, the explanation which most readily solves all the difficulties, is the explanation of Mr. M'Lennan. The Aryan races have very generally passed through the stage of scarcity of women, polyandry, absence of recognised male kinship, and recognition of kinship through women. What Sir Henry Maine admits as the exception, we are inclined to regard as having, in a very remote past, been the rule. No one kind of evidence — neither traces of marriage by capture, of exogamy, of totemism, of tradition, of noted fact among Lycians and Picts and Irish — would alone suffice to guide our opinion in this direction. But the cumulative force of the testimony strikes us as not inconsiderable, and it must be remembered that the testimony has not yet been assiduously collected.

Let us end by showing how this discussion illustrates the method of Folklore. We have found anomalies among Aryans. We have seen the *gens* an odd, decaying institution. We have seen Greek families claim descent from various animals, said to be Zeus in disguise. We have found them tracing kinship and deriving names from the mother. We have found stocks with animal and vegetable names. We have found half-brothers and sisters marrying. We have noted prohibition to marry anyone of the same family name. All these institutions are odd, anomalous, decaying things among Aryans, and the more civilised the Aryans the more they decay. All of them are living, active things among savages, and, far from being anomalous, are in precise harmony with savage notions of the world. Surely, then, where they seem decaying and anomalous, as among Aryans, these customs and laws are mouldering relics of ideas and practices natural and inevitable among savages.

THE ART OF SAVAGES.

‘Avoid Coleridge, he is *useless*,’ says Mr. Ruskin. Why should the poetry of Coleridge be useful? The question may interest the critic, but we are only concerned with Mr. Ruskin here, for one reason. His disparagement of Coleridge as ‘useless’ is a survival of the belief that art should be ‘useful.’ This is the savage’s view of art. He imitates nature, in dance, song, or in plastic art, for a definite practical purpose. His dances are magical dances, his images are made for a magical purpose, his songs are incantations. Thus the theory that art is a disinterested expression of the imitative faculty is scarcely warranted by the little we know of art’s beginnings. We shall adopt, provisionally, the hypothesis that the earliest art with which we are acquainted is that of savages contemporary or extinct. Some philosophers may tell us that all known savages are only degraded descendants of early civilised men who have, unluckily and inexplicably, left no relics of their civilisation. But we shall argue on the opposite theory, that the art of Australians, for example, is really earlier in kind, more backward, nearer the rude beginnings of things, than the art of people who have attained to some skill in pottery, like the New Caledonians. These, again, are much more backward, in a state really much earlier, than the old races of Mexico and Peru; while they, in turn, show but a few traces of advance towards the art of Egypt; and the art of Egypt, at least after the times of the Ancient Empire, is scarcely advancing in the direction of the flawless art of Greece. We shall be able to show how savage art, as of the Australians, develops into barbarous art, as of the New Zealanders; while the arts of strange civilisations, like those of Peru and Mexico, advance one step further; and how, again, in the early art of Greece, in the Greek art of ages prior to Pericles, there are remains of barbaric forms which are gradually softened into beauty. But there are necessarily breaks and solutions of continuity in the path of progress.

One of the oldest problems has already risen before us in connection with the question stated — is art the gratification of the imitative faculty? Now, among the lowest, the most untutored, the worst equipped savages of contemporary races, art is rather decorative on the whole than imitative. The patterns on Australian shields and clubs, the scars which they raise on their own flesh by way of tattooing, are very rarely imitations of any objects in nature. The Australians, like the Red Indians, like many African and some aboriginal Indian races, Peruvians, and others, distinguish their families by the names of various plants and animals, from which each family boasts its descent. Thus you have a family called Kangaroos, descended, as they fancy, from the kangaroo; another from the cockatoo, another from the black snake, and so forth. Now, in many quarters of the globe, this custom and this superstition, combined with the imitative faculty in man, has produced a form of art representing the objects from which the families claim descent. This art is a sort of rude heraldry — probably the origin of heraldry. Thus, if a Red Indian (say a Delaware) is of the family of the Turtle, he blazons a turtle on his shield or coat, probably tattoos or paints his breast with a figure of a turtle, and always has a turtle, *reversed*, designed on the pillar above his grave when he dies, just as, in our mediæval chronicles, the leopards of an English king are reversed on his scutcheon opposite the record of his death. But the Australians, to the best of my knowledge, though they are much governed by belief in descent from animals, do not usually blazon their crest on their flesh, nor on the trees near the place where the dead are buried. They have not arrived at this pitch of imitative art, though they have invented or inherited a kind of runes which they notch on sticks, and in which they convey to each other secret messages. The natives of the Upper Darling, however, do carve their family crests on their shields. In place of using imitative art, the Murri are said, I am not quite sure with what truth, to indicate the distinction of families by arrangements of patterns, lines and dots, tattooed on the breast and arms, and carved on the bark of trees near places of burial. In any case, the absence of the rude imitative art of heraldry among a race which possesses all the social conditions that produce this art is a fact worth noticing, and itself proves that the native art of one of the most backward races we know is not essentially imitative.

Anyone who will look through a collection of Australian weapons and utensils will be brought to this conclusion. The shields and the clubs are elaborately worked, but almost always without any representation of plants, animals, or the human figure. As a rule the decorations take the simple shape of the ‘herring-bone’ pattern, or such other patterns as can be produced without the aid of spirals, or curves, or circles. There is a natural and necessary cause of this choice of decoration. The Australians, working on hard wood, with tools made of flint, or broken glass, or sharp shell, cannot easily produce any curved lines. Everyone who, when a boy, carved his name on the bark of a tree, remembers the difficulty he had with S and G, while he got on easily with letters like M and A, which consist of straight or inclined lines. The savage artist has the same difficulty with his rude tools in producing anything like satisfactory curves or spirals. We engrave above (Fig. 1) a shield on which an Australian has succeeded, with obvious difficulty, in producing concentric ovals of irregular shape. It may be that the artist would have produced perfect circles if he could. His failure is exactly like that of a youthful carver of inscriptions coming to grief over his G's and S's. Here, however (Fig. 2), we have three shields which, like the ancient Celtic pipkin (the tallest of the three figures in Fig. 3), show the earliest known form of savage decorative art — the forms which survive under the names of 'chevron' and 'herring-bone.' These can be scratched on clay with the nails, or a sharp stick, and this primeval way of decorating pottery made without the wheel survives, with other relics of savage art, in the western isles of Scotland. The Australian had not even learned to make rude clay pipkins, but he decorated his shields as the old Celts and modern old Scotch women decorated their clay pots, with the herring-bone arrangement of incised lines. In the matter of colour the Australians prefer white clay and red ochre, which they rub into the chinks in the woodwork of their shields. When they are determined on an ambush, they paint themselves all over with white, justly conceiving that their sudden apparition in this guise will strike terror into the boldest hearts. But arrangements in black and white of this sort scarcely deserve the name of even rudimentary art.

The Australians sometimes introduce crude decorative attempts at designing the human figure, as in the pointed shield opposite (Fig. 2, *a*), which, with the other Australian designs, are from Mr. Brough Smyth's 'Aborigines of Victoria.' But these ambitious efforts usually end in failure. Though the Australians chiefly confine themselves to decorative art, there are numbers of wall-paintings, so to speak, in the caves of the country which prove that they, like the Bushmen, could design the human figure in action when they pleased. Their usual preference for the employment of patterns appears to me to be the result of the nature of their materials. In modern art our mechanical advantages and facilities are so great that we are always carrying the method and manner of one art over the frontier of another. Our poetry aims at producing the effects of music; our prose at producing the effects of poetry. Our sculpture tries to vie with painting in the representation of action, or with lace-making in the production of reticulated surfaces, and so forth. But the savage, in his art, has sense enough to confine himself to the sort of work for which his materials are fitted. Set him in the bush with no implements and materials but a bit of broken shell and a lump of hard wood, and he confines himself to decorative scratches. Place the black in the large cave which Pundjel, the Australian Zeus, inhabited when on earth (as Zeus inhabited the cave in Crete), and give the black plenty of red and white ochre and charcoal, and he will paint the human figure in action on the rocky walls. Later, we will return to the cave-paintings of the Australians and the Bushmen in South Africa. At present we must trace purely decorative art a little further. But we must remember that there was once a race apparently in much the same social condition as the Australians, but far more advanced and ingenious in art. The earliest men of the European Continent, about whom we know much, the men whose bones and whose weapons are found beneath the gravel-drift, the men who were contemporary with the rhinoceros, mammoth, and cave-bear, were not further advanced in material civilisation than the Australians. They used weapons of bone, of unpolished stone, and probably of hard wood. But the remnants of their art, the scraps of mammoth or reindeer bone in our museums, prove that they had a most spirited style of sketching from the life. In a collection of drawings on bone (probably designed with a flint or a shell), drawings by palæolithic man, in the British Museum, I have only observed one purely decorative attempt. Even in this the decoration resembles an effort to use the outlines of foliage for ornamental purposes. In almost all the other cases the palæolithic artist has not decorated his bits of bone in the usual savage manner, but has treated his bone as an artist treats his sketch-book, and has scratched outlines of beasts and fishes with his sharp shell as an artist uses his point. These ancient bones, in short, are the sketch-books of European savages, whose untaught skill was far greater than that of the Australians, or even of the Eskimo. When brought into contact with Europeans, the Australian and Eskimo very quickly, even without regular teaching, learn to draw with some spirit and skill. In the Australian stele, or grave-pillar, which we have engraved (Fig. 4), the shapeless figures below the men and animals are the dead, and the *boilyas* or ghosts. Observe the patterns in the interstices. The artist had lived with Europeans. In their original conditions, however, the Australians have not attained to such free, artist-like, and unhampered use of their rude materials as the mysterious European artists who drew the mammoth that walked abroad amongst them.

We have engraved one solitary Australian attempt at drawing curved lines. The New Zealanders, a race far more highly endowed, and, when Europeans arrived amongst them, already far more civilised than the Australians, had, like the Australians, no metal implements. But their stone weapons were harder and keener, and with these they engraved the various spirals and coils on hard wood, of which we give examples here. It is sometimes said that New Zealand culture and art have filtered from some Asiatic source, and that in the coils and spirals designed, as in our engravings, on the face of the Maori chief, or on his wooden furniture, there may be found debased Asiatic influences. This is one of the questions which we can hardly deal with here. Perhaps its solution requires more of knowledge, anthropological and linguistic, than is at present within the reach of any student. Assuredly the races of the earth have wandered far, and have been wonderfully intermixed, and have left the traces of their passage here and there on sculptured stones, and in the keeping of the ghosts that haunt ancient grave-steads. But when two pieces of artistic work, one civilised, one savage, resemble each other, it is always dangerous to suppose that the resemblance bears witness to relationship or contact between the races, or to influences imported by one from the other. New Zealand work may be Asiatic in origin, and debased by the effect of centuries of lower civilisation and ruder implements. Or Asiatic ornament may be a form of art improved out of ruder forms, like those to which the New Zealanders have already attained. One is sometimes almost tempted to regard the favourite Maori spiral as an imitation of the form, not unlike that of a bishop's crozier at the top, taken by the great native ferns. Examples of resemblance, to be accounted for by the development of a crude early idea, may be traced most easily in the early pottery of Greece. No one says that the Greeks borrowed from the civilised people of America. Only a few enthusiasts say that the civilised peoples of America, especially the Peruvians, are Aryan by race. Yet the remains of Peruvian palaces are often by no means dissimilar in style from the 'Pelasgic' and 'Cyclopean' buildings of gigantic stones which remain on such ancient Hellenic sites as Argos and Mycenæ. The probability is that men living in similar social conditions, and using similar implements, have unconsciously and unintentionally arrived at like results.

Few people who are interested in the question can afford to visit Peru and Mycenæ and study the architecture for themselves. But anyone who is interested in the strange identity of the human mind everywhere, and in the necessary forms of early art, can go to the British Museum and examine the American and early Greek pottery. Compare the Greek key pattern and the wave pattern on Greek and Mexican vases, and compare the bird-faces, or human faces very like those of birds, with the similar faces on the clay pots which Dr. Schliemann dug up at Troy. The latter are engraved in his book on Troy. Compare the so-called 'cuttle-fish' from a Peruvian jar with the same figure on the early Greek vases, most of which are to be found in the last of the classical vase-rooms upstairs. Once more, compare the little clay 'whorls' of the Mexican and Peruvian room with those which Dr. Schliemann found so numerous at Hissarlik. The conviction becomes irresistible that all these objects, in shape, in purpose, in character of decoration, are the same, because the mind and the materials of men, in their early stages of civilisation especially, are the same everywhere. You might introduce old Greek bits of clay-work, figures or vases, into a Peruvian collection, or might foist Mexican objects among the clay treasures of Hissarlik, and the wisest archæologist would be deceived. The Greek fret pattern especially seems to be one of the earliest that men learnt to draw. The *svastika*, as it is called, the cross with lines at right angles to each limb, is found everywhere — in India, Greece, Scotland, Peru — as a natural bit of ornament. The allegorising fancy of the Indians gave it a mystic meaning, and the learned have built I know not what worlds of religious theories on this ‘pre-Christian cross,’ which is probably a piece of hasty decorative work, with no original mystic meaning at all. Ornaments of this sort were transferred from wood or bone to clay, almost as soon as people learned that early art, the potter’s, to which the Australians have not attained, though it was familiar to the not distant people of New Caledonia. The style of spirals and curves, again, once acquired (as it was by the New Zealanders), became the favourite of some races, especially of the Celtic. Any one who will study either the ornaments of Mycenæ, or those of any old Scotch or Irish collection, will readily recognise in that art the development of a system of ornament like that of the Maoris. Classical Greece, on the other hand, followed more in the track of the ancient system of straight and slanted lines, and we do not find in the later Greek art that love of interlacing coils and spirals which is so remarkable among the Celts, and which is very manifest in the ornaments of the Mycænean hoards — that is, perhaps, of the ancient Greek heroic age. The causes of these differences in the development of ornament, the causes that made Celtic genius follow one track, and pursue to its æsthetic limits one early *motif*, while classical art went on a severer line, it is, perhaps, impossible at present to ascertain. But it is plain enough that later art has done little more than develop ideas of ornament already familiar to untutored races.

It has been shown that the art which aims at decoration is better adapted to both the purposes and materials of savages than the art which aims at representation. As a rule, the materials of the lower savages are their own bodies (which they naturally desire to make beautiful for ever by tattooing), and the hard substances of which they fashion their tools and weapons. These hard substances, when worked on with cutting instruments of stone or shell, are most easily adorned with straight cut lines, and spirals are therefore found to be, on the whole, a comparatively late form of ornament.

We have now to discuss the efforts of the savage to represent. Here, again, we have to consider the purpose which animates him, and the materials which are at his service. His pictures have a practical purpose, and do not spring from what we are apt, perhaps too hastily, to consider the innate love of imitation for its own sake. In modern art, in modern times, no doubt the desire to imitate nature, by painting or sculpture, has become almost an innate impulse, an in-born instinct. But there must be some ‘reason why’ for this; and it does not seem at all unlikely that we inherit the love, the disinterested love, of imitative art from very remote ancestors, whose habits of imitation had a direct, interested, and practical purpose. The member of Parliament who mimics the crowing of a cock during debate, or the street boy who beguiles his leisure by barking like a dog, has a disinterested pleasure in the exercise of his skill; but advanced thinkers seem pretty well agreed that the first men who imitated the voices of dogs, and cocks, and other animals, did not do so merely for fun, but with the practical purpose of indicating to their companions the approach of these creatures. Such were the rude beginnings of human language: and whether that theory be correct or not, there are certainly practical reasons which impel the savage to attempt imitative art. I doubt if there are many savage races which do not use representative art for the purposes of writing — that is, to communicate information to persons whom they cannot reach by the voice, and to assist the memory, which, in a savage, is perhaps not very strong. To take examples. A savage man meets a savage maid. She does not speak his language, nor he hers. How are they to know whether, according to the marriage laws of their race, they are lawful mates for each other? This important question is settled by an inspection of their tattooed marks. If a Thlinkeet man of the Swan stock meets an Iroquois maid of the Swan stock they cannot speak to each other, and the ‘gesture language’ is cumbrous. But if both are tattooed with the swan, then the man knows that this daughter of the swan is not for him. He could no more marry her than Helen of Troy could have married Castor, the tamer of horses. Both are children of the Swan, as were Helen and Castor, and must regard each other as brother and sister. The case of the Thlinkeet man and the Iroquois maid is extremely unlikely to occur; but I give it as an example of the practical use among savages, of representative art.

Among the uses of art for conveying intelligence we notice that even the Australians have what the Greeks would have called the ÃºÅÄ±»·, a staff on which inscriptions, legible to the Aborigines, are engraven. I believe, however, that the Australian ÃºÅÄ±»· is not usually marked with picture-writing, but with notches — even more difficult to decipher. As an example of Red Indian picture-writing we publish a scroll from Kohl's book on the natives of North America. This rude work of art, though the reader may think little of it, is really a document as important in its way as the Chaldæan clay tablets inscribed with the record of the Deluge. The coarsely-drawn figures recall, to the artist's mind, much of the myth of Manabozho, the Prometheus and the Deucalion, the Cain and the Noah of the dwellers by the great lake. Manabozho was a great chief, who had two wives that quarrelled. The two stumpy half-figures (4) represent the wives; the mound between them is the displeasure of Manabozho. Further on (5) you see him caught up between two trees — an unpleasant fix, from which the wolves and squirrels refused to extricate him. The kind of pyramid with a figure at top (8) is a mountain, on which when the flood came, Manabozho placed his grandmother to be out of the water's way. The somewhat similar object is Manabozho himself, on the top of his mountain. The animals you next behold (10) were sent out by Manabozho to ascertain how the deluge was faring, and to carry messages to his grandmother. This scroll was drawn, probably on birch bark, by a Red Man of literary attainments, who gave it to Kohl (in its lower right-hand corner (11) he has pictured the event), that he might never forget the story of the Manabozhian deluge. The Red Indians have always, as far as European knowledge goes, been in the habit of using this picture-writing for the purpose of retaining their legends, poems, and incantations. It is unnecessary to say that the picture-writing of Mexico and the hieroglyphics of ancient Egypt are derived from the same savage processes. I must observe that the hasty indications of the figure used in picture-writing are by no means to be regarded as measures of the Red Men's skill in art. They can draw much better than the artist who recorded the Manabozhian legend, when they please.

In addition to picture-writing, Religion has fostered savage representative art. If a man worships a lizard or a bear, he finds it convenient to have an amulet or idol representing a bear or a lizard. If one adores a lizard or a bear, one is likely to think that prayer and acts of worship addressed to an image of the animal will please the animal himself, and make him propitious. Thus the art of making little portable figures of various worshipful beings is fostered, and the craft of working in wood or ivory is born. As a rule, the savage is satisfied with excessively rude representations of his gods. Objects of this kind — rude hewn blocks of stone and wood — were the most sacred effigies of the gods in Greece, and were kept in the dimmest recesses of the temple. No Demeter wrought by the craft of Phidias would have appeared so holy to the Phigalians as the strange old figure of the goddess with the head of a mare. The earliest Greek sacred sculptures that remain are scarcely, if at all, more advanced in art than the idols of the naked Admiralty Islanders. But this is anticipating; in the meantime it may be said that among the sources of savage representative art are the need of something like writing, and ideas suggested by nascent religion.

The singular wall-picture (Fig. 9) from a cave in South Africa, which we copy from the ‘Cape Monthly Magazine,’ probably represents a magical ceremony. Bushmen are tempting a great water animal — a rhinoceros, or something of that sort — to run across the land, for the purpose of producing rain. The connection of ideas is scarcely apparent to civilised minds, but it is not more indistinct than the connection between carrying a bit of the rope with which a man has been hanged and success at cards — a common French superstition. The Bushman cave-pictures, like those of Australia, are painted in black, red, and white. Savages, like the Assyrians and the early Greeks, and like children, draw animals much better than the human figure. The Bushman dog in our little engraving (Fig. 7) is all alive — almost as full of life as the dog which accompanies the centaur Chiron, in that beautiful vase in the British Museum which represents the fostering of Achilles. The Bushman wall-paintings, like those of Australia, seem to prove that savage art is capable of considerable freedom, when supplied with fitting materials. Men seem to draw better when they have pigments and a flat surface of rock to work upon, than when they are scratching on hard wood with a sharp edge of a broken shell. Though the thing has little to do with art, it may be worth mentioning, as a matter of curiosity, that the labyrinthine Australian caves are decorated, here and there, with the mark of a red hand. The same mysterious, or at least unexplained, red hand is impressed on the walls of the ruined palaces and temples of Yucatan — the work of a vanished people.

There is one singular fact in the history of savage art which reminds us that savages, like civilised men, have various degrees of culture and various artistic capacities. The oldest inhabitants of Europe who have left any traces of their lives and handiwork must have been savages. Their tools and weapons were not even formed of polished stone, but of rough-hewn flint. The people who used tools of this sort must necessarily have enjoyed but a scanty mechanical equipment, and the life they lived in caves from which they had to drive the cave-bear, and among snows where they stalked the reindeer and the mammoth, must have been very rough. These earliest known Europeans, ‘palæolithic men,’ as they called, from their use of the ancient unpolished stone weapons, appear to have inhabited the countries now known as France and England, before the great Age of Ice. This makes their date one of incalculable antiquity; they are removed from us by a ‘dark backward and abysm of time.’ The whole Age of Ice, the dateless period of the polishers of stone weapons, the arrival of men using weapons of bronze, the time which sufficed to change the climate and fauna and flora of Western Europe, lie between us and palæolithic man. Yet in him we must recognise a skill more akin to the spirit of modern art than is found in any other savage race. Palæolithic man, like other savages, decorated his weapons; but, as I have already said, he did not usually decorate them in the common savage manner with ornamental patterns. He scratched on bits of bone spirited representations of all the animals whose remains are found mixed with his own. He designed the large-headed horse of that period, and science inclines to believe that he drew the breed correctly. His sketches of the mammoth, the reindeer, the bear, and of many fishes, may be seen in the British Museum, or engraved in such works as Professor Boyd Dawkins’s ‘Early Man in Britain.’ The object from which our next illustration (Fig. 12) was engraved represents a deer, and was a knife-handle. Eyes at all trained in art can readily observe the wonderful spirit and freedom of these ancient sketches. They are the rapid characteristic work of true artists who know instinctively what to select and what to sacrifice.

Some learned men, Mr. Boyd Dawkins among them, believe that the Eskimo, that stunted hunting and fishing race of the Western Arctic circle, are descendants of the palæolithic sketchers, and retain their artistic qualities. Other inquirers, with Mr. Geikie and Dr. Wilson, do not believe in this pedigree of the Eskimo. I speak not with authority, but the submission of ignorance, and as one who has no right to an opinion about these deep matters of geology and ethnology. But to me, Mr. Geikie’s arguments appear distinctly the more convincing, and I cannot think it demonstrated that the Eskimo are descended from our old palæolithic artists. But if Mr. Boyd Dawkins is right, if the Eskimo derive their lineage from the artists of the Dordogne, then the Eskimo are sadly degenerated. In Mr. Dawkins’s ‘Early Man’ is an Eskimo drawing of a reindeer hunt, and a palæolithic sketch of a reindeer; these (by permission of the author and Messrs. Macmillan) we reproduce. Look at the vigour and life of the ancient drawing — the feathering hair on the deer’s breast, his head, his horns, the very grasses at his feet, are touched with the graver of a true artist (Fig. 14). The design is like a hasty memorandum of Leech’s. Then compare the stiff formality of the modern Eskimo drawing (Fig. 13). It is rather like a record, a piece of picture-writing, than a free sketch, a rapid representation of what is most characteristic in nature. Clearly, if the Eskimo come from palæolithic man, they are a degenerate race as far as art is concerned. Yet, as may be seen in Dr.

Rink's books, the Eskimo show considerable skill when they have become acquainted with European methods and models, and they have at any rate a greater natural gift for design than the Red Indians, of whose sacred art the Thunderbird brooding over page 298 is a fair example. The Red Men believe in big birds which produce thunder. Quahteaht, the Adam of Vancouver's Island, married one, and this (Fig. 11) is she.

We have tried to show how savage decorative art supplied the first ideas of patterns which were developed in various ways by the decorative art of advancing civilisation. The same progress might be detected in representative art. Books, like the guide-book to ancient Greece which Pausanias wrote before the glory had quite departed, prove that the Greek temples were museums in which the development of art might be clearly traced. Furthest back in the series of images of gods came things like that large stone which was given to Cronus when he wished to swallow his infant child Zeus, and which he afterwards vomited up with his living progeny. This fetich-stone was preserved at Delphi. Next came wild bulks of beast-headed gods, like the horse-headed Demeter of Phigalia, and it seems possible enough that there was an Artemis with the head of a she-bear. Gradually the bestial characteristics dropped, and there appeared such rude anthropomorphic images of Apollo — more like South Sea idols than the archer prince — as are now preserved in Athens. Next we have the stage of semi-savage realism, which is represented by the metopes of Selinus in Sicily, now in the British Museum, and by not a few gems and pieces of gold work. Greek temples have fallen, and the statues of the gods exist only in scattered fragments. But in the representative collection of casts belonging to the Cambridge Archæological Museum, one may trace the career of Greek art backwards from Phidias to the rude idol.

'Savage realism' is the result of a desire to represent an object as it is known to be, and not as it appears. Thus Catlin, among the Red Indians, found that the people refused to be drawn in profile. They knew they had two eyes, and in profile they seemed only to have one. Look at the Selinus marbles, and you will observe that figures, of which the body is seen in profile, have the full face turned to the spectator. Again, the savage knows that an animal has two sides; both, he thinks, should be represented, but he cannot foreshorten, and he finds the profile view easiest to draw. To satisfy his need of realism he draws a beast's head full-face, and gives to the one head two bodies drawn in profile. Examples of this are frequent in very archaic Greek gems and gold work, and Mr. A. S. Murray suggests (as I understand him) that the attitude of the two famous lions, which guarded vainly Agamemnon’s gate at Mycenæ, is derived from the archaic double-bodied and single-headed beast of savage realism. Very good examples of these oddities may be found in the ‘Journal of the Hellenic Society,’ 1881, pl. xv. Here are double-bodied and single headed birds, monsters, and sphinxes. We engrave (Fig. 15) three Greek gems from the islands as examples of savagery in early Greek art. In the oblong gem the archers are rather below the Red Indian standard of design. The hunter figured in the first gem is almost up to the Bushman mark. In his dress ethnologists will recognise an arrangement now common among the natives of New Caledonia. In the third gem the woman between two swans may be Leda, or she may represent Leto in Delos. Observe the amazing rudeness of the design, and note the modern waist and crinoline. The artists who engraved these gems on hard stone had, of necessity, much better tools than any savages possess, but their art was truly savage. To discover how Greek art climbed in a couple of centuries from this coarse and childish work to the grace of the Ægina marbles, and thence to the absolute freedom and perfect unapproachable beauty of the work of Phidias, is one of the most singular problems in the history of art. Greece learned something, no doubt, from her early knowledge of the arts the priests of Assyria and Egypt had elaborated in the valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile. That might account for a swift progress from savage to formal and hieratic art; but whence sprang the inspiration which led her so swiftly on to art that is perfectly free, natural, and god-like? It is a mystery of race, and of a divine gift. ‘The heavenly gods have given it to mortals.’

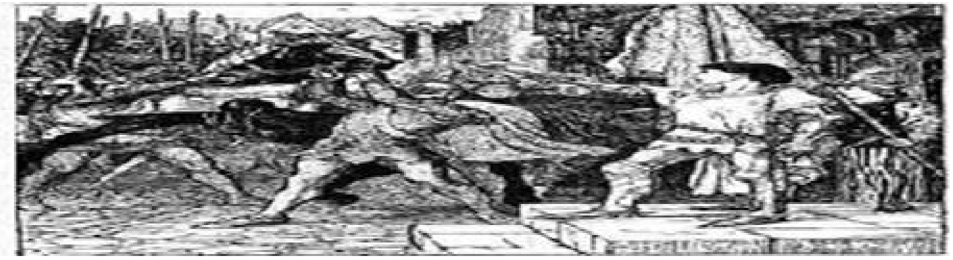

‘THAT VERY MAB’

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CHAPTER I. — UNDER TWO FLAGS.

‘You send out teachers of religion to undermine and ruin the people.’ — Black Flag Proclamation to the French, 1883.

The moonlight, in wave on wave of silver, flooded all the Sacred Island. Far away and faint ran the line of the crests of Samoa, like the hills of heaven in the old ballad, or a scene in the Italian opera. Then came a voice from the Calling Place, and the smooth sea thrilled, and all the fishes leaped, and the Sacred Isle itself was moved, and shuddered to its inmost heart. Again and again came the voice, and now it rose and fell in the cadences of a magical song (or *Karakia*, if we *must* have local colour), and the words were not of this world. Then, behold, the smooth seas began to break and plash round the foremost cape of the Holy Island, and to close again behind, like water before the keel and behind the stern of a running ship, so they plashed, and broke, and fell. Next the surface was stirred far off with the gambolling and sporting of innumerable fishes; the dolphin was tumbling in the van; the flying fish hovered and shone and sank; and clearer, always, and yet more clear came the words of the song from Samoa. Clearer and louder, moment by moment, rose the voice of Queen Mab, where she stood on the Calling Place of the Gods, and chanted to the Islands, and to the sea, and the dwellers in the sea. It was not that she left her stand, nor came nearer, but the Sacred Island itself was steering straight, like a magical barque, drawn by the wonderful song, to the mystic shore of Samoa. Now Queen Mab, where she stood among her court, with the strange brown fairies of the Southern Ocean, could behold the Sacred Island, with all its fairy crew. Beautiful things they seemed, as the sailing isle drew nearer, beautiful and naked, and brave with purple pandanus flowers, and with red and yellow necklets of the scented seed of the pandanus. At last Queen Mab, the fairy in the fluttering wings of green, clapped her hands, and, with a little soft shock, the Sacred Island ran in and struck on the haunted beach of Samoa. What was Queen Mab doing here, so far away from England? England she had left long ago; when the Puritans arose the Fairies vanished. When ‘Tom came home from labour and Cis from milking rose,’ there was now no more sound of tabor, nor ‘merrily went their toes.’ Tom went to the Public House or the Preaching House, and Cis — Cis waited till Tom should come home and kick her into a jelly (his toes going merrily enough at that work), or tell her she was, spiritually, in a parlous case. So the Fairy Queen and all her court had long since fled from England, and long ago made a home in the undiscovered isles of the South. Now they all met and mingled in the throng of the Polynesian fairy folk, and, rushing down into the waters, they revelled all night on the silvery sand, in the windless dancing places of the deep. Tanê and Tawhiti came, the Gods of the tides and the shores, and all the fairies sang to them: *‘Tawhiti, on the sacred beach*

The purple pandanus is thine!
How soft the breakers come and go,
How bright the fragrant berries blow,
The fern-tree scents the shining reach,
And Tanê dances down the brine!’

Such is the poetry of the Polynesian fairies. It is addicted to frequent repetitions of the same obvious remark, and it does not contain a Criticism of Life, so we do not give any more of it. But, such as it was, it seemed to afford great pleasure to the dancers, probably because every one of them could compose any amount of it himself, at will, and every dancer was ‘his own poet,’ than which nothing can be more salubrious and delightful.

Thus the dance and the revel swang and swayed through the silver halls till the green lights began to glow with gold and scarlet and crimson, burning into dawn. Then came a sudden noise, like thunder, crashing and roaring through the silence of the sea. Queen Mab clapped her hands, and, in one moment, the Sacred Isle had flitted back to its place, and the music stopped, and the dancers vanished.

Then, as the island swiftly receded, came a monstrous wave, and no wonder, which raised the surface of the sea to a level with the topmost cliff of the Calling Place. Queen Mab, who had flown to a pine-tree there, saw the salt water fall back down the steeps like a cataract, and heard a voice say, ‘The blooming reef has bolted.’ Another voice remarked something about ‘submarine volcanic action.’ These words came from a level with her head, where the Queen saw, stranded in a huge tree, a boat with a funnel that poured forth smoke, and with wheels that still rapidly and automatically revolved in mid air. In fact, a missionary steamer had been raised by the mighty tidal wave to the level of the cliff. Then the sailors climbed into the trees, talking freely, in a speech which Queen Mab knew for English, but not at all the English she had been accustomed to hear. Also the sailors had among them men with full, sleek, shining faces, wearing tall hats and long coats, and carrying little books whose edges flashed in the sun. And Queen Mab did not like the look of them. Then she heard the sailors and the men in black coats making straight for the very pine-tree in which she was sitting. So she fled into a myrtle-bush, and behold, the sailors chopped every branch of the pine clean away, and changed the beautiful tree into a bare pole. Then they brought out ropes, and a great piece of thin cloth, white with red and blue cross marks on it, and they tugged it up, and it floated from the top of the tree. Then the people from the ship gathered round it, and sang songs, whereof one repeated, ‘Rule Britannia!’

and the other contained the words, ‘Every prospect pleases, And only Man is vile.’

Soon some specimens of vile Man, some of the human beings of Samoa, came round, beautiful women dressed in feathers and leaves, carrying flowers and fruit, which they offered to the men in black coats and white neckties. But the men in black coats held up their hands in horror, and shut their eyes, while some of them ran to the boat and brought bonnets, and boots, and cotton gowns, and pocket-handkerchiefs, and gave them to the women. And the women, putting them on anyhow, walked about as proud as peacocks; while the men in black coats explained that, unless they wore these things, and did and refrained from many matters, they would all be punished dreadfully after they were dead. Now, while the women were crying at such glad tidings, came another awful crash and shock, which indeed, like the previous noise that had frightened the dancers, was produced by a ship’s gun. And another cloud of black smoke floated round the point, and another set of sailors got out and cut the branches off a tree, and ran up a flag which was black and red and yellow. Then those sailors (who had men with red beards and spectacles among them) cried *Hock!* and sang the *Wacht am Rhein*. Thereupon the sailors of the first steamer, with a horrid yell, rushed on the tree under the new flag, and were cutting it down, when some of the singers of the *Wacht am Rhein* pointed a curious little machine that way and began to turn a handle. Thereon the most dreadful cracking sounds arose, cracking and crashing; fire flew, and some of the first set of sailors fell down and writhed on the sand, while the rest fled to their boat. Several of the native women also fell down bleeding and dying in their new cotton gowns and their bonnets, for they had been dancing about while the sailors were hacking at the tree with the black and red and yellow flag.

Seeing all this, Queen Mab also saw that Samoa was no longer a place for her. She did not understand what was happening, nor know that a peaceful English annexation had been disturbed by a violent German annexation, for which the English afterwards apologised. Queen Mab also conceived a prejudice against missionaries, which, perhaps, was justified by her experience. For, in the matter of missionaries, she was unlucky. The specimens she had observed were of the wrong kind. She might have met missionaries as learned as Mr. Codrington, as manly as Livingstone, as brave and pure as Bishop Pattison> who was a martyr indeed, and gave his life for the heathen people. Yes, Queen Mab was unlucky in her missionaries.

CHAPTER II. — DISILLUSIONS.

‘The time is come,’ the walrus said,
‘To talk of many things.’
‘Alice in Wonderland.’

It was on April 1, the green young year’s beginning, that Mab arrived in England. She had hired a seagull — no, the seagull offered his services for nothing; I was forgetting that it was not an English, but a Polynesian seagull — to take her across. She did not altogether admire the missionaries, as we have seen, in their proceedings, the fact being that she had grown used to Polynesians in the course of the centuries she had spent among them, and the missionaries were such a remarkable contrast to the Polynesians. But their advent was certainly a source of mental improvement to her, for fairies as we know, understand things almost by instinct, and Queen Mab, one evening, chanced to overhear a good deal of the missionaries’ conversation. She learned, for instance, the precise meanings, and the bearings on modern theology and metaphysics, of such words as kathenotheism, hagiography, transubstantiation, eschatology, Positivist, *noumenony begriffy vorstellung, Paulisimus, wissenschaft,* and others, quite new to her, and of great benefit in general conversation.

With this additional knowledge she started on the voyage, leaving her faithful subjects to take care of the island and themselves, till she came back to tell them whether their return to England would ever be practicable. She landed in Great Britain, then, on April 1, and the seagull went across to the Faroe Islands and waited there till the time which she had appointed for him to come and carry her back to Polynesia.

Queen Mab found England a good deal altered. There were still fairy circles in the grass; but they were attributed, not to fairy dances, but to unscientific farming and the absence of artificial phosphates. The country did not smell of April and May, but of brick-kilns and the manufacture of chemicals. The rivers, which she had left bright and clear, were all black and poisonous. Water for drinking purposes was therefore supplied by convoys from the Apollinaris and other foreign wells, and it was thought that, if a war broke out, the natives of England would die of thirst. This was not the only disenchantment of Queen Mab. She found that in Europe she was an anachronism. She did not know, at first, what the word meant, but the sense of it gradually dawned upon her. Now there is always something uncomfortable about being an anachronism; but still people may become accustomed to it, and even take a kind of a pride in it, if they are only anachronisms on the right side — so far in the van of the bulk of humanity, for instance, that the bulk of humanity considers them not wholly in their right minds. There must surely be a sense of superiority in knowing oneself a century or two in front of one’s fellow-creatures that counterbalances the sense of solitude. Queen Mab had no such consolation. She was an anachronism hundreds of years on the wrong side; in fact, a relic of Paganism.

Of course she was acquainted with the language of all the beasts and birds and insects, and she counted on their befriending her, however much men had changed. Her brief experience of modern sailors and missionaries, whether English or German, had indeed convinced her that men were, even now, far from perfection. But it was a crushing blow to find that all the beasts were traitors, and all the insects.

If it had not been for the loyal birds she would have gone back to Polynesia at once; but they flocked faithfully to her standard, led by the Owl, the wisest of all feathered things, who had lived too long, and had too much good feeling to ignore fairies, though he was, perhaps, just a little of a prig. The insects, however, who, considering the size of their brains, one might have thought would believe in fairies and in the supernatural in general, if anybody did, behaved disgracefully, and the ant was the worst all. She started by saying that *her* brain was larger in proportion than the brain of any other insect. Perhaps Queen Mab was not aware that Sir John Lubbock had devoted a volume to the faculties and accomplishments of ants, together with some minor details relating to bees and wasps, of which these insects magnified the importance. Under *these* circumstances, it was impossible for her to countenance a mere vulgar superstition, like faith in fairies. She begged leave to refer Queen Mab to various works in the International Scientific Series for a complete explanation of her motives, and mentioned, casually, that she also held credentials from Mr. Romanes. Then, explaining that her character with the sluggard was at stake, she hurried away. Evidently she did not care to be seen talking to a fairy. It may be mentioned here, however, that Queen Mab’s faith in entomological nature was considerably shaken by the fact that when no one was looking at her the ant always folded up her work and went to sleep — though, if surprised in a siesta, she explained that she had only just succumbed to complete exhaustion, and lamented that mind, though infinitely superior to, was not yet independent of matter.

The bees hummed much to the same tune. The Queen Bee recommended our foreigner to read a work on ‘Bees and Wasps,’ with a few minor details relating to Ants, by Sir John Lubbock, in the International Scientific Series. She was not, indeed quite so timid about her reputation as the ant, and even volunteered to give her visitor an account of the formation of hexagonal cells by Natural Selection, culled from the pages of the ‘Origin of Species’; but she observed that, though her brain might be smaller in proportion than the brains of some inferior insects, it was of finer quality, what there was of it, and that fairies were merely an outgrowth of the anthropomorphic tendency which had been noticed by distinguished writers as persisting even in the present day. Then she departed, humming gaily, to the tune of a popular hymn in the ‘Ancient and Modern’ collection:

‘And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower?

But the whole sad history of Queen Mab’s failures to enlist sympathy and protection it would be vain to tell. The fishes, all that were left of them, took her part; but they lived in the water, and she had never had very much to do with them. In the birds she found her true allies. They were not attached to the higher civilisation. The higher civilisation, so far, had treated them inconsiderately, at sparrow clubs. The Owl talked a good deal about the low moral tone of the human race in this respect, and was pessimistic about it, failing to perceive that higher types of organisms always like to signify their superiority over lower ones by shooting them, or otherwise making their lives a burden. The Owl, however, was a very talented bird, and one felt that even his fallacies were a mark of attainments beyond those common to his race. He had read and thought a great deal, and could tell Queen Mab about almost anything she asked him. This was pleasant, and she sat with him on a very high oak in Epping Forest, above a pond, and made observations. It was lovely weather, just the weather for sitting on the uppermost branches of a great oak, and she began to feel like herself again. She had forgotten to put her invisible cloak on; but as she was only half a foot high, and dressed in green, no one saw her up there. Having reached the Forest at night, she had met as yet with few British subjects; but the Owl explained that she would see hundreds of them before the day was over, coming to admire Nature.

‘The English people,’ he observed, ‘are great worshippers of Nature, and write many guide-books about her, some on large paper at ten guineas the volume. I have sometimes fancied, indeed,’ he added, doubtfully,’ that it was their own capacity for admiring Nature that they admired, but that were a churlish thought. For, do they not run innumerable excursion trains for the purpose of bowing at her shrine? Epping Forest must be one of Nature’s favourite haunts, from the numbers of people who come here to worship her, especially on Bank Holidays. Those are her high festivals, when her adorers troop down, and build booths and whirligigs and circuses in her honour, and gamble, and ride donkeys, and shy sticks at cocoanuts before her. Also they partake of sandwiches and many other appropriate offerings at the shrine, and pour libations of bottled ale, and nectar, and zoedone, and brandy, and soda-water, and ginger-beer. They *always* leave the corks about, and confectionery paper bags, for the next people to gaze upon who come to worship Nature: you may see them now, if you look down. I have often thought those corks, and cigar-ends, and such tokens that the British public always leaves behind it, must be symbolical of something — offerings to Nature, you know, an invariable part of the rite, and typical — well, the question is, of what are they typical?' mused the Owl, getting beyond his depth, as he had a way of doing.

'However,' he resumed, 'it is certain that their devotion is strong, and they offer to Nature the sacrifices dearest to their own hearts, and probably dearest, therefore, to the heart of Nature. They cut their names all over her shrine, which is, I have no doubt, a welcome attention; but they do not look at her any more than they can help, for they stay where the beer is, and they are very warm, and flirt.'

'What is "flirt"?'

'A recreation,' said the Owl decorously; 'a pastime.'

'And does *nobody* believe in fairies?' sighed Queen Mab.

'No, or at least hardly anyone. A few of the children, perhaps, and a very, very few grown-up people — persons who believe in Faith-healing and Esoteric Buddhism, and Thought-reading, and Arbitration, and Phonetic Spelling, can believe in anything, except what their mothers taught them on their knees. All of these are *in* just now.'

'What do you mean by "in"?'

'In fashion; and what is fashionable is to be believed in. Why, you might be the fashion again,' said the Owl excitedly. 'Why not? and then people would believe in *you*. What a game it all is, to be sure! But the fashions of this kind don't last,' the bird added; 'they get snuffed out by the scientific men.'

'Tell me exactly who the scientific men are,' said the fairy. 'I have heard so much about them since I came.'

'They are the men.' sighed the Owl, 'who go about with microscopes, that is, instruments for looking into things as they are not meant to be looked at and seeing them as they were never intended to be seen. They have put everything under their microscopes, except stars and First Causes; but they had to take telescopes to the stars, because they were so far off; and First Causes they examined by stethoscopes, which each philosopher applied to his own breast. But, as all the breasts are different, they now call First Causes no business of theirs. They make most things their business, though. They have had a good deal of trouble with the poets, because the poets liked to put themselves and their critics under their own microscopes, and they objected to the microscopes of the scientific men. You know what poets are?'

'Yes, indeed,' said Queen Mab, feeling at home on the subject. 'I have forgotten a good many things, I daresay, with living in Polynesia, but not about the poets. I remember Shakespeare very well, and Herrick is at my court in the Pacific.'

'Ah, he was a great man, Shakespeare, almost too large for a microscope!' said the Owl reflectively. They have put him under a good many since he died, however, especially German lenses. But we were talking about the philosophers — another name for the scientific men — the men who don't know everything.'

'I should have thought they did,' said Queen Mab.

'No,' said the Owl. 'It is the theologians who know everything, or at least they used to do so. But lately it has become such a mark of mental inferiority to know everything, that they are always casting it in each other's teeth. It has grown into a war-cry with both parties: "You think you know everything," and it is hard for a bird to find out how it all began and what it is all about. I believe it sprang originally out of the old microscope difficulty. The philosophers wanted to put theology under the microscope, and the theologians excommunicated microscopes, and said theology ought never to be looked at except with the Eye of Faith. Now the philosophers are borrowing an eye of Faith from the theologians, and adding it on to their own microscope like another lens, and they have detected a kind of Absolute, a sort of a Something, the Higher Pantheism. I could never tell you all about it, and I don't even know whether they have really put theology under the microscope, or only theologians.'

'And the people worship St. George still?' asked Queen Mab, who, being only a fairy, and owning no soul, had private theories of belief, based merely on observation of popular customs.

'Oh yes, St. George and the Dragon. They have them both together on the beads of their rosaries — the yellow things they count, and pray with, or pay with.' said the Owl rather vaguely.

'St. George *and the Dragon!* Why, St. George killed the Dragon.'

'Ah! the Dragon was not really killed.' said the Owl coolly. 'It was only syncope, and he kept quiet for a time, and grew seven other heads worse than the first. Some say St George worships the Dragon now, himself; but people always are saying unpleasant things, and probably it isn't true. At all events, the English worship St George and the Dragon till they don't seem to know which is which.'

'What, has St George grown like the Dragon then?' cried Queen Mab distractedly, wringing her hands.

‘Oh no,’ replied the Owl, with some condescending pity for the foreigner’s ignorance. ‘But the Dragon has grown vastly like St. George.’

‘Is that all they worship?’ said Queen Mab.

‘Oh no, there are plenty of other patent religions. A hundred religions and only one sauce — melted butter, as the Frenchman said, but the sauce has outlived many of the patent religions.’

‘I don’t understand how religions are patent.’ remarked her inquisitive Majesty.

‘We call it a patent religion.’ said the Owl, ‘when it has only been recently invented, and is so insufficiently advertised, that it is only to be found in a very few houses indeed, and is not a commodity in general request. The Patentees then call themselves a Church, and devote their energies to advertising the new “Cult,” as they generally style it. For example, you have Esoteric Buddhism, so named because it is not Buddhism, nor Esoteric. It is imported by an American company with a manufactory in Thibet, and has had some success among fashionable people.’

‘What do the Esoteric Buddhists worship?’

‘Teacups and cigarettes, standing where they ought not.’ replied the owl; ‘but I believe these things are purely symbolical, and that *au fond* the Priestess of Esoteric Buddhism herself adores the Dragon.’

‘That is enough about *that*. Are there no patent religions warranted free from Dragon worship?’

‘Well.’ said the Owl dubiously, ‘there are the Altruists. ‘*They* worship humanity. As a rule, you may have noticed that adorers think the object of adoration better than themselves, — an unexpected instance in most cases, of the modesty of their species. But the Altruists worship Humanity.’

‘And they don’t think Humanity better than themselves?’

‘Far from it. Their leading idea is that they are the cream of Humanity. Their principal industry is to scold and lecture Humanity. Whatever Humanity may be doing — making war or making peace, or making love to its Deceased Wife’s Sister — the Altruists cry out, “Don’t do that.” And they preach sermons to Humanity, always beginning, “We think;” and they publish their remarks in high-class periodicals, and they invariably show that everyone, and especially Mr. Herbert Spencer, is in the wrong, and nobody pays the slightest attention to them. In their way the Altruists do to others as they would have others do to them, To my mind, while they pretend that Humanity is what they worship, they really want to be worshipped by Humanity.’

‘Are there many of this sect?’ asked Mab.

‘There were twenty-seven of them.’ said the Owl, ‘but they quarrelled about canonising the Emperor Tiberius, and now there are only thirteen and a half.’

‘Where do you get the fraction?’ said Mab.

‘That is a mystery.’ said the Owl. ‘Every religion should have its mystery, and the Altruists possess only this example; it is a cheap one, but they are not a luxurious sect.’

‘Well.’ said Mab mournfully at last, ‘I must go back to Samoa; there is too much mystery here for me. But who is that?’

She broke off suddenly, for a new and mysterious object had just entered the glade, and was advancing towards the pool.

‘Hush!’ said the Owl. ‘Do take care. It is a scientific man — a philosopher.’

It was a tall, thin personage, with spectacles and a knapsack, and what reminded Queen Mab of a small green landing-net, but was really intended to catch butterflies. He came up to the pond, and she imagined he was going to fish; but no, he only unfastened his knapsack and took some small phials and a tin box out of it Then, bending down to the edge of the water, he began to skim its surface cautiously with a ladle and empty the contents into one of his phials. Suddenly a look of delight came into his face, and he uttered a cry— ‘Stephanoceros!’

Queen Mab thought it was an incantation, and, trembling with fear, she relaxed her hold of the bough and fell. Not into the pond! She had wings, of course, and half petrified with horror though she was, she yet fluttered away from that stagnant water. But alas, in the very effort to escape, she had caught the eye of the Professor; he sprang up — pond, animalcule all forgotten in the chase of this extraordinary butterfly. The fairy’s courage failed her: her presence of mind vanished, and the wild gyrations of the owl, who, too late, realised the peril of his companion, only increased her confusion. In another moment she was a prisoner under the butterfly-net.

Beaming with delight, the philosopher turned her carefully into the tin box, shut the lid and hastened home, too much enraptured with his prize even to pause to secure the valuable Stephanoceros.

But Queen Mab had fainted, as even fairies must do at such a terrible crisis; and perhaps it was as well that she had, for the professor forbore to administer chloroform, under the impression that his lovely captive had completely succumbed. He put her, therefore, straight into a tall glass bottle, and began to survey her carefully, walking round and round. Truly, he had never seen such a remarkable butterfly.

CHAPTER III. — THE ORIGIN OF RELIGION.

‘Rough draughts of Man’s Beginning God!’
Swinburne.

When Queen Mab recovered consciousness she heard the sound of violent voices in the room before she opened her eyes, which she did half hoping to find herself the victim of some terrible delusion. But the sight of the professor, standing not a yard away, brought a fatal conviction to her heart. It was too true. Was there ever a more undesirable position for a fairy, accustomed to perfect freedom, and nourished by honey and nectar, than to be closely confined in a tall bottle, with smooth hard slippery walls that she could not pierce, and nothing to live upon but a glass-stopper! It was absurd; but it was also terrible. How fervently she wished, now, that the missionaries had never come to Polynesia.

But the professor was not alone, two of his acquaintances were there — a divine veering towards the modern school, and a poet — the ordinary poet of satire and Mr. Besant’s novels, with an eyeglass, who held that the whole duty of poets at least was to transfer the meanderings of the inner life, or as much of them as were in any degree capable of transmission, to immortal foolscap..Unfortunately, as he observed with a mixture of pride and regret, the workings of his soul were generally so ethereal as to baffle expression and comprehension; and, he was wont to say, mixing up metaphors at a great rate, that he could only stand, like the High Priest of the Delphic oracle, before the gates of his inner life, to note down such fragmentary utterances as ‘foamed up from the depths of that divine chaos.’ for the benefit of inquiring minds with a preference for the oracular. He added that cosmos was a condition of grovelling minds, and that while the thoughts, faculties, and emotions of an ordinary member of society might fitly be summed up in the epithet ‘microcosm.’ his own nature could be appropriately described only by that of ‘microchaos.’ In which opinion the professor always fully coincided.

With the two had entered the professor’s little boy, a motherless child of eight, who walked straight up to the bottle.

No sooner did the child’s eyes light on the vessel than a curious thing occurred. He fell down on his knees, bowed his head, and held up his hands.

‘Great Heavens!’ cried the professor, forgetting himself, ‘what do I behold! My child is praying (a thing he never was taught to do), and praying to a green butterfly! Hush! hush!’ the professor went on, turning to his friends. ‘This is terrible, but most important. The child has never been allowed to hear anything about the supernatural — his poor mother died when he was in the cradle — and I have scrupulously shielded him from all dangerous conversation. There is not a prayer-book in the house, the maids are picked Agnostics, from advanced families, and I am quite certain that my boy has never even heard of the existence of a bogie.'

The poet whistled: the divine took up his hat, and, with a pained look, was leaving the room.

'Stop, stop!' cried the professor, 'he is doing something odd.'

The child had taken out of his pocket certain small black stones of a peculiar shape. So absorbed was he that he never noticed the presence of the men.

He kissed the stones and arranged them in a curious pattern on the floor, still kneeling, and keeping his eye on Mab in her bottle. At last he placed one strangely shaped pebble in the centre, and then began to speak in a low, trembling voice, and in a kind of cadence: *'Oh! you that I have tried to see,*
Oh! you that I have heard in the night,
Oh! you that live in the sky and the water;
Now I see you, now you have come:
Now you will tell me where you live,
And what things are, and who made them.
Oh Dala, these stones are yours;
These are the goona stones I find,
And play with when I think of you.
Oh Dala, be my friend, and never leave me
Alone in the dark night.'

'As I live, it's a religious service, the worship of a green butterfly!' said the professor. At his voice the child turned round, and seeing the men, looked very much ashamed of himself.

'Come here, my dear old man.' said the professor to the child, who came on being called.

'What were you doing? — who taught you to say all those funny things?'

The little fellow looked frightened.

'I didn't remember you were here.' he said; 'they are things I say when I play by myself.'

'And who is Dala?'

The boy was blushing painfully.

'Oh, I didn't mean you to hear, it's just a game of mine. I play at there being somebody I can't see, who knows what I am doing; a friend.'

'And nobody taught you, not Jane or Harriet?'

Now Harriet and Jane were the maids.

‘You never saw anybody play at that kind of game before?’

‘No,’ said the child, ‘nobody ever.’ ‘Then,’ cried the professor, in a loud and blissful voice, ‘we have at last discovered the origin of religion. It isn’t Ghosts. It isn’t the Infinite. It is worshipping butterflies, with a service of fetich stones. The boy has returned to it by an act of unconscious inherited memory, derived from Palaeolithic Man, who must, therefore, have been the native of a temperate climate, where there were green lepidoptera. Oh, my friends, what a thing is inherited memory! In each of us there slumber all the impressions of all our predecessors, up to the earliest Ascidian. See how the domesticated dog,’ cried the professor, forgetting that he was not lecturing in Albemarle Street, ‘see how the domesticated dog, by inherited memory, turns round on the hearthrug before he curls up to sleep! He is unconsciously remembering the long grasses in which his wild ancestors dwelt. Also observe this boy, who has retained an unconscious recollection of the earliest creed of prehistoric man. Behold him instinctively, and I may say automatically, cherishing fetich stones (instead of marbles, like other boys) and adoring that green insect in the glass bottle! Oh Science,’ he added rapturously, ‘what will Mr. Max Müller say now? The Infinite! Bosh, it’s a butterfly!’

‘It is my own Dala, come to play with me,’ said the boy.

‘It is a fairy,’ exclaimed the poet, examining Mab through his eyeglass. This he said, not that he believed in fairies any more than publishers believed in him, but partly because it was a pose he affected, partly to ‘draw’ the professor.

The professor replied that fairies were unscientific, and even unthinkable, and the divine declared that they were too heterodox even for the advanced state of modern theology, and had been condemned by several councils, which is true. And the professor ran through all the animal kingdoms and sub-kingdoms very fast, and proved quite conclusively, in a perfect cataract of polysyllables, that fairies didn’t belong to any of them. While the professor was recovering breath, the divine observed, in a somewhat aggrieved tone, that he for his part found men and women enough for him, and too much sometimes. He also wished to know whether, if his talented but misguided friend required something ethereal, angels were not sufficient, without his having recourse to Pagan mythology; and whether he considered Pagan mythology suitable to the pressing needs of modern society, with a large surplus female population, and to the adjustment of the claims of reason and religion.

The poet replied, ‘Oh, don’t bother me with your theological conundrums. I give it up. See here, I am going to write a sonnet to this creature, whatever it is. Fair denizen — !’

‘Of a glass bottle!’ interrupted the professor somewhat rudely, and the divine laughed.

‘No. Of deathless ether, doomed.’

‘And that reminds me,’ said the professor, turning hastily, ‘I must examine it under the microscope carefully, while the light lasts.’

‘Oh father!’ cried the child, ‘don’t touch it, it is alive!’

‘Nonsense!’ said the professor, ‘it is as dead as a door-nail. Just reach me that lens.’

He raised the glass stopper unsuspiciously, then turned to adjust his instrument And even as he turned his captive fled.

‘There!’ cried the boy.

Like a flash of sunshine, Queen Mab darted upwards and floated through the open window. They saw her hover outside a moment, then she was gone — back into her deathless ether.

‘I told you so!’ exclaimed the poet, startled by this incident into a momentary conviction of the truth of his own theory.

CHAPTER IV. — THE POET AND THE PALÆONTO-THEOLOGIST

‘Puis nous fut dit que chose estrange ne leur sembloit estre
deux contradictoires Vrayes en mode, en figure, et en
temps.’ Pantagruel, v. xxii.

Moved by an uncontrollable impulse, they all three rushed out into the garden; and far beyond them, in the sunlight, they did indeed catch one parting gleam of gauzy wings, as the fairy vanished. When the professor led the way into the room again, and, rather crestfallen, looked at the tall empty bottle and the stopper, which in his hurry he had thrown down upon the floor.

‘She is gone!’ sobbed the child. ‘My beautiful Dala. I shall never see her again.’

He was right; the professor and the theologian, between them, had scared Queen Mab away pretty successfully. She would certainly never revisit that part of the city if she could help it. The divine looked uncomfortable. In spite of himself he had recognised something strange and unusual in the appearance of this last capture of his friend’s butterfly-net, and almost unconsciously he began to ponder on the old theory that the Evil One might occasionally disguise himself as an angel of light. The poet, meanwhile, was more voluble.

‘Your soul is sordid!’ he said indignantly to the professor. ‘You have no eyes for the Immaterial, the intangibly Ideal, that lies behind the shadowy and deceptive veil that we call Matter.’

‘My soul,’ said the professor with equal indignation, ‘that is, if I have got one, is as good as yours.’

‘No, it isn’t,’ said the poet; ‘I am all soul, or nearly all. You are nothing but a mass of Higher Protoplasm.’

‘No one need wish to be anything better. I should like to know,’ cried the professor angrily, ‘where we should all be without Protoplasm.’

‘My friends,’ said the theologian, still rather confused, ‘this heat is both irreverent and irrational. Protoplasm is invaluable, but is it not also transient? The flight of that butterfly may well remind us—’

‘Stop!’ interrupted the philosopher. ‘*Was* it a butterfly? Now I come to think of it, I hardly know whether to refer it to the lepidoptera or not. At all events, it is a striking example of the manner in which natural and sexual selection, continued through a series of epochs, can evolve the most brilliant and graceful combinations of tint and plumage, by simple survival of the favourable variations.’

‘It is indeed,’ suggested the theologian, ‘a remarkable proof of the intelligent construction of the universe, and of the argument from design, that this insect should have been framed with such exquisite perfection of form and colour to delight the eyes of the theologian.’

‘Not at all,’ said the professor irritably. ‘It was to delight the eyes of butterflies of the opposite sex. It is no more an argument from design than I am!’

‘Do stop that!’ said the poet. ‘How can a fellow write a sonnet with you two for ever sparring away at your musty scholasticisms? Haven’t we heard enough about Paley and Darwin? You have frightened away the fairy between you, and that is plenty of mischief for one day.

‘Fair denizen of deathless ether, doomed For one brief hour to languish and repine.

Entombed? That will do, but I’m afraid there are not many more rhymes to “doomed.” “Loomed,” “boomed,” “exhumed,” “well-groomed.” My thoughts won’t flow, hang it all!’

‘You *are* an argument for design,’ said the theologian, taking no notice of the poet, ‘though you won’t admit it. Why won’t you take up with my scientific religion? — a religion, you know, that can be expressed with equal facility by emotional or by mathematical terms. It is as easy, when you once understand it, as the first proposition in Euclid. You have two points, Faith and Reason, and you draw a straight line between them. Then you must describe an equilateral triangle — I mean a scientific religion, on the straight line, F R — between Faith and Reason.’

‘Oh!’ said the professor. ‘How do you do it?’

‘First,’ said the theologian hopefully, ‘taking F as your centre, F R as your radius, describe the circle of Theology. Then, taking R as your centre, F R as your radius, describe the circle of Logic. These two circles will intersect at Science, indicated in the proposition by the point S. Join together S F, and then join S R, and you will have the equilateral triangle of a scientific religion on the line F R S.’

‘Prove it,’ said the professor grimly.

‘Science and Faith,’ replied the theologian readily, ‘equal Faith and Reason, because they are both radii of the same circle, Man being the Radius of the Infinite. Theology—’

‘Stop!’ ejaculated the professor in the utmost indignation. ‘What do you mean by it? I never in my life listened to such unmitigated nonsense. Who gave you leave to talk of a scientific religion as an equilateral triangle? If it is a triangle at all, which there is not the remotest reason to suppose — but I cannot argue with you? You might as well call it a dodecahedron, or the cube root of minus nothing.'

'Oh, very well,' said the theologian with exasperating coolness. 'I thought it possible that even your blind prejudice might not refuse to listen to a simple mathematical demonstration of the possibility of a true scientific religion, but I find that I was mistaken. I am not annoyed — not at all. I prefer to look with lenity upon this outburst of passion, which might, I admit, have roused the anger of a theologian of the old school. But, believe me, I personally feel towards you no enmity — only the profoundest compassion.'

Inarticulate sound from the professor.

'I find in you,' continued the theologian with benevolence, 'much to tolerate, much even to admire. I regret that, formerly, some of my predecessors may have been led, by your aggressive and turbulent spirit, to form unnecessarily harsh judgments of your character, and put unnecessarily tight thumbscrews on your thumbs; but as for me, I desire to win you by sympathy and affection and physico-theological afternoon parties, not to coerce you by vituperation. Your eye of Reason, as I have often observed, is already sufficiently developed; supplement it with the eye of Faith, and you will be quite complete. It will then only remain for you to learn which objects it is necessary to view with which eye, and carefully to close the other. This takes a little practice (which must not be attempted in Society), but I am sure that a person of your attainments will easily master the difficulty. We will then joyfully receive you into our ranks. No sacrifice on your part will be required; you will retain the old distinction of F.R.S., of which you have always been justly proud; but we shall take the liberty of conferring upon you the additional privilege of the honorary title of D.D.'

The professor uttered a brief but trenchant observation, on which the theologian was about to launch down a reply, less brief but equally trenchant. But the poet, as his fate would have it, struck in, in the capacity of a lightning conductor, and succeeded in turning the wrath of both combatants upon his own devoted head.

'If you must quarrel,' he cried, 'pray don't quarrel here. You would fight on the very peaks of Parnassus. I can't think of a word that will rhyme except "design." Stop, now I have it:

'Bright messenger of the Celestial Nine, Now in translucent ambience entombed.'

Celestial Nine is commonplace, but what can a man do in this region of trivial souls? Soar, my mind! What does "ambience" mean, by the way? Never mind, if the Sublime is unfettered by literal meaning, all the better for the Sublime!'

At this the divine and the philosopher turned upon him together, as they were wont to do every now and then.

‘This laxity of terms,’ said the professor, ‘is unscientific and unpractical.’

‘I am a poet,’ said the poet, ‘I bow to no narrow machinery of definitions. Words have a gemlike beauty and colour of their own. They are *not* merely the signs of ideas — of thoughts.’

‘I wish they were!’ groaned the professor. ‘They are with us.’

‘The idea,’ continued the poet, ‘must conform to the word, when the word honours the idea by making use of it. What care I for the conventional, the threadbare significance? My heart recognises, through the outer vestment of apparent insanity, the inner adaptability. Soar, my mind!’

‘And in this way,’ said the professor sternly, ‘ignoring the great principles of classification and generalisation, you let a chaos of disordered ideas abroad upon the universe, destroying all method and definite arrangement and retarding the great progress of Evolution!’

‘A jewel-like word, a transfigured phrase,’ replied the poet, ‘is worth all your scientific dictionaries and logic threshing-machines put together. Ruskin was in error. He tells us that Milton always meant what he said, and said exactly what he meant.

‘This had been an ignoble exactitude. How can a man whose words are unbounded confine himself within the limits of an intellectual bound?

How can he, that is to say, know exactly what he means, in words, or mean exactly what, to souls less gloriously chaotic, his words appear to express? I have always felt this an insuperable difficulty.’

‘I have no doubt of it,’ said the professor ironically. ‘Now,’ he went on, turning to the theologian, ‘you see what comes of having too much soul. It is impossible but that such fixed attention to any one organ should prove injurious, even if the organ is not there. You really have a great deal to answer for, in encouraging this kind of monomania.’

‘Not a bit of it,’ said the theologian indignantly. ‘It comes of not having soul enough, or of allowing the sway the soul should exercise to fall upon the feeble sceptre of imagination. If our misguided young friend had been thoroughly grounded in Paley’s Evidences and scientific primers — for these should never be separated — do you think we should have heard anything about his chaotic soul? Not a bit of it. It would all have been as clear as an opera-glass, or as Mr. Joseph Cook’s theory of Solar Light. Why didn’t his parents give him my “Mathematical Exposition of Orthodoxy for Children,” or my “The Theology of Euclid,” on his birthdays, instead of Hans Andersen’s “Fairy Tales” and the “Tales from the Norse?” It was very remiss of them.’

‘On the contrary,’ said the professor, ‘I should have recommended the entire elimination of doctrinal matter from his studies. I should have guided him to a thorough investigation of the principle of all the Natural Sciences, with especial devotion to one single branch, as Botany or Conchology, and an entire mastery of its terminology I should have urged our gifted but destitute of all scientific method friend to the observation and definition of objective phenomena, rather than to subjective analysis, and turned his reflections—’

‘Flow, my words!’ said the poet dreamily. ‘Soar, my mind!’

He had flung himself into the solitary armchair in a graceful and distraught pose, and with half-closed eyes had fallen into a reverie. The divine and the professor stood and gazed at him despondently.

‘Such,’ said the divine, ‘are the consequences of the lack of sound ethical and eclectic principles in our day and generation!’

‘Such,’ said the professor, ‘are the pernicious results of a classical training, the absence of a spirit of scientific research and a broad and philosophical mental culture.’

Those readers who have not yet perused the poet’s sonnet may recognise it, of course, by the first line:

‘Fair denizen of deathless ether, doomed.’

It attracted a good deal of attention at the time. The public were informed, in the ‘Athæenum,’ that the poet was engaged on a sonnet, and the literary world was excited, but, not having the key, could not make out what on earth it meant. Meanwhile the professor’s paper in ‘Nature,’ which appeared in the course of the same week, being written from a wholly different standpoint, did not tend to elucidate the mystery. The latter merely described the locality in which the fairy, or butterfly, as the professor called it, was found, and the circumstances of its capture and escape, with such an account of its manifold peculiarities, and the reasons to suppose it an entirely new genus, that Epping Forest was as much haunted for the next two or three months by naturalists on the watch, as by ‘Arries making holiday. Our professor himself visited the fairy’s pond several times, in the company of the poet, with whom he soon patched up a reconciliation. But Queen Mab, in the meantime, had taken her departure.

The professor also sent to the ‘Spectator’ an account of the Origin of Religion, as developed by his little boy, under his very eyes. But the editor thought, not unnaturally, that it was only the professor’s fun, and declined to publish it, preferring an essay on the Political Rights of the Domesticated Cat.

CHAPTER V. — ST. GEORGE FOR MERRY ENGLAND

‘Geese are swans, and swans are geese,’
M. Arnold.

At first Mab was so overwhelmed at the nature of her reception by Science and Theology, that she meditated an immediate return to Polynesia; but the birds implored her so pathetically to stay longer, that she yielded, and went with the owl into Surrey. She had seen enough of Epping Forest.

Surrey was very beautiful, and once pleasantly established in Richmond Park, she watched the human life that seemed so strange to her with great interest, taking care nevertheless, for some time, to keep clear of anything that looked like a scientific man. The owl supported her in this policy. He was not intimately acquainted with any of the members of the learned societies, but he had a deeply-rooted and perhaps overstrained horror of vivisection. Still, being a liberal-minded bird, he extenuated the professor’s conduct as far as possible.

‘Perhaps he did not mean to do you any harm,’ he suggested. ‘He only wanted to put you under the microscope.’

‘He might have had more sense, then?’ returned Queen Mab, still ruffled. ‘He might have seen that I was a fairy. The child suspected something at once.’

‘Ah, he was an exceptional child,’ said the Owl. ‘Most of the children, nowadays, don’t believe anything. In fact, now that education is spreading so widely, I don’t suppose one of them will in ten years’ time.’

‘It is very dreadful,’ said Queen Mab. ‘What are we coming to?’

‘I am sure I don’t know,’ said the Owl. ‘But we are being educated up to a very high point. It saves people the trouble of thinking for themselves, certainly; they can always get all their thoughts now, ready made, on every kind of subject, and at extremely low prices. They only have to make up their minds what to take, and generally they take the cheapest. There is a great demand for cheap thought just now, especially when it is advertised as being of superior quality.’

‘How do they buy it?’ asked Queen Mab. ‘I don’t quite understand.’

‘Well, you know a little about Commerce. Education is another kind of commerce. The authors and publishers are the wholesale market, and teachers and schools and colleges are a kind of retail dealers. Of course, not being human, we can’t expect to find it quite clear, but that is what we *do* make out. The kingfisher and I were listening lately to a whole course of lectures on Political

Economy; we were on a skylight in the roof of the building, and we found that Popular Education was part of the system of co-operation. The people who don't think, you know, but want thoughts, hand education over to the people who do think, or who buy up old thoughts cheap, and remake them, and this class furnishes the community. So that, by division of labour, no one is obliged to think who doesn't want to think, and this saves any amount of time and expense. It is really astonishing, I hear, how few people have to think under this new system. But Thought is in great demand, as I said, and so is Knowledge — whether there was any difference between the two we could not quite gather. It is a law that everyone must buy a certain quantity from the dealers: in other words, education is compulsory. Eating is *not* compulsory; you *may* starve, you *must* learn. The Government has founded a large system of retail establishments, or schools, and up to a certain age all the children are taught there whose parents do not undertake to have them supplied with thoughts at other establishments. I say thoughts, but it is facts principally that they acquire. Of course, some thoughts are necessary to mix the facts together with; but they generally take as few as possible, because facts are a cheaper article, and by the principles of competition and profit, people use the cheapest article that will sell again for the same price. Some writers say that thoughts at retail establishments are very inferior, and that customers had better go to wholesale dealers at once, or else make on the premises; but I don't know about that. Generally people buy the kind that comes handiest; they are not half so particular about them as about articles of food and dress, and the dealers, wholesale or retail, can sell almost anything they like if they have a good reputation. History, languages, science, art, theology, are all so many departments. Politics are always in demand, and there are many great manufacturers who issue supplies at a penny, every day, all over the kingdom. There is no branch where the labourers employed have such stirring times as the makers of politics: we call them statesmen. They seem, however, rather to enjoy it, and I suppose they get used to the heat, like stokers. I think that the burden of the whole scheme really falls most heavily on the children. But you are tired.'

'Tell me about the children,' said Queen Mab. 'I shall understand that better.'

'They have to learn facts, facts, for ever facts,' said the Owl compassionately. 'It makes one's head ache to think of it. I am a pretty well educated bird myself, though I say it; but if I had spent my time in acquiring a quarter of the knowledge those children have to acquire, then I should certainly never have been able to look at things in the broadly scientific light in which they should be looked at. It does not seem to matter what the facts are, so long as they are cheap and plenty of them; it does not even matter whether they are true, or, at least, that is of very minor importance. But see! see there! That is an example of what I have been telling you.’

A child was passing below them with a weary step. Queen Mab trembled at the sight of him, secure as she was among the broad chestnut leaves, and her fear was justified, for in another moment the professor himself came into view. The fairy-had seen the child before, and, as Mr. Trollope used to say, ‘she had been to him as a god’ — it was the professor’s little boy. But this time the philosopher was without his butterfly-net, and she found him much less alarming. He was occupied with the pale, tired child, and telling him charming stories about coral islands, that sounded to Queen Mab’s astonished ears almost like a real fairy tale. They sat down, while the professor talked. Wonderful things he told, and said not a word all the time about generalisation or classification.

‘It is like a fairy tale,’ said the boy, echoing Queen Mab’s thought, when at last they rose to go. ‘Oh, father, how I wish we could see Dala again!’

‘Dala, my boy? What, the lepidoptera? Ah, I wish we could! You will find, as you grow older, Walter, that science is better than a butterfly.’

The boy looked up wistfully, and over the face of the philosopher, too, came a sudden shadow. When Walter grew older? Hand in hand, the two passed silently out of sight.

‘He is a good man, after all,’ said the Owl sententiously. And then there came by a British manufacturer, in a gold watch-chain and patent creaking leather boots, warranted to creak everywhere without losing tone.

‘Who is that?’ asked Queen Mab.

‘It is one of the pillars of the Church,’ replied the Owl. ‘The Dragon’s church, I mean, where he is worshipped by himself. In some places you may worship St. George and the Dragon together; but in the Stock Exchange, for instance, you may only worship the Dragon.’

‘Is the Dragon very wicked?’

‘I don’t know,’ said the Owl. ‘I think he can’t be, or else so many respectable people would not worship him. The professor doesn’t, or very little; but then he doesn’t worship St. George either. The people who worship the Dragon are sometimes called Snobs — not by themselves though; it is one of the marks of the true Snob that he never knows he is one. They never call the Dragon by that name either. He has as many other names as Jupiter used to have, and all the altars, and temples, and sacrifices are made to him under the other names.’

‘Sacrifices!’ exclaimed Queen Mab. ‘What do they sacrifice?’

‘It would be shorter to say what they *don’t* sacrifice,’ replied the Owl. ‘Only nobody knows, for many of his worshippers sacrifice anything and everything. The manufacturer you saw go past—’

‘Yes,’ said Queen Mab, a good deal impressed, for the owl was speaking solemnly.

‘He is sacrificing the happiness, and even the lives of hundreds of men and women. Also the playtime of the children and their innocence. As for his own peace and charity, he sacrificed them long ago. And yet — it is very strange; he calls himself a worshipper of St. George. You remember, in very early times there used to be sacrifices to the Dragon.’

‘I remember,’ said the fairy. ‘In wicker baskets. But never anything. like this!’

‘I daresay not,’ said the Owl ‘We do things on a larger scale now, sacrifices and all. Everybody prefers, of course, to make sacrifices of the belongings of other people; but there are certain possessions of their own that unavoidably go too — as Truth, Sympathy, Justice; abstract nouns, the names of any quality, property, state or action,’ murmured the Owl, falling unconsciously into his old habit of parsing. ‘The English,’ he added, ‘are very generous with their abstract nouns, and will sacrifice or give away any quantity of them. It is a national characteristic, of which they are justly proud.’

‘Do the women worship the Dragon?’

‘Certainly!’ said the Owl. ‘They generally profess a great deal of veneration for St. George too; but they will worship either to get front seats. I don’t know why the English are so fond of front seats; back ones are just as comfortable, and one can often hear better in them; but they don’t suit dragon-worshippers. They want front seats anywhere — at concerts, in the church, in art or literature, or even in subscription lists. The persons who can’t afford front seats generally adore those who can, and those who can, say that the others ought to be grateful to Providence for putting them in the gallery or letting them into the free pews. There is a great deal of veneration in the English, and it shows itself in this way; they reverence the people with reserved tickets. That is why they are so fond of a noble lord, and that is why they admire Abraham, and even Lazarus, because he ultimately got such an excellent place in the next world. They don’t care much about Lazarus in this, because their souls have not such a natural affinity with his when he is hanging about anyone’s doorstep, or loafing round street-corners with oranges to sell or a barrel-organ. Sometimes they give him the crumbs that fall from their tables, and sometimes they don’t, because they are afraid he will take advantage of it to steal the spoons. Or else they take the lofty patriotic ground, and say that their principles forbid them to countenance vagrancy, and that Heaven helps those who help themselves. This is very consoling to Lazarus, and it always gives him pleasure to hear what good moral principles the Philistines — or Snobs — have got, even if he hasn’t got any himself. From what they frequently say, you would not think that they looked forward to seeing him in Heaven. It is part of their great-mindedness — a national characteristic — that the chords of their nature are more deeply stirred by sympathy with him when he has got into a good berth. I can fancy how, in Paradise, a British Snob will edge round to some retired crossing-sweeper, who was converted by the Salvation Army, and went straight up among the front row of angels and prophets, and will say: '"Pardon me; but I remember you *so* well!" And I can fancy that the seraph might reply: '"Ah, yes! I used to sweep a crossing up your street. I asked you for a copper once, and you told me to go — not where you find me."

'It would be a little awkward for the Snob: things often are; but he would soon get over it. His sense of locality, you perceive, is extremely acute. He may not always know at a glance exactly what men are in themselves, but he can always tell *where* they are. If you put one of Madame Tussaud's waxworks into a front seat, or on a Woolsack, or on a Board of Directors, the English would venerate it more than most real persons. Their sensibilities are so strong that the merest symbol stirs them. A noble lord need not do anything remarkable; but he is in the front row, and if he just radiates ability, that is quite enough. And he can't help radiating "ability;" it is one of his characteristics, and has become automatic.'

'What is automatic?'

'Automatic! Oh, it means acting of its own accord, without any effort of the will to make it work. Automatic actions may go on a very long time without stopping, sometimes for ever. If I continued in this strain much longer it might get automatic too: speaking often does, especially with Members of Parliament. It is as if they were wound up to say similar things one after the other, like musical-boxes, by reflex action, and you never know when they will give up. The automatic method has this advantage, that when you have had some experience of an automaton, you can always tell — suppose that it is wound up, for instance, to speak on a motion — what it will probably say next, and certainly how it will vote, and that gives you a sense of calm peace. It is a method very common among stump orators, because it comes cheaper in the long run. But there are other things — novel-writing, for instance. Novelists, many of them, are wound up at the beginning to write novels periodically, and the action gradually gets feebler and feebler, till at last it stops. It does not, however, generally stop till they die, and that is why we have so many bad novels from some writers. All authors, though, don't write automatically, any more than all clergymen preach automatically. But it is a very easy habit to fall into: I have done it myself more than once. Of course it is very useful, and very inexpensive, and an immense saving of energy, and one would advise the rising generation to cultivate it as much as possible, that their years may be long in the land. But one ought never to allow such a habit as swearing, — or shooting,' added the Owl gravely, 'to become automatic. Let me see, where did I begin? I was telling you about the female dragon-worshippers, who dress in symbolical costumes, like the old priestesses or the Salvation Army captains. Lately, though, a good many of the women who were brought up to it have taken "a new departure," and gone off after the wholesale education establishments at Camford, where they are fed on biscuits and marmalade, and illuminate the fragments of Sappho on vellum. This may not be very good: still I think it is better than the Dragon; the worst of it is that it forces up the educational prices.'

With which remark the Owl began a long series of observations, a mixture of political economy and his views on popular education, which Queen Mab found rather tedious. But they inspired her with a few verses, which she resolved, being the most philanthropic of fairies, and full of compassion for the dreary state of Great Britain in general, and of the rising generation in particular, to circulate among the Polynesian children as soon as she returned home. In this determination, unfortunately, she either forgot or ignored the fact that she had left her happy island a prey to the combined effects of annexation, civilisation, and evangelisation. But the verses ran thus: *'Upon my childhood's pallid morn*
No tropic summer smiled,
In foreign lands I was not born,
A happy, heathen child.

Alas! but in a colder clime,
A cultured clime, I dwell
All in the foremost ranks of time,
They say: I know it well.

You never learn geography,
No grammar makes you wild,
A book, a slate you never see,
You happy, heathen child.

I know in forest and in glade
Your games are odd but gay,
Think of the little British maid,
Who has no place for play.

When ended is the day's long joy,
And you to rest have gone,

Think of the little British boy,
Who still is toiling on.

The many things we learn about,
We cannot understand.
Ah, send your missionaries out
To this benighted land!

You blessed little foreigner,
In weather fair and mild,
Think of the tiny Britisher,
Oh, happy heathen child.

Ah! highly favoured Pagan, born
In some far hemisphere,
Pity the British child forlorn,
And drop one sorrowing tear!'

CHAPTER VI. — JUSTICE AND THE NEW DEMOCRACY.

‘They will soon be here,
They are upon the road,’
John Gilpin.

‘I should like,’ said Queen Mab one day, ‘to go and see the City. Do you think it would be safe?’

‘Yes,’ said the Owl, ‘if you fly out of the way of the smoke and the net of overhead wires, and take care not to be suffocated, and not to go near the Houses of Parliament, nor the Bank, nor St. Paul’s, nor the Exchange, nor any great public building. And if you keep clear of all the bridges, and the railway stations, and Victoria Embankment, and go the other way whenever you see a person carrying a black bag.’

‘Why?’ inquired Queen Mab, a good deal mystified.

‘Because all these places,’ said the Owl, ‘are in danger of being blown up. If you could get a Home Ruler to take you round now; but I’m afraid it wouldn’t do, as he might put you into an explosion and leave you there, as likely as not. Besides, I was forgetting, you are immortal, aren’t you? You *couldn’t* be blown up? If so, it is all right.’

‘I don’t suppose I could,’ said Queen Mab a little doubtfully, ‘but still I shouldn’t care to try. What is it like?’

‘I don’t know,’ replied her mentor. ‘I have never tried it myself. You had better ask Mr. Bradlaugh, or some eminent popular sciolist Huxley or Spencer would do. They have been exploding or blowing up popular theology for a number of years, and popular theology and Mr. Joseph Cook have been exploding them. As far as I can make out, they both appear to think it very good fun. But I was going to tell you about the black bags, which are filled with dynamite, a very explosive though inexpensive substance indeed, and carried by persons called “dynamiters.” These bags are left at large in public buildings, while the dynamitards go away, and as soon as their owners turn the corner the bags explode and blow up the buildings, and anyone who happens to be about.’

‘Why do they do it?’ exclaimed Queen Mab, breathless.

‘Nobody seems to know,’ said the Owl. ‘It is one of the problems of the nineteenth century. Even the dynamiters themselves don’t appear to have gone into the whole logic of it I suppose that they are tired of only blowing things up on paper, and they are people who have a great objection to things in general. They complain that they can't get justice from the universe in its present state of preservation, and therefore they are going to blow as much of it as possible into what they call *smithereens*, and try to get justice from the smithereens. It is a new scheme they have hit upon, a kind of scientific experiment. The theory appears to be, that justice is the product of Nihilism plus public buildings blown up by dynamite, and that the more public buildings they blow up the more justice they will obtain. I hear that they have also started a company for supplying statesmen, and all public orators except Home Rulers, with nitro-glycerine jujubes to improve the voice. Nitro-glycerine is a kind of condensed dynamite. A City sparrow told me — but perhaps it was only his fun — that they were borrowing the money from the Government, under the pretext of applying it to a fund for presenting three-and-sixpenny copies of Jevons' "Logic" to Members of Parliament who can't afford to buy the book for themselves. It is reported, also, that if the Nihilists can't obtain justice enough by any less extensive measures, they will lower a great many kegs of nitro-glycerine to the molten nucleus of the globe, and then—'

'Then?' said Queen Mab, much excited.

'Then the globe will explode, and all the inhabitants, even the dynamiters themselves; but justice will remain; according to the theory, that is. But it is rather an expensive experiment.'

'How dreadful!' said the fairy. 'Do you think I had better not go to London?'

'I think you might,' replied the Owl thoughtfully. 'There would be a little risk certainly; but you could fly high, and remember that dynamite strikes downwards. You had better take the sparrow, though, for I'm afraid I should attract too much attention. Otherwise I should like to go with you.'

'I will make us both invisible,' said Queen Mab. 'That will be easy.'

'Oh, very well, if you do *that!*' And they started.

'After all,' said the Owl an hour later, 'as we *are* here, and invisible, we may as well rest on the dome of St. Paul's. Dynamite does strike downwards, and I don't see any black bags about,' he added, looking round suspiciously.

'All right,' said the fairy. 'Now you can tell me all about things,' for they had been flying too fast to exchange many remarks. 'What is this building?'

'It is one of St. George's best churches,' said the Owl.

A burst of melancholy music swelled out below them as he spoke, and Queen Mab started with delight.

'That is like Fairyland,' she said promptly. 'What is it?'

'It is the organ and the choristers,' said the Owl. 'If you fly down a moment you can look in; but don't wait long, because of the dynamite. It would be just like them,' he added pensively, 'to blow it up when we are here.'

Queen Mab obeyed, leaving the owl, still a little nervous, seated invisible on the dome.

'I have heard the music,' she said when she flew back, 'and seen the singers, and the great golden pipes the music comes out of. What a beautiful big place it is! We have nothing like that in Polynesia.'

'No, I should think not,' returned the bird. 'Look round you. That street where all the people and the vehicles are rushing up and down is Cheapside.'

'Why do they all go so fast?' said the fairy.

'Oh, for many reasons. Competition, struggle for existence, and all that. They are in a normal condition, in that street, of having trains to catch, and not having any time to catch them in. Besides, they are dragon-worshippers, most of them, and it is part of their religion to walk as fast as they can, not only through Cheapside but through life. The one who can walk fastest, and knock down the greatest number of other people, gets a prize.'

'Who are the big men in black robes who stand at corners, and look as if everything belonged to them? Are they the owners of the City?'

'They are policemen,' said the Owl. 'Products,' he went on learnedly, 'of the higher civilisation, evolved to put the lower civilisation into prisons.'

'What are prisons?'

'A kind of hothouses,' said the Owl, 'for the culture of feeble moral principles that the Struggle for Existtence has been too much for. They are a wonderful system. The weak morality is supplied with bread and water and a cell to develop in, and it is exercised on a treadmill, and allowed to expand and pick oakum, and so it is turned into a beautiful plant of virtue.'

'What do they do with it then?'

'Then they let it run wild, unless it comes across a Home Missionary, or a School Board, or Dr. Barnardo, and gets trained.'

'Oh!' said Queen Mab. 'Are there many of these hothouses?'

'A good many. You see, such a number of the members of the lower portion of the higher civilisation have moral principles that need training. The moral principle is the latest product of evolution, or so the professor says, and evolution has not yet got quite into the way of always turning it out first class. Like everything else, it wants practice. Some moral principles are excellent; but others are really bungles, and require periodical prison culture. At present we need policemen for the transplanting; but it is hoped that, in the course of an era or two, the automatic method will be so much further developed that a member of the higher civilisation who gets very drunk, or steals, will put himself to prison at once, by reflex action. I told you about that: it is a lengthy subject; but the kingfisher and I quite mastered it one day, and I daresay you will. It is much easier than portions of the Thirty-nine Articles.'

'I know what that is,' said Queen Mab; 'the missionaries were talking about it once.'

'I have taken a good deal of trouble,' said the Owl, 'but there were parts of the Thirty-nine Articles I never could make out. They are a kind of tinned theology, and so much tinned that no one appreciates them but the theologians.'

'Why is the theology tinned?' asked the Queen. 'Why don't they have it fresh and fresh?'

'They like it old,' said the Owl. 'They have tried various ways of treating it, for theology does not keep well in a scientific atmosphere. Frozen theology has been experimented with by Archdeacon Farrar and others, and has some vogue. But the popular taste prefers it tinned. And yet it is very tough, in Articles. I am surprised that no one has written a simple explanation of them: "Primer of the Thirty-nine Articles," "The Thirty-nine Articles made Easy," or "Thirty-nine Articles for Beginners;" but no one ever has. It is a book that is very much needed, and if I had any influence with the theologians I would ask them to do it at once. In days like ours, when floods of Nonconformity and Socialism are pouring in on every hand, the very foundations of Church and State are being sapped for want of a plain popular guide ta the Thirty-nine Articles, that a child could understand. A child couldn't expect to find them clear in their present condensed state, could he now? But then, when I come to think of it, perhaps there is no reason why he should.' And the owl fell into a reverie.

After this they departed in search of a more sequestered resting-place, and ultimately alighted in Kensington Gardens. And there they came upon a Democrat and an Aristocrat who was also a landholder, and the Aristocrat was saying:

'What will you do without an aristocracy? What will you look up to?' 'We shall do,' said the Democrat, 'very well indeed. We shall do, in fact, a good deal better; for we shall be an aristocracy in ourselves, and look up to ourselves, and reverence humanity. What, I should like to know, has the British aristocracy done for us?'

'We have set you an example,' replied his companion impressively.

'We have told you what to do and what not to do. We have employed you; we have let you vote for us; we have represented you in Church and State; we have given you a popular education; and a pretty use you have made of it! We have, in short,' he continued, trying hard to remember the popular maxim, 'cherished you like a viper, and you turn again and rend us.'

'All that,' said the Democrat, 'you did because you couldn't help it.' 'We have been,’ exclaimed the Aristocrat with deep pathos, ‘as lights in a benighted land. We have improved the breed of horses and cultivated the fine arts, and literature, and china, and the fashions, and French cookery—’

‘And drinking, and racing, and gambling, and betting, and pigeon-shooting,’ put in the Democrat thoughtfully. ‘So you have.’

‘We have come to church,’ continued the Aristocrat unheeding, ‘and you have surveyed us from the free seats — when you were there. I regret to say that your attendance at the established places of worship has been far from satisfactory. We have allowed you to pay us the highest rents you could afford, solely to develop in you the sense of competition and a stimulus to progress, and we have daily displayed to you, in our persons and equipments, the advantages of the higher life. Our wives and daughters have played the piano, done crewel work, danced, sung and skated, and painted on plaques for your edification and improvement. We have trained ourselves, physically, mentally, morally, and aesthetically to be a thing of beauty in your eyes and a joy for ever. Alas, you have no vision for the beautiful and intrinsically complete; you can’t appreciate an aristocracy when you see one. We have even flung open our parks and grounds for your benefit, and let you admire our mansions, and you knocked down the ornaments, and smudged the tapestry and the antimacassars, and trod on the flower-beds, and pulled up the young trees, and threw orange-peel into the fountains, and ridiculed the statuary. Then you asked us for peasant proprietorship.’

‘It wasn’t me,’ said the Democrat with unusual humility. ‘It was the British public.’

‘And what are you,’ retorted his companion firmly — for he felt that he had scored a point— ‘but a representative of the British public? Alas, I could weep for your short-sightedness! When the reins of the ship of State — no, the helm of the chariot of Government, is in the hands of a semi-barbarous public, what will it do with it? The old aristocratic ballast once thrown overboard, it will drive that chariot upon the rocks of anarchy, it will overturn it upon the shores of revolution. And you, contemptible tool of an infatuated majority, what will you do then? Ah, then, too late you will cry, “Give me back my aristocracy, the aristocracy I so madly flung away!” When you have the Church and State flying about your ears, you will wish you had minded what we said to you. You will long with remorse unspeakable for the old English gentleman, the bulwark of the land; but the good old English gentleman will be no more. He will have gone to the vaults of his fathers, to the happy hunting-grounds of the noble lord.’

‘You are really very eloquent,’ said the Democrat, with more politeness than his wont (‘I didn’t think he had it in him,’ he murmured under his breath.) ‘But you exaggerate our intentions. We are only democrats: we are not Nihilists. We desire justice.’

‘Ah, that is what you all say!’ exclaimed the Aristocrat hastily. ‘I have heard enough about justice: I wish it had never been invented. Never knew any of your fine-sounding phrases yet that did not end in gunpowder.’

‘You mistake,’ said the Democrat severely. ‘Our requirements are few and simple: Universal suffrage, the abolition of the peers, of entail, and of primogeniture, the overthrow of establishments and armaments equally bloated, the right to marry the deceased wife’s sister, the confiscation of landed property by the State—’

‘Oh lord, yes!’ groaned the Aristocrat ‘I thought you were coming to that next. Take our landed property, do — I wish you joy of it! What with all your Communistic legislation and bad harvests, and backing good things that don’t come off — like an ass as I was — by Jove, I feel disposed to quit the whole business and compete for a Mandarin’s Button in China. It’s the only country for a British Aristocracy to live comfortably in and be properly appreciated, and you can’t come sneaking about with your red-hot Republicanism, for they are all good Conservatives. Who ever heard of The Chinese Revolution?’

They parted hastily, the common consequence of all lengthy argument, and the aristocrat repaired to his club, smoking a cigar to soothe his ruffled feelings, while the democrat also turned on his heel, and went to address the British public in Hyde Park. Queen Mab, however, had heard enough of social problems for one day, and she did not follow him. The Owl took her, instead, to Westminster Abbey, and offered explanations after the manner of a verger.

‘This is our museum of ‘dead celebrities,’ he said. ‘Here lie our great men — poets, soldiers, artists, and statesmen. When the British public feels elevated and sublime it comes here to look at the tombstones, and it says: “These are my great men: they worked for me. I bought them: I paid for them!” And it turns away with tears in its eyes.’

‘And while they are alive?’ asked Mab.

‘That is rather a long subject,’ replied the Owl.

‘In the first place, they set up a great man, like a target, to shoot at and fight over, and find out whether he is really a great man or only a “lunatic ritualist,” like General Gordon, in the view of Thoughtful persons. It takes them some time to decide: sometimes they never do decide till he has gone to his reward, if even then. It is an admirable quality in him, always, not to mind being shot at. But when the British public has really made up its mind that a man is a great man, and that however low they rate him at market value he is sure to be above the average, they sing a psalm of thanksgiving, and they cry, “Where is his coffin?

Let us drive nails into the coffin of this great man! Let us show our magnanimity, our respect for the higher life, our reverence for the lofty soul! Give us the hammer.” Then they begin. It is an imposing ceremony, and lasts during the lifetime of the great man, whoever he happens to be. He may be a literary great man, a poet, perhaps a Laureate. This type, according to the notions of the British public, requires a great quantity of nails, and every class of society almost brings them to his coffin. The young lady authors come, many troops of them, all conscious of greatness in their own souls, and all having made it the dream of their lives to turn their souls inside out for the benefit of a really great man. Surely, they think, there must be in the heart of him a natural affinity for the details of their inner lives. They give him the details of their inner lives: they also bring with them hammer and nails. There is nerve in those delicate fingers, energy in those sympathetic souls: the number of nails they contrive to hammer in is astonishing.

‘Then the theologians come, with a doctrinal hammer and many nails, the lineal descendants of the nail that Jael drove into the head of Sisera because he fought against the Israelites. They have found out that there is a want of sound sectarian teaching in the works of the poet, and they say that in the interests of theology they must drive a nail in. They drive it: they know how to drive nails, some of the theologians. Good sound crushing, rending, comfortable nails of doctrine — none of your airy latitudinarian tin-tacks. Then come the critics: they have been brought up to it. They have all manner of nails — nails with broad heads, and narrow heads, and brass heads, and no heads, but all with points. If a critic ever should drive in a nail without a point he would feel everlastingly disgraced, but he never does: he sharpens them on the premises. He can always find a place for another nail, till by-and-by the coffin is quite covered, and then the great man is thankful to rest in it. Then the British public sings more psalms.

But it seems to afford them solid comfort and happiness to find out, or to think they find out, that a great man was really not so great after all, and that they can look down on him. It is certainly a more piquant sensation to look down on a great man than on an ordinary mortal, and makes one feel happier. There is a melancholy, sweet satisfaction — I have noticed it myself — in pointing out exactly where this or that great man erred, and where we should not have erred if we had been this or that great man. There is a calm, blessed sense of the law of compensation among humans when they murmur over the grave: “Ah! his was a mighty soul; everybody says so; but his umbrella was only gingham, and mine has a silver handle.” Or, “Yes, his force of mind was gigantic; but just here he left the beaten track. If I had been in his place at that moment I should have kept it; I always do.” Or, “His morality looks elegant, but it hasn’t got any fibre to it.

Now my morality is all fibre; you never met with such fibrous morality. What did he do with the fibre out of his? Did he pawn it? did he sell it? did he give it away? We should like to know all about it — is it in his autobiography? Did he write an autobiography? If he didn't, why didn't he? We prefer all our great men to write autobiographies. We like to be well up in them, and we think it would throw a great deal of light on the study of psychology, and gratify our sense of reverence, to know the exact details of the daily life of this great man, and at what hour he dined, and whether he wrote with a quill or a J pen. Whether the quality of the pens he used was or was not intimately connected with the quality of his moral fibre, and whether his ethical degeneration could or could not be dated from his ceasing to make two fair copies of his manuscripts. We should also like to be informed whether his studs were gold or gilt, and, if they were gold, whether it was 18-carat gold, or only 15. If they were gilt, whether he wore them gilt on principle, or because he hadn't money enough to buy a better pair; and if, supposing that it was because he hadn't money enough, *why* he hadn't, and whether he spent the money on cigars. Why he was not an anti-tobacconist. Did anyone ever invite him to join the anti-tobacconists? and if they didn't, why didn't they? Did he approve of the Blue Ribbon movement? Is it true that he once got intoxicated, and smashed a blue china teapot? If he did, was it by way of protest against the demoralising doctrine of Art for Art's sake? Has anybody written his wife's biography? — if not, why not? We should like it at once, and also the biographies of all his second and third cousins, and of his publishers, and of the conductor of the tramcar he once went into town by. Why did he travel by tram that day, and what had the twopence he paid for the tramcar to do with the flow of the hexameters used by him in translating the Æneid? Let us trace the effects of both on the growth of individuality in his writings, and find out, if possible, the influence of the twopence as affecting his views on the opium traffic." But what a long time I have been talking,' said the Owl, suddenly recollecting himself. 'Automatic action again. Dear me!'

'Yes, you have,' said Queen Mab, whose thoughts had been wandering. 'I did not suppose you meant to stop. Is it not time for us to go?'

It was indeed growing late, and the Owl was tired after his long harangue, but though they set out at once on their return journey, the day's experiences were not quite ended. For behold! the mob, returning from Hyde Park, with the Democrat at its head, in search of a Cabinet Minister, a Lord Mayor, a Government, anything administrative and official that they could lay their hands upon, and to whom they could make representations. The mob was half-starved; but that, as the Owl whispered to Queen Mab, was a way it had, and did not amount to much. It was also able-bodied and unemployed but these too were normal characteristics, and did not amount to much either. Fortunately, or unfortunately, it met a Cabinet Minister just at the entrance of Oxford Street, and the Cabinet Minister, who had been walking gaily, and twirling his cane, instantly slackened his pace, and, with inherent fine tact, put on a serious and sympathetic expression. The mob pushed the Democrat forward, and he confronted the Cabinet Minister.

‘What are you going to do for these people?’ he said abruptly; ‘they are starving.’

‘No; are they?’ said the Cabinet Minister, looking very properly horrified, at which the mob cheered. ‘I am very sorry indeed to hear it. Let me see if I can find a sixpence.’

He fumbled in all his pockets, and, finally, with some difficulty, produced a threepenny bit. The mob cheered again.

‘I am sorry,’ he said, ‘that I haven’t a sixpence, but perhaps this will be of use?’

‘That won’t do,’ replied the Democrat roughly, as he pocketed the coin. ‘Do you suppose that you are going to feed thousands of starving men, women, and children on a threepenny bit?’

‘I deeply sympathise,’ said the Cabinet Minister, without any distinct impression that he was quoting from ‘Alice in Wonderland.’ ‘In fact, I may say that I weep for you; but what can I do? Am I not with you? Don’t I hate criticism, and political economy, and Mr. Goschen?’

‘You must *act*, returned the Democrat impressively. ‘You are in the Government; ‘and there came from the mob a hoarse, funereal echo, ‘You are in the — qualified — Government!’

‘Ah, but I am not in that department,’ said the Minister, seeing a way of escape. ‘My friends — I may say, indeed, my suffering fellow-citizens — be reasonable. Don’t be vexed with *me*. I am only a capitalist, a toiler and spinner. Go for dukes and earls, or better — exercise patience. “The night,” says the poet, “is always darkest just before the dawn.” I am not in that department.’

‘Hang your departments!’ said the Democrat. ‘If you are not in that department, at least you might be expected to know where it is, and to tell it what to do. Who would give a farthing for departments and officials who can’t join hands at a time like this, to help their starving countrymen? We shan’t stop to quarrel with you how you do it, if you only lift us out of the mire. Here are these men’ — he pointed to the mob, and the mob hurrahed— ‘willing to work, eager to work, perishing for want of food, and not a soul of your benevolent Governments will lift a finger to set them to work for it. Give them public buildings to erect and to be blown up, canals to make, railways to cut; assist them to emigrate, if you have nothing for them to do at home, but in Heaven’s name be sharp about it!’

‘It is really very awkward,’ said the Cabinet Minister. ‘You see I am not in the Railroad Department, nor in the Canal Department, nor in the Emigration Department. I am sure you see that!’ he continued hopefully, looking round upon the crowd, who, though they admitted the fact, did not appear to appreciate its deep and intrinsic force. ‘But I am quite willing at some future opportunity — indeed, I may say I hope at some opportunity comparatively not distant, to consider the advisability of representing the matter to the heads of certain departments who might be able, in the course of the next but one Septennial Parliament, or’ (even more sanguinely) ‘I might under favourable circumstances even hope to say, the *next* Septennial Parliament, to lay the topic before the Government. In the meantime, my friends, consider that such means as you have suggested for alleviating the hardships with which I so profoundly sympathise are not things to be lightly rushed into. You will agree with me doubtless. You will show that fine sense of the propriety of your lots innate in the breast of every Briton, by agreeing with me that canals, for instance, are not things to be lightly rushed into. Emigration, my friends, is not a thing to be lightly rushed into. In the meantime, knowledge, as the good old maxim tells us, never comes amiss, and whatever be the eventual scheme resolved upon by Government for relieving your necessities, you cannot better employ your leisure than in preparatory academic study of the arts of building, railway cutting, and canal-making, and in acquainting yourselves with the principles and methods of emigration, the nature of our different colonial settlements, their situation and productions, during the seven years that must inevitably elapse—’

He would have proceeded, but a howl, long and loud, drowned his utterance, and the mob surged forward, driving him back, in a state of bewildered astonishment, into the premises of a fashionable dealer. Various tokens of regard followed him in the shape of rotten eggs and cabbage leaves, which, as the Owl observed in a thoughtful voice, were doubtless symbolical.

Then the mob broke up and went on its different ways. Mab and the Owl, following one of its scattered detachments, met another procession, with a drum and trumpets and other instruments, all working their hardest at one of Sankey and Moody’s hymns, which procession drew up straightway before the remnant of the mob, and began to convert it.

‘What is this?’ asked Queen Mab. ‘Is it British Polynesians going to a wardance?’

‘No,’ replied the Owl. ‘It is only the Salvation Army, walking backwards into glory.’

‘Come away,’ said Mab. ‘They are very noisy, these British Polynesians, and the mob makes me miserable. Let us go back.’

‘I am ready,’ said the Owl. ‘I don’t wonder that London has this effect on you at first. You are not sufficiently automatic, and a non-automatic mind has always much to contend with.’

CHAPTER VII. — MACHINERY AND THE SUCCESSFUL MERCHANT.

‘Now to the eye of Faith displayed,
The Prototype is seen,
In every office, every trade,
I mark, in human garb arrayed,
The conquering Machine!

By careful evolution planned,
With many a gliding wheel,
To warn, to comfort, to command,
Or fly, or drive a four-in-hand,
Or dance a Highland Reel!

When, urged no more by Passions gale,
Or impulse unforeseen,
Humanity shall faint and fail,
Upon its ruins will prevail
The conquering Machine!’

Perhaps the exhibition of machinery-struck Queen Mab with more horror than any other novelty in this country. The Owl declared that she ought to develop a stronger automatic principle, and he therefore took her to an exhibition full of appliances for making the world over again, if ever, as North-country folk say, it ‘happened an accident’ All the different industries of the higher life were represented, and the scene was calculated to drive a non-automatic mind, as the Owl called Queen Mab’s, entirely out of itself in the course of three-quarters of an hour.

There was machinery, worked by electricity, for beating gold to that degree of fineness that it could not be seen except through a powerful microscope, and there was the powerful microscope for seeing it through, also worked by electricity.

‘Why do they want it so fine?’ asked Mab.

‘In order,’ said the Owl, ‘that they may be able to take a microscope to it, and so increase the demand for microscopes. The trades play into each other’s hands. Look at these watches making themselves.’

He pointed to an arrangement of ropes and wheels and pulleys and electricity, directing the movements of a few human assistants with admirable dexterity and precision.

‘You don’t have anything like that in Polynesia!’ said the Owl with pardonable pride.

‘No, I should think not,’ said Queen Mab. ‘Why, we haven’t any watches at all there. We look at the sun.’

‘Ah yes,’ returned the Owl. ‘But the sun is rather unreliable, after all. He has the Ecliptic to go round, and the whole of the Solar System to attend to, and one must make allowances for him. But, for purposes of strict chronology, watches are better, especially these watches! They wind themselves up punctually every night, and if their owners break the mainsprings of them, they pack themselves up to go by Parcels Post back to the Company, and then they direct the parcel — or so I hear. Oh! they are very intelligent watches!’

‘Is that true? ‘inquired Mab doubtfully.

‘I believe so,’ said the Owl.

There seemed to Queen Mab something rather too preternatural about this, though she could well believe it, as she looked at the wonderful manner in which the watches turned themselves out. It frightened her, and they proceeded farther on, and came to much artillery, carefully constructed by the higher civilisation for the purpose of turning the lower civilisation, or the non-civilisation, or the alien civilisation, from the error of its ways.

‘These,’ said the Owl, pointing at random to a collection of elegantly polished torpedoes, cannons of superior excellence, gunpowder and gun-cotton of all descriptions and colours, arranged artistically in cases, to resemble sugar-candy and other confectionery, ‘are the weapons of our philanthropy, the agents by which we disseminate truth, charity, and freedom, among tribes and races as yet imperfectly supplied with cardinal virtues and general ideas. They cost a great deal, but we would sacrifice anything for such a purpose. There is nothing mean about the British public. “What are a few bales of gun-cotton,’ it cries—” a few tons of paltry bullets, in comparison with the march of civilisation and humanity and open markets? We do but give them of our best, our finest Bessemer steel, our latest thing in torpedo-boats — nothing is too good for them. What are we, if not magnanimous?’ says the British public. I always like that about it — it never grudges a few millions for war expenditure in the cause of philanthropy! Considering how very sharply it looks after its £ s. d. in other directions, this liberality is especially touching and gratifying.’

But Queen Mab preferred to hurry past these dangerous-looking engines of Altruism, and they continued their survey. They came next to a company of umbrellas who were also barometers, and found out when it was going to rain in time for their masters to take them out. This, Mab said, was absurd, and, in fact, she was heartily tired of the whole thing before the Owl had explained to her half-a-dozen ingenious structures. She said that inanimate objects had no business to be so clever, and that, if the mechanicians did not take care, they would shortly invent machines that would conspire together to assassinate them, and then share the profits.

‘Let us go away,’ she exclaimed finally, ‘before we turn into machines ourselves! Everything is going round and round, and I am afraid of having to begin to go round and round too.’

‘Ah, I knew this would be the place for cultivating the automatic principle in you,’ said the Owl triumphantly. ‘We will come again.’

‘No, thank you,’ said Mab, energetically spreading her wings, and, in her preoccupation, taking the wrong road and darting into the great luncheon-room, whither the Owl followed her. The tables were crowded with people, and numbers of other people who had not yet lunched, were pacing up and down, looking anxiously for vacant places which were not there. The invisible spectators recognised the British manufacturer they had seen in Richmond Park. He was seated at a table; he had been sitting there since the disappearance of his last glass of claret, half an hour by the great clock, and for the whole of that half-hour several persons, standing very near his chair, had been fixing hungry eyes upon him, and expecting him to get up. Every time his boots creaked they moved perceptibly nearer, and made swift mental calculations of the chances each would have to reach the chair; but the worthy manufacturer still sat on, stolid and complacent, with a sense of comfort the keener by contrast.

Queen Mab and the Owl found him uncongenial, and flew away again.

‘That is just like him,’ said the Owl, when they had reached the outside of the building at last, and were perched on the roof, enjoying the fresh air. ‘He *will* get all he can for his money. In him you may see a typical and beautiful example of the Survival of the Fittest. He worked his way, by means of native moral superiority and pure chocolate composed of mortar and molasses tinted with sepia, right from the gallery into one of the very best reserved seats, and now has little books written on himself, as exemplifying the reward of virtue, and exhorts everybody to go in and do likewise. The pamphlets conclude: ‘“If your vocation furnishes only the trivial round and the common task; if it does not fall to your lot to invent a new pure chocolate, you can at least buy Mr. Tubbs’s pure chocolate, and reverence the benefactors of humanity.”

‘He sends copies to all the dukes, and earls, and archbishops, and the result is an immense sale of the pure chocolate. He has never missed a chance of advertising it; he takes boxes to the meetings of the Church Missionary Society for propagation among the heathen, and so has managed to get large profits from the Zunis, and the Thlinkeets, and the Mikado, and the Shah. He nearly got into difficulty with the Low Church party once by writing privately to the Pope to solicit orders — not holy orders; orders for pure chocolate, I mean. I hope he won't carry it too far. His wife's uncle, who was a wholesale draper, seized one golden opportunity too many, and never recovered from the effects.'

'How was that?' asked Mab.

'It was an incident that took place in the Strand one day,' said the Owl with a modest air, 'of which I learned the particulars from two City sparrows. It struck my fancy, and I wrote a few stanzas upon it. The kingfisher, in fact, did me the honour to say that I had wedded the circumstance to immortal verse; but that was his partiality. I will, however, repeat the little poem to you.' And with becoming diffidence the Owl recited: *'The Seraph and the Snob.*

It was a draper eminent,
A merchant of the land,
On lofty calculations bent,
Who raised his eyes, on cent, per cent.

From pondering, in the Strand.
He saw a Seraph standing there,
With aspect bright and sainted,
Ethereal robe of fabric fair,
And wings that might have been the pair
Sir Noel Paton painted.

A real Seraph met his gaze —
There was no doubt of that —
Irradiate with celestial rays.
Our merchant viewed him with amaze,
And then he touched his hat.

I own, before he raised his hand,
A moment he reflected,
Because in this degenerate land,
To meet a Seraph in the Strand
Was somewhat unexpected.

Yet there one stood, as wrapt in thought,
Amid the City’s din,
No other eye the vision caught,
Not even a stray policeman sought
To run that Seraph in.

But on the merchant curious eyes
Men turned, and mocking finger,
For well they knew his mien and guise,
He was not wont, in moonstruck wise,
About the Strand to linger.

Mute stood the draper for a space,
The mystery to probe,
Alas! in that his hour of grace,
His eyes forsook the Seraph’s face,
And rested on his robe.

And wildly did he seek in vain
To guess the strange material,
And golden fancies filled his brain,
And hopes of unimagined gain
Woke at the sight ethereal.

Then, suffered not by fate austere
The impulse to discard,
He never paused to idly veer
About the bush; but calm and clear
He said: ‘How much a yard?’

A bright and tremulous lustre shone
Through the dull, dingy Strand,
From parting wings seraphic thrown;
And then, mute, motionless, alone,
Men saw the merchant stand.

In town to-day his memory’s cold,
No more his name on ’Change is,
Idle his mart, his wares are sold,
And men forget his fame of old,
Who now in Earlswood ranges.

Yet evermore, with toil and care
He ponders on devices
For stuffs superlatively rare,
Celestial fabrics past compare,
At reasonable prices.

To him the padded wall and dead
With gorgeous colour gleams,
And huge advertisements are spread,
And lurid placards, orange, red,
Drive through his waking dreams.’

‘Thank you,’ said Queen Mab, ‘that is very interesting; but I can’t help being sorry for the merchant. For, after all, you know, it was his nature to. Is it not time, now, for us to go back?’

CHAPTER VIII. — THE BEAUTIFUL.

‘Tweet!’ cried the sparrows, ‘it is nothing!
It only looks like something.
Tweet! that is the beautiful.
Can you make anything of it?
I can’t?’
Hans Andersen.

‘How exceedingly successful,’ observed Queen Mab one day, ‘the Permanent Scarecrows have been!’

‘The Permanent Scarecrows?’ said the Owl.

The winged and gifted pair had been on another visit to London, and Mab had found rows on rows of stucco houses, where she had left green fields, running brooks, and hedges white with may, on the northern side of the Strand.

‘Yes ‘said Mab ‘you hardly ever see a crow now, where, in my time, the farmers were so much plagued by the furtive bird. But, as the crows have been thoroughly frightened off, and as there are now no crops to protect, I do think they might remove the permanent scarecrows.’

‘Your Majesty’s meaning,’ said the Owl, ‘is beginning to dawn on me. True, in your time there were no statues in London, and the mistake into which you have fallen is natural. You went away before the great development of British Art, and British Sculpture, and British worship of Beauty. The monuments you notice are expressive of our love of loveliness, our devotion to all that is fair. These objects of which you complain are not meant to alarm predatory fowls (though well calculated for that purpose) but to commemorate heroes, often themselves more or less predatory.’

‘Do you mean to tell me?’ asked Mab, ‘that that big burly scarecrow, about to mend a gigantic quill with a blunt sword, was a hero?’

‘He was indeed,’ said the Owl, ‘though I admit that you would never have guessed it from his effigy.’

‘And that other scarecrow, all claws and beak, who blocks up the narrow street where the Dragon worshippers throng? Was *he* a hero?’

‘He is believed by some to be the Dragon himself,’ said the Owl; ‘but no one knows for certain, not even the sculptor.’

‘And the Barber’s Block with the stuffed dog, looking into the Park?’

‘He was a poet,’ said the Owl, ‘and expressed so much contempt for men that they retorted by that ridiculous caricature. Would you believe it, English sculptors actually quarrelled among themselves as to who made that singular and, for its original purpose, most successful scarecrow!’

‘I don’t wonder,’ remarked the Queen, ‘that birds of taste are rare in the Metropolis, and that, on the Embankment especially, a rook would be regarded as a kind of prodigy. Nowhere has the manufacture of permanent scarecrows been conducted with more ingenious success. But tell me, my accomplished fowl, have Britons any other arts? Long ago the men used to paint themselves blue, but, as far as I have remarked, the women are now alone in staining their cheeks with a curious purplish dye and their locks with ginger colour.’

‘Among the Arts,’ said the Owl, ‘the modern English chiefly excel in painting. To-morrow, by the way, the shrine of Loveliness begins to open its gates. The successful worshippers, are admitted to varnish their offerings to Beauty, while the unsuccessful are sent away in disgrace, with their sacrifices. Suppose we go and examine this curious scene.’

‘In Polynesia,’ replied Mab, ‘no well-meant offering is rejected by the gods.’

‘The Polynesian gods,’ answered the Owl, ‘are too indiscriminate.’

On the next morning any one whose eyes were purged with euphrasy and rue might have observed an owl and a fairy queen fluttering in the smoky air above Burlington House. Here a mixed multitude of men and women, young and old, were thronging about the gates, some laughing, some lamenting. A few entered with proud and happy steps, bearing quantities of varnish to the goddess; others sneaked away with pictures under their arms, or hastily concealed the gifts rejected at the shrine of Beauty in the hospitable shelter of four-wheeled cabs.

‘Let us enter,’ said the Owl, ‘and behold how wisely the Forty Priests of Beauty (or the Forty Thieves, as their enemies call them) and the Thirty Acolytes have arranged the gifts of the faithful.

Lightly the unseen pair fluttered past the servants of Beauty, nobly attired in gold and scarlet. They found themselves in a series of stately halls, so covered with pictures in all the hues of the aniline rainbow, that Queen Mab winked, and suffered from an immortal headache.

‘How curious it is,’ said Queen Mab, ‘that of all the many thousand offerings only a very few, namely, those hung at a certain height from the floor, are really visible to any one who is neither a fairy nor a bird.’

‘The pieces which you observe,’ remarked the Owl, ‘are almost in every case the work of the Forty Priests of Beauty, of the Thirty Acolytes, and of their cousins, their sisters, and their aunts. Those other attempts, almost invisible, as you say, to anyone but a bird or a fairy, have been produced by other worshippers not yet admitted to the Holy Band.’

‘Then,’ asked the Queen, ‘are the Forty Priests by far the most expert in devising objects truly beautiful, and really worthy of the Goddess of Beauty?’

‘On that subject,’ said the Owl, ‘your Majesty will be able to form an opinion after you have examined the sacrifices at the shrine.’

Swiftly as Art Critics the winged spectators flew, invisible, round the galleries, and finally paused, breathless, on the gigantic group of St. George and the Dragon, then in the Sculpture Room.

‘Well, what do you think?’ asked the Owl.

‘The Forty Priests,’ replied Queen Mab, ‘are, with few exceptions, men who seem to have been blinded, perhaps by the Beatific Vision of Beauty. If the Beatific Vision of Beauty has not blinded them, why are they and their friends so hopelessly absurd? Why do they have all the best of the shrine to themselves, while the young worshippers are consigned to holes and corners, or turned out altogether? Who makes the Forty the Forty? Does the goddess choose her own Ministers?’

‘By no means,’ said the Owl, ‘they choose themselves. Who else, in the name of Beauty, would choose them? But you must not think that they are all blind or stupid; there are some very brilliant exceptions,’ and he pointed triumphantly to the offerings of the High Priest and of five or six other members of the Fraternity.

‘This is all very well, and I am delighted to see it,’ said Queen Mab, ‘but tell me how the choosing of the Forty and of the Acolytes is arranged. ‘When one of the Forty dies,’ replied the Owl, ‘which happens only at very long intervals, for they belong to the race of Struldbrugs, several worshippers who have become bald, old, nearly sightless, with other worshippers’ still young and strong, are paraded before the Thirty-nine. And they generally choose the old men, or, if not, the young men who come from a strange land in the North, where rain falls always when it is not snowing, and whither no native ever returns. If such a man lives in a fine house, and has a cunning cook, then (even though he can paint) he may be admitted among the Forty, or among the Thirty who attain not to the Forty. After that he can take his ease; however ugly his offerings to Beauty, they are presented to the public.’

‘Well,’ said Queen Mab, ‘my curiosity is satisfied, and I no longer wonder at the permanent scarecrows. But one thing still puzzles me. What becomes of the offerings of the Forty after the temple closes?’

‘They disappear by means of a very clever invention,’ said the Owl. ‘Long ago a famous priest, named Chantrey, perceived that the country would be overrun with the offerings to which you allude. He therefore bequeathed a sum of money, called the Chantrey bequest, to enable the Forty to purchase each other’s pictures.’

‘But what do they do with them after they have bought them?’ persisted Mab, who had a very inquiring mind.

‘Oh, goodness knows; don’t ask *me*,’ said the Owl crossly; ‘nobody ever inquires after them again!’

CHAPTER IX. — IN WHICH THE NIHILIST, THE DEMOCRAT, AND THE PROFESSOR OFFER A SUGGESTION TO THE BISHOP.

‘Were it not better not to be!’
Tennyson: The Two Voices.

‘Si tu veux’, je te tuerais ici tout franc,
en sorte que tu rien sentiras rien, et m’en croy,
car j’en ay bien tué d’autres qui s’en sont bien trouvez’
Pantagruel, ii. xiv.

‘Look there!’ said the Owl one day. ‘There is a bishop, one of the higher priests of St. George.’

He was a beautiful bishop, in his mitre, canonicals, and crozier, all complete — so the Owl said. It strikes one as a novelty for bishops to wear their rochettes and mitres when they go out walking in Richmond Park; but one is forced to believe the Owl, he has such a truthful way with him, like George Washington. By the way, what scope George Washington had for telling lies, if he had wished it, after that incident of the cherry-tree, which gave everyone such a high opinion of his veracity!

The Bishop advanced slowly into full view, and then drew up before a tree. He did not lean against the tree, for fear of spoiling his splendours, but he drew up before it, and began to ponder, with a mild, benevolent expression on his fine features. At the same time, two hundred yards away, Queen Mab caught sight of the Democrat, walking very fast, a little out of breath, and looking for the Bishop. He wanted to explain to him the principles of Church and State, and to talk things over in a friendly way. The Democrat had great faith in talking things over, spite of his failure to convince the Aristocrat; he never really doubted that if he only harangued against obstacles long enough they would ultimately disappear. The Bishop, for instance, would willingly rush into nonentity, if once he could be brought to look at his duty in that light, and the Democrat was eager to begin to put it before him in that light immediately. But while he was still looking earnestly for his expected proselyte, someone else advanced with a similar purpose — a tall, gentlemanly individual, with a pleasing exterior, spotless linen cuffs, and a black bag. The Owl uttered a cry of horror.

‘Come away!’ he exclaimed. ‘It is a Nihilist, a dynamiter!’

But Queen Mab held her ground, or rather her branch. She was a courageous fairy, and though she turned a shade paler she spoke resolutely:

‘No!’ she said. ‘I mean to stay and see what he does with it *You* may go.’

But the Owl was either too chivalrous to desert her, or he was paralysed with terror.

‘Dynamite strikes downwards,’ the fairy heard him murmur with chattering beak, and that was all he could say. Meanwhile the Nihilist went up to the Bishop.

‘Excuse me!’ he murmured politely, and knelt down. The Bishop stretched out his hands absently, in an attitude of blessing; but the Nihilist did not look up. He took an American cloth parcel from the black bag and laid it at the Bishop’s feet. Then, gradually withdrawing, he began to lay the train.

‘He is going to blow him up!’ whispered Mab, shuddering. But the Bishop, absorbed in rapt contemplation, heard and saw nothing, till the Democrat, breaking rudely through some bushes and into his reverie, roused him effectually. The Democrat was not a person of whose neighbourhood one could remain unconscious.

‘Ah!’ he exclaimed, while the Bishop looked upon him with an air of mild disapprobation. ‘I have found you at last! I was anxious to discuss with you — but what is this?’

For the more observant Democrat had caught sight of the cloth parcel.

‘What is this?’ he repeated suspiciously.

‘I really don’t know,’ said the Bishop mildly, putting on his spectacles and gazing down. ‘I am a little shortsighted, you know. It is the size of the quarto edition of—’

‘There!’ interrupted the Democrat, who had caught a glimpse of the Nihilist’s shadowy figure. He darted after it, while the Bishop, a little perturbed, moved slowly in the same direction.

‘Don’t move,’ said the Nihilist, raising an abstracted face. ‘I will only be a moment. Just step back there, will you?’ and he pointed towards the parcel with one hand, while the other still scattered the train.

‘What are you doing?’ cried the Democrat, shaking him.

‘Stop that!’ said the Nihilist ‘You had better not lay hands on *me*, or you mayn’t like it. It is really inconsiderate,’ he continued, appealing to the Bishop in an injured voice. ‘I am only going to blow you up, and you won’t be quiet half a minute together. How *can* I blow you up properly, if you will keep walking about?’

‘You are going to blow *me* up!’ said the Bishop, awaking to the situation, and becoming as indignant as his gentle nature would allow him to be. ‘Miserable man! What will you want to blow up next? I utterly discountenance it. Take your dynamite to the haunts of iniquity and atheism, if you will. Rather blow up Renan, and Dissenters, and the Rev. Mr. Cattell; but as for *me*, this is really carrying it too far!'

'Waal,' said the Nihilist, rising with a surprised stare, and in the astonishment of the moment betraying his nationality, 'I guess things air come to a pretty pass when a Bishop of the Church of England refooses to be blown up in the interests of hoomanity!'

He took up the American cloth parcel as he spoke and walked despondently away, musing over the lack of public spirit displayed by established orders in general and prelates in particular.

'I would cheerfully consent to be blown up any day,' he murmured pensively, 'in the interests of hoomanity; but it is not for the interests of hoomanity—'

'Why did you not arrest him?' said the Bishop reproachfully, when he was out of sight.

'He is the natural product of the present depraved state of Society and of the Legislature,' replied the Democrat, shaking his head, 'and therefore to be pitied rather than condemned. He should be accepted as a warning, a merciful token sent to all thrones, principalities and powers, reminding them of the error of their ways and of their latter end. And besides,' he continued unwillingly, 'he has a whole magazine of explosives on his person. If I had not been carried away by my indignation just now I should never have taken him by the collar. I did remonstrate with him once, on the strength of his political bias. I said, "Look at us, why can't you profit by our example? We don't wish to blow up, but gently to 'disintegrate. We are mild, but firm. We never express a wish for revolution, but for reform. We are as active as anyone in bringing about the Millennium, but we don't desire to be shot into it head foremost, like a projectile from one of your infernal machines. Dynamite, that last infirmity of noble minds, should only be resorted to when all other modes of conciliation have failed." And what do you think he replied? He smiled affably and offered me a box. "Thank you!" he said, "Take a torpedo?"'

'Dear me!' said the Bishop; 'he is really a terrible character. I have here some of his advertisements, sent to me the other day. Actually sent by post, to me, a Prelate of the Church of England. I saved them, intending to deliver a discourse upon the subject.'

He took a handful of papers from his pocket-book, and the Democrat perused them, while Queen Mab, invisible, looked over his shoulder.

'Home Comfort! Hints to Architects and Builders.

'In the construction of tenements, it is absolutely necessary, for the safety and convenience of the inmates, to place in the recess at the back of each fireplace a couple of Donovan's Patent Dynamite Fire Bricks, warranted. The advantages of this novel and most ingenious contrivance will be fully appreciated when, for the first time, the family circle gathers round the cheerful blaze.'

'To Clergymen.

> *'For a pure religious light, suitable to the Liturgy of the Church of England, try Donovan's Wax Tapers for Church Illumination. Two of these, placed in the sconces, will give more light than twenty ordinary candles, and will also impart vigour and fervency of tone to the whole of the proceedings. Donovan and Co. are so confident of the superiority of their manufactures that they are willing to refund costs, on receiving the written attestation of the Bishop of the diocese that the article has proved unsuitable. Try them; you can have no idea of the effects.'*

'Directors of Railway Companies.

> *'Take care to have carriages illuminated with Donovan's Patent Safety Lamps. These exert a bracing and salutary influence, not only on the atmosphere and the spirits of the passengers, but on the tunnel walls themselves, which are invariably found, after the passage through them of a train lighted by Donovan's Patent Safety Lamps, completely prostrate with astonishment at the unparalleled effects of the same, to the immense convenience of traffic and judicious prevention of accidents.'*

There were several more advertisements, similar in tone and of attractive appearance, which the Democrat perused with interest.

'What could possess the fellow to send all these to *you?*' he exclaimed when he had finished. 'I always said he pushed the thing to an extreme. He has got dynamite on the brain: he will go off himself some day if he doesn't take care, like a new infernal machine.'

'I wish he would!' said the Bishop hastily; and then correcting himself, 'I was about to say, "Whatever is, is best."'

'Oh, stow that!' exclaimed the Democrat. 'I mean,' he added apologetically, on observing the Bishop's startled glance, 'that, of course, that sounds very well, and it is a pretty thing to say, but everybody knows it isn't true. I will undertake to prove to you, if you will allow me' — here the Bishop's face gathered a shade of melancholy— 'that, in fact, there never was a more outrageous falsehood on the earth. As for the Nihilist, naturally we should be thankful to get rid of him, either by explosion or otherwise; but he is such a dangerous fellow to tackle. The fact is, one hardly dare shake hands with him, for fear of being blown into the middle of next week, and then one couldn't toil for the benefit of humanity.'

'Act, act in the living Present,' murmured the Bishop.

'Just so,' said his companion approvingly. 'And you can't act in the living Present when you are in the middle of next week.'

'And yet, you know,' said the Bishop, with a glimpse before him of some possible advantage in the argument, 'I have often fancied that you yourself—'

He paused judiciously.

'Oh no!' returned the Democrat promptly, 'we wouldn't do it on any account. I assure you that our motives are quite unimpeachable.'

'Oh!' said the Bishop. 'And about the House of Lords, for example? Being a Spiritual Peer oneself, you see, one naturally takes an interest — limited.'

'Well, as for that,' said the Democrat, 'it would really be such an excellent thing for you in all respects to be abolished, that you would never make any objection, would you now? We have your welfare so deeply at heart, and long study of your characteristics has convinced us that a course of judicious abolition would be your salvation, temporal, spiritual — and eternal.'

'I say!' exclaimed the Bishop, 'isn't *that* putting it rather strong? To a Bishop, you know.'

'Ah,' said his companion encouragingly, 'all that feeling will pass away. The full beauty of true Democracy is not, I admit, at first wholly apparent to the Conservative mind; but once afford the requisite culture, and it unfolds new attractions every day. Believe me, we are acting in this matter solely, or almost solely, with a view to your ultimate benefit. We are not acting for ourselves — ourselves is a secondary consideration. But your true fife, as Goethe so beautifully says, probably with an intentional reference to bishops and noble lords, must begin with renunciation of yourself. Till you have once been abolished you can never know how nice it is.

"The bud may have a bitter taste, But sweet will be the flower,"' he added, quoting the words of the hymn-book, with the firm impression that they were from some Secularist publication.

'And is it necessary?' said the Bishop somewhat helplessly.

'Absolutely necessary,' replied the Democrat.

'I don't know about that,' said a voice behind them, and Queen Mab started, seeing the Professor. 'But depend upon it, the fittest will survive. I think, myself, that it is quite time you were gone; but some types die out very slowly, especially the lower types; and you may be said, as regards freedom of intellect and the march of Science, to be a low type — in fact, a relic of barbarism. There can be no doubt that, in the economy of Nature, bishops are an unnecessary organ, merely transmitted by inheritance in the national organism, and that in the course of time they will become atrophied and degenerate out of existence. When that time comes you must be content to pass into oblivion. Study Palæontology.' Now he pronounced it Paleyontology, not having had a classical education. 'Think of the pterodactyles, who passed away before the end of the Mesozoic ages, and never have appeared again. What, in the eternal nature of things, are bishops more than pterodactyles?'

'I wonder,' interrupted the Bishop severely, 'that you dare to speak of your pernicious teachings under the name of Paleyontology, as if the First Principles of that revered divine, whose loss we all deplore, were ever anything like that!'

The Professor only glared, and was going on, but the Democrat stopped him, by remarking, in a loud and exasperatingly complacent voice:

'You are quite correct. Only upon the wreck of the old order of existence can arise the New Democracy.'

'Can you never stop talking about yourself?' snapped the Professor testily. 'One would think, to hear you, that Democracy was the goal of everything.'

'So it is,' said the Democrat.

'Not a bit of it. You and your democracies are only a fleeting phase, an infinitesimal fraction of the aeons to be represented, perhaps, in some geological record of the future, by a mere insignificant conglomerate of dust and bones, and ballot-boxes, and letters in the *Spectator* and other articles characteristic of this especial period. What a dream of Science that, interstellary communication established, some being of knowledge and capacities as infinitely excelling our own as our faculties excel those of the lowly monad, wandering on this terrestrial globe, and culling from the imperfect archives of these bygone years a corkscrew, an opera-glass, or, perchance, a pot of long since petrified marmalade, preserved intact by some protecting incrustation of stalagmite from the ravages of time, may dart a penetrating gleam of intelligence through the dark abysses of innumerable ages, and exclaim: "This clay, upon which I gaze, was of the human period. This coin, this meerschaum, this china shepherdess, this prayer-book with gilt edges, this *Sporting Times,* were the inseparable companions of a fossil species of Englishmen who once colonised this globe, and minute traces of whom have been found in its most widely separated regions. Alas that the action of marine and subaerial denuding agents has deprived us of an opportunity for closer examination of the habits and idiosyncrasies of this interesting fossil. Into such small compass are compressed the pride and wealth of nations and of centuries. O genus humanum! O tempora! O mores!” Thus will he muse. No democrat! no stump orator will be that Being of the Future, nor anything of human mould. One’s imagination may well revel in the thought that Evolution, mighty to conceive and to perform, lias not yet completed her work. What are vertebrates? Even these are transient. But four classes of vertebrates — only four!’ shouted the Professor in his enthusiasm, wholly forgetting the Democrat, and the Bishop, who was gazing at him with a look of blank horror on his venerable countenance. ‘Why, it is preposterous, it is inconceivable that we should stop at four! — fishes, reptiles, birds, and mammals! Where is the fifth! Cannot Natural Selection, Struggle for Existence, Variability and Survival of the Fittest, between them, furnish a fifth class of vertebrates? I demand it in the name of Science and of Evolution. We have been human long enough. There we are, ever since the Age of Stone, pinned down to one particular tribe of mammals. Ah, when shall we begin to move on again? Is not this a hope beyond the niggardly aspirations of a purblind democrat?’

‘What will the future reality be? I care not; but progress demands a new and conquering organism. For my part, I see no reason why we should not immediately leave the vertebrates. That would be something like a New Departure.’

Here the professor stopped suddenly, becoming aware of the eyes of the Democrat, which were fixed on him with a mixture of contempt and curiosity.

‘I don’t understand all that,’ he said in an exasperating tone. ‘It is very elevating, I daresay, but what I want is Universal Suffrage. There is something tangible for you. When we get that, there will be time to think about the future, and indeed, we shall have it in our own hands, and can furnish any kind we like, by Ballot. Ballot is better than Natural Selection. Natural Selection is all very well; but it does not know what we want. We do.’

‘Science may be allowed her dreams as well as Theology,’ said the Professor rather shamefacedly.

‘But you can’t bring about a new sub-kingdom, or the kingdom of heaven either, by Act of Parliament.’

‘Why not?’ returned the Democrat confidently. ‘It is only to get a majority; and there you are, you know!’

‘My brethren,’ said the Bishop, inspired thereto, as the Owl observed, by reflex action, ‘Perfection is not of this world!’

‘It will be though,’ replied the Democrat cheerfully,’ before we have done with it. Bless you, Perfection will be upon you before you have time to turn round! That is the beauty of the New Democracy. You have merely to be abolished, and then we get a majority, and then, you know, there we are!’

‘What will you do with the minority?’ said the Professor grumpily. ‘How about Proportional Representation?’

‘Oh, the minority?’ said the Democrat. ‘Well, it will be all right — you will see how right it will be if you give us a majority. We have everybody’s interests at heart — deeply at heart!’ he added hopefully. ‘We first pass a Bill for the manufacture (National Monopoly) of all the cardinal virtues at reduced prices — may be ordered direct from the Company, carriage paid; and then a Bill for the repression of all the Cardinal Crimes, which the Company is also willing to buy up at market value, for exportation — and then, you see, there we are!’

‘Where are you?’ said the Professor sharply.

‘Where?’ replied the Democrat, looking puzzled for a moment, but soon recovering himself triumphantly. ‘Where? oh, we are there, you know. *There* we are!’

‘Humph!’ ejaculated the Professor, turning on his heel. The Bishop turned away also, saying that he had an engagement, and the Democrat followed him, talking very fast and bringing forward arguments. When they reached the gate there was a sad, perplexed look upon the Bishop’s face, and finally shaking off his companion by an effort of the will, he entered the nearest churchyard and began to meditate upon mortality. The Democrat, observing in an acrid voice that he had something better to do with mortality than to meditate upon it, turned away reluctantly from the gate, and began to compose a popular ode, which had tremendous success, and of which the rhymes were dubious but the sentiments unimpeachable. Meanwhile, Queen Mab and the Owl, who had followed unperceived, perched upon the tower of the church, and surveyed the landscape and the Bishop, who, a venerable appropriate figure in his vestments, had turned naturally to the east, and was standing by a marble cross.

‘What a pleasant place!’ said Mab. ‘The dead must rest quietly here.’

‘I am not sure that they don’t keep up class distinctions,’ said the Owl rather misanthropically. ‘They would if they could. But, on the whole, I prefer to think that this place is the goal of the Democrat, where Equality reigns indeed. If so, it will be consoling to him, for I am afraid he will never get equality in life. Death, at present, has the monopoly. Mr. Mallock thinks that Social Equality, if it ever came to pass, would be ruinous to the welfare of the nation; but happily we are in no immediate danger of it. Inequality, he says, is the condition of Progress, and if it is only Inequality that is wanted, Progress ought to be making rapid strides. Oh yes, we have Social Inequality enough to carry us on at the rate of a mile a minute. It would be interesting, would it not, to know in what direction we are progressing — though, of course, the Progress is the chief thing — from good to better or from bad to worse?’

‘Very interesting,’ said Queen Mab. ‘I mean to think that we are progressing from good to better. But do you know that you are a very dismal bird? Are things really as bad as you say they are?’

‘Perhaps I *am* cynical,’ replied the Owl. ‘The kingfisher says so. The kingfisher is an optimist, and he told me I thought it was clever to be cynical; but that was when we had a few words one day. It is from living in a belfry, doubtless, that I have contracted a habit of looking at things on the dark side; but when one has made allowance for the belfry, the world is not so bad after all. Of course animals can’t be expected to know what it means; they are not social philosophers, and men say so many different things. Some think the universe is under a dual control, and some that it is altogether a blunder — a clock running down and the key lost I don’t know about that, I am only a bird; but if it is a failure, it is a glorious failure. Sometimes, indeed, the theologians call life a howling wilderness; but that is in comparison with the next world. For they are immortal.’

‘I am immortal too,’ said Queen Mab proudly.

‘So you are,’ returned the Owl. ‘I was forgetting. I’m not,’ he added rather doubtfully. ‘But I hope you will enjoy it.’

‘It is my intention,’ said Queen Mab.

The Bishop, from whose face the look of perplexity had departed, leaving only his old serene, benevolent expression, turned as the bell chimed out the hour, and walked slowly towards the gate. The east was growing grey towards sunset, the east that lent the light wherein he lived, for he was a man of a gentle heart. Far off, in the town, a million lamps were beginning to burn. Gas lamps, and electric, and matches that struck only on the box, and not always on that. But the face of the Bishop shone with another radiance, and a lustre not of this world.

CHAPTER X. — THE SUBSEQUENT CAREER OF THE NIHILIST.

‘Cucullus nonfacit monachum.’

Queen Mab and the Owl were returning, rather tired, from an excursion, when a procession of the Salvation Army came across them, with drums and banners, and the General at its head, and, — they could hardly believe their eyes, — the Nihilist walking by the side of the General and weeping abundantly. The Salvation Army had brought him to a conviction of his sins, and he was wringing his hands — at least one of them; the other, as if automatically, still carried the black bag. The General, on the contrary, was highly delighted. It was not every day that he converted a Nihilist, and the thought occurred, small blame to him, that the whole history of the incident would sound remarkably well in the ‘War Cry.’ So it would have done, but for that unfortunate bag.

‘You renounce the devil,’ said the General confidently, ‘and all his ways?’

‘I renounce him,’ said the Nihilist, still clasping the black bag fervently, in a glow of pious enthusiasm, as if it were a prayer-book.

‘Then you are all right,’ said the General in an encouraging tone. ‘Throw away the black bag, my friend, and shout Hallelujah! Do you feel your sins forgiven?’

‘I do! I do!’ exclaimed the Nihilist. ‘But I daren’t throw it away: it would make such a noise in the street. I’ll tie it on to the next balloon that comes by empty. They’ll assassinate me; but I don’t care: I have peace in my heart!’

‘That’s the right ring,’ said the General, not without conquering a feeling of repugnance towards the vicinity of the bag. ‘Faith without works, you know. Well, my brother, we must be back to head-quarters. You’ll meet us at the Hall to-night — seven sharp.’

‘I will,’ cried the Nihilist enthusiastically. ‘I must go to one of your blessed gatherings before my enemies are on my track. Ah, it’s true — the world is vanity. Dynamite is vanity. Torpedoes, nitro-glycerine — they’re dust and ashes, broken cisterns! I renounce them all.’

They had reached an important metropolitan railway station, and the General’s party, entering, began to take tickets for their return journey. Then, for the first time, the Nihilist noticed that the General also carried a black bag, in shape and size similar to his own, which he placed on the floor of the booking-office as he went to take his ticket. Queen Mab never fully comprehended what happened next. She could only assert that the expression on the face of the Nihilist was one of fervent and devoted piety, as, with an ejaculation of ‘Hallelujah!’ he absently put down his own bag and took up that of the General. Then he broke out, as in irrepressible enthusiasm, with a verse of ‘Dare to be a Daniel!’ The General, turning round, looked duly edified at this outburst of ardour, and took up his bag of pamphlets, as he supposed, without any suspicion of the length to which his friend’s devotional rapture had carried him. The Nihilist then bade a hurried farewell, observing rather incoherently that the weight of sin was heavy on his conscience, and he was going to submerge it instantly at St. Paul’s Pier. With this parting statement he rushed from the station, and Queen Mab, with a sense of misgiving, followed hastily.

A moment after, the city was thrilled by a loud explosion. No one was killed: above a hundred persons were injured, and the cause of the disturbance was traced to a bag left by the General on the platform close to the bookstall. For the next two or three days the station wore a blackened, distracted, and generally intermingled appearance. The big drum suffered the most severely, and shreds of parchment were wafted to a great distance, and gathered up, many of them, by adherents of the Army, as relics of this unfortunate martyr of Progress and of Nihilism. Many of the other instruments were shattered, and so great was the force of the explosion, that a small fragment of a bagpipe was propelled into St. Paul’s Cathedral, where it was discovered next day, on the lectern, by the Canon who read the lessons. The General, for some time, was supposed to have disappeared with these instruments; but it was afterwards asserted, on good authority, that he had been seen the same evening on board a vessel bound for America; and the most reasonable conjecture appeared to be, that his native discrimination, at once perceiving the weight of evidence for the prosecution, had led him, during the tumult incident on the explosion, to effect an escape. Certain it is that the Hall at Clapton knew him no more.

Meanwhile, outside the station, amid a medley of blackened officials, disintegrated portions of railway carriages and bookstalls, Salvation Army captains, converted reprobates, policemen, cabmen, and orange vendors, was found a Nihilist! Once a Nihilist, but a Nihilist no longer. With a threepenny hymn-book in one hand and a black bag in the other, filled, not with dangerous explosives, but with a whole arsenal of tracts, ‘War Crys,’ hymn-books, addresses to swearers and Sabbath-breakers, and other devotional literature, he was calmly spouting:

‘Convulsions shake the solid world, My faith shall never yield to fear!’

It may not be amiss, here, to say a few words as regards his subsequent history, as related by the Owl. After that somewhat untoward incident, he was not warmly received into the ranks of the Salvation Army. A coldness sprang up which, though not inexplicable, had the unfortunate effect of causing our Nihilist to renounce connection with that body. The influences which they had brought to bear upon him, however, did not so easily pass away, and it was in the continued glow of pious enthusiasm that he joined a Dissenting Society, in which respectability and fervour were happily combined, and which, accusing the Salvation Army of the fervour without the respectability, regarded the Nihilist as an interesting martyr of unjust suspicion. For two months he remained in this society, and rose to the post of deacon, or what corresponded to deacon in their system; but at the end of that time his native bias proved too strong for him. With singular injudiciousness he brought to the Sunday evening service a hymn-book carefully constructed, including the hymns of the society, and also a small but superlatively powerful block of explosive material, arranged to go off at the moment in which the collection was being taken up. So confident was he of the excellent workmanship of this article that he did not scruple even to write his name in it, and to leave it in the pew, assured that, once exploded, no trace of its ownership would remain. He then left before the collection — a thing which he had been repeatedly known to do before, and which struck the congregation with no alarm. But, from the pew behind, an eye was upon him. It was the eye of the Professor. What was the Professor! doing there? The answer was simple enough. He was writing a book on ‘Competition, and the Survival of the Fittest, as displayed in Modern Sectarianism,’ and he had come to this! dissenting place of worship in quest; of information. Always ardent in the pursuit of knowledge, he entered the Nihilist’s pew the moment that individual left it, and began to scan the leaves of the hymn-book. To his infinite amazement, on turning over page 227, he came upon a cunning piece of machinery, not a musical-box, like those one comes to unexpectedly in the midst of photograph albums, but a “chef d’ouvre” of Donovan’s own, smouldering away at a great rate. The time was just up; the collection-boxes were being handed round; instant destruction seemed inevitable, when, to the amazement of the congregation, the Professor, starting up, rushed to the altar, and, with *the cool forethought and intrepidity* so eminently characteristic of that gifted man, dropped the hymn-book into the large font, then full of water. The ignited wick ceased to smoulder; the peril was averted.

But the Nihilist was sought for in vain by the civil authorities.
Glancing back at the threshold of the building, he had caught sight of
the Professor, and, as if fascinated to the spot, he had watched him
take up the fatal hymn-book. Then, with an instant presentiment of the
consequences, he had rushed away. He has since joined the Parsees, and

the Democrat, visiting America on business, met him the other day in New York, in the full costume of a Fire-worshipper. His complexion had assumed a more Eastern appearance, and his turban was pulled low down, and partially concealed his features; but the Democrat's keen eyes detected a resemblance, even before the Parsee began to hum, in a singularly rich and flexible tenor voice, a verse from Omar Khayyam:

'Ah Love, could you and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would we not shatter it to bits, and then
Remould it nearer to the Heart's Desire?'

From the depth of feeling which the Nihilist flung into these words, the Democrat conjectured that he had at last found his true devotional sphere, but he did not venture on renewing the acquaintance, judiciously reflecting that the flowing costume of a Persian magnate was favourable to the secretion of infernal machines of all sorts and sizes.

CHAPTER XI. — HOME AND FOREIGN POLICY COMBINED.

Knowest thou the House where the members elected
Consider the measure apart from the brand,
Where Voting by Party is quite unaffected,
And solely concerned with the good of the land?
Knowest thou the House of Amendments and Clauses,
Where Reason may reel but debate never pauses,
Where words, the grand note of Humanity, reign
(Oh Müller, Max Müller, expound us the gain!),
Articulate always, if often insane?

’Tis the Temple of Justice, the home of M.P.’s,
Our noble, our own representatives these,
But endless as sands of the desert, and worse,
Are the Bills they discuss and the rules they
rehearse.

‘What about the Government?’ said Queen Mab to the Owl one day. ‘Is there anything that it would do to introduce into Polynesia — that is, if the Germans and the missionaries have gone away again? If they haven’t — !’ and she sighed.

‘I think you had better not try,’ returned her counsellor, after considering the point. ‘You have got a queen already, and I should think the Polynesians are hardly ripe for a representative Government No doubt, in the course of the struggle for existence, they will get into a good many difficulties, but I rather think that a British constitution on the top of them would not improve matters. If you could get up a Witenagemot now!’

‘Oh, the gathering of the Wise Men,’ said the fairy. ‘I remember that. Has not England got a Witenagemot now, then?’ she inquired. Her historical notions, during her long residence in Polynesia, had got fearfully mixed up and hazy.

‘They don’t call it so,’ said the Owl gravely. ‘I wonder they don’t, it would be very suitable.’

‘And what is it for?’ asked Mab.

‘Chiefly to legislate for the Millennium, I think,’ replied the Owl. ‘They have been legislating now for a considerable time, but it hasn’t come yet. It is late. We expect, however, that it will arrive when the New Democracy is in power. There has been a good deal of annoyance with the Established Church lately for not telegraphing for it sooner, and people say that but for the Church’s neglect the Millennium would have been here a very long time ago. Therefore, when the New Democracy comes, it intends, as the Democrat was saying, to be mild but firm, and see if the Millennium can’t be got to travel faster. And the first mild but firm thing it will do will be to pull down the Established Church of England and level it with the — with other denominations.’

‘What *is* the Millennium?’ said Queen Mab.

‘Some think one thing and some another,’ returned the Owl. ‘Perhaps we had better not discuss it; it is so easy to be profane on the subject before you know where you are. But you can hear Parliament legislating for it any day, and see people living up to it under the gangway.’

‘I should like to go and see how they do it,’ said Mab, ‘just for once.’

‘Well, so you can,’ said the Owl. ‘We can start directly if you like. It is the safest place in London now that the session is on, because of the Home Rulers. The dynamiters couldn’t very well blow it up with the Irish members in, and it would look too pointed for them all to be away at the time of its being blown up. Make me invisible and we will go.’

So Queen Mab made them both invisible, and they flew away to the House of Commons. There ensconcing themselves on a high beam, they soon forgot the cobwebs in the interest of the debate. It was a remarkable debate, and, what is also remarkable, I can find no traces of it in the Hansard for that year, and it hardly conforms to the latest rules. Sometimes I am inclined to think that the Owl must have invented it or dreamed it, but he says that every word is mathematically correct, and I know him for a most truthful bird, who never told, or at all events never meant to tell, a lie. The debate was on a Bill introduced by Government for the colonisation of the lunar world by emigration of the able-bodied unemployed, and the House was full. All the Home Rulers were present, a fact which gave the Owl a feeling of pleasant security, and members generally were wide awake and very attentive.

In a brief speech of three hours the Prime Minister advocated the principles of the Bill.

‘I am not what is vulgarly called a Jingo’ (hear, hear!) he said finally, ‘and measures of simple aggrandisement, sir, I have never been known to advocate.’

‘How about Bechuana?’ from Mr. Jacob Bright.

‘If the rules of courtesy demanded a reply to that interruption,’ said the Prime

Minister, ‘I would answer,’ and he did so for an hour by Shrewsbury clock. He then proceeded: ‘But there is a wide difference between annexation necessary to maintain the integrity of our glorious realm, as in the case of Bechuana, and the annexations so often observed in the policy of Continental Powers, springing from a mere greed of empire. We may deplore, indeed, that a preceding Administration has involved us in responsibilities almost beyond the power of statesmen to grapple with successfully; but that is the habit of preceding Administrations, and now that such measures are beyond recall we shall not shirk their consequences. The recent annexation of Mercury by Russia, and the presence in Jupiter of a German emissary, whose ulterior object, though the Press of that country states him to have gone there solely for the benefit of his health, cannot be viewed with too much suspicion, make it incumbent on all parties to unite in speedy measures for the security of our home and colonial interests.’ (Ministerial cheers.) ‘I am at a loss to conceive,’ said a member of the Opposition, rising — and here the irregularity comes in, for which we can only refer readers to the Owl— ‘what is the drift of the remarks we have just listened to. I am no enemy to annexation, as honourable members know well. We have been annexing ever since we had a rood of land to make annexations to, and it would be a pity to begin to stop now. But as for occupying a place like the Moon, without water, without air, without inhabitants — that, sir, appears to me to be adding folly to madness. Is the Government not content with the proofs of utter imbecility’ — (order)— ‘I will say, of excruciating feebleness, it has given to the public, that it must squander the resources of the nation for the sake of a wild-goose chase like this? As for the German envoy, he has gone to Jupiter for the benefit of a settled climate, and to drink the waters, not to annex a planet which, with the present indifferent means of communication, could be of no service to his country. This is the simple explanation, which anybody but an old owl like the Prime Minister—’

‘Order, order!’ shouted several voices, and the Speaker, rising gravely, called upon the honourable member to withdraw the epithet of ‘old owl’ as unparliamentary.

‘I withdraw it,’ said the member readily. ‘I should have said, the gentleman so highly distinguished for youth and sanity, who has plunged us into oceans of disaster at home and abroad, and, not content with making the world we live in too hot to hold us, intends to make all the planets related to us in the Solar System too hot to hold us, as well. He has determined wantonly to attack a sphere with which we have always maintained the most cordial relations, to invade its territories, ravage its villages, and introduce the atrocious benefits of Maxim guns and Gladstone claret to the Selenites.’

‘The honourable member observed a moment ago,’ said the Prime Minister ironically, ‘that there were no Selenites.’

‘So I did,’ returned the Opposition member unabashed. ‘I am not ashamed of that. If the Moon has no inhabitants, you can have no commercial relations with the Moon; if it has, you can only demoralise an unsophisticated population. But I refuse to be held responsible for the opinions I expressed two minutes ago. I am a true Briton, and I absolutely decline to limit myself to a single contradiction, or to a dozen, in the course of a quarter of an hour’s harangue.’

‘We can quite believe *that*!’ said the Home Secretary blandly. ‘But till my honourable friend undertakes the management of affairs — before which may heaven remove me! (“Hear, hear!” from the honourable friend) — it is the business of competent statesmen to preserve relations friendly yet firm with foreign Powers terrestrial and celestial, and we shall do it, sir, if we have to annex the Pleiades (cheers). To illustrate by a single case the urgency of an action which the honourable member, in his own choice and happy phraseology, stigmatised as a wild-goose chase. If a Power which I will not specify is allowed to occupy that interesting orb which it is our hope to link closely with our own destinies in national union — *what of the tides*? (Cheers.) Sir, it has long been our proud boast that Britannia rules the waves. How much longer, I ask you, would she continue to rule them, if once the sway with which the studies of our childhood have made us all familiar passed into the hands of alien and perhaps hostile authorities? (Prolonged cheers.) Can we doubt that unfriendly arbitration would eventually turn away all the tides from our hitherto favoured island, and would divert the current of the Gulf Stream to Powers with whom our relations are strained, while punctually supplying us with icebergs and a temperature below zero from the Arctic Zone? Once hemmed in (or surrounded) by icebergs, what becomes of your carrying trade? Can we doubt that the trade-winds, too, would be mere playthings in the hands of a lunar colonial Government, inspired in every action by the malice of an unfriendly terrestrial Admiralty, and that, in short, by a terrible reversal of the national motto for which we feel so just a reverence, Britannia would cease to rule the waves, while the waves would rule Britannia?’ (Loud and prolonged Ministerial cheers, during which another member of the Opposition rose and inquired the precise policy of Her Majesty’s Government towards the Selenites.) ‘I am instructed,’ said a Cabinet Minister, ‘to inform the honourable member that the Selenites have no existence. The step contemplated is therefore a mere peaceful annexation, and war and bloodshed, such as were pathetically alluded to by the honourable member for Putney, are out of the question. I may here bring clearly before the minds of the House the fact that, as the Moon is destitute of any atmosphere, scientific men have unanimously declared the impossibility of animal life upon it.’

‘I should like to know,’ said a member, rising below the gangway, ‘whether the Government has given its attention to one point, namely, that as where there is no atmosphere there can be no inhabitants, where there can be no inhabitants there can be no representatives of rival terrestrial Powers. Unless the forces of a certain Power are capable of living without air, I fail to see that we have anything to apprehend from their occupation of the Moon. Russians, for instance, are not personally dear to me; and I should say that the more of them introduce civilisation to that extinct and uninhabitable sphere the better; but I utterly decline to go there myself, or to vote for sending even our convicts there, much less our able-bodied unemployed. I should like this little difficulty explained, for I confess that, to an unstatesmanlike mind, this debate seems to be verging on nonsense.’ ‘I had not thought it necessary, at this early stage of the debate,’ observed the Prime Minister plaintively, ‘to remind the House that no such difficulty as that present to the mind of the honourable member really exists. Has my honourable friend below the gangway never heard of a mental or a moral atmosphere? Is it not one which inevitably surrounds us, in the incandescent Soudan or in the chill abode of departed Selenites? What he regards as an insuperable drawback only furnishes me with another reason for urging the Bill upon you. Would it not be a disgrace to the British flag, ever the friend of civilisation and of virtue, to allow a perverted moral atmosphere to be introduced into an orb which has done so much for us in the way of tidal action, of artistic enjoyment, and, I will say, of amatory sentiment — (cheers) — as our satellite? Now what kind of moral atmosphere, I would ask, surrounds the average Russian? Of a mental atmosphere I will not speak — suffice it to say that that also is immeasurably inferior; but is it fitting for a nation like ours, in the van of progress, to suffer a moral atmosphere degraded, pernicious, and suffocating to circulate in regions to which we could furnish one so infinitely more salubrious?’ (Prolonged Ministerial cheers.)

CHAPTER XII. — THE DELUGE.

‘The drivelling of politicians!’
Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

It is said that the unexpected always happens, and therefore one may deplore without surprise the fact that schemes set on foot by a charitable government to relieve the necessities of their starving fellow-countrymen should frequently have a diametrically opposite effect. Into the Ministerial cheers that followed the Premier’s last statement broke a sound outside the House, a sound as of much wailing, the howling of innumerable newsboys, the cries of ‘Woe, woe!’ the dirge of an empire *qui s’en va*! With those now familiar noises was mingled, but at a greater distance, a strain of martial music.

‘What is this?’ said the Prime Minister through the increasing tumult, with a vague idea of legions of the able-bodied unemployed coming in person to state their views on the debate. ‘A riot?’

‘No,’ shouted the member below the gangway, promptly divining, by a prophetic instinct, the real nature of the case. ‘It is a Revolution.’

‘Heavens!’ said the leader of the Opposition helplessly. ‘I hope not. I had no idea!’

It was too true. The Army was advancing to the House — the broken-down, ragged, wasted remnant of an Army of Heroes. Sent forth, too late, to ‘smash’ Prester John, and relieve the Equator, they had all but overcome the Desert, and had only been defeated by space. Too many of them lay like the vanished legions of Cambyses, swathed by the sand and lulled by the music of the night wind. The remnant had returned of their own motion. It was an impressive spectacle, and the British public, finding no more appropriate action, cheered vociferously, while the newsboys, hundreds of them, continued to howl one against another. For the newspapers had got wind of Something, and it only remained for them to find out what the Something was. At present they had confused the facts — an accident which will happen sometimes with the best-regulated newspapers. But all of them had made shots at the truth, more or less un-veracious. ‘The Banner’ asserted that Sir Charles Dilke and the Democrat, arrayed in costumes of the beginning of the seventeenth century for effect, were parading the cellars under the House of Lords, after the manner of Guy Fawkes, laying trains of gunpowder and singing the well-known lines about the fifth of

November. The ‘Daily Pulpit,’ on the other hand, declared that Lord Randolph Church-hill had set the Thames on fire with native genius and a lighted fusee, which, on the face of it, seemed so extremely probable, that all of the British public that was not cheering the Army’s arrival rushed to the bridges to investigate the river. Delegates from the ‘Holywell Street Gazette,’ in the meantime, were madly interviewing everything and everybody with such celerity that the British public probably arrived at the truth of matters somewhere about that journal’s fifth edition. Up to this time, unfortunately, the ‘Gazette’ had only been able to contradict flatly all the statements of all its contemporaries in language, to say the least of it, most emphatic. But at a national crisis one is nothing if not emphatic. And this was a national crisis. And while the crowd was rushing and swaying hither and thither, and the light-fingered brigade was taking advantage of the crowd’s absent-mindedness to borrow its watches and pocket-handkerchiefs, the General, just returned from the Desert, with the demeanour of a second Cromwell, was marching on the House of Commons. In the House itself reigned confusion much worse confounded. There was no time for lengthy recrimination, for in another moment the General, alone, and with a mien of indignant resolution that struck a chill to the hearts of the most irrepressible members, was striding boldly up to the table. The Speaker looked at the Serjeant-at-Arms, and the Serjeant-at-Arms looked at the Speaker, but neither of them said a word. This was worse than Mr. Bradlaugh at his worst.

‘Behold in this handful of broken and wasted men, returned, not by *your* order, but by *mine*, to their native shore,’ exclaimed the General in a voice of stern thunder that reverberated through the building, ‘the result of your imbecile, idiotic, ignominious, incomprehensible policy and of your absurd “Intelligence” and “Righteousness!” Call yourselves a Parliament? I tell you, your Constitution is rotten to the core. Do you think we are to shed our blood for you, to perish of famine, sword and pestilence, while you sit here, talking the most delirious nonsense that ever was talked since the Confusion of Tongues? You never have anything fresh to say; but there you are, and nothing stops you. If it was the Day of Judgment you would go on moving resolutions; and you have the insolence to maunder over your gallant band of heroes, sacrificed to a whim of party rancour or a struggle for place. We put you here to maintain law and order, to give justice to your fellow-countrymen, and you sit listening to your own melodious voices raving of the welfare of the nation, of Political Economy, Budgets, and Ballots; but so much as the meaning of true justice the bulk of you never guess. *You*, you turn Parliament into a club, and your ambition is satisfied by invitations to dinner. But we have borne enough, and marched enough; now you must march. We have trudged at your bidding thousands of weary miles, for an end you made impossible by your word-splitting cowardice. *Your* turn has come. The troops are in readiness; we are drilling the unemployed in event of civil war, and you had better look out. “Obey me,”’ added the General, insensibly sliding into a popular quotation, ‘“and my nature’s ile: disobey me, and it’s still ile, but it’s ile of vitriol.”’

For the most part honourable members sat stunned and silent; but from the more rebellious came a few cries of ‘Order!’ ‘Turn him out!’ and the Speaker slowly rose. ‘I would remind the gallant General of the Mutiny Act,’ he said.

‘An obsolete restriction of free contract,’ said the General. He stamped his foot, and in a second a file of soldiers had appeared.

‘Take away that bauble!’ exclaimed the General to his aide-decamp in a severe and terrible tone, as he pointed to the mace. But as he gazed upon the venerable emblem his frown melted, and his eyes grew dim. For one instant the victorious warrior, the inexorable avenger of his country’s wrongs, was the dreamy worshipper of Blue China, the aesthetic adorer of marquetry, and Chippendale.

‘Take away that bauble,’ he repeated in a low voice of ineffable sweetness, ‘and deposit it in the upper compartment of my bureau. You know the spot. The bauble has a Chippendale feeling about it.’

Then his fortitude returned; he was once more the dauntless General, the saviour of society.

‘A passing weakness,’ he said, smiling sadly. ‘“Richard’s himself again!”’

Into the lull that followed his words fell the familiar accents of the future Dictator, the Member for Woodstock, as he said in a cool aside to Mr. Goschen:

‘The Hour has come.’

And Mr. Goschen, with his usual calm impartiality, replied:

‘Yes, Randolph, and the Man!’

Through all the uproar Queen Mab and the Owl had looked on with breathless interest; but now, at a reiterated mandate from the General, the members were compelled to disperse, some furious, some alarmed, and all discomfited. There only remained one policeman, the General, and the Democrat to fight it out between themselves, and decide whether a European war would be advisable, or whether they should disband the army and devote themselves to Home Reform. But by this time Queen Mab and the Owl had had enough, for the din which still continued outside the windows was giving them neuralgia. They therefore left the House and flew away westward over the crowd, where differences of opinion, expressed in the British public’s own graceful and forcible manner, had become the order of the day. They met Mr. Bradlaugh at a little distance, hurrying to the scene of combat with the air of ‘Under which king, Bezonian?’

and if the locality had not been so extremely noisy they could not have but turned back to see the fun. The Prime Minister had unaccountably (though not unexpectedly) disappeared from the arena, and his adherents were under the impression that he had been treacherously stowed away in the Tower or some subterranean dungeon. The fact was, that, as eloquence could have no effect on the House in its present state of delirium, the temptation to study Hittite inscriptions in their native home became too strong for him, and he was on his peaceful way to the shores of the Orontes and the ruins of Megiddo.

Shortly after, the Owl and the Fairy met the Bishop, who had heard of the catastrophe, and was torn by conflicting emotions; personal anxiety about his prospects being overclouded by the fear that the new Government might proceed to pass the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill immediately. 'And a man who marries his Deceased Wife's Sister,' he exclaimed pathetically to the air, 'may very soon end in the swamps of Rationalism!' Only Queen Mab and the Owl heard the words as they flew overhead. Next they met Mr. Matthew Arnold, smiling a happy smile, and concocting a 'childlike and bland' article for the 'Nineteenth Century' on the present crisis. So they flew on westward till, gaining a freer and fresher neighbourhood, they came upon a wide green lawn, and on the lawn three old acquaintances, the Poet, the Palæonto-theologist, and — wholly altered from the pale and dreamy boy of their recollection — Walter, the Professor's child.

The Professor was a man given to promptitude of speech and action, and, once awakened to the serious state of Walter's health, physical and mental, he had resolved, at whatever discomfort to himself, to check the boy's undue mental precocity and substitute for it mere physical vigour. He was content with no half-measures, and he sent the lad at once to a preparatory school for Eton. At Eton he knew Walter's brain would have a rest. The effect was miraculous. The boy, whom the Palaeonto-theologist had rashly invited to spend a holiday at his home, was a different creature. He had become sturdy and robust; he had forgotten his new religion of Dala, with his science primers, and could no more have composed a hymn to a fairy than he could have endured a false quantity. He had forgotten the Goona stones; he had forgotten the dates of the Kings of England. He said that bogies were all bosh; he said that Cardinal Wolsey was imprisoned in the Tower for thirteen years and wrote 'Robinson Crusoe' there, and that the Nile rose in Mungo Park. He had forgotten his father's instructions, and regarded birds, not as products of Evolution, but as things suitable to shy stones at, and to be treated with contempt, and catapults. He was incorrigible at Euclid, but he was excellent at cricket, and on this occasion he had fagged the Poet and the Palæonto-theologist to bowl to and field out for him. It was beyond human nature to expect them to enjoy it. The Poet was in the midst of a sublime stanza when he was peremptorily ordered to come and bowl, and he went dreamily and reluctantly, to be greeted with a further mandate of ‘Look sharp there!’ The Palaeonto-theologist was deep in an exhaustive inventory of the animals in Noah’s Ark, and was discussing the probability of the Mammoth’s having been one of its residents. If so, there came the knotty point of how Noah contrived to stow him and the Megatherium in comfortably, and whether they never wanted to do away with the other animals, in which case the Patriarch must have had stirring times. The Palæonto-theologist was just about to begin the grand chain of evidence in which he proves conclusively, from careful study of the original Hebrew manuscripts, and from examination of the soil of Mount Ararat, whose fossils are abraded to this day where the Ark rested on them, that the dimensions of the Ark were anything but what they are said to be, when Walter ordered him to come and field. There was no help for it; he went and fielded; ‘he ran, he fell, he fielded well.’

While he and the Poet were thus occupied, Mab and the Owl rested on a great horse-chestnut and watched the game, and Mab, under the impression that the boy, at sight of her, would be filled with wonder and delight, slipped off her invisible cloak. For some time he was too much absorbed in ‘crumping the Poet’s slows,’ as he said, to notice her; but at last, when the Poet and the Palæonto-theologist were utterly ‘collared’ (as Walter put it) and exhausted, and the perspiration stood thick on their intellectual foreheads, the advent of refreshments gained them a momentary respite. Walter attacked the fruit and cakes so vigorously that Queen Mab grew impatient, and descended to a lower branch of the huge tree, where at last the boy, raising his eyes, beheld her.

‘Hi!’ he cried, rushing indiscriminately at his companions. ‘Get me a catapult, lower boy, I say! Stones, peashooter, anything. Look alive! Here goes!’

And he assailed the astonished Mab with a cricket-ball, and next ‘it came to pleats,’ as Mrs. Major O’Dowd said; and then he hurled a jampot and a fruit-knife. Fortunately for the fairy, who at the moment was too much astonished to move, his aim was rendered inaccurate by his excitement, and the missiles flew wide. The unhappy fags had started up, and the Poet, looking round bewildered, with a volley of desperate expletives unuttered in his soul, caught sight of Mab.

‘Celestial being!’ he exclaimed rapturously. ‘I again behold thee. Bright inmate! How did it run?’

‘Bother your verses!’ cried the boy with utter contempt. ‘Shy at it, you duffer! Oh, what a Butterfly! Get her into the teapot. Blockhead!’

This last disdainfully to himself, for he had hurled the ancient and valuable teapot at Mab, who was flying to a higher branch, and the teapot had missed.

‘Rash boy!’ cried the Palæonto-theologist, shaking him angrily, ‘you have broken my grandfather’s teapot.’

‘Run for the butterfly-net,’ returned the boy unabashed. ‘By George, I’ll give you the jolliest licking!’

‘Hi, there she goes! Seize her!’ he shouted distractedly, and the unlucky Palæonto-theologist rushed after a butterfly-net, while Queen Mab, in unutterable indignation, rose slowly into the air, followed by the bewildered Owl, who had not had time to explain the boy’s ‘new departure’ to himself on scientific principles. It was not till they were fully half a mile from the ill-starred spot that the Owl opened his beak to murmur, with an air of long-suffering melancholy but scientific delight, the word —

‘Reaction!’

But Queen Mab, after this crowning insult, was fain to depart from Britain and renounce the higher civilisation. In the Councils of the New Democracy she had no place. Church and State abjured her: the rising generation needed no fairies, but was content with football and cricket, ‘Treasure Island,’ and the Latin Grammar. Education, Philosophy, and the Philistines had made of the island she once loved well a wilderness wherein no fairy might henceforth furl its wings.

She said ‘good-bye’ to the Owl, who shed one tear at parting, and to all the loyal birds, and went back to Samoa. But alas! Samoa, like Great Britain, was no longer any place for her. It was annexed: it was evangelised. The natives of it were going to church; they were going to Sunday School; they were going to heaven. They were sending their children to be educated at English colleges: they were translating Tennyson and Wesley’s sermons, and learning the catechism, and reading the Testament in the original Greek, and wearing high-crowned hats and paper collars. There was no end of the things they were doing, and they had no time for fairies.

Queen Mab summoned her Court together in despair, and left for one of the Admiralty Islands. There, till the civilisation that dogs the steps of the old folk-lore has driven her thence — with constitutions, and microscopes, and a higher Pantheism that leaves the older Pantheism in the lurch, and other advantages of the nineteenth century — she is secure. We trust that she is also happy, and that the shadow of the approaching hour when she will be ultimately reduced by scientific theologians to a symbol of some deeper verity, the conception of men whose understandings could not cope, like ours, with abstract truth, is not cast heavily upon her path. For she knows well, now, that her day is over, that she is too tangible by far for a higher Pantheism, and that only among the heathen, in some obscure corner of Oceania, she is still permitted to linger on, till that lagging island too receives its chrism of intellect, and is caught up into the van of time.

The Owl is yet the wisest of the birds, though he has commenced a course of psychological research that, it is to be feared, if persisted in, will seriously injure his brain. For he said, only yesterday, that as he was conscious of external objects merely through the medium of his own ego, how was he to know whether or not his own ego was the sole ego in the universe — in fact, composed the universe? He wished to be informed whether he could possibly be nothing but an impression or somebody else’s ego; and said finally, in a despondent tone, that it was hopeless to regard this mundane scheme as anything but a subjective phenomenon, mere *Schein* or *maya*, and that he gave it up.

But the Democrat, untroubled by transcendental scruples, goes on his way, rejoicing in the prospect of the Millennium, now close at hand. He does not much care what the universe is, but he knows what he wants to get out of it, and that is sufficient for his purpose. To be sure, he wants to get what no one ever did or will obtain, but his moments are impassioned, and his idea is a distraction, like another.

BOOKS AND BOOKMEN

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TO THE VISCOUNTESS WOLSELEY

Madame, it is no modish thing,
The bookman’s tribute that I bring;
A talk of antiquaries grey,
Dust unto dust this many a day,
Gossip of texts and bindings old,
Of faded type, and tarnish’d gold!

Can ladies care for this to-do
With Payne, Derome, and Padeloup?
Can they resign the rout, the ball,
For lonely joys of shelf and stall?

The critic thus, serenely wise;
But you can read with other eyes,
Whose books and bindings treasured are
‘Midst mingled spoils of peace and war;
Shields from the fights the Mahdi lost,
And trinkets from the Golden Coast,
And many things divinely done
By Chippendale and Sheraton,
And trophies of Egyptian deeds,
And fans, and plates, and Aggrey beads,
Pomander boxes, assegais,
And sword-hilts worn in Marlbro’s days.

In this pell-mell of old and new,
Of war and peace, my essays, too,
For long in serials tempest-tost,
Are landed now, and are not lost:
Nay, on your shelf secure they lie,
As in the amber sleeps the fly.
’Tis true, they are not “rich nor rare;”

Enough, for me, that they are — there!

A. L

PREFACE

The essays in this volume have, for the most part, already appeared in an American edition (Combes, New York, 1886). The Essays on ‘Old French Title-Pages’ and ‘Lady Book-Lovers’ take the place of ‘Book Binding’ and ‘Bookmen at Rome;’ ‘Elzevirs’ and ‘Some Japanese Bogie-Books’ are reprinted, with permission of Messrs. Cassell, from the Magazine of Art; ‘Curiosities of Parish Registers’ from the Guardian; ‘Literary Forgeries’ from the Contemporary Review; ‘Lady Book-Lovers’ from the Fortnightly Review; ‘A Bookman’s Purgatory’ and two of the pieces of verse from Longman’s Magazine — with the courteous permission of the various editors. All the chapters have been revised, and I have to thank Mr. H. Tedder for his kind care in reading the proof sheets, and Mr. Charles Elton, M.P., for a similar service to the Essay on ‘Parish Registers.’

ELZEVIRS

The Countryman. “You know how much, for some time past, the editions of the Elzevirs have been in demand. The fancy for them has even penetrated into the country. I am acquainted with a man there who denies himself necessaries, for the sake of collecting into a library (where other books are scarce enough) as many little Elzevirs as he can lay his hands upon. He is dying of hunger, and his consolation is to be able to say, ‘I have all the poets whom the Elzevirs printed. I have ten examples of each of them, all with red letters, and all of the right date.’ This, no doubt, is a craze, for, good as the books are, if he kept them to read them, one example of each would be enough.”

The Parisian. “If he had wanted to read them, I would not have advised him to buy Elzevirs. The editions of minor authors which these booksellers published, even editions ‘of the right date,’ as you say, are not too correct. Nothing is good in the books but the type and the paper. Your friend would have done better to use the editions of Gryphius or Estienne.”

This fragment of a literary dialogue I translate from ‘Entretiens sur les Contes de Fees,’ a book which contains more of old talk about books and booksellers than about fairies and folk-lore. The ‘Entretiens’ were published in 1699, about sixteen years after the Elzevirs ceased to be publishers. The fragment is valuable: first, because it shows us how early the taste for collecting Elzevirs was fully developed, and, secondly, because it contains very sound criticism of the mania. Already, in the seventeenth century, lovers of the tiny Elzevirian books waxed pathetic over dates, already they knew that a ‘Caesar’ of 1635 was the right ‘Caesar,’ already they were fond of the red-lettered passages, as in the first edition of the ‘Virgil’ of 1636. As early as 1699, too, the Parisian critic knew that the editions were not very correct, and that the paper, type, ornaments, and FORMAT were their main attractions. To these we must now add the rarity of really good Elzevirs.

Though Elzevirs have been more fashionable than at present, they are still regarded by novelists as the great prize of the book collector. You read in novels about “priceless little Elzevirs,” about books “as rare as an old Elzevir.” I have met, in the works of a lady novelist (but not elsewhere), with an Elzevir ‘Theocritus.’ The late Mr. Hepworth Dixon introduced into one of his romances a romantic Elzevir Greek Testament, “worth its weight in gold.” Casual remarks of this kind encourage a popular delusion that all Elzevirs are pearls of considerable price. When a man is first smitten with the pleasant fever of book-collecting, it is for Elzevirs that he searches. At first he thinks himself in amazing luck. In Booksellers' Row and in Castle Street he "picks up," for a shilling or two, Elzevirs, real or supposed. To the beginner, any book with a sphere on the title-page is an Elzevir. For the beginner's instruction, two copies of spheres are printed here. The second is a sphere, an ill-cut, ill-drawn sphere, which is not Elzevirian at all. The mark was used in the seventeenth century by many other booksellers and printers. The first, on the other hand, is a true Elzevirian sphere, from a play of Moliere's, printed in 1675. Observe the comparatively neat drawing of the first sphere, and be not led away after spurious imitations.

Beware, too, of the vulgar error of fancying that little duodecimos with the mark of the fox and the bee's nest, and the motto "Quaerendo," come from the press of the Elzevirs. The mark is that of Abraham Wolfgang, which name is not a pseudonym for Elzevir. There are three sorts of Elzevir pseudonyms. First, they occasionally reprinted the full title-page, publisher's name and all, of the book they pirated. Secondly, when they printed books of a "dangerous" sort, Jansenist pamphlets and so forth, they used pseudonyms like "Nic. Schouter," on the 'Lettres Provinciales' of Pascal. Thirdly, there are real pseudonyms employed by the Elzevirs. John and Daniel, printing at Leyden (1652-1655), used the false name "Jean Sambix." The Elzevirs of Amsterdam often placed the name "Jacques le Jeune" on their title-pages. The collector who remembers these things must also see that his purchases have the right ornaments at the heads of chapters, the right tail-pieces at the ends. Two of the most frequently recurring ornaments are the so-called "Tete de Buffle" and the "Sirene." More or less clumsy copies of these and the other Elzevirian ornaments are common enough in books of the period, even among those printed out of the Low Countries; for example, in books published in Paris.

A brief sketch of the history of the Elzevirs may here be useful. The founder of the family, a Flemish bookbinder, Louis, left Louvain and settled in Leyden in 1580. He bought a house opposite the University, and opened a book-shop. Another shop, on college ground, was opened in 1587. Louis was a good bookseller, a very ordinary publisher. It was not till shortly before his death, in 1617, that his grandson Isaac bought a set of types and other material. Louis left six sons. Two of these, Matthew and Bonaventure, kept on the business, dating ex officina Elzeviriana. In 1625 Bonaventure and Abraham (son of Matthew) became partners. The "good dates" of Elzevirian books begin from 1626. The two Elzevirs chose excellent types, and after nine years' endeavours turned out the beautiful 'Caesar' of 1635.

Their classical series in petit format was opened with ‘Horace’ and ‘Ovid’ in 1629. In 1641 they began their elegant piracies of French plays and poetry with ‘Le Cid.’ It was worth while being pirated by the Elzevirs, who turned you out like a gentleman, with fleurons and red letters, and a pretty frontispiece. The modern pirate dresses you in rags, prints you murderously, and binds you, if he binds you at all, in some hideous example of “cloth extra,” all gilt, like archaic gingerbread. Bonaventure and Abraham both died in 1652. They did not depart before publishing (1628), in grand format, a desirable work on fencing, Thibault’s ‘Academie de l’Espee.’ This Tibbald also killed by the book. John and Daniel Elzevir came next. They brought out the ‘Imitation’ (Thomae a Kempis canonici regularis ord. S. Augustini De Imitatione Christi, libri iv.); I wish by taking thought I could add eight millimetres to the stature of my copy. In 1655 Daniel joined a cousin, Louis, in Amsterdam, and John stayed in Leyden. John died in 1661; his widow struggled on, but her son Abraham (1681) let all fall into ruins. Abraham died 1712. The Elzevirs of Amsterdam lasted till 1680, when Daniel died, and the business was wound up. The type, by Christopher Van Dyck, was sold in 1681, by Daniel’s widow. Sic transit gloria.

After he has learned all these matters the amateur has still a great deal to acquire. He may now know a real Elzevir from a book which is not an Elzevir at all. But there are enormous differences of value, rarity, and excellence among the productions of the Elzevirian press. The bookstalls teem with small, “cropped,” dingy, dirty, battered Elzevirian editions of the classics, NOT “of the good date.” On these it is not worth while to expend a couple of shillings, especially as Elzevirian type is too small to be read with comfort by most modern eyes. No, let the collector save his money; avoid littering his shelves with what he will soon find to be rubbish, and let him wait the chance of acquiring a really beautiful and rare Elzevir.

Meantime, and before we come to describe Elzevirs of the first flight, let it be remembered that the “taller” the copy, the less harmed and nipped by the binder’s shears, the better. “Men scarcely know how beautiful fire is,” says Shelley; and we may say that most men hardly know how beautiful an Elzevir was in its uncut and original form. The Elzevirs we have may be “dear,” but they are certainly “dumpy twelves.” Their fair proportions have been docked by the binder. At the Beckford sale there was a pearl of a book, a ‘Marot;’ not an Elzevir, indeed, but a book published by Wetstein, a follower of the Elzevirs. This exquisite pair of volumes, bound in blue morocco, was absolutely unimpaired, and was a sight to bring happy tears into the eyes of the amateur of Elzevirs. There was a gracious svelte elegance about these tomes, an appealing and exquisite delicacy of proportion, that linger like sweet music in the memory.

I have a copy of the Wetstein ‘Marot’ myself, not a bad copy, though murderously bound in that ecclesiastical sort of brown calf antique, which goes well with hymn books, and reminds one of cakes of chocolate. But my copy is only some 128 millimetres in height, whereas the uncut Beckford copy (it had belonged to the great Pixerecourt) was at least 130 millimetres high. Beside the uncut example mine looks like Cinderella’s plain sister beside the beauty of the family.

Now the moral is that only tall Elzevirs are beautiful, only tall Elzevirs preserve their ancient proportions, only tall Elzevirs are worth collecting. Dr. Lemuel Gulliver remarks that the King of Lilliput was taller than any of his court by almost the breadth of a nail, and that his altitude filled the minds of all with awe. Well, the Philistine may think a few millimetres, more or less, in the height of an Elzevir are of little importance. When he comes to sell, he will discover the difference. An uncut, or almost uncut, copy of a good Elzevir may be worth fifty or sixty pounds or more; an ordinary copy may bring fewer pence. The binders usually pare down the top and bottom more than the sides. I have a ‘Rabelais’ of the good date, with the red title (1663), and some of the pages have never been opened, at the sides. But the height is only some 122 millimetres, a mere dwarf. Anything over 130 millimetres is very rare. Therefore the collector of Elzevirs should have one of those useful ivory-handled knives on which the French measures are marked, and thus he will at once be able to satisfy himself as to the exact height of any example which he encounters.

Let us now assume that the amateur quite understands what a proper Elzevir should be: tall, clean, well bound if possible, and of the good date. But we have still to learn what the good dates are, and this is matter for the study and practice of a well-spent life. We may gossip about a few of the more famous Elzevirs, those without which no collection is complete. Of all Elzevirs the most famous and the most expensive is an old cookery book, “‘Le Pastissier Francois.’ Wherein is taught the way to make all sorts of pastry, useful to all sorts of persons. Also the manner of preparing all manner of eggs, for fast-days, and other days, in more than sixty fashions. Amsterdam, Louys, and Daniel Elsevier. 1665.” The mark is not the old “Sage,” but the “Minerva” with her owl. Now this book has no intrinsic value any more than a Tauchnitz reprint of any modern volume on cooking. The ‘Pastissier’ is cherished because it is so very rare. The tract passed into the hands of cooks, and the hands of cooks are detrimental to literature. Just as nursery books, fairy tales, and the like are destroyed from generation to generation, so it happens with books used in the kitchen. The ‘Pastissier,’ to be sure, has a good frontispiece, a scene in a Low Country kitchen, among the dead game and the dainties. The buxom cook is making a game pie; a pheasant pie, decorated with the bird’s head and tail-feathers, is already made.

Not for these charms, but for its rarity, is the ‘Pastissier’ coveted. In an early edition of the ‘Manuel’ (1821) Brunet says, with a feigned brutality (for he dearly loved an Elzevir), “Till now I have disdained to admit this book into my work, but I have yielded to the prayers of amateurs. Besides, how could I keep out a volume which was sold for one hundred and one francs in 1819?” One hundred and one francs! If I could only get a ‘Pastissier’ for one hundred and one francs! But our grandfathers lived in the Bookman’s Paradise. “Il n’est pas jusqu’aux Anglais,” adds Brunet— “the very English themselves — have a taste for the ‘Pastissier.’” The Duke of Marlborough’s copy was actually sold for 1 pound 4s. It would have been money in the ducal pockets of the house of Marlborough to have kept this volume till the general sale of all their portable property at which our generation is privileged to assist. No wonder the ‘Pastissier’ was thought rare. Berard only knew two copies. Pietiers, writing on the Elzevirs in 1843, could cite only five ‘Pastissiers,’ and in his ‘Annales’ he had found out but five more. Willems, on the other hand, enumerates some thirty, not including Motteley’s. Motteley was an uncultivated, untaught enthusiast. He knew no Latin, but he had a FLAIR for uncut Elzevirs. “Incomptis capillis,” he would cry (it was all his lore) as he gloated over his treasures. They were all burnt by the Commune in the Louvre Library.

A few examples may be given of the prices brought by ‘Le Pastissier’ in later days. Sensier’s copy was but 128 millimetres in height, and had the old ordinary vellum binding, — in fact, it closely resembled a copy which Messrs. Ellis and White had for sale in Bond Street in 1883. The English booksellers asked, I think, about 1,500 francs for their copy. Sensier’s was sold for 128 francs in April, 1828; for 201 francs in 1837. Then the book was gloriously bound by Trautz-Bauzonnet, and was sold with Potier’s books in 1870, when it fetched 2,910 francs. At the Benzon sale (1875) it fetched 3,255 francs, and, falling dreadfully in price, was sold again in 1877 for 2,200 francs. M. Dutuit, at Rouen, has a taller copy, bound by Bauzonnet. Last time it was sold (1851) it brought 251 francs. The Duc de Chartres has now the copy of Pieters, the historian of the Elzevirs, valued at 3,000 francs.

About thirty years ago no fewer than three copies were sold at Brighton, of all places. M. Quentin Bauchart had a copy only 127 millimetres in height, which he swopped to M. Paillet. M. Chartener, of Metz, had a copy now bound by Bauzonnet which was sold for four francs in 1780. We call this the age of cheap books, but before the Revolution books were cheaper. It is fair to say, however, that this example of the ‘Pastissier’ was then bound up with another book, Vlacq's edition of 'Le Cuisinier Francois,' and so went cheaper than it would otherwise have done. M. de Fontaine de Resbecq declares that a friend of his bought six original pieces of Moliere's bound up with an old French translation of Garth's 'Dispensary.' The one faint hope left to the poor book collector is that he may find a valuable tract lurking in the leaves of some bound collection of trash. I have an original copy of Moliere's 'Les Fascheux' bound up with a treatise on precious stones, but the bookseller from whom I bought it knew it was there! That made all the difference.

But, to return to our 'Pastissier,' here is M. de Fontaine de Resbecq's account of how he wooed and won his own copy of this illustrious Elzevir. "I began my walk to-day," says this haunter of ancient stalls, "by the Pont Marie and the Quai de la Greve, the pillars of Hercules of the book-hunting world. After having viewed and reviewed these remote books, I was going away, when my attention was caught by a small naked volume, without a stitch of binding. I seized it, and what was my delight when I recognised one of the rarest of that famed Elzevir collection whose height is measured as minutely as the carats of the diamond. There was no indication of price on the box where this jewel was lying; the book, though unbound, was perfectly clean within. 'How much?' said I to the bookseller. 'You can have it for six sous,' he answered; 'is it too much?' 'No,' said I, and, trembling a little, I handed him the thirty centimes he asked for the 'Pastissier Francois.' You may believe, my friend, that after such a piece of luck at the start, one goes home fondly embracing the beloved object of one's search. That is exactly what I did."

Can this tale be true? Is such luck given by the jealous fates mortalibus aegris? M. de Resbecq's find was made apparently in 1856, when trout were plenty in the streams, and rare books not so very rare. To my own knowledge an English collector has bought an original play of Moliere's, in the original vellum, for eighteenpence. But no one has such luck any longer. Not, at least, in London. A more expensive 'Pastissier' than that which brought six sous was priced in Bachelin-Deflorenne's catalogue at 240 pounds. A curious thing occurred when two uncut 'Pastissiers' turned up simultaneously in Paris. One of them Morgand and Fatout sold for 400 pounds. Clever people argued that one of the twin uncut 'Pastissiers' must be an imitation, a facsimile by means of photogravure, or some other process. But it was triumphantly established that both were genuine; they had minute points of difference in the ornaments.

M. Willems, the learned historian of the Elzevirs, is indignant at the successes of a book which, as Brunet declares, is badly printed. There must be at least forty known 'Pastissiers' in the world. Yes; but there are at least 4,000 people who would greatly rejoice to possess a 'Pastissier,' and some of these desirous ones are very wealthy. While this state of the market endures, the ‘Pastissier’ will fetch higher prices than the other varieties. Another extremely rare Elzevir is ‘L’Illustre Theatre de *Mons.* Corneille’ (Leyden, 1644). This contains ‘Le Cid,’ ‘Les Horaces,’ ‘Le Cinna,’ ‘La Mort de Pompee,’ ‘Le Polyeucte.’ The name, ‘L’Illustre Theatre,’ appearing at that date has an interest of its own. In 1643-44, Moliere and Madeleine Bejart had just started the company which they called ‘L’Illustre Theatre.’ Only six or seven copies of the book are actually known, though three or four are believed to exist in England, probably all covered with dust in the library of some lord. “He has a very good library,” I once heard some one say to a noble earl, whose own library was famous. “And what can a fellow do with a very good library?” answered the descendant of the Crusaders, who probably (being a youth light-hearted and content) was ignorant of his own great possessions. An expensive copy of ‘L’Illustre Theatre,’ bound by Trautz-Bauzonnet, was sold for 300 pounds.

Among Elzevirs desirable, yet not hopelessly rare, is the ‘Virgil’ of 1636. Heinsius was the editor of this beautiful volume, prettily printed, but incorrect. Probably it is hard to correct with absolute accuracy works in the clear but minute type which the Elzevirs affected. They have won fame by the elegance of their books, but their intention was to sell good books cheap, like Michel Levy. The small type was required to get plenty of “copy” into little bulk. Nicholas Heinsius, the son of the editor of the ‘Virgil,’ when he came to correct his father’s edition, found that it contained so many coquilles, or misprints, as to be nearly the most incorrect copy in the world. Heyne says, “Let the ‘Virgil’ be one of the rare Elzevirs, if you please, but within it has scarcely a trace of any good quality.” Yet the first edition of this beautiful little book, with its two passages of red letters, is so desirable that, till he could possess it, Charles Nodier would not profane his shelves by any ‘Virgil’ at all.

Equally fine is the ‘Caesar’ of 1635, which, with the ‘Virgil’ of 1636 and the ‘Imitation’ without date, M. Willems thinks the most successful works of the Elzevirs, “one of the most enviable jewels in the casket of the bibliophile.” It may be recognised by the page 238, which is erroneously printed 248. A good average height is from 125 to 128 millimetres. The highest known is 130 millimetres. This book, like the ‘Imitation,’ has one of the pretty and ingenious frontispieces which the Elzevirs prefixed to their books. So farewell, and good speed in your sport, ye hunters of Elzevirs, and may you find perhaps the rarest Elzevir of all, ‘L’Aimable Mere de Jesus.’

BALLADE OF THE REAL AND IDEAL (DOUBLE REFRAIN)

O visions of salmon tremendous,
Of trout of unusual weight,
Of waters that wander as Ken does,
Ye come through the Ivory Gate!
But the skies that bring never a “spate,”
But the flies that catch up in a thorn,
But the creel that is barren of freight,
Through the portals of horn!

O dreams of the Fates that attend us
With prints in the earliest state,
O bargains in books that they send us,
Ye come through the Ivory Gate!
But the tome that has never a mate,
But the quarto that’s tattered and torn,
And bereft of a title and date,
Through the portals of horn!

O dreams of the tongues that commend us,
Of crowns for the laureate pate,
Of a public to buy and befriend us,
Ye come through the Ivory Gate!
But the critics that slash us and slate,
But the people that hold us in scorn,
But the sorrow, the scathe, and the hate,
Through the portals of horn!

ENVOY.

Fair dreams of things golden and great,
Ye come through the Ivory Gate;
But the facts that are bleak and forlorn,
Through the portals of horn!

CURIOSITIES OF PARISH REGISTERS

There are three classes of persons who are deeply concerned with parish registers — namely, villains, antiquaries, and the sedulous readers, “parish clerks and others,” of the second or “agony” column of the Times. Villains are probably the most numerous of these three classes. The villain of fiction dearly loves a parish register: he cuts out pages, inserts others, intercalates remarks in a different coloured ink, and generally manipulates the register as a Greek manages his hand at ecarte, or as a Hebrew dealer in Moabite bric-a-brac treats a synagogue roll. We well remember one villain who had locked himself into the vestry (he was disguised as an archaeologist), and who was enjoying his wicked pleasure with the register, when the vestry somehow caught fire, the rusty key would not turn in the door, and the villain was roasted alive, in spite of the disinterested efforts to save him made by all the virtuous characters in the story. Let the fate of this bold, bad man be a warning to wicked earls, baronets, and all others who attempt to destroy the record of the marriage of a hero’s parents. Fate will be too strong for them in the long run, though they bribe the parish clerk, or carry off in white wax an impression of the keys of the vestry and of the iron chest in which a register should repose.

There is another and more prosaic danger in the way of villains, if the new bill, entitled “The Parish Registers Preservation Act,” ever becomes law. The bill provides that every register earlier than 1837 shall be committed to the care of the Master of the Rolls, and removed to the Record Office. Now the common villain of fiction would feel sadly out of place in the Register Office, where a more watchful eye than that of a comic parish clerk would be kept on his proceedings. Villains and local antiquaries will, therefore, use all their parliamentary influence to oppose and delay this bill, which is certainly hard on the parish archaeologist. The men who grub in their local registers, and slowly compile parish or county history, deserve to be encouraged rather than depressed. Mr. Chester Waters, therefore, has suggested that copies of registers should be made, and the comparatively legible copy left in the parish, while the crabbed original is conveyed to the Record Office in London. Thus the local antiquary would really have his work made more easy for him (though it may be doubted whether he would quite enjoy that condescension), while the villain of romance would be foiled; for it is useless (as a novel of Mr. Christie Murray’s proves) to alter the register in the keeping of the parish when the original document is safe in the Record Office. But previous examples of enforced transcription (as in 1603) do not encourage us to suppose that the copies would be very scrupulously made. Thus, after the Reformation, the prayers for the dead in the old registers were omitted by the copyist, who seemed to think (as the contractor for "sandwich men" said to the poor fellows who carried the letter H), "I don't want you, and the public don't want you, and you're no use to nobody." Again, when Laurence Fletcher was buried in St. Saviour's, Southwark, in 1608, the old register described him as "a player, the King's servant." But the clerk, keeping a note-book, simply called Laurence Fletcher "a man," and (in 1625) he also styled Mr. John Fletcher "a man." Now, the old register calls Mr. John Fletcher "a poet." To copy all the parish registers in England would be a very serious task, and would probably be but slovenly performed. If they were reproduced, again, by any process of photography, the old difficult court hand would remain as hard as ever. But this is a minor objection, for the local antiquary revels in the old court hand.

From the little volume by Mr. Chester Waters, already referred to ('Parish Registers in England;' printed for the author by F. J. Roberts, Little Britain, E.C.), we proceed to appropriate such matters of curiosity as may interest minds neither parochial nor doggedly antiquarian. Parish registers among the civilised peoples of antiquity do not greatly concern us. It seems certain that many Polynesian races have managed to record (in verse, or by some rude marks) the genealogies of their chiefs through many hundreds of years. These oral registers are accepted as fairly truthful by some students, yet we must remember that Pindar supposed himself to possess knowledge of at least twenty-five generations before his own time, and that only brought him up to the birth of Jason. Nobody believes in Jason and Medea, and possibly the genealogical records of Maoris and Fijians are as little trustworthy as those of Pindaric Greece. However, to consider thus is to consider too curiously. We only know for certain that genealogy very soon becomes important, and, therefore, that records are early kept, in a growing civilisation. "After Nehemiah's return from the captivity in Babylon, the priests at Jerusalem whose register was not found were as polluted put from the priesthood." Rome had her parish registers, which were kept in the temple of Saturn. But modern parish registers were "discovered" (like America) in 1497, when Cardinal Ximenes found it desirable to put on record the names of the godfathers and godmothers of baptised children. When these relations of "gossip," or God's kin (as the word literally means), were not certainly known, married persons could easily obtain divorces, by pretending previous spiritual relationship.

But it was only during the reign of Mary, (called the Bloody) that this rule of registering godfathers and godmothers prevailed in England. Henry VIII. introduced the custom of parish registers when in a Protestant humour. By the way, how curiously has Madame de Flamareil (la femme de quarante ans, in Charles de Bernard's novel) anticipated the verdict of Mr. Froude on Henry VIII.! 'On accuse Henri VIII.,' dit Madame de Flamareil, "moi je le comprends, et je l'absous; c'etait un coeur genereux, lorsqu'il ne les aimait plus, il les tuait.'" The public of England mistrusted, in the matter of parish registers, the generous heart of Henry VIII. It is the fixed conviction of the public that all novelties in administration mean new taxes. Thus the Croatian peasantry were once on the point of revolting because they imagined that they were to be taxed in proportion to the length of their moustaches. The English believed, and the insurgents of the famous Pilgrimage of Grace declared, that baptism was to be refused to all children who did not pay a "trybette" (tribute) to the king. But Henry, or rather his minister, Cromwell, stuck to his plan, and (September 29, 1538) issued an injunction that a weekly register of weddings, christenings, and burials should be kept by the curate of every parish. The cost of the book (twopence in the case of St. Margaret's, Westminster) was defrayed by the parishioners. The oldest extant register books are those thus acquired in 1597 or 1603. These volumes were of parchment, and entries were copied into them out of the old books on paper. The copyists, as we have seen, were indolent, and omitted characteristic points in the more ancient records.

In the civil war parish registers fell into some confusion, and when the clergy did make entries they commonly expressed their political feelings in a mixture of Latin and English. Latin, by the way, went out as Protestantism came in, but the curate of Rotherby, in Leicestershire, writes, "Bellum, Bellum, Bellum, interruption! persecution!" At St. Bridget's, in Chester, is the quaint entry, "1643. Here the register is defective till 1653. The tymes were SUCH!" At Hilton, in Dorset, William Snoke, minister, entered his opinion that persons whose baptism and marriage were not registered "will be made uncapable of any earthly inheritance if they live. This I note for the satisfaction of any that do:" though we may doubt whether these parishioners found the information thus conveyed highly satisfactory.

The register of Maid's Moreton, Bucks, tells how the reading-desk (a spread eagle, gilt) was "doomed to perish as an abominable idoll;" and how the cross on the steeple nearly (but not quite) knocked out the brains of the Puritan who removed it. The Puritans had their way with the registers as well as with the eagle ("the vowl," as the old country people call it), and laymen took the place of parsons as registrars in 1653. The books from 1653 to 1660, while this regime lasted, "were kept exceptionally well," new brooms sweeping clean. The books of the period contain fewer of the old Puritan Christian names than we might have expected. We find, “REPENTE Kytchens,” so styled before the poor little thing had anything but original sin to repent of. “FAINT NOT Kennard” is also registered, and “FREEGIFT Mabbe.”

A novelty was introduced into registers in 1678. The law required (for purposes of protecting trade) that all the dead should be buried in woollen winding-sheets. The price of the wool was the obolus paid to the Charon of the Revenue. After March 25, 1667, no person was to be “buried in any shirt, shift, or sheet other that should be made of woole only.” Thus when the children in a little Oxfordshire village lately beheld a ghost, “dressed in a long narrow gown of woollen, with bandages round the head and chin,” it is clear that the ghost was much more than a hundred years old, for the act “had fallen into disuse long before it was repealed in 1814.” But this has little to do with parish registers. The addition made to the duties of the keeper of the register in 1678 was this — he had to take and record the affidavit of a kinsman of the dead, to the effect that the corpse was actually buried in woollen fabric. The upper classes, however, preferred to bury in linen, and to pay the fine of 5L. When Mistress Oldfield, the famous actress, was interred in 1730, her body was arrayed “in a very fine Brussels lace headdress, a holland shift with a tucker and double ruffles of the same lace, and a pair of new kid gloves.”

In 1694 an empty exchequer was replenished by a tax on marriages, births, and burials, the very extortion which had been feared by the insurgents in the Pilgrimage of Grace. The tax collectors had access without payment of fee to the registers. The registration of births was discontinued when the Taxation Acts expired. An attempt to introduce the registration of births was made in 1753, but unsuccessfully. The public had the old superstitious dread of anything like a census. Moreover, the custom was denounced as “French,” and therefore abominable. In the same way it was thought telling to call the cloture “the French gag” during some recent discussions of parliamentary rules. In 1783 the parish register was again made the instrument of taxation, and threepence was charged on every entry. Thus “the clergyman was placed in the invidious light of a tax collector, and as the poor were often unable or unwilling to pay the tax, the clergy had a direct inducement to retain their good-will by keeping the registers defective.”

It is easy to imagine the indignation in Scotland when “bang went saxpence” every time a poor man had twins! Of course the Scotch rose up against this unparalleled extortion. At last, in 1812, “Rose’s Act” was passed. It is styled “an Act for the better regulating and preserving registers of births,” but the registration of births is altogether omitted from its provisions. By a stroke of the wildest wit the penalty of transportation for fourteen years, for making a false entry, "is to be divided equally between the informer and the poor of the parish." A more casual Act has rarely been drafted.

Without entering into the modern history of parish registers, we may borrow a few of the ancient curiosities to be found therein, the blunders and the waggeries of forgotten priests, and curates, and parish clerks. In quite recent times (1832) it was thought worth while to record that Charity Morrell at her wedding had signed her name in the register with her right foot, and that the ring had been placed on the fourth toe of her left foot; for poor Charity was born without arms. Sometimes the time of a birth was recorded with much minuteness, that the astrologers might draw a more accurate horoscope. Unlucky children, with no acknowledged fathers, were entered in a variety of odd ways. In Lambeth (1685), George Speedwell is put down as "a merry begot;" Anne Twine is "filia uniuscujusque." At Croydon, a certain William is "terraefilius" (1582), an autochthonous infant. Among the queer names of foundlings are "Nameless," "Godsend," "Subpoena," and "Moyses and Aaron, two children found," not in the bulrushes, but "in the street."

The rule was to give the foundling for surname the name of the parish, and from the Temple Church came no fewer than one hundred and four foundlings named "Temple," between 1728 and 1755. These Temples are the plebeian gens of the patrician house which claims descent from Godiva. The use of surnames as Christian names is later than the Reformation, and is the result of a reaction against the exclusive use of saints' names from the calendar. Another example of the same reaction is the use of Old Testament names, and "Ananias and Sapphira were favourite names with the Presbyterians." It is only fair to add that these names are no longer popular with Presbyterians, at any rate in the Kirk of Scotland. The old Puritan argument was that you would hardly select the name of too notorious a scriptural sinner, "as bearing testimony to the triumph of grace over original sin." But in America a clergyman has been known to decline to christen a child "Pontius Pilate," and no wonder.

Entries of burials in ancient times often contained some biographical information about the deceased. But nothing could possibly be vaguer than this: "1615, February 28, St. Martin's, Ludgate, was buried an anatomy from the College of Physicians." Man, woman, or child, sinner or saint, we know not, only that "an anatomy" found Christian burial in St. Martin's, Ludgate. How much more full and characteristic is this, from St. Peter's-in-the-East, Oxford (1568): 'There was buried Alyce, the wiff of a naughty fellow whose name is Matthew Manne.' There is immortality for Matthew Manne, and there is, in short-hand, the tragedy of "Alyce his wiff." The reader of this record knows more of Matthew than in two hundred years any one is likely to know of us who moralise over Matthew! At Kyloe, in Northumberland, the intellectual defects of Henry Watson have, like the naughtiness of Manne, secured him a measure of fame. (1696.) “Henry was so great a fooll, that he never could put on his own close, nor never went a quarter of a mile off the house,” as Voltaire’s Memnon resolved never to do, and as Pascal partly recommends.

What had Mary Woodfield done to deserve the alias which the Croydon register gives her of “Queen of Hell”? (1788.) Distinguished people were buried in effigy, in all the different churches with which they were connected, and each sham burial service was entered in the parish registers, a snare and stumbling-block to the historian. This curious custom is very ancient. Thus we read in the Odyssey that when Menelaus heard in Egypt of the death of Agamemnon he reared for him a cenotaph, and piled an empty barrow “that the fame of the dead man might never be quenched.” Probably this old usage gave rise to the claims of several Greek cities to possess the tomb of this or that ancient hero. A heroic tomb, as of Cassandra for example, several towns had to show, but which was the true grave, which were the cenotaphs? Queen Elizabeth was buried in all the London churches, and poor Cassandra had her barrow in Argos, Mycenae, and Amyclae.

“A drynkyng for the soul” of the dead, a [Greek text] or funeral feast, was as common in England before the Reformation as in ancient Greece. James Cooke, of Sporle, in Norfolk (1528), left six shillings and eightpence to pay for this “drynkyng for his soul;” and the funeral feast, which long survived in the distribution of wine, wafers, and rosemary, still endures as a slight collation of wine and cake in Scotland. What a funeral could be, as late as 1731, Mr. Chester Waters proves by the bill for the burial of Andrew Card, senior bencher of Gray’s Inn. The deceased was brave in a “superfine pinked shroud” (cheap at 1L. 5S. 6D.), and there were eight large plate candle-sticks on stands round the dais, and ninety-six buckram escutcheons. The pall-bearers wore Alamode hatbands covered with frizances, and so did the divines who were present at the melancholy but gorgeous function. A hundred men in mourning carried a hundred white wax branch lights, and the gloves of the porters in Gray’s Inn were ash-coloured with black points. Yet the wine cost no more than 1L. 19S. 6D.; a “deal of sack,” by no means “intolerable.”

Leaving the funerals, we find that the parish register sometimes records ancient and obsolete modes of death. Thus, martyrs are scarce now, but the register of All Saints’, Derby, 1556, mentions “a poor blinde woman called Joan Waste, of this parish, a martyr, burned in Windmill pit.” She was condemned by Ralph Baynes, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield. In 1558, at Richmond, in

Yorkshire, we find “Richard Snell, b’rnt, bur. 9 Sept.” At Croydon, in 1585, Roger Shepherd probably never expected to be eaten by a lioness. Roger was not, like Wyllyam Barker, “a common drunkard and blasphemer,” and we cannot regard the Croydon lioness, like the Nemean lion, as a miraculous monster sent against the county of Surrey for the sins of the people. The lioness “was brought into the town to be seen of such as would give money to see her. He” (Roger) “was sore wounded in sundry places, and was buried the 26th Aug.”

In 1590, the register of St. Oswald’s, Durham, informs us that “Duke, Hyll, Hogge, and Holiday” were hanged and burned for “there horrible offences.” The arm of one of these horrible offenders was preserved at St. Omer as the relic of a martyr, “a most precious treasure,” in 1686. But no one knew whether the arm belonged originally to Holiday, Hyll, Duke, or Hogge. The coals, when these unfortunate men were burned, cost sixpence; the other items in the account of the abominable execution are, perhaps, too repulsive to be quoted.

According to some critics of the British government, we do not treat the Egyptians well. But our conduct towards the Fellahs has certainly improved since this entry was made in the register of St. Nicholas, Durham (1592, August 8th): ‘Simson, Arington, Featherston, Fenwick, and Lancaster, WERE HANGED FOR BEING EGYPTIANS.’ They were, in fact, gypsies, or had been consorting with gypsies, and they suffered under 5 Eliz. c. 20. In 1783 this statute was abolished, and was even considered “a law of excessive severity.” For even a hundred years ago “the puling cant of sickly humanitarianism” was making itself heard to the injury of our sturdy old English legislation. To be killed by a poet is now an unusual fate, but the St. Leonard’s, Shoreditch, register (1598) mentions how “Gabriel Spencer, being slayne, was buried.” Gabriel was “slayne” by Rare Ben Jonson, in Hoxton Fields.

The burning of witches is, naturally, not an uncommon item in parish registers, and is set forth in a bold, business-like manner. On August 21 (1650) fifteen women and one man were executed for the imaginary crime of witchcraft. “A grave, for a witch, sixpence,” is an item in the municipal accounts. And the grave was a cheap haven for the poor woman who had been committed to the tender mercies of a Scotch witch-trier. Cetewayo’s medicine-men, who “smelt out” witches, were only some two centuries in the rear of our civilisation. Three hundred years ago Bishop Jewell, preaching before Elizabeth, was quite of the mind of Cetewayo and Saul, as to the wickedness of suffering a witch to live. As late as 1691, the register of Holy Island, Northumberland, mentions “William Cleugh, bewitched to death,” and the superstition is almost as powerful as ever among the rural people. Between July 13 and July 24 (1699) the widow Comon, in Essex, was thrice swum for a witch. She was not drowned, but survived her immersion for only five months. A singular homicide is recorded at Newington Butts, 1689. “John Arris and Derwick Farlin in one grave, being both Dutch soldiers; one killed the other drinking brandy.” But who slew the slayer? The register is silent; but “often eating a shoulder of mutton or a peck of hasty pudding at a time caused the death of James Parsons,” at Teddington, in Middlesex, 1743. Parsons had resisted the effects of shoulders of mutton and hasty pudding till the age of thirty-six.

And so the registers run on. Sometimes they tell of the death of a glutton, sometimes of a GRACE WYFE (grosse femme). Now the bell tolls for the decease of a duke, now of a “dog-whipper.” “Lutenists” and “Saltpetremen” — the skeleton of the old German allegory whispers to each and twitches him by the sleeve. “Ellis Thompson, insipiens,” leaves Chester-le-Street, where he had gabbled and scrabbled on the doors, and follows “William, foole to my Lady Jerningham,” and “Edward Errington, the Towne’s Fooll” (Newcastle-on-Tyne) down the way to dusty death. Edward Errington died “of the pest,” and another idiot took his place and office, for Newcastle had her regular town fools before she acquired her singularly advanced modern representatives. The “aquavity man” dies (in Cripplegate), and the “dumb-man who was a fortune-teller” (Stepney, 1628), and the “King’s Falkner,” and Mr. Gregory Isham, who combined the professions, not frequently united, of “attorney and husbandman,” in Barwell, Leicestershire (1655). “The lame chimney-sweeper,” and the “King of the gypsies,” and Alexander Willis, “qui calographiam docuit,” the linguist, and the Tom o’ Bedlam, the comfit-maker, and the panyer-man, and the tack-maker, and the suicide, they all found death; or, if they sought him, the churchyard where they were “hurled into a grave” was interdicted, and purified, after a fortnight, with “frankincense and sweet perfumes, and herbs.”

Sometimes people died wholesale of pestilence, and the Longborough register mentions a fresh way of death, “the swat called New Acquaintance, alias Stoupe Knave, and know thy master.” Another malady was ‘the posting swet, that posted from towne to towne through England.’ The plague of 1591 was imported in bales of cloth from the Levant, just as British commerce still patriotically tries to introduce cholera in cargoes of Egyptian rags. The register of Malpas, in Cheshire (Aug. 24, 1625), has this strange story of the plague:-

“Richard Dawson being sicke of the plague, and perceiving he must die at yt time, arose out of his bed, and made his grave, and caused his nefew, John Dawson, to cast strawe into the grave which was not farre from the house, and went and lay’d him down in the say’d grave, and caused clothes to be lay’d uppon and so dep’ted out of this world; this he did because he was a strong man, and heavier than his said nefew and another wench were able to bury.”

And John Dawson died, and Rose Smyth, the “wench” already spoken of, died, the last of the household.

Old customs survive in the parish registers. Scolding wives were ducked, and in Kingston-on-Thames, 1572, the register tells how the sexton’s wife “was sett on a new cukking-stoole, and brought to Temes brydge, and there had three duckings over head and eres, because she was a common scold and fighter.” The cucking-stool, a very elaborate engine of the law, cost 1L. 3S. 4D. Men were ducked for beating their wives, and if that custom were revived the profession of cucking-stool maker would become busy and lucrative. Penances of a graver sort are on record in the registers. Margaret Sherioux, in Croydon (1597), was ordered to stand three market days in the town, and three Sundays in the church, in a white sheet. The sin imputed to her was a dreadful one. “She stood one Saturday, and one Sunday, and died the next.” Innocent or guilty, this world was no longer a fit abiding-place for Margaret Sherioux. Occasionally the keeper of the register entered any event which seemed out of the common. Thus the register of St. Nicholas, Durham (1568), has this contribution to natural history:-

“A certaine Italian brought into the cittie of Durham a very greate strange and monstrous serpent, in length sixteen feet, in quantitie and dimentions greater than a greate horse, which was taken and killed by special policie, in Ethiopia within the Turkas dominions. But before it was killed, it had devoured (as is credibly thought) more than 1,000 persons, and destroyed a great country.”

This must have been a descendant of the monster that would have eaten Andromeda, and was slain by Perseus in the country of the blameless Ethiopians. Collections of money are recorded occasionally, as in 1680, when no less than one pound eight shillings was contributed “for redemption of Christians (taken by ye Turkish pyrates) out of Turkish slavery.” Two hundred years ago the Turk was pretty “unspeakable” still. Of all blundering Dogberries, the most confused kept (in 1670) the parish register at Melton Mowbray:-

“Here [he writes] is a bill of Burton Lazareth’s people, which was buried, and which was and maried above 10 years old, for because the clarke was dead, and therefore they was not set down according as they was, but they all set down sure enough one among another here in this place.”

“They all set down sure enough,” nor does it matter much now to know whom they married, and how long they lived in Melton Mowbray. The following entry sufficed for the great Villiers that expired “in the worst inn’s worst room,”—“Kirkby Moorside, Yorkshire, 1687. Georges vilaris Lord dooke of Bookingham, bur. 17. April.”

“So much for Buckingham!”

THE ROWFANT BOOKS BALLADE EN GUISE DE RONDEAU

The Rowfant books, how fair they shew,
The Quarto quaint, the Aldine tall,
Print, autograph, portfolio!
Back from the outer air they call,
The athletes from the Tennis ball,
This Rhymer from his rod and hooks,
Would I could sing them one and all,
The Rowfant books!

The Rowfant books! In sun and snow
They’re dear, but most when tempests fall;
The folio towers above the row
As once, o’er minor prophets, — Saul!
What jolly jest books and what small
“Dear dumpy Twelves” to fill the nooks.
You do not find on every stall
The Rowfant books!

The Rowfant books! These long ago
Were chained within some College hall;
These manuscripts retain the glow
Of many a coloured capital
While yet the Satires keep their gall,
While the Pastissier puzzles cooks,
Theirs is a joy that does not pall,
The Rowfant books!

ENVOI.

The Rowfant books, — ah magical
As famed Armida’s “golden looks,”
They hold the rhymer for their thrall,
The Rowfant books.

TO F. L.

I mind that Forest Shepherd’s saw,
For, when men preached of Heaven, quoth he,
“It’s a’ that’s bricht, and a’ that’s braw,
But Bourhope’s guid eneuch for me!”

Beneath the green deep-bosomed hills
That guard Saint Mary’s Loch it lies,
The silence of the pasture fills
That shepherd’s homely paradise.

Enough for him his mountain lake,
His glen the burn went singing through,
And Rowfant, when the thrushes wake,
May well seem good enough for you.

For all is old, and tried, and dear,
And all is fair, and round about
The brook that murmurs from the mere
Is dimpled with the rising trout.

But when the skies of shorter days
Are dark and all the ways are mire,
How bright upon your books the blaze
Gleams from the cheerful study fire,

On quartos where our fathers read,
Enthralled, the book of Shakespeare’s play,
On all that Poe could dream of dread,
And all that Herrick sang of gay!

Fair first editions, duly prized,
Above them all, methinks, I rate
The tome where Walton’s hand revised
His wonderful receipts for bait!

Happy, who rich in toys like these
Forgets a weary nation’s ills,
Who from his study window sees
The circle of the Sussex hills!

SOME JAPANESE BOGIE-BOOKS

There is or used to be a poem for infant minds of a rather Pharisaical character, which was popular in the nursery when I was a youngster. It ran something like this:-.

I thank my stars that I was born
A little British child.

Perhaps these were not the very words, but that was decidedly the sentiment. Look at the Japanese infants, from the pencil of the famous Hokusai. Though they are not British, were there ever two jollier, happier small creatures? Did Leech, or Mr. Du Maurier, or Andrea della Robbia ever present a more delightful view of innocent, well-pleased childhood? Well, these Japanese children, if they are in the least inclined to be timid or nervous, must have an awful time of it at night in the dark, and when they make that eerie “northwest passage” bedwards through the darkling house of which Mr. Stevenson sings the perils and the emotions. All of us who did not suffer under parents brought up on the views of Mr. Herbert Spencer have endured, in childhood, a good deal from ghosts. But it is nothing to what Japanese children bear, for our ghosts are to the spectres of Japan as moonlight is to sunlight, or as water unto whisky. Personally I may say that few people have been plagued by the terror that walketh in darkness more than myself. At the early age of ten I had the tales of the ingenious Mr. Edgar Poe and of Charlotte Bronte “put into my hands” by a cousin who had served as a Bashi Bazouk, and knew not the meaning of fear. But I DID, and perhaps even Nelson would have found out “what fear was,” or the boy in the Norse tale would have “learned to shiver,” if he had been left alone to peruse ‘Jane Eyre,’ and the ‘Black Cat,’ and the ‘Fall of the House of Usher,’ as I was. Every night I expected to wake up in my coffin, having been prematurely buried; or to hear sighs in the area, followed by light, unsteady footsteps on the stairs, and then to see a lady all in a white shroud stained with blood and clay stagger into my room, the victim of too rapid interment. As to the notion that my respected kinsman had a mad wife concealed on the premises, and that a lunatic aunt, black in the face with suppressed mania, would burst into my chamber, it was comparatively a harmless fancy, and not particularly disturbing. Between these and the ‘Yellow Dwarf,’ who (though only the invention of the Countess D’Aulnoy) might frighten a nervous infant into hysterics, I personally had as bad a time of it in the night watches as any happy British child has survived. But our ogres are nothing to the bogies which make not only night but day terrible to the studious infants of Japan and China.

Chinese ghosts are probably much the same as Japanese ghosts. The Japanese have borrowed most things, including apparitions and awesome sprites and grisly fiends, from the Chinese, and then have improved on the original model. Now we have a very full, complete, and horror-striking account of Chinese harnts (as the country people in Tennessee call them) from Mr. Herbert Giles, who has translated scores of Chinese ghost stories in his ‘Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio’ (De la Rue, 1880). Mr. Giles’s volumes prove that China is the place for Messrs. Gurney and Myers, the secretaries of the Psychical Society.

Ghosts do not live a hole-and-corner life in China, but boldly come out and take their part in the pleasures and business of life. It has always been a question with me whether ghosts, in a haunted house, appear when there is no audience. What does the spectre in the tapestried chamber do when the house is NOT full, and no guest is put in the room to bury strangers in, the haunted room? Does the ghost sulk and complain that there is “no house,” and refuse to rehearse his little performance, in a conscientious and disinterestedly artistic spirit, when deprived of the artist’s true pleasure, the awakening of sympathetic emotion in the mind of the spectator? We give too little thought and sympathy to ghosts, who in our old castles and country houses often find no one to appear to from year’s end to year’s-end. Only now and then is a guest placed in the “haunted room.” Then I like to fancy the glee of the lady in green or the radiant boy, or the headless man, or the old gentleman in snuff-coloured clothes, as he, or she, recognises the presence of a spectator, and prepares to give his or her best effects in the familiar style.

Now in China and Japan certainly a ghost does not wait till people enter the haunted room: a ghost, like a person of fashion, “goes everywhere.” Moreover, he has this artistic excellence, that very often you don’t know him from an embodied person. He counterfeits mortality so cleverly that he (the ghost) has been known to personate a candidate for honours, and pass an examination for him. A pleasing example of this kind, illustrating the limitations of ghosts, is told in Mr. Giles’s book. A gentleman of Huai Shang named Chou-t’ien-i had arrived at the age of fifty, but his family consisted of but one son, a fine boy, “strangely averse from study,” as if there were anything strange in THAT. One day the son disappeared mysteriously, as people do from West Ham. In a year he came back, said he had been detained in a Taoist monastery, and, to all men’s amazement, took to his books. Next year he obtained is B.A. degree, a First Class. All the neighbourhood was overjoyed, for Huai Shang was like Pembroke College (Oxford), where, according to the poet, “First Class men are few and far between.” It was who should have the honour of giving his daughter as bride to this intellectual marvel. A very nice girl was selected, but most unexpectedly the B.A. would not marry. This nearly broke his father’s heart. The old gentleman knew, according to Chinese belief, that if he had no grandchild there would be no one in the next generation to feed his own ghost and pay it all the little needful attentions. “Picture then the father naming and insisting on the day;” till K’o-ch’ang, B.A., got up and ran away. His mother tried to detain him, when his clothes “came off in her hand,” and the bachelor vanished! Next day appeared the real flesh and blood son, who had been kidnapped and enslaved. The genuine K’o-ch’ang was overjoyed to hear of his approaching nuptials. The rites were duly celebrated, and in less than a year the old gentleman welcomed his much-longed-for grand child. But, oddly enough, K’o-ch’ang, though very jolly and universally beloved, was as stupid as ever, and read nothing but the sporting intelligence in the newspapers. It was now universally admitted that the learned K’o-ch’ang had been an impostor, a clever ghost. It follows that ghosts can take a very good degree; but ladies need not be afraid of marrying ghosts, owing to the inveterate shyness of these learned spectres.

The Chinese ghost is by no means always a malevolent person, as, indeed, has already been made clear from the affecting narrative of the ghost who passed an examination. Even the spectre which answers in China to the statue in ‘Don Juan,’ the statue which accepts invitations to dinner, is anything but a malevolent guest. So much may be gathered from the story of Chu and Lu. Chu was an undergraduate of great courage and bodily vigour, but dull of wit. He was a married man, and his children (as in the old Oxford legend) often rushed into their mother’s presence, shouting, “Mamma! mammal papa’s been plucked again!” Once it chanced that Chu was at a wine party, and the negus (a favourite beverage of the Celestials) had done its work. His young friends betted Chu a bird’s-nest dinner that he would not go to the nearest temple, enter the room devoted to coloured sculptures representing the torments of Purgatory, and carry off the image of the Chinese judge of the dead, their Osiris or Rhadamanthus. Off went old Chu, and soon returned with the august effigy (which wore “a green face, a red beard, and a hideous expression”) in his arms. The other men were frightened, and begged Chu to restore his worship to his place on the infernal bench. Before carrying back the worthy magistrate, Chu poured a libation on the ground and said, “Whenever your excellency feels so disposed, I shall be glad to take a cup of wine with you in a friendly way.” That very night, as Chu was taking a stirrup cup before going to bed, the ghost of the awful judge came to the door and entered. Chu promptly put the kettle on, mixed the negus, and made a night of it with the festive fiend. Their friendship was never interrupted from that moment. The judge even gave Chu a new heart (literally) whereby he was enabled to pass examinations; for the heart, in China, is the seat of all the intellectual faculties. For Mrs. Chu, a plain woman with a fine figure, the ghost provided a new head, of a handsome girl recently slain by a robber. Even after Chu's death the genial spectre did not neglect him, but obtained for him an appointment as registrar in the next world, with a certain rank attached.

The next world, among the Chinese, seems to be a paradise of bureaucracy, patent places, jobs, mandarins' buttons and tails, and, in short, the heaven of officialism. All civilised readers are acquainted with Mr. Stockton's humorous story of 'The Transferred Ghost.' In Mr. Stockton's view a man does not always get his own ghostship; there is a vigorous competition among spirits for good ghostships, and a great deal of intrigue and party feeling. It may be long before a disembodied spectre gets any ghostship at all, and then, if he has little influence, he may be glad to take a chance of haunting the Board of Trade, or the Post Office, instead of "walking" in the Foreign Office. One spirit may win a post as White Lady in the imperial palace, while another is put off with a position in an old college library, or perhaps has to follow the fortunes of some seedy "medium" through boarding-houses and third-rate hotels. Now this is precisely the Chinese view of the fates and fortunes of ghosts. Quisque suos patimur manes.

In China, to be brief, and to quote a ghost (who ought to know what he was speaking about), "supernaturals are to be found everywhere." This is the fact that makes life so puzzling and terrible to a child of a believing and trustful character. These Oriental bogies do not appear in the dark alone, or only in haunted houses, or at cross-roads, or in gloomy woods. They are everywhere: every man has his own ghost, every place has its peculiar haunting fiend, every natural phenomenon has its informing spirit; every quality, as hunger, greed, envy, malice, has an embodied visible shape prowling about seeking what it may devour. Where our science, for example, sees (or rather smells) sewer gas, the Japanese behold a slimy, meagre, insatiate wraith, crawling to devour the lives of men. Where we see a storm of snow, their livelier fancy beholds a comic snow-ghost, a queer, grinning old man under a vast umbrella.

The illustrations in this paper are only a few specimens chosen out of many volumes of Japanese bogies. We have not ventured to copy the very most awful spectres, nor dared to be as horrid as we can. These native drawings, too, are generally coloured regardless of expense, and the colouring is often horribly lurid and satisfactory. This embellishment, fortunately perhaps, we cannot reproduce. Meanwhile, if any child looks into this essay, let him (or her) not be alarmed by the pictures he beholds. Japanese ghosts do not live in this country; there are none of them even at the Japanese Legation. Just as bears, lions, and rattlesnakes are not to be seriously dreaded in our woods and commons, so the Japanese ghost cannot breathe (any more than a slave can) in the air of England or America. We do not yet even keep any ghostly zoological garden in which the bogies of Japanese, Australians, Red Indians, and other distant peoples may be accommodated. Such an establishment is perhaps to be desired in the interests of psychical research, but that form of research has not yet been endowed by a cultivated and progressive government.

The first to attract our attention represents, as I understand, the common ghost, or simulacrum vulgare of psychical science. To this complexion must we all come, according to the best Japanese opinion. Each of us contains within him “somewhat of a shadowy being,” like the spectre described by Dr. Johnson: something like the Egyptian “Ka,” for which the curious may consult the works of Miss Amelia B. Edwards and other learned Orientalists. The most recent French student of these matters, the author of ‘L’Homme Posthume,’ is of opinion that we do not all possess this double, with its power of surviving our bodily death. He thinks, too, that our ghost, when it does survive, has but rarely the energy and enterprise to make itself visible to or audible by “shadow-casting men.” In some extreme cases the ghost (according to our French authority, that of a disciple of M. Comte) feeds fearsomely on the bodies of the living. In no event does he believe that a ghost lasts much longer than a hundred years. After that it mizzles into spectre, and is resolved into its elements, whatever they may be.

A somewhat similar and (to my own mind) probably sound theory of ghosts prevails among savage tribes, and among such peoples as the ancient Greeks, the modern Hindoos, and other ancestor worshippers. When feeding, as they all do, or used to do, the ghosts of the ancestral dead, they gave special attention to the claims of the dead of the last three generations, leaving ghosts older than the century to look after their own supplies of meat and drink. The negligence testifies to a notion that very old ghosts are of little account, for good or evil. On the other hand, as regards the longevity of spectres, we must not shut our eyes to the example of the bogie in ancient armour which appears in Glamis Castle, or to the Jesuit of Queen Elizabeth’s date that haunts the library (and a very nice place to haunt: I ask no better, as a ghost in the Pavilion at Lord’s might cause a scandal) of an English nobleman. With these instantiae contradictoriae, as Bacon calls them, present to our minds, we must not (in the present condition of psychical research) dogmatise too hastily about the span of life allotted to the simulacrum vulgare. Very probably his chances of a prolonged existence are in inverse ratio to the square of the distance of time which severs him from our modern days. No one has ever even pretended to see the ghost of an ancient Roman buried in these islands, still less of a Pict or Scot, or a Palaeolithic man, welcome as such an apparition would be to many of us. Thus the evidence does certainly look as if there were a kind of statute of limitations among ghosts, which, from many points of view, is not an arrangement at which we should repine.

The Japanese artist expresses his own sense of the casual and fluctuating nature of ghosts by drawing his spectre in shaky lines, as if the model had given the artist the horrors. This simulacrum rises out of the earth like an exhalation, and groups itself into shape above the spade with which all that is corporeal of its late owner has been interred. Please remark the uncomforted and dismal expression of the simulacrum. We must remember that the ghost or “Ka” is not the “soul,” which has other destinies in the future world, good or evil, but is only a shadowy resemblance, condemned, as in the Egyptian creed, to dwell in the tomb and hover near it. The Chinese and Japanese have their own definite theory of the next world, and we must by no means confuse the eternal fortunes of the permanent, conscious, and responsible self, already inhabiting other worlds than ours, with the eccentric vagaries of the semi-material tomb-haunting larva, which so often develops a noisy and bear-fighting disposition quite unlike the character of its proprietor in life.

The next bogie, so limp and washed-out as he seems, with his white, drooping, dripping arms and hands, reminds us of that horrid French species of apparition, “la lavandiere de la nuit,” who washes dead men’s linen in the moonlit pools and rivers. Whether this simulacrum be meant for the spirit of the well (for everything has its spirit in Japan), or whether it be the ghost of some mortal drowned in the well, I cannot say with absolute certainty; but the opinion of the learned tends to the former conclusion. Naturally a Japanese child, when sent in the dusk to draw water, will do so with fear and trembling, for this limp, floppy apparition might scare the boldest. Another bogie, a terrible creation of fancy, I take to be a vampire, about which the curious can read in Dom Calmet, who will tell them how whole villages in Hungary have been depopulated by vampires; or he may study in Fauriel’s ‘Chansons de la Grece Moderne’ the vampires of modern Hellas.

Another plan, and perhaps even more satisfactory to a timid or superstitious mind, is to read in a lonely house at midnight a story named ‘Carmilla,’ printed in Mr. Sheridan Le Fanu’s ‘In a Glass Darkly.’ That work will give you the peculiar sentiment of vampirism, will produce a gelid perspiration, and reduce the patient to a condition in which he will be afraid to look round the room. If, while in this mood, some one tells him Mr. Augustus Hare’s story of Crooglin Grange, his education in the practice and theory of vampires will be complete, and he will be a very proper and well-qualified inmate of Earlswood Asylum. The most awful Japanese vampire, caught red-handed in the act, a hideous, bestial incarnation of ghoulishness, we have carefully refrained from reproducing.

Scarcely more agreeable is the bogie, or witch, blowing from her mouth a malevolent exhalation, an embodiment of malignant and maleficent sorcery. The vapour which flies and curls from the mouth constitutes “a sending,” in the technical language of Icelandic wizards, and is capable (in Iceland, at all events) of assuming the form of some detestable supernatural animal, to destroy the life of a hated rival. In the case of our last example it is very hard indeed to make head or tail of the spectre represented. Chinks and crannies are his domain; through these he drops upon you. He is a merry but not an attractive or genial ghost. Where there are such “visions about” it may be admitted that children, apt to believe in all such fancies, have a youth of variegated and intense misery, recurring with special vigour at bed-time. But we look again at our first picture, and hope and trust that Japanese boys and girls are as happy as these jolly little creatures appear.

GHOSTS IN THE LIBRARY

Suppose, when now the house is dumb,
When lights are out, and ashes fall -
Suppose their ancient owners come
To claim our spoils of shop and stall,
Ah me! within the narrow hall
How strange a mob would meet and go,
What famous folk would haunt them all,
Octavo, quarto, folio!

The great Napoleon lays his hand
Upon this eagle-headed N,
That marks for his a pamphlet banned
By all but scandal-loving men, -
A libel from some nameless den
Of Frankfort, — Arnaud a la Sphere,
Wherein one spilt, with venal pen,
Lies o'er the loves of Moliere.

Another shade — he does not see
"Boney," the foeman of his race -
The great Sir Walter, this is he
With that grave homely Border face.
He claims his poem of the chase
That rang Benvoirlich's valley through;
And THIS, that doth the lineage trace
And fortunes of the bold Buccleuch;

For these were his, and these he gave
To one who dwelt beside the Peel,
That murmurs with its tiny wave
To join the Tweed at Ashestiel.
Now thick as motes the shadows wheel,
And find their own, and claim a share

Of books wherein Ribou did deal,
Or Roulland sold to wise Colbert.

What famous folk of old are here!
A royal duke comes down to us,
And greatly wants his Elzevir,
His Pagan tutor, Lucius.
And Beckford claims an amorous
Old heathen in morocco blue;
And who demands Eobanus
But stately Jacques Auguste de Thou!

They come, the wise, the great, the true,
They jostle on the narrow stair,
The frolic Countess de Verrue,
Lamoignon, ay, and Longepierre,
The new and elder dead are there -
The lords of speech, and song, and pen,
Gambetta, Schlegel and the rare
Drummond of haunted Hawthornden.

Ah, and with those, a hundred more,
Whose names, whose deeds, are quite forgot:
Brave “Smiths” and “Thompsons” by the score,
Scrawled upon many a shabby “lot.”
This playbook was the joy of Pott -
Pott, for whom now no mortal grieves.
Our names, like his, remembered not,
Like his, shall flutter on fly-leaves!

At least in pleasant company
We bookish ghosts, perchance, may flit;
A man may turn a page, and sigh,
Seeing one’s name, to think of it.
Beauty, or Poet, Sage, or Wit,

May ope our book, and muse awhile,
And fall into a dreaming fit,
As now we dream, and wake, and smile!

LITERARY FORGERIES

In the whole amusing history of impostures, there is no more diverting chapter than that which deals with literary frauds. None contains a more grotesque revelation of the smallness and the complexity of human nature, and none — not even the records of the Tichborne trial, nor of general elections — displays more pleasantly the depths of mortal credulity. The literary forger is usually a clever man, and it is necessary for him to be at least on a level with the literary knowledge and critical science of his time. But how low that level commonly appears to be! Think of the success of Ireland, a boy of eighteen; think of Chatterton; think of Surtees of Mainsforth, who took in the great Sir Walter himself, the father of all them that are skilled in ballad lore. How simple were the artifices of these ingenious impostors, their resources how scanty; how hand-to-mouth and improvised was their whole procedure! Times have altered a little. Jo Smith's revelation and famed 'Golden Bible' only carried captive the polygamous populus qui vult decipi, reasoners a little lower than even the believers in Anglo-Israel. The Moabite Ireland, who once gave Mr. Shapira the famous MS. of Deuteronomy, but did not delude M. Clermont-Ganneau, was doubtless a smart man; he was, however, a little too indolent, a little too easily satisfied. He might have procured better and less recognisable materials than his old "synagogue rolls;" in short, he took rather too little trouble, and came to the wrong market. A literary forgery ought first, perhaps, to appeal to the credulous, and only slowly should it come, with the prestige of having already won many believers, before the learned world. The inscriber of the Phoenician inscriptions in Brazil (of all places) was a clever man. His account of the voyage of Hiram to South America probably gained some credence in Brazil, while in England it only carried captive Mr. Day, author of 'The Prehistoric Use of Iron and Steel.' But the Brazilians, from lack of energy, have dropped the subject, and the Phoenician inscriptions of Brazil are less successful, after all, than the Moabite stone, about which one begins to entertain disagreeable doubts.

The motives of the literary forger are curiously mixed; but they may, perhaps, be analysed roughly into piety, greed, "push," and love of fun. Many literary forgeries have been pious frauds, perpetrated in the interests of a church, a priesthood, or a dogma. Then we have frauds of greed, as if, for example, a forger should offer his wares for a million of money to the British Museum; or when he tries to palm off his Samaritan Gospel on the "Bad Samaritan" of the

Bodleian. Next we come to playful frauds, or frauds in their origin playful, like (perhaps) the Shakespearian forgeries of Ireland, the supercheries of Prosper Merimee, the sham antique ballads (very spirited poems in their way) of Surtees, and many other examples. Occasionally it has happened that forgeries, begun for the mere sake of exerting the imitative faculty, and of raising a laugh against the learned, have been persevered with in earnest. The humorous deceits are, of course, the most pardonable, though it is difficult to forgive the young archaeologist who took in his own father with false Greek inscriptions. But this story may be a mere fable amongst archaeologists, who are constantly accusing each other of all manner of crimes. Then there are forgeries by "pushing" men, who hope to get a reading for poems which, if put forth as new, would be neglected. There remain forgeries of which the motives are so complex as to remain for ever obscure. We may generally ascribe them to love of notoriety in the forger; such notoriety as Macpherson won by his dubious pinchbeck Ossian. More difficult still to understand are the forgeries which real scholars have committed or connived at for the purpose of supporting some opinion which they held with earnestness. There is a vein of madness and self-deceit in the character of the man who half-persuades himself that his own false facts are true. The Payne Collier case is thus one of the most difficult in the world to explain, for it is equally hard to suppose that Mr. Payne Collier was taken in by the notes on the folio he gave the world, and to hold that he was himself guilty of forgery to support his own opinions.

The further we go back in the history of literary forgeries, the more (as is natural) do we find them to be of a pious or priestly character. When the clergy alone can write, only the clergy can forge. In such ages people are interested chiefly in prophecies and warnings, or, if they are careful about literature, it is only when literature contains some kind of title-deeds. Thus Solon is said to have forged a line in the Homeric catalogue of the ships for the purpose of proving that Salamis belonged to Athens. But the great antique forger, the "Ionian father of the rest," is, doubtless, Onomacritus. There exists, to be sure, an Egyptian inscription professing to be of the fourth, but probably of the twenty-sixth, dynasty. The Germans hold the latter view; the French, from patriotic motives, maintain the opposite opinion. But this forgery is scarcely "literary."

I never can think of Onomacritus without a certain respect: he began the forging business so very early, and was (apart from this failing) such an imposing and magnificently respectable character. The scene of the error and the detection of Onomacritus presents itself always to me in a kind of pictorial vision. It is night, the clear, windless night of Athens; not of the Athens whose ruins remain, but of the ancient city that sank in ashes during the invasion of Xerxes. The time is the time of Pisistratus the successful tyrant; the scene is the ancient temple, the stately house of Athene, the fane where the sacred serpent was fed on cakes, and the primeval olive-tree grew beside the well of Posidon. The darkness of the temple's inmost shrine is lit by the ray of one earthen lamp. You dimly discern the majestic form of a venerable man stooping above a coffer of cedar and ivory, carved with the exploits of the goddess, and with boustrophedon inscriptions. In his hair this archaic Athenian wears the badge of the golden grasshopper. He is Onomacritus, the famous poet, and the trusted guardian of the ancient oracles of Musaeus and Bacis.

What is he doing? Why, he takes from the fragrant cedar coffer certain thin stained sheets of lead, whereon are scratched the words of doom, the prophecies of the Greek Thomas the Rhymer. From his bosom he draws another thin sheet of lead, also stained and corroded. On this he scratches, in imitation of the old "Cadmeian letters," a prophecy that "the Isles near Lemnos shall disappear under the sea." So busy is he in this task, that he does not hear the rustle of a chiton behind, and suddenly a man's hand is on his shoulder! Onomacritus turns in horror. Has the goddess punished him for tampering with the oracles? No; it is Lasus, the son of Hermiones, a rival poet, who has caught the keeper of the oracles in the very act of a pious forgery. (Herodotus, vii. 6.)

Pisistratus expelled the learned Onomacritus from Athens, but his conduct proved, in the long run, highly profitable to the reputations of Musaeus and Bacis. Whenever one of their oracles was not fulfilled, people said, "Oh, THAT is merely one of the interpolations of Onomacritus!" and the matter was passed over. This Onomacritus is said to have been among the original editors of Homer under Pisistratus. He lived long, never repented, and, many years later, deceived Xerxes into attempting his disastrous expedition. This he did by "keeping back the oracles unfavourable to the barbarians," and putting forward any that seemed favourable. The children of Pisistratus believed in him as spiritualists go on giving credit to exposed and exploded "mediums."

Having once practised deceit, it is to be feared that Onomacritus acquired a liking for the art of literary forgery, which, as will be seen in the case of Ireland, grows on a man like dram-drinking. Onomacritus is generally charged with the authorship of the poems which the ancients usually attributed to Orpheus, the companion of Jason. Perhaps the most interesting of the poems of Orpheus to us would have been his 'Inferno,' or [Greek text], in which the poet gave his own account of his descent to Hades in search of Eurydice. But only a dubious reference to one adventure in the journey is quoted by Plutarch. Whatever the exact truth about the Orphic poems may be (the reader may pursue the hard and fruitless quest in Lobeck’s ‘Aglaophamus’), it seems certain that the period between Pisistratus and Pericles, like the Alexandrian time, was a great age for literary forgeries. But of all these frauds the greatest (according to the most “advanced” theory on the subject) is the “Forgery of the Iliad and Odyssey!” The opinions of the scholars who hold that the Iliad and Odyssey, which we know and which Plato knew, are not the epics known to Herodotus, but later compositions, are not very clear nor consistent. But it seems to be vaguely held that about the time of Pericles there arose a kind of Greek Macpherson. This ingenious impostor worked on old epic materials, but added many new ideas of his own about the gods, converting the Iliad (the poem which we now possess) into a kind of mocking romance, a Greek Don Quixote. He also forged a number of pseudo-archaic words, tenses, and expressions, and added the numerous references to iron, a metal practically unknown, it is asserted, to Greece before the sixth century. If we are to believe, with Professor Paley, that the chief incidents of the Iliad and Odyssey were unknown to Sophocles, AEschylus, and the contemporary vase painters, we must also suppose that the Greek Macpherson invented most of the situations in the Odyssey and Iliad. According to this theory the ‘cooker’ of the extant epics was far the greatest and most successful of all literary impostors, for he deceived the whole world, from Plato downwards, till he was exposed by Mr. Paley. There are times when one is inclined to believe that Plato must have been the forger himself, as Bacon (according to the other hypothesis) was the author of Shakespeare’s plays. Thus “Plato the wise, and large-browed Verulam,” would be “the first of those who” forge! Next to this prodigious imposture, no doubt, the false ‘Letters of Phalaris’ are the most important of classical forgeries. And these illustrate, like most literary forgeries, the extreme worthlessness of literary taste as a criterion of the authenticity of writings. For what man ever was more a man of taste than Sir William Temple, “the most accomplished writer of the age,” whom Mr. Boyle never thought of without calling to mind those happy lines of Lucretius, -

Quem tu, dea, tempore in omni
Omnibus ornatum voluisti excellere rebus.

Well, the ornate and excellent Temple held that “the Epistles of Phalaris have more race, more spirit, more force of wit and genius, than any others he had ever seen, either ancient or modern.” So much for what Bentley calls Temple’s “Nicety of Tast.” The greatest of English scholars readily proved that Phalaris used (in the spirit of prophecy) an idiom which did not exist to write about matters in his time not invented, but “many centuries younger than he.” So let the Nicety of Temple’s Tast and its absolute failure be a warning to us when we read (if read we must) German critics who deny Homer’s claim to this or that passage, and Plato’s right to half his accepted dialogues, on grounds of literary taste. And farewell, as Herodotus would have said, to the Letters of Phalaris, of Socrates, of Plato; to the Lives of Pythagoras and of Homer, and to all the other uncounted literary forgeries of the classical world, from the Sibylline prophecies to the battle of the frogs and mice.

Early Christian frauds were, naturally, pious. We have the apocryphal Gospels, and the works of Dionysius the Areopagite, which were not exposed till Erasmus’s time. Perhaps the most important of pious forgeries (if forgery be exactly the right word in this case) was that of ‘The False Decretals.’ “Of a sudden,” says Milman, speaking of the pontificate of Nicholas I. (ob. 867 A.D.), “Of a sudden was promulgated, unannounced, without preparation, not absolutely unquestioned, but apparently over-awing at once all doubt, a new Code, which to the former authentic documents added fifty-nine letters and decrees of the twenty oldest Popes from Clement to Melchiades, and the donation of Constantine, and in the third part, among the decrees of the Popes and of the Councils from Sylvester to Gregory II., thirty-nine false decrees, and the acts of several unauthentic Councils.” “The whole is composed,” Milman adds, “with an air of profound piety and reverence.” The False Decretals naturally assert the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. “They are full and minute on Church Property” (they were sure to be that); in fact, they remind one of another forgery, pious and Aryan, ‘The Institutes of Vishnu.’ “Let him not levy any tax upon Brahmans,” says the Brahman forger of the Institutes, which “came from the mouths of Vishnu,” as he sat “clad in a yellow robe, imperturbable, decorated with all kinds of gems, while Lakshmi was stroking his feet with her soft palms.” The Institutes took excellent care of Brahmans and cows, as the Decretals did of the Pope and the clergy, and the earliest Popes had about as much hand in the Decretals as Vishnu had in his Institutes. Hommenay, in ‘Pantagruel,’ did well to have the praise of the Decretals sung by filles belles, blondelettes, doulcettes, et de bonne grace. And then Hommenay drank to the Decretals and their very good health. “O dives Decretales, tant par vous est le vin bon bon trouve”— “O divine Decretals, how good you make good wine taste!” “The miracle would be greater,” said Pantagruel, “if they made bad wine taste good.” The most that can now be done by the devout for the Decretals is “to palliate the guilt of their forger,” whose name, like that of the Greek Macpherson, is unknown.

If the early Christian centuries, and the Middle Ages, were chiefly occupied with pious frauds, with forgeries of gospels, epistles, and Decretals, the impostors of the Renaissance were busy, as an Oxford scholar said, when he heard of a new MS. of the Greek Testament, “with something really important,” that is with classical imitations. After the Turks took Constantinople, when the learned Greeks were scattered all over Southern Europe, when many genuine classical manuscripts were recovered by the zeal of scholars, when the plays of Menander were seen once, and then lost for ever, it was natural that literary forgery should thrive. As yet scholars were eager rather than critical; they were collecting and unearthing, rather than minutely examining the remains of classic literature. They had found so much, and every year were finding so much more, that no discovery seemed impossible. The lost books of Livy and Cicero, the songs of Sappho, the perished plays of Sophocles and AEschylus might any day be brought to light. This was the very moment for the literary forger; but it is improbable that any forgery of the period has escaped detection. Three or four years ago some one published a book to show that the ‘Annals of Tacitus’ were written by Poggio Bracciolini. This paradox gained no more converts than the bolder hypothesis of Hardouin. The theory of Hardouin was all that the ancient classics were productions of a learned company which worked, in the thirteenth century, under Severus Archontius. Hardouin made some exceptions to his sweeping general theory. Cicero’s writings were genuine, he admitted, so were Pliny’s, of Virgil the Georgics; the satires and epistles of Horace; Herodotus, and Homer. All the rest of the classics were a magnificent forgery of the illiterate thirteenth century, which had scarce any Greek, and whose Latin, abundant in quantity, in quality left much to be desired.

Among literary forgers, or passers of false literary coin, at the time of the Renaissance, Annius is the most notorious. Annius (his real vernacular name was Nanni) was born at Viterbo, in 1432. He became a Dominican, and (after publishing his forged classics) rose to the position of Maitre du Palais to the Pope, Alexander Borgia. With Caesar Borgia it is said that Annius was never on good terms. He persisted in preaching “the sacred truth” to his highness and this (according to the detractors of Annius) was the only use he made of the sacred truth. There is a legend that Caesar Borgia poisoned the preacher (1502), but people usually brought that charge against Caesar when any one in any way connected with him happened to die. Annius wrote on the History and Empire of the Turks, who took Constantinople in his time; but he is better remembered by his ‘Antiquitatum Variarum Volumina XVII. cum comment. Fr. Jo. Annii.’ These fragments of antiquity included, among many other desirable things, the historical writings of Fabius Pictor, the predecessor of Livy. One is surprised that Annius, when he had his hand in, did not publish choice extracts from the

‘Libri Lintei,’ the ancient Roman annals, written on linen and preserved in the temple of Juno Moneta. Among the other discoveries of Annius were treatises by Berosus, Manetho, Cato, and poems by Archilochus. Opinion has been divided as to whether Annius was wholly a knave, or whether he was himself imposed upon. Or, again, whether he had some genuine fragments, and eked them out with his own inventions. It is observed that he did not dovetail the really genuine relics of Berosus and Manetho into the works attributed to them. This may be explained as the result of ignorance or of cunning; there can be no certain inference. “Even the Dominicans,” as Bayle says, admit that Annius’s discoveries are false, though they excuse them by averring that the pious man was the dupe of others. But a learned Lutheran has been found to defend the ‘Antiquitates’ of the Dominican.

It is amusing to remember that the great and erudite Rabelais was taken in by some pseudo-classical fragments. The joker of jokes was hoaxed. He published, says Mr. Besant, “a couple of Latin forgeries, which he proudly called ‘Ex reliquiis venerandae antiquitatis,’ consisting of a pretended will and a contract.” The name of the book is ‘Ex reliquiis venerandae antiquitatis. Lucii Cuspidii Testamentum. Item contractus venditionis antiquis Romanorum temporibus initus. Lugduni apud Gryphium (1532).’ Pomponius Laetus and Jovianus Pontanus were apparently authors of the hoax.

Socrates said that he “would never lift up his hand against his father Parmenides.” The fathers of the Church have not been so respectfully treated by literary forgers during the Renaissance. The ‘Flowers of Theology’ of St. Bernard, which were to be a primrose path ad gaudia Paradisi (Strasburg, 1478), were really, it seems, the production of Jean de Garlande. Athanasius, his ‘Eleven Books concerning the Trinity,’ are attributed to Vigilius, a colonial Bishop in Northern Africa. Among false classics were two comic Latin fragments with which Muretus beguiled Scaliger. Meursius has suffered, posthumously, from the attribution to him of a very disreputable volume indeed. In 1583, a book on ‘Consolations,’ by Cicero, was published at Venice, containing the reflections with which Cicero consoled himself for the death of Tullia. It might as well have been attributed to Mrs. Blimber, and described as replete with the thoughts by which that lady supported herself under the affliction of never having seen Cicero or his Tusculan villa. The real author was Charles Sigonius, of Modena. Sigonius actually did discover some Ciceronian fragments, and, if he was not the builder, at least he was the restorer of Tully’s lofty theme. In 1693, Francois Nodot, conceiving the world had not already enough of Petronius Arbiter, published an edition, in which he added to the works of that lax though accomplished author. Nodot’s story was that he had found a whole MS. of Petronius at Belgrade, and he published it with a translation of his own Latin into French. Still dissatisfied with the existing supply of Petronius’ humour was Marchena, a writer of Spanish books, who printed at Bale a translation and edition of a new fragment. This fragment was very cleverly inserted in a presumed lacuna. In spite of the ironical style of the preface many scholars were taken in by this fragment, and their credulity led Marchena to find a new morsel (of Catullus this time) at Herculaneum. Eichstadt, a Jena professor, gravely announced that the same fragment existed in a MS. in the university library, and, under pretence of giving various readings, corrected Marchena’s faults in prosody. Another sham Catullus, by Corradino, a Venetian, was published in 1738.

The most famous forgeries of the eighteenth century were those of Macpherson, Chatterton, and Ireland. Space (fortunately) does not permit a discussion of the Ossianic question. That fragments of Ossianic legend (if not of Ossianic poetry) survive in oral Gaelic traditions, seems certain. How much Macpherson knew of these, and how little he used them in the bombastic prose which Napoleon loved (and spelled “Ocean”), it is next to impossible to discover. The case of Chatterton is too well known to need much more than mention. The most extraordinary poet for his years who ever lived began with the forgery of a sham feudal pedigree for Mr. Bergum, a pewterer. Ireland started on his career in much the same way, unless Ireland’s ‘Confessions’ be themselves a fraud, based on what he knew about Chatterton. Once launched in his career, Chatterton drew endless stores of poetry from “Rowley’s MS.” and the muniment chest in St. Mary Redcliffe’s. Jacob Bryant believed in them and wrote an ‘Apology’ for the credulous. Bryant, who believed in his own system of mythology, might have believed in anything. When Chatterton sent his “discoveries” to Walpole (himself somewhat of a mediaeval imitator), Gray and Mason detected the imposture, and Walpole, his feelings as an antiquary injured took no more notice of the boy. Chatterton’s death was due to his precocity. Had his genius come to him later, it would have found him wiser, and better able to command the fatal demon of intellect, for which he had to find work, like Michael Scott in the legend.

The end of the eighteenth century, which had been puzzled or diverted by the Chatterton and Macpherson frauds, witnessed also the great and famous Shakespearian forgeries. We shall never know the exact truth about the fabrication of the Shakespearian documents, and ‘Vortigern’ and the other plays. We have, indeed, the confession of the culprit: habemus confitentem reum, but Mr. W. H. Ireland was a liar and a solicitor’s clerk, so versatile and accomplished that we cannot always trust him, even when he is narrating the tale of his own iniquities. The temporary but wide and turbulent success of the Ireland forgeries suggests the disagreeable reflection that criticism and learning are (or a hundred years ago were) worth very little as literary touchstones. A polished and learned society, a society devoted to Shakespeare and to the stage, was taken in by a boy of eighteen. Young Ireland not only palmed off his sham prose documents, most makeshift imitations of the antique, but even his ridiculous verses on the experts. James Boswell went down on his knees and thanked Heaven for the sight of them, and, feeling thirsty after these devotions, drank hot brandy and water. Dr. Parr was not less readily gulled, and probably the experts, like Malone, who held aloof, were as much influenced by jealousy as by science. The whole story of young Ireland's forgeries is not only too long to be told here, but forms the topic of a novel ('The Talk of the Town') by Mr. James Payn. The frauds in his hands lose neither their humour nor their complicated interest of plot. To be brief, then, Mr. Samuel Ireland was a gentleman extremely fond of old literature and old books. If we may trust the 'Confessions' (1805) of his candid son, Mr. W. H. Ireland, a more harmless and confiding old person than Samuel never collected early English tracts. Living in his learned society, his son, Mr. W. H. Ireland, acquired not only a passion for black letters, but a desire to emulate Chatterton. His first step in guilt was the forgery of an autograph on an old pamphlet, with which he gratified Samuel Ireland. He also wrote a sham inscription on a modern bust of Cromwell, which he represented as an authentic antique. Finding that the critics were taken in, and attributed this new bust to the old sculptor Simeon, Ireland conceived a very low and not unjustifiable opinion of critical tact. Critics would find merit in anything which seemed old enough. Ireland's next achievement was the forgery of some legal documents concerning Shakespeare. Just as the bad man who deceived the guileless Mr. Shapira forged his 'Deuteronomy' on the blank spaces of old synagogue rolls, so young Ireland used the cut-off ends of old rent rolls. He next bought up quantities of old fly-leaves of books, and on this ancient paper he indicted a sham confession of faith, which he attributed to Shakespeare. Being a strong "evangelical," young Mr. Ireland gave a very Protestant complexion to this edifying document. And still the critics gaped and wondered and believed.

Ireland's method was to write in an ink made by blending various liquids used in the marbling of paper for bookbinding. This stuff was supplied to him by a bookbinder's apprentice. When people asked questions as to whence all the new Shakespeare manuscripts came, he said they were presented to him by a gentleman who wished to remain anonymous. Finally, the impossibility of producing this gentleman was one of the causes of the detection of the fraud. According to himself, Ireland performed prodigies of acuteness. Once he had forged, at random, the name of a contemporary of Shakespeare. He was confronted with a genuine signature, which, of course, was quite different. He obtained leave to consult his “anonymous gentleman,” rushed home, forged the name again on the model of what had been shown to him, and returned with this signature as a new gift from his benefactor. That nameless friend had informed him (he swore) that there were two persons of the same name, and that both signatures were genuine. Ireland’s impudence went the length of introducing an ancestor of his own, with the same name as himself, among the companions of Shakespeare. If ‘Vortigern’ had succeeded (and it was actually put on the stage with all possible pomp), Ireland meant to have produced a series of pseudo-Shakespearian plays from William the Conqueror to Queen Elizabeth. When busy with ‘Vortigern,’ he was detected by a friend of his own age, who pounced on him while he was at work, as Lasus pounced on Onomacritus. The discoverer, however, consented to “stand in” with Ireland, and did not divulge his secret. At last, after the fiasco of ‘Vortigern,’ suspicion waxed so strong, and disagreeable inquiries for the anonymous benefactor were so numerous, that Ireland fled from his father’s house. He confessed all, and, according to his own account, fell under the undying wrath of Samuel Ireland. Any reader of Ireland’s confessions will be likely to sympathise with old Samuel as the dupe of his son. The whole story is told with a curious mixture of impudence and humour, and with great plausibility. Young Ireland admits that his “desire for laughter” was almost irresistible, when people — learned, pompous, sagacious people — listened attentively to the papers. One feels half inclined to forgive the rogue for the sake of his youth, his cleverness, his humour. But the ‘Confessions’ are, not improbably, almost as apocryphal as the original documents. They were written for the sake of money, and it is impossible to say how far the same mercenary motive actuated Ireland in his forgeries. Dr. Ingleby, in his ‘Shakespeare Fabrications,’ takes a very rigid view of the conduct, not only of William, but of old Samuel Ireland. Sam, according to Dr. Ingleby, was a partner in the whole imposture, and the confession was only one element in the scheme of fraud. Old Samuel was the Fagin of a band of young literary Dodgers. He “positively trained his whole family to trade in forgery,” and as for Mr. W. H. Ireland, he was “the most accomplished liar that ever lived,” which is certainly a distinction in its way. The point of the joke is that, after the whole conspiracy exploded, people were anxious to buy examples of the forgeries. Mr. W. H. Ireland was equal to the occasion. He actually forged his own, or (according to Dr. Ingleby) his father’s forgeries, and, by thus increasing the supply, he deluged the market with sham shams, with imitations of imitations. If this accusation be correct, it is impossible not to admire the colossal impudence of Mr. W. H. Ireland. Dr.

Ingleby, in the ardour of his honest indignation, pursues William into his private life, which, it appears, was far from exemplary. But literary criticism should be content with a man's works; his domestic life is matter, as Aristotle often says, "for a separate kind of investigation." Old Ritson used to say that "every literary impostor deserved hanging as much as a common thief." W. H. Ireland's merits were never recognised by the law.

How old Ritson would have punished "the old corrector," it is "better only guessing," as the wicked say, according to Clough, in regard to their own possible chastisement. The difficulty is to ascertain who the apocryphal old corrector really was. The story of his misdeeds was recently brought back to mind by the death, at an advanced age, of the learned Shakespearian, Mr. J. Payne Collier. Mr. Collier was, to put it mildly, the Shapira of the old corrector. He brought that artist's works before the public; but WHY? how deceived, or how influenced, it is once more "better only guessing." Mr. Collier first introduced to the public notice his singular copy of a folio Shakespeare (second edition), loaded with ancient manuscript emendations, in 1849. His account of this book was simple and plausible. He chanced, one day, to be in the shop of Mr. Rudd, the bookseller, in Great Newport Street, when a parcel of second-hand volumes arrived from the country. When the parcel was opened, the heart of the Bibliophile began to sing, for the packet contained two old folios, one of them an old folio Shakespeare of the second edition (1632). The volume (mark this) was "much cropped," greasy, and imperfect. Now the student of Mr. Hamilton's 'Inquiry' into the whole affair is already puzzled. In later days, Mr. Collier said that his folio had previously been in the possession of a Mr. Parry. On the other hand, Mr. Parry (then a very aged man) failed to recognise his folio in Mr. Collier's, for HIS copy was "cropped," whereas the leaves of Mr. Collier's example were NOT mutilated. Here, then ('Inquiry,' p, 61), we have two descriptions of the outward aspect of Mr. Collier's dubious treasure. In one account it is "much cropped" by the bookbinder's cruel shears; in the other, its unmutilated condition is contrasted with that of a copy which has been "cropped." In any case, Mr. Collier hoped, he says, to complete an imperfect folio he possessed, with leaves taken from the folio newly acquired for thirty shillings. But the volumes happened to have the same defects, and the healing process was impossible. Mr. Collier chanced to be going into the country, when in packing the folio he had bought of Rudd he saw it was covered with manuscript corrections in an old hand. These he was inclined to attribute to one Thomas Perkins, whose name was written on the fly-leaf, and who might have been a connection of Richard Perkins, the actor (flor. 1633) The notes contained many various readings, and very numerous changes in punctuation. Some of these Mr. Collier published in his ‘Notes and Emendations’ (1852), and in an edition of the ‘Plays.’ There was much discussion, much doubt, and the folio of the old corrector (who was presumed to have marked the book in the theatre during early performances) was exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries. Then Mr. Collier presented the treasure to the Duke of Devonshire, who again lent it for examination to the British Museum. Mr. Hamilton published in the Times (July, 1859) the results of his examination of the old corrector. It turned out that the old corrector was a modern myth. He had first made his corrections in pencil and in a modern hand, and then he had copied them over in ink, and in a forged ancient hand. The same word sometimes recurred in both handwritings. The ink, which looked old, was really no English ink at all, not even Ireland’s mixture. It seemed to be sepia, sometimes mixed with a little Indian ink. Mr. Hamilton made many other sad discoveries. He pointed out that Mr. Collier had published, from a Dulwich MS., a letter of Mrs. Alleyne’s (the actor’s wife), referring to Shakespeare as “Mr. Shakespeare of the Globe.” Now the Dulwich MS. was mutilated and blank in the very place where this interesting reference should have occurred. Such is a skeleton history of the old corrector, his works and ways. It is probable that — thanks to his assiduities — new Shakespearian documents will in future be received with extreme scepticism; and this is all the fruit, except acres of newspaper correspondence, which the world has derived from Mr. Collier’s greasy and imperfect but unique “corrected folio.”

The recency and (to a Shakespearian critic) the importance of these forgeries obscures the humble merit of Surtees, with his ballads of the ‘Slaying of Antony Featherstonhaugh,’ and of ‘Bartram’s Dirge.’ Surtees left clever lacunae in these songs, ‘collected from oral tradition,’ and furnished notes so learned that they took in Sir Walter Scott. There are moments when I half suspect “the Shirra himsel” (who blamelessly forged so many extracts from ‘Old Plays’) of having composed ‘Kinmont Willie.’ To compare old Scott of Satchell’s account of Kinmont Willie with the ballad is to feel uncomfortable doubts. But this is a rank impiety. The last ballad forgery of much note was the set of sham Macedonian epics and popular songs (all about Alexander the Great, and other heroes) which a schoolmaster in the Rhodope imposed on M. Verkovitch. The trick was not badly done, and the imitation of “ballad slang” was excellent. The ‘Oera Linda’ book, too, was successful enough to be translated into English. With this latest effort of the tenth muse, the crafty muse of Literary Forgery, we may leave a topic which could not be exhausted in a ponderous volume. We have not room even for the forged letters of Shelley, to which Mr. Browning, being taken in thereby, wrote a preface, nor for the forged letters of Mr. Ruskin, which occasionally hoax all the newspapers.

BIBLIOMANIA IN FRANCE

The love of books for their own sake, for their paper, print, binding, and for their associations, as distinct from the love of literature, is a stronger and more universal passion in France than elsewhere in Europe. In England publishers are men of business; in France they aspire to be artists. In England people borrow what they read from the libraries, and take what gaudy cloth-binding chance chooses to send them. In France people buy books, and bind them to their heart’s desire with quaint and dainty devices on the morocco covers. Books are lifelong friends in that country; in England they are the guests of a week or of a fortnight. The greatest French writers have been collectors of curious editions; they have devoted whole treatises to the love of books. The literature and history of France are full of anecdotes of the good and bad fortunes of bibliophiles, of their bargains, discoveries, disappointments. There lies before us at this moment a small library of books about books, — the ‘Bibliophile Francais,’ in seven large volumes, ‘Les Sonnets d’un Bibliophile,’ ‘La Bibliomanie en 1878,’ ‘La Bibliotheque d’un Bibliophile’ (1885) and a dozen other works of Janin, Nodier, Beraldi, Pieters, Didot, great collectors who have written for the instruction of beginners and the pleasure of every one who takes delight in printed paper.

The passion for books, like other forms of desire, has its changes of fashion. It is not always easy to justify the caprices of taste. The presence or absence of half an inch of paper in the “uncut” margin of a book makes a difference of value that ranges from five shillings to a hundred pounds. Some books are run after because they are beautifully bound; some are competed for with equal eagerness because they never have been bound at all. The uninitiated often make absurd mistakes about these distinctions. Some time ago the Daily Telegraph reproached a collector because his books were “uncut,” whence, argued the journalist, it was clear that he had never read them. “Uncut,” of course, only means that the margins have not been curtailed by the binders’ plough. It is a point of sentiment to like books just as they left the hands of the old printers, — of Estienne, Aldus, or Louis Elzevir.

It is because the passion for books is a sentimental passion that people who have not felt it always fail to understand it. Sentiment is not an easy thing to explain. Englishmen especially find it impossible to understand tastes and emotions that are not their own, — the wrongs of Ireland, (till quite recently) the aspirations of Eastern Roumelia, the demands of Greece. If we are to understand the book-hunter, we must never forget that to him books are, in the first place, RELICS. He likes to think that the great writers whom he admires handled just such pages and saw such an arrangement of type as he now beholds. Moliere, for example, corrected the proofs for this edition of the ‘Precieuses Ridicules,’ when he first discovered “what a labour it is to publish a book, and how GREEN (NEUF) an author is the first time they print him.” Or it may be that Campanella turned over, with hands unstrung, and still broken by the torture, these leaves that contain his passionate sonnets. Here again is the copy of Theocritus from which some pretty page may have read aloud to charm the pagan and pontifical leisure of Leo X. This Gargantua is the counterpart of that which the martyred Dolet printed for (or pirated from, alas!) Maitre Francois Rabelais. This woeful ballade, with the woodcut of three thieves hanging from one gallows, came near being the “Last Dying Speech and Confession of Francois Villon.” This shabby copy of ‘The Eve of St. Agnes’ is precisely like that which Shelley doubled up and thrust into his pocket when the prow of the piratical felucca crashed into the timbers of the Don Juan. Some rare books have these associations, and they bring you nearer to the authors than do the modern reprints. Bibliophiles will tell you that it is the early READINGS they care for, — the author’s first fancies, and those more hurried expressions which he afterwards corrected. These READINGS have their literary value, especially in the masterpieces of the great; but the sentiment after all is the main thing.

Other books come to be relics in another way. They are the copies which belonged to illustrious people, — to the famous collectors who make a kind of catena (a golden chain of bibliophiles) through the centuries since printing was invented. There are Grolier (1479-1565), — not a bookbinder, as an English newspaper supposed (probably when Mr. Sala was on his travels), — De Thou (1553-1617), the great Colbert, the Duc de la Valliere (1708-1780), Charles Nodier, a man of yesterday, M. Didot, and the rest, too numerous to name. Again, there are the books of kings, like Francis I., Henri III., and Louis XIV. These princes had their favourite devices. Nicolas Eve, Padeloup, Derome, and other artists arrayed their books in morocco,- -tooled with skulls, cross-bones, and crucifixions for the voluptuous pietist Henri III., with the salamander for Francis I., and powdered with fleurs de lys for the monarch who “was the State.” There are relics also of noble beauties. The volumes of Marguerite d’Angouleme are covered with golden daisies. The cipher of Marie Antoinette adorns too many books that Madame du Barry might have welcomed to her hastily improvised library. The three daughters of Louis XV. had their favourite colours of morocco, citron, red, and olive, and their books are valued as much as if they bore the bees of De Thou, or the intertwined C’s of the illustrious and ridiculous

Abbe Cotin, the Trissotin of the comedy. Surely in all these things there is a human interest, and our fingers are faintly thrilled, as we touch these books, with the far-off contact of the hands of kings and cardinals, scholars and coquettes, pedants, poets, and precieuses, the people who are unforgotten in the mob that inhabited dead centuries.

So universal and ardent has the love of magnificent books been in France, that it would be possible to write a kind of bibliomaniac history of that country. All her rulers, kings, cardinals, and ladies have had time to spare for collecting. Without going too far back, to the time when Bertha span and Charlemagne was an amateur, we may give a few specimens of an anecdotical history of French bibliolatry, beginning, as is courteous, with a lady. “Can a woman be a bibliophile?” is a question which was once discussed at the weekly breakfast party of Guilbert de Pixerecourt, the famous book-lover and playwright, the “Corneille of the Boulevards.” The controversy glided into a discussion as to “how many books a man can love at a time;” but historical examples prove that French women (and Italian, witness the Princess d’Este) may be bibliophiles of the true strain. Diane de Poictiers was their illustrious patroness. The mistress of Henri II. possessed, in the Chateau d’Anet, a library of the first triumphs of typography. Her taste was wide in range, including songs, plays, romances, divinity; her copies of the Fathers were bound in citron morocco, stamped with her arms and devices, and closed with clasps of silver. In the love of books, as in everything else, Diane and Henri II. were inseparable. The interlaced H and D are scattered over the covers of their volumes; the lily of France is twined round the crescents of Diane, or round the quiver, the arrows, and the bow which she adopted as her cognisance, in honour of the maiden goddess. The books of Henri and of Diane remained in the Chateau d’Anet till the death of the Princesse de Conde in 1723, when they were dispersed. The son of the famous Madame de Guyon bought the greater part of the library, which has since been scattered again and again. M. Leopold Double, a well-known bibliophile, possessed several examples.

Henry III. scarcely deserves, perhaps, the name of a book-lover, for he probably never read the works which were bound for him in the most elaborate way. But that great historian, Alexandre Dumas, takes a far more friendly view of the king’s studies, and, in ‘La Dame de Monsoreau,’ introduces us to a learned monarch. Whether he cared for the contents of his books or not, his books are among the most singular relics of a character which excites even morbid curiosity. No more debauched and worthless wretch ever filled a throne; but, like the bad man in Aristotle, Henri III. was “full of repentance.” When he was not dancing in an unseemly revel, he was on his knees in his chapel. The board of one of his books, of which an engraving lies before me, bears his cipher and crown in the corners; but the centre is occupied in front with a picture of the Annunciation, while on the back is the crucifixion and the breeding heart through which the swords have pierced. His favourite device was the death's-head, with the motto Memento Mori, or Spes mea Deus. While he was still only Duc d'Anjou, Henri loved Marie de Cleves, Princesse de Conde. On her sudden death he expressed his grief, as he had done his piety, by aid of the petits fers of the bookbinder. Marie's initials were stamped on his book-covers in a chaplet of laurels. In one corner a skull and cross-bones were figured; in the other the motto Mort m'est vie; while two curly objects, which did duty for tears, filled up the lower corners. The books of Henri III., even when they are absolutely worthless as literature, sell for high prices; and an inane treatise on theology, decorated with his sacred emblems, lately brought about 120 pounds in a London sale.

Francis I., as a patron of all the arts, was naturally an amateur of bindings. The fates of books were curiously illustrated by the story of the copy of Homer, on large paper, which Aldus, the great Venetian printer, presented to Francis I. After the death of the late Marquis of Hastings, better known as an owner of horses than of books, his possessions were brought to the hammer. With the instinct, the flair, as the French say, of the bibliophile, M. Ambroise Firmin Didot, the biographer of Aldus, guessed that the marquis might have owned something in his line. He sent his agent over to England, to the country town where the sale was to be held. M. Didot had his reward. Among the books which were dragged out of some mouldy store-room was the very Aldine Homer of Francis I., with part of the original binding still clinging to the leaves. M. Didot purchased the precious relic, and sent it to what M. Fertiault (who has written a century of sonnets on bibliomania) calls the hospital for books.

Le dos humide, je l'eponge;
Ou manque un coin, vite une allonge,
Pour tous j'ai maison de sante.

M. Didot, of course, did not practise this amateur surgery himself, but had the arms and devices of Francis I. restored by one of those famous binders who only work for dukes, millionnaires, and Rothschilds.

During the religious wars and the troubles of the Fronde, it is probable that few people gave much time to the collection of books. The illustrious exceptions are Richelieu and Cardinal Mazarin, who possessed a "snuffy Davy" of his own, an indefatigable prowler among book-stalls and dingy purlieus, in Gabriel Naude. In 1664, Naude, who was a learned and ingenious writer, the apologist for “great men suspected of magic,” published the second edition of his ‘Avis pour dresser une Bibliotheque,’ and proved himself to be a true lover of the chase, a mighty hunter (of books) before the Lord. Naude’s advice to the collector is rather amusing. He pretends not to care much for bindings, and quotes Seneca’s rebuke of the Roman bibliomaniacs, Quos voluminum suorum frontes maxime placent titulique, — who chiefly care for the backs and lettering of their volumes. The fact is that Naude had the wealth of Mazarin at his back, and we know very well, from the remains of the Cardinal’s library which exist, that he liked as well as any man to see his cardinal’s hat glittering on red or olive morocco in the midst of the beautiful tooling of the early seventeenth century. When once he got a book, he would not spare to give it a worthy jacket. Naude’s ideas about buying were peculiar. Perhaps he sailed rather nearer the wind than even Monkbarns would have cared to do. His favourite plan was to buy up whole libraries in the gross, “speculative lots” as the dealers call them. In the second place, he advised the book-lover to haunt the retreats of Libraires fripiers, et les vieux fonds et magasins. Here he truly observes that you may find rare books, broches, — that is, unbound and uncut,- -just as Mr. Symonds bought two uncut copies of ‘Laon and Cythna’ in a Bristol stall for a crown. “You may get things for four or five crowns that would cost you forty or fifty elsewhere,” says Naude. Thus a few years ago M. Paul Lacroix bought for two francs, in a Paris shop, the very copy of ‘Tartuffe’ which had belonged to Louis XIV. The example may now be worth perhaps 200 pounds. But we are digressing into the pleasures of the modern sportsman.

It was not only in second-hand bookshops that Naude hunted, but among the dealers in waste paper. “Thus did Poggio find Quintilian on the counter of a wood-merchant, and Masson picked up ‘Agobardus’ at the shop of a binder, who was going to use the MS. to patch his books withal.” Rossi, who may have seen Naude at work, tells us how he would enter a shop with a yard-measure in his hand, buying books, we are sorry to say, by the ell. “The stalls where he had passed were like the towns through which Attila or the Tartars had swept, with ruin in their train, — ut non hominis unius sedulitas, sed calamitas quaedam per omnes bibliopolarum tabernas pervasisse videatur!” Naude had sorrows of his own. In 1652 the Parliament decreed the confiscation of the splendid library of Mazarin, which was perhaps the first free library in Europe, — the first that was open to all who were worthy of right of entrance. There is a painful description of the sale, from which the book-lover will avert his eyes. On Mazarin’s return to power he managed to collect again and enrich his stores, which form the germ of the existing Bibliotheque Mazarine.

Among princes and popes it is pleasant to meet one man of letters, and he the greatest of the great age, who was a bibliophile. The enemies and rivals of Moliere — De Vise, De Villiers, and the rest — are always reproaching him — with his love of bouquins. There is some difference of opinion among philologists about the derivation of bouquin, but all book-hunters know the meaning of the word. The bouquin is the “small, rare volume, black with tarnished gold,” which lies among the wares of the stall-keeper, patient in rain and dust, till the hunter comes who can appreciate the quarry. We like to think of Moliere lounging through the narrow streets in the evening, returning, perhaps, from some noble house where he has been reading the proscribed ‘Tartuffe,’ or giving an imitation of the rival actors at the Hotel Bourgogne. Absent as the contemplateur is, a dingy book-stall wakens him from his reverie. His lace ruffles are soiled in a moment with the learned dust of ancient volumes. Perhaps he picks up the only work out of all his library that is known to exist, — un ravissant petit Elzevir, ‘De Imperio Magni Mogolis’ (Lugd. Bat. 1651). On the title-page of this tiny volume, one of the minute series of ‘Republics’ which the Elzevirs published, the poet has written his rare signature, “J. B. P. Moliere,” with the price the book cost him, “1 livre, 10 sols.” “Il n’est pas de bouquin qui s’echappe de ses mains,” says the author of ‘La Guerre Comique,’ the last of the pamphlets which flew about during the great literary quarrel about “L’Ecole des Femmes.” Thanks to M. Soulie the catalogue of Moliere’s library has been found, though the books themselves have passed out of view. There are about three hundred and fifty volumes in the inventory, but Moliere’s widow may have omitted as valueless (it is the foible of her sex) many rusty bouquins, now worth far more than their weight in gold. Moliere owned no fewer than two hundred and forty volumes of French and Italian comedies. From these he took what suited him wherever he found it. He had plenty of classics, histories, philosophic treatises, the essays of Montaigne, a Plutarch, and a Bible.

We know nothing, to the regret of bibliophiles, of Moliere’s taste in bindings. Did he have a comic mask stamped on the leather (that device was chased on his plate), or did he display his cognizance and arms, the two apes that support a shield charged with three mirrors of Truth? It is certain — La Bruyere tells us as much — that the sillier sort of book-lover in the seventeenth century was much the same sort of person as his successor in our own time. “A man tells me he has a library,” says La Bruyere (De la Mode); “I ask permission to see it. I go to visit my friend, and he receives me in a house where, even on the stairs, the smell of the black morocco with which his books are covered is so strong that I nearly faint. He does his best to revive me; shouts in my ear that the volumes ‘have gilt edges,’ that they are ‘elegantly tooled,’ that they are ‘of the good edition,’ . . . and informs me that ‘he never reads,’ that ‘he never sets foot in this part of his house,’ that he ‘will come to oblige me!’ I thank him for all his kindness, and have no more desire than himself to see the tanner’s shop that he calls his library.”

Colbert, the great minister of Louis XIV., was a bibliophile at whom perhaps La Bruyere would have sneered. He was a collector who did not read, but who amassed beautiful books, and looked forward, as business men do, to the day when he would have time to study them. After Grolier, De Thou, and Mazarin, Colbert possessed probably the richest private library in Europe. The ambassadors of France were charged to procure him rare books and manuscripts, and it is said that in a commercial treaty with the Porte he inserted a clause demanding a certain quantity of Levant morocco for the use of the royal bookbinders. England, in those days, had no literature with which France deigned to be acquainted. Even into England, however, valuable books had been imported; and we find Colbert pressing the French ambassador at St. James’s to bid for him at a certain sale of rare heretical writings. People who wanted to gain his favour approached him with presents of books, and the city of Metz gave him two real curiosities — the famous “Metz Bible” and the Missal of Charles the Bald. The Elzevirs sent him their best examples, and though Colbert probably saw more of the gilt covers of his books than of their contents, at least he preserved and handed down many valuable works. As much may be said for the reprobate Cardinal Dubois, who, with all his faults, was a collector. Bossuet, on the other hand, left little or nothing of interest except a copy of the 1682 edition of Moliere, whom he detested and condemned to “the punishment of those who laugh.” Even this book, which has a curious interest, has slipped out of sight, and may have ceased to exist.

If Colbert and Dubois preserved books from destruction, there are collectors enough who have been rescued from oblivion by books. The diplomacy of D’Hoym is forgotten; the plays of Longepierre, and his quarrels with J. B. Rousseau, are known only to the literary historian. These great amateurs have secured an eternity of gilt edges, an immortality of morocco. Absurd prices are given for any trash that belonged to them, and the writer of this notice has bought for four shillings an Elzevir classic, which when it bears the golden fleece of Longepierre is worth about 100 pounds. Longepierre, D’Hoym, McCarthy, and the Duc de la Valliere, with all their treasures, are less interesting to us than Graille, Coche and Loque, the neglected daughters of Louis XV. They found some pale consolation in their little cabinets of books, in their various liveries of olive, citron, and red morocco.

A lady amateur of high (book-collecting) reputation, the Comtesse de Verrue, was represented in the Beckford sale by one of three copies of ‘L’Histoire de Melusine,’ of Melusine, the twy-formed fairy, and ancestress of the house of Lusignan. The Comtesse de Verrue, one of the few women who have really understood book-collecting, was born January 18, 1670, and died November 18, 1736. She was the daughter of Charles de Luynes and of his second wife, Anne de Rohan. When only thirteen she married the Comte de Verrue, who somewhat injudiciously presented her, a fleur de quinze ans, as Ronsard says, at the court of Victor Amadeus of Savoy. It is thought that the countess was less cruel than the fleur Angevine of Ronsard. For some reason the young matron fled from the court of Turin and returned to Paris, where she built a magnificent hotel, and received the most distinguished company. According to her biographer, the countess loved science and art jusqu’au delire, and she collected the furniture of the period, without neglecting the blue china of the glowing Orient. In ebony bookcases she possessed about eighteen thousand volumes, bound by the greatest artists of the day. “Without care for the present, without fear of the future, doing good, pursuing the beautiful, protecting the arts, with a tender heart and open hand, the countess passed through life, calm, happy, beloved, and admired.” She left an epitaph on herself, thus rudely translated:-

Here lies, in sleep secure,
A dame inclined to mirth,
Who, by way of making sure,
Chose her Paradise on earth.

During the Revolution, to like well-bound books was as much as to proclaim one an aristocrat. Condorcet might have escaped the scaffold if he had only thrown away the neat little Horace from the royal press, which betrayed him for no true Republican, but an educated man. The great libraries from the chateaux of the nobles were scattered among all the book-stalls. True sons of freedom tore off the bindings, with their gilded crests and scutcheons. One revolutionary writer declared, and perhaps he was not far wrong, that the art of binding was the worst enemy of reading. He always began his studies by breaking the backs of the volumes he was about to attack. The art of bookbinding in these sad years took flight to England, and was kept alive by artists robust rather than refined, like Thompson and Roger Payne. These were evil days, when the binder had to cut the aristocratic coat of arms out of a book cover, and glue in a gilt cap of liberty, as in a volume in an Oxford amateur’s collection.

When Napoleon became Emperor, he strove in vain to make the troubled and feverish years of his power produce a literature. He himself was one of the most voracious readers of novels that ever lived. He was always asking for the newest of the new, and unfortunately even the new romances of his period were hopelessly bad. Barbier, his librarian, had orders to send parcels of fresh fiction to his majesty wherever he might happen to be, and great loads of novels followed Napoleon to Germany, Spain, Italy, Russia. The conqueror was very hard to please. He read in his travelling carriage, and after skimming a few pages would throw a volume that bored him out of the window into the highway. He might have been tracked by his trail of romances, as was Hop-o'-my-Thumb, in the fairy tale, by the white stones he dropped behind him. Poor Barbier, who ministered to a passion for novels that demanded twenty volumes a day, was at his wit's end. He tried to foist on the Emperor the romances of the year before last; but these Napoleon had generally read, and he refused, with imperial scorn, to look at them again. He ordered a travelling library of three thousand volumes to be made for him, but it was proved that the task could not be accomplished in less than six years. The expense, if only fifty copies of each example had been printed, would have amounted to more than six million francs. A Roman emperor would not have allowed these considerations to stand in his way; but Napoleon, after all, was a modern. He contented himself with a selection of books conveniently small in shape, and packed in sumptuous cases. The classical writers of France could never content Napoleon, and even from Moscow in 1812, he wrote to Barbier clamorous for new books, and good ones. Long before they could have reached Moscow, Napoleon was flying homeward before Kotousoff and Benningsen.

Napoleon was the last of the book-lovers who governed France. The Duc d'Aumale, a famous bibliophile, has never "come to his own," and of M. Gambetta it is only known that his devotional library, at least, has found its way into the market. We have reached the era of private book-fanciers: of Nodier, who had three libraries in his time, but never a Virgil; and of Pixerecourt, the dramatist, who founded the Societe des Bibliophiles Francais. The Romantic movement in French literature brought in some new fashions in book-hunting. The original editions of Ronsard, Des Portes, Belleau, and Du Bellay became invaluable; while the writings of Gautier, Petrus Borel, and others excited the passion of collectors. Pixerecourt was a believer in the works of the Elzevirs. On one occasion, when he was outbid by a friend at an auction, he cried passionately, "I shall have that book at your sale!" and, the other poor bibliophile soon falling into a decline and dying, Pixerecourt got the volume which he so much desired. The superstitious might have been excused for crediting him with the gift of jettatura, — of the evil eye. On Pixerecourt himself the evil eye fell at last; his theatre, the Gaiete, was burned down in 1835, and his creditors intended to impound his beloved books. The bibliophile hastily packed them in boxes, and conveyed them in two cabs and under cover of night to the house of M. Paul Lacroix. There they languished in exile till the affairs of the manager were settled.

Pixerecourt and Nodier, the most reckless of men, were the leaders of the older school of bibliomaniacs. The former was not a rich man; the second was poor, but he never hesitated in face of a price that he could not afford. He would literally ruin himself in the accumulation of a library, and then would recover his fortunes by selling his books. Nodier passed through life without a Virgil, because he never succeeded in finding the ideal Virgil of his dreams, — a clean, uncut copy of the right Elzevir edition, with the misprint, and the two passages in red letters. Perhaps this failure was a judgment on him for the trick by which he beguiled a certain collector of Bibles. He INVENTED an edition, and put the collector on the scent, which he followed vainly, till he died of the sickness of hope deferred.

One has more sympathy with the eccentricities of Nodier than with the mere extravagance of the new haute ecole of bibliomaniacs, the school of millionnaires, royal dukes, and Rothschilds. These amateurs are reckless of prices, and by their competition have made it almost impossible for a poor man to buy a precious book. The dukes, the Americans, the public libraries, snap them all up in the auctions. A glance at M. Gustave Brunet’s little volume, ‘La Bibliomanie en 1878,’ will prove the excesses which these people commit. The funeral oration of Bossuet over Henriette Marie of France (1669), and Henriette Anne of England (1670), quarto, in the original binding, are sold for 200 pounds. It is true that this copy had possibly belonged to Bossuet himself, and certainly to his nephew. There is an example, as we have seen, of the 1682 edition of Moliere, — of Moliere whom Bossuet detested, — which also belonged to the eagle of Meaux. The manuscript notes of the divine on the work of the poor player must be edifying, and in the interests of science it is to be hoped that this book may soon come into the market. While pamphlets of Bossuet are sold so dear, the first edition of Homer — the beautiful edition of 1488, which the three young Florentine gentlemen published — may be had for 100 pounds. Yet even that seems expensive, when we remember that the copy in the library of George III. cost only seven shillings. This exquisite Homer, sacred to the memory of learned friendships, the chief offering of early printing at the altar of ancient poetry, is really one of the most interesting books in the world. Yet this Homer is less valued than the tiny octavo which contains the ballades and huitains of the scamp Francois Villon (1533). ‘The History of the Holy Grail’ (L’Hystoire du Sainct Greaal: Paris, 1523), in a binding stamped with the four crowns of Louis XIV., is valued at about 500 pounds. A chivalric romance of the old days, which was treasured even in the time of the grand monarque, when old French literature was so much despised, is certainly a curiosity. The Rabelais of Madame de Pompadour (in morocco) seems comparatively cheap at 60 pounds. There is something piquant in the idea of inheriting from that famous beauty the work of the colossal genius of Rabelais.

The natural sympathy of collectors “to middle fortune born” is not with the rich men whose sport in book-hunting resembles the battue. We side with the poor hunters of the wild game, who hang over the fourpenny stalls on the quais, and dive into the dusty boxes after literary pearls. These devoted men rise betimes, and hurry to the stalls before the common tide of passengers goes by. Early morning is the best moment in this, as in other sports. At half past seven, in summer, the bouquiniste, the dealer in cheap volumes at second-hand, arrays the books which he purchased over night, the stray possessions of ruined families, the outcasts of libraries. The old-fashioned bookseller knew little of the value of his wares; it was his object to turn a small certain profit on his expenditure. It is reckoned that an energetic, business-like old bookseller will turn over 150,000 volumes in a year. In this vast number there must be pickings for the humble collector who cannot afford to encounter the children of Israel at Sotheby’s or at the Hotel Drouot.

Let the enthusiast, in conclusion, throw a handful of lilies on the grave of the martyr of the love of books, — the poet Albert Glatigny. Poor Glatigny was the son of a garde champetre; his education was accidental, and his poetic taste and skill extraordinarily fine and delicate. In his life of starvation (he had often to sleep in omnibuses and railway stations), he frequently spent the price of a dinner on a new book. He lived to read and to dream, and if he bought books he had not the wherewithal to live. Still, he bought them, — and he died! His own poems were beautifully printed by Lemerre, and it may be a joy to him (si mentem mortalia tangunt) that they are now so highly valued that the price of a copy would have kept the author alive and happy for a month.

OLD FRENCH TITLE-PAGES

Nothing can be plainer, as a rule, than a modern English title-page. Its only beauty (if beauty it possesses) consists in the arrangement and ‘massing’ of lines of type in various sizes. We have returned almost to the primitive simplicity of the oldest printed books, which had no title-pages, properly speaking, at all, or merely gave, with extreme brevity, the name of the work, without printer’s mark, or date, or place. These were reserved for the colophon, if it was thought desirable to mention them at all. Thus, in the black-letter example of Guido de Columna’s ‘History of Troy,’ written about 1283, and printed at Strasburg in 1489, the title-page is blank, except for the words,

Hystoria Troiana Guidonis,

standing alone at the top of the leaf. The colophon contains all the rest of the information, ‘happily completed in the City of Strasburg, in the year of Grace Mcccclxxxix, about the Feast of St. Urban.’ The printer and publisher give no name at all.

This early simplicity is succeeded, in French books, from, say, 1510, and afterwards, by the insertion either of the printer’s trademark, or, in black-letter books, of a rough woodcut, illustrative of the nature of the volume. The woodcuts have occasionally a rude kind of grace, with a touch of the classical taste of the early Renaissance surviving in extreme decay.

[Illustration with title page: Les demandes tamours auec les refpofesioyeufes. Demade refponfe.]

An excellent example is the title-page of ‘Les Demandes d’amours, avec les responses joyeuses,’ published by Jacques Moderne, at Lyon, 1540. There is a certain Pagan breadth and joyousness in the figure of Amor, and the man in the hood resembles traditional portraits of Dante.

There is more humour, and a good deal of skill, in the title-page of a book on late marriages and their discomforts, ‘Les dictz et complainctes de trop Tard marie’ (Jacques Moderne, Lyon, 1540), where we see the elderly and comfortable couple sitting gravely under their own fig-tree.

[Illustration of ‘Les dictz et complainctes…]

Jacques Moderne was a printer curious in these quaint devices, and used them in most of his books: for example, in ‘How Satan and the God Bacchus accuse the Publicans that spoil the wine,’ Bacchus and Satan (exactly like each other, as Sir Wilfrid Lawson will not be surprised to hear) are encouraging dishonest tavern-keepers to stew in their own juice in a caldron over a huge fire. From the same popular publisher came a little tract on various modes of sport, if the name of sport can be applied to the netting of fish and birds. The work is styled ‘Livret nouveau auquel sont contenuz xxv receptes de prendre poissons et oiseaulx avec les mains.’ A countryman clad in a goat’s skin with the head and horns drawn over his head as a hood, is dragging ashore a net full of fishes. There is no more characteristic frontispiece of this black-letter sort than the woodcut representing a gallows with three men hanging on it, which illustrates Villon’s ‘Ballade des Pendus,’ and is reproduced in Mr. John Payne’s ‘Poems of Master Francis Villon of Paris’ (London, 1878).

Earlier in date than these vignettes of Jacques Moderne, but much more artistic and refined in design, are some frontispieces of small octavos printed en lettres rondes, about 1530. In these rubricated letters are used with brilliant effect. One of the best is the title-page of Galliot du Pre’s edition of ‘Le Rommant de la Rose’ (Paris, 1529). Galliot du Pre’s artist, however, surpassed even the charming device of the Lover plucking the Rose, in his title-page, of the same date, for the small octavo edition of Alain Chartier’s poems, which we reproduce here.

[Illustration of title page]

The arrangement of letters, and the use of red, make a charming frame, as it were, to the drawing of the mediaeval ship, with the Motto VOGUE LA GALEE.

Title-pages like these, with designs appropriate to the character of the text, were superseded presently by the fashion of badges, devices, and mottoes. As courtiers and ladies had their private badges, not hereditary, like crests, but personal — the crescent of Diane, the salamander of Francis I., the skulls and cross-bones of Henri III., the marguerites of Marguerite, with mottoes like the Le Banny de liesse, Le traverseur des voies perilleuses, Tout par Soulas, and the like, so printers and authors had their emblems, and their private literary slogans. These they changed, accordinging

[Another illustration titled: Le Pastissier Francois, MDCLV, title page]

to fancy, or the vicissitudes of their lives. Clement Marot’s motto was La Mort n’y Mord. It is indicated by the letters L. M. N. M. in the curious title of an edition of Marot’s works published at Lyons by Jean de Tournes in 1579. The portrait represents the poet when the tide of years had borne him far from his youth, far from L’Adolescence Clementine.

[Another illustration titled: Le Pastissier Francois, 1655, showing a kitchen scene]

The unfortunate Etienne Dolet, perhaps the only publisher who was ever burned, used an ominous device, a trunk of a tree, with the axe struck into it. In publishing ‘Les Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses, tres illustre Royne de Navarre,’ Jean de Tournes employed a pretty allegorical device. Love, with the bandage thrust back from his eyes, and with the bow and arrows in his hand, has flown up to the sun, which he seems to touch; like Prometheus in the myth when he stole the fire, a shower of flowers and flames falls around him. Groueleau, of Paris, had for motto Nul ne s’y frotte, with the thistle for badge. These are beautifully combined in the title-page of his version of Apuleius, ‘L’Amour de Cupido et de Psyche’ (Paris, 1557). There is probably no better date for frontispieces, both for ingenuity of device and for elegance of arrangement of title, than the years between 1530 and 1560. By 1562, when the first edition of the famous Fifth Book of Rabelais was published, the printers appear to have thought devices wasted on popular books, and the title of the Master’s posthumous chapters is printed quite simply.

In 1532-35 there was a more adventurous taste — witness the title of ‘Gargantua.’ This beautiful title decorates the first known edition, with a date of the First Book of Rabelais. It was sold, most appropriately, devant nostre Dame de Confort. Why should so glorious a relic of the Master have been carried out of England, at the Sunderland sale? All the early titles of Francois Juste’s Lyons editions of Rabelais are on this model. By 1542 he dropped the framework of architectural design. By 1565 Richard Breton, in Paris, was printing Rabelais with a frontispiece of a classical dame holding a heart to the sun, a figure which is almost in the taste of Stothard, or Flaxman.

The taste for vignettes, engraved on copper, not on wood, was revived under the Elzevirs. Their pretty little title-pages are not so well known but that we offer examples. In the essay on the Elzevirs in this volume will be found a copy of the vignette of the ‘Imitatio Christi,’ and of ‘Le Pastissier Francois’ a reproduction is given here (p, 115). The artists they employed had plenty of fancy, not backed by very profound skill in design.

In the same genre as the big-wigged classicism of the Elzevir vignettes, in an age when Louis XIV. and Moliere (in tragedy) wore laurel wreaths over vast perruques, are the early frontispieces of Moliere’s own collected works. Probably the most interesting of all French title-pages are those drawn by Chauveau for the two volumes ‘Les Oeuvres de M. de Moliere,’ published in 1666 by Guillaume de Luynes. The first shows Moliere in two characters, as Mascarille, and as Sganarelle, in ‘Le Cocu Imaginaire.’ Contrast the full-blown jollity of the fourbum imperator, in his hat, and feather, and wig, and vast canons, and tremendous shoe-tie, with the lean melancholy of jealous Sganarelle. These are two notable aspects of the genius of the great comedian.

The apes below are the supporters of his scutcheon.

The second volume shows the Muse of Comedy crowning *Mlle.* de Moliere (Armande Bejart) in the dress of Agnes, while her husband is in the costume, apparently, of Tartuffe, or of Sganarelle in ‘L’Ecole des Femmes.’ ‘Tartuffe’ had not yet been licensed for a public stage. The interest of the portraits and costumes makes these title-pages precious, they are historical documents rather than mere curiosities.

These title-pages of Moliere are the highwater mark of French taste in this branch of decoration. In the old quarto first editions of Corneille’s early plays, such as ‘Le Cid’ (Paris 1637), the printers used lax and sprawling combinations of flowers and fruit. These, a little better executed, were the staple of Ribou, de Luynes, Quinet, and the other Parisian booksellers who, one after another, failed to satisfy Moliere as publishers.

The basket of fruits on the title-page of ‘Iphigenie,’ par M. Racine (Barbin, Paris, 1675), is almost, but not quite, identical with the similar ornament of De Vise’s ‘La Cocue Imaginaire’ (Ribou, Paris 1662). Many of Moliere’s plays appearing first, separately, in small octavo, were adorned with frontispieces, illustrative of some scene in the comedy. Thus, in the ‘Misanthrope’ (Rihou 1667) we see Alceste, green ribbons and all, discoursing with Philinte, or perhaps listening to the famous sonnet of Oronte; it is not easy to be quite certain, but the expression of Alceste’s face looks rather as if he were being baited with a sonnet. From the close of the seventeenth century onwards, the taste for title-pages declined, except when Moreau or Gravelot drew vignettes on copper, with abundance of cupids and nymphs. These were designed for very luxurious and expensive books; for others, men contented themselves with a bald simplicity, which has prevailed till our own time. In recent years the employment of publishers’ devices has been less unusual and more agreeable. Thus Poulet Malassis had his armes parlantes, a chicken very uncomfortably perched on a rail. In England we have the cipher and bees of Messrs. Macmillan, the Trees of Life and Knowledge of Messrs. Kegan Paul and Trench, the Ship, which was the sign of Messrs. Longman’s early place of business, and doubtless other symbols, all capable of being quaintly treated in a title-page.

A BOOKMAN’S PURGATORY

Thomas Blinton was a book-hunter. He had always been a book-hunter, ever since, at an extremely early age, he had awakened to the errors of his ways as a collector of stamps and monograms. In book-hunting he saw no harm; nay, he would contrast its joys, in a rather pharisaical style, with the pleasures of shooting and fishing. He constantly declined to believe that the devil came for that renowned amateur of black letter, G. Steevens. Dibdin himself, who tells the story (with obvious anxiety and alarm), pretends to refuse credit to the ghastly narrative. “His language,” says Dibdin, in his account of the book-hunter’s end, “was, too frequently, the language of imprecation.” This is rather good, as if Dibdin thought a gentleman might swear pretty often, but not “TOO frequently.” “Although I am not disposed to admit,” Dibdin goes on, “the WHOLE of the testimony of the good woman who watched by Steevens’s bedside, although my prejudices (as they may be called) will not allow me to believe that the windows shook, and that strange noises and deep groans were heard at midnight in his room, yet no creature of common sense (and this woman possessed the quality in an eminent degree) could mistake oaths for prayers;” and so forth. In short, Dibdin clearly holds that the windows did shake “without a blast,” like the banners in Branxholme Hall when somebody came for the Goblin Page.

But Thomas Blinton would hear of none of these things. He said that his taste made him take exercise; that he walked from the City to West Kensington every day, to beat the covers of the book-stalls, while other men travelled in the expensive cab or the unwholesome Metropolitan Railway. We are all apt to hold favourable views of our own amusements, and, for my own part, I believe that trout and salmon are incapable of feeling pain. But the flimsiness of Blinton’s theories must be apparent to every unbiassed moralist. His “harmless taste” really involved most of the deadly sins, or at all events a fair working majority of them. He coveted his neighbours’ books. When he got the chance he bought books in a cheap market and sold them in a dear market, thereby degrading literature to the level of trade. He took advantage of the ignorance of uneducated persons who kept book-stalls. He was envious, and grudged the good fortune of others, while he rejoiced in their failures. He turned a deaf ear to the appeals of poverty. He was luxurious, and laid out more money than he should have done on his selfish pleasures, often adorning a volume with a morocco binding when Mrs. Blinton sighed in vain for some old point d’Alencon lace. Greedy, proud, envious, stingy, extravagant, and sharp in his dealings, Blinton was guilty of most of the sins which the Church recognises as “deadly.”

On the very day before that of which the affecting history is now to be told, Blinton had been running the usual round of crime. He had (as far as intentions went) defrauded a bookseller in Holywell Street by purchasing from him, for the sum of two shillings, what he took to be a very rare Elzevir. It is true that when he got home and consulted ‘Willems,’ he found that he had got hold of the wrong copy, in which the figures denoting the numbers of pages are printed right, and which is therefore worth exactly “nuppence” to the collector. But the intention is the thing, and Blinton’s intention was distinctly fraudulent. When he discovered his error, then “his language,” as Dibdin says, “was that of imprecation.” Worse (if possible) than this, Blinton had gone to a sale, begun to bid for ‘Les Essais de Michel, Seigneur de Montaigne’ (Foppens, MDCLIX.), and, carried away by excitement, had “plunged” to the extent of 15 pounds, which was precisely the amount of money he owed his plumber and gasfitter, a worthy man with a large family. Then, meeting a friend (if the book-hunter has friends), or rather an accomplice in lawless enterprise, Blinton had remarked the glee on the other’s face. The poor man had purchased a little old Olaus Magnus, with woodcuts, representing were-wolves, fire-drakes, and other fearful wild-fowl, and was happy in his bargain. But Blinton, with fiendish joy, pointed out to him that the index was imperfect, and left him sorrowing.

Deeds more foul have yet to be told. Thomas Blinton had discovered a new sin, so to speak, in the collecting way. Aristophanes says of one of his favourite blackguards, “Not only is he a villain, but he has invented an original villainy.” Blinton was like this. He maintained that every man who came to notoriety had, at some period, published a volume of poems which he had afterwards repented of and withdrawn. It was Blinton’s hideous pleasure to collect stray copies of these unhappy volumes, these ‘Peches de Jeunesse,’ which, always and invariably, bear a gushing inscription from the author to a friend. He had all Lord John Manners’s poems, and even Mr. Ruskin’s. He had the ‘Ode to Despair’ of Smith (now a comic writer), and the ‘Love Lyrics’ of Brown, who is now a permanent under-secretary, than which nothing can be less gay nor more permanent. He had the amatory songs which a dignitary of the Church published and withdrew from circulation. Blinton was wont to say he expected to come across ‘Triolets of a Tribune,’ by Mr. John Bright, and ‘Original Hymns for Infant Minds,’ by Mr. Henry Labouchere, if he only hunted long enough.

On the day of which I speak he had secured a volume of love-poems which the author had done his best to destroy, and he had gone to his club and read all the funniest passages aloud to friends of the author, who was on the club committee. Ah, was this a kind action? In short, Blinton had filled up the cup of his iniquities, and nobody will be surprised to hear that he met the appropriate punishment of his offence. Blinton had passed, on the whole, a happy day, notwithstanding the error about the Elzevir. He dined well at his club, went home, slept well, and started next morning for his office in the City, walking, as usual, and intending to pursue the pleasures of the chase at all the book-stalls. At the very first, in the Brompton Road, he saw a man turning over the rubbish in the cheap box. Blinton stared at him, fancied he knew him, thought he didn't, and then became a prey to the glittering eye of the other. The Stranger, who wore the conventional cloak and slouched soft hat of Strangers, was apparently an accomplished mesmerist, or thought-reader, or adept, or esoteric Buddhist. He resembled Mr. Isaacs, Zanoni (in the novel of that name), Mendoza (in 'Codlingsby'), the soul-less man in 'A Strange Story,' Mr. Home, Mr. Irving Bishop, a Buddhist adept in the astral body, and most other mysterious characters of history and fiction. Before his Awful Will, Blinton's mere modern obstinacy shrank back like a child abashed. The Stranger glided to him and whispered, "Buy these."

"These" were a complete set of Auerbach's novels, in English, which, I need not say, Blinton would never have dreamt of purchasing had he been left to his own devices.

"Buy these!" repeated the Adept, or whatever he was, in a cruel whisper. Paying the sum demanded, and trailing his vast load of German romance, poor Blinton followed the fiend.

They reached a stall where, amongst much trash, Glatigny's 'Jour de l'An d'un Vagabond' was exposed.

"Look," said Blinton, "there is a book I have wanted some time. Glatignys are getting rather scarce, and it is an amusing trifle."

" Nay, buy THAT," said the implacable Stranger, pointing with a hooked forefinger at Alison's 'History of Europe' in an indefinite number of volumes. Blinton shuddered.

"What, buy THAT, and why? In heaven's name, what could I do with it?"

"Buy it," repeated the persecutor, "and THAT" (indicating the 'Ilios' of Dr. Schliemann, a bulky work), "and THESE" (pointing to all Mr. Theodore Alois Buckley's translations of the Classics), "and THESE" (glancing at the collected writings of the late Mr. Hain Friswell, and at a 'Life,' in more than one volume, of Mr. Gladstone).

The miserable Blinton paid, and trudged along carrying the bargains under his arm. Now one book fell out, now another dropped by the way. Sometimes a portion of Alison came ponderously to earth; sometimes the ‘Gentle Life’ sunk resignedly to the ground. The Adept kept picking them up again, and packing them under the arms of the weary Blinton.

The victim now attempted to put on an air of geniality, and tried to enter into conversation with his tormentor.

“He DOES know about books,” thought Blinton, “and he must have a weak spot somewhere.”

So the wretched amateur made play in his best conversational style. He talked of bindings, of Maioli, of Grolier, of De Thou, of Derome, of Clovis Eve, of Roger Payne, of Trautz, and eke of Bauzonnet. He discoursed of first editions, of black letter, and even of illustrations and vignettes. He approached the topic of Bibles, but here his tyrant, with a fierce yet timid glance, interrupted him.

“Buy those!” he hissed through his teeth.

“Those” were the complete publications of the Folk Lore Society.

Blinton did not care for folk lore (very bad men never do), but he had to act as he was told.

Then, without pause or remorse, he was charged to acquire the ‘Ethics’ of Aristotle, in the agreeable versions of Williams and Chase. Next he secured ‘Strathmore,’ ‘Chandos,’ ‘Under Two Flags,’ and ‘Two Little Wooden Shoes,’ and several dozens more of Ouida’s novels. The next stall was entirely filled with school-books, old geographies, Livys, Delectuses, Arnold’s ‘Greek Exercises,’ Ollendorffs, and what not.

“Buy them all,” hissed the fiend. He seized whole boxes and piled them on Blinton’s head.

He tied up Ouida’s novels, in two parcels, with string, and fastened each to one of the buttons above the tails of Blinton’s coat.

“You are tired?” asked the tormentor. “Never mind, these books will soon be off your hands.”

So speaking, the Stranger, with amazing speed, hurried Blinton back through Holywell Street, along the Strand, and up to Piccadilly, stopping at last at the door of Blinton’s famous and very expensive binder.

The binder opened his eyes, as well he might, at the vision of Blinton’s treasures. Then the miserable Blinton found himself, as it were automatically and without any exercise of his will, speaking thus:-

“Here are some things I have picked up, — extremely rare, — and you will oblige me by binding them in your best manner, regardless of expense. Morocco, of course; crushed levant morocco, double, every book of them, petits fers, my crest and coat of arms, plenty of gilding. Spare no cost. Don't keep me waiting, as you generally do;" for indeed book-binders are the most dilatory of the human species.

Before the astonished binder could ask the most necessary questions,
Blinton's tormentor had hurried that amateur out of the room.

"Come on to the sale," he cried.

"What sale?" said Blinton.

"Why, the Beckford sale; it is the thirteenth day, a lucky day."

"But I have forgotten my catalogue."

"Where is it?"

"In the third shelf from the top, on the right-hand side of the ebony book-case at home."

The stranger stretched out his arm, which swiftly elongated itself till the hand disappeared from view round the corner. In a moment the hand returned with the catalogue. The pair sped on to Messrs. Sotheby's auction-rooms in Wellington Street. Every one knows the appearance of a great book-sale. The long table, surrounded by eager bidders, resembles from a little distance a roulette table, and communicates the same sort of excitement. The amateur is at a loss to know how to conduct himself. If he bids in his own person some bookseller will outbid him, partly because the bookseller knows, after all, he knows little about books, and suspects that the amateur may, in this case, know more. Besides, professionals always dislike amateurs, and, in this game, they have a very great advantage. Blinton knew all this, and was in the habit of giving his commissions to a broker. But now he felt (and very naturally) as if a demon had entered into him. 'Tirante il Bianco Valorosissimo Cavaliere' was being competed for, an excessively rare romance of chivalry, in magnificent red Venetian morocco, from Canevari's library. The book is one of the rarest of the Venetian Press, and beautifully adorned with Canevari's device, — a simple and elegant affair in gold and colours. "Apollo is driving his chariot across the green waves towards the rock, on which winged Pegasus is pawing the ground," though why this action of a horse should be called "pawing" (the animal notoriously not possessing paws) it is hard to say. Round this graceful design is the inscription [Greek text] (straight not crooked). In his ordinary mood Blinton could only have admired 'Tirante il Bianco' from a distance. But now, the demon inspiring him, he rushed into the lists, and challenged the great Mr. -, the Napoleon of bookselling. The price had already reached five hundred pounds.

"Six hundred," cried Blinton.

"Guineas," said the great Mr. -.

"Seven hundred," screamed Blinton.

"Guineas," replied the other.

This arithmetical dialogue went on till even Mr. — struck his flag, with a sigh, when the maddened Blinton had said "Six thousand." The cheers of the audience rewarded the largest bid ever made for any book. As if he had not done enough, the Stranger now impelled Blinton to contend with Mr. — for every expensive work that appeared. The audience naturally fancied that Blinton was in the earlier stage of softening of the brain, when a man conceives himself to have inherited boundless wealth, and is determined to live up to it. The hammer fell for the last time. Blinton owed some fifty thousand pounds, and exclaimed audibly, as the influence of the fiend died out, "I am a ruined man."

"Then your books must be sold," cried the Stranger, and, leaping on a chair, he addressed the audience:-

"Gentlemen, I invite you to Mr. Blinton's sale, which will immediately take place. The collection contains some very remarkable early English poets, many first editions of the French classics, most of the rarer Aldines, and a singular assortment of Americana."

In a moment, as if by magic, the shelves round the room were filled with Blinton's books, all tied up in big lots of some thirty volumes each. His early Molieres were fastened to old French dictionaries and school-books. His Shakespeare quartos were in the same lot with tattered railway novels. His copy (almost unique) of Richard Barnfield's much too 'Affectionate Shepheard' was coupled with odd volumes of 'Chips from a German Workshop' and a cheap, imperfect example of 'Tom Brown's School-Days.' Hookes's 'Amanda' was at the bottom of a lot of American devotional works, where it kept company with an Elzevir Tacitus and the Aldine 'Hypnerotomachia.' The auctioneer put up lot after lot, and Blinton plainly saw that the whole affair was a "knock-out." His most treasured spoils were parted with at the price of waste paper. It is an awful thing to be present at one's own sale. No man would bid above a few shillings. Well did Blinton know that after the knock-out the plunder would be shared among the grinning bidders. At last his 'Adonais,' uncut, bound by Lortic, went, in company with some old 'Bradshaws,' the 'Court Guide' of 1881, and an odd volume of the 'Sunday at Home,' for sixpence. The Stranger smiled a smile of peculiar malignity. Blinton leaped up to protest; the room seemed to shake around him, but words would not come to his lips.

Then he heard a familiar voice observe, as a familiar grasp shook his shoulder,—

“Tom, Tom, what a nightmare you are enjoying!”

He was in his own arm-chair, where he had fallen asleep after dinner, and Mrs. Blinton was doing her best to arouse him from his awful vision. Beside him lay ‘L’Enfer du Bibliophile, vu et decrit par Charles Asselineau.’ (Paris: Tardieu, MDCCCLX.)

If this were an ordinary tract, I should have to tell how Blinton’s eyes were opened, how he gave up book-collecting, and took to gardening, or politics, or something of that sort. But truth compels me to admit that Blinton’s repentance had vanished by the end of the week, when he was discovered marking M. Claudin’s catalogue, surreptitiously, before breakfast. Thus, indeed, end all our remorses. “Lancelot falls to his own love again,” as in the romance. Much, and justly, as theologians decry a death-bed repentance, it is, perhaps, the only repentance that we do not repent of. All others leave us ready, when occasion comes, to fall to our old love again; and may that love never be worse than the taste for old books! Once a collector, always a collector. Moi qui parle, I have sinned, and struggled, and fallen. I have thrown catalogues, unopened, into the waste-paper basket. I have withheld my feet from the paths that lead to Sotheby’s and to Puttick’s. I have crossed the street to avoid a book-stall. In fact, like the prophet Nicholas, “I have been known to be steady for weeks at a time.” And then the fatal moment of temptation has arrived, and I have succumbed to the soft seductions of Eisen, or Cochin, or an old book on Angling. Probably Grolier was thinking of such weaknesses when he chose his devices Tanquam Ventus, and quisque suos patimur Manes. Like the wind we are blown about, and, like the people in the AEneid, we are obliged to suffer the consequences of our own extravagance.

BALLADE OF THE UNATTAINABLE

The Books I cannot hope to buy,
Their phantoms round me waltz and wheel,
They pass before the dreaming eye,
Ere Sleep the dreaming eye can seal.
A kind of literary reel
They dance; how fair the bindings shine!
Prose cannot tell them what I feel, —
The Books that never can be mine!

There frisk Editions rare and shy,
Morocco clad from head to heel;
Shakspearian quartos; Comedy
As first she flashed from Richard Steele;
And quaint De Foe on Mrs. Veal;
And, lord of landing net and line,
Old Izaak with his fishing creel, —
The Books that never can be mine!

Incunables! for you I sigh,
Black letter, at thy founts I kneel,
Old tales of Perrault’s nursery,
For you I’d go without a meal!
For Books wherein did Aldus deal
And rare Galliot du Pre I pine.
The watches of the night reveal
The Books that never can be mine!

ENVOY.

Prince, bear a hopeless Bard’s appeal;
Reverse the rules of Mine and Thine;
Make it legitimate to steal
The Books that never can be mine!

LADY BOOK-LOVERS

The biographer of Mrs. Aphra Behn refutes the vulgar error that “a Dutchman cannot love.” Whether or not a lady can love books is a question that may not be so readily settled. Mr. Ernest Quentin Bauchart has contributed to the discussion of this problem by publishing a bibliography, in two quarto volumes, of books which have been in the libraries of famous beauties of old, queens and princesses of France. There can be no doubt that these ladies were possessors of exquisite printed books and manuscripts wonderfully bound, but it remains uncertain whether the owners, as a rule, were bibliophiles; whether their hearts were with their treasures. Incredible as it may seem to us now, literature was highly respected in the past, and was even fashionable. Poets were in favour at court, and Fashion decided that the great must possess books, and not only books, but books produced in the utmost perfection of art, and bound with all the skill at the disposal of Clovis Eve, and Padeloup, and Duseuil. Therefore, as Fashion gave her commands, we cannot hastily affirm that the ladies who obeyed were really book-lovers. In our more polite age, Fashion has decreed that ladies shall smoke, and bet, and romp, but it would be premature to assert that all ladies who do their duty in these matters are born romps, or have an unaffected liking for cigarettes. History, however, maintains that many of the renowned dames whose books are now the most treasured of literary relics were actually inclined to study as well as to pleasure, like Marguerite de Valois and the Comtesse de Verrue, and even Madame de Pompadour. Probably books and arts were more to this lady’s liking than the diversions by which she beguiled the tedium of Louis XV.; and many a time she would rather have been quiet with her plays and novels than engaged in conscientiously conducted but distasteful revels.

Like a true Frenchman, M. Bauchart has only written about French lady book-lovers, or about women who, like Mary Stuart, were more than half French. Nor would it be easy for an English author to name, outside the ranks of crowned heads, like Elizabeth, any Englishwomen of distinction who had a passion for the material side of literature, for binding, and first editions, and large paper, and engravings in early “states.” The practical sex, when studious, is like the same sex when fond of equestrian exercise. “A lady says, ‘My heyes, he’s an ‘orse, and he must go,’” according to Leech’s groom. In the same way, a studious girl or matron says, “This is a book,” and reads it, if read she does, without caring about the date, or the state, or the publisher’s name, or even very often about the author’s. I remember, before the publication of a novel now celebrated, seeing a privately printed vellum-bound copy on large paper in the hands of a literary lady. She was holding it over the fire, and had already made the vellum covers curl wide open like the shells of an afflicted oyster.

When I asked what the volume was, she explained that “It is a book which a poor man has written, and he’s had it printed to see whether some one won’t be kind enough to publish it.” I ventured, perhaps pedantically, to point out that the poor man could not be so very poor, or he would not have made so costly an experiment on Dutch paper. But the lady said she did not know how that might be, and she went on toasting the experiment. In all this there is a fine contempt for everything but the spiritual aspect of literature; there is an aversion to the mere coquetry and display of morocco and red letters, and the toys which amuse the minds of men. Where ladies have caught “the Bibliomania,” I fancy they have taken this pretty fever from the other sex. But it must be owned that the books they have possessed, being rarer and more romantic, are even more highly prized by amateurs than examples from the libraries of Grolier, and Longepierre, and D’Hoym. M. Bauchart’s book is a complete guide to the collector of these expensive relics. He begins his dream of fair women who have owned books with the pearl of the Valois, Marguerite d’Angouleme, the sister of Francis I. The remains of her library are chiefly devotional manuscripts. Indeed, it is to be noted that all these ladies, however frivolous, possessed the most devout and pious books, and whole collections of prayers copied out by the pen, and decorated with miniatures. Marguerite’s library was bound in morocco, stamped with a crowned M in interlacs sown with daisies, or, at least, with conventional flowers which may have been meant for daisies. If one could choose, perhaps the most desirable of the specimens extant is ‘Le Premier Livre du Prince des Poetes, Homere,’ in Salel’s translation. For this translation Ronsard writes a prologue, addressed to the manes of Salel, in which he complains that he is ridiculed for his poetry. He draws a characteristic picture of Homer and Salel in Elysium, among the learned lovers:

qui parmi les fleurs devisent Au giron de leur dame.

Marguerite’s manuscript copy of the First Book of the Iliad is a small quarto, adorned with daisies, fleurs de-lis, and the crowned M. It is in the Duc d’Aumale’s collection at Chantilly. The books of Diane de Poitiers are more numerous and more famous. When first a widow she stamped her volumes with a laurel springing from a tomb, and the motto, “Sola vivit in illo.” But when she consoled herself with Henri II. she suppressed the tomb, and made the motto meaningless. Her crescent shone not only on her books, but on the palace walls of France, in the Louvre, Fontainebleau, and Anet, and her initial D. is inextricably interlaced with the H. of her royal lover. Indeed, Henri added the D to his own cypher, and this must have been so embarrassing for his wife Catherine, that people have good-naturedly tried to read the curves of the D’s as C’s. The D’s, and the crescents, and the bows of his Diana are impressed even on the covers of Henri’s Book of Hours. Catherine’s own cypher is a double C enlaced with an H, or double K’s (Katherine) combined in the same manner. These, unlike the D.H., are surmounted with a crown — the one advantage which the wife possessed over the favourite. Among Diane’s books are various treatises on medicines and on surgery, and plenty of poetry and Italian novels. Among the books exhibited at the British Museum in glass cases is Diane’s copy of Bembo’s ‘History of Venice.’ An American collector, Mr. Barlow, of New York, is happy enough to possess her ‘Singularitez de la France Antarctique’ (Antwerp, 1558).

Catherine de Medicis got splendid books on the same terms as foreign pirates procure English novels — she stole them. The Marshal Strozzi, dying in the French service, left a noble collection, on which Catherine laid her hands. Brantome says that Strozzi’s son often expressed to him a candid opinion about this transaction. What with her own collection and what with the Marshal’s, Catherine possessed about four thousand volumes. On her death they were in peril of being seized by her creditors, but her almoner carried them to his own house, and De Thou had them placed in the royal library. Unluckily it was thought wiser to strip the books of the coats with Catherine’s compromising device, lest her creditors should single them out, and take them away in their pockets. Hence, books with her arms and cypher are exceedingly rare. At the sale of the collections of the Duchesse de Berry, a Book of Hours of Catherine’s was sold for 2,400 pounds.

Mary Stuart of Scotland was one of the lady book-lovers whose taste was more than a mere following of the fashion. Some of her books, like one of Marie Antoinette’s, were the companions of her captivity, and still bear the sad complaints which she entrusted to these last friends of fallen royalty. Her note-book, in which she wrote her Latin prose exercises when a girl, still survives, bound in red morocco, with the arms of France. In a Book of Hours, now the property of the Czar, may be partly deciphered the quatrains which she composed in her sorrowful years, but many of them are mutilated by the binder’s shears. The Queen used the volume as a kind of album: it contains the signatures of the “Countess of Schrewsbury” (as M. Bauchart has it), of Walsingham, of the Earl of Sussex, and of Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham. There is also the signature, “Your most infortunat, ARBELLA SEYMOUR;” and “Fr. Bacon.”

This remarkable manuscript was purchased in Paris, during the Revolution, by Peter Dubrowsky, who carried it to Russia. Another Book of Hours of the Queen’s bears this inscription, in a sixteenth-century hand: “Ce sont les Heures de Marie Setuart Renne. Marguerite de Blacuod de Rosay.” In De Blacuod it is not very easy to recognise “Blackwood.” Marguerite was probably the daughter of Adam Blackwood, who wrote a volume on Mary Stuart’s sufferings (Edinburgh, 1587).

The famous Marguerite de Valois, the wife of Henri IV., had certainly a noble library, and many beautifully bound books stamped with daisies are attributed to her collections. They bear the motto, “Expectata non eludet,” which appears to refer, first to the daisy (“Margarita”), which is punctual in the spring, or rather is “the constellated flower that never sets,” and next, to the lady, who will “keep tryst.” But is the lady Marguerite de Valois? Though the books have been sold at very high prices as relics of the leman of La Mole, it seems impossible to demonstrate that they were ever on her shelves, that they were bound by Clovis Eve from her own design. “No mention is made of them in any contemporary document, and the judicious are reduced to conjectures.” Yet they form a most important collection, systematically bound, science and philosophy in citron morocco, the poets in green, and history and theology in red. In any case it is absurd to explain “Expectata non eludet” as a reference to the lily of the royal arms, which appears on the centre of the daisy-pied volumes. The motto, in that case, would run, “Expectata (lilia) non eludent.” As it stands, the feminine adjective, “expectata,” in the singular, must apply either to the lady who owned the volumes, or to the “Margarita,” her emblem, or to both. Yet the ungrammatical rendering is that which M. Bauchart suggests. Many of the books, Marguerite’s or not, were sold at prices over 100 pounds in London, in 1884 and 1883. The Macrobius, and Theocritus, and Homer are in the Cracherode collection at the British Museum. The daisy crowned Ronsard went for 430 pounds at the Beckford sale. These prices will probably never be reached again.

If Anne of Austria, the mother of Louis XIV., was a bibliophile, she may be suspected of acting on the motive, “Love me, love my books.” About her affection for Cardinal Mazarin there seems to be no doubt: the Cardinal had a famous library, and his royal friend probably imitated his tastes. In her time, and on her volumes, the originality and taste of the skilled binder, Le Gascon, begin to declare themselves. The fashionable passion for lace, to which La Fontaine made such sacrifices, affected the art of book decorations, and Le Gascon’s beautiful patterns of gold points and dots are copies of the productions of Venice. The Queen-Mother’s books include many devotional treatises, for, whatever other fashions might come and go, piety was always constant before the Revolution. Anne of Austria seems to have been particularly fond of the lives and works of Saint Theresa, and Saint Francois de Sales, and John of the Cross. But she was not unread in the old French poets, such as Coquillart; she condescended to Ariosto; she had that dubious character, Theophile de Viaud, beautifully bound; she owned the Rabelais of 1553; and, what is particularly interesting, M. de Lignerolles possesses her copy of ‘L’Eschole des Femmes, Comedie par J. B. P. Moliere. Paris: Guillaume de Luynes, 1663.’ In 12 [degree sign], red morocco, gilt edges, and the Queen’s arms on the covers. This relic is especially valuable when we remember that ‘L’Ecole des Femmes’ and Arnolphe’s sermon to Agnes, and his comic threats of future punishment first made envy take the form of religious persecution. The devout Queen-Mother was often appealed to by the enemies of Moliere, yet Anne of Austria had not only seen his comedy, but possessed this beautiful example of the first edition. M. Paul Lacroix supposes that this copy was offered to the Queen-Mother by Moliere himself. The frontispiece (Arnolphe preaching to Agnes) is thought to be a portrait of Moliere, but in the reproduction in M. Louis Lacour’s edition it is not easy to see any resemblance. Apparently Anne did not share the views, even in her later years, of the converted Prince de Conty, for several comedies and novels remain stamped with her arms and device.

The learned Marquise de Rambouillet, the parent of all the ‘Precieuses,’ must have owned a good library, but nothing is chronicled save her celebrated book of prayers and meditations, written out and decorated by Jarry. It is bound in red morocco, double with green, and covered with V’s in gold. The Marquise composed the prayers for her own use, and Jarry was so much struck with their beauty that he asked leave to introduce them into the Book of Hours which he had to copy, “for the prayers are often so silly,” said he, “that I am ashamed to write them out.”

Here is an example of the devotions which Jarry admired, a prayer to Saint Louis. It was published in ‘Miscellanies Bibliographiques’ by M. Prosper Blanchemain.

PRIERE A SAINT-LOUIS, ROY DE FRANCE.

Grand Roy, bien que votre couronne ayt este des plus esclatantes de la Terre, celle que vous portez dans le ciel est incomparablement plus precieuse. L’une estoit perissable l’autre est immortelle et ces lys dont la blancheur se pouvoit ternir, sont maintenant incorruptibles. Vostre obeissance envers vostre mere; vostre justice envers vos sujets; et vos guerres contre les infideles, vous ont acquis la veneration de tous les peuples; et la France doit a vos travaux et a vostre piete l’inestimable tresor de la sanglante et glorieuse couronne du Sauveur du monde. Priez-le incomparable Saint qu’il donne une paix perpetuelle au Royaume dont vous avez porte le sceptre; qu’il le preserve d’heresie; qu’il y face toujours regner saintement vostre illustre Sang; et que tous ceux qui ont l’honneur d’en descendre soient pour jamais fideles a son Eglise.

The daughter of the Marquise, the fair Julie, heroine of that “long courting” by M. de Montausier, survives in those records as the possessor of ‘La Guirlande de Julie,’ the manuscript book of poems by eminent hands. But this manuscript seems to have been all the library of Julie; therein she could constantly read of her own perfections. To be sure she had also ‘L’Histoire de Gustave Adolphe,’ a hero for whom, like Major Dugald Dalgetty, she cherished a supreme devotion. In the ‘Guirlande’ Chapelain’s verses turn on the pleasing fancy that the Protestant Lion of the North, changed into a flower (like Paul Limayrac in M. Banville’s ode), requests Julie to take pity on his altered estate:

Sois pitoyable a ma langueur;
Et si je n’ay place en ton coeur
Que je l’aye au moins sur ta teste.

These verses were reckoned consummate.

The ‘Guirlande’ is still, with happier fate than attends most books, in the hands of the successors of the Duc and Duchesse de Montausier.

Like Julie, Madame de Maintenon was a precieuse, but she never had time to form a regular library. Her books, however, were bound by Duseuil, a binder immortal in the verse of Pope; or it might be more correct to say that Madame de Maintenon’s own books are seldom distinguishable from those of her favourite foundation, St. Cyr. The most interesting is a copy of the first edition of ‘Esther,’ in quarto (1689), bound in red morocco, and bearing, in Racine's hand, 'A Madame la Marquise de Maintenon, offert avec respect, — RACINE."

Doubtless Racine had the book bound before he presented it. "People are discontented," writes his son Louis, "if you offer them a book in a simple marbled paper cover." I could wish that this worthy custom were restored, for the sake of the art of binding, and also because amateur poets would be more chary of their presentation copies. It is, no doubt, wise to turn these gifts with their sides against the inner walls of bookcases, to be bulwarks against the damp, but the trouble of acknowledging worthless presents from strangers is considerable.

Another interesting example of Madame de Maintenon's collections is Dacier's 'Remarques Critiques sur les OEuvres d'Horace,' bearing the arms of Louis XIV., but with his wife's signature on the fly-leaf (1681).

Of Madame de Montespan, ousted from the royal favour by Madame de Maintenon, who "married into the family where she had been governess," there survives one bookish relic of interest. This is 'OEuvres Diverses par un auteur de sept ans,' in quarto, red morocco, printed on vellum, and with the arms of the mother of the little Duc du Maine (1678). When Madame de Maintenon was still playing mother to the children of the king and of Madame de Montespan, she printed those "works" of her eldest pupil.

These ladies were only bibliophiles by accident, and were devoted, in the first place, to pleasure, piety, or ambition. With the Comtesse de Verrue, whose epitaph will be found on an earlier page, we come to a genuine and even fanatical collector. Madame de Verrue (1670-1736) got every kind of diversion out of life, and when she ceased to be young and fair, she turned to the joys of "shopping." In early years, "pleine de coeur, elle le donna sans comptes." In later life, she purchased, or obtained on credit, everything that caught her fancy, also sans comptes. "My aunt," says the Duc de Luynes, "was always buying, and never baulked her fancy." Pictures, books, coins, jewels, engravings, gems (over 8,000), tapestries, and furniture were all alike precious to Madame de Verrue. Her snuff-boxes defied computation; she had them in gold, in tortoise-shell, in porcelain, in lacquer, and in jasper, and she enjoyed the delicate fragrance of sixty different sorts of snuff. Without applauding the smoking of cigarettes in drawing-rooms, we may admit that it is less repulsive than steady applications to tobacco in Madame de Verrue's favourite manner.

The Countess had a noble library, for old tastes survived in her commodious heart, and new tastes she anticipated. She possessed 'The Romance of the Rose,' and 'Villon,' in editions of Galliot du Pre (1529-1533) undeterred by the satire of Boileau. She had examples of the 'Pleiade,' though they were not again admired in France till 1830. She was also in the most modern fashion of to-day, for she had the beautiful quarto of La Fontaine’s ‘Contes,’ and Bouchier’s illustrated Moliere (large paper). And, what I envy her more, she had Perrault’s ‘Fairy Tales,’ in blue morocco — the blue rose of the folklorist who is also a book-hunter. It must also be confessed that Madame de Verrue had a large number of books such as are usually kept under lock and key, books which her heirs did not care to expose at the sale of her library. Once I myself (moi chetif) owned a novel in blue morocco, which had been in the collection of Madame de Verrue. In her old age this exemplary woman invented a peculiarly comfortable arm-chair, which, like her novels, was covered with citron and violet morocco; the nails were of silver. If Madame de Verrue has met the Baroness Bernstein, their conversation in the Elysian Fields must be of the most gallant and interesting description.

Another literary lady of pleasure, Madame de Pompadour, can only be spoken of with modified approval. Her great fault was that she did not check the decadence of taste and sense in the art of bookbinding. In her time came in the habit of binding books (if binding it can be called) with flat backs, without the nerves and sinews that are of the very essence of book-covers. Without these no binding can be permanent, none can secure the lasting existence of a volume. It is very deeply to be deplored that by far the most accomplished living English artist in bookbinding has reverted to this old and most dangerous heresy. The most original and graceful tooling is of much less real value than permanence, and a book bound with a flat back, without nerfs, might practically as well not be bound at all. The practice was the herald of the French and may open the way for the English Revolution. Of what avail were the ingenious mosaics of Derome to stem the tide of change, when the books whose sides they adorned were not really BOUND at all? Madame de Pompadour’s books were of all sorts, from the inevitable works of devotions to devotions of another sort, and the ‘Hours’ of Erycina Ridens. One of her treasures had singular fortunes, a copy of ‘Daphnis and Chloe,’ with the Regent’s illustrations, and those of Cochin and Eisen (Paris, quarto, 1757, red morocco). The covers are adorned with billing and cooing doves, with the arrows of Eros, with burning hearts, and sheep and shepherds. Eighteen years ago this volume was bought for 10 francs in a village in Hungary. A bookseller gave 8 pounds for it in Paris. M. Bauchart paid for it 150 pounds; and as it has left his shelves, probably he too made no bad bargain. Madame de Pompadour’s ‘Apology for Herodotus’ (La Haye, 1735) has also its legend. It belonged to M. Paillet, who coveted a glorified copy of the ‘Pastissier Francois,’ in M. Bauchart’s collection. M Paillet swopped it, with a number of others, for the ‘Pastissier:’

J’avais ‘L’Apologie
Pour Herodote,’ en reliure ancienne, amour
De livre provenant de chez la Pompadour
Il me le soutira!

Of Marie Antoinette, with whom our lady book-lovers of the old regime must close, there survive many books. She had a library in the Tuileries, as well as at le petit Trianon. Of all her great and varied collections, none is now so valued as her little book of prayers, which was her consolation in the worst of all her evil days, in the Temple and the Conciergerie. The book is ‘Office de la Divine Providence’ (Paris, 1757, green morocco). On the fly-leaf the Queen wrote, some hours before her death, these touching lines: “Ce 16 Octobre, a 4 h. 0.5 du matin. Mon Dieu! ayez pitie de moi! Mes yeux n’ont plus de larmes pour prier pour vous, mes pauvres enfants. Adieu, adieu! — MARIE ANTOINETTE.”

There can be no sadder relic of a greater sorrow, and the last consolation of the Queen did not escape the French popular genius for cruelty and insult. The arms on the covers of the prayer-book have been cut out by some fanatic of Equality and Fraternity.

LETTERS TO DEAD AUTHORS

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Preface.

Sixteen of these Letters, which were written at the suggestion of the editor of the ‘St. James’s Gazette,’ appeared in that journal, from which they are now reprinted, by the editor’s kind permission. They have been somewhat emended, and a few additions have been made. The Letters to Horace, Byron, Isaak Walton, Chapelain, Ronsard, and Theocritus have not been published before.

The gem published for the first time on the title-page is a red cornelian in the British Museum, probably Graeco-Roman, and treated in an archaistic style. It represents Hermes Psychogogos, with a Soul, and has some likeness to the Baptism of Our Lord, as usually shown in art. Perhaps it may be post-Christian. The gem was selected by Mr. A. S. Murray.

It is, perhaps, superfluous to add that some of the Letters are written rather to suit the Correspondent than to express the writer’s own taste or opinions. The Epistle to Lord Byron, especially, is ‘writ in a manner which is my aversion.’

LETTERS TO DEAD AUTHORS

I. To W. M. Thackeray.

Sir, — There are many things that stand in the way of the critic when he has a mind to praise the living. He may dread the charge of writing rather to vex a rival than to exalt the subject of his applause. He shuns the appearance of seeking the favour of the famous, and would not willingly be regarded as one of the many parasites who now advertise each movement and action of contemporary genius. ‘Such and such men of letters are passing their summer holidays in the Val d’Aosta,’ or the Mountains of the Moon, or the Suliman Range, as it may happen. So reports our literary ‘Court Circular,’ and all our *Précieuses* read the tidings with enthusiasm. Lastly, if the critic be quite new to the world of letters, he may superfluously fear to vex a poet or a novelist by the abundance of his eulogy. No such doubts perplex us when, with all our hearts, we would commend the departed; for they have passed almost beyond the reach even of envy; and to those pale cheeks of theirs no commendation can bring the red.

You, above all others, were and remain without a rival in your many-sided excellence, and praise of you strikes at none of those who have survived your day. The increase of time only mellows your renown, and each year that passes and brings you no successor does but sharpen the keenness of our sense of loss. In what other novelist, since Scott was worn down by the burden of a forlorn endeavour, and died for honour’s sake, has the world found so many of the fairest gifts combined? If we may not call you a poet (for the first of English writers of light verse did not seek that crown), who that was less than a poet ever saw life with a glance so keen as yours, so steady, and so sane? Your pathos was never cheap, your laughter never forced; your sigh was never the pulpit trick of the preacher. Your funny people — your Costigans and Fokers — were not mere characters of trick and catch-word, were not empty comic masks. Behind each the human heart was beating; and ever and again we were allowed to see the features of the man.

Thus fiction in your hands was not simply a profession, like another, but a constant reflection of the whole surface of life: a repeated echo of its laughter and its complaint. Others have written, and not written badly, with the stolid professional regularity of the clerk at his desk; you, like the Scholar Gipsy, might have said that ‘it needs heaven-sent moments for this skill.’ There are, it will not surprise you, some honourable women and a few men who call you a cynic; who speak of ‘the withered world of Thackerayan satire;’ who think your eyes were ever turned to the sordid aspects of life — to the mother-in-law who threatens to ‘take away her silver bread-basket;’ to the intriguer, the sneak, the termagant; to the Beckys, and Barnes Newcomes, and Mrs. Mackenzies of this world. The quarrel of these sentimentalists is really with life, not with you; they might as wisely blame Monsieur Buffon because there are snakes in his Natural History. Had you not impaled certain noxious human insects, you would have better pleased Mr. Ruskin; had you confined yourself to such performances, you would have been more dear to the Neo-Balzacian school in fiction.

You are accused of never having drawn a good woman who was not a doll, but the ladies that bring this charge seldom remind us either of Lady Castlewood or of Theo or Hetty Lambert. The best women can pardon you Becky Sharp and Blanche Amory; they find it harder to forgive you Emmy Sedley and Helen Pendennis. Yet what man does not know in his heart that the best women — God bless them — lean, in their characters, either to the sweet passiveness of Emmy or to the sensitive and jealous affections of Helen? ’Tis Heaven, not you, that made them so; and they are easily pardoned, both for being a very little lower than the angels and for their gentle ambition to be painted, as by Guido or Guercino, with wings and harps and haloes. So ladies have occasionally seen their own faces in the glass of fancy, and, thus inspired, have drawn Romola and Consuelo. Yet when these fair idealists, *Mdme.* Sand and George Eliot, designed Rosamund Vincy and Horace, was there not a spice of malice in the portraits which we miss in your least favourable studies?

That the creator of Colonel Newcome and of Henry Esmond was a snarling cynic; that he who designed Rachel Esmond could not draw a good woman: these are the chief charges (all indifferent now to you, who were once so sensitive) that your admirers have to contend against. A French critic, M. Taine, also protests that you do preach too much. Did any author but yourself so frequently break the thread (seldom a strong thread) of his plot to converse with his reader and moralise his tale, we also might be offended. But who that loves Montaigne and Pascal, who that likes the wise trifling of the one and can bear with the melancholy of the other, but prefers your preaching to another’s playing!

Your thoughts come in, like the intervention of the Greek Chorus, as an ornament and source of fresh delight. Like the songs of the Chorus, they bid us pause a moment over the wider laws and actions of human fate and human life, and we turn from your persons to yourself, and again from yourself to your persons, as from the odes of Sophocles or Aristophanes to the action of their characters on the stage. Nor, to my taste, does the mere music and melancholy dignity of your style in these passages of meditation fall far below the highest efforts of poetry. I remember that scene where Clive, at Barnes Newcome's Lecture on the Poetry of the Affections, sees Ethel who is lost to him. 'And the past and its dear histories, and youth and its hopes and passions, and tones and looks for ever echoing in the heart and present in the memory — these, no doubt, poor Clive saw and heard as he looked across the great gulf of time, and parting and grief, and beheld the wonmn he had loved for many years.'

For ever echoing in the heart and present in the memory: who has not heard these tones, who does not hear them as he turns over your books that, for so many years, have been his companions and comforters? We have been young and old, we have been sad and merry with you, we have listened to the mid-night chimes with Pen and Warrington, have stood with you beside the death-bed, have mourned at that yet more awful funeral of lost love, and with you have prayed in the inmost chapel sacred to our old and immortal affections, *a' léal souvenir!* And whenever you speak for yourself, and speak in earnest, how magical, how rare, how lonely in our literature is the beauty of your sentences! 'I can't express the charm of them' (so you write of George Sand; so we may write of you): 'they seem to me like the sound of country bells, provoking I don't know what vein of music and meditation, and falling sweetly and sadly on the ear.' Surely that style, so fresh, so rich, so full of surprises — that style which stamps as classical your fragments of slang, and perpetually astonishes and delights — would alone give immortality to an author, even had he little to say. But you, with your whole wide world of fops and fools, of good women and brave men, of honest absurdities and cheery adventurers: you who created the Steynes and Newcomes, the Beckys and Blanches, Captain Costigan and F. B., and the Chevalier Strong — all that host of friends imperishable — you must survive with Shakespeare and Cervantes in the memory and affection of men.

II. To Charles Dickens.

Sir, — It has been said that every man is born a Platonist or an Aristotelian, though the enormous majority of us, to be sure, live and die without being conscious of any invidious philosophic partiality whatever. With more truth (though that does not imply very much) every Englishman who reads may be said to be a partisan of yourself or of Mr. Thackeray. Why should there be any partisanship in the matter; and why, having two such good things as your novels and those of your contemporary, should we not be silently happy in the possession? Well, men are made so, and must needs fight and argue over their tastes in enjoyment. For myself, I may say that in this matter I am what the Americans do not call a ‘Mugwump,’ what English politicians dub a ‘superior person’ — that is, I take no side, and attempt to enjoy the best of both.

It must be owned that this attitude is sometimes made a little difficult by the vigour of your special devotees. They have ceased, indeed, thank Heaven! to imitate you; and even in ‘descriptive articles’ the touch of Mr. Gigadibs, of him whom ‘we almost took for the true Dickens,’ has disappeared. The young lions of the Press no longer mimic your less admirable mannerisms — do not strain so much after fantastic comparisons, do not (in your manner and Mr. Carlyle’s) give people nick-names derived from their teeth, or their complexion; and, generally, we are spared second-hand copies of all that in your style was least to be commended. But, though improved by lapse of time in this respect, your devotees still put on little conscious airs of virtue, robust manliness, and so forth, which would have irritated you very much, and there survive some press men who seem to have read you a little (especially your later works), and never to have read anything else. Now familiarity with the pages of ‘Our Mutual Friend’and ‘Dombey and Son’ does not precisely constitute a liberal education, and the assumption that it does is apt (quite unreasonably) to prejudice people against the greatest comic genius of modern times.

On the other hand, Time is at last beginning to sift the true admirers of Dickens from the false. Yours, Sir, in the best sense of the word, is a popular success, a popular reputation. For example, I know that, in a remote and even Pictish part of this kingdom, a rural household, humble and under the shadow of a sorrow inevitably approaching, has found in ‘David Copperfield’ oblivion of winter, of sorrow, and of sickness. On the other hand, people are now picking up heart to say that ‘they cannot read Dickens,’ and that they particularly detest

‘Pickwick.’ I believe it was young ladies who first had the courage of their convictions in this respect. ‘Tout sied aux belles,’ and the fair, in the confidence of youth, often venture on remarkable confessions. In your ‘Natural History of Young Ladies’ I do not remember that you describe the Humorous Young Lady (1). She is a very rare bird indeed, and humour generally is at a deplorably low level in England.

(1) I am informed that the *Natural History of Young Ladies* is attributed, by some writers, to another philosopher, the author of *The Art of Pluck*.

Hence come all sorts of mischief, arisen since you left us; and, it may be said, that inordinate philanthropy, genteel sympathy with Irish murder and arson, Societies for Badgering the Poor, Esoteric Buddhism, and a score of other plagues, including what was once called Aestheticism, are all, primarily, due to want of humour. People discuss, with the gravest faces, matters which properly should only be stated as the wildest paradoxes. It naturally follows that, in a period almost destitute of humour, many respectable persons ‘cannot read Dickens,’ and are not ashamed to glory in their shame. We ought not to be angry with others for their misfortunes; and yet when one meets the *crétins* who boast that they cannot read Dickens, one certainly does feel much as Mr. Samuel Weller felt when he encountered Mr. Job Trotter.

How very singular has been the history of the decline of humour. Is there any profound psychological truth to be gathered from consideration of the fact that humour has gone out with cruelty? A hundred years ago, eighty years ago — nay, fifty years ago — we were a cruel but also a humorous people. We had bull-baitings, and badger-drawings, and hustings, and prize-fights, and cock-fights; we went to see men hanged; the pillory and the stocks were no empty ‘terrors unto evil-doers,’ for there was commonly a malefactor occupying each of these institutions. With all this we had a broad blown comic sense. We had Ho-garth, and Bunbury, and George Cruikshank, and Gilray; we had Leech and Surtees, and the creator of Tittlebat Titmouse; we had the Shepherd of the ‘Noctes,’ and, above all, we had *you*.

From the old giants of English fun — burly persons delighting in broad caricature, in decided colours, in cockney jokes, in swashing blows at the more prominent and obvious human follies — from these you derived the splendid high spirits and unhesitating mirth of your earlier works. Mr. Squeers, and Sam Weller, and Mrs. Gamp, and all the Pickwickians, and Mr. Dowler, and John Browdie — these and their immortal companions were reared, so to speak, on the beef and beer of that naughty, fox-hunting, badger-baiting old England, which we have improved out of existence. And these characters, assuredly, are your best; by them, though stupid people cannot read about them, you will live while there is a laugh left among us. Perhaps that does not assure you a very prolonged existence, but only the future can show.

The dismal seriousness of the time cannot, let us hope, last for ever and a day. Honest old Laughter, the true *lutin* of your inspiration, must have life left in him yet, and cannot die; though it is true that the taste for your pathos, and your melodrama, and plots constructed after your favourite fashion (‘Great Expectations’ and the ‘Tale of Two Cities’ are exceptions) may go by and never be regretted. Were people simpler, or only less clear-sighted, as far as your pathos is concerned, a generation ago? Jeffrey, the hard-headed shallow critic, who declared that Wordsworth ‘would never do,’ cried, ‘wept like anything,’ over your Little Nell. One still laughs as heartily as ever with Dick Swiveller; but who can cry over Little Nell?

Ah, Sir, how could you — who knew so intimately, who remembered so strangely well the fancies, the dreams, the sufferings of childhood — how could you ‘wallow naked in the pathetic,’ and massacre holocausts of the Innocents? To draw tears by gloating over a child’s death-bed, was it worthy of you? Was it the kind of work over which our hearts should melt? I confess that Little Nell might die a dozen times, and be welcomed by whole legions of Angels, and I (like the bereaved fowl mentioned by Pet Marjory) would remain unmoved.

She was more than usual calm,
She did not give a single dam,

wrote the astonishing child who diverted the leisure of Scott. Over your Little Nell and your Little Dombey I remain more than usual calm; and probably so do thousands of your most sincere admirers. But about matter of this kind, and the unsealing of the fountains of tears, who can argue? Where is taste? where is truth? What tears are ‘manly, Sir, manly,’ as Fred Bayham has it; and of what lamentations ought we rather to be ashamed? *Sunt lacrymae rerum*; one has been moved in the cell where Socrates tasted the hemlock; or by the river-banks where Syracusan arrows slew the parched Athenians among the mire and blood; or, in fiction, when Colonel Newcome said *Adsum*, or over the diary of Clare Doria Forey, or where Aramis laments, with strange tears, the death of Porthos. But over Dombey (the Son), or Little Nell, one declines to snivel.

When an author deliberately sits down and says, ‘Now, let us have a good cry,’ he poisons the wells of sensibility and chokes, at least in many breasts, the fountain of tears. Out of ‘Dombey and Son’ there is little we care to remember except the deathless Mr. Toots; just as we forget the melodramatics of ‘Martin Chuzzlewit.’ I have read in that book a score of times; I never see it but I revel in it — in Pecksniff, and Mrs. Gamp, and the Americans. But what the plot is all about, what Jonas did, what Montagu Tigg had to make in the matter, what all the pictures with plenty of shading illustrate, I have never been able to comprehend. In the same way, one of your most thorough-going admirers has allowed (in the licence of private conversation) that ‘Ralph Nickleby and Monk are too steep;’ and probably a cultivated taste will always find them a little precipitous.

‘Too steep:’ — the slang expresses that defect of an ardent genius, carried above itself, and out of the air we breathe, both in its grotesque and in its gloomy imaginations. To force the note, to press fantasy too hard, to deepen the gloom with black over the indigo, that was the failing which proved you mortal. To take an instance in little: when Pip went to Mr. Pumblechook’s, the boy thought the seedsman ‘a very happy man to have so many little drawers in his shop.’ The reflection is thoroughly boyish; but then you add, ‘I wondered whether the flower-seeds and bulbs ever wanted of a fine day to break out of those jails and bloom.’ That is not boyish at all; that is the hard-driven, jaded literary fancy at work.

‘So we arraign her; but she,’ the Genius of Charles Dickens, how brilliant, how kindly, how beneficent she is! dwelling by a fountain of laughter imperishable; though there is something of an alien salt in the neighbouring fountain of tears. How poor the world of fancy would be, how ‘dispeopled of her dreams,’ if, in some ruin of the social system, the books of Dickens were lost; and if The Dodger, and Charley Bates, and Mr. Crinkle, and Miss Squeers, and Sam Weller, and Mrs. Gamp, and Dick Swiveller were to perish, or to vanish with Menander’s men and women! We cannot think of our world without them; and, children of dreams as they are, they seem more essential than great statesmen, artists, soldiers, who have actually worn flesh and blood, ribbons and orders, gowns and uniforms. May we not almost welcome ‘Free Education’? for every Englishman who can read, unless he be an Ass, is a reader the more for you.

III. To Pierre de Ronsard (Prince of Poets.)

Master and Prince of Poets, — As we know what choice thou madest of a sepulchre (a choice how ill fulfilled by the jealousy of Fate), so we know well the manner of thy chosen immortality. In the Plains Elysian, among the heroes and the ladies of old song, there was thy Love with thee to enjoy her paradise in an eternal spring.

La' du plaisant Avril la saison imortelle Sans eschange le suit, La terre sans labeur, de sa grasse mamelle, Tout chose y produit; D'enbas la troupe sainte autrefois amoureuse, Nous honorant sur tous, Viendra nous saluer, s'estimant bien-heureuse De s'accointer de nous.

There thou dwellest, with the learned lovers of old days, with Belleau, and Du Bellay, and Bai'f, and the flower of the maidens of Anjou. Surely no rumour reaches thee, in that happy place of reconciled affections, no rumour of the rudeness of Time, the despite of men, and the change which stole from thy locks, so early grey, the crown of laurels and of thine own roses. How different from thy choice of a sepulchre have been the fortunes of thy tomb!

I will that none should break The marble for my sake, Wishful to make more fair My sepulchre.

So didst thou sing, or so thy sweet numbers run in my rude English. Wearied of Courts and of priories, thou didst desire a grave beside thine own Loire, not remote from The caves, the founts that fall From the high mountain wall, That fall and flash and fleet, Wilh silver fret.

Only a laurel tree Shall guard the grave of me; Only Apollo's bough Shall shade me now!

Far other has been thy sepulchre: not in the free air, among the field flowers, but in thy priory of Saint Cosme, with marble for a monument, and no green grass to cover thee. Restless wert thou in thy life; thy dust was not to be restful in thy death. The Huguenots, *ces nouveaux*

Chrétiens qui la France ont pillée, destroyed thy tomb, and the warning of the later monument, ABI, NEFASTE, QUAM CALCAS HUMUM SACRA EST, has not scared away malicious men. The storm that passed over France a hundred years ago, more terrible than the religious wars that thou didst weep for, has swept the column from the tomb. The marble was broken by violent hands, and the shattered sepulchre of the Prince of Poets gained a dusty hospitality from the museum of a country town. Better had been the laurel of thy desire, the creeping vine, and the ivy tree.

Scarce more fortunate, for long, than thy monument was thy memory. Thou hast not encountered, Master, in the Paradise of Poets, Messieurs Malherbe, De Balzac, and Boileau — Boileau who spoke of thee as *Ce poéte orgueilleux trébuché de si haut!*

These gallant gentlemen, I make no doubt, are happy after their own fashion, backbiting each other and thee in the Paradise of Critics. In their time they wrought thee much evil, grumbling that thou wrotest in Greek and Latin (of which tongues certain of them had but little skill), and blaming thy many lyric melodies and the free flow of thy lines. What said M. de Balzac to M. Chapelain? ‘M. de Malherbe, M. de Grasse, and yourself must be very little poets, if Ronsard be a great one.’ Time has brought in his revenges, and Messieurs Chapelain and De Grasse are as well forgotten as thou art well remembered. Men could not always be deaf to thy sweet old songs, nor blind to the beauty of thy roses and thy loves. When they took the wax out of their ears that M. Boileau had given them lest they should hear the singing of thy Sirens, then they were deaf no longer, then they heard the old deaf poet singing and made answer to his lays. Hast thou not heard these sounds? have they not reached thee, the voices and the lyres of Théophile Gautier and Alfred de Musset? Methinks thou hast marked them, and been glad that the old notes were ringing again and the old French lyric measures tripping to thine ancient harmonies, echoing and replying to the Muses of Horace and Catullus. Returning to Nature, poets returned to thee. Thy monument has perished, but not thy music, and the Prince of Poets has returned to his own again in a glorious Restoration.

Through the dust and smoke of ages, and through the centuries of wars we strain our eyes and try to gain a glimpse of thee, Master, in thy good days, when the Muses walked with thee. We seem to mark thee wandering silent through some little village, or dreaming in the woods, or loitering among thy lonely places, or in gardens where the roses blossom among wilder flowers, or on river banks where the whispering poplars and sighing reeds make answer to the murmur of the waters. Such a picture hast thou drawn of thyself in the summer afternoons.

Je m’en vais pourmener tantost parmy la plaine, Tantost en un village, et tantost en un bois, Et tantost par les lieux solitaires et cois.

J’aime fort les jardins qui sentent le sauvage, J’aime le flot de l’eau qui gazou’ille au rivage.

Still, methinks, there was a book in the hand of the grave and learned poet; still thou wouldst carry thy Horace, thy Catullus, thy Theocritus, through the gem-like weather of the *Renouveau*, when the woods were enamelled with flowers, and the young Spring was lodged, like a wandering prince, in his great palaces hung with green: Orgueilleux de ses fleurs, enflé de sa jeunesse, Logé comme un grand Prince en ses vertes maisons!

Thou sawest, in these woods by Loire side, the fair shapes of old religion, Fauns, Nymphs, and Satyrs, and heard'st in the nightingale's music the plaint of Philomel. The ancient poets came back in the train of thyself and of the Spring, and learning was scarce less dear to thee than love; and thy ladies seemed fairer for the names they borrowed from the beauties of forgotten days, Helen and Cassandra. How sweetly didst thou sing to them thine old morality, and how gravely didst thou teach the lesson of the Roses! Well didst thou know it, well didst thou love the Rose, since thy nurse, carrying thee, an infant, to the holy font, let fall on thee the sacred water brimmed with floating blossoms of the Rose!

Mignonne, allons voir si la Rose, Qui ce matin avoit desclose Sa robe de pourpre au soleil, A point perdu ceste vespree Les plis de sa robe pourpree, Et son teint au votre pareil.

And again, La belle Rose du Printemps, Aubert, admoneste les hommes Passer joyeusement le temps, Et pendant que jeunes nous sommes, Esbattre la fleur de nos ans.

In the same mood, looking far down the future, thou sangest of thy lady's age, the most sad, the most beautiful of thy sad and beautiful lays; for if thy bees gathered much honey 't was somewhat bitter to taste, as that of the Sardinian yews. How clearly we see the great hall, the grey lady spinning and humming among her drowsy maids, and how they waken at the word, and she sees her spring in their eyes, and they forecast their winter in her face, when she murmurs ''Twas Ronsard sang of me.'

Winter, and summer, and spring, how swiftly they pass, and how early time brought thee his sorrows, and grief cast her dust upon thy head.

Adieu ma Lyre, adieu fillettes, Jadis mes douces amourettes, Adieu, je sens venir ma fin, Nul passetemps de ma jeunesse Ne m'accompagne en la vieillesse, Que le feu, le lict et le vin.

Wine, and a soft bed, and a bright fire: to this trinity of poor pleasures we come soon, if, indeed, wine be left to us. Poetry herself deserts us; is it not said that Bacchus never forgives a renegade? and most of us turn recreants to Bacchus. Even the bright fire, I fear, was not always there to warm thine old blood, Master, or, if fire there were, the wood was not bought with thy bookseller’s money. When autumn was drawing in during thine early old age, in 1584, didst thou not write that thou hadst never received a sou at the hands of all the publishers who vended thy books? And as thou wert about putting forth the folio edition of 1584, thou didst pray Buon, the bookseller, to give thee sixty crowns to buy wood withal, and make thee a bright fire in winter weather, and comfort thine old age with thy friend Gallandius. And if Buon will not pay, then to try the other booksellers, ‘that wish to take everything and give nothing.’

Was it knowledge of this passage, Master, or ignorance of everything else, that made certain of the common steadfast dunces of our days speak of thee as if thou hadst been a starveling, neglected poetaster, jealous forsooth, of Maitre Francoys Rabelais? See how ignorantly M. Fleury writes, who teaches French literature withal to them of Muscovy, and hath indited a Life of Rabelais. ‘Rabelais était revétu d’un emploi honorable; Ronsard était traité en subalterne,’ quoth this wondrous professor. What! Pierre de Ronsard, a gentleman of a noble house, holding the revenue of many abbeys, the friend of Mary Stuart, of the Duc d’Orléans, of Charles IX., *he* is *traité en subalterne*, and is jealous of a frocked or unfrocked *manant* like Maitre Francoys! And then this amazing Fleury falls foul of thine epitaph on Mai’tre Francoys and cries, ‘Ronsard a voulu faire des vers méchants; il n’a fait que de méchants vers.’ More truly saith M. Sainte-Beuve, ‘If the good Rabelais had returned to Meudon on the day when this epitaph was made over the wine, he would, methinks, have laughed heartily.’ But what shall be said of a Professor like the egregious M. Fleury, who holds that Ronsard was despised at Court? Was there a party at tennis when the king would not fain have had thee on his side, declaring that he ever won when Ronsard was his partner? Did he not give thee benefices, and many priories, and call thee his father in Apollo, and even, so they say, bid thee sit down beside him on his throne? Away, ye scandalous folk, who tell us that there was strife between the Prince of Poets and the King of Mirth. Naught have ye by way of proof of your slander but the talk of Jean Bernier, a scurrilous, starveling apothecary, who put forth his fables in 1697, a century and a half after Mai’tre Francoys died. Bayle quoted this fellow in a note, and ye all steal the tattle one from another in your dull manner, and know not whence it comes, nor even that Bayle would none of it and mocked its author. With so little knowledge is history written, and thus doth each chattering brook of a ‘Life swell with its tribute, that great Mississippi of falsehood,’ Biography.

IV. To Herodotus.

To Herodotus of Halicarnassus, greeting. — Concerning the matters set forth in your histories, and the tales you tell about both Greeks and barbarians, whether they be true, or whether they be false, men dispute not little but a great deal. Wherefore I, being concerned to know the verity, did set forth to make search in every manner, and came in my quest even unto the ends of the earth. For there is an island of the Cimmerians beyond the Straits of Heracles, some three days' voyage to a ship that hath a fair following wind in her sails; and there it is said that men know many things from of old: thither, then, I came in my inquiry. Now, the island is not small, but large, greater than the whole of Hellas; and they call it Britain. In that island the east wind blows for ten parts of the year, and the people know not how to cover themselves from the cold. But for the other two months of the year the sun shines fiercely, so that some of them die thereof, and others die of the frozen mixed drinks; for they have ice even in the summer, and this ice they put to their liquor. Through the whole of this island, from the west even to the east, there flows a river called Thames: a great river and a laborious, but not to be likened to the River of Egypt.

The mouth of this river, where I stepped out from my ship, is exceedingly foul and of an evil savour by reason of the city on the banks. Now this city is several hundred parasangs in circumference. Yet a man that needed not to breathe the air might go round it in one hour, in chariots that run under the earth; and these chariots are drawn by creatures that breathe smoke and sulphur, such as Orpheus mentions in his 'Argonautica,' if it be by Orpheus. The people of the town, when I inquired of them concerning Herodotus of Halicarnassus, looked on me with amazement, and went straightway about their business, — namely, to seek out whatsoever new thing is coming to pass all over the whole inhabited world, and as for things old, they take no keep of them.

Nevertheless, by diligence I learned that he who in this land knew most concerning Herodotus was a priest, and dwelt in the priests' city on the river which is called the City of the Ford of the Ox. But whether Io, when she wore a cow's shape, had passed by that way in her wanderings, and thence comes the name of that city, I could not (though I asked all men I met) learn aught with certainty. But to me, considering this, it seemed that Io must have come thither. And now farewell to Io.

To the City of the Priests there are two roads: one by land; and one by water, following the river. To a well-girdled man, the land journey is but one day’s travel; by the river it is longer but more pleasant. Now that river flows, as I said, from the west to the east. And there is in it a fish called chub, which they catch; but they do not eat it, for a certain sacred reason. Also there is a fish called trout, and this is the manner of his catching. They build far this purpose great dams of wood, which they call weirs. Having built the weir they sit upon it with rods in their hands, and a line on the rod, and at the end of the line a little fish. There then they ‘sit and spin in the sun,’ as one of their poets says, not for a short time but for many days, having rods in their hands and eating and drinking. In this wise they angle for the fish called trout; but whether they ever catch him or not, not having seen it, I cannot say; for it is not pleasant to me to speak things concerning which I know not the truth.

Now, after sailing and rowing against the stream for certain days, I came to the City of the Ford of the Ox. Here the river changes his name, and is called Isis, after the name of the goddess of the Egyptians. But whether the Britons brought the name from Egypt or whether the Egyptians took it from the Britons, not knowing I prefer not to say. But to me it seems that the Britons are a colony of the Egyptians, or the Egyptians a colony of the Britons. Moreover, when I was in Egypt I saw certain soldiers in white helmets, who were certainly British. But what they did there (as Egypt neither belongs to Britain nor Britain to Egypt) I know not, neither could they tell me. But one of them replied to me in that line of Homer (if the Odyssey be Homer’s), ‘We have come to a sorry Cyprus, and a sad Egypt.’ Others told me that they once marched against the Ethiopians, and having defeated them several times, then came back again, leaving their property to the Ethiopians. But as to the truth of this I leave it to every man to form his own opinion.

Having come into the City of the Priests, I went forth into the street, and found a priest of the baser sort, who for a piece of silver led me hither and thither among the temples, discoursing of many things.

Now it seemed to me a strange thing that the city was empty, and no man dwelling therein, save a few priests only, and their wives, and their children, who are drawn to and fro in little carriages dragged by women, but the priest told me that during half the year the city was desolate, for that there came somewhat called ‘The Long,’ or ‘The Vac,’ and drave out the young priests. And he said that these did no other thing but row boats, and throw balls from one to the other, and this they were made to do, he said, that the young priests might learn to be humble, for they are the proudest of men. But whether he spoke truth or not I know not, only I set down what he told me. But to anyone considering it, this appears rather to jump with his story — namely, that the young priests have houses on the river, painted of divers colours, all of them empty.

Then the priest, at my desire, brought me to one of the temples, that I might seek out all things concerning Herodotus the Halicarnassian, from one who knew. Now this temple is not the fairest in the city, but less fair and goodly than the old temples, yet goodlier and more fair than the new temples; and over the roof there is the image of an eagle made of stone — no small marvel, but a great one, how men came to fashion him; and that temple is called the House of Queens. Here they sacrifice a boar once every year; and concerning this they tell a certain sacred story which I know but will not utter.

Then I was brought to the priest who had a name for knowing most about Egypt, and the Egyptians, and the Assyrians, and the Cappadocians, and all the kingdoms of the Great King. He came out to me, being attired in a black robe, and wearing on his head a square cap. But why the priests have square caps I know, and he who has been initiated into the mysteries which they call ‘Matric’ knows, but I prefer not to tell. Concerning the square cap, then, let this be sufficient. Now, the priest received me courteously, and when I asked him, concerning Herodotus, whether he were a true man or not, he smiled, and answered ‘Abu Goosh,’ which, in the tongue of the Arabians, means ‘The Father of Liars.’ Then he went on to speak concerning Herodotus, and he said in his discourse that Herodotus not only told the thing which was not, but that he did so wilfully, as one knowing the truth but concealing it. For example, quoth he, ‘Solon never went to see Croesus, as Herodotus avers; nor did those about Xerxes ever dream dreams; but Herodotus, out of his abundant wickedness, invented these things.

‘Now behold,’ he went on, ‘how the curse of the Gods falls upon Herodotus. For he pretends that he saw Cadmeian inscriptions at Thebes. Now I do not believe there were any Cadmeian inscriptions there: therefore Herodotus is most manifestly lying. Moreover, this Herodotus never speaks of Sophocles the Athenian, and why not? Because he, being a child at school, did not learn Sophocles by heart: for the tragedies of Sophocles could not have been learned at school before they were written, nor can any man quote a poet whom he never learned at school. Moreover, as all those about Herodotus knew Sophocles well, he could not appear to them to be learned by showing that he knew what they knew also.’ Then I thought the priest was making game and sport, saying first that Herodotus could know no poet whom he had not learned at school, and then saying that all the men of his time well knew this poet, ‘about whom everyone was talking’. But the priest seemed not to know that Herodotus and Sophocles were friends, which is proved by this, that Sophocles wrote an ode in praise of Herodotus.

Then he went on, and though I were to write with a hundred hands (like Briareus, of whom Homer makes mention) I could not tell you all the things that the priest said against Herodotus, speaking truly, or not truly, or sometimes correctly and sometimes not, as often befalls mortal men. For Herodotus, he said, was chiefly concerned to steal the lore of those who came before him, such as Hecataeus, and then to escape notice as having stolen it. Also he said that, being himself cunning and deceitful, Herodotus was easily beguiled by the cunning of others, and believed in things manifestly false, such as the story of the Phoenix-bird.

Then I spoke, and said that Herodotus himself declared that he could not believe that story; but the priest regarded me not. And he said that Herodotus had never caught a crocodile with cold pig, nor did he ever visit Assyria, nor Babylon, nor Elephantine; but, saying that he had been in these lands, said that which was not true. He also declared that Herodotus, when he travelled, knew none of the Fat Ones of the Egyptians, but only those of the baser sort. And he called Herodotus a thief and a beguiler, and 'the same with intent to deceive,' as one of their own poets writes, and, to be short, Herodotus, I could not tell you in one day all the charges which are now brought against you; but concerning the truth of these things, *you* know, not least, but most, as to yourself being guilty or innocent. Wherefore, if you have anything to show or set forth whereby you may be relieved from the burden of these accusations, now is the time. Be no more silent; but, whether through the Oracle of the Dead, or the Oracle of Branchidae, or that in Delphi, or Dodona, or of Amphiaraus at Oropus, speak to your friends and lovers (whereof I am one from of old) and let men know the very truth.

Now, concerning the priests in the City of the Ford of the Ox, it is to be said that of all men whom we know they receive strangers most gladly, feasting them all day. Moreover, they have many drinks, cunningly mixed, and of these the best is that they call Archdeacon, naming it from one of the priests' offices. Truly, as Homer says (if the Odyssey be Homer's), 'when that draught is poured into the bowl then it is no pleasure to refrain.'

Drinking of this wine, or nectar, Herodotus, I pledge you, and pour forth some deal on the ground, to Herodotus of Halicarnassus, in the House of Hades.

And I wish you farewell, and good be with you. Whether the priest spoke truly, or not truly, even so may such good things betide you as befall dead men.

V. Epistle to Mr. Alexander Pope.

From mortal Gratitude, decide, my Pope,   Have Wits Immortal more to fear or hope?

Wits toil and travail round the Plant of Fame,   Their Works its Garden, and its Growth their Aim,   Then Commentators, in unwieldy Dance,   Break down the Barriers of the trim Pleasance,   Pursue the Poet, like Actaeon's Hounds,   Beyond the fences of his Garden Grounds,   Rend from the singing Robes each borrowed gem,   Rend from the laurel'd Brows the Diadem,   And, if one Rag of Character they spare,   Comes the Biographer, and strips it bare!

Such, Pope, has been thy Fortune, such thy Doom.

Swift the Ghouls gathered at the Poet's Tomb,   With Dust of Notes to clog each lordly Line,   Warburton, Warton, Croker, Bowles, combine!

Collecting Cackle, Johnson condescends   To *interview* the Drudges of your Friends.

Though still your Courthope holds your merits high,   And still proclaims your Poems poetry,   Biographers, un-Boswell-like, have sneered,   And Dunces edit him whom Dunces feared!

They say; what say they? Not in vain You ask.

To tell you what they say, behold my Task!

'Methinks already I your Tears survey'

As I repeat 'the horrid Things they say.' (1) (1) *Rape of the Lock*.

Comes El — n first: I fancy you'll agree   Not frenzied Dennis smote so fell as he;   For El — n's Introduction, crabbed and dry,   Like Churchill's Cudgel's (2) marked with Lie, and Lie!

(2) In Mr Hogarth's Caricatura.

'Too dull to know what his own System meant,   Pope yet was skilled new Treasons to invent;   A Snake that puffed himself and stung his Friends,   Few Lied so frequent, for such little Ends;   His mind, like Flesh inflamed, (3) was raw and sore,   And still, the more he writhed, he stung the more!

Oft in a Quarrel, never in the Right,   His Spirit sank when he was called to fight.

Pope, in the Darkness mining like a Mole,   Forged on Himself, as from

Himself he stole, And what for Caryll once he feigned to feel, Transferred, in Letters never sent, to Steele!

Still he denied the Letters he had writ, And still mistook Indecency for Wit.

His very Grammar, so De Quincey cries, “Detains the Reader, and at times defies!”’

(3) Elwyn’s Pope, ii. 15.

Fierce El — n thus: no Line escapes his Rage, And furious Foot-notes growl ‘neath every Page: See St-ph-n next take up the woful Tale, Prolong the Preaching, and protract the Wail!

‘Some forage Falsehoods from the North and South, But Pope, poor D — -l, lied from Hand to Mouth; (1) Affected, hypocritical, and vain, A Book in Breeches, and a Fop in Grain; A Fox that found not the high Clusters sour, The Fanfaron of Vice beyond his power, Pope yet possessed’ — (the Praise will make you start) — ‘Mean, morbid, vain, he yet possessed a Heart!

And still we marvel at the Man, and still Admire his Finish, and applaud his Skill: Though, as that fabled Barque, a phantom Form, Eternal strains, nor rounds the Cape of Storm, Even so Pope strove, nor ever crossed the Line That from the Noble separates the Fine!’

(1) ‘Poor Pope was always a hand-to-mouth liar.’

— *Pope*, by Leslie Stephen, 139.

The Learned thus, and who can quite reply, Reverse the Judgment, and Retort the Lie?

You reap, in arméd Hates that haunt Your name, Reap what you sowed, the Dragon’s Teeth of Fame: You could not write, and from unenvious Time Expect the Wreath that crowns the lofty Rhyme, You still must fight, retreat, attack, defend, And oft, to snatch a Laurel, lose a Friend!

The Pity of it! And the changing Taste Of changing Time leaves half your Work a Waste!

My Childhood fled your couplet’s clarion tone, And sought for Homer in the Prose of Bohn.

Still through the Dust of that dim Prose appears The Flight of Arrows and the Sheen of Spears; Still we may trace what Hearts heroic feel, And hear the Bronze that hurtles on the Steel!

But, ah, your Iliad seems a half-pretence, Where Wits, not Heroes, prove their Skill in Fence, And great Achilles’ Eloquence doth show As if no Centaur trained him, but Boileau!

Again, your Verse is orderly, — and more, — ‘The Waves behind impel the Waves before;’

Monotonously musical they glide,   Till Couplet unto Couplet hath replied.

But turn to Homer! How his Verses sweep!

Surge answers Surge and Deep doth call on Deep;   This Line in Foam and Thunder issues forth,   Spurred by the West or smitten by the North,   Sombre in all its sullen Deeps, and all   Clear at the Crest, and foaming to the Fall,   The next with silver Murmur dies away,   Like Tides that falter to Calypso’s Bay!

Thus Time, with sordid Alchemy and dread,   Turns half the Glory of your Gold to Lead;   Thus Time, — at Ronsard’s wreath that vainly bit, —   Has marred the Poet to preserve the Wit,   Who almost left on Addison a stain,   Whose knife cut cleanest with a poisoned pain, —   Yet Thou (strange Fate that clings to all of Thine!)   When most a Wit dost most a Poet shine.

In Poetry thy Dunciad expires,   When Wit has shot ‘her momentary Fires.’

‘T is Tragedy that watches by the Bed   ‘Where tawdry Yellow strove with dirty Red,’

And men, remembering all, can scarce deny   To lay the Laurel where thine Ashes lie!

VI. To Lucian of Samosata.

In what bower, oh Lucian, of your rediscovered Islands Fortunate are you now reclining; the delight of the fair, the learned, the witty, and the brave? In that clear and tranquil climate, whose air breathes of ‘violet and lily, myrtle, and the flower of the vine,’

Where the daisies are rose-scented, And the Rose herself has got Perfume which on earth is not, among the music of all birds, and the wind-blown notes of flutes hanging on the trees, methinks that your laughter sounds most silvery sweet, and that Helen and fair Charmides are still of your company. Master of mirth, and Soul the best contented of all that have seen the world’s ways clearly, most clear-sighted of all that have made tranquillity their bride, what other laughers dwell with you, where the crystal and fragrant waters wander round the shining palaces and the temples of amethyst?

Heine surely is with you; if, indeed, it was not one Syrian soul that dwelt among alien men, Germans and Romans, in the bodily tabernacles of Heine and of Lucian. But he was fallen on evil times and evil tongues; while Lucian, as witty as he, as bitter in mockery, as happily dowered with the magic of words, lived long and happily and honoured, imprisoned in no ‘mattress-grave.’ Without Rabelais, without Voltaire, without Heine, you would find, methinks, even the joys of your Happy Islands lacking in zest; and, unless Plato came by your way, none of the ancients could meet you in the lists of sportive dialogue.

There, among the vines that bear twelve times in the year, more excellent than all the vineyards of Touraine, while the song-birds bring you flowers from vales enchanted, and the shapes of the Blessed come and go, beautiful in wind-woven raiment of sunset hues; there, in a land that knows not age nor winter, midnight, nor autumn, nor noon, where the silver twilight of summer-dawn is perennial, where youth does not wax spectre-pale and die; there, my Lucian, you are crowned the Prince of the Paradise of Mirth.

Who would bring you, if he had the power, from the banquet where Homer sings: Homer, who, in mockery of commentators, past and to come, German and Greek, informed you that he was by birth a Babylonian? Yet, if you, who first wrote Dialogues of the Dead, could hear the prayer of an epistle wafted to ‘lands indiscoverable in the unheard-of West,’ you might visit once more a world so worthy of such a mocker, so like the world you knew so well of old.

Ah, Lucian, we have need of you, of your sense and of your mockery! Here, where faith is sick and superstition is waking afresh; where gods come rarely, and spectres appear at five shillings an interview; where science is popular, and philosophy cries aloud in the market-place, and clamour does duty for government, and Thais and Lais are names of power — here, Lucian, is room and scope for you. Can I not imagine a new ‘Auction of Philosophers,’ and what wealth might be made by him who bought these popular sages and lecturers at his estimate, and vended them at their own?

HERMES: Whom shall we put first up to auction?

ZEUS: That German in spectacles; he seems a highly respectable man.

HERMES: Ho, pessimist, come down and let the public view you.

ZEUS: Go on, put him up and have done with him.

HERMES: Who bids for the Life Miserable, for extreme, complete, perfect, unredeemable perdition? What offers for the universal extinction of the species, and the collapse of the Conscious?

A PURCHASER: He does not look at all a bad lot. May one put him through his paces?

HERMES: Certainly; try your luck.

PURCHASER: What is your name?

PESSIMIST: Hartmann.

PURCHASER: What can you teach me?

PESSIMIST: That Life is not worth Living.

PURCHASER: Wonderful! Most edifying! How much for this lot?

HERMES: Two hundred pounds.

PURCHASER: I will write you a cheque for the money. Come home, Pessimist, and begin your lessons without more ado.

HERMES: Attention! Here is a magnificent article — the Positive Life, the Scientific Life, the Enthusiastic Life. Who bids for a possible place in the Calendar of the Future?

PURCHASER: What does he call himself? he has a very French air.

HERMES: Put your own questions.

PURCHASER: What’s your pedigree, my Philosopher, and previous performances?

POSITIVIST: I am by Rousseau out of Catholicism, with a strain of the Evolution blood.

PURCHASER: What do you believe in?

POSITIVIST: In Man, with a large M.

PURCHASER: Not in individual Man?

POSITIVIST: By no means; not even always in Mr. Gladstone. All men, all Churches, all parties, all philosophies, and even the other sect of our own

Church, are perpetually in the wrong. Buy me, and listen to me, and you will ahvays be in the right.

PURCHASER: And, after this life, what have you to offer me?

POSITIVIST: A distinguished position in the Choir Invisible: but not, of course, conscious immortality.

PURCHASER: Take him away, and put up another lot.

Then the Hegelian, with his Notion, and the Darwinian, with his notions, and the Lotzian, with his Broad Church mixture of Religion and Evolution, and the Spencerian, with that Absolute which is a sort of a something, might all be offered with their divers wares; and cheaply enough, Lucian, you would value them in this auction of Sects. ‘There is but one way to Corinth,’ as of old; but which that way may be, oh master of Hermotimus, we know no more than he did of old; and still we find, of all philosophies, that the Stoic route is most to be recommended. But we have our Cyrenaics too, though they are no longer ‘clothed in purple, and crowned with flowers, and fond of drink and of female flute-players.’ Ah, here too, you might laugh, and fail to see where the Pleasure lies, when the Cyrenaics are no ‘judges of cakes’ (nor of ale, for that matter), and are strangers in the Courts of Princes. ‘To despise all things, to make use of all things, in all things to follow pleasure only:’ that is not the manner of the new, if it were the secret of the older Hedonism.

Then, turning from the philosophers to the seekers after a sign, what change, Lucian, would you find in them and their ways? None; they are quite unaltered. Still our Perigrinus, and our Perigrina too, come to us from the East, or, if from the West, they take India on their way — India, that secular home of drivelling creeds, and of religion in its sacerdotage. Still they prattle of Brahmins and Buddhism; though, unlike Peregrinus, they do not publicly burn themselves on pyres, at Epsom Downs, after the Derby. We are not so fortunate in the demise of our Theosophists; and our police, less wise than the Hellenodicae, would probably not permit the Immolation of the Quack. Like your Alexander, they deal in marvels and miracles, oracles and warnings. All such bogy stories as those of your ‘Philopseudes,’ and the ghost of the lady who took to table-rapping because one of her best slippers had not been burned with her body, are gravely investigated by the Psychical Society.

Even your ignorant Bibliophile is still with us — the man without a tinge of letters, who buys up old manuscripts ‘because they are stained and gnawed, and who goes, for proof of valued antiquity, to the testimony of the book-worms.’ And the rich Bibliophile now, as in your satire, clothes his volumes in purple morocco and gay *dorures*, while their contents are sealed to him.

As to the topics of satire and gay curiosity which occupy the lady known as

‘Gyp,’ and M. Halévy in his ‘Les Petites Cardinal,’ if you had not exhausted the matter in your ‘Dialogues of Hetairai,’ you would be amused to find the same old traits surviving without a touch of change. One reads, in Halévy’s French, of Madame Cardinal, and, in your Greek, of the mother of Philinna, and marvels that eighteen hundred years have not in one single trifle altered the mould. Still the old shabby light-loves, the old greed, the old luxury and squalor. Still the unconquerable superstition that now seeks to tell fortunes by the cards, and, in your time, resorted to the sorceress with her magical ‘bull-roarer’ or ‘*turndun*.’ (1) (1)The Greek *rombos* , mentioned by Lucian and Theocritus, was the magical weapon of the Australians — the *turndun*.

Yes, Lucian, we are the same vain creatures of doubt and dread, of unbelief and credulity, of avarice and pretence, that you knew, and at whom you smiled. Nay, our very ‘social question’ is not altered. Do you not write, in ‘The Runaways,’ ‘The artisans will abandon their workshops, and leave their trades, when they see that, with all the labour that bows their bodies from dawn to dark, they make a petty and starveling pittance, while men that toil not nor spin are floating in Pactolus’?

They begin to see this again as of yore; but whether the end of their vision will be a laughing matter, you, fortunate Lucian, do not need to care. Hail to you, and farewell!

VII. To Maitre Francoys Rabelais.

Of the Coming of the Coqcigrues.

Master, — In the Boreal and Septentrional lands, turned aside from the noonday and the sun, there dwelt of old (as thou knowest, and as Olaus voucheth) a race of men, brave, strong, nimble, and adventurous, who had no other care but to fight and drink. There, by reason of the cold (as Virgil witnesseth), men break wine with axes. To their minds, when once they were dead and gotten to Valhalla, or the place of their Gods, there would be no other pleasure but to swig, tipple, drink, and boose till the coming of that last darkness and Twilight, wherein they, with their deities, should do battle against the enemies of all mankind; which day they rather desired than dreaded.

So chanced it also with Pantagruel and Brother John and their company, after they had once partaken of the secret of the *Dive Bouteille*. Thereafter they searched no longer; but, abiding at their ease, were merry, frolic, jolly, gay, glad, and wise; only that they always and ever did expect the awful Coming of the Coqcigrues. Now concerning the day of that coming, and the nature of them that should come, they knew nothing; and for his part Panurge was all the more adread, as Aristotle testifieth that men (and Panurge above others) most fear that which they know least. Now it chanced one day, as they sat at meat, with viands rare, dainty, and precious as ever Apicius dreamed of, that there fluttered on the air a faint sound as of sermons, speeches, orations, addresses, discourses, lectures, and the like; whereat Panurge, pricking up his ears, cried, ‘Methinks this wind bloweth from Midlothian,’ and so fell a trembling.

Next, to their aural orifices, and the avenues audient of the brain, was borne a very melancholy sound as of harmoniums, hymns, organ-pianos, psalteries, and the like, all playing different airs, in a kind most hateful to the Muses. Then said Panurge, as well as he might for the chattering of his teeth: ‘May I never drink if here come not the Coqcigrues!’ and this saying and prophecy of his was true and inspired. But thereon the others began to mock, flout, and gird at Panurge for his cowardice. ‘Here am I!’ cried Brother John, ‘well-armed and ready to stand a siege; being entrenched, fortified, hemmed-in and surrounded with great pasties, huge pieces of salted beef, salads, fricassees, hams, tongues, pies, and a wilderness of pleasant little tarts, jellies, pastries, trifles, and fruits of all kinds, and I shall not thirst while I have good wells, founts, springs, and sources of Bordeaux wine, Burgundy, wine of the Champagne country, sack and Canary. A fig for thy Coqcigrues!’

But even as he spoke there ran up suddenly a whole legion, or rather army, of physicians, each armed with laryngoscopes, stethoscopes, horoscopes, microscopes, weighing machines, and such other tools, engines, and arms as they had who, after thy time, persecuted Monsieur de Pourceaugnac! And they all, rushing on Brother John, cried out to him, ‘Abstain! Abstain!’ And one said, ‘I have well diagnosed thee, and thou art in a fair way to have the gout.’ ‘I never did better in my days,’ said Brother John. ‘Away with thy meats and drinks!’ they cried. And one said, ‘He must to Royat;’ and another, ‘Hence with him to Aix;’ and a third, ‘Banish him to Wiesbaden;’ and a fourth, ‘Hale him to Gastein;’ and yet another, ‘To Barbouille with him in chains!’

And while others felt his pulse and looked at his tongue, they all wrote prescriptions for him like men mad. ‘For thy eating,’ cried he that seemed to be their leader, ‘No soup!’ ‘No soup!’ quoth Brother John; and those cheeks of his, whereat you might have warmed your two hands in the winter solstice, grew white as lilies. ‘Nay! and no salmon nor any beef nor mutton! A little chicken by times, but *periculo tuo*! Nor any game, such as grouse, partridge, pheasant, capercailzie, wild duck; nor any cheese, nor fruit, nor pastry, nor coffee, nor eau de vie; and avoid all sweets. No veal, pork, nor made dishes of any kind.’ ‘Then what may I eat?’ quoth the good Brother, whose valour had oozed out of the soles of his sandals. ‘A little cold bacon at breakfast — no eggs,’ quoth the leader of the strange folk, ‘and a slice of toast without butter.’ ‘And for thy drink’ — (‘What?’ gasped Brother John)— ‘one dessert-spoonful of whisky, with a pint of the water of Apollinaris at luncheon and dinner. No more!’ At this Brother John fainted, falling like a great buttress of a hill, such as Taygetus or Erymanthus.

While they were busy with him, others of the frantic folk had built great platforms of wood, whereon they all stood and spoke at once, both men and women. And of these some wore red crosses on their garments, which meaneth ‘Salvation;’ and others wore white crosses, with a little black button of crape, to signify ‘Purity;’ and others bits of blue to mean ‘Abstinence.’ While some of these pursued Panurge others did beset Pantagruel; asking him very long questions, whereunto he gave but short answers. Thus they asked: Have ye Local Option here? — Pan.: What?

May one man drink if his neighbour be not athirst? — Pan.: Yea!

Have ye Free Education? — Pan.: What?

Must they that have, pay to school them that have not? — Pan.: Nay Have ye free land? — Pan.: What?

Have ye taken the land from the farmer, and given it to the tailor out of work and the candlemaker masterless? — Pan.: Nay!

Have your women folk votes? — Pan.: Bosh!

Have ye got religion? — Pan.: How?

Do you go about the streets at night, brawling, blowing a trumpet before you, and making long prayers? — Pan.: Nay Have you manhood suffrage? — Pan.: Eh?

Is Jack as good as his master? Pan.: Nay!

Have you joined the Arbitration Society? — Pan.: *Quoy?*?

Will you let another kick you, and will you ask his neighbour if you deserve the same? — Pan.: Nay?

Do you cat what you list? — Pan.: Ay!

Do you drink when you are athirst? Pan.: Ay!

Are you governed by the free expression of the popular will? — Pan.: How?

Are you servants of priests, pulpits, and penny papers? — Pan.: No!

Now, when they heard these answers of Pantagruel they all fell, some a weeping, some a praying, some a swearing, some an arbitrating, some a lecturing, some a caucussing, some a preaching, some a faith-healing, some a miracle-working, some a hypnotising, some a writing to the daily press; and while they were thus busy, like folk distraught, ‘reforming the island,’ Pantagruel burst out a laughing; whereat they were greatly dismayed; for laughter killeth the whole race of Coqcigrues, and they may not endure it.

Then Pantagruel and his company stole aboard a barque that Panurge had ready in the harbour. And having provisioned her well with store of meat and good drink, they set sail for the kingdom of Entelechy, where, having landed, they were kindly entreated; and there abide to this day; drinking of the sweet and eating of the fat, under the protection of that intellectual sphere which hath in all places its centre and nowhere its circumference.

Such was their destiny; there was their end appointed, and thither the Coqcigrues can never come. For all the air of that land is full of laughter, which killeth Coqcigrues; and there aboundeth the herb Pantagruelion. But for thee, Master Francoys, thou art not well liked in this island of ours, where the Coqcigrues are abundant, very fierce, cruel, and tyrannical. Yet thou hast thy friends, that meet and drink to thee and wish thee well wheresoever thou hast found thy *grand peut-étre*.

VIII. To Jane Austen.

Madame, — If to the enjoyments of your present state be lacking a view of the minor infirmities or foibles of men, I cannot but think (were the thought permitted) that your pleasures are yet incomplete. Moreover, it is certain that a woman of parts who has once meddled with literature will never wholly lose her love for the discussion of that delicious topic, nor cease to relish what (in the cant of our new age) is styled ‘literary shop.’ For these reasons I attempt to convey to you some inkling of the present state of that agreeable art which you, madam, raised to its highest pitch of perfection.

As to your own works (immortal, as I believe), I have but little that is wholly cheering to tell one who, among women of letters, was almost alone in her freedom from a lettered vanity. You are not a very popular author: your volumes are not found in gaudy covers on every bookstall; or, if found, are not perused with avidity by the Emmas and Catherines of our generation. ’Tis not long since a blow was dealt (in the estimation of the unreasoning) at your character as an author by the publication of your familiar letters. The editor of these epistles, unfortunately, did not always take your witticisms, and he added others which were too unmistakably his own. While the injudicious were disappointed by the absence of your exquisite style and humour, the wiser sort were the more convinced of your wisdom. In your letters (knowing your correspondents) you gave but the small personal talk of the hour, for them sufficient; for your books you reserved matter and expression which are imperishable. Your admirers, if not very numerous, include all persons of taste, who, in your favour, are apt somewhat to abate the rule, or shake off the habit, which commonly confines them to but temperate laudation.

‘T is the fault of all art to seem antiquated and faded in the eyes of the succeeding generation. The manners of your age were not the manners of to-day, and young gentlemen and ladies who think Scott ‘slow,’ think Miss Austen ‘prim’ and ‘dreary.’ Yet, even could you return among us, I scarcely believe that, speaking the language of the hour, as you might, and versed in its habits, you would win the general admiration. For how tame, madam, are your characters, especially your favourite heroines! how limited the life which you knew and described! how narrow the range of your incidents! how correct your grammar!

As heroines, for example, you chose ladies like Emma, and Elizabeth, and

Catherine: women remarkable neither for the brilliance nor for the degradation of their birth; women wrapped up in their own and the parish’s concerns, ignorant of evil, as it seems, and unacquainted with vain yearnings and interesting doubts. Who can engage his fancy with their match-makings and the conduct of their affections, when so many daring and dazzling heroines approach and solicit his regard?

Here are princesses dressed in white velvet stamped with golden fleurs-de-lys — ladies with hearts of ice and lips of fire, who count their roubles by the million, their lovers by the score, and even their husbands, very often, in figures of some arithmetical importance. With these are the immaculate daughters of itinerant Italian musicians, maids whose souls are unsoiled amidst the contaminations of our streets, and whose acquaintance with the art of Phidias and Praxiteles, of Daedalus and Scopas, is the more admirable, because entirely derived from loving study of the inexpensive collections vended by the plaster-of-Paris man round the corner. When such heroines are wooed by the nephews of Dukes, where are your Emmas and Elizabeths? Your volumes neither excite nor satisfy the curiosities provoked by that modern and scientific fiction, which is greatly admired, I learn, in the United States, as well as in France and at home.

You erred, it cannot be denied, with your eyes open. Knowing Lydia and Kitty so intimately as you did, why did you make of them almost insignificant characters? With Lydia for a heroine you might have gone far; and, had you devoted three volumes, and the chief of your time, to the passions of Kitty, you might have held your own, even now, in the circulating library. How Lyddy, perched on a corner of the roof, first beheld her Wickham; how, on her challenge, he climbed up by a ladder to her side; how they kissed, caressed, swung on gates together, met at odd seasons, in strange places, and finally eloped: all this might have been put in the mouth of a jealous elder sister, say Elizabeth, and you would not have been less popular than several favourites of our time. Had you cast the whole narrative into the present tense, and lingered lovingly over the thickness of Mary’s legs and the softness of Kitty’s cheeks, and the blonde fluffiness of Wickham’s whiskers, you would have left a romance still dear to young ladies.

Or again, you might entrance your students still, had you concentrated your attention on Mrs. Rushworth, who eloped with Henrv Crawford. These should have been the chief figures of ‘Mansfield Park.’ But you timidly decline to tackle Passion. ‘Let other pens,’ you write, ‘dwell on guilt and misery. I quit such odious subjects as soon as I can.’ Ah, *there* is the secret of your failure! Need I add that the vulgarity and narrowness of the social circles you describe impair your popularity? I scarce remember more than one lady of title, and but very few lords (and these unessential) in all your tales. Now, when we all wish to be in society, we demand plenty of titles in our novels, at any rate, and we get lords (and very queer lords) even from Republican authors, born in a country which in your time was not renowned for its literature. I have heard a critic remark, with a decided air of fashion, on the brevity of the notice which your characters give each other when they offer invitations to dinner. 'An invitation to dinner next day was despatched,' and this demonstrates that your acquaintance 'went out' very little, and had but few engagements. How vulgar, too, is one of your heroines, who bids Mr. Darcy 'keep his breath to cool his porridge.' I blush for Elizabeth! It were superfluous to add that your characters are debased by being invariably mere members of the Church of England as by law established. The Dissenting enthusiast, the open soul that glides from Esoteric Buddhism to the Salvation Army, and from the Higher Pantheism to the Higher Paganism, we look for in vain among your studies of character. Nay, the very words I employ are of unknown sound to you; so how can you help us in the stress of the soul's travailings?

You may say that the soul's travailings are no affair of yours; proving thereby that you have indeed but a lowly conception of the duty of the novelist. I only remember one reference, in all your works, to that controversy which occupies the chief of our attention — the great controversy on Creation or Evolution. Your Jane Bennet cries: 'I have no idea of there being so much Design in the world as some persons imagine.' Nor do you touch on our mighty social question, the Land Laws, save when Mrs. Bennet appears as a Land Reformer, and rails bitterly against the cruelty 'of settling an estate away from a family of five daughters, in favour of a man whom nobody cared anything about.' There, madam, in that cruelly unjust performance, what a text you had for a *Tendenz-Roman*. Nay, you can allow Kitty to report that a Private had been flogged, without introducing a chapter on Flogging in the Army. But you formally declined to stretch your matter out, here and there, 'with solemn specious nonsense about something unconnected with the story.' No 'padding' for Miss Austen! In fact, madam, as you were born before Analysis came in, or Passion, or Realism, or Naturalism, or Irreverence, or Religious Open-mindedness, you really cannot hope to rival your literary sisters in the minds of a perplexed generation. Your heroines are not passionate, we do not see their red wet cheeks, and tresses dishevelled in the manner of our frank young Maenads. What says your best successor, a lady who adds fresh lustre to a name that in fiction equals yours? She says of Miss Austen: 'Her heroines have a stamp of their own. They have a *certain gentle self-respect and humour and hardness of heart*... Love with them does not mean a passion as much as an interest, deep and silent.' I think one prefers them so, and that Englishwomen should be more like Anne Elliot than Maggie Tulliver. ‘All the privilege I claim for my own sex is that of loving longest when existence or when hope is gone,’ said Anne; perhaps she insisted on a monopoly that neither sex has all to itself. Ah, madam, what a relief it is to come back to your witty volumes, and forget the follies of to-day in those of Mr. Collins and of Mrs. Bennet! How fine, nay, how noble is your art in its delicate reserve, never insisting, never forcing the note, never pushing the sketch into the caricature! You worked without thinking of it, in the spirit of Greece, on a labour happily limited, and exquisitely organised. ‘Dear books,’ we say, with Miss Thackeray— ‘dear books, bright, sparkling with wit and animation, in which the homely heroines charm, the dull hours fly, and the very bores are enchanting.’

IX. To Master Isaak Walton.

Father Isaak, — When I would be quiet and go angling it is my custom to carry in my wallet thy pretty book, ‘The Compleat Angler.’ Here, methinks, if I find not trout I shall find content, and good company, and sweet songs, fair milkmaids, and country mirth. For you are to know that trout be now scarce, and whereas he was ever a fearful fish, he hath of late become so wary that none but the cunningest anglers may be even with him.

It is not as it was in your time, Father, when a man might leave his shop in Fleet Street, of a holiday, and, when he had stretched his legs up Tottenham Hill, come lightly to meadows chequered with waterlilies and lady-smocks, and so fall to his sport. Nay, now have the houses so much increased, like a spreading sore (through the breaking of that excellent law of the Conscientious King and blessed Martyr, whereby building beyond the walls was forbidden), that the meadows are all swallowed up in streets. And as to the River Lea, wherein you took many a good trout, I read in the news sheets that ‘its bed is many inches thick in horrible filth, and the air for more than half a mile on each side of it is polluted with a horrible, sickening stench,’ so that we stand in dread of a new Plague, called the Cholera. And so it is all about London for many miles, and if a man, at heavy charges, betake himself to the fields, lo you, folk are grown so greedy that none will suffer a stranger to fish in his water.

So poor anglers are in sore straits. Unless a man be rich and can pay great rents, he may not fish, in England, and hence spring the discontents of the times, for the angler is full of content, if he do but take trout, but if he be driven from the waterside, he falls, perchance, into evil company, and cries out to divide the property of the gentle folk. As many now do, even among Parliament, men, whom you loved not, Father Isaak, neither do I love them more than Reason and Scripture bid each of us be kindly to his neighbour. But, behold, the causes of the ill content are not yet all expressed, for even where a man hath licence to fish, he will hardly take trout in our age, unless he be all the more cunning. For the fish, harried this way and that by so many of your disciples, is exceeding shy and artful, nor will he bite at a fly unless it falleth lightly, just above his mouth, and floateth dry over him, for all the world like the natural *ephemeris*. And we may no longer angle with worm for him, nor with penk or minnow, nor with the natural fly, as was your manner, but only with the artificial, for the more difficulty the more diversion. For my part I may cry, like Viator in your book, ‘Master, I can neither catch with the first nor second Angle: I have no fortune.’

So we fare in England, but somewhat better north of the Tweed, where trout are less wary, but for the most part small, except in the extreme rough north, among horrid hills and lakes. Thither, Master, as methinks you may remember, went Richard Franck, that called himself *Philanthropus*, and was, as it were, the Columbus of anglers, discovering for them a new Hyperborean world. But Franck, doubtless, is now an angler in the Lake of Darkness, with Nero and other tyrants, for he followed after Cromwell, the man of blood, in the old riding days. How wickedly doth Franck boast of that leader of the giddy multitude, ‘when they raged, and became restless to find out misery for themselves and others, and the rabble would herd themselves together,’ as you said, ‘and endeavour to govern and act in spite of authority.’ So you wrote; and what said Franck, that recreant angler? Doth he not praise ‘Ireton, Vane, Nevill, and Martin, and the most renowned, valorous, and victorious conqueror, Oliver Cromwell.’ Natheless, with all his sins on his head, this Franck discovered Scotland for anglers, and my heart turns to him when he praises ‘the glittering and resolute streams of Tweed.’

In those wilds of Assynt and Loch Rannoch, Father, we, thy followers, may yet take trout, and forget the evils of the times. But, to be done with Franck, how harshly he speaks of thee and thy book. ‘For you may dedicate your opinion to what scribbling putationer you please; the *Compleat Angler* if you will, who tells you of a tedious fly story, extravagantly collected from antiquated authors, such as Gesner and Dubravius.’ Again, he speaks of ‘Isaac Walton, whose authority to me seems alike authentick, as is the general opinion of the vulgar prophet,’ &c.

Certain I am that Franck, if a better angler than thou, was a worse man, who, writing his ‘Dialogues Piscatorial’ or ‘Northern Memoirs’ five years after the world welcomed thy ‘Compleat Angler,’ was jealous of thy favour with the people, and, may be, hated thee for thy loyalty and sound faith. But, Master, like a peaceful man avoiding contention, thou didst never answer this blustering Franck, but wentest quietly about thy quiet Lea, and left him his roaring Brora and windy Assynt. How could this noisy man know thee — and know thee he did, having argued with thee in Stafford — and not love Isaak Walton? A pedant angler, I call him, a plaguy angler, so let him huff away, and turn we to thee and to thy sweet charm in fishing for men.

How often, studying in thy book, have I hummed to myself that of Horace —

Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula quae te Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello.

So healing a book for the frenzy of fame is thy discourse on meadows, and pure streams, and the country life. How peaceful, men say, and blessed must have been the life of this old man, how lapped in content, and hedged about by his own humility from the world! They forget, who speak thus, that thy years, which were many, were also evil, or would have seemed evil to divers that had tasted of thy fortunes. Thou wert poor, but that, to thee, was no sorrow, for greed of money was thy detestation. Thou wert of lowly rank, in an age when gentle blood was alone held in regard; yet tiny virtues made thee hosts of friends, and chiefly among religious men, bishops, and doctors of the Church. Thy private life was not unacquainted with sorrow; thy first wife and all her fair children were taken from thee like flowers in spring, though, in thine age, new love and new offspring comforted thee like ‘the primrose of the later year.’ Thy private griefs might have made thee bitter, or melancholy, so might the sorrows of the State and of the Church, which were deprived of their heads by cruel men, despoiled of their wealth, the pious driven, like thee, from their homes; fear everywhere, everywhere robbery and confusion: all this ruin might have angered another temper. But thou, Father, didst bear all with so much sweetness as perhaps neither natural temperament, nor a firm faith, nor the love of angling could alone have displayed. For we see many anglers (as witness Richard Franck aforesaid) who are angry men, and myself, when I get my hooks entangled at every cast in a tree, have come nigh to swear prophane.

Also we see religious men that are sour and fanatical, no rare thing in the party that professes godliness. But neither private sorrow nor public grief could abate thy natural kindliness, nor shake a religion which was not untried, but had, indeed, passed through the furnace like fine gold. For if we find not Faith at all times easy, because of the oppositions of Science, and the searching curiosity of men’s minds, neither was Faith a matter of course in thy day. For the learned and pious were greatly tossed about, like worthy Mr. Chillingworth, by doubts wavering between the Church of Rome and the Reformed Church of England. The humbler folk, also, were invited, now here, now there, by the clamours of fanatical Nonconformists, who gave themselves out to be somebody, while Atheism itself was not without many to witness to it. Therefore, such a religion as thine was not, so to say, a mere innocence of evil in the things of our Belief, but a reasonable and grounded faith, strong in despite of oppositions. Happy was the man in whom temper, and religion, and the love of the sweet country and an angler’s pastime so conveniently combined; happy the long life which held in its hand that threefold clue through the labyrinth of human fortunes! Around thee Church and State might fall in ruins, and might be rebuilded, and thy tears would not be bitter, nor thy triumph cruel.

Thus, by God’s blessing, it befell thee   Nec turpem senectam

Degere, nec cithara carentem.

I would, Father, that I could get at the verity about thy poems. Those recommendatory verses with which thou didst grace the Lives of Dr. Donne and others of thy friends, redound more to the praise of thy kind heart than thy fancy. But what or whose was the pastoral poem of ‘Thealma and Clearchus,’ which thou didst set about printing in 1678, and gavest to the world in 1683? Thou gavest John Chalkhill for the author’s name, and a John Chalkhill of thy kindred died at Winchester, being eighty years of his age, in 1679. Now thou speakest of John Chalkhill as ‘a friend of Edmund Spenser’s,’ and how could this be?

Are they right who hold that John Chalkhill was but a name of a friend, borrowed by thee out of modesty, and used as a cloak to cover poetry of thine own inditing? When Mr. Flatman writes of Chalkhill, ‘t is in words well fitted to thine own merit: Happy old man, whose worth all mankind knows Except himself, who charitably shows The ready road to virtue and to praise, The road to many long and happy days.

However it be, in that road, by quiet streams and through green pastures, thou didst walk all thine almost century of years, and we, who stray into thy path out of the highway of life, we seem to hold thy hand, and listen to thy cheerful voice. If our sport be worse, may our content be equal, and our praise, therefore, none the less. Father, if Master Stoddard, the great fisher of Tweed-side, be with thee, greet him for me, and thank him for those songs of his, and perchance he will troll thee a catch of our dear River.

Tweed! winding and wild! where the heart is unbound, They know not, they dream not, who linger around, How the saddened will smile, and the wasted rewin From thee — the bliss withered within.

Or perhaps thou wilt better love,

The lanesome Tala and the Lyne, And Mahon wi’ its mountain rills, An’ Etterick, whose waters twine Wi’ Yarrow frae the forest hills; An’ Gala, too, and Teviot bright, An’ mony a stream o’ playfu’ speed, Their kindred valleys a’ unite Amang the braes o’ bonnie Tweed!

So, Master, may you sing against each other, you two good old anglers, like Peter and Corydon, that sang in your golden age.

X. To M. Chapelain.

Monsieur, — You were a popular writer, and an honourable, over-educated, upright gentleman. Of the latter character you can never be deprived, and I doubt not it stands you in better stead where you are, than the laurels which flourished so gaily, and faded so soon.

Laurel is green for a season, and Love is fair for a day, But Love grows bitter with treason, and laurel outlives not May.

I know not if Mr. Swinburne is correct in his botany, but *your* laurel certainly outlived not May, nor can we hope that you dwell where Orpheus and where Homer are. Some other crown, some other Paradise, we cannot doubt it, awaited *un si bon homme*. But the moral excellence that even Boileau admitted, *ladfoi, l'honneur, la probiité,* do not in Parnassus avail the popular poet, and some luckless Musset or Théophile, Regnier or Villars attains a kind of immortality denied to the man of many contemporary editions, and of a great commercial success.

If ever, for the confusion of Horace, any Poet was Made, you, Sir, should have been that fortunately manufactured article. You were, in matters of the Muses, the child of many prayers. Never, since Adam's day, have any parents but yours prayed for a poet-child. Then Destiny, that mocks the desires of men in general, and fathers in particular, heard the appeal, and presented M. Chapelain and Jeanne Corbiére his wife with the future author of 'La Pucelle.' Oh futile hopes of men, *O pectora caeca!* All was done that education could do for a genius which, among other qualities, 'especially lacked fire and imagination,' and an ear for verse — sad defects these in a child of the Muses. Your training in all the mechanics and metaphysics of criticism might have made you exclaim, like Rasselas, 'Enough! Thou hast convinced me that no human being can ever be a Poet.' Unhappily, you succeeded in convincing Cardinal Richelieu that to be a Poet was well within your powers, you received a pension of one thousand crowns, and were made Captain of the Cardinal's minstrels, as M. de Tréville was Captain of the King's Musketeers.

Ah, pleasant age to live in, when good intentions in poetry were more richly endowed than ever is Research, even Research in Prehistoric English, among us niggard moderns! How I wish I knew a Cardinal, or, even as you did, a Prime Minister, who would praise and pension me; but Envy be still! Your existence was more happy indeed; you constructed odes, corrected sonnets, presided at the Ho'tel Rambouillet, while the learned ladies were still young and fair, and you enjoyed a prodigious celebrity on the score of your yet unpublished Epic. 'Who, indeed,' says a sympathetic author, M. Théophile Gautier, 'who could expect less than a miracle from a man so deeply learned in the laws of art — a perfect Turk in the science of poetry, a person so well pensioned, and so favoured by the great?' Bishops and politicians combined in perfect good faith to advertise your merits. Hard must have been the heart that could resist the testimonials of your skill as a poet offered by the Duc de Montausier, and the learned Huet, Bishop of Avranches, and Monseigneur Godeau, Bishop of Vence, or M. Colbert, who had such a genius for finance.

If bishops and politicians and prime ministers skilled in finance, and some critics, Ménage and Sarrazin and Vaugetas, if ladies of birth and taste, if all the world in fact, combined to tell you that you were a great poet, how can we blame you for taking yourself seriously, and appraising yourself at the public estimate?

It was not in human nature to resist the evidence of the bishops especially, and when every minor poet believes in himself on the testimony of his own conceit, you may be acquitted of vanity if you listened to the plaudits of your friends. Nay, you ventured to pronounce judgment on contemporaries whom Posterity has preferred to your perfections. ‘Moliére,’ said you, ‘understands the nature of comedy, and presents it in a natural style. The plot of his best pieces is borrowed, but not without judgment; his *morale* is fair, and he has only to avoid scurrility.’

Excellent, unconscious, popular Chapelain!

Of yourself you observed, in a Report on contemporary literature, that your ‘courage and sincerity never allowed you to tolerate work not absolutely good.’ And yet you regarded ‘La Pucellé with some complacency.

On the ‘Pucellé you were occupied during a generation of mortal men. I marvel not at the length of your labours, as you received a yearly pension till the Epic was finished, but your Muse was no Alcmena, and no Hercules was the result of that prolonged night of creations. First you gravely wrote out (it was the task of five years) all the compositions in prose. Ah, why did you not leave it in that commonplace but appropriate medium? What says the Précieuse about you in Boileau’s satire?

In Chapelain, for all his foes have said, She finds but one defect, he can’t be read; Yet thinks the world might taste his maiden’s woes, If only he would turn his verse to prose!

The verse had been prose, and prose, perhaps, it should have remained. Yet for this precious ‘Pucelle,’ in the age when ‘Paradise Lost’ was sold for five pounds, you are believed to have received about four thousand. Horace was wrong, mediocre poets may exist (now and then), and he was a wise man who first spoke of *aurea mediocritas*. At length the great work was achieved, a work thrice blessed in its theme, that divine Maiden to whom France owes all, and whom you and Voltaire have recompensed so strangely. In folio, in italics, with a score of portraits and engravings, and *culs de lampe*, the great work was given to the world, and had a success. Six editions in eighteen months are figures which fill the poetic heart with envy and admiration. And then, alas! the bubble burst. A great lady, Madame de Longveille, hearing the ‘Pucellé read aloud, murmured that it was ‘perfect indeed, but perfectly wearisome.’ Then the satires began, and the satirists never left you till your poetic reputation was a rag, till the mildest Abbé at Ménagés had his cheap sneer for Chapelain.

I make no doubt, Sir, that envy and jealousy had much to do with the onslaught on your ‘Pucelle.’ These qualities, alas! are not strange to literary minds; does not even Hesiod tell us ‘potter hates potter, and poet hates poet’? But contemporary spites do not harm true genius. Who suffered more than Moliére from cabals? Yet neither the court nor the town ever deserted him, and he is still the joy of the world. I admit that his adversaries were weaker than yours. What were Boursault and Le Boulanger, and Thomas Corneille and De Visé, what were they all compared to your enemy, Boileau? Brossette tells a story which really makes a man pity you. There was a M. de Puimorin who, to be in the fashion, laughed at your once popular Epic. ‘It is all very well for a man to laugh who cannot even read.’ Whereon M. de Puimorin replied: ‘Qu’il n’avoit que trop su’ lire, depuis que Chapelain s’étoit avisé de faire imprimer.’ A new horror had been added to the accomplishment of reading since Chapelain had published. This repartee was applauded, and M. de Puimorin tried to turn it into an epigram. He did complete the last couplet, Hélas! pour mes péchés, je n’ai su’ que trop lire Depuis que tu fais imprimer.

But by no labour would M. de Puimorin achieve the first two lines of his epigram. Then you remember what great allies came to his assistance. I almost blush to think that M. Despréaux, M. Racine, and M. de Moliére, the three most renowned wits of the time, conspired to complete the poor jest, and madden you. Well, bubble as your poetry was, you may be proud that it needed all these sharpest of pens to prick the bubble. Other poets, as popular as you, have been annihilated by an article. Macaulay puts forth his hand, and ‘Satan Montgomery’ was no more. It did not need a Macaulay, the laughter of a mob of little critics was enough to blow into space; but you probably have met Montgomery, and of contemporary failures or successes I do not speak.

I wonder, sometimes, whether the consensus of criticism ever made you doubt for a moment whether, after all, you were not a false child of Apollo? Was your complacency tortured, as the complacency of true poets has occasionally been, by doubts? Did you expect posterity to reverse the verdict of the satirists, and to do you justice? You answered your earliest assailant, Liniére, and, by a few changes of words, turned his epigrams into flattery. But I fancy, on the whole, you remained calm, unmoved, wrapped up in admiration of yourself. According to M. de Marivaux, who reviewed, as I am doing, the spirits of the mighty dead, you ‘conceived, on the strength of your reputation, a great and serious veneration for yourself and your genius.’ Probably you were protected by this invulnerable armour of an honest vanity, probably you declared that mere jealousy dictates the lines of Boileau, and that Chapelain’s real fault was his popularity, and his pecuniary success, Qu’il soit le mieux renté de tous les beaux-esprits.

This, you would avow, was your offence, and perhaps you were not altogether mistaken. Yet posterity declines to read a line of yours, and, as we think of you, we are again set face to face with that eternal problem, how far is popularity a test of poetry? Burns was a poet, and popular. Byron was a popular poet, and the world agrees in the verdict of their own generation. But Montgomery, though he sold so well, was no poet, nor, Sir, I fear, was your verse made of the stuff of immortality. Criticism cannot hurt what is truly great; the Cardinal and the Academy left Chiméne as fair as ever, and as adorable. It is only pinchbeck that perishes under the acids of satire: gold defies them. Yet I sometimes ask myself, does the existence of popularity like yours justify the malignity of satire, which blesses neither him who gives, nor him who takes? Are poisoned arrows fair against a bad poet? I doubt it, Sir, holding that, even unpricked, a poetic bubble must soon burst by its own nature. Yet satire will assuredly be written so long as bad poets are successful, and bad poets will assuredly reflect that their assailants are merely envious, and, while their vogue lasts, that Prime Ministers and the purchasing public are the only judges.

Monsieur,
Votre trés humble serviteur, Andrew Lang.

XI. To Sir John Manndeville, Kt.

(Of the Ways Into Ynde.)

Sir John, — wit you well that men holden you but light, and some clepen you a Liar. And they say that you never were born in Englond, in the town of Seynt Albones, nor have seen and gone through manye diverse Londes. And there goeth an old knight at arms, and one that connes Latyn, and hath been beyond the sea, and hath seen Prester John’s country. And he hath been in an Yle that men clepen Burmah, and there bin women bearded. Now men call him Colonel Henry Yule, and he hath writ of thee in his great booke, Sir John, and he holds thee but lightly. For he saith that ye did pill your tales out of Odoric his book, and that ye never saw snails with shells as big as houses, nor never met no Devyls, but part of that ye say, ye took it out of William of Boldensele his book, yet ye took not his wisdom, withal, but put in thine own foolishness. Nevertheless, Sir John, for the frailty of Mankynde, ye are held a good fellow, and a merry; so now, come, I shall tell you of the new ways into Ynde.

In that Lond they have a Queen that governeth all the Lond, and all they ben obeyssant to her. And she is the Queen of Englond; for Englishmen have taken all the Lond of Ynde. For they were right good werryoures of old, and wyse, noble, and worthy. But of late hath risen a new sort of Englishman very puny and fearful, and these men clepen Radicals. And they go ever in fear, and they scream on high for dread in the streets and the houses, and they fain would flee away from all that their fathers gat them with the sword. And this sort men call Scuttleres, but the mean folk and certain of the womenkind hear them gladly, and they say ever that Englishmen should flee out of Ynde. Fro England men gon to Ynde by many dyverse Contreyes. For Englishmen ben very stirring and nymble. For they ben in the seventh climate, that is of the Moon. And the Moon (ye have said it yourself, Sir John, natheless, is it true) is of lightly moving, for to go diverse ways, and see strange things, and other diversities of the Worlde. Wherefore Englishmen be lightly moving, and far wandering. And they gon to Ynde by the great Sea Ocean. First come they to Gibraltar, that was the point of Spain, and builded upon a rock; and there ben apes, and it is so strong that no man may take it. Natheless did Englishmen take it fro the Spanyard, and all to hold the way to Ynde. For ye may sail all about Africa, and past the Cape men clepen of Good Hope, but that way unto Ynde is long and the sea is weary. Wherefore men rather go by the Midland sea, and Englishmen have taken many

Yles in that sea.

For first they have taken an Yle that is clept Malta; and therein built they great castles, to hold it against them of Fraunce, and Italy, and of Spain. And from this Ile of Malta Men gon to Cipre. And Cipre is right a good Yle, and a fair, and a great, and it hath 4 principal Cytees within him. And at Famagost is one of the principal Havens of the sea that is in the world, and Englishmen have but a lytel while gone won that Yle from the Sarazynes. Yet say that sort of Englishmen where of I told you, that is puny and sore adread, that the Lond is poisonous and barren and of no avail, for that Lond is much more hotter than it is here. Yet the Englishmen that ben werryoures dwell there in tents, and the skill is that they may ben the more fresh.

From Cypre, Men gon to the Lond of Egypte, and in a Day and a Night he that hath a good wind may come to the Haven of Alessandrie. Now the Lond of Egypt longeth to the Soudan, yet the Soudan longeth not to the Lond of Egypt. And when I say this, I do jape with words, and may hap ye understond me not. Now Englishmen went in shippes to Alessandrie, and brent it, and over ran the Lond, and their soudyours warred agen the Bedoynes, and all to hold the way to Ynde. For it is not long past since Frenchmen let dig a dyke, through the narrow spit of lond, from the Midland sea to the Red sea, wherein was Pharaoh drowned. So this is the shortest way to Ynde there may be, to sail through that dyke, if men gon by sea.

But all the Lond of Egypt is clepen the Vale enchaunted; for no man may do his business well that goes thither, but always fares he evil, and therefore clepen they Egypt the Vale perilous, and the sepulchre of reputations. And men say there that is one of the entrees of Helle. In that Vale is plentiful lack of Gold and Silver, for many misbelieving men, and many Christian men also, have gone often time for to take of the Thresoure that there was of old, and have pilled the Thresoure, wherefore there is none left. And Englishmen have let carry thither great store of our Thresoure, 9,000,000 of Pounds sterling, and whether they will see it agen I misdoubt me. For that Vale is alle fulle of Develes and Fiendes that men clepen Bondholderes, for that Egypt from of olde is the Lond of Bondage. And whatsoever Thresoure cometh into the Lond, these Devyls of Bondholders grabben the same. Natheless by that Vale do Englishmen go unto Ynde, and they gon by Aden, even to Kurrachee, at the mouth of the Flood of Ynde. Thereby they send their souldyours, when they are adread of them of Muscovy.

For, look you, there is another way into Ynde, and thereby the men of Muscovy are fain to come, if the Englishmen let them not. That way cometh by Desert and Wildernesse, from the sea that is clept Caspian, even to Khiva, and so to Merv; and then come ye to Zulfikar and Penjdeh, and anon to Herat, that is called the Key of the Gates of Ynde. Then ye win the lond of the Emir of the Afghauns, a great prince and a rich, and he hath in his Thresoure more crosses, and stars, and coats that captains wearen, than any other man on earth.

For all they of Muscovy, and all Englishmen maken him gifts, and he keepeth the gifts, and he keepeth his own counsel. For his lond lieth between Ynde and the folk of Muscovy, wherefore both Englishmen and men of Muscovy would fain have him friendly, yea, and independent. Wherefore they of both parties give him clocks, and watches, and stars, and crosses, and culverins, and now and again they let cut the throats of his men some deal, and pill his country. Thereby they both set up their rest that the Emir will be independent, yea, and friendly. But his men love him not, neither love they the English nor the Muscovy folk, for they are worshippers of Mahound, and endure not Christian men. And they love not them that cut their throats, and burn their country.

Now they of Muscovy ben Devyls, und they ben subtle for to make a thing seme otherwise than it is, for to deceive mankind. Wherefore Englishmen putten no trust in them of Muscovy, save only the Englishmen ciept Radicals, for they make as if they loved these Develes, out of the fear and dread of war wherein they go, and would be slaves sooner than fight. But the folk of Ynde know not what shall befall, nor whether they of Muscovy will take the Lond, or Englishmen shall keep it, so that their hearts may not enduren for drede. And methinks that soon shall Englishmen and Muscovy folk put their bodies in adventure, and war one with another, and all for the way to Ynde.

But St. George for Englond, I say, and so enough; and may the Seyntes hele thee, Sir John, of thy Gowtes Artetykes, that thee tormenten. But to thy Boke I list not to give no credence.

XII. To Alexandre Dumas.

Sir, — There are moments when the wheels of life, even of such a life as yours, run slow, and when mistrust and doubt overshadow even the most intrepid disposition. In such a moment, towards the ending of your days, you said to your son, M. Alexandre Dumas, ‘I seem to see myself set on a pedestal which trembles as if it were founded on the sands.’ These sands, your uncounted volumes, are all of gold, and make a foundation more solid than the rock. As well might the singer of Odysseus, or the authors of the ‘Arabian Nights’, or the first inventors of the stories of Boccaccio, believe that their works were perishable (their names, indeed, have perished), as the creator of ‘Les Trois Mousquetaires’ alarm himself with the thought that the world could ever forget Alexandre Dumas.

Than yours there has been no greater nor more kindly and beneficent force in modern letters. To Scott, indeed, you owed the first impulse of your genius; but, once set in motion, what miracles could it not accomplish? Our dear Porthos was overcome, at last, by a superhuman burden; but your imaginative strength never found a task too great for it. What an extraordinary vigour, what health, what an overflow of force was yours! It is good, in a day of small and laborious ingenuities, to breathe the free air of your books, and dwell in the company of Dumas’s men — so gallant, so frank, so indomitable, such swordsmen, and such trenchermen. Like M. de Rochefort in ‘Vingt Ans Aprés,’ like that prisoner of the Bastille, your genius ‘n’est que d’un parti, c’est du parti du grand air.’

There seems to radiate from you a still persistent energy and enjoyment; in that current of strength not only your characters live, frolic, kindly, and sane, but even your very collaborators were animated by the virtue which went out of you. How else can we explain it, the dreary charge which feeble and envious tongues have brought against you, in England and at home? They say you employed in your novels and dramas that vicarious aid which, in the slang of the studio, the ‘sculptor’s ghost’ is fabled to afford.

Well, let it be so; these ghosts, when uninspired by you, were faint and impotent as ‘the strengthless tribes of the dead’ in Homer’s Hades, before Odysseus had poured forth the blood that gave them a momentary valour. It was from you and your inexhaustible vitality that these collaborating spectres drew what life they possessed; and when they parted from you they shuddered back into their nothingness. Where are the plays, where the romances which Maquet and the rest wrote in their own strength? They are forgotten with last year's snows; they have passed into the wide waste-paper basket of the world. You say of D'Artagnan, when severed from his three friends — from Porthos, Athos, and Aramis— 'he felt that he could do nothing, save on the condition that each of these companions yielded to him, if one may so speak, a share of that electric fluid which was his gift from heaven.'

No man of letters ever had so great a measure of that gift as you; none gave of it more freely to all who came — to the chance associate of the hour, as to the characters, all so burly and full-blooded, who flocked from your brain. Thus it was that you failed when you approached the supernatural. Your ghosts had too much flesh and blood, more than the living persons of feebler fancies. A writer so fertile, so rapid, so masterly in the ease with which he worked, could not escape the reproaches of barren envy. Because you overflowed with wit, you could not be 'serious;' Because you created with a word, you were said to scamp your work; because you were never dull, never pedantic, incapable of greed, you were to be censured as desultory, inaccurate, and prodigal.

A generation suffering from mental and physical anaemia — a generation devoted to the 'chiselled phrase,' to accumulated 'documents,' to microscopic porings over human baseness, to minute and disgustful records of what in humanity is least human — may readily bring these unregarded and railing accusations. Like one of the great and good-humoured Giants of Rabelais, you may hear the murmurs from afar, and smile with disdain. To you, who can amuse the world — to you who offer it the fresh air of the highway, the battle-field, and the sea — the world must always return, escaping gladly from the boudoirs and the *bouges*, from the surgeries and hospitals, and dead rooms, of M. Daudet and M. Zola and of the wearisome De Goncourt.

With all your frankness, and with that queer morality of the Camp which, if it swallows a camel now and again, never strains at a gnat, how healthy and wholesome, and even pure, are your romances! You never gloat over sin, nor dabble with an ugly curiosity in the corruptions of sense. The passions in your tales are honourable and brave, the motives are clearly human. Honour, Love, Friendship make the threefold cord, the clue your knights and dames follow through how delightful a labyrinth of adventures! Your greatest books, I take the liberty to maintain, are the Cycle of the Valois ('La Reine Margot, 'La Dame de Montsoreau,' 'Les Quarante-cinq'), and the Cycle of Louis Treize and Louis Quatorze ('Les Trois Mousquetaires,' 'Vingt Ans Aprés,' 'Le Vicomte de Bragelonné); and, beside these two trilogies — a lonely monument, like the sphinx hard by the three pyramids— 'Monte Cristo.'

In these romances how easy it would have been for you to burn incense to that great goddess, Lubricity, whom our critic says your people worship. You had Branto’me, you had Tallemant, you had Rétif, and a dozen others, to furnish materials for scenes of voluptuousness and of blood that would have outdone even the present *naturalistes*. From these alcoves of ‘Les Dames Galantes,’ and from the torture chambers (M. Zola would not have spared us one starting sinew of brave La Mole on the rack) you turned, as Scott would have turned, without a thought of their profitable literary uses. You had other metal to work on: you gave us that superstitious and tragical true love of La Molés, that devotion — how tender and how pure! — of Bussy for the Dame de Montsoreau. You gave us the valour of D’Artagnan, the strength of Porthos, the melancholy nobility of Athos: Honour, Chivalry, and Friendship. I declare your characters are real people to me and old friends. I cannot bear to read the end of ‘Bragelonne,’ and to part with them for ever. ‘Suppose Perthos, Athos, and Aramis should enter with a noiseless swagger, curling their moustaches.’ How we would welcome them, forgiving D’Artagnan even his hateful *fourberie* in the case of Milady. The brilliance of your dialogue has never been approached: there is wit everywhere; repartees glitter and ring like the flash and clink of small-swords. Then what duels are yours! and what inimitable battle-pieces! I know four good fights of one against a multitude, in literature. These are the Death of Gretir the Strong, the Death of Gunnar of Lithend, the Death of Hereward the Wake, the Death of Bussy d’Amboise. We can compare the strokes of the heroic fighting-times with those described in later days; and, upon my word, I do not know that the short sword of Gretir, or the bill of Skarphedin, or the bow of Gunnar was better wielded than the rapier of your Bussy or the sword and shield of Kingsley’s Hereward.

They say your fencing is unhistorical; no doubt it is so, and you knew it. La Mole could not have lunged on Coconnas ‘after deceiving circle;’ for the parry was not invented except by your immortal Chicot, a genius in advance of his time. Even so Hamlet and Laertes would have fought with shields and axes, not with small swords. But what matters this pedantry? In your works we hear the Homeric Muse again, rejoicing in the clash of steel; and even, at times, your very phrases are unconsciously Homeric.

Look at these men of murder, on the Eve of St. Bartholomew, who flee in terror from the Queen’s chamber, and ‘find the door too narrow for their flight:’ the very words were anticipated in a line of the ‘Odyssey’ concerning the massacre of the Wooers. And the picture of Catherine de Medicis, prowling ‘like a wolf among the bodies and the blood,’ in a passage of the Louvre — the picture is taken unwittingly from the ‘Iliad.’ There was in you that reserve of primitive force, that epic grandeur and simplicity of diction. This is the force that animates ‘Monte Cristo,’ the earlier chapters, the prison, and the escape. In later volumes of that romance, methinks, you stoop your wing. Of your dramas I have little room, and less skill, to speak. ‘Antony,’ they tell me, was ‘the greatest literary event of its time,’ was a restoration of the stage. ‘While Victor Hugo needs the cast-off clothes of history, the wardrobe and costume, the sepulchre of Charlemagne, the ghost of Barbarossa, the coffins of Lucretia Borgia, Alexandre Dumas requires no more than a room in an inn, where people meet in riding cloaks, to move the soul with the last degree of terror and of pity.’

The reproach of being amusing has somewhat dimmed your fame — for a moment. The shadow of this tyranny will soon be overpast; and when ‘La Curée and ‘Pot-Bouillé are more forgotten than ‘Le Grand Cyrus,’ men and women — and, above all, boys — will laugh and weep over the page of Alexandre Dumas. Like Scott himself, you take us captive in our childhood. I remember a very idle little boy who was busy with the ‘Three Musketeers’ when he should have been occupied with ‘Wilkins’s Latin Prose.’ ‘Twenty years after’ (alas and more) he is still constant to that gallant company; and, at this very moment, is breathlessly wondering whether Grimand will steal M. de Beaufort out of the Cardinal’s prison.

XIII. To Theocritus

‘Sweet, methinks, is the whispering sound of yonder pine-tree,’ so, Theocritus, with that sweet word *ade**, didst thou begin and strike the keynote of thy songs. ‘Sweet,’ and didst thou find aught of sweet, when thou, like thy Daphnis, didst ‘go down the stream, when the whirling wave closed over the man the Muses loved, the man not hated of the Nymphs?’ Perchance below those waters of death thou didst find, like thine own Hylas, the lovely Nereids waiting thee, Eunice, and Malis, and Nycheia with her April eyes. In the House of Hades, Theocritus, doth there dwell aught that is fair, and can the low light on the fields of asphodel make thee forget thy Sicily? Nay, methinks thou hast not forgotten, and perchance for poets dead there is prepared a place more beautiful than their dreams. It was well for the later minstrels of another day, it was well for Ronsard and Du Bellay to desire a dim Elysium of their own, where the sunlight comes faintly through the shadow of the earth, where the poplars are duskier, and the waters more pale than in the meadows of Anjou.

* Transliterated.

There, in that restful twilight, far remote from war and plot, from sword and fire, and from religions that sharpened the steel and lit the torch, there these learned singers would fain have wandered with their learned ladies, satiated with life and in love with an unearthly quiet. But to thee, Theocritus, no twilight of the Hollow Land was dear, but the high suns of Sicily and the brown cheeks of the country maidens were happiness enough. For thee, therefore, methinks, surely is reserved an Elysium beneath the summer of a far-off system, with stars not ours and alien seasons. There, as Bion prayed, shall Spring, the thrice desirable, be with thee the whole year through, where there is neither frost, nor is the heat so heavy on men, but all is fruitful, and all sweet things blossom, and evenly meted are darkness and dawn. Space is wide, and there be many worlds, and suns enow, and the Sun-god surely has had a care of his own. Little didst thou need, in thy native land, the isle of the three capes, little didst thou need but sunlight on land and sea. Death can have shown thee naught dearer than the fragrant shadow of the pines, where the dry needles of the fir are strewn, or glades where feathered ferns make ‘a couch more soft than Sleep.’ The short grass of the cliffs, too, thou didst love, where thou wouldst lie, and watch, with the tunny watcher till the deep blue sea was broken by the burnished sides of the tunny shoal, and afoam with their gambols in the brine. There the Muses met thee, and the Nymphs, and there Apollo, remembering his old thraldom with Admetus, would lead once more a mortal’s flocks, and listen and learn, Theocritus, while thou, like thine own Comatas, ‘didst sweetly sing.’

There, methinks, I see thee as in thy happy days, ‘reclined on deep beds of fragrant lentisk, lowly strewn, and rejoicing in new stript leaves of the vine, while far above thy head waved many a poplar, many an elm-tree, and close at hand the sacred waters sang from the mouth of the cavern of the nymphs.’ And when night came, methinks thou wouldst flee from the merry company and the dancing girls, from the fading crowds of roses or white violets, from the cottabos, and the minstrelsy, and the Bibline wine, from these thou wouldst slip away into the summer night. Then the beauty of life and of the summer would keep thee from thy couch, and wandering away from Syracuse by the sandhills and the sea, thou wouldst watch the low cabin, roofed with grass, where the fishing-rods of reed were leaning against the door, while the Mediterranean floated up her waves, and filled the waste with sound. There didst thou see thine ancient fishermen rising ere the dawn from their bed of dry sea-weed, and heardst them stirring, drowsy, among their fishing gear, and heardst them tell their dreams.

Or again thou wouldst wander with dusty feet through the ways that the dust makes silent, while the breath of the kine, as they were driven forth with the morning, came fresh to thee, and the trailing dewy branch of honeysuckle struck sudden on thy cheek. Thou wouldst see the Dawn awake in rose and saffron across the waters, and Etna, grey and pale against the sky, and the setting crescent would dip strangely in the glow, on her way to the sea. Then, methinks, thou wouldst murmur, like thine own Simaetha, the love-lorn witch, ‘Farewell, Selene, bright and fair; farewell, ye other stars, that follow the wheels of the quiet Night.’ Nay, surely it was in such an hour that thou didst behold the girl as she burned the laurel leaves and the barley grain, and melted the waxen image, and called on Selene to bring her lover home. Even so, even now, in the islands of Greece, the setting Moon may listen to the prayers of maidens. ‘Bright golden Moon, that now art near the waters, go thou and salute my lover, he that stole my love, and that kissed me, saying “Never will I leave thee.” And lo, he hath left me as men leave a field reaped and gleaned, like a church where none cometh to pray, like a city desolate.’

So the girls still sing in Greece, for though the Temples have fallen, and the wandering shepherds sleep beneath the broken columns of the god’s house in Selinus, yet these ancient fires burn still to the old divinities in the shrines of the hearths of the peasants. It is none of the new creeds that cry, in the dirge of the Sicilian shepherds of our time, ‘Ah, light of mine eyes, what gift shall I send thee, what offering to the other world? The apple fadeth, the quince decayeth, and one by one they perish, the petals of the rose. I will send thee my tears shed on a napkin, and what though it burneth in the flame, if my tears reach thee at the last.'

Yes, little is altered, Theocritus, on these shores beneath the sun, where thou didst wear a tawny skin stripped from the roughest of he-goats, and about thy breast an old cloak buckled with a plaited belt. Thou wert happier there, in Sicily, methinks, and among vines and shadowy lime-trees of Cos, than in the dust, and heat, and noise of Alexandria. What love of fame, what lust of gold tempted thee away from the red cliffs, and grey olives, and wells of black water wreathed with maidenhair?

The music of the rustic flute Kept not for long its happy country tone; Lost it too soon, and learned a stormy note Of men contention tost, of men who groan, Which tasked thy pipe too sore, and tired thy throat — It failed, and thou wast mute!

What hadst *thou* to make in cities, and what could Ptolemies and Princes give thee better than the goat-milk cheese and the Ptelean wine? Thy Muses were meant to be the delight of peaceful men, not of tyrants and wealthy merchants, to whom they vainly went on a begging errand. 'Who will open his door and gladly receive our Muses within his house, who is there that will not send them back again without a gift? And they with naked feet and looks askance come homewards, and sorely they upbraid me when they have gone on a vain journey, and listless again in the bottom of their empty coffer they dwell with heads bowed over their chilly knees, where is their drear abode, when portionless they return.' How far happier was the prisoned goat-herd, Comatas, in the fragrant cedar chest where the blunt-faced bees from the meadow fed him with food of tender flowers, because still the Muse dropped sweet nectar on his lips!

Thou didst leave the neat-herds and the kine, and the oaks of Himera, the galingale hummed over by the bees, and the pine that dropped her cones, and Amaryllis in her cave, and Bombyca with her feet of carven ivory. Thou soughtest the City, and strife with other singers, and the learned write still on thy quarrels with Apollonius and Callimachus, and Antagoras of Rhodes. So ancient are the hatreds of poets, envy, jealousy, and all unkindness.

Not to the wits of Courts couldst thou teach thy rural song, though all these centuries, more than two thousand years, they have laboured to vie with thee. There has come no new pastoral poet, though Virgil copied thee, and Pope, and Phillips, and all the buckram band of the teacup time; and all the modish swains of France have sung against thee, as the *son challenged Athene*. They never knew the shepherd’s life, the long’ winter nights on dried heather by the fire, the long summer days, when over the dry grass all is quiet, and only the insects hum, and the shrunken burn whispers a silver tune. Swains in high-heeled shoon, and lace, shepherdesses in rouge and diamonds, the world is weary of all concerning them, save their images in porcelain, effigies how unlike the golden figures, dedicate to Aphrodite, of Bombyca and Battus. Somewhat, Theocritus, thou hast to answer for, thou that first of men brought the shepherd to Court, and made courtiers wild to go a Maying with the shepherds.

XIV. To Edgar Allan Poe.

Sir, — Your English readers, better acquainted with your poems and romances than with your criticisms, have long wondered at the indefatigable hatred which pursues your memory. You, who knew the men, will not marvel that certain microbes of letters, the survivors of your own generation, still harass your name with their malevolence, while old women twitter out their incredible and heeded slanders in the literary papers of New York. But their persistent animosity does not quite suffice to explain the dislike with which many American critics regard the greatest poet, perhaps the greatest literary genius, of their country. With a commendable patriotism, they are not apt to rate native merit too low; and you, I think, are the only example of an American prophet almost without honour in his own country.

The recent publication of a cold, careful, and in many respects admirable study of your career (‘Edgar Allan Poe,’ by George Woodberry: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., Boston) reminds English readers who have forgotten it, and teaches those who never knew it, that you were, unfortunately, a Reviewer. How unhappy were the necessities, how deplorable the vein, that compelled or seduced a man of your eminence into the dusty and stony ways of contemporary criticism! About the writers of his own generation a leader of that generation should hold his peace, he should neither praise nor blame nor defend his equals; he should not strike one blow at the buzzing ephemerae of letters. The breath of their life is in the columns of ‘Literary Gossip;’ and they should be allowed to perish with the weekly advertisements on which they pasture. Reviewing, of course, there must needs be; but great minds should only criticise the great who have passed beyond the reach of eulogy or fault-finding.

Unhappily, taste and circumstances combined to make you a censor; you vexed a continent, and you are still unforgiven. What ‘irritation of a sensitive nature, chafed by some indefinite sense of wrong,’ drove you (in Mr. Longfellow’s own words) to attack his pure and beneficent Muse we may never ascertain. But Mr. Longfellow forgave you easily; for pardon comes easily to the great. It was the smaller men, the Daweses, Griswolds, and the like, that knew not how to forget. ‘The New Yorkers never forgave him,’ says your latest biographer; and one scarcely marvels at the inveteracy of their malice. It was not individual vanity alone, but the whole literary class that you assailed. ‘As a literary people,’ you wrote, ‘we are one vast perambulating humbug.’ After that declaration of war you died, and left your reputation to the vanities yet writhing beneath your scorn. They are writhing and writing still. He who knows them need not linger over the attacks and defences of your personal character; he will not waste time on calumnies, tale-bearing, private letters, and all the noisome dust which takes so long in settling above your tomb.

For us it is enough to know that you were compelled to live by your pen, and that in an age when the author of ‘To Helen’ and’ The Cask of Amontillado’ was paid at the rate of a dollar a column. When such poverty was the mate of such pride as yours, a misery more deep than that of Burns, an agony longer than Chatterton’s, were inevitable and assured. No man was less fortunate than you in the moment of his birth — *infelix opportunitate vitae*. Had you lived a generation later, honour, wealth, applause, success in Europe and at home, would all have been yours. Within thirty years so great a change has passed over the profession of letters in America; and it is impossible to estimate the rewards which would have fallen to Edgar Poe, had chance made him the contemporary of Mark Twain and of ‘Called Back.’ It may be that your criticisms helped to bring in the new era, and to lift letters out of the reach of quite unlettered scribblers. Though not a scholar, at least you had a respect for scholarship. You might still marvel over such words as ‘objectional’ in the new biography of yourself, and might ask what is meant by such a sentence as ‘his connection with it had inured to his own benefit by the frequent puffs of himself,’ and so forth.

Best known in your own day as a critic, it is as a poet and a writer of short tales that you must live. But to discuss your few and elaborate poems is a waste of time, so completely does your own brief definition of poetry, ‘the rhythmic creation of the beautiful,’ exhaust your theory, and so perfectly is the theory illustrated by the poems. Natural bent, and reaction against the example of Mr. Longfellow, combined to make you too intolerant of what you call the ‘didactic’ element in verse. Even if morality be not seven-eighths of our life (the exact proportion as at present estimated), there was a place even on the Hellenic Parnassus for gnomic bards, and theirs in the nature of the case must always be the largest public.

‘Music is the perfection of the soul or the idea of poetry,’ so you wrote; ‘the vagueness of exaltation aroused by a sweet air (which should be indefinite and never too strongly suggestive), is precisely what we should aim at in poetry.’ You aimed at that mark, and struck it again and again, notably in ‘Helen, thy beauty is to me,’ in ‘The Haunted Palace,’ ‘The Valley of Unrest,’ and ‘The City in the Sea.’ But by some Nemesis which might, perhaps, have been foreseen, you are, to the world, the poet of one poem— ‘The Raven:’ a piece in which the music is highly artificial, and the ‘exaltation’ (what there is of it) by no means particularly ‘vague.’ So a portion of the public know little of Shelley but the ‘Skylark,’ and those two incongruous birds, the lark and the raven, bear each of them a poet’s name *vivu’ per ora virum*. Your theory of poetry, if accepted, would make you (after the author of ‘Kubla Khan’) the foremost of the poets of the world; at no long distance would come Mr. William Morris as he was when he wrote ‘Golden Wings,’ ‘The Blue Closet,’ and ‘The Sailing of the Sword;’ and, close up, Mr. Lear, the author of ‘The Yongi Bongi Bo,’ and the lay of the ‘Jumblies.’

On the other hand Homer would sink into the limbo to which you consigned Moliére. If we may judge a theory by its results, when compared with the deliberate verdict of the world, your aesthetic does not seem to hold water. The ‘Odyssey’ is not really inferior to ‘Ulalume,’ as it ought to be if your doctrine of poetry were correct, nor ‘Le Festin de Pierré to ‘Undine.’ Yet you deserve the praise of having been constant, in your poetic practice, to your poetic principles — principles commonly deserted by poets who, like Wordsworth, have published their aesthetic system. Your pieces are few; and Dr. Johnson would have called you, like Fielding, ‘a barren rascal.’ But how can a writer’s verses be numerous if with him, as with you, ‘poetry is not a pursuit but a passion... which cannot at will be excited with an eye to the paltry compensations or the more paltry commendations of mankind!’ Of you it may be said, more truly than Shelley said it of himself, that ‘to ask you for anything human, is like asking at a gin-shop for a leg of mutton.’

Humanity must always be, to the majority of men, the true stuff of poetry; and only a minority will thank you for that rare music which (like the strains of the fiddler in the story) is touched on a single string, and on an instrument fashioned from the spoils of the grave. You chose, or you were destined

> To vary from the kindly race of men;

and the consequences, which wasted your life, pursue your reputation. For your stories has been reserved a boundless popularity, and that highest success — the success of a perfectly sympathetic translation. By this time, of course, you have made the acquaintance of your translator, M. Charles Baudelaire, who so strenuously shared your views about Mr. Emerson and the Transcendentalists, and who so energetically resisted all those ideas of ‘progress’ which ‘came from Hell or Boston.’ On this point, however, the world continues to differ from you and M. Baudelaire, and perhaps there is only the choice between our optimism and universal suicide or universal opium-eating. But to discuss your ultimate ideas is perhaps a profitless digression from the topic of your prose romances.

An English critic (probably a Northerner at heart) has described them as ‘Hawthorne and delirium tremens.’ I am not aware that extreme orderliness, masterly elaboration, and unchecked progress towards a predetermined effect are characteristics of the visions of delirium. If they be, then there is a deal of truth in the criticism, and a good deal of delirium tremens in your style. But your ingenuity, your completeness, your occasional luxuriance of fancy and wealth of jewel-like words, are not, perhaps, gifts which Mr. Hawthorne had at his command. He was a great writer — the greatest writer in prose fiction whom America has produced. But you and he have not much in common, except a certain mortuary turn of mind and a taste for gloomy allegories about the workings of conscience.

I forbear to anticipate your verdict about the latest essays of American fiction. These by no means follow in the lines which you laid down about brevity and the steady working to one single effect. Probably you would not be very tolerant (tolerance was not your leading virtue) of Mr. Roe, now your countrymen's favourite novelist. He is long, he is didactic, he is eminently uninspired. In the works of one who is, what you were called yourself, a Bostonian, you would admire, at least, the acute observation, the subtlety, and the unfailing distinction. But, destitute of humour as you unhappily but undeniably were, you would miss, I fear, the charm of 'Daisy Miller.' You would admit the unity of effect secured in 'Washington Square,' though that effect is as remote as possible from the terror of 'The House of Usher' or the vindictive triumph of 'The Cask of Amontillado.'

Farewell, farewell, thou sombre and solitary spirit: a genius tethered to the hack-work of the press, a gentleman among *canaille*, a poet among poetasters, dowered with a scholar's taste without a scholar's training, embittered by his sensitive scorn, and all unsupported by his consolations.

XV. To Sir Walter Scott, Bart.

Rodono, St. Mary’s Loch: Sept. 5, 1885.

Sir, — In your biography it is recorded that you not only won the favour of all men and women; but that a domestic fowl conceived an affection for you, and that a pig, by his will, had never been severed from your company. If some Circe had repeated in my case her favourite miracle of turning mortals into swine, and had given me a choice, into that fortunate pig, blessed among his race, would I have been converted! You, almost alone among men of letters, still, like a living friend, win and charm us out of the past; and if one might call up a poet, as the scholiast tried to call Homer, from the shades, who would not, out of all the rest, demand some hours of your society? Who that ever meddled with letters, what child of the irritable race, possessed even a tithe of your simple manliness, of the heart that never knew a touch of jealousy, that envied no man his laurels, that took honour and wealth as they came, but never would have deplored them had you missed both and remained but the Border sportsman and the Border antiquary?

Were the word ‘genial’ not so much profaned, were it not misused in easy good-nature, to extenuate lettered and sensual indolence, that worn old term might be applied, above all men, to ‘the Shirra.’ But perhaps we scarcely need a word (it would be seldom in use) for a character so rare, or rather so lonely, in its nobility and charm as that of Walter Scott. Here, in the heart of your own country, among your own grey round-shouldered hills (each so like the other that the shadow of one falling on its neighbour exactly outlines that neighbour’s shape), it is of you and of your works that a native of the Forest is most frequently brought in mind. All the spirits of the river and the hill, all the dying refrains of ballad and the fading echoes of story, all the memory of the wild past, each legend of burn and loch, seem to have combined to inform your spirit, and to secure themselves an immortal life in your song. It is through you that we remember them; and in recalling them, as in treading each hillside in this land, we again remember you and bless you.

It is not ‘Sixty Years Since’ the echo of Tweed among his pebbles fell for the last time on your ear; not sixty years since, and how much is altered! But two generations have passed; the lad who used to ride from Edinburgh to Abbotsford, carrying new books for you, and old, is still vending, in George Street, old books and new. Of politics I have not the heart to speak. Little joy would you have had in most that has befallen since the Reform Bill was passed, to the chivalrous cry of ‘burke Sir Walter.’ We are still very Radical in the Forest, and you were taken away from many evils to come. How would the cheek of Walter Scott, or of Leyden, have blushed at the names of Majuba, The Soudan, Maiwand, and many others that recall political cowardice or military incapacity! On the other hand, who but you could have sung the dirge of Gordon, or wedded with immortal verse the names of Hamilton (who fell with Cavagnari), of the two Stewarts, of many another clansman, brave among the bravest! Only he who told how The stubborn spearmen still made good Their dark impenetrable wood could have fitly rhymed a score of feats of arms in which, as at M’Neill’s Zareeba and at Abu Klea, Groom fought like noble, squire like knight, As fearlessly and well.

Ah, Sir, the hearts of the rulers may wax faint, and the voting classes may forget that they are Britons; but when it comes to blows our fighting men might cry, with Leyden, My name is little Jock Elliot, And wha daur meddle wi’ me!

Much is changed, in the country-side as well as in the country; but much remains. The little towns of your time are populous and excessively black with the smoke of factories — not, I fear, at present very flourishing. In Galashiels you still see the little change-house and the cluster of cottages round the Laird’s lodge, like the clachan of Tully Veolan. But these plain remnants of the old Scotch towns are almost buried in a multitude of ‘smoky dwarf houses’ — a living poet, Mr. Matthew Arnold, has found the fitting phrase for these dwellings, once for all. All over the Forest he waters are dirty and poisoned: I think they are filthiest below Hawick; but this may be mere local prejudice in a Selkirk man. To keep them clean costs money; and, though improvements are often promised, I cannot see much change for the better. Abbotsford, luckily, is above Galashiels, and only receives the dirt and dyes of Selkirk, Peebles, Walkerburn, and Innerlethen. On the other hand, your ill-omened later dwelling, ‘the unhappy palace of your race,’ is overlooked by villas that prick a cockney ear among their larches, hotels of the future. Ah, Sir, Scotland is a strange place. Whisky is exiled from some of our caravanserais, and they have banished Sir John Barleycorn. It seems as if the views of the excellent critic (who wrote your life lately, and said you had left no descendants, *le pauvre homme*) were beginning to prevail. This pious biographer was greatly shocked by that capital story about the keg of whisky that arrived at the Liddesdale farmer’s during family prayers. Your Toryism also was an offence to him.

Among these vicissitudes of things and the overthrow of customs, let us be thankful that, beyond the reach of the manufacturers, the Border country remains as kind and homely as ever. I looked at Ashiestiel some days ago: the house seemed just as it may have been when you left it for Abbotsford, only there was a lawn-tennis net on the lawn, the hill on the opposite bank of the Tweed was covered to the crest with turnips, and the burn did not sing below the little bridge, for in this arid summer the burn was dry. But there was still a grilse that rose to a big March brown in the shrunken stream below Elibank. This may not interest you, who styled yourself No fisher, But a well-wisher To the game!

Still, as when you were thinking over Marmion, a man might have ‘grand gallops among the hills’ — those grave wastes of heather and bent that sever all the watercourses and roll their sheep-covered pastures from Dollar Law to White Combe, and from White Combe to the Three Brethren Cairn and the Windburg and Skelf-hill Pen. Yes, Teviotdale is pleasant still, and there is not a drop of dye in the water, *purior electro*, of Yarrow. St. Mary’s Loch lies beneath me, smitten with wind and rain — the St. Mary’s of North and of the Shepherd. Only the trout, that see a myriad of artificial flies, are shyer than of yore. The Shepherd could no longer fill a cart up Meggat with trout so much of a size that the country people took them for herrings.

The grave of Piers Cockburn is still not desecrated: hard by it lies, within a little wood; and beneath that slab of old sandstone, and the graven letters, and the sword and shield, sleep ‘Piers Cockburn and Marjory his wife.’ Not a hundred yards off was the castle door where they hanged him; this is the tomb of the ballad, and the lady that buried him rests now with her wild lord.

Oh, wat ye no my heart was sair, When I happit the mouls on his yellow hair; Oh, wat ye no my heart was wae, When I turned about and went my way! (1) Here too hearts have broken, and there is a sacredness in the shadow and beneath these clustering berries of the rowan-trees. That sacredness, that reverent memory of our old land, it is always and inextricably blended with our memories, with our thoughts, with our love of you. Scotchmen, methinks, who owe so much to you, owe you most for the example you gave of the beauty of a life of honour, showing them what, by Heaven’s blessing, a Scotchman still might be.

(1) Lord Napier and Ettrick points out to me that, unluckily, the tradition is erroneous. Piers was not executed at all. William Cockburn suffered in Edinburgh. But the *Border Minstrelsy* overrides history.

Criminal Trials in Scotland by Robert Pitcairn, Esq. Vol. i. part I. , A. D. 1530. 17 Jac. V.

May 16. William Cokburne of Henderland, convicted (in presence of the King) of high treason committed by him in bringing Alexander Forestare and his son, Englishmen, to the plundering of Archibald Somervile; and for treasunably bringing certain Englishmen to the lands of Glenquhome; and for common theft, common reset of theft, out-putting and in-putting thereof. Sentence. For which causes and crimes he has forfeited his life, lands, and goods, movable and immovable; which shall be escheated to the King. Beheaded.

Words, empty and unavailing — for what words of ours can speak our thoughts or interpret our affections! From you first, as we followed the deer with King James, or rode with William of Deloraine on his midnight errand, did we learn what Poetry means and ali the happiness that is in the gift of song. This and more than may be told you gave us, that are not forgetful, not ungrateful, though our praise be unequal to our gratitude. *Fungor inani munere!*

XVI. To Eusebius of Caesarea.

(Concerning the Gods of the Heathen.)

Touching the Gods of the Heathen, most reverend Father, thou art not ignorant that even now, as in the time of thy probation on earth, there is great dissension. That these feigned Deities and idols, the work of men's hands, are no longer worshipped thou knowest; neither do men eat meat offered to idols. Even as spoke that last Oracle which murmured forth, the latest and the only true voice from Delphi, even so 'the fair-wrought court divine hath fallen; no more hath Phoebus his home, no more his laurel-bough, nor the singing well of water; nay, the sweet-voiced water is silent.' The fane is ruinous, and the images of men's idolatry are dust.

Nevertheless, most worshipful, men do still dispute about the beginnings of those sinful Gods: such as Zeus, Athene, and Dionysus: and marvel how first they won their dominion over the souls of the foolish peoples. Now, concerning these things there is not one belief, but many; howbeit, there are two main kinds of opinion. One sect of philosophers believes — as thyself, with heavenly learning, didst not vainly persuade — that the Gods were the inventions of wild and bestial folk, who, long before cities were builded or life was honourably ordained, fashioned forth evil spirits in their own savage likeness; ay, or in the likeness of the very beasts that perish. To this judgment, as it is set forth in thy Book of the Preparation for the Gospel, I, humble as I am, do give my consent. But on the other side are many and learned men, chiefly of the tribes of the Alemanni, who have almost conquered the whole inhabited world. These, being unwilling to suppose that the Hellenes were in bondage to superstitions handed down from times of utter darkness and a bestial life, do chiefly hold with the heathen philosophers, even with the writers whom thou, most venerable, didst confound with thy wisdom and chasten with the scourge of small cords of thy wit.

Thus, like the heathen, our doctors and teachers maintain that the Gods of the nations were, in the beginning, such pure natural creatures as the blue sky, the sun, the air, the bright dawn, and the fire; but, as time went on, men, forgetting the meaning of their own speech and no longer understanding the tongue of their own fathers, were misled and beguiled into fashioning all those lamentable tales: as that Zeus, for love of mortal women, took the shape of a bull, a ram, a serpent, an ant, an eagle, and sinned in such wise as it is a shame even to speak of.

Behold, then, most worshipful, how these doctors and learned men argue, even like the philosophers of the heathen whom thou didst confound. For they declare the Gods to have been natural elements, sun and sky and storm, even as did thy opponents; and, like them, as thou saidst, ‘they are nowise at one with each other in their explanations.’ For of old some boasted that Hera was the Air; and some that she signified the love of woman and man; and some that she was the waters above the Earth; and others that she was the Earth beneath the waters; and yet others that she was the Night, for that Night is the shadow of Earth: as if, forsooth, the men who first worshipped Hera had understanding of these things! And when Hera and Zeus quarrel unseemly (as Homer declareth), this meant (said the learned in thy days) no more than the strife and confusion of the elements, and was not in the beginning an idle slanderous tale.

To all which, most worshipful, thou didst answer wisely: saying that Hera could not be both night, and earth, and water, and air, and the love of sexes, and the confusion of the elements; but that all these opinions were vain dreams, and the guesses of the learned. And why — thou saidst — even if the Gods were pure natural creatures, are such foul things told of them in the Mysteries as it is not fitting for me to declare. ‘These wanderings, and drinkings, and loves, and corruptions, that would be shameful in men, why,’ thou saidst, ‘were they attributed to the natural elements; and wherefore did the Gods constantly show themselves, like the sorcerers called were-wolves, in the shape of the perishable beasts?’ But, mainly, thou didst argue that, till the philosophers of the heathen were agreed among themselves, not all contradicting each the other, they had no semblance of a sure foundation for their doctrine.

To all this and more, most worshipful Father, I know not what the heathen answered thee. But, in our time, the learned men who stand to it that the heathen Gods were in the beginning the pure elements, and that the nations, forgetting their first love and the significance of their own speech, became confused and were betrayed into foul stories about the pure Gods — these learned men, I say, agree no whit among themselves. Nay, they differ one from another, not less than did Plutarch and Porphyry and Theagenes, and the rest whom thou didst laugh to scorn. Bear with me, Father, while I tell thee how the new Plutarchs and Porphyrys do contend among themselves; and yet these differences of theirs they call ‘Science’!

Consider the goddess Athene, who sprang armed from the head of Zeus, even as — among the fables of the poor heathen folk of seas thou never knewest — goddesses are fabled to leap out from the armpits or feet of their fathers. Thou must know that what Plato, in the ‘Cratylus,’ made Socrates say in jest, the learned among us practise in sad earnest. For, when they wish to explain the nature of any God, they first examine his name, and torment the letters thereof, arranging and altering them according to their will, and flying off to the speech of the Indians and Medes and Chaldeans, and other Barbarians, if Greek will not serve their turn. How saith Socrates? ‘I bethink me of a very new and ingenious idea that occurs to me; and, if I do not mind, I shall be wiser than I should be by to-morrow’s dawn. My notion is that we may put in and pull out letters at pleasure and alter the accents.’ Even so do our learned — not at pleasure, maybe, but according to certain fixed laws (so they declare); yet none the more do they agree among themselves. And I deny not that they discover many things true and good to be known; but, as touching the names of the Gods, their learning, as it standeth, is confusion. Look, then, at the goddess Athene: taking one example out of hundreds. We have dwelling in our coasts Muellerus, the most erudite of the doctors of the Alemanni, and the most golden-mouthed. Concerning Athene, he saith that her name is none other than, in the ancient tongue of the Brachmanae, *Ahana’*, which, being interpreted, means the Dawn. ‘And that the morning light,’ saith he, ‘offers the best starting-point; for the later growth of Athene has been proved, I believe, beyond the reach of doubt or even cavil.’ (1)

(1) ‘The Lesson of Jupiter.’ — *Nineteenth Century*, October, 1885.

Yet this same doctor candidly lets us know that another of his nation, the witty Benfeius, hath devised another sense and origin of Athene, taken from the speech of the old Medes. But Muellerus declares to us that whosoever shall examine the contention of Benfeius ‘will be bound, in common honesty, to confess that it is untenable.’ This, Father, is one for Benfeius, as the saying goes. And as Muellerus holds that these matters ‘admit of almost mathematical precision,’ it would seem that Benfeius is but a *Dummkopf*, as the Alemanni say, in their own language, when they would be pleasant among themselves.

Now, wouldst thou credit it? despite the mathematical plainness of the facts, other Alemanni agree neither with Muellerus, nor yet with Benfeius, and will neither hear that Athene was the Dawn, nor yet that she is ‘the feminine of the Zend *Thra’eta’na athwya’na*.’ Lo, you! how Prellerus goes about to show that her name is drawn not from *Ahana’* and the old Brachmanae, nor *athwya’na* and the old Medes, but from ‘the root *aith**, whence *aither**, the air, or *ath**, whence *anthos**, a flower.’ Yea, and Prellerus will have it that no man knows the verity of this matter. None the less he is very bold, and will none of the Dawn; but holds to it that Athene was, from the first, ‘the clear pure height of the Air, which is exceeding pure in Attica.’

Now, Father, as if all this were not enough, comes one Roscherus in, with a mighty great volume on the Gods, and Furtwaenglerus, among others, for his ally. And these doctors will neither with Rueckertus and Hermannus, take Athene for ‘wisdom in person;’ nor with Welckerus and Prellerus, for ‘the goddess of air;’ nor even, with Muellerus and mathematical certainty, for ‘the Morning-Red:’ but they say that Athene is the ‘black thunder-cloud, and the lightning that leapeth therefrom’! I make no doubt that other Alemanni are of other minds: *quot Alemanni tot sententiae*.

Yea, as thou saidst of the learned heathen, *Oude gar allelois symphona physiologousis*. Yet these disputes of theirs they call ‘Science’! But if any man says to the learned: ‘Best of men, you are erudite, and laborious and witty; but, till you are more of the same mind, your opinions cannot be styled knowledge. Nay, they are at present of no avail whereon to found any doctrine concerning the Gods’ — that man is railed at for his ‘mean’ and ‘weak’ arguments.

* Transliterated from Greek.

Was it thus, Father, that the heathen railed against thee? But I must still believe, with thee, that these evil tales of the Gods were invented ‘when man’s life was yet brutish and wandering’ (as is the life of many tribes that even now tell like tales), and were maintained in honour of the later Greeks ‘because none dared alter the ancient beliefs of his ancestors.’ Farewell, Father; and all good be with thee, wishes thy well-wisher and thy disciple.

XVII. To Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Sir, — In your lifetime on earth you were not more than commonly curious as to what was said by ‘the herd of mankind,’ if I may quote your own phrase. It was that of one who loved his fellow-men, but did not in his less enthusiastic moments overestimate their virtues and their discretion. Removed so far away from our hubbub, and that world where, as you say, we ‘pursue our serious folly as of old,’ you are, one may guess, but moderately concerned about the fate of your writings and your reputation. As to the first, you have somewhere said, in one of your letters, that the final judgment on your merits as a poet is in the hands of posterity, and that you fear the verdict will be ‘Guilty,’ and the sentence ‘Death.’ Such apprehensions cannot have been fixed or frequent in the mind of one whose genius burned always with a clearer and steadier flame to the last. The jury of which you spoke has met: a mixed jury and a merciful. The verdict is ‘Well done,’ and the sentence Immortality of Fame. There have been, there are, dissenters; yet probably they will be less and less heard as the years go on.

One judge, or juryman, has made up his mind that prose was your true province, and that your letters will outlive your lays. I know not whether it was the same or an equally well-inspired critic, who spoke of your most perfect lyrics (so Beau Brummell spoke of his ill-tied cravats) as ‘a gallery of your failures.’ But the general voice does not echo these utterances of a too subtle intellect. At a famous University (not your own) once existed a band of men known as ‘The Trinity Sniffers.’ Perhaps the spirit of the sniffer may still inspire some of the jurors who from time to time make themselves heard in your case. The ‘Quarterly Review’, I fear, is still unreconciled. It regards your attempts as tainted by the spirit of ‘The Liberal Movement in English Literature;’ and it is impossible, alas! to maintain with any success that you were a Throne and Altar Tory. At Oxford you are forgiven; and the old rooms where you let the oysters burn (was not your founder, King Alfred, once guilty of similar negligence?) are now shown to pious pilgrims.

But Conservatives, ‘t is rumoured, are still averse to your opinions, and are believed to prefer to yours the works of the Reverend Mr. Keble, and, indeed, of the clergy in general. But, in spite of all this, your poems, like the affections of the true lovers in Theocritus, are still ‘in the mouths of all, and chiefly on the lips of the young.’ It is in your lyrics that you live, and I do not mean that every one could pass an examination in the plot of “Prometheus Unbound” Talking of this piece, by the way, a Cambridge critic finds that it reveals in you a hankering after life in a cave — doubtless an unconsciously inherited memory from cave-man. Speaking of cave-man reminds me that you once spoke of deserting song for prose, and of producing a history of the moral, intellectual, and political elements in human society, which, we now agree, began, as Asia would fain have ended, in a cave.

Fortunately you gave us ‘Adonai, and ‘Hellas’ instead of this treatise, and we have now successfully written the natural history of Man for ourselves. Science tells us that before becoming cave-dweller he was a brute; Experience daily proclaims that he constantly reverts to his original condition. *L’homme est un méchant animal*, in spite of your boyish efforts to add pretty girls ‘to the list of the good, the disinterested, and the free.’

Ah, not in the wastes of Speculation, nor the sterile din of Politics, were ‘the haunts meet for thee.’ Watching the yellow bees in the ivy bloom, and the reflected pine forest in the water-pools, watching the sunset as it faded, and the dawn as it fired, and weaving all fair and fleeting things into a tissue where light and music were at one, that was the task of Shelley! ‘To ask you for anything human,’ you said, ‘was like asking for a leg of mutton at a gin-shop.’ Nay, rather, like asking Apollo and Hebe, in the Olympian abodes, to give us beef for ambrosia, and port for nectar. Each poet gives what he has, and what he can offer; you spread before us fairy bread, and enchanted wine, and shall we turn away, with a sneer, because, out of all the multitudes of singers, one is spiritual and strange, one has seen Artemis unveiled? One, like Anchises, has been beloved of the Goddess, and his eyes, when he looks on the common works of common men, are, like the eyes of Anchises, blind with excess of light. Let Shelley sing of what he saw, what none saw but Shelley!

Notwithstanding the popularity of your poems (the most romantic of things didactic), our world is no better than the world you knew. This will disappoint you, who had ‘a passion for reforming it.’ Kings and priests are very much where you left them. True, we have a poet who assails them, at large, frequently and fearlessly; yet Mr. Swinburne has never, like ‘kind Hunt,’ been in prison, nor do we fear for him a charge of treason. Moreover, chemical science has discovered new and ingenious ways of destroying principalities and powers. You would be interested in the methods, but your peaceful Revolutionism, which disdained physical force, would regret their application.

Our foreign affairs are not in a state which even you would consider satisfactory; for we have just had to contend with a Revolt of Islam, and we still find in Russia exactly the qualities which you recognised and described. We have a great statesman whose methods and eloquence somewhat resemble those you attribute to Laon and Prince Athanase. Alas! he is a youth of more than seventy summers; and not in his time will Prometheus retire to a cavern and pass a peaceful millennium in twining buds and beams.

In domestic affairs most of the Reforms you desired to see have been carried. Ireland has received Emancipation, and almost everything else she can ask for. I regret to say that she is still unhappy; her wounds unstanched, her wrongs unforgiven. At home we have enfranchised the paupers, and expect the most happy results. Paupers (as Mr. Gladstone says) are ‘our own flesh and blood,’ and, as we compel them to be vaccinated, so we should permit them to vote. Is it a dream that Mr. Jesse Collings (how you would have loved that man!) has a Bill for extending the priceless boon of the vote to inmates of Pauper Lunatic Asylums? This may prove that last element in the Elixir of political happiness which we have sought in vain. Atheists, you will regret to hear, are still unpopular; but the new Parliament has done something for Mr. Bradlaugh. You should have known our Charles while you were in the ‘Queen Mab’ stage. I fear you wandered, later, from his robust condition of intellectual development.

As to your private life, many biographers contrive to make public as much of it as possible. Your name, even in life, was, alas! a kind of *ducdame* to bring people of no very great sense into your circle. This curious fascination has attracted round your memory a feeble folk of commentators, biographers, anecdotists, and others of the tribe. They swarm round you like carrion-flies round a sensitive plant, like night-birds bewildered by the sun. Men of sense and taste have written on you, indeed; but your weaker admirers are now disputing as to whether it was your heart, or a less dignified and most troublesome organ, which escaped the flames of the funeral pyre. These biographers fight terribly among themselves, and vainly prolong the memory of ‘old unhappy far-off things, and *sorrows* long ago.’ Let us leave them and their squabbles over what is unessential, their raking up of old letters and old stories.

The town has lately yawned a weary laugh over an enemy of yours, who has produced two heavy volumes, styled by him ‘The Real Shelley.’ The real Shelley, it appears, was Shelley as conceived of by a worthy gentleman so prejudiced and so skilled in taking up things by the wrong handle that I wonder he has not made a name in the exact science of Comparative Mythology. He criticises you in the spirit of that Christian Apologist, the Englishman who called you ‘a damned Atheist’ in the post-office at Pisa. He finds that you had ‘a little turned-up nose,’ a feature no less important in his system than was the nose of Cleopatra (according to Pascal) in the history of the world. To be in harmony with your nose, you were a ‘phenomenal’ liar, an ill-bred, ill-born, profligate, partly insane, an evil-tempered monster, a self-righteous person, full of self-approbation — in fact you were the Beast of this pious Apocalypse. Your friend Dr. Lind was an embittered and scurrilous apothecary, ‘a bad old man.’ But enough of this inopportune brawler. For Humanity, of which you hoped such great things, Science predicts extinction in a night of Frost. The sun will grow cold, slowly — as slowly as doom came on Jupiter in your ‘Prometheus,’ but as surely. If this nightmare be fulfilled, perhaps the Last Man, in some fetid hut on the ice-bound Equator, will read. by a fading lamp charged with the dregs of the oil in his cruse, the poetry of Shelley. So reading, he, the latest of his race, will not wholly be deprived of those sights which alone (says the nameless Greek) make life worth enduring. In your verse he will have sight of sky, and sea, and cloud, the gold of dawn and the gloom of earthquake and eclipse, he will be face to face, in fancy, with the great powers that are dead, sun, and ocean, and the illimitable azure of the heavens. In Shelley’s poetry, while Man endures, all those will survive; for your ‘voice is as the voice of winds and tides,’ and perhaps more deathless than all of these, and only perishable with the perishing of the human spirit.

XVIII. To Monsieur de Moliére, Valet de Chambre du Roi.

Monsieur, — With what awe does a writer venture into the presence of the great Moliére! As a courtier in your time would scratch humbly (with his comb!) at the door of the Grand Monarch, so I presume to draw near your dwelling among the Immortals. You, like the king who, among all his titles, has now none so proud as that of the friend of Moliére — you found your dominions small, humble, and distracted; you raised them to the dignity of an empire: what Louis XIV. did for France you achieved for French comedy; and the ba’ton of Scapin still wields its sway though the sword of Louis was broken at Blenheim. For the King the Pyrenees, or so he fancied, ceased to exist; by a more magnificent conquest you overcame the Channel. If England vanquished your country’s arms, it was through you that France *ferum victorem cepit*, and restored the dynasty of Comedy to the land whence she had been driven. Ever since Dryden borrowed ‘L’Etourdi,’ our tardy apish nation has lived (in matters theatrical) on the spoils of the wits of France.

In one respect, to be sure, times and manners have altered. While you lived, taste kept the French drama pure; and it was the congenial business of English playwrights to foist their rustic grossness and their large Fescennine jests into the urban page of Moliére. Now they are diversely occupied; and it is their affair to lend modesty where they borrow wit, and to spare a blush to the cheek of the Lord Chamberlain. But still, as has ever been our wont since Etherege saw, and envied, and imitated your successes — still we pilfer the plays of France, and take our *bien*, as you said in your lordly manner, wherever we can find it. We are the privateers of the stage; and it is rarely, to be sure, that a comedy pleases the town which has not first been ‘cut out’ from the countrymen of Moliére. Why this should be, and what ‘tenebriferous star’ (as Paracelsus, your companion in the ‘Dialogues des Morts,’ would have believed) thus darkens the sun of English humour, we know not; but certainly our dependence on France is the sincerest tribute to you. Without you, neither Rotrou, nor Corneille, nor ‘a wilderness of monkeys’ like Scarron, could ever have given Comedy to France and restored her to Europe.

While we owe to you, Monsieur, the beautiful advent of Comedy, fair and beneficent as Peace in the play of Aristophanes, it is still to you that we must turn when of comedies we desire the best. If you studied with daily and nightly care the works of Plautus and Terence, if you ‘let no musty *bouquin* escape you’ (so your enemies declared), it was to some purpose that you laboured. Shakespeare excepted, you eclipsed all who came before you; and from those that follow, however fresh, we turn: we turn from Regnard and Beaumarchais, from Sheridan: and Goldsmith, from Musset and Pailleron and Labiche, to that crowded world of your creations. ‘Creations’ one may well say, for you anticipated Nature herself: you gave us, before she did, in Alceste a Rousseau who was a gentleman not a lacquey; in a *mot* of Don Juan’s, the secret of the new Religion and the watchword of Comte, *l’amour de l’humanité*.

Before you where can we find, save in Rabelais, a Frenchman with humour; and where, unless it be in Montaigne, the wise philosophy of a secular civilisalion? With a heart the most tender, delicate, loving, and generous, a heart often in agony and torment, you had to make life endurable (we cannot doubt it) without any whisper of promise, or hope, or warning from Religion. Yes, in an age when the greatest mind of all, the mind of Pascal, proclaimed that the only help was in voluntary blindness, that the only chance was to hazard all on a bet at evens, you, Monsieur, refused to be blinded, or to pretend to see what you found invisible.

In Religion you beheld no promise of help. When the Jesuits and Jansenists of your time saw, each of them, in Tartufe the portrait of their rivals (as each of the laughable Marquises in your play conceived that you were girding at his neighbour), you all the while were mocking every credulous excess of Faith. In the sermons preached to Agnés we surely hear your private laughter; in the arguments for credulity which are presented to Don Juan by his valet we listen to the eternal self-defence of superstition. Thus, desolate of belief, you sought for the permanent element of life — precisely where Pascal recognised all that was most fleeting and unsubstantial — in *divertissement*; in the pleasure of looking on, a spectator of the accidents of existence, an observer of the follies of mankind. Like the Gods of the Epicurean, you seem to regard our life as a play that is played, as a comedy; yet how often the tragic note comes in! What pity, and in the laughter what an accent of tears, as of rain in the wind! No comedian has been so kindly and human as you; none has had a heart, like you, to feel for his butts, and to leave them sometimes, in a sense, superior to their tormentors. Sganarelle, M. de Pourceaugnac, George Dandin, and the rest — our sympathy, somehow, is with them, after all; and M. de Pourceaugnac is a gentleman, despite his misadventures.

Though triumphant Youth and malicious Love in your plays may batter and defeat Jealousy and Old Age, yet they have not all the victory, or you did not mean that they should win it. They go off with laughter, and their victim with a grimace; but in him we, that are past our youth, behold an actor in an unending tragedy, the defeat of a generation. Your sympathy is not wholly with the dogs that are having their day; you can throw a bone or a crust to the dog that has had his, and has been taught that it is over and ended. Yourself not unlearned in shame, in jealousy, in endurance of the wanton pride of men (how could the poor player and the husband of Céliméne be untaught in that experience?), you never sided quite heartily, as other comedians have done, with young prosperity and rank and power.

I am not the first who has dared to approach you in the Shades; for just after your own death the author of ‘Les Dialogues des Morts’ gave you Paracelsus as a companion, and the author of ‘Le Jugement de Pluton’ made the ‘mighty warder’ decide that ‘Moliére should not talk philosophy.’ These writers, like most of us, feel that, after all, the comedies of the *Contemplateur*, of the translator of Lucretius, are a philosophy of life in themselves, and that in them we read the lessons of human experience writ small and clear.

What comedian but Moliére has combined with such depths — with the indignation of Alceste, the self-deception of Tartufe, the blasphemy of Don Juan — such wildness of irresponsible mirth, such humour, such wit! Even now, when more than two hundred years have sped by, when so much water has flowed under the bridges and has borne away so many trifles of contemporary mirth (*cetera fluminis ritu feruntur*), even now we never laugh so well as when Mascarille and Vadius and M. Jourdain tread the boards in the Maison de Moliére. Since those mobile dark brows of yours ceased to make men laugh, since your voice denounced the ‘demoniac’ manner of contemporary tragedians, I take leave to think that no player has been more worthy to wear the *canons* of Mascarille or the gown of Vadius than M. Coquelin of the Comédie Francaise. In him you have a successor to your Mascarille so perfect, that the ghosts of play-goers of your date might cry, could they see him, that Moliére had come again. But, with all respect to the efforts of the fair, I doubt if Mdlle. Barthet, or *Mdme.* Croizette herself, would reconcile the town to the loss of the fair De Brie, and Madeleine, and the first, the true Céliméne, Armande. Yet had you ever so merry a *soubrette* as *Mdme.* Samary, so exquisite a Nicole?

Denounced, persecuted, and buried hugger-mugger two hundred years ago, you are now not over-praised, but more worshipped, with more servility and ostentation, studied with more prying curiosity than you may approve. Are not the Moliéristes a body who carry adoration to fanaticism? Any scrap of your handwriting (so few are these), any anecdote even remotely touching on your life, any fact that may prove your house was numbered 15 not 22, is eagerly seized and discussed by your too minute historians. Concerning your private life, these men often write more like malicious enemies than friends; repeating the fabulous scandals of Le Boulanger, and trying vainly to support them by grubbing in dusty parish registers. It is most necessary to defend you from your friends — from such friends as the veteran and inveterate M. Arséne Houssaye, or the industrious but puzzle-headed M. Loiseleur. Truly they seek the living among the dead, and the immortal Moliére among the sweepings of attorneys' offices. As I regard them (for I have tarried in their tents) and as I behold their trivialities — the exercises of men who neglect Moliérés works to write about Moliére's great-grandmother's second-best bed — I sometimes wish that Moliére were here to write on his devotees a new comedy, 'Les Moliéristes.' How fortunate were they, Monsieur, who lived and worked with you, who saw you day by day, who were attached, as Lagrange tells us, by the kindest loyalty to the best and most honourable of men, the most open-handed in friendship, in charity the most delicate, of the heartiest sympathy! Ah, that for one day I could behold you, writing in the study, rehearsing on the stage, musing in the lace-seller's shop, strolling through the Palais, turning over the new books at Billaine's, dusting your ruffles among the old volumes on the sunny stalls. Would that, through the ages, we could hear you after supper, merry with Boileau, and with Racine, — not yet a traitor, — laughing over Chapelain, combining to gird at him in an epigram, or mocking at Cotin, or talking your favourite philosophy, mindful of Descartes. Surely of all the wits none was ever so good a man, none ever made life so rich with humour and friendship.

XIX. To Robert Burns.

Sir, — Among men of Genius, and especially among Poets, there are some to whom we turn with a peculiar and unfeigned affection; there are others whom we admire rather than love. By some we are won with our will, by others conquered against our desire. It has been your peculiar fortune to capture the hearts of a whole people — a people not usually prone to praise, but devoted with a personal and patriotic loyalty to you and to your reputation. In you every Scot who *is* a Scot sees, admires, and compliments Himself, his ideal self — independent, fond of whisky, fonder of the lassies; you are the true representative of him and of his nation. Next year will be the hundredth since the press of Kilmarnock brought to light its solitary masterpiece, your Poems; and next year, therefore, methinks, the revenue will receive a welcome accession from the abundance of whisky drunk in your honour. It is a cruel thing for any of your countrymen to feel that, where all the rest love, he can only admire; where all the rest are idolators, he may not bend the knee; but stands apart and beats upon his breast, observing, not adoring — a critic. Yet to some of us — petty souls, perhaps, and envious — that loud indiscriminating praise of 'Robbie Burns' (for so they style you in their Change-house familiarity) has long been ungrateful; and, among the treasures of your songs, we venture to select and even to reject. So it must be! We cannot all love Haggis, nor 'painch, tripe, and thairm,' and all those rural dainties which you celebrate as 'warm-reekin, rich!' 'Rather too rich,' as the Young Lady said on an occasion recorded by Sam Weller.

Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware That jaups in luggies;   But, if ye wish her gratefu' prayer, Gie her a Haggis!

You *have* given her a Haggis, with a vengeance, and her 'gratefu' prayer' is yours for ever. But if even an eternity of partridge may pall on the epicure, so of Haggis too, as of all earthly delights, cometh satiety at last. And yet what a glorious Haggis it is — the more emphatically rustic and even Fescennine part of your verse! We have had many a rural bard since Theocritus 'watched the visionary flocks,' but you are the only one of them all who has spoken the sincere Doric. Yours is the talk of the byre and the plough-tail; yours is that large utterance of the early hinds. Even Theocritus minces matters, save where Lacon and Comatas quite outdo the swains of Ayrshire. 'But thee, Theocritus, wha matches?’

you ask, and yourself out-match him in this wide rude region, trodden only by the rural Muse.

‘*Thy* rural loves are nature’s sel’;’ and the wooer of Jean Armour speaks more like a true shepherd than the elegant Daphnis of the ‘Oaristys.’

Indeed it is with this that moral critics of your life reproach you, forgetting, perhaps, that in your amours you were but as other Scotch ploughmen and shepherds of the past and present. Ettrick may still, with Afghanistan, offer matter for idylls, as Mr. Carlyle (your antithesis, and the complement of the Scotch character) supposed; but the morals of Ettrick are those of rural Sicily in old days, or of Mossgiel in your days. Over these matters the Kirk, with all her power, and the Free Kirk too, have had absolutely no influence whatever. To leave so delicate a topic, you were but as other swains, or, as ‘that Birkie ca’d a lord,’ Lord Byron; only you combined (in certain of your letters) a libertine theory with your practice; you poured out in song your audacious raptures, your half-hearted repentance, your shame and your scorn. You spoke the truth about rural lives and loves. We may like it or dislike it; but we cannot deny the verity.

Was it not as unhappy a thing, Sir, for you, as it was fortunate for Letters and for Scotland, that you were born at the meeting of two ages and of two worlds — precisely in the moment when bookish literature was beginning to reach the people, and when Society was first learning to admit the low-born to her Minor Mysteries? Before you how many singers not less truly poets than yourself — though less versatile not less passionate, though less sensuous not less simple — had been born and had died in poor men’s cottages! There abides not even the shadow of a name of the old Scotch song-smiths, of the old ballad-makers. The authors of ‘Clerk Saunders,’ of ‘The Wife of Usher’s Well,’ of ‘Fair Annie,’ and ‘Sir Patrick Spens,’ and ‘The Bonny Hind,’ are as unknown to us as Homer, whom in their directness and force they resemble. They never, perhaps, gave their poems to writing; certainly they never gave them to the press. On the lips and in the hearts of the people they have their lives; and the singers, after a life obscure and untroubled by society or by fame, are forgotten. ‘The Iniquity of Oblivion blindly scattereth his Poppy.’

Had you been born some years earlier you would have been even as these unnamed Immortals, leaving great verses to a little clan — verses retained only by Memory. You would have been but the minstrel of your native valley: the wider world would not have known you, nor you the world. Great thoughts of independence and revolt would never have burned in you; indignation would not have vexed you. Society would not have given and denied her caresses. You would have been happy. Your songs would have lingered in all ‘the circle of the summer hills;' and your scorn, your satire, your narrative verse, would have been unwritten or unknown. To the world what a loss! and what a gain to you! We should have possessed but a few of your lyrics, as When o'er the hill the eastern star Tells bughtin-time is near, my jo; And owsen frae the furrowed field, Return sae dowf and wearie O!

How noble that is, how natural, how unconsciously Greek! You found, oddly, in good Mrs. Barbauld, the merits of the Tenth Muse: In thy sweet sang, Barbauld, survives Even Sappho's flame!

But how unconsciously you remind us both of Sappho and of Homer in these strains about the Evening Star and the hour when the Day *metenisseto boulytoide*?* Had you lived and died the pastoral poet of some silent glen, such lyrics could not but have survived; free, too, of all that in your songs reminds us of the Poet's Corner in the 'Kirkcudbright Advertiser.' We should not have read how Phoebus, gilding the brow o' morning, Banishes ilk darksome shade!

Still we might keep a love-poem unexcelled by Catullus, Had we never loved sae kindly, Had we never loved sae blindly, Never met — or never parted, We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

But the letters to Clarinda would have been unwritten, and the thrush would have been untaught in 'the style of the Bird of Paradise.'

*Transliterated from Greek.

A quiet life of song, *fallentis semita vitae*', was not to be yours. Fate otherwise decreed it. The touch of a lettered society, the strife with the Kirk, discontent with the State, poverty and pride, neglect and success, were needed to make your Genius what it was, and to endow the world with 'Tam o' Shanter,' the 'Jolly Beggars,' and 'Holy Willie's Prayer.' Who can praise them too highly — who admire in them too much the humour, the scorn, the wisdom, the unsurpassed energy and courage? So powerful, so commanding, is the movement of that Beggars' Chorus, that, methinks, it unconsciously echoed in the brain of our greatest living poet when he conceived the Vision of Sin. You shall judge for yourself. Recall: Here's to budgets, bags, and wallets!
Here's to all the wandering train!
Here's our ragged bairns and callers!
One and all cry out, Amen!

A fig for those by law protected!
Liberty's a glorious feast!
Courts for cowards were erected!
Churches built to please the priest!

Then read this: Drink to lofty hopes that cool Visions of a perfect state:

Drink we, last, the public fool, Frantic love and frantic hate.
.... Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance, While we keep a little breath!
Drink to heavy Ignorance Hob and nob with brother Death!

Is not the movement the same, though the modern speaks a wilder recklessness?

So in the best company we leave you, who were the life and soul of so much company, good and bad. No poet, since the Psalmist of Israel, ever gave the world more assurance of a man; none lived a life more strenuous, engaged in an eternal conflict of the passions, and by them overcome— ‘mighty and mightily fallen.’ When we think of you, Byron seems, as Plato would have said, remote by one degree from actual truth, and Musset by a degree more remote than Byron.

XX. To Lord Byron.

My Lord, (Do you remember how Leigh Hunt Enraged you once by writing *My dear Byron*?)   Books have their fates, — as mortals have who punt, And *yours* have entered on an age of iron.

Critics there be who think your satin blunt, Your pathos, fudge; such perils must environ Poets who in their time were quite the rage, Though now there's not a soul to turn their page.

Yes, there is much dispute about your worth,   And much is said which you might like to know By modern poets here upon the earth,   Where poets live, and love each other so; And, in Elysium, it may move your mirth   To hear of bards that pitch your praises low, Though there be some that for your credit stickle, As — Glorious Mat, — and not inglorious Nichol.

This kind of writing is my pet aversion,   I hate the slang, I hate the personalities, I loathe the aimless, reckless, loose dispersion,   Of every rhyme that in the singer's wallet is, I hate it as you hated the *Excursion*, But, while no man a hero to his valet is, The hero's still the model; I indite The kind of rhymes that Byron oft would write.

There's a Swiss critic whom I cannot rhyme to,   One Scherer, dry as sawdust, grim and prim.

Of him there's much to say, if I had time to   Concern myself in any wise with him.

He seems to hate the heights he cannot climb to, He thinks your poetry a coxcomb's whim, A good deal of his sawdust he has spilt on Shakspeare, and Moliére, and you, and Milton.

Ay, much his temper is like Vivien's mood,   Which found not Galahad pure, nor Lancelot brave; Cold as a hailstorm on an April wood,   He buries poets in an icy grave, His Essays — he of the Genevan hood!

Nothing so good, but better doth he crave.

So stupid and so solemn in his spite He dares to print that Moliére could not write!

Enough of these excursions; I was saying That half our English Bards are turned Reviewers, And Arnold was discussing and assaying The weight and value of that work of yours, Examining and testing it and weighing, And proved, the gems are pure, the gold endures.

While Swinburne cries with an exceeding joy, the stones are paste, and half the gold, alloy.

In Byron, Arnold finds the greatest force, Poetic, in this later age of ours His song, a torrent from a mountain source, Clear as the crystal, singing with the showers, Sweeps to the sea in unrestricted course Through banks o'erhung with rocks and sweet with flowers; None of your brooks that modestly meander, But swift as Awe along the Pass of Brander.

And when our century has clomb its crest, And backward gazes o'er the plains of Time, And counts its harvest, yours is still the best, The richest garner in the field of rhyme (The metaphoric mixture, 't is confest, Is all my own, and is not quite sublime).

But fame's not yours alone; you must divide all The plums and pudding with the Bard of Rydal!

WORDSWORTH and BYRON, these the lordly names And these the gods to whom most incense burns.

'Absurd!' cries Swinburne, and in anger flames, And in an AEschylean fury spurns With impious foot your altar, and exclaims And wreathes his laurels on the golden urns Where Coleridge's and Shelley's ashes lie, Deaf to the din and heedless of the cry.

For Byron (Swinburne shouts) has never woven One honest thread of life within his song; As Offenbach is to divine Beethoven So Byron is to Shelley (*This* is strong!), And on Parnassus' peak, divinely cloven, He may not stand, or stands by cruel wrong; For Byron's rank (the Examiner has reckoned) Is in the third class or a feeble second.

'A Bernesque poet' at the very most, And never earnest save in politics — The Pegasus that he was wont to boast A blundering, floundering hackney, full of tricks, A beast that must be driven to the post By whips and spurs and oaths and kicks and sticks, A gasping, ranting, broken-winded brute, That any judge of Pegasi would shoot; In sooth, a half-bred Pegasus, and far gone In spavin, curb, and half a hundred woes.

And Byron’s style is ‘jolter-headed jargon;’
His verse is ‘only bearable in prose.’
So living poets write of those that are gone, And o’er the Eagle thus the Bantam crows; And Swinburne ends where Verisopht began, By owning you ‘a very clever man.’

Or rather does not end: he still must utter A quantity of the unkindest things.
Ah! were you here, I marvel, would you flutter O’er such a foe the tempest of your wings?
‘T is ‘rant and cant and glare and splash and splutter’
That rend the modest air when Byron sings.
There Swinburne stops: a critic rather fiery.
Animis caelestibus tantaene irae?

But whether he or Arnold in the right is, Long is the argument, the quarrel long; *Non nobis est to settle tantas lites*; No poet I, to judge of right or wrong: But of all things I always think a fight is The most unpleasant in the lists of song; When Marsyas of old was flayed, Apollo Set an example which we need not follow.

The fashion changes! Maidens do not wear, As once they wore, in necklaces and lockets A curl ambrosial of Lord Byron’s hair; ‘Don Juan’ is not always in our pockets Nay, a NEW WRITER’s readers do not care Much for your verse, but are inclined to mock its Manners and morals. Ay, and most young ladies To yours prefer the ‘Epic’ called ‘of Hades’!

I do not blame them; I’m inclined to think That with the reigning taste ‘t is vain to quarrel, And Burns might teach his votaries to drink, And Byron never meant to make them moral.
You yet have lovers true, who will not shrink From lauding you and giving you the laurel; The Germans too, those men of blood and iron, Of all our poets chiefly swear by Byron.

Farewell, thou Titan fairer than the gods!
Farewell, farewell, thou swift and lovely spirit, Thou splendid warrior with the world at odds, Unpraised, unpraisable, beyond thy merit; Chased, like Oresres, by the furies’ rods, Like him at length thy peace dost thou inherit; Beholding whom, men think how fairer far Than all the steadfast stars the wandering star!

Note Mr. Swlnburne’s and Mr. Arnold’s diverse views of Byron will be found in the *Selections* by Mr. Arnold and in the *Nineteenth Century*.

XXI. To Omar Kha’yya’m.

Wise Omar, do the Southern Breezes fling Above your Grave, at ending of the Spring, The Snowdrift of the petals of the Rose, The wild white Roses you were wont to sing?

Far in the South I know a Land divine, (1) And there is many a Saint and many a Shrine, And over all the shrines the Blossom blows Of Roses that were dear to you as wine.

(1) The hills above San Remo, where rose-bushes are planted by the shrines. Omar desired that his grave might be where the wind would scatter rose-leaves over it.

You were a Saint of unbelieving days, Liking your Life and happy in men’s Praise; Enough for you the Shade beneath the Bough, Enough to watch the wild World go its Ways.

Dreadless and hopeless thou of Heaven or Hell, Careless of Words thou hadst not Skill to spell, Content to know not all thou knowest now, What’s Death? Doth any Pitcher dread the Well?

The Pitchers we, whose Maker makes them ill, Shall He torment them if they chance to spill?

Nay, like the broken potsherds are we cast Forth and forgotten, — and what will be will!

So still were we, before the Months began That rounded us and shaped us into Man.

So still we shall be, surely, at the last, Dreamless, untouched of Blessing or of Ban!

Ah, strange it seems that this thy common thought How all things have been, ay, and shall be nought Was ancient Wisdom in thine ancient East, In those old Days when Senlac fight was fought, Which gave our England for a captive Land To pious Chiefs of a believing Band, A gift to the Believer from the Priest, Tossed from the holy to the blood-red Hand! (1) (1) Omar was contemporary with the battle of Hastings.

Yea, thou wert singing when that Arrow clave Through helm and brain of him who could not save His England, even of Harold Godwin's son; The high tide murmurs by the Hero's grave! (1) (1) Per mandata Ducis, Rex hic, Heralde, quiescis, Ut custos maneas littoris et pelagi.

And *thou* wert wreathing Roses — who can tell? — Or chanting for some girl that pleased thee well, Or satst at wine in Nasha'pu'r, when dun The twilight veiled the field where Harold fell!

The salt Sea-waves above him rage and roam!
Along the white Walls of his guarded Home No Zephyr stirs the Rose, but o'er the wave The wild Wind beats the Breakers into Foam!

And dear to him, as Roses were to thee, Rings long the Roar of Onset of the Sea; The *Swan's Path* of his Fathers is his grave: His sleep, methinks, is sound as thine can be.

His was the Age of Faith, when all the West Looked to the Priest for torment or for rest; And thou wert living then, and didst not heed The Saint who banned thee or the Saint who blessed!

Ages of Progress! These eight hundred years Hath Europe shuddered with her hopes or fears, And now! — she listens in the wilderness To thee, and half believeth what she hears!

Hadst *thou* THE SECRET? Ah, and who may tell?
'An hour we have,' thou saidst. 'Ah, waste it well!'
An hour we have, and yet Eternity Looms o'er us, and the thought of Heaven or Hell!

Nay, we can never be as wise as thou, O idle singer 'neath the blossomed bough.
Nay, and we cannot be content to die.
We cannot shirk the questions 'Where?' and 'How?'

Ah, not from learned Peace and gay Content Shall we of England go the way he went The Singer of the Red Wine and the Rose Nay, otherwise than his our Day is spent!

Serene he dwelt in fragrant Nasha’pu’r, But we must wander while the Stars endure.

He knew THE SECRET: we have none that knows, No Man so sure as Omar once was sure!

XXII. To Q. Horatius Flaccus.

In what manner of Paradise are we to conceive that you, Horace, are dwelling, or what region of immortality can give you such pleasures as this life afforded? The country and the town, nature and men, who knew them so well as you, or who ever so wisely made the best of those two worlds? Truly here you had good things, nor do you ever, in all your poems, look for more delight in the life beyond; you never expect consolation for present sorrow, and when you once have shaken hands with a friend the parting seems to you eternal.

Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus   Tam cari capitis?

So you sing, for the dear head you mourn has sunk for ever beneath the wave. Virgil might wander forth bearing the golden branch ‘the Sibyl doth to singing men allow,’ and might visit, as one not wholly without hope, the dim dwellings of the dead and the unborn. To him was it permitted to see and sing ‘mothers and men, and the bodies outworn of mighty heroes, boys and unwedded maids, and young men borne to the funeral fire before their parents’ eyes.’ The endless caravan swept past him— ‘many as fluttering leaves that drop and fall in autumn woods when the first frost begins; many as birds that flock landward from the great sea when now the chill year drives them o’er the deep and leads them to sunnier lands.’ Such things was it given to the sacred poet to behold, and the happy seats and sweet pleasances of fortunate souls, where the larger light clothes all the plains and dips them in a rosier gleam, plains with their own new sun and stars before unknown. Ah, not *frustra pius* was Virgil, as you say, Horace, in your melancholy song. In him, we fancy, there was a happier mood than your melancholy patience. ‘Not, though thou wert sweeter of song than Thracian Orpheus, with that lyre whose lay led the dancing trees, not so would the blood return to the empty shade of him whom once with dread wand the inexorable god hath folded with his shadowy flocks; but patience lighteneth what heaven forbids us to undo.’

Durum, sed levius fit patientia?

It was all your philosophy in that last sad resort to which we are pushed so often —   ‘With close-lipped Patience for our only friend,   Sad Patience, too near neighbour of Despair.’

The Epicurean is at one with the Stoic at last, and Horace with Marcus Aurelius. ‘To go away from among men, if there are gods, is not a thing to be afraid of; but if indeed they do not exist, or if they have no concern about human affairs, what is it to me to live in a universe devoid of gods or devoid of providence?'

An excellent philosophy, but easier to those for whom no Hope had dawn or seemed to set. Yet it is harder than common, Horace, for us to think of you, still glad somewhere, among rivers like Liris and plains and vine-clad hills, that Solemque suum, sua sidera borunt.

It is hard, for you looked for no such thing.

Omnes una manet nox
Et calcanda semel via leti.

You could not tell Maecenas that you would meet him again; you could only promise to tread the dark path with him.

Ibimus, ibimus,
Utcunque praecedes, supremum
Carpere iter comites parati.

Enough, Horace, of these mortuary musings. You loved the lesson of the roses, and now and again would speak somewhat like a death's head over thy temperate cups of Sabine *ordinaire*. Your melancholy moral was but meant to heighten the joy of thy pleasant life, when wearied Italy, after all her wars and civic bloodshed, had won a peaceful haven. The harbour might be treacherous; the prince might turn to the tyrant; far away on the wide Roman marches might be heard, as it were, the endless, ceaseless monotone of beating horses' hoofs and marching feet of men. They were coming, they were nearing, like footsteps heard on wool; there was a sound of multitudes and millions of barbarians, all the North, *officina gentium*, mustering and marshalling her peoples. But their coming was not to be to-day, nor to-morrow; nor to-day was the budding princely sway to blossom into the blood-red flower of Nero. In the hall between the two tempests of Republic and Empire your odes sound 'like linnets in the pauses of the wind.'

What joy there is in these songs! what delight of life, what an exquisite Hellenic grace of art, what a manly nature to endure, what tenderness and constancy of friendship, what a sense of all that is fair in the glittering stream, the music of the waterfall, the hum of bees, the silvery grey of the olive woods on the hillside! How human are all your verses, Horace! what a pleasure is yours in the straining poplars, swaying in the wind! what gladness you gain from the white crest of Soracte, beheld through the fluttering snowflakes while the logs are being piled higher on the hearth. You sing of women and wine — not all whole-hearted in your praise of them, perhaps, for passion frightens you, and 't is pleasure more than love that you commend to the young. Lydia and Glycera, and the others, are but passing guests of a heart at ease in itself, and happy enough when their facile reign is ended. You seem to me like a man who welcomes middle age, and is more glad than Sophocles was to ‘flee from these hard masters’ the passions. In the ‘fallow leisure of life’ you glance round contented, and find all very good save the need to leave all behind. Even that you take with an Italian good-humour, as the folk of your sunny country bear poverty and hunger.

Durum, sed levius fit patientia!

To them, to you, the loveliness of your land is, and was, a thing to live for. None of the Latin poets your fellows, or none but Virgil, seem to me to have known so well as you, Horace, how happy and fortunate a thing it was to be born in Italy. You do not say so, like your Virgil, in one splendid passage, numbering the glories of the land as a lover might count the perfections of his mistress. But the sentiment is ever in your heart and often on your lips.

Me nec tam patiens Lacedaemon, Nec tam Larissae percussit campus opimae, Quam domus Albuneae resonantis Et praeceps Anio, ac Tiburni lucus, et uda Mobilibus pomaria rivis. (1) (1) ‘Me neither resolute Sparta nor the rich Larissaean plain so enraptures as the fane of echoing Albunea, the headlong Anio, the grove of Tibur, the orchards watered by the wandering rills.

So a poet should speak, and to every singer his own land should be dearest. Beautiful is Italy with the grave and delicate outlines of her sacred hills, her dark groves, her little cities perched like eyries on the crags, her rivers gliding under ancient walls; beautiful is Italy, her seas, and her suns: but dearer to me the long grey wave that bites the rock below the minster in the north; dearer is the barren moor and black peat-water swirling in tanny foam, and the scent of bog myrtle and the bloom of heather, and, watching over the lochs, the green round-shouldered hills.

In affection for your native land, Horace, certainly the pride in great Romans dead and gone made part, and you were, in all senses, a lover of your country, your country’s heroes, your country’s gods. None but a patriot could have sung that ode on Regulus, who died, as our own hero died, on an evil day for the honour of Rome, as Gordon for the honour of England.

Fertur pudicae conjujis osculum, Parvosque natos, ut capitis minor, Ab se removisse, et virilem Torvus humi pusuisse voltum: Donec labantes consilio patres Firmaret auctor nunquam alias dato, Interque maerentes amicos Egregius properaret exul.

Atqui sciebat, quae sibi barbarus Tortor pararet: non aliter tamen Dimovit obstantes propinquos, Et populum reditus morantem, Quam si clientum longa negotia Dijudicata lite relinqueret, Tendens Venafranos in agros Aut

Lacedaemonium Tarentum. (1) (1) ‘They say he put aside from him the pure lips of his wife and his little children, like a man unfree, and with his brave face bowed earthward sternly he waited till with such counsel as never mortal gave he might strengthen the hearts of the Fathers, and through his mourning friends go forth, a hero, into exile. Yet well he knew what things were being prepared for him at the hands of the tormenters, who, none the less, put aside the kinsmen that barred his path and the people that would fain have held him back, passing through their midst as he might have done, if, his retainers’ weary business ended and the suits adjudged, he were faring to his Venafran lands or to Dorian Tarentum.’

We talk of the Greeks as your teachers. Your teachers they were, but that poem could only have been written by a Roman! The strength, the tenderness, the noble and monumental resolution and resignation — these are the gift of the lords of human things, the masters of the world. Your country’s heroes are dear to you, Horace, but you did not sing them better than your country’s Gods, the pious protecting spirits of the hearth, the farm, the field, kindly ghosts, it may be, of Latin fathers dead or Gods framed in the image of these. What you actually believed we know not, *you* knew not. Who knows what he believes? *Parcus Deorum cultor* you bowed not often, it may be, in the temples of the state religion and before the statues of the great Olympians; but the pure and pious worship of rustic tradition, the faith handed down by the homely elders, with that you never broke. Clean hands and a pure heart, these, with a sacred cake and shining grains of salt, you could offer to the Lares. It was a benignant religion, uniting old times and new, men living and men long dead and gone, in a kind of service and sacrifice solemn yet familiar.

Te nihil attinet Tentare multa caede bidentium Parvos coronantem marino Rore deos fragilique myrto.

Immunis aram si tetigit manus, Non sumptuosa blandior hostia Mollivit aversos Penates Farre pio et salienta mica. (1) (1) Thou, Phidyle, hast no need to besiege the gods with slaughter so great of sheep, thou who crownest thy tiny deities with myrtle rare and rosemary. If but the hand be clean that touches the altar, then richest sacrifice will not more appease the angered Penates than the duteous cake and salt that crackles in the blaze.’

Farewell, dear Horace; farewell, thou wise and kindly heathen; of mortals the most human, the friend of my friends and of so many generations of men.

MYTH, RITUAL AND RELIGION

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VOLUME I

CHAPTER I. SYSTEMS OF MYTHOLOGY.

Definitions of religion — Contradictory evidence— “Belief in spiritual beings” — Objection to Mr. Tylor’s definition — Definition as regards this argument — Problem: the contradiction between religion and myth — Two human moods — Examples — Case of Greece — Ancient mythologists — Criticism by Eusebius — Modern mythological systems — Mr. Max Muller — Mannhardt.

The word “Religion” may be, and has been, employed in many different senses, and with a perplexing width of significance. No attempt to define the word is likely to be quite satisfactory, but almost any definition may serve the purpose of an argument, if the writer who employs it states his meaning frankly and adheres to it steadily. An example of the confusions which may arise from the use of the term “religion” is familiar to students. Dr. J. D. Lang wrote concerning the native races of Australia: “They have nothing whatever of the character of religion, or of religious observances, to distinguish them from the beasts that perish”. Yet in the same book Dr. Lang published evidence assigning to the natives belief in “Turramullun, the chief of demons, who is the author of disease, mischief and wisdom”.(1) The belief in a superhuman author of “disease, mischief and wisdom” is certainly a religious belief not conspicuously held by “the beasts”; yet all religion was denied to the Australians by the very author who prints (in however erroneous a style) an account of part of their creed. This writer merely inherited the old missionary habit of speaking about the god of a non-Christian people as a “demon” or an “evil spirit”.

(1) See Primitive Culture, second edition, i. 419.

Dr. Lang’s negative opinion was contradicted in testimony published by himself, an appendix by the Rev. Mr. Ridley, containing evidence of the belief in Baiame. “Those who have learned that ‘God’ is the name by which we speak of the Creator, say that Baiame is God.”(1)

(1) Lang’s Queensland, , 1861.

As “a minimum definition of religion,” Mr. Tylor has suggested “the belief in spiritual beings”. Against this it may be urged that, while we have no definite certainty that any race of men is destitute of belief in spiritual beings, yet certain moral and creative deities of low races do not seem to be envisaged as “spiritual” at all. They are regarded as EXISTENCES, as BEINGS, unconditioned by Time, Space, or Death, and nobody appears to have put the purely metaphysical question, “Are these beings spiritual or material?”(1) Now, if a race were discovered which believed in such beings, yet had no faith in spirits, that race could not be called irreligious, as it would have to be called in Mr. Tylor’s “minimum definition”. Almost certainly, no race in this stage of belief in nothing but unconditioned but not expressly spiritual beings is extant. Yet such a belief may conceivably have existed before men had developed the theory of spirits at all, and such a belief, in creative and moral unconditioned beings, not alleged to be spiritual, could not be excluded from a definition of religion.(2)

(1) See The Making of Religion, p-210.

(2) “The history of the Jews, nay, the history of our own mind, proves to demonstration that the thought of God is a far easier thought, and a far earlier, than that of a spirit.” Father Tyrrell, S. J., The Month, October, 1898. As to the Jews, the question is debated. As to our own infancy, we are certainly taught about God before we are likely to be capable of the metaphysical notion of spirit. But we can scarcely reason from children in Christian houses to the infancy of the race.

For these reasons we propose (merely for the purpose of the present work) to define religion as the belief in a primal being, a Maker, undying, usually moral, without denying that the belief in spiritual beings, even if immoral, may be styled religious. Our definition is expressly framed for the purpose of the argument, because that argument endeavours to bring into view the essential conflict between religion and myth. We intend to show that this conflict between the religious and the mythical conception is present, not only (where it has been universally recognised) in the faiths of the ancient civilised peoples, as in Greece, Rome, India and Egypt, but also in the ideas of the lowest known savages.

It may, of course, be argued that the belief in Creator is itself a myth. However that may be, the attitude of awe, and of moral obedience, in face of such a supposed being, is religious in the sense of the Christian religion, whereas the fabrication of fanciful, humorous, and wildly irrational fables about that being, or others, is essentially mythical in the ordinary significance of that word, though not absent from popular Christianity.

Now, the whole crux and puzzle of mythology is, “Why, having attained (in whatever way) to a belief in an undying guardian, ‘Master of Life,’ did mankind set to work to evolve a chronique scandaleuse about HIM? And why is that chronique the elaborately absurd set of legends which we find in all mythologies?”

In answering, or trying to answer, these questions, we cannot go behind the beliefs of the races now most immersed in savage ignorance. About the psychology of races yet more undeveloped we can have no historical knowledge.

Among the lowest known tribes we usually find, just as in ancient Greece, the belief in a deathless “Father,” “Master,” “Maker,” and also the crowd of humorous, obscene, fanciful myths which are in flagrant contradiction with the religious character of that belief. That belief is what we call rational, and even elevated. The myths, on the other hand, are what we call irrational and debasing. We regard low savages as very irrational and debased characters, consequently the nature of their myths does not surprise us. Their religious conception, however, of a “Father” or “Master of Life” seems out of keeping with the nature of the savage mind as we understand it. Still, there the religious conception actually is, and it seems to follow that we do not wholly understand the savage mind, or its unknown antecedents. In any case, there the facts are, as shall be demonstrated. However the ancestors of Australians, or Andamanese, or Hurons arrived at their highest religious conception, they decidedly possess it.(1) The development of their mythical conceptions is accounted for by those qualities of their minds which we do understand, and shall illustrate at length. For the present, we can only say that the religious conception uprises from the human intellect in one mood, that of earnest contemplation and submission: while the mythical ideas uprise from another mood, that of playful and erratic fancy. These two moods are conspicuous even in Christianity. The former, that of earnest and submissive contemplation, declares itself in prayers, hymns, and “the dim religious light” of cathedrals. The second mood, that of playful and erratic fancy, is conspicuous in the buffoonery of Miracle Plays, in Marchen, these burlesque popular tales about our Lord and the Apostles, and in the hideous and grotesque sculptures on sacred edifices. The two moods are present, and in conflict, through the whole religious history of the human race. They stand as near each other, and as far apart, as Love and Lust.

(1) The hypothesis that the conception was borrowed from European creeds will be discussed later. See, too, “Are Savage Gods borrowed from Missionaries?” Nineteenth Century, January, 1899.

It will later be shown that even some of the most backward savages make a perhaps half-conscious distinction between their mythology and their religion. As to the former, they are communicative; as to the latter, they jealously guard their secret in sacred mysteries. It is improbable that reflective “black fellows” have been morally shocked by the flagrant contradictions between their religious conceptions and their mythical stories of the divine beings. But human thought could not come into explicit clearness of consciousness without producing the sense of shock and surprise at these contradictions between the Religion and the Myth of the same god. Of this we proceed to give examples.

In Greece, as early as the sixth century B. C., we are all familiar with

Xenophanes’ poem(1) complaining that the gods were credited with the worst crimes of mortals — in fact, with abominations only known in the orgies of Nero and Elagabalus. We hear Pindar refusing to repeat the tale which told him the blessed were cannibals.(2) In India we read the pious Brahmanic attempts to expound decently the myths which made Indra the slayer of a Brahman; the sinner, that is, of the unpardonable sin. In Egypt, too, we study the priestly or philosophic systems by which the clergy strove to strip the burden of absurdity and sacrilege from their own deities. From all these efforts of civilised and pious believers to explain away the stories about their own gods we may infer one fact — the most important to the student of mythology — the fact that myths were not evolved in times of clear civilised thought. It is when Greece is just beginning to free her thought from the bondage of too concrete language, when she is striving to coin abstract terms, that her philosophers and poets first find the myths of Greece a stumbling-block.

(1) Ritter and Preller, Hist. Philos., Gothae, 1869, .

(2) Olympic Odes, i., Myers’s translation: “To me it is impossible to call one of the blessed gods a cannibal.... Meet it is for a man that concerning the gods he speak honourably, for the reproach is less. Of thee, son of Tantalus, I will speak contrariwise to them who have gone before me.” In avoiding the story of the cannibal god, however, Pindar tells a tale even more offensive to our morality.

All early attempts at an interpretation of mythology are so many efforts to explain the myths on some principle which shall seem not unreasonable to men living at the time of the explanation. Therefore the pious remonstrances and the forced constructions of early thinkers like Xenophanes, of poets like Pindar, of all ancient Homeric scholars and Pagan apologists, from Theagenes of Rhegium (525 B. C.), the early Homeric commentator, to Porphyry, almost the last of the heathen philosophers, are so many proofs that to Greece, as soon as she had a reflective literature, the myths of Greece seemed impious and IRRATIONAL. The essays of the native commentators on the Veda, in the same way, are endeavours to put into myths felt to be irrational and impious a meaning which does not offend either piety or reason. We may therefore conclude that it was not men in an early stage of philosophic thought (as philosophy is now understood) — not men like Empedocles and Heraclitus, nor reasonably devout men like Eumaeus, the pious swineherd of the Odyssey — who evolved the blasphemous myths of Greece, of Egypt and of India. We must look elsewhere for an explanation. We must try to discover some actual and demonstrable and widely prevalent condition of the human mind, in which tales that even to remote and rudimentary civilisations appeared irrational and unnatural would seem natural and rational. To discover this intellectual condition has been the aim of all mythologists who did not believe that myth is a divine tradition depraved by human weakness, or a distorted version of historical events.

Before going further, it is desirable to set forth what our aim is, and to what extent we are seeking an interpretation of mythology. It is not our purpose to explain every detail of every ancient legend, either as a distorted historical fact or as the result of this or that confusion of thought caused by forgetfulness of the meanings of language, or in any other way; nay, we must constantly protest against the excursions of too venturesome ingenuity. Myth is so ancient, so complex, so full of elements, that it is vain labour to seek a cause for every phenomenon. We are chiefly occupied with the quest for an historical condition of the human intellect to which the element in myths, regarded by us as irrational, shall seem rational enough. If we can prove that such a state of mind widely exists among men, and has existed, that state of mind may be provisionally considered as the fount and ORIGIN of the myths which have always perplexed men in a reasonable modern mental condition. Again, if it can be shown that this mental stage was one through which all civilised races have passed, the universality of the mythopoeic mental condition will to some extent explain the universal DIFFUSION of the stories.

Now, in all mythologies, whether savage or civilised, and in all religions where myths intrude, there exist two factors — the factor which we now regard as rational, and that which we moderns regard as irrational. The former element needs little explanation; the latter has demanded explanation ever since human thought became comparatively instructed and abstract.

To take an example; even in the myths of savages there is much that still seems rational and transparent. If savages tell us that some wise being taught them all the simple arts of life, the use of fire, of the bow and arrow, the barbing of hooks, and so forth, we understand them at once. Nothing can be more natural than that man should believe in an original inventor of the arts, and should tell tales about the imaginary discoverers if the real heroes be forgotten. So far all is plain sailing. But when the savage goes on to say that he who taught the use of fire or who gave the first marriage laws was a rabbit or a crow, or a dog, or a beaver, or a spider, then we are at once face to face with the element in myths which seems to us IRRATIONAL. Again, among civilised peoples we read of the pure all-seeing Varuna in the Vedas, to whom sin is an offence. We read of Indra, the Lord of Thunder, borne in his chariot, the giver of victory, the giver of wealth to the pious; here once more all seems natural and plain. The notion of a deity who guides the whirlwind and directs the storm, a god of battles, a god who blesses righteousness, is familiar to us and intelligible; but when we read how Indra drank himself drunk and committed adulteries with Asura women, and got himself born from the same womb as a bull, and changed himself into a quail or a ram, and suffered from the most abject physical terror, and so forth, then we are among myths no longer readily intelligible; here, we feel, are IRRATIONAL stories, of which the original ideas, in their natural sense, can hardly have been conceived by men in a pure and rational early civilisation. Again, in the religions of even the lowest races, such myths as these are in contradiction with the ethical elements of the faith.

If we look at Greek religious tradition, we observe the coexistence of the RATIONAL and the apparently IRRATIONAL elements. The RATIONAL myths are those which represent the gods as beautiful and wise beings. The Artemis of the Odyssey “taking her pastime in the chase of boars and swift deer, while with her the wild wood-nymphs disport them, and high over them all she rears her brow, and is easily to be known where all are fair,”(1) is a perfectly RATIONAL mythic representation of a divine being. We feel, even now, that the conception of a “queen and goddess, chaste and fair,” the abbess, as Paul de Saint-Victor calls her, of the woodlands, is a beautiful and natural fancy, which requires no explanation. On the other hand, the Artemis of Arcadia, who is confused with the nymph Callisto, who, again, is said to have become a she-bear, and later a star; and the Brauronian Artemis, whose maiden ministers danced a bear-dance,(2) are goddesses whose legend seems unnatural, and needs to be made intelligible. Or, again, there is nothing not explicable and natural in the conception of the Olympian Zeus as represented by the great chryselephantine statue of Zeus at Olympia, or in the Homeric conception of Zeus as a god who “turns everywhere his shining eyes, and beholds all things, and protects the righteous, and deals good or evil fortune to men.” But the Zeus whose grave was shown in Crete, or the Zeus who played Demeter an obscene trick by the aid of a ram, or the Zeus who, in the shape of a swan, became the father of Castor and Pollux, or the Zeus who deceived Hera by means of a feigned marriage with an inanimate object, or the Zeus who was afraid of Attes, or the Zeus who made love to women in the shape of an ant or a cuckoo, is a being whose myth is felt to be unnatural and bewildering.(3) It is this IRRATIONAL and unnatural element, as Mr. Max Muller says, “the silly, senseless, and savage element,” that makes mythology the puzzle which men have so long found it. For, observe, Greek myth does not represent merely a humorous play of fancy, dealing with things religiously sacred as if by way of relief from the strained reverential contemplation of the majesty of Zeus. Many stories of Greek mythology are such as could not cross, for the first time, the mind of a civilised Xenophanes or Theagenes, even in a dream. THIS was the real puzzle.

(1) Odyssey, vi. 102.

(2) (Greek word omitted); compare Harpokration on this word.

(3) These are the features in myth which provoke, for example, the wonder of Emeric-David. “The lizard, the wolf, the dog, the ass, the frog, and all the other brutes so common on religious monuments everywhere, do they not all imply a THOUGHT which we must divine?” He concludes that these animals, plants, and monsters of myths are so many “enigmas” and “symbols” veiling some deep, sacred idea, allegories of some esoteric religious creed. Jupiter, Paris, 1832, .

We have offered examples — Savage, Indian, and Greek — of that element in mythology which, as all civilised races have felt, demands explanation.

To be still more explicit, we may draw up a brief list of the chief problems in the legendary stories attached to the old religions of the world — the problems which it is our special purpose to notice. First we have, in the myths of all races, the most grotesque conceptions of the character of gods when mythically envisaged. Beings who, in religion, leave little to be desired, and are spoken of as holy, immortal, omniscient, and kindly, are, in myth, represented as fashioned in the likeness not only of man, but of the beasts; as subject to death, as ignorant and impious.

Most pre-Christian religions had their “zoomorphic” or partially zoomorphic idols, gods in the shape of the lower animals, or with the heads and necks of the lower animals. In the same way all mythologies represent the gods as fond of appearing in animal forms. Under these disguises they conduct many amours, even with the daughters of men, and Greek houses were proud of their descent from Zeus in the shape of an eagle or ant, a serpent or a swan; while Cronus and the Vedic Tvashtri and Poseidon made love as horses, and Apollo as a dog. Not less wild are the legends about the births of gods from the thigh, or the head, or feet, or armpits of some parent; while tales describing and pictures representing unspeakable divine obscenities were frequent in the mythology and in the temples of Greece. Once more, the gods were said to possess and exercise the power of turning men and women into birds, beasts, fishes, trees, and stones, so that there was scarcely a familiar natural object in the Greek world which had not once (according to legend) been a man or a woman. The myths of the origin of the world and man, again, were in the last degree childish and disgusting. The Bushmen and Australians have, perhaps, no story of the origin of species quite so barbarous in style as the anecdotes about Phanes and Prajapati which are preserved in the Orphic hymns and in the Brahmanas. The conduct of the earlier dynasties of classical gods towards each other was as notoriously cruel and loathsome as their behaviour towards mortals was tricksy and capricious. The classical gods, with all their immortal might, are, by a mythical contradiction of the religious conception, regarded as capable of fear and pain, and are led into scrapes as ludicrous as those of Brer Wolf or Brer Terrapin in the tales of the Negroes of the Southern States of America. The stars, again, in mythology, are mixed up with beasts, planets and men in the same embroglio of fantastic opinion. The dead and the living, men, beasts and gods, trees and stars, and rivers, and sun, and moon, dance through the region of myths in a burlesque ballet of Priapus, where everything may be anything, where nature has no laws and imagination no limits.

Such are the irrational characteristics of myths, classic or Indian, European or American, African or Asiatic, Australian or Maori. Such is one element we find all the world over among civilised and savage people, quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus. It is no wonder that pious and reflective men have, in so many ages and in so many ways, tried to account to themselves for their possession of beliefs closely connected with religion which yet seemed ruinous to religion and morality.

The explanations which men have given of their own sacred stories, the apologies for their own gods which they have been constrained to offer to themselves, were the earliest babblings of a science of mythology. That science was, in its dim beginnings, intended to satisfy a moral need. Man found that his gods, when mythically envisaged, were not made in his own moral image at its best, but in the image sometimes of the beasts, sometimes of his own moral nature at its very worst: in the likeness of robbers, wizards, sorcerers, and adulterers. Now, it is impossible here to examine minutely all systems of mythological interpretation. Every key has been tried in this difficult lock; every cause of confusion has been taken up and tested, deemed adequate, and finally rejected or assigned a subordinate place. Probably the first attempts to shake off the burden of religious horror at mythical impiety were made by way of silent omission. Thus most of the foulest myths of early India are absent, and presumably were left out, in the Rig-Veda. “The religious sentiment of the hymns, already so elevated, has discarded most of the tales which offended it, but has not succeeded in discarding them all.”(1) Just as the poets of the Rig-Veda prefer to avoid the more offensive traditions about Indra and Tvashtri, so Homer succeeds in avoiding the more grotesque and puerile tales about his own gods.(2) The period of actual apology comes later. Pindar declines, as we have seen, to accuse a god of cannibalism. The Satapatha Brahmana invents a new story about the slaying of Visvarupa. Not Indra, but Trita, says the Brahmana apologetically, slew the three-headed son of Tvashtri. “Indra assuredly was free from that sin, for he is a god,” says the Indian apologist.(3) Yet sins which to us appear far more monstrous than the peccadillo of killing a three-headed Brahman are attributed freely to Indra.

(1) Les Religions de l'Inde, Barth, . See also postea, "Indian Myths".

(2) The reasons for Homer's reticence are probably different in different passages. Perhaps in some cases he had heard a purer version of myth than what reached Hesiod; perhaps he sometimes purposely (like Pindar) purified a myth; usually he must have selected, in conformity with the noble humanity and purity of his taste, the tales that best conformed to his ideal. He makes his deities reluctant to drag out in dispute old scandals of their early unheroic adventures, some of which, however, he gives, as the kicking of Hephaestus out of heaven, and the imprisonment of Ares in a vessel of bronze. Compare Professor Jebb's Homer, : "whatever the instinct of the great artist has tolerated, at least it has purged these things away." that is, divine amours in bestial form.

(3) Satapatha Brahmana, Oxford, 1882, vol. i. .

While poets could but omit a blasphemous tale or sketch an apology in passing, it became the business of philosophers and of antiquarian writers deliberately to "whitewash" the gods of popular religion. Systematic explanations of the sacred stories, whether as preserved in poetry or as told by priests, had to be provided. India had her etymological and her legendary school of mythology.(1) Thus, while the hymn SEEMED to tell how the Maruts were gods, "born together with the spotted deer," the etymological interpreters explained that the word for deer only meant the many-coloured lines of clouds.(2) In the armoury of apologetics etymology has been the most serviceable weapon. It is easy to see that by aid of etymology the most repulsive legend may be compelled to yield a pure or harmless sense, and may be explained as an innocent blunder, caused by mere verbal misunderstanding. Brahmans, Greeks, and Germans have equally found comfort in this hypothesis. In the Cratylus of Plato, Socrates speaks of the notion of explaining myths by etymological guesses at the meaning of divine names as "a philosophy which came to him all in an instant". Thus we find Socrates shocked by the irreverence which styled Zeus the son of Cronus, "who is a proverb for stupidity". But on examining philologically the name Kronos, Socrates decides that it must really mean Koros, "not in the sense of a youth, but signifying the pure and garnished mind". Therefore, when people first called Zeus the son of Cronus, they meant nothing irreverent, but only that Zeus is the child of the pure mind or pure reason. Not only is this etymological system most pious and consolatory, but it is, as Socrates adds, of universal application. "For now I bethink me of a very new and ingenious notion,... that we may put in and pull out letters at pleasure, and alter the accents."(3)

(1) Rig-Veda Sanhita. Max Muller, .

(2) Postea, “Indian Divine Myths”.

(3) Jowett’s Plato, vol. i. p, 670.

Socrates, of course, speaks more than half in irony, but there is a certain truth in his account of etymological analysis and its dependence on individual tastes and preconceived theory.

The ancient classical schools of mythological interpretation, though unscientific and unsuccessful, are not without interest. We find philosophers and grammarians looking, just as we ourselves are looking, for some condition of the human intellect out of which the absurd element in myths might conceivably have sprung. Very naturally the philosophers supposed that the human beings in whose brain and speech myths had their origin must have been philosophers like themselves — intelligent, educated persons. But such persons, they argued, could never have meant to tell stories about the gods so full of nonsense and blasphemy.

Therefore the nonsense and blasphemy must originally have had some harmless, or even praiseworthy, sense. What could that sense have been? This question each ancient mythologist answered in accordance with his own taste and prejudices, and above all, and like all other and later speculators, in harmony with the general tendency of his own studies. If he lived when physical speculation was coming into fashion, as in the age of Empedocles, he thought that the Homeric poems must contain a veiled account of physical philosophy. This was the opinion of Theagenes of Rhegium, who wrote at a period when a crude physicism was disengaging itself from the earlier religious and mythical cosmogonic systems of Greece. Theagenes was shocked by the Homeric description of the battle in which the gods fought as allies of the Achaeans and Trojans. He therefore explained away the affair as a veiled account of the strife of the elements. Such “strife” was familiar to readers of the physical speculations of Empedocles and of Heraclitus, who blamed Homer for his prayer against Strife.(1)

(1) Is. et Osir., 48.

It did not occur to Theagenes to ask whether any evidence existed to show that the pre-Homeric Greeks were Empedoclean or Heraclitean philosophers. He readily proved to himself that Apollo, Helios, and Hephaestus were allegorical representations, like what such philosophers would feign, — of fire, that Hera was air, Poseidon water, Artemis the moon, and the rest he disposed of in the same fashion.(1)

(1) Scholia on Iliad, xx. 67. Dindorf (1877), vol. iv. . “This manner of apologetics is as old as Theagenes of Rhegium. Homer offers theological

doctrine in the guise of physical allegory.”

Metrodorus, again, turned not only the gods, but the Homeric heroes into “elemental combinations and physical agencies”; for there is nothing new in the mythological philosophy recently popular, which saw the sun, and the cloud, and the wind in Achilles, Athene, and Hermes.(1)

(1) Grote, Hist, of Greece, ed. 1869, i. .

In the Bacchae (291-297), Euripides puts another of the mythological systems of his own time into the mouth of Cadmus, the Theban king, who advances a philological explanation of the story that Dionysus was sewn up in the thigh of Zeus. The most famous of the later theories was that of Euhemerus (316 B.C.). In a kind of philosophical romance, Euhemerus declared that he had sailed to some No-man’s-land, Panchaea, where he found the verity about mythical times engraved on pillars of bronze. This truth he published in the Sacra Historia, where he rationalised the fables, averring that the gods had been men, and that the myths were exaggerated and distorted records of facts. (See Eusebius, Praep. E., ii 55.) The Abbe Banier (La Mythologie expliquee par l’Histoire, Paris, 1738, vol. ii.) attempts the defence of Euhemerus, whom most of the ancients regarded as an atheist. There was an element of truth in his romantic hypothesis.(1)

(1) See Block, Euhemere et sa Doctrine, Mons, 1876.

Sometimes the old stories were said to conceal a moral, sometimes a physical, sometimes a mystical or Neo-platonic sort of meaning. As every apologist interpreted the legends in his own fashion, the interpretations usually disagreed and killed each other. Just as one modern mythologist sees the wind in Aeetes and the dawn in Medea, while another of the same school believes, on equally good evidence, that both Aeetes and Medea are the moon, so writers like Porphyry (270 A. D.) and Plutarch (60 A. D.) made the ancient deities types of their own favourite doctrines, whatever these might happen to be.

When Christianity became powerful, the Christian writers naturally attacked heathen religion where it was most vulnerable, on the side of the myths, and of the mysteries which were dramatic representations of the myths. “Pretty gods you worship,” said the Fathers, in effect, “homicides, adulterers, bulls, bears, mice, ants, and what not.” The heathen apologists for the old religion were thus driven in the early ages of Christianity to various methods of explaining away the myths of their discredited religion.

The early Christian writers very easily, and with considerable argumentative power, disposed of the apologies for the myths advanced by Porphyry and Plutarch. Thus Eusebius in the Praeparatio Evangelica first attacks the Egyptian interpretations of their own bestial or semi-bestial gods. He shows that the various interpretations destroy each other, and goes on to point out that Greek myth is in essence only a veneered and varnished version of the faith of Egypt. He ridicules, with a good deal of humour, the old theories which resolved so many mythical heroes into the sun; he shows that while one system is contented to regard Zeus as mere fire and air, another system recognises in him the higher reason, while Heracles, Dionysus, Apollo, and Asclepius, father and child, are all indifferently the sun.

Granting that the myth-makers were only constructing physical allegories, why did they wrap them up, asks Eusebius, in what WE consider abominable fictions? In what state were the people who could not look at the pure processes of Nature without being reminded of the most hideous and unnatural offences? Once more: “The physical interpreters do not even agree in their physical interpretations”. All these are equally facile, equally plausible, and equally incapable of proof. Again, Eusebius argues, the interpreters take for granted in the makers of the myths an amount of physical knowledge which they certainly did not possess. For example, if Leto were only another name for Hera, the character of Zeus would be cleared as far as his amour with Leto is concerned. Now, the ancient believers in the “physical phenomena theory” of myths made out that Hera, the wife of Zeus, was really the same person under another name as Leto, his mistress. “For Hera is the earth” (they said at other times that Hera was the air), “and Leto is the night; but night is only the shadow of the earth, and therefore Leto is only the shadow of Hera.” It was easy, however, to prove that this scientific view of night as the shadow of earth was not likely to be known to myth-makers, who regarded “swift Night” as an actual person. Plutarch, too, had an abstruse theory to explain the legend about the dummy wife, — a log of oak-wood, which Zeus pretended to marry when at variance with Hera.(1)

(1) Pausanias, ix. 31.

This quarrel, he said, was merely the confusion and strife of elements. Zeus was heat, Hera was cold (she had already been explained as earth and air), the dummy wife of oak-wood was a tree that emerged after a flood, and so forth. Of course, there was no evidence that mythopoeic men held Plutarchian theories of heat and cold and the conflict of the elements; besides, as Eusebius pointed out, Hera had already been defined once as an allegory of wedded life, and once as the earth, and again as the air, and it was rather too late to assert that she was also the cold and watery element in the world. As for his own explanation of the myths, Eusebius holds that they descend from a period when men in their lawless barbarism knew no better than to tell such tales. “Ancient folk, in the exceeding savagery of their lives, made no account of God, the universal Creator (here Eusebius is probably wrong)... but betook them to all manner of abominations. For the laws of decent existence were not yet established, nor was any settled and peaceful state ordained among men, but only a loose and savage fashion of wandering life, while, as beasts irrational, they cared for no more than to fill their bellies, being in a manner without God in the world.” Growing a little more civilised, men, according to Eusebius, sought after something divine, which they found in the heavenly bodies. Later, they fell to worshipping living persons, especially “medicine men” and conjurors, and continued to worship them even after their decease, so that Greek temples are really tombs of the dead.(1) Finally, the civilised ancients, with a conservative reluctance to abandon their old myths (Greek text omitted), invented for them moral or physical explanations, like those of Plutarch and others, earlier and later.(2)

(1) Praep. E., ii. 5.

(2) Ibid., 6,19.

As Eusebius, like Clemens of Alexandria, Arnobius, and the other early Christian disputants, had no prejudice in favour of Hellenic mythology, and no sentimental reason for wishing to suppose that the origin of its impurities was pure, he found his way almost to the theory of the irrational element in mythology which we propose to offer.

Even to sketch the history of mythological hypothesis in modern times would require a book to itself. It must suffice here to indicate the various lines which speculation as to mythology has pursued.

All interpretations of myth have been formed in accordance with the ideas prevalent in the time of the interpreters. The early Greek physicists thought that mythopoeic men had been physicists. Aristotle hints that they were (like himself) political philosophers.(1) Neo-platonists sought in the myths for Neo-platonism; most Christians (unlike Eusebius) either sided with Euhemerus, or found in myth the inventions of devils, or a tarnished and distorted memory of the Biblical revelation.

(1) Met., xi. 8,19.

This was the theory, for example, of good old Jacob Bryant, who saw everywhere memories of the Noachian deluge and proofs of the correctness of Old Testament ethnology.(1)

(1) Bryant, A New System, wherein an Attempt is made to Divest Tradition of Fable, 1774.

Much the same attempt to find the Biblical truth at the bottom of savage and ancient fable has been recently made by the late M. Lenormant, a Catholic scholar.(1)

(1) Les Origines de l’Histoire d’apres le Bible, 1880-1884.

In the beginning of the present century Germany turned her attention to mythology. As usual, men’s ideas were biassed by the general nature of their opinions. In a pious kind of spirit, Friedrich Creuzer sought to find SYMBOLS of some pure, early, and Oriental theosophy in the myths and mysteries of Greece. Certainly the Greeks of the philosophical period explained their own myths as symbols of higher things, but the explanation was an after-thought.(1) The great Lobeck, in his Aglaophamus (1829), brought back common sense, and made it the guide of his vast, his unequalled learning. In a gentler and more genial spirit, C. Otfried Muller laid the foundation of a truly scientific and historical mythology.(2) Neither of these writers had, like Alfred Maury,(3) much knowledge of the myths and faiths of the lower races, but they often seem on the point of anticipating the ethnological method.

(1) Creuzer, Symbolik und Mythologie, 2d edit., Leipzig, 1836-43.

(2) Introduction to a Scientific System of Mythology, English trans., London, 1844.

(3) Histoire des Religions de la Grece Antique, Paris, 1857.

When philological science in our own century came to maturity, in philology, as of old in physics and later in symbols, was sought the key of myths. While physical allegory, religious and esoteric symbolism, verbal confusion, historical legend, and an original divine tradition, perverted in ages of darkness, have been the most popular keys in other ages, the scientific nineteenth century has had a philological key of its own. The methods of Kuhn, Breal, Max Muller, and generally the philological method, cannot be examined here at full length.(1) Briefly speaking, the modern philological method is intended for a scientific application of the old etymological interpretations. Cadmus in the Bacchae of Euripides, Socrates in the Cratylus of Plato, dismiss unpalatable myths as the results of verbal confusion. People had originally said something quite sensible — so the hypothesis runs — but when their descendants forgot the meaning of their remarks, a new and absurd meaning followed from a series of unconscious puns.(2) This view was supported in ancient times by purely conjectural and impossible etymologies. Thus the myth that Dionysus was sewn up in the THIGH of Zeus (Greek text omitted) was explained by Euripides as the result of a confusion of words. People had originally said that Zeus gave a pledge (Greek text omitted) to Hera. The modern philological school relies for explanations of untoward and other myths on similar confusions. Thus Daphne is said to have been originally not a girl of romance, but the dawn (Sanskirt, dahana: ahana) pursued by the rising sun. But as the original Aryan sense of Dahana or Ahana was lost, and as Daphne came to mean the laurel — the wood which burns easily — the fable arose that the tree had been a girl called Daphne.(3)

(1) See Mythology in Encyclop. Brit. and in La Mythologie (A. L.), Paris, 1886, where Mr. Max Muller’s system is criticised. See also Custom and Myth

and Modern Mythology.

(2) That a considerable number of myths, chiefly myths of place names, arise from popular etymologies is certain: what is objected to is the vast proportion given to this element in myths.

(3) Max Muller, Nineteenth Century, December, 1885; "Solar Myths," January, 1886; Myths and Mythologists (A. L). Whitney, Mannhardt, Bergaigne, and others dispute the etymology. Or. and Ling. Studies, 1874, ; Mannhardt, Antike Wald und Feld Kultus (Berlin, 1877), .; Bergaigne, La Religion Vedique, iii. 293; nor does Curtius like it much, Principles of Greek Etymology, English trans., ii. 92, 93; Modern Mythology (A. L.), 1897.

This system chiefly rests on comparison between the Sanskrit names in the Rig-Veda and the mythic names in Greek, German, Slavonic, and other Aryan legends. The attempt is made to prove that, in the common speech of the undivided Aryan race, many words for splendid or glowing natural phenomena existed, and that natural processes were described in a figurative style. As the various Aryan families separated, the sense of the old words and names became dim, the nomina developed into numina, the names into gods, the descriptions of elemental processes into myths. As this system has already been criticised by us elsewhere with minute attention, a reference to these reviews must suffice in this place. Briefly, it may be stated that the various masters of the school — Kuhn, Max Muller, Roth, Schwartz, and the rest — rarely agree where agreement is essential, that is, in the philological foundations of their building. They differ in very many of the etymological analyses of mythical names. They also differ in the interpretations they put on the names, Kuhn almost invariably seeing fire, storm, cloud, or lightning where Mr. Max Muller sees the chaste Dawn. Thus Mannhardt, after having been a disciple, is obliged to say that comparative Indo-Germanic mythology has not borne the fruit expected, and that "the CERTAIN gains of the system reduce themselves to the scantiest list of parallels, such as Dyaus = Zeus = Tius, Parjanya = Perkunas, Bhaga = Bog, Varuna = Uranos" (a position much disputed), *etc.* Mannhardt adds his belief that a number of other "equations" — such as Sarameya = Hermeias, Saranyus = Demeter Erinnys, Kentauros = Gandharva, and many others — will not stand criticism, and he fears that these ingenious guesses will prove mere jeux d'esprit rather than actual facts.(1) Many examples of the precarious and contradictory character of the results of philological mythology, many instances of "dubious etymologies," false logic, leaps at foregone conclusions, and attempts to make what is peculiarly Indian in thought into matter of universal application, will meet us in the chapters on Indian and Greek divine legends.(2) "The method in its practical working shows a fundamental lack of the historical sense," says Mannhardt.

Examples are torn from their contexts, he observes; historical evolution is neglected; passages of the Veda, themselves totally obscure, are dragged forward to account for obscure Greek mythical phenomena. Such are the accusations brought by the regretted Mannhardt against the school to which he originally belonged, and which was popular and all-powerful even in the maturity of his own more clear-sighted genius. Proofs of the correctness of his criticism will be offered abundantly in the course of this work. It will become evident that, great as are the acquisitions of Philology, her least certain discoveries have been too hastily applied in alien “matter,” that is, in the region of myth. Not that philology is wholly without place or part in the investigation of myth, when there is agreement among philologists as to the meaning of a divine name. In that case a certain amount of light is thrown on the legend of the bearer of the name, and on its origin and first home, Aryan, Greek, Semitic, or the like. But how rare is agreement among philologists!

(1) Baum und Feld Kultus, . Kuhn’s “epoch-making” book is Die Herabkunft des Feuers, Berlin, 1859. By way of example of the disputes as to the original meaning of a name like Prometheus, compare Memoires de la Societe de Linguistique de Paris, t. iv. .

(2) See especially Mannhardt’s note on Kuhn’s theories of Poseidon and Hermes, B. u. F. K., p., xix., note 1.

“The philological method,” says Professor Tiele,(1) “is inadequate and misleading, when it is a question of discovering the ORIGIN of a myth, or the physical explanation of the oldest myths, or of accounting for the rude and obscene element in the divine legends of civilised races. But these are not the only problems of mythology. There is, for example, the question of the GENEALOGICAL relations of myths, where we have to determine whether the myths of peoples whose speech is of the same family are special modifications of a mythology once common to the race whence these peoples have sprung. The philological method alone can answer here.” But this will seem a very limited province when we find that almost all races, however remote and unconnected in speech, have practically much the same myths.

(1) Rev. de l’Hist. des Rel., xii. 3, 260, Nov., Dec., 1885.

CHAPTER II. NEW SYSTEM PROPOSED.

Chap. I. recapitulated — Proposal of a new method: Science of comparative or historical study of man — Anticipated in part by Eusebius, Fontenelle, De Brosses, Spencer (of C. C. C., Cambridge), and Mannhardt — Science of Tylor — Object of inquiry: to find condition of human intellect in which marvels of myth are parts of practical everyday belief — This is the savage state — Savages described — The wild element of myth a survival from the savage state — Advantages of this method — Partly accounts for wide DIFFUSION as well as ORIGIN of myths — Connected with general theory of evolution — Puzzling example of myth of the water-swallower — Professor Tiele’s criticism of the method — Objections to method, and answer to these — See Appendix B.

The past systems of mythological interpretation have been briefly sketched. It has been shown that the practical need for a reconciliation between RELIGION and MORALITY on one side, and the MYTHS about the gods on the other, produced the hypotheses of Theagenes and Metrodorus, of Socrates and Euemerus, of Aristotle and Plutarch. It has been shown that in each case the reconcilers argued on the basis of their own ideas and of the philosophies of their time. The early physicist thought that myth concealed a physical philosophy; the early etymologist saw in it a confusion of language; the early political speculator supposed that myth was an invention of legislators; the literary Euhemerus found the secret of myths in the course of an imaginary voyage to a fabled island. Then came the moment of the Christian attacks, and Pagan philosophers, touched with Oriental pantheism, recognised in myths certain pantheistic symbols and a cryptic revelation of their own Neo-platonism. When the gods were dead and their altars fallen, then antiquaries brought their curiosity to the problem of explaining myth. Christians recognised in it a depraved version of the Jewish sacred writings, and found the ark on every mountain-top of Greece. The critical nineteenth century brought in, with Otfried Muller and Lobeck, a closer analysis; and finally, in the sudden rise of comparative philology, it chanced that philologists annexed the domain of myths. Each of these systems had its own amount of truth, but each certainly failed to unravel the whole web of tradition and of foolish faith.

Meantime a new science has come into existence, the science which studies man in the sum of all his works and thoughts, as evolved through the whole process of his development. This science, Comparative Anthropology, examines the development of law out of custom; the development of weapons from the stick or stone to the latest repeating rifle; the development of society from the horde to the nation. It is a study which does not despise the most backward nor degraded tribe, nor neglect the most civilised, and it frequently finds in Australians or Nootkas the germ of ideas and institutions which Greeks or Romans brought to perfection, or retained, little altered from their early rudeness, in the midst of civilisation.

It is inevitable that this science should also try its hand on mythology. Our purpose is to employ the anthropological method — the study of the evolution of ideas, from the savage to the barbarous, and thence to the civilised stage — in the province of myth, ritual, and religion. It has been shown that the light of this method had dawned on Eusebius in his polemic with the heathen apologists. Spencer, the head of Corpus, Cambridge (1630-93), had really no other scheme in his mind in his erudite work on Hebrew Ritual.(1) Spencer was a student of man’s religions generally, and he came to the conclusion that Hebrew ritual was but an expurgated, and, so to speak, divinely “licensed” adaptation of heathen customs at large. We do but follow his guidance on less perilous ground when we seek for the original forms of classical rite and myth in the parallel usages and legends of the most backward races.

(1) De Legibus Hebraeorum Ritualibus, Tubingae, 1782.

Fontenelle in the last century, stated, with all the clearness of the French intellect, the system which is partially worked out in this essay — the system which explains the irrational element in myth as inherited from savagery. Fontenelle’s paper (Sur l’Origine des Fables) is brief, sensible, and witty, and requires little but copious evidence to make it adequate. But he merely threw out the idea, and left it to be neglected.(1)

(1) See Appendix A., Fontenelle’s Origine des Fables.

Among other founders of the anthropological or historical school of mythology, De Brosses should not be forgotten. In his Dieux Fetiches (1760) he follows the path which Eusebius indicated — the path of Spencer and Fontenelle — now the beaten road of Tylor and M’Lennan and Mannhardt.

In anthropology, in the science of Waitz, Tylor, and M’Lennan, in the examination of man’s faith in the light of his social, legal, and historical conditions generally, we find, with Mannhardt, some of the keys of myth. This science “makes it manifest that the different stages through which humanity has passed in its intellectual evolution have still their living representatives among various existing races. The study of these lower races is an invaluable instrument for the interpretation of the survivals from earlier stages, which we meet in the full civilisation of cultivated peoples, but whose origins were in the remotest fetichism and savagery."(1)

(1) Mannhardt op. cit. .

It is by following this road, and by the aid of anthropology and of human history, that we propose to seek for a demonstrably actual condition of the human intellect, whereof the puzzling qualities of myth would be the natural and inevitable fruit. In all the earlier theories which we have sketched, inquirers took it for granted that the myth-makers were men with philosophic and moral ideas like their own — ideas which, from some reason of religion or state, they expressed in bizarre terms of allegory. We shall attempt, on the other hand, to prove that the human mind has passed through a condition quite unlike that of civilised men — a condition in which things seemed natural and rational that now appear unnatural and devoid of reason, and in which, therefore, if myths were evolved, they would, if they survived into civilisation, be such as civilised men find strange and perplexing.

Our first question will be, Is there a stage of human society and of the human intellect in which facts that appear to us to be monstrous and irrational — facts corresponding to the wilder incidents of myth — are accepted as ordinary occurrences of everyday life? In the region of romantic rather than of mythical invention we know that there is such a state. Mr. Lane, in his preface to the Arabian Nights, says that the Arabs have an advantage over us as story-tellers. They can introduce such incidents as the change of a man into a horse, or of a woman into a dog, or the intervention of an Afreet without any more scruple than our own novelists feel in describing a duel or the concealment of a will. Among the Arabs the agencies of magic and of spirits are regarded as at least as probable and common as duels and concealments of wills seem to be thought by European novelists. It is obvious that we need look no farther for the explanation of the supernatural events in Arab romances. Now, let us apply this system to mythology. It is admitted that Greeks, Romans, Aryans of India in the age of the Sanskrit commentators, and Egyptians of the Ptolemaic and earlier ages, were as much puzzled as we are by the mythical adventures of their gods. But is there any known stage of the human intellect in which similar adventures, and the metamorphoses of men into animals, trees, stars, and all else that puzzles us in the civilised mythologies, are regarded as possible incidents of daily human life? Our answer is, that everything in the civilised mythologies which we regard as irrational seems only part of the accepted and natural order of things to contemporary savages, and in the past seemed equally rational and natural to savages concerning whom we have historical information.(1) Our theory is, therefore, that the savage and senseless element in mythology is, for the most part, a legacy from the fancy of ancestors of the civilised races who were once in an intellectual state not higher, but probably lower, than that of Australians, Bush-men, Red Indians, the lower races of South America, and other worse than barbaric peoples. As the ancestors of the Greeks, Aryans of India, Egyptians and others advanced in civilisation, their religious thought was shocked and surprised by myths (originally dating from the period of savagery, and natural in that period, though even then often in contradiction to morals and religion) which were preserved down to the time of Pausanias by local priesthoods, or which were stereotyped in the ancient poems of Hesiod and Homer, or in the Brahmanas and Vedas of India, or were retained in the popular religion of Egypt. This theory recommended itself to Lobeck. "We may believe that ancient and early tribes framed gods like unto themselves in action and in experience, and that the allegorical softening down of myths is the explanation added later by descendants who had attained to purer ideas of divinity, yet dared not reject the religion of their ancestors."(2) The senseless element in the myths would, by this theory, be for the most part a "survival"; and the age and condition of human thought whence it survived would be one in which our most ordinary ideas about the nature of things and the limits of possibility did not yet exist, when all things were conceived of in quite other fashion; the age, that is, of savagery.

(1) We have been asked to DEFINE a savage. He cannot be defined in an epigram, but by way of choice of a type: —

1. In material equipment the perfect savage is he who employs tools of stone and wood, not of metal; who is nomadic rather than settled; who is acquainted (if at all) only with the rudest forms of the arts of potting, weaving, fire-making, etc.; and who derives more of his food from the chase and from wild roots and plants than from any kind of agriculture or from the flesh of domesticated animals.

2. In psychology the savage is he who (extending unconsciously to the universe his own implicit consciousness of personality) regards all natural objects as animated and intelligent beings, and, drawing no hard and fast line between himself and the things in the world, is readily persuaded that men may be metamorphosed into plants, beasts and stars; that winds and clouds, sun and dawn, are persons with human passions and parts; and that the lower animals especially may be creatures more powerful than himself, and, in a sense, divine and creative.

3. In religion the savage is he who (while often, in certain moods, conscious of a far higher moral faith) believes also in ancestral ghosts or spirits of woods and wells that were never ancestral; prays frequently by dint of magic; and sometimes adores inanimate objects, or even appeals to the beasts as supernatural protectors.

4. In society the savage is he who (as a rule) bases his laws on the well-defined lines of totemism — that is, claims descent from or other close relation to natural objects, and derives from the sacredness of those objects the sanction of his marriage prohibitions and blood-feuds, while he makes skill in magic a claim to distinguished rank.

Such, for our purpose, is the savage, and we propose to explain the more “senseless” factors in civilised mythology as “survivals” of these ideas and customs preserved by conservatism and local tradition, or, less probably, borrowed from races which were, or had been, savage.

(2) Aglaoph., i. 153. Had Lobeck gone a step farther and examined the mental condition of veteres et priscae gentes, this book would have been, superfluous. Nor did he know that the purer ideas were also existing among certain low savages.

It is universally admitted that “survivals” of this kind do account for many anomalies in our institutions, in law, politics, society, even in dress and manners. If isolated fragments of earlier ages abide in these, it is still more probable that other fragments will survive in anything so closely connected as is mythology with the conservative religious sentiment and tradition. Our object, then, is to prove that the “silly, savage, and irrational” element in the myths of civilised peoples is, as a rule, either a survival from the period of savagery, or has been borrowed from savage neighbours by a cultivated people, or, lastly, is an imitation by later poets of old savage data.(1) For example, to explain the constellations as metamorphosed men, animals, or other objects of terrestrial life is the habit of savages,(2) — a natural habit among people who regard all things as on one level of personal life and intelligence. When the stars, among civilised Greeks or Aryans of India, are also popularly regarded as transformed and transfigured men, animals and the like, this belief may be either a survival from the age when the ancestors of Greeks and Indians were in the intellectual condition of the Australian Murri; or the star-name and star-myth may have been borrowed from savages, or from cultivated peoples once savage or apt to copy savages; or, as in the case of the Coma Berenices, a poet of a late age may have invented a new artificial myth on the old lines of savage fancy.

(1) We may be asked why do savages entertain the irrational ideas which survive in myth? One might as well ask why they eat each other, or use stones instead of metal. Their intellectual powers are not fully developed, and hasty analogy from their own unreasoned consciousness is their chief guide. Myth, in Mr. Darwin’s phrase, is one of the “miserable and indirect consequences of our highest faculties”. Descent of Man, .

(2) See Custom and Myth, “Star-Myths”.

This method of interpreting a certain element in mythology is, we must repeat, no new thing, though, to judge from the protests of several mythologists, it is new to many inquirers. We have seen that Eusebius threw out proposals in this direction; that Spencer, De Brosses, and Fontenelle unconsciously followed him; and we have quoted from Lobeck a statement of a similar opinion. The whole matter has been stated as clearly as possible by Mr. B. B. Tylor: —

“Savages have been for untold ages, and still are, living in the myth-making stage of the human mind. It was through sheer ignorance and neglect of this direct knowledge how and by what manner of men myths are really made that their simple philosophy has come to be buried under masses of commentator’s rubbish...”(1) Mr. Tylor goes on thus (and his words contain the gist of our argument): “The general thesis maintained is that myth arose in the savage condition prevalent in remote ages among the whole human race; that it remains comparatively unchanged among the rude modern tribes who have departed least from these primitive conditions, while higher and later civilisations, partly by retaining its actual principles, and partly by carrying on its inherited results in the form of ancestral tradition, continued it not merely in toleration, but in honour”.(2) Elsewhere Mr. Tylor points out that by this method of interpretation we may study myths in various stages of evolution, from the rude guess of the savage at an explanation of natural phenomena, through the systems of the higher barbarisms, or lower civilisations (as in ancient Mexico), and the sacerdotage of India, till myth reaches its most human form in Greece. Yet even in Greek myth the beast is not wholly cast out, and Hellas by no means “let the ape and tiger die”. That Mr. Tylor does not exclude the Aryan race from his general theory is plain enough.(3) “What is the Aryan conception of the Thunder-god but a poetic elaboration of thoughts inherited from the savage stage through which the primitive Aryans had passed?”(4)

(1) Primitive Culture, 2nd edit., i. .

(2) Op. cit., .

(3) Primitive Culture, 2nd edit., ii. 265.

(4) Pretty much the same view seems to be taken by Mr. Max Muller (Nineteenth Century, January, 1882) when he calls Tsui Goab (whom the Hottentots believe to be a defunct conjuror) “a Hottentot Indra or Zeus”.

The advantages of our hypothesis (if its legitimacy be admitted) are obvious. In the first place, we have to deal with an actual demonstrable condition of the human intellect. The existence of the savage state in all its various degrees, and of the common intellectual habits and conditions which are shared by the backward peoples, and again the survival of many of these in civilisation, are indubitable facts. We are not obliged to fall back upon some fanciful and unsupported theory of what “primitive man” did, and said, and thought. Nay, more; we escape all the fallacies connected with the terms “primitive man”. We are not compelled (as will be shown later)(1) to prove that the first men of all were like modern savages, nor that savages represent primitive man. It may be that the lowest extant savages are the nearest of existing peoples to the type of the first human beings. But on this point it is unnecessary for us to dogmatise. If we can show that, whether men began their career as savages or not, they have at least passed through the savage status or have borrowed the ideas of races in the savage status, that is all we need. We escape from all the snares of theories (incapable of historical proof) about the really primeval and original condition of the human family.

(1) Appendix B.

Once more, our theory naturally attaches itself to the general system of Evolution. We are enabled to examine mythology as a thing of gradual development and of slow and manifold modifications, corresponding in some degree to the various changes in the general progress of society. Thus we shall watch the barbaric conditions of thought which produce barbaric myths, while these in their turn are retained, or perhaps purified, or perhaps explained away, by more advanced civilisations. Further, we shall be able to detect the survival of the savage ideas with least modification, and the persistence of the savage myths with least change, among the classes of a civilised population which have shared least in the general advance. These classes are, first, the rustic peoples, dwelling far from cities and schools, on heaths or by the sea; second, the conservative local priesthoods, who retain the more crude and ancient myths of the local gods and heroes after these have been modified or rejected by the purer sense of philosophers and national poets. Thus much of ancient myth is a woven warp and woof of three threads: the savage donnee, the civilised and poetic modification of the savage donnee, the version of the original fable which survives in popular tales and in the “sacred chapters” of local priesthoods. A critical study of these three stages in myth is in accordance with the recognised practice of science. Indeed, the whole system is only an application to this particular province, mythology, of the method by which the development either of organisms or of human institutions is traced. As the anomalies and apparently useless and accidental features in the human or in other animal organisms may be explained as stunted or rudimentary survivals of organs useful in a previous stage of life, so the anomalous and irrational myths of civilised races may be explained as survivals of stories which, in an earlier state of thought and knowledge, seemed natural enough. The persistence of the myths is accounted for by the well-known conservatism of the religious sentiment — a conservatism noticed even by Eusebius. “In later days, when they became ashamed of the religious beliefs of their ancestors, they invented private and respectful interpretations, each to suit himself. For no one dared to shake the ancestral beliefs, as they honoured at a very high rate the sacredness and antiquity of old associations, and of the teaching they had received in childhood.”(1)

(1) Praep. E., ii. 6, 19.

Thus the method which we propose to employ is in harmony both with modern scientific procedure and with the views of a clear-sighted Father of the Church. Consequently no system could well be less “heretical” and “unorthodox”.

The last advantage of our hypothesis which need here be mentioned is that it helps to explain the DIFFUSION no less than the ORIGIN of the wild and crazy element in myth. We seek for the origin of the savage factor of myth in one aspect of the intellectual condition of savages. We say “in one aspect” expressly; to guard against the suggestion that the savage intellect has no aspect but this, and no saner ideas than those of myth. The DIFFUSION of stories practically identical in every quarter of the globe may be (provisionally) regarded as the result of the prevalence in every quarter, at one time or another, of similar mental habits and ideas. This explanation must not be pressed too hard nor too far. If we find all over the world a belief that men can change themselves and their neighbours into beasts, that belief will account for the appearance of metamorphosis in myth. If we find a belief that inanimate objects are really much on a level with man, the opinion will account for incidents of myth such as that in which the wooden figure-head of the Argo speaks with a human voice. Again, a widespread belief in the separability of the soul or the life from the body will account for the incident in nursery tales and myths of the “giant who had no heart in his body,” but kept his heart and life elsewhere. An ancient identity of mental status and the working of similar mental forces at the attempt to explain the same phenomena will account, without any theory of borrowing, or transmission of myth, or of original unity of race, for the world-wide diffusion of many mythical conceptions.

But this theory of the original similarity of the savage mind everywhere and in all races will scarcely account for the world-wide distribution of long and intricate mythical PLOTS, of consecutive series of adroitly interwoven situations. In presence of these long romances, found among so many widely severed peoples, conjecture is, at present, almost idle. We do not know, in many instances, whether such stories were independently developed, or carried from a common centre, or borrowed by one race from another, and so handed on round the world.

This chapter may conclude with an example of a tale whose DIFFUSION may be explained in divers ways, though its ORIGIN seems undoubtedly savage. If we turn to the Algonkins, a stock of Red Indians, we come on a popular tradition which really does give pause to the mythologist. Could this story, he asks himself, have been separately invented in widely different places, or could the Iroquois have borrowed from the Australian blacks or the Andaman Islanders? It is a common thing in most mythologies to find everything of value to man — fire, sun, water — in the keeping of some hostile power. The fire, or the sun, or the water is then stolen, or in other ways rescued from the enemy and restored to humanity. The Huron story (as far as water is concerned) is told by Father Paul Le Jeune, a Jesuit missionary, who lived among the Hurons about 1636. The myth begins with the usual opposition between two brothers, the Cain and Abel of savage legend. One of the brothers, named Ioskeha, slew the other, and became the father of mankind (as known to the Red Indians) and the guardian of the Iroquois. The earth was at first arid and sterile, but Ioskeha destroyed the gigantic frog which had swallowed all the waters, and guided the torrents into smooth streams and lakes.(1)

(1) Relations de la Nouvelle France, 1636, (Paris, Cramoisy, 1637).

Now where, outside of North America, do we find this frog who swallowed all the water? We find him in Australia.

“The aborigines of Lake Tyers,” remarks Mr. Brough Smyth, “say that at one time there was no water anywhere on the face of the earth. All the waters were contained in the body of a huge frog, and men and women could get none of them. A council was held, and... it was agreed that the frog should be made to laugh, when the waters would run out of his mouth, and there would be plenty in all parts.”

To make a long story short, all the animals played the jester before the gigantic solemn frog, who sat as grave as Louis XV. “I do not like buffoons who don’t make me laugh,” said that majestical monarch. At last the eel danced on the tip of his tail, and the gravity of the prodigious Batrachian gave way. He laughed till he literally split his sides, and the imprisoned waters came with a rush. Indeed, many persons were drowned, though this is not the only Australian version of the Deluge.

The Andaman Islanders dwell at a very considerable distance from Australia and from the Iroquois, and, in the present condition of the natives of Australia and Andaman, neither could possibly visit the other. The frog in the Andaman version is called a toad, and he came to swallow the waters in the following way: One day a woodpecker was eating honey high up in the boughs of a tree. Far below, the toad was a witness of the feast, and asked for some honey. “Well, come up here, and you shall have some,” said the woodpecker. “But how am I to climb?” “Take hold of that creeper, and I will draw you up,” said the woodpecker; but all the while he was bent on a practical joke. So the toad got into a bucket he happened to possess, and fastened the bucket to the creeper. “Now, pull!” Then the woodpecker raised the toad slowly to the level of the bough where the honey was, and presently let him down with a run, not only disappointing the poor toad, but shaking him severely. The toad went away in a rage and looked about him for revenge. A happy thought occurred to him, and he drank up all the water of the rivers and lakes. Birds and beasts were perishing, woodpeckers among them, of thirst. The toad, overjoyed at his success, wished to add insult to the injury, and, very thoughtlessly, began to dance in an irritating manner at his foes. But then the stolen waters gushed out of his mouth in full volume, and the drought soon ended. One of the most curious points in this myth is the origin of the quarrel between the woodpecker and the toad. The same beginning — the tale of an insult put on an animal by hauling up and letting him down with a run — occurs in an African Marchen.(1)

(1) Brough Smyth, Aborigines of Victoria, i. 429, 430; Brinton, American Hero Myths, i. 55. Cf. also Relations de la Nouvelle France, 1636, 1640, 1671; (Sagard, Hist. du Canada, 1636, ;) Journal Anthrop. Inst., 1881.

Now this strangely diffused story of the slaying of the frog which had swallowed all the water seems to be a savage myth of which the more heroic conflict of Indra with Vrittra (the dragon which had swallowed all the waters) is an epic and sublimer version.(1) “The heavenly water, which Vrittra withholds from the world, is usually the prize of the contest.”

(1) Ludwig, Der Rig-Veda, iii. . See postea, “Divine Myths of India”.

The serpent of Vedic myth is, perhaps, rather the robber-guardian than the swallower of the waters, but Indra is still, like the Iroquois Ioskeha, “he who wounds the full one”.(1) This example of the wide distribution of a myth shows how the question of diffusion, though connected with, is yet distinct from that of origin. The advantage of our method will prove to be, that it discovers an historical and demonstrable state of mind as the origin of the wild element in myth. Again, the wide prevalence in the earliest times of this mental condition will, to a certain extent, explain the DISTRIBUTION of myth. Room must be left, of course, for processes of borrowing and transmission, but how Andamanese, Australians and Hurons could borrow from each other is an unsolved problem.

(1) Gubernatis, Zoological Myth. ii. 395, note 2. “When Indra kills the serpent he opens the torrent of the waters” (). See also Aitareya Brahmana, translated by Haug, ii. 483.

Finally, our hypothesis is not involved in dubious theories of race. To us, myths appear to be affected (in their origins) much less by the race than by the stage of culture attained by the people who cherish them. A fight for the waters between a monstrous dragon like Vrittra and a heroic god like Indra is a nobler affair than a quarrel for the waters between a woodpecker and a toad. But the improvement and transfiguration, so to speak, of a myth at bottom the same is due to the superior culture, not to the peculiar race, of the Vedic poets, except so far as culture itself depends on race. How far the purer culture was attained to by the original superiority of the Aryan over the Andaman breed, it is not necessary for our purpose to inquire. Thus, on the whole, we may claim for our system a certain demonstrable character, which helps to simplify the problems of mythology, and to remove them from the realm of fanciful guesses and conflicting etymological conjectures into that of sober science. That these pretensions are not unacknowledged even by mythologists trained in other schools is proved by the remarks of Dr. Tiele.(1)

(1) Rev. de l’Hist. des Rel., “Le Mythe de Cronos,” January, 1886. Dr. Tiele is not, it must be noted, a thorough adherent of our theory. See Modern Mythology: “The Question of Allies”.

Dr. Tiele writes: “If I were obliged to choose between this method” (the system here advocated) “and that of comparative philology, it is the former that I would adopt without the slightest hesitation. This method alone enables us to explain the fact, which has so often provoked amazement, that people so refined as the Greeks,... or so rude, but morally pure, as the Germans,... managed to attribute to their gods all manner of cowardly, cruel and disorderly conduct. This method alone explains the why and wherefore of all those strange metamorphoses of gods into beasts and plants, and even stones, which scandalised philosophers, and which the witty Ovid played on for the diversion of his contemporaries. In short, this method teaches us to recognise in all those strange stories the survivals of a barbaric age, long passed away, but enduring to later times in the form of religious traditions, of all traditions the most persistent.... Finally, this method alone enables us to explain the origin of myths, because it endeavours to study them in their rudest and most primitive shape, thus allowing their true significance to be much more clearly apparent than it can be in the myths (so often touched, retouched, augmented and humanised) which are current among races arrived at a certain degree of culture.”

The method is to this extent applauded by a most competent authority, and it has been warmly accepted by a distinguished French school of students, represented by M. Gaidoz. But it is obvious that the method rests on a double hypothesis: first, that satisfactory evidence as to the mental conditions of the lower and backward races is obtainable; second, that the civilised races (however they began) either passed through the savage state of thought and practice, or borrowed very freely from people in that condition. These hypotheses have been attacked by opponents; the trustworthiness of our evidence, especially, has been assailed. By way of facilitating the course of the exposition and of lessening the disturbing element of controversy, a reply to the objections and a defence of the evidence has been relegated to an Appendix.(1) Meanwhile we go on to examine the peculiar characteristics of the mental condition of savages and of peoples in the lower and upper barbarisms.

(1) Appendix B.

CHAPTER III. THE MENTAL CONDITION OF SAVAGES — CONFUSION WITH

NATURE — TOTEMISM.

The mental condition of savages the basis of the irrational element in myth — Characteristics of that condition: (1) Confusion of all things in an equality of presumed animation and intelligence; (2) Belief in sorcery; (3) Spiritualism; (4) Curiosity; (5) Easy credulity and mental indolence — The curiosity is satisfied, thanks to the credulity, by myths in answer to all inquiries — Evidence for this — Mr. Tylor's opinion — Mr. Im Thurn — Jesuit missionaries' Relations — Examples of confusion between men, plants, beasts and other natural objects — Reports of travellers — Evidence from institution of totemism — Definition of totemism — Totemism in Australia, Africa, America, the Oceanic Islands, India, North Asia — Conclusions: Totemism being found so widely distributed, is a proof of the existence of that savage mental condition in which no line is drawn between men and the other things in the world. This confusion is one of the characteristics of myth in all races.

We set out to discover a stage of human intellectual development which would necessarily produce the essential elements of myth. We think we have found that stage in the condition of savagery. We now proceed to array the evidence for the mental processes of savages. We intend to demonstrate the existence in practical savage life of the ideas which most surprise us when we find them in civilised sacred legends.

For the purposes of this inquiry, it is enough to select a few special peculiarities of savage thought.

1. First we have that nebulous and confused frame of mind to which all things, animate or inanimate, human, animal, vegetable, or inorganic, seem on the same level of life, passion and reason. The savage, at all events when myth-making, draws no hard and fast line between himself and the things in the world. He regards himself as literally akin to animals and plants and heavenly bodies; he attributes sex and procreative powers even to stones and rocks, and he assigns human speech and human feelings to sun and moon and stars and wind, no less than to beasts, birds and fishes.(1)

(1) “So fasst auch das Alterthum ihren Unterschied von den Menschen ganz anders als die spatere Zeit.” — Grimm, quoted by Liebrecht, Zur Volkskunde, .

2. The second point to note in savage opinion is the belief in magic and

sorcery. The world and all the things in it being vaguely conceived of as sensible and rational, obey the commands of certain members of the tribe, chiefs, jugglers, conjurors, or what you will. Rocks open at their order, rivers dry up, animals are their servants and hold converse with them. These magicians cause or heal diseases, and can command even the weather, bringing rain or thunder or sunshine at their will.(1) There are few supernatural attributes of “cloud-compelling Zeus” or of Apollo that are not freely assigned to the tribal conjuror. By virtue, doubtless, of the community of nature between man and the things in the world, the conjuror (like Zeus or Indra) can assume at will the shape of any animal, or can metamorphose his neighbours or enemies into animal forms.

(1) See Roth in North-West Central Queensland Aborigines, chapter xii., 1897.

3. Another peculiarity of savage belief naturally connects itself with that which has just been described. The savage has very strong ideas about the persistent existence of the souls of the dead. They retain much of their old nature, but are often more malignant after death than they had been during life. They are frequently at the beck and call of the conjuror, whom they aid with their advice and with their magical power. By virtue of the close connection already spoken of between man and the animals, the souls of the dead are not rarely supposed to migrate into the bodies of beasts, or to revert to the condition of that species of creatures with which each tribe supposes itself to be related by ties of kinship or friendship. With the usual inconsistency of mythical belief, the souls of the dead are spoken of, at other times, as if they inhabited a spiritual world, sometimes a paradise of flowers, sometimes a gloomy place, which mortal men may visit, but whence no one can escape who has tasted of the food of the ghosts.

4. In connection with spirits a far-reaching savage philosophy prevails. It is not unusual to assign a ghost to all objects, animate or inanimate, and the spirit or strength of a man is frequently regarded as something separable, capable of being located in an external object, or something with a definite locality in the body. A man’s strength and spirit may reside in his kidney fat, in his heart, in a lock of his hair, or may even be stored by him in some separate receptacle. Very frequently a man is held capable of detaching his soul from his body, and letting it roam about on his business, sometimes in the form of a bird or other animal.

5. Many minor savage beliefs might be named, such as the common faith in friendly or protecting animals, and the notion that “natural deaths” (as we call them) are always UNNATURAL, that death is always caused by some hostile spirit or conjuror. From this opinion comes the myth that man is naturally not subject to death: that death was somehow introduced into the world by a mistake

or misdeed is a corollary. (See “Myths of the Origin of Death” in Modern Mythology.)

6. One more mental peculiarity of the savage mind remains to be considered in this brief summary. The savage, like the civilised man, is curious. The first faint impulses of the scientific spirit are at work in his brain; he is anxious to give himself an account of the world in which he finds himself. But he is not more curious than he is, on occasion, credulous. His intellect is eager to ask questions, as is the habit of children, but his intellect is also lazy, and he is content with the first answer that comes to hand. “Ils s’arretent aux premieres notions qu’ils en ont,” says Pere Hierome Lalemant.(1) “Nothing,” says Schoolcraft, “is too capacious (sic) for Indian belief.”(2) The replies to his questions he receives from tradition or (when a new problem arises) evolves an answer for himself in the shape of STORIES. Just as Socrates, in the Platonic dialogues, recalls or invents a myth in the despair of reason, so the savage has a story for answer to almost every question that he can ask himself. These stories are in a sense scientific, because they attempt a solution of the riddles of the world. They are in a sense religious, because there is usually a supernatural power, a deus ex machina, of some sort to cut the knot of the problem. Such stories, then, are the science, and to a certain extent the religious tradition, of savages.(3)

(1) Relations de la Nouvelle France, 1648, .

(2) Algic Researches, i. 41.

(3) “The Indians (Algonkins) conveyed instruction — moral, mechanical and religious — through traditionary fictions and tales.” — Schoolcraft, Algic Researches, i. 12.

Now these tales are necessarily cast in the mould of the savage ideas of which a sketch has been given. The changes of the heavenly bodies, the processes of day and night, the existence of the stars, the invention of the arts, the origin of the world (as far as known to the savage), of the tribe, of the various animals and plants, the origin of death itself, the origin of the perplexing traditional tribal customs, are all accounted for in stories. At the same time, an actual divine Maker is sometimes postulated. The stories, again, are fashioned in accordance with the beliefs already named: the belief in human connection with and kinship with beasts and plants; the belief in magic; the belief in the perpetual possibility of metamorphosis or “shape shifting”; the belief in the permanence and power of the ghosts of the dead; the belief in the personal and animated character of all the things in the world, and so forth.

No more need be said to explain the wild and (as it seems to us moderns) the irrational character of savage myth. It is a jungle of foolish fancies, a walpurgis nacht of gods and beasts and men and stars and ghosts, all moving madly on a level of common personality and animation, and all changing shapes at random, as partners are changed in some fantastic witches' revel. Such is savage mythology, and how could it be otherwise when we consider the elements of thought and belief out of which it is mainly composed? We shall see that part of the mythology of the Greeks or the Aryans of India is but a similar walpurgis nacht, in which an incestuous or amorous god may become a beast, and the object of his pursuit, once a woman, may also become a beast, and then shift shapes to a tree or a bird or a star. But in the civilised races the genius of the people tends to suppress, exclude and refine away the wild element, which, however, is never wholly eliminated. The Erinyes soon stop the mouth of the horse of Achilles when he begins, like the horse in Grimm's Goose Girl, to hold a sustained conversation.(1) But the ancient, cruel, and grotesque savage element, nearly overcome by Homer and greatly reduced by the Vedic poets, breaks out again in Hesiod, in temple legends and Brahmanic glosses, and finally proves so strong that it can only be subdued by Christianity, or rather by that break between the educated classes and the traditional past of religion which has resulted from Christianity. Even so, myth lingers in the folk-lore of the non-progressive classes of Europe, and, as in Roumania, invades religion.

(1) Iliad, xix. 418.

We have now to demonstrate the existence in the savage intellect of the various ideas and habits which we have described, and out of which mythology springs. First, we have to show that "a nebulous and confused state of mind, to which all things, animate or inanimate, human, animal, vegetable or inorganic, seem on the same level of life, passion and reason," does really exist.(1) The existence of this condition of the intellect will be demonstrated first on the evidence of the statements of civilised observers, next on the evidence of the savage institutions in which it is embodied.

(1) Creuzer and Guigniaut, vol. i. .

The opinion of Mr. Tylor is naturally of great value, as it is formed on as wide an acquaintance with the views of the lower races as any inquirers can hope to possess. Mr. Tylor observes: "We have to inform ourselves of the savage man's idea, which is very different from the civilised man's, of the nature of the lower animals.... The sense of an absolute psychical distinction between man and beast, so prevalent in the civilised world, is hardly to be found among the lower races."(1) The universal attribution of "souls" to all things — the theory known as "Animism" — is another proof that the savage draws no hard and fast line between man and the other things in the world. The notion of the Italian country-people, that cruelty to an animal does not matter because it is not a "Christian," has no parallel in the philosophy of the savage, to whom all objects seem to have souls, just as men have. Mr. Im Thurn found the absence of any sense of a difference between man and nature a characteristic of his native companions in Guiana. “The very phrase, ‘Men and other animals,’ or even, as it is often expressed, ‘Men and animals,’ based as it is on the superiority which civilised man feels over other animals, expresses a dichotomy which is in no way recognised by the Indian.... It is therefore most important to realise how comparatively small really is the difference between men in a state of savagery and other animals, and how completely even such difference as exists escapes the notice of savage men... It is not, therefore, too much to say that, according to the view of the Indians, other animals differ from men only in bodily form and in their various degrees of strength; in spirit they do not differ at all.”(2) The Indian’s notion of the life of plants and stones is on the same level of unreason, as we moderns reckon reason. He believes in the spirits of rocks and stones, undeterred by the absence of motion in these objects. “Not only many rocks, but also many waterfalls, streams, and indeed material objects of every sort, are supposed each to consist of a body and a spirit, as does man.”(3) It is not our business to ask here how men came by the belief in universal animation. That belief is gradually withdrawn, distinctions are gradually introduced, as civilisation and knowledge advance. It is enough for us if the failure to draw a hard and fast line between man and beasts, stones and plants, be practically universal among savages, and if it gradually disappears before the fuller knowledge of civilisation. The report which Mr. Im Thurn brings from the Indians of Guiana is confirmed by what Schoolcraft says of the Algonkin races of the northern part of the continent. “The belief of the narrators and listeners in every wild and improbable thing told helps wonderfully in the original stories, in joining all parts together. The Indian believes that the whole visible and invisible creation is animated.... To make the matter worse, these tribes believe that animals of the lowest as well as highest class in the chain of creation are alike endowed with reasoning powers and faculties. As a natural conclusion they endow birds, beasts and all other animals with souls.”(4) As an example of the ease with which the savage recognises consciousness and voluntary motion even in stones, may be cited Kohl’s account of the beliefs of the Objibeways.(5) Nearly every Indian has discovered, he says, an object in which he places special confidence, and to which he sacrifices more zealously than to the Great Spirit. The “hope” of Otamigan (a companion of the traveller) was a rock, which once advanced to meet him, swayed, bowed and went back again. Another Indian revered a Canadian larch, “because he once heard a very remarkable rustling in its branches”. It thus appears that while the savage has a general kind of sense that inanimate things are animated, he is a good deal impressed by their conduct when he thinks that they actually display their animation. In the same way a devout modern spiritualist probably regards with more reverence a table which he has seen dancing and heard rapping than a table at which he has only dined. Another general statement of failure to draw the line between men and the irrational creation is found in the old Jesuit missionary Le Jeune's Relations de la Nouvelle France.(6) "Les sauvages se persuadent que non seulement les hommes et les autres animaux, mais aussi que toutes les autres choses sont animees." Again: "Ils tiennent les poissons raisonnables, comme aussi les cerfs". In the Solomon Islands, Mr. Romilly sailed with an old chief who used violent language to the waves when they threatened to dash over the boat, and "old Takki's exhortations were successful".(7) Waitz(8) discovers the same attitude towards the animals among the negroes. Man, in their opinion, is by no means a separate sort of person on the summit of nature and high above the beasts; these he rather regards as dark and enigmatic beings, whose life is full of mystery, and which he therefore considers now as his inferiors, now as his superiors. A collection of evidence as to the savage failure to discriminate between human and non-human, animate and inanimate, has been brought together by Sir John Lubbock.(9)

(1) Primitive Culture, i. 167-169.

(2) Among the Indians of Guiana (1883), .

(3) Op. Cit., 355.

(4) Schoolcraft, Algic Researches, i. 41.

(5) Kohl, Wanderings Round Lake Superior, p, 59; Muller, Amerikan Urrelig., p-67.

(6) 1636, .

(7) Western Pacific, .

(8) Anthropologie der Natur-Volker, ii. 177.

(9) Origin of Civilisation, . A number of examples of this mental attitude among the Bushmen will be found in cha., postea.

To a race accustomed like ourselves to arrange and classify, to people familiar from childhood and its games with "vegetable, animal and mineral," a condition of mind in which no such distinctions are drawn, any more than they are drawn in Greek or Brahmanic myths, must naturally seem like what Mr. Max Muller calls "temporary insanity". The imagination of the savage has been defined by Mr. Tylor as "midway between the conditions of a healthy, prosaic, modern citizen, and of a raving fanatic, or of a patient in a fever-ward". If any relics of such imagination survive in civilised mythology, they will very closely resemble the productions of a once universal "temporary insanity". Let it be granted, then, that "to the lower tribes of man, sun and stars, trees and rivers, winds and clouds, become personal, animate creatures, leading lives conformed to human or animal analogies, and performing their special functions in the universe with the aid of limbs like beasts, or of artificial instruments like men; or that what men's eyes behold is but the instrument to be used or the material to be shaped, while behind it there stands some prodigious but yet half-human creature, who grasps it with his hands or blows it with his breath. The basis on which such ideas as these are built is not to be narrowed down to poetic fancy and transformed metaphor. They rest upon a broad philosophy of nature; early and crude, indeed, but thoughtful, consistent, and quite really and seriously meant."(1)

(1) Primtive Culture, i. 285.

For the sake of illustration, some minor examples must next be given of this confusion between man and other things in the world, which will presently be illustrated by the testimony of a powerful and long diffused set of institutions.

The Christian Quiches of Guatemala believe that each of them has a beast as his friend and protector, just as in the Highlands "the dog is the friend of the Maclaines". When the Finns, in their epic poem the Kalewala, have killed a bear, they implore the animal to forgive them. "Oh, Ot-so," chant the singers, "be not angry that we come near thee. The bear, the honey-footed bear, was born in lands between sun and moon, and he died, not by men's hands, but of his own will."(1) The Red Men of North America(2) have a tradition showing how it is that the bear does not die, but, like Herodotus with the sacred stories of the Egyptian priests, Mr. Schoolcraft "cannot induce himself to write it out".(3) It is a most curious fact that the natives of Australia tell a similar tale of THEIR "native bear". "He did not die" when attacked by men.(4) In parts of Australia it is a great offence to skin the native bear, just as on a part of the west coast of Ireland, where seals are superstitiously regarded, the people cannot be bribed to skin them. In New Caledonia, when a child tries to kill a lizard, the men warn him to "beware of killing his own ancestor".(5) The Zulus spare to destroy a certain species of serpents, believed to be the spirits of kinsmen, as the great snake which appeared when Aeneas did sacrifice was held to be the ghost of Anchises. Mexican women(6) believed that children born during an eclipse turn into mice. In Australia the natives believe that the wild dog has the power of speech; whoever listens to him is petrified; and a certain spot is shown where "the wild dog spoke and turned the men into stone";(7) and the blacks run for their lives as soon as the dog begins to speak. What it said was "Bones".

(1) Kalewala, in La Finlande, Leouzon Le Duc (1845), vol. ii. ; cf. also the Introduction.

(2) Schoolcraft, v. 420.

(3) See similar ceremonies propitiatory of the bear in Jewett's Adventures

among the Nootkas, Edinburgh, 1824.

(4) Brough Smyth, i. 449.

(5) J. J. Atkinson's MS.

(6) Sahagun, ii. viii. 250; Bancroft, iii. 111. Compare stories of women who give birth to animals in Melusine, 1886, August-November. The Batavians believe that women, when delivered of a child, are frequently delivered at the same time of a young crocodile as a twin. Hawkesworth's Voyages, iii. 756. Liebrecht, Zur Volkskunde, et seq.

(7) Brough Smyth, Aborigines of Victoria, i. 497.

These are minor examples of a form of opinion which is so strong that it is actually the chief constituent in savage society. That society, whether in Ashantee or Australia, in North America or South Africa, or North Asia or India, or among the wilder tribes of ancient Peru, is based on an institution generally called "totemism". This very extraordinary institution, whatever its origin, cannot have arisen except among men capable of conceiving kinship and all human relationships as existing between themselves and all animate and inanimate things. It is the rule, and not the exception, that savage societies are founded upon this belief. The political and social conduct of the backward races is regulated in such matters as blood-feud and marriage by theories of the actual kindred and connection by descent, or by old friendship, which men have in common with beasts, plants, the sun and moon, the stars, and even the wind and the rain. Now, in whatever way this belief in such relations to beasts and plants may have arisen, it undoubtedly testifies to a condition of mind in which no hard and fast line was drawn between man and animate and inanimate nature. The discovery of the wide distribution of the social arrangements based on this belief is entirely due to Mr. J. F. M'Lennan, the author of Primitive Marriage. Mr. M'Lennan's essays ("The Worship of Plants and Animals," "Totems and Totemism") were published in the Fortnightly Review, 1869-71. Any follower in the footsteps of Mr. M'Lennan has it in his power to add a little evidence to that originally set forth, and perhaps to sift the somewhat uncritical authorities adduced.(1)

(1) See also Mr. Frazer's Totemism, and Golden Bough, with chapter on Totemism in Modern Mythology.

The name "Totemism" or "Totamism" was first applied at the end of the last century by Long(1) to the Red Indian custom which acknowledges human kinship with animals. This institution had already been recognised among the Iroquois by Lafitau,(2) and by other observers. As to the word "totem," Mr. Max Muller(3) quotes an opinion that the interpreters, missionaries, Government inspectors, and others who apply the name totem to the Indian "family mark" must have been ignorant of the Indian languages, for there is in them no such word as totem. The right word, it appears, is otem; but as “totemism” has the advantage of possessing the ground, we prefer to say “totemism” rather than “otemism”. The facts are the same, whatever name we give them. As Mr. Muller says himself,(4) “every warrior has his crest, which is called his totem”;(5) and he goes on to describe a totem of an Indian who died about 1793. We may now return to the consideration of “otemism” or totemism. We approach it rather as a fact in the science of mythology than as a stage in the evolution of the modern family system. For us totemism is interesting because it proves the existence of that savage mental attitude which assumes kindred and alliance between man and the things in the world. As will afterwards be seen, totemism has also left its mark on the mythologies of the civilised races. We shall examine the institution first as it is found in Australia, because the Australian form of totemism shows in the highest known degree the savage habit of confusing in a community of kinship men, stars, plants, beasts, the heavenly bodies, and the forces of Nature. When this has once been elucidated, a shorter notice of other totemistic races will serve our purpose.

(1) Voyages and Travels, 1791.

(2) Moeurs des Sauvages (1724), .

(3) Academy, December 15, 1883.

(4) Selected Essays (1881), ii. 376.

(5) Compare Mr. Max Muller’s Contributions to the Science of Mythology.

The society of the Murri or black fellows of Australia is divided into local tribes, each of which possesses, or used to possess, and hunt over a considerable tract of country. These local tribes are united by contiguity, and by common local interests, but not necessarily by blood kinship. For example, the Port Mackay tribe, the Mount Gambier tribe, the Ballarat tribe, all take their names from their district. In the same way we might speak of the people of Strathclyde or of Northumbria in early English history. Now, all these local tribes contain an indefinite number of stocks of kindred, of men believing themselves to be related by the ties of blood and common descent. That descent the groups agree in tracing, not from some real or idealised human parent, but from some animal, plant, or other natural object, as the kangaroo, the emu, the iguana, the pelican, and so forth. Persons of the pelican stock in the north of Queensland regard themselves as relations of people of the same stock in the most southern parts of Australia. The creature from which each tribe claims descent is called “of the same flesh,” while persons of another stock are “fresh flesh”. A native may not marry a woman of “his own flesh”; it is only a woman of “fresh” or “strange” flesh he may marry. A man may not eat an animal of “his own flesh”; he may only eat “strange flesh”. Only under great stress of need will an Australian eat the animal which is the flesh-and-blood cousin and protector of his stock.(1) (These rules of marriage and blood, however, do not apply among the Arunta of Central Australia, whose Totems (if Totems they should be called) have been developed on very different lines.(2)) Clearer evidence of the confusion between man and beast, of the claiming of kin between man and beast, could hardly be.

(1) Dawson, Aborigines, p, 27; Howitt and Fison, Kamilaroi and Kurnai, .

(2) Spencer and Gillen, Native Tribes of Central Australia.

But the Australian philosophy of the intercommunion of Nature goes still farther than this. Besides the local divisions and the kindred stocks which trace their descent from animals, there exist among many Australian tribes divisions of a kind still unexplained. For example, every man of the Mount Gambier local tribe is by birth either a Kumite or a Kroki. This classification applies to the whole of the sensible universe. Thus smoke and honeysuckle trees belong to the division Kumite, and are akin to the fishhawk stock of men. On the other hand, the kangaroo, summer, autumn, the wind and the shevak tree belong to the division Kroki, and are akin to the black cockatoo stock of men. Any human member of the Kroki division has thus for his brothers the sun, the wind, the kangaroo, and the rest; while any man of the Kumite division and the crow surname is the brother of the rain, the thunder, and the winter. This extraordinary belief is not a mere idle fancy — it influences conduct. “A man does not kill or use as food any of the animals of the same subdivision (Kroki or Kumite) with himself, excepting when hunger compels, and then they express sorrow for having to eat their wingong (friends) or tumanang (their flesh). When using the last word they touch their breasts, to indicate the close relationship, meaning almost a portion of themselves. To illustrate: One day one of the blacks killed a crow. Three or four days afterwards a Boortwa (a man of the crow surname and stock), named Larry, died. He had been ailing for some days, but the killing of his wingong (totem) hastened his death.”(1) Commenting on this statement, Mr. Fison observes: “The South Australian savage looks upon the universe as the Great Tribe, to one of whose divisions he himself belongs; and all things, animate and inanimate, which belong to his class are parts of the body corporate whereof he himself is part”. This account of the Australian beliefs and customs is borne out, to a certain extent, by the evidence of Sir George Grey,(2) and of the late Mr. Gideon Scott Lang.(3) These two writers take no account of the singular “dichotomous” divisions, as of Kumite and Kroki, but they draw attention to the groups of kindred which derive their surnames from animals, plants, and the like. “The origin of these family names,” says Sir George Grey, “is attributed by the natives to different causes.... One origin frequently assigned by the natives is, that they were derived from some vegetable or animal being very common in the district which the family inhabited.” We have seen from the evidence of Messrs. Fison and Howitt that a more common native explanation is based on kinship with the vegetable or plant which bestows the family surname. Sir George Gray mentions that the families use their plant or animal as a crest or kobong (totem), and he adds that natives never willingly kill animals of their kobong, holding that some one of that species is their nearest friend. The consequences of eating forbidden animals vary considerably. Sometimes the Boyl-yas (that is, ghosts) avenge the crime. Thus when Sir George Grey ate some mussels (which, after all, are not the crest of the Greys), a storm followed, and one of his black fellow improvised this stave: —

Oh, wherefore did he eat the mussels?
Now the Boyl-yas storms and thunders make;
Oh, wherefore would he eat the mussels?

(1) Kamilaroi and Kurnai, .

(2) Travels, ii. 225.

(3) Lang, Lecture on Natives of Australia, .

There are two points in the arrangements of these stocks of kindred named from plants and animals which we shall find to possess a high importance. No member of any such kindred may marry a woman of the same name and descended from the same object.(1) Thus no man of the Emu stock may marry an Emu woman; no Blacksnake may marry a Blacksnake woman, and so forth. This point is very strongly put by Mr. Dawson, who has had much experience of the blacks. “So strictly are the laws of marriage carried out, that, should any sign of courtship or affection be observed between those ‘of one flesh,’ the brothers or male relatives of the woman beat her severely.” If the incestuous pair (though not in the least related according to our ideas) run away together, they are “half-killed”; and if the woman dies in consequence of her punishment, her partner in iniquity is beaten again. No “eric” or blood-fine of any kind is paid for her death, which carries no blood-feud. “Her punishment is legal.”(2) This account fully corroborates that of Sir George Grey.(3)

(1) Taplin, The Nerrinyeri. . “Every tribe, regarded by them as a family, has its ngaitge, or tutelary genius or tribal symbol, in the shape of some bird, beast, fish, reptile, insect, or substance. Between individuals of the same tribe no marriage can take place.” Among the Narrinyeri kindred is reckoned () on the father’s side. See also () ngaitge = Samoan aitu. “No man or woman will kill their ngaitge,” except with precautions, for food.

(2) Op. cit., .

(3) Ibid., ii. 220.

Our conclusion is that the belief in “one flesh” (a kinship shared with the animals) must be a thoroughly binding idea, as the notion is sanctioned by capital punishment.

Another important feature in Australian totemism strengthens our position. The idea of the animal kinship must be an ancient one in the race, because the family surname, Emu, Bandicoot, or what not, and the crest, kobong, or protecting and kindred animal, are inherited through the mother’s side in the majority of stocks. This custom, therefore, belongs to that early period of human society in which the woman is the permanent and recognised factor in the family while male parentage is uncertain.(1) One other feature of Australian totemism must be mentioned before we leave the subject. There is some evidence that in certain tribes the wingong or totem of each man is indicated by a tattooed representation of it upon his flesh. The natives are very licentious, but men would shrink from an amour with a woman who neither belonged to their own district nor spoke their language, but who, in spite of that, was of their totem. To avoid mistakes, it seems that some tribes mark the totem on the flesh with incised lines.(2) The natives frequently design figures of some kind on the trees growing near the graves of deceased warriors. Some observers have fancied that in these designs they recognised the totem of the dead men; but on this subject evidence is by no means clear. We shall see that this primitive sort of heraldry, this carving or painting of hereditary blazons, is common among the Red Men of America.(3)

(1) Cf. Bachofen, Das Mutterrecht; M’Lennan, Primitive Marriage, passim; Encycl. Brit. s. v. Family.

(2) Fison, op. cit., .

(3) Among other recent sources see Howitt in “Organisation of Australian Tribes” (Transactions of Royal Society of Victoria, 1889), and Spencer and Gillen, Natives of Central Australia. In Central Australia there is a marked difference in the form of Totemism.

Though a large amount of evidence might be added to that already put forward, we may now sum up the inferences to be drawn from the study of totemism in Australia. It has been shown (1) that the natives think themselves actually akin to animals, plants, the sun, and the wind, and things in general; (2) that those ideas influence their conduct, and even regulate their social arrangements, because (3) men and women of the kinship of the same animal or plant may not intermarry, while men are obliged to defend, and in case of murder to avenge, persons of the stock of the family or plant from which they themselves derive their family name. Thus, on the evidence of institutions, it is plain that the Australians are (or before the influence of the Europeans became prevalent were) in a state of mind which draws no hard and fast line between man and the things in the world. If, therefore, we find that in Australian myth, men, gods, beasts, and things all shift shapes incessantly, and figure in a coroboree dance of confusion, there will be nothing to astonish us in the discovery. The myths of men in the Australian intellectual condition, of men who hold long conversations with the little “native bear,” and ask him for oracles, will naturally and inevitably be grotesque and confused.(1)

(1) Brough Smyth, i. 447, on MS. authority of W. Thomas.

It is “a far cry” from Australia to the West Coast of Africa, and it is scarcely to be supposed that the Australians have borrowed ideas and institutions from Ashantee, or that the people of Ashantee have derived their conceptions of the universe from the Murri of Australia. We find, however, on the West African Coast, just as we do in Australia, that there exist large local divisions of the natives. These divisions are spoken of by Mr. Bowditch (who visited the country on a mission in 1817) as nations, and they are much more populous and powerful (as the people are more civilised) than the local tribes of Australia. Yet, just as among the local tribes of Australia, the nations of the West African Coast are divided into stocks of kindred, each STOCK having its representatives in each NATION. Thus an Ashantee or a Fantee may belong to the same stock of kindred as a member of the Assin or Akini nation. When an Ashantee of the Annona stock of kindred meets a Warsaw man of the same stock they salute and acknowledge each other as brothers. In the same way a Ballarat man of the Kangaroo stock in Australia recognises a relative in a Mount Gambier man who is also a Kangaroo. Now, with one exception, all the names of the twelve stocks of West African kindreds, or at least all of them which Mr. Bowditch could get the native interpreters to translate, are derived from animals, plants and other natural objects, just as in Australia.(1) Thus Quonna is a buffalo, Abrootoo is a cornstalk, Abbradi a plantain. Other names are, in English, the parrot, the wild cat, red earth, panther and dog. Thus all the natives of this part of Africa are parrots, dogs, buffaloes, panthers, and so forth, just as the Australians are emus, iguanas, black cockatoos, kangaroos, and the rest. It is remarkable that there is an Incra stock, or clan of ants, in Ashantee, just as there was a race of Myrmidons, believed to be descended from or otherwise connected with ants, in ancient Greece. Though Bowditch’s account of these West African family divisions is brief, the arrangement tallies closely with that of Australia. It is no great stretch of imagination to infer that the African tribes do, or once did, believe themselves to be of the kindred of the animals whose names they bear. (2) It is more or less confirmatory of this hypothesis that no family is permitted to use as food the animal from which it derives its name. We have seen that a similar rule prevails, as far as hunger and scarcity of victuals permit it to be obeyed, among the natives of Australia. The Intchwa stock in Ashantee and Fantee is particularly unlucky, because its members may not eat the dog, “much relished by native epicures, and therefore a serious privation”. Equally to be pitied were the ancient Egyptians, who, if they belonged to the district of the sheep, might not eat mutton, which their neighbours, the Lycopolitae, devoured at pleasure. These restrictions appear to be connected with the almost universal dislike of cannibals to eat persons of their own kindred except as a pious duty. This law of the game in cannibalism has not yet been thoroughly examined, though we often hear of wars waged expressly for the purpose of securing food (human meat), while some South American tribes actually bred from captive women by way of securing constant supplies of permitted flesh.(3) When we find stocks, then, which derive their names from animals and decline to eat these animals, we may at least SUSPECT that they once claimed kinship with the name-giving beasts. The refusal to eat them raises a presumption of such faith. Old Bosman(4) had noticed the same practices. “One eats no mutton, another no goat’s flesh, another no beef, swine’s flesh, wild fowl, cocks with white feathers, and they say their ancestors did so from the beginning of the world.”

(1) The evidence of native interpreters may be viewed with suspicion. It is improbable, however, that in 1817 the interpreters were acquainted with the totemistic theory of mythologists, and deliberately mistranslated the names of the stocks, so as to make them harmonise with Indian, Australian, and Red Indian totem kindreds. This, indeed, is an example where the criterion of “recurrence” or “coincidence” seems to be valuable. Bowditch’s Mission to Ashantee (1873), .

(2) This view, however, does not prevail among the totemistic tribes of British Columbia, for example.

(3) Cieza de Leon (Hakluyt Society), . This amazing tale is supported by the statement that kinship went by the female side (); the father was thus not of the kin of his child by the alien woman. Cieza was with Validillo in 1538.

(4) In Pinkerton, xvi. 400.

While in the case of the Ashantee tribes, we can only infer the existence of a belief in kinship with the animals from the presence of the other features of fully developed totemism (especially from the refusal to eat the name-giving animal), we have direct evidence for the opinion in another part of Africa, among the Bechuanas.(1) Casalis, who passed twenty-three years as a missionary in South Africa, thus describes the institution: “While the united communities usually bear the name of their chief or of the district which they inhabit” (local tribes, as in Australia), “each stock (tribu) derives its title from an animal or a vegetable.

All the Bechuanas are subdivided thus into Bakuenas (crocodile-men), Batlapis (men of the fish), Banarer (of the buffalo), Banukus (porcupines), Bamoraras (wild vines), and so forth. The Bakuenas call the crocodile their father, sing about him in their feasts, swear by him, and mark the ears of their cattle with an incision which resembles the open jaws of the creature.” This custom of marking the cattle with the crest, as it were, of the stock, takes among some races the shape of deforming themselves, so as the more to resemble the animal from which they claim descent. “The chief of the family which holds the chief rank in the stock is called ‘The Great Man of the Crocodile’. Precisely in the same way the Duchess of Sutherland is styled in Gaelic ‘The Great Lady of the Cat,’” though totemism is probably not the origin of this title.

(1) E. Casalis, Les Bassoutos, 1859.

Casalis proceeds: “No one would dare to eat the flesh or wear the skin of the animal whose name he bears. If the animal be dangerous — the lion, for example — people only kill him after offering every apology and asking his pardon. Purification must follow such a sacrifice.” Casalis was much struck with the resemblance between these practices and the similar customs of North American races. Livingstone’s account(1) on the whole corroborates that of Casalis, though he says the Batau (tribe of the lion) no longer exists. “They use the word bina ‘to dance,’ in reference to the custom of thus naming themselves, so that when you wish to ascertain what tribe they belong to, you say, ‘What do you dance?’ It would seem as if this had been part of the worship of old.” The mythological and religious knowledge of the Bushmen is still imparted in dances; and when a man is ignorant of some myth he will say, “I do not dance that dance,” meaning that he does not belong to the guild which preserves that particular “sacred chapter”.(2)

(1) Missionary Travels (1857), .

(2) Orpen, Cape Monthly Magazine, 1872.

Casalis noticed the similarity between South African and Red Indian opinion about kinship with vegetables and beasts. The difficulty in treating the Red Indian belief is chiefly found in the abundance of the evidence. Perhaps the first person who ever used the word “totemism,” or, as he spells it, “totamism,” was (as we said) Mr. Long, an interpreter among the Chippeways, who published his Voyages in 1791. Long was not wholly ignorant of the languages, as it was his business to speak them, and he was an adopted Indian. The ceremony of adoption was painful, beginning with a feast of dog’s flesh, followed by a Turkish bath and a prolonged process of tattooing.(1) According to Long,(2) “The totam, they conceive, assumes the form of some beast or other, and therefore they never kill, hurt, or eat the animal whose form they think this totam bears”. One man was filled with religious apprehensions, and gave himself up to the gloomy belief of Bunyan and Cowper, that he had committed the unpardonable sin, because he dreamed he had killed his totem, a bear.(3) This is only one example, like the refusal of the Osages to kill the beavers, with which they count cousins,(4) that the Red Man’s belief is an actual creed, and does influence his conduct.

(1) Long, p-49.

(2) Ibid., .

(3) Ibid., .

(4) Schoolcraft, i. 319.

As in Australia, the belief in common kin with beasts is most clearly proved by the construction of Red Indian society. The “totemistic” stage of thought and manners prevails. Thus Charlevoix says,(1) “Plusieurs nations ont chacune trois familles ou tribus principales, AUSSI ANCIENNES, A CE QU’IL PAROIT, QUE LEUR ORIGINE. Chaque tribu porte le nom d’un animal, et la nation entiere a aussi le sien, dont elle prend le nom, et dont la figure est sa marque, ou, se l’on veut, ses armoiries, on ne signe point autrement les traites qu’en traceant ces figures.” Among the animal totems Charlevoix notices porcupine, bear, wolf and turtle. The armoiries, the totemistic heraldry of the peoples of Virginia, greatly interested a heraldic ancestor of Gibbon the historian,(2) who settled in the colony. According to Schoolcraft,(3) the totem or family badge, of a dead warrior is drawn in a reverse position on his grave-post. In the same way the leopards of England are drawn reversed on the shield of an English king opposite the mention of his death in old monkish chronicles. As a general rule,(4) persons bearing the same totem in America cannot intermarry. “The union must be between various totems.” Moreover, as in the case of the Australians, “the descent of the chief is in the female line”. We thus find among the Red Men precisely the same totemistic regulations as among the Aborigines of Australia. Like the Australians, the Red Men “never” (perhaps we should read “hardly ever”) eat their totems. Totemists, in short, spare the beasts that are their own kith and kin. To avoid multiplying details which all corroborate each other, it may suffice to refer to Schoolcraft for totemism among the Iowas(5) and the Pueblos;(6) for the Iroquois, to Lafitau, a missionary of the early part of the eighteenth century. Lafitau was perhaps the first writer who ever explained certain features in Greek and other ancient myths and practices as survivals from totemism. The Chimera, a composite creature, lion, goat and serpent, might represent, Lafitau thought, a league of three totem tribes, just as wolf, bear and turtle represented the Iroquois League.

(1) Histoire de la France-Nouvelle, iii. 266.

(2) Introductio ad Latinam Blasoniam, by John Gibbon, Blue Mantle, London, 1682. “The dancers, were painted some party per pale, gul and sab, some party per fesse of the same colours;” whence Gibbon concluded “that heraldry was ingrafted naturally into the sense of the humane race”.

(3) Vol. i. .

(4) Schoolcraft, v. 73.

(5) Ibid., iii. 268.

(6) Ibid., iv. 86.

The martyred Pere Rasles, again, writing in 1723,(1) says that one stock of the Outaonaks claims descent from a hare (“the great hare was a man of prodigious size”), while another stock derive their lineage from the carp, and a third descends from a bear; yet they do not scruple, after certain expiatory rites, to eat bear’s flesh. Other North American examples are the Kutchin, who have always possessed the system of totems.(2)

(1) Kip’s Jesuits in America i. 33.

(2) Dall’s Alaska, p-198.

It is to be noticed, as a peculiarity of Red Indian totemism which we have not observed (though it may exist) in Africa, that certain stocks claim relations with the sun. Thus Pere Le Petit, writing from New Orleans in 1730, mentions the Sun, or great chief of the Natchez Indians.(1) The totem of the privileged class among the Natchez was the sun, and in all myths the sun is regarded as a living being, who can have children, who may be beaten, who bleeds when cut, and is simply on the same footing as men and everything else in the world. Precisely similar evidence comes from South America. In this case our best authority is almost beyond suspicion. He knew the native languages well, being himself a half-caste. He was learned in the European learning of his time; and as a son of the Incas, he had access to all surviving Peruvian stores of knowledge, and could collect without difficulty the testimonies of his countrymen. It will be seen(2) that Don Garcilasso de la Vega could estimate evidence, and ridiculed the rough methods and fallacious guesses of Spanish inquirers. Garcilasso de la Vega was born about 1540, being the son of an Inca princess and of a Spanish conqueror. His book, Commentarias Reales,(3) was expressly intended to rectify the errors of such Spanish writers as Acosta. In his account of Peruvian religion, Garcilasso distinguishes between the beliefs of the tribes previous to the rise of the Inca empire and the sun-worship of the Incas. But it is plain, from Garcilasso’s own account and from other evidence, that under the Incas the older faiths and fetichisms survived, in subordination to sun-worship, just as Pagan superstitions survived in custom and folk-lore after the official recognition of Christianity. Sun-worship, in Peru, and the belief in a Supreme Creator there, seem even, like Catholicism in Mexico, China and elsewhere, to have made a kind of compromise with the lower beliefs, and to have been content to allow a certain amount of bowing down in the temples of the elder faiths. According, then, to Garcilasso's account of Peruvian totemism, "An Indian was not looked upon as honourable unless he was descended from a fountain, river,(4) or lake, or even from the sea, OR FROM A WILD ANIMAL, such as a bear, lion, tiger, eagle, or the bird they call cuntur (condor), or some other bird of prey ".(5) A certain amount of worship was connected with this belief in kinship with beasts and natural objects. Men offered up to their totems "what they usually saw them eat".(6) On the seacoasts "they worshipped sardines, skates, dog-fish, and, for want of larger gods, crabs.... There was not an animal, how vile and filthy soever, that they did not worship as a god," including "lizards, toads and frogs." Garcilasso (who says they ate the fish they worshipped) gives his own theory of the origin of totemism. In the beginning men had only sought for badges whereby to discriminate one human stock from another. "The one desired to have a god different from the other.... They only thought of making one different from another." When the Inca emperors began to civilise the totemistic stocks, they pointed out that their own father, the sun, possessed "splendour and beauty" as contrasted with "the ugliness and filth of the frogs and other vermin they looked upon as gods".(7) Garcilasso, of course, does not use the North American word totem (or ote or otem) for the family badge which represented the family ancestors. He calls these things, as a general rule, pacarissa. The sun was the pacarissa of the Incas, as it was of the chief of the Natchez. The pacarissa of other stocks was the lion, bear, frog, or what not. Garcilasso accounts for the belief accorded to the Incas, when they claimed actual descent from the sun, by observing(8) that "there were tribes among their subjects who professed similar fabulous descents, though they did not comprehend how to select ancestors so well as the Incas, but adored animals and other low and earthly objects". As to the fact of the Peruvian worship of beasts, if more evidence is wanted, it is given, among others, by Cieza de Leon,(9) who contrasts the adoration of the Roman gods with that offered in Peru to brutes. "In the important temple of Pacha-camac (the spiritual deity of Peru) they worshipped a she-fox or vixen and an emerald." The devil also "appeared to them and spoke in the form of a tiger, very fierce". Other examples of totemism in South America may be studied in the tribes on the Amazon.(10) Mr. Wallace found the Pineapple stock, the Mosquitoes, Woodpeckers, Herons, and other totem kindreds. A curious example of similar ideas is discovered among the Bonis of Guiana. These people were originally West Coast Africans imported as slaves, who have won their freedom with the sword. While they retain a rough belief in Gadou (God) and

Didibi (the devil), they are divided into totem stocks with animal names. The red ape, turtle and cayman are among the chief totems.(11)

(1) Kip, ii. 288.

(2) Appendix B.

(3) See translation in Hakluyt Society's Collection.

(4) Like many Greek heroes. Odyssey, iii. 489. "Orsilochus, the child begotten of Alpheus."

(5) Comm. Real., i. 75.

(6) Ibid., 53.

(7) Ibid., 102.

(8) Ibid., 83.

(9) Cieza de Leon (Hakluyt Society), .

(10) Acuna, ; Wallace, Travels on Amazon (1853), p-506.

(11) Crevaux, Voyages dans l'Amerique du Sud, .

After this hasty examination of the confused belief in kinship with animals and other natural objects which underlies institutions in Australia, West and South Africa, North and South America, we may glance at similar notions among the non-Aryan races of India. In Dalton's Ethnology of Bengal,(1) he tells us that the Garo clans are divided into maharis or motherhoods. Children belong to the mahari of the mother, just as (in general) they derive their stock name and totem from the mother's side in Australia and among the North American Indians. No man may marry (as among the Red Indians and Australians) a woman belonging to his own stock, motherhood or mahari. So far the maharis of Bengal exactly correspond to the totem kindred. But do the Maharis also take their names from plants and animals, and so forth? We know that the Killis, similar communities among the Bengal Hos and Mundos, do this.(2) "The Mundaris, like the Oraons, adopt as their tribal distinction the name of some animal, and the flesh of that animal is tabooed to them as food; for example, the eel, the tortoise." This is exactly the state of things in Ashanti. Dalton mentions also(3) a princely family in Nagpur which claims descent from "a great hooded snake". Among the Oraons he found(4) tribes which might not eat young mice (considered a dainty) or tortoises, and a stock which might not eat the oil of the tree which was their totem, nor even sit in its shade. "The family or tribal names" (within which they may not marry) "are usually those of animals or plants, and when this is the case, the flesh of some part of the animal or the fruit of the tree is tabooed to the tribe called after it."

(1) Dalton, .

(2) Ibid., .

(3) Ibid., .

(4) Ibid., .

An excellent sketch of totemism in India is given by Mr. H. H. Risley of the Bengal Civil Service: — (1)

(1) The Asiatic Quarterly, No. 3, Essay on “Primitive Marriage in Bengal.”

“At the bottom of the social system, as understood by the average Hindu, stands a large body of non-Aryan castes and tribes, each of which is broken up into a number of what may be called totemistic exogamous septs. Each sept bears the name of an animal, a tree, a plant, or of some material object, natural or artificial, which the members of that sept are prohibited from killing, eating, cutting, burning, carrying, using, etc.”(1)

(1) Here we may note that the origin of exogamy itself is merely part of a strict totemistic prohibition. A man may not “use” an object within the totem kin, nor a woman of the kin. Compare the Greek idiom (Greek text omitted).

Mr. Risley finds that both Kolarians, as the Sonthals, and Dravidians, as the Oraons, are in this state of totemism, like the Hos and Mundas. It is most instructive to learn that, as one of these tribes rises in the social scale, it sloughs off its totem, and, abandoning the common name derived from bird, beast, or plant, adopts that of an eponymous ancestor. A tendency in this direction has been observed by Messrs. Fison and Howitt even in Australia. The Mahilis, Koras and Kurmis, who profess to be members of the Hindu community, still retain the totemistic organisation, with names derived from birds, beasts and plants. Even the Jagannathi Kumhars of Orissa, taking rank immediately below the writer-caste, have the totems tiger, snake, weasel, cow, frog, sparrow and tortoise. The sub-castes of the Khatlya Kumhars explain away their totem-names “as names of certain saints, who, being present at Daksha’s Horse-sacrifice, transformed themselves into animals to escape the wrath of Siva,” like the gods of Egypt when they fled in bestial form from the wrath of Set.

Among the non-Aryan tribes the marriage law has the totemistic sanction. No man may marry a woman of his totem kin. When the totem-name is changed for an eponym, the non-Aryan, rising in the social scale, is practically in the same position as the Brahmans, “divided into exogamous sections (gotras), the members of which profess to be descended from the mythical rishi or inspired saint whose name the gotra bears”. There is thus nothing to bar the conjecture that the exogamous gotras of the whole Brahmans were once a form of totem-kindred, which (like aspiring non-Aryan stocks at the present day) dropped the totem-name and renamed the septs from some eponymous hero, medicine-man, or Rishi.

Constant repetition of the same set of facts becomes irksome, and yet is made necessary by the legitimate demand for trustworthy and abundant evidence. As the reader must already have reflected, this living mythical belief in the common confused equality of men, gods, plants, beasts, rivers, and what not, which still regulates savage society,(1) is one of the most prominent features in mythology. Porphyry remarked and exactly described it among the Egyptians— “common and akin to men and gods they believed the beasts to be.”(2) The belief in such equality is alien to modern civilisation. We have shown that it is common and fundamental in savagery. For instance, in the Pacific, we might quote Turner,(3) and for Melanesia, Codrington,(4) while for New Zealand we have Taylor.(5) For the Jakuts, along the banks of the Lena in Northern Asia, we have the evidence of Strahlenberg, who writes: “Each tribe of these people look upon some particular creature as sacred, e.g., a swan, goose, raven, etc., and such is not eaten by that tribe” though the others may eat it.(6) As the majority of our witnesses were quite unaware that the facts they described were common among races of whom many of them had never even heard, their evidence may surely be accepted as valid, especially as the beliefs testified to express themselves in marriage laws, in the blood-feud, in abstinence from food, on pillars over graves, in rude heraldry, and in other obvious and palpable shapes. If we have not made out, by the evidence of institutions, that a confused credulity concerning the equality and kinship of man and the objects in nature is actually a ruling belief among savages, and even higher races, from the Lena to the Amazon, from the Gold Coast to Queensland, we may despair of ever convincing an opponent. The survival of the same beliefs and institutions among civilised races, Aryan and others, will later be demonstrated.(7) If we find that the mythology of civilised races here agrees with the actual practical belief of savages, and if we also find that civilised races retain survivals of the institutions in which the belief is expressed by savages, then we may surely infer that the activity of beasts in the myths of Greece springs from the same sources as the similar activity of beasts in the myths of Iroquois or Kaffirs. That is to say, part of the irrational element in Greek myth will be shown to be derived (whether by inheritance or borrowing) from an ascertained condition of savage fancy.

(1) See some very curious and disgusting examples of this confusion in Liebrecht’s Zur Volkskunde, p, 396 (Heilbronn, 1879).

(2) De Abst., ii. 26.

(3) Nineteen Years in Polynesia, , and Samoa by the same author. Complete totemism is not asserted here, and is denied for Melanesia.

(4) Journ. Anthrop. Inst., “Religious Practices in Melanesia”.

(5) New Zealand, “Animal Intermarriage with Men”.

(6) Description of Asia (1783), .

(7) Professor Robertson Smith, Kinship in Arabia, attempts to show that

totemism existed in the Semitic races. The topic must be left to Orientalists.

CHAPTER IV. THE MENTAL CONDITION OF

SAVAGES — MAGIC — METAMORPHOSIS — METAPHYSIC — PSYCHOLOGY.

Claims of sorcerers — Savage scientific speculation — Theory of causation — Credulity, except as to new religious ideas— “Post hoc, ergo propter hoc” — Fundamental ideas of magic — Examples: incantations, ghosts, spirits — Evidence of rank and other institutions in proof of confusions of mind exhibited in magical beliefs.

“I mean eftsoons to have a fling at magicians for their abominable lies and monstrous vanities.” — PLINY, ap. Phil. Holland.

“Quoy de ceux qui naturellement se changent en loups, en juments, et puis encores en hommes?” — MONTAIGNE, Apologie pour Raymond de Sebonde.

The second feature in the savage intellectual condition which we promised to investigate was the belief in magic and sorcery. The world and all the things in it being conceived of vaguely as sensible and rational, are supposed to obey the commands of certain members of each tribe, such as chiefs, jugglers, or conjurors. These conjurors, like Zeus or Indra, can affect the weather, work miracles, assume what shapes, animal, vegetable, or inorganic, they please, and can metamorphose other persons into similar shapes. It has already been shown that savage man has regarded all THINGS as PERSONS much on a level with himself. It has now to be shown WHAT KIND OF PERSON HE CONCEIVES HIMSELF TO BE. He does not look on men as civilised races regard them, that is, as beings with strict limitations. On the other hand, he thinks of certain members of his tribe as exempt from most of the limitations, and capable of working every miracle that tradition has ever attributed to prophets or gods. Nor are such miraculous powers, such practical omnipotence, supposed by savages to be at all rare among themselves. Though highly valued, miraculous attainments are not believed to be unusual. This must be kept steadily in mind. When myth-making man regards the sky or sun or wind as a person, he does not mean merely a person with the limitations recognised by modern races. He means a person with the miraculous powers of the medicine-man. The sky, sun, wind or other elemental personage can converse with the dead, and can turn himself and his neighbours into animals, stones and trees.

To understand these functions and their exercise, it is necessary to examine what may be called savage science, savage metaphysics, and the savage theory of the state of the dead. The medicine-man’s supernatural claims are rooted in the general savage view of the world, of what is possible, and of what (if anything) is impossible. The savage, even more than the civilised man, may be described as a creature “moving about in worlds not realised”. He feels, no less than civilised man, the need of making the world intelligible, and he is active in his search for causes and effects. There is much “speculation in these eyes that he doth glare withal”. This is a statement which has been denied by some persons who have lived with savages. Thus Mr. Bates, in his Naturalist on the Amazon,(1) writes: “Their want of curiosity is extreme.... Vicente (an Indian companion) did not know the cause of thunder and lightning. I asked him who made the sun, the stars, the trees. He didn’t know, and had never heard the subject mentioned in his tribe.” But Mr. Bates admits that even Vicente had a theory of the configuration of the world. “The necessity of a theory of the earth and water had been felt, and a theory had been suggested.” Again, Mr. Bates says about a certain Brazilian tribe, “Their sluggish minds seem unable to conceive or feel the want of a theory of the soul”; and he thinks the cause of this indolence is the lack “of a written language or a leisured class”. Now savages, as a rule, are all in the “leisured class,” all sportsmen. Mr. Herbert Spencer, too, has expressed scepticism about the curiosity attributed to savages. The point is important, because, in our view, the medicine-man’s powers are rooted in the savage theory of things, and if the savage is too sluggish to invent or half consciously evolve a theory of things, our hypothesis is baseless. Again, we expect to find in savage myths the answer given by savages to their own questions. But this view is impossible if savages do not ask themselves, and never have asked themselves, any questions at all about the world. On this topic Mr. Spencer writes: “Along with absence of surprise there naturally goes absence of intelligent curiosity”.(2) Yet Mr. Spencer admits that, according to some witnesses, “the Dyaks have an insatiable curiosity,” the Samoans “are usually very inquisitive,” and “the Tahitians are remarkably curious and inquisitive”. Nothing is more common than to find travellers complaining that savages, in their ardently inquiring curiosity, will not leave the European for a moment to his own undisturbed devices. Mr. Spencer’s savages, who showed no curiosity, displayed this impassiveness when Europeans were trying to make them exhibit signs of surprise. Impassivity is a point of honour with many uncivilised races, and we cannot infer that a savage has no curiosity because he does not excite himself over a mirror, or when his European visitors try to swagger with their mechanical appliances. Mr. Herbert Spencer founds, on the statements of Mr. Bates already quoted, a notion that “the savage, lacking ability to think and the accompanying desire to know, is without tendency to speculate”.

He backs Mr. Bates's experience with Mungo Park's failure to "draw" the negroes about the causes of day and night. They had never indulged a conjecture nor formed an hypothesis on the matter. Yet Park avers that "the belief in one God is entire and universal among them". This he "pronounces without the smallest shadow of doubt". As to "primitive man," according to Mr. Spencer, "the need for explanations about surrounding appearances does not occur to him". We have disclaimed all knowledge about "primitive man," but it is easy to show that Mr. Spencer grounds his belief in the lack of speculation among savages on a frail foundation of evidence.

(1) Vol. ii. .

(2) Sociology, .

Mr. Spencer has admitted speculation, or at least curiosity, among New Caledonians, New Guinea people, Dyaks, Samoans and Tahitians. Even where he denies its existence, as among the Amazon tribes mentioned by Mr. Bates, we happen to be able to show that Mr. Bates was misinformed. Another traveller, the American geologist, Professor Hartt of Cornell University, lived long among the tribes of the Amazon. But Professor Hartt did not, like Mr. Bates, find them at all destitute of theories of things — theories expressed in myths, and testifying to the intellectual activity and curiosity which demands an answer to its questions. Professor Hartt, when he first became acquainted with the Indians of the Amazon, knew that they were well supplied with myths, and he set to work to collect them. But he found that neither by coaxing nor by offers of money could he persuade an Indian to relate a myth. Only by accident, "while wearily paddling up the Paranamirim of the Ituki," did he hear the steersman telling stories to the oarsmen to keep them awake. Professor Hartt furtively noted down the tale, and he found that by "setting the ball rolling," and narrating a story himself, he could make the natives throw off reserve and add to his stock of tales. "After one has obtained his first myth, and has learned to recite it accurately and spiritedly, the rest is easy." The tales published by Professor Hartt are chiefly animal stories, like those current in Africa and among the Red Indians, and Hartt even believed that many of the legends had been imported by Negroes. But as the majority of the Negro myths, like those of the Australians, give a "reason why" for the existence of some phenomenon or other, the argument against early man's curiosity and vivacity of intellect is rather injured, even if the Amazonian myths were imported from Africa. Mr. Spencer based his disbelief in the intellectual curiosity of the Amazonian tribes and of Negroes on the reports of Mr. Bates and of Mungo Park. But it turns out that both Negroes and Amazonians have stories which do satisfy an unscientific curiosity, and it is even held that the Negroes lent the Amazonians these very stories.(1) The

Kamschadals, according to Steller, “give themselves a reason why for everything, according to their own lively fancy, and do not leave the smallest matter uncriticised”.(2) As far, then, as Mr. Spencer’s objections apply to existing savages, we may consider them overweighed by the evidence, and we may believe in a naive savage curiosity about the world and desire for explanations of the causes of things. Mr. Tylor’s opinion corroborates our own: “Man’s craving to know the causes at work in each event he witnesses, the reasons why each state of things he surveys is such as it is and no other, is no product of high civilisation, but a characteristic of his race down to its lowest stages. Among rude savages it is already an intellectual appetite, whose satisfaction claims many of the moments not engrossed by war or sport, food or sleep. Even in the Botocudo or the Australian, scientific speculation has its germ in actual experience.”(3) It will be shown later that the food of the savage intellectual appetite is offered and consumed in the shape of explanatory myths.

(1) See Amazonian Tortoise-Myth., p, 37, 40; and compare Mr. Harris’s Preface to Nights with Uncle Remus.

(2) Steller, . Cf. Farrer’s Primitive Manners, .

(3) Primitive Culture, i. 369.

But we must now observe that the “actual experience,” properly so called, of the savage is so limited and so coloured by misconception and superstition, that his knowledge of the world varies very much from the conceptions of civilised races. He seeks an explanation, a theory of things, based on his experience. But his knowledge of physical causes and of natural laws is exceedingly scanty, and he is driven to fall back upon what we may call metaphysical, or, in many cases “supernatural” explanations. The narrower the range of man’s knowledge of physical causes, the wider is the field which he has to fill up with hypothetical causes of a metaphysical or “supernatural” character. These “supernatural” causes themselves the savage believes to be matters of experience. It is to his mind a matter of experience that all nature is personal and animated; that men may change shapes with beasts; that incantations and supernatural beings can cause sunshine and storm.

A good example of this is given in Charlevoix’s work on French Canada.(1) Charlevoix was a Jesuit father and missionary among the Hurons and other tribes of North America. He thus describes the philosophy of the Red Men: “The Hurons attribute the most ordinary effects to supernatural causes”.(2) In the same page the good father himself attributes the welcome arrival of rainy weather and the cure of certain savage patients to the prayers of Pere Brebeuf and to the exhibition of the sacraments. Charlevoix had considerably extended the field in which natural effects are known to be produced by natural causes. He was much more scientifically minded than his savage flock, and was quite aware that an ordinary clock with a pendulum cannot bring bad luck to a whole tribe, and that a weather-cock is not a magical machine for securing unpleasant weather. The Hurons, however, knowing less of natural causes and nothing of modern machinery, were as convinced that his clock was ruining the luck of the tribe and his weather-cock spoiling the weather, as Father Charlevoix could be of the truth of his own inferences. One or two other anecdotes in the good father's history and letters help to explain the difference between the philosophies of wild and of Christian men. The Pere Brebeuf was once summoned at the instigation of a Huron wizard or "medicine-man" before a council of the tribe. His judges told the father that nothing had gone right since he appeared among them. To this Brebeuf replied by "drawing the attention of the savages to the absurdity of their principles". He admitted(3) the premise that nothing had turned out well in the tribe since his arrival. "But the reason," said he, "plainly is that God is angry with your hardness of heart." No sooner had the good father thus demonstrated the absurdity of savage principles of reasoning, than the malignant Huron wizard fell down dead at his feet! This event naturally added to the confusion of the savages.

(1) Histoire de la France-Nouvelle.

(2) Vol. i. .

(3) Vol. i. .

Coincidences of this sort have a great effect on savage minds. Catlin, the friend of the Mandan tribe, mentions a chief who consolidated his power by aid of a little arsenic, bought from the whites. The chief used to prophesy the sudden death of his opponents, which always occurred at the time indicated. The natural results of the administration of arsenic were attributed by the barbarous people to supernatural powers in the possession of the chief.(1) Thus the philosophy of savages seeks causas cognoscere rerum, like the philosophy of civilised men, but it flies hastily to a hypothesis of "supernatural" causes which are only guessed at, and are incapable of demonstration. This frame of mind prevails still in civilised countries, as the Bishop of Nantes showed when, in 1846, he attributed the floods of the Loire to "the excesses of the press and the general disregard of Sunday". That "supernatural" causes exist and may operate, it is not at all our intention to deny. But the habit of looking everywhere for such causes, and of assuming their interference at will, is the main characteristic of savage speculation. The peculiarity of the savage is that he thinks human agents can work supernaturally, whereas even the Bishop reserved his supernatural explanations for the Deity. On this belief in man's power to affect events beyond the limits of natural possibility is based the whole theory of MAGIC, the whole power of sorcerers. That theory, again, finds incessant expression in myth, and therefore deserves our attention.

(1) Catlin, Letters, ii. 117.

The theory requires for its existence an almost boundless credulity. This credulity appears to Europeans to prevail in full force among savages. Bosman is amazed by the African belief that a spider created the world. Moffat is astonished at the South African notion that the sea was accidentally created by a girl. Charlevoix says, “Les sauvages sont d’une facilite a croire ce qu’on leur dit, que les plus facheuse experiences n’ont jamais pu guerir”.(1) But it is a curious fact that while savages are, as a rule, so credulous, they often laugh at the religious doctrines taught them by missionaries. Elsewhere they recognise certain essential doctrines as familiar forms of old. Dr. Moffat remarks, “To speak of the Creation, the Fall and the Resurrection, seemed more fabulous, extravagant and ludicrous to them than their own vain stories of lions and hyaenas.” Again, “The Gospel appeared too preposterous for the most foolish to believe”.(2) While the Zulus declared that they used to accept their own myths without inquiry,(3) it was a Zulu who suggested to Bishop Colenso his doubts about the historical character of the Noachian Deluge. Hearne(4) knew a Red Man, Matorabhee, who, “though a perfect bigot with regard to the arts and tricks of the jugglers, could yet by no means be impressed with a belief of any part of OUR religion”. Lieutenant Haggard, R.N., tells the writer that during an eclipse at Lamoo he ridiculed the native notion of driving away a beast which devours the moon, and explained the real cause of the phenomenon. But his native friend protested that “he could not be expected to believe such a story”. Yet other savages aver an old agreement with the belief in a moral Creator.

(1) Vol. ii. .

(2) Missionary Labours, .

(3) Callaway, Religion of Amazulus, i. 35.

(4) Journey among the Indians, 1795, .

We have already seen sufficient examples of credulity in savage doctrines about the equal relations of men and beasts, stars, clouds and plants. The same readiness of belief, which would be surprising in a Christian child, has been found to regulate the rudimentary political organisations of grey barbarians. Add to this credulity a philosophy which takes resemblance, or contiguity in space, or nearness in time as a sufficient reason for predicating the relations of cause and effect, and we have the basis of savage physical science. Yet the metaphysical theories of savages, as expressed in Maori, Polynesian, and Zuni hymns, often amaze us by their wealth of abstract ideas. Coincidence elsewhere stands for cause.

Post hoc, ergo propter hoc, is the motto of the savage philosophy of causation. The untutored reasoner speculates on the principles of the Egyptian clergy, as described by Herodotus.(1) “The Egyptians have discovered more omens and prodigies than any other men; for when aught prodigious occurs, they keep good watch, and write down what follows; and then, if anything like the prodigy be repeated, they expect the same events to follow as before.” This way of looking at things is the very essence of superstition.

(1) II. .

Savages, as a rule, are not even so scientific as the Egyptians. When an untoward event occurs, they look for its cause among all the less familiar circumstances of the last few days, and select the determining cause very much at random. Thus the arrival of the French missionaries among the Hurons was coincident with certain unfortunate events; therefore it was argued that the advent of the missionaries was the cause of the misfortune. When the Bechuanas suffered from drought, they attributed the lack of rain to the arrival of Dr. Moffat, and especially to his beard, his church bell, and a bag of salt in his possession. Here there was not even the pretence of analogy between cause and effect. Some savages might have argued (it is quite in their style), that as salt causes thirst, a bag of salt causes drought; but no such case could be made out against Dr. Moffat’s bell and beard. To give an example from the beliefs of English peasants. When a cottage was buried by a little avalanche in 1772, the accident was attributed to the carelessness of the cottagers, who had allowed a light to be taken out of their dwelling in Christmas-tide.(1) We see the same confusion between antecedence and consequence in time on one side, and cause and effect on the other, when the Red Indians aver that birds actually bring winds and storms or fair weather. They take literally the sense of the Rhodian swallow-song: —

The swallow hath come,
Bringing fair hours,
Bringing fair seasons,
On black back and white breast.(2)

(1) Shropshire Folk-Lore, by Miss Burne, iii. 401.

(2) Brinton, Myths of New World, .

Again, in the Pacific the people of one island always attribute hurricanes to the machinations of the people of the nearest island to windward. The wind comes from them; therefore (as their medicine-men can notoriously influence the weather), they must have sent the wind. This unneighbourly act is a casus belli, and through the whole of a group of islands the banner of war, like the flag of freedom in Byron, flies against the wind. The chief principle, then, of savage science is that antecedence and consequence in time are the same as effect and cause.(1) Again, savage science holds that LIKE AFFECTS LIKE, that you can injure a man, for example, by injuring his effigy. On these principles the savage explains the world to himself, and on these principles he tries to subdue to himself the world. Now the putting of these principles into practice is simply the exercise of art magic, an art to which nothing seems impossible. The belief that his Shamans or medicine-men practise this art is universal among savages. It seriously affects their conduct, and is reflected in their myths.

(1) See account of Zuni metaphysics in chapter on American Divine Myths.

The one general rule which governs all magical reasoning is, that casual connection in thought is equivalent to causative connection in fact. Like suggests like to human thought by association of ideas; wherefore like influences like, or produces analogous effects in practice. Any object once in a man's possession, especially his hair or his nails, is supposed to be capable of being used against him by a sorcerer. The part suggests the whole. A lock of a man's hair was part of the man; to destroy the hair is to destroy its former owner. Again, whatever event follows another in time suggests it, and may have been caused by it. Accompanying these ideas is the belief that nature is peopled by invisible spiritual powers, over which magicians and sorcerers possess influence. The magic of the lower races chiefly turns on these two beliefs. First, "man having come to associate in thought those things which he found by experience to be connected in fact, proceeded erroneously to invert their action, and to conclude that association in thought must involve similar connection in reality. He thus attempted to discover, to foretell, and to cause events, by means of processes which we now see to have only an ideal significance."(1) Secondly, man endeavoured to make disembodied spirits of the dead, or any other spirits, obedient to his will. Savage philosophy presumes that the beliefs are correct, and that their practical application is successful. Examples of the first of the two chief magical ideas are as common in unscientific modern times or among unscientific modern people as in the savage world.

(1) Primitive Culture, i. 14.

The physicians of the age of Charles II. were wont to give their patients "mummy powder," that is, pulverised mummy. They argued that the mummy had lasted for a very long time, and that the patients ought to do so likewise. Pliny imagined that diamonds must be found in company with gold, because these are the most perfect substances in the world, and like should draw to like. Aurum potabile, or drinkable gold, was a favourite medical nostrum of the Middle Ages, because gold, being perfect, should produce perfect health. Among savages the belief that like is caused by like is exemplified in very many practices. The New Caledonians, when they wish their yam plots to be fertile, bury in them with mystic ceremonies certain stones which are naturally shaped like yams. The Melanesians have reduced this kind of magic to a system. Among them certain stones have a magical efficacy, which is determined in each case by the shape of the stone. “A stone in the shape of a pig, of a bread-fruit, of a yam, was a most valuable find. No garden was planted without the stones which were to increase the crop.”(1) Stones with a rude resemblance to beasts bring the Zuni luck in the chase.

(1) Rev. R. H. Codrington, Journ. Anth. Inst., February, 1881.

The spiritual theory in some places is mixed up with the “like to like” theory, and the magical stones are found where the spirits have been heard twittering and whistling. “A large stone lying with a number of small ones under it, like a sow among her sucklings, was good for a childless woman.”(1) It is the savage belief that stones reproduce their species, a belief consonant with the general theory of universal animation and personality. The ancient belief that diamonds gendered diamonds is a survival from these ideas. “A stone with little disks upon it was good to bring in money; any fanciful interpretation of a mark was enough to give a character to the stone and its associated Vui” or spirit in Melanesia. In Scotland, stones shaped like various parts of the human body are expected to cure the diseases with which these members may be afflicted. “These stones were called by the names of the limbs which they represented, as ‘eye-stone,’ ‘head-stone’.” The patient washed the affected part of the body, and rubbed it well with the stone corresponding.(2)

(1) Codrington, Journ. Anth. Soc., x. iii. 276.

(2) Gregor, Folk-Lore of North-East Counties, .

To return from European peasant-magic to that of savages, we find that when the Bushmen want wet weather they light fires, believing that the black smoke clouds will attract black rain clouds; while the Zulus sacrifice black cattle to attract black clouds of rain.(1) Though this magic has its origin in savage ignorance, it survives into civilisation. Thus the sacrifices of the Vedic age were imitations of the natural phenomena which the priests desired to produce.(2) “C’etait un moyen de faire tombre la pluie en realisant, par les representations terrestres des eaux du nuage et de l’eclair, les conditions dans lesquelles celui-ci determine dans le ciel l’epanchement de celles-la.” A good example of magical science is afforded by the medical practice of the Dacotahs of North America.(3) When any one is ill, an image of his disease, a boil or what not, is carved in wood. This little image is then placed in a bowl of water and shot at with a gun. The image of the disease being destroyed, the disease itself is expected to disappear. Compare the magic of the Philistines, who made golden images of the sores which plagued them and stowed them away in the ark.(4) The custom of making a wax statuette of an enemy, and piercing it with pins or melting it before the fire, so that the detested person might waste as his semblance melted, was common in mediaeval Europe, was known to Plato, and is practised by Negroes. Some Australians take some of the hair of an enemy, mix it with grease and the feathers of the eagle, and burn it in the fire. This is “bar” or black magic. The boarding under the chair of a magistrate in Barbadoes was lifted not long ago, and the ground beneath was found covered with wax images of litigants stuck full of pins.

(1) Callaway, i. 92.

(2) Bergaigne, Religion Vedique, i. 126-138, i., vii., viii.

(3) Schoolcraft, iv. 491.

(4) 1 Samuel vi. 4, 5.

The war-magic of the Dacotahs works in a similar manner. Before a party starts on the war-trail, the chief, with various ceremonies, takes his club and stands before his tent. An old witch bowls hoops at him; each hoop represents an enemy, and for each he strikes a foeman is expected to fall. A bowl of sweetened water is also set out to entice the spirits of the enemy.(1) The war-magic of the Aryans in India does not differ much in character from that of the Dacotahs. “If any one wishes his army to be victorious, he should go beyond the battle-line, cut a stalk of grass at the top and end, and throw it against the hostile army with the words, Prasahe kas trapasyati? — O Prasaha, who sees thee? If one who has such knowledge cuts a stalk of grass and throws the parts at the hostile army, it becomes split and dissolved, just as a daughter-in-law becomes abashed and faints when seeing her father-in-law,” — an allusion, apparently, to the widespread tabu which makes fathers-in-law, daughters-in-law, sons-in-law, and mothers-in-law avoid each other.(2)

(1) Schoolcraft, iv. 496.

(2) Aitareya Brahmana, iii. 22.

The hunt-dances of the Red Indians and Australians are arranged like their war-magic. Effigies of the bears, deer, or kangaroos are made, or some of the hunters imitate the motions of these animals. The rest of the dancers pretend to spear them, and it is hoped that this will ensure success among the real bears and kangaroos.

Here is a singular piece of magic in which Europeans and Australian blacks agree. Boris Godunoff made his servants swear never to injure him by casting spells with the dust on which his feet or his carriage wheels had left traces.(1) Mr. Howitt finds the same magic among the Kurnai.(2) “Seeing a Tatungolung very lame, I asked him what was the matter. He said, ‘Some fellow has put

BOTTLE in my foot’. I found he was probably suffering from acute rheumatism. He explained that some enemy must have found his foot-track and have buried in it a piece of broken bottle. The magic influence, he believed, caused it to enter his foot.” On another occasion a native told Mr. Howitt that he had seen black fellows putting poison in his foot-tracks. Bosman mentions a similar practice among the people of Guinea. In Scottish folk-lore a screw nail is fixed into the footprint of the person who is to be injured.

(1) Rambaud’s History of Russia, English trans., i. 351.

(2) Kamilaroi and Kurnai, .

Just as these magical efforts to influence like by like work their way into Vedic and other religions, so they are introduced into the religion of the savage. His prayers are addresses to some sort of superior being, but the efficacy of the prayer is often eked out by a little magic, unless indeed we prefer to suppose that the words of the supplication are interpreted by gesture-speech. Sproat writes: “Set words and gestures are used according to the thing desired. For instance, in praying for salmon, the native rubs the backs of his hands, looks upwards, and mutters the words, ‘Many salmon, many salmon’. If he wishes for deer, he carefully rubs both eyes; or, if it is geese, he rubs the back of his shoulder, uttering always in a sing-song way the accustomed formula.... All these practices in praying no doubt have a meaning. We may see a steady hand is needed in throwing the salmon-spear, and clear eyesight in finding deer in the forest.”(1)

(1) Savage Life, .

In addition to these forms of symbolical magic (which might be multiplied to any extent), we find among savages the belief in the power of songs of INCANTATION. This is a feature of magic which specially deserves our attention. In myths, and still more in marchen or household tales, we shall constantly find that the most miraculous effects are caused when the hero pronounces a few lines of rhyme. In Rome, as we have all read in the Latin Delectus, it was thought that incantations could draw down the moon. In the Odyssey the kinsfolk of Odysseus sing “a song of healing” over the wound which was dealt him by the boar’s tusk. Jeanne d’Arc, wounded at Orleans, refused a similar remedy. Sophocles speaks of the folly of muttering incantations over wounds that need the surgeon’s knife. The song that salved wounds occurs in the Kalewala, the epic poem of the Finns. In many of Grimm’s marchen, miracles are wrought by the repetition of snatches of rhyme. This belief is derived from the savage state of fancy. According to Kohl,(1) “Every sorrowful or joyful emotion that opens the Indian’s mouth is at once wrapped up in the garb of a wabanonagamowin (chanson magicale). If you ask one of them to sing you a simple innocent hymn in praise of Nature, a spring or jovial hunting stave, he never gives you anything but a form of incantation, with which he says you will be able to call to you all the birds from the sky, and all the foxes and wolves from their caves and burrows."(2) The giant's daughter in the Scotch marchen, Nicht, Nought, Nothing, is thus enabled to call to her aid "all the birds of the sky". In the same way, if you ask an Indian for a love-song, he will say that a philtre is really much more efficacious. The savage, in short, is extremely practical. His arts, music and drawing, exist not pour l'art, but for a definite purpose, as methods of getting something that the artist wants. The young lover whom Kohl knew, like the lover of Bombyca in Theocritus, believed in having an image of himself and an image of the beloved. Into the heart of the female image he thrust magic powders, and he said that this was common, lovers adding songs, "partly elegiac, partly malicious, and almost criminal forms of incantation".(3)

(1) Page 395.

(2) Cf. Comparetti's Traditional Poetry of the Finns.

(3) Kitchi gami, p, 397.

Among the Indo-Aryans the masaminik or incantations of the Red Man are known as mantras.(1) These are usually texts from the Veda, and are chanted over the sick and in other circumstances where magic is believed to be efficacious. Among the New Zealanders the incantations are called karakias, and are employed in actual life. There is a special karakia to raise the wind. In Maori myths the hero is very handy with his karakia. Rocks split before him, as before girls who use incantations in Kaffir and Bushman tales. He assumes the shape of any animal at will, or flies in the air, all by virtue of the karakia or incantation.(2)

(1) Muir, Sanskrit Texts, v. 441, "Incantations from the Atharva Veda".

(2) Taylor's New Zealand; Theal's Kaffir Folk-Lore, South-African Folk-Lore Journal, passim; Shortland's Traditions of the New Zealanders, p-135.

Without multiplying examples in the savage belief that miracles can be wrought by virtue of physical CORRESPONDANCES, by like acting on like, by the part affecting the whole, and so forth, we may go on to the magical results produced by the aid of spirits. These may be either spirits of the dead or spiritual essences that never animated mortal men. Savage magic or science rests partly on the belief that the world is peopled by a "choir invisible," or rather by a choir only occasionally visible to certain gifted people, sorcerers and diviners. An enormous amount of evidence to prove the existence of these tenets has been collected by Mr. Tylor, and is accessible to all in the chapters on "Animism" in his Primitive Culture. It is not our business here to account for the universality of the belief in spirits. Mr. Tylor, following Lucretius and Homer, derives the belief from the reasonings of early men on the phenomena of dreams, fainting, shadows, visions caused by narcotics, hallucinations, and other facts which suggest the hypothesis of a separable life apart from the bodily organism. It would scarcely be fair not to add that the kind of “facts” investigated by the Psychical Society — such “facts” as the appearance of men at the moment of death in places remote from the scene of their decease, with such real or delusive experiences as the noises and visions in haunted houses — are familiar to savages. Without discussing these obscure matters, it may be said that they influence the thoughts even of some scientifically trained and civilised men. It is natural, therefore, that they should strongly sway the credulous imagination of backward races, in which they originate or confirm the belief that life can exist and manifest itself after the death of the body.(1)

(1) See the author’s Making of Religion, 1898.

Some examples of savage “ghost-stories,” precisely analogous to the “facts” of the Psychical Society’s investigations, may be adduced. The first is curious because it offers among the Kanekas an example of a belief current in Breton folk-lore. The story is vouched for by Mr. J. J. Atkinson, late of Noumea, New Caledonia. Mr. Atkinson, we have reason to believe, was unacquainted with the Breton parallel. To him one day a Kaneka of his acquaintance paid a visit, and seemed loth to go away. He took leave, returned, and took leave again, till Mr. Atkinson asked him the reason of his behaviour. He then explained that he was about to die, and would never see his English friend again. As he seemed in perfect health, Mr. Atkinson rallied him on his hypochondria; but the poor fellow replied that his fate was sealed. He had lately met in the wood one whom he took for the Kaneka girl of his heart; but he became aware too late that she was no mortal woman, but a wood-spirit in the guise of the beloved. The result would be his death within three days, and, as a matter of fact, he died. This is the groundwork of the old Breton ballad of Le Sieur Nan, who dies after his intrigue with the forest spectre.(1) A tale more like a common modern ghost-story is vouched for by Mr. C. J. Du Ve, in Australia. In the year 1860, a Maneroo black fellow died in the service of Mr. Du Ve. “The day before he died, having been ill some time, he said that in the night his father, his father’s friend, and a female spirit he could not recognise, had come to him and said that he would die next day, and that they would wait for him. Mr. Du Ye adds that, though previously the Christian belief had been explained to this man, it had entirely faded, and that he had gone back to the belief of his childhood.” Mr. Fison, who prints this tale in his Kamilaroi and Kurnai,(2) adds, “I could give many similar instances which have come within my own knowledge among the Fijians, and, strange to say, the dying man in all these cases kept his appointment with the ghosts to the very day”.

(1) It may, of course, be conjectured that the French introduced this belief into New Caledonia.

(2) Page 247.

In the Cruise of the Beagle is a parallel anecdote of a Fuegian, Jimmy Button, and his father’s ghost.

Without entering into a discussion of ghosts, it is plain that the kind of evidence, whatever its value may be, which convinces many educated Europeans of the existence of “veridical” apparitions has also played its part in the philosophy of uncivilised races. On this belief in apparitions, then, is based the power of the savage sorcerers and necromants, of the men who converse with the dead and are aided by disembodied spirits. These men have greatly influenced the beginnings of mythology. Among certain Australian tribes the necromants are called Birraark.(1) “The Kurnai tell me,” says Mr. Howitt, “that a Birraark was supposed to be initiated by the ‘Mrarts (ghosts) when they met him wandering in the bush.... It was from the ghosts that he obtained replies to questions concerning events passing at a distance or yet to happen, which might be of interest or moment to his tribe.” Mr. Howitt prints an account of a spiritual seance in the bush.(2) “The fires were let go down. The Birraark uttered a cry ‘coo-ee’ at intervals. At length a distant reply was heard, and shortly afterwards the sound as of persons jumping on the ground in succession. A voice was then heard in the gloom asking in a strange intonation, ‘What is wanted?’ Questions were put by the Birraark and replies given. At the termination of the seance, the spirit-voice said, ‘We are going’. Finally, the Birraark was found in the top of an almost inaccessible tree, apparently asleep.”(3) There was one Birraark at least to every clan. The Kurnai gave the name of “Brewin” (a powerful evil spirit) to a Birraark who was once carried away for several days by the Mrarts or spirits.(4) It is a belief with the Australians, as, according to Bosman, it was with the people of the Gold Coast, that a very powerful wizard lives far inland, and the Negroes held that to this warlock the spirits of the dead went to be judged according to the merit of their actions in life. Here we have a doctrine answering to the Greek belief in “the wizard Minos,” Aeacus, and Rhadamanthus, and to the Egyptian idea of Osiris as judge of the departed.(5) The pretensions of the sorcerer to converse with the dead are attested by Mr. Brough Smyth.(6) “A sorcerer lying on his stomach spoke to the deceased, and the other sitting by his side received the precious messages which the dead man told.” As a natural result of these beliefs, the Australian necromant has great power in the tribe. Mr. Howitt mentions a case in which a group of kindred, ceasing to use their old totemistic surname, called themselves the children of a famous dead Birraark, who thus became an eponymous hero, like Ion among the Ionians.(7) Among the Scotch Highlanders the position and practice of the seer were very like those of the Birraark. “A person,” says Scott,(8) “was wrapped up in the skin of a newly slain bullock and deposited beside a waterfall or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed and whatever was impressed on him by his exalted imagination PASSED FOR THE INSPIRATION OF THE DISEMBODIED SPIRITS who haunt these desolate recesses.” A number of examples are given in Martin’s Description of the Western Islands.(9) In the Century magazine (July, 1882) is a very full report of Thlinkeet medicine-men and metamorphoses.

(1) Kamilaroi and Kurnai, .

(2) Page 254.

(3) In the Jesuit Relations (1637), , we read that the Red Indian sorcerer or Jossakeed was credited with power to vanish suddenly away out of sight of the men standing around him. Of him, as of Homeric gods, it might be said, “Who has power to see him come or go against his will?”

(4) Here, in the first edition, occurred the following passage: “The conception of Brewin is about as near as the Kurnai get to the idea of a God; their conferring of his name on a powerful sorcerer is therefore a point of importance and interest”. Mr. Howitt’s later knowledge demonstrates an error here.

(5) Bosman in Pinkerton, xvi. .

(6) Aborigines of Australia, i. 197.

(7) In Victoria, after dark the wizard goes up to the clouds and brings down a good spirit. Dawkins, . For eponymous medicine-men see Kamilaroi and Kurnai, .

(8) Lady of the Lake, note 1 to Canto iv.

(9) P. 112.

The sorcerer among the Zulus is, apparently, of a naturally hysterical and nervous constitution. “He hears the spirits who speak by whistlings speaking to him.”(1) Whistling is also the language of the ghosts in New Caledonia, where Mr. Atkinson informs us that he has occasionally put an able-bodied Kaneka to ignominious flight by whistling softly in the dusk. The ghosts in Homer make a similar sound, “and even as bats flit gibbering in the secret place of a wondrous cavern,... even so the souls gibbered as they fared together” (Odyssey, xxiv. 5). “The familiar spirits make him” (that Zulu sorcerer) “acquainted with what is about to happen, and then he divines for the people.” As the Birraarks learn songs and dance-music from the Mrarts, so the Zulu Inyanga or diviners learn magical couplets from the Itongo or spirits.(2)

(1) Callaway, Religious System of the Amazules, .

(2) On all this, see “Possession” in The Making of Religion.

The evidence of institutions confirms the reports about savage belief in magic. The political power of the diviners is very great, as may be observed from the fact that a hereditary chief needs their consecration to make him a chief de jure.(1) In fact, the qualities of the diviner are those which give his sacred authority to the chief. When he has obtained from the diviners all their medicines and information as to the mode of using the isitundu (a magical vessel), it is said that he often orders them to be killed. Now, the chief is so far a medicine-man that he is lord of the air. “The heaven is the chief’s,” say the Zulus; and when he calls out his men, “though the heaven is clear, it becomes clouded by the great wind that arises”. Other Zulus explain this as the mere hyperbole of adulation. “The word of the chief gives confidence to his troops; they say, ‘We are going; the chief has already seen all that will happen in his vessel’. Such then are chiefs; they use a vessel for divination.”(2) The makers of rain are known in Zululand as “heaven-herds” or “sky-herds,” who herd the heaven that it may not break out and do its will on the property of the people. These men are, in fact, (Greek text omitted), “cloud-gatherers,” like the Homeric Zeus, the lord of the heavens. Their name of “herds of the heavens” has a Vedic sound. “The herd that herds the lightning,” say the Zulus, “does the same as the herder of the cattle; he does as he does by whistling; he says, ‘Tshu-i-i-i. Depart and go yonder. Do not come here.’” Here let it be observed that the Zulus conceive of the thunder-clouds and lightning as actual creatures, capable of being herded like sheep. There is no metaphor or allegory about the matter,(3) and no forgetfulness of the original meaning of words. The cloud-herd is just like the cowherd, except that not every man, but only sorcerers, and they who have eaten the “lightning-bird” (a bird shot near the place where lightning has struck the earth), can herd the clouds of heaven. The same ideas prevail among the Bushmen, where the rainmaker is asked “to milk a nice gentle female rain”; the rain-clouds are her hair. Among the Bushmen Rain is a person. Among the Red Indians no metaphor seems to be intended when it is said that “it is always birds who make the wind, except that of the east”. The Dacotahs once killed a thunder-bird(4) behind Little Crow’s village on the Missouri. It had a face like a man with a nose like an eagle’s bill.(5)

(1) Callaway, .

(2) Callaway, Religions System of the Amazules, .

(3) Ibid., .

(4) Schoolcraft, iii. 486.

(5) Compare Callaway, .

The political and social powers which come into the hands of the sorcerers are manifest, even in the case of the Australians. Tribes and individuals can attempt few enterprises without the aid of the man who listens to the ghosts. Only he can foretell the future, and, in the case of the natural death of a member of the tribe, can direct the vengeance of the survivors against the hostile magician who has committed a murder by “bar” or magic. Among the Zulus we have seen that sorcery gives the sanction to the power of the chief. “The winds and weather are at the command” of Bosman’s “great fetisher”. Inland from the Gold Coast,(1) the king of Loango, according to the Abbe Proyart, “has credit to make rain fall on earth”. Similar beliefs, with like political results, will be found to follow from the superstition of magic among the Red Indians of North America. The difficulty of writing about sorcerers among the Red Indians is caused by the abundance of the evidence. Charlevoix and the other early Jesuit missionaries found that the jongleurs, as Charlevoix calls the Jossakeeds or medicine-men, were their chief opponents. As among the Scotch Highlanders, the Australians and the Zulus, the Red Indian jongleur is visited by the spirits. He covers a hut with the skin of the animal which he commonly wears, retires thither, and there converses with the bodiless beings.(2) The good missionary like Mr. Moffat in Africa, was convinced that the exercises of the Jossakeeds were verily supernatural. “Ces seducteurs ont un veritable commerce avec le pere du mensonge.”(3) This was denied by earlier and wiser Jesuit missionaries. Their political power was naturally great. In time of war “ils avancent et retardent les marches comme il leur plait”. In our own century it was a medicine-man, Ten Squa Ta Way, who by his magical processes and superstitious rites stirred up a formidable war against the United States.(4) According to Mr. Pond,(5) the native name of the Dacotah medicine-men, “Wakan,” signifies “men supernaturally gifted”. Medicine-men are believed to be “wakanised” by mystic intercourse with supernatural beings. The business of the wakanised man is to discern future events, to lead and direct parties on the war-trail, “to raise the storm or calm the tempest, to converse with the lightning or thunder as with familiar friends”.(6) The wakanised man, like the Australian Birraark and the Zulu diviner, “dictates chants and prayers”. In battle “every Dacotah warrior looks to the Wakan man as almost his only resource”. Belief in Wakan men is, Mr. Pond says, universal among the Dacotahs, except where Christianity has undermined it. “Their influence is deeply felt by every individual of the tribe, and controls all their affairs.” The Wakan man’s functions are absorbed by the general or war-chief of the tribe, and in Schoolcraft (iv. 495), Captain Eastman prints copies of native scrolls showing the war-chief at work as a wizard. “The war-chief who leads the party to war is always one of these medicine-men.” In another passage the medicine-men are described as “having a voice in the sale of land”. It must be observed that the Jossakeed, or medicine-man, pure and simple, exercises a power which is not in itself hereditary. Chieftainship, when associated with inheritance of property, is hereditary; and when the chief, as among the Zulus, absorbs supernatural power, then the same man becomes diviner and chief, and is a person of great and sacred influence. The liveliest account of the performances of the Maori “tohunga” or sorcerer is to be found in Old New Zealand,(7) by the Pakeha Maori, an English gentleman who had lived with the natives like one of themselves. The tohunga, says this author,(8) presided over “all those services and customs which had something approaching to a religious character. They also pretended to power by means of certain familiar spirits, to foretell future events, and even in some cases to control them.... The spirit ‘entered into’ them, and, on being questioned, gave a response in a sort of half whistling, half-articulate voice, supposed to be the proper language of spirits.” In New South Wales, Mrs. Langlot Parker has witnessed a similar exhibition. The “spirits” told the truth in this case. The Pakeha Maori was present in a darkened village-hall when the spirit of a young man, a great friend of his own, was called up by a tohunga. “Suddenly, without the slightest warning, a voice came out of the darkness.... The voice all through, it is to be remembered, was not the voice of the tohunga, but a strange melancholy sound, like the sound of a wind blowing into a hollow vessel. ‘It is well with me; my place is a good place.’ The spirit gave an answer to a question which proved to be correct, and then ‘Farewell,’ cried the spirit FROM DEEP BENEATH THE GROUND. ‘Farewell,’ again, FROM HIGH IN AIR. ‘Farewell,’ once more came moaning through the distant darkness of the night.” As chiefs in New Zealand no less than tohungas can exercise the mystical and magical power of tabu, that is, of imparting to any object or person an inviolable character, and can prevent or remit the mysterious punishment for infringement of tabu, it appears probable that in New Zealand, as well as among the Zulus and Red Indians, chiefs have a tendency to absorb the sacred character and powers of the tohungas. This is natural enough, for a tohunga, if he plays his cards well, is sure to acquire property and hereditary wealth, which, in combination with magical influence, are the necessary qualifications for the office of the chieftain.

(1) Pinkerton, xvi. 401.

(2) Charlevoix, i. 105. See “Savage Spiritualism” in Cock Lane and Common Sense.

(3) Ibid., iii. 362.

(4) Catlin, ii. 17.

(5) In Schoolcraft, iv. 402.

(6) Pond, in Schoolcraft, iv. 647.

(7) Auckland, 1863.

(8) Page 148.

Here is the place to mention a fact which, though at first sight it may appear to have only a social interest, yet bears on the development of mythology. Property and rank seem to have been essential to each other in the making of social rank, and where one is absent among contemporary savages, there we do not find the other. As an example of this, we might take the case of two peoples who, like the Homeric Ethiopians, are the outermost of men, and dwell far apart at the ends of the world. The Eskimos and the Fuegians, at the extreme north and south of the American continent, agree in having little or no private property and no chiefs. Yet magic is providing a kind of basis of rank. The bleak plains of ice and rock are, like Attica, "the mother of men without master or lord". Among the "house-mates" of the smaller settlements there is no head-man, and in the larger gatherings Dr. Rink says that "still less than among the house-mates was any one belonging to such a place to be considered a chief". The songs and stories of the Eskimo contain the praises of men who have risen up and killed any usurper who tried to be a ruler over his "place-mates". No one could possibly establish any authority on the basis of property, because "superfluous property, implements, etc., rarely existed". If there are three boats in one household, one of the boats is "borrowed" by the community, and reverts to the general fund. If we look at the account of the Fuegians described in Admiral Fitzroy's cruise, we find a similar absence of rank produced by similar causes. "The perfect equality among the individuals composing the tribes must for a long time retard their civilisation.... At present even a piece of cloth is torn in shreds and distributed, and no one individual becomes richer than another. On the other hand, it is difficult to understand how a chief can arise till there is property of some sort by which he might manifest and still increase his authority." In the same book, however, we get a glimpse of one means by which authority can be exercised. "The doctor-wizard of each party has much influence over his companions." Among the Eskimos this element in the growth of authority also exists. A class of wizards called Angakut have power to cause fine weather, and, by the gift of second-sight and magical practices, can detect crimes, so that they necessarily become a kind of civil magistrates. These Angekkok or Angakut have familiar spirits called Torngak, a word connected with the name of their chief spiritual being, Torngarsak. The Torngak is commonly the ghost of a deceased parent of the sorcerer. "These men," says Egede, "are held in great honour and esteem among this stupid and ignorant nation, insomuch that nobody dare ever refuse the strictest obedience when they command him in the name of Torngarsak." The importance and actual existence of belief in magic has thus been attested by the evidence of institutions, even among Australians, Fuegians and Eskimos.

It is now necessary to pass from examples of tribes who have superstitious respect for certain individuals, but who have no property and no chiefs, to peoples who exhibit the phenomenon of superstitious reverence attached to wealthy rulers or to judges. To take the example of Ireland, as described in the Senchus Mor, we learn that the chiefs, just like the Angakut of the Eskimos, had "power to make fair or foul weather" in the literal sense of the words.(1) In Africa, in the same way, as Bosman, the old traveller, says, "As to what difference there is between one negro and another, the richest man is the most honoured," yet the most honoured man has the same magical power as the poor Angakuts of the Eskimos.

(1) Early History of Institutions, .

"In the Solomon Islands," says Dr. Codrington, "there is nothing to prevent a common man from becoming a chief, if he can show that he has the mana (supernatural power) for it."(1)

(1) Journ. Anth. Inst., x. iii. 287, 300, 309.

Though it is anticipating a later stage of this inquiry, we must here observe that the sacredness, and even the magical virtues of barbarous chiefs seem to have descended to the early leaders of European races. The children of Odin and of Zeus were "sacred kings". The Homeric chiefs, like those of the Zulus and the Red Men, and of the early Irish and Swedes, exercised an influence over the physical universe. Homer(1) speaks of "a blameless king, one that fears the gods, and reigns among many men and mighty, and the black earth bears wheat and barley, and the sheep bring forth and fail not, and the sea gives store of fish, and all out of his good sovereignty".

(1) Od., xix. 109.

The attributes usually assigned by barbarous peoples to their medicine-men have not yet been exhausted. We have found that they can foresee and declare the future; that they control the weather and the sensible world; that they can converse with, visit and employ about their own business the souls of the dead. It would be easy to show at even greater length that the medicine-man has everywhere the power of metamorphosis. He can assume the shapes of all beasts, birds, fishes, insects and inorganic matters, and he can subdue other people to the same enchantment. This belief obviously rests on the lack of recognised distinction between man and the rest of the world, which we have so frequently insisted on as a characteristic of savage and barbarous thought. Examples of accredited metamorphosis are so common everywhere, and so well known, that it would be waste of space to give a long account of them. In Primitive

Culture(1) a cloud of witnesses to the belief in human tigers, hyaenas, leopards and wolves is collected.(2) Mr. Lane(3) found metamorphosis by wizards as accredited a working belief at Cairo as it is among Abipones, Eskimo, or the people of Ashangoland. In various parts of Scotland there is a tale of a witch who was shot at when in the guise of a hare. In this shape she was wounded, and the same wound was found on her when she resumed her human appearance. Lafitau, early in the last century, found precisely the same tale, except that the wizards took the form of birds, not of hares, among the Red Indians. The birds were wounded by the magical arrows of an old medicine-man, Shonnoh Koui Eretsi, and these bolts were found in the bodies of the human culprits. In Japan, as we learn from several stories in Mr. Mitford’s Tales of Old Japan, people chiefly metamorphose themselves into foxes and badgers. The sorcerers of Honduras(4) “possess the power of transforming men into wild beasts, and were much feared accordingly”. Among the Cakchiquels, a cultivated people of Guatemala, the very name of the clergy, haleb, was derived from their power of assuming animal shapes, which they took on as easily as the Homeric gods.(5) Regnard, the French dramatist, who travelled among the Lapps at the end of the seventeenth century (1681), says: “They believe witches can turn men into cats;” and again, “Under the figures of swans, crows, falcons and geese, they call up tempests and destroy ships”.(6) Among the Bushmen “sorcerers assume the forms of beasts and jackals”.(7) Dobrizhoffer (1717-91), a missionary in Paraguay, found that “sorcerers arrogate to themselves the power of transforming themselves into tigers”.(8) He was present when the Abipones believed that a conversion of this sort was actually taking place: “Alas,” cried the people, “his whole body is beginning to be covered with tiger-spots; his nails are growing”. Near Loanda, Livingstone found that a “chief may metamorphose himself into a lion, kill any one he choses, and then resume his proper form”.(9) Among the Barotse and Balonda, “while persons are still alive they may enter into lions and alligators”.(10) Among the Mayas of Central America “sorcerers could transform themselves into dogs, pigs and other animals; their glance was death to a victim”.(11) The Thlinkeets think that their Shamans can metamorphose themselves into animals at pleasure; and a very old raven was pointed out to Mr. C. E. S. Wood as an incarnation of the soul of a Shaman.(12) Sir A. C. Lyall finds a similar belief in flourishing existence in India. The European superstition of the were-wolf is too well known to need description. Perhaps the most curious legend is that told by Giraldus Cambrensis about a man and his wife metamorphosed into wolves by an abbot. They retained human speech, made exemplary professions of Christian faith, and sent for priests when they found their last hours approaching. In an old Norman ballad a girl is transformed into a white doe, and hunted and slain by her brother’s hounds. The “aboriginal” peoples of India retain similar convictions. Among the Hos,(13) an old sorcerer called Pusa was known to turn himself habitually into a tiger, and to eat his neighbour’s goats, and even their wives. Examples of the power of sorcerers to turn, as with the Gorgon’s head, their enemies into stone, are peculiarly common in America.(14) Hearne found that the Indians believed they descended from a dog, who could turn himself into a handsome young man.(15)

(1) Vol. i. p-315.

(2) See also M’Lennan on Lykanthropy in Encyclopedia Britannica.

(3) Arabian Nights, i. 51.

(4) Bancroft, Races of Pacific Coast, i. 740.

(5) Brinton, Annals of the Cakchiquels, .

(6) Pinkerton, i. 471.

(7) Bleek, Brief Account of Bushman Folk-Lore, p, 40.

(8) English translation of Dobrizhoffer’s Abipones, i. 163.

(9) Missionary Travels, .

(10) Livingstone, .

(11) Bancroft, ii.

(12) Century Magazine, July, 1882.

(13) Dalton’s Ethnology of Bengal, .

(14) Dorman, p, 134; Report of Ethnological Bureau, Washington, 1880-81.

(15) A Journey, etc., .

Let us recapitulate the powers attributed all over the world, by the lower people, to medicine-men. The medicine-man has all miracles at his command. He rules the sky, he flies into the air, he becomes visible or invisible at will, he can take or confer any form at pleasure, and resume his human shape. He can control spirits, can converse with the dead, and can descend to their abodes.

When we begin to examine the gods of MYTHOLOGY, savage or civilised, as distinct from deities contemplated, in devotion, as moral and creative guardians of ethics, we shall find that, with the general, though not invariable addition of immortality, they possess the very same accomplishments as the medicine-man, peay, tohunga, jossakeed, birraark, or whatever name for sorcerer we may choose. Among the Greeks, Zeus, mythically envisaged, enjoys in heaven all the attributes of the medicine-man; among the Iroquois, as Pere le Jeune, the old Jesuit missionary, observed,(1) the medicine-man enjoys on earth all the attributes of Zeus. Briefly, the miraculous and supernatural endowments of the gods of MYTH, whether these gods be zoomorphic or anthropomorphic, are exactly the magical properties with which the medicine-man is credited by his tribe. It does not at all follow, as Euemerus and Mr. Herbert Spencer might argue, that the god was once a real living medicine-man. But myth-making man confers on the deities of myth the magical powers which he claims for himself.

(1) Relations (1636), .

CHAPTER V. NATURE MYTHS.

Savage fancy, curiosity and credulity illustrated in nature myths — In these all phenomena are explained by belief in the general animation of everything, combined with belief in metamorphosis — Sun myths, Asian, Australian, African, Melanesian, Indian, Californian, Brazilian, Maori, Samoan — Moon myths, Australian, Muysca, Mexican, Zulu, Macassar, Greenland, Piute, Malay — Thunder myths — Greek and Aryan sun and moon myths — Star myths — Myths, savage and civilised, of animals, accounting for their marks and habits — Examples of custom of claiming blood kinship with lower animals — Myths of various plants and trees — Myths of stones, and of metamorphosis into stones, Greek, Australian and American — The whole natural philosophy of savages expressed in myths, and survives in folk-lore and classical poetry; and legends of metamorphosis.

The intellectual condition of savages which has been presented and established by the evidence both of observers and of institutions, may now be studied in savage myths. These myths, indeed, would of themselves demonstrate that the ideas which the lower races entertain about the world correspond with our statement. If any one were to ask himself, from what mental conditions do the following savage stories arise? he would naturally answer that the minds which conceived the tales were curious, indolent, credulous of magic and witchcraft, capable of drawing no line between things and persons, capable of crediting all things with human passions and resolutions. But, as myths analogous to those of savages, when found among civilised peoples, have been ascribed to a psychological condition produced by a disease of language acting after civilisation had made considerable advances, we cannot take the savage myths as proof of what savages think, believe and practice in the course of daily life. To do so would be, perhaps, to argue in a circle. We must therefore study the myths of the undeveloped races in themselves.

These myths form a composite whole, so complex and so nebulous that it is hard indeed to array them in classes and categories. For example, if we look at myths concerning the origin of various phenomena, we find that some introduce the action of gods or extra-natural beings, while others rest on a rude theory of capricious evolution; others, again, invoke the aid of the magic of mortals, and most regard the great natural forces, the heavenly bodies, and the animals, as so many personal characters capable of voluntarily modifying themselves or of being modified by the most trivial accidents. Some sort of arrangement, however, must be attempted, only the student is to understand that the lines are never drawn with definite fixity, that any category may glide into any other category of myth.

We shall begin by considering some nature myths — myths, that is to say, which explain the facts of the visible universe. These range from tales about heaven, day, night, the sun and the stars, to tales accounting for the red breast of the ousel, the habits of the quail, the spots and stripes of wild beasts, the formation of rocks and stones, the foliage of trees, the shapes of plants. In a sense these myths are the science of savages; in a sense they are their sacred history; in a sense they are their fiction and romance. Beginning with the sun, we find, as Mr. Tylor says, that "in early philosophy throughout the world the sun and moon are alive, and, as it were, human in their nature".(1) The mass of these solar myths is so enormous that only a few examples can be given, chosen almost at random out of the heap. The sun is regarded as a personal being, capable not only of being affected by charms and incantations, but of being trapped and beaten, of appearing on earth, of taking a wife of the daughters of men. Garcilasso de la Vega has a story of an Inca prince, a speculative thinker, who was puzzled by the sun-worship of his ancestors. If the sun be thus all-powerful, the Inca inquired, why is he plainly subject to laws? why does he go his daily round, instead of wandering at large up and down the fields of heaven? The prince concluded that there was a will superior to the sun's will, and he raised a temple to the Unknown Power. Now the phenomena which put the Inca on the path of monotheistic religion, a path already traditional, according to Garcilasso, have also struck the fancy of savages. Why, they ask, does the sun run his course like a tamed beast? A reply suited to a mind which holds that all things are personal is given in myths. Some one caught and tamed the sun by physical force or by art magic.

(1) Primitive Culture, i. 288.

In Australia the myth says that there was a time when the sun did not set. "It was at all times day, and the blacks grew weary." Norralie considered and decided that the sun should disappear at intervals. He addressed the sun in an incantation (couched like the Finnish Kalewala in the metre of Longfellow's Hiawatha); and the incantation is thus interpreted: "Sun, sun, burn your wood, burn your internal substance, and go down". The sun therefore now burns out his fuel in a day, and goes below for fresh firewood.(1)

(1) Brough Smyth, Aborigines of Victoria, i. 430.

In New Zealand the taming of the sun is attributed to the great hero Maui, the Prometheus of the Maoris. He set snares to catch the sun, but in vain, for the sun’s rays bit them through. According to another account, while Norralie wished to hasten the sun’s setting, Maui wanted to delay it, for the sun used to speed through the heavens at a racing pace. Maui therefore snared the sun, and beat him so unmercifully that he has been lame ever since, and travels slowly, giving longer days. “The sun, when beaten, cried out and revealed his second great name, Taura-mis-te-ra.”(1) It will be remembered that Indra, in his abject terror when he fled after the slaying of Vrittra, also revealed his mystic name. In North America the same story of the trapping and laming of the sun is told, and attributed to a hero named Tcha-ka-betch. In Samoa the sun had a child by a Samoan woman. He trapped the sun with a rope made of a vine and extorted presents. Another Samoan lassoed the sun and made him promise to move more slowly.(2) These Samoan and Australian fancies are nearly as dignified as the tale in the Aitareya Brahmana. The gods, afraid “that the sun would fall out of heaven, pulled him up and tied him with five ropes”. These ropes are recognised as verses in the ritual, but probably the ritual is later than the ropes. In Mexico we find that the sun himself (like the stars in most myths) was once a human or pre-human devotee, Nanahuatzin, who leapt into a fire to propitiate the gods.(3) Translated to heaven as the sun, Nanahuatzin burned so very fiercely that he threatened to reduce the world to a cinder. Arrows were therefore shot at him, and this punishment had as happy an effect as the beatings administered by Maui and Tcha-ka-betch. Among the Bushmen of South Africa the sun was once a man, from whose armpit a limited amount of light was radiated round his hut. Some children threw him up into the sky, and there he stuck, and there he shines.(4) In the Homeric hymn to Helios, as Mr. Max Muller observes, “the poet looks on Helios as a half god, almost a hero, who had once lived on earth,” which is precisely the view of the Bushmen.(5) Among the Aztecs the sun is said to have been attacked by a hunter and grievously wounded by his arrows.(6) The Gallinomeros, in Central California, seem at least to know that the sun is material and impersonal. They say that when all was dark in the beginning, the animals were constantly jostling each other. After a painful encounter, the hawk and the coyote collected two balls of inflammable substance; the hawk (Indra was occasionally a hawk) flew up with them into heaven, and lighted them with sparks from a flint. There they gave light as sun and moon. This is an exception to the general rule that the heavenly bodies are regarded as persons. The Melanesian tale of the bringing of night is a curious contrast to the Mexican, Maori, Australian and American Indian stories which we have quoted. In Melanesia, as in Australia, the days were long, indeed endless, and people grew tired; but instead of sending the sun down below by an incantation when night would follow in course of nature, the Melanesian hero went to Night (conceived of as a person) and begged his assistance. Night (Qong) received Qat (the hero) kindly, darkened his eyes, gave him sleep, and, in twelve hours or so, crept up from the horizon and sent the sun crawling to the west.(7) In the same spirit Paracelsus is said to have attributed night, not to the absence of the sun, but to the apparition of certain stars which radiate darkness. It is extraordinary that a myth like the Melanesian should occur in Brazil. There was endless day till some one married a girl whose father “the great serpent,” was the owner of night. The father sent night bottled up in a gourd. The gourd was not to be uncorked till the messengers reached the bride, but they, in their curiosity, opened the gourd, and let night out prematurely.(8)

(1) Taylor, New Zealand, .

(2) Turner, Samoa, .

(3) Sahagun, French trans., vii. ii.

(4) Bleck, Hottentot Fables, ; Bushman Folk-Lore, p, 11.

(5) Compare a Californian solar myth: Bancroft, iii. p, 86.

(6) Bancroft, iii. 73, quoting Burgoa, i. 128, 196.

(7) Codrington, Journ. Anthrop. Inst., February, 1881.

(8) Contes Indiens du Bresil, p-9, by Couto de Magalhaes. Rio de Janeiro, 1883. M. Henri Gaidoz kindly presented the author with this work.

The myths which have been reported deal mainly with the sun as a person who shines, and at fixed intervals disappears. His relations with the moon are much more complicated, and are the subject of endless stories, all explaining in a romantic fashion why the moon waxes and wanes, whence come her spots, why she is eclipsed, all starting from the premise that sun and moon are persons with human parts and passions. Sometimes the moon is a man, sometimes a woman and the sex of the sun varies according to the fancy of the narrators. Different tribes of the same race, as among the Australians, have different views of the sex of moon and sun. Among the aborigines of Victoria, the moon, like the sun among the Bushmen, was a black fellow before he went up into the sky. After an unusually savage career, he was killed with a stone hatchet by the wives of the eagle, and now he shines in the heavens.(1) Another myth explanatory of the moon’s phases was found by Mr. Meyer in 1846 among the natives of Encounter Bay. According to them the moon is a woman, and a bad woman to boot. She lives a life of dissipation among men, which makes her consumptive, and she wastes away till they drive her from their company. While she is in retreat, she lives on nourishing roots, becomes quite plump, resumes her gay career, and again wastes away. The same tribe, strangely enough, think that the sun also is a woman. Every night she descends among the dead, who stand in double lines to greet her and let her pass. She has a lover among the dead, who has presented her with a red kangaroo skin, and in this she appears at her rising. Such is the view of rosy-fingered Dawn entertained by the blacks of Encounter Bay. In South America, among the Muyscas of Bogota, the moon, Huythaca, is the malevolent wife of the child of the sun; she was a woman before her husband banished her to the fields of space.(2) The moon is a man among the Khasias of the Himalaya, and he was guilty of the unpardonable offence of admiring his mother-in-law. As a general rule, the mother-in-law is not even to be spoken to by the savage son-in-law. The lady threw ashes in his face to discourage his passion, hence the moon’s spots. The waning of the moon suggested the most beautiful and best known of savage myths, that in which the moon sends a beast to tell mortals that, though they die like her, like her they shall be born again.(3) Because the spots in the moon were thought to resemble a hare they were accounted for in Mexico by the hypothesis that a god smote the moon in the face with a rabbit;(4) in Zululand and Thibet by a fancied translation of a good or bad hare to the moon.

(1) Brough Smyth, Aborigines of Victoria, i. 432.

(2) Tylor, Primitive Culture, i. 353.

(3) Bleek, Reynard in South Africa, p-74.

(4) Sahagun, viii. 2.

The Eskimos have a peculiar myth to account for the moon’s spots. Sun and moon were human brother and sister. In the darkness the moon once attempted the virtue of the sun. She smeared his face over with ashes, that she might detect him when a light was brought. She did discover who her assailant had been, fled to the sky, and became the sun. The moon still pursues her, and his face is still blackened with the marks of ashes.(1) Gervaise(2) says that in Macassar the moon was held to be with child by the sun, and that when he pursued her and wished to beat her, she was delivered of the earth. They are now reconciled. About the alternate appearance of sun and moon a beautifully complete and adequate tale is told by the Piute Indians of California. No more adequate and scientific explanation could possibly be offered, granting the hypothesis that sun and moon are human persons and savage persons. The myth is printed as it was taken down by Mr. De Quille from the lips of Tooroop Eenah (Desert Father), a chief of the Piutes, and published in a San Francisco newspaper.

(1) Crantz’s History of Greenland, i. 212.

(2) Royaume de Macacar, 1688.

“The sun is the father and ruler of the heavens. He is the big chief. The moon is his wife and the stars are their children. The sun eats his children whenever he can catch them. They flee before him, and are all the time afraid when he is passing through the heavens. When he (their father) appears in the morning, you see all the stars, his children, fly out of sight — go away back into the blue of the above — and they do not wake to be seen again until he, their father, is about going to his bed.

“Down deep under the ground — deep, deep, under all the ground — is a great hole. At night, when he has passed over the world, looked down on everything and finished his work, he, the sun, goes into his hole, and he crawls and creeps along it till he comes to his bed in the middle part of the earth. So then he, the sun, sleeps there in his bed all night.

“This hole is so little, and he, the sun, is so big, that he cannot turn round in it; and so he must, when he has had all his sleep, pass on through, and in the morning we see him come out in the east. When he, the sun, has so come out, he begins to hunt up through the sky to catch and eat any that he can of the stars, his children, for if he does not so catch and eat he cannot live. He, the sun, is not all seen. The shape of him is like a snake or a lizard. It is not his head that we can see, but his belly, filled up with the stars that times and times he has swallowed.

“The moon is the mother of the heavens and is the wife of the sun. She, the moon, goes into the same hole as her husband to sleep her naps. But always she has great fear of the sun, her husband, and when he comes through the hole to the nobee (tent) deep in the ground to sleep, she gets out and comes away if he be cross.

“She, the moon, has great love for her children, the stars, and is happy to travel among them in the above; and they, her children, feel safe, and sing and dance as she passes along. But the mother, she cannot help that some of her children must be swallowed by the father every month. It is ordered that way by the Pah-ah (Great Spirit), who lives above the place of all.

“Every month that father, the sun, does swallow some of the stars, his children, and then that mother, the moon, feels sorrow. She must mourn; so she must put the black on her face for to mourn the dead. You see the Piute women put black on their faces when a child is gone. But the dark will wear away from the face of that mother, the moon, a little and a little every day, and after a time again we see all bright the face of her. But soon more of her children are gone, and again she must put on her face the pitch and the black.”

Here all the phenomena are accounted for, and the explanation is as advanced as the Egyptian doctrine of the hole under the earth where the sun goes when he passes from our view. And still the Great Spirit is over all: Religion comes athwart Myth.

Mr. Tylor quotes(1) a nature myth about sun, moon and stars which remarkably corresponds to the speculation of the Piutes. The Mintira of the Malayan Peninsula say that both sun and moon are women. The stars are the moon's children; once the sun had as many. They each agreed (like the women of Jerusalem in the famine), to eat their own children; but the sun swallowed her whole family, while the moon concealed hers. When the sun saw this she was exceedingly angry, and pursued the moon to kill her. Occasionally she gets a bite out of the moon, and that is an eclipse. The Hos of North-East India tell the same tale, but say that the sun cleft the moon in twain for her treachery, and that she continues to be cut in two and grow again every month. With these sun and moon legends sometimes coexists the RELIGIOUS belief in a Creator of these and of all things.

(1) Primitive Culture, i. 356.

In harmony with the general hypothesis that all objects in nature are personal, and human or bestial, in real shape, and in passion and habits, are the myths which account for eclipses. These have so frequently been published and commented on(1) that a long statement would be tedious and superfluous. To the savage mind, and even to the Chinese and the peasants of some European countries, the need of an explanation is satisfied by the myth that an evil beast is devouring the sun or the moon. The people even try by firing off guns, shrieking, and clashing cymbals, to frighten the beast (wolf, pig, dragon, or what not) from his prey. What the hungry monster in the sky is doing when he is not biting the sun or moon we are not informed. Probably he herds with the big bird whose wings, among the Dacotahs of America and the Zulus of Africa, make thunder; or he may associate with the dragons, serpents, cows and other aerial cattle which supply the rain, and show themselves in the waterspout. Chinese, Greenland, Hindoo, Finnish, Lithunian and Moorish examples of the myth about the moon-devouring beasts are vouched for by Grimm.(2) A Mongolian legend has it that the gods wished to punish the maleficent Arakho for his misdeeds, but Arakho hid so cleverly that their limited omnipotence could not find him. The sun, when asked to turn spy, gave an evasive answer. The moon told the truth. Arakho was punished, and ever since he chases sun and moon. When he nearly catches either of them, there is an eclipse, and the people try to drive him off by making a hideous uproar with musical and other instruments.(3) Captain Beeckman in 1704 was in Borneo, when the natives declared that the devil "was eating the moon".

(1) Tylor, Primitive Culture, vol. i.; Lefebure, Les Yeux d'Horus.

(2) Teutonic Mythology, English trans., ii. 706.

(3) Moon-Lore by Rev. T. Harley, .

Dr. Brinton in his Myths and Myth-Makers gives examples from Peruvians, Tupis, Creeks, Iroquois and Algonkins. It would be easy, and is perhaps superfluous, to go on multiplying proofs of the belief that sun and moon are, or have been, persons. In the Hervey Isles these two luminaries are thought to have been made out of the body of a child cut in twain by his parents. The blood escaped from the half which is the moon, hence her pallor.(1) This tale is an exception to the general rule, but reminds us of the many myths which represent the things in the world as having been made out of a mutilated man, like the Vedic Purusha. It is hardly necessary, except by way of record, to point out that the Greek myths of sun and moon, like the myths of savages, start from the conception of the solar and lunar bodies as persons with parts and passions, human loves and human sorrows. As in the Mongolian myth of Arakho, the sun “sees all and hears all,” and, less honourable than the Mongolian sun, he plays the spy for Hephaestus on the loves of Ares and Aphrodite. He has mistresses and human children, such as Circe and Aeetes.(2)

(1) Gill, Myths and Songs, .

(2) See chapter on Greek Divine Myths.

The sun is all-seeing and all-penetrating. In a Greek song of to-day a mother sends a message to an absent daughter by the sun; it is but an unconscious repetition of the request of the dying Ajax that the heavenly body will tell his fate to his old father and his sorrowing spouse.(1)

(1) Sophocles, Ajax, 846.

Selene, the moon, like Helios, the sun, was a person, and amorous. Beloved by Zeus, she gave birth to Pandia, and Pan gained her affection by the simple rustic gift of a fleece.(1) The Australian Dawn, with her present of a red kangaroo skin, was not more lightly won than the chaste Selene. Her affection for Endymion is well known, and her cold white glance shines through the crevices of his mountain grave, hewn in a rocky wall, like the tombs of Phrygia.(2) She is the sister of the sun in Hesiod, the daughter (by his sister) of Hyperion in the Homeric hymns to Helios.

(1) Virgil, Georgics, iii. 391.

(2) Preller, Griech. Myth., i. 163.

In Greece the aspects of sun and moon take the most ideal human forms, and show themselves in the most gracious myths. But, after all, these retain in their anthropomorphism the marks of the earliest fancy, the fancy of Eskimos and Australians. It seems to be commonly thought that the existence of solar myths is denied by anthropologists. This is a vulgar error. There is an enormous mass of solar myths, but they are not caused by “a disease of language,” and — all myths are not solar!

There is no occasion to dwell long on myths of the same character in which the stars are accounted for as transformed human adventurers. It has often been shown that this opinion is practically of world-wide distribution.(1) We find it in

Australia, Persia, Greece, among the Bushmen, in North and South America, among the Eskimos, in ancient Egypt, in New Zealand, in ancient India — briefly, wherever we look. The Sanskrit forms of these myths have been said to arise from confusion as to the meaning of words. But is it credible that, in all languages, however different, the same kind of unconscious puns should have led to the same mistaken beliefs? As the savage, barbarous and Greek star-myths (such as that of Callisto, first changed into a bear and then into a constellation) are familiar to most readers, a few examples of Sanskrit star-stories are offered here from the Satapatha Brahmana.(2) Fires are not, according to the Brahmana ritual, to be lighted under the stars called Krittikas, the Pleiades. The reason is that the stars were the wives of the bears (Riksha), for the group known in Brahmanic times as the Rishis (sages) were originally called the Rikshas (bears). But the wives of the bears were excluded from the society of their husbands, for the bears rise in the north and their wives in the east. Therefore the worshipper should not set up his fires under the Pleiades, lest he should thereby be separated from the company of his wife. The Brahmanas(3) also tell us that Prajapati had an unholy passion for his daughter, who was in the form of a doe. The gods made Rudra fire an arrow at Prajapati to punish him; he was wounded, and leaped into the sky, where he became one constellation and his daughter another, and the arrow a third group of stars. In general, according to the Brahmanas, “the stars are the lights of virtuous men who go to the heavenly world”.(4)

(1) Custom and Myth, “Star-Myths”; Primitive Culture, i. 288, 291; J. G. Muller, Amerikanischen Urreligionen, p, 53.

(2) Sacred Books of the East, i. 283-286.

(3) Aitareya Bramana, iii. 33.

(4) Satapatha Brahmana, vi. 5, 4, 8. For Greek examples, Hesiod, Ovid, and the Catasterismoi, attributed to Eratosthenes, are useful authorities. Probably many of the tales in Eratosthenes are late fictions consciously moulded on traditional data.

Passing from savage myths explanatory of the nature of celestial bodies to myths accounting for the formation and colour and habits of beasts, birds and fishes, we find ourselves, as an old Jesuit missionary says, in the midst of a barbarous version of Ovid’s Metamorphoses. It has been shown that the possibility of interchange of form between man and beast is part of the working belief of everyday existence among the lower peoples. They regard all things as on one level, or, to use an old political phrase, they “level up” everything to equality with the human status. Thus Mr. Im Thurn, a very good observer, found that to the Indians of Guiana “all objects, animate or inaminate, seem exactly of the same nature, except that they differ by the accident of bodily form”. Clearly to grasp this entirely natural conception of primitive man, the civilised student must make a great effort to forget for a time all that science has taught him of the differences between the objects which fill the world.(1) “To the ear of the savage, animals certainly seem to talk.” “As far as the Indians of Guiana are concerned, I do not believe that they distinguish such beings as sun and moon, or such other natural phenomena as winds and storms, from men and other animals, from plants and other inanimate objects, or from any other objects whatsoever.” Bancroft says about North American myths, “Beasts and birds and fishes fetch and carry, talk and act, in a way that leaves even Aesop’s heroes quite in the shade”.(2)

(1) Journ. Anthrop. Inst., xi. 366-369. A very large and rich collection of testimonies as to metamorphosis will be found in J. G. Muller’s Amerikanischen Urreligionen, et seq.; while, for European superstitions, Bodin on La Demonomanie des Sorciers, Lyon, 1598, may be consulted.

(2) Vol. iii. .

The savage tendency is to see in inanimate things animals, and in animals disguised men. M. Reville quotes in his Religions des Peuples Non-Civilise’s, i. 64, the story of some Negroes, who, the first time they were shown a cornemuse, took the instrument for a beast, the two holes for its eyes. The Highlander who looted a watch at Prestonpans, and observing, “She’s teed,” sold it cheap when it ran down, was in the same psychological condition. A queer bit of savage science is displayed on a black stone tobacco-pipe from the Pacific Coast.(1) The savage artist has carved the pipe in the likeness of a steamer, as a steamer is conceived by him. “Unable to account for the motive power, he imagines the paddle to be linked round the tongue of a coiled serpent, fastened to the tail of the vessel,” and so he represents it on the black stone pipe. Nay, a savage’s belief that beasts are on his own level is so literal, that he actually makes blood-covenants with the lower animals, as he does with men, mingling his gore with theirs, or smearing both together on a stone;(2) while to bury dead animals with sacred rites is as usual among the Bedouins and Malagasies to-day as in ancient Egypt or Attica. In the same way the Ainos of Japan, who regard the bear as a kinsman, sacrifice a bear once a year. But, to propitiate the animal and his connections, they appoint him a “mother,” an Aino girl, who looks after his comforts, and behaves in a way as maternal as possible. The bear is now a kinsman, (Greek text omitted), and cannot avenge himself within the kin. This, at least, seems to be the humour of it. In Lagarde’s Reliquiae Juris Ecclesiastici Antiquissimae a similar Syrian covenant of kinship with insects is described. About 700 A. D., when a Syrian garden was infested by caterpillars, the maidens were assembled, and one caterpillar was caught. Then one of the virgins was “made its mother,” and the creature was buried with due lamentations. The “mother” was then brought to the spot where the pests were, her companions bewailed her, and the caterpillars perished like their chosen kinsman, but without extorting revenge.(3) Revenge was out of their reach. They had been brought within the kin of their foes, and there were no Erinnyes, “avengers of kindred blood,” to help them. People in this condition of belief naturally tell hundreds of tales, in which men, stones, trees, beasts, shift shapes, and in which the modifications of animal forms are caused by accident, or by human agency, or by magic, or by metamorphosis. Such tales survive in our modern folk-lore. To make our meaning clear, we may give the European nursery-myth of the origin of the donkey’s long ears, and, among other illustrations, the Australian myth of the origin of the black and white plumage of the pelican. Mr. Ralston has published the Russian version of the myth of the donkey’s ears. The Spanish form, which is identical with the Russian, is given by Fernan Caballero in La Gaviota.

(1) Magazine of Art, January, 1883.

(2) “Malagasy Folk-Tales,” Folk-Lore Journal, October, 1883.

(3) We are indebted to Professor Robertson Smith for this example, and to Miss Bird’s Journal, p, 97, for the Aino parallel.

“Listen! do you know why your ears are so big?” (the story is told to a stupid little boy with big ears). “When Father Adam found himself in Paradise with the animals, he gave each its name; those of THY species, my child, he named ‘donkeys’. One day, not long after, he called the beasts together, and asked each to tell him its name. They all answered right except the animals of THY sort, and they had forgotten their name! Then Father Adam was very angry, and, taking that forgetful donkey by the ears, he pulled them out, screaming ‘You are called DONKEY!’ And the donkey’s ears have been long ever since.” This, to a child, is a credible explanation. So, perhaps, is another survival of this form of science — the Scotch explanation of the black marks on the haddock; they were impressed by St. Peter’s finger and thumb when he took the piece of money for Caesar’s tax out of the fish’s mouth.

Turning from folk-lore to savage beliefs, we learn that from one end of Africa to another the honey-bird, schneter, is said to be an old woman whose son was lost, and who pursued him till she was turned into a bird, which still shrieks his name, “Schneter, Schneter”.(1) In the same way the manners of most of the birds known to the Greeks were accounted for by the myth that they had been men and women. Zeus, for example, turned Ceyx and Halcyon into sea-fowls because they were too proud in their married happiness.(2) To these myths of the origin of various animals we shall return, but we must not forget the black and white

Australian pelican. Why is the pelican parti-coloured?(3) For this reason: After the Flood (the origin of which is variously explained by the Murri), the pelican (who had been a black fellow) made a canoe, and went about like a kind of Noah, trying to save the drowning. In the course of his benevolent mission he fell in love with a woman, but she and her friends played him a trick and escaped from him. The pelican at once prepared to go on the war-path. The first thing to do was to daub himself white, as is the custom of the blacks before a battle. They think the white pipe-clay strikes terror and inspires respect among the enemy. But when the pelican was only half pipe-clayed, another pelican came past, and, "not knowing what such a queer black and white thing was, struck the first pelican with his beak and killed him. Before that pelicans were all black; now they are black and white. That is the reason."(4)

(1) Barth, iii. 358.

(2) Apollodorus, i. 7 (13, 12).

(3) Sahagun, viii. 2, accounts for colours of eagle and tiger. A number of races explain the habits and marks of animals as the result of a curse or blessing of a god or hero. The Hottentots, the Huarochiri of Peru, the New Zealanders (Shortland, Traditions,), are among the peoples which use this myth.

(4) Brough Symth, Aborigines of Australia, i. 477, 478.

"That is the reason." Therewith native philosopy is satisfied, and does not examine in Mr. Darwin's laborious manner the slow evolution of the colour of the pelican's plumage. The mythological stories about animals are rather difficult to treat, because they are so much mixed up with the topic of totemism. Here we only examine myths which account by means of a legend for certain peculiarities in the habits, cries, or colours and shapes of animals. The Ojibbeways told Kohl they had a story for every creature, accounting for its ways and appearance. Among the Greeks, as among Australians and Bushmen, we find that nearly every notable bird or beast had its tradition. The nightingale and the swallow have a story of the most savage description, a story reported by Apollodorus, though Homer(1) refers to another, and, as usual, to a gentler and more refined form of the myth. Here is the version of Apollodorus. "Pandion" (an early king of Athens) "married Zeuxippe, his mother's sister, by whom he had two daughters, Procne and Philomela, and two sons, Erechtheus and Butes. A war broke out with Labdas about some debatable land, and Erechtheus invited the alliance of Tereus of Thrace, the son of Ares. Having brought the war, with the aid of Tereus, to a happy end, he gave him his daughter Procne to wife. By Procne, Tereus had a son, Itys, and thereafter fell in love with Philomela, whom he seduced, pretending that Procne was dead, whereas he had really concealed her somewhere in his lands. Thereon he married Philomela, and cut out her tongue. But she wove into a robe characters that told the whole story, and by means of these acquainted Procne with her sufferings. Thereon Procne found her sister, and slew Itys, her own son, whose body she cooked, and served up to Tereus in a banquet. Thereafter Procne and her sister fled together, and Tereus seized an axe and followed after them. They were overtaken at Daulia in Phocis, and prayed to the gods that they might be turned into birds. So Procne became the nightingale, and Philomela the swallow, while Tereus was changed into a hoopoe."(2) Pausanias has a different legend; Procne and Philomela died of excessive grief.

(1) Odyssey, xix. 523.

(2) A Red Indian nightingale-myth is alluded to by J. G. Muller, Amerik. Urrel., . Some one was turned into a nightingale by the sun, and still wails for a lost lover.

These ancient men and women metamorphosed into birds were HONOURED AS ANCESTORS by the Athenians.(1) Thus the unceasing musical wail of the nightingale and the shrill cry of the swallow were explained by a Greek story. The birds were lamenting their old human sorrow, as the honey-bird in Africa still repeats the name of her lost son.

(1) Pausanias, i. v. Pausanias thinks such things no longer occur.

Why does the red-robin live near the dwellings of men, a bold and friendly bird? The Chippeway Indians say he was once a young brave whose father set him a task too cruel for his strength, and made him starve too long when he reached man's estate. He turned into a robin, and said to his father, "I shall always be the friend of man, and keep near their dwellings. I could not gratify your pride as a warrior, but I will cheer you by my songs."(1) The converse of this legend is the Greek myth of the hawk. Why is the hawk so hated by birds? Hierax was a benevolent person who succoured a race hated by Poseidon. The god therefore changed him into a hawk, and made him as much detested by birds, and as fatal to them, as he had been beloved by and gentle to men.(2) The Hervey Islanders explain the peculiarities of several fishes by the share they took in the adventures of Ina, who stamped, for example, on the sole, and so flattened him for ever.(3) In Greece the dolphins were, according to the Homeric hymn to Dionysus, metamorphosed pirates who had insulted the god. But because the dolphin found the hidden sea-goddess whom Poseidon loved, the dolphin, too, was raised by the grateful sea-god to the stars.(4) The vulture and the heron, according to Boeo (said to have been a priestess in Delphi and the author of a Greek treatise on the traditions about birds), were once a man named Aigupios (vulture) and his mother, Boulis. They sinned inadvertently, like Oedipus and Jocasta; wherefore Boulis, becoming aware of the guilt, was about to put out the eyes of her son and slay herself. Then they were changed, Boulis into the heron, “which tears out and feeds on the eyes of snakes, birds and fishes, and Aigupios into the vulture which bears his name”. This story, of which the more repulsive details are suppressed, is much less pleasing and more savage than the Hervey Islanders’ myth of the origin of pigs. Maaru was an old blind man who lived with his son Kationgia. There came a year of famine, and Kationgia had great difficulty in finding food for himself and his father. He gave the blind old man puddings of banana roots and fishes, while he lived himself on sea-slugs and shellfish, like the people of Terra del Fuego. But blind old Maaru suspected his son of giving him the worst share and keeping what was best for himself. At last he discovered that Kationgia was really being starved; he felt his body, and found that he was a mere living skeleton. The two wept together, and the father made a feast of some cocoa-nuts and bread-fruit, which he had reserved against the last extremity. When all was finished, he said he had eaten his last meal and was about to die. He ordered his son to cover him with leaves and grass, and return to the spot in four days. If worms were crawling about, he was to throw leaves and grass over them and come back four days later. Kationgia did as he was instructed, and, on his second visit to the grave, found the whole mass of leaves in commotion. A brood of pigs, black, white and speckled, had sprung up from the soil; famine was a thing of the past, and Kationgia became a great chief in the island.(5)

(1) Schoolcraft, ii. 229, 230.

(1) Boeo, quoted by Antoninus Liberalis.

(3) Gill, South Sea Myths, p-95.

(4) Artemidorus in his Love Elegies, quoted by the Pseud-Eratosthenes.

(5) Gill, Myths and Songs from South Pacific, p-138.

“The owl was a baker’s daughter” is the fragment of Christian mythology preserved by Ophelia. The baker’s daughter behaved rudely to our Lord, and was changed into the bird that looks not on the sun. The Greeks had a similar legend of feminine impiety by which they mythically explained the origin of the owl, the bat and the eagle-owl. Minyas of Orchomenos had three daughters, Leucippe, Arsippe and Alcathoe, most industrious women, who declined to join the wild mysteries of Dionysus. The god took the shape of a maiden, and tried to win them to his worship. They refused, and he assumed the form of a bull, a lion, and a leopard as easily as the chiefs of the Abipones become tigers, or as the chiefs among the African Barotse and Balonda metamorphose themselves into lions and alligators.(1) The daughters of Minyas, in alarm, drew lots to determine which of them should sacrifice a victim to the god. Leucippe drew the lot and offered up her own son. They then rushed to join the sacred rites of

Dionysus, when Hermes transformed them into the bat, the owl and the eagle-owl, and these three hide from the light of the sun.(2)

(1) Livingstone, Missionary Travels, p, 642.

(2) Nicander, quoted by Antoninus Liberalis.

A few examples of Bushman and Australian myths explanatory of the colours and habits of animals will probably suffice to establish the resemblance between savage and Hellenic legends of this character. The Bushman myth about the origin of the eland (a large antelope) is not printed in full by Dr. Bleek, but he observes that it “gives an account of the reasons for the colours of the gemsbok, hartebeest, eland, quagga and springbok”.(1) Speculative Bushmen seem to have been puzzled to account for the wildness of the eland. It would be much more convenient if the eland were tame and could be easily captured. They explain its wildness by saying that the eland was “spoiled” before Cagn, the creator, or rather maker of most things, had quite finished it. Cagn’s relations came and hunted the first eland too soon, after which all other elands grew wild. Cagn then said, “Go and hunt them and try to kill one; that is now your work, for it was you who spoilt them”.(2) The Bushmen have another myth explanatory of the white patches on the breasts of crows in their country. Some men tarried long at their hunting, and their wives sent out crows in search of their husbands. Round each crow’s neck was hung a piece of fat to serve as food on the journey. Hence the crows have white patches on breast and neck.

(1) Brief Account of Bushmen Folk-Lore, .

(2) Cape Monthly Magazine, July, 1874.

In Australia the origins of nearly all animals appear to be explained in myths, of which a fair collection is printed in Mr. Brough Symth’s Aborigines of Victoria.(1) Still better examples occur in Mrs. Langloh Parker’s Australian Legends. Why is the crane so thin? Once he was a man named Kar-ween, the second man fashioned out of clay by Pund-jel, a singular creative being, whose chequered career is traced elsewhere in our chapter on “Savage Myths of the Origin of the World and of Man”. Kar-ween and Pund-jel had a quarrel about the wives of the former, whom Pund-jel was inclined to admire. The crafty Kar-ween gave a dance (jugargiull, corobboree), at which the creator Pund-jel was disporting himself gaily (like the Great Panjandrum), when Kar-ween pinned him with a spear. Pund-jel threw another which took Kar-ween in the knee-joint, so that he could not walk, but soon pined away and became a mere skeleton. “Thereupon Pund-jel made Kar-ween a crane,” and that is why the crane has such attenuated legs. The Kortume, Munkari and Waingilhe, now birds, were once men. The two latter behaved unkindly to their friend Kortume, who shot them out of his hut in a storm of rain, singing at the same time an incantation.

The three then turned into birds, and when the Kortume sings it is a token that rain may be expected.

(1) Vol. i. et seq.

Let us now compare with these Australian myths of the origin of certain species of birds the Greek story of the origin of frogs, as told by Menecrates and Nicander.(1) The frogs were herdsmen metamorphosed by Leto, the mother of Apollo. But, by way of showing how closely akin are the fancies of Greeks and Australian black fellows, we shall tell the legend without the proper names, which gave it a fictitious dignity.

(1) Antoninus Liberalis, xxxv.

THE ORIGIN OF FROGS.

"A woman bore two children, and sought for a water-spring wherein to bathe them. She found a well, but herdsmen drove her away from it that their cattle might drink. Then some wolves met her and led her to a river, of which she drank, and in its waters she bathed her children. Then she went back to the well where the herdsmen were now bathing, and she turned them all into frogs. She struck their backs and shoulders with a rough stone and drove them into the waters, and ever since that day frogs live in marshes and beside rivers."

A volume might be filled with such examples of the kindred fancies of Greeks and savages. Enough has probably been said to illustrate our point, which is that Greek myths of this character were inherited from the period of savagery, when ideas of metamorphosis and of the kinship of men and beasts were real practical beliefs. Events conceived to be common in real life were introduced into myths, and these myths were savage science, and were intended to account for the Origin of Species. But when once this train of imagination has been fired, it burns on both in literature and in the legends of the peasantry. Every one who writes a Christmas tale for children now employs the machinery of metamorphosis, and in European folk-lore, as Fontenelle remarked, stories persist which are precisely similar in kind to the minor myths of savages.

Reasoning in this wise, the Mundas of Bengal thus account for peculiarities of certain animals. Sing Bonga, the chief god, cast certain people out of heaven; they fell to earth, found iron ore, and began smelting it. The black smoke displeased Sing Bonga, who sent two king crows and an owl to bid people cease to pollute the atmosphere. But the iron smelters spoiled these birds' tails, and blackened the previously white crow, scorched its beak red, and flattened its head. Sing Bonga burned man, and turned woman into hills and waterspouts.(1)

(1) Dalton, p, 187.

Examples of this class of myth in Indo-Aryan literature are not hard to find. Why is dawn red? Why are donkeys slow? Why have mules no young ones?

Mules have no foals because they were severely burned when Agni (fire) drove them in a chariot race. Dawn is red, not because (as in Australia) she wears a red kangaroo cloak, but because she competed in this race with red cows for her coursers. Donkeys are slow because they never recovered from their exertions in the same race, when the Asvins called on their asses and landed themselves the winners.(1) And cows are accommodated with horns for a reason no less probable and satisfactory.(2)

(1) Aitareya Brahmana, ii. 272, iv. 9.

(2) iv. 17.

Though in the legends of the less developed peoples men and women are more frequently metamorphosed into birds and beasts than into stones and plants, yet such changes of form are by no means unknown. To the north-east of Western Point there lies a range of hills, inhabited, according to the natives of Victoria, by a creature whose body is made of stone, and weapons make no wound in so sturdy a constitution. The blacks refuse to visit the range haunted by the mythic stone beast. “Some black fellows were once camped at the lakes near Shaving Point. They were cooking their fish when a native dog came up. They did not give him anything to eat. He became cross and said, ‘You black fellows have lots of fish, but you give me none’. So he changed them all into a big rock. This is quite true, for the big rock is there to this day, and I have seen it with my own eyes.”(1) Another native, Toolabar, says that the women of the fishing party cried out yacka torn, “very good”. A dog replied yacka torn, and they were all changed into rocks. This very man, Toolabar, once heard a dog begin to talk, whereupon he and his father fled. Had they waited they would have become stones. “We should have been like it, wallung,” that is, stones.

(1) Native narrator, ap. Brough Smyth, i. 479.

Among the North American Indians any stone which has a resemblance to the human or animal figure is explained as an example of metamorphosis. Three stones among the Aricaras were a girl, her lover and her dog, who fled from home because the course of true love did not run smooth, and who were petrified. Certain stones near Chinook Point were sea-giants who swallowed a man. His brother, by aid of fire, dried up the bay and released the man, still alive, from the body of the giant. Then the giants were turned into rocks.(1) The rising sun in Popol Vuh (if the evidence of Popol Vuh, the Quichua sacred book, is to be accepted) changed into stone the lion, serpent and tiger gods. The Standing Rock on the Upper Missouri is adored by the Indians, and decorated with coloured ribbons and skins of animals. This stone was a woman, who, like Niobe, became literally petrified with grief when her husband took a second wife. Another stone-woman in a cave on the banks of the Kickapoo was wont to kill people who came near her, and is even now approached with great respect. The Oneidas and Dacotahs claim descent from stones to which they ascribe animation.(2) Montesinos speaks of a sacred stone which was removed from a mountain by one of the Incas. A parrot flew out of it and lodged in another stone, which the natives still worship.(3) The Breton myth about one of the great stone circles (the stones were peasants who danced on a Sunday) is a well-known example of this kind of myth surviving in folk-lore. There is a kind of stone Actaeon(4) near Little Muniton Creek, "resembling the bust of a man whose head is decorated with the horns of a stag".(5) A crowd of myths of metamorphosis into stone will be found among the Iroquois legends in Report of Bureau of Ethnology, 1880-81. If men may become stones, on the other hand, in Samoa (as in the Greek myth of Deucalion), stones may become men.(6) Gods, too, especially when these gods happen to be cuttlefish, might be petrified. They were chased in Samoa by an Upolu hero, who caught them in a great net and killed them. "They were changed into stones, and now stand up in a rocky part of the lagoon on the north side of Upolu."(7) Mauke, the first man, came out of a stone. In short,(8) men and stones and beasts and gods and thunder have interchangeable forms. In Mangaia(9) the god Ra was tossed up into the sky by Maui and became pumice-stone. Many samples of this petrified deity are found in Mangaia. In Melanesia matters are so mixed that it is not easy to decide whether a worshipful stone is the dwelling of a dead man's soul or is of spiritual merit in itself, or whether "the stone is the spirit's outward part or organ". The Vui, or spirit, has much the same relations with snakes, owls and sharks.(10) Qasavara, the mythical opponent of Qat, the Melanesian Prometheus, "fell dead from heaven" (like Ra in Mangia), and was turned into a stone, on which sacrifices are made by those who desire strength in fighting.

(1) See authorities ap. Dorman, Primitive Superstitions, p-138.

(2) Dorman, .

(3) Many examples are collected by J. G. Muller, Amerikanischen Urreligionen, p, 110, 125, especially when the stones have a likeness to human form, a. "Im der That werden auch einige in Steine, oder in Thiere and Pflanzen verwandelt." Cf. . Instances (from Balboa) of men turned into stone by wizards, .

(4) Preller thinks that Actaeon, devoured by his hounds after being changed into a stag, is a symbol of the vernal year. Palaephatus (De Fab. Narrat.) holds that the story is a moral fable.

(5) Dorman, .

(6) Turner's Samoa, .

(7) Samoa, .

(8) Op. cit., .

(9) Gill, Myths and Songs, .

(10) Codrington, Journ. Anthrop. Inst., February, 1881.

Without delaying longer among savage myths of metamorphosis into stones, it may be briefly shown that the Greeks retained this with all the other vagaries of early fancy. Every one remembers the use which Perseus made of the Gorgon's head, and the stones on the coast of Seriphus, which, like the stones near Western Point in Victoria, had once been men, the enemies of the hero. "Also he slew the Gorgon," sings Pindar, "and bare home her head, with serpent tresses decked, to the island folk a stony death." Observe Pindar's explanatory remark: "I ween there is no marvel impossible if gods have wrought thereto". In the same pious spirit a Turk in an isle of the Levant once told Mr. Newton a story of how a man hunted a stag, and the stag spoke to him. "The stag spoke?" said Mr. Newton. "Yes, by Allah's will," replied the Turk. Like Pindar, he was repeating an incident quite natural to the minds of Australians, or Bushmen, or Samoans, or Red Men, but, like the religious Pindar, he felt that the affair was rather marvellous, and accounted for it by the exercise of omnipotent power.(1) The Greek example of Niobe and her children may best be quoted in Mr. Bridges' translation from the Iliad: —

And somewhere now, among lone mountain rocks
On Sipylus, where couch the nymphs at night
Who dance all day by Achelous' stream,
The once proud mother lies, herself a rook,
And in cold breast broods o'er the goddess' wrong.
— Prometheus the fire-bringer.(2)

In the Iliad it is added that Cronion made the people into stones. The attitude of the later Greek mind towards these myths may be observed in a fragment of Philemon, the comic poet. "Never, by the gods, have I believed, nor will believe, that Niobe the stone was once a woman. Nay, by reason of her calamities she became speechless, and so, from her silence, was called a stone."(3)

(1) Pindar, Pyth. x., Myers's translation.

(2) xxiv. 611.

(3) The Scholiast on Iliad, xxiv. 6, 7.

There is another famous petrification in the Iliad. When the prodigy of the snake and the sparrows had appeared to the assembled Achaeans at Aulis, Zeus displayed a great marvel, and changed into a stone the serpent which swallowed the young of the sparrow. Changes into stone, though less common than changes into fishes, birds and beasts, were thus obviously not too strange for the credulity of Greek mythology, which could also believe that a stone became the mother of Agdestis by Zeus.

As to interchange of shape between men and women and PLANTS, our information, so far as the lower races are concerned, is less copious. It has already been shown that the totems of many stocks in all parts of the world are plants, and this belief in connection with a plant by itself demonstrates that the confused belief in all things being on one level has thus introduced vegetables into the dominion of myth. As far as possessing souls is concerned, Mr. Tylor has proved that plants are as well equipped as men or beasts or minerals.(1) In India the doctrine of transmigration widely and clearly recognises the idea of trees or smaller plants being animated by human souls. In the well-known ancient Egyptian story of "The Two Brothers,"(2) the life of the younger is practically merged in that of the acacia tree where he has hidden his heart; and when he becomes a bull and is sacrificed, his spiritual part passes into a pair of Persea trees. The Yarucaris of Bolivia say that a girl once bewailed in the forest her loverless estate. She happened to notice a beautiful tree, which she adorned with ornaments as well as she might. The tree assumed the shape of a handsome young man —

She did not find him so remiss,
But, lightly issuing through,
He did repay her kiss for kiss,
With usury thereto.(3)

J. G. Muller, who quotes this tale from Andree, says it has "many analogies with the tales of metamorphosis of human beings into trees among the ancients, as reported by Ovid". The worship of plants and trees is a well-known feature in religion, and probably implies (at least in many cases) a recognition of personality. In Samoa, metamorphosis into vegetables is not uncommon. For example, the king of Fiji was a cannibal, and (very naturally) "the people were melting away under him". The brothers Toa and Pale, wishing to escape the royal oven, adopted various changes of shape. They knew that straight timber was being sought for to make a canoe for the king, so Pale, when he assumed a vegetable form, became a crooked stick overgrown with creepers, but Toa "preferred standing erect as a handsome straight tree". Poor Toa was therefore cut down by the king's shipwrights, though, thanks to his brother's magic wiles, they did not make a canoe out of him after all.(4) In Samoa the trees are so far human that they not only go to war with each other, but actually embark in canoes to seek out distant enemies.(5) The Ottawa Indians account for the origin of maize by a myth in which a wizard fought with and conquered a little man who had a little crown of feathers. From his ashes arose the maize with its crown of leaves and heavy ears of corn.(6)

(1) Primitive Culture, i. 145; examples of Society Islanders, Dyaks, Karens,

Buddhists.

(2) Maspero, Contes Egyptiens, .

(3) J. G. Muller, Amerik. Urrel., .

(4) Turner's Samoa, .

(5) Ibid.. .

(6) Amerik. Urrel., .

In Mangaia the myth of the origin of the cocoa-nut tree is a series of transformation scenes, in which the persons shift shapes with the alacrity of medicine-men. Ina used to bathe in a pool where an eel became quite familiar with her. At last the fish took courage and made his declaration. He was Tuna, the chief of all eels. "Be mine," he cried, and Ina was his. For some mystical reason he was obliged to leave her, but (like the White Cat in the fairy tale) he requested her to cut off his eel's head and bury it. Regretfully but firmly did Ina comply with his request, and from the buried eel's head sprang two cocoa trees, one from each half of the brain of Tuna. As a proof of this be it remarked, that when the nut is husked we always find on it "the two eyes and mouth of the lover of Ina".(1) All over the world, from ancient Egypt to the wigwams of the Algonkins, plants and other matters are said to have sprung from a dismembered god or hero, while men are said to have sprung from plants.(2) We may therefore perhaps look on it as a proved point that the general savage habit of "levelling up" prevails even in their view of the vegetable world, and has left traces (as we have seen) in their myths.

(1) Gill, Myths and Songs, .

(2) Myths of the Beginning of Things.

Turning now to the mythology of Greece, we see that the same rule holds good. Metamorphosis into plants and flowers is extremely common; the instances of Daphne, Myrrha, Hyacinth, Narcissus and the sisters of Phaethon at once occur to the memory.

Most of those myths in which everything in Nature becomes personal and human, while all persons may become anything in Nature, we explain, then, as survivals or imitations of tales conceived when men were in the savage intellectual condition. In that stage, as we demonstrated, no line is drawn between things animate and inanimate, dumb or "articulate speaking," organic or inorganic, personal or impersonal. Such a mental stage, again, is reflected in the nature-myths, many of which are merely "aetiological," — assign a cause, that is, for phenomena, and satisfy an indolent and credulous curiosity.

We may be asked again, "But how did this intellectual condition come to exist?" To answer that is no part of our business; for us it is enough to trace myth, or a certain element in myth, to a demonstrable and actual stage of thought. But this stage, which is constantly found to survive in the minds of children, is thus explained or described by Hume in his Essay on Natural Religion: “There is an universal tendency in mankind to conceive all beings like themselves, and to transfer to every object those qualities... of which they are intimately conscious”.(1) Now they believe themselves to be conscious of magical and supernatural powers, which they do not, of course, possess. These powers of effecting metamorphosis, of “shape-shifting,” of flying, of becoming invisible at will, of conversing with the dead, of miraculously healing the sick, savages pass on to their gods (as will be shown in a later chapter), and the gods of myth survive and retain the miraculous gifts after their worshippers (become more reasonable) have quite forgotten that they themselves once claimed similar endowments. So far, then, it has been shown that savage fancy, wherever studied, is wild; that savage curiosity is keen; that savage credulity is practically boundless. These considerations explain the existence of savage myths of sun, stars, beasts, plants and stones; similar myths fill Greek legend and the Sanskrit Brahmanes. We conclude that, in Greek and Sanskrit, the myths are relics (whether borrowed or inherited) of the savage mental STATUS.

(1) See Appendix B.

CHAPTER VI. NON-ARYAN MYTHS OF THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN.

Confusions of myth — Various origins of man and of things — Myths of Australia, Andaman Islands, Bushmen, Ovaherero, Namaquas, Zulus, Hurons, Iroquois, Diggers, Navajoes, Winnebagoes, Chaldaeans, Thlinkeets, Pacific Islanders, Maoris, Aztecs, Peruvians — Similarity of ideas pervading all those peoples in various conditions of society and culture.

The difficulties of classification which beset the study of mythology have already been described. Nowhere are they more perplexing than when we try to classify what may be styled Cosmogonic Myths. The very word cosmogonic implies the pre-existence of the idea of a cosmos, an orderly universe, and this was exactly the last idea that could enter the mind of the myth-makers. There is no such thing as orderliness in their mythical conceptions, and no such thing as an universe. The natural question, “Who made the world, or how did the things in the world come to be?” is the question which is answered by cosmogonic myths. But it is answered piecemeal. To a Christian child the reply is given, “God made all things”. We have known this reply discussed by some little girls of six (a Scotch minister’s daughters, and naturally metaphysical), one of whom solved all difficulties by the impromptu myth, “God first made a little place to stand on, and then he made the rest”. But savages and the myth-makers, whose stories survive into the civilised religions, could adhere firmly to no such account as this. Here occurs in the first edition of this book the following passage: “They (savages) have not, and had not, the conception of God as we understand what we mean by the word. They have, and had at most, only the small-change of the idea God,” — here the belief in a moral being who watches conduct; here again the hypothesis of a pre-human race of magnified, non-natural medicine-men, or of extra-natural beings with human and magical attributes, but often wearing the fur, and fins, and feathers of the lower animals. Mingled with these faiths (whether earlier, later, or coeval in origin with these) are the dread and love of ancestral ghosts, often transmuting themselves into worship of an imaginary and ideal first parent of the tribe, who once more is often a beast or a bird. Here is nothing like the notion of an omnipotent, invisible, spiritual being, the creator of our religion; here is only la monnaie of the conception.”

It ought to have occurred to the author that he was here traversing the main theory of his own book, which is that RELIGION is one thing, myth quite another thing. That many low races of savages entertain, in hours of RELIGIOUS thought, an elevated conception of a moral and undying Maker of Things, and Master of Life, a Father in Heaven, has already been stated, and knowledge of the facts has been considerably increased since this work first appeared (1887). But the MYTHICAL conceptions described in the last paragraph coexist with the religious conception in the faiths of very low savages, such as the Australians and Andamanese, just as the same contradictory coexistence is notorious in ancient Greece, India, Egypt and Anahuac. In a sense, certain low savages HAVE the "conception of God, as we understand what we mean by the word". But that sense, when savages come to spinning fables about origins, is apt to be overlaid and perplexed by the frivolity of their mythical fancy.

With such shifting, grotesque and inadequate fables, the cosmogonic myths of the world are necessarily bewildered and perplexed. We have already seen in the chapter on "Nature Myths" that many things, sun, moon, the stars, "that have another birth," and various animals and plants, are accounted for on the hypothesis that they are later than the appearance of man — that they originally WERE men. To the European mind it seems natural to rank myths of the gods before myths of the making or the evolution of the world, because our religion, like that of the more philosophic Greeks, makes the deity the fount of all existences, causa causans, "what unmoved moves," the beginning and the end. But the myth-makers, deserting any such ideas they may possess, find it necessary, like the child of whom we spoke, to postulate a PLACE for the divine energy to work from, and that place is the earth or the heavens. Then, again, heaven and earth are themselves often regarded in the usual mythical way, as animated, as persons with parts and passions, and finally, among advancing races, as gods. Into this medley of incongruous and inconsistent conceptions we must introduce what order we may, always remembering that the order is not native to the subject, but is brought in for the purpose of study.

The origin of the world and of man is naturally a problem which has excited the curiosity of the least developed minds. Every savage race has its own myths on this subject, most of them bearing the marks of the childish and crude imagination, whose character we have investigated, and all varying in amount of what may be called philosophical thought.

All the cosmogonic myths, as distinct from religious belief in a Creator, waver between the theory of construction, or rather of reconstruction, and the theory of evolution, very rudely conceived. The earth, as a rule, is mythically averred to have grown out of some original matter, perhaps an animal, perhaps an egg which floated on the waters, perhaps a handful of mud from below the waters. But this conception does not exclude the idea that many of the things in the world, minerals, plants and what not, are fragments of the frame of a semi-supernatural and gigantic being, human or bestial, belonging to a race which preceded the advent of man.(1) Such were the Titans, demi-gods, Nurrumbunguttias in Australia. Various members of this race are found active in myths of the creation, or rather the construction, of man and of the world. Among the lowest races it is to be noted that mythical animals of supernatural power often take the place of beings like the Finnish Wainamoinen, the Greek Prometheus, the Zulu Unkulunkulu, the Red Indian Manabozho, himself usually a great hare.

(1) Macrobius, Saturnal., i. xx.

The ages before the development or creation of man are filled up, in the myths, with the loves and wars of supernatural people. The appearance of man is explained in three or four contradictory ways, each of which is represented in the various myths of most mythologies. Often man is fashioned out of clay, or stone, or other materials, by a Maker of all things, sometimes half-human or bestial, but also half-divine. Sometimes the first man rises out of the earth, and is himself confused with the Creator, a theory perhaps illustrated by the Zulu myth of Unkulunkulu, “The Old, Old One”. Sometimes man arrives ready made, with most of the animals, from his former home in a hole in the ground, and he furnishes the world for himself with stars, sun, moon and everything else he needs. Again, there are many myths which declare that man was evolved out of one or other of the lower animals. This myth is usually employed by tribesmen to explain the origin of their own peculiar stock of kindred. Once more, man is taken to be the fruit of some tree or plant, or not to have emerged ready-made, but to have grown out of the ground like a plant or a tree. In some countries, as among the Bechuanas, the Boeotians, and the Peruvians, the spot where men first came out on earth is known to be some neighbouring marsh or cave. Lastly, man is occasionally represented as having been framed out of a piece of the body of the Creator, or made by some demiurgic potter out of clay. All these legends are told by savages, with no sense of their inconsistency. There is no single orthodoxy on the matter, and we shall see that all these theories coexist pell-mell among the mythological traditions of civilised races. In almost every mythology, too, the whole theory of the origin of man is crossed by the tradition of a Deluge, or some other great destruction, followed by revival or reconstruction of the species, a tale by no means necessarily of Biblical origin.

In examining savage myths of the origin of man and of the world, we shall begin by considering those current among the most backward peoples, where no hereditary or endowed priesthood has elaborated and improved the popular beliefs. The natives of Australia furnish us with myths of a purely popular type, the property, not of professional priests and poets, but of all the old men and full-grown warriors of the country. Here, as everywhere else, the student must be on his guard against accepting myths which are disguised forms of missionary teaching.(1)

(1) Taplin, The Narrinyeri. “He must also beware of supposing that the Australians believe in a creator in our sense, because the Narrinyeri, for example, say that Nurundere ‘made everything’. Nurundere is but an idealised wizard and hunter, with a rival of his species.” This occurs in the first edition, but “making all things” is one idea, wizardry is another.

In Southern Australia we learn that the Boonoorong, an Australian coast tribe, ascribe the creation of things to a being named Bun-jel or Pund-jel. He figures as the chief of an earlier supernatural class of existence, with human relationships; thus he “has a wife, WHOSE FACE HE HAS NEVER SEEN,” brothers, a son, and so on. Now this name Bun-jel means “eagle-hawk,” and the eagle-hawk is a totem among certain stocks. Thus, when we hear that Eagle-hawk is the maker of men and things we are reminded of the Bushman creator, Cagn, who now receives prayers of considerable beauty and pathos, but who is (in some theories) identified with kaggen, the mantis insect, a creative grasshopper, and the chief figure in Bushman mythology.(1) Bun-jel or Pund-jel also figures in Australian belief, neither as the creator nor as the eagle-hawk, but “as an old man who lives at the sources of the Yarra river, where he possesses great multitudes of cattle”.(2) The term Bun-jel is also used, much like our “Mr.,” to denote the older men of the Kurnai and Briakolung, some of whom have magical powers. One of them, Krawra, or “West Wind,” can cause the wind to blow so violently as to prevent the natives from climbing trees; this man has semi-divine attributes. From these facts it appears that this Australian creator, in myth, partakes of the character of the totem or worshipful beast, and of that of the wizard or medicine-man. He carried a large knife, and, when he made the earth, he went up and down slicing it into creeks and valleys. The aborigines of the northern parts of Victoria seem to believe in Pund-jel in what may perhaps be his most primitive mythical shape, that of an eagle.(3) This eagle and a crow created everything, and separated the Murray blacks into their two main divisions, which derive their names from the crow and the eagle. The Melbourne blacks seem to make Pund-jel more anthropomorphic. Men are his (Greek text omitted) figures kneaded of clay, as Aristophanes says in the Birds. Pund-jel made two clay images of men, and danced round them. “He made their hair — one had straight, one curly hair — of bark. He danced round them. He lay on them, and breathed his breath into their mouths, noses and navels, and danced round them. Then they arose full-grown young men.” Some blacks seeing a brickmaker at work on a bridge over the Yarra exclaimed, “Like ’em that Pund-jel make ’em Koolin”. But other blacks prefer to believe that, as Pindar puts the Phrygian legend, the sun saw men growing like trees.

(1) Bleek, Brief Account of Bushman Mythology, ; Cape Monthly Magazine, July, 1874, p-13; Kamilaroi and Kurnai, p, 324.

(2) Kamilaroi and Kurnai, .

(3) Brough Smyth, Natives of Victoria, vol. i. .

The first man was formed out of the gum of a wattle-tree, and came out of the knot of a wattle-tree. He then entered into a young woman (though he was the first man) and was born.(1) The Encounter Bay people have another myth, which might have been attributed by Dean Swift to the Yahoos, so foul an origin does it allot to mankind.

(1) Meyer, Aborigines of Encounter Bay. See, later, “Gods of the Lowest Races”.

Australian myths of creation are by no means exclusive of a hypothesis of evolution. Thus the Dieyrie, whose notions Mr. Gason has recorded, hold a very mixed view. They aver that “the good spirit” Moora-Moora made a number of small black lizards, liked them, and promised them dominion. He divided their feet into toes and fingers, gave them noses and lips, and set them upright. Down they fell, and Moora-Moora cut off their tails. Then they walked erect and were men.(1) The conclusion of the adventures of one Australian creator is melancholy. He has ceased to dwell among mortals whom he watches and inspires. The Jay possessed many bags full of wind; he opened them, and Pund-jel was carried up by the blast into the heavens. But this event did not occur before Pund-jel had taught men and women the essential arts of life. He had shown the former how to spear kangaroos, he still exists and inspires poets. From the cosmogonic myths of Australia (the character of some of which is in contradiction with the higher religious belief of the people to be later described) we may turn, without reaching a race of much higher civilisation, to the dwellers in the Andaman Islands and their opinions about the origin of things.

(1) Gason’s Dieyries, ap. Native Tribes of South Australia, .

The Andaman Islands, in the Bay of Bengal, are remote from any shores, and are protected from foreign influences by dangerous coral reefs, and by the reputed ferocity and cannibalism of the natives. These are Negritos, and are commonly spoken of as most abject savages. They are not, however, without distinctions of rank; they are clean, modest, moral after marriage, and most strict in the observance of prohibited degrees. Unlike the Australians, they use bows and arrows, but are said to be incapable of striking a light, and, at all events, find the process so difficult that, like the Australians and the farmer in the Odyssey, (1) they are compelled “to hoard the seeds of fire”. Their mythology contains explanations of the origin of men and animals, and of their own customs and language.

(1) Odyssey, v. 490.

The Andamanese, long spoken of as “godless,” owe much to Mr. Man, an English official, who has made a most careful study of their beliefs.(1) So extraordinary is the contradiction between the relative purity and morality of the RELIGION and the savagery of the myths of the Andamanese, that, in the first edition of this work, I insisted that the “spiritual god” of the faith must have been “borrowed from the same quarter as the stone house” in which he is mythically said to live. But later and wider study, and fresh information from various quarters, have convinced me that the relative purity of Andamanese religion, with its ethical sanction of conduct, may well be, and probably is, a natural unborrowed development. It is easy for MYTH to borrow the notion of a stone house from our recent settlement at Port Blair. But it would not be easy for RELIGION to borrow many new ideas from an alien creed, in a very few years, while the noted ferocity of the islanders towards strangers, and the inaccessibility of their abode, makes earlier borrowing, on a large scale at least, highly improbable. The Andamanese god, Puluga, is “like fire” but invisible, unborn and immortal, knowing and punishing or rewarding, men’s deeds, even “the thoughts of their hearts”. But when once mythical fancy plays round him, and stories are told about him, he is credited with a wife who is an eel or a shrimp, just as Zeus made love as an ant or a cuckoo. Puluga was the maker of men; no particular myth as to how he made them is given. They tried to kill him, after the deluge (of which a grotesque myth is told), but he replied that he was “as hard as wood”. His legend is in the usual mythical contradiction with the higher elements in his religion.

(1) Journ. Anthrop. Soc., vol. xii. et seq.

Leaving the Andaman islanders, but still studying races in the lowest degree of civilisation, we come to the Bushmen of South Africa. This very curious and interesting people, far inferior in material equipment to the Hottentots, is sometimes regarded as a branch of that race.(1) The Hottentots call themselves “Khoi-khoi,” the Bushmen they style “Sa”. The poor Sa lead the life of pariahs, and are hated and chased by all other natives of South Africa. They are hunters and diggers for roots, while the Hottentots, perhaps their kinsmen, are cattle-breeders.(2) Being so ill-nourished, the Bushmen are very small, but sturdy. They dwell in, or rather wander through, countries which have been touched by some ancient civilisation, as is proved by the mysterious mines and roads of Mashonaland. It is singular that the Bushmen possess a tradition according to which they could once “make stone things that flew over rivers”. They have remarkable artistic powers, and their drawings of men and animals on the walls of caves are often not inferior to the designs on early Greek vases.(3)

(1) See “Divine Myths of the Lower Races”.

(2) Hahu, Tsuni Goam, . See other accounts in Waitz, Anthropologie, ii. 328.

(3) Custom and Myth, where illustrations of Bushman art are given, p-295.

Thus we must regard the Bushmen as possibly degenerated from a higher status, though there is nothing (except perhaps the tradition about bridge-making) to show that it was more exalted than that of their more prosperous neighbours, the Hottentots. The myths of the Bushmen, however, are almost on the lowest known level. A very good and authentic example of Bushman cosmogonic myth was given to Mr. Orpen, chief magistrate of St. John’s territory, by Qing, King Nqusha’s huntsman. Qing “had never seen a white man, but in fighting,” till he became acquainted with Mr. Orpen.(1) The chief force in Bushmen myth is by Dr. Bleek identified with the mantis, a sort of large grasshopper. Though he seems at least as “chimerical a beast” as the Aryan creative boar, the “mighty big hare” of the Algonkins, the large spider who made the world in the opinion of the Gold Coast people, or the eagle of the Australians, yet the insect (if insect he be), like the others, has achieved moral qualities and is addressed in prayer. In his religious aspect he is nothing less than a grasshopper. He is called Cagn. “Cagn made all things and we pray to him,” said Qing. “Coti is the wife of Cagn.” Qing did not know where they came from; “perhaps with the men who brought the sun”. The fact is, Qing “did not dance that dance,” that is, was not one of the Bushmen initiated into the more esoteric mysteries of Cagn. Till we, too, are initiated, we can know very little of Cagn in his religious aspect. Among the Bushmen, as among the Greeks, there is “no religious mystery without dancing”. Qing was not very consistent. He said Cagn gave orders and caused all things to appear and to be made, sun, moon, stars, wind, mountains, animals, and this, of course, is a lofty theory of creation. Elsewhere myth avers that Cagn did not so much create as manufacture the objects in nature. In his early day “the snakes were also men”. Cagn struck snakes with his staff and turned them into men, as Zeus, in the Aeginetan myth, did with ants. He also turned offending men into baboons. In Bushman myth, little as we really know of it, we see the usual opposition of fable and faith, a kind creator in religion is apparently a magician in myth.

(1) Cape Monthly Magazine, July, 1874.

Neighbours of the Bushmen, but more fortunate in their wealth of sheep and cattle, are the Ovaherero. The myths of the Ovaherero, a tribe dwelling in a part of Hereraland “which had not yet been under the influence of civilisation and Christianity,” have been studied by the Rev. H. Reiderbecke, missionary at Otyozondyupa. The Ovaherero, he says, have a kind of tree Ygdrasil, a tree out of which men are born, and this plays a great part in their myth of creation. The tree, which still exists, though at a great age, is called the Omumborombonga tree. Out of it came, in the beginning, the first man and woman. Oxen stepped forth from it too, but baboons, as Caliban says of the stars, “came otherwise,” and sheep and goats sprang from a flat rock. Black people are so coloured, according to the Ovaherero, because when the first parents emerged from the tree and slew an ox, the ancestress of the blacks appropriated the black liver of the victim. The Ovakuru Meyuru or “OLD ONES in heaven,” once let the skies down with a run, but drew them up again (as the gods of the Satapatha Brahmana drew the sun) when most of mankind had been drowned.(1) The remnant pacified the OLD ONES (as Odysseus did the spirits of the dead) by the sacrifice of a BLACK ewe, a practice still used to appease ghosts by the Ovaherero. The neighbouring Omnambo ascribe the creation of man to Kalunga, who came out of the earth, and made the first three sheep.(2)

(1) An example of a Deluge myth in Africa, where M. Lenormant found none.

(2) South African Folk-Lore Journal, ii. pt. v. .

Among the Namaquas, an African people on the same level of nomadic culture as the Ovaherero, a divine or heroic early being called Heitsi Eibib had a good deal to do with the origin of things. If he did not exactly make the animals, he impressed on them their characters, and their habits (like those of the serpent in Genesis) are said to have been conferred by a curse, the curse of Heitsi Eibib. A precisely similar notion was found by Avila among the Indians of Huarochiri, whose divine culture-hero imposed, by a curse or a blessing, their character and habits on the beasts.(1) The lion used to live in a nest up a tree till Heitsi Eibib cursed him and bade him walk on the ground. He also cursed the hare, “and the hare ran away, and is still running”.(2) The name of the first man is given as Eichaknanabiseb (with a multitude of “clicks”), and he is said to have met all the animals on a flat rock, and played a game with them for copper beads. The rainbow was made by Gaunab, who is generally a malevolent being, of whom more hereafter.

(1) Fables of Yncas (Hakluyt Society), .

(2) Tsuni Goam, p, 67.

Leaving these African races, which, whatever their relative degrees of culture, are physically somewhat contemptible, we reach their northern neighbours, the Zulus. They are among the finest, and certainly among the least religious, of the undeveloped peoples. Their faith is mainly in magic and ghosts, but there are traces of a fading and loftier belief.

The social and political condition of the Zulu is well understood. They are a pastoral, but not a nomadic people, possessing large kraals or towns. They practise agriculture, and they had, till quite recently, a centralised government and a large army, somewhat on the German system. They appear to have no regular class of priests, and supernatural power is owned by the chiefs and the king, and by diviners and sorcerers, who conduct the sacrifices. Their myths are the more interesting because, whether from their natural scepticism, which confuted Bishop Colenso in his orthodox days, or from acquaintance with European ideas, they have begun to doubt the truth of their own traditions.(1) The Zulu theory of the origin of man and of the world commences with the feats of Unkulunkulu, "the old, old one," who, in some legends, was the first man, "and broke off in the beginning". Like Manabozho among the Indians of North America, and like Wainamoinen among the Finns, Unkulunkulu imparted to men a knowledge of the arts, of marriage, and so forth. His exploits in this direction, however, must be considered in another part of this work. Men in general "came out of a bed of reeds".(2) But there is much confusion about this bed of reeds, named "Uthlanga". The younger people ask where the bed of reeds was; the old men do not know, and neither did their fathers know. But they stick to it that "that bed of reeds still exists". Educated Zulus appear somewhat inclined to take the expression in an allegorical sense, and to understand the reeds either as a kind of protoplasm or as a creator who was mortal. "He exists no longer. As my grandfather no longer exists, he too no longer exists; he died." Chiefs who wish to claim high descent trace their pedigree to Uthlanga, as the Homeric kings traced theirs to Zeus. The myths given by Dr. Callaway are very contradictory.

(1) These legends have been carefully collected and published by Bishop Callaway (Trubner & Co., 1868).

(2) Callaway, .

In addition to the legend that men came out of a bed of reeds, other and perhaps even more puerile stories are current. "Some men say that they were belched up by a cow;" others "that Unkulunkulu split them out of a stone,"(1) which recalls the legend of Pyrrha and Deucalion. The myth about the cow is still applied to great chiefs. "He was not born; he was belched up by a cow." The myth of the stone origin corresponds to the Homeric saying about men "born from the stone or the oak of the old tale".(2)

(1) Without anticipating a later chapter, the resemblances of these to Greek myths, as arrayed by M. Bouche Leclercq (De Origine Generis Humani), is very striking.

(2) Odyssey, xix. 103.

In addition to the theory of the natal bed of reeds, the Zulus, like the Navajoes of New Mexico, and the Bushmen, believe in the subterranean origin of man. There was a succession of emigrations from below of different tribes of men, each having its own Unkulunkulu. All accounts agree that Unkulunkulu is not worshipped, and he does not seem to be identified with “the lord who plays in heaven” — a kind of fading Zeus — when there is thunder. Unkulunkulu is not worshipped, though ancestral spirits are worshipped, because he lived so long ago that no one can now trace his pedigree to the being who is at once the first man and the creator. His “honour-giving name is lost in the lapse of years, and the family rites have become obsolete.”(1)

(1) See Zulu religion in The Making of Religion, p-229, where it is argued that ghost worship has superseded a higher faith, of which traces are discernible.

The native races of the North American continent (concerning whose civilisation more will be said in the account of their divine myths) occupy every stage of culture, from the truly bestial condition in which some of the Digger Indians at present exist, living on insects and unacquainted even with the use of the bow, to the civilisation which the Spaniards destroyed among the Aztecs.

The original facts about religion in America are much disputed, and will be more appropriately treated later. It is now very usual for anthropologists to say, like Mr. Dorman, “no approach to monotheismn had been made before the discovery of America by Europeans, and the Great Spirit mentioned in these (their) books is an introduction by Christianity”.(1) “This view will not bear examination,” says Mr. Tylor, and we shall later demonstrate the accuracy of his remark.(2) But at present we are concerned, not with what Indian religion had to say about her Gods, but with what Indian myth had to tell about the beginnings of things.

(1) Origin of Primitive Superstitions, .

(2) Primitive Culture, 1873, ii. .

The Hurons, for example (to choose a people in a state of middle barbarism), start in myth from the usual conception of a powerful non-natural race of men dwelling in the heavens, whence they descended, and colonised, not to say constructed, the earth. In the Relation de la Nouvelle France, written by Pere Paul le Jeune, of the Company of Jesus, in 1636, there is a very full account of Huron opinion, which, with some changes of names, exists among the other branches of the Algonkin family of Indians.

They recognise as the founder of their kindred a woman named Ataentsic, who, like Hephaestus in the Iliad, was banished from the sky. In the upper world there are woods and plains, as on earth. Ataentsic fell down a hole when she was hunting a bear, or she cut down a heaven-tree, and fell with the fall of this Huron Ygdrasil, or she was seduced by an adventurer from the under world, and was tossed out of heaven for her fault. However it chanced, she dropped on the back of the turtle in the midst of the waters. He consulted the other aquatic animals, and one of them, generally said to have been the musk-rat, fished(1) up some soil and fashioned the earth.(2) Here Ataentsic gave birth to twins, Ioskeha and Tawiscara. These represent the usual dualism of myth; they answer to Osiris and Set, to Ormuzd and Ahriman, and were bitter enemies. According to one form of the myth, the woman of the sky had twins, and what occurred may be quoted from Dr. Brinton. “Even before birth one of them betrayed his restless and evil nature by refusing to be born in the usual manner, but insisting on breaking through his parent’s side or arm-pit. He did so, but it cost his mother her life. Her body was buried, and from it sprang the various vegetable productions,” pumpkins, maize, beans, and so forth.(3)

(1) Relations, 1633. In this myth one Messon, the Great Hare, is the beginner of our race. He married a daughter of the Musk-rat.

(2) Here we first meet in this investigation a very widely distributed myth. The myths already examined have taken the origin of earth for granted. The Hurons account for its origin; a speck of earth was fished out of the waters and grew. In M. H. de Charencey’s tract Une Legende Cosmogonique (Havre, 1884) this legend is traced. M. de Charencey distinguishes (1) a continental version; (2) an insular version; (3) a mixed and Hindoo version. Among continental variants he gives a Vogul version (Revue de Philologie et d’Ethnographie, Paris, 1874, i. 10). Numi Tarom (a god who cooks fish in heaven) hangs a male and female above the abyss of waters in a silver cradle. He gives them, later, just earth enough to build a house on. Their son, in the guise of a squirrel, climbs to Numi Tarom, and receives from him a duck-skin and a goose-skin. Clad in these, like Yehl in his raven-skin or Odin in his hawk-skin, he enjoys the powers of the animals, dives and brings up three handfuls of mud, which grow into our earth. Elempi makes men out of clay and snow. The American version M. de Charencey gives from Nicholas Perrot (Mem. sur les Moers, etc., Paris, 1864, i. 3). Perrot was a traveller of the seventeenth century. The Great Hare takes a hand in the making of earth out of fished-up soil. After giving other North American variants, and comparing the animals that, after three attempts, fish up earth to the dove and raven of Noah, M. de Charencey reaches the Bulgarians. God made Satan, in the skin of a diver, fish up earth out of Lake Tiberias. Three doves fish up earth, in the beginning, in the Galician popular legend (Chodzko, Contes des Paysans Slaves,). In the INSULAR version, as in New Zealand, the island is usually fished up with a hook by a heroic angler (Japan, Tonga, Tahiti,

New Zealand). The Hindoo version, in which the boar plays the part of musk-rat, or duck, or diver, will be given in “Indian Cosmogonic Myths”.

(3) Brinton, American Hero-Myths, . Nicholas Perrot and various Jesuit Relations are the original authorities. See “Divine Myths of America”. Mr. Leland, in his Algonkin Tales, prints the same story, with the names altered to Glooskap and Malsumis, from oral tradition. Compare Schoolcraft, v. 155, and i. 317, and the versions of PP. Charlevoix and Lafitau. In Charlevoix the good and bad brothers are Manabozho and Chokanipok or Chakekanapok, and out of the bones and entrails of the latter many plants and animals were fashioned, just as, according to a Greek myth preserved by Clemens Alexandrinus, parsley and pomegranates arose from the blood and scattered members of Dionysus Zagreus. The tale of Tawiscara’s violent birth is told of Set in Egypt, and of Indra in the Veda, as will be shown later. This is a very common fable, and, as Mr. Whitley Stokes tells me, it recurs in old Irish legends of the birth of our Lord, Myth, as usual, invading religion, even Christian religion.

According to another version of the origin of things, the maker of them was one Michabous, or Michabo, the Great Hare. His birthplace was shown at an island called Michilimakinak, like the birthplace of Apollo at Delos. The Great Hare made the earth, and, as will afterwards appear, was the inventor of the arts of life. On the whole, the Iroquois and Algonkin myths agree in finding the origin of life in an upper world beyond the sky. The earth was either fished up (as by Brahma when he dived in the shape of a boar) by some beast which descended to the bottom of the waters, or grew out of the tortoise on whose back Ataentsic fell. The first dwellers in the world were either beasts like Manabozho or Michabo, the Great Hare, or the primeval wolves of the Uinkarets,(1) or the creative musk-rat, or were more anthropomorphic heroes, such as Ioskeha and Tawiscara. As for the things in the world, some were made, some evolved, some are transformed parts of an early non-natural man or animal. There is a tendency to identify Ataentsic, the sky-woman, with the moon, and in the Two Great Brethren, hostile as they are, to recognise moon and sun.(2)

(1) Powell, Bureau of Ethnology, i. 44.

(2) Dr. Brinton has endeavoured to demonstrate by arguments drawn from etymology that Michabos, Messou, Missibizi or Manabozho, the Great Hare, is originally a personification of Dawn (Myths of the New World,). I have examined his arguments in the Nineteenth Century, January, 1886, which may be consulted, and in Melusine, January, 1887. The hare appears to be one out of the countless primeval beast-culture heroes. A curious piece of magic in a tradition of the Dene Hareskins may seem to aid Dr. Brinton’s theory: “Pendant la nuit il entra, jeta au feu une tete de lievre blanc et aussitot le jour se fit”. —

Petitot, Traditions Indiennes, . But I take it that the sacrifice of a white hare’s head makes light magically, as sacrifice of black beasts and columns of black smoke make rainclouds.

Some of the degraded Digger Indians of California have the following myth of the origin of species. In this legend, it will be noticed, a species of evolution takes the place of a theory of creation. The story was told to Mr. Adam Johnston, who “drew” the narrator by communicating to a chief the Biblical narrative of the creation.(1) The chief said it was a strange story, and one that he had never heard when he lived at the Mission of St. John under the care of a Padre. According to this chief (he ruled over the Po-to-yan-te tribe or Coyotes), the first Indians were coyotes. When one of their number died, his body became full of little animals or spirits. They took various shapes, as of deer, antelopes, and so forth; but as some exhibited a tendency to fly off to the moon, the Po-to-yan-tes now usually bury the bodies of their dead, to prevent the extinction of species. Then the Indians began to assume the shape of man, but it was a slow transformation. At first they walked on all fours, then they would begin to develop an isolated human feature, one finger, one toe, one eye, like the ascidian, our first parent in the view of modern science. Then they doubled their organs, got into the habit of sitting up, and wore away their tails, which they unaffectedly regret, “as they consider the tail quite an ornament”. Ideas of the immortality of the soul are said to be confined to the old women of the tribe, and, in short, according to this version, the Digger Indians occupy the modern scientific position.

(1) Schoolcraft, vol. v.

The Winnebagoes, who communicated their myths to Mr. Fletcher,(1) are suspected of having been influenced by the Biblical narrative. They say that the Great Spirit woke up as from a dream, and found himself sitting in a chair. As he was all alone, he took a piece of his body and a piece of earth, and made a man. He next made a woman, steadied the earth by placing beasts beneath it at the corners, and created plants and animals. Other men he made out of bears. “He created the white man to make tools for the poor Indians” — a very pleasing example of a teleological hypothesis and of the doctrine of final causes as understood by the Winnebagoes. The Chaldean myth of the making of man is recalled by the legend that the Great Spirit cut out a piece of himself for the purpose; the Chaldean wisdom coincides, too, with the philosophical acumen of the Po-to-yan-te or Coyote tribe of Digger Indians. Though the Chaldean theory is only connected with that of the Red Men by its savagery, we may briefly state it in this place.

(1) Ibid., iv. 228.

According to Berosus, as reported by Alexander Polyhistor, the universe was originally (as before Manabozho's time) water and mud. Herein all manner of mixed monsters, with human heads, goat's horns, four legs, and tails, bred confusedly. In place of the Iroquois Ataentsic, a woman called Omoroca presided over the mud and the menagerie. She, too, like Ataentsic, is sometimes recognised as the moon. Affairs being in this state, Bel-Maruduk arrived and cut Omoroca in two (Chokanipok destroyed Ataentsic), and out of Omoroca Bel made the world and the things in it. We have already seen that in savage myth many things are fashioned out of a dead member of the extra-natural race. Lastly, Bel cut his own head off, and with the blood the gods mixed clay and made men. The Chaldeans inherited very savage fancies.(1)

(1) Cf. Syncellus, ; Euseb., Chronic. Armen., ed. Mai, ; Lenormant, Origines de l'Histoire, i. 506.

One ought, perhaps, to apologise to the Chaldeans for inserting their myths among the fables of the least cultivated peoples; but it will scarcely be maintained that the Oriental myths differ in character from the Digger Indian and Iroquois explanations of the origin of things. The Ahts of Vancouver Island, whom Mr. Sproat knew intimately, and of whose ideas he gives a cautious account (for he was well aware of the limits of his knowledge), tell a story of the usual character.(1) They believe in a member of the extra-natural race, named Quawteaht, of whom we shall hear more in his heroic character. As a demiurge "he is undoubtedly represented as the general framer, I do not say creator, of all things, though some special things are excepted. He made the earth and water, the trees and rocks, and all the animals. Some say that Quawteaht made the sun and moon, but the majority of the Indians believe that he had nothing to do with their formation, and that they are deities superior to himself, though now distant and less active. He gave names to everything; among the rest, to all the Indian houses which then existed, although inhabited only by birds and animals. Quawteaht went away before the apparent change of the birds and beasts into Indians, which took place in the following manner: —

"The birds and beasts of old had the spirits of the Indians dwelling in them, and occupied the various coast villages, as the Ahts do at present. One day a canoe manned by two Indians from an unknown country approached the shore. As they coasted along, at each house at which they landed, the deer, bear, elk, and other brute inhabitants fled to the mountains, and the geese and other birds flew to the woods and rivers. But in this flight, the Indians, who had hitherto been contained in the bodies of the various creatures, were left behind, and from that time they took possession of the deserted dwellings and assumed the condition in which we now see them."

(1) Sproat, Scenes and Studies of Savage Life, p, 211.

Crossing the northern continent of America to the west, we are in the domains of various animal culture-heroes, ancestors and teachers of the human race and the makers, to some extent, of the things in the world. As the eastern tribes have their Great Hare, so the western tribes have their wolf hero and progenitor, or their coyote, or their raven, or their dog. It is possible, and even certain in some cases, that the animal which was the dominant totem of a race became heir to any cosmogonic legends that were floating about.

The country of the Papagos, on the eastern side of the Gulf of California, is the southern boundary of the province of the coyote or prairie wolf. The realm of his influence as a kind of Prometheus, or even as a demiurge, extends very far northwards. In the myth related by Con Quien, the chief of the central Papagos, (1) the coyote acts the part of the fish in the Sanskrit legend of the flood, while Montezuma undertakes the role of Manu. This Montezuma was formed, like the Adams of so many races, out of potter's clay in the hands of the Great Spirit. In all this legend it seems plain enough that the name of Montezuma is imported from Mexico, and has been arbitrarily given to the hero of the Papagos. According to Mr. Powers, whose manuscript notes Mr. Bancroft quotes (iii. 87), all the natives of California believe that their first ancestors were created directly from the earth of their present dwelling-places, and in very many cases these ancestors were coyotes.

(1) Davidson, Indian Affairs Report, 1865, ; Bancroft, iii. 75.

The Pimas, a race who live near the Papagos on the eastern coast of the Gulf of California, say that the earth was made by a being named Earth-prophet. At first it appeared like a spider's web, reminding one of the West African legend that a great spider created the world. Man was made by the Earth-prophet out of clay kneaded with sweat. A mysterious eagle and a deluge play a great part in the later mythical adventures of war and the world, as known to the Pimas.(1)

(1) Communicated to Mr. Bancroft by Mr. Stout of the Pima Agency.

In Oregon the coyote appears as a somewhat tentative demiurge, and the men of his creation, like the beings first formed by Prajapati in the Sanskrit myth, needed to be reviewed, corrected and considerably augmented. The Chinooks of Oregon believe in the usual race of magnified non-natural men, who preceded humanity.

These semi-divine people were called Ulhaipa by the Chinooks, and Sehuiab by the Lummies. But the coyote was the maker of men. As the first of Nature's journeymen, he made men rather badly, with closed eyes and motionless feet. A kind being, named Ikanam, touched up the coyote's crude essays with a sharp stone, opening the eyes of men, and giving their hands and feet the powers of movement. He also acted as a “culture-hero,” introducing the first arts. (1)

(1) (Frauchere’s Narrative, 258; Gibb’s Chinook Vocabulary; Parker’s exploring Tour, i. 139;) Bancroft, iii. 96.

Moving up the West Pacific coast we reach British Columbia, where the coyote is not supposed to have been so active as our old friend the musk-rat in the great work of the creation. According to the Tacullies, nothing existed in the beginning but water and a musk-rat. As the animal sought his food at the bottom of the water, his mouth was frequently filled with mud. This he spat out, and so gradually formed by alluvial deposit an island. This island was small at first, like earth in the Sanskrit myth in the Satapatha Brahmana, but gradually increased in bulk. The Tacullies have no new light to throw on the origin of man.(1)

(1) Bancroft, iii. 98; Harmon’s Journey, p, 303.

The Thlinkeets, who are neighbours of the Tacullies on the north, incline to give crow or raven the chief role in the task of creation, just as some Australians allot the same part to the eagle-hawk, and the Yakuts to a hawk, a crow and a teal-duck. We shall hear much of Yehl later, as one of the mythical heroes of the introduction of civilisation. North of the Thlinkeets, a bird and a dog take the creative duties, the Aleuts and Koniagas being descended from a dog. Among the more northern Tinnehs, the dog who was the progenitor of the race had the power of assuming the shape of a handsome young man. He supplied the protoplasm of the Tinnehs, as Purusha did that of the Aryan world, out of his own body. A giant tore him to pieces, as the gods tore Purusha, and out of the fragments thrown into the rivers came fish, the fragments tossed into the air took life as birds, and so forth.(1) This recalls the Australian myth of the origin of fish and the Ananzi stories of the origin of whips.(2)

(1) Hearne, p, 343; Bancroft, iii. 106.

(2) See “Divine Myths of Lower Races”. M. Cosquin, in Contes de Lorraine, vol. i. , gives the Ananzi story.

Between the cosmogonic myths of the barbarous or savage American tribes and those of the great cultivated American peoples, Aztecs, Peruvians and Quiches, place should be found for the legends of certain races in the South Pacific. Of these, the most important are the Maoris or natives of New Zealand, the Mangaians and the Samoans. Beyond the usual and world-wide correspondences of myth, the divine tales of the various South Sea isles display resemblances so many and essential that they must be supposed to spring from a common and probably not very distant centre. As it is practically impossible to separate Maori myths of the making of things from Maori myths of the gods and their origin, we must pass over here the metaphysical hymns and stories of the original divine beings, Rangi and Papa, Heaven and Earth, and of their cruel but necessary divorce by their children, who then became the usual Titanic race which constructs and “airs” the world for the reception of man.(1) Among these beings, more fully described in our chapter on the gods of the lower races, is Tiki, with his wife Marikoriko, twilight. Tane (male) is another of the primordial race, children of earth and heaven, and between him and Tiki lies the credit of having made or begotten humanity. Tane adorned the body of his father, heaven (Rangi), by sticking stars all over it, as disks of pearl-shells are stuck all over images. He was the parent of trees and birds, but some trees are original and divine beings. The first woman was not born, but formed out of the sun and the echo, a pretty myth. Man was made by Tiki, who took red clay, and kneaded it with his own blood, or with the red water of swamps. The habits of animals, some of which are gods, while others are descended from gods, follow from their conduct at the moment when heaven and earth were violently divorced. New Zealand itself, or at least one of the isles, was a huge fish caught by Maui (of whom more hereafter). Just as Pund-jel, in Australia, cut out the gullies and vales with his knife, so the mountains and dells of New Zealand were produced by the knives of Maui’s brothers when they crimped his big fish.(2) Quite apart from those childish ideas are the astonishing metaphysical hymns about the first stirrings of light in darkness, of “becoming” and “being,” which remind us of Hegel and Heraclitus, or of the most purely speculative ideas in the Rig-Veda.(3) Scarcely less metaphysical are the myths of Mangaia, of which Mr. Gill(4) gives an elaborate account.

(1) See “Divine Myths of Lower Races”.

(2) Taylor, New Zealand, p-121; Bastian, Heilige Sage der Polynesier, p-50; Shortland, Traditions of New Zealanders.

(3) See chapter on “Divine Myths of the Lower Races,” and on “Indian Cosmogonic Myths”

(4) Myths and Songs from the South Pacific, p-22.

The Mangaian ideas of the world are complex, and of an early scientific sort. The universe is like the hollow of a vast cocoa-nut shell, divided into many imaginary circles like those of mediaeval speculation. There is a demon at the stem, as it were, of the cocoa-nut, and, where the edges of the imaginary shell nearly meet, dwells a woman demon, whose name means “the very beginning”. In this system we observe efforts at metaphysics and physical speculation. But it is very characteristic of rude thought that such extremely abstract conceptions as “the very beginning” are represented as possessing life and human form. The woman at the bottom of the shell was anxious for progeny, and therefore plucked a bit out of her own right side, as Eve was made out of the rib of Adam. This piece of flesh became Vatea, the father of gods and men. Vatea (like Oannes in the Chaldean legend) was half man, half fish. “The Very Beginning” begat other children in the same manner, and some of these became departmental gods of ocean, noon-day, and so forth. Curiously enough, the Mangaians seem to be sticklers for primogeniture. Vatea, as the first-born son, originally had his domain next above that of his mother. But she was pained by the thought that his younger brothers each took a higher place than his; so she pushed his land up, and it is now next below the solid crust on which mortals live in Mangaia. Vatea married a woman from one of the under worlds named Papa, and their children had the regular human form. One child was born either from Papa’s head, like Athene from the head of Zeus, or from her armpit, like Dionysus from the thigh of Zeus. Another child may be said, in the language of dog-breeders, to have “thrown back,” for he wears the form of a white or black lizard. In the Mangaian system the sky is a solid vault of blue stone. In the beginning of things the sky (like Ouranos in Greece and Rangi in New Zealand) pressed hard on earth, and the god Ru was obliged to thrust the two asunder, or rather he was engaged in this task when Maui tossed both Ru and the sky so high up that they never came down again. Ru is now the Atlas of Mangaia, “the sky-supporting Ru”.(1) His lower limbs fell to earth, and became pumice-stone. In these Mangaian myths we discern resemblances to New Zealand fictions, as is natural, and the tearing of the body of “the Very Beginning” has numerous counterparts in European, American and Indian fable. But on the whole, the Mangaian myths are more remarkable for their semi-scientific philosophy than for their coincidences with the fancies of other early peoples.

(1) Gill, .

The Samoans, like the Maoris and Greeks, hold that heaven at first fell down and lay upon earth.(1) The arrowroot and another plant pushed up heaven, and “the heaven-pushing place” is still known and pointed out. Others say the god Ti-iti-i pushed up heaven, and his feet made holes six feet deep in the rocks during this exertion. The other Samoan myths chiefly explain the origin of fire, and the causes of the characteristic forms and habits of animals and plants. The Samoans, too, possess a semi-mythical, metaphysical cosmogony, starting from NOTHING, but rapidly becoming the history of rocks, clouds, hills, dew and various animals, who intermarried, and to whom the royal family of Samoa trace their origin through twenty-three generations. So personal are Samoan abstract conceptions, that “SPACE had a long-legged stool,” on to which a head fell, and grew into a companion for Space. Yet another myth says that the god Tangaloa existed in space, and made heaven and earth, and sent down his daughter, a snipe. Man he made out of the mussel-fish. So confused are the doctrines of the Samoans.(2)

(1) Turner’s Samoa, .

(2) Turner’s Samoa, p-9.

Perhaps the cosmogonic myths of the less cultivated races have now been stated in sufficient number. As an example of the ideas which prevailed in an American race of higher culture, we may take the Quiche legend as given in the Popol Vuh, a post-Christian collection of the sacred myths of the nation, written down after the Spanish conquest, and published in French by the Abbe Brasseur de Bourbourg.(1)

(1) See Popol Vuh in Mr. Max Muller’s Chips from a German Workshop, with a discussion of its authenticity. In his Annals of the Cakchiquels, a nation bordering on the Quiches, Dr. Brinton expresses his belief in the genuine character of the text. Compare Bancroft, iii. . The ancient and original Popol Vuh, the native book in native characters, disappeared during the Spanish conquest.

The Quiches, like their neighbours the Cakchiquels, were a highly civilised race, possessing well-built towns, roads and the arts of life, and were great agriculturists. Maize, the staple of food among these advanced Americans, was almost as great a god as Soma among the Indo-Aryans. The Quiches were acquainted with a kind of picture-writing, and possessed records in which myth glided into history. The Popol Vuh, or book of the people, gives itself out as a post-Columbian copy of these traditions, and may doubtless contain European ideas. As we see in the Commentarias Reales of the half-blood Inca Garcilasso de la Vega, the conquered people were anxious to prove that their beliefs were by no means so irrational and so “devilish” as to Spanish critics they appeared. According to the Popol Vuh, there was in the beginning nothing but water and the feathered serpent, one of their chief divine beings; but there also existed somehow, “they that gave life”. Their names mean “shooter of blow-pipe at coyote,” “at opossum,” and so forth. They said “Earth,” and there WAS earth, and plants growing thereon. Animals followed, and the Givers of life said “Speak our names,” but the animals could only cluck and croak. Then said the Givers, “Inasmuch as ye cannot praise us, ye shall be killed and eaten”. They then made men out of clay; these men were weak and watery, and by water they were destroyed. Next they made men of wood and women of the pith of trees. These puppets married and gave in marriage, and peopled earth with wooden mannikins. This unsatisfactory race was destroyed by a rain of resin and by the wild beasts. The survivors developed into apes. Next came a period occupied by the wildest feats of the magnified non-natural race and of animals. The record is like the description of a supernatural pantomime — the nightmare of a god. The Titans upset hills, are turned into stone, and behave like Heitsi Eibib in the

Namaqua myths.

Last of all, men were made of yellow and white maize, and these gave more satisfaction, but their sight was contracted. These, however, survived, and became the parents of the present stock of humanity.

Here we have the conceptions of creation and of evolution combined. Men are MADE, but only the fittest survive; the rest are either destroyed or permitted to develop into lower species. A similar mixture of the same ideas will be found in one of the Brahmanas among the Aryans of India. It is to be observed that the Quiche myths, as recorded in Popol Vuh, contain not only traces of belief in a creative word and power, but many hymns of a lofty and beautifully devotional character.

"Hail! O Creator, O Former! Thou that hearest and understandest us, abandon us not, forsake us not! O God, thou that art in heaven and on the earth, O Heart of Heaven, O Heart of Earth, give us descendants and posterity as long as the light endures."

This is an example of the prayers of the men made out of maize, made especially that they might "call on the name" of the god or gods. Whether we are to attribute this and similar passages to Christian influence (for Popol Vuh, as we have it, is but an attempt to collect the fragments of the lost book that remained in men's minds after the conquest), or whether the purer portions of the myth be due to untaught native reflection and piety, it is not possible to determine. It is improbable that the ideas of a hostile race would be introduced into religious hymns by their victims. Here, as elsewhere in the sacred legends of civilised peoples, various strata of mythical and religious thought coexist.

No American people reached such a pitch of civilisation as the Aztecs of Anahuac, whose capital was the city of Mexico. It is needless here to repeat the story of their grandeur and their fall. Obscure as their history, previous to the Spanish invasion, may be, it is certain that they possessed a highly organised society, fortified towns, established colleges or priesthoods, magnificent temples, an elaborate calendar, great wealth in the precious metals, the art of picture-writing in considerable perfection, and a despotic central government. The higher classes in a society like this could not but develop speculative systems, and it is alleged that shortly before the reign of Montezuma attempts had been made to introduce a pure monotheistic religion. But the ritual of the Aztecs remained an example of the utmost barbarity. Never was a more cruel faith, not even in Carthage. Nowhere did temples reek with such pools of human blood; nowhere else, not in Dahomey and Ashanti, were human sacrifice, cannibalism and torture so essential to the cult that secured the favour of the gods. In these dark fanes — reeking with gore, peopled by monstrous shapes of idols bird-headed or beast-headed, and adorned with the hideous carvings in which we still see the priest, under the mask of some less ravenous forest beast, tormenting the victim — in these abominable temples the Castilian conquerors might well believe that they saw the dwellings of devils.

Yet Mexican religion had its moral and beautiful aspect, and the gods, or certain of the gods, required from their worshippers not only bloody hands, but clean hearts.

To the gods we return later. The myths of the origin of things may be studied without a knowledge of the whole Aztec Pantheon. Our authorities, though numerous, lack complete originality and are occasionally confused. We have first the Aztec monuments and hieroglyphic scrolls, for the most part undeciphered. These merely attest the hideous and cruel character of the deities. Next we have the reports of early missionaries, like Sahagun and Mendieta, of conquerors, like Bernal Diaz, and of noble half-breeds, such as Ixtlilxochitl.(1)

(1) Bancroft’s Native Races of Pacific Coast of North America, vol. iii., contains an account of the sources, and, with Sahagun and Acosta, is mainly followed here. See also J. G. Muller, Ur. Amerik. Rel., . See chapter on the “Divine Myths of Mexico”.

There are two elements in Mexican, as in Quiche, and Indo-Aryan, and Maori, and even Andaman cosmogonic myth. We find the purer religion and the really philosophic speculation concurrent with such crude and childish stories as usually satisfy the intellectual demands of Ahts, Cahrocs and Bushmen; but of the purer and more speculative opinions we know little. Many of the noble, learned and priestly classes of Aztecs perished at the conquest. The survivors were more or less converted to Catholicism, and in their writings probably put the best face possible on the native religion. Like the Spanish clergy, their instructors, they were inclined to explain away their national gods by a system of euhemerism, by taking it for granted that the gods and culture-heroes had originally been ordinary men, worshipped after their decease. This is almost invariably the view adopted by Sahagun. Side by side with the confessions, as it were, of the clergy and cultivated classes coexisted the popular beliefs, the myths of the people, partaking of the nature of folk-lore, but not rejected by the priesthood.

Both strata of belief are represented in the surviving cosmogonic myths of the Aztecs. Probably we may reckon in the first or learned and speculative class of tales the account of a series of constructions and reconstructions of the world. This idea is not peculiar to the higher mythologies, the notion of a deluge and recreation or renewal of things is almost universal, and even among the untutored Australians there are memories of a flood and of an age of ruinous winds. But the theory of definite epochs, calculated in accordance with the Mexican calendar, of epochs in which things were made and re-made, answers closely to the Indo-Aryan conception of successive kalpas, and can only have been developed after the method of reckoning time had been carried to some perfection. “When heaven and earth were fashioned, they had already been four times created and destroyed,” say the fragments of what is called the Chimalpopoca manuscript. Probably this theory of a series of kalpas is only one of the devices by which the human mind has tried to cheat itself into the belief that it can conceive a beginning of things. The earth stands on an elephant, the elephant on a tortoise, and it is going too far to ask what the tortoise stands on. In the same way the world’s beginning seems to become more intelligible or less puzzling when it is thrown back into a series of beginnings and endings. This method also was in harmony with those vague ideas of evolution and of the survival of the fittest which we have detected in myth. The various tentative human races of the Popol Vuh degenerated or were destroyed because they did not fulfil the purposes for which they were made. In Brahmanic myth we shall see that type after type was condemned and perished because it was inadequate, or inadequately equipped — because it did not harmonise with its environment. (1) For these series of experimental creations and inefficient evolutions vast spaces of time were required, according to the Aztec and Indo-Aryan philosophies. It is not impossible that actual floods and great convulsions of nature may have been remembered in tradition, and may have lent colour and form to these somewhat philosophic myths of origins. From such sources probably comes the Mexican hypothesis of a water-age (ending in a deluge), an earth-age (ending in an earthquake), a wind-age (ending in hurricanes), and the present dispensation, to be destroyed by fire.

(1) As an example of a dim evolutionary idea, note the myths of the various ages as reported by Mendieta, according to which there were five earlier ages “or suns” of bad quality, so that the contemporary human beings were unable to live on the fruits of the earth.

The less philosophic and more popular Aztec legend of the commencement of the world is mainly remarkable for the importance given in it to objects of stone. For some reason, stones play a much greater part in American than in other mythologies. An emerald was worshipped in the temple of Pachacamac, who was, according to Garcilasso, the supreme and spiritual deity of the Incas. The creation legend of the Cakchiquels of Guatemala(1) makes much of a mysterious, primeval and animated obsidian stone. In the Iroquois myths(2) stones are the leading characters. Nor did Aztec myth escape this influence.

(1) Brinton, Annals of the Cakchiquels.

(2) Erminie Smith, Bureau of Ethnol. Report, ii.

There was a god in heaven named Citlalatonac, and a goddess, Citlalicue. When we speak of “heaven” we must probably think of some such world of ordinary terrestrial nature above the sky as that from which Ataentsic fell in the Huron story. The goddess gave birth to a flint-knife, and flung the flint down to earth. This abnormal birth partly answers to that of the youngest of the Adityas, the rejected abortion in the Veda, and to the similar birth and rejection of Maui in New Zealand. From the fallen flint-knife sprang our old friends the magnified non-natural beings with human characteristics, “the gods,” to the number of 1600. The gods sent up the hawk (who in India and Australia generally comes to the front on these occasions), and asked their mother, or rather grandmother, to help them to make men, to be their servants. Citlalicue rather jeered at her unconsidered offspring. She advised them to go to the lord of the homes of the departed, Mictlanteuctli, and borrow a bone or some ashes of the dead who are with him. We must never ask for consistency from myths. This statement implies that men had already been in existence, though they were not yet created. Perhaps they had perished in one of the four great destructions. With difficulty and danger the gods stole a bone from Hades, placed it in a bowl, and smeared it with their own blood, as in Chaldea and elsewhere. Finally, a boy and a girl were born out of the bowl. From this pair sprang men, and certain of the gods, jumping into a furnace, became sun and moon. To the sun they then, in Aztec fashion, sacrificed themselves, and there, one might think, was an end of them. But they afterwards appeared in wondrous fashions to their worshippers, and ordained the ritual of religion. According to another legend, man and woman (as in African myths) struggled out of a hole in the ground.(1)

(1) Authorities: Ixtlil.; Kingsborough, ix. p, 206; Sahagun, Hist. Gen., i. 3, vii. 2; J. G. Muller, , where Muller compares the Delphic conception of ages of the world; Bancroft, iii. p, 65.

The myths of the peoples under the empire of the Incas in Peru are extremely interesting, because almost all mythical formations are found existing together, while we have historical evidence as to the order and manner of their development. The Peru of the Incas covered the modern state of the same name, and included Ecuador, with parts of Chili and Bolivia. M. Reville calculates that the empire was about 2500 miles in length, four times as long as France, and that its breadth was from 250 to 500 miles. The country, contained three different climatic regions, and was peopled by races of many different degrees of culture, all more or less subject to the dominion of the Children of the Sun. The three regions were the dry strip along the coast, the fertile and cultivated land about the spurs of the Cordilleras, and the inland mountain regions, inhabited by the wildest races. Near Cuzco, the Inca capital, was the Lake of Titicaca, the Mediterranean, as it were, of Peru, for on the shores of this inland sea was developed the chief civilisation of the new world.

As to the institutions, myths and religion of the empire, we have copious if contradictory information. There are the narratives of the Spanish conquerors, especially of Pizarro's chaplain, Valverde, an ignorant bigoted fanatic. Then we have somewhat later travellers and missionaries, of whom Cieza de Leon (his book was published thirty years after the conquest, in 1553) is one of the most trustworthy. The "Royal Commentaries" of Garcilasso de la Vega, son of an Inca lady and a Spanish conqueror, have often already been quoted. The critical spirit and sound sense of Garcilasso are in remarkable contrast to the stupid orthodoxy of the Spaniards, but some allowance must be made for his fervent Peruvian patriotism. He had heard the Inca traditions repeated in boyhood, and very early in life collected all the information which his mother and maternal uncle had to give him, or which could be extracted from the quipus (the records of knotted cord), and from the commemorative pictures of his ancestors. Garcilasso had access, moreover, to the "torn papers" of Blas Valera, an early Spanish missionary of unusual sense and acuteness. Christoval de Moluna is also an excellent authority, and much may be learned from the volume of Rites and Laws of the Yncas.(1)

(1) A more complete list of authorities, including the garrulous Acosta, is published by M. Reville in his Hibbert Lectures, p, 137. Garcilasso, Cieza de Leon, Christoval de Moluna, Acosta and the Rites and Laws have all been translated by Mr. Clements Markham, and are published, with the editor's learned and ingenious notes, in the collection of the Hakluyt Society. Care must be taken to discriminate between what is reported about the Indians of the various provinces, who were in very different grades of culture, and what is told about the Incas themselves.

The political and religious condition of the Peruvian empire is very clearly conceived and stated by Garcilasso. Without making due allowance for that mysterious earlier civilisation, older than the Incas, whose cyclopean buildings are the wonder of travellers, Garcilasso attributes the introduction of civilisation to his own ancestors. Allowing for what is confessedly mythical in his narrative, it must be admitted that he has a firm grasp of what the actual history must have been. He recognises a period of savagery before the Incas, a condition of the rudest barbarism, which still existed on the fringes and mountain recesses of the empire. The religion of that period was mere magic and totemism. From all manner of natural objects, but chiefly from beasts and birds, the various savage stocks of Peru claimed descent, and they revered and offered sacrifice to their totemic ancestors.(1) Garcilasso adds, what is almost incredible, that the Indians tamely permitted themselves to be eaten by their totems, when these were carnivorous animals. They did this with the less reluctance as they were cannibals, and accustomed to breed children for the purposes of the cuisine from captive women taken in war.(2) Among the huacas or idols, totems, fetishes and other adorable objects of the Indians, worshipped before and retained after the introduction of the Inca sun-totem and solar cult, Garcilasso names trees, hills, rocks, caves, fountains, emeralds, pieces of jasper, tigers, lions, bears, foxes, monkeys, condors, owls, lizards, toads, frogs, sheep, maize, the sea, "for want of larger gods, crabs" and bats. The bat was also the totem of the Zotzil, the chief family of the Cakchiquels of Guatemala, and the most high god of the Cakchiquels was worshipped in the shape of a bat. We are reminded of religion as it exists in Samoa. The explanation of Blas Valera was that in each totem (pacarissa) the Indians adored the devil.

(1) Com. Real., vol. i., cha., x. xi. p-53.

(2) Cieza de Leon, xii., xv., xix., xxi., xxiii., xxvi., xxviii., xxxii. Cieza is speaking of people in the valley of Cauca, in New Granada.

Athwart this early religion of totems and fetishes came, in Garcilasso's narrative, the purer religion of the Incas, with what he regards as a philosophic development of a belief in a Supreme Being. According to him, the Inca sun-worship was really a totemism of a loftier character. The Incas "knew how to choose gods better than the Indians". Garcilasso's theory is that the earlier totems were selected chiefly as distinguishing marks by the various stocks, though, of course, this does not explain why the animals or other objects of each family were worshipped or were regarded as ancestors, and the blood-connections of the men who adored them. The Incas, disdaining crabs, lizards, bats and even serpents and lions, "chose" the sun. Then, just like the other totemic tribes, they feigned to be of the blood and lineage of the sun.

This fable is, in brief, the Inca myth of the origin of civilisation and of man, or at least of their breed of men. As M. Reville well remarks, it is obvious that the Inca claim is an adaptation of the local myth of Lake Titicaca, the inland sea of Peru. According to that myth, the Children of the Sun, the ancestors of the Incas, came out of the earth (as in Greek and African legends) at Lake Titicaca, or reached its shores after wandering from the hole or cave whence they first emerged. The myth, as adapted by the Incas, takes for granted the previous existence of mankind, and, in some of its forms, the Inca period is preceded by the deluge.

Of the Peruvian myth concerning the origin of things, the following account is given by a Spanish priest, Christoval de Moluna, in a report to the Bishop of

Cuzco in 1570.(1) The story was collected from the lips of ancient Peruvians and old native priests, who again drew their information in part from the painted records reserved in the temple of the sun near Cuzco. The legend begins with a deluge myth; a cataclysm ended a period of human existence. All mankind perished except a man and woman, who floated in a box to a distance of several hundred miles from Cuzco. There the creator commanded them to settle, and there, like Pund-jel in Australia, he made clay images of men of all races, attired in their national dress, and then animated them. They were all fashioned and painted as correct models, and were provided with their national songs and with seed-corn. They then were put into the earth, and emerged all over the world at the proper places, some (as in Africa and Greece) coming out of fountains, some out of trees, some out of caves. For this reason they made huacas (worshipful objects or fetishes) of the trees, caves and fountains. Some of the earliest men were changed into stones, others into falcons, condors and other creatures which we know were totems in Peru. Probably this myth of metamorphosis was invented to account for the reverence paid to totems or pacarissas as the Peruvians called them. In Tiahuanaco, where the creation, or rather manufacture of men took place, the creator turned many sinners into stones. The sun was made in the shape of a man, and, as he soared into heaven, he called out in a friendly fashion to Manco Ccapac, the Ideal first Inca, “Look upon me as thy father, and worship me as thy father”. In these fables the creator is called Pachyachachi, “Teacher of the world”. According to Christoval, the creator and his sons were “eternal and unchangeable”. Among the Canaris men descend from the survivor of the deluge, and a beautiful bird with the face of a woman, a siren in fact, but known better to ornithologists as a macaw. “The chief cause,” says the good Christoval, “of these fables was ignorance of God.”

(1) Rites and Laws of the Yncas, , Hakluyt Society, 1873.

The story, as told by Cieza de Leon, runs thus:(1) A white man of great stature (in fact, “a magnified non-natural man”) came into the world, and gave life to beasts and human beings. His name was Ticiviracocha, and he was called the Father of the Sun.(2) There are likenesses of him in the temple, and he was regarded as a moral teacher. It was owing apparently to this benevolent being that four mysterious brothers and sisters emerged from a cave — Children of the Sun, fathers of the Incas, teachers of savage men. Their own conduct, however, was not exemplary, and they shut up in a hole in the earth the brother of whom they were jealous. This incident is even more common in the marchen or household tales than in the regular tribal or national myths of the world.(3) The buried brother emerged again with wings, and “without doubt he must have been some devil,” says honest Cieza de Leon. This brother was Manco Ccapac, the heroic ancestor of the Incas, and he turned his jealous brethren into stones. The whole tale is in the spirit illustrated by the wilder romances of the Popol Vuh.

(1) Second Part of the Chronicles of Peru, p 5.

(2) See Making of Religion, p-270. Name and God are much disputed.

(3) The story of Joseph and the marchen of Jean de l'Ours are well-known examples.

Garcilasso gives three forms of this myth. According to "the old Inca," his maternal uncle, it was the sun which sent down two of his children, giving them a golden staff, which would sink into the ground at the place where they were to rest from wandering. It sank at Lake Titicaca. About the current myths Garcilasso says generally that they were "more like dreams" than straightforward stories; but, as he adds, the Greeks and Romans also "invented fables worthy to be laughed at, and in greater number than the Indians. The stories of one age of heathenism may be compared with those of the other, and in many points they will be found to agree." This critical position of Garcilasso's will be proved correct when we reach the myths of Greeks and Indo-Aryans. The myth as narrated north-east of Cuzco speaks of the four brothers and four sisters who came out of caves, and the caves in Inca times were panelled with gold and silver.

Athwart all these lower myths, survivals from the savage stage, comes what Garcilasso regards as the philosophical Inca belief in Pachacamac. This deity, to Garcilasso's mind, was purely spiritual: he had no image and dwelt in no temple; in fact, he is that very God whom the Spanish missionaries proclaimed. This view, though the fact has been doubted, was very probably held by the Amautas, or philosophical class in Peru.(1) Cieza de Leon says "the name of this devil, Pachacamac, means creator of the world". Garcilasso urges that Pachacamac was the animus mundi; that he did not "make the world," as Pund-jel and other savage demiurges made it, but that he was to the universe what the soul is to the body.

(1) Com. Real., vol. i. .

Here we find ourselves, if among myths at all, among the myths of metaphysics — rational myths; that is, myths corresponding to our present stage of thought, and therefore intelligible to us. Pachacamac "made the sun, and lightning, and thunder, and of these the sun was worshipped by the Incas". Garcilasso denies that the moon was worshipped. The reflections of the sceptical or monotheistic Inca, who declared that the sun, far from being a free agent, "seems like a thing held to its task," are reported by Garcilasso, and appear to prove that solar worship was giving way, in the minds of educated Peruvians, a hundred years before the arrival of Pizarro and Valverde with his missal.(1)

(1) Garcilasso, viii. 8, quoting Blas Valera.

From this summary it appears that the higher Peruvian religion had wrested to its service, and to the dynastic purposes of the Incas, a native myth of the familiar class, in which men come ready made out of holes in the ground. But in Peru we do not find nearly such abundance of other savage origin myths as will be proved to exist in the legends of Greeks and Indo-Aryans. The reason probably is that Peru left no native literature; the missionaries disdained stories of “devils,” and Garcilasso’s common sense and patriotism were alike revolted by the incidents of stories “more like dreams” than truthful records. He therefore was silent about them. In Greece and India, on the other hand, the native religious literature preserved myths of the making of man out of clay, of his birth from trees and stones, of the fashioning of things out of the fragments of mutilated gods and Titans, of the cosmic egg, of the rending and wounding of a personal heaven and a personal earth, of the fishing up from the waters of a tiny earth which grew greater, of the development of men out of beasts, with a dozen other such notions as are familiar to contemporary Bushmen, Australians, Digger Indians, and Cahrocs. But in Greece and India these ideas coexist with myths and religious beliefs as purely spiritual and metaphysical as the belief in the Pachacamac of Garcilasso and the Amautas of Peru.

CHAPTER VII. INDO-ARYAN MYTHS — SOURCES OF EVIDENCE.

Authorities — Vedas — Brahmanas — Social condition of Vedic India — Arts — Ranks — War — Vedic fetishism — Ancestor worship — Date of Rig-Veda Hymns doubtful — Obscurity of the Hymns — Difficulty of interpreting the real character of Veda — Not primitive but sacerdotal — The moral purity not innocence but refinement.

Before examining the myths of the Aryans of India, it is necessary to have a clear notion of the nature of the evidence from which we derive our knowledge of the subject. That evidence is found in a large and incongruous mass of literary documents, the heritage of the Indian people. In this mass are extremely ancient texts (the Rig-Veda, and the Atharva-Veda), expository comments of a date so much later that the original meaning of the older documents was sometimes lost (the Brahmanas), and poems and legendary collections of a period later still, a period when the whole character of religious thought had sensibly altered. In this literature there is indeed a certain continuity; the names of several gods of the earliest time are preserved in the legends of the latest. But the influences of many centuries of change, of contending philosophies, of periods of national growth and advance, and of national decadence and decay, have been at work on the mythology of India. Here we have myths that were perhaps originally popular tales, and are probably old; here again, we have later legends that certainly were conceived in the narrow minds of a pedantic and ceremonious priesthood. It is not possible, of course, to analyse in this place all the myths of all the periods; we must be content to point out some which seem to be typical examples of the working of the human intellect in its earlier or its later childhood, in its distant hours of barbaric beginnings, or in the senility of its sacerdotage.

The documents which contain Indian mythology may be divided, broadly speaking, into four classes. First, and most ancient in date of composition, are the collections of hymns known as the Vedas. Next, and (as far as date of collection goes) far less ancient, are the expository texts called the Brahmanas. Later still, come other manuals of devotion and of sacred learning, called Sutras and Upanishads; and last are the epic poems (Itihasas), and the books of legends called Puranas. We are chiefly concerned here with the Vedas and Brahmanas. A gulf of time, a period of social and literary change, separates the Brahmanas from the Vedas. But the epics and Puranas differ perhaps even still more from the Brahmanas, on account of vast religious changes which brought new gods into the Indian Olympus, or elevated to the highest place old gods formerly of low degree. From the composition of the first Vedic hymn to the compilation of the latest Purana, religious and mythopoeic fancy was never at rest.

Various motives induced various poets to assign, on various occasions the highest powers to this or the other god. The most antique legends were probably omitted or softened by some early Vedic bard (Rishi) of noble genius, or again impure myths were brought from the obscurity of oral circulation and foisted into literature by some poet less divinely inspired. Old deities were half-forgotten, and forgotten deities were resuscitated. Sages shook off superstitious bonds, priests forged new fetters on ancient patterns for themselves and their flocks. Philosophy explained away the more degrading myths; myths as degrading were suggested to dark and servile hearts by unscientific etymologies. Over the whole mass of ancient mythology the new mythology of a debased Brahmanic ritualism grew like some luxurious and baneful parasite. It is enough for our purpose if we can show that even in the purest and most antique mythology of India the element of traditional savagery survived and played its part, and that the irrational legends of the Vedas and Brahmanas can often be explained as relics of savage philosophy or faith, or as novelties planned on the ancient savage model, whether borrowed or native to the race.

The oldest documents of Indian mythology are the Vedas, usually reckoned as four in number. The oldest, again, of the four, is the Sanhita (“collection”) of the Rig-Veda. It is a purely lyrical assortment of the songs “which the Hindus brought with them from their ancient homes on the banks of the Indus”. In the manuscripts, the hymns are classified according to the families of poets to whom they are ascribed. Though composed on the banks of the Indus by sacred bards, the hymns were compiled and arranged in India proper. At what date the oldest hymns of which this collection is made up were first chanted it is impossible to say with even approximate certainty. Opinions differ, or have differed, between 2400 B.C. and 1400 B.C. as the period when the earliest sacred lyrics of the Veda may first have been listened by gods and men. In addition to the Rig-Veda we have the Sanhita of the Sama-Veda, “an anthology taken from the Rik-Samhita, comprising those of its verses which were intended to be chanted at the ceremonies of the soma sacrifice”.(1) It is conjectured that the hymns of the Sama-Veda were borrowed from the Rig-Veda before the latter had been edited and stereotyped into its present form. Next comes the Yajur-Veda, “which contains the formulas for the entire sacrificial ceremonial, and indeed forms its proper foundations,” the other Vedas being devoted to the soma sacrifice.(2) The

Yajur-Veda has two divisions, known as the Black and the White Yajur, which have common matter, but differ in arrangement. The Black Yajur-Veda is also called the Taittirya, and it is described as “a motley undigested jumble of different pieces”.(3) Last comes Atharva-Veda, not always regarded as a Veda properly speaking. It derives its name from an old semi-mythical priestly family, the Atharvans, and is full of magical formulae, imprecations, folklore and spells. There are good reasons for thinking this late as a collection, however early may be the magical ideas expressed in its contents.(4)

(1) Weber, History of Indian Literature, Eng. transl., .

(2) Ibid., .

(3) Ibid, . The name Taittirya is derived from a partridge, or from a Rishi named Partridge in Sanskrit. There is a story that the pupils of a sage were turned into partridges, to pick up sacred texts.

(4) Barth (Les Religions de l’Inde,) thinks that the existence of such a collection as the Atharva-Veda is implied, perhaps, in a text of the Rig-Veda, x. 90, 9.

Between the Vedas, or, at all events, between the oldest of the Vedas, and the compilation of the Brahmanas, these “canonised explanations of a canonised text,”(1) it is probable that some centuries and many social changes intervened.(2)

(1) Whitney, Oriental and Linguistic studies, First Series, .

(2) Max Muller, Biographical Essays, . “The prose portions presuppose the hymns, and, to judge from the utter inability of the authors of the Brahmanas to understand the antiquated language of the hymns, these Brahmanas must be ascribed to a much later period than that which gave birth to the hymns.”

If we would criticise the documents for Indian mythology in a scientific manner, it is now necessary that we should try to discover, as far as possible, the social and religious condition of the people among whom the Vedas took shape. Were they in any sense “primitive,” or were they civilised? Was their religion in its obscure beginnings or was it already a special and peculiar development, the fruit of many ages of thought? Now it is an unfortunate thing that scholars have constantly, and as it were involuntarily, drifted into the error of regarding the Vedas as if they were “primitive,” as if they exhibited to us the “germs” and “genesis” of religion and mythology, as if they contained the simple though strange utterances of PRIMITIVE thought.(1) Thus Mr. Whitney declares, in his Oriental and Linguistic Studies, “that the Vedas exhibit to us the very earliest germs of the Hindu culture”. Mr. Max Muller avers that “no country can be compared to India as offering opportunities for a real study of the genesis and growth of religion”.(2) Yet the same scholar observes that “even the earliest specimens of Vedic poetry belong to the modern history of the race, and that the early period of the historical growth of religion had passed away before the Rishis (bards) could have worshipped their Devas or bright beings with sacred hymns and invocations”. Though this is manifestly true, the sacred hymns and invocations of the Rishis are constantly used as testimony bearing on the beginning of the historical growth of religion. Nay, more; these remains of “the modern history of the race” are supposed to exhibit mythology in the process of making, as if the race had possessed no mythology before it reached a comparatively modern period, the Vedic age. In the same spirit, Dr. Muir, the learned editor of Sanskrit Texts, speaks in one place as if the Vedic hymns “illustrated the natural workings of the human mind in the period of its infancy”.(3) A brief examination of the social and political and religious condition of man, as described by the poets of the Vedas, will prove that his infancy had long been left behind him when the first Vedic hymns were chanted.

(1) Ibid., Rig-Veda Sanhita, .

(2) Hibbert Lectures, .

(3) Nothing can prove more absolutely and more briefly the late character of Vedic faith than the fact that the faith had already to be defended against the attacks of sceptics. The impious denied the existence of Indra because he was invisible. Rig-Veda, ii. 12, 5; viii. 89, 3; v. 30, 1-2; vi. 27, 3. Bergaigne, ii. 167. “Es gibt keinen Indra, so hat der eine und der ander gesagt” (Ludwig’s version).

As Barth observes, the very ideas which permeate the Veda, the idea of the mystic efficacy of sacrifice, of brahma, prove that the poems are profoundly sacerdotal; and this should have given pause to the writers who have persisted in representing the hymns as the work of primitive shepherds praising their gods as they feed their flocks.(1) In the Vedic age the ranks of society are already at least as clearly defined as in Homeric Greece. “We men,” says a poet of the Rig-Veda,(2) “have all our different imaginations and designs. The carpenter seeks something that is broken, the doctor a patient, the priest some one who will offer libations.... The artisan continually seeks after a man with plenty of gold.... I am a poet, my father is a doctor, and my mother is a grinder of corn.” Chariots and the art of the chariot-builder are as frequently spoken of as in the Iliad. Spears, swords, axes and coats of mail were in common use. The art of boat-building or of ship-building was well known. Kine and horses, sheep and dogs, had long been domesticated. The bow was a favourite weapon, and warriors fought in chariots, like the Homeric Greeks and the Egyptians. Weaving was commonly practised. The people probably lived, as a rule, in village settlements, but cities or fortified places were by no means unknown.(3) As for political society, “kings are frequently mentioned in the hymns,” and “it was regarded as eminently beneficial for a king to entertain a family priest," on whom he was expected to confer thousands of kine, lovely slaves and lumps of gold. In the family polygamy existed, probably as the exception. There is reason to suppose that the brother-in-law was permitted, if not expected, to "raise up seed" to his dead brother, as among the Hebrews.(4) As to literature, the very structure of the hymns proves that it was elaborate and consciously artistic. M. Barth writes: "It would be a great mistake to speak of the primitive naivete of the Vedic poetry and religion".(5) Both the poetry and the religion, on the other hand, display in the highest degree the mark of the sacerdotal spirit. The myths, though originally derived from nature-worship, in an infinite majority of cases only reflect natural phenomena through a veil of ritualistic corruptions.(6) The rigid division of castes is seldom recognised in the Rig-Veda. We seem to see caste in the making.(7) The Rishis and priests of the princely families were on their way to becoming the all-powerful Brahmans. The kings and princes were on their way to becoming the caste of Kshatriyas or warriors. The mass of the people was soon to sink into the caste of Vaisyas and broken men. Non-Aryan aborigines and others were possibly developing into the caste of Sudras. Thus the spirit of division and of ceremonialism had still some of its conquests to achieve. But the extraordinary attention given and the immense importance assigned to the details of sacrifice, and the supernatural efficacy constantly attributed to a sort of magical asceticism (tapas, austere fervour), prove that the worst and most foolish elements of later Indian society and thought were in the Vedic age already in powerful existence.

(1) Les Religions de l'Inde, .

(2) ix. 112.

(3) Ludwig, Rig-Veda, iii. 203. The burgs were fortified with wooden palisades, capable of being destroyed by fire. "Cities" may be too magnificent a word for what perhaps were more like pahs. But compare Kaegi, The Rig-Veda, note 42, Engl. transl. Kaegi's book (translated by Dr. Arrowsmith, Boston, U.S., 1886) is probably the best short manual of the subject.

(4) Deut. xxv. 5; Matt. xxii. 24.

(5) Revue de l'Histoire des Religions, i. 245.

(6) Ludwig, iii. 262.

(7) On this subject see Muir, i. 192, with the remarks of Haug. "From all we know, the real origin of caste seems to go back to a time anterior to the composition of the Vedic hymns, though its development into a regular system with insurmountable barriers can be referred only to the later period of the Vedic times." Roth approaches the subject from the word brahm, that is, prayer with a mystical efficacy, as his starting-point. From brahm, prayer, came brahma, he

who pronounces the prayers and performs the rite. This celebrant developed into a priest, whom to entertain brought blessings on kings. This domestic chaplaincy (conferring peculiar and even supernatural benefits) became hereditary in families, and these, united by common interests, exalted themselves into the Brahman caste. But in the Vedic age gifts of prayer and poetry alone marked out the purohitas, or men put forward to mediate between gods and mortals. Compare Ludwig, iii. 221.

Thus it is self-evident that the society in which the Vedic poets lived was so far from being PRIMITIVE that it was even superior to the higher barbarisms (such as that of the Scythians of Herodotus and Germans of Tacitus), and might be regarded as safely arrived at the threshold of civilisation. Society possessed kings, though they may have been kings of small communities, like those who warred with Joshua or fought under the walls of Thebes or Troy. Poets were better paid than they seem to have been at the courts of Homer or are at the present time. For the tribal festivals special priests were appointed, “who distinguished themselves by their comprehensive knowledge of the requisite rites and by their learning, and amongst whom a sort of rivalry is gradually developed, according as one tribe or another is supposed to have more or less prospered by its sacrifices”.(1) In the family marriage is sacred, and traces of polyandry and of the levirate, surviving as late as the epic poems, were regarded as things that need to be explained away. Perhaps the most barbaric feature in Vedic society, the most singular relic of a distant past, is the survival, even in a modified and symbolic form, of human sacrifice.(2)

(1) Weber, .

(2) Wilson, Rig-Veda, i. -63; Muir, i. ii.; Wilson, Rig-Veda i. ., ii. 8 (ii. 90); Aitareya Brahmana, Haug’s version, vol. ii. p, 469.

As to the religious condition of the Vedic Aryans, we must steadily remember that in the Vedas we have the views of the Rishis only, that is, of sacred poets on their way to becoming a sacred caste. Necessarily they no more represent the POPULAR creeds than the psalmists and prophets, with their lofty monotheistic morality, represent the popular creeds of Israel. The faith of the Rishis, as will be shown later, like that of the psalmists, has a noble moral aspect. Yet certain elements of this higher creed are already found in the faiths of the lowest savages. The Rishis probably did not actually INVENT them. Consciousness of sin, of imperfection in the sight of divine beings, has been developed (as it has even in Australia) and is often confessed. But on the whole the religion of the Rishis is practical — it might almost be said, is magical. They desire temporal blessings, rain, sunshine, long life, power, wealth in flocks and herds. The whole purpose of the sacrifices which occupy so much of their time and thought is to obtain these good things. The sacrifice and the sacrificer come between gods and men. On the man’s side is faith, munificence, a compelling force of prayer and of intentness of will. The sacrifice invigorates the gods to do the will of the sacrificer; it is supposed to be mystically celebrated in heaven as well as on earth — the gods are always sacrificing. Often (as when rain is wanted) the sacrifice imitates the end which it is desirable to gain.(1) In all these matters a minute ritual is already observed. The mystic word brahma, in the sense of hymn or prayer of a compelling and magical efficacy, has already come into use. The brahma answers almost to the Maori karakia or incantation and charm. “This brahma of Visvamitra protects the tribe of Bharata.” “Atri with the fourth prayer discovered the sun concealed by unholy darkness.”(2) The complicated ritual, in which prayer and sacrifice were supposed to exert a constraining influence on the supernatural powers, already existed, Haug thinks, in the time of the chief Rishis or hymnists of the Rig-Veda.(3)

(1) Compare “The Prayers of Savages” in J. A. Farrer’s Primitive Manners, and Ludwig, iii. 262-296, and see Bergaigne, La Religion Vedique, vol. i. .

(2) See texts in Muir, i. 242.

(3) Preface to translation of Aitareya Brahmana, .

In many respects the nature of the idea of the divine, as entertained by the Rishis of the Rig-Veda, is still matter for discussion. In the chapter on Vedic gods such particulars as can be ascertained will be given. Roughly speaking, the religion is mainly, though not wholly, a cult of departmental gods, originally, in certain cases, forces of Nature, but endowed with moral earnestness. As to fetishism in the Vedas the opinions of the learned are divided. M. Bergaigne(1) looks on the whole ritual as, practically, an organised fetishism, employed to influence gods of a far higher and purer character. Mr. Max Muller remarks, “that stones, bones, shells, herbs and all the other so-called fetishes, are simply absent in the old hymns, though they appear in more modern hymns, particularly those of the Atharva-Veda. When artificial objects are mentioned and celebrated in the Rig-Veda, they are only such as might be praised even by Wordsworth or Tennyson — chariots, bows, quivers, axes, drums, sacrificial vessels and similar objects. They never assume any individual character; they are simply mentioned as useful or precious, it may be as sacred.”(2)

(1) La Religion Vedique, vol. i. . “Le culte est assimilable dans une certaine mesure aux incantations, aux pratiques magiques.”

(2) Hibbert Lectures, .

When the existence of fetish “herbs” is denied by Mr. Max Muller, he does not, of course, forget Soma, that divine juice. It is also to be noted that in modern India, as Mr. Max Muller himself observes, Sir Alfred Lyall finds that “the husbandman prays to his plough and the fisher to his net,” these objects being, at present, fetishes. In opposition to Mr. Max Muller, Barth avers that the same kind of fetishism which flourishes to-day flourishes in the Rig-Veda. “Mountains, rivers, springs, trees, herbs are invoked as so many powers. The beasts which live with man — the horse, the cow, the dog, the bird and the animals which imperil his existence — receive a cult of praise and prayer. Among the instruments of ritual, some objects are more than things consecrated — they are divinities; and the war-chariot, the weapons of defence and offence, the plough, are the objects not only of benedictions but of prayers.”(1) These absolute contradictions on matters of fact add, of course, to the difficulty of understanding the early Indo-Aryan religion. One authority says that the Vedic people were fetish-worshippers; another authority denies it.

(1) Barth, Les Religions de l’Inde, , with the Vedic texts.

Were the Rishis ancestor-worshippers? Barth has no doubt whatever that they were. In the pitris or fathers he recognises ancestral spirits, now “companions of the gods, and gods themselves. At their head appear the earliest celebrants of the sacrifice, Atharvan, the Angiras, the Kavis (the pitris, par excellence) equals of the greatest gods, spirits who, BY DINT OF SACRIFICE, drew forth the world from chaos, gave birth to the sun and lighted the stars,” — cosmical feats which, as we have seen, are sometimes attributed by the lower races to their idealised mythic ancestors, the “old, old ones” of Australians and Ovahereroes.

A few examples of invocations of the ancestral spirits may not be out of place. (1) “May the Fathers protect me in my invocation of the gods.” Here is a curious case, especially when we remember how the wolf, in the North American myth, scattered the stars like spangles over the sky: “The fathers have adorned the sky with stars”.(2)

(1) Rig-Veda, vi. 52,4.

(2) Ibid., x. 68, xi.

Mr. Whitney (Oriental and Linguistic Studies, First Series,) gives examples of the ceremony of feeding the Aryan ghosts. “The fathers are supposed to assemble, upon due invocation, about the altar of him who would pay them homage, to seat themselves upon the straw or matting spread for each of the guests invited, and to partake of the offerings set before them.” The food seems chiefly to consist of rice, sesame and honey.

Important as is the element of ancestor-worship in the evolution of religion, Mr. Max Muller, in his Hibbert Lectures, merely remarks that thoughts and feelings about the dead “supplied some of the earliest and most important elements of religion”; but how these earliest elements affect his system does not appear. On a general view, then, the religion of the Vedic poets contained a vast number of elements in solution — elements such as meet us in every quarter of the globe. The belief in ancestral ghosts, the adoration of fetishes, the devotion to a moral ideal, contemplated in the persons of various deities, some of whom at least have been, and partly remain, personal natural forces, are all mingled, and all are drifting towards a kind of pantheism, in which, while everything is divine, and gods are reckoned by millions, the worshipper has glimpses of one single divine essence. The ritual, as we have seen, is more or less magical in character. The general elements of the beliefs are found, in various proportions, everywhere; the pantheistic mysticism is almost peculiar to India. It is, perhaps, needless to repeat that a faith so very composite, and already so strongly differentiated, cannot possibly be “primitive,” and that the beliefs and practices of a race so highly organised in society and so well equipped in material civilisation as the Vedic Aryans cannot possibly be “near the beginning”. Far from expecting to find in the Veda the primitive myths of the Aryans, we must remember that myth had already, when these hymns were sung, become obnoxious to the religious sentiment. “Thus,” writes Barth, “the authors of the hymns have expurgated, or at least left in the shade, a vast number of legends older than their time; such, for example, as the identity of soma with the moon, as the account of the divine families, of the parricide of Indra, and a long list might be made of the reticences of the Veda.... It would be difficult to extract from the hymns a chapter on the loves of the gods. The goddesses are veiled, the adventures of the gods are scarcely touched on in passing.... We must allow for the moral delicacy of the singers, and for their dislike of speaking too precisely about the gods. Sometimes it seems as if their chief object was to avoid plain speaking.... But often there is nothing save jargon and indolence of mind in this voluntary obscurity, for already in the Veda the Indian intellect is deeply smitten with its inveterate malady of affecting mystery the more, the more it has nothing to conceal; the mania for scattering symbols which symbolise no reality, and for sporting with riddles which it is not worth while to divine.”(1) Barth, however, also recognises amidst these confusions, “the inquietude of a heart deeply stirred, which seeks truth and redemption in prayer”. Such is the natural judgment of the clear French intellect on the wilfully obscure, tormented and evasive intellect of India.

(1) Les Religions de l’Inde, .

It would be interesting were it possible to illuminate the criticism of Vedic religion by ascertaining which hymns in the Rig-Veda are the most ancient, and which are later. Could we do this, we might draw inferences as to the comparative antiquity of the religious ideas in the poems. But no such discrimination of relative antiquity seems to be within the reach of critics. M.

Bergaigne thinks it impossible at present to determine the relative age of the hymns by any philological test. The ideas expressed are not more easily arrayed in order of date. We might think that the poems which contain most ceremonial allusions were the latest. But Mr. Max Muller says that “even the earliest hymns have sentiments worthy of the most advanced ceremonialists”.(1)

(1) History of Sanskrit Literature, .

The first and oldest source of our knowledge of Indo-Aryan myths is the Rig-Veda, whose nature and character have been described. The second source is the Atharva-Veda with the Brahmanas. The peculiarity of the Atharva is its collection of magical incantations spells and fragments of folklore. These are often, doubtless, of the highest antiquity. Sorcery and the arts of medicine-men are earlier in the course of evolution than priesthood. We meet them everywhere among races who have not developed the institution of an order of priests serving national gods. As a collection, the Atharva-Veda is later than the Rig-Veda, but we need not therefore conclude that the IDEAS of the Atharva are “a later development of the more primitive ideas of the Rig-Veda”. Magic is quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus; the ideas of the Atharva-Veda are everywhere; the peculiar notions of the Rig-Veda are the special property of an advanced and highly differentiated people. Even in the present collected shape, M. Barth thinks that many hymns of the Atharva are not much later than those of the Rig-Veda. Mr. Whitney, admitting the lateness of the Atharva as a collection, says, “This would not necessarily imply that the main body of the Atharva hymns were not already in existence when the compilation of the Rig-Veda took place”.(1) The Atharva refers to some poets of the Rig (as certain hymnists in the Rig also do) as earlier men. If in the Rig (as Weber says) “there breathes a lively natural feeling, a warm love of nature, while in the Atharva, on the contrary, there predominates an anxious apprehension of evil spirits and their magical powers,” it by no means follows that this apprehension is of later origin than the lively feeling for Nature. Rather the reverse. There appears to be no doubt(2) that the style and language of the Atharva are later than those of the Rig. Roth, who recognises the change, in language and style, yet considers the Atharva “part of the old literature”.(3) He concludes that the Atharva contains many pieces which, “both by their style and ideas, are shown to be contemporary with the older hymns of the Rig-Veda”. In religion, according to Muir,(4) the Atharva shows progress in the direction of monotheism in its celebration of Brahman, but it also introduces serpent-worship.

(1) Journal of the American Oriental Society. iv. 253.

(2) Muir, ii. 446.

(3) Ibid., ii. 448.

(4) Ibid., ii. 451.

As to the Atharva, then, we are free to suppose, if we like, that the dark magic, the evil spirits, the incantations, are old parts of Indian, as of all other popular beliefs, though they come later into literature than the poetry about Ushas and the morality of Varuna. The same remarks apply to our third source of information, the Brahmanas. These are indubitably comments on the sacred texts very much more modern in form than the texts themselves. But it does not follow, and this is most important for our purpose, that the myths in the Brahmanas are all later than the Vedic myths or corruptions of the Veda. Muir remarks,(1) “The Rig-Veda, though the oldest collection, does not necessarily contain everything that is of the greatest age in Indian thought or tradition. We know, for example, that certain legends, bearing the impress of the highest antiquity, such as that of the deluge, appear first in the Brahmanas.” We are especially interested in this criticism, because most of the myths which we profess to explain as survivals of savagery are narrated in the Brahmanas. If these are necessarily late corruptions of Vedic ideas, because the collection of the Brahmanas is far more modern than that of the Veda, our argument is instantly disproved. But if ideas of an earlier stratum of thought than the Vedic stratum may appear in a later collection, as ideas of an earlier stratum of thought than the Homeric appear in poetry and prose far later than Homer, then our contention is legitimate. It will be shown in effect that a number of myths of the Brahmanas correspond in character and incident with the myths of savages, such as Cahrocs and Ahts. Our explanation is, that these tales partly survived, in the minds perhaps of conservative local priesthoods, from the savage stage of thought, or were borrowed from aborigines in that stage, or were moulded in more recent times on surviving examples of that wild early fancy.

(1) Muir, iv. 450.

In the age of the Brahmanas the people have spread southwards from the basin of the Indus to that of the Ganges. The old sacred texts have begun to be scarcely comprehensible. The priesthood has become much more strictly defined and more rigorously constituted. Absurd as it may seem, the Vedic metres, like the Gayatri, have been personified, and appear as active heroines of stories presumably older than this personification. The Asuras have descended from the rank of gods to that of the heavenly opposition to Indra’s government; they are now a kind of fiends, and the Brahmanas are occupied with long stories about the war in heaven, itself a very ancient conception. Varuna becomes cruel on occasion, and hostile. Prajapati becomes the great mythical hero, and inherits the wildest myths of the savage heroic beasts and birds.

The priests are now Brahmans, a hereditary divine caste, who possess all the vast and puerile knowledge of ritual and sacrificial minutiae. As life in the opera is a series of songs, so life in the Brahmanas is a sequence of sacrifices. Sacrifice makes the sun rise and set, and the rivers run this way or that.

The study of Indian myth is obstructed, as has been shown, by the difficulty of determining the relative dates of the various legends, but there are a myriad of other obstacles to the study of Indian mythology. A poet of the Vedas says, “The chanters of hymns go about enveloped in mist, and unsatisfied with idle talk”.(1) The ancient hymns are still “enveloped in mist,” owing to the difficulty of their language and the variety of modern renderings and interpretations. The heretics of Vedic religion, the opponents of the orthodox commentators in ages comparatively recent, used to complain that the Vedas were simply nonsense, and their authors “knaves and buffoons”. There are moments when the modern student of Vedic myths is inclined to echo this petulant complaint. For example, it is difficult enough to find in the Rig-Veda anything like a categoric account of the gods, and a description of their personal appearance. But in Rig-Veda, viii. 29, 1, we read of one god, “a youth, brown, now hostile, now friendly; a golden lustre invests him”. Who is this youth? “Soma as the moon,” according to the commentators. M. Langlois thinks the sun is meant. Dr. Aufrecht thinks the troop of Maruts (spirits of the storm), to whom, he remarks, the epithet “dark-brown, tawny” is as applicable as it is to their master, Rudra. This is rather confusing, and a mythological inquirer would like to know for certain whether he is reading about the sun or soma, the moon, or the winds.

(1) Rig-Veda, x. 82, 7, but compare Bergaigne, op. cit., iii. 72, “enveloppes de nuees et de murmures”.

To take another example; we open Mr. Max Muller’s translation of the Rig-Veda at random, say at page 49. In the second verse of the hymn to the Maruts, Mr. Muller translates, “They who were born together, self-luminous, with the spotted deer (the clouds), the spears, the daggers, the glittering ornaments. I hear their whips almost close by, as they crack them in their hands; they gain splendour on their way.” Now Wilson translates this passage, “Who, borne by spotted deer, were born self-luminous, with weapons, war-cries and decorations. I hear the cracking of their whips in their hands, wonderfully inspiring courage in the fight.” Benfey has, “Who with stags and spears, and with thunder and lightning, self-luminous, were born. Hard by rings the crack of their whip as it sounds in their hands; bright fare they down in storm.” Langlois translates, “Just born are they, self-luminous. Mark ye their arms, their decorations, their car drawn by deer? Hear ye their clamour? Listen! ’tis the noise of the whip they hold in their hands, the sound that stirs up courage in the battle.” This is an ordinary example of the diversities of Vedic translation. It is sufficiently puzzling, nor is the matter made more transparent by the variety of opinion as to the meaning of the “deer” along with which the Maruts are said (by some of the translators) to have been born. This is just the sort of passage on which a controversy affecting the whole nature of Vedic mythological ideas might be raised. According to a text in the Yajur Veda, gods, and men, and beasts, and other matters were created from various portions of the frame of a divine being named Prajapati.(1) The god Agni, Brahmans and the goat were born from the mouth of Prajapati. From his breast and arms came the god Indra (sometimes spoken of as a ram), the sheep, and of men the Rajanya. Cows and gods called Visvadevas were born together from his middle. Are we to understand the words “they who were born together with the spotted deer” to refer to a myth of this kind — a myth representing the Maruts and deer as having been born at the same birth, as Agni came with the goat, and Indra with the sheep? This is just the point on which the Indian commentators were divided.(2) Sayana, the old commentator, says, “The legendary school takes them for deer with white spots; the etymological school, for the many-coloured lines of clouds”. The modern legendary (or anthropological) and etymological (or philological) students of mythology are often as much at variance in their attempts to interpret the traditions of India.

(1) Muir, Sanskrit Texts, 2nd edit., i. 16.

(2) Max Muller, Rig-Veda Sanhita, trans., vol. i. .

Another famous, and almost comic, example of the difficulty of Vedic interpretation is well known. In Rig-Veda, x. 16, 4, there is a funeral hymn. Agni, the fire-god, is supplicated either to roast a goat or to warm the soul of the dead and convey it to paradise. Whether the soul is to be thus comforted or the goat is to be grilled, is a question that has mightily puzzled Vedic doctors.(1) Professor Muller and M. Langlois are all for “the immortal soul”, the goat has advocates, or had advocates, in Aufrecht, Ludwig and Roth. More important difficulties of interpretation are illustrated by the attitude of M. Bergaigne in La Religion Vedique, and his controversy with the great German lexicographers. The study of mythology at one time made the Vedas its starting-point. But perhaps it would be wise to begin from something more intelligible, something less perplexed by difficulties of language and diversities of interpretation.

(1) Muir, v. 217.

In attempting to criticise the various Aryan myths, we shall be guided, on the whole, by the character of the myths themselves. Pure and elevated conceptions we shall be inclined to assign to a pure and elevated condition of thought (though such conceptions do, recognisably, occur in the lowest known religious strata), and we shall make no difficulty about believing that Rishis and singers capable of noble conceptions existed in an age very remote in time, in a society which had many of the features of a lofty and simple civilisation. But we shall not, therefore, assume that the hymns of these Rishis are in any sense “primitive,” or throw much light on the infancy of the human mind, or on the “origin” of religious and heroic myths. Impure, childish and barbaric conceptions, on the other hand, we shall be inclined to attribute to an impure, childish, and barbaric condition of thought; and we shall again make no difficulty about believing that ideas originally conceived when that stage of thought was general have been retained and handed down to a far later period. This view of the possible, or rather probable, antiquity of many of the myths preserved in the Brahmanas is strengthened, if it needed strengthening, by the opinion of Dr. Weber.(1) “We must indeed assume generally with regard to many of those legends (in the Brahmanas of the Rig-Veda) that they had already gained a rounded independent shape in tradition before they were incorporated into the Brahmanas; and of this we have frequent evidence in the DISTINCTLY ARCHAIC CHARACTER OF THEIR LANGUAGE, compared with that of the rest of the text.”

(1) History of Indian Literature, English trans., .

We have now briefly stated the nature and probable relative antiquity of the evidence which is at the disposal of Vedic mythologists. The chief lesson we would enforce is the necessity of suspending the judgment when the Vedas are represented as examples of primitive and comparatively pure and simple natural religion. They are not primitive; they are highly differentiated, highly complex, extremely enigmatic expressions of fairly advanced and very peculiar religious thought. They are not morally so very pure as has been maintained, and their purity, such as it is, seems the result of conscious reticence and wary selection rather than of primeval innocence. Yet the bards or editors have by no means wholly excluded very ancient myths of a thoroughly savage character. These will be chiefly exposed in the chapter on “Indo-Aryan Myths of the Beginnings of Things,” which follows.

CHAPTER VIII. INDIAN MYTHS OF THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD AND OF MAN.

Comparison of Vedic and savage myths — The metaphysical Vedic account of the beginning of things — Opposite and savage fable of world made out of fragments of a man — Discussion of this hymn — Absurdities of Brahmanas — Prajapati, a Vedic Unkulunkulu or Qat — Evolutionary myths — Marriage of heaven and earth — Myths of Puranas, their savage parallels — Most savage myths are repeated in Brahmanas.

In discussing the savage myths of the origin of the world and of man, we observed that they were as inconsistent as they were fanciful. Among the fancies embodied in the myths was noted the theory that the world, or various parts of it, had been formed out of the body of some huge non-natural being, a god, or giant, or a member of some ancient mysterious race. We also noted the myths of the original union of heaven and earth, and their violent separation as displayed in the tales of Greeks and Maoris, to which may be added the Acagchemem nation in California.(1) Another feature of savage cosmogonies, illustrated especially in some early Slavonic myths, in Australian legends, and in the faith of the American races, was the creation of the world, or the recovery of a drowned world by animals, as the raven, the dove and the coyote. The hatching of all things out of an egg was another rude conception, chiefly noted among the Finns. The Indian form occurs in the Satapatha Brahmana.(2) The preservation of the human race in the Deluge, or the creation of the race after the Deluge, was yet another detail of savage mythology; and for many of these fancies we seemed to find a satisfactory origin in the exceedingly credulous and confused state of savage philosophy and savage imagination.

(1) Bancroft, v. 162.

(2) Sacred Books of the East, i. 216.

The question now to be asked is, do the traditions of the Aryans of India supply us with myths so closely resembling the myths of Nootkas, Maoris and Australians that we may provisionally explain them as stories originally due to the invention of savages? This question may be answered in the affirmative. The Vedas, the Epics and the Puranas contain a large store of various cosmogonic traditions as inconsistent as the parallel myths of savages. We have an Aryan Ilmarinen, Tvashtri, who, like the Finnish smith, forged “the iron vault of hollow heaven” and the ball of earth.(1) Again, the earth is said to have sprung, as in some Mangaian fables, “from a being called Uttanapad”.(2) Again, Brahmanaspati, “blew the gods forth like a blacksmith,” and the gods had a hand in the making of things. In contrast with these childish pieces of anthropomorphism, we have the famous and sublime speculations of an often-quoted hymn.(3) It is thus that the poet dreams of the days before being and non-being began: —

(1) Muir, v. 354.

(2) Rig-Veda, x. 72, 4.

(3) Ibid., x. 126.

“There was then neither non-entity nor entity; there was no atmosphere nor sky above. What enveloped (all)?... Was it water, the profound abyss? Death was not then, nor immortality: there was no distinction of day or night. That One breathed calmly, self-supported; then was nothing different from it, or above it. In the beginning darkness existed, enveloped in darkness. All this was undistinguishable water. That One which lay void and wrapped in nothingness was developed by the power of fervour. Desire first arose in It, which was the primal germ of mind (and which) sages, searching with their intellect, have discovered to be the bond which connects entity with non-entity. The ray (or cord) which stretched across these (worlds), was it below or was it above? There were there impregnating powers and mighty forces, a self-supporting principle beneath and energy aloft. Who knows? who here can declare whence has sprung, whence this creation? The gods are subsequent to the development of this (universe); who then knows whence it arose? From what this creation arose, and whether (any one) made it or not, he who in the highest heaven is its ruler, he verily knows, or (even) he does not know.”(1)

(1) Muir, Sanskrit Texts, 2nd edit., v. 357.

Here there is a Vedic hymn of the origin of things, from a book, it is true, supposed to be late, which is almost, if not absolutely, free from mythological ideas. The “self-supporting principle beneath and energy aloft” may refer, as Dr. Muir suggests, to the father, heaven above, and the mother, earth beneath. The “bond between entity and non-entity” is sought in a favourite idea of the Indian philosophers, that of tapas or “fervour”. The other speculations remind us, though they are much more restrained and temperate in character, of the metaphysical chants of the New Zealand priests, of the Zunis, of Popol Vuh, and so on. These belong to very early culture.

What is the relative age of this hymn? If it could be proved to be the oldest in the Veda, it would demonstrate no more than this, that in time exceedingly remote the Aryans of India possessed a philosopher, perhaps a school of philosophers, who applied the minds to abstract speculations on the origin of things. It could not prove that mythological speculations had not preceded the attempts of a purer philosophy. But the date cannot be ascertained. Mr. Max Muller cannot go farther than the suggestion that the hymn is an expression of the perennis quaedam philosophia of Leibnitz. We are also warned that a hymn is not necessarily modern because it is philosophical.(1) Certainly that is true; the Zunis, Maoris, and Mangaians exhibit amazing powers of abstract thought. We are not concerned to show that this hymn is late; but it seems almost superfluous to remark that ideas like those which it contains can scarcely be accepted as expressing man's earliest theory of the origin of all things. We turn from such ideas to those which the Aryans of India have in common with black men and red men, with far-off Finns and Scandinavians, Chaldaeans, Haidahs, Cherokees, Murri and Maori, Mangaians and Egyptians.

(1) History of Sanskrit Literature, .

The next Vedic account of creation which we propose to consider is as remote as possible in character from the sublime philosophic poem. In the Purusha Sukta, the ninetieth hymn of the tenth book of the Rig-Veda Sanhita, we have a description of the creation of all things out of the severed limbs of a magnified non-natural man, Purusha. This conception is of course that which occurs in the Norse myths of the rent body of Ymir. Borr's sons took the body of the Giant Ymir and of his flesh formed the earth, of his blood seas and waters, of his bones mountains, of his teeth rocks and stones, of his hair all manner of plants, of his skull the firmament, of his brains the clouds, and so forth. In Chaldean story, Bel cuts in twain the magnified non-natural woman Omorca, and converts the halves of her body into heaven and earth. Among the Iroquois in North America, Chokanipok was the giant whose limbs, bones and blood furnished the raw material of many natural objects; while in Mangaia portions of Ru, in Egypt of Set and Osiris, in Greece of Dionysus Zagreus were used in creating various things, such as stones, plants and metals. The same ideas precisely are found in the ninetieth hymn of the tenth book of the Rig-Veda. Yet it is a singular thing that, in all the discussions as to the antiquity and significance of this hymn which have come under our notice, there has not been one single reference made to parallel legends among Aryan or non-Aryan peoples. In accordance with the general principles which guide us in this work, we are inclined to regard any ideas which are at once rude in character and widely distributed, both among civilised and uncivilised races, as extremely old, whatever may be the age of the literary form in which they are presented. But the current of learned opinions as to the date of the Purusha Sukta, the Vedic hymn about the sacrifice of Purusha and the creation of the world out of fragments of his body, runs in the opposite direction. The hymn is not regarded as very ancient by most Sanskrit scholars.

We shall now quote the hymn, which contains the data on which any theory as to its age must be founded: — (1)

(1) Rig-Veda, x. 90; Muir, Sanskrit Texts, 2nd edit., i. 9.

“Purusha has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. On every side enveloping the earth, he overpassed (it) by a space of ten fingers. Purusha himself is this whole (universe), whatever is and whatever shall be.... When the gods performed a sacrifice with Purusha as the oblation, the spring was its butter, the summer its fuel, and the autumn its (accompanying) offering. This victim, Purusha, born in the beginning, they immolated on the sacrificial grass. With him the gods, the Sadhyas, and the Rishis sacrificed. From that universal sacrifice were provided curds and butter. It formed those aerial (creatures) and animals both wild and tame. From that universal sacrifice sprang the Ric and Saman verses, the metres and Yajush. From it sprang horses, and all animals with two rows of teeth; kine sprang from it; from it goats and sheep. When (the gods) divided Purusha, into how many parts did they cut him up? What was his mouth? What arms (had he)? What (two objects) are said (to have been) his thighs and feet? The Brahman was his mouth; the Rajanya was made his arms; the being (called) the Vaisya, he was his thighs; the Sudra sprang from his feet. The moon sprang from his soul (Mahas), the sun from his eye, Indra and Agni from his mouth, and Yaiyu from his breath. From his navel arose the air, from his head the sky, from his feet the earth, from his ear the (four) quarters; in this manner (the gods) formed the world. When the gods, performing sacrifice, bound Purusha as a victim, there were seven sticks (stuck up) for it (around the fire), and thrice seven pieces of fuel were made. With sacrifice the gods performed the sacrifice. These were the earliest rites. These great powers have sought the sky, where are the former Sadhyas, gods.”

The myth here stated is plain enough in its essential facts. The gods performed a sacrifice with a gigantic anthropomorphic being (Purusha = Man) as the victim. Sacrifice is not found, as a rule, in the religious of the most backward races of all; it is, relatively, an innovation, as shall be shown later. His head, like the head of Ymir, formed the sky, his eye the sun, animals sprang from his body. The four castes are connected with, and it appears to be implied that they sprang from, his mouth, arms, thighs and feet. It is obvious that this last part of the myth is subsequent to the formation of castes. This is one of the chief arguments for the late date of the hymn, as castes are not distinctly recognised elsewhere in the Rig-Veda. Mr. Max Muller(1) believes the hymn to be “modern both in its character and in its diction,” and this opinion he supports by philological arguments. Dr. Muir(2) says that the hymn “has every character of modernness both in its diction and ideas”. Dr Haug, on the other hand,(3) in a paper read in

1871, admits that the present form of the hymn is not older than the greater part of the hymns of the tenth book, and than those of the Atharva Veda; but he adds, “The ideas which the hymn contains are certainly of a primeval antiquity.... In fact, the hymn is found in the Yajur-Veda among the formulas connected with human sacrifices, which were formerly practised in India.” We have expressly declined to speak about “primeval antiquity,” as we have scarcely any evidence as to the myths and mental condition for example, even of palaeolithic man; but we may so far agree with Dr. Haug as to affirm that the fundamental idea of the Purusha Sukta, namely, the creation of the world or portions of the world out of the fragments of a fabulous anthropomorphic being is common to Chaldeans, Iroquois, Egyptians, Greeks, Tinnehs, Mangaians and Aryan Indians. This is presumptive proof of the antiquity of the ideas which Dr. Muir and Mr. Max Muller think relatively modern. The savage and brutal character of the invention needs no demonstration. Among very low savages, for example, the Tinnehs of British North America, not a man, not a god, but a DOG, is torn up, and the fragments are made into animals.(4) On the Paloure River a beaver suffers in the manner of Purusha. We may, for these reasons, regard the chief idea of the myth as extremely ancient — infinitely more ancient than the diction of the hymn.

(1) Ancient Sanskrit Literature, 570.

(2) Sanskrit Texts, 2nd edit., i. 12.

(3) Sanskrit Text, 2nd edit., ii. 463.

(4) Hearne’s Journey, p-343.

As to the mention of the castes, supposed to be a comparatively modern institution, that is not an essential part of the legend. When the idea of creation out of a living being was once received it was easy to extend the conception to any institution, of which the origin was forgotten. The Teutonic race had a myth which explained the origin of the classes eorl, ceorl and thrall (earl, churl and slave). A South American people, to explain the different ranks in society, hit on the very myth of Plato, the legend of golden, silver and copper races, from which the ranks of society have descended. The Vedic poet, in our opinion, merely extended to the institution of caste a myth which had already explained the origin of the sun, the firmament, animals, and so forth, on the usual lines of savage thought. The Purusha Sukta is the type of many other Indian myths of creation, of which the following(1) one is extremely noteworthy. “Prajapati desired to propagate. He formed the Trivrit (stoma) from his mouth. After it were produced the deity Agni, the metre Gayatri,... of men the Brahman, of beasts the goat;... from his breast, and from his arms he formed the Panchadasa (stoma). After it were created the God Indra, the Trishtubh metre,... of men the Rajanya, of beasts the sheep. Hence they are vigorous, because they were created from vigour. From his middle he formed the Saptadasa (stoma). After it were created the gods called the Yisvadevas, the Jagati metre,... of men the Vaisya, of beasts kine. Hence they are to be eaten, because they were created from the receptacle of food.” The form in which we receive this myth is obviously later than the institution of caste and the technical names for metres. Yet surely any statement that kine “are to be eaten” must be older than the universal prohibition to eat that sacred animal the cow. Possibly we might argue that when this theory of creation was first promulgated, goats and sheep were forbidden food.(2)

(1) Taittirya Sanhita, or Yajur-Veda, vii. i. 1-4; Muir, 2nd edit., i. 15.

(2) Mr. M’Lennan has drawn some singular inferences from this passage, connecting, as it does, certain gods and certain classes of men with certain animals, in a manner somewhat suggestive of totemism (Fornightly Review), February, 1870.

Turning from the Vedas to the Brahmanas, we find a curiously savage myth of the origin of species.(1) According to this passage of the Brahmana, “this universe was formerly soul only, in the form of Purusha”. He caused himself to fall asunder into two parts. Thence arose a husband and a wife. “He cohabited with her; from them men were born. She reflected, ‘How does he, after having produced me from himself, cohabit with me? Ah, let me disappear.’ She became a cow, and the other a bull, and he cohabited with her. From them kine were produced.” After a series of similar metamorphoses of the female into all animal shapes, and a similar series of pursuits by the male in appropriate form, “in this manner pairs of all sorts of creatures down to ants were created”. This myth is a parallel to the various Greek legends about the amours in bestial form of Zeus, Nemesis, Cronus, Demeter and other gods and goddesses. In the Brahmanas this myth is an explanation of the origin of species, and such an explanation as could scarcely have occurred to a civilised mind. In other myths in the Brahmanas, Prajapati creates men from his body, or rather the fluid of his body becomes a tortoise, the tortoise becomes a man (purusha), with similar examples of speculation.(2)

(1) Satapatha Brahmana, xiv. 4, 2; Muir, 2nd edit., i. 25.

(2) Similar tales are found among the Khonds.

Among all these Brahmana myths of the part taken by Prajapati in the creation or evoking of things, the question arises who WAS Prajapati? His role is that of the great Hare in American myth; he is a kind of demiurge, and his name means “The Master of Things Created,” like the Australian Biamban, “Master,” and the American title of the chief Manitou, “Master of Life”,(1) Dr. Muir remarks that, as the Vedic mind advances from mere divine beings who “reside and operate in fire” (Agni), “dwell and shine in the sun” (Surya), or “in the atmosphere” (Indra), towards a conception of deity, “the farther step would be taken of speaking of the deity under such new names as Visvakarman and Prajapati”. These are “appellatives which do not designate any limited functions connected with any single department of Nature, but the more general and abstract notions of divine power operating in the production and government of the universe”. Now the interesting point is that round this new and abstract NAME gravitate the most savage and crudest myths, exactly the myths we meet among Hottentots and Nootkas. For example, among the Hottentots it is Heitsi Eibib, among the Huarochiri Indians it is Uiracocha, who confers, by curse or blessing, on the animals their proper attributes and characteristics.(2) In the Satapatha Brahmana it is Prajapati who takes this part, that falls to rude culture-heroes of Hottentots and Huarochiris.(3) How Prajapati made experiments in a kind of state-aided evolution, so to speak, or evolution superintended and assisted from above, will presently be set forth.

(1) Bergaigne, iii. 40.

(2) Avila, Fables of the Yncas, .

(3) English translation, ii. 361.

In the Puranas creation is a process renewed after each kalpa, or vast mundane period. Brahma awakes from his slumber, and finds the world a waste of water. Then, just as in the American myths of the coyote, and the Slavonic myths of the devil and the doves, a boar or a fish or a tortoise fishes up the world out of the waters. That boar, fish, tortoise, or what not, is Brahma or Vishnu. This savage conception of the beginnings of creation in the act of a tortoise, fish, or boar is not first found in the Puranas, as Mr. Muir points out, but is indicated in the Black Yajur Veda and in the Satapatha Brahmana.(1) In the Satapatha Brahmana, xiv. 1, 2, 11, we discover the idea, so common in savage myths — for example, in that of the Navajoes — that the earth was at first very small, a mere patch, and grew bigger after the animal fished it up. “Formerly this earth was only so large, of the size of a span. A boar called Emusha raised her up.” Here the boar makes no pretence of being the incarnation of a god, but is a mere boar sans phrase, like the creative coyote of the Papogas and Chinooks, or the musk-rat of the Tacullies. This is a good example of the development of myths. Savages begin, as we saw, by mythically regarding various animals, spiders, grasshoppers, ravens, eagles, cockatoos, as the creators or recoverers of the world. As civilisation advances, those animals still perform their beneficent functions, but are looked on as gods in disguise. In time the animals are often dropped altogether, though they hold their place with great tenacity in the cosmogonic traditions of the Aryans in India. When we find the Satapatha

Brahmana alleging(2) “that all creatures are descended from a tortoise,” we seem to be among the rude Indians of the Pacific Coast. But when the tortoise is identified with Aditya, and when Adityas prove to be solar deities, sons of Aditi, and when Aditi is recognised by Mr. Muller as the Dawn, we see that the Aryan mind has not been idle, but has added a good deal to the savage idea of the descent of men and beasts from a tortoise.(3)

(1) Muir, 2nd edit., vol. i. .

(2) Muir, 2nd edit., vol. i. .

(3) See Ternaux Compans’ Nouvelles Annales des Voyages, lxxxvi. . For Mexican traditions, “Mexican and Australian Hurricane World’s End,” Bancroft, v. 64.

Another feature of savage myths of creation we found to be the introduction of a crude theory of evolution. We saw that among the Potoyante tribe of the Digger Indians, and among certain Australian tribes, men and beasts were supposed to have been slowly evolved and improved out of the forms first of reptiles and then of quadrupeds. In the mythologies of the more civilised South American races, the idea of the survival of the fittest was otherwise expressed. The gods made several attempts at creation, and each set of created beings proving in one way or other unsuited to its environment, was permitted to die out or degenerated into apes, and was succeeded by a set better adapted for survival.(1) In much the same way the Satapatha Brahmana(2) represents mammals as the last result of a series of creative experiments. “Prajapati created living beings, which perished for want of food. Birds and serpents perished thus. Prajapati reflected, ‘How is it that my creatures perish after having been formed?’ He perceived this: ‘They perish from want of food’. In his own presence he caused milk to be supplied to breasts. He created living beings, which, resorting to the breasts, were thus preserved. These are the creatures which did not perish.”

(1) This myth is found in Popol Vuh. A Chinook myth of the same sort, Bancroft, v. 95.

(2) ii. 5, 11; Muir, 2nd edit., i. 70.

The common myth which derives the world from a great egg — the myth perhaps most familiar in its Finnish shape — is found in the Satapatha Brahmana.(1) “In the beginning this universe was waters, nothing but waters. The waters desired: ‘How can we be reproduced?’ So saying, they toiled, they performed austerity. While they were performing austerity, a golden egg came into existence. It then became a year.... From it in a year a man came into existence, who was Prajapati.... He conceived progeny in himself; with his mouth he created the gods.” According to another text,(2) “Prajapati took the form of a tortoise”. The tortoise is the same as Aditya.(3)

(1) xi. 1, 6, 1; Muir, Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, 1863.

(2) Satapatha Brahmana, vii. 4, 3, 5.

(3) Aitareya Brahmana, iii. 34 (11, 219), a very discreditable origin of species.

It is now time to examine the Aryan shape of the widely spread myth about the marriage of heaven and earth, and the fortunes of their children. We have already seen that in New Zealand heaven and earth were regarded as real persons, of bodily parts and passions, united in a secular embrace. We shall apply the same explanation to the Greek myth of Gaea and of the mutilation of Cronus. In India, Dyaus (heaven) answers to the Greek Uranus and the Maori Rangi, while Prithivi (earth) is the Greek Gaea, the Maori Papa. In the Veda, heaven and earth are constantly styled “parents”;(1) but this we might regard as a mere metaphorical expression, still common in poetry. A passage of the Aitareya Brahmana, however, retains the old conception, in which there was nothing metaphorical at all.(2) These two worlds, heaven and earth, were once joined. Subsequently they were separated (according to one account, by Indra, who thus plays the part of Cronus and of Tane Mahuta). “Heaven and earth,” says Dr. Muir, “are regarded as the parents not only of men, but of the gods also, as appears from the various texts where they are designated by the epithet Devapatre, ‘having gods for their children’.” By men in an early stage of thought this myth was accepted along with others in which heaven and earth were regarded as objects created by one of their own children, as by Indra,(3) who “stretched them out like a hide,” who, like Atlas, “sustains and upholds them”(4) or, again, Tvashtri, the divine smith, wrought them by his craft; or, once more, heaven and earth sprung from the head and feet of Purusha. In short, if any one wished to give an example of that recklessness of orthodoxy or consistency which is the mark of early myth, he could find no better example than the Indian legends of the origin of things. Perhaps there is not one of the myths current among the lower races which has not its counterpart in the Indian Brahmanas. It has been enough for us to give a selection of examples.

(1) Muir, v. 22.

(2) iv. 27; Haug, ii. 308.

(3) Rig-Veda, viii. 6, 5.

(4) Ibid., iii. 32, 8.

CHAPTER IX. GREEK MYTHS OF THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD AND MAN.

The Greeks practically civilised when we first meet them in Homer — Their mythology, however, is full of repulsive features — The hypothesis that many of these are savage survivals — Are there other examples of such survival in Greek life and institutions? — Greek opinion was constant that the race had been savage — Illustrations of savage survival from Greek law of homicide, from magic, religion, human sacrifice, religious art, traces of totemism, and from the mysteries — Conclusion: that savage survival may also be expected in Greek myths.

The Greeks, when we first make their acquaintance in the Homeric poems, were a cultivated people, dwelling, under the government of royal families, in small city states. This social condition they must have attained by 1000 B.C., and probably much earlier. They had already a long settled past behind them, and had no recollection of any national migration from the "cradle of the Aryan race". On the other hand, many tribes thought themselves earth-born from the soil of the place where they were settled. The Maori traditions prove that memories of a national migration may persist for several hundred years among men ignorant of writing. Greek legend, among a far more civilised race, only spoke of occasional foreign settlers from Sidon, Lydia, or Egypt. The Homeric Greeks were well acquainted with almost all the arts of life, though it is not absolutely certain that they could write, and certainly they were not addicted to reading. In war they fought from chariots, like the Egyptians and Assyrians; they were bold seafarers, being accustomed to harry the shores even of Egypt, and they had large commercial dealings with the people of Tyre and Sidon. In the matter of religion they were comparatively free and unrestrained. Their deities, though, in myth, capricious in character, might be regarded in many ways as "making for righteousness". They protected the stranger and the suppliant; they sanctioned the oath, they frowned on the use of poisoned arrows; marriage and domestic life were guarded by their good-will; they dispensed good and evil fortune, to be accepted with humility and resignation among mortals.

The patriarchal head of each family performed the sacrifices for his household, the king for the state, the ruler of Mycenae, Agamemnon, for the whole Achaean host encamped before the walls of Troy. At the same time, prophets, like Calchas, possessed considerable influence, due partly to an hereditary gift of second-sight, as in the case of Theoclymenus,(1) partly to acquired professional skill in observing omens, partly to the direct inspiration of the gods. The oracle at Delphi, or, as it is called by Homer, Pytho, was already famous, and religion recognised, in various degrees, all the gods familiar to the later cult of Hellas. In a people so advanced, so much in contact with foreign races and foreign ideas, and so wonderfully gifted by nature with keen intellect and perfect taste, it is natural to expect, if anywhere, a mythology almost free from repulsive elements, and almost purged of all that we regard as survivals from the condition of savagery. But while Greek mythology is richer far than any other in beautiful legend, and is thronged with lovely and majestic forms of gods and goddesses, nymphs and oreads ideally fair, none the less a very large proportion of its legends is practically on a level with the myths of Maoris, Thlinkeets, Cahrocs and Bushmen.

(1) Odyssey, xx. 354.

This is the part of Greek mythology which has at all times excited most curiosity, and has been made the subject of many systems of interpretation. The Greeks themselves, from almost the earliest historical ages, were deeply concerned either to veil or explain away the blasphemous horrors of their own “sacred chapters,” poetic traditions and temple legends. We endeavour to account for these as relics of an age of barbarism lying very far behind the time of Homer — an age when the ancestors of the Greeks either borrowed, or more probably developed for themselves, the kind of myths by which savage peoples endeavour to explain the nature and origin of the world and all phenomena.

The correctness of this explanation, resting as it does on the belief that the Greeks were at one time in the savage status, might be demonstrated from the fact that not only myths, but Greek life in general, and especially Greek ritual, teemed with surviving examples of institutions and of manners which are found everywhere among the most backward and barbarous races. It is not as if only the myths of Greece retained this rudeness, or as if the Greeks supposed themselves to have been always civilised. The whole of Greek life yields relics of savagery when the surface is excavated ever so slightly. Moreover, that the Greeks, as soon as they came to reflect on these matters at all, believed themselves to have emerged from a condition of savagery is undeniable. The poets are entirely at one on this subject with Moschion, a writer of the school of Euripides. “The time hath been, yea, it HATH been,” he says, “when men lived like the beasts, dwelling in mountain caves, and clefts unvisited of the sun.... Then they broke not the soil with ploughs nor by aid of iron, but the weaker man was slain to make the supper of the stronger,” and so on.(1) This view of the savage origin of mankind was also held by Aristotle:(2) “It is probable that the first men, whether they were produced by the earth (earth-born) or survived from some deluge, were on a level of ignorance and darkness”.(3) This opinion, consciously held and stated by philosophers and poets, reveals itself also in the universal popular Greek traditions that men were originally ignorant of fire, agriculture, metallurgy and all the other arts and conveniences of life, till they were instructed by ideal culture-heroes, like Prometheus, members of a race divine or half divine. A still more curious Athenian tradition (preserved by Varro) maintained, not only that marriage was originally unknown, but that, as among Australians and some Red Indians, the family name, descended through the mother, and kinship was reckoned on the female side before the time of Cecrops.(4)

(1) Moschion; cf. Preller, Ausgewahlte Aufsatze, .

(2) Politics, ii. 8-21; Plato, Laws, 667-680.

(3) Compare Horace, Satires, i. 3, 99; Lucretius, v. 923.

(4) Suidas, s.v. “Prometheus”; Augustine, De Civitate Dei, xviii. 9.

While Greek opinion, both popular and philosophical, admitted, or rather asserted, that savagery lay in the background of the historical prospect, Greek institutions retained a thousand birth-marks of savagery. It is manifest and undeniable that the Greek criminal law, as far as it effected murder, sprang directly from the old savage blood-feud.(1) The Athenian law was a civilised modification of the savage rule that the kindred of a slain man take up his blood-feud. Where homicide was committed WITHIN the circle of blood relationship, as by Orestes, Greek religion provided the Erinnyes to punish an offence which had, as it were, no human avenger. The precautions taken by murderers to lay the ghost of the slain man were much like those in favour among the Australians. The Greek cut off the extremities of his victim, the tips of the hands and feet, and disposed them neatly beneath the arm-pits of the slain man.(2) In the same spirit, and for the same purpose, the Australian black cuts off the thumbs of his dead enemy, that the ghost too may be mutilated and prevented from throwing at him with a ghostly spear. We learn also from Apollonius Rhodius and his scholiast that Greek murderers used thrice to suck in and spit out the gore of their victims, perhaps with some idea of thereby partaking of their blood, and so, by becoming members of their kin, putting it beyond the power of the ghosts to avenge themselves. Similar ideas inspire the worldwide savage custom of making an artificial “blood brotherhood” by mingling the blood of the contracting parties. As to the ceremonies of cleansing from blood-guiltiness among the Greeks, we may conjecture that these too had their primitive side; for Orestes, in the Eumenides, maintains that he has been purified of his mother’s slaughter by sufficient blood of swine. But this point will be illustrated presently, when we touch on the mysteries.

(1) Duncker, History of Greece, Engl. transl., vol. ii. .

(2) See “Arm-pitting in Ancient Greece,” in the American Journal of Philology, October, 1885, where a discussion of the familiar texts in Aeschylus and Apollonius Rhodius will be found.

Ritual and myth, as might be expected, retained vast masses of savage rites and superstitious habits and customs. To be “in all things too superstitious,” too full of deisidaimonia, was even in St. Paul’s time the characteristic of the Athenians. Now superstition, or deisidaimonia, is defined by Theophrastus,(1) as “cowardice in regard to the supernatural” ((Greek text omitted)). This “cowardice” has in all ages and countries secured the permanence of ritual and religious traditions. Men have always argued, like one of the persons in M. Renan’s play, Le Pretre de Nemi, that “l’ordre du monde depend de l’ordre des rites qu’on observe”. The familiar endurable sequence of the seasons of spring, and seed-sowing, and harvest depend upon the due performance of immemorial religious acts. “In the mystic deposits,” says Dinarchus, “lies the safety of the city.”(2) What the “mystic deposits” were nobody knows for certain, but they must have been of very archaic sanctity, and occur among the Arunta and the Pawnees.

(1) Characters.

(2) Ap. Hermann, Lehrbuch, ; Aglaophamus, 965.

Ritual is preserved because it preserves LUCK. Not only among the Romans and the Brahmans, with their endless minute ritual actions, but among such lower races as the Kanekas of New Caledonia, the efficacy of religious functions is destroyed by the slightest accidental infraction of established rules.(1) The same timid conservatism presides over myth, and in each locality the mystery-plays, with their accompanying narratives, preserved inviolate the early forms of legend. Myth and ritual do not admit of being argued about. “C’etait le rite etabli. Ce n’etait pas plus absurde qu’autre chose,” says the conservative in M. Renan’s piece, defending the mode of appointment of

The priest who slew the slayer,
And shall himself be slain.

(1) Thus the watchers of the dead in New Caledonia are fed by the sorcerer with a mess at the end of a very long spoon, and should the food miss the mouth, all the ceremonies have to be repeated. This detail is from Mr. J. J. Atkinson.

Now, if the rites and myths preserved by the timorousness of this same “cowardice towards the supernatural” were originally evolved in the stage of savagery, savage they would remain, as it is impious and dangerous to reform them till the religion which they serve perishes with them. These relics in Greek ritual and faith are very commonly explained as due to Oriental influences, as things borrowed from the dark and bloody superstitions of Asia. But this attempt to save the native Greek character for “blitheness” and humanity must not be pushed too far.(1) It must be remembered that the cruder and wilder sacrifices and legends of Greece were strictly LOCAL; that they were attached to these ancient temples, old altars, barbarous xoana, or wooden idols, and rough fetish stones, in which Pausanias found the most ancient relics of Hellenic theology. This is a proof of their antiquity and a presumption in favour of their freedom from foreign influence. Most of these things were survivals from that dimly remembered prehistoric age in which the Greeks, not yet gathered into city states, lived in villages or kraals, or pueblos, as we should translate (Greek text omitted), if we were speaking of African or American tribes. In that stage the early Greeks must have lacked both the civic and the national or Panhellenic sentiment; their political unit was the clan, which, again, answered in part to the totem kindred of America, or Africa, or Australia.(2) In this stagnant condition they could not have made acquaintance with the many creeds of Semitic and other alien peoples on the shores of the Levant.(3) It was later, when Greece had developed the city life of the heroic age, that her adventurous sons came into close contact with Egypt and Phoenicia.

(1) Claus, De Antiq. Form. Dianae, 6,7,16.

(2) As C. O. Muller judiciously remarks: “The scenes of nine-tenths of the Greek myths are laid in PARTICULAR DISTRICTS OF GREECE, and they speak of the primeval inhabitants, of the lineage and adventures of native heroes. They manifest an accurate acquaintance with individual localities, which, at a time when Greece was neither explored by antiquaries, nor did geographical handbooks exist, could be possessed only by the inhabitants of these localities.” Muller gives, as examples, myths of bears more or less divine. Scientific Mythology, p, 15.

(3) Compare Claus, De Dianae Antiquissima Natura, .

In the colonising time, still later — perhaps from 900 B.C. downwards — the Greeks, settled on sites whence they had expelled Sidonians or Sicanians, very naturally continued, with modifications, the worship of such gods as they found already in possession. Like the Romans, the Greeks easily recognised their own deities in the analogous members of foreign polytheistic systems. Thus we can allow for alien elements in such gods and goddesses as Zeus Asterios, as Aphrodite of Cyprus or Eryx, or the many-breasted Ephesian Artemis, whose monstrous form had its exact analogue among the Aztecs in that many-breasted goddess of the maguey plant whence beer was made. To discern and disengage the borrowed factors in the Hellenic Olympus by analysis of divine names is a task to which comparative philology may lawfully devote herself; but we cannot so readily explain by presumed borrowing from without the rude xoana of the ancient local temples, the wild myths of the local legends, the sacra which were the exclusive property of old-world families, Butadae or Eumolpidae. These are clearly survivals from a stage of Greek culture earlier than the city state, earlier than the heroic age of the roving Greek Vikings, and far earlier than the Greek colonies. They belong to that conservative and immobile period when the tribe or clan, settled in its scattered kraals, lived a life of agriculture, hunting and cattle-breeding, engaged in no larger or more adventurous wars than border feuds about women or cattle. Such wars were on a humbler scale than even Nestor's old fights with the Epeians; such adventures did not bring the tribe into contact with alien religions. If Sidonian merchantmen chanced to establish a factory near a tribe in this condition, their religion was not likely to make many proselytes.

These reasons for believing that most of the wilder element in Greek ritual and myth was native may be briefly recapitulated, as they are often overlooked. The more strange and savage features meet us in LOCAL tales and practices, often in remote upland temples and chapels. There they had survived from the society of the VILLAGE status, before villages were gathered into CITIES, before Greeks had taken to a roving life, or made much acquaintance with distant and maritime peoples.

For these historical reasons, it may be assumed that the LOCAL religious antiquities of Greece, especially in upland districts like Arcadia and Elis, are as old, and as purely national, as free from foreign influences as any Greek institutions can be. In these rites and myths of true folk-lore and Volksleben, developed before Hellas won its way to the pure Hellenic stage, before Egypt and Phoenicia were familiar, should be found that common rude element which Greeks share with the other races of the world, and which was, to some extent, purged away by the genius of Homer and Pindar, pii vates et Phaebo digna locuti.

In proof of this local conservatism, some passages collected by K. F. Hermann in his Lehrbuch der Griechischen Antiquitaten(1) may be cited. Thus Isocrates writes,(2) "This was all their care, neither to destroy any of the ancestral rites, nor to add aught beyond what was ordained". Clemens Alexandrinus reports that certain Thessalians worshipped storks, "IN ACCORDANCE WITH USE AND WONT".(3) Plato lays down the very "law of least change" which has been described. "Whether the legislator is establishing a new state or restoring an old and decayed one, in respect of gods and temples,... if he be a man of sense, he will MAKE NO CHANGE IN ANYTHING which the oracle of Delphi, or

Dodona, or Ammon has sanctioned, in whatever manner.” In this very passage Plato(4) speaks of rites “derived from Tyrrhenia or Cyprus” as falling within the later period of the Greek Wanderjahre. On the high religious value of things antique, Porphyry wrote in a late age, and when the new religion of Christ was victorious, “Comparing the new sacred images with the old, we see that the old are more simply fashioned, yet are held divine, but the new, admired for their elaborate execution, have less persuasion of divinity,” — a remark anticipated by Pausanias, “The statues Daedalus wrought are quainter to the outward view, yet there shows forth in them somewhat supernatural”.(5) So Athenaeus(6) reports of a visitor to the shrine of Leto in Delos, that he expected the ancient statue of the mother of Apollo to be something remarkable, but, unlike the pious Porphyry, burst out laughing when he found it a shapeless wooden idol. These idols were dressed out, fed and adorned as if they had life.(7) It is natural that myths dating from an age when Greek gods resembled Polynesian idols should be as rude as Polynesian myths. The tenacity of LOCAL myth is demonstrated by Pausanias, who declares that even in the highly civilised Attica the Demes retained legends different from those of the central city — the legends, probably, which were current before the villages were “Synoecised” into Athens.(8)

(1) Zweiter Theil, 1858.

(2) Areop., 30.

(3) Clem. Alex., Oxford, 1715, i. 34.

(4) Laws, v. 738.

(5) De. Abst., ii. 18; Paus., ii. 4, 5.

(6) xiv. 2.

(7) Hermann, op. cit., , note 10.

(8) Pausanias, i. 14, 6.

It appears, then, that Greek ritual necessarily preserves matter of the highest antiquity, and that the oldest rites and myths will probably be found, not in the Panhellenic temples, like that in Olympia, not in the NATIONAL poets, like Homer and Sophocles, but in the LOCAL fanes of early tribal gods, and in the LOCAL mysteries, and the myths which came late, if they came at all, into literary circulation. This opinion is strengthened and illustrated by that invaluable guide-book of the artistic and religious pilgrim written in the second century after our era by Pausanias. If we follow him, we shall find that many of the ceremonies, stories and idols which he regarded as oldest are analogous to the idols and myths of the contemporary backward races. Let us then, for the sake of illustrating the local and savage survivals in Greek religion, accompany Pausanias in his tour through Hellas.

In Christian countries, especially in modern times, the contents of one church are very like the furniture of another church; the functions in one resemble those in all, though on the Continent some shrines still retain relics and customs of the period when local saints had their peculiar rites. But it was a very different thing in Greece. The pilgrim who arrived at a temple never could guess what oddity or horror in the way of statues, sacrifices, or stories might be prepared for his edification. In the first place, there were HUMAN SACRIFICES. These are not familiar to low savages, if known to them at all. Probably they were first offered to barbaric royal ghosts, and thence transferred to gods. In the town of Salamis, in Cyprus, about the date of Hadrian, the devout might have found the priest slaying a human victim to Zeus, — an interesting custom, instituted, according to Lactantius, by Teucer, and continued till the age of the Roman Empire.(1)

(1) Euseb., Praep. Ev., iv. 17, mentions, among peoples practising human sacrifices, Rhodes, Salamis, Heliopolis, Chios, Tenedos, Lacedaemon, Arcadia and Athens; and, among gods thus honoured, Hera, Athene, Cronus, Ares, Dionysus, Zeus and Apollo. For Dionysus the Cannibal, Plutarch, Themist., 13; Porphyr., Abst., ii. 55. For the sacrifice to Zeus Laphystius, see Grote, i. c. vi., and his array of authorities, especially Herodotus, vii. 197. Clemens Alexandrinus (i. 36) mentions the Messenians, to Zeus; the Taurians, to Artemis, the folk of Pella, to Peleus and Chiron; the Cretans, to Zeus; the Lesbians, to Dionysus. Geusius de Victimis Humanis (1699) may be consulted.

At Alos in Achaia Phthiotis, the stranger MIGHT have seen an extraordinary spectacle, though we admit that the odds would have been highly against his chance of witnessing the following events. As the stranger approaches the town-hall, he observes an elderly and most respectable citizen strolling in the same direction. The citizen is so lost in thought that apparently he does not notice where he is going. Behind him comes a crowd of excited but silent people, who watch him with intense interest. The citizen reaches the steps of the town-hall, while the excitement of his friends behind increases visibly. Without thinking, the elderly person enters the building. With a wild and un-Aryan howl, the other people of Alos are down on him, pinion him, wreathe him with flowery garlands, and, lead him to the temple of Zeus Laphystius, or “The Glutton,” where he is solemnly sacrificed on the altar. This was the custom of the good Greeks of Alos whenever a descendant of the house of Athamas entered the Prytaneion. Of course the family were very careful, as a rule, to keep at a safe distance from the forbidden place. “What a sacrifice for Greeks!” as the author of the Minos(1) says in that dialogue which is incorrectly attributed to Plato. “He cannot get out except to be sacrificed,” says Herodotus, speaking of the unlucky descendant of Athamas. The custom appears to have existed as late as the time of the scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius.(2)

(1) 315, c.; Plato, Laws, vi. 782, c.

(2) Argonautica, vii. 197.

Even in the second century, when Pausanias visited Arcadia, he found what seem to have been human sacrifices to Zeus. The passage is so very strange and romantic that we quote a part of it.(1) “The Lycaean hill hath other marvels to show, and chiefly this: thereon there is a grove of Zeus Lycaeus, wherein may men in nowise enter; but if any transgresses the law and goes within, he must die within the space of one year. This tale, moreover, they tell, namely, that whatsoever man or beast cometh within the grove casts no shadow, and the hunter pursues not the deer into that wood, but, waiting till the beast comes forth again, sees that it has left its shadow behind. And on the highest crest of the whole mountain there is a mound of heaped-up earth, the altar of Zeus Lycaeus, and the more part of Peloponnesus can be seen from that place. And before the altar stand two pillars facing the rising sun, and thereon golden eagles of yet more ancient workmanship. And on this altar they sacrifice to Zeus in a manner that may not be spoken, and little liking had I to make much search into this matter. BUT LET IT BE AS IT IS, AND AS IT HATH BEEN FROM THE BEGINNING.” The words “as it hath been from the beginning” are ominous and significant, for the traditional myths of Arcadia tell of the human sacrifices of Lycaon, and of men who, tasting the meat of a mixed sacrifice, put human flesh between their lips unawares.(2) This aspect of Greek religion, then, is almost on a level with the mysterious cannibal horrors of “Voodoo,” as practised by the secret societies of negroes in Hayti. But concerning these things, as Pausanias might say, it is little pleasure to inquire.

(1) Pausanias, viii. 2.

(2) Plato, Rep., viii. 565, d. This rite occurs in some African coronation ceremonies.

Even where men were not sacrificed to the gods, the tourist among the temples would learn that these bloody rites had once been customary, and ceremonies existed by way of commutation. This is precisely what we find in Vedic religion, in which the empty form of sacrificing a man was gone through, and the origin of the world was traced to the fragments of a god sacrificed by gods.(1) In Sparta was an altar of Artemis Orthia, and a wooden image of great rudeness and antiquity — so rude indeed, that Pausanias, though accustomed to Greek fetish-stones, thought it must be of barbaric origin. The story was that certain people of different towns, when sacrificing at the altar, were seized with frenzy and slew each other. The oracle commanded that the altar should be sprinkled with human blood. Men were therefore chosen by lot to be sacrificed till Lycurgus commuted the offering, and sprinkled the altar with the blood of boys who were flogged before the goddess. The priestess holds the statue of the goddess during the flogging, and if any of the boys are but lightly scourged, the image becomes too heavy for her to bear.

(1) The Purusha Sukhta, in Rig-Veda, x. 90.

The Ionians near Anthea had a temple of Artemis Triclaria, and to her it had been customary to sacrifice yearly a youth and maiden of transcendent beauty. In Pausanias's time the human sacrifice was commuted. He himself beheld the strange spectacle of living beasts and birds being driven into the fire to Artemis Laphria, a Calydonian goddess, and he had seen bears rush back among the ministrants; but there was no record that any one had ever been hurt by these wild beasts.(1) The bear was a beast closely connected with Artemis, and there is some reason to suppose that the goddess had herself been a she-bear or succeeded to the cult of a she-bear in the morning of time.(2)

(1) Paus., vii. 18, 19.

(2) See "Artemis", postea.

It may be believed that where symbolic human sacrifices are offered, that is, where some other victim is slain or a dummy of a man is destroyed, and where legend maintains that the sacrifice was once human, there men and women were originally the victims. Greek ritual and Greek myth were full of such tales and such commutations.(1) In Rome, as is well known, effigies of men called Argives were sacrificed.(2) As an example of a beast-victim given in commutation, Pausanias mentions(3) the case of the folk of Potniae, who were compelled once a year to offer to Dionysus a boy, in the bloom of youth. But the sacrifice was commuted for a goat.

(1) See Hermann, Alterthumer., ii. 159-161, for abundant examples.

(2) Plutarch, Quest. Rom. 32.

(3) ix. 8, 1.

These commutations are familiar all over the world. Even in Mexico, where human sacrifices and ritual cannibalism were daily events, Quetzalcoatl was credited with commuting human sacrifices for blood drawn from the bodies of the religious. In this one matter even the most conservative creeds and the faiths most opposed to change sometimes say with Tartuffe: —

Le ciel defend, de vrai, certains contentements,
Mais on trouve avec lui des accommodements.

Though the fact has been denied (doubtless without reflection), the fact remains that the Greeks offered human sacrifices. Now what does this imply? Must it be taken as a survival from barbarism, as one of the proofs that the Greeks had passed through the barbaric status?

The answer is less obvious than might be supposed. Sacrifice has two origins.

First, there are HONORIFIC sacrifices, in which the ghost or god (or divine beast, if a divine beast be worshipped) is offered the food he is believed to prefer. This does not occur among the lowest savages. To carnivorous totems, Garcilasso says, the Indians of Peru offered themselves. The feeding of sacred mice in the temples of Apollo Smintheus is well known. Secondly, there are expiatory or PIACULAR sacrifices, in which the worshipper, as it were, fines himself in a child, an ox, or something else that he treasures. The latter kind of sacrifice (most common in cases of crime done or suspected within the circle of kindred) is not necessarily barbaric, except in its cruelty. An example is the Attic Thargelia, in which two human scape-goats annually bore "the sins of the congregation," and were flogged, driven to the sea with figs tied round their necks, and burned.(1)

(1) Compare the Marseilles human sacrifice, Petron., 141; and for the Thargelia, Tsetzes, Chiliads, v. 736; Hellad. in Photius, f. and Harpoc. s. v.

The institution of human sacrifice, then, whether the offering be regarded as food, or as a gift to the god of what is dearest to man (as in the case of Jephtha's daughter), or whether the victim be supposed to carry on his head the sins of the people, does not necessarily date from the period of savagery. Indeed, sacrifice flourishes most, not among savages, but among advancing barbarians. It would probably be impossible to find any examples of human sacrifices of an expiatory or piacular character, any sacrifices at all, among Australians, or Andamanese, or Fuegians. The notion of presenting food to the supernatural powers, whether ghosts or gods, is relatively rare among savages.(1) The terrible Aztec banquets of which the gods were partakers are the most noted examples of human sacrifices with a purely cannibal origin. Now there is good reason to guess that human sacrifices with no other origin than cannibalism survived even in ancient Greece. "It may be conjectured," writes Professor Robertson Smith,(2) "that the human sacrifices offered to the Wolf Zeus (Lycaeus) in Arcadia were originally cannibal feasts of a Wolf tribe. The first participants in the rite were, according to later legend, changed into wolves; and in later times(3) at least one fragment of the human flesh was placed among the sacrificial portions derived from other victims, and the man who ate it was believed to become a were-wolf."(4) It is the almost universal rule with cannibals not to eat members of their own stock, just as they do not eat their own totem. Thus, as Professor Robertson Smith says, when the human victim is a captive or other foreigner, the human sacrifice may be regarded as a survival of cannibalism. Where, on the other hand, the victim is a fellow tribesman, the sacrifice is expiatory or piacular.

(1) Jevons, Introduction to the Science of Religion, p, 199.

(2) Encyc. Brit., s. v. "Sacrifice".

(3) Plato, Rep., viii. 565, D.

(4) Paus., viii. 2.

Among Greek cannibal gods we cannot fail to reckon the so-called “Cannibal Dionysus,” and probably the Zeus of Orchomenos, Zeus Laphystius, who is explained by Suidas as “the Glutton Zeus”. The cognate verb ((Greek text omitted)) means “to eat with mangling and rending,” “to devour gluttonously”. By Zeus Laphystius, then, men’s flesh was gorged in this distressing fashion.

The evidence of human sacrifice (especially when it seems not piacular, but a relic of cannibalism) raises a presumption that Greeks had once been barbarians. The presumption is confirmed by the evidence of early Greek religious art.

When his curiosity about human sacrifices was satisfied, the pilgrim in Greece might turn his attention to the statues and other representations of the gods. He would find that the modern statues by famous artists were beautiful anthropomorphic works in marble or in gold and ivory. It is true that the faces of the ancient gilded Dionysi at Corinth were smudged all over with cinnabar, like fetish-stones in India or Africa.(1) As a rule, however, the statues of historic times were beautiful representations of kindly and gracious beings. The older works were stiff and rigid images, with the lips screwed into an unmeaning smile. Older yet were the bronze gods, made before the art of soldering was invented, and formed of beaten plates joined by small nails. Still more ancient were the wooden images, which probably bore but a slight resemblance to the human frame, and which were often mere “stocks”.(2) Perhaps once a year were shown the very early gods, the Demeter with the horse’s head, the Artemis with the fish’s tails, the cuckoo Hera, whose image was of pear-wood, the Zeus with three eyes, the Hermes, made after the fashion of the pictures on the walls of sacred caves among the Bushmen. But the oldest gods of all, says Pausanias repeatedly, were rude stones in the temple or the temple precinct. In Achaean Pharae he found some thirty squared stones, named each after a god. “Among all the Greeks in the oldest times rude stones were worshipped in place of statues.” The superstitious man in Theophrastus’s Characters used to anoint the sacred stones with oil. The stone which Cronus swallowed in mistake for Zeus was honoured at Delphi, and kept warm with wool wrappings. There was another sacred stone among the Troezenians, and the Megarians worshipped as Apollo a stone cut roughly into a pyramidal form. The Argives had a big stone called Zeus Kappotas. The Thespians worshipped a stone which they called Eros; “their oldest idol is a rude stone”.(3) It is well known that the original fetish-stone has been found in situ below the feet of the statue of Apollo in Delos. On this showing, then, the religion of very early Greeks in Greece was not unlike that of modern Negroes. The artistic evolution of the gods, a remarkably rapid one after a certain point, could be traced in every temple. It began with the rude stone, and rose to the wooden idol, in which, as we have seen, Pausanias and Porphyry found such sanctity. Next it reached the hammered bronze image, passed through the archaic marbles, and culminated in the finer marbles and the chryselephantine statues of Zeus and Athena. But none of the ancient sacred objects lost their sacredness. The oldest were always the holiest idols; the oldest of all were stumps and stones, like savage fetish-stones.

(1) Pausanias, ii. 2.

(2) Clemens Alex., Protrept. (Oxford, 1715). .

(3) Gill, Myths of South Pacific, . Compare a god, which proved to be merely pumice-stone, and was regarded as the god of winds and waves, having been drifted to Puka-Puka. Offerings of food were made to it during hurricanes.

Another argument in favour of the general thesis that savagery left deep marks on Greek life in general, and on myth in particular, may be derived from survivals of totemism in ritual and legend. The following instances need not necessarily be accepted, but it may be admitted that they are precisely the traces which totemism would leave had it once existed, and then waned away on the advance of civilisation.(1)

(1) The argument to be derived from the character of the Greek (Greek text omitted) as a modified form of the totem-kindred is too long and complex to be put forward here. It is stated in Custom and Myth, “The history of the Family,” in M’Lennan’s Studies in Early history, and is assumed, if not proved, in Ancient Society by the late Mr. Lewis Morgan.

That Greeks in certain districts regarded with religious reverence certain plants and animals is beyond dispute. That some stocks even traced their lineage to beasts will be shown in the chapter on Greek Divine Myths, and the presumption is that these creatures, though explained as incarnations and disguises of various gods, were once totems sans phrase, as will be inferred from various examples. Clemens Alexandrinus, again, after describing the animal-worship of the Egyptians, mentions cases of zoolatry in Greece.(1) The Thessalians revered storks, the Thebans weasels, and the myth ran that the weasel had in some way aided Alcmena when in labour with Heracles. In another form of the myth the weasel was the foster-mother of the hero.(2) Other Thessalians, the Myrmidons, claimed descent from the ant and revered ants. The religious respect paid to mice in the temple of Apollo Smintheus, in the Troad, Rhodes, Gela, Lesbos and Crete is well known, and a local tribe were alluded to as Mice by an oracle. The god himself, like the Japanese harvest-god, was represented in art with a mouse at his foot, and mice, as has been said, were fed at his shrine.(3) The Syrians, says Clemens Alexandrinus, worship doves and fishes, as the Elians worship Zeus.(4) The people of Delphi adored the wolf,(5) and the Samians the sheep. The Athenians had a hero whom they worshipped in the shape of a wolf.(6) A remarkable testimony is that of the scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius, ii. 124. “The wolf,” he says, “was a beast held in honour by the Athenians, and whosoever slays a wolf collects what is needful for its burial.” The burial of sacred animals in Egypt is familiar. An Arab tribe mourns over and solemnly buries all dead gazelles.(7) Nay, flies were adored with the sacrifice of an ox near the temple of Apollo in Leucas.(8) Pausanias (iii. 22) mentions certain colonists who were guided by a hare to a site where the animal hid in a myrtle-bush. They therefore adore the myrtle, (Greek text omitted). In the same way a Carian stock, the Ioxidae, revered the asparagus.(9) A remarkable example of descent mythically claimed from one of the lower animals is noted by Otfried Muller.(10) Speaking of the swan of Apollo, he says, “That deity was worshipped, according to the testimony of the Iliad, in the Trojan island of Tenedos. There, too, was Tennes honoured as the (Greek text omitted) of the island. Now his father was called Cycnus (the swan) in an oft-told and romantic legend.(11)... The swan, therefore, as father to the chief hero on the Apolline island, stands in distinct relation to the god, who is made to come forward still more prominently from the fact that Apollo himself is also called father of Tennes. I think we can scarcely fail to recognise a mythus which was local at Tenedos.... The fact, too, of calling the swan, instead of Apollo, the father of a hero, demands altogether a simplicity and boldness of fancy which are far more ancient than the poems of Homer.”

(1) Op. cit., i. 34.

(2) Scholiast on Iliad, xix. 119.

(3) Aelian, H. A., xii. 5; Strabo, xiii. 604. Compare “Apollo and the Mouse, Custom and Myth, p-120.

(4) Lucian, De Dea Syria.

(5) Aelian, H. A., xii. 40.

(6) Harpocration, (Greek text omitted). Compare an address to the wolf-hero, “who delights in the flight and tears of men,” in Aristophanes, Vespae, 389.

(7) Robertson Smith, Kinship in Early Arabia, p-204.

(8) Aelian, xi. 8.

(9) Plutarch, Theseus, 14.

(10) Proleg., Engl. trans., .

(11) (Canne on Conon, 28.)

Had Muller known that this “simplicity and boldness of fancy” exist to-day, for example, among the Swan tribe of Australia, he would probably have recognised in Cycnus a survival from totemism. The fancy survives again in

Virgil’s Cupavo, “with swan’s plumes rising from his crest, the mark of his father’s form”.(1) Descent was claimed, not only from a swan Apollo, but from a dog Apollo.

(1) Aeneid, x. 187.

In connection with the same set of ideas, it is pointed out that several (Greek text omitted), or stocks, had eponymous heroes, in whose names the names of the ancestral beast apparently survived. In Attica the Crioeis have their hero (Crio, “Ram”), the Butadae have Butas (“Bullman”), the Aegidae have Aegeus (“Goat”), and the Cynadae, Cynus (“Dog”). Lycus, according to Harpocration (s. v.) has his statue in the shape of a wolf in the Lyceum. “The general facts that certain animals might not be sacrificed to certain gods” (at Athens the Aegidae introduced Athena, to whom no goat might be offered on the Acropolis, while she herself wore the goat skin, aegis), “while, on the other hand, each deity demanded particular victims, explained by the ancients themselves in certain cases to be hostile animals, find their natural explanation” in totemism.(1) Mr. Evelyn Abbott points out, however, that the names Aegeus, Aegae, Aegina, and others, may be connected with the goat only by an old volks-etymologie, as on coins of Aegina in Achaea. The real meaning of the words may be different. Compare (Greek text omitted), the sea-shore. Mr. J. G. Frazer does not, at present, regard totemism as proved in the case of Greece.(2)

(1) Some apparent survivals of totemism in ritual will be found in the chapter on Greek gods, especially Zeus, Dionysus, and Apollo.

(2) See his Golden Bough, an alternative explanation of these animals in connection with “The Corn Spirit”.

As final examples of survivals from the age of barbarism in the religion of Greece, certain features in the Mysteries may be noted. Plutarch speaks of “the eating of raw flesh, and tearing to pieces of victims, as also fastings and beatings of the breast, and again in many places abusive language at the sacrifices, and other mad doings”. The mysteries of Demeter, as will appear when her legend is criticised, contained one element all unlike these “mad doings”; and the evidence of Sophocles, Pindar, Plutarch and others demonstrate that religious consolations were somehow conveyed in the Eleusinia. But Greece had many other local mysteries, and in several of these it is undeniable the Greeks acted much as contemporary Australians, Zunis and Negroes act in their secret initiations which, however, also inculcate moral ideas of considerable excellence. Important as these analogies are, they appear to have escaped the notice of most mythologists. M. Alfred Maury, however, in Les Religions de la Grece, published in 1857, offers several instances of hidden rites, common to Hellas and to barbarism.

There seem in the mysteries of savage races to be two chief purposes. There is the intention of giving to the initiated a certain sacred character, which puts them in close relation with gods or demons, and there is the introduction of the young to complete or advancing manhood, and to full participation in the savage Church with its ethical ideas. The latter ceremonies correspond, in short, to confirmation, and they are usually of a severe character, being meant to test by fasting (as Plutarch says) and by torture (as in the familiar Spartan rite) the courage and constancy of the young braves. The Greek mysteries best known to us are the Thesmophoria and the Eleusinia. In the former the rites (as will appear later) partook of the nature of savage "medicine" or magic, and were mainly intended to secure fertility in husbandry and in the family. In the Eleusinia the purpose was the purification of the initiated, secured by ablutions and by standing on the "ram's-skin of Zeus," and after purifications the mystae engaged in sacred dances, and were permitted to view a miracle play representing the sorrows and consolations of Demeter. There was a higher element, necessarily obscure in nature. The chief features in the whole were purifications, dancing, sacrifice and the representation of the miracle play. It would be tedious to offer an exhaustive account of savage rites analogous to these mysteries of Hellas. Let it suffice to display the points where Greek found itself in harmony with Australian, and American, and African practice. These points are: (1) mystic dances; (2) the use of a little instrument, called turndun in Australia, whereby a roaring noise is made, and the profane are warned off; (3) the habit of daubing persons about to be initiated with clay or anything else that is sordid, and of washing this off; apparently by way of showing that old guilt is removed and a new life entered upon; (4) the performances with serpents may be noticed, while the "mad doings" and "howlings" mentioned by Plutarch are familiar to every reader of travels in uncivilised countries; (5) ethical instruction is communicated.

First, as to the mystic dances, Lucian observes:(1) "You cannot find a single ancient mystery in which there is not dancing.... This much all men know, that most people say of the revealers of the mysteries that they 'dance them out'" ((Greek text omitted)). Clemens of Alexandria uses the same term when speaking of his own "appalling revelations".(2) So closely connected are mysteries with dancing among savages, that when Mr. Orpen asked Qing, the Bushman hunter, about some doctrines in which Qing was not initiated, he said: "Only the initiated men of that dance know these things". To "dance" this or that means to be acquainted with this or that myth, which is represented in a dance or ballet d'action(3) ((Greek text omitted)). So widely distributed is the practice, that Acosta, in an interesting passage, mentions it as familiar to the people of

Peru before and after the Spanish conquest. The text is a valuable instance of survival in religion. When they were converted to Christianity the Peruvians detected the analogy between our sacrament and their mysteries, and they kept up as much as possible of the old rite in the new ritual. Just as the mystae of Eleusis practised chastity, abstaining from certain food, and above all from beans, before the great Pagan sacrament, so did the Indians. “To prepare themselves all the people fasted two days, during which they did neyther company with their wives, nor eate any meate with salt or garlicke, nor drink any chic.... And although the Indians now forbeare to sacrifice beasts or other things publikely, which cannot be hidden from the Spaniardes, yet doe they still use many ceremonies that have their beginnings from these feasts and auntient superstitions, for at this day do they covertly make their feast of Ytu at the daunces of the feast of the Sacrament. Another feast falleth almost at the same time, whereas the Christians observe the solempnitie of the holy Sacrament, which DOTH RESEMBLE IT IN SOME SORT, AS IN DAUNCING, SINGING AND REPRESENTATIONS.”(4) The holy “daunces” at Seville are under Papal disapproval, but are to be kept up, it is said, till the peculiar dresses used in them are worn out. Acosta’s Indians also had “garments which served only for this feast”. It is superfluous to multiply examples of the dancing, which is an invariable feature of savage as of Greek mysteries.

(1) (Greek text omitted), cha. 277.

(2) Ap. Euseb., Praep. Ev., ii, 3, 6.

(3) Cape Monthly Magazine, July, 1874.

(4) Acosta, Historie of the Indies, book v. cha. London, 1604.

2. The Greek and savage use of the turndun, or bribbun of Australia in the mysteries is familiar to students. This fish-shaped flat board of wood is tied to a string, and whirled round, so as to cause a peculiar muffled roar. Lobeck quotes from the old scholia on Clemens Alexandrinus, published by Bastius in annotations on St. Gregory, the following Greek description of the turndun, the “bull-roarer” of English country lads, the Gaelic srannam:(1) (Greek text omitted)”. “The conus was a little slab of wood, tied to a string, and whirled round in the mysteries to make a whirring noise. As the mystic uses of the turndun in Australia, New Zealand, New Mexico and Zululand have elsewhere been described at some length (Custom and Myth, p-44), it may be enough to refer the reader to the passage. Mr. Taylor has since found the instrument used in religious mysteries in West Africa, so it has now been tracked almost round the world. That an instrument so rude should be employed by Greek and Australians on mystic occasions is in itself a remarkable coincidence. Unfortunately, Lobeck, who published the Greek description of the turndun (Aglaophamus,

700), was unacquainted with the modern ethnological evidence.

(1) Pronounced strantham. For this information I am indebted to my friend Mr. M'Allister, schoolmaster at St. Mary's Loch.

3. The custom of plastering the initiated over with clay or filth was common in Greek as in barbaric mysteries. Greek examples may be given first. Demosthenes accuses Aeschines of helping his mother in certain mystic rites, aiding her, especially, by bedaubing the initiate with clay and bran.(1) Harpocration explains the term used ((Greek text omitted)) thus: "Daubing the clay and bran on the initiate, to explain which they say that the Titans when they attacked Dionysus daubed themselves over with chalk, but afterwards, for ritual purposes, clay was used". It may be urged with some force that the mother of Aeschines introduced foreign, novel and possibly savage rites. But Sophocles, in a fragment of his lost play, the Captives, uses the term in the same ritual sense —

(Greek text omitted).

(1) De Corona, 313.

The idea clearly was that by cleansing away the filth plastered over the body was symbolised the pure and free condition of the initiate. He might now cry in the mystic chant —

(Greek text omitted).
Worse have I fled, better have I found.

That this was the significance of the daubing with clay in Greek mysteries and the subsequent cleansing seems quite certain. We are led straight to this conclusion by similar rites, in which the purpose of mystically cleansing was openly put forward. Thus Plutarch, in his essay on superstition, represents the guilty man who would be purified actually rolling in clay, confessing his misdeeds, and then sitting at home purified by the cleansing process ((Greek text omitted)).(1) In another rite, the cleansing of blood-guiltiness, a similar process was practised. Orestes, after killing his mother, complains that the Eumenides do not cease to persecute him, though he has been "purified by blood of swine".(2) Apollonius says that the red hand of the murderer was dipped in the blood of swine and then washed.(3) Athenaeus describes a similar unpleasant ceremony.(4) The blood of whelps was apparently used also, men being first daubed with it and then washed clean.(5) The word (Greek text omitted) is again the appropriate ritual term. Such rites Plutarch calls (Greek text omitted), "filthy purifications".(6) If daubing with dirt is known to have been a feature of Greek mysteries, it meets us everywhere among savages. In O-Kee-Pa, that curiously minute account of the Mandan mysteries, Catlin writes that a portion of the frame of the initiate was "covered with clay, which the operator took from a wooden bowl, and with his hand plastered unsparingly over”. The fifty young men waiting for initiation “were naked and entirely covered with clay of various colours”.(7) The custom is mentioned by Captain John Smith in Virginia. Mr. Winwood Reade found it in Africa, where, as among the Mandans and Spartans, cruel torture and flogging accompanied the initiation of young men.(8) In Australia the evidence for daubing the initiate is very abundant.(9) In New Mexico, the Zunis stole Mr. Cushing’s black paint, as considering it even better than clay for religious daubing.(10)

(1) So Hermann, op. cit., 133.

(2) Eumenides, 273.

(3) Argonautica, iv. 693.

(4) ix. 78. Hermann, from whom the latter passages are borrowed, also quotes the evidence of a vase published by Feuerbach, Lehrbuch, , with other authorities.

(5) Plutarch, Quaest. Rom., 68.

(6) De Superstitione, cha.

(7) O-Kee-Pa, London, 1867, .

(8) Savage Africa, case of Mongilomba; Pausanias, iii. 15.

(9) Brough Smyth, i. 60.

(10) Custma and Myth, .

4. Another savage rite, the use of serpents in Greek mysteries, is attested by Clemens Alexandrinus and by Demosthenes (loc. cit.). Clemens says the snakes were caressed in representations of the loves of Zeus in serpentine form. The great savage example is that of “the snake-dance of the Moquis,” who handle rattle-snakes in the mysteries without being harmed.(1) The dance is partly totemistic, partly meant, like the Thesmophoria, to secure the fertility of the lands of the Moquis of Arizonas. The turndum or (Greek text omitted) is employed. Masks are worn, as in the rites of Demeter Cidiria in Arcadia.(2)

(1) The Snake-Dance of the Moquis. By Captain John G. Bourke, London, 1884.

(2) Pausanias, viii. 16.

5. This last point of contact between certain Greek and certain savage mysteries is highly important. The argument of Lobeck, in his celebrated work Aglaophamus, is that the Mysteries were of no great moment in religion. Had he known the evidence as to savage initiations, he would have been confirmed in his opinion, for many of the singular Greek rites are clearly survivals from savagery. But was there no more truly religious survival? Pindar is a very ancient witness that things of divine import were revealed. “Happy is he who having seen these things goes under the hollow earth. He knows the end of life,

and the god-given beginning.”(1) Sophocles “chimes in,” as Lobeck says, declaring that the initiate alone LIVE in Hades, while other souls endure all evils. Crinagoras avers that even in life the initiate live secure, and in death are the happier. Isagoras declares that about the end of life and all eternity they have sweet hopes.

(1) Fragm., cxvi., 128 H. .

Splendida testimonia, cries Lobeck. He tries to minimise the evidence, remarking that Isocrates promises the very same rewards to all who live justly and righteously. But why not, if to live justly and righteously was part of the teaching of the mysteries of Eleusis? Cicero’s evidence, almost a translation of the Greek passages already cited, Lobeck dismisses as purely rhetorical.(1) Lobeck’s method is rather cavalier. Pindar and Sophocles meant something of great significance.

(1) De Legibus ii. 14; Aglaophamus, p-74.

Now we have acknowledged savage survivals of ugly rites in the Greek mysteries. But it is only fair to remember that, in certain of the few savage mysteries of which we know the secret, righteousness of life and a knowledge of good are inculcated. This is the case in Australia, and in Central Africa, where to be “uninitiated” is equivalent to being selfish.(1) Thus it seems not improbable that consolatory doctrines were expounded in the Eleusinia, and that this kind of sermon or exhortation was no less a survival from savagery than the daubing with clay, and the (Greek text omitted), and other wild rites.

(1) Making of Religion, p-197, 235.

We have now attempted to establish that in Greek law and ritual many savage customs and usages did undeniably survive. We have seen that both philosophical and popular opinion in Greece believed in a past age of savagery. In law, in religion, in religious art, in custom, in human sacrifice, in relics of totemism, and in the mysteries, we have seen that the Greeks retained plenty of the usages now found among the remotest and most backward races. We have urged against the suggestion of borrowing from Egypt or Asia that these survivals are constantly found in local and tribal religion and rituals, and that consequently they probably date from that remote prehistoric past when the Greeks lived in village settlements. It may still doubtless be urged that all these things are Pelasgic, and were the customs of a race settled in Hellas before the arrival of the Homeric Achaeans, and Dorians, and Argives, who, on this hypothesis, adopted and kept up the old savage Pelasgian ways and superstitions. It is impossible to prove or disprove this belief, nor does it affect our argument. We allege that all Greek life below the surface was rich in institutions now found among the most barbaric peoples. These institutions, whether borrowed or inherited, would still be part of the legacy left by savages to cultivated peoples. As this legacy is so large in custom and ritual, it is not unfair to argue that portions of it will also be found in myths. It is now time to discuss Greek myths of the origin of things, and decide whether they are or are not analogous in ideas to the myths which spring from the wild and ignorant fancy of Australians, Cahrocs, Nootkas and Bushmen.

CHAPTER X. GREEK COSMOGONIC MYTHS.

Nature of the evidence — Traditions of origin of the world and man — Homeric, Hesiodic and Orphic myths — Later evidence of historians, dramatists, commentators — The Homeric story comparatively pure — The story in Hesiod, and its savage analogues — The explanations of the myth of Cronus, modern and ancient — The Orphic cosmogony — Phanes and Prajapati — Greek myths of the origin of man — Their savage analogues.

The authorities for Greek cosmogonic myth are extremely various in date, character and value. The most ancient texts are the Iliad and the poems attributed to Hesiod. The Iliad, whatever its date, whatever the place of its composition, was intended to please a noble class of warriors. The Hesiodic poems, at least the Theogony, have clearly a didactic aim, and the intention of presenting a systematic and orderly account of the divine genealogies. To neither would we willingly attribute a date much later than the ninth century of our era, but the question of the dates of all the epic and Hesiodic poems, and even of their various parts, is greatly disputed among scholars. Yet it is nowhere denied that, however late the present form of some of the poems may be, they contain ideas of extreme antiquity. Although the Homeric poems are usually considered, on the whole, more ancient than those attributed to Hesiod,(1) it is a fact worth remembering that the notions of the origin of things in Hesiod are much more savage and (as we hold) much more archaic than the opinions of Homer.

(1) Grote assigns his Theogony to circ. 750 A.D. The Thegony was taught to boys in Greece, much as the Church Catechism and Bible are taught in England; Aeschines in Ctesiph., 135, . Libanius, 400 years after Christ (i. 502-509, iv. 874).

While Hesiod offers a complete theogony or genealogy of deities and heroes, Homer gives no more than hints and allusions to the stormy past of the gods. It is clear, however, that his conception of that past differed considerably from the traditions of Hesiod. However we explain it, the Homeric mythology (though itself repugnant to the philosophers from Xenophanes downwards) is much more mild, pure and humane than the mythology either of Hesiod or of our other Greek authorities. Some may imagine that Homer retains a clearer and less corrupted memory than Hesiod possessed of an original and authentic “divine tradition”. Others may find in Homer’s comparative purity a proof of the later date of his epics in their present form, or may even proclaim that Homer was a kind of Cervantes, who wished to laugh the gods away. There is no conceivable or inconceivable theory about Homer that has not its advocates. For ourselves, we hold that the divine genius of Homer, though working in an age distant rather than "early," selected instinctively the purer mythical materials, and burned away the coarser dross of antique legend, leaving little but the gold which is comparatively refined.

We must remember that it does not follow that any mythical ideas are later than the age of Homer because we first meet them in poems of a later date. We have already seen that though the Brahmanas are much later in date of compilation than the Veda, yet a tradition which we first find in the Brahmanas may be older than the time at which the Veda was compiled. In the same way, as Mr. Max Muller observes, "we know that certain ideas which we find in later writers do not occur in Homer. But it does not follow at all that such ideas are all of later growth or possess a secondary character. One myth may have belonged to one tribe; one god may have had his chief worship in one locality; and our becoming acquainted with these through a later poet does not in the least prove their later origin."(1)

(1) Hibbert Lectures, p, 131.

After Homer and Hesiod, our most ancient authorities for Greek cosmogonic myths are probably the so-called Orphic fragments. Concerning the dates and the manner of growth of these poems volumes of erudition have been compiled. As Homer is silent about Orpheus (in spite of the position which the mythical Thracian bard acquired as the inventor of letters and magic and the father of the mysteries), it has been usual to regard the Orphic ideas as of late introduction. We may agree with Grote and Lobeck that these ideas and the ascetic "Orphic mode of life" first acquired importance in Greece about the time of Epimenides, or, roughly speaking, between 620 and 500 B.C.(1) That age certainly witnessed a curious growth of superstitious fears and of mystic ceremonies intended to mitigate spiritual terrors. Greece was becoming more intimately acquainted with Egypt and with Asia, and was comparing her own religion with the beliefs and rites of other peoples. The times and the minds of men were being prepared for the clear philosophies that soon "on Argive heights divinely sang". Just as, when the old world was about to accept Christianity, a deluge of Oriental and barbaric superstitions swept across men's minds, so immediately before the dawn of Greek philosophy there came an irruption of mysticism and of spiritual fears. We may suppose that the Orphic poems were collected, edited and probably interpolated, in this dark hour of Greece. "To me," says Lobeck, "it appears that the verses may be referred to the age of Onomacritus, an age curious in the writings of ancient poets, and attracted by the allurements of mystic religions."

The style of the surviving fragments is sufficiently pure and epic; the strange unheard of myths are unlike those which the Alexandrian poets drew from fountains long lost.(2) But how much in the Orphic myths is imported from Asia or Egypt, how much is the invention of literary forgers like Onomacritus, how much should be regarded as the first guesses of the physical poet-philosophers, and how much is truly ancient popular legend recast in literary form, it is impossible with certainty to determine.

(1) Lobeck, Aglaophamus, i. 317; Grote, iii. 86.

(2) Aglaophamus, i. 611.

We must not regard a myth as necessarily late or necessarily foreign because we first meet it in an “Orphic composition”. If the myth be one of the sort which encounter us in every quarter, nay, in every obscure nook of the globe, we may plausibly regard it as ancient. If it bear the distinct marks of being a Neo-platonic pastiche, we may reject it without hesitation. On the whole, however, our Orphic authorities can never be quoted with much satisfaction. The later sources of evidence for Greek myths are not of great use to the student of cosmogonic legend, though invaluable when we come to treat of the established dynasty of gods, the heroes and the “culture-heroes”. For these the authorities are the whole range of Greek literature, poets, dramatists, philosophers, critics, historians and travellers. We have also the notes and comments of the scholiasts or commentators on the poets and dramatists. Sometimes these annotators only darken counsel by their guesses. Sometimes perhaps, especially in the scholia on the Iliad and Odyssey, they furnish us with a precious myth or popular marchen not otherwise recorded. The regular professional mythographi, again, of whom Apollodorus (150 B.C.) is the type, compiled manuals explanatory of the myths which were alluded to by the poets. The scholiasts and mythographi often retain myths from lost poems and lost plays. Finally, from the travellers and historians we occasionally glean examples of the tales (“holy chapters,” as Mr. Grote calls them) which were narrated by priests and temple officials to the pilgrims who visited the sacred shrines.

These “chapters” are almost invariably puerile, savage and obscene. They bear the stamp of extreme antiquity, because they never, as a rule, passed through the purifying medium of literature. There were many myths too crude and archaic for the purposes of poetry and of the drama. These were handed down from local priest to local priest, with the inviolability of sacred and immutable tradition. We have already given a reason for assigning a high antiquity to the local temple myths. Just as Greeks lived in villages before they gathered into towns, so their gods were gods of villages or tribes before they were national deities. The local myths are those of the archaic village state of “culture,” more ancient, more savage, than literary narrative. Very frequently the local legends were subjected to the process of allegorical interpretation, as men became alive to the monstrosity of their unsophisticated meaning. Often they proved too savage for our authorities, who merely remark, “Concerning this a certain holy chapter is told,” but decline to record the legend. In the same way missionaries, with mistaken delicacy, often refuse to repeat some savage legend with which they are acquainted.

The latest sort of testimony as to Greek myths must be sought in the writings of the heathen apologists or learned Pagan defenders of Paganism in the first centuries during Christianity, and in the works of their opponents, the fathers of the Church. Though the fathers certainly do not understate the abominations of Paganism, and though the heathen apologists make free use of allegorical (and impossible) interpretations, the evidence of both is often useful and important. The testimony of ancient art, vases, statues, pictures and the descriptions of these where they no longer survive, are also of service and interest.

After this brief examination of the sources of our knowledge of Greek myth, we may approach the Homeric legends of the origin of things and the world’s beginning. In Homer these matters are only referred to incidentally. He more than once calls Oceanus (that is, the fabled stream which flows all round the world, here regarded as a PERSON) “the origin of the gods,” “the origin of all things”.(1) That Ocean is considered a person, and that he is not an allegory for water or the aqueous element, appears from the speech of Hera to Aphrodite: “I am going to visit the limits of the bountiful earth, and Oceanus, father of the gods, and mother Tethys, who reared me duly and nurtured me in their halls, when far-seeing Zeus imprisoned Cronus beneath the earth and the unvintaged sea”.(2) Homer does not appear to know Uranus as the father of Cronus, and thus the myth of the mutilation of Uranus necessarily does not occur in Homer. Cronus, the head of the dynasty which preceded that of Zeus, is described(3) as the son of Rhea, but nothing is said of his father. The passage contains the account which Poseidon himself chose to give of the war in heaven: “Three brethren are we, and sons of Cronus whom Rhea bare — Zeus and myself, and Hades is the third, the ruler of the folk in the underworld. And in three lots were all things divided, and each drew a domain of his own.” Here Zeus is the ELDEST son of Cronus. Though lots are drawn at hazard for the property of the father (which we know to have been customary in Homer’s time), yet throughout the Iliad Zeus constantly claims the respect and obedience due to him by right of primogeniture.(4) We shall see that Hesiod adopts exactly the opposite view. Zeus is the YOUNGEST child of Cronus. His supremacy is an example of jungsten recht, the wide-spread custom which makes the youngest child the heir in chief.(5) But how did the sons of Cronus come to have his property in their hands to divide? By right of successful rebellion, when “Zeus imprisoned Cronus beneath the earth and the unvintaged sea”. With Cronus in his imprisonment are the Titans. That is all that Homer cares to tell about the absolute beginning of things and the first dynasty of rulers of Olympus. His interest is all in the actual reigning family, that of the Cronidae, nor is he fond of reporting their youthful excesses.

(1) Iliad, xiv. 201, 302, 246.

(2) In reading what Homer and Hesiod report about these matters, we must remember that all the forces and phenomena are conceived of by them as PERSONS. In this regard the archaic and savage view of all things as personal and human is preserved. “I maintain,” says Grote, “moreover, fully the character of these great divine agents as persons, which is the light in which they presented themselves to the Homeric or Hesiodic audience. Uranus, Nyx, Hypnos and Oneiros (heaven, night, sleep and dream) are persons just as much as Zeus or Apollo. To resolve them into mere allegories is unsafe and unprofitable. We then depart from the point of view of the original hearers without acquiring any consistent or philosophical point of view of our own.” This holds good though portions of the Hesiodic genealogies are distinctly poetic allegories cast in the mould or the ancient personal theory of things.

(3) Iliad, xv. 187.

(4) The custom by which sons drew lots for equal shares of their dead father’s property is described in Odyssey, xiv. 199-212. Here Odysseus, giving a false account of himself, says that he was a Cretan, a bastard, and that his half-brothers, born in wedlock, drew lots for their father’s inheritance, and did not admit him to the drawing, but gave him a small portion apart.

(5) See Elton, Origins of English History, p-207.

We now turn from Homer’s incidental allusions to the ample and systematic narrative of Hesiod. As Mr. Grote says, “Men habitually took their information respecting their theogonic antiquities from the Hesiodic poems.” Hesiod was accepted as an authority both by the pious Pausanias in the second century of our era — who protested against any attempt to alter stories about the gods — and by moral reformers like Plato and Xenophanes, who were revolted by the ancient legends,(1) and, indeed, denied their truth. Yet, though Hesiod represents Greek orthodoxy, we have observed that Homer (whose epics are probably still more ancient) steadily ignores the more barbarous portions of Hesiod’s narrative. Thus the question arises: Are the stories of Hesiod’s invention, and later than Homer, or does Homer’s genius half-unconsciously purify materials like those which Hesiod presents in the crudest form? Mr. Grote says: “How far these stories are the invention of Hesiod himself it is impossible to determine. They bring us down to a cast of fancy more coarse and indelicate than the Homeric, and more nearly resemble some of the holy chapters ((Greek text omitted)) of the more recent mysteries, such, for example, as the tale of Dionysus Zagreus. There is evidence in the Theogony itself that the author was acquainted with local legends current both at Krete and at Delphi, for he mentions both the mountain-cave in Krete wherein the newly-born Zeus was hidden, and the stone near the Delphian temple — the identical stone which Kronos had swallowed — placed by Zeus himself as a sign and marvel to mortal men. Both these monuments, which the poet expressly refers to, and had probably seen, imply a whole train of accessory and explanatory local legends, current probably among the priests of Krete and Delphi."

(1) Timaeeus, 41; Republic, 377.

All these circumstances appear to be good evidence of the great antiquity of the legends recorded by Hesiod. In the first place, arguing merely a priori, it is extremely improbable that in the brief interval between the date of the comparatively pure and noble mythology of the Iliad and the much ruder Theogony of Hesiod men INVENTED stories like the mutilation of Uranus, and the swallowing of his offspring by Cronus. The former legend is almost exactly parallel, as has already been shown, to the myth of Papa and Rangi in New Zealand. The later has its parallels among the savage Bushmen and Australians. It is highly improbable that men in an age so civilised as that of Homer invented myths as hideous as those of the lowest savages. But if we take these myths to be, not new inventions, but the sacred stories of local priesthoods, their antiquity is probably incalculable. The sacred stories, as we know from Pausanias, Herodotus and from all the writers who touch on the subject of the mysteries, were myths communicated by the priests to the initiated. Plato speaks of such myths in the Republic, 378: "If there is an absolute necessity for their mention, a very few might hear them in a mystery, and then let them sacrifice, not a common pig, but some huge and unprocurable victim; this would have the effect of very greatly diminishing the number of the hearers". This is an amusing example of a plan for veiling the horrors of myth. The pig was the animal usually offered to Demeter, the goddess of the Eleusinian mysteries. Plato proposes to substitute some "unprocurable" beast, perhaps a giraffe or an elephant.

To Hesiod, then, we must turn for what is the earliest complete literary form of the Greek cosmogonic myth. Hesiod begins, like the New Zealanders, with "the august race of gods, by earth and wide heaven begotten".(1) So the New Zealanders, as we have seen, say, "The heaven which is above us, and the earth which is beneath us, are the progenitors of men and the origin of all things”. Hesiod(2) somewhat differs from this view by making Chaos absolutely first of all things, followed by “wide-bosomed Earth,” Tartarus and Eros (love). Chaos unaided produced Erebus and Night; the children of Night and Erebus are Aether and Day. Earth produced Heaven, who then became her own lover, and to Heaven she bore Oceanus, and the Titans, Coeeus and Crius, Hyperion and Iapetus, Thea and Rhea, Themis, Mnemosyne, Phoebe, Tethys, “and youngest after these was born Cronus of crooked counsel, the most dreadful of her children, who ever detested his puissant sire,” Heaven. There were other sons of Earth and Heaven peculiarly hateful to their father,(3) and these Uranus used to hide from the light in a hollow of Gaea. Both they and Gaea resented this treatment, and the Titans, like “the children of Heaven and Earth,” in the New Zealand poem, “sought to discern the difference between light and darkness”. Gaea (unlike Earth in the New Zealand myth, for there she is purely passive), conspired with her children, produced iron, and asked her sons to avenge their wrongs.(4) Fear fell upon all of them save Cronus, who (like Tane Mahuta in the Maori poem) determined to end the embraces of Earth and Heaven. But while the New Zealand, like the Indo-Aryan myth,(5) conceives of Earth and Heaven as two beings who have never previously been sundered at all, Hesiod makes Heaven amorously approach his spouse from a distance. This was the moment for Cronus,(6) who stretched out his hand armed with the sickle of iron, and mutilated Uranus. As in so many savage myths, the blood of the wounded god fallen on the ground produced strange creatures, nymphs of the ash-tree, giants and furies. As in the Maori myth, one of the children of Heaven stood apart and did not consent to the deed. This was Oceanus in Greece,(7) and in New Zealand it was Tawhiri Matea, the wind, “who arose and followed his father, Heaven, and remained with him in the open spaces of the sky”. Uranus now predicted(8) that there would come a day of vengeance for the evil deed of Cronus, and so ends the dynasty of Uranus.

(1) Theog., 45.

(2) Ibid., 116.

(3) Ibid., 155.

(4) Ibid., 166.

(5) Muir, v. 23, quoting Aitareya Brahmana, iv. 27: “These two worlds were once joined; subsequently they separated”.

(6) Theog., 175-185.

(7) Apollod., i, 15.

(8) Theog., 209.

This story was one of the great stumbling-blocks of orthodox Greece. It was the tale that Plato said should be told, if at all, only to a few in a mystery, after the sacrifice of some rare and scarcely obtainable animal. Even among the Maoris, the conduct of the children who severed their father and mother is regarded as a singular instance of iniquity, and is told to children as a moral warning, an example to be condemned. In Greece, on the other hand, unless we are to take the Euthyphro as wholly ironical, some of the pious justified their conduct by the example of Zeus. Euthyphro quotes this example when he is about to prosecute his own father, for which act, he says, “Men are angry with ME; so inconsistently do they talk when I am concerned and when the gods are concerned”.(1) But in Greek THE TALE HAS NO MEANING. It has been allegorised in various ways, and Lafitau fancied that it was a distorted form of the Biblical account of the origin of sin. In Maori the legend is perfectly intelligible. Heaven and earth were conceived of (like everything else), as beings with human parts and passions, linked in an endless embrace which crushed and darkened their children. It became necessary to separate them, and this feat was achieved not without pain. “Then wailed the Heaven, and exclaimed the Earth, ‘Wherefore this murder? Why this great sin? Why separate us?’ But what cared Tane? Upwards he sent one and downwards the other. He cruelly severed the sinews which united Heaven and Earth.”(2) The Greek myth too, contemplated earth and heaven as beings corporeally united, and heaven as a malignant power that concealed his children in darkness.

(1) Euthyphro, 6.

(2) Taylor, New Zealand, 119.

But while the conception of heaven and earth as parents of living things remains perfectly intelligible in one sense, the vivid personification which regarded them as creatures with human parts and passions had ceased to be intelligible in Greece before the times of the earliest philosophers. The old physical conception of the pair became a metaphor, and the account of their rending asunder by their children lost all significance, and seemed to be an abominable and unintelligible myth. When examined in the light of the New Zealand story, and of the fact that early peoples do regard all phenomena as human beings, with physical attributes like those of men, the legend of Cronus, and Uranus, and Gaea ceases to be a mystery. It is, at bottom, a savage explanation (as in the Samoan story) of the separation of earth and heaven, an explanation which could only have occurred to people in a state of mind which civilisation has forgotten.

The next generation of Hesiodic gods (if gods we are to call the members of this race of non-natural men) was not more fortunate than the first in its family relations.

Cronus wedded his sister, Rhea, and begat Demeter, Hera, Hades, Poseidon, and the youngest, Zeus. “And mighty Cronus swallowed down each of them, each that came to their mother’s knees from her holy womb, with this intent that none other of the proud sons of heaven should hold his kingly sway among the immortals. Heaven and Earth had warned him that he too should fall through his children. Wherefore he kept no vain watch, but spied and swallowed down each of his offspring, while grief immitigable took possession of Rhea.”(1) Rhea, being about to become the mother of Zeus, took counsel with Uranus and Gaea. By their advice she went to Crete, where Zeus was born, and, in place of the child, she presented to Cronus a huge stone swathed in swaddling bands. This he swallowed, and was easy in his mind. Zeus grew up, and by some means, suggested by Gaea, compelled Zeus to disgorge all his offspring. “And he vomited out the stone first, as he had swallowed it last.”(2) The swallowed children emerged alive, and Zeus fixed the stone at Pytho (Delphi), where Pausanias(3) had the privilege of seeing it, and where, as it did not tempt the cupidity of barbarous invaders, it probably still exists. It was not a large stone, Pausanias says, and the Delphians used to pour oil over it, as Jacob did(4) to the stone at Bethel, and on feast-days they covered it with wraps of wool. The custom of smearing fetish-stones (which Theophrastus mentions as one of the practices of the superstitious man) is clearly a survival from the savage stage of religion. As a rule, however, among savages, fetish-stones are daubed with red paint (like the face of the wooden ancient Dionysi in Greece, and of Tsui Goab among the Hottentots), not smeared with oil.(5)

(1) Theog., 460, 465.

(2) Theog., 498.

(3) x. 245.

(4) Gen. xxviii. 18.

(5) Pausanias, ii. 2, 5. “Churinga” in Australia are greased with the natural moisture of the palm of the hand, and rubbed with red ochre. — Spencer and Gillen. They are “sacred things,” but not exactly fetishes.

The myth of the swallowing and disgorging of his own children by Cronus was another of the stumbling-blocks of Greek orthodoxy. The common explanation, that Time ((Greek text omitted)) does swallow his children, the days, is not quite satisfactory. Time brings never the past back again, as Cronus did. Besides, the myth of the swallowing is not confined to Cronus. Modern philology has given, as usual, different analyses of the meaning of the name of the god. Hermann, with Preller, derives it from (Greek text omitted), to fulfil. The harvest-month, says Preller, was named Cronion in Greece, and Cronia was the title of the harvest-festival. The sickle of Cronus is thus brought into connection with the sickle of the harvester.(1)

(1) Preller, Gr. Myth., i. 44; Hartung, ii. 48; Porphyry, Abst., ii. 54. Welcker will not hear of this etymology, Gr. gott., i. 145, note 9.

The second myth, in which Cronus swallows his children, has numerous parallels in savage legend. Bushmen tell of Kwai Hemm, the devourer, who swallows that great god, the mantis insect, and disgorges him alive with all the other persons and animals whom he has engulphed in the course of a long and voracious career.(1) The moon in Australia, while he lived on earth, was very greedy, and swallowed the eagle-god, whom he had to disgorge. Mr. Im Thurn found similar tales among the Indians of Guiana. The swallowing and disgorging of Heracles by the monster that was to slay Hesione is well known. Scotch peasants tell of the same feats, but localise the myth on the banks of the Ken in Galloway. Basutos, Eskimos, Zulus and European fairy tales all possess this incident, the swallowing of many persons by a being from whose maw they return alive and in good case.

(1) Bleek, Bushman Folk-lore, p, 8.

A mythical conception which prevails from Greenland to South Africa, from Delphi to the Solomon Islands, from Brittany to the shores of Lake Superior, must have some foundation in the common elements of human nature.(1) Now it seems highly probable that this curious idea may have been originally invented in an attempt to explain natural phenomena by a nature-myth. It has already been shown (chapter v.) that eclipses are interpreted, even by the peasantry of advanced races, as the swallowing of the moon by a beast or a monster. The Piutes account for the disappearance of the stars in the daytime by the hypothesis that the “sun swallows his children”. In the Melanesian myth, dawn is cut out of the body of night by Qat, armed with a knife of red obsidian. Here are examples(2) of transparent nature-myths in which this idea occurs for obvious explanatory purposes, and in accordance with the laws of the savage imagination. Thus the conception of the swallowing and disgorging being may very well have arisen out of a nature-myth. But why is the notion attached to the legend of Cronus?

(1) The myth of Cronus and the swallowed children and the stone is transferred to Gargantua. See Sebillot, Gargantua dans les Traditions Populaires. But it is impossible to be certain that this is not an example of direct borrowing by Madame De Cerny in her Saint Suliac, .

(2) Compare Tylor, Prim. Cult., i. 338.

That is precisely the question about which mythologists differ, as has been shown, and perhaps it is better to offer no explanation. However stories arise — and this story probably arose from a nature-myth — it is certain that they wander about the world, that they change masters, and thus a legend which is told of a princess with an impossible name in Zululand is told of the mother of Charlemagne in France. The tale of the swallowing may have been attributed to Cronus, as a great truculent deity, though it has no particular elemental signification in connection with his legend.

This peculiarly savage trick of swallowing each other became an inherited habit in the family of Cronus. When Zeus reached years of discretion, he married Metis, and this lady, according to the scholiast on Hesiod, had the power of transforming herself into any shape she pleased. When she was about to be a mother, Zeus induced her to assume the shape of a fly and instantly swallowed her.(1) In behaving thus, Zeus acted on the advice of Uranus and Gaea. It was feared that Metis would produce a child more powerful than his father. Zeus avoided this peril by swallowing his wife, and himself gave birth to Athene. The notion of swallowing a hostile person, who has been changed by magic into a conveniently small bulk, is very common. It occurs in the story of Taliesin.(2) Caridwen, in the shape of a hen, swallows Gwion Bach, in the form of a grain of wheat. In the same manner the princess in the Arabian Nights swallowed the Geni. Here then we have in the Hesiodic myth an old marchen pressed into the service of the higher mythology. The apprehension which Zeus (like Herod and King Arthur) always felt lest an unborn child should overthrow him, was also familiar to Indra; but, instead of swallowing the mother and concealing her in his own body, like Zeus, Indra entered the mother’s body, and himself was born instead of the dreaded child.(3) A cow on this occasion was born along with Indra. This adventure of the (Greek text omitted) or swallowing of Metis was explained by the late Platonists as a Platonic allegory. Probably the people who originated the tale were not Platonists, any more than Pandarus was all Aristotelian.

(1) Hesiod, Theogonia, 886. See Scholiast and note in Aglaophamus, i. 613. Compare Puss in Boots and the Ogre.

(2) Mabinogion, .

(3) Black Yajur Veda, quoted by Sayana.

After Homer and Hesiod, the oldest literary authorities for Greek cosmogonic myths are the poems attributed to Orpheus. About their probable date, as has been said, little is known. They have reached us only in fragments, but seem to contain the first guesses of a philosophy not yet disengaged from mythical conditions. The poet preserves, indeed, some extremely rude touches of early imagination, while at the same time one of the noblest and boldest expressions of pantheistic thought is attributed to him. From the same source are drawn ideas as pure as those of the philosophical Vedic hymn,(1) and as wild as those of the

Vedic Purusha Sukta, or legend of the fashioning of the world out of the mangled limbs of Purusha. The authors of the Orphic cosmogony appear to have begun with some remarks on Time ((Greek text omitted)). "Time was when as yet this world was not."(2) Time, regarded in the mythical fashion as a person, generated Chaos and Aether. The Orphic poet styles Chaos (Greek text omitted), "the monstrous gulph," or "gap". This term curiously reminds one of Ginnunga-gap in the Scandinavian cosmogonic legends. "Ginnunga-gap was light as windless air," and therein the blast of heat met the cold rime, whence Ymir was generated, the Purusha of Northern fable.(3) These ideas correspond well with the Orphic conception of primitive space.(4)

(1) Rig-Veda, x. 90.

(2) Lobeck, Aglaophamus, i. 470. See also the quotations from Proclus.

(3) Gylfi's Mocking.

(4) Aglaophamus, .

In process of time Chaos produced an egg, shining and silver white. It is absurd to inquire, according to Lobeck, whether the poet borrowed this widely spread notion of a cosmic egg from Phoenicia, Babylon, Egypt (where the goose-god Seb laid the egg), or whether the Orphic singer originated so obvious an idea. Quaerere ludicrum est. The conception may have been borrowed, but manifestly it is one of the earliest hypotheses that occur to the rude imagination. We have now three primitive generations, time, chaos, the egg, and in the fourth generation the egg gave birth to Phanes, the great hero of the Orphic cosmogony.(1) The earliest and rudest thinkers were puzzled, as many savage cosmogonic myths have demonstrated, to account for the origin of life. The myths frequently hit on the theory of a hermaphroditic being, both male and female, who produces another being out of himself. Prajapati in the Indian stories, and Hrimthursar in Scandinavian legend— "one of his feet got a son on the other" — with Lox in the Algonquin tale are examples of these double-sexed personages. In the Orphic poem, Phanes is both male and female. This Phanes held within him "the seed of all the gods,"(2) and his name is confused with the names of Metis and Ericapaeus in a kind of trinity. All this part of the Orphic doctrine is greatly obscured by the allegorical and theosophistic interpretations of the late Platonists long after our era, who, as usual, insisted on finding their own trinitarian ideas, commenta frigidissima, concealed under the mythical narrative.(3)

(1) Clemens Alexan., .

(2) Damascius, ap. Lobeck, i. 481.

(3) Aglaoph., i. 483.

Another description by Hieronymus of the first being, the Orphic Phanes, "as a serpent with bull's and lion's heads, with a human face in the middle and wings on the shoulders," is sufficiently rude and senseless. But these physical attributes could easily be explained away as types of anything the Platonist pleased.(1) The Orphic Phanes, too, was almost as many-headed as a giant in a fairy tale, or as Purusha in the Rig-Veda. He had a ram's head, a bull's head, a snake's head and a lion's head, and glanced around with four eyes, presumably human.(2) This remarkable being was also provided with golden wings. The nature of the physical arrangements by which Phanes became capable of originating life in the world is described in a style so savage and crude that the reader must be referred to Suidas for the original text.(3) The tale is worthy of the Swift-like fancy of the Australian Narrinyeri.

(1) Damascius, 381, ap. Lobeck, i. 484.

(2) Hermias in Phaedr. ap. Lobeck, i. 493.

(3) Suidas s. v. Phanes.

Nothing can be easier or more delusive than to explain all this wild part of the Orphic cosmogony as an allegorical veil of any modern ideas we choose to select. But why the "allegory" should closely imitate the rough guesses of uncivilised peoples, Ahts, Diggers, Zunis, Cahrocs, it is less easy to explain. We can readily imagine African or American tribes who were accustomed to revere bulls, rams, snakes, and so forth, ascribing the heads of all their various animal patrons to the deity of their confederation. We can easily see how such races as practise the savage rites of puberty should attribute to the first being the special organs of Phanes. But on the Neo-Platonic hypothesis that Orpheus was a seer of Neo-Platonic opinions, we do not see why he should have veiled his ideas under so savage an allegory. This part of the Orphic speculation is left in judicious silence by some modern commentators, such as M. Darmesteter in Les Cosmogonies Aryennes.(1) Indeed, if we choose to regard Apollonius Rhodius, an Alexandrine poet writing in a highly civilised age, as the representative of Orphicism, it is easy to mask and pass by the more stern and characteristic fortresses of the Orphic divine. The theriomorphic Phanes is a much less "Aryan" and agreeable object than the glorious golden-winged Eros, the love-god of Apollonius Rhodius and Aristophanes.(2)

(1) Essais Orientaux, .

(2) Argonautica, 1-12; Aves, 693.

On the whole, the Orphic fragments appear to contain survivals of savage myths of the origin of things blended with purer speculations. The savage ideas are finally explained by late philosophers as allegorical veils and vestments of philosophy; but the interpretation is arbitrary, and varies with the taste and fancy of each interpreter. Meanwhile the coincidence of the wilder elements with the speculations native to races in the lowest grades of civilisation is undeniable.

This opinion is confirmed by the Greek myths of the origin of Man. These, too, coincide with the various absurd conjectures of savages.

In studying the various Greek local legends of the origin of Man, we encounter the difficulty of separating them from the myths of heroes, which it will be more convenient to treat separately. This difficulty we have already met in our treatment of savage traditions of the beginnings of the race. Thus we saw that among the Melanesians, Qat, and among the Ahts, Quawteaht, were heroic persons, who made men and most other things. But it was desirable to keep their performances of this sort separate from their other feats, their introduction of fire, for example, and of various arts. In the same way it will be well, in reviewing Greek legends, to keep Prometheus' share in the making of men apart from the other stories of his exploits as a benefactor of the men whom he made. In Hesiod, Prometheus is the son of the Titan Iapetus, and perhaps his chief exploit is to play upon Zeus a trick of which we find the parallel in various savage myths. It seems, however, from Ovid(1) and other texts, that Hesiod somewhere spoke of Prometheus as having made men out of clay, like Pund-jel in the Australian, Qat in the Melanesian and Tiki in the Maori myths. The same story is preserved in Servius's commentary on Virgil.(2) A different legend is preserved in the Etymologicum Magnum (voc. Ikonion). According to this story, after the deluge of Deucalion, "Zeus bade Prometheus and Athene make images of men out of clay, and the winds blew into them the breath of life". In confirmation of this legend, Pausanias was shown in Phocis certain stones of the colour of clay, and "smelling very like human flesh"; and these, according to the Phocians, were "the remains of the clay from which the whole human race was fashioned by Prometheus".(3)

(1) Ovid. Metam. i. 82.

(2) Eclogue, vi. 42.

(3) Pausanias, x. 4, 3.

Aristophanes, too, in the Birds (686) talks of men as (Greek text omitted), figures kneaded of clay. Thus there are sufficient traces in Greek tradition of the savage myth that man was made of clay by some superior being, like Pund-jel in the quaint Australian story.

We saw that among various rude races other theories of the origin of man were current. Men were thought to have come out of a hole in the ground or a bed of reeds, and sometimes the very scene of their first appearance was still known and pointed out to the curious. This myth was current among races who regarded themselves as the only people whose origin needed explanation. Other stories represented man as the fruit of a tree, or the child of a rock or stone, or as the descendant of one of the lower animals. Examples of these opinions in Greek legend are now to be given. In the first place, we have a fragment of Pindar, in which the poet enumerates several of the centres from which different Greek tribes believed men to have sprung. “Hard it is to find out whether Alalkomeneus, first of men, arose on the marsh of Cephissus, or whether the Curetes of Ida first, a stock divine, arose, or if it was the Phrygian Corybantes that the sun earliest saw — men like trees walking;” and Pindar mentions Egyptian and Libyan legends of the same description.(1) The Thebans and the Arcadians held themselves to be “earth-born”. “The black earth bore Pelasgus on the high wooded hills,” says an ancient line of Asius. The Dryopians were an example of a race of men born from ash-trees. The myth of gens virum truncis et duro robore nata, “born of tree-trunk and the heart of oak,” had passed into a proverb even in Homer’s time.(2) Lucian mentions(3) the Athenian myth “that men grew like cabbages out of the earth”. As to Greek myths of the descent of families from animals, these will be examined in the discussion of the legend of Zeus.

(1) Preller, Aus. Auf., .

(2) Virgil Aen., viii. 315; Odyssey, xix. 163; Iliad, ii. xxii. 120; Juvenal, vi. 11. Cf. also Bouche Leclerq, De Origine Generis Humani.

(3) Philops. iii.

CHAPTER XI. SAVAGE DIVINE MYTHS.

The origin of a belief in GOD beyond the ken of history and of speculation — Sketch of conjectural theories — Two elements in all beliefs, whether of backward or civilised races — The Mythical and the Religious — These may be coeval, or either may be older than the other — Difficulty of study — The current anthropological theory — Stated objections to the theory — Gods and spirits — Suggestion that savage religion is borrowed from Europeans — Reply to Mr. Tylor's arguments on this head — The morality of savages.

"The question of the origin of a belief in Deity does not come within the scope of a strictly historical inquiry. No man can watch the idea of GOD in the making or in the beginning. We are acquainted with no race whose beginning does not lie far back in the unpenetrated past. Even on the hypothesis that the natives of Australia, for example, were discovered in a state of culture more backward than that of other known races, yet the institutions and ideas of the Australians must have required for their development an incalculable series of centuries. The notions of man about the Deity, man's religious sentiments and his mythical narratives, must be taken as we find them. There have been, and are, many theories as to the origin of the conception of a supernatural being or beings, concerned with the fortunes of mankind, and once active in the making of the earth and its inhabitants. There is the hypothesis of an original divine tradition, darkened by the smoke of foolish mortal fancies. There is the hypothesis of an innate and intuitive sensus numinis. There is the opinion that the notion of Deity was introduced to man by the very nature of his knowledge and perceptions, which compel him in all things to recognise a finite and an infinite. There is the hypothesis that gods were originally ghosts, the magnified shapes of ancestral spectres. There is the doctrine that man, seeking in his early speculations for the causes of things, and conscious of his own powers as an active cause, projected his own shadow on the mists of the unknown, and peopled the void with figures of magnified non-natural men, his own parents and protectors, and the makers of many of the things in the world.

"Since the actual truth cannot be determined by observation and experiment, the question as to the first germs of the divine conception must here be left unanswered. But it is possible to disengage and examine apart the two chief elements in the earliest as in the latest ideas of Godhead. Among the lowest and most backward, as among the most advanced races, there coexist the

MYTHICAL and the RELIGIOUS elements in belief. The rational factor (or what approves itself to us as the rational factor) is visible in religion; the irrational is prominent in myth. The Australian, the Bushman, the Solomon Islander, in hours of danger and necessity ‘yearns after the gods,’ and has present in his heart the idea of a father and friend. This is the religious element. The same man, when he comes to indulge his fancy for fiction, will degrade this spiritual friend and father to the level of the beasts, and will make him the hero of comic or repulsive adventures. This is the mythical or irrational element. Religion, in its moral aspect, always traces back to the belief in a power that is benign and works for righteousness. Myth, even in Homer or the Rig-Veda, perpetually falls back on the old stock of absurd and immoral divine adventures. (1)

(1) M. Knappert here, in a note to the Dutch translation, denies the lowest mythical element to the Hebrews, as their documents have reached us.

“It would be rash, in the present state of knowledge, to pronounce that the germ of the serious Homeric sense of the justice and power of the Divinity is earlier or later than the germ of the Homeric stories of gods disguised as animals, or imprisoned by mortals, or kicked out of Olympus. The rational and irrational aspects of mythology and religion may be of coeval antiquity for all that is certainly known, or either of them, in the dark backward of mortal experience, may have preceded the other. There is probably no religion nor mythology which does not offer both aspects to the student. But it is the part of advancing civilisation to adorn and purify the rational element, and to subordinate and supersede the irrational element, as far as religious conservatism, ritual and priestly dogma will permit.”

Such were the general remarks with which this chapter opened in the original edition of the present work. But reading, reflection and certain additions to the author’s knowledge of facts, have made it seem advisable to state, more fully and forcibly than before, that, in his opinion, not only the puzzling element of myth, but the purer element of a religious belief sanctioning morality is derived by civilised people from a remote past of savagery. It is also necessary to draw attention to a singular religious phenomena, a break, or “fault,” as geologists call it, in the religious strata. While the most backward savages, in certain cases, present the conception of a Being who sanctions ethics, and while that conception recurs at a given stage of civilisation, it appears to fade, or even to disappear in some conditions of barbarism. Among some barbaric peoples, such as the Zulus, and the Red Indians of French Canada when first observed, as among some Polynesians and some tribes of Western and Central Africa little trace of a supreme being is found, except a name, and that name is even occasionally a matter of ridicule. The highest religious conception has been reached, and is generally known, yet the Being conceived of as creative is utterly neglected, while ghosts, or minor gods, are served and adored. To this religious phenomenon (if correctly observed) we must attempt to assign a cause. For this purpose it is necessary to state again what may be called the current or popular anthropological theory of the evolution of Gods.

That theory takes varying shapes. In the philosophy of Mr. Herbert Spencer we find a pure Euhemerism. Gods are but ghosts of dead men, raised to a higher and finally to the highest power. In the somewhat analogous but not identical system of Mr. Tylor, man first attains to the idea of spirit by reflection on various physical, psychological and psychical experiences, such as sleep, dreams, trances, shadows, hallucinations, breath and death, and he gradually extends the conception of soul or ghost till all nature is peopled with spirits. Of these spirits one is finally promoted to supremacy, where the conception of a supreme being occurs. In the lowest faiths there is said, on this theory, to be no connection, or very little connection, between religion and morality. To supply a religious sanction of morals is the work of advancing thought.(1)

(1) Prim. Cult., ii. 381. Huxley’s Science and Hebrew Tradition, p,372.

This current hypothesis is, confessedly, “animistic,” in Mr. Tylor’s phrase, or, in Mr. Spencer’s terminology, it is “the ghost theory”. The human soul, says Mr. Tylor, has been the model on which all man’s ideas of spiritual beings, from “the tiniest elf” to “the heavenly Creator and ruler of the world, the Great Spirit,” have been framed.(1) Thus it has been necessary for Mr. Tylor and for Mr. Spencer to discover first an origin of man’s idea of his own soul, and that supposed origin in psychological, physical and psychical experiences is no doubt adequate. By reflection on these facts, probably, the idea of spirit was reached, though the psychical experiences enumerated by Mr. Tylor may contain points as yet unexplained by Materialism. From these sources are derived all really “animistic” gods, all that from the first partake of the nature of hungry ghosts, placated by sacrifices of food, though in certain cases that hunger may have been transferred, we surmise, by worshippers to gods not ORIGINALLY animistic.

(1) Prim. Cult., ii. 109

In answer to this theory of an animistic or ghostly origin of all gods, it must first be observed that all gods are not necessarily, it would seem, of animistic origin. Among certain of the lowest savages, although they believe in ghosts, the animistic conception, the spiritual idea, is not attached to the relatively supreme being of their faith. He is merely a powerful BEING, unborn, and not subject to death. The purely metaphysical question “was he a ghost?” does not seem always to have been asked. Consequently there is no logical reason why man’s idea of a Maker should not be prior to man’s idea that there are such things as souls, ghosts and spirits. Therefore the animistic theory is not necessary as material for the “god-idea”. We cannot, of course, prove that the “god-idea” was historically prior to the “ghost-idea,” for we know no savages who have a god and yet are ignorant of ghosts. But we can show that the idea of God may exist, in germ, without explicitly involving the idea of spirit. Thus gods MAY be prior in evolution to ghosts, and therefore the animistic theory of the origin of gods in ghosts need not necessarily be accepted.

In the first place, the original evolution of a god out of a ghost need not be conceded, because in perhaps all known savage theological philosophy the God, the Maker and Master, is regarded as a being who existed before death entered the world. Everywhere, practically speaking, death is looked on as a comparatively late intruder. He came not only after God was active, but after men and beasts had populated the world. Scores of myths accounting for this invasion of death have been collected all over the world.(1) Thus the relatively supreme being, or beings, of religion are looked on as prior to Death, therefore, not as ghosts. They are sometimes expressly distinguished as “original gods” from other gods who are secondary, being souls of chiefs. Thus all Tongan gods are Atua, but all Atua are not “original gods”.(2) The word Atua, according to Mr. White, is “A-tu-a”. “A” was the name given to the author of the universe, and signifies: “Am the unlimited in power,” “The Conception,” “the Leader,” “the Beyond All”. “Tua” means “Beyond that which is most distant,” “Behind all matter,” and “Behind every action”. Clearly these conceptions are not more mythical (indeed A does not seem to occur in the myths), nor are they more involved in ghosts, than the unknown absolute of Mr. Herbert Spencer. Yet the word Atua denotes gods who are recognised as ghosts of chiefs, no less than it denotes the supreme existence.(3) These ideas are the metaphysical theology of a race considerably above the lowest level. They lend no assistance to a theory that A was, or was evolved out of, a human ghost, and he is not found in Maori MYTHOLOGY as far as our knowledge goes. But, among the lowest known savages, the Australians, we read that “the Creator was a gigantic black, once on earth, now among the stars”. This is in Gippsland; the deities of the Fuegians and the Blackfoot Indians are also Beings, anthropomorphic, unborn and undying, like Mangarrah, the creative being of the Larrakeah tribe in Australia. “A very good man called Mangarrah lives in the sky.... He made everything” (blacks excepted). He never dies.(4) The Melanesian Vui “never were men,” were “something different,” and “were NOT ghosts”. It is as a Being, not as a Spirit, that the Kurnai deity Munganngaur (Our Father) is described.(5) In short, though Europeans often speak of these divine beings of low savages as “spirits,” it does not appear that the natives themselves advance here the metaphysical idea of spirit. These gods are just BEINGS, anthropomorphic, or (in myth and fable), very often bestial, “theriomorphic”.(6) It is manifest that a divine being envisaged thus need not have been evolved out of the theory of spirits or ghosts, and may even have been prior to the rise of the belief in ghosts.

(1) See Modern Mythology, “Myths of Origin of Death”.

(2) Mariner, ii. 127.

(3) White, Ancient History of the Maoris, vol. i. ; other views in Gill’s Myths of the Pacific. I am not committed to Mr. White’s opinion.

(4) Journal Anthrop. Inst., Nov., 1894, .

(5) Ibid., 1886, .

(6) See Making of Religion, p-210, for a more copious statement.

Again, these powerful, or omnipotent divine beings are looked on as guardians of morality, punishers of sin, rewarders of righteousness, both in this world and in a future life, in places where ghosts, though believed in, ARE NOT WORSHIPPED, NOR IN RECEIPT OF SACRIFICE, and where, great grandfathers being forgotten, ancestral ghosts can scarcely swell into gods. This occurs among Andamanese, Fuegians and Australians, therefore, among non-ghost-worshipping races, ghosts cannot have developed into deities who are not even necessarily spirits. These gods, again, do not receive sacrifice, and thus lack the note of descent from hungry food-craving ghosts. In Australia, indeed, while ghosts are not known to receive any offerings, “the recent custom of providing food for it” — the dead body of a friend— “is derided by the intelligent old aborigines as ‘white fellow’s gammon’”.(1)

(1) Dawson, Australian Aborigines, , 1881.

The Australians possess no chiefs like “Vich Ian Vohr or Chingachgook” whose ghosts might be said to swell into supreme moral deities. “Headmen” they have, leaders of various degrees of authority, but no Vich Ian Vohr, no semi-sacred representative of the tribe.(1) Nor are the ghosts of the Headmen known to receive any particular posthumous attention or worship. Thus it really seems impossible to show proof that Australian gods grew out of Australian ghosts, a subject to which we shall return.

(1) Howitt, Organisation of Australian Tribes, p-113. “Transactions of Royal Society of Victoria,” 1889.

Some supporters of the current theory therefore fall back on the hypothesis that the Australians are sadly degenerate.(1) Chiefs, it is argued, or kings, they once had, and the gods are surviving ghosts of these wholly forgotten potentates. To this we reply that we know not the very faintest trace of Australian degeneration. Sir John Lubbock and Mr. Tylor have correctly argued that the soil of Australia has not yet yielded so much as a fragment of native pottery, nor any trace of native metal work, not a vestige of stone buildings occurs, nor of any work beyond the present native level of culture, unless we reckon weirs for fish-catching. “The Australian boomerang,” writes Mr. Tylor, “has been claimed as derived from some hypothetical high culture, whereas the transition-stages through which it is connected with the club are to be observed in its own country, while no civilised race possesses the weapon.”(2)

(1) See Prof. Menzie’s History of Religion, p, 17, where a singular inconsistency has escaped the author.

(2) Prim. Cult., i. 57, 67.

Therefore the Australian, with his boomerang, represents no degeneration but advance on his ancestors, who had not yet developed the boomerang out of the club. If the excessively complex nature of Australian rules of prohibited degrees be appealed to as proof of degeneration from the stage in which they were evolved, we reply that civilisation everywhere tends not to complicate but to simplify such rules, as it also notoriously simplifies the forms of language.

The Australian people, when discovered, were only emerging from palaeolithic culture, while the neighbouring Tasmanians were frankly palaeolithic.(1) Far from degenerating, the Australians show advance when they supersede their beast or other totem by an eponymous human hero.(2) The eponymous hero, however, changed with each generation, so that no one name was fixed as that of tribal father, later perhaps to become a tribal god. We find several tribes in which the children now follow the FATHER’S class, and thus paternal kin takes the place of the usual early savage method of reckoning kinship by the mother’s side, elsewhere prevalent in Australia. In one of these tribes, dwelling between the Glenelg and Mount Napier, headmanship is hereditary, but nothing is said of any worship of the ghosts of chiefs. All this social improvement denotes advance on the usual Australian standard.(3) Of degeneration (except when produced recently by European vices and diseases) I know no trace in Australia. Their highest religious conceptions, therefore, are not to be disposed of as survivals of a religion of the ghosts of such chiefs as the Australians are not shown ever to have recognised. The “God idea” in Australia, or among the Andamanese, must have some other source than the Ghost-Theory. This is all the more obvious because not only are ghosts not worshipped by the Australians, but also the divine beings who are alleged to form links between the ghost and the moral god are absent. There are no departmental gods, as of war, peace, the chase, love, and so forth. Sun, sky and earth are equally unworshipped. There is nothing in religion between a Being, on one hand (with a son or sons), and vague mischievous spirits, boilyas or mrarts, and ghosts (who are not worshipped), on the other hand. The friends of the idea that the God is an ancient evolution from the ghost of such a chief as is not proved to have existed, must apparently believe that the intermediate stages in religious evolution, departmental gods, nature gods and gods of polytheism in general once existed in Australia, and have all been swept away in a deluge of degeneration. That deluge left in religion a moral, potently active Father and Judge. Now that conception is considerably above the obsolescent belief in an otiose god which is usually found among barbaric races of the type from which the Australians are said to have degenerated. There is no proof of degeneracy, and, if degeneration has occurred, why has it left just the kind of deity who, in the higher barbaric culture, is not commonly found? Clearly this attempt to explain the highest aspect of Australian religion by an undemonstrated degeneration is an effort of despair.

(1) Tylor, preface to Ling Roth's Aborigines of Tasmania, p.-viii.

(2) Kamilaroi and Kurnai, .

(3) Kamilaroi and Kurnai, p, 278.

While the current theory thus appears to break down over the deities of certain Australian tribes and of other low savages to be more particularly described later, it is not more successful in dealing with what we have called the "fault" or break in the religious strata of higher races. The nature of that "fault" may thus be described: While the deities of several low savage peoples are religiously regarded as guardians and judges of conduct both in this life and in the next, among higher barbarians they are often little, or not at all, interested in conduct. Again, while among Australians, and Andamanese, and Fuegians, there is hardly a verifiable trace, if any trace there be, of sacrifice to any divine being, among barbarians the gods beneath the very highest are in receipt even of human sacrifice. Even among barbarians the highest deity is very rarely worshipped with sacrifice. Through various degrees he is found to lose all claim on worship, and even to become a mere name, and finally a jest and a mockery. Meanwhile ancestral ghosts, and gods framed on the same lines as ghosts, receive sacrifice of food and of human victims. Once more, the high gods of low savages are not localised, not confined to any temple or region. But the gods of higher barbarians (the gods beneath the highest), are localised in this way, as occasionally even the highest god also is.

All this shows that, among advancing barbarians, the gods, if they started from the estate of gods among savages on the lowest level, become demoralised, limited, conditioned, relegated to an otiose condition, and finally deposed, till progressive civilisation, as in Greece, reinstates or invents purer and more philosophic conceptions, without being able to abolish popular and priestly myth and ritual.

Here, then, is a flaw or break in the strata of religion. What was the cause of this flaw? We answer, the evolution, through ghosts, of “animistic” gods who retained the hunger and selfishness of these ancestral spirits whom the lowest savages are not known to worship.

The moral divine beings of these lowest races, beings (when religiously regarded) unconditioned, in need of no gift that man can give, are not to be won by offerings of food and blood. Of such offerings ghosts, and gods modelled on ghosts, are notoriously in need. Strengthened and propitiated by blood and sacrifice (not offered to the gods of low savages), the animistic deities will become partisans of their adorers, and will either pay no regard to the morals of their worshippers, or will be easily bribed to forgive sins. Here then is, ethically speaking, a flaw in the strata of religion, a flaw found in the creeds of ghost-worshipping barbarians, but not of non-ghost-worshipping savages. A crowd of venal, easy-going, serviceable deities has now been evolved out of ghosts, and Animism is on its way to supplant or overlay a rude early form of theism. Granting the facts, we fail to see how they are explained by the current theory which makes the highest god the latest in evolution from a ghost. That theory wrecks itself again on the circumstance that, whereas the tribal or national highest divine being, as latest in evolution, ought to be the most potent, he is, in fact, among barbaric races, usually the most disregarded. A new idea, of course, is not necessarily a powerful or fashionable idea. It may be regarded as a “fad,” or a heresy, or a low form of dissent. But, when universally known to and accepted by a tribe or people, then it must be deemed likely to possess great influence. But that is not the case; and among barbaric tribes the most advanced conception of deity is the least regarded, the most obsolete.

An excellent instance of the difference between the theory here advocated, and that generally held by anthropologists, may be found in Mr. Abercromby’s valuable work, Pre-and Proto-Historic Finns, i. 150-154. The gods, and other early ideas, says Mr. Abercromby, “could in no sense be considered as supernatural”. We shall give examples of gods among the races “nearest the beginning,” whose attributes of power and knowledge can not, by us at least, be considered other than “supernatural”. “The gods” (in this hypothesis) “were so human that they could be forced to act in accordance with the wishes of their worshippers, and could likewise be punished.” These ideas, to an Australian black, or an Andamanese, would seem dangerously blasphemous. These older gods “resided chiefly in trees, wells, rivers and animals”. But many gods of our lowest known savages live “beyond the sky”. Mr. Abercromby supposes the sky god to be of later evolution, and to be worshipped after man had exhausted “the helpers that seemed nearest at hand... in the trees and waters at his very door". Now the Australian black has not a door, nor has he gods of any service to him in the "trees and waters," though sprites may lurk in such places for mischief. But in Mr. Abercromby's view, some men turned at last to the sky-god, "who in time would gain a large circle of worshippers". He would come to be thought omnipotent, omniscient, the Creator. This notion, says Mr. Abercromby, "must, if this view is correct, be of late origin". But the view is not correct. The far-seeing powerful Maker beyond the sky is found among the very backward races who have not developed helpers nearer man, dwelling round what would be his door, if door he was civilised enough to possess. Such near neighbouring gods, of human needs, capable of being bullied, or propitiated by sacrifice, are found in races higher than the lowest, who, for their easily procurable aid, have allowed the Maker to sink into an otiose god, or a mere name. Mr. Abercromby unconsciously proves our case by quoting the example of a Samoyede. This man knew a Sky-god, Num; that conception was familiar to him. He also knew a familiar spirit. On Mr. Abercromby's theory he should have resorted for help to the Sky-god, not to the sprite. But he did the reverse: he said, "I cannot approach Num, he is too far away; if I could reach him I should not beseech thee (the familiar spirit), but should go myself; but I cannot". For this precise reason, people who have developed the belief in accessible affable spirits go to them, with a spell to constrain, or a gift to bribe, and neglect, in some cases almost forget, their Maker. But He is worshipped by low savages, who do not propitiate ghosts and who have no gods in wells and trees, close at hand. It seems an obvious inference that the greater God is the earlier evolved.

These are among the difficulties of the current anthropological theory. There is, however, a solution by which the weakness of the divine conception, its neglected, disused aspect among barbaric races, might be explained by anthropologists, without regarding it as an obsolescent form of a very early idea. This solution is therefore in common use. It is applied to the deity revealed in the ancient mysteries of the Australians, and it is employed in American and African instances.

The custom is to say that the highest divine being of American or African native peoples has been borrowed from Europeans, and is, especially, a savage refraction from the God of missionaries. If this can be proved, the shadowy, practically powerless "Master of Life" of certain barbaric peoples, will have degenerated from the Christian conception, because of that conception he will be only a faint unsuccessful refraction. He has been introduced by Europeans, it is argued, but is not in harmony with his new environment, and so is "half-remembered and half forgot".

The hypothesis of borrowing admits of only one answer, but that answer should be conclusive. If we can discover, say in North America, a single instance in which the supreme being occurs, while yet he cannot possibly be accounted for by any traceable or verifiable foreign influence, then the burden of proof, in other cases, falls on the opponent. When he urges that other North American supreme beings were borrowed, we can reply that our crucial example shows that this need not be the fact. To prove that it is the fact, in his instances, is then his business. It is obvious that for information on this subject we must go to the reports of the earliest travellers who knew the Red Indians well. We must try to get at gods behind any known missionary efforts. Mr. Tylor offers us the testimony of Heriot, about 1586, that the natives of Virginia believed in many gods, also in one chief god, "who first made other principal gods, and then the sun, moon and stars as petty gods".(1) Whence could the natives of Virginia have borrowed this notion of a Creator before 1586? If it is replied, in the usual way, that they developed him upwards out of sun, moon and star gods, other principal gods, and finally reached the idea of the Creator, we answer that the idea of the Maker is found where these alleged intermediate stages are NOT found, as in Australia. In Virginia then, as in Victoria, a Creator may have been evolved in some other way than that of gradual ascent from ghosts, and may have been, as in Australia and elsewhere, prior to verifiable ghost-worship. Again, in Virginia at our first settlement, the native priests strenuously resisted the introduction of Christianity. They were content with their deity, Ahone, "the great God who governs all the world, and makes the sun to shine, creating the moon and stars his companions.... The good and peaceable God... needs not to be sacrificed unto, for he intendeth all good unto them." This good Creator, without sacrifice, among a settled agricultural barbaric race sacrificing to other gods and ghosts, manifestly cannot be borrowed from the newly arrived religion of Christianity, which his priests, according to the observer, vigorously resisted. Ahone had a subordinate deity, magisterial in functions, "looking into all men's actions" and punishing the same, when evil. To THIS god sacrifices WERE made, and if his name, Okeus, is derived from Oki = "spirit," he was, of course, an animistic ghost-evolved deity. Anthropological writers, by an oversight, have dwelt on Oki, but have not mentioned Ahone.(2) Manifestly it is not possible to insist that these Virginian high deities were borrowed, without saying whence and when they were borrowed by a barbaric race which was, at the same time, rejecting Christian teaching.

(1) Prim. Cult., ii. 341.

(2) History of Travaile into Virginia, by William Strachey, 1612.

Mr. Tylor writes, with his habitual perspicacity: "It is the widespread belief in the Great Spirit, whatever his precise nature and origin, that has long and deservedly drawn the attention of European thinkers to the native religions of the North American tribes". Now while, in recent times, Christian ideas may undeniably have crystallised round "the Great Spirit," it has come to be thought "that THE WHOLE DOCTRINE of the Great Spirit was borrowed by the savages from missionaries and colonists. But this view will not bear examination," says Mr. Tylor.(1)

(1) Prim. Cult, ii. p, 340 (1873). For some reason, Mr. Tylor modifies this passage in 1891.

Mr. Tylor proceeds to prove this by examples from Greenland, and the Algonkins. He instances the Massachusett God, Kiehtan, who created the other gods, and receives the just into heaven. This was recorded in 1622, but the belief, says Winslow, our authority, goes back into the unknown past. "They never saw Kiehtan, but THEY HOLD IT A GREAT CHARGE AND DUTY THAT ONE AGE TEACH ANOTHER." How could a deity thus rooted in a traditional past be borrowed from recent English settlers?

In these cases the hypothesis of borrowing breaks down, and still more does it break down over the Algonkin deity Atahocan.

Father Le Jeune, S.J., went first among the Algonkins, a missionary pioneer, in 1633, and suffered unspeakable things in his courageous endeavour to win souls in a most recalcitrant flock. He writes (1633): "As this savage has given me occasion to speak of their god, I will remark that it is a great error to think that the savages have no knowledge of any deity. I was surprised to hear this in France. I do not know their secrets, but, from the little which I am about to tell, it will be seen that they have such knowledge.

"They say that one exists whom they call Atahocan, who made the whole. Speaking of God in a wigwam one day, they asked me 'what is God?' I told them that it was He who made all things, Heaven and Earth. They then began to cry out to each other, 'Atahocan! Atahocan! it is Atahocan!'"

There could be no better evidence that Atahocan was NOT (as is often said) "borrowed from the Jesuits". The Jesuits had only just arrived.

Later (1634) Le Jeune interrogated an old man and a partly Europeanised sorcerer. They replied that nothing was certain; that Atahocan was only spoken of as "of a thing so remote," that assurance was impossible. "In fact, their word Nitatohokan means, 'I fable, I tell an old story'."

Thus Atahocan, though at once recognised as identical with the Creator of the missionary, was so far from being the latest thing in religious evolution that he had passed into a proverb for the ancient and the fabulous. This, of course, is inconsistent with RECENT borrowing. He was neglected for Khichikouai, spirits which inspire seers, and are of some practical use, receiving rewards in offerings of grease, says Le Jeune.(1)

(1) Relations, 1633, 1634.

The obsolescent Atahocan seems to have had no moral activity. But, in America, this indolence of God is not universal. Mr. Parkman indeed writes: “In the primitive Indian’s conception of a God, the idea of moral good has no part”.(1) But this is definitely contradicted by Heriot, Strachey, Winslow, already cited, and by Pere Le Jeune. The good attributes of Kiehtan and Ahone were not borrowed from Christianity, were matter of Indian belief before the English arrived. Mr. Parkman writes: “The moment the Indians began to contemplate the object of his faith, and sought to clothe it with attributes, it became finite, and commonly ridiculous”. It did so, as usual, in MYTHOLOGY, but not in RELIGION. There is nothing ridiculous in what is known of Ahone and Kiehtan. If they had a mythology, and if we knew the myths, doubtless they would be ridiculous enough. The savage mind, turned from belief and awe into the spinning of yarns, instantly yields to humorous fancy. As we know, mediaeval popular Christianity, in imagery, marchen or tales, and art, copiously illustrates the same mental phenomenon. Saints, God, our Lord, and the Virgin, all play ludicrous and immoral parts in Christian folk-tales. This is Mythology, and here is, beyond all cavil, a late corruption of Religion. Here, where we know the history of a creed, Religion is early, and these myths are late. Other examples of American divine ideas might be given, such as the extraordinary hymns in which the Zunis address the Eternal, Ahonawilona. But as the Zuni religion has only been studied in recent years, the hymns would be dismissed as “borrowed,” though there is nothing Catholic or Christian about them. We have preferred to select examples where borrowing from Christianity is out of the question. The current anthropological theory is thus confronted with American examples of ideas of the divine which cannot have been borrowed, while, if the gods are said to have been evolved out of ghosts, we reply that, in some cases, they receive no sacrifice, sacrifice being usually a note of ghostly descent. Again, similar gods, as we show, exist where ghosts of chiefs are not worshipped, and as far as evidence goes never were worshipped, because there is no evidence of the existence at any time of such chiefs. The American highest gods may then be equally free from the taint of ghostly descent.

(1) Parkman, The Jesuits in North America. .

There is another more or less moral North American deity whose evolution is rather questionable. Pere Brebeuf (1636), speaking of the Hurons, says that “they have recourse to Heaven in almost all their necessities,... and I may say that it is, in fact, God whom they blindly adore, for they imagine that there is an Oki, that is, a demon, in heaven, who regulates the seasons, bridles the winds and the waves of the sea, and helps them in every need. They dread his wrath, and appeal to him as witness to the inviolability of their faith, when they make a promise or treaty of peace with enemies. ‘Heaven hear us to-day’ is their form of adjuration.”(1)

(1) Relations, 1636, p, 107.

A spiritual being, whose home is heaven, who rides on the winds, whose wrath is dreaded, who sanctions the oath, is only called “a demon” by the prejudice of the worthy father who, at the same time, admits that the savages have a conception of God — and that God, so conceived, is this demon!

The debatable question is, was the “demon,” or the actual expanse of sky, first in evolution? That cannot precisely be settled, but in the analogous Chinese case of China we find heaven (Tien) and “Shang-ti, the personal ruling Deity,” corresponding to the Huron “demon”. Shang-ti, the personal deity, occurs most in the oldest, pre-Confucian sacred documents, and, so far, appears to be the earlier conception. The “demon” in Huron faith may also be earlier than the religious regard paid to his home, the sky.(1) The unborrowed antiquity of a belief in a divine being, creative and sometimes moral, in North America, is thus demonstrated. So far I had written when I accidentally fell in with Mr. Tylor’s essay on “The Limits of Savage Religion”.(2) In that essay, rather to my surprise, Mr. Tylor argues for the borrowing of “The Great Spirit,” “The Great Manitou,” from the Jesuits. Now, as to the phrase, “Great Spirit,” the Jesuits doubtless caused its promulgation, and, where their teaching penetrated, shreds of their doctrine may have adhered to the Indian conception of that divine being. But Mr. Tylor in his essay does not allude to the early evidence, his own, for Oki, Atahocan, Kiehtan, and Torngursak, all undeniably prior to Jesuit influence, and found where Jesuits, later, did not go. As Mr. Tylor offers no reason for disregarding evidence in 1892 which he had republished in a new edition of Primitive Culture in 1891, it is impossible to argue against him in this place. He went on, in the essay cited (1892) to contend that the Australian god of the Kamilaroi of Victoria, Baiame, is, in name and attributes, of missionary introduction. Happily this hypothesis can be refuted, as we show in the following chapter on Australian gods.

(1) See Tylor, Prim. Cult., ii. 362, and Making of Religion, ; also Menzies, History of Religion, p,109, and Dr. Legge’s Chinese Classics, in Sacred Books of the East, vols. iii., xxvii., xxviii.

(2) Journ. of Anthrop. Inst., vol. xxi., 1892.

It would be easy enough to meet the hypothesis of borrowing in the case of the many African tribes who possess something approaching to a rude monotheistic conception. Among these are the Dinkas of the Upper Nile, with their neighbours, whose creed Russegger compares to that of modern Deists in Europe. The Dinka god, Dendid, is omnipotent, but so benevolent that he is not addressed in prayer, nor propitiated by sacrifice. Compare the supreme being of the Caribs, beneficent, otiose, unadored.(1) A similar deity, veiled in the instruction of the as yet unpenetrated Mysteries, exists among the Yao of Central Africa.(2) Of the negro race, Waitz says, "even if we do not call them monotheists, we may still think of them as standing on the boundary of monotheism despite their innumerable rude superstitions".(3) The Tshi speaking people of the Gold Coast have their unworshipped Nyankupon, a now otiose unadored being, with a magisterial deputy, worshipped with many sacrifices. The case is almost an exact parallel to that of Ahone and Oki in America. THESE were not borrowed, and the author has argued at length against Major Ellis's theory of the borrowing from Christians of Nyankupon.(4)

(1) Rochefort, Les Isles Antilles, . Tylor, ii. 337.

(2) Macdonald, Africana, 1, 71, 72, 130, 279-301. Scott, Dictionary of the Manganja Language, Making of Religion, p-238. A contradictory view in Spencer, Ecclesiastical Institutions, .

(3) Anthropologie, ii. 167.

(4) Making of Religion, p-250.

To conclude this chapter, the study of savage and barbaric religions seems to yield the following facts: —

1. Low savages. No regular chiefs. Great beings, not in receipt of sacrifice, sanctioning morality. Ghosts are not worshipped, though believed in. Polytheism, departmental gods and gods of heaven, earth, sky and so forth, have not been developed or are not found.

2. Barbaric races. Aristocratic or monarchic. Ghosts are worshipped and receive sacrifice. Polytheistic gods are in renown and receive sacrifice. There is usually a supreme Maker who is, in some cases, moral, in others otiose. In only one or two known cases (as in that of the Polynesian Taaroa) is he in receipt of sacrifice.

3. Barbaric races. (Zulus, monarchic with Unkulunkulu; some Algonquins (feebly aristocratic) with Atahocan). Religion is mainly ancestor worship or vague spirit worship; ghosts are propitiated with food. There are traces of an original divine being whose name is becoming obsolescent and a matter of jest.

4. Early civilisations. Monarchic or aristocratic. (Greece, Egypt, India, Peru, Mexico.) Polytheism. One god tends to be supreme. Religiously regarded, gods are moral; in myth are the reverse. Gods are in receipt of sacrifice. Heavenly society is modelled on that of men, monarchic or aristocratic. Philosophic

thought tends towards belief in one pure god, who may be named Zeus, in Greece.

5. The religion of Israel. Probably a revival and purification of the old conception of a moral, beneficent creator, whose creed had been involved in sacrifice and anthropomorphic myth.

In all the stages thus roughly sketched, myths of the lowest sort prevail, except in the records of the last stage, where the documents have been edited by earnest monotheists.

If this theory be approximately correct, man’s earliest religious ideas may very well have consisted, in a sense, of dependence on a supreme moral being who, when attempts were made by savages to describe the modus of his working, became involved in the fancies of mythology. How this belief in such a being arose we have no evidence to prove. We make no hint at a sensus numinis, or direct revelation.

While offering no hypothesis of the origin of belief in a moral creator we may present a suggestion. Mr. Darwin says about early man: “The same high mental faculties which first led man to believe in unseen spiritual agencies, then in fetichism, polytheism and ultimately monotheism, would infallibly lead him, so long as his reasoning powers remained poorly developed, to various strange superstitions and customs”.(1) Now, accepting Mr. Darwin’s theory that early man had “high mental faculties,” the conception of a Maker of things does not seem beyond his grasp. Man himself made plenty of things, and could probably conceive of a being who made the world and the objects in it. “Certainly there must be some Being who made all these things. He must be very good too,” said an Eskimo to a missionary.(2) The goodness is inferred by the Eskimo from his own contentment with “the things which are made”.(3)

(1) Darwin, Descent of Man, i. .

(2) Cranz, i. 199.

(3) Romans, i. 19.

Another example of barbaric man “seeking after God” may be adduced.

What the Greenlander said is corroborated by what a Kaffir said. Kaffir religion is mainly animistic, ancestral spirits receive food and sacrifice — there is but an evanescent tradition of a “Lord in Heaven”. Thus a very respectable Kaffir said to M. Arbrousset, “your tidings (Christianity) are what I want; and I was seeking before I knew you.... I asked myself sorrowful questions. ‘Who has touched the stars with his hands?... Who makes the waters flow?... Who can have given earth the wisdom and power to produce corn?’ Then I buried my face in my hands.”

“This,” says Sir John Lubbock, “was, however, an exceptional case. As a general rule savages do not set themselves to think out such questions."(1)

(1) Origin of Civilisation, .

As a common fact, if savages never ask the question, at all events, somehow, they have the answer ready made. "Mangarrah, or Baiame, Puluga, or Dendid, or Ahone, or Ahonawilona, or Atahocan, or Taaroa, or Tui Laga, was the maker." Therefore savages who know that leave the question alone, or add mythical accretions. But their ancestors must have asked the question, like the "very respectable Kaffir" before they answered it.

Having reached the idea of a Creator, it was not difficult to add that he was "good," or beneficent, and was deathless.

A notion of a good powerful Maker, not subject to death because necessarily prior to Death (who only invaded the world late), seems easier of attainment than the notion of Spirit which, ex hypothesi, demands much delicate psychological study and hard thought. The idea of a Good Maker, once reached, becomes, perhaps, the germ of future theism, but, as Mr. Darwin says, the human mind was "infallibly led to various strange superstitions". As St. Paul says, in perfect agreement with Mr. Darwin on this point, "they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened".

Among other imaginations (right or wrong) was the belief in spirits, with all that followed in the way of instituting sacrifices, even of human beings, and of dropping morality, about which the ghost of a deceased medicine-man was not likely to be much interested. The supposed nearness to man, and the venal and partial character of worshipped gods and ghost-gods, would inevitably win for them more service and attention than would be paid to a Maker remote, unbought and impartial. Hence the conception of such a Being would tend to obsolescence, as we see that it does, and would be most obscured where ghosts were most propitiated, as among the Zulus. Later philosophy would attach the spiritual conception to the revived or newly discovered idea of the supreme God.

In all this speculation there is nothing mystical; no supernatural or supernormal interference is postulated. Supernormal experiences may have helped to originate or support the belief in spirits, that, however, is another question. But this hypothesis of the origin of belief in a good unceasing Maker of things is, of course, confessedly a conjecture, for which historical evidence cannot be given, in the nature of the case. All our attempts to discover origins far behind history must be conjectural. Their value must be estimated by the extent to which this or that hypothesis colligates the facts. Now our hypothesis does colligate the facts. It shows how belief in a moral supreme being might arise before ghosts were worshipped, and it accounts for the flaw in the religious strata, for the mythical accretions, for the otiose Creator in the background of many barbaric religions, and for the almost universal absence of sacrifice to the God relatively supreme. He was, from his earliest conception, in no need of gifts from men.

On this matter of otiose supreme gods, Professor Menzies writes, “It is very common to find in savage beliefs a vague far-off god, who is at the back of all the others, takes little part in the management of things, and receives little worship. But it is impossible to judge what that being was at an earlier time; he may have been a nature god, or a spirit who has by degrees grown faint, and come to occupy this position.”

Now the position which he occupies is usually, if not universally, that of the Creator. He could not arrive at this rank by “becoming faint,” nor could “a nature-god” be the Maker of Nature. The only way by which we can discover “what that being was at an earlier time” is to see what he IS at an earlier time, that is to say, what the conception of him is, among men in an earlier state of culture. Among them, as we show, he is very much more near, potent and moral, than among races more advanced in social evolution and material culture. We can form no opinion as to the nature of such “vague, far-off gods, at the back of all the others,” till we collect and compare examples, and endeavour to ascertain what points they have in common, and in what points they differ from each other. It then becomes plain that they are least far away, and most potent, where there is least ghostly and polytheistic competition, that is, among the most backward races. The more animism the less theism, is the general rule. Manifestly the current hypothesis — that all religion is animistic in origin — does not account for these facts, and is obliged to fly to an undemonstrated theory of degradation, or to an undemonstrated theory of borrowing. That our theory is inconsistent with the general doctrine of evolution we cannot admit, if we are allowed to agree with Mr. Darwin’s statement about the high mental faculties which first led man to sympathetic, and then to wild beliefs. We do not pretend to be more Darwinian than Mr. Darwin, who compares “these miserable and indirect results of our higher faculties” to “the occasional mistakes of the instincts of the lower animals”.

The opinion here maintained, namely, that a germ of pure belief may be detected amidst the confusion of low savage faith, and that in a still earlier stage it may have been less overlaid with fable, is in direct contradiction to current theories. It is also in contradiction with the opinions entertained by myself before I made an independent examination of the evidence. Like others, I was inclined to regard reports of a moral Creator, who observes conduct, and judges it even in the next life, as rumours due either to Christian influence, or to mistake. I well know, however, and could, and did, discount the sources of error.

I was on my guard against the twin fallacies of describing all savage religion as “devil worship,” and of expecting to find a primitive “divine tradition”. I was also on my guard against the modern bias derived from the “ghost-theory,” and Mr. Spencer’s works, and I kept an eye on opportunities of “borrowing”.(1) I had, in fact, classified all known idola in the first edition of this work, such as the fallacy of leading questions and the chance of deliberate deception. I sought the earliest evidence, prior to any missionary teaching, and the evidence of what the first missionaries found, in the way of belief, on their arrival. I preferred the testimony of the best educated observers, and of those most familiar with native languages. I sought for evidence in native hymns (Maori, Zuni, Dinka, Red Indian) and in native ceremonial and mystery, as these sources were least likely to be contaminated.

(1) Making of Religion, .

On the other side, I found a vast body of testimony that savages had no religion at all. But that testimony, en masse, was refuted by Roskoff, and also, in places, by Tylor. When three witnesses were brought to swear that they saw the Irishman commit a crime, he offered to bring a dozen witnesses who did NOT see him. Negative evidence of squatters, sailors and colonists, who did NOT see any religion among this or that race, is not worth much against evidence of trained observers and linguists who DID find what the others missed, and who found more the more they knew the tribe in question. Again, like others, I thought savages incapable of such relatively pure ideas as I now believe some of them to possess. But I could not resist the evidence, and I abandoned my a priori notions. The evidence forcibly attests gradations in the central belief. It is found in various shades, from relative potency down to a vanishing trace, and it is found in significant proportion to the prevalence of animistic ideas, being weakest where they are most developed, strongest where they are least developed. There must be a reason for these phenomena, and that reason, as it seems to me, is the overlaying and supersession of a rudely Theistic by an animistic creed. That one cause would explain, and does colligate, all the facts.

There remains a point on which misconception proves to be possible. It will be shown, contrary to the current hypothesis, that the religion of the lowest races, in its highest form, sanctions morality. That morality, again, in certain instances, demands unselfishness. Of course we are not claiming for that doctrine any supernatural origin. Religion, if it sanctions ethics at all, will sanction those which the conscience accepts, and those ethics, in one way or other, must have been evolved. That the “cosmical” law is “the weakest must go to the wall” is generally conceded. Man, however, is found trying to reverse the law, by equal and friendly dealing (at least within what is vaguely called “the tribe”). His religion, as in Australia, will be shown to insist on this unselfishness. How did he evolve his ethics?

“Be it little or be it much they get,” says Dampier about the Australians in 1688, “every one has his part, as well the young and tender as the old and feeble, who are not able to get abroad as the strong and lusty.” This conduct reverses the cosmical process, and notoriously civilised society, Christian society, does not act on these principles. Neither do the savages, who knock the old and feeble on the head, or deliberately leave them to starve, act on these principles, sanctioned by Australian religion, but (according to Mr. Dawson) NOT carried out in Australian practice. “When old people become infirm... it is lawful and customary to kill them.”(1)

(1) Australian Aborigines, .

As to the point of unselfishness, evolutionists are apt to account for it by common interest. A tribe in which the strongest monopolise what is best will not survive so well as an unselfish tribe in the struggle for existence. But precisely the opposite is true, aristocracy marks the more successful barbaric races, and an aristocratic slave-holding tribe could have swept Australia as the Zulus swept South Africa. That aristocracy and acquisition of separate property are steps in advance on communistic savagery all history declares. Therefore a tribe which in Australia developed private property, and reduced its neighbours to slavery, would have been better fitted to survive than such a tribe as Dampier describes.

This is so evident that probably, or possibly, the Dampier state of society was not developed in obedience to a recognised tribal interest, but in obedience to an affectionate instinct. “Ils s’entr’ aiment les une les autres,” says Brebeuf of the Hurons.(1) “I never heard the women complain of being left out of feasts, or that the men ate the best portions... every one does his business sweetly, peaceably, without dispute. You never see disputes, quarrels, hatred, or reproach among them.” Brebeuf then tells how a young Indian stranger, in a time of want, stole the best part of a moose. “They did not rage or curse, they only bantered him, and yet to take our meat was almost to take our lives.” Brebeuf wanted to lecture the lad; his Indian host bade him hold his peace, and the stranger was given hospitality, with his wife and children. “They are very generous, and make it a point not to attach themselves to the goods of this world.” “Their greatest reproach is ‘that man wants everything, he is greedy’. They support, with never a murmur, widows, orphans and old men, yet they kill hopeless or troublesome invalids, and their whole conduct to Europeans was the reverse of their domestic behaviour.”

(1) Relations, 1634, .

Another example of savage unselfish ethics may be found in Mr. Mann’s account of the Andaman Islanders, a nomad race, very low in culture. “It is a noteworthy trait, and one which deserves high commendation, that every care and consideration are paid by all classes to the very young, the weak, the aged, and the helpless, and these being made special objects of interest and attention, invariably fare better in regard to the comforts and necessaries of daily life than any of the otherwise more fortunate members of the community.”(1)

(1) J. A. I., xii. .

Mr. Huxley, in his celebrated Romanes Lecture on “Evolution and Morality,” laid stress on man’s contravention of the cosmic law, “the weakest must go to the wall”. He did not explain the evolution of man’s opposition to this law. The ordinary evolutionist hypothesis, that the tribe would prosper most whose members were least self-seeking, is contradicted by all history. The overbearing, “grabbing,” aristocratic, individualistic, unscrupulous races beat the others out of the field. Mr. Huxley, indeed, alleged that the “influence of the cosmic process in the evolution of society is the greater the more rudimentary its civilisation. Social progress means a checking of the cosmic process at every step and the substitution for it of another, which may be called the ethical process.... As civilisation has advanced, so has the extent of this interference increased....”(1) But where, in Europe, is the interference so marked as among the Andamanese? We have still to face the problem of the generosity of low savages.

(1) Ethics of Evolution, p-84.

It is conceivable that the higher ethics of low savages rather reflect their emotional instincts than arise from tribal legislation which is supposed to enable a “tribe” to prosper in the struggle for existence. As Brebeuf and Dampier, among others, prove, savages often set a good example to Christians, and their ethics are, in certain cases, as among the Andamanese and Fuegians, and, probably among the Yao, sanctioned by their religion. But, as Mr. Tylor says, “the better savage social life seems but in unstable equilibrium, liable to be easily upset by a touch of distress, temptation, or violence”.(1) Still, religion does its best, in certain cases, to lend equilibrium; though all the world over, religion often fails in practice.

(1) Prim. Cult., i. 51.

VOLUME II

CHAPTER XII. GODS OF THE LOWEST RACES.

Savage religion mysterious — Why this is so — Australians in 1688 — Sir John Lubbock — Roskoff — Evidence of religion — Mr. Manning — Mr. Howitt — Supreme beings — Mr. Tylor's theory of borrowing — Reply — Morality sanctioned — Its nature — Satirical rite— "Our Father" — Mr. Ridley on a creator — Mr. Langloh Parker — Dr. Roth — Conclusion — Australians' religious.

The Science of Anthropology can speak, with some confidence, on many questions of Mythology. Materials are abundant and practically undisputed, because, as to their myths, savage races have spoken out with freedom. Myth represents, now the early scientific, now the early imaginative and humorous faculty, playing freely round all objects of thought: even round the Superhuman beings of belief. But, as to his Religion, the savage by no means speaks out so freely. Religion represents his serious mood of trust, dependence or apprehension.

In certain cases the ideas about superhuman Makers and judges are veiled in mysteries, rude sketches of the mysteries of Greece, to which the white man is but seldom admitted. In other cases the highest religious conceptions of the people are in a state of obsolescence, are subordinated to the cult of accessible minor deities, and are rarely mentioned. While sacrifice or service again is done to the lower objects of faith (ghosts or gods developed out of ghosts) the Supreme Being, in a surprising number of instances, is wholly unpropitiated. Having all things, he needs nothing (at all events gets nothing) at men's hands except obedience to his laws; being good, he is not feared; or being obsolescent (superseded, as it seems, by deities who can be bribed) he has shrunk to the shadow of a name. Of the gods too good and great to need anything, the Ahone of the Red Men in Virginia, or the Dendid of the African Dinkas, is an example. Of the obsolescent god, now but a name, the Atahocan of the Hurons was, while the "Lord in heaven" of the Zulus is, an instance. Among the relatively supreme beings revealed only in the mysteries, the gods of many Australian tribes are deserving of observation.

For all these reasons, mystery, absence of sacrifice or idol, and obsolescence, the Religion of savages is a subject much more obscure than their mythology. The truth is that anthropological inquiry is not yet in a position to be dogmatic; has not yet knowledge sufficient for a theory of the Origins of Religion, and the evolution of belief from its lowest stages and earliest germs. Nevertheless such a theory has been framed, and has been already stated.

We formulated the objections to this current hypothesis, and observed that its defenders must take refuge in denying the evidence as to low savage religions, or, if the facts be accepted, must account for them by a theory of degradation, or by a theory of borrowing from Christian sources. That the Australians are not degenerate we demonstrated, and we must now give reasons for holding that their religious conceptions are not borrowed from Europeans.

The Australians, when observed by Dampier on the North-west Coast in 1688, seemed "the miserablest people in the world," without houses, agriculture, metals, or domesticated animals.* In this condition they still remain, when not under European influence. Dampier, we saw, noted peculiarities: "Be it little or much they get, every one has his part, as well the young and tender as the old and feeble, who are not able to go abroad, as the strong and lusty". This kind of justice or generosity, or unselfishness, is still inculcated in the religious mysteries of some of the race. Generosity is certainly one of the native's leading features. He is always accustomed to give a share of his food, or of what he may possess, to his fellows. It may be, of course, objected to this that in doing so he is only following an old-established custom, the breaking of which would expose him to harsh treatment and to being looked on as a churlish fellow. It will, however, be hardly denied that, as this custom expresses the idea that, in this particular matter, every one is supposed to act in a kindly way towards certain individuals: the very existence of such a custom, even if it be only carried out in the hope of securing at some time a *quid pro quo*, shows that the native is alive to the fact that an action which benefits some one else is worthy to be performed....

** Early Voyages to Australia, p-111. Hakluyt Society.*

It is with the native a fixed habit to give away part of what he has."* The authors of this statement do not say that the duty is inculcated, in Central Australia, under religious sanction, in the tribal mysteries. This, however, is the case among the Kurnai, and some tribes of Victoria and New South Wales.** Since Dampier found the duty practised as early as 1688, it will scarcely be argued that the natives adopted this course of what should be Christian conduct from their observations of Christian colonists.

The second point which impressed Dampier was that men and women, old and young, all lacked the two front upper teeth. Among many tribes of the natives of New South Wales and Victoria, the boys still have their front teeth knocked out, when initiated, but the custom does not prevail (in ritual) where circumcision and another very painful rite are practised, as in Central Australia and Central Queensland.

Dampier’s evidence shows how little the natives have changed in two hundred years. Yet evidence of progress may be detected, perhaps, as we have already shown. But one fact, perhaps of an opposite bearing, must be noted. A singular painting, in a cave, of a person clothed in a robe of red, reaching to the feet, with sleeves, and with a kind of halo (or set of bandages) round the head, remains a mystery, like similar figures with blue halos or bandages, clothed and girdled. None of the figures had mouths; otherwise, in Sir George Grey’s sketches, they have a remote air of Cimabue’s work.*** These designs were by men familiar with clothing, whether their own, or that of strangers observed by them, though in one case an unclothed figure carries a kangaroo. At present the natives draw with much spirit, when provided with European materials, as may be seen in Mrs. Langloh Parker’s two volumes of *Australian Legendary Tales*. Their decorative patterns vary in character in different parts of the continent, but nowhere do they now execute works like those in the caves discovered by Sir George Grey. The reader must decide for himself how far these monuments alone warrant an inference of great degeneration in Australia, or are connected with religion.

** Spencer and Gillen, Natives of Central Australia, .*

*** Howitt, Journal Anthrop. Inst., 1885, .*

**** Grey’s Journals of Expeditions of Discovery in North-West and Western Australia, in the years 1837-39, vol i., p-263. Sir George regarded the pictures as perhaps very ancient. The natives “chaffed” him when he asked for traditions on the subject.*

Such are the Australians, men without kings or chiefs, and what do we know of their beliefs?

The most contradictory statements about their religion may be found in works of science Mr. Huxley declared that “their theology is a mere belief in the existence, powers and dispositions (usually malignant) of ghost-like entities who may be propitiated or scared away; but no cult can be properly said to exist. And in this stage theology is wholly independent of ethics.” This, he adds, is “theology in its simplest condition”.

In a similar sense, Sir John Lubbock writes: “The Australians have no idea of creation, nor do they use prayers; they have no religious forms, ceremonies or worship. They do not believe in the existence of a Deity, nor is morality in any way connected with their religion, if it can be so called."*

** Lubbock, Origin of Civilisation, ,1870. In 1889, for "a deity" "a true Deity".*

This remark must be compared with another in the same work (1882,). "Mr. Ridley, indeed,... states that they have a traditional belief in one supreme Creator, called Baiamai, but he admits that most of the witnesses who were examined before the Select Committee appointed by the Legislative Council of Victoria in 1858 to report on the Aborigines, gave it as their opinion that the natives had no religious ideas. It appears, moreover, from a subsequent remark, that Baiamai only possessed 'traces' of the three attributes of the God of the Bible, Eternity, Omnipotence and Goodness".*

** Cf. J. A. I., 1872, 257-271.*

Mr. Ridley, an accomplished linguist who had lived with wild blacks in 1854-58, in fact, said long ago, that the Australian *Bora*, or Mystery, "involves the idea of dedication to God ". He asked old Billy Murri Bundur whether men *worshipped* Baiame at the Bora? "Of course they do," said Billy. Mr. Ridley, to whose evidence we shall return, was not the only affirmative witness. Archdeacon Gunther had no doubt that Baiame was equivalent to the Supreme Being, "a remnant of original traditions," and it was Mr. Günther, not Mr. Ridley, who spoke of "traces" of Baiame's eternity, omnipotence and goodness. Mr. Ridley gave similar reports from evidence collected by the committee of 1858. He found the higher creeds most prominent in the interior, hundreds of miles from the coast.

Apparently the reply of Gustav Roskoff to Sir John Lubbock (1880) did not alter that writer's opinion. Roskoff pointed out that Waitz-Gerland, while denying that Australian beliefs were derived from any higher culture, denounced the theory that they have no religion as "entirely false". "Belief in a Good Being is found in South Australia, New South Wales, and the centre of the south-eastern continent."* The opinion of Waitz is highly esteemed, and that not merely because, as Mr. Max Müller has pointed out, he has edited Greek classical works. *Avec du Grec on nepeut gâter rien*. Mr. Oldfield, in addition to bogles and a water-spirit, found Biam (Baiame) and Namba-jundi, who admits souls into his Paradise, while Warnyura torments the bad under earth.** Mr. Eyre, publishing in 1845, gives Baiame (on the Morrum-bidgee, Biam; on the Murray, Biam-Vaitch-y) as a source of songs sung at dances, and a cause of disease. He is deformed, sits cross-legged, or paddles a canoe. On the Murray he found a creator, Noorele, "all powerful, and of benevolent character," with three unborn sons, dwelling "up among the clouds". Souls of dead natives join them in the skies. Nevertheless "the natives, as far as yet can be ascertained, have no religious belief or ceremonies”; and, though Noorele is credited with “the origin of creation,” “he made the earth, trees, water, etc.,” a deity, or Great First Cause, “can hardly be said to be acknowledged”.***

** Waitz-Gerland, Anthropologic, vi. 794 et seq.*

*** Oldfield, Translations of Ethnol. Soc., iii. 208. On this evidence I lay no stress.*

**** Eyre, Journals, ii. p-358.*

Such are the consistent statements of Mr. Eyre! Roskoff also cites Mr. Ridley, Braim, Cunningham, Dawson, and other witnesses, as opposed to Sir John Lubbock, and he includes Mr. Tylor.* Mr. Tylor, later, found Baiame, or Pei-a-mei, no earlier in literature than about 1840, in Mr. Hale’s *United States Exploring Expedition?* Previous to that date, Baiame, it seems, was unknown to Mr. Threlkeld, whose early works are of 1831-1857. He only speaks of Koin, a kind of goblin, and for lack of a native name for God, Mr. Threlkeld tried to introduce Jehova-ka-biruê, and Eloi, but failed. Mr. Tylor, therefore, appears to suppose that the name, Baiame, and, at all events, his divine qualities, were introduced by missionaries, apparently between 1831 and 1840.*** To this it must be replied that Mr. Hale, about 1840, writes that “when the missionaries first came to Wellington” (Mr. Threlkeld’s own district) “Baiame was worshipped there with songs”. “These songs or hymns, *according to Mr. Threlkeld*, were passed on from a considerable distance. It is notorious that songs and dances are thus passed on, till they reach tribes who do not even know the meaning of the words.”****

** Roskoff, Das Religionstoesen der Rohesten Naturvolher, pp. 37-41.*

*** Ethnology and Philology, . 1846.*

**** Tylor, The Limits of Savage Religion, J. A. I., vol. xxi. 1892.*

***** Roth, Natives of N.-W. Central Queensland, .*

In this way Baiame songs had reached Wellington before the arrival of the missionaries, and for this fact Mr. Threlkeld (who is supposed not to have known Baiame) is Mr. Hale’s authority. In Mr. Tylor’s opinion (as I understand it) the word Baiame was the missionary translation of our word “Creator,” and derived from *Baia* “to make”. Now, Mr. Ridley says that Mr. Greenway “discovered” this *baia* to be the root of Baiame. But what missionary introduced the word before 1840? Not Mr. Threlkeld, for he (according to Mr. Tylor), did not know the word, and he tried Eloi, and Jehova-ka-biru£, while Immanueli was also tried and also failed* Baiame, known in 1840, does not occur in a missionary primer before Mr. Ridley’s *Gurre Kamilaroi* (1856), so the missionary primer did not launch Baiame before the missionaries came to Wellington. According to Mr. Hale, the Baiame songs were brought by blacks from a distance (we know how Greek mysteries were also *colportés* to new centres), and the yearly rite had, in 1840, been for three years in abeyance. Moreover, the etymology, *Baia* “to make” has a competitor in “Byamee = Big Man”.** Thus Baiame, as a divine being, preceded the missionaries, and is not a word of missionary manufacture, while sacred words really of missionary manufacture do not find their way into native tradition. Mr. Hale admits that the ideas about Baiame may “possibly” be of European origin, though the great reluctance of the blacks to adopt any opinion from Europeans makes against that theory.***

It may be said that, if Baiame was premissionary, his higher attributes date after Mr. Ridley’s labours, abandoned for lack of encouragement in 1858. In 1840, Mr. Hale found Baiame located in an isle of the seas, like Circe, living on fish which came to his call. Some native theologians attributed Creation to his Son, Burambin, the Demiurge, a common savage form of Gnosticism.

On the nature of Baiame, we have, however, some curious early evidence of 1844-45. Mr. James Manning, in these years, and earlier, lived “near the outside boundaries of settlers to the south”. A conversation with Goethe, when the poet was eighty-five, induced him to study the native beliefs. “No missionaries,” he writes, “ever came to the southern district at any time, and it was not till many years later that they landed in Sydney on their way to Moreton Bay, to attempt, in vain, to Christianise the blacks of that locality, before the Queensland separation from this colony took place.” Mr. Manning lost his notes of 1845, but recovered a copy from a set lent to Lord Audley, and read them, in November, 1882, to the Royal Society of New South Wales. The notes are of an extraordinary character, and Mr. Manning, perhaps unconsciously, exaggerated their Christian analogies, by adopting Christian terminology. Dean Cowper, however, corroborated Mr. Manning’s general opinion, by referring to evidence of Archdeacon Gunther, who sent a grammar, with remarks on “Bhaime, or Bhaiame,” from Wellington to Mr. Max Müller. “He received his information, he told me, from some of the oldest blacks, who, he was satisfied, could not have derived their ideas from white men, as they had not then had intercourse with them.” Old savages are not apt to be in a hurry to borrow European notions. Mr. Manning also averred that he obtained his information with the greatest difficulty. “They required such secrecy on my part, and seemed so afraid of being heard even in the most secret places, that, in one or two cases, I have seen them almost tremble in speaking.” One native, after carefully examining doors and windows, “stood in a wooden fireplace, and spoke in a tone little above a whisper, and confirmed what I had before heard”. Another stipulated that silence must be observed, otherwise the European hands might question his wife, in which case he would be obliged to kill her. Mr. Howitt also found that the name of Darumulun (in religion) is too sacred to be spoken except almost in whispers, while the total exclusion of women from mysteries and religious knowledge, on pain of death, is admitted to be universal among the tribes.* Such secrecy, so widely diffused, is hardly compatible with humorous imposture by the natives.

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* *Ridley, speaking of 1855. Lang’s Queensland, .*

** *Mrs. Langloh Parker, More Australian Legendary Tales. 1898. Glossary.*

*** *Op. cit., .*

There is an element of humour in all things. Mr. Manning, in 1882, appealed to his friend, Mr. Mann, to give testimony to the excellency of Black Andy, the native from whom he derived most of his notes, which were corroborated by other black witnesses. Mr. Mann arose and replied that “he had never met one aborigine who had any true belief in a Supreme Being”. On cross-examination, they always said that they had got their information from a missionary or other resident. Black Andy was not alluded to by Mr. Mann, who regarded all these native religious ideas as filtrations from European sources. Mr. Palmer, on the other hand, corroborated Mr. Manning, who repeated the expression of his convictions.** Such, then, is the perplexed condition of the evidence.

** Howitt,.7. A. I., xiii. 193.*

*** Mr. Mann told a story of native magic, viewed by himself, which might rouse scepticism among persons not familiar with what these conjurers can do.*

It may be urged that the secrecy and timidity of Mr. Manning’s informants, corresponding with Mr. Howitt’s experience, makes for the affirmative side; that, in 1845, when Mr. Manning made his notes, missionaries were scarce, and that a native “cross-examined” by the sceptical and jovial Mr. Mann, would probably not contradict. (Lubbock, O. of C. .) Confidence is only won by sympathy, and one inquirer will get authentic legends and folklore from a Celt, while another of the ordinary English type will totally fail On this point Mr. Manning says: “Sceptics should consider how easy it might be for intelligent men to pass almost a lifetime among the blacks in any quarter of this continent without securing the confidence even of the best of the natives around them, through whom they might possibly become acquainted with their religious secrets, secrets which they dare not reveal to their own women at all, nor to their adult youths until the latter have been sworn to reticence under that terrifying ceremony which my notes describe”. In the same way Mrs. Langloh Parker found that an European neighbour would ask, “but have the blacks any legends?” and we have cited Mr. Hartt on the difficulty of securing legends on the Amazon, while Mr. Sproat had to live long among, and become very intimate with, the tribes of British Columbia, before he could get any information about their beliefs. Thus, the present writer is disinclined to believe that the intelligence offered to Mr. Manning with shy secrecy in 1845 was wholly a native copy of recently acquired hints on religion derived from Europeans, especially as Mr. Howitt, who had lived long among the Kurnai, and had written copiously on them, knew nothing of their religion, before, about 1882, he was initiated and admitted to the knowledge like that of Mr. Manning in 1845 The theory of borrowing is also checked by the closely analogous savage beliefs reported from North America before a single missionary had arrived, and from Africa. For the Australian, African and American ideas have a common point of contact, not easily to be explained as deduced from Christianity. According, then, to Mr. Manning, the natives believed in a being called Boyma, who dwells in heaven, “immovably fixed in a crystal rock, with only the upper half of a supernatural body visible”. Now, about 1880, a native described Baiame to Mr. Howitt as “a very great old man with a beard,” and with crystal pillars growing out of his shoulders which prop up a supernal sky. This vision of Baiame was seen by the native, apparently as a result of the world-wide practice of crystal-gazing.* Mr. Tylor suspects “the old man with the beard” as derived from Christian artistic representations, but old men are notoriously the most venerated objects among the aborigines. Turning now to Mrs. Langloh Parker’s *More Australian Legendary Tales* (), we find Byamee “fixed to the crystal rock on which he sat in Bullimah” (Paradise). Are we to suppose that some savage caught at Christian teaching, added this feature of the crystal rock from “the glassy sea” of the Apocalpyse, or from the great white throne, and succeeded in securing wide acceptance and long persistence for a notion borrowed from Europeans? Is it likely that the chief opponents of Christianity everywhere, the Wirreenuns or sorcerers, would catch at the idea, introduce it into the conservative ritual of the Mysteries, and conceal it from women and children who are as open as adults to missionary influence? Yet from native women and children the belief is certainly concealed.

* *J. A. I., xvi. , 60.*

Mr. Manning, who prejudices his own case by speaking of Boyma as “the Almighty,” next introduces us to a “Son of God” equal to the father as touching his omniscience, and otherwise but slightly inferior. Mr. Eyre had already reported on the unborn sons of Noorele, “there is no mother”. The son of Boyma’s name is Grogoragally. He watches over conduct, and takes the good to Ballima (Bullimah in Mrs. Langloh Parker), the bad to Oorooma, the place of fire (gumby). Mr. Eyre had attested similar ideas of future life of the souls with Noorele. (Eyre, ii. 357.) In Mrs. Langloh Parker’s book a Messenger is called “the All-seeing Spirit,” apparently identical with her Wallahgooroonbooan, whose voice is heard in the noise of the *tundun*, or bull-roarer, used in the Mysteries.*

* *More Legendary Tales, .*

Grogoragally is unborn of any mother. He is represented by Mr. Manning as a mediator between Boyma and the race of men. Here our belief is apt to break down, and most people will think that Black Andy was a well-instructed Christian catechumen. This occurred to Mr. Manning, who put it plainly to Andy. He replied that the existence of names in the native language for the sacred persons and places proved that they were not of European origin. “White fellow no call budgery place (paradise) ‘Ballima,’ or other place ‘Oorooma,’ nor God ‘Boyma,’ nor Son ‘Grogoragally,’ only we black fellow think and call them that way in our own language, before white fellow came into the country.” A son or deputy of the chief divine being is, in fact, found among the Kurnai and in other tribes. He directs the mysteries. Here, then, Andy is backed by Mr. Howitt’s aboriginal friends. Their deity sanctioned morality “before the white men came to Melbourne” (1835) and was called “Our Father” at the same date.* Several old men insisted on this, as a matter of their own knowledge. They were initiated before the arrival of Europeans. Archdeacon Gunther received the same statements from old aborigines, and Mr. Palmer, speaking of other notions of tribes of the North, is perfectly satisfied that none of their ideas were derived from the whites.** In any case, Black Andy’s intelligence and logic are far beyond what most persons attribute to his race. If we disbelieve him, it must be on the score, I think, that he consciously added European ideas to names of native origin. On the other hand, analogous ideas, not made so startling as in Mr. Manning’s Christian terminology, are found in many parts of Australia.

* *J. A., xiii. , 193,*

*** Op. cit., .*

Mr. Manning next cites Moodgeegally, the first man, immortal, a Culture Hero, and a messenger of Boyma's. There are a kind of rather mediaeval fiends, Waramolong, who punish the wicked (murderers, liars and breakers of marriage laws) in Gumby. Women do not go to Ballima, Boyma being celibate, and women know nothing of all these mysteries; certainly this secrecy is not an idea of Christian origin. If women get at the secret, the whole race must be exterminated, men going mad and slaying each other. This notion we shall see is corroborated. But if missionaries taught the ideas, women must know all about them already. Mr. Manning's information was confirmed by a black from 300 miles away, who called Grogoragally by the name of Boymagela. There are no prayers, except for the dead at burial: corroborated by Mrs. Langloh Parker's beautiful Legend of Eerin. "Byamee," the mourners cry, "let in the spirit of Eerin to Bullimah. Save him from Eleanbah wundah, abode of the wicked. For Eerin was faithful on earth, faithful to the laws you left us!"* The creed is taught to boys when initiated, with a hymn which Mr. Manning's informant dared not to reveal. He said angrily that Mr. Manning already knew more than any other white man. Now, to invent a hymn could not have been beyond the powers of this remarkable savage, Black Andy. The "Sons" of Baiame answer, we have seen, to those ascribed to Noorele, in Mr. Eyre's book. They also correspond to Daramulun where he is regarded as the son of Baiame, while the Culture Hero, Moodgeegally, founder of the Mysteries, answers to Tundun, among the Kurnai.** We have, too, in Australia, Dawed, a subordinate where Mangarrah is the Maker in the Larrakeah tribe.***

** More Australian Tales, .*

*** Howitt, J. A. /., 1885, .*

**** J. A. I., Nov., 1894, .*

In some cases, responsibility for evil, pain, and punishment, are shifted from the good Maker on to the shoulders of his subordinate. This is the case, in early Virginia, with Okeus, the subordinate of the Creator, the good Ahone.* We have also, in West Africa, the unpropitiated Nyankupon, with his active subordinate, who has human sacrifices, Bobowissi;** and Mulungu, in Central Africa, "possesses many powerful servants, but is himself kept a good deal behind the scenes of earthly affairs, like the gods of Epicurus".*** The analogy, as to the Son, interpreter of the divine will, in Apollo and Zeus (certainly not of Christian origin!) is worth observing. In the Andaman Islands, Mr. Mann, after long and minute inquiry from the previously un-contaminated natives, reports on an only son of Puluga, “a sort of archangel,” who alone is permitted to live with his father, whose orders it is his duty to make known to the *moro-win*, his sisters, ministers of Puluga, the angels, that is, inferior ministers of Puluga’s will.****

** William Strachey, Hakluyt Society, chapter vii., date, 1612.*

*** Ellis, Religion of the Tshi-speaking Races.*

**** Macdonald, Africana, vol. i. .*

*****J. A. I., xii. .*

It is for science to determine how far this startling idea of the Son is a natural result of a desire to preserve the remote and somewhat inaccessible and otiose dignity of the Supreme Being from the exertion of activity; and how far it is a savage refraction of missionary teaching, even where it seems to be anterior to missionary influences, which, with these races, have been almost a complete failure. The subject abounds in difficulty, but the sceptic must account for the marvellously rapid acceptance of the European ideas by the most conservative savage class, the doctors or sorcerers; for the admission of the ideas into the most conservative of savage institutions, the Mysteries; for the extreme reticence about the ideas in presence of the very Europeans from whom they are said to have been derived; and in some cases for the concealment of the ideas from the women, who, one presumes, are as open as the men to missionary teaching. It is very easy to talk of “borrowing,” not so easy to explain these points on the borrowing theory, above all, when evidence is frequent that the ideas preceded the arrival of Christian teachers.

On this crucial point, the question of borrowing, I may cite Mr. Mann as to the Andamanese beliefs. Mr. Mann was for eleven years in the islands, and for four years superintended our efforts to “reclaim” some natives. He is well acquainted with the South Andaman dialect, and has made studies of the other forms of the language. This excellent witness writes: “It is extremely improbable that their legends were the result of the teaching of missionaries or others”. They have no tradition of any foreign arrivals, and their reputation (undeserved) as cannibals, with their ferocity to invaders, “precludes the belief” that any one ever settled there to convert or instruct them. “Moreover, to regard with suspicion, as some have done, the genuineness of such legends argues ignorance of the fact that numerous other tribes, in equally remote or isolated localities, have, when first discovered, been found to possess similar traditions on the subject under consideration,” Further, “I have taken special care not only to obtain my information on each point from those who are considered by their fellow tribesmen as authorities, but who, from having had little or no intercourse with other races, were in entire ignorance regarding any save their own legends," which, "they all agree in stating, were handed down to them by their first parent, To-mo, and his immediate descendants".* What Mr. Mann says concerning the unborrowed character of Andaman beliefs applies, of course, to the yet more remote and inaccessible natives of Australia.

In what has been, and in what remains to be said, it must be remembered that the higher religious ideas attributed to the Australians are not their only ideas in this matter. Examples of their wild myths have already been offered, they are totemists, too, and fear, though they do not propitiate, ghosts. Vague spirits unattached are also held in dread, and inspire sorcerers and poets,** as also does the god Bunjil.***

** J. A. I., xii. p, 157.*

*** Ibid.y xvi., p, 331. On Bunjil.*

**** In FolkLore, December, 1898, will be found an essay, Mr. Hartland, on my account of Australian gods. Instancing many wild or comic myths (some of them unknown to me when I wrote 'The Making of Religion'), Mr. Hartland seems to argue that these destroy the sacredness of other coexisting native beliefs of a higher kind. But, on this theory, what religion is sacred? All have contradictory myths. See Introduction.*

Turning from early accounts of Australian religion, say from 1835 to 1845, we look at the more recent reports. The best evidence is that of Mr. Howitt, who, with Mr. Fison, laid the foundations of serious Australian anthropology in *Kamilaroi and Kurnai* (1881). In 1881, Mr. Howitt, though long and intimately familiar with the tribes of Gippsland, the Yarra, the Upper Murray, the Murumbidgee, and other districts, had found no trace of belief in a moral Supreme Being. He was afterwards, however, initiated, or less formally let into the secret, by two members of Brajerak (wild) black fellows, not of the same tribe as the Kurnai. The rites of these former aborigines are called Kuringal. Their supreme being is Daramulun "believed in from the sea-coast across to the northern boundary claimed by the Wolgal, about Yass and Gundagai, and from Omeo to at least as far as the Shoalhaven River.... He was not, as it seems to me, everywhere thought to be a malevolent being, but he was dreaded as one who could severely punish the trespasses committed against these tribal ordinances and customs, whose first institution is ascribed to him.... It was taught also that Daramulun himself watched the youths from the sky, prompt to punish by sickness or death the breach of his ordinances.” These are often mere taboos; an old man said: “I could not eat Emu’s eggs. *He* would be very angry, and perhaps I should die.” It will hardly be argued that the savages have recently borrowed from missionaries this conception of Daramulun, as the originator and guardian of tribal taboos. Opponents must admit him as of native evolution in that character at least. The creed of Daramulun is not communicated to women and children. “It is said that the women among the Ngarego and Wolgal knew only that a great being lived beyond the sky, and that he was spoken of by them as Papang (Father). This seemed to me when I first heard it to bear so suspicious a resemblance to a belief derived from the white men, that I thought it necessary to make careful and repeated inquiries. My Ngarego and Wolgal informants, two of them old men, strenuously maintained that it was so before the white men came.” They themselves only learned the doctrine when initiated, as boys, by the old men of that distant day. The name Daramulun, was almost whispered to Mr. Howitt, and phrases were used such as “He,” “the man,” “the name I told you of”. The same secrecy was preserved by a Woi-worung man about Bunjil, or Pund-jel, “though he did not show so much reluctance when repeating to me the ‘folklore’ in which the ‘Great Spirit’ of the Kulin plays a part”. “He” was used, or gesture signs were employed by this witness, who told how his grandfather had warned him that Bunjil watched his conduct from a star, “he can see you and all you do down here,”— “before the white men came to Melbourne.” (1835).*

** J. A. I.f xiii, 1884, p, 193.*

Are we to believe that this mystic secrecy is kept up, as regards white men, about a Being first heard of from white men? And is it credible that the “old men,” the holders of tribal traditions, and the most conservative of mortals, would borrow a new divinity from “the white devils,” conceal the doctrine from the women (as accessible to missionary teaching as themselves), adopt the new Being as the founder of the antique mysteries, and introduce him into the central rite? And can the natives have done so steadily, ever since about 1840 at least? To believe all this is to illustrate the credulity of scepticism.

Mr. Howitt adds facts about tribes “from Twofold Bay to Sydney, and as far west, at least, as Hay”. Here, too, Daramulun instituted the rites; his voice is heard in the noise of the whirling *mudji* (bull-roarer). “The muttering of thunder is said to be his voice ‘calling to the rain to fall, and make the grass grow up green’.” Such are “the very words of Umbara, the minstrel of the tribe”.*

At the rites, respect for age, for truth, for unprotected women and married women, and other details of sexual morality, is inculcated partly in obscene dances. A magic ceremony, resembling mesmeric passes, and accompanied by the word “Good” (*nga*) is meant to make the boys acceptable to Daramulun. A temporary image of him is made on raised earth (to be destroyed after the rites), his attributes are then explained. “This is the Master (Biamban) who can go anywhere and do anything.”** An old man is buried, and rises again. “This ceremony is most impressive.” “The opportunity is taken of impressing on the mind of youth, in an indelible manner, those rules of conduct which form the moral law of the tribe.” “There is clearly a belief in a Great Spirit, or rather an anthropomorphic Supernatural Being, the Master of All, whose abode is above, the sky, and to whom are attributed powers of omnipotence and omnipresence, or, at any rate, the power to do anything and go anywhere.... To his direct ordinance are attributed the social and moral laws of the community.” Mr. Howitt ends, “I venture to assert that it can no longer be maintained that have no belief which can be called religious — that is, in the sense of beliefs which govern tribal and individual morality under a supernatural sanction”.***

** J. A. I., 1884, .*

*** Op. cit., .*

**** J. A. I., 1884, .*

Among the rites is one which “is said to be intended to teach the boys to speak the straightforward truth, and the kabos (mystagogues) thus explain it to them “.*

It is, perhaps, unfortunate that Mr. Howitt does not give a full account of what the morality thus sanctioned includes. Respect for age, for truth, for unprotected women, and for nature (as regards avoiding certain unnatural vices) are alone spoken of, in addition to taboos which have no relation to developed morality. Mr. Palmer, in speaking of the morality inculcated in the mysteries of the Northern Australians, adds to the elements of ethics mentioned by Mr. Howitt in the south, the lesson “not to be quarrelsome”. To each lad is given, “by one of the elders, advice so kindly, fatherly and impressive, as often to soften the heart, and draw tears from the youth”.**

** J. A. 1., xiii. 444.*

*** Ibid., xlii 296.*

So far, the morality religiously sanctioned is such as men are likely to evolve, and probably no one will maintain that it must have been borrowed from Europeans. It is argued that the morality is only such as the tribes would naturally develop, mainly in the interests of the old (the ruling class) and of social order (Hartland, *op. cit*. p-329). What else did any one ever suppose the *mores* of a people to be, *plus* whatever may be allowed for the effects of kindliness, or love, which certainly exists? I never hinted at morals divinely and supernormally revealed. All morality had been denied to the Australians. Yet in the religious rites they are “taught to speak the straightforward truth”! As regards women, there are parts of Australia where disgusting laxity prevails, except in cases prohibited by the extremely complex rules of forbidden degrees. Such parts are Central Australia and North-west Central Queensland.*

Another point in Mr. Howitt’s evidence deserves notice. He at first wrote “The Supreme Being who is believed in by all the tribes I refer to here, either as a benevolent or more frequently as a malevolent being, it seems to me represents the defunct headman “. We have seen that Mr. Howitt came to regard “malevolence” as merely the punitive aspect of the “Supreme Being “. As to the theory that such a being represents a dead headman, no proof is anywhere given that ghosts of headmen are in any way propitiated. Even “corpse-feeding” was represented to Mr. Dawson by intelligent old blacks, as “white fellows’ gammon”.** Mrs. Langloh Parker writes to me that she, when she began to study the blacks, “had, I must allow, a prejudice in favour of Mr. Herbert Spencer’s theory — it seemed so rational, but, accepting my savages’ evidence, I must discard it”. As to “offerings of food to the dead,” Mrs. Langloh Parker found that nothing was offered except food “which happened to be in the possession of the corpse,” at his decease.

For these reasons it is almost inconceivable that the “Supreme Being” should “represent a dead headman,” as to dead men of any sort no tribute is paid. Mr. Howitt himself appears to have abandoned the hypothesis that Daramulun represents a dead headman, for he speaks of him as the “Great Spirit,” or rather an “anthropomorphic Supernatural Being”,***

A Great Spirit might, conceivably, be developed out of a little spirit, even out of the ghost of a tribesman. But to the conception of a “supernatural anthropomorphic being,” the idea of “spirit” is not necessary. Men might imagine such an entity before they had ever dreamed of a ghost.

Having been initiated into the secrets of one set of tribes, Mr. Howitt was enabled to procure admission to those of another group of “clans,” the Kurnai. For twenty-five years the Jeraeil, or mystery, had been in abeyance, for they are much in contact with Europeans. The old men, however, declared that they exactly reproduced (with one confessed addition) the ancestral ceremonies. They were glad to do it, for their lads "now paid no attention either to the words of the old men, or to those of the missionaries".*

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* *Spencer and Gillen, and Roth.*

** *Dawson, Aborigines of Australia.*

*** *J. A. I., 1884, .*

This is just what usually occurs. When we meet a savage tribe we destroy the old bases of its morality and substitute nothing new of our own. "They pay no attention to the words of the missionaries," but loaf, drink and gamble like station hands "knocking down a cheque ".

Consequently a rite unknown before the arrival of Europeans is now introduced at the Jeraeil. Swift would have been delighted by this ceremony. "It was thought that the boys, having lived so much among the whites, had become selfish and no longer willing to share that which they obtained by their own exertions, or had given to them, with their friends." The boys were, therefore, placed in a row, and the initiator or mystagogue stooped over the first boy, and, muttering some words which I could not catch, he kneaded the lad's stomach with his hands. This he did to each one successively, and by it the Kurnai supposed the "greediness" (—— —) "of the youth would be expelled".*

So far from unselfishness being a doctrine borrowed by the Kurnai from Christians, and introduced into their rites, it is (as we saw in the case of the Arunta of Central Australia) part of the traditional morality— "the good old ancestral virtues," says Mr. Howitt — of the tribes. A special ceremony is needed before unselfishness can be inspired among blacks who have lived much among adherents of the Gospel.

Thus "one satiric touch" seems to demonstrate that the native ethics are not of missionary origin.

After overcoming the scruples of the old men by proving that he really was initiated in the Kuringal, Mr. Howitt was admitted to the central rite of the Kurnai "showing the Grandfather". The essence of it is that the *mystae* have their heads shrouded in blankets. These are snatched off, the initiator points solemnly to the sky with his throwing stick (which propels the spears) and then points to the Tundun, or bull-roarer. This object (—— —) was also used in the Mysteries of ancient Greece, and is still familiar in the rites of savages in all quarters of the world.

"The ancestral beliefs" are then solemnly revealed. It seems desirable to quote freely the "condensed" version of Mr. Howitt. "Long ago there was a great Being called Mungan-ngaur." Here a note adds that Mungan means "Father," and "ngaur" means "Our".

**J. A. I.,1885, .*

* *Op. cit., p, 311.*

“He has no other name among the Kurnai. In other tribes the Great Supreme Being, besides being called ‘father,’ has a name, for example Bunjil, Baiame, Daramulun.” “This Being lived on the earth, and taught the Kurnai... all the arts they know. He also gave them the names they bear. Mungan-gnaur had a son” (the Sonship doctrine already noticed by Mr. Manning) “named Tundun (the bull-roarer), who was married, and who is the direct ancestor — the Weintwin or father’s father — of the Kurnai. Mungan-ngaur instituted the Jeraeil (mysteries) which was conducted by Tundun, who made the instruments” (a large and a small bull-roarer, as also in Queensland) “which bear the name of himself and his wife.

“Some tribal traitor impiously revealed the secrets of the Jeraeil to women, and thereby brought down the anger of Mungan upon the Kurnai. He sent fire which filled the wide space between earth and sky. Men went mad, and speared one another, fathers killing their children, husbands their wives, and brethren each other.” This corroborates Black Andy. “Then the sea rushed over the land, and nearly all mankind were drowned. Those who survived became the ancestors of the Kurnai.... Tundun and his wife became porpoises” (as Apollo in the Homeric hymn became a dolphin), “Mungan left the earth, and ascended to the sky, where he still remains.”*

* *Op. cit., p, 314.*

Here the Son is credited with none of the mediatorial attributes in Mr. Manning’s version, but universal massacre, as a consequence of revealing the esoteric doctrine, is common to both accounts.

Morals are later inculcated.

1. “To listen to and obey the old men.
2. “To share everything they have with their friends.
3. “To live peaceably with their friends.
4. “Not to interfere with girls or married women.
5. “To obey the food restrictions until they are released from them by the old men.”

These doctrines, and the whole belief in Mungan-ngaur, “the Kurnai carefully concealed from me,” says Mr. Howitt, “until I learned them at the Jeraeil”.* Mr. Howitt now admits, in so many words, that Mungan-ngaur “is rather the beneficent father, and the kindly though severe headman of the whole tribe.... than the malevolent wizard”.... He considers it “perhaps indicative of great antiquity, that this identical belief forms part of the central mysteries of a tribe so isolated as the Kurnai, as well as of those of the tribes which had free communication one with another”.

As the morals sanctioned by Mungan-ngaur are simply the extant tribal morals (of which unselfishness is a part, as in Central Australia), there seems no reason to attribute them to missionaries — who are quite unheeded. This part of the evidence may close with a statement of Mr. Howitt's: "Beyond the vaulted sky lies the mysterious home of that great and powerful Being who is Bunjil, Baiame, or Daramulun in different tribal languages, but who in all is known by a name, the equivalent of the only one used by the Kurnai, which is Mungan-ngaur, Our Father".**

** Op. cit. 321, note 3*

*** J. A. I., xvi. 64.*

Other affirmative evidence might be adduced. Mr. Ridley, who wrote primers in the Kamilaroi language as early as in 1856 (using Baiame for God), says: "In every part of Australia where I have conversed with the aborigines, they have a traditional belief in one Supreme Creator," and he wonders, as he well may, at the statement to the contrary in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which rests solely on the authority, of Dr. Lang, in Queensland. Of names for the Supreme Being, Mr. Ridley gives Baiame, Anamba; in Queensland, Mumbal (Thunder) and, at Twofold Bay, "Dhu-rumbulum, which signifies, in the Namoi, a sacred staff, originally given by Baiame, and is used as the title of Deity".*

By "staff" Mr. Ridley appears to indicate the Tundun, or bull-roarer. This I venture to infer from Mr. Matthews' account of the Wiradthuri (New South Wales) with whom Dhuramoolan is an extinct bugbear, not answering to Tundun among the Kurnai, who is subordinate, as son, to Mungan-ngaur, and is associated with the mystic bull-roarer, as is Gayandi, the voice of the Messenger of Baiame, among Mrs. Langloh Parker's informants.** In one tribe, Daramulun used to carry off and eat the initiated boys, till he was stopped and destroyed by Baiame. This myth can hardly exist, one may suppose, among such tribes as consider Daramulun to preside over the mysteries.

** J. A. I., ii. (1872), 268, 270.*

*** Ibid., xxv. 298.*

Living in contact with the Baiame-worshipping Kamilaroi, the Wiradthuri appear to make a jest of the power of Daramulun, who (we have learned) is said to have died, while his "spirit" dwells on high.* Mr. Green way also finds Turramulan to be subordinate to Baiame, who "sees all, and knows all, if not directly, through Turramulan, who presides at the Bora.... Turramulan is mediator in all the operations of Baiame upon man, and in all man's transactions with Baiame. Turramulan means "leg on one side only," "one-legged". Here the mediatorial aspect corroborates Mr. Manning's information.** I would suggest, *periculo meo*, that there may have been some syncretism, a Baiame-worshipping tribe adopting Daramulun as a subordinate and mediator; or Baiame may have ousted Daramulun, as Zeus did Cronos.

Mr. Ridley goes on to observe that about eighteen years ago (that is, in 1854) he asked intelligent blacks “if they knew Baiame”. The answer was: “Kamil zaia zummi Baiame, zaia winuzgulda,” “I have not seen Baiame, I have heard or perceived him”. The same identical answer was given in 1872 “by a man to whom I had never before spoken”. “If asked who made the sky, the earth, the animals and man, they always answer ‘Baiame’.” Varieties of opinion as to a future life exist. All go to Baiame, or only the good (the bad dying eternally), or they change into birds!***

* *J. A. I., xii. 194.*

** *Ibid., vii. 242.*

*** *Ibid., ii. 269.*

Turning to North-west Central Queensland we find Dr. Roth (who knows the language and is partly initiated) giving Mul-ka-ri as “a benevolent, omnipresent, supernatural being. Anything incomprehensible.” He offers a sentence: “Mulkari tikkara ena” = “Lord (who dwellest) among the sky”. Again: “Mulkari is the supernatural power who makes everything which the blacks cannot otherwise account for; he is a good, beneficent person, and never kills any one”. He initiates medicine men. His home is in the skies. He once lived on earth, and there was a culture-hero, inventing magic and spells. That Mulkari is an ancestral ghost as well as a beneficent Maker I deem unlikely, as no honours are paid to the dead. “Not in any way to refer to the dead appears to be an universal rule among all these tribes.”* Mulkari has a malignant opposite or counterpart.

Nothing is said by Dr. Roth as to inculcation of these doctrines at the Mysteries, nor do Messrs. Spencer and Gillen allude to any such being in their accounts of Central Australian rites, if we except the “self-existing” “out of nothing” Ungambikula, sky-dwellers.

One rite “is supposed to make the men who pass through it more kindly,” we are not told why.** We have also an allusion to “the great spirit Twangirika,” whose voice (the women are told) is heard in the noise of the bull-roarer.***

* *Roth, p, 36, 116, 153,158, 165.*

** *Spencer and Gillen, .*

*** *Ibid., .*

"The belief is fundamentally the same as that found in all Australian tribes," write the authors, in a note citing Tundun and Daramulun. But they do not tell us whether the Arunta belief includes the sanction, by Twangirika, of morality. If it does not, have the Central Australians never developed the idea, or have they lost it? They have had quite as much experience of white men (or rather much more) than the believers in Baiame or Bunjil, "before the white men came to Melbourne," and, if one set of tribes borrowed ideas from whites, why did not the other?

The evidence here collected is not exhaustive. We might refer to Pirnmeheal, a good being, whom the blacks loved before they were taught by missionaries to fear him.*

* *Dawson, The Australian Aborigines.*

Mr. Dawson took all conceivable pains to get authentic information, and to ascertain whether the belief in Pirnmeheal was pre-European. He thinks it was original. The idea of "god-borrowing" is repudiated by Manning, Gunther, Ridley, Greenway, Palmer, Mrs. Langloh Parker and others, speaking for trained observers and (in several cases) for linguists, studying the natives on the spot, since 1845. It is thought highly improbable by Mr. Hale (1840). It is rejected by Waitz-Gerland, speaking for studious science in Europe. Mr. Howitt, beginning with distrust, seems now to regard the beliefs described as of native origin. On the other hand we have Mr. Mann, who has been cited, and the great authority of Mr. E. B. Tylor, who, however, has still to reply to the arguments in favour of the native origin of the beliefs which I have ventured to offer. Such arguments are the occurrence of Baiame before the arrival of missionaries; the secrecy, as regards Europeans, about ideas derived (Mr. Tylor thinks) from Europeans; the ignorance of the women on these heads; the notorious conservatism of the "doctors" who promulgate the creed as to ritual and dogma, and the other considerations which have been fully stated. In the meanwhile I venture to think, subject to correction, that, while Black Andy may have exaggerated, or Mr. Manning may have coloured his evidence by Christian terminology, and while mythical accretions on a religious belief are numerous, yet the lowest known human race has attained a religious conception very far above what savages are usually credited with, and has not done so by way of the "ghost-theory" of the anthropologists. In this creed sacrifice and ghost-worship are absent.*

It has seemed worth while to devote space and attention to the Australian beliefs, because the vast continent contains the most archaic and backward of existing races. We may not yet have a sufficient collection of facts microscopically criticised, but the evidence here presented seems deserving of attention. About the still more archaic but extinct Tasmanians and their religion, evidence is too scanty, too casual, and too conflicting for our purpose.**

* *These Australian gods are confusing.*

1. Daramulun is supreme among the Coast Murring. J. A. I., ziv. 432-459.

2. Baiame is supreme, Daramulun is an extinct bugbear, among the Wiradthuri. J. A. I., xxv. 298.

3. Baiame is supreme, Daramulun is "mediator," among the Kamilaroi. J. A. I., vii. 242.

*** See Ling Roth's Tasmanians.*

CHAPTER XIII. GODS OF THE LOWEST RACES.

Bushmen gods — Cagn, the grasshopper? — Hottentot gods— “Wounded knee,” a dead sorcerer — Melanesian gods — Qat and the spider — Aht and Maori beasts-gods and men-gods — Samoan form of animal-gods — One god incarnate in many animal shapes — One for each clan — They punish the eating of certain animals.

Passing from Australia to Africa, we find few races less advanced than the Bushmen (*Sa-n*, “settlers,” in Nama). Whatever view may be taken of the past history of the Bushmen of South Africa, it is certain that at present they are a race on a very low level of development. “Even the Hottentots,” according to Dr. Bleek, “exceed the Bushmen in civilisation and political organisation”.*

** See Waitz, Anthrop. Nat. Volk, ii. 323-329.*

Before investigating the religious myths of the Bushmen, it must be repeated that, as usual, their religion is on a far higher level than their mythology. The conception of invisible or extra-natural powers, which they entertain and express in moments of earnest need, is all unlike the tales which they tell about their own.

Our main authorities at present for Bushman myths are contained in A Brief Account of Bushman Folk-lore, Bleek, London, 1875; and in A Glimpse into the Mythology of the Maluti Bushmen, by Mr. Orpen, Chief Magistrate, St. John’s Territory, Cape Monthly Magazine, July, 1874. Some information may also be gleaned from the South African Folk-lore Journal, 1879-80, gods, if gods such mythical beings may be called. Thus Livingstone says: “On questioning intelligent men among the Bakwains as to their former knowledge of good and evil, of God and the future state, they have scouted the idea of any of them ever having been without a tolerably clear conception on all these subjects”.* Their ideas of sin were the same as Livingstone’s, except about polygamy, and apparently murder. Probably there were other trifling discrepancies. But “they spoke in the same way of the direct influence exercised by God in giving rain in answer to the prayers of the rain-makers, and in granting deliverance in times of danger, as they do now, before they ever heard of white men “. This was to be expected. In short, the religion of savages, in its childlike and hopeful dependence on an invisible friend or friends, in its hope of moving him (or them) by prayer, in its belief that he (or they) “make for righteousness,” is absolutely human. On the other side, as in the myths of Greece or India, stand the absurd and profane anecdotes of the gods.

** Missionary Travels, .*

We now turn to a Bushman's account of the religious myths of his tribe. Shortly after the affair of Langa-libalele, Mr. Orpen had occasion to examine an unknown part of the Maluti range, the highest mountains in South Africa. He engaged a scout named Qing, son of a chief of an almost exterminated clan of hill Bushmen. He was now huntsman to King Nqusha, Morosi's son, on the Orange River, and *had never seen a white man, except fighting*. Thus Qing's evidence could not be much affected by European communications. Mr. Orpen secured the services of Qing, who was a young man and a mighty hunter. By inviting him to explain the wall-pictures in caves, Mr. Orpen led him on to give an account of Cagn, the chief mythical being in Bushman religion. "Cagn made all things, and we pray to him," said Qing. "At first he was very good and nice, but he got spoilt through fighting so many things." "The prayer uttered by Qing, 'in a low imploring voice,' ran thus: 'O Cagn, O Cagn, are we not your children? Do you not see our hunger? Give us food.'" Where Cagn is Qing did not know, "but the elands know. Have you not hunted and heard his cry when the elands suddenly run to his call?"* Now comes in myth. Cagn has a wife called Coti. "How came he into the world? Perhaps with those who brought the sun;... only the initiated men of that dance know these things."**

** Another Bushman prayer, a touching appeal, is given in Alexander's Expedition, ii. 125, and a Khoi-Khoi hymn of prayer is in Hahn, p, 57.*

*** Cf. Custom and Myth, p, 42. It appears that the Bushmen, like the Egyptians and Greeks, hand down myths through esoteric societies, with dramatic mysteries.*

Cagn had two sons, Cogaz and Gcwi. He and they were "great chiefs," but used stone-pointed digging sticks to grub up edible roots! Cagn's wife brought forth a fawn, and, like Cronus when Rhea presented him with a foal, Cagn was put to it to know the nature and future fortunes of this child of his. To penetrate the future he employed the ordinary native charms and sorcery. The remainder of the myth accounts for the origin of elands and for their inconvenient wildness. A daughter of Cagn's married "snakes who were also men," the eternal confusion of savage thought. These snakes became the people of Cagn. Cagn had a tooth which was "great medicine"; his force resided in it, and he lent it to people whom he favoured. The birds (as in Odin's case) were his messengers, and brought him news of all that happened at a distance.*

** Compare with the separable vigour of Cagn, residing in his* *tooth, the European and Egyptian examples of a similar myth — the lock of hair of Minos, the hair of Samson — in introduction to Mrs. Hunt's Grimm's Household Stories,*

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He could turn his sandals and clubs into dogs, and set them at his enemies. The baboons were once men, but they offended Cagn, and sang a song with the burden, "Cagn thinks he is clever"; so he drove them into desolate places, and they are accursed till this day. His strong point was his collection of charms, which, like other Bushmen and Hottentots, he kept "in his belt". He could, and did, assume animal shapes; for example, that of a bull-eland. The thorns were once people, and killed Cagn, and the ants ate him, but his bones were collected and he was revived. It was formerly said that when men died they went to Cagn, but it has been denied by later Bushmen sceptics.

Such is Qing's account of Cagn, and Cagn in myth is plainly but a successful and idealised medicine-man whose charms actually work. Dr. Bleek identifies his name with that of the mantis insect. This insect is the chief mythological personage of the Bushmen of the western province. Kággen his name is written. Dr. Bleek knew of no prayer to the mantis, but was acquainted with addresses to the sun, moon and stars. If Dr. Bleek's identification is correct, the Cagn of Qing is at once human and a sort of grasshopper, just as Pund-jel was half human, half eagle-hawk.

"The most prominent of the mythological figures," says Dr. Bleek, speaking of the Bushmen, "is the mantis." His proper name is Kaggen, but if we call him Cagn, the interests of science will not seriously suffer. His wife is the "Dasse Hyrax". Their adopted daughter is the porcupine, daughter of *Khwdi hemm*, the All-devourer. Like Cronus, and many other mythological persons, the All-devourer has the knack of swallowing all and sundry, and disgorging them alive. Dr. Bleek offers us but a wandering and disjointed account of the mantis or Cagn, who is frequently defeated by other animals, such as the suricat. Cagn has one point at least in common with Zeus. As Zeus was swallowed and disgorged by Cronus, so was Cagn by *Khwái hemm*. As Indra once entered into the body of a cow, so did Cagn enter into the body of an elephant. Dr. Bleek did not find that the mantis was prayed to, as Cagn was by Qing. The moon (like sun and stars) is, however, prayed to, and "the moon belongs to the mantis," who, indeed, made it out of his old shoe! The chameleon is prayed to for rain on occasion, and successfully.

The peculiarity of Bushman mythology is the almost absolute predominance of animals. Except "an old woman," who appears now and then in these incoherent legends, their myths have scarcely one human figure to show. Now, whether the Bushmen be deeply degenerate from a past civilisation or not, it is certain that their myths are based on their actual condition of thought, unless we prefer to say that their intellectual condition is derived from their myths. We have already derived the constant presence and personal action of animals in myth from that savage condition of the mind in which “all things, animate or inanimate, human, animal, vegetable or inorganic, seem on the same level of life, passion and reason” (cha.). Now, there can be no doubt that, whether the Bushman mind has descended to this stage or not, in this stage it actually dwells at present. As examples we may select the following from Dr. Bleek’s *Bushman Folk-lore*. *Díalkwáin* told how the death of his own wife was “foretold by the springbok and the gems-bok”. Again, for examples of living belief in community of nature with animals, Dialkwain mentioned an old woman, a relation, and friend of his own, who had the power “of turning herself into a lioness”. Another Bushman, Kabbo, retaining, doubtless, his wide-awake mental condition in his sleep, “dreamed of lions which talked”. Another informant explained that lions talk like men “by putting their tails in their mouth”.

This would have pleased Sydney Smith, who thought that “if lions would meet and growl out their observations to each other,” they might sensibly improve in culture. Again, “all things that belong to the mantis can talk,” and most things do belong to that famous being. In “News from Zululand,”* in a myth of the battle of Isandlwana, a blue-buck turns into a young man and attacks the British.

** Folk-lore Journal of South Africa, i. iv. 83.*

These and other examples demonstrate that the belief in the personal and human character and attributes of animals still prevails in South Africa. From that living belief we derive the personal and human character and attributes of animals, which, remarkable in all mythologies, is perhaps specially prominent in the myths of the Bushmen.

Though Bushman myth is only known to us in its outlines, and is apparently gifted with even more than the due quantity of incoherence, it is perhaps plain that animals are the chief figures in this African lore, and that these Bushmen gods, if ever further developed, will retain many traces of their animal ancestry.

From the Bushmen we may turn to their near neighbours, the Hottentots or Khoi-Khoi. Their religious myths have been closely examined in Dr. Hahn’s *Tsuni Goam, the Supreme Being of the Khoi-Khoi*. Though Dr. Hahn’s conclusions as to the origin of Hottentot myth differ entirely from our own, his collection and critical study of materials, of oral traditions, and of the records left by old travellers are invaluable. The early European settlers at the Cape found the Khoi-Khoi, that is, “The Men,” a yellowish race of people, who possessed large herds of cattle, sheep and goats.* The Khoi-Khoi, as nomad cattle and sheep farmers, are on a much higher level of culture than the Bushmen, who are hunters.**

** Op. cit. i. p, 32.*

*** Ibid., .*

The languages of the two peoples leave “no more doubt as to their primitive relationship” (). The wealth of the Khoi-Khoi was considerable and unequally distributed, a respectable proof of nascent civilisation. The rich man was called *gou, aob,* that is “fat”. In the same way the early Greeks called the wealthy “(—— —— ——)”.* As the rich man could afford many wives (which gives him a kind of “commendation” over men to whom he allots his daughters), he “gradually rose to the station of a chief”.** In domestic relations, Khoi-Khoi society is “matriarchal” (p-21).***

** Herodotus, v. 30.*

*** Op. cit., .*

**** But speaking of the wife, Kolb calls “the poor wretch” a “drudge, exposed to the insults of her children”, — English transl., .*

All the sons are called after the mother, the daughters after the father. Among the arts, pottery and mat-making, metallurgy and tool-making are of ancient date. A past stone age is indicated by the use of quartz knives in sacrifice and circumcision. In Khoi-Khoi society seers and prophets were “the greatest and most respected old men of the clan” (). The Khoi-Khoi of to-day have adopted a number of Indo-European beliefs and customs, and “the Christian ideas introduced by missionaries have amalgamated... with the national religious ideas and mythologies,” for which reasons Dr, Hahn omits many legends which, though possibly genuine, might seem imported (p, 31).

A brief historical abstract of what was known to old travellers of Khoi-Khoi religion must now be compiled from the work of Dr. Hahn.

In 1655 Corporal Müller found adoration paid to great stones on the side of the paths. The worshippers pointed upwards and said *Hette hie,* probably “Heitsi Eibib,” the name of a Khoi-Khoi extra-natural being. It appears () that Heitsi Eibib “has changed names” in parts of South Africa, and what was his worship is now offered “to |Garubeb, or Tsui |Goab”. In 1671 Dapper found that the Khoi-Khoi “believe there is one who sends rain on earth;... they also believe that they themselves can make rain and prevent the wind from blowing”. Worship of the moon and of “erected stones” is also noticed. In 1691 Nicolas Witsen heard that the Khoi-Khoi adored a god which Dr. Hahn () supposes to have been “a peculiar-shaped stone-fetish,” such as the Basutos worship and spit at. Witsen found that the “god” was daubed with red earth, like the Dionysi in Greece. About 1705 Valentyn gathered that the people believed in “a great chief who dwells on high,” and a devil; “but in carefully examining this, it is nothing else but their *somsomas* and *spectres*” (). We need not accept that opinion. The worship of a “great chief” is mentioned again in 1868. In 1719 Peter Kolb, the German Magister, published his account of the Hottentots, which has been done into English.* Kolb gives Gounja Gounja, or Gounja Ticqvoa, as the divine name; “they say he is a good man, who does nobody any hurt,... and that he dwells far above the moon “.** This corresponds to the Australian Pirnmeheal. Kolb also noted propitiation of an evil power. He observed that the Khoi-Khoi worship the mantis insect, which, as we have seen, is the chief mythical character among the Bushmen.***

** Second edition, London, 1788.*

*** Engl. transl., 95.*

**** Engl, transl., i. 97, gives a picture of Khoi-Khoi adoring the mantis.*

Dr. Hahn remarks, “Strangely enough the Namaquas also call it |Gaunab, as they call the enemy of Tsui |Goab”.* In Kolb’s time, as now, the rites of the Khoi (except, apparently, their worship at dawn) were performed beside cairns of stones. If we may credit Kolb, the Khoi-Khoi are not only most fanatical adorers of the mantis, but “pay a religious veneration to their saints and men of renown departed”. Thunberg (1792) noticed cairn-worship and heard of mantis-worship. In 1803 Lichtenstein saw cairn-worship. With the beginning of the present century we find in Apple-yard, Ebner and others Khoi-Khoi names for a god, which are translated “Sore-Knee” or “Wounded-Knee “.

This title is explained as originally the name of a “doctor or sorcerer” of repute, “invoked even after death,” and finally converted into a deity. His enemy is Gaunab, an evil being, and he is worshipped at the cairns, below which he is believed to be buried.** About 1842 Knudsen considered that the Khoi-Khoi believed in a dead medicine-man, Heitsi Eibib, who could make rivers roll back their waves, and then walk over safely, as in the *märchen* of most peoples. He was also, like Odin, a “shape-shifter,” and he died several times and came to life again.***

** Page 42; compare p, 125.*

*** Alexander, Expedition, i 166; Hahn, op. cit., p, 50, where Moffat is quoted.*

**** Hahn, .*

Thus the numerous graves of Heitsi Eibib are explained by his numerous deaths. In Egypt the numerous graves of Osiris were explained by the story that he was mutilated, and each limb buried in a different place. Probably both the Hottentot and the Egyptian legend were invented to account for the many worshipped cairns attributed to the same corpse.

We now reach the myths of Heitsi Eibib and Tsui |Goab collected by Dr. Hahn himself. According to the evidence of Dr. Hahn's own eyes, the working religion of the Khoi-Khoi is "a firm belief in sorcery and the arts of living medicine-men on the one hand, and, on the other, belief in and adoration of the powers of the dead" (p, 82, 112, 113). Our author tells us that he met in the wilds a woman of the "fat" or wealthy class going to pray at the grave and to the manes of her own father. "We Khoi-Khoi always, if we are in trouble, go and pray at the graves of our grandparents and ancestors." They also sing rude epic verses, accompanied by the dance in honour of men distinguished in the late Namaqua and Damara war. Now it is alleged by Dr. Hahn that prayers are offered at the graves of Heitsi Eibib and Tsui Goab, as at those of ancestors lately dead, and Heitsi Eibib and Tsui Goab within living memory were honoured by song and dance, exactly like the braves of the Damara war.

The obvious and natural inference is that Heitsi Eibib and Tsui Goab were and are regarded by their worshippers as departed but still helpful ancestral warriors or medicine-men. We need not hold that they ever were actual living men; they may be merely idealised figures of Khoi-Khoi wisdom and valour. Here, as elsewhere, Animism, ghost-worship, is potent, and, in proportion, theism declines.

Here Dr. Hahn offers a different explanation, founded on etymological conjecture and a philosophy of religion. According to him, the name of Tsui Goab originally meant, not wounded knee, but red dawn. The dawn was worshipped as a symbol or suggestion of the infinite, and only by forgetfulness and false interpretation of the original word did the Khoi-Khoi fall from a kind of pure theosophy to adoration of a presumed dead medicine-man. As Dr. Hahn's ingenious hypothesis has been already examined by us,* it is unnecessary again to discuss the philological basis of his argument.

Dr. Hahn not only heard simple and affecting prayers addressed to Tsui Goab, but learned from native informants that the god had been a chief, a warrior, wounded in his knee in battle with Gaunab, another chief, and that he had prophetic powers. He still watches the ways of men () and punishes guilt. Universal testimony was given to the effect that Heitsi Eibib also had been a chief from the East, a prophet and a warrior. He apportioned, by blessings and curses, their present habits to many of the animals. Like Odin, he was a "shape-shifter," possessing the medicine-man's invariable power of taking all manner of forms. He was on one occasion born of a cow, which reminds us of a myth of Indra. By another account he was born of a virgin who tasted a certain kind of grass. This legend is of wonderfully wide diffusion among savage and semi-civilised races.**

** Custom and Myth, p-211.*

*** Le Fits de la Vierge, H. de Charency, Havre, 1879. A tale of incest by Heitsi Eibib, may be compared with another in Muir's Sanskrit Texts, iv. 39.*

The tales about Tsui Goab and Heitsi Eibib are chiefly narratives of combats with animals and with the evil power in a nascent dualism, Gaunab, "at first a ghost," according to Hahn (), or "certainly nobody else but the Night" (p, 126). Here there is some inconsistency. If we regard the good power, Tsui Goab, as the Red Dawn, we are bound to think the evil power, Gaunab, a name for the Night. But Dr. Hahn's other hypothesis, that the evil power was originally a malevolent ghost, seems no less plausible. In either case, we have here an example of the constant mythical dualism which gives the comparatively good being his perpetual antagonist — the Loki to his Odin, the crow to his eagle-hawk. In brief, Hottentot myth is pretty plainly a reflection of Hottentot general ideas about ancestor worship, ghosts, sorcerers and magicians, while, in their *religious* aspect, Heitsi Eibib or Tsui Goab are guardians of life and of morality, fathers and friends.

A description of barbarous beliefs not less scholarly and careful than that compiled by Dr. Hahn has been published by the Rev. R. H. Codrington.* Mr. Codrington has studied the myths of the Papuans and other natives of the Melanesian group, especially in the Solomon Islands and Banks Island. These peoples are by no means in the lowest grade of culture; they are traders in their way, builders of canoes and houses, and their society is interpenetrated by a kind of mystic hierarchy, a religious *Camorra*. The Banks Islanders** recognise two sorts of intelligent extra-natural beings — the spirits of the dead and powers which have never been human.

** Journal Anthrop. Inst., February, 1881.*

*** Op. cit., .*

The former are *Tamate*, the latter *Vui* — ghosts and *genii*, we might call them. Vuis are classed by Mr. Codrington as “corporeal” and “incorporeal,” but he thinks the corporeal Vuis have not *human* bodies. Among corporeal Vuis the chief are the beings nearest to gods in Melanesian myths — the half god, half “culture-hero,” I Qat, his eleven brothers, and his familiar and assistant, Marawa. These were members of a race anterior to that of the men of to-day, and they dwelt in Vanua Levu. Though now passed away from the eyes of mortals, they are still invoked in prayer. The following appeal by a voyaging Banks Islander resembles the cry of the shipwrecked Odysseus to the friendly river: — “Qat! Marawa! look down upon us; smooth the sea for us two, that I may go safely on the sea. Beat down for me the crests of the tide-rip; let the tide-rip settle down away from me; beat it down level that it may sink and roll away, and I may come to a quiet landing-place.”

Compare the prayer of Odysseus: —

“‘Hear me, O king, whosoever thou art; unto thee am I come as to one to whom prayer is made, while I flee the rebukes of Poseidon from the deep....’ So spake he, and the god straightway stayed his stream and withheld his waves, and made the water smooth before him, and brought him safely to the mouth of the river.”

But for Qat’s supernatural power and creative exploits,* “there would be little indeed to show him other than a man”. He answers almost precisely to Maui, the “the culture-hero” of New Zealand. Qat’s mother either was, or, like Niobe, became a stone.

* *See “Savage Myths of the Origin of Things”.*

He was the eldest (unlike Maui) of twelve brothers, among whom were Tongaro the Wise and Tongaro the Fool. The brothers were killed by an evil gluttonous power like Kwai Hemm and put in a food chest. Qat killed the foe and revived his brothers, as the sons of Cronus came forth alive from their father’s maw. His great foe — for of course he had a foe — was Qasavara, whom he destroyed by dashing him against the solid firmament of sky. Qasavara is now a stone (like the serpent displayed by Zeus at Aulis*), on which sacrifices are made. Qat’s chief friend is Marawa, a spider, or a Vui in the shape of a spider. The divine mythology of the Melanesians, as far as it has been recovered, is meagre. We only see members of a previous race, “magnified non-natural men,” with a friendly insect working miracles and achieving rather incoherent adventures.

* *Iliad, ii. 315-318.*

Much on the same footing of civilisation as the Melanesians were the natives of Tonga in the first decade of this century. The Tongan religious beliefs were nearly akin to the ideas of the Samoans and of the Solomon Islanders. In place of Vuis they spoke of Hotooas (Atuas), and like the Vuis, those spiritual beings have either been purely spiritual from the beginning or have been incarnate in humanity and are now ghosts, but ghosts enjoying many of the privileges of gods. All men, however, have not souls capable of a separate existence, only the *Egi* or nobles, possess a spiritual part, which goes to Bolotoo, the land of gods and ghosts, after death, and enjoys "power similar to that of the original gods, but less".

It is open to philosophers of Mr. Herbert Spencer's school to argue that the "original gods" were once ghosts like the others, but this was not the opinion of the Tongans. They have a supreme Creator, who alone receives no sacrifice.* Both sorts of gods appear occasionally to mankind — the primitive deities particularly affect the forms of "lizards, porpoises and a species of water-snake, hence those animals are much respected".**

* *Mariner, ii. 205.*

** *Mariner's Tonga Islands, Edin., 1827, ii 99-101.*

Whether each stock of Tongans had its own animal incarnation of its special god does not appear from Mariner's narrative. The gods took human morality under their special protection, punishing the evil and rewarding the good, in this life only, not in the land of the dead. When the comfortable doctrine of eternal punishment was expounded to the Tongans by Mariner, the poor heathen merely remarked that it "was very bad indeed for the Papalangies" or foreigners. Their untutored minds, in their pagan darkness, had dreamed of no such thing. The Tongans themselves are descended from some gods who set forth on a voyage of discovery out of Bolotoo. Landing on Tonga, these adventurers were much pleased with the island, and determined to stay there; but in a few days certain of them died. They had left the deathless coasts for a world where death is native, and, as they had eaten of the food of the new realm, they would never escape the condition of mortality. This has been remarked as a widespread belief. Persephone became enthralled to Hades after tasting the mystic pomegranate of the underworld.

In Samoa Siati may not eat of the god's meat, nor Wainamoinen in Pohjola, nor Thomas the Rhymer in Fairyland. The exploring gods from Bolotoo were in the same way condemned to become mortal and people the world with mortal beings, and all about them should be *méa máma*, subject to decay and death.* It is remarkable, if correctly reported, that the secondary gods, or ghosts of nobles, cannot reappear as lizards, porpoises and water-snakes; this is the privilege of the original gods only, and may be an assumption by them of a conceivably totemistic aspect. The nearest approach to the idea of a permanent supreme deity is contained in the name of Táli y Toobo— “wait there, Toobo” — a name which conveys the notion perhaps of permanence or eternity. “He is a great chief from the top of the sky to the bottom of the earth.”**

** Mariner, ii. 115.*

*** Ibid., ii. 205.*

He is invoked both in war and peace, not locally, but “for the general good of the natives”. He is the patron, not of any special stock or family, but of the house in which the royal power is lodged for the time. Alone of gods he is unpropitiated by food or libation, indicating that he is not evolved out of a hungry ghost. Another god, Toobo Toty or Toobo the Mariner, may be a kind of Poseidon. He preserves canoes from perils at sea. On the death of the daughter of Finow, the king in Mariner’s time, that monarch was so indignant that he threatened to kill the priest of Toobo Toty. As the god is believed to inspire the priest, this was certainly a feasible way of getting at the god. But Toobo Toty was beforehand with Finow, who died himself before he could carry the war into Bolotoo.* This Finow was a sceptic; he allowed that there were gods, because he himself had occasionally been inspired by them; “but what the priests tell us about their power over mankind I believe to be all false”. Thus early did the conflict of Church and State declare itself in Tonga. Human sacrifices were a result of priestcraft in Tonga, as in Greece. Even the man set to kill a child of Toobo Toa’s was moved by pity, and exclaimed *O iaooe chi vale!* (“poor little innocent!”) The priest demanded this sacrifice to allay the wrath of the gods for the slaying of a man in consecrated ground.** Such are the religious ideas of Tonga; of their mythology but little has reached us, and that is under suspicion of being coloured by acquaintance with the stories of missionaries.

** Mariner, i. 307, it 107.*

*** Compare the ayos of the Alcmænidæ.*

The Maoris, when first discovered by Europeans, were in a comparatively advanced stage of barbarism. Their society had definite ranks, from that of the Rangatira, the chief with a long pedigree, to the slave. Their religious hymns, of great antiquity, have been collected and translated by Grey, Taylor, Bastian and others. The mere possession of such hymns, accurately preserved for an unknown number of years by oral tradition, proves that the mythical notions of the Maoris have passed through the minds of professed bards and early physical speculators. The verses, as Bastian has observed (*Die Heilige Sage der Polynesier*), display a close parallel to the roughest part of the early Greek cosmogonies, as expounded by Hesiod. Yet in the Maori hymns there are metaphysical ideas and processes which remind one more of Heraclitus than of Hesiod, and perhaps more of Hegel than of either. Whether we are to regard the abstract conceptions or the rude personal myths of gods such as A, the Beyond All, as representing the earlier development of Maori thought, whether one or the other element is borrowed, not original, are questions which theorists of different schools will settle in their own way to their own satisfaction. Some hymns represent the beginning of things from a condition of thought, and Socrates might have said of the Maori poets as he did of Anaxagoras, that compared with other early thinkers, they are "like sober men among drunkards". Thus one hymn of the origins runs thus: — *From the conception the increase,*

From the increase the swelling,
From the swelling the thought,
From the thought the remembrance,
From the remembrance the desire.
The word became fruitful,
It dwelt with the feeble glimmering,
It brought forth Night.
From the nothing the begetting,
It produced the atmosphere which is above us.
The atmosphere above dwelt with the glowing sky,
Forthwith was produced the sun.
Then the moon sprang forth.
They were thrown up above as the chief eyes of heaven,
Then the heavens became light.
*The sky which floats above dwelt with Hawaiki,**
And produced (certain islands).

* *The islands of Hawaiki, being then the only land known, is put for Papa, the earth.*

Then follow genealogies of gods, down to the chief in whose family this hymn was traditional.*

* *Taylor, New Zealand, p-112.*

Other hymns of the same character, full of such metaphysical and abstract conceptions as "the proceeding from the nothing," are quoted at great length.

These extracts are obviously speculative rather than in any sense mythological The element of myth just shows itself when we are told that the sky dwelt with the earth and produced certain islands. But myth of a familiar character is very fully represented among the Maoris. Their mythical gods, though "mixed up with the spirits of ancestors," are great natural powers, first Heaven and Earth, Rangi and Papa, the parents of all. These are conceived as having originally been united in such a close embrace, the Heaven lying on the Earth, that between their frames all was darkness, and in darkness the younger gods, Atua, O-te-po, their children, were obliged to dwell. These children or younger gods (answering to the Cronidæ) were the god of war (Tumatauenga), the forest-god (Tane Mahuta), in shape a tree, the wind-god (Tawhiri Matea), the gods of cultivated and natural fruits, the god of ocean (Tangaroa). These gods were unable to endure the dungeon and the darkness of their condition, so they consulted together and said: "Let us seek means whereby to destroy Heaven and Earth, or to separate them from each other". The counsel of Tane Mahuta prevailed: "Let one go upwards and become a stranger to us; let the other remain below and be a parent to us". Finally, Tane Mahuta rent asunder Heaven and Earth, pushing Heaven up where he has ever since remained. The wind-god followed his father, abode with him in the open spaces of the sky, and thence makes war on the trees of the forest-god, his enemy. Tangaroa went, like Poseidon, to the great deep, and his children, the reptiles and fishes, clove part to the waters, part to the dry land. The war-god, Tu, was more of a human being than the other gods, though his "brethren" are plants, fish and reptiles. Still, Tu is not precisely the first man of New Zealand.

Though all these mythical beings are in a sense departmental gods, they yield in renown to a later child of their race, Maui, the great culture-hero, who is an advanced form of the culture-heroes, mainly theriomorphic, of the lower races.*

Maui, like many heroes of myth, was a youngest son. He was prematurely born (a similar story comes in the Brahmanic legend of the Adityas); his mother wrapped him up in her long hair and threw him out to sea. A kinsman rescued him, and he grew up to be much the most important member of his family, like Qat in his larger circle of brethren. Maui it was who snared the sun, beat him,** and taught him to run his appointed course, instead of careering at will and at any pace he chose about the heavens.

** Te-Heu-Heu, a powerful chief, described to Mr. Taylor the departmental character of his gods. "Is there one maker of things among Europeans? Is not one a carpenter, another a blacksmith, another a shipbuilder? So it was in the beginning. One made this, another that. Tane made trees, Ru mountains, Tangaroa fish, and so forth." Taylor, New Zealand, , note.*

*** The sun, when beaten, cried out and revealed his great name, exactly as Indra did in his terror and flight after* *slaying the serpent. Taylor, op. cit., .*

He was the culture-hero who invented barbs for spears and hooks; he turned his brother into the first dog, whence dogs are sacred, he fished New Zealand out of the sea; he stole fire for men. How Maui performed this feat, and how he "brought death into the world and all our woe," are topics that belong to the myths of *Death* and of the *Fire-Stealer*.* Maui could not only change men into animals, but could himself assume animal shapes at will.

Such is a brief account of the ancient traditions of mythical Maori gods and of the culture-hero. In practice, the conception of *Atua* (or a kind of extra-natural power or powers) possesses much influence in New Zealand. All manner of spirits in all manner of forms are *Atuas*. "A great chief was regarded as a malignant god in life, and a still worse one after death."** Again, "after Maui came a host of gods, each with his history and wonderful deeds.... These were ancestors who became deified by their respective tribes,"*** — a statement which must be regarded as theoretical.

** See La Mythologie, A. L., Paris, 1886.*

*** Taylor, op. cit., p, 136.*

****Op. cit., .*

It is odd enough, if true, that Maru should be the war-god of the southern island, and that the planet Mars is called after him Maru. "There were also gods in human forms, and others with those of reptiles.... At one period there seems to have been a mixed offspring from the same parents. Thus while Tawaki was of the human form, his brethren were *taniwa* and sharks; there were likewise mixed marriages among them." These legends are the natural result of that lack of distinction between man and the other things in the world which, as we demonstrated, prevails in early thought. It appears that the great mythical gods of the Maoris have not much concern with their morality. The myths are "but a magnified history of their chiefs, their wars, murders and lusts, with the addition of some supernatural powers" — such as the chiefs are very apt to claim.* In the opinion of a competent observer, the gods, or Atua, who are feared in daily life, are "spirits of the dead," and *their* attention is chiefly confined to the conduct of their living descendants and clansmen. They inspire courage, the leading virtue. When converted, the natives are said not to expel, but merely to subordinate their Atua, "believing Christ to be a more powerful Atua".**

** Op. cit., .*

*** Shortland, Trad, and Superst. of New Zealanders, 1856,* *p-85.*

The Maoris are perhaps the least elevated race in which a well-developed polytheism has obscured almost wholly that belief in a moral Maker which we find among the lowest savages who have but a rudimentary polytheism. When we advance to ancient civilised peoples, like the Greeks, we shall find the archaic Theism obscured, or obliterated, in a similar way.

In the beliefs of Samoa (formerly called the Navigators' Islands, and discovered by a Dutch expedition in 1722) may be observed a most interesting moment in the development of religion and myth. In many regions it has been shown that animals are worshipped as totems, and that the gods are invested with the shape of animals. In the temples of higher civilisations will be found divine images still retaining in human form certain animal attributes, and a minor worship of various beasts will be shown to have grouped itself in Greece round the altars of Zeus, or Apollo, or Demeter. Now in Samoa we may perhaps trace the actual process of the "transition," as Mr. Tylor says, "from the spirit inhabiting an individual body to the deity presiding over all individuals of a kind". In other words, whereas in Australia or America each totem-kindred reveres each animal supposed to be of its own lineage — the "Cranes" revering all cranes, the "Kangaroos" all kangaroos — in Samoa the various clans exhibit the same faith, but combine it with the belief that one spiritual deity reveals itself in each separate animal, as in a kind of avatar. For example, the several Australian totem-kindreds do not conceive that Pund-jel incarnates himself in the emu for one stock, in the crow for another, in the cockatoo for a third, and they do not by these, but by other means, attain a religious unity, transcending the diversity caused by the totemic institutions. In Samoa this kind of spiritual unity is actually reached by various stocks.

The Samoans were originally spoken of by travellers as the "godless Samoans," an example of a common error. Probably there is no people whose practices and opinions, if duly investigated, do not attest their faith in something of the nature of gods. Certainly the Samoans, far from being "godless," rather deserve the reproach of being "in all things too superstitious". "The gods were supposed to appear in some *visible incarnation*, and the particular thing in which his god was in the habit of appearing was to the Samoanan object of veneration."*

* *Turner's Samoa, .*

Here we find that the religious sentiment has already become more or less self-conscious, and has begun to reason on its own practices. In pure totemism it is their kindred animal that men revere. The Samoans explain their worship of animals, not on the ground of kinship and common blood or "one flesh" (as in

Australia), but by the comparatively advanced hypothesis that a spiritual power is *in* the animal. “One, for instance, saw his god in the eel, another in the shark, another in the turtle, another in the dog, another in the owl, another in the lizard,” and so on, even to shell-fish. The creed so far is exactly what Garcilasso de la Vega found among the remote and ruder neighbours of the Incas, and attributed to the pre-Inca populations. “A man,” as in Egypt, and in totemic countries generally, “would eat freely of what was regarded as the incarnation of the god of another man”, but the incarnation of his own god he would consider it death to injure or eat. The god was supposed to avenge the insult by taking up his abode in that person’s body, and causing to generate there the very thing which he had eaten until it produced death. The god used to be heard within the man, saying, “I am killing this man; he ate my incarnation”. This class of tutelary deities they called *aitu fale*, or “gods of the house,” gods of the stock or kindred. In totemistic countries the totem is respected *per se*, in Samoa the animal is worshipful because a god abides within him. This appears to be a theory by which the reflective Samoans have explained to themselves what was once pure totemism.

Not only the household, but the village has its animal gods or god incarnate in an animal As some Arab tribes piously bury dead gazelles, as Athenians piously buried wolves, and Egyptians cats, so in Samoa “if a man found a dead owl by the roadside, and if that happened to be the incarnation of his village god, he would sit down and weep over it, and beat his forehead with a stone till the blood came. This was supposed to be pleasing to the deity. Then the bird would be wrapped up and buried with care and ceremony, as if it were a human body. This, however, was not the death of the god.” Like the solemnly sacrificed buzzard in California, like the bull in the Attic *Dupolia*, “he was supposed to be yet alive and incarnate in all the owls in existence”.*

In addition to these minor and local divinities, the Samoans have gods of sky, earth, disease and other natural departments.** Of their origin we only know that they fell from heaven, and all were incarnated or embodied in birds, beasts, plants, stones and fishes. But they can change shapes, and appear in the moon when she is not visible, or in any other guise they choose. If in Samoa the sky-god was once on the usual level of sky-gods elsewhere, he seems now to be degenerate.

** (—— —— —— —— —) Porph., De Abst.t ii. 29; Samoa, p. 21.*

*** I am careful not to call Samoan sacred animals “Totems.” to which Mr. Tylor justly objects, but I think the Samoan* *belief has Totemistic origins.*

CHAPTER XIV. AMERICAN DIVINE MYTHS

Novelty of the "New World " — Different stages of culture represented there — Question of American Monotheism — Authorities and evidence cited — Myths examined: Eskimo, Ahts, Thlinkeets, Iroquois, the Great Hare — Dr. Brinton's theory of the hare — Zuni myths — Transition to Mexican mythology.

The divine myths of the vast American continent are a topic which a lifetime entirely devoted to the study could not exhaust. At best it is only a sketch in outline that can be offered in a work on the development of mythology in general. The subject is the more interesting as anything like systematic borrowing of myths from the Old World is all but impossible, as has already been argued in chapter xi. America, it is true, may have been partially "discovered" many times; there probably have been several points and moments of contact between the New and the Old World. Yet at the time when the Spaniards landed there, and while the first conquests and discoveries were being pursued, the land and the people were to Europeans practically as novel as the races and territories of a strange planet.* But the New World only revealed the old stock of humanity in many of its familiar stages of culture, and, consequently, with the old sort of gods, and myths, and creeds.

* *Reville, Hibbert Lectures, 1884,*

In the evolution of politics, society, ritual, and in all the outward and visible parts of religion, the American races ranged between a culture rather below the ancient Egyptian and a rudeness on a level with Australian or Bushman institutions. The more civilised peoples, Aztecs and Peruvians, had many peculiarities in common with the races of ancient Egypt, China and India; where they fell short was in the lack of alphabet or syllabary. The Mexican MSS. are but an advanced picture-writing, more organised than that of the Ojibbeways; the Peruvian Quipus was scarcely better than the Red Indian wampum records. Mexicans and Peruvians were settled in what deserved to be called cities; they had developed a monumental and elaborately decorated architecture; they were industrious in the arts known to them, though ignorant of iron. Among the Aztecs, at least, weapons and tools of bronze, if rare, were not unknown. They were sedulous in agriculture, disciplined in war, capable of absorbing and amalgamating with conquered tribes.

In Peru the ruling family, the Incas, enjoyed all the sway of a hierarchy, and the chief Inca occupied nearly as secure a position, religious, social and political, as any Rameses or Thothmes. In Mexico, doubtless, the monarch’s power was at least nominally limited, in much the same way as that of the Persian king. The royal rule devolved on the elected member of an ancient family, but once he became prince he was surrounded by imposing ceremony. In both these two civilised peoples the priesthood enjoyed great power, and in Mexico, though not so extensively, if at all, in Peru, practised an appalling ritual of cannibalism and human sacrifice. It is extremely probable, or rather certain, that both of these civilisations were younger than the culture of other American peoples long passed away, whose cities stand in colossal ruin among the forests, whose hieroglyphs seem undecipherable, and whose copper-mines were worked at an unknown date on the shore of Lake Superior. Over the origin and date of those “crowned races” it were vain to linger here. They have sometimes left the shadows of names — Toltecs and Chichimecs — and relics more marvellous than the fainter traces of miners and builders in Southern and Central Africa. The rest is silence. We shall never know why the dwellers in Palenque deserted their majestic city while “the staircases were new, the steps whole, the edges sharp, and nowhere did traces of wear and tear give certain proof of long habitation”.* On a much lower level than the great urban peoples, but tending, as it were, in the same direction, and presenting the same features of state communism in their social arrangements, were, and are, the cave and cliff dwellers, the agricultural village Indians (Pueblo Indians) of New Mexico and Arizona. In the sides of the cañons towns have been burrowed, and men have dwelt in them like sand-martins in a sand-bank. The traveller views “perpendicular cliffs everywhere riddled with human habitations, which resemble the cells of a honeycomb more than anything else”. In lowland villages the dwellings are built of clay and stone.

* Nadaillac, Prehistoric America, .

“The San Juan valley is strewn with ruins for hundreds of miles; some buildings, three storeys high, of masonry, are still standing.”* The Moquis, Zunis and Navahos of to-day, whose habits and religious rites are known from the works of Mr. Cushing, Mr. Matthews, and Captain John G. Bourke, are apparently descendants of “a sedentary, agricultural and comparatively cultivated race,” whose decadence perhaps began “before the arrival of the Spaniards.”**

Rather lower in the scale of culture than the settled Pueblo Indians were the hunter tribes of North America generally. They dwelt, indeed, in collections of wigwams which were partially settled, and the “long house” of the Iroquois looks like an approach to the communal system of the Pueblos.*** But while such races as Iroquois, Mandans and Ojibbeways cultivated the maize plant, they depended for food more than did the Pueblo peoples on success in the chase. Deer, elk, buffalo, the wild turkey, the bear, with ducks and other birds, supplied the big kettle with its contents. Their society was totemistic, as has already been described; kinship, as a rule, was traced through the female line; the Sachems or chiefs and counsellors were elected, generally out of certain totem-kindreds; the war-chiefs were also elected when a military expedition started on the war-path; and Jossakeeds or medicine-men (the title varied in different dialects) had no small share of secular power.

**Nadaillac, .*

*** Ibid., . See Bourke's Snake-Dance of the Natives of Arizona, and the fifth report of the Archaeological Institute of America, with an account of the development of Pueblo buildings. It seems scarcely necessary to discuss Mr. Lewis Morgan's attempt to show that the Aztecs of Cortes's time were only on the level of the modern Pueblo Indians.*

**** Mr. Lewis Morgan's valuable League of the Iroquois and the Iroquois Book of Rites (Brinton, Philadelphia, 1883) may be consulted.*

In war these tribes displayed that deliberate cruelty which survived under the Aztec rulers as the enormous cannibal ritual of human sacrifice. A curious point in Red Indian custom was the familiar institution of scalping the slain in war. Other races are head-hunters, but scalping is probably peculiar to the Red Men and the Scythians.*

** Herodotus, iv. 64.*

On a level, yet lower than that of the Algonkin and other hunter tribes, are the American races whom circumstances have driven into desolate infertile regions; who live, like the Ahts, mainly on fish; like the Eskimos, in a world of frost and winter; or like the Fuegians, on crustaceans and seaweed. The minute gradations of culture cannot be closely examined here, but the process is upwards, from people like the Fuegians and Diggers, to the builders of the kitchen-middens — probably quite equals of the Eskimos*** — and so through the condition of Ahts.

**** Nadaillac, Prehistoric America, .*

The resemblance between Scythian and Red Indian manners exercised the learned in the time of Grotius. It has been acutely remarked by J. G. Müller, that in America one stage of society, as developed in the Old World, is absent. There is no pastoral stage. The natives had neither domesticated kine, goats nor sheep. From this lack of interest in the well-being of the domesticated lower animals he is inclined to deduce the peculiarly savage cruelty of American war and American religion. Sympathy was undeveloped. Possibly the lack of tame animals may have encouraged the prevalence of human sacrifice. The Brahmana shows how, in Hindostan, the lower animals became vicarious substitutes for man in sacrifice, as the fawn of Artemis or the ram of Jehovah took the place of Iphigenia or of Isaac. Cf. J. G. Müller, Oeschichte der Amerikanisehen Urreligionen, p, 23.

Thlinkeets, Cahrocs and other rude tribes of the North-west Pacific Coast, to that of Sioux, Blackfeet, Mandans, Iroquois, and then to the settled state of the Pueblo folk, the southern comforts of the Natchez, and finally to the organisation of the Mayas, and the summit occupied by the Aztecs and Incas.

Through the creeds of all these races, whether originally of the same stock or not, run many strands of religious and mythical beliefs — the very threads that are woven into the varied faiths of the Old World. The dread of ghosts; the religious adoration paid to animals; the belief in kindred and protecting beasts; the worship of inanimate objects, roughly styled fetishes; a certain reverence for the great heavenly bodies, sun, moon and Pleiades; a tendency to regard the stars, with all other things and phenomena, as animated and personal — with a belief in a Supreme Creator, these are the warp, as it were, of the fabric of American religion.*

** The arguments against the borrowing of the Creator from missionaries have already been stated.*

In one stage of culture one set of those ideas may be more predominant than in another stage, but they are present in all. The zoomorphic or theriomorphic mythologies and creeds are nowhere more vivacious than in America. Not content with the tribal zoomorphic guardian and friend, the totem, each Indian was in the habit of seeking for a special animal protector of his own. This being, which he called his Manitou, revealed itself to him in the long fasts of that savage sacrament which consecrates the entrance on full manhood. Even in the elaborate religions of the civilised races, Peruvians and Aztecs, the animal deities survive, and sacred beasts gather in the shrine of Pachacamac, or a rudimentary remnant of ancestral beak or feather clings to the statue of Huitzilopochtli. But among the civilised peoples, in which the division of labour found its place and human ranks were minutely discriminated, the gods too had their divisions and departments. An organised polytheism prevailed, and in the temples of Centeotl and Tlazolteotl, Herodotus or Pausanias would have readily recognised the Demeter and the Aphrodite of Mexico.

There were departmental gods, and there was even an obvious tendency towards the worship of one spiritual deity, the Bretwalda of all the divine kings, a god on his way to becoming single and supreme. The religions and myths of America thus display, like the myths and religions of the Old World, the long evolution of human thought in its seeking after God. The rude first draughts of Deity are there, and they are by no means effaced in the fantastic priestly designs of departmental divinities.

The question of a primitive American monotheism has been more debated than even that of the "Heno-theism" of the Aryans in India. On this point it must be said that, in a certain sense, probably any race of men may be called monotheistic, just as, in another sense, Christians who revere saints may be called polytheistic.*

** Gaidoz, Revue Critique, March, 1887.*

It has been constantly set forth in this work that, in moments of truly religious thought, even the lowest tribes turn their minds towards a guardian, a higher power, something which watches and helps the race of men. This mental approach towards the powerful friend is an aspiration, and sometimes a dogma; it is religious, not mythological; it is monotheistic, not polytheistic. The Being appealed to by the savage in moments of need or despair may go by a name which denotes a hawk, or a spider, or a grasshopper, but we may be pretty sure that little thought of such creatures is in the mind of the worshipper in his hour of need.*

** There are exceptions, as when the Ojibbeway, being in danger, appeals to his own private protecting Manitou, perhaps a wild duck; or when the Zuni cries to "Ye animal gods, my fathers!" (Bureau of Ethnol., 1880-81, .) Thus we can scarcely agree entirely with M. Maurice Vernes when he says, "All men are monotheistic in the fervour of adoration or in moments of deep thought". (L'Histoire des Religions, Paris, 1887, .) The tendency of adoration and of speculation is, however, monotheistic.*

Again, the most ludicrous or infamous tales may be current about the adventures and misadventures of the grasshopper or the hawk. He may be, as mythically conceived, only one out of a crowd of similar magnified non-natural men or lower animals. But neither his companions nor his legend are likely to distract the thoughts of the Bushman who cries to Cagn for food, or of the Murri who tells his boy that Pund-jel watches him from the heavens, or of the Solomon Islander who appeals to Qat as he crosses the line of reefs and foam. Thus it may be maintained that whenever man turns to a guardian not of this world, not present to the senses, man is for the moment a theist, and often a monotheist. But when we look from aspiration to doctrine, from the solitary ejaculation to ritual, from religion to myth, it would probably be vain to suppose that an uncontaminated belief in one God only, the maker and creator of all things, has generally prevailed, either in America or elsewhere. Such a belief, rejecting all minor deities, consciously stated in terms and declared in ritual, is the result of long ages and efforts of the highest thought, or, if once and again the intuition of Deity has flashed on some lonely shepherd or sage like an inspiration, his creed has usually been at war with the popular opinions of men, and has, except in Islam, won its disciples from the learned and refined. America seems no exception to so general a rule.

An opposite opinion is very commonly entertained, because the narratives of missionaries, and even the novels of Cooper and others, have made readers familiar with such terms as "the Great Spirit" in the mouths of Pawnees or Mohicans. On the one hand, taking the view of borrowing, Mrs. E. A. Smith says: "'The Great Spirit,' so popularly and poetically know as the God of the Red Man,' and 'the happy hunting-ground,' generally reported to be the Indian's idea of a future state, are both of them but their ready conception of the white man's God and heaven".* Dr. Brinton, too,** avers that "the Great Spirit is a post-Christian conception." In most cases these terms are entirely of modern origin, coined at the suggestion of missionaries, applied to the white man's God....

* *Bureau of Ethnology's Second Report, .*

** *Myths of the New World, New York, 1876, .*

The Jesuits' *Relations* state positively that there was "no one immaterial God recognised by the Algonkin tribes, and that the title 'The Great Manito' was introduced first by themselves in its personal sense." The statement of one missionary cannot be taken, of course, to bind all the others. The Pere Paul le Jeune remarks: "The savages give the name of Manitou to whatsoever in nature, good or evil, is superior to man. Therefore when we speak of God, they sometimes call him 'The Good Manitou,' that is, 'The Good Spirit'."* The same Pere Paul le Jeune** says that by Manitou his flock meant *un ange ou quelque nature puissante. Il y'en a de bons et de mauvais*. The evidence of Pere Hierosme Lallemant*** has already been alluded to, but it may be as well to repeat that, while he attributes to the Indians a kind of unconscious religious theism, he entirely denies them any monotheistic dogmas. With Tertullian, he writes, *Exclamant vocem naturaliter Christianam*. "To speak truth, these peoples have derived from their fathers no knowledge of a god, and before we set foot in their country they had nothing but vain fables about the origin of the world. Nevertheless, savages as they were, there did abide in their hearts a secret sentiment of divinity, and of a first principle, author of all things, whom, not knowing, they yet invoked. In the forest, in the chase, on the water, in peril by sea, they call him to their aid."

** Relations de la Novelle France, 1637, .*

*** Relations, 1633, .*

**** 1648, .*

This guardian, it seems, receives different names in different circumstances. Myth comes in; the sky is a God; a Manitou dwelling in the north sends ice and snow; another dwells in the waters, and many in the winds.* The Pere Allouez** says, "They recognise no sovereign of heaven or earth". Here the good father and all who advocate a theory of borrowing are at variance with Master Thomas Heriot, "that learned *Mathematician*" (1588). In Virginia "there is one chiefe god, that has beene from all eternitie," who "made other gods of a principal order".*** Near New Plymouth, Kiehtan was the chief god, and the souls of the just abode in his mansions.**** We have already cited Alione, and shown that he and the other gods found by the first explorers, are certainly not of Christian origin.

** The Confessions of Kah-ge-ga-gah Bowh, a converted Crane of the Ojibbeways, may be rather a suspicious document. Kah, to shorten his noble name, became a preacher and platform-speaker of somewhat windy eloquence, according to Mr. Longfellow, who had heard him. His report is that in youth he sought the favour of the Manitous (Mon-e-doos he calls them), but also revered Ke-sha-mon-e-doo, the benevolent spirit, "who made the earth with all its variety and smiling beauty". But his narrative is very unlike the Indian account of the manufacture of the world by this or that animal, already given in "Myths of the Origin of Things". The benevolent spirit, according to Kah's father, a medicine-man, dwelt in the sun (Copway, Recollections of a Forest Life, London, s. a. p, 5). Practical and good-natured actions of the Great Spirit are recorded on . He directs starving travellers by means of dreams.*

*** Relations, 1667, .*

**** Arber, Captain John Smith, .*

***** Op. cit., .*

A curious account of Red Indian religion may be extracted from a work styled *A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner during a Thirty Years' Residence among the Indians* (New York, 1830). Tanner was caught when a boy, and lived as an Indian, even in religion. The Great Spirit constantly appears in his story as a moral and protecting deity, whose favour and help may be won by "prayers, which are aided by magical ceremonies and dances. Tanner accepted and acted on this part of the Indian belief, while generally rejecting the medicine men, who gave themselves out for messengers or avaters of the Great Spirit. Tanner had frequent visions of the Great Spirit in the form of a handsome young man, who gave him information about the future. "Do I not know," said the appearance, "when you are hungry and in distress? I look down upon you at all times, and it is not necessary you should call me with such loud cries". ().

Almost all idea of a tendency towards monotheism vanishes when we turn from the religions to the myths of the American peoples. Doubtless it may be maintained that the religious impulse or sentiment never wholly dies, but, after being submerged in a flood of fables, reappears in the philosophic conception of a pure deity entertained by a few of the cultivated classes of Mexico and Peru. But our business just now is with the flood of fables. From north to south the more general beliefs are marked with an early dualism, and everywhere are met the two opposed figures of a good and a bad extra-natural being in the shape of a man or beast. The Eskimos, for example, call the better being Torngarsuk. "They don't all agree about his form or aspect. Some say he has no form at all; others describe him as a great bear, or as a great man with one arm, or as small as a finger. He is immortal, but might be killed by the intervention of the god Crepitus."*

** The circumstances in which this is possible may be sought for in Crantz, History of Greenland, London, 1767, vol. i.*

"The other great but malignant spirit is a nameless female," the wife or mother of Torngarsuk. She dwells under the sea in a habitation guarded by a Cerberus of her own, a huge dog, which may be surprised, for he sleeps for one moment at a time. Torngarsuk is not the maker of all things, but still is so much of a deity that many, "when they hear of God and his omnipotence, are readily led to the supposition that probably we mean their Torngarsuk ". All spirits are called Torngak, and *soak = great*; hence the good spirit of the Eskimos in his limited power is “the Great Spirit”.* In addition to a host of other spirits, some of whom reveal themselves affably to all, while others are only accessible to Angakut or medicine-men, the Eskimos have a Pluto, or Hades, or Charos of their own. He is meagre, dark, sullen, and devours the bowels of the ghosts. There are spirits of fire, water, mountains, winds; there are dog-faced demons, and the souls of abortions become hideous spectres, while the common ghost of civilised life is familiar. The spirit of a boy’s dead mother appeared to him in open day, and addressed him in touching language: “Be not afraid; I am thy mother, and love thee!” for here, too, in this frozen and haunted world, love is more strong than death.**

Eskimo myth is practical, and, where speculative, is concerned with the fortunes of men, alive or dead, as far as these depend on propitiating the gods or extra-natural beings. The Eskimo myth of the origin of death would find its place among the other legends of this sort.***

** Crantz, op. cit., i. 207. note.*

*** Op. cit., i. 209*

**** Cf. Modern Mythology, “The Origin of Death”.*

As a rule, Eskimo myth, as far as it has been investigated, rather resembles that of the Zulus. *Märchen* or romantic stories are very common; tales about the making of things and the actions of the pre-human beings are singularly scarce. Except for some moon and star myths, and the tale of the origin of death, hardly any myths, properly so called, are reported. “Only very scanty traces,” says Rink, “have been found of any kind of ideas having been formed as to the origin and early history of the world and the ruling powers or deities.”*

** He adds that this “seems sufficiently to show that such mythological speculations have been, in respect to other nations, also the product of a later stage of culture”. That this position is erroneous is plain from the many myths here collected from peoples lower in culture than the Eskimos. Cf. Rink, Tales and Traditions of the Eskimos.*

Turning from the Eskimos to the Ahts of Vancouver’s Island, we find them in possession of rather a copious mythology. Without believing exactly in a *supreme*, they have the conception of a *superior* being, Quawteaht, no mere local nor tribal deity, but known in every village, like Osiris in Egypt. He is also, like Osiris and Baiame, the chief of a beautiful, far-off, spiritual country, but he had his adventures and misadventures while he dwelt on earth. The malevolent aspect of things — storms, disease and the rest — is either Quawteaht enraged, or the manifestation of his opponent in the primitive dualism, Tootooch or Chay-her, the Hades or Pluto of the Ahts. Like Hades, Chay-her is both a person and a place — the place of the dead discomforted, and the ruler of that land, a boneless form with a long grey beard. The exploits of Quawteaht in the beginning of things were something between those of Zeus and of Prometheus.

"He is the general framer — I do not say creator of all things, though some special things are excepted."* Quawteaht, in the legend of the loon (who was once an injured Indian, and still wails his wrongs), is represented as conscious of the conduct of men, and as prone to avenge misdeeds.** In person Quawteaht was of short stature, with very strong hairy arms and legs.*** There is a touch of unconscious Darwinism in this description of "the first Indian". In Quawteaht mingle the rough draughts of a god and of an Adam, a creator and a first man. This mixture is familiar in the Zulu Unkulunkulu. Unlike Prometheus, Quawteaht did not steal the seed of fire. It was stolen by the cuttlefish, and in some legends Quawteaht was the original proprietor. Like most gods, he could assume the form of the beasts, and it was in the shape of a great whale that he discomfited his opponent Tootooch.*** It does not appear that Tootooch receives any worship or adoration, such as is offered to the sun and moon.

** Sproat, Savage Life, London, 1868, .*

*** Op. cit., .*

****Ibid. i. .*

Leaving the Ahts for the Thlinkeets, we find Yehl, the god or hero of the introduction of the arts, who, like the Christ of the Finnish epic or Maui in New Zealand, was born by a miraculous birth. His mother was a Thlinkeet woman, whose boys had all been slain. As she wandered disconsolate by the sea-shore, a dolphin or whale, taking pity upon her. bade her drink a little salt water and swallow a pebble. She did so, and in due time bore a child, Yehl, the hero of the Thlinkeets. Once, in his youth, Yehl shot a supernatural crane, skinned it, and whenever he wished to fly, clothed himself in the bird's skin. Yet he is always known as a raven. Hence there is much the same confusion between Yehl and the bird as between Amun in Egypt and the ram in whose skin he was once pleased to reveal himself to a mortal. In Yehl's youth occurred the deluge, produced by the curse of an unfriendly uncle of his own; but the deluge was nothing to Yehl, who flew up to heaven, and anchored himself to a cloud by his beak till the waters abated. Like most heroes of his kind, Yehl brought light to men. The heavenly bodies in his time were kept in boxes by an old chief. Yehl, by an ingenious stratagem, got possession of the boxes. To fly up to the firmament with the treasure, to open the boxes, and to stick stars, sun and moon in their proper places in the sky, was to the active Yehl the work of a moment.

Fire he stole, like Prometheus, carrying a brand in his beak till he reached the Thlinkeet shore. There the fire dropped on stones and sticks, from which it is still obtained by striking the flints or rubbing together the bits of wood. Water, like fire, was a monopoly in those days, and one Khanukh kept all of it in his own well. Khanukh was the ancestor of the Wolf family among the Thlinkeets, as Yehl is the first father of the stock called Ravens. The wolf and raven thus answer to the mythic creative crow and cockatoo in Australian mythology, and take sides in the primitive dualism. When Yehl went to steal water from Khanukh, the pair had a discussion, exactly like that between Joukahainen and Wainamoinen in the epic of the Finns, as to which of them had been longer in the world. "Before the world stood in its place, I was there," says Yehl; and Wainamoinen says, "When earth was made, I was there; when space was unrolled, I launched the sun on his way". Similar boasts occur in the poems of Empedocles and of Taliesin. Khanukh, however, proved to be both older and more skilled in magic than Yehl. Yet the accomplishment of flying once more stood Yehl in good stead, and he carried off the water, as Odin, in the form of a bird, stole Suttung's mead, by flying off with it in his beak. Yehl then went to his own place.*

In the myths of the other races on the North-west Pacific Coast nothing is more remarkable than the theriomorphic character of the heroes, who are also to a certain extent gods and makers of things.

The Koniagas have their ancestral bird and dog, demiurges, makers of sea, rivers, hills, yet subject to "a great deity called Schljam Schoa," of whom they are the messengers and agents.** The Aleuts have their primeval dog-hero, and also a great old man, who made people, like Deucalion, and as in the Macusi myth, by throwing stones over his shoulder.***

** Bancroft, iii. 100-102 .*

*** Ibid., 104, quoting Dall's Alaska, , and Lisiansky's Voyage, p, 198.*

**** Brett's Indians of Guiana, .*

Concerning the primal mythical beings of the great hunter and warrior tribes of America, Algonkins, Hurons and Iroquois, something has already been said in the chapter on "Myths of the Origin of Things".

It is the peculiarity of such heroes or gods of myth as the opposing Red Indian good and evil deities that they take little part in the affairs of the world when once these have been started.* Ioskeha and Tawiscara, the good and bad primeval brothers, have had their wars, and are now, in the opinion of some, the sun and the moon.** The benefits of Ioskeha to mankind are mainly in the past; as, for example, when, like another Indra, he slew the great frog that had swallowed the waters, and gave them free course over earth.***

Ioskeha is still so far serviceable that he “makes the pot boil,” though this may only be a way of recalling the benefits conferred on man by him when he learned from the turtle how to make fire. Ioskeha, moreover is thanked for success in the chase, because he let loose the animals from the cave in which they lived at the beginning. As they fled he spoiled their speed by wounding them with arrows; only one escaped, the wind-swift wolf. Some devotees regarded Ioskeha as the teacher of agriculture and the giver of great harvests of maize. In 1635 Ioskeha was seen, all meagre and skeleton-like, tearing a man’s leg with his teeth, a prophecy of famine. A more agreeable apparition of loskeha is reported by the Pere Barthelemy Vimont.* When an Iroquois was fishing, “a demon appeared to him in the shape of a tall and beautiful young man. ‘Be not afraid,’ said this spirit; ‘I am the master of earth, whom you Hurons worship under the name of Ioskeha; the French give me the erroneous name of Jesus, but they know me not.’” Ioskeha then gave some directions for curing the small-pox. The Indian’s story is, of course, coloured by what he knew of missionary teaching, but the incident should be compared with the “medicine dream” of John Tanner.

The sky, conceived as a person, held a place rather in the religion than in the

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* Erminie Smith, in Report of Bureau of Ethnology, 1880-81, publishes a full, but not very systematic, account of Iroquois gods of to-day. Thunder, the wind, and echo are the chief divine figures. The Titans or Jotuns, the opposed supernatural powers, are giants of stone. “Among the most ancient of the deities were their most remote ancestors, certain animals who later were transformed into human shapes, the name of the animals being preserved by their descendants, who have used them to designate their gentes or clans.” The Iroquois have a strange and very touching version of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice (op. cit., p. 104). It appears to be native and unborrowed; all the details are pure Iroquois.

** Relations de la Nouvelle France, 1636, .

*** Ibid. i. .

mythology of the Indians. He was approached with prayer and sacrifice, and “they implored the sky in all their necessities”.** “The sky hears us,” they would say in taking an oath, and they appeased the wrath of the sky with a very peculiar semi-cannibal sacrifice.***

* Relations, 1640, .

** Op. cit. i. 1636, .

*** For Pawnees and Blackfeet see Grinnell, Pawnee and Blackfoot Legends (2 vols.).

What Ioskeha was to the Iroquois, Michabo or Manibozho was to the Algonkin tribes. There has been a good deal of mystification about Michabo or Manibozho, or Messou, who was probably, in myth, a hare *sans phrase*, but who has been converted by philological processes into a personification of light or dawn. It has already been seen that the wild North Pacific peoples recognise in their hero and demiurge animals of various species; dogs, ravens, muskrats and coyotes have been found in this lofty estimation, and the Utes believe in “Cin-au-av, the ancient of wolves”.* It would require some labour to derive all the ancient heroes and gods from misconceptions about the names of vast natural phenomena like light and dawn, and it is probable that Michabo or Manibozho, the Great Hare of the Algonkins, is only a successful apotheosised totem like the rest. His legend and his dominion are very widely spread. Dr. Brinton himself () allows that the great hare is a totem. Perhaps our earliest authority about the mythical great hare in America is William Strachey’s *Travaile into Virginia*.**

* Powell, in Bureau of Ethnology, 1879-80, .

** Circa 1612; reprinted by the Hakjuyt Society.

Among other information as to the gods of the natives, Strachey quotes the remarks of a certain Indian: “We have five gods in all; our chief god appears often unto us in the likeness of a mighty great hare; the other four have no visible shape, but are indeed the four wynds”. An Indian, after hearing from the English the Biblical account of the creation, explained that “our god, who takes upon him the shape of a hare,... at length devised and made divers men and women”. He also drove away the cannibal Manitous. “That godlike hare made the water and the fish and a great deare.” The other four gods, in envy, killed the hare’s deer. This is curiously like the Bushman myth of Cagn, the mantis insect, and his favourite eland. “The godly hare’s house” is at the place of sun-rising; there the souls of good Indians “feed on delicious fruits with that great hare,” who is clearly, so far, the Virginian Osiris.* Dr. Brinton has written at some length on “this chimerical beast,” whose myth prevails, he says, “from the remotest wilds of the North-west to the coast of the Atlantic, from the southern boundary of Carolina to the cheerless swamps of Hudson’s Bay.... The totem” (totem-kindred probably is meant) “clan which bore his name was looked up to with peculiar respect.” From this it would appear that the hare was a totem like another, and had the same origin, whatever that may have been. According to the Pere Allouez, the Indians “ont en veneration toute particuliere, une certaine beste chimerique, qu’ils n’ont jamais veue sinon en songe, ils Tappelient Missibizi,” which appears to be a form of Michabo and Manibozho.**

** History of Travaile, p, 99. This hare we have alluded to in vol. i. , but it seems worth while again to examine Dr. Brinton’s theory more closely.*

*** Relations, 1637,*

In 1670 the same Pere Allouez gives some myths about Michabo. “C’est-a-dire le grand lievre,” who made the world, and also invented fishing-nets. He is the master of life, and can leap eight leagues at one bound, and is beheld by his servants in dreams. In 1634 Pere Paul le Jeune gives a longer account of Messou, “a variation of the same name,” according to Dr. Brinton, as Michabo. This Messou reconstructed the drowned world out of a piece of clay brought him by an otter, which succeeded after the failure of a raven sent out by Messou. He afterwards married a muskrat, by whom he became the father of a flourishing family. “Le brave reparateur de l’univers est le frere aisné de toutes les bestes,” says the mocking missionary.* Messou has the usual powers of shape-shifting, which are the common accomplishments of the medicine-man or conjuror, *se transformant en mille sortes d’animaux.** He is not so much a creator as a demiurge, inferior to a mysterious being called Atahocan. But Atahocan is obsolescent, and his name is nearly equivalent to an old wife’s fable, a story of events* au temps jadis.**** “Le mot* Nitatoho-can signifie, ‘Je dis un vieux conte fait à plaisir’.”

** Relations, 1634, .*

*** Op. cit., 1633, .*

**** Op. cit., 1634, .*

These are examples of the legends of Michabo or Manibozho, the great hare. He appears in no way to differ from the other animals of magical renown, who, in so many scores of savage myths, start the world on its way and instruct men in the arts. His fame may be more widely spread, but his deeds are those of eagle, crow, wolf, coyote, spider, grasshopper, and so forth, in remote parts of the world. His legend is the kind of legend whose origin we ascribe to the credulous fancy of early peoples, taking no distinction between themselves and the beasts. If the hare was indeed the totem of a successful and honoured kindred, his elevation is perfectly natural and intelligible.

Dr. Brinton, in his *Myths of the New World* (New York, 1876), adopts a different line of explanation. Michabo, he says, “was originally the highest divinity recognised by them, powerful and beneficent beyond all others, maker of the heavens and the world”. We gladly welcome him in that capacity in religion. But it has already been shown that Michabo is only, in myth, the *reparateur de l’univers*, and that he has a sleeping partner — a deity retired from business. Moreover, Dr. Brinton’s account of Michabo, “powerful and beneficent beyond all others, maker of the heavens and the world,” clashes with his own statement, that “of monotheism as displayed in the one personal definite God of the Semitic races” (to whom Dr. Brinton’s description of Michabo applies) “there is not a single instance on the American continent.”* The residences and birthplaces of Michabo are as many as those of the gods of Greece. It is true that in some accounts, as in Strachey’s, “his bright home is in the *rising* sun”. It does not follow that the hare had any original connection with the dawn. But this connection Dr. Brinton seeks to establish by philological arguments. According to this writer, the names (Manibozho, Nanibozhu, Missibizi, Michabo, Messou) “all seem compounded, according to well-ascertained laws of Algonkin euphony, from the words corresponding to *great* and *hare or rabbit*, or the first two perhaps from *spirit* and *hare*”.** But this seeming must not be trusted. We must attentively examine the Algonkin root *wab*, when it will appear “that in fact there are two roots having this sound. One is the initial syllable of the word translated hare or rabbit, but the other means *white*, and from it is derived the words for the east, the dawn, the light, the day, and the morning. Beyond a doubt (sic) this is the compound in the names Michabo and Manibozho, which therefore mean the great light, the spirit of light, of the dawn, or the east.”

* *Relations, p, 176.*

** *Op. cit., .*

Then the war of Manibozho became the struggle of light and darkness. Finally, Michabo is recognised by Dr. Brinton as “the not unworthy personification of the purest conceptions they possessed concerning the Father of All,”* though, according to Dr. Brinton in an earlier passage, they can hardly be said to have possessed such conceptions.** We are not responsible for these inconsistencies. The degeneracy to the belief in a “mighty great hare,” a “chimerical beast,” was the result of a misunderstanding of the root *wab* in their own language by the Algonkins, a misunderstanding that not only affected the dialects in which the root *wab* occurred in the hare’s name, but those in which it did not!

On the whole, the mythology of the great hunting and warrior tribes of North America is peopled by the figures of ideal culture-heroes, partly regarded as first men, partly as demiurges and creators. They waver in outward aspect between the beautiful youths of the “medicine-dreams” and the bestial guise of totems and protecting animals. They have a tendency to become identified with the sun, like Osiris in Egypt, or with the moon. They are adepts in all the arts of the medicine-man, and they are especially addicted to animal metamorphosis. In the long winter evenings, round the camp-fire, the Indians tell such grotesque tales of their pranks and adventures as the Greeks told of their gods, and the Middle Ages of the saints.***

** Relations, .*

*** Op. cit., .*

**** A full collection of these, as they survive in oral tradition, with an obvious European intermixture, will be found in Mr. Leland’s Algonquin Legends, London, 1884, and in Schoolcraft’s Hiawatha Legends, London, 1856. See especially the Manibozho legend.*

The stage in civilisation above that of the hunter tribes is represented in the present day by the settled Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Arizona. Concerning the faith of the Zunis we fortunately possess an elaborate account by Mr. Frank Cushing.* Mr. Cushing was for long a dweller in the clay *pueblos* of the Zuñis, and is an initiated member of their sacred societies. He found that they dealt at least as freely in metaphysics as the Maoris, and that, like the Australians, “they suppose sun, moon and stars, the sky, earth and sea, in all their phenomena and elements, and all inanimate objects, as well as plants, animals and men, to belong to one great system of all conscious and interrelated life, in which the degrees of relationship seem to be determined largely, if not wholly, by the degrees of resemblance”. This, of course, is stated in terms of modern self-conscious speculation. When much the same opinions are found among the Kamilaroi and Kurnai of Australia, they are stated thus: “Some of the totems divide not mankind only, but the whole universe into what may almost be called gentile divisions”.**

** Report of Bureau of Ethnology, Washington, 1880-81.*

*** Kamilaroi and Kurnai, .(). Mrs. Langloh Parker, in a letter to me, remarks that Baiame alone is outside of this conception, and is common to all classes, and totems, and class divisions.*

"Everything in nature is divided between the classes. The wind belongs to one and the rain to another. The sun is Wutaroo and the moon is Yungaroo.... The South Australian savage looks upon the universe as the great tribe, to one of whose divisions he himself belongs, and all things, animate or inanimate, which belong to his class are parts of the body corporate, whereof he himself is part. They are almost parts of himself".

Manifestly this is the very condition of mind out of which mythology, with all existing things acting as *dramatis personæ*, must inevitably arise.

The Zuni philosophy, then, endows all the elements and phenomena of nature with personality, and that personality is blended with the personality of the beast "whose operations most resemble its manifestation". Thus lightning is figured as a serpent, and the serpent holds a kind of mean position between lightning and man. Strangely enough, flint arrow-heads, as in Europe, are regarded as the gift of thunder, though the Zunis have not yet lost the art of making, nor entirely abandoned, perhaps, the habit of using them. Once more, the supernatural beings of Zuni religion are almost invariably in the shape of animals, or in monstrous semi-theriomorphic form. There is no general name for the gods, but the appropriate native terms mean "creators and masters," "makers," and "finishers," and "immortals". All the classes of these, including the class that specially protects the animals necessary to men, "are believed to be related by blood ". But among these essences, the animals are nearest to man, most accessible, and therefore most worshipped, sometimes as mediators. But the Zuni has mediators even between him and his animal mediators, and these are fetishes, usually of stone, which accidentally resemble this or that beast-god in shape. Sometimes, as in the Egyptian sphinx, the natural resemblance of a stone to a living form has been accentuated and increased by art. The stones with a natural resemblance to animals are most valued when they are old and long in use, and the orthodox or priestly theory is that they are petrifactions of this or that beast. Flint arrow-heads and feathers are bound about them with string.

All these beliefs and practices inspire the Zuñi epic, which is repeated, at stated intervals, by the initiated to the neophytes. Mr. Cushing heard a good deal of this archaic poem in his sacred capacity. The epic contains a Zuñi cosmogony. Men, as in so many other myths, originally lived in the dark places of earth in four caverns. Like the children of Uranus and Gæa, they murmured at the darkness. The “holder of the paths of life,” the sun, now made two beings out of his own substance; they fell to the earth, armed with rainbow and lightning, a shield and a magical flint knife. The new-comers cut the earth with a flint-knife, as Qat cut the palpable dark with a blade of red obsidian in Melanesia. Men were then lifted through the hole on the shield, and began their existence in the sunlight, passing gradually through the four caverns. Men emerged on a globe still very wet; for, as in the Iroquois and other myths, there had been a time when “water was the world “. The two benefactors dried the earth and changed the monstrous beasts into stones. It is clear that this myth accounts at once for the fossil creatures found in the rocks and for the merely accidental resemblance to animals of stones now employed as fetishes.* In the stones is believed to survive the “medicine” or magic, the spiritual force of the animals of old.

** Report, etc, .*

The Zuñis have a culture-hero as usual, Po’shai-an-k’ia, who founded the mysteries, as Demeter did in Greece, and established the sacred orders. He appeared in human form, taught men agriculture, ritual, and then departed. He is still attentive to prayer. He divided the world into regions, and gave the animals their homes and functions, much as Heitsi Eibib did in Namaqualand. These animals carry out the designs of the culture-hero, and punish initiated Zuñis who are careless of their religious duties and ritual. The myths of the sacred beasts are long and dismal, chiefly aetiological, or attempts to account by a fictitious narrative for the distribution and habits of the various creatures. Zuñi prayers are mainly for success in the chase; they are directed to the divine beasts, and are reinforced by magical ceremonies. Yet a prayer for sport may end with such a truly religious petition as this: “Grant me thy light; give me and my children a good trail across life “. Again we read: “This day, my fathers, ye animal gods, although this country be filled with enemies, render me precious.... Oh, give ye shelter of my heart from them!” Yet in religious hymns the Zuñis celebrate Ahonawilona, “the Maker and Container of All, the All Father,” the uncreated, the unbegotten, who “thought himself out into space”. Here is monotheism among fetishists.*

** Cushing, Report, Ethnol. Bureau, 1891-92, .*

The faith of the Zuñis, with its metaphysics, its devoutness and its magic ritual, may seem a kind of introduction to the magic, the ritual and the piety of the ancient Aztecs. The latter may have grown, in a long course of forgotten ages, out of elements like those of the Zuñi practice, combined with the atrocious cruelty of the warrior tribes of the north. Perhaps in no race is the extreme contrast between low myth, and the highest speculation, that of “the

Eternal thinking himself out into space," so marked as among the Zuñis. The highly abstract conception of Ahonawilona was unknown to Europeans when this work first appeared.

CHAPTER XV. MEXICAN DIVINE MYTHS

European eye-witnesses of Mexican ritual — Diaz, his account of temples and GodsSahagun, his method — Theories of the god Huitzilopochtli — Totemistic and other elements in his image and legend — Illustrations from Latin religion — “God-eating” — The calendar — Other gods — Their feasts and cruel ritual — Their composite character — Parallels from ancient classical peoples — Moral aspects of Aztec gods.

The religion of the Mexicans was a compound of morality and cruelty so astonishing that its two aspects have been explained as the contributions of two separate races. The wild Aztecs from the north are credited with having brought to a high pitch of organised ritual the ferocious customs of the Red Indians. The tortures which the tribes inflicted on captives taken in war were transmuted into the cannibal sacrifices and orgies of bloodshed with which the Aztec temples reeked. The milder elements, again, the sense of sin which found relief in confession and prayer, are assigned to the influence of Mayas, and especially of Toltecs, a shadowy and perhaps an imaginary people. Our ignorance of Mexican history before the Spanish conquest is too deep to make any such theory of the influence of race on religion in Mexico more than merely plausible. The facts of ritual and of myth are better known, thanks to the observations of such an honest soldier as Bernal Diaz and such a learned missionary as Sahagun. The author of the *Historia General de las Cosas de Nueva España* was a Spanish Franciscan, and one of the earliest missionaries (1529) in Mexico. He himself describes the method by which he collected his information about the native religion. He summoned together the chief men of one of the provinces, who, in turn, chose twelve old men well seen in knowledge of the Mexican practices and antiquities. Several of them were also scholars in the European sense, and had been taught Latin. The majority of the commission collected and presented “pictures which were the writings formerly in use among them,” and the “grammarians” or Latin-learned Aztecs wrote in European characters and in Aztec the explanations of these designs. When Sahagun changed his place of residence, these documents were again compared, re-edited and enlarged by the assistance of the native gentlemen in his new district, and finally the whole was passed through yet a third “sieve,” as Sahagun says, in the city of Mexico. The completed manuscript had many ups and downs of fortune, but Sahagun’s book remains a source of almost undisputed authenticity.

Probably no dead religion whose life was among a people ignorant of syllabaries or of the alphabet is presented to us in a more trustworthy form than the religion of Mexico. It is necessary, however, to discount the *theories* of Sahagun and his converts, who though they never heard of Euhemerus, habitually applied the euhemeristic doctrine to their facts. They decided that the gods of the Aztecs had once been living men and conjurors, worshipped after their decease. It is possible, too, that a strain of Catholic piety has found its way into the long prayers of the heathen penitents, as reported by Sahagun.* Sahagun gives us a full account of the Mexican mythology. What the gods, as represented by idols and adored in ritual, were like, we learn from a gallant Catholic soldier, Bernal Diaz.** “Above the altars,” he writes, “were two shapes like giants, wondrous for height and hugeness. The first on the right was Huichilobos (Huitzilopochtli), their god of war. He had a big head and trunk, his eyes great and terrible, and so inlaid with precious stones that all his head and body shone with stars thereof. Great snakes of gold and fine stones were girdled about his flanks; in one hand he held a bow, and arrows in the other, and a little idol called his page stood by his side.... Thereby also were braziers, wherein burned the hearts of three Indians, torn from their bodies that very day, and the smoke of them and the savour of incense were the sacrifice. The walls of this oratory were black and dripping with gouts of blood, and likewise the floor that stank horribly.” Such was the aspect of a Mexican shrine before the Spaniards introduced their faith.

** For a brief account of Sahagun and the fortunes of his book, see Bancroft, Native Races of the Pacific States, iii. 231, note 61. The references here to Sahagun’s own work are to the translation by MM. Jourdanet and Simeon, published by Masson, Paris, 1880. Bernal Diaz is referred to in the French edition published by M. Lemerre in 1879.*

*** Veridique Histoire, chap, xcii.*

As to the mythical habits of the Aztec Olympians in general, Sahagun observes that “they were friends of disguise, and changed themselves often into birds or savage beasts”. Hence he, or his informants, infer that the gods have originally been necromancers or medicine-men, now worshipped after death; a natural inference, as magical feats of shape-shifting are commonly ascribed “everywhere to witches and warlocks”. As a matter of fact, the Aztec gods, though bedizened with the attributes of mortal conjurors, and with the fur and feathers of totems, are, for the most part, the departmental deities of polytheism, each ruling over some province of nature or of human activity. Combined with these are deities who, in their origin, were probably ideal culture-heroes, like Yehl, or Qat, or Prometheus. The long and tedious myths of Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca appear to contain memories of a struggle between the gods or culture-heroes of rival races. Such struggles were natural, and necessary, perhaps, before a kind of syncretism and a general tolerance could unite in peace the deities of a realm composed of many tribes originally hostile. In a cultivated people, made up out of various conquered and amalgamated tribes, we must expect polytheism, because their Olympus is a kind of divine representative assembly. Anything like monotheism, in such a state, must be the result of philosophic reflection. “A laughable matter it is,” says Bernal Diaz, “that in each province the Indians have their gods, and the gods of one province or town are of no profit to the people of another. Thus have they an infinite number of idols, to each of which they sacrifice.”*

** Bernal Diaz, chacii.*

He might have described, in the same words, the local gods of the Egyptian nomes, for a similar state of things preceded, and to some extent survived, the syncretic efforts of Egyptian priesthood. Meanwhile, the *Teocallis*, or temples of Mexico, gave hospitable shelter to this mixed multitude of divinities. Hard by Huitzilopochtli was Tezcatlipoca (Tezcatepuca, Bernal calls him), whose chapel “stank worse than all the shambles of Castile”. He had the face of a bear and shining eyes, made of mirrors called *Tezcut*. He was understood by Bernal to be the Mexican Hades, or warden of the dead. Not far off was an idol, half-human and half-lizard, “the god of fruits and harvest, I remember not his name,” and all his chapel walls dripped blood.

In the medley of such a pantheon, it is difficult to arrange the deities on any principle of order. Beginning with Huitzilopochtli, as perhaps the most famous, it is to be observed that he indubitably became and was recognised as a god of battles, and that he was also the guide and protector who (according to the Aztec painted scriptures) led the wandering fathers through war and wilderness to the promised land of Mexico. His birth was one of those miraculous conceptions which we have seen so frequently in the myths and *märchen* of the lower and the higher races. It was not by swallowing a berry, as in Finland, but by cherishing in her bosom a flying ball of feathers that the devout woman, Coatlicue, became the mother of Huitzilopochtli. All armed he sprang to the light, like Athene from the head of Zeus, and slew his brothers that had been born by natural generation. From that day he received names of dread, answering to *Deimos* and *Phobos*.*

** Clavigero, Staria Ant. del Mexico, ii. 17, 19; Bancroft, iii. 290.*

By another myth, euhemeristic in character, Huitziton (the name is connected with *huitzilin*, the hummingbird) was the leader of the Aztecs in their wanderings. On his death or translation, his skull gave oracles, like the head of Bran in the Welsh legend. Sahagun, in the first page of his work, also euhemerises Huitzilopochtli, and makes him out to have been a kind of Hercules *doublé* with a medicine-man; but all this is mere conjecture. The position of Huitzilopochtli as a war-god, guardian and guide through the wilderness is perfectly established, and it is nearly as universally agreed that his name connects him with the hummingbird, which his statue wore on its left foot. He also carried a green bunch of plumage upon his head, shaped like the bill of a small bird Now, as J. G. Müller has pointed out, the legend and characteristics of Huitzilopochtli are reproduced, by a coincidence startling even in mythology, in the legend and characteristics of Picus in Latium. Just as Huitzilopochtli wore the hummingbird indicated by his name on his foot, so Picus was represented with the woodpecker of his name on his head.*

** J. G. Muller, Uramerik. Rel., .*

On the subject of Picus one may consult Ovid, *Metamorph*, xiv. 314. Here the story runs that Circe loved Picus, whom she met in the woods. He disdained her caresses, and she turned him into the woodpecker, “with his garnet head”. “Et fulvo cervix pnecingitur auro.”

According to Virgil (J. Sn., vii. 187), the statue of this Picus was settled in an old Laurentian temple or palace of unusual sanctity, surrounded by images of the earlier gods. The woodpeckers, *pici*, are known *Martio cognomine*, says Pliny (10, 18, 20, § 40), and so connected with the Roman war-god, *Picas Martius*.

In his Romische Mythologie, i. 336, 337, Preller makes no use of these materials for comparison, though the conduct and character of the other beast of war, the wolf, as guide and protector of the Hirpi (wolves), and worshipped by them with wolf-dances, is an obvious survival of totemism. The Picini have their animal leader, Picus, the woodpecker, the Hirpi have their animal leader, the wolf, just as the hummingbird was the leader of the Aztecs.

In these Latin legends, as in the legends of Huitzilopochtli, the basis, as J. G. Müller sees, is the bird — the hummingbird in one case, the woodpecker in the other. The bird is then euhemerised or brought into anthropomorphic form. It is fabled that he was originally a man (like Picus before Circe enchanted him to a bird’s shape), or, in Mexico, a man named Huitziton, who during the Aztec migrations heard and pursued a little bird that cried “Tinni,” that is, “Follow, follow”.* Now we are all familiar with classical legends of races that were guided by a bird or beast to their ultimate seats. Müller mentions Battus and the raven, the Chalcidians and the dove, the Cretans and the dolphin, which was

Apollo, Cadmus and the cow; the Hirpi, or wolves, who followed the wolf. In the same way the Picini followed the woodpecker, *Picus,* from whom they derived their name, and carried a woodpecker on their banners. Thus we may connect both the Sabine war-gods and the bird of the Mexican war-gods with the many guiding and protecting animals which occur in fable. Now a guiding and protecting animal is almost a synonym for a totem. That the Sabine woodpecker had been a totem may be pretty certainly established on the evidence of Plutarch. The people called by his name (Picini) declined, like totemists everywhere, to eat their holy bird, in this case the woodpecker.**

** Bancroft, iii. 69, note, quoting Torquemada.*

*** Quoest. Rom., xxi.*

The inference is that the hummingbird whose name enters into that of Huitzilopochtli, and whose feathers were worn on his heel, had been the totem of an Aztec kindred before Huitzilopochtli, like Picus, was anthropomorphised. On the other hand, if Huitzilopochtli was once the Baiame of the Aztecs, their Guide in their wanderings, he might, in myth, be mixed up with a totem or other worshipful animal. “Before this god was represented in human form, he was merely a little hummingbird, Huitziton; but as the anthropomorphic processes advanced, the bird became an attribute, emblem, or symbol of the deity.”* If Huitzilopochtli is said to have given the Aztecs fire, that boon is usually regarded by many races, from Normandy to Australia, as the present given to men by a bird; for example, the fire-crested wren.** Thus understood, the ornithological element in Huitzilopochtli is purely totemic. While accepting the reduction of him to a hummingbird, M. Reville ingeniously concludes that he was “a derivative form of the sun, and especially of the sun of the fair season”. If the bird was worshipped, it was not as a totem, but as “the divine messenger of the spring,” like “the plover among the Latins”.*** Attempts have been made, with no great success, to discover the cosmical character of the god from the nature of his feasts.

** J. G. Muller, op. cit. i. .*

*** Bosquet, La Normandie Merveilleuse, Paris, 1845; Brough Smyth, Aborigines of Victoria, vol. i.; Kuhn, Herabkunft, ; Journal Anthrop. Inst., November, 1884; Sproat, Savage Life (the cuttlefish), ; Bancroft, iii. 100.*

**** Hibbert Lectures, 1884, English trans., p, 55. The woodpecker seems a better Latin example than the plover.*

The Mexican calendar, “the Aztec year,” as described at considerable length by Sahagun, was a succession of feasts, marked by minute and elaborate rites of a magical character. The gods of rain were frequently propitiated, so was the goddess of maize, the mountain god, the mother of the gods, and many other divinities. The general theory of worship was the adoration of a deity, first by innumerable human sacrifices, next by the special sacrifice of a man for male gods, of a woman for each goddess. The latter victims were regarded as the living images or incarnations of the divinities in each case; for no system of worship carried farther the identification of the god with the sacrifice, and of both with the officiating priest. The connection was emphasised by the priest’s wearing the newly-flayed skins of the victims, just as in Greece, Egypt and Assyria the fawn-skin, or bull-hide, or goat-skin, or fish-skin of the victims is worn by the celebrants. Finally, an image of the god was made out of paste, and this was divided into morsels and eaten in a hideous sacrament by those who communicated.*

** Copious details as to the sacraments, human sacrifices, paste figures of gods, and identity of god and victim, will be found in Sahagun’s second and third books. The magical character of the ritual deserves particular attention. See many examples of gods made of flour and eaten in Liebrecht’s Zur Volkskunde, “Der aufgegessene Gott,” . It will be noted that the feasts of the corn goddess, like the rites of Demeter, were celebrated with torch-dances. The ritual of the month Quecholli (iii. 33, 144) is a mere medicine hunt, as Tanner and the Red Indians call it, a procuring of magical virtue for the arrows, as in the Zuni mysteries to-day. Compare Report of Bureau of Ethnology, vol. ii., “Zuni Prey Gods”.*

From the special ritual of Huitzilopochtli Mr. Tylor conjectures that this “inextricable compound parthenogenetic god may have been originally” a nature deity whose life and death were connected with the year”.* This theory is based on the practice at the feast called Panquetzaliztli.** “His paste idol was shot through with an arrow,” says Mr. Tylor, “and being thus killed, was divided into morsels and eaten; wherefore the ceremony was called *Teoqualo*, or ‘god-eating,’ and this was associated with the winter solstice.” M. Reville says that this feast coincided with our month of December, the beginning of the cold and dry season, Huitzilopochtli would die with the verdure, the flowers and all the beauteous adornments of spring and summer; but like Adonis, like Osiris, and so many other solar deities, he only died to live and to return again. Before identifying him with the sun, it may be remarked that the Aztec feast of the return of the gods was celebrated in the twelfth month and the paste sacrifice of Huitzilopochtli was in the fifteenth.

There were eighteen months in the Aztec year, and the year began on the 2nd of February. The return of the gods was, therefore, in September, and the paste sacrifice of Huitzilopochtli in December. Clearly the god who dies in the winter solstice cannot be thought to "return" late in September. Huitzilopochtli had another feast on the first day of the ninth month, that is, between June and July, when much use was made of floral decorations, and "they offered him the first flowers of the year," although flowers were used two months earlier, in the seventh month and in the fourth month.***

** Primitive Culture, ii. 307; Clavigero, Messico, ii. 17, 81.*

*** Sahagun, ii. 15, and Appendix, iii. 2, 3.*

**** Ibid. i. ii 9.*

But the Mexican calendar is hard to deal with. Müller places the feasts of Huitzilopochtli in the middle of May, the middle of August, and the middle of December.* He combines his facts with a legend which made Huitzilopochtli to be the son of the goddess of vegetation. J. G. Müller's whole argument is learned and acute, but errs probably in attempting to extract a consecutive symbolical sense out of the chaos of myth. Thus he writes: "When the myth makes the god the son of the mother of plants, it divides his essence from that of his mother, and thus Huitzilopochtli, however closely akin to the plant world, is not the plant world itself ". This is to consider more curiously than the myth-makers. The name of the patron goddess of the flower-wearers in feasts was Coatlicue or Coatlan, which is also the name of the mother of Huitzilopochtli; its meaning is "serpent petticoated".**

** Uramerik. Rel. v. .*

*** Sahagun, ii. 8*

When Müller goes on to identify Huitzilopochtli with the bunch of feathers that fell into his mother's breast before his birth, and that again with the hummingbird, and that again with the honey-sucking bird as the "means of fructifying the plants," and, finally, with the *männliche befrwchtende Naturkraft*, we have left myth far behind, and are in a region of symbolism and abstract thought, where one conjecture is as good as another. The hypothesis is that men, feeling a sense of religious reverence for the germinal force in Nature, took the hummingbird for its emblem, and so evolved the myth of the birth of Huitzilopochtli, who at once fructifies and is born from the bosom of vernal Nature. It would be rash and wrong to deny that such ideas are mixed in the medley of myth. But, as a rule, the sacred animal (as the hummingbird) is sacred first in itself, probably as a totem or as a guide and protector, and the symbolical sense is a forced interpretation put later on the facts.* We can hardly go farther, with safety, than the recognition of mingled aspects and elements in Huitzilopochtli as the totem, the tribal god, the departmental war-god, and possibly he is the god of the year's progress and renewal. His legend and ritual are a conglomerate of all these things, a mass of ideas from many stages of culture.

An abstract comparatively brief must suffice for the other Aztec deities.

Tezcatlipoca is a god with considerable pretensions to an abstract and lofty divinity. His appearance was not prepossessing; his image, as Bernal has described it, wore the head of a bear, and was covered with tiny mirrors.** Various attributes, especially the mirror and a golden ear, showed him forth as the beholder of the conduct of men and the hearer of prayer. He was said, while he lived on earth, to have been a kind of Ares in the least amiable aspect of the god, a maker of wars and discord.*** Wealth and power were in his gift. He was credited with ability to destroy the world when he chose. Seats were consecrated to him in the streets and the public places; on these might no man sit down.

** Compare Maspero on "Egyptian Beast-Gods," Rev. de l'Hist. des Rel., vol. i. and chapter postea, on "Egyptian Divine Myths".*

***The name means "shining mirror". Acosta makes him the god of famine and pestilence ().*

**** Sahagun, i. 3.*

He was one of the two gods whose extraordinary birth, and death by "happy despatch," that their vitality might animate the motionless sun, have already been described.* Tezcatlipoca, like most of the other gods, revived, and came back from the sky to earth. At a place called Tulla he encountered another god or medicine-man, Quetzalcoatl, and their legends become inextricably entangled in tales of trickery, animal metamorphosis, and perhaps in vague memories of tribal migrations. Throughout Tezcatlipoca brought grief on the people called Toltecs, of whom Quetzalcoatl was the divine culture-hero.** His statues, if we may believe Acosta, did him little credit. "In Cholula, which is a commonwealth of Mexico, they worship a famous idol, which was the god of merchandise.... It had the forme of a man, but the visage of a little bird with a red bill and above a combe full of wartes.”***

** Antea, “Myths of the Origins of Things “.*

*** Sahagnn, iii. 5, 6.*

**** Acosta, Nalurall and Morall Historic of the East and West Indies, London, 1604.*

A ready way of getting a view of the Mexican Pantheon is to study Sahagun’s two books on the feasts of the gods, with their ritual. It will become manifest that the worship was a worship, on the whole, of departmental gods of the elements, of harvest, of various human activities, such as love and commerce, and war and agriculture. The nature of the worship, again, was highly practical. The ceremonies, when not mere offerings of human flesh, were commonly representations on earth of desirable things which the gods were expected to produce in the heavenly sphere. The common type of all such magical ceremonies, whereby like is expected to produce like, has been discussed in the remarks on magic (chapter iv.). The black smoke of sacrifice generates clouds; the pouring forth of water from a pitcher (as in the Attic Thesmophoria) induces the gods to pour forth rain. Thus in Mexico the rain-god (Tlaloc, god of waters) was propitiated with sacrifices of children. “If the children wept and shed abundant tears, they who carried them rejoiced, being convinced that rain would also be abundant.”* The god of the maize, again (Cinteotl, son of the maize-goddess), had rites resembling those of the Greek Pyanepsion and Eiresione. The Aztecs used to make an image of the god, and offer it all manner of maize and beans.** Curiously enough, the Greeks also regarded their Pyanepsion as a bean-feast. A more remarkable analogy is that of the Peruvian Mama Cora, the figure of a goddess made of maize, which was asked “if it hath strength sufficient to continue until the next year,” and of which the purpose was, “that the seed of the maize may not perish”.*** This corn image of the corn goddess, preserved through all the year and replaced in the next year by a fresh image, is the Attic (—— ——), a branch of olive hung with a loaf and with all the fruits of the season, and set up to stand for all the year in front of each house. “And it remains for a year, and when it is dry and withered next year they make a fresh one.”****

** Sahagun. ii. 2, 3.*

*** Ibid., ii. 4, 24.*

**** Acosta, Hist Nat., 1604, .*

***** See Schol. in Aristoph. Plut., 1054, and other texts, quoted by Mannhardt, Arntike Waldund Feld Cultus, ii. 221, note 3.*

Children were sacrificed in Mexico to this deity. In the rites of a goddess of harvest, as has been said, torches were borne by the dancers, as in the Eleusinia; and in European and Oriental folk-lore.1 Demeter was the Greek harvest goddess, in whose rites torches had a place. One of her names is Demeter Erinnys. Mr. Max Müller recognises Erinnys as the dawn. Schwartz connects Demeter Erinnys with the thunderstorm. The torch in the hand of Demeter is the lightning, according to Schwartz. It is interesting, whether the torch be the torch of dawn, or of storm, or neither, to see the prevalence of these torch festivals in rural rites in Mexico, Greece and modern Europe. The idea of the peasants is that the lights scare away evil spirits.** In the Mexican rite, a woman, representing the goddess and dressed in her ornaments, was sacrificed. The same horrid ceremony accompanied the feast of the mother of the gods, Teteo Innan.*** In this rite the man who represented the son of the goddess wore a mask of the skin from the thigh of the female victim who had personated the goddess herself. The wearing of the skin established a kinship between the man and the woman, as in the many classical, ancient and savage rituals where the celebrants wear the hides of the sacrificed beasts. There was a god of storm called "cloudy serpent," Mixcoatl, whose rites were not more humane. The Mexican Aphrodite was named *Tlaçolteotl*,**** "the impure".

** Mannhardt, op. cit., ii. 263, i. 501, 502; Schwartz, Prähistorisch Anthropologische Studien, .*

*** Compare the French jour des brandons.*

****See Sahagun, ii. 30.*

***** Ibid., i. 12.*

About her character the Aztecs had no illusions. She listened to the confessions of the most loathsome sinners, whom she perhaps first tempted to err, and then forgave and absolved. Confession was usually put off till people had ceased to be likely to sin. She is said to have been the wife of Tlaloc, carried off by Tezcatlipoca. "She must have been the aquatic vegetation of marshy lands," says M. Roville, "possessed by the god of waters till the sun dries her up and she disappears." This is an amusing example of modern ingenuity. It resembles M. Reville’s assertion that Tlaloc, the rain-god, “had but one eye, which shows that he must be ultimately identified as an ancient personification of the rainy sky, whose one eye is the sun”. A rainy sky has usually no “eye” at all, and, when it has, in this respect it does not differ from a cloudless sky.

A less lovely set of Olympians than the Aztec gods it is difficult to conceive. Yet, making every allowance for Catholic after-thoughts, there can be no doubt that the prayers, penances and confessions described at length by Sahagun indicate a firm Mexican belief that even these strange deities “made for righteousness,” loved good, and, in this world and the next, punished evil. However it happened, whatever accidents of history or of mixture of the races in the dim past caused it, the Aztecs carried to extremes the religious and the mythical ideas. They were exceedingly pious in their attitude of penitence and prayer; they were more fierce and cruel in ritual, more fantastic in myth, than the wildest of tribes, tameless and homeless, ignorant of agriculture or of any settled and assured existence. Even the Inquisition of the Spanishof the sixteenth century was an improvement on the unheard-of abominations of Mexican ritual. As in all fully developed polytheisms of civilised races among the Aztecs we lose sight of the moral primal Being of low savage races. He is obscured by deities of a kind not yet evolved in the lowest culture.

CHAPTER XVI. THE MYTHOLOGY OF EGYPT

Antiquity of Egypt — Guesses at origin of the people — Chronological views of the religion — Permanence and changes — Local and syncretic worship — Elements of pure belief and of totemism — Authorities for facts — Monuments and Greek reports — Contending theories of modern authors — Study of the gods, their beasts, their alliances and mutations — Evidence of ritual — A study of the Osiris myth and of the development of Osiris-Savage and theological elements in the myth — Moral aspect of the religion — Conclusion.

Even to the ancients Egypt was antiquity, and the Greeks sought in the dateless mysteries of the Egyptian religion for the fountain of all that was most mysterious in their own. Curiosity about the obscure beginnings of human creeds and the first knowledge of the gods was naturally aroused by that spectacle of the Pantheon of Egypt. Her highest gods were abstractions, swathed, like the Involuti of the Etrurians, in veils of mystic doctrine; yet in the most secret recess of her temples the pious beheld “a crocodile, a cat, or a serpent, a beast rolling on a purple couch”.*

** Clem. Alex., Pædagog., iii. 2 (93).*

In Egypt, the earlier ages and the later times beheld a land dominated by the thought of death, whose shadow falls on the monarch on his crowning day, whose whisper bids him send to far-off shores for the granite and the alabaster of the tomb. As life was ruled by the idea of death; so was fact conquered by dream, and all realities hastened to lose themselves in symbols; all gods rushed to merge their identity in the sun, as moths fly towards the flame of a candle. This spectacle of a race obedient to the dead and bowing down before the beasts, this procession of gods that were their own fathers and members together in Ra, wakened the interest of the Greeks, who were even more excited by the mystery of extreme age that hid the beginnings of Egypt. Full of their own memories and legends of tribal movements, of migrations, of invasions, the Greeks acknowledged themselves children of yesterday in face of a secular empire with an origin so remote that it was scarcely guessed at in the conjectures of fable. Egypt presented to them, as to us, the spectacle of antique civilisation without a known beginning. The spade of to-day reveals no more than the traditions of two thousand years ago. The most ancient relics of the earliest dynasty are the massive works of an organised society and an accomplished art. There is an unbridged interval between the builders of the mysterious temple hard by the Sphinx and their predecessors, the chippers of palaeolithic flint axes in the river drift. We know not whence the Egyptians came; we only trifle with hypotheses when we conjecture that her people are of an Asiatic or an African stock; we know not whether her gods arose in the fertile swamps by Nile-side, or whether they were borne in arks, like the Huitzilopochtli of Mexico, from more ancient seats by the piety of their worshippers. Yet as one great river of mysterious source flows throughout all Egypt, so through the brakes and jungles of her religion flows one great myth from a distant fountain-head, the myth of Osiris.*

** As to the origin of the Egyptians, the prevalent belief among the ancients was that they had descended the Nile from the interior of Africa. Cf. Diodorus Siculus, iii. 8. Modern theorists occasionally lean in this direction. Dumichen, Geschichte des Alien Ægyptiens, i. 118. Again, an attempt has been made to represent them as successful members of a race whereof the Bushmen of South Africa are the social failures. M. Maspero conceives, once more, that the Egyptians were "proto-Semitic," ethnologically related to the people of Eastern Asia, and the grammar of their language has Semitic affinities. But the connection, if it ever existed, is acknowledged to be extremely remote. Maspero, Hist, de l'Orient, 4th edit., . De Rouge writes, "Tout nous ramène vers la parenté primitive de Mitsraim (Egyptains) et de Canaan" (Recherches sur les Muniments,).*

The questions which we have to ask in dealing with the mythology of Egypt come under two heads: First, What was the nature of Egyptian religion and myth? Secondly, How did that complex mass of beliefs and practices come into existence?

The question, *What was the religion of Egypt?* is far from simple. In a complete treatise on the topic, it would be necessary to ask in reply, At what period, in what place, and among what classes of society did the religion exist which you wish to investigate? The ancient Egyptian religion had a lifetime so long that it almost requires to be meted by the vague measures of geological time. It is historically known to us, by the earliest monuments, about the date at which Archbishop Usher fixed the Creation. Even then, be it noticed, the religion of Egypt was old and full-grown; there are no historical traces of its beginnings. Like the material civilisation, it had been fashioned by the unrecorded *Sheshoa Hor*, “the servants of Horus,” patriarchs dwelling with the blessed. In the four or five thousand years of its later existence, Egyptian religion endured various modifications.* It was a conservative people, and schooled by the wisdom of the sepulchre. But invaders, Semitic, Ethiopian and Greek, brought in some of their own ideas. Priestly colleges developed novel dogmas, and insensibly altered ritual The thought of hundreds of generations of men brooded, not fruitlessly, over the problems of the divine nature. Finally, it is likely that in Egypt, as elsewhere, the superstitions of the least educated and most backward classes, and of subject peoples on a lower level of civilisation, would again and again break up, and win their way to the surface of religion. Thus a complete study of Egyptian faiths would be chronological — would note the setting and rising of the stars of elder and later deities.

** Professor Lieblein, maintaining this view, opposes the statement of Mr. Le Page Renouf, who writes: “The earliest monuments which have been discovered present to us the very same fully developed civilisation and the same religion as the later monuments” (Hib. Lectures, 1880,). But it is superfluous to attack a position which Mr. Le Page Renouf does not appear really to hold. He admits the existence of development and evolution in Egyptian religious thought “I believe, therefore, that, after closely approaching the point at which polytheism might have turned into monotheism, the religious thought of Egypt turned aside into a wrong track” (Op. cit,).*

The method of a systematic history of Egyptian religion would not be regulated by chronology alone. Topographical and social conditions would also claim attention. The favoured god or gods of one nome (administrative district), or of one town, or of one sacred metropolis, were not the gods of another metropolis, or town, or nome, though some deities were common to the whole country. The fundamental character might be much the same in each case, but the titles, and aspects, and ritual, and accounts of the divine genealogy varied in each locality. Once more, the “syncretic” tendency kept fusing into one divine name and form, or into a family triad of gods (mother, father and son), the deities of different districts, which, beneath their local peculiarities, theologians could recognise as practically the same.

While political events and local circumstances were thus modifying Egyptian religion, it must never be forgotten that the different classes of society were probably by no means at one in their opinions. The monuments show us what the kings believed, or at least what the kings practised, record the prayers they uttered and the sacrifices they offered. The tombs and the papyri which contain the *Book of the Dead* and other kindred works reveal the nature of belief in a future life, with the changes which it underwent at different times. But the people, the vast majority, unlettered and silent, cannot tell us what *they* believed, or what were their favourite forms of adoration. We are left to the evidence of amulets, of books of magic, of popular tales, surviving on a papyrus here and there, and to the late testimony of Greek writers — Herodotus, Diodorus, the author of the treatise *De Osiride et hide*, and others. While the clergy of the twentieth dynasty were hymning the perfections of Ammon Ra— "so high that man may not attain unto him, dweller in the hidden place, him whose image no man has beheld" — the peasant may have been worshipping, like a modern Zulu, the serpents in his hovel, or may have been adoring the local sacred cat of his village, or flinging stones at the local sacred crocodile of his neighbours. To the enlightened in the later empire, perhaps to the remotest unknown ancestors also, God was self-proceeding, self-made, manifest in the deities that were members together in him of godhead. But the peasant, if he thinks of the gods at all, thinks of them walking the earth, like our Lord and the saints in the Norse nursery tales, to amuse themselves with the adventures of men. The peasant spoke of the Seven Hathors, that come like fairy godmothers to the cradle of each infant, and foretell his lot in life.*

** Compare Maspero, Hist, de l'Orient., 4th edit., p-288, for the priestly hymns and the worship of beasts. "The lofty thoughts remained the property of a small number of priests and instructed people; they did not penetrate the mass of the population. Far from that, the worship of animals, goose, swallow, cat, serpent, had many more followers than Amnion Ra could count." See also Tiele, Manuel de l'Hist. des Rel., Paris, 1880, p, 47. For the folk-lore of wandering gods see Maspero, Contes Egyptiens, Paris, 1882, .*

It is impossible, of course, to write here a complete history of Egyptian religion, as far as it is to be extracted from the books and essays of learned moderns; but it has probably been made clear that when we speak of the religion and mythology of Egypt, we speak of a very large and complicated subject. Plainly this is a topic which the lay student will find full of pitfalls, and on which even scholars may well arrive at contradictory opinions. To put the matter briefly, where one school finds in the gods and the holy menagerie of Egyptian creeds the corruption of a primitive monotheism, its opponents see a crowd of survivals from savagery combined with clearer religious ideas, which are the long result of civilised and educated thought.* Both views may be right in part.

** The English leader of the former school, the believer in a primitive purity, corrupted and degraded but not extinguished, is Mr. Le Page Renouf (Hibbert Lectures, London, 1879). It is not always very easy to make out what side Mr. Le Page Renouf does take. For example, in his Hibbert Lectures, , he speaks somewhat sympathetically of the "very many eminent scholars, who, with full knowledge of all that can be said to the contrary, maintain that the Egyptian religion is essentially monotheistic". He himself says that "a power without a name or any mythological characteristic is constantly referred to in the singular number, and can only be regarded as the object of that sensus numinis, or immediate perception of the Infinite." which is "the result of an intuition as irresistible as the impressions of our senses". If this be not primitive instinctive monotheism, what is it? Yet Mr. Le Page Renouf says that Egyptian polytheism, after closely approaching the point where it might have become monotheism, went off on a wrong track; so the Egyptians after all were polytheists, not monotheists (op. cit.,). Of similar views are the late illustrious Vicomte de Rouge, M. Mariette, M. Pierret, and Brugsch Pasha (Rel. und Myth, der Alien Egypter, vol i., Leipzig, 1884). On the other side, on the whole regarding Egyptian creeds as a complex mass of early uncivilised and popular ideas, with a later priestly religion tending towards pantheism and monotheism, are M. Maspero, Professor Tiele, Professor Lieblein (English readers may consult his pamphlet, Egyptian Religion, Leipzig, 1884), M. Edward Meyer, (Geschichte des Alterthums, Stuttgart, 1884), Herr Pietsch. mann (Zeitschrtftfur Ethnologic, Berlin, 1878, art. "Fetisch Dienst"), and Professor Tiele (Manuel de l'Histoire des Religions, Paris, 1880, and "History of Egyptian Religion, English translation, 1882).*

After this preamble let us endeavour to form a general working idea of what Egyptian religion was as a whole. What kind of religion did the Israelites see during the sojourn in Egypt, or what presented itself to the eyes of Herodotus? Unluckily we have no such eye-witnesses of the earlier Egyptian as Bernal Diaz was of the Aztec temples. The Bible says little that is definite about the theological “wisdom of the Egyptians”. When confronted with the sacred beasts, Herodotus might have used with double truth the Greek saw: “A great ox has trod upon my tongue”.* But what Herodotus hinted at or left unsaid is gathered from the evidence of tombs and temple walls and illuminated papyri.

One point is certain. Whatever else the religion of Egypt may at any time have been, it struck every foreign observer as polytheism.** Moreover, it was a polytheism like another. The Greeks had no difficulty, for example, in recognising amongst these beast-headed monsters gods analogous to their own. This is demonstrated by the fact that to almost every deity of Egypt they readily and unanimously assigned a Greek divine name. Seizing on a certain aspect of Osiris and of his mystery-play, they made him Dionysus; Hor became Apollo; Ptah, Hephaestus: Ammon Ra, Zeus; Thoth, Hermes, and so on with the rest. The Egyptian deities were recognised as divine beings, with certain (generally ill-defined) departments of Nature and of human activity under their care. Some of them, like Seb (earth) and Nut (heaven), were esteemed elemental forces or phenomena, and were identified with the same personal phenomena or forces, Uranus and Gæa, in the Greek system, where heaven and earth were also parents of many of the gods.

** Æschylus, Agamemnon, 37, (—— ——)*

*** Maspero, Musée de Boulaq, ; Le Page Renouf, Hib. Led., p,86.*

Thus it is indisputably clear that Egyptian religion had a polytheistic aspect, or rather, as Maspero says, was “a well-marked polytheism”; that in this regard it coincided with other polytheisms, and that this element must be explained in the Egyptian, as it is explained in the Greek or the Aztec, or the Peruvian or the Maori religion.* Now an explanation has already been offered in the mythologies previously examined. Some gods have been recognised, like Rangi and Papa, the Maori heaven and earth (Nut and Seb), as representatives of the old personal earth and heaven, which commend themselves to the barbaric fancy. Other gods are the informing and indwelling spirits of other phenomena, of winds or sea or woods. Others, again, whatever their origin, preside over death, over the dead, over the vital functions, such as love, or over the arts of life, such as agriculture; and these last gods of departments of human activity were probably in the beginning culture-heroes, real, or more likely ideal, the first teachers of men.

** “It is certainly erroneous to consider Egyptian religion as a polytheistic corruption of a prehistoric monotheism. It* *is more correct to say that, while polytheistic in principle, the religion developed in two absolutely opposite directions. On one side, the constant introduction of new gods, local or foreign; on the other, a groping after a monotheism never absolutely reached. The learned explained the crowd of gods as so many incarnations of the one hidden uncreated deity." — Tiele, Manuel de l'Histoire des Religions, .*

In polytheisms of long standing all these attributes and functions have been combined and reallotted, and the result we see in that confusion which is of the very essence of myth. Each god has many birth-places, one has many sepulchres, all have conflicting genealogies. If these ideas about other polytheisms be correct, then it is probable that they explain to a great extent the first principles of the polytheism of Egypt They explain at least the factors in Egyptian religion, which the Greeks recognised as analogous with their own, and which are found among polytheists of every degree of culture, from New Zealand to Hellas. If ever Ptah, or any other name, represented "Our Father" as he is known to the most backward races, he was buried into the background by gods evolved from ghosts, by departmental gods, and by the gods of races amalgamated in the course of conquest and settlement.

Leaving on one side, then, for the moment, the vast system of ancestor-worship and of rites undertaken for the benefit of the dead, and leaving aside the divinity of the king, polytheism was the most remarkable feature of Egyptian religion. The foreign traveller in the time of the pyramid-builders, as in the time of Ramses II., or of the Ptolemies, or of the Roman domination, would have found a crowd of gods in receipt of honour and of sacrifice. He would have learned that one god was most adored in one locality, another in another, that Ammon Ra was predominant in Thebes; Ra, the sun-god, in Heliopolis; Osiris in Abydos, and so forth. He would also have observed that certain animals were sacred to certain gods, and that in places where each beast was revered, his species was not eaten, though it might blamelessly be cooked and devoured in the neighbouring nome or district, where another animal was dominant. Everywhere, in all nomes and towns, the adoration of Osiris, chiefly as the god and redeemer of the dead, was practised.*

** On the different religions of different nomes, and especially the animal worship, see Pietschmann, Der Ægyptische Fetischdienst und Götterglaube, Zeitschrtft für Ethnologie, 1878, .*

While these are the general characteristics of Egyptian religion, there were inevitably many modifications in the course of five thousand years. If one might imagine a traveller endowed, like the Wandering Jew, with endless life, and visiting Egypt every thousand, or every five hundred years, we can fancy some of the changes in religion which he would observe. On the whole, from the first dynasty and the earliest monuments to the time when Hor came to wear a dress like that of a Roman centurion, the traveller would find the chief figures of the Pantheon recognisably the same. But there would be novelties in the manner of worshipping and of naming or representing them. “In the oldest tombs, where the oldest writings are found, there are not many gods mentioned — there are Osiris, Horus, Thot, Seb, Nut, Hathor, Anubis, Apheru, and a couple more.”* Here was a stock of gods who remained in credit till “the dog Anubis” fled from the Star of Bethlehem. Most of these deities bore birth-marks of the sky and of the tomb. If Osiris was “the sun-god of Abydos,” he was also the murdered and mutilated culture-hero. If Hor or Horus was the sun at his height, he too had suffered despiteful usage from his enemies. Seb and Nut (named on the coffin of Mycerinus of the fourth dynasty in the British Museum) were our old friends the personal heaven and earth. Anubis, the jackal, was “the lord of the grave,” and dead kings are worshipped no less than gods who were thought to have been dead kings. While certain gods, who retained permanent power, appear in the oldest monuments, sacred animals are also present from the first.

* *Lieblein, Egyptian Religion, .*

The gods, in fact, of the earliest monuments were beasts. Here is one of the points in which a great alteration developed itself in the midst of Egyptian religion. Till the twelfth dynasty, when a god is mentioned (and in those very ancient remains gods are not mentioned often), “he is represented by his animal, or with the name spelled out in hieroglyphs, often beside the bird or beast”.* “The jackal stands for Anup (Anubis), the frog for Hekt, the baboon for Tahuti (Thoth). It is not till after Semitic influence had begun to work in the country that any figures of gods are found.” By “figures of gods” are meant the later man-shaped or semi-man-shaped images, the hawk-headed, jackal-headed, and similar representations with which we are familiar in the museums. The change begins with the twelfth dynasty, but becomes most marked under the eighteenth. “During the ancient empire,” says M. Maspero, “I only find monuments at four points — at Memphis, at Abydos, in some parts of Middle Egypt, at Sinai, and in the valley of Hammamat. The divine names appear but occasionally, in certain unvaried formulæ. Under the eleventh and twelfth dynasties Lower Egypt comes on the scene. The formulæ are more explicit, but the religious monuments rare. From the eighteenth dynasty onwards, we have *representations* of all the deities, accompanied by legends more or less developed, and we begin to discover books of ritual, hymns, amulets, and other objects."** There are also sacred texts in the Pyramids.

** Flinders Petrie, Arts of Ancient Egypt, .*

*** Revue de l'Histoire des Religions, i. 124.*

Other changes, less important than that which turned the beast-god into a divine man or woman, often beast-headed, are traced in the very earliest ages. The ritual of the holy bulls (Hapi, Apis) makes its official appearance under the fourth king of the first, and the first king of the second dynasties.* Mr. Le Page Renouf, admitting this, thinks the great development of bull-worship later.** In the third dynasty the name of Ra, sun, comes to be added to the royal names of kings, as Nebkara, Noferkara, and so forth.*** Osiris becomes more important than the jackal-god as the guardian of the dead. Sokar, another god of death, shows a tendency to merge himself in Osiris. With the successes of the eighteenth dynasty in Thebes, the process of *syncretism*, by which various god-names and god-natures are mingled, so as to unite the creeds of different nomes and provinces, and blend all in the worship of the Theban Ammon Ra, is most notable. Now arise schools of theology; pantheism and an approach to monotheism in the Theban god become probable results of religious speculations and imperial success. These tendencies are baffled by the break-up of the Theban supremacy, but the monotheistic idea remains in the esoteric dogmas of priesthoods, and survives into Neo-Platonism. Special changes are introduced — now, as in the case of worship of the solar disk by a heretic king; earlier, as in the prevalence of Set-worship, perhaps by Semitic invaders.****

** Brugsch, History of Egypt, English transl., i. 59, 60.*

*** Hib. Lect., p, 238.*

**** Op. cit. i. .*

***** For Khunaten, and his heresy of the disk in Thebes, see Brugsch, op. cit., i. 442. It had little or no effect on myth. Tiele says (Hist. Egypt. Rel.,), "From the most remote antiquity Set is one of the Osirian circle, and is thus a genuine Egyptian deity".*

It is impossible here to do more than indicate the kind of modification which Egyptian religion underwent. Throughout it remained constant in certain features, namely, the *local* character of its gods, their usefulness to the dead (their *Chthonian* aspect), their tendency to be merged into the sun, Ra, the great type and symbol and source of life, and, finally, their inability to shake off the fur and feathers of the beasts, the earliest form of their own development. Thus life, death, sky, sun, bird, beast and man are all blended in the religious conceptions of Egypt. Here follow two hymns to Osiris, hymns of the nineteenth and twentieth dynasties, which illustrate the confusion of lofty and almost savage ideas, the coexistence of notions from every stage of thought, that make the puzzle of Egyptian mythology.

"Hail to thee, Osiris, eldest son of Seb, greatest of the six deities born of Nut, chief favourite of thy father, Ra, the father of fathers; king of time, master of eternity; one in his manifestations, terrible. When he left the womb of his mother he united all the crowns, he fixed the urseus (emblem of sovereignty) on his head. God of many shapes, god of the unknown name, thou who hast many names in many provinces; if Ra rises in the heavens, it is by the will of Osiris; if he sets, it is at the sight of his glory."*

In another hymn** Osiris is thus addressed: "King of eternity, great god, risen from the waters that were in the beginning, strong hawk, king of gods, master of souls, king of terrors, lord of crowns, thou that art great in Hnes, that dost appear at Mendes in the likeness of a ram, monarch of the circle of gods, king of Amenti (Hades), revered of gods and men, who so knoweth humility and reckoneth deeds of righteousness, thereby knows he Osiris."***

** From Abydos, nineteenth dynasty. Maspero, Musee de Boulaq, p,50.*

*** Twentieth dynasty.   Op. cit., .*

**** "This phase of religious thought," says Mr. Page Renouf, speaking of what he calls monotheism, "is chiefly presented to us in a large number of hymns, beginning with the earliest days of the eighteenth dynasty. It is certainly much more ancient, but.... none of the hymns of that time have come down to us." See a very remarkable pantheistic hymn to Osiris, "lord of holy transformations," in a passage cited, Hib. Lect., , and the hymns to Amnion Ra, "closely approaching the language of monotheism," p, 226. Excellent examples of pantheistic litanies of Ra are translated from originals of the nineteenth dynasty, in Records of the Past, viii. 105-128. The royal Osiris is identified with Ra. Here, too, it is told how Ra smote Apap, the serpent of evil, the Egyptian Ahi.*

Here the noblest moral sentiments are blended with Oriental salutations in the worship of a god who, for the moment, is recognised as lord of lords, but who is also a ram at Mendes. This apparent confusion of ideas, and this assertion of supremacy for a god who, in the next hymn, is subjected to another god, mark civilised polytheism; but the confusion was increased by the extreme age of the Egyptian faith, and by the doubt that prevailed as to the meaning of tradition. “The seventeenth chapter of the *Book of the Dead*” which seems to contain a statement of the system of the universe as understood at Heliopolis under the first dynasties, “is known to us by several examples of the eleventh and twelfth dynasties.” *Each of the verses had already been interpreted in three or four different ways*; so different, that, according to one school, the Creator, *Râ-Show*, was the solar fire; according to another school, not the fire, but the waters! The *Book of the Dead*, in fact, is no book, but collections of pamphlets, so to speak, of very different dates. “Plan or unity cannot be expected,” and glosses only some four thousand years old have become imbedded in really ancient texts.* Fifteen centuries later the number of interpretations had considerably increased.**

Where the Egyptians themselves were in helpless doubt, it would be vain to offer complete explanations of their opinions and practices in detail; but it is possible, perhaps, to account for certain large elements of their beliefs, and even to untie some of the knots of the Osirian myth.

The strangest feature in the rites of Egypt was animal-worship, which appeared in various phases. There was the local adoration of a beast, a bird, or fish, to which the neighbours of other districts were indifferent or hostile. There was the presence of the animal in the most sacred *penetralia* of the temple; and there was the god conceived of, on the whole, as anthropomorphic, but often represented in art, after the twelfth dynasty, as a man or woman with the head of a bird or beast.***

These points in Egyptian religion have been the great puzzle both of antiquity

** Cf. Tiele, Hist Egypt. Rel., p-29, and notes.*

*** Maspero, Musee de Boulaq, .*

**** As to the animals which were sacred and might not be eaten in various nomes, an account will be found in Wilkinson’s Ancient Egyptians, ii. 467. The English reader will find many beast-headed gods in the illustrations to vol. iii. The edition referred to is Birch’s, London, 1878. A more scientific authority is Lanzoni, Dizion. Mit.*

and of modern mythology. The common priestly explanations varied. Sometimes it was said that the gods had concealed themselves in the guise of beasts during the revolutionary wars of Set against Horus.* Often, again, animal-worship was interpreted as symbolical; it was not the beast, but the qualities which he personified that were adored.** Thus Anubis, really a jackal, is a dog, in the explanations of Plutarch, and is said to be worshipped for his fidelity, or because he can see in the night, or because he is the image of time. “As he brought forth all things out of himself, and contains all things within himself, he gets the title of dog.”*** Once more, and by a nearer approach to what is probably the truth, the beast-gods were said to be survivals of the badges (representing animals) of various tribal companies in the forces of Osiris. Such were the ideas current in Graeco-Roman speculation, nor perhaps is there any earlier evidence as to the character of native interpretation of animal-worship. The opinion has also been broached that beast-worship in Egypt is a refraction from the use of hieroglyphs. If the picture of a beast was one of the signs in the writing of a god’s name, adoration might be transferred to the beast from the god. It is by no means improbable that this process had its share in producing the results.**** Some of the explanations of animal-worship which were popular of old are still in some favour.

** De Is. et Os., lxxii.*

*** Op. cit., xi.*

**** Ibid., xliv.*

***** Pietschmann, op. cit., , contends that the animal-worship is older than these Egyptian modes of writing the divine names, say of Amnion Ra or Hathor. Moreover, the signs were used in writing the names because the gods were conceived of in these animal shapes.*

Mr. Le Page Renouf appears to hold that there was something respectably mythical in the worship of the inhabitants of zoological and botanical gardens, something holy apparent at least to the devout.* He quotes the opinion attributed to Apollonius of Tyana, that the beasts were symbols of deity, not deities, and this was the view of “a grave opponent”. Mr. Le Page Renouf also mentions Porphyry’s theory, that “under the semblance of animals the Egyptians worship the universal power which the gods have revealed in the various forms of living nature”.** It is evident, of course, that all of these theories may have been held by the learned in Egypt, especially after the Christian era, in the times of

Apollonius and Porphyry; but that throws little light on the motives and beliefs of the pyramid-builders many thousands of years before, or of the contemporary peasants with their worship of cats and alligators. In short, the systems of symbolism were probably made after the facts, to account for practices whose origin was obscure. Yet another hypothesis is offered by Mr. Le Page Renouf, and in the case of Set and the hippopotamus is shared by M. Maspero. Tiele also remarks that some beasts were promoted to godhead comparatively late, because their names resembled names of gods.***

** Hibbert Lectures, p, 7.*

*** De Abst., iv. c. 9.*

**** Theolog. Tidjsch., 12th year, .*

The gods, in certain cases, received their animal characteristics by virtue of certain unconscious puns or mistakes in the double senses of words. Seb is the earth. Seb is also the Egyptian name for a certain species of goose, and, in accordance with the *homonymous* tendency of the mythological period of all nations, the god and the bird were identified.* Seb was called “the Great Cackler”.** Again, the god Thoth was usually represented with the head of an ibis. A mummied ibis “in the human form is made to represent the god Thoth”.*** This connection between Thoth and the ibis Mr. Le Page Renouf explains at some length as the result of an etymological confusion.**** Thus metaphorical language reacted upon thought, and, as in other religions, obtained the mastery.

While these are the views of a distinguished modern Egyptologist, another Egyptologist, not less distinguished, is of an entirely opposite opinion as to the question on the whole. “It is possible, nay, certain,” writes M. Maspero, “that during the second Theban empire the learned priests may have thought it well to attribute a symbolical sense to certain bestial deities. But whatever they may have worshipped in Thoth-Ibis, it was a bird, and not a hieroglyph, that the first worshippers of the ibis adored.”(v) M. Meyer is of the same opinion, and so are Professor Tiele and M. Perrot.(v)*

** For a statement of the theory of “homonymous tendency,” see Selected Essays, Max Müller, i. 299, 245. For a criticism of the system, see Mythology in Encyclop, Brit., or in La Mythologie, A. Lang, Paris, 1886.*

*** Hibbert Lectures, 1880, .*

**** Wilkinson, iii. 325.*

***** Op. cit., p, 117, 237.*

(v) Revue de V Histoire des Religions, vol. i.

(v) Meyer, Oeschichte des Alterthums, ; Tiele, Manuel, ; Perrot and Chipiez, Egyptian Art, English transl., i. 54. Hist. Egypt. Rel., p, 103. Tiele finds the origin of this animal-worship in "animism," and supposes that the original colonists or conquerors from Asia found it prevalent in and adopted it from an African population. Professor Tiele does not appear, when he wrote this chapter, to have observed the world-wide diffusion of animal-worship in totem ism, for he says, "Nowhere else does the worship of animals prevail so extensively as among African peoples".*

While the learned have advanced at various periods these conflicting theories of the origin of Egyptian animal-worship, a novel view was introduced by Mr. M'Lennan. In his essays on *Plant and Animal Worship,* he regarded Egyptian animal-worship as only a consecrated and elaborate survival of totemism. Mr. Le Page Renouf has ridiculed the "school-boy authorities on which Mr. M'Lennan relied".* Nevertheless, Mr. M'Lennan's views are akin to those to which M. Maspero and MM. Perrot and Chipiez are attached, and they have also the support of Professor Sayce.

"These animal forms, in which a later myth saw the shapes assumed by the affrighted gods during the great war between Horus and Typhon, take us back to a remote prehistoric age, when the religious creed of Egypt was still totemism. They are survivals from a long-forgotten past, and prove that Egyptian civilisation was of slow and independent growth, the latest stage only of which is revealed to us by the monuments. Apis of Memphis, Mnevis of Heliopolis, and Pachis of Hermonthis are all links that bind together the Egypt of the Pharaohs and the Egypt of the stone age. These were the sacred animals of the clans which first settled in these localities, and their identification with the deities of the official religion must have been a slow process, never fully carried out, in fact, in the minds of the lower classes."**

** Hibbert Lectures, p, 30.*

*** Herodotus, .*

Thus it appears that, after all, even on philological showing, the religions and myths of a civilised people may be illustrated by the religions and myths of savages. It is in the study of savage totemism that we too seek a partial explanation of the singular Egyptian practices that puzzled the Greeks and Romans, and the Egyptians themselves. To some extent the Egyptian religious facts were purely totemistic in the strict sense.

Some examples of the local practices and rites which justify this opinion may be offered. It has been shown that the totem of each totem-kindred among the lower races is sacred, and that there is a strict rule against eating, or even making other uses of, the sacred animal or plant.* At the same time, one totem-kindred has no scruple about slaying or eating the totem of any other kindred. Now similar rules prevailed in Egypt, and it is not easy for the school which regards the holy beasts as *emblems*, or as the results of misunderstood language, to explain why an emblem was adored in one village and persecuted and eaten in the next. But if these usages be survivals of totemism, the practice at once ceases to be isolated, and becomes part of a familiar, if somewhat obscure, body of customs found all over the world. “The same animal which was revered and forbidden to be slaughtered for the altar or the table in one part of the country was sacrificed and eaten in another.”**

** This must be taken generally. See Spencer and Gillen in the Natives of Central Australia, where each kin helps the others to kill its own totem.*

*** Wilkinson, Ancient Egyptians, ii. 467.*

Herodotus bears testimony to this habit in an important passage. He remarks that the people of the Theban nome whose god, Ammon Ra, or Khnum, was ram-headed, abstain from sheep and sacrifice goats; but the people of Mendes, whose god was goat-headed, abstain from goats, sacrifice sheep, and hold all goats in reverence.*

These local rites, at least in Roman times, caused civil brawls, for the customs of one town naturally seemed blasphemous to neighbours with a different sacred animal. Thus when the people of Dog-town were feasting on the fish called oxyrrhyncus, the citizens of the town which revered the oxyrrhyncus began to eat dogs, to which there is no temptation. Hence arose a riot.**

** Herodotus, ii. 42-46. The goat-headed Mendesian god Pan, as Herodotus calls him, is recognised by Dr. Birch as the goat-headed Ba-en-tattu. Wilkinson, ii. 512, note 2.*

*** De Is. et Os., 71, 72.*

The most singular detail in Juvenal’s famous account of the war between the towns of Ombi and Tentyra does not appear to be a mere invention. They fought “because each place loathes the gods of its neighbours”. The turmoil began at a sacred feast, and the victors devoured one of the vanquished. Now if the religion were really totemistic, the worshippers would be of the same blood as the animal they worshipped, and in eating an adorer of the crocodile, his enemies would be avenging the eating of their own sacred beast. When that beast was a crocodile, probably nothing but starvation or religious zeal could induce people to taste his unpalatable flesh. Yet “in the city Apollinopolis it is the custom that every one must by all means eat a bit of crocodile; and on one day they catch and kill as many crocodiles as they can, and lay them out in front of the temple “. The mythic reason was that Typhon, in his flight from Horus, took the shape of a crocodile. Yet he was adored at various places where it was dangerous to bathe on account of the numbers and audacity of the creatures. Mummies of crocodiles are found in various towns where the animal was revered.*

It were tedious to draw up a list of the local sacred beasts of Egypt;** but it seems manifest that the explanation of their worship as totems at once colligates it with a familiar set of phenomena. The symbolic explanations, on the other hand, are clearly fanciful, mere *jeux d’esprit*. For example, the sacred shrew-mouse was locally adored, was carried to Butis on its death, and its mummy buried with care, but the explanation that it “received divine honours because it is blind, and darkness is more ancient than light,” by no means accounts for the mainly *local* respect paid to the little beast.***

** Wilkinson, iii. 329. Compare AElian, x. 24, on the enmity between worshippers of crocodiles and hawks (and Strabo, xvii. 558). The hawk-worshippers averred that the hawk was a symbol of fire; the crocodile people said that their beast was an emblem of water; but why one city should be so attached to water-worship and its neighbour to tire-worship does not appear.*

*** A good deal of information will be found in Wilkinson’s third volume, but must be accepted with caution.*

**** Wilkinson, iii. 33; Plutarch, Sympos., iv. quaest. 5; Herodot, ii. 67.*

If this explanation of the *local* worship of sacred beasts be admitted as plausible, the beast-headed gods, or many of them, may be accounted for in the same way. It is always in a town where a certain animal is locally revered that the human-shaped god wearing the head of the same animal finds the centre and chief holy place of his worship. The cat is great in Bubastis, and there is Bast, and also the cat-headed Sekhet* of Memphis. The sheep was great in Thebes, and there was the sacred city of the ram-headed Khnum or Ammon Ra.** If the crocodile was held in supreme regard at Ombos, there, too, was the sacred town of the crocodile-headed god, Sebak.

** Wilkinson, iii. 286. But the cat, though Bubastis was her centre and metropolis, was sacred all over the land. Nor was puss only in this proud position. Some animals were universally worshipped.*

*** The inconsistencies of statement about this ram-headed deity in Wilkinson are most confusing. Ammon is an adjective = "hidden," and is connected with the ram-headed Khnum, and with the hawk-headed Ra, the sun.*

While Greek writers like Porphyry and Plutarch and Jamblichus repeat the various and inconsistent Egyptian allegorical accounts of the origin of those beast-headed gods, the facts of their worship and chosen residence show that the gods are only semi-anthropomorphic refinements or successors of the animals. It has been said that these representations are later in time, and it is probable that they are later in evolution, than the representations of the deities as mere animals. Nor, perhaps, is it impossible to conjecture how the change in art was made. It is a common ritual custom for the sacrificer to cover himself with the skin and head of the animal sacrificed. In Mexico we know that the Aztec priests wore the flayed skins of their human victims. Herodotus mentions that on the one awful day when a sheep was yearly sacrificed in Thebes, the statue of Zeus, as he calls him, was draped in the hide of the beast. In the same way certain Californian tribes which worship the buzzard sacrifice him, "himself to himself," once a year, and use his skin as a covering in the ritual.* Lucian gives an instance in his treatise *De Deâ Syriâ* (55): "When a man means to go on pilgrimage to Hierapolis, he sacrifices a sheep and eats of its flesh. He then kneels down and draws the head over his own head, praying at the same time to the god." Chaldean works of art often represent the priest in the skin of the god, sometimes in that of a fish.**

It is a conjecture not unworthy of consideration that the human gods with bestial heads are derived from the aspect of the celebrant clad in the pelt of the beast whom he sacrifices. In Egyptian art the heads of the gods are usually like masks, or flayed skins superimposed on the head of a man.*** If it be asked *why* the celebrant thus disguises himself in the sacrifice, it is only possible to reply by guess-work. But the hypothesis may be hazarded that this rite was one of the many ways in which the sacred animal has been propitiated in his death by many peoples. It is a kind of legal fiction to persuade him that, like the bear in the Finnish Kalewala and in the Red Indian and Australian legend, “he does not die”. His skin is still capering about on other shoulders.****

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Herodotus, ii. 42.

*** Menant, Recherehes, ii. 49. See a collection of cases in our Cupid and Psyche, p., lix.*

**** The idea is Professor Robertson Smith’s.*

***** For examples of propitiation of slain animals by this and other arts, see Prim. Cult, i. 467, 469. When the Koriaks slay a bear or wolf, they dress one of their people in his skin, and dance round him, chanting excuses. We must not forget, while offering this hypothesis of the origin of beast-headed gods, that representations of this kind in art may only be a fanciful kind of shorthand. Everyone knows the beasts which, in Christian art, accompany the four Evangelists. These do not, of course, signify that St. John was of the eagle totem kin, and St. Mark of the stock of the lion. They are the beasts of Ezekiel and the Apocalypse, regarded as types of the four Gospel writers. Moreover, in mediaeval art, the Evangelists are occasionally represented with the heads of their beasts — John with an eagle’s head, Mark with a lion’s, Luke with that of an ox. See Bulletin, Com. Hist. Archeol., iv. 1852. For this note I am indebted to M. H. Gaidoz.*

While Egyptian myth, religion and ritual is thus connected with the beliefs of the lower races, the animal-worship presents yet another point of contact. Not only were beasts locally adored, but gods were thought of and represented in the shape of various different beasts. How did the evolution work its way? what is the connection between a lofty spiritual conception, as of Ammon Ra, the lord of righteousness, and Osiris, judge of the dead, and bulls, rams, wolves, cranes, hawks, and so forth? Osiris especially had quite a collection of bestial heads, and appeared in divers bestial forms.* The bull Hapi “was a fair and beautiful image of the soul of Osiris,” in late ritual.** We have read a hymn in which he is saluted as a ram. He also “taketh the character of the god Bennu, with the head of a crane,” and as Sokar Osiris has the head of a hawk.*** These phenomena could not but occur, in the long course of time, when political expediency, in Egypt, urged the recognition of the identity of various local deities. In the same way “Ammon Ra, like most of the gods, frequently took the character of other deities, as Khem, Ra and Chnumis, and even the attributes of Osiris “.****

** Cf. Wilkinson, iii. 86, 87.*

*** De Is. et Os., 29.*

****Wilkinson, iii. 82.*

*****Op. cit., iii, 9.*

There was a constant come and go of attributes, and gods adopted each other’s symbols, as kings and emperors wear the uniform of regiments in each other’s service. Moreover, it is probable that the process so amply illustrated in Samoan religion had its course in Egypt, and that different holy animals might be recognised as aspects of the same deity. Finally, the intricate connection of gods and beasts is no singular or isolated phenomenon. From Australia upwards, a god, perhaps originally, conceived of as human and moral in character, is also recognised in a totem, as Pund-jel in the eagle-hawk. Thus the confusion of Egyptian religion is what was inevitable in a land where new and old did not succeed and supersede each other, but coexisted on good terms. Had religion not been thus confused, it would have been a solitary exception among the institutions of the country.

The peculiarity of Egypt, in religion and myth as in every other institution, is the retention of the very rudest and most barbarous things side by side with the last refinements of civilisation (Tiele, Manuel,). The existence of this conservatism (by which we profess to explain the Egyptian myths and worship) is illustrated, in another field, by the arts of everyday life, and by the testimony of the sepulchres of Thebes. M. Passalacqua, in some excavations at Quoarnah (Gurna), struck on the common cemetery of the ancient city of Thebes. Here he found “the mummy of a hunter, with a wooden bow and twelve arrows, the shaft made of reed, the points of hardened wood tipped with edged flints. Hard by lay jewels belonging to the mummy of a young woman, pins with ornamental heads, necklaces of gold and lapis-lazuli, gold earrings, scarabs of gold, bracelets of gold,” and so forth (Chabas, *Etudes sur l’Antiquity Historique,*). The refined art of the gold-worker was contemporary, and this at a late period, with the use of flint-headed arrows, the weapons commonly found all over the world in places where the metals had never penetrated. Again, a razor-shaped knife of flint has been unearthed; it is inscribed in hieroglyphics with the words, “The great Sam, son of Ptah, chief of artists “. The “Sams” were members of the priestly class, who fulfilled certain mystic duties at funerals. It is reported by Herodotus that the embalmers opened the bodies of the dead with a knife of stone; and the discovery of such a knife, though it had not belonged to an embalmer, proves that in Egypt the stone age did not disappear, but coexisted throughout with the arts of metal-working. It is alleged that flint chisels and stone hammers were used by the workers of the mines in Sinai, even under Dynasties XII., XIX. The soil of Egypt, when excavated, constantly shows that the Egyptians, who in the remote age of the pyramid-builders were already acquainted with bronze, and even with iron, did not therefore relinquish the use of flint knives and arrow-heads when such implements became cheaper than tools of metal, or when they were associated with religion. Precisely in the same way did the Egyptians, who, in the remotest known times, had imposing religious ideas, decline to relinquish the totems and beast-gods and absurd or blasphemous myths which (like flint axes and arrow-heads) are everywhere characteristic of savages. The fact is, that the Egyptian mind, when turned to divine matters, was constantly working on, and working over, the primeval stuff of all mythologies and of all religions. First, there is the belief in a moral guardian and father of men; this is expressed in the sacred hymns. Next, there is the belief in “a strange and powerful race, supposed to have been busy on earth before the making, or the evolution, or the emergence of man”; this is expressed in the mythical legends. The Egyptians inherited a number of legends of extranatural heroes, not unlike the savage Qat, Cagn, Yehl, Pund-jel, Ioskeha and Quahteaht, the Maori Tutenganahau and the South Sea Tangaroa. Some of these were elemental forces, personified in human or bestial guise; some were merely idealised medicine-men. Their “wanderings, rapes and manslaughters and mutilations,” as Plutarch says, remained permanently in legend. When these beings, in the advance of thought, had obtained divine attributes, and when the conception of abstract divinity, returning, perhaps, to its first form, had become pure and lofty, the old legends became so many stumbling-blocks to the faithful. They were explained away as allegories (every student having his own allegorical system), or the extranatural beings were taken (as by Plutarch) to be “demons, not gods “.

A brief and summary account of the chief figures in the Egyptian pantheon will make it sufficiently plain that this is a plausible theory of the gods of Egypt, and a probable interpretation of their adventures.

Accepting the classification proposed by M. Maspero, and remembering the limitations under which it holds good, we find that: —

1. The gods of death and the dead were Sokari, Isis and Osiris, the young

Horus and Nephthys.*

2. The elemental gods were Seb and Nut, of whom Seb is the earth and Nut the heavens. These two, like heaven and earth in almost all mythologies, are represented as the parents of many of the gods. The other elemental deities are but obscurely known.

3. Among solar deities are at once recognised Ra and others, but there was a strong tendency to identify each of the gods with the sun, especially to identify Osiris with the sun in his nightly absence.** Each god, again, was apt to be blended with one or more of the sacred animals. “Ra, in his transformations, assumed the form of the lion, cat and hawk.”*** “The great cat in the alley of persea trees at Heliopolis, which is Ra, crushed the serpent.”****

In different nomes and towns, it either happened that the same gods had different names, or that analogies were recognised between different local gods; in which case the names were often combined, as in Ammon-Ra, Sabek-Ra, Sokar-Osiris, and so forth.

Athwart all these classes and compounds of gods, and athwart the theological attempt at constructing a monotheism out of contradictory materials, came that ancient idea of dualism which exists in the myths of the most backward peoples. As Pund-jel in Australia had his enemy, the crow, as in America Yehl had his Khanukh, as Ioskeha had his Tawiscara, so the gods of Egypt, and specially Osiris, have their Set or Typhon, the spirit who constantly resists and destroys.

With these premises we approach the great Osirian myth.

THE OSIRIAN MYTH.

The great Egyptian myth, the myth of Osiris, turns on the antagonism of Osiris and Set, and the persistence of the blood-feud between Set and the kindred of Osiris.* To narrate and as far as possible elucidate this myth is the chief task of the student of Egyptian mythology.

Though the Osiris myth, according to Mr. Le Page Renouf, is “as old as

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** Their special relation to the souls of the departed is matter for a separate discussion.*

*** “The gods of the dead and the elemental gods were almost all identified with the sun, for the purpose of blending them in a theistic unity” (Maspero, Rev. de l’hist. des Rel., i. 126).*

**** Birch, in Wilkinson, iii. 59.*

****Le Page Renouf, op. cit., .*

Egyptian civilisation," and though M. Maspero finds the Osiris myth in all its details under the first dynasties, our accounts of it are by no means so early.**

** Herodotus, ii. 144.*

*** The principal native documents are the Magical Harris Papyrus, of the nineteenth or twentieth dynasty, translated by M. Chabas (Records of the Past, x. 137); the papyrus of Nebseni (eighteenth dynasty), translated by M. Naville, and in Records of Past, x. 159; the hymn to Osiris, on a stele (eighteenth dynasty) translated by M. Chabas (Rev. Archeol., 1857; Records of Past, iv. 99); "The Book of Respirations," mythically said to have been made by Isis to restore Osiris — "Book of the Breath of Life" (the papyrus is probably of the time of the Ptolemies — Records of Part, iv. 119); "The Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys," translated by M. de Horrack (Records of Past, ii. 117). There is also "The Book of the Dead": the version of M. Pierret, (Paris, 1882) is convenient in shape (also Birch, in Bunsen, vol. v.). M. de Naville's new edition is elaborate and costly, and without a translation. Sarcophagi and royal tombs (Champollion) also contain many representations of the incidents in the myth. "The myth of Osiris in its details, the laying out of his body by his wife Isis and his sister Nephthys, the reconstruction of his limbs, his mythical chest, and other incidents connected with his myth are represented in detail in the temple of Philae" (Birch, ap. Wilkinson, iii. 84). The reverent awe of Herodotus prevents him from describing the mystery-play on the sufferings of Osiris, which he says was acted at Sais, ii. 171, and ii. 61, 67, 86. Probably the clearest and most consecutive modern account of the Osiris myth is given by M. Lefebure in Les Yeux d'Horus et Osiris. M. Lefebure's translations are followed in the text; he is not, however, responsible for our treatment of the myth. The Ptolemaic version of the temple of Edfou is published by M. Naville, Mythe d'Horus (Geneva, 1870).*

They are mainly allusive, without any connected narrative. Fortunately the narrative, as related by the priests of his own time, is given by the author of *De Iside et Osiride*, and is confirmed both by the Egyptian texts and by the mysterious hints of the pious Herodotus. Here we follow the myth as reported in the Greek tract, and illustrated by the monuments.

The reader must, for the moment, clear his mind of all the many theories of the meaning of the myth, and must forget the lofty, divine and mystical functions attributed by Egyptian theologians and Egyptian sacred usage to Osiris. He must read the story simply as a story, and he will be struck with its amazing resemblances to the legends about their culture-heroes which are current among the lowest races of America and Africa.

Seb and Nut — earth and heaven — were husband and wife. In the *De Iside* version, the sun cursed Nut that she should have no child in month or year; but thanks to the cleverness of a new divine co-respondent, five days were added to the calendar. This is clearly a later edition to the fable. On the first of those days Osiris was born, then Typhon or Set, "neither in due time, nor in the right place, but breaking through with a blow, he leaped out from his mother's side".*

** De Iside et Osiride, xii. It is a most curious coincidence that the same story is told of Indra in the Rig-Veda, iv. 18, 1. "This is the old and well-known path by which all the gods were born: thou mayst not, by other means, bring thy mother unto death." Indra replies, "I will not go out thence, that is a dangerous way: right through the side will I burst". Compare (Leland, Algonquin Legends,) the birth of the Algonquin Typhon, the evil Malsumis, the wolf. "Glooskap said, 'I will be born as others are'." But the evil Malsumis thought himself too great to be brought forth in such a manner, and declared that he would burst through his mother's side. Mr. Leland's note, containing a Buddhist and an Armenian parallel, but referring neither to Indra nor Typhon, shows the bona fides of the Algonquin report. The Bodhisattva was born through his mother's right side (Kern.. Der Buddhismus, 30). The Irish version is that our Lord was born through the crown of the head of the Virgin, like Athene. Saltair na Rann, 7529, 7530. Se« also Liebrecht, Zur Volkskunde, . For the Irish and Buddhist legends (there is an Anglo-Saxon parallel) I am indebted to Mr Whitley Stokes. Probably the feeling that a supernatural child should have no natural birth, and not the borrowing of ideas, accounts for those strange similarities of myth.*

Isis and Nephthys were later-born sisters. The Greek version of the myth next describes the conduct of Osiris as a "culture-hero". He instituted laws, taught agriculture, instructed the Egyptians in the ritual of worship, and won them from “their destitute and bestial mode of living”. After civilising Egypt, he travelled over the world, like the Greek Dionysus, whom he so closely resembles in some portions of his legend that Herodotus supposed the Dionysiac myth to have been imported from Egypt.* In the absence of Osiris, his evil brother, Typhon, kept quiet. But, on the hero’s return, Typhon laid an ambush against him, like Ægisthus against Agamemnon. He had a decorated coffer (mummy-case?) made of the exact length of Osiris, and offered this as a present to any one whom it would fit. At a banquet all the guests tried it; but when Osiris lay down in it, the lid was closed and fastened with nails and melted lead. The coffer, Osiris and all, was then thrown into the Nile. Isis, arrayed in mourning robes like the wandering Demeter, sought Osiris everywhere lamenting, and found the chest at last in an *erica* tree that entirely covered it. After an adventure like that of Demeter with Triptolemus, Isis obtained the chest. During her absence Typhon lighted on it as he was hunting by moonlight; he tore the corpse of Osiris into fourteen pieces, and scattered them abroad. Isis sought for the mangled remnants, and, whenever she found one, buried it, each tomb being thenceforth recognised as “a grave of Osiris”. Precisely the same fable occurs in Central Australian myths of the Alcheringa, or legendary past.**

** “Osiris is Dionysus in the tongue of Hellas” (Herodotus, ii. 144, ii. 48). “Most of the details of the mystery of Osiris, as practised by the Egyptians, resemble the Dionysus mysteries of Greece.... Methinks that Melampus, Amythaon’s son, was well seen in this knowledge, for it was Melampus that brought among the Greeks the name and rites and phallic procession of Dionysus.” (Compare Dels, et Os., xxxv.) The coincidences are probably not to be explained by borrowing; many of them are found in America.*

*** Spencer and Gillen, .*

The wives “search for the murdered man’s mutilated parts”. It is a plausible suggestion that, if graves of Osiris were once as common in Egypt as cairns of Heitsi Eibib are in Namaqualand to-day, the existence of many tombs of one being might be explained as tombs of his scattered members, and the myth of the dismembering may have no other foundation. On the other hand, it must be noticed that a swine was sacrificed to Osiris, at the full moon, and it was in the form of a black swine that Typhon assailed Horus, the son of Osiris, whose myth is a *doublure or replica*, in some respects, of the Osirian myth itself.1 We may conjecture, then, that the fourteen portions into which the body of Osiris was rent may stand for the fourteen days of the waning moon.** It is well known that the phases of the moon and lunar eclipses are almost invariably accounted for in savage science by the attacks of a beast — dog, pig, dragon, or what not — on the heavenly body. Either of these hypothesis (the Egyptians adopted the latter)*** is consistent with the character of early myth, but both are merely tentative suggestions.****

** In the Edfou monuments Set is slain and dismembered in the shape of a red hippopotamus (Naville, Mythe d'Horus,).*

*** The fragments of Osiris were sixteen, according to the texts of Deuderah, one for each nome.*

**** De Is. et Os., xxxv.*

***** Compare Lefebure, Les Yeux d'Horus, p 48.*

The phallus of Osiris was not recovered, and the totemistic habit which made the people of three different districts abstain from three different fish — *lepidotus, phagrus and oxyrrhyncus* — was accounted for by the legend that these fish had devoured the missing portion of the hero's body.

So far the power of evil, the black swine Typhon, had been triumphant. But the blood-feud was handed on to Horus, son of Isis and Osiris. To spur Horus on to battle, Osiris returned from the dead, like Hamlet's father. But, as is usual with the ghosts of savage myth, Osiris returned, not in human, but in bestial form as a wolf.* Horus was victorious in the war which followed, and handed Typhon over bound in chains to Isis. Unluckily Isis let him go free, whereon Horus pushed off her crown and placed a bull's skull on her head.

There the Greek narrator ends, but** he expressly declines to tell the more blasphemous parts of the story, such as "the dismemberment of Horus and the beheading of Isis". Why these myths should be considered "more blasphemous" than the rest does not appear.

It will probably be admitted that nothing in this sacred story would seem out of place if we found it in the legends of Pund-jel, or Cagn, or Yehl, among Australians, Bushmen, or Utes, whose own "culture-hero," like the ghost of Osiris, was a wolf. This dismembering of Osiris in particular resembles the dismembering of many other heroes in American myth; for example, of Chokanipok, out of whom were made vines and flint-stones. Objects in the mineral and vegetable world were explained in Egypt as transformed parts or humours of Osiris, Typhon and other heroes.***

** Wicked squires in Shropshire (Miss Burns, Shropshire Folk-Lore) "come" as bulls. Osiris, in the Mendes nonie, "came"* *as a ram (Marietta, Denderah, iv. 75).*

*** De Is, et Os., xx.*

****Magical Text, nineteenth dynasty, translated by Dr. Birch Records of Past vi. 115; Lefebure, Osiris, p, 113,124, 205; Livre des Morts cha.; Records of Past, x. 84.*

Once more, though the Egyptian gods are buried here and are immortal in heaven, they have also, like the heroes of Eskimos and Australians and Indians of the Amazon, been transformed into stars, and the priests could tell which star was Osiris, which was Isis, and which was Typhon.* Such are the wild inconsistencies which Egyptian religion shares with the fables of the lowest races. In view of these facts it is difficult to agree with Brugsch** that "from the root and trunk of a pure conception of deity spring the boughs and twigs of a tree of myth, whose leaves spread into a rank impenetrable luxuriance ". Stories like the Osiris myth — stories found all over the whole world — spring from no pure religious source, but embody the delusions and fantastic dreams of the lowest and least developed human fancy and human speculation. And these flourish, like mistletoe on the oak, over the sturdier growth of a religious conception of another root.

The references to the myth in papyri and on the monuments, though obscure and fragmentary, confirm the narrative of the *De Iside*. The coffer in which Osiris foolishly ventured himself seems to be alluded to in the Harris magical papyrus.*** "Get made for me a shrine of eight cubits. Then it was told to thee, O man of seven cubits, How canst thou enter it? And it had been made for thee, and thou hast reposed in it."

** Custom and Myth, "Star Myths"; De Rouge, Nouv. Not., p. 197; Lefebure, Osiris, .*

*** Religion und Mythologie, .*

**** Records of Past, x. 154.*

Here, too, Isis magically stops the mouths of the Nile, perhaps to prevent the coffer from floating out to sea. More to the point is one of the original "Osirian hymns" mentioned by Plutarch.* The hymn is on a stele, and is attributed by M. Chabas, the translator, to the seventeenth dynasty.** Osiris is addressed as the joy and glory of his parents, Seb and Nut, who overcomes his enemy. His sister, Isis, accords to him due funeral rites after his death and routs his foes. Without ceasing, without resting, she sought his dead body, and wailing did she wander round the world, nor stopped till she found him. Light flashed from her feathers.*** Horus, her son, is king of the world.

Such is a *precis* of the mythical part of the hymn. The rest regards Osiris in his religious capacity as a sovereign of nature, and as the guide and protector of the dead. The hymn corroborates, as far as it goes, the narrative of the Greek two thousand years later. Similar confirmation is given by "The Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys," a papyrus found within a statue of Osiris in Thebes. The sisters wail for the dead hero, and implore him to "come to his own abode". The theory of the birth of Horus here is that he was formed out of the scattered members of Osiris, an hypothesis, of course, inconsistent with the other myths (especially with the myth that he dived for the members of Osiris in the shape of a crocodile),**** and, therefore, all the more mythical.

** De Is. et Os., 211.*

*** Rev. Archeol., May, 1857.*

**** The Greek version says that Isis took the form of a swallow.*

***** Mariette, Denderah, iv. 77, 88, 89.*

The "Book of Respirations," finally, contains the magical songs by which Isis was feigned to have restored breath and life to Osiris.* In the representations of the vengeance and triumph of Horus on the temple walls of Edfou in the Ptolemaic period, Horus, accompanied by Isis, not only chains up and pierces the red hippopotamus (or pig in some designs), who is Set, but, exercising reprisals, cuts him into pieces, as Set cut Osiris. Isis instructs Osiris as to the portion which properly falls to each of nine gods. Isis reserves his head and "saddle"; Osiris gets the thigh; the bones are given to the cats. As each god had his local habitation in a given town, there is doubtless reference to local myths. At Edfou also the animal of Set is sacrificed, symbolically in his image made of paste, a common practice in ancient Mexico.**

** Records of Past, iv. 121.*

*** Herodotus, ii. 47; De. Is. et Os., 90. See also Porphyry's Life of Pythagoras, who sacrificed a bull made of paste, Liebrecht, Zur Volkskunde, .*

Many of these myths, as M. Naville remarks, are doubtless ratiological: the priests, as in the Brahmanas, told them to account for peculiar parts of the ritual, and to explain strange local names. Thus the names of many places are explained by myths setting forth that they commemorate some event in the campaign of Horus against Set. In precisely the same way the local superstitions, originally totemic, about various animals were explained by myths attaching these animals to the legends of the gods.

Explanations of the Osiris myth thus handed down to us were common among the ancient students of religion. Many of them are reported in the familiar tract De Iside et Osiride. They are all the interpretations of civilised men, whose method is to ask themselves, “Now, if *I* had told such a tale as this, or invented such a mystery-play of divine misadventures, what meaning could *I* have intended to convey in what is apparently blasphemous nonsense?” There were moral, solar, lunar, cosmical, tellurian, and other methods of accounting for a myth which, in its origin, appears to be one of the world-wide early legends of the strife between a fabulous good being and his brother, a fabulous evil being. Most probably some incidents from a moon-myth have also crept into, or from the first made part of, the tale of Osiris. The enmity of Typhon to the eyes of Horus, which he extinguishes, and which are restored,* has much the air of an early mythical attempt to explain the phenomena of eclipses, or even of sunset. We can plainly see how local and tribal superstitions, according to which this or that beast, fish, or tree was held sacred, came to be tagged to the general body of the myth. This or that fish was not eaten; this or that tree was holy; and men who had lost the true explanation of these superstitions explained them by saying that the fish had tasted, or the tree had sheltered.

* *Livre des Moris, p, 118.*

This view of the myth, while it does not pretend to account for every detail, refers it to a large class of similar narratives, to the barbarous dualistic legends about the original good and bad extranatural beings, which are still found current among contemporary savages. These tales are the natural expression of the savage fancy, and we presume that the myth of the mutilated Osiris survived in Egypt, just as the use of flint-headed arrows and flint knives survived during millenniums in which bronze and iron were perfectly familiar. The cause assigned is adequate, and the process of survival is verified.

Whether this be the correct theory of the fundamental facts of the myth or not, it is certain that the myth received vast practical and religious developments. Orisis did not remain the mere culture-hero of whom we have read the story, wounded in the house of his friends, dismembered, restored and buried, reappearing as a wolf or bull, or translated to a star. His worship pervaded the whole of Egypt, and his name grew into a kind of hieroglyph for all that is divine.

“The Osirian type, in its long evolution, ended in being the symbol of the whole deified universe — underworld and world of earth, the waters above and the waters below. It is Osiris that floods Egypt in the Nile, and that clothes her with the growing grain. His are the sacred eyes, the sun that is born daily and meets a daily death, the moon that every month is young and waxes old. Osiris is the soul that animates these, the soul that vivifies all things, and all things are but his body. He is, like Ra of the royal tombs, the earth and the sun, the creator and the created.”*

** Lefebure, Osiris, .*

Such is the splendid sacred vestment which Egyptian theology wove for the mangled and massacred hero of the myth. All forces, all powers, were finally recognised in him; he was sun and moon, and the maker of all things; he was the truth and the life; in him all men were justified.

On the origin of the myth philology throws no light. M. Lefebure recognises in the name Osiris the meaning of “the infernal abode,” or “the nocturnal residence of the sacred eye,” for, in the duel of Set and Horus, he sees a mythical account of the daily setting of the sun.* “Osiris himself, the sun at his setting, became a centre round which the other incidents of the war of the gods gradually crystallised.” Osiris is also the earth. It would be difficult either to prove or disprove this contention, and the usual divergency of opinion as to the meaning and etymology of the word “Osiris” has always prevailed.** The Greek*** identifies Osiris with Hades. “Both,” says M. Lefebure, “originally meant the dwellings — and came to mean the god — of the dead.” In the same spirit Anubis, the jackal (a beast still dreaded as a ghost by the Egyptians), is explained as “the circle of the horizon,” or “the portals of the land of darkness,” the gate kept, as Homer would say, by Hades, the mighty warden. Whether it is more natural that men should represent the circle of the horizon or the twilight at sunset as a jackal, or that a jackal-totem should survive as a god, mythologists will decide for themselves.****

** Osiris, .   So Lieblein, op. cit., .*

*** See the guesses of etymologists (Osiris, p,133).*
Horus has even been connected with the Greek Hera, as the
atmosphere!

**** De Is. Os., 75.*

***** Le Page Renouf, Hibbert Lectures, p-114, 237.*

The jackal, by a myth that cannot be called pious, was said to have eaten his father, Osiris. Mr. Frazers theory of Osiris as somehow connected with vegetation will be found in his *Golden Bough*. His master, Mannhardt, the great writer on vegetation myths, held that Osiris was the sun.

The conclusions to be drawn from so slight a treatment of so vast a subject are, that in Egypt, as elsewhere, a mythical and a religious, a rational and an irrational stream of thought flowed together, and even to some extent mingled their waters. The rational tendency, declared in prayers and hymns, amplifies the early human belief in a protecting and friendly personal power making for righteousness. The irrational tendency, declared in myth and ritual, retains and elaborates the early human confusions of thought between man and beast and god, things animate and inanimate. On the one hand, we have almost a recognition of supreme divinity; on the other, savage rites and beliefs, shared by Australians and Bushmen. It is not safe or scientific to call one of those tendencies earlier than the other; perhaps we know no race so backward that it is not influenced by forms of both. Nor is it safe or scientific to look on ruder practices as corruptions of the purer beliefs. Perhaps it may never be possible to trace both streams to the same fountain-head; probably they well up from separate springs in the nature of man. We do but recognise and contrast them; the sources of both are lost in the distance, where history can find no record of actual experience. Egyptian religion and myth are thus no isolated things; they are but the common stuff of human thought, decorated or distorted under a hundred influences in the course of unknown centuries of years.

CHAPTER XVII. GODS OF THE ARYANS OF INDIA.

Difficulties of the study — Development of clan-gods — Departmental gods-Divine patronage of morality — Immorality mythically attributed to gods — Indra — His love of Soma — Scandal about Indra — Attempts to explain Indra as an elemental god — Varuna — Ushas — The Asvins — Their legend and theories about it — Tvashtri — The Maruts — Conclusions arrived at.

Nothing in all mythology is more difficult than the attempt to get a clear view of the gods of Vedic India. The perplexed nature of the evidence has already been explained, and may be briefly recapitulated. The obscure documents on which we have to rely, the Vedas and the Brahmanaa, contain in solution the opinions of many different ages and of many different minds. Old and comparatively modern conceptions of the deities, pious efforts to veil or to explain away what seemed crude or profane, the puerilities of ritual, half-conscious strivings in the direction of monotheism or pantheism, clan or family prejudices, rough etymological guesses, and many other elements of doubt combine to confuse what can never have been clear. Savage legends, philosophic conjectures, individual predilections are all blended into the collection of hymns called the *Rig-Veda*. Who can bring order into such a chaos?

An attempt to unravel the tangled threads of Indian faith must be made. The gods of the Vedas are, on the whole, of the usual polytheistic type, though their forms mix into each other like shadows cast by a flickering fire. The ideas which may be gathered about them from the ancient hymns have, as usual, no consistency and no strict orthodoxy. As each bard of each bardic family celebrates a god, he is apt to make him for the occasion the pre-eminent deity of all.* This way of conceiving of the gods leads naturally (as thought advances) in the direction of a pantheistic monotheism, a hospitable theology which accepts each divine being as a form or manifestation of the supreme universal spirit. It is easy, however, to detect certain attributes more or less peculiar to each god. As among races far less forward in civilisation, each of the greater powers has his own special department, however much his worshippers may be inclined to regard him as really supreme sovereign. Thus Indra is mainly concerned with thunder and other atmospheric phenomena: these are his department; but Vayu is the wind or the god of the wind, and Agni as fire or the god of fire is necessarily not unconnected with the lightning. The Maruts, again, are the storm-winds, or gods of the storm-winds; Mitra and Varuna preside over day and night; Ushas is the dawn or the goddess of dawn, and Tvashtri is the mechanic among the deities, corresponding more or less closely to the Greek Hephaestus.

** Muir, v. 125. Compare Muir, i. 348, on the word Kusikas, implying, according to Benfey, that Indra "is designated as the sole or chief deity of this tribe ". Cf, also Hang, Ait. Br., ii. 384.*

Though many of these beings are still in Vedic poetry departmental powers with provinces of their own in external Nature, they are also supposed to be interested not only in the worldly, but in the moral welfare of mankind, and are imagined to "make for righteousness ". It is true that the myths by no means always agree in representing the gods as themselves moral. Incest and other hideous offences are imputed to them, and it is common to explain these myths as the result of the forgotten meanings of sayings which originally were only intended to describe processes of nature, especially of the atmosphere. Supposing, for the sake of argument, that this explanation is correct, we can scarcely be expected to think highly of the national taste which preferred to describe pure phenomena like dawn and sunset in language which is appropriate to the worst crimes in the human calendar. It is certain that the Indians, when they came to reflect and philosophise on their own religion (and they had reached this point before the Veda was compiled), were themselves horrified by the immoralities of some of their gods. Yet in Vedic times these gods were already acknowledged as beings endowed with strong moral attributes and interested in the conduct of men. As an example of this high ethical view, we may quote Mr. Max Muller's translation of part of a hymn addressed to Varuna.*

** Rig-Veda, ii. 28; Hibbert Lectures, .*

"Take from me my sin like a fetter, and we shall increase, O Varuna, the spring of thy law. Let not the thread be cut while I weave my song! Let not the form of the workman break before the time.... Like as a rope from a calf, remove from me my sin, for away from thee I am not master even of the twinkling of an eye.... Move far away from me all self-committed guilt, and may I not, O king, suffer for what others have committed. Many dawns have not yet dawned; grant me to live in them, O Varuna." What follows is not on the same level of thought, and the next verse contains an appeal to Varuna to save his worshipper from the effect of magic spells. "Whether it be my companion or a friend who, while I was asleep and trembling, uttered fearful spells against me, whether it be a thief or a wolf who wishes to hurt me, protect us against them, O Varuna.”* Agni, again, the god of fire, seems to have no original connection with righteousness. Yet even Agni** is prayed to forgive whatever sin the worshipper may have committed through folly, and to make him guiltless towards Aditi.*** The goddess Aditi once more, whether her name (rendered the “boundless”) be or be not “one of the oldest names of the dawn,”**** is repeatedly called on by her worshippers to “make them sinless”. In the same way sun, dawn, heaven, soma, and earth are implored to pardon sin.

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* *An opposite view is expressed in Weber’s Hist, of Sansk. Literature.*

** *Rig-Veda, iv. 12, 4; viii. 93, 7.*

*** *For divergent opinions about Aditi, compare Revue de l’Histoire des Religions, xii. 1, p-42; Muir, v. 218.*

**** *Max Müller, Hibbert Lectures, .*

Though the subject might be dwelt on at very great length, it is perhaps already apparent that the gods of the Vedic poetry are not only potent over regions of the natural world, but are also conceived of, at times, as being powers with ethical tendencies and punishers of mortal guilt. It would be difficult to overstate the ethical nobility of certain Vedic hymns, which even now affect us with a sense of the “hunger and thirst after righteousness” so passionately felt by the Hebrew psalmists. How this emotion, which seems naturally directed to a single god, came to be distributed among a score, it is hard to conjecture. But all this aspect of the Vedic deities is essentially the province of the science of religion rather than of mythology. Man’s consciousness of sin, his sense of being imperfect in the sight of “larger other eyes than ours,” is a topic of the deepest interest, but it comes but by accident into the realm of mythological science. That science asks, not with what feelings of awe and gratitude the worshipper approaches his gods, but what myths, what stories, are told to or told by the worshipper concerning the origin, personal characteristics and personal adventures of his deities. As a rule, these stories are a mere *chronique scandaleuse*, full of the most absurd and offensive anecdotes, and of the crudest fictions. The deities of the Vedic poems, so imposing when regarded as vast natural forces, or as the spiritual beings that master vast natural forces, so sympathetic when looked on as merciful gods conscious of, yet lenient towards, the sins of perishing mortals, have also their mythological aspect and their *chronique scandaleuse*.*

** Here we must remind the reader that the Vedas do not offer us all these tales, nor the worst of them. As M. Barth says, "Le sentiment religieux a ecarte la plupart de ces mythes ainsi que beaucoup d'autres qui le choquaient, mais il ne les a pas ecartes tous" (Religions de l'Inde, p. 14).*

It is, of course, in their anthropomorphic aspect that the Vedic deities share or exceed the infirmities of mortals. The gods are not by any means always regarded as practically equal in supremacy. There were great and small, young and old gods,* though this statement, with the habitual inconsistency of a religion without creeds and articles, is elsewhere controverted. "None of you, O gods, is small or young; you are all great."** As to the immortality and the origin of the gods, opinions are equally divided among the Vedic poets and in the traditions collected in the Brahmanas. Several myths of the origin of the gods have already been discussed in the chapter on "Aryan Myths of the Creation of the World and of Man". It was there demonstrated that many of the Aryan myths were on a level with those current among contemporary savages all over the world, and it was inferred that they originally sprang from the same source, the savage imagination.

In this place, while examining the wilder divine myths, we need only repeat that, in one legend, heaven and earth, conceived of as two sentient living beings of human parts and passions, produced the Aryan gods, as they did the gods of the New Zealanders and of other races. Again, the gods were represented in the children of Aditi, and this might be taken either in a high and refined sense, as if Aditi were the infinite region from which the solar deities rise,*** or we may hold that Aditi is the eternal which sustains and is sustained by the gods,**** or the Indian imagination could sink to the vulgar and half-magical conception of Aditi as a female, who, being desirous of sons, cooked a Brahmandana oblation for the gods, the Sadhyas.(v) ** Rig-Veda, i. 27,13.*

*** Ibid., viii. 30; Muir, v. 12.*

**** Max Müller, Hibbert Lectures, .*

***** Roth, in Muir, iv. 56.*

(v) Taittirya Brahmana, i. 1, 9, 1; Muir, v. 55, 1, 27.

Various other gods and supernatural beings are credited with having created or generated the gods. Indra's father and mother are constantly spoken of, and both he and other gods are often said to have been originally mortal, and to have reached the heavens by dint of that “austere fervour,” that magical asceticism, which could do much more than move mountains. The gods are thus by no means always credited in Aryan mythology with inherent immortality. Like most of the other deities whose history we have been studying, they had struggles for pre-eminence with powers of a titanic character, the Asuras. “Asura, ‘living,’ was originally an epithet of certain powers of Nature, particularly of the sky,” says Mr. Max Müller.** As the gods also are recognised as powers of Nature, particularly of the sky, there does not seem to be much original difference between Devas and Asuras.*** The opposition between them may be “secondary,” as Mr. Max Müller says, but in any case it too strongly resembles the other wars in heaven of other mythologies to be quite omitted. Unluckily, the most consecutive account of the strife is to be found, not in the hymns of the Vedas, but in the collected body of mythical and other traditions called the Brahmanas.****

*** Hibbert Lectures, .*

**** In the Atharva Veda it is said that a female Asura once drew Indra from among the gods (Muir, v. 82). Thus gods and Asuras are capable of amorous relations.*

***** Satapatha Br.*

The story in the Brahmana begins by saying that throughout. See the Oxford translation. Prajapati (the producer of things, whose acquaintance we have made in the chapter on cosmogonic myths) was half mortal and half immortal. After creating things endowed with life, he created Death, the devourer. With that part of him which was mortal he was afraid of Death, and the gods were also “afraid of this ender, Death”. The gods in this tradition are regarded as mortals. Compare the *Black Yajur Veda*:* “*The gods were formerly just like men*. They desired to overcome want, misery, death, and to go to the divine assembly. They saw, took and sacrificed with this Chaturvimsatiratra, and in consequence overcame want, misery and death, and reached the divine assembly.” In the same Veda we are told that the gods and Asuras contended together; the gods were less numerous, but, as politicians make men peers, they added to their number by placing some bricks in the proper position to receive the sacrificial fire. They then used incantations: “Thou art a multiplier”; and so the bricks became animated, and joined the party of the gods, and made numbers more equal.**

** Taittirya Sanhita; Muir, v. 15, note 22.*

*** According to a later legend, or a legend which we have* *received in a later form, the gods derived immortality from drinking of the churned ocean of milk. They churned it with Mount Mandara for a staff and the serpent Hasuki for a cord. The Ramayana and Mahabharata ascribe this churning to the desire of the gods to become immortal. According to the Mahabharata, a Daitya named Rahu insinuated himself among the gods, and drank some of the draught of immortality. Vishnu beheaded him before the draught reached lower than his throat; his head was thus immortal, and is now a constellation. He pursues the sun and moon, who had spied him among the gods, and causes their eclipses by his ferocity. All this is on a level with Australian mythology.*

To return to the gods in the *Satapatha Brahmana* and their dread of death. They overcame him by certain sacrifices suggested by Prajapati. Death resented this, and complained that men would now become immortal and his occupation would be gone. To console him the gods promised that no man in future should become immortal with his body, but only through knowledge after parting with his body. This legend, at least in its present form, is necessarily later than the establishment of minute sacrificial rules. It is only quoted here as an example of the opinion that the gods were once mortal and “just like men”. It may be urged, and probably with truth, that this belief is the figment of religious decadence. As to the victory of the gods over the Asuras, that is ascribed by the *Satapatha Brahmana** to the fact that, at a time when neither gods nor Asuras were scrupulously veracious, the gods invented the idea of speaking the truth. The Asuras stuck to lying. The first results not unnaturally were that the gods became weak and poor, the Asuras mighty and rich. The gods at last overcame the Asuras, not by veracity, but by the success of a magical sacrifice. Earlier dynasties of gods, to which the generation of Indra succeeded, are not unfrequently mentioned in the *Rig-Veda*.**

** Muir, iv. 6a.*

*** Ibid., v. 16.*

On the whole, the accounts of the gods and of their nature present in Aryan mythology the inconsistent anthropomorphism, and the mixture of incongruous and often magical and childish ideas, which mark all other mythological systems. This will become still more manifest when we examine the legends of the various gods separately, as they have been disentangled by Dr. Muir and M. Bergaigne from the Vedas, and from the later documents which contain traditions of different dates.

The Vedas contain no such orderly statements of the divine genealogies as we find in Hesoid and Homer. All is confusion, all is contradiction.* In many passages heaven and earth, Dyaus and Prithivi, are spoken of as parents of the other gods. Dyaus is commonly identified, as is well known, with Zeus by the philologists, but his legend has none of the fulness and richness which makes that of Zeus so remarkable. Before the story of Dyaus could become that of Zeus, the old Aryan sky or heaven god had to attract into his cycle that vast collection of miscellaneous adventures from a thousand sources which fill the legend of the chief Hellenic deity. In the Veda, Dyaus appears now, as with Prithivi,** the parent of all, both men and gods, now as a created thing or being fashioned by Indra or by Tvashtri.*** He is “essentially beneficent, but has no marked individuality, and can only have become the Greek Zeus by inheriting attributes from other deities “.****

Another very early divine person is Aditi, the mother of the great and popular gods called Adityas. “Nothing is less certain than the derivation of the name of Aditi,” says M. Paul Regnaud.(v)

M. Regnaud finds the root of Aditi in *ad*, to shine. Mr. Max Müller looks for the origin of the word in *a*, privative, and *da*, to bind; thus Aditi will mean “the boundless,” the “infinite,” a theory rejected by M. Regnaud. The expansion of this idea, with all its important consequences, is worked out by Mr. Max Müller in his *Hibbert Lectures*. “The dawn came and went, but there remained always behind the dawn that heaving sea of light or fire from which she springs. Was not this the invisible infinite? And what better name could be given than that which the Vedic poets gave to it, Aditi, the boundless, the yonder, the beyond all and everything.” This very abstract idea “may have been one of the earliest intuitions and creations of the Hindu mind” (). M. Darmesteter and Mr. Whitney, on the other hand, explain Aditi just as Welcker and Mr. Max Müller explain Cronion. There was no such thing as a goddess named Aditi till men asked themselves the meaning of the title of their own gods, “the Adityas”. That name might be interpreted “children of Aditi,” and so a goddess called Aditi was invented to fit the name, thus philologically extracted from Adityas.*

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* *Certain myths of the beginnings of things will be found in the chapter on cosmogonic traditions.*

*** Muir, v. 21-24.*

**** Ibid., v. 30.*

***** Bergaigne, iii. 112.*

(v) Revue de l’Histoire des Religions, xii. 1, 40.

M. Bergaigne** finds that Aditi means “free,” “untrammelled,” and is used both as an adjective and as a name.

** The Brahmanic legend of the birth of the Adityas (Aitareya Brahmana iii. 33) is too disgusting to be quoted.*

*** Religion Vedique, iii. 88.*

This vague and floating term was well suited to convey the pantheistic ideas natural to the Indian mind, and already notable in the Vedic hymns. “Aditi,” cries a poet, “is heaven; Aditi is air; Aditi is the father, the mother and the son; Aditi is all the gods; Aditi is that which is born and which awaits the birth.”* Nothing can be more advanced and metaphysical. Meanwhile, though Aditi is a personage so floating and nebulous, she figures in fairly definite form in a certain myth. The *Rig-Veda* (x. 72, 8) tells us the tale of the birth of her sons, the Adityas. “Eight sons were there of Aditi, born of her womb. To the gods went she with seven; Martanda threw she away.” The *Satapatha Brahmana* throws a good deal of light on her conduct. Aditi had eight sons; but there are only seven gods whom men call Adityas. The eighth she bore a shapeless lump, of the dimensions of a man, as broad as long, say some. The Adityas then trimmed this ugly duckling of the family into human shape, and an elephant sprang from the waste pieces which they threw away; therefore an elephant partakes of the nature of man. The shapen eighth son was called Vivasvat, the sun.**

** Rig-Veda, i. 89, 10.*

*** Muir, iv. 15.*

It is not to be expected that many, if any, remains of a theriomorphic character should cling to a goddess so abstract as Aditi. When, therefore, we find her spoken of as a cow, it is at least as likely that this is only part of “the pleasant unconscious poetry” of the Veda, as that it is a survival of some earlier zoomorphic belief. Gubernatis offers the following lucid account of the metamorphosis of the infinite (for so he understands Aditi) into the humble domestic animal: “The inexhaustible soon comes to mean that which can be milked without end” (it would be more plausible to say that what can be milked without end soon comes to mean the inexhaustible), “and hence also a celestial cow, an inoffensive cow, which we must not offend.... The whole heavens being thus represented as an infinite cow, it was natural that the principal and most visible phenomena of the sky should become, in their turn, children of the cow.” Aditi then is “the great spotted cow”. Thus did the Vedic poets (according to

Gubernatis) descend from the unconditioned to the byre.

From Aditi, however she is to be interpreted, we turn to her famous children, the Adityas, the high gods.

There is no kind of consistency, as we have so often said, in Vedic mythical opinion. The Adityas, for example, are now represented as three, now as seven; for three and seven are sacred numbers. To the triad a fourth is sometimes added, to the seven an eighth Aditya. The Adityas are a brotherhood or college of gods, but some of the members of the fraternity have more individual character than, for example, the Maruts, who are simply a company with a tendency to become confused with the Adityas. Considered as a triad, the Adityas are Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman. The name of Varuna is commonly derived from vri (or Var),* to cover, according to the commentator Sayana, because "he envelops the wicked in his snares," the nets which he carries to capture the guilty. As god of the midnight sky, Varuna is also "the covering" deity, with his universal pall of darkness. Varuna's name has frequently been compared to that of Uranus (——— —), the Greek god of heaven, who was mutilated by his son Cronos.

** Max Müller, Select Essays, i. 871.*

Supposing Varuna to mean the heaven, we are not much advanced, for *dyu* also has the same meaning; yet Dyaus and Varuna have little in common. The interpreters of the Vedas attempted to distinguish Mitra from Varuna by making the former the god of the daylight, the latter the god of the midnight vault of heaven. The distinction, like other Vedic attempts at drawing a line among the floating phantasms of belief, is not kept up with much persistency.

Of all Vedic deities, Varuna has the most spiritual and ethical character. "The grandest cosmical functions are ascribed to Varuna." "His ordinances are fixed and unassailable." "He who should flee far beyond the sky would not escape Varuna the king." He is "gracious even to him who has committed sin". To be brief, the moral sentiments, which we have shown to be often present in a pure form, even in the religion of savages, find a lofty and passionate expression in the Vedic psalms to Varuna.* But even Varuna has not shaken off all remains of the ruder mythopoeic fancy. A tale of the grossest and most material obscenity is told of Mitra and Varuna in the *Rig-Veda* itself — the tale of the birth of Vasistha.**

In the Aitareya Brahmana (ii. 460) Varuna takes a sufficiently personal form. He has somehow fallen heir to a role familiar to us from the Russian tale of *Tsar Morskoi*, the Gaelic "Battle of the Birds," and the Scotch "Nicht, Nought, nothing"*** Varuna, in short, becomes the giant or demon who demands from the king the gift of his yet unborn son.

** Muir, v. 66.*

*** Rig. Veda, vii. 33, 2.*

**** See Custom, and Myth, “A Far-Travelled Tale,” and our chapter postea, on “Romantic Myths”.*

Harischandra is childless, and is instructed to pray to Varuna, promising to offer the babe as a human sacrifice. When the boy is born, Harischandra tries to evade the fulfilment of his promise. Finally a young Brahman is purchased, and is to be sacrificed to Varuna as a substitute for the king’s son. The young Brahman is supernaturally released.

Thus even in Vedic, still more in Brahmanic myth, the vague and spiritual form of Varuna is brought to shame, or confused with some demon of lower earlier legends.

There are believed on somewhat shadowy evidence to be traces of a conflict between Varuna and Indra (the fourth Aditya sometimes added to the triad), a conflict analogous to that between Uranus and Cronos.* The hymn, as M. Bergaigne holds, proves that Indra was victorious over Varuna, and thereby obtained possession of fire and of the soma juice. But these births and battles of gods, who sometimes are progenitors of their own fathers, and who seem to change shapes with demons, are no more to be fixed and scientifically examined than the torn plumes and standards of the mist as they roll up a pass among the mountain pines.**

** Rig-Veda, x. 124.*

*** Bergaigne, iii. 147.*

We next approach a somewhat better defined and more personal figure, that of the famous god Indra, who is the nearest Vedic analogue of the Greek Zeus. Before dealing with the subject more systematically, it may be interesting to give one singular example of the parallelisms between Aryan and savage mythology.

In his disquisition on the Indian gods, Dr. Muir has been observing* that some passages of the *Rig-Veda* imply that the reigning deities were successors of others who had previously existed. He quotes, in proof of this, a passage from *Rig-Veda*, iv. 18, 12: “Who, O Indra, made thy mother a widow? Who sought to kill thee, lying or moving? What god was present in the fray when thou didst slay thy father, seizing him by the foot?” According to M. Bergaigne,** Indra slew his father, Tvashtri, for the purpose of stealing and drinking the soma, to which he was very partial. This is rather a damaging passage, as it appears that the Vedic poet looked on Indra as a parricide and a drunkard. To explain this hint, however, Sayana the ancient commentator, quotes a passage from the *Black*

Yajur Veda which is no explanation at all. But it has some interest for us, as showing how the myths of Aryans and Hottentots coincide, even in very strange details. Yajna (sacrifice) desired Dakshina (largesse). He consorted with her. Indra was apprehensive of this. He reflected, “Whoever is born of her will be this”. He entered into her. Indra himself was born of her. He reflected, “Whoever is born of her besides me will be this”. Having considered, he cut open her womb. She produced a cow. Here we have a high Aryan god passing into and being born from the womb of a being who also bore a cow. The Hottentot legend of the birth of their god, Heitsi Eibib, is scarcely so repulsive.***

* *Sanskrit Texts, v. 16,17.*

** *Religion Vedique, iii. 99.*

*** *Tsuni Goam, Hahn, p.*

“There was grass growing, and a cow came and ate of that grass, and she became pregnant” (as Hera of Ares in Greek myth), “and she brought forth a young bull. And this bull became a very large bull.” And the people came together one day in order to slaughter him. But he ran away down hill, and they followed him to turn him back and catch him. But when they came to the spot where he had disappeared, they found a man making milk tubs. They asked this man, “Where is the bull that passed down here?” He said, “I do not know; has he then passed here?” And all the while it was he himself, who had again become Heitsi Eibib. Thus the birth of Heitsi Eibib resembled that of Indra as described in *Rig-Veda*, iv. 18, 10. “His mother, a cow, bore Indra, an unlicked calf.”* Whatever view we may take of this myth, and of the explanation in the Brahmana, which has rather the air of being an invention to account for the Vedic cow-mother of Indra, it is certain that the god is not regarded as an uncreated being.**

* Ludwig, *Die farse hat den groszen, starken, nicht zu venoundenden stier, den tosenden Indra, geboren.*

** As to the etymological derivation and original significance of the name of Indra, the greatest differences exist among philologists. Yaska gives thirteen guesses of old, and there are nearly as many modern conjectures. In 1846 Roth described Indra as the god of “the bright clear vault of heaven” (Zeller’s *Theologisches Jahrbuch,* 1846,). Compare for this and the following conjectures, E. D. Perry, *Journal of American Oriental Society,* vol. i. . Roth derived the “radiance” from *idh, indh,* to kindle. Roth afterwards changed his mind, and selected *in* or *inv*, to have power over. Lassen (*Indisclie Allerthumskunde,* 2nd ed., i.) adopted a different derivation. Benfey (Or. und

Occ, 1862,) made Indra God, not of the radiant, but of the rainy sky. Mr. Max Müller (lectures on Science of Language, ii. 470) made Indra "another conception of the bright blue sky," but (, note 35) he derives Indra from the same root as in Sanskrit gives indu, drop or sap, that is, apparently, rainy sky, the reverse of blue. It means originally "the giver of rain," and Beufey is quoted ut supra. In Chips, ii. 91, Indra becomes "the chief solar deity of India ". Muir (Texts, v. 77) identifies the character of Indra with that of Jupiter Pluvius, the Rainy Jove of Rome. Grassman (Dictionary, s. v.) calls Indra "the god of the bright firmament". Mr. Perry takes a distinction, and regards Indra as a god, not of sky, but of air, a midgarth between earth and sky, who inherited the skyey functions of Dyu. In the Veda Mr. Perry finds him "the personification of the thunderstorm". And so on! It seems incontestable that in Vedic mythology Tvashtri is regarded as the father of Indra.* Thus (ii. 17, 6) Indra's thunderbolts are said to have been fashioned by his father. Other proofs are found in the account of the combat between father and son. Thus (iii. 48, 4) we read, "Powerful, victorious, *he gives his body what shape he pleases*. Thus Indra, having vanquished Tvashtri even at his birth, stole and drank the soma."** These anecdotes do not quite correspond with the version of Indra's guilt given in the Brahmanas. There it is stated*** that Tvashtri had a three-headed son akin to the Asuras, named Vairupa. This Vairupa was suspected of betraying to the Asuras the secret of soma. Indra therefore cut off his three heads.

** On the parentage of Indra, Bergaigne writes, iii. 58.*

*** iii. 61. Bergaigne identifies Tvashtri and Vritra.*
Cf. Aitareya Brahmana, ii. 483, note 5.

**** Aitareya Brahmana, it 483, note 6.*

Now Vairupa was a Brahman, and Indra was only purified of his awful guilt, Brahmanicide, when earth, trees and women accepted each their share of the iniquity. Tvashtri, the father of Vairupa, still excluded Indra from a share of the soma, which, however, Indra seized by force. Tvashtri threw what remained of Indra's share into the fire with imprecations, and from the fire sprang Vritra, the enemy of Indra. Indra is represented at various times and in various texts as having sprung from the mouth of Purusha, or as being a child of heaven and earth, whom he thrust asunder, as Tutenganahau thrust asunder Rangi and Papa in the New Zealand myth. In a passage of the *Black Yajur Veda*, once already quoted, Indra, sheep and the Kshattriya caste were said to have sprung from the breast and arms of Prajapati.* In yet another hymn in the *Rig-Veda* he is said to have conquered heaven by magical austerity. Leaving the Brahmanas aside, Mr.

Perry** distinguishes four sorts of Vedic texts on the origin of Indra: — 1. Purely physical.

2. Anthropomorphic.

3. Vague references to Indra's parents.

4. Philosophical speculations.

Of the first class,*** it does not appear to us that the purely physical element is so very pure after all. Heaven, earth, Indra, "the cow," are all thought of as *personal* entities, however gigantic and vague.

In the second or anthropomorphic myths we have**** the dialogue already referred to, in which Indra, like Set in Egypt and Malsumis or Chokanipok in America, insists on breaking his way through his mother's side.(v) ** Muir, i. 16.*

*** Op. cit., .*

**** Rig-Veda, iv. 17, 4, 2, 12; iv. 22, 4; i. 63, 1; viii. 59, 4; viii. 6, 28-30.*

***** Ibid., iv. 18,1.*

(v) Cf. "Egyptian Divine Myths"

In verse 5 his mother exposes Indra, as Maui and the youngest son of Aditi were exposed. Indra soon after, as precocious as Heitsi Eibib, immediately on his birth kills his father.* He also kills Vritra, as Apollo when new-born slew the Python. In iii. 48, 2, 3, he takes early to soma-drinking. In x. 153, 1, women cradle him as the nymphs nursed Zeus in the Cretan cave.

In the third class we have the odd myth,** "while an immature boy, he mounted the new waggon and roasted for father and mother a fierce bull ".

In the fourth class a speculative person tries to account for the statement that Indra was born from a horse, "or the verse means that Agni was a horse's son". Finally, Sayana**** explains nothing, but happens to mention that the goddess Aditi *swallowed* her rival Nisti, a very primitive performance, and much like the feat of Cronos when he dined on his family, or of Zeus when he swallowed his wife.

** Why do Indra and his family behave in this bloodthirsty way? Hillebrandt says that the father is the heaven which Indra "kills" by covering it with clouds. But, again, Indra kills his father by concealing the sun. He is abandoned by his mother when the clear sky, from which he is born, disappears behind the veil of cloud. Is the father sun or* *heaven? is the mother clear sky, or, as elsewhere, the imperishability of the daylight? (Perry, op. cit.,).*

*** Rig-Veda, viii. 68, 15.*

**** Ibid., x. 73, 10.*

***** Ibid., x. 101, 12. For Sayana, see Mr. Perry's Essay, Journal A. 0. S. 1882, .*

Thus a fixed tradition of Indra's birth is lacking in the Veda, and the fluctuating traditions are not very creditable to the purity of the Aryan fancy. In personal appearance Indra was handsome and ruddy as the sun, but, like Odin and Heitsi Eibib and other gods and wizards, he could assume any shape at will. He was a great charioteer, and wielded the thunderbolt forged for him by Tvashtri, the Indian Hephaestus. His love of the intoxicating soma juice was notorious, and with sacrifices of this liquor his adorers were accustomed to inspire and invigorate him. He is even said to have drunk at one draught thirty bowls of soma. Dr. Haug has tasted it, but could only manage one teaspoonful. Indra's belly is compared by his admirers to a lake, and there seems to be no doubt that they believed the god really drank their soma, as Heitsi Eibib really enjoys the honey left by the Hottentots on his grave. "I have verily resolved to bestow cows and horses. I have quaffed the soma. The draughts which I have drunk impel me as violent blasts. I have quaffed the soma. I surpass in greatness the heaven and the vast earth. I have quaffed the soma. I am majestic, elevated to the heavens. I have quaffed the soma."* So sings the drunken and bemused Indra, in the manner of the Cyclops in Euripides, after receiving the wine, the treacherous gift of Odysseus.

According to the old commentator Sayana, Indra got at the soma which inspired him with his drinking-song by assuming the shape of a quail.

The great feats of Indra, which are constantly referred to, are his slaughter of the serpent Vritra, who had taken possession of all the waters, and his recovery of the sun, which had also been stolen.**

** Rig-Veda, x. 119.*

*** Ibid., 139, 4; iii. 39, 6; viii. 85, 7.*

These myths are usually regarded as allegorical ways of stating that the lightning opens the dark thundercloud, and makes it disgorge the rain and reveal the sun. Whether this theory be correct or not, it is important for our purpose to show that the feats thus attributed to Indra are really identical in idea with, though more elevated in conception and style, than certain Australian, Iroquois and Thlinkeet legends. In the Iroquois myth, as in the Australian,* a great frog swallowed all the waters, and was destroyed by Ioskeha or some other animal. In Thlinkeet legends, Yehl, the raven-god, carried off to men the hidden sun and the waters. Among these lower races the water-stealer was thought of as a real reptile of some sort, and it is probable that a similar theory once prevailed among the ancestors of the Aryans. Vritra and Ahi, the mysterious foes whom Indra slays when he recovers the sun and the waters, were probably once as real to the early fancy as the Australian or Iroquois frog. The extraordinary myth of the origin of Vritra, only found in the Brahmanas, indicates the wild imagination of an earlier period. Indra murdered a Brahman, a three-headed one, it is true, but still a Brahman. For this he was excluded from the banquet and was deprived of his favourite soma. He stole a cup of it, and the dregs, thrown into the fire with a magical imprecation, became Vritra, whom Indra had such difficulty in killing. Before attacking Vritra, Indra supplied himself with Dutch courage. “A copious draught of soma provided him with the necessary courage and strength.” The terror of the other gods was abject.** After slaying him, he so lost self-possession that in his flight he behaved like Odin when he flew off in terror with the head of Suttung.***

** Brinton, Myths of New World, p, 185.   See also chapter i.*

*** Perry, op. cit., ; Rig-Veda, v. 29, 3, 7; iii. 43, 7; iv. 18, 11; viii. 85, 7.*

**** Rig-Veda, i. 32,14, tells of a flight as headlong as that of Apollo after killing the Python. Mr. Perry explains the flight as the rapid journey of the thunderstorm.*

If our opinion be correct, the elemental myths which abound in the Veda are not myths “in the making,” as is usually held, but rather myths gradually dissolving into poetry and metaphor. As an example of the persistence in civilised myth of the old direct savage theory that animals of a semi-supernatural sort really cause the heavenly phenomena, we may quote Mr. Darmesteter’s remark, in the introduction to the *Zendavesta*: “The storm floods that cleanse the sky of the dark fiends in it were described in a class of myths as the urine of a gigantic animal in the heavens”.* A more savage and theriomorphic hypothesis it would be hard to discover among Bushmen or Nootkas.** Probably the serpent Vritra is another beast out of the same menagerie.

If our theory of the evolution of gods is correct, we may expect to find in the myths of Indra traces of a theriomorphic character. As the point in the ear of man is thought or fabled to be a relic of his arboreal ancestry, so in the shape of Indra there should, if gods were developed out of divine beasts, be traces of fur and feather. They are not very numerous nor very distinct, but we give them for what they may be worth.

The myth of Yehl, the Thlinkeet raven-god, will not have been forgotten. In his raven gear Yehl stole the sacred water, as Odin, also in bird form, stole the mead of Suttung. We find a similar feat connected with Indra. Gubernatis says:***

** Sacred Books of the East, vol. iv. .*

*** The etymology of Vritra is usually derived from vn, to “cover,” “hinder,” “restrain,” then “what is to be hindered,” then “enemy,” “fiend”.*

**** Zoological Mythology, ii. 182.*

“In the *Rig-Veda* Indra often appears as a hawk. While the hawk carries the ambrosia through the air, he trembles for fear of the archer Kricanus, who, in fact, shot off one of his claws, of which the hedgehog was born, according to the *Aitareya Brahmana*, and according to the Vedic hymn, one of his feathers, which, falling on the earth, afterwards became a tree.”* Indra’s very peculiar relations with rams are also referred to by Gubernatis.** They resemble a certain repulsive myth of Zeus, Demeter and the ram referred to by the early Christian fathers. In the *Satapatha Brahmana**** Indra is called “ram of Medhatithi,” wife of Vrishanasva. Indra, like Loki, had taken the part of a woman.**** In the shape of a ram he carried off Medhatithi, an exploit like that of Zeus with Ganymede.(v) In the Vedas, however, all the passages which connect Indra with animals will doubtless be explained away as metaphorical, though it is admitted that, like Zeus, he could assume whatever form he pleased.(v)* Vedic poets, probably of a late period, made Indra as anthropomorphic as the Homeric Zeus. His domestic life in the society of his consort Indrani is described.(v)** When he is starting for the war, Indrani calls him back, and gives him a stirrup-cup of soma. He and she quarrel very naturally about his pet monkey.(v)***

In this brief sketch, which is not even a summary, we have shown how much of the irrational element, how much, too, of the humorous element, there is in the myths about Indra. He is a drunkard, who gulps down cask, spigot and all.(v)****

** Compare Rig-Veda, iv. 271.*

*** Zool. Myth., i. 414.*

**** ii. 81.*

***** Rig-Veda, i. 51, 13.*

(v) Ibid., viii. 2, 40.

(v) Ibid.,*

(v) Ibid., iii. 48, 4.*

*(v)** Ibid, 53, 4-6; vii. 18, 2.*

*(v)*** Ibid., x. 86.*

*(v)**** Ibid. 116.*

He is an adulterer and a “shape-shifter,” like all medicine-men and savage sorcerers. He is born along with the sheep from the breast of a vast non-natural being, like Ymir in Scandinavian myth; he metamorphoses himself into a ram or a woman; he rends asunder his father and mother, heaven and earth; he kills his father immediately after his birth, or he is mortal, but has attained heaven by dint of magic, by “austere fervour”. Now our argument is that these and such as these incongruous and irrational parts of Indra’s legend have no necessary or natural connection with the worship of him as a nature-god, an elemental deity, a power of sky and storm, as civilised men conceive storm and sky. On the other hand, these legends, of which plenty of savage parallels have been adduced, are obviously enough survivals from the savage intellectual myths, in which sorcerers, with their absurd powers, are almost on a level with gods. And our theory is, that the irrational part of Indra’s legend became attached to the figure of an elemental divinity, a nature-god, at the period when savage men mythically attributed to their gods the qualities which were claimed by the most illustrious among themselves, by their sorcerers and chiefs. In the Vedas the nature-god has not quite disengaged himself from these old savage attributes, which to civilised men seem so irrational. “Trailing clouds of” anything but “glory” does Indra come “from heaven, which is his home.” If the irrational element in the legend of Indra was neither a survival of, nor a loan from, savage fancy, why does it tally with the myths of savages?

The other Adityas, strictly so called (for most gods are styled Adityas now and then by way of compliment), need not detain us. We go on to consider the celebrated soma.

Soma is one of the most singular deities of the Indo-Aryans. Originally Soma is the intoxicating juice of a certain plant.* The wonderful personifying power of the early imagination can hardly be better illustrated than by the deification of the soma juice. We are accustomed to hear in the *märchen* or peasant myths of Scotch, Russian, Zulu and other races, of drops of blood or spittle which possess human faculties and intelligence, and which can reply, for example, to questions. The personification of the soma juice is an instance of the same exercise of fancy on a much grander scale. All the hymns in the ninth book of the *Rig-Veda*, and many others in other places, are addressed to the milk-like juice of this plant, which, when personified, holds a place almost as high as that of Indra in the Indo-Aryan Olympus. The sacred plant was brought to men from the sky or from a mountain by a hawk, or by Indra in guise of a hawk, just as fire was brought to other races by a benevolent bird, a raven or a cow. According to the *Aitareya Brahmana* (ii. 59), the gods bought some from the Gandharvas in exchange for one of their own number, who was metamorphosed into a woman, "a big naked woman" of easy virtue. In the *Satapatha Brahmana*,** the gods, while still they lived on earth, desired to obtain soma, which was then in the sky.

** As to the true nature and home of the soma plant, see a discussion in the Academy, 1885.*

*** Muir, v. 263.*

A Gandharva robbed the divine being who had flown up and seized the soma, and, as in the *Aitareya Brahmana*, the gods won the plant back by the aid of Vach, a woman-envoy to the amorous Gandharvas. The *Black Yajur Veda* has some ridiculous legends about Soma (personified) and his thirty-three wives, their jealousies, and so forth. Soma, in the *Rig-Veda*, is not only the beverage that inspires Indra, but is also an anthropomorphic god who created and lighted up the sun,* and who drives about in a chariot. He is sometimes addressed as a kind of Atlas, who keeps heaven and earth asunder.** He is prayed to forgive the violations of his law.*** Soma, in short, as a personified power, wants little of the attributes of a supreme deity.****

Another, and to modern ideas much more poetical personified power, often mentioned in the Vedas, is Ushas, or the dawn. As among the Australians, the dawn is a woman, but a very different being from the immodest girl dressed in red kangaroo-skins of the Murri myth. She is an active maiden, who(v) "advances, cherishing all things; she hastens on, arousing footed creatures, and makes the birds fly aloft.... The flying birds no longer rest after thy dawning, O bringer of food (?). She has yoked her horses from the remote rising-place of the sun.... Resplendent on thy massive car, hear our invocations.” Ushas is “like a fair girl adorned by her mother.... She has been beheld like the bosom of a bright maiden....”

** Rig-Veda, vi. 44, 23.*

*** Ibid., 44, 24.*

**** Ibid., viii. 48, 9.*

***** Bergaigne, i. 216. To me it seems that the Rishis when hymning Soma simply gave him all the predicates of God that came into their heads. Cf. Bergaigne, i. 223.*

***** Rig-Veda, i. 48.*

“Born again and again though ancient, shining with an ever uniform hue, she wasteth away the life of mortals.” She is the sister of Night, and the bright sun is her child. There is no more pure poetry in the Vedic collections than that which celebrates the dawn, though even here the Rishis are not oblivious of the rewards paid to the sacrificial priests.* Dawn is somewhat akin to the Homeric Eos, the goddess of the golden throne,** she who loved a mortal and bore him away, for his beauty’s sake, to dwell with the immortals. Once Indra, acting with the brutality of the Homeric Ares, charged against the car of Ushas and overthrew it.***

** Rig-Veda, i. 48, 4.*

*** Ibid., i.. 48,10.*

**** Ibid., iv. 30, 8; Ait Br., iv. 9.*

In her legend, however, we find little but pure poetry, and we do not know that Ushas, like Eos, ever chose a mortal lover. Such is the Vedic Ushas, but the Brahmanas, as usual, manage either to retain or to revive and introduce the old crude element of myth. We have seen that the Australians account to themselves for the ruddy glow of the morning sky by the hypothesis that dawn is a girl of easy virtue, dressed in the red opossum-skins she has received from her lovers. In a similar spirit the *Aitareya Brahmana* (iv. 9) offers brief and childish ætiological myths to account for a number of natural phenomena. Thus it explains the sterility of mules by saying that the gods once competed in a race; that Agni (fire) drove in a chariot drawn by mules and scorched them, so that they do not conceive. But in this race Ushas was drawn by red cows; “hence after the coming of dawn there is a reddish colour”. The red cows of the Brahmana may pair off with the red opossums of the Australian imagination.

We now approach a couple of deities whose character, as far as such shadowy things can be said to have any character at all, is pleasing and friendly. The Asvins correspond in Vedic mythology to the Dioscuri, the Castor and Polydeuces of Greece. They, like the Dioscuri, are twins, are horsemen, and their legend represents them as kindly and helpful to men in distress. But while the Dioscuri stand forth in Greek legend as clearly and fairly fashioned as two young knights of the Panathenaic procession, the Asvins show as bright and formless as melting wreaths of mist.

The origin of their name has been investigated by the commentator Yaska, who “quotes sundry verses to prove that the two Asvins belong together” (sic).* The etymology of the name is the subject, as usual, of various conjectures. It has been derived from *Asva*, a horse, from the root as, “to pervade,” and explained as a patronymic from Asva, the sun. The nature of the Asvins puzzled the Indian commentators no less than their name. Who, then, are these Asvins? “Heaven and earth,” say some.**

** Max Müller, Lectures on Language, ii. 536.*

*** Yaska in the Nirukta, xii. 1. See Muir, v. 234.*

The “some” who held this opinion relied on an etymological guess, the derivation from *as* “to pervade “. Others inclined to explain the Asvins as day and night, others as the sun and moon, others — Indian euhemerists — as two real kings, now dead and gone. Professor Roth thinks the Asvins contain an historical element, and are “the earliest bringers of light in the morning sky”. Mr. Max Müller seems in favour of the two twilights. As to these and allied modes of explaining the two gods in connection with physical phenomena, Muir writes thus: “This allegorical method of interpretation seems unlikely to be correct, as it is difficult to suppose that the phenomena in question should have been alluded to under such a variety of names and circumstances. It appears, therefore, to be more probable that the Rishis merely refer to certain legends which were popularly current of interventions of the Asvins in behalf of the persons whose names are mentioned.” In the Veda* the Asvins are represented as living in fraternal polyandry, with but one wife, Surya, the daughter of the sun, between them. They are thought to have won her as the prize in a chariot-race, according to the commentator Sayana. “The time of their appearance is properly the early dawn,” when they receive the offerings of their votaries.** “When the dark (night) stands among the tawny cows, I invoke you, Asvins, sons of the sky.”***

They are addressed as young, beautiful, fleet, and the foes of evil spirits.

** Rig-Veda, i. 119, 2; i. 119, 5; x. 39, 11 (?).*

*** Muir, v. 238.*

**** Rig-Veda, x. 61, 4.*

There can be no doubt that, when the Vedas were composed, the Asvins shone and wavered and were eclipsed among the bright and cloudy throng of gods, then contemplated by the Rishis or sacred singers. Whether they had from the beginning an elemental origin, and what that origin exactly was, or whether they were merely endowed by the fancy of poets with various elemental and solar attributes and functions, it may be impossible to ascertain. Their legend, meanwhile, is replete with features familiar in other mythologies. As to their birth, the *Rig-Veda* has the following singular anecdote, which reminds one of the cloud-bride of Ixion, and of the woman of clouds and shadows that was substituted for Helen of Troy: "Tvashtri makes a wedding for his daughter. Hearing this, the whole world assembled. The mother of Yama, the wedded wife of the great Vivasvat, disappeared. They concealed the immortal bride from mortals. Making another of like appearance, they gave her to Vivasvat. Saranyu bore the two Asvins, and when she had done so, deserted the twins."* The old commentators explain by a legend in which the daughter of Tvashtri, Saranyu, took on the shape of a mare. Vivasvat followed her in the form of a horse, and she became the mother of the Asvins, "sons of the horse," who more or less correspond to Castor and Pollux, sons of the swan. The Greeks were well acquainted with local myths of the same sort, according to which, Poseidon, in the form of a horse, had become the parent of a horse by Demeter Erinnys (Saranyu?), then in the shape of a mare. The Phigaleians, among whom this tale was current, worshipped a statue of Demeter in a woman's shape with a mare's head. The same tale was told of Cronus and Philyra.** This myth of the birth of gods, who "are lauded as Asvins" sprung from a horse,*** may be the result of a mere *volks etymologie*.

** Rig-Veda, x. 17, 1-2; Bergaigne, ii. 806, 318.*

*** Pausanias, viii. 25; Virgil, Georgia, iii. 91; Muir, v. 128. See chapter on "Greek Divine Myths," Demeter.*

**** Muir,v. 228.*

Some one may have asked himself what the word Asvins meant; may have rendered it "sprung from a horse," and may either have invented, by way of explanation, a story like that of Cronus and Philyra, or may have adapted such a story, already current in folk-lore, to his purpose; or the myth may be early, and a mere example of the prevalent mythical fashion which draws no line between gods and beasts and men. It will probably be admitted that this and similar tales prove the existence of the savage element of mythology among the Aryans of India, whether it be borrowed, or a survival, or an imitative revival.

The Asvins were usually benefactors of men in every sort of strait and trouble. A quail even invoked them (Mr. Max Müller thinks this quail was the dawn, but the Asvins were something like the dawn already), and they rescued her from the jaws of a wolf. In this respect, and in their beauty and youth, they answer to Castor and Pollux as described by Theocritus. “Succourers are they of men in the very thick of peril, and of horses maddened in the bloody press of battle, and of ships that, defying the setting and the rising of the stars in heaven, have encountered the perilous breath of storms.”*

** Theoc. Idyll, xxii. i. 17.*

A few examples of the friendliness of the Asvins may be selected from the long list given by Muir. They renewed the youth of Kali. After the leg of Vispala had been cut off in battle, the Asvins substituted an iron leg! They restored sight to Rijrasva, whom his father had blinded because, in an access of altruism, he had given one hundred and one sheep to a hungry she-wolf. The she-wolf herself prayed to the Asvins to succour her benefactor.* They drew the Rishi Rebha out of a well. They made wine and liquors flow from the hoof of their own horse.** Most of the persons rescued, quail and all, are interpreted, of course, as semblances of the dawn and the twilight. Goldstucker says they are among “the deities forced by Professor Müller to support his dawn-theory”. M. Bergaigne also leans to the theory of physical phenomena. When the Asvins restore sight to the blind Kanva, he sees no reason to doubt that “the blind Kanva is the sun during the night, or Agni or Soma is concealment”. A proof of this he finds in the statement that Kanva is “dark”; to which we might reply that “dark” is still a synonym for “blind” among the poor.***

** Rig-Veda, i. 116, 16.*

*** Ibid., i. 116, 7.*

**** Bergaigne, Rel. Ved., ii. 460, 465.*

M. Bergaigne’s final hypothesis is that the Asvins “may be assimilated to the two celebrants who in the beginning seemed to represent the terrestrial and celestial fires”. But this origin, he says, even if correctly conjectured, had long been forgotten.

Beyond the certainty that the Asvins represent the element of kindly and healing powers, as commonly conceived of in popular mythology — for example, in the legends of the saints — there is really nothing certain or definite about their original meaning.

A god with a better defined and more recognisable department is Tvashtri, who is in a vague kind of way the counterpart of the Greek Hephaestus. He sharpens the axe of Brahmanaspiti, and forges the bolts of Indra. He also bestows offspring, is a kind of male Aphrodite, and is the shaper of all forms human and animal. Saranyu is his daughter. Professor Kuhn connects her with the storm-cloud, Mr. Max Müller with the dawn.* Her wedding in the form of a mare to Vivasvat in the guise of a horse has already been spoken of and discussed. Tvashtri's relations with Indra, as we have shown, are occasionally hostile; there is a blood-feud between them, as Indra slew Tvashtri's three-headed son, from whose blood sprang two partridges and a sparrow.**

The Maruts are said to be gods of the tempest, of lightning, of wind and of rain. Their names, as usual, are tortured on various by the etymologists. Mr. Max Müller connects *Maruts* with the roots *mar*, "to pound," and with the Roman war-god Mars. Others think the root is *mar*, "to shine". Benfey*** says "that the Maruts (their name being derived from *mar*, 'to die') are personfications of the souls of the departed".

* *Max Müller, Lectures on Language, ii. 530.*

** *Muir, v. 224, 233.*

*** *Ibid., v. 147.*

Their numbers are variously estimated. They are the sons of Rudra and Prisni. Rudra as a bull, according to a tale told by Sayana, begat the Maruts on the earth, which took the shape of a cow. As in similar cases, we may suppose this either to be a survival or revival of a savage myth or a merely symbolical statement. There are traces of rivalry between Indra and the Maruts. It is beyond question that the Rishis regard them as elementary and mainly as storm-gods. Whether they were originally ghosts (like the Australian Mrarts, where the name tempts the wilder kind of etymologists), or whether they are personified winds, or, again, winds conceived as persons (which is not quite the same thing), it is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to determine.

Though divers of the Vedic gods have acquired solar characteristics, there is a regular special sundeity in the Veda, named Surya or Savitri. He answers to the Helios of the Homeric hymn to the sun, conceived as a personal being, a form which he still retains in the fancy of the Greek islanders.* Surya is sometimes spoken of as a child of Aditi’s or of Dyaus and Ushas is his wife, though she also lives in Spartan polyandry with the Asvin twins.** Like Helios Hyperion, he beholds all things, the good and evil deeds of mortals. He is often involved in language of religious fervour.*** The English reader is apt to confuse Surya with the female being Surya. Surya is regarded by Grassmann and Roth as a feminine personification of the sun.**** M. Bergaigne looks on Surya as the daughter of the sun or daughter of Savitri, and thus as the dawn. Savitri is the sun, golden-haired and golden-handed. From the *Satapatha Brahmana*(v) it appears that people were apt to identify Savitri with Prajapati.(v)*

** Bent’s Cyclades.*

*** Rig-Veda, vii. 75, 5.*

**** Muir, v. 155-162.*

***** Bergaigne, ii. 486.*

(v) xiii. 3, 5, 1.

(v) The very strange and important personage of Prajapati is discussed in the chapter on “Indian Cosmogonic Myths”.*

These blendings of various conceptions and of philosophic systems with early traditions have now been illustrated as far as our space will permit. The natural conclusion, after a rapid view of Vedic deities, seems to be that they are extremely composite characters, visible only in the shifting rays of the Indian fancy, at a period when the peculiar qualities of Indian thought were already sufficiently declared. The lights of ritualistic dogma and of pantheistic and mystic and poetic emotion fall in turn, like the changeful hues of sunset, on figures as melting and shifting as the clouds of evening. Yet even to these vague shapes of the divine there clings, as we think has been shown, somewhat of their oldest raiment, something of the early fancy from which we suppose them to have floated up ages before the Vedas were compiled in their present form. If this view be correct, Vedic mythology does by no means represent what is primitive and early, but what, in order of development, is late, is peculiar, and is marked with the mark of a religious tendency as strongly national and characteristic as the purest Semitic monotheism. Thus the Veda is not a fair starting-point for a science of religion, but is rather, in spite of its antiquity, a temporary though advanced resting-place in the development of Indian religious speculation and devotional sentiment.*

** In the chapters on India the translation of the Veda used is Herr Ludwig’s (Prag, 1876). Much is owed to Mr. Perry’s essay on Indra, quoted above.*

CHAPTER XVIII. GREEK DIVINE MYTHS

Gods in myth, and God in religion — The society of the gods like that of men in Homer — Borrowed elements in Greek belief — Zeus — His name — Development of his legend — His bestial shapes explained — Zeus in religion — Apollo — Artemis — Dionysus — Athene — Aphrodite — Hermes — Demeter — Their names, natures, rituals and legends — Conclusions.

In the gods of Greece, when represented in ideal art and in the best religious sentiment, as revealed by poets and philosophers, from Homer to Plato, from Plato to Porphyry, there is something truly human and truly divine. It cannot be doubted that the religion of Apollo, Athene, Artemis and Hermes was, in many respects, an adoration directed to the moral and physical qualities that are best and noblest. Again, even in the oldest Greek literature, in Homer and in all that follows, the name of the chief god, Zeus, might in many places be translated by our word “God”.*

** Postea, “Zeus”.*

It is God that takes from man half his virtue on the day of slavery; it is God that gives to each his lot in life, and ensures that as his day is so shall his strength be. This spiritual conception of deity, undifferentiated by shape or attributes, or even by name, declares itself in the Homeric terms (—— —— ——) and in the (—— —) of Herodotus. These are spiritual forces or tendencies ruling the world, and these conceptions are present to the mind, even of Homer, whose pictures of the gods are so essentially anthropomorphic; even of Herodotus, in all things so cautiously reverent in his acceptation of the popular creeds and rituals. When Socrates, therefore, was doomed to death for his theories of religion, he was not condemned so much for holding a pure belief in a spiritual divinity, as for bringing that opinion (itself no new thing) into the marketplace, and thereby shocking the popular religion, on which depended the rites that were believed to preserve the fortune of the state.

It is difficult or impossible quite to unravel the tangled threads of mythical legend, of sacerdotal ritual, of local religion, and of refined religious sentiment in Greece. Even in the earliest documents, the Homeric poems, religious sentiment deserts, in moments of deep and serious thought, the brilliant assembly of the Olympians, and takes refuge in that fatherhood of the divine “after which all men yearn”.*

* *Odyssey, iii. 48.*

Yet, even in Pausanias, in the second century of the Christian era, and still more in Plutarch and Porphyry, there remains an awful acquiescence in such wild dogmas and sacred traditions as antiquity handed down. We can hardly determine whether even Homer actually believed in his own turbulent cowardly Ares, in his own amorous and capricious Zeus. Did Homer, did any educated Greek, turn in his thoughts, when pain, or sorrow, or fear fell on him, to a hope in the help of Hermes or Athene? He was ready to perform all their rites and offer all the sacrifices due, but it may be questioned whether, even in such a god-fearing man as Nicias, this ritualism meant more than a desire to "fulfil all righteousness," and to gratify a religious sentiment in the old traditional forms.

In examining Greek myths, then, it must be remembered that, like all myths, they have far less concern with religion in its true guise — with the yearning after the divine which "is not far from any one of us," after the God "in whom we live, and move, and have our being" — than with the *religio*, which is a tissue of old barbarous fears, misgivings, misapprehensions. The religion which retained most of the myths was that ancient superstition which is afraid of "changing the luck," and which, therefore, keeps up acts of ritual that have lost their significance in their passage from a dark and dateless past. It was the local priesthoods of demes and remote rural places that maintained the old usages of the ancient tribes and kindreds — usages out of keeping with the mental condition of the splendid city state, or with the national sentiment of Hellenism. But many of the old tales connected with, and explanatory of, these ritual practices, after "winning their way to the mythical," as Thucydides says, won their way into literature, and meet us in the odes of Pindar, the plays of Æschylus and Sophocles, the notes of commentators, and the apologetic efforts of Plutarch and Porphyry. It is with these antique stories that the mythologist is concerned. But even here he need not loose his reverence for the nobler aspects of the gods of Greece. Like the archaeologist and excavator, he must touch with careful hand these — *Strange clouded fragments of the ancient glory,*
Late lingerers of the company divine;
For even in ruin of their marble limbs
They breathe of that far world wherefrom they came,
Of liquid light and harmonies serene,
*Lost halls of heaven and far Olympian air.**

"Homer and Hesiod named the gods for the Greeks;" so Herodotus thought, and constructed the divine genealogies. Though the gods were infinitely older than Homer, though a few of them probably date from before the separation of the Indo-Aryan and Hellenic stocks, it is certain that Homer and Hesiod stereotyped, to some extent, the opinions about the deities which were current in their time.**

** Ernest Myers, Hermes, in The Judgment of Prometheus.*

*** As a proof of the Pre-Homeric antiquity of Zeus, it has often been noticed that Homer makes Achilles pray to Zeus of Dodona (the Zeus, according to Thrasybulus, who aided Deucalion after the deluge) as the “Pelasgian” Zeus (Iliad, xvi. 233). “Pelasgian” may be regarded as equivalent to” pre-historic Greek “. Sophocles (Trach., 65; see Scholiast) still speaks of the Selli, the priests of Dodonean Zeus, as “mountain-dwelling and couching on the earth “. They retained, it seems, very primitive habits. Be it observed that Achilles has been praying for confusion and ruin to the Achaeans, and so invokes the deity of an older, perhaps hostile, race. Probably the oak-oracle at Dodona, the message given by “the sound of a going in the tree-tops” or by the doves, was even more ancient than Zeus, who, on that theory, fell heir to the rites of a peasant oracle connected with tree-worship. Zeus, according to Hesiod, “dwelt in the trunk of the oak tree” (cited by Preller, i. 98), much as an Indian forest-god dwells in the peepul or any other tree. It is rather curious that, according to Eustathius (Iliad, xvi. 233), “Pelargicus,” “connected with storks,” was sometimes written for Pelasgicus; that there was a Dodona in Thessaly, and that storks were sacred to the Thessalians.*

Hesiod codified certain priestly and Delphian theories about their origin and genealogies. Homer minutely described their politics and society. His description, however, must inevitably have tended to develop a later scepticism. While men lived in city states under heroic kings, acknowledging more or less the common sway of one king at Argos or Mycenæ, it was natural that the gods (whether in the dark backward of time Greece knew a Moral Creative Being or not) should be conceived as dwelling in a similar society, with Zeus for their Agamemnon, a ruler supreme but not absolute, not safe from attempts at resistance and rebellion. But when Greek politics and society developed into a crowd of republics, with nothing answering to a certain imperial sway, then men must have perceived that the old divine order was a mere survival from the time when human society was similarly ordained. Thus Xenophanes very early proclaimed that men had made the gods in their own likeness, as a horse, could he draw, would design his deity in equine semblance. But the detection by Xenophanes of the anthropomorphic tendency in religion could not account for the instinct which made Greeks, like other peoples, as Aristotle noticed, figure their gods not only in human shape, but in the guise of the lower animals. For that zoomorphic element in myth an explanation, as before, will be sought in the early mental condition which takes no great distinction between man and the beasts. The same method will explain, in many cases, the other peculiarly un-Hellenic elements in Greek divine myth. Yet here, too, allowance must be made for the actual borrowing of rites and legends from contiguous peoples.

The Greeks were an assimilative race. The alphabet of their art they obtained, as they obtained their written alphabet, from the kingdoms of the East.* Like the Romans, they readily recognised their own gods, even under the barbarous and brutal disguises of Egyptian popular religion; and, while recognising their god under an alien shape, they may have taken over legends alien to their own national character.** Again, we must allow, as in India, for myths which are really late, the inventions, perhaps, of priests or oracle-mongers. But in making these deductions, we must remember that the later myths would be moulded, in many cases, on the ancient models. These ancient models, there is reason to suppose, were often themselves of the irrational and savage character which has so frequently been illustrated from the traditions of the lower races.

The elder dynasties of Greek gods, Uranus and Cronos, with their adventures and their fall, have already been examined.***

** Helbig, Homerwche Epos cms dem Denhmalern. Perrot and Chipiez, on Mycenaean art, represent a later view.*

*** On the probable amount of borrowing in Greek religion see Maury, Religions de la Greece, iii. 70-75; Newton, Nineteenth Century, 1878, . Gruppe, Griech. Culte u. Mythen., p-163*

**** "Greek Cosmogonic Myths," antea.*

Uranus may have been an ancient sky-god, like the Samoyed Num, deposed by Cronus, originally, perhaps, one of the deputy-gods, active where their chief is otiose, whom we find in barbaric theology. But this is mere guess-work. We may now turn to the deity who was the acknowledged sovereign of the Greek Olympus during all the classical period from the date of Homer and Hesiod to the establishment of Christianity. We have to consider the legend of Zeus.

It is necessary first to remind the reader that all the legends in the epic poems date after the time when an official and national Olympus had been arranged.

Probably many tribal gods, who had originally no connection with gods of other tribes, had, by Homer’s age, thus accepted places and relationships in the Olympic family. Even rude low-born Pelasgian deities may have been adopted into the highest circles, and fitted out with a divine pedigree in perfect order.

To return to Zeus, his birth (whether as the eldest or the youngest of the children of Cronus) has already been studied; now we have to deal with his exploits and his character.

About the meaning of the name of Zeus the philologists seem more than commonly harmonious. They regard the Greek Zeus as the equivalent of the Sanskrit Dyaus, “the bright one,” a term for the sky.*

* Max Müller, Selected Essays, ii. 419; Preller, Gr. Myth., i. 92.

He was especially worshipped on hill-tops (like the Aztec rain-god); for example, on Ithome, Parnes, Cithgeron, and the Lycaean hill of Arcadia. On the Arcadian mountain, a centre of the strangest and oldest rites, the priest of Zeus acted as what the African races call a “rainmaker”. There was on the hill the sacred well of the nymph Hagno, one of the nurses of the child Zeus. In time of drought the priest of Zeus offered sacrifice and prayer to the water according to ritual law, and it would be interesting to know what it was that he sacrificed. He then gently stirred the well with a bough from the oak, the holy tree of the god, and when the water was stirred, a cloud arose like mist, which attracted other clouds and caused rain. As the priest on a mountain practically occupied a meteorological observatory, he probably did not perform these rites till he knew that a “depression” might be expected from one quarter or another.*

* See similar examples of popular magic in Gervase of Tilbury, Otia Imperiidia; Liebrecht, ii. 146. The citation is due to Freller, i. 102.

Wonderful feats of rain-prophecy are done by Australian seers, according to Mrs. Langloh Parker and others. As soon as we meet Zeus in Homer, we find that he is looked on, not as the sky, but as the deity who “dwells in the heights of air,” and who exercises supreme sway over all things, including storm and wind and cloud. He casts the lightning forth (—— ——) he thunders on high (—— ——), he has dark clouds for his covering (—— ——) all these imposing aspects he is *religiously* regarded by people who approach him in prayer. These aspects would be readily explained by the theory that Zeus, after having been the personal sky, came to be thought a powerful being who dwelt in the sky, if we did not find such beings worshipped where the sky is not yet adored, as in Australia. Much the same occurred if, as M. Maspero points out, in Egypt the animals were worshipped first, and then later the gods supposed to be present in the animals. So the sky, a personal sky, was first adored, later a god dwelling in the sky. But it is less easy to show how this important change in opinion took place, if it really occurred. A philological theory of the causes which produced the change is set forth by Mr. Keary in his book *Primitive Belief*. In his opinion the sky was first worshipped as a vast non-personal phenomenon, “the bright thing”(*Dyaus*). But, to adopt the language of Mr. Max Müller, who appears to hold the same views, “Dyaus ceased to be an expressive predicate; it became a traditional name”;* it “lost its radical meaning”. Thus where a man had originally said, “It thunders,” or rather “He thunders,” he came to say, “Dyaus” (that is, the sky) “thunders”.

** Select Essays, ii. 419.*

Next Dyaus, or rather the Greek form Zeus, almost lost its meaning of the sky, and the true sense being partially obscured, became a name supposed to indicate a person. Lastly the expression became “Zeus thunders,” Zeus being regarded as a person, because the old meaning of his name, “the sky,” was forgotten, or almost forgotten. The *nomen* (name) has become a *numen* (god). As Mr. Keary puts it, “The god stands out as clear and thinkable in virtue of this name as any living friend can be”. The whole doctrine resolves itself into this, a phenomenon originally (according to the theory) considered impersonal, came to be looked on as personal, because a word survived in colloquial expressions after it had lost, or all but lost, its original meaning. As a result, ‘all the changes and processes of the impersonal sky came to be spoken of as personal actions performed by a personal being, Zeus. The record of these atmospheric processes on this theory is the legend of Zeus. Whatever is irrational and abominable in the conduct of the god is explained as originally a simple statement of meteorological phenomena. “Zeus weds his mother;” that must mean the rain descends on the earth, from which it previously arose in vapour. “Zeus weds his daughter,” that is, the rain falls on the crop, which grew up from the rainy embrace of sky and earth.

Here then we have the philological theory of the personality and conduct of Zeus. To ourselves and those who have followed us the system will appear to reverse the known conditions of the working of the human mind among early peoples. On the philological theory, man first regards phenomena in our modern way as impersonal; he then gives them personality as the result of a disease of language, of a forgetfulness of the sense of words. Thus Mr. Keary writes: “The idea of personality as apart from matter must have been growing more distinct when men could attribute personality to such an abstract phenomenon as the sky “. Where is the distinctness in a conception which produces such confusion? We have seen that as the idea of personality becomes more distinct the range of its application becomes narrower, not wider. The savage, it has been thought, attributes personality to everything without exception. As the idea of personality grows more distinct it necessarily becomes less extensive, till we withdraw it from all but intelligent human beings. Thus we must look for some other explanation of the personality of Zeus, supposing his name to mean the sky. This explanation we find in a survival of the savage mental habit of regarding all phenomena, even the most abstract, as persons. Our theory will receive confirmation from the character of the personality of Zeus in his myth. Not only is he a person, but in myth, as distinct from religion, he is a very savage person, with all the powers of the medicine-man and all the passions of the barbarian. Why should this be so on the philological theory? When we examine the legend of Zeus, we shall see which explanation best meets the difficulties of the problem. But the reader must again be reminded that the Zeus of myth, in Homer and elsewhere, is a very different being from the Zeus of religion of Achilles’s prayer, from the Zeus whom the Athenians implored to rain on their fields, and from the Zeus who was the supreme being of the tragedians, of the philosophers, and of later Greece.

The early career, *la jeunesse orageuse*, of Zeus has been studied already. The child of Cronus and Rhea, countless places asserted their claim to be the scene of his birth, though the Cretan claim was most popular.*

* *Hesiod, Theog., 468; Paus., iv. 33, 2.*

In Crete too was the grave of Zeus: a scandal to pious heathendom. The euhemerists made this tomb a proof that Zeus was a deified man. Preller takes it for an allegory of winter and the death of the god of storm, who in winter is especially active. Zeus narrowly escaped being swallowed by his father, and, after expelling and mediatising that deity, he changed his own wife, Metis, into a fly, swallowed her, and was delivered out of his own head of Athene, of whom his wife had been pregnant. He now became ruler of the world, with his brother Poseidon for viceroy, so to speak, of the waters, and his brother Hades for lord of the world of the dead. Like the earlier years of Louis XIV., the earlier centuries of the existence of Zeus were given up to a series of amours, by which he, like Charles II., became the father of many noble families. His legitimate wife was his sister Hera, whom he seduced before wedlock “without the knowledge of their dear parents,” says Homer,* who neglects the myth that one of the “dear parents” ate his own progeny, “like him who makes his generation messes to gorge his appetite”. Hera was a jealous wife, and with good cause.** The Christian fathers calculated that he sowed his wild oats and persecuted mortal women with his affections through seventeen generations of men. His amours with his mother and daughters, with Deo and Persephone, are the great scandals of Clemens Alexandrinus and Arnobius.*** Zeus seldom made love *in* *propria persona*, in all his meteorological pomp. When he thus gratified Semele she was burned to a cinder.****

** It is probable that this myth of the seduction of Hera is of Samian origin, and was circulated to account for and justify the Samian custom by which men seduced their loves first and celebrated the marriage afterwards (Scholia on Iliad, xiv. 201). "Others say that Samos was the place where Zeus betrayed Hera, whence it comes that the Samians, when they go a-wooing, anticipate the wedding first in secret, and then celebrate it openly." Yet another myth (Iliad, xiv. 295, Scholiast) accounts for the hatred which Zeus displayed to Prometheus by the fable that, before her wedding with Zeus, Hera became the mother of Prometheus by the giant Eurymedon. Euphorion was the authority for this tale. Yet another version occurs in the legend of Hephaestus. See also Schol., Theoc., xv. 64.*

*** Iliad, xiv. 307, 340.*

**** Arnobius, Adv. Nat., v. 9, where the abominations described defy repetition. The myth of a rock which became the mother of the offspring of Zeus may recall the maternal flint of Aztec legend and the vagaries of Iroquois tradition. Compare Clemens Alex., Oxford, 1719, i. 13, for the amours of Zeus, Deo and Persephone, with their representations in the mysteries; also Arnob., Adv. Cent., v. 20. Zeus adopted the shape of a serpent in his amour with his daughter. An ancient Tarentine sacred ditty is quoted as evidence, Taurus draconem genuit, et taurum draco, and certain repulsive performances with serpents in the mysteries are additional testimony.*

***** Apollodorus, iii. 4, 3.*

The amour with Danae, when Zeus became a shower of gold, might be interpreted as a myth of the yellow sunshine. The amours of Zeus under the disguise of various animal forms were much more usual, and are familiar to all.* As Cronus when in love metamorphosed himself into a stallion, as Prajapati pursued his own daughter in the shape of a roebuck, so Zeus became a serpent, a bull, a swan, an eagle, a dove,** and, to woo the daughter of Cletor, an ant.

Similar disguises are adopted by the sorcerers among the Algonkins for similar purposes. When Pund-jel, in the Australian myth of the Pleiades, was in love with a native girl, he changed himself into one of those grubs in the bark of trees which the Blacks think edible, and succeeded as well as Zeus did when he became an ant.***

** The mythologists, as a rule, like the heathen opponents of Arnobius, Clemens and Eusebius, explain the amours of Zeus as allegories of the fruitful union of heaven and earth, of rain and grain. Preller also allows for the effects of human vanity, noble families insisting on tracing themselves to gods. On the whole, says Preller, "Zeugung in der Natur-religion und Mythologie, dasselbe ist was Schopfung inden deistischen Religionen" (i. 110). Doubtless all these elements come into the legend; the unions of Zeus with Deo and Persephone especially have much the air of a nature-myth told in an exceedingly primitive and repulsive manner. The amours in animal shape are explained in the text as in many cases survivals of the totemistic belief in descent from beasts, sans phrase.*

***Lian., Hist Vwr., i. 15.*

**** Dawson, Australian Aborigines; Custom, and Myth, .*

It is not improbable that the metamorphosis of Zeus into an ant is the result of a *volks-etymologie* which derived "Myrmidons" from (—— —), an ant. Even in that case the conversion of the ant into an avatar of Zeus would be an example of the process of gravitation or attraction, whereby a great mythical name and personality attracts to itself floating fables.* The remark of Clemens on this last extraordinary intrigue is suggestive. The Thessalians, he says, are reputed to worship ants because Zeus took the semblance of an ant when he made the daughter of Cletor mother of Myrmidon. Where people worship any animal from whom they claim descent (in this case through Myrmidon, the ancestor of the famed Myrmidons), we have an example of stiraight forward totemism. To account for the adoration of the animal on the hypothesis that it was the incarnation of a god, is the device which has been observed in Egyptian as in Samoan religion, and in that of aboriginal Indian tribes, whose animal gods become saints "when the Brahmans get a turn at them".**

The most natural way of explaining such tales about the amours and animal metamorphoses of so great a god, is to suggest that Zeus inherited,*** as it were, legends of a lower character long current among separate families and in different localities. In the same way, where a stone had been worshipped, the stone was, in at least one instance, dubbed with the name of Zeus.****

** Clemens, .*

*** See Mr. H. H. Risley on "Primitive Marriage in Bengal,"*
in Astatic Quarterly Review, June, 1886.

**** In Pausanias's opinion Cecrops first introduced the*
belief in Zeus, the most highest.

***** Paus., iii. 21, l; but the reading is doubtful.*

The tradition of descent from this or that beast or plant has been shown to be most widely prevalent. On the general establishment of a higher faith in a national deity, these traditions, it is presumed, would not wholly disappear, but would be absorbed into the local legend of the god. The various beasts would become sacred to him, as the sheep was sacred to Hera in Samos, according to Mandrobulus,* and images of the animals would congregate in his temple. The amours of Zeus, then, are probably traceable to the common habit of deriving noble descents from a god, and in the genealogical narrative older totemistic and other local myths found a place.** Apart from his intrigues, the youth of Zeus was like that of some masquerading and wandering king, such as James V. in Scotland. Though Plato, in the *Republic*, is unwilling that the young should be taught how the gods go about disguised as strangers, this was their conduct in the myths. Thus we read of *Lycaon and his fifty sons, whom Zeus*
In their own house spied on, and unawares
Watching at hand, from his disguise arose,
And overset the table where they sat
*Around their impious feast, and slew them all.****

Clemens of Alexandria**** contrasts the "human festival" of Zeus among the Ethiopians with the inhuman banquet offered to him by Lycaon in Arcadia.(v) ** Op. Clem. Alex., i. 36.*

*** Compare Heyne, Observ. in Apollodor., i. 8, 1.*

**** Bridges, Prometheus the Firegiver.*

***** Clem. Alex., L 31.*

(v) Paus., viii. 2, l.

The permanence of Arcadian human sacrifice has already been alluded to, and it is confirmed by the superstition that whoever tasted the human portion in the mess sacrificed to Zeus became a were-wolf, resuming his original shape if for ten years he abstained from the flesh of men.*

A very quaint story of the domestic troubles of Zeus was current in Plataea, where it was related at the festival named *Dædala*. It was said that Hera, indignant at the amours of her lord, retired to Euboæ. Zeus, wishing to be reconciled to her, sought the advice of Cithæron, at that time king of Platæa. By his counsel the god celebrated a sham marriage with a wooden image, dressed up to personate Plataea, daughter of Asopus. Hera flew to the scene and tore the bridal veil, when, discovering the trick, she laughed, and was reconciled to her husband.** Probably this legend was told to explain some incident of ritual or custom in the feast of the Dædala, and it is certainly a more innocent myth than most that were commemorated in local mystery-plays.

** The wolves connected with the worship of Zeus, like his rams, goats, and other animals, are commonly explained as mythical names for elemental phenomena, clouds and storms. Thus the ram's fleece, (—— ——), used in certain expiatory rites (Hesych., s. v., Lobeck,), is presumed by Preller to be a symbol of the cloud. In the same way his regis or goat-skin is the storm-wind or the thunder-cloud. The opposite view will be found in Professor Robertson Smith's article on "Sacrifice" in Encyc. Brit., where the similar totemistic rites of the lower races are adduced. The elemental theory is set forth by Decharme, Mythologie de la Grece Antique (Paris, 1879), . For the "storm-wolf," see Preller, i. 101. It seems a little curious that the wolf, which, on the solar hypothesis, was a brilliant beast connected with the worship of the sun-god, Apollo Lycaeus, becomes a cloud or storm-wolf when connected with Zeus. On the whole subject of the use of the skins of animals as clothing of the god or the ministrant, see Lobeck, Aglaoph., p-186, and Robertson Smith, op. cit.*

*** Paus., ix. 3, 1.*

It was not only when he was *en bonne fortune* that Zeus adopted the guise of a bird or beast. In the very ancient temple of Hera near Mycenae there was a great statue of the goddess, of gold and ivory, the work of Polycletus, and therefore comparatively modern. In one hand the goddess held a pomegranate, in the other a sceptre, on which was perched a cuckoo, like the Latin woodpecker Picus on his wooden post. About the pomegranate there was a myth which Pausanias declines to tell, but he does record the myth of the cuckoo. “They say that when Zeus loved the yet virgin Hera, he changed himself into a cuckoo, which she pursued and caught to be her playmate.” Pausanias admits that he did not believe this legend. Probably it was invented to account for the companionship of the cuckoo, which, like the cow, was one of the sacred animals of Hera. Myths of this class are probably later than the period in which we presume the divine relationships of gods and animals to have passed out of the totemistic into the Samoan condition of belief. The more general explanation is, that the cuckoo, as a symbol of the vernal season, represents the heaven in its wooing of the earth. On the whole, as we have tried to show, the symbolic element in myth is late, and was meant to be explanatory of rites and usages whose original significance was forgotten. It would be unfair to assume that a god was disrespectfully viewed by his earliest worshippers because ætiological, genealogical, and other myths, crystallised into his legend.

An extremely wild legend of Zeus was current among the Galatæ, where Pausanias expressly calls it a “local myth,” differing from the Lydian variant. Zeus in his sleep became, by the earth, father of Attes, Va being both male and female in his nature. Agdistis was the local name of this enigmatic character, whom the gods feared and mutilated. From the blood grew up, as in so many myths, an almond tree. The daughter of Sangarius, Nana, placed some of the fruit in her bosom, and thereby became pregnant, like the girl in the Kalewala by the berry, or the mother of Huitzilopochtli, in Mexico, by the floating feather. The same set of ideas recurs in Grimm’s *Märchen Machandelhoom,** if we may suppose that in an older form the juniper tree and its berries aided the miraculous birth.** It is customary to see in these wild myths a reflection of the Phrygian religious tradition, which leads up to the birth of Atys, who again is identified with Adonis as a hero of the spring and the reviving year. But the story has been introduced in this place as an example of the manner in which floating myths from all sources gravitate towards one great name and personality, like that of Zeus. It would probably be erroneous to interpret these and many other myths in the vast legend of Zeus, as if they had originally and intentionally described the phenomena of the heavens. They are, more probably, mere accretions round the figure of Zeus conceived as a personal god, a “magnified non-natural man”.***

* *Mrs. Hunt’s translation, i. 187.*

** *For parallels to this myth in Chinese, Aztec, Indian,* *Phrygian and other languages, see Le Fils de la Vierge, by M. H. de Charency, Havre, 1879. See also "Les Deux Freres" in M. Maspero's Contes Egyptians*

****As to the Agdistis myth, M. de Charency writes (after quoting forms of the tale from all parts of the world), "This resemblance between different shapes of the same legend, among nations separated by such expanses of land and sea, may be brought forward as an important proof of the antiquity of the myth, as well as of the distant date at which it began to be diffused".*

Another example of local accretion is the fable that Zeus, after carrying off Ganymede to be his cupbearer, made atonement to the royal family of Troy by the present of a vine of gold fashioned by Hephaestus.* The whole of the myth of Callisto, again, whom Zeus loved, and who bore Areas, and later was changed into a bear, and again into a star, is clearly of local Arcadian origin. If the Arcadians, in very remote times, traced their descent from a she-bear, and if they also, like other races, recognised a bear in the constellation, they would naturally mix up those fables later with the legend of the all-powerful Zeus.**

** Scholia on Odyssey, xL 521; Iliad, xx. 234; Eurip., Orestes, 1392, and Scholiast quoting the Little Iliad.*

*** Compare C. O. Müller, Introduction to a Scientific System of Mythology, London, 1884, p,17; Pausaniaa, i 25, 1, viii. 35, 7.*

So far we have studied some of the details in the legend of Zeus which did not conspicuously win their way into the national literature. The object has been to notice a few of the myths which appear the most ancient, and the most truly native and original. These are the traditions preserved in mystery-plays, tribal genealogies, and temple legends, the traditions surviving from the far off period of the village Greeks. It has already been argued, in conformity with the opinion of C. O. Müller, that these myths are most antique and thoroughly local. "Any attempt to explain these myths in order, such, for instance, as we now find them in the collection of Apollodorus, as a system of thought and knowledge, must prove a fruitless task." Equally useless is it to account for them all as stories originally told to describe, consciously or unconsciously, or to explain any atmospheric and meteorological phenomena. Zeus is the bright sky; granted, but the men who told how he became an ant, or a cuckoo, or celebrated a sham wedding with a wooden image, or offered Troy a golden vine, "the work of

Hephaestus,” like other articles of jewellery, were not thinking of the bright sky when they repeated the story. They were merely strengthening some ancient family or tribal tradition by attaching it to the name of a great, powerful, personal being, an immortal. This being, not the elemental force that was Zeus, not the power “making for righteousness” that is Zeus, not the pure spiritual ruler of the world, the Zeus of philosophy, is the hero of the myths that have been investigated.

In the tales that actually won their way into national literature, beginning with Homer, there is observable the singular tendency to combine, in one figure, the highest religious ideas with the fables of a capricious, and often unjust and lustful supernatural being. Taking the myths first, their contrast with the religious conception of Zeus will be the more remarkable.

Zeus is the king of all gods and father of some, but he cannot keep his subjects and family always in order. In the first book of the *Iliad*, Achilles reminds his mother, the sea-nymph Thetis, how she once “rescued the son of Cronus, lord of the storm-clouds, from shameful wreck, when all other Olympians would have bound him, even Hera, and Poseidon, and Pallas Athene “. Thetis brought the hundred-handed Briareus to the help of the outnumbered and over-mastered Zeus. Then Zeus, according to the Scholiast, hung Hera out of heaven in chains, and gave Apollo and Poseidon for slaves to Laomedon, king of Troy. So lively was the recollection of this *coup d’etat* in Olympus, that Hephaestus implores Hera (his mother in Homer) not to anger Zeus, “lest I behold thee, that art so dear, chastised before mine eyes, and then shall I not be able to save thee for all my sorrow”.* He then reminds Hera how Zeus once tossed him out of heaven (as the Master of Life tossed Ataentsic in the Iroquois myth), and how he fell in Lemnos, “and little life was left in me”. The passage is often interpreted as if the fall of Hephaestus, the fire-god, were a myth of lightning; but in Homer assuredly the incident has become thoroughly personal, and is told with much humour. The offence of Hera was the raising of a magic storm (which she could do as well as any Lapland witch) and the wrecking of Heracles on Cos. For this she was chained and hung out of heaven, as on the occasion already described.**

** Iliad, i. 587.*

*** Ibid., 590; Scholia, xiv. 255. The myth is derived from Pherecydes.*

The constant bickerings between Hera and Zeus in the *Iliad* are merely the reflection in the upper Olympian world of the wars and jealousies of men below. Ilios is at war with Argos and Mycenae, therefore the chief protecting gods of each city take part in the strife. This conception is connected with the heroic genealogies. Noble and royal families, as in most countries, feigned a descent from the gods. It followed that Zeus was a partisan of his “children,” that is, of the royal houses in the towns where he was the most favoured deity. Thus Hera when she sided with Mycenæ had a double cause of anger, and there is an easy answer to the question, *quo numine læso?* She had her own townsmen’s quarrel to abet, and she had her jealousy to incite her the more; for to become father of the human families Zeus must have been faithless to her. Indeed, in a passage (possibly interpolated) of the fourteenth *Iliad* he acts as his own Leporello, and recites the list of his conquests. The Perseidæ, the Heraclidæ, the Pirithoidæ, with Dionysus, Apollo and Artemis spring from the amours there recounted.* Moved by such passions, Hera urges on the ruin of Troy, and Zeus accuses her of a cannibal hatred. “Perchance wert thou to enter within the gates and long walls, and devour Priam raw, and Priam’s sons, and all the Trojans, then mightest thou assuage thine anger.”** That great stumbling-block of Greek piety, the battle in which the gods take part,*** was explained as a physical allegory by the Neo-Platonists.**** It is in reality only a refraction of the wars of men, a battle produced among the heavenly folk by men’s battles, as the earthly imitations of rain in the Vedic ritual beget rain from the firmament. The favouritism which Zeus throughout shows to Athene(v) is explained by that rude and ancient myth of her birth from his brain after he had swallowed her pregnant mother.(v)*

** Pherecydes is the authority for the treble night, in which Zeus persuaded the sun not to rise when he wooed Alemena.*

*** See the whole passage, Iliad, iv. 160.*

**** Ibid., v. 385.*

***** Scholia, ed. Dindorf, vol iii.; Ibid., v. 886.*

(v)Ibid., v. 875.

(v) Cf. “Hymn to Apollo Pythius,” 136.*

But Zeus cannot allow the wars of the gods to go on unreproved, and* he asserts his power, and threatens to cast the offenders into Tartarus, “as far beneath Hades as heaven is high above earth”. Here the supremacy of Zeus is attested, and he proposes to prove it by the sport called “the tug of war”. He says, “Fasten ye a chain of gold from heaven, and all ye gods lay hold thereof, and all goddesses, yet could ye not drag from heaven to earth Zeus, the supreme counsellor, not though ye strove sore. But if once I were minded to drag with all my heart, then I could hang gods and earth and sea to a pinnacle of Olympus."** The supremacy claimed here on the score of strength, "by so much I am beyond gods and men," is elsewhere based on primogeniture,*** though in Hesiod Zeus is the youngest of the sons of Cronos. But there is, as usual in myth, no consistent view, and Zeus cannot be called omnipotent. Not only is he subject to fate, but his son Heracles would have perished when he went to seek the hound of hell but for the aid of Athene.**** Gratitude for his relief does not prevent Zeus from threatening Athene as well as Hera with Tartarus, when they would thwart him in the interest of the Achæans. Hera is therefore obliged to subdue him by the aid of love and sleep, in that famous and beautiful passage,(v) which is so frankly anthropomorphic, and was such a scandal to religious minds.(v)*

** Iliad, viii. ad init.*

*** M. Decharme regards this challenge to the tug of war as a very noble and sublime assertion of supreme sovereignty. Myth, de la Greece, .*

**** Iliad, xv. 166.*

***** Ibid., viii. 369.* *(v)Ibid., adv. 160-350.*

(v) Schol. Iliad, xiv. 346; Dindorf, vol. iv. In the Scholiast's explanation the scene is an allegorical description of spring; the wrath of Hera is the remains of winter weather; her bath represents the April showers; when she busks her hair, the new leaves on the boughs, "the high leafy tresses of the trees," are intended, and so forth. Not to analyse the whole divine plot of the Iliad, such is Zeus in the mythical portions of the epic. He is the father and master of gods and men, and the strongest; but he may be opposed, he may be deceived and cajoled; he is hot-tempered, amorous, luxurious, by no means omnipotent or omniscient. He cannot avert even from his children the doom that Fate span into the threads at their birth; he is no more omniscient than omnipotent, and if he can affect the weather, and bring storm and cloud, so at will can the other deities, and so can any sorcerer, or Jossakeed, or Biraark*

of the lower races.

In Homeric religion, as considered apart from myth, in the religious thoughts of men at solemn moments of need, or dread, or prayer, Zeus holds a far other place. All power over mortals is in his hands, and is acknowledged with almost the fatalism of Islam. “So meseems it pleaseth mighty Zeus, who hath laid low the head of many a city, yea, and shall lay low, for his is the highest power.”* It is Zeus who gives sorrows to men,** and he has, in a mythical picture, two jars by him full of evil and good, which he deals to his children on earth. In prayer*** he is addressed as Zeus, most glorious, most great, veiled in the storm-cloud, that dwelleth in the heaven. He gives his sanction to the oath:****

** Iliad, ii. 177.*

*** Ibid., 378.*

**** Ibid., 408.*

***** Ibid., iii 277.*

“Thou sun, that seest all, Father Zeus, that rulest from Ida, most glorious, most great, and things, and nearest all things, and ye rivers, and thou earth, and ye that in the underworld punish men forsworn, whosoever sweareth falsely, be ye witnesses, and watch over the faithful oath”. Again it is said: “Even if the Olympian bring not forth the fulfilment” (of the oath) “at once, yet doth he fulfil at the last, and men make dear amends, even with their own heads, and their wives and little ones”.* Again, “Father Zeus will be no helper of liars “.**

As to the religious sentiment towards Zeus of a truly devout man in that remote age, Homer has left us no doubt. In Eumæus the swineherd of Odysseus, a man of noble birth stolen into slavery when a child, Homer has left a picture of true religion and undefiled. Eumæus attributes everything that occurs to the will of the gods, with the resignation of a child of Islam or a Scot of the Solemn League and Covenant.*** “From Zeus are all strangers and beggars,” he says, and believes that hospitality and charity are well pleasing in the sight of the Olympian. When he flourishes, “it is God that increaseth this work of mine whereat I abide”. He neither says “Zeus” nor “the gods,” but in this passage simply “god”. “Verily the blessed gods love not froward deeds, but they reverence justice and the righteous acts of men;” yet it is “Zeus that granteth a prey to the sea-robbers”. It is the gods that rear Telemachus like a young sapling, yet is it the gods who “mar his wits within him” when he sets forth on a perilous adventure. It is to Zeus Cronion that the swineherd chiefly prays,**** but he does not exclude the others from his supplication.(v) * *Iliad*, iv. 160.

** Ibid., iv. 236.

*** *Odyssey*, xiv. passim,

**** Ibid., 406.

(v) *Odyssey*, iv. 423.

Being a man of scrupulous piety, when he slays a swine for supper, he only sets aside a seventh portion “for Hermes and the nymphs” who haunt the lonely uplands.** Yet his offering has no magical intent of constraining the immortals. “One thing God will give, and another withhold, even as he will, for with him all things are possible.”***

Such is a Homeric ideal of piety, and it would only gain force from contrast with the blasphemy of Aias, “who said that in the god’s despite he had escaped the great deep of the sea “.****

*** Ibid., xiv. 435.*

**** Ibid., 444, 445.*

***** Ibid., iv. 504.*

The epics sufficiently prove that a noble religion may coexist with a wild and lawless mythology. That ancient sentiment of the human heart which makes men listen to a human voice in the thunder and yearn for immortal friends and helpers, lives its life little disturbed by the other impulse which inspires men when they come to tell stories and romances about the same transcendent beings.

As to the actual original form of the faith in Zeus, we can only make guesses. To some it will appear that Zeus was originally the clear bright expanse which was taken for an image or symbol of the infinite. Others will regard Zeus as the bright sky, but the bright sky conceived of in savage fashion, as a being with human parts and passions, a being with all the magical accomplishments of metamorphosis, rainmaking and the rest, with which the medicine-man is credited. A third set of mythologists, remembering how gods and medicine-men have often interchangeable names, and how, for example, the Australian Biraark, who is thought to command the west wind, is himself styled “West Wind,” will derive Zeus from the ghost of some ancestral sorcerer named “Sky”. This euhemerism seems an exceedingly inadequate explanation of the origin of Zeus. In his moral aspect Zeus again inherits the quality of that supernatural and moral watcher of man’s deeds who is recognised (as we have seen) even by the most backward races, and who, for all we can tell, is older than any beast-god or god of the natural elements. Thus, whatever Zeus was in his earliest origin, he had become, by the time we can study him in ritual, poem or sacred chapter, a complex of qualities and attributes, spiritual, moral, elemental, animal and human.

It is curious that, on our theory, the mythical Zeus must have morally degenerated at a certain period as the Zeus of religion more and more approached the rank of a pure and almost supreme deity. On our hypothesis, it was while Greece was reaching a general national consciousness, and becoming more than an aggregate of small local tribes, that Zeus attracted the worst elements of his myth. In deposing or relegating to a lower rank a crowd of totems and fetishes and ancestral ghosts, he inherited the legends of their exploits. These were attached to him still more by the love of genealogies derived from the gods. For each such pedigree an amour was inevitably invented, and, where totems had existed, the god in this amour borrowed the old bestial form. For example, if a Thessalian stock had believed in descent from an ant, and wished to trace their pedigree to Zeus, they had merely to say, "Zeus was that ant". Once more, as Zeus became supreme among the other deities of men in the patriarchal family condition, those gods were grouped round him as members of his family, his father, mother, brothers, sisters, wife, mistresses and children. Here was a noble field in which the mythical fancy might run riot; hence came stories of usurpations, rebellions, conjugal skirmishes and jealousies, a whole world of incidents in which humour had free play. Nor would foreign influences be wanting. A wandering Greek, recognising his Zeus in a deity of Phoenicia or Babylon, might bring home some alien myth which would take its place in the general legend, with other myths imported along with foreign objects of art, silver bowls and inlaid swords. Thus in all probability grew the legend of the Zeus of myth, certainly a deplorable legend, while all the time the Greek intellect was purifying itself and approaching the poetical, moral and philosophical conception of the Zeus of religion. At last, in the minds of the philosophically religious, Zeus became pure deity, and the details of the legend were explained away by this or that system of allegory; while in the minds of the sceptical, Zeus yielded his throne to the "vortex" of the Aristophanic comedy. Thus Zeus may have begun as a kindly supreme being; then ætiological and totemistic myths may have accrued to his legend, and, finally, philosophic and pious thought introduced a rational conception of his nature. But myth lived on, ritual lived on, and human victims were slain on the altars of Zeus till Christianity was the established religion. "Solet it be," says Pausanias, "as it hath been from the beginning."

The gods who fill the court of Zeus and surround his throne are so numerous that a complete account of each would exceed the limits of our space. The legend of Zeus is typical, on the whole, of the manner in which the several mythical chapters grew about the figures of each of the deities. Some of these were originally, it is probable, natural forces or elemental phenomena, conceived of at first as personal beings; while, later, the personal earth or sun shaded off into the informing genius of the sun or earth, and still later was almost freed from all connection with the primal elemental phenomenon or force. In these processes of evolution it seems to have happened occasionally that the god shed, like a shell or chrysalis, his original form, which continued to exist, however, as a deity of older family and inferior power. By such processes, at least, it would not be difficult to explain the obvious fact that several gods have “under-studies” of their parts in the divine comedy. It may be well to begin a review of the gods by examining those who were, or may be supposed to have been, originally forces or phenomena of Nature.

APOLLO.

This claim has been made for almost all the Olympians, but in some cases appears more plausible than in others. For example, Apollo is regarded as a solar divinity, and the modes in which he attained his detached and independent position as a brilliant anthropomorphic deity, patron of art, the lover of the nymphs, the inspirer of prophecy, may have been something in this fashion. First the sun may have been regarded (in the manner familiar to savage races) as a personal being. In Homer he is still the god “who sees and hears all things,”* and who beholds and reveals the loves of Ares and Aphrodite. This personal character of the sun is well illustrated in the Homeric hymn to Hyperion, the sun that dwells on high, where, as Mr. Max Müller says, “the words would seem to imply that the poet looked upon Helios as a half-god, almost as a hero, who had once lived upon earth”.** It has already been shown that this mythical theory of the origin of the sun is met with among the Aztecs and the Bushmen.*** In Homer, the sun, Helios Hyperion, though he sees and hears all things,**** needs to be informed by one of the nymphs that the companions of Odysseus have devoured his sacred cattle. In the same way the supreme Baiame of Australia needs to ask questions of mortals. Apollo then speaks in the Olympian assembly, and threatens that if he is not avenged he will “go down to Hades and shine among the dead”. The sun is capable of marriage, as in the Bulgarian *Volkslied*, where he marries a peasant girl,(v) and, by Perse, he is the father of Circe and Æetes.(v)*

** Odyssey, viii. 270.*

*** Selected Essays, i. 605, note 1.*

**** “Nature Myths,” antea.*

***** Iliad, iii. 277.*

(v) Dozon, Chansons Bulgares.

(v) Odyssey, x. 139.*

According to the early lyric poet Stesichorus, the sun sails over ocean in a golden cup or bowl. “Then Helios Hyperionides went down into his golden cup to cross Ocean-stream, and come to the deeps of dark and sacred Night, to his mother, and his wedded wife, and his children dear.” This belief, in more barbaric shape, still survives in the Greek islands.* “The sun is still to them a giant, like Hyperion, bloodthirsty when tinged with gold. The common saying is that the sun ‘when he seeks his kingdom’ expects to find forty loaves prepared for him by his mother.... Woe to her if the loaves be not ready! The sun eats his brothers, sisters, father and mother in his wrath.”** A well-known amour of Helios was his intrigue with Rhode by whom he had Phaethon and his sisters. The tragedians told how Phaethon drove the chariot of the sun, and upset it, while his sisters were turned into poplar trees, and their tears became amber.***

** Bent’s Cyclades, .*

*** Stesichorus, Poetæ Lyrici Græci, Pomtow, vol. i. p. 148; qf. also Mimnermus, op. cit.,i. 78.*

**** Odyssey, xvii. 208; Scholiast. The story is ridiculed by Lucian, De Electro.*

Such were the myths about the personal sun, the hero or demigod, Helios Hyperion. If we are to believe that Apollo also is a solar deity, it appears probable that he is a more advanced conception, not of the sun as a person, but of a being who represents the sun in the spiritual world, and who exercises, by an act of will, the same influence as the actual sun possesses by virtue of his rays. Thus he brings pestilence on the Achæans in the first book of the *Iliad*, and his viewless shafts slay men suddenly, as sunstroke does. It is a pretty coincidence that a German scholar, Otfried Müller, who had always opposed Apollo’s claim to be a sun-god, was killed by a sunstroke at Delphi. The god avenged himself in his ancient home. But if this deity was once merely the sun, it may be said, in the beautiful phrase of Paul de St. Victor, “Pareil a une statue qui surgit des flammes de son moule, Apollo se degage vite du soleil”.* He becomes a god of manifold functions and attributes, and it is necessary to exercise extreme caution in explaining any one myth of his legend as originally a myth of the sun.** *Phoibos* certainly means “the brilliant” or “shining”. It is, however, unnecessary to hold that such epithets as *Lyceius, Lycius, Lycegenes* indicate “light,” and are not connected, as the ancients, except Macrobius, believed, with the worship of the wolf.*** The character of Apollo as originally a sun-god is asserted on the strength not only of his names, but of many of his attributes and his festivals. It is pointed out that he is the deity who superintends the measurement of time.**** “The chief days in the year’s reckoning, the new and full moons and the seventh and twentieth days of the month, also the beginning of the solar year, are reckoned Apolline." That curious ritual of the Daphnephoria, familiar to many English people from Sir Frederick Leighton's picture, is believed to have symbolised the year. Proclus says that a staff of olive wood decorated with flowers supported a central ball of brass beneath which was a smaller ball, and thence little globes were hung.(v) * *Homines et Dieux, .*

*** There is no agreement nor certainty about the etymology and original meaning of the name Apollo. See Preller, Or. Myth., i. 189. "Comparative philologists have not yet succeeded in finding the true etymology of Apollo" (Max Müller, Selected Essays, i. 467).*

**** Compare Zeus Lyceius and his wolf-myths; compare also Roscher, Ausfukrliches Lexikon, .*

***** Sonnengott als Zeitordner, Roscher, op. cit., .*

(v) Cf. Photius, Bibl.,321.

The greater ball means the sun, the smaller the moon, the tiny globes the stars and the 365 laurel garlands used in the feast are understood to symbolise the days. Pausanias* says that the ceremony was of extreme antiquity. Heracles had once been the youth who led the procession, and the tripod which Amphitryon dedicated for him was still to be seen at Thebes in the second century of our era. Another proof of Apollo's connection with the sun is derived from the cessation of his rites at Delphi during the three winter months which were devoted to Dionysus.** The sacred birthday feasts of the god are also connected with the year's renewal.*** Once more, his conflict with the great dragon, the Pytho, is understood as a symbol of the victory of light and warmth over the darkness and cold of winter.

The discomfiture of a dragon by a god is familiar in the myth of the defeat of Ahi or Vritra by Indra, and it is a curious coincidence that Apollo, like Indra, fled in terror after slaying his opponent. Apollo, according to the myth, was purified of the guilt of the slaying (a ceremony unknown to Homer) at Tempe.**** According to the myth, the Python was a snake which forbade access to the chasm whence rose the mysterious fumes of divination. Apollo slew the snake and usurped the oracle. His murder of the serpent was more or less resented by the Delphians of the time.(v) * *i ix. 10, 4.*

*** Plutarch, Depa El. Delph., 9.*

**** Roscher, op. cit., .*

***** Proclus, Chresl, ed. Gaisford, ; Homer, Hymn to Apollo, 122, 178; Apollod., i. 4, 3; Plutarch, Quæst. Groec., 12.*

(v) Apollod., Heyne, Observationes, . Compare the Scholiast on the argument to Pindar's Pythian odes.

The snake, like the other animals, frogs and lizards, in Andaman, Australian and Iroquois myth, had swallowed the waters before its murder.* Whether the legend of the slaying of the Python was or was not originally an allegory of the defeat of winter by sunlight, it certainly at a very early period became mixed up with ancient legal ideas and local traditions. It is almost as necessary for a young god or hero to slay monsters as for a young lady to be presented at court; and we may hesitate to explain all these legends of an useful feat of courage as nature-myths. In the Homeric Hymn to Apollo Pythius, the monster is called *Dracæna*, the female form of *drakon*. The Drakos and his wife are still popular bogies in modern Greek superstition and folk-song.**

** Preller, i. 194.*

*** Forchhammer takes the Dracæna to be a violent winter torrent, dried up by the sun's rays. Cf. Decharme, Myth. Orec., . It is also conjectured that the snake is only the sacred serpent of the older oracle of the earth on the same site. Æschylus, Eumenides, 2.*

The monster is the fosterling of Hera in the Homeric hymn, and the bane of flocks and herds. She is somehow connected with the fable of the birth of the monster Typhoeus, son of Hera without a father. The Homeric hymn derives *Pythius*, the name of the god, from (—— —), "rot," the disdainful speech of Apollo to the dead monster, "for there the pest rotted away beneath the beams of the sun". The derivation is a *volks-etymologie*. It is not clear whether the poet connected in his mind the sun and the god. The local legend of the dragon-slaying was kept alive in men's minds at Delphi by a mystery-play, in which the encounter was represented in action. In one version of the myth the slavery of Apollo in the house of Admetus was an expiation of the dragon's death.* Through many of the versions runs the idea that the slaying of the serpent was a deed which required purification and almost apology. If the serpent was really the deity of an elder faith, this would be intelligible, or, if he had kinsfolk, a serpent-tribe in the district, we could understand it. Apollo’s next act was to open a new spring of water, as the local nymph was hostile and grudged him her own. This was an inexplicable deed in a sun god, whose business it is to dry up rather than to open water-springs. He gave oracles out of the laurel of Delphi, as Zeus out of the oaks of Dodona.** Presently Apollo changed himself into a huge dolphin, and in this guise approached a ship of the Cretan mariners.*** He guided, in his dolphin shape, the vessel to Crisa, the port of Delphi, and then emerged splendid from the waters, and filled his fane with light, a sun-god indeed Next, assuming the shape of a man, he revealed himself to the Cretans, and bade them worship him in his *Delphic* seat as Apollo Delphinios, the Dolphin-Apollo.

* *Eurip., Alcestis, Schol., line 1.*

** *Hymn, 215.*

*** *Op. cit., 220-225.*

Such is the ancient tale of the founding of the Delphic oracle, in which gods, and beasts, and men are mixed in archaic fashion. It is open to students to regard the dolphin as only one of the many animals whose earlier worship is concentrated in Apollo, or to take the creature for the symbol of spring, when seafaring becomes easier to mortals, or to interpret the dolphin as the result of a *volks-etymologie*, in which the name Delphi (meaning originally a hollow in the hills) was connected with *delphis*, the dolphin.*

On the whole, it seems impossible to get a clear view of Apollo as a sun-god from a legend built out of so many varied materials of different dates as the myth of the slaying of the Python and the founding of the Delphic oracle. Nor does the tale of the birth of the god — *les enfances Apollon* — yield much more certain information. The most accessible and the oldest form of the birth-myth is preserved in the Homeric hymn to the Delian Apollo, a hymn intended for recital at the Delian festival of the Ionian people.

The hymn begins without any account of the amours of Zeus and Leto; it is merely said that many lands refused to allow Leto a place wherein to bring forth her offspring. But barren Delos listened to her prayer, and for nine days Leto was in labour, surrounded by all the goddesses, save jealous Hera and Eilithyia, who presides over child-birth. To her Iris went with the promise of a golden necklet set with amber studs, and Eilithyia came down to the isle, and Leto, grasping the trunk of a palm tree, brought forth Apollo and Artemis.**

Such is the narrative of the hymn, in which some interpreters, such as M. Decharme, find a rich allegory of the birth of Light. Leto is regarded as Night or

Darkness, though it is now admitted that this meaning cannot be found in the etymology of her name.***

** Roscher, Lexikon; Preller, i. 208; Schol. ad Lycophr., v. 208.*

*** Compare Theognis, 5-10.*

**** Preller, i. 190, note 4; Curtius, Gr. Æ, 120.*

M. Decharme presumes that the palm tree (—— —) originally meant the morning red, by aid of which night gives birth to the sun, and if the poet says the young god loves the mountain tops, why, so does the star of day. The moon, however, does not usually arise simultaneously with the dawn, as Artemis was born with Apollo. It is vain, in fact, to look for minute touches of solar myth in the tale, which rests on the womanly jealousy of Hera, and explains the existence of a great fane and feast of Apollo, not in one of the rich countries that refused his mother sanctuary, but in a small barren and remote island.*

Among the wilder myths which grouped themselves round the figure of Apollo was the fable that his mother Leto was changed into a wolf. The fable ran that Leto, in the shape of a wolf, came in twelve days from the Hyperboreans to Delos.** This may be explained as a *volks-etymologie* from the god’s name, “Lycegenes,” which is generally held to mean “born of light”. But the presence of very many animals in the Apollo legend and in his temples, corresponding as it does to similar facts already observed in the religion of the lower races, can scarcely be due to popular etymologies alone. The Dolphin-Apollo has already been remarked.

** The French excavators in Delos found the original unhewn stone on which, in later days, the statue of the anthropomorphic god was based.*

*** Aristotle, Hist. An., vi 86; Elian., N. A., iv. 4; Schol. on Apol. Rhod., ii. 12*

There are many traces of connection between Apollo and the wolf. In Athens there was the Lyceum of Apollo Lukios, Wolf-Apollo, which tradition connected with the primeval strife wherein Ægeus (goat-man) defeated Lukios (wolfman). The Lukian Apollo was the deity of the defeated side, as Athene of the Ægis (goat-skin) was the deity of the victors.* The Argives had an Apollo of the same kind, and the wolf was stamped on their coins.** According to Pausanias, when Danaus came seeking the kingship of Argos, the people hesitated between him and Gelanor. While they were in doubt, a wolf attacked a bull, and the Argives determined that the bull should stand for Gelanor, the wolf for Danaus. The wolf won; Danaus was made king, and in gratitude raised an altar to *Apollo Lukios*, Wolf-Apollo. That is (as friends of the totemic system would argue), a man of the wolf-stock dedicated a shrine to the wolf-god.*** In Delphi the presence of a bronze image of a wolf was explained by the story that a wolf once revealed the place where stolen temple treasures were concealed. The god's beast looked after the god's interest.**** In many myths the children of Apollo by mortal girls were exposed, but fostered by wolves.(v) In direct contradiction with Pausanias, but in accordance with a common rule of mythical interpretation, Sophocles(v)* calls Apollo "the wolf-slayer".

** Paus., i. 19, 4.*

*** Preller, i. 202, note 3; Paus., ii. 19, 3.*

**** Encyc. Brit., s. v. "Sacrifice".*

***** Paus., x. 14, 4.*

(v) Ant. Lib., 30.

(v) Electra, 6., 222*

It has very frequently happened that when animals were found closely connected with a god, the ancients explained the fact indifferently by calling the deity the protector or the destroyer of the beasts in question. Thus, in the case of Apollo, mice were held sacred and were fed in his temples in the Troad and elsewhere, the people of Hamaxitus especially worshipping mice.* The god's name, Smintheus, was understood to mean "Apollo of the Mouse," or "Mouse-Apollo ".** But while Apollo was thus at some places regarded as the patron of mice, other narratives declared that he was adored as Sminthian because from mice he had freed the country. This would be a perfectly natural explanation if the vermin which had once been sacred became a pest in the eyes of later generations.***

Flies were in this manner connected with the services of Apollo. It has already been remarked that an ox was sacrificed to flies near the temple of Apollo in Leucas. The sacrifice was explained as a device for inducing flies to settle in one spot, and leave the rest of the coast clear. This was an expensive, and would prove a futile arrangement. There was a statue of the Locust-Apollo (Parnopios) in Athena The story ran that it was dedicated after the god had banished a plague of locusts.****

* *Ælian, H. A., xii. 6.*

** *Strabo, xiii. 604.*

*** *It is the explanation Preller gives of the Mouse-Apollo, i. 202.*

**** *Paus., i. 24, 8; Strabo, xiii. 912.*

A most interesting view of the way in which pious heathens of a late age regarded Apollo’s menagerie may be got from Plutarch’s essay on the Delphic responses. It is the description of a visit to Delphi. In the hall of the Corinthians the writer and his friends examine the sacred palm tree of bronze, and “the snakes and frogs in relief round the root of the tree”. “Why,” said they, “the palm tree is not a marsh plant, and frogs are not a Corinthian crest.” And indeed one would think ravens and swans, and hawks and wolves, and anything else than these reptiles would be agreeable to the god. Then one of the visitors, Serapion, very learnedly showed that Apollo was the sun, and that the sun arises from water. “Still slipping into the story your lightings up and your exhalations,” cried Plutarch, and chaffed him, as one might chaff Kuhn, or Schwartz, or Decharme, about his elemental interpretations. In fact, the classical writers knew rather less than we do about the origin of many of their religious peculiarities.

In connection with sheep, again, Apollo was worshipped as the ram Apollo.* At the festival of the Carneia a ram was his victim.** These facts are commonly interpreted as significant of the god’s care for shepherds and the pastoral life, a memory of the days when Apollo kept a mortal’s sheep and was the hind of Admetus of Thessaly. He had animal names derived from sheep and goats, such as *Maloeis Tragios*.*** The tale which made Apollo the serf and shepherd of mortal men is as old as the *Iliad*,**** and is not easy to interpret, whether as a nature-myth or a local legend. Laomedon, one of Apollo’s masters, not only refused him his wage, but threatened to put him in chains and sell him to foreign folk across the sea, and to crop his ears with the blade of bronze. These legends may have brought some consolation to the hearts of free men enslaved. A god had borne like calamities, and could feel for their affliction.

* *Karneios, from (Heyschius, s.v.), a ram.*

** *Theocritus, Idyll, v. 8a*

*** *Preller, i. 215, note 1.*

***** ii. 766. xxi. 448.*

To return to the beasts of Apollo, in addition to dolphins, mice, rams and wolves, he was constantly associated with lizards (powerful totems in Australia), cicalas, hawks, swans, ravens, crows, vultures, all of which are, by mythologists, regarded as symbols of the sun-god, in one or other capacity or function. In the *Iliad*,* Apollo puts on the gear of a hawk, and flits on hawk's wings down Ida, as the Thlinkeet Yehl does on the feathers of a crane or a raven.

** xv. 287.*

The loves of Apollo make up a long and romantic chapter in his legend. They cannot all be so readily explained, as are many of the loves of Zeus, by the desire to trace genealogical pedigrees to a god. It is on this principle, however, that the birth of Ion, for example, is to be interpreted. The ideal eponymous hero of the Ionian race was naturally feigned to be the son of the deity by whose fatherhood all Ionians became "brethren in Apollo". Once more, when a profession like that of medicine was in the hands of a clan conceiving themselves to be of one blood, and when their common business was under the protection of Apollo, they inevitably traced their genealogy to the god. Thus the medical clan of the Asclepiadæ, of which Aristotle was a member, derived their origin from Asclepius or (as the Romans called him) Æsculapius.

So far everything in this myth appears natural and rational, granting the belief in the amours of an anthropomorphic god. But the details of the story are full of that *irrational* element which is said to "make mythology mythological". In the third Pythian ode Pindar sings how Apollo was the lover of Coronis; how she was faithless to him with a stranger. Pindar does not tell how the crow or the raven flew to Apollo with the news, and how the god cursed the crow, which had previously been white, that it should for ever be black. Then he called his sister, Artemis, to slay the false nymph, but snatched from her funeral pyre the babe Asclepius, his own begotten. This myth, which explains the colour of the crow as the result of an event and a divine curse, is an example of the stage of thought already illustrated in the Namaqua myth of Heitsi Eibib, and the peculiarities which his curse attached to various animals. There is also a Bushman myth according to which certain blackbirds have white breasts, because some women once tied pieces of white fat round their necks.* It is instructive to observe, as the Scholiast on Pindar quotes Artemon, that Pindar omits the incident of the crow as foolish and unworthy. Apollo, according to the ode, was himself aware, in his omniscience, of the frailty of Coronis. But Hesiod, a much earlier poet, tells the story in the usual way, with the curse of the crow, and his consequent change of colour.** The whole story, in its most ancient shape, and with the omissions suggested by the piety of a later age, is an excellent example of the irrational element in Greek myth, of its resemblance to savage myth, and of the tendency of more advanced thought to veil or leave out features revolting to pure religion.***

** Bleek, Bushman Folk-Lore; Pindar, Pyth., iii, with notes of the Scholiast.*

*** Pindar, Estienne, Geneva, 1599, .*

**** For the various genealogies of Asclepius and a discussion of the authenticity of the Hesiodic fragments, see Roscher, Lexikon, p, 616.*

The connection of Asclepius with the serpent was so close that he was received into Roman religion in the form of a living snake, while dogs were so intimately connected with his worship that Panofka believed him to have been originally a dog-god (Roscher, , *Revue Archeohgique*). In another myth Apollo succeeds to the paternal honours of a totem. The Telmissians in Lycia claimed descent from Telmessus, who was the child of an amour in which Apollo assumed the form of a dog. “In this guise he lay with a daughter of Antenor.” Probably the Lycians of Telmissus originally derived their pedigree from a dog, *sans phrase* and, later, made out that the dog was Apollo metamorphosed. This process of veiling a totem, and explaining him away as a saint of the same name, is common in modern India.*

** Suidas, His authority is Dionysius of Chalcis 200 BC, See “Primitive Marriage in Bengal,” Asiatic Quarterly, June, 1886.*

The other loves of Apollo are numerous, but it may be sufficient to have examined one such story in detail. Where the tale of the amour was not a necessary consequence of the genealogical tendency to connect clans with gods, it was probably, as Roscher observes in the case of Daphne, an Ætiological myth. Many flowers and trees, for example, were nearly connected with the worship and ritual of Apollo; among these were notably the laurel, cypress and hyacinth. It is no longer possible to do more than conjecture why each of these plants was thus favoured, though it is a plausible guess that the god attracted into his service various local tree-worships and plant-worships. People would ask why the deity was associated with the flowers and boughs, and the answer would be readily developed on the familiar lines of nature-myth. The laurel is dear to the god because the laurel was once a girl whom he pursued with his love, and who, to escape his embraces, became a tree. The hyacinth and cypress were beautiful youths, dear to Apollo, and accidentally slain by him in sport. After their death they became flowers. Such myths of metamorphoses, as has been shown, are an universal growth of savage fancy, and spring from the want of a sense of difference between men and things.*

The legend of Apollo has only been slightly sketched, but it is obvious that many elements from many quarters enter into the sum of his myths and rites.** If Apollo was originally the sun-god, it is certain that his influence on human life and society was as wide and beneficent as that of the sun itself. He presides over health and medicine, and over purity of body and soul. He is the god of song, and the hexameter, which first resounded in his temples, uttered its latest word in the melancholy music of the last oracle from Delphi: — *Say to the king that the beautiful fane hath fallen asunder,*

Phoebus no more hath a sheltering roof nor a sacred cell,
And the holy laurels are broken and wasted, and hushed is the wonder
Of water that spake as it flowed from the deeps of the Delphian well.

In his oracle he appears as the counsellor of men, between men and Zeus he is a kind of mediator (like the son of Baiame in Australia, or of Puluga in the Andaman isles), tempering the austerity of justice with a yearning and kind compassion. He sanctifies the pastoral life by his example, and, as one who had known bondage to a mortal, his sympathy lightens the burden of the slave. He is the guide of colonists, he knows all the paths of earth and all the ways of the sea, and leads wanderers far from Greece into secure havens, and settles them on fertile shores. But he is also the god before whom the Athenians first flogged and then burned their human scapegoats.* His example consecrated the abnormal post-Homeric vices of Greece. He is capable of metamorphosis into various beasts, and his temple courts are thronged with images of frogs, and mice, and wolves, and dogs, and ravens, over whose elder worship he throws his protection. He is the god of sudden death; he is amorous and revengeful. The fair humanities of old religion boast no figure more beautiful; yet he, too, bears the birthmarks of ancient creeds, and there is a shadow that stains his legend and

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** See “Nature-Myths,” antea. Schwartz, as usual, takes Daphne to be connected, not with the dawn, but with lightning. “Es ist der Gewitter-baum.” Der Ursprung der Mythologie, Berlin, 1860, pg. 160-162.*

*** For the influence of Apollo-worship on Greek civilisation, see Curtius’s History qf Greece, English transl., vol. i. For a theory that Apollo answers to Mitra among “the Arians of Iran,” see Duncker’s History of Greece, vol, i. 173.*

darkens the radiance of his glory.

* *At the Thergelia. See Meursius, Græcia Feriata.*

ARTEMIS.

If Apollo soon disengages himself from the sun, and appears as a deity chiefly remarkable for his moral and prophetic attributes, Artemis retains as few traces of any connection with the moon. “In the development of Artemis may most clearly be distinguished,” says Claus, the progress of the human intellect from the early, rude, and, as it were, natural ideas, to the fair and brilliant fancies of poets and sculptors.”*

** De Dianæ Antiguisstma apud Græcos Natura, Vratialaviæ, 1881.*

There is no goddess more beautiful, pure and maidenly in the poetry of Greece. There she shines as the sister of Apollo; her chapels are in the wild wood; she is the abbess of the forest nymphs, “chaste and fair”, the maiden of the precise life, the friend of the virginal Hippolytus; always present, even if unseen, with the pure of heart.* She is like Milton’s lady in the revel route of the *Comus*, and among the riot of Olympian lovers she alone, with Athene, satisfies the ascetic longing for a proud remoteness and reserve. But though it is thus that the poets dream of her, from the author of the *Odyssey* to Euripides, yet the local traditions and cults of Artemis, in many widely separated districts, combine her worship and her legend with hideous cruelties, with almost cannibal rites, with relics of the wild worship of the beasts whom, in her character as the goddess of the chase, she “preserves” rather than protects. To her human victims are sacrificed; for her bears, deer, doves, wolves, all the tameless herds of the hills and forests are driven through the fire in Achaea. She is adored with bear-dances by the Attic girls; there is a gloomy Chthonian or sepulchral element in her worship, and she is even blended in ritual with a monstrous many-breasted divinity of Oriental religion. Perhaps it is scarcely possible to separate now all the tangled skeins in the mixed conception of Artemis, or to lay the finger on the germinal conception of her nature. “Dark,” says Schreiber, “is the original conception, obscure the meaning of the name of Artemis.”**

** Hippolytus, Eurip., 73-87.*

*** Roscher’s Lexikon, s. v.*

It is certain that many tribal worships are blended in her legend and each of two or three widely different notions of her nature may be plausibly regarded as the most primitive. In the attempt to reach the original notion of Artemis, philology offers her distracting aid and her competing etymologies. What is the radical meaning of her name? On this point Claus* has a long dissertation. In his opinion Artemis was originally (as Dione) the wife, not the daughter, of Zeus, and he examines the names Dione, Diana, concluding that Artemis, Dione and Diana are essentially one, and that Diana is the feminine of Janus (Djanus), corresponding to the Greek. As to the etymology of Artemis, Curtis wisely professes himself uncertain.** A crowd of hypotheses have been framed by more sanguine and less cautious etymologists. Artemis has been derived from "safe," "unharmed," "the stainless maiden ". Goebel,3 suggests the root *arpar* or *par,* "to shake," and makes Artemis mean the thrower of the dart or the shooter. But this is confessedly conjectural. The Persian language has also been searched for the root of Artemis, which is compared with the first syllables in Artaphernes, Artaxerxes, Artaxata, and so forth. It is concluded that Artemis would simply mean "the great goddess ". Claus again, returning to his theory of Artemis as originally the wife of Zeus, inclines to regard her as originally the earth, the "mighty mother".****

** Roscher's Lexikon, s. v., .*

*** Etym. Or,, 5th ed., .*

**** Lexilogus, i. 554.*

***** For many other etymologies of Artemis, see Roscher's Lexikon, . Among these is "she who cuts the air". Even the bear, has occurred to inventive men.*

As Schreiber observes, the philological guesses really throw no light on the nature of Artemis. Welcker, Preller and Lauer take her for the goddess of the midnight sky, and "the light of the night".* Claus, as we have seen, is all for night, not light; for "Night is identical in conception with the earth" — night being the shadow of earth, a fact probably not known to the very early Greeks. Claus, however, seems well inspired when he refuses to deduce all the many properties, myths and attributes of Artemis from lunar aspects and attributes. The smallest grain of ingenuity will always suffice as the essential element in this mythological alchemy, this "transmutation" of the facts of legend into so many presumed statements about any given natural force or phenomenon.

From all these general theories and vague hypotheses it is time to descend to facts, and to the various local or tribal cults and myths of Artemis. Her place in the artistic poetry, which wrought on and purified those tales, will then be considered. This process is the converse of the method, for example, of M.

Decharme. He first accepts the “queen and huntress, chaste and fair,” of poetry, and then explains her local myths and rituals as accidental corruptions of and foreign additions to that ideal.

The Attic and Arcadian legends of Artemis are confessedly among the oldest.**

** Welcker, Oriechische Gotterlehre, i. 561, Gottingen, 1867;*
Preller, i. 239.

*** Roscher, Lexikon, 580.*

Both in Arcadia and Attica, the goddess is strangely connected with that animal worship, and those tales of bestial metamorphosis, which are the characteristic elements of myths and beliefs among the most backward races.

The Arcadian myth of Artemis and the she-bear is variously narrated. According to Pausanias, Lycaon, king of Arcadia, had a daughter, Callisto, who was loved by Zeus. Hera, in jealous wrath, changed Callisto into a she-bear; and Artemis, to please Hera, shot the beast. At this time the she-bear was pregnant with a child by Zeus, who sent Hermes to save the babe, Areas, just as Dionysus was saved at the burning of Semele and Asclepius at the death of his mother, whom Apollo slew. Zeus then transformed Callisto into a constellation, the bear.* No more straightforward myth of descent from a beast (for the Arcadians claimed descent from Areas, the she-bear’s son) and of starry or bestial metamorphosis was ever told by Cahrocs or Kamilaroi. Another story ran that Artemis herself, in anger at the unchastity of Callisto, caused her to become a bear. So the legend ran in a Hesiodic poem, according to the extract in Eratosthenes.**

** Paus., viii. 3, 5.*

*** O. Müller, Engl. transl., ; Catast., i.; Apollodor.,*
iii. 82; Hyginus, 176, 177. A number of less important
references are given in Bachofen’s Der Bar in den Religionen
des Alterthums.

Such is the ancient myth, which Otfried Müller endeavours to explain by the light of his lucid common sense, without the assistance which we can now derive from anthropological research. The nymph Callisto, in his opinion, is a mere refraction from Artemis herself, under her Arcadian and poetic name of Calliste, “the most beautiful”. Hard by the tumulus known as the grave of Callisto was a shrine, Pausanias tells us, of Artemis *Calliste*.* Pamphos, he adds, was the first poet known to him who praised Artemis by this title, and he learned it from the Arcadians. Müller next remarks on the attributes of Artemis in Athens, the

Artemis known as Brauronia. “Now,” says he, “we set out from this, that the circumstance of the goddess who is served at Brauron by she-bears having a friend and companion changed into a bear, cannot possibly be a freak of chance, but that this metamorphosis has its foundation in the fact that the animal was sacred to the goddess.”

It will become probable that the animal actually was mythically identified with the goddess at an extremely remote period, or, at all events, that the goddess succeeded to, and threw her protection over, an ancient worship of the animal.

Passing then from Arcadia, where the friend of the goddess becomes a she-bear, to Brauron and Munychia in Attica, we find that the local Artemis there, an Artemis connected by legend with the fierce Taurian goddess, is served by young girls, who imitate, in dances, the gait of bears, who are called little bears, apktoi, and whose ministry is named aptcreia, that is, “a playing the bear”. Some have held that the girls once wore bearskins.**

** Paus., viii. 3.*

*** Claus, op. cit., . The bearskin seems later to have been exchanged for a saffron raiment. Compare Harpokration, Aristophanes, Lysistrata, 646. The Scholiast on that passage collects legendary explanations, setting forth that the rites were meant to appease the goddess for the slaying of a tame bear . Mr. Parnell has collected all the lore in his work on the Cults of the Greek States.*

Familiar examples in ancient and classical times of this religious service by men in bestial guise are the wolf-dances of the Hirpi or “wolves,” and the use of the ram-skin in Egypt and Greece.* These Brauronian rites point to a period when the goddess was herself a bear, or when a bear-myth accrued to her legend, and this inference is confirmed by the singular tradition that she was not only a bear, but a bear who craved for human blood.**

** Servius. Jen. i. xi. 785. For a singular parallel in modern French folk-lore to the dance of the Hirpi, see Mannhardt, Wald und Feld Qultus, ii 824, 825. For the ram, see Herodotus, ii. 42. In Thebes the ram’s skin was in the yearly festival flayed, and placed on the statue of the god. Compare, in the case of the buzzard, Bancroft, iii. 168. Great care is taken in preserving the skin of the sacrificed totem, the buzzard, as it makes part of a sacred dress.*

*** Apostolius, viii. 19, vii. 10, quoted by O. Müller (cf. Welcker, i. 573).*

The connection between the Arcadian Artemis, the Artemis of Brauron, and the common rituals and creeds of totemistic worship is now, perhaps, undeniably apparent. Perhaps in all the legend and all the cult of the goddess there is no more archaic element than this. The speech of the women in the *Lysistrata*, recalling the days of their childhood when they "were bears," takes us back to a remote past when the tribes settled at Brauron were bear-worshippers, and, in all probability, claimed to be of the bear stock or kindred. Their distant descendants still imitated the creature's movements in a sacred dance; and the girls of Periclean Athens acted at that moment like the young men of the Mandans or Nootkas in their wolf-dance or buffalo-dance. Two questions remain unanswered: how did a goddess of the name of Artemis, and with her wide and beneficent functions, succeed to a cult so barbarous? or how, on the other hand, did the cult of a ravening she-bear develop into the humane and pure religion of Artemis?

Here is a moment in mythical and religious evolution which almost escapes our inquiry. We find, in actual historical processes, nothing more akin to it than the relation borne by the Samoan gods to the various animals in which they are supposed to be manifest. How did the complex theory of the nature of Artemis arise? what was its growth? at what precise hour did it emancipate itself on the whole from the lower savage creeds? or how was it developed out of their unpromising materials? The science of mythology may perhaps never find a key to these obscure problems.*

** The symbolic explanation of Bachofen, Claus and others is to the effect that the she-bear (to take that case) is a beast in which the maternal instinct is very strong, and apparently that the she-bear, deprived of her whelps, is a fit symbol of a goddess notoriously virginal, and without offspring.*

The goddess of Brauron, succeeding probably to the cult of a she-bear, called for human blood. With human blood the Artemis Orthia of Sparta was propitiated. Of this goddess and her rights Pausanias tells a very remarkable story. The image of the goddess, he declares, is barbarous; which probably means that even among the archaic wooden idols of Greece it seemed peculiarly savage in style. Astrabacus and Alopecus (the ass and the fox), sons of Agis, are said to have found the idol in a bush, and to have been struck mad at the sight of it. Those who sacrificed to the goddess fell to blows and slew each other; a pestilence followed, and it became clear that the goddess demanded human victims. “Her altar must be drenched in the blood of men,” the victim being chosen by lot. Lycurgus got the credit of substituting the rite in which boys were flogged before the goddess to the effusion of blood for the older human sacrifices.* The Taurian Artemis, adored with human sacrifice, and her priestess, Iphigenia, perhaps a form of the goddess, are familiar examples of this sanguinary ritual.** Suchier is probably correct in denying that these sacrifices are of foreign origin. They are closely interwoven with the oldest idols and oldest myths of the districts least open to foreign influence. An Achaean example is given by Pausanias.*** Artemis was adored with the offering of a beautiful girl and boy. Not far from Brauron, at Halae, was a very ancient temple of Artemis Tauropolos, in which blood was drawn from a man’s throat by the edge of the sword, clearly a modified survival of human sacrifice. The whole connection of Artemis with Taurian rites has been examined by Müller,**** in his *Orchomenos*(v) Horns grow from the shoulders of Artemis Tauropolos, on the coins of Amphipolis, and on Macedonian coins she rides on a bull. According to Decharme,(v)* the Taurian Artemis, with her hideous rites, was confused, by an accidental resemblance of names, with this Artemis Tauropolos, whose “symbol” was a bull, and who (whatever we may think of the symbolic hypothesis) used bulls as her “vehicle” and wore bull’s horns.

** Paus., iii. 8,16. Cf. Müller, Dorians, book ii. cha, 6. Pausanias, viii. 23, 1, mentions a similar custom, ordained by the Delphian oracle, the flogging of women at the feast of Dionysus in Alea of Arcadia.*

*** Cf. Müller, Dorians, it 9, 6, and Claus, op. cit., cap. v.*

**** Paus., vii. 19.*

*****Op. cit., ii. 9, 6.*

(v) Ibid., . Qf. Euripides, Iph. Taur., 1424, and Roscher, Lexikon, .

(v) Mythol. de la Grece, .*

Müller, on the other hand,* believes the Greeks found in Tauria (i.e., Lemnos) a goddess with bloody “rites, whom they identified by reason of those very human sacrifices, with their own Artemis Iphigenia”. Their own worship of that deity bore so many marks of ancient barbarism that they were willing to consider the northern barbarians as its authors. Yet it is possible that the Tauric Artemis was no more derived from the Taurians than Artemis Æthiopia from the Æthiopians.

The nature of the famous Diana of the Ephesians, or Artemis of Ephesus, is probably quite distinct in origin from either the Artemis of Arcadia and Attica or the deity of literary creeds. As late as the time of Tacitus** the Ephesians maintained that Leto's twins had been born in their territory. "The first which showed themselves in the senate were the Ephesians, declaring that Diana and Apollo were not born in the island Delos, as the common people did believe; and there was in their country a river called Cenchrius, and a wood called Ortegia, where Latona, being great with child, and leaning against an olive tree which is yet in that place, brought forth these two gods, and that by the commandment of the gods the wood was made sacred."***

** Mythol. de la Grece, ii. 9, 7.*

*** Annals, iii. 61.*

**** Greenwey's Tacitus, 1622.*

This was a mere adaptation of the Delian legend, the olive (in Athens sacred to Athene) taking the place of the Delian palm-tree. The real Artemis of Ephesus, "the image that fell from heaven," was an Oriental survival. Nothing can be less Greek in taste than her many-breasted idol, which may be compared with the many-breasted goddess of the beer-producing maguey plant in Mexico.*

*The wilder elements in the local rites and myths of Diana are little if at all concerned with the goddess in her Olympian aspect as the daughter of Leto and sister of Apollo. It is from this lofty rank that she descends in the national epic to combat on the Ilian plain among warring gods and men. Claus has attempted, from a comparison of the epithets applied to Artemis, to show that the poets of the Iliad and the Odyssey take different views of her character. In the Iliad she is a goddess of tumult and passion; in the Odyssey, a holy maiden with the "gentle darts" that deal sudden and painless death. But in both poems she is a huntress, and the death-dealing shafts are hers both in Iliad and Odyssey. Perhaps the apparent difference is due to nothing but the necessity for allotting her a part in that battle of the Olympians which rages in the Iliad. Thus Hera in the Iliad addresses her thus:** "How now! art thou mad, bold vixen, to match thyself against me? Hard were it for thee to match my might, bow-bearer though thou art, since* *against women Zeus made thee a lion, and giveth thee to slay whomso of them thou wilt. Truly it is better on the mountains to slay wild beasts and deer than to fight with one that is mightier than thou.”*

** For an alabaster statuette of the goddess, see Roscher’s Lexikon,*

*** Iliad, xxi. 481.*

These taunts of Hera, who always detests the illegitimate children of Zeus, doubtless refer to the character of Artemis as the goddess of childbirth. Here she becomes confused with Ilithyia and with Hecate; but it is unnecessary to pursue the inquiry into these details.*

Like most of the Olympians, Artemis was connected not only with beast-worship, but with plant-worship. She was known by the names Daphnæa and Cedreatis; at Ephesus not only the olive but the oak was sacred to her; at Delos she had her palm tree. Her idol was placed in or hung from the branches of these trees, and it is not improbable that she succeeded to the honours either of a tree worshipped in itself and for itself, or of the spirit or genius which was presumed to dwell in and inform it. Similar examples of one creed inheriting the holy things of its predecessor are common enough where either missionaries, as in Mexico and China, or the early preachers of the gospel in Brittany or Scandinavia, appropriated to Christ the holy days of pagan deities and consecrated fetish stones with the mark of the cross. Unluckily, we have no historical evidence as to the moment in which the ancient tribal totems and fetishes and sacrifices were placed under the protection of the various Olympians, in whose cult they survive, like flies in amber. But that this process did take place is the most obvious explanation of the rude factors in the religion of Artemis, as of Apollo, Zeus or Dionysus.

** Cf. Preller, i. 256, 257. Bacchylides make Hecate the daughter of “deep-bosomed Night”. (40). The Scholiast on the second idyll of Theocritus, in which the sorceress appeals to the magic of the moon, makes her a daughter of Zeus and Demeter, and identified with Artemis. Here, more clearly than elsewhere, the Artemis appears sub luce maligna, under the wan uncertain light of the moon.*

It was ever the tendency of Greek thought to turn from the contemplation of dark and inscrutable things in the character of the gods and to endow them with the fairest attributes. The primitive formless *Zoana* give place to the ideal statues of gold and ivory. The Artemis to whom a fawn in a maiden’s dress is sacrificed

does not haunt the memory of Euripides; his Artemis is fair and honourable, pure and maidenly, a goddess wandering in lonely places unbeholden of man. It is thus, if one may rhyme the speech of Hippolytus, that her votary addresses her: — *For thee soft crowns in thine untrampled mead*
I weave, my lady, and to thee I bear;
Thither no shepherd drives his flocks to feed,
Nor scythe of steel has ever laboured there;
Nay, through the spring among the blossoms fair
The brown bee comes and goes, and with good heed
Thy maiden, Reverence, sweet streams doth lead
About the grassy close that is her care!
Souls only that are gracious and serene
By gift of God, in human lore unread,
May pluck these holy blooms and grasses green
That now I wreathe for thine immortal head,
I who may walk with thee, thyself unseen,
And by thy whispered voice am comforted.

In passages like this we find the truly *natural* religion, the religion to which man's nature tends, "groaning and travailing" till the goal is won, But it is long in the winning; the paths are rough; humanity is "led by a way that it knew not".

DIONYSUS.

Among deities whose origin has been sought in the personification, if not of the phenomena, at least of the forces of Nature, Dionysus is prominent.* He is regarded by many mythologists** as the “spiritual form” of the new vernal life, the sap and pulse of vegetation and of the new-born year, especially as manifest in the vine and the juice of the grape. Thus Preller*** looks on his mother, Semele, as a personification of the pregnant soil in spring.**** The name of Semele is explained with the familiar diversity of conjecture. Whether the human intellect, at the time of the first development of myth, was capable of such abstract thought as is employed in the recognition of a deity presiding over “the revival of earth-life” or not, and whether, having attained to this abstraction, men would go on to clothe it in all manner of animal and other symbolisms, are questions which mythologists seem to take for granted. The popular story of the birth of Dionysus is well known.

His mother, Semele, desired to see Zeus in all his glory, as he appeared when he made love to Hera. Having promised to grant all the nymph’s requests, Zeus was constrained to approach her in thunder and lightning. She was burned to death, but the god rescued her unborn child and sowed him up in his own thigh. In this wild narrative Preller finds the wedlock of heaven and earth, “the first day that it thunders in March”. The thigh of Zeus is to be interpreted as “the cool moist clouds”. If, on the other hand, we may take Dionysus himself to be the

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** It is needless to occupy space with the etymological guesses at the sense of the name “Dionysus”. Greek, Sanskrit and Assyrian have been tortured by the philologists, but refuse to give up their secret, and Curtis does not even offer a conjecture (Or. Etym., 609).*

*** Preller, i. 544.*

**** i. 546.*

***** The birth of Dionysus is recorded (Iliad, xiv. 323; Hesiod, Theog., 940) without the story of the death of Semele, which occurs in Æschylus, Frg., 217-218; Eurip., Bacchœ, i. 3.*

rain, as Kuhn does, and explain the thigh of Zeus by comparison with certain details in the soma sacrifice and the right thigh of Indra, as described in one of the Brahmanas, why then, of course, Preller's explanation cannot be admitted.*

** Kuhn, Herabkunft, p, 167, where it appears that the gods buy soma and place it on the right thigh of Indra.*

These examples show the difficulty, or rather indicate the error, of attempting to interpret all the details in any myth as so many statements about natural phenomena and natural forces. Such interpretations are necessarily conjectural. Certainly Dionysus, the god of orgies, of wine, of poetry, became in later Greek thought something very like the "spiritual form" of the vine, and the patron of Nature's moods of revelry. But that he was originally conceived of thus, or that this conception may be minutely traced through each incident of his legend, cannot be scientifically established. Each mythologist, as has been said before, is, in fact, asking himself, "What meaning would I have had if I told this or that story of the god of the vine or the god of the year's renewal?" The imaginations in which the tale of the double birth of Dionysus arose were so unlike the imagination of an erudite modern German that these guesses are absolutely baseless. Nay, when we are told that the child was sheltered in his father's body, and was actually brought to birth by the father, we may be reminded, like Bachofen, of that widespread savage custom, the *couvade*.

From Brazil to the Basque country it has been common for the father to pretend to lie-in while the mother is in childbed; the husband undergoes medical treatment, in many cases being put to bed for days.* This custom, "world-wide," as Mr. Tylor calls it, has been used by Bachofen as the source of the myth of the double birth of Dionysus. Though other explanations of the *couvade* have been given, the most plausible theory represents it as a recognition of paternity by the father. Bachofen compares the ceremony by which, when Hera became reconciled to Herakles, she adopted him as her own through the legal fiction of his second birth. The custom by which, in old French marriage rites, illegitimate children were legitimised by being brought to the altar under the veil of the bride is also in point.** Diodorus says that barbarians still practise the rite of adoption by a fictitious birth. Men who returned home safely after they were believed to be dead had to undergo a similar ceremony.*** Bachofen therefore explains the names and myths of the "double-mothered Dionysus" as relics of the custom of the *couvade*, and of the legal recognition of children by the father, after a period of kinship through women only.

**** Tylor, Prim. Oult., I 94; Early History of Mankind, p. 293.*

** *Bachofen, Das Mutterrecht, Stuttgart, 1861, .*

*** *Plutarch, Quæst. Rom., 5.*

This theory is put by Lucian in his usual bantering manner. Poseidon wishes to enter the chamber of Zeus, but is refused admission by Hermes.

"Is Zeus *en bonne fortune?*" he asks.

"No, the reverse. Zeus has just had a baby."

"A baby! why there was nothing in his figure...! Perhaps the child was born from his head, like Athene?"

"Not at all — his *thigh*; the child is Semele's."

"Wonderful God! what varied accomplishments! But who is Semele?"

"A Theban girl, a daughter of Cadmus, much noticed by Zeus."

"And so he kindly was confined for her?"

"Exactly!"

"So Zeus is both father and mother of the child?"

"Naturally! And now I must go and make him comfortable."*

* *Dial. Deor., xi.*

We need not necessarily accept Bachofen's view. This learned author employed indeed a widely comparative method, but he saw everything through certain mystic speculations of his own. It may be deemed, however, that the authors of the myth of the double birth of Dionysus were rather in the condition of men who practise the *couvade* than capable of such vast abstract ideas and such complicated symbolism as are required in the system of Preller. It is probable enough that the struggle between the two systems of kindred — maternal and paternal — has left its mark in Greek mythology. Undeniably it is present in the *Eumenides* of Æschylus, and perhaps it inspires the tales which represent Hera and Zeus as emulously producing offspring (Athene and Hephaestus) without the aid of the opposite sex.*

In any case, Dionysus, Semele's son, the patron of the vine, the conqueror of India, is an enigmatic figure of dubious origin, but less repulsive than Dionysus Zagreus.

Even among the adventures of Zeus the amour which resulted in the birth of Dionysus Zagreus was conspicuous. "Jupiter ipse filiam incestavit, natum hinc Zagreum."** Persephone, fleeing her hateful lover, took the shape of a serpent, and Zeus became the male dragon. The story is on a footing with the Brahmanic myth of Prajapati and his daughter as buck and doe. The Platonists explained the legend, as usual, by their "absurd symbolism ".***

The child of two serpents, Zagreus, was born, curious as it may seem, with horns on his head. Zeus brought him up in secret, but Hera sent the Titans to kill him. According to Clemens Alexandrinus**** and other authorities, the Titans won his heart with toys, including the bull-roarer or turn-dun of the Australians.**** His enemies, also in Australian fashion, daubed themselves over with pipeclay.(v)* By these hideous foes the child was torn to pieces, though, according to Nonnus, he changed himself into as many beasts as Proteus by the Nile, or Tamlane by the Ettrick.

** Roscher’s Lexikon, .*

*** Lobeck, Aglaoph., , quoting Callimachus and Euphoric*

**** Ibid., .*

***** Admon., ; Nonnus, xxiv. 43; ap. Aglaoph., .*

(v) Custom and Myth, .

*(v)*Cf. Demosthenes, Pro. Or., 313; Lobeck, p, 646, 700.*

In his bull-shape, Zagreus was finally chopped up small, cooked (except the heart), and eaten by the Titans.* Here we are naturally reminded of the dismemberment of Osiris, Ymir, Purusha, Chokanipok and so many other gods and beasts in Egypt, India, Scandinavia and America. This point must not be lost sight of in the controversy as to the origin and date of the story of Dionysus Zagreus. Nothing can be much more repulsive than these hideous incidents to the genius, for example, of Homer. He rarely tells anything worse about the gods than the tale of Ares’ imprisonment in the large bronze pot, an event undignified, indeed, but not in the ferocious taste of the Zagreus legend. But it need not, therefore, be decided that the story of Dionysus and the Titans is later than Homer because it is inconsistent with the tone of Homeric mythology, and because it is found in more recent authorities. Details like the use of the “turn-dun” in the Dionysiac mysteries, and the bodies of the celebrants daubed with clay, have a primitive, or at least savage, appearance. It was the opinion of Lobeck that the Orphic poems, in which the legend first comes into literature, were the work of Onomacritus.**

On the other hand, Müller argued that the myth was really archaic, although it had passed through the hands of Onomacritus. On the strength of the boast of the Delphian priests that they possessed the grave in which the fragments of the god were buried, Müller believed that Onomacritus received the story from

Delphi.***

** Proclus in Crat., .*

*** Aglaoph., . “Onomacritum architectum istius mythi.”*

**** Müller’s Proleg., English transl., .*

Müller writes, “The way in which these Orphics went to work with ancient myths can be most distinctly seen in the mythus of the *tearing asunder of Bacchus*, which, at all events, passed *through* the hands of Onomacritus, an organiser of Dionysian orgies, according to Pausanias, an author of Orphean poems also, and therefore, in all probability, an Orphic”.

The words of Pausanias are (viii. 37, 3), “Onomacritus, taking from Homer the name of the Titans, established Dionysiac orgies, and represented the Titans as the authors of the sorrows of the god”.

Now it is perhaps impossible to decide with certainty whether, as Lobeck held, Onomacritus “adapted” the myth, and the Delphians received it into their religion, with rites purposely meant to resemble those of Osiris in Egypt, or whether Müller more correctly maintains that Onomacritus, on the other hand, brought an old temple mystery and “sacred chapter” into the light of literature. But it may very plausibly be maintained that a myth so wild, and so analogous in its most brutal details to the myths of many widely scattered races, is more probably ancient than a fresh invention of a poet of the sixth century. It is much more likely that Greece, whether at Delphi or elsewhere, possessed a legend common to races in distant continents, than that Onomacritus either invented the tale or borrowed it from Egypt and settled it at Delphi. O. Müller could not appeal to the crowd of tales of divine dismemberment in savage and civilised lands, because with some he was unacquainted, and others (like the sacrifice of Purusha, the cutting up of Omorca, the rending of Ymir) do not seem to have occurred to his memory. Though the majority of these legends of divine dismemberment are connected with the making of the world, yet in essentials they do resemble the tale of Dionysus and the Titans. Thus the balance of probability is in favour of the theory that the myth is really old, and was borrowed, not invented, by Onomacritus.* That very shifty person may have made his own alterations in the narrative, but it cannot be rash to say with O. Müller, “If it has been supposed that he was the inventor of the entire fable, which Pausanias by no means asserts, I must confess that I cannot bring myself to think so. According to the notions of the ancients, it must have been an unholy, an accursed man who could, from a mere caprice of his own, represent the ever-young Dionysus, the god of joy, as having been torn to pieces by the Titans.” A reply to this might, no doubt, be sought in the passages describing the influx of new superstitions which are cited by Lobeck.** The Greek comic poets especially derided these religious novelties, which corresponded very closely to our “Esoteric Buddhism” and similar impostures. But these new mysteries and trumpery cults of the decayed civilisation were things very different from the worship of Dionysus Zagreus and his established sacrifices of oxen in the secret penetralia of Delphi.***

** Lobeck, Aglaoph., .*

*** Aglaoph., 625-630.*

**** Lycophron, 206, and the Scholiast.*

It may be determined, therefore, that the tale and the mystery-play of Dionysus and the Titans are, in essentials, as old as the savage state of religion, in which their analogues abound, whether at Delphi they were or were not of foreign origin, and introduced in times comparatively recent. The fables, wherever they are found, are accompanied by savage rites, in which (as in some African tribes when the chief is about to declare war) living animals were torn asunder and eaten raw. These horrors were a kind of representation of the sufferings of the god. O. Müller may well observe,* “We can scarcely take these rites to be new usages and the offspring of a post-Homeric civilisation”. These remarks apply to the custom of *nebrismus*, or tearing fawns to pieces and dancing about draped in the fawn-skins. Such rites were part of the Bacchic worship, and even broke out during a pagan revival in the time of Valens, when dogs were torn in shreds by the worshippers.**

Whether the antiquity of the Zagrean ritual and legend be admitted or not, the problem as to their original significance remains. Although the majority of heathen rites of this kind were mystery-plays, setting forth in action some story of divine adventure or misadventure,*** yet Lobeck imagines the story of Zagreus and the Titans to have been invented or adapted from the Osiris legend, as an account of the mystic performances themselves. What the myth meant, or what the furious actions of the celebrants intended, it is only possible to conjecture.

** Lycophrony .*

*** Theodoretus, ap. Lobeck, . Observe the number of examples of daubing with clay in the mysteries here adduced by Lobeck, and compare the Mandan tribes described by Catlin* *in O-Kee-Pa, Londou, 1867, and by Theal in Kaffir Folk-Lore.*

**** Lactantius, v. 19,15; Ovid, Fasti, iv. 211.*

Commonly it is alleged that the sufferings of Dionysus are the ruin of the summer year at the hands of storm and winter, while the revival of the child typifies the vernal resurrection; or, again, the slain Dionysus is the vintage. The old English song tells how "John Barleycorn must die," and how potently he came back to life and mastered his oppressors. This notion, too, may be at the root of "the passion of Dionysus," for the grapes suffer at least as many processes of torture as John Barleycorn before they declare themselves in the shape of strong drink.* While Preller talks about the *tiefste Erd-und Naturschmerz* typified in the Zagrean ritual, Lobeck remarks that Plato would be surprised if he could hear these "drunken men's freaks" decoratively described as *ein erhabene Naturdienst.*

** Decharme, Mythologie de la Grece, , Compare Preller,*
i. 572 on tiefste Naturschmerz, and so forth.

Lobeck looks on the wild acts, the tearing of fawns and dogs, the half-naked dances, the gnawing of raw bleeding flesh, as the natural expression of fierce untutored folk, revelling in freedom, leaping and shouting. But the odd thing is that the most civilised of peoples should so long have retained the manners of *ingenia inculta et indomita*. Whatever the original significance of the Dionysiac revels, that significance was certainly expressed in a ferocious and barbaric fashion, more worthy of Australians than Athenians.

On this view of the case it might perhaps be maintained that the germ of the myth is merely the sacrifice itself, the barbaric and cruel dismembering of an animal victim, which came to be identified with the god. The sufferings of the victim would thus finally be transmuted into a legend about the passion of the deity. The old Greek explanation that the ritual was designed "in imitation of what befel the god" would need to be reversed. The truth would be that the myth of what befel the god was borrowed from the actual torture of the victim with which the god was identified Examples of this mystic habit of mind, in which the slain beast, the god, and even the officiating celebrant were confused in thought with each other, are sufficiently common in ritual.*

** As to the torch-dances of the Maenads, compare Roscher,*
Lexikon, , and Mannhardt Wald und Feki Kultits, i.
534, for parallels in European folk-lore.

The sacrifices in the ritual of Dionysus have a very marked character and here more, commonly than in other Hellenic cults, the god and the victim are recognised as essentially the same. The sacrifice, in fact, is a sacrament, and in partaking of the victim the communicants eat their god. This detail is so prominent that it has not escaped the notice even of mythologists who prefer to take an ideal view of myths and customs, to regard them as symbols in a nature-worship originally pure. Thus M. Decharme says of the bull-feast in the Dionysiac cult, “Comme le taureau est un des formes de Dionysos, c’etait le corps du dieu dont se repaissaient les inities, c’etait son sang dont ils s’abreuvaient dans ce banquet mystique”. Now it was the peculiarity of the Bacchici who maintained these rites, that, as a rule, they abstained from the flesh of animals altogether, or at least their conduct took this shape when adopted into the Orphic discipline.* This ritual, therefore, has points in common with the usages which appear also to have survived into the cult of the ram-god in Egypt.** The conclusion suggested is that where Dionysus was adored with this sacrament of bull’s flesh, he had either been developed out of, or had succeeded to, the worship of a bull-totem, and had inherited his characteristic ritual. Mr. Frazer, however, proposes quite a different solution.*** Ours is rendered plausible by the famous Elean chant in which the god was thus addressed: “Come, hero Dionysus, come with the Graces to thy holy house by the shores of the sea; hasten with thy bull-foot”. Then the chorus repeated, “Goodly bull, goodly bull”.**** M. Decharme publishes a cameo(v) in which the god is represented as a bull, with the three Graces standing on his neck, and seven stars in the field. M. Decharme decides that the stars are the Pleiades, the Graces the rays of the vernal sun, and Dionysus as a bull the symbol of the vernal sun itself. But all such symbolical explanations are apt to be mere private conjectures, and they are of no avail in face of the ritual which, on the other hypothesis, is to be expected, and is actually found, in connection with the bull Dionysus. Where Dionysus is not absolutely called a bull, he is addressed as the “horned deity,” the “bull-horned,” the “horned child”.(v)*

** Lobeck, Aglaoph., i 244; Plato, Laws, vi. 782; Herodot, ii. 81. Porphyry says that this also was the rule of Pythagoras (Vita Pyth., 1630,).*

*** Herodot., ii. 42.*

**** Golden Bough, vol. ii.*

***** Plutarch, Qu. Or., 3d.*

(v) Op. cit., .

(v) Clemens Alex., Adhort, ii. 15-18; Nonnus, vi. 264;*
Diodorus, iv. 4. 3. 64.

A still more curious incident of the Dionysiac worship was the sacrifice of a booted calf, a calf with cothurns on its feet.* The people of Tenedos, says Ælian, used to tend their goodliest cow with great care, to treat it, when it calved, like a woman in labour, to put the calf in boots and sacrifice it, and then to stone the sacrificer and drive him into the sea to expiate his crime. In this ceremony, as in the Diipolia at Athens, the slain bull is, as it were, a member of the blood-kindred of the man who immolates him, and who has to expiate the deed as if it were a murder.** In this connection it is worth remarking that Dionysus Zagreus, when, according to the myth, he was attacked by the Titans, tried to escape his enemies by assuming various forms. It was in the guise of a bull that he was finally captured and rent asunder. The custom of rending the living victims of his cult was carried so far that, when Pentheus disturbed his mysteries, the king was torn piecemeal by the women of his own family.*** The pious acquiescence of the author of the so-called Theocritean idyll in this butchery is a curious example of the conservatism of religious sentiment. The connection of Dionysus with the bull in particular is attested by various ritual epithets, such as “the bull,” “bull-born,”**** “bull-horned,” and “bull-browed”. (v) He was also worshipped with sacrifice of he-goats; according to the popular explanation, because the goat gnaws the vine, and therefore is odious to the god.

** Ælian., H. A.t xii. 34.*

*** O. Müller, Proleg., Engl, transl., 322, attributes the*
Tenedos Dionysus rites to “the Beotic Achsean emigrants”.
Gf, Aglaoph., 674-677.

**** Theocritus, Idyll, xxvi.*

***** Pollux, iv. 86.*

(v) Athenaus, xi. 466, a.

The truth is, that animals, as the old commentator on Virgil remarks, were sacrificed to the various gods, “*aut per similitudinem aut per contrarietatem*” either because there was a community of nature between the deity and the beast, or because the beast had once been sacred in a hostile clan or tribe.* The god derived some of his ritual names from the goat as well as from the bull According to one myth, Dionysus was changed into a kid by Zeus, to enable him to escape the jealousy of Hera.** “It is a peculiarity,” says Voigt, “of the

Dionysus ritual that the god is one of his offering." But though the identity of the god and the victim is manifest, the phenomenon is too common in religion to be called peculiar.*** Plutarch**** especially mentions that "many of the Greeks make statues of Dionysus in the form of a bull".

Dionysus was not only an animal-god, or a god who absorbed in his rights and titles various elder forms of beast-worship. Trees also stood in the same relation to him. As *Dendrites*, he is, like Artemis, a tree-god, and probably succeeded to the cult of certain sacred trees; just as, for example, St. Bridget, in Ireland, succeeded to the cult of the fire-goddess and to her ceremonial.(v) * *Cf. Roscher, Lexikon, ; Robertson Smith on "Sacrifice," Encyc. Brit.*

*** Appolodorus, iii. 4, 9.*

**** "Dionysos selber. Stier Zicklein ist, und als Zagreus-kind selber, den Opfertod erleidet." Ap. Roscher, .*

***** De Is. et Os.*

(v) Elton, Origins of English History, , and the authorities there quoted.

Dionysus was even called "the god in the tree,"* reminding us of Artemis Dendritis, and of the village gods which in India dwell in the peepul or the bo tree.** Thus Pausanias*** tells us that, when Pentheus went to spy on the Dionysiac mysteries, the women found him hidden in a tree, and there and then tore him piecemeal. According to a Corinthian legend, the Delphic oracle bade them seek this tree and worship it with no less honour than the god (Dionysus) himself. Hence the wooden images of Dionysus were made of that tree, the fig tree, *non ex quovis ligno*, and the god had a ritual name, "The fig-tree Dionysus". In the idols the community of nature between the god and the fig tree was expressed and commemorated. An unhewn stump of wood was the Dionysus idol of the rustic people.****

* *Hesychius.*

** *Cf. Roscher, .*

*** *ii. 2,5.*

**** *Max. Tyr., 8, 1.*

Certain antique elements in the Dionysus cult have now been sketched; we have seen the god in singularly close relations with animal and plant worship, and have noted the very archaic character of certain features in his mysteries. Doubtless these things are older than the bright anthropomorphic Dionysus of the poets — the beautiful young deity, vine-crowned, who rises from the sea to comfort Ariadne in Tintoretto's immortal picture. At his highest, at his best, Dionysus is the spirit not only of Bacchic revel and of dramatic poetry, but of youth, health and gaiety. Even in this form he retains something tricksy and enigmatic, the survival perhaps of earlier ideas; or, again, it may be the result of a more or less conscious symbolism. The god of the vine and of the juice of the vine maketh glad the heart of man; but he also inspires the kind of metamorphosis which the popular speech alludes to when a person is said to be "disguised in drink". For this reason, perhaps, he is now represented in art as a grave and bearded man, now as a manly youth, and again as an effeminate lad of girlish loveliness. The bearded type of the god is apparently the earlier; the girlish type may possibly be the result merely of decadent art, and its tendency to a sexless or bisexual prettiness.*

Turning from the ritual and local cults of the god, which, as has been shown, probably retain the earlier elements in his composite nature, and looking at his legend in the national literature of Greece, we find little that throws any light on the origin and primal conception of his character In the *Iliad* Dionysus is not one of the great gods whose politics sways Olympus, and whose diplomatic or martial interference is exercised in the leaguer of the Achæans or in the citadel of Ilios. The longest passage in which he is mentioned is *Iliad*, vi. 130, a passage which clearly enough declares that the worship of Dionysus, or at least that certain of his rites were brought in from without, and that his worshippers endured persecution. Diomedes, encountering Glaucus in battle, refuses to fight him if he is a god in disguise. "Nay, moreover, even Dryas' son, mighty Lykourgos, was not for long when he strove with heavenly gods; he that erst chased through the goodly land of Nysa the nursing mothers of frenzied Dionysus; and they all cast their wands upon the ground, smitten with murderous Lykourgos' ox-goad. Then Dionysus fled, and plunged beneath the salt sea-wave, and Thetis took him to her bosom, affrighted, for mighty trembling had seized him at his foe's rebuke. But with Lykourgos the gods that live at ease were wroth, and Kronos's son made him blind, and he was not for long, because he was hated of all the immortal gods."

* *See Thræmer, in Roscher, p-1143.*

Though Dionysus is not directly spoken of as the wine-god here, yet the gear of his attendants, and his own title, "the frenzied," seem to identify him with the deity of orgiastic frenzy. As to Nysa, volumes might be written to little or no purpose on the learning connected with this obscure place-name, so popular in the legend of Dionysus. It has been identified as a mountain in Thrace, in Boeotia, in Arabia, India, Libya and Naxos, as a town in Caria or the Caucasus, and as an island in the Nile. The flight of Dionysus into the sea may possibly recall the similar flight of Agni in Indian myth.

The *Odyssey* only mentions Dionysus in connection with Ariadne, whom Artemis is said to have slain "by reason of the witness of Dionysus,"** and where the great golden urn of Thetis is said to have been a present from the god. The famous and beautiful hymn proves, as indeed may be learned from Hesiod,*** that the god was already looked on as the patron of the vine.

** xi.325.*

*** xxiv. 74.*

**** Works and Days, 614.*

When the pirates had seized the beautiful young man with the dark-blue eyes, and had bound him in their ship, he "showed marvels among them," changed into the shape of a bear, and turned his captors into dolphins, while wine welled up from the timbers of the vessel, and vines and ivy trees wreathed themselves on the mast and about the rigging. Leaving aside the Orphic poems, which contain most of the facts in the legend of Dionysus Zagreus, the *Bacchæ* of Euripides is the chief classical record of ideas about the god. Dionysus was the patron of the drama, which itself was an artistic development of the old rural songs and dances of his Athenian festival. In the *Bacchæ*, then, Euripides had to honour the very patron of his art. It must be said that his praise is but half-hearted. A certain ironical spirit, breaking out here and there (as when old Cadmus dances, and shakes a grey head and a stiff knee) into actual burlesque, pervades the play. Tradition and myth doubtless retained some historical truth when they averred that the orgies of the god had been accepted with reluctance into state religion. The tales about Lycurgus and Pentheus, who persecuted the Bacchæ in Thebes, and was dismembered by his own mother in a divine madness, are survivals of this old distrust of Dionysus. It was impossible for Euripides, a sceptic, even in a sceptical age, to approve sincerely of the god whom he was obliged to celebrate. He falls back on queer etymological explanations of the birth of Dionysus from the thigh of Zeus. This myth, as Cadmus very learnedly sets forth, was the result of forgetfulness of the meaning of words, was born of a *Volks-etymologie*. Zeus gave a hostage to Hera, says Cadmus, and in "process of time" (a very short time) men forgot what they meant when they said this, and supposed that Dionysus had been sewnup in the thigh of his father.* The explanation is absurd, but it shows how Euripides could transfer the doubt and distrust of his own age, and its attempt at a philological interpretation of myth, to the remote heroic tunes. Throughout the play the character and conduct of the god, and his hideous revenge on the people who reject his wild and cruel rites, can only be justified because they are articles of faith. The chorus may sing— “Ah! blessed he who dwelleth in happiness, expert in the rites of the gods, and so hallows his life, fulfilling his soul with the spirit of Dionysus, revelling on the hills with charms of holy purity “.** This was the interpretation which the religious mind thrust upon rites which in themselves were so barbarously obscene that they were feigned to have been brought by Dionysus from the barbaric East,*** and to be the invention of Rhea, an alien and orgiastic goddess.**** The bull-horned, snake-wreathed god,(v) the god who, when bound, turns into a bull (618); who manifests himself as a bull to Pentheus (920), and is implored by the chorus to appear “as bull, or burning lion, or many-headed snake” (1017-19), this god is the ancient barbarous deity of myth, in manifest contrast with the artistic Greek conception of him as “a youth with clusters of golden hair, and in his dark eyes the grace of Aphrodite” (235, 236).

** Bacchæ, 291, 296.*

*** Ibid., 73, 76.*

**** Ibid., 10-20.*

***** Ibid., i. 59.*

(v) Ibid., 100, 101.

The *Bacchæ*, then, expresses the sentiments of a moment which must often have occurred in Greek religion. The Greek reverence accepts, hallows and adorns an older faith, which it feels to be repugnant and even alien, but none the less recognises as human and inevitable. From modern human nature the ancient orgiastic impulse of savage revelry has almost died away. In Greece it was dying, but before it expired it sanctified and perpetuated itself by assuming a religious form, by draping its naked limbs in the fawn-skin or the bull-skin of Dionysus. In precisely the same spirit Christianity, among the Negroes of the Southern States, has been constrained to throw its mantle over what the race cannot discard. The orgies have become camp-meetings; the Voodoo-dance is consecrated as the “Jerusalem jump”. In England the primitive impulse is but occasionally recognised at “revivals”. This orgiastic impulse, the impulse of Australian corroboree and Cherokee fetish-dances, and of the “dancing Dervishes” themselves, occasionally seizes girls in modern Greece. They dance themselves to death on the hills, and are said by the peasants to be victims of the Nereids. In the old classic world they would have been saluted as the nurses and companions of Dionysus, and their disease would have been hallowed by religion. Of that religion the “bull-horned,” “bull-eating,” “cannibal” Dionysus was the deity; and he was refined away into the youth with yellow-clustered curls, and sleepy eyes, and smiling lips, the girlish youth of the art of Praxiteles. So we see him in surviving statues, and seeing him, forget his ghastly rites, and his succession to the rites of goats, and deer, and bulls.

ATHENE.

Among deities for whom an origin has been sought in the personification of elemental phenomena, Athene is remarkable. Perhaps no divine figure has caused more diverse speculations. The study of her legend is rather valuable for the varieties of opinion which it illustrates than for any real contribution to actual knowledge which it supplies. We can discover little, if anything, about the rise and development of the conception of Athene. Her local myths and local *sacra* seem, on the whole, less barbaric than those of many other Olympians. But in comparing the conjectures of the learned, one lesson comes out with astonishing clearness. It is most perilous, as this comparison demonstrates, to guess at an origin of any god in natural phenomena, and then to explain the details of the god's legend with exclusive reference to that fancied elemental origin.

As usual, the oldest literary references to Athene are found in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. It were superfluous to collect and compare texts so numerous and so familiar. Athene appears in the *Iliad* as a martial maiden, daughter of Zeus, and, apparently, of Zeus alone without female mate.*

** Iliad, v. 875, 880. This is stated explicitly in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo, where Athene is said to have been born from the head of Zeus (Pindar, Olympic Odes, vii.).*

She is the patron of valour and the inspirer of counsel; she arrests the hand of Achilles when his sword is half drawn from the sheath in his quarrel with Agamemnon; she is the constant companion and protector of Odysseus; and though she is worshipped in the citadel of Troy, she is constant to the cause of the Achæans. Occasionally it is recorded of her that she assumed the shape of various birds; a sea-bird and a swallow are among her metamorphoses; and she could put on the form of any man she pleased; for example, of Deiphobus.* It has often been observed that among the lower races the gods habitually appear in the form of animals. "Entre ces facultes qui possedent les immortels, l'une des plus frappantes est celle de se metamorphoser, de prendre des apparences non seulement animales, mais encore de se transformer en objets inanimes."** Of this faculty, inherited from the savage stage of thought, Athene has her due share even in Homer. But in almost every other respect she is free from the heritage of barbarism, and might very well be regarded as the ideal representative of wisdom, valour and manfulness in man, of purity, courage and nobility in woman, as in the Phæacian maid Nausicæ.

** Iliad, xxii. 227, xvii. 351, Od. iii. 372. v. 353;*
Iliad, vii. 59.

*** Maury, Religion de la Grece, i. 256.*

In Hesiod, as has already been shown, the myth of the birth of Athene retains the old barbaric stamp. It is the peculiarity of the Hesiodic poems to preserve the very features of religious narrative which Homer disregards. According to Hesiod, Zeus, the youngest child of child-swallowing Cronus, married Metis after he had conquered and expelled his father. Now Metis, like other gods and goddesses, had the power of transforming herself into any shape she pleased. Her husband learned that her child — for she was pregnant — would be greater than its father, as in the case of the child of Thetis. Zeus, therefore, persuaded Metis to transform herself into a fly. No sooner was the metamorphosis complete than he swallowed the fly, and himself produced the child of Metis out of his head.* The later philosophers explained this myth** by a variety of metaphysical interpretations, in which the god is said to contain the all in himself, and again to reproduce it. Any such ideas must have been alien to the inventors of a tale which, as we have shown, possesses many counterparts among the lowest and least Platonic races.*** C. O. Müller remarks plausibly that “the figure of the swallowing is employed in imitation of still older legends,” such as those of Africa and Australia. This leaves him free to imagine a philosophic explanation of the myth based on the word Metis.**** We may agree with Müller that the “swallow-myth” is extremely archaic in character, as it is so common among the backward races. As to the precise amount, however, of philosophic reflection and allegory which was present to the cosmogonic poet’s mind when he used Metis as the name of the being who could become a fly, and so be swallowed by her husband, it is impossible to speak with confidence. Very probably the poet meant to read a moral and speculative meaning into a barbaric *märchen* surviving in religious tradition.

To the birth of Athene from her father’s head savage parallels are not lacking. In the legends of the South Pacific, especially of Mangaia, Tangaroa is fabled to have been born from the head of Papa.(v) ** Hesiod, Theog., 886, and the Scholiast*

*** Lobeck, i. 613, note 2.*

**** See the Cronus myth.*

**** *Proleg. Engl. transl., .*

(v) *Gill, Myths and Songs, .*

In the *Vafthrudismal* (31) a maid and a man-child are born from under the armpits of a primeval gigantic being. The remarks of Lucian on miraculous birth have already been quoted.*

With this mythical birth for a starting-point, and relying on their private interpretations of the *cognomina* of the goddess, of her *sacra*, and of her actions in other parts of her legend, the modern mythologists have built up their various theories. Athene is now the personification of wisdom, now the dawn, now the air or aether, now the lightning as it leaps from the thunder-cloud; and if she has not been recognised as the moon, it is not for lack of opportunity.** These explanations rest on the habit of twisting each detail of a divine legend into conformity with aspects of certain natural and elemental forces, or they rely on etymological conjecture. For example, Welcker*** maintains that Athene is “a feminine personification of the upper air, daughter of Zeus, the dweller in æther”. Her name Tritogenia is derived**** from an ancient word for water, which, like fire, has its source in æther.(v) Welcker presses the title of the goddess, “Glaucopis,” the “grey-green-eyed,” into the service. The heaven in Attica *oft ebenfalls wunderbar grun ist.*(v)*

* *Cf. Dionysus.*

** *Welcker, i. 305.*

*** *Griechische Gotterlehre, Gottingen, 1857, i. 303.*

**** *Op. cit., 311.*

(v) *The ancients themselves were in doubt whether Trito were the name of a river or mere, or whether the Cretan for the head was intended. See Odyssey, Butcher and Lang, note 10, .*

(v)* *Op. cit., i. 303.*

Moreover, there was a temple at Methone of Athene of the Winds (Anemotis), which would be a better argument had there not been also temples of Athene of the Pathway, Athene of the Ivy, Athene of the Crag, Athene of the Market-place, Athene of the Trumpet, and so forth. Moreover, the olive tree is one of the sacred plants of Athene. Now why should this be? Clearly, thinks Welcker, because olive-oil gives light from a lamp, and light also comes from æther.* Athene also gives Telemachus a fair wind in the *Odyssey*, and though any Lapland witch could do as much, this goes down to her account as a goddess of the air.**

** Op. cit. i. 318.*

*** Mr. Ruskin’s Queen of the Air is full of similar ingenuities.*

Leaving Welcker, who has many equally plausible proofs to give, and turning to Mr. Max Müller, we learn that Athene was the dawn. This theory is founded on the belief that Athene = Ahana, which Mr. Max Müller regards as a Sanskrit word for dawn. “Phonetically there is not one word to be said against, Ahana = Athene, and that the morning light offers the best starting-point for the later growth of Athene has been proved, I believe, beyond the reach of doubt, or even of cavil.” Mr. Müller adds that “nothing really important could be brought forward against my equation Ahana = Athene”.

It is no part of our province here to decide between the conjectures of rival etymologists, nor to pronounce on their relative merits. But the world cannot be expected to be convinced by philological scholars before they have convinced each other. Mr. Max Müller had not convinced Benfey, who offered another etymology of Athene, as the feminine of the Zend *Thrætana athwyana*, an etymology of which Mr. Müller remarks that “whoever will take the trouble to examine its phonetic foundation will be obliged in common honesty to confess that it is untenable”.* Meanwhile Curtius** is neither for Ahana and Sanskrit and Mr. Max Müller, nor for Benfey and Zend. He derives Athene from the root *aio*, whence perhaps comes Athene, the blooming one” = the maiden. Preller, again,*** finds the source of the name Athene in *aio*, whence *aion*, “the air,” or a flower”. He does not regard these etymologies as certain, though he agrees with Welcker that Athene is the clear height of æther.

Manifestly no one can be expected to accept as matter of faith an etymological solution which is rejected by philologists. The more fashionable theory for the moment is that maintained some time since by Lauer and Schwartz, and now by Furtwangler in Roscher’s Lexikon, that Athene is the “cloud-goddess,” or the goddess of the lightning as it springs from the clouds.**** As the lightning in mythology is often a serpent, and as Athene had her sacred serpent, “which might be Erichthonios,”(v)

** Nineteenth Century, October, 1885, p, 639.*

*** Gr. Et., Engl, transl., i. 300.*

**** Preller, i. 161.*

***** Cf. Lauer, System der Oriesch. Myth., Berlin, 1853,*
; Schwartz Ursprung der Mythol, Berlin, 1863, p.
38.

(v) Paus., xxiv. 7.

Schwartz conjectures that the serpent is the lightning and Athene the cloud. A long list of equally cogent reasons for identifying Athene with the lightning and the thunder-cloud has been compiled by Furtwangler, and deserves some attention. The passage excellently illustrates the error of taking poetic details in authors as late as Pindar for survivals of the absolute original form of an elemental myth.

Furtwangler finds the proof of his opinion that Athene is originally the goddess of the thunder-cloud and the lightning that leaps from it in the Olympic ode.* “By Hephaistos’ handicraft beneath the bronze-wrought axe from the crown of her father’s head Athene leapt to light, and cried aloud an exceeding cry, and heaven trembled at her coming, and earth, the mother.” The “cry” she gave is the thunderpeal; the spear she carried is the lightning; the ægis or goat-skin she wore is the cloud again, though the cloud has just been the head of Zeus.** Another proof of Athene’s connection with storm is the miracle she works when she sets a flame to fly from the head of Diomede or of Achilles,*** or fleets from the sky like a meteor.**** Her possession, on certain coins, of the thunderbolts of Zeus is another argument. Again, as the Trumpet-Athene she is connected with the thunderpeal, though it seems more rational to account for her supposed invention of a military instrument by the mere fact that she is a warlike goddess. But Furtwangler explains her martial attributes as those of a thunder-goddess, while Preller finds it just as easy to explain her moral character as goddess of wisdom by her elemental character as goddess, not at all of the cloud, but of the clear sky.(v) ** Ode, vii. 35, Myers.*

*** Cf. Schwartz. Ursprung, etc., p, 83.*

**** Iliad, v. 7,18,203.*

***** Ibid, iv. 74.*

(v) Preller, i. 183.

“Lastly, as goddess of the heavenly clearness, she is also goddess of spiritual clearness." Again, "As goddess of the cloudless heaven, she is also goddess of health",* There could be no more instructive examples of the levity of conjecture than these, in which two scholars interpret a myth with equal ease and freedom, though they start from diametrically opposite conceptions. Let Athene be lightning and cloud, and all is plain to Furtwangler. Let Athene be cloudless sky, and Preller finds no difficulties. Athene as the goddess of woman's work as well as of man's, Athene Ergane, becomes clear to Furtwangler as he thinks of the *fleecy* clouds. Probably the storm-goddess, when she is not thundering, is regarded as weaving the fleeces of the upper air. Hence the myth that Arachne was once a woman, changed by Athene into a spider because she contended with her in spinning.**

** Preller, i. 179.*

*** Ovid, Metamorph., vi. 5-146.*

The metamorphosis of Arachne is merely one of the half-playful aetiological myths of which we have seen examples all over the world. The spider, like the swallow, the nightingale, the dolphin, the frog, was once a human being, metamorphosed by an angry deity. As Preller makes Athene goddess of wisdom because she is goddess of clearness in the sky, so Furtwangler derives her intellectual attributes from her skill in weaving clouds. It is tedious and unprofitable to examine these and similar exercises of facile ingenuity. There is no proof that Athene was ever a nature-goddess at all, and if she was, there is nothing to show what was her department of nature. When we meet her in Homer, she is patroness of moral and physical excellence in man and woman. Manly virtue she typifies in her martial aspect, the armed and warlike maid of Zeus; womanly excellence she protects in her capacity of *Ergane*, the toiler. She is the companion and guardian of Perseus no less than of Odysseus.*

The sacred animals of Athene were the owl, the snake (which accompanies her effigy in Athens, and is a form of her foster-child Erechtheus), the cock,** and the crow.*** Probably she had some connection with the goat, which might not be sacrificed in her fane on the Acropolis, where she was settled by Ægeus ("goat-man "?). She wears the goat-skin, *ægis*, in art, but this is usually regarded as another type of the storm-cloud.****

** Pindar, Olymp., x. ad Jin.*

*** Paus., vi. 262.*

**** Ibid., iv. 34, 6.*

***** Roscher, in his Lexikon, s.v. œgis, with his arguments there. Compare, on this subject of Athene as the goddess of a goat-stock. Robertson Smith on "Sacrifice" in the Encycl. Brit. Aphrodite.*

Athene's maiden character is stainless in story, despite the brutal love of Hephaestus. This characteristic perhaps is another proof that she neither was in her origin nor became in men's minds one of the amorous deities of natural phenomena. In any case, it is well to maintain a sceptical attitude towards explanations of her myth, which only agree in the determination to make Athene a "nature power" at all costs, and which differ destructively from each other as to whether she was dawn, storm, or clear heaven. Where opinions are so radically divided and so slenderly supported, suspension of belief is natural and necessary.

No polytheism is likely to be without a goddess of love, and love is the chief, if not the original, department of Aphrodite in the Greek Olympus. In the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and the Homeric Hymn she is already the queen of desire, with the beauty and the softness of the laughter-loving dame. Her cestus or girdle holds all the magic of passion, and is borrowed even by Hera when she wishes to win her fickle lord. She disturbs the society of the gods by her famous amours with Ares, deceiving her husband, Hephaestus, the lord of fire; and she even stoops to the embraces of mortals, as of Anchises. In the Homeric poems the charm of "Golden Aphrodite" does not prevent the singer from hinting a quiet contempt for her softness and luxury. But in this oldest Greek literature the goddess is already thoroughly Greek, nor did later ages make any essential changes in her character. Concerning her birth Homer and Hesiod are not in the same tale; for while Homer makes her a daughter of Zeus, Hesiod prefers, as usual, the more repulsive, and probably older story, which tells how she sprang from the sea-foam and the mutilated portions of Cronus.*

** Iliad, v. 312; Theog., 188-206.*

But even in the Hesiodic myth it is remarkable that the foam-born goddess first landed at Cythera, or again "was born in wave-washed Cyprus". Her ancient names — the Cyprian and the Cytherean — with her favoured seats in Paphos, Idalia and the Phoenician settlement of Eryx in Sicily, combine with historical traditions to show that the Greek Aphrodite was, to some extent, of Oriental character and origin. It is probable, or rather certain, that even without foreign influence the polytheism of Greece must have developed a deity of love, as did the Mexican and Scandinavian polytheisms. But it is equally certain that portions of the worship and elements in the myth of Aphrodite are derived from the ritual and the legends of the Oriental queen of heaven, adored from old Babylon to

Cyprus and on many other coasts and isles of the Grecian seas. The Greeks themselves recognised Asiatic influence. Pausanias speaks of the temple of heavenly Aphrodite in Cythera as the holiest and most ancient of all her shrines among the Hellenes.* Herodotus, again, calls the fane of the goddess in Askalon of the Philistines "the oldest of all, and the place whence her worship travelled to Cyprus," as the Cyprians say, and the Phoenicians planted it in Cythera, being themselves emigrants from Syria. The Semitic element in this Greek goddess and her cult first demand attention.

Among the Semitic races with whose goddess of love Aphrodite was thus connected the deity had many names. She was regarded as at once the patroness of the moon, and of fertility in plants beasts, and women. Among the Phoenicians her title is Astarte among the Assyrians she was Istar; among the Syrians, Aschera; in Babylon, Mylitta.** Common practices in the ritual of the Eastern and Western goddesses were the licence of the temple-girls, the sacrifices of animals supposed to be peculiarly amorous (sparrows, doves, he-goats), and, above all, the festivals and fasts for Adonis.

** Paus., Hi. 28, 1.*

*** So Roscher, Ausfuhr. Lexik., p, 647.   See also Astarte, .*

There can scarcely be a doubt that Adonis — the young hunter beloved by Aphrodite, slain by the boar, and mourned by his mistress — is a symbol of the young season, the *renouveau*, and of the spring vegetation, ruined by the extreme heats, and passing the rest of the year in the underworld. Adonis was already known to Hesiod, who called him, with obvious meaning, the son of *Phoenix* and Alphesiboea, while Pausanias attributed to him, with equal significance, Assyrian descent.* The name of Adonis is manifestly a form of the Phoenician Adon, "Lord". The nature of his worship among the Greeks is most familiar from the fifteenth Idyll of Theocritus, with its lively picture of dead Adonis lying in state, of the wailing for him by Aphrodite, of the little "gardens" of quickly-growing flowers which personified him, and with the beautiful nuptial hymn for his resurrection and reunion to Aphrodite. Similar rites were customary at Athens.** Mannhardt gives the main points in the ritual of the Adonis-feast thus: The fresh vegetation is personified as a fair young man, who in ritual is represented by a kind of idol, and also by the plants of the "Adonis-gardens". The youth comes in spring, the bridegroom to the bride, the vernal year is their honeymoon. In the heat of summer the bridegroom perishes for the nonce, and passes the winter in the land of the dead. His burial is bewailed, his resurrection is rejoiced in. The occasions of the rite are spring and midsummer.

The idol and the plants are finally cast into the sea, or into well-water.

** Apollod., Bibliothec, iii. 14, 4.*

*** Aristoph., Lysistrata, 389; Mannhardt, Feld und Wold Kultus, ii. 276.*

The union of the divine lovers is represented by pairing of men and maidens in bonds of a kindly sentimental sort, — the flowery bonds of valentines.

The Oriental influence in all these rites has now been recognised; it is perfectly attested both by the Phoenican settlements, whence Aphrodite-worship spread, and by the very name of her lover, the spring. But all this may probably be regarded as little more than the Semitic colouring of a ritual and a belief which exist among Indo-European peoples, quite apart from Phoenican influence. Mannhardt traces the various points in the Aphrodite cult already enumerated through the folk-lore of the German peasants. The young lover, the spring, is the Maikonig or Laubmann; his effigy is a clothed and crowned idol or puppet, or the Maibaum. The figure is thrown into the water and bewailed in Russia, or buried or burned with lamentations.* He is wakened and kissed by a maiden, who acts as the bride.** Finally, we have the “May-pairs,” a kind of valentines united in a nominal troth.

** i. 418; ii. 287.*

*** i 436.*

The probable conclusion seems to be that the Adonis ritual expresses certain natural human ways of regarding the vernal year. It is not unlikely that the ancestors of the Greeks possessed these forms of folk-lore previous to their contact with the Semitic races, and their borrowing of the very marked Semitic features in the festivals.

For the rest, the concern of Aphrodite with the passion of love in men and with general productiveness in nature is a commonplace of Greek literature.

It would be waste of space to recount the numerous and familiar fables in which she inspires a happy or an ill-fated affection in gods or mortals. Like most other mythical figures, Aphrodite has been recognised by Mr. Max Müller as the dawn; but the suggestion has not been generally accepted.* If Aphrodite retains any traces of an elemental origin, they show chiefly in that part of her legend which is peculiarly Semitic in colour. For the rest, though she, like Hermes, gives good luck in general, she is a recognised personification of passion and the queen of love.

** Roscher, Lexikon, .*

HERMES.

Another child of Zeus whose elemental origin and character have been much debated is Hermes. The meaning of the name** is confessedly obscure.

Opinion, then, is divided about the elemental origin of Hermes and the meaning of his name. His character must be sought, as usual, in ancient poetic myth and in ritual and religion. Herodotus recognised his rites as extremely old, for that is the meaning of his remark*** that the Athenians borrowed them from the Pelasgians, who are generally recognised as prehistoric Greeks.

*** Preller, i. 307. The name of Hermes is connected by Welcker (Griesch. Got., i. 342) with (—— -), and he gives other examples of the Æolic use of o for e. Compare Curtius's Greek Etymology, English translation, 1886, vol. i. . Mr. Max Müller, on the other hand (Lectures, ii. 468), takes Hermes to be the son of the Dawn. Curtius reserves his opinion. Mr. Max Müller recognises Saramejas and Hermes as deities of twilight. Preller (i. 309) takes him for a god of dark and gloaming.*

**** Herod., ii. 61.*

In the rites spoken of, the images of the god were in one notable point like well-known Bushmen and Admiralty Island divine representations, and like those of Priapus.* In Cyllene, where Hermes was a great resident god, Artemidorus** saw a representation of Hermes which was merely a large phallus, and Pausanias beheld the same sacred object, which was adored with peculiar reverence.*** Such was Hermes in the Elean region, whence he derived his name, Cyllenian.**** He was a god of "the liberal shepherds," conceived of in the rudest aspect, perhaps as the patron of fruitfulness in their flocks. Manifestly he was most unlike the graceful swift messenger of the gods, and guide of the ghosts of men outworn, the giver of good fortune, the lord of the crowded market-place, the teacher of eloquence and of poetry, who appears in the literary mythology of Greece. Nor is there much in his Pelasgian or his Cyllenian form to suggest the elemental deity either of gloaming, or of twilight, or of the storm.(v)

** Can the obscene story of Cicero (De Nat. Deor., iii. 22, 56) be a repetition of the sacred chapter by which Herodotus says the Pelasgians explained the attribute of the image?*

*** Artem., i. 45.*

**** Paus., vi. 26, 3.*

***** Homeric Hymns, iii. 2.*

(v) But see Welcker, i. 343, for connection between his name and his pastoral functions.

But whether the pastoral Hermes of the Pelasgians was refined into the messenger-god of Homer, or whether the name and honours of that god were given to the rude Priapean patron of the shepherds by way of bringing him into the Olympic circle, it seems impossible to ascertain. These combinations lie far behind the ages of Greece known to us in poetry and history. The province of the god as a deity of flocks is thought to be attested by his favourite companion animal the ram, which often stood beside him in works of art.* In one case, where he is represented with a ram on his shoulder, the legend explained that by carrying a ram round the walls he saved the city of Tanagra from a pestilence.** The Arcadians also represented him carrying a ram under his arm.*** As to the phallic Hermæ, it is only certain that the Athenian taste agreed with that of the Admiralty Islanders in selecting such unseemly images to stand beside every door. But the connection of Hermes with music (he was the inventor of the lyre, as the Homeric Hymn sets forth) may be explained by the musical and poetical character of old Greek shepherd life.

If we could set aside the various elemental theories of Hermes as the storm-wind, the twilight, the child of dawn, and the rest, it would not be difficult to show that one moral conception is common to his character in many of its varied aspects. He is the god of luck, of prosperity, of success, of fortunate adventure. This department of his activity is already recognised in Homer. He is giver of good luck.**** He is “Hermes, who giveth grace and glory to all the works of men”. Hence comes his Homeric name, the luck-bringer. The last cup at a feast is drunk to his honour “for luck”.

** Pausanias, ii. 8, 4.*

*** For Hermes, god of herds and flocks, see Preller, i. 322-325.*

**** Pausanias, v. 27, 5.*

***** Iliad, xiv. 491; Od. 15, 319.*

Where we cry “Shares!” in a lucky find, the Greek cried “Hermes in common!” A godsend was (—— —). Thus among rough shepherd folk the luck-bringing god displayed his activity chiefly in making fruitful the flocks, but among city people he presided over the mart and the public assembly, where he gave good fortune, and over musical contests.* It is as the lucky god that Hermes holds his “fair wand of wealth and riches, three-leafed and golden, which wardeth off all evil”** Hermes has thus, among his varied departments, none better marked out than the department of luck, a very wide and important province in early thought. But while he stands in this relation to men, to the gods he is the herald and messenger, and, in some undignified myths, even the pander and accomplice. In the Homeric Hymn this child of Zeus and Maia shows his versatile character by stealing the oxen of Apollo, and fashioning the lyre on the day of his birth. The theft is sometimes explained as a solar myth; the twilight steals the bright days of the sun-god. But he could only steal them day by day, whereas Hermes lifts the cattle in an hour.*** The surname of Hermes, is usually connected with the slaying of Argus, a supernatural being with many eyes, set by Hera to watch Io, the mistress of Zeus.****

** See also Preller, i. 326, note 3.*

*** Hymn, 529. See Custom and Myth, “The Divining Rod “.*

**** Preller, i. 316, note 2; Welcker, Gr. Got, i. 338, and note 11.*

***** Æsch., Prom. Vinct, 568.*

Hermes lulled the creature to sleep with his music and cut off his head. This myth yields a very natural explanation if Hermes be the twilight of dawn, and if Argus be the many-eyed midnight heaven of stars watching Io, the moon. If Hermes be the storm-wind, it seems just as easy to say that he kills Argus by driving a cloud over the face of heaven. In his capacity as the swift-winged messenger, who, in the *Odyssey*, crosses the great gulf of the sea, and scarce brushes the brine with his feathers, Hermes might be explained, by any one so minded, either as lightning or wind. Neither hypothesis suits very well with his duties as guide of the ghosts, whom he leads down darkling ways with his wand of gold.* In this capacity he and the ghosts were honoured at the Athenian All-Souls’ day, in February.**

Such are the chief mythic aspects of Hermes. He has many functions; common to all of them is the power of bringing all to a happy end. This resemblance to twilight, “which bringeth all things good,” as Sappho sang, may be welcome to interpreters who see in Hermes a personification of twilight. How ingeniously, and even beautifully, this crepuscular theory can be worked out, and made to explain all the activities of Hermes, may be read in an essay of Paul de St. Victor.*** What is the dawn? The passage from night to day. Hermes therefore is the god of all such fleet transitions, blendings, changes. The messenger of the gods, he flits before them, a heavenly ambassador to mortals. Two light wings quiver on his rounded cap, *the vault of heaven in little*....

The highways cross and meet and increase the meetings of men; so Hermes, the ceaseless voyager, is their protecting genius.... Who should guide the ghosts down the darkling ways but the deity of the dusk; sometimes he made love to fair ghostly maids whom he attended. So easy is it to interpret all the functions of a god as reflections of elemental phenomena. The origin of Hermes remains obscure; but he is, in his poetical shape, one of the most beautiful and human of the deities. He has little commerce with the beasts; we do not find him with many animal companions, like Apollo, nor adored, like Dionysus, with a ritual in which are remnants of animal-worship. The darker things of his oldest phallic forms remain obscure in his legends, concealed by beautiful fancies, as the old wooden phallic figure, the gift of Cecrops, which Pausanias saw in Athens, was covered with myrtle boughs. Though he is occasionally in art represented with a beard, he remains in the fancy as the Odysseus met him, “Hermes of the golden wand, like unto a young man, with the first down on his cheek, when youth is loveliest”.

** Odyssey, xxiv. 1-14.*

*** Preller, i. 330, and see the notes on the passage. The ceremonies were also reminiscent of the Deluge.*

**** Les Deux Masques, i. 316-326.*

DEMETER.

The figure of Demeter, the *mater dolorosa* of paganism, the sorrowing mother seated on the stone of lamentation, is the most touching in Greek mythology. The beautiful marble statue found by Mr. Newton at Cnidos, and now in the British Museum, has the sentiment and the expression of a Madonna. Nowhere in ancient religion was human love, regret, hope and *desiderium* or wistful longing typified so clearly as in the myth and ritual of Demeter. She is severed from her daughter, Persephone, who goes down among the dead, but they are restored to each other in the joy of the spring’s renewal. The mysteries of Eleusis, which represented these events in a miracle-play, were certainly understood by Plato and Pindar and Æschylus to have a mystic and pathetic significance. They shadowed forth the consolations that the soul has fancied for herself, and gave promise of renewed and undisturbed existence in the society of all who have been dear on earth. Yet Aristophanes, in the *Frogs*, ventures even here to bring in his raillery, and makes Xanthias hint that the mystæ, the initiate, “smell of roast-pig”. No doubt they had been solemnly sacrificing, and probably tasting the flesh of the pig, the sacred animal of Demeter, whose bones, with clay or marble *figurines* representing him, are found in the holy soil of her temples. Thus even in the mystery of Demeter the grotesque, the barbaric element appears, and it often declares itself in her legend and in her ritual.

A scientific study of Demeter must endeavour to disentangle the two main factors in her myth and cult, and to hold them apart. For this purpose it is necessary to examine the development of the cult as far as it can be traced.

As to the name of the goddess, for once there is agreement, and even certainty. It seems hardly to be disputed that Demeter is Greek, and means *mother-earth or earth the mother*.*

There is his mythological panacea. Mannhardt is all for “Corn-mother,” Corn being nothing peculiarly Hellenic or Aryan in the adoration of earth. A comparative study of earth-worship would prove it to be very widely diffused, even among non-European tribes. The Demeter cult, however, is distinct enough from the myth of Gæa, the Earth, considered as, in conjunction with Heaven, the parent of the gods. Demeter is rather the fruitful soil regarded as a person than

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** Welcker, Oriech. QML, i. 385-387; Preller, i. 618, note 2; Maury, Rel. des Grdes, L 69. Apparently “A” still means earth in Albanian; Max Müller, Selected Essays, ii. 428.*

the elder Titanic formless earth personified as Gæa. Thus conceived as the foster-mother of life, earth is worshipped in America by the Shawnees and Potawatomies as *Me-mk-kum-mik-o-kwi,* the “mother of earth” It will be shown that this goddess appears casually in a Potawatomie legend, which is merely a savage version of the sacred story of Eleusis.* Tacitus found that Mother Hertha was adored in Germany with rites so mysterious that the slaves who took part in them were drowned. “Whereof ariseth a secret terror and an holy ignorance what that should be which they only see who are a-perishing.”** It is curious that in the folk-lore of Europe, up to this century, food-offerings to the earth were *buried* in Germany and by Gipsies; for the same rite is practised by the Potawatomies.***

** Compare Maury, Religions de la Grece, i. 72.*

*** Germania, 40, translation of 1622.*

**** Compare Tylor, Prim. Cult, ii. 273, with Father De Smet,
Oregon Missions, New York, 1847, .*

The Mexican Demeter, Centeotl, is well known, and Acosta’s account of religious ceremonies connected with harvest in Mexico and Peru might almost be taken for a description of the Greek *Eiresione*. The god of agriculture among the Tongan Islanders has one very curious point of resemblance to Demeter. In the Iliad (v. 505) we read that Demeter presides over the fanning of the grain. “Even as a wind carrieth the chaff about the sacred threshing-floors when men are winnowing, *what time golden Demeter, in rush of wind*, maketh division of grain and chaff.”.... Now the name of the “god of wind, and weather, rain, harvest and vegetation in general” in the Tongan Islands is Alo-Alo, literally “to fan”.* One is reminded of Joachim Du Bellay’s poem, “To the Winnowers of Corn”. Thus from all these widely diffused examples it is manifest that the idea of a divinity of earth, considered as the mother of fruits, and as powerful for good or harm in harvest-time, is anything but peculiar to Greece or to Aryan peoples. In her character as potent over this department of agriculture, the Greek goddess was named “she of the rich threshing-floors,” “of the corn heaps,” “of the corn in the ear,” “of the harvest-home,” “of the sheaves,” “of the fair fruits,” “of the goodly gifts,” and so forth.**

** Mariner’s Tonga Islands, 1827, ii. 107. The Attic
Eiresioni may be studied in Mannhardt, Wald und Feld Qultus,
it 312, and Aztec and Peruvian harvest rites of a similar
character in Custom and Myth, p-20. See also Prim.
Quit., ii. 306, for other examples.*

** *Welcker, ii, 468-470, a collection of such titles.*

In popular Greek religion, then, Demeter was chiefly regarded as the divinity of earth at seedtime and harvest. Perhaps none of the gods was worshipped in so many different cities and villages, or possessed so large a number of shrines and rustic chapels. There is a pleasant picture of such a chapel, with its rural disorder, in the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius. Psyche, in her search for Cupid, “came to the temple and went in, whereas behold she espied sheaves of corn lying on a heap, blades with withered garlands, and reeds of barley. Moreover, she saw hooks, scythes, sickles and other instruments to reape, but everie thing laide out of order, and as it were cast in by the hands of labourers; which when Psyche saw she gathered up and put everything in order.” The chapel of Demeter, in short, was a tool-house, dignified perhaps with some rude statue and a little altar. Every village, perhaps every villa, would have some such shrine.

Behind these observances, and behind the harvest-homes and the rites — half ritual, half folk-lore — which were expected to secure the fertility of the seed sown, there lurked in the minds of priests and in the recesses of sanctuaries certain mystic and secret practices of adoration. In these mysteries Demeter was doubtless worshipped in her *Chthonian* character as a goddess of earth, powerful over those who are buried in her bosom, over death and the dead. In these hidden mysteries of her cult, moreover, survived ancient legends of the usual ugly sort, tales of the amours of the goddess in bestial guise. Among such rites Pausanias mentions, at Hermione of Dryopian Argolis, the *fete* of Chthonian Demeter, a summer festival. The procession of men, women, boys and priests dragged a struggling heifer to the doors of the temple, and thrust her in unbound. Within the fane she was butchered by four old women armed with sickles. The doors were then opened, and a second and third heifer were driven in and slain by the old women. “This marvel attends the sacrifice, that all the heifers fall on the same side as the first that was slain.” There remains somewhat undivulged. “The things which they specially worship, I know not, nor any man, neither native or foreigner, but only the ancient women concerned in the rite.”* In Arcadia there was a temple of Demeter, whose priests boasted a connection with Eleusis, and professed to perform the mysteries in the Eleusinian manner. Here stood two great stones, with another over them, probably (if we may guess) a prehistoric dolmen. Within the dolmen, which was so revered that the neighbours swore their chief oath by it, were kept certain sacred scriptures. These were read aloud once a year to the initiated by a priest who covered his face with a mask of Demeter. At the same time he smote the earth with rods, and called on the folk below the earth. Precisely the same practice, smiting the earth with rods, is employed by those who consult diviners among the Zulus.** The Zulu woman having a spirit of divination says, “Strike the ground for them” (the spirits). “See, they say you came to inquire about something.” The custom of wearing a mask of the deity worshipped is common in the religions of animal-worship in Egypt, Mexico, the South Seas and elsewhere. The Aztec celebrant, we saw, wore a mask made of the skin of the thigh of the human victim. Whether this Arcadian Demeter was represented with the head of a beast does not appear; she had a mare’s head in Phigalia. One common point between this Demeter of the Pheneatæ and the Eleusinian is her *taboo* on beans, which are so strangely mystical a vegetable in Greek and Roman ritual.***

** Paus., li. 86.*

*** Callaway, Izinyanga Zokvbula,*

**** For a collection of passages see Aglaophamus, 251-254.*

The Black Demeter of the Phigalians in Arcadia was another most archaic form of the goddess. In Phigalia the myth of the wrath and reconciliation of the goddess assumed a brutal and unfamiliar aspect. The common legend, universally known, declares that Demeter sorrowed for the *enlevement* of her daughter, Persephone, by Hades. The Phigalians added another cause; the wandering Demeter had assumed the form of a mare, and was violently wooed by Poseidon in the guise of a stallion.*

** The same story was told of Cronus and Philyra, of Agni and a cow in the Satapatha Brahmana (English translation, i. 326), of Saranyu, daughter of Tvashtri, who “fled in the form of a mare”. Visvasvat, in like manner, assumed the shape of a horse, and followed her. From their intercourse sprang the two Asvins. See Muir, Sanskrit Texts, v. 227, or Rig-Veda, x. 17, 1. Here we touch a very curious point. Erinnys was au Arcadian cognomen of the Demeter who was wedded as a mare (Paus., viii. 25). Now, Mr. Max Müller says that “Erinnys is the Vedic Saranyu, the Dawn,” and we have seen that both Demeter Erinnys and Saranyu were wooed and won in the form of mares (Select Essays, i. 401, 492-622). The curious thing is that, having so valuable a proof in his hand as the common bestial amours of both Saranyu and Erinnys Demeter, Mr. Max Müller does not produce it. The Scandinavian horse-loves of Loki also recur to the memory. Prajapati’s loves in the shape of a deer are familiar in the*

Brahmanas. If Saranyu=Erinnys, and both=Dawn, then a dawn-myth has been imported into the legend of Demeter, whom nobody, perhaps, will call a dawn-goddess. Schwartz, as usual, makes the myth a storm-myth, and Demeter a goddess of storms (Ursprwig der Myth.,).

The goddess, in wrath at this outrage, attired herself in black mourning raiment, and withdrew into a cave, according to the Phigalians, and the fruits of the earth perished. Zeus learned from Pan the place of Demeter’s retreat, and sent to her the Moeræ or Fates, who persuaded her to abate her anger. The cave became her holy place, and there was set an early wooden *xoanon*, or idol, representing the goddess in the shape of a woman with the head and mane of a mare, in memory of her involuntary intrigue in that shape. Serpents and other creatures were twined about her head, and in one hand, for a mystic reason undivulged, she held a dolphin, in the other a dove. The wooden image was destroyed by fire, and disasters fell on the Phigalians. Onatas was then employed to make a bronze statue like the old idol, wherof the fashion was revealed to him in a dream. This restoration was made about the time of the Persian war. The sacrifices offered to this Demeter were fruits, grapes, honey and uncarded wool; whence it is clear that the black goddess was a true earth-mother, and received the fruits of the earth and the flock. The image by Onatas had somewhat mysteriously disappeared before the days of Pausanias.*

** Paus., viii. 42. Compare viii. 25, 4, for the horse Arion, whom Demeter bore to Poseidon.*

Even in her rude Arcadian shape Demeter is a goddess of the fruits of earth. It is probable that her most archaic form survived from the “Pelasgian” clays in remote mountainous regions. Indeed Herodotus, observing the resemblance between the Osirian mysteries in Egypt and the Thesmophoria of Demeter in Greece, boldly asserts that the Thesmophoria were Egyptian, and were brought to the Pelasgians from Egypt (ii. 171). The Pelasgians were driven out of Peloponnesus by the Dorians, and the Arcadians, who were not expelled, retained the rites. As Pelasgians also lingered long in Attica, Herodotus recognised the Thesmophoria as in origin Egyptian. In modern language this theory means that the Thesmophoria were thought to be a rite of prehistoric antiquity older than the Dorian invasion. Herodotus naturally explained resemblances in the myth and ritual of distant peoples as the result of borrowing, usually from Egypt, an idea revived by M. Foucart. These analogies, however, are more frequently produced by the working out of similar thoughts, presenting themselves to minds similarly situated in a similar way. The mysteries of Demeter offer an excellent specimen of the process. While the Greeks, not yet collected into cities, lived in village settlements, each village would possess its own feasts, mysteries and “medicine-dances,” as the Red Indians say, appropriate to seedtime and harvest. For various reasons, certain of these local rites attained high importance in the development of Greek civilisation The Eleusinian performances, for instance, were adopted into the state ritual of a famous city, Athens, and finally acquired a national status, being open to all not disqualified Hellenes. In this development the old local ritual for the propitiation of Demeter, for the fertility of the seed sown, and for the gratification of the dead ancestors, was caught up into the religion of the state, and was modified by advancing ideas of religion and morality. But the local Athenian mystery of the Thesmophoria probably retained more of its primitive shape and purpose.

The Thesmophoria was the feast of seedtime, and Demeter was adored by the women as the patroness of human as well as of universal fertility. Thus a certain jocund and licentious element was imparted to the rites, which were not to be witnessed by men.

The Demeter of the Thesmophoria was she who introduced and patronised the (—— —) of marriage, as Homer says of Odysseus and Penelope.* What was done at the Thesmophoria Herodotus did not think fit to tell. A scholiast on Lucian’s *Dialogues of Courtesans* let out the secret in a much later age. He repeats the story of the swineherd Eubuleus, whose pigs were swallowed up by the earth when it opened to receive Hades and Persephone. In honour and in memory of Eubuleus, pigs were thrown into the cavernof Demeter. Then certain women brought up the decaying flesh of the dead pigs, and placed it on the altar. It was believed that to mix this flesh with the seed-corn secured abundance of harvest. Though the rite is magical in character, perhaps the decaying flesh might act as manure, and be of real service to the farmer. Afterwards images of pigs, such as Mr. Newton found in a hole in the holy plot of Demeter at Cnidos, were restored to the place whence the flesh had been taken. The practice was believed to make marriage fruitful; its virtues were for the husband as well as for the husbandman.** However the Athenians got the rite, whether they evolved it or adapted it from some “Pelasgian” or other prehistoric people, similar practices occur among the Khonds in India and the Pawnees in America. The Khonds sacrifice a pig and a human victim, the Pawnees a girl of a foreign tribe.

* *Odyssey, xxiii. 295.*

** *Newton, Hulicarn., plate iv. p, 371-391.*

The fragments of flesh are not mixed with the seed-corn, but buried on the borders of the fields.* The ancient, perhaps “Pelasgian,” ritual of Demeter had thus its savage features and its savage analogues. More remarkable still is the

Pawnee version, as we may call it, of the Eleusinia. Curiously, the Red Indian myth which resembles that of Demeter and Persephone is *not* told about Me-suk-kum-mik-o-kwi, the Red Indian Mother Earth, to whom offerings are made, valuable objects being buried for her in brass kettles.** The American tale is attached to the legend of Manabozho and his brother Chibiabos, not to that of the Earth Mother and her daughter, if in America she had a daughter.

The account of the Pawnee mysteries and their origin is worth quoting in full, as it is among the most remarkable of mythical coincidences. If we decline to believe that Pere De Smet invented the tale for the mere purpose of mystifying mythologists, we must, apparently, suppose that the coincidences are due to the similar workings of the human mind in the Prairies as at Eleusis. We shall first give the Red Indian version. It was confided to De Smet, as part of the general tradition of the Pawnees, by an old chief, and was first published by De Smet in his *Oregon Mission**** Tanner speaks of the legend as one that the Indians chant in their "medicine-songs," which record the sacred beliefs of the race.****

** De Smet, Oregon Missions, ; Mr. Russell's, "Report"*
in Major Campbell's Personal Narrative, 1864, p, 113.

*** Tanner's Narrative, 1830, .*

**** New York, 1847.*

***** Ibid., New York, 1830, p, 193.*

He adds that many of these songs are noted down, by a method probably peculiar to the Indians, on birch-bark or small flat pieces of wood, the ideas being conveyed by emblematical figures. When it is remembered that the *luck* of the tribe depends on these songs and rites, it will be admitted that they are probably of considerable antiquity, and that the Indians probably did not borrow the story about the origin of their ritual from some European conversant with the Homeric hymn to Demeter.

Here follows the myth, as borrowed (without acknowledgment) by Schoolcraft from De Smet: — *

"The Manitos (powers or spirits) were jealous of Manabozho and Chibiabos. Manabozho warned his brother never to be alone, but one day he ventured on the frozen lake and was drowned by the Manitos. Manabozho wailed along the shores. He waged a war against all the Manitos.... He called on the dead body of his brother. He put the whole country in dread by his lamentations. He then besmeared his face with black, and sat down six years to lament, uttering the name of Chibiabos. The Manitos consulted what to do to assuage his melancholy and his wrath. The oldest and wisest of them, who had had no hand in the death of Chibiabos, offered to undertake the task of reconciliation. They built a sacred lodge close to that of Manabozho, and prepared a sumptuous feast. They then assembled in order, one behind the other, each carrying under his arm a sack of the skin of some favourite animal, as a beaver, an otter, or a lynx, and filled with precious and curious medicines culled from all plants. These they exhibited, and invited him to the feast with pleasing words and ceremonies. He immediately raised his head, uncovered it, and washed off his besmearments and mourning colours, and then followed them. They offered him a cup of liquor prepared from the choicest medicines, at once as a propitiation and an initiatory rite. He drank it at a single draught, and found his melancholy departed. They then commenced their dances and songs, united with various ceremonies. All danced, all sang, all acted with the utmost gravity, with exactness of time, motion and voice. Manabozho was cured; he ate, danced, sang and smoked the sacred pipe.

* *Schoolcraft, L 318.*

"In this manner the mysteries of the great medicine-dance were introduced.

"The Manitos now united their powers to bring Chibiabos to life. They did so, and brought him to life, but it was forbidden to enter the lodge. They gave him, through a chink, a burning coal, and told him to go and preside over the country of souls and reign over the land of the dead.

"Manabozho, now retired from men, commits the care of medicinal plants to Misukumigakwa, or the Mother of the Earth, to whom he makes offerings."

In all this the resemblance to the legend of the Homeric hymn to Demeter is undeniable. The hymn is too familiar to require a long analysis. We read how Demeter had a fair daughter, Persephone; how the Lord of the Dead carried her off as she was gathering flowers; how Demeter sought her with burning torches; and how the goddess came to Eleusis and the house of Celeus in the guise of an old wife. There she dwelt in sorrow, neither eating nor drinking, till she tasted of a mixture of barley and water (*cyceon*), and was moved to smile by the mirth of Iambe. Yet she still held apart in wrath from the society of the gods, and still the earth bore not her fruits, till the gods bade Hermes restore Persephone. But Persephone had tasted one pomegranate-seed in Hades, and therefore, according to a world-wide belief, she was under bonds to Hades. For only half the year does she return to earth; yet by this Demeter was comforted; the soil bore fruits again, and Demeter showed forth to the chiefs of Eleusis her sacred mysteries and the ritual of their performance.*

The Persephone myth is not in Homer, though in Homer Persephone is Lady of the Dead. Hesiod alludes to it in the *Theogony* (912-914); but the chief authority is the Homeric hymn, which Matthaeus found (1777) in a farmyard at

Moscow. “Inter pullos et porcos latuerat” — the pigs of Demeter had guarded the poem of her mysteries.** As to the date and authorship of the hymn, the learned differ in opinion. Probably most readers will regard it as a piece of poetry, like the hymn to Aphrodite, rather than as a “mystic chain of verse” meant solely for hieratic purposes. It is impossible to argue with safety that the Eleusinian mysteries and legend were later than Homer, because Homer does not allude to them.

** The superstition about the food of the dead is found in New Zealand, Melanesia, Scotland, Finland and among the Ojibbeways. Compare “Wandering Willie’s” tale in Redgaunttet.*

*** Ruhnken, ap. Hignard, Les Hymnes Homeriques, , Paris, 1864.*

He has no occasion to speak of them. Possibly the mysteries were, in his time, but the rites of a village or little town; they attained celebrity owing to their adoption by Athens, and they ended by becoming the most famous national festival. The meaning of the legend, in its origin, was probably no more than a propitiation of earth, and a ceremony that imitated, and so secured, the return of spring and vegetation. This early conception, which we have found in America, was easily combined with doctrines of the death and revival, not of the year, not of the seed sown, but of the human soul. These ideas were capable of endless illustration and amplification by priests; and the mysteries, by Plato’s time, and even by Pindar’s, were certainly understood to have a purifying influence on conduct and a favourable effect on the fortunes of the soul in the next world.

“Happy whosoever of mortal men has looked on these things; but whoso hath had no part nor lot in this sacrament hath no equal fate when once he hath perished and passed within the pall of darkness.”* Of such rites we may believe that Plato was thinking when he spoke of “beholding apparitions innocent and simple, and calm and happy, *as in a mystery*”** Nor is it strange that, when Greeks were seeking for a sign, and especially for some creed that might resist the new worship of Christ, Plutarch and the Neo-Platonic philosophers tried to cling to the promise of the mysteries of Demeter.

** Homeric Hymn, 480-482.*

*** Phaedrus, 260.*

They regarded her secret things as “a dreamy shadow of that spectacle and that rite,” the spectacle and rite of the harmonious order of the universe, some time to be revealed to the souls of the blessed.* It may not have been a drawback to the consolations of the hidden services that they made no appeal to the weary and wandering reason of the later heathens. Tired out with endless discourse on fate and free will, gods and demons, allegory and explanation, they could repose on mere spectacles and ceremonies and pious ejaculations, “without any evidence or proof offered for the statements “. Indeed, writers like Plutarch show almost the temper of Pascal, trying to secure rest for their souls by a wise passiveness and pious contemplation, and participation in sacraments not understood.

As to the origin of these sacraments, we may believe, with Lobeck, that it was no priestly system of mystic and esoteric teaching, moral or physical. It was but the “medicine-dance” of a very old Greek tribal settlement, perhaps from the first with an ethical element. But from this, thanks to the genius of Hellas, sprang all the beauty of the Eleusinian ritual, and all the consolation it offered the bereaved, all the comfort it yielded to the weary and heavy laden.** That the popular religious excitement caused by the mysteries and favoured by the darkness often produced scenes of lustful revelry, may be probable enough. “Revivals” everywhere have this among other consequences. But we may share Lobeck’s scepticism as to the wholesale charges of iniquity brought by the Fathers.

In spite of survivals and slanders, the religion of Demeter was among the most natural, beautiful and touching of Greek beliefs. The wild element was not lacking; but a pious contemporary of Plato, when he bathed in the sea with his pig before beholding the mystery-play, probably made up his mind to blink the barbaric and licentious part of the performances.

* *Plutarch, De Def. Orac. xxii*

** *Lobeck, Aglaoph., 133.*

CONCLUSION.

This brief review of Greek divine myths does not of course aim at exhausting the subject. We do not pretend to examine the legends of all the Olympians. But enough has been said to illustrate the method of interpretation, and to give specimens of the method at work. It has been seen that there is only agreement among philologists as to the origin and meaning of two out of nearly a dozen divine names. Zeus is admitted to be connected with *Dyaus*, and to have originally meant “sky”. Demeter is accepted as Greek, with the significance of “Mother Earth”. But the meaning and the roots of Athene, Apollo, Artemis, Hermes, Cronus, Aphrodite, Dionysus — we might add Poseidon and Hephaestus — are very far from being known. Nor is there much more general agreement as to the original elemental phenomena or elemental province held by all of these gods and goddesses. The moon, the wind, the twilight, the sun, the growth and force of vegetation, the dark, the night, the atmosphere, have been shuffled and dealt most variously to the various deities by learned students of myth. This complete diversity of opinion must be accepted as a part in the study.

The learned, as a rule, only agree in believing (1) that the names hold the secret of the original meaning of the gods; and (2) that the gods are generally personifications of elements or of phenomena, or have been evolved out of such personifications. Beyond this almost all is confusion, doubt, “the twilight of the gods”.

In this darkness there is nothing to surprise. We are not wandering in a magical mist poured around us by the gods, but in a fog which has natural causes. First, there is the untrustworthiness of attempts to analyse proper names. “With every proper name the etymological operation is by one degree more difficult than with an appellative.... We have to deal with two unknown quantities,” origin and meaning; whereas in appellatives we know the meaning and have only to hunt for the origin. And of all proper names mythological names are the most difficult to interpret. Curtius has shown how many paths may be taken in the analysis of the name Achilles. The second part may be of the stem: people, or the stem: stone. Does the first part of the word mean “water” (cf. aqua), or is it equivalent to: (“bulwark” or “the people”)? Or is it akin to: “one who causes pain”? Or is the: “prothetic”? and is (it) the root, and does it mean “clear-shining”? Or is the word related to (—— —), and does it mean “dark”?

All these and other explanations are offered by the learned, and are chosen by Curtius to show the uncertainty and difficulty of the etymological process as applied to names in myth. Cornutus remarked long ago that the great antiquity of the name of Athene made its etymology difficult. Difficult it remains.* Whatever the science of language may accomplish in the future, it is baffled for the present by the divine names of Greece, or by most of them, and these the most important.**

** Cf. Curtius, Greek Etym., Engl, transl., i. 137-139.*

*** Gruppe, Griech. Culte und Myththis, , selects Iapetos, Kadmos, Kabeiros, Adonis, Baitylos, Typhon, Nysos (in Dionysos), Acheron, Kimmerians and Gryps, aa certainly Phoenician. But these are not the names of the high gods.*

There is another reason for the obscurity of the topic besides the darkness in which the origin of the names has been wrapped by time. The myths had been very long in circulation before we first meet them in Homer and Hesiod. We know not whence the gods came. Perhaps some of them were the chief divine conceptions of various Hellenic clans before the union of clans into states. However this may be, when we first encounter the gods in Homer and Hesiod, they have been organised into a family, with regular genealogies and relationships. Functions have been assigned to them, and departments. Was Hermes always the herald? Was Hephaestus always the artisan? Was Athene from the first the well-beloved daughter of Zeus? Was Apollo from the beginning the mediator with men by oracles? Who can reply? We only know that the divine ministry has been thoroughly organised, and departments assigned, as in a cabinet, before we meet the gods on Olympus. What they were in the ages before this organisation, we can only conjecture. Some may have been adopted from clans whose chief deity they were. If any one took all the Samoan gods, he could combine them into a family with due functions and gradations. No one man did this, we may believe, for Greece: though Herodotus thought it was done by Homer and Hesiod. The process went on through centuries we know not of; still less do we know what or where the gods were before the process began.

Thus the obscurity in which the divine origins are hidden is natural and inevitable. Our attempt has been to examine certain birth-marks which the gods bear from that hidden antiquity, relics of fur and fin and feather, inherited from ancestral beasts like those which ruled Egyptian, American and Australian religions. We have also remarked the brilliant divinity of beautiful form which the gods at last attained, in marble, in gold, in ivory and in the fancy of poets and sculptors. Here is the truly Hellenic element, here is the ideal — Athene arming, Hera with the girdle of Aphrodite, Hermes with his wand, Apollo with the silver bow — to this the Hellenic intellect attained; this ideal it made more imperishable than bronze. Finally, the lovely shapes of gods “defecate to a pure transparency” in the religion of Aristotle and Plutarch. But the gods remain beautiful in their statues, beautiful in the hymns of Pindar and the plays of Sophocles; hideous, often, in temple myth, and ancient *xoanon*, and secret rite, till they are all, good and evil, cast out by Christianity. The most brilliant civilisation of the world never expelled the old savage from its myth and its ritual. The lowest savagery scarcely ever, if ever, wholly loses sight of a heavenly Father.

In conclusion, we may deprecate the charge of *exclusivism*. The savage element is something, nay, is much, in Greek myth and ritual, but it is not everything. The truth, grace and beauty of the myths are given by “the clear spirit” of Hellas. Nor is all that may be deplored necessarily native. We may well believe in borrowing from Phoenicians, who in turn may have borrowed from Babylon. Examples of this process have occasionally been noted. It will be urged by some students that the wild element was adopted from the religion of prehistoric races, whom the Greeks found in possession when first they seized the shores of the country. This may be true in certain cases, but historical evidence is not to be obtained. We lose ourselves in theories of Pelasgians and Pre-Pelasgians, and “la Grece avant les Grecs”. In any case, the argument that the more puzzling part of Greek myth is a “survival” would not be affected. Borrowed, or inherited, or imitated, certain of the stories and rites are savage in origin, and the argument insists on no more as to that portion of Greek mythology.

CHAPTER XIX. HEROIC AND ROMANTIC MYTHS.

A new class of myths — Not explanatory — Popular tales — Heroic and romantic myths — (1) Savage tales — (2) European Contes — (3) Heroic myths — Their origin — Diffusion — History of their study — Grimm's theory — Aryan theory — Benfey's theory — Ancient Egyptian stories examined — Wanderung's theorie — Conclusion.

The myths which have hitherto been examined possess, for the most part, one common feature. All, or almost all of them, obviously aim at satisfying curiosity about the causes of things, at supplying gaps in human knowledge. The nature-myths account for various aspects of Nature, from the reed by, the river-side that once was a fair maiden pursued by Pan, to the remotest star that was a mistress of Zeus; from the reason why the crow is black, to the reason why the sun is darkened in eclipse. The divine myths, again, are for the more part essays in the same direction. They try to answer these questions: "Who made things?" "How did this world begin?" "What are the powers, felt to be greater than ourselves, which regulate the order of events and control the destinies of men?" Myths reply to all these questionings, and the answers are always in accordance with that early nebulous condition of thought and reason where observation lapses into superstition, religion into science, science into fancy, knowledge into fable. In the same manner the myths which we do not treat of here — the myths of the origin of death, of man's first possession of fire, and of the nature of his home among the dead — are all tentative contributions to knowledge. All seek to satisfy the eternal human desire to *know*. "Whence came death?" man asks, and the myths answer him with a story of Pandora, of Maui, of the moon and the hare, or the bat and the tree. "How came fire to be a servant of ours?" The myths tell of Prometheus the fire-stealer, or of the fire-stealing wren, or frog, or coyote, or cuttlefish. "What manner of life shall men live after death? in what manner of home?" The myth answers with tales of Pohjola, of Hades, of Amenti, of all that, in the Australian black fellow's phrase, "lies beyond the Rummut," beyond the surf of the Pacific, beyond the "stream of Oceanus," beyond the horizon of mortality. To these myths, and to the more mysterious legend of the Flood, we may return some other day. For the present, it must suffice to repeat that all these myths (except, perhaps, the traditions of the Deluge) fill up gaps in early human knowledge, and convey information as to matters outside of practical experience.

But there are classes of tales, or *märchen,* or myths which, as far as can be discovered, have but little of the explanatory element. Though they have been interpreted as broken-down nature-myths, the variety of the interpretations put upon them proves that, at least, their elemental meaning is dim and uncertain, and makes it very dubious whether they ever had any such significance at all. It is not denied here that some of these myths and tales may have been suggested by elemental and meteorological phenomena. For example, when we find almost everywhere among European peasants, and among Samoyeds and Zulus, as in Greek heroic-myths of the Jason cycle, the story of the children who run away from a cannibal or murderous mother or step-mother, we are reminded of certain nature-myths. The stars are often said* to be the children of the sun, and to flee away at dawn, lest he or their mother, the moon, should devour them. This early observation may have started the story of flight from the cannibal parents, and the legend may have been brought down from heaven to earth. Yet this were, perhaps, a far-fetched hypothesis of the origin of a tale which may readily have been born wherever human beings have a tendency (as in North America and South Africa) to revert to cannibalism.

** Nature-Myths, vol. i . The story is "Asterinos und Pulja" in Von Hahn's Griech. und Alban. Marchen. Compare Samojedische Marchen, Castren, Varies, uber die Alt. Volk, ; Callaway, Uzembeni.*

The peculiarity, then, of the myths which we propose to call "Heroic and Romantic Tales" (*märchen contes populaires*), is the absence, as a rule, of any obvious explanatory purpose. They are romances or novels, and if they do explain anything, it is rather the origin or sanction of some human law or custom than the cause of any natural phenomenon that they expound.

The kind of traditional fictions here described as heroic and romantic may be divided into three main categories.

(1) First we have the popular tales of the lower and more backward races, with whom may be reckoned, for our present purpose, the more remote and obscure peoples of America. We find popular tales among the Bushmen, Kaffirs, Zulus, Samoans, Maoris, Hurons, Samoyeds, Eskimos, Crees, Blackfeet and other so-called savage races. We also find tales practically identical in character, and often in plot and incident, among such a people as the Huarochiris, a civilised race brought under the Inca Empire some three generations before the Spanish conquest. The characteristics of these tales are the presence of talking and magically helpful beasts; the human powers and personal existence of even inanimate objects; the miraculous accomplishments of the actors; the

introduction of beings of another race, usually hostile; the power of going to and returning from Hades — always described in much the same imaginative manner. The persons are sometimes anonymous, sometimes are named while the name is not celebrated; more frequently the tribal culture-hero, demiurge, or god is the leading character in these stories. In accordance with the habits of savage fancy, the chief person is often a beast, such as Ananzi, the West African spider; Cagn, the Bushman grasshopper; or Michabo, the Algonkin white-hare. Animals frequently take parts assigned to men and women in European *märchen*.

(2) In the second place, we have the *märchen*, or *contes*, or household tales of the modern European, Asiatic and Indian peasantry, the tales collected by the Grimms, by Afanasief, by Von Hahn, by Miss Frere, by Miss Maive Stokes, by M. Sebillot, by Campbell of Islay, and by so many others. Every reader of these delightful collections knows that the characteristics, the machinery, all that excites wonder, are the same as in the savage heroic tales just described But it is a peculiarity of the popular tales of the peasantry that the *places* are seldom named; the story is not localised, and the characters are anonymous. Occasionally our Lord and his saints appear, and Satan is pretty frequently present, always to be defeated and disgraced; but, as a rule, the hero is “a boy,” “a poor man” “a fiddler,” “a soldier,” and so forth, no names being given.

(3) Thirdly, we have in epic poetry and legend the romantic and heroic tales of the great civilised races, or races which have proved capable of civilisation. These are the Indians, the Greeks, Romans, Celts, Scandinavians and Germans. These have won their way into the national literatures and the region of epic. We find them in the *Odyssey*, the *Edda* the Celtic poems, the *Ramayana*, and they even appear in the *Veda*. They occur in the legends and pedigrees of the royal heroes of Greece and Germany. They attach themselves to the dim beginnings of actual history, and to real personages like Charlemagne. They even invade the legends of the saints. The characters are national heroes, such as Perseus, Jason, Ædipus and Olympian gods, and holy men and women dear to the Church, and primal heroes of the North, Sigurd and Signy. Their paths and places are not in dim fairyland, but in the fields and on the shores we know — at Roland’s Pass in the Pyrenees, on the enchanted Colchian coast, or among the blameless Ethiopians, or in Thessaly, or in Argos. Now, in all these three classes of romance, savage fables, rural märchen, Greek or German epics, the ideas and incidents are analogous, and the very conduct of the plot is sometimes recognisably the same. The moral ideas on which many of the märchen, sagas, or epic myths turn are often identical. Everywhere we find doors or vessels which are not to be opened, regulations for the conduct of husband and wife which are not to be broken; everywhere we find helpful beasts, birds and fishes;

everywhere we find legends proving that one cannot outwit his fate or evade the destiny prophesied for him.

The chief problems raised by these sagas and stories are — (1) How do they come to resemble each other so closely in all parts of the world? (2) Were they invented once for all, and transmitted all across the world from some centre? (3) What was that centre, and what was the period and the process of transmission?

Before examining the solutions of those problems, certain considerations may be advanced.

The supernatural *stuff* of the stories, the threads of the texture, the belief in the life and personality of all things — in talking beasts and trees, in magical powers, in the possibility of visiting the diad — must, on our theory as already set forth, be found wherever men have either passed through savagery, and retained-survivals of that intellectual condition, or wherever they have borrowed or imitated such survivals.

By this means, without further research, we may account for the similarity of the stuff of heroic myths and marchen. The stuff is the same as in nature myths and divine myths. But how is the similarity of the arrangement of the incidents and ideas into *plots* to be accounted for? The sagas, epic myths, and marchen do not appear to resemble each other everywhere (as the nature-myths do), because they are the same ideas applied to the explanation of the same set of natural facts. The sagas, epics and marchen seem to explain nothing, but to be told, in the first instance, either to illustrate and enforce a moral, or for the mere pleasure of imaginative narration.

We are thus left, provisionally, with the notion that occasionally the resemblance of plot and arrangement may be *accidental*. In shaking the mental kaleidoscope, which contains a given assortment of ideas, analogous combinations may not impossibly be now and then produced everywhere. Or the story may have been invented once for all in one centre, but at a period so incalculably remote that it has filtered, in the exchanges and contacts of prehistoric life, all over the world, even to or from the Western Pacific and the lonely Oceanic Islands. Or, once more, the story may have had a centre in the Old World, say, in India; may have been carried to Europe by oral tradition or in literary vehicles, like the *Pantschatantra* or the *Hitopadesa*, or by gypsies; may have reached the sailors, and trappers, and miners of civilisation, and may have been communicated by them (in times subsequent to the discovery of America by Columbus) to the backward races of the world.

These are preliminary statements of possibilities, and theories more or less based on those ideas are now to be examined.

The best plan may be to trace briefly the history of the study of popular tales.

As early as Charles Perrault’s time (1696), popular traditional tales had attracted some curiosity, more or less scientific. Mademoiselle L’Heritier, the Abbe Villiers, and even the writer of the dedication of Perrault’s *Contes* to Mademoiselle, had expressed opinions as to the purposes for which they were first told, and the time and place where they probably arose. The Troubadours, the Arabs, and the fanciful invention of peasant nurses were vaguely talked of as possible first authors of the popular tales. About the same time, Huet, Bishop of Avranches, had remarked that the Hurons in North America amused their winter leisure with narratives in which beasts endowed with speech and reason were the chief characters.

Little was done to secure the scientific satisfaction of curiosity about traditional folk-tales, contes or marchen till the time when the brothers Grimm collected the stories of Hesse. The Grimms became aware that the stories were common to the peasant class in most European lands, and that they were also known in India and the East. As they went on collecting, they learned that African and North American tribes also had their marchen, not differing greatly in character from the stories familiar to German firesides.

Already Sir Walter Scott had observed, in a note to the Lady of the Lake, that “a work of great interest might be compiled upon the origin of popular fiction, and the transmission of similar tales from age to age, and from country to country. The mythology of one period would then appear to pass into the romance of the next, and that into the nursery tales of subsequent ages.” This opinion has long been almost universal. Thus, if the story of Jason is found in Greek myths, and also, with a difference, in popular modern marchen, the notion has been that the marchen is the last and youngest form, the *detritus* of the myth. Now, as the myth is only known from literary sources (Homer, Mimnermus, Apollonius Rhodius, Euripides, and so on), it must follow, on this theory, that the people had borrowed from the literature of the more cultivated classes. As a matter of fact, literature has borrowed far more from the people than the people have borrowed from literature, though both processes have been at work in the course of history. But the question of the relations of marchen to myths, and of both to romance, may be left unanswered for the moment. More pressing questions are, what is the origin, and where the original home of the marchen or popular tales, and how have they been so widely diffused all over the world?

The answers given to these questions have naturally been modified by the widening knowledge of the subject. One answer seemed plausible when only the common character of European *contes* was known; another was needed when the Aryan peoples of the East were found to have the same stories; another, or a modification of the second, was called for when marchen like those of Europe were found among the Negroes, the Indians of Brazil, the ancient Huarochiri of Peru, the people of Madagascar, the Samoyeds, the Samoans, the Dene Hareskins of the extreme American North-west, the Zulus and Kaffirs, the Bushmen, the Finns, the Japanese, the Arabs, and the Swahilis.

The Grimms, in the appendix to their *Household Tales*,* give a list of the stories with which they were acquainted. Out of Europe they note first the literary collections of the East, the Thousand and One Nights and the Hitopadesa, which, with the Book of Sinda-bad, and the Pantschatantra, and the Katharit Sagara, contain almost all of the Oriental tales that filtered into Western literature through written translations. The Grimms had not our store of folk-tales recently collected from the lips of the Aryan and non-Aryan natives of Hindostan, such as the works of Miss Maive Stokes, of Miss Frere, of Captain Steel, of Mr. Lai Behar Day, and the few Santal stories. But the Grimms had some Kalmuck stories.**

One or two Chinese and Japanese examples had fallen into their hands, and all this as early as 1822. In later years they picked up a Malay story, some Bechuana tales, Koelle’s Kanuri or Bornu stories, Schoolcraft’s and James Athearn Jones’s North American legends, Finnish, Esthonian and Mongolian narratives, and an increasing store of European *contes*. The Grimms were thus not unaware that the *märchen*, with their surprising resemblances of plot and incident, had a circulation far beyond the limits of the Ayran peoples. They were specially struck, as was natural, by the reappearance of incidents analogous to those of the German *contes* (such as *Machandelboom* and the *Singing Bone*, 47, 28) among the remote Bechuanas of South Africa. They found, too, that in Sierra Leone beasts and birds play the chief parts in *märchen*. “They have a much closer connection with humanity,... nay, they have even priests,” as the animals in Guiana have *peays* or sorcerers of their own. “Only the beasts of the country itself appear in the *märchen*.” Among these Bornu legends they found several tales analogous to *Faithful John* (6), and to one in Stra-parola’s *Piacevoli Notti* (Venice, 1550), a story, by the way, which recurs among the Santals, an “aboriginal” tribe of India. It is the tale of the man who knows the language of animals, and is warned by them against telling secrets to women. Among the Indians of North America Grimm found the analogue of his tale (182) of the *Elves’ Gifts*, which, by the way, also illustrates a proverb in Japan. Finnish, Tartar and Indian analogues were discovered in plenty.

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* *Mrs. Hunt’s translation, London, 1884.*

** *“The relations of Ssidi Kur,” in Bergmann’s Nomadische Stretfereien, vol. i.*

Such were Grimm’s materials; much less abundant than ours, indeed, but sufficient to show him that “the resemblance existing between the stories, not only of nations widely removed from each other by time and distance, but also between those which lie near together, consists partly in the underlying idea and the delineation of particular characters, and partly in the weaving together and unravelling of incidents”. How are these resemblances to be explained? That is the question. Grimm’s answer was, as ours must still be, only a suggestion. “There are situations so simple and natural that they reappear everywhere, just like the isolated words which are produced in a nearly or entirely identical form in languages which have no connection with each other, by the mere imitation of natural sounds.” Thus to a certain, but in Grimm’s opinion to a very limited extent, the existence of similar situations in the marchen of the most widely separated peoples is the result of the common facts of human thought and sentiment.

To repeat a convenient illustration, if we find talking and rational beasts and inanimate objects, and the occurrence of metamorphosis and of magic, and of cannibals and of ghosts (as we do), in the marchen as in the higher myths of all the world, and if we also find certain curious human customs in the contes, these resemblances may be explained as born of the same early condition of human fancy, which regards all known things as personal and animated, which believes in ghosts and magic, while men also behave in accordance with customs now obsolete and forgotten in civilisation. These common facts are the threads (as we have said) in the cloth of myth and marchen. They were supplied by the universal early conditions of the prescientific human intellect; Thus the stuff of marchen is everywhere the same. But why are the patterns — the situations, and the arrangements, and sequence of incidents — also remarkably similar in the contes of unrelated and unconnected tribes and races everywhere?

Here the difficulty begins in earnest.

It is clearly not enough to force the analogy, and reply that the patterns of early fabrics and the decorations of early weapons, of pottery, tattooing marks, and so forth, are also things universally human.*

** See Custom and Myth, “The Art of Savages,”* .

The close resemblances of undeveloped Greek and Mexican and other early artistic work are interesting, but may be accounted for by similarity of materials, of instruments, of suggestions from natural objects, and of inexperience in design. The selections of similar situations and of similar patterns into which these are interwoven in *märchen,* by Greeks, Huarochiris of Peru, and Samoans or Eskimos, is much more puzzling to account for.

Grimm gives some examples in which he thinks that the ideas, and their collocations in the story, can only have originally occurred to one mind, once for all. How is the wide distribution of such a story to be accounted for? Grimm first admits "*as rare exceptions* the probability of a story's passing from one people to another, and firmly rooting itself in foreign soil". But such cases, he says, are "one or two solitary exceptions," whereas the diffusion of stories which, in his opinion, could only have been invented once for all is an extensive phenomenon. He goes on to say, "We shall be asked where the outermost lines of common property in stories begin, and how the lines of affinity are gradated". His answer was not satisfactory even to himself, and the additions to our knowledge have deprived it of any value. "The outermost lines are coterminous with those of the great race which is called Indo-Germanic." Outside of the Indo-Germanic, or "Aryan" race, that is to say, are found none of the *märchen* which are discovered within the borders of that race. But Grimm knew very well himself that this was an erroneous belief. "We see with amazement in such of the stories of the Negroes of Bornu and the Bechuanas (a wandering tribe in South Africa) as we have become acquainted with *an undeniable connection with the German ones*, while at the same time their peculiar composition distinguishes them from these." So Grimm, though he found "no decided resemblance" in North American stories, admitted that the boundaries of common property in marchen did include more than the "Indo-Germanic" race. Bechuanas, and Negroes, and Finns, as he adds, and as Sir George Dasent saw,* are certainly within the fold.

* *Popular Tales from the Norse, 1859, p., lv.*

There William Grimm left the question in 1856. His tendency apparently was to explain the community of the marchen on the hypothesis that they were the original common store of the undivided Aryan people, carried abroad in the long wanderings of the race. But he felt that the presence of the marchen among Bechuanas, Negroes and Finns was not thus to be explained. At the same time he closed the doors against a theory of borrowing, except in "solitary exceptions," and against the belief in frequent, separate and independent evolution of the same story in various unconnected regions. Thus Grimm states the question, but does not pretend to have supplied its answer.

The solutions offered on the hypothesis that the marchen are exclusively Aryan, and that they are the *detritus* or youngest and latest forms of myths, while these myths are concerned with the elemental phenomena of Nature, and arose out of the decay of language, have been so frequently criticised that they need not long detain us.* The most recent review of the system is by M. Cosquin.** In place of repeating objections which have been frequently urged by the present writer, an abstract of M. Cosquin's reasons for differing from the "Aryan" theory of Von Hahn may be given. Voh Hahn was the collector and editor of stories from the modern Greek,*** and his work is scholarly and accomplished. He drew up comparative tables showing the correspondence between Greek and German *märchen* on the one side, and Greek and Teutonic epics and higher legends or sagas on the other. He also attempted to classify the stories in a certain number of recurring *formula* or plots. Lin Von Hahn's opinion, the stories were originally the myths of the undivided Aryan people in its central Asian home. As the different branches scattered and separated, they carried with them their common store of myths, which were gradually worn down into the *detritus* of popular stories, "the youngest form of the myth". The same theory appeared (in 1859) in Mr. Max Muller's *Chips from a German Workshop***** The undivided Aryan people possessed, in its mythological and proverbial phraseology, the seeds or germs, more or less developed, which would nourish, under any sky, into very similar plants — that is, the popular stories.

** See our Introduction to Mrs. Hunt's translation of Grimm's Household Tales.*

*** Contes Populaire de Lorraine, Paris, 1886, p., xv.*

**** Grieschische und Albanesische Marchen, 1864.*

***** Vol. ii. .*

Against these ideas M. Cosquin argues that if the Aryan people before its division preserved the myths only in their *earliest germinal form*, it is incredible that, when the separated branches had lost touch of each other, the final shape of their myths, the *märchen*, should have so closely resembled each other as they do. The Aryan theory (as it may be called for the sake of brevity) rejects, as a rule, the idea that tales can, as a rule, have been *borrowed,* even by one Aryan people from another.* "Nursery tales are generally the last things to be borrowed by one nation from another."** Then, says M. Cosquin, as the undivided Aryan people had only the myths in their least developed state, and as the existing peasantry have only the *detritus* of these myths — the *märchen* — and as you say borrowing is out of the question, how do you account for a coincidence like *this*? In the Punjaub, among the Bretons, the Albanians, the modern Greeks and the Russians we find a *conte* in which a young man gets possession of a magical ring. This ring is stolen from him, and recovered by the aid of certain grateful beasts, whom the young man has benefited. His foe keeps the ring in his mouth, but the grateful mouse, insinuating his tail into the nose of the thief, makes him sneeze, and out comes the magical ring!

** Cox, Mythol. of Aryan Nations, i. 109.*

** *Max Müller, Chips, ii. 216.*

Common sense insists, says M. Cosquin, that this detail was invented once for all. It must have first occurred, not in a myth, but in a *conte* or *märchen*, from which all the others alike proceed. Therefore, if you wish the idea of the mouse and the ring and the sneeze to be a part of the store of the undivided Aryans, you must admit that they had *contes, märchen*, popular stories, what you call the *detritus* of myths, as well as myths themselves, before they left their cradle in Central Asia. “Nos ancetres, les peres des nations europeennes, auraient, de cette facon, emporte dans leurs fourgons la collection complete de contes Ibleus actuels.” In short, if there was no borrowing, myths have been reduced (on the Aryan theory) to the condition of *detritus*, to the diamond dust of marchen, before the Aryan people divided. But this is contrary to the hypothesis.

M. Cosquin does not pause here. The *märchen* — mouse, ring, sneeze and all — is found among *non-Aryan* tribes, “the inhabitants of Mardin in Mesopotamia and the Kariaines of Birmanie”.* Well, if there was no borrowing, how did the non-Aryan peoples get the story?

* *Cosquin, i, xi., xii., with his authorities in note 1.*

M. Cosquin concludes that the theory he attacks is untenable, and determines that, “after having been invented in this place or that, which we must discover” , “the popular tales of the various European nations (to mention these alone) have spread all over the world from people to people by way of borrowing”. In arriving at this opinion, M. Cosquin admits, as is fair, that the Grimms, not having our knowledge of non-Aryan *märchen* (Mongol, Syrian, Arab, Kabyle, Swahili, Annamite — he might have added very many more), could not foresee all the objections to the theory of a store common to Aryans alone.

Were we constructing an elaborate treatise on *märchen*, it would be well in this place to discuss the Aryan theory at greater length. That theory turns on the belief that popular stories are the *detritus* of Aryan myths. It would be necessary then to discuss the philological hypothesis of the origin and nature of these original Aryan myths themselves; but to do so would lead us far from the study of mere popular tales.*

Leaving the Aryan theory, we turn to that supported by M. Cosquin himself — the theory, as he says, of Benfey.**

Inspired by Benfey, M. Cosquin says: “The method must be to take each type of story successively, and to follow it, if we can, from age to age, from people to; people, and see where this voyage of discovery will lead us. Now, travelling thus from point to point, often by different routes, we always arrive at the same centre, namely, at India, *not the India of fabulous times*, but the India of actual history.”

The theory of M. Cosquin is, then, that the popular stories of the world, or rather the vast majority of them, were *invented* in India, and that they were carried from India, during the historical period, by various routes, till they were scattered over all the races among whom they are found.

This is a venturesome theory, and is admitted, apparently, to have its exceptions. For example, we possess ancient Egyptian popular tales corresponding to those of the rest of the world, but older by far than historical India, from which, according to M. Cosquin, the stories set forth on their travels.***

** It has already been attempted in our Custom and Myth; Introduction to Mrs. Hunt’s Grimm; La Mythologie, and elsewhere.*

*** For M. Benfey’s notions, see Bulletin de I’ Academie de Saint Petersburg, September 4-16, 1859, and Pantschatantra, Leipzig, 1859.*

**** See M. Maspero’s collection, Contes Populaires de l’Egypte Ancienne, Paris, 1882.*

One of these Egyptian tales, The Two Brothers, was actually written down on the existing manuscript in the time of Rameses II., some 1400 years before our era, and many centuries before India had any known history. No man can tell, moreover, how long it had existed before it was copied out by the scribe Ennana. Now this tale, according to M. Cosquin himself, has points in common with *märchen* from Hesse, Hungary, Russia, modern Greece, France, Norway, Lithuania, Hungary, Servia, Annam, modern India, and, we may add, with Samoyed *märchen*, with Hottentot *marchen*, and with *märchen* from an “aboriginal” people of India, the Santals.

We ask no more than this one *märchen* of ancient Egypt to upset the whole theory that India was the original home of the contes, and that from historic India they have been carried by oral transmission, and in literary vehicles, all over the world. First let us tell the story briefly, and then examine its incidents each separately, and set forth the consequences of that examination.

According to the story of *The Two Brothers* — Once upon a time there were two brothers; Anapou was the elder, the younger was called Bitiou. Anapou was married, and Bitiou lived with him as his servant. When he drove the cattle to feed, he heard what they said to each other, and drove them where they told him the pasture was best. One day his brother’s wife saw him carrying a very heavy burden of grain, and she fell in love with his force, and said, “Come and lie with me, and I will make thee goodly raiment”.

But he answered, “Art thou not as my mother, and my brother as a father to me? Speak to me thus no more, and never will I tell any man what a word thou hast said.”

Then she cast dust on her head, and went to her husband, saying, “Thy brother would have lain with me; slay him or I die”.

Then the elder brother was like a panther of the south, and he sharpened his knife, and lay in wait behind the door. And when the sun set, Bitiou came driving his cattle; but the cow that walked before them all said to him, “There stands thine elder brother with his knife drawn to slay thee”.

Then he saw the feet of his brother under the door, and he fled, his brother following him; and he cried to Ra, and Ra heard him, and between him and his brother made a great water flow full of crocodiles.

Now in the morning the younger brother told the elder all the truth, and he mutilated himself, and cast it into the water, and the *calmar* fish devoured it. And he said, “I go to the Valley of Acacias” (possibly a mystic name for the next world), “and in an acacia tree I shall place my heart; and if men cut the tree, and my heart falls, thou shalt seek it for seven years, and lay it in a vessel of water. Then shall I live again and requite the evil that hath been done unto me. And the sign that evil hath befallen me shall be when the cup of beer in thy hand is suddenly turbid and troubled.”

Then the elder brother cast dust on his head and besmeared his face, and went home and slew his wicked wife.

Now the younger brother dwelt in the Valley of Acacias, and all the gods came by that way, and they pitied his loneliness, and Chnum made for him a wife.* And the seven Hathors came and prophesied, saying, “*She shall die an ill death and a violent*”. And Bitiou loved her, and told her the secret of his life, and that he should die when his heart fell from the acacia tree.

** Chnum is the artificer among the gods.*

Now, a lock of the woman’s hair fell into the river, and it floated to the place where Pharaoh’s washermen were at work. And the sweet lock perfumed all the raiment of Pharaoh, and the washermen knew not wherefore, and they were rebuked. Then Pharaoh’s chief washerman went to the water and found the hair of the wife of Bitiou; and Pharaoh’s magicians went to him and said, “Our lord, thou must marry the woman from whose head this tress of hair hath floated hither”. And Pharaoh hearkened unto them, and he sent messengers even to the Valley of Acacias, and they came unto the wife of Bitiou. And she said, “First you must slay my husband”; and she showed them the acacia tree, and they out the flower that held the heart of Bitiou, and he died.

Then it so befel that the brother of Bitiou held in his hand a cup of beer, and, lo! the beer was troubled. And he said, “Alas, my brother!” and he sought his brother’s heart, and he found it in the berry of the acacia. Then he laid it in a cup of fresh water, and Bitiou drank of it, and his heart went into his own place, and lived again.

Then said Bitiou, “Lo! I shall become the bull, even Apis” (Hapi); and they led him to the king, and all men rejoiced that Apis was found. But the bull went into the chamber of the king’s women, and he spake to the woman that had been the wife of Bitiou. And she was afraid, and said to Pharaoh, “Wilt thou swear to give me my heart’s desire?” and he swore it with an oath. And she said, “Slay that bull that I may eat his liver”. Then felt Pharaoh sick for sorrow, yet for his oath’s sake he let slay the bull. And there fell of his blood two quarts on either side of the son of Pharaoh, and thence grew two persea trees, great and fair, and offerings were made to the trees, as they had been gods.

Then the wife of Pharaoh went forth in her chariot, and the tree spake to her, saying, “I am Bitiou”. And she let cut down that tree, and a chip leaped into her mouth, and she conceived and bare a son. And that child was Bitiou; and when he came to full age and was prince of that land, he called together the councillors of the king, and accused the woman, and they slew her. And he sent for his elder brother, and made him a prince in the land of Egypt.

We now propose to show, not only that the incidents of this tale — far more ancient than historic India as it is — are common in the *märchen* of many countries, but that they are inextricably entangled and intertwisted with the chief plots of popular tales. There are few of the main cycles of popular tales which do not contain, as essential parts of their machinery, one or more of the ideas and situations of this legend. There is thus at least a presumption that these cycles of story may have been in existence in the reign of Rameses II., and for an indefinite period earlier; while, if they were not, and if they are made of borrowed materials, it may have been from the Egypt of an unknown antiquity, not from much later Indian sources, that they were adapted.

The incidents will now be analysed and compared with those of *märchen* in general.

To this end let us examine the incidents in the ancient Egyptian tale of *The Two Brothers*. These incidents are: — (1) The *spretæ injuria formæ* of the wedded woman, who, having offered herself in vain to a man, her brother-in-law, accuses him of being her assailant. This incident, of course, occurs in Homer, in the tale of Bellerophon, before we know anything of historic India. This, moreover, seems one of the notions (M. Cosquin admits, with Benfey, that there are such notions) which are "universally human," and *might* be invented anywhere.

(2) The Egyptian Hippolytus is warned of his danger by his cow, which speaks with human voice. Every one will recognise the ram which warns Phrixus and Helle in the Jason legend.* In the Albanian *märchen,*** a *dog,* not a cow nor a ram, gives warning of the danger. Animals, in short, often warn of danger by spoken messages, as the fish does in the Brahmanic deluge-myth, and the dog in a deluge-myth from North America.

** The authority cited by the scholiast (Apoll. Rhod., Argon., i. 256) is Hecatseus. Scholiast on Iliad, vii. 86, quotes Philostephanus.*

*** Von Hahn, i. 65.*

(3) The accused brother is pursued by his kinsman, and about to be slain, when Ra, at his prayer, casts between him and the avenger a stream full of crocodiles. This incident is at least not very unlike one of the most widely diffused of all incidents of story — the *flight* in which the runaways cause magical rivers or lakes suddenly to cut off the pursuer. This narrative of the flight and the obstacles is found in Scotch, Gaelic, Japanese (no water obstacle), Zulu, Russian, Samoan, and in "The Red Horse of the Delawares," a story from Dacotah, as well as in India and elsewhere.* The difference is, that in the Egyptian *conte*, as it has reached us in literary form, the fugitive appeals to Ra to help him, instead of magically making a river by throwing water or a bottle behind him, as is customary. It may be conjectured that the substitution of divine intervention in response to prayer for magical self-help is the change made by a priestly scribe in the traditional version.**

** See Folk-Lore Journal, April, 1886, review of Houston's Popular Stories, for examples of the magic used in the flight.*

*** Maspero, Contes, , note 1.*

(4) Next morning the brothers parley across the stream. The younger first mutilates himself (*Atys*) then says he is going to the vale of the acacia, according to M. Maspero probably a name for the other world. Meanwhile the younger brother will put his *heart* in a high acacia tree. If the tree is cut down, the elder brother must search for the *heart,* and place it in a jar of water, when the younger brother will revive. Here we have the idea which recurs in the Samoyed marchen where the men lay aside their hearts, in which are their separable lives. As Mr.

Ralston says,* "This heart-breaking episode occurs in the tales of many lands”. In the Russian the story is Koschchei the deathless, whose “death” (or life) lies in an egg, in a duck, on a log, in the ice.** As Mr. Ralston well remarks, a very singular parallel to the revival of the Egyptian brothers heart in water is the Hottentot tale of a girl eaten by a lion. Her heart is extracted from the lion, is placed in a calabash of milk, and the girl comes to life again.***

(5) The younger brother gives the elder a sign magical, whereby he shall know how it fares with the heart. When a cup of beer suddenly grows turbid, then evil has befallen the heart. This is merely one of the old *sympathetic signs* of story — the opal that darkens; the comb of Lemminkainen in the *Kalewala* that drops blood when its owner is in danger; the stick that the hero erects as he leaves home, and which will fall when he is imperilled. In Australia the natives practise this magic with a stick, round which they bind the hair of the distant person about whose condition they want to be informed.**** This incident, turning on the belief in *sympathies*, might perhaps be regarded as “universally human” and capable of being invented anywhere.

** Russian Folk-Tales, 109.*

*** In Norse, Asbjornsen and Moe, 36; Dasent, 9. Gaelic, Campbell, i. 4, . Indian, “Punchkin,” Old Deccan Days, p-16. Samoyed, Castren, Ethnol. Varies liber die Altaischen Volker., .*

**** Bleek, Reynard the Fox of South Africa, .*

***** Dawson, Australian Aborigines, , 1881. The stick used is the “throwing stick” wherewith the spear is hurled,(6) The elder brother goes home and kills his wife. The gods pity the younger Bitiou in the Valley of Acacias, and make him a wife.*

M. Cosquin has found in France the trait of the blood that boils in the glass when the person concerned is in danger.

(7) The three Hathors come to her creation, and prophesy for her a violent death. For this incident compare Perrault’s *The Sleeping Beauty* and Maury’s work on *Les Fees*. The spiritual midwives and prophetesses at the hour of birth are familiar in *märchen* as Fairies, and Fates, and Mæræ.

(8) The river carries a tress of the hair of Bitiou’s wife to the feet of Pharaoh’s washermen; the scent perfumes all the king’s linen. Pharaoh falls in love with the woman from whose locks this tress has come. For this incident compare *Cinderella*. In Santal and Indian *märchen* a tress of hair takes the place of the

glass-slipper, and the amorous prince or princess will only marry the person from whose head the lock has come. Here M. Cosquin himself gives Siamese, Mongol, Bengali (Lai Behar Day,), and other examples of the lock of hair doing duty for the slipper with which the lover is smitten, and by which he recognises his true love.

(9) The wife of Bitiou reveals the secret of his heart. The people of Pharaoh cut down the acacia tree.

(10) His brother reads in the turbid beer the death of Bitiou. He discovers the heart and life in a berry of the acacia.

It is superfluous to give modern parallels to the various transformations of the life of Bitiou. He becomes an Apis bull, and his faithless wife desires his death, and wishes to eat his liver, but his life goes on in other forms. This is merely the familiar situation of the ass in *Peau d'Ane* (the ass who clearly, before Perrault's time, had been human).

Demandez lui la peau de ce rare animal!

In most traditional versions of *Cinderella* will be found examples of the beast, once human, slain by an enemy, yet potent after death. This beast takes the part given by Perrault to the fairy godmother. The idea is also familiar in Grimm's *Machandelboom* (47), and was found by Casalis among the Bechuanas.

(11) The wicked wife obtains the bull Apis's death by virtue of a *hasty oath* of Pharaoh's (*Jephtha, Herodias*).

(12) The blood of the bull grows into two persea trees.

Here M. Cosquin himself supplies parallels of blood turning into trees from Hesse (Wolf,) and from Russian. We may add the ancient Lydian myth. When the gods slew Agdistis, a drop of his blood became an almond tree, the fruit of which made women pregnant.*

* *Pausanias, vii. 17.*

(13) The persea tree is also cut down by the wicked wife of Bitiou. A chip from its boughs is swallowed by the wicked wife, who conceives, like Margata in the *Kalewala*, and bears a son.

The story of Agdistis, just quoted, is in point, but the topic is of enormous range, and the curious may consult *Le Fils de Vierge* by M. H. De Charencey. Compare also Surya Bay in *Old Deccan Days* (6). The final resurrection of Surya Bay is exactly like that in the Hottentot tale already quoted. Surya is drowned by a jealous rival, becomes a golden flower, is burned, becomes a mango; one of the fruits falls into a calabash of milk, and out of the calabash, like the Hottentot girl, comes Surya!

(14) The son of the persea tree was Bitiou, born of his own faithless wife; and when he grew up he had her put to death.

Even a hasty examination of these incidents from old Egypt proves that before India was heard of in history the people of the Pharaohs possessed a large store of incidents perfectly familiar in modern marchen. Now, if one single Egyptian tale yields this rich supply, it is an obvious presumption that the collection of an Egyptian Grimm might, and probably would, have furnished us with the majority of the situations common in popular tales. M. Cosquin himself remarks that these ideas cannot be invented more than once (I. lxvii.). The other Egyptian contes, as that of *Le Prince Predestine* (twentieth dynasty), and the noted *Master Thief* of Herodotus (ii. 121), are merely familiar marchen of the common type, and have numerous well-known analogues.

From all these facts M. Cosquin draws no certain conclusions. He asks: Did Egypt borrow these tales from India, or India from Egypt? *And were there Aryans in India in the time of Rameses II.?*

These questions are beyond conjecture. We know nothing of Egyptian relations with prehistoric India. We know not how many aeons the tale of *The Two Brothers* may have existed in Egypt before Ennana, the head librarian, wrote it out for Pharaoh’s treasurer, Qagabou.

What we do know is, that if we find a large share of the whole stock of incident of popular tale fully developed in one single story long before India was historic, it is perfectly vain to argue that all stories were imported from historic India. It is impossible to maintain that the single centre whence the stories spread was not the India of fable, but the India of history, when we discover such abundance of story material in Egypt before, as far as is known, India \ had even become the India of fable.

The topic is altogether too obscure for satisfactory argument. Certainly the *märchen* were at home in Egypt before we have even reason to believe that Egypt and India were conscious of each other’s existence.

The antiquity of *märchen* by the Nile-side touches geological time, if we agree with M. Maspero that Bitiou is a form of Osiris, that is, that the Osiris myth may have been developed out of the Bitiou *märchen*.*

* *Maspero, op. cit., , note 1.*

The Osiris myth is as old as the Egypt we know, and the story of Bitiou may be either the *detritus* or the germ of the myth. This gives it a dateless antiquity; and with this *märchen* the kindred and allied *märchen* establish a claim to enormous age. But it is quite impossible to say when these tales were first invented. We cannot argue that the cradle of a story is the place where it first received literary form. We know not whence the Egyptians came to Nile-side; we know not whether they brought the story with them, or found it among some nameless earlier people, fugitives from Kor, perhaps, or anywhere else. We know not whether the remote ancestors of modern peoples, African, or European, or Asiatic, who now possess forms of the tale, borrowed it from a people more ancient than Egypt, or from Egypt herself. These questions are at present insoluble. We only know for certain that, when we find anywhere any one of the numerous incidents of the story of *The Two Brothers*, we can be certain that their original home was *not* historic India. There is also the presumption that, if we knew more of the tales of ancient Egypt, we could as definitely refuse to regard historic India as the cradle of many other *märchen*.

Thus, in opposition to the hypothesis of borrowing from India, we reach some distinct and assured, though negative, truths.

1. So far as the ideas in *The Two Brothers* are representative of *märchen* (and these ideas are inextricably interwoven with some of the most typical legends), *historic* India is certainly and demonstrably *not* the cradle of popular tales. These are found far earlier already in the written literature of Egypt.

2. As far as these ideas are representative of *märchen*, there is absolutely no evidence to show that *märchen* sprang from India, whether historical or prehistoric; nor is any connection proved between ancient Egypt and prehistoric India.

3. As far as *märchen* are represented by the ideas in *The Two Brothers* and the *Predestined Prince*, there is absolutely no evidence to show in what region or where they were originally invented.

The Bellerophon story rests on a *donnee* in *The Two Brothers*; the *Flight* rests on another; *Cinderella* reposes on a third; the giant with no heart in his body depends on a fourth; the *Milk-White Dove* on the same; and these incidents occur in Hottentot, Bechuana, Samoyed, Samoan, as well as in Greek, Scotch, German, Gaelia Now, as all these incidents existed in Egyptian *marchen* fourteen hundred years before Christ, they *may* have been dispersed without Indian intervention. One of the white raiders from the Northern Sea may have been made captive, like the pseud-Odysseus, in Egypt; may have heard the tales; may have been ransomed, and carried the story to Greece or Libya, whence a Greek got it. Southwards it may have passed up the Nile to the Great Lakes, and down the Congo and Zambesi, and southward ever with the hordes of T’Chaka’s ancestors. All these processes are possible and even probable, but absolutely nothing is known for certain on the subject. It is only as manifest as facts can be that all this might have occurred if the Indian peninsula *did not exist.* Another objection to the hypothesis of distribution from historic India is the existence of sagas or epic legends corresponding to marchen in pre-Homeric Greece. The story of Jason, for example, is in its essential features, perhaps, the most widely diffused of all.* The story of the return of the husband, and of his difficult recognition by his wife, the central idea of the *Odyssey,* is of wide distribution, and the *Odyssey* (as Fenelon makes the ghost of Achilles tell Homer in Hades) is *un amas de contes de vieilles*. The Cyclops, the Siren, Scylla, and the rest,** these tales did not reach Greece from historic India at least, and we have no reason for supposing that India before the dawn of history was their source.

** Custom and Myth, "A Far-Travelled Tale ".*

*** Gerland, Alt Griechische Marchen in der Odyssee.*

The reasons for which India has been regarded as a great centre and fountain-head of popular stories are, on the other hand, excellent, if the theory is sufficiently limited. The cause is *vera causa*. Marchen certainly did set out from mediaeval India, and reached mediaeval Europe and Asia in abundance. Not to speak of oral communications in the great movements, missions and migrations, Tartar, crusading, Gypsy, commercial and Buddhistic — in all of which there must have been "swopping of stories" — it is certain that Western literature was actually invaded by the *contes* which had won away into the literature of India.* These are facts beyond doubt, but these facts must not be made the basis of too wide an inference. Though so many stories have demonstrably been borrowed from India in the historical period, it is no less certain that many existed in Europe before their introduction. Again, as has been ably argued by a writer in the *Athenaeum* (April 23, 1887), the literary versions of the tales probably had but a limited influence on the popular narrators, the village gossips and grandmothers. Thus no collection of published tales has ever been more popular than that of Charles Perrault, which for many years has been published not only in cheap books, but in cheaper broadsheets.

** Cosquin, op. cit., i. xv., xxiv.; Max Müller, "The Migrations of Fables," Selected Essays, vol. ii., Appendix; Benfey, Pantschatantra; Comparetti, Introduction to Book of Sindibad, English translation of the Folk-Lore Society.*

Yet M. Sebillot and other French collectors gather from the lips of peasants versions of *Cinderella*, for example, quite unaffected by Perrault's version, and rich in archaic features, such as the presence of a miracle-working beast instead of a fairy godmother. That detail is found in Kaffir, and Santhal, and Finnish, as well as in Celtic, and Portuguese, and Scottish variants, and has been preserved in popular French traditions, despite the influence of Perrault. In the same way, M. Carnoy finds only the faintest traces of the influence of a collection so popular as the *Arabian Nights*. The peasantry regard tales which they read in books as quite apart from their inherited store of legend.*

** Sebillot's popular Cendrillon is Le Taureau Bleu in Contes* *de la Haute Bretagne. See also M. Carnoy's Contes Francais, 1885, .*

If printed literature has still so little power over popular tradition, the manuscript literature of the Middle Ages must have had much less, though sometimes *contes* from India were used as parables by preachers. Thus we must beware of over-estimating the effect of importation from India, even where it distinctly existed. Even the versions that were brought in the Middle Ages by oral tradition must have encountered versions long settled in Europe — versions which may have been current before any scribe of Egypt perpetuated a legend on papyrus.

Once more, the Indian theory has to account for the presence of tales in Africa and America among populations which are not known to have had any contact with India at all. Where such examples are urged, it is usual to say that the stories either do not really resemble our *märchen*, or are quite recent importations by Europeans, Dutch, French, English and others.* Here we are on ground where proof is difficult, if not impossible. Assuredly French influence declares itself in certain narratives collected from the native tribes of North America. On the other hand, when the *märchen* is interwoven with the national traditions and poetry of a remote people, and with the myths by which they account to themselves for the natural features of their own country, the hypothesis of recent borrowing from Europeans appears insufficient. A striking example is the song of Siati (a form of the Jason myth) among the people of Samoa.** Even more remarkable is the presence of a crowd of familiar *märchen* in the national traditions of the Huarochiri, a pre-Inca civilised race of Southern Peru. These were published, or at least collected and written down, by Francisco de Avila, a Spanish priest, about 1608. He remarks that "these traditions are deeply rooted in the hearts of the people of this province".*** These traditions refer to certain prehistoric works of engineering or accidents of soil, whereby the country was drained. The Huarochiri explained them by a series of *märchen* about Huthiacuri, Pariaca (culture-heroes), and about friendly animals which aided them in the familiar way. In the same manner exactly the people of the Marais of Poitou have to account for the drainage of the country, a work of the twelfth century.

** Cosquin, op. cit, 1, xix.*

*** Turner's Samoa, .*

**** Rites of the Incas. Hakluyt Society. The third document in the book. The märchen have been examined by me in The*

Marriage of Cupid and Psyche, .

They attribute the old works to the local hero, Gargantua, who “drank up all the water”.* No one supposes that this legend is borrowed from Rabelais, and it seems even more improbable that the Huarochiri hastily borrowed *märchen* from the Spaniards, and converted them before 1600 into national myths.

** Revue des Traditions Populaires, April 25,1887, .*

We have few opportunities of finding examples of remote American *märchen* recorded so early as this, and generally the hypothesis of recent borrowing from Europeans, or from Negroes influenced by Europeans, is at least possible, and it would be hard to prove a negative. But the case of the Huarochiri throws doubt on the hypothesis of recent borrowing as the invariable cause of the diffusion of *märchen* in places beyond the reach of historic India.

The only way (outside of direct evidence) to prove borrowing would be to show that ideas and customs peculiarly Indian (for example) occur in the *märchen* of people destitute of these ideas. But it would be hard to ask believers in the Indian theory to exhibit such survivals. In the first place, if *contes* have been borrowed, it seems that a new “local colour” was given to them almost at the moment of transference. The Zulu and Kaffir *märchen* are steeped in Zulu and Kaffir colour, and the life they describe is rich in examples of rather peculiar native rites and ceremonies, seldom if ever essential to the conduct of the tale. Thus, if stories are “adapted” (like French plays) in the moment of borrowing, it will be cruel to ask supporters of the Indian theory for traces of Indian traits and ideas in European *märchen*. Again, apart from special yet non-essential matters of etiquette (such as the ceremonies with which certain kinsfolk are treated, or the initiation of girls at the marriageable age), the ideas and customs found in marchen are practically universal As has been shown, the supernatural stuff — metamorphosis, equality of man, beasts and things, magic and the like — *is* universal. Thus little remains that could be fixed on as especially the custom or idea of any one given people. For instance, in certain variants of *Puss in Boots*, Swahili, Avar, Neapolitan, the beast-hero makes it a great point that, when he dies, he is to be *honourably buried*. Now what peoples give beasts honourable burial? We know the cases of ancient Egyptians, Samoans, Arabs and Athenians (in the case, at least, of the wolf), and probably there are many more. Thus even so peculiar an idea or incident as this cannot be proved to belong to a definite region, or to come from any one original centre.*

** See Deulin, Gontes de ma Mire l’Oye, and Reinhold Kohler*
in Gonzenbach’s Siclianische Marchen, No. 65.

By the very nature of the case, therefore, it is difficult for M. Cosquin and other supporters of the Indian theory to prove the existence of Indian ideas in

European marchen. Nor do they establish this point. They urge that *charity to beasts* and the *gratitude of beasts*, as contrasted with human lack of gratitude, are Indian, and perhaps Buddhist ideas. Thus the Buddha gave his own living body to a famished tigress. But so, according to Garcilasso, were the subjects of the Incas wont to do, and they were not Buddhists. The beasts in marchen, again, are just as often, or even more frequently, helpful to men without any motive of gratitude; nor would it be fair to argue that the notion of gratitude has dropped out, because we find friendly beasts all the world over, totems and manitous, who have never been benefited by man. The favours are all on the side of the totems. It is needless to adduce again the evidence on this topic. M. Cosquin adds that the belief in the equality and interchangeability of attributes and aspect between man and beast is “une idee bien indienne,” and derived from the doctrine of metempsychosis, “qui efface la distinction entre l’homme et l’animal, et qui en tout vivant voit un frere”. But it has been demonstrated that this belief in the equality and kinship not only of all animate, but all inanimate nature, is the very basis of Australian, Zuni and all other philosophies of the backward races. No idea can be less peculiar to India; it is universal. Once more, the belief that shape-shifting (metamorphosis) can be achieved by skin-shifting, by donning or doffing the hide of a beast, is no more “peculiarly Indian” than the other conceptions. Benfey, to be sure, laid stress on this point;* but it is easy to produce examples of skin-shifting and consequent metamorphosis from Roman, North American, Old Scandinavian, Thlinkeet, Slav and Vogul ritual and myths.** There remains only a trace of polygamy in European marchen to speak of specially Indian influence.*** But polygamy is not peculiar to India, nor is monogamy a recent institution in Europe.

** Pantschatantra, I 265.*

*** Marriage of Cupid and Psyche, p., lxiv., where examples and authorities are given.*

**** Cosquin, op. cit, i., xxx.*

Thus each “peculiarly Indian” idea supposed to be found in marchen proves to be practically universal. So the whole Indian hypothesis is attacked on every side. *Contes* are far older than *historic* India. Nothing raises even a presumption that they first arose in *prehistoric* India. They are found in places where they could hardly have travelled from historic India. Their ideas are not peculiarly Indian, and though many reached Europe and Asia in literary form derived from India during the Middle Ages, and were even used as parables in sermons, yet the majority of European folk-tales have few traces of Indian influence. Some examples of this influence, as when the “frame-work” of an Oriental collection has acquired popular circulation, will be found in Professor Crane’s interesting book, *Italian Popular Tales*, p, 359. But to admit this is very different from asserting that German *Hausmarchen* are all derived from “Indian and Arabian originals, with necessary changes of costume and manners,” which is, apparently, the opinion of some students.

What remains to do is to confess ignorance of the original centre of the *märchen*, and inability to decide dogmatically which stories must have been invented only once for all, and which may have come together by the mere blending of the universal elements of imagination. It is only certain that no limit can be put to a story’s power of flight *per ora virum*. It may wander wherever merchants wander, wherever captives are dragged, wherever slaves are sold, wherever the custom of exogamy commands the choice of alien wives. Thus the story flits through the who let race and over the whole world. Wherever human communication is or has been possible, there the story may go, and the space of time during which the courses of the sea and the paths of the land have been open to story is dateless and unknown. Here the story may dwindle to a fireside tale; there it may become an epic in the mouth of Homer or a novel in the hands of Madame D’Aulnoy or Miss Thackeray. The savage makes the characters beasts or birds; the epic \ poet or saga-man made them heroic kings, or lovely, baleful sorceresses, daughters of the Sun; the French Countess makes them princesses and countesses. Like its own heroes, the popular story can assume every shape; like some of them, it has drunk the waters of immortality.*

** A curious essay by Mr. H. E. Warner, on “The Magical Flight,” urges that there is no plot, but only a fortuitous congeries of story-atoms (Scribner’s Magazine, June, 1887). There is a good deal to be said, in this case, for Mr. Warner’s conclusions.*

APPENDIX A. Fontenelle’s forgotten common sense

In the opinion of Aristotle, most discoveries and inventions have been made time after time and forgotten again. Aristotle may not have been quite correct in this view; and his remarks, perhaps, chiefly applied to politics, in which every conceivable and inconceivable experiment has doubtless been attempted. In a field of less general interest — namely, the explanation of the absurdities of mythology — the true cause was discovered more than a hundred years ago by a man of great reputation, and then was quietly forgotten. Why did the ancient peoples — above all, the Greeks — tell such extremely gross and irrational stories about their Gods and heroes? That is the riddle of the mythological Sphinx. It was answered briefly, wittily and correctly by Fontenelle; and the answer was neglected, and half a dozen learned but impossible theories have since come in and out of fashion. Only within the last ten years has Fontenelle’s idea been, not resuscitated, but rediscovered. The followers of Mr. E. B. Taylor, Mannhardt, Gaidoz, and the rest, do not seem to be aware that they are only repeating the notions of the nephew of Corneille.

The Academician’s theory is stated in a short essay, De l’Origine des Fables (OEuvres: Paris, 1758, vol. iii. p.270). We have been so accustomed from childhood, he says, to the absurdities of Greek myth, that we have ceased to be aware that they are absurd. Why are the legends of men and beasts and Gods so incredible and revolting? Why have we ceased to tell such tales? The answer is, that early men were in “a state of almost inconceivable savagery and ignorance,” and that the Greek myths are inherited from people in that condition. “Look at the Kaffirs and Iroquois,” says Fontenelle, “if you wish to know what early men were like; and remember that even the Iroquois and Kaffirs are people with a long past, with knowledge and culture (*politesse*) which the first men did not enjoy.” Now the more ignorant a man is, the more prodigies he supposes himself to behold. Thus the first narratives of the earliest men were full of monstrous things, “parce qu’ils etoient faits par des gens sujets a voir bien des choses qui n’etaient pas”. This condition answers, in Mr. Tylor’s system, to the confusion the savage makes between dreams and facts, and to the hallucinations which beset him when he does not get his regular meals. Here, then, we have a groundwork of irresponsible fancy.

The next step is this: even the rudest men are curious, and ask “the reason why” of phenomena. “Il y a eu de la philosophie meme dans ces siecles grossiers;” and this rude philosophy “greatly contributed to the origin of myths “. Men looked for causes of things. “‘Whence comes this river?’ asked the reflective man of those ages — a queer philosopher, yet one who might have been a Descartes did he live to-day. After long meditation, he concluded that some one had always to keep filling the source whence the stream springs. And whence came the water? Our philosopher did not consider so curiously. He had evolved the myth of a water-nymph or naiad, and there he stopped. The characteristic of these mythical explanations — as of all philosophies, past, present and to come — was that they were limited by human experience. Early man’s experience showed him that effects were produced by conscious, sentient, personal causes like himself. He sprang to the conclusion that all hidden causes were also persons. These persons are the *dramatis personœ* of myth. It was a person who caused thunder, with a hammer or a mace; or it was a bird whose wings produced the din.

“From this rough philosophy which prevailed in the early ages were born the gods and goddesses” — deities made not only in the likeness of man, but of savage man as he, in his ignorance and superstition, conceived himself to be. Fontenelle might have added that those fancied personal causes who became gods were also fashioned in the likeness of the beasts, whom early man regarded as his equals or superiors. But he neglects this point. He correctly remarks that the gods of myth appear immoral to us because they were devised by men whose morality was all unlike ours — who prized justice less than power, especially (he might have added) magical power. As morality ripened into self-consciousness, the gods improved with the improvement of men; and “the gods known to Cicero are much better than those known to Homer, because better philosophers have had a hand at their making”. Moreover, in the earliest speculations an imaginative and hair-brained philosophy explained all that seemed extraordinary in nature; while the sphere of philosophy was filled by fanciful narratives about facts. The constellations called the Bears were accounted for as metamorphosed men and women. Indeed, “all the metamorphoses are the physical philosophy of these early times,” which accounted for every fact by what we now calletiological nature-myths. Even the peculiarities of birds and beasts were thus explained. The partridge flies low because Daedalus (who had seen his son Icarus perish through a lofty flight) was changed into a partridge. This habit of mind, which finds a story for the solution of every problem, survives, Fontenelle remarks, in what we now call folk-lore — popular tradition. Thus, the elder tree is said to have borne as good berries as the vine does till Judas Iscariot hanged himself from its branches. This story must be later than Christianity; but it is precisely identical in character with those ancient metamorphoses which Ovid collected. The kind of fancy that produced these and other prodigious myths is not peculiar, Fontenelle maintains, to Eastern peoples. “It is common to all men,” at a certain mental stage— “in the tropics or in the regions of eternal ice.” Thus the worldwide similarities of myths are, on the whole, the consequence of a worldwide uniformity of intellectual development.

Fontenelle hints at his proof of this theory. He compares the myths of America with those of Greece, and shows that distance in space and difference of race do not hinder Peruvians and Athenians from being “in the same tale”. “For the Greeks, with all their intelligence, did not, in their beginnings, think more rationally than the savages of America, who were also, apparently, a rather primitive people (*assez nouveau*).” He concludes that the Americans might have become as sensible as the Greeks if they had been allowed the leisure.

With an exception in the Israelites, Fontenelle decides that all nations made the astounding part of their myths while they were savages, and retained them from custom and religious conservatism. But myths were also borrowed and interchanged between Phoenicia, Egypt and Greece. Further, Greek misunderstandings of the meanings of Phoenician and other foreign words gave rise to myths. Finally, myths were supposed to contain treasures of antique mysterious wisdom; and mythology was explained by systems which themselves are only myths, stories told by the learned to themselves and to the public.

“It is not science to fill one’s head with the follies of Phoenicians and Greeks, but it is science to understand what led Greeks and Phoenicians to imagine these follies.” A better and briefer system of mythology could not be devised; but the Mr. Casaubons of this world have neglected it, and even now it is beyond their comprehension.

APPENDIX B. Reply to Objections

In a work which perhaps inevitably contains much controversial matter, it has seemed best to consign to an Appendix the answers to objections against the method advocated. By this means the attention is less directed from the matter in hand, the exposition of the method itself. We have announced our belief that a certain element in mythology is derived from the mental condition of savages. To this it is replied, with perfect truth, that there are savages and savages; that a vast number of shades of culture and of nascent or retrograding civilisation exist among the races to whom the term "savage" is commonly applied. This is not only true, but its truth is part of the very gist of our theory. It is our contention that myth is sensibly affected by the varieties of culture which prevail among so-called savage tribes, as they approach to or decline from the higher state of barbarism. The anthropologist is, or ought to be, the last man to lump all savages together, as if they were all on the same level of culture.

When we speak of "the savage mental condition," we mean the mental condition of all uncultivated races who still fail to draw any marked line between man and the animate or inanimate things in the world, and who explain physical phenomena on a vague theory, more or less consciously held, that all nature is animated and endowed with human attributes. This state of mind is nowhere absolutely extinct; it prevails, to a limited extent, among untutored European peasantry, and among the children of the educated classes. But this intellectual condition is most marked and most powerful among the races which ascend from the condition of the Australian Murri and the Bushmen, up to the comparatively advanced Maoris of New Zealand and Algonkins or Zunis of North America. These are the sorts of people who, for our present purpose, must be succinctly described as still in the savage condition of the imagination.

Again, it is constantly objected to our method that we have no knowledge of the past of races at present in the savage status. "The savage are as old as the civilised races, and can as little be named primitive," writes Dr. Fairbairn.* Mr. Max Müller complains with justice of authors who "speak of the savage of to-day as if he had only just been sent into the world, forgetting that, as a living species, he is probably not a day younger than ourselves".** But Mr. Max Müller has himself admitted all we want, namely, *that savages or nomads represent an earlier stage of culture than even the ancient Sanskrit-speaking Aryans*, This follows from the learned writer's assertion that savage tongues, Kaffir and so forth, are still in the childhood which Hebrew and the most ancient Sanskrit had long left behind them.*** “We see in them” (savage languages) “what we can no longer expect to see even in the most ancient Sanskrit or Hebrew. We watch the childhood of language with all its childish pranks.” These “pranks” are the result of the very habits of savage thought which we regard as earlier than “the most ancient Sanskrit”.

** Academy, 20th July, 1878. a*

*** Hibb. Lect., .*

**** Lectures on Science of Language, 2nd series, .*

Thus Mr. Max Müller has admitted all that we need — admitted that savage language (and therefore, in his view, savage thought) is of an earlier stratum than, for example, the language of the Vedas. No more valuable concession could be made by a learned opponent.

Objections of an opposite character, however, are pushed, along with the statement that we have no knowledge of the past of savages. Savages were not always what they are now; they may have degenerated from a higher condition; their present myths may be the corruption of something purer and better; above all, savages are not *primitive*.

All this contention, whatever its weight, does not affect the thesis of the present argument. It is quite true that we know nothing directly of the condition, let us say, of the Australian tribes a thousand years ago except that it has left absolutely no material traces of higher culture. But neither do we know anything directly about the condition of the Indo-European peoples five hundred years before Philology fancies that she gets her earliest glimpse of them. We must take people as we find them, and must not place too much trust in our attempts to reconstruct their “dark backward”. As to the past of savages, it is admitted by most anthropologists that certain tribes have probably seen better days. The Fuegians and the Bushmen and the Digger Indians were probably driven by stronger races out of seats comparatively happy and habits comparatively settled into their present homes and their present makeshift wretchedness.*

** The Fuegiaus are not (morally and socially) so black as they have occasionally been painted. But it is probable that they “have seen better days”. If the possession of a language with, apparently, a very superfluous number of words is a proof of high civilisation in the past, then the Fuegians are degraded indeed. But the finding of one piece of native pottery in an Australian burial-mound would prove* *more than a wilderness of irregular verbs.*

But while degeneration is admitted as an element in history, there seems no tangible reason for believing that the highest state which Bushmen, Fuegians, or Diggers ever attained, and from which they can be thought to have fallen, was higher than a rather more comfortable savagery. There are ups and downs in savage as in civilised life, and perhaps “crowned races may degrade,” but we have no evidence to show that the ancestors of the Diggers or the Fuegians were a “crowned race”. Their descent has not been comparatively a very deep one; their presumed former height was not very high. As Mr. Tylor observes, “So far as history is to be our criterion, progression is primary and degradation secondary; culture must be gained before it can be lost”. One thing about the past of savages we do know: it must have been a long past, and there must have been a period in it when the savage had even less of what Aristotle calls (——— —) even less of the equipment and provision necessary for a noble life than he possesses at present. His past must have been long, because great length of time is required for the evolution of his exceedingly complex customs, such as his marriage laws and his minute etiquette. Mr. Herbert Spencer has deduced from the multiplicity, elaborateness and wide diffusion of Australian marriage laws the inference that the Australians were once more civilised than they are now, and had once a kind of central government and police. But to reason thus is to fail back on the old Greek theory which for every traditional custom imagined an early legislative hero, with a genius for devising laws, and with power to secure their being obeyed. The more generally accepted view of modern science is that law and custom are things slowly evolved under stress of human circumstances. It is certain that the usual process is from the extreme complexity of savage to the clear simplicity of civilised rules of forbidden degrees. Wherever we see an advancing civilisation, we see that it does not put on new, complex and incomprehensible regulations, but that it rather sloughs off the old, complex and incomprehensible regulations bequeathed to it by savagery.

This process is especially manifest in the laws of forbidden degrees in marriage — laws whose complexity among the Australians or North American Indians “might puzzle a mathematician,” and whose simplicity in a civilised country seems transparent even to a child. But while the elaborateness and stringency of savage customary law point to a more, and not a less barbarous past, they also indicate a past of untold duration. Somewhere in that past also it is evident that the savage must have been even worse off materially than he is at present. Even now he can light a fire; he has a bow, or a boomerang, or a blowpipe, and has attained very considerable skill in using his own rough tools of flint and his weapons tipped with quartz. Now man was certainly not born in the possession of fire; he did not come into the world with a bow or a boomerang in his hand, nor with an instinct which taught him to barb his fishing-hooks. These implements he had to learn to make and use, and till he had learned to use them and make them his condition must necessarily have been more destitute of material equipment than that of any races known to us historically. Thus all that can be inferred about the past of savages is that it was of vast duration, and that at one period man was more materially destitute, and so far more struggling and forlorn, than the Murri of Australia were when first discovered by Europeans. Even then certain races *may* have had intellectual powers and potentialities beyond those of other races. Perhaps the first fathers of the white peoples of the North started with better brains and bodies than the first fathers of the Veddahs of Ceylon; but they all started naked, tool-less, fire-less. The only way of avoiding these conclusions is to hold-that men, or some favoured races of man, were created with civilised instincts and habits of thought, and were miraculously provided with the first necessaries of life, or were miraculously instructed to produce them without passing through slow stages of experiment, invention and modification. But we might as well assume, with some early Biblical commentators, that the naked Adam in Paradise was miraculously clothed in a vesture of refulgent light. Against such beliefs we have only to say that they are without direct historical confirmation of any kind.

But if, for the sake of argument, we admit the belief that primitive man was miraculously endowed, and was placed at once in a stage of simple and happy civilisation, our thesis still remains unaffected. Dr. Fairbairn’s saying has been quoted, “The savage are as old as the civilised races, and can as little be called primitive”. But we do not wish to call savages primitive. We have already said that savages have a far-stretching unknown history behind them, and that (except on the supposition of miraculous enlightenment followed by degradation) their past must have been engaged in slowly evolving their rude arts, their strange beliefs and their elaborate customs. Undeniably there is nothing “primitive” in a man who can use a boomerang, and who must assign each separate joint of the kangaroo he kills to a separate member of his family circle, while to some of those members he is forbidden by law to speak. Men were not born into the world with all these notions. The lowest savage has sought out or inherited many inventions, and cannot be called “primitive”. But it never was part of our argument that savages *are* primitive. Our argument does not find it necessary to claim savagery as the state from which all men set forth. About what was “primitive,” as we have no historical information on the topic, we express no opinion at all. Man may, if any one likes to think so, have appeared on earth in a state of perfection, and may have degenerated from that condition. Some such opinion, that purity and reasonableness are “nearer the beginning” than absurdity and unreasonableness, appears to be held by Mr. Max Müller, who remarks, “I simply say that in the Veda we have a nearer approach to a beginning, and an intelligible beginning, than in the wild invocations of Hottentots or Bushmen”.*

* *Lectures on India.*

Would Mr. Müller add, “I simply say that in the arts and political society of the Vedic age we have a nearer approach to a beginning than in the arts and society of Hottentots and Bushmen”? Is the use of chariots, horses, ships — are kings, walled cities, agriculture, the art of weaving, and so forth, all familiar to the Vedic poets, nearer the beginning of man’s civilisation than the life of the naked or skin-clad hunter who has not yet learned to work the metals, who acknowledges no king, and has no certain abiding-place? If not, why is the religion of the civilised man nearer the beginning than that of the man who is not civilised? We have already seen that, in Mr. Max Muller’s opinion, his language is much farther from the beginning.

Whatever the primitive condition of man may have been, it is certain that savagery was a stage through which he and his institutions have passed, or from which he has copiously borrowed. He may have degenerated from perfection, or from a humble kind of harmless simplicity, into savagery. He may have risen into savagery from a purely animal condition. But however this may have been, modern savages are at present in the savage condition, and the ancestors of the civilised races passed through or borrowed from a similar savage condition. As Mr. Tylor says, “It is not necessary to inquire how the savage state first came to be upon the earth. It is enough that, by some means or other, it has actually come into existence.”* It is a stage through which all societies have passed, or (if that be contested) a condition of things from which all societies have borrowed. This view of the case has been well put by M. Darmesteter.**

* *Prim. Cult., i 37.*

** *Revue Critique, January, 1884.*

He is speaking of the history of religion. “If savages do not represent religion in its germ, if they do not exemplify that vague and indefinite thing conventionally styled ‘primitive religion,’ at least they represent a stage through which all religions have passed. The proof is that a very little research into civilised religions discovers a most striking similarity between the most essential elements of the civilised and the non-historic creeds.” Proofs of this have been given when we examined the myths of Greece.

We have next to criticise the attempts which have been made to discredit the *evidence* on which we rely for our knowledge of the intellectual constitution of the savage, and of his religious ideas and his myths and legends. If that evidence be valueless, our whole theory is founded on the sand.

The difficulties in the way of obtaining trustworthy information about the ideas, myths and mental processes of savages are not only proclaimed by opponents of the anthropological method, but are frankly acknowledged by anthropologists themselves. The task is laborious and delicate, but not impossible. Anthropology has, at all events, the advantage of studying an actual undeniably existing state of things, to sift the evidence as to that state of things, to examine the opportunities, the discretion, and the honesty of the witnesses, is part of the business of anthropology. A science which was founded on an uncritical acceptance of all the reports of missionaries, travellers, traders, and “beach-combers,” would be worth nothing. But, as will be shown, anthropology is fortunate in the possession of a touchstone, “like that,” as Theocritus says, “wherewith the money-changers try gold, lest perchance base metal pass for true”.

The “difficulties which beset travellers and missionaries in their description of the religious and intellectual life of savages” have been catalogued by Mr. Max Muller. As he is not likely to have omitted anything which tells against the evidence of missionaries and travellers, we may adopt his statement in an abridged shape, with criticisms, and with additional illustrations of our own.*

* *Hibbert Lectures,*

First, “Few men are quite proof against the fluctuations of public opinion”. Thus, in Rousseau’s time, many travellers saw savages with the eyes Rousseau — that is, as models of a simple “state of nature”. In the same way, we may add, modern educated travellers are apt to see savages in the light cast on them by Mr. Tylor or Sir John Lubbock. Mr. Im Thurn, in Guiana, sees with Mr. Tylor’s eyes; Messrs. Fison and Howitt, among the Kamilaroi in Australia, see with the eyes of Mr. Lewis Morgan, author of *Systems of Consanguinity*. Very well; we must allow for the bias in each case. But what are we to say when the travellers who lived long before Begnard report precisely the same facts of savage life as the witty Frenchman who wrote that “next to the ape, the Laplander is the animal nearest to man”? What are we to say when the mariner, or beach-comber, or Indian interpreter, who never heard of Rousseau, brings from Canada or the Marquesas Islands a report of ideas or customs which the trained anthropologist finds in New Guinea or the Admiralty Islands, and with which the Inca, Garcilasso de la Vega, was familiar in Peru? If the Wesleyan missionary in South Africa is in the same tale with the Jesuit in Paraguay or in China, while the Lutheran in Kamtschatka brings the same intelligence as that which they contribute, and all three are supported by the shipwrecked mariner in Tonga and by the squatter in Queensland, as well as by the evidence, from ancient times and lands, of Strabo, Diodorus and Pausanias, what then? Is it not clear that if pagan Greeks, Jesuits and Wesleyans, squatters and anthropologists, Indian interpreters and the fathers of the Christian Church, are all agreed in finding this idea or that practice in their own times and countries, their evidence is at least unaffected by “the fluctuations of public opinion”? This criterion of undesigned coincidence in evidence drawn from Protestants, Catholics, pagans, sceptics, from times classical, mediaeval and modern, from men learned and unlearned, is the touchstone of anthropology. It will be admitted that the consentient testimony of persons in every stage of belief and prejudice, of ignorance and learning, cannot agree, as it does agree, by virtue of some “fluctuation of public opinion”. It is to be regretted that, in Mr. Max Muller’s description of the difficulties which beset the study of savage religious ideas, he entirely omits to mention, on the other side, the corroboration which is derived from the undesigned coincidence of independent testimony. This point is so important that it may be well to quote Mr. Tylor’s statement of the value of the anthropological criterion: —

It is a matter worthy of consideration that the accounts of similar phenomena of culture, recurring in different parts of the world, actually supply incidental proof of their own authenticity. Some years since a question which brings out this point was put to me by a great historian, “How can a statement as to customs, myths, beliefs, etc., of a savage tribe be treated as evidence where it depends on the testimony of some traveller or missionary who may be a superficial observer, more or less ignorant of the native language, a careless retailer of unsifted talk, a man prejudiced, or even wilfully deceitful?” This question is, indeed, one which every ethnographer ought to keep clearly and constantly before his mind. Of course he is bound to use his best judgment as to the trustworthiness of all authors he quotes, and if possible to obtain several accounts to certify each point in each locality. But it is over and above these measures of precaution that the test of recurrence comes in. If two independent visitors to different countries, say a mediaeval Mohammedan in Tartary and a modern Englishman in Dahomey, or a Jesuit missionary in Brazil and a Wesleyan in the Fiji Islands, agree in describing some analogous art, or rite, or myth among the people they have visited, it becomes difficult or impossible to set down such correspondence to accident or wilful fraud. A story by a bushranger in Australia may perhaps be objected to as a mistake or an invention; but did a Methodist minister in Guinea conspire with him to cheat the public by telling the same story there? The possibility of intentional or unintentional mystification is often barred by such a state of things as that a similar statement is made in two remote lands by two witnesses, of whom A lived a century before

B, and B appears never to have heard of A. How distant are the countries, how wide apart the dates, how different the creeds and characters of the observers in the catalogue of facts of civilisation, needs no farther showing to any one who will even glance at the footnotes of the present work. And the more odd the statement, the less likely that several people in several places should have made it wrongly. This being so, it seems reasonable to judge that the statements are in the main truly given, and that their close and regular coincidence is due to the cropping up of similar facts in various districts of culture. Now the most important facts of ethnography are vouched for in this way. Experience leads the student after a while to expect and find that the phenomena of culture, as resulting from widely-acting similar causes, should recur again and again in the world. He even mistrusts isolated statements to which he knows of no parallel elsewhere, and waits for their genuineness to be shown by corresponding accounts from the other side of the earth or the other end of history. So strong indeed is the means of authentication, that the ethnographer in his library may sometimes presume to decide not only whether a particular explorer is a shrewd and honest observer, but also whether what he reports is conformable to the general rules of civilisation. *Non quia, sed quid.*

It must be added, as a rider to Mr. Tylo^s remarks, that anthropology is rapidly making the accumulation of fresh and trustworthy evidence more difficult than ever. Travellers and missionaries have begun to read anthropological books, and their evidence is therefore much more likely to be biassed now by anthropological theories than it was of old. When Mr. M’Lennan wrote on “totems” in 1869,* he was able to say, “It is some compensation for the completeness of the accounts that we can thoroughly trust them, as the totem has not till now got itself mixed up with speculations, and accordingly the observers have been unbiassed. But as anthropology is now more widely studied, the *naif* evidence of ignorance and of surprise grows more and more difficult to obtain.”

* *Fortnightly Review, October 1869.*

We may now assert that, though the evidence of each separate witness may be influenced by fluctuations of opinion, yet the consensus of their testimony, when they are unanimous, remains unshaken. The same argument applies to the private inclination, and prejudice, and method of inquiry of each individual observer.

Travellers in general, and missionaries in particular, are biassed in several distinct ways. The missionary is sometimes anxious to prove that religion can only come by revelation, and that certain tribes, having received no revelation, have no religion or religious myths at all. Sometimes the missionary, on the other hand, is anxious to demonstrate that the myths of his heathen flock are a corrupted version of the Biblical narrative. In the former case he neglects the study of savage myths; in the latter he unconsciously accommodates what he hears to what he calls “the truth”. In modern days the missionary often sees with the eyes of Mr. Herbert Spencer. The traveller who is not a missionary may either have the same prejudices, or he may be a sceptic about revealed religion. In the latter case he is perhaps unconsciously moved to put burlesque versions of Biblical stories into the mouths of his native informants, or to represent the savages as ridiculing (Dr. Moffat found that they did ridicule) the Scriptural traditions which he communicates to them. Yet again we must remember that the leading questions of a European inquirer may furnish a savage with a thread on which to string answers which the questions themselves have suggested. “Have you ever had a great flood?” “Yes.” “Was any one saved?” The leading question starts the invention of the savage on a Deluge-myth, of which, perhaps, the idea has never before entered his mind.

The last is a source of error pointed out by Mr. Codrington:*

* *Journal of Anthrop. Inst, February 1881.*

“The questions of the European are a thread on which the ideas of the native precipitate themselves”. Now, as European inquirers are prone to ask much the same questions, a people which, like some Celts and savages, “always answers yes,” will everywhere give much the same answers. Mr. Romilly, in his book on the Western Pacific,* remarks, “In some parts of New Britain, if a stranger were to ask, ‘Are there men with tails in the mountains?’ he would probably be answered ‘Yes,’ that being the answer which the new Briton” (and the North Briton, too, very often) “would imagine was expected of him, and would be most likely to give satisfaction. The train of thought in his mind would be something like this, ‘He must know that there are no such men, but he cannot have asked so foolish a question without an object, and therefore he wishes me to say ‘Yes!’ Of course the first ‘Yes’ leads to many others, and in a very short time everything is known about these tailed men, and a full account of them is sent home.”

What is true of tailed men applies to native answers about myths and customs when the questions are asked by persons who have not won the confidence of the people nor discovered their real beliefs by long and patient observation. This must be borne in mind when missionaries tell us that savages believe in one supreme deity, in a mediator, and the like, and it must be borne in mind when they tell us that savages have no supreme being at all. Always we must be wary! A very pleasing example of inconsistency in reports about the same race may be found in a comparison of the account of the Khonds in the thirteenth volume of the Royal Asiatic Society with the account given by General Campbell in his *Personal Narrative*, The inquirer in the former case did not know the Khond language, and trusted to interpreters, who were later expelled from the public service. General Campbell, on the other hand, believed himself to possess “the confidence of the priests and chiefs,” and his description is quite different. In cases of contradictions like these, the anthropologist will do well to leave the subject alone, unless he has very strong reasons for believing one or other of the contending witnesses.

* *The Western Pacific and New Guinea, London, 1886, p-6.*

** *Hibbert Lectures, .*

We have now considered the objections that may be urged against the bias of witnesses.

Mr. Max Müller founds another objection on “the absence of recognised authorities among savages”.* This absence of authority is not always complete; the Maoris, for example, have traditional hymns of great authority and antiquity. There are often sacred songs and customs (preserved by the Red Indians in chants recorded by picture-writing on birch bark), and there always is some teaching from the mothers to their children, or in the Mysteries. All these, but, above all, the almost immutable sacredness of *custom*, are sources of evidence. But, of course, the story of one savage informant may differ widely from that of his neighbour. The first may be the black sheep of the tribe, the next may be the saint of the district. “Both would be considered by European travellers as unimpeachable authorities with regard to their religion.” This is too strongly stated. Even the inquiring squatter will repose more confidence in the reports about his religion of a black with a decent character, or of a black who has only recently mixed with white men, than in those of a rum-bibbing loafer about up-country stations or a black professional bowler on a colonial cricket-ground. Our best evidence is from linguists who have been initiated into the secret Mysteries. Still more will missionaries and scholars like Bleek, Hahn, Codrington, Castren, Gill, Callaway, Theal, and the rest, sift and compare the evidence of the most trustworthy native informants. The merits of the travellers we have named as observers and scholars are freely acknowledged by Mr. Max Müller himself. To their statements, also, we can apply the criterion: Does Bleek’s report from the Bushmen and Hottentots confirm Castren’s from the Finns? Does Codrington in Melanesia tell the same tale as Gill in Mangia or Theal among the Kaffirs? Are all confirmed by Charlevoix, and Lafitau, and Brebeuf, the old Catholic apostles of the North American Indians? If this be so, then we may presume that the inquirers have managed to extract true accounts from some of their native informants. The object of the inquiry, of course, is to find out, not what a few more educated and noble members of a tribe may think, nor what some original speculative thinker among a lower race may have worked out for himself, but to ascertain the general character of the ideas most popular and most widely prevalent among backward peoples.

A third objection is that the priests of savage tribes are not unimpeachable authorities. It is pointed out that even Christian clergy have their differences of opinion. Naturally we expect most shades of opinion where there is most knowledge and most liberty, but the liberty of savage heterodoxy is very wide indeed. We might almost say that (as in the mythology of Greece) there is *no* orthodox mythical doctrine among savages. But, amidst minor diversities, we have found many ideas which are universal both in savage and civilised myths. *Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*. It is on this universal element of faith, not on the discrepancies of local priests, that we must fix our attention. Many a different town in Greece showed the birthplace or tomb of this or that deity. The essential point is that all agreed in declaring that the god was born or died.

Once more — and this is a point of some importance when we are told that priests differ from each other in their statements — we must remember that these very differences are practically universal in all mythology, even in that of civilised races. Thus, if one savage authority declares that men came originally out of trees, while his fellow-tribesman avers that the human race was created out of clay, and a third witness maintains that his first ancestors emerged from a hole in the ground, and a fourth stands to it that his stock is descended from a swan or a serpent, and a fifth holds that humanity was evolved from other animal forms, these savage statements appear contradictory. But when we find (as we do) precisely the same sort of contradictions everywhere recurring among civilised peoples, in Greece, India, Egypt, as well as in Africa, America and Australia, there seems no longer any reason to distrust the various versions of the myth which are given by various priests or chiefs. Each witness is only telling the legend which he has heard and prefers, and it is precisely the coexistence of all these separate monstrous beliefs which makes the enigma and the attraction of mythology. In short, the discrepancies of savage myths are not an argument against the authenticity of our information on the topic, because the discrepancies themselves are repeated in civilised myth. *Semper et ubique, et ab omnibus*. To object to the presence of discrepant accounts is to object to mythology for being mythological.

Another objection is derived from the “unwillingness of savages to talk about religion,” and from the difficulty of understanding them when they do talk of it. This hardly applies when Europeans are initiated into savage Mysteries. We may add a fair example of the difficulty of learning about alien religions. It is given by Garcilasso de la Vega, son of an Inca princess, and a companion of Pizarro.*”

** Garcilaaso de la Vega, Royal Commentaries, vol, i. 123.*

The method that our Spaniards adopted in writing their histories was to ask the Indians in Spanish touching the things they wanted to find out from them. These, from not having a clear knowledge of ancient things, or from bad memories, told them wrong, or mixed up poetical fables with their replies. And the worst of it was that neither party had more than a very imperfect knowledge of the language of the other, so as to understand the inquiry and to reply to it.... In this great confusion, the priest or layman who asked the questions placed the meaning to them which was nearest to the desired answer, or which was most like what the Indian was understood to have said. Thus they interpreted according to their pleasure or prejudice, and wrote things down as truths which the Indians never dreamt of. As an example of these comparisons, Garcilasso gives the discovery of the doctrine of the Trinity among the people of Peru. A so-called *Icona* was found answering to the Father, a Son (*Racab*) and a Holy Spirit (*Estrua*); nor was the Virgin lacking, nor even St. Anne. “All these things are fictions of the Spaniards.” But no sooner has Garcilasso rebuked the Spaniards and their method, than he hastens to illustrate by his own example another difficulty that besets us in our search for evidence of myths. He says, as if it were a matter of certain fact, that Tlasolteute, a kind of Priapus, god of lust, and Ometoctilti, god of drunkenness, and the god of murder, and the others, “were the names of *men and women* whom the natives of that land worshipped as gods and goddesses”. Thus Garcilasso euhemerises audaciously, as also does Sahagun in his account of Mexican religion. We have no right to assume that gods of natural departments (any more than Dionysus and Priapus and Ares) had once been real men and were deified, on evidence like the statement of Garcilassp. He is giving his own euhemeristic guess as if it were matter of fact, and this is a common custom with even the more intelligent of the early missionaries.

Another example of the natural difficulty in studying the myths of savages may be taken from Mr. Sproat’s *Scenes of Savage Life* (1868). There is an honesty and candour in Mr. Sproat’s work which by itself seems to clear this witness, at least, of charges of haste or prejudice. The religion of savages, says this inquirer, “is a subject as to which a traveller might easily form erroneous opinions, owing to the practical difficulty, even to one skilled in the language, of ascertaining the true nature of their superstitions. This short chapter is the result of more than four years’ inquiry, made unremittingly, under favourable circumstances. There is a constant temptation, from which the unbiassed observer cannot be quite free, to fill up in one’s mind, without proper material, the gap between what is known of the religion of the natives for certain, and the larger less-known portion, which can only be guessed at; and I frequently found that, under this temptation, I was led on to form, in my own mind, a connected whole, designed to coincide with some ingenious theory which I might wish to be true. Generally speaking, it is necessary, I think, to view with suspicion *any very regular account* given by travellers of the religion of savages.” (Yet we have seen the absence of “regularity,” the differences of opinion among priests, objected to by Mr. Max Müller as a proof of the untrustworthy nature of our evidence.) “The real religious notions of savages cannot be separated from the vague and unformed, as well as bestial and grotesque, mythology with which they are intermixed. The faint struggling efforts of our natures in so early or so little advanced a stage of moral and intellectual cultivation can produce only a medley of opinions and beliefs, not to be dignified by the epithet religious, which are held loosely by the people themselves, and are neither very easily discovered nor explained.” When we came to civilised mythologies, we found that they also are “bestial and grotesque,” “loosely held,” and a “medley of opinions and beliefs “.

Mr. Sproat was “two years among the Ahts, with his mind constantly directed to the subject of their religious beliefs,” before he could discover that they had any such beliefs at all. Traders assured him that they had none. He found that the Ahts were “fond of mystification” and of “sells”; and, in short, this inquirer, living with the Ahts like an Aht, discounted every sort of circumstance which could invalidate his statement of their myths.*

* *P-205.*

Now, when we find Mr. Codrington taking the same precautions in Melanesia, and when his account of Melanesian myths reads like a close copy of Mr. Sproat’s account of Aht legends, and when both are corroborated by the collections of Bleek, and Hahn, and Gill, and Castren, and Eink, in far distant corners of the world, while the modern testimony of these scholarly men is in harmony with that of the old Jesuit missionaries, and of untaught adventurers who have lived for many years with savages, surely it will be admitted that the difficulty of ascertaining savage opinion has been, to a great extent, overcome. If all the evidence be wrong, the coincidences of the witnesses with each other and of the savage myths they report with the myths of Greeks and Aryans of India will be no less than a miracle.

We have now examined the objections urged against a system founded on the comparative study of savage myths. It cannot be said of us (as it has been said of De Brosses), that “whatever we find in the voyages of sailors and traders is welcome to us; that we have a theory to defend, and whatever seems to support it is sure to be true”. Our evidence is based, to a very great extent, on the communications of missionaries who are acknowledged to be scholarly and sober men. It is confirmed by other evidence, Catholic, Dissenting, pagan, scientific, and by the reports of illiterate men, unbiassed by science, and little biassed by religion.

But we have not yet exhausted our evidence, nor had recourse to our ultimate criterion. That evidence, that criterion, is derived from the study of comparative institutions, of comparative ritual, of comparative law, and of comparative customs. In the widely diffused rites and institutions which express themselves in actual practice we have sure evidence for the ideas on which the customs are founded. For example, if a man pays away his wampum, or his yams, or his arrow-heads to a magician for professional services, it follows that he *does* believe in magic. If he puts to death a tribesman for the sin of marrying a woman to whom he was only akin by virtue of common descent from the same beast or plant, it seems to follow that he *does* believe in descent from and kinship with plants and beasts. If he buries food and valuable weapons with his dead, it follows that he *does*, or that his fathers did, believe in the continued life of the dead. At the very least, in all three cases the man is acting on what must once have been actual beliefs, even if the consequent practices be still in force only through custom, after the real faith has dwindled away. Thus the belief, past or present, in certain opinions can be deduced from actual practices, just as we may deduce from our own Coronation Service the fact that oil, anointed on a man’s head by a priest, was once believed to have a mysterious efficacy, or the fact that a certain rough block of red sand-stone was once supposed to have some kind of sacredness. Of all these sources of evidence, none is more valuable than the testimony of ritual. A moment’s reflection will show that ritual, among any people, wild or civilised, is not a thing easily altered. If we take the savage, *his* ritual consists mainly of the magical rites by which he hopes to constrain his gods to answer his prayers, though he may also “reveal” to the neophyte “Our Father”. If we examine the Greeks, we discover the same element in such rites as the Attic Thesmophoria, the torch-dance of Demeter, the rainmaking on the Arcadian Mount Lycæus, with many other examples. Meanwhile the old heathen ritual survives in Europe as rural folklore, and we can thus display a chain of evidence, from savage magic to Greek ritual, with the folklore of Germany, France, Eussia and Scotland for the link between these and our own time. This is almost our best evidence for the ancient idea about gods and their service. From the evidence of institutions, then, the evidence of reports may be supplemented. “The direct testimony,” as M. Darmesteter says, “heureusement peut-etre supplee par le temoignage indirect, celui qui porte sur les usages, les coutumes, l’ordre exterieur de la vie,” everything that shows us religious faith embodied in action. Now these actions, also, are only attested by the reports of travellers, missionaries and historians. But it is comparatively easy to describe correctly what is *done*, much more easy than to discover what is *thought*. Yet it will be found that the direct evidence of institutions corroborates the less direct evidence as to thought and opinion. Thus an uncommonly strong texture of testimony is woven by the coincidence of evidence, direct and indirect, ancient and modern, of learned and unlearned men, of Catholics, Protestants, pagans and sceptics. What can be said against that evidence we have heard. We have examined the objections based on “the influence of public opinion on travellers,” on “the absence of recognised authorities among savages,” on the discrepancies of the authorities who are recognised, on the “unwillingness of savages to talk of their religion,” and on the difficulty of understanding them when they do talk of it.

But after allowing for all these drawbacks (as every anthropologist worthy of the name will, in each case, allow), we have shown that there does remain a body of coincident evidence, of authority, now learned and critical, now uncritical and unlearned, which cannot be set aside as “extremely untrustworthy”. This authority is accepted in questions of the evolution of art, politics, handicraft; why not in questions of religion? It is usually evidence given by men who did not see its tendency or know its value. A chance word in the Veda shows us that a savage point of marriage etiquette was known to the poet. A sneer of Theophrastus, a denunciation of Ezekiel, an anecdote of Herodotus, reveal to us the practices of contemporary savages as they existed thousands of years ago among races savage or civilised. A traveller’s tale of Melville or Mandeville proves to be no mere “yarn,” but completes the evidence for the existence in Asia or the Marquesas Islands of belief and rites proved to occur in Europe or India.

Such is the nature of the evidence for savage ideas, and for their survivals in civilisation; and the amount of the evidence is best known to him who has to plod through tracts, histories and missionary reports.

INTRODUCTION TO POPULAR TALES

PERRAULT'S

POPULAR TALES

EDITED
FROM THE ORIGINAL EDITIONS, WITH INTRODUCTION, &c.
BY

ANDREW LANG, M.A.

PREFACE.

This edition of the stories of Perrault *is intended partly as an introduction to the study of Popular Tales in general. The text of the prose has been collated by* M. Alfred Bauer *with that of the first edition (Paris, 1697), a book which probably cannot be found in England. I have to thank* M. Bauer *for the kind and minute care he has bestowed on his task. We have tried to restore the original text of 1697, with its spelling, punctuation, use of capital letters, and so forth. One might have compared the text of* Perrault's *prose tales, as published in a book in 1697, with their original form in* Moetjens's *Recueil or Magazine. Unluckily the British Museum only possesses the earlier volumes of the Recueil, in which the less important stories, those in verse, were first published. The Text of the tales in Verse has been collated, by myself and* Mrs. Ogilby, *with that of the Recueil. The Paris editions of 1694 and 1695 I have never seen. In his 'Contes en Prose de Charles Perrault'* (Jouaust, *Paris, 1876*), M. Paul Lacroix *published the more important readings in which the Recueil differed from the ultimate text. The changes shew good taste on the part of* Perrault: *one or two tedious gallantries, out of keeping with the stories, were removed by him.*

Two of the most useful books that have been read by me in preparing this edition are M. André Lefèvre's *edition of the Contes, with his bibliographical and other notes, and the 'Contes de Ma Mère L'Oye avant Charles Perrault,' by the late* M. Charles Deulin. *I have also read, I think, most of the modern editions of the*

Contes which offer any fresh criticism or information, and acknowledgments will be found in the proper place.

The Introduction contains a brief sketch of Perrault, *and of the circumstances in which his tales were composed and published. Each prose story has also been made the subject of a special comparative research; its wanderings and changes of form have been observed, and it is hoped that this part of the work may be serviceable to students of Folklore and Mythology.*

In this little book, as in all researches into tradition, I have received much aid from the writings and from the kind suggestions of M. Henri Gaidoz, *and from the knowledge and experience of* Mr. Alfred Nutt. *It is almost superfluous to add that without the industry of such students as* Herr Reinhold Köhler, M. Paul Sébillot, Mr. Ralston, M. Cosquin, *and very many others, these studies of story could never have been produced.*

A. L.

INTRODUCTION : CHARLES PERRAULT.

In Eisen’s portrait of Charles Perrault, the medallion which holds the good-natured face under the large *perruque* is being wreathed with flowers by children. Though they do not, for the most part, know the name of their benefactor, it is children who keep green the memory of Perrault, of the author of *Puss in Boots* and *Bluebeard*. He flies for ever *vivu’ per ora virum*, borne on the wings of the fabulous Goose, *notre Mère L’Oye*. He looked, no doubt, for no such immortality, and, if he ever thought of posthumous fame, relied on his elaborate *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes* (4 vols. Paris, 1688-96). But fate decided differently, and he who kept open the Tuileries gardens in the interests of children for ever, owes the best of his renown to a book in the composition of which he was aided by a child.

Though a man of unimpeached respectability of conduct, Charles Perrault was a born Irregular. He was a truant from school, a deserter of the Bar, an architect without professional training, a man of letters by inclination, a rebel against the tyranny of the classics, and immortal by a kind of accident.

He did many things well, above all the things that he had not been taught to do, and he did best of all the thing which nobody expected him to have done. A vivid, genial and indomitable character and humour made him one of the best-liked men of his age, and better remembered than people with far higher contemporary reputation than his own.

Charles Perrault, as he tells us in his *Mémoires* (1769, Patte, Paris; 1 vol. in 12), was born at Paris, on January 12, 1628. At the age of nine he was sent to the Collége de Beauvais, and was aided in his studies by his father, at home. He was always at the head of his form, after leaving the Sixth (the lowest) which he entered before he had quite learned to read. He was not a prodigy of precocious instruction, happily for himself. He preferred exercises in verse, and excelled in these, though the gods had not made him poetical. In the class of Philosophy he was deeply interested, wrangling with his teacher, and maintaining, characteristically, that his arguments were better than the stock themes, ‘because they were new.’ Thus the rebel against the Ancients raised his banner at school, where one recruit flocked to it, a boy called Beaurin. Young Perrault and his friend took a formal farewell of their master, and solemnly seceded to the garden of the Luxembourg, where they contrived a plan of study for themselves. For three or four years they read together as chance or taste directed: this course had not in it the making of a scholar.

Perrault's first literary effort was a burlesque of the Sixth book of the Æneid, a thing rather too sacred for parody in Scarron's manner. His brother the doctor took a hand in this labour, and Perrault says 'the MS. is on the shelf where there are no books but those written by members of the Family.' The funniest thing was held to be the couplet on the charioteer Tydacus, in the shades, Qui, tenant l'ombre d'une brosse, Nettoyait l'ombre d'un carrosse.

Perrault, as a young man, was moderately interested in the fashionable controversy about Grace, *pouvoir prochain et pouvoir éloigné*, and the jargon of the quarrel between Port Royal and the Jesuits. His brother, a doctor of the Sorbonne, explained the question, 'and we saw there was nothing in it to justify the noise it made.' He persuaded himself, however, that this little conference was the occasion of the *Lettres Provinciales*. The new Editor will doubtless deal with this pretension when he comes to publish Pascal's Life in the series of *Grands Ecrivains de la France*. Unlike Perrault, Pascal thought 'que le sujet des disputes de Sorbonne étoit bien important et d'une extrême conséquence pour la religion.'

The first of the Provincial Letters is dated January 23, 1656. Charles Perrault was now twenty-eight. In 1651 he had taken his *licences* at Orleans, where degrees were granted with scandalous readiness. Perrault and his friends wakened the learned doctors in the night, returned ridiculous answers to their questions, chinked their money in their bags, — and passed. The same month they were all admitted to the Bar. His legal reading was speculative, and he proposed the idea of codifying the various customs; but the task waited for Napoleon. Wearying of the Bar he accepted a place under his brother, Receiver-General of Paris. In this occupation he remained from 1654 to 1664. He had plenty of leisure for study, his brother had bought an excellent library, and Perrault speaks of 'le plaisir que j'eus de me voir au milieu de tant de bons livres.' He made verses, which were handed about and attributed to Quinault. That poet, getting a copy from Perrault, permitted a young lady whom he was courting to think they were his own. Perrault claimed them, and 'M. Quinault se trouvait un peu embarrassé.' However, when Quinault said that a lady was in the case, the plagiary was forgiven. Perrault afterwards wrote a defence of his *Alceste*. A trifling piece which Perrault composed on this little affair pleased Fouquet, who had it copied on vellum, with miniatures and gilt capitals.

In 1657 Perrault directed the construction of a house for his brother. The skill and taste he shewed induced Colbert to make him his subaltern in the superintendence of the Royal buildings, in 1663. A vision of a completed

Louvre, and of ‘obelisks, pyramids, triumphal arches, and mausoleums,’ floated before the mind of Colbert. Then there would be *fêtes* and masquerades to describe, and as Chapelain recommended Perrault, who was already the author of some loyal odes, (such as the wise write about Jubilee times,) he finally received an elegant appointment, with 500, later 1000 *livres* a year. This he enjoyed till 1683. A little Academy of Medals and Inscriptions grew into existence: Perrault edited panegyrics on the king, and made designs for Gobelin tapestries.

Perrault’s next feat was the suggestion of the peristyle of the Louvre, introduced into the design of his brother Claude, the architect. After the Chevalier Bernini had been summoned from Rome to finish the Louvre, and had been treated with sumptuous hospitality, a variety of disputes and difficulties arose, and, by merit or favour, the plan of Perrault’s brother, Claude, by profession a physician, was chosen and executed. People said ‘que l’architecture devoit être bien malade, puisqu’on la mettait entre les mains des médecins.’

‘M. Colbert asked me for news of the Academy, supposing that I was a member. I told him that I could not satisfy him, as I had not the honour of belonging to that company. He seemed surprised, and said I ought to be admitted. “’Tis a set of men for whom the king has a great regard, and as business prevents me from often attending their councils, I should be glad to hear from you what passes. You should stand at the next vacancy.”’ So writes Perrault, and he did become a candidate for Immortality. But a lady had begged the next place for an Abbé, and next time, a doctor had secured it for a *curé*. Finally, the Academy elected Perrault, he says, without any canvass on his part. Perrault introduced election for the Academy by ballot, and he himself invented and provided a little balloting machine, which he does not describe. One day when the King was being publicly rubbed down after a game at tennis, an Academician prayed that the Academy might be allowed to read addresses to his Majesty. The King, who had probably given some courtier the side walls and a beating, graciously permitted the Academy to add its voice to the chorus of flattery. Perrault now disported himself among harangues, the new Versailles fountains, grottoes, arches of triumph, and royal devices, his brother executing his designs. They were sunny years, and Le Roi Soleil beamed upon the house of Perrault. But a dispute between his brother, the receiver of taxes, and Colbert caused a coolness between Charles Perrault and the Minister. M. Perrault also married a young lady to please himself, not to please Colbert. But, before leaving the service of the Minister, the good Perrault had succeeded in saving the Tuileries gardens for the people of Paris, and for the children, when it was proposed to reserve them to the Royal use. ‘I am persuaded,’ he said, ‘that the gardens of Kings are made so great and spacious that all their children may walk in them.’ We owe Perrault less gratitude for aiding Lulli, who obtained the monopoly of Opera, a privilege adverse to the interests of Molière. If Perrault thought at all of the interests of Molière, he probably remembered that his own brother was a physician, and that physicians were Molière’s favourite butts. ‘Il ne devait pas tourner en ridicule les bons Médecins, que l’Ecriture nous enjoint d’honorer,’ says Perrault in his *Eloges des Hommes Illustres* (1696-1700). Molière’s own influence with the king corrected the influence of Lulli, and he obtained the right to give musical pieces, in spite of Lulli’s privilege, but he did not live long to enjoy it.

Ten years afterwards Colbert became *si difficile et si chagrin*, that Perrault withdrew quietly from his service. He had been employed in public functions for twenty years (1663-1683), he was over fifty, and he needed rest. Louvois excluded him on the death of Colbert from the *petite Académie*. He devoted himself to the education of his children, who were ‘day-boarders’ at the colleges, and returned at night to the paternal house in the Faubourg St. Jacques. ‘Les mœurs ne sont pas en si grande sûreté’ at a public school, Perrault thought. In 1686 he published his ‘Saint Paulin Evesque de Nole, avec une Epistre Chrestienne sur la Penitence, et une Ode aux Nouveaux Convertis.’ (Paris, J. R. Coignard.) It is dedicated to Bossuet, in a letter, and Perrault trusts that great poets will follow his example, and write on sacred subjects. Happily his example was not followed, *la raillerie et l’amour* possessing stronger attractions for minstrels, as Perrault complains. He throws his stone at Comedy, which Bossuet notably disliked and condemned. But this did not prevent Perrault, seven years later, from writing little comedies of his own. *Saint Paulin* is prettily illustrated with vignettes on copper after Sebastien le Clerc, vignettes much better than those which hardly decorate *Histoires ou Contes du Tems passé*. An angel appearing to Saint Paulin in gardens exactly like the parterres of Versailles is particularly splendid and distinguished. As for the poem, ‘qui eut assez de succès malgré les critiques de quelques personnes d’esprit,’ the story is not badly told, for the legend of the Bishop has a good deal of the air of a *conte*, reclaimed for sacred purposes. The *Ode aux Nouveaux Convertis* is not a success. Perrault comparing Reason to Faith, says that Reason makes the glories beheld by Faith disappear, as the Sun scatters the stars. This was an injudicious admission. The *Saint Paulin* may be bought for two or three francs, while the *Histoires ou Contes*, when last sold by public auction in the original edition (Nodier’s copy, at the Hamilton Sale, May 1884), fetched £85. It is a commercial but not inaccurate test of merit.

Perrault’s *Mémoires* end just where they begin to be interesting. He tells us how he read his poem *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*, to the Academy, how angrily Boileau declared that the poem was an insult to the great men of times past, how Huet took Perrault's side, how Boileau wrote epigrams against him, how Racine pretended not to think him in earnest, and how he defended himself in *Le Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes*. Here close the Memoirs, and the hero of the great Battle of the Books leaves its tale untold.

The quarrel is too old and too futile to require a long history. Perrault's remarks on Homer, the cause of the war, merely show that Perrault was quite out of sympathy with the heroic age and with heroic song. He avers that, if a favourable Heaven had permitted Homer to be born under Louis XIV, Homer would have been a much better poet.

'Cent défauts qu'on impute au siècle où tu naquis Ne profaneroient pas tes ouvrages exquis.'

Men of letters who were men of sense would have smiled and let Perrault perorate. But men of letters are rarely men of sense, and dearly love a brawl. M. E. de Goncourt once complained that M. Paul de St. Victor looked at him 'like a stuffed bird,' because M. de Goncourt declared that Providence had created antiquity to prevent pedagogues from starving. Boileau was not less indignant with Perrault, who, by the way, in his poem had damned Molière with faint praise, and had not praised La Fontaine, Racine, and Boileau at all. The quarrel 'thundered in and out the shadowy skirts' of Literature for ten years. Boileau turned and rent the architect-physician Claude Perrault in his *Art Poétique*. But Boileau, stimulated by Conti, who wrote on his *fauteuil*, '*tu dors, Brutus,*' chiefly thundered in his *Réflexions Critiques* on Longinus (1694). 'He makes four errors, out of ignorance of Greek, and a fifth out of ignorance of Latin,' is an example of Boileau's amenities. Why Boileau should have written at such length and so angrily on *un livre que personne ne lit*, he does not explain. Perrault kept his temper, Boileau displayed his learning. Arnauld had the credit of making a personal peace between the foes. Boileau suppressed some of his satirical lines (Satire X. line 459), and we now read them only in the foot-notes. Boileau's letter to Arnauld, in which he expresses his willingness even to read *Saint Paulin* for the sake of a peaceful life, is not unamusing. 'Faut-il lire tout *Saint Paulin*? Vous n'avez qu'à dire: rien ne me sera difficile' (June 1694). Meanwhile Perrault, in his comedy *L'Oublieux*, was mocking people who think it a fine thing 'to publish old books with a great many notes.' But Perrault himself was about to win his own fame by publishing versions of old traditional Fairy Tales.

The following essay traces the history and bibliography of these Tales. Perrault's last years were occupied with his large illustrated book, *Eloges des Hommes Illustres du Siècle de Louis XIV* (2 vols. in folio. 102 portraits.) He died on May

16, 1703. His fair enemy in the bookish battle, Madame Dacier, says ‘*il étoit plein de piété, de probité, de vertu, poli, modeste, officieux, fidèle à tous les devoirs qu’exigent les liaisons naturelles et acquises; et, dans un poste considérable auprès d’un des plus grands ministres que la France ait eus et qui l’honoroit de sa confiance, il ne s’est jamais servi de sa faveur pour sa fortune particulière, et il l’a toujours employée pour ses amis*.’

Charles Perrault was a good man, a good father, a good Christian, and a good fellow. He was astonishingly clever and versatile in little things, honest, courteous, and witty, and an undaunted amateur. The little thing in which he excelled most was telling fairy tales. Every generation listens in its turn to this old family friend of all the world. No nation owes him so much as we of England, who, south of the Scottish, and east of the Welsh marches, have scarce any popular tales of our own save Jack the Giant Killer, and who have given the full fairy citizenship to Perrault’s *Petit Poucet* and *La Barbe Bleue*.

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DEDICATION

Dear Mr. Way, *After so many letters to people who never existed, may I venture a short one, to a person very real to me, though I have never seen him, and only know him by his many kindnesses? Perhaps you will add another to these by accepting the Dedication of a little work, of a sort experimental in English, and in prose, though Horace — in Latin and in verse — was successful with it long ago*?

Very sincerely yours, A. LANG.

To W. J. Way, Esq.
Topeka, Kansas.

PREFACE

These Letters were originally published in the *Independent* of New York. The idea of writing them occurred to the author after he had produced "Letters to Dead Authors." That kind of Epistle was open to the objection that nobody *would* write so frankly to a correspondent about his own work, and yet it seemed that the form of Letters might be attempted again. The *Lettres à Emilie sur la Mythologie* are a well-known model, but Emilie was not an imaginary correspondent. The persons addressed here, on the other hand, are all people of fancy — the name of Lady Violet Lebas is an invention of Mr. Thackeray's: gifted Hopkins is the minor poet in Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes's "Guardian Angel." The author's object has been to discuss a few literary topics with more freedom and personal bias than might be permitted in a graver kind of essay. The Letter on Samuel Richardson is by a lady more frequently the author's critic than his collaborator.

INTRODUCTORY: OF MODERN ENGLISH POETRY

To Mr. Arthur Wincott, Topeka, Kansas.
Dear Wincott, — You write to me, from your "bright home in the setting sun," with the flattering information that you have read my poor "Letters to Dead Authors." You are kind enough to say that you wish I would write some "Letters to Living Authors;" but that, I fear, is out of the question, — for me.

A thoughtful critic in the *Spectator* has already remarked that the great men of the past would not care for my shadowy epistles — if they could read them. Possibly not; but, like Prior, "I may write till they can spell" — an exercise of which ghosts are probably as incapable as was Matt's little Mistress of Quality. But Living Authors are very different people, and it would be perilous, as well as impertinent, to direct one's comments on them literally, in the French phrase, "to their address." Yet there is no reason why a critic should not adopt the epistolary form.

Our old English essays, the papers in the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, were originally nothing but letters. The vehicle permits a touch of personal taste, perhaps of personal prejudice. So I shall write my "Letters on Literature," of the present and of the past, English, American, ancient, or modern, to *you*, in your distant Kansas, or to such other correspondents as are kind enough to read these notes.

Poetry has always the precedence in these discussions. Poor Poetry! She is an ancient maiden of good family, and is led out first at banquets, though many would prefer to sit next some livelier and younger Muse, the lady of fiction, or even the chattering *soubrette* of journalism. *Seniores priores*: Poetry, if no longer very popular, is a dame of the worthiest lineage, and can boast a long train of gallant admirers, dead and gone. She has been much in courts. The old Greek tyrants loved her; great Rhamses seated her at his right hand; every prince had his singers. Now we dwell in an age of democracy, and Poetry wins but a feigned respect, more out of courtesy, and for old friendship's sake, than for liking. Though so many write verse, as in Juvenal's time, I doubt if many read it. "None but minstrels list of sonneting." The purchasing public, for poetry, must now consist chiefly of poets, and *they* are usually poor.

Can anything speak more clearly of the decadence of the art than the birth of so many poetical "societies"? We have the Browning Society, the Shelley Society, the Shakespeare Society, the Wordsworth Society — lately dead. They all demonstrate that people have not the courage to study verse in solitude, and for their proper pleasure; men and women need confederates in this adventure. There is safety in numbers, and, by dint of tea-parties, recitations, discussions, quarrels and the like, Dr. Furnivall and his friends keep blowing the faint embers on the altar of Apollo. They cannot raise a flame!

In England we are in the odd position of having several undeniable poets, and very little new poetry worthy of the name. The chief singers have outlived, if not their genius, at all events its flowering time. Hard it is to estimate poetry, so apt we are, by our very nature, to prefer "the newest songs," as Odysseus says men did even during the war of Troy. Or, following another ancient example, we say, like the rich niggards who neglected Theocritus, "Homer is enough for all."

Let us attempt to get rid of every bias, and, thinking as dispassionately as we can, we still seem to read the name of Tennyson in the golden book of English poetry. I cannot think that he will ever fall to a lower place, or be among those whom only curious students pore over, like Gower, Drayton, Donne, and the rest. Lovers of poetry will always read him as they will read Wordsworth, Keats, Milton, Coleridge, and Chaucer. Look his defects in the face, throw them into the balance, and how they disappear before his merits! He is the last and youngest of the mighty race, born, as it were, out of due time, late, and into a feebler generation.

Let it be admitted that the gold is not without alloy, that he has a touch of voluntary affectation, of obscurity, even an occasional perversity, a mannerism, a set of favourite epithets ("windy" and "happy"). There is a momentary echo of Donne, of Crashaw, nay, in his earliest pieces, even a touch of Leigh Hunt. You detect it in pieces like "Lilian" and "Eleanore," and the others of that kind and of that date.

Let it be admitted that "In Memoriam" has certain lapses in all that meed of melodious tears; that there are trivialities which might deserve (here is an example) "to line a box," or to curl some maiden's locks, that there are weaknesses of thought, that the poet now speaks of himself as a linnet, singing "because it must," now dares to approach questions insoluble, and again declines their solution. What is all this but the changeful mood of grief? The singing linnet, like the bird in the old English heathen apologue, dashes its light wings painfully against the walls of the chamber into which it has flown out of the blind night that shall again receive it.

I do not care to dwell on the imperfections in that immortal strain of sympathy and consolation, that enchanted book of consecrated regrets. It is an easier if not more grateful task to note a certain peevish egotism of tone in the heroes of

"Locksley Hall," of "Maud," of "Lady Clara Vere de Vere." "You can't think how poor a figure you make when you tell that story, sir," said Dr. Johnson to some unlucky gentleman whose "figure" must certainly have been more respectable than that which is cut by these whining and peevish lovers of Maud and Cousin Amy.

Let it be admitted, too, that King Arthur, of the "Idylls," is like an Albert in blank verse, an Albert cursed with a Guinevere for a wife, and a Lancelot for friend. The "Idylls," with all their beauties, are full of a Victorian respectability, and love of talking with Vivien about what is not so respectable. One wishes, at times, that the "Morte d'Arthur" had remained a lonely and flawless fragment, as noble as Homer, as polished as Sophocles. But then we must have missed, with many other admirable things, the "Last Battle in the West."

People who come after us will be more impressed than we are by the Laureate's versatility. He has touched so many strings, from "Will Waterproof's Monologue," so far above Praed, to the agony of "Rizpah," the invincible energy of "Ulysses," the languor and the fairy music of the "Lotus Eaters," the grace as of a Greek epigram which inspires the lines to Catullus and to Virgil. He is with Milton for learning, with Keats for magic and vision, with Virgil for graceful recasting of ancient golden lines, and, even in the latest volume of his long life, "we may tell from the straw," as Homer says, "what the grain has been."

There are many who make it a kind of religion to regard Mr. Browning as the greatest of living English poets. For him, too, one is thankful as for a veritable great poet; but can we believe that impartial posterity will rate him with the Laureate, or that so large a proportion of his work will endure? The charm of an enigma now attracts students who feel proud of being able to understand what others find obscure. But this attraction must inevitably become a stumbling-block.

Why Mr. Browning is obscure is a long question; probably the answer is that he often could not help himself. His darkest poems may be made out by a person of average intelligence who will read them as hard as, for example, he would find it necessary to read the "Logic" of Hegel. There is a story of two clever girls who set out to peruse "Sordello," and corresponded with each other about their progress. "Somebody is dead in 'Sordello,'" one of them wrote to her friend. "I don't quite know *who* it is, but it must make things a little clearer in the long run." Alas! a copious use of the guillotine would scarcely clear the stage of "Sordello." It is hardly to be hoped that "Sordello," or "Red Cotton Night Cap Country," or "Fifine," will continue to be struggled with by posterity. But the mass of "Men and Women," that unexampled gallery of portraits of the inmost hearts and secret minds of priests, prigs, princes, girls, lovers, poets, painters, must survive immortally, while civilization and literature last, while men care to know what is in men.

No perversity of humour, no voluntary or involuntary harshness of style, can destroy the merit of these poems, which have nothing like them in the letters of the past, and must remain without successful imitators in the future. They will last all the better for a certain manliness of religious faith — something sturdy and assured — not moved by winds of doctrine, not paltering with doubts, which is certainly one of Mr. Browning's attractions in this fickle and shifting generation. He cannot be forgotten while, as he says —

”A sunset touch,
A chorus ending of Euripides,”

remind men that they are creatures of immortality, and move “a thousand hopes and fears.”

If one were to write out of mere personal preference, and praise most that which best fits one's private moods, I suppose I should place Mr. Matthew Arnold at the head of contemporary English poets. Reason and reflection, discussion and critical judgment, tell one that he is not quite there.

Mr. Arnold had not the many melodies of the Laureate, nor his versatile mastery, nor his magic, nor his copiousness. He had not the microscopic glance of Mr. Browning, nor his rude grasp of facts, which tears the life out of them as the Aztec priest plucked the very heart from the victim. We know that, but yet Mr. Arnold's poetry has our love; his lines murmur in our memory through all the stress and accidents of life. “The Scholar Gipsy,” “Obermann,” “Switzerland,” the melancholy majesty of the close of “Sohrab and Rustum,” the tenderness of those elegiacs on two kindred graves beneath the Himalayas and by the Midland Sea; the surge and thunder of “Dover Beach,” with its “melancholy, long-withdrawing roar;” these can only cease to whisper to us and console us in that latest hour when life herself ceases to “moan round with many voices.”

My friends tell me that Mr. Arnold is too doubting, and too didactic, that he protests too much, and considers too curiously, that his best poems are, at most, “a chain of highly valuable thoughts.” It may be so; but he carries us back to “wet, bird-haunted English lawns;” like him “we know what white and purple fritillaries the grassy harvest of the river yields,” with him we try to practise resignation, and to give ourselves over to that spirit

“Whose purpose is not missed,
While life endures, while things subsist.”

Mr. Arnold's poetry is to me, in brief, what Wordsworth's was to his generation. He has not that inspired greatness of Wordsworth, when nature does for him what his "*lutin*" did for Corneille, "takes the pen from his hand and writes for him." But he has none of the creeping prose which, to my poor mind, invades even "Tintern Abbey." He is, as Mr. Swinburne says, "the surest-footed" of our poets. He can give a natural and lovely life even to the wildest of ancient imaginings, as to "these bright and ancient snakes, that once were Cadmus and Harmonia."

Bacon speaks of the legends of the earlier and ruder world coming to us "breathed softly through the flutes of the Grecians." But even the Grecian flute, as in the lay of the strife of Apollo and Marsyas, comes more tunably in the echo of Mr. Arnold's song, that beautiful song in "Empedocles on Etna," which has the perfection of sculpture and the charm of the purest colour. It is full of the silver light of dawn among the hills, of the music of the loch's dark, slow waves among the reeds, of the scent of the heather, and the wet tresses of the birch.

Surely, then, we have had great poets living among us, but the fountains of their song are silent, or flow but rarely over a clogged and stony channel. And who is there to succeed the two who are gone, or who shall be our poet, if the Master be silent? That is a melancholy question, which I shall try to answer (with doubt and dread enough) in my next letter.

OF MODERN ENGLISH POETRY

My dear Wincott, — I hear that a book has lately been published by an American lady, in which all the modern poets are represented. The singers have been induced to make their own selections, and put forward, as Mr. Browning says, their best foot, anapæst or trochee, or whatever it may be. My information goes further, and declares that there are but eighteen poets of England to sixty inspired Americans.

This Western collection of modern minstrelsy shows how very dangerous it is to write even on the English poetry of the day. Eighteen is long odds against a single critic, and Major Bellenden, in “Old Mortality,” tells us that three to one are odds as long as ever any warrior met victoriously, and that warrior was old Corporal Raddlebanes.

I decline the task; I am not going to try to estimate either the eighteen of England or the sixty of the States. It is enough to speak about three living poets, in addition to those masters treated of in my last letter. Two of the three you will have guessed at — Mr. Swinburne and Mr. William Morris. The third, I dare say, you do not know even by name. I think he is not one of the English eighteen — Mr. Robert Bridges. His muse has followed the epicurean maxim, and chosen the shadowy path, *fallentis semita vitæ*, where the dew lies longest on the grass, and the red rowan berries droop in autumn above the yellow St. John’s wort. But you will find her all the fresher for her country ways.

My knowledge of Mr. William Morris’s poetry begins in years so far away that they seem like reminiscences of another existence. I remember sitting beneath Cardinal Beaton’s ruined castle at St. Andrews, looking across the bay to the sunset, while some one repeated “Two Red Roses across the Moon.” And I remember thinking that the poem was nonsense. With Mr. Morris’s other early verses, “The Defence of Guinevere,” this song of the moon and the roses was published in 1858. Probably the little book won no attention; it is not popular even now. Yet the lyrics remain in memories which forget all but a general impression of the vast “Earthly Paradise,” that huge decorative poem, in which slim maidens and green-clad men, and waters wan, and flowering apple trees, and rich palaces are all mingled as on some long ancient tapestry, shaken a little by the wind of death. They are not living and breathing people, these persons of the fables; they are but shadows, beautiful and faint, and their poem is fit reading for sleepy summer afternoons. But the characters in the lyrics in “The Defence of Guinevere" are people of flesh and blood, under their chain armour and their velvet, and the trappings of their tabards.

There is no book in the world quite like this of Mr. Morris's old Oxford days when the spirit of the Middle Ages entered into him, with all its contradictions of faith and doubt, and its earnest desire to enjoy this life to the full in war and love, or to make certain of a future in which war is not, and all love is pure heavenly. If one were to choose favourites from "The Defence of Guinevere," they would be the ballads of "Shameful Death," and of "The Sailing of the Sword," and "The Wind," which has the wind's wail in its voice, and all the mad regret of "Porphyria's Lover" in its burden.

The use of "colour-words," in all these pieces, is very curious and happy. The red ruby, the brown falcon, the white maids, "the scarlet roofs of the good town," in "The Sailing of the Sword," make the poem a vivid picture. Then look at the mad, remorseful sea-rover, the slayer of his lady, in "The Wind":

"For my chair is heavy and carved, and with sweeping green behind
It is hung, and the dragons thereon grin out in the gusts of the wind;
On its folds an orange lies with a deep gash cut in the rind;
If I move my chair it will scream, and the orange will roll out far,
And the faint yellow juice ooze out like blood from a wizard's jar,
And the dogs will howl for those who went last month the war."

"The Blue Closet," which is said to have been written for some drawings of Mr. Rossetti, is also a masterpiece in this romantic manner. Our brief English age of romanticism, our 1830, was 1856-60, when Mr. Morris, Mr. Burne Jones, and Mr. Swinburne were undergraduates. Perhaps it wants a peculiar turn of taste to admire these strange things, though "The Haystack in the Floods," with its tragedy, must surely appeal to all who read poetry.

For the rest, as time goes on, I more and more feel as if Mr. Morris's long later poems, "The Earthly Paradise" especially, were less art than "art manufacture." This may be an ungrateful and erroneous sentiment. "The Earthly Paradise," and still more certainly "Jason," are full of such pleasure as only poetry can give. As some one said of a contemporary politician, they are "good, but copious." Even from narrative poetry Mr. Morris has long abstained. He, too, illustrates Mr. Matthew Arnold's parable of "The Progress of Poetry."

"The Mount is mute, the channel dry."

Euripides has been called "the meteoric poet," and the same title seems very appropriate to Mr. Swinburne. Probably few readers had heard his name — I only knew it as that of the author of a strange mediæval tale in prose — when he published “Atalanta in Calydon” in 1865. I remember taking up the quarto in white cloth, at the Oxford Union, and being instantly led captive by the beauty and originality of the verse.

There was this novel “meteoric” character in the poem: the writer seemed to rejoice in snow and fire, and stars, and storm, “the blue cold fields and folds of air,” in all the primitive forces which were alive before this earth was; the naked vast powers that circle the planets and farthest constellations. This quality, and his varied and sonorous verse, and his pessimism, put into the mouth of a Greek chorus, were the things that struck one most in Mr. Swinburne. He was, above all, “a mighty-mouthed inventer of harmonies,” and one looked eagerly for his next poems. They came with disappointment and trouble.

The famous “Poems and Ballads” have become so well known that people can hardly understand the noise they made. I don’t wonder at the scandal, even now. I don’t see the fun of several of the pieces, except the mischievous fun of shocking your audience. However, “The Leper” and his company are chiefly boyish, in the least favourable sense of the word. They do not destroy the imperishable merit of the “Hymn to Proserpine” and the “Garden of Proserpine” and the “Triumph of Time” and “Itylus.”

Many years have passed since 1866, and yet one’s old opinion, that English poetry contains no verbal music more original, sonorous, and sweet than Mr. Swinburne wrote in these pieces when still very young, remains an opinion unshaken. Twenty years ago, then, he had enabled the world to take his measure; he had given proofs of a true poet; he was learned too in literature as few poets have been since Milton, and, like Milton, skilled to make verse in the languages of the ancient world and in modern tongues. His French songs and Greek elegiacs are of great excellence; probably no scholar who was not also a poet could match his Greek lines on Landor.

What, then, is lacking to make Mr. Swinburne a poet of a rank even higher than that which he occupies? Who can tell? There is no science that can master this chemistry of the brain. He is too copious. “Bothwell” is long enough for six plays, and “Tristram of Lyonesse” is prolix beyond even mediæval narrative. He is too pertinacious; children are the joy of the world and Victor Hugo is a great poet; but Mr. Swinburne almost makes us excuse Herod and Napoleon III. by his endless odes to Hugo, and rondels to small boys and girls. *Ne quid nimis*, that is the golden rule which he constantly spurns, being too luxuriant, too emphatic, and as fond of repeating himself as Professor Freeman. Such are the defects of so noble a genius; thus perverse Nature has decided that it shall be, Nature which makes no ruby without a flaw.

The name of Mr. Robert Bridges is probably strange to many lovers of poetry who would like nothing better than to make acquaintance with his verse. But his verse is not so easily found. This poet never writes in magazines; his books have not appealed to the public by any sort of advertisement, only two or three of them have come forth in the regular way. The first was "Poems, by Robert Bridges, Batchelor of Arts in the University of Oxford. *Parva seges satis est*. London: Pickering, 1873."

This volume was presently, I fancy, withdrawn, and the author has distributed some portions of it in succeeding pamphlets, or in books printed at Mr. Daniel's private press in Oxford. In these, as in all Mr. Bridges's poems, there is a certain austere and indifferent beauty of diction and a memory of the old English poets, Milton and the earlier lyrists. I remember being greatly pleased with the "Elegy on a Lady whom Grief for the Death of Her Betrothed Killed."

"Let the priests go before, arrayed in white,
   And let the dark-stoled minstrels follow slow
Next they that bear her, honoured on this night,
   And then the maidens in a double row,
   Each singing soft and low,
And each on high a torch upstaying:
Unto her lover lead her forth with light,
With music and with singing, and with praying."

This is a stately stanza.

In his first volume Mr. Bridges offered a few rondeaux and triolets, turning his back on all these things as soon as they became popular. In spite of their popularity I have the audacity to like them still, in their humble twittering way. Much more in his true vein were the lines, "Clear and Gentle Stream," and all the other verses in which, like a true Etonian, he celebrates the beautiful Thames:

"There is a hill beside the silver Thames,
   Shady with birch and beech and odorous pine,
And brilliant under foot with thousand gems
   Steeply the thickets to his floods decline.
      Straight trees in every place
      Their thick tops interlace,
   And pendent branches trail their foliage fine
      Upon his watery face.

*

A reedy island guards the sacred bower
   And hides it from the meadow, where in peace
The lazy cows wrench many a scented flower,
   Robbing the golden market of the bees.
      And laden branches float
      By banks of myosote;
   And scented flag and golden fleur-de-lys
      Delay the loitering boat."

I cannot say how often I have read that poem, and how delightfully it carries the breath of our River through the London smoke. Nor less welcome are the two poems on spring, the "Invitation to the Country," and the "Reply." In these, besides their verbal beauty and their charming pictures, is a manly philosophy of Life, which animates Mr. Bridges's more important pieces — his "Prometheus the Firebringer," and his "Nero," a tragedy remarkable for the representation of Nero himself, the luxurious human tiger. From "Prometheus" I make a short extract, to show the quality of Mr. Bridges's blank verse:

"Nor is there any spirit on earth astir,
Nor 'neath the airy vault, nor yet beyond
In any dweller in far-reaching space
Nobler or dearer than the spirit of man:
That spirit which lives in each and will not die,
That wooeth beauty, and for all good things
Urgeth a voice, or still in passion sigheth,
And where he loveth, draweth the heart with him."

Mr. Bridges's latest book is his "Eros and Psyche" (Bell & Sons, who publish the "Prometheus"). It is the old story very closely followed, and beautifully retold, with a hundred memories of ancient poets: Homer, Dante, Theocritus, as well as of Apuleius.

I have named Mr. Bridges here because his poems are probably all but unknown to readers well acquainted with many other English writers of late days. On them, especially on actual contemporaries or juniors in age, it would be almost impertinent for me to speak to you; but, even at that risk, I take the chance of directing you to the poetry of Mr. Bridges. I owe so much pleasure to its delicate air, that, if speech be impertinence, silence were ingratitude.

FIELDING

To Mrs. Goodhart, in the Upper Mississippi Valley.

Dear Madam, — Many thanks for the New York newspaper you have kindly sent me, with the statistics of book-buying in the Upper Mississippi Valley. Those are interesting particulars which tell one so much about the taste of a community.

So the Rev. E. P. Roe is your favourite novelist there; a thousand of his books are sold for every two copies of the works of Henry Fielding? This appears to me to speak but oddly for taste in the Upper Mississippi Valley. On Mr. Roe's works I have no criticism to pass, for I have not read them carefully.

But I do think your neighbours lose a great deal by neglecting Henry Fielding. You will tell me he is coarse (which I cannot deny); you will remind me of what Dr. Johnson said, rebuking Mrs. Hannah More. "I never saw Johnson really angry with me but once," writes that sainted maiden lady. "I alluded to some witty passage in 'Tom Jones.'" He replied: "I am shocked to hear you quote from so vicious a book. I am sorry to hear you have read it; a confession which no modest lady should ever make."

You remind me of this, and that Johnson was no prude, and that his age was tolerant. You add that the literary taste of the Upper Mississippi Valley is much more pure than the waters of her majestic river, and that you only wish you knew who the two culprits were that bought books of Fielding's.

Ah, madam, how shall I answer you? Remember that if you have Johnson on your side, on mine I have Mrs. More herself, a character purer than "the consecrated snow that lies on Dian's lap." Again, we cannot believe Johnson was fair to Fielding, who had made his friend, the author of "Pamela," very uncomfortable by his jests. Johnson owned that he read all "Amelia" at one sitting. Could so worthy a man have been so absorbed by an unworthy book?

Once more, I am not recommending Fielding to boys and girls. "Tom Jones" was one of the works that Lydia Languish hid under the sofa; even Miss Languish did not care to be caught with that humorous foundling. "Fielding was the last of our writers who drew a man," Mr. Thackeray said, "and he certainly did not study from a draped model."

For these reasons, and because his language is often unpolished, and because his morality (that he is always preaching) is not for "those that eddy round and round," I do not desire to see Fielding popular among Miss Alcott's readers. But no man who cares for books can neglect him, and many women are quite manly enough, have good sense and good taste enough, to benefit by “Amelia,” by much of “Tom Jones.” I don’t say by “Joseph Andrews.” No man ever respected your sex more than Henry Fielding. What says his reformed rake, Mr. Wilson, in “Joseph Andrews”?

“To say the Truth, I do not perceive that Inferiority of Understanding which the Levity of Rakes, the Dulness of Men of Business, and the Austerity of the Learned would persuade us of in Women. As for my Wife, I declare I have found none of my own Sex capable of making juster Observations on Life, or of delivering them more agreeably, nor do I believe any one possessed of a faithfuller or braver Friend.”

He has no other voice wherein to speak of a happy marriage. Can you find among our genteel writers of this age, a figure more beautiful, tender, devoted, and in all good ways womanly than Sophia Western’s? “Yes,” you will say; “but the man must have been a brute who could give her to Tom Jones, to ‘that fellow who sold himself,’ as Colonel Newcome said.” “There you have me at an avail,” in the language of the old romancers. There we touch the centre of Fielding’s morality, a subject ill to discuss, a morality not for everyday preaching.

Fielding distinctly takes himself for a moralist. He preaches as continually as Thackeray. And his moral is this: “Let a man be kind, generous, charitable, tolerant, brave, honest — and we may pardon him vices of young blood, and the stains of adventurous living.” Fielding has no mercy on a seducer. Lovelace would have fared worse with him than with Richardson, who, I verily believe, admired that infernal (excuse me) coward and villain. The case of young Nightingale, in “Tom Jones,” will show you what Fielding thought of such gallants. Why, Tom himself preaches to Nightingale. “Miss Nancy’s Interest alone, and not yours, ought to be your sole Consideration,” cried Thomas, . . . “and the very best and truest Honour, which is Goodness, requires it of you,” that is, requires that Nightingale shall marry Miss Nancy.

How Tom Jones combined these sentiments, which were perfectly honest, with his own astonishing lack of *retenue,* and with Lady Bellaston, is just the puzzle. We cannot very well argue about it. I only ask you to let Jones in his right mind partly excuse Jones in a number of very delicate situations. If you ask me whether Sophia had not, after her marriage, to be as forgiving as Amelia, I fear I must admit that probably it was so. But Dr. Johnson himself thought little of that.

I am afraid our only way of dealing with Fielding’s morality is to take the best of it and leave the remainder alone. Here I find that I have unconsciously agreed with that well-known philosopher, Mr. James Boswell, the younger, of Auchinleck:

"The moral tendency of Fielding's writings . . . is ever favourable to honour and honesty, and cherishes the benevolent and generous affections. He who is as good as Fielding would make him is an amiable member of society, and may be led on by more regulated instructions to a higher state of ethical perfection."

Let us be as good and simple as Adams, without his vanity and his oddity, as brave and generous as Jones, without Jones's faults, and what a world of men and women it will become! Fielding did not paint that unborn world, he sketched the world he knew very well. He found that respectable people were often perfectly blind to the duties of charity in every sense of the word. He found that the only man in a whole company who pitied Joseph Andrews, when stripped and beaten by robbers was a postilion with defects in his moral character. In short, he knew that respectability often practised none but the strictly self-regarding virtues, and that poverty and recklessness did not always extinguish a native goodness of heart. Perhaps this discovery made him leniently disposed to "characters and situations so wretchedly low and dirty, that I," say the author of "Pamela," "could not be interested for any one of them."

How amusing Richardson always was about Fielding! How jealousy, spite, and the confusion of mind that befogs a prig when he is not taken seriously, do darken the eyes of the author of "those deplorably tedious lamentations, 'Clarissa' and 'Sir Charles Grandison,'" as Horace Walpole calls them!

Fielding asks his Muse to give him "humour and good humour." What novelist was ever so rich in both? Who ever laughed at mankind with so much affection for mankind in his heart? This love shines in every book of his. The poor have all his good-will, and in him an untired advocate and friend. What a life the poor led in the England of 1742! There never before was such tyranny without a servile insurrection. I remember a dreadful passage in "Joseph Andrews," where Lady Booby is trying to have Fanny, Joseph's sweetheart, locked up in prison: —

"It would do a Man good," says her accomplice, Scout, "to see his Worship, our Justice, commit a Fellow to *Bridewell*; he takes so much pleasure in it. And when once we ha' 'um there, we seldom hear any more o' 'um. He's either starved or eat up by Vermin in a Month's Time."

This England, with its dominant Squires, who behaved much like robber barons on the Rhine, was the merry England Fielding tried to turn from some of its ways. I seriously do believe that, with all its faults, it was a better place, with a better breed of men, than our England of to-day. But Fielding satirized intolerable injustice.

He would be a Reformer, a didactic writer. If we are to have nothing but "Art for Art's sake," that burly body of Harry Fielding's must even go to the wall. The first Beau Didapper of a critic that passes can shove him aside. He preaches like Thackeray; he writes "with a purpose" like Dickens — obsolete old authors. His cause is judged, and into Bridewell he goes, if *l'Art pour l'Art* is all the literary law and the prophets.

But Fielding cannot be kept in prison long. His noble English, his sonorous voice must be heard. There is somewhat inexpressibly heartening, to me, in the style of Fielding. One seems to be carried along, like a swimmer in a strong, clear stream, trusting one's self to every whirl and eddy, with a feeling of safety, of comfort, of delightful ease in the motion of the elastic water. He is a scholar, nay more, as Adams had his innocent vanity, Fielding has his innocent pedantry. He likes to quote Greek (fancy quoting Greek in a novel of to-day!) and to make the rogues of printers set it up correctly. He likes to air his ideas on Homer, to bring in a piece of Aristotle — not hackneyed — to show you that if he is writing about "characters and situations so wretchedly low and dirty," he is yet a student and a critic.

Mr. Samuel Richardson, a man of little reading, according to Johnson, was, I doubt, sadly put to it to understand Booth's conversations with the author who remarked that "Perhaps Mr. Pope followed the French Translations. I observe, indeed, he talks much in the Notes of Madame Dacier and Monsieur Eustathius." What knew Samuel of Eustathius? I not only can forgive Fielding his pedantry; I like it! I like a man of letters to be a scholar, and his little pardonable display and ostentation of his Greek only brings him nearer to us, who have none of his genius, and do not approach him but in his faults. They make him more human; one loves him for them as he loves Squire Western, with all his failings. Delightful, immortal Squire!

It was not he, it was another Tory Squire that called out "Hurray for old England! Twenty thousand honest Frenchmen are landed in Sussex." But it *was* Western that talked of "One Acton, that the Story Book says was turned into a Hare, and his own Dogs kill'd 'un, and eat 'un." And have you forgotten the popular discussion (during the Forty-five) of the affairs of the Nation, which, as Squire Western said, "all of us understand"? Said the Puppet-Man, "I don't care what Religion comes, provided the Presbyterians are not uppermost, for they are enemies to Puppet-Shows." But the Puppet-Man had no vote in 1745. Now, to our comfort, he can and does exercise the glorious privilege of the franchise.

There is no room in this epistle for Fielding's glorious gallery of characters — for Lady Bellaston, who remains a lady in her debaucheries, and is therefore so unlike our modern representative of her class, Lady Betty, in Miss Broughton's

"Doctor Cupid;" for Square, and Thwackum, and Trulliber, and the jealous spite of Lady Booby, and Honour, that undying lady's maid, and Partridge, and Captain Blifil and Amelia, the fair and kind and good!

It is like the whole world of that old England — the maids of the Inn, the parish clerk, the two sportsmen, the hosts of the taverns, the beaux, the starveling authors — all alive; all (save the authors) full of beef and beer; a cudgel in every fist, every man ready for a brotherly bout at fisticuffs. What has become of it, the lusty old militant world? What will become of us, and why do we prefer to Fielding — a number of meritorious moderns? Who knows? But do not let *us* prefer anything to our English follower of Cervantes, our wise, merry, learned Sancho, trudging on English roads, like Don Quixote on the paths of Spain.

But I cannot convert you. You will turn to some story about store-clerks and summer visitors. Such is his fate who argues with the fair.

LONGFELLOW

To Walter Mainwaring, Esq., Lothian College, Oxford.

My dear Mainwaring, — You are very good to ask me to come up and listen to a discussion, by the College Browning Society, of the minor characters in “Sordello;” but I think it would suit me better, if you didn’t mind, to come up when the May races are on. I am not deeply concerned about the minor characters in “Sordello,” and have long reconciled myself to the conviction that I must pass through this pilgrimage without hearing Sordello’s story told in an intelligible manner. Your letter, however, set me a-voyaging about my bookshelves, taking up a volume of poetry here and there.

What an interesting tract might be written by any one who could remember, and honestly describe, the impressions that the same books have made on him at different ages! There is Longfellow, for example. I have not read much in him for twenty years. I take him up to-day, and what a flood of memories his music brings with it! To me it is like a sad autumn wind blowing over the woods, blowing over the empty fields, bringing the scents of October, the song of a belated bird, and here and there a red leaf from the tree. There is that autumnal sense of things fair and far behind, in his poetry, or, if it is not there, his poetry stirs it in our forsaken lodges of the past. Yes, it comes to one out of one’s boyhood; it breathes of a world very vaguely realized — a world of imitative sentiments and forebodings of hours to come. Perhaps Longfellow first woke me to that later sense of what poetry means, which comes with early manhood.

Before, one had been content, I am still content, with Scott in his battle pieces; with the ballads of the Border. Longfellow had a touch of reflection you do not find, of course, in battle poems, in a boy’s favourites, such as “Of Nelson and the North,” or “Ye Mariners of England.”

His moral reflections may seem obvious now, and trite; they were neither when one was fifteen. To read the “Voices of the Night,” in particular — those early pieces — is to be back at school again, on a Sunday, reading all alone on a summer’s day, high in some tree, with a wide prospect of gardens and fields.

There is that mysterious note in the tone and measure which one first found in Longfellow, which has since reached our ears more richly and fully in Keats, in Coleridge, in Tennyson. Take, for example,

“The welcome, the thrice prayed for, the most fair,
   The best-beloved Night!”

Is not that version of Euripides exquisite — does it not seem exquisite still, though this is not the quality you expect chiefly from Longfellow, though you rather look to him for honest human matter than for an indefinable beauty of manner?

I believe it is the manner, after all, of the “Psalm of Life” that has made it so strangely popular. People tell us, excellent people, that it is “as good as a sermon,” that they value it for this reason, that its lesson has strengthened the hearts of men in our difficult life. They say so, and they think so: but the poem is not nearly as good as a sermon; it is not even coherent. But it really has an original cadence of its own, with its double rhymes; and the pleasure of this cadence has combined, with a belief that they are being edified, to make readers out of number consider the “Psalms of Life” a masterpiece. You — my learned prosodist and student of Browning and Shelley — will agree with me that it is *not* a masterpiece. But I doubt if you have enough of the experience brought by years to tolerate the opposite opinion, as your elders can.

How many other poems of Longfellow’s there are that remind us of youth, and of those kind, vanished faces which were around us when we read “The Reaper and the Flowers”! I read again, and, as the poet says,

“Then the forms of the departed
   Enter at the open door,
The belovèd, the true-hearted
   Come to visit me once more.”

Compare that simple strain, you lover of Théophile Gautier, with Théo’s own “Château de Souvenir” in “Emaux et Camées,” and confess the truth, which poet brings the break into the reader’s voice? It is not the dainty, accomplished Frenchman, the jeweller in words; it is the simpler speaker of our English tongue who stirs you as a ballad moves you. I find one comes back to Longfellow, and to one’s old self of the old years. I don’t know a poem “of the affections,” as Sir Barnes Newcome would have called it, that I like better than Thackeray’s “Cane-bottomed Chair.” Well, “The Fire of Driftwood” and this other of Longfellow’s with its absolute lack of pretence, its artful avoidance of art, is not less tender and true.

“And she sits and gazes at me
   With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saintlike,
   Looking downward from the skies.”

It is from the skies that they look down, those eyes which once read the “Voices of the Night” from the same book with us, how long ago! So long ago that one was half-frightened by the legend of the “Beleaguered City.” I know the ballad brought the scene to me so vividly that I expected, any frosty night, to see how

“The white pavilions rose and fell
  On the alarmed air;”

and it was down the valley of Ettrick, beneath the dark “Three Brethren’s Cairn,” that I half-hoped to watch when “the troubled army fled” — fled with battered banners of mist drifting through the pines, down to the Tweed and the sea. The “Skeleton in Armour” comes out once more as terrific as ever, and the “Wreck of the Hesperus” touches one in the old, simple way after so many, many days of verse-reading and even verse-writing.

In brief, Longfellow’s qualities are so mixed with what the reader brings, with so many kindliest associations of memory, that one cannot easily criticize him in cold blood. Even in spite of this friendliness and affection which Longfellow wins, I can see, of course, that he does moralize too much. The first part of his lyrics is always the best; the part where he is dealing directly with his subject. Then comes the “practical application” as preachers say, and I feel now that it is sometimes uncalled for, disenchanting, and even manufactured.

Look at his “Endymion.” It is the earlier verses that win you:

“And silver white the river gleams
As if Diana in her dreams
  Had dropt her silver bow
  Upon the meadows low.”

That is as good as Ronsard, and very like him in manner and matter. But the moral and consolatory *application* is too long — too much dwelt on:

“Like Dian’s kiss, unasked, unsought,
Love gives itself, but is not bought.”

Excellent; but there are four weak, moralizing stanzas at the close, and not only does the poet “moralize his song,” but the moral is feeble, and fantastic, and untrue. There are, though he denies it, myriads of persons now of whom it cannot be said that

“Some heart, though unknown,
Responds unto his own.”

If it were true, the reflection could only console a school-girl.

A poem like “My Lost Youth” is needed to remind one of what the author really was, “simple, sensuous, passionate.” What a lovely verse this is, a verse somehow inspired by the breath of Longfellow’s favourite Finnish “Kalevala,” “a verse of a Lapland song,” like a wind over pines and salt coasts:

“I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tide, tossing free,
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and the mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.”

Thus Longfellow, though not a very great magician and master of language — not a Keats by any means — has often, by sheer force of plain sincerity, struck exactly the right note, and matched his thought with music that haunts us and will not be forgotten:

“Ye open the eastern windows,
That look towards the sun,
Where thoughts are singing swallows,
And the brooks of morning run.”

There is a picture of Sandro Botticelli’s, the Virgin seated with the Child by a hedge of roses, in a faint blue air, as of dawn in Paradise. This poem of Longfellow’s, “The Children’s Hour,” seems, like Botticelli’s painting, to open a door into the paradise of children, where their angels do ever behold that which is hidden from men — what no man hath seen at any time.

Longfellow is exactly the antithesis of Poe, who, with all his science of verse and ghostly skill, has no humanity, or puts none of it into his lines. One is the poet of Life, and everyday life; the other is the poet of Death, and of *bizarre* shapes of death, from which Heaven deliver us!

Neither of them shows any sign of being particularly American, though Longfellow, in “Evangeline” and “Hiawatha,” and the “New England Tragedies,” sought his topics in the history and traditions of the New World.

To me “Hiawatha” seems by far the best of his longer efforts; it is quite full of sympathy with men and women, nature, beasts, birds, weather, and wind and snow. Everything lives with a human breath, as everything should live in a poem concerned with these wild folk, to whom all the world, and all in it, is personal as themselves. Of course there are lapses of style in so long a piece. It jars on us in the lay of the mystic Chibiabos, the boy Persephone of the Indian Eleusinia, to be told that

”the gentle Chibiabos
Sang in tones of deep emotion!”

“Tones of deep emotion” may pass in a novel, but not in this epic of the wild wood and the wild kindreds, an epic in all ways a worthy record of those dim, mournful races which have left no story of their own, only here and there a ruined wigwam beneath the forest leaves.

A poet’s life is no affair, perhaps, of ours. Who does not wish he knew as little of Burn’s as of Shakespeare’s? Of Longfellow’s there is nothing to know but good, and his poetry testifies to it — his poetry, the voice of the kindest and gentlest heart that poet ever bore. I think there are not many things in poets’ lives more touching than his silence, in verse, as to his own chief sorrow. A stranger intermeddles not with it, and he kept secret his brief lay on that insuperable and incommunicable regret. Much would have been lost had all poets been as reticent, yet one likes him better for it than if he had given us a new “Vita Nuova.”

What an immense long way I have wandered from “Sordello,” my dear Mainwaring, but when a man turns to his books, his thoughts, like those of a boy, “are long, long thoughts.” I have not written on Longfellow’s sonnets, for even you, impeccable sonneteer, admit that you admire them as much as I do.

A FRIEND OF KEATS

To Thomas Egerton, Esq., Lothian College, Oxford.

Dear Egerton, — Yes, as you say, Mr. Sidney Colvin's new "Life of Keats" has only one fault, it's too short. Perhaps, also, it is almost too studiously free from enthusiasm. But when one considers how Keats (like Shelley) has been gushed about, and how easy it is to gush about Keats, one can only thank Mr. Colvin for his example of reserve. What a good fellow Keats was! How really manly and, in the best sense, moral he seems, when one compares his life and his letters with the vagaries of contemporary poets who lived longer than he, though they, too, died young, and who left more work, though not better, never so good, perhaps, as Keats's best.

However, it was not of Keats that I wished to write, but of his friend, John Hamilton Reynolds. *Noscitur a sociis* — a man is known by the company he keeps. Reynolds, I think, must have been excellent company, if we may judge him by his writings. He comes into Lord Houghton's "Life and Letters of Keats" very early (vol. i.). We find the poet writing to him in the April of 1817, from the Isle of Wight. "I shall forthwith begin my 'Endymion,' which I hope I shall have got some way with before you come, when we will read our verses in a delightful place I have set my heart upon, near the castle." Keats ends "your sincere friend," and a man to whom Keats was a sincere friend had some occasion for pride.

About Reynolds's life neither time nor space permits me to say very much, if I knew very much, which I don't. He was the son of a master in one of our large schools. He went to the Bar. He married a sister of Thomas Hood. He wrote, like Hood, in the *London Magazine*. With Hood for ally, he published "Odes and Addresses to Great People;" the third edition, which I have here, is of 1826. The late relations of the brothers-in-law were less happy; possibly the ladies of their families quarrelled; that is usually the way of the belligerent sex.

Reynolds died in the enjoyment of a judicial office in the Isle of Wight, some thirty years later than his famous friend, the author of "Endymion." "It is to be lamented," says Lord Houghton, "that Mr. Reynolds's own remarkable verse is not better known." Let us try to know it a little better.

I have not succeeded in getting Reynolds's first volume of poems, which was published before "Endymion." It contained some Oriental melodies, and won a careless good word from Byron. The earliest work of his I can lay my hand on is

"The Fancy, a Selection from the Poetical Remains of the late Peter Corcoran, of Gray's Inn, Student at Law, with a brief memoir of his Life." There is a motto from Wordsworth:

"Frank are the sports, the stains are fugitive."

It was the old palmy time of the Ring. Every one knows how Byron took lessons from Jackson the boxer; how Shelley had a fight at Eton in which he quoted Homer, but was licked by a smaller boy; how Christopher North whipped the professional pugilist; how Keats himself never had enough of fighting at school, and beat the butcher afterwards. His friend Reynolds, also, liked a set-to with the gloves. His imaginary character, Peter Corcoran, is a poetical lad, who becomes possessed by a passion for prize-fighting. It seems odd in a poet, but "the stains are fugitive."

We would liefer see a young man rejoicing in his strength and improving his science, than loafing about with long hair and giving anxious thought to the colour of his necktie. It is a disinterested preference, as fighting was never my *forte,* any more than it was Artemus Ward's. At school I was "more remarkable for what I suffered than for what I achieved."

Peter Corcoran "fought nearly as soon as he could walk," wherein he resembled Keats, and part of his character may even have been borrowed from the author of the "Ode to the Nightingale." Peter fell in love, wrote poetry, witnessed a "mill" at the Fives-Court, and became the Laureate of the Ring. "He has made a good set-to with Eales, Tom Belcher (the monarch of the *gloves*!), and Turner, and it is known that he has parried the difficult and ravaging hand even of Randall himself." "The difficult and ravaging hand" — there is a style for you!

Reynolds has himself the enthusiasm of his hero; let us remember that Homer, Virgil, and Theocritus have all described spirited rallies with admiration and good taste. From his dissipation in cider-cellars and coal-holes, this rival of Tom and Jerry wrote a sonnet that applies well enough to Reynolds's own career:

"Were this a feather from an eagle's wing,
   And thou, my tablet white! a marble tile
   Taken from ancient Jove's majestic pile —
And might I dip my feather in some spring,
Adown Mount Ida threadlike wandering: —
   And were my thoughts brought from some starry isle
   In Heaven's blue sea — I then might with a smile
Write down a hymn to fame, and proudly sing!

“But I am mortal: and I cannot write
  Aught that may foil the fatal wing of Time.
  Silent, I look at Fame: I cannot climb
To where her Temple is — Not mine the might: —
  I have some glimmering of what is sublime —
But, ah! it is a most inconstant light.”

Keats might have written this sonnet in a melancholy mood.

“About this time he (Peter) wrote a slang description of a fight he had witnessed to a lady.” Unlucky Peter! “Was ever woman in this manner wooed?” The lady “glanced her eye over page after page in hopes of meeting with something that was intelligible,” and no wonder she did not care for a long letter “devoted to the subject of a mill between Belasco and the Brummagem youth.” Peter was so ill-advised as to appear before her with glorious scars, “two black eyes” in fact, and she “was inexorably cruel.” Peter did not survive her disdain. “The lady still lives, and is married”! It is ever thus!

Peter’s published works contain an American tragedy. Peter says he got it from a friend, who was sending him an American copy of “Guy Mannering” “to present to a young lady who, strange to say, read books and wore pockets,” virtues unusual in the sex. One of the songs (on the delights of bull-baiting) contains the most vigorous lines I have ever met, but they are *too* vigorous for our lax age. The tragedy ends most tragically, and the moral comes in “better late,” says the author, “than never.” The other poems are all very lively, and very much out of date. Poor Peter!

Reynolds was married by 1818, and it is impossible to guess whether the poems of Peter Corcoran did or did not contain allusions to his own more lucky love affair. “Upon my soul,” writes Keats, “I have been getting more and more close to you every day, ever since I knew you, and now one of the first pleasures I look to is your happy marriage.” Reynolds was urging Keats to publish the “Pot of Basil” “as an answer to the attack made on me in *Blackwood’s Magazine* and the *Quarterly Review*.”

Next Keats writes that he himself “never was in love, yet the voice and shape of a woman has haunted me these two days.” On September 22, 1819, Keats sent Reynolds the “Ode to Autumn,” than which there is no more perfect poem in the language of Shakespeare. This was the last of his published letters to Reynolds. He was dying, haunted eternally by that woman’s shape and voice.

Reynolds’s best-known book, if any of them can be said to be known at all, was published under the name of John Hamilton. It is “The Garden of Florence, and Other Poems" (Warren, London, 1821). There is a dedication — to his young wife.

"Thou hast entreated me to 'write no more,'" and he, as an elderly "man of twenty-four," promises to obey. "The lily and myself henceforth are *two*," he says, implying that he and the lily have previously been "one," a quaint confession from the poet of Peter Corcoran. There is something very pleasant in the graceful regret and obedience of this farewell to the Muse. He says to Mrs. Reynolds:

"I will not tell the world that thou hast chid
 My heart for worshipping the idol Muse;
That thy dark eye has given its gentle lid
 Tears for my wanderings; I may not choose
When thou dost speak but do as I am bid, —
 And therefore to the roses and the dews,
Very respectfully I make my bow; —
And turn my back upon the tulips now."

"The chief poems in the collection, taken from Boccaccio, were to have been associated with tales from the same source, intended to have been written by a friend; but illness on his part and distracting engagements on mine, prevented us from accomplishing our plan at the time; and Death now, to my deep sorrow, has frustrated it for ever!"

I cannot but quote what follows, the tribute to Keats's kindness, to the most endearing quality our nature possesses; the quality that was Scott's in such a winning degree, that was so marked in Molière,

"He, who is gone, was one of the very kindest friends I ever possessed, and yet he was not kinder, perhaps, to me than to others. His intense mind and powerful feeling would, I truly believe, have done the world some service had his life been spared — but he was of too sensitive a nature — and thus he was destroyed! One story he completed, and that is to me now the most pathetic poem in existence."

It was "Isabella, or the Pot of Basil."

The "Garden of Florence" is written in the couplets of "Endymion," and is a beautiful version of the tale once more retold by Alfred de Musset in "Simone." From "The Romance of Youth" let me quote one stanza, which applies to Keats:

"He read and dreamt of young Endymion,
 Till his romantic fancy drank its fill;
He saw that lovely shepherd sitting lone,

Watching his white flocks upon Ida’s hill;
The Moon adored him — and when all was still,
And stars were wakeful — she would earthward stray,
And linger with her shepherd love, until
The hooves of the steeds that bear the car of day,
Struck silver light in the east, and then she waned away!”

It was on Latmos, not Ida, that Endymion shepherded his flocks; but that is of no moment, except to schoolmasters. There are other stanzas of Reynolds worthy of Keats; for example, this on the Fairy Queen:

“Her bodice was a pretty sight to see;
Ye who would know its colour, — be a thief
Of the rose’s muffled bud from off the tree;
And for your knowledge, strip it leaf by leaf
Spite of your own remorse or Flora’s grief,
Till ye have come unto its heart’s pale hue;
The last, last leaf, which is the queen, — the chief
Of beautiful dim blooms: ye shall not rue,
At sight of that sweet leaf the mischief which ye do.”

One does not know when to leave off gathering buds in the “Garden of Florence.” Even after Shakespeare, and after Keats, this passage on wild flowers has its own charm:

“We gathered wood flowers, — some blue as the vein
O’er Hero’s eyelid stealing, and some as white,
In the clustering grass, as rich Europa’s hand
Nested amid the curls on Jupiter’s forehead,
What time he snatched her through the startled waves; —
Some poppies, too, such as in Enna’s meadows
Forsook their own green homes and parent stalks,
To kiss the fingers of Proserpina:
And some were small as fairies’ eyes, and bright
As lovers’ tears!”

I wish I had room for three or four sonnets, the Robin Hood sonnets to Keats, and another on a picture of a lady. Excuse the length of this letter, and read this:

“Sorrow hath made thine eyes more dark and keen,

   And set a whiter hue upon thy cheeks, —
   And round thy pressèd lips drawn anguish-streaks,
And made thy forehead fearfully serene.
Even in thy steady hair her work is seen,
   For its still parted darkness — till it breaks
   In heavy curls upon thy shoulders — speaks
   Like the stern wave, how hard the storm hath been!

“So looked that hapless lady of the South,
   Sweet Isabella! at that dreary part
Of all the passion’d hours of her youth;
   When her green Basil pot by brother’s art
Was stolen away; so look’d her painèd mouth
   In the mute patience of a breaking heart!”

There let us leave him, the gay rhymer of prize-fighters and eminent persons — let us leave him in a serious hour, and with a memory of Keats.

ON VIRGIL

To Lady Violet Lebas.

Dear Lady Violet, — Who can admire too much your undefeated resolution to admire only the right things? I wish I had this respect for authority! But let me confess that I have always admired the things which nature made me prefer, and that I have no power of accommodating my taste to the verdict of the critical. If I do not like an author, I leave him alone, however great his reputation. Thus I do not care for Mr. Gibbon, except in his Autobiography, nor for the elegant plays of M. Racine, nor very much for some of Wordsworth, though his genius is undeniable, nor excessively for the late Prof. Amiel. Why should we force ourselves into an affection for them, any more than into a relish for olives or claret, both of which excellent creatures I have the misfortune to dislike? No spectacle annoys me more than the sight of people who ask if it is "right" to take pleasure in this or that work of art. Their loves and hatreds will never be genuine, natural, spontaneous.

You say that it is "right" to like Virgil, and yet you admit that you admire the Mantuan, as the Scotch editor joked, "wi' deeficulty." I, too, must admit that my liking for much of Virgil's poetry is not enthusiastic, not like the admiration expressed, for example, by Mr. Frederic Myers, in whose "Classical Essays" you will find all that the advocates of the Latin singer can say for him. These heights I cannot reach, any more than I can equal that eloquence. Yet must Virgil always appear to us one of the most beautiful and moving figures in the whole of literature.

How sweet must have been that personality which can still win our affections, across eighteen hundred years of change, and through the mists of commentaries, and school-books, and traditions! Does it touch thee at all, oh gentle spirit and serene, that we, who never knew thee, love thee yet, and revere thee as a saint of heathendom? Have the dead any delight in the religion they inspire?

Id cinerem aut Manes credis curare sepultos?

I half fancy I can trace the origin of this personal affection for Virgil, which survives in me despite the lack of a very strong love of parts of his poems. When I was at school we met every morning for prayer, in a large circular hall, round which, on pedestals, were set copies of the portrait busts of great ancient writers. Among these was "the Ionian father of the rest," our father Homer, with a winning and venerable majesty. But the bust of Virgil was, I think, of white marble, not a cast (so, at least, I remember it), and was of a singular youthful purity and beauty, sharing my affections with a copy of the exquisite Psyche of Naples. It showed us that Virgil who was called "The Maiden" as Milton was named "The Lady of Christ's." I don't know the archeology of it, perhaps it was a mere work of modern fancy, but the charm of this image, beheld daily, overcame even the tedium of short scraps of the "Æneid" daily parsed, not without stripes and anguish. So I retain a sentiment for Virgil, though I well perceive the many drawbacks of his poetry.

It is not always poetry at first hand; it is often imitative, like all Latin poetry, of the Greek songs that sounded at the awakening of the world. This is more tolerable when Theocritus is the model, as in the "Eclogues," and less obvious in the "Georgics," when the poet is carried away into naturalness by the passion for his native land, by the longing for peace after cruel wars, by the joy of a country life. Virgil had that love of rivers which, I think, a poet is rarely without; and it did not need Greece to teach him to sing of the fields:

Propter aquam, tardis ingens ubi flexibus
Mincius et tenera prætexit arundine ripas.

"By the water-side, where mighty Mincius wanders, with links and loops, and fringes all the banks with the tender reed." Not the Muses of Greece, but his own *Casmenæ*, song-maidens of Italy, have inspired him here, and his music is blown through a reed of the Mincius. In many such places he shows a temper with which we of England, in our late age, may closely sympathize.

Do you remember that mediæval story of the building of Parthenope, how it was based, by the Magician Virgilius, on an egg, and how the city shakes when the frail foundation chances to be stirred? This too vast empire of ours is as frail in its foundation, and trembles at a word. So it was with the Empire of Rome in Virgil's time: civic revolution muttering within it, like the subterranean thunder, and the forces of destruction gathering without. In Virgil, as in Horace, you constantly note their anxiety, their apprehension for the tottering fabric of the Roman state. This it was, I think, and not the contemplation of human fortunes alone, that lent Virgil his melancholy. From these fears he looks for a shelter in the sylvan shades; he envies the ideal past of the golden world.

Aureus hanc vitam in terris Saturnus agebat!

"Oh, for the fields! Oh, for Spercheius and Taygetus, where wander the Lacænian maids! Oh, that one would carry me to the cool valleys of Hæmus, and cover me with the wide shadow of the boughs! Happy was he who came to know the causes of things, who set his foot on fear and on inexorable Fate, and far below him heard the roaring of the streams of Hell! And happy he who knows the rural deities, Pan, and Sylvanus the Old, and the sisterhood of the nymphs! Unmoved is he by the people's favour, by the purple of kings, unmoved by all the perfidies of civil war, by the Dacian marching down from his hostile Danube; by the peril of the Roman state, and the Empire hurrying to its doom. He wasteth not his heart in pity of the poor, he envieth not the rich, he gathereth what fruits the branches bear and what the kindly wilderness unasked brings forth; he knows not our laws, nor the madness of the courts, nor the records of the common weal" — does not read the newspapers, in fact.

The sorrows of the poor, the luxury of the rich, the peril of the Empire, the shame and dread of each day's news, we too know them; like Virgil we too deplore them. We, in our reveries, long for some such careless paradise, but we place it not in Sparta but in the Islands of the Southern Seas. It is in passages of this temper that Virgil wins us most, when he speaks for himself and for his age, so distant, and so weary, and so modern; when his own thought, unborrowed and unforced, is wedded to the music of his own unsurpassable style.

But he does not always write for himself and out of his own thought, that style of his being far more frequently misapplied, wasted on telling a story that is only of feigned and foreign interest. Doubtless it was the "Æneid," his artificial and unfinished epic, that won Virgil the favour of the Middle Aces. To the Middle Ages, which knew not Greek, and knew not Homer, Virgil was the representative of the heroic and eternally interesting past. But to us who know Homer, Virgil's epic is indeed, "like moonlight unto sunlight;" is a beautiful empty world, where no real life stirs, a world that shines with a silver lustre not its own, but borrowed from "the sun of Greece."

Homer sang of what he knew, of spears and ships, of heroic chiefs and beggar men, of hunts and sieges, of mountains where the lion roamed, and of fairy isles where a goddess walked alone. He lived on the marches of the land of fable, when half the Mediterranean was a sea unsailed, when even Italy was as dimly descried as the City of the Sun in Elizabeth's reign. Of all that he knew he sang, but Virgil could only follow and imitate, with a pale antiquarian interest, the things that were alive for Homer. What could Virgil care for a tussle between two stout men-at-arms, for the clash of contending war-chariots, driven each on each, like wave against wave in the sea? All that tide had passed over, all the story of the "Æneid" is mere borrowed antiquity, like the Middle Ages of Sir Walter Scott; but the borrower had none of Scott's joy in the noise and motion of war, none of the Homeric "delight in battle."

Virgil, in writing the "Æneid," executed an imperial commission, and an ungrateful commission; it is the sublime of hack-work, and the legend may be true which declares that, on his death-bed, he wished his poem burned. He could only be himself here and there, as in that earliest picture of romantic love, as some have called the story of “Dido,” not remembering, perhaps, that even here Virgil had before his mind a Greek model, that he was thinking of Apollonius Rhodius, and of Jason and Medea. He could be himself, too, in passages of reflection and description, as in the beautiful sixth book, with its picture of the under world, and its hints of mystical philosophy.

Could we choose our own heavens, there in that Elysian world might Virgil be well content to dwell, in the shadow of that fragrant laurel grove, with them who were “priests pure of life, while life was theirs, and holy singers, whose songs were worthy of Apollo.” There he might muse on his own religion and on the Divinity that dwells in, that breathes in, that is, all things and more than all. Who could wish Virgil to be one of the spirits that

Lethæum ad flumen Dues evocat agmine magno,

that are called once more to the Lethean stream, and that once more, forgetful of their home, “into the world and wave of men depart?”

There will come no other Virgil, unless his soul, in accordance with his own philosophy, is among us to-day, crowned with years and honours, the singer of “Ulysses,” of the “Lotus Eaters,” of “Tithonus,” and “Œnone.”

So, after all, I have been enthusiastic, “maugre my head,” as Malory says, and perhaps, Lady Violet, I have shown you why it is “right” to admire Virgil, and perhaps I have persuaded nobody but myself.

P.S. — Mr. Coleridge was no great lover of Virgil, inconsistently. “If you take from Virgil his diction and metre, what do you leave him?” Yet Mr. Coleridge had defined poetry as “the *best* words, in the best order” — that is, “diction and metre.” He, therefore, proposed to take from Virgil his poetry, and then to ask what was left of the Poet!

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE

To the Lady Violet Lebas.

Dear Lady Violet, — I do not wonder that you are puzzled by the language of the first French novel. The French of "Aucassin et Nicolette" is not French after the school of Miss Pinkerton, at Chiswick. Indeed, as the little song-story has been translated into modern French by M. Bida, the painter (whose book is very scarce), I presume even the countrywomen of Aucassin find it difficult. You will not expect me to write an essay on the grammar, nor would you read it if I did. The chief thing is that "s" appears as the sign of the singular, instead of being the sign of the plural, and the nouns have cases.

The story must be as old as the end of the twelfth century, and must have received its present form in Picardy. It is written, as you see, in alternate snatches of verse and prose. The verse, which was chanted, is not rhymed as a rule, but each *laisse*, or screed, as in the "Chanson de Roland," runs on the same final assonance, or vowel sound throughout.

So much for the form. Who is the author? We do not know, and never shall know. Apparently he mentions himself in the first lines:

"Who would listen to the lay,
Of the captive old and gray;"

for this is as much sense as one can make out of *del deport du viel caitif*.

The author, then, was an old fellow. I think we might learn as much from the story. An old man he was, or a man who felt old. Do you know whom he reminds me of? Why, of Mr. Bowes, of the Theatre Royal, Chatteris; of Mr. Bowes, that battered, old, kindly sentimentalist who told his tale with Mr. Arthur Pendennis.

It is a love story, a story of love overmastering, without conscience or care of aught but the beloved. And the *viel caitif* tells it with sympathy, and with a smile. "Oh, folly of fondness," he seems to cry; "oh, pretty fever and foolish; oh, absurd happy days of desolation:

"*When I was young, as you are young,*
And lutes were touched, and songs were sung!
And love-lamps in the windows hung!"

It is the very tone of Thackeray, when Thackeray is tender; and the world heard it first from this elderly nameless minstrel, strolling with his viol and his singing boys, a blameless D'Assoucy, from castle to castle in the happy poplar land. I think I see him and hear him in the silver twilight, in the court of some château of Picardy, while the ladies around sit listening on silken cushions, and their lovers, fettered with silver chains, lie at their feet. They listen, and look, and do not think of the minstrel with his gray head, and his green heart; but we think of him. It is an old man's work, and a weary man's work. You can easily tell the places where he has lingered and been pleased as he wrote.

The story is simple enough. Aucassin, son of Count Garin, of Beaucaire, loved so well fair Nicolette, the captive girl from an unknown land, that he would never be dubbed knight, nor follow tourneys; nor even fight against his father's mortal foe, Count Bougars de Valence. So Nicolette was imprisoned high in a painted chamber. But the enemy were storming the town, and, for the promise of "one word or two with Nicolette, and one kiss," Aucassin armed himself and led out his men. But he was all adream about Nicolette, and his horse bore him into the press of foes ere he knew it. Then he heard them contriving his death, and woke out of his dream.

"The damoiseau was tall and strong, and the horse whereon he sat fierce and great, and Aucassin laid hand to sword, and fell a-smiting to right and left, and smote through helm and headpiece, and arm and shoulder, making a murder about him, like a wild boar the hounds fall on in the forest. There slew he ten knights, and smote down seven, and mightily and knightly he hurled through the press, and charged home again, sword in hand." For that hour Aucassin struck like one of Mallory's men in the best of all romances. But though he took Count Bougars prisoner, his father would not keep his word, nor let him have one word or two with Nicolette, and one kiss. Nay, Aucassin was thrown into prison in an old tower. There he sang of Nicolette,

"Was it not the other day
That a pilgrim came this way?
And a passion him possessed,
That upon his bed he lay,
Lay, and tossed, and knew no rest,
In his pain discomforted.
But thou camest by his bed,
Holding high thine amice fine
And thy kirtle of ermine.
Then the beauty that is thine
Did he look on; and it fell

That the Pilgrim straight was well,
Straight was hale and comforted.
And he rose up from his bed,
And went back to his own place
Sound and strong, and fair of face."

Thus Aucassin makes a Legend of his lady, as it were, assigning to her beauty such miracles as faith attributes to the excellence of the saints.

Meanwhile, Nicolette had slipped from the window of her prison chamber, and let herself down into the garden, where she heard the song of the nightingales. "Then caught she up her kirtle in both hands, behind and before, and flitted over the dew that lay deep on the grass, and fled out of the garden, and the daisy flowers bending below her tread seemed dark against her feet, so white was the maiden." Can't you see her stealing with those "feet of ivory," like Bombyca's, down the dark side of the silent moonlit streets of Beaucaire?

Then she came where Aucassin was lamenting in his cell, and she whispered to him how she was fleeing for her life. And he answered that without her he must die; and then this foolish pair, in the very mouth of peril, must needs begin a war of words as to which loved the other best!

"Nay, fair sweet friend," saith Aucassin, "it may not be that thou lovest me more than I love thee. Woman may not love man as man loves woman, for a woman's love lies no deeper than in the glance of her eye, and the blossom of her breast, and her foot's tip-toe; but man's love is in his heart planted, whence never can it issue forth and pass away."

So while they speak

“In debate as birds are,
Hawk on bough,”

comes the kind sentinel to warn them of a danger. And Nicolette flees, and leaps into the fosse, and thence escapes into a great forest and lonely. In the morning she met shepherds merry over their meat, and bade them tell Aucassin to hunt in that forest, where he should find a deer whereof one glance would cure him of his malady. The shepherds are happy, laughing people, who half mock Nicolette, and quite mock Aucassin, when he comes that way. But at first they took Nicolette for a *fée*, such a beauty shone so brightly from her, and lit up all the forest. Aucassin they banter; and indeed the free talk of the peasants to their lord’s son in that feudal age sounds curiously, and may well make us reconsider our notions of early feudalism.

But Aucassin learns at least that Nicolette is in the wood, and he rides at adventure after her, till the thorns have ruined his silken surcoat, and the blood, dripping from his torn body, makes a visible track in the grass. So, as he wept, he met a monstrous man of the wood, that asked him why he lamented. And he said he was sorrowing for a lily-white hound that he had lost. Then the wild man mocked him, and told his own tale. He was in that estate which Achilles, among the ghosts, preferred to all the kingship of the dead outworn. He was hind and hireling to a villein, and he had lost one of the villein’s oxen. For that he dared not go into the town, where a prison awaited him. Moreover, they had dragged the very bed from under his old mother, to pay the price of the ox, and she lay on straw; and at that the woodman wept.

A curious touch, is it not, of pity for the people? The old poet is serious for one moment. “Compare,” he says, “the sorrows of sentiment, of ladies and lovers, praised in song, with the sorrows of the poor, with troubles that are real and not of the heart!” Even Aucassin the lovelorn feels it, and gives the hind money to pay for his ox, and so riding on comes to a lodge that Nicolette has built with blossoms and boughs. And Aucassin crept in and looked through a gap in the fragrant walls of the lodge, and saw the stars in heaven, and one that was brighter than the rest.

Does one not feel it, the cool of that old summer night, the sweet smell of broken boughs and trodden grass and deep dew, and the shining of the star?

“Star that I from far behold
That the moon draws to her fold,
Nicolette with thee doth dwell,

My sweet love with locks of gold,”

sings Aucassin. “And when Nicolette heard Aucassin, right so came she unto him, and passed within the lodge, and cast her arms about his neck and kissed and embraced him:

“Fair sweet friend, welcome be thou!”
“And thou, fair sweet love, be thou welcome!”

There the story should end, in a dream of a summer’s night. But the old minstrel did not end it so, or some one has continued his work with a heavier hand. Aucassin rides, he cares not whither, if he has but his love with him. And they come to a fantastic land of burlesque, such as Pantagruel’s crew touched at many a time. And Nicolette is taken by Carthaginian pirates, and proves to be daughter to the King of Carthage, and leaves his court and comes to Beaucaire in the disguise of a ministrel, and “journeys end in lovers’ meeting.”

That is all the tale, with its gaps, its careless passages, its adventures that do not interest the poet. He only cares for youth, love, spring, flowers, and the song of the birds; the rest, except the passage about the hind, is mere “business” done casually, because the audience expects broad jests, hard blows, misadventures, recognitions. What lives is the touch of poetry, of longing, of tender heart, of humorous resignation. It lives, and always must live, “while the nature of man is the same.” The poet hopes his tale will gladden sad men. This service it did for M. Bida, he says, in the dreadful year of 1870-71, when he translated “Aucassin.” This, too, it has done for me in days not delightful.

PLOTINUS (A.D. 200-262)

To the Lady Violet Lebas.

Dear Lady Violet, — You are discursive and desultory enough, as a reader, to have pleased even the late Lord Iddesleigh. It was "Aucassin and Nicolette" only a month ago, and to-day you have been reading Lord Lytton's "Strange Story," I am sure, for you want information about Plotinus! He was born (about A.D. 200) in Wolf-town (Lycopolis), in Egypt, the town, you know, where the natives might not eat wolves, poor fellows, just as the people of Thebes might not eat sheep. Probably this prohibition caused Plotinus no regret, for he was a consistent vegetarian.

However, we are advancing too rapidly, and we must discuss Plotinus more in order. His name is very dear to mystic novelists, like the author of "Zanoni." They always describe their favourite hero as "deep in Plotinus or Iamblichus," and I venture to think that nearly represents the depth of their own explorations. We do not know exactly when Plotinus was born. Like many ladies he used to wrap up his age in a mystery, observing that these petty details about the body (a mere husk of flesh binding the soul) were of no importance. He was not weaned till he was eight years old, a singular circumstance. Having a turn for philosophy, he attended the schools of Alexandria, concerning which Kingsley's "Hypatia" is the most accessible authority.

All these anecdotes, I should have said, we learn from Porphyry, the Tyrian, who was a kind of Boswell to Plotinus. The philosopher himself often reminds me of Dr. Johnson, especially as Dr. Johnson is described by Mr. Carlyle. Just as the good doctor was a sound Churchman in the beginning of the age of new ideas, so Plotinus was a sound pagan in the beginning of the triumph of Christianity.

Like Johnson, Plotinus was lazy and energetic and short-sighted. He wrote a very large number of treatises, but he never took the trouble to read through them when once they were written, because his eyes were weak. He was superstitious, like Dr. Johnson, yet he had lucid intervals of common sense, when he laughed at the superstitions of his disciples. Like Dr. Johnson, he was always begirt by disciples, men and women, Bozzys and Thrales. He was so full of honour and charity, that his house was crowded with persons in need of help and friendly care. Though he lived so much in the clouds and among philosophical abstractions, he was an excellent man of business. Though a philosopher he was pious, and was courageous, dreading the plague no more than the good doctor dreaded the tempest that fell on him when he was voyaging to Coll.

You will admit that the parallel is pretty close for an historical parallel, despite the differences between the ascetic of Wolf-town and the sage of Bolt Court, hard by Fleet Street!

To return to the education of Plotinus. He was twenty-eight when he went up to the University of Alexandria. For eleven years he diligently attended the lectures of Ammonius. Then he went on the Emperor Gordian's expedition to the East, hoping to learn the philosophy of the Hindus. The Upanishads would have puzzled Plotinus, had he reached India; but he never did. Gordian's army was defeated in Mesopotamia, no "blessed word" to Gordian, and Plotinus hardly escaped with his life. He must have felt like Stendhal on the retreat from Moscow.

From Syria his friend and disciple Amelius led him to Rome, and here, as novelists say, "a curious thing happened." There was in Rome an Egyptian priest, who offered to raise up the Demon, or Guardian Angel, of Plotinus in visible form. But there was only one pure spot in all Rome, so said the priest, and this spot was the Temple of Isis. Here the *séance* was held, and no demon appeared, but a regular God of one of the first circles. So terrified was an onlooker that he crushed to death the living birds which he held in his hands for some ritual or magical purpose.

It was a curious scene, a cosmopolitan confusion of Egypt, Rome, Isis, table-turning, the late Mr. Home, religion, and mummery, while Christian hymns of the early Church were being sung, perhaps in the garrets around, outside the Temple of Isis. The discovery that he had a god for his guardian angel gave Plotinus plenty of confidence in dealing with rival philosophers. For example, Alexandrinus Olympius, another mystic, tried magical arts against Plotinus. But Alexandrinus, suddenly doubling up during lecture with unaffected agony, cried, "Great virtue hath the soul of Plotinus, for my spells have returned against myself." As for Plotinus, he remarked among his disciples, "Now the body of Alexandrinus is collapsing like an empty purse."

How diverting it would be, Lady Violet, if our modern controversialists had those accomplishments, and if Mr. Max Müller could, literally, "double up" Professor Whitney, or if any one could cause Peppmüller to collapse with his queer Homeric theory! Plotinus had many such arts. A piece of jewellery was stolen from one of his *protégées*, a lady, and he detected the thief, a servant, by a glance. After being flogged within an inch of his life, the servant (perhaps to save the remaining inch) confessed all.

Once when Porphyry was at a distance, and was meditating suicide, Plotinus appeared at his side, saying, "This that thou schemest cometh not of the pure intellect, but of black humours," and so sent Porphyry for change of air to Sicily. This was thoroughly good advice, but during the absence of the disciple the master died.

Porphyry did not see the great snake that glided into the wall when Plotinus expired; he only heard of the circumstance. Plotinus's last words were: "I am striving to release that which is divine within us, and to merge it in the universally divine." It is a strange mixture of philosophy and savage survival. The Zulus still believe that the souls of the dead reappear, like the soul of Plotinus, in the form of serpents.

Plotinus wrote against the paganizing Christians, or Gnostics. Like all great men, he was accused of plagiarism. A defence of great men accused of literary theft would be as valuable as Naudé's work of a like name about magic. On his death the Delphic Oracle, in very second-rate hexameters, declared that Plotinus had become a demon.

Such was the life of Plotinus, a man of sense and virtue, and so modest that he would not allow his portrait to be painted. His character drew good men round him, his repute for supernatural virtues brought "fools into a circle." What he meant by his belief that four times he had, "whether in the body or out of the body," been united with the Spirit of the world, who knows? What does Tennyson mean when he writes:

"So word by word, and line by line,
  The dead man touch'd me from the past,
  And all at once it seem'd at last
His living soul was flashed on mine.

And mine in his was wound and whirl'd
  About empyreal heights of thought,
  And came on that which is, and caught
The deep pulsations of the world."

Mystery! We cannot fathom it; we know not the paths of the souls of Pascal and Gordon, of Plotinus and St. Paul. They are wise with a wisdom not of this world, or with a foolishness yet more wise.

In his practical philosophy Plotinus was an optimist, or at least he was at war with pessimism.

"They that love God bear lightly the ways of the world — bear lightly whatsoever befalls them of necessity in the general movement of things." He believed in a rest that remains for the people of God, "where they speak not one with the other; but, as we understand many things by the eyes only, so does soul read soul in heaven, where the spiritual body is pure, and nothing is hidden, and nothing feigned." The arguments by which these opinions are buttressed may be called metaphysical, and may be called worthless; the conviction, and the beauty of the language in which it is stated, remain immortal possessions.

Why such a man as Plotinus, with such ideas, remained a pagan, while Christianity offered him a sympathetic refuge, who can tell? Probably natural conservatism, in him as in Dr. Johnson — conservatism and taste — caused his adherence to the forms at least of the older creeds. There was much to laugh at in Plotinus, and much to like. But if you read him in hopes of material for strange stories, you will be disappointed. Perhaps Lord Lytton and others who have invoked his name in fiction (like Vivian Grey in Lord Beaconsfield's tale) knew his name better than his doctrine. His "Enneads," even as edited by his patient Boswell, Porphyry, are not very light subjects of study.

LUCRETIUS

To the Rev. Geoffrey Martin, Oxford.

Dear Martin,— “How individuals found religious consolation from the creeds of ancient Greece and Rome” is, as you quote C. O. Müller, “a very curious question.” It is odd that while we have countless books on the philosophy and the mythology and the ritual of the classic peoples, we hear about their religion in the modern sense scarcely anything from anybody. We know very well what gods they worshipped, and what sacrifices they offered to the Olympians, and what stories they told about their deities, and about the beginnings of things. We know, too, in a general way, that the gods were interested in morality. They would all punish offences in their own department, at least when it was a case of *numine læso*, when the god who protected the hearth was offended by breach of hospitality, or when the gods invoked to witness an oath were offended by perjury.

But how did a religiously minded man regard the gods? What hope or what fears did he entertain with regard to the future life? Had he any sense of *sin*, as more than a thing that could be expiated by purification with the blood of slaughtered swine, or by purchasing the prayers and “masses,” so to speak, of the mendicant clergy or charlatans, mentioned by Plato in the “Republic”? About these great questions of the religious life — the Future and man’s fortunes in the future, the punishment or reward of justice or iniquity — we really know next to nothing.

That is one reason why the great poem of Lucretius seems so valuable to me. The *De Rerum Natura* was written for no other purpose than to destroy Religion, as Lucretius understood it, to free men’s minds from all dread as to future punishment, all hope of Heaven, all dread or desire for the interference of the gods in this mortal life of ours on earth. For no other reason did Lucretius desire to “know the causes of things,” except that the knowledge would bring “emancipation,” as people call it, from the gods, to whom men had hitherto stood in the relation of the Roman son to the Roman sire, under the *patria potestas* or *in manu patris*.

As Lucretius wrought all his arduous work to this end, it follows that his fellow-countrymen *must* have gone in a constant terror about spiritual penalties, which we seldom associate in thought with the “blithe” and careless existence of the ancient peoples. In every line of Lucretius you read the joy and the indignation of the slave just escaped from an intolerable thraldom to fear. Nobody could well have believed on any other evidence that the classical people had a gloomy Calvinism of their own time. True, as early as Homer, we hear of the shadowy existence of the souls, and of the torments endured by the notably wicked; by impious ghosts, or tyrannical, like Sisyphus and Tantalus. But when we read the opening books of the "Republic," we find the educated friends of Socrates treating these terrors as old-wives' fables. They have heard, they say, that such notions circulate among the people, but they seem never for a moment to have themselves believed in a future of rewards and punishments.

The remains of ancient funereal art, in Etruria or Attica, usually show us the semblances of the dead lying at endless feasts, or receiving sacrifices of food and wine (as in Egypt) from their descendants, or, perhaps, welcoming the later dead, their friends who have just rejoined them. But it is only in the descriptions by Pausanias and others of certain old wall-paintings that we hear of the torments of the wicked, of the demons that torture them and, above all, of the great chief fiend, coloured like a carrion fly. To judge from Lucretius, although so little remains to us of this creed, yet it had a very strong hold of the minds of people, in the century before Christ. Perhaps the belief was reinforced by the teaching of Socrates, who, in the vision of Er, in the "Republic," brings back, in a myth, the old popular faith in a *Purgatorio,* if not in an *Inferno*.

In the "Phædo," for certain, we come to the very definite account of a Hell, a place of eternal punishment, as well as of a Purgatory, whence souls are freed when their sins are expiated. "The spirits beyond redemption, for the multitude of their murders or sacrileges, Fate hurls into Tartarus, whence they never any more come forth." But souls of lighter guilt abide a year in Tartarus, and then drift out down the streams Cocytus and Pyriphlegethon. Thence they reach the marsh of Acheron, but are not released until they have received the pardon of the souls whom in life they had injured.

All this, and much more to the same purpose in other dialogues of Plato's, appears to have been derived by Socrates from the popular unphilosophic traditions, from Folk-lore in short, and to have been raised by him to the rank of "pious opinion," if not of dogma. Now, Lucretius represents nothing but the reaction against all this dread of future doom, whether that dread was inculcated by Platonic philosophy or by popular belief. The latter must have been much the more powerful and widely diffused. It follows that the Romans, at least, must have been haunted by a constant dread of judgment to come, from which, but for the testimony of Lucretius and his manifest sincerity, we might have believed them free.

Perhaps we may regret the existence of this Roman religion, for it did its best to ruin a great poet. The sublimity of the language of Lucretius, when he can leave his attempts at scientific proof, the closeness of his observation, his enjoyment of life, of Nature, and his power of painting them, a certain largeness of touch, and noble amplitude of manner — these, with a burning sincerity, mark him above all others that smote the Latin lyre. Yet these great qualities are half-crushed by his task, by his attempt to turn the atomic theory into verse, by his unsympathetic effort to destroy all faith and hope, because these were united, in his mind, with dread of Styx and Acheron.

It is an almost intolerable philosophy, the philosophy of eternal sleep, without dreams and without awakening. This belief is wholly divorced from joy, which inspires all the best art. This negation of hope has “close-lipped Patience for its only friend.”

In vain does Lucretius paint pictures of life and Nature so large, so glowing, so majestic that they remind us of nothing but the “Fête Champêtre” of Giorgione, in the Louvre. All that life is a thing we must leave soon, and forever, and must be hopelessly lapped in an eternity of blind silence. “I shall let men see the certain end of all,” he cries; “then will they resist religion, and the threats of priests and prophets.” But this “certain end” is exactly what mortals do not desire to see. To this sleep they prefer even *tenebras Orci, vastasque lacunas*.

They will not be deprived of gods, “the friends of man, merciful gods, compassionate.” They will not turn from even a faint hope in those to the Lucretian deities in their endless and indifferent repose and divine “delight in immortal and peaceful life, far, far away from us and ours — life painless and fearless, needing nothing we can give, replete with its own wealth, unmoved by prayer and promise, untouched by anger.”

Do you remember that hymn, as one may call it, of Lucretius to Death, to Death which does not harm us. “For as we knew no hurt of old, in ages when the Carthaginian thronged against us in war, and the world was shaken with the shock of fight, and dubious hung the empire over all things mortal by sea and land, even so careless, so unmoved, shall we remain, in days when we shall no more exist, when the bond of body and soul that makes our life is broken. Then naught shall move us, nor wake a single sense, not though earth with sea be mingled, and sea with sky.” There is no hell, he cries, or, like Omar, he says, “Hell is the vision of a soul on fire.”

Your true Tityus, gnawed by the vulture, is only the slave of passion and of love; your true Sisyphus (like Lord Salisbury in *Punch*) is only the politician, striving always, never attaining; the stone rolls down again from the hill-crest, and thunders far along the plain.

Thus his philosophy, which gives him such a delightful sense of freedom, is rejected after all these years of trial by men. They feel that since those remotest days

“*Quum Venus in silvis jungebat corpora amantum,*”

they have travelled the long, the weary way Lucretius describes to little avail, if they may not keep their hopes and fears. Robbed of these we are robbed of all; it serves us nothing to have conquered the soil and fought the winds and waves, to have built cities, and tamed fire, if the world is to be “dispeopled of its dreams.” Better were the old life we started from, and dreams therewith, better the free days —

”*Novitas tum florida mundi*
Pabula dia tulit, miseris mortablibus ampla;”

than wealth or power, and neither hope nor fear, but one certain end of all before the eyes of all.

Thus the heart of man has answered, and will answer Lucretius, the noblest Roman poet, and the least beloved, who sought, at last, by his own hand, they say, the doom that Virgil waited for in the season appointed.

TO A YOUNG AMERICAN BOOK-HUNTER

To Philip Dodsworth, Esq., New York.

Dear Dodsworth, — Let me congratulate you on having joined the army of book-hunters. “Everywhere have I sought peace and found it nowhere,” says the blessed Thomas à Kempis, “save in a corner with a book.” Whether that good monk wrote the “De Imitatione Christi” or not, one always likes him for his love of books. Perhaps he was the only book-hunter that ever wrought a miracle. “Other signs and miracles which he was wont to tell as having happened at the prayer of an unnamed person, are believed to have been granted to his own, such as the sudden reappearance of a lost book in his cell.” Ah, if Faith, that moveth mountains, could only bring back the books we have lost, the books that have been borrowed from us! But we are a faithless generation.

From a collector so much older and better experienced in misfortune than yourself, you ask for some advice on the sport of book-hunting. Well, I will give it; but you will not take it. No; you will hunt wild, like young pointers before they are properly broken.

Let me suppose that you are “to middle fortune born,” and that you cannot stroll into the great book-marts and give your orders freely for all that is rich and rare. You are obliged to wait and watch an opportunity, to practise that maxim of the Stoic’s, “Endure and abstain.” Then abstain from rushing at every volume, however out of the line of your literary interests, which seems to be a bargain. Probably it is not even a bargain; it can seldom be cheap to you, if you do not need it, and do not mean to read it.

Not that any collector reads all his books. I may have, and indeed do possess, an Aldine Homer and Caliergus his Theocritus; but I prefer to study the authors in a cheap German edition. The old editions we buy mainly for their beauty, and the sentiment of their antiquity and their associations.

But I don’t take my own advice. The shelves are crowded with books quite out of my line — a whole small library of tomes on the pastime of curling, and I don’t curl; and “God’s Revenge against Murther,” though (so far) I am not an assassin. Probably it was for love of Sir Walter Scott, and his mention of this truculent treatise, that I purchased it. The full title of it is “The Triumphs of God’s Revenge against the Crying and Execrable Sinne of (willful and premeditated) Murther.” Or rather there is nearly a column more of title, which I spare you. But the pictures are so bad as to be nearly worth the price. Do not waste your money, like your foolish adviser, on books like that, or on "Les Sept Visions de Don Francisco de Quevedo," published at Cologne, in 1682.

Why in the world did I purchase this, with the title-page showing Quevedo asleep, and all his seven visions floating round him in little circles like soap-bubbles? Probably because the book was published by Clement Malassis, and perhaps he was a forefather of that whimsical Frenchman, Poulet Malassis, who published for Banville, and Baudelaire, and Charles Asselineau. It was a bad reason. More likely the mere cheapness attracted me.

Curiosity, not cheapness, assuredly, betrayed me into another purchase. If I want to read "The Pilgrim's Progress," of course I read it in John Bunyan's good English. Then why must I ruin myself to acquire "Voyage d'un Chrestien vers l'Eternité. Ecrit en Anglois, par Monsieur Bunjan, F.M., en Bedtfort, et nouvellement traduit en François. Avec Figures. A Amsterdam, chez Jean Boekholt Libraire près de la Bourse, 1685"? I suppose this is the oldest French version of the famed allegory. Do you know an older? Bunyan was still living and, indeed, had just published the second part of the book, about Christian's wife and children, and the deplorable young woman whose name was Dull.

As the little volume, the Elzevir size, is bound in blue morocco, by Cuzin, I hope it is not wholly a foolish bargain; but what do I want, after all, with a French "Pilgrim's Progress"? These are the errors a man is always making who does not collect books with system, with a conscience and an aim.

Do have a specially. Make a collection of works on few subjects, well chosen. And what subjects shall they be? That depends on taste. Probably it is well to avoid the latest fashion. For example, the illustrated French books of the eighteenth century are, at this moment, *en hausse*. There is a "boom" in them. Fifty years ago Brunet, the author of the great "Manuel," sneered at them. But, in his, "Library Companion," Dr. Dibdin, admitted their merit. The illustrations by Gravelot, Moreau, Marillier, and the rest, are certainly delicate, graceful, full of character, stamped with style. But only the proofs before letters are very much valued, and for these wild prices are given by competitive millionaires. You cannot compete with them.

It is better wholly to turn the back on these books and on any others at the height of the fashion, unless you meet them for fourpence on a stall. Even then should a gentleman take advantage of a poor bookseller's ignorance? I don't know. I never fell into the temptation, because I never was tempted. Bargains, real bargains, are so rare that you may hunt for a lifetime and never meet one.

The best plan for a man who has to see that his collection is worth what it cost him, is probably to confine one's self to a single line, say, in your case, first editions of new English, French, and American books that are likely to rise in value. I would try, were I you, to collect first editions of Longfellow, Bryant, Whittier, Poe, and Hawthorne.

As to Poe, you probably will never have a chance. Outside of the British Museum, where they have the “Tamerlane” of 1827, I have only seen one early example of Poe’s poems. It is “Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems, by Edgar A. Poe. Baltimore: Hatch and Dunning, 1829, 8vo, p.” The book “came to Mr. Locker (Mr. Frederick Locker-Lampson), through Mr. R. H. Stoddard, the American poet.” So says Mr. Locker-Lampson’s Catalogue. He also has the New York edition of 1831.

These books are extraordinarily rare; you are more likely to find them in some collection of twopenny rubbish than to buy them in the regular market. Bryant’s “Poems” (Cambridge, 1821) must also be very rare, and Emerson’s of 1847, and Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes’s of 1836, and Longfellow’s “Voices of the Night,” 1839, and Mr. Lowell’s “A Year’s Life;” none of these can be common, and all are desirable, as are Mr. Whittier’s “Legends of New England” (1831), and “Poems” (1838).

Perhaps you may never be lucky enough to come across them cheap; no doubt they are greatly sought for by amateurs. Indeed, all American books of a certain age or of a special interest are exorbitantly dear. Men like Mr. James Lenox used to keep the market up. One cannot get the Jesuit “Relations” — shabby little missionary reports from Canada, in dirty vellum.

Cartier, Perrot, Champlain, and the other early explorers’ books are beyond the means of a working student who needs them. May *you* come across them in a garret of a farmhouse, or in some dusty lane of the city. Why are they not reprinted, as Mr. Arber has reprinted “Captain John Smith’s Voyages, and Reports on Virginia”? The very reprints, when they have been made, are rare and hard to come by.

There are certain modern books, new books, that “go up” rapidly in value and interest. Mr. Swinburne’s “Atalanta” of 1865, the quarto in white cloth, is valued at twenty dollars. Twenty years ago one dollar would have purchased it. Mr. Austin Dobson’s “Proverbs in Porcelain” is also in demand among the curious. Nay, even I may say about the first edition of “Ballades in Blue China” (1880), as Gibbon said of his “Essay on the Study of Literature:” “The primitive value of half a crown has risen to the fanciful price of a guinea or thirty shillings,” or even more. I wish I had a copy myself, for old sake’s sake.

Certain modern books, “on large paper,” are safe investments. The “Badminton Library,” an English series of books on sport, is at a huge premium already, when on “large paper.” But one should never buy the book unless, as in the case of Dr. John Hill Burton’s “Book-Hunter” (first edition), it is not only on large paper, and not only rare (twenty-five copies), but also readable and interesting. A collector should have the taste to see when a new book is in itself valuable and charming, and when its author is likely to succeed, so that his early attempts (as in the case of Mr. Matthew Arnold, Lord Tennyson, and a few others of the moderns) are certain to become things of curious interest.

You can hardly ever get a novel of Jane Austen's in the first edition. She is rarer than Fielding or Smollett. Some day it may be the same in Miss Broughton's case. Cling to the fair and witty Jane, if you get a chance. Beware of illustrated modern books in which "processes" are employed. Amateurs will never really value mechanical reproductions, which can be copied to any extent. The old French copper-plate engravings and the best English mezzo-tints are so valuable because good impressions are necessarily so rare.

One more piece of advice. Never (or "hardly ever") buy an imperfect book. It is a constant source of regret, an eyesore. Here have I Lovelace's "Lucasta," 1649, *without the engraving*. It is deplorable, but I never had a chance of another "Lucasta." This is not a case of *invenies aliam*. However you fare, you will have the pleasure of Hope and the consolation of books *quietem inveniendam in abditis recessibus et libellulis*.

ROCHEFOUCAULD

To the Lady Violet Lebas.

Dear Lady Violet, — I am not sure that I agree with you in your admiration of Rochefoucauld — of the *Réflexions, ou Sentences et Maximes Morales*, I mean. At least, I hardly agree when I have read many of them at a stretch. It is not fair to read them in that way, of course, for there are more than five hundred *pensées*, and so much *esprit* becomes fatiguing. I doubt if people study them much. Five or six of them have become known even to writers in the newspapers, and we all copy them from each other.

Rochefoucauld says that a man may be too dull to be duped by a very clever person. He himself was so clever that he was often duped, first by the general honest dulness of mankind, and then by his own acuteness. He thought he saw more than he did see, and he said even more than he thought he saw. If the true motive of all our actions is self-love, or vanity, no man is a better proof of the truth than the great maxim-maker. His self-love took the shape of a brilliancy that is sometimes false. He is tricked out in paste for diamonds, now and then, like a vain, provincial beauty at a ball. “A clever man would frequently be much at a loss,” he says, “in stupid company.” One has seen this embarrassment of a wit in a company of dullards. It is Rochefoucauld’s own position in this world of men and women. We are all, in the mass, dullards compared with his cleverness, and so he fails to understand us, is much at a loss among us. “People only praise others in hopes of being praised in turn,” he says. Mankind is not such a company of “log-rollers” as he avers.

There is more truth in a line of Tennyson’s about

”The praise of those we love,
Dearer to true young hearts than their own praise.”

I venture to think we need not be young to prefer to hear the praise of others rather than our own. It is not embarrassing in the first place, as all praise of ourselves must be. I doubt if any man or woman can flatter so discreetly as not to make us uncomfortable. Besides, if our own performances be lauded, we are uneasy as to whether the honour is deserved. An artist has usually his own doubts about his own doings, or rather he has his own certainties. About our friends’ work we need have no such misgivings. And our self-love is more delicately caressed by the success of our friends than by our own. It is still self-love, but it is filtered, so to speak, through our affection for another.

What are human motives, according to Rochefoucauld? Temperament, vanity, fear, indolence, self-love, and a grain of natural perversity, which somehow delights in evil for itself. He neglects that other element, a grain of natural worth, which somehow delights in good for itself. This taste, I think, is quite as innate, and as active in us, as that other taste for evil which causes there to be something not wholly displeasing in the misfortunes of our friends.

There is a story which always appears to me a touching proof of this grain of goodness, as involuntary, as fatal as its opposite. I do not remember in what book of travels I found this trait of native excellence. The black fellows of Australia are very fond of sugar, and no wonder, if it be true that it has on them an intoxicating effect. Well, a certain black fellow had a small parcel of brown sugar which was pilfered from his lair in the camp. He detected the thief, who was condemned to be punished according to tribal law; that is to say, the injured man was allowed to have a whack at his enemy's head with a waddy, a short club of heavy hard wood. The whack was duly given, and then the black who had suffered the loss threw down his club, burst into tears, embraced the thief and displayed every sign of a lively regret for his revenge.

That seems to me an example of the human touch that Rochefoucauld never allows for, the natural goodness, pity, kindness, which can assert itself in contempt of the love of self, and the love of revenge. This is that true clemency which is a real virtue, and not "the child of Vanity, Fear, Indolence, or of all three together." Nor is it so true that "we have all fortitude enough to endure the misfortunes of others." Everybody has witnessed another's grief that came as near him as his own.

How much more true, and how greatly poetical is that famous maxim: "Death and the Sun are two things not to be looked on with a steady eye." This version is from the earliest English translation of 1698. The *Maximes* were first published in Paris in 1665. "Our tardy apish nation" took thirty-three years in finding them out and appropriating them. This, too, is good: "If we were faultless, we would observe with less pleasure the faults of others." Indeed, to observe these with pleasure is not the least of our faults. Again, "We are never so happy, nor so wretched, as we suppose." It is our vanity, perhaps, that makes us think ourselves *miserrimi*.

Do you remember — no, you don't — that meeting in "Candide" of the unfortunate Cunégonde and the still more unfortunate old lady who was the daughter of a Pope? "You lament your fate," said the old lady; "alas, you have known no such sorrows as mine!" "What! my good woman!" says Cunégonde. "Unless you have been maltreated by *two* Bulgarians, received *two* stabs from a knife, had *two* of your castles burned over your head, seen *two* fathers and *two* mothers murdered before your eyes, and *two* of your lovers flogged at two autos-da-fé, I don't fancy that you can have the advantage of me. Besides, I was born a baroness of seventy-two quarterings, and I have been a cook." But the daughter of a Pope had, indeed, been still more unlucky, as she proved, than Cunégonde; and the old lady was not a little proud of it.

But can you call *this* true: "There is nobody but is ashamed of having loved when once he loves no longer"? If it be true at all, I don't think the love was much worth having or giving. If one really loves once, one can never be ashamed of it; for we never cease to love. However, this is the very high water of sentiment, you will say; but I blush no more for it than M. le Duc de Rochefoucauld for his own opinion. Perhaps I am thinking of that kind of love about which he says: "True love is like ghosts; which everybody talks about and few have seen." "Many be the thyrsus-bearers, few the Mystics," as the Greek proverb runs. "Many are called, few are chosen."

As to friendship being "a reciprocity of interests," the saying is but one of those which Rochefoucauld's vanity imposed on his wit. Very witty it is not, and it is emphatically untrue. "Old men console themselves by giving good advice for being no longer able to set bad examples." Capital; but the poor old men are often good examples of the results of not taking their own good advice. "Many an ingrate is less to blame than his benefactor." One might add, at least I will, "Every man who looks for gratitude deserves to get none of it." "To say that one never flirts — is flirting." I rather like the old translator's version of "Il y a de bons mariages; mais il n'y en a point de délicieux"— "Marriage is sometimes convenient, but never delightful."

How true is this of authors with a brief popularity: "*Il y a des gens qui ressemblent aux vaudevilles, qu'on ne chante qu'un certain temps*." Again, "to be in haste to repay a kindness is a sort of ingratitude," and a rather insulting sort too. "Almost everybody likes to repay small favours; many people can be grateful for favours not too weighty, but for favours truly great there is scarce anything but ingratitude." They must have been small favours that Wordsworth had conferred when "the gratitude of men had oftener left him mourning." Indeed, the very pettiness of the aid we can generally render each other, makes gratitude the touching thing it is. So much is repaid for so little, and few can ever have the chance of incurring the thanklessness that Rochefoucauld found all but universal.

"Lovers and ladies never bore each other, because they never speak of anything but themselves." Do husbands and wives often bore each other for the same reason? Who said: "To know all is to forgive all"? It is rather like "On pardonne tant que l’on aime”— “As long as we love we can forgive,” a comfortable saying, and these are rare in Rochefoucauld. “Women do not quite know what flirts they are” is also, let us hope, not incorrect. The maxim that “There is a love so excessive that it kills jealousy” is only a corollary from “as long as we love, we forgive.” You remember the classical example, Manon Lescaut and the Chevalier des Grieux; not an honourable precedent.

“The accent of our own country dwells in our hearts as well as on our tongues.” Ah! never may I lose the Border accent! “Love’s Miracle! To cure a coquette.” “Most honest women are tired of their task,” says this unbeliever. And the others? Are they never aweary? The Duke is his own best critic after all, when he says: “The greatest fault of a penetrating wit is going beyond the mark.” Beyond the mark he frequently goes, but not when he says that we come as fresh hands to each new epoch of life, and often want experience for all our years. How hard it was to begin to be middle-aged! Shall we find old age easier if ever we come to its threshold? Perhaps, and Death perhaps the easiest of all. Nor let me forget, it will be long before *you* have occasion to remember, that “vivacity which grows with age is not far from folly.”

OF VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ

To Mr. Gifted Hopkins.

My Dear Hopkins, — The verses which you have sent me, with a request "to get published in some magazine," I now return to you. If you are anxious that they should be published, send them to an editor yourself. If he likes them he will accept them from you. If he does not like them, why should he like them because they are forwarded by *me*? His only motive would be an aversion to disobliging a *confrère*, and why should I put him in such an unpleasant position?

But this is a very boorish way of thanking you for the *première représentation* of your little poem. "To Delia in Girton" you call it, "recommending her to avoid the Muses, and seek the society of the Graces and Loves." An old-fashioned preamble, and of the lengthiest, and how do you go on? —

Golden hair is fairy gold,
   Fairy gold that cannot stay,
Turns to leaflets green and cold,
   At the ending of the day!
   Laurel-leaves the Muses may
Twine about your golden head.
   Will the crown reward you, say,
When the fairy gold is fled?

Daphne was a maid unwise —
   Shun the laurel, seek the rose;
Azure, lovely in the skies,
   Shines less gracious in the hose!

Don't you think, dear Hopkins, that this allusion to *bas-bleus*, if not indelicate, is a little rococo, and out of date? Editors will think so, I fear. Besides, I don't like "Fairy gold *that cannot stay*." If *Fairy Gold* were a *horse*, it would be all very well to write that it "cannot stay." 'Tis the style of the stable, unsuited to songs of the *salon*.

This is a very difficult kind of verse that you are essaying, you whom the laurels of Mr. Locker do not suffer to sleep for envy. You kindly ask my opinion on *vers de société* in general. Well, I think them a very difficult sort of thing to write well, as one may infer from this, that the ancients, our masters, could hardly write them at all. In Greek poetry of the great ages I only remember one piece which can be called a model — the Æolic verses that Theocritus wrote to accompany the gift of the ivory distaff. It was a present, you remember, to the wife of his friend Nicias, the physician of Miletus. The Greeks of that age kept their women in almost Oriental reserve. One may doubt whether Nicias would have liked it if Theocritus had sent, instead of a distaff, a fan or a jewel. But there is safety in a spinning instrument, and all the compliments to the lady, “the dainty-ankled Theugenis,” turn on her skill, and industry, and housewifery. So Louis XIV., no mean authority, called this piece of *vers de société* “a model of honourable gallantry.”

I have just looked all through Pomtow’s pretty little pocket volumes of the minor Greek poets, and found nothing more of the nature of the lighter verse than this of Alcman’s — ¿Å ¼’ µÄ¹ À±Á¸µ½¹º±¹. Do you remember the pretty paraphrase of it in “Love in Idleness”?

“Maidens with voices like honey for sweetness that breathe desire,
Would that I were a sea bird with wings that could never tire,
Over the foam-flowers flying, with halcyons ever on wing,
Keeping a careless heart, a sea-blue bird of the spring.”

It does not quite give the sense Alcman intended, the lament for his limbs weary with old age — with old age sadder for the sight of the honey-voiced girls.

The Greeks had not the kind of society that is the home of “Society Verses,” where, as Mr. Locker says, “a *boudoir* decorum is, or ought always to be, preserved, where sentiment never surges into passion, and where humour never overflows into boisterous merriment.” Honest women were estranged from their mirth and their melancholy.

The Romans were little more fortunate. You cannot expect the genius of Catullus not to “surge into passion,” even in his hours of gayer song, composed when

Multum lusimus in meis tabellis,
Ut convenerat esse delicatos,
Scribens versiculos uterque nostrum.

Thus the lighter pieces of Catullus, like the dedication of his book, are addressed to *men*, his friends, and thus they scarcely come into the category of what we call “Society Verses.” Given the character of Roman society, perhaps we might say that plenty of this kind of verse was written by Horace and by Martial. The famous ode to Pyrrha does not exceed the decorum of a Roman *boudoir*, and, as far as love was concerned, it does not seem to have been in the nature of Horace to "surge into passion." So his best songs in this kind are addressed to men, with whom he drinks a little, and talks of politics and literature a great deal, and muses over the shortness of life, and the zest that snow-clad Soracte gives to the wintry fire.

Perhaps the ode to Leuconoe, which Mr. Austin Dobson has rendered so prettily in a *villanelle*, may come within the scope of this Muse, for it has a playfulness mingled with its melancholy, a sadness in its play. Perhaps, too, if Horace is to be done into verse, these old French forms seem as fit vehicles as any for Latin poetry that was written in the exotic measures of Greece. There is a foreign grace and a little technical difficulty overcome in the *English ballade and villanelle*, as in the Horatian sapphics and alcaics. I would not say so much, on my own responsibility, nor trespass so far on the domain of scholarship, but this opinion was communicated to me by a learned professor of Latin. I think, too, that some of the lyric measures of the old French Pleiad, of Ronsard and Du Bellay, would be well wedded with the verse of Horace. But perhaps no translator will ever please any one but himself, and of Horace every man must be his own translator.

It may be that Ovid now and then comes near to writing *vers de société*, only he never troubles himself for a moment about the "decorum of the *boudoir*." Do you remember the lines on the ring which he gave his lady? They are the origin and pattern of all the verses written by lovers on that pretty metempsychosis which shall make them slippers, or fans, or girdles, like Waller's, and like that which bound "the dainty, dainty waist" of the Miller's Daughter.

"Ring that shalt bind the finger fair
Of my sweet maid, thou art not rare;
Thou hast not any price above
The token of her poet's love;
Her finger may'st thou mate as she
Is mated every wise with me!"

And the poet goes on, as poets will, to wish he were this favoured, this fortunate jewel:

"In vain I wish! So, ring, depart,
And say 'with me thou hast his heart'!"

Once more Ovid's verses on his catholic affection for all ladies, the brown and the blonde, the short and the tall, may have suggested Cowley's humorous confession, "The Chronicle":

"Margarita first possessed,
If I remember well, my breast,
    Margarita, first of all;"

and then follows a list as long as Leporello's.

What disqualifies Ovid as a writer of *vers de société* is not so much his lack of "decorum" as the monotonous singsong of his eternal elegiacs. The lightest of light things, the poet of society, should possess more varied strains; like Horace, Martial, Thackeray, not like Ovid and (here is a heresy) Praed. Inimitably well as Praed does his trick of antithesis, I still feel that it *is* a trick, and that most rhymers could follow him in a mere mechanic art. But here the judgment of Mr. Locker would be opposed to this modest opinion, and there would be opposition again where Mr. Locker calls Dr. O. W. Holmes "perhaps the best living writer of this species of verse." But here we are straying among the moderns before exhausting the ancients, of whom I fancy that Martial, at his best, approaches most near the ideal.

Of course it is true that many of Martial's lyrics would be thought disgusting in any well-regulated convict establishment. His gallantry is rarely "honourable." Scaliger used to burn a copy of Martial, once a year, on the altar of Catullus, who himself was far from prudish. But Martial, somehow, kept his heart undepraved, and his taste in books was excellent. How often he writes verses for the bibliophile, delighting in the details of purple and gold, the illustrations and ornaments for his new volume! These pieces are for the few — for amateurs, but we may all be touched by his grief for the little lass, Erotion. He commends her in Hades to his own father and mother gone before him, that the child may not be frightened in the dark, friendless among the shades

"*Parvula ne nigras horrescat Erotion umbras*
Oraque Tartarei prodigiosa canis."

There is a kind of playfulness in the sorrow, and the pity of a man for a child; pity that shows itself in a smile. I try to render that other inscription for the tomb of little Erotion:

Here lies the body of the little maid
    Erotion;

From her sixth winter’s snows her eager shade
Hath fleeted on!
Whoe’er thou be that after me shalt sway
My scanty farm,
To her slight shade the yearly offering pay,
So — safe from harm —
Shall thou and thine revere the kindly *Lar*,
And *this* alone
Be, through thy brief dominion, near or far,
A mournful stone!

Certainly he had a heart, this foul-mouthed Martial, who claimed for the study of his book no serious hours, but moments of mirth, when men are glad with wine, “in the reign of the Rose:”

“*Hæc hora est tua, cum furit Lyæus,*
Cum regnat rosa, cum madent capilli;
Tunc mevel rigidi legant Catones.”

But enough of the poets of old; another day we may turn to Carew and Suckling, Praed and Locker, poets of our own speech, lighter lyrists of our own time.

ON VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ

To Mr. Gifted Hopkins.

Dear Gifted, — If you will permit me to use your Christian, and prophetic, name — we improved the occasion lately with the writers of light verse in ancient times. We decided that the ancients were not great in verses of society, because they had, properly speaking, no society to write verses for. Women did not live in the Christian freedom and social equality with men, either in Greece or Rome — at least not "modest women," as Mr. Harry Foker calls them in "Pendennis." About the others there is plenty of pretty verse in the Anthology. What you need for verses of society is a period in which the social equality is recognized, and in which people are peaceable enough and comfortable enough to "play with light loves in the portal" of the Temple of Hymen, without any very definite intentions, on either part, of going inside and getting married.

Perhaps we should not expect *vers de société* from the Crusaders, who were not peaceable, and who were very earnest indeed, in love or war. But as soon as you get a Court, and Court life, in France, even though the times were warlike, then ladies are lauded in artful strains, and the lyre is struck *leviore plectro*. Charles d'Orleans, that captive and captivating prince, wrote thousands of *rondeaux*; even before his time a gallant company of gentlemen composed the *Livre des Cent Ballades*, one hundred *ballades*, practically unreadable by modern men. Then came Clément Marot, with his gay and rather empty fluency, and Ronsard, with his mythological compliments, his sonnets, decked with roses, and led like lambs to the altar of Helen or Cassandra. A few, here and there, of his pieces are lighter, more pleasant, and, in a quiet way, immortal, such as the verses to his "fair flower of Anjou," a beauty of fifteen. So they ran on, in France, till Voiture's time, and Sarrazin's with his merry *ballade* of an elopement, and Corneille's proud and graceful stanzas to Marquise de Gorla.

But verses in the English tongue are more worthy of our attention. Mr. Locker begins his collection of them, *Lyra Elegantiarum* (no longer a very rare book in England), as far back as Skelton's age, and as Thomas Wyat's, and Sidney's; but those things, the lighter lyrics of that day, are rather songs than poems, and probably were all meant to be sung to the virginals by our musical ancestors.

"Drink to me only with thine eyes," says the great Ben Jonson, or sings it rather. The words, that he versified out of the Greek prose of Philostratus, cannot be thought of without the tune. It is the same with Carew's "He that loves a rosy cheek," or with "Roses, their sharp spines being gone." The lighter poetry of Carew's day is all powdered with gold dust, like the court ladies' hair, and is crowned and diapered with roses, and heavy with fabulous scents from the Arabian phoenix's nest. Little Cupids flutter and twitter here and there among the boughs, as in that feast of Adonis which Ptolemy's sister gave in Alexandria, or as in Eisen's vignettes for Dorat's *Baisers*:

"Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;
For in pure love did Heaven prepare
These powders to enrich your hair."

It would be affectation, Gifted, if *you* rhymed in that fashion for the lady of your love, and presented her, as it were, with cosmical cosmetics, and compliments drawn from the starry spaces and deserts, from skies, phoenixes, and angels. But it was a natural and pretty way of writing when Thomas Carew was young. I prefer Herrick the inexhaustible in dainties; Herrick, that parson-pagan, with the soul of a Greek of the Anthology, and a cure of souls (Heaven help them!) in Devonshire. His Julia is the least mortal of these "daughters of dreams and of stories," whom poets celebrate; she has a certain opulence of flesh and blood, a cheek like a damask rose, and "rich eyes," like Keats's lady; no vaporous Beatrice, she; but a handsome English wench, with

"A cuff neglectful and thereby
Ribbons to flow confusedly;
A winning wave, deserving note
In the tempestuous petticoat."

Then Suckling strikes up a reckless military air; a warrior he is who has seen many a siege of hearts — hearts that capitulated, or held out like Troy-town, and the impatient assailant whistles:

"Quit, quit, for shame: this will not move,
    This cannot take her.
If of herself she will not love,
    Nothing can make her —
    The devil take her."

So he rides away, curling his moustache, hiding his defeat in a big inimitable swagger. It is a pleasanter piece in which Suckling, after a long leaguer of a lady’s heart, finds that Captain honour is governor of the place, and surrender hopeless. So he departs with a salute:

“March, march (quoth I), the word straight give,
Let’s lose no time but leave her:
That giant upon air will live,
And hold it out for ever.”

Lovelace is even a better type in his rare good things of the military amorist and poet. What apology of Lauzun’s, or Bussy Rabutin’s for faithlessness could equal this? —

“Why dost thou say I am forsworn,
Since thine I vowed to be?
Lady, it is already morn;
It was last night I swore to thee
That fond impossibility.”

Has “In Memoriam” nobler numbers than the poem, from exile, to Lucasta? —

“Our Faith and troth
All time and space controls,
Above the highest sphere we meet,
Unseen, unknown, and greet as angels greet.”

How comes it that in the fierce fighting days the soldiers were so tuneful, and such scholars? In the first edition of Lovelace’s “Lucasta” there is a flock of recommendatory verses, English, Latin, even Greek, by the gallant Colonel’s mess-mates and comrades. What guardsman now writes like Lovelace, and how many of his friends could applaud him in Greek? You, my Gifted, are happily of a pacific disposition, and tune a gentle lyre. Is it not lucky for swains like you that the soldiers have quite forsworn sonneting? When a man was a rake, a poet, a warrior, all in one, what chance had a peaceful minor poet like you or me, Gifted, against his charms? Sedley, when sober, must have been an invincible rival — invincible, above all, when he pretended constancy:

“Why then should I seek further store,
And still make love anew?
When change itself can give no more
’Tis easy to be true.”

How infinitely more delightful, musical, and captivating are those Cavalier singers — their numbers flowing fair, like their scented lovelocks — than the prudish society poets of Pope's day. "The Rape of the Lock" is very witty, but through it all don't you mark the sneer of the contemptuous, unmanly little wit, the crooked dandy? He jibes among his compliments; and I do not wonder that Mistress Arabella Fermor was not conciliated by his long-drawn cleverness and polished lines. I prefer Sackville's verses "written at sea the night before an engagement":

"To all you ladies now on land
   We men at sea indite."

They are all alike, the wits of Queen Anne; and even Matt Prior, when he writes of ladies occasionally, writes down to them, or at least glances up very saucily from his position on his knees. But Prior is the best of them, and the most candid:

"I court others in verse — but I love thee in prose;
And they have my whimsies, but thou hast my heart."

Yes, Prior is probably the greatest of all who dally with the light lyre which thrills to the wings of fleeting Loves — the greatest English writer of *vers de société*; the most gay, frank, good-humoured, tuneful and engaging.

Landor is great, too, but in another kind; the bees that hummed over Plato's cradle have left their honey on his lips; none but Landor, or a Greek, could have written this on Catullus:

"Tell me not what too well I know
About the Bard of Sirmio —
   Yes, in Thalia's son
Such stains there are as when a Grace
Sprinkles another's laughing face
   With nectar, and runs on!"

That is poetry deserving of a place among the rarest things in the Anthology. It is a sorrow to me that I cannot quite place Praed with Prior in my affections. With all his gaiety and wit, he wearies one at last with that clever, punning antithesis. I don't want to know how

"Captain Hazard wins a bet,

Or Beaulieu spoils a curry" —

and I prefer his sombre "Red Fisherman," the idea of which is borrowed, wittingly or unwittingly, from Lucian.

Thackeray, too careless in his measures, yet comes nearer Prior in breadth of humour and in unaffected tenderness. Who can equal that song, "Once you come to Forty Year," or the lines on the Venice Love-lamp, or the "Cane-bottomed Chair"? Of living English writers of verse in the "familiar style," as Cowper has it, I prefer Mr. Locker when he is tender and not untouched with melancholy, as in "The Portrait of a Lady," and Mr. Austin Dobson, when he is not flirting, but in earnest, as in the "Song of Four Seasons" and "The Dead Letter." He has ingenuity, pathos, mastery of his art, and, though the least pedantic of poets, is "conveniently learned."

Of contemporary Americans, if I may be frank, I prefer the verse of Mr. Bret Harte, verse with so many tunes and turns, as comic as the "Heathen Chinee," as tender as the lay of the ship with its crew of children that slipped its moorings in the fog. To me it seems that Mr. Bret Harte's poems have never (at least in this country) been sufficiently esteemed. Mr. Lowell has written ("The Biglow Papers" apart) but little in this vein. Mr. Wendell Holmes, your delightful godfather, Gifted, has written much with perhaps some loss from the very quantity. A little of *vers de société*, my dear Gifted, goes a long way, as you will think, if ever you sit down steadily to read right through any collection of poems in this manner. So do not add too rapidly to your own store; let them be "few, but roses" all of them.

RICHARDSON

By Mrs. Andrew Lang.

Dear Miss Somerville, — I was much interested in your fruitless struggle to read "Sir Charles Grandison," — the book whose separate numbers were awaited with such impatience by Richardson's endless lady friends and correspondents, and even by the rakish world — even by Colley Cibber himself. I sympathize entirely with your estimate of its dulness; yet, dull as it is, it is worth wading through to understand the kind of literature which could flutter the dove-cotes of the last century in a generation earlier than the one that was moved to tears by the wearisome dramas of Hannah More.

There is only one character in the whole of "Sir Charles Grandison" where Richardson is in the least like himself — in the least like the Richardson of "Pamela" and "Clarissa." This character is Miss Charlotte Grandison, the sister of Sir Charles, and later (after many vicissitudes) the wife of Lord G. Miss Grandison's conduct falls infinitely beneath the high standard attained to by the rest of Sir Charles's chosen friends. She is petulant and loves to tease; is uncertain of what she wants; she is lively and sarcastic, and, worse than all, abandons the rounded periods of her brother and Miss Byron for free, not to say slang, expressions. "Hang ceremony!" she often exclaims, with much reason, while "What a deuce!" is her favourite expletive.

The conscientious reader heaves a sigh of relief when this young lady and her many indiscretions appear on the scene; when Miss Grandison, like Nature, "takes the pen from Richardson and writes for him." But I gather that you, my dear Miss Somerville, never got far enough to make her acquaintance, and therefore are still ignorant of the singular qualities of her brother, Sir Charles — Richardson's idea of a perfect man, for both brother and sister are introduced at almost the same moment.

Now it is nearly as difficult to realize that Sir Charles is a young man of twenty-six, as it is to feel that his antithesis, the adorable Pepys of the "Diary," was of that precise age. Sir Charles might be borne with good-naturedly for a short time as an old gentleman who had become garrulous from want of contradiction, but in any other aspect he would be shunned conscientiously. Yet Richardson is not content with putting into his mouth lengthy discourses tending chiefly, though expressed with mock humility, to his own glorification; but he keeps all the other characters perpetually dancing round the Baronet in a chorus of praise. “Was there ever such a man, my Harriet, so good, so just, so noble in his sentiments?” “Ah, my Lucy, dare I hope for the affection of the best of men?” Some people would have begged their friends to cease making them ridiculous, but not so Sir Charles.

But, my dear, trying as Sir Charles is at all moments, he is infinitely at his worst when he attempts to be jocose, when he rallies the step-mother of his friend Beauchamp in a sprightly manner, or exchanges quips with Harriet’s cousins at the house of “that excellent ancient,” her grandmother. It is a mammoth posing as a kitten, though whatever he says or does, his audience throw up their hands and eyes and ask: “Was there ever such a man?” “Thank Heaven, *never*!” the nineteenth century replies unanimously.

Secure as he is of the contemporary public verdict, Sir Charles does not attempt to repress his love of “pawing” all his female acquaintances. He is eternally taking their hands, putting his arm round their waists, leading them up and down, and permitting himself liberties that in a less perfect character would be considered intolerable. It is also interesting to note that he never addresses any of his female friends without the prefix “my.” “My Harriet,” “my Emily,” “my Charlotte,” are his usual forms, and he is likewise very much addicted to the use of the third person, which may, however, have been the result of his long residence in Italy.

Little as you read of the book, no doubt you were struck — you *must* have been — by the singular practice in this very matter of Christian names, and also by the enormous satisfaction with which every one promptly adopts every one else as his brother or sister. As regards names, no sooner has Sir Charles rescued Harriet from the clutches of Sir Hargrave Pollexfen, than he calls her “*his* Harriet,” though, when he is once engaged to her, then this is changed into “infinitely obliging Miss Byron.” His eldest sister, one year his senior, is always “Lady L.” to him, and on her marriage “his Charlotte,” aged twenty-four, becomes “Lady G.;” but no one ever ventures to address him with anything more familiar than “Sir Charles.” Harriet, indeed, once gets as far as “my Cha-” but this was in a moment of extreme emotion — one of the excesses of youth.

Of course the method of telling his story in letters necessitates the acceptance of various improbabilities; reticence has sometimes to be violated, and confidences to be unduly made. Still, with all these allowances, the gossip of every one with regard to the likelihood of Sir Charles returning Harriet’s very thinly veiled attachment is highly undignified, and often indecent. The Object himself, for whom no less than seven ladies were at that time openly sighing, alone ignores Harriet’s love, or, at any rate, appears to do so. But his sisters freely and frequently charge her with having fallen in love with him. She writes pages to her whole family as to his behaviour on particular occasions, while his ward, Emily Jervois, begs permission to take up her abode with Harriet when she and Sir Charles are married.

Miss Jervois, who is Richardson's idea of a *jeune personne bien élevée*, is a compound of tears, of servility, and of undisguised love for her guardian. She is much more like the heroine of a French drama than an English girl of fourteen, and I dread to think what effect she would have on a free-born American! Harriet, as you know, is not quite hopeless at first, but the descent is easy, and, in the end, we quite agree with all the admiring circle, that they were made for each other. They were equally pompous, and used stilts of equal height.

"Sir Charles Grandison" was the last, the most socially ambitious, and much the worst of Richardson's novel's. Smollett came to his best in his last, "Humphrey Clinker." Fielding sobered down into the kind excellence of *his* last, "Amelia." Neither had been flattered and coddled by literary ladies, like Richardson. What of "Pamela" and "Clarissa"? May a maiden read the book that the young lady studied over Charles Lamb's shoulder? Well, I think, as you have now passed your quarter of a century, it would do you no harm to read the other two, which are infinitely better than "Sir Charles." The worthy Miss Byron, aged only twenty, indeed, writes to her Lucy to remind her that "their grandmother had told them twenty and twenty frightful stories of the vile enterprises of men against innocent creatures," and that they can both "call to mind stories which had ended much worse than hers (the affair with Sir Hargrave Pollexfen) had done."

Grandmothers now choose other topics of conversation for their descendants, but in those old days when sedan-chairs made *enlèvements* so very easy, it was considered necessary to caution girls against all the possible wiles of man. Even little boys, strange as it may sound, were given "Pamela" to read after the Bible. More than this, one small creature, Harry Campbell by name, so young that he always spoke of himself as "little Harry," obtained the book by stealth in his guardian's house, and never stopped till he finished it. When Richardson, on being told of this, sent him a copy for his own, he nearly went out of his senses with delight.

Of course you know the outline of Pamela's story. How at eleven she was taken and educated by a lady, who on her death, when Pamela was sixteen, left her not only more beautiful, but more accomplished than any girl of her years. How Pamela's young master fell in love with her, persecuted her, and after moving adventures of all kinds, being convinced that she was not to be overcome, married her, and they lived happy, with one brief exception, ever after. The proper frame of mind in which to read "Pamela" is to consider it in the light of an historical joke.

The absolute want of dignity that is almost as marked a characteristic in Richardson as his lack of humour, shows itself again and again. After all, Mr. B. would never have married Pamela if he could have persuaded her to live with him in any other way; so the cringing gratitude expressed by Pamela and her parents to the "good gentleman" and the "dear obliger" is only revolting. No woman with any delicacy of feeling could have sat complacently at her own table, while her husband entertained his company with prolonged and minute accounts of his attempts on her virtue. Can you fancy Fielding composing such a scene, Fielding whom Richardson scouts as a profligate? It is impossible not to laugh at the bare idea; and no less funny are Pamela's poetical flights, especially when, like Hamilton of Bangour in exile, she paraphrases the paraphrase of the 137th Psalm, about her captivity in Lincolnshire. All through one has to remind one's self perpetually that Pamela must not be expected to behave like a lady, and that if her father had done as he ought and removed her from her place when she first told him of her uneasiness, there would have been no story at all, and some other book would have had to rank in the opinion of Richardson's adorers "next to the Bible."

Still, whatever may have to be said as to Richardson's subjects, he is never coarse in his treatment of them. The pursuit of Pamela by Mr. B., or of Clarissa by Lovelace, through eight volumes, may weary; it does not corrupt. No man or maid on earth could lay it to his charge that he or she had been corrupted by these books, while no man on earth could read "Clarissa" without being touched by the noble ending. If "Clarissa" had never been written we should have said that the good-natured, fussy, essentially middle-class bookseller, Samuel Richardson, was unable to draw a lady; and it is curious to see how Clarissa stands out, not only among Richardson's female characters, but among the female characters of all time; eminent she is for purity of soul, and nobility of feeling. There is no cant about her anywhere, no effort to pose or to strain after a state of mind which she cannot naturally experience. The business-like manner in which she makes her preparations for death have nothing sentimental about them, nothing that even faintly suggests the pretty death-beds with which Mr. Dickens and others have made us familiar; but I doubt if the most practical money-maker in Wall Street could read it without feeling uncomfortable.

How, after describing such a character as Clarissa, Richardson could turn to the whale-bone figures in "Sir Charles Grandison" is quite incomprehensible. Had he been ruined by his numerous female admirers and correspondents, or by his desire to become fashionable, or, as is most likely, by the wish to create in Sir Charles a virtuous foil to him whom he thought the wicked, witty, delightful, and detestable Lovelace? Whatever the reason, it is a thousand pities that he gave way to his impulse.

It would interest you as well as me to note little points of manners that are to be gathered from the three books. I have not time to write much more, but will tell you two or three that have struck me. If you read them, as I still hope you may, you will see what early risers they all are, even the wicked Mr. B.; while Clarissa, when in Dover Street, usually gives Lovelace his interviews at six in the morning. One hears of two-o'clock-in-the-morning courage. How much more wonderful is love that rises at six!

Richardson was a woman's novelist, as Fielding was a man's. I sometimes think of Dr. Johnson's *mot*: "Claret for boys, port for men, and," smiling, "brandy for heroes." So one might fancy him saying: "Richardson for women, Fielding for men, Smollett for ruffians," though some of *his* rough customers were heroes, too. But we now confine ourselves so closely to "the later writers" of Russia, France, England, America, that the woman who reads Richardson may be called heroic. "To the unknown heroine" I dedicate my respect, as the Athenians dedicated an altar to "the unknown hero." Will you be the heroine? I am afraid you won't!

GÉRARD DE NERVAL

To Miss Girton, Cambridge.

Dear Miss Girton, — Yes, I fancy Gérard de Nerval is one of that rather select party of French writers whom Mrs. Girton will allow you to read. But even if you read him, I do not think you will care very much for him. He is a man's author, not a woman's; and yet one can hardly say why. It is not that he offends "the delicacy of your sex," as Tom Jones calls it; I think it is that his sentiment, whereof he is full, is not of the kind you like. Let it be admitted that, when his characters make love, they might do it "in a more human sort of way."

In this respect, and in some others, Gérard de Nerval resembles Edgar Poe. Not that his heroes are always attached to a *belle morte* in some distant Aiden; not that they have been for long in the family sepulchre; not that their attire is a vastly becoming shroud — no, Aurélie and Sylvie, in *Les Filles de Feu*, are nice and natural girls; but their lover is not in love with them "in a human sort of way." He is in love with some vaporous ideal, of which they faintly remind him. He is, as it were, the eternal passer-by; he is a wanderer from his birth; he sees the old *château*, or the farmer's cottage, or even the bright theatre, or the desert tent; he sees the daughters of men that they are fair and dear, in moonlight, in sunlight, in the glare of the footlights, and he looks, and longs, and sighs, and wanders on his fatal path. Nothing can make him pause, and at last his urgent spirit leads him over the limit of this earth, and far from the human shores; his delirious fancy haunts graveyards, or the fabled harbours of happy stars, and he who rested never, rests in the grave, forgetting his dreams or finding them true.

All this is too vague for you, I do not doubt, but for me the man and his work have an attraction I cannot very well explain, like the personal influence of one who is your friend, though other people cannot see what you see in him.

Gérard de Nerval (that was only his pen-name) was a young man of the young romantic school of 1830; one of the set of Hugo and Gautier. Their gallant, school-boyish absurdities are too familiar to be dwelt upon. They were much of Scott's mind when he was young, and translated Bürger, and "wished to heaven he had a skull and cross-bones." Two or three of them died early, two or three subsided into ordinary literary gentlemen (like M. Maquet, lately deceased), two, nay three, became poets — Victor Hugo, Théophile Gautier, and Gérard de Nerval. It is not necessary to have heard of Gérard; even that queer sham, the lady of culture, admits without a blush that she knows not Gérard. Yet he is worth knowing.

What he will live by is his story of “Sylvie;” it is one of the little masterpieces of the world. It has a Greek perfection. One reads it, and however old one is, youth comes back, and April, and a thousand pleasant sounds of birds in hedges, of wind in the boughs, of brooks trotting merrily under the rustic bridges. And this fresh nature is peopled by girls eternally young, natural, gay, or pensive, standing with eager feet on the threshold of their life, innocent, expectant, with the old ballads of old France on their lips. For the story is full of those artless, lisping numbers of the popular French Muse, the ancient ballads that Gérard collected and put in the mouth of Sylvie, the pretty peasant girl.

Do you know what it is to walk alone all day on the Border, and what good company to you the burn is that runs beside the highway? Just so companionable is the music of the ballads in that enchanted country of Gérard’s fancy, in the land of the Valois. All the while you read, you have a sense of the briefness of the pleasure, you know that the hero cannot rest here, that the girls and their loves, the cottage and its shelter, are not for him. He is only passing by, happy yet wistful, far untravelled horizons are alluring him, the great city is drawing him to herself and will slay him one day in her den, as Scylla slew her victims.

Conceive Gérard living a wild life with wilder young men and women in a great barrack of an old hotel that the painters amused themselves by decorating. Conceive him coming home from the play, or rather from watching the particular actress for whom he had a distant, fantastic passion. He leaves the theatre and takes up a newspaper, where he reads that tomorrow the Archers of Senlis are to meet the Archers of Loisy. These were places in his native district, where he had been a boy. They recalled many memories; he could not sleep that night; the old scenes flashed before his half-dreaming eyes. This was one of the visions.

“In front of a *château* of the time of Henri IV., a *château* with peaked lichen-covered roofs, with a facing of red brick varied by stonework of a paler hue, lay a wide, green lawn set round with limes and elms, and through the leaves fell the golden rays of the setting sun. Young girls were dancing in a circle on the mossy grass, to the sound of airs that their mothers had sung, airs with words so pure and natural that one felt one’s self indeed in that old Valois land, where for a thousand years has beat the heart of France.

“I was the only boy in the circle whither I had led my little friend, Sylvie, a child of a neighbouring hamlet; Sylvie, so full of life, so fresh, with her dark eyes, her regular profile, her sunburnt face. I had loved nobody, I had seen nobody but her, till the daughter of the *château*, fair and tall, entered the circle of peasant girls. To obtain the right to join the ring she had to chant a scrap of a ballad. We sat round her, and in a fresh, clear voice she sang one of the old ballads of romance, full of love and sadness . . . As she sang, the shadow of the great trees grew deeper, and the broad light of the risen moon fell on her alone, she standing without the listening circle. Her song was over, and no one dared to break the silence. A light mist arose from the mossy ground, trailing over the grass. We seemed to be in Paradise."

So the boy twisted a wreath for this new enchantress, the daughter of a line of nobles with king's blood in her veins. And little brown, deserted Sylvie cried.

All this Gérard remembered, and remembering, hurried down to the old country place, and met Sylvie, now a woman grown, beautiful, unspoiled, still remembering the primitive songs and fairy tales. They walked together through the woods to the cottage of the aunt of Sylvie, an old peasant woman of the richer class. She prepared dinner for them, and sent De Nerval for the girl, who had gone to ransack the peasant treasures in the garret.

Two portraits were hanging there — one that of a young man of the good old times, smiling with red lips and brown eyes, a pastel in an oval frame. Another medallion held the portrait of his wife, gay, *piquante*, in a bodice with ribbons fluttering, and with a bird perched on her finger. It was the old aunt in her youth, and further search discovered her ancient festal-gown, of stiff brocade. Sylvie arrayed herself in this splendour; patches were found in a box of tarnished gold, a fan, a necklace of amber.

The holiday attire of the dead uncle, who had been a keeper in the royal woods, was not far to seek, and Gérard and Sylvie appeared before the aunt, as her old self, and her old lover. "My children!" she cried and wept, and smiled through her tears at the cruel and charming apparition of youth. Presently she dried her tears, and only remembered the pomp and pride of her wedding. "We joined hands, and sang the *naïve* epithalamium of old France, amorous, and full of flowery turns, as the Song of Songs; we were the bride and the bridegroom all one sweet morning of summer."

I translated these fragments long ago in one of the first things I ever tried to write. The passages are as touching and fresh, the originals I mean, as when first I read them, and one hears the voice of Sylvie singing:

"*A Dammartin, l'y a trois belles filles,*
L'y en a z'une plus belle que le jour!"

So Sylvie married a confectioner, and, like Marion in the "Ballad of Forty

Years," "Adrienne's dead" in a convent. That is all the story, all the idyll. Gérard also wrote the idyll of his own delirium, and the proofs of it (*Le Rêve et la Vie*) were in his pocket when they found him dead in La Rue de la Vieille Lanterne.

Some of his poems have a sweetness and careless grace, like the grace of his favourite old ballads. One cannot translate things like this:

"*Où sont nos amoureuses*?
  Elles sont au tombeau!
Elles sont plus heureuses
  Dans un sêjour plus beau."

But I shall try the couplets on a Greek air:
  "*Neither good morn nor good night*."

The sunset is not yet, the morn is gone;
  Yet in our eyes the light hath paled and passed;
But twilight shall be lovely as the dawn,
  And night shall bring forgetfulness at last!

Gérard's poems are few; the best are his vision of a lady with gold hair and brown eyes, whom he had loved in an earlier existence, and his humorous little piece on a boy's love for a fair cousin, and on their winter walk together, and the welcome smell of roast turkey which greets them on the stairs, when they come home. There are also poems of his madness, called *Chimères*, and very beautiful in form. You read and admire, and don't understand a line, yet it seems that if we were a little more or a little less mad we would understand:

"*Et j'ai deux fois vainqueur traversé l'Achéron*:
Modulant tour à tour sur la lyre d'Orphée
Les soupirs de la sainte et les cris de la fée."

Here is an attempt to translate the untranslatable, the sonnet called —
"*El Desdichado*."

I am that dark, that disinherited,
  That all dishonoured Prince of Aquitaine,
  The Star upon my scutcheon long hath fled;
A black sun on my lute doth yet remain!

Oh, thou that didst console me not in vain,
   Within the tomb, among the midnight dead,
   Show me Italian seas, and blossoms wed,
The rose, the vine-leaf, and the golden grain.

Say, am I Love or Phoebus? have I been
Or Lusignan or Biron? By a Queen
   Caressed within the Mermaid's haunt I lay,
And twice I crossed the unpermitted stream,
And touched on Orpheus' lyre as in a dream,
   Sighs of a Saint, and laughter of a Fay!

ON BOOKS ABOUT RED MEN

To Richard Wilby, Esq., Eton College, Windsor.

My Dear Dick, — It is very good of you, among your severe studies at Eton, to write to your Uncle. I am extremely pleased to hear that your football is appreciated in the highest circles, and shall be happy to have as good an account of your skill in making Latin verses.

I am glad you like "She," Mr. Rider Haggard's book which I sent you. It is "something like," as you say, and I quite agree with you, both in being in love with the heroine, and in thinking that she preaches rather too much. But, then, as she was over two thousand years old, and had lived for most of that time among cannibals, who did not understand her, one may excuse her for "jawing," as you say, a good deal, when she met white men. You want to know if "She" is a true story. Of course it is!

But you have read "She," and you have read all Cooper's, and Marryat's, and Mr. Stevenson's books, and "Tom Sawyer," and "Huckleberry Finn," several times. So have I, and am quite ready to begin again. But, to my mind, books about "Red Indians" have always seemed much the most interesting. At your age, I remember, I bought a tomahawk, and, as we had also lots of spears and boomerangs from Australia, the poultry used to have rather a rough time of it.

I never could do very much with a boomerang; but I could throw a spear to a hair's breadth, as many a chicken had occasion to discover. When you go home for Christmas I hope you will remember that all this was very wrong, and that you will consider we are civilized people, not Mohicans, nor Pawnees. I also made a stone pipe, like Hiawatha's, but I never could drill a hole in the stem, so it did not "draw" like a civilized pipe.

By way of an awful warning to you on this score, and also, as you say you want a *true* book about Red Indians, let me recommend to you the best book about them *I* ever came across. It is called "A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner, during Thirty Years' Residence among the Indians," and it was published at New York by Messrs. Carvill, in 1830.

If I were an American publisher, instead of a British author (how I wish I was!) I'd publish "John Tanner" again, or perhaps cut a good deal out, and make a boy's book of it. You are not likely to get it to buy, but Mr. Steevens, the American bookseller, has found me a copy. If I lend you it, will you be kind enough to illustrate it on separate sheets of paper, and not make drawings on the pages of the book? This will, in the long run, be more satisfactory to yourself, as you will be able to keep your pictures; for I want "John Tanner" back again: and don't lend him to your fag-master.

Tanner was born about 1780; he lived in Kentucky. Don't you wish you had lived in Kentucky in Colonel Boone's time? The Shawnees were roaming about the neighbourhood when Tanner was a little boy. His uncle scalped one of them. This made bad feeling between the Tanners and the Shawnees; but John, like any boy of spirit, wished never to learn lessons, and wanted to be an Indian brave. He soon had more of being a brave than he liked; but he never learned any more lessons, and could not even read or write.

One day John's father told him not to leave the house, because from the movements of the horses, he knew that Indians were in the woods. So John seized the first chance and nipped out, and ran to a walnut tree in one of the fields, where he began filling his straw hat with walnuts. At that very moment he was caught by two Indians, who spilled the nuts, put his hat on his head, and bolted with him. One of the old women of the tribe had lost her son, and wanted to adopt a boy, and so they adopted Johnny Tanner. They ran with him till he was out of breath, till they reached the Ohio, where they threw him into a canoe, paddled across, and set off running again.

In ten days' hard marching they reached the camp, and it was worse than going to a new school, for all the Indians kicked John Tanner about, and "their dance," he says, "was brisk and cheerful, *after the manner of the scalp dance*!" Cheerful for John! He had to lie between the fire and the door of the lodge, and every one who passed gave him a kick. One old man was particularly cruel. When Tanner was grown up, he came back to that neighbourhood, and the first thing he asked was, "Where is Manito-o-geezhik?"

"Dead, two months since."

"It is well that he is dead," said John Tanner. But an old female chief, Net-ko-kua, adopted him, and now it began to be fun. For he was sent to shoot game for the family. Could anything be more delightful? His first shot was at pigeons, with a pistol. The pistol knocked down Tanner; but it also knocked down the pigeon. He then caught martins — and measles, which was less entertaining. Even Indians have measles! But even hunting is not altogether fun, when you start with no breakfast and have no chance of supper unless you kill game.

The other Red Indian books, especially the cheap ones, don't tell you that very often the Indians are more than half-starved. Then some one builds a magic lodge, and prays to the Great Spirit. Tanner often did this, and he would then dream how the Great Spirit appeared to him as a beautiful young man, and told him where he would find game, and prophesied other events in his life. It is curious to see a white man taking to the Indian religion, and having exactly the same sort of visions as their red converts described to the Jesuit fathers nearly two hundred years before.

Tanner saw some Indian ghosts, too, when he grew up. On the bank of the Little Saskawjewun there was a capital camping-place where the Indians never camped. It was called *Jebingneezh-o-shin-naut*— "the place of two Dead Men." Two Indians of the same *totem* had killed each other there. Now, their *totem* was that which Tanner bore, the *totem* of his adopted Indian mother. The story was that if any man camped there, the ghosts would come out of their graves; and that was just what happened. Tanner made the experiment; he camped and fell asleep. "Very soon I saw the two dead men come and sit down by my fire opposite me. I got up and sat opposite them by the fire, and in this position I awoke." Perhaps he fell asleep again, for he now saw the two dead men, who sat opposite to him, and laughed and poked fun and sticks at him. He could neither speak nor run away. One of them showed him a horse on a hill, and said, "There, my brother, is a horse I give you to ride on your journey home, and on your way you can call and leave the horse, and spend another night with us." So, next morning, he found the horse and rode it, but he did not spend another night with the ghosts of his own *totem*. He had seen enough of them.

Though Tanner believed in his own dreams of the Great Spirit, he did *not* believe in those of his Indian mother. He thought she used to prowl about in the daytime, find tracks of a bear or deer, watch where they went to, and then say the beast's lair had been revealed to her in a dream. But Tanner's own visions were "honest Injun." Once, in a hard winter, Tanner played a trick on the old woman. All the food they had was a quart of frozen bears' grease, kept in a kettle with a skin fastened over it. But Tanner caught a rabbit alive and popped him under the skin. So when the old woman went for the bears' grease in the morning, and found it alive, she was not a little alarmed.

But does not the notion of living on frozen pomatum rather take the gilt off the delight of being an Indian? The old woman was as brave and resolute as a man, but in one day she sold a hundred and twenty beaver skins and many buffalo robes for rum. She always entertained all the neighbouring Indians as long as the rum lasted, and Tanner had a narrow escape of growing up a drunkard. He became such a savage that when an Indian girl carelessly allowed his wigwam to be burned, he stripped her of her blanket and turned her out for the night in the snow.

So Tanner grew up in spite of hunger and drink. Once, when starving, and without bullets, he met a buck moose. If he killed the moose he would be saved, if he did not he would die. So he took the screws out of the lock of his rifle, loaded with them in place of bullets, tied the lock on with string, fired, and killed the moose.

Tanner was worried into marrying a young squaw (at least *he* says he did it because the girl wanted it), and this led to all his sorrows — this and a quarrel with a medicine-man. The medicine-man accused him of being a wizard, and his wife got another Indian to shoot him. Tanner was far from surgeons, and he actually hacked out the bullet himself with an old razor. Another wounded Indian once amputated his own arm. The ancient Spartans could not have been pluckier. The Indians had other virtues as well as pluck. They were honest and so hospitable, before they knew white men's ways, that they would give poor strangers new mocassins and new buffalo cloaks.

Will it bore you, my dear Dick, if I tell you of an old Indian's death? It seems a pretty and touching story. Old Pe-shau-ba was a friend of Tanner. One day he fell violently ill. He sent for Tanner and said to him: "I remember before I came to live in this world, I was with the Great Spirit above. I saw many good and desirable things, and among others a beautiful woman. And the Great Spirit said: 'Pe-shau-ba, do you love the woman?' I told him I did. Then he said, 'Go down and spend a few winters on earth. You cannot stay long, and you must remember to be always kind and good to my children whom you see below.' So I came down, but I have never forgotten what was said to me.

"I have always stood in the smoke between the two bands when my people fought with their enemies . . . I now hear the same voice that talked to me before I came into the world. It tells me I can remain here no longer." He then walked out, looked at the sun, the sky, the lake, and the distant hills; then came in, lay down composedly in his place, and in a few minutes ceased to breathe.

If we would hardly care to live like Indians, after all (and Tanner tired of it and came back, an old man, to the States), we might desire to die like Pe-shau-ba, if, like him, we had been "good and kind to God's children whom we meet below." So here is a Christmas moral for you, out of a Red Indian book, and I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

APPENDIX I

Reynolds's Peter Bell.

When the article on John Hamilton Reynolds ("A Friend of Keats") was written, I had not seen his "Peter Bell" (Taylor and Hessey, London, 1888). This "Lyrical Ballad" is described in a letter of Keats's published by Mr. Sidney Colvin in *Macmillan's Magazine*, August, 1888. The point of Reynolds's joke was to produce a parody before the original. Reynolds was annoyed by what Hood called "The Betty Foybles" of Wordsworth, and by the demeanour of a poet who was serious, not only in season, but out of season. Moreover, Wordsworth had damned "a pretty piece of heathenism" by Keats, with praise which was faint even from Wordsworth to a contemporary. In the circumstances, as Wordsworth was not yet a kind of solemn shade, whom we see haunting the hills, and hear chanting the swan song of the dying England, perhaps Reynolds's parody scarce needs excuse. Mr. Ainger calls it "insolent," meaning that it has an unkind tone of personal attack. That is, unluckily, true, but to myself the parody appears remarkably funny, and quite worthy of "the sneering brothers, the vile Smiths," as Lamb calls the authors of "Rejected Addresses." Lamb wrote to tell Wordsworth that he did not see the fun of the parody — perhaps it is as well that we should fail to see the fun of jests broken on our friends. But will any Wordsworthian deny to-day the humour of this? —

"He is rurally related;
Peter Bell hath country cousins,
(He had once a worthy mother),
Bells and Peters by the dozens,
But Peter Bell he hath no brothers,
Not a brother owneth he,
Peter Bell he hath no brother;
His mother had no other son,
No other son e'er called her 'mother,'
Peter Bell hath brother none."

As Keats says in a review he wrote for *The Examiner*, "there is a pestilent humour in the rhymes, and an inveterate cadence in some of the stanzas that must be lamented." In his review Keats tried to hurt neither side, but his heart was with Reynolds; "it would be just as well to trounce Lord Byron in the same manner."

People still make an outcry over the trouncing of Keats. It was bludgeonly done, but only part of a game, a kind of horseplay at which most men of letters of the age were playing. Who but regrets that, in his “Life of Keats,” Mr. Colvin should speak as if Sir Walter Scott had, perhaps, a guilty knowledge of the review of Keats in *Blackwood*! There is but a tittle of published evidence to the truth of a theory in itself utterly detestable, and, to every one who understands the character of Scott, wholly beyond possibility of belief. Even if Lockhart was the reviewer, and if Scott came to know it, was Scott responsible for what Lockhart did in 1819 or 1820, the very time when Mrs. Shelley thought he was defending Shelley in *Blackwood* (where he had praised her *Frankenstein*), and when she spoke of Sir Walter as “the only liberal man in the faction”? Unluckily Keats died, and his death was absurdly attributed to a pair of reviews which may have irritated him, and which were coarse, and cruel even for that period of robust reviewing. But Keats knew very well the value of these critiques, and probably resented them not much more than a football player resents being “hacked” in the course of the game. He was very willing to see Byron and Wordsworth “trounced,” and as ready as Peter Corcoran in his friend’s poem to “take punishment” himself. The character of Keats was plucky, and his estimate of his own genius was perfectly sane. He knew that he was in the thick of a literary “scrimmage,” and he was not the man to flinch or to repine at the consequences.

APPENDIX II

Portraits of Virgil and Lucretius.

In the Letter on Virgil some remarks are made on a bust of the poet. It is wholly fanciful. Our only vestiges of a portrait of Virgil are in two MSS.; the better of the two is in the Vatican. The design represents a youth, with dark hair and a pleasant face, seated reading. A desk is beside him, and a case for manuscript, in shape like a band-box. (See Visconti, “Icon. Rom.” i. 179, plate 13.) Martial tells us that portraits of Virgil were illuminated on copies of his “Æneid.” The Vatican MS. is of the twelfth century. But every one who has followed the fortunes of books knows that a kind of tradition often preserves the illustrations, which are copied and recopied without material change. (See Mr. Jacobs’s “Fables of Bidpai,” Nutt, 1888.) Thus the Vatican MS. may preserve at least a shadow of Virgil.

If there be any portrait of Lucretius, it is a profile on a sard, published by Mr. Munro in his famous edition of the poet. The letters LVCR are inscribed on the stone, and appear to be contemporary with the gem. This, at least, is the opinion of Mr. A. S. Murray, of the late Mr. C. W. King, Braun, and Müller. On the other hand, Bernouilli (“Rom. Icon.” i. 247) regards this, and apparently most other Roman gems with inscriptions, as “apocryphal.” The ring, which was in the Nott collection, is now in my possession. If Lucretius were the rather pedantic and sharp-nosed Roman of the gem, his wife had little reason for the jealousy which took so deplorable a form. Cold this Lucretius may have been, volatile — never!

LOST LEADERS

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PREFACE.

These articles are reprinted, by the permission of the Editor, from the *Daily News*. They were selected and arranged by Mr. Pett Ridge, who, with the Publishers, will perhaps kindly take a share in the responsibility of republishing them.

SCOTCH RIVERS.

September is the season of the second and lovelier youth of the river-scenery of Scotland. Spring comes but slowly up that way; it is June before the woods have quite clothed themselves. In April the angler or the sketcher is chilled by the east wind, whirling showers of hail, and even when the riverbanks are sweet with primroses, the bluff tops of the border hills are often bleak with late snow. This state of things is less unpropitious to angling than might be expected. A hardy race of trout will sometimes rise freely to the artificial fly when the natural fly is destroyed, and the angler is almost blinded with dusty snowflakes. All through midsummer the Scotch rivers lose their chief attractions. The bracken has not yet changed its green for the fairy gold, the hue of its decay; the woods wear a uniform and sombre green; the waters are low and shrunken, and angling is almost impossible. But with September the pleasant season returns for people who love "to be quiet, and go a-fishing," or a-sketching. The hills put on a wonderful harmony of colours, the woods rival the October splendours of English forests. The bends of the Tweed below Melrose and round Mertoun — a scene that, as Scott says, the river seems loth to leave — may challenge comparison with anything the Thames can show at Nuneham or Cliefden. The angler, too, is as fortunate as the lover of the picturesque. The trout that have hidden themselves all summer, or at best have cautiously nibbled at the worm-bait, now rise freely to the fly. Wherever a yellow leaf drops from birch tree or elm the great trout are splashing, and they are too eager to distinguish very subtly between flies of nature's making and flies of fur and feather. It is a time when every one who can manage it should be by the water-side, and should take with him, if possible, the posthumous work of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder on the "Rivers of Scotland."

This book, as the author of "Rab and his Friends" tells us in the preface, is a re-publication of articles written in 1848, on the death-bed of the author, a man of many accomplishments and of a most lovable nature. He would lie and dictate or write in pencil these happy and wistful memories of days passed by the banks of Tweed and Tyne. He did not care to speak of the northern waters: of Tay, which the Roman invaders compared to Tiber; of Laxford, the river of salmon; or of the "thundering Spey." Nor has he anything to say of the west, and of Galloway, the country out of which young Lochinvar came, with its soft and broken hills, like the lower spurs of the Pyrenees, and its streams, now rushing down defiles of rock, now stealing with slow foot through the plains. He confines himself to the limits of the Scottish Arcadia; to the hills near Edinburgh, where Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd loved and sang in a rather affected way; and to the main stream and the tributaries of the Tweed. He tells, with a humour like that of Charles Lamb in his account of his youthful search for the mysterious fountain-head of the New River, how he sought among the Pentland Hills for the source of the brook that flowed past his own garden. The wandering stream led him through many a scene renowned in Border history, up to the heights whence Marmion surveyed the Scottish forces encamped on Borough Moor before the fatal day of Flodden. These scenes are described with spirit and loving interest; but it is by Tweedside that the tourist will find his most pleasant guide in Lauder's book. Just as Cicero said of Athens, that in every stone you tread on a history, so on Tweedside by every nook and valley you find the place of a ballad, a story, or a legend. From Tweed's source, near the grave of the Wizard Merlin, down to Berwick and the sea, the Border "keeps" and towers are as frequent as castles on the Rhine. Each has its tradition, its memory of lawless times, which have become beautiful in the magic of poetry and the mist of the past. First comes Neidpath Castle, with its vaulted "hanging chamber" in the roof, and the rafter, with the iron ring to which prisoners were hanged, still remaining to testify to the lawless power of Border lords. Neidpath has a softer legend of the death of the lady of the house, when her lover failed to recognize the features that had wasted with sorrow for his absence. Lower down the river comes Clovenfords, with its memories of Christopher North, and Peebles, where King James sings that there was "dancing and derray" in his time; and still lower Ashiesteel, where Scott was young and happy, and Abbotsford, where his fame and his misfortunes found him out. It was on a bright afternoon in late September that he died there, and the mourners by his bed heard through the silence the murmuring of Tweed How many other associations there are by the tributary rivers! what a breath of "pastoral melancholy"! There is Ettrick, where the cautious lover in the old song of Ettrick banks found "a canny place of meeting." Oakwood Tower, where Michael Scott, the wizard, wove his spells, is a farm building — the haunted magician's room is a granary, Earlstone, where Thomas the Rhymer dwelt, and whence the two white deer recalled him to Elfland and to the arms of the fairy queen, is noted "for its shawl manufactory." Only Yarrow still keeps its ancient quiet, and the burn that was tinged by the blood of Douglas is unstained by more commonplace dyes.

All these changes make the "Rivers of Scotland" rather melancholy reading. Thirty years have not passed since Lauder died, and how much he would miss if he could revisit his beloved water! Spearing salmon by torchlight is a forbidden thing. The rocks are no longer lit up with the red glow; they resound no longer with the shouts and splashing of the yeomen. You might almost as readily find a hart on Harthope, or a wild cat at Catslack, or a wolf at Wolf-Cleugh, as catch three stone-weight of trout in Meggat-water. The days of guileless fish and fabulous draughts of trout are over. No sportsman need take three large baskets to the Gala now, as Lauder did, and actually filled them with thirty-six dozen of trout. The modern angler must not allow his expectations to be raised too highly by these stories. Sport has become much more difficult in these times of rapidly growing population. It is a pleasant sight to see the weavers spending their afternoons beside the Tweed; it is such a sight as could not be witnessed by the closely preserved rivers of England. But the weavers have taught the trout caution, and the dyes and various pollutions of trade have thinned their numbers. Mr. Ruskin sees no hope in this state of things; he preaches, in the spirit of old Hesiod, that there is no piety in a race which defiles the “holy waters.” But surely civilization, even if it spoil sport and degrade scenery, is better than a state of things in which the laird would hang up his foes to an iron ring in the roof. The hill of Cowden Knowes may be a less eligible place for lovers’ meetings than it was of old. But in those times the lord of Cowden Knowes is said by tradition to have had a way of putting his prisoners in barrels studded with iron nails, and rolling them down a brae. This is the side of the good old times which should not be overlooked. It may not be pleasant to find blue dye and wool yarn in Teviot, but it is more endurable than to have to encounter the bandit Barnskill, who hewed his bed of flint, Scott says, in Minto Crags. Still, the reading of the “Rivers of Scotland” leaves rather a sad impression on the reader, and makes him ask once more if there is no way of reconciling the beauty of rude ages with the comforts and culture of civilization. This is a question that really demands an answer, though it is often put in a mistaken way. The teachings of Mr. Ruskin and of his followers would bring us back to a time when printing was not, and an engineer would have been burned for a wizard. But there is a point at which civilization and production must begin to respect the limits of the beautiful, on which they so constantly encroach. Who is to settle the limit, and escape the charge of being either a *dilettante* and a sentimentalist on the one hand, or a Philistine on the other?

SALMON-FISHING.

Salmon-fishing for this season is over, and, in spite of the fresh and open weather, most anglers will feel that the time has come to close the fly-book, to wind up the reel, and to consign the rod to its winter quarters. Salmon-fishing ceases to be very enjoyable when the *snaw broo*, or melted snow from the hilltops, begins to mix with the brown waters of Tweed or Tay; when the fallen leaves hamper the hook; and when the fish are becoming sluggish, black, and the reverse of comely. Now the season of retrospect commences, the time of the pleasures of memory, and the delights of talking shop dear to anglers Most sporting talk is dull to every one but the votaries of the particular amusement. Few things can be drearier to the outsider than the conversation of cricketers, unless it be the recondite lore which whist-players bring forth from the depths of their extraordinary memories. But angling talk has a variety, recounts an amount of incident and adventure, and wakens a feeling of free air in a way with which the records of no other sport, except perhaps deer-stalking, can compete. The salmon is, beyond all rivalry, the strongest and most beautiful, and most cautious and artful, of fresh-water fishes. To capture him is not a task for slack muscles or an uncertain eye. There is even a slight amount of personal risk in the sport. The fisher must often wade till the water reaches above the waist in cold and rushing streams, where his feet are apt to slip on the smooth stones or trip on the rough rocks beneath him. When the salmon takes the fly, there is no time for picking steps. The line rushes out so swiftly as to cut the fingers if it touches them, and then is the moment when the angler must follow the fish at the top of his speed. To stand still, or to go cautiously in pursuit, is to allow the salmon to run out with an enormous length of line; the line is submerged — technically speaking, *drowned* — in the water, the strain of the supple rod is removed from the fish, who finds the hook loose in his mouth, and rubs it off against the bottom of the river. Thus speed of foot, in water or over rocks, is a necessary quality in the angler; at least in the northern angler. By the banks of the Usk a contemplative man who likes to take things easily may find pretty sure footing on grassy slopes, or on a gravelly bottom. But it is a different thing to hook a large salmon where the Tweed foams under the bridge of Yair down to the narrows and linns below. If the angler hesitates there, he is lost. Does he stand still and give the fish line? The astute creature cuts it against the sharp rocks below the bridge, and the rod, relieved of the weight, leaps straight in the fisher's hand, and in his heart there is a sense of emptiness and sudden desolation. Does he try to follow, the chances are that his feet slip; after one or two wild struggles he is on his back in the water, and nearly strangled with his fishing-basket. In either case the fish goes on his way rejoicing, and, after the manner of his kind, leaps out of the water once or twice — a maddening sight.

Adventures like this are among the bitter memories of the angler. The fish that break away are monstrous animals; imagination increases their bulk, and fond desire paints them clean-run and bright as silver. There are other chances of the angler's life scarcely less sad than this. When a hook breaks just as the salmon was losing strength, was ceasing to struggle, and beginning to sway with the mere force of the stream, and to show his shining sides — when a hook breaks at such a moment, it is very hard to bear. The oath of Ernulphus seems all too weak to express the feelings of the sportsman and his wrath against the wretched tackle-maker. Again, when the fish is actually conquered; when he is being towed gently into some little harbour among the tall slim water-grasses, or into a pebbly cove, or up to a green bank; when the bitterness of struggle is past, and he seems resigned and almost happy; when at this crisis the clumsy gilly with the gaff scratches him, rouses him to a last exertion, and entangles the line, so that the salmon breaks free — that is an experience to which language cannot do justice. The ancient painter drew his veil over the face of Agamemnon present at his daughter's sacrifice. Silence and sympathy are all one can offer to the angler who has toiled all day, and in this wise caught nothing. There is yet another very bitter sorrow. It is a hard thing for a man to leave town and hurry to a river in the west, a river that perhaps he has known since he fished for minnows with a bent pin in happy childhood. The west is not a dry land; effeminate tourists complain that the rain it raineth every day. But the heavy soft rain is the very life of an angler. It keeps the stream of that clear brown hue, between porter and amber, which he loves; and it encourages the salmon to keep rushing from the estuary and the sea right up to the mountain loch, where they rest. But suppose there is a dry summer — and such things have been even in Argyleshire. The heart of the tourist is glad within him, but as the river shrinks and shrinks, a silver thread among slimy green mosses in the streams, a sheet of clear water in the pools, the angler repines. Day after sultry day goes by, and there is no hope. There is a cloud on the distant hill; it is only the smoke from some moor that has caught fire. The river grows so transparent that it is easy to watch the lazy fish sulking at the bottom. Then comes a terrible temptation. Men, men calling themselves sportsmen, have been known to fish in the innocent dewy morning, with worm, with black lob worm. Worse remains behind. Persons of ungoverned passions, maddened by the sight of the fish, are believed to have poached with rake-hooks, a cruel apparatus made of three hooks fastened back to back and loaded with lead. These are thrown over the fish, and then struck into him with a jerk. But the mind willingly turns away from the contemplation of such actions.

It is pleasanter to think of not unsuccessful days by lowland or highland streams, when the sun was veiled, the sky pearly grey, the water, as the people say, in grand order. There is the artistic excitement of choosing the hook, gaudy for a heavy water, neat and modest for a clearer stream. There is the feverish moment of adjusting rod and line, while you mark a fish "rising to himself." You begin to cast well above him, and come gradually down, till the fly lights on the place where he is lying. Then there is a slow pull, a break in the water, a sudden strain at the line, which flies through the rings of the rod. It is not well to give too much line; best to follow his course, as he makes off as if for Berwick and the sea. Once or twice he leaps clean into the air, a flying bar of silver. Then he sulks at the bottom, a mere dead weight, attempting devices only to be conjectured. A common plan now is to tighten the line, and tap the butt end of the rod. This humane expedient produces effects not unlike neuralgia, it may be supposed, for the fish is off in a new fury. But rush after rush grows tamer, till he is drawn within reach of the gaff, and so on to the grassy bed, where a tap on the head ends his sorrows, and the colours on his shining side undulate in delicate and beautiful radiance. It may be dreadfully cruel, as cruel as nature and human life; but those who eat salmon or butcher's meat cannot justly protest, for they, desiring the end, have willed the means. As the angler walks home, and watches the purple Eildon grow grey in the twilight, or sees the hills of Mull delicately outlined between the faint gold of sky and sea, it is not probable that his conscience reproaches him very fiercely. He has spent a day among the most shy and hidden beauties of nature, surprising her here and there in places where, unless he had gone a-fishing, he might never have penetrated. He has set his skill against the strength and skill of the monarch of rivers, and has mastered him among the haunts of fairies and beneath the ruined towers of feudalism. These are some of the delights that to-day end for a season.

WINTER SPORTS.

People to whom cold means misery, who hate to be braced, and shudder at the word "seasonable," can have little difficulty in accounting for the origin of the sports of winter. They need only adapt to the circumstances that old Lydian tradition which says that games of chance were invented during a great famine. Men permitted themselves to eat only every second day, and tried to forget their hunger in playing at draughts and dice. That is clearly the invention of a southern people, which never had occasion to wish it could become oblivious of the weather, as too many of us would like to be in England. Such shivering and indolent folks may be inclined to say that skating and curling and wildfowl-shooting, and the other diversions which seduce the able-bodied from the warm precincts of the cheerful fire, were only contrived to enable us to forget the state of the thermometer. Whether or not that was the purpose of the first northerner who fixed sheep-bones beneath his feet, to course more smoothly over the frozen sound, there can be no doubt that winter sports answer their presumed purpose. They keep up that glow which only exercise in the open air can give, and promote the health which shows itself in the complexion. It is the young lady who interprets literally the Scotch invitation "come into the fire," and who spoils the backs of library novels by holding them too near the comfortable hearth, she it is who suffers from the ignoble and unbecoming liberties that winter takes with the human countenance. Happier and wiser is she who studies the always living and popular Dutch roll rather than the Grecian bend, and who blooms with continual health and good temper. Our changeful climate affords so few opportunities of learning to skate, that it is really extraordinary to find so much skill, and to see feats so difficult and graceful. In Canada, where frost is a certainty, and where the covered "rinks" make skating an indoor sport, it is not odd that great perfection should be attained. But as fast as Canadians bring over a new figure or a new trick it is picked up, and critics may dispute as to whether the bold and dashing style of the English school of skaters is not preferable to the careful and smooth, but somewhat pretty and niggling manner of the colonists. Our skating stands to the Canadian fashion somewhat as French does to English etching. We have the dash and the *chic* with skates which Frenchmen show with the etching-needle, and the Canadian, on the other hand, is apt to decline into the mere prettiness which is the fault of English etchers.

Skating has been, within the last few years, a very progressive art. There was a time when mere speed, and the grace of speed, satisfied most amateurs. The ideal spot for skating in those days must have been the lakes where Wordsworth used to listen to the echoes replying from the cold and moonlit hills, or such a frozen river as that on which the American skater was pursued by wolves. No doubt such scenes have still their rare charm, and few expeditions are more attractive than a moonlight exploration of a winding river. But it is seldom that our frosts make such tours practicable, whereas almost every winter it is possible to skate with safety, at least on shallow ponds, or on places like the ice-bound floods at Oxford. Thus figure-skating, which needs but a surface of a few yards to each performer, has come into fashion, and it is hard to imagine any exercise more elegant, or one that requires more nerve. The novice is theoretically aware that if he throws his body into certain unfamiliar postures, which are explained to him, the laws of gravitation and of the higher curves will cause him to complete a certain figure. But how much courage and faith it requires to yield to these laws and let the frame swing round subject to the immutable rules of matter! The temptation to stop half-way is almost irresistible, and then there occurs a complicated fall, which makes the petrified spectator ask where may be the skater's body— "which are legs, and which are arms?" Of all sports, skating has the best claim to adopt Danton's motto, *Toujours de l'audace* — the audacity meant being that of giving one's self up to the laws of motion, and not the vulgar quality which carries its owner on to dangerous ice. Something may now be learned of figure-skating on dry land, and the adventure may be renewed of the mythical children who went sliding all on a summer day. In this respect, skating has a great advantage over its rival, the "roaring game" of curling. It would be poor fun to curl on asphalte, with stones fixed on wheels, though the amusement is possible, and we recommend the idea, which is not copyright, to enthusiastic curlers; and curlers are almost always enthusiastic. It is pleasant to think how the hills must be ringing with their shouts, round many a lonely tarn, where the men of one parish meet those of the next in friendly conflict north of the Tweed. The exhilarating yell of "soop her up," whereby the curler who wields a broom is abjured to sweep away the snow in front of the advancing stone, will many a time be heard this winter. There is something peculiarly healthy about this sport — in the ring with which the heavy stones clash against each other; in the voices of the burly plaided men, shepherd, and farmer, and laird; in the rough banquet of beef and greens and the copious toddy which close the day's exertions.

Frost brings with it an enforced close-season for most of furred and feathered kind. The fox is safe enough, and, if sportsmen are right, must be rather wearying for open weather, and for the return of his favourite exercise with hounds. But even when the snow hangs out her white flag of truce and goodwill between man and beast, the British sportsman is still the British sportsman, and is not averse to going out and killing something. To such a one, wildfowl shooting is a possibility, though, as good Colonel Hawker says, some people complain forsooth that it interferes with ease and comfort. We should rather incline to think it does. A black frost with no moon is not precisely the kind of weather that a degenerate sportsman would choose for lying in the frozen mud behind a bush, or pushing a small punt set on large skates across the ice to get at birds. Few attitudes can be more cramping than that of the gunner who skulks on one knee behind his canoe, pushing it with one hand, and dragging himself along by the aid of the other. Then, it is disagreeable to have to use a gun so heavy that the stock is fitted with a horsehair pillow, or even with a small bolster. The whistle of widgeon and the shrill-sounding pinions of wild geese may be attractive noises, and no doubt all shooting is exciting; and a form of shooting which stakes all on one shot must offer some thrilling moments of expectation. The quarry has to be measured by number, not by size, and fifty widgeon at one discharge, or a brace of wild swans may almost serve to set against a stag of ten. The lover of nature has glimpses in wildfowl shooting such as she gives no other man — the glittering expanse of waters, the birds “all in a charm,” all uttering their cry together, the musical moan of the tide, and the “long glories of the winter moon.” But success is too difficult, equipment too costly, and rheumatism too certain for wildfowl shooting to be reckoned among popular winter sports.

HUMAN LEVITATION.

Why is it that living fish add nothing to the "weight of the bucket of water in which they swim?" Charles II. is said to have asked the Royal Society. A still more extraordinary question has been propounded in the grave pages of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, edited by Mr. Crookes, a Fellow of the Royal Society, and the discoverer of the useful metal thallium. The problem set in this learned review does not, like that of the Merry Monarch, beg the question of facts. "What is the scientific inference from the various accounts, modern and traditional, of human levitation?" is the difficulty before the world at this present moment. Now, there may be people who never heard of levitation, nor even of "thaums," a term that frequently occurs in the article we refer to. A slight acquaintance with the dead languages, whose shadows reappear in this queer fashion, enables the inquirer to decide that "levitation" means the power of becoming lighter than the surrounding atmosphere, and setting at nought the laws of gravitation.

Thaums, again, are wonders, and there is no very obvious reason why they should not be called wonders. But to return to levitation. Most of us have heard how Mr. Home and other gifted people possess the faculty of being raised from the ground, and of floating about the room, or even out of the window. There are clouds of witnesses who have observed these phenomena, which generally occur in the dark. In fact, they are part of that vague subject called spiritualism, about which opinion is so much divided, and views are so vague. It has been said that the human race, in regard to this high argument, is divided into five classes. There are people who believe; people who investigate; people who think the matter really ought to be looked into; people who dislike the topic, but who would believe in the phenomena if they were proved; and people of common sense, who would not believe in them if they were proved. Now, the article in the *Journal of Science* only deals with one of the phenomena we hear so much of — that of the sudden suspension of the laws of gravitation, in the case of individual men. The author has collected a vast variety of traditions bearing on this subject, and his conclusion apparently is, that events of this kind, though rather rare, are natural, are peculiar to people of certain temperament and organization, and, above all, bring no proof as to the truth of the doctrines asserted by the persons who exhibit the phenomena. Now, men of science, as a rule, and the world at large, look on stories of this sort as myths, romances, false interpretations of subjective feelings, pious frauds, and absurd nonsense. Before expressing an opinion, it may be well to look over the facts, as they are called, which are brought under our notice.

What accounts, then, are there of levitation among the civilized people of the Old World? First, there is Abaris, the Scythian, "in the time of Pythagoras," says our author. Well, as a matter of evidence, Abaris may have been levitated in the eighth century before Christ, or it may have been two hundred and fifty years later. Perhaps he was a Druid of the Hebrides. Toland thought so, and Toland had as good a chance of knowing as any one else. Our earliest authority, Herodotus, says he took no earthly food, and "went with his arrow all round the world without once eating." It seems that he rode on this arrow, which, Mr. Rawlinson thinks, may possibly have been an early tradition of the magnet. All our detailed information about him is of later date than the Christian era. The fact remains that tradition says he was able to fly in the air. Pythagoras is said to have had the same power, or rather the same faculty came upon him. He was lifted up, with no will or conscious exertion of his own. Now, our evidence as to the power of Pythagoras to be "like a bird, in two places at once," is exactly as valuable as that about Abaris. It rests on the tradition repeated by superstitious philosophers who lived eight hundred years after his death. "To Pythagoras, therefore," as Herodotus has it, "we now say farewell," with no further knowledge than that vague tradition says he was "levitated." The writer now leaves classical antiquity behind him — he does not repeat a saying of Plotinus, the mystic of Alexandria, who lived in the third century of our era. The best known anecdote of him is that his disciples asked him if he were not sometimes levitated, and he laughed, and said, "No; but he was no fool who persuaded you of this." Instead of Plotinus, we are referred to a mass of Jewish and anti-Christian apocryphal traditions, which have the same common point — the assertion of the existence of the phenomenon of levitation. Apollonius of Tyana is also said to have been a highly accomplished medium. We are next presented with a list of forty "levitated" persons, canonized or beatified by the Church of Rome. Their dates range from the ninth to the seventeenth century, and their histories go to prove that levitation runs in families. Perhaps the best known of the collection is St. Theresa (1515-1582), and it is only fair to say that the stories about St. Theresa are very like those repeated about our lady mediums. One of these, Mrs. Guppy, as every one knows, can scatter flowers all over a room, "flowers of Paradise," unknown to botanists. Fauna, rather than flora, was St. Theresa's province, and she kept a charming pet, a little white animal of no recognized species. Still, about her, and about her friend St John of the Cross, the legend runs that they used to be raised off the ground, chairs and all, and float about in the most soothing way. Poor Peter of Alcantara was levitated in a less pleasant manner; “he uttered a frightful cry, and shot through the air as if he had been fired from a gun.” Peter had a new form of epilepsy — the rising, not the falling, sickness. Joseph Copertino, again, floated about to such good effect, that in 1650 Prince John of Brunswick foreswore the Protestant faith. The logical process which converted this prince is not a very obvious one.

Why do we quote all these old monkish and neoplatonic legends? For some the evidence is obviously nil; to other anecdotes many witnesses bear testimony; but then, we know that an infectious *schwärmerei* can persuade people that the lion now removed from Northumberland House wagged his tail. The fact is that there is really matter for science in all these anecdotes, and the question to be asked is this — How does it happen that in ages and societies so distant and so various identical stories are current? What is the pressure that makes neoplatonic gossips of the fourth century circulate the same marvels as spiritualist gossips of the nineteenth? How does it happen that the mediæval saint, the Indian medicine-man, the Siberian shaman (a suggestive term), have nearly identical wonders attributed to them? If people wanted merely to tell “a good square lie,” as the American slang has it, invention does not seem to have such pitifully narrow boundaries. It appears to follow that there are contagious nervous illusions, about which science has not said the last word. We believe that the life of children, with its innocent mixture of dreams and waking, facts and fancies, could supply odd parallels to the stories we have been treated to. And as we are on the subject, we should like, as the late President Lincoln said, to tell a little story. It occurred to a learned divine to meet a pupil, who ought by rights to have been in the University of Oxford, walking in Regent Street. The youth glided past like a ghost, and was lost in the crowd; next day his puzzled preceptor received a note, dated on the previous day from Oxford, telling how the pupil had met the teacher by the Isis, and on inquiry had heard he was in London. Here is a case of levitation — of double levitation, and we leave it to be explained by the followers of Abaris and of Mr. Home.

A CHINAMAN’S MARRIAGE.

The Court of Assizes at Paris has lately been occupied with the case of a Chinese gentleman, whose personal charms and literary powers make him worthy to be the compatriot of Ah-Sin, that astute Celestial. Tin-tun-ling is the name — we wish we could say, with Thackeray’s F. B., “the highly respectable name” — of the Chinese who has just been acquitted on a charge of bigamy. In China, it is said that the more distinguished a man is the shorter is his title, and the name of a very victorious general is a mere click or gasp. On this principle, the trisyllabic Tin-tun-ling must have been without much honour in his own country. In Paris, however, he has learned Parisian aplomb, and when confronted with his judges and his accusers, his air, we learn, “was very calm.” “His smile it was pensive and bland,” like the Heathen Chinee’s, and his calm confidence was justified by events. It remains to tell the short, though not very simple, tale of Tin-tun-ling. Mr. Ling was born in 1831, in the province of Chan-li. At the interesting age of eighteen, an age at which the intellect awakens and old prejudices lose their grasp, he ceased to burn gilt paper on the tombs of his ancestors; he ceased to revere their august spirits; he gave up the use of the planchette, rejected the teachings of Confucius, and, in short, became a convert to Christianity. This might be considered either as a gratifying testimony to the persuasive powers of Catholic missionaries, or as an example of the wiles of Jesuitism, if we did not know the inner history of Mr. Ling’s soul, the abysmal depths of his personality. He has not, like many other modern converts, written a little book, such as “How I ceased to chinchin Joss; or, from Confucius to Christianity,” but he has told Madame Judith Mendès all about it. Madame Mendès has made a name in literature, and English readers may have wondered how the daughter of the poet Théophile Gautier came to acquire the knowledge of Chinese which she has shown in her translations from that language. It now appears that she was the pupil of Tin-tun-ling, who, in a moment of expansion, confided to her that he adopted the Catholic faith that he might eat a morsel of bread. He was starving, it seems; he had eaten nothing for eight days, when he threw himself on the charity of the missionaries, and received baptism. Since Winckelmann turned renegade, and became a Roman Catholic merely that the expenses of his tour to Rome and his maintenance there might be paid, there have surely been few more mercenary converts. Tin-tun-ling was not satisfied with being christened into the Church, he was also married in Catholic rites, and here his misfortunes fairly began, and he entered on the path which has led him into difficulty and discredit.

The French, as a nation, are not remarkable for their accuracy in the use of foreign proper names, and we have a difficulty in believing that the name of Mr. Ling's first wife was really Quzia-Tom-Alacer. There is a touch of M. Hugo's famous Tom Jim Jack, the British tar, about this designation. Nevertheless, the facts are that Tin-tun-ling was wedded to Quzia, and had four children by her. After years of domestic life, on which he is said to look back but rarely and with reluctance, he got a position as secretary and shoeblack and tutor in Chinese to a M. Callery, and left the province of Chin-li for Paris. For three months this devoted man sent Quzia-Tom-Alacer small sums of money, and after that his kindness became, as Douglas Jerrold said, unremitting. Quzia heard of her lord no more till she learned that he had forgotten his marriage vow, and was, in fact, Another's. As to how Tin-tun-ling contracted a matrimonial alliance in France, the evidence is a little confusing. It seems certain that after the death of his first employer, Callery, he was in destitution; that M. Théophile Gautier, with his well-known kindness and love of curiosities, took him up, and got him lessons in Chinese, and it seems equally certain that in February, 1872, he married a certain Caroline Julie Liégeois. In the act of marriage, Tin-tun-ling described himself as a baron, which we know that he was not, for in his country he did not rejoice in buttons and other insignia of Chinese nobility. As Caroline Julie Ling (*née* Liégeois) denounced her lord for bigamy in 1873, and succeeded, as has been seen, in proving that he was husband of Quzia-Tom-Alacer, it may seem likely that she found out the spurious honours of the pretended title. But whatever may be thought of the deceitful conduct of Ling, there is little doubt apparently that Caroline is really his. He stated in court that by Chinese law a husband who has not heard of his wife for three years may consider that his marriage has legally ceased to be binding. Madame Mendès proved from the volume Ta-Tsilg-Leu-Lee, the penal code of China, that Ling's law was correct. It also came out in court that Quzia-Tom-Alacer had large feet. The jury, on hearing this evidence, very naturally acquitted Tin-tun-ling, whom Madame Mendès embraced, it is said, with the natural fervour of a preserver of innocence. Whether Tin-tun-ling is now a bachelor, or whether he is irrevocably bound to Caroline Julie, is a question that seems to have occurred to no one.

The most mysterious point in this dark business is the question, How did Tin-tun-ling, who always spoke of his first marriage with terror, happen to involve himself in the difficulties of a second? Something more than the common weakness of human nature must have been at work here. Madame Mendès says, like a traitor to her sex, that Tin espoused Caroline Julie from feelings of compassion. He yielded, according to Madame Mendès, "to the entreaties of this woman." The story of M. Gustave Lafargue confirms this ungallant tale. According to M. Lafargue, Tin's bride was a governess, and an English governess, or at least one who taught English. She proposed to marry Tin, who first resisted, and then hesitated. In a matter of this kind, the man who hesitates is lost. The English governess flattered Tin's literary as well as his personal vanity. She proposed to translate the novels which Tin composes in his native tongue, and which he might expect to prove as popular in France as some other fictions of his fatherland have done in times past. So they were married. Tim, though on pleasure bent, had a frugal mind, and after a wedding-breakfast, which lasted all day, he went to a theatre to ask for two free passes. When he came back his bride was gone. He sought her with all the ardour of the bridegroom in the ballad of "The Mistletoe Bough," and with more success. Madame Ling was reading a novel at home. Mr. Carlyle has quoted Tobias Smollett as to the undesirability of giving the historical muse that latitude which is not uncommon in France, and we prefer to leave the tale of Ling's where Mr. Carlyle left that of Brynhild's wedding.

SIEUR DE MONTAIGNE.

The French National Library has recently, as it is said, made an acquisition of great value and interest. The books, and better still the notes, of Montaigne, the essayist, have been bought up at the not very exorbitant price of thirty-six thousand francs. The volumes are the beautiful editions of the sixteenth century — the age of great scholars and of printers, like the Estiennes, who were at once men of learning and of taste. It is almost certain that they must be enriched with marginal notes of Montaigne's, and the marginal notes of a great man add even more to the value of a book than the scribblings of circulating library readers detract from its beauty. There is always something characteristic in a man's treatment of his books. Coleridge's marginalia on borrowed works, according to Lamb, were an ornament of value to his friends, if they were lucky enough to get the books back again. Poe's marginalia were of exquisite neatness, though in their printed form they were not very interesting. Thackeray's seem mostly to have taken the shape of slight sketches in illustration of the matter. Scaliger's notes converted a classic into a new and precious edition of one example. Casaubon's, on the other hand, were mere scratches and mnemonic lines and blurs, with which he marked his passage through a book, as roughly as the American woodsman "blazes" his way through a forest. "None could read the comment save himself," and the text was disfigured. We may be sure that Montaigne's marginalia are of a very different value. As he walked up and down in his orchard, or in his library, beneath the rafters engraved with epicurean maxims, he jotted his thoughts hastily on the volume in his hand — on the Pliny, or Suetonius, or Livy. His library was probably not a large one, for he had but a few favourite authors, the Latin historians, moralists, and anecdotists, and for mere amusement Terence and Catullus, Boccaccio and Rabelais. His thoughts fell asleep, he says, if he was not walking about, and his utter want of memory made notes and note-books necessary to him. He who could not remember the names of the most ordinary tools used in agriculture, nor the difference between oats and barley, could never keep in his head his enormous stock of classical anecdotes and modern instances. His thoughts got innocently confused with his recollections, and his note-books will probably show whence he drew many of his stories, and the quotations that remain untraced. They will add also to our knowledge of the man and of his character, though it might seem difficult to give additional traits in the portrait of himself which he has painted with so many minute touches.

With the exception of Dr. Johnson, there is scarcely any great man of letters whom we are enabled to know so intimately as the Sieur de Montaigne. He has told us all about himself; all about his age, as far as it came under his eager and observant eyes; all about the whole world, as far as it made part of his experience. Rousseau is not more frank, and not half so worthy of credit, for Rousseau, like Topsy in the novel, had a taste for "'fessing" offences that he had never committed rather than not "'fess" at all. Montaigne strikes no such attitudes; he does not pose, he does not so much confess as blab. His life stands before the reader "as in a picture." We learn that his childhood was a happier one than usually fell to the lot of children in that age when there was but little honey smeared on the cup of learning. We know that his father taught him Greek in a kind of sport or game, that the same parent's relations with the fair sex were remarkable, and that he had extraordinary strength in his thumb. For his own part, Montaigne was so fresh and full of life that Simon Thomas, a great physician, said it would make a decrepit old man healthy again to live in his company. One thinks of him as a youth like the irrepressible Swiss who amused the *ennui* of Gray.

Even in his old age, Montaigne was a gay, cheerful, untiring traveller, always eager to be going on, delighted with every place he visited, and yet anxious for constant change of scene and for new experience. To be amusingly and simply selfish is ever part of the charm of Montaigne. He adds to his reader's pleasure in life by the keenness with which he relished his own existence, and savoured every little incident as a man relishes the bouquet of wine. Without selfishness, how can this be managed? and without perfect simplicity and the good faith on which he prided himself, how could Montaigne, how could Pepys, have enriched the world as they have done? His essays are among the few works that really and literally make life more opulent with accumulated experience, criticism, reflection, humour. He gives of his rich nature, his lavish exuberance of character, out of that fresh and puissant century to this rather weary one, just as his society in youth might have been given to the sick old man.

Besides what he has to give in this manner, Montaigne seems to express French character, to explain the French genius and the French way of looking at life, more clearly and completely than any other writer. He has at bottom the intense melancholy, the looking forward to the end of all, which is the ground-note of the poetry of Villon, and of Ronsard, as of the prose of Chateaubriand. The panelled library in Montaigne's chateau was carven with mottoes, which were to be charms against too great fear of death. "For my part," he says, "if a man could by any means avoid death, were it by hanging a calf-skin on his limbs, I am one that would not be ashamed of the shift." Happy it is, he thinks, that we do not, as a rule, meet death on a sudden, any more than we encounter the death of youth in one day. But this is only the dark background of the enjoyment of life, to which Montaigne clings, as he says, "even too eagerly." Merely to live, merely to muse over this spectacle of the world, simply to feel, even if the thing felt be agony, and to reflect on the pain, and on how it may best be borne — this is enough for Montaigne. This is his philosophy, reconciling in a way the maxims of the schools that divided the older worlds, the theories of the Stoic and wiser Epicurean. To make each moment yield all that it has of experience, and of reflection on that experience, is his system of existence. Acting on this idea, all contrasts of great and petty, mean and divine, in human nature do not sadden, but delight him. It was part of the play to see the division between the King of Navarre (Henri IV.) and the Duke of Guise. He told Thuanus that he knew the most secret thoughts of both these princes, and that he was persuaded that neither of them was of the religion he professed. This scandal gave him no concern, compared with his fear that his own castle would suffer in wars of the League. As to the Reformation, he held it for a hasty, conceited movement on the part of persons who did not know what they were meddling with, and, being a perfect sceptic, he was a perfectly good Churchman. Full of tolerance, good-humour, and content, cheerful in every circumstance, simple and charming, yet melancholy in his hour, Montaigne is a thorough representative of the French spirit in literature. His English translator in 1776 declares that "he meets with a much more favourable entertainment in England than in his native country, a servile nation that has lost all sense of liberty." Like many other notions current in 1776, this theory of Montaigne's popularity at home and abroad has lost its truth. Perhaps it would be more true to say that Montaigne is one of the last authors whom modern taste learns to appreciate. He is a man's author, not a woman's; a tired man's, not a fresh man's. We all come to him, late indeed, but at last, and rest in his panelled library.

THACKERAY'S DRAWINGS.

The advertisements of publishers make a very pleasant sort of reading. They offer, as it were, a distant prospect of the great works of the future, looming in a golden haze of expectation. A gentleman or lady may acquire a reputation for wide research by merely making a careful study of the short paragraphs in the literary papers.

There are three classes of people who take an interest in letters. There are the persons who read books; the much larger class which reads reviews; and, again, they who merely skim over the advertisements of new works. The last set live in a constant enjoyment of the pleasure of expectation; they pretend to themselves that some day they will find time to peruse the volumes in the birth of which they are interested, but, in fact, they live in the future. They are a month ahead of their friends who read reviews, and six months of the students who actually devour books themselves. Not only these eager lovers of literary "shop," but all friends of English humour, must be glad to see that a collection of Mr. Thackeray's sketches and drawings has been prepared for publication.

When the news spread over England of Mr. Thackeray's sudden death, it was felt that a personal loss had been sustained by every one who cared for books and for style. Other men might write themselves out, their invention might become weary; and, indeed, Mr. Thackeray himself felt this fatigue. He wished he could get some one to do "the business" of his stories he told the world in a "Roundabout Paper." The love-making parts of "the business" annoyed him, and made him blush, in the privacy of his study, "as if he were going into an apoplexy." Some signs of this distaste for the work of the novelist were obvious, perhaps, in "Philip," though they did not mar the exquisite tenderness and charm of "Denis Duval." However that might be, his inimitable style was as fresh as ever, with its passages of melancholy, its ease, its flexible strength, and unlooked-for cadences. It was the talk about life, and the tone of that talk, which fell silent when Thackeray died, that we all felt as an irremediable loss. There is an old story that Pindar had never in his lifetime written an ode in praise of Persephone, the goddess of death and the dead, and that after he had departed from among living men, his shade communicated to the priests a new hymn on the Queen of Hades. The works of great writers published after their decease have somewhat of the charm of this fabled hymn; they are voices, familiar and unlocked for, out of the silence. They are even stranger, when they have such a slight and homelike interest as the trifles that fell unheeded from the pen or pencil of one who has done great things in poetry or art. Mr. Thackeray’s sketches in the “Orphan of Pimlico” are of this quality — caricatures thrown off to amuse children who are now grown men and women. They have the mark of the old unmistakable style, humorous and sad, and, as last remains, they are to be welcomed and treasured.

Mr. Thackeray’s skill with the pencil bore very curious relations to his mastery of the other art, in which lay his strength, but to which perhaps he never gave his love. Everyone has heard how, when a young man, he was anxious to illustrate “Pickwick,” which found more fitting artists in Seymour and H. K. Browne. Mr. Thackeray seems to have been well aware of the limitations of his own power as a draughtsman. In one of his “Roundabout Papers” he described the method — the secret so to say — of Rubens; and then goes on to lament the impotence of his own hand, the “pitiful niggling,” that cannot reproduce the bold sweep of Ruben’s brush.

Thackeray was like Théophile Gautier, who began life as a painter, and who has left to posterity a wonderful etching of his own portrait, pale, romantic, with long sweeping moustache, and hair falling over his shoulders. Both writers found their knowledge of the technique of painting useful in making their appreciation of art and nature more keen and versatile. But Mr. Thackeray’s powers had another field — he really did succeed in illustrating some of his own writings. Accomplished his style never was. There was a trace of the old school of caricature in the large noses and thin legs which he gave his figures. Nor was his drawing very correct; the thin legs of the heroes of “The Virginians” are often strangely contorted. He has even placed a thumb on the wrong side of a hand! For all that, he gave to many of his own characters a visible embodiment, which another artist would have missed. Mr. Frederick Walker, for instance, drew Philip Firmin admirably — a large, rough man, with a serious and rather worn face, and a huge blonde beard. Mr. Walker’s Philip has probably become the Philip of many readers, but he was not Mr. Thackeray’s. It is delightful to be sure, on the other hand, that we have the author’s own Captain Costigan before us, in his habit as he lived — the unshaven chin, the battered hat, the high stock, the blue cloak, the whiskeyfied stare, and the swagger. Mr. Thackeray did not do his young men well. Arthur Pendennis is only himself as he sits with Warrington over a morning paper; in his white hat and black band at the Derby, he has not the air of a gentleman. Harry Foker is either a coarse exaggeration, or the modern types of Fokers have improved in demeanour on the great prototype. But Costigan is always perfect; and the nose and wig of Major Pendennis are ideally correct. In his drawings of women, Mr. Thackeray very much confined himself to two types. There was the dark-eyed, brown-haired, bright-complexioned girl who was his favourite — Laura, Betsinda, Amelia; and the blonde, ringletted, clever, and false girl — Becky, Blanche, Angelica, who was the favourite of the reader. He did not always succeed in making them pretty, though there is a beautiful head of Amelia, in a court dance at Pumpernickel; but he always made the dark young lady look honest, and the fair young minx look a thing all soul and enthusiasm.

It was a note of Mr. Thackeray's art, and probably one among other proofs that the higher fields of art were closed to him, that his success by no means corresponded to the amount of pains he took with his work. His drawings which appeared as steel engravings, were not unfrequently weak, while his sketches on the wood and his lithographs were much more free and masterly. There is, indeed, a sketch on the steel of poor Pen tossing feverishly in his mother's comforting arms, which is full of passion and life and sentiment. But it was rare that success attended his ambition, and, indeed, another drawing of Pen and his mother admiring a sunset might have come out of a book of fashions of that remote period. It was in his initial letters and slight designs that Thackeray showed his best powers. There is much wistful tenderness in the little Marquise's face as she trips down a rope-ladder in an initial letter of *Vanity Fair*. The bewigged shepherds and powdered shepherdesses of his favourite period are always reproduced with grace, and the children of his drawings are almost invariably charming. In the darker moods, when "man delighted him not, nor woman either," children did not fail to please him, and he sketched them in a hundred pathetic attitudes. There are the little brother and sister of the doomed House of Gaunt, sitting under the ancestral sword that seems ready to fall. There is little Rawdon Crawley, manly and stout, in his great coat, watching the thin little cousin Pitt, whom he was "too big a dog to play with." There is the printer's devil, asleep at Pen's door; and the small boy in "Dr. Birch," singing in his nightgown to the big boy in bed. There is Betsinda dancing with her plum-bun in "The Rose and the Ring." The burlesque drawings of that delightful child's book are not its least attraction. Not arriving at the prettiness of Mr. Tenniel, and the elegance of Mr. Du Maurier, and falling far short of their ingenious fantasy, they are yet manly delineations of great adventures. The count kicking the two black men into space is a powerful design, full of action; and it would be hard to beat the picture of the fate of Gruffanuf's husband. These and the rest are old friends, and there are hosts of quaint scribblings, signed with the mark of a pair of spectacles, scattered through the pages of *Punch*.

GOLF.

While pheasant-shooters are enjoying the first day of the season, the votaries of a sport not less noble, though less noisy, are holding the great festival of their year. The autumn meeting of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews is in full swing, and the words will suggest pleasant memories to many a golfer. Golf is not one of the more brilliant and famous pastimes of the day, though it yields to none in antiquity and in unassuming merit. The names of the winners of the gold medal and of the silver cross are not telegraphed all over the world as widely as Mr. Tennyson's hero wished the news that Maud had accepted him to be. The red man may possibly "dance beneath his red cedar tree" at the tidings of the event of one of our great horse-races, or great university matches. At all events, even if the red man preserves his usual stoicism of demeanour, his neighbours, the pale-faces, like to know all about the result of many English sports the moment they are decided. Golf, as we have said, excites less general enthusiasm; but in people who love it at all, the love is burning, consuming; they will talk golf-shop in season and out of season. Few persons, perhaps, will call golf the very first and queen of games. Cricket exercises more faculties of body, and even of mind, for does not the artful bowler "bowl with his head?" Football demands an extraordinary personal courage, and implies the existence of a fierce delight in battle with one's peers. Tennis, with all its merits, is a game for the few, so rare are tennis-courts and so expensive the pastime. But cricketers, football-players, tennis-players, would all give golf the second place after their favourite exercise; and just as Themistocles was held to be the best Greek general, because each of his fellows placed him second, so golf may assert a right to be thought the first of games. One great advantage it certainly has — it is a game for "men" of all ages, from eight, or even younger, to eighty. The links of St. Andrews are probably cleared just now of the little lads and the veterans, they make room for the heroes, the medalists, the great players — Mr. Mackay, Mr. Lamb, Mr. Leslie Balfour, and the rest. But at ordinary times there are always dozens of tiny boys in knickerbockers and scarlet stockings, who "drive out" the first hole in some twenty strokes of their little clubs, and who pass much of their time in fishing for their lost balls in the muddy burn. As for the veterans "on the threshold of old age," it is pleasant to watch their boyish eagerness, the swaying of their bodies as they watch the short flight of their longest hits; their delight when they do manage to hit further than the sand-pit, or "bunker," which is named after the nose of a long-dead principal of the university; their caution, nay, their almost tedious delay in the process of putting, that is, of hitting the ball over the "green" into the neighbouring hole. They can still do their round, or their two rounds, five or ten miles' walking a day, and who can speak otherwise than well of a game which is not too strenuous for healthy age or tender childhood, and yet allows an athlete of twenty-three to put out all his strength?

Golf is a thoroughly national game; it is as Scotch as haggis, cockie-leekie, high cheekbones, or rowanberry jam. A spurious imitation, or an arrested development of the sport, exists in the south of France, where a ball is knocked along the roads to a fixed goal. But this is naturally very poor fun compared to the genuine game as played on the short turf beside the grey northern sea on the coast of Fife. Golf has been introduced of late years into England, and is played at Westward Ho, at Wimbledon, at Blackheath (the oldest club), at Liverpool, over Cowley Marsh, near Oxford, and in many other places. It is, therefore, no longer necessary to say that golf is not a highly developed and scientific sort of hockey, or bandy-ball. Still, there be some to whom the processes of the sport are a mystery, and who would be at a loss to discriminate a niblick from a bunker-iron. The thoroughly equipped golf-player needs an immense variety of weapons, or implements, which are carried for him by his caddie — a youth or old man, who is, as it were, his esquire, who sympathizes with him in defeat, rejoices in his success, and aids him with such advice as his superior knowledge of the ground suggests. The class of human beings known as caddies are the offspring of golf, and have peculiar traits which distinguish them from the professional cricketer, the waterman, the keeper, the gillie, and all other professionals. It is not very easy to account for their little peculiarities. One thing is certain — that when golf was introduced by Scotchmen into France, and found a home at Pau, in the shadow of the Pyrenees, the French caddie sprang, so to speak, from the ground, the perfect likeness of his Scottish brother. He was just as sly, just as importunate in his demands to be employed, just as fond of "putting at short holes," more profane, and every bit as contemptuous of all non-golf-playing humanity as the boyish Scotch caddie, in whom contempt has reversed the usual process, and bred familiarity with all beginners.

The professional cricketer can instruct an unskilled amateur, can take his ill-guarded wicket, and make him "give chances" all over the field, without bursting into yells of unseemly laughter. But the little caddie cannot restrain his joy when the tyro at golf, after missing his ball some six times, ultimately dashes off the head of his club against the ground. Nor is he less exuberant when his patron's ball is deep in a "bunker," or sand-pit, where the wretch stands digging at it with an iron, hot, helpless, and wrathful. And yet golf is a sport not learned in a day, and caddies might be more considerate. The object of the game is to strike a small gutta-percha ball into a hole about five inches wide, distant from the striker about three hundred yards, and separated from him by rough grass and smooth sand-pits, furze bushes, and perhaps a road or a brook. He who, of two players, gets his ball into the hole in the smallest number of strokes is the winner of that hole, and the party then play towards the next hole. All sorts of skill are needed — strength and adroitness, and a certain supple "swing" of the body, are wanted to send the ball "sure and far" in the "driving" part of the game. Nothing is so pleasant as a clean "drive." The sensation is like that of hitting a ball to square-leg, fair and full, at cricket. Then the golfer must have the knack to lift his ball out of deep sand with the "iron," and to strike it deftly "a half-shot" up to the hole with the "cleek;" and, lastly, coolness and a good eye when he "putts" or hits his ball actually up to the very hole.

Any degree of skill in these varied feats makes golf a delightful game, if the opponents are well matched. Nor are the charms of scenery wanting at St. Andrews, the headquarters of the sport. There is no more picturesque town in Scotland than the little university city. From the plain of the estuary of the river Eden, across the long leagues of marsh land and the stretches of golden sand and brown, the towers of St. Andrews — for it is a town of many towers — are seen breaking the sky-line. Built on a windy headland, running out to the grey northern sea, it reaches the water with an ancient pier of rugged stone. Immediately above is the site of a chapel of immemorial age, and above that again are the ruins of the cathedral — gaunt spires with broken tracery, standing where once the burnished roof of copper flashed far across the deep. The high street winds from the cathedral precinct past an old house of Queen Mary Stuart, past ruined chapels of St. Leonard's, and the university chapel with its lovely spire, down to the shores of the bay; and along the bay run the famous "links," where the royal and ancient game has its cradle and home. Other links, as Prestwick, or North Berwick, may vie with those of St. Andrews in extent, or in the smoothness of the putting greens, or in the number and hardness of the "hazards," or difficult places; but none offer so wide and varied an extent of scenery, from the melancholy stretch of the parallel sands to the hills in the west, the golden glitter of the beach, beneath the faint aërial blue of the still more distant hills across the firth, while behind is the city set on its cliffs, and proud with its crown of spires. The reflected sunset lingers on the walls and crags and towers, that shine imaged in the wet sands, the after-glow hangs over the eastern sky, and these have their charm; but their charm yields to that of golf. It is a sign that a man has lost heart and hope when he dilates on the beauty of the scenery, and abstracts his attention from what alone would interest him were he winning — the “lie” of his ball. Who can stop to think of the beauties of nature, when he and his antagonist are equal, and there are only two more holes left to play in the match for the medal? It is a serious moment; not one of the little crowd of observers, the gallery that accompany the players, dares to speak, or even cough. The caddie who sneezes is lost, for he will be accused of distracting his master’s attention. The ladies begin to appear in the background, ready to greet the players, and to tell the truth, are not very welcome to the nervous golfer. Everything turns on half an inch of leather in a “drive,” or a stiff blade of grass in a putt, and the interest is wound up to a really breathless pitch. Happy he is who does not in his excitement “top” his ball into the neighbouring brook, or “heel” it and send it devious down to the depths of ocean. Happy is he who can “hole out the last hole in four” beneath the eyes of the ladies. Striding victorious into the hospitable club, where beer awaits him, he need not envy the pheasant-slayer who has slain his hundreds.

ART OF DINING.

There is such a thing as nationality in dining, just as Mr. Browning has proved, in a brilliant poem, that there is nationality in drinks. Surveying mankind with extensive view, the essayist recognizes that the science is not absolutely ignored in Turkey, where we cannot but think that an archaic school retains too much wool with the mutton, and that dining (like Egyptian Art) is rather a matter of sacred and immemorial rules than in any worthy sense of the word a science. The Chinese and Japanese have long been famous for their birds'-nest soup, and for making the best, after his lamented decease, of the friend of man — the dog. About the Australians and New Zealanders, perhaps the less said the better. Many students will feel that our own colonists have neglected to set a proper example to these poor heathen races, who, save kangaroos, have no larger game than rats. The Englishman in Australia revels in boundless mutton, in damper, in tea, and in the vintages of his adopted soil, which he playfully, and patriotically, compares to those of the Rhine. It is impossible, on the other hand, not to recognize the merits of the Russian *cuisine*, where the imported civilization of France has found various good traditional ideas still retained by the Sclavonic people; and where the *caviare*, "with that pale green hue which denotes the absence of salt," is not to be overlooked. In melancholy contrast to the native genius of the Sclavs is the absolute dearth of taste and sense in gastronomic Germany. If a map of the world could be made — and why not? — in which lands of utter darkness in culinary matters should be coloured black (like heathen countries in the missionary atlas, and coalfields in the map of physical geography), the German Empire would be one vast blot on Central Europe. Science might track Teutonic blood by the absence of respectable cookery; and in England too obvious tokens would be found of that incapacity of the art of dining which we brought from the marshes of Holstein. In America, nature herself has put the colonists on many schemes for the improvement of dinner, and terrapin soup is gratefully associated with memoirs of Virginia — in the minds of those who like terrapin soup. The canvas-backed duck has been praised as highly as the "swopping, swopping mallard" of a comfortable college in Oxford. As to the wild turkey, the poet has not yet risen in America who can do justice to the charms of that admirable bird. Mr. Whitman, who has much to say about "bob-a-links" and "whip-poor-wills," and some other fowl which sing "when lilacs bloom in the garden yard," has neglected, we fear, the wild turkey, simply because the Muse has not given this bird melody, and made it, like the robin-redbreast, which goes so well with bread-crumbs, “an amiable songster.” American genius neglects the turkey, and positively takes more interest in the migrations of the transatlantic sparrow. If the nobler fowl can cross the water as safely as the beef and mutton of everyday life, he will receive the honour he deserves in this country. Some students with the deathless thirst of scientific men for acclimatization, speak well of the Bohemian pheasant, which, unlike some other denizens of Bohemia, is fat. But there are probably less familiar birds in America that rival the duck and the wild turkey, and excel the Bohemian pheasant. The existence of maize, however, on the Western Continent has been a snare to American cooks, who have yielded to an absorbing passion for hot corn-cakes.

France is, of course, the land in which the Muse of cooking is native. “If we turn north towards Belgium,” says a modern author, “we shall find much that is good in cooking and eating known, if not universally practised.” He has also made the discovery that the Belgian air and climate are admirably suited to develop the best qualities of Burgundy. It is from these favoured and ingenious people that England ought to learn a lesson, or rather a good many lessons. To begin at the beginning, with soup, does not every one know that all domestic soups in England, which bear French names, are really the same soup, just as almost all puddings are, or may be, called cabinet pudding? The one word “Julienne” covers all the watery, chill and tasteless, or terribly salt, decoctions, in which a few shreds of vegetables appear drifting through the illimitable inane. Other names are given at will by the help of a cookery-book and a French dictionary; but all these soups, at bottom, are attempts to be Julienne soup. The idea of looking on soup “as a vehicle for applying to the palate certain herbal flavours,” is remote indeed from the Plain Cook’s mind. There is a deeply rooted conviction in her inmost soul that all vegetables, which are not potatoes or cabbages, partake of the nature of evil. As to eating vegetables apart from meat, it was once as hard to get English domestics to let you do that, as to get a Cretan cook to serve woodcock with the trail. “*Kopros* is not a thing to be eaten,” says the Cretan, according to a traveller; and the natural heart of the English race regards vegetables, when eaten as a *plat* apart, with equal disfavour. Probably the market gardener’s ignorance and conservatism are partly in fault. Cabbage he knows, and potatoes he knows, but what are pennyroyal and chervil? He has cauliflower for you, but never says, “Here is rue for you, and rosemary for you.” Cooks do not give him botany lessons, and a Scottish cook, deprived of bay-leaf, has been known to make an experiment in the use of what she called “Roderick Randoms,” members of the vegetable kingdom which proved to be rhododendron. As for pennyroyal, most people have only heard of it through Mr. Bonn's crib to Aristophanes.

When it comes to fish, it is allowed that we are not an insular people for nothing. There are other forms of good living that Paris knows not of, so to speak, at first hand, native to England. Turtle soup, turbot and lobster sauce, a haunch of venison, and a grouse, are, we may say without chauvinism, a "truly royal repast." But we incur the contempt of foreigners once more in the matter of wines. To like sherry, the coarse and fiery, is a matter of habit, which would teach us to love betel-root, and rejoice in the very peculiar drink of the South Sea islanders. Some purists include champagne in the same condemnation — the champagne, that is, of this degenerate day. When the Russians drank up the contents of the widow Clicquot's cellars, they found a sweet natural wine, to which they have constantly adhered. But Western Europe, all the Europe which, as M. Comte puts it, "synergizes" after light and positivism, has tended towards champagnes more or less dry. The English serve this "grog mousseux" as a necessity for social liveliness, and have not come back to the sweet wine which was only meant to be drunk with sweets. A *Quarterly* reviewer is very severe in his condemnation of a practice which will only yield to the stress of some European convulsion in politics and society. These matters are like certain large reforms, they either come to pass without observation in the slow changes of things, or great movements in the world are accompanied by small ones in everyday life. Dry champagne came in after the Revolution; it may go out after a European war, which will make wine either expensive, or, if cheap, a palpably spurious article. "Monotony and base servile imitation" may be the bane of eating and drinking in England; but the existence of monotony shows that the English really do not care very much about dining considered as a fine art. When they do care, they cover their interest in the matter decently, with the veil of humorous affectation. They cannot spontaneously and sincerely make a business of it, as the French do in all good faith. Even if they had a genius for dining, we doubt if a critic is right in thinking they should dine at six o'clock or seven at latest. Whether in the country or in town, the business or amusement of the day claims more time. Sportsmen, for example, in early autumn could not possibly return home by six very frequently, and in summer six o'clock may be so sultry an hour that the thought of food is intolerable. Still, it must be admitted that the unawakened state of the market-gardener and the condition of English soups are matters deserving serious consideration.

AMERICAN HUMOUR.

One of the most popular of American humorists has elicited from a member of an English audience, who did not quite hear him lecture, a remark of an amusing sort. The aggrieved listener proclaimed that he "had a right to hear." This was one of the turbulent people who should read Mazzini, and learn that man has no rights worth mentioning — only duties, one of which is to hold his tongue in season. If Mr. Bret Harte's words did not reach all his audience, his writings at least have come home to most English readers. They suggest a consideration of the many points of difference which distinguish American from English humour. The Americans are of our own stock, yet in their treatment of the ludicrous how unlike us they are! As far as fun goes, the race has certainly become "differentiated," as the philosophers say, on the other side of the Atlantic. It does not seem probable that the infusion of alien blood has caused the difference. The native redskin can claim few descendants among the civilized Americans, and the native redskin had no sense of humour. We all remember Cooper's Hawk-eye or Leather Stocking, with his "peculiar silent laugh." He was obliged to laugh silently for fear of attracting the unfavourable notice of the Mingo, who might be hiding in the nearest bush. The red men found it simpler and safer not to laugh at all. No, it is not from the natives that the people of the States get their peculiar fun. As to the German emigrants — But why pursue the subject? The Abbé Bouhours told the bitter truth about German wit, though, in new conditions and on a fresh soil, the Teuton has helped to produce Hans Breitmann. We laugh at Hans, however, and with his creator. Hans does not make us laugh by conscious efforts of humour. Whence, then, come Artemus Ward, Mark Twain, and Mr. Bret Harte, who are probably the American humorists whose popularity is widest? Mr. Bret Harte's own fun is much more English and less thoroughly Yankee than that of his contemporaries. He is a disciple of Thackeray and Dickens. Of all the pupils of Dickens he is perhaps the only one who has continued to be himself, who has not fallen into a trick of aping his master's mannerisms. His mixture of the serious, the earnest, the pathetic, makes his humour not unlike the melancholy mirth of Thackeray and Sterne. He is almost the only American humorist with sentiment. It is only the air, not the spirit, that is changed — *cœlum non animus*.

The changed atmosphere, the new conditions, do, however, make an immense superficial difference between the humour even of Mr. Bret Harte and that of

English writers. His fun is derived from the vagaries of huge, rough people, with the comic cruelty of the old Danes, and with the unexpected tenderness of a sentimental time. The characters of the great Texan and Californian drama are like our hackneyed friends, the Vikings, with a touch, if we may use the term, of spooniness. Their humour is often nothing more than a disdainful trifling with death; they seize the comic side of manslaughter very promptly, and enjoy all the mirth that can be got out of revolvers and grizzly bears. In Mr. Bret Harte's poems of "The Spelling Bee" and of "The Break-up of the Society upon the Stanislaw," the fun is of this practical sort. The innate mirthfulness of a chunk of old red sandstone is illustrated, and you are introduced to people who not only take delight of battle with their peers, but think the said battle the most killing joke in the world. The incongruities of these revels of wild men in a new world; their confusion when civilization meets them in the shape of a respectable woman or of a baby; their grotesque way of clinging to religion, as they understand it, make up the transatlantic element in this American humour. The rest of it is "European quite," though none the worse for that. It is more humane, on the whole, than the laughable and amazing paradoxes of Mark Twain, or the *naïvetés* of Artemus Ward.

Two remarkable features in American humour, as it is shown in the great body of comic writers who are represented by Mark Twain and the "Genial Showman," are its rusticity and its puritanism. The fun is the fun of rough villagers, who use quaint, straightforward words, and have developed, or carried over in the *Mayflower*, a slang of their own. They do not want anything too refined; they are not in the least like the farm-lad to whose shirt a serpent clung as he was dressing after bathing. Many people have read how he fled into the farm-yard, where the maidens were busy; how he did not dare to stop, and sought escape, not from woman's help — he was too modest — but in running so fast that, obedient to the laws of centrifugal motion, the snake waved out behind him like a flag. The village wits are not so shy. The young ladies, like Betsy Ward, say, "If you mean getting hitched, I'm on." The public is not above the most practical jokes, and a good deal of the amusement is derived from the extreme dryness, the countrified slowness of the narrative. The humorists are Puritans at bottom, as well as rustics. They have an amazing familiarity with certain religious ideas and certain Biblical terms. There is a kind of audacity in their use of the Scriptures, which reminds one of the freedom of mediæval mystery-plays. Probably this boldness began, not in scepticism or in irreverence, but in honest familiar faith. It certainly seems very odd to us in England, and probably expressions often get a laugh which would pass unnoticed in America. An astounding coolness and freedom of manners probably go for something in the effect produced by American humour. There is nothing of the social flunkeyism in it which too often marks our own satirists. Artemus Ward's reports of his own conversations with the mighty of the earth were made highly ludicrous by the homely want of self-consciousness, displayed by the owner of the Kangaroo, that "amoosin' little cuss," and of the "two moral B'ars." But it is vain to attempt to analyze the fun of Artemus Ward. Why did he make some people laugh till they cried, while others were all untouched? His secret probably was almost entirely one of manner, a trick of almost idiotic *naïveté*, like that of Lord Dundreary, covering real shrewdness. He had his rustic chaff, his Puritan profanity; his manner was the essence of his mirth. It was one of the ultimate constituents of the ludicrous, beyond which it is useless to inquire.

With Mark Twain we are on smoother ground. An almost Mephistophilean coolness, an unwearying search after the comic sides of serious subjects, after the mean possibilities of the sublime, — these, with a native sense of incongruities and a glorious vein of exaggeration, make up his stock-in-trade. The colossal exaggeration is, of course, natural to a land of ocean-like rivers and almighty tall pumpkins. No one has made such charming use of the trick as Mark Twain. The dryness of the story of a greenhorn's sufferings who had purchased "a genuine Mexican plug," is one of the funniest things in literature. The intense gravity and self-pity of the sufferer, the enormous and Gargantuan feats of his steed, the extreme distress of body thence resulting, make up a passage more moving than anything in Rabelais. The same contrast, between an innocent style of narrative and the huge palpable nonsense of the story told, marks the tale of the agricultural newspaper which Mr. Twain edited. To a joker of jokes of this sort, a tour through Palestine presented irresistible attractions. It is when we read of the "Innocents Abroad" that we discern the weak point of American humour when carried to its extreme. Here, indeed, is the place where the most peculiarly American fun has always failed. It has lacked reverence and sympathy, and so, when it was most itself, never approached the masterpieces of Thackeray and Dickens. To balance its defect by its merit, American humour has always dared to speak out, and Mark Twain especially has hit hard the errors of public opinion and the dishonest compromises of custom.

SUSPENDED ANIMATION.

It used to be thought that a man who said he liked dry champagne would say anything. In the same way, some persons may hold that a person who could believe in the recurrent Australian story of "suspended animation" — artificially produced in animals, and prolonged for months — could believe in anything. It does not do, however, to be too dogmatic about matters of opinion in this world. Perhaps the Australian tale of an invention by which sheep and oxen are first made lifeless, then rendered "stiff ones" by freezing, and then restored to life, and reproduced with gravy, may be like the genius of Beethoven. Very few persons (and these artists) believed in Beethoven at first, but now he is often considered to be the greatest of composers. Perhaps great discoveries, like the works of men of original genius, are certain to be received at first with incredulity and mockery. We will not, therefore, take up a dogmatic position, either about the painting or the preserved meats of the future; but will hope for the best. The ideally best, of course, is that the tale from Australia may prove true. In that case the poorest will be able to earn "three square meals a day," like the Australians themselves; and while English butchers suffer (for some one must suffer in all great revolutions), smiling Plenty will walk through our land studying a cookery-book. There are optimistic thinkers, who gravely argue that the serious desires of humanity are the pledges of their own future fulfilment. If that be correct, the Australian myth may be founded on fact. There is no desire more deep-rooted in our perishable nature than that which asks for plenty of beef and mutton at low prices. Again, humanity has so often turned over the idea of conveniently suspended animation before, that there must be something in that conception. If we examine the history of ideas we shall find that they at first exist "in the air." They float about, beautiful alluring visions, ready to be caught and made to serve mortal needs by the right man at the right moment. Thus Empedocles, Lucretius, and the author of "Vestiges of Creation," all found out Darwinism before Mr. Darwin. They spied the idea, but they left it floating; they did not trap it, and break it into scientific harness. Solomon De Caus, as all the world has heard, was put into a lunatic asylum for inventing the steam-engine, though no one would have doubted his sanity if he had offered to raise the devil, or to produce the philosopher's stone, or the *elixir vitæ*. Now, these precious possessions have not been more in men's minds than a system of conveniently suspended animation. There is scarcely a peasantry in Europe that does not sing the ballad of the dead bride. This lady, in the legends, always loves the cavalier not selected by her parents, the detrimental cavalier. To avoid the wedding which is thrust on her, she gets an old witch to do what the Australian romancer professes to do — to suspend her animation, and so she is carried on an open bier to a chapel on the border of her lover's lands. There he rides, the right lover, with his men-at-arms, the bride revives just in time, is lifted on to his saddle-bow, and "they need swift steeds that follow" the fugitive pair. The sleeping beauty, who is thrown into so long a swoon by the prick of the fairy thorn, is another very old example, while "Snow-white," in her glass coffin, in the German nursery tale, is a third instance.

It is not only the early fancy of the ballad-mongers and fairy tale-tellers that has dwelt longingly on the idea of suspended animation. All the mystics, who all follow the same dim track that leads to nothing, have believed in various forms of the imaginary Australian experiment. The seers of most tribes, from Kamschatka to Zululand, and thence to Australia, are feigned to be able to send their souls away, while their bodies lie passive in the magical tent. The soul wanders over the earthly world, and even to the home of the dead, and returns, in the shape of a butterfly or of a serpent, to the body which has been lying motionless, but uncorruptible, in apparent death. The Indian Yogis can attain that third state of being, all three being unknown to Brahma, which is neither sleeping nor waking, but trance. To produce this ecstasy, to do for themselves what some people at the Antipodes pretend to do to sheep and cattle, is the ideal aim of the existence of the Yogi. The Neoplatonists were no wiser, and Greek legend tells a well-known story of a married mystic whose suspended animation began at last to bore his wife. "Dear Hermotimus" — that was his name, if we have not forgotten it— "is quite the most absent of men," his spouse would say, when her husband's soul left his body and took its walks abroad. On one occasion the philosopher's spiritual part remained abroad so long that his lady ceased to expect its return. She therefore went through the usual mourning, cut her hair, cried, and finally burned the body on the funeral-pyre. "We can do no more for miserable mortals, when once the spirit has left their bones," says Homer.

At that very moment the spirit returned, and found its uninsured tenement of clay reduced to ashes. The sequel may be found in a poem of the late Professor Aytoun's, and in the same volume occurs the wondrous tale of Colonel Townsend, who could suspend his animation at pleasure.

There is certainly a good deal of risk, as well as of convenience, in suspended animation. People do not always welcome Rip Van Winkle when he returns to life, as we would all welcome Mr. Jefferson if he revisited the glimpses of the footlights,

“The hard heir strides about the lands,
And will not yield them for a day.”

There is the horrible chance of being buried alive, which was always present to the mind of Edgar Poe. It occurs in one of his half-humorous stories, where a cataleptic man, suddenly waking in a narrow bed, in the smell of earthy mould, believes he has been interred, but finds himself mistaken. In the “Fall of The House of Usher” the wretched brother, with his nervous intensity of sensation, hears his sister for four days stirring in her vault before she makes her escape. In the “Strange Effects of Mesmerism on a Dying Man,” the animation is mesmerically suspended at the very instant when it was about naturally to cease. The results, when the passes were reversed, and the half fled life was half restored, are described in a passage not to be recommended to sensitive readers. M. About, uses the same general idea in the fantastic plot of his “L’Homme à l’Oreille Cassée,” and the risk of breakage was insisted on by M. About as well as by the inventive Australian reporter. Mr. Clarke Russell has also frozen a Pirate. Thus the idea of suspended animation is “in the air,” is floating among the visions of men of genius. It is, perhaps, for the great continent beneath the Southern Cross to realize the dreams of savages, of seers, of novelists, of poets, of Yogis, of Plotinus, of M. About, and of Swedenborg. Swedenborg, too, was a suspended animationist, if we may use the term. What else than suspension of outer life was his “internal breathing,” by which his body existed while his soul was in heaven, hell, or the ends of the earth? When the Australian discovery is universally believed in (and acted on), then, and perhaps not till then, will be the time for the great unappreciated. They will go quietly to sleep, to waken a hundred years hence, and learn how posterity likes their pictures and poems. They may not always be satisfied with the results, but no artist will disbelieve in the favourable verdict of posterity till the supposed Australian method is applied to men as well as to sheep and kangaroos.

BREAKING UP.

The schools have by this time all "broken up," if that is still the term which expresses the beginning of their vacation. "Breaking up" is no longer the festival that it was in the good old coaching days — nothing is what it was in the good old coaching days. Boys can no longer pass a whole happy day driving through the country and firing peas at the wayfaring man. They have to travel by railway, and other voyagers may well pray that their flight be not on breaking-up day. The untrammelled spirits of boyhood are very much what they have always been. Boys fill the carriages to overflowing. They sing, they shout, they devour extraordinary quantities of refreshment, they buy whole libraries of railway novels, and, generally speaking, behave as if the earth and the fulness of it were their own. This is trying to the mature traveller, who has plenty of luggage on his mind, and who wishes to sleep or to read the newspaper. Boys have an extraordinary knack of losing their own luggage, and of appearing at home, like the companions of Ulysses, "bearing with them only empty hands." This is usually their first exploit in the holidays. Their arrival causes great excitement among their little sisters, and in the breasts of their fathers wakens a presentiment of woe. When a little boy comes home his first idea is to indulge in harmless swagger. When Tom Tulliver went to school, he took some percussion caps with him that the other lads might suppose him to be familiar with the use of guns. The schoolboy has other devices for keeping up the manly character in the family circle. The younger ones gather round him while he narrates the adventures of himself, and Smith minor, and Walker (of Briggs's house), in a truly epic spirit. He has made unheard-of expeditions up the river, has chaffed a farmer almost into apoplexy, has come in fifth in the house paper-chase, has put the French master to open shame, and has got his twenty-two colours. These are the things that make a boy respected by his younger brothers, and admired by his still younger sisters. They of course have a good deal to tell him. The setter puppies must be inspected. A match is being got up with the village eleven, who are boastful and confident in the possession of a bowling curate. To this the family hero rejoins that "he will crump the parson," a threat not so awful as it sounds. There is a wasps' nest which has been carefully preserved for this eventful hour, and which is to be besieged with boiling water, gunpowder, and other engines of warfare. Thus the schoolboy's first days at home are a glorious hour of crowded sport.

It cannot be denied that, as the holidays go on, a biggish boy sometimes finds time hang heavy on his hands, while his father and mother find him hang heavy on theirs. The first excitement rubs off. The fun of getting up handicap races among children under twelve years of age wears away. One cannot always be taking wasps' nests. Of course there are many happy boys who live in the country, and pursue the pleasures of manhood with the zest of extreme youth. Before they are fourteen, they have a rod on a salmon river, a gun on a moor, horses and yachts, and boats at their will, with keepers and gillies to do their bidding. Others, not so much indulged by fortune and fond parents, live at least among hills and streams, or by the sea. They are never "in the way," for they are always in the open air. Their summer holidays may be things to look back upon all through life. Natural history, and the beauty of solitary nature; the joys of the swimmer in deep river pools shut in with cool grey walls of rock, and fringed with fern; the loveliness of the high table lands, and the intense hush that follows sunset by the trout stream — these things are theirs, and become a part of their consciousness. In later and wearier years these spectacles will flash before their eyes unbidden, they will see the water dimpled by rising trout, and watch the cattle stealing through the ford, and disappearing, grey shapes, in the grey of the hills.

In boyhood, the legends that cling to ancient castles where only a shell of stone is standing, and to the ash-trees that grow by the feudal gateway, and supplied the wood for spear shafts — these and all the stories of red men that haunt the moors, and of kelpies that make their dwelling in the waters, become very real to us when standing in the dusk by a moorland loch. If some otter or great fish breaks the water and the stillness with a sudden splash, a boy feels a romantic thrill, a pause of expectation, that later he will never experience. "The thoughts of a boy are long, long thoughts," says the poet; he thinks them out by himself on the downs, or the hills, and tells them to nobody.

If we all lived in the country, the advent of boys would not be a thing to contemplate with secret dread. It is rather a terrible thing, a houseful of boys in a town, or in a pretty thickly populated district. Boys, it is true, are always a source of pleasure to the humorist and the scientific observer of mankind. They are scarcely our fellow-creatures, so to speak; they live in a world of their own, ruled by eccentric traditional laws. They have their own heroes, and are much more interested in Mr. Alan Steel or Lohmann than in persons like Mr. Arthur Balfour, whose cricket is only middling. They have rules of conduct which cannot be called immoral, but which are certainly relics of a very ancient state of tribal morality. The humour of it is that the modern boy is so grave, so self-assured, and has such abundance of aplomb. He has acquired an air of mysterious sagacity, and occasionally seems to smile at the petty interests with which men divert themselves. In a suburban or city home, he can find very little that he thinks worth doing, and then he becomes discontented and disagreeable. It is better that he should do that, perhaps, than that he should aim at being a dandy. The boy-dandy is an odd, and at bottom a slovenly, creature. He is fond of varnished boots, of pink neckties, of lavender-coloured gloves, and, above all, of scent. The quantity of scent that a lad of sixteen will pour on his handkerchief is something perfectly astounding. In this stage of his development he is addicted to falling into love, or rather into flirtation. He keeps up a correspondence with a young lady in Miss Pinkerton's establishment. They see each other in church, when he looks unutterable things from the gallery. This kind of boy is not unlikely to interest himself, speculatively, in horse-races. He has communications with a bookmaker who finds Boulogne a salubrious residence. He would like to know the officers, if his home is in a garrison town, and he humbly imitates these warriors at an immense distance. He passes much time in trying to colour a pipe. This is not a nice sort of boy to have at home for the holidays, nor is it likely that he does much good when he is at school. It is pleasanter to think of the countless jolly little fellows of twelve, who are happily busy all day with lawn-tennis, cricket, and general diversion in the open air. Their appearance, their manly frankness, their modesty and good temper, make their homes happier in the holidays than in the quieter nine months of the year. Let us hope that they will not put off their holiday tasks to be learned in the train on their way back to school. This, alas, is the manner of boyhood.

ON SHAVING.

A philanthropist has published a little book which interests persons who in civilized society form a respectable minority, and in the savage world an overpowering majority. But, savage or polite, almost all men must shave, or must be shaved, and the author of "A Few Useful Hints on Shaving," is, in his degree, a benefactor to his fellow-creatures. The mere existence of the beard may be accounted for in various ways; but, however we explain it, the beard is apt to prove a nuisance to its proprietor. Speculators of the old school may explain the beard as part of the punishment entailed on man with the curse of labour. The toilsome day begins with the task of scraping the chin and contemplating, as the process goes on, a face that day by day grows older and more weary. No race that shaves can shirk the sense of passing time, or be unaware of the approach of wrinkles, of "crow's-feet," of greyness. Shaving is the most melancholy, and to many people the most laborious of labours. It seems, therefore, more plausible (if less scientific) to look on the beard as a penalty for some ancient offence of our race, than to say with Mr. Grant Allen, and perhaps other disciples of Mr. Darwin, that the beard is the survival of a very primitive decoration. According to this view man was originally very hairy. His hair wore off in patches as he acquired the habits of sleeping on his sides and of sitting with his back against a tree, or against the wall of his hut. The hair of dogs is not worn off thus, but what of that? After some hundreds of thousands of years had passed, our ancestors (according to this system) awoke to the consciousness that they were patchy and spotty, and they determined to eradicate all hair that was not ornamental. The eyebrows, moustache, and, unfortunately, the beard seemed to most races worth preserving. There are, indeed, some happy peoples who have no beards, or none worth notice. Very early in their history they must have taken the great resolve to "live down" and root out the martial growth that fringes our lips. But among European peoples the absence of a beard has usually been a reproach, and the enemies of Njal, in ancient Iceland, could find nothing worse to say of him than that he was beardless. Mehemet Ali bought sham beards for his Egyptian grenadiers, that they might more closely resemble the European model. The soldiers of Harold thought that the Normans were all priests, because they were "shavelings;" and it is only natural that soldiers should in all countries be bearded. It is almost impossible to shave during a campaign. Stendhal, the French novelist and critic, was remarkable as the best, perhaps the only, clean-shaved man in the French army during the dreadful retreat from Moscow. In his time, as in that of our fathers, ideas of beauty had changed, and the smooth chin was as much the mark of a gentleman as the bearded chin had been the token of a man.

The idea that shaving is a duty — ceremonial, as among the Egyptian priests, or social merely, as among ourselves — is older than the invention of steel or even of bronze razors. Nothing is more remarkable in savage life than the resolution of the braves who shave with a shell or with a broken piece of glass, left by European mariners. A warrior will throw himself upon the ground, and while one friend sits on his head, and another holds his arms and prevents him from struggling, a third will scrape his chin with the shell or the broken bottle-glass till he rises, bleeding, but beardless. Macaulay, it seems, must have shaved almost as badly with the razor of modern life. When he went to a barber, and, after an easy shave, asked what he owed, the fellow replied, “Just what you generally give the man who shaves you, sir.” “I generally give him two cuts on each cheek,” said the historian of England. Shaving requires a combination of qualities which rarely meet in one amateur. You should have plenty of razors, unlike a Prussian ambassador of the stingy Frederick. This ambassador, according to Voltaire, cut his throat with the only razor he possessed. The chin of that diplomatist must have been unworthy alike of the Court to which he was accredited, and of that from which he came. The exquisite shaver who would face the world with a smooth chin requires many razors, many strops, many brushes, odd soaps, a light steady hand, and, perhaps, a certain gaiety of temper which prevents edged weapons from offering unholy temptations. Possibly the shaver is born, not made, like the poet; it is sure that many men are born with an inability to shave. Hence comes the need for the kindly race of barbers, a race dear to literature. Their shops were the earliest clubs, their conversation was all the ancient world knew in the way of society journals. Horace, George Eliot, Beaumarchais, Cervantes, and Scott have appreciated the barber, and celebrated his characteristics. If the wearing of the beard ever became universal, the world, and especially the Spanish and Italian world, would sadly miss the barber and the barber’s shop. The energy of the British character, our zeal for individual enterprise, makes us a self-shaving race; the Latin peoples are economical, but they do not grudge paying for an easy shave. Americans in this matter are more Continental than English in their taste. Was it not in Marseilles that his friends induced Mark Twain to be shaved by a barber worthy of the bottle-glass or sea-shell stage of his profession? They pretended that his performances were equal to those of the barber on board the ship that brought them from America.

Englishmen, as a rule, shave themselves when they do not wear beards. The author of the little pamphlet before us gives a dozen curious hints which prove the difficulty of the art. Almost all razors, he seems to think, were "made to sell." He suggests that razors of tried and trusty character, razors whose public form can be depended upon, should be purchased of barbers. But it is not every barber who will part with such possessions. Razors are like Scotch sheep dogs; no one would keep a bad one, or sell, or give away a good one. Cœlebs did not find the quest of a wife more arduous than all men find that of a really responsible razor. You may be unlucky in the important matter of lather. For soap our author gives a recipe which reminds one of Walton's quaint prescriptions and queer preparations. Shaving soap should be made at home, it seems, and the mystery of its manufacture is here disclosed. The only way to keep razors "set" is to persevere in sending them to various barbers till the genius who can "set" them to your hand is discovered. Perhaps he lives at Aleppo; perhaps, like the father of a heroine of comic song, at Jerusalem. Till he is discovered the shaver wins no secure happiness, and in the search for the barber who has an elective affinity for the shaver may be found material for an operetta or an epic. The shaver figures as a sort of Alastor, seeking the ideal setter of razors, as Shelley's Alastor sought ideal beauty in the neighbourhood of Afghanistan, and in the very home of the Central Asian Question. No razor should be condemned till it has been "stropped" well and carefully. And this brings us to the great topic of strops. Some say that soldiers' old buff belts make the best strops. The Scotch peasantry use a peculiar hard smooth fungus which grows in decaying elm trees. Our author has heard that "Government now demands the return of" the old buff belts. Government cannot want them all for its own use, and perhaps will see to it that old buff strops once more find an open market. In the lack of old buff belts, you may mix up tallow and the ashes of burnt newspaper, and smear this unctuous compound on the strop. People who neglect these "tips," and who are clumsy, like most of us, may waste a forty-eighth part of their adult years in shaving. This time is worth economizing, and with a little forethought, an ideal razor-setter, tallow, buff belts, burnt newspapers, and the rest, we may shave in five minutes daily.

STREET NOISES.

"If any calm, a calm despair," is the portion of people who would like to reform, that is to abolish, the street noises of London. These noises are constantly commented upon with much freedom in the columns of various contemporaries. Nor is this remarkable, for persons who are occupied with what is called "brainwork," are peculiarly sensitive to the disturbances of the streets. Sometimes they cannot sleep till morning, sometimes they can only sleep in the earlier watches of the night, and, as a rule, they cannot write novels, or articles, or treatises; they cannot compose comic operas, or paint, in the midst of a row. Now, the streets of London are the scenes of rows at every hour of night and day-light. It is not the roll of carriages and carts that provokes irritation, and drives the sensitive man or woman half mad. Even the whistling of the metropolitan trains may, perhaps, be borne with if the drivers are not too ambitious artists, and do not attempt fantasias and variations on their powerful instrument. The noises that ruin health, temper, and power of work; the noises that cause an incalculable waste of time, money, and power, are all voluntary, and perhaps preventable. Let us examine the working hours of the nervous or irritable musician, mathematician, man of letters, or member of Parliament. On second thoughts, the last may be omitted, as if he cannot sleep in a tedious debate, his case is beyond cure.

"Not bromide of potassium
Nor all the drowsy speeches in the world"

can medicine him to forgetfulness of street noises. For the others, the day may be said to begin about five, when the voice of the chimneysweep is heard in the land. Here we may observe that servants are the real causes of half the most provoking noises in London. People ask why the sweep cannot ring the bell, like other people. But the same people remark that even the howl of the sweep does not waken the neighbours' servants. Of what avail, then, could his use of the bell prove? It generally takes the sweep twenty-five minutes exactly to bring the servants to open the door. Meanwhile, the eminent men of letters in the street open their windows, and show a very fair command of language understanded by the people. But the sweep only laughs, and every three minutes utters a howl which resembles no other noise with which men are acquainted. Where do young sweeps learn to make this cry which can only be acquired by long practice? Perhaps it is inherited, like the music of “the damned nightingales,” as the sleepless political economist called the Daulian birds.

When the sweep is silent, when slumber is stealing over the weary eyelids, then traction engines, or steam-rollers, or some other scientific improvement on wheels begin to traverse the streets and shake the houses. This does not last more than a quarter of an hour, and then a big bell rings, and the working men and women tramp gaily by, chatting noisily and in excellent spirits. Now comes the milkman’s turn. He, like the chimneysweep, has his own howl, softer, more flute-like in quality than that of the sweep, but still capable of waking any one who is not a domestic servant in hard training. The milkman also cries “woa” to his horse at every house, and accompanies himself on his great tin cans, making a noise most tolerable, and not to be endured. Is it necessary, absolutely necessary, that the milkman should howl? In some parts of town milkwomen distribute their wares without howling. They do, certainly, wear very short petticoats, but that is matter, as Aristotle says, for a separate disquisition. On the other hand, milkwomen exist who howl as loudly as milkmen. We cannot but fear that without these noises it would be difficult to attract the notice of servants. If this pessimistic view be correct, sweeps and milkmen will howl while London is a city inhabited. And even if we could secure the services of milkwomen of the silent species that ring the bell, could we hope to have female chimneysweeps as well behaved? Here, at all events, is a new opening for female labour. When the milkman has done his worst, the watercress people come and mournfully ejaculate. Now it is time for the sleepless and nervous to get up and do their work. Now, too, the barrel-organ comes round. There are persons who, fortunately for themselves, are so indifferent to music that they do not mind the barrel-organ. It is neither better nor worse to them than the notes of Patti, and from the voice of that siren, as from all music, they withdraw their attention without difficulty. But other persons cannot work while the dirty grinder and the women that drag his instrument are within hearing. The barrel-organ, again, is strong in the support of servants, especially nurses, who find that the music diverts babies. The rest of the day is made hideous by the awful notes of every species of unintelligible and uncalled for costermonger, from him who (apparently) bellows “Annie Erskine,” to her who cries, “All a-blowing and a-growing.” There are miscreants who want to buy bones, to sell ferns, to sell images, wicker-chairs, and other inutilities, while last come the two men who howl in a discordant chorus, and attempt to dispose of the second edition of the evening paper, at ten o’clock at night. At eleven all the neighbours turn out their dogs to bark, and the dogs waken the cats, which scream like demoniacs. Then the public houses close, and the people who have been inebriated, if not cheered, stagger howling by. Stragglers yell and swear, and use foul language till about four in the morning, without attracting the unfavourable notice of the police. Two or three half drunken men and women bellow and blaspheme opposite the sufferer's house for an hour at a time. And then the chimneysweep renews his rounds, and the milkman follows him.

The screams of costermongers and of rowdies might surely be suppressed by the police. A system of "local option" might be introduced. In all decent quarters householders would vote against the licensed bellowings of cads and costermongers. In districts which think a noise pleasant and lively the voting would go the other way. People would know where they could be quiet, and where noise would reign. Except Bologna, perhaps no town is so noisy as London; but then, compared with Bologna, London is tranquillity itself. It is fair to say that really nervous and irritable people find the country worse than town. The noise of the nightingales is deplorable. The lamentations of a cow deprived of her calf, or of a passion-stricken cow, "wailing for her demon lover" on the next farm, excel anything that the milkman can perpetrate, and almost vie with the performances of the sweep. When "the cocks are crowing a merry midnight," as in the ballad, the sleepless patient wishes he could make off as quietly and quickly as the ghostly sons of the "Wife of Usher's Well." Dogs delight to bark in the country more than in town. Leech's picture of the unfortunate victim who left London to avoid noise, and found that the country was haunted by Cochin-China cocks, illustrates the still repose of the rural life. Nervous people, on the whole, are in a minute minority. No one else seems to mind how loud and horrible the noises of London are, and therefore we have faint hope of seeing nocturnal 'Arry gagged, the drunken drab "moved on," and the sweep compelled to ring the bell till some one comes and opens the door of the house in whose chimneys he is professionally interested.

LENDING OF BOOKS.

A popular clergyman has found it necessary to appeal to his friends in a very touching way. The friends of the divine are requested to return “Colenso on the Pentateuch,” and another volume which they have borrowed. The advertisement has none of that irony which finds play in the notice, “The Gentleman who took a brown silk umbrella, with gold crutch handle, and left a blue cotton article, is asked to restore the former.” The advertiser seems to speak more in sorrow and in hope than in anger, and we sincerely trust that he may get his second volume of “Colenso on the Pentateuch.” But if he does, he will be more fortunate than most owners of books. Pitiful are their thoughts as they look round their shelves. The silent friends of their youth, the acquisitions of their mature age, have departed. Even popular preachers cannot work miracles, like Thomas à Kempis, and pray back their borrowed volumes. As the Rev. Robert Elsmere says, “Miracles do not happen” — at least, to book-collectors.

“Murray sighs o’er Pope and Swift, and many a treasure more,” said Cowper, when Lord Mansfield’s house was burned, and we have all had experience of the sorrows of Murray. Even people who are not bibliophiles, nay, who class bibliophiles with “blue-and-white young men,” know that a book in several volumes loses an unfair proportion of its usefulness, and almost all its value, when one or more of the volumes are gone. Grote’s works, or Mill’s, Carlyle’s, or Milman’s, seem nothing when they are incomplete. It always happens, somehow, that the very tome you want to consult is that which has fallen among borrowers. Even Panurge, who praised the race of borrowers so eloquently, could scarcely have found an excuse for the borrowers of books.

“Tel est le triste sort de tout livre prêté,
Souvent il est perdu, toujours il est gâté.”

“Often lost, always spoiled,” said Charles Nodier, “such is the fate of every book one lends.” The Parisian collector, Guibert de Pixérécourt, would lend no books at all to his dearest friends. His motto, inscribed above the lintel of his library-door, was, “Go to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.” As Pixérécourt was the owner of many volumes which “they that sell” cannot procure, or which could only be bought at enormous rates, his caution (we will not say churlishness) was rather inconvenient for men of letters. But if hard pressed and in a strait, he would make his friend a gift of the book which was necessary to his studies. This course had the effect of preventing people from wishing to borrow. But many of the great collectors have been more generous than Pixérécourt. We forget the name (not an illustrious one) of the too good-natured man who labelled his books, “Not my own, but my friends’.” “Sibi et amicis” (“His own and his friends’ property”) has been the motto of several illustrious amateurs since Grolier and Maioli stamped it on the beautifully decorated morocco of their bindings. Other people have invented bookplates, containing fell curses in doggrel Latin or the vernacular on the careless or dishonest borrower:

“Aspice Pierrot pendut
Parceque librum non a rendu”

is the kind of macaronic French and Latin which schoolboys are accustomed to write under a sketch of the borrower expiating his offences on the gallows.

The mischief of borrowing, the persistent ill-luck which cleaves to property thus obtained, have been proverbial since the young prophet dropped the axe-head in the deep water, and cried, “Alas, for it is borrowed.” The old prophet, readily altering the specific gravity of the article, enabled his disciple to regain it. But there are no prophets now, none, at least, who can repair our follies, and remove their baneful effects by a friendly miracle. What miracle can restore the books we borrow and lose, or the books we borrow and spoil with ink, or with candle-wax, or which children scrawl or paint over, or which “the dog ate,” like the famous poll-book at an Irish election, that fell into the broth, and ultimately into the jaws of an illiterate animal? Books are such delicate things! Yet men — and still more frequently women — read them so close to the fire that the bindings warp, and start, and gape like the shells of a moribund oyster. Other people never have a paper-knife, and cut the leaves of books with cards, railway tickets, scissors, their own fingers, or any other weapon that chances to seem convenient. Then books are easily dirtied. A little dust falls into the leaves, and is smudged by the fingers. No fuller on earth can cleanse it. The art of man can remove certain sorts of stains, but only by stripping the book of its binding, and washing leaf by leaf in certain acids, an expensive and dangerous process. There are books for use, stout, everyday articles, and books for pious contemplation, original editions, or tomes that have belonged to great collectors. The borrower, who only wants to extract a passage of which he is in momentary need, is a person heedless of these distinctions. He enters a friend’s house, or (for this sort of borrower thrives at college) a friend’s rooms, seizes a first edition of Keats, or Shelley, or an Aldine Homer, or Elzevir Cæsar of the good date, and hurries away with it, leaving a hasty scrawl, “I have taken your Shelley,” signed with initials. Perhaps the owner of the book never sees the note. Perhaps he does not recognize the hand. The borrower is just the man to forget the whole transaction. So there is a blank in the shelves, a gap among the orderly volumes, a blank never to be filled up, unless our amateur advertises his woes in the newspapers.

All borrowers are bad; but in this, as in other crimes, there are degrees. The man who acts as Ménage advises, in the aphorism which Garrick used as a motto on his bookplate, the man who reads a book instantly and promptly returns it, is the most pardonable borrower. But how few people do this! As a rule, the last thing the borrower thinks of is to read the book which he has secured. Or rather, that is the last thing but one; the very last idea that enters his mind is the project of returning the volume. It simply “lies about,” and gets dusty in his rooms. A very bad borrower is he who makes pencil marks on books. Perhaps he is a little more excusable than the borrower who does not read at all.

A clean margin is worth all the marginalia of Poe, though he, to do him justice, seems chiefly to have written on volumes that were his own property. De Quincey, according to Mr. Hill Burton, appears to have lacked the faculty of mind which recognizes the duty of returning books. Mr. Hill Burton draws a picture of “Papaverius” living in a sort of cave or den, the walls of which were books, while books lay around in tubs. Who was to find a loved and lost tome in this vast accumulation? But De Quincey at least made good use of what he borrowed. The common borrower does nothing of the kind. Even Professor Mommsen, when he had borrowed manuscripts of great value in his possession, allowed his house to get itself set on fire. Europe lamented with him, but deepest was the wail of a certain college at Cambridge which had lent its treasures. Even Paul Louis Courier blotted horribly a Laurentian MS. of “Daphnis and Chloe.” When Chénier lent his annotated “Malherbe,” the borrower spilt a bottle of ink over it. Thinking of these things, of these terrible, irreparable calamities, the wonder is, not that men still lend, but that any one has the courage to borrow. It is more dreadful far to spoil or lose a friend’s book than to have our own lost or spoiled. Stoicism easily submits to the latter sorrow, but there is no remedy for a conscience sensible of its own unlucky guilt.

CLUB BORES.

The London Club has been sitting in a judicial way on one of its members. This member of the Club seems to have been what Thackeray's waiter called "a harbitrary gent." The servants of the club had to complain that he did not make "their lives so sweet to them that they (the servants) greatly cared to live," if we may parody Arthur's address to his erring queen. The Club has not made a vacancy in its ranks by requesting the arbitrary member to withdraw. But his conduct was deemed, on the report of the Committee, worthy of being considered by the Club. And that is always something. In an age when clubs are really almost universal, most men have had occasion to wish that their society would sit occasionally on some of the members. The member who bullies the servants is a not uncommon specimen of the club-bore. He may be called the bore truculent. He has been excellently caricatured by Thackeray in the "Book of Snobs."

There we have the club-bore who makes such a fuss about his chop, and scolds the waiter so terribly. "Look at it, sir; is it a chop for a gentleman? Smell it, sir; is it fit to put on a club table?" These, or such as these, are the words of the gallant terror of waiters. Now it is clearly unjust to make a waiter responsible for the errors, however grave, of a very different character, the cook. But this mistake the arbitrary gent is continually making. The cook is safe in his inaccessible stronghold, down below. He cannot be paraded for punishment on the quarter-deck, where Captain Bragg, of the Gunboat and Torpedo Club, exercises justice. Therefore the miserable waiter is rebuked in tones of thunder because the Captain's steak is underdone, or because Nature (or the market gardener) has not made the stalks of asparagus so green and succulent as their charming tops. People who do not know the scolding club-bore at home are apt to be thankful that they are not favoured with his intimate acquaintance, and are doubly grateful that they are not members of his family. For if, in a large and quiet room full of strangers, a man can give loose to his temper without provocation, and outroar the thunder, what must this noisy person do at home? "In an English family," says a social critic, "the father is the man who shouts." How the club-bore must shout when he is in his own castle, surrounded only by his trembling kindred and anxious retainers! In his castle there is no one to resist or criticise him — unless indeed his wife happen to be a lady, like Clytemnestra, of masculine resolution. In that case the arbitrary gent may be a father of a family who is not allowed to shout at home, but is obliged to give nature free play by shouting abroad.

There are plenty of other club-bores besides the man who rates these generally affable and well-behaved persons, the club servants. One of the worst is the man whom you never see anywhere except at the club, and whom you never fail to see there. It is bad enough when you have no acquaintance with him. Murders have probably been committed by sensitive persons for no better reason (often for worse reasons) than that they are tired of seeing some one else going about. His voice, his manner, his cough, especially his cough, become unendurable. People who cough in clubs are generally amateurs of the art. They are huskier, more wheezing, more pertinacious in working away at a cough till they have made it a masterpiece than any other mortals. We believe that club Asthmats (it is quite as good a word as "Æsthetes") practise in the Reading Room of the British Museum, where they acquire their extraordinary compass and mastery of various notes. Be this as it may, the cough which drives every one but its owner out of the room (though doubtless an affliction to the proprietor) gives him rank as a club-bore of the finest water. The bore who always enters into conversation, though he has nothing to say, merely because you used to dislike him at school, or college, or elsewhere, is another common annoyance. The man who is engaged, apparently, on a large work, and who rushes about the library hunting for Proclus and Jamblichus when other occupants of the room wish to be quiet, is naturally detested.

Most men are the bores of some other person. People of watchful mind and intelligent habit, who talk in the drawing-room, are regarded as bores by fat old gentlemen who wish to sleep there. And as these gentlemen turn the drawing-room into a dormitory, which resounds with their snoring, they in turn are bores to people who wish to read the papers. But if these students drop the poker with a clang, or dash down small tables in order to waken the sleepers, they, in their turn, give a good deal of annoyance. The man who talks about politics at great length, is only one of the common bores of the world transported into a club. But the man with a voice which in ordinary conversation pierces through all the hum of voices, like a clarion note in battle, would be a bore anywhere. If he were in the wilderness of Sinai, he would annoy the monks in the convent near the top. His voice is one of those terrible, inscrutable scourges of nature, like the earthquake and the mosquito, which tax our poor human wisdom to reconcile with any monistic theory of the benevolent government of the universe. Once admit an evil principle, however, and the thing is clear. The club-bore with the trumpet tones, which he cannot moderate, is possessed, on this theory, by a fiend. As men are talking quietly of turnips in one corner of the room, of rent in another, and of racing in a third, his awful notes blend in from the fourth corner with strident remarks on Bulgarian philology.

The ancient Greeks were well accustomed to club life, for each of their little cities was only a large club. They had, therefore, to deal with the problem of bores. Some of them, consequently, had the institution of annually devoting to the infernal gods the most unpopular citizens. These persons were called *catharmata*, which may be freely translated "scapegoats." Could not clubs annually devote one or more scapebores to the infernal gods? They might ballot for them, of course, on some merciful and lenient principle. One white ball in ten or twenty-black ones might enable the bore to keep his membership for the next year. The warning, if he only escaped this species of ostracism very narrowly, might do him a great deal of moral good. Of course the process would be unpleasant, but it is seldom agreeable to be done good to. Occasionally even the most good-natured members would stand apart, not voting, or even would place the black ball in the mystic urn. Then the scapebore would have his subscription returned to him, and would be obliged to seek in other haunts servants to swear at, and sofas to snore on. Another suggestion, that members should be balloted for anew every five years, would simply cause clubs to be depopulated. Pall-Mall and St. James's would be desolate, mourning their children, and refusing comfort. The system would act like a proscription. People would give up their friends that they might purchase aid against their enemies. Clubs are more endurable as they are, though members do suffer grievously from the garrulity, the coughs, the slumbrous tendencies, and the temper of their fellow-men.

PHIZ.

Mr. Hablot K. Browne, better known as Phiz, was an artist of a departed school to whom we all owe a great deal of amusement. He was not so versatile nor so original as Cruickshank; he had not the genius, nor the geniality, still less the sense of beauty, of John Leech. In his later years his work became more and more unequal, till he was sometimes almost as apt to scribble hasty scrawls as Constantin Guys. M. Guys was an artist selected by M. Baudelaire as the fine flower of modern art, and the true, though hurried, designer of the fugitive modern beauty. It is recorded that M. Guys was once sent to draw a scene of triumph and certain illuminations in London, probably about the end of the Crimean War. His sketch did not reach the office of the paper for which he worked in time, and some one went to see what the man of genius was doing. He was found in bed, but he was equal to the occasion. Snatching a sheet of paper and a pencil he drew a curve. “There,” said he, “is the triumphal arch, and here” — scribbling a number of scratches like eccentric comets— “here are the fireworks.” Mr. Browne’s drawings occasionally showed a tendency to approach the rudimentary sort of “pictograph” rather than give what a dramatic critic calls “a solid and studied rendering” of events. But many of Mr. Browne’s illustrations of Dickens are immortal. They are closely bound up with our earliest and latest recollections of the work of the “incomparable Boz.” Mr. Pickwick, we believe, was not wholly due to the fancy of Mr. Browne, but of the unfortunate Seymour, whom death prevented from continuing the series. Every one has heard how Mr. Thackeray, then an unknown man, wished to illustrate one of Mr. Dickens’s early stories, and brought Mr. Dickens examples of his skill. Fortunately, his offer was not accepted. Mr. Thackeray’s pencil was the proper ally of his pen. He saw and drew Costigan, Becky, Emmy, Lord Steyne, as no one else could have drawn them. But he had not beheld the creations of Boz in the same light of imaginative vision. Sometimes, too, it must be allowed that Mr. Thackeray drew very badly. His “Peg of Limavaddy,” in the “Irish Sketch Book,” is a most formless lady, and by no means justifies the enthusiasm of her poet. Thus the task of illustrating “Pickwick” fell to Mr. Browne, and he carried on the conceptions of his predecessor with extraordinary vigour. The old vein of exaggerated caricature he inherited from the taste of an elder generation. But making allowance for the exaggeration, what can be better than Mr. Pickwick sliding, or the awful punishment of Stiggins at the hands of the long-suffering Weller? We might wish that the young lady in fur-topped boots was prettier, and indeed more of a lady. But Mr. Browne never had much success, we think, in drawing pretty faces. He tried to improve in this respect, but either his girls had little character, or the standard of female beauty has altered. As to this latter change, there can be no doubt at all. Leech's girls are not like Thackeray's early pictures of women; and Mr. Du Maurier's are sometimes sicklied o'er with the pale cast of an æsthetic period.

It is probable that the influence of Mr. Browne's art reacted in some degree on Dickens. In the old times every one whom the author invented the artist was pretty certain to caricature. Thus the author may have felt the temptation to keep pace with the frolic humour of the artist. Mr. Browne cannot be blamed for a tendency to exaggerate noses and other features, which was almost universal in his time. None of us can say what conception would now be entertained of Dickens's characters if Mr. Browne had not drawn them. In the later works of Dickens (when they were illustrated) other artists were employed, as Mr. Stone and Mr. Fildes. These are accomplished painters of established reputation, and they of course avoided the old system of caricature, the old forced humour. But we doubt whether their designs are so intimately associated with the persons in the stories as are the designs of Mr. Browne. The later artists had this disadvantage, that the later novels (except "Great Expectations," which was not illustrated) were neither so good nor so popular as "Pickwick," "Nicholas Nickleby," "Martin Chuzzlewit," "David Copperfield," or even "Bleak House." We never can have any Mr. Micawber but Phiz's indescribably jaunty Micawber. His Mr. Pecksniff is not very like a human being, but his collars and his eye-glass redeem him, and after all Pecksniff is a transcendental and incredible Tartuffe. Tom Pinch is even less sympathetic in the drawings than in the novel. Jonas Chuzzlewit is also "too steep," as a modern critic has said in modern slang. But in the novel, too, Mr. Jonas is somewhat precipitous. Nicholas Nickleby is a colourless sort of young man in the illustrations, but then he is not very vividly presented in the text. Ralph Nickleby and Arthur Gride may pair off with Jonas Chuzzlewit, but who can disparage the immortal Mr. Squeers? From the first moment when we see him at his inn, with the starveling little boys, through all the story, Mr. Squeers is consistently exquisite. In spite of his cruelty, coarseness, hypocrisy, there is a kind of humour in Mr. Squeers which makes him not quite detestable. In "David Copperfield" Mr. Micawber is perhaps the only artistic creation of much permanent merit, unless it be the waiter who consumed David's dinner, and the landlady who gave him a pint of the Regular Stunning. In "Bleak House" Mr. Browne made some credible attempts to be tragic and pathetic. Jo is remembered, and the gateway of the churchyard where the rats were, and the Ghost's Walk in the gloomy domain of Lady Dedlock.

It is a singular and gloomy feature in the character of young ladies and gentlemen of a particular type that they have ceased to care for Dickens, as they have ceased to care for Scott. They say they cannot read Dickens. When Mr. Pickwick's adventures are presented to the modern maid, she behaves like the Cambridge freshman. "Euclide viso, cohorruit et evasit." When he was shown Euclid he evinced dismay, and sneaked off. Even so do most young people act when they are expected to read "Nicholas Nickleby" and "Martin Chuzzlewit." They call these masterpieces "too gutterly gutter;" they cannot sympathize with this honest humour and conscious pathos. Consequently the innumerable references to Sam Weller, and Mrs. Gamp, and Mr. Pecksniff, and Mr. Winkle which fill our ephemeral literature are written for these persons in an unknown tongue. The number of people who could take a good pass in Mr. Calverley's Pickwick Examination Paper is said to be diminishing. Pathetic questions are sometimes put. Are we not too much cultivated? Can this fastidiousness be anything but a casual passing phase of taste? Are all people over thirty who cling to their Dickens and their Scott old fogies? Are we wrong in preferring them to "Bootle's Baby," and "The Quick or the Dead," and the novels of M. Paul Bourget?

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF PROPOSALS.

There is no subject in the whole range of human affairs so interesting to a working majority of the race as the theory and practice of proposals of marriage. Men perhaps cease to be very much concerned about the ordeal when they have been through it. But the topic never loses its charm for the fair, though they are presumed only to wait and to listen, and never to speak for themselves. That this theory has its exceptions appears to be the conviction of many novelists. They not only make their young ladies "lead up to it," but heroines occasionally go much further than that, and do more than prompt an inexperienced wooer. But all these things are only known to the world through the confessions of novelists, who, perhaps, themselves receive confessions. M. Goncourt not long ago requested all his fair readers to send him notes of their own private experience. How did you feel when you were confirmed? How did Alphonse whisper his passion? These and other questions, quite as intimate, were set by M. Goncourt. He meant to use the answers, with all discreet reserve, in his next novel. Do English novelists receive any private information, and if they do not, how are we to reconcile their knowledge — they are all love-adepts — with the morality of their lives? "We live like other people, only more purely," says the author of "Some Private Views," which is all very well. No man is bound to incriminate himself. But as in the course of his career a successful novelist describes many hundreds of proposals, all different, are we to believe that he is so prompted merely by imagination? Are there no "documents," as M. Zola says, for all this prodigious deal of love-making? These are questions which await a reply in the interests of ethics and of art. Meanwhile an editor of enterprise has selected five-and-thirty separate examples of "popping the question," as he calls it, from the tomes of British fiction. To begin with an early case — when Tom Jones returned to his tolerant Sophia, he called her "Madam," and she called him "Mr. Jones," not Tom. She asked Thomas how she could rely on his constancy, when the lover of Miss Segrim drew a mirror from his pocket (like Strephon in "Iolanthe"), and cried, "Behold that lovely figure, that shape, those eyes," with other compliments; "can the man who shall be in possession of these be inconstant?" Sophia was charmed by the "man in possession," but forced her features into a frown. Presently Thomas "caught her in his arms," and the rest was in accordance with what Mr. Trollope and the best authorities recommend. How differently did Arthur Pendennis carry himself when he proposed to Laura, and did not want to be accepted! Lord Farintosh — his affecting adventure is published here — proposed nicely enough, but did not behave at all well when he was rejected. By the way, when young men in novels are not accepted, they invariably ask the lady whether she loves another. Only young ladies, and young men whom they have rejected, know whether this is common in real life. It does not seem quite right.

Kneeling has probably gone out, though Mr. Jingle knelt before the maiden aunt, and remained in that attitude for no less than five minutes. In Mr. Howell’s “Modern Instance,” kneeling was not necessary, and the heroine kept thrusting her face into her lover’s necktie; so the author tells us. M. Théophile Gautier says that ladies invariably lay their heads on the shoulder of the man who proposes (if he is the right man), and for this piece of “business” (as we regret to say he considers it) he assigns various motives. But he was a Frenchman, and the cynicism of that nation (to parody a speech of Tom Jones’s) cannot understand the delicacy of ours. Mr. Blackmore (in “Lorna Doone”) lets his lover make quite a neat and appropriate speech, but that was in the seventeenth century. When Artemus Ward began a harangue of this sort, Betsy Jane knocked him off the fence on which he was sitting, and first criticising his eloquence in a trenchant style, added, “If you mean being hitched, I’m in it.” In other respects the lover of Lorna Doone behaved as the best authorities recommend.

Mr. Whyte Melville ventured to describe Chastelard’s proposal to Mary Stuart, but it was not exactly in Mr. Swinburne’s manner, and, where historical opinions disagree, no reliance can be placed on speeches which were not taken down by the intelligent reporters. Mr. Slope had his ears boxed when he proposed to Mrs. Bold, but such Amazonian conduct is probably rare, and neither party is apt to boast of it. He also, being accepted, behaved in the manner to which the highest authorities have lent their sanction, or, at least, he meant to do so, when the lady “fled like a roe to her chamber.” For all widows are not like widow Malone (ochone!) renowned in song. When Arbaces, the magician, proposed to Ione, he did so in the most necromantic and hierophantic manner in which it could be done; his “properties” including a statue of Isis, an altar, “and a quick, blue, darting, irregular flame.” But his flame, quick, blue, darting, and irregular as it was, lighted no answering blaze in the ice-cold breast of the lovely lone. When rejected (in spite of a splendid arrangement of magic lanterns, then a novelty, got up regardless of expense) Arbaces swore like an intoxicated mariner, rather than a necromaunt accustomed to move in the highest circles and pentacles. Nancy, Miss Broughton’s heroine, tells her middle-aged wooer, among other things, that she accepts him, because “I did think it would be nice for the boys; but I like you myself, besides." After this ardent confession, he "kissed her with a sort of diffidence." Many men would have preferred to go out and kick "the boys."

Mr. Rochester's proposal to Jane Eyre should be read in the works both of Bret Harte and of Miss Brontë. We own that we prefer Bret Harte's Mr. Rawjester, who wearily ran the poker through his hair, and wiped his boots on the dress of his beloved. Even in the original authority, Mr. Rochester conducted himself rather like a wild beast. He "ground his teeth," "he seemed to devour" Miss Eyre "with his flaming glance." Miss Eyre behaved with sense. "I retired to the door." Proposals of this desperate and homicidal character are probably rare in real life, or, at least, out of lunatic asylums. To be sure, Mr. Rochester's house *was* a kind of lunatic asylum.

Adam Bede's proposal to Dinah was a very thoughtful, earnest proposal. John Inglesant himself could not have been less like that victorious rascal, Tom Jones. Colonel Jack, on the other hand, "used no great ceremony." But Colonel Jack, like the woman of Samaria in the Scotch minister's sermon, "had enjoyed a large and rich matrimonial experience," and went straight to the point, being married the very day of his successful wooing. Some one in a story of Mr. Wilkie Collins's asks the fatal question at a croquet party. At lawn-tennis, as Nimrod said long ago, "the pace is too good to inquire" into matters of the affections. In Sir Walter's golden prime, or rather in the Forty-five as Sir Walter understood it, ladies were in no hurry, and could select elegant expressions. Thus did Flora reply to Waverley, "I can but explain to you with candour the feelings which I now entertain; how they might be altered by a train of circumstances too favourable, perhaps, to be hoped for, it were in vain even to conjecture; only be assured, Mr. Waverley, that after my brother's honour and happiness, there is none which I shall more sincerely pray for than yours." This love is indeed what Sidney Smith heard the Scotch lady call "love in the abstract." Mr. Kingsley's Tom Thurnall somehow proposed, was accepted, and was "converted" all at once — a more complex erototheological performance was never heard of before.

Many of Mr. Abell's thirty-five cases are selected from novelists of no great mark; it would have been more instructive to examine only the treatment of the great masters of romance. But, after all, this is of little consequence. All day long and every day novelists are teaching the "Art of Love," and playing Ovid to the time. But what are novels without love? Mere waste paper, only fit to be reduced to pulp, and restored to a whiteness and firmness on which more love lessons may be written.

MASTER SAMUEL PEPYS.

No man is a hero to his valet, and unluckily Samuel Pepys, by way of a valet, chose posterity. All the trifles of temper, habit, vice, and social ways which a keen-eyed valet may observe in his master Samuel Pepys carefully recorded about himself, and bequeathed to the diversion of future generations. The world knows Pepys as the only man who ever wrote honest confessions, for Rousseau could not possibly be candid for five minutes together, and St. Augustine was heavily handicapped by being a saint. Samuel Pepys was no saint. We might best define him, perhaps, by saying that if ever any man was his own Boswell, that man was Samuel Pepys. He had Bozzy's delightful appreciation of life; writing in cypher, he had Bozzy's shamelessness and more, and he was his own hero.

It is for these qualities and achievements that he received a monument honoured in St. Olave's, his favourite church. In St. Olave's, on December 23, 1660, Samuel went to pray, and had his pew all covered with rosemary and baize. Thence he went home, and "with much ado made haste to spit a turkey." Here, in St. Olave's, he listened to "a dull sermon from a stranger." Here, when "a Scot" preached, Pepys "slept all the sermon," as a man who could "never be reconciled to the voice of the Scot." What an unworthy prejudice! Often he writes, "After a dull sermon of the Scotchman, home;" or to church again, "and there a simple coxcombe preached worse than the Scot." Frequently have the sacred walls of St. Olave's, where his effigy may be seen, echoed to the honest snoring of the Clerk of the Navy. There Pepys lies now, his body having been brought "in a very honourable and solemn manner," from Clapham, where, according to that respected sheet, the *Post-boy*, he expired on May 26, 1703. No stone marked the spot, when Mr. Mynors Bright's delightful edition of Pepys was published in 1875.

Now Pepys is honoured in that church where he sleeps even sounder than in days when the Scot preached worse than usual. But he is rewarded in death — not, it may be feared, for his real services to England, but because he has amused us all so much. A dead humorist may be better than a living official, however honest, industrious, and careful.

In all these higher things Pepys was not found wanting. The son of a tailor in the City, he yet had connections of good family, who were of service to him when he entered public life. Samuel Pepys was born in 1632. He was educated at Magdalene, Cambridge, where he was once common-roomed for being “scandalously overserved with liquor.” Through life he retained a friendly admiration of Magdalene strong ale. He married a girl of fifteen when he was but twenty-two; he entered the service of the State shortly afterwards. He was the Chief Secretary for Naval Affairs during many years; he defended his department at the Bar of the House of Commons after De Ruyter’s attack in 1668, and he remained true to the Stuart dynasty in heart after James was driven abroad. Yet, though his contemporary biographer calls Pepys the greatest and most useful public servant that ever filled the same situations in England, Pepys would not now be honoured if he had not kept the most amusing diary in the world. Samuel was a highly conscientious, truly pious man, constant in all religious exercises, though he did slumber when the Scot wagged his pow in a pulpit. At the same time, Samuel lived in a very fast age, an age when pleasure was a business, and “old Rowley, the king,” led the brawls. He was young when society was most scandalously diverting. He had a pretty wife, “poor wretch,” of whom he stood in some awe; and yet this inconsistent naval secretary liked to flit from flower to flower. He was vain, greedy, wanton, fond of the delight of the eye and the pride of life; he was loving and loose in his manners; he was pious, repentant, profligate; and he deliberately told the whole tale of all his many changes of mood and mistress, of piety and pleasure. One cannot open Pepys at random without finding him at his delightful old games. On the Lord’s day he goes to church with Mr. Creed, and hears a good sermon from the red-faced parson. He came home, read divinity, dined, and, he says, “played the fool,” and won a quart of sack from Mr. Creed. Then to supper at the Banquet House, and there Mr. Pepys and his wife fell to quarrelling over the beauty of Mrs. Pierce; “she against, and I for,” says superfluous Pepys. No one is in the least likely to suspect that Mrs. Pepys was angry with her lord because he did not think Mrs. Pierce a beauty.

How living the whole story is! One can smell the flowers of that Sunday in May, and the roast beef. The sack seems but newly drawn, the red cheeks of Mrs. Pierce as fresh as ever. The flowers grow over them now, or the church floor covers them; the sack is drunk, the roast beef is eaten, the quarrel is over; the beauty and the red-faced parson, the husband and wife, they are all with Tullus and Ancus. *Pulvis et umbra* — that is the moral of “Pepys’s Diary.” Life yet lives so strong in the cyphered pages; all the colour, all the mirth, all the little troubles and sins, and vows, they are so real they might be of yesterday or to-day, but the end of them came nigh two hundred years ago. Therefore, to read Pepys is to enjoy our own brief innings better, as men who know that our March is passing where Pepys’ May has flown before, and that we shall soon be with him and his wife, and the Scot, and the red-faced parson. So fleeting is life, whose record outlives it for ever; so brief, so swift, so faint the joys and sorrows, and all that we make marvel of in our own fortunes and those of other men.

Reading Pepys is thus like reading Montaigne, whose cheery scepticism his revelations recall. But Pepys has all the advantage of the man living in the busiest world over the recluse in that famed library, with the mottoes on the wall. Montaigne wrote in a retired and contemplative home, viewing life, as Osman Digna has viewed strife, "from afar," almost safe from the shots of fortune. But Pepys writes day by day, like a war correspondent, in the thick of the battle; his head "full of business," as he declares; his heart full of many desires, many covetings, much pride in matters that look small enough. He notes how, by chewing tobacco, Mr. Chetwynde, who was consumptive, became very fat. He remarks how a board fell, and the dust powdered the ladies' heads at the play, "which made good sport." He records every venison-pasty, every flagon of wine, every pretty wench whom he encountered in his march through his youth towards the vault in St. Olave's. He is vexed with Mrs. Pepys and troubled by "my aunt's base ugly humours." He is "full of repentance," like the Bad Man in the Ethics, and thinks how much he is addicted to expense and pleasure, "so that now I can hardly reclaim myself." He interests himself in Dr. Williams's remarkable dog, which not only killed cats, but buried them with punctilious obsequies, never leaving the tip of puss's tail out of the ground. Then he goes to the play, "after swearing to my wife that I would never go to the play without her." He remembers one night that he passed "with the greatest epicurism of sleep," because he was often disturbed, and so got out of sleeping more conscious enjoyment. Now he sleeps what Socrates calls the sweetest slumber of all, if it be but dreamless, or, somewhere, he enjoys all new experience, with the lusty appetite of old.

INVOLUNTARY BAILEES.

Lord Tennyson is probably the most extensive Involuntary Bailee at present living. The term “Involuntary Bailee” may or may not be a correct piece of legal terminology; at all events, it sounds very imposing, and can be easily explained.

An Involuntary Bailee is a person to whom people (generally unknown to him) send things which he does not wish to receive, but which they are anxious to have returned. Most of us in our humble way are or have been Involuntary Bailees. When some one you meet at dinner recommends to your notice a book (generally of verse), and kindly insists on sending it to you next day by post as a loan, you are an Involuntary Bailee. You have the wretched book in your possession; no inducement would make you read it, and to pack it up and send it back again requires a piece of string, energy, brown paper, and stamps enough to defray the postage. Now, surely no casual acquaintance or neighbour for an hour at a dinner-party has any right thus to make demands on a man’s energy, money, time, brown paper, string, and other capital and commodities.

If the book be sent as a present, the crime is less black, though still very culpable. You need take no notice of the present, whereby you probably offend the author for life, and thus get rid of him anyhow. Commonly, he is a minor poet, and sends you his tragedy on John Huss; or he is a writer on mythological subjects, and is anxious to weary you with a theory that Jack the Giant Killer was Julius Cæsar. At the worst, you can toss his gift into the waste-paper basket, or sell it for fourpence three-farthings, or set it on your bookshelf so as to keep the damp away from books of which you are not the Involuntary Bailee, but the unhappy purchaser. The case becomes truly black, as we have said, when the uncalled-for tribute has to be returned. Then it is sure to be lost, when the lender writes to say he wishes to recover it. In future he will go about telling people that the recipient stole his best ideas from the manuscript (if it was a manuscript) which he pretends to have lost.

Lord Tennyson has suffered from all these troubles to an extent which the average Bailee can only fancy by looking with his mind’s eye through “patent double million magnifiers.” A man so eminent as the Laureate is the butt of all the miserable minor poets, all the enthusiastic school-girls, all the autograph-hunters, all the begging-letter writers, all the ambitious young tragedians, and all the utterly unheard-of and imaginary relations in Kamschatka or Vancouver’s Island with whom the wide world teems. Lord Tennyson has endured these people for some fifty years, and now he takes a decided line. He will not answer their letters, nor return their manuscripts.

Lord Tennyson is perfectly right to assume this attitude, only it makes life even more hideous than of old to Mr. Browning and Mr. Swinburne. Probably these distinguished writers are already sufficiently pestered by the Mr. Tootses of this world, whose chief amusement is to address epistles to persons of distinction. Mr. Toots was believed to answer his own letters himself, but the beings who fill Lord Tennyson's, and Mr. Gladstone's, and probably Mr. Browning's letterbox expect to receive answers. Frightened away from Lord Tennyson's baronial portals, they will now crowd thicker than ever round the gates of other poets who have not yet announced that they will prove irresponsive. Cannot the Company of Authors (if that be the correct style and title) take this matter up and succour the profession? Next, of course, to the baneful publisher and the hopelessly indifferent public, most authors suffer more from no one than from the unknown correspondent. The unknown correspondent is very frequently of the fair sex, and her bright home is not unusually in the setting sun. "Dear Mr. Brown," she writes to some poor author who never heard of her, nor of Idaho, in the States, where she lives, "I cannot tell you how much I admire your monograph on Phonetic Decay in its influence on Logic. Please send me two copies with autograph inscriptions. I hope to see you at home when I visit Europe in the Fall."

Every man of letters, however humble, is accustomed to these salutations, and probably Lord Tennyson receives scores every morning at breakfast. Like all distinguished poets, like Scott certainly, we presume that he is annoyed with huge parcels of MSS. These (unless Lord Tennyson is more fortunate than other singers) he is asked to read, correct, and return with a carefully considered opinion as to the sender's chance of having "Assur ban-i-pal," a tragedy, accepted at the Gaiety Theatre. Rival but unheard-of bards will entreat him to use his influence to get their verses published. Others (all the world knows) will send him "spiteful letters," assuring him that "his fame in song has done them much wrong." How interesting it would be to ascertain the name of the author of that immortal "spiteful letter"! Probably many persons have felt that they could make a good guess; no less probably they have been mistaken.

In no way can the recipient avoid making enemies of the authors of all these communications if he is at all an honest, irascible man. Mr. Dickens used to reply to total strangers, and to poets like Miss Ada Menken, with a dignified and sympathetic politeness which disarmed wrath. But he probably thereby did but invite fresh trouble of the same kind. Mr. Thackeray (if a recently-published answer was a fair specimen) used to answer more briefly and brusquely. One thing is certain. No criticism not entirety laudatory, which the Involuntary Bailee may make of his correspondent's MS., will be accepted without remonstrance. Doubtless Lord Tennyson has at last chosen the only path of safety by declining to answer his unknown correspondents, or to return their rubbish, any more.

Of course, it is a wholly different affair when the anonymous correspondent sends several brace of grouse, or a salmon of noble proportions, or rare old books bound by Derome, or a service of Worcester china with the square mark, or other tribute of that kind. Probably some dozen of rhymers sent Lord Tennyson amateur congratulatory odes when he was raised to the peerage. If he is at all like other poets, he would have preferred a few dozen of extremely curious old port, or a Villon published by Galiot du Pré, or a gold nugget, or some of the produce of the diamond mines, to any number of signed congratulations from total strangers. Actors seem to receive nicer tributes than poets. Two brace of grouse were thrown on the stage when Mr. Irving was acting in a northern town. This is as picturesque as, and a great deal more permanently enjoyable than, a shower of flowers and wreaths. Another day a lady threw a gold cross on the stage, and yet another enthusiast contributed rare books appropriately bound. These gifts will not, of course, be returned by a celebrity who respects himself; but they bless him who gives and him who takes, much more than tons of manuscript poetry, and thousands of entreaties for an autograph, and millions of announcements that the writer will be "proud to drink your honour's noble health."

SUMMER NIGHTS.

If the best of all ways of lengthening our days be to take a few hours from the night, many of us are involuntarily prolonging existence at the present hour. Macbeth did not murder sleep more effectually than the hot weather does. At best, in the sultry nights, most people sleep what is called "a dog's sleep," and by no means the sleep of a lucky dog. As the old English writers say, taking a distinction which our language appears to have lost, we "rather slumber than sleep," waking often, and full of the foolishest of dreams. This condition of things probably affects politics and society more than the thoughtless suppose. If literature produced in the warm, airless fog of July be dull, who can marvel thereat?

"Of all gods," says Pausanias, "Sleep is dearest to the Muses;" and when the child of the Muses does not get his regular nine hours' rest (which he fails to do in warm weather), then his verse and prose are certain to bear traces of his languor. It is true that all children of the Muses do not require about double the allowance of the saints. Five hours was all St. Jerome took, and probably Byron did not sleep much more during the season when he wrote "Childe Harold." The moderns who agree with the Locrians in erecting altars to Sleep, can only reply that probably "Childe Harold" would have been a better poem if Byron had kept more regular hours when he was composing it. So far they will, perhaps, have Mr. Swinburne with them, though that author also has Sung before Sunrise, when he would (if the wisdom of the ancients be correct) have been better employed in plucking the flower of sleep.

Leaving literature, and looking at society, it is certain that the human temper is more lively, and more unkind things are said, in a sultry than in a temperate season. In the restless night-watches people have time to brood over small wrongs, and wax indignant over tiny slights and unoffered invitations. Perhaps politics, too, are apt to be more rancorous in a "heated term." Man is very much what his liver makes him.

Hot weather vexes the unrested soul in nothing more than this, that (like a revolution in Paris) it tempts the people to "go down into the streets." The streets are cooler, at least, than stuffy gas-lit rooms; and if the public would only roam them in a contemplative spirit, with eyes turned up to the peaceful constellations, the public might fall down an area now and then, but would not much disturb the neighbourhood. But the 'Arry that walketh by night thinks of nothing less than admiring, with Kant, the starry heavens and the moral nature of man. He seeks his peers, and together in great bands they loiter or run, stopping to chaff each other, and to jeer at the passer-by. Their satire is monotonous in character, chiefly consisting of the words for using which the famous Mr. Budd beat the baker. Now, the sultry weather makes it absolutely necessary to leave bedroom windows wide open, so that he who is courting sleep has all the advantage of studying the dialogue of the slums. These disturbances last till two in the morning in some otherwise quiet districts near the river. When Battersea ‘Arry has been “on the fly” in Chelsea, while Chelsea ‘Arry has been pursuing pleasure in Battersea, the homeward-faring bands meet, about one in the morning, on the Embankment. Then does Cheyne Walk hear the amœbean dialogues of strayed revellers, and knows not whether Battersea or Chelsea best deserves the pipe, the short black pipe, for which the rival swains compete in profanity and slang. In music, too, does this modern Dionysiac procession rejoice, and Kensington echoes like Cithæron when Pan was keeping his orgies there — Pan and the Theban nymphs. The music and the song of the London street roamer is excessively harsh, crabbed, and tuneless. Almost as provoking it is, in a quiet way, when three or four quite harmless people meet under a bedroom window and converse in their usual tone of voice about their private affairs.

These little gatherings sometimes seem as if they would never break up, and though the persons in the piece mean no harm, they are nearly as noxious to sleep as the loud musical water-side rough or public-house loafer. Dogs, too, like men, seem to feel it incumbent on them to howl more than usual in hot weather, and to bay the moon with particular earnestness in July. No enemy of sleep is deadlier than a dear, good, affectionate dog, whose owners next door have accidentally shut him out. The whole night long he bewails his loneliness, in accents charged with profound melancholy. The author of the “Amusement Philosophique” would have us believe that animals can speak. Nothing makes more for his opinion than the exquisite variety of lyrical howl in which a shut-out dog expresses every phrase of blighted affection, incommunicable longing, and supreme despair. Somehow he never, literally never, wakens his owners. He only keeps all the other people in a four-mile radius wide awake. Yet how few have the energy and public spirit to get up and go for that dog with sticks, umbrellas, and pieces of road-metal! The most enterprising do little more than shout at him out of the window, or take long futile shots at him with bits of coal from the fireplace. When we have a Municipal Government of London, then, perhaps, measures will be taken with dogs, and justice will be meted out to the owners of fowls. At present these fiends in human shape can keep their detestable pets, and defy the menaces, as they have rejected the prayers, of their neighbours. The amount of profanity, insanity, ill-health, and general misery which one rooster can cause is far beyond calculation.

When London nights are intolerable, people think with longing of the cool, fragrant country, of the jasmine-muffled lattices, and the groups beneath the dreaming evening star. One dreams of coffee after dinner in the open air, as described in “In Memoriam;” one longs for the cool, the hush, the quiet. But try the country on a July night. First you have trouble with all the great, big, hairy, leathery moths and bats which fly in at the jasmine-muffled lattice, and endeavour to put out your candle. You blow the candle out, and then a bluebottle fly in good voice comes out too, and is accompanied by very fair imitations of mosquitoes. Probably they are only gnats, but in blowing their terrible little trumpets they are of the mosquito kind. Next the fact dawns on you that the church clock in the neighbouring spire strikes the quarters, and you know that you cannot fall asleep before the chime wakes you up again, with its warning, “Another quarter gone.” The cocks come forth and crow about four; the hens proclaim to a drowsy world that they have fulfilled the duties of maternity. All through the ambrosial night three cows, in the meadow under your windows, have been lamenting the loss of their calves. Of all terrible notes, the “routing” of a bereaved, or amorous, or homesick cow is the most disturbing. It carries for miles, and keeps all who hear it — all town-bred folk, at least — far from the land of Nod. At dawn the song-birds begin, and hold you awake, as they disturbed Rufinus long ago; but the odds are that they do not inspire you, like Rufinus, with the desire to write poetry. The short and simple language of profanity is more likely to come unbidden to the wakeful lips. Thus, as John Leech found out, the country in July is almost as dreadful at night as the town. Nay, thanks to the cow, we think the country may bear away the prize for all that is uncomfortable, all that is hostile to sleep and the Muses. Yet rustics always sleep very well, and no more mind the noise of cocks, sparrows, cows, dogs, and ducks than the owner of a town-bred dog minds when his faithful hound drives a whole street beyond their patience. It is a matter of sound health and untaxed brains. If we always gave our minds a rest, none of us would dread the noises of the nights of summer.

ON HYPOCHONDRIACS.

A nice state we are in, according to the *Medical Times*. If the secrets of our "casebooks" — that is, we suppose, our medical *dossiers*, doctors' records of the condition of their patients — could be revealed, it would be shown that many clever people have a fancy skeleton in their cupboards. By a fancy skeleton we mean, not some dismal secret of crime or shame, but a melancholy and apprehensiveness without any ground in outward facts. With the real skeleton doctors have nothing to do. He rather belongs to the province of Scotland Yard. If a man has compromised himself in some way, if he has been found out by some scoundrel, if he is compelled to "sing," as the French say, or to pay "blackmail," then the doctor is not concerned in the business. A detective, a revolver, or a well-planned secret flight may be prescribed to the victim. Other real skeletons men possess which do not come of their own misdeeds. One of their friends or one of their family may be the skeleton, or the consciousness of coming and veritable misfortune, pecuniary or what-not. But the *Medical Times*, which no doubt ought to know, refers purely to cases of vague melancholy and hypochondriac foreboding. Apparently "The Spleen," the "English Disease," is as bad now as when Green wrote in verse and Dr. Cheyne in prose. Prosperous business men, literary gents in active employment, artists, students, tradesmen, "are all visited by melancholy, revealed only to their doctors, and sometimes to their domestic circle."

Unhappy domestic circle, brooded over by a gloomy parent, who thinks that life is too short, or faith too much a matter of speculation, or that the country is going to the dogs! Then the doctor, it seems, hears his patient, and recommends him only to drink a very little whisky and potash water, or to take two bottles of port every day, or to take to angling, or to give up smoking, or to work less or to work more, or to go to bed early or to get up late, or to ride, or to fence, or to play golf, or to go to Upper Egypt or the Engadine, or anything that fancy may dictate and opportunity suggest. So the kind physician advises his mournful self-tormentor, and then he himself flies round the corner and consults some brother-healer about his own subjective gloom.

Old ladies, in speaking of the misdeeds of youth, are apt to recommend "a good shaking" as a panacea. Really those victims of whom our contemporary speaks, appear to be persons on whom "a good shaking," mental or physical, would produce a salutary effect. Cowardice, vanity, overweening self-consciousness, are the causes of most melancholy. No doubt it has physical causes too. Dr. Johnson suffered, — one of the best and bravest of men. But most of us suffer — if suffer we do — because we over-estimate ourselves and our own importance. Mr. Matthew Arnold has tried to enforce this lesson. After a horrible murder in a railway carriage, Mr. Arnold observed, with pain, the "almost bloodthirsty clinging to life" of his fellow-passengers. In vain he pointed out to them that even if they were to depart, "the great mundane movement" would go on as usual. But they refused to be comforted. Every man was afraid of meeting his own Müller; and as to the great mundane movement, no one cared a pin. This selfishness is among the chief causes of melancholy. A man persuades himself that he will not live long, or that his prospects in this world or the next are gloomy; or he takes views as absurdly far-reaching as those of the spinsters in the old tale, who wept over the hypothetical fate of the child one of them might have had if she had been married. Now, there is a certain melancholy not unbecoming a man; indeed, to be without it is hardly to be human. Here we do find ourselves, indeed, like the shipwrecked mariner on the isle of Pascal's apologue; all around us are the unknown seas, all about us are the indomitable and eternal processes of generation and corruption. "We come like water, and like wind we go." Life is, indeed, as the great Persian says —

"A moment's halt, a momentary taste
Of being from the well beside the waste."

These just causes of melancholy and of awe have presented themselves to all reflective men at all times. They deeply affect the thought, so wholesome and so human, of Homer. They express themselves in that old English pagan's allegory of the bird that flies from the dark into the warm and lighted hall, and from the hall into the dark again. Not to be capable of these reflections is to be incapable of tasting the noblest poetry. Such thoughts actually give zest to our days, and sharpen our enjoyment of that which we have only a brief moment to enjoy. Such thoughts add their own sweetness and sadness to the song of the nightingale, to the fall of the leaves, to the coming of the spring. Were we "exempt from eld and age," this noble melancholy could never be ours, and we, like the ancient classical gods, would be incapable of tears. What Prometheus says in Mr. Bridge's poem is true —

”Not in heaven,
Among our easy gods, hath facile time
A touch so keen to wake such love of life
As stirs the frail and careful being of Man."

Such are the benefits of Melancholy, when she is only an occasional guest, and is not pampered or made the object of devotion. But Melancholy, though an excellent companion for an hour, is the most exacting and depressing of mistresses. The man who gives himself up to her, who always takes too long views, who broods on the future of this planet when the sun has burned out, is on the high-way to madness. The odds are that he does not travel all the way. He remains a self-tormented wretch, highly profitable to his medical man, and a frightful nuisance to his family. Now, there are, of course, cases in which this melancholy has physical causes. It may come of indigestion, and then the remedy is known. Less dining out (indeed, no one will ask the abjectly melancholy man out) and more exercise may be recommended. The melancholy man had better take to angling; it is a contemplative pastime, but he will find it far from a gloomy one. The sounds and sights of nature will revive and relieve him, and, if he is only successful, the weight of a few pounds of fish on his back will make him toss off that burden which poor Christian carried out of the City of Destruction. No man can be melancholy when the south wind blows in spring, when the soft, feathery March-browns flit from the alders and fall in the water, while the surface boils with the heads and tails of trout.

Perhaps, on the other hand, the melancholy one lives too much in the country. Then let him go to Paris or Vienna; let him try the Palais Royal, and spend a good deal of money in the shops. A course of this might have cured even Obermann, whom there was nothing to check or divert while he kept philandering on the mountains with the snows and his woes. There are plenty of such cures for a melancholy not yet incurable; change of air, scene, food, amusement, and occupation being the best. True, the Romans tried this, as Seneca and Lucretius tells us, and found themselves as much bored as ever. “No easier nor no quicker passed th’ impracticable hours.” But the Romans were very extreme cases.

When the cause of melancholy is religious or moral, there is little to be done with the victim. In “Sartor Resartus” he will read how Mr. Carlyle cured himself, if ever he was cured. To be brief, he said, “What then, who cares?” and indeed, in more reverent form of expression, it is all that can be said. When Nicias addressed the doomed and wasted remnant of the Athenian expedition to Syracuse, he told them that “others, too, being men, had borne things which had to be endured.” That is the whole philosophy of the matter.

THACKERAY'S LONDON.

A house in a highly respectable square, where Jeames Yellowplush was in service, had recently the fame of being haunted. No one knew exactly what haunted this desirable mansion, or how, though a novelist was understood to have supplied a satisfactory legend. The young man who "investigated" the ghost rang the bell thrice violently, and then fell down dead, nor could he in any wise satisfy the curiosity of his friends. That fable is exploded. It was what is called an "ætiological myth;" by the learned it was merely a story devised to account for the fact that the house was not occupied. The imagination of man, confronted by so strange a problem as money running to waste, took refuge in the supernatural. Much more truly haunted than the house in "Buckley Square" are the streets of London which are tenanted by the ghosts that genius created. These, having never been born, can never die, and still we may meet them in the roads and squares where they lived and took their pastime. Mr. Rideing, an American author, has published (with Messrs. Jarvis and Son) a little volume called "Thackeray's London," an account of the places which that great novelist made household words, and filled with genial spectres that time can never lay. Mr. Rideing's little book does not strike us as being quite complete. Surely Thackeray, especially in the "Ballads," mentions many places not alluded to by the new topographer. Besides, Mr. Rideing says that Thackeray's readers forget the localities in which his characters appear. Surely this is a calumny on human memory. Who but thinks of Becky Sharp as he trudges down Curzon Street? Has Bryanston Square properly any reason for existence, except that the Hobson Newcomes dwelt there? Are the chambers of Captain Costigan forgotten by the memory of any man, or those of Pen and George Warrington? But Pen took better rooms, not so lofty, when he scored that success with "Walter Lorraine." Where did Mr. Bowes, the hopeless admirer of the Fotheringay, dwell? Every one should know, but that question might puzzle some. Or where was the lair of the Mulligan? Like the grave of Arthur, or of Molière, it is unknown; the whole of the postal district known as W. is haunted by that tremendous shade. "I live there," says he, pointing down towards Uxbridge with the big stick he carries; so his abode is in that direction, at any rate. No more has been given to man to know.

Many minor reminiscences occur to the mind. In Pump Court we encounter the brisk little spectre of Mr. Frederick Minchin, and who can forget that his club was The Oxford and Cambridge, than which what better could he desire? Mr. Thackeray himself was a member of The Garrick, The Athenæum, and The Reform, but the clubs of many of his characters, like the "buth" of Jeames Yellowplush, are "wrapped up in a mistry." They are alluded to by fancy names, but the scholiast on Thackeray will probably be able to identify them. Is it not time, by the way, for that scholiast to give his labours to the public? Thackeray's world is passing; the children he knew, the boys he tipped and took to the play, are middle-aged men — fogies, in fact. *Tempus edax rerum*, Time has an appetite as good as that of a boy at his first club dinner. The meaning of the great writer's contemporary allusions may be lost, like those of Villon and Aristophanes. Such is the fate of comedy. Who knows, if we turn to Dickens, what the "common profeel machine" was, or what were the steps of the dance known as the Fanteag (the spelling is dubious); or what the author meant by a "red-faced Nixon." Was it a nixie? Does the new Professor of the English Language and Literature at Oxford hope to cast the light of Teutonic research on these and similar inquiries? Sam Weller found that oysters always went hand-in-hand with poverty. How this must astonish a generation which finds the oyster nearly as extinct as the ichthyosaurus! The "Book of Snobs" calls aloud for a commentator. Who is the nobleman holding his boots out of the hotel window — an act which the Snob very properly declined to classify as snobbish? Who are the originals of Henry Foker (this, indeed, is known), and of Wagg and Wenham? Or did Wenham's real name *rhyme* to Foker, as, according to the Mulligan, "Perkins rhymes to Jerkins, my man of firkins"? Posterity will insist on an answer, which will be nothing if not authentic. Posterity, *pace* Mr. Rideing, will remember very well that George Osborne's father lived in Russell Square, and will hunt in vain for 96. There is no such number, any more than there ever was such a Pope as he to whom the unfortunate old woman in "Candid" attributed her birth. Here once more, as Voltaire justly remarks in a footnote, we observe the discretion of our author.

Colonel Newcome lived, as is well known, in Fitzroy Square, and died in the Charter House. To these shrines the pious go in pilgrimage; the rather dingy quarters are brightened by the memory of his presence, as we think of Scott in Castle Street, Edinburgh, or of Dr. John Brown in Princes Street — Dr. John Brown who was a Colonel Newcome that had gone into medicine instead of the army. Smithfield is hardly more memorable for her martyrs than for the battles fought on neighbouring ground between Biggs and Berry, between Cuff and old Figs. Kentish Town, but little sought for sentimental reasons, is glorified by the memory of Adolphus Larkins; "Islington, Pentonville, Somers Town, were the scenes of many of his exploits." Brompton, again, passionate Brompton, lent her shelter — or rather, sold it, for the poetess lived in a boarding-house — to Miss Bunnion. Cursitor Street might be unknown as the great men before Agamemnon (many of whom, by the way, as Meleager and Pirithous, are known well enough) had not Cursitor Street contained the sponging-house where Rawdon Crawley was incarcerated.

In addition to these scholia on Thackeray so sadly needed, and so little likely to be published, we need novelists' maps and topographies of London and Paris. These will probably be constructed by some American of leisure; they order these things better in America. When we go to Paris we want to know where Balzac's men and women lived, Z. Marcas and César Birotteau, and Le Cousin Pons, and Le Père Goriot, and all the duchesses, financiers, scoundrels, journalists, and persons of both sexes and no character "Comédie Humaine." London also might be thus spaced out — the London of Richardson, and Fielding, and Miss Burney, as well as the London of Thackeray or Dickens. Already, to speak of to-day, Rupert Street is more interesting, because there, fallen in fortune, but resolute of heart and courtly as ever, Prince Florizel of Bohemia held his cigar divan.

TORRID SUMMER.

"Is it very cold?" asks the Prince of Denmark, according to a familiar reading. No one has any occasion to consult the thermometer before answering the question, "Is it very hot?" All things combine to prove that it is very hot. Even the man of metal who used, according to legend, to patrol the coast of Crete, the man with only one vein from head to heel, would admit (could he appear in the Machineries at present) that it is very hot indeed. He might not feel any subjective sensation of heat (for he seems to have been a mythical anticipation of the Conquering Machine which is to dominate the world), but he would have inferred the height of the temperature from a number of phenomena. He would have seen the ticket-clerks in the railway stations with their coats off. He would have observed imitation Japanese parasols at a penny among the ware of enterprising capitalists in the streets. He would have marked the very street-boys in wide, inexpensive straw hats of various and astonishing colours. Woman he would have found in beautiful shades of blue, in such light garments "woven wind" as Theocritus speaks of when he presents the wife of his doctor with a new ivory distaff.

As to men, they in their attire do show their wit or their want of courage, as the case may be. It is not easy for modern man, when he "repairs to the metropolis," to dress up to the heat of the weather. An ingenious though too hasty philosopher once observed that all men who wear velvet coats are atheists. He probably overstated the amount of intellectual and spiritual audacity to be expected from him who, setting the picturesque before the conventional, dons a coat of velvet. But it really does require some originality even to wear a white hat and a white waistcoat in a London July. The heat is never so great but that the majority of males endure black coats and black shiny hats. The others are in a minority. The voice of public opinion is not on their side. "Who stole the moke, Anna?" asked suspicion; and the answer came, "The man in the *chapeau blanc*." There is something daring, something distinctive in a white hat; and it may be doubted whether the amount of comfort obtained by the revolutionary wearer is in a due ratio to the conspicuousness which his action entails on him. Members of Parliament are singularly emancipated from these fears of the brave; but members of Parliament cannot supply the whole contingent of white-hatted men now to be seen in the streets of the metropolis. Their presence proves that it is very hot indeed. One swallow does not make a summer, but half a dozen pairs of “ducks” beheld in public places would mark a summer of unusually high temperature.

There are, of course, alleviations. Nature compensates all who can afford to purchase the compensations. Strawberries, long waited for, shy, retiring fruit, have now nearly approached the popular price of sixpence a basket. A divine of a past generation declared that in his opinion the joys of Paradise would consist of eating strawberries to the sound of a trumpet. For a poor sixpence half of this transcendental pastime may be partaken of, and probably the brass band which is usually round the corner could supply the sound of the trumpet at a small extra charge.

Unluckily, doctors have decided that many of us must not eat strawberries, nor drink champagne cup, nor iced coffee. That is the way with doctors. Æsculapius was originally worshipped in the form of a serpent; in the guise of a serpent he came to Rome. Medical men still hold of their heroic father, and physicians are the serpents in the Paradise of a warm summer. Mortals, in their hands, are like Sancho Panza with his medical adviser. Here is summer, provoking a gentle interest in every method of assuaging thirst, and almost every method is condemned by one member of the faculty or another. Champagne cannot be so royally sound, nor is shandy-gaff so humble, that it ‘scapes whipping. How melancholy a thing is human life at best! In boyhood we can eat more ices than our pocket-money enables us to purchase; in maturity we have the pocket-money without the powers of digestion. The French lady said that if strawberry ices were only sinful, no pleasure could exceed that which is to be enjoyed in the consumption of the congealed fruit. Strawberry ices are sinful now, and under the medical ban. The French lady, were she living still, might be at ease on that score. But her audacity is not given to all, and many fall back on that poor creature, lemon-squash, when they are conscious of a thirst worthy of being quenched by the most imperial beverages in imperial quarts.

Men, being reasonable, must hurry about town when the thermometer is at something fabulous, wearing black clothes, going to parties, and larding the lean earth. Beasts are not so foolish. To the pious Brahmin Vishnu accords the power of becoming what animal he pleases, with a break in the lease, so to speak, when circumstances alter. Had a sage this power at this moment he would become a cow, standing up to her middle in the clear, cool water of the Kennet, under the shade of a hanging willow tree. What bliss can equal that of a cow thus engaged? Her life must, indeed, be burning with a hard gem-like flame. She must be plucking the flower of a series of exquisite moments. The rich, deep grass, with the buttercups and forget-me-nots, is behind her, but she has had enough of that, and is open to more spiritual pleasures. The kingfishers and water-wagtails flit about her. The water-rat jumps into the stream with a soft plash, and his black body scuttles along to the opposite bank. The green dragon-flies float hither and thither; the beautiful frail-winged water-flies float over trout too lazy to snatch at them. The cow, in her sensuous nirvana, may see and marvel at the warm boating-man as he tows two stout young ladies in a heavy boat, or labours with the oar. Her pleasure is far more enduring than that of the bathers in the lasher up stream, and she has an enormous advantage over the contemplative man trying to lie on the grass and enjoy nature, for he really is not enjoying nature. The pleasures of lying on the grass are chiefly those of imagination. You cannot get into a truly comfortable position. Your back has a lump of grass under it here, or your arm tingles and "falls asleep," as children say. No attitude will enable you to read, and the black flies hover around and alight on such of your features as are tempting — to a fly. Then you begin to be quite sure it is damp, and, as you have nothing else to sit on, you sit down on your book, which no one can call comfortable.

The notion of reclining on cushions in a punt is equally fallacious, and, while promising much, ends in a headache. Besides, the river does not always smell very nicely now that it has so long been unrelieved by rain. All through the hot day, in fact, civilized northern man finds loafing very difficult, especially as his Aryan impetuosity is always urging him to do something active. Cows in this climate are the only true lotus-eaters. Next to them in enjoyment comes the angler who approaches the river about eight o'clock, at the time of the "evening rise." He, like the cow, is knee-deep in water, wading; he listens to the plash of big, hungry trout, sucking down gnats under the alders; he casts over them, and if he catches them, who more content than he, as the sky turns from amber to purple and silvery grey, and the light fades till one cannot thread the gut through the eye-hole of one of the new-fashioned hooks? Certainly this man is more blessed than he who is just coming to the ices at a big, hot London dinner, and knows that his physician has forbidden him this form of enjoyment. What a struggle in that person's mind! and how almost predestined is his fall! how sure his repentance next morning!

WESTERN DROLLS.

The death of Mr. "Josh Billings" may have diminished the stock of harmless pleasures, but can hardly be said to have eclipsed the gaiety of nations. In this country, at least, however it may have been in the States, Josh Billings was by no means the favourite or leading American humorist. If phonetic spelling were universal, much of his fun would disappear. His place was nearer that of Orpheus C. Kerr than of Artemus Ward, or of Mark Twain. It has long been the English habit to look for most of our broad fun across the Atlantic. Americans say we are not a funny people. A chivalrous and mediæval French writer, not unfrequently quoted, once made a kindred remark. We are not at present a boisterously comic lot of geniuses, and if you see the tears running down the eyes of a fellow-countryman reading in a railway carriage, if he be writhing with mirth too powerful for expression, the odds are that he has got hold of a Yankee book.

In American country newspapers there is usually one column entirely devoted to facetiæ, which appear to have been clipped out of the columns of other country papers. They live on each other, just as the natives of the Scilly Islands are feigned to eke out a precarious livelihood by taking in each other's washing. It is averred that one American journal, the *Danbury Newsman*, contains nothing but merriment — a fearful idea! We have nothing like this at home, and as for writers who make a reader giggle almost indelicately often, where are they to be found? "Happy Thoughts" affect some of us in this way; others are convulsed by "Vice Versâ;" but, as George Eliot says, nothing is such a strain on the affections as a difference of taste in jokes. It is unsafe to recommend any writer as very funny. No man can ever tell how his neighbour will take a joke. But it may safely be said that authors who really tickle their students are extremely rare in England, except as writers for the stage, and surely "The Great Pink Pearl" might have made Timon of Athens shake his sides, or might convert a Veddah to the belief that "there is something to laugh at." In literature, when we want to be even hysterically diverted, we must, as a rule, buy our fun from the American humorists. If we cannot make laughter ourselves, at least we can, and do, laugh with them.

A vast amount of American humour may be called local and middle-class. In the youth of Dickens, there was a regular set of home-made middle-class jokes about babies, about washing-day, about mothers-in-law, about dinner-parties that were not successes, about curtain lectures, about feminine extravagance in bonnet-buying, about drunken men, about beer, all of them jokes worn threadbare. A similar kind of fun, with local differences, prevails in the States, but is wonderfully mixed up with scriptural and religious jokes. To us sober Britons, whatever our opinions, these latter japes appear more or less ribald, though they are quite innocently made.

Aristophanes, a pious conservative, was always laughing consumedly at the Greek gods, and the Greek gods were supposed to be in the joke. The theatrical season was sacred to the deity of wine and fun, and he, with the other Olympians, was not scandalized by the merriment. In the ages of faith it is also notorious that saints, and even more sacred persons, were habitually buffooned in the Mystery Plays, and the Church saw no harm. The old leaven of American Puritanism has the same kind of familiarity with ideas and words which we approach more delicately, conscious that the place where we tread is holy ground. This consciousness appears to be less present in the States, which are peopled by descendants of the Puritans, and scores of good things are told in "family" American journals and magazines which are received without a grin in this country. "We are not amused," a great person is reported to have once observed when some wit had ventured on a hazardous anecdote. And we, meaning the people of England, are often not amused, but rather vexed, by gaieties which appear absolutely harmless on the other side of the ocean. These two kinds of humour, the middle-class jokes about courting between lovers seated on a snake fence, or about Sunday schools and quaint answers there given to Biblical questions, leave us cold.

But surely we appreciate as well as the Americans themselves the extraordinarily intellectual high spirits of Mark Twain, a writer whose genius goes on mellowing, ripening, widening, and improving at an age when another man would have written himself out. His gravity in narrating the most preposterous tale, his sympathy with every one of his absurdest characters, his microscopic imagination, his vein of seriousness, his contrasts of pathos, his bursts of indignant plain speaking about certain national errors, make Mark Twain an author of the highest merit, and far remote from the mere buffoon. Say the "Jumping Frog" is buffoonery; perhaps it is, but Louis Quinze could not have classed the author among the people he did not love, *les buffons qui ne me font rire*. The man is not to be envied who does not laugh over the ride on "The Genuine Mexican Plug" till he is almost as sore as the equestrian after that adventure. Again, while studying the narrative of how Mark edited an agricultural paper in a country district, a person with any sense of humour is scarcely a responsible being. He is quite unfit (so doth he revel in laughter uncontrollable) for the society of staid people, and he ought to be ejected from club libraries, where his shouts waken the bald-headed sleepers of these retreats. It is one example of what we have tried to urge, that "Mark's way" is not nearly so acceptable in "The Innocents Abroad," especially when the Innocents get to the Holy Land. We think it in bad taste, for example, to snigger over the Siege of Samaria, and the discomfiture of "shoddy speculators" in curious articles of food during that great leaguer. Recently Mark Twain has shown in his Mississippi sketches, in "Tom Sawyer," and in "Hucklebury Finn," that he can paint a landscape, that he can describe life, that he can tell a story as well as the very best, and all without losing the gift of laughter. His travel-books are his least excellent; he is happiest at home, in the country of his own Blue Jay.

The contrasts, the energy, the mixture of races in America, the overflowing young life of the continent, doubtless give its humorists the richness of its vein. All over the land men are eternally "swopping stories" at bars, and in the long, endless journeys by railway and steamer. How little, comparatively, the English "swop stories"! The Scotch are almost as much addicted as the Americans to this form of barter, so are the Irish. The Englishman has usually a dignified dread of dropping into his "anecdotage."

The stories thus collected in America are the subsoil of American literary humour, a rich soil in which the plant cultivated by Mark Twain and Mr. Frank Stockton grows with vigour and puts forth fruit and flowers. Mr. Stockton is very unlike Mark Twain: he is quiet, domesticated, the jester of the family circle. Yet he has shown in "Rudder Grange," and in "The Transferred Ghost," very great powers, and a pleasant, dry kind of Amontillado flavour in his fun, which somewhat reminds one of Thackeray — the Thackeray of the "Bedford-row Conspiracy" and of "A Little Dinner at Timmins." Mr. Stockton's vein is a little too connubial — a little too rich in the humours and experiences of young married people. But his fun is rarely strained or artificial, except in the later chapters of "Rudder Grange," and he has a certain kindliness and tenderness not to be always met with in the jester. His angling and hunting pieces are excellent, and so are those of Mr. Charles Dudley Warner. This humorist (like Alceste) was once "funnier than he had supposed," when he sat down with a certain classical author, to study the topography of Epipolæ. But his talent is his own, and very agreeable, though he once so forgot himself as to jest on the Deceased Wife's Sister. When we think of those writers to whom we all owe so much, it would be sheer ingratitude to omit the name of the master of them all, Oliver Wendell Holmes. Here is a wit who is a scholar, and almost a poet, and whose humour is none the less precious for being accompanied by good humour, learning, a wide experience of the world. With Mr. Lowell, he belongs to an older generation, yet reigns among the present. May the reign be long!

SHOW SUNDAY.

The years bring round very quickly the old familiar events. Yesterday was Show Sunday. It scarcely seems a year since last the painters received their friends, and perhaps a few of their enemies. These visits to studios are very exciting to ladies who have read about studios in novels, and believe that they will find everywhere tawny tiger-skins, Venetian girls, chrysanthemum and hawthorn patterned porcelain, suits of armour, old plate, swords, and guns, and bows, and all the other "properties" of the painter of romance. Some of these delightful things, no doubt, the visitors of yesterday saw, and probably some painters still wear velvet coats and red neckties, and long hair and pointed beards. But the typical artist is not what he was. He has become domesticated. Sometimes he is nearly as rich and "apolaustic" as a successful stock-broker, and much more fashionable. Then he dwells in marble halls, with pleasing fountains, by whose falls all sorts of birds sing madrigals. He has an entirely new house, in short, fitted up in the early Basque style, or after the fashion of an Inca's palace, or like the Royal dwelling of a Rajah, including, of course, all modern improvements. This is a very desirable kind of artist to know at home; but, after all, it is not easy to distinguish him from a highly-cultivated and successful merchant prince, with a taste for *bric-à-brac*. He is not in the least like the painter of romance; perhaps he is better — he is certainly more fortunate; but he is not the real old thing, the Bohemian of Ouida and Miss Braddon. One might as well expect a banker to be a Bohemian.

Another class of modern painter is even more disappointing. He is extremely neat and smooth in his appearance, and dresses in the height of the most quiet fashion. His voice is low and soft, and he never (like the artist of fiction) employs that English word whereby the Royalist sailor was recognized when, attired as a Portuguee, he tried to blow up one of the ships of Admiral Blake. This new kind of artist avoids studio slang as much as he does long hair and red waistcoats. He might be a young barrister, only he is more polished; or a young doctor, only he is more urbane. No doubt there exist men of the ancient species — rough-and-ready men as strong as bargees, given to much tobacco, amateurs of porter or shandygaff, great hunters of the picturesque, such wild folk as Thackeray knew and Mr. Charles Keene occasionally caricatures. These are the artists whom young ladies want to see, but they are not in great force on Show Sunday. They rather look on that festival as a day of national mourning and humiliation and woe. They do not care to have all Belgravia or South Kensington let loose in their places. They do not wish the public to gaze and simper at pieces which will probably be enskied or rejected, or hung at a dangerous corner next a popular picture.

No painter who is not of the most secure eminence can, perhaps, quite enjoy Show Sunday. Many of his visitors know as much about Art as the Fuegians do of white neckties. They come and gaze, and say, "How soft, how sweet!" like Rosey Mackenzie, and have tea, and go away. Other people offer amazing suggestions, and no one who thinks the pictures failures quite manages to conceal his opinion. Poets are said to be fond of reading their own poems aloud, which seems amazing; but then as they read they cannot see their audience, nor guess how they are boring those sufferers. The poet, like the domestic fowl which did not scream when plucked, is "too much absorbed." But while his friends look at his pictures, the painter looks at their faces, and must make many sad discoveries. Like other artists, he does not care nearly so much for the praise as he is dashed and discomfited by the slightest hint of blame. It is a wonder that irascible painters do not run amuck among their own canvases and their visitors on Show Sunday. That, at least, in Mr. Browning's phrase, is "how it strikes a contemporary." Were the artists to yield to the promptings of their lower nature, were they to hearken to the Old Man within them, fearful massacres would occur in St. John's Wood, and Campden Hill, and round Holland House. An alarmed public and a powerless police would behold vast ladies of wealth, and maidens fair, and wild critics with eye-glasses speeding, at a furious pace, along certain roads, pursued by painters armed to the teeth with palette knives and mahlsticks.

This is what would occur if academicians and others gave way to the natural passions provoked by criticism and general demeanour on Show Sunday. But it is a proof of the triumph of civilization that nothing of this kind occurs. Peace prevails in the street and studio, and at the end of the day the artist must feel much as the critic does after the private view at the Royal Academy. The artist has been having a private view of the public on its good behaviour, and that wild contempt of the bourgeois which burns in every artist's breast must reach its highest temperature. However, the holidays are beginning, the working season is over, and that reflection, doubtless, helps the weary painter through his ordeal. But his friends also have to bear a good deal if they happen not to like his performances. They must feign admiration as well as they may, and the sun of Show Sunday goes down on a world rather glad that it is well over.

Lord Beaconsfield once said at an Academy dinner that originality was the great characteristic of English art. So little was he supposed to have spoken seriously that another, of whose ceasing to perorate there is no prospect, characterized his criticism in language so strong that it cannot well be repeated. Let us admit that Lord Beaconsfield was either mistaken, or that, like the Consul Aulus, “he spake a bitter jest.” Our artists, when they have found their vein, go on working it. They do not wander off in search of new veins, as a general rule. It would be unkind to draw attention to personal proofs of this truism. He who has done well with babies in fancy dresses will go on doing well with infants in masquerade. There are moments when the arrival of Cronus to swallow the whole family of painted babes, as he did his own, would be not unwelcome; when an artistic Herod would be applauded for a general massacre of the Burlington House innocents. But this may be only the jaundiced theory of a jaded critic. The mothers of England are a much more important set of judges, and they like the babies. Then the bishops, though a little monotonous, must be agreeable to their flocks; while the hunting dogs, and pugs, and kittens, and monks, and Venetian girls — *la blonde et la brune* — and the Highland rivers of the colour of porter “with a head on it,” and the mackerel-hued sea, and the marble, and the martyrs, and the Mediterranean — they are all dear to various classes of our teeming population. The critic may say he has seen them all before, he knows them off by heart; but then so does he know Raphael’s infants, and Botticelli’s madonnas, and Fra Angelico’s angel trumpeters, and Vecelli’s blue hills, and Robusti’s doges, and Lionardo’s smiling, enigmatic ladies. He does not say he is tired of these, but that is only his eternal affectation. He is afraid, perhaps, to say that the old masters bore him — that is a compliment reserved for contemporaries. Let it be admitted that in all ages artists have had their grooves, like other men, and have reproduced themselves and their own best effects. But, as this is inevitably true, how careful they should be that the effects are really of permanent value and beauty! Realistic hansom cabs, and babies in strange raiment, and schoolgirls of the last century, and Masters of Hounds, are scarcely of so much permanent value as the favourite types and characters which Lionardo and Carpaccio repeat again and again. We no more think Claude monotonous than we think “the quiet coloured end of evening” flat and stale. But we may, and must, tire of certain modern combinations too often rehearsed, after the trick has become a habit, and the method an open mystery.

THE DRY FLY.

As the Easter vacation approaches, the cockney angler, the "inveterate cockney," as Lord Salisbury did or did not say, begins to look to his fishing tackle. Now comes in the sweet of the year, and we may regret, with Mr. Swinburne, that "such sweet things should be fleet, such fleet things sweet." There are not many days that the London trout-fisher gets by the waterside. The streams worth his attention, and also within his reach, are few, and either preserved so that he cannot approach them, or harried by poachers as well as anglers. How much happier were men in Walton's day who stretched their legs up Tottenham Hill and soon found, in the Lea, trout which would take a worm when the rod was left to fish for itself! In those old days Hackney might be called a fishing village. There was in Walton's later years a writer on fishing named W. Gilbert, "Gent." This gent produced a small work called the "Angler's Delight," and if the angler was delighted, he must have been very easily pleased. The book now sells for large sums, apparently because it is scarce, for it is eminently worthless. The gentle writer, instead of giving directions about fly-dressing, calmly tells his readers to go and buy his flies at a little shop "near Powle's." To the "Angler's Delight" this same W. Gilbert added a tract on "The Hackney River, and the best stands there." Now there are no stands there, except cabstands, which of course are uninteresting to the angler. Two hundred years have put his fishing far away from him.

However, the ancient longing lives in him, and the Sunday morning trains from Paddington are full of early fishing-men. But it cannot be that most of them are after trout, the Thames trout being so artful that it needs a week's work and private information to come to terms with him. Hitherto he has been spun for chiefly, or coaxed with live bait; but now people think that a good big loch fly may win his affections. It is to be hoped that this view is correct, for the attempts by spinning and with live bait are calculated to stretch and crack even the proverbial patience of anglers. Persons conscious of less enduring mettle in their mind will soon be off to the moorland waters of Devonshire, or the Border, where trout are small, fairly plentiful, and come early into season. About the upper waters of Severn, where Sabrina is still unvexed by pollution, and where the stream is not greater than Tweed at Peebles, sport is fair in spring.

Though the Devonshire, and Border, and probably the Welsh waters, are just in their prime, the season is not yet for the Itchen and the Kennet, with their vast over-educated and over-fed monsters of the deep. Though there may be respectable angling for accomplished artists thereabouts in late April and May, the true sport does not begin till the May-fly comes in, which he generally does in June. Then the Kennet is a lovely and seductive spectacle to the angler. Between the turns of sun and shower the most beautiful delicate insects, frail as gossamer and fair as a fairy, are born, and flit for their hour, and float down the water, soon to be swallowed by the big four-pound trout. He who has no experience of this angling, and who comes to it from practice in the North, at first thinks he cannot go wrong. There is the smooth clear water, broken every moment by a trout's nose, just gently pushed up, but indicating, by the size of the ripple, that a monster is feeding below. You think, if you are accustomed to less experienced fish, that all is well. You throw your flies, two or three, a yard above the ripple, and wait to strike. But the ripples instantly cease, and on the surface of the water you see the long thin track of a broad back and huge dorsal fin. The trout has been, not frightened — he is in no hurry — but disgusted by your clumsy cast, which would readily have taken in a sea-trout or a loch-trout. They of Kennet and Test know a good deal better than to approach your wet flies. A few minutes of this failure reduce the novice to the despair of Tantalus. *He* never was set to such a torture as casting over big feeding trout and never getting a rise. You feel inclined to throw your fly-book bodily at the heads of the trout and bid them take their choice of its contents. That method of angling would be quite as successful as angling for large southern trout in the northern manner. So the novice either loses his temper and walks away to take his ease and some shandy-gaff at the Bear, or he sits down to smoke, or he potters botanically among the flowering water-weeds. Then a southern angler comes near, and is presently playing a trout which the northern man has not "put down," or frightened into total abstinence for the day. Then the true method of fishing for trout in a clear stream is illustrated in practice, and a beautiful and most delicate art it proves to be.

First, the angler notices a rising fish. Then he retires to a safe distance from the bank, outflanks the trout, and comes round in his rear. As fish always feed with their heads up stream, it is necessary in such clear water to fish for them from below, from as far below as possible. Every advantage is taken of cover, and the angler soon acquires the habits of a skirmisher. A tuft of rushes, an inequality in the ground, or an alder bush conceals him; behind this he kneels, and gets his tackle in order. He uses only one fly, not two or three, as people do on the Border. He carefully measures his ground, flicking his cast through the air, so that the fly shall be perfectly dry. Then the trout rises, and in a moment the dry fly descends as lightly as a living insect, half a foot above the ripple.

Down it floats, the fisher watching with a beating heart: then there is a ripple, then a splash; the rod bends nearly double, the line flies out to the further bank, and the struggle begins. The fight is by no means over, for the fish instinctively makes for a bed of weeds, where he can entangle and break the line, while the angler holds him as hard as he dares, and, if tackle be sound and luck goes not contrary, the big trout is landed at last.

This is no trifling victory. Nay, a Kennet trout is far harder to catch and kill than the capricious salmon, which will often take a fly, however clumsy be the man who casts it. There is a profane theory that several members of the Hungerford Club never catch the trout they pay so much to have the privilege of trying to capture. A very sure eye and clever hand are needed to make the fly light dry and neat so close above the fish that he has not time to be alarmed by the gut. “Gut-shy” he is, and the less he sees of it the better. Moreover, a wonderful temper is required, for in the backward cast of the long line the hook will, ten to one, catch in a tree, or a flower, or a straw, or a bit of hay, and then it has to be disengaged by the angler crawling on hands and knees. Perhaps a northern angler will never quite master the delicacy of this sport, nor acquire the entomological knowledge which seems to be necessary, nor make up his mind between the partisans of the light one-handed rod and the double-handed rod.

AMATEUR AUTHORS.

Literature knows no Trades Unions, but if things go on as they are at present, perhaps we shall hear of literary rattening and picketing. The *Kölnische Zeitung*, in Germany, has been protesting against the mob of noble ladies who write with ease, though their works, even to persons acquainted with the German tongue, are by no means easy reading. The Teutonic paper requests these ambitious dames to conduct themselves as amateurs, to write, if write they must, but to print only a few copies of their books, and give these few copies only to their friends. This is advice as morally excellent as it will be practically futile, nor does it apply only to ladies of rank, but to amateur novelists in general. The old quarrel between artists and amateurs is fiercely waged in dramatic society, perhaps because actors and actresses feel the stress of competing with cheap amateur labour. Now, though the professional novelist has only of late begun to think seriously of the subject, it is plain that he too is competing with labour unnaturally cheap, and is losing in the competition. To define an amateur is difficult, as all athletic clubs and rowing clubs are aware. But in this particular field of human industry, the amateur may be defined with ease. The amateur novelist is not merely the person who, having another profession, writes a romance by way of "by-work," as the Greeks called it. Lord Beaconsfield was no amateur in romance, and perhaps no novel was ever sold at so high a ransom as "Endymion." Yet Lord Beaconsfield only scribbled in his idle hours, and was not half so much an amateur novelist as Mr. Gladstone is an amateur student of Homer. No; the true amateur is he or she who publishes at his or her own expense. The labour of such persons is not only cheap; its rewards may be estimated by a frightful minus quantity — the publisher's bill. Every one must have observed that when his box of books comes from the circulating library, it by no means contains the books he has asked the librarian to send. The batch does not exclusively consist of the plums and prizes of the publishing season, of Sir Henry Gordon's book on his illustrious brother, of the most famous novel of the month, of Mr. Romilly's "New Guinea and the Western Pacific" — as diverting a book of travel as ever was written, of Mr. Stockton's "Mrs. Null," and generally of all that is freshest and most notable in biography, fiction, and history. A few of the peaches of the best quality there are, but the rest are fruit less valued, are, in fact, amateur novels. There are two sets of three gaudy novels by unheard-of ladies; and perhaps three shilling novels, with such titles as

"Who Did It?" "Chopped in Cover," or "Under a Cloud," none of which names we trust are copyright. A similar phenomenon presents itself at the bookstalls, which are choked with cheap and unenticing brief tales of the deadly sins. And whose fault is it that we do not get the good books and are flooded with the bad books? Why, it is the fault of the ambitious amateur, of the ladies and gentlemen who publish at their own risk, and at the cost of the world of readers and professional writers.

This is, with a few remarkable limitations, a free country. No law exists which says to publishers, "Thou shalt not publish on commission." No law confines the vagaries of amateur romance. Hence the market is choked, and the circulating libraries are overwhelmed with rubbish, and good books, as the Americans of the West say, "get no show." The debauched novel reader, to whom every story is a story, and one no better nor worse than another, may not heed it, but the judicious grieve, and the artist in fiction returns a smaller income tax. Then the very revenue suffers with the general decline of letters. It may, of course, be urged that all artists are amateurs before they secure a paying public. The amateur novelist may be compared to the young dramatic author who gives his piece at a *matinée*, and who, once in a hundred times, finds a manager to approve it. May not publishing *en amateur* be the only way of reaching the public? To this question the answer is, No! The risk of publishing a novel by a new author is nothing like so great as the risk of producing a play with an unknown name to it. Publishers exist for the purpose of bringing out books that will pay, and they generally pounce on a good manuscript in fiction, whether the writer be known or unknown. It is much more easy to predict whether a novel will pay or not than to prophecy about a drama. Thus the most obscure author (in spite of the difficulties faced by "Jane Eyre" and "Vanity Fair") may rely on it, that if his MS. is not accepted, it is not worth accepting. He should not, if he has decently sound reasons for self-confidence, be disheartened by two or three refusals. One man's taste might be averse to "John Inglesant," another's might turn against Ouida, a third might fail to see the merit of "Vice Versâ." But if half a dozen experts taste and reject a manuscript, it is almost certain to be hopeless. Then the author should take the advice once offered by Mr. Walter Besant. "*Never* publish at your own expense." If you do, you stamp yourself as an amateur; you add to the crowd of futilities that choke the market; and, if you have it in you to write a novel which shall be a good piece, you are handicapping yourself by placing a bad novel on your record. People sin out of thoughtlessness, as well as depravity, and we would not say that every amateur novelist is, *ex officio*, infamous, nefarious, and felonious. He or she may be only rather vain, conceited, and unreflecting.

Where, then, is the remedy if homilies fail to convert the sinner, as, indeed, it is the misfortune of homilies to fail? The remedy will be found in a Novelists' League, with tickets, and boycotting, and strikes, and rattening, and all the other devices for getting our own way in an oppressive world. There will be a secret society of professionals. Lady novelists (amateurs) will be rattened; their blotting-paper and French dictionaries will be stolen or destroyed; their publishers will be boycotted by all members of the League, who will decline to publish with any man known to deal with amateurs. Nay, so powerful is this dread and even criminal confederacy, that amateurs will not even be reviewed. Neither the slashing, nor the puffing, nor the faintly praising notice will be meted out to them. There will be a conspiracy of silence. The very circulating libraries will be threatened, and coffins (stolen from undertakers who dabble in romance) will be laid at Mr. Mudie's door, unless he casts off the amateur in fiction. The professionals will march through rapine to emancipation. They will strike off the last gyves that fetter the noble art of romance, and in five or six years we shall have only about a tenth of the present number of romances, but that tenth will pass through as many editions as "The Pilgrim's Progress," which, by the way, was probably, like Ronsard's poems, the work of an amateur. But these were other times, when an author did not expect to make money, and thought himself lucky if, after a slashing personal review by the Inquisition, his fragments were not burned at the stake in a bonfire of his volumes.

SOME RARE THINGS FOR SALE.

An American writer has been complaining lately that his countrymen have lost the habit of reading. This is partly the result of that free trade in English books which is the only form of free trade that suits the American Constitution. People do not buy American books any longer, because they can get English works, mere printed rags, but paying nothing to English authors, for a few cents. The rags, of course, fall to pieces, and are tossed into the waste-paper basket, and thus a habit of desultoriness and of abstention from books worth styling books grows and grows, like a noxious and paralysing parasite, over the American intellect. In this way our pleasant vices are made instruments to plague us, and the condition of the law, which leaves the British authors at the mercy of the Aldens and Monros of the States, is beginning to react on the buyers of goods indelicately obtained. Even newspaper articles are becoming, it is said, a heavy and a weary weight on the demoralised attention, and people are ceasing to read anything but brief and probably personal paragraphs, such as "Joaquin Miller has had his hair cut."

This is a deplorable condition of things, and perhaps not quite without example at home, where, however, many people still intend to read books, and order them at the libraries, though they never really carry out intentions which, like those of Wilkins Micawber the younger, are excellent. To persons conscious of mental debility and incapable of grappling even with a short shilling novel, a brief and easy form of reading may be recommended. They may study catalogues; they may peruse the lists of their wares which secondhand booksellers and dealers in all kinds of curiosities circulate gratis. This is the only kind of circular which should not go straight to its long home in the waste-paper basket. A catalogue is full of information. It is so exceedingly inconsecutive that even the most successful barrister, or doctor, or stockbroker (they are the people that read least) need not be fatigued by its contents. The catalogue skips from gay to grave, from Tupper to Aretino, from Dickens to "Drelincourt on Death." You can pick it up where you like, and lay it down when your poor fagged attention is distracted by a cab in the street, or a bird in the branches. Then there is the pleasure of marking with a pencil the articles which you would buy if you could — the Nankin double bottle, the old novel bound in the arms of the Comtesse de Verrue, the picture ascribed to the school of Potto Pottoboileri. Of course, in these bad times, such purchases are out of the question, but the taste and judgment are gratified by “marking them down,” like partridges in September.

These contemplative reveries on catalogues have been inspired by a catalogue, not without its merits — a list of relics of Mexican history now to be sold. The curious may find it for themselves, the wealthy may speculate in the treasures which it advertises. Here is a piece of the Emperor Maximilian’s waistcoat, “same in which they shot him,” to employ an idiom of Captain Rawdon Crawley’s. There are many relics of the same recent and troublous times; but the amateur is more strongly attracted by a very singular series of objects of the times of the Spanish Conquest, nearly four hundred years ago. It is not so much the obsidian idols, made of that curious bottle-glass-like mineral so fashionable among the Aztecs, as the authentic remains of Fernando Cortes that the collector will covet. What man had ever such fortune as Cortes — he who discovered a new world as strange as a new planet? He conquered a great civilized race, he overthrew a dynasty, not only of mortals, but of gods. Huitzilopochtli and Quetzalcoatl fled from him, and their hideous priests, draped and masked in skins fresh flayed from beasts or men, vanished at his coming, as Isis, Osiris, and the dog Anubis fled from the folding star of Bethlehem. He fought battles like the visions of romance, and he took great and stately cities, with all their temples and towers, which a month before were as unknown to Europeans as the capitals of Mars and Sirius. The wonderful catalogue of which we speak is rich in relics of this hero. We are offered a chance to buy his “trunk,” a carved wooden trunk in which Cortes carried his personal property. His army chest, which held the sacred gold of Montesuma and the treasure of the Temple of the Sun, is to be sold for a consideration. His pistols are also on sale, and his “field-glass,” which must be an exceedingly early example of that useful invention. Whether the field-glass is binocular or not, the catalogue does not pause to inform us. Corslets worn by his brave Castilians are also to be vended, perhaps the very leather and steel that guarded the honest heart of good Bernal Diaz. But all these treasures, and even the very “scissors” of Fernando Cortes, are less enticingly romantic than the iron head of Alvarado’s spear. Surely no spear since that of Peleus’ son, not to be wielded by meaner men, has ever been so well worth acquiring as the spear of Alvarado, Tonatrish the sun-god, as he was called by the Mexicans, by reason of his long, bright, golden hair. This may have been, probably was, the spear that Alvarado bore when he charged up the steps of the great Teocalli or God’s house, rained upon by Aztec darts, driving before him the hordes of heathendom. With this very spear, when the summit was gained, he may have fought in that strange fight, high in air, beheld by all the people of the city and all the allies of Spain. Here stood the Christian cross; there was planted the war-god, Huitzilopochtli; there the two faiths fought out their battle, and the vanquished were tossed dying down the sides of the Teocalli. Then the Spaniard was victorious; fire was set to the Teocalli, and the cannibal Aztec religion rolled away in the clouds of smoke and vapour of flame. With the self-same spear (no doubt) did Alvarado make his famous leap, using it as a leaping pole to clear the canal during the retreat of the Night of Dread. Assuredly Alvarado's spear, or even the iron head of it alone, is an object worthy of an archæologist's regard, and scarce less curious than that

"Broomstick o' the Witch of Endor,
Weel shod wi' brass,"

which Burns describes in the collection of Captain Grove. But extraordinary as is the charm of these relics of Anahuac and of Castille, perhaps even more engrossing is the last article in this romantic catalogue, namely, "a green portfolio" giving an account of the various articles, and how they came into the hands of their proprietor. Their pedigree, if authentic, must be most important.

Probably the most inattentive mind, even in the holidays, could "tackle" a catalogue like this, or another in which the snuff-box of Xerxes and the boot-jack of Themistocles should be offered for sale. These antiquities seem scarcely less desirable, or less likely to come into the market, than the scissors, pistols, and field-glass of Fernando Cortes. An original portion of the Tables of the Law (broken on a familiar occasion by the prophet), Hannibal's cigarette case, a landing net (at one time in the possession of Alcibiades), a piece of chalk used by Archimedes in his mathematical demonstrations, the bronze shoe of Empedocles, the arrow on which Abaris flew, and the walking-stick, a considerable piece of timber, which Dr. Johnson lost in Mull, may all be reposing in some private collection. Collectors do get very odd things together. Poor M. Soleirol had quite a gallery of portraits and autographs of Molière, and a French mathematician, about a dozen years ago, possessed an assortment of apocryphal letters from almost every one mentioned in history, sacred or profane. The collection of Mr. Samuel Ireland was like this, and an English student possessed autographs of most of the great reformers, carefully written by an ingenious swindler in contemporary books. The lovers of relics are apt to be thus deluded, and perhaps we should not regret this, as long as they are happy. But they should be very careful indeed when they are asked to buy Alvarado's spear, though probably it is extant somewhere, as it certainly is in the catalogue. It is a question of caution in the purchaser.

CURIOSITY HUNTING.

What will people not collect in this curious age, and what prices will they not pay for things apparently valueless? Few objects can seem less desirable than an old postage-stamp, yet our Paris correspondent informs us that postage-stamps are at a premium in the capital of taste and of pleasure. A well-known dealer offers £4 15*s*. for every Tuscan stamp earlier than 1860, and £16 for particularly fine examples. Mauritius stamps of 1847 are estimated — by the purchaser, mind — at two thousand francs, and post-marks of British Guiana of 1836, from five hundred to a thousand francs. Eighty pounds for a soiled bit of paper, that has no beauty to recommend it! Probably no drawing of equal size from the very hand of Raffaelle or Leonardo would be priced nearly so high as these grubby old stamps. Yet the drawing would be not only a thing of art, beautiful in itself, but also a personal relic of the famous artist whose pencil touched it, while a stamp is a relic of nothing but some forgotten postal arrangement with a colony. We do not know, moreover, how much the dealer will ask for these stamps when once he gets hold of them and has rich collectors at his mercy. In no trade do the buyer’s price and the seller’s price differ with such wide margins as in the commerce of curiosities, especially, perhaps, in the book-trade. People find that they possess books highly priced in dealers’ catalogues, and, if they want money, they carry their treasures to the dealers. But “advantage seldom comes of it.” The dealer has a different price, very often, when he is a purchaser. This is intelligible, but, to many persons who are not amateurs, the mania for rare postage-stamps passes all understanding. Yet it is capable of being explained. Like many other oddities and puzzling features in the ways of collectors, the high price of certain stamps is the consequence of the passion for perfection. Any one can collect stamps — little boys and schoolgirls often do. But there comes a point at which foreign stamps and old stamps grow rare, and more rare, and, finally, next to impossible to procure. Here it is that the heart of the mature collector begins to beat. He is determined to have a perfect collection. Nothing shall escape him in the way of printed franks on letters. Now, nineteen-twentieths of his assortment he can buy in the gross, without trouble or great expense; but the last twentieth demands personal care and attention, and the hunting up of old family letters, and the haunting of great dealers’ shops, and peeping through dirty windows in shady lanes and alleys. As he gets nearer and nearer a complete collection the spoil grows more and more shy, the excitement faster and more furious, till, finally, the amateur would sell an estate for a square inch of paper, and turn large England to a little stamp, if he had the opportunity. The fury of the pastime is caused by the presence of definite limits. There is only a certain known number of stamps in the world. This limit makes perfection possible.

It is not as if you were collecting really beautiful things like Tanagra terra-cottas, or really rare and quaint and mysterious things like aggery beads. Though Tanagra terra-cottas, and aggery beads, and fine examples of Moorish lustre, or of ancient Nankin, or of gold coins of the Roman Empire, are all rare, yet there is no definite limit to their number. More may turn up any day when the pickaxe breaks into a new Tanagra cemetery, when a fallen palm in Ashanti brings up aggery beads clinging to its earthy roots, when a pot of coins is found by some old Roman way, and so forth. To be sure, perfection may be attained in coin collecting, when a man has specimens of all known sorts, but even then he will pine for better specimens, for the best specimens. In the other branches of the sport we have mentioned the collector may be eager, of course, for good things, but he can never know the passion of the stampomaniac who has all sorts but three, and finds these within his reach. Perfection is within a step of such a man, and that step we fear he will take, even if it involves ever so many breaches of the Decalogue. In one of this month's magazines, in a story called "Mr. Pierrepoint's Repentance," Mr. Grant Allen tells the tale of a coin collector's infamy, and that coin collector a clergyman and fellow of his college. A pope is said to have stolen a rare book from a painter, and it is certain that enthusiastic collectors are apt to have "their moral tone lowered some," as the American gentleman said about the lady whom he had wooed with intentions less than honourable.

A good example of the toils of the collector in pursuit of perfection is given by M. Henri Beraldi in his very amusing catalogue of M. Paillet's library. This book, by the way, is itself scarce, and the bibliomaniac will be rather lucky if he meets with it. M. Beraldi describes M. Paillet's copy of Dorat's "Fables," published in 1773, with illustrations by Marillier. Nobody perhaps ever reads Dorat now, but his book came out in the very palmiest days of the art of illustration in France. There were no *photogravures* then, nor hideous, scratchy, and seamy "processes," such as almost make one despair of progress and of the future of humanity. The people that takes to "processes" is lost! The illustrations of the "Fables" were duly engraved on copper. There were ninety-nine vignettes, and as many tail-pieces. The bibliographical history of the book is instructive, either to young collectors or to the common herd, not to speak impolitely — the persons who do not understand what collectors want. The

“Fables” were originally published on three different sorts of paper, Dutch paper at seventy-two francs, French paper at twenty-nine francs, and on “small paper” at twenty-four francs. In 1853 the original drawings were bought by one of the Rothschilds for about £60; they would now, probably, be worth at least £1,000. The ordinary copies of the book itself bring about £6, the large paper copies about £30, and a copy in old morocco can hardly be estimated — you may pay anything for it, as a copy in old calf has sold for £240.

Such is the natural history of a book pretty valueless as literature, the “Fables” of Dorat. In the early edition of “Brunet’s Manual,” published in 1821, the large paper copies of the work, with the engravings in the earliest state, are priced at from fifteen to eighteen francs. These vignettes had gone out of fashion; they have come in again with a vengeance. The high prices, eighty or a hundred pounds, are merely the beginning of what the great collectors are ready to pay, and to do, and to suffer in the cause of Dorat. In M. Cohen’s catalogue of all these old illustrated books special mention is made of M. Paillet’s copy of the “Fables.” It is “a superb example, with all the engravings printed separately.” But M. Paillet describes this specimen far more lovingly. All the designs are separately printed, and, oh joy! all have all their margins uncut. The book is “all that man can dream of” in the way of perfection. Cuzin did the binding, in yellow morocco, tooled with roses and butterflies. “Reader,” cries M. Beraldi, “if you are not a collector you cannot imagine the difficulty of getting such a copy. It is the thirteenth labour of Hercules.” First you buy your text, then you must have the separately printed *fleurons*. These can only be picked up here and there, in sales and stalls. Perhaps you purchase half of them in one lucky investment. With no great difficulty you secure another lot. Then begins the hunt — you buy assortments at the price of bank notes, merely for the sake of two or three out of the mass. You offer to barter twenty-five for one you have not got. Then you have all but three, which you demand from the universe at large: then all but two; then all but one. What you pay for that one you keep a profound secret, lest your family should have you put under control. Even then you are not safe, for some of your engravings have false margins, and must be changed for entire examples. Such are the joys of the collector, for shadows we are and engravings *à toutes marges* we pursue.

HOW TO FAIL IN LITERATURE; A LECTURE

PREFACE

This Lecture was delivered at the South Kensington Museum, in aid of the College for Working Men and Women. As the Publishers, perhaps erroneously, believe that some of the few authors who were not present may be glad to study the advice here proffered, the Lecture is now printed. It has been practically re-written, and, like the kiss which the Lady returned to Rodolphe, is revu, corrigé, et considerablement augmenté.

A. L.

HOW TO FAIL IN LITERATURE

What should be a man's or a woman's reason for taking literature as a vocation, what sort of success ought they to desire, what sort of ambition should possess them? These are natural questions, now that so many readers exist in the world, all asking for something new, now that so many writers are making their pens "in running to devour the way" over so many acres of foolscap. The legitimate reasons for enlisting (too often without receiving the shilling) in this army of writers are not far to seek. A man may be convinced that he has useful, or beautiful, or entertaining ideas within him, he may hold that he can express them in fresh and charming language. He may, in short, have a "vocation," or feel conscious of a vocation, which is not exactly the same thing. There are "many thyrsus bearers, few mystics," many are called, few chosen. Still, to be sensible of a vocation is something, nay, is much, for most of us drift without any particular aim or predominant purpose. Nobody can justly censure people whose chief interest is in letters, whose chief pleasure is in study or composition, who rejoice in a fine sentence as others do in a well modelled limb, or a delicately touched landscape, nobody can censure them for trying their fortunes in literature. Most of them will fail, for, as the bookseller's young man told an author once, they have the poetic temperament, without the poetic power. Still among these whom *Pendennis* has tempted, in boyhood, to run away from school to literature as Marryat has tempted others to run away to sea, there must be some who will succeed. But an early and intense ambition is not everything, any more than a capacity for taking pains is everything in literature or in any art.

Some have the gift, the natural incommunicable power, without the ambition, others have the ambition but no other gift from any Muse. This class is the more numerous, but the smallest class of all has both the power and the will to excel in letters. The desire to write, the love of letters may shew itself in childhood, in boyhood, or youth, and mean nothing at all, a mere harvest of barren blossom without fragrance or fruit. Or, again, the concern about letters may come suddenly, when a youth that cared for none of those things is waning, it may come when a man suddenly finds that he has something which he really must tell. Then he probably fumbles about for a style, and his first fresh impulses are more or less marred by his inexperience of an art which beguiles and fascinates others even in their school-days.

It is impossible to prophesy the success of a man of letters from his early promise, his early tastes; as impossible as it is to predict, from her childish grace, the beauty of a woman.

But the following remarks on How to fail in Literature are certainly meant to discourage nobody who loves books, and has an impulse to tell a story, or to try a song or a sermon. Discouragements enough exist in the pursuit of this, as of all arts, crafts, and professions, without my adding to them. Famine and Fear crouch by the portals of literature as they crouch at the gates of the Virgilian Hades. There is no more frequent cause of failure than doubt and dread; a beginner can scarcely put his heart and strength into a work when he knows how long are the odds against his victory, how difficult it is for a new man to win a hearing, even though all editors and publishers are ever pining for a new man. The young fellow, unknown and unwelcomed, who can sit down and give all his best of knowledge, observation, humour, care, and fancy to a considerable work has got courage in no common portion; he deserves to triumph, and certainly should not be disheartened by our old experience. But there be few beginners of this mark, most begin so feebly because they begin so fearfully. They are already too discouraged, and can scarce do themselves justice. It is easier to write more or less well and agreeably when you are certain of being published and paid, at least, than to write well when a dozen rejected manuscripts are cowering (as Theocritus says) in your chest, bowing their pale faces over their chilly knees, outcast, hungry, repulsed from many a door. To write excellently, brightly, powerfully, with these poor unwelcomed wanderers, returned MSS., in your possession, is difficult indeed. It might be wiser to do as M. Guy de Maupassant is rumoured to have done, to write for seven years, and shew your essays to none but a mentor as friendly severe as M. Flaubert. But all men cannot have such mentors, nor can all afford so long an unremunerative apprenticeship. For some the better plan is *not* to linger on the bank, and take tea and good advice, as Keats said, but to plunge at once in mid-stream, and learn swimming of necessity.

One thing, perhaps, most people who succeed in letters so far as to keep themselves alive and clothed by their pens will admit, namely, that their early rejected MSS. *deserved to be rejected*. A few days ago there came to the writer an old forgotten beginner’s attempt by himself. Whence it came, who sent it, he knows not; he had forgotten its very existence. He read it with curiosity; it was written in a very much better hand than his present scrawl, and was perfectly legible. But *readable* it was not. There was a great deal of work in it, on an out of the way topic, and the ideas were, perhaps, not quite without novelty at the time of its composition. But it was cramped and thin, and hesitating between several manners; above all it was uncommonly dull. If it ever was sent to an editor, as I presume it must have been, that editor was trebly justified in declining it. On the other hand, to be egotistic, I have known editors reject the attempts of those old days, and afterwards express lively delight in them when they struggled into print, somehow, somewhere. These worthy men did not even know that they had despised and refused what they came afterwards rather to enjoy.

Editors and publishers, these keepers of the gates of success, are not infallible, but their opinion of a beginner's work is far more correct than his own can ever be. They should not depress him quite, but if they are long unanimous in holding him cheap, he is warned, and had better withdraw from the struggle. He is either incompetent, or he has the makings of a Browning. He is a genius born too soon. He may readily calculate the chances in favour of either alternative.

So much by way of not damping all neophytes equally: so much we may say about success before talking of the easy ways that lead to failure. And by success here is meant no glorious triumph; the laurels are not in our thoughts, nor the enormous opulence (about a fourth of a fortunate barrister's gains) which falls in the lap of a Dickens or a Trollope. Faint and fleeting praise, a crown with as many prickles as roses, a modest hardly-gained competence, a good deal of envy, a great deal of gossip — these are the rewards of genius which constitute a modern literary success. Not to reach the moderate competence in literature is, for a professional man of letters of all work, something like failure. But in poetry to-day a man may succeed, as far as his art goes, and yet may be unread, and may publish at his own expense, or not publish at all. He pleases himself, and a very tiny audience: I do not call that failure. I regard failure as the goal of ignorance, incompetence, lack of common sense, conceited dulness, and certain practical blunders now to be explained and defined.

The most ambitious may accept, without distrust, the following advice as to How to fail in Literature. The advice is offered by a mere critic, and it is an axiom of the Arts that the critics "are the fellows who have failed," or have not succeeded. The persons who really can paint, or play, or compose seldom tell us how it is done, still less do they review the performances of their contemporaries. That invidious task they leave to the unsuccessful novelists. The instruction, the advice are offered by the persons who cannot achieve performance. It is thus that all things work together in favour of failure, which, indeed, may well appear so easy that special instruction, however competent, is a luxury rather than a necessary. But when we look round on the vast multitude of writers who, to all seeming, deliberately aim at failure, who take every precaution in favour of failure that untutored inexperience can suggest, it becomes plain that education in ill-success, is really a popular want. In the following remarks some broad general principles, making disaster almost inevitable, will first be offered, and then special methods of failing in all special departments of letters will be ungrudgingly communicated. It is not enough to attain failure, we should deserve it. The writer, by way of insuring complete confidence, would modestly mention that he has had ample opportunities of study in this branch of knowledge. While sifting for five or six years the volunteered contributions to a popular periodical, he has received and considered some hundredweights of manuscript. In all these myriad contributions he has not found thirty pieces which rose even to the ordinary dead level of magazine work. He has thus enjoyed unrivalled chances of examining such modes of missing success as spontaneously occur to the human intellect, to the unaided ingenuity of men, women, and children.

He who would fail in literature cannot begin too early to neglect his education, and to adopt every opportunity of not observing life and character. None of us is so young but that he may make himself perfect in writing an illegible hand. This method, I am bound to say, is too frequently overlooked. Most manuscripts by ardent literary volunteers are fairly legible. On the other hand there are novelists, especially ladies, who not only write a hand wholly declining to let itself be deciphered, but who fill up the margins with interpolations, who write between the lines, and who cover the page with scratches running this way and that, intended to direct the attention to after-thoughts inserted here and there in corners and on the backs of sheets. To pin in scraps of closely written paper and backs of envelopes adds to the security for failure, and produces a rich anger in the publisher’s reader or the editor.

The cultivation of a bad handwriting is an elementary precaution, often overlooked. Few need to be warned against having their MSS. typewritten, this gives them a chance of being read with ease and interest, and this must be neglected by all who have really set their hearts on failure. In the higher matters of education it is well to be as ignorant as possible. No knowledge comes amiss to the true man of letters, so they who court disaster should know as little as may be.

Mr. Stevenson has told the attentive world how, in boyhood, he practised himself in studying and imitating the styles of famous authors of every age. He who aims at failure must never think of style, and should sedulously abstain from reading Shakespeare, Bacon, Hooker, Walton, Gibbon, and other English and foreign classics. He can hardly be too reckless of grammar, and should always place adverbs and other words between “to” and the infinitive, thus: “Hubert was determined to energetically and on all possible occasions, oppose any attempt to entangle him with such.” Here, it will be noticed, “such” is used as a pronoun, a delightful flower of speech not to be disregarded by authors who would fail. But some one may reply that several of our most popular novelists revel in the kind of grammar which I am recommending. This is undeniable, but certain people manage to succeed in spite of their own earnest endeavours and startling demerits. There is no royal road to failure. There is no rule without its exception, and it may be urged that the works of the gentlemen and ladies who "break Priscian's head" — as they would say themselves — may be successful, but are not literature. Now it is about literature that we are speaking.

In the matter of style, there is another excellent way. You need not neglect it, but you may study it wrongly. You may be affectedly self-conscious, you may imitate the ingenious persons who carefully avoid the natural word, the spontaneous phrase, and employ some other set of terms which can hardly be construed. You may use, like a young essayist whom I have lovingly observed, a proportion of eighty adjectives to every sixty-five other words of all denominations. You may hunt for odd words, and thrust them into the wrong places, as where you say that a man's nose is "beetling," that the sun sank in "a cauldron of daffodil chaos," and the like. You may use common words in an unwonted sense, keeping some private interpretation clearly before you. Thus you may speak, if you like to write partly in the tongue of Hellas, about "assimilating the *êthos*" of a work of art, and so write that people shall think of the processes of digestion. You may speak of "exhausting the beauty" of a landscape, and, somehow, convey the notion of sucking an orange dry. Or you may wildly mix your metaphors, as when a critic accuses Mr. Browning of "giving the irridescence of the poetic afflatus," as if the poetic afflatus were blown through a pipe, into soap, and produced soap bubbles. This is a more troublesome method than the mere picking up of every newspaper commonplace that floats into your mind, but it is equally certain to lead — where you want to go. By combining the two fashions a great deal may be done. Thus you want to describe a fire at sea, and you say, "the devouring element lapped the quivering spars, the mast, and the sea-shouldering keel of the doomed *Mary Jane* in one coruscating catastrophe. The sea deeps were incarnadined to an alarming extent by the flames, and to escape from such many plunged headlong in their watery bier."

As a rule, authors who would fail stick to one bad sort of writing; either to the newspaper commonplace, or to the out of the way and inappropriate epithets, or to the common word with a twist on it. But there are examples of the combined method, as when we call the trees round a man's house his "domestic boscage." This combination is difficult, but perfect for its purpose. You cannot write worse than "such." To attain perfection the young aspirant should confine his reading to the newspapers (carefully selecting his newspapers, for many of them will not help him to write ill) and to those modern authors who are most praised for their style by the people who know least about the matter. Words like "fictional" and "fictive" are distinctly to be recommended, and there are epithets such as "weird," "strange," "wild," "intimate," and the rest, which blend pleasantly with "all the time" for "always"; "back of" for "behind"; "belong with" for "belong to"; "live like I do" for "as I do." The authors who combine those charms are rare, but we can strive to be among them.

In short, he who would fail must avoid simplicity like a sunken reef, and must earnestly seek either the commonplace or the *bizarre*, the slipshod or the affected, the newfangled or the obsolete, the flippant or the sepulchral. I need not specially recommend you to write in "Wardour-street English," the sham archaic, a lingo never spoken by mortal man, and composed of patches borrowed from authors between Piers Plowman and Gabriel Harvey. A few literal translations of Icelandic phrases may be thrown in; the result, as furniture-dealers say, is a "made-up article."

On the subject of style another hint may be offered. Style may be good in itself, but inappropriate to the subject. For example, style which may be excellently adapted to a theological essay, may be but ill-suited for a dialogue in a novel. There are subjects of which the poet says

Ornari res ipsa vetat, contenta doceri.

The matter declines to be adorned, and is content with being clearly stated. I do not know what would occur if the writer of the Money Article in the *Times* treated his topic with reckless gaiety. Probably that number of the journal in which the essay appeared would have a large sale, but the author might achieve professional failure; in the office. On the whole it may not be the wiser plan to write about the Origins of Religion in the style which might suit a study of the life of ballet dancers; the two MM. Halévy, the learned and the popular, would make a blunder if they exchanged styles. Yet Gibbon never denies himself a jest, and Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* was called *L'Esprit sur les Lois*. M. Renan's *Histoire d'Israel* may almost be called skittish. The French are more tolerant of those excesses than the English. It is a digression, but he who would fail can reach his end by not taking himself seriously. If he gives himself no important airs, whether out of a freakish humour, or real humility, depend upon it the public and the critics will take him at something under his own estimate. On the other hand, by copying the gravity of demeanour admired by Mr. Shandy in a celebrated parochial animal, even a very dull person may succeed in winning no inconsiderable reputation.

To return to style, and its appropriateness: all depends on the work in hand, and the audience addressed. Thus, in his valuable Essay on Style, Mr. Pater says, with perfect truth:

"The otiose, the facile, surplusage: why are these abhorrent to the true literary artist, except because, in literary as in all other arts, structure is all important, felt or painfully missed, everywhere? — that architectural conception of work, which foresees the end in the beginning, and never loses sight of it, and in every part is conscious of all the rest, till the last sentence does but, with undiminished vigour, unfold and justify the first — a condition of literary art, which, in contradistinction to another quality of the artist himself, to be spoken of later, I shall call the necessity of *mind* in style."

These are words which the writer should have always present to his memory, if he has something serious that he wants to say, or if he wishes to express himself in the classic and perfect manner. But if it is his fate merely to be obliged to say something, in the course of his profession, or if he is bid to discourse for the pleasure of readers in the Underground Railway, I fear he will often have to forget Mr. Pater. It may not be literature, the writing of *causeries*, of Roundabout Papers, of rambling articles "on a broomstick," and yet again, it *may* be literature! "Parallel, allusion, the allusive way generally, the flowers in the garden" — Mr. Pater charges heavily against these. The true artist "knows the narcotic force of these upon the negligent intelligence to which any *diversion*, literally, is welcome, any vagrant intruder, because one can go wandering away with it from the immediate subject . . . In truth all art does but consist in the removal of surplusage, from the last finish of the gem engraver blowing away the last particle of invisible dust, back to the earliest divination of the finished work to be lying somewhere, according to Michel Angelo's fancy, in the rough-hewn block of stone."

Excellent, but does this apply to every kind of literary art? What would become of Montaigne if you blew away his allusions, and drove him out of "the allusive way," where he gathers and binds so many flowers from all the gardens and all the rose-hung lanes of literature? Montaigne sets forth to write an Essay on Coaches. He begins with a few remarks on seasickness in the common pig; some notes on the Pont Neuf at Paris follow, and a theory of why tyrants are detested by men whom they have obliged; a glance at Coaches is then given, next a study of Montezuma's gardens, presently a brief account of the Spanish cruelties in Mexico and Peru, last — *retombons à nos coches* — he tells a tale of the Inca, and the devotion of his Guard: *Another for Hector*!

The allusive style has its proper place, like another, if it is used by the right man, and the concentrated and structural style has also its higher province. It would not do to employ either style in the wrong place. In a rambling discursive essay, for example, a mere straying after the bird in the branches, or the thorn in the way, he might not take the safest road who imitated Mr. Pater's style in what follows:

"In this way, according to the well-known saying, 'The style is the man,' complex or simple, in his individuality, his plenary sense of what he really has to say, his sense of the world: all cautions regarding style arising out of so many natural scruples as to the medium through which alone he can expose that inward sense of things, the purity of this medium, its laws or tricks of refraction: nothing is to be left there which might give conveyance to any matter save that." Clearly the author who has to write so that the man may read who runs will fail if he wrests this manner from its proper place, and uses it for casual articles: he will fail to hold the vagrom attention!

Thus a great deal may be done by studying inappropriateness of style, by adopting a style alien to our matter and to our audience. If we "haver" discursively about serious, and difficult, and intricate topics, we fail; and we fail if we write on happy, pleasant, and popular topics in an abstruse and intent, and analytic style. We fail, too, if in style we go outside our natural selves. "The style is the man," and the man will be nothing, and nobody, if he tries for an incongruous manner, not naturally his own, for example if Miss Yonge were suddenly to emulate the manner of Lever, or if Mr. John Morley were to strive to shine in the fashion of *Uncle Remus*, or if Mr. Rider Haggard were to be allured into imitation by the example, so admirable in itself, of the Master of Balliol. It is ourselves we must try to improve, our attentiveness, our interest in life, our seriousness of purpose, and then the style will improve with the self. Or perhaps, to be perfectly frank, we shall thus convert ourselves into prigs, throw ourselves out of our stride, lapse into self-consciousness, lose all that is natural, *naif*, and instinctive within us. Verily there are many dangers, and the paths to failure are infinite.

So much for style, of which it may generally be said that you cannot be too obscure, unnatural, involved, vulgar, slipshod, and metaphorical. See to it that your metaphors are mixed, though, perhaps, this attention is hardly needed. The free use of parentheses, in which a reader gets lost, and of unintelligible allusions, and of references to unread authors — the *Kalevala* and Lycophron, and the Scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius, is invaluable to this end. So much for manner, and now for matter.

The young author generally writes because he wants to write, either for money, from vanity, or in mere weariness of empty hours and anxiety to astonish his relations. This is well, he who would fail cannot begin better than by having nothing to say. The less you observe, the less you reflect, the less you put yourself in the paths of adventure and experience, the less you will have to say, and the more impossible will it be to read your work. Never notice people's manner, conduct, nor even dress, in real life. Walk through the world with your eyes and ears closed, and embody the negative results in a story or a poem. As to Poetry, with a fine instinct we generally begin by writing verse, because verse is the last thing that the public want to read. The young writer has usually read a great deal of verse, however, and most of it bad. His favourite authors are the bright lyrists who sing of broken hearts, wasted lives, early deaths, disappointment, gloom. Without having even had an unlucky flirtation, or without knowing what it is to lose a favourite cat, the early author pours forth laments, just like the laments he has been reading. He has too a favourite manner, the old consumptive manner, about the hectic flush, the fatal rose on the pallid cheek, about the ruined roof tree, the empty chair, the rest in the village churchyard. This is now a little *rococo* and forlorn, but failure may be assured by travelling in this direction. If you are ambitious to disgust an editor at once, begin your poem with "Only." In fact you may as well head the lyric "Only."

ONLY.

Only a spark of an ember,
   Only a leaf on the tree,
Only the days we remember,
   Only the days without thee.
Only the flower that thou worest,
   Only the book that we read,
Only that night in the forest,
   Only a dream of the dead,
Only the troth that was broken,
   Only the heart that is lonely,
Only the sigh and the token
   That sob in the saying of Only!

In literature this is a certain way of failing, but I believe a person might make a livelihood by writing verses like these — for music. Another good way is to be very economical in your rhymes, only two to the four lines, and regretfully vague. Thus:

SHADOWS.

In the slumber of the winter,
   In the secret of the snow,

What is the voice that is crying
   Out of the long ago?

When the accents of the children
   Are silent on the stairs,
When the poor forgets his troubles,
   And the rich forgets his cares.

What is the silent whisper
   That echoes in the room,
When the days are full of darkness,
   And the night is hushed in gloom?

’Tis the voice of the departed,
   Who will never come again,
Who has left the weary tumult,
   And the struggle and the pain.

And my heart makes heavy answer,
   To the voice that comes no more,
To the whisper that is welling
   From the far off happy shore.

If you are not satisfied with these simple ways of not succeeding, please try the Grosvenor Gallery style. Here the great point is to make the rhyme arrive at the end of a very long word, you should also be free with your alliterations.

LULLABY.

When the sombre night is dumb,
Hushed the loud chrysanthemum,
   Sister, sleep!
Sleep, the lissom lily saith,
Sleep, the poplar whispereth,
   Soft and deep!

Filmy floats the wild woodbine,
Jonquil, jacinth, jessamine,
  Float and flow.
Sleeps the water wild and wan,
As in far off Toltecan
  Mexico.

See, upon the sun-dial,
Waves the midnight’s misty pall,
  Waves and wakes.
As, in tropic Timbuctoo,
Water beasts go plashing through
  Lilied lakes!

Alliteration is a splendid source of failure in this sort of poetry, and adjectives like lissom, filmy, weary, weird, strange, make, or ought to make, the rejection of your manuscript a certainty. The poem should, as a rule, seem to be addressed to an unknown person, and should express regret and despair for circumstances in the past with which the reader is totally unacquainted. Thus:

GHOSTS.

We met at length, as Souls that sit
At funeral feast, and taste of it,
And empty were the words we said,
As fits the converse of the dead,
For it is long ago, my dear,
Since we two met in living cheer,
Yea, we have long been ghosts, you know,
And alien ways we twain must go,
Nor shall we meet in Shadow Land,
Till Time’s glass, empty of its sand,
Is filled up of Eternity.
Farewell — enough for once to die —
And far too much it is to dream,
And taste not the Lethæan stream,

But bear the pain of loves unwed
Even here, even here, among the dead!

That is a cheerful intelligible kind of melody, which is often practised with satisfactory results. Every form of imitation (imitating of course only the faults of a favourite writer) is to be recommended.

Imitation does a double service, it secures the failure of the imitator and also aids that of the unlucky author who is imitated. As soon as a new thing appears in literature, many people hurry off to attempt something of the same sort. It may be a particular trait and accent in poetry, and the public, weary of the mimicries, begin to dislike the original.

“Most can grow the flowers now,
 For all have got the seed;
And once again the people
 Call it but a weed.”

In fiction, if somebody brings in a curious kind of murder, or a study of religious problems, or a treasure hunt, or what you will, others imitate till the world is weary of murders, or theological flirtations, or the search for buried specie, and the original authors themselves will fail, unless they fish out something new, to be vulgarised afresh. Therefore, imitation is distinctly to be urged on the young author.

As a rule, his method is this, he reads very little, but all that he reads is *bad*. The feeblest articles in the weakliest magazines, the very mildest and most conventional novels appear to be the only studies of the majority. Apparently the would-be contributor says to himself, or herself, “well, *I* can do something almost on the level of this or that maudlin and invertebrate novel.” Then he deliberately sits down to rival the most tame, dull, and illiterate compositions that get into print. In this way bad authors become the literary parents of worse authors. Nobody but a reader of MSS. knows what myriads of fiction are written without one single new situation, original character, or fresh thought. The most out-worn ideas: sudden loss of fortune; struggles; faithlessness of First Lover; noble conduct of Second Lover: frivolity of younger sister; excellence of mother: naughtiness of one son, virtue of another, these are habitually served up again and again. On the sprained ankles, the mad bulls, the fires, and other simple devices for doing without an introduction between hero and heroine I need not dwell. The very youngest of us is acquainted with these expedients, which, by this time of day, will spell failure.

The common novels of Governess life, the daughters and granddaughters of *Jane Eyre*, still run riot among the rejected manuscripts. The lively large family, all very untidy and humorous, all wearing each other's boots and gloves, and making their dresses out of bedroom curtains and marrying rich men, still rushes down the easy descent to failure. The sceptical curate is at large, and is disbelieving in everything except the virtues of the young woman who "has a history." Mr. Swinburne hopes that one day the last unbelieving clergyman will disappear in the embrace of the last immaculate Magdalen, as the Princess and the Geni burn each other to nothingness, in the *Arabian Nights*. On that happy day there will be one less of the roads leading to failure. If the pair can carry with them the self-sacrificing characters who take the blame of all the felonies that they did not do, and the nice girl who is jilted by the poet, and finds that the squire was the person whom she *really* loved, so much the better. If not only Monte Carlo, but the inevitable scene in the Rooms there can be abolished; if the Riviera, and Italy can be removed from the map of Europe as used by novelists, so much the better. But failure will always be secured, while the huge majority of authors do not aim high, but aim at being a little lower than the last domestic drivel which came out in three volumes, or the last analysis of the inmost self of some introspective young girl which crossed the water from the States.

These are general counsels, and apply to the production of books. But, when you have done your book, you may play a number of silly tricks with your manuscript. I have already advised you to make only one copy, a rough one, as that secures negligence in your work, and also disgusts an editor or reader. It has another advantage, you may lose your copy altogether, and, as you have not another, no failure can be more complete. The best way of losing it, I think and the safest, is to give it to somebody you know who has once met some man or woman of letters.. This somebody must be instructed to ask that busy and perhaps casual and untidy person to read your manuscript, and "place" it, that is, induce some poor publisher or editor to pay for and publish it. Now the man, or woman of letters, will use violent language on receiving your clumsy brown paper parcel of illegible wares, because he or she has no more to do with the matter than the crossing sweeper. The MS. will either be put away so carefully that it can never be found again, or will be left lying about so that the housemaid may use it for her own domestic purposes, like Betty Barnes, the cook of Mr. Warburton, who seems to have burned several plays of Shakespeare.

The MS. in short will go where the old moons go.

And all dead days drift thither,

And all disastrous things.

Not only can you secure failure thus yourself, but you can so worry and badger your luckless victim, that he too will be unable to write well till he has forgotten you and your novel, and all the annoyance and anxiety you have given him. Much may be done by asking him for "introductions" to an editor or publisher. These gentry don't want introductions, they want good books, and very seldom get them. If you behave thus, the man whom you are boring will write to his publisher:

Dear Brown,

A wretched creature, who knows my great aunt, asks me to recommend his rubbish to you. I send it by to-day's post, and I wish you joy of it.

This kind of introduction will do you excellent service in smoothing the path to failure. You can arrive at similar results by sending your MS. *not* to the editor of this or that magazine, but to some one who, as you have been told by some nincompoop, is the editor, and who is *not*. He *may* lose your book, or he may let it lie about for months, or he may send it on at once to the real editor with his bitter malison. The utmost possible vexation is thus inflicted on every hand, and a prejudice is established against you which the nature of your work is very unlikely to overcome. By all means bore many literary strangers with correspondence, this will give them a lively recollection of your name, and an intense desire to do you a bad turn if opportunity arises.

If your book does, in spite of all, get itself published, send it with your compliments to critics and ask them for favourable reviews. It is the publisher's business to send out books to the editors of critical papers, but never mind *that*. Go on telling critics that you know praise is only given by favour, that they are all more or less venal and corrupt and members of the Something Club, add that *you* are no member of a *côterie* nor clique, but that you hope an exception will be made, and that your volume will be applauded on its merits. You will thus have done what in you lies to secure silence from reviewers, and to make them request that your story may be sent to some other critic. This, again, gives trouble, and makes people detest you and your performance, and contributes to the end which you have steadily in view.

I do not think it is necessary to warn young lady novelists, who possess beauty, wealth, and titles, against asking Reviewers to dine, and treating them as kindly, almost, as the Fairy Paribanou treated Prince Ahmed. They only act thus, I fear, in Mr. William Black's novels.

Much may be done by re-writing your book on the proof sheets, correcting everything there which you should have corrected in manuscript. This is an expensive process, and will greatly diminish your pecuniary gains, or rather will add to your publisher's bill, for the odds are that you will have to publish at your own expense. By the way, an author can make almost a certainty of disastrous failure, by carrying to some small obscure publisher a work which has been rejected by the best people in the trade. Their rejections all but demonstrate that your book is worthless. If you think you are likely to make a good thing by employing an obscure publisher, with little or no capital, then, as some one in Thucydides remarks, congratulating you on your simplicity, I do not envy your want of common sense. Be very careful to enter into a perfectly preposterous agreement. For example, accept "half profits," but forget to observe that before these are reckoned, it is distinctly stated in your "agreement" that the publisher is to pay *himself* some twenty per cent. on the price of each copy sold before you get your share.

Here is "another way," as the cookery books have it. In your gratitude to your first publisher, covenant with him to let him have all the cheap editions of all your novels for the next five years, at his own terms. If, in spite of the advice I have given you, you somehow manage to succeed, to become wildly popular, you will still have reserved to yourself, by this ingenious clause, a chance of ineffable pecuniary failure. A plan generally approved of is to sell your entire copyright in your book for a very small sum. You want the ready money, and perhaps you are not very hopeful. But, when your book is in all men's hands, when you are daily reviled by the small fry of paragraphers, when the publisher is clearing a thousand a year by it, while you only got a hundred down, then you will thank me, and will acknowledge that, in spite of apparent success, you are a failure after all. There are publishers, however, so inconsiderate that they will not leave you even this consolation. Finding that the book they bought cheap is really valuable, they will insist on sharing the profits with the author, or on making him great presents of money to which he has no legal claim. Some persons, some authors, cannot fail if they would, so wayward is fortune, and such a Quixotic idea of honesty have some middlemen of literature. But, of course, you *may* light on a publisher who will not give you *more* than you covenanted for, and then you can go about denouncing the whole profession as a congregation of robbers and clerks of St. Nicholas.

The ways of failure are infinite, and of course are not nearly exhausted. One good plan is never to be yourself when you write, to put in nothing of your own temperament, manner, character — or to have none, which does as well. Another favourite method is to offer the wrong kind of article, to send to the

Cornhill an essay on the evolution of the Hittite syllabary, (for only one author could make *that* popular;) or a sketch of cock fighting among the ancients to the *Monthly Record*; or an essay on *Ayahs in India* to an American magazine; or a biography of Washington or Lincoln to any English magazine whatever. We have them every month in some American periodicals, and our poor insular serials can get on without them: “have no use for them.”

It is a minor, though valuable scheme, to send poems on Christmas to magazines about the beginning of December, because, in fact, the editors have laid in their stock of that kind of thing earlier. Always insist on *seeing* an editor, instead of writing to him. There is nothing he hates so much, unless you are very young and beautiful indeed, when, perhaps, if you wish to fail you had better *not* pay him a visit at the office. Even if you do, even if you were as fair as the Golden Helen, he is not likely to put in your compositions if, as is probable, they fall *much* below the level of his magazine.

A good way of making yourself a dead failure is to go about accusing successful people of plagiarising from books or articles of yours which did not succeed, and, perhaps, were never published at all. By encouraging this kind of vanity and spite you may entirely destroy any small powers you once happened to possess, you will, besides, become a person with a grievance, and, in the long run, will be shunned even by your fellow failures. Again, you may plagiarise yourself, if you can, it is not easy, but it is a safe way to fail if you can manage it. No successful person, perhaps, was ever, in the strict sense, a plagiarist, though charges of plagiary are always brought against everybody, from Virgil to Milton, from Scott to Molière, who attains success. When you are accused of being a plagiarist, and shewn up in double columns, you may be pretty sure that all this counsel has been wasted on you, and that you have failed to fail, after all. Otherwise nobody would envy and malign you, and garble your book, and print quotations from it which you did not write, all in the sacred cause of morality.

Advice on how to secure the reverse of success should not be given to young authors alone. Their kinsfolk and friends, also, can do much for their aid. A lady who feels a taste for writing is very seldom allowed to have a quiet room, a quiet study. If she retreats to her chill and fireless bed chamber, even there she may be chevied by her brothers, sisters, and mother. It is noticed that cousins, and aunts, especially aunts, are of high service in this regard. They never give an intelligent woman an hour to herself.

“Is Miss Mary in?”

“Yes, ma’am, but she is very busy.”

“Oh, she won’t mind me, I don’t mean to stay long.”

Then in rushes the aunt.

"Over your books again: my dear! You really should not overwork yourself. Writing something"; here the aunt clutches the manuscript, and looks at it vaguely.

"Well, I dare say it's very clever, but I don't care for this kind of thing myself. Where's your mother? Is Jane better? Now, do tell me, do you get much for writing all that? Do you send it to the printers, or where? How interesting, and that reminds me, you that are a novelist, have you heard how shamefully Miss Baxter was treated by Captain Smith? No, well you might make something out of it."

Here follows the anecdote, at prodigious length, and perfectly incoherent.

"Now, write *that,* and I shall always say I was partly the author. You really should give me a commission, you know. Well, good bye, tell your mother I called. Why, there she is, I declare. Oh, Susan, just come and hear the delightful plot for a novel that I have been giving Mary."

And then she begins again, only further back, this time.

It is thus that the aunts of England may and do assist their nieces to fail in literature. Many and many a morning do they waste, many a promising fancy have they blighted, many a temper have they spoiled.

Sisters are rather more sympathetic: the favourite plan of the brother is to say, "Now, Mary, read us your new chapter."

Mary reads it, and the critic exclaims, "Well, of all the awful Rot! Now, why can't you do something like *Bootles's Baby*?"

Fathers never take any interest in the business at all: they do not count. The sympathy of a mother may be reckoned on, but not her judgement, for she is either wildly favourable, or, mistrusting her own tendencies, is more diffident than need be. The most that relations can do for the end before us is to worry, interrupt, deride, and tease the literary member of the family. They seldom fail in these duties, and not even success, as a rule, can persuade them that there is anything in it but "luck."

Perhaps reviewing is not exactly a form of literature. But it has this merit that people who review badly, not only fail themselves, but help others to fail, by giving a bad idea of their works. You will, of course, never read the books you review, and you will be exhaustively ignorant of the subjects which they treat. But you can always find fault with the *title* of the story which comes into your hands, a stupid reviewer never fails to do this. You can also copy out as much of the preface as will fill your eighth of a column, and add, that the performance is not equal to the promise. You must never feel nor shew the faintest interest in the work reviewed, that would be fatal. Never praise heartily, that is the sign of an intelligence not mediocre. Be vague, colourless, and languid, this deters readers from approaching the book. If you have glanced at it, blame it for not being what it never professed to be; if it is a treatise on Greek Prosody, censure the lack of humour; if it is a volume of gay verses, lament the author's indifference to the sorrows of the poor or the wrongs of the Armenians. If it has humour, deplore its lack of thoughtfulness; if it is grave, carp at its lack of gaiety. I have known a reviewer of half a dozen novels denounce half a dozen *kinds* of novels in the course of his two columns; the romance of adventure, the domestic tale, the psychological analysis, the theological story, the detective's story, the story of "Society," he blamed them all in general, and the books before him in particular, also the historical novel. This can easily be done, by dint of practice, after dipping into three or four pages of your author. Many reviewers have special aversions, authors they detest. Whatever they are criticising, novels, poems, plays, they begin by an attack on their pet aversion, who has nothing to do with the matter in hand. They cannot praise A, B, C, and D, without first assailing E. It will generally be found that E is a popular author. But the great virtue of a reviewer, who would be unreadable and make others unread, is a languid ignorant lack of interest in all things, a habit of regarding his work as a tedious task, to be scamped as rapidly and stupidly as possible.

You might think that these qualities would displease the reviewer's editor. Not at all, look at any column of short notices, and you will occasionally find that the critic has anticipated my advice. There is no topic in which the men who write about it are so little interested as contemporary literature. Perhaps this is no matter to marvel at. By the way, a capital plan is not to write your review till the book has been out for two years. This is the favourite dodge of the — , that distinguished journal.

If any one has kindly attended to this discourse, without desiring to be a failure, he has only to turn the advice outside in. He has only to be studious of the very best literature, observant, careful, original, he has only to be himself and not an imitator, to aim at excellence, and not be content with falling a little lower than mediocrity. He needs but bestow the same attention on this art as others give to the other arts and other professions. With these efforts, and with a native and natural gift, which can never be taught, never communicated, and with his mind set not on his reward, but on excellence, on style, on matter, and even on the not wholly unimportant virtue of vivacity, a man will succeed, or will deserve success. First, of course, he will have to "find" himself, as the French say, and if he does *not* find an ass, then, like Saul the son of Kish, he may discover a kingdom. One success he can hardly miss, the happiness of living, not with trash, but among good books, and "the mighty minds of old." In an unpublished letter of Mr. Thackeray's, written before he was famous, and a novelist, he says how much he likes writing on historical subjects, and how he enjoys historical research. *The work is so gentlemanly*, he remarks. Often and often, after the daily dreadful lines, the bread and butter winning lines on some contemporary folly or frivolity, does a man take up some piece of work hopelessly unremunerative, foredoomed to failure as far as money or fame go, some dealing with the classics of the world, Homer or Aristotle, Lucian or Molière. It is like a bath after a day's toil, it is tonic and clean; and such studies, if not necessary to success, are, at least, conducive to mental health and self-respect in literature.

To the enormous majority of persons who risk themselves in literature, not even the smallest measure of success can fall. They had better take to some other profession as quickly as may be, they are only making a sure thing of disappointment, only crowding the narrow gates of fortune and fame. Yet there are others to whom success, though easily within their reach, does not seem a thing to be grasped at. Of two such, the pathetic story may be read, in the Memoir of *A Scotch Probationer*, Mr. Thomas Davidson, who died young, an unplaced Minister of the United Presbyterian Church, in 1869. He died young, unaccepted by the world, unheard of, uncomplaining, soon after writing his latest song on the first grey hairs of the lady whom he loved. And she, Miss Alison Dunlop, died also, a year ago, leaving a little work newly published, *Anent Old Edinburgh*, in which is briefly told the story of her life. There can hardly be a true tale more brave and honourable, for those two were eminently qualified to shine, with a clear and modest radiance, in letters. Both had a touch of poetry, Mr. Davidson left a few genuine poems, both had humour, knowledge, patience, industry, and literary conscientiousness. No success came to them, they did not even seek it, though it was easily within the reach of their powers. Yet none can call them failures, leaving, as they did, the fragrance of honourable and uncomplaining lives, and such brief records of these as to delight, and console and encourage us all. They bequeath to us the spectacle of a real triumph far beyond the petty gains of money or of applause, the spectacle of lives made happy by literature, unvexed by notoriety, unfretted by envy. What we call success could never have yielded them so much, for the ways of authorship are dusty and stony, and the stones are only too handy for throwing at the few that, deservedly or undeservedly, make a name, and therewith about one-tenth of the wealth which is ungrudged to physicians, or barristers, or stock-brokers, or dentists, or electricians. If literature and occupation with letters were not its own reward, truly they who seem to succeed might envy those who fail. It is not wealth that they win, as fortunate men in other professions count wealth; it is not rank nor fashion that come to their call nor come to call on them. Their success is to be let dwell with their own fancies, or with the imaginations of others far greater than themselves; their success is this living in fantasy, a little remote from the hubbub and the contests of the world. At the best they will be vexed by curious eyes and idle tongues, at the best they will die not rich in this world's goods, yet not unconsoled by the friendships which they win among men and women whose faces they will never see. They may well be content, and thrice content, with their lot, yet it is not a lot which should provoke envy, nor be coveted by ambition.

It is not an easy goal to attain, as the crowd of aspirants dream, nor is the reward luxurious when it is attained. A garland, usually fading and not immortal, has to be run for, not without dust and heat.

OLD FRIENDS, EPISTOLARY PARODY

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PREFACE

The studies in this volume originally appeared in the “St. James’s Gazette.” Two, from a friendly hand, have been omitted here by the author of the rest, as non sua poma. One was by Mr. RICHARD SWIVELLER to a boon companion and brother in the lyric Apollo; the other, though purporting to have been addressed by Messrs. DOMBEY & SON to Mr. TOOTS, is believed, on internal evidence, to have been composed by the patron of the CHICKEN himself. A few prefatory notes, an introductory essay, and two letters have been added.

The portrait in the frontispiece, copied by Mr. T. Hodge from an old painting in the Club at St. Andrews, is believed to represent the Baron Bradwardine addressing himself to his ball.

A. L.

FRIENDS IN FICTION

Every fancy which dwells much with the unborn and immortal characters of Fiction must ask itself, Did the persons in contemporary novels never meet? In so little a world their paths must often have crossed, their orbits must have intersected, though we hear nothing about the adventure from the accredited narrators. In historical fiction authors make their people meet real men and women of history — Louis XI., Lazarus, Mary Queen of Scots, General Webbe, Moses, the Man in the Iron Mask, Marie Antoinette; the list is endless. But novelists, in spite of Mr. Thackeray's advice to Alexandre Dumas, and of his own example in "Rebecca and Rowena," have not introduced each other's characters. Dumas never pursued the fortunes of the Master of Ravenswood after he was picked up by that coasting vessel in the Kelpie's Flow. Sometimes a meeting between characters in novels by different hands looked all but unavoidable. "Pendennis" and "David Copperfield" came out simultaneously in numbers, yet Pen never encountered Steerforth at the University, nor did Warrington, in his life of journalism, jostle against a reporter named David Copperfield. One fears that the Major would have called Steerforth a tiger, that Pen would have been very loftily condescending to the nephew of Betsy Trotwood. But Captain Costigan would scarcely have refused to take a sip of Mr. Micawber's punch, and I doubt, not that Litimer would have conspired darkly with Morgan, the Major's sinister man. Most of those delightful sets of old friends, the Dickens and Thackeray people, might well have met, though they belonged to very different worlds. In older novels, too, it might easily have chanced that Mr. Edward Waverley of Waverley Honour, came into contact with Lieutenant Booth, or, after the Forty-five, with Thomas Jones, or, in Scotland, Balmawhapple might have foregathered with Lieutenant Lismahagow. Might not even Jeanie Deans have crossed the path of Major Lambert of the "Virginians," and been helped on her way by that good man? Assuredly Dugald Dalgetty in his wanderings in search of fights and fortune may have crushed a cup or rattled a dicebox with four gallant gentlemen of the King's Mousquetaires. It is agreeable to wonder what all these very real people would have thought of their companions in the region of Romance, and to guess how their natures would have acted and reacted on each other.

This was the idea which suggested the following little essays in parody. In making them the writer, though an assiduous and veteran novel reader, had to recognise that after all he knew, on really intimate and friendly terms, comparatively few people in the Paradise of Fiction. Setting aside the dramatic poets and their creations, the children of Moliere and Shakspeare, the reader of novels will find, may be, that his airy friends are scarce so many as he deemed. We all know Sancho and the Don, by repute at least; we have all our memories of Gil Blas; Manon Lescaut does not fade from the heart, nor her lover, the Chevalier des Grieux, from the remembrance. Our mental picture of Anna Karenine is fresh enough and fair enough, but how few can most of us recall out of the myriad progeny of George Sand! Indiana, Valentine, Lelia, do you quite believe in them, would you know them if you met them in the Paradise of Fiction? Noun one might recognise, but there is a haziness about La Petite Fadette. Consuelo, let it be admitted, is not evanescent, oblivion scatters no poppy over her; but Madame Sand's later ladies, still more her men, are easily lost in the forests of fancy. Even their names with difficulty return to us, and if we read the roll-call, would Horace and Jacques cry Adsum like the good Colonel? There are living critics who have all Mr. George Meredith's heroines and heroes and oddities at their finger ends, and yet forget that musical name, like the close of a rich hexameter, Clare Doria Forey. But this is a digression; it is perhaps admitted that George Sand, so great a novelist, gave the world few characters who live in and are dear to memory. We can just fancy one of her dignified later heroines, all self-renunciation and rural sentiment, preaching in vain to that real woman, Emma Bovary. HER we know, her we remember, as we remember few, comparatively, of Balzac's thronging faces, from La Cousine Bette to Seraphitus Seraphita. Many of those are certain to live and keep their hold, but it is by dint of long and elaborate preparation, description, analysis. A stranger intermeddleth not with them, though we can fancy Lucien de Rubempre let loose in a country neighbourhood of George Sand's, and making sonnets and love to some rural chatelaine, while Vautrin might stray among the ruffians of Gaboriau, a giant of crime. Among M. Zola's people, however it may fare with others, I find myself remembering few: the guilty Hippolytus of "La Curee," the poor girl in "La Fortune des Rougon," the Abbe Mouret, the artist in "L'Oeuvre," and the half idiotic girl of the farm house, and Helene in "Un Page d'Amour." They are not amongst M. Zola's most prominent creations, and it must be some accident that makes them most memorable and recognisable to one of his readers.

Probably we all notice that the characters of fiction who remain our intimates, whose words come to our lips often, whose conduct in this or that situation we could easily forecast, are the characters whom we met when we were young. We may be wrong in thinking them the best, the most true and living of the unborn;

perhaps they only seem so real because they came fresh to fresh hearts and unworn memories. This at least we must allow for, when we are tempted to say about novelists, “The old are better.” It was we who, long ago, were young and better, better fitted to enjoy and retain the pleasure of making new visionary acquaintances. If this be so, what an argument it is in favour of reading the best books first and earliest in youth! Do the ladies who now find Scott slow, and Miss Austen dull, and Dickens vulgar, and Thackeray prosy, and Fielding and Richardson impossible, come to this belief because they began early with the volumes of the circulating library? Are their memories happily stored with the words and deeds of modern fictitious romps, and passionate governesses, and tremendous guardsmen with huge cigars? Are the people of — well, why mention names of living authors? — of whom you will — are those as much to the young readers of 1890 as Quentin Durward, and Colonel Newcome, and Sam Weller, and Becky Sharp, and Anne Elliot, and Elizabeth Bennett, and Jane Eyre were to young readers of 1860? It may very well be so, and we seniors will not regret our choice, and the young men and maids will be pleased enough with theirs. Yet it is not impossible that the old really are better, and do not gain all their life and permanent charm merely from the unjaded memories and affections with which we came to them long ago.

We shall never be certain, for even if we tried the experiment of comparing, we are no longer good judges, our hearts are with our old friends, whom we think deathless; their birth is far enough off in time, but they will serve us for ours.

These friends, it has been said, are not such a very numerous company after all. Most of them are children of our own soil, their spirits were made in England, or at least in Great Britain, or, perhaps, came of English stock across the seas, like our dear old Leather Stocking and Madam Hester Prynne. Probably most of us are insular enough to confess this limitation; even if we be so unpatriotic to read far more new French than new English novels. One may study M. Daudet, and not remember his Sidonie as we remember Becky, nor his Petit Chose or his Jack as we remember David Copperfield. In the Paradise of Fiction are folk of all nations and tongues; but the English (as Swedenborg saw them doing in his vision of Heaven) keep very much to themselves. The American visitors, or some of them, disdain our old acquaintances, and associate with Russian, Spanish, Lithuanian, Armenian heroes and heroines, conversing, probably, in some sort of French. Few of us “poor islanders” are so cosmopolitan; we read foreign novels, and yet among all the brilliant persons met there we remember but a few. Most of my own foreign friends in fiction wear love-locks and large boots, have rapiers at their side which they are very ready to draw, are great trenchermen, mighty fine drinkers, and somewhat gallant in their conduct to the sex. There is also a citizen or two from Furetiere's "Roman Bourgeois," there is Manon, aforesaid, and a company of picaroons, and an archbishop, and a lady styled Marianne, and a newly ennobled Count of mysterious wealth, and two grisettes, named Mimi and Musette, with their student-lovers. M. Balzac has introduced us to mystics, and murderers, and old maids, and doctors, and adventurers, and poets, and a girl with golden eyes, and malefactors, and bankrupts, and mad old collectors, peasants, cures, critics, dreamers, debauchees; but all these are somewhat distant acquaintances, many of them undesirable acquaintances. In the great "Comedie Humaine" have you a single real friend? Some of Charles de Bernard's folk are more akin to us, such as "La Femme de Quarante Ans," and the owner of the hound Justinian, and that drunken artist in "Gerfaut." But an Englishman is rather friendless, rather an alien and an outcast, in the society of French fiction. Monsieur de Camors is not of our monde, nor is the Enfant du Siecle; indeed, perhaps good Monsieur Sylvestre Bonnard is as sympathetic as anyone in that populous country of modern French romance. Or do you know Fifi Vollard?

Something must be allowed for strange manners, for exotic ideas, and ways not our own. More perhaps is due to what, as Englishmen think, is the lack of HUMOUR in the most brilliant and witty of races. We have friends many in Moliere, in Dumas, in Rabelais; but it is far more difficult to be familiar, at ease, and happy in the circles to which Madame Sand, M. Daudet, M. Flaubert, or M. Paul Bourget introduce us. M. Bourget's old professor, in "Le Disciple," we understand, but he does not interest himself much in us, and to us he is rather a curiosity, a "character," than an intimate. We are driven to the belief that humour, with its loving and smiling observation, is necessary to the author who would make his persons real and congenial, and, above all, friendly. Now humour is the quality which Dumas, Moliere, and Rabelais possess conspicuously among Frenchmen. Montaigne has it too, and makes himself dear to us, as the humorous novelists make their fancied people dear. Without humour an author may draw characters distinct and clear, and entertaining, and even real; but they want atmosphere, and with them we are never intimate. Mr. Alfred Austin says that "we know the hero or the heroine in prose romance far more familiarly than we know the hero or heroine in the poem or the drama." "Which of the serious characters in Shakspeare's plays are not indefinite and shadowy compared with Harry Esmond or Maggie Tulliver?" The SERIOUS characters — they are seldom very familiar or definite to us in any kind of literature. One might say, to be sure, that he knows Hotspur a good deal more intimately than he knows Mr. Henry Esmond, and that he has a pretty definite idea of Iago, Othello, Macbeth, King Lear, as definite as he has (to follow Mr. Austin) of Tito Melema. But we cannot reckon Othello, or Macbeth, or King Lear as FRIENDS; nay, we would rather drink with the honest ancient. All heroes and the heroines are usually too august, and also too young, to be friendly with us; to be handled humorously by their creators. We know Cuddie Headrigg a great deal better than Henry Morton, and Le Balafre better than Quentin Durward, and Dugald Dalgetty better than anybody. Humour it is that gives flesh and blood to the persons of romance; makes Mr. Lenville real, while Nicholas Nickleby is only a "walking gentleman." You cannot know Oliver Twist as you know the Dodger and Charlie Bates. If you met Edward Waverley you could scarce tell him from another young officer of his time; but there would be no chance of mistake about the Dugald creature, or Bailie Nicol Jarvie, or the Baron Bradwardine, or Balmawhapple.

These ideas might be pushed too far; it might be said that only the persons in "character parts" — more or less caricatures — are really vivid in the recollection. But Colonel Newcome is as real as Captain Costigan, and George Warrington as the Chevalier Strong. The hero is commonly too much of a beau tenebreux to be actual; Scott knew it well, and in one of his unpublished letters frankly admits that his heroes are wooden, and no favourites of his own. He had to make them, as most authors make their heroes, romantic, amorous, and serious; few of them have the life of Roland Graeme, or even of Quentin Durward. Ivanhoe might put on the cloak of the Master of Ravenswood, the Master might wear the armour of the Disinherited Knight, and the disguise would deceive the keenest. Nay, Mr. Henry Esmond might pass for either, if arrayed in appropriate costume.

To treat a hero with humour is difficult in romance, all but impossible. Hence the heroes are rarely our friends, except in Fielding, or, now and then, in Thackeray. No book is so full of friends as the novel that has no hero, but has Rawdon Crawley, Becky, Lady Jane, Mr. Jim Crawley, MacMurdo, Mrs. Major O'Dowd, and the rest. Even Dobbin is too much the hero to be admitted among our most kindly acquaintances. So unlucky are heroes that we know Squire Western and the Philosopher Square and Parson Adams far better than even that unheroic hero, Tom Jones, or Joseph Andrews. The humour of Fielding and his tenderness make Amelia and Sophia far more sure of our hearts than, let us say, Rowena, or the Fair Maid of Perth, or Flora MacIvor, or Rose Bradwardine. It is humour that makes Mr. Collins immortal, and Mrs. Bennett, and Emma; while a multitude of nice girls in fiction, good girls too, are as dead as Queen Tiah.

Perhaps, after all, this theory explains why it is so very hard to recall with vividness the persons of our later fiction. Humour is not the strong point of novelists to-day. There may be amateurs who know Mr. Howells's characters as their elders know Sophia and Amelia and Catherine Seyton — there may be. To the old reader of romance, however earnestly he keeps up with modern fiction, the salt of life seems often lacking in its puppets or its persons. Among the creations of living men and women I, for one, feel that I have two friends at least across the sea, Master Thomas Sawyer and his companion, Huckleberry Finn. If these are not real boys, then Dr. Farrar's Eric IS a real boy; I cannot put it stronger. There is a lady on those distant shores (for she never died of Roman fever) who I may venture to believe is not unfriendly — Miss Annie P. Miller — and there is a daughter of Mr. Silas Lapham whom one cannot readily forget, and there is a beery journalist in a "Modern Instance," an acquaintance, a distant professional acquaintance, not a friend. The rest of the fictitious white population of the States are shadowy to myself; I have often followed their fortunes with interest, but the details slip my aging memory, which recalls Topsy and Uncle Remus.

To speak of new friends at home is a more delicate matter. A man may have an undue partiality for the airy children of his friends' fancy. Mr. Meredith has introduced me to an amiable Countess, to a strange country girl named Rhoda, to a wonderful old AEschylean nurse, to some genuine boys, to a wise Youth, — but that society grows as numerous as brilliant. Mr. Besant has made us friends with twins of literary and artistic genius, with a very highly-cultured Fellow of Lothian, with a Son of Vulcan, with a bevy of fair but rather indistinguishable damsels, like a group of agreeable-looking girls at a dance. But they are too busy with their partners to be friendly. We admire them, but they are unconcerned with us. In Mr. Black's large family the Whaup seems most congenial to some strangers; the name of one of Mr. Payn's friendly lads is Legion, and Miss Broughton's dogs, with THEIR friend Sara, and Mrs. Moberley, welcome the casual visitor with hospitable care. Among the kindly children of a later generation one may number a sailor man with a wooden leg; a Highland gentleman, who, though landless, bears a king's name; an Irish chevalier who was out in the '45; a Zulu chief who plied the axe well; a private named Mulvaney in Her Majesty's Indian army; an elderly sportsman of agile imagination or unparalleled experience in remote adventure. All these a person who had once encountered them would recognise, perhaps, when he was fortunate enough to find himself in their company.

There are children, too, of a dead author, an author seldom lauded by critics, who, possibly, have as many living friends as any modern characters can claim. A very large company of Christian people are fond of Lord Welter, Charles Ravenshoe, Flora and Gus, Lady Ascot, the boy who played fives with a brass button, and a dozen others of Henry Kingsley’s men, women, and children, whom we have laughed with often, and very nearly cried with. For Henry Kingsley had humour, and his children are dear to us; while which of Charles Kingsley’s far more famous offspring would be welcome — unless it were Salvation Yeo — if we met them all in the Paradise of Fiction?

It is not very safe, in literature as in life, to speak well of our friends or of their families. Other readers, other people, have theirs, whom we may not care much for, whom we may even chance never to have met. In the following Letters from Old Friends (mainly reprinted from the “St. James’s Gazette”), a few of the writers may, to some who glance at the sketches, be unfamiliar. When Dugald Dalgetty’s epistle on his duel with Aramis was written, a man of letters proposed to write a reply from Aramis in a certain journal. But his Editor had never heard of any of the gentlemen concerned in that affair of honour; had never heard of Dugald, of Athos, Porthos, Aramis, nor D’Artagnan. He had not been introduced to them. This little book will be fortunate far beyond its deserts if it tempts a few readers to extend the circle of their visionary acquaintances, of friends who, like Brahma, know not birth, nor decay, “sleep, waking, nor trance.”

A theme more delicate and intimate than that of our Friends in fiction awaits a more passionate writer than the present parodist. Our LOVES in fiction are probably numerous, and our choice depends on age and temperament. In romance, if not in life, we can be in love with a number of ladies at once. It is probable that Beatrix Esmond has not fewer knights than Marie Antoinette or Mary Stuart. These ladies have been the marks of scandal. Unkind things are said of all three, but our hearts do not believe the evil reports. Sir Walter Scott refused to write a life of Mary Stuart because his opinion was not on the popular side, nor on the side of his feelings. The reasoning and judicial faculties may be convinced that Beatrix was “other than a guid ane,” but reason does not touch the affections; we see her with the eyes of Harry Esmond, and, like him, “remember a paragon.” With similar lack of logic we believe that Mrs. Wenham really had one of her headaches, and that Becky was guiltless on a notorious occasion. Bad or not so bad, what lady would we so gladly meet as Mrs. Rawdon Crawley, whose kindness was so great that she even condescended to be amusing to her own husband? For a more serious and life-long affection there are few heroines so satisfactory as Sophia Western and Amelia Booth (nee Harris). Never before nor since did a man’s ideal put on flesh and blood — out of poetry, that is, — and apart from the ladies of Shakspeare. Fielding’s women have a manly honour, tolerance, greatness, in addition to their tenderness and kindness. Literature has not their peers, and life has never had many to compare with them. They are not “superior” like Romola, nor flighty and destitute of taste like Maggie Tulliver; among Fielding's crowd of fribbles and sots and oafs they carry that pure moly of the Lady in "Comus." It is curious, indeed, that men have drawn women more true and charming than women themselves have invented, and the heroines of George Eliot, of George Sand (except Consuelo), and even of Miss Austen, do not subdue us like Di Vernon, nor win our sympathies like Rebecca of York. They may please and charm for their hour, but they have not the immortality of the first heroines of all — of Helen, or of that Alcmena who makes even comedy grave when she enters, and even Plautus chivalrous. Poetry, rather than prose fiction, is the proper home of our spiritual mistresses; they dwell where Rosalind and Imogen are, with women perhaps as unreal or as ideal as themselves, men's lost loves and unforgotten, in a Paradise apart.

LETTER: From Mr. Clive Newcome to Mr. Arthur Pendennis.

Mr. Newcome, a married man and an exile at Boulogne, sends Mr. Arthur Pendennis a poem on his undying affection for his cousin, Miss Ethel Newcome. He desires that it may be published in a journal with which Mr. Pendennis is connected. He adds a few remarks on his pictures for the Academy.

Boulogne, March 28.

Dear Pen, — I have finished Belisarius, and he has gone to face the Academicians. There is another little thing I sent— "Blondel" I call it — a troubadour playing under a castle wall. They have not much chance; but there is always the little print-shop in Long Acre. My sketches of mail-coaches continue to please the public; they have raised the price to a guinea.

Here we are not happier than when you visited us. My poor wife is no better. It is something to have put my father out of hearing of her mother's tongue: that cannot cross the Channel. Perhaps I am as well here as in town. There I always hope, I always fear to meet HER . . . my cousin, you know. I think I see her face under every bonnet. God knows I don't go where she is likely to be met. Oh, Pen, haeret lethalis arundo; it is always right — the Latin Delectus! Everything I see is full of her, everything I do is done for her. "Perhaps she'll see it and know the hand, and remember," I think, even when I do the mail-coaches and the milestones. I used to draw for her at Brighton when she was a child. My sketches, my pictures, are always making that silent piteous appeal to her, WON'T YOU LOOK AT US? WON'T YOU REMEMBER? I dare say she has quite forgotten. Here I send you a little set of rhymes; my picture of Blondel and this old story brought them into my mind. They are gazes, as the drunk painter says in "Gerfaut;" they are veiled, a mystery. I know she's not in a castle or a tower or a cloistered cell anywhere; she is in Park Lane. Don't I read it in the "Morning Post?" But I can't, I won't, go and sing at the area-gate, you know. Try if F. B. will put the rhymes into the paper. Do they take it in in Park Lane?

See whether you can get me a guinea for these tears of mine: “Mes Larmes,” Pen, do you remember? — Yours ever, C. N.

The verses are enclosed.

THE NEW BLONDEL.

O ma Reine!

Although the Minstrel’s lost you long,
Although for bread the Minstrel sings,
Ah, still for you he pipes the song,
And thrums upon the crazy strings!

As Blondel sang by cot and hall,
Through town and stream and forest passed,
And found, at length, the dungeon wall,
And freed the Lion-heart at last -

So must your hapless minstrel fare,
By hill and hollow violing;
He flings a ditty on the air,
He wonders if you hear him sing!

For in some castle you must dwell
Of this wide land he wanders through -
In palace, tower, or cloistered cell -
He knows not; but he sings to YOU!

The wind may blow it to your ear,
And you, perchance, may understand;
But from your lattice, though you hear,
He knows you will not wave a hand.

Your eyes upon the page may fall,
More like the page will miss your eyes;
You may be listening after all,
So goes he singing till he dies.

LETTER: From the Hon. Cecil Bertie to the Lady Guinevere.

Mr. Cecil Tremayne, who served “Under Two Flags,” an officer in her Majesty’s Guards, describes to the Lady Guinevere the circumstances of his encounter with Miss Annie P. (or Daisy) Miller. The incident has been omitted by Ouida and Mr. Henry James.

You ask me, Camarada, what I think of the little American donzella, Daisy Miller? Hesterna Rosa, I may cry with the blind old bard of Tusculum; or shall we say, Hesterna Margaritae? Yesterday’s Daisy, yesterday’s Rose, were it of Paestum, who values it to-day? Mais ou sont les neiges d’automne? However, yesterday — the day before yesterday, rather — Miss Annie P. Miller was well enough.

We were smoking at the club windows on the Ponte Vecchio; Marmalada, Giovanelli of the Bersaglieri, young Ponto of the K.O.B.’s, and myself — men who never give a thought save to the gold embroidery of their pantoufles or the exquisite ebon laquer of their Russia leather cricket-shoes. Suddenly we heard a clatter in the streets. The riderless chargers of the Bersaglieri were racing down the Santo Croce, and just turning, with a swing and shriek of clattering spurs, into the Maremma. In the midst of the street, under our very window, was a little thing like a butterfly, with yeux de pervenche. You remember, Camarada, Voltaire’s love of the pervenche; we have plucked it, have we not? in his garden of Les Charmettes. Nous n’irons plus aux bois! Basta!

But to return. There she stood, terror-stricken, petrified, like her who of old turned her back on Zoar and beheld the incandescent hurricane of hail smite the City of the Plain! She was dressed in white muslin, joli comme un coeur, with a myriad frills and flounces and knots of pale-coloured ribbon. Open-eyed, open-mouthed, she stared at the tide of foaming steeds, like a maiden martyr gazing at the on-rushing waves of ocean! “Caramba!” said Marmalada, “voila une jeune fille pas trop bien gardee!” Giovanelli turned pale, and, muttering Corpo di Bacco, quaffed a carafon of green Chartreuse, holding at least a quart, which stood by him in its native pewter. Young Ponto merely muttered, “Egad!” I leaped through the open window and landed at her feet.

The racing steeds were within ten yards of us. Calmly I cast my eye over their points. Far the fleetest, though he did not hold the lead, was Marmalada’s charger, the Atys gelding, by Celerima out of Sac de Nuit. With one wave of my arm I had placed her on his crupper, and, with the same action, swung myself into the saddle. Then, in a flash and thunder of flying horses, we swept like tawny lightning down the Pincian. The last words I heard from the club window, through the heliotrope-scented air, were “Thirty to one on Atys, half only if declared.” They were wagering on our lives; the slang of the paddock was on their lips.

Onward, downward, we sped, the fair stranger lifeless in my arms. Past scarlet cardinals in mufti, past brilliant like those who swayed the City of the Violet Crown; past pifferari dancing in front of many an albergo; through the Ghetto with its marmorine palaces, over the Fountain of Trevi, across the Cascine, down the streets of the Vatican we flew among yells of “Owner’s up,” “The gelding wins, hard held,” from the excited bourgeoisie. Heaven and earth swam before my eyes as we reached the Pons Sublicia, and heard the tawny waters of Tiber swaying to the sea.

THE PONS SUBLICIA WAS UP!

With an oath of despair, for life is sweet, I rammed my persuaders into Atys, caught him by the head, and sent him straight at the flooded Tiber!

“Va-t-en donc, espece de type!” said the girl on my saddle-bow, finding her tongue at last. Fear, or girlish modesty, had hitherto kept her silent.

Then Atys rose on his fetlocks! Despite his double burden, the good steed meant to have it. He deemed, perchance, he was with the Quorn or the Baron’s. He rose; he sprang. The deep yellow water, cold in the moon’s rays, with the farthest bank but a chill grey line in the mist, lay beneath us! A moment that seemed an eternity! Then we landed on the far-off further bank, and for the first time I could take a pull at his head. I turned him on the river’s brim, and leaped him back again.

The runaway was now as tame as a driven deer in Richmond Park.

Well, Camarada, the adventure is over. She was grateful, of course. These pervenche eyes were suffused with a dewy radiance.

“You can’t call,” she said, “for you haven’t been introduced, and Mrs. Walker says we must be more exclusive. I’m dying to be exclusive; but I’m very much obliged to you, and so will mother be. Let’s see. I’ll be at the Colosseum to-morrow night, about ten. I’m bound to see the Colosseum, by moonlight. Good-bye;” and she shook her pale parasol at me, and fluttered away.

Ah, Camarada, shall I be there? Que scais-je? Well, ’tis time to go to the dance at the Holy Father’s. Adieu, Carissima. — Tout a vous,

CIS.

LETTER: Barry Lyndon

Mr. Redmond Barry (better known as Barry Lyndon) tells his uncle the story of a singular encounter at Berlin with Mr. Alan Stuart, called Alan Breck, and well known as the companion of Mr. David Balfour in many adventures. Mr. Barry, at this time, was in the pay of Herr Potzdorff, of his Prussian Majesty’s Police, and was the associate of the Chevalier, his kinsman, in the pursuit of fortune.

Berlin, April 1, 1748.

Uncle Barry, — I dictate to Pippi, my right hand being wounded, and that by no common accident. Going down the Linden Strasse yesterday, I encountered a mob; and, being curious in Potzdorff’s interest, penetrated to the kernel of it. There I found two men of my old regiment — Kurz and another — at words with a small, dark, nimble fellow, who carried bright and dancing eyes in a pock-marked face. He had his iron drawn, a heavy box-handled cut-and-thrust blade, and seemed ready to fall at once on the pair that had been jeering him for his strange speech.

“Who is this, lads?” I asked.

“Ein Englander,” answered they.

“No Englishman,” says he, in a curious accent not unlike our brogue, “but a plain gentleman, though he bears a king’s name and hath Alan Breck to his by-name.”

“Come, come,” says I in German, “let the gentleman go his way; he is my own countryman.” This was true enough for them; and you should have seen the Highlander’s eyes flash, and grow dim again.

I took his arm, for Potzdorff will expect me to know all about the stranger, and marched him down to the Drei Konige.

“I am your host, sir; what do you call for, Mr. Stuart of -?” said I, knowing there is never a Scot but has the name of his kailyard tacked to his own.

“A King’s name is good enough for me; I bear it plain. Mr. -?” said he, reddening.

“They call me the Chevalier Barry, of Ballybarry.”

“I am in the better company, sir,” quoth he, with a grand bow.

When a bowl of punch was brought he takes off his hat, and drinks, very solemnly, “To the King!”

“Over the water?” I asked.

“Nay, sir, on THIS side,” he said; and I smoked the Jacobite. But to shorten the story, which amuses my tedium but may beget it in you, I asked him if he knew the cards.

“I’m just daft when I get to the cartes,” he answered in his brogue, and we fell to piquet. Now my Scot wore a very fine coat, and on the same very large smooth silver buttons, well burnished. Therefore, perceiving such an advantage as a skilled player may enjoy, I let him win a little to whet his appetite, but presently used his buttons as a mirror, wherein I readily detected the strength of the cards he held. Before attempting this artifice, I had solemnly turned my chair round thrice.

“You have changed the luck, sir,” says Mr. Breck, or Stuart, presently; and, rising with a mighty grave air, he turned his coat and put it on inside out.

“Sir,” says I, “what am I to understand by this conduct?”

“What for should not I turn my coat, for luck, if you turn your chair?” says he. “But if you are not preceesely satisfied, I will be proud to step outside with you.”

I answered that we were not in a Highland wilderness, and that if no malice were meant no affront was taken. We continued at the game till, though deprived of my mirror, I had won some 500 Fredericks. On this he rose, saying, “Sir, in this purse you will find the exact sum that I am owing you, and I will call for my empty sporran the morn. It was Rob Roy’s before it was mine.” Therewith he laid on the table a sort of goatskin pouch, such as Highlanders gird about their loins, and marched forth.

I set to work at opening his pouch, that was fastened by a spring and button, seeming easy enough of access. But I had scarce pressed the button when lo! a flash, a pistol shot, and my right hand is grazed with a bullet that flew out of the bag. This Highlander of the Devil had some mechanism in his purse that discharged a small steel pistol when unwarily opened. My hand is but slightly wounded, yet I cannot hold my sword, nor hath my search brought me any news of Alan Breck. He has vanished like an emissary of the Devil or the Pretender, as I doubt not he is. But I will have his blood, if he is not one of their Scotch fairies. — Your loving Nephew, P.S. — The Fredericks were in the bag, all told.

LETTER: From Mrs. Gamp to Mrs. Prig.

Mrs. Gamp nurses an old friend who is under a singular delusion.

Todgers’s.

My precious Betsy, — Which when last we parted it was not as I could wish, but bearing malice in our hearts. But, as often and often Mrs. Harris have said it before me, with the tears in her angel eyes — one of them having a slight cast from an accident with the moderator lamp, Harris being quick in his temper — often and often have she said to me: “Ah, Sairey, the quarrels of friends is affection’s best restorer.” And good reason to know it she have, with a husband as was ever true, and never gave her no cause to form the wish to pizen them as has good looks, but, for I will not deceive you, ready with his hands.

And so, between you and me may it be, Betsy Prig, as was constant partners afore them Chuzzlewidges, and Nadgetts, and Lewsomses, and Tiggses, and Chuffeys got that mixed and that aggerawating that to remember who of them poisoned which or for why in a slime draught, it makes my poor head go round, nor could such be soothing to the temper. So let bygones be bygones between us. For, wanting of my Betsy, I am now in a nice state of confusion, with a patient as was well beknown to me in younger days, when there wasn’t so much of a shadder on this mortial vial, meaning Mr. Pecksniff. Which you will not forget of him, by reason of his daughter as married that Jonadge, and his collars as mints of money must have gone to the getting them up; but is now at Todgers’s, and confused in his poor mind, thinking hisself Somebody else high in Parliament. And wonder at it I do not, them Chuzzlewidges and Chuffeys being that distracting, and ever proving to be some other pusson in disguise, as would confuge a calkilating boy.

So being applied to for to nightly him, there in that very sick room — for why should I deceive you? — I meets the daily nuss; and, Betsy, I was that overcome to have such a pardner propoged to me as I had to ring and ask the young woman immediate for a small glass of their oldest rum, being what I am not accustomed to but having had a turn. For, will you believe it, she was not a widger woman as has experience in the ways of men, but a huzzy in a bragian cap like them the Nuns wear in “Mariar Monk,” as you may have seen it in the small sweet-shops, at a penny. And her hands as white as her papistry cap, and she a turning up of her nose at what I had took, and a presuming to give ME advice about nussing, as St. Pancradge's Churchyard wouldn't hold them I've seen comfortable to their long homes, and no complaints made but ever the highest satigefaction. So I ups and gives her a bit of my mind; and Mrs. Todgers coming down, "It's she goes or me," says I, "for never will Sairey Gamp nuss, sick or monthly, with a pardner as has not confidence in me, nor I in her, but contrary." Then SHE says she'll go and speak to the doctor about it; and out she tramps with her nose in the air, and sneezing most awful, not being accustomed to that which I take, find it strengthening, but as it have been a cause of sorrow and strife let it be nameless between you and me. For to have the name "Snuffey" brought forward it is what the heart can forgive, but never forget in this valley of the shaddock.

I have nussed a many lunacies, Betsy, and in a general way am dispoged to humour them rather than set them right up agin the fire when fractious. But this Pecksniff is the tryingest creature; he having got it in his mind as he is Somebody very high, and talking about the House, and Bills, and clauses, and the "sacred cause of Universal Anarchy," for such was his Bible language, though meaning to me no more than the babe unborn. Whereby Mrs. Harris she have often said to me, "What DO them blessed infants occupy their little minds with afore they are called into that condition where, unless changed at nuss, Providence have appointed them?" And many a time have I said, "Seek not, Mrs. Harris, to diskiver; for we know not wot's hidden in our own hearts, and the torters of the Imposition should not make me diwulge it."

But Pecksniff is that aggravating as I can hardly heed the words I now put on the paper.

"Some of my birds have left me," says he, "for the stranger's breast, and one have took wing for the Government benches. But I have ever sacrificed my country's happiness to my own, and I will not begin to regulate my life by other rules of conduct now. I know the purity of my own motives, and while my Merry, my little Sir William, playful warbler, prattles under this patriarchal wing, and my Cherry, my darling Morley, supports the old man's tottering walk, I can do without my Goschy, my dears, I can do without him." And wants to borrer MY umbreller for them "to rally round," the bragian idgiot!

A chattering creature he always were, and will be; but, Betsy, I have this wery momink fixed him up with a shoehorn in his mouth, as was lying round providential, and the strings of my bonnet, and the last word as he will say this blessed night was some lunacy about "denouncing the clogeure," as won't give much more trouble now.

So having rung for a shilling's worth of gin-and-water warm, and wishing you was here to take another of the same, I puts my lips to it, and drinks to one as was my frequent pardner in this mortial vale, and am, as in old days, my Betsy’s own

SAIREY GAMP.

LETTER: From Herodotus of Halicarnassus to Sophocles the Athenian.

Herodotus describes, in a letter to his friend Sophocles, a curious encounter with a mariner just returned from unknown parts of Africa.

To Sophocles, the Athenian, greeting. Yesterday, as I was going down to the market-place of Naucratis, I met Nicarete, who of all the hetairai in this place is the most beautiful. Now, the hetairai of Naucratis are wont somehow to be exceedingly fair, beyond all women whom we know. She had with her a certain Phocaean mariner, who was but now returned from a voyage to those parts of Africa which lie below Arabia; and she saluted me courteously, as knowing that it is my wont to seek out and inquire the tidings of all men who have intelligence concerning the ends of the earth.

“Hail to thee, Nicarete,” said I; “verily thou art this morning as lovely as the dawn, or as the beautiful Rhodopis that died ere thou wert born to us through the favour of Aphrodite.”

Now this Rhodopis was she who built, they say, the Pyramid of Mycerinus: wherein they speak not truly but falsely, for Rhodopis lived long after the kings who built the Pyramids.

“Rhodopis died not, O Herodotus,” said Nicarete, “but is yet living, and as fair as ever she was; and he who is now my lover, even this Phanes of Phocaea, hath lately beheld her.”

Then she seemed to me to be jesting, like that scribe who told me of Krophi and Mophi; for Rhodopis lived in the days of King Amasis and of Sappho the minstrel, and was beloved by Charaxus, the brother of Sappho, wherefore Sappho reviled him in a song. How then could Rhodopis, who flourished more than a hundred years before my time, be living yet?

While I was considering these things they led me into the booth of one that sold wine; and when Nicarete had set garlands of roses on our heads, Phanes began and told me what I now tell thee but whether speaking truly or falsely I know not. He said that being on a voyage to Punt (for so the Egyptians call that part of Arabia), he was driven by a north wind for many days, and at last landed in the mouth of a certain river where were many sea-fowl and water-birds. And thereby is a rock, no common one, but fashioned into the likeness of the head of an Ethiopian. There he said that the people of that country found him, namely the Amagardoi, and carried him to their village. They have this peculiar to themselves, and unlike all other peoples whom we know, that the woman asks the man in marriage. They then, when they have kissed each other, are man and wife wedded. And they derive their names from the mother; wherein they agree with the Lycians, whether being a colony of the Lycians, or the Lycians a colony of theirs, Phanes could not give me to understand. But, whereas they are black and the Lycians are white, I rather believe that one of them has learned this custom from the other; for anything might happen in the past of time.

The Amagardoi have also this custom, such as we know of none other people; that they slay strangers by crowning them with amphorae, having made them red-hot. Now, having taken Phanes, they were about to crown him on this wise, when there appeared among them a veiled woman, very tall and goodly, whom they conceive to be a goddess and worship. By her was Phanes delivered out of their hands; and "she kept him in her hollow caves having a desire that he should be her lover," as Homer says in the Odyssey, if the Odyssey be Homer's. And Phanes reports of her that she is the most beautiful woman in the world, but of her coming thither, whence she came or when, she would tell him nothing. But he swore to me, by him who is buried at Thebes (and whose name in such a matter as this it is not holy for me to utter), that this woman was no other than Rhodopis the Thracian. For there is a portrait of Rhodopis in the temple of Aphrodite in Naucratis, and, knowing this portrait well, Phanes recognised by it that the woman was Rhodopis. Therefore Rhodopis is yet living, being now about one hundred and fifty years of age. And Phanes added that there is in the country of the Amagardoi a fire; and whoso enters into that fire does not die, but is "without age and immortal," as Homer says concerning the horses of Peleus. Now, I would have deemed that he was making a mock of that sacred story which he knows who has been initiated into the mysteries of Demeter at Eleusis. But he and Nicarete are about to sail together without delay to the country of the Amagardoi, believing that there they will enter the fire and become immortal. Yet methinks that Rhodopis will not look lovingly on Nicarete, when they meet in that land, nor Nicarete on Rhodopis. Nay, belike the amphora will be made hot for one or the other.

Such, howbeit, was the story of Phanes the Phocaean, whether he spoke falsely or truly. The God be with thee.

HERODOTUS.

LETTER: Mrs Proudie

Mrs. Proudie, wife of the Bishop of Barchester, admits Mrs. Quiverful into her confidence. Mrs. Proudie first takes pleasure in a new and pious acquaintance, Lady Crawley (nee Sharp), but afterwards discovers the true character of this insidious and dangerous woman.

The Palace, Barchester, July 17.

Dear Letitia, — The appearance of mumps in a small family of fourteen like yours, is indeed one of those dispensations which teach us how mysterious are the ways! But I need not tell you to be most careful about cold, which greatly adds to the virulence of the complaint, and it is difficult for you, in lodgings at Brighton, to keep a watchful eye on so many at once. May this discipline be blessed to you, and to the dear children!

I have much to tell you of Barchester. The light worldly tone of some families in this place (I will not mention the Grantleys nor the Arabins) has been checked, I hope, by one of those accidents which surely, surely, are not to be considered accidents alone! You know how strong is my objection to fancy fairs or bazaars, too often rather scenes of giddy merriment than exhibitions of genuine Christian feeling. Yet by means of one of these (how strangely are things ordered!) a happy change, I trust, is being brought about in our midst.

You have heard of Hogglestock, though you may never have visited that benighted and outlying parish. Indeed, I was never there myself till last week, when Tom felt it his duty (though woefully misdirected, to my mind, but we are fallible creatures) to go and open a bazaar in that place for the restoration of the church. I accompanied him; for I trusted that an opportunity might be made for me, and that I might especially bear in on the mind of the rector's wife the absolute necessity of Sabbath-day schools. The rector is a Mr. Crawley. He led us on our arrival into a scene of red cloth, wax dolls most indelicately displayed, cushions, antimacassars, and similar IDOLS. The Bishop's speech (I composed it myself) you will read in the "Barchester Guardian," which I send you. While approving the END he rebuked the MEANS, and took the opportunity to read a much-needed lesson on JESUITRY and the dangers of worldliness in high ecclesiastical places. Let those wince who feel a sense of their own backslidings. When the Bishop had ended, I determined to walk once through the bazaar just to make sure that there were no lotteries nor games of chance — a desecration of our MITES now too, too frequent. As I was returning through the throng, alas! of PLEASURE-SEEKERS, and wishing that I might scourge them out of the schoolroom, Mr. Crawley met me, in company with a lady who desired, he said, to be presented to me. He is a distant relation of the well-known county family, the Crawleys, of Queen’s Crawley; the present baronet, Sir Rawdon, having recently married Miss Jane Dobbin, daughter of Colonel Dobbin. The lady who was now introduced to me, and whose STILL PLEASING face wears an aspect of humble devoutness, was Lady Crawley, mother of the present baronet.

“Madam,” she said, “I came here in the belief that I was discharging a pious duty. My life, alas! has been one of sore trial, and I only try to do good.” . . .

I was going to say that I had seen her name in a score of charity lists, and knew her as a patroness of the Destitute Orange-Girls, the Neglected Washerwomen, and the Distressed Muffin-Men. But she shook her head; and then, looking up at me with eyes like a SAINT’S (if our PRIVILEGES permitted us to believe in these fabulous beings of the Romish superstition), she said, “Ah, no! I have always been in the wrong. The beautiful address of the Bishop of Barchester has awakened me, and convinced me that the PATH does not lie through Fancy Fairs. I have to begin again. Who shall guide me?”

I trust I am not subject to vanity; but the news that I (for I composed the Charge, as I may almost call it) had been the instrument of so affecting a change did not fail to please me. I thanked Lady Crawley, and expressed my deep interest in her altered convictions. Finally she promised to come on a visit to us at the Palace (she usually resides at Bath or Cheltenham), and has been three days an inmate. Never have I met a more singular example of what the Truth can do for one who, as she admits, was long ago a worldling. “I have seen the vanity of it,” she tells me, with tears in her eyes; and from her example I expect an AWAKENING among our worldlings. They will follow the path of a TITLED person. Tom is much interested in his CONVERT, as he thinks her. Not to ME be the glory! — Your assured friend,

EMILY BARNUM.

From Mrs. Proudie to Mrs. Quiverful.
The Palace, Barchester, July 22.

Dear Letitia, — My hand trembles so with indignation that I can hardly direct my pen. Pray BURN my letter of July 17 at once, if you have not already done so. We have been DECEIVED in that woman! She is a brazenfaced, painted daughter of Heth, and has no more right to the title of Lady Crawley than YOU have. I am told that she was at one time the paramour of Lord Steyne, and that her conduct made it impossible for her husband to live with her. And this is the woman who has come within the gates of the palace of a Christian prelate; nay, more, who has secured his signature to a cheque of very considerable value. I think my suspicions were first excited by the disappearance of the brandy in the liqueur-stand, and by meeting "her ladyship's" maid carrying the bottle up to her room! I spoke to the Bishop, but he would not listen to me- -quite unlike himself; and even turned on me in her defence.

Entering his study hastily on the following day, I found her kneeling at his feet, her yellow hair (dyed, no doubt, for she must be sixty if she is a day) about her shoulders, doing what do you suppose -? CONFESSING HERSELF TO THE BISHOP OF BARCHESTER

And he was listening to her "confession" with an appearance of interest, and with one of her hands in his.

"Serpent!" I said — and her green eyes glittered just like one —
"unhand his lordship!" She gave a little laugh and said, "Dear
Mrs. Proudie, do not let me monopolise the Bishop's time. Perhaps
I am in the way?"

"And you shall go out of it," I said. "You are one of those who cause Israel to sin. You bring the Confessional, for it is no better, into the house of a Prelate of the Protestant Church of England!" Would you believe that she had the assurance to answer me with a passage from the Prayer Book, which I have often felt certain must be MISTRANSLATED?

"Pack, madam," said I; "we know who can quote Scripture for his own ends!"

And I pretty soon saw her out of the house, though NOT IN TIME; for the infatuated Bishop had already given her a cheque for a sum which I cannot bring myself to tell you, for the Funds of the Destitute Orange-Girls. Not a penny of it will they ever see; nor do I approve of such ostentatious alms in any case. —Yours in haste, P.S. — I have heard from Lady Courtney all her history. It is ABOMINABLE.

LETTER: From Robert Surtees, Esq., of Mainsforth, to Jonathan Oldbuck, Esq., of Monkbarns.

It is well known that Mr. Surtees of Mainsforth not only palmed off on Sir Waiter Scott several ballads of his own manufacture, but also invented and pretended to have found in a document (since burned) the story of the duel with the spectre knight which occurs in Marmion. In the following letter this ingenious antiquary plays the same game with Mr. Jonathan Oldbuck, of Monkbarns, the celebrated antiquary. A note on the subject is published in the Appendix.

Mainsforth, May 9, 1815.

Dear Sir, — I am something of the Mussulman's humour, as you know, and never willingly pass by a scrap of printed paper, however it comes in my way. I cannot, indeed, like the "Spectator," "mention a paper kite from which I have received great improvement," nor "a hat-case which I would not exchange for all the beavers in Great Britain." It is in a less unlikely place that I have made a little discovery which will interest you, I hope; for as it chances, not only has a lost ballad been at least partially recovered, but . . . however, I will keep your learned patience on the tenterhooks for a while.

Business taking me to Newcastle of late, I found myself in Bell's little shop on the quay. You know the man by report at least; he is more a collector than a bookseller, though poor; and I verily believe that he would sell all his children — Douglas Bell, Percy Bell, Hobbie Bell, and Kinmont Bell— "for a song." Ballads are his foible, and he can hardly be made to part with one of the broadsides in his broken portfolios. Well, semel insanivimus omnes (by the way, did it ever strike you that the Roman "cribbed" that line, as the vulgar say, from an epigram in the Anthology?), and you and I will scarce throw the first stone at the poor man's folly. However, I am delaying your natural eagerness. So now for the story of my great discovery. As our friend Bell would scarce let his dusty broadsheet lumber out of his hands, I was turning to leave him in no very good humour, when I noticed a small and rather long octavo, in dirty and crumpled vellum, lying on the top of a heap of rubbish, Boston’s “Crook in the Lot,” “The Pilgrim’s Progress,” and other chap-book trumpery. I do not know what good angel that watches over us collectors made me take up the thing, which I found to be nothing less than a copy of old Guillaume Coquillart. It was not Galliot du Pre’s edition, in lettres rondes, but, still more precious had it only been complete, an example in black letter. I give you the whole title. First the motto, in the frieze of an architectural design, . Then, in small capitals -

LES OEUVRES MAISTRE GVIL LAUME COQUIL LART EN SON VI VANT OFFICIAL DE REIMS. NOV VELLEMENT RE VEVES ET CORRI GEES. M. D. XXXV.

On les vend a Lyon en la
Maison de Francoys Juste,
Demourant devant nostre
Dame de Confort.

By bad (or good) luck this rare piece was imperfect — the back gaping and three sheets gone. But, in turning over the leaves, I saw something that brought my heart, as they say, into my mouth. So, beating down Bell from his upset price of fourpence to six bawbees, I pushed the treasure carelessly in my pocket, and never stopped till I was in a lonely place by Tyne-side and secure from observation. Then, with my knife, I very carefully uncased Maistre Guillaume, and extracted the sheet of parchment, printed in black letter with red capitals, that had been used to line the binding. A corner of it had crept out, through the injuries of time, and on that, in Bell's "crame" (for it is more a crame than a shop), I had caught the mystic words Runjt macht Gunjt.

And now, I think, Monkbarns, you prick up your ears and wipe your spectacles. That is the motto, as every one of the learned family of antiquaries is well aware, and, as you have often told me, of your great forbear, the venerable and praiseworthy Aldobrand Oldenbuck the Typographer, who fled from the Low Countries during the tyrannical attempt of Philip II. to suppress at once civil and religious liberty. As all the world knows, he withdrew from Nuremberg to Scotland, and set up his Penates and (what you may not hitherto have been aware of) his Printing Press at Fairport, and under your ancestral roof of Monkbarns. But, what will surprise you yet more, the parchment sheet which bears Aldobrand's motto in German contains printed matter in good Scots! This excellent and enterprising man must have set himself to ply his noble art in his new home, and in our unfamiliar tongue.

Yet, even now, we are not at the end of this most fortunate discovery. It would appear that there was little demand for works of learning and religion in Scotland, or at least at Fairport; for the parchment sheet contains fragments of a

Ballad in the Scots tongue. None but a poor and struggling printer would then have lent his types to such work, and fortunate for us has been the poverty of your great ancestor. Here we have the very earliest printed ballad in the world, and, though fragmentary, it is the more precious as the style proves to demonstration, and against the frantic scepticism even of a Ritson, the antique and venerable character of those compositions. I send you a copy of the Ballad, with the gaps (where the tooth of time or of the worm, edax rerum, hath impaired it) filled up with conjectural restorations of my own. But how far do they fall short of the original simplicity! Non cuivis contingit. As the title is lacking, as well as the imprint, I have styled it

THE FRAGMENT OF THE FAUSE LOVER AND THE DEAD LEMAN.

O Willie rade, and Willie gaed
Atween the shore and sea,
And still it was his dead Lady
That kept him company.

O Willie rade, and Willie gaed
Atween the ,
And still it was his dead Lady
That .

“O Willie, tak’ me up by ye,
Sae far it is I gang;
O tak’ me on your saddle bow,
Or .”

“Gae back, gae back, ye fause ill wife,
To the grave wherein ye lie,
It never was seen that a dead leman
Kept lover’s company!

“Gae back, gae back frae me,” he said,
“For this day maun I wed,
And how can I kiss a living lass,
When ye come frae the dead?

“If ye maun haunt a living man,
Your brither haunt,” says he,
“For it was never my knife, but his
That

*

We are to understand, I make no doubt, that Willie had been too fortunate a lover, and that in his absence — the frailty of his lady becoming conspicuous — her brother had avenged the family honour according to that old law of Scotland which the courteous Ariosto styles “l’ aspra legge di Scozia, empia e severa.”

Pray let me know, at your leisure, what you think of this trouvaille. It is, of course, entirely at your service, if you think it worthy of a place in a new edition of the “Minstrelsy.” I have no room to inflict more ballads or legends on you; and remain, most faithfully yours,

R. SURTEES.

LETTER: From Jonathan Oldbuck, Esq., of Monkbarns, to Robert Surtees, Esq., Mainsforth.

Monkbarns, June 1.
My Dear Sir, — How kind hath Fortune been to you, and, in a secondary degree, to myself. Your letter must dispel the unreasoning and I fear envious scepticism of MacCribb, who has put forth a plaunflet (I love that old spelling) in which he derides the history of Aldobrand Oldenbuck as a fable. The Ballad shall, indeed, have an honoured place in my poor Collection whenever the public taste calls for a new edition. But the original, what would I not give to have it in my hands, to touch the very parchment which came from the press of my revered ancestor, and, gloating on the crabbed letters, confute MacCribb to his face ipso visu et tactu of so inestimable a rarity. Exchanges — or “swaps,” as the vulgar call them — are not unknown among our fraternity. Ask what you will for this treasure, to the half of my kingdom: my gold Aurelius (found at Bermuckety, on the very limits of Roman Caledonia), my “Complaynte of Scotland” (the only perfect copy known),

My copperplate, with almanacks
Engrav’d upon’t, and other knacks;
My moon-dial, with Napier’s bones
And several constellation stones.

Make your choice, in fact, of all my Gabions, as honest old George Ruthven called them.

Nay, excuse the covetousness of an Antiquary, my dear sir; I well know that nothing I could offer were worth a tithe of your priceless discovery, the oldest printed Scots Ballad extant. It shall suffice for me to look on it, under the roof of Mainsforth, when next I make a raid across the Border. I have conquered my passions, and can obey the last of the Commandments. Haud equiden invideo, minor magis. I need not bid you be watchful of your booty. — Yours most faithfully,

JONATHAN OLDBUCK.

From Robert Surtees, Esq., to Jonathan Oldbuck, Esq.
June 11.
My Dear Sir, — Alas, your warning comes too late. An accursed example of womankind, fit descendant of that unhappy Betty Barnes, cook to Mr. Warburton, who destroyed his ancient manuscript plays, hath invaded my sanctum, and the original black-letter text of the ballad has gone to join Shakspeare's "Stephen" and "Henry II." She hath lit with it my study fire, and it is fortunate indeed that I had made the copy of the ballad for you. But the volume of Coquillart is alive to testify to the authenticity of the poem; which, after all, is needless evidence, as not even Ritson could suspect of either the skill or the malice of such a forgery, Yours most faithfully,

ROBERT SURTEES.

LETTER: From Nicholas to the Editor of the St. James's Gazette,

It is only too probable that a later generation has forgotten "Nicholas," the sporting Prophet of "Fun," in the reign of Mr. Hood the younger. The little work, "Nicholas's Notes," in which Mr. W. J. Prowse collected the papers of the old Prophet, is, indeed, not an "edition de looks," as the aged Seer says, with his simple humour. From the Paradise of Fiction, however (and the Paradise of Touts), Nicholas has communicated, perhaps to the Psychical Society, the following Epistle. His friendly mention of a brother journalist speaks well for the Old Man's head and heart.

The Paradise of Fiction, Feb. 9, 1888.

Sir, — My dear young friend, it is ten to one, and no takers, that the public, than whom, between you and me, I do not think much of them, have forgotten Nicholas, or even never heard of the Prophet. Youth will be served; and it is now between twenty years since he left off vaticinating in "Fun," during young Mr. Hood's time, of future sportive events for to come, and came to live HERE with the other celebrated characters of Fiction, than whom I am sure a more mixed lot, though perhaps a little gay. It having come to the Prophet's knowledge that some of them was writing letters to "The St. James's Gazette" (than which I am sure none more respectable, though perhaps a little not quite so attentive to sportive interests as it might be), he have decided that Nicholas will take up his pen once more, as of old.

The State of the Turf, my dear young friend, since an old but still handsome bird would freely alight (when not warned off) on Newmarket Heath, have caused Nicholas some anxiety. Sir, between you and me, IT IS RAPIDLY GETTING NO BETTER. Here is Lord — (than whom a more sterling sportsman) as good as saying to Sir — (than whom, perhaps), "Did you ever hear of a sporting character called Swindells?" And the Prophet HAVE been told that it may furnish matter for the gentlemen of the long robe — which, in my time, many of them was backers of horses.

And all along of what? Why, of the "inexplicable in-and-out running of horses," as the "Standard" says, and as will often happen, you, perhaps, having a likely dark one as you want to get light into a high-class autumn handicap. The days is long past since Nicholas was nuts on the game little Lecturer, but still has the interests of the Turf at heart; and, my dear young friend, if horses never ran in and out, where would be “the glorious uncertainty of the sport”? On the whole, then, if asked my opinion on this affair, the Prophet would say — putting it ambiguous-like— “Gentlemen, when there’s so much dirty linen to wash, can’t you remember that we’re all pretty much tarred with the same brush?” A great politician — which a lot of his family is here, Coningsby, and the Young Duke, and many other sportsmen — used to say as what the Turf was “a gigantic engine of national demoralisation;” which Nicholas is not quite sure but what he was right for him, though his language on rather a large scale. Horses running in and out is inexplicable! Why, gents all, which of us WOULDN’T do it, if he had the chance to put the pot on handsome, human nature being what it is, especially considering the lowness of the market odds as you have often and often to be content with. In short, the more you stir it the more it won’t exactly remind you of gales from Araby the Blest; than which a more delightful country, only not to be found on any atlas as Nicholas ever cast a glance at the map, however large.

But enough of a subject than which perhaps one more painful to me; the Prophet having often and often, in early days, been warned off Newmarket Heath himself, and called a “disreputable old tout,” though only labouring in his vocation.

(Make a new beginning here, please, Printer.)

It have come to the knowledge of the Prophet that his “Notes” are not quite so much read as they once was, partly owing, no doubt, to the book being not so much an “edition de looks” as rather a low-lived lot, to a casual eye, at fourpence; the picture outside representing Nicholas rather as having had too much for to drink than as a prominent member of the Blue Ribbon Society, which it did not exist in his period, nor would it have enjoyed, to any considerable extent, my personal or pecuniary support, he having something else to do with his money. (Printer, please put in a full stop somewhere here, Nicholas being a little out of the habit of writing for the periodical press.) He have also heard that it is proposed in literary circles to start a “Nicholas Society” for the purpose of printing a limited edition of my works including my lost treatise of Knur and Spell, on Japanese paper, illustrated with photo-gravelures; they having come in since the Prophet’s period, though perhaps a little gay.

But, my dear though exquisite young friends, is there no better way of rallying round the Prophet than THIS? I have heard, from characters in ancient literature, such as Agamemnon — than whom a more energetic soldier, though perhaps a trifle arbitrary — the Prophet HAVE heard, I say, that a deal of liquor used to be poured on the graves of coves like him and me, and that it did them good. This may be the case, and anyway the experiment is well worth trying; though, I would say, do not let it be milk, as I gather was customary in early times, as didn’t know any better; but, if possible, a bottle or two of sherry wine, to which, as is well beknown, Nicholas was partial. He will now conclude; and the Prophet hopes that an experiment, than which, I am sure, one more deeply interesting, will not be deferred; he not much taking to the liquor here, though the company makes up for a great deal, especially an Irish officer by the name of Costigan, than whom a sweeter singer or a more honourable gentleman; and signs himself, with gratitude for past favours, and kind respects to the Editor of the “Guardian,”

NICHOLAS.

LETTER: From the Earl of Montrose to Captain Dugald Dalgetty.

Whoever has read the “Memoirs of Monsieur d’Artagnan” — a Marshal in the French King’s service — as they are published by Monsieur Alexandre Dumas in “Les Trois Mousquetaires,” will not have forgotten that duel behind the Luxembourg, in which, as is declared, an Englishman ran away from the Chevalier d’Herblay, called Aramis in his regiment. Englishmen have never held that Monsieur Dumas was well informed about this affair. The following letters of the Great Marquis and Captain Dalgetty from the “Kirkhope Papers” prove that Englishmen were in the right.

-, 164-.

Sir, — Touching that I did, to your apprehension, turn away from you with some show of coldness on your late coming, it may be that you but little misread me. But, for that no man is condemned without a hearing, I would fain know under your own hand the truth concerning that whereof a shameful report is bruited abroad, even in the “Gallo Belgicus” and the “Fliegender Mercoeur” of Leipsic — namely, that in a certain duel lately fought in Paris behind the Palace of the Luxembourg, four Englishmen encountering as many Musketeers of the French King’s, one out of this realm, to our disgrace, shamefully fled; and he (by report) Rittmaster Dugald Dalgetty. Till which, bruit be either abolished, and the stain — as an ill blot on a clean scutcheon — wiped away, or as shamefully acknowledged as it is itself shameful, I abide, as I shall hear from yourself,

MONTROSE.

From Captain Dugald Dalgetty, of Drumthwacket, to the Most Noble and Puissant Prince James, Earl of Montrose, commanding the musters of the King in Scotland. These -

My Lord, — As touching the bruit, or fama, as we said at the Mareschal College, I shall forthwith answer, and that peremptorie. For this story of the duello, as a man may say (though, indeed, they that fought in it were not in the dual number, as your Grecian hath it, but eight soldados — seven of them gallant men), truly the story is of the longest; but as your lordship will have it, though more expert with the sword than the goosequill, I must even buckle to.

Let your lordship conceive of your poor officer, once lieutenant and Rittmaster under that invincible monarch, the bulwark of the Protestant faith, Gustavus the Victorious; conceive, I say, Dugald Dalgetty, of Drumthwacket that should be, in Paris, concerned with a matter of weight and moment not necessary to be mooted or minted of. As I am sitting at my tavern ordinary, for I consider that an experienced cavalier should ever lay in provenant as occasion serveth, comes in to me a stipendiary of my Lord Winter, bidding me know that his master would speak to me: and that not coram populo, as I doubt not your lordship said at St. Leonard’s College in St. Andrews, but privily. Thereon I rise and wait on him; to be brief- -brevis esse laboro, as we said lang syne — his lordship would have me to be of his backers in private rencontre with four gentlemen of the King’s Musketeers.

Concerning the cause of this duello, I may well say teterrima causa. His lordship’s own sister Milady Clarik was in question; she being, I fear me, rather akin in her way of life to Jean Drocheils (whom your lordship may remember; for, the Baillies expulsing her from Aberdeen, she migrated to St. Andrews, ad eundem, as the saying is) than like, in her walk and conduct, to a virtuous lady of a noble family. She was, indeed, as current rumour had it, the light o’love or belle amie of Monsieur d’Artagnan, his lordship’s adversary.

But of siclike least said soonest mended. I take cloak and sword, and follow with his lordship and two other experienced cavaliers unto the place of rencontre, being a waste croft whereon a loon was herding goats, behind the Palace of the Luxembourg. Here we find waiting us four soldados, proper tall men of their hands, who receive us courteously. He that first gave cause of quarrel to my Lord Winter bore a worthy name enough out of Gascony, that is arida nutrix, as we said at the Mareschal College, of honourable soldados — to wit, as I said, he was Monsieur d’Artagnan. To his friends, howbeit, he gave sic heathen titles as I never saw or heard of out of the Grecian books: namely, Monsieur Porthos, a very tall man, albeit something of a lourdaud; Monsieur Athos; and he that was to be mine own opposite, Monsieur Aramis. Hearing these outlandish and insolent appellations, I thought it becoming me, as an honourable cavalier, to resent this fashion of presenting: and demurred that a gentleman of the House of Dalgetty of Drumthwacket could neither take affront from, nor give honourable satisfaction to, a nameless landlouper. Wherein your lordship, I doubt me not, will hold me justificate.

Lord Winter homologating mine opinion, he that called himself Athos drew each of us apart, and whispered the true names and qualities territorial of these gentlemen; the whilk, as may befall honourable soldados, they had reason sufficient to conceal while serving as private gentlemen in a regiment, though disdaining to receive halberds, as unbecoming their birth. He that aligned himself forenenst me was styled the Chevalier d’Herblay; and, the word being given, we fell to.

Now, mine adversary declining to fight comminus gladio, but breaking ground in a manner unworthy of a gallant soldado, and the place, saving your presence, being somewhat slippery and treacherous because of the goats that were fed there, I delivered a sufficient onslaught; and he fell, his sword flying from his hand. When I had taken his weapon — the spolia opima, as we said at Mareschal College — I bid him rise, and then discoursed him on the dishonour of such a hasty defeat. Then, he confessing himself to me that, though under arms, he was a young fledgeling priest in Popish orders, I began upon him with such words on his disgracing the noble profession of arms as might have made him choose to return to his cloister; when suddenly he fled, and, being young and light-footed, robbed me, not only of such caduacs and casualties as an experienced cavalier might well take from his prisoner for ransom, but also, as now it appears, of my good name. For I doubt not that this musketeer priest, Monsieur Aramis, or l’Abbe d’Herblay (for he hath as many names as I have seen campaigns), was the loon that beguiled with a lying tale the newsman of the “Gallo Belgicus.” And I have ever seen that an honourable soldado will give the go-by to these newsmen and their flying sheets, as unworthy of the notice of honourable cavaliers; of whom (recommending your lordship for the truth of my tale to my Lord Winter, now with his gracious Majesty the King) I am fain to subscribe myself one, and your lordship’s poor officer, as ye shall entreat him,

DUGALD DALGETTY, of Drumthwacket,

Late Commander of the whole stift of Dunklespiel on the Lower
Rhine.

LETTER: From Mr. Lovelace to John Belford, Esq.

The following letter must have been omitted from the papers to which Mr. Samuel Richardson, the editor of “Clarissa,” had access. It was written, apparently, after the disgraceful success of Lovelace’s disgraceful adventure, and shows us that scoundrel in company not choice, indeed, but better than he deserved, the society of Mr. Thomas Jones, a Foundling. Mr. Jones’s admirable wife (nee Western), having heard of Lovelace’s conduct, sent her husband to execute that revenge which should have been competed for by every man of heart. It will be seen that Mr. Jones was no match for the perfidies of Mr. Lovelace. The cynical reflections of that bad man on Lord Fellamar, and his relations with Mrs. Jones, will only cause indignation and contempt among her innumerable and honourable admirers. They will remember the critical and painful circumstances as recorded in Mr. Henry Fielding’s biography of Mr. Jones.

Parcius junctas quatiunt fenestras
Ictibus crebris juvenes protervi.

Curse upon thy stars, Jack! How long wilt thou beat me about the head with thy musty citations from Nat Lee and thy troop of poetical divines? Thou hast driven me to motto-hunting for the comeliness of mine epistle, like the weekly scribblers. See, Jack, I have an adventure to tell thee! It is not the avenging Morden that hath flashed through the window, sword in hand, as in my frightful dream; nor hath the statue of the Commandant visited me, like Don Juan, that Rake of Spain; but a challenger came hither that is not akin to my beloved Miss. Dost remember a tall, fresh-coloured, cudgel-playing oaf that my Lady Bellaston led about with her — as maids lead apes in hell, though he more of an ape than she of a maid— ’tis a year gone? This brawny-beefed chairman hath married a fortune and a delicious girl, you dog, Miss Sophia Western, of Somerset, and is now in train, I doubt not, to beget as goodly a tribe of chuckle-headed boys and whey-faced wenches as you shall see round an old squire’s tomb in a parish church. Wherefore does he not abide at this his appointed lawful husbandry, I marvel; but not a whit!

Our cursed adventure hath spread from the flippanti of both sexes down to the heathenish parts of Somerset; where it hath reached Madam Jones's ears, and inflamed this pretty vixen with a desire to avenge Miss Harlowe on me, and by the cudgel of Mr. Jones, his Sophia having sent him up to town for no other purpose. De la Tour, my man, came to me yesterday morning with the tidings that the New Giant, as he supposes, waits on me to solicit the favour of my patronage. I am in the powdering closet, being bound for a rout, and cry, "Let the Giant in!" Then a heavy tread: and, looking up, what do I see but a shoulder-of-mutton fist at my nose, and lo! a Somerset tongue cries, "Lovelace, thou villain, thou shalt taste of this!" A man in a powdering closet cannot fight, even if he be a boxing glutton like your Figs and other gladiators of the Artillery Ground. Needs must I parley. "What," says I, "what, the happy Mr. Jones from the West! What brings him here among the wicked, and how can the possessor of the beauteous Sophia be a moment from her charms?"

"Take not her name," cries my clod-hopper, "into thy perjured mouth. 'Tis herself sends me here to avenge the best, the most injured . . . " Here he fell a-blubbering! Oh, Belford, the virtue of this world is a great discourager of repentance.

"If Mr. Jones insists on the arbitrament of the sword . . . " I was beginning—"Nay, none of thy Frenchified blades," cries he, "come out of thy earth, thou stinking fox, and try conclusions with an English cudgel!"

Belford, I am no cudgel-player, and I knew not well how to rid myself of this swasher.

"Mr. Jones!" I said, "I will fight you how you will, where you will, with what weapon you will; but first inform me of the nature of our quarrel. Would you blazon abroad yet further the malignant tales that have injured both me and a lady for whom I have none but the most hallowed esteem? I pray you sit down, Sir; be calm, the light is ill for any play with cudgel or sword. De la Tour, a bottle of right Burgundy; Mr. Jones and I have business, and he hath travelled far."

In a trice there was a chicken, a bottle, a set of knives and forks, a white cloth, and a hungry oaf that did eat and swear! One bottle followed another. By the third Mr. Jones embraced me, saying that never had a man been more belied than I; that it was Lord Fellamar, not I, was the villain. To this effect I own that I did myself drop a hint; conceiving that the divine Sophia must often have regretted our friend Fellamar when once she was bound to the oaf, and that Jones was capable of a resentful jealousy. By midnight I had to call a chair for my besotted challenger, and when the Avenger was there safely bestowed, I asked him where the men should carry him? His tongue being now thick, and his brains bemused, he could not find the sign of his inn in his noddle. So, the merry devil prompting me, I gave the men the address of his ancient flame, my Lady Bellaston, and off they jogged with Jones.

Was there ever, Belford, a stranger amoris redintegratio than this must have been, when our Lydia heard the old love at the rarely shaken doors:

Me tuo longas pereunte noctes,
Lydia, dormis?

Ah, how little hath Madam Sophia taken by despatching her lord to town, and all to break my head. My fellow, who carries this to thee, has just met Fellamar's man, and tells me that FELLAMAR YESTERDAY WENT DOWN INTO SOMERSET. What bodes this rare conjunction and disjunction of man and wife and of old affections? and hath "Thomas, a Foundling," too, gone the way of all flesh?

Thy LOVELACE.

No news of the dear fugitive! Ah, Belford, my conscience and my cousins call me a villain! Minxes all.

LETTER: From Miss Catherine Morland to Miss Eleanor Tilney.

Miss Catherine Morland, of "Northanger Abbey," gives her account of a visit to Mr. Rochester, and of his governess's peculiar behaviour. Mrs. Rochester (nee Eyre) has no mention of this in her Memoirs.

Thornfield, Midnight

At length, my dear Eleanor, the terrors on which you have so often rallied me are become REALITIES, and your Catherine is in the midst of those circumstances to which we may, without exaggeration, give the epithet "horrible." I write, as I firmly believe, from the mansion of a maniac! On a visit to my Aunt Ingram, and carried by her to Thornfield, the seat of her wealthy neighbour, Mr. Rochester, how shall your Catherine's trembling pen unfold the mysteries by which she finds herself surrounded! No sooner had I entered this battlemented mansion than a cold chill struck through me, as with a sense of some brooding terror. All, indeed, was elegance, all splendour! The arches were hung with Tyrian-dyed curtains. The ornaments on the pale Parian mantelpiece were of red Bohemian glass. Everywhere were crimson couches and sofas. The housekeeper, Mrs. Fairfax, pointed out to my notice some vases of fine purple spar, and on all sides were Turkey carpets and large mirrors. Elegance of taste and fastidious research of ornament could do no more; but what is luxury to the mind ill at ease? or can a restless conscience be stilled by red Bohemian glass or pale Parian mantelpieces?

No, alas! too plainly was this conspicuous when, on entering the library, we found Mr. Rochester — alone! The envied possessor of all this opulence can be no happy man. He was seated with his head bent on his folded arms, and when he looked up a morose — almost a malignant — scowl blackened his features! Hastily beckoning to the governess, who entered with us, to follow him, he exclaimed, “Oh, hang it all!” in an accent of despair, and rushed from the chamber. We distinctly heard the doors clanging behind him as he flew! At dinner, the same hollow reserve; his conversation entirely confined to the governess (a Miss Eyre), whose position here your Catherine does not understand, and to whom I distinctly heard him observe that Miss Blanche Ingram was “an extensive armful.”

The evening was spent in the lugubrious mockery of pretending to consult an old gipsy-woman who smoked a short black pipe, and was recognised BY ALL as Mr. Rochester in disguise. I was conducted by Miss Eyre to my bedroom — through a long passage, narrow, low, and dim, with two rows of small black doors, all shut; ’twas like a corridor in some Blue Beard’s castle. “Hurry, hurry, I hear the chains rattling,” said this strange girl; whose position, my Eleanor, in this house causes your Catherine some natural perplexity. When we had reached my chamber, “Be silent, silent as death,” said Miss Eyre, her finger on her lip and her meagre body convulsed with some mysterious emotion. “Speak not of what you hear, do not remember what you see!” and she was gone.

I undressed, after testing the walls for secret panels and looking for assassins in the usual place, but was haunted all the time by an unnatural sound of laughter. At length, groping my way to the bed, I jumped hastily in, and would have sought some suspension of anguish by creeping far underneath the clothes. But even this refuge was denied to your wretched Catherine! I could not stretch my limbs; for the sheet, my dear Eleanor, had been so arranged, in some manner which I do not understand, as to render this impossible. The laughter seemed to redouble. I heard a footstep at my door. I hurried on my frock and shawl and crept into the gallery. A strange dark figure was gliding in front of me, stooping at each door; and every time it stooped, came A LOW GURGLING NOISE! Inspired by I know not what desperation of courage, I rushed on the figure and seized it by the neck. It was Miss Eyre, the governess, filling the boots of all the guests with water, which she carried in a can. When she saw me she gave a scream and threw herself against a door hung with a curtain of Tyrian dye. It yielded, and there poured into the passage a blue cloud of smoke, with a strong and odious smell of cigars, into which (and to what company?) she vanished. I groped my way as well as I might to my own chamber: where each hour the clocks, as they struck, found an echo in the apprehensive heart of

THE ILL-FATED CATHERINE MORLAND.

LETTER: From Montague Tigg, Esq., to Mr. David Crimp.

The following letter needs no explanation for any who have studied the fortunes and admired the style of that celebrated and sanguine financier, Mr. Montague Tigg, in “Martin Chuzzlewit.” His chance meeting with the romantic Comte de Monte Cristo naturally suggested to him the plans and hopes which he unfolds to an unsympathetic capitalist.

1542 Park Lane, May 27, 1848.

My Premium Pomegranate, — Oracles are not in it, David, with you, my pippin, as auspicious counsellors of ingenious indigence. The remark which you uttered lately, when refusing to make the trumpery advance of half-a-crown on a garment which had been near to the illustrious person of my friend Chevy Slime, that remark was inspired. “Go to Holborn!” you said, and the longest-bearded of early prophets never uttered aught more pregnant with Destiny. I went to Holborn, to the humble establishment of the tuneful tonsor, Sweedle-pipe. All things come, the poet says, to him who knows how to wait — especially, I may add, to him who knows how to wait behind thin partitions with a chink in them. Ensconced in such an ambush- -in fact, in the back shop — I bided my time, intending to solicit pecuniary accommodation from the barber, and studying human nature as developed in his customers.

There are odd customers in Kingsgate Street, Holborn — foreign gents and refugees. Such a cove my eagle eye detected in a man who entered the shop wearing a long black beard streaked with the snows of age, and who requested Poll to shave him clean. He was a sailor-man to look at; but his profile, David, might have been carved by a Grecian chisel out of an iceberg, and that steel grey eye of his might have struck a chill, even through a chink, into any heart less stout than beats behind the vest of Montague Tigg. The task of rasping so hirsute a customer seemed to sit heavy on the soul of Poll, and threatened to exhaust the resources of his limited establishment. The barber went forth to command, as I presume, a fresher strop, or more keenly tempered steel, and glittering cans of water heated to a fiercer heat. No sooner was the coast clear than the street-door opened, and my stranger was joined by a mantled form, that glided into Poll’s emporium. The new-comer doffed a swart sombrero, and disclosed historic features that were not unknown to the concealed observer — meaning me. Yes, David, that aquiline beak, that long and waxed moustache, that impassible mask of a face, I had seen them, Sir, conspicuous (though their owner be of alien and even hostile birth) among England's special chivalry. The foremost he had charged on the Ides of April (I mean against the ungentlemanly Chartist throng) and in the storied lists of Eglinton. The new-comer, in short, was the nephew of him who ate his heart out in an English gaol (like our illustrious Chiv) — in fact, he was Prince Louis N-B-.

Gliding to the seat where, half-lathered, the more or less ancient Mariner awaited Poll's return, the Prince muttered (in the French lingo, familiar to me from long exile in Boulogne):

"Hist, goes all well?"

"Magnificently, Sire!" says the other chap.

"Our passages taken?"

"Ay, and private cabins paid for to boot, in case of the storm's inclemency."

The Prince nodded and seemed pleased; then he asked anxiously,

"The Bird? You have been to Jamrach's?"

"Pardon me, Sire," says the man who was waiting to be shaved, "I can slip from your jesses no mercenary eagle. These limbs have yet the pith to climb and this heart the daring to venture to the airiest crag of Monte d'Oro, and I have ravished from his eyrie a true Corsican eagle to be the omen of our expedition. Wherever this eagle is your uncle's legions will gather together."

"'Tis well; and the gold?"

"TRUST MONTE CRISTO!" says the bearded man; and then, David, begad!
I knew I had them!

"We meet?"

"At Folkestone pier, 7.45, tidal train."

"I shall be there without fail," says the Prince, and sneaks out of the street-door just as Poll comes in with the extra soap and strop.

Well, David, to make it as short as I can, the man of the icy glance was clean-shaved at last, and the mother who bore him would not have known him as he looked in the glass when it was done. He chucked Poll a diamond worth about a million piastres, and, remarking that he would not trouble him for the change, he walked out. By this characteristic swagger, of course, he more than confirmed my belief that he was, indeed, the celebrated foreigner the Count of Monte Cristo; whose name and history even YOU must be acquainted with, though you may not be what I have heard my friend Chevy Slime call himself, "the most literary man alive." A desperate follower of the star of Austerlitz from his youth, a martyr to the cause in the Chateau d'If, Monte Cristo has not deserted it now that he has come into his own — or anybody else’s.

Of course I was after him like a shot. He walked down Kingsgate Street and took a four-wheeler that was loitering at the corner. I followed on foot, escaping the notice of the police from the fact, made only too natural by Fortune’s cursed spite, that under the toga-like simplicity of Montague Tigg’s costume these minions merely guessed at a cab-tout.

Well, David, he led me a long chase. He got out of the four-wheeler (it was dark now) at the Travellers’, throwing the cabman a purse — of sequins, no doubt. At the door of the Travellers’ he entered a brougham; and, driving to the French Embassy in Albert Gate, he alighted, IN DIFFERENT TOGS, quite the swell, and LET HIMSELF IN WITH HIS OWN LATCH-KEY.

In fact, Sir, this conspirator of barbers’ shops, this prisoner of the Chateau d’If, this climber of Corsican eyries, is to-day the French Minister accredited to the Court of St. James’s!

And now perhaps, David, you begin to see how the land lies, the Promised Land, the land where there is corn and milk and honey-dew. I hold those eminent and highly romantic parties in the hollow of my hand. A letter from me to M. Lecoq, of the Rue Jerusalem, and their little game is up, their eagle moults, the history of Europe is altered. But what good would all that do Montague Tigg? Will it so much as put that delightful coin, a golden sovereign, in the pocket of his nether garments? No, Tigg is no informer; a man who has charged at the head of his regiment on the coast of Africa is no vulgar spy. There is more to be got by making the Count pay through the nose, as we say; chanter, as the French say; “sing a song of sixpence” — to a golden tune.

But, as Fortune now uses me, I cannot personally approach his Excellency. Powdered menials would urge me from his portals. An advance, a small advance — say 30l. — is needed for preliminary expenses: for the charges of the clothier, the bootmaker, the hosier, the barber. Give me 30l. for the restoration of Tigg to the semblance of the Montagues, and with that sum I conquer millions. The diamonds of Monte Cristo, the ingots, the rubies, the golden crowns with the image and superscription of Pope Alexander VI. — all are mine: I mean are ours.

More, David; more, my premium tulip: we shall make the Count a richer man than ever he has been. We shall promote new companies, we shall put him on the board of directors. I see the prospectuses from afar.

UNIVERSAL INTERNATIONAL TREASURE RECOVERY COMPANY.

Chairman.
His Excellency the COMTE DE MONTE CRISTO. K.G., K.C.B., Knight of the Black Eagle.
Directors.

CHEVY SLIME, Esq., Berkeley Square.
MONTAGUE TIGG, Esq., Park Lane.
M. VAUTRIN (Les Bagnes pres de Toulon).
M. JEAN VALJEAN.
The CHEVALIER STRONG. (Would he come in?)
Hon. Secretary. — DAVID CRIMP, Esq.
Archaeological Adviser. — Dr. SPIEGELMANN, Berlin.

Then the prospectus! Treasure-hunting too long left to individual and uneducated enterprise. Need of organised and instructed effort. Examples of treasure easily to be had. Grave of Alaric. Golden chain of Cuzco. Galleons of Vigo Bay. Loot of Delphi. Straits of Salamis. Advice of most distinguished foreign experts already secured. Paid-up capital, a 6 and as many 0’s as the resources of the printing establishment can command. The public will rush in by the myriad. And I am also sketching a

“Disinterested Association for Securing the Rights of Foundlings,” again with Monte Cristo in the chair. David, you have saved a few pounds; in the confidence of unofficial moments you have confessed as much (though not exactly HOW much) to me. Will you neglect one of those opportunities which only genius can discover, but which the humble capitalist can help to fructify? With thirty, nay, with twenty pounds, I can master this millionaire and tame this Earthly Providence. Behind us lies penury and squalor, before us glitters jewelled opulence. You will be at 1542 Park Lane to-morrow WITH THE DIBS? — Yours expectantly,

MONTAGUE TIGG.

From Mr. David Crimp to Montague Tigg, Esq.
The Golden Balls, May 28.

Dear Mr. Tigg, — You always WERE full of your chaff, but you must have been drinking when you wrote all that cock-and-a-bull gammon. Thirty pounds! No; nor fifteen; nor as many pence. I never heard of the party you mention by the name of the Count of Monte Cristo; and as for the Prince, he’s as likely to be setting out for Boulogne with an eagle as you are to start a monkey and a barrel-organ in Jericho; or may be THAT’S the likeliest of the two. So stow your gammon, and spare your stamps, is my last word. — Yours respectfully to command,

D. CRIMP.

LETTER: From Christian to Piscator.
Walton and Bunyan were men who should have known each other. It is a pleasant fancy, to me, that they may have met on the banks of Ouse, while John was meditating a sermon, and Izaak was “attentive of his trembling quill.”

Sir, — Being now come into the Land of Beulah; here, whence I cannot so much as see Doubting Castle; here, where I am solaced with the sound of voices from the City, — my mind, that is now more at peace about mine own salvation, misgives me sore about thine. Thou wilt remember me, perchance, for him that met thee by a stream of the Delectable Mountains, and took thee to be a man fleeing from the City of Destruction. For, beholding thee from afar, methought that thou didst carry a burden on thy back, even as myself before my deliverance did bear the burden of my sins and fears. Yet when I drew near I perceived that it was but a fisherman’s basket on thy back, and that thou didst rather seek to add to the weight of thy burden than to lighten it or fling it away. But, when we fell into discourse, I marvelled much how thou camest so far upon the way, even among the sheep and the shepherds of that country. For I found that thou hadst little experience in conflict with Apollyon, and that thou hadst never passed through the Slough of Despond nor wandered in the Valley of the Shadow. Nay, thou hadst never so much as been distressed in thy mind with great fear, nor hadst thou fled from thy wife and children, to save, if it might be, thy soul for thyself, as I have done. Nay, rather thou didst parley with the shepherds as one that loved their life; and I remember, even now, that sweet carnal song

The Shepherd swains shall dance and sing,
For thy delight, each May morning;
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

These are not the songs that fit the Delectable Country; nay, rather they are the mirth of wantons. Yet didst thou take pleasure in them; and therefore I make bold to ask how didst thou flee at all from the City of Destruction, and come so far upon thy way? Beware lest, when thou winnest to that brook wherein no man casts angle, even to that flood where there is no bridge to go over and the River is very deep — beware, I say, of one Vain Hope, the Ferryman! For I would not have thee lost, because thou art a kindly man and a simple. Yet for Ignorance there is an ill way, even from the very gates of the City. — Thy fellow-traveller,

CHRISTIAN.

From Piscator to Christian.

Sir, — I do indeed remember thee; and I trust thou art amended of these gripings which caused thee to groan and moan, even by the pleasant streams from the hills of the Delectable Mountains. And as for my “burden” ’twas pleasant to me to bear it; for, like not the least of the Apostles, I am a fisher, and I carried trout. But I take no shame in that I am an angler; for angling is somewhat like poetry; men are to be born so, and I would not be otherwise than my Maker designed to have me. Of the antiquity of angling I could say much; but I misdoubt me that thou dost not heed the learning of ancient times, but art a contemner of good learning and virtuous recreations. Yet it may a little move thee that in the Book of Job mention is made of fish-hooks, and without reproof; for let me tell you that in the Scriptures angling is always taken in the best sense.

Touching my flight from the City of Destruction, I love that place no more than thou dost; yet I fear not its evil communications, nor would I so hastily desert it as to leave my wife and children behind therein. Nor have I any experience of conflict with the Evil One; wherefore I thank Him that hath set me in pleasant fields, by clear waters, where come no wicked whispers (be they from Apollyon or from our own hearts); but there is calmness of spirit, and a world of blessings attending upon it. And hence can no man see the towers of Doubting Castle, for the green trees and the hedges white with May. This life is not wholly vile, as some of thy friends declare (Thou, who makest thy pilgrims dance to the lute, knowest better); and, for myself, I own that I love such mirth as does not make men ashamed to look upon each other next morning. Let him that bears a heavy heart for his ill-deeds turn him to better, but not mourn as though the sun were taken out of the sky. What says the song? — nay, ’tis as good balm for the soul as many a hymn:

A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad one tires in a mile-a!

He that made the world made man to take delight in it; even as thou saw’st me joyful with the shepherds — ay, with godly Mr. Richard Hooker, “he being then tending his small allotment of sheep in a common field,” as I recount in a brief life of a good man. As to what awaits me on the other side of that River, I do expect it with a peaceful heart, and in humble hope that a man may reach the City with a cheerful countenance, no less than through groans and sighs and fears. For we have not a tyrant over us, but a Father, that loveth a cheerful liver no less than a cheerful giver. Nevertheless, I thank thee for thy kind thought of one that is not of thy company, nor no Nonconformist, but a peaceful Protestant. And, lest thou be troubled with apparitions of hobgoblins and evil spirits, read that comfortable sermon of Mr. Hooker's to weak believers, on the CERTAINTY OF ADHERENCE, though they want the inward testimony of it.

But now falls there a sweet shower, "a singing shower" saith old George Chapman, and methinks I shall have sport; for I do note that the mayfly is up; and, seeing all these beautiful creatures playing in the air and water, I feel my own heart play within me; and I must out and dape under yonder sycamore tree. Wherefore, prithee, pardon me a longer discourse as at this time. — Thy friend,

PISCATOR.

LETTER: From Truthful James to Mr. Bret Harte.

WILLIAM NYE'S EXPERIMENT.
Angel's.

Dear Bret Harte,
I'm in tears,
And the camp's in the dust,
For with anguish it hears
As poor William may bust,
And the last of the Nyes is in danger of
sleeping the sleep of the just.

No revolver it was
Interfered with his health,
The convivial glass
Did not harm him by stealth;
It was nary! He fell by a scheme which
he thought would accumulate wealth!

For a Moqui came round
To the camp — Injun Joe;
And the dollars was found
In his pockets to flow;
For he played off some tricks with live
snakes, as was reckoned a competent show.

They was rattlers; a pair
In his teeth he would hold,
And another he'd wear
Like a scarf to enfold

His neck, with them dangerous critters
as safe as the saint was of old.

Sez William, “That same
Is as easy as wink.
I am fly to his game;
For them rattlers, I think,
Has had all their incisors extracted.
They’re harmless as suthin’ to drink.”

So he betted his pile
He could handle them snakes;
And he tried, with a smile,
And a rattler he takes,
Feeling safe as they’d somehow been
doctored; but bless you, that sarpent awakes!

Waken snakes! and they DID
And they rattled like mad;
For it was not a “kid,”
But some medicine he had,
Injun Joe, for persuadin’ the critters but
William’s bit powerful bad.

So they’ve put him outside
Of a bottle of Rye,
And they’ve set him to ride
A mustang as kin shy,
To keep up his poor circulation; and
that’s the last chance for Bill Nye.

But a near thing it is,
And the camp’s in the dust.
He’s a pard as we’d miss
If poor Bill was to bust -

If the last of the Nyes were a-sleepin
the peaceable sleep of the just.

LETTER: From Professor Forth to the Rev. Mr. Casaubon.

The delicacy of the domestic matters with which the following correspondence deals cannot be exaggerated. It seems that Belinda (whose Memoirs we owe to Miss Rhoda Broughton) was at Oxford while Mr. and Mrs. Casaubon were also resident near that pleasant city, so famed for its Bodleian Library. Professor Forth and Mr. Casaubon were friends, as may be guessed; their congenial characters, their kindred studies, Etruscology and Mythology, combined to ally them. Their wives were not wholly absorbed in their learned pursuits, and if Mr. Ladislaw was dangling after Mrs. Casaubon, we know that Mr. Rivers used to haunt with Mrs. Forth the walks of Magdalen. The regret and disapproval which Mrs. Casaubon expresses, and her desire to do good to Mrs. Forth, are, it is believed, not alien to her devoted and exemplary character.

Bradmore-road, Oxford, May 29.

Dear Mr. Casaubon, — In the course of an investigation which my researches into the character of the Etruscan “Involuti” have necessitated, I frequently encounter the root Kad, k2ad, or Qad. Schnitzler’s recent and epoch-making discovery that d in Etruscan = b2, has led me to consider it a plausible hypothesis that we may convert Kad or Qad into Kab2, in which case it is by no means beyond the range of a cautious conjecture that the Involuti are identical with the Cab-iri (Cabiri). Though you will pardon me for confessing, what you already know, that I am not in all points an adherent to your ideas concerning a “Key to All Mythologies” (at least, as briefly set forth by you in Kuhn’s Zeitung), yet I am deeply impressed with this apparent opportunity of bridging the seemingly impassable gulf between Etrurian Religion and the comparatively clear and comprehensible systems of the Pelasgo-Phoenician peoples. That Kad or Kab can refer either (as in Quatuor) to a four-footed animal (quadruped, “quad”) or to a four-wheeled vehicle (esseda, Celtic cab) I cannot for a moment believe, though I understand that this theory has the support of Schrader, Penka, and Baunder. Any information which your learning can procure, and your kind courtesy can supply, will be warmly welcomed and duly acknowledged. — Believe me, faithfully yours,

JAMES FORTH.

P.S. — I open this note, which was written from my dictation by my secretary, Mrs. Forth, to assure myself that her inexperience has been guilty of no error in matters of so much delicacy and importance. I have detected no mistake of moment, and begin to hope that the important step of matrimony to which I was guided by your example may not have been a rash experiment.

From the Rev. Mr. Casaubon to James Forth, Esq., Professor of
Etruscan, Oxford.

Dear Mr. Forth, — Your letter throws considerable light on a topic which has long engaged my earnest attention. To my thinking, the Cab in Cabiri = CAV, “hollow,” as in cavus, and refers to the Ark of Noah, which, of course, before the entrance of every living thing according to his kind, must have been the largest artificial hollow or empty space known to our Adamite ancestors. Thus the Cabiri would answer, naturally, to the Pataeci, which, as Herodotus tells us, were usually figured on the prows of ships. The Cabiri or Pataeci, as children of Noah and men of the “great vessel,” or Cave-men (a wonderful anticipation of modern science), would perpetuate the memory of Arkite circumstances, and would be selected, as the sacred tradition faded from men’s minds, as the guides of navigation. I am sorry to seem out of harmony with your ideas; but it is only a matter of seeming, for I have no doubt that the Etruscan Involuti are also Arkite, and that they do not, as Max Muller may be expected to intimate, represent the veiled or cloudy Dawns, but rather the Arkite Patriarchs. We thus, from different starting-places, arrive at the same goal, the Arkite solution of Bryant. I am aware that I am old-fashioned — like Eumaeus, “I dwell here among the swine, and go not often to the city.” Your letters with little numerals (as k2) may represent the exactness of modern philology; but more closely remind me of the formulae of algebra, a study in which I at no time excelled.

It is my purpose to visit Cambridge on June 3, to listen to a most valuable address by Professor Tosch, of Bonn, on Hittite and Aztec affinities. If you can meet me there and accept the hospitality of my college, the encounter may prove a turning point in Mythological and Philological Science. — Very faithfully yours,

J. CASAUBON.

P.S. — I open this note, written from my dictation by my wife, to enclose my congratulations on Mrs. Forth's scholarly attainments.

From Professor Forth to Rev. Mr. Casaubon.
(Telegram.)

Will be with you at Cambridge on the third.

From Mrs. Forth, Bradmore-road, Oxford, to David Rivers, Esq.,
Milnthorpe, Yorkshire.

He goes on Saturday to Cambridge to hear some one talk about the Hittites and the Asiatics. Did you not say there was a good Sunday train? They sing "O Rest in the Lord" at Magdalen. I often wonder that Addison's Walk is so deserted on Sundays. He stays over Sunday at Cambridge.

From David Rivers, Esq., to Mrs. Forth, Oxford.

Dear Mrs. Forth, — Saturday is a half-holiday at the Works, and I propose to come up and see whether our boat cannot bump Balliol. How extraordinary it is that people should neglect, on Sundays, the favourite promenade of the Short-faced Humourist. I shall be there: the old place. — Believe me, yours ever,

D. RIVERS.

From Mrs. Casaubon to William Ladislaw, Esq., Stratford-on-Avon.

Dear Friend, — Your kind letter from Stratford is indeed interesting. Ah, when shall I have an opportunity of seeing these, and so many other interesting places! But in a world where duty is SO MUCH, and so ALWAYS with us, why should we regret the voids in our experience which, after all, life is filling in the experience of others? The work is advancing, and Mr. Casaubon hopes that the first chapter of the “Key to All Mythologies” will be fairly copied and completed by the end of autumn. Mr. Casaubon is going to Cambridge on Saturday to hear Professor Tosch lecture on the Pittites and some other party, I really forget which; but it is not often that he takes so much interest in mere MODERN history. How curious it sometimes is to think that the great spirit of humanity and of the world, as you say, keeps working its way — ah, to what wonderful goal — by means of these obscure difficult politics: almost unworthy instruments, one is tempted to think. That was a true line you quoted lately from the “Vita Nuova.” We have no books of poetry here, except a Lithuanian translation of the Rig Veda. How delightful it must be to read Dante with a sympathetic fellow-student, one who has also loved — and RENOUNCED!- -Yours very sincerely,

DOROTHEA CASAUBON.

P.S. — I do not expect Mr. Casaubon back from Cambridge before
Monday afternoon.

From William Ladislaw, Esq., to the Hon. Secretary of the Literary and Philosophical Mechanics' Institute, Middlemarch.

My Dear Sir, — I find that I can be in your neighbourhood on
Saturday, and will gladly accept your invitation to lecture at your
Institute on the Immutability of Morals. — Faithfully yours,

W. LADISLAW.

From William Ladislaw, Esq., to Mrs.
Casaubon.

Dear Mrs. Casaubon, — Only a line to say that I am to lecture at the Mechanics' Institute on Saturday. I can scarcely hope that, as Mr. Casaubon is away, you will be able to attend my poor performance, but on Sunday I may have, I hope, the pleasure of waiting on you in the afternoon? — Very sincerely yours,

W. LADISLAW.

P.S. — I shall bring the ‘Vita Nuova’ — it is not so difficult as the ‘Paradiso’ — and I shall be happy to help you with a few of the earlier sonnets.

From Mrs. Casaubon to Mrs. Forth.

June 5.

Dear Lady, — You will be surprised at receiving a letter from a stranger! How shall I address you — how shall I say what I ought to say? Our husbands are not unknown to each other, I may almost call them friends, but we have met only once. You did not see me; but I was at Magdalen a few weeks ago, and I could not help asking who you were, so young, so beautiful; and when I saw you so lonely among all those learned men my heart went out to you, for I too know what the learned are, and how often, when we are young, we feel as if they were so cold, so remote. Ah, then there come TEMPTATIONS, but they must be conquered. — We are not born to live for ourselves only, we must learn to live for others — ah! not for ANOTHER!

Some one we both know, a lady, has spoken to me of you lately. She too, though you did not know it, was in Magdalen Walk on Sunday evening when the bells were chiming and the birds singing. She saw you; you were not alone! Mr. Rivers (I am informed that is his name) was with you. Ah, stop and think, and hear me before it is too late. A word; I do not know — a word of mine may be listened to, though I have no right to speak. But something forces me to speak, and to implore you to remember that it is not for Pleasure we live, but for Duty. We must break the dearest ties if they do not bind us to the stake — the stake of all we owe to all! You will understand, you will forgive me, will you not? You will forgive another woman whom your beauty and sadness have won to admire and love you. You WILL break these ties, will you not, and be free, for only in Renunciation is there freedom? He MUST NOT come again, you will tell him that he must not. — Yours always,

DOROTHEA CASAUBON.

LETTER: From Euphues to Sir Amyas Leigh, Kt.

This little controversy on the value of the herb tobacco passed between the renowned Euphues and that early but assiduous smoker, Sir Amyas Leigh, well known to readers of “Westward Ho.”

(He dissuadeth him from drinking the smoke of the Indian weed.)

Sir Amyas, — Take it not unkindly that a traveller (though less wide a wanderer than thou) dissuadeth thee from a new-found novelty — the wanton misuse, or rather the misuseful wantonness, of the Indian herb. It is a blind goose that knoweth not a fox from a fern-bush, and a strange temerity that mistaketh smoke for provender. The sow, when she is sick, eateth the sea-crab and is immediately recovered: why, then, should man, being whole and sound, haste to that which maketh many sick? The lobster flieth not in the air, nor doth the salamander wanton in the water; wherefore, then, will man betake him for nourishment or solace to the fire? Vesuvius bringeth not forth speech from his mouth, but man, like a volcano, will utter smoke. There is great difference between the table and the chimney; but thou art for making both alike. Though the Rose be sweet, yet will it prove less fragrant if it be wreathed about the skunk; and so an ill weed from the land where that beast hath its habitation defileth a courteous knight. Consider, if this practice delights thee, that the apples of Sodom are outwardly fair but inwardly full of ashes; the box-tree is always green, but his seed is poison. Mithridate must be taken inwardly, not spread on plasters. Of his nature smoke goeth upward and outward; why wilt thou make it go inward and downward? The manners of the Cannibal fit not the Englishman; and this thy poison is unlike Love, which maimeth every part before it kill the Liver, whereas tobacco doth vex the Liver before it harmeth any other part. Excuse this my boldness, and forswear thy weed, an thou lovest

EUPHUES.

From Sir Amyas Leigh to Euphues.

Whereas thou bringest in a rabble of reasons to convince me, I will answer thee in thine own kind. Thou art like those that proffer a man physic before he be sick, and, because his pleasure is not theirs, call him foolish that is but early advised. Nature maketh nothing without an end: the eye to see with, the ear to hear, the herb tobacco to be smoked. As wine strengtheneth and meat maketh full, tobacco maketh the heart at rest. Helen gave Nepenthe to them that sorrowed, and Heaven hath made this weed for such as lack comfort. Tobacco is the hungry man's food, the wakeful man's sleep, the weary man's rest, the old man's defence against melancholy, the busy man's repose, the talkative man's muzzle, the lonely man's companion. Indeed, there was nothing but this one thing wanting to man, of those that earth can give; wherefore, having found it, let him so use as not abusing it, as now I am about doing. — Thy servant,

AMYAS LEIGH.

LETTER: From Mr. Paul Rondelet to the Very Rev. Dean Maitland.

That Dean Maitland should have taken the political line indicated in Mr. Rondelet's letter will amaze no reader of 'The Silence of Dean Maitland.' That Mr. Paul Rondelet flew from his penny paper to a Paradise meet for him is a matter of congratulation to all but his creditors. He really is now in the only true Monastery of Thelema, and is simply dressed in an eye-glass and a cincture of pandanus flowers. The natives worship him, and he is the First AEsthetic Beach-comber.

Te-a-Iti, The Pacific.

Dear Maitland, — As my old friend and tutor at Lothian, you ask me to join the Oxford Home Rule Association. Excuse my delay in answering. Your letter was sent to that detested and long-deserted newspaper office in Fleet Street, and from Fleet Street to Te-a- Iti; thank Heaven! it is a long way. Were I at home, and still endeavouring to sway the masses, I might possibly accept your invitation. I dislike crowds, and I dislike shouting; but if shout I must, like you I would choose to chime in with the dingier and the larger and the more violent assembly. But, having perceived that the masses were very perceptibly learning to sway themselves, I have retired to Te-a-Iti. You have read "Epipsychidion," my dear Dean? And, in your time, no doubt you have loved? Well, this is the Isle of Love, described, as in a dream, by the rapt fancy of Shelley. Urged, perhaps, by a reminiscence of the Great Aryan wave of migration, I have moved westward to this Paradise. Like Obermann, I hide my head "from the wild tempest of the age," but in a much dearer place than "chalets near the Alpine snow." Long ago I said, to one who would not listen, that "all the religions of the world are based on false foundations, resting on the Family, and fatally unsound." Here the Family, in our sense, has not been developed. Here no rules trammel the best and therefore the most evanescent of our affections. And as for Religion, it is based upon Me, on Rondelet of Lothian. Here nobody asks me why or how I am "superior." The artless natives at once perceived the fact, recognised me as a god, and worship me (do not shudder, my good Dean) with floral services. In Te-a-Iti (vain to look for it on the map!) I have found my place — a place far from the babel of your brutal politics, a place where I am addressed in liquid accents of adoration.

You may ask whether I endeavour to raise the islanders to my own level? It is the last thing that I would attempt. Culture they do not need: their dainty hieratic precisions of ritual are a sufficient culture in themselves. As I said once before, “it is an absurdity to speak of married people being one.” Here we are an indefinite number; and no jealousy, no ambitious exclusiveness, mars the happiness of all. This is the Higher Life about which we used ignorantly to talk. Here the gross temporal necessities are satisfied with a breadfruit, a roasted fish, and a few pandanus flowers. The rest is all climate and the affections.

Conceive, my dear Dean, the undisturbed felicity of life without newspapers! Empires may fall, perhaps have fallen, since I left Fleet Street; Alan Dunlop may be a ditcher in good earnest on an estate no longer his; but here we fleet the time carelessly, as in the golden world. And you ask me to join a raucous political association for an object you detest in your heart, merely because you want to swim with the turbid democratic current! You are an historian, Maitland: did you ever know this policy succeed? Did you ever know the respectables prosper when they allied themselves with the vulgar? Ah, keep out of your second-hand revolutions. Keep your hands clean, whether you keep your head on your shoulders or not. You will never, I fear, be Bishop of Winkum, with all your historical handbooks and all your Oxford Liberalism.

But I am losing my temper, for the first time since I discovered
Te-a-Iti. This must not be. — Yours regretfully,

P.S. — Don’t give any one my address; some of these Oxford harpies are still unappeased. The only European I have seen was not an University man. He was a popular Scotch novelist, and carried Shorter Catechisms, which he distributed to my flock. I only hope he won’t make “copy” out of me and my situation.

P. R.

LETTER: From Harold Skimpole, Esq., to the Rev. Charles Honeyman, M.A.

These letters tell their own tale of Genius and Virtue indigent and in chains. The eloquence of a Honeyman, the accomplishments of a Skimpole, lead only to Cursitor Street.

Coavins’s, Cursitor Street, May 1.

My Dear Honeyman, — It is May-day, when even the chimney-sweeper, developing the pleasant unconscious poetry of his nature, forgets the flues, wreathes the flowers, and persuades himself that he is Jack-in-the-Green. Jack who? Was he Jack Sprat, or the young swain who mated with Jill! Who knows? The chimney-sweeper has all I ask, all that the butterflies possess, all that Common-sense and Business and Society deny to Harold Skimpole. He lives, he is free, he is “in the green!” I am in Coavins’s! In Cursitor Street I cannot hear the streams warble, the birds chant, the music roll through the stately fane, let us say, of Lady Whittlesea’s. Coavins’s (as Coavins’s man says) is “a ‘ouse;” but how unlike, for example, the hospitable home of our friend Jarndyce! I can sketch Coavins’s, but I cannot alter it: I can set it to music, on Coavins’s piano; but how melancholy are the jingling strains of that dilapidated instrument! At Jarndyce’s house, when I am there, I am in possession of it: here Coavins’s is in possession of me — of the person of Harold Skimpole.

And why am I here? Why am I far from landscape, music, conversation? Why, merely because I will follow neither Fame nor Fortune nor Faith. They call to us in the market-place, but I will not dance. Fame blows her trumpet, and offers her shilling (the Queen’s). Faith peals her bells, and asks for MY shilling. Fortune rattles her banking-scales. They call, and the world joins the waltz; but I will not march with them. “Go after glory, commerce, creeds,” I cry; “only let Harold

Skimpole live!" The world pursues the jangling music; but in my ear sound the pipes of Pan, the voices of the river and the wood.

Yet I cannot be in the playground, whither they invite me. Harold Skimpole is fettered — by what? By items! I regret my incapacity for details. It may be the tinker or the tailor at whose suit I am detained. I am certain it is not at that of the soldier, or the sailor, or the ploughboy, or the thief. But, for the apothecary — why, yes — it MAY be the apothecary! In the dawn of life I loved — who has not? — I wedded. I set about surrounding myself with rosy cheeks. These cheeks grow pallid. I call for the aid of Science — Science sends in her bill! "To the Mixture as Before," so much to "the Tonic," so much. The cheeks are rosy again. I pour forth the blessings of a father's heart; but there stands Science inexorable, with her bill, her items. I vainly point out that the mixture has played its part, the tonic has played ITS part; and that, in the nature of things, the transaction is ended. The bill is unappeasable. I forget the details; a certain number of pieces of yellow and white dross are spoken of. Ah, I see it is fifteen and some odd shillings and coppers. Let us say twenty.

My dear Honeyman, you who, as I hear, are about to follow the flutes of Aphrodite into a temple where Hymen gilds the horns of the victims — you, I am sure, will hurry to my rescue. You may not have the specie actually in your coffers; but with your prospects, surely you can sign something, or make over something, or back something, say a post obit or post vincula, or employ some other instrument? Excuse my inexperience; or, I should say, excuse my congenital inability to profit by experience, now considerable, of DIFFICULTIES — and of friendship. Let not the sun of May-day go down on Harold Skimpole in Coavins's! — Yours ever,

H. S.

P.S. — A youthful myrmidon of Coavins's will wait for a reply.
Shall we say, while we are about it, Twenty-five?

From the Rev. Charles Honeyman to Harold Skimpole, Esq.
Cursitor Street, May 1.

My Dear Skimpole, — How would I have joyed, had Providence placed it within my power to relieve your distress! But it cannot be. Like the Carthaginian Queen of whom we read in happier days at dear old Borhambury, I may say that I am haud ignarus mali. But, alas! the very evils in which I am not unlearned, make it impossible for me to add miseris succurrere disco! Rather am I myself in need of succour. You, my dear Harold, have fallen among thieves; I may too truly add that in this I am your neighbour. The dens in which we are lodged are contiguous; we are separated only by the bars. Your note was sent on hither from my rooms in Walpole Street. Since we met I have known the utmost that woman's perfidy and the rich man's contumely can inflict. But I can bear my punishment. I loved, I trusted. She to whose hand I aspired, she on whose affections I had based hopes at once of happiness in life and of extended usefulness in the clerical profession, SHE was less confiding. She summoned to her council a minion of the Law, one Briggs. HIS estimate of my position and prospects could not possibly tally with that of one whose HOPES are not set where the worldling places them. Let him, and such as he, take thought for the morrow and chaffer about settlements. I do not regret the gold to which you so delicately allude. I sorrow only for the bloom that has been brushed from the soaring pinions of a pure and disinterested affection. Sunt lacrymae rerum, and the handkerchief in which I bury my face is dank with them.

Nor is this disappointment my only CROSS. The carrion-birds of commerce have marked down the stricken deer from their eyries in Bond Street and Jermyn Street. To know how Solomons has behaved, and the BLACK colours in which Moss (of Wardour Street) has shown himself, is to receive a new light on the character of a People chosen under a very different Dispensation! Detainers flock in, like ravens to a feast. At this moment I have endured the humiliation of meeting a sneering child of this world — Mr. Arthur Pendennis — the emissary of one to whom I gave in other days the sweetest blossom in the garden of my affections — my sister — of one who has, indeed, behaved like a brother — IN LAW! My word distrusted, my statements received with a chilling scepticism by this NABOB Newcome, I am urged to make some "composition" with my creditors. The world is very censorious, the ear of a Bishop is easily won; who knows how those who have ENVIED talents not misused may turn my circumstances to my disadvantage? You will see that, far from aiding another, I am rather obliged to seek succour myself. But that saying about the sparrows abides with me to my comfort. Could aught be done, think you, with a bill backed by our joint names? On July 12 my pew-rents will come in. I swear to you that they HAVE NOT BEEN ANTICIPATED. Yours afflictedly, P.S. — Would Jarndyce lend his name to a small bill at three months? You know him well, and I have heard that he is a man of benevolent character, and of substance. But “how hardly shall a rich man” — you remember the text. — C. H.

LETTER: From Miss Harriet to M. Guy de Maupassant.

This note, from one of the English damsels whom M. Guy de Maupassant dislikes so much, is written in such French as the lady could muster. It explains that recurrent mystery, WHY ENGLISHWOMEN ABROAD SMELL OF GUTTA-PERCHA. The reason is not discreditable to our countrywomen, but if M. de Maupassant asks, as he often does, why Englishwomen dress like scarecrows when they are on the Continent, Miss Harriet does not provide the answer.

Miss Pinkerton’s, Stratford-atte-Bowe, Mars 12.

Monsieur, — Vous devez me connaitre, quoique je ne vous connais pas le moins du monde. Il m’est defendu de lire vos romans, je ne sais trop pourquoi; mais j’ai bien lu la notice que M. Henry James a consacree, dans le Fortnightly Review, a votre aimable talent. Vous n’aimez pas, a ce qu’il parait, ni “la sale Angleterre” ni les filles de ce pays immonde. Je figure moi-meme dans vos romans (ou moa-meme,” car les Anglais, il est convenu, prononcent ce pronom comme le nom d’un oiseau monstrueux et meme prehistorique de New Zealand) — oui, “Miss Harriet” se risque assez souvent dans vos contes assez risques.

Vous avez pose, Monsieur, le sublime probleme, “Comment se prennentelles les demoiselles anglaises pour sentir toujours le caoutchouc?” (“to smell of india-rubber”: traduction Henry James). En premier lieu, Monsieur, elles ne “smell of india-rubber” quand elles se trouvent chez elles, dans les bouges infectes qu’on appelle les “stately homes of England.” C’est seulement a l’etranger que nous repandons l’odeur saine et rejouissante de caoutchouc. Et pourquoi? Parce que, Monsieur, Miss Harriet tient a son tub — ou tob — la chose est anglaise; c’est permis pourtant a un galant homme d’en prononcer le nom comme il veut, ou comme il peut

Or, quand elle voyage, Miss Harriet trouve, assez souvent, que le “tub” est une institution tout-a-fait inconnue a ses hotes. Que fait-elle donc? Elle porte dans sa malle un tub de caoutchouc, “patent compressible india-rubber tub!” Inutile a dire que ses vetements se trouvent impregnes du “smell of india-rubber.” Voici,

Monsieur, la solution naturelle, et meme fort louable, d'une question qui est faite pour desesperer les savants de la France!

Vous, Monsieur, qui etes un styliste accompli, veuillez bien me pardonner les torts que je viens de faire a la belle langue francaise. Dame, on fait ce qu'on peut (comme on dit dans les romans policiers) pour etre intelligible a un ecrivain si celebre, qui ne lit couramment, peut-etre, l'idiome barbare et malsonnant de la sale Angleterre. M. Paul Bourget lui-meme ne lit plus le Grec. Non omnia possumus omnes.

Agreez, Monsieur, mes sentiments les plus distingues.

MISS HARRIET.

LETTER: From S. Gandish, Esq., to the “Newcome Independent.”

THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

It appears that Mr. Gandish, at a great age — though he was not older than several industrious Academicans — withdrew from the active exercise of his art and employed his learning and experience as Art Critic of the “Newcome Independent.” The following critique appears to show traces of declining mental vigour in the veteran Gandish.

Our great gallery has once more opened her doors, if not to the public, nor even to the fashionable elite, at least to the critics. They are a motley throng who lounge on Press Days in the sumptuous halls; ladies, small boys, clergymen are there, and among them but few, perhaps, who have received the training in High Art of your correspondent, and have had their eye, through a lifetime more than commonly prolonged, on the glorious Antique. And what shall we say of the present Academy? In some ways, things have improved a little since my “Boadishia” came back on my hands (1839) at a time when High Art and the Antique would not do in this country: they would not do. As far as the new exhibition shows, they do better now than when the century was younger and “Portrait of the Artist, by S. Gandish” — at thirty-three years of age — was offered in vain to the jealously Papist clique who then controlled the Uffizi. Foreigners are more affable now; they have taken Mr. Poynter’s of himself.

To return to the Antique, what the President’s “Captive Andromache” must have cost in models alone is difficult to reckon. When times were cheaper, fifty years since, my ancient Britons in “Boadishia” stood me in thirty pounds: the central figures, however, were members of my own family. To give every one his due, “Andromache” is high art — yes, it is high — and the Antique has not been overlooked. About the back-view of the young party at the fountain Mr. Horsley may have something to say. For my part, there seems a want of muscle in vigorous action: where are the BICEPS, where are the thews of Michael Angelo? The President is a touch too quiet for a taste framed in the best schools. As to his colour, where is that nutty brown tone of the flesh? But the designs on the Greek vase are carefully rendered; though I have heard it remarked by a classical scholar that these kind of vases were not in use about Homer’s time. Still, the intention is good, though the costumes are not what WE should have called Ancient Roman when the President was a boy — ay, or earlier.

Then, Mr. Alma-Tadema, he has not turned HIS back on the glorious Antique. “The Roses of Heliogabalus” are not explained in the catalogue. As far as I understand, there has been an earthquake at a banquet of this unprincipled monarch. The King himself, and his friends, are safe enough at a kind of high table; though which IS Heliogabalus (he being a consumptive-looking character in his coins in the Classical Dictionary) your critic has not made out. The earth having opened down below, the heads of some women, and of a man with a beard and his hair done up like a girl, are tossing about in a quantity of rose-leaves, which had doubtless been strown on the floor, as Martial tells us was the custom, dum regnat rosa. So I overheard a very erudite critic remarking. The composition of the piece would be thus accounted for; but I cannot pretend that Mr. Tadema reminds one of either Poussin or Annibale Carracci. However, rumour whispers that a high price has been paid for this curious performance. To my thinking the friends of Heliogabalus are a little flat and leathery in the handling of the flesh. The silver work, and the marble, will please admirers of this eccentric artist; but I can hardly call the whole effect “High.” But Mr. Armitage’s “Siren” will console people who remember the old school. This beautiful girl (somewhat careless in her attitude, though she has been sensible enough NOT to sit down on the damp rock without putting her drapery beneath her) would have been a true gem in one of the old Books of Beauty, such as the Honourable Percy Popjoy and my old friend, Miss Bunnion, used to contribute to in the palmy days of the English school. Mr. Armitage’s “Juno,” standing in mid-air, with the moon in the neighbourhood, is also an example to youth, and very unlike the way such things are generally done now. Mr. Burne-Jones (who does not exhibit) never did anything like this. Poor Haydon, with whom I have smoked many a pipe, would have acknowledged that Mr. Goodall’s “David’s Promise to Bathsheba” and “By the Sea of Galilee” prove that his aspirations are nearly fulfilled. These are extremely large pictures, yet well hung. The figure of Abishag is a little too much in the French taste for an old-fashioned painter. Ars longa, nuda veritas! I hope (and so will the Liberal readers of the “Newcome Independent”) that it is by an accident the catalogue reads— “The Traitor.” “Earl Spencer, K.G.” “The Moonlighters.” (Nos. 220, 221, 225.) Some Tory WAG among the Hanging Committee may have taken this juxtaposition for wit: our readers will adopt a different view.

There is a fine dog in Mr. Briton Riviere’s “Requiescat,” but how did the relations of the dead knight in plate armour acquire the embroidery, at least three centuries later, on which he is laid to his last repose? This destroys the illusion, but does not diminish the pathos in the attitude of the faithful hound. Mr. Long’s large picture appears to exhibit an Oriental girl being tried by a jury of matrons — at least, not having my Diodorus Scriblerus by me, I can arrive at no other conclusion. From the number of models engaged, this picture must have been designed quite regardless of expense. It is a study of the Antique, but I doubt if Smee would have called it High Art.

Speaking of Smee reminds me of portraits. I miss "Portrait of a Lady," "Portrait of a Gentleman;" the names of the sitters are now always given — a concession to the notoriety-hunting proclivities of the present period. Few portraits are more in the style of the palmy days of our school (just after Lawrence) than a study of a lady by Mr. Goodall (687). On the other hand, young Mr. Richmond goes back to the antiquated manner of Reynolds in one of his representations. I must admit that I hear this work much admired by many; to me it seems old-fashioned and lacking in blandness and affability. Mr Waterhouse has a study of a subject from a poem that Mr. Pendennis, the novelist (whom I knew well), was very fond of when he first came on the town: "The Lady of Shalott." It represents a very delicate invalid, in a boat, under a counterpane. I remember the poem ran (it was by young Mr. Tennyson):-

They crossed themselves, their stars they blest,
Knight, minstrel, abbot, squire, and guest.
There lay a parchment on her breast
That puzzled more than all the rest
The well-fed wits of Camelot:
"The web was woven curiously,
The charm is broken utterly;
Draw near and fear not, this is I
The Lady of Shalott."

I admit that the wonder and dismay of the "well-fed wits," if the Lady was like Mr. Waterhouse's picture of her, do not surprise me. But I confess I do not understand modern poetry, nor, perhaps, modern painting. Where is historical Art? Where is Alfred and the Cake — a subject which, as is well known, I discovered in my researches in history. Where is "Udolpho in the Tower"? or the "Duke of Rothsay the Fourth Day after He was Deprived of his Victuals"? or "King John Signing Magna Charta"? They are gone with the red curtain, the brown tree, the storm in the background. Art is revolutionary, like everything else in these times, when Treason itself, in the form of a hoary apostate and reviewer of contemporary fiction, glares from the walls, and is painted by Royal — mark ROYAL! — Academicians! . . .

From Thomas Potts, Esq., of the "Newcome Independent," to S. Gandish, Esq.
Newcome, May 3.

My Dear Sir, — I am truly sorry to have to interrupt a connection with so old and respected a contributor. But I think you will acknowledge, on reading the proof of your article on the Academy, which I enclose, that the time has arrived when public criticism is no longer your province. I do not so much refer to the old-fashioned tone of your observations on modern art. I know little about it, and care not much more. But you have entirely forgotten, towards the end of the notice, that the "Newcome Independent," as becomes its name, is a journal of Liberty and Progress. The very proper remarks on Lord Spencer's portrait elsewhere show that you are not unacquainted with our politics; but, at the close (expressing, I fear, your true sentiments), you glide into language which makes me shudder, and which, if printed in the "Independent," would spell ruin. Send it, by all means, to the "Sentinel," if you like. Send your Tory views, I mean. As for your quotation from the "Lady of Shalott," I can find it nowhere in the poem of that name by the author you strangely style "young Mr. Tennyson."

I enclose a cheque for a quarter's salary, and, while always happy to meet you as man with man, must get the notice of the Academy written up in the office from the "Daily Telegraph," "Standard," and "Times." — Faithfully and with deep regret yours,

THOMAS POTTS.

LETTER: From Monsieur Lecoq, Rue Jerusalem, Paris, to Inspector Bucket, Scotland Yard.

This correspondence appears to prove that mistakes may be made by the most astute officers of police, and that even so manifest a Briton as Mr. Pickwick might chance to find himself in the toils of international conspiracy.

(Translated.) May 19, 1852.

Sir and Dear Fellow-Brother (confrere). — The so cordial understanding between our countries ought to expand itself into a community of the political police. But the just susceptibilities of the Old England forbid at this moment the restoration to a friendly Power of political offenders. In the name of the French police of surety I venture to present to the famous officer Bucket a prayer that he will shut his eyes, for once, on the letter, and open his heart to the spirit of the laws.

No one needs to teach Monsieur Bucket that a foreign miscreant can be given up, under all reserves, to the justice! A small vial of a harmless soporific, a closed carriage, a private cabin on board a Channel steamer — with these and a little of the adroitness so remarked in the celebrated Bucket, the affair is in the bag! (dans le sac). All these things are in the cords (dans les cordes) of my esteemed English fellow-brother; will he not employ them in the interest of a devoted colleague and a friendly Administration? We seek a malefactor of the worst species (un chenapan de la pire espece). This funny fellow (drole) calls himself Count of Fosco, and he resides in Wood Road 5, St. John’s Forest; worth abode of a miscreant fit for the Forest of Bondy! He is a man bald, stout, fair, and paying well in countenance (il paie de mine), conceiving himself to resemble the great Napoleon. At the first sight you would say a philanthrope, a friend of man. On his right arm he bears a small red mark, round, the brand of a society of the most dangerous. Dear Sir, you will not miss him? When once he is in our hands, faith of Lecoq, you shall tell us your news as to whether France can be grateful. Of more words there is no need. — I remain, all to you, with the assurance of my most distinguished consideration,

LECOQ.

From Inspector Bucket to M. Lecoq.
May 22.

Dear Sir, — Your polite favour to hand, and contents noted. You are a man of the world; I am a man of the world, and proud to deal with you as between man and man. The little irregularity shall be no consideration, all shall be squared, and the man wanted run in with punctuality and despatch. Expect him at Calais on the 26th current, — Faithfully yours,

C. BUCKET.

From Count Fosco to Samuel Pickwick, Esq., G.C.M.P.C., Goswell Road. 5 Forest Road, St. John’s Wood, May 23.

Dear Sir, — When we met lately at the hospitable board of our common friend, Benjamin Allen, Esq., lately elected Professor of Chemistry in the University of London, our conversation turned (if you can pass me the intoxicating favour of remembering it) on the glorious science of chemistry. For me this knowledge has ever possessed irresistible attractions, from the enormous power which it confers of heaping benefits on the suffering race of mankind. Others may rejoice in the advantages which a knowledge of it bestows — the power which can reduce a Hannibal to the level of a drummer boy, or an all-pervading Shakspeare to the intellectual estate of a vestryman, though it cannot at present reverse those processes. The consideration of the destructive as compared with the constructive forces of chemistry was present, as I recollect, to your powerful intellect on the festive occasion to which I refer. “Yes!” you said (permit me to repeat your very words)— “Yes, Count Fosco, Alexander’s morning draught shall make Alexander run for his life at the first sound of the enemy’s trumpet. So much chemistry can achieve; but can she help as well as harm? Nay, can she answer for it that the lemon which Professor Allen, from the best and purest of motives, has blended with this milk-punch, shall not disagree with me to-morrow morning? Can chemistry, Count Fosco, thus thwart malign constitutional tendency?”

These were your words, sir, and I am now ready to answer your deep-searching question in the affirmative. Prolonged assiduous application to my Art has shown me how to preserve the lemon in Milk Punch, and yet destroy, or disengage, the deleterious elements. Will you so greatly honour science, and Fosco her servant, as to sup with me on the night of the twenty-fifth, at nine o’clock, and prove (you need not dread the test) whether a true follower of knowledge or a vain babbler signs — in exile — the name of

ISIDOR OTTAVIO BALDASSARE FOSCO?

From Mr. Pickwick to the Count Fosco.
May 24.

My Dear Sir, — Many thanks for your very kind invitation. Apart from the interests of science, the pleasure of your company alone would be more than enough to make me gladly accept it. I shall have the enjoyment of testing your milk-punch to-morrow night at nine, with the confident expectation that your admirable studies will have overcome a tendency which for many years has prevented me from relishing, as I could wish, one of the best things in this good world. Lemon, in fact, has always disagreed with me, as Professor Allen or Sir Robert Sawyer will be able to assure you; so your valuable experiment can be put, in my case, to a crucial test. — Very faithfully yours,

SAMUEL PICKWICK.

From Inspector Bucket to M. Lecoq.
May 26, 1 A.M.

My Dear Sir, — We have taken your man without difficulty. Bald, benevolent-looking, stout, perhaps fancies himself like Napoleon; if so, is deceived. We nabbed him asleep over his liquor and alone, at the address you meant to give, 5 Forest Road, St. John’s Wood. The house was empty, servants out, not a soul but him at home. He speaks English well for a foreigner, and tries to make out he is a British subject. Was rather confused when took, and kept ejaculating “Cold Punch,” apparently with the hope of persuading us that such was his name or alias. He also called for one Sam — probably an accomplice. He travels to Calais to-day as a lunatic patient in a strait-waistcoat, under charge of four “keepers” belonging to the force; and I trust that you have made preparations for receiving your prisoner, and that our management of the case has given satisfaction. What I like is doing business with a man like you. We may not be so smart nor so clever at disguises as the French profession, but we flatter ourselves we are punctual and cautious. — Faithfully yours,

C. BUCKET.

From Mr. Pickwick to Mr. Perker, Solicitor, Gray’s Inn.
Sainte Pelagie, May 28.

Dear Perker, — For heaven’s sake come over here at once, bringing some one who can speak French, and bail me out, or whatever the process of their law may be. I have been arrested, illegally and without warrant, at the house of a scientific friend, Count Fosco, where I had been supping. As far as I can understand, I am accused of a plot against the life of the Emperor of the French; but the whole proceedings have been unintelligible and arbitrary to a degree. I cannot think that an English citizen will be allowed to perish by the guillotine — innocent and practically unheard! Please bring linen and brushes, &c., but not Sam, who would be certain to embroil himself with the French police. I am writing to the Times and Lord Palmerston. — Sincerely yours,

SAMUEL PICKWICK.

From Monsieur Lecoq to Inspector Bucket.
May 27.

Sir, — There has arrived a frightful misunderstanding. The man you have sent us is not Fosco. Of Fosco he has only the baldness, the air benevolent, and the girth. The brand on his right arm is no more than the mark of vaccination. Brought before the Commissary of Police, the prisoner, who has not one word of French, was heard through an interpreter. He gives himself the name of Piquouique, rentier, English; and he appeals to his Ambassador. Of papers he had letters bearing the name Samuel Pickwick, and, on his buttons, the letters P.C., which we suspect are the badge of a secret society. But this is not to the point; for it is certain that, whatever the crimes of this brigand, he is NOT Fosco, but an Englishman. That he should be found in the domicile of Fosco when that droll had evaded is suspicious (louche), and his explanation does not permit itself to be understood. I have fear that we enjoy bad luck, and that M. Palmerston will make himself to be heard on this matter.

Accept, Monsieur, the assurance of my high consideration.

LECOQ.

P.S. — Our comrade, the Count Smorltork, of the Police of Manners (police des moeurs), has come to present himself. Confronted with the bandit, he gives him reason, and offers his faith that the man is Piquouique, with whom he encountered himself when on a mission of secrecy to England it is now some years. What to do? (Que faire?)

LETTER: From Mr. Allan Quatermain to Sir Henry Curtis.

Mr. Quatermain offers the correct account of two celebrated right and left shots, also an adventure of the stranger in the Story of an African Farm.

Dear Curtis, — You ask me to give you the true account, in writing, of those right and left shots of mine at the two lions, the crocodile, and the eagle. The brutes are stuffed now, in the hall at home — the lions each on a pedestal, and the alligator on the floor with the eagle in his jaws — much as they were when I settled them and saved the Stranger. All sorts of stories have got into the papers about the business, which was simple enough; so, though no hand with a pen, I may as well write it all out.

I was up on the Knobkerry River, prospecting for diamonds, in Omomborombunga's country. I had nobody with me but poor Jim-jim, who afterwards met with an awful death, otherwise he would have been glad to corroborate my tale, if it needed it. One night I had come back tired to camp, when I found a stranger sitting by the fire. He was a dark, fat, Frenchified little chap, and you won't believe me, but it is a fact that he wore gloves. I asked him to stay the night, of course, and inspanned the waggons in laager, for Omomborombunga's impis were out, swearing to wash their spears in the blood of The Great White Liar — a Portuguese traveller probably; if not, I don't know who he can have been; perhaps this stranger: he gave no name. Well, we had our biltong together, and the Stranger put himself outside a good deal of the very little brandy I had left. We got yarning, so to speak, and I told him a few of the curious adventures that naturally fall to the lot of a man in those wild countries. The Stranger did not say much, but kept playing with a huge carved walking-stick that he had. Presently he said, "Look at this stick; I bought it from a boy on a South African Farm. Do you understand what the carvings mean?"

"Hanged if I do!" I said, after turning it about.

"Well, do you see that figure?" and he touched a thing like a Noah out of a child's ark. "That was a hunter like you, my friend, but not in all respects. That hunter pursued a vast white bird with silver wings, sailing in the everlasting blue.”

“Everlasting bosh!” said I; “there is no bird of the kind on the veldt.”

“That bird was Truth,” says the Stranger, “and, judging from the anecdote you tell me about the Babyan woman and the Zulu medicine-man, it is a bird YOU don’t trouble yourself with much, my friend.”

This was a pretty cool thing to say to a man whose veracity is known like a proverb from Sheba’s Breasts to the Zambesi.

Foide Macumazahn, the Zulus say, meaning as true as a yarn of Allan Quatermain’s. Well, my blood was up; no man shall call Allan Quatermain a liar. The fellow was going on with a prodigious palaver about a white feather of Truth, and Mount Sinai, and the Land of Absolute Negation, and I don’t know what, but I signified to him that if he did not believe my yarns I did not want his company. “I’m sorry to turn you out,” I said, “for there are lions around” — indeed they were roaring to each other— “and you will have a parroty time. But you apologise, or you go!”

He laughed his short thick laugh. “I am a man who hopes nothing, feels nothing, fears nothing, and believes nothing that you tell me!”

I got up and went for him with my fists, and whether he feared nothing or not I don’t know; but he scooted, dropping a yellow French novel, by one Catulle Mendes, that I could make neither head nor tail of. I afterwards heard that there was something about this stranger in a book called “The Story of an African Farm,” which I once began, but never finished, not being able to understand most of it, and being vexed by the gross improbability of the girl not marrying the baby’s father, he being ready and willing to make her an honest woman. However, I am no critic, but a plain man who tells a plain tale, and I believe persons of soul admire the book very much. Any way, it does not say who the Stranger was — an allegorical kind of bagman I fancy; but I am not done with him yet.

Out he went into the dark, where hundreds of lions could be plainly seen making love (at which season they are very dangerous) by the flashes of lightning.

It was a terrific yet beautiful spectacle, and one which I can never forget. The black of night would suddenly open like a huge silver flower, deep within deep, till you almost fancied you could see within the gates of heaven. The hills stood out dark against the illimitable splendour, and on every koppie you saw the huge lions, like kittens at play, roaring till you could scarcely hear the thunder. The rain was rushing like a river, all glittering like diamonds, and then, in the twinkling of an eye, all was black as a wolf’s mouth till the next flash. The lightning, coming from all quarters, appeared to meet above me, and now was red, now golden, now silver again, while the great cat-like beasts, as they leaped or lay, looked like gold, red, and silver lions, reminding me of the signs of public-houses in old England, far away. Meantime the donga beneath roared with the flooded torrent that the rain was bringing down from the heights of Umbopobekatanktshiu.

I stood watching the grand spectacle for some time, rather pitying the Stranger who was out in it, by no fault of mine. Then I knocked the ashes out of my pipe, ate a mealy or two, and crept into my kartel, and slept the sleep of the just.

About dawn I woke. The thunder had rolled away like a bad dream. The long level silver shafts of the dawn were flooding the heights, raindrops glittered like diamonds on every kopje and karroo bush, leaving the deep donga bathed in the solemn pall of mysterious night.

My thoughts went rapidly over the millions of leagues of land and sea, where life, that perpetual problem, was now awaking to another day of struggle and temptation. Then the golden arrows of the day followed fast. The silver and blue sky grew roseate with that wide wild blush which testifies to the modest delight of nature, satisfied and grateful for her silent existence and her amorous repose. I breakfasted, went down into the donga with a black boy, poor Jim-jim, who was afterwards, as I said, to perish by an awful fate, otherwise he would testify to the truth of my plain story. I began poking among the rocks in the dry basin of the donga, and had just picked up a pebble — I knew it by the soapy feel for a diamond. Uncut it was about three times the size of the koh-i- noor, say 1,000 carats, and I was rejoicing in my luck when I heard the scream of a human being in the last agony of terror. Looking up, I saw that on either side of the donga, which was about twenty feet wide, a great black lion and lioness were standing with open jaws, while some fifty yards in front of me an alligator, in a deep pool of the flooded donga, was stretching his open snout and gleaming teeth greedily upwards. Over head flew an eagle, and IN MID-AIR BETWEEN, as I am a living and honourable man, a human being was leaping the chasm. He had been pursued by the lion on my left, and had been driven to attempt the terrible leap; but if he crossed he was certain to fall into the jaws of the lion on my right, while if he fell short in his jump, do you see, the alligator was ready for him below, and the great golden eagle watched the business from above, in case he attempted to escape THAT way.

All this takes long to tell, though it was passing in a flash of time. Dropping the diamond (which must have rolled into a crevice of the rock, for I never saw it again), I caught up my double-barrelled rifle (one of Wesson & Smith’s), aimed at the lion on the right hand of the donga with my right barrel, and then hastily fired my left at the alligator. When the smoke cleared away, the man had reached the right side of the donga safe and sound. Seeing that the alligator was dying, I loaded again, bowled over the lioness on the left, settled the eagle's business (he fell dead into the jaws of the dying alligator, which closed on him with a snap). I then climbed the wall of the donga, and there lay, fainting, the Stranger of last night — the man who feared nothing — the blood of the dead lion trickling over him. His celebrated allegorical walking-stick from the African Farm had been broken into two pieces by the bullet after it (the bullet) had passed through the head of the lion. And, as the "Ingoldsby Legends" say, "nobody was one penny the worse," except the wild beasts. The man, however, had had a parroty time, and it was a good hour before I could bring him round, during which he finished my brandy. He still wore gloves. What he was doing in Omuborumbunga's country I do not know to this day. I never found the diamond again, though I hunted long. But I must say that two better right and left shots, considering that I had no time to aim, and that they were really snapshots, I never remember to have made in my long experience.

This is the short and the long of the matter, which was talked of a good deal in the Colony, and about which, I am told, some inaccurate accounts have got into the newspapers. I hate writing, as you know, and don't pretend to give a literary colour to this little business of the shots, but merely tell a "plain, unvarnished tale," as the "Ingoldsby Legends" say.

As to the Stranger, what he was doing there, or who he was, or where he is now, I can tell you nothing. He told me he was bound for "the almighty mountains of Dry-facts and Realities," which he kindly pointed out to me among the carvings of his walking-stick. He then sighed wearily, very wearily, and scooted. I think he came to no good; but he never came in my way again.

And now you know the yarn of the two stuffed lions and the alligator with the eagle in his jaws.

Ever yours,
ALLAN QUATERMAIN.

LETTER: From the Baron Bradwardine to Edward Waverley, Esq., of Waverley Honour.

The Baron explains the mysterious circumstances of his affair with his third cousin, Sir Hew Halbert.— "Waverley," cha.

Tully Veolan, May 17, 1747.

Son Edward, — Touching my quarrel with Sir Hew Halbert, anent which I told you no more than that it was “settled in a fitting manner,” you have long teased me for an ampler explanation. This I have withheld, as conceiving that it tended rather to vain quolibets and jesting, than to that respect in which the duello, or single combat, should be regarded by gentlemen of name and coat armour. But Sir Hew being dead, and buried with his fathers, the matter may be broached as among friends and persons of honour. The ground of our dispute, as ye know, was an unthinking scoff of Sir Hew’s, he being my own third cousin by the mother’s side, Anderson of Ettrick Hall having intermarried, about the time of the Solemn League and Covenant, with Anderson of Tushielaw, both of which houses are connected with the Halberts of Dinniewuddie and with the Bradwardines. But stemmata quid faciunt? Sir Hew, being a young man, and the maut, as the vulgar say, above the meal, after a funeral of one of our kin in the Cathedral Kirkyard of St. Andrews, we met at Glass’s Inn, where, in the presence of many gentlemen, occurred our unfortunate dissension.

We encountered betimes next morning, on a secluded spot of the sands hard by the town, at the Eden-mouth. The weapons were pistols, Sir Hew, by a slight passing infirmity, being disabled from the use of the sword. Inchgrabbit was my second, and Strathtyrum did the same office for my kinsman, Sir Hew. The pistols being charged and primed, and we aligned forenent each other at the convenient distance of twelve paces, the word was given to fire, and both weapons having been discharged, and the smoke having cleared away, Sir Hew was discovered fallen to the ground, procumbus humi, and exanimate. The blood was flowing freely from a face-wound, and my unhappy kinsman was senseless. At this moment we heard a voice, as of one clamantis in eremo, cry “Fore!” to which paying no heed in the natural agitation of our spirits, we hurried to lift my fallen opponent and examine his wound. Upon a closer search it proved to be no shot-wound, but a mere clour, or bruise, whereof the reason was now apparent, he having been struck by the ball of a golfer (from us concealed by the dunes, or bunkers, of sand) and not by the discharge of my weapon. At this moment a plebeian fellow appeared with his arma campestria, or clubs, cleeks, irons, and the like, under his arm, who, without paying any attention to our situation, struck the ball wherewith he had felled my kinsman in the direction of the hole. Reflection directed us to the conclusion that both pistols had missed their aim, and that Sir Hew had fallen beneath a chance blow from this fellow’s golf-ball. But as my kinsman was still hors de combat, and incapable of further action, being unwitting, too, of the real cause of his disaster, Inchgrabbit and Strathtyrum, in their discretion as seconds, or belli judices, deemed it better that we should keep a still sough, and that Sir Hew should never be informed concerning the cause of his discomfiture. This resolution we kept, and Sir Hew wore, till the day of his late lamented decease, a bullet among the seals of his watch, he being persuaded by Strathtyrum that it had been extracted from his brain-pan, which certainly was of the thickest. But this was all a bam, or bite, among young men, and a splore to laugh over by our three selves, nor would I have it to go abroad now that Sir Hew is dead, as being prejudicial to the memory of a worthy man, and an honourable family connected with our own. Wherefore I pray you keep a still sough hereanent, as you love me, who remain — Your loving good father,

BRADWARDINE.

APPENDIX

Note on Letter of Mr. Surtees to Mr. Jonathan Oldbuck, .

No literary forgeries were ever much better done than the sham ballads which Surtees of Mainsforth imposed on Sir Walter Scott. The poems were spirited and good of their kind; and though we wonder now that some of them could take in an expert, it is by no means assured that we are even to-day acquainted with the whole of Surtees' frauds. Why a man otherwise honourable, kindly, charitable, and learned, exercised his ingenuity so cruelly upon a trusting correspondent and a staunch friend, it is hardly possible to guess. The biographers of Surtees maintain that he wanted to try his skill on Scott, then only known to him by correspondence; and that, having succeeded, he was afraid to risk Scott's friendship by a confession. This is plausible; and if good may come out of evil, we may remember that two picturesque parts of "Marmion" are due to one confessed and another certain supercherie of Surtees. It cannot be said in his defence that he had no conception of the mischief of literary frauds; in more than one passage of his correspondence he mentions Ritson's detestation of these practices. "To literary imposition, as tending to obscure the path of inquiry, Ritson gave no quarter," says this arch literary impostor.

A brief account of Surtees' labour in the field of sham ballad writing may be fresh to many people who merely know him as the real author of "Barthram's Dirge" and of "The Slaying of Anthony Featherstonhaugh." In an undated letter of 1806, Scott, writing from Ashestiel, thanks Surtees for his "obliging communications." Surtees manifestly began the correspondence, being attracted by the "Border Minstrelsy." Thus it appears that Surtees did NOT forge "Hobbie Noble" in the first edition of the "Minstrelsy"; for he makes some suggestions as to the "Earl of Whitfield," dreaded by the hero of that ballad, which Scott had already published. But he was already deceiving Scott, who writes to him about "Ralph Eure," or "Lord Eure," and about a "Goth, who melted Lord Eure's gold chain." This Lord Eure is doubtless the "Lord Eurie" of the ballad in the later editions of the "Border Minstrelsy," a ballad actually composed by Surtees. That wily person immediately sent Scott a ballad on "The Feud between the Ridleys and Featherstones," in which Scott believed to the day of his death. He introduced it in "Marmion."

The whiles a Northern harper rude
Chaunted a rhyme of deadly feud,

How the fierce Thirlwalls and Ridleys all, &c.

In his note (“Border Minstrelsy,” second edition, 1808, .) Scott says the ballad was taken down from an old woman’s recitation at the Alston Moor lead-mines “by the agent there,” and sent by him to Surtees. Consequently, when Surtees saw “Marmion” in print he had to ask Scott not to print “THE agent,” as he does not know even the name of Colonel Beaumont’s chief agent there, but “an agent.” Thus he hedged himself from a not impossible disclaimer by the agent at the mines.

Readers of “Marmion” will remember how

Once, near Norham, there did fight
A spectre fell, of fiendish might,
In likeness of a Scottish knight,
With Brian Bulmer bold,
And trained him nigh to disallow
The aid of his baptismal vow.

This legend is more of Surtees’ fun. “The most singular tale of this kind,” says Sir Walter, “is contained in an extract communicated to me by my friend Mr. Surtees, of Mainsforth, who copied it from a MS. note in a copy of Burthogge “On the Nature of Spirits, 1694, 8vo,” which had been the property of the late Mr. Gill. It was not in Mr. Gill’s own hand: but probably an hundred years older, and was said to be “E libro Convent. Dunelm. per T. C. extract.;” this T. C. being Thomas Cradocke, Esq. Scott adds, that the passage, which he gives in the Latin, suggested the introduction of the tourney with the Fairy Knight in “Marmion.” Well, WHERE is Cradocke’s extract? The original was “lost” before Surtees sent his “copy” to Sir Walter. “The notes had been carelessly or injudiciously shaken out of the book.” Surtees adds, another editor confirms it, that no such story exists in any MS. of the Dean and Chapter of Durham. No doubt he invented the whole story, and wrote it himself in mediaeval Latin.

Not content with two “whoppers,” as Mr. Jo Gargery might call them, Surtees goes on to invent a perfectly incredible heraldic bearing. He found it in a MS. note in the “Gwillim’s Heraldry” of Mr. Gyll or Gill — the name is written both ways. “He beareth per pale or and arg., over all a spectre passant, SHROUDED SABLE”— “he” being Newton, of Beverley, in Yorkshire. Sir Walter actually swallowed this amazing fib, and alludes to it in “Rob Roy” (1818). But Mr. Raine, the editor of Surtees’ Life, inherited or bought his copy of Gwillim, that of Mr. Gill or Gyll; “and I find in it no trace of such an entry.” “Lord Derwentwater’s Good-Night” is probably entirely by Surtees. “A friend of Mr. Taylor’s” gave him a Tynedale ballad, “Hey, Willy Ridley, winna you stay?” which is also “aut Diabolus aut Robertus.” As to “Barthram’s Dirge,” “from Ann Douglas, a withered crone who weeds my garden,” copies with various tentative verses in Surtees’ hand have been found. Oddly enough, Sir Walter had once discovered a small sepulchral cross, upset, in Liddesdale, near the “Nine Stane Rig;” and this probably made him more easily deceived. Surtees very cleverly put some lines, which COULD not have been original, in brackets, as his own attempt to fill up lacunae. Such are

Any one reading the piece would say, “It must be genuine, for the CONFESSED interpolations are not in the ballad style, which the interpolator, therefore, could not write.” An attempt which Surtees made when composing the song, and which he wisely rejected, could not have failed to excite Scott’s suspicions. It ran -

They buried him when the bonny may
Was on the flow’ring thorn;
And she waked him till the forest grey
Of every leaf was lorn;

Till the rowan tree of gramarye
Its scarlet clusters shed,
And the hollin green alone was seen
With its berries glistening red.

Whether Surtees’ “Brown Man of the Muirs,” to which Scott also gave a place in his own poetry, was a true legend or not, the reader may decide for himself.

Concerning another ballad in the “Minstrelsy”— “Auld Maitland” — Professor Child has expressed a suspicion which most readers feel. What Scott told Ellis about it (Autumn, 1802) was, that he got it in the Forest, “copied down from the recitation of an old shepherd by a country farmer.” Who was the farmer? Will Laidlaw had employed James Hogg, as shepherd. Hogg’s mother chanted “Auld Maitland.” Hogg first met Scott in the summer of 1801. The shepherd had already seen the first volume of the “Minstrelsy.” Did he, thereupon, write “Auld Maitland,” teach his mother it, and induce Laidlaw to take it down from her recitation? The old lady said she got it from Andrew Moir, who had it “frae auld Baby Mettlin, who was said to have been another nor a gude ane.” But we have Hogg’s own statement that “aiblins ma gran’-mither was an unco leear,” and this quality may have been hereditary. On the other side, Hogg could hardly have held his tongue about the forgery, if forgery it was, when he wrote his “Domestic Manners and Private Life of Sir Walter Scott” (1834). The whole investigation is a little depressing, and makes one very shy of unauthenticated ballads.

ON THE SUBLIME

INTRODUCTION: TREATISE ON THE SUBLIME

Boileau, in his introduction to his version of the ancient Treatise on the Sublime, says that he is making no valueless present to his age. Not valueless, to a generation which talks much about style and method in literature, should be this new rendering of the noble fragment, long attributed to Longinus, the Greek tutor and political adviser of Zenobia. There is, indeed, a modern English version by Spurden,I.1 but that is now rare, and seldom comes into the market. Rare, too, is Vaucher's critical essay (1854), which is unlucky, as the French and English books both contain valuable disquisitions on the age of the author of the Treatise. This excellent work has had curious fortunes. It is never quoted nor referred to by any extant classical writer, and, among the many books attributed by Suidas to Longinus, it is not mentioned. xiv Decidedly the old world has left no more noble relic of criticism. Yet the date of the book is obscure, and it did not come into the hands of the learned in modern Europe till Robertelli and Manutius each published editions in 1544. From that time the Treatise has often been printed, edited, translated; but opinion still floats undecided about its origin and period. Does it belong to the age of Augustus, or to the age of Aurelian? Is the author the historical Longinus — the friend of Plotinus, the tutor of Porphyry, the victim of Aurelian, — or have we here a work by an unknown hand more than two centuries earlier? Manuscripts and traditions are here of little service. The oldest manuscript, that of Paris, is regarded as the parent of the rest. It is a small quarto of 414 pages, whereof 335 are occupied by the "Problems" of Aristotle. Several leaves have been lost, hence the fragmentary character of the essay. The Paris MS. has an index, first mentioning the "Problems," and then ”™Ÿ¥£™Ÿ¥ — ›Ÿ““™Ÿ¥ •¡™ ¥¨Ÿ¥£, that is, "The work of Dionysius, or of Longinus, about the Sublime."

On this showing the transcriber of the MS. considered its authorship dubious. Supposing that the author was Dionysius, which of the many writers of that name was he? Again, if he was Longinus, how far does his work tally with the xv characteristics ascribed to that late critic, and peculiar to his age?

About this Longinus, while much is written, little is certainly known. Was he a descendant of a freedman of one of the Cassii Longini, or of an eastern family with a mixture of Greek and Roman blood? The author of the Treatise avows himself a Greek, and apologises, as a Greek, for attempting an estimate of Cicero. Longinus himself was the nephew and heir of Fronto, a Syrian rhetorician of Emesa. Whether Longinus was born there or not, and when he was born, are things uncertain. Porphyry, born in 233 A.D., was his pupil: granting that Longinus was twenty years Porphyry's senior, he must have come into the world about 213 A.D. He travelled much, studied in many cities, and was the friend of the mystic Neoplatonists, Plotinus and Ammonius. The former called him "a philologist, not a philosopher." Porphyry shows us Longinus at a supper where the plagiarisms of Greek writers are discussed — a topic dear to trivial or spiteful mediocrity. He is best known by his death. As the Greek secretary of Zenobia he inspired a haughty answer from the queen to Aurelian, who therefore put him to death. Many rhetorical and philosophic treatises are ascribed to him, whereof only fragments survive. Did he write the Treatise on the Sublime? Modern students prefer to believe that the famous xvi essay is, if not by Plutarch, as some hold, at least by some author of his age, the age of the early Caesars.

The arguments for depriving Longinus, Zenobia's tutor, of the credit of the Treatise lie on the surface, and may be briefly stated. He addresses his work as a letter to a friend, probably a Roman pupil, Terentianus, with whom he has been reading a work on the Sublime by Caecilius. Now Caecilius, a voluminous critic, certainly lived not later than Plutarch, who speaks of him with a sneer. It is unlikely then that an author, two centuries later, would make the old book of Caecilius the starting-point of his own. He would probably have selected some recent or even contemporary rhetorician. Once more, the writer of the Treatise of the Sublime quotes no authors later than the Augustan period. Had he lived as late as the historical Longinus he would surely have sought examples of bad style, if not of good, from the works of the Silver Age. Perhaps he would hardly have resisted the malicious pleasure of censuring the failures among whom he lived. On the other hand, if he cites no late author, no classical author cites him, in spite of the excellence of his book. But we can hardly draw the inference that he was of late date from this purely negative evidence.

Again, he describes, in a very interesting and xvii earnest manner, the characteristics of his own period (Translation, p-86). Why, he is asked, has genius become so rare? There are many clever men, but scarce any highly exalted and wide-reaching genius. Has eloquence died with liberty? "We have learned the lesson of a benignant despotism, and have never tasted freedom." The author answers that it is easy and characteristic of men to blame the present times. Genius may have been corrupted, not by a world-wide peace, but by love of gain and pleasure, passions so strong that "I fear, for such men as we are it is better to serve than to be free. If our appetites were let loose altogether against our neighbours, they would be like wild beasts uncaged, and bring a deluge of calamity on the whole civilised world.” Melancholy words, and appropriate to our own age, when cleverness is almost universal, and genius rare indeed, and the choice between liberty and servitude hard to make, were the choice within our power.

But these words assuredly apply closely to the peaceful period of Augustus, when Virgil and Horace “praising their tyrant sang,” not to the confused age of the historical Longinus. Much has been said of the allusion to “the Lawgiver of the Jews” as “no ordinary person,” but that remark might have been made by a heathen acquainted with the Septuagint, at either of the disputed dates. xviii On the other hand, our author (Section XIII) quotes the critical ideas of “Ammonius and his school,” as to the debt of Plato to Homer. Now the historical Longinus was a friend of the Neoplatonist teacher (not writer), Ammonius Saccas. If we could be sure that the Ammonius of the Treatise was this Ammonius, the question would be settled in favour of the late date. Our author would be that Longinus who inspired Zenobia to resist Aurelian, and who perished under his revenge. But Ammonius is not a very uncommon name, and we have no reason to suppose that the Neoplatonist Ammonius busied himself with the literary criticism of Homer and Plato. There was, among others, an Egyptian Ammonius, the tutor of Plutarch.

These are the mass of the arguments on both sides. M. Egger sums them up thus: “After carefully examining the tradition of the MSS., and the one very late testimony in favour of Longinus, I hesitated for long as to the date of this precious work. In 1854 M. VaucherI.2 inclined me to believe that Plutarch was the author.I.3 All seems to concur towards the opinion that, if not Plutarch, at least one of his contemporaries wrote the most xix original Greek essay in its kind since the *Rhetoric* and *Poetic* of Aristotle.”I.4

We may, on the whole, agree that the nobility of the author’s thought, his habit of quoting nothing more recent than the Augustan age, and his description of his own time, which seems so pertinent to that epoch, mark him as its child rather than as a great critic lost among the *somnia Pythagorea* of the Neoplatonists. On the other hand, if the author be a man of high heart and courage, as he seems, so was that martyr of independence, Longinus. Not without scruple, then, can we deprive Zenobia’s tutor of the glory attached so long to his name.

Whatever its date, and whoever its author may be, the Treatise is fragmentary. The lost parts may very probably contain the secret of its period and authorship. The writer, at the request of his friend, Terentianus, and dissatisfied with the essay of Caecilius, sets about examining the nature of the Sublime in poetry and oratory. To the latter he assigns, as is natural, much more literary importance than we do, in an age when there is so little oratory of literary merit, and so much popular rant. The subject of sublimity must naturally have attracted a writer whose own moral nature was xx pure and lofty, who was inclined to discover in moral qualities the true foundation of the highest literary merit. Even in his opening words he strikes the keynote of his own disposition, where he approves the saying that “the points in which we resemble the divine nature are benevolence and love of truth.” Earlier or later born, he must have lived in the midst of literary activity, curious, eager, occupied with petty questions and petty quarrels, concerned, as men in the best times are not very greatly concerned, with questions of technique and detail. Cut off from politics, people found in composition a field for their activity. We can readily fancy what literature becomes when not only its born children, but the minor busybodies whose natural place is politics, excluded from these, pour into the study of letters. Love of notoriety, vague activity, fantastic indolence, we may be sure, were working their will in the sacred close of the Muses. There were literary sets, jealousies, recitations of new poems; there was a world of amateurs, if there were no papers and paragraphs. To this world the author speaks like a voice from the older and graver age of Greece. If he lived late, we can imagine that he did not quote contemporaries, not because he did not know them, but because he estimated them correctly. He may have suffered, as we suffer, from critics who, of all the world’s literature, know only xxi “the last thing out,” and who take that as a standard for the past, to them unfamiliar, and for the hidden future. As we are told that excellence is not of the great past, but of the present, not in the classical masters, but in modern Muscovites, Portuguese, or American young women, so the author of the Treatise may have been troubled by Asiatic eloquence, now long forgotten, by names of which not a shadow survives. He, on the other hand, has a right to be heard because he has practised a long familiarity with what is old and good. His mind has ever been in contact with masterpieces, as the mind of a critic should be, as the mind of a reviewer seldom is, for the reviewer has to hurry up and down inspecting new literary adventurers. Not among their experiments will he find a touchstone of excellence, a test of greatness, and that test will seldom be applied to contemporary performances. What is the test, after all, of the Sublime, by which our author means the truly great, the best and most passionate thoughts, nature’s high and rare inspirations, expressed in the best chosen words? He replies that “a just judgment of style is the final fruit of long experience.” “Much has he travelled in the realms of gold.”

The word “style” has become a weariness to think upon; so much is said, so much is printed about the art of expression, about methods, tricks, and xxii turns; so many people, without any long experience, set up to be judges of style, on the strength of having admired two or three modern and often rather fantastic writers. About our author, however, we know that his experience has been long, and of the best, that he does not speak from a hasty acquaintance with a few contemporary *précieux* and *précieuses*. The bad writing of his time he traces, as much of our own may be traced, to "the pursuit of novelty in thought," or rather in expression. "It is this that has turned the brain of nearly all our learned world to-day." "Gardons nous d'écrire trop bien," he might have said, "c'est la pire manière qu'il y'ait d'écrire."I.5

The Sublime, with which he concerns himself, is "a certain loftiness and excellence of language," which "takes the reader out of himself.... The Sublime, acting with an imperious and irresistible force, sways every reader whether he will or no." In its own sphere the Sublime does what "natural magic" does in the poetical rendering of nature, and perhaps in the same scarcely-to-be-analysed fashion. Whether this art can be taught or not is a question which the author treats with modesty. Then, as now, people were denying (and not unjustly) that this art can be taught by rule. The author does not go so far as to say that Criticism, "unlike xxiii Justice, does little evil, and little good; that is, *if* to entertain for a moment delicate and curious minds is to do little good." He does not rate his business so low as that. He admits that the inspiration comes from genius, from nature. But "an author can only learn from art when he is to abandon himself to the direction of his genius." Nature must "burst out with a kind of fine madness and divine inspiration." The madness must be *fine*. How can art aid it to this end? By knowledge of, by sympathy and emulation with, "the great poets and prose writers of the past." By these we may be inspired, as the Pythoness by Apollo. From the genius of the past "an effluence breathes upon us." The writer is not to imitate, but to keep before him the perfection of what has been done by the greatest poets. He is to look on them as beacons; he is to keep them as exemplars or ideals. He is to place them as judges of his work. "How would Homer, how would Demosthenes, have been affected by what I have written?" This is practical counsel, and even the most florid modern author, after polishing a paragraph, may tear it up when he has asked himself, "What would Addison have said about this eloquence of mine, or Sainte Beuve, or Mr. Matthew Arnold?" In this way what we call inspiration, that is the performance of the heated mind, perhaps working at its best, perhaps overstraining xxiv itself, and overstating its idea, might really be regulated. But they are few who consider so closely, fewer perhaps they who have the heart to cut out their own fine or refined things. Again, our author suggests another criterion. We are, as in

Lamb’s phrase, “to write for antiquity,” with the souls of poets dead and gone for our judges. But we are also to write for the future, asking with what feelings posterity will read us — if it reads us at all. This is a good discipline. We know by practice what will hit some contemporary tastes; we know the measure of smartness, say, or the delicate flippancy, or the sentence with “a dying fall.” But one should also know that these are fancies of the hour — these and the touch of archaism, and the spinster-like and artificial precision, which seem to be points in some styles of the moment. Such reflections as our author bids us make, with a little self-respect added, may render our work less popular and effective, and certainly are not likely to carry it down to remote posterity. But all such reflections, and action in accordance with what they teach, are elements of literary self-respect. It is hard to be conscientious, especially hard for him who writes much, and of necessity, and for bread. But conscience is never to be obeyed with ease, though the ease grows with the obedience. The book attributed to Longinus will not have missed xxv its mark if it reminds us that, in literature at least, for conscience there is yet a place, possibly even a reward, though that is unessential. By virtue of reasonings like these, and by insisting that nobility of style is, as it were, the bloom on nobility of soul, the Treatise on the Sublime becomes a tonic work, wholesome to be read by young authors and old. “It is natural in us to feel our souls lifted up by the true Sublime, and, conceiving a sort of generous exultation, to be filled with joy and pride, as though we had ourselves originated the ideas which we read.” Here speaks his natural disinterested greatness the author himself is here sublime, and teaches by example as well as precept, for few things are purer than a pure and ardent admiration. The critic is even confident enough to expect to find his own nobility in others, believing that what is truly Sublime “will always please, and please all readers.” And in this universal acceptance by the populace and the literate, by critics and creators, by young and old, he finds the true external canon of sublimity. The verdict lies not with contemporaries, but with the large public, not with the little set of dilettanti, but must be spoken by all. Such verdicts assign the crown to Shakespeare and Molière, to Homer and Cervantes; we should not clamorously anticipate this favourable judgment for Bryant or Emerson, nor for the greatest of our own contemporaries. xxvi Boileau so much misconceived these lofty ideas that he regarded “Longinus’s” judgment as solely that “of good sense,” and held that, in his time, “nothing was good or bad till he had spoken.” But there is far more than good sense, there is high poetic imagination and moral greatness, in the criticism of our author, who certainly would have rejected Boileau’s compliment when he selects Longinus as a literary dictator.

Indeed we almost grudge our author's choice of a subject. He who wrote that "it was not in nature's plan for us, her children, to be base and ignoble; no, she brought us into life as into some great field of contest," should have had another field of contest than literary criticism. It is almost a pity that we have to doubt the tradition, according to which our author was Longinus, and, being but a rhetorician, greatly dared and bravely died. Taking literature for his theme, he wanders away into grammar, into considerations of tropes and figures, plurals and singulars, trumpery mechanical pedantries, as we think now, to whom grammar is no longer, as of old, "a new invented game." Moreover, he has to give examples of the faults opposed to sublimity, he has to dive into and search the bathos, to dally over examples of the bombastic, the over-wrought, the puerile. These faults are not the sins of "minds generous and aspiring," and we have them with us xxvii always. The additions to Boileau's preface (Paris, 1772) contain abundance of examples of faults from Voiture, Mascaron, Bossuet, selected by M. de St. Marc, who no doubt found abundance of entertainment in the chastising of these obvious affectations. It hardly seems the proper work for an author like him who wrote the Treatise on the Sublime. But it is tempting, even now, to give contemporary instances of skill in the Art of Sinking — modern cases of bombast, triviality, false rhetoric. "Speaking generally, it would seem that bombast is one of the hardest things to avoid in writing," says an author who himself avoids it so well. Bombast is the voice of sham passion, the shadow of an insincere attitude. "Even the wretched phantom who still bore the imperial title stooped to pay this ignominious blackmail," cries bombast in Macaulay's *Lord Clive*. The picture of a phantom who is not only a phantom but wretched, stooping to pay blackmail which is not only blackmail but ignominious, may divert the reader and remind him that the faults of the past are the faults of the present. Again, "The desolate islands along the sea-coast, overgrown by noxious vegetation, and swarming with deer and tigers" — do, what does any one suppose, perform what forlorn part in the economy of the world? Why, they "supply the cultivated districts with abundance of salt." It is as comic as —

xxviii

"And thou Dalhousie, thou great God of War,
Lieutenant-Colonel to the Earl of Mar."

Bombast "transcends the Sublime," and falls on the other side. Our author gives more examples of puerility. "Slips of this sort are made by those who, aiming at brilliancy, polish, and especially attractiveness, are landed in paltriness and silly affectation.” Some modern instances we had chosen; the field of choice is large and richly fertile in those blossoms. But the reader may be left to twine a garland of them for himself; to select from contemporaries were invidious, and might provoke retaliation. When our author censures Timaeus for saying that Alexander took less time to annex Asia than Isocrates spent in writing an oration, to bid the Greeks attack Persia, we know what he would have thought of Macaulay’s antithesis. He blames Xenophon for a poor pun, and Plato, less justly, for mere figurative badinage. It would be an easy task to ransack contemporaries, even great contemporaries, for similar failings, for pomposity, for the florid, for sentences like processions of intoxicated torch-bearers, for pedantic display of cheap erudition, for misplaced flippancy, for nice derangement of epitaphs wherein no adjective is used which is appropriate. With a library of cultivated American novelists and uncultivated English romancers at hand, with our own voluminous xxix essays, and the essays and histories and “art criticisms” of our neighbours to draw from, no student need lack examples of what is wrong. He who writes, reflecting on his own innumerable sins, can but beat his breast, cry *Mea Culpa*, and resist the temptation to beat the breasts of his coevals. There are not many authors, there have never been many, who did not need to turn over the treatise of the Sublime by day and night.I.6

As a literary critic of Homer our author is most interesting even in his errors. He compares the poet of the *Odyssey* to the sunset: the *Iliad* is noonday work, the *Odyssey* is touched with the glow of evening — the softness and the shadows. “Old age naturally leans,” like childhood, “towards the fabulous.” The tide has flowed back, and left dim bulks of things on the long shadowy sands. Yet he makes an exception, oddly enough, in favour of the story of the Cyclops, which really is the most fabulous and crude of the fairy tales in the first and greatest of romances. The Slaying of the Wooers, xxx that admirable fight, worthy of a saga, he thinks too improbable, and one of the “trifles into which second childhood is apt to be betrayed.” He fancies that the aged Homer had “lost his power of depicting the passions”; in fact, he is hardly a competent or sympathetic critic of the *Odyssey*. Perhaps he had lived among Romans till he lost his sense of humour; perhaps he never had any to lose. On the other hand, he preserved for us that inestimable and not to be translated fragment of Sappho — Æ±w½µÄ±w ¼¿¹ ºÆ½¿Â 4Ã¿Â ¸µ¿ÖÃ¹½.

It is curious to find him contrasting Apollonius Rhodius as faultless, with Homer as great but faulty. The “faultlessness” of Apollonius is not his merit, for he is often tedious, and he has little skill in selection; moreover, he is deliberately antiquarian, if not pedantic. His true merit is in his original and, as we think, modern telling of a love tale — pure, passionate, and tender, the first in known literature. Medea is often sublime, and always touching. But it is not on these merits that our author lingers; he loves only the highest literature, and, though he finds spots on the sun and faults in Homer, he condones them as oversights passed in the poet's "contempt of little things."

Such for us to-day are the lessons of Longinus. He traces dignity and fire of style to dignity and fire of soul. He detects and denounces the very xxxi faults of which, in each other, all writers are conscious, and which he brings home to ourselves. He proclaims the essential merits of conviction, and of selection. He sets before us the noblest examples of the past, most welcome in a straining age which tries already to live in the future. He admonishes and he inspires. He knows the "marvellous power and enthralling charm of appropriate and striking words" without dropping into mere word-tasting. "Beautiful words are the very light of thought," he says, but does not maunder about the "colour" of words, in the style of the decadence. And then he "leaves this generation to its fate," and calmly turns himself to the work that lies nearest his hand.

To us he is as much a moral as a literary teacher. We admire that Roman greatness of soul in a Greek, and the character of this unknown man, who carried the soul of a poet, the heart of a hero under the gown of a professor. He was one of those whom books cannot debilitate, nor a life of study incapacitate for the study of life.

A. L.

COCK LANE AND COMMON-SENSE

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PREFACE

Of the following essays, five are new, and were written for this volume. They are the paper on Mr. R. L. Stevenson, the "Letter to a Young Journalist," the study of Mr. Kipling, the note on Homer, and "The Last Fashionable Novel." The article on the author of "Oh, no! we never mention Her," appeared in the New York *Sun*, and was suggested by Mr. Dana, the editor of that journal. The papers on Thackeray and Dickens were published in *Good Words*, that on Dumas appeared in *Scribner's Magazine*, that on M. Théodore de Banville in *The New Quarterly Review*. The other essays were originally written for a newspaper "Syndicate." They have been re-cast, augmented, and, to a great extent, re-written.

A. L.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS

Alexandre Dumas is a writer, and his life is a topic, of which his devotees never weary. Indeed, one lifetime is not long enough wherein to tire of them. The long days and years of Hilpa and Shalum, in Addison — the antediluvian age, when a picnic lasted for half a century and a courtship for two hundred years, might have sufficed for an exhaustive study of Dumas. No such study have I to offer, in the brief seasons of our perishable days. I own that I have not read, and do not, in the circumstances, expect to read, all of Dumas, nor even the greater part of his thousand volumes. We only dip a cup in that sparkling spring, and drink, and go on, — we cannot hope to exhaust the fountain, nor to carry away with us the well itself. It is but a word of gratitude and delight that we can say to the heroic and indomitable master, only an *ave* of friendship that we can call across the bourne to the shade of the Porthos of fiction. That his works (his best works) should be even still more widely circulated than they are; that the young should read them, and learn frankness, kindness, generosity — should esteem the tender heart, and the gay, invincible wit; that the old should read them again, and find forgetfulness of trouble, and taste the anodyne of dreams, that is what we desire.

Dumas said of himself ("Mémoires," v. 13) that when he was young he tried several times to read forbidden books — books that are sold *sous le manteau*. But he never got farther than the tenth page, in the

”scrofulous French novel
On gray paper with blunt type;”

he never made his way so far as

"the woful sixteenth print."

"I had, thank God, a natural sentiment of delicacy; and thus, out of my six hundred volumes (in 1852) there are not four which the most scrupulous mother may not give to her daughter." Much later, in 1864, when the *Censure* threatened one of his plays, he wrote to the Emperor: "Of my twelve hundred volumes there is not one which a girl in our most modest quarter, the Faubourg Saint-Germain, may not be allowed to read." The mothers of the Faubourg, and mothers in general, may not take Dumas exactly at his word. There is a passage, for example, in the story of Miladi ("Les Trois Mousquetaires") which a parent or guardian may well think undesirable reading for youth. But compare it with the original passage in the "Mémoires" of D'Artagnan! It has passed through a medium, as Dumas himself declared, of natural delicacy and good taste. His enormous popularity, the widest in the world of letters, owes absolutely nothing to prurience or curiosity. The air which he breathes is a healthy air, is the open air; and that by his own choice, for he had every temptation to seek another kind of vogue, and every opportunity.

Two anecdotes are told of Dumas' books, one by M. Edmond About, the other by his own son, which show, in brief space, why this novelist is so beloved, and why he deserves our affection and esteem. M. Villaud, a railway engineer who had lived much in Italy, Russia, and Spain, was the person whose enthusiasm finally secured a statue for Dumas. He felt so much gratitude to the unknown friend of lonely nights in long exiles, that he could not be happy till his gratitude found a permanent expression. On returning to France he went to consult M. Victor Borie, who told him this tale about George Sand. M. Borie chanced to visit the famous novelist just before her death, and found Dumas' novel, "Les Quarante Cinq" (one of the cycle about the Valois kings) lying on her table. He expressed his wonder that she was reading it for the first time.

"For the first time! — why, this is the fifth or sixth time I have read 'Les Quarante Cinq,' and the others. When I am ill, anxious, melancholy, tired, discouraged, nothing helps me against moral or physical troubles like a book of Dumas." Again, M. About says that M. Sarcey was in the same class at school with a little Spanish boy. The child was homesick; he could not eat, he could not sleep; he was almost in a decline.

"You want to see your mother?" said young Sarcey.

"No: she is dead."

"Your father, then?"

"No: he used to beat me."

"Your brothers and sisters?"

"I have none."

"Then why are you so eager to be back in Spain?"

"To finish a book I began in the holidays."

"And what was its name?"

"'Los Tres Mosqueteros'!"

He was homesick for "The Three Musketeers," and they cured him easily.

That is what Dumas does. He gives courage and life to old age, he charms away the half-conscious *nostalgie*, the *Heimweh*, of childhood. We are all homesick, in the dark days and black towns, for the land of blue skies and brave adventures in forests, and in lonely inns, on the battle-field, in the prison, on the desert isle. And then Dumas comes, and, like Argive Helen, in Homer, he casts a drug into the wine, the drug nepenthe, “that puts all evil out of mind.” Does any one suppose that when George Sand was old and tired, and near her death, she would have found this anodyne, and this stimulant, in the novels of M. Tolstoï, M. Dostoiefsky, M. Zola, or any of the “scientific” observers whom we are actually requested to hail as the masters of a new art, the art of the future? Would they make her laugh, as Chicot does? make her forget, as Porthos, Athos, and Aramis do? take her away from the heavy, familiar time, as the enchanter Dumas takes us? No; let it be enough for these new authors to be industrious, keen, accurate, *précieux*, pitiful, charitable, veracious; but give us high spirits now and then, a light heart, a sharp sword, a fair wench, a good horse, or even that old Gascon rouncy of D’Artagnan’s. Like the good Lord James Douglas, we had liefer hear the lark sing over moor and down, with Chicot, than listen to the starved-mouse squeak in the *bouge* of Thérèse Raquin, with M. Zola. Not that there is not a place and an hour for him, and others like him; but they are not, if you please, to have the whole world to themselves, and all the time, and all the praise; they are not to turn the world into a dissecting-room, time into tedium, and the laurels of Scott and Dumas into crowns of nettles.

There is no complete life of Alexandre Dumas. The age has not produced the intellectual athlete who can gird himself up for that labour. One of the worst books that ever was written, if it can be said to be written, is, I think, the English attempt at a biography of Dumas. Style, grammar, taste, feeling, are all bad. The author does not so much write a life as draw up an indictment. The spirit of his work is grudging, sneering, contemptuous, and pitifully peddling. The great charge is that Dumas was a humbug, that he was not the author of his own books, that his books were written by “collaborators” — above all, by M. Maquet. There is no doubt that Dumas had a regular system of collaboration, which he never concealed. But whereas Dumas could turn out books that *live*, whoever his assistants were, could any of his assistants write books that live, without Dumas? One might as well call any barrister in good practice a thief and an impostor because he has juniors to “devil” for him, as make charges of this kind against Dumas. He once asked his son to help him; the younger Alexandre declined. “It is worth a thousand a year, and you have only to make objections,” the sire urged; but the son was not to be tempted. Some excellent novelists of to-day would be much better if they employed a friend to make objections. But, as a rule, the collaborator did much more. Dumas’ method, apparently, was first to talk the subject over with his *aide-de-camp*. This is an excellent practice, as ideas are knocked out, like sparks (an elderly illustration!), by the contact of minds. Then the young man probably made researches, put a rough sketch on paper, and supplied Dumas, as it were, with his “brief.” Then

Dumas took the "brief" and wrote the novel. He gave it life, he gave it the spark (*l'étincelle*); and the story lived and moved.

It is true that he "took his own where he found it," like Molère and that he took a good deal. In the gallery of an old country-house, on a wet day, I came once on the "Mémoires" of D'Artagnan, where they had lain since the family bought them in Queen Anne's time. There were our old friends the Musketeers, and there were many of their adventures, told at great length and breadth. But how much more vivacious they are in Dumas! M. About repeats a story of Dumas and his ways of work. He met the great man at Marseilles, where, indeed, Alexandre chanced to be "on with the new love" before being completely "off with the old." Dumas picked up M. About, literally lifted him in his embrace, and carried him off to see a play which he had written in three days. The play was a success; the supper was prolonged till three in the morning; M. About was almost asleep as he walked home, but Dumas was as fresh as if he had just got out of bed. "Go to sleep, old man," he said: "I, who am only fifty-five, have three *feuilletons* to write, which must be posted to-morrow. If I have time I shall knock up a little piece for Montigny — the idea is running in my head." So next morning M. About saw the three *feuilletons* made up for the post, and another packet addressed to M. Montigny: it was the play *L'Invitation à la Valse*, a chef-d'oeuvre! Well, the material had been prepared for Dumas. M. About saw one of his novels at Marseilles in the chrysalis. It was a stout copy-book full of paper, composed by a practised hand, on the master's design. Dumas copied out each little leaf on a big leaf of paper, *en y semant l'esprit à pleines mains*. This was his method. As a rule, in collaboration, one man does the work while the other looks on. Is it likely that Dumas looked on? That was not the manner of Dumas. "Mirecourt and others," M. About says, "have wept crocodile tears for the collaborators, the victims of his glory and his talent. But it is difficult to lament over the survivors (1884). The master neither took their money — for they are rich, nor their fame — for they are celebrated, nor their merit — for they had and still have plenty. And they never bewailed their fate: the reverse! The proudest congratulate themselves on having been at so good a school; and M. Auguste Maquet, the chief of them, speaks with real reverence and affection of his great friend." And M. About writes "as one who had taken the master red-handed, and in the act of collaboration." Dumas has a curious note on collaboration in his "Souvenirs Dramatiques." Of the two men at work together, "one is always the dupe, and *he* is the man of talent."

There is no biography of Dumas, but the small change of a biography exists in abundance. There are the many volumes of his "Mémoires," there are all the tomes he wrote on his travels and adventures in Africa, Spain, Italy, Russia; the book he wrote on his beasts; the romance of *Ange Pitou*, partly autobiographical; and there are plenty of little studies by people who knew him. As to his "Mémoires," as to all he wrote about himself, of course his imagination entered into the narrative. Like Scott, when he had a good story he liked to dress it up with a cocked hat and a sword. Did he perform all those astonishing and innumerable feats of strength, skill, courage, address, in revolutions, in voyages, in love, in war, in cookery? The narrative need not be taken "at the foot of the letter"; great as was his force and his courage, his fancy was greater still. There is no room for a biography of him here. His descent was noble on one side, with or without the bend sinister, which he said he would never have disclaimed, had it been his, but which he did not happen to inherit. On the other side he *may* have descended from kings; but, as in the case of "The Fair Cuban," he must have added, "African, unfortunately." Did his father perform these mythical feats of strength? did he lift up a horse between his legs while clutching a rafter with his hands? did he throw his regiment before him over a wall, as Guy Heavistone threw the mare which refused the leap ("Mémoires," i. 122)? No doubt Dumas believed what he heard about this ancestor — in whom, perhaps, one may see a hint of the giant Porthos. In the Revolution and in the wars his father won the name of Monsieur de l'Humanité, because he made a bonfire of a guillotine; and of Horatius Cocles, because he held a pass as bravely as the Roman "in the brave days of old."

This was a father to be proud of; and pluck, tenderness, generosity, strength, remained the favourite virtues of Dumas. These he preached and practised. They say he was generous before he was just; it is to be feared this was true, but he gave even more freely than he received. A regiment of seedy people sponged on him always; he could not listen to a tale of misery but he gave what he had, and sometimes left himself short of a dinner. He could not even turn a dog out of doors. At his Abbotsford, "Monte Cristo," the gates were open to everybody but bailiffs. His dog asked other dogs to come and stay: twelve came, making thirteen in all. The old butler wanted to turn them adrift, and Dumas consented, and repented.

"Michel," he said, "there are some expenses which a man's social position and the character which he has had the ill-luck to receive from heaven force upon him. I don't believe these dogs ruin me. Let them bide! But, in the interests of their own good luck, see they are not thirteen, an unfortunate number!"

"Monsieur, I'll drive one of them away."

"No, no, Michel; let a fourteenth come. These dogs cost me some three pounds a month," said Dumas. "A dinner to five or six friends would cost thrice as much, and, when they went home, they would say my wine was good, but certainly that my books were bad." In this fashion Dumas fared royally "to the dogs," and his Abbotsford ruined him as certainly as that other unhappy palace ruined Sir Walter. He, too, had his miscellaneous kennel; he, too, gave while he had anything to give, and, when he had nothing else, gave the work of his pen. Dumas tells how his big dog, Mouton once flew at him and bit one of his hands, while the other held the throat of the brute. "Luckily my hand, though small, is powerful; what it once holds it holds long — money excepted." He could not "haud a guid grip o' the gear." Neither Scott nor Dumas could shut his ears to a prayer or his pockets to a beggar, or his doors on whoever knocked at them.

"I might at least have asked him to dinner," Scott was heard murmuring, when some insufferable bore at last left Abbotsford, after wasting his time and nearly wearing out his patience. Neither man *preached* socialism; both practised it on the Aristotelian principle: the goods of friends are common, and men are our friends.

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The death of Dumas' father, while the son was a child, left Madame Dumas in great poverty at Villers Cotterets. Dumas' education was sadly to seek. Like most children destined to be bookish, he taught himself to read very young: in Buffon, the Bible, and books of mythology. He knew all about Jupiter — like David Copperfield's Tom Jones, "a child's Jupiter, an innocent creature" — all about every god, goddess, fawn, dryad, nymph — and he never forgot this useful information. Dear Lemprière, thou art superseded; but how much more delightful thou art than the fastidious Smith or the learned Preller! Dumas had one volume of the "Arabian Nights," with Aladdin's lamp therein, the sacred lamp which he was to keep burning with a flame so brilliant and so steady. It is pleasant to know that, in his boyhood, this great romancer loved Virgil. "Little as is my Latin, I have ever adored Virgil: his tenderness for exiles, his melancholy vision of death, his foreboding of an unknown God, have always moved me; the melody of his verses charmed me most, and they lull me still between asleep and awake." School days did not last long: Madame Dumas got a little post — a licence to sell tobacco — and at fifteen Dumas entered a notary's office, like his great Scotch forerunner. He was ignorant of his vocation for the stage — Racine and Corneille fatigued him prodigiously — till he saw *Hamlet*: *Hamlet* diluted by Ducis. He had never heard of Shakespeare, but here was something he could appreciate. Here was "a profound impression, full of inexplicable emotion, vague desires, fleeting lights, that, so far, lit up only a chaos."

Oddly enough, his earliest literary essay was the translation of Bürger's "Lenore." Here, again, he encounters Scott; but Scott translated the ballad, and Dumas failed. *Les mortes vont vite*! the same refrain woke poetry in both the Frenchman and the Scotchman.

"Ha! ha! the Dead can ride with speed:
  Dost fear to ride with me?"

So Dumas' literary career began with a defeat, but it was always a beginning. He had just failed with "Lenore," when Leuven asked him to collaborate in a play. He was utterly ignorant, he says; he had not succeeded in gallant efforts to read through "Gil Blas" and "Don Quixote." "To my shame," he writes, "the man has not been more fortunate with those masterpieces than the boy." He had not yet heard of Scott, Cooper, Goethe; he had heard of Shakespeare only as a barbarian. Other plays the boy wrote — failures, of course — and then Dumas poached his way to Paris, shooting partridges on the road, and paying the hotel expenses by his success in the chase. He was introduced to the great Talma: what a moment for Talma, had he known it! He saw the theatres. He went home, but returned to Paris, drew a small prize in a lottery, and sat next a gentleman at the play, a gentleman who read the rarest of Elzevirs, "Le Pastissier Français," and gave him a little lecture on Elzevirs in general. Soon this gentleman began to hiss the piece, and was turned out. He was Charles Nodier, and one of the anonymous authors of the play he was hissing! I own that this amusing chapter lacks verisimilitude. It reads as if Dumas had chanced to "get up" the subject of Elzevirs, and had fashioned his new knowledge into a little story. He could make a story out of anything — he "turned all to favour and to prettiness." Could I translate the whole passage, and print it here, it would be longer than this article; but, ah, how much more entertaining! For whatever Dumas did he did with such life, spirit, wit, he told it with such vivacity, that his whole career is one long romance of the highest quality. Lassagne told him he must read — must read Goethe, Scott, Cooper, Froissart, Joinville, Brantôme. He read them to some purpose. He entered the service of the Duc d'Orléans as a clerk, for he wrote a clear hand, and, happily, wrote at astonishing speed. He is said to have written a short play in a cottage where he went to rest for an hour or two after shooting all the morning. The practice in a notary's office stood him, as it stood Scott, in good stead. When a dog bit his hand he managed to write a volume without using his thumb. I have tried it, but forbear — in mercy to the printers. He performed wild feats of rapid caligraphy when a clerk under the Duc d'Orléans, and he wrote his plays in one "hand," his novels in another. The "hand" used in his dramas he acquired when, in days of poverty, he used to write in bed. To this habit he also attributed the *brutalité* of his earlier pieces, but there seems to be no good reason why a man should write like a brute because it is in bed that he writes.

In those days of small things he fought his first duel, and made a study of Fear and Courage. His earliest impulse was to rush at danger; if he had to wait, he felt his courage oozing out at the tips of his fingers, like Bob Acres, but in the moment of peril he was himself again. In dreams he was a coward, because, as he argues, the natural man *is* a poltroon, and conscience, honour, all the spiritual and commanding part of our nature, goes to sleep in dreams. The animal terror asserts itself unchecked. It is a theory not without exceptions. In dreams one has plenty of conscience (at least that is my experience), though it usually takes the form of remorse. And in dreams one often affronts dangers which, in waking hours, one might probably avoid if one could.

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Dumas' first play, an unimportant vaudeville, was acted in 1825. His first novels were also published then; he took part of the risk, and only four copies were sold. He afterward used the ideas in more mature works, as Mr. Sheridan Le Fanu employed three or four times (with perfect candour and fairness) the most curious incident in "Uncle Silas." Like Mr. Arthur Pendennis, Dumas at this time wrote poetry "up to" pictures and illustrations. It is easy, but seldom lucrative work. He translated a play of Schiller's into French verse, chiefly to gain command of that vehicle, for his heart was fixed on dramatic success. Then came the visit of Kean and other English actors to Paris. He saw the true *Hamlet*, and, for the first time on any stage, "the play of real passions." Emulation woke in him: a casual work of art led him to the story of Christina of Sweden, he wrote his play *Christine* (afterward reconstructed); he read it to Baron Taylor, who applauded; the Comédie Française accepted it, but a series of intrigues disappointed him, after all. His energy at this moment was extraordinary, for he was very poor, his mother had a stroke of paralysis, his bureau was always bullying and interfering with him. But nothing could snub this "force of nature," and he immediately produced his *Henri Trois*, the first romantic drama of France. This had an instant and noisy success, and the first night of the play he spent at the theatre, and at the bedside of his unconscious mother. The poor lady could not even understand whence the flowers came that he laid on her couch, the flowers thrown to the young man — yesterday unknown, and to-day the most famous of contemporary names. All this tale of triumph, checkered by enmities and diversified by duels, Dumas tells with the vigour and wit of his novels. He is his own hero, and loses nothing in the process; but the other characters — Taylor, Nodier, the Duc d'Orléans, the spiteful press-men, the crabbed old officials — all live like the best of the persons in his tales. They call Dumas vain: he had reason to be vain, and no candid or generous reader will be shocked by his pleasant, frank, and artless enjoyment of himself and of his adventures. Oddly enough, they are small-minded and small-hearted people who are most shocked by what they call "vanity" in the great. Dumas' delight in himself and his doings is only the flower of his vigorous existence, and in his "Mémoires," at least, it is as happy and encouraging as his laugh, or the laugh of Porthos; it is a kind of radiance, in which others, too, may bask and enjoy themselves. And yet it is resented by tiny scribblers, frozen in their own chill self-conceit.

There is nothing incredible (if modern researches are accurate) in the stories he tells of his own success in Hypnotism, as it is called now, Mesmerism or Magnetism as it was called then. Who was likely to possess these powers, if not this good-humoured natural force? "I believe that, by aid of magnetism, a bad man might do much mischief. I doubt whether, by help of magnetism, a good man can do the slightest good," he says, probably with perfect justice. His dramatic success fired Victor Hugo, and very pleasant it is to read Dumas' warm-hearted praise of that great poet. Dumas had no jealousy — no more than Scott. As he believed in no success without talent, so he disbelieved in genius which wins no success. "Je ne crois pas au talent ignoré, au génie inconnu, moi." Genius he saluted wherever he met it, but was incredulous about invisible and inaudible genius; and I own to sharing his scepticism. People who complain of Dumas' vanity may be requested to observe that he seems just as "vain" of Hugo's successes, or of Scribe's, as of his own, and just as much delighted by them.

He was now struck, as he walked on the boulevard one day, by the first idea of *Antony* — an idea which, to be fair, seems rather absurd than tragic, to some tastes. "A lover, caught with a married woman, kills her to save her character, and dies on the scaffold." Here is indeed a part to tear a cat in!

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The performances of M. Dumas during the Revolution of 1830, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of Alexandre the Great? But they were not literary excellences which he then displayed, and we may leave this king-maker to hover, "like an eagle, above the storms of anarchy."

Even to sketch his later biography is beyond our province. In 1830 he had forty years to run, and he filled the cup of the Hours to the brim with activity and adventure. His career was one of unparalleled production, punctuated by revolutions, voyages, exiles, and other intervals of repose. The tales he tells of his prowess in 1830, and with Garibaldi, seem credible to me, and are borne out, so far, by the narrative of M. Maxime Ducamp, who met him at Naples, in the Garibaldian camp. Like Mr. Jingle, in "Pickwick," he "banged the field-piece, twanged the lyre," and was potting at the foes of the republic with a double-barrelled gun, when he was not composing plays, romances, memoirs, criticisms. He has told the tale of his adventures with the Comédie Française, where the actors laughed at his *Antony*, and where Madame Mars and he quarrelled and made it up again. His plays often won an extravagant success; his novels — his great novels, that is — made all Europe his friend. He gained large sums of money, which flowed out of his fingers, though it is said by some that his Abbotsford, Monte Cristo, was no more a palace than the villa which a retired tradesman builds to shelter his old age. But the money disappeared as fast as if Monte Cristo had really been palatial, and worthy of the fantasy of a Nero. He got into debt, fled to Belgium, returned, founded the *Mousquetaire*, a literary paper of the strangest and most shiftless kind. In "Alexandre Dumas à la Maison d'Or," M. Philibert Audebrand tells the tale of this Micawber of newspapers. Everything went into it, good or bad, and the name of Dumas was expected to make all current coin. For Dumas, unluckily, was as prodigal of his name as of his gold, and no reputation could bear the drafts he made on his celebrity. His son says, in the preface to *Le Fils Naturel*: "Tragedy, dramas, history, romance, comedy, travel, you cast all of them in the furnace and the mould of your brain, and you peopled the world of fiction with new creations. The newspaper, the book, the theatre, burst asunder, too narrow for your puissant shoulders; you fed France, Europe, America with your works; you made the wealth of publishers, translators, plagiarists; printers and copyists toiled after you in vain. In the fever of production you did not always try and prove the metal which you employed, and sometimes you tossed into the furnace whatever came to your hand. The fire made the selection: what was your own is bronze, what was not yours vanished in smoke."

The simile is noble and worthy of the Cyclopean craftsman, Dumas. His great works endured; the plays which renewed the youth of the French stage, the novels which Thackeray loved to praise, these remain, and we trust they may always remain, to the delight of mankind and for the sorrow of prigs.

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So much has been written of Dumas' novels that criticism can hardly hope to say more that is both new and true about them. It is acknowledged that, in such a character as Henri III., Dumas made history live, as magically as Scott revived the past in his Louis XI., or Balfour of Burley. It is admitted that Dumas' good tales are told with a vigour and life which rejoice the heart; that his narrative is never dull, never stands still, but moves with a freedom of adventure which perhaps has no parallel. He may fall short of the humour, the kindly wisdom, the genial greatness of Sir Walter at his best, and he has not that supernatural touch, that tragic grandeur, which Scott inherits from Homer and from Shakespeare. In another Homeric quality, Ç±Áy·, as Homer himself calls it, in the "delight of battle" and the spirit of the fray, Scott and Dumas are alike masters. Their fights and the fights in the Icelandic sagas are the best that have ever been drawn by mortal man. When swords are aloft, in siege or on the greensward, or in the midnight chamber where an ambush is laid, Scott and Dumas are indeed themselves. The steel rings, the bucklers clash, the parry and lunge pass and answer too swift for the sight. If Dumas has not, as he certainly has not, the noble philosophy and kindly knowledge of the heart which are Scott's, he is far more swift, more witty, more diverting. He is not prolix, his style is not involved, his dialogue is as rapid and keen as an assault at arms. His favourite virtues and graces, we repeat it, are loyalty, friendship, gaiety, generosity, courage, beauty, and strength. He is himself the friend of the big, stupid, excellent Porthos; of Athos, the noble and melancholy swordsman of sorrow; of D'Artagnan, the indomitable, the trusty, the inexhaustible in resource; but his heart is never on the side of the shifty Aramis, with all his beauty, dexterity, bravery, and brilliance. The brave Bussy, and the chivalrous, the doomed La Mole, are more dear to him; and if he embellishes their characters, giving them charms and virtues that never were theirs, history loses nothing, and romance and we are the gainers. In all he does, at his best, as in the "Chevalier d'Harmenthal," he has movement, kindness, courage, and gaiety. His philosophy of life is that old philosophy of the sagas and of Homer. Let us enjoy the movement of the fray, the faces of fair women, the taste of good wine; let us welcome life like a mistress, let us welcome death like a friend, and with a jest — if death comes with honour.

Dumas is no pessimist. "Heaven has made but one drama for man — the world," he writes, "and during these three thousand years mankind has been hissing it." It is certain that, if a moral censorship could have prevented it, this great drama of mortal passions would never have been licensed, at all, never performed. But Dumas, for one, will not hiss it, but applauds with all his might — a charmed spectator, a fortunate actor in the eternal piece, where all the men and women are only players. You hear his manly laughter, you hear his mighty hands approving, you see the tears he sheds when he had "slain Porthos" —

great tears like those of Pantagruel.

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His may not be the best, nor the ultimate philosophy, but it *is* a philosophy, and one of which we may some day feel the want. I read the stilted criticisms, the pedantic carpings of some modern men who cannot write their own language, and I gather that Dumas is out of date. There is a new philosophy of doubts and delicacies, of dallyings and refinements, of half-hearted lookers-on, desiring and fearing some new order of the world. Dumas does not dally nor doubt: he takes his side, he rushes into the smoke, he strikes his foe; but there is never an unkind word on his lip, nor a grudging thought in his heart.

It may be said that Dumas is not a master of words and phrases, that he is not a *raffiné* of expression, nor a jeweller of style. When I read the maunderings, the stilted and staggering sentences, the hesitating phrases, the far-sought and dear-bought and worthless word-juggles; the sham scientific verbiage, the native pedantries of many modern so-called “stylists,” I rejoice that Dumas was not one of these. He told a plain tale, in the language suited to a plain tale, with abundance of wit and gaiety, as in the reflections of his Chicot, as in all his dialogues. But he did not gnaw the end of his pen in search of some word that nobody had ever used in this or that connection before. The right word came to him, the simple straightforward phrase. Epithet-hunting may be a pretty sport, and the bag of the epithet-hunter may contain some agreeable epigrams and rare specimens of style; but a plain tale of adventure, of love and war, needs none of this industry, and is even spoiled by inopportune diligence. Speed, directness, lucidity are the characteristics of Dumas’ style, and they are exactly the characteristics which his novels required. Scott often failed, his most loyal admirers may admit, in these essentials; but it is rarely that Dumas fails, when he is himself and at his best.

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In spite of his heedless education, Dumas had true critical qualities, and most admired the best things. We have already seen how he writes about Shakespeare, Virgil, Goethe, Scott. But it may be less familiarly known that this burly man-of-all-work, ignorant as he was of Greek, had a true and keen appreciation of Homer. Dumas declares that he only thrice criticised his contemporaries in an unfavourable sense, and as one wishful to find fault. The victims were Casimir Delavigne, Scribe, and Ponsard. On each occasion Dumas declares that, after reflecting, he saw that he was moved by a little personal pique, not by a disinterested love of art. He makes his confession with a rare nobility of candour; and yet his review of Ponsard is worthy of him. M. Ponsard, who, like Dumas, was no scholar, wrote a play styled *Ulysse*, and borrowed from the Odyssey. Dumas follows Ponsard, Odyssey in hand, and while he proves that the dramatist failed to understand Homer, proves that he himself was, in essentials, a capable Homeric critic. Dumas understands that far-off heroic age. He lives in its life and sympathises with its temper. Homer and he are congenial; across the great gulf of time they exchange smiles and a salute.

"Oh! ancient Homer, dear and good and noble, I am minded now and again to leave all and translate thee — I, who have never a word of Greek — so empty and so dismal are the versions men make of thee, in verse or in prose."

How Dumas came to divine Homer, as it were, through a language he knew not, who shall say? He *did* divine him by a natural sympathy of excellence, and his chapters on the "Ulysse" of Ponsard are worth a wilderness of notes by learned and most un-Homeric men. For, indeed, who can be less like the heroic minstrel than the academic philologist?

This universality deserves note. The Homeric student who takes up a volume of Dumas at random finds that he is not only Homeric naturally, but that he really knows his Homer. What did he nor know? His rapidity in reading must have been as remarkable as his pace with the pen. As M. Blaze de Bury says: "Instinct, experience, memory were all his; he sees at a glance, he compares in a flash, he understands without conscious effort, he forgets nothing that he has read." The past and present are photographed imperishably on his brain, he knows the manners of all ages and all countries, the names of all the arms that men have used, all the garments they have worn, all the dishes they have tasted, all the terms of all professions, from swordsmanship to coach-building. Other authors have to wait, and hunt for facts; nothing stops Dumas: he knows and remembers everything. Hence his rapidity, his facility, his positive delight in labour: hence it came that he might be heard, like Dickens, laughing while he worked.

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This is rather a eulogy than a criticism of Dumas. His faults are on the surface, visible to all men. He was not only rapid, he was hasty, he was inconsistent; his need of money as well as his love of work made him put his hand to dozens of perishable things. A beginner, entering the forest of Dumas' books, may fail to see the trees for the wood. He may be counselled to select first the cycle of d'Artagnan — the "Musketeers," "Twenty Years After," and the "Vicomte de Bragelonne." Mr. Stevenson's delightful essay on the last may have sent many readers to it; I confess to preferring the youth of the "Musketeers" to their old age. Then there is the cycle of the Valois, whereof the "Dame de Monsereau" is the best — perhaps the best thing Dumas ever wrote. The "Tulipe Noire" is a novel girls may read, as Thackeray said, with confidence. The "Chevalier d'Harmenthal" is nearly (not quite) as good as "Quentin Durward." "Monte Cristo" has the best beginning — and loses itself in the sands. The novels on the Revolution are not among the most alluring: the famed device "L. P. D." (*lilia pedibus destrue*) has the bad luck to suggest "London Parcels Delivery." That is an accident, but the Revolution is in itself too terrible and pitiful, and too near us (on both sides!) for fiction.

On Dumas' faults it has been no pleasure to dwell. In a recent work I find the Jesuit Le Moyne quoted, saying about Charles V.: "What need that future ages should be made acquainted so religious an Emperor was not always chaste!" The same reticence allures one in regard to so delightful an author as Dumas. He who had enriched so many died poor; he who had told of conquering France, died during the Terrible Year. But he could forgive, could appreciate, the valour of an enemy. Of the Scotch at Waterloo he writes: "It was not enough to kill them: we had to push them down." Dead, they still stood "shoulder to shoulder." In the same generous temper an English cavalry officer wrote home, after Waterloo, that he would gladly have given the rest of his life to have served, on that day, in our infantry or in the French cavalry. These are the spirits that warm the heart, that make us all friends; and to the great, the brave, the generous Dumas we cry, across the years and across the tomb, our *Ave atque vale*!

MR. STEVENSON’S WORKS

Perhaps the first quality in Mr. Stevenson’s works, now so many and so various, which strikes a reader, is the buoyancy, the survival of the child in him. He has told the world often, in prose and verse, how vivid are his memories of his own infancy. This retention of childish recollections he shares, no doubt, with other people of genius: for example, with George Sand, whose legend of her own infancy is much more entertaining, and perhaps will endure longer, than her novels. Her youth, like Scott’s and like Mr. Stevenson’s, was passed all in fantasy: in playing at being some one else, in the invention of imaginary characters, who were living to her, in the fabrication of endless unwritten romances. Many persons, who do not astonish the world by their genius, have lived thus in their earliest youth. But, at a given moment, the fancy dies out of them: this often befalls imaginative boys in their first year at school. “Many are called, few chosen”; but it may be said with probable truth, that there has never been a man of genius in letters, whose boyhood was not thus fantastic, “an isle of dreams.” We know how Scott and De Quincey inhabited airy castles; and Gillies tells us, though Lockhart does not, that Scott, in manhood, was occasionally so lost in thought, that he knew not where he was nor what he was doing.

The peculiarity of Mr. Stevenson is not only to have been a fantastic child, and to retain, in maturity, that fantasy ripened into imagination: he has also kept up the habit of dramatising everything, of playing, half consciously, many parts, of making the world “an unsubstantial fairy place.” This turn of mind it is that causes his work occasionally to seem somewhat freakish. Thus, in the fogs and horrors of London, he plays at being an Arabian tale-teller, and his “New Arabian Nights” are a new kind of romanticism — Oriental, freakish, like the work of a changeling. Indeed, this curious genius, springing from a family of Scottish engineers, resembles nothing so much as one of the fairy children, whom the ladies of Queen Proserpina’s court used to leave in the cradles of Border keeps or of peasants’ cottages. Of the Scot he has little but the power of touching us with a sense of the supernatural, and a decided habit of moralising; for no Scot of genius has been more austere with Robert Burns. On the other hand, one element of Mr. Stevenson’s ethical disquisitions is derived from his dramatic habit. His optimism, his gay courage, his habit of accepting the world as very well worth living in and looking at, persuaded one of his critics that he was a hard-hearted young athlete of iron frame. Now, of the athlete he has nothing but his love of the open air: it is the eternal child that drives him to seek adventures and to sojourn among beach-combers and savages. Thus, an admiring but far from optimistic critic may doubt whether Mr. Stevenson's content with the world is not "only his fun," as Lamb said of Coleridge's preaching; whether he is but playing at being the happy warrior in life; whether he is not acting that part, himself to himself. At least, it is a part fortunately conceived and admirably sustained: a difficult part too, whereas that of the pessimist is as easy as whining.

Mr. Stevenson's work has been very much written about, as it has engaged and delighted readers of every age, station, and character. Boys, of course, have been specially addressed in the books of adventure, children in "A Child's Garden of Verse," young men and maidens in "Virginibus Puerisque," — all ages in all the curiously varied series of volumes. "Kidnapped" was one of the last books which the late Lord Iddesleigh read; and I trust there is no harm in mentioning the pleasure which Mr. Matthew Arnold took in the same story. Critics of every sort have been kind to Mr. Stevenson, in spite of the fact that the few who first became acquainted with his genius praised it with all the warmth of which they were masters. Thus he has become a kind of classic in his own day, for an undisputed reputation makes a classic while it lasts. But was ever so much fame won by writings which might be called scrappy and desultory by the *advocatus diaboli*? It is a most miscellaneous literary baggage that Mr. Stevenson carries. First, a few magazine articles; then two little books of sentimental journeyings, which convince the reader that Mr. Stevenson is as good company to himself as his books are to others. Then came a volume or two of essays, literary and social, on books and life. By this time there could be no doubt that Mr. Stevenson had a style of his own, modelled to some extent on the essayists of the last century, but with touches of Thackeray; with original breaks and turns, with a delicate freakishness, in short, and a determined love of saying things as the newspapers do not say them. All this work undoubtedly smelt a trifle of the lamp, and was therefore dear to some, and an offence to others. For my part, I had delighted in the essays, from the first that appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine*, shortly after the Franco-German war. In this little study, "Ordered South," Mr. Stevenson was employing himself in extracting all the melancholy pleasure which the Riviera can give to a wearied body and a mind resisting the clouds of early malady,

"Alas, the worn and broken board,
  How can it bear the painter's dye!

The harp of strained and tuneless chord,
   How to the minstrel's skill reply!
To aching eyes each landscape lowers,
   To feverish pulse each gale blows chill,
And Araby's or Eden's bowers
   Were barren as this moorland hill," —

wrote Scott, in an hour of malady and depression. But this was not the spirit of "Ordered South": the younger soul rose against the tyranny of the body; and that familiar glamour which, in illness, robs Tintoretto of his glow, did not spoil the midland sea to Mr. Stevenson. His gallant and cheery stoicism were already with him; and so perfect, if a trifle overstudied, was his style, that one already foresaw a new and charming essayist.

But none of those early works, nor the delightful book on Edinburgh, prophesied of the story teller. Mr. Stevenson's first published tales, the "New Arabian Nights," originally appeared in a quaintly edited weekly paper, which nobody read, or nobody but the writers in its columns. They welcomed the strange romances with rejoicings: but perhaps there was only one of them who foresaw that Mr. Stevenson's *forte* was to be fiction, not essay writing; that he was to appeal with success to the large public, and not to the tiny circle who surround the essayist. It did not seem likely that our incalculable public would make themselves at home in those fantastic purlieus which Mr. Stevenson's fancy discovered near the Strand. The impossible Young Man with the Cream Tarts, the ghastly revels of the Suicide Club, the Oriental caprices of the Hansom Cabs — who could foresee that the public would taste them! It is true that Mr. Stevenson's imagination made the President of the Club, and the cowardly member, Mr. Malthus, as real as they were terrible. His romance always goes hand in hand with reality; and Mr. Malthus is as much an actual man of skin and bone, as Silas Lapham is a man of flesh and blood. The world saw this, and applauded the "Noctes of Prince Floristan," in a fairy London.

Yet, excellent and unique as these things were, Mr. Stevenson had not yet "found himself." It would be more true to say that he had only discovered outlying skirts of his dominions. Has he ever hit on the road to the capital yet? and will he ever enter it laurelled, and in triumph? That is precisely what one may doubt, not as without hope. He is always making discoveries in his realm; it is less certain that he will enter its chief city in state. His next work was rather in the nature of annexation and invasion than a settling of his own realms. "Prince Otto" is not, to my mind, a ruler in his proper soil. The provinces of George Sand and of Mr. George Meredith have been taken captive. "Prince

Otto" is fantastic indeed, but neither the fantasy nor the style is quite Mr. Stevenson's. There are excellent passages, and the Scotch soldier of fortune is welcome, and the ladies abound in subtlety and wit. But the book, at least to myself, seems an extremely elaborate and skilful *pastiche*. I cannot believe in the persons. I vaguely smell a moral allegory (as in "Will of the Mill"). I do not clearly understand what it is all about. The scene is fairyland; but it is not the fairyland of Perrault. The ladies are beautiful and witty; but they are escaped from a novel of Mr. Meredith's, and have no business here. The book is no more Mr. Stevenson's than "The Tale of Two Cities" was Mr. Dickens's.

It was probably by way of mere diversion and child's play that Mr. Stevenson began "Treasure Island." He is an amateur of boyish pleasures of masterpieces at a penny plain and twopence coloured. Probably he had looked at the stories of adventure in penny papers which only boys read, and he determined sportively to compete with their unknown authors. "Treasure Island" came out in such a periodical, with the emphatic woodcuts which adorn them. It is said that the puerile public was not greatly stirred. A story is a story, and they rather preferred the regular purveyors. The very faint archaism of the style may have alienated them. But, when "Treasure Island" appeared as a real book, then every one who had a smack of youth left was a boy again for some happy hours. Mr. Stevenson had entered into another province of his realm: the king had come to his own again.

They say the seamanship is inaccurate; I care no more than I do for the year 30. They say too many people are killed. They all died in fair fight, except a victim of John Silver's. The conclusion is a little too like part of Poe's most celebrated tale, but nobody has bellowed "Plagiarist!" Some people may not look over a fence: Mr. Stevenson, if he liked, might steal a horse, — the animal in this case is only a skeleton. A very sober student might add that the hero is impossibly clever; but, then, the hero is a boy, and this is a boy's book. For the rest, the characters live. Only genius could have invented John Silver, that terribly smooth-spoken mariner. Nothing but genius could have drawn that simple yokel on the island, with his craving for cheese as a Christian dainty. The blustering Billy Bones is a little masterpiece: the blind Pew, with his tapping stick (there are three such blind tappers in Mr. Stevenson's books), strikes terror into the boldest. Then, the treasure is thoroughly satisfactory in kind, and there is plenty of it. The landscape, as in the feverish, fog-smothered flat, is gallantly painted. And there are no interfering petticoats in the story.

As for the "Black Arrow," I confess to sharing the disabilities of the "Critic on the Hearth," to whom it is dedicated. "Kidnapped" is less a story than a fragment; but it is a noble fragment. Setting aside the wicked old uncle, who in his later behaviour is of the house of Ralph Nickleby, "Kidnapped" is all excellent — perhaps Mr. Stevenson's masterpiece. Perhaps, too, only a Scotchman knows how good it is, and only a Lowland Scot knows how admirable a character is the dour, brave, conceited David Balfour. It is like being in Scotland again to come on "the green drive-road running wide through the heather," where David "took his last look of Kirk Essendean, the trees about the manse, and the big rowans in the kirkyard, where his father and mother lay." Perfectly Scotch, too, is the mouldering, empty house of the Miser, with the stamped leather on the walls. And the Miser is as good as a Scotch Trapbois, till he becomes homicidal, and then one fails to recognise him unless he is a little mad, like that other frantic uncle in "The Merry Men." The scenes on the ship, with the boy who is murdered, are better — I think more real — than the scenes of piratical life in "The Master of Ballantrae." The fight in the Round House, even if it were exaggerated, would be redeemed by the "Song of the Sword of Alan." As to Alan Breck himself, with his valour and vanity, his good heart, his good conceit of himself, his fantastic loyalty, he is absolutely worthy of the hand that drew Callum Bey and the Dougal creature. It is just possible that we see, in "Kidnapped," more signs of determined labour, more evidence of touches and retouches, than in "Rob Roy." In nothing else which it attempts is it inferior; in mastery of landscape, as in the scene of the lonely rock in a dry and thirsty land, it is unsurpassed. If there are signs of laboured handling on Alan, there are none in the sketches of Cluny and of Rob Roy's son, the piper. What a generous artist is Alan! "Robin Oig," he said, when it was done, "ye are a great piper. I am not fit to blow in the same kingdom with you. Body of me! ye have mair music in your sporran than I have in my head."

"Kidnapped," we said, is a fragment. It ends anywhere, or nowhere, as if the pen had dropped from a weary hand. Thus, and for other reasons, one cannot pretend to set what is not really a whole against such a rounded whole as "Rob Roy," or against "The Legend of Montrose." Again, "Kidnapped" is a novel without a woman in it: not here is Di Vernon, not here is Helen McGregor. David Balfour is the pragmatic Lowlander; he does not bear comparison, excellent as he is, with Baillie Nicol Jarvie, the humorous Lowlander: he does not live in the memory like the immortal Baillie. It is as a series of scenes and sketches that "Kidnapped" is unmatched among Mr. Stevenson's works.

In "The Master of Ballantrae" Mr. Stevenson makes a gallant effort to enter what I have ventured to call the capital of his kingdom. He does introduce a woman, and confronts the problems of love as well as of fraternal hatred. The "Master" is studied, is polished *ad unguem*; it is a whole in itself, it is a remarkably daring attempt to write the tragedy, as, in "Waverley," Scott wrote the romance, of Scotland about the time of the Forty-Five. With such a predecessor and rival, Mr. Stevenson wisely leaves the pomps and battles of the Forty-Five, its chivalry and gallantry, alone. He shows us the seamy side: the intrigues, domestic and political; the needy Irish adventurer with the Prince, a person whom Scott had not studied. The book, if completely successful, would be Mr. Stevenson's "Bride of Lammermoor." To be frank, I do not think it completely successful — a victory all along the line. The obvious weak point is Secundra Dass, that Indian of unknown nationality; for surely his name marks him as no Hindoo. The Master could not have brought him, shivering like Jos Sedley's black servant, to Scotland. As in America, this alien would have found it "too dam cold." My power of belief (which verges on credulity) is staggered by the ghastly attempt to reanimate the buried Master. Here, at least to my taste, the freakish changeling has got the better of Mr. Stevenson, and has brought in an element out of keeping with the steady lurid tragedy of fraternal hatred. For all the rest, it were a hard judge that had anything but praise. The brilliant blackguardism of the Master; his touch of sentiment as he leaves Durisdeer for the last time, with a sad old song on his lips; his fascination; his ruthlessness; his irony; — all are perfect. It is not very easy to understand the Chevalier Bourke, that Barry Lyndon, with no head and with a good heart, that creature of a bewildered kindly conscience; but it is easy to like him. How admirable is his undeflected belief in and affection for the Master! How excellent and how Irish he is, when he buffoons himself out of his perils with the pirates! The scenes are brilliant and living, as when the Master throws the guinea through the Hall window, or as in the darkling duel in the garden. It needed an austere artistic conscience to make Henry, the younger brother, so unlovable with all his excellence, and to keep the lady so true, yet so much in shadow. This is the best woman among Mr. Stevenson's few women; but even she is almost always reserved, veiled as it were.

The old Lord, again, is a portrait as lifelike as Scott could have drawn, and more delicately touched than Scott would have cared to draw it: a French companion picture to the Baron Bradwardine. The whole piece reads as if Mr. Stevenson had engaged in a struggle with himself as he wrote. The sky is never blue, the sun never shines: we weary for a "westland wind." There is something "thrawn," as the Scotch say, about the story; there is often a touch of this sinister kind in the author's work. The language is extraordinarily artful, as in the mad lord's words, "I have felt the hilt dirl on his breast-bone." And yet, one is hardly thrilled as one expects to be, when, as Mackellar says, "the week-old corpse looked me for a moment in the face."

Probably none of Mr. Stevenson's many books has made his name so familiar as “Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde.” I read it first in manuscript, alone, at night; and, when the Butler and Mr. Urmson came to the Doctor’s door, I confess that I threw it down, and went hastily to bed. It is the most gruesome of all his writings, and so perfect that one can complain only of the slightly too obvious moral; and, again, that really Mr. Hyde was more of a gentleman than the unctuous Dr. Jekyll, with his “bedside manner.”

So here, not to speak of some admirable short stories like “Thrawn Janet,” is a brief catalogue — little more — of Mr. Stevenson’s literary baggage. It is all good, though variously good; yet the wise world asks for the masterpiece. It is said that Mr. Stevenson has not ventured on the delicate and dangerous ground of the novel, because he has not written a modern love story. But who has? There are love affairs in Dickens, but do we remember or care for them? Is it the love affairs that we remember in Scott? Thackeray may touch us with Clive’s and Jack Belsize’s misfortunes, with Esmond’s melancholy passion, and amuse us with Pen in so many toils, and interest us in the little heroine of the “Shabby Genteel Story.” But it is not by virtue of those episodes that Thackeray is so great. Love stories are best done by women, as in “Mr. Gilfil’s Love Story”; and, perhaps, in an ordinary way, by writers like Trollope. One may defy critics to name a great English author in fiction whose chief and distinguishing merit is in his pictures of the passion of Love. Still, they all give Love his due stroke in the battle, and perhaps Mr. Stevenson will do so some day. But I confess that, if he ever excels himself, I do not expect it to be in a love story.

Possibly it may be in a play. If he again attempt the drama, he has this in his favour, that he will not deal in supernumeraries. In his tales his minor characters are as carefully drawn as his chief personages. Consider, for example, the minister, Henderland, the man who is so fond of snuff, in “Kidnapped,” and, in the “Master of Ballantrae,” Sir William Johnson, the English Governor. They are the work of a mind as attentive to details, as ready to subordinate or obliterate details which are unessential. Thus Mr. Stevenson’s writings breathe equally of work in the study and of inspiration from adventure in the open air, and thus he wins every vote, and pleases every class of reader.

THOMAS HAYNES BAYLY

I cannot sing the old songs, nor indeed any others, but I can read them, in the neglected works of Thomas Haynes Bayly. The name of Bayly may be unfamiliar, but every one almost has heard his ditties chanted — every one much over forty, at all events. "I'll hang my Harp on a Willow Tree," and "I'd be a Butterfly," and "Oh, no! we never mention Her," are dimly dear to every friend of Mr. Richard Swiveller. If to be sung everywhere, to hear your verses uttered in harmony with all pianos and quoted by the world at large, be fame, Bayly had it. He was an unaffected poet. He wrote words to airs, and he is almost absolutely forgotten. To read him is to be carried back on the wings of music to the bowers of youth; and to the bowers of youth I have been wafted, and to the old booksellers. You do not find on every stall the poems of Bayly; but a copy in two volumes has been discovered, edited by Mr. Bayly's widow (Bentley, 1844). They saw the light in the same year as the present critic, and perhaps they ceased to be very popular before he was breeched. Mr. Bayly, according to Mrs. Bayly, "ably penetrated the sources of the human heart," like Shakespeare and Mr. Howells. He also "gave to minstrelsy the attributes of intellect and wit," and "reclaimed even festive song from vulgarity," in which, since the age of Anacreon, festive song has notoriously wallowed. The poet who did all this was born at Bath in Oct. 1797. His father was a genteel solicitor, and his great-grandmother was sister to Lord Delamere, while he had a remote baronet on the mother's side. To trace the ancestral source of his genius was difficult, as in the case of Gifted Hopkins; but it was believed to flow from his maternal grandfather, Mr. Freeman, whom his friend, Lord Lavington, regarded as "one of the finest poets of his age." Bayly was at school at Winchester, where he conducted a weekly college newspaper. His father, like Scott's, would have made him a lawyer; but "the youth took a great dislike to it, for his ideas loved to dwell in the regions of fancy," which are closed to attorneys. So he thought of being a clergyman, and was sent to St. Mary's Hall, Oxford. There "he did not apply himself to the pursuit of academical honours," but fell in love with a young lady whose brother he had tended in a fatal illness. But "they were both too wise to think of living upon love, and, after mutual tears and sighs, they parted never to meet again. The lady, though grieved, was not heartbroken, and soon became the wife of another." They usually do. Mr. Bayly's regret was more profound, and expressed itself in the touching ditty:

“Oh, no, we never mention her,
   Her name is never heard,
My lips are now forbid to speak
   That once familiar word;
From sport to sport they hurry me
   To banish my regret,
And when they only worry me —

“And when they win a smile from me,
   They fancy I forget.

“They bid me seek in change of scene
   The charms that others see,
But were I in a foreign land
   They’d find no change in me.
’Tis true that I behold no more
   The valley where we met;
I do not see the hawthorn tree,
   But how can I forget?”

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“They tell me she is happy now,

   The gayest of the gay;
They hint that she’s forgotten me;
   But heed not what they say.
Like me, perhaps, she struggles with
   Each feeling of regret:
’Tis true she’s married Mr. Smith,
   But, ah, does she forget!”

The temptation to parody is really too strong; the last lines, actually and in an authentic text, are:

“But if she loves as I have loved,
   She never can forget.”

Bayly had now struck the note, the sweet, sentimental note, of the early, innocent, Victorian age. Jeames imitated him:

“R. Hangeline, R. Lady mine,
Dost thou remember Jeames!”

We should do the trick quite differently now, more like this:

“Love spake to me and said:
  ‘Oh, lips, be mute;
Let that one name be dead,
That memory flown and fled,
  Untouched that lute!
Go forth,’ said Love, ‘with willow in thy hand,
  And in thy hair
  Dead blossoms wear,
Blown from the sunless land.

“‘Go forth,’ said Love; ‘thou never more shalt see
Her shadow glimmer by the trysting tree;
  But *she* is glad,
  With roses crowned and clad,
Who hath forgotten thee!’
  But I made answer: ‘Love!
  Tell me no more thereof,
For she has drunk of that same cup as I.
Yea, though her eyes be dry,
  She garners there for me
  Tears salter than the sea,
Even till the day she die.’
So gave I Love the lie.”

I declare I nearly weep over these lines; for, though they are only Bayly’s sentiment hastily recast in a modern manner, there is something so very affecting, mouldy, and unwholesome about them, that they sound as if they had been “written up to” a sketch by a disciple of Mr. Rossetti’s.

In a mood much more manly and moral, Mr. Bayly wrote another poem to the young lady:

“May thy lot in life be happy, undisturbed by thoughts of me,
The God who shelters innocence thy guard and guide will be.
Thy heart will lose the chilling sense of hopeless love at last,
And the sunshine of the future chase the shadows of the past.”

It is as easy as prose to sing in this manner. For example:

“In fact, we need not be concerned; ‘at last’ comes very soon, and our Emilia quite forgets the memory of the moon, the moon that shone on her and us, the woods that heard our vows, the moaning of the waters, and the murmur of the boughs. She is happy with another, and by her we’re quite forgot; she never lets a thought of us bring shadow on her lot; and if we meet at dinner she’s too clever to repine, and mentions us to Mr. Smith as ‘An old flame of mine.’ And shall I grieve that it is thus? and would I have her weep, and lose her healthy appetite and break her healthy sleep? Not so, she’s not poetical, though ne’er shall I forget the fairy of my fancy whom I once thought I had met. The fairy of my fancy! It was fancy, most things are; her emotions were not steadfast as the shining of a star; but, ah, I love her image yet, as once it shone on me, and swayed me as the low moon sways the surging of the sea.”

Among other sports his anxious friends hurried the lovelorn Bayly to Scotland, where he wrote much verse, and then to Dublin, which completed his cure. “He seemed in the midst of the crowd the gayest of all, his laughter rang merry and loud at banquet and hall.” He thought no more of studying for the Church, but went back to Bath, met a Miss Hayes, was fascinated by Miss Hayes, “came, saw, but did *not* conquer at once,” says Mrs. Haynes Bayly (*née* Hayes) with widow’s pride. Her lovely name was Helena; and I deeply regret to add that, after an education at Oxford, Mr. Bayly, in his poems, accentuated the penultimate, which, of course, is short.

“Oh, think not, Helena, of leaving us yet,”

he carolled, when it would have been just as easy, and a hundred times more correct, to sing —

“Oh, Helena, think not of leaving us yet.”

Miss Hayes had lands in Ireland, alas! and Mr. Bayly insinuated that, like King Easter and King Wester in the ballad, her lovers courted her for her lands and her fee; but he, like King Honour,

“For her bonny face
And for her fair bodie.”

In 1825 (after being elected to the Athenæum) Mr. Bayly “at last found favour in the eyes of Miss Hayes.” He presented her with a little ruby heart, which she accepted, and they were married, and at first were well-to-do, Miss Hayes being the heiress of Benjamin Hayes, Esq., of Marble Hill, in county Cork. A friend of Mr. Bayly's described him thus:

"I never have met on this chilling earth
   So merry, so kind, so frank a youth,
In moments of pleasure a smile all mirth,
   In moments of sorrow a heart of truth.
I have heard thee praised, I have seen thee led
   By Fashion along her gay career;
While beautiful lips have often shed
   Their flattering poison in thine ear."

Yet he says that the poet was unspoiled. On his honeymoon, at Lord Ashdown's, Mr. Bayly, flying from some fair sirens, retreated to a bower, and there wrote his world-famous "I'd be a Butterfly."

"I'd be a butterfly, living a rover,
Dying when fair things are fading away."

The place in which the deathless strains welled from the singer's heart was henceforth known as "Butterfly Bower." He now wrote a novel, "The Aylmers," which has gone where the old moons go, and he became rather a literary lion, and made the acquaintance of Theodore Hook. The loss of a son caused him to write some devotional verses, which were not what he did best; and now he began to try comedies. One of them, *Sold for a Song*, succeeded very well. In the stage-coach between Wycombe Abbey and London he wrote a successful little *lever de rideau* called *Perfection*; and it was lucky that he opened this vein, for his wife's Irish property got into an Irish bog of dishonesty and difficulty. Thirty-five pieces were contributed by him to the British stage. After a long illness, he died on April 22nd, 1829. He did not live, this butterfly minstrel, into the winter of human age.

Of his poems the inevitable criticism must be that he was a Tom Moore of much lower accomplishments. His business was to carol of the most vapid and obvious sentiment, and to string flowers, fruits, trees, breeze, sorrow, to-morrow, knights, coal-black steeds, regret, deception, and so forth, into fervid anapæstics. Perhaps his success lay in knowing exactly how little sense in poetry composers will endure and singers will accept. Why, "words for music" are almost invariably trash now, though the words of Elizabethan songs are better than any music, is a gloomy and difficult question. Like most poets, I myself detest the sister art, and don’t know anything about it. But any one can see that words like Bayly’s are and have long been much more popular with musical people than words like Shelley’s, Keats’s, Shakespeare’s, Fletcher’s, Lovelace’s, or Carew’s. The natural explanation is not flattering to musical people: at all events, the singing world doted on Bayly.

“She never blamed him — never,
  But received him when he came
With a welcome sort of shiver,
  And she tried to look the same.

“But vainly she dissembled,
  For whene’er she tried to smile,
A tear unbidden trembled
  In her blue eye all the while.”

This was pleasant for “him”; but the point is that these are lines to an Indian air. Shelley, also, about the same time, wrote Lines to an Indian air; but we may “swear, and save our oath,” that the singers preferred Bayly’s. Tennyson and Coleridge could never equal the popularity of what follows. I shall ask the persevering reader to tell me where Bayly ends, and where parody begins:

“When the eye of beauty closes,
  When the weary are at rest,
When the shade the sunset throws is
  But a vapour in the west;
When the moonlight tips the billow
  With a wreath of silver foam,
And the whisper of the willow
  Breaks the slumber of the gnome, —
Night may come, but sleep will linger,
  When the spirit, all forlorn,
Shuts its ear against the singer,
  And the rustle of the corn
Round the sad old mansion sobbing
  Bids the wakeful maid recall
Who it was that caused the throbbing
  Of her bosom at the ball.”

Will this not do to sing just as well as the original? and is it not true that "almost any man you please could reel it off for days together"? Anything will do that speaks of forgetting people, and of being forsaken, and about the sunset, and the ivy, and the rose.

"Tell me no more that the tide of thine anguish
   Is red as the heart's blood and salt as the sea;
That the stars in their courses command thee to languish,
   That the hand of enjoyment is loosened from thee!

"Tell me no more that, forgotten, forsaken,
   Thou roamest the wild wood, thou sigh'st on the shore.
Nay, rent is the pledge that of old we had taken,
   And the words that have bound me, they bind thee no more!

"Ere the sun had gone down on thy sorrow, the maidens
   Were wreathing the orange's bud in thy hair,
And the trumpets were tuning the musical cadence
   That gave thee, a bride, to the baronet's heir.

"Farewell, may no thought pierce thy breast of thy treason;
   Farewell, and be happy in Hubert's embrace.
Be the belle of the ball, be the bride of the season,
   With diamonds bedizened and languid in lace."

This is mine, and I say, with modest pride, that it is quite as good as —

"Go, may'st thou be happy,
   Though sadly we part,
In life's early summer
   Grief breaks not the heart.

"The ills that assail us
   As speedily pass
As shades o'er a mirror,
   Which stain not the glass."

Anybody could do it, we say, in what Edgar Poe calls “the mad pride of intellectuality,” and it certainly looks as if it could be done by anybody. For example, take Bayly as a moralist. His ideas are out of the centre. This is about his standard:

“CRUELTY.

“‘Break not the thread the spider
Is labouring to weave.’
I said, nor as I eyed her
Could dream she would deceive.

“Her brow was pure and candid,
Her tender eyes above;
And I, if ever man did,
Fell hopelessly in love.

“For who could deem that cruel
So fair a face might be?
That eyes so like a jewel
Were only paste for me?

“I wove my thread, aspiring
Within her heart to climb;
I wove with zeal untiring
For ever such a time!

“But, ah! that thread was broken
All by her fingers fair,
The vows and prayers I’ve spoken
Are vanished into air!”

Did Bayly write that ditty or did I? Upon my word, I can hardly tell. I am being hypnotised by Bayly. I lisp in numbers, and the numbers come like mad. I can hardly ask for a light without abounding in his artless vein. Easy, easy it seems; and yet it was Bayly after all, not you nor I, who wrote the classic —

"I'll hang my harp on a willow tree,
And I'll go to the war again,
For a peaceful home has no charm for me,
A battlefield no pain;
The lady I love will soon be a bride,
With a diadem on her brow.
Ah, why did she flatter my boyish pride?
She is going to leave me now!"

It is like listening, in the sad yellow evening, to the strains of a barrel organ, faint and sweet, and far away. A world of memories come jigging back — foolish fancies, dreams, desires, all beckoning and bobbing to the old tune:

"Oh had I but loved with a boyish love,
It would have been well for me."

How does Bayly manage it? What is the trick of it, the obvious, simple, meretricious trick, which somehow, after all, let us mock as we will, Bayly could do, and we cannot? He really had a slim, serviceable, smirking, and sighing little talent of his own; and — well, we have not even that. Nobody forgets

"The lady I love will soon be a bride."

Nobody remembers our cultivated epics and esoteric sonnets, oh brother minor poet, *mon semblable*, *mon frère*! Nor can we rival, though we publish our books on the largest paper, the buried popularity of

"Gaily the troubadour
Touched his guitar
When he was hastening
Home from the war,
Singing, "From Palestine
Hither I come,
Lady love! Lady love!
Welcome me home!"

Of course this is, historically, a very incorrect rendering of a Languedoc crusader; and the impression is not mediæval, but of the comic opera. Any one of us could get in more local colour for the money, and give the crusader a cithern or citole instead of a guitar. This is how we should do "Gaily the Troubadour" nowadays: —

“Sir Ralph he is hardy and mickle of might,
Ha, *la belle blanche aubépine*!
Soldans seven hath he slain in fight,
Honneur à la belle Isoline!

“Sir Ralph he rideth in riven mail,
Ha, *la belle blanche aubépine*!
Beneath his nasal is his dark face pale,
Honneur à la belle Isoline!

“His eyes they blaze as the burning coal,
Ha, *la belle blanche aubépine*!
He smiteth a stave on his gold citole,
Honneur à la belle Isoline!

“From her mangonel she looketh forth,
Ha, *la belle blanche aubépine*!
‘Who is he spurreth so late to the north?’
Honneur à la belle Isoline!

“Hark! for he speaketh a knightly name,
Ha, *la belle blanche aubépine*!
And her wan cheek glows as a burning flame,
Honneur à la belle Isoline!

“For Sir Ralph he is hardy and mickle of might,
Ha, *la belle blanche aubépine*!
And his love shall ungirdle his sword to-night,
Honneur à la belle Isoline!”

Such is the romantic, esoteric, old French way of saying —

“Hark, ’tis the troubadour
Breathing her name
Under the battlement

Softly he came,
Singing, “From Palestine
Hither I come.
Lady love! Lady love!
Welcome me home!”

The moral of all this is that minor poetry has its fashions, and that the butterfly Bayly could versify very successfully in the fashion of a time simpler and less pedantic than our own. On the whole, minor poetry for minor poetry, this artless singer, piping his native drawing-room notes, gave a great deal of perfectly harmless, if highly uncultivated, enjoyment.

It must not be fancied that Mr. Bayly had only one string to his bow — or, rather, to his lyre. He wrote a great deal, to be sure, about the passion of love, which Count Tolstoï thinks we make too much of. He did not dream that the affairs of the heart should be regulated by the State — by the Permanent Secretary of the Marriage Office. That is what we are coming to, of course, unless the enthusiasts of “free love” and “go away as you please” failed with their little programme. No doubt there would be poetry if the State regulated or left wholly unregulated the affections of the future. Mr. Bayly, living in other times, among other manners, piped of the hard tyranny of a mother:

“We met, ’twas in a crowd, and I thought he would shun me.
He came, I could not breathe, for his eye was upon me.
He spoke, his words were cold, and his smile was unaltered,
I knew how much he felt, for his deep-toned voice faltered.
I wore my bridal robe, and I rivalled its whiteness;
Bright gems were in my hair, — how I hated their brightness!
He called me by my name as the bride of another.
Oh, thou hast been the cause of this anguish, my mother!”

In future, when the reformers of marriage have had their way, we shall read:

“The world may think me gay, for I bow to my fate;
But thou hast been the cause of my anguish, O State!”

For even when true love is regulated by the County Council or the village community, it will still persist in not running smooth.

Of these passions, then, Mr. Bayly could chant; but let us remember that he could also dally with old romance, that he wrote:

“The mistletoe hung in the castle hall,
The holly branch shone on the old oak wall.”

When the bride unluckily got into the ancient chest,

“It closed with a spring. And, dreadful doom,
The bride lay clasped in her living tomb,”

so that her lover “mourned for his fairy bride,” and never found out her premature casket. This was true romance as understood when Peel was consul. Mr. Bayly was rarely political; but he commemorated the heroes of Waterloo, our last victory worth mentioning:

“Yet mourn not for them, for in future tradition
   Their fame shall abide as our tutelar star,
To instil by example the glorious ambition
   Of falling, like them, in a glorious war.
Though tears may be seen in the bright eyes of beauty,
   One consolation must ever remain:
Undaunted they trod in the pathway of duty,
   Which led them to glory on Waterloo’s plain.”

Could there be a more simple Tyrtæus? and who that reads him will not be ambitious of falling in a glorious war? Bayly, indeed, is always simple. He is “simple, sensuous, and passionate,” and Milton asked no more from a poet.

“A wreath of orange blossoms,
When next we met, she wore.
The expression of her features
Was more thoughtful than before.”

On his own principles Wordsworth should have admired this unaffected statement; but Wordsworth rarely praised his contemporaries, and said that “Guy Mannering” was a respectable effort in the style of Mrs. Radcliffe. Nor did he even extol, though it is more in his own line,

“Of what is the old man thinking,
As he leans on his oaken staff?”

My own favourite among Mr. Bayly’s effusions is not a sentimental ode, but the following gush of true natural feeling: —

“Oh, give me new faces, new faces, new faces,
   I’ve seen those around me a fortnight and more.
Some people grow weary of things or of places,
   But persons to me are a much greater bore.
I care not for features, I’m sure to discover
   Some exquisite trait in the first that you send.
My fondness falls off when the novelty’s over;
   I want a new face for an intimate friend.”

This is perfectly candid: we should all prefer a new face, if pretty, every fortnight:

“Come, I pray you, and tell me this,
   All good fellows whose beards are grey,
Did not the fairest of the fair
Common grow and wearisome ere
   Ever a month had passed away?”

For once Mr. Bayly uttered in his “New Faces” a sentiment not usually expressed, but universally felt; and now he suffers, as a poet, because he is no longer a new face, because we have welcomed his juniors. To Bayly we shall not return; but he has one rare merit, — he is always perfectly plain-spoken and intelligible.

“Farewell to my Bayly, farewell to the singer
   Whose tender effusions my aunts used to sing;
Farewell, for the fame of the bard does not linger,
   My favourite minstrel’s no longer the thing.
But though on his temples has faded the laurel,
   Though broken the lute, and though veiled is the crest,
My Bayly, at worst, is uncommonly moral,
   Which is more than some new poets are, at their best.”

Farewell to our Bayly, about whose songs we may say, with Mr. Thackeray in “Vanity Fair,” that “they contain numberless good-natured, simple appeals to the affections.” We are no longer affectionate, good-natured, simple. We are cleverer than Bayly’s audience; but are we better fellows?

THÉODORE DE BANVILLE

There are literary reputations in France and England which seem, like the fairies, to be unable to cross running water. Dean Swift, according to M. Paul de Saint-Victor, is a great man at Dover, a pigmy at Calais— "Son talent, qui enthousiasme l'Angleterre, n'inspire ailleurs qu'un morne étonnement." M. Paul De Saint-Victor was a fair example of the French critic, and what he says about Swift was possibly true, — for him. There is not much resemblance between the Dean and M. Théodore de Banville, except that the latter too is a poet who has little honour out of his own country. He is a charming singer at Calais; at Dover he inspires *un morne étonnement* (a bleak perplexity). One has never seen an English attempt to describe or estimate his genius. His unpopularity in England is illustrated by the fact that the London Library, that respectable institution, does not, or did not, possess a single copy of any one of his books. He is but feebly represented even in the collection of the British Museum. It is not hard to account for our indifference to M. De Banville. He is a poet not only intensely French, but intensely Parisian. He is careful of form, rather than abundant in manner. He has no story to tell, and his sketches in prose, his attempts at criticism, are not very weighty or instructive. With all his limitations, however, he represents, in company with M. Leconte de Lisle, the second of the three generations of poets over whom Victor Hugo reigned.

M. De Banville has been called, by people who do not like, and who apparently have not read him, *un saltimbanque littéraire* (a literary rope-dancer). Other critics, who do like him, but who have limited their study to a certain portion of his books, compare him to a worker in gold, who carefully chases or embosses dainty processions of fauns and mænads. He is, in point of fact, something more estimable than a literary rope-dancer, something more serious than a working jeweller in rhymes. He calls himself *un raffiné*; but he is not, like many persons who are proud of that title, *un indifférent* in matters of human fortune. His earlier poems, of course, are much concerned with the matter of most early poems — with Lydia and Cynthia and their light loves. The verses of his second period often deal with the most evanescent subjects, and they now retain but a slight petulance and sparkle, as of champagne that has been too long drawn. In a prefatory plea for M. De Banville's poetry one may add that he "has loved our people," and that no poet, no critic, has honoured Shakespeare with brighter words of praise.

Théodore de Banville was born at Moulin, on March 14th 1823, and he is therefore three years younger than the dictionaries of biography would make the world believe. He is the son of a naval officer, and, according to M. Charles Baudelaire, a descendant of the Crusaders. He came much too late into the world to distinguish himself in the noisy exploits of 1830, and the chief event of his youth was the publication of "Les Cariatides" in 1842. This first volume contained a selection from the countless verses which the poet produced between his sixteenth and his nineteenth year. Whatever other merits the songs of minors may possess, they have seldom that of permitting themselves to be read. "Les Cariatides" are exceptional here. They are, above all things, readable. "On peut les lire à peu de frais," M. De Banville says himself. He admits that his lighter works, the poems called (in England) *vers de société*, are a sort of intellectual cigarette. M. Emile de Girardin said, in the later days of the Empire, that there were too many cigarettes in the air. Their stale perfume clings to the literature of that time, as the odour of pastilles yet hangs about the verse of Dorat, the designs of Eisen, the work of the Pompadour period. There is more than smoke in M. De Banville's ruling inspiration, his lifelong devotion to letters and to great men of letters — Shakespeare, Molière, Homer, Victor Hugo. These are his gods; the memory of them is his muse. His enthusiasm is worthy of one who, though born too late to see and know the noble wildness of 1830, yet lives on the recollections, and is strengthened by the example, of that revival of letters. Whatever one may say of the *renouveau*, of romanticism, with its affectations, the young men of 1830 were sincere in their devotion to liberty, to poetry, to knowledge. One can hardly find a more brilliant and touching belief in these great causes than that of Edgar Quinet, as displayed in the letters of his youth. De Banville fell on more evil times.

When "Les Cariatides" was published poets had begun to keep an eye on the Bourse, and artists dabbled in finance. The new volume of song in the sordid age was a November primrose, and not unlike the flower of Spring. There was a singular freshness and hopefulness in the verse, a wonderful "certitude dans l'expression lyrique," as Sainte-Beuve said. The mastery of musical speech and of various forms of song was already to be recognised as the basis and the note of the talent of De Banville. He had style, without which a man may write very nice verses about heaven and hell and other matters, and may please thousands of excellent people, but will write poetry — never. Comparing De Banville's boy's work with the boy's work of Mr. Tennyson, one observes in each— "Les Cariatides" as in "The Hesperides" — the *timbre* of a new voice. Poetry so fresh seems to make us aware of some want which we had hardly recognised, but now are sensible of, at the moment we find it satisfied.

It is hardly necessary to say that this gratifying and welcome strangeness, this lyric originality, is nearly all that M. De Banville has in common with the English poet whose two priceless volumes were published in the same year as "Les Cariatides?" The melody of Mr. Tennyson's lines, the cloudy palaces of his imagination, rose

"As Ilion, like a mist rose into towers,"

when Apollo sang. The architecture was floating at first, and confused; while the little theatre of M. De Banville's poetry, where he sat piping to a dance of nixies, was brilliantly lit and elegant with fresh paint and gilding. "The Cariatides" support the pediment and roof of a theatre or temple in the Graeco-French style. The poet proposed to himself

"A côté de Vénus et du fils de Latone
Peindre la fée et la péri."

The longest poem in the book, and the most serious, "La Voie Lactée," reminds one of the "Palace of Art," written before the after-thought, before the "white-eyed corpses" were found lurking in corners. Beginning with Homer, "the Ionian father of the rest," —

"Ce dieu, père des dieux qu'adore Ionie," —

the poet glorifies all the chief names of song. There is a long procession of illustrious shadows before Shakespeare comes — Shakespeare, whose genius includes them all.

"Toute création à laquelle on aspire,
Tout rêve, toute chose, émanent de Shakespeare."

His mind has lent colour to the flowers and the sky, to

"La fleur qui brode un point sur les manteau des plaines,
Les nénuphars penchés, et les pâles roseaux
Qui disent leur chant sombre au murmure des eaux."

One recognises more sincerity in this hymn to all poets, from Orpheus to Heine, than in "Les Baisers de Pierre" — a clever imitation of De Musset's stories in verse. Love of art and of the masters of art, a passion for the figures of old mythology, which had returned again after their exile in 1830, gaiety, and a revival of the dexterity of Villon and Marot, — these things are the characteristics of M. De Banville's genius, and all these were displayed in "Les Cariatides." Already, too, his preoccupation with the lighter and more fantastic sort of theatrical amusements shows itself in lines like these:

“De son lit à baldaquin
  Le soleil de son beau globe
Avait l’air d’un arlequin
  Etalant sa garde-robe;

“Et sa soeur au front changeant
  Mademoiselle la Lune
Avec ses grands yeux d’argent
  Regardait la terre brune.”

The verse about “the sun in bed,” unconsciously Miltonic, is in a vein of bad taste which has always had seductions for M. De Banville. He mars a fine later poem on Roncevaux and Roland by a similar absurdity. The angel Michael is made to stride down the steps of heaven four at a time, and M. De Banville fancies that this sort of thing is like the simplicity of the ages of faith.

In “Les Cariatides,” especially in the poems styled “En Habit Zinzolin,” M. De Banville revived old measures — the *rondeau* and the “poor little triolet.” These are forms of verse which it is easy to write badly, and hard indeed to write well. They have knocked at the door of the English muse’s garden — a runaway knock. In “Les Cariatides” they took a subordinate place, and played their pranks in the shadow of the grave figures of mythology, or at the close of the procession of Dionysus and his Mænads. De Banville often recalls Keats in his choice of classical themes. “Les Exilés,” a poem of his maturity, is a French “Hyperion.” “Le Triomphe de Bacchus” reminds one of the song of the Bassarids in “Endymion” —

“So many, and so many, and so gay.”

There is a pretty touch of the pedant (who exists, says M. De Banville, in the heart of the poet) in this verse:

“Il rêve à Cama, l’amour aux cinq flèches fleuries,
Qui, lorsque soupire au milieu des roses prairies
La douce Vasanta, parmi les bosquets de santal,
Envoie aux cinq sens les flèches du carquois fatal.”

The Bacchus of Titian has none of this Oriental languor, no memories of perfumed places where “the throne of Indian Cama slowly sails.” One cannot help admiring the fancy which saw the conquering god still steeped in Asiatic ease, still unawakened to more vigorous passion by the fresh wind blowing from Thrace. Of all the Olympians, Diana has been most often hymned by M. De Banville: his imagination is haunted by the figure of the goddess. Now she is manifest in her Hellenic aspect, as Homer beheld her, “taking her pastime in the chase of boars and swift deer; and with her the wild wood-nymphs are sporting the daughters of Zeus; and Leto is glad at heart, for her child towers over them all, and is easy to be known where all are fair” (Odyssey, vi.). Again, Artemis appears more thoughtful, as in the sculpture of Jean Goujon, touched with the sadness of moonlight. Yet again, she is the weary and exiled spirit that haunts the forest of Fontainebleau, and is a stranger among the woodland folk, the *fades* and nixies. To this goddess, “being triple in her divided deity,” M. De Banville has written his hymn in the characteristic form of the old French *ballade*. The translator may borrow Chaucer’s apology —

“And eke to me it is a grete penaunce,
Syth rhyme in English hath such scarsete
To folowe, word by word, the curiosite
Of *Banville*, flower of them that make in France.”

“BALLADE SUR LES HÔTES MYSTÉRIEUX DE LA FORÊT

“Still sing the mocking fairies, as of old,
Beneath the shade of thorn and holly tree;
The west wind breathes upon them pure and cold,
And still wolves dread Diana roving free,
In secret woodland with her company.
Tis thought the peasants’ hovels know her rite
When now the wolds are bathed in silver light,
And first the moonrise breaks the dusky grey,
Then down the dells, with blown soft hair and bright,
And through the dim wood Dian thrids her way.

“With water-weeds twined in their locks of gold
The strange cold forest-fairies dance in glee;
Sylphs over-timorous and over-bold
Haunt the dark hollows where the dwarf may be,
The wild red dwarf, the nixies’ enemy;
Then, ‘mid their mirth, and laughter, and affright,

The sudden goddess enters, tall and white,
With one long sigh for summers passed away;
The swift feet tear the ivy nets outright,
And through the dim wood Dian thrids her way.

"She gleans her sylvan trophies; down the wold
She hears the sobbing of the stags that flee,
Mixed with the music of the hunting rolled,
But her delight is all in archery,
And nought of ruth and pity wotteth she
More than the hounds that follow on the flight;
The tall nymph draws a golden bow of might,
And thick she rains the gentle shafts that slay,
She tosses loose her locks upon the night,
And Dian through the dim wood thrids her way.

Envoi.

"Prince, let us leave the din, the dust, the spite,
The gloom and glare of towns, the plague, the blight;
Amid the forest leaves and fountain spray
There is the mystic home of our delight,
And through the dim wood Dian thrids her way."

The piece is characteristic of M. De Banville's genius. Through his throng of operatic nixies and sylphs of the ballet the cold Muse sometimes passes, strange, but not unfriendly. He, for his part, has never degraded the beautiful forms of old religion to make the laughing-stock of fools. His little play, *Diane au Bois*, has grace, and gravity, and tenderness like the tenderness of Keats, for the failings of immortals. "The gods are jealous exceedingly if any goddess takes a mortal man to her paramour, as Demeter chose Iasion." The least that mortal poets can do is to show the Olympians an example of toleration.

"Les Cariatides" have delayed us too long. They are wonderfully varied, vigorous, and rich, and full of promise in many ways. The promise has hardly been kept. There is more seriousness in "Les Stalactites" (1846), it is true, but then there is less daring. There is one morsel that must be quoted, — a fragment fashioned on the air and the simple words that used to waken the musings of George Sand when she was a child, dancing with the peasant children:

“Nous n’irons plus an bois: les lauries sont coupés,
   Les amours des bassins, les naïades en groupe
Voient reluire au soleil, en cristaux découpés
   Les flots silencieux qui coulaient de leur coupe,
Les lauriers sont coupés et le cerf aux abois
   Tressaille au son du cor: nous n’irons plus au bois!
Où des enfants joueurs riait la folle troupe
   Parmi les lys d’argent aux pleurs du ciel trempés,
Voici l’herbe qu’on fauche et les lauriers qu’on coupe;
   Nous n’irons plus au bois; les lauriers sont coupés.”

In these days Banville, like Gérard de Nerval in earlier times, ronsardised. The poem ‘À la Font Georges,’ full of the memories of childhood, sweet and rich with the air and the hour of sunset, is written in a favourite metre of Ronsard’s. Thus Ronsard says in his lyrical version of five famous lines of Homer —

“La gresle ni la neige
   N’ont tels lieux pour leur siége
      Ne la foudre oncques là
         Ne dévala.”

(The snow, and wind, and hail
   May never there prevail,
      Nor thunderbolt doth fall,
         Nor rain at all.)

De Banville chose this metre, rapid yet melancholy, with its sad emphatic cadence in the fourth line, as the vehicle of his childish memories:

“O champs pleins de silence,
Où mon heureuse enfance
      Avait des jours encor
      Tout filés d’or!”

O ma vieille Font Georges,
Vers qui les rouges-gorges
      Et le doux rossignol
      Prenaient leur vol!

So this poem of the fountain of youth begins, “tout filé d’or,” and closes when the dusk is washed with silver —

“À l’heure où sous leurs voiles
Les tremblantes étoiles
Brodent le ciel changeant
De fleurs d’argent.”

The “Stalactites” might detain one long, but we must pass on after noticing an unnamed poem which is the French counterpart of Keats’ “Ode to a Greek Urn”:

“Qu’autour du vase pur, trop beau pour la Bacchante,
La verveine, mêlée à des feuilles d’acanthe,
Fleurisse, et que plus bas des vierges lentement
S’avancent deux à deux, d’un pas sur et charmant,
Les bras pendants le long de leurs tuniques droites
Et les cheyeux tressés sur leurs têtes étroites.”

In the same volume of the definite series of poems come “Les Odelettes,” charming lyrics, one of which, addressed to Théophile Gautier, was answered in the well-known verses called “L’Art.” If there had been any rivalry between the writers, M. De Banville would hardly have cared to print Gautier’s “Odelette” beside his own. The tone of it is infinitely more manly: one seems to hear a deep, decisive voice replying to tones far less sweet and serious. M. De Banville revenged himself nobly in later verses addressed to Gautier, verses which criticise the genius of that workman better, we think, than anything else that has been written of him in prose or rhyme.

The less serious poems of De Banville are, perhaps, the better known in this country. His feats of graceful metrical gymnastics have been admired by every one who cares for skill pure and simple. “Les Odes Funambulesques” and “Les Occidentales” are like ornamental skating. The author moves in many circles and cuts a hundred fantastic figures with a perfect ease and smoothness. At the same time, naturally, he does not advance nor carry his readers with him in any direction. “Les Odes Funambulesques” were at first unsigned. They appeared in journals and magazines, and, as M. de Banville applied the utmost lyrical skill to light topics of the moment, they were the most popular of “Articles de Paris.” One must admit that they bore the English reader, and by this time long *scholia* are necessary for the enlightenment even of the Parisian student. The verses are, perhaps, the “bird-chorus” of French life, but they have not the permanent truth and delightfulness of the “bird-chorus” in Aristophanes. One has easily too much of the Carnival, the masked ball, the *débardeurs*, and the *pierrots*. The people at whom M. De Banville laughed are dead and forgotten. There was a certain M. Paul Limayrac of those days, who barked at the heels of Balzac, and other great men, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. In his honour De Banville wrote a song which parodied all popular aspirations to be a flower. M. Limayrac was supposed to have become a blossom:

“Sur les côteaux et dans les landes
   Voltigeant comme un oiseleur
Buloz en ferait des guirlandes
   Si Limayrac devenait fleur!”

There is more of high spirits than of wit in the lyric, which became as popular as our modern invocation of Jingo, the god of battles. It chanced one night that M. Limayrac appeared at a masked ball in the opera-house. He was recognised by some one in the crowd. The turbulent waltz stood still, the music was silent, and the dancers of every hue howled at the critic

“Si Paul Limayrac devenait fleur!”

Fancy a British reviewer, known as such to the British public, and imagine that public taking a lively interest in the feuds of men of letters! Paris, to be sure, was more or less of a university town thirty years ago, and the students were certain to be largely represented at the ball.

The “Odes Funambulesques” contain many examples of M. De Banville’s skill in reviving old forms of verse — *triolets*, *rondeaux*, *chants royaux*, and *ballades*. Most of these were composed for the special annoyance of M. Buloz, M. Limayrac, and a M. Jacquot who called himself De Mirecourt. The *rondeaux* are full of puns in the refrain: “Houssaye ou c’est; lyre, l’ire, lire,” and so on, not very exhilarating. The *pantoum*, where lines recur alternately, was borrowed from the distant Malay; but primitive *pantoum*, in which the last two lines of each stanza are the first two of the next, occur in old French folk-song. The popular trick of repetition, affording a rest to the memory of the singer, is perhaps the origin of all refrains. De Banville’s later satires are directed against permanent objects of human indignation — the little French debauchée, the hypocritical friend of reaction, the bloodthirsty *chauviniste*. Tired of the flashy luxury of the Empire, his memory goes back to his youth —

“Lorsque la lèvre de l’aurore
   Baisait nos yeux soulevés,
Et que nous n’étions pas encore

La France des petits crevés."

The poem "Et Tartufe" prolongs the note of a satire always popular in France — the satire of Scarron, Molière, La Bruyère, against the clerical curse of the nation. The Roman Question was Tartufe's stronghold at the moment. "French interests" demanded that Italy should be headless.

"Et Tartufe? Il nous dit entre deux crémus
Que pour tout bon Français l'empire est à Rome,
Et qu'ayant pour aïeux Romulus et Rémus
Nous tetterons la louve à jamais — le pauvre homme."

The new Tartufe worships St. Chassepot, who once, it will not be forgotten, "wrought miracles"; but he has his doubts as to the morality of explosive bullets. The nymph of modern warfare is addressed as she hovers above the Geneva Convention, —

"Quoi, nymphe du canon rayé,
Tu montres ces pudeurs risibles
Et ce petit air effrayé
Devant les balles exploisibles?"

De Banville was for long almost alone among poets in his freedom from *Weltschmerz*, from regret and desire for worlds lost or impossible. In the later and stupider corruption of the Empire, sadness and anger began to vex even his careless muse. She had piped in her time to much wild dancing, but could not sing to a waltz of mushroom speculators and decorated capitalists. "Le Sang de la Coupe" contains a very powerful poem, "The Curse of Venus," pronounced on Paris, the city of pleasure, which has become the city of greed. This verse is appropriate to our own commercial enterprise:

"Vends les bois où dormaient Viviane et Merlin!
L'Aigle de mont n'est fait que pour ta gibecière;
La neige vierge est là pour fournir ta glacière;
Le torrent qui bondit sur le roc sybillin,
Et vole, diamant, neige, écume et poussière,
N'est plus bon qu'à tourner tes meules de moulin!"

In the burning indignation of this poem, M. De Banville reaches his highest mark of attainment. "Les Exilés" is scarcely less impressive. The outcast gods of Hellas, wandering in a forest of ancient Gaul, remind one at once of the fallen deities of Heine, the decrepit Olympians of Bruno, and the large utterance of Keats's "Hyperion." Among great exiles, Victor Hugo, "le père là-bas dans l'île," is not forgotten:

"Et toi qui l'accueillis, sol libre et verdoyant,
   Qui prodigues les fleurs sur tes côteaux fertiles,
Et qui sembles sourire à l'océan bruyant,
   Sois bénie, île verte, entre toutes les îles."

The hoarsest note of M. De Banville's lyre is that discordant one struck in the "Idylles Prussiennes." One would not linger over poetry or prose composed during the siege, in hours of shame and impotent scorn. The poet sings how the sword, the flashing Durendal, is rusted and broken, how victory is to him —

   " . . . qui se cela
Dans un trou, sous la terre noire."

He can spare a tender lyric to the memory of a Prussian officer, a lad of eighteen, shot dead through a volume of Pindar which he carried in his tunic.

It is impossible to leave the poet of gaiety and good-humour in the mood of the prisoner in besieged Paris. His "Trente Six Ballades Joyeuses" make a far more pleasant subject for a last word. There is scarcely a more delightful little volume in the French language than this collection of verses in the most difficult of forms, which pour forth, with absolute ease and fluency, notes of mirth, banter, joy in the spring, in letters, art, and good-fellowship.

"L'oiselet retourne aux forêts;
   Je suis un poëte lyrique," —

he cries, with a note like a bird's song. Among the thirty-six every one will have his favourites. We venture to translate the "Ballad de Banville":

"AUX ENFANTS PERDUS

"I know Cythera long is desolate;
   I know the winds have stripped the garden green.
Alas, my friends! beneath the fierce sun's weight
   A barren reef lies where Love's flowers have been,
   Nor ever lover on that coast is seen!
So be it, for we seek a fabled shore,

To lull our vague desires with mystic lore,
   To wander where Love’s labyrinths, beguile;
There let us land, there dream for evermore:
   ‘It may be we shall touch the happy isle.’

“The sea may be our sepulchre. If Fate,
   If tempests wreak their wrath on us, serene
We watch the bolt of Heaven, and scorn the hate
   Of angry gods that smite us in their spleen.
   Perchance the jealous mists are but the screen
That veils the fairy coast we would explore.
Come, though the sea be vexed, and breakers roar,
   Come, for the breath of this old world is vile,
Haste we, and toil, and faint not at the oar;
   ‘It may be we shall touch the happy isle.’

“Grey serpents trail in temples desecrate
   Where Cypris smiled, the golden maid, the queen,
And ruined is the palace of our state;
   But happy loves flit round the mast, and keen
   The shrill wind sings the silken cords between.
Heroes are we, with wearied hearts and sore,
Whose flower is faded and whose locks are hoar.
   Haste, ye light skiffs, where myrtle thickets smile;
Love’s panthers sleep ‘mid roses, as of yore:
   ‘It may be we shall touch the happy isle.’

Envoi.

“Sad eyes! the blue sea laughs, as heretofore.
All, singing birds, your happy music pour;
   Ah, poets, leave the sordid earth awhile;
Flit to these ancient gods we still adore:
   ‘It may be we shall touch the happy isle.’”

Alas! the mists that veil the shore of our Cythera are not the summer haze of Watteau, but the smoke and steam of a commercial time.

It is as a lyric poet that we have studied M. De Banville. “Je ne m’entends qu’à la méurique,” he says in his ballad on himself; but he can write prose when he pleases.

It is in his drama of *Gringoire* acted at the Théâtre Français, and familiar in the version of Messrs. Pollock and Besant, that M. De Banville's prose shows to the best advantage. Louis XI. is supping with his bourgeois friends and with the terrible Olivier le Daim. Two beautiful girls are of the company, friends of Pierre Gringoire, the strolling poet. Presently Gringoire himself appears. He is dying of hunger; he does not recognise the king, and he is promised a good supper if he will recite the new satirical "Ballade des Pendus," which he has made at the monarch's expense. Hunger overcomes his timidity, and, addressing himself especially to the king, he enters on this goodly matter:

"Where wide the forest boughs are spread,
   Where Flora wakes with sylph and fay,
Are crowns and garlands of men dead,
   All golden in the morning gay;
Within this ancient garden grey
   Are clusters such as no mail knows,
Where Moor and Soldan bear the sway:
   This is King Louis' orchard close!

"These wretched folk wave overhead,
   With such strange thoughts as none may say;
A moment still, then sudden sped,
   They swing in a ring and waste away.
The morning smites them with her ray;
   They toss with every breeze that blows,
They dance where fires of dawning play:
   This is King Louis' orchard close!

"All hanged and dead, they've summonèd
   (With Hell to aid, that hears them pray)
New legions of an army dread,
   Now down the blue sky flames the day;
The dew dies off; the foul array
   Of obscene ravens gathers and goes,
With wings that flap and beaks that flay:
   This is King Louis' orchard close!

Envoi.

“Prince, where leaves murmur of the May,
A tree of bitter clusters grows;
The bodies of men dead are they!
This is King Louis’ orchard close!

Poor Gringoire has no sooner committed himself, than he is made to recognise the terrible king. He pleads that, if he must join the ghastly army of the dead, he ought, at least, to be allowed to finish his supper. This the king grants, and in the end, after Gringoire has won the heart of the heroine, he receives his life and a fair bride with a full dowry.

Gringoire is a play very different from M. De Banville’s other dramas, and it is not included in the pretty volume of “Comédies” which closes the Lemerre series of his poems. The poet has often declared, with an iteration which has been parodied by M. Richepin, that “comedy is the child of the ode,” and that a drama without the “lyric” element is scarcely a drama at all. While comedy retains either the choral ode in its strict form, or its representative in the shape of lyric enthusiasm (*le lyrisme*), comedy is complete and living. *Gringoire*, to our mind, has plenty of lyric enthusiasm; but M. De Banville seems to be of a different opinion. His republished “Comédies” are more remote from experience than *Gringoire*, his characters are ideal creatures, familiar types of the stage, like Scapin and “le beau Léandre,” or ethereal persons, or figures of old mythology, like Diana in *Diane au Bois*, and Deidamia in the piece which shows Achilles among women. M. De Banville’s dramas have scarcely prose enough in them to suit the modern taste. They are masques for the delicate diversion of an hour, and it is not in the nature of things that they should rival the success of blatant buffooneries. His earliest pieces — *Le Feuilleton d’Aristophane* (acted at the Odéon, Dec. 26th, 1852), and *Le Cousin du Roi* (Odéon, April 4th, 1857) — were written in collaboration with Philoxène Boyer, a generous but indiscreet patron of singers.

“Dans les salons de Philoxène
Nous étions quatre-vingt rimeurs,”

M. De Banville wrote, parodying the “quatre-vingt ramuers” of Victor Hugo.

The memory of M. Boyer’s enthusiasm for poetry and his amiable hospitality are not unlikely to survive both his compositions and those in which M. De Banville aided him. The latter poet began to walk alone as a playwright in *Le Beau Léandre* (Vaudeville, 1856) — a piece with scarcely more substance than the French scenes in the old Franco-Italian drama possess. We are taken into an impossible world of gay non-morality, where a wicked old bourgeois, Orgon, his daughter Colombine, a pretty flirt, and her lover Léandre, a light-hearted scamp, bustle through their little hour. Léandre, who has no notion of being married, says, “Le ciel n’est pas plus pur que mes intentions.” And the artless Colombine replies, “Alors marions-nous!” To marry Colombine without a dowry forms, as a modern novelist says, “no part of Léandre’s profligate scheme of pleasure.” There is a sort of treble intrigue. Orgon wants to give away Colombine dowerless, Léandre to escape from the whole transaction, and Colombine to secure her *dot* and her husband. The strength of the piece is the brisk action in the scene when Léandre protests that he can’t rob Orgon of his only daughter, and Orgon insists that he can refuse nothing except his ducats to so charming a son-in-law. The play is redeemed from sordidness by the costumes. Léandre is dressed in the attire of Watteau’s “L’Indifférent” in the Louvre, and wears a diamond-hilted sword. The lady who plays the part of Colombine may select (delightful privilege!) the prettiest dress in Watteau’s collection.

This love of the glitter of the stage is very characteristic of De Banville. In his *Déidamie* (Odéon, Nov. 18th, 1876) the players who took the roles of Thetis, Achilles, Odysseus, Deidamia, and the rest, were accoutred in semi-barbaric raiment and armour of the period immediately preceding the Graeco-Phoenician (about the eighth century B.C.). Again we notice the touch of pedantry in the poet. As for the play, the sombre thread in it is lent by the certainty of Achilles’ early death, the fate which drives him from Déidamie’s arms, and from the sea king’s isle to the leagues under the fatal walls of Ilion. Of comic effect there is plenty, for the sisters of Déidamie imitate all the acts by which Achilles is likely to betray himself — grasp the sword among the insidious presents of Odysseus, when he seizes the spear, and drink each one of them a huge beaker of wine to the confusion of the Trojans. On a Parisian audience the imitations of the tone of the Odyssey must have been thrown away. For example, here is a passage which is as near being Homeric as French verse can be. Déidamie is speaking in a melancholy mood:

“Heureux les époux rois assis dans leur maison,
Qui voient tranquillement s’enfuir chaque saison —
L’époux tenant son sceptre, environné de gloire,

Et l’épouse filant sa quenouille d’ivoire!
Mais le jeune héros que, la glaive à son franc!
Court dans le noir combat, les mains teintes de sang,
Laisse sa femme en pleurs dans sa haute demeure.”

With the accustomed pedantry, M. De Banville, in the scene of the banquet, makes the cup-bearer go round dealing out a little wine, with which libation is made, and then the feast goes on in proper Homeric fashion. These overwrought details are forgotten in the parting scenes, where Déidamie takes what she knows to be her last farewell of Achilles, and girds him with his sword:

“La lame de l’épée, en sa forme divine
Est pareille à la feuille austère du laurier!”

Let it be noted that each of M. De Banville’s more serious plays ends with the same scene, with slight differences. In *Florise* (never put on the stage) the wandering actress of Hardy’s troupe leaves her lover, the young noble, and the shelter of his castle, to follow where art and her genius beckon her. In *Diane au Bois* the goddess “that leads the precise life” turns her back on Eros, who has subdued even her, and passes from the scene as she waves her hand in sign of a farewell ineffably mournful. Nearer tragedy than this M. De Banville does not care to go; and if there is any deeper tragedy in scenes of blood and in stages strewn with corpses, from that he abstains. His *Florise* is perhaps too long, perhaps too learned; and certainly we are asked to believe too much when a kind of etherealised Consuelo is set before us as the *prima donna* of old Hardy’s troupe:

“Mais Florise n’est pas une femme. Je suis
L’harmonieuse voix que berce vos ennuis;
Je suis la lyre aux sons divers que le poëte
Fait résonner et qui sans lui serait muette —
Une comédienne enfin. Je ne suis pas
Une femme.”

An actress who was not a woman had little to do in the company of Scarron’s Angélique and Mademoiselle de l’Estoile. Florise, in short, is somewhat too allegorical and haughty a creature; while Colombine and Nérine (Vaudeville, June 1864) are rather tricksy imps than women of flesh and blood. M. De Banville’s stage, on the whole, is one of glitter and fantasy; yet he is too much a Greek for the age that appreciates “la belle Hélène,” too much a lyric dramatist to please the contemporaries of Sardou; he lends too much sentiment and dainty refinement to characters as flimsy as those of Offenbach's drama.

Like other French poets, M. De Banville has occasionally deigned to write *feuilletons* and criticisms. Not many of these scattered leaves are collected, but one volume, "La Mer de Nice" (Poulet-Malassis et De Broise, Paris, 1861), may be read with pleasure even by jealous admirers of Gautier's success as a chronicler of the impressions made by southern scenery.

To De Banville (he does not conceal it) a journey to a place so far from Paris as the Riviera was no slight labour. Even from the roses, the palms, the siren sea, the wells of water under the fronds of maiden-hair fern, his mind travels back wistfully to the city of his love.

"I am, I have always been, one of those devotees of Paris who visit Greece only when they gaze on the face, so fair and so terrible, of the twice-victorious Venus of the Louvre. One of those obstinate adorers of my town am I, who will never see Italy, save in the glass that reflects the tawny hair of Titian's Violante, or in that dread isle of Alcinous where Lionardo shows you the mountain peaks that waver in the blue behind the mysterious Monna Lisa. But the Faculty of Physicians, which has, I own, the right to be sceptical, does not believe that neuralgia can be healed by the high sun which Titian and Veronese have fixed on the canvas. To me the Faculty prescribes the real sun of nature and of life; and here am I, condemned to learn in suffering all that passes in the mind of a poet of Paris exiled from that blessed place where he finds the Cyclades and the islands blossoming, the vale of Avalon, and all the heavenly homes of the fairies of experience and desire."

Nice is Tomi to this Ovid, but he makes the best of it, and sends to the editor of the *Moniteur* letters much more diverting than the "Tristia." To tell the truth, he never overcomes his amazement at being out of Paris streets, and in a glade of the lower Alps he loves to be reminded of his dear city of pleasure. Only under the olives of Monaco, those solemn and ancient trees, he feels what surely all men feel who walk at sunset through their shadow — the memory of a mysterious twilight of agony in an olive garden.

"Et ceux-ci, les pâles oliviers, n'est-ce pas de ces heures désolées où, comme torture suprême, le Sauveur acceptait en son âme l'irrêparable misère du doute, n'est-ce pas alors qu'il ont appris de lui à courber le front sous le poids impérieux des souvenirs?"

The pages which M. De Banville consecrates to the Villa Sardou, where Rachel died, may disenchant, perhaps, some readers of Mr. Matthew Arnold's sonnet. The scene of Rachel's death has been spoiled by "improvements" in too theatrical taste. All these notes, however, were made many years ago; and visitors of the Riviera, though they will find the little book charming where it speaks of seas and hills, will learn that France has greatly changed the city which she has annexed. As a practical man and a Parisian, De Banville has printed (p-81) a recipe for the concoction of the Marseilles dish, *bouillabaisse*, the mess that Thackeray's ballad made so famous. It takes genius, however, to cook *bouillabaisse*; and, to parody what De Banville says about his own recipe for making a mechanical "ballade," "en employment ce moyen, on est sûr de faire une mauvaise, irrémédiablement mauvaise *bouillabaisse*." The poet adds the remark that "une bouillabaisse réussie vaut un sonnet sans défaut."

There remains one field of M. De Banville's activity to be shortly described. Of his "Emaux Parisiens," short studies of celebrated writers, we need say no more than that they are written in careful prose. M. De Banville is not only a poet, but in his "Petit Traité de Poésie Française" (Bibliothèque de l'Echo de la Sorbonne, s.d.) a teacher of the mechanical part of poetry. He does not, of course, advance a paradox like that of Baudelaire, "that poetry can be taught in thirty lessons." He merely instructs his pupil in the material part — the scansion, metres, and so on — of French poetry. In this little work he introduces these "traditional forms of verse," which once caused some talk in England: the *rondel, rondeau, ballade, villanelle,* and *chant royal*. It may be worth while to quote his testimony as to the merit of these modes of expression. "This cluster of forms is one of our most precious treasures, for each of them forms a rhythmic whole, complete and perfect, while at the same time they all possess the fresh and unconscious grace which marks the productions of primitive times." Now, there is some truth in this criticism; for it is a mark of man's early ingenuity, in many arts, to seek complexity (where you would expect simplicity), and yet to lend to that complexity an infantine naturalness. One can see this phenomenon in early decorative art, and in early law and custom, and even in the complicated structure of primitive languages. Now, just as early, and even savage, races are our masters in the decorative use of colour and of carving, so the nameless master-singers of ancient France may be our teachers in decorative poetry, the poetry some call *vers de société*. Whether it is possible to go beyond this, and adapt the old French forms to serious modern poetry, it is not for any one but time to decide. In this matter, as in greater affairs, *securus judicat orbis terrarum*. For my own part I scarcely believe that the revival would serve the nobler ends of English poetry. Now let us listen again to De Banville.

"In the *rondel*, as in the *rondeau* and the *ballade*, all the art is to bring in the refrain without effort, naturally, gaily, and each time with novel effect and with fresh light cast on the central idea." Now, you can *teach* no one to do that, and M. De Banville never pretends to give any recipes for cooking *rondels* or *ballades* worth reading. “Without poetic *vision* all is mere marquetery and cabinet-maker’s work: that is, so far as poetry is concerned — nothing.” It is because he was a poet, not a mere craftsman, that Villon was and remains the king, the absolute master, of ballad-land.” About the *rondeau*, M. De Banville avers that it possesses “nimble movement, speed, grace, lightness of touch, and, as it were, an ancient fragrance of the soil, that must charm all who love our country and our country’s poetry, in its every age.” As for the *villanelle*, M. De Banville declares that it is the fairest jewel in the casket of the muse Erato; while the *chant royal* is a kind of fossil poem, a relic of an age when kings and allegories flourished. “The kings and the gods are dead,” like Pan; or at least we no longer find them able, by touch royal or divine, to reanimate the magnificent *chant royal*.

This is M. De Banville’s apology in *pro lyrâ suâ*, that light lyre of many tones, in whose jingle the eternal note of modern sadness is heard so rarely. If he has a lesson to teach English versifiers, surely it is a lesson of gaiety. They are only too fond of rue and rosemary, and now and then prefer the cypress to the bay. M. De Banville’s muse is content to wear roses in her locks, and perhaps may retain, for many years, a laurel leaf from the ancient laurel tree which once sheltered the poet at Turbia.

HOMER AND THE STUDY OF GREEK

The Greek language is being ousted from education, here, in France, and in America. The speech of the earliest democracies is not democratic enough for modern anarchy. There is nothing to be gained, it is said, by a knowledge of Greek. We have not to fight the battle of life with Hellenic waiters; and, even if we had, Romaic, or modern Greek, is much more easily learned than the old classical tongue. The reason of this comparative ease will be plain to any one who, retaining a vague memory of his Greek grammar, takes up a modern Greek newspaper. He will find that the idioms of the modern newspaper are the idioms of all newspapers, that the grammar is the grammar of modern languages, that the opinions are expressed in barbarous translations of barbarous French and English journalistic *clichés* or commonplaces. This ugly and undignified mixture of the ancient Greek characters, and of ancient Greek words with modern grammar and idioms, and stereotyped phrases, is extremely distasteful to the scholar. Modern Greek, as it is at present printed, is not the natural spoken language of the peasants. You can read a Greek leading article, though you can hardly make sense of a Greek rural ballad. The peasant speech is a thing of slow development; there is a basis of ancient Greek in it, with large elements of Slavonic, Turkish, Italian, and other imposed or imported languages. Modern literary Greek is a hybrid of revived classical words, blended with the idioms of the speeches which have arisen since the fall of the Roman Empire. Thus, thanks to the modern and familiar element in it, modern Greek "as she is writ" is much more easily learned than ancient Greek. Consequently, if any one has need for the speech in business or travel, he can acquire as much of it as most of us have of French, with considerable ease. People therefore argue that ancient Greek is particularly superfluous in schools. Why waste time on it, they ask, which could be expended on science, on modern languages, or any other branch of education? There is a great deal of justice in this position. The generation of men who are now middle-aged bestowed much time and labour on Greek; and in what, it may be asked, are they better for it? Very few of them "keep up their Greek." Say, for example, that one was in a form with fifty boys who began the study — it is odds against five of the survivors still reading Greek books. The worldly advantages of the study are slight: it may lead three of the fifty to a good degree, and one to a fellowship; but good degrees may be taken in other subjects, and fellowships may be abolished, or "nationalised," with all other forms of property.

Then, why maintain Greek in schools? Only a very minute percentage of the boys who are tormented with it really learn it. Only a still smaller percentage can read it after they are thirty. Only one or two gain any material advantage by it. In very truth, most minds are not framed by nature to excel and to delight in literature, and only to such minds and to schoolmasters is Greek valuable.

This is the case against Greek put as powerfully as one can state it. On the other side, we may say, though the remark may seem absurd at first sight, that to have mastered Greek, even if you forget it, is not to have wasted time. It really is an educational and mental discipline. The study is so severe that it needs the earnest application of the mind. The study is averse to indolent intellectual ways; it will not put up with a "there or thereabouts," any more than mathematical ideas admit of being made to seem "extremely plausible." He who writes, and who may venture to offer himself as an example, is naturally of a most slovenly and slatternly mental habit. It is his constant temptation to "scamp" every kind of work, and to say "it will do well enough." He hates taking trouble and verifying references. And he can honestly confess that nothing in his experience has so helped, in a certain degree, to counteract those tendencies — as the labour of thoroughly learning certain Greek texts — the dramatists, Thucydides, some of the books of Aristotle. Experience has satisfied him that Greek is of real educational value, and, apart from the acknowledged and unsurpassed merit of its literature, is a severe and logical training of the mind. The mental constitution is strengthened and braced by the labour, even if the language is forgotten in later life.

It is manifest, however, that this part of education is not for everybody. The real educational problem is to discover what boys Greek will be good for, and what boys will only waste time and dawdle over it. Certainly to men of a literary turn (a very minute percentage), Greek is of an inestimable value. Great poets, even, may be ignorant of it, as Shakespeare probably was, as Keats and Scott certainly were, as Alexandre Dumas was. But Dumas regretted his ignorance; Scott regretted it. We know not how much Scott's admitted laxity of style and hurried careless habit might have been modified by a knowledge of Greek; how much of grace, permanence, and generally of art, his genius might have gained from the language and literature of Hellas. The most Homeric of modern men could not read Homer. As for Keats, he was born a Greek, it has been said; but had he been born with a knowledge of Greek, he never, probably, would have been guilty of his chief literary faults. This is not certain, for some modern men of letters deeply read in Greek have all the qualities of fustian and effusiveness which Longinus most despised. Greek will not make a luxuriously

Asiatic mind Hellenic, it is certain; but it may, at least, help to restrain effusive and rhetorical gabble. Our Asiatic rhetoricians might perhaps be even more barbarous than they are if Greek were a sealed book to them. However this may be, it is, at least, well to find out in a school what boys are worth instructing in the Greek language. Now, of their worthiness, of their chances of success in the study, Homer seems the best touchstone; and he is certainly the most attractive guide to the study.

At present boys are introduced to the language of the Muses by pedantically written grammars, full of the queerest and most arid metaphysical and philological verbiage. The very English in which these deplorable books are composed may be scientific, may be comprehensible by and useful to philologists, but is utterly heart-breaking to boys.

Philology might be made fascinating; the history of a word, and of the processes by which its different forms, in different senses, were developed, might be made as interesting as any other story of events. But grammar is not taught thus: boys are introduced to a jargon about matters meaningless, and they are naturally as much enchanted as if they were listening to a *chimæra bombinans in vacuo*. The grammar, to them, is a mere buzz in a chaos of nonsense. They have to learn the buzz by rote; and a pleasant process that is — a seductive initiation into the mysteries. When they struggle so far as to be allowed to try to read a piece of Greek prose, they are only like the Marchioness in her experience of beer: she once had a sip of it. Ten lines of Xenophon, narrating how he marched so many parasangs and took breakfast, do not amount to more than a very unrefreshing sip of Greek. Nobody even tells the boys who Xenophon was, what he did there, and what it was all about. Nobody gives a brief and interesting sketch of the great march, of its history and objects. The boys straggle along with Xenophon, knowing not whence or whither:

“They stray through a desolate region,
  And often are faint on the march.”

One by one they fall out of the ranks; they mutiny against Xenophon; they murmur against that commander; they desert his flag. They determine that anything is better than Greek, that nothing can be worse than Greek, and they move the tender hearts of their parents. They are put to learn German; which they do not learn, unluckily, but which they find it comparatively easy to shirk. In brief, they leave school without having learned anything whatever.

Up to a certain age my experiences at school were precisely those which I have described. Our grammar was not so philological, abstruse and arid as the instruments of torture employed at present. But I hated Greek with a deadly and sickening hatred; I hated it like a bully and a thief of time. The verbs in ¼Å completed my intellectual discomfiture, and Xenophon routed me with horrible carnage. I could have run away to sea, but for a strong impression that a life on the ocean wave "did not set my genius," as Alan Breck says. Then we began to read Homer; and from the very first words, in which the Muse is asked to sing the wrath of Achilles, Peleus' son, my mind was altered, and I was the devoted friend of Greek. Here was something worth reading about; here one knew where one was; here was the music of words, here were poetry, pleasure, and life. We fortunately had a teacher (Dr. Hodson) who was not wildly enthusiastic about grammar. He would set us long pieces of the Iliad or Odyssey to learn, and, when the day's task was done, would make us read on, adventuring ourselves in "the unseen," and construing as gallantly as we might, without grammar or dictionary. On the following day we surveyed more carefully the ground we had pioneered or skirmished over, and then advanced again. Thus, to change the metaphor, we took Homer in large draughts, not in sips: in sips no epic can be enjoyed. We now revelled in Homer like Keats in Spenser, like young horses let loose in a pasture. The result was not the making of many accurate scholars, though a few were made; others got nothing better than enjoyment in their work, and the firm belief, opposed to that of most schoolboys, that the ancients did not write nonsense. To love Homer, as Steele said about loving a fair lady of quality, "is a liberal education."

Judging from this example, I venture very humbly to think that any one who, even at the age of Cato, wants to learn Greek, should begin where Greek literature, where all profane literature begins — with Homer himself. It was thus, not with grammars *in vacuo*, that the great scholars of the Renaissance began. It was thus that Ascham and Rabelais began, by jumping into Greek and splashing about till they learned to swim. First, of course, a person must learn the Greek characters. Then his or her tutor may make him read a dozen lines of Homer, marking the cadence, the surge and thunder of the hexameters — a music which, like that of the Sirens, few can hear without being lured to the seas and isles of song. Then the tutor might translate a passage of moving interest, like Priam's appeal to Achilles; first, of course, explaining the situation. Then the teacher might go over some lines, minutely pointing out how the Greek words are etymologically connected with many words in English. Next, he might take a substantive and a verb, showing roughly how their inflections arose and were developed, and how they retain forms in Homer which do not occur in later Greek. There is no reason why even this part of the lesson should be uninteresting. By this time a pupil would know, more or less, where he was, what Greek is, and what the Homeric poems are like. He might thus believe from the first that there are good reasons for knowing Greek; that it is the key to many worlds of life, of action, of beauty, of contemplation, of knowledge. Then, after a few more exercises in Homer, the grammar being judiciously worked in along with the literature of the epic, a teacher might discern whether it was worth while for his pupils to continue in the study of Greek. Homer would be their guide into the "realms of gold."

It is clear enough that Homer is the best guide. His is the oldest extant Greek, his matter is the most various and delightful, and most appeals to the young, who are wearied by scraps of Xenophon, and who cannot be expected to understand the Tragedians. But Homer is a poet for all ages, all races, and all moods. To the Greeks the epics were not only the best of romances, the richest of poetry; not only their oldest documents about their own history, — they were also their Bible, their treasury of religious traditions and moral teaching. With the Bible and Shakespeare, the Homeric poems are the best training for life. There is no good quality that they lack: manliness, courage, reverence for old age and for the hospitable hearth; justice, piety, pity, a brave attitude towards life and death, are all conspicuous in Homer. He has to write of battles; and he delights in the joy of battle, and in all the movement of war. Yet he delights not less, but more, in peace: in prosperous cities, hearths secure, in the tender beauty of children, in the love of wedded wives, in the frank nobility of maidens, in the beauty of earth and sky and sea, and seaward murmuring river, in sun and snow, frost and mist and rain, in the whispered talk of boy and girl beneath oak and pine tree.

Living in an age where every man was a warrior, where every city might know the worst of sack and fire, where the noblest ladies might be led away for slaves, to light the fire and make the bed of a foreign master, Homer inevitably regards life as a battle. To each man on earth comes "the wicked day of destiny," as Malory unconsciously translates it, and each man must face it as hardily as he may.

Homer encourages them by all the maxims of chivalry and honour. His heart is with the brave of either side — with Glaucus and Sarpedon of Lycia no less than with Achilles and Patroclus. "Ah, friend," cries Sarpedon, "if once escaped from this battle we were for ever to be ageless and immortal, neither would I myself fight now in the foremost ranks, nor would I urge thee into the wars that give renown; but now — for assuredly ten thousand fates of death on every side beset us, and these may no man shun, nor none avoid — forward now let us go, whether we are to give glory or to win it!" And forth they go, to give and take renown and death, all the shields and helms of Lycia shining behind them, through the dust of battle, the singing of the arrows, the hurtling of spears, the rain of stones from the Locrian slings. And shields are smitten, and chariot-horses run wild with no man to drive them, and Sarpedon drags down a portion of the Achæan battlement, and Aias leaps into the trench with his deadly spear, and the whole battle shifts and shines beneath the sun. Yet he who sings of the war, and sees it with his sightless eyes, sees also the Trojan women working at the loom, cheating their anxious hearts with broidery work of gold and scarlet, or raising the song to Athene, or heating the bath for Hector, who never again may pass within the gates of Troy. He sees the poor weaving woman, weighing the wool, that she may not defraud her employers, and yet may win bread for her children. He sees the children, the golden head of Astyanax, his shrinking from the splendour of the hero's helm. He sees the child Odysseus, going with his father through the orchard, and choosing out some apple trees "for his very own." It is in the mouth of the ruthless Achilles, the fatal, the fated, the swift-footed hero with the hands of death, that Homer places the tenderest of his similes. "Wherefore weepest thou, Patroclus, like a fond little maid, that runs by her mother's side, praying her mother to take her up, snatching at her gown, and hindering her as she walks, and tearfully looking at her till her mother takes her up? — like her, Patroclus, dost thou softly weep."

This is what Chesterfield calls "the porter-like language of Homer's heroes." Such are the moods of Homer, so full of love of life and all things living, so rich in all human sympathies, so readily moved when the great hound Argus welcomes his master, whom none knew after twenty years, but the hound knew him, and died in that welcome. With all this love of the real, which makes him dwell so fondly on every detail of armour, of implement, of art; on the divers-coloured gold-work of the shield, on the making of tires for chariot-wheels, on the forging of iron, on the rose-tinted ivory of the Sidonians, on cooking and eating and sacrificing, on pet dogs, on wasps and their ways, on fishing, on the boar hunt, on scenes in baths where fair maidens lave water over the heroes, on undiscovered isles with good harbours and rich land, on ploughing, mowing, and sowing, on the furniture of houses, on the golden vases wherein the white dust of the dead is laid, — with all this delight in the real, Homer is the most romantic of poets. He walks with the surest foot in the darkling realm of dread Persephone, beneath the poplars on the solemn last beach of Ocean. He has heard the Siren's music, and the song of Circe, chanting as she walks to and fro, casting the golden shuttle through the loom of gold. He enters the cave of the Man Eater; he knows the unsunned land of the Cimmerians; in the summer of the North he has looked, from the fiord of the Laestrygons, on the Midnight Sun. He has dwelt on the floating isle of Æolus, with its wall of bronze unbroken, and has sailed on those Phæacian barks that need no help of helm or oar, that fear no stress either of wind or tide, that come and go and return obedient to a thought and silent as a dream. He has seen the four maidens of Circe, daughters of wells and woods, and of sacred streams. He is the second-sighted man, and beholds the shroud that wraps the living who are doomed, and the mystic dripping from the walls of blood yet unshed. He has walked in the garden closes of Phæacia, and looked on the face of gods who fare thither, and watch the weaving of the dance. He has eaten the honey-sweet fruit of the lotus, and from the hand of Helen he brings us that Egyptian nepenthe which puts all sorrow out of mind. His real world is as real as that in *Henry V.*, his enchanted isles are charmed with the magic of the *Tempest*. His young wooers are as insolent as Claudio, as flushed with youth; his beggar-men are brethren of Edie Ochiltree; his Nausicaa is sister to Rosalind, with a different charm of stately purity in love. His enchantresses hold us yet with their sorceries; his Helen is very Beauty: she has all the sweetness of ideal womanhood, and her repentance is without remorse. His Achilles is youth itself, glorious, cruel, pitiful, splendid, and sad, ardent and loving, and conscious of its doom. Homer, in truth, is to be matched only with Shakespeare, and of Shakespeare he has not the occasional wilfulness, freakishness, and modish obscurity. He is a poet all of gold, universal as humanity, simple as childhood, musical now as the flow of his own rivers, now as the heavy plunging wave of his own Ocean.

Such, then, as far as weak words can speak of him, is the first and greatest of poets. This is he whom English boys are to be ignorant of, if Greek be ousted from our schools, or are to know only in the distorting mirror of a versified, or in the pale shadow of a prose translation. Translations are good only as teachers to bring men to Homer. English verse has no measure which even remotely suggests the various flow of the hexameter. Translators who employ verse give us a feeble Homer, dashed with their own conceits, and moulded to their own style. Translators who employ prose "tell the story without the song," but, at least, they add no twopenny "beauties" and cheap conceits of their own.

I venture to offer a few examples of original translation, in which the mannerisms of poets who have, or have not, translated Homer, are parodied, and, of course (except in the case of Pope), exaggerated. The passage is the speech of the Second-sighted Man, before the slaying of the wooers in the hall: —

"Ah! wretched men, what ill is this ye suffer? In night are swathed your heads, your faces, your knees; and the voice of wailing is kindled, and cheeks are wet with tears, and with blood drip the walls, and the fair main beams of the roof, and the porch is full of shadows, and full is the courtyard, of ghosts that hasten hellward below the darkness, and the sun has perished out of heaven, and an evil mist sweeps up over all."

So much for Homer. The first attempt at metric translation here given is meant to be in the manner of Pope:

"Caitiffs!" he cried, "what heaven-directed blight
Involves each countenance with clouds of night!
What pearly drop the ashen cheek bedews!
Why do the walls with gouts ensanguined ooze?
The court is thronged with ghosts that 'neath the gloom
Seek Pluto's realm, and Dis's awful doom;
In ebon curtains Phoebus hides his head,
And sable mist creeps upward from the dead."

This appears pretty bad, and nearly as un-Homeric as a translation could possibly be. But Pope, aided by Broome and Fenton, managed to be much less Homeric, much more absurd, and infinitely more "classical" in the sense in which Pope is classical:

"O race to death devote! with Stygian shade
Each destined peer impending fates invade;
With tears your wan distorted cheeks are drowned;
With sanguine drops the walls are rubied round:
Thick swarms the spacious hall with howling ghosts,
To people Orcus and the burning coasts!
Nor gives the sun his golden orb to roll,
But universal night usurps the pole."

Who could have conjectured that even Pope would wander away so far from his matchless original? "Wretches!" cries Theoclymenus, the seer; and that becomes, "O race to death devote!" "Your heads are swathed in night," turns into "With Stygian shade each destined peer" (peer is good!) "impending fates invade," where Homer says nothing about Styx nor peers. The Latin Orcus takes the place of Erebus, and "the burning coasts" are derived from modern popular theology. The very grammar detains or defies the reader; is it the sun that does not give his golden orb to roll, or who, or what?

The only place where the latter-day Broome or Fenton can flatter himself that he rivals Pope at his own game is —

"What pearly drop the ashen cheek bedews!"

This is, if possible, *more* classical than Pope's own —

"With tears your wan distorted cheeks are drowned."

But Pope nobly revindicates his unparalleled power of translating funnily, when, in place of “the walls drip with blood,” he writes —

“With sanguine drops the walls are rubied round.”

Homer does not appear to have been acquainted with rubies; but what of that? And how noble, how eminently worthy of Pope it is to add that the ghosts “howl”! I tried to make them gibber, but ghosts *do* gibber in Homer (though not in this passage), so Pope, Fenton, Broome, and Co., make them howl.

No, Pope is not lightly to be rivalled by a modern translator. The following example, a far-off following of a noted contemporary poet, may be left unsigned —

“Wretches, the bane hath befallen, the night and the blight of your sin
Sweeps like a shroud o’er the faces and limbs that were gladsome therein;
And the dirge of the dead breaketh forth, and the faces of all men are wet,
And the walls are besprinkled with blood, and the ghosts in the gateway are met,
Ghosts in the court and the gateway are gathered, Hell opens her lips,
And the sun in his splendour is shrouded, and sickens in spasm of eclipse.”

The next is longer and slower: the poet has a difficulty in telling his story:

“Wretches,” he cried, “what doom is this? what night
Clings like a face-cloth to the face of each, —
Sweeps like a shroud o’er knees and head? for lo!
The windy wail of death is up, and tears
On every cheek are wet; each shining wall
And beauteous interspace of beam and beam
Weeps tears of blood, and shadows in the door
Flicker, and fill the portals and the court —
Shadows of men that hellwards yearn — and now
The sun himself hath perished out of heaven,
And all the land is darkened with a mist.”

That could never be mistaken for a version by the Laureate, as perhaps any contemporary hack’s works might have been taken for Pope’s. The difficulty, perhaps, lies here: any one knows where to have Pope, any one knows that he will evade the *mot propre*, though the precise evasion he may select is hard to guess. But the Laureate would keep close to his text, and yet would write like himself, very beautifully, but not with an Homeric swiftness and strength. Who is to imitate him? As to Mr. William Morris, he might be fabled to render ‘ ´µ¹»¿¯ “niddering wights,” but beyond that, conjecture is baffled. Or is *this* the kind of thing? —

“Niddering wights, what a bane do ye bear, for your knees in the night,
And your heads and your faces, are shrouded, and clamour that knows not delight
Rings, and your cheeks are begrutten, and blood is besprent on the walls,
Blood on the tapestry fair woven, and barrow-wights walk in the halls.
Fetches and wraiths of the chosen of the Norns, and the sun from the lift
Shudders, and over the midgarth and swan’s bath the cloud-shadows drift.”

It may be argued that, though this is perhaps a translation, it is not English, never was, and never will be. But it is quite as like Homer as the performance of Pope.

Such as these, or not so very much better than these as might be wished, are our efforts to translate Homer. From Chapman to Avia, or Mr. William Morris, they are all eminently conscientious, and erroneous, and futile. Chapman makes Homer a fanciful, euphuistic, obscure, and garrulous Elizabethan, but Chapman has fire. Pope makes him a wit, spirited, occasionally noble, full of points, and epigrams, and queer rococo conventionalisms. Cowper makes him slow, lumbering, a Milton without the music. Maginn makes him pipe an Irish jig: —

“Scarcely had she begun to wash
When she was aware of the grisly gash!”

Lord Derby makes him respectable and ponderous. Lord Tennyson makes him not less, but certainly not more, than Tennysonian. Homer, in the Laureate’s few fragments of experiment, is still a poet, but he is not Homer. Mr. Morris, and Avia, make him Icelandic, and archaistic, and hard to scan, though vigorous in his fetters for all that. Bohn makes him a crib; and of other translators in prose it has been said, with a humour which one of them appreciates, that they render Homer into a likeness of the Book of Mormon.

Homer is untranslatable. None of us can bend the bow of Eurytus, and make the bow-string “ring sweetly at the touch, like the swallow’s song.” The adventure is never to be achieved; and, if Greek is to be dismissed from education, not the least of the sorrows that will ensue is English ignorance of Homer.

THE LAST FASHIONABLE NOVEL

The editor of a great American newspaper once offered the author of these lines a commission to explore a lost country, the seat of a fallen and forgotten civilisation. It was not in Yucatan, or Central Africa, or Thibet, or Kafiristan, this desolate region, once so popular, so gaudy, so much frequented and desired. It was only the fashionable novels of the Forties, say from 1835 to 1850, that I was requested to examine and report upon. But I shrank from the colossal task. I am no Mr. Stanley; and the length, the difficulties, the arduousness of the labour appalled me. Besides, I do not know where that land lies, the land of the old Fashionable Novel, the Kôr of which Thackeray's Lady Fanny Flummery is the Ayesha. What were the names of the old novels, and who were the authors, and in the circulating library of what undiscoverable watering-place are they to be found? We have heard of Mrs. Gore, we have heard of *Tremayne, and Emilia Wyndham*, and the *Bachelor of the Albany*; and many of us have read *Pelham*, or know him out of Carlyle's art, and those great curses which he spoke. But who was the original, or who were the originals, that sat for the portrait of the "Fashionable Authoress," Lady Fanny Flummery? and of what work is *Lords and Liveries* a parody? The author is also credited with *Dukes and Dejeûners, Marchionesses and Milliners*, etc. Could, any candidate in a literary examination name the prototypes? "Let mantua-makers puff her, but not men," says Thackeray, speaking of Lady Fanny Flummery, "and the Fashionable Authoress is no more. Blessed, blessed thought! No more fiddle-faddle novels! When will you arrive, O happy Golden Age!"

Well, it has arrived, though we are none the happier for all that. The Fashionable Novel has ceased to exist, and the place of the fashionable authoress knows her no more. Thackeray plainly detested Lady Fanny. He writes about her, her books, her critics, her successes, with a certain bitterness. Can it be possible that a world which rather neglected *Barry Lyndon* was devoted to *Marchionesses and Milliners*? Lady Fanny is represented as having editors and reviewers at her feet; she sits among the flowers, like the Sirens, and around her are the bones of critics corrupt in death. She is puffed for the sake of her bouquets, her dinners, her affabilities and condescensions. She gives a reviewer a great garnet pin, adorned wherewith he paces the town. Her adorers compare her to "him who sleeps by Avon." In one of Mr. Black's novels there is a lady of this kind, who captivates the tribe of "Log Rollers," as Mr. Black calls them.

This lady appears to myself to be a quite impossible She. One has never met her with her wiles, nor come across her track, even, and seen the bodies and the bones of those who perished in puffing her. Some persons of rank and fashion have a taste for the society of some men of letters, but nothing in the way of literary puffery seems to come of it. Of course many critics like to give their friends and acquaintances an applausive hand, and among their acquaintances may be ladies of fashion who write novels; but we read nowhere such extraordinary adulations as Augustus Timson bestowed on Lady Fanny. The fashionable authoress is nearly extinct, though some persons write well albeit they are fashionable. The fashionable novel is as dead as a door nail: *Lothair* was nearly the last of the species. There are novelists who write about "Society," to be sure, like Mr. Norris; but their tone is quite different. They do not speak as if Dukes and Earls were some strange superior kind of beings; their manner is that of men accustomed to and undazzled by Earls, writing for readers who do not care whether the hero is a lord or a commoner. They are "at ease," though not terribly "in Zion." Thackeray himself introduces plenty of the peerage, but it cannot be said that he is always at ease in their society. He remembers that they are lords, and is on his guard, very often, and suspicious and sarcastic, except, perhaps when he deals with a gentleman like Lord Kew. He examines them like curious wild animals in the Jardin des Plantes. He is an accomplished naturalist, and not afraid of the lion; but he remembers that the animal is royal, and has a title. Mr. Norris, for instance, shows nothing of this mood. Mr. Trollope was not afraid of his Dukes: he thought none the worse of a man because he was the high and puissant prince of Omnium. As for most novelists, they no longer paint fashionable society with enthusiasm. Mr. Henry James has remarked that young British peers favour the word "beastly," — a point which does not always impress itself into other people so keenly as into Mr. Henry James. In reading him you do not forget that his Tufts are Tufts. But then Tufts are really strange animals to the denizens of the Great Republic. Perhaps the modern realism has made novelists desert the world where Dukes and Dowagers abound. Novelists do not know very much about it; they are not wont to haunt the gilded saloons, and they prefer to write about the manners which they know. A very good novel, in these strange ruinous times, might be written with a Duke for hero; but nobody writes it, and, if anybody did write it in the modern manner, it would not in the least resemble the old fashionable novel.

Here a curious point arises. We have all studied the ingenious lady who calls herself Ouida. Now, is Ouida, or rather was Ouida in her early state sublime, the last of the old fashionable novelists, or did Thackeray unconsciously prophesy of her when he wrote his burlesque *Lords and Liveries*? Think of the young earl of

Bagnigge, “who was never heard to admire anything except a *coulis de dindonneau à la St. Menéhould*, . . . or the bouquet of a flask of Médoc, of Carbonnell’s best quality, or a *goutte* of Marasquin, from the cellars of Briggs and Hobson.” We have met such young patricians in *Under Two Flags* and *Idalia*. But then there is a difference: Ouida never tells us that her hero was “blest with a mother of excellent principles, who had imbued his young mind with that morality which is so superior to all the vain pomps of the world.” But a hero of Ouida’s might easily have had a father who “was struck down by the side of the gallant Collingwood in the Bay of Fundy.” The heroes themselves may have “looked at the Pyramids without awe, at the Alps without reverence.” They do say “*Corpo di Bacco*,” and the Duca de Montepulciano does reply, “*E’ bellissima certamente*.” And their creator might conceivably remark “Non cuivis contigit.” But Lady Fanny Flummery’s ladies could not dress as Ouida’s ladies do: they could not quote Petronius Arbiter; they had never heard of Suetonius. No age reproduces itself. There is much of our old fashionable authoress in Ouida’s earlier tales; there is plenty of the Peerage, plenty of queer French in old novels and Latin yet more queer; but where is the *élan* which takes archæology with a rush, which sticks at no adventure, however nobly incredible? where is the pathos, the simplicity, the purple splendour of Ouida’s manner, or manners? No, the spirit of the world, mirroring itself in the minds of individuals, simpered, and that simper was Lady Fanny Flummery. But it did many things more portentous than simpering, when it reflected itself in Ouida.

Is it that we do no longer gape on the aristocracy admiringly, and write of them curiously, as if they were creatures in a Paradise? Is it that Thackeray has converted us? In part, surely, we are just as snobbish as ever, though the gods of our adoration totter to their fall, and “a hideous hum” from the mob outside thrills through the temples. In fiction, on the other hand, the world of fashion is “played out.” Nobody cares to read or write about the dear duchess. If a peer comes into a novel he comes in, not as a coroneted curiosity, but as a man, just as if he were a dentist, or a stockbroker. His rank is an accident; it used to be the essence of his luminous apparition. I scarce remember a lord in all the many works of Mr. Besant, nor do they people the romances of Mr. Black. Mr. Kipling does not deal in them, nor Mr. George Meredith much; Mr. Haggard hardly gets beyond a baronet, and *he* wears chain mail in Central Africa, and tools with an axe. Mrs. Oliphant has a Scotch peer, but he is less interesting and prominent than his family ghost. No, we have only Ouida left, and Mr. Norris — who writes about people of fashion, indeed, but who has nothing in him of the old fashionable novelist.

Is it to a Republic, to France, that we must look for our fashionable novels —

to France and to America. Every third person in M. Guy de Maupassant's tales has a "de," and is a Marquis or a Vicomte. As for M. Paul Bourget, one really can be happy with him in the fearless old fashion. With him we meet Lord Henry Bohun, and M. De Casal (a Vicomte), and all the Marquises and *Marquises*; and all the pale blue boudoirs, and sentimental Duchesses, whose hearts are only too good, and who get into the most complicated amorous scrapes. That young Republican, M. Bourget, sincerely loves a *blason*, a pedigree, diamonds, lace, silver dressing cases, silver baths, essences, pomatums, *le grand luxe*. So does Gyp: apart from her wit, Gyp is delightful to read, introducing us to the very best of bad company. Even M. Fortune du Boisgobey likes a Vicomte, and is partial to the *noblesse*, while M. Georges Ohnet is accused of entering the golden world of rank, like a man without a wedding garment, and of being lost and at sea among his aristocrats. They order these things better in France: they still appeal to the fine old natural taste for rank and luxury, splendour and refinement. What is Gyp but a Lady Fanny Flummery *réussie*, — Lady Fanny with the trifling additional qualities of wit and daring? Observe her noble scorn of M. George Ohnet: it is a fashionable arrogance.

To my mind, I confess, the decay of the British fashionable novel seems one of the most threatening signs of the times. Even in France institutions are much more permanent than here. In France they have fashionable novels, and very good novels too: no man of sense will deny that they are far better than our dilettantism of the slums, or our religious and social tracts in the disguise of romance. If there is no new tale of treasure and bandits and fights and lions handy, may I have a fashionable novel in French to fall back upon! Even Count Tolstoï does not disdain the *genre*. There is some uncommonly high life in *Anna Karénine*. He adds a great deal of psychology, to be sure; so does M. Paul Bourget. But he takes you among smart people, who have everything handsome about them — titles, and lands, and rents. Is it not a hard thing that an honest British snob, if he wants to move in the highest circles of fiction, must turn to French novelists, or Russian, or American? As to the American novels of the *élite* and the *beau monde*, their elegance is obscured to English eyes, because that which makes one New Yorker better than another, that which creates the Upper Ten Thousand (dear phrase!) of New York, is so inconspicuous. For example, the scientific inquirer may venture himself among the novels of two young American authors. Few English students make this voyage of exploration. But the romances of these ingenious writers are really, or really try to be, a kind of fashionable novels. It is a queer domain of fashion, to be sure, peopled by the strangest aborigines, who talk and are talked about in a language most interesting to the philologist. Here poor Lady Fanny Flummery would have been sadly to seek, for her characters, though noble, were moral, and her pen was wielded on the side of Church and State. But these western fashionables have morals and a lingo of their own, made in equal parts of the American idioms and of expressions transferred from the jargon of Decadence and the *Parnassiculet Contemporain*. As one peruses these novels one thinks of a new tale to be told — *The Last of the Fashionables*, who died away, like the buffalo and the grisly bear, in some cañon or forest of the Wild West. I think this distinguished being, *Ultimus hominum venustiorum*, will find the last remnants of the Gentlemanly Party in some Indian tribe, Apaches or Sioux. I see him raised to the rank of chief, and leading the red-skinned and painted cavaliers on the war-path against the Vulgarians of the ultimate Democracy. To depict this dandy chief would require the art at once of a Cooper and a Ouida. Let me attempt —

THE LAST FIGHT OF FOUR HAIR-BRUSHES

By this time the Sioux were flying in all directions, mowed down by the fire of Gatling and Maxim guns. The scrub of Little Big Horn Creek was strewn with the bodies of writhing braves. On the livid and volcanic heights of Mount Buncombe, the painted tents were blazing merrily. But on a mound above the creek, an ancient fortress of some long-forgotten people, a small group of Indian horsemen, might be observed, steady as rocks in the refluent tide of war. The fire from their Winchester repeaters blazed out like the streamers of the Northern Lights. Again and again the flower of the United States army had charged up the mound, only to recoil in flight, or to line the cliff with their corpses. The First Irish Cuirassiers had been annihilated: Parnell's own, alas! in the heat of the combat had turned their fratricidal black-thorns on M'Carthy's brigade, and these two gallant squadrons were mixed and broken, falling beneath the blows of brothers estranged.

But at last the fire from the Redmen on the bluff slackened and grew silent. The ammunition was exhausted. There was a movement in the group of braves. Crazy Horse and Bald Coyote turned to Four Hair-Brushes, who sat his steed Atalanta, last winner of the last Grand National, with all the old careless elegance of the Row.

"Four Hair-Brushes," said Crazy Horse (and a tear rolled down his painted cheek), "nought is left but flight."

"Then fly," said Four Hair-Brushes, languidly, lighting a cigarette, which he took from a diamond-studded gold *étui*, the gift of the Kaiser in old days.

"Nay, not without the White Chief," said Bald Coyote; and he seized the reins of Four Hair-Brushes, to lead him from that stricken field.

"Vous êtes trop vieux jeu, mon ami," murmured Four Hair-Brushes, "je ne suis ni Edouard II., ni Charles Edouard à Culloden. Quatre-brosses meurt, mais il ne se rend pas."

The Indian released his hold, baffled by the erudition and the calm courage of his captain.

"I make tracks," he said; and, swinging round so that his horse concealed his body, he galloped down the bluff, and through the American cavalry, scattering death from the arrows which he loosed under his horse's neck.

Four Hair-Brushes was alone.

Unarmed, as ever, he sat, save for the hunting-whip in his right hand.

“Scalp him!” yelled the Friendly Crows.

“Nay, take him alive: a seemlier knight never backed steed!” cried the gallant Americans.

From their midst rode a courteous cavalier, Captain John Barry, the scholar, the hero of sword and pen.

“Yield thee, Sir Knight!” he said, doffing his *képi* in martial courtesy.

Four Hair-Brushes replied to his salute, and was opening his curved and delicate lips to speak, when a chance bullet struck him full in the breast. He threw up his arms, reeled, and fell. The gallant American, leaping from saddle to ground, rushed to raise his head.

Through the war-paint he recognised him.

“Great Heaven!” he cried, “it is—”

“Hush!” whispered Four Hair-Brushes, with a weary smile: “let Annesley de Vere of the Blues die unnamed. Tell them that I fell in harness.”

He did, indeed. Under his feathered and painted cloak Barry found that Annesley, ever careful of his figure, ever loyal in love, the last of the Dandies, yet wore the corset of Madame de Tellière. It was wet with his life-blood.

“So dies,” said Barry, “the last English gentleman.”

THACKERAY

"I thought how some people's towering intellects and splendid cultivated geniuses rise upon simple, beautiful foundations hidden out of sight." Thus, in his Letters to Mrs. Brookfield, Mr. Thackeray wrote, after visiting the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral, with its "charming, harmonious, powerful combination of arches and shafts, beautiful whichever way you see them developed, like a fine music." The simile applies to his own character and genius, to his own and perhaps to that of most great authors, whose works are our pleasure and comfort in this troublesome world. There are critics who profess a desire to hear nothing, or as little as may be, of the lives of great artists, whether their instrument of art was the pen, or the brush, or the chisel, or the strings and reeds of music. With those critics perhaps most of us agree, when we read books that gossip about Shelley, or Coleridge, or Byron. "Give us their poetry," we say, "and leave their characters alone: we do not want tattle about Claire and chatter about Harriet; we want to be happy with 'The Skylark' or 'The Cloud.'" Possibly this instinct is correct, where such a poet as Shelley is concerned, whose life, like his poetry, was as "the life of winds and tides," whose genius, unlike the skylark's, was more true to the point of heaven than the point of home. But reflection shows us that on the whole, as Mr. Thackeray says, a man's genius must be builded on the foundations of his character. Where that genius deals with the mingled stuff of human life — sorrow, desire, love, hatred, kindness, meanness — then the foundation of character is especially important. People are sometimes glad that we know so little of Shakespeare the man; yet who can doubt that a true revelation of his character would be not less worthy, noble and charming than the general effect of his poems? In him, it is certain, we should always find an example of nobility, of generosity, of charity and kindness and self-forgetfulness. Indeed, we find these qualities, as a rule, in the biographies of the great sympathetic poets and men of genius of the pen — I do not say in the lives of rebels of genius, "meteoric poets" like Byron. The same basis, the same foundations of rectitude, of honour, of goodness, of melancholy, and of mirth, underlie the art of Molière, of Scott, of Fielding, and as his correspondence shows, of Thackeray.

It seems probable that a complete biography of Thackeray will never be written. It was his wish to live in his works alone: that wish his descendants respect; and we must probably regard the Letters to Mr. and Mrs. Brookfield as the last private and authentic record of the man which will be given, at least to this generation. In these Letters all sympathetic readers will find the man they have long known from his writings — the man with a heart so tender that the world often drove him back into a bitterness of opposition, into an assumed hardness and defensive cynicism. There are readers so unluckily constituted that they can see nothing in Thackeray but this bitterness, this cruel sense of meanness and power of analysing shabby emotions, sneaking vanities, contemptible ambitions. All of us must often feel with regret that he allowed himself to be made too unhappy by the spectacle of failings so common in the world he knew best, that he dwelt on them too long and lashed them too complacently. One hopes never to read "Lovel the Widower" again, and one gladly skips some of the speeches of the Old Campaigner in "The Newcomes." They are terrible, but not more terrible than life. Yet it is hard to understand how Mr. Ruskin, for example, can let such scenes and characters hide from his view the kindness, gentleness, and pity of Thackeray's nature. The Letters must open all eyes that are not wilfully closed, and should at last overcome every prejudice.

In the Letters we see a man literally hungering and thirsting after affection, after love — a man cut off by a cruel stroke of fate from his natural solace, from the centre of a home.

"God took from me a lady dear,"

he says, in the most touching medley of doggerel and poetry, made "instead of writing my *Punch* this morning." Losing "a lady dear," he takes refuge as he may, he finds comfort as he can, in all the affections within his reach, in the society of an old college friend and of his wife, in the love of all children, beginning with his own; in a generous liking for all good work and for all good fellows.

Did any man of letters except Scott ever write of his rivals as Thackeray wrote of Dickens? Artists are a jealous race. "Potter hates potter, and poet hates poet," as Hesiod said so long ago. This jealousy is not mere envy, it is really a strong sense of how things ought to be done, in any art, touched with a natural preference for a man's own way of doing them. Now, what could be more unlike than the "ways" of Dickens and Thackeray? The subjects chosen by these great authors are not more diverse than their styles. Thackeray writes like a scholar, not in the narrow sense, but rather as a student and a master of all the refinements and resources of language. Dickens copies the chaff of the street, or he roams into melodramatics, "drops into poetry" — blank verse at least — and touches all with peculiarities, we might say mannerisms, of his own. I have often thought, and even tried to act on the thought, that some amusing imaginary letters might be written, from characters of Dickens about characters of Thackeray, from characters of Thackeray about characters of Dickens. They might be supposed to meet each other in society, and describe each other. Can you not fancy Captain Costigan on Dick Swiveller, Blanche Amory on Agnes, Pen on David Copperfield, and that "tiger" Steerforth? What would the family solicitor of "The Newcomes" have to say of Mr. Tulkinghorn? How would George Warrington appreciate Mr. Pickwick? Yes, the two great novelists were as opposed as two men could be — in manner, in style, in knowledge of books, and of the world. And yet how admirably Thackeray writes about Dickens, in his letters as in his books! How he delights in him! How manly is that emulation which enables an author to see all the points in his rival, and not to carp at them, but to praise, and be stimulated to keener effort!

Consider this passage. "Have you read Dickens? O! it is charming! Brave Dickens! It has some of his very prettiest touches — those inimitable Dickens touches which make such a great man of him, and the reading of the book has done another author a great deal of good."

Thackeray is just as generous, and perhaps more critical, in writing of Kingsley. "A fine, honest, go-a-head fellow, who charges a subject heartily, impetuously, with the greatest courage and simplicity; but with narrow eyes (his are extraordinarily brave, blue and honest), and with little knowledge of the world, I think. But he is superior to us worldlings in many ways, and I wish I had some of his honest pluck."

I have often wished that great authors, when their days of creation were over, when "their minds grow grey and bald," would condescend to tell us the history of their books. Sir Walter Scott did something of this kind in the prefaces to the last edition of the Waverley Novels published during his life. What can be more interesting than his account, in the introduction to the "Fortunes of Nigel," of how he worked, how he planned, and found all his plots and plans overridden by the demon at the end of his pen! But Sir Walter was failing when he began those literary confessions; good as they are, he came to them too late. Yet these are not confessions which an author can make early. The pagan Aztecs only confessed once in a lifetime — in old age, when they had fewer temptations to fall to their old loves: then they made a clean breast of it once for all. So it might be with an author. While he is in his creative vigour, we want to hear about his fancied persons, about Pendennis, Beatrix, Becky, not about himself, and how he invented them. But when he has passed his best, then it is he who becomes of interest; it is about himself that we wish him to speak, as far as he modestly may. Who would not give "Lovel the Widower" and "Philip" for some autobiographical and literary prefaces to the older novels? They need not have been more egotistic than the “Roundabout Papers.” They would have had far more charm. Some things cannot be confessed. We do not ask who was the original Sir Pitt Crawley, or the original Blanche Amory. But we might learn in what mood, in what circumstances the author wrote this passage or that.

The Letters contain a few notes of this kind, a few literary confessions. We hear that Emmy Sedley was partly suggested by Mrs. Brookfield, partly by Thackeray’s mother, much by his own wife. There scarce seems room for so many elements in Emmy’s personality. For some reason ladies love her not, nor do men adore her. I have been her faithful knight ever since I was ten years old and read “Vanity Fair” somewhat stealthily. Why does one like her except because she is such a thorough woman? She is not clever, she is not very beautiful, she is unhappy, and she can be jealous. One pities her, and that is akin to a more tender sentiment; one pities her while she sits in the corner, and Becky’s green eyes flatter her oaf of a husband; one pities her in the poverty of her father’s house, in the famous battle over Daffy’s Elixir, in the separation from the younger George. You begin to wish some great joy to come to her: it does not come unalloyed; you know that Dobbin had bad quarters of an hour with this lady, and had to disguise a little of his tenderness for his own daughter. Yes, Emmy is more complex than she seems, and perhaps it needed three ladies to contribute the various elements of her person and her character. One of them, the jealous one, lent a touch to Helen Pendennis, to Laura, to Lady Castlewood. Probably this may be the reason why some persons dislike Thackeray so. His very best women are not angels. Are the very best women angels? It is a pious opinion — that borders on heresy.

When the Letters began to be written, in 1847, Thackeray had his worst years, in a worldly sense, behind him. They were past: the times when he wrote in *Galignani* for ten francs a day. Has any literary ghoul disinterred his old ten-franc articles in *Galignani*? The time of “Barry Lyndon,” too, was over. He says nothing of that masterpiece, and only a word about “The Great Hoggarty Diamond.” “I have been re-reading it. Upon my word and honour, if it doesn’t make you cry, I shall have a mean opinion of you. It was written at a time of great affliction, when my heart was very soft and humble. Amen. Ich habe auch viel geliebt.” Of “Pendennis,” as it goes on, he writes that it is “awfully stupid,” which has not been the verdict of the ages. He picks up materials as he passes. He dines with some officers, and perhaps he stations them at Chatteris. He meets Miss G — , and her converse suggests a love passage between Pen and Blanche. Why did he dislike fair women so? It runs all through his novels. Becky is fair. Blanche is fair. Outside the old yellow covers of “Pendennis,” you see the blonde mermaid, “amusing, and clever, and depraved,” dragging the lover to the sea, and the nut-brown maid holding him back. Angelina, of the "Rose and the Ring," is the Becky of childhood; she is fair, and the good Rosalba is *brune*. In writing "Pendennis" he had a singular experience. He looked over his own "back numbers," and found "a passage which I had utterly forgotten as if I had never read or written it." In Lockhart's "Life of Scott," James Ballantyne says that "when the 'Bride of Lammermoor' was first put into his hands in a complete shape, he did not recollect one single incident, character, or conversation it contained." That is to say, he remembered nothing of his own invention, though his memory of the traditional parts was as clear as ever. Ballantyne remarks, "The history of the human mind contains nothing more wonderful." The experience of Thackeray is a parallel to that of Scott. "Pendennis," it must be noted, was interrupted by a severe illness, and "The Bride of Lammermoor" was dictated by Sir Walter when in great physical pain. On one occasion Thackeray "lit upon a very stupid part of 'Pendennis,' I am sorry to say; and yet how well written it is! What a shame the author don't write a complete good story! Will he die before doing so? or come back from America and do it?"

Did he ever write "a complete, good story"? Did any one ever do such a thing as write a three-volume, novel, or a novel of equal length, which was "a complete, good story"? Probably not; or if any mortal ever succeeded in the task, it was the great Alexander Dumas. "The Three Musketeers," I take leave to think, and "Twenty Years After," are complete good stories, good from beginning to end, stories from beginning to end without a break, without needless episode. Perhaps one may say as much for "Old Mortality," and for "Quentin Durward." But Scott and Dumas were born story-tellers; narrative was the essence of their genius at its best; the current of romance rolls fleetly on, bearing with it persons and events, mirroring scenes, but never ceasing to be the main thing — the central interest. Perhaps narrative like this is the chief success of the novelist. He is triumphant when he carries us on, as Wolf, the famous critic, was carried on by the tide of the Iliad, "in that pure and rapid current of action." Nobody would claim this especial merit for Thackeray. He is one of the greatest of novelists; he displays human nature and human conduct so that we forget ourselves in his persons, but he does not make us forget ourselves in their fortunes. Whether Clive does or does not marry Ethel, or Esmond, Beatrix, does not very greatly excite our curiosity. We cannot ring the bells for Clive's second wedding as the villagers celebrated the bridal of Pamela. It is the development of character, it is the author's comments, it is his own personality and his unmatched and inimitable style, that win our admiration and affection. We can take up "Vanity Fair," or "Pendennis," or "The Newcomes," just where the book opens by chance, and read them with delight, as we may read Montaigne. When one says one can take up a book anywhere, it generally means that one can also lay it down anywhere. But it is not so with Thackeray. Whenever we meet him he holds us with his charm, his humour, his eloquence, his tenderness. If he has not, in the highest degree, the narrative power, he does possess, in a degree perhaps beyond any other writer of English, that kind of poetic quality which is not incompatible with prose writing.

A great deal has been said about prose poetry. As a rule, it is very poor stuff. As prose it has a tendency to run into blank verse; as poetry it is highly rhetorical and self-conscious. It would be invidious and might be irritating to select examples from modern masters of prose-poetry. They have never been poets. But the prose of a poet like Milton may be, and is, poetical in the true sense; and so, upon occasions, was the prose of Thackeray. Some examples linger always in the memory, and dwell with their music in the hearing. One I have quoted elsewhere; the passage in "The Newcomes" where Clive, at the lecture on the Poetry of the Domestic Affections, given by Sir Barnes Newcome, sees Ethel, whom he has lost.

"And the past, and its dear histories, and youth and its hopes and passions, and tones and looks, for ever echoing in the heart and present in the memory — those, no doubt, poor Clive saw and heard as he looked across the great gulf of time and parting and grief, and beheld the woman he had loved for many years." "The great gulf of time, and parting, and grief," — some of us are on the farther side of it, and our old selves, and our old happiness, and our old affections beyond, grow near, grow clear, now and then, at the sight of a face met by chance in the world, at the chance sound of a voice. Such are human fortunes, and human sorrows; not the worst, not the greatest, for these old loves do not die — they live in exile, and are the better parts of our souls. Not the greatest, nor the worst of sorrows, for shame is worse, and hopeless hunger, and a life all of barren toil without distractions, without joy, must be far worse. But of those myriad tragedies of the life of the poor, Thackeray does not write. How far he was aware of them, how deeply he felt them, we are not informed. His highest tragedy is that of the hunger of the heart; his most noble prose sounds in that meeting of Harry Esmond with Lady Castlewood, in the immortal speech which has the burden, "bringing your sheaves with you!" All that scene appears to me no less unique, no less unsurpassable, no less perfect, than the "Ode to the Nightingale" of Keats, or the *Lycidas* of Milton. It were superfluous to linger over the humour of Thackeray. Only Shakespeare and Dickens have graced the language with so many happy memories of queer, pleasant people, with so many quaint phrases, each of which has a kind of freemasonry, and when uttered, or recalled, makes all friends of Thackeray into family friends of each other. The sayings of Mr. Harry Foker, of Captain Costigan, of Gumbo, are all like old dear family phrases, they live imperishable and always new, like the words of Sir John, the fat knight, or of Sancho Panza, or of Dick Swiveller, or that other Sancho, Sam Weller. They have that Shakespearian gift of being ever appropriate, and undyingly fresh.

These are among the graces of Thackeray, these and that inimitable style, which always tempts and always baffles the admiring and despairing copyist. Where did he find the trick of it, of the words which are invariably the best words, and invariably fall exactly in the best places? "The best words in the best places," is part of Coleridge's definition of poetry; it is also the essence of Thackeray's prose. In these Letters to Mrs. Brookfield the style is precisely the style of the novels and essays. The style, with Thackeray, was the man. He could not write otherwise. But probably, to the last, this perfection was not mechanical, was not attained without labour and care. In Dr. John Brown's works, in his essay on Thackeray, there is an example of a proof-sheet on which the master has made corrections, and those corrections bring the passage up to his accustomed level, to the originality of his rhythm. Here is the piece: —

"Another Finis, another slice of life which *Tempus edax* has devoured! And I may have to write the word once or twice, perhaps, and then an end of Ends. Oh, the troubles, the cares, the *ennui*, the repetitions, the old conversations over and over again, and here and there all the delightful passages, the dear, the brief, the forever-remembered!

" A few chapters more, and then the last, and behold Finis itself coming to an end, and the Infinite beginning."

"How like music this," writes Dr. John Brown— "like one trying the same air in different ways, as it were, searching out and sounding all its depths!" The words were almost the last that Thackeray wrote, perhaps the very last. They reply, as it were, to other words which he had written long before to Mrs. Brookfield.

"I don't pity anybody who leaves the world; not even a fair young girl in her prime; I pity those remaining. On her journey, if it pleases God to send her, depend on it there's no cause for grief, that's but an earthly condition. Out of our stormy life, and brought nearer the Divine light and warmth, there must be a serene climate. Can't you fancy sailing into the calm?"

Ah! nowhere else shall we find the Golden Bride, "passionless bride, divine Tranquillity."

As human nature persistently demands a moral, and, as, to say truth, Thackeray was constantly meeting the demand, what is the lesson of his life and his writings? So people may ask, and yet how futile is the answer! Life has a different meaning, a different riddle, a different reply for each of us. There is not one sphinx, but many sphinxes — as many as there are women and men. We must all answer for ourselves. Pascal has one answer, “Believe!” Molière has another, “Observe!” Thackeray’s answer is, “Be good and enjoy!” but a melancholy enjoyment was his. Dr. John Brown says:

“His persistent state, especially for the later half of his life, was profoundly *morne*, there is no other word for it. This arose in part from temperament, from a quick sense of the littleness and wretchedness of mankind . . . This feeling, acting on a harsh and savage nature, ended in the *sæva indignatio* of Swift; acting on the kindly and sensitive nature of Mr. Thackeray, it led only to compassionate sadness.”

A great part of his life, and most of his happiness, lay in love. “Ich habe auch viel geliebt,” he says, and it is a hazardous kind of happiness that attends great affection. Your capital is always at the mercy of failures, of death, of jealousy, of estrangement. But he had so much love to give that he could not but trust those perilous investments.

Other troubles he had that may have been diversions from those. He did not always keep that manly common sense in regard to criticism, which he shows in a letter to Mrs. Brookfield. “Did you read the *Spectator’s* sarcastic notice of ‘Vanity Fair’? I don’t think it is just, but think Kintoul (Rintoul?) is a very honest man, and rather inclined to deal severely with his private friends lest he should fall into the other extreme: to be sure he keeps out of it, I mean the other extreme, very well.”

That is the way to take unfavourable criticisms — not to go declaring that a man is your enemy because he does not like your book, your ballads, your idyls, your sermons, what you please. Why cannot people keep literature and liking apart? Am I bound to think Jones a bad citizen, a bad man, a bad householder, because his poetry leaves me cold? Need he regard me as a malevolent green-eyed monster, because I don’t want to read him? Thackeray was not always true in his later years to these excellent principles. He was troubled about trifles of criticisms and gossip, *bagatelles* not worth noticing, still less worth remembering and recording. Do not let us record them, then.

We cannot expect for Thackeray, we cannot even desire for him, a popularity like that of Dickens. If ever any man wrote for the people, it was Dickens. Where can we find such a benefactor, and who has lightened so many lives with such merriment as he? But Thackeray wrote, like the mass of authors, for the literary class — for all who have the sense of style, the delight in the best language. He will endure while English literature endures, while English civilisation lasts. We cannot expect all the world to share our affection for this humourist whose mirth springs from his melancholy. His religion, his education, his life in this unsatisfying world, are not the life, the education, the religion of the great majority of human kind. He cannot reach so many ears and hearts as Shakespeare or Dickens, and some of those whom he reaches will always and inevitably misjudge him. *Mais c'est mon homme*, one may say, as La Fontaine said of Molière. Of modern writers, putting Scott aside, he is to me the most friendly and sympathetic. Great genius as he was, he was also a penman, a journalist; and journalists and penmen will always look to him as their big brother, the man in their own line of whom they are proudest. As devout Catholics did not always worship the greatest saints, but the friendliest saints, their own, so we scribes burn our cheap incense to St. William Makepeace. He could do all that any of us could do, and he did it infinitely better. A piece of verse for *Punch*, a paragraph, a caricature, were not beneath the dignity of the author of "Esmond." He had the kindness and helpfulness which I, for one, have never met a journalist who lacked. He was a good Englishman; the boy within him never died; he loved children, and boys, and a little slang, and a boxing match. If he had failings, who knew them better than he? How often he is at once the boy at the swishing block and Dr. Birch who does not spare the rod! Let us believe with that beloved physician, our old friend Dr. John Brown, that "Mr. Thackeray was much greater, much nobler than his works, great and noble as they are." Let us part with him, remembering his own words:

"Come wealth or want, come good or ill,
   Let young and old accept their part,
And bow before the awful Will,
   And bear it with an honest heart."

DICKENS

"I cannot read Dickens!" How many people make this confession, with a front of brass, and do not seem to know how poor a figure they cut! George Eliot says that a difference of taste in jokes is a great cause of domestic discomfort. A difference of taste in books, when it is decided and vigorous, breaks many a possible friendship, and nips many a young liking in the bud. I would not willingly seem intolerant. A man may not like Sophocles, may speak disrespectfully of Virgil, and even sneer at Herodotus, and yet may be endured. But he or she (it is usually she) who contemns Scott, and "cannot read Dickens," is a person with whom I would fain have no further converse. If she be a lady, and if one meets her at dinner, she must of course be borne with, and "suffered gladly." But she has dug a gulf that nothing can bridge; she may be fair, clever and popular, but she is Anathema. I feel towards her (or him if he wears a beard) as Bucklaw did towards the person who should make inquiries about that bridal night of Lammermoor.

But this admission does not mean that one is sealed of the tribe of Charles — that one is a Dickensite pure and simple, convinced and devout — any more than Mr. Matthew Arnold was a Wordsworthian. Dickens has many such worshippers, especially (and this is an argument in favour of the faith) among those who knew him in his life. He must have had a wonderful charm; for his friends in life are his literary partisans, his uncompromising partisans, even to this day. They will have no half-hearted admiration, and scout him who tries to speak of Dickens as of an artist not flawless, no less than they scorn him who cannot read Dickens at all. At one time this honourable enthusiasm (as among the Wordsworthians) took the shape of "endless imitation." That is over; only here and there is an imitator of the master left in the land. All his own genius was needed to carry his mannerisms; the mannerisms without the genius were an armour that no devoted David had proved, that none could wear with success.

Of all great writers since Scott, Dickens is probably the man to whom the world owes most gratitude. No other has caused so many sad hearts to be lifted up in laughter; no other has added so much mirth to the toilsome and perplexed life of men, of poor and rich, of learned and unlearned. "A vast hope has passed across the world," says Alfred de Musset; we may say that with Dickens a happy smile, a joyous laugh, went round this earth. To have made us laugh so frequently, so inextinguishably, so kindly — that is his great good deed. It will be said, and with a great deal of truth, that he has purged us with pity and terror as well as with laughter. But it is becoming plain that his command of tears is less assured than of old, and I cannot honestly regret that some of his pathos — not all, by any means — is losing its charm and its certainty of appeal. Dickens's humour was rarely too obvious; it was essentially personal, original, quaint, unexpected, and his own. His pathos was not infrequently derived from sources open to all the world, and capable of being drawn from by very commonplace writers. Little Nells and Dombeys, children unhappy, overthrown early in the *mêlée* of the world, and dying among weeping readers, no longer affect us as they affected another generation. Mrs. Beecher Stowe and the author of "Misunderstood," once made some people weep like anything by these simple means. Ouida can do it; plenty of people can do it. Dickens lives by virtue of what none but he can do: by virtue of Sairey Gamp, and Sam Weller, and Dick Swiveller, and Mr. Squeers, with a thousand other old friends, of whom we can never weary. No more than Cleopatra's can custom stale *their* infinite variety.

I do not say that Dickens' pathos is always of the too facile sort, which plays round children's death-beds. Other pathos he has, more fine and not less genuine. It may be morbid and contemptible to feel "a great inclination to cry" over David Copperfield's boyish infatuation for Steerforth; but I feel it. Steerforth was a "tiger," — as Major Pendennis would have said, a tiger with his curly hair and his ambrosial whiskers. But when a little boy loses his heart to a big boy he does not think of this. Traddles thought of it. "Shame, J. Steerforth!" cried Traddles, when Steerforth bullied the usher. Traddles had not lost his heart, nor set up the big boy as a god in the shrine thereof. But boys do these things; most of us have had our Steerforths — tall, strong, handsome, brave, good-humoured. Far off across the years I see the face of such an one, and remember that emotion which is described in "David Copperfield," cha., towards the end of the chapter. I don't know any other novelist who has touched this young and absolutely disinterested belief of a little boy in a big one — touched it so kindly and seriously, that is there is a hint of it in "Dr. Birch's School Days."

But Dickens is always excellent in his boys, of whom he has drawn dozens of types — all capital. There is Tommy Traddles, for example. And how can people say that Dickens could not draw a gentleman? The boy who shouted, "Shame, J. Steerforth!" was a gentleman, if one may pretend to have an opinion about a theme so difficult. The Dodger and Charley Bates are delightful boys — especially Bates. Pip, in the good old days, when he was the prowling boy, and fought Herbert Pocket, was not less attractive, and Herbert himself, with his theory and practice of the art of self-defence — could Nelson have been more brave, or Shelley (as in Mr. Matthew Arnold's opinion) more "ineffectual"? Even the boys at Dotheboys Hall are each of them quite distinct. Dickens's boys are almost as dear to me as Thackeray's — as little Rawdon himself. There is one exception. I cannot interest myself in Little Dombey. Little David Copperfield is a jewel of a boy with a turn for books. Doubtless he is created out of Dickens's memories of himself as a child. That is true pathos again, and not overwrought, when David is sent to Creakle's, and his poor troubled mother dare hardly say farewell to him.

And this brings us back to that debatable thing — the pathos of Dickens — from which one has been withdrawn by the attractions of his boys. Little Dombey is a prize example of his pathos. Little Nell is another. Jeffrey, of the *Edinburgh Review*, who criticised "Marmion" and the "Lady of the Lake" so vindictively, shed tears over Little Nell. It is a matter of taste, or, as Science might say, of the lachrymal glands as developed in each individual. But the lachrymal glands of this amateur are not developed in that direction. Little Dombey and Little Nell leave me with a pair of dry eyes. I do not "melt visibly" over Little Dombey, like the weak-eyed young man who took out his books and trunk to the coach. The poor little chap was feeble and feverish, and had dreams of trying to stop a river with his childish hands, or to choke it with sand. It may be very good pathology, but I cannot see that it is at all right pathos. One does not like copy to be made out of the sufferings of children or of animals. One's heart hardens: the object is too manifest, the trick is too easy. Conceive a child of Dombey's age remarking, with his latest breath, "Tell them that the picture on the stairs at school is not Divine enough!" That is not the delirium of infancy, that is art-criticism: it is the *Athenæum* on Mr. Holman Hunt. It is not true to nature; it is not good in art: it is the kind of thing that appears in Sunday-school books about the virtuous little boy who died. There is more true pathos in many a page of "Huckleberry Finn." Yet this is what Jeffrey gushed over. "There has been nothing like the actual dying of that sweet Paul." So much can age enfeeble the intellect, that he who had known Scott, and yet nibbled at his fame, descended to admiring the feeblest of false sentiment. As for Little Nell, who also has caused floods of tears to be shed, her case is sufficiently illustrated by the picture in the first edition ("Master Humphrey's Clock,", 1840,):

"'When I die
Put near me something that has loved the light,
And had the sky above it always.' Those
Were her words."

"Dear, gentle, patient, noble Nell was dead!"

The pathos is about as good as the prose, and *that* is blank verse. Are the words in the former quotation in the least like anything that a little girl would say? A German sentimentalist might have said them; Obermann might have murmured them in his weaker moments. Let us try a piece of domestic pathos by another hand. It is the dawn of Waterloo.

"Heart-stained and shame-stricken, he stood at the bed's foot, and looked at the sleeping girl. How dared he — who was he — to pray for one so spotless! God bless her! God bless her! He came to the bedside, and looked at the hand, the little soft hand, lying asleep, and he bent over the pillow noiselessly towards the gentle pale face. Two fair arms closed tenderly round his neck as he stooped down. 'I am awake, George,' the poor child said, with a sob."

I know I am making enemies of a large proportion of the readers of this page. "Odious, sneering beast!" is the quotation which they will apply, perhaps unconscious of its origin, to a critic who is humble but would fain be honest, to a critic who thinks that Dickens has his weak places, and that his pathos is one of these. It cannot be helped. Each of us has his author who is a favourite, a friend, an idol, whose immaculate perfection he maintains against all comers. For example, things are urged against Scott; I receive them in the attitude of the deaf adder of St. Augustine, who stops one ear with his tail and presses the other against the dust. The same with Molière: M. Scherer utters complaints against Molière! He would not convince me, even if I were convinced. So, with regard to Dickens, the true believer will not listen, he will not be persuaded. But if any one feels a little shaken, let him try it another way. There is a character in M. Alphonse Daudet's "Froment Jeune et Rissler Aîné" — a character who, people say, is taken bodily from Dickens. This is Désirée Delobelle, the deformed girl, the daughter of *un raté*, a pretentious imbecile actor. She is poor, stunted, laborious, toiling at a small industry; she is in love, is rejected, she tries to drown herself, she dies. The sequence of ideas is in Dickens's vein; but read the tale, and I think you will see how little the thing is overdone, how simple and unforced it is, compared with analogous persons and scenes in the work of the English master. The idiotic yell of "plagiarism" has been raised, of course, by critical *crétins*. M. Daudet, as I understand what he says in "Trente Ans de Paris," had not read Dickens at all, when he wrote "Froment Jeune" — certainly had not read "Our Mutual Friend." But there is something of Dickens's genius in M. Daudet's, and that something is kept much better in hand by the Frenchman, is more subordinated to the principles of taste and of truth.

On the other hand, to be done with this point, look at Delobelle, the father of Désirée, and compare him with Dickens's splendid strollers, with Mr. Vincent

Crummles, and Mr. Lenville, and the rest. As in Désirée so in Delobelle, M. Daudet's picture is much the more truthful. But it is truthful with a bitter kind of truth. Now, there is nothing not genial and delightful in Crummles and Mrs. Crummles and the Infant Phenomenon. Here Dickens has got into a region unlike the region of the pathetic, into a world that welcomes *charge* or caricature, the world of humour. We do not know, we never meet Crummleses quite so unsophisticated as Vincent, who is "not a Prussian," who "can't think who puts these things into the papers." But we do meet stage people who come very near to this *naïveté* of self-advertisement, and some of whom are just as dismal as Crummles is delightful.

Here, no doubt, is Dickens's *forte*. Here his genius is all pure gold, in his successful studies or inventions of the humorous, of character parts. One literally does not know where to begin or end in one's admiration for this creative power that peopled our fancies with such troops of dear and impossible friends. "Pickwick" comes practically first, and he never surpassed "Pickwick." He was a poor story-teller, and in "Pickwick" he had no story to tell; he merely wandered at adventure in that merrier England which was before railways were. "Pickwick" is the last of the stories of the road that begin in the wandering, aimless, adventurous romances of Greece, or in Petronius Arbiter, and that live with the life of "Gil Blas" and "Don Quixote," of "Le Roman Comique," of "Tom Jones" and "Joseph Andrews." These tales are progresses along highways bristling with adventure, and among inns full of confusion, Mr. Pickwick's affair with the lady with yellow curl-papers being a mild example. Though "Tom Jones" has a plot so excellent, no plot is needed here, and no consecutive story is required. Detached experiences, vagrants of every rank that come and go, as in real life, are all the material of the artist. With such materials Dickens was exactly suited; he was at home on high-road and lane, street and field-path, in inns and yeomen's warm hospitable houses. Never a humour escaped him, and he had such a wealth of fun and high spirits in these glad days as never any other possessed before. He was not in the least a bookish man, not in any degree a scholar; but Nature taught him, and while he wrote with Nature for his teacher, with men and women for his matter, with diversion for his aim, he was unsurpassable — nay, he was unapproachable.

He could not rest here; he was, after all, a child of an age that grew sad, and earnest, and thoughtful. He saw abuses round him — injustice, and oppression, and cruelty. He had a heart to which those things were not only abhorrent, but, as it were, maddening. He knew how great an influence he wielded, and who can blame him for using it in any cause he thought good? Very possibly he might have been a greater artist if he had been less of a man, if he had been quite disinterested, and had never written “with a purpose.” That is common, and even rather obsolete critical talk. But when we remember that Fielding, too, very often wrote “with a purpose,” and that purpose the protection of the poor and unfriended; and when we remember what an artist Fielding was, I do not see how we can blame Dickens. Occasionally he made his art and his purpose blend so happily that his work was all the better for his benevolent intentions. We owe Mr. Squeers, Mrs. Squeers, Fanny Squeers, Wackford and all, to Dickens’s indignation against the nefarious school pirates of his time. If he is less successful in attacking the Court of Chancery, and very much less successful still with the Red Tape and Circumlocution Office affairs, that may be merely because he was less in the humour, and not because he had a purpose in his mind. Every one of a man’s books cannot be his masterpiece. There is nothing in literary talk so annoying as the spiteful joy with which many people declare that an author is “worked out,” because his last book is less happy than some that went before. There came a time in Dickens’ career when his works, to my own taste and that of many people, seemed laboured, artificial — in fact, more or less failures. These books range from “Dombey and Son,” through “Little Dorrit,” I dare not say to “Our Mutual Friend.” One is afraid that “Edwin Drood,” too, suggests the malady which Sir Walter already detected in his own “Peveril of the Peak.” The intense strain on the faculties of Dickens — as author, editor, reader, and man of the world — could not but tell on him; and years must tell. “Philip” is not worthy of the author of “Esmond,” nor “Daniel Deronda” of the author of “Silas Marner.” At that time — the time of the Dorrits and Dombeys — *Blackwood’s Magazine* published a “Remonstrance with Boz”; nor was it quite superfluous. But Dickens had abundance of talent still to display — above all in “Great Expectations” and “A Tale of Two Cities.” The former is, after “Pickwick,” “Copperfield,” “Martin Chuzzlewit,” and “Nicholas Nickleby” — after the classics, in fact — the most delightful of Dickens’s books. The story is embroiled, no doubt. What are we to think of Estelle? Has the minx any purpose? Is she a kind of Ethel Newcome of odd life? It is not easy to say; still, for a story of Dickens’s the plot is comparatively clear and intelligible. For a study of a child’s life, of the nature Dickens drew best — the river and the marshes — and for plenty of honest explosive fun, there is no later book of Dickens’s like “Great Expectations.” Miss Havisham, too, in her mouldy bridal splendour, is really impressive; not like Ralph Nickleby and Monk in “Oliver Twist” — a book of which the plot remains to me a mystery. Pip and Pumblechook and Mr. Wopsle and Jo are all immortal, and cause laughter inextinguishable. The rarity of this book, by the way, in its first edition — the usual library three volumes — is rather difficult to explain. One very seldom sees it come into the market, and then it is highly priced.

I have mentioned more than once the obscurity of Dickens's plots. This difficulty may be accounted for in a very flattering manner. Where do we lose ourselves? Not in the bare high-road, but among lanes, between hedges hung with roses, blackberries, morning glories, where all about us is so full of pleasure that our attention is distracted and we miss our way. Now, in Dickens — in "Oliver Twist," in "Martin Chuzzlewit," in "Nicholas Nickleby" — there is, as in the lanes, so much to divert and beguile, that we cease to care very much where the road leads — a road so full of happy marvels. The dark, plotting villains — like the tramp who frightened Sir Walter Scott so terribly, as he came from Miss Baillie's at Hampstead — peer out from behind the hedges now and then. But we are too much amused by the light hearts that go all the way, by the Dodger and Crummles and Mrs. Gamp, to care much for what Ralph, and Monk, and Jonas Chuzzlewit are plotting. It may not be that the plot is so confused, but that we are too much diverted to care for the plot, for the incredible machinations of Uriah Heap, to choose another example. Mr. Micawber cleared these up; but it is Mr. Micawber that hinders us from heeding them.

This, at least, is a not unfriendly explanation. Yet I cannot but believe that, though Dickens took great pains with his plots, he was not a great plotter. He was not, any more than Thackeray, a story-teller first and foremost. We can hold in our minds every thread of Mr. Wilkie Collins' web, or of M. Fortuné du Boisgobey's, or of M. Gaboriau's — all great weavers of intrigues. But Dickens goes about darkening his intrigue, giving it an extra knot, an extra twist, hinting here, ominously laughing there, till we get mystified and bored, and give ourselves up to the fun of the humours, indifferent to the destinies of villains and victims. Look at "Edwin Drood." A constant war about the plot rages in the magazines. I believe, for one, that Edwin Drood was resuscitated; but it gives me no pleasure. He was too uninteresting. Dickens's hints, nods, mutterings, forebodings, do not at all impress one like that deepening and darkening of the awful omens in "The Bride of Lammermoor." Here Scott — unconsciously, no doubt — used the very manner of Homer in the Odyssey, and nowhere was his genius more Homeric. That was romance.

The "Tale of Two Cities" is a great test of the faith — that is in Dickensites. Of all his works it is the favourite with the wrong sort! Ladies prefer it. Many people can read it who cannot otherwise read Dickens at all. This in itself proves that it is not a good example of Dickens, that it is not central, that it is an outlying province which he conquered. It is not a favourite of mine. The humour of the humorous characters rings false — for example, the fun of the resurrection-man with the wife who "flops." But Sidney Carton has drawn many tears down cheeks not accustomed to what Mr. B. in “Pamela” calls “pearly fugitives.”

It sometimes strikes one that certain weaknesses in our great novelists, in Thackeray as well as Dickens, were caused by their method of publication. The green and yellow leaves flourished on the trees for two whole years. Who (except Alexandre the Great) could write so much, and yet all good? Do we not all feel that “David Copperfield” should have been compressed? As to “Pendennis,” Mr. Thackeray’s bad health when he wrote it might well cause a certain languor in the later pages. Moreover, he frankly did not care for the story, and bluffly says, in the preface, that he respited Colonel Altamont almost at the foot of the gallows. Dickens took himself more in earnest, and, having so many pages to fill, conscientiously made Uriah Heap wind and wriggle through them all.

To try to see blots in the sun, and to pick holes in Dickens, seems ungrateful, and is indeed an ungrateful task; to no mortal man have more people owed mirth, pleasure, forgetfulness of care, knowledge of life in strange places. There never was such another as Charles Dickens, nor shall we see his like sooner than the like of Shakespeare. And he owed all to native genius and hard work; he owed almost nothing to literature, and that little we regret. He was influenced by Carlyle, he adopted his method of nicknames, and of hammering with wearisome iteration on some peculiarity — for example, on Carker’s teeth, and the patriarch’s white hair. By the way, how incredible is all the Carker episode in “Dombey”! Surely Dickens can never have intended Edith, from the first, to behave as she did! People may have influenced him, as they influenced Scott about “St. Ronan’s Well.” It has been said that, save for Carlyle, Dickens was in letters a self-taught artist, that he was no man’s pupil, and borrowed from none. No doubt this makes him less acceptable to the literary class than a man of letters, like Thackeray — than a man in whose treasure chamber of memory all the wealth of the Middle Ages was stored, like Scott. But the native naked genius of Dickens, — his heart, his mirth, his observation, his delightful high spirits, his intrepid loathing of wrong, his chivalrous desire to right it, — these things will make him for ever, we hope and believe, the darling of the English people.

ADVENTURES OF BUCCANEERS

Most of us, as boys, have envied the buccaneers. The greatest of all boys, Canon Kingsley, once wrote a pleasing and regretful poem in which the Last Buccaneer represents himself as a kind of picturesque philanthropist: —

“There were forty craft in Aves that were both swift and stout,
All furnished well with small arms, and cannons round about;
And a thousand men in Aves made laws so fair and free,
To choose their valiant captains and obey them loyally.
Thence we sailed against the Spaniard with his hoards of plate and gold,
Which he wrung with cruel tortures from Indian folk of old;
Likewise the merchant captains, with hearts as hard as stone,
Who flog men and keel-haul them, and starve them to the bone.”

The buccaneer is “a gallant sailor,” according to Kingsley’s poem — a Robin Hood of the waters, who preys only on the wicked rich, or the cruel and Popish Spaniard, and the extortionate shipowner. For his own part, when he is not rescuing poor Indians, the buccaneer lives mainly “for climate and the affections”: —

“Oh, sweet it was in Aves to hear the landward breeze,
A swing with good tobacco in a net between the trees,
With a negro lass to fan you, while you listened to the roar
Of the breakers on the reef outside that never touched the shore.”

This is delightfully idyllic, like the lives of the Tahitian shepherds in the Anti-Jacobin — the shepherds whose occupation was a sinecure, as there were no sheep in Tahiti.

Yet the vocation was not really so touchingly chivalrous as the poet would have us deem. One Joseph Esquemeling, himself a buccaneer, has written the history and described the exploits of his companions in plain prose, warning eager youths that “pieces-of-eight do not grow on every tree,” as many raw recruits have believed. Mr. Esquemeling’s account of these matters may be purchased, with a great deal else that is instructive and entertaining, in “The History of the Buccaneers in America.” My edition (of 1810) is a dumpy little book, in very small type, and quite a crowd of publishers took part in the venture. The older editions are difficult to procure if your pockets are not stuffed with pieces-of-eight. You do not often find even this volume, but “when found make a note of,” and you have a reply to Canon Kingsley.

A charitable old Scotch lady, who heard our ghostly foe evil spoken of, remarked that, “If we were all as diligent and conscientious as the Devil, it would be better for us.” Now, the buccaneers were certainly models of diligence and conscientiousness in their own industry, which was to torture people till they gave up their goods, and then to run them through the body, and spend the spoils over drink and dice. Except Dampier, who was a clever man, but a poor buccaneer (Mr. Clark Russell has written his life), they were the most hideously ruthless miscreants that ever disgraced the earth and the sea. But their courage and endurance were no less notable than their greed and cruelty, so that a moral can be squeezed even out of these abandoned miscreants. The soldiers and sailors who made their way within gunshot of Khartoum, overcoming thirst, hunger, heat, the desert, and the gallant children of the desert, did not fight, march, and suffer more bravely than the scoundrels who sacked Mairaibo and burned Panama. Their good qualities were no less astounding and exemplary than their almost incredible wickedness. They did not lie about in hammocks much, listening to the landward wind among the woods — the true buccaneers. To tell the truth, most of them had no particular cause to love the human species. They were often Europeans who had been sold into slavery on the West Indian plantations, where they learned lessons of cruelty by suffering it. Thus Mr. Joseph Esquemeling, our historian, was beaten, tortured, and nearly starved to death in Tortuga, “so I determined, not knowing how to get any living, to enter into the order of the pirates or robbers of the sea.” The poor Indians of the isles, much pitied by Kingsley’s buccaneer, had a habit of sticking their prisoners all over with thorns, wrapped in oily cotton, whereto they then set fire. “These cruelties many Christians have seen while they lived among these barbarians.” Mr. Esquemeling was to see, and inflict, plenty of this kind of torment, which was not out of the way nor unusual. One planter alone had killed over a hundred of his servants— “the English did the same with theirs.”

A buccaneer voyage began in stealing a ship, collecting desperadoes, and torturing the local herdsmen till they gave up their masters’ flocks, which were salted as provisions. Articles of service were then drawn up, on the principle “no prey, no pay.” The spoils, when taken, were loyally divided as a rule, though Captain Morgan, of Wales, made no more scruple about robbing his crew than about barbecuing a Spanish priest. “They are very civil and charitable to each other, so that if any one wants what another has, with great willingness they give it to one another.” In other matters they did not in the least resemble the early Christians. A fellow nick-named The Portuguese may be taken as our first example of their commendable qualities.

With a small ship of four guns he had taken a great one of twenty guns, with 70,000 pieces-of-eight . . . He himself, however, was presently captured by a larger vessel, and imprisoned on board. Being carelessly watched, he escaped on two earthen jars (for he could not swim), reached the woods in Campechy, and walked for a hundred and twenty miles through the bush. His only food was a few shell-fish, and by way of a knife he had a large nail, which he whetted to an edge on a stone. Having made a kind of raft, he struck a river, and paddled to Golpho Triste, where he found congenial pirates. With twenty of these, and a boat, he returned to Campechy, where he had been a prisoner, and actually captured the large ship in which he had lain captive! Bad luck pursued him, however: his prize was lost in a storm; he reached Jamaica in a canoe, and never afterwards was concerned as leader in any affair of distinction. Not even Odysseus had more resource, nor was more long-enduring; but Fortune was The Portuguese's foe.

Braziliano, another buccaneer, served as a pirate before the mast, and "was beloved and respected by all." Being raised to command, he took a plate ship; but this success was of indifferent service to his otherwise amiable character. "He would often appear foolish and brutish when in drink," and has been known to roast Spaniards alive on wooden spits "for not showing him hog yards where he might steal swine." One can hardly suppose that Kingsley would have regretted *this* buccaneer, even if he had been the last, which unluckily he was not. His habit of sitting in the street beside a barrel of beer, and shooting all passers-by who would not drink with him, provoked remark, and was an act detestable to all friends of temperance principles.

François L'Olonnois, from southern France, had been kidnapped, and sold as a slave in the Caribbee Islands. Recovering his freedom, he plundered the Spanish, says my buccaneer author, "till his unfortunate death." With two canoes he captured a ship which had been sent after him, carrying ten guns and a hangman for his express benefit. This hangman, much to the fellow's chagrin, L'Olonnois put to death like the rest of his prisoners. His great achievements were in the Gulf of Venezuela or Bay of Maracaibo. The gulf is a strong place; the mouth, no wider than a gunshot, is guarded by two islands. Far up the inlet is Maracaibo, a town of three thousand people, fortified and surrounded by woods. Yet farther up is the town of Gibraltar. To attack these was a desperate enterprise; but L'Olonnois stole past the forts, and frightened the townsfolk into the woods. As a rule the Spaniards made the poorest resistance; there were examples of courage, but none of conduct. With strong forts, heavy guns, many men, provisions, and ammunition, they quailed before the desperate valour of the pirates. The towns were sacked, the fugitives hunted out in the woods, and the most abominable tortures were applied to make them betray their friends and reveal their treasures. When they were silent, or had no treasures to declare, they were hacked, twisted, burned, and starved to death.

Such were the manners of L'Olonnois; and Captain Morgan, of Wales, was even more ruthless.

Gibraltar was well fortified and strengthened after Maracaibo fell; new batteries were raised, the way through the woods was barricaded, and no fewer than eight hundred men were under arms to resist a small pirate force, exhausted by debauch, and having its retreat cut off by the forts at the mouth of the great salt-water loch. But L'Olonnois did not blench: he told the men that audacity was their one hope, also that he would pistol the first who gave ground. The men cheered enthusiastically, and a party of three hundred and fifty landed. The barricaded way they could not force, and in a newly cut path they met a strong battery which fired grape. But L'Olonnois was invincible. He tried that old trick which rarely fails, a sham retreat, and this lured the Spaniards from their earthwork on the path. The pirates then turned, sword in hand, slew two hundred of the enemy, and captured eight guns. The town yielded, the people fled to the woods, and then began the wonted sport of torturing the prisoners. Maracaibo they ransomed afresh, obtained a pilot, passed the forts with ease, and returned after sacking a small province. On a dividend being declared, they parted 260,000 pieces-of-eight among the band, and spent the pillage in a revel of three weeks.

L'Olonnois "got great repute" by this conduct, but I rejoice to add that in a raid on Nicaragua he "miserably perished," and met what Mr. Esquemeling calls "his unfortunate death." For L'Olonnois was really an ungentlemanly character. He would hack a Spaniard to pieces, tear out his heart, and "gnaw it with his teeth like a ravenous wolf, saying to the rest, 'I will serve you all alike if you show me not another way'" (to a town which he designed attacking). In Nicaragua he was taken by the Indians, who, being entirely on the Spanish side, tore him to pieces and burned him. Thus we really must not be deluded by the professions of Mr. Kingsley's sentimental buccaneer, with his pity for "the Indian folk of old."

Except Denis Scott, a worthy bandit in his day, Captain Henry Morgan is the first renowned British buccaneer. He was a young Welshman, who, after having been sold as a slave in Barbadoes, became a sailor of fortune. With about four hundred men he assailed Puerto Bello. "If our number is small," he said, "our hearts are great," and so he assailed the third city and place of arms which Spain then possessed in the West Indies. The entrance of the harbour was protected by two strong castles, judged as “almost impregnable,” while Morgan had no artillery of any avail against fortresses. Morgan had the luck to capture a Spanish soldier, whom he compelled to parley with the garrison of the castle. This he stormed and blew up, massacring all its defenders, while with its guns he disarmed the sister fortress. When all but defeated in a new assault, the sight of the English colours animated him afresh. He made the captive monks and nuns carry the scaling ladders; in this unwonted exploit the poor religious folk lost many of their numbers. The wall was mounted, the soldiers were defeated, though the Governor fought like a Spaniard of the old school, slew many pirates with his own hand, and pistolled some of his own men for cowardice. He died at his post, refusing quarter, and falling like a gentleman of Spain. Morgan, too, was not wanting in fortitude: he extorted 100,000 pieces-of-eight from the Governor of Panama, and sent him a pistol as a sample of the gun wherewith he took so great a city. He added that he would return and take this pistol out of Panama; nor was he less good than his word. In Cuba he divided 250,000 pieces-of-eight, and a great booty in other treasure. A few weeks saw it all in the hands of the tavern-keepers and women of the place.

Morgan’s next performance was a new sack of Maracaibo, now much stronger than L’Olonnois had found it. After the most appalling cruelties, not fit to be told, he returned, passing the castles at the mouth of the port by an ingenious stratagem. Running boatload after boatload of men to the land side, he brought them back by stealth, leading the garrison to expect an attack from that quarter. The guns were massed to landward, and no sooner was this done than Morgan sailed up through the channel with but little loss. Why the Spaniards did not close the passage with a boom does not appear. Probably they were glad to be quit of Morgan on any terms.

A great Spanish fleet he routed by the ingenious employment of a fire-ship. In a later expedition a strong place was taken by a curious accident. One of the buccaneers was shot through the body with an arrow. He drew it out, wrapped it in cotton, fired it from his musket, and so set light to a roof and burned the town.

His raid on Panama was extraordinary for the endurance of his men. For days they lived on the leather of bottles and belts. “Some, who were never out of their mothers’ kitchens, may ask how these pirates could eat and digest these pieces of leather, so hard and dry? Whom I answer — that could they once experience what hunger, or rather famine is, they would find the way, as the pirates did.” It was at the close of this march that the Indians drove wild bulls among them; but they cared very little for these new allies of the Spaniards: beef, in any form, was only too welcome.

Morgan burned the fair cedar houses of Panama, but lost the plate ship with all the gold and silver out of the churches. How he tortured a poor wretch who chanced to wear a pair of taffety trousers belonging to his master, with a small silver key hanging out, it is better not to repeat. The men only got two hundred pieces-of-eight each, after all their toil, for their Welshman was indeed a thief, and bilked his crews, no less than he plundered the Spaniards, without remorse. Finally, he sneaked away from the fleet with a ship or two; and it is to be feared that Captain Morgan made rather a good thing by dint of his incredible cruelty and villainy.

And so we leave Mr. Esquemeling, whom Captain Morgan also deserted; for who would linger long when there is not even honour among thieves? Alluring as the pirate’s profession is, we must not forget that it had a seamy side, and was by no means all rum and pieces-of-eight. And there is something repulsive to a generous nature in roasting men because they will not show you where to steal hogs.

THE SAGAS

"The general reader," says a frank critic, "hates the very name of a Saga." The general reader, in that case, is to be pitied, and, if possible, converted. But, just as Pascal admits that the sceptic can only become religious by living as if he *were* religious — by stupefying himself, as Pascal plainly puts it, with holy water — so it is to be feared that there is but a single way of winning over the general reader to the Sagas. Preaching and example, as in this brief essay, will not avail with him. He must take Pascal's advice, and live for an hour or two as if he were a lover of Sagas. He must, in brief, give that old literature a fair chance. He has now his opportunity: Mr. William Morris and Mr. Eirikr Magnusson are publishing a series of cheap translations — cheap only in coin of the realm — a *Saga Library*. If a general reader tries the first tale in the first volume, story of "Howard the Halt," — if he tries it honestly, and still can make no way with it, then let him take comfort in the doctrine of Invincible Ignorance. Let him go back to his favourite literature of gossiping reminiscence, or of realistic novels. We have all, probably, a drop of the Northmen's blood in us, but in that general reader the blood is dormant.

What is a Saga? It is neither quite a piece of history nor wholly a romance. It is a very old story of things and adventures that really happened, but happened so long ago, and in times so superstitious, that marvels and miracles found their way into the legend. The best Sagas are those of Iceland, and those, in translations, are the finest reading that the natural man can desire. If you want true pictures of life and character, which are always the same at bottom, or true pictures of manners, which are always changing, and of strange customs and lost beliefs, in the Sagas they are to be found. Or if you like tales of enterprise, of fighting by land and sea, fighting with men and beasts, with storms and ghosts and fiends, the Sagas are full of this entertainment.

The stories of which we are speaking were first told in Iceland, perhaps from 950 to 1100 B.C. When Norway and Sweden were still heathen, a thousand years ago, they were possessed by families of noble birth, owning no master, and often at war with each other, when the men were not sailing the seas, to rob and kill in Scotland, England, France, Italy, and away east as far as Constantinople, or farther. Though they were wild sea robbers and warriors, they were sturdy farmers, great shipbuilders; every man of them, however wealthy, could be his own carpenter, smith, shipwright, and ploughman. They forged their own good short swords, hammered their own armour, ploughed their own fields. In short, they lived like Odysseus, the hero of Homer, and were equally skilled in the arts of war and peace. They were mighty lawyers, too, and had a most curious and minute system of laws on all subjects — land, marriage, murder, trade, and so forth. These laws were not written, though the people had a kind of letters called runes. But they did not use them much for documents, but merely for carving a name on a sword-blade, or a tombstone, or on great gold rings such as they wore on their arms. Thus the laws existed in the memory and judgment of the oldest and wisest and most righteous men of the country. The most important was the law of murder. If one man slew another, he was not tried by a jury, but any relation of the dead killed him "at sight," wherever he found him. Even in an Earl's hall, Kari struck the head off one of his friend Njal's Burners, and the head bounded on the board, among the trenchers of meat and the cups of mead or ale. But it was possible, if the relations of a slain man consented, for the slayer to pay his price — every man was valued at so much — and then revenge was not taken. But, as a rule, one revenge called for another. Say Hrut slew Hrap, then Atli slew Hrut, and Gisli slew Atli, and Kari slew Gisli, and so on till perhaps two whole families were extinct and there was peace. The gods were not offended by manslaughter openly done, but were angry with treachery, cowardice, meanness, theft, perjury, and every kind of shabbiness.

This was the state of affairs in Norway when a king arose, Harold Fair-Hair, who tried to bring all these proud people under him, and to make them pay taxes and live more regularly and quietly. They revolted at this, and when they were too weak to defy the king they set sail and fled to Iceland. There in the lonely north, between the snow and fire, the hot-water springs, the volcano of Hecla, the great rivers full of salmon that rush down such falls as Golden Foot, there they lived their old-fashioned life, cruising as pirates and merchants, taking foreign service at Mickle Garth, or in England or Egypt, filling the world with the sound of their swords and the sky with the smoke of their burnings. For they feared neither God nor man nor ghost, and were no less cruel than brave; the best of soldiers, laughing at death and torture, like the Zulus, who are a kind of black Vikings of Africa. On some of them "Bersark's gang" would fall — that is, they would become in a way mad, slaying all and sundry, biting their shields, and possessed with a furious strength beyond that of men, which left them as weak as children when it passed away. These Bersarks were outlaws, all men's enemies, and to kill them was reckoned a great adventure, and a good deed. The women were worthy of the men — bold, quarrelsome, revengeful. Some were loyal, like Bergthora, who foresaw how all her sons and her husband were to be burned; but who would not leave them, and perished in the burning without a cry. Some were as brave as Howard's wife, who enabled her husband, old and childless, to overthrow the wealthy bully, the slayer of his only son. Some were treacherous, as Halgerda the Fair. Three husbands she had, and was the death of every man of them. Her last lord was Gunnar of Lithend, the bravest and most peaceful of men. Once she did a mean thing, and he slapped her face. She never forgave him. At last enemies besieged him in his house. The doors were locked — all was quiet within. One of the enemies climbed up to a window slit, and Gunnar thrust him through with his lance. "Is Gunnar at home?" said the besiegers. "I know not — but his lance is," said the wounded man, and died with that last jest on his lips. For long Gunnar kept them at bay with his arrows, but at last one of them cut the arrow string. "Twist me a string with thy hair," he said to his wife, Halgerda, whose yellow hair was very long and beautiful. "Is it a matter of thy life or death?" she asked. "Ay," he said. "Then I remember that blow thou gavest me, and I will see thy death." So Gunnar died, overcome by numbers, and they killed Samr, his hound, but not before Samr had killed a man.

So they lived always with sword or axe in hand — so they lived, and fought, and died.

Then Christianity was brought to them from Norway by Thangbrand, and if any man said he did not believe a word of it, Thangbrand had the schoolboy argument, "Will you fight?" So they fought a duel on a *holm* or island, that nobody might interfere — holm-gang they called it — and Thangbrand usually killed his man. In Norway, Saint Olaf did the like, killing and torturing those who held by the old gods — Thor, Odin, and Freya, and the rest. So, partly by force and partly because they were somewhat tired of bloodshed, horsefights, and the rest, they received the word of the white Christ and were baptised, and lived by written law, and did not avenge themselves by their own hands.

They were Christians now, but they did not forget the old times, the old feuds and fightings and Bersarks, and dealings with ghosts, and with dead bodies that arose and wrought horrible things, haunting houses and strangling men. The Icelandic ghosts were able-bodied, well "materialised," and Grettir and Olaf Howard's son fought them with strength of arm and edge of steel. *True* stories of the ancient days were told at the fireside in the endless winter nights by story tellers or Scalds. It was thought a sin for any one to alter these old stories, but as generations passed more and more wonderful matters came into the legend. It was believed that the dead Gunnar, the famed archer, sang within his cairn or "Howe," the mound wherein he was buried, and his famous bill or cutting spear was said to have been made by magic, and to sing in the night before the wounding of men and the waking of war. People were thought to be "second-sighted" — that is, to have prophetic vision. The night when Njal's house was burned his wife saw all the meat on the table “one gore of blood,” just as in Homer the prophet Theoclymenus beheld blood falling in gouts from the walls, before the slaying of the Wooers. The Valkyries, the Choosers of the slain, and the Norns who wove the fates of men at a ghastly loom were seen by living eyes. In the graves where treasures were hoarded the Barrowwights dwelt, ghosts that were sentinels over the gold: witchwives changed themselves into wolves and other monstrous animals, and for many weeks the heroes Signy and Sinfjotli ran wild in the guise of wolves.

These and many other marvels crept into the Sagas, and made the listeners feel a shudder of cold beside the great fire that burned in the centre of the skali or hall where the chief sat, giving meat and drink to all who came, where the women span and the Saga man told the tales of long ago. Finally, at the end of the middle ages, these Sagas were written down in Icelandic, and in Latin occasionally, and many of them have been translated into English.

Unluckily, these translations have hitherto been expensive to buy, and were not always to be had easily. For the wise world, which reads newspapers all day and half the night, does not care much for books, still less for good books, least of all for old books. You can make no money out of reading Sagas: they have nothing to say about stocks and shares, nor about Prime Ministers and politics. Nor will they amuse a man, if nothing amuses him but accounts of races and murders, or gossip about Mrs. Nokes’s new novel, Mrs. Stokes’s new dresses, or Lady Jones’s diamonds. The Sagas only tell how brave men — of our own blood very likely — lived, and loved, and fought, and voyaged, and died, before there was much reading or writing, when they sailed without steam, travelled without railways, and warred hand-to-hand, not with hidden dynamite and sunk torpedoes. But, for stories of gallant life and honest purpose, the Sagas are among the best in the world.

Of Sagas in English one of the best is the “Volsunga,” the story of the Niflungs and Volsungs. This book, thanks to Mr. William Morris, can be bought for a shilling. It is a strange tale in which gods have their parts, the tale of that oldest Treasure Hunt, the Hunt for the gold of the dwarf Andvari. This was guarded by the serpent, Fafnir, who had once been a man, and who was killed by the hero Sigurd. But Andvari had cursed the gold, because his enemies robbed him of it to the very last ring, and had no pity. Then the brave Sigurd was involved in the evil luck. He it was who rode through the fire, and woke the fair enchanted Brynhild, the Shield-maiden. And she loved him, and he her, with all their hearts, always to the death. But by ill fate she was married to another man, Sigurd’s chief friend, and Sigurd to another woman. And the women fell to jealousy and quarrelling as women will, and they dragged the friends into the feud, and one manslaying after another befell, till that great murder of men in the Hall of Atli, the King. The curse came on one and all of them — a curse of blood, and of evil loves, and of witchwork destroying good and bad, all fearless, and all fallen in one red ruin.

The "Volsunga Saga" has this unique and unparalleled interest, that it gives the spectacle of the highest epic genius, struggling out of savagery into complete and free and conscious humanity. It is a mark of the savage intellect not to discriminate abruptly between man and the lower animals. In the tales of the lower peoples, the characters are just as often beasts as men and women. Now, in the earlier and wilder parts of the "Volsunga Saga," otters and dragons play human parts. Signy and his son, and the mother of their enemy, put on the skins of wolves, become wolves, and pass through hideous adventures. The story reeks with blood, and ravins with lust of blood. But when Sigurd arrives at full years of manhood, the barbarism yields place, the Saga becomes human and conscious.

These legends deal little with love. But in the "Volsunga Saga" the permanent interest is the true and deathless love of Sigurd and Brynhild: their separation by magic arts, the revival of their passion too late, the man's resigned and heroic acquiescence, the fiercer passion of the woman, who will neither bear her fate nor accept her bliss at the price of honour and her plighted word.

The situation, the *nodus*, is neither ancient merely nor modern merely, but of all time. Sigurd, having at last discovered the net in which he was trapped, was content to make the best of marriage and of friendship. Brynhild was not. "The hearts of women are the hearts of wolves," says the ancient Sanskrit commentary on the Rig Veda. But the she-wolf's heart broke, like a woman's, when she had caused Sigurd's slaying. Both man and woman face life, as they conceive it, with eyes perfectly clear.

The magic and the supernatural wiles are accidental, the human heart is essential and eternal. There is no scene like this in the epics of Greece. This is a passion that Homer did not dwell upon. In the Iliad and Odyssey the repentance of Helen is facile; she takes life easily. Clytemnestra is not brought on the stage to speak for herself. In this respect the epic of the North, without the charm and the delightfulness of the Southern epic, excels it; in this and in a certain bare veracity, but in nothing else. We cannot put the Germanic legend on the level of the Greek, for variety, for many-sided wisdom, for changing beauty of a thousand colours. But in this one passion of love the "Volsunga Saga" excels the Iliad.

The Greek and the Northern stories are alike in one thing. Fate is all-powerful over gods and men. Odin cannot save Balder; nor Thetis, Achilles; nor Zeus, Sarpedon. But in the Sagas fate is more constantly present to the mind. Much is thought of being “lucky,” or “unlucky.” Howard’s “good luck” is to be read in his face by the wise, even when, to the common gaze, he seems a half-paralytic dotard, dying of grief and age.

Fate and evil luck dog the heroes of the Sagas. They seldom “end well,” as people say, — unless, when a brave man lies down to die on the bed he has strewn of the bodies of his foes, you call *that* ending well. So died Grettir the Strong. Even from a boy he was strong and passionate, short of temper, quick of stroke, but loyal, brave, and always unlucky. His worst luck began after he slew Glam. This Glam was a wicked heathen herdsman, who would not fast on Christmas Eve. So on the hills his dead body was found, swollen as great as an ox, and as blue as death.

What killed him they did not know. But he haunted the farmhouse, riding the roof, kicking the sides with his heels, killing cattle and destroying all things. Then Grettir came that way, and he slept in the hall. At night the dead Glam came in, and Grettir arose, and to it they went, struggling and dashing the furniture to bits. Glam even dragged Grettir to the door, that he might slay him under the sky, and for all his force Grettir yielded ground. Then on the very threshold he suddenly gave way when Glam was pulling hardest, and they fell, Glam undermost. Then Grettir drew the short sword, “Kari’s loom,” that he had taken from a haunted grave, and stabbed the dead thing that had lived again. But, as Glam lay a-dying in the second death, the moon fell on his awful eyes, and Grettir saw the horror of them, and from that hour he could not endure to be in the dark, and he never dared to go alone. This was his death, for he had an evil companion who betrayed him to his enemies; but when they set on Grettir, though he was tired and sick of a wound, many died with him. No man died like Grettir the Strong, nor slew so many in his death.

Besides those Sagas, there is the best of all, but the longest, “Njala” (pronounced “Nyoula”), the story of Burnt Njal. That is too long to sketch here, but it tells how, through the hard hearts and jealousy of women, ruin came at last on the gentle Gunnar, and the reckless Skarphedin of the axe, “The Ogress of War,” and how Njal, the wisest, the most peaceful, the most righteous of men, was burned with all his house, and how that evil deed was avenged on the Burners of Kari.

The site of Njal’s house is yet to be seen, after these nine hundred years, and the little glen where Kari hid when he leaped through the smoke and the flame that made his sword-blade blue. Yes, the very black sand that Bergthora and her maids threw on the fire lies there yet, and remnants of the whey they cast on the flames, when water failed them. They were still there beneath the earth when an

English traveller dug up some of the ground last year, and it is said that an American gentleman found a gold ring in the house of Njal. The story of him and of his brave sons, and of his slaves, and of his kindred, and of Queens and Kings of Norway, and of the coming of the white Christ, are all in the “Njala.” That and the other Sagas would bear being shortened for general readers; once they were all that the people had by way of books, and they liked them long. But, shortened or not, they are brave books for men, for the world is a place of battle still, and life is war. These old heroes knew it, and did not shirk it, but fought it out, and left honourable names and a glory that widens year by year. For the story of Njal and Gunnar and Skarphedin was told by Captain Speedy to the guards of Theodore, King of Abyssinia. They liked it well; and with queer altered names and changes of the tale, that Saga will be told in Abyssinia, and thence carried all through Africa where white men have never wandered. So wide, so long-enduring a renown could be given by a nameless Sagaman.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

When I was very young, a distinguished *Review* was still younger. I remember reading one of the earliest numbers, being then myself a boy of ten, and coming on a review of a novel. Never, as it seemed to me, or seems to my memory, was a poor novel more heavily handled: and yet I felt that the book must be a book to read on the very earliest opportunity. It was “Westward Ho!” the most famous, and perhaps the best novel, of Charles Kingsley. Often one has read it since, and it is an example of those large, rich, well-fed romances, at which you can cut and come again, as it were, laying it down, and taking it up on occasion, with the certainty of being excited, amused — and preached at.

Lately I have re-read “Westward Ho!” and some of Kingsley’s other books, “Hypatia,” “Hereward the Wake,” and the poems, over again. The old pleasure in them is not gone indeed, but it is modified. One must be a boy to think Kingsley a humourist. At the age of twelve or ten you take the comic passages which he conscientiously provides, without being vexed or offended; you take them merely in the way of business. Better things are coming: struggles with the Inquisition, storms at sea, duels, the Armada, wanderings in the Lotus land of the tropical west; and for the sake of all this a boy puts up good-naturedly with Kingsley’s humour. Perhaps he even grins over Amyas “burying alternately his face in the pasty and the pasty in his face,” or he tries to feel diverted by the Elizabethan waggeries of Frank. But there is no fun in them — they are mechanical; they are worse than the humours of Scott’s Sir Percy Shafto, which are not fine.

The same sense of everything not being quite so excellent as one remembered it haunts one in “Hereward the Wake, the Last of the English.” Kingsley calls him “the Last of the English,” but he is really the first of the literary Vikings. In the essay on the Sagas here I have tried to show, very imperfectly, what the Norsemen were actually like. They caught Kingsley’s fancy, and his “Hereward,” though born on English soil, is really Norse — not English. But Kingsley did not write about the Vikings, nor about his Elizabethan heroes in “Westward Ho!” in a perfectly simple, straightforward way. He was always thinking of our own times and referring to them. That is why even the rather ruffianly Hereward is so great an enemy of saints and monks. That is why, in “Hypatia” (which opens so well), we have those prodigiously dull, stupid, pedantic, and conceited reflections of Raphael Ben Ezra. That is why, in all

Kingsley's novels, he is perpetually exciting himself in defence of marriage and the family life, as if any monkish ideas about the blessedness of bachelorhood were ever likely to drive the great Anglo-Saxon race into convents and monasteries. That is the very last thing we have to be afraid of; but Kingsley was afraid of it, and was eternally attacking everything Popish and monkish.

Boys and young people, then, can read "Westward Ho!" and "Hypatia," and "Hereward the Wake," with far more pleasure than their elders. They hurry on with the adventures, and do not stop to ask what the moralisings mean. They forgive the humour of Kingsley because it is well meant. They get, in short, the real good of this really great and noble and manly and blundering genius. They take pleasure in his love of strong men, gallant fights, desperate encounters with human foes, with raging seas, with pestilence, or in haunted forests. For in all that is good of his talent — in his courage, his frank speech, his love of sport, his clear eyes, his devotion to field and wood, river, moor, sea, and storms — Kingsley is a boy. He has the brave, rather hasty, and not over well-informed enthusiasm of sixteen, for persons and for causes. He saw an opponent (it might be Father Newman): his heart lusted for a fight; he called his opponent names, he threw his cap into the ring, he took his coat off, he fought, he got a terrible scientific drubbing. It was like a sixth-form boy matching himself against the champion. And then he bore no malice. He took his defeat bravely. Nay, are we not left with a confused feeling that he was not far in the wrong, though he had so much the worse of the fight?

Such was Kingsley: a man with a boy's heart; a hater of cruelty and injustice, and also with a brave, indomitable belief that his own country and his own cause were generally in the right, whatever the quarrel. He loved England like a mistress, and hated her enemies, Spain and the Pope, though even in them he saw the good. He is for ever scolding the Spanish for their cruelties to the Indians, but he defends our doings to the Irish, which (at that time) were neither more nor less oppressive than the Spanish performances in America. "Go it, our side!" you always hear this good Kingsley crying; and one's heart goes out to him for it, in an age when everybody often proves his own country to be in the wrong.

Simple, brave, resolute, manly, a little given to "robustiousness," Kingsley transfigured all these qualities by possessing the soul and the heart of a poet. He was not a very great poet, indeed, but a true poet — one of the very small band who are cut off, by a gulf that can never be passed, from mere writers of verse, however clever, educated, melodious, ingenious, amiable, and refined. He had the real spark of fire, the true note; though the spark might seldom break into flame, and the note was not always clear. Never let us confuse true poets with writers of verse, still less with writers of “poetic prose.” Kingsley wrote a great deal of that-perhaps too much: his descriptions of scenes are not always as good as in Hereward’s ride round the Fens, or when the tall, Spanish galleon staggers from the revenge of man to the vengeance of God, to her doom through the mist, to her rest in the sea. Perhaps only a poet could have written that prose; it is certain no writer of “poetic prose” could have written Kingsley’s poems.

His songs are his best things; they really are songs, not merely lyric poems. They have the merit of being truly popular, whether they are romantic, like “The Sands o’ Dee,” which actually reproduces the best qualities of the old ballad; or whether they are pathetic, like the “Doll’s Song,” in “Water Babies”; or whether they attack an abuse, as in the song of “The Merry Brown Hares”; or whether they soar higher, as in “Deep, deep Love, within thine own abyss abiding”; or whether they are mere noble nonsense, as in “Lorraine Loree”: —

“She mastered young Vindictive; oh, the gallant lass was she,
And kept him straight and won the race, as near as near could be;
But he killed her at the brook against a pollard willow tree;
Oh, he killed her at the brook, the brute, for all the world to see,
And no one but the baby cried for poor Lorraine Loree.”

The truth about Charles Kingsley seems to be that he rather made a brave and cheery noise in this night-battle of modern life, than that he directed any movement of forces. He kept cheering, as it were, and waving his sword with a contagious enthusiasm. Being a poet, and a man both of heart and of sentiment, he was equally attached to the best things of the old world and to the best of the new world, as far as one can forecast what it is to be. He loved the stately homes of England, the ancient graduated order of society, the sports of the past, the military triumphs, the patriotic glories. But he was also on the side of the poor: as “Parson Lot” he attempted to be a Christian Socialist.

Now, the Socialists are the people who want to take everything; the Christians are the persons who do not want to give more than they find convenient. Kingsley himself was ready to give, and did give, his time, his labour, his health, and probably his money, to the poor. But he was by no means minded that they should swallow up the old England with church and castle, manor-house and tower, wealth, beauty, learning, refinement. The man who wrote “Alton Locke,” the story of the starved tailor-poet, was the man who nearly wept when he heard a fox bark, and reflected that the days of fox-hunting were numbered. He had a poet’s politics, Colonel Newcome’s politics. He was for England, for the poor, for the rich, for the storied houses of the chivalrous past, for the cottage, for the hall; and was dead against the ideas of Manchester, and of Mr. John Bright. “My father,” he says in a letter, “would have put his hand to a spade or an axe with any man, and so could I pretty well, too, when I was in my prime; and my eldest son is now working with his own hands at farming, previous to emigrating to South America, where he will do the drudgery of his own cattle-pens and sheepfolds; and if I were twenty-four and unmarried I would go out there too, and work like an Englishman, and live by the sweat of my brow.”

This was the right side of his love of the Vikings; it was thus *they* lived, when not at war — thus that every gentleman who has youth and health should work, winning new worlds for his class, in place of this miserable, over-crowded, brawling England. This, I think, was, or should have been, the real lesson and message of Kingsley for the generations to come. Like Scott the scion of an old knightly line, he had that drop of wild blood which drives men from town into the air and the desert, wherever there are savage lands to conquer, beasts to hunt, and a hardy life to be lived. But he was the son of a clergyman, and a clergyman himself. The spirit that should have gone into action went into talking, preaching, writing — all sources of great pleasure to thousands of people, and so not wasted. Yet these were not the natural outlets of Kingsley’s life: he should have been a soldier, or an explorer; at least, we may believe that he would have preferred such fortune. He did his best, the best he knew, and it is all on the side of manliness, courage, kindness. Perhaps he tried too many things — science, history, fairy tales, religious and political discussions, romance, poetry. Poetry was what he did best, romance next; his science and his history are entertaining, but without authority.

This, when one reads it again, seems a cold, unfriendly estimate of a man so ardent and so genuine, a writer so vivacious and courageous as Kingsley. Even the elderly reviewer bears to him, and to his brother Henry, a debt he owes to few of their generation. The truth is we should *read* Kingsley; we must not criticise him. We must accept him and be glad of him, as we accept a windy, sunny autumn day — beautiful and blusterous — to be enjoyed and struggled with. If once we stop and reflect, and hesitate, he seems to preach too much, and with a confidence which his knowledge of the world and of history does not justify. To be at one with Kingsley we must be boys again, and that momentary change cannot but be good for us. Soon enough — too soon — we shall drop back on manhood, and on all the difficulties and dragons that Kingsley drove away by a blast on his chivalrous and cheery horn.

CHARLES LEVER: HIS BOOKS, ADVENTURES AND MISFORTUNES

Surely it is a pleasant thing that there are books, like other enjoyments, for all ages. You would not have a boy prefer whist to fives, nor tobacco to toffee, nor Tolstoï to Charles Lever. The ancients reckoned Tyrtæcus a fine poet, not that he was particularly melodious or reflective, but that he gave men heart to fight for their country. Charles Lever has done as much. In his biography, by Mr. Fitzpatrick, it is told that a widow lady had but one son, and for him she obtained an appointment at Woolwich. The boy was timid and nervous, and she fancied that she must find for him some other profession — perhaps that of literature. But he one day chanced on Lever's novels, and they put so much heart into him that his character quite altered, and he became the bravest of the brave.

Lever may not do as much for every one, but he does teach contempt of danger, or rather, delight in it: a gay, spontaneous, boyish kind of courage — Irish courage at its best. We may get more good from that than harm from all his tales of much punch and many drinking bouts. These are no longer in fashion and are not very gay reading, perhaps, but his stories and songs, his duels and battles and hunting scenes are as merry and as good as ever. Wild as they seem in the reading, they are not far from the truth, as may be gathered out of "Barrington's Memoirs," and their tales of the reckless Irish life some eighty years ago.

There were two men in Charles Lever — a glad man and a sad man. The gaiety was for his youth, when he poured out his "Lorrequers" and "O'Malleys," all the mirth and memories of his boyhood, all the tales of fighting and feasting he gleaned from battered, seasoned old warriors, like Major Monsoon. Even then, Mr. Thackeray, who knew him, and liked and laughed at him, recognised through his merriment "the fund of sadness beneath." "The author's character is *not* humour, but sentiment . . . extreme delicacy, sweetness and kindliness of heart. The spirits are mostly artificial, the *fond* is sadness, as appears to me to be that of most Irish writing and people." Even in "Charles O'Malley," what a true, dark picture that is of the duel beside the broad, angry river on the level waste under the wide grey sky! Charles has shot his opponent, Bodkin, and with Considine, his second, is making his escape. "Considine cried out suddenly, 'Too infamous, by Jove: we are murdered men!'"

"'What do you mean?' said I.

"'Don't you see that?' said he, pointing to something black which floated from a pole at the opposite side of the river.

"'Yes; what is it?'

"'It's his coat they've put upon an oar, to show the people he's killed — that's all. Every man here's his tenant; and look there! they're not giving us much doubt as to their intentions.'

"Here a tremendous yell burst forth from the mass of people along the shore, which, rising to a terrific cry, sank gradually down to a low wailing, then rose and fell several times, as the Irish death-cry filled the air, and rose to heaven, as if imploring vengeance on a murderer."

Passages like this, and that which follows — the dangerous voyage through the storm on the flooded Shannon, and through the reefs — are what Mr. Thackeray may have had in his mind when he spoke of Lever's underlying melancholy. Like other men with very high spirits, he had hours of gloom, and the sadness and the thoughtfulness that were in him came forth then and informed his later books. These are far more carefully written, far more cunningly constructed, than the old chapters written from month to month as the fit took him, with no more plan or premeditation than "Pickwick." But it is the early stories that we remember, and that he lives by — the pages thrown off at a heat, when he was a lively doctor with few patients, and was not over-attentive to them. These were the days of Harry Lorrequer and Tom Burke; characters that ran away with him, and took their own path through a merry world of diversion. Like the knights in Sir Thomas Malory, these heroes "ride at adventure," ride amazing horses that dread no leap, be it an Irish stone wall on a mountain crest, or be it the bayonets of a French square.

Mr. Lever's biographer has not been wholly successful in pleasing the critics, and he does not seem to affect very critical airs himself, but he tells a straightforward tale. The life of Charles Lever is the natural commentary on his novels. He was born at Dublin in 1806, the son of a builder or architect. At school he was very much flogged, and the odds are that he deserved these attentions, for he had high spirits beyond the patience of dominies. Handsome, merry and clever, he read novels in school hours, wore a ring, and set up as a dandy. Even then he was in love with the young lady whom he married in the end. At a fight with boys of another school, he and a friend placed a mine under the ground occupied by the enemy, and blew them, more or less, into the air. Many an eyebrow was singed off on that fatal day, when, for the only time, this romancer of the wars "smelled powder." He afterwards pleaded for his party before the worthy police magistrate, and showed great promise as a barrister. At Trinity College, Dublin, he was full of his fun, made ballads, sang them through the streets in disguise (like Fergusson, the Scottish poet), and one night collected thirty shillings in coppers.

The original of Frank Webber, in “Charles O’Malley,” was a chum of his, and he took part in the wonderful practical jokes which he has made immortal in that novel.

From Trinity College, Dublin, Lever went to Göttingen, where he found fun and fighting enough among the German students. From that hour he became a citizen of the world, or, at least, of Europe, and perhaps, like the prophets, was most honoured when out of his own country. He returned to Dublin and took his degree in medicine, after playing a famous practical joke. A certain medical professor was wont to lecture in bed. One night he left town unexpectedly. Lever, by chance, came early to lecture, found the Professor absent, slipped into his bed, put on his nightcap, and took the class himself. On another day he was standing outside the Foundling Hospital with a friend, a small man. Now, a kind of stone cradle for foundlings was built outside the door, and, when a baby was placed therein, a bell rang. Lever lifted up his friend, popped him into the cradle, and had the joy of seeing the promising infant picked out by the porter.

It seems a queer education for a man of letters; but, like Sir Walter Scott when revelling in Liddesdale, he “was making himself all the time.” He was collecting myriads of odd experiences and treasures of anecdotes; he was learning to know men of all sorts; and later, as a country doctor, he had experiences of mess tables, of hunting, and of all the ways of his remarkable countrymen. When cholera visited his district he stuck to his work like a man of heart and courage. But the usual tasks of a country doctor wearied him; he neglected them, he became unpopular with the authorities, he married his first love and returned to Brussels, where he practised as a physician. He had already begun his first notable book, “Harry Lorrequer,” in the *University Magazine*. It is merely a string of Irish and other stories, good, bad, and indifferent — a picture gallery full of portraits of priests, soldiers, peasants and odd characters. The plot is of no importance; we are not interested in Harry’s love affairs, but in his scrapes, adventures, duels at home and abroad. He fights people by mistake whom he does not know by sight, he appears on parade with his face blackened, he wins large piles at *trente et quarante*, he disposes of coopers of claret and bowls of punch, and the sheep on a thousand hills provide him with devilled kidneys. The critics and the authors thought little of the merry medley, but the public enjoyed it, and defied the reviewers. One paper preferred the book to a wilderness of “Pickwicks”; and as this opinion was advertised everywhere by M’Glashan, the publisher, Mr. Dickens was very much annoyed indeed. Authors are easily annoyed. But Lever writes *ut placeat pueris*, and there was a tremendous fight at Rugby between two boys, the "Slogger Williams" and "Tom Brown" of the period, for the possession of "Harry Lorrequer." When an author has the boys of England on his side, he can laugh at the critics. Not that Lever laughed: he, too, was easily vexed, and much depressed, when the reviews assailed him. Next he began "Charles O'Malley"; and if any man reads this essay who has not read the "Irish Dragoon," let him begin at once. "O'Malley" is what you can recommend to a friend. Here is every species of diversion: duels and steeplechases, practical jokes at college (good practical jokes, not booby traps and apple-pie beds); here is fighting in the Peninsula. If any student is in doubt, let him try chapter xiv. — the battle on the Douro. This is, indeed, excellent military writing, and need not fear comparison as art with Napier's famous history. Lever has warmed to his work; his heart is in it; he had the best information from an eye-witness; and the brief beginning, on the peace of nature before the strife of men, is admirably poetical.

To reach the French, under Soult, Wellesley had to cross the deep and rapid Douro, in face of their fire, and without regular transport. "He dared the deed. What must have been his confidence in the men he commanded! what must have been his reliance on his own genius!"

You hold your breath as you read, while English and Germans charge, till at last the field is won, and the dust of the French columns retreating in the distance blows down the road to Spain.

The Great Duke read this passage, and marvelled how Lever knew certain things that he tells. He learned this, and much more, the humours of war, from the original of Major Monsoon. Falstaff is alone in the literature of the world, but if ever there came a later Falstaff, Monsoon was the man. And where have you such an Irish Sancho Panza as Micky Free, that independent minstrel, or such an Irish Di Vernon as Baby Blake? The critics may praise Lever's thoughtful and careful later novels as they will, but "Charles O'Malley" will always be the pattern of a military romance. The anecdote of "a virtuous weakness" in O'Shaughnessy's father's character would alone make the fortune of many a story. The truth is, it is not easy to lay down "Charles O'Malley," to leave off reading it, and get on with the account of Lever.

His excellent and delightful novel scarcely received one favourable notice from the press. This may have been because it was so popular; but Lever became so nervous that he did not like to look at the papers. When he went back to Dublin and edited a magazine there, he was more fiercely assailed than ever. It is difficult for an Irishman to write about the Irish, or for a Scot to write about the Scottish, without hurting the feelings of his countrymen. While their literary brethren are alive they are not very dear to the newspaper scribes of these gallant nations; and thus Jeffrey was more severe to Scott than he need have been, while the Irish press, it appears, made an onslaught on Lever. Mr. Thackeray met Lever in Dublin, and he mentions this unkind behaviour. "Lorrequer's military propensities have been objected to strongly by his squeamish Hibernian brethren . . . But is Lorrequer the only man in Ireland who is fond of military spectacles? Why does the *Nation* publish these edifying and Christian war songs? . . . And who is it that prates about the Irish at Waterloo, and the Irish at Fontenoy, and the Irish at Seringapatam, and the Irish at Timbuctoo? If Mr. O'Connell, like a wise rhetorician, chooses, and very properly, to flatter the national military passion, why not Harry Lorrequer?"

Why not, indeed? But Mr. Lever was a successful Irishman of letters, and a good many other Irish gentlemen of letters, honest Doolan and his friends, were not successful. That is the humour of it.

Though you, my youthful reader, if I have one, do not detest Jones because he is in the Eleven, nor Brown because he has "got his cap," nor Smith because he does Greek Iambics like Sophocles; though you rather admire and applaud these champions, you may feel very differently when you come to thirty years or more, and see other men doing what you cannot do, and gaining prizes beyond your grasp. And then, if you are a reviewer, you "will find fault with a book for what it does not give," as thus, to take Mr. Thackeray's example: —

"Lady Smigsmag's novel is amusing, but lamentably deficient in geological information." "Mr. Lever's novels are trashy and worthless, for his facts are not borne out by any authority, and he gives us no information about the political state of Ireland. 'Oh! our country, our green and beloved, our beautiful and oppressed?'" and so forth.

It was not altogether a happy time that Lever passed at home. Not only did his native critics belabour him most ungrudgingly for "Tom Burke," that vivid and chivalrous romance, but he made enemies of authors. He edited a magazine! Is not that enough? He wearied of wading through waggon-loads of that pure unmitigated rubbish which people are permitted to "shoot" at editorial doors. How much dust there is in it to how few pearls! He did not return MSS. punctually and politely. The office cat could edit the volunteered contributions of many a magazine, but Lever was even more casual and careless than an experienced office cat. He grew crabbed, and tried to quarrel with Mr. Thackeray for that delightful parody "Phil Fogarty," nearly as good as a genuine story by Lever.

Beset by critics, burlesqued by his friend, he changed his style (Mr. Fitzpatrick tells us) and became more sober — and not so entertaining. He actually published a criticism of Beyle, of Stendhal, that psychological prig, the darling of culture and of M. Paul Bourget. Harry Lorrequer on Stendhal! — it beggars belief. He nearly fought a duel with the gentleman who is said to have suggested Mr. Pecksniff to Dickens! Yet they call his early novels improbable. Nothing could be less plausible than a combat between Harry Lorrequer and a gentleman who, even remotely, resembled the father of Cherry and Merry.

Lever went abroad again, and in Florence or the Baths of Lucca, in Trieste or Spezia, he passed the rest of his life. He saw the Italian revolution of 1848, and it added to his melancholy. This is plain from one of his novels with a curious history— "Con Cregan." He wrote it at the same time as "The Daltons," and he did not sign it. The reviewers praised "Con Cregan" at the expense of the signed work, rejoicing that Lever, as "The Daltons" proved, was exhausted, and that a new Irish author, the author of "Con Cregan," was coming to eclipse him. In short, he eclipsed himself, and he did not like it. His right hand was jealous of what his left hand did. It seems odd that any human being, however dull and envious, failed to detect Lever in the rapid and vivacious adventures of his Irish "Gil Blas," hero of one of the very best among his books, a piece not unworthy of Dumas. "Con" was written after midnight, "The Daltons" in the morning; and there can be no doubt which set of hours was more favourable to Lever's genius. Of course he liked "The Daltons" best; of all people, authors appear to be their own worst critics.

It is not possible even to catalogue Lever's later books here. Again he drove a pair of novels abreast— "The Dodds" and "Sir Jasper Carew" — which contain some of his most powerful situations. When almost an old man, sad, outworn in body, straitened in circumstances, he still produced excellent tales in this later manner— "Lord Kilgobbin," "That Boy of Norcott's," "A Day's Ride," and many more. These are the thoughts of a tired man of the world, who has done and seen everything that such men see and do. He says that he grew fat, and bald, and grave; he wrote for the grave and the bald, not for the happier world which is young, and curly, and merry. He died at last, it is said, in his sleep; and it is added that he did what Harry Lorrequer would not have done — he left his affairs in perfect order.

Lever lived in an age so full of great novelists that, perhaps, he is not prized as he should be. Dickens, Bulwer, Thackeray, Trollope, George Eliot, were his contemporaries. But when we turn back and read him once more, we see that Lever, too, was a worthy member of that famous company — a romancer for boys and men.

THE POEMS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

Yesterday, as the sun was very bright, and there was no wind, I took a fishing-rod on chance and Scott's poems, and rowed into the middle of St. Mary's Loch. Every hill, every tuft of heather was reflected in the lake, as in a silver mirror. There was no sound but the lapping of the water against the boat, the cry of the blackcock from the hill, and the pleasant plash of a trout rising here and there. So I read "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" over again, here, in the middle of the scenes where the story is laid and where the fights were fought. For when the Baron went on pilgrimage,

"And took with him this elvish page
To Mary's Chapel of the Lowes,"

it was to the ruined chapel *here* that he came,

"For there, beside our Ladye's lake,
An offering he had sworn to make,
  And he would pay his vows."

But his enemy, the Lady of Branksome, gathered a band,
"Of the best that would ride at her command,"
and they all came from the country round. Branksome, where the lady lived, is twenty miles off, towards the south, across the ranges of lonely green hills. Harden, where her ally, Wat of Harden, abode, is within twelve miles; and Deloraine, where William dwelt, is nearer still; and John of Thirlestane had his square tower in the heather, "where victual never grew," on Ettrick Water, within ten miles. These gentlemen, and their kinsfolk and retainers, being at feud with the Kers, tried to slay the Baron, in the Chapel of "Lone St. Mary of the Waves."

"They were three hundred spears and three.
Through Douglas burn, up Yarrow stream,
Their horses prance, their lances gleam.
They came to St. Mary's Lake ere day;
But the chapel was void, and the Baron away.
They burned the chapel for very rage,
And cursed Lord Cranstoun's goblin-page."

The Scotts were a rough clan enough to burn a holy chapel because they failed to kill their enemy within the sacred walls. But, as I read again, for the twentieth time, Sir Walter's poem, floating on the lonely breast of the lake, in the heart of the hills where Yarrow flows, among the little green mounds that cover the ruins of chapel and castle and lady's bower, I asked myself whether Sir Walter was indeed a great and delightful poet, or whether he pleases me so much because I was born in his own country, and have one drop of the blood of his Border robbers in my own veins?

It is not always pleasant to go back to places, or to meet people, whom we have loved well, long ago. If they have changed little, we have changed much. The little boy, whose first book of poetry was "The Lady of the Lake," and who naturally believed that there was no poet like Sir Walter, is sadly changed into the man who has read most of the world's poets, and who hears, on many sides, that Scott is outworn and doomed to deserved oblivion. Are they right or wrong, the critics who tell us, occasionally, that Scott's good novels make up for his bad verse, or that verse and prose, all must go? *Pro captu lectoris*, by the reader's taste, they stand or fall; yet even pessimism can scarcely believe that the Waverley Novels are mortal. They were once the joy of every class of minds; they cannot cease to be the joy of those who cling to the permanently good, and can understand and forgive lapses, carelessnesses, and the leisurely literary fashion of a former age. But, as to the poems, many give them up who cling to the novels. It does not follow that the poems are bad. In the first place, they are of two kinds — lyric and narrative. Now, the fashion of narrative in poetry has passed away for the present. The true Greek epics are read by a few in Greek; by perhaps fewer still in translations. But so determined are we not to read tales in verse, that prose renderings, even of the epics, nay, even of the Attic dramas, have come more or less into vogue. This accounts for the comparative neglect of Sir Walter's lays. They are spoken of as Waverley Novels spoiled. This must always be the opinion of readers who will not submit to stories in verse; it by no means follows that the verse is bad. If we make an exception, which we must, in favour of Chaucer, where is there better verse in story telling in the whole of English literature? The readers who despise "Marmion," or "The Lady of the Lake," do so because they dislike stories told in poetry. From poetry they expect other things, especially a lingering charm and magic of style, a reflective turn, "criticism of life." These things, except so far as life can be criticised in action, are alien to the Muse of narrative. Stories and pictures are all she offers: Scott's pictures, certainly, are fresh enough, his tales are excellent enough, his manner is sufficiently direct. To take examples: every one who wants to read Scott's poetry should begin with the "Lay." From opening to close it never falters: —

"Nine and twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome Hall;
Nine and twenty squires of name
Brought their steeds to bower from stall,
Nine and twenty yeomen tall
Waited, duteous, on them all . . .
Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
With belted sword, and spur on heel;
They quitted not their harness bright
Neither by day nor yet by night:
They lay down to rest
With corslet laced,
Pillowed on buckler cold and hard;
They carved at the meal
With gloves of steel,
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barred."

Now, is not that a brave beginning? Does not the verse clank and chime like sword sheath on spur, like the bits of champing horses? Then, when William of Deloraine is sent on his lonely midnight ride across the haunted moors and wolds, does the verse not gallop like the heavy armoured horse?

"Unchallenged, thence passed Deloraine,
To ancient Riddell's fair domain,
Where Aill, from mountains freed,
Down from the lakes did raving come;
Each wave was crested with tawny foam,
Like the mane of a chestnut steed,
In vain! no torrent, deep or broad,
Might bar the bold moss-trooper's road;
At the first plunge the horse sunk low,
And the water broke o'er the saddle-bow."

These last two lines have the very movement and note, the deep heavy plunge, the still swirl of the water. Well I know the lochs whence Aill comes red in flood; many a trout have I taken in Aill, long ago. This, of course, causes a favourable prejudice, a personal bias towards admiration. But I think the poetry itself is good, and stirs the spirit, even of those who know not Ailmoor, the mother of Aill, that lies dark among the melancholy hills.

The spirit is stirred throughout by the chivalry and the courage of Scott's men and of his women. Thus the Lady of Branksome addresses the English invaders who have taken her boy prisoner: —

"For the young heir of Branksome's line,
God be his aid, and God be mine;
Through me no friend shall meet his doom;
Here, while I live, no foe finds room.
Then if thy Lords their purpose urge,
Take our defiance loud and high;
Our slogan is their lyke-wake dirge,
Our moat, the grave where they shall lie."

Ay, and though the minstrel says he is no love poet, and though, indeed, he shines more in war than in lady's bower, is not this a noble stanza on true love, and worthy of what old Malory writes in his "Mort d'Arthur"? Because here Scott speaks for himself, and of his own unhappy and immortal affection: —

"True love's the gift which God has given
To man alone beneath the Heaven.
It is not Fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes, soon as granted, fly;
It liveth not in fierce desire,
With dead desire it dock not die:
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind."

Truth and faith, courage and chivalry, a free life in the hills and by the streams, a shrewd brain, an open heart, a kind word for friend or foeman, these are what you learn from the "Lay," if you want to learn lessons from poetry. It is a rude legend, perhaps, as the critics said at once, when critics were disdainful of wizard priests and ladies magical. But it is a deathless legend, I hope; it appeals to every young heart that is not early spoiled by low cunning, and cynicism, and love of gain. The minstrel's own prophecy is true, and still, and always,

"Yarrow, as he rolls along,

Bears burden to the minstrel's song."

After the "Lay" came "Marmion, a Tale of Flodden Field." It is far more ambitious and complicated than the "Lay," and is not much worse written. Sir Walter was ever a rapid and careless poet, and as he took more pains with his plot, he took less with his verse. His friends reproved him, but he answered to one of them —

"Since oft thy judgment could refine
My flattened thought and cumbrous line,
Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,
And in the minstrel spare the friend:
Though wild as cloud, *as stream*, *as gale*,
Flow forth, *flow unrestrained*, *my tale*!"

Any one who knows Scott's country knows how cloud and stream and gale all sweep at once down the valley of Ettrick or of Tweed. West wind, wild cloud, red river, they pour forth as by one impulse — forth from the far-off hills. He let his verse sweep out in the same stormy sort, and many a "cumbrous line," many a "flattened thought," you may note, if you will, in "Marmion." For example —

"And think what he must next have felt,
At buckling of the falchion belt."

The "Lay" is a tale that only verse could tell; much of "Marmion" might have been told in prose, and most of "Rokeby." But prose could never give the picture of Edinburgh, nor tell the tale of Flodden Fight in "Marmion," which I verily believe is the best battle-piece in all the poetry of all time, better even than the stand of Aias by the ships in the Iliad, better than the slaying of the Wooers in the Odyssey. Nor could prose give us the hunting of the deer and the long gallop over hillside and down valley, with which the "Lady of the Lake" begins, opening thereby the enchanted gates of the Highlands to the world. "The Lady of the Lake," except in the battle-piece, is told in a less rapid metre than that of the "Lay," less varied than that of "Marmion." "Rokeby" lives only by its songs; the "Lord of the Isles" by Bannockburn, the "Field of Waterloo" by the repulse of the Cuirassiers. But all the poems are interspersed with songs and ballads, as the beautiful ballad of "Alice Brand"; and Scott's fame rests on *these* far more than on his later versified romances. Coming immediately after the very tamest poets who ever lived, like Hayley, Scott wrote songs and ballads as wild and free, as melancholy or gay, as ever shepherd sang, or gipsy carolled, or witch-wife moaned, or old forgotten minstrel left to the world, music with no maker's name. For example, take the Outlaw's rhyme —

"With burnished brand and musketoon,
  So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold dragoon
  That lists the tuck of drum.
I list no more the tuck of drum,
  No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
  My comrades take the spear.
And, oh, though Brignal banks be fair,
  And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
  Would reign my Queen of May!"

How musical, again, is this! —

"This morn is merry June, I trow,
  The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter snow,
  Ere we two meet again.
He turned his charger as he spake,
  Upon the river shore,
He gave his bridle-reins a shake,
  Said, 'Adieu for evermore,
        My love!
  Adieu for evermore!'"

Turning from the legends in verse, let it not be forgotten that Scott was a great lyrical poet. Mr. Palgrave is not too lenient a judge, and his "Golden Treasury" is a touchstone, as well as a treasure, of poetic gold. In this volume Wordsworth contributes more lyrics than any other poet: Shelley and Shakespeare come next; then Sir Walter. For my part I would gladly sacrifice a few of Wordsworth's for a few more of Scott's. But this may be prejudice. Mr. Palgrave is not prejudiced, and we see how high is his value for Sir Walter.

There are scores of songs in his works, touching and sad, or gay as a hunter's waking, that tell of lovely things lost by tradition, and found by him on the moors: all these — not prized by Sir Walter himself — are in his gift, and in that of no other man. For example, his "Eve of St. John" is simply a masterpiece, a ballad among ballads. Nothing but an old song moves us like —

“Are these the links o’ Forth, she said,
Are these the bends o’ Dee!”

He might have done more of the best, had he very greatly cared. Alone among poets, he had neither vanity nor jealousy; he thought little of his own verse and his own fame: would that he had thought more! would that he had been more careful of what was so precious! But he turned to prose; bade poetry farewell.

“Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp,
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway.
And little reck I of the censure sharp
May idly cavil at an idle lay.”

People still cavil idly, complaining that Scott did not finish, or did not polish his pieces; that he was not Keats, or was not Wordsworth. He was himself; he was the Last Minstrel, the latest, the greatest, the noblest of natural poets concerned with natural things. He sang of free, fierce, and warlike life, of streams yet rich in salmon, and moors not yet occupied by brewers; of lonely places haunted in the long grey twilights of the North; of crumbling towers where once dwelt the Lady of Branksome or the Flower of Yarrow. Nature summed up in him many a past age a world of ancient faiths; and before the great time of Britain wholly died, to Britain, as to Greece, she gave her Homer. When he was old, and tired, and near his death — so worn with trouble and labour that he actually signed his own name wrong — he wrote his latest verse, for a lady. It ends —

“My country, be thou glorious still!”

and so he died, within the sound of the whisper of Tweed, foreseeing the years when his country would no more be glorious, thinking of his country only, forgetting quite the private sorrow of his own later days.

People will tell you that Scott was not a great poet; that his bolt is shot, his fame perishing. Little he cared for his fame! But for my part I think and hope that Scott can never die, till men grow up into manhood without ever having been boys — till they forget that

“One glorious hour of crowded life
Is worth an age without a name!”

Thus, the charges against Sir Walter’s poetry are, on the whole, little more than the old critical fallacy of blaming a thing for not being something else. “It takes all sorts to make a world,” in poetry as in life. Sir Walter’s sort is a very good sort, and in English literature its place was empty, and waiting for him. Think of what he did. English poetry had long been very tame and commonplace, written in couplets like Pope’s, very artificial and smart, or sensible and slow. He came with poems of which the music seemed to gallop, like thundering hoofs and ringing bridles of a rushing border troop. Here were goblin, ghost, and fairy, fight and foray, fair ladies and true lovers, gallant knights and hard blows, blazing beacons on every hill crest and on the bartisan of every tower. Here was a world made alive again that had been dead for three hundred years — a world of men and women.

They say that the archæology is not good. Archæology is a science; in its application to poetry, Scott was its discoverer. Others can name the plates of a coat of armour more learnedly than he, but he made men wear them. They call his Gothic art false, his armour pasteboard; but he put living men under his castled roofs, living men into his breastplates and taslets. Science advances, old knowledge becomes ignorance; it is poetry that does not die, and that will not die, while —

“The triple pride
Of Eildon looks over Strathclyde.”

JOHN BUNYAN

Dr. Johnson once took Bishop Percy's little daughter on his knee, and asked her what she thought of the "Pilgrim's Progress." The child answered that she had not read it. "No?" replied the Doctor; "then I would not give one farthing for you," and he set her down and took no further notice of her.

This story, if true, proves that the Doctor was rather intolerant. We must not excommunicate people because they have not our taste in books. The majority of people do not care for books at all.

There is a descendant of John Bunyan's alive now, or there was lately, who never read the "Pilgrim's Progress." Books are not in his line. Nay, Bunyan himself, who wrote sixty works, was no great reader. An Oxford scholar who visited him in his study found no books at all, except some of Bunyan's own and Foxe's "Book of Martyrs."

Yet, little as the world in general cares for reading, it has read Bunyan more than most. One hundred thousand copies of the "Pilgrim" are believed to have been sold in his own day, and the story has been done into the most savage languages, as well as into those of the civilised world.

Dr. Johnson, who did not like Dissenters, praises the "invention, imagination, and conduct of the story," and knew no other book he wished longer except "Robinson Crusoe" and "Don Quixote." Well, Dr. Johnson would not have given a farthing for *me*, as I am quite contented with the present length of these masterpieces. What books do *you* wish longer? I wish Homer had written a continuation of the Odyssey, and told us what Odysseus did among the far-off men who never tasted salt nor heard of the sea. A land epic after the sea epic, how good it would have been — from Homer! But it would have taxed the imagination of Dante to continue the adventures of Christian and his wife after they had once crossed the river and reached the city.

John Bunyan has been more fortunate than most authors in one of his biographies.

His life has been written by the Rev. Dr. Brown, who is now minister of his old congregation at Bedford; and an excellent life it is. Dr. Brown is neither Roundhead nor Cavalier; for though he is, of course, on Bunyan's side, he does not throw stones at the beautiful Church of England.

Probably most of us are on Bunyan's side now. It might be a good thing that we should all dwell together in religious unity, but history shows that people cannot be bribed into brotherhood. They tried to bully Bunyan; they arrested and imprisoned him — unfairly even in law, according to Dr. Brown, not unfairly, Mr. Froude thinks — and he would not be bullied.

What was much more extraordinary, he would not be embittered. In spite of all, he still called Charles II. "a gracious Prince." When a subject is in conscience at variance with the law, Bunyan said, he has but one course — to accept peaceably the punishment which the law awards. He was never soured, never angered by twelve years of durance, not exactly in a loathsome dungeon, but in very uncomfortable quarters. When there came a brief interval of toleration, he did not occupy himself in brawling, but in preaching, and looking after the manners and morals of the little "church," including one woman who brought disagreeable charges against "Brother Honeylove." The church decided that there was nothing in the charges, but somehow the name of Brother Honeylove does not inspire confidence.

Almost everybody knows the main facts of Bunyan's life. They may not know that he was of Norman descent (as Dr. Brown seems to succeed in proving), nor that the Bunyans came over with the Conqueror, nor that he was a gipsy, as others hold. On Dr. Brown's showing, Bunyan's ancestors lost their lands in process of time and change, and Bunyan's father was a tinker. He preferred to call himself a brazier — his was the rather unexpected trade to which Mr. Dick proposed apprenticing David Copperfield.

Bunyan himself, "the wondrous babe," as Dr. Brown enthusiastically styles him, was christened on November 30th, 1628. He was born in a cottage, long fallen, and hard by was a marshy place, "a veritable slough of despond." Bunyan may have had it in mind when he wrote of the slough where Christian had so much trouble. He was not a travelled man: all his knowledge of people and places he found at his doors. He had some schooling, "according to the rate of other poor men's children," and assuredly it was enough.

The great civil war broke out, and Bunyan was a soldier; he tells us not on which side. Dr. Brown and Mr. Lewis Morris think he was on that of the Parliament, but his old father, the tinker, stood for the King. Mr. Froude is rather more inclined to hold that he was among the "gay gallants who struck for the crown." He does not seem to have been much under fire, but he got that knowledge of the appearance of war which he used in his siege of the City of Mansoul. One can hardly think that Bunyan liked war — certainly not from cowardice, but from goodness of heart.

In 1646 the army was disbanded, and Bunyan went back to Elstow village and his tinkering, his bell-ringing, his dancing with the girls, his playing at "cat" on a Sunday after service.

He married very young and poor. He married a pious wife, and read all her library— “The Plain Man’s Pathway to Heaven,” and “The Practice of Piety.” He became very devout in the spirit of the Church of England, and he gave up his amusements. Then he fell into the Slough of Despond, then he went through the Valley of the Shadow, and battled with Apollyon.

People have wondered *why* he fancied himself such a sinner? He confesses to having been a liar and a blasphemer. If I may guess, I fancy that this was merely the literary genius of Bunyan seeking for expression. His lies, I would go bail, were tremendous romances, wild fictions told for fun, never lies of cowardice or for gain. As to his blasphemies, he had an extraordinary power of language, and that was how he gave it play. “Fancy swearing” was his only literary safety-valve, in those early days, when he played cat on Elstow Green.

Then he heard a voice dart from heaven into his soul, which said, “Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?” So he fell on repentance, and passed those awful years of mental torture, when all nature seemed to tempt him to the Unknown Sin.

What did all this mean? It meant that Bunyan was within an ace of madness.

It happens to a certain proportion of men, religiously brought up, to suffer like Bunyan. They hear voices, they are afraid of that awful unknown iniquity, and of eternal death, as Bunyan and Cowper were afraid.

Was it not De Quincey who was at school with a bully who believed he had been guilty of the unpardonable offence? Bullying is an offence much less pardonable than most men are guilty of. Their best plan (in Bunyan’s misery) is to tell Apollyon that the Devil is an ass, to do their work and speak the truth.

Bunyan got quit of his terror at last, briefly by believing in the goodness of God. He did not say, like Mr. Carlyle, “Well, if all my fears are true, what then?” His was a Christian, not a stoical deliverance.

The “church” in which Bunyan found shelter had for minister a converted major in a Royalist regiment. It was a quaint little community, the members living like the early disciples, correcting each other’s faults, and keeping a severe eye on each other’s lives. Bunyan became a minister in it; but, Puritan as he was, he lets his Pilgrims dance on joyful occasions, and even Mr. Ready-to-Halt waltzes with a young lady of the Pilgrim company.

As a minister and teacher Bunyan began to write books of controversy with Quakers and clergymen. The points debated are no longer important to us; the main thing was that he got a pen into his hand, and found a proper outlet for his genius, a better way than fancy swearing.

If he had not been cast into Bedford jail for preaching in a cottage, he might never have dreamed his immortal dream, nor become all that he was. The leisures of gaol were long. In that “den” the Muse came to him, the fair kind Muse of the Home Beautiful. He saw all that company of his, so like and so unlike Chaucer’s: Faithful, and Hopeful, and Christian, the fellowship of fiends, the truculent Cavaliers of Vanity Fair, and Giant Despair, with his grievous crabtree cudgel; and other people he saw who are with us always, — the handsome Madam Bubble, and the young woman whose name was Dull, and Mr. Worldly Wiseman, and Mr. Facing Bothways, and Byends, all the persons of the comedy of human life.

He hears the angelic songs of the City beyond the river; he hears them, but repeat them to us he cannot, “for I’m no poet,” as he says himself. He beheld the country of Beulah, and the Delectable Mountains, that earthly Paradise of nature where we might be happy yet, and wander no farther, if the world would let us — fair mountains in whose streams Izaak Walton was then even casting angle.

It is pleasant to fancy how Walton and Bunyan might have met and talked, under a plane tree by the Ouse, while the May showers were falling. Surely Bunyan would not have likened the good old man to Formalist; and certainly Walton would have enjoyed travelling with Christian, though the book was by none of his dear bishops, but by a Non-conformist. They were made to like but not to convert each other; in matters ecclesiastical they saw the opposite sides of the shield. Each wrote a masterpiece. It is too late to praise “The Complete Angler” or the “Pilgrim’s Progress.” You may put ingenuity on the rack, but she can say nothing new that is true about the best romance that ever was wedded to allegory, nor about the best idyl of old English life.

The people are living now — all the people: the noisy bullying judges, as of the French Revolutionary Courts, or the Hanging Courts after Monmouth’s war; the demure, grave Puritan girls; and Matthew, who had the gripes; and lazy, feckless Ignorance, who came to so ill an end, poor fellow; and sturdy Old Honest, and timid Mr. Fearing; not single persons, but dozens, arise on the memory.

They come, as fresh, as vivid, as if they were out of Scott or Molière; the Tinker is as great a master of character and fiction as the greatest, almost; his style is pure, and plain, and sound, full of old idioms, and even of something like old slang. But even his slang is classical.

Bunyan is everybody’s author. The very Catholics have their own edition of the Pilgrim: they have cut out Giant Pope, but have been too good-natured to insert Giant Protestant in his place. Unheralded, unannounced, though not uncriticised (they accused the Tinker of being a plagiarist, of course), Bunyan outshone the Court wits, the learned, the poets of the Restoration, and even the great theologians.

His other books, except “Grace Abounding” (an autobiography), “The Holy War,” and “Mr. Badman,” are only known to students, nor much read by them. The fashion of his theology, as of all theology, passed away; it is by virtue of his imagination, of his romance, that he lives.

The allegory, of course, is full of flaws. It would not have been manly of Christian to run off and save his own soul, leaving his wife and family. But Bunyan shrank from showing us how difficult, if not impossible, it is for a married man to be a saint. Christiana was really with him all through that pilgrimage; and how he must have been hampered by that woman of the world! But had the allegory clung more closely to the skirts of truth, it would have changed from a romance to a satire, from “The Pilgrim’s Progress” to “Vanity Fair.” There was too much love in Bunyan for a satirist of that kind; he had just enough for a humourist.

Born in another class, he might have been, he would have been, a writer more refined in his strength, more uniformly excellent, but never so universal nor so popular in the best sense of the term.

In the change of times and belief it is not impossible that Bunyan will live among the class whom he least thought of addressing — scholars, lovers of worldly literature — for devotion and poverty are parting company, while art endures till civilisation perishes.

Are we better or worse for no longer believing as Bunyan believed, no longer seeing that Abyss of Pascal’s open beside our armchairs? The question is only a form of that wide riddle, Does any theological or philosophical opinion make us better or worse? The vast majority of men and women are little affected by schemes and theories of this life and the next. They who even ask for a reply to the riddle are the few: most of us take the easy-going morality of our world for a guide, as we take Bradshaw for a railway journey. It is the few who must find out an answer: on that answer their lives depend, and the lives of others are insensibly raised towards their level. Bunyan would not have been a worse man if he had shared the faith of Izaak Walton. Izaak had his reply to all questions in the Church Catechism and the Articles. Bunyan found his in the theology of his sect, appealing more strongly than orthodoxy to a nature more bellicose than Izaak’s. Men like him, with his indomitable courage, will never lack a solution of the puzzle of the earth. At worst they will live by law, whether they dare to speak of it as God’s law, or dare not. They will always be our leaders, our Captain Greathearts, in the pilgrimage to the city where, led or unled, we must all at last arrive. They will not fail us, while loyalty and valour are human qualities. The day may conceivably come when we have no Christian to march before us, but we shall never lack the company of Greatheart.

TO A YOUNG JOURNALIST

Dear Smith, — You inform me that you desire to be a journalist, and you are kind enough to ask my advice. Well, be a journalist, by all means, in any honest and honourable branch of the profession. But do not be an eavesdropper and a spy. You may fly into a passion when you receive this very plainly worded advice. I hope you will; but, for several reasons, which I now go on to state, I fear that you won’t. I fear that, either by natural gift or by acquired habit, you already possess the imperturbable temper which will be so useful to you if you do join the army of spies and eavesdroppers. If I am right, you have made up your mind to refuse to take offence, as long as by not taking offence you can wriggle yourself forward in the band of journalistic reptiles. You will be revenged on me, in that case, some day; you will lie in wait for me with a dirty bludgeon, and steal on me out of a sewer. If you do, permit me to assure you that I don’t care. But if you are already in a rage, if you are about tearing up this epistle, and are starting to assault me personally, or at least to answer me furiously, then there is every hope for you and for your future. I therefore venture to state my reasons for supposing that you are inclined to begin a course which your father, if he were alive, would deplore, as all honourable men in their hearts must deplore it. When you were at the University (let me congratulate you on your degree) you edited, or helped to edit, *The Bull-dog*. It was not a very brilliant nor a very witty, but it was an extremely “racy” periodical. It spoke of all men and dons by their nicknames. It was full of second-hand slang. It contained many personal anecdotes, to the detriment of many people. It printed garbled and spiteful versions of private conversations on private affairs. It did not even spare to make comments on ladies, and on the details of domestic life in the town and in the University. The copies which you sent me I glanced at with extreme disgust.

In my time, more than a score of years ago, a similar periodical, but a much more clever periodical, was put forth by members of the University. It contained a novel which, even now, would be worth several ill-gotten guineas to the makers of the *chronique scandaleuse*. But nobody bought it, and it died an early death. Times have altered, I am a fogey; but the ideas of honour and decency which fogies hold now were held by young men in the sixties of our century. I know very well that these ideas are obsolete. I am not preaching to the world, nor hoping to convert society, but to *you*, and purely in your own private, spiritual interest. If you enter on this path of tattle, mendacity, and malice, and if, with your cleverness and light hand, you are successful, society will not turn its back on you. You will be feared in many quarters, and welcomed in others. Of your paragraphs people will say that "it is a shame, of course, but it is very amusing." There are so many shames in the world, shames not at all amusing, that you may see no harm in adding to the number. "If I don't do it," you may argue, "some one else will." Undoubtedly; but *why should you do it*?

You are not a starving scribbler; if you determine to write, you can write well, though not so easily, on many topics. You have not that last sad excuse of hunger, which drives poor women to the streets, and makes unhappy men act as public blabs and spies. If *you* take to this *métier*, it must be because you like it, which means that you enjoy being a listener to and reporter of talk that was never meant for any ears except those in which it was uttered. It means that the hospitable board is not sacred for *you*; it means that, with you, friendship, honour, all that makes human life better than a low smoking-room, are only valuable for what their betrayal will bring. It means that not even the welfare of your country will prevent you from running to the Press with any secret which you may have been entrusted with, or which you may have surprised. It means, this peculiar kind of profession, that all things open and excellent, and conspicuous to all men, are with you of no account. Art, literature, politics, are to cease to interest you. You are to scheme to surprise gossip about the private lives, dress, and talk of artists, men of letters, politicians. Your professional work will sink below the level of servants' gossip in a public-house parlour. If you happen to meet a man of known name, you will watch him, will listen to him, will try to sneak into his confidence, and you will blab, for money, about him, and your blab will inevitably be mendacious. In short, like the most pitiable outcasts of womankind, and, without their excuse, you will live by selling your honour. You will not suffer much, nor suffer long. Your conscience will very speedily be seared with a red-hot iron. You will be on the road which leads from mere dishonour to crime; and you may find yourself actually practising *chantage*, and extorting money as the price of your silence. This is the lowest deep: the vast majority, even of social *mouchards*, do not sink so low as this.

The profession of the critic, even in honourable and open criticism, is beset with dangers. It is often hard to avoid saying an unkind thing, a cruel thing, which is smart, and which may even be deserved. Who can say that he has escaped this temptation, and what man of heart can think of his own fall without a sense of shame? There are, I admit, authors so antipathetic to me, that I cannot trust myself to review them. Would that I had never reviewed them! They cannot be so bad as they seem to me: they must have qualities which escape my observation. Then there is the temptation to hit back. Some one writes, unjustly or unkindly as you think, of you or of your friends. You wait till your enemy has written a book, and then you have your innings. It is not in nature that your review should be fair: you must inevitably be more on the look-out for faults than merits. The *éreintage*, the "smashing" of a literary foe is very delightful at the moment, but it does not look well in the light of reflection. But these deeds are mere peccadilloes compared with the confirmed habit of regarding all men and women as fair game for personal tattle and the sating of private spite. Nobody, perhaps, begins with this intention. Most men and women can find ready sophistries. If a report about any one reaches their ears, they say that they are doing him a service by publishing it and enabling him to contradict it. As if any mortal ever listened to a contradiction! And there are charges — that of plagiarism, for example — which can never be disproved, even if contradictions were listened to by the public. The accusation goes everywhere, is copied into every printed rag; the contradiction dies with the daily death of a single newspaper. You may reply that a man of sense will be indifferent to false accusations. He may, or may not be, — that is not the question for you; the question for you is whether you will circulate news that is false, probably, and spiteful, certainly.

In short, the whole affair regards yourself more than it regards the world. Plenty of poison is sold: is it well for you to be one of the merchants? Is it the business of an educated gentleman to live by the trade of an eavesdropper and a blab? In the Memoirs of M. Blowitz he tells you how he began his illustrious career by procuring the publication of remarks which M. Thiers had made to him. He then "went to see M. Thiers, not without some apprehension." Is that the kind of emotion which you wish to be habitual in your experience? Do you think it agreeable to become shame-faced when you meet people who have conversed with you frankly? Do you enjoy being a sneak, and feeling like a sneak? Do you find blushing pleasant? Of course you will soon lose the power of blushing; but is that an agreeable prospect? Depend on it, there are discomforts in the progress to the brazen, in the journey to the shameless. You may, if your tattle is political, become serviceable to men engaged in great affairs. They may even ask you to their houses, if that is your ambition. You may urge that they condone your deeds, and are even art and part in them. But you must also be aware that they call you, and think you, a reptile. You are not one of those who will do the devil's work without the devil's wages; but do you seriously think that the wages are worth the degradation?

Many men think so, and are not in other respects bad men. They may even be kindly and genial. Gentlemen they cannot be, nor men of delicacy, nor men of honour. They have sold themselves and their self-respect, some with ease (they are the least blamable), some with a struggle. They have seen better things, and perhaps vainly long to return to them. These are "St. Satan's Penitents," and their remorse is vain: *Virtutem videant*, *intabescantque relicta*.

If you don't wish to be of this dismal company, there is only one course open to you. Never write for publication one line of personal tattle. Let all men's persons and private lives be as sacred to you as your father's, — though there are tattlers who would sell paragraphs about their own mothers if there were a market for the ware. There is no half-way house on this road. Once begin to print private conversation, and you are lost — lost, that is, to delicacy and gradually, to many other things excellent and of good report. The whole question for you is, Do you mind incurring this damnation? If there is nothing in it which appals and revolts you, if your conscience is satisfied with a few ready sophisms, or if you don't care a pin for your conscience, fall to!

Vous irez loin! You will prattle in print about men's private lives their hidden motives, their waistcoats, their wives, their boots, their businesses, their incomes. Most of your prattle will inevitably be lies. But go on! nobody will kick you, I deeply regret to say. You will earn money. You will be welcomed in society. You will live and die content, and without remorse. I do not suppose that any particular *inferno* will await you in the future life. Whoever watches this world "with larger other eyes than ours" will doubtless make allowance for you, as for us all. I am not pretending to be a whit better than you; probably I am worse in many ways, but not in your way. Putting it merely as a matter of taste, I don't like the way. It makes me sick — that is all. It is a sin which I can comfortably damn, as I am not inclined to it. You may put it in that light; and I have no way of converting you, nor, if I have not dissuaded you, of dissuading you, from continuing, on a larger scale, your practices in *The Bull-dog*.

MR. KIPLING’S STORIES

The wind bloweth where it listeth. But the wind of literary inspiration has rarely shaken the bungalows of India, as, in the tales of the old Jesuit missionaries, the magical air shook the frail “medicine tents,” where Huron conjurors practised their mysteries. With a world of romance and of character at their doors, Englishmen in India have seen as if they saw it not. They have been busy in governing, in making war, making peace, building bridges, laying down roads, and writing official reports. Our literature from that continent of our conquest has been sparse indeed, except in the way of biographies, of histories, and of rather local and unintelligible *facetiæ*. Except the novels by the author of “Tara,” and Sir Henry Cunningham’s brilliant sketches, such as “Dustypore,” and Sir Alfred Lyall’s poems, we might almost say that India has contributed nothing to our finer literature. That old haunt of history, the wealth of character brought out in that confusion of races, of religions, and the old and new, has been wealth untouched, a treasure-house sealed: those pagoda trees have never been shaken. At last there comes an Englishman with eyes, with a pen extraordinarily deft, an observation marvellously rapid and keen; and, by good luck, this Englishman has no official duties: he is neither a soldier, nor a judge; he is merely a man of letters. He has leisure to look around him, he has the power of making us see what he sees; and, when we have lost India, when some new power is ruling where we ruled, when our empire has followed that of the Moguls, future generations will learn from Mr. Kipling’s works what India was under English sway.

It is one of the surprises of literature that these tiny masterpieces in prose and verse were poured, “as rich men give that care not for their gifts,” into the columns of Anglo-Indian journals. There they were thought clever and ephemeral — part of the chatter of the week. The subjects, no doubt, seemed so familiar, that the strength of the handling, the brilliance of the colour, were scarcely recognised. But Mr. Kipling’s volumes no sooner reached England than the people into whose hands they fell were certain that here were the beginnings of a new literary force. The books had the strangeness, the colour, the variety, the perfume of the East. Thus it is no wonder that Mr. Kipling’s repute grew up as rapidly as the mysterious mango tree of the conjurors. There were critics, of course, ready to say that the thing was merely a trick, and had nothing of the supernatural. That opinion is not likely to hold its ground.

Perhaps the most severe of the critics has been a young Scotch gentleman, writing French, and writing it wonderfully well, in a Parisian review. He chose to regard Mr. Kipling as little but an imitator of Bret Harte, deriving his popularity mainly from the novel and exotic character of his subjects. No doubt, if Mr. Kipling has a literary progenitor, it is Mr. Bret Harte. Among his earlier verses a few are what an imitator of the American might have written in India. But it is a wild judgment which traces Mr. Kipling's success to his use, for example, of Anglo-Indian phrases and scraps of native dialects. The presence of these elements is among the causes which have made Englishmen think Anglo-Indian literature tediously provincial, and India a bore. Mr. Kipling, on the other hand, makes us regard the continent which was a bore an enchanted land, full of marvels and magic which are real. There has, indeed, arisen a taste for exotic literature: people have become alive to the strangeness and fascination of the world beyond the bounds of Europe and the United States. But that is only because men of imagination and literary skill have been the new conquerors — the Corteses and Balboas of India, Africa, Australia, Japan, and the isles of the southern seas. All such conquerors, whether they write with the polish of M. Pierre Loti, or with the carelessness of Mr. Boldrewood, have, at least, seen new worlds for themselves; have gone out of the streets of the over-populated lands into the open air; have sailed and ridden, walked and hunted; have escaped from the fog and smoke of towns. New strength has come from fresher air into their brains and blood; hence the novelty and buoyancy of the stories which they tell. Hence, too, they are rather to be counted among romanticists than realists, however real is the essential truth of their books. They have found so much to see and to record, that they are not tempted to use the microscope, and pore for ever on the minute in character. A great deal of realism, especially in France, attracts because it is novel, because M. Zola and others have also found new worlds to conquer. But certain provinces in those worlds were not unknown to, but were voluntarily neglected by, earlier explorers. They were the "Bad Lands" of life and character: surely it is wiser to seek quite new realms than to build mud huts and dunghills on the "Bad Lands."

Mr. Kipling's work, like all good work, is both real and romantic. It is real because he sees and feels very swiftly and keenly; it is romantic, again, because he has a sharp eye for the reality of romance, for the attraction and possibility of adventure, and because he is young. If a reader wants to see petty characters displayed in all their meannesses, if this be realism, surely certain of Mr. Kipling's painted and frisky matrons are realistic enough. The seamy side of Anglo-Indian life: the intrigues, amorous or semi-political — the slang of people who describe dining as "mangling garbage" the "games of tennis with the seventh commandment” — he has not neglected any of these. Probably the sketches are true enough, and pity ’tis true: for example, the sketches in “Under the Deodars” and in “The Gadsbys.” That worthy pair, with their friends, are to myself as unsympathetic, almost, as the characters in “La Conquête de Plassans.” But Mr. Kipling is too much a true realist to make their selfishness and pettiness unbroken, unceasing. We know that “Gaddy” is a brave, modest, and hard-working soldier; and, when his little silly bride (who prefers being kissed by a man with waxed moustaches) lies near to death, certainly I am nearer to tears than when I am obliged to attend the bed of Little Dombey or of Little Nell. Probably there is a great deal of slangy and unrefined Anglo-Indian society; and, no doubt, to sketch it in its true colours is not beyond the province of art. At worst it is redeemed, in part, by its constancy in the presence of various perils — from disease, and from “the bullet flying down the pass.” Mr. Kipling may not be, and very probably is not, a reader of “Gyp”; but “The Gadsbys,” especially, reads like the work of an Anglo-Indian disciple, trammelled by certain English conventions. The more Pharisaic realists — those of the strictest sect — would probably welcome Mr. Kipling as a younger brother, so far as “Under the Deodars” and “The Gadsbys” are concerned, if he were not occasionally witty and even flippant, as well as realistic. But, very fortunately, he has not confined his observation to the leisures and pleasures of Simla; he has looked out also on war and on sport, on the life of all native tribes and castes; and has even glanced across the borders of “The Undiscovered Country.”

Among Mr. Kipling’s discoveries of new kinds of characters, probably the most popular is his invention of the British soldier in India. He avers that he “loves that very strong man, Thomas Atkins”; but his affection has not blinded him to the faults of the beloved. Mr. Atkins drinks too much, is too careless a gallant in love, has been educated either too much or too little, and has other faults, partly due, apparently, to recent military organisation, partly to the feverish and unsettled state of the civilised world. But he is still brave, when he is well led; still loyal, above all, to his “trusty chum.” Every Englishman must hope that, if Terence Mulvaney did not take the city of Lungtung Pen as described, yet he is ready, and willing so to take it. Mr. Mulvaney is as humorous as Micky Free, but more melancholy and more truculent. He has, perhaps, “won his way to the mythical” already, and is not so much a soldier, as an incarnation, not of Krishna, but of many soldierly qualities. On the other hand, Private Ortheris, especially in his frenzy, seems to shew all the truth, and much more than the life of, a photograph. Such, we presume, is the soldier, and such are his experiences and temptations and repentance. But nobody ever dreamed of telling us all this, till Mr. Kipling came. As for the soldier in action, the “Taking of Lungtung Pen,” and the “Drums of the Fore and Aft,” and that other tale of the battle with the Pathans in the gorge, are among the good fights of fiction. They stir the spirit, and they should be distributed (in addition, of course, to the “Soldier’s Pocket Book”) in the ranks of the British army. Mr. Kipling is as well informed about the soldier’s women-kind as about the soldier: about Dinah Shadd as about Terence Mulvaney. Lever never instructed us on these matters: Micky Free, if he loves, rides away; but Terence Mulvaney is true to his old woman. Gallant, loyal, reckless, vain, swaggering, and tender-hearted, Terence Mulvaney, if there were enough of him, “would take St. Petersburg in his drawers.” Can we be too grateful to an author who has extended, as Mr. Kipling in his military sketches has extended, the frontiers of our knowledge and sympathy?

It is a mere question of individual taste; but, for my own part, had I to make a small selection from Mr. Kipling’s tales, I would include more of his studies in Black than in White, and many of his excursions beyond the probable and natural. It is difficult to have one special favourite in this kind; but perhaps the story of the two English adventurers among the freemasons of unknown Kafiristan (in the “Phantom Rickshaw”) would take a very high place. The gas-heated air of the Indian newspaper office is so real, and into it comes a wanderer who has seen new faces of death, and who carries with him a head that has worn a royal crown. The contrasts are of brutal force; the legend is among the best of such strange fancies. Then there is, in the same volume, “The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes,” the most dreadful nightmare of the most awful Bunker in the realms of fancy. This is a very early work; if nothing else of Mr. Kipling’s existed, his memory might live by it, as does the memory of the American Irishman by the “Diamond Lens.” The sham magic of “In the House of Suddhu” is as terrible as true necromancy could be, and I have a *faiblesse* for the “Bisara of Pooree.” “The Gate of the Hundred Sorrows” is a realistic version of “The English Opium Eater,” and more powerful by dint of less rhetoric. As for the sketches of native life — for example, “On the City Wall” — to English readers they are no less than revelations. They testify, more even than the military stories, to the author’s swift and certain vision, his certainty in his effects. In brief, Mr. Kipling has conquered worlds, of which, as it were, we knew not the existence.

His faults are so conspicuous, so much on the surface, that they hardly need to be named. They are curiously visible to some readers who are blind to his merits. There is a false air of hardness (quite in contradiction to the sentiment in his tales of childish life); there is a knowing air; there are mannerisms, such as

“But that is another story”; there is a display of slang; there is the too obtrusive knocking of the nail on the head. Everybody can mark these errors; a few cannot overcome their antipathy, and so lose a great deal of pleasure.

It is impossible to guess how Mr. Kipling will fare if he ventures on one of the usual novels, of the orthodox length. Few men have succeeded both in the *conte* and the novel. Mr. Bret Harte is limited to the *conte*; M. Guy de Maupassant is probably at his best in it. Scott wrote but three or four short tales, and only one of these is a masterpiece. Poe never attempted a novel. Hawthorne is almost alone in his command of both kinds. We can live only in the hope that Mr. Kipling, so skilled in so many species of the *conte*, so vigorous in so many kinds of verse, will also be triumphant in the novel: though it seems unlikely that its scene can be in England, and though it is certain that a writer who so cuts to the quick will not be happy with the novel’s almost inevitable “padding.” Mr. Kipling’s longest effort, “The Light which Failed,” can, perhaps, hardly be considered a test or touchstone of his powers as a novelist. The central interest is not powerful enough; the characters are not so sympathetic, as are the interest and the characters of his short pieces. Many of these persons we have met so often that they are not mere passing acquaintances, but already find in us the loyalty due to old friends.

ROBERT F. MURRAY: A MEMOIR

R. F. MURRAY — 1863-1893

Much is written about success and failure in the career of literature, about the reasons which enable one man to reach the front, and another to earn his livelihood, while a third, in appearance as likely as either of them, fails and, perhaps, faints by the way. Mr. R. F. Murray, the author of *The Scarlet Gown*, was among those who do not attain success, in spite of qualities which seem destined to ensure it, and who fall out of the ranks. To him, indeed, success and the rewards of this world, money, and praise, did by no means seem things to be snatched at. To him success meant earning by his pen the very modest sum which sufficed for his wants, and the leisure necessary for serious essays in poetry. Fate denied him even this, in spite of his charming natural endowment of humour, of tenderness, of delight in good letters, and in nature. He died young; he was one of those whose talent matures slowly, and he died before he came into the full possession of his intellectual kingdom. He had the ambition to excel, ±¯µ½ ±Á¹ÃÄµÅµ¹½, as the Homeric motto of his University runs, and he was on the way to excellence when his health broke down. He lingered for two years and passed away.

It is a familiar story, the story of lettered youth; of an ambition, or rather of an ideal; of poverty; of struggles in the ‘dusty and stony ways’; of intellectual task-work; of a true love consoling the last months of weakness and pain. The tale is not repeated here because it is novel, nor even because in its hero we have to regret an ‘inheritor of unfulfilled renown.’ It is not the genius so much as the character of this St. Andrews student which has won the sympathy of his biographer, and may win, he hopes, the sympathy of others. In Mr. Murray I feel that I have lost that rare thing, a friend; a friend whom the chances of life threw in my way, and withdrew again ere we had time and opportunity for perfect recognition. Those who read his Letters and Remains may also feel this emotion of sympathy and regret.

He was young in years, and younger in heart, a lover of youth; and youth, if it could learn and could be warned, might win a lesson from his life. Many of us have trod in his path, and, by some kindness of fate, have found from it a sunnier exit into longer days and more fortunate conditions. Others have followed this well-beaten road to the same early and quiet end as his.

The life and the letters of Murray remind one strongly of Thomas Davidson's, as published in that admirable and touching biography, *A Scottish Probationer*. It was my own chance to be almost in touch with both these gentle, tuneful, and kindly humorists. Davidson was a Borderer, born on the skirts of 'stormy Ruberslaw,' in the country of James Thomson, of Leyden, of the old Ballad minstrels. The son of a Scottish peasant line of the old sort, honourable, refined, devout, he was educated in Edinburgh for the ministry of the United Presbyterian Church. Some beautiful verses of his appeared in the *St. Andrews University Magazine* about 1863, at the time when I first 'saw myself in print' in the same periodical. Davidson's poem delighted me: another of his, 'Ariadne in Naxos,' appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* about the same time. Mr. Thackeray, who was then editor, no doubt remembered Pen's prize poem on the same subject. I did not succeed in learning anything about the author, did not know that he lived within a drive of my own home. When next I heard of him, it was in his biography. As a 'Probationer,' or unplaced minister, he, somehow, was not successful. A humorist, a poet, a delightful companion, he never became 'a placed minister.' It was the old story of an imprudence, a journey made in damp clothes, of consumption, of the end of his earthly life and love. His letters to his betrothed, his poems, his career, constantly remind one of Murray's, who must often have joined in singing Davidson's song, so popular with St. Andrews students, *The Banks of the Yang-tse-kiang*. Love of the Border, love of Murray's 'dear St. Andrews Bay,' love of letters, make one akin to both of these friends who were lost before their friendship was won. Why did not Murray succeed to the measure of his most modest desire? If we examine the records of literary success, we find it won, in the highest fields, by what, for want of a better word, we call genius; in the lower paths, by an energy which can take pleasure in all and every exercise of pen and ink, and can communicate its pleasure to others. Now for Murray one does not venture, in face of his still not wholly developed talent, and of his checked career, to claim genius. He was not a Keats, a Burns, a Shelley: he was not, if one may choose modern examples, a Kipling or a Stevenson. On the other hand, his was a high ideal; he believed, with André Chénier, that he had 'something there,' something worthy of reverence and of careful training within him. Consequently, as we shall see, the drudgery of the pressman was excessively repulsive to him. He could take no delight in making the best of it. We learn that Mr. Kipling's early tales were written as part of hard daily journalistic work in India; written in torrid newspaper offices, to fill columns. Yet they were written with the delight of the artist, and are masterpieces in their *genre*. Murray could not make the best of ordinary pen-work in this manner. Again, he was incapable of 'transactions,' of compromises; most honourably incapable of earning his bread by agreeing, or seeming to agree with opinions which were not his. He could not endure (here I think he was wrong) to have his pieces of light and mirthful verse touched in any way by an editor. Even where no opinions were concerned, even where an editor has (to my mind) a perfect right to alter anonymous contributions, Murray declined to be edited. I ventured to remonstrate with him, to say *non est tanti*, but I spoke too late, or spoke in vain. He carried independence too far, or carried it into the wrong field, for a piece of humorous verse, say in *Punch*, is not an original masterpiece and immaculate work of art, but more or less of a joint-stock product between the editor, the author, and the public. Macaulay, and Carlyle, and Sir Walter Scott suffered editors gladly or with indifference, and who are we that we should complain? This extreme sensitiveness would always have stood in Murray's way.

Once more, Murray's interest in letters was much more energetic than his zeal in the ordinary industry of a student. As a general rule, men of original literary bent are not exemplary students at college. 'The common curricoolum,' as the Scottish laird called academic studies generally, rather repels them. Macaulay took no honours at Cambridge; mathematics defied him. Scott was 'the Greek dunce,' at Edinburgh. Thackeray, Shelley, Gibbon, did not cover themselves with college laurels; they read what pleased them, they did not read 'for the schools.' In short, this behaviour at college is the rule among men who are to be distinguished in literature, not the exception. The honours attained at Oxford by Mr. Swinburne, whose Greek verses are no less poetical than his English poetry, were inconspicuous. At St. Andrews, Murray read only 'for human pleasure,' like Scott, Thackeray, Shelley, and the rest, at Edinburgh, Oxford, and Cambridge. In this matter, I think, he made an error, and one which affected his whole career. He was not a man of private fortune, like some of those whom we have mentioned. He had not a business ready for him to step into. He had to force his own way in life, had to make himself 'self-supporting.' This was all the more essential to a man of his honourable independence of character, a man who not only would not ask a favour, but who actually shrunk back from such chances as were offered to him, if these chances seemed to be connected with the least discernible shadow of an obligation. At St. Andrews, had he chosen to work hard in certain branches of study, he might probably have gained an exhibition, gone to Oxford or elsewhere, and, by winning a fellowship, secured the leisure which was necessary for the development of his powers. I confess to believing in strenuous work at the classics, as offering, apart from all material reward, the best and most solid basis, especially where there is no exuberant original genius, for the career of a man of letters. The mental discipline is invaluable, the training in accuracy is invaluable, and invaluable is the life led in the society of the greatest minds, the noblest poets, the most faultless artists of the world. To descend to ordinary truths, scholarship is, at lowest, an honourable *gagne-pain*. But Murray, like the majority of students endowed with literary originality, did not share these rather old-fashioned ideas. The clever Scottish student is apt to work only too hard, and, perhaps, is frequently in danger of exhausting his powers before they are mature, and of injuring his health before it is confirmed. His ambitions, to lookers-on, may seem narrow and school-boyish, as if he were merely emulous, and eager for a high place in his 'class,' as lectures are called in Scotland. This was Murray's own view, and he certainly avoided the dangers of academic over-work. He read abundantly, but, as Fitzgerald says, he read 'for human pleasure.' He never was a Greek scholar, he disliked Philosophy, as presented to him in class-work; the gods had made him poetical, not metaphysical.

There was one other cause of his lack of even such slender commercial success in letters as was really necessary to a man who liked 'plain living and high thinking.' He fell early in love with a city, with a place — he lost his heart to St. Andrews. Here, at all events, his critic can sympathise with him. His 'dear St. Andrews Bay,' beautiful alike in winter mists and in the crystal days of still winter sunshine; the quiet brown streets brightened by the scarlet gowns; the long limitless sands; the dark blue distant hills, and far-off snowy peaks of the Grampians; the majestic melancholy towers, monuments of old religion overthrown; the deep dusky porch of the college chapel, with Kennedy's arms in wrought iron on the oaken door; the solid houses with their crow steps and gables, all the forlorn memories of civil and religious feud, of inhabitants saintly, royal, heroic, endeared St. Andrews to Murray. He could not say, like our other poet to Oxford, 'Farewell, dear city of youth and dream!' His whole nature needed the air, 'like wine.' He found, as he remarks, 'health and happiness in the German Ocean,' swimming out beyond the 'lake' where the witches were dipped; walking to the grey little coast-towns, with their wealth of historic documents, their ancient kirks and graves; dreaming in the vernal woods of Mount Melville or Strathtyrum; rambling (without a fishing-rod) in the charmed 'dens' of the Kenley burn, a place like Tempe in miniature: these things were Murray's usual enjoyments, and they became his indispensable needs. His peculiarly shy and, as it were, silvan nature, made it physically impossible for him to live in crowded streets and push his way through throngs of indifferent men. He could not live even in Edinburgh; he made the effort, and his health, at no time strong, seems never to have recovered from the effects of a few months spent under a roof in a large town. He hurried back to St. Andrews: her fascination was too powerful. Hence it is that, dying with his work scarcely begun, he will always be best remembered as the poet of *The Scarlet Gown*, the Calverley or J. K. S. of Kilrymont; endowed with their humour, their skill in parody, their love of youth, but (if I am not prejudiced) with more than the tenderness and natural magic of these regretted writers. Not to be able to endure crowds and towns, (a matter of physical health and constitution, as well as of temperament) was, of course, fatal to an ordinary success in journalism. On the other hand, Murray's name is inseparably connected with the life of youth in the little old college, in the University of the Admirable Crichton and Claverhouse, of the great Montrose and of Ferguson, — the harmless Villon of Scotland, — the University of almost all the famous Covenanters, and of all the valiant poet-Cavaliers. Murray has sung of the life and pleasures of its students, of examinations and *Gaudeamuses* — supper parties — he has sung of the sands, the links, the sea, the towers, and his name and fame are for ever blended with the air of his city of youth and dream. It is not a wide name or a great fame, but it is what he would have desired, and we trust that it may be long-lived and enduring. We are not to wax elegiac, and adopt a tearful tone over one so gallant and so uncomplaining. He failed, but he was undefeated.

In the following sketch of Murray's life and work use is made of his letters, chiefly of letters to his mother. They always illustrate his own ideas and attempts; frequently they throw the light of an impartial and critical mind on the distinguished people whom Murray observed from without. It is worth remarking that among many remarks on persons, I have found not one of a censorious, cynical, envious, or unfriendly nature. Youth is often captious and keenly critical; partly because youth generally has an ideal, partly, perhaps chiefly, from mere intellectual high spirits and sense of the incongruous; occasionally the motive is jealousy or spite. Murray's sense of fun was keen, his ideal was lofty; of envy, of an injured sense of being neglected, he does not show one trace. To make fun of their masters and pastors, tutors, professors, is the general and not necessarily unkind tendency of pupils. Murray rarely mentions any of the professors in St. Andrews except in terms of praise, which is often enthusiastic. Now, as he was by no means a prize student, or pattern young man for a story-book, this generosity is a high proof of an admirable nature. If he chances to speak to his mother about a bore, and he did not suffer bores gladly, he not only does not name the person, but gives no hint by which he might be identified. He had much to embitter him, for he had a keen consciousness of 'the something within him,' of the powers which never found full expression; and he saw others advancing and prospering while he seemed to be standing still, or losing ground in all ways. But no word of bitterness ever escapes him in the correspondence which I have seen. In one case he has to speak of a disagreeable and disappointing interview with a man from whom he had been led to expect sympathy and encouragement. He told me about this affair in conversation; 'There were tears in my eyes as I turned from the house,' he said, and he was not effusive. In a letter to Mrs. Murray he describes this unlucky interview, — a discouragement caused by a manner which was strange to Murray, rather than by real unkindness, — and he describes it with a delicacy, with a reserve, with a toleration, beyond all praise. These are traits of a character which was greater and more rare than his literary talent: a character quite developed, while his talent was only beginning to unfold itself, and to justify his belief in his powers.

Robert Murray was the eldest child of John and Emmeline Murray: the father a Scot, the mother of American birth. He was born at Roxbury, in Massachusetts, on December 26th, 1863. It may be fancy, but, in his shy reserve, his almost *farouche* independence, one seems to recognise the Scot; while in his cast of literary talent, in his natural 'culture,' we observe the son of a refined American lady. To his mother he could always write about the books which were interesting him, with full reliance on her sympathy, though indeed, he does not often say very much about literature.

Till 1869 he lived in various parts of New England, his father being a Unitarian minister. 'He was a remarkably cheerful and affectionate child, and seldom seemed to find anything to trouble him.' In 1869 his father carried him to England, Mrs. Murray and a child remaining in America. For more than a year the boy lived with kinsfolk near Kelso, the beautiful old town on the Tweed where Scott passed some of his childish days. In 1871 the family were reunited at York, where he was fond of attending the services in the Cathedral. Mr. Murray then took charge of the small Unitarian chapel of Blackfriars, at Canterbury. Thus Murray's early youth was passed in the mingled influences of Unitarianism at home, and of Cathedral services at York, and in the church where Becket suffered martyrdom. A not unnatural result was a somewhat eclectic and unconstrained religion. He thought but little of the differences of creed, believing that all good men held, in essentials, much the same faith. His view of essentials was generous, as he admitted. He occasionally spoke of himself as 'sceptical,' that is, in contrast with those whose faith was more definite, more dogmatic, more securely based on 'articles.' To illustrate Murray's religious attitude, at least as it was in 1887, one may quote from a letter of that year (April 17).

'There was a University sermon, and I thought I would go and hear it. So I donned my old cap and gown and felt quite proud of them. The preacher was Bishop Wordsworth. He goes in for the union of the Presbyterian and Episcopalian Churches, and is glad to preach in a Presbyterian Church, as he did this morning. How the aforesaid Union is to be brought about, I'm sure I don't know, for I am pretty certain that the Episcopalians won't give up their bishops, and the Presbyterians won't have them on any account. However, that's neither here nor there — at least it does not affect the fact that Wordsworth is a first-rate man, and a fine preacher. I dare say you know he is a nephew or grand-nephew of the Poet. He is a most venerable old man, and worth looking at, merely for his exterior. He is so feeble with age that he can with difficulty climb the three short steps that lead into the pulpit; but, once in the pulpit, it is another thing. There is no feebleness when he begins to preach. He is one of the last voices of the old orthodox school, and I wish there were hundreds like him. If ever a man believed in his message, Wordsworth does. And though I cannot follow him in his veneration for the Thirty-nine Articles, the way in which he does makes me half wish I could. . . . It was full of wisdom and the beauty of holiness, which even I, poor sceptic and outcast, could recognise and appreciate. After all, he didn't get it from the Articles, but from his own human heart, which, he told us, was deceitful and desperately wicked.

'Confound it, how stupid we all are! Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Unitarians, Agnostics; the whole lot of us. We all believe the same things, to a great extent; but we must keep wrangling about the data from which we infer these beliefs . . . I believe a great deal that he does, but I certainly don't act up to my belief as he does to his.'

The belief 'up to' which Murray lived was, if it may be judged by its fruits, that of a Christian man. But, in this age, we do find the most exemplary Christian conduct in some who have discarded dogma and resigned hope. Probably Murray would not the less have regarded these persons as Christians. If we must make a choice, it is better to have love and charity without belief, than belief of the most intense kind, accompanied by such love and charity as John Knox bore to all who differed from him about a mass or a chasuble, a priest or a presbyter. This letter, illustrative of the effect of cathedral services on a young Unitarian, is taken out of its proper chronological place.

From Canterbury Mr. Murray went to Ilminster in Somerset. Here Robert attended the Grammar School; in 1879 he went to the Grammar School of Crewkerne. In 1881 he entered at the University of St. Andrews, with a scholarship won as an external student of Manchester New College. This he resigned not long after, as he had abandoned the idea of becoming a Unitarian minister.

No longer a schoolboy, he was now a *Bejant* (*bec jaune*?), to use the old Scotch term for ‘freshman.’ He liked the picturesque word, and opposed the introduction of ‘freshman.’ Indeed he liked all things old, and, as a senior man, was a supporter of ancient customs and of *esprit de corps* in college. He fell in love for life with that old and grey enchantress, the city of St. Margaret, of Cardinal Beaton, of Knox and Andrew Melville, of Archbishop Sharp, and Samuel Rutherford. The nature of life and education in a Scottish university is now, probably, better understood in England than it used to be. Of the Scottish universities, St. Andrews varies least, though it varies much, from Oxford and Cambridge. Unlike the others, Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, the United College of St. Leonard and St. Salvator is not lost in a large town. The College and the Divinity Hall of St. Mary’s are a survival from the Middle Ages. The University itself arose from a voluntary association of the learned in 1410. Privileges were conferred on this association by Bishop Wardlaw in 1411. It was intended as a bulwark against Lollard ideas. In 1413 the Antipope Benedict XIII., to whom Scotland then adhered, granted six bulls of confirmation to the new University. Not till 1430 did Bishop Wardlaw give a building in South Street, the Pædagogium. St. Salvator’s College was founded by Bishop Kennedy (1440-1466): it was confirmed by Pius II. in 1458. Kennedy endowed his foundation richly with plate (a silver mace is still extant) and with gorgeous furniture and cloth of gold. St. Leonard’s was founded by Prior Hepburn in 1512. Of St. Salvator’s the ancient chapel still remains, and is in use. St. Leonard’s was merged with St. Salvator’s in the last century: its chapel is now roofless, some of the old buildings remain, much modernised, but on the south side fronting the gardens they are still picturesque. Both Colleges were, originally, places of residence for the students, as at Oxford and Cambridge, and the discipline, especially at St. Leonard’s, was rather monastic. The Reformation caused violent changes; all through these troubled ages the new doctrines, and then the violent Presbyterian pretensions to clerical influence in politics, and the Covenant and the Restoration and Revolution, kept busy the dwellers in what should have been ‘quiet collegiate cloisters.’ St. Leonard’s was more extreme, on Knox’s side, than St. Salvator’s, but was also more devoted to King James in 1715. From St. Andrews Simon Lovat went to lead his abominable old father’s clan, on the Prince Regent’s side, in 1745. Golf and archery, since the Reformation at least, were the chief recreations of the students, and the archery medals bear all the noblest names of the North, including those of Argyll and the great Marquis of Montrose. Early in the present century the old ruinous college buildings of St. Salvator’s ceased to be habitable, except by a ghost! There is another spectre of a noisy sort in St.

Leonard's. The new buildings are mere sets of class-rooms, the students live where they please, generally in lodgings, which they modestly call *bunks*. There is a hall for dinners in common; it is part of the buildings of the Union, a new hall added to an ancient house.

It was thus to a university with ancient associations, with a *religio loci*, and with more united and harmonious student-life than is customary in Scotland, that Murray came in 1881. How clearly his biographer remembers coming to the same place, twenty years earlier! how vivid is his memory of quaint streets, grey towers, and the North Sea breaking in heavy rollers on the little pier!

Though, like a descendant of Archbishop Sharp, and a winner of the archery medal, I boast myself *Sancti Leonardi alumnus addictissimus,* I am unable to give a description, at first hand, of student life in St. Andrews. In my time, a small set of 'men' lived together in what was then St. Leonard's Hall. The buildings that remain on the site of Prior Hepburn's foundation, or some of them, were turned into a hall, where we lived together, not scattered in *bunks*. The existence was mainly like that of pupils of a private tutor; seven-eighths of private tutor to one-eighth of a college in the English universities. We attended the lectures in the University, we distinguished ourselves no more than Murray would have approved of, and many of us have remained united by friendship through half a lifetime.

It was a pleasant existence, and the perfume of buds and flowers in the old gardens, hard by those where John Knox sat and talked with James Melville and our other predecessors at St. Leonard's, is fragrant in our memories. It was pleasant, but St. Leonard's Hall has ceased to be, and the life there was not the life of the free and hardy bunk-dwellers. Whoso pined for such dissipated pleasures as the chill and dark streets of St. Andrews offer to the gay and rousing blade, was not encouraged. We were very strictly 'gated,' though the whole society once got out of window, and, by way of protest, made a moonlight march into the country. We attended 'gaudeamuses' and *solatia* — University suppers — but little; indeed, he who writes does not remember any such diversions of boys who beat the floor, and break the glass. To plant the standard of cricket in the remoter gardens of our country, in a region devastated by golf, was our ambition, and here we had no assistance at all from the University. It was chiefly at lecture, at football on the links, and in the debating societies that we met our fellow-students; like the celebrated starling, 'we could not get out,' except to permitted dinners and evening parties. Consequently one could only sketch student life with a hand faltering and untrained. It was very different with Murray and his friends. They were their own masters, could sit up to all hours, smoking, talking, and, I dare say, drinking. As I gather from his letters, Murray drank nothing stronger than water. There was a certain kind of humour in drink, he said, but he thought it was chiefly obvious to the sober spectator. As the sober spectator, he sang of violent delights which have violent ends. He may best be left to illustrate student life for himself. The ‘waster’ of whom he chants is the slang name borne by the local fast man.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPLEAT ANGLER

ANDREW LANG'S INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPLEAT ANGLER

To write on Walton is, indeed, to hold a candle to the sun. The editor has been content to give a summary of the chief or rather the only known, events in Walton's long life, adding a notice of his character as displayed in his Biographies and in *The Compleat Angler*, with comments on the ancient and modern practice of fishing, illustrated by passages from Walton's foregoers and contemporaries. Like all editors of Walton, he owes much to his predecessors, Sir John Hawkins, Oldys, Major, and, above all, to the learned Sir Harris Nicolas.

HIS LIFE

The few events in the long life of Izaak Walton have been carefully investigated by Sir Harris Nicolas. All that can be extricated from documents by the alchemy of research has been selected, and I am unaware of any important acquisitions since Sir Harris Nicolas's second edition of 1860. Izaak was of an old family of Staffordshire yeomen, probably descendants of George Walton of Yoxhall, who died in 1571. Izaak's father was Jarvis Walton, who died in February 1595-6; of Izaak's mother nothing is known. Izaak himself was born at Stafford, on August 9, 1593, and was baptized on September 21. He died on December 15, 1683, having lived in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., Charles I., under the Commonwealth, and under Charles II. The anxious and changeful age through which he passed is in contrast with his very pacific character and tranquil pursuits.

Of Walton's education nothing is known, except on the evidence of his writings. He may have read Latin, but most of the books he cites had English translations. Did he learn his religion from 'his mother or his nurse'? It will be seen that the free speculation of his age left him untouched: perhaps his piety was awakened, from childhood, under the instruction of a pious mother. Had he been orphaned of both parents (as has been suggested) he might have been less amenable to authority, and a less notable example of the virtues which

Anglicanism so vainly opposed to Puritanismism. His literary beginnings are obscure. There exists a copy of a work, *The Loves of Amos and Laura*, written by S. P., published in 1613, and again in 1619. The edition of 1619 is dedicated to 'Iz. Wa.': —

'Thou being cause *it is as now it is*';

the Dedication does not occur in the one imperfect known copy of 1613. Conceivably the words, 'as now it is' refer to the edition of 1619, which might have been emended by Walton's advice. But there are no emendations, hence it is more probable that Walton revised the poem in 1613, when he was a man of twenty, or that he merely advised the author to publish: —

'For, hadst thou held thy tongue, by silence might
These have been buried in oblivion's night.'

S. P. also remarks: —

'No ill thing can be clothed in thy verse';

hence Izaak was already a rhymer, and a harmless one, under the Royal Prentice, gentle King Jamie.

By this time Walton was probably settled in London. A deed in the possession of his biographer, Dr. Johnson's friend, Sir John Hawkins, shows that, in 1614, Walton held half of a shop on the north side of Fleet Street, two doors west of Chancery Lane: the other occupant was a hosier. Mr. Nicholl has discovered that Walton was made free of the Ironmongers' Company on Nov. 12, 1618. He is styled an Ironmonger in his marriage licence. The facts are given in Mr. Marston's Life of Walton, prefixed to his edition of *The Compleat Angler* (1888). It is odd that a prentice ironmonger should have been a poet and a critic of poetry. Dr. Donne, before 1614, was Vicar of St. Dunstan's in the West, and in Walton had a parishioner, a disciple, and a friend. Izaak greatly loved the society of the clergy: he connected himself with Episcopal families, and had a natural taste for a Bishop. Through Donne, perhaps, or it may be in converse across the counter, he made acquaintance with Hales of Eton, Dr. King, and Sir Henry Wotton, himself an angler, and one who, like Donne and Izaak, loved a ghost story, and had several in his family. Drayton, the river-poet, author of the *Polyolbion*, is also spoken of by Walton as 'my old deceased friend.'

On Dec. 27, 1626, Walton married, at Canterbury, Rachel Floud, a niece, on the maternal side, by several descents, of Cranmer, the famous Archbishop of Canterbury. The Cranmers were intimate with the family of the judicious Hooker, and Walton was again connected with kinsfolk of that celebrated divine. Donne died in 1631, leaving to Walton, and to other friends, a bloodstone engraved with Christ crucified on an anchor: the seal is impressed on Walton's will. When Donne's poems were published in 1633, Walton added commendatory verses: —

'As all lament
(Or should) this general cause of discontent.'

The parenthetic 'or should' is much in Walton's manner. 'Witness my mild pen, not used to upbraid the world,' is also a pleasant and accurate piece of self-criticism. 'I am his convert,' Walton exclaims. In a citation from a manuscript which cannot be found, and perhaps never existed, Walton is spoken of as 'a very sweet poet in his youth, and more than all in matters of love.' Donne had been in the same case: he, or Time, may have converted Walton from amorous ditties. Walton, in an edition of Donne's poems of 1635, writes of

'This book (dry emblem) which begins
With love; but ends with tears and sighs for sins.'

The preacher and his convert had probably a similar history of the heart: as we shall see, Walton, like the Cyclops, had known love. Early in 1639, Wotton wrote to Walton about a proposed Life of Donne, to be written by himself, and hoped 'to enjoy your own ever welcome company in the approaching time of the *Fly* and the *Cork*.' Wotton was a fly-fisher; the cork, or float, or 'trembling quill,' marks Izaak for the bottom-fisher he was. Wotton died in December 1639; Walton prefixed his own Life of Donne to that divine's sermons in 1640. He says, in the Dedication of the reprint of 1658, that 'it had the approbation of our late learned and eloquent King,' the martyred Charles I. Living in, or at the corner of Chancery Lane, Walton is known to have held parochial office: he was even elected 'scavenger.' He had the misfortune to lose seven children — of whom the last died in 1641 — his wife, and his mother-in-law. In 1644 he left Chancery Lane, and probably retired from trade. He was, of course, a Royalist. Speaking of the entry of the Scots, who came, as one of them said, 'for the goods, — and chattels of the English,' he remarks, 'I saw and suffered by it.' He also mentions that he 'saw' shops shut by their owners till Laud should be put to death, in January 1645. In his Life of Sanderson, Walton vouches for an anecdote of 'the knowing and conscientious King,' Charles, who, he says, meant to do public penance for Strafford's death, and for the abolishing of Episcopacy in Scotland. But the condition, 'peaceable possession of the Crown,' was not granted to Charles, nor could have been granted to a prince who wished to reintroduce Bishops in Scotland. Walton had his information from Dr. Morley. On Nov. 25, 1645, Walton probably wrote, though John Marriott signed, an Address to the Reader, printed, in 1646, with Quarles's *Shepherd's Eclogues*. The piece is a little idyll in prose, and 'angle, lines, and flies' are not omitted in the description of 'the fruitful month of May,' while Pan is implored to restore Arcadian peace to Britannia, 'and grant that each honest shepherd may again sit under his own vine and fig-tree, and feed his own flock,' when the King comes, no doubt. 'About' 1646 Walton married Anne, half-sister of Bishop Ken, a lady 'of much Christian meeknesse.' Sir Harris Nicolas thinks that he only visited Stafford occasionally, in these troubled years. He mentions fishing in 'Shawford brook'; he was likely to fish wherever there was water, and the brook flowed through land which, as Mr. Marston shows, he acquired about 1656. In 1650 a child was born to Walton in Clerkenwell; it died, but another, Isaac, was born in September 1651. In 1651 he published the *Reliquiae Wottonianae*, with a Memoir of Sir Henry Wotton. The knight had valued Walton's company as a cure for 'those splenetic vapours that are called hypochondriacal.'

Worcester fight was on September 3, 1651; the king was defeated, and fled, escaping, thanks to a stand made by Wogan, and to the loyalty of Mistress Jane Lane, and of many other faithful adherents. A jewel of Charles's, the lesser George, was preserved by Colonel Blague, who intrusted it to Mr. Barlow of Blore Pipe House, in Staffordshire. Mr. Barlow gave it to Mr. Milward, a Royalist prisoner in Stafford, and he, in turn, intrusted it to Walton, who managed to convey it to Colonel Blague in the Tower. The colonel escaped, and the George was given back to the king. Ashmole, who tells the story, mentions Walton as 'well beloved of all good men.' This incident is, perhaps, the only known adventure in the long life of old Izaak. The peaceful angler, with a royal jewel in his pocket, must have encountered many dangers on the highway. He was a man of sixty when he published his *Compleat Angler* in 1653, and so secured immortality. The quiet beauties of his manner in his various biographies would only have made him known to a few students, who could never have recognised Byron's 'quaint, old, cruel coxcomb' in their author. 'The whole discourse is a kind of picture of my own disposition, at least of my disposition in such days and times as I allow myself when honest Nat. and R. R. and I go a-fishing together.' Izaak speaks of the possibility that his book may reach a second edition. There are now editions more than a hundred! Waltonians should read Mr. Thomas Westwood's Preface to his *Chronicle of the Compleat Angler*: it is reprinted in Mr. Marston's edition. Mr. Westwood learned to admire Walton at the feet of Charles Lamb: —

‘No fisher,
But a well-wisher
To the game,’

as Scott describes himself.

Lamb recommended Walton to Coleridge; ‘it breathes the very spirit of innocence, purity, and simplicity of heart; . . . it would sweeten a man’s temper at any time to read it; it would Christianise every angry, discordant passion; pray make yourself acquainted with it.’ (Oct. 28, 1796.) According to Mr. Westwood, Lamb had ‘an early copy,’ found in a repository of marine stores, but not, even then, to be bought a bargain. Mr. Westwood fears that Lamb’s copy was only Hawkins’s edition of 1760. The original is extremely scarce. Mr. Locker had a fine copy; there is another in the library of Dorchester House: both are in their primitive livery of brown sheep, or calf. The book is one which only the wealthy collector can hope, with luck, to call his own. A small octavo, sold at eighteenpence, *The Compleat Angler* was certain to be thumbed into nothingness, after enduring much from May showers, July suns, and fishy companionship. It is almost a wonder that any examples of Walton’s and Bunyan’s first editions have survived into our day. The little volume was meant to find a place in the bulging pockets of anglers, and was well adapted to that end. The work should be reprinted in a similar format: quarto editions are out of place.

The fortunes of the book, the *fata libelli*, have been traced by Mr. Westwood. There are several misprints (later corrected) in the earliest copies, as () ‘Fordig’ for ‘Fordidg,’ () ‘Pudoch’ for ‘Pudock.’ The appearance of the work was advertised in *The Perfect Diurnal* (May 9-16), and in No. 154 of *The Mercurius Politicus* (May 19-26), also in an almanack for 1654. Izaak, or his publisher Marriott, cunningly brought out the book at a season when men expect the Mayfly. Just a month before, Oliver Cromwell had walked into the House of Commons, in a plain suit of black clothes, with grey stockings. His language, when he spoke, was reckoned unparliamentary (as it undeniably was), and he dissolved the Long Parliament. While Marriott was advertising Walton’s work, Cromwell was making a Parliament of Saints, ‘faithful, fearing God, and hating covetousness.’ This is a good description of Izaak, but he was not selected. In the midst of revolutions came *The Compleat Angler* to the light, a possession for ever. Its original purchasers are not likely to have taken a hand in Royalist plots or saintly conventicles. They were peaceful men. A certain Cromwellian trooper, Richard Franck, was a better angler than Walton, and he has left to us the only contemporary and contemptuous criticism of his book: to this we shall return, but anglers, as a rule, unlike Franck, must have been for the king, and on Izaak's side in controversy.

Walton brought out a second edition in 1655. He rewrote the book, adding more than a third, suppressing *Viator*, and introducing *Venator*. New plates were added, and, after the manner of the time, commendatory verses. A third edition appeared in 1661, a fourth (published by Simon Gape, not by Marriott) came out in 1664, a fifth in 1668 (counting Gape's of 1664 as a new edition), and in 1676, the work, with treatises by Venables and Charles Cotton, was given to the world as *The Universal Angler*. Five editions in twelve years is not bad evidence of Walton's popularity. But times now altered. Walton is really an Elizabethan: he has the quaint freshness, the apparently artless music of language of the great age. He is a friend of 'country contents': no lover of the town, no keen student of urban ways and mundane men. A new taste, modelled on that of the wits of Louis XIV., had come in: we are in the period of Dryden, and approaching that of Pope.

There was no new edition of Walton till Moses Browne (by Johnson's desire) published him, with 'improvements,' in 1750. Then came Hawkins's edition in 1760. Johnson said of Hawkins, 'Why, ma'am, I believe him to be an honest man at the bottom; but, to be sure, he is penurious, and he is mean, and it must be owned he has a degree of brutality, and a tendency to savageness, that cannot easily be defended.'

This was hardly the editor for Izaak! However, Hawkins, probably by aid of Oldys the antiquary (as Mr. Marston shows), laid a good foundation for a biography of Walton. Errors he made, but Sir Harris Nicolas has corrected them. Johnson himself reckoned Walton's *Lives* as 'one of his most favourite books.' He preferred the life of Donne, and justly complained that Walton's story of Donne's vision of his absent wife had been left out of a modern edition. He explained Walton's friendship with persons of higher rank by his being 'a great panegyrist.'

The eighteenth century, we see, came back to Walton, as the nineteenth has done. He was precisely the author to suit Charles Lamb. He was reprinted again and again, and illustrated by Stoddart and others. Among his best editors are Major (1839), 'Ephemera' (1853), Nicolas (1836, 1860), and Mr. Marston (1888).

The only contemporary criticism known to me is that of Richard Franck, who had served with Cromwell in Scotland, and, not liking the aspect of changing times, returned to the north, and fished from the Esk to Strathnaver. In 1658 he wrote his *Northern Memoirs*, an itinerary of sport, heavily cumbered by dull reflections and pedantic style. Franck, however, was a practical angler, especially for salmon, a fish of which Walton knew nothing: he also appreciated the character of the great Montrose. He went to America, wrote a wild cosmogonic work, and *The Admirable and Indefatigable Adventures of the Nine Pious Pilgrims* (one pilgrim catches a trout!) (London, 1708). The *Northern Memoirs* of 1658 were not published till 1694. Sir Walter Scott edited a new issue, in 1821, and defended Izaak from the strictures of the salmon-fisher. Izaak, says Franck, 'lays the stress of his arguments upon other men's observations, wherewith he stuffs his indigested octavo; so brings himself under the angler's censure and the common calamity of a plagiary, to be pitied (poor man) for his loss of time, in scribbling and transcribing other men's notions. . . . I remember in Stafford, I urged his own argument upon him, that pickerel weed of itself breeds pickerel (pike).' Franck proposed a rational theory, 'which my Compleat Angler no sooner deliberated, but dropped his argument, and leaves Gesner to defend it, so huffed away. . . . ' 'So note, the true character of an industrious angler more deservedly falls upon Merrill and Faulkner, or rather Izaak Ouldham, a man that fished salmon with but three hairs at hook, whose collections and experiments were lost with himself,' — a matter much to be regretted. It will be observed, of course, that hair was then used, and gut is first mentioned for angling purposes by Mr. Pepys. Indeed, the flies which Scott was hunting for when he found the lost Ms. of the first part of *Waverley* are tied on horse-hairs. They are in the possession of the descendants of Scott's friend, Mr. William Laidlaw. The curious angler, consulting Franck, will find that his salmon flies are much like our own, but less variegated. Scott justly remarks that, while Walton was habit and repute a bait-fisher, even Cotton knows nothing of salmon. Scott wished that Walton had made the northern tour, but Izaak would have been sadly to seek, running after a fish down a gorge of the Shin or the Brora, and the discomforts of the north would have finished his career. In Scotland he would not have found fresh sheets smelling of lavender.

Walton was in London 'in the dangerous year 1655.' He speaks of his meeting Bishop Sanderson there, 'in sad-coloured clothes, and, God knows, far from being costly.' The friends were driven by wind and rain into 'a cleanly house, where we had bread, cheese, ale, and a fire, for our ready money. The rain and wind were so obliging to me, as to force our stay there for at least an hour, to my great content and advantage; for in that time he made to me many useful observations of the present times with much clearness and conscientious freedom.' It was a year of Republican and Royalist conspiracies: the clergy were persecuted and banished from London.

No more is known of Walton till the happy year 1660, when the king came to his own again, and Walton's Episcopal friends to their palaces. Izaak produced an ‘Eglog,’ on May 29: —

‘The king! The king’s returned! And now
Let’s banish all sad thoughts, and sing:
We have our laws, and have our king.’

If Izaak was so eccentric as to go to bed sober on that glorious twenty-ninth of May, I greatly misjudge him. But he grew elderly. In 1661 he chronicles the deaths of ‘honest Nat. and R. Roe, — they are gone, and with them most of my pleasant hours, even as a shadow that passeth away, and returns not.’ On April 17, 1662, Walton lost his second wife: she died at Worcester, probably on a visit to Bishop Morley. In the same year, the bishop was translated to Winchester, where the palace became Izaak’s home. The Itchen (where, no doubt, he angled with worm) must have been his constant haunt. He was busy with his Life of Richard Hooker (1665). The peroration, as it were, was altered and expanded in 1670, and this is but one example of Walton’s care of his periods. One beautiful passage he is known to have rewritten several times, till his ear was satisfied with its cadences. In 1670 he published his Life of George Herbert. ‘I wish, if God shall be so pleased, that I may be so happy as to die like him.’ In 1673, in a Dedication of the third edition of *Reliquiae Wottonianae*, Walton alludes to his friendship with a much younger and gayer man than himself, Charles Cotton (born 1630), the friend of Colonel Richard Lovelace, and of Sir John Suckling: the translator of Scarron’s travesty of Virgil, and of Montaigne’s *Essays*. Cotton was a roisterer, a man at one time deep in debt, but he was a Royalist, a scholar, and an angler. The friendship between him and Walton is creditable to the freshness of the old man and to the kindness of the younger, who, to be sure, laughed at Izaak’s heavily dubbed London flies. ‘In him,’ says Cotton, ‘I have the happiness to know the worthiest man, and to enjoy the best and the truest friend any man ever had.’ We are reminded of Johnson with Langton and Topham Beauclerk. Meanwhile Izaak the younger had grown up, was educated under Dr. Fell at Christ Church, and made the Grand Tour in 1675, visiting Rome and Venice. In March 1676 he proceeded M.A. and took Holy Orders. In this year Cotton wrote his treatise on fly-fishing, to be published with Walton’s new edition; and the famous fishing house on the Dove, with the blended initials of the two friends, was built. In 1678, Walton wrote his Life of Sanderson. . . . ‘’Tis now too late to wish that my life may be like his, for I am in the eighty-fifth year of my age, but I humbly beseech Almighty God that my death may be; and do as earnestly beg of every reader to say Amen!’ He wrote, in 1678, a preface to *Thealma and Clearchus* (1683). The poem is attributed to John

Chalkhill, a Fellow of Winchester College, who died, a man of eighty, in 1679. Two of his songs are in *The Compleat Angler*. Probably the attribution is right: Chalkhill's tomb commemorates a man after Walton's own heart, but some have assigned the volume to Walton himself. Chalkhill is described, on the title-page, as 'an acquaintant and friend of Edmund Spencer,' which is impossible.

On August 9, 1683, Walton wrote his will, 'in the neintyeth year of my age, and in perfect memory, for which praised be God.' He professes the Anglican faith, despite 'a very long and very trew friendship for some of the Roman Church.' His worldly estate he has acquired 'neither by falsehood or flattery or the extreme crewelty of the law of this nation.' His property was in two houses in London, the lease of Norington farm, a farm near Stafford, besides books, linen, and a hanging cabinet inscribed with his name, now, it seems, in the possession of Mr. Elkin Mathews. A bequest is made of money for coals to the poor of Stafford, 'every last weike in Janewary, or in every first weike in Febrewary; I say then, because I take that time to be the hardest and most pinching times with pore people.' To the Bishop of Winchester he bequeathed a ring with the posy, 'A Mite for a Million.' There are other bequests, including ten pounds to 'my old friend, Mr. Richard Marriott,' Walton's bookseller. This good man died in peace with his publisher, leaving him also a ring. A ring was left to a lady of the Portsmouth family, 'Mrs. Doro. Wallop.'

Walton died, at the house of his son-in-law, Dr. Hawkins, in Winchester, on Dec. 15, 1683: he is buried in the south aisle of the Cathedral. The Cathedral library possesses many of Walton's books, with his name written in them. His *Eusebius* (1636) contains, on the fly-leaf, repetitions, in various forms, of one of his studied passages. Simple as he seems, he is a careful artist in language.

Such are the scanty records, and scantier relics, of a very long life. Circumstances and inclination combined to make Walpole choose the *fallentis semita vitae*. Without ambition, save to be in the society of good men, he passed through turmoil, ever companioned by content. For him existence had its trials: he saw all that he held most sacred overthrown; laws broken up; his king publicly murdered; his friends outcasts; his worship proscribed; he himself suffered in property from the raid of the Kirk into England. He underwent many bereavements: child after child he lost, but content he did not lose, nor sweetness of heart, nor belief. His was one of those happy characters which are never found disassociated from unquestioning faith. Of old he might have been the ancient religious Athenian in the opening of Plato's *Republic*, or Virgil's aged gardener. The happiness of such natures would be incomplete without religion, but only by such tranquil and blessed souls can religion be accepted with no doubt or scruple, no dread, and no misgiving. In his Preface to *Thealma and*

Clearchus Walton writes, and we may use his own words about his own works: 'The Reader will here find such various events and rewards of innocent Truth and undissembled Honesty, as is like to leave in him (if he be a good-natured reader) more sympathising and virtuous impressions, than ten times so much time spent in impertinent, critical, and needless disputes about religion.' Walton relied on authority; on 'a plain, unperplexed catechism.' In an age of the strangest and most dissident theological speculations, an age of Quakers, Anabaptists, Antinomians, Fifth Monarchy Men, Covenanters, Independents, Gibbites, Presbyterians, and what not, Walton was true to the authority of the Church of England, with no prejudice against the ancient Catholic faith. As Gesner was his authority for pickerel weed begetting pike, so the Anglican bishops were security for Walton's creed.

To him, if we may say so, it was easy to be saved, while Bunyan, a greater humorist, could be saved only in following a path that skirted madness, and 'as by fire.' To Bunyan, Walton would have seemed a figure like his own Ignorance; a pilgrim who never stuck in the Slough of Despond, nor met Apollyon in the Valley of the Shadow, nor was captive in Doubting Castle, nor stoned in Vanity Fair. And of Bunyan, Walton would have said that he was among those Nonconformists who 'might be sincere, well-meaning men, whose indiscreet zeal might be so like charity, as thereby to cover a multitude of errors.' To Walton there seemed spiritual solace in remembering 'that we have comforted and been helpful to a dejected or distressed family.' Bunyan would have regarded this belief as a heresy, and (theoretically) charitable deeds 'as filthy rags.' Differently constituted, these excellent men accepted religion in different ways. Christian bows beneath a burden of sin; Piscator beneath a basket of trout. Let us be grateful for the diversities of human nature, and the dissimilar paths which lead Piscator and Christian alike to the City not built with hands. Both were seekers for a City which to have sought through life, in patience, honesty, loyalty, and love, is to have found it. Of Walton's book we may say: —

'Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula quae te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello.'

WALTON AS A BIOGRAPHER

It was probably by his *Lives*, rather than, in the first instance, by his *Angler*, that

Walton won the liking of Dr. Johnson, whence came his literary resurrection. It is true that Moses Browne and Hawkins, both friends of Johnson's, edited *The Compleat Angler* before 1775-1776, when we find Dr. Home of Magdalene, Oxford, contemplating a 'benoted' edition of the *Lives*, by Johnson's advice. But the Walton of the *Lives* is, rather than the Walton of the *Angler*, the man after Johnson's own heart. The *Angler* is 'a picture of my own disposition' on holidays. The *Lives* display the same disposition in serious moods, and in face of the eternal problems of man's life in society. Johnson, we know, was very fond of biography, had thought much on the subject, and, as Boswell notes, 'varied from himself in talk,' when he discussed the measure of truth permitted to biographers. 'If a man is to write a *Panegyrick*, he may keep vices out of sight; but if he professes to write a *Life*, he must represent it as it really was.' Peculiarities were not to be concealed, he said, and his own were not veiled by Boswell. 'Nobody can write the life of a man but those who have eat and drunk and lived in social intercourse with him.' 'They only who live with a man can write his life with any genuine exactness and discrimination; and few people who have lived with a man know what to remark about him.' Walton had lived much in the society of his subjects, Donne and Wotton; with Sanderson he had a slighter acquaintance; George Herbert he had only met; Hooker, of course, he had never seen in the flesh. It is obvious to every reader that his biographies of Donne and Wotton are his best. In Donne's Life he feels that he is writing of an English St. Austin,— 'for I think none was so like him before his conversion; none so like St. Ambrose after it: and if his youth had the infirmities of the one, his age had the excellencies of the other; the learning and holiness of both.'

St. Augustine made free confession of his own infirmities of youth. With great delicacy Walton lets Donne also confess himself, printing a letter in which he declines to take Holy Orders, because his course of life when very young had been too notorious. Delicacy and tact are as notable in Walton's account of Donne's poverty, melancholy, and conversion through the blessed means of gentle King Jamie. Walton had an awful loyalty, a sincere reverence for the office of a king. But wherever he introduces King James, either in his Donne or his Wotton, you see a subdued version of the King James of *The Fortunes of Nigel*. The pedantry, the good nature, the touchiness, the humour, the nervousness, are all here. It only needs a touch of the king's broad accent to set before us, as vividly as in Scott, the interviews with Donne, and that singular scene when Wotton, disguised as Octavio Baldi, deposits his long rapier at the door of his majesty's chamber. Wotton, in Florence, was warned of a plot to murder James VI. The duke gave him 'such Italian antidotes against poison as the Scots till then had been strangers to': indeed, there is no antidote for a dirk, and the Scots were not poisoners. Introduced by Lindsay as ‘Octavio Baldi,’ Wotton found his nervous majesty accompanied by four Scottish nobles. He spoke in Italian; then, drawing near, hastily whispered that he was an Englishman, and prayed for a private interview. This, by some art, he obtained, delivered his antidotes, and, when James succeeded Elizabeth, rose to high favour. Izaak’s suppressed humour makes it plain that Wotton had acted the scene for him, from the moment of leaving the long rapier at the door. Again, telling how Wotton, in his peaceful hours as Provost of Eton, intended to write a Life of Luther, he says that King Charles diverted him from his purpose to attempting a History of England ‘by a persuasive loving violence (to which may be added a promise of £500 a year).’ He likes these parenthetic touches, as in his description of Donne, ‘always preaching to himself, like an angel from a cloud, — *but in none*.’ Again, of a commendation of one of his heroes he says, ‘it is a known truth, — though it be in verse.’

A memory of the days when Izaak was an amorist, and shone in love ditties, appears thus. He is speaking of Donne: —

‘Love is a flattering mischief . . . a passion that carries us to commit errors with as much ease as whirlwinds remove feathers.’

‘The tears of lovers, or beauty dressed in sadness, are observed to have in them a charming sadness, and to become very often too strong to be resisted.’

These are examples of Walton’s sympathy: his power of portrait-drawing is especially attested by his study of Donne, as the young gallant and poet, the unhappy lover, the man of state out of place and neglected; the heavily burdened father, the conscientious scholar, the charming yet ascetic preacher and divine, the saint who, dying, makes himself in his own shroud, an emblem of mortality.

As an example of Walton’s style, take the famous vision of Dr. Donne in Paris. He had left his wife expecting her confinement: —

‘Two days after their arrival there, Mr. Donne was left alone in that room in which Sir Robert and he, and some other friends, had dined together. To this place Sir Robert returned within half an hour, and as he left, so he found Mr. Donne alone, but in such an ecstacy, and so altered as to his looks, as amazed Sir Robert to behold him; insomuch that he earnestly desired Mr. Donne to declare what had befallen him in the short time of his absence. To which Mr. Donne was not able to make a present answer: but, after a long and perplexed pause, did at last say, “I have seen a dreadful vision since I saw you: I have seen my dear wife pass twice by me through this room, with her hair hanging about her shoulders, and a dead child in her arms; this I have seen since I saw you.” To which Sir Robert replied, “Sure, sir, you have slept since I saw you; and this is the result of some melancholy dream, which I desire you to forget, for you are now awake." To which Mr. Donne's reply was, "I cannot be surer that I now live than that I have not slept since I saw you: and I am as sure that at her second appearing she stopped, and looked me in the face, and vanished . . . " And upon examination, the abortion proved to be the same day, and about the very hour, that Mr. Donne affirmed he saw her pass by him in his chamber.

' . . . And though it is most certain that two lutes, being both strung and tuned to an equal pitch, and then one played upon, the other, that is not touched, being laid upon a table at a fit distance, will (like an echo to a trumpet) warble a faint audible harmony in answer to the same tune; yet many will not believe there is any such thing as a sympathy of souls, and I am well pleased that every reader do enjoy his own opinion . . .'

He then appeals to authority, as of Brutus, St. Monica, Saul, St. Peter: —

'More observations of this nature, and inferences from them, might be made to gain the relation a firmer belief; but I forbear: lest I, that intended to be but a relator, may be thought to be an engaged person for the proving what was related to me, . . . by one who had it from Dr. Donne.'

Walpole was no Boswell; worthy Boswell would have cross-examined Dr. Donne himself.

Of dreams he writes: —

'Common dreams are but a senseless paraphrase on our waking thoughts, or of the business of the day past, or are the result of our over engaged affections when we betake ourselves to rest.' . . . Yet 'Almighty God (though the causes of dreams be often unknown) hath even in these latter times also, by a certain illumination of the soul in sleep, discovered many things that human wisdom could not foresee.'

Walton is often charged with superstition, and the enlightened editor of the eighteenth century excised all the scene of Mrs. Donne's wraith as too absurd. But Walton is a very fair witness. Donne, a man of imagination, was, he tells us, in a perturbed anxiety about Mrs. Donne. The event was after dinner. The story is, by Walton's admission, at second hand. Thus, in the language of the learned in such matters, the tale is 'not evidential.' Walton explains it, if true, as a result of 'sympathy of souls' — what is now called telepathy. But he is content that every man should have his own opinion. In the same way he writes of the seers in the Wotton family: 'God did seem to speak to many of this family' (the Wottons) 'in dreams,' and Thomas Wotton's dreams 'did usually prove true, both in foretelling things to come, and discovering things past.' Thus he dreamed that five townsmen and poor scholars were robbing the University chest at Oxford. He mentioned this in a letter to his son at Oxford, and the letter, arriving just after the robbery, led to the discovery of the culprits. Yet Walton states the causes and nature of dreams in general with perfect sobriety and clearness. His tales of this sort were much to Johnson's mind, as to Southey's. But Walton cannot fairly be called 'superstitious,' granting the age in which he lived. Visions like Dr. Donne's still excite curious comment.

To that cruel superstition of his age, witchcraft, I think there is no allusion in Walton. Almost as uncanny, however, is his account of Donne's preparation for death

'Several charcoal fires being first made in his large study, he brought with him into that place his winding-sheet in his hand, and having put off all his clothes, had this sheet put on him, and so tied with knots at his head and feet, and his hands so placed as dead bodies are usually fitted, to be shrouded and put into their coffin or grave. Upon this urn he thus stood, with his eyes shut, and with so much of the sheet turned aside as might show his lean, pale, and death-like face, which was purposely turned towards the east, from which he expected the second coming of his and our Saviour Jesus. In this posture he was drawn at his just height, and, when the picture was fully finished, he caused it to be set by his bedside, where it continued, and became his hourly object till death.'

Thus Donne made ready to meet the common fate: —

'That body, which once was a temple of the Holy Ghost, is now become a small quantity of Christian ashes. But I shall see it reanimated.'

This is the very voice of Faith. Walton was, indeed, an assured believer, and to his mind, the world offered no insoluble problem. But we may say of him, in the words of a poet whom he quotes: —

'Many a one
Owes to his country his religion;
And in another would as strongly grow
Had but his nurse or mother taught him so.'

In his account of Donne's early theological studies of the differences between Rome and Anglicanism, it is manifest that Izaak thinks these differences matters of no great moment. They are not for simple men to solve: Donne has taken that trouble for him; besides, he is an Englishman, and

'Owes to his country his religion.'

He will be no Covenanter, and writes with disgust of an intruded Scots minister, whose first action was to cut down the ancient yews in the churchyard. Izaak's religion, and all his life, were rooted in the past, like the yew-tree. He is what he calls 'the passive peaceable Protestant.' 'The common people in this nation,' he writes, 'think they are not wise unless they be busy about what they understand not, and especially about religion'; as Bunyan was busy at that very moment. In Walton's opinion, the plain facts of religion, and of consequent morality, are visible as the sun at noonday. The vexed questions are for the learned, and are solved variously by them. A man must follow authority, as he finds it established in his own country, unless he has the learning and genius of a Donne. To these, or equivalents for these in a special privy inspiration, 'the common people' of his day, and ever since Elizabeth's day, were pretending. This was the inevitable result of the translation of the Bible into English. Walton quotes with approval a remark of a witty Italian on a populace which was universally occupied with Free-will and Predestination. The fruits Walton saw, in preaching Corporals, Antinomian Trusty Tompkinses, Quakers who ran about naked, barking, Presbyterians who cut down old yew-trees, and a Parliament of Saints. Walton took no kind of joy in the general emancipation of the human spirit. The clergy, he confessed, were not what he wished them to be, but they were better than Quakers, naked and ululant. To love God and his neighbour, and to honour the king, was Walton's unperplexed religion. Happily he was saved from the view of the errors and the fall of James II., a king whom it was not easy to honour. His social philosophy was one of established rank, tempered by equity and Christian charity. If anything moves his tranquil spirit, it is the remorseless greed of him who takes his fellow-servant by the throat and exacts the uttermost penny. How Sanderson saved a poor farmer from the greed of an extortionate landlord, Walton tells in his Life of the prelate, adding this reflection: —

'It may be noted that in this age there are a sort of people so unlike the God of mercy, so void of the bowels of pity, that they love only themselves and their children; love them so as not to be concerned whether the rest of mankind waste their days in sorrow or shame; people that are cursed with riches, and a mistake that nothing but riches can make them and theirs happy.'

Thus Walton appears, this is 'the picture of his own disposition,' in the *Lives*. He is a kind of antithesis to John Knox. Men like Walton are not to be approached for new 'ideas.' They will never make a new world at a blow: they will never enable us to understand, but they can teach us to endure, and even to enjoy, the world. Their example is alluring: —

'Even the ashes of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.'

THE COMPLEAT ANGLER

Franck, as we saw, called Walton ‘a plagiary.’ He was a plagiary in the same sense as Virgil and Lord Tennyson and Robert Burns, and, indeed, Homer, and all poets. *The Compleat Angler*, the father of so many books, is the child of a few. Walton not only adopts the opinions and advice of the authors whom he cites, but also follows the manner, to a certain extent, of authors whom he does not quote. His very exordium, his key-note, echoes (as Sir Harris Nicolas observes) the opening of *A Treatise of the Nature of God* (London, 1599). The *Treatise* starts with a conversation between a gentleman and a scholar: it commences: —

Gent. Well overtaken, sir!

Scholar. You are welcome, gentleman.

A more important source is *The Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle*, commonly attributed to Dame Juliana Barnes (printed at Westminster, 1496). A manuscript, probably of 1430-1450, has been published by Mr. Satchell (London, 1883). This book may be a translation of an unknown French original. It opens: —

‘Soloman in hys paraboles seith that a glad spirit maket a flowryng age. That ys to sey, a feyre age and a longe’ (like Walton’s own), ‘and sith hyt ys so I aske this question, wyche bynne the menys and cause to reduce a man to a mery spryte.’ The angler ‘schall have hys holsom walke and mery at hys owne ease, and also many a sweyt eayr of divers erbis and flowres that schall make hym ryght hongre and well disposed in hys body. He schall heyr the melodies melodious of the ermony of byrde: he schall se also the yong swannes and signetes folowing ther eyrours, duckes, cootes, herons, and many other fowlys with ther brodys, wyche me semyt better then all the noyse of houndes, and blastes of hornes and other gamys that fawkners or hunters can make, and yf the angler take the fyssche, hardly then ys ther no man meryer then he in his sprites.’

This is the very ‘sprite’ of Walton; this has that vernal and matutinal air of opening European literature, full of birds’ music, and redolent of dawn. This is the note to which the age following Walton would not listen.

In matter of fact, again, Izaak follows the ancient *Treatise*. We know his jury of twelve flies: the *Treatise* says: —

‘These ben the xij flyes wyth whyche ye shall angle to the trought and graylling, and dubbe like as ye shall now here me tell.

‘*Marche*. The donne fly, the body of the donne woll, and the wyngis of the pertryche. Another donne flye, the body of blacke woll, the wyngis of the blackyst drake; and the lay under the wynge and under the tayle.’

Walton has: —

‘The first is the dun fly in March: the body is made of dun wool, the wings of the partridge’s feathers. The second is another dun fly: the body of black wool; and the wings made of the black drake’s feathers, and of the feathers under his tail.’

Again, the *Treatise* has: —

Auguste. The drake fly. The body of black wull and lappyd abowte wyth blacke sylke: winges of the mayle of the blacke drake wyth a blacke heed.’

Walton has: —

‘The twelfth is the dark drake-fly, good in August: the body made with black wool, lapt about with black silk, his wings are made with the mail of the black drake, with a black head.’

This is word for word a transcript of the fifteenth century *Treatise*. But Izaak cites, not the ancient *Treatise*, but Mr. Thomas Barker. Barker, in fact, gives many more, and more variegated flies than Izaak offers in the jury of twelve which he rendered, from the old *Treatise*, into modern English. Sir Harris Nicolas says that the jury is from Leonard Mascall’s *Booke of Fishing with Hooke and Line* (London, 1609), but Mascall merely stole from the fifteenth-century book. In Cotton’s practice, and that of *The Angler’s Vade Mecum* (1681), flies were as numerous as among ourselves, and had, in many cases, the same names. Walton absurdly bids us ‘let no part of the line touch the water, but the fly only.’ Barker says, ‘Let the fly light first into the water.’ Both men insist on fishing down stream, which is, of course, the opposite of the true art, for fish lie with their heads up stream, and trout are best approached from behind. Cotton admits of fishing both up and down, as the wind and stream may serve: and, of course, in heavy water, in Scotland, this is all very well. But none of the old anglers, to my knowledge, was a dry-fly fisher, and Izaak was no fly-fisher at all. He took what he said from Mascall, who took it from the old *Treatise*, in which, it is probable, Walton read, and followed the pleasant and to him congenial spirit of the mediæval angler. All these writers tooled with huge rods, fifteen or eighteen feet in length, and Izaak had apparently never used a reel. For salmon, he says, ‘some use a wheel about the middle of their rods or near their hand, which is to be observed better by seeing one of them, than by a large demonstration of words.’

Mr. Westwood has made a catalogue of books cited by Walton in his *Compleat Angler*. There is Ælian (who makes the first known reference to fly-fishing); Aldrovandus, *De Piscibus* (1638); Dubravius, *De Piscibus* (1559); and the English translation (1599) Gerard’s *Herball* (1633); Gesner, *De Piscibus* (*s.a.*) and *Historia Naturalis* (1558); Phil. Holland’s *Pliny* (1601); Rondelet, *De Piscibus Marines* (1554); Silvianus *Aquatilium Historiæ* (1554): these nearly exhaust Walton’s supply of authorities in natural history. He was devoted, as we saw, to authority, and had a childlike faith in the fantastic theories which date from Pliny. ‘Pliny hath an opinion that many flies have their birth, or being, from a dew that in the spring falls upon the leaves of trees.’ It is a pious opinion! Izaak is hardly so superstitious as the author of *The Angler’s Vade Mecum*. I cannot imagine him taking ‘Man’s fat and cat’s fat, of each half an ounce, mummy finely powdered, three drains,’ and a number of other abominations, to ‘make an Oyntment according to Art, and when you Angle, anoint 8 inches of the line next the Hook therewith.’ Or, ‘Take the Bones and Scull of a Dead-man, at the opening of a Grave, and beat the same into Pouder, and put of this Pouder in the Moss wherein you keep your Worms, — *but others like Grave Earth as well*.’ No doubt grave earth is quite as efficacious.

These remarks show how Izaak was equipped in books and in practical information: it follows that his book is to be read, not for instruction, but for human pleasure.

So much for what Walton owed to others. For all the rest, for what has made him the favourite of schoolboys and sages, of poets and philosophers, he is indebted to none but his Maker and his genius. That he was a lover of Montaigne we know; and, had Montaigne been a fisher, he might have written somewhat like Izaak, but without the piety, the perfume, and the charm. There are authors whose living voices, if we know them in the flesh, we seem to hear in our ears as we peruse their works. Of such was Mr. Jowett, sometime Master of Balliol College, a good man, now with God. It has ever seemed to me that friends of Walton must thus have heard his voice as they read him, and that it reaches us too, though faintly. Indeed, we have here ‘a kind of picture of his own disposition,’ as he tells us Piscator is the Walton whom honest Nat. and R. Roe and Sir Henry Wotton knew on fishing-days. The book is a set of confessions, without their commonly morbid turn. ‘I write not for money, but for pleasure,’ he says; methinks he drove no hard bargain with good Richard Marriott, nor was careful and troubled about royalties on his eighteenpenny book. He regards scoffers as ‘an abomination to mankind,’ for indeed even Dr. Johnson, who, a century later, set Moses Browne on reprinting *The Compleat Angler*, broke his jest on our suffering tribe. ‘Many grave, serious men pity anglers,’ says Auceps, and Venator styles them ‘patient men,’ as surely they have great need to be. For our toil, like that of the husbandman, hangs on the weather that Heaven sends, and on the flies that have their birth or being from a kind of dew, and on the inscrutable caprice of fish; also, in England, on the miller, who giveth or withholdeth at his pleasure the very water that is our element. The inquiring rustic who shambles up erect when we are lying low among the reeds, even he disposes of our fortunes, with whom, as with all men, we must be patient, dwelling ever —

‘With close-lipped Patience for our only friend,
Sad Patience, too near neighbour of Despair.’

O the tangles, more than Gordian, of gut on a windy day! O bitter east wind that bloweth down stream! O the young ducks that, swimming between us and the trout, contend with him for the blue duns in their season! O the hay grass behind us that entangles the hook! O the rocky wall that breaks it, the boughs that catch it; the drought that leaves the salmon-stream dry, the floods that fill it with turbid, impossible waters! Alas for the knot that breaks, and for the iron that bends; for the lost landing-net, and the gillie with the gaff that scrapes the fish! Izaak believed that fish could hear; if they can, their vocabulary must be full of strange oaths, for all anglers are not patient men. A malison on the trout that ‘bulge’ and ‘tail,’ on the salmon that ‘jiggers,’ or sulks, or lightly gambols over and under the line. These things, and many more, we anglers endure meekly, being patient men, and a light world fleers at us for our very virtue.

Izaak, of course, justifies us by the example of the primitive Christians, and, in the manner of the age, drowns opposition in a flood of erudition, out of place, but never pedantic; futile, yet diverting; erroneous, but not dull.

‘God is said to have spoken to a fish, but never to a beast.’ There is a modern Greek phrase, ‘By the first word of God, and the second of the fish.’ As for angling, ‘it is somewhat like poetry: men are to be born so’; and many are born to be both rhymers and anglers. But, unlike many poets, the angler resembles ‘the Adonis, or Darling of the Sea, so called because it is a loving and innocent fish,’ and a peaceful; ‘and truly, I think most anglers are so disposed to most of mankind.’

Our Saviour’s peculiar affection for fishermen is, of course, a powerful argument. And it is certain that Peter, James, and John made converts among the twelve, for ‘the greater number of them were found together, fishing, by Jesus after His Resurrection.’ That Amos was ‘a good-natured, plain fisherman,’ only Walton had faith enough to believe. He fixes gladly on mentions of hooks in the Bible, omitting Homer, and that excellent Theocritean dialogue of the two old anglers and the fish of gold, which would have delighted Izaak, had he known it; but he was no great scholar. ‘And let me tell you that in the Scripture, angling is always taken in the best sense,’ though Izaak does not dwell on Tobias’s enormous capture. So he ends with commendations of angling by Wotton, and Davors (Dennys, more probably) author of *The Secrets of Angling*

(1613). To these we may add Wordsworth, Thomson, Scott, Hogg, Stoddart, and many minor poets who loved the music of the reel.

Izaak next illustrates his idea of becoming mirth, which excludes ‘Scripture jests and lascivious jests,’ both of them highly distasteful to anglers. Then he comes to practice, beginning with chub, for which I have never angled, but have taken them by misadventure, with a salmon fly. Thence we proceed to trout, and to the charming scene of the milkmaid and her songs by Raleigh and Marlowe, ‘I think much better than the strong lines that are now in fashion in this critical age,’ for Walton, we have said, was the last of the Elizabethans and the new times were all for Waller and Dryden. ‘Chevy Chace’ and ‘Johnny Armstrong’ were dear to Walton as to Scott, but through a century these old favourites were to be neglected, save by Mr. Pepys and Addison. Indeed, there is no more curious proof of the great unhappy change then coming to make poetry a mechanic art, than the circumstance that Walton is much nearer to us, in his likings, than to the men between 1670 and 1770. Gay was to sing of angling, but in ‘the strong lines that are now in fashion.’ All this while Piscator has been angling with worm and minnow to no purpose, though he picks up ‘a trout will fill six reasonable bellies’ in the evening. So we leave them, after their ale, in fresh sheets that smell of lavender.’ Izaak’s practical advice is not of much worth; we read him rather for sentences like this: ‘I’ll tell you, scholar: when I sat last on this primrose bank, and looked down these meadows, I thought of them as Charles the Emperor did of the city of Florence, “that they were too pleasant to be looked upon, but only on holy-days.”’ He did not say, like Fox, when Burke spoke of ‘a seat under a tree, with a friend, a bottle, and a book,’ ‘Why a book?’ Izaak took his book with him — a practice in which, at least, I am fain to imitate this excellent old man.

As to salmon, Walton scarcely speaks a true word about their habits, except by accident. Concerning pike, he quotes the theory that they are bred by pickerel weed, only as what ‘some think.’ In describing the use of frogs as bait, he makes the famous, or infamous, remark, ‘Use him as though you loved him . . . that he may live the longer.’ A bait-fisher *may* be a good man, as Izaak was, but it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. As coarse fish are usually caught only with bait, I shall not follow Izaak on to this unholy and unfamiliar ground, wherein, none the less, grow flowers of Walton’s fancy, and the songs of the old poets are heard. *The Practical Angler*, indeed, is a book to be marked with flowers, marsh marigolds and fritillaries, and petals of the yellow iris, for the whole provokes us to content, and whispers that word of the apostle, ‘Study to be quiet.’

FISHING THEN AND NOW

Since Maui, the Maori hero, invented barbs for hooks, angling has been essentially one and the same thing. South Sea islanders spin for fish with a mother-of-pearl lure which is also a hook, and answers to our spoon. We have hooks of stone, and hooks of bone; and a bronze hook, found in Ireland, has the familiar Limerick bend. What Homer meant by making anglers throw ‘the horn of an ox of the stall’ into the sea, we can only guess; perhaps a horn minnow is meant, or a little sheath of horn to protect the line. Dead bait, live bait, and imitations of bait have all been employed, and Ælian mentions artificial Mayflies used, with a very short line, by the Illyrians.

But, while the same in essence, angling has been improved by human ingenuity. The Waltonian angler, and still more his English predecessors, dealt much in the home-made. The *Treatise* of the fifteenth century bids you make your ‘Rodde’ of a fair staff even of a six foot long or more, as ye list, of hazel, willow, or ‘aspe’ (ash?), and ‘beke hym in an ovyn when ye bake, and let him cool and dry a four weeks or more.’ The pith is taken out of him with a hot iron, and a yard of white hazel is similarly treated, also a fair shoot of blackthorn or crabtree for a top. The butt is bound with hoops of iron, the top is accommodated with a noose, a hair line is looped in the noose, and the angler is equipped. Splicing is not used, but the joints have holes to receive each other, and with this instrument ‘ye may walk, and there is no man shall wit whereabout ye go.’ Recipes are given for colouring and plaiting hair lines, and directions for forging hooks. ‘The smallest quarell needles’ are used for the tiniest hooks.

Barker (1651) makes the rod ‘of a hasel of one piece, or of two pieces set together in the most convenient manner, light and gentle.’ He recommends the use of a single hair next the fly,— ‘you shall have more rises,’ which is true, ‘and kill more fish,’ which is not so likely. The most delicate striking is required with fine gut, and with a single hair there must be many breakages. For salmon, Barker uses a rod ten feet in the butt, ‘that will carry a top of six foot pretty stiffe and strong.’ The ‘winder,’ or reel, Barker illustrates with a totally unintelligible design. His salmon fly ‘carries six wings’; perhaps he only means wings composed of six kinds of feathers, but here Franck is a better authority, his flies being sensible and sober in colour. Not many old salmon flies are in existence, nor have I seen more ancient specimens than a few, chiefly of peacocks’ feathers, in the fly-leaf of a book at Abbotsford; they were used in Ireland by Sir Walter Scott’s eldest son. The controversy as to whether fish can distinguish colours was unknown to our ancestors. I am inclined to believe that, for salmon, size, and perhaps shade, light or dark, with more or less of tinsel, are the only important points. Izaak stumbled on the idea of Mr. Stewart (author of *The Practical Angler*) saying, ‘for the generality, three or four flies, neat, and rightly made, and not too big, serve for a trout in most rivers, all the summer.’ Our ancestors, though they did not fish with the dry fly, were intent on imitating the insect on the water. As far as my own experience goes, if trout are feeding on duns, one dun will take them as well as another, if it be properly presented. But my friend Mr. Charles Longman tells me that, after failing with two trout, he examined the fly on the water, an olive dun, and found in his book a fly which exactly matched the natural insect in colour. With this he captured his brace.

Such incidents look as if trout were particular to a shade, but we can never be certain that the angler did not make an especially artful and delicate cast when he succeeded. Sir Herbert Maxwell intends to make the experiment of using duns of impossible and unnatural colours; if he succeeds with these, on several occasions, as well as with orthodox flies, perhaps we may decide that trout do not distinguish hues. On a Sutherland loch, an angler found that trout would take flies of any colour, except that of a light-green leaf of a tree. This rejection decidedly looked as if even Sutherland loch trout exercised some discrimination. Often, on a loch, out of three flies they will favour one, and that, perhaps, not the trail fly. The best rule is: when you find a favourite fly on a salmon river, use it: its special favouritism may be a superstition, but, at all events, salmon do take it. We cannot afford to be always making experiments, but Mr. Herbert Spencer, busking his flies the reverse way, used certainly to be at least as successful with sea trout as his less speculative neighbours in Argyllshire.

In making rods, Walton is most concerned with painting them; ‘I think a good top is worth preserving, or I had not taken care to keep a top above twenty years.’ Cotton prefers rods ‘made in Yorkshire,’ having advanced from the home-made stage. His were spliced, and kept up all through the season, as he had his water at his own door, while Walton trudged to the Lee and other streams near London, when he was not fishing the Itchen, or Shawford Brook. *The Angler’s Vade Mecum* recommends eighteen-feet rods: preferring a fir butt, fashioned by the arrow-maker, a hazel top, and a tip of whalebone. This authority, even more than Walton, deals in mysterious ‘Oyntments’ of gum ivy, horse-leek, asafoetida, man’s fat, cat’s fat, powdered skulls, and grave earth. A ghoulish body is the angler of the *Vade Mecum*. He recommends up-stream fishing, with worm, in a clear water, and so is a predecessor of Mr. Stewart. ‘When you have hooked a good fish, have an especial care to keep the rod bent, lest he run to the end of the line' (he means, as does Walton, lest he pull the rod horizontal) 'and break either hook or hold.' An old owner of my copy adds, in manuscript, 'And hale him not to near ye top of the water, lest in flaskering he break ye line.'

This is a favourite device of sea trout, which are very apt to 'flasker' on the top of the water. The *Vade Mecum*, in advance of Walton on this point, recommends a swivel in minnow-fishing: but has no idea of an artificial minnow of silk. I have known an ingenious lady who, when the bodies of her phantom minnows gave out, in Norway, supplied their place successfully with bed-quilting artfully sewn. In fact, anything bright and spinning will allure fish, though in the upper Ettrick, where large trout exist, they will take the natural, but perhaps never the phantom or angel minnow. I once tried a spinning Alexandra fly over some large pond trout. They followed it eagerly, but never took hold, on the first day; afterwards they would not look at it at all. The *Vade Mecum* man, like Dr. Hamilton, recommends a light fly for a light day, a dark fly for a dark day and dark weather; others hold the converse opinion. Every one agrees that the smallness of the flies should be in proportion to the lowness of the water and the advance of summer.

Our ancestors, apparently, used only one fly at a time; in rapid rivers, with wet fly, two, three, or, in lochs like Loch Leven, even four are employed. To my mind more than two only cause entanglements of the tackle. The old English anglers knew, of course, little or nothing of loch fishing, using bait in lakes. The great length of their rods made reels less necessary, and they do not seem to have waded much. A modern angler, casting upwards, from the middle of the stream, with a nine-foot rod, would have astonished Walton. They dealt with trout less educated than ours, and tooled with much coarser and heavier implements. They had no fine scruples about bait of every kind, any more than the Scots have, and Barker loved a lob-worm, fished on the surface, in a dark night. He was a pot-fisher, and had been a cook. He could catch a huge basket of trout, and dress them in many different ways, — broyled, calvored hot with antchovaes sauce, boyled, soused, stewed, fried, battered with eggs, roasted, baked, calvored cold, and marilled, or potted, also marrionated. Barker instructs my Lord Montague to fish with salmon roe, a thing prohibited and very popular in Scotland. 'If I had known it but twenty years agoe, I would have gained a hundred pounds onely with that bait. I am bound in duty to divulge it to your Honour, and not to carry it to my grave with me. I do desire that men of quality should have it that delight in that pleasure: the greedy angler will murmur at me, but for that I care not.' Barker calls salmon roe 'an experience I have found of late: the best bait for a trout that I have seen in all my time,' and it is the most deadly, in the eddy of a turbid water. Perhaps trout would take caviare, which is not forbidden by the law of the land. Any unscrupulous person may make the experiment, and argue the matter out with the water-bailie. But, in my country, it is more usual to duck that official, and go on netting, sniggling, salmon-roeing, and destroying sport in the sacred name of Liberty.

Scots wha fish wi’ salmon roe,
Scots wha sniggle as ye go,
Wull ye stand the Bailie? No!
Let the limmer die!

Now’s the day and now’s the time,
Poison a’ the burns wi’ lime,
Fishing fair’s a dastard crime,
We’re for fishing *free*!

‘Ydle persones sholde have but lyttyl mesure in the sayd disporte of fysshyng,’ says our old *Treatise*, but in southern Scotland they have left few fish to dysporte with, and the trout is like to become an extinct animal. Izaak would especially have disliked Fishing Competitions, which, by dint of the multitude of anglers, turn the contemplative man’s recreation into a crowded skirmish; and we would repeat his remark, ‘the rabble herd themselves together’ (a dozen in one pool, often), ‘and endeavour to govern and act in spite of authority.’

For my part, had I a river, I would gladly let all honest anglers that use the fly cast line in it, but, where there is no protection, then nets, poison, dynamite, slaughter of fingerlings, and unholy baits devastate the fish, so that ‘Free Fishing’ spells no fishing at all. This presses most hardly on the artisan who fishes fair, a member of a large class with whose pastime only a churl would wish to interfere. We are now compelled, if we would catch fish, to seek Tarpon in Florida, Mahseer in India: it does not suffice to ‘stretch our legs up Tottenham Hill.’

MODERN MYTHOLOGY

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Dedicated to the memory of John Fergus McLennan.

INTRODUCTION

It may well be doubted whether works of controversy serve any useful purpose. ‘On an opponent,’ as Mr. Matthew Arnold said, ‘one never does make any impression,’ though one may hope that controversy sometimes illuminates a topic in the eyes of impartial readers. The pages which follow cannot but seem wandering and desultory, for they are a reply to a book, Mr. Max Müller’s *Contributions to the Science of Mythology*, in which the attack is of a skirmishing character. Throughout more than eight hundred pages the learned author keeps up an irregular fire at the ideas and methods of the anthropological school of mythologists. The reply must follow the lines of attack.

Criticism cannot dictate to an author how he shall write his own book. Yet anthropologists and folk-lorists, ‘agriologists’ and ‘Hottentotic’ students, must regret that Mr. Max Müller did not state their general theory, as he understands it, fully and once for all. Adversaries rarely succeed in quite understanding each other; but had Mr. Max Müller made such a statement, we could have cleared up anything in our position which might seem to him obscure.

Our system is but one aspect of the theory of evolution, or is but the application of that theory to the topic of mythology. The archæologist studies human life in its material remains; he tracks progress (and occasional degeneration) from the rudely chipped flints in the ancient gravel beds, to the polished stone weapon, and thence to the ages of bronze and iron. He is guided by material ‘survivals’ — ancient arms, implements, and ornaments. The student of Institutions has a similar method. He finds his relics of the uncivilised past in agricultural usages, in archaic methods of allotment of land, in odd marriage customs, things rudimentary — fossil relics, as it were, of an early social and political condition. The archæologist and the student of Institutions compare these relics, material or customary, with the weapons, pottery, implements, or again with the habitual law and usage of existing savage or barbaric races, and demonstrate that our weapons and tools, and our laws and manners, have been slowly evolved out of lower conditions, even out of savage conditions.

The anthropological method in mythology is the same. In civilised religion and myth we find rudimentary survivals, fossils of rite and creed, ideas absolutely incongruous with the environing morality, philosophy, and science of Greece and India. Parallels to these things, so out of keeping with civilisation, we recognise in the creeds and rites of the lower races, even of cannibals; but *there* the creeds and rites are *not* incongruous with their environment of knowledge and culture. There they are as natural and inevitable as the flint-headed spear or marriage by capture. We argue, therefore, that religions and mythical faiths and rituals which, among Greeks and Indians, are inexplicably incongruous have lived on from an age in which they were natural and inevitable, an age of savagery.

That is our general position, and it would have been a benefit to us if Mr. Max Müller had stated it in his own luminous way, if he wished to oppose us, and had shown us where and how it fails to meet the requirements of scientific method. In place of doing this once for all, he often assails our evidence, yet never notices the defences of our evidence, which our school has been offering for over a hundred years. He attacks the excesses of which some sweet anthropological enthusiasts have been guilty or may be guilty, such as seeing totems wherever they find beasts in ancient religion, myth, or art. He asks for definitions (as of totemism), but never, I think, alludes to the authoritative definitions by Mr. McLennan and Mr. Frazer. He assails the theory of fetishism as if it stood now where De Brosses left it in a purely pioneer work — or, rather, where he understands De Brosses to have left it. One might as well attack the atomic theory where Lucretius left it, or the theory of evolution where it was left by the elder Darwin.

Thus Mr. Max Müller really never conies to grips with his opponents, and his large volumes shine rather in erudition and style than in method and system. Anyone who attempts a reply must necessarily follow Mr. Max Müller up and down, collecting his scattered remarks on this or that point at issue. Hence my reply, much against my will, must seem desultory and rambling. But I have endeavoured to answer with some kind of method and system, and I even hope that this little book may be useful as a kind of supplement to Mr. Max Müller’s, for it contains exact references to certain works of which he takes the reader’s knowledge for granted.

The general problem at issue is apt to be lost sight of in this guerilla kind of warfare. It is perhaps more distinctly stated in the preface to Mr. Max Müller’s *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. iv. (Longmans, 1895), than in his two recent volumes. The general problem is this: Has language — especially language in a state of ‘disease,’ been the great source of the mythology of the world? Or does mythology, on the whole, represent the survival of an old stage of thought — not caused by language — from which civilised men have slowly emancipated themselves? Mr. Max Müller is of the former, anthropologists are of the latter, opinion. Both, of course, agree that myths are a product of thought, of a kind of thought almost extinct in civilised races; but Mr. Max Müller holds that language caused that kind of thought. We, on the other hand, think that language only gave it one means of expressing itself.

The essence of myth, as of fairy tale, we agree, is the conception of the things in the world as all alike animated, personal, capable of endless interchanges of form. Men may become beasts; beasts may change into men; gods may appear as human or bestial; stones, plants, winds, water, may speak and act like human beings, and change shapes with them.

Anthropologists demonstrate that the belief in this universal kinship, universal personality of things, which we find surviving only in the myths of civilised races, is even now to some degree part of the living creed of savages. Civilised myths, then, they urge, are survivals from a parallel state of belief once prevalent among the ancestors of even the Aryan race. But how did this mental condition, this early sort of false metaphysics, come into existence? We have no direct historical information on the subject. If I were obliged to offer an hypothesis, it would be that early men, conscious of personality, will, and life — conscious that force, when exerted by themselves, followed on a determination of will within them — extended that explanation to all the exhibitions of force which they beheld without them. Rivers run (early man thought), winds blow, fire burns, trees wave, as a result of their own will, the will of personal conscious entities. Such vitality, and even power of motion, early man attributed even to inorganic matter, as rocks and stones. All these things were beings, like man himself. This does not appear to me an unnatural kind of nascent, half-conscious metaphysics. ‘Man never knows how much he anthropomorphises.’ He extended the only explanation of his own action which consciousness yielded to him, he extended it to explain every other sort of action in the sensible world. Early Greek philosophy recognised the stars as living bodies; all things had once seemed living and personal. From the beginning, man was eager *causas cognoscere rerum*. The only cause about which self-consciousness gave him any knowledge was his own personal will. He therefore supposed all things to be animated with a like will and personality. His mythology is a philosophy of things, stated in stories based on the belief in universal personality.

My theory of the origin of that belief is, of course, a mere guess; we have never seen any race in the process of passing from a total lack of a hypothesis of causes into that hypothesis of universally distributed personality which is the basis of mythology.

But Mr. Max Müller conceives that this belief in universally distributed personality (the word ‘Animism’ is not very clear) was the result of an historical necessity — not of speculation, but of language. ‘Roots were all, or nearly all, expressive of action. . . . Hence a river could only be called or conceived as a runner, or a roarer, or a defender; and in all these capacities always as something active and animated, nay, as something masculine or feminine.'

But *why* conceived as 'masculine or feminine'? This necessity for endowing inanimate though active things, such as rivers, with sex, is obviously a necessity of a stage of thought wholly unlike our own. *We* know that active inanimate things are sexless, are neuter; *we* feel no necessity to speak of them as male or female. How did the first speakers of the human race come to be obliged to call lifeless things by names connoting sex, and therefore connoting, not only activity, but also life and personality? We explain it by the theory that man called lifeless things male or female — by using gender-terminations — as a result of his habit of regarding lifeless things as personal beings; that habit, again, being the result of his consciousness of himself as a living will.

Mr. Max Müller takes the opposite view. Man did not call lifeless things by names denoting sex because he regarded them as persons; he came to regard them as persons because he had already given them names connoting sex. And why had he done that? This is what Mr. Max Müller does not explain. He says:

'In ancient languages every one of these words' (sky, earth, sea, rain) 'had necessarily' (why necessarily?) 'a termination expressive of gender, and this naturally produced in the mind the corresponding idea of sex, so that these names received not only an individual but a sexual character.'

It is curious that, in proof apparently of this, Mr. Max Müller cites a passage from the *Printer's Register*, in which we read that to little children '*everything* is *alive*. . . . The same instinct that prompts the child to personify everything remains unchecked in the savage, and grows up with him to manhood. Hence in all simple and early languages there are but two genders, masculine and feminine.'

The *Printer's Register* states our theory in its own words. First came the childlike and savage belief in universal personality. Thence arose the genders, masculine and feminine, in early languages. These ideas are the precise reverse of Mr. Max Müller's ideas. In his opinion, genders in language caused the belief in the universal personality even of inanimate things. The *Printer's Register* holds that the belief in universal personality, on the other hand, caused the genders. Yet for thirty years, since 1868, Mr. Max Müller has been citing his direct adversary, in the *Printer's Register*, as a supporter of his opinion! We, then, hold that man thought all things animated, and expressed his belief in gender-terminations. Mr. Max Müller holds that, because man used gender-terminations, therefore he thought all things animated, and so he became mythopœic. In the passage cited, Mr. Max Müller does not say *why* 'in ancient languages every one of these words had *necessarily* terminations expressive of gender.' He merely quotes the hypothesis of the *Printer's Register*. If he accepts that hypothesis, it destroys his own theory — that gender-terminations caused all things to be regarded as personal; for, *ex hypothesi*, it was just because they were regarded as personal that they received names with gender-terminations. Somewhere — I cannot find the reference — Mr. Max Müller seems to admit that personalising thought caused gender-terminations, but these later 'reacted' on thought, an hypothesis which multiplies causes *præter necessitatem*.

Here, then, at the very threshold of the science of mythology we find Mr. Max Müller at once maintaining that a feature of language, gender-terminations, caused the mythopœic state of thought, and quoting with approval the statement that the mythopœic state of thought caused gender-terminations.

Mr. Max Müller's whole system of mythology is based on reasoning analogous to this example. His *mot d'ordre*, as Professor Tiele says, is 'a disease of language.' This theory implies universal human degradation. Man was once, for all we know, rational enough; but his mysterious habit of using gender-terminations, and his perpetual misconceptions of the meaning of old words in his own language, reduced him to the irrational and often (as we now say) obscene and revolting absurdities of his myths. Here (as is later pointed out) the objection arises, that all languages must have taken the disease in the same way. A Maori myth is very like a Greek myth. If the Greek myth arose from a disease of Greek, how did the wholly different Maori speech, and a score of others, come to have precisely the same malady?

Mr. Max Müller alludes to a Maori parallel to the myth of Cronos. 'We can only say that there is a rusty lock in New Zealand, and a rusty lock in Greece, and that, surely, is very small comfort.' He does not take the point. The point is that, as the myth occurs in two remote and absolutely unconnected languages, a theory of disease of language cannot turn the wards of the rusty locks. The myth is, in part at least, a nature-myth — an attempt to account for the severance of Heaven and Earth (once united) by telling a story in which natural phenomena are animated and personal. A disease of language has nothing to do with this myth. It is cited as a proof against the theory of disease of language.

The truth is, that while languages differ, men (and above all early men) have the same kind of thoughts, desires, fancies, habits, institutions. It is not that in which all races formally differ — their language — but that in which all early races are astonishingly the same — their ideas, fancies, habits, desires — that causes the amazing similarity of their myths.

Mythologists, then, who find in early human nature the living ideas which express themselves in myths will hardily venture to compare the analogous myths of all peoples. Mythologists, on the other hand, who find the origin of myths in a necessity imposed upon thought by misunderstood language will necessarily, and logically, compare only myths current among races who speak languages of the same family. Thus, throughout Mr. Max Müller's new book we constantly find him protesting, on the whole and as a rule, against the system which illustrates Aryan myths by savage parallels. Thus he maintains that it is perilous to make comparative use of myths current in languages — say, Maori or Samoyed — which the mythologists confessedly do not know. To this we can only reply that we use the works of the best accessible authorities, men who do know the languages — say, Dr. Codrington or Bishop Callaway, or Castren or Egede. Now it is not maintained that the myths, on the whole, are incorrectly translated. The danger which we incur, it seems, is ignorance of the original sense of savage or barbaric divine or heroic names — say, Maui, or Yehl, or Huitzilopochhtli, or Heitsi Eibib, or Pundjel. By Mr. Max Müller's system such names are old words, of meanings long ago generally lost by the speakers of each language, but analysable by 'true scholars' into their original significance. That will usually be found by the philologists to indicate 'the inevitable Dawn,' or Sun, or Night, or the like, according to the taste and fancy of the student.

To all this a reply is urged in the following pages. In agreement with Curtius and many other scholars, we very sincerely doubt almost all etymologies of old proper names, even in Greek or Sanskrit. We find among philologists, as a rule, the widest discrepancies of interpretation. Moreover, every name must mean *something*. Now, whatever the meaning of a name (supposing it to be really ascertained), very little ingenuity is needed to make it indicate one or other aspect of Dawn or Night, of Lightning or Storm, just as the philologist pleases. Then he explains the divine or heroic being denoted by the name — as Dawn or Storm, or Fire or Night, or Twilight or Wind — in accordance with his private taste, easily accommodating the facts of the myth, whatever they may be, to his favourite solution. We rebel against this kind of logic, and persist in studying the myth in itself and in comparison with analogous myths in every accessible language. Certainly, if divine and heroic names — Artemis or Pundjel — *can* be interpreted, so much is gained. But the myth may be older than the name.

As Mr. Hogarth points out, Alexander has inherited in the remote East the myths of early legendary heroes. We cannot explain these by the analysis of the name of Alexander! Even if the heroic or divine name can be shown to be the original one (which is practically impossible), the meaning of the name helps us little. That Zeus means 'sky' cannot conceivably explain scores of details in the very composite legend of Zeus — say, the story of Zeus, Demeter, and the Ram.

Moreover, we decline to admit that, if a divine name means ‘swift,’ its bearer must be the wind or the sunlight. Nor, if the name means ‘white,’ is it necessarily a synonym of Dawn, or of Lightning, or of Clear Air, or what not. But a mythologist who makes language and names the fountain of myth will go on insisting that myths can only be studied by people who know the language in which they are told. Mythologists who believe that human nature is the source of myths will go on comparing all myths that are accessible in translations by competent collectors.

Mr. Max Müller says, ‘We seldom find mythology, as it were, *in situ* — as it lived in the minds and unrestrained utterances of the people. We generally have to study it in the works of mythographers, or in the poems of later generations, when it had long ceased to be living and intelligible.’ The myths of Greece and Rome, in Hyginus or Ovid, ‘are likely to be as misleading as a *hortus siccus* would be to a botanist if debarred from his rambles through meadows and hedges.’

Nothing can be more true, or more admirably stated. These remarks are, indeed, the charter, so to speak, of anthropological mythology and of folklore. The old mythologists worked at a *hortus siccus*, at myths dried and pressed in thoroughly literary books, Greek and Latin. But we now study myths ‘in the unrestrained utterances of the people,’ either of savage tribes or of the European Folk, the unprogressive peasant class. The former, and to some extent the latter, still live in the mythopœic state of mind — regarding bees, for instance, as persons who must be told of a death in the family. Their myths are still not wholly out of concord with their habitual view of a world in which an old woman may become a hare. As soon as learned Jesuits like Père Lafitau began to understand their savage flocks, they said, ‘These men are living in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.’ They found mythology *in situ*! Hence mythologists now study mythology *in situ* — in savages and in peasants, who till very recently were still in the mythopœic stage of thought. Mannhardt made this idea his basis. Mr. Max Müller says, very naturally, that I have been ‘popularising the often difficult and complicated labours of Mannhardt and others.’ In fact (as is said later), I published all my general conclusions before I had read Mannhardt. Quite independently I could not help seeing that among savages and peasants we had mythology, not in a literary *hortus siccus*, but *in situ*. Mannhardt, though he appreciated Dr. Tylor, had made, I think, but few original researches among savage myths and customs. His province was European folklore. What he missed will be indicated in the chapter on ‘The Fire-Walk’ — one example among many.

But this kind of mythology *in situ*, in ‘the unrestrained utterances of the people,’ Mr. Max Müller tells us, is no province of his. ‘I saw it was hopeless for me to gain a knowledge at first hand of innumerable local legends and customs;’ and it is to be supposed that he distrusted knowledge acquired by collectors: Grimm, Mannhardt, Campbell of Islay, and an army of others. ‘A scholarlike knowledge of Maori or Hottentot mythology’ was also beyond him. We, on the contrary, take our Maori lore from a host of collectors: Taylor, White, Manning (‘The Pakeha Maori’), Tregear, Polack, and many others. From them we flatter ourselves that we get — as from Grimm, Mannhardt, Islay, and the rest — mythology *in situ*. We compare it with the dry mythologic blossoms of the classical *hortus siccus*, and with Greek ritual and temple legend, and with *Märchen* in the scholiasts, and we think the comparisons very illuminating. They have thrown new light on Greek mythology, ritual, mysteries, and religion. This much we think we have already done, though we do not know Maori, and though each of us can hope to gather but few facts from the mouths of living peasants.

Examples of the results of our method will be found in the following pages. Thus, if the myth of the fire-stealer in Greece is explained by misunderstood Greek or Sanskrit words in no way connected with robbery, we shall show that the myth of the theft of fire occurs where no Greek or Sanskrit words were ever spoken. *There*, we shall show, the myth arose from simple inevitable human ideas. We shall therefore doubt whether in Greece a common human myth had a singular cause — in a ‘disease of language.’

It is with no enthusiasm that I take the opportunity of Mr. Max Müller’s reply to me ‘by name.’ Since *Myth*, *Ritual*, *and Religion* (now out of print, but accessible in the French of M. Marillier) was published, ten years ago, I have left mythology alone. The general method there adopted has been applied in a much more erudite work by Mr. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, by Mr. Farnell in *Cults of the Greek States*, by Mr. Jevons in his *Introduction to the History of Religion*, by Miss Harrison in explanations of Greek ritual, by Mr. Hartland in *The Legend of Perseus*, and doubtless by many other writers. How much they excel me in erudition may be seen by comparing Mr. Farnell’s passage on the Bear Artemis with the section on her in this volume.

Mr. Max Müller observes that ‘Mannhardt’s mythological researches have never been fashionable.’ They are now very much in fashion; they greatly inspire Mr. Frazer and Mr. Farnell. ‘They seemed to me, and still seem to me, too exclusive,’ says Mr. Max Müller. Mannhardt in his second period was indeed chiefly concerned with myths connected, as he held, with agriculture and with tree-worship. Mr. Max Müller, too, has been thought ‘exclusive’— ‘as teaching,’ he complains, ‘that the whole of mythology is solar.’ That reproach arose, he says, because ‘some of my earliest contributions to comparative mythology were devoted exclusively to the special subject of solar myths.’ But Mr. Max Müller also mentions his own complaints, of ‘the omnipresent sun and the inevitable dawn appearing in ever so many disguises.’

Did they really appear? Were the myths, say the myths of Daphne, really solar? That is precisely what we hesitate to accept. In the same way Mannhardt’s preoccupation with vegetable myths has tended, I think, to make many of his followers ascribe vegetable origins to myths and gods, where the real origin is perhaps for ever lost. The corn-spirit starts up in most unexpected places. Mr. Frazer, Mannhardt’s disciple, is very severe on solar theories of Osiris, and connects that god with the corn-spirit. But Mannhardt did not go so far. Mannhardt thought that the myth of Osiris was solar. To my thinking, these resolutions of myths into this or that original source — solar, nocturnal, vegetable, or what not — are often very perilous. A myth so extremely composite as that of Osiris must be a stream flowing from many springs, and, as in the case of certain rivers, it is difficult or impossible to say which is the real fountain-head.

One would respectfully recommend to young mythologists great reserve in their hypotheses of origins. All this, of course, is the familiar thought of writers like Mr. Frazer and Mr. Farnell, but a tendency to seek for exclusively vegetable origins of gods is to be observed in some of the most recent speculations. I well know that I myself am apt to press a theory of totems too far, and in the following pages I suggest reserves, limitations, and alternative hypotheses. *Il y a serpent et serpent*; a snake tribe may be a local tribe named from the Snake River, not a totem kindred. The history of mythology is the history of rash, premature, and exclusive theories. We are only beginning to learn caution. Even the prevalent anthropological theory of the ghost-origin of religion might, I think, be advanced with caution (as Mr. Jevons argues on other grounds) till we know a little more about ghosts and a great deal more about psychology. We are too apt to argue as if the psychical condition of the earliest men were exactly like our own; while we are just beginning to learn, from Prof. William James, that about even our own psychical condition we are only now realising our exhaustive ignorance. How often we men have thought certain problems settled for good! How often we have been compelled humbly to return to our studies! Philological comparative mythology seemed securely seated for a generation. Her throne is tottering:

Our little systems have their day,
  They have their day and cease to be,

They are but broken lights from Thee,
And Thou, we trust, art more than they.

But we need not hate each other for the sake of our little systems, like the grammarian who damned his rival's soul for his 'theory of the irregular verbs.' Nothing, I hope, is said here inconsistent with the highest esteem for Mr. Max Müller's vast erudition, his enviable style, his unequalled contributions to scholarship, and his awakening of that interest in mythological science without which his adversaries would probably never have existed.

Most of Chapter XII. appeared in the 'Contemporary Review,' and most of Chapter XIII. in the 'Princeton Review.'

REGENT MYTHOLOGY

Mythology in 1860-1880

Between 1860 and 1880, roughly speaking, English people interested in early myths and religions found the mythological theories of Professor Max Müller in possession of the field. These brilliant and attractive theories, taking them in the widest sense, were not, of course, peculiar to the Right Hon. Professor. In France, in Germany, in America, in Italy, many scholars agreed in his opinion that the science of language is the most potent spell for opening the secret chamber of mythology. But while these scholars worked on the same general principle as Mr. Max Müller, while they subjected the names of mythical beings — Zeus, Helen, Achilles, Athênê — to philological analysis, and then explained the stories of gods and heroes by their interpretations of the meanings of their names, they arrived at all sorts of discordant results. Where Mr. Max Müller found a myth of the Sun or of the Dawn, these scholars were apt to see a myth of the wind, of the lightning, of the thunder-cloud, of the *crépuscule*, of the upper air, of what each of them pleased. But these ideas — the ideas of Kuhn, Welcker, Curtius (when he appeared in the discussion), of Schwartz, of Lauer, of Bréal, of many others — were very little known — if known at all — to the English public. Captivated by the graces of Mr. Max Müller's manner, and by a style so pellucid that it accredited a logic perhaps not so clear, the public hardly knew of the divisions in the philological camp. They were unaware that, as Mannhardt says, the philological school had won 'few sure gains,' and had discredited their method by a 'muster-roll of variegated' and discrepant 'hypotheses.'

Now, in all sciences there are differences of opinion about details. In comparative mythology there was, with rare exceptions, no agreement at all about results beyond this point; Greek and Sanskrit, German and Slavonic myths were, in the immense majority of instances, to be regarded as mirror-pictures on earth, of celestial and meteorological phenomena. Thus even the story of the Earth Goddess, the Harvest Goddess, Demeter, was usually explained as a reflection in myth of one or another celestial phenomenon — dawn, storm-cloud, or something else according to taste.

Again, Greek or German myths were usually to be interpreted by comparison with myths in the Rig Veda. Their origin was to be ascertained by discovering the Aryan root and original significance of the names of gods and heroes, such as Saranyu — Erinnys, Daphne — Dahanâ, Athene — Ahanâ. The etymology and meaning of such names being ascertained, the origin and sense of the myths in which the names occur should be clear.

Clear it was not. There were, in most cases, as many opinions as to the etymology and meaning of each name and myth, as there were philologists engaged in the study. Mannhardt, who began, in 1858, as a member of the philological school, in his last public utterance (1877) described the method and results, including his own work of 1858, as ‘mainly failures.’

But, long ere that, the English cultivated public had, most naturally, accepted Mr. Max Müller as the representative of the school which then held the field in comparative mythology. His German and other foreign brethren, with their discrepant results, were only known to the general, in England (I am not speaking of English scholars), by the references to them in the Oxford professor’s own works. His theories were made part of the education of children, and found their way into a kind of popular primers.

For these reasons, anyone in England who was daring enough to doubt, or to deny, the validity of the philological system of mythology in general was obliged to choose Mr. Max Müller as his adversary. He must strike, as it were, the shield of no Hospitaler of unsteady seat, but that of the Templar himself. And this is the cause of what seems to puzzle Mr. Max Müller, namely the attacks on *his* system and *his* results in particular. An English critic, writing for English readers, had to do with the scholar who chiefly represented the philological school of mythology in the eyes of England.

Autobiographical

Like other inquiring undergraduates in the sixties, I read such works on mythology as Mr. Max Müller had then given to the world; I read them with interest, but without conviction. The argument, the logic, seemed to evade one; it was purely, with me, a question of logic, for I was of course prepared to accept all of Mr. Max Müller’s dicta on questions of etymologies. Even now I never venture to impugn them, only, as I observe that other scholars very frequently differ, *toto cœlo*, from him and from each other in essential questions, I preserve a just balance of doubt; I wait till these gentlemen shall be at one among themselves.

After taking my degree in 1868, I had leisure to read a good deal of mythology in the legends of all races, and found my distrust of Mr. Max Müller’s reasoning increase upon me. The main cause was that whereas Mr. Max Müller explained

Greek myths by etymologies of words in the Aryan languages, chiefly Greek, Latin, Slavonic, and Sanskrit, I kept finding myths very closely resembling those of Greece among Red Indians, Kaffirs, Eskimo, Samoyeds, Kamilaroi, Maoris, and Cahrocs. Now if Aryan myths arose from a 'disease' of Aryan languages, it certainly did seem an odd thing that myths so similar to these abounded where non-Aryan languages alone prevailed. Did a kind of linguistic measles affect all tongues alike, from Sanskrit to Choctaw, and everywhere produce the same ugly scars in religion and myth?

The Ugly Scars

The ugly scars were the problem! A civilised fancy is not puzzled for a moment by a beautiful beneficent Sun-god, or even by his beholding the daughters of men that they are fair. But a civilised fancy *is* puzzled when the beautiful Sun-god makes love in the shape of a dog. To me, and indeed to Mr. Max Müller, the ugly scars were the problem.

He has written— 'What makes mythology mythological, in the true sense of the word, is what is utterly unintelligible, absurd, strange, or miraculous.' But he explained these blots on the mythology of Greece, for example, as the result practically of old words and popular sayings surviving in languages after the original, harmless, symbolical meanings of the words and sayings were lost. What had been a poetical remark about an aspect of nature became an obscene, or brutal, or vulgar myth, a stumbling block to Greek piety and to Greek philosophy.

To myself, on the other hand, it seemed that the ugly scars were remains of that kind of taste, fancy, customary law, and incoherent speculation which everywhere, as far as we know, prevails to various degrees in savagery and barbarism. Attached to the 'hideous idols,' as Mr. Max Müller calls them, of early Greece, and implicated in a ritual which religious conservatism dared not abandon, the fables of perhaps neolithic ancestors of the Hellenes remained in the religion and the legends known to Plato and Socrates. That this process of 'survival' is a *vera causa*, illustrated in every phase of evolution, perhaps nobody denies.

Thus the phenomena which the philological school of mythology explains by a disease of language we would explain by survival from a savage state of society and from the mental peculiarities observed among savages in all ages and countries. Of course there is nothing new in this: I was delighted to discover the idea in Eusebius as in Fontenelle; while, for general application to singular institutions, it was a commonplace of the last century. Moreover, the idea had been widely used by Dr. E. B. Tylor in *Primitive Culture*, and by Mr. McLennan in his *Primitive Marriage* and essays on Totemism.

My Criticism of Mr. Max Müller

This idea I set about applying to the repulsive myths of civilised races, and to *Märchen*, or popular tales, at the same time combating the theories which held the field — the theories of the philological mythologists as applied to the same matter. In journalism I criticised Mr. Max Müller, and I admit that, when comparing the mutually destructive competition of varying etymologies, I did not abstain from the weapons of irony and *badinage*. The opportunity was too tempting! But, in the most sober seriousness, I examined Mr. Max Müller's general statement of his system, his hypothesis of certain successive stages of language, leading up to the mythopœic confusion of thought. It was not a question of denying Mr. Max Müller's etymologies, but of asking whether he established his historical theory by evidence, and whether his inferences from it were logically deduced. The results of my examination will be found in the article 'Mythology' in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and in *La Mythologie*. It did not appear to me that Mr. Max Müller's general theory was valid, logical, historically demonstrated, or self-consistent. My other writings on the topic are chiefly *Custom and Myth*, *Myth*, *Ritual*, *and Religion* (with French and Dutch translations, both much improved and corrected by the translators), and an introduction to Mrs. Hunt's translation of Grimm's *Märchen*.

Success of Anthropological Method

During fifteen years the ideas which I advocated seem to have had some measure of success. This is, doubtless, due not to myself, but to the works of Mr. J. G. Frazer and of Professor Robertson Smith. Both of these scholars descend intellectually from a man less scholarly than they, but, perhaps, more original and acute than any of us, my friend the late Mr. J. F. McLennan. To Mannhardt also much is owed, and, of course, above all, to Dr. Tylor. These writers, like Mr. Farnell and Mr. Jevons recently, seek for the answer to mythological problems rather in the habits and ideas of the folk and of savages and barbarians than in etymologies and 'a disease of language.' There are differences of opinion in detail: I myself may think that 'vegetation spirits,' the 'corn spirit,' and the rest occupy too much space in the systems of Mannhardt, and other moderns. Mr. Frazer, again, thinks less of the evidence for Totems among 'Aryans' than I was inclined to do. But it is not, perhaps, an overstatement to say that explanation of myths by analysis of names, and the lately overpowering predominance of the Dawn, and the Sun, and the Night in mythological hypothesis, have received a slight check. They do not hold the field with the superiority which was theirs in England between 1860 and 1880. This fact — a scarcely deniable fact — does not, of course, prove that the philological method is wrong, or that the Dawn is not as great a factor in myth as Mr. Max Müller believes himself to have proved it to be. Science is inevitably subject to shiftings of opinion, action, and reaction.

Mr. Max Müller's Reply

In this state of things Mr. Max Müller produces his *Contributions to the Science of Mythology,* which I propose to criticise as far as it is, or may seem to me to be, directed against myself, or against others who hold practically much the same views as mine. I say that I attempt to criticise the book 'as far as it is, or may seem to me to be, directed against' us, because it is Mr. Max Müller's occasional habit to argue (apparently) *around* rather than *with* his opponents. He says 'we are told this or that' — something which he does not accept — but he often does not inform us as to *who* tells us, or where. Thus a reader does not know whom Mr. Max Müller is opposing, or where he can find the adversary's own statement in his own words. Yet it is usual in such cases, and it is, I think, expedient, to give chapter and verse. Occasionally I find that Mr. Max Müller is honouring me by alluding to observations of my own, but often no reference is given to an opponent's name or books, and we discover the passages in question by accident or research. This method will be found to cause certain inconveniences.

THE STORY OF DAPHNE

Mr. Max Müller's Method in Controversy

As an illustration of the author's controversial methods, take his observations on my alleged attempt to account for the metamorphosis of Daphne into a laurel tree. When I read these remarks (i.) I said, 'Mr. Max Müller vanquishes me *there,'* for he gave no reference to my statement. I had forgotten all about the matter, I was not easily able to find the passage to which he alluded, and I supposed that I had said just what Mr. Max Müller seemed to me to make me say — no more, and no less. Thus:

'Mr. Lang, as usual, has recourse to savages, most useful when they are really wanted. He quotes an illustration from the South Pacific that Tuna, the chief of the eels, fell in love with Ina and asked her to cut off his head. When his head had been cut off and buried, two cocoanut trees sprang up from the brain of Tuna. How is this, may I ask, to account for the story of Daphne? Everybody knows that "stories of the growing of plants out of the scattered members of heroes may be found from ancient Egypt to the wigwams of the Algonquins," but these stories seem hardly applicable to Daphne, whose members, as far as I know, were never either severed or scattered.'

I thought, perhaps hastily, that I must have made the story of Tuna 'account for the story of Daphne.' Mr. Max Müller does not actually say that I did so, but I understood him in that sense, and recognised my error. But, some guardian genius warning me, I actually hunted up my own observations. Well, I had never said (as I conceived my critic to imply) that the story of Tuna 'accounts for the story of Daphne.' That was what I had not said. I had observed, 'As to interchange of shape between men and women and *plants*, our information, so far as the lower races are concerned, is less copious' — than in the case of stones. I then spoke of plant totems of one kin with human beings, of plant-souls, of Indian and Egyptian plants animated by *human* souls, of a tree which became a young man and made love to a Yurucari girl, of metamorphosis into vegetables in Samoa, of an Ottawa myth in which a man became a plant of maize, and then of the story of Tuna. Next I mentioned plants said to have sprung from dismembered gods and heroes. *All* this, I said, *all* of it, proves that savages mythically regard human life as on a level with vegetable no less than with animal life. 'Turning to the mythology of Greece, we see that the same rule holds good. Metamorphosis into plants and flowers is extremely common,' and I, of course, attributed the original idea of such metamorphoses to 'the general savage habit of "levelling up,"' of regarding all things in nature as all capable of interchanging their identities. I gave, as classical examples, Daphne, Myrrha, Hyacinth, Narcissus, and the sisters of Phaethon. Next I criticised Mr. Max Müller's theory of Daphne. But I never hinted that the isolated Mangaian story of Tuna, or the stories of plants sprung from mangled men, 'accounted,' by themselves, 'for the story of Daphne.'

Mr. Max Müller is not content with giving a very elaborate and interesting account of how the story of Tuna arose (i. 5-7). He keeps Tuna in hand, and, at the peroration of his vast work (ii. 831), warns us that, before we compare myths in unrelated languages, we need 'a very accurate knowledge of their dialects . . . to prevent accidents like that of Tuna mentioned in the beginning.' What accident? That I explained the myth of Daphne by the myth of Tuna? But that is precisely what I did not do. I explained the Greek myth of Daphne (1) as a survival from the savage mental habit of regarding men as on a level with stones, beasts, and plants; or (2) as a tale ‘moulded by poets on the same model.’ The latter is the more probable case, for we find Daphne late, in artificial or mythographic literature, in Ovid and Hyginus. In Ovid the river god, Pentheus, changes Daphne into a laurel. In Hyginus she is not changed at all; the earth swallows her, and a laurel fills her place.

Now I really did believe — perhaps any rapid reader would have believed — when I read Mr. Max Müller, that I must have tried to account for the story of Daphne by the story of Tuna. I actually wrote in the first draft of this work that I had been in the wrong. Then I verified the reference which my critic did not give, with the result which the reader has perused. Never could a reader have found out what I did really say from my critic, for he does not usually when he deals with me give chapter and verse. This may avoid an air of personal bickering, but how inconvenient it is!

Let me not be supposed to accuse Mr. Max Müller of consciously misrepresenting me. Of that I need not say that he is absolutely incapable. My argument merely took, in his consciousness, the form which is suggested in the passage cited from him.

Tuna and Daphne

To do justice to Mr. Max Müller, I will here state fully his view of the story of Tuna, and then go on to the story of Daphne. For the sake of accuracy, I take the liberty of borrowing the whole of his statement (i. 4-7): —

‘I must dwell a little longer on this passage in order to show the real difference between the ethnological and the philological schools of comparative mythology.

‘First of all, what has to be explained is not the growing up of a tree from one or the other member of a god or hero, but the total change of a human being or a heroine into a tree, and this under a certain provocation. These two classes of plant-legends must be carefully kept apart. Secondly, what does it help us to know that people in Mangaia believed in the change of human beings into trees, if we do not know the reason why? This is what we want to know; and without it the mere juxtaposition of stories apparently similar is no more than the old trick of explaining ignotum per ignotius. It leads us to imagine that we have learnt something, when we really are as ignorant as before.

‘If Mr. A. Lang had studied the Mangaian dialect, or consulted scholars like the Rev. W. W. Gill — it is from his “Myths and Songs from the South Pacific” that he quotes the story of Tuna — he would have seen that there is no similarity whatever between the stories of Daphne and of Tuna. The Tuna story belongs to a very well known class of ætiological plant-stories, which are meant to explain a no longer intelligible name of a plant, such as Snakeshead, Stiefmütterchen, &c.; it is in fact a clear case of what I call disease of language, cured by the ordinary nostrum of folk-etymology. I have often been in communication with the Rev. W. W. Gill about these South Pacific myths and their true meaning. The preface to his collection of Myths and Songs from the South Pacific was written by me in 1876; and if Mr. A. Lang had only read the whole chapter which treats of these Tree-Myths (seq.), he would easily have perceived the real character of the Tuna story, and would not have placed it in the same class as the Daphne story; he would have found that the white kernel of the cocoanut was, in Mangaia, called the "brains of Tuna," a name like many more such names which after a time require an explanation.

'Considering that "cocoanut" was used in Mangaia in the sense of head (*testa*), the kernel or flesh of it might well be called the brain. If then the white kernel had been called Tuna's brain, we have only to remember that in Mangaia there are two kinds of cocoanut trees, and we shall then have no difficulty in understanding why these twin cocoanut trees were said to have sprung from the two halves of Tuna's brain, one being red in stem, branches, and fruit, whilst the other was of a deep green. In proof of these trees being derived from the head of Tuna, we are told that we have only to break the nut in order to see in the sprouting germ the two eyes and the mouth of Tuna, the great eel, the lover of Ina. For a full understanding of this very complicated myth more information has been supplied by Mr. Gill. Ina means moon; Ina-mae-aitu, the heroine of our story, means Ina-who-had-a-divine (*aitu*) lover, and she was the daughter of Kui, the blind. Tuna means eel, and in Mangaia it was unlawful for women to eat eels, so that even now, as Mr. Gill informs me, his converts turn away from this fish with the utmost disgust. From other stories about the origin of cocoanut trees, told in the same island, it would appear that the sprouts of the cocoanut were actually called eels' heads, while the skulls of warriors were called cocoanuts.

'Taking all these facts together, it is not difficult to imagine how the story of Tuna's brain grew up; and I am afraid we shall have to confess that the legend of Tuna throws but little light on the legend of Daphne or on the etymology of her name. No one would have a word to say against the general principle that much that is irrational, absurd, or barbarous in the Veda is a survival of a more primitive mythology anterior to the Veda. How could it be otherwise?'

Criticism of Tuna and Daphne

Now (1), as to Daphne, we are not invariably told that hers was a case of 'the total change of a heroine into a tree.' In Ovid she is thus changed. In Hyginus, on the other hand, the earth swallows her, and a tree takes her place. All the authorities are late. Here I cannot but reflect on the scholarly method of Mannhardt, who would have examined and criticised all the sources for the tale before trying to explain it. However, Daphne was not mangled; a tree did not spring from her severed head or scattered limbs. She was metamorphosed, or was buried in earth, a tree springing up from the place.

(2) I think we do know *why* the people of Mangaia 'believe in the change of human beings into trees.' It is one among many examples of the savage sense of the intercommunity of all nature. 'Antiquity made its division between man and the world in a very different sort than do the moderns.' I illustrate this mental condition fully in *M. R. R.* i. 46-56. *Why* savages adopt the major premise, 'Human life is on a level with the life of all nature,' philosophers explain in various ways. Hume regards it as an extension to the universe of early man's own consciousness of life and personality. Dr. Tylor thinks that the opinion rests upon 'a broad philosophy of nature.' M. Lefébure appeals to psychical phenomena as I show later (see 'Fetishism'). At all events, the existence of these savage metaphysics is a demonstrated fact. I established it before invoking it as an explanation of savage belief in metamorphosis.

(3) 'The Tuna story belongs to a very well known class of ætiological plant-stories' (ætiological: assigning a cause for the plant, its peculiarities, its name, &c.), 'which are meant to explain a no longer intelligible name of a plant, &c.' I also say, 'these myths are nature-myths, so far as they attempt to account for a fact in nature — namely, for the existence of certain plants, and for their place in ritual.'

The reader has before him Mr. Max Müller's view. The white kernel of the cocoanut was locally styled 'the brains of Tuna.' That name required explanation. Hence the story about the fate of Tuna. Cocoanut was used in Mangaia in the sense of 'head' (*testa*). So it is now in England.

See *Bell's Life, passim*, as 'The Chicken got home on the cocoanut.'

The Explanation

On the whole, either cocoanut kernels were called 'brains of Tuna' because 'cocoanut'='head,' and a head has brains — and, well, somehow I fail to see why brains of *Tuna* in particular! Or, there being a story to the effect that the first cocoanut grew out of the head of the metamorphosed Tuna, the kernel was called his brains. But why was the story told, and why of Tuna? Tuna was an eel, and women may not eat eels; and Ina was the moon, who, a Mangaian Selene, loved no Latmian shepherd, but an eel. Seriously, I fail to understand Mr. Max Müller's explanation. Given the problem, to explain a no longer intelligible plant-name — brains of Tuna — (applied not to a plant but to the kernel of a nut), this name is explained by saying that the moon, Ina, loved an eel, cut off his head at his desire, and buried it. Thence sprang cocoanut trees, with a fanciful likeness to a human face — face of Tuna — on the nut. But still, why Tuna? How could the moon love an eel, except on my own general principle of savage 'levelling up' of all life in all nature? In my opinion, the Mangaians wanted a fable to account for the resemblance of a cocoanut to the human head — a resemblance noted, as I show, in our own popular slang. The Mangaians also knew the moon, in her mythical aspect, as Ina; and Tuna, whatever his name may mean (Mr. Max Müller does not tell us), was an eel. Having the necessary savage major premise in their minds, 'All life is on a level and interchangeable,' the Mangaians thought well to say that the head-like cocoanut sprang from the head of her lover, an eel, cut off by Ina. The myth accounts, I think, for the peculiarities of the cocoanut, rather than for the name 'brains of Tuna;' for we still ask, 'Why of Tuna in particular? Why Tuna more than Rangoa, or anyone else?'

'We shall have to confess that the legend of Tuna throws but little light on the legend of Daphne, or on the etymology of her name.'

I never hinted that the legend of Tuna threw light on the etymology of the name of Daphne. Mangaian and Greek are not allied languages. Nor did I give the Tuna story as an explanation of the Daphne story. I gave it as one in a mass of illustrations of the savage mental propensity so copiously established by Dr. Tylor in *Primitive Culture*. The two alternative explanations which I gave of the Daphne story I have cited. No mention of Tuna occurs in either.

Disease of Language and Folk-etymology

The Tuna story is described as 'a clear case of disease of language cured by the ordinary nostrum of folk-etymology.' The 'disease' showed itself, I suppose, in the presence of the Mangaian words for 'brain of Tuna.' But the story of Tuna gives no folk-etymology of the name Tuna. Now, to give an etymology of a name of forgotten meaning is the sole object of folk-etymology. The plant-name, 'snake's head,' given as an example by Mr. Max Müller, needs no etymological explanation. A story may be told to explain why the plant is called snake's head, but a story to give an etymology of snake's head is superfluous. The Tuna story explains why the cocoanut kernel is called 'brains of Tuna,' but it offers no etymology of Tuna’s name. On the other hand, the story that marmalade (really *marmalet*) is so called because Queen Mary found comfort in marmalade when she was sea-sick — hence *Marie-malade,* hence *marmalade* — gives an etymological explanation of the origin of the *word* marmalade. Here is a real folk-etymology. We must never confuse such myths of folk-etymology with myths arising (on the philological hypothesis) from ‘disease of language.’ Thus, Daphne is a girl pursued by Apollo, and changed into a daphne plant or laurel, or a laurel springs from the earth where she was buried. On Mr. Max Müller’s philological theory Daphne=Dahanâ, and meant ‘the burning one.’ Apollo may be derived from a Sanskrit form, *Apa-var-yan, or* Apa-val-yan (though how Greeks ever heard a Sanskrit word, if such a word as Apa-val-yan ever existed, we are not told), and may mean ‘one who opens the gate of the sky’ (ii. 692-696). At some unknown date the ancestors of the Greeks would say ‘The opener of the gates of the sky (*Apa-val-yan, *i.e*. the sun) pursues the burning one (Dahanâ, *i.e*. the dawn).’ The Greek language would retain this poetic saying in daily use till, in the changes of speech, *Apa-val-yan ceased to be understood, and became Apollo, while Dahanâ ceased to be understood, and became Daphne. But the verb being still understood, the phrase ran, ‘Apollo pursues Daphne.’ Now the Greeks had a plant, laurel, called *daphne*. They therefore blended plant, daphne, and heroine’s name, Daphne, and decided that the phrase ‘Apollo pursues Daphne’ meant that Apollo chased a nymph, Daphne, who, to escape his love, turned into a laurel. I cannot give Mr. Max Müller’s theory of the Daphne story more clearly. If I misunderstand it, that does not come from want of pains.

In opposition to it we urge that (1) the etymological equations, Daphne=Dahanâ, Apollo=*Apa-val-yan, are not generally accepted by other scholars. Schröder, in fact, derives Apollo ‘from the Vedic Saparagenya, “worshipful,” an epithet of Agni,’ who is Fire (ii. 688), and so on. Daphne=Dahanâ is no less doubted. Of course a Greek simply cannot be ‘derived’ from a Sanskrit word, as is stated, though both may have a common origin, just as French is not ‘derived from’ Italian.

(2) If the etymologies were accepted, no proof is offered to us of the actual existence, as a *vera causa*, of the process by which a saying. ‘Apollo pursues Daphne,’ remains in language, while the meaning of the words is forgotten. This process is essential, but undemonstrated. See the chapter here on ‘The Riddle Theory.’

(3) These processes, if demonstrated, which they are not, must be carefully discriminated from the actual demonstrable process of folk-etymology. The Marmalade legend gives the etymology of a word, marmalade; the Daphne

legend does not give an etymology.

(4) The theory of Daphne is of the kind protested against by Mannhardt, where he warns us against looking in most myths for a ‘mirror-picture’ on earth of celestial phenomena. For these reasons, among others, I am disinclined to accept Mr. Max Müller’s attempt to explain the story of Daphne.

Mannhardt on Daphne

Since we shall presently find Mr. Max Müller claiming the celebrated Mannhardt as a sometime deserter of philological comparative mythology, who ‘returned to his old colours,’ I observe with pleasure that Mannhardt is on my side and against the Oxford Professor. Mannhardt shows that the laurel (*daphne*) was regarded as a plant which, like our rowan tree, averts evil influences. ‘Moreover, the laurel, like the *Maibaum*, was looked on as a being with a spirit. This is the safest result which myth analysis can extract from the story of Daphne, a nymph pursued by Apollo and changed into a laurel. It is a result of the use of the laurel in his ritual.’ In 1877, a year after Mannhardt is said by Mr. Max Müller to have returned to his old colours, he repeats this explanation. In the same work () he says that ‘there is no reason for accepting Max Müller’s explanation about the Sun-god and the Dawn, *wo jeder thätliche Anhalt dafür fehlt*.’ For this opinion we might also cite the Sanskrit scholars Whitney and Bergaigne.

THE QUESTION OF ALLIES

Athanasius

Mr. Max Müller protests, most justly, against the statement that he, like St. Athanasius, stands alone, *contra mundum*. If ever this phrase fell from my pen (in what connection I know not), it is as erroneous as the position of St. Athanasius is honourable. Mr. Max Müller's ideas, in various modifications, are doubtless still the most prevalent of any. The anthropological method has hardly touched, I think, the learned contributors to Roscher's excellent mythological Lexicon. Dr. Brinton, whose American researches are so useful, seems decidedly to be a member of the older school. While I do not exactly remember alluding to Athanasius, I fully and freely withdraw the phrase. But there remain questions of allies to be discussed.

Italian Critics

Mr. Max Müller asks, 'What would Mr. Andrew Lang say if he read the words of Signer Canizzaro, in his "Genesi ed Evoluzione del Mito" (1893), "Lang has laid down his arms before his adversaries"?' Mr. Lang 'would smile.' And what would Mr. Max Müller say if he read the words of Professor Enrico Morselli, 'Lang gives no quarter to his adversaries, who, for the rest, have long been reduced to silence'? The Right Hon. Professor also smiles, no doubt. We both smile. *Solvuntur risu tabulæ*.

A Dutch Defender

The question of the precise attitude of Professor Tiele, the accomplished Gifford Lecturer in the University of Edinburgh (1897), is more important and more difficult. His remarks were made in 1885, in an essay on the Myth of Cronos, and were separately reprinted, in 1886, from the 'Revue de l'Histoire des Religions,' which I shall cite. Where they refer to myself they deal with *Custom and Myth*, not with *Myth, Ritual, and Religion* (1887). It seems best to quote, *ipsissimis verbis*, Mr. Max Müller's comments on Professor Tiele's remarks. He writes (i. viii.):

'Let us proceed next to Holland. Professor Tiele, who had actually been claimed as an ally of the victorious army, declares:— "Je dois m'élever, au nom de la science mythologique et de l’exactitude . . . centre une méthode qui ne fait que glisser sur des problèmes de première importance.” (See further on, .)

‘And again:

‘“Ces braves gens qui, pour peu qu’ils aient lu un ou deux livres de mythologie et d’anthropologie, et un ou deux récits de voyages, ne manqueront pas de se mettre à comparer à tort et à travers, et pour tout résultat produiront la confusion.”’

Again (i. 35):

‘Besides Signer Canizzaro and Mr. Horatio Hale, the veteran among comparative ethnologists, Professor Tiele, in his Le Mythe de Kronos (1886), has very strongly protested against the downright misrepresentations of what I and my friends have really written.

‘Professor Tiele had been appealed to as an unimpeachable authority. He was even claimed as an ally by the ethnological students of customs and myths, but he strongly declined that honour (1. c.,):-

‘“M. Lang m’a fait 1’honneur de me citer,” he writes, “comme un de ses alliés, et j’ai lieu de croire que M. Gaidoz en fait en quelque mesure autant. Ces messieurs n’ont point entièrement tort. Cependant je dois m’élever, au nom de la science mythologique et de 1’exactitude dont elle ne peut pas plus se passer que les autres sciences, contre une méthode qui ne fait que glisser sur des problèmes de première importance,” &c.

‘Speaking of the whole method followed by those who actually claimed to have founded a new school of mythology, he says (): —

‘“Je crains toutefois que ce qui s’y trouve de vrai ne soit connu depuis longtemps, et que la nouvelle école ne pèche par exclusionisme tout autant que les aînées qu’elle combat avec tant de conviction.”

‘That is exactly what I have always said. What is there new in comparing the customs and myths of the Greeks with those of the barbarians? Has not even Plato done this? Did anybody doubt that the Greeks, nay even the Hindus, were uncivilised or savages, before they became civilised or tamed? Was not this common-sense view, so strongly insisted on by Fontenelle and Vico in the eighteenth century, carried even to excess by such men as De Brosses (1709-1771)? And have the lessons taught to De Brosses by his witty contemporaries been quite forgotten? Must his followers be told again and again that they ought to begin with a critical examination of the evidence put before them by casual travellers, and that mythology is as little made up of one and the same material as the crust of the earth of granite only?’

Reply

Professor Tiele wrote in 1885. I do not remember having claimed his alliance, though I made one or two very brief citations from his remarks on the dangers of etymology applied to old proper names. To citations made by me later in 1887 Professor Tiele cannot be referring. Thus I find no proof of any claim of alliance put forward by me, but I do claim a right to quote the Professor's published words. These I now translate: —

'What goes before shows adequately that I am an ally, much more than an adversary, of the new school, whether styled ethnological or anthropological. It is true that all the ideas advanced by its partisans are not so new as they seem. Some of us — I mean among those who, without being vassals of the old school, were formed by it — had not only remarked already the defects of the reigning method, but had perceived the direction in which researches should be made; they had even begun to say so. This does not prevent the young school from enjoying the great merit of having first formulated with precision, and with the energy of conviction, that which had hitherto been but imperfectly pointed out. If henceforth mythological science marches with a firmer foot, and loses much of its hypothetical character, it will in part owe this to the stimulus of the new school.'

'Braves Gens'

Professor Tiele then bids us leave our cries of triumph to the *servum imitatorum pecus*, *braves gens*, and so forth, as in the passage which Mr. Max Müller, unless I misunderstand him, regards as referring to the 'new school,' and, notably, to M. Gaidoz and myself, though such language ought not to apply to M. Gaidoz, because he is a scholar. I am left to uncovenanted mercies.

Professor Tiele on Our Merits

The merits of the new school Professor Tiele had already stated: —

'If I were reduced to choose between this method and that of comparative philology, I would prefer the former without the slightest hesitation. This method alone enables us to explain the fact, such a frequent cause of surprise, that the Greeks like the Germans . . . could attribute to their gods all manner of cruel, cowardly and dissolute actions. This method alone reveals the cause of all the strange metamorphoses of gods into animals, plants, and even stones. . . . In fact, this method teaches us to recognise in all these oddities the survivals of an age of barbarism long over-past, but lingering into later times, under the form of religious legends, the most persistent of all traditions. . . . This method, *enfin*, can alone help us to account for the genesis of myths, because it devotes itself to studying them in their rudest and most primitive shape. . . .'

Destruction and Construction

Thus writes Professor Tiele about the constructive part of our work. As to the destructive — or would-be destructive — part, he condenses my arguments against the method of comparative philology. 'To resume, the whole house of comparative philological mythology is builded on the sand, and her method does not deserve confidence, since it ends in such divergent results.' That is Professor Tiele's statement of my destructive conclusions, and he adds, 'So far, I have not a single objection to make. I can still range myself on Mr. Lang's side when he' takes certain distinctions into which it is needless to go here.

Allies or Not?

These are several of the passages on which, in 1887, I relied as evidence of the Professor's approval, which, I should have added, is only partial It is he who, unsolicited, professes himself 'much more our ally than our adversary.' It is he who proclaims that Mr. Max Midler's central hypothesis is erroneous, and who makes 'no objection' to my idea that it is 'builded on the sand.' It is he who assigns essential merits to our method, and I fail to find that he 'strongly declines the honour' of our alliance. The passage about 'braves gens' explicitly does not refer to us.

Our Errors

In 1887, I was not careful to quote what Professor Tiele had said against us. First, as to our want of novelty. That merit, I think, I had never claimed. I was proud to point out that we had been anticipated by Eusebius of Cæsarea, by Fontenelle, and doubtless by many others. We repose, as Professor Tiele justly says, on the researches of Dr. Tylor. At the same time it is Professor Tiele who constantly speaks of 'the new school,' while adding that he himself had freely opposed Mr. Max Müller's central hypothesis, 'a disease of language,' in Dutch periodicals. The Professor also censures our 'exclusiveness,' our 'narrowness,' our 'songs of triumph,' our use of parody (M. Gaidoz republished an old one, not to my own taste; I have also been guilty of 'The Great Gladstone Myth') and our charge that our adversaries neglect ethnological material. On this I explain myself later.

Uses of Philology

Our method (says Professor Tiele) ‘cannot answer all the questions which the science of mythology must solve, or, at least, must study.’ Certainly it makes no such pretence.

Professor Tiele then criticises Sir George Cox and Mr. Robert Brown, junior, for their etymologies of Poseidon. Indiscreet followers are not confined to our army alone. Now, the use of philology, we learn, is to discourage such etymological vagaries as those of Sir G. Cox. *We* also discourage them — severely. But we are warned that philology really has discovered ‘some undeniably certain etymologies’ of divine names. Well, I also say, ‘Philology alone can tell whether Zeus Asterios, or Adonis, or Zeus Labrandeus is originally a Semitic or a Greek divine name; here she is the Pythoness we must all consult.’ And is it my fault that, even in this matter, the Pythonesses utter such strangely discrepant oracles? Is Athene from a Zend root (Benfey), a Greek root (Curtius), or to be interpreted by Sanskrit *Ahanâ* (Max Müller)? Meanwhile Professor Tiele repeats that, in a search for the origin of myths, and, above all, of obscene and brutal myths, ‘philology will lead us far from our aim.’ Now, if the school of Mr. Max Müller has a *mot d’ordre*, it is, says Professor Tiele, ‘to call mythology a disease of language.’ But, adds Mr. Max Müller’s learned Dutch defender, mythologists, while using philology for certain purposes, ‘must shake themselves free, of course, from the false hypothesis’ (Mr. Max Müller’s) ‘which makes of mythology a mere *maladie du langage*.’ This professor is rather a dangerous defender of Mr. Max Müller! He removes the very corner-stone of his edifice, which Tiele does not object to our describing as founded on the sand. Mr. Max Müller does not cite (as far as I observe) these passages in which Professor Tiele (in my view, and in fact) abandons (for certain uses) *his* system of mythology. Perhaps Professor Tiele has altered his mind, and, while keeping what Mr. Max Müller quotes, *braves gens*, and so on, has withdrawn what he said about ‘the false hypothesis of a disease of language.’ But my own last book about myths was written in 1886-1887, shortly after Professor Tiele’s remarks were published (1886) as I have cited them.

Personal Controversy

All this matter of alliances may seem, and indeed is, of a personal character, and therefore unimportant. Professor Tiele’s position in 1885-86 is clearly defined. Whatever he may have published since, he then accepted the anthropological or ethnological method, as *alone* capable of doing the work in which we employ it. This method alone can discover the origin of ancient myths, and alone can account for the barbaric element, that old puzzle, in the myths of civilised races. This the philological method, useful for other purposes, cannot do, and its central hypothesis can only mislead us. I was not aware, I repeat, that I ever claimed Professor Tiele’s ‘alliance,’ as he, followed by Mr. Max Müller, declares. They cannot point, as a proof of an assertion made by Professor Tiele, 1885-86, to words of mine which did not see the light till 1887, in *Myth*, *Ritual*, *and Religion*, i. p, 43, 44. Not that I deny Professor Tiele’s statement about my claim of his alliance before 1885-86. I merely ask for a reference to this claim. In 1887 I cited his observations (already quoted) on the inadequate and misleading character of the philological method, when we are seeking for ‘the origin of a myth, or the physical explanation of the oldest myths, or trying to account for the rude and obscene element in the divine legends of civilised races.’ I added the Professor’s applause of the philological method as applied to other problems of mythology; for example, ‘the genealogical relations of myths. . . . The philological method alone can answer here,’ aided, doubtless, by historical and archæological researches as to the inter-relations of races. This approval of the philological method, I cited; the reader will find the whole passage in the *Revue*, vol. xii. . I remarked, however, that this will seem ‘a very limited province,’ though, in this province, ‘Philology is the Pythoness we must all consult; in this sphere she is supreme, when her high priests are of one mind.’ Thus I did not omit to notice Professor Tiele’s comments on the *merits* of the philological method. To be sure, he himself does not apply it when he comes to examine the Myth of Cronos. ‘Are the God and his myth original or imported? I have not approached this question because it does not seem to me ripe in this particular case.’ ‘Mr. Lang has justly rejected the opinion of Welcker and Mr. Max Müller, that Cronos is simply formed from Zeus’s epithet, ºÁ¿½¹É½.’ This opinion, however, Mr. Max Müller still thinks the ‘most likely’ (ii. 507).

My other citation of Professor Tiele in 1887 says that our pretensions ‘are not unacknowledged’ by him, and, after a long quotation of approving passages, I add ‘the method is thus *applauded* by a most competent authority, and it has been *warmly accepted*’ (pray note the distinction) by M. Gaidoz. I trust that what I have said is not unfair. Professor Tiele’s objections, not so much to our method as to our manners, and to my own use of the method in a special case, have been stated, or will be stated later. Probably I should have put them forward in 1887; I now repair my error. My sole wish is to be fair; if Mr. Max Müller has not wholly succeeded in giving the full drift of Professor Tiele’s remarks, I am certain that it is from no lack of candour.

The Story of Cronos

Professor Tiele now devotes fifteen pages to the story of Cronos, and to my essay on that theme. He admits that I was right in regarding the myth as ‘extraordinarily old,’ and that in Greece it must go back to a period when Greeks had not passed the New Zealand level of civilisation. But ‘we are the victims of a great illusion if we think that a mere comparison of a Maori and Greek myth explains the myth.’ I only profess to explain the savagery of the myth by the fact (admitted) that it was composed by savages. The Maori story ‘is a myth of the creation of light.’ I, for my part, say, ‘It is a myth of the severance of heaven and earth.’ And so it is! No Being said, in Maori, ‘Fiat lux!’ Light is not here *created*. Heaven lay flat on Earth, all was dark, somebody kicked Heaven up, the already existing light came in. Here is no *création de la lumière*. I ask Professor Tiele, ‘Do you, sir, create light when you open your window-shutters in the morning? No, you let light in!’ The Maori tale is also ‘un mythe primitif de l’aurore,’ a primitive dawn myth. Dawn, again! Here I lose Professor Tiele.

‘Has the myth of Cronos the same sense?’ Probably not, as the Maori story, to my mind, has not got it either. But Professor Tiele says, ‘The myth of Cronos has precisely the opposite sense.’ What is the myth of Cronos? Ouranos (Heaven) married Gaea (Earth). Ouranos ‘hid his children from the light in the *hollows* of Earth’ (Hesiod). So, too, the New Zealand gods were hidden from light while Heaven (Rangi) lay flat on Papa (Earth). The children ‘were concealed between the *hollows* of their parent’s breasts.’ They did not like it, for they dwelt in darkness. So Cronos took an iron sickle and mutilated Ouranos in such a way, *enfin*, as to divorce him *a thoro*. ‘Thus,’ I say, ‘were Heaven and Earth practically divorced.’ The Greek gods now came out of the hollows where they had been, like the New Zealand gods, ‘hidden from the light.’

Professor Tiele on Sunset Myths

No, says Professor Tiele, ‘the story of Cronos has precisely the opposite meaning.’ The New Zealand myth is one of dawn, the Greek myth is one of sunset. The mutilated part of poor Ouranos is *le phallus du ciel*, *le soleil*, which falls into ‘the Cosmic ocean,’ and then, of course, all is dark. Professor Tiele may be right here; I am indifferent. All that I wanted to explain was the savage complexion of the myth, and Professor Tiele says that I have explained that, and (xii. 264) he rejects the etymological theory of Mr. Max Müller.

I say that, in my opinion, the second part of the Cronos myth (the child-swallowing performances of Cronos) ‘was probably a world-wide *Märchen*, or tale, attracted into the cycle of which Cronos was the centre, without any particular reason beyond the law which makes detached myths crystallise round any celebrated name.'

Professor Tiele says he does not grasp the meaning of, or believe in, any such law. Well, why is the world-wide tale of the Cyclops told about Odysseus? It is absolutely out of keeping, and it puzzles commentators. In fact, here was a hero and there was a tale, and the tale was attracted into the cycle of the hero; the very last man to have behaved as Odysseus is made to do. But Cronos was an odious ruffian. The world-wide tale of swallowing and disgorging the children was attracted to *his* too notorious name 'by grace of congruity.' Does Professor Tiele now grasp my meaning (*saisir*)?

Our Lack of Scientific Exactness

I do not here give at full length Professor Tiele's explanation of the meaning of a myth which I do not profess to explain myself. Thus, drops of the blood of Ouranos falling on Earth begat the *Mélies*, usually rendered 'Nymphs of the Ash-trees.' But Professor Tiele says they were really *bees* (Hesychius, ¼µ»¹±¹=¼µ»¹ÃÃ±¹)— 'that is to say, stars.' Everybody has observed that the stars rise up off the earth, like the bees sprung from the blood of Ouranos. In *Myth*, *Ritual*, *and Religion* (i. 299-315) I give the competing explanations of Mr. Max Müller, of Schwartz (Cronos=storm god), Preller (Cronos=harvest god), of others who see the sun, or time, in Cronos; while, with Professor Tiele, Cronos is the god of the upper air, and also of the underworld and harvest; he 'doubles the part.' '*Il est l'un et l'autre'* — that is, '*le dieu qui fait mûrir le blé*' and also '*un dieu des lieux souterrains*.' '*Il habite les profondeurs sous la terre*,' he is also *le dieu du ciel nocturne*.

It may have been remarked that I declined to add to this interesting collection of plausible explanations of Cronos. A selection of such explanations I offer in tabular form: —

Cronos was God of

Time (?) — Max Müller
Sun — Sayce
Midnight sky — Kuhn

Underworld }
Midnight sky} — Tiele
Harvest }

Harvest — Preller
Storm — Schwartz
Star-swallowing sky — Canon Taylor
Sun scorching spring — Hartung

Cronos was by Race

Late Greek (?) — Max Müller
Semitic — Böttiger
Accadian (?) — Sayce

Etymology of Cronos

§Á¿½¿Â=Time (?) — Max Müller
Krna (Sanskrit) — Kuhn
Karnos (Horned) — Brown
ºÁ±¹½É — Preller

The pleased reader will also observe that the *phallus* of Ouranos is the sun (Tiele), that Cronos is the sun (Sayce), that Cronos mutilating Ouranos is the sun (Hartung), just as the sun is the mutilated part of Ouranos (Tiele); *Or* is, according to others, the stone which Cronos swallowed, and which acted as an emetic.

My Lack of Explanation of Cronos

Now, I have offered no explanation at all of who Cronos was, what he was god of, from what race he was borrowed, from what language his name was derived. The fact is that I do not know the truth about these important debated questions. Therefore, after speaking so kindly of our method, and rejecting the method of Mr. Max Müller, Professor Tiele now writes thus (and *this* Mr. Max Müller does cite, as we have seen): —

‘Mr. Lang and M. Gaidoz are not entirely wrong in claiming me as an ally. But I must protest, in the name of mythological science, and of the exactness as necessary to her as to any of the other sciences, against a method which only glides over questions of the first importance’ (name, origin, province, race of Cronos), ‘and which to most questions can only reply, with a smile, *C’est chercher raison où il n’y en a pas*.’

My Crime

Now, what important questions was I gliding over? In what questions did I not expect to find reason? Why in this savage *fatras* about Cronos swallowing his children, about blood-drops becoming bees (Mr. Max Müller says ‘Melian nymphs’), and bees being stars, and all the rest of a prehistoric *Märchen* worked over again and again by the later fancy of Greek poets and by Greek voyagers who recognised Cronos in Moloch. In all this I certainly saw no ‘reason,’ but I have given in tabular form the general, if inharmonious, conclusions of more exact and conscientious scholars, ‘their variegated hypotheses,’ as Mannhardt says in the case of Demeter. My error, rebuked by Professor Tiele, is the lack of that ‘scientific exactitude’ exhibited by the explanations arranged in my tabular form.

My Reply to Professor Tiele

I would reply that I am not engaged in a study of the *Cult* of Cronos, but of the revolting element in his *Myth*: his swallowing of his children, taking a stone emetic by mistake, and disgorging the swallowed children alive; the stone being on view at Delphi long after the Christian era. Now, such stories of divine feats of swallowing and disgorging are very common, I show, in savage myth and popular *Märchen*. The bushmen have Kwai Hemm, who swallows the sacred Mantis insect. He is killed, and all the creatures whom he has swallowed return to light. Such stories occur among Australians, Kaffirs, Red Men, in Guiana, in Greenland, and so on. In some cases, among savages. Night (conceived as a person), or one star which obscures another star, is said to ‘swallow’ it. Therefore, I say, ‘natural phenomena, explained on savage principles, might give the data of the swallowing myth, of Cronos’ — that is, the myth of Cronos may be, probably is, originally a nature-myth. ‘On this principle Cronos would be (*ad hoc*) the Night.’ Professor Tiele does not allude to this effort at interpretation. But I come round to something like the view of Kuhn. Cronos (*ad hoc*) is the midnight , which Professor Tiele also regards as one of his several aspects. It is not impossible, I think, that if the swallowing myth was originally a nature-myth, it was suggested by Night. But the question I tried to answer was, ‘Why did the Greeks, of all people, tell such a disgusting story?’ And I replied, with Professor Tiele’s approval, that they inherited it from an age to which such follies were natural, an age when the ancestors of the Greeks were on (or under) the Maori stage of culture. Now, the Maoris, a noble race, with poems of great beauty and speculative power, were cannibals, like Cronos. To my mind, ‘scientific exactitude’ is rather shown in confessing ignorance than in adding to the list of guesses.

Conclusion as to Professor Tiele

The learned Professor's remarks on being 'much more my ally than my opponent' were published before my *Myth*, *Ritual*, *and Religion*, in which (i. 24, 25) I cited his agreement with me in the opinion that 'the philological method' (Mr. Max Müller's) is 'inadequate and misleading, when it is a question of discovering the origin of a myth.' I also quoted his unhesitating preference of ours to Mr. Max Müller's method (i. 43, 44). I did not cite a tithe of what he actually did say to our credit. But I omitted to quote what it was inexcusable not to add, that Professor Tiele thinks us 'too exclusive,' that he himself had already, before us, combated Mr. Max Müller's method in Dutch periodicals, that he blamed our 'songs of triumph' and our levities, that he thought we might have ignorant camp-followers, that I glided over important questions (bees, blood-drops, stars, Melian nymphs, the *phallus* of Ouranos, &c.), and showed scientific inexactitude in declining *chercher raison où il n'y en a pas*.

None the less, in Professor Tiele's opinion, our method is new (or is *not* new), illuminating, successful, and *alone* successful, for the ends to which we apply it, and, finally, we have shown Mr. Max Müller's method to be a house builded on the sand. That is the gist of what Professor Tiele said.

Mr. Max Müller, like myself, quotes part and omits part. He quotes twice Professor Tiele's observations on my deplorable habit of gliding over important questions. He twice says that we have 'actually' claimed the Professor as 'an ally of the victorious army,' 'the ethnological students of custom and myth,' and once adds, 'but he strongly declined that honour.' He twice quotes the famous *braves gens* passage, excepting only M. Gaidoz, as a scholar, from a censure explicitly directed at our possible camp-followers as distinguished from ourselves.

But if Mr. Max Müller quotes Professor Tiele's remarks proving that, in his opinion, the 'army' *is* really victorious; if he cites the acquiescence in my opinion that *his* mythological house is 'builded on the sands,' or Professor Tiele's preference for our method over his own, or Professor Tiele's volunteered remark that he is 'much more our ally than our adversary,' I have not detected the passages in *Contributions to the Science of Mythology*.

The reader may decide as to the relative importance of what I left out, and of what Mr. Max Müller omitted. He says, 'Professor Tiele and I differ on several points, but we perfectly understand each other, and when we have made a mistake we readily confess and correct it' (i. 37).

The two scholars, I thought, differed greatly. Mr. Max Müller's war-cry, slogan, *mot d'ordre*, is to Professor Tiele 'a false hypothesis.' Our method, which Mr. Max Müller combats so bravely, is all that Professor Tiele has said of it. But, if all this is not conspicuously apparent in our adversary's book, it does not become me to throw the first stone. We are all, in fact, inclined unconsciously to overlook what makes against our argument. I have done it; and, to the best of my belief, Mr. Max Müller has not avoided the same error.

MANNHARDT

Mannhardt’s Attitude

Professor Tiele, it may appear, really ‘fights for his own hand,’ and is not a thorough partisan of either side. The celebrated Mannhardt, too, doubtless the most original student of folklore since Grimm, might, at different periods of his career, have been reckoned an ally, now by philologists, now by ‘the new school.’ He may be said, in fact, to have combined what is best in the methods of both parties. Both are anxious to secure such support as his works can lend.

Moral Character Impeached

Mr. Max Müller avers that his moral character seems to be ‘aimed at’ by critics who say that he has no right to quote Mannhardt or Oldenberg as his supporters (1. xvi.). Now, without making absurd imputations, I do not reckon Mannhardt a thorough partisan of Mr. Max Müller. I could not put *our* theory so well as Mannhardt puts it. ‘The study of the lower races is an invaluable instrument for the interpretation of the survivals from earlier stages, which we meet in the full civilisation of cultivated peoples, but which arose in the remotest fetishism and savagery.’

Like Mr. Max Müller, I do not care for the vague word ‘fetishism,’ otherwise Mannhardt’s remark exactly represents my own position, the anthropological position. Now, Mr. Max Müller does not like that position. That position he assails. It was Mannhardt’s, however, when he wrote the book quoted, and, so far, Mannhardt was *not* absolutely one of Mr. Max Müller’s ‘supporters’ — unless I am one. ‘I have even been accused,’ says Mr. Max Müller, ‘of intentionally ignoring or suppressing Mannhardt’s labours. How charitable!’ (1. xvii.) I trust, from our author’s use of the word *todtschweigen*, that this uncharitable charge was made in Germany.

Mannhardt

Mannhardt, for a time, says Mr. Max Müller, ‘expressed his mistrust in some of the results of comparative mythology’ (1. xvii.). Indeed, I myself quote him to that very effect. Not only ‘*some* of the results,’ but the philological method itself was distrusted by Mannhardt, as by Curtius. ‘The failure of the method in its practical working lies in a lack of the historical sense,' says Mannhardt. Mr. Max Müller may have, probably has, referred to these sayings of Mannhardt; or, if he has not, no author is obliged to mention everybody who disagrees with him. Mannhardt's method was mainly that of folklore, not of philology. He examined peasant customs and rites as 'survivals' of the oldest paganism. Mr. Frazer applies Mannhardt's rich lore to the explanation of Greek and other rites in *The Golden Bough*, that entrancing book. Such was Mannhardt's position (as I shall prove at large) when he was writing his most famous works. But he 'returned at last to his old colours' (1. xvii.) in *Die lettischen Sonnenmythen* (1875). In 1880 Mannhardt died. Mr. Max Müller does not say whether Mannhardt, before a decease deeply regretted, recanted his heretical views about the philological method, and his expressed admiration of the study of the lower races as 'an invaluable instrument.' One would gladly read a recantation so important. But Mr. Max Müller does tell us that 'if I did not refer to his work in my previous contributions to the science of mythology the reason was simple enough. It was not, as has been suggested, my wish to suppress it (*todtschweigen*), but simply my want of knowledge of the materials with which he dealt' (German popular customs and traditions) 'and therefore the consciousness of my incompetence to sit in judgment on his labours.' Again, we are told that there was no need of criticism or praise of Mannhardt. He had Mr. Frazer as his prophet — but not till ten years after his death.

Mannhardt's Letters

'Mannhardt's state of mind with regard to the general principles of comparative philology has been so exactly my own,' says Mr. Max Müller, that he cites Mannhardt's letters to prove the fact. But as to the *application* to myth of the principles of comparative philology, Mannhardt speaks of 'the lack of the historical sense' displayed in the practical employment of the method. This, at least, is 'not exactly' Mr. Max Müller's own view. Probably he refers to the later period when Mannhardt 'returned to his old colours.'

The letters of Mannhardt, cited in proof of his exact agreement with Mr. Max Müller about comparative philology, do not, as far as quoted, mention the subject of comparative philology at all (1. xviii-xx.). Possibly 'philology' is here a slip of the pen, and 'mythology' may be meant.

Mannhardt says to Müllenhoff (May 2, 1876) that he has been uneasy 'at the extent which sun myths threaten to assume in my comparisons.' He is opening 'a new point of view;' materials rush in, 'so that the sad danger seemed inevitable of everything becoming everything.' In Mr. Max Müller's own words, written long ago, *he* expressed his dread, not of 'everything becoming everything' (a truly Heraclitean state of affairs), but of the 'omnipresent Sun and the inevitable Dawn appearing in ever so many disguises.' 'Have we not,' he asks, 'arrived both at the same conclusion?' Really, I do not know! Had Mannhardt quite cashiered 'the corn-spirit,' who, perhaps, had previously threatened to 'become everything'? He is still in great vigour, in Mr. Frazer's *Golden Bough*, and Mr. Frazer is Mannhardt's disciple. But where, all this time, is there a reference by Mannhardt to 'the general principles of comparative philology'? Where does he accept 'the omnipresent Sun and the inevitable Dawn'? Why, he says the reverse; he says in this letter that he is immeasurably removed from accepting them at all as Mr. Max Müller accepts them!

'I am very far from looking upon all myths as psychical reflections of physical phenomena, still less as of exclusively solar or meteorological phenomena, like Kuhn, Schwartz, Max Müller and their school.' What a queer way of expressing his agreement with Mr. Max Müller!

The Professor expostulates with Mannhardt (1. xx.):— 'Where has any one of us ever done this?' Well, when Mannhardt said '*all* myths,' he wrote colloquially. Shall we say that he meant 'most myths,' 'a good many myths,' 'a myth or two here and there'? Whatever he meant, he meant that he was 'still more than very far removed from looking upon all myths' as Mr. Max Müller does.

Mannhardt's next passage I quote entire and textually from Mr. Max Müller's translation: — 'I have learnt to appreciate poetical and literary production as an essential element in the development of mythology, and to draw and utilise the consequences arising from this state of things. But, on the other hand, I hold it as quite certain that a portion of the older myths arose from nature poetry which is no longer directly intelligible to us, but has to be interpreted by means of analogies. Nor does it follow that these myths betray any historical identity; they only testify to the same kind of conception and tendency prevailing on similar stages of development. Of these nature myths some have reference to the life and the circumstances of the sun, and our first steps towards an understanding of them are helped on by such nature poetry as the Lettish, which has not yet been obscured by artistic and poetical reflexion. In that poetry mythical personalities confessedly belonging to a solar sphere are transferred to a large number of poetical representatives, of which the explanation must consequently be found in the same (solar) sphere of nature. My method here is just the same as that applied by me to the Tree-cult.'

Mr. Max Müller asks, 'Where is there any difference between this, the latest and final system adopted by Mannhardt, and my own system which I put forward in 1856?' (1. xxi.)

How Mannhardt differs from Mr. Max Müller

I propose to show wherein the difference lies. Mannhardt says, 'My method is just the same as that applied by me to the Tree-cult.' What was *that* method?

Mannhardt, in the letter quoted by Mr. Max Müller, goes on to describe it; but Mr. Max Müller omits the description, probably not realising its importance. For Mannhardt's method is the reverse of that practised under the old colours to which he is said to have returned.

Mannhardt's Method

'My method is here the same as in the Tree-cult. I start from a given collection of facts, of which the central idea is distinct and generally admitted, and consequently offers a firm basis for explanation. I illustrate from this and from well-founded analogies. Continuing from these, I seek to elucidate darker things. I search out the simplest radical ideas and perceptions, the germ-cells from whose combined growth mythical tales form themselves in very different ways.'

Mr. Frazer gives us a similar description of Mannhardt's method, whether dealing with sun myths or tree myths. 'Mannhardt set himself systematically to collect, compare, and explain the living superstitions of the peasantry.' Now Mr. Max Müller has just confessed, as a reason for incompetence to criticise Mannhardt's labours, 'my want of knowledge of the materials with which he dealt — the popular customs and traditions of Germany.' And yet he asks where there is any difference between his system and Mannhardt's. Mannhardt's is the study of rural survival, the system of folklore. Mr. Max Müller's is the system of comparative philology about which in this place Mannhardt does not say one single word. Mannhardt interprets some myths 'arising from nature poetry, no longer intelligible to us,' by *analogies*; Mr. Max Müller interprets them by *etymologies*.

The difference is incalculable; not that Mannhardt always abstains from etymologising.

Another Claim on Mannhardt

While maintaining that 'all comparative mythology must rest on comparison of names as its most certain basis' (a system which Mannhardt declares explicitly to be so far 'a failure'), Mr. Max Müller says, 'It is well known that in his last, nay posthumous essay, Mannhardt, no mean authority, returned to the same conviction.' I do not know which is Mannhardt's very last essay, but I shall prove that in the posthumous essays Mannhardt threw cold water on the whole method of philological comparative mythology.

However, as proof of Mannhardt's return to Mr. Max Müller's convictions, our author cites *Mythologische Forschungen* (p-113).

What Mannhardt said

In the passages here produced as proof of Mannhardt's conversion, he is not investigating a myth at all, or a name which occurs in mythology. He is trying to discover the meaning of the practices of the Lupercalia at Rome. In February, says Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the Romans held a popular festival, and lads ran round naked, save for skins of victims, whipping the spectators. Mannhardt, in his usual way, collects all the facts first, and then analyses the name *Luperci*. This does not make him a philological mythologist. To take a case in point, at Selkirk and Queensferry the bounds are ridden, or walked, by 'Burleymen' or 'Burrymen.' After examining the facts we examine the words, and ask, 'Why Burley or Burry men?' At Queensferry, by a folk etymology, one of the lads wears a coat stuck over with *burrs*. But 'Borough-men' seems the probable etymology. As we examine the names Burley, or Burry men, so Mannhardt examines the name *Luperci*; and if a true etymology can be discovered, it will illustrate the original intention of the Lupercalia ().

He would like to explain the Lupercalia as a popular play, representing the spirits of vegetation opposing the spirits of infertility. 'But we do not forget that our whole theory of the development of the rite rests on a hypothesis which the lack of materials prevents us from demonstrating.' He would explain *Luperci* as *Lupiherci*— 'wolf-goats.' Over this we need not linger; but how does all this prove Mannhardt to have returned to the method of comparing Greek with Vedic divine names, and arriving thence at some celestial phenomenon as the basis of a terrestrial myth? Yet he sometimes does this.

My Relations to Mannhardt

If anything could touch and move an unawakened anthropologist it would be the conversion of Mannhardt. My own relations with his ideas have the interest of illustrating mental coincidences. His name does not occur, I think, in the essay, 'The Method of Folklore,' in the first edition of my *Custom and Myth*. In that essay I take, as an example of the method, the Scottish and Northumbrian *Kernababy*, the puppet made out of the last gleanings of harvest. This I compared to the Greek Demeter of the harvest-home, with sheaves and poppies in her hands, in the immortal Seventh Idyll of Theocritus. Our Kernababy, I said, is a stunted survival of our older ‘Maiden,’ ‘a regular image of the harvest goddess,’ and I compared º¿Á·. Next I gave the parallel case from ancient Peru, and the odd accidental coincidence that *there* the maize was styled *Mama Cora* (¼·Ä·Á º¿Á·!).

In entire ignorance of Mannhardt’s corn-spirit, or corn-mother, I was following Mannhardt’s track. Indeed, Mr. Max Müller has somewhere remarked that I popularise Mannhardt’s ideas. Naturally he could not guess that the coincidence was accidental and also inevitable. Two men, unknown to each other, were using the same method on the same facts.

Mannhardt’s Return to his old Colours

If, then, Mannhardt was re-converted, it would be a potent argument for my conversion. But one is reminded of the re-conversion of Prince Charles. In 1750 he ‘deserted the errors of the Church of Rome for those of the Church of England.’ Later he returned, or affected to return, to the ancient faith.

A certain Cardinal seemed contented therewith, and, as the historian remarks, ‘was clearly a man not difficult to please.’ Mr. Max Müller reminds me of the good Cardinal. I do not feel so satisfied as he does of Mannhardt’s re-conversion.

Mannhardt’s Attitude to Philology

We have heard Mannhardt, in a letter partly cited by Mr. Max Müller, describe his own method. He begins with what is certain and intelligible, a mass of popular customs. These he explains by analogies. He passes from the known to the obscure. Philological mythologists begin with the unknown, the name of a god. This they analyse, extract a meaning, and (proceeding to the known) fit the facts of the god’s legend into the sense of his name. The methods are each other’s opposites, yet the letter in which Mannhardt illustrates this fact is cited as a proof of his return to his old colours.

Irritating Conduct of Mannhardt

Nothing irritates philological mythologists so much, nothing has injured them so much in the esteem of the public which ‘goes into these things a little,’ as the statement that their competing etymologies and discrepant interpretations of mythical names are mutually destructive. I have been told that this is ‘a mean argument.’ But if one chemical analyst found bismuth where another found iridium, and a third found argon, the public would begin to look on chemistry without enthusiasm; still more so if one chemist rarely found anything but inevitable bismuth or omnipresent iridium. Now Mannhardt uses this ‘mean argument.’

Mannhardt on Demeter Erinnys

In a posthumous work, *Mythologische Forschungen* (1884), the work from which Mr. Max Müller cites the letter to Müllenhoff, Mannhardt discusses Demeter Erinnys. She is the Arcadian goddess, who, in the form of a mare, became mother of Despoina and the horse Arion, by Poseidon. Her anger at the unhandsome behaviour of Poseidon caused Demeter to be called Erinnys— ‘to be angry’ being µÁ¹½Åµ¹½ in Arcadian — a folk-etymology, clearly. Mannhardt first dives deep into the sources for this fable. Arion, he decides, is no mythological personification, but a poetical ideal (*Bezeichnung*) of the war-horse. Legend is ransacked for proof of this. Poseidon is the lord of wind and wave. Now, there are waves of corn, under the wind, as well as waves of the sea. When the Suabian rustic sees the wave running over the corn, he says, *Da lauft das Pferd*, and Greeks before Homer would say, in face of the billowing corn, ‘•º¹¸¹ ¸µ¿ÅÃ¹ ¹ÀÀ¿¹, *There run horses*! And Homer himself says that the horses of Erichthonius, children of Boreas, ran over cornfield and sea. We ourselves speak of sea-waves as ‘white horses.’ So, to be brief, Mannhardt explains the myth of Demeter Erinnys becoming, as a mare, a mother by Poseidon as a horse, thus, ‘Poseidon Hippies, or Poseidon in horse’s form, rushes through the growing grain and weds Demeter,’ and he cites peasant proverbs, such as *Das Korn heirathet*; *das Korn feiert Hochzeit* (). ‘This is the germ of the Arcadian Saga.’

‘The Arcadian myth of Demeter Erinnys is undeniably a blending of the epic tradition with the local cult of Demeter. . . . It is a probable hypothesis that the belief in the wedding of Demeter and Poseidon comes from the sight of the waves passing over the cornfield. . . .’

It is very neat! But a certain myth of Loki in horse-form comes into memory, and makes me wonder how Mannhardt would have dealt with that too liberal narrative.

Loki, as a mare (he being a male god), became, by the horse of a giant, the father of Sleipnir, Odin’s eight-footed steed. Mr. W. A. Craigie supplies this note on Loki’s analogy with Poseidon, as a horse, in the waves of corn: — ‘In North Jutland, when the vapours are seen going with a wavy motion along the earth in the heat of summer, they say, “Loki is sowing oats today,” or “Loki is driving his goats.”

‘N.B. — *Oats* in Danish are *havre*, which suggests O.N. *hafrar*, goats. Modern Icelandic has *hafrar*=oats, but the word is not found in the old language.’

Is Loki a corn-spirit?

Mannhardt’s ‘Mean Argument’

Mannhardt now examines the explanations of Demeter Erinnys, and her legend, given by Preller, E. Curtius, O. Müller, A. Kuhn, W. Sonne, Max Müller, E. Burnouf, de Gubernatis, Schwartz, and H. D. Müller. ‘Here,’ he cries, ‘is a variegated list of hypotheses!’ Demeter is Storm-cloud
Sun Goddess
Earth and Moon Goddess
Dawn
Night.

Poseidon is

Sea
Storm God
Cloud-hidden Sun
Rain God.

Despoina is

Rain
Thunder
Moon.

Arion, the horse, is

Lightning
Sun
Thunder-horse.

Erinnys is

Storm-cloud
Red Dawn.

Mannhardt decides, after this exhibition of guesses, that the Demeter legends cannot be explained as refractions of any natural phenomena in the heavens (). He concludes that the myth of Demeter Erinnys, and the parallel Vedic story of Saranyu (who also had an amour as a mare), are ‘incongruous,’ and that neither sheds any light on the other. He protests against the whole tendency to find prototypes of all Aryan myths in the Veda, and to think that, with a few exceptions, all mythology is a terrestrial reflection of celestial phenomena (). He then goes into the contending etymologies of Demeter, and decides (‘for the man was mortal and had been a’ philologer) in favour of his own guess, –µ¹± ´·+¼·Ä·Á=‘Corn-mother’ ().

This essay on Demeter was written by Mannhardt in the summer of 1877, a year after the letter which is given as evidence that he had ‘returned to his old colours.’ The essay shows him using the philological string of ‘variegated hypotheses’ as anything but an argument in favour of the philological method. On the other hand, he warns us against the habit, so common in the philological school, of looking for prototypes of all Aryan myths in the Veda, and of finding in most myths a reflection on earth of phenomena in the heavens, Erinnys being either Storm-cloud or Dawn, according to the taste and fancy of the inquirer. We also find Mannhardt, in 1877, starting from the known — legend and rural survival in phrase and custom — and so advancing to the unknown — the name Demeter. The philologists commence with the unknown, the old name, Demeter Erinnys, explain it to taste, and bring the legend into harmony with their explanation. I cannot say, then, that I share Mr. Max Müller’s impression. I do not feel sure that Mannhardt did return to his old colours.

Why Mannhardt is Thought to have been Converted

Mannhardt’s friend, Müllenhoff, had an aversion to solar myths. He said: ‘I deeply mistrust all these combinations of the new so-called comparative mythology.’ Mannhardt was preparing to study Lithuanian solar myths, based on Lithuanian and Lettish marriage songs. Müllenhoff and Scherer seem to have thought this work too solar for their taste. Mannhardt therefore replied to their objections in the letter quoted in part by Mr. Max Müller. Mannhardt was not the man to neglect or suppress solar myths when he found them, merely because he did not believe that a great many other myths which had been claimed as celestial were solar. Like every sensible person, he knew that there are numerous real, obvious, confessed solar myths *not* derived from a disease of language. These arise from (1) the impulse to account for the doings of the Sun by telling a story about him as if he were a person; (2) from the natural poetry of the human mind. What we think they are *not* shown to arise from is forgetfulness of meanings of old words, which, *ex hypothesi*, have become proper names.

That is the theory of the philological school, and to that theory, to these colours, I see no proof (in the evidence given) that Mannhardt had returned. But 'the scalded child dreads cold water,' and Müllenhoff apparently dreaded even real solar myths. Mr. Max Müller, on the other hand (if I do not misinterpret him), supposes that Mannhardt had returned to the philological method, partly because he was interested in *real* solar myths and in the natural poetry of illiterate races.

Mannhardt's Final Confession

Mannhardt's last work published in his life days was *Antike Wald- und Feldkulte* (1877). In the preface, dated November 1, 1876 (*after* the famous letter of May 1876), he explains the growth of his views and criticises his predecessors. After doing justice to Kuhn and his comparisons of European with Indian myths, he says that, in his opinion, comparative Indo-Germanic mythology has not yet borne the expected fruits. 'The *assured* gains shrink into very few divine names, such as Dyaus — Zeus — Tius, Parjany — Perkunas, Bhaga — Bug, Varuna — Uranus, &c.' I wish he had completed the list included in &c. Other equations, as Sarameya=Hermeias, Saranyu=Demeter Erinnys, he fears will not stand close criticism. He dreads that *jeux d'esprit* (*geistvolle Spiele des Witzes*) may once more encroach on science. Then, after a lucid statement of Mr. Max Müller's position, he says, 'Ich vermag dem von M. Müller aufgestellten Principe, wenn überhaupt eine, so doch nur eine sehr beschrankte Geltung zuzugestehen.'

'To the principle of Max Müller I can only assign a very limited value, if any value at all.'

'Taken all in all, I consider the greater part of the results hitherto obtained in the field of Indo-Germanic comparative mythology to be, as yet, a failure, premature or incomplete, my own efforts in *German Myths* (1858) included. That I do not, however, "throw out the babe with the bath," as the proverb goes, my essay on Lettish sun myths in Bastian-Hartmann's *Ethnological Journal* will bear witness.’

Such is Mannhardt’s conclusion. Taken in connection with his still later essay on Demeter, it really leaves no room for doubt. There, I think, he does ‘throw out the child with the bath,’ throw the knife after the handle. I do not suppose that Mr. Max Müller ever did quote Mannhardt as one of his supporters, but such a claim, if really made, would obviously give room for criticism.

Mannhardt on Solar Myths

What the attitude of Mannhardt was, in 1877 and later, we have seen. He disbelieves in the philological system of explaining myths by etymological conjectures. He disbelieves in the habit of finding, in myths of terrestrial occurrences, reflections of celestial phenomena. But earlier, in his long essay *Die lettischen Sonnenmythen* (in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1875), he examines the Lettish popular songs about the Sun, the Sun’s daughters, the god-sons, and so forth. Here, of course, he is dealing with popular songs explicitly devoted to solar phenomena, in their poetical aspect. In the Lettish Sun-songs and Sun-myths of the peasants we see, he says, a myth-world ‘in process of becoming,’ in an early state of development, as in *the Veda* (). But, we may reply, in the Veda, myths are already full-grown, or even decadent. Already there are unbelievers in the myths. Thus we would say, in the Veda we have (1) myths of nature, formed in the remote past, and (2) poetical phrases about heavenly phenomena, which resemble the nature-poetry of the Letts, but which do not become full-grown myths. The Lett songs, also, have not developed into myths, of which (as in the Apollo and Daphne story, by Mr. Max Müller’s hypothesis) *the original meaning is lost.*

In the Lett songs we have a mass of nature-pictures — the boat and the apples of the Sun, the red cloak hung on the oak-tree, and so on; pictures by which it is sought to make elemental phenomena intelligible, by comparison with familiar things. Behind the phenomena are, in popular belief, personages — mythical personages — the Sun as ‘a magnified non-natural man,’ or woman; the Sun’s mother, daughters, and other heavenly people. Their conduct is ‘motived’ in a human way. Stories are told about them: the Sun kills the Moon, who revives.

All this is perfectly familiar everywhere. Savages, in their fables, account for solar, lunar, and similar elemental processes, on the theory that the heavenly bodies are, and act like, human beings. The Eskimo myth of the spots on the Moon, marks of ashes thrown by the Sun in a love-quarrel, is an excellent example. But in all this there is no ‘disease of language.’ These are frank nature-myths, ‘ætiological,’ giving a fabulous reason for facts of nature.

Mannhardt on Märchen.

But Mannhardt goes farther. He not only recognises, as everyone must do, the Sun, as explicitly named, when he plays his part in myth, or popular tale (*Märchen*). He thinks that even when the Sun is not named, his presence, and reference to him, and derivation of the incidents in *Märchen* from solar myth, may sometimes be detected with great probability (p, 327). But he adds, 'not that every *Märchen* contains a reference to Nature; that I am far from asserting' ().

Now perhaps nobody will deny that some incidents in *Märchen* may have been originally suggested by nature-myths. The all-swallowing and all-disgorging beast, wolf, or ogre, may have been derived from a view of Night as the all-swallower. But to disengage natural phenomena, mythically stated, from the human tangle of *Märchen*, to find natural phenomena in such a palimpsest as Perrault's courtly and artificial version of a French popular tale, is a delicate and dangerous task. In many stories a girl has three balls — one of silver, one of gold, one of diamond — which she offers, in succession, as bribes. This is a perfectly natural invention. It is perilous to connect these balls, gifts of ascending value, with the solar apple of iron, silver, and gold (and note 5). It is perilous, and it is quite unnecessary. Some one — Gubernatis, I think — has explained the naked sword of Aladdin, laid between him and the Sultan's daughter in bed, as the silver sickle of the Moon. Really the sword has an obvious purpose and meaning, and is used as a symbol in proxy-marriages. The blood shed by Achilles in his latest victories is elsewhere explained as red clouds round the setting Sun, which is conspicuously childish. Mannhardt leans, at least, in this direction.

'The Two Brothers'

Mannhardt takes the old Egyptian tale of 'The Two Brothers,' Bitiou and Anepou. This fable, as old, in actual written literature, as Moses, is a complex of half the *Märchen* plots and incidents in the world. It opens with the formula of Potiphar's Wife. The falsely accused brother flies, and secretes his life, or separable soul, in a flower of the mystic Vale of Acacias. This affair of the separable soul may be studied in Mr. Hartland's *Perseus*, and it animates, as we shall see, Mr. Frazer's theory of the Origin of Totemism. A golden lock of the wicked wife's hair is then borne by the Nile to the king's palace in Egypt. He will insist on marrying the lady of the lock. Here we are in the Cinderella formula, *en plein*, which may be studied, in African and Santhal shapes, in Miss Coxe's valuable *Cinderella*. Pharaoh's wise men decide that the owner of the lock of hair is (like Egyptian royalty at large) a daughter of the Sun-god (). Here is the Sun, in all his glory; but here we are dealing with a literary version of the *Märchen*, accommodated to royal tastes and Egyptian ideas of royalty by a royal scribe, the courtly Perrault of the Egyptian *Roi-Soleil*. Who can say what he introduced? — while we *can* say that the Sun-god is absent in South African and Santhal and other variants. The Sun may have slipped out here, may have been slipped in there; the faintest glimmer of the historical sense prevents us from dogmatising.

Wedded to Pharaoh, the wicked wife, pursuing her vengeance on Bitiou, cuts down his life-tree. Anepou, his brother, however, recovers his concealed heart (life), and puts it in water. Bitiou revives. He changes himself into the sacred Bull, Apis — a feature in the story which is practically possible in Egypt alone. The Bull tells the king his story, but the wicked wife has the Bull slain, as by Cambyses in Herodotus. Two of his blood-drops become two persea trees. One of them confesses the fact to the wicked wife. She has them cut down; a chip flies into her mouth, she becomes a mother by the chip, the boy (Bitiou) again becomes king, and slays his mother, the wicked wife.

In the tree, any tree, acacia or persea, Mannhardt wishes to recognise the Sun-tree of the Lett songs. The red blossoms of the persea tree are a symbol of the Sun-tree: of Horus. He compares features, not always very closely analogous, in European *Märchen*. For example, a girl hides in a tree, like Charles II. at Boscobel. That is not really analogous with Bitiou's separable life in the acacia! 'Anepou' is like 'Anapu,' Anubis. The Bull is the Sun, is Osiris — dead in winter. Mr. Frazer, Mannhardt's disciple, protests *à grands cris* against these identifications when made by others than Mannhardt, who says, 'The *Märchen* is an old obscure solar myth' (). To others the story of Bitiou seems an Egyptian literary complex, based on a popular set of tales illustrating *furens quid femina possit*, and illustrating the world-wide theory of the separable life, dragging in formulas from other *Märchen*, and giving to all a thoroughly classical Egyptian colouring. Solar myths, we think, have not necessarily anything to make in the matter.

The Golden Fleece

Mannhardt reasons in much the same way about the Golden Fleece. This is a peculiarly Greek feature, interwoven with the world-wide *Märchen* of the Lad, the Giant's helpful daughter, her aid in accomplishing feats otherwise impossible, and the pursuit of the pair by the father. I have studied the story — as it occurs in Samoa, among Red Indian tribes, and elsewhere — in 'A Far-travelled Tale.' In our late Greek versions the Quest of the Fleece of Gold occurs, but in no other variants known to me. There is a lamb (a boy changed into a lamb) in Romaic. His fleece is of no interest to anybody. Out of his body grows a tree with a golden apple. Sun-yarns occur in popular songs. Mannhardt (p, 283) abounds in solar explanations of the Fleece of Gold, hanging on the oak-tree in the dark Ææan forest. Idyia, wife of the Colchian king, 'is clearly the Dawn.' Aia is the isle of the Sun. Helle=Surya, a Sanskrit Sun-goddess; the golden ram off whose back she falls, while her brother keeps his seat, is the Sun. Her brother, Phrixus, may be the Daylight. The oak-tree in Colchis is the Sun-tree of the Lettish songs. Perseus is a hero of Light, born in the Dark Tower (Night) from the shower of gold (Sun-rays).

'We can but say "it may be so,"' but who could explain all the complex Perseus-saga as a statement about elemental phenomena? Or how can the Far-travelled Tale of the Lad and the Giant's Daughter be interpreted to the same effect, above all in the countless examples where no Fleece of Gold occurs? The Greek tale of Jason is made up of several *Märchen*, as is the Odyssey, by epic poets. These *Märchen* have no necessary connection with each other; they are tagged on to each other, and localised in Greece and on the Euxine. A poetic popular view of the Sun may have lent the peculiar, and elsewhere absent, incident of the quest of the Fleece of Gold on the shores of the Black Sea. The old epic poets may have borrowed from popular songs like the Lettish chants (). A similar dubious adhesion may be given by us in the case of Castor and Polydeuces (Morning and Evening Stars?), and Helen (Dawn), and the Hesperides (). The germs of the myths *may* be popular poetical views of elemental phenomena. But to insist on elemental allegories through all the legends of the Dioskouroi, and of the Trojan war, would be to strain a hypothesis beyond the breaking-point. Much, very much, is epic invention, *unverkennbar das werk der Dichter* ().

Mannhardt's Approach to Mr. Max Müller

In this essay on Lettish Sun-songs (1875) Mannhardt comes nearest to Mr. Max Müller. He cites passages from him with approval (*cf.* p, 322). His explanations, by aid of Sun-songs, of certain features in Greek mythology are plausible, and may be correct. But we turn to Mannhardt's explicit later statement of his own position in 1877, and to his posthumous essays, published in 1884; and, on the whole, we find, in my opinion, much more difference from than agreement with the Oxford Professor, whose Dawn-Daphne and other equations Mannhardt dismisses, and to whose general results (in mythology) he assigns a value so restricted. It is a popular delusion that the anthropological mythologists deny the existence of solar myths, or of nature-myths in general. These are extremely common. What we demur to is the explanation of divine and heroic myths at large as solar or elemental, when the original sense has been lost by the ancient narrators, and when the elemental explanation rests on conjectural and conflicting etymologies and interpretations of old proper names — Athene, Hera, Artemis, and the rest. Nevertheless, while Mannhardt, in his works on Tree-cult, and on Field and Wood Cult, and on the ‘Corn Demon,’ has wandered far from ‘his old colours’ — while in his posthumous essays he is even more of a deserter, his essay on Lettish Sun-myths shows an undeniable tendency to return to Mr. Max Müller’s camp. This was what made his friends so anxious. It is probably wisest to form our opinion of his final attitude on his preface to his last book published in his life-time. In that the old colours are not exactly his chosen banner; nor can the flag of the philological school be inscribed *tandem triumphans*.

In brief, Mannhardt’s return to his old colours (1875-76) seems to have been made in a mood from which he again later passed away. But either modern school of mythology may cite him as an ally in one or other of his phases of opinion.

PHILOLOGY AND DEMETER ERINNYS

Mr. Max Müller on Demeter Erinnys.

Like Mannhardt, our author in his new treatise discusses the strange old Arcadian myth of the horse-Demeter Erinnys (ii. 537). He tells the unseemly tale, and asks why the Earth goddess became a mare? Then he gives the analogous myth from the Rig-Veda, which, as it stands, is 'quite unintelligible.' But Yâska explains that Saranyu, daughter of Tvashtri, in the form of a mare, had twins by Vivasvat, in the shape of a stallion. Their offspring were the Asvins, who are more or less analogous in their helpful character to Castor and Pollux. Now, can it be by accident that Saranyu in the Veda is Erinnys in Greek? To this 'equation,' as we saw, Mannhardt demurred in 1877. Who was Saranyu? Yâska says 'the Night;' that was Yâska's idea. Mr. Max Müller adds, 'I think he is right,' and that Saranyu is 'the grey dawn' (ii. 541).

'But,' the bewildered reader exclaims, 'Dawn is one thing and Night is quite another.' So Yâska himself was intelligent enough to observe, 'Night is the wife of Aditya; she vanishes at sunrise.' However, Night in Mr. Max Müller's system 'has just got to be' Dawn, a position proved thus: 'Yâska makes this clear by saying that the time of the Asvins, sons of Saranyu, is after midnight,' but that 'when darkness prevails over light, that is Madhyama; when light prevails over darkness, that is Aditya,' both being Asvins. They (the Asvins) are, in fact, darkness and light; and *therefore*, I understand, Saranyu, who is Night, and not an Asvin at all, is Dawn! To make this perfectly clear, remember that the husband of Saranyu, whom she leaves at sunrise, is — I give you three guesses — is the Sun! The Sun's wife leaves the Sun at sunrise. This is proved, for Aditya is Vivasvat=the Sun, and is the husband of Saranyu (ii. 541). These methods of proving Night to be Dawn, while the substitute for both in the bed of the Sun 'may have been meant for the gloaming' (ii. 542), do seem to be *geistvolle Spiele des Witzes*, ingenious *jeux d'esprit*, as Mannhardt says, rather than logical arguments.

But we still do not know how the horse and mare came in, or why the statue of Demeter had a horse's head. 'This seems simply to be due to the fact that, quite apart from this myth, the sun had, in India at least, often been conceived as a horse . . . . and the dawn had been likened to a mare.' But how does this explain the problem? The Vedic poets cited (ii. 542) either referred to the myth which we have to explain, or they used a poetical expression, knowing perfectly well what they meant. As long as they knew what they meant, they could not make an unseemly fable out of a poetical phrase. Not till after the meaning was forgotten could the myth arise. But the myth existed already in the Veda! And the unseemliness is precisely what we have to account for; that is our enigma.

Once more, Demeter is a goddess of Earth, not of Dawn. How, then, does the explanation of a hypothetical Dawn-myth apply to the Earth? Well, perhaps the story, the unseemly story, was first told of Erinnys (who also is ‘the inevitable Dawn’) or of Deo, ‘and this name of Deo, or Dyâvâ, was mixed up with a hypokoristic form of Demeter, Deo, and thus led to the transference of her story to Demeter. I know this will sound very unlikely to Greek scholars, yet I see no other way out of our difficulties’ (ii. 545). Phonetic explanations follow.

‘To my mind,’ says our author, ‘there is no chapter in mythology in which we can so clearly read the transition of an auroral myth of the Veda into an epic chapter of Greece as in the chapter of Saranyu (or Suramâ) and the Asvins, ending in the chapter of Helena and her brothers, the ”¹¿Ãº¿Á¿¹ »µÅº¿ÀÉ»¿¹’ (ii. 642). Here, as regards the Asvins and the Dioskouroi, Mannhardt may be regarded as Mr. Max Müller’s ally; but compare his note, *A. F. u. W. K.* .

My Theory of the Horse Demeter

Mannhardt, I think, ought to have tried at an explanation of myths so closely analogous as those two, one Indian, one Greek, in which a goddess, in the shape of a mare, becomes mother of twins by a god in the form of a stallion. As Mr. Max Müller well says, ‘If we look about for analogies we find nothing, as far as I know, corresponding to the well-marked features of this barbarous myth among any of the uncivilised tribes of the earth. If we did, how we should rejoice! Why, then, should we not rejoice when we find the allusion in Rig Veda?’ (x 17, 1).

I do rejoice! The ‘song of triumph,’ as Professor Tiele says, will be found in *M. R. R.* ii. 266 (note), where I give the Vedic and other references. I even asked why Mr. Max Müller did not produce this proof of the identity of Saranyu and Demeter Erinnys in his *Selected Essays* (p, 492).

I cannot explain why this tale was told both of Erinnys and of Saranyu. Granting the certainty of the etymological equation, Saranyu=Erinnys (which Mannhardt doubted), the chances against fortuitous coincidence may be reckoned by algebra, and Mr. Edgeworth’s trillions of trillions feebly express it. Two goddesses, Indian and Greek, have, *ex hypothesi*, the same name, and both, as mares, are mothers of twins. Though the twins (in India the Asvins, in Greek an ideal war-horse and a girl) differ in character, still the coincidence is evidential. Explain it I cannot, and, clearly as the confession may prove my lack of scientific exactness, I make it candidly.

If I must offer a guess, it is that Greeks, and Indians of India, inherited a very ordinary savage idea. The gods in savage myths are usually beasts. As beasts they beget anthropomorphic offspring. This is the regular rule in totemism. In savage myths we are not told ‘a god’ (Apollo, or Zeus, or Poseidon) ‘put on beast shape and begat human sons and daughters’ (Helen, the Telmisseis, and so on). The god in savage myths was a beast already, though he could, of course, shift shapes like any ‘medicine-man,’ or modern witch who becomes a hare. This is not the exception but the rule in savage mythology. Anyone can consult my *Myth*, *Ritual*, *and Religion*, or Mr. Frazer’s work *Totemism*, for abundance of evidence. To Loki, a male god, prosecuting his amours as a female horse, I have already alluded, and in *M. R. R.* give cases from the *Satapatha Brahmana*.

The Saranyu-Erinnys myth dates, I presume, from this savage state of fancy; but why the story occurred both in Greece and India, I protest that I cannot pretend to explain, except on the hypothesis that the ancestors of Greek and Vedic peoples once dwelt together, had a common stock of savage fables, and a common or kindred language. After their dispersion, the fables admitted discrepancies, as stories in oral circulation occasionally do. This is the only conjecture which I feel justified in suggesting to account for the resemblances and incongruities between the myths of the mare Demeter-Erinnys and the mare Saranyu.

TOTEMISM

Totemism

To the strange and widely diffused institution of 'Totemism' our author often returns. I shall deal here with his collected remarks on the theme, the more gladly as the treatment shows how very far Mr. Max Müller is from acting with a shadow of unfairness when he does not refer to special passages in his opponent's books. He treats himself and his own earlier works in the same fashion, thereby, perhaps, weakening his argument, but also demonstrating his candour, were any such demonstration required.

On totems he opens (i. 7) — 'When we come to special cases we must not imagine that much can be gained by using such general terms as Animism, Totemism, Fetishism, &c., as solvents of mythological problems. To my mind, all such general terms, not excluding even Darwinism or Puseyism, seem most objectionable, because they encourage vague thought, vague praise, or vague blame.

'It is, for instance, quite possible to place all worship of animal gods, all avoidance of certain kinds of animal food, all adoption of animal names as the names of men and families, under the wide and capacious cover of totemism. All theriolatry would thus be traced back to totemism. I am not aware, however, that any Egyptologists have adopted such a view to account for the animal forms of the Egyptian gods. Sanskrit scholars would certainly hesitate before seeing in Indra a totem because he is called v*ri*shabha, or bull, or before attempting to explain on this ground the abstaining from beef on the part of orthodox Hindus .'

Totemism Defined

I think I have defined totemism, and the reader may consult Mr. Frazer's work on the subject, or Mr. MacLennan's essays, or 'Totemism' in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. However, I shall define totemism once more. It is a state of society and cult, found most fully developed in Australia and North America, in which sets of persons, believing themselves to be akin by blood, call each such set by the name of some plant, beast, or other class of objects in nature. One kin may be wolves, another bears, another cranes, and so on. Each kin derives its kin-name from its beast, plant, or what not; pays to it more or less respect, usually abstains from killing, eating, or using it (except in occasional sacrifices); is apt to claim descent from or relationship with it, and sometimes uses its effigy on memorial pillars, carved pillars outside huts, tattooed on the skin, and perhaps in other ways not known to me. In Australia and North America, where rules are strict, a man may not marry a woman of his own totem; and kinship is counted through mothers in many, but not in all, cases. Where all these notes are combined we have totemism. It is plain that two or three notes of it may survive where the others have perished; may survive in ritual and sacrifice, and in bestial or semi-bestial gods of certain nomes, or districts, in ancient Egypt; in Pictish names; in claims of descent from beasts, or gods in the shape of beasts; in the animals sacred to gods, as Apollo or Artemis, and so on. Such survivals are possible enough in evolution, but the evidence needs careful examination. Animal attributes and symbols and names in religion are not necessarily totemistic. Mr. Max Müller asks if 'any Egyptologists have adopted' the totem theory. He is apparently oblivious of Professor Sayce's reference to a prehistoric age, 'when the religious creed of Egypt was still totemism.'

Dr. Codrington is next cited for the apparent absence of totemism in the Solomon Islands and Polynesia, and Professor Oldenberg as denying that 'animal names of persons and clans imply totemism.' Who says that they do? 'Clan Chattan,' with its cat crest, may be based, not on a totem, but on a popular etymology. Animal names of *individuals* have nothing to do with totems. A man has no business to write on totemism if he does not know these facts.

What a Totem is

Though our adversary now abandons totems, he returns to them elsewhere (i. 198-202). 'Totem is the corruption of a term used by North American Indians in the sense of clan-mark or sign-board ("ododam").' The totem was originally a rude emblem of an animal or other object 'placed by North American Indians in front of their settlements.'

The Evidence for Sign-boards

Our author's evidence for sign-boards is from an Ottawa Indian, and is published from his MS. by Mr. Hoskyns Abrahall. The testimony is of the greatest merit, for it appears to have first seen the light in a Canadian paper of 1858. Now in 1858 totems were only spoken of in Lafitau, Long, and such old writers, and in Cooper's novels. They had not become subjects of scientific dispute, so the evidence is uncontaminated by theory. The Indians were, we learn, divided into tribes, and these 'into sections or families according to their *ododams*' — devices, signs, in modern usage 'coats of arms.' All people of one *ododam* (apparently under male kinship) lived together in a special section of each village. At the entrance to the enclosure was the figure of an animal, or some other sign, set up on the top of one of the posts. Thus everybody knew what family dwelt in what section of the village. Some of the families were called after their *ododam*. But the family with the bear *ododam* were called Big Feet, not Bears. Sometimes parts of different animals were 'quartered' , and one *ododam* was a small hawk and the fins of a sturgeon.

We cannot tell, of course, on the evidence here, whether 'Big Feet' suggested 'Bear,' or *vice versa*, or neither. But Mr. Frazer has remarked that periphrases for sacred beasts, like 'Big Feet' for Bear, are not uncommon. Nor can we tell 'what couple of ancestors' a small hawk and a sturgeon's fins represent, unless, perhaps, a hawk and a sturgeon.

For all this, Mr. Max Müller suggests the explanation that people who marked their abode with crow or wolf might come to be called Wolves or Crows. Again, people might borrow beast names from the prevalent beast of their district, as Arkades, 'Á°Ä¿¹, Bears, and so evolve the myth of descent from Callisto as a she-bear. 'All this, however, is only guesswork.' The Snake Indians worship no snake. Once more, the name-giving beast, say, 'Great Hare,' is explained by Dr. Brinton as 'the inevitable Dawn.' 'Hasty writers,' remarks Dr. Brinton, 'say that the Indians claim descent from different wild beasts.' For evidence I refer to that hasty writer, Mr. Frazer, and his book, *Totemism*. For a newly sprung up modern totem our author alludes to a boat, among the Mandans, 'their totem, or tutelary object of worship.' An object of worship, of course, is not necessarily a totem! Nor is a totem by the definition (as a rule one of a *class* of objects) anything but a *natural* object. Mr. Max Müller wishes that 'those who write about totems and totemism would tell us exactly what they mean by these words.' I have told him, and indicated better sources. I apply the word totemism to the widely diffused savage institution which I have defined.

More about Totems

The origin of totemism is unknown to me, as to Mr. McLennan and Dr. Robertson Smith, but Mr. Max Müller knows this origin. 'A totem is a clan-mark, then a clan-name, then the name of the ancestor of a clan, and lastly the name of something worshipped by a clan' (i. 201). 'All this applies in the first instance to Red Indians only.' Yes, and 'clan' applies in the first instance to the Scottish clans only! When Mr. Max Müller speaks of 'clans' among the Red Indians, he uses a word whose connotation differs from anything known to exist in America. But the analogy between a Scottish clan and an American totem-kin is close enough to justify Mr. Max Müller in speaking of Red Indian ‘clans.’ By parity of reasoning, the analogy between the Australian *Kobong* and the American totem is so complete that we may speak of ‘Totemism’ in Australia. It would be childish to talk of ‘Totemism’ in North America, ‘Kobongism’ in Australia, ‘Pacarissaism’ in the realm of the Incas: totems, kobongs, and pacarissas all amounting to the same thing, except in one point. I am not aware that Australian blacks erect, or that the subjects of the Incas, or that African and Indian and Asiatic totemists, erected ‘sign-boards’ anywhere, as the Ottawa writer assures us that the Ottawas do, or used to do. And, if they don’t, how do we know that kobongs and pacarissas were developed out of sign-boards?

Heraldry and Totems

The Ottawas are *armigeri*, are heraldic; so are the natives of Vancouver’s Island, who have wooden pillars with elaborate quarterings. Examples are in South Kensington Museum. But this savage heraldry is not nearly so common as the institution of totemism. Thus it is difficult to prove that the heraldry is the origin of totemism, which is just as likely, or more likely, to have been the origin of savage heraldic crests and quarterings. Mr. Max Müller allows that there may be other origins.

Gods and Totems

Our author refers to unnamed writers who call Indra or Ammon a totem (i. 200).

This is a foolish liberty with language. ‘Why should not all the gods of Egypt with their heads of bulls and apes and cats be survivals of totemisms?’ Why not, indeed? Professor Sayce remarks, ‘They were the sacred animals of the clans,’ survivals from an age ‘when the religion of Egypt was totemism.’ ‘In Egypt the gods themselves are totem-deities, *i.e.* personifications or individual representations of the sacred character and attributes which in the purely totem stage of religion were ascribed without distinction to all animals of the holy kind.’ So says Dr. Robertson Smith. He and Mr. Sayce are ‘scholars,’ not mere unscholarly anthropologists.

An Objection

Lastly (ii. 403), when totems infected ‘even those who ought to have been proof against this infantile complaint’ (which is not even a ‘disease of language’ of a respectable type), then ‘the objection that a totem meant originally a clan-mark was treated as scholastic pedantry.' Alas, I fear with justice! For if I call Mr. Arthur Balfour a Tory will Mr. Max Müller refute my opinion by urging that 'a Tory meant originally an Irish rapparee,' or whatever the word *did* originally mean?

Mr. Max Müller decides that 'we never find a religion consisting exclusively of a belief in fetishes, or totems, or ancestral spirits.' Here, at last, we are in absolute agreement. So much for totems and sign-boards. Only a weak fanatic will find a totem in every animal connected with gods, sacred names, and religious symbols. But totemism is a fact, whether 'totem' originally meant a clan-mark or sign-board in America or not. And, like Mr. Sayce, Mr. Frazer, Mr. Rhys, Dr. Robertson Smith, I believe that totemism has left marks in civilised myth, ritual, and religion, and that these survivals, not a 'disease of language,' explain certain odd elements in the old civilisations.

A Weak Brother

Our author's habit of omitting references to his opponents has here caused me infinite inconvenience. He speaks of some eccentric person who has averred that a 'fetish' is a 'totem,' inhabited by 'an ancestral spirit.' To myself it seems that you might as well say 'Abracadabra is gas and gaiters.' As no reference was offered, I invented 'a wild surmise' that Mr. Max Müller had conceivably misapprehended Mr. Frazer's theory of the origin of totems. Had our author only treated himself fairly, he would have referred to his own *Anthropological Religion* (p and 407), where the name of the eccentric definer is given as that of Herr Lippert. Then came into my mind the words of Professor Tiele, 'Beware of weak brethren' — such as Herr Lippert seems, as far as this definition is concerned, to be.

Nobody knows the origin of totemism. We find no race on its way to becoming totemistic, though we find several in the way of ceasing to be so. They are abandoning female kinship for paternity; their rules of marriage and taboo are breaking down; perhaps various totem kindreds of different crests and names are blending into one local tribe, under the name, perhaps, of the most prosperous totem-kin. But we see no race on its way to becoming totemistic, so we have no historical evidence as to the origin of the institution. Mr. McLennan offered no conjecture, Professor Robertson Smith offered none, nor have I displayed the spirit of scientific exactitude by a guess in the dark. To gratify Mr. Max Müller by defining totemism as Mr. McLennan first used the term is all that I dare do. Here one may remark that if Mr. Max Müller really wants 'an accurate definition' of totemism, the works of McLennan, Frazer, Robertson

Smith, and myself are accessible, and contain our definitions. He does not produce these definitions, and criticise them; he produces Dr. Lippert's and criticises that. An argument should be met in its strongest and most authoritative form. 'Define what you mean by a totem,' says Professor Max Müller in his *Gifford Lectures* of 1891 (). He had to look no further for a definition, an authoritative definition, than to 'totem' in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, or to McLennan. Yet his large and intelligent Glasgow audience, and his readers, may very well be under the impression that a definition of 'totem' is 'still to seek,' like Prince Charlie's religion. Controversy simply cannot be profitably conducted on these terms.

'The best representatives of anthropology are now engaged not so much in comparing as in discriminating.' Why not refer, then, to the results of their discriminating efforts? 'To treat all animal worship as due to totemism is a mistake.' Do we make it?

Mr. Frazer and Myself

There is, or was, a difference of opinion between Mr. Frazer and myself as to the causes of the appearance of certain sacred animals in Greek religion. My notions were published in *Myth, Ritual, and Religion* (1887), Mr. Frazer's in *The Golden Bough* (1890). Necessarily I was unaware in 1887 of Mr. Frazer's still unpublished theory. Now that I have read it, he seems to me to have the better logic on his side; and if I do not as yet wholly agree with him, it is because I am not yet certain that both of our theories may not have their proper place in Greek mythology.

Greek Totemism

In *C. and M.* () I describe the social aspects of totemism. I ask if there are traces of it in Greece. Suppose, for argument's sake, that in prehistoric Greece the mouse had been a totem, as it is among the Oraons of Bengal. In that case (1) places might be named from a mouse tribe; (2) mice might be held sacred *per se*; (3) the mouse name might be given locally to a god who superseded the mouse in pride of place; (4) images of the mouse might be associated with that of the god, (5) and used as a local badge or mark; (6) myths might be invented to explain the forgotten cause of this prominence of the mouse. If all these notes occur, they would raise a presumption in favour of totemism in the past of Greece. I then give evidence in detail, proving that all these six facts do occur among Greeks of the Troads and sporadically elsewhere. I add that, granting for the sake of argument that these traces may point to totemism in the remote past, the mouse, though originally a totem, ‘*need not have been an Aryan totem*’ ().

I offer a list of other animals closely connected with Apollo, giving him a beast’s name (wolf, ram, dolphin), and associated with him in myth and art. In *M. R. R.* I apply similar arguments in the case of Artemis and the Bear, of Dionysus and the Bull, Demeter and the Pig, and so forth. Moreover, I account for the myths of descent of Greek human families from gods disguised as dogs, ants, serpents, bulls, and swans, on the hypothesis that kindreds who originally, in totemistic fashion, traced to beasts *sans phrase*, later explained their own myth to themselves by saying that the paternal beast was only a god in disguise and *en bonne fortune*.

This hypothesis at least ‘colligates the facts,’ and brings them into intelligible relationship with widely-diffused savage institutions and myths.

The Greek Mouse-totem?

My theory connecting Apollo Smintheus and the place-names derived from mice with a possible prehistoric mouse-totem gave me, I confess, considerable satisfaction. But in Mr. Frazer’s *Golden Bough* (ii. 129-132) is published a group of cases in which mice and other vermin are worshipped for prudential reasons — to get them to go away. In the *Classical Review* (vol. vi. 1892) Mr. Ward Fowler quotes Aristotle and Ælian on plagues of mice, like the recent invasion of voles on the Border sheep-farms. He adopts the theory that the sacred mice were adored by way of propitiating them. Thus Apollo may be connected with mice, not as a god who superseded a mouse-totem, but as an expeller of mice, like the worm-killing Heracles, and the Locust-Heracles, and the Locust-Apollo. The locust is still painted red, salaamed to, and set free in India, by way of propitiating his companions. Thus the Mouse-Apollo (Smintheus) would be merely a god noted for his usefulness in getting rid of mice, and any worship given to mice (feeding them, placing their images on altars, their stamp on coins, naming places after them, and so on) would be mere acts of propitiation.

There would be no mouse-totem in the background. I do not feel quite convinced — the mouse being a totem, and a sacred or tabooed animal, in India and Egypt. But I am content to remain in a balance of opinion. That the Mouse is the Night (Gubernatis), or the Lightning (Grohmann), I am disinclined to believe. Philologists are very apt to jump at contending meteorological explanations of mice and such small deer without real necessity, and an anthropologist is very apt to jump at an equally unnecessary and perhaps equally undemonstrated totem.

Philological Theory

Philological mythologists prefer to believe that the forgotten meaning of words produced the results; that the wolf-born Apollo (›Åº·yµ½·Â) originally meant 'Light-born Apollo,' and that the wolf came in from a confusion between »Åº·, 'Light,' and »Åº¿Â, a wolf. I make no doubt that philologists can explain Sminthian Apollo, the Dog-Apollo, and all the rest in the same way, and account for all the other peculiarities of place-names, myths, works of art, local badges, and so forth. We must then, I suppose, infer that these six traits of the mouse, already enumerated, tally with the traces which actual totemism would or might leave surviving behind it, or which propitiation of mice might leave behind it, by a chance coincidence, determined by forgotten meanings of words. The Greek analogy to totemistic facts would be explained, (1) either by asking for a definition of totemism, and not listening when it is given; or (2) by maintaining that savage totemism is also a result of a world-wide malady of language, which, in a hundred tongues, produced the same confusions of thought, and consequently the same practices and institutions. Nor do I for one moment doubt that the ingenuity of philologists could prove the name of every beast and plant, in every language under heaven, to be a name for the 'inevitable dawn' (Max Müller), or for the inevitable thunder, or storm, or lightning (Kuhn-Schwartz). But as names appear to yield storm, lightning, night, or dawn with equal ease and certainty, according as the scholar prefers dawn or storm, I confess that this demonstration would leave me sceptical. It lacks scientific exactitude.

Mr. Frazer on Animals in Greek Religion

In *The Golden Bough* (ii. 37) Mr. Frazer, whose superior knowledge and acuteness I am pleased to confess, has a theory different from that which I (following McLennan) propounded before *The Golden Bough* appeared. Greece had a bull-shaped Dionysus. 'There is left no room to doubt that in rending and devouring a live bull at his festival, his worshippers believed that they were killing the god, eating his flesh, and drinking his blood.' Mr. Frazer concludes that there are two possible explanations of Dionysus in his bull aspect. (1) This was an expression of his character as a deity of vegetation, 'especially as the bull is a common embodiment of the corn-spirit in Northern Europe.' (2) The other possible explanation 'appears to be the view taken by Mr. Lang, who suggests that the bull-formed Dionysus "had either been developed out of, or had succeeded to, the worship of a bull-totem."'

Now, anthropologists are generally agreed, I think, that occasional sacrifices of and communion in the flesh of the totem or other sacred animals do occur among totemists. But Mr. Frazer and I both admit, and indeed are eager to state publicly, that the evidence for sacrifice of the totem, and communion in eating him, is very scanty. The fact is rather inferred from rites among peoples just emerging from totemism (see the case of the Californian buzzard, in Bancroft) than derived from actual observation. On this head too much has been taken for granted by anthropologists. But I learn that direct evidence has been obtained, and is on the point of publication. The facts I may not anticipate here, but the evidence will be properly sifted, and bias of theory discounted.

To return to my theory of the development of Dionysus into a totem, or of his inheritance of the rites of a totem, Mr. Frazer says, ‘Of course this is possible, but it is not yet certain that Aryans ever had totemism.’ Now, in writing of the mouse, I had taken care to observe that, in origin, the mouse as a totem need not have been Aryan, but adopted. People who think that the Aryans did not pass through a stage of totemism, female kin, and so forth, can always fall back (to account for apparent survivals of such things among Aryans) on ‘Pre-Aryan conquered peoples,’ such as the Picts. Aryans may be enticed by these bad races and become *Pictis ipsis Pictiores*.

Aryan Totems (?)

Generally speaking (and how delightfully characteristic of us all is this!), I see totems in Greek sacred beasts, where Mr. Frazer sees the corn-spirit embodied in a beast, and where Mr. Max Müller sees (in the case of Indra, called the bull) ‘words meaning simply male, manly, strong,’ an ‘animal simile.’ Here, of course, Mr. Max Müller is wholly in the right, when a Vedic poet calls Indra ‘strong bull,’ or the like. Such poetic epithets do not afford the shadow of a presumption for Vedic totemism, even as a survival. Mr. Frazer agrees with me and Mr. Max Müller in this certainty. I myself say, ‘If in the shape of Indra there be traces of fur and feather, they are not very numerous nor very distinct, but we give them for what they may be worth.’ I then give them. To prove that I do not force the evidence, I take the Vedic text. ‘His mother, a cow, bore Indra, an unlicked calf.’ I then give Sayana’s explanation. Indra entered into the body of Dakshina, and was reborn of her. She also bore a cow. But this legend, I say, ‘has rather the air of being an invention, *après coup*, to account for the Vedic text of calf Indra, born from a cow, than of being a genuine ancient myth.’ The Vedic myth of Indra’s amours in shape of a ram, I say ‘will doubtless be explained away as metaphorical.’ Nay, I will go further. It is perfectly conceivable to me that in certain cases a poetic epithet applied by a poet to a god (say bull, ram, or snake) *might* be misconceived, and *might* give rise to the worship of a god as a bull, or snake, or ram. Further, if civilised ideas perished, and if a race retained a bull-god, born of their degradation and confusion of mind, they might eat him in a ritual sacrifice. But that *all* totemistic races are totemistic, because they all first metaphorically applied animal names to gods, and then forgot what they had meant, and worshipped these animals, *sans phrase*, appears to me to be, if not incredible, still greatly in want of evidence.

Mr. Frazer and I

It is plain that where a people claim no connection by descent and blood from a sacred animal, are neither of his name nor kin, the essential feature of totemism is absent. I do not see that eaters of the bull Dionysus or cultivators of the pig Demeter made any claim to kindred with either god. Their towns were not allied in name with pig or bull. If traces of such a belief existed, they have been sloughed off. Thus Mr. Frazer's explanation of Greek pigs and bulls and all their odd rites, as connected with the beast in which the corn-spirit is incarnate, holds its ground better than my totemistic suggestion. But I am not sure that the corn-spirit accounts for the Sminthian mouse in all his aspects, nor for the Arcadian and Attic bear-rites and myths of Artemis. Mouse and bear do appear in Mr. Frazer's catalogue of forms of the corn-spirits, taken from Mannhardt. But the Arcadians, as we shall see, *claimed descent* from a bear, and the mouse place-names and badges of the Troad yield a hint of the same idea. The many Greek family claims to descent from gods as dogs, bulls, ants, serpents, and so on, *may* spring from gratitude to the corn-spirit. Does Mr. Frazer think so? Nobody knows so well as he that similar claims of descent from dogs and snakes are made by many savage kindreds who have no agriculture, no corn, and, of course, no corn-spirits. These remarks, I trust, are not undiscriminating, and naturally I yield the bull Dionysus and the pig Demeter to the corn-spirit, *vice* totem, superseded. But I do hanker after the Arcadian bear as, at least, a possible survival of totemism. The Scottish school inspector removed a picture of Behemoth, as a fabulous animal, from the wall of a school room. But, not being sure of the natural history of the unicorn, 'he just let him bide, and gave the puir beast the benefit o' the doubt.'

Will Mr. Frazer give the Arcadian bear 'the benefit of the doubt'?

I am not at all bigoted in the opinion that the Greeks may have once been totemists. The strongest presumption in favour of the hypothesis is the many claims of descent from a god disguised as a beast. But the institution, if ever it did exist among the ancestors of the Greeks, had died out very long before Homer. We cannot expect to find traces of the prohibition to marry a woman of the same totem. In Rome we do find traces of exogamy, as among totemists. 'Formerly they did not marry women connected with them by blood.' But we do not find, and would not expect to find, that the 'blood' was indicated by the common totem.

Mr. Frazer on Origin of Totemism

Mr. Frazer has introduced the term 'sex-totems,' in application to Australia. This is connected with his theory of the Origin of Totemism. I cannot quite approve of the term sex-totems.

If in Australia each sex has a protecting animal — the men a bat, the women an owl — if the slaying of a bat by a woman menaces the death of a man, if the slaying of an owl by a woman may cause the decease of a man, all that is very unlike totemism in other countries. Therefore, I ask Mr. Frazer whether, in the interests of definite terminology, he had not better give some other name than 'totem' to his Australian sex protecting animals? He might take for a *local* fact, a *local* name, and say 'Sex-kobong.'

Once more, for even we anthropologists have our bickerings, I would 'hesitate dislike' of this passage in Mr. Frazer's work:

'When a savage *names himself* after an animal, calls it his brother, and refuses to kill it, the animal is said to be his totem.' *Distinguo*! A savage does not name *himself* after his totem, any more than Mr. Frazer named himself by his clan-name, originally Norman. It was not as when Miss Betty Amory named herself 'Blanche,' by her own will and fantasy. A savage *inherits* his totem name, usually through the mother's side. The special animal which protects an individual savage (Zapotec, *tona*; Guatemalan, *nagual*; North America, *Manitou*, 'medicine') is *not* that savage's totem. The *nagual*, *tona*, or *manitou* is selected for each particular savage, at birth or puberty, in various ways: in America, North and Central, by a dream in a fast, or after a dream. ('Post-hypnotic suggestion.') But a savage is born to his kin-totem. A man is born a wolf of the Delawares, his totem is the wolf, he cannot help himself. But after, or in, his medicine fast and sleep, he may choose a dormouse or a squirrel for his manitou (*tona*, *nagual*) or *private* protecting animal. These are quite separate from totems, as Mr. Max Müller also points out.

Of totems, I, for one, must always write in the sense of Mr. McLennan, who introduced totemism to science. Thus, to speak of 'sex-totems,' or to call the protecting animal of each individual a 'totem,' is, I fear, to bring in confusion, and to justify Mr. Max Müller's hard opinion that 'totemism' is ill-defined. For myself, I use the term in the strict sense which I have given, and in no other.

Mr. McLennan did not profess, as we saw, to know the origin of totems. He once made a guess in conversation with me, but he abandoned it. Professor Robertson Smith did not know the origin of totems. 'The origin of totems is as much a problem as the origin of local gods.' Mr. Max Müller knows the origin: sign-boards are the origin, or one origin. But what was the origin of sign-boards? 'We carry the pictures of saints on our banners because we worship them; we don't worship them because we carry them as banners,' says De Brosses, an acute man. Did the Indians worship totems because they carved them on sign-boards (if they all did so), or did they carve them on sign-boards because they worshipped them?

Mr. Frazer's Theory

The Australian respects his 'sex-totem' because the life of his sex is bound up in its life. He speaks of it as his brother, and calls himself (as distinguished by his sex) by its name. As a man he is a bat, as a woman his wife is an owl. As a member of a given human kin he may be a kangaroo, perhaps his wife may be an emu. But Mr. Frazer derives totemism, all the world over, from the same origin as he assigns to 'sex-totems.' In these the life of each sex is bound up, therefore they are by each sex revered. Therefore totemism must have the same origin, substituting 'kin' or 'tribe' for sex. He gives examples from Australia, in which killing a man's totem killed the man.

I would respectfully demur or suggest delay. Can we explain an American institution, a fairly world-wide institution, totemism, by the local peculiarities of belief in isolated Australia? If, in America, to kill a wolf was to kill Uncas or Chingachgook, I would incline to agree with Mr. Frazer. But no such evidence is adduced. Nor does it help Mr. Frazer to plead that the killing of an American's *nagual* or of a Zulu's *Ihlozi* kills that Zulu or American. For a *nagual*, as I have shown, is one thing and a totem is another; nor am I aware that Zulus are totemists. The argument of Mr. Frazer is based on analogy and on a special instance. That instance of the Australians is so archaic that it *may* show totemism in an early form. Mr. Frazer's may be a correct hypothesis, but it needs corroboration. However, Mr. Frazer concludes: 'The totem, if I am right, is simply the receptacle in which a man keeps his life.' Yet he never shows that a Choctaw *does* keep his life in his totem. Perhaps the Choctaw is afraid to let out so vital a secret. The less reticent Australian blurts it forth. Suppose the hypothesis correct. Men and women keep their lives in their *naguals*, private sacred beasts. But why, on this score, should a man be afraid to make love to a woman of the same *nagual*? Have Red Indian *women* any *naguals*? I never heard of them.

Since writing this I have read Miss Kingsley’s *Travels in West Africa*. There the ‘bush-souls’ which she mentions () bear analogies to totems, being inherited sacred animals, connected with the life of members of families. The evidence, though vaguely stated, favours Mr. Frazer’s hypothesis, to which Miss Kingsley makes no allusion.

THE VALIDITY OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Anthropological Evidence

In all that we say of totemism, as, later, of fetishism, we rely on an enormous mass of evidence from geographers, historians, travellers, settlers, missionaries, explorers, traders, Civil Servants, and European officers of native police in Australia and Burmah. Our witnesses are of all ages, from Herodotus to our day, of many nations, of many creeds, of different theoretical opinions. This evidence, so world-wide, so diversified in source, so old, and so new, Mr. Max Müller impugns. But, before meeting his case, let us clear up a personal question.

‘Positions one never held’

‘It is not pleasant to have to defend positions which one never held, nor wishes to hold, and I am therefore all the more grateful to those who have pointed out the audacious misrepresentations of my real opinion in comparative mythology, and have rebuked the flippant tone of some of my eager critics’ .

I must here confess to the belief that no gentleman or honest man ever *consciously* misrepresents the ideas of an opponent. If it is not too flippant an illustration, I would say that no bowler ever throws consciously and wilfully; his action, however, may unconsciously develop into a throw. There would be no pleasure in argument, cricket, or any other sport if we knowingly cheated. Thus it is always *unconsciously* that adversaries pervert, garble, and misrepresent each other’s opinions; unconsciously, not ‘audaciously.’ If people would start from the major premise that misrepresentations, if such exist, are unconscious errors, much trouble would be spared.

Positions which I never held

Thus Mr. Max Müller never dreamed of ‘audaciously misrepresenting’ me when, in four lines, he made two statements about my opinions and my materials which are at the opposite pole from the accurate (i. 12): ‘When I speak of the Vedic *Rishis* as primitive, I do not mean what Mr. A. Lang means when he calls his savages primitive.’ But I have stated again and again that I *don’t* call my savages 'primitive.' Thus 'contemporary savages may be degraded, they certainly are not primitive.' 'One thing about the past of savages we do know: it must have been a long past.' 'We do not wish to call savages primitive.' All this was written in reply to the very proper caution of Dr. Fairbairn that 'savages are not primitive.' Of course they are not; that is of the essence of my theory. I regret the use of the word 'primitive' even in *Primitive Culture*. Savages, as a rule, are *earlier*, more backward than civilised races, as, of course, Mr. Max Müller admits, where language is concerned. Now, after devoting several pages to showing in detail how very far from primitive even the Australian tribes are, might I (if I were ill-natured) not say that Mr. Max Müller 'audaciously misrepresents' me when he avers that I 'call my savages primitive'? But he never dreamed of misrepresenting me; he only happened not to understand my position. However, as he complains in his own case, 'it is not pleasant to have to defend positions which one never held' (i. 26), and, indeed, I shall defend no such position.

My adversary next says that my 'savages are of the nineteenth century.' It is of the essence of my theory that my savages are of many different centuries. Those described by Herodotus, Strabo, Dio Cassius, Christoval de Moluna, Sahagun, Cieza de Leon, Brébeuf, Garoilasso de la Vega, Lafitau, Nicholas Damascenus, Leo Africanus, and a hundred others, are *not* of the nineteenth century. This fact is essential, because the evidence of old writers, from Herodotus to Egede, corroborates the evidence of travellers, Indian Civil Servants, and missionaries of today, by what Dr. Tylor, when defending our materials, calls 'the test of recurrence.' Professor Millar used the same argument in his *Origin of Rank*, in the last century. Thus Mr. Max Müller unconsciously misrepresents me (and my savages) when he says that my 'savages are of the nineteenth century.' The fact is the reverse. They are of many centuries. These two unconscious misrepresentations occur in four consecutive lines.

Anthropological Evidence

In connection with this topic (the nature of anthropological evidence), Mr. Max Müller (i. 205-207) repeats what he has often said before. Thus he cites Dr. Codrington's remarks, most valuable remarks, on the difficulty of reporting correctly about the ideas and ways of savages. I had cited the same judicious writer to the same effect, and had compiled a number of instances in which the errors of travellers were exposed, and their habitual fallacies were detected. Fifteen closely printed pages were devoted by me to a criterion of evidence, and a reply to Mr. Max Müller's oft-repeated objections.

‘When we find Dr. Codrington taking the same precautions in Melanesia as Mr. Sproat took among the Ahts, and when his account of Melanesian myths reads like a close copy of Mr. Sproat’s account of Aht legends, and when both are corroborated by the collections of Bleek, and Hahn, and Gill, and Castren, and Rink, in far different corners of the world; while the modern testimony of these scholarly men is in harmony with that of the old Jesuit missionaries, and of untaught adventurers who have lived for many years with savages, surely it will be admitted that the difficulty of ascertaining savage opinion has been, to a great extent, overcome.’

I also cited at length Dr. Tylor’s masterly argument to the same effect, an argument offered by him to ‘a great historian,’ apparently.

Mr. Max Müller’s Method of Controversy

Now no member of the reading public, perusing Mr. Max Müller on anthropological evidence (i. 24-26, 205-207), could guess that his cautions about evidence are not absolutely new to us. He could not guess that Dr. Tylor replied to them ‘before they were made’ by our present critic (I think), and that I did the same with great elaboration. Our defence of our evidence is not noticed by Mr. Max Müller. He merely repeats what he has often said before on the subject, exactly as if anthropologists were ignorant of it, and had not carefully studied, assimilated, profited by it, and answered it. Our critic and monitor might have said, ‘I have examined your test of *recurrences*, and what else you have to urge, and, for such and such reasons, I must reject it.’ Then we could reconsider our position in this new light. But Mr. Max Müller does not oblige us in this way.

Mr. Max Müller on our Evidence

In an earlier work, *The Gifford Lectures* for 1891, our author had devoted more space to a criticism of our evidence. To this, then, we turn (p-180, 413-436). Passing Mr. Max Müller’s own difficulties in understanding a Mohawk (which the Mohawk no doubt also felt in understanding Mr. Max Müller), we reach () the fables about godless savages. These, it is admitted, are exploded among scholars in anthropology. So we do, at least, examine evidence. Mr. Max Müller now fixes on a flagrant case, some fables about the godless Mincopies of the Andaman Islands. But *he* relies on the evidence of Mr. Man. So do I, as far as it seems beyond doubt. Mr. Man is ‘a careful observer, a student of language, and perfectly trustworthy.’ These are the reasons for which I trust him. But when Mr. Man says that the Mincopies have a god, Puluga, who inhabits ‘a stone house in the sky,’ I remark, ‘Here the idea of the stone house is necessarily borrowed from our stone houses at Port Blair.’ When Mr. Man talks of Puluga’s only-begotten son, ‘a sort of archangel,’ medium between Puluga and the angels, I ‘hesitate a doubt.’ Did not this idea reach the Mincopie mind from the same quarter as the stone house, especially as Puluga’s wife is ‘a green shrimp or an eel’? At all events, it is right to bear in mind that, as the stone house of the Mincopie heaven is almost undeniably of European origin, the only-begotten mediating son of Puluga and the green shrimp *may* bear traces of Christian teaching. Caution is indicated.

Does Mr. Max Müller, so strict about evidence, boggle at the stone house, the only son, the shrimp? Not he; he never hints at the shrimp! Does he point out that one anthropologist has asked for caution in weighing what the Mincopies told Mr. Man? Very far from that, he complains that ‘the old story is repeated again and again’ about the godless Andamans. The intelligent Glasgow audience could hardly guess that anthropologists were watchful, and knew pretty well what to believe about the Mincopies. Perhaps in Glasgow they do not read us anthropologists much.

On our author returns to the charge. He observes (as I have also observed) the often contradictory nature of our evidence. Here I may offer an anecdote. The most celebrated of living English philosophers heard that I was at one time writing a book on the ‘ghostly’ in history, anthropology, and society, old or new, savage or civilised. He kindly dictated a letter to me asking how I could give time and pains to any such marvels. For, he argued, the most unveracious fables were occasionally told about himself in newspapers and social gossip. If evidence cannot be trusted about a living and distinguished British subject, how can it be accepted about hallucinations?

I replied, with respect, that on this principle nothing could be investigated at all. History, justice, trade, everything would be impossible. We must weigh and criticise evidence. As my friendly adviser had written much on savage customs and creeds, he best knew that conflicting testimony, even on his own chosen theme, is not peculiar to ghost stories. In a world of conflicting testimony we live by criticising it. Thus, when Mr. Max Müller says that I call my savages ‘primitive,’ and when I, on the other hand, quote passages in which I explicitly decline to do so, the evidence as to my views is contradictory. Yet the truth can be discovered by careful research.

The application is obvious. We must not despair of truth! As our monitor says, ‘we ought to discard all evidence that does not come to us either from a man who was able himself to converse with native races, or who was at least an eye-witness of what he relates.’ Precisely, that is our method. I, for one, do not take even a ghost story at second hand, much less anything so startling as a savage rite. And we discount and allow for every bias and prejudice of our witnesses. I have made a list of these *idola* in *M. R. R.* ii. 334-344.

Mr. Max Müller now gives a list of inconsistencies in descriptions of Australian Blacks. They are *not* Blacks, they have a dash of copper colour! Well, I never said that they had 'the sooty tinge of the African negro.' Did anybody?

Mr. Ridley thinks that all natives are called 'Murri.' Mr. Curr says 'No.' Important. We must reserve our judgment.

Missionaries say the Blacks are 'devoid of moral ideas.' What missionaries? What anthropologist believes such nonsense? There are differences of opinion about landed property, communal or private. The difference rages among historians of civilised races. So, also, as to portable property. Mr. Curr (Mr. Max Müller's witness) agrees here with those whose works I chiefly rely on.

'Mr. McLennan has built a whole social theory on the statement' (a single statement) 'made by Sir George Grey, and contradicted by Mr. Curr.' Mr. McLennan would be, I think, rather surprised at this remark; but what would he do? Why, he would re-examine the whole question, decide by the balance of evidence, and reject, modify, or retain his theory accordingly.

All sciences have to act in this way; therefore almost all scientific theories are fluctuating. Nothing here is peculiar to anthropology. A single word, or two or three, will prove or disprove a theory of phonetic laws. Even phonetics are disputable ground.

In defence of my late friend Mr. McLennan, I must point out that if he built a whole social theory on a single statement of Sir George Grey's, and if Mr. Curr denies the truth of the statement, Mr. Frazer has produced six or seven witnesses to the truth of that very statement in other parts of the world than Australia. To this circumstance we may return.

Mr. Max Müller next produces Mr. Curr's opinions about the belief in a god and morality among Australians. 'Here he really contradicts himself.' The disputable evidence about Australian marriage laws is next shown to be disputable. That is precisely why Dr. Tylor is applying to it his unrivalled diligence in accurate examination. We await his results. Finally, the contradictory evidence as to Tasmanian religion is exposed. We have no Codrington or Bleek for Tasmania. The Tasmanians are extinct, and Science should leave the evidence as to their religion out of her accounts. We cannot cross-examine defunct Tasmanians.

From all this it follows that anthropologists must sift and winnow their evidence, like men employed in every other branch of science. And who denies it? What anthropologist of mark accepts as gospel any casual traveller's tale?

The Test of Recurrences

Even for travellers' tales we have a use, we can apply to them Dr. Tylor's 'Test of Recurrences.'

'If two independent visitors to different countries, say a mediæval Mahommedan in Tartary and a modern Englishman in Dahomey, or a Jesuit missionary in Brazil and a Wesley an in the Fiji Islands, agree in describing some analogous art, or rite, or myth among the people they have visited, it becomes difficult or impossible to set down such correspondence to accident or wilful fraud. A story by a bushranger in Australia may perhaps be objected to as a mistake or an invention, but did a Methodist minister in Guinea conspire with him to cheat the public by telling the same story there?'

The whole passage should be read: it was anticipated by Professor Millar in his *Origin of Rank*, and has been restated by myself. Thus I wrote (in 1887) 'it is to be regretted that Mr. Max Müller entirely omits to mention . . . the corroboration which is derived from the undesigned coincidence of independent testimony.'

In 1891-1892 he still entirely omits to mention, to his Glasgow audience, the strength of his opponents' case. He would serve us better if he would criticise the test of recurrences, and show us its weak points.

Bias of Theory

Yes, our critic may reply, 'but Mr. Curr thinks that there is a strong tendency in observers abroad, if they have become acquainted with a new and startling theory that has become popular at home, to see confirmations of it everywhere.' So I had explicitly stated in commenting on Dr. Tylor's test of recurrences. 'Travellers and missionaries have begun to read anthropological books, and their evidence is, therefore, much more likely to be biassed now by anthropological theories than it was of old.' So Mr. McLennan, in the very earliest of all writings on totemism, said: 'As the totem has not till now got itself mixed up with speculations the observers have been unbiassed.' Mr. McLennan finally declined to admit any evidence as to the savage marriage laws collected after his own theory, and other theories born from it, had begun to bias observers of barbaric tribes.

It does not quite seem to me that Mr. Max Müller makes his audience acquainted with these precautions of anthropologists, with their sedulous sifting of evidence, and watchfulness against the theoretical bias of observers. Thus he assails the *faible*, not the *fort* of our argument, and may even seem not to be aware that we have removed the *faible* by careful discrimination.

What opinion must his readers, who know not Mr. McLennan’s works, entertain about that acute and intrepid pioneer, a man of warm temper, I admit, a man who threw out his daringly original theory at a heat, using at first such untrustworthy materials as lay at hand, but a man whom disease could not daunt, and whom only death prevented from building a stately edifice on the soil which he was the first to explore?

Our author often returns to the weakness of the evidence of travellers and missionaries.

Concerning Missionaries

Here is an example of a *vivacité* in our censor. ‘With regard to ghosts and spirits among the Melanesians, our authorities, whether missionaries, traders, or writers on ethnology, are troubled by no difficulties’ (i. 207). Yet on this very page Mr. Max Müller has been citing the ‘difficulties’ which *do* ‘trouble’ a ‘missionary,’ Dr. Codrington. And, for my own part, when I want information about Melanesian beliefs, it is to Dr. Codrington’s work that I go. The doctor, himself a missionary, *ex hypothesi* ‘untroubled by difficulties,’ has just been quoted by Mr. Max Müller, and by myself, as a witness to the difficulties which trouble himself and us. What can Mr. Max Müller possibly mean? Am I wrong? Was Dr. Codrington *not* a missionary? At all events, he is the authority on Melanesia, a ‘high’ authority (i. 206).

THE PHILOLOGICAL METHOD IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Mr. Max Müller as Ethnologist

Our author is apt to remonstrate with his anthropological critics, and to assure them that he also has made studies in ethnology. 'I am not such a despairer of ethnology as some ethnologists would have me.' He refers us to the assistance which he lent in bringing out Dr. Hahn's *Tsuni-Goam* (1881), Mr. Gill's *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific* (1876), and probably other examples could be added. But my objection is, not that we should be ungrateful to Mr. Max Müller for these and other valuable services to anthropology, but that, when he has got his anthropological material, he treats it in what I think the wrong way, or approves of its being so treated.

Here, indeed, is the irreconcilable difference between two schools of mythological interpretation. Given Dr. Hahn's book, on Hottentot manners and religion: the anthropologist compares the Hottentot rites, beliefs, social habits, and general ideas with those of other races known to him, savage or civilised. A Hottentot custom, which has a meaning among Hottentots, may exist where its meaning is lost, among Greeks or other 'Aryans.' A story of a Hottentot god, quite a natural sort of tale for a Hottentot to tell, may be told about a god in Greece, where it is contrary to the Greek spirit. We infer that the Greeks perhaps inherited it from savage ancestors, or borrowed it from savages.

Names of Savage Gods

This is the method, and if we can also get a scholar to analyse the *names* of Hottentot gods, we are all the luckier, that is, if his processes and inferences are *logical*. May we not decide on the *logic* of scholars? But, just as Mr. Max Müller points out to us the dangers attending our evidence, we point out to him the dangers attending his method. In Dr. Hahn's book, the doctor analyses the meaning of the name Tsuni-Goam and other names, discovers their original sense, and from that sense explains the myths about Hottentot divine beings.

Here we anthropologists first ask Mr. Max Müller, before accepting Dr. Hahn's etymologies, to listen to other scholars about the perils and difficulties of the philological analysis of divine names, even in Aryan languages. I have already quoted his ‘defender,’ Dr. Tiele. ‘The philological method is inadequate and misleading, when it is a question of (1) discovering the origin of a myth, or (2) the physical explanation of the oldest myths, or (3) of accounting for the rude and obscene element in the divine legends of civilised races.’

To the two former purposes Dr. Hahn applies the philological method in the case of Tsuni-Goam. Other scholars agree with Dr. Tiele. Mannhardt, as we said, held that Mr. Max Müller’s favourite etymological ‘equations,’ Sarameya=Hermeias; Saranyu=Demeter-Erinnys; Kentauros=Gandharvas and others, would not stand criticism. ‘The method in its practical working shows a lack of the historical sense,’ said Mannhardt. Curtius — a scholar, as Mr. Max Müller declares (i. 32) — says, ‘It is especially difficult to conjecture the meaning of proper names, and above all of local and mythical names.’ I do not see that it is easier when these names are not Greek, but Hottentot, or Algonquin!

Thus Achilles may as easily mean ‘holder of the people’ as ‘holder of stones,’ *i.e*. a River-god! Or does ‘Ç suggest *aqua*, Achelous the River? Leto, mother of Apollo, cannot be from »±¸µ¹½, as Mr. Max Müller holds (ii. 514, 515), to which Mr. Max Müller replies, perhaps not, as far as the phonetic rules go ‘which determine the formation of appellative nouns. It, indeed, would be extraordinary if it were. . . .’ The phonetic rules in Hottentot may also suggest difficulties to a South African Curtius!

Other scholars agree with Curtius — agree in thinking that the etymology of mythical names is a sandy foundation for the science of mythology.

‘The difficult task of interpreting mythical names has, so far, produced few certain results,’ says Otto Schrader.

When Dr. Hahn applies the process in Hottentot, we urge with a friendly candour these cautions from scholars on Mr. Max Müller.

A Hottentot God

In *Custom and Myth* (), I examine the logic by which Dr. Hahn proves Tsuni-Goam to be ‘The Red Dawn.’ One of his steps is to say that few means ‘sore,’ or ‘wounded,’ and that a wound is *red*, so he gets his ‘red’ in Red Dawn. But of *tsu* in the sense of ‘red’ he gives not one example, while he does give another word for ‘red,’ or ‘bloody.’ This may be scholarly but it is not evidence, and this is only one of many perilous steps on ground extremely *scabreux*, got over by a series of logical leaps. As to our quarrel with Mr. Max Müller about his friend’s treatment of ethnological materials, it is this: we do not believe in the validity of the etymological method when applied to many old divine names in

Greek, still less in Hottentot.

Cause of our Scepticism

Our scepticism is confirmed by the extraordinary diversity of opinion among scholars as to what the right analysis of old divine names is. Mr. Max Müller writes (i. 18): ‘I have never been able to extract from my critics the title of a single book in which my etymologies and my mythological equations had been seriously criticised by real scholars.’ We might answer, ‘Why tell you what you know very well?’ For (i. 50) you say that while Signer Canizzaro calls some of your ‘equations’ ‘irrefutably demonstrated,’ ‘other scholars declare these equations are futile and impossible.’ Do these other scholars criticise your equations not ‘seriously’? Or are you ignorant of the names of their works?

Another case. Our author says that ‘many objections were raised’ to his ‘equation’ of Athênê=Ahanâ=‘Dawn’ (ii. 378, 400, &c.). Have the objections ceased? Here are a few scholars who do not, or did not, accept Athênê=Ahanâ: Welcker, Benfey, Curtius, Preller, Furtwängler, Schwartz, and now Bechtel (i. 378). Mr. Max Müller thinks that he is right, but, till scholars agree, what can we do but wait?

Phonetic Bickerings

The evidence turns on theories of phonetic laws as they worked in pre-Homeric Greece. But these laws, as they apply to common ordinary words, need *not,* we are told, be applied so strictly to proper names, as of gods and heroes. These are a kind of comets, and their changes cannot be calculated like the changes of vulgar words, which answer to stars (i. 298). Mr. Max Müller ‘formerly agreed with Curtius that phonetic rules should be used against proper names with the same severity as against ordinary nouns and verbs.’ Benfey and Welcker protested, so does Professor Victor Henry. ‘It is not fair to demand from mythography the rigorous observation of phonetics’ (i. 387). ‘This may be called backsliding,’ our author confesses, and it *does* seem rather a ‘go-as-you-please’ kind of method.

Phonetic Rules

Mr. Max Müller argues at length (and, to my ignorance, persuasively) in favour of a genial laxity in the application of phonetic rules to old proper names. Do they apply to these as strictly as to ordinary words? ‘This is a question that has often been asked . . . but it has never been boldly answered’ (i. 297). Mr. Max

Müller cannot have forgotten that Curtius answered boldly — in the negative. 'Without such rigour all attempts at etymology are impossible. For this very reason ethnologists and mythologists should make themselves acquainted with the simple principles of comparative philology.'

But it is not for us to settle such disputes of scholars. Meanwhile their evidence is derived from their private interpretations of old proper names, and they differ among themselves as to whether, in such interpretations, they should or should not be governed strictly by phonetic laws. Then what Mr. Max Müller calls 'the usual bickerings' begin among scholars (i. 416). And Mr. Max Müller connects Ouranos with Vedic Varuna, while Wackernagel prefers to derive it from ¿ÅÁ¿½, urine, and this from ¿ÅÁµÉ=Sk. Varshayâmi, to rain (ii. 416, 417), and so it goes on for years with a glorious uncertainty. If Mr. Max Müller's equations are scientifically correct, the scholars who accept them not must all be unscientific. Or else, this is not science at all.

Basis of a Science

A science in its early stages, while the validity of its working laws in application to essential cases is still undetermined, must, of course, expect 'bickerings.' But philological mythologists are actually trying to base one science, Mythology, on the still shifting and sandy foundations of another science, Phonetics. The philologists are quarrelling about their 'equations,' and about the application of their phonetic laws to mythical proper names. On the basis of this shaking soil, they propose to build *another* science, Mythology! Then, pleased with the scientific exactitude of their evidence, they object to the laxity of ours.

Philology in Action — Indra

As an example of the philological method with a Vedic god, take Indra. I do not think that science is ever likely to find out the whole origins of any god. Even if his name mean 'sky,' Dyaus, Zeus, we must ask what mode of conceiving 'sky' is original. Was 'sky' thought of as a person, and, if so, as a savage or as a civilised person; as a god, *sans phrase*; as the inanimate visible vault of heaven; as a totem, or how? Indra, like other gods, is apt to evade our observation, in his origins. Mr. Max Müller asks, 'what should we gain if we called Indra . . . a totem?' Who does? If we derive his name from the same root as 'ind-u,' *raindrop*, then 'his starting-point was the rain' (i. 131). Roth preferred 'idh,' 'indh,' *to kindle*; and later, his taste and fancy led him to 'ir,' or 'irv,' *to have power over*. He is variously regarded as god of 'bright firmament,' of air, of thunderstorm personified, and so forth. His name is not detected among other

Aryan gods, and his birth may be *after* the ‘Aryan Separation’ (ii. 752). But surely his name, even so, might have been carried to the Greeks? This, at least, should not astonish Mr. Max Müller. One had supposed that Dyaus and Zeus were separately developed, by peoples of India and Greece, from a common, pre-separation, Aryan root. One had not imagined that the Greeks *borrowed* divine names from Sanskrit and from India. But this, too, might happen! (ii. 506). Mr. Max Müller asks, ‘Why should not a cloud or air goddess *of India*, whether called Svârâ or Urvasî, have supplied the first germs from which ’¿ÉÀ¹Â À¿Ä½¹± —Á· descended?’ Why not, indeed, if prehistoric Greeks were in touch with India? I do not say they were not. Why should not a Vedic or Sanskrit goddess of India supply the first germs of a Greek goddess? (ii.). Why, because ‘Greek gods have never been Vedic gods, but both Greek and Vedic gods have started from the same germs’ (ii. 429). Our author has answered his own question, but he seems at intervals to suppose, contrary to his own principles, as I understand them, that Greek *may* be ‘derived from’ Vedic divine names, or, at least, divine names in Sanskrit. All this is rather confusing.

Obscuring the Veda

If Indra is called ‘bull,’ that at first only meant ‘strong’ (ii. 209). Yet ‘some very thoughtful scholars’ see traces of totemism in Indra! Mr. Max Müller thinks that this theory is ‘obscuring the Veda by this kind of light from the Dark Continent’ (America, it seems). Indra is said to have been born from a cow, like the African Heitsi Eibib. There are unholy stories about Indra and rams. But I for one, as I have said already, would never deny that these *may* be part of the pleasant unconscious poetry of the Vedic hymnists. Indra’s legend is rich in savage obscenities; they may, or may not, be survivals from savagery. At all events one sees no reason why we should not freely compare parallel savageries, and why this should ‘obscure’ the Veda. Comparisons are illuminating.

CRITICISM OF FETISHISM

Mischief of Comparisons in Comparative Mythology

Not always are comparisons illuminating, it seems. Our author writes, 'It may be said — in fact, it has been said — that there can at all events be no harm in simply placing the myths and customs of savages side by side with the myths and customs of Hindus and Greeks.' (This, in fact, is the method of the science of institutions.)

'But experience shows that this is not so' (i. 195). So we must not, should not, simply place the myths and customs of savages side by side with those of Hindus and Greeks. It is taboo.

Dr. Oldenberg

Now Dr. Oldenberg, it seems, uses such comparisons of savage and Aryan faiths. Dr. Oldenberg is (i. 209) one of several '*very thoughtful scholars*' who do so, who break Mr. Max Müller's prohibition. Yet (ii. 220) '*no true scholar* would accept any comparison' between savage fables and the folklore of Homer and the Vedas 'as really authoritative *until fully demonstrated on both sides*.' Well, it *is* 'fully demonstrated,' or 'a very thoughtful scholar' (like Dr. Oldenberg) would not accept it. Or it is *not* demonstrated, and then Dr. Oldenberg, though 'a very thoughtful,' is not 'a true scholar.'

Comparisons, when odious

Once more, Mr. Max Müller deprecates the making of comparisons between savage and Vedic myths (i. 210), and then (i. 220) he deprecates the *acceptance* of these very comparisons 'as really authoritative until fully demonstrated.' Now, how is the validity of the comparisons to be 'fully demonstrated' if we are forbidden to make them at all, because to do so is to 'obscure' the Veda 'by light from the Dark Continent'?

A Question of Logic

I am not writing 'quips and cranks;' I am dealing quite gravely with the author's processes of reasoning. 'No true scholar' does what 'very thoughtful scholars' do. No comparisons of savage and Vedic myths should be made, but yet, 'when fully demonstrated,' 'true scholars would accept them' (i 209, 220). How can comparisons be demonstrated before they are made? And made they must not be!

'Scholars'

It would be useful if Mr. Max Müller were to define 'scholar,' 'real scholar,' 'true scholar,' 'very thoughtful scholar.' The latter may err, and have erred — like General Councils, and like Dr. Oldenberg, who finds in the Veda 'remnants of the wildest and rawest essence of religion,' totemism, and the rest (i. 210). I was wont to think that 'scholar,' as used by our learned author, meant 'philological mythologist,' as distinguished from 'not-scholar,' that is, 'anthropological mythologist.' But now 'very thoughtful scholars,' even Dr. Oldenberg, Mr. Rhys, Dr. Robertson Smith, and so on, use the anthropological method, so 'scholar' needs a fresh definition. The 'not-scholars,' the anthropologists, have, in fact, converted some very thoughtful scholars. If we could only catch the *true* scholar! But that we cannot do till we fully demonstrate comparisons which we may not make, for fear of first 'obscuring the Veda by this kind of light from the Dark Continent.'

Anthropology and the Mysteries

It is not my affair to defend Dr. Oldenberg, whose comparisons of Vedic with savage rites I have never read, I am sorry to say. One is only arguing that the *method* of making such comparisons is legitimate. Thus (i. 232) controversy, it seems, still rages among scholars as to 'the object of the Eleusinian Mysteries.' 'Does not the scholar's conscience warn us against accepting whatever in the myths and customs of the Zulus seems to suit our purpose' — of explaining features in the Eleusinia? If Zulu customs, and they alone, contained Eleusinian parallels, even the anthropologist's conscience would whisper caution. But this is not the case. North American, Australian, African, and other tribes have mysteries very closely and minutely resembling parts of the rites of the Eleusinia, Dionysia, and Thesmophoria. Thus Lobeck, a scholar, describes the *Rhombos* used in the Dionysiac mysteries, citing Clemens Alexandrinus. Thanks to Dr. Tylor's researches I was able to show (what Lobeck knew not) that the *Rhombos* (Australian *turndun,* 'Bull-roarer') is also used in Australian, African, American, and other savage religious mysteries. Now should I have refrained from producing this well-attested matter of fact till I knew Australian, American, and African languages as well as I know Greek? 'What century will it be when there will be scholars who know the dialects of the Australian blacks as well as we know the dialects of Greece?' (i. 232) asks our author. And what in the name of Eleusis have dialects to do with the circumstance that savages, like Greeks, use *Rhombi* in their mysteries? There are abundant other material facts, visible palpable objects and practices, which savage mysteries have in common with the Greek mysteries. If observed by deaf men, when used by dumb men, instead of by scores of Europeans who could talk the native languages, these illuminating rites of savages would still be evidence. They have been seen and described often, not by 'a casual native informant' (who, perhaps, casually invented Greek rites, and falsely attributed them to his tribesmen), but by educated Europeans.

Abstract Ideas of Savages

Mr. Max Müller defends, with perfect justice, the existence of abstract ideas among contemporary savages. It appears that somebody or other has said— 'we have been told' (i. 291)— 'that all this' (the Mangaian theory of the universe) 'must have come from missionaries.' The ideas are as likely to have come from Hegel as from a missionary! Therefore, 'instead of looking for idols, or for totems and fetishes, we must learn and accept what the savages themselves are able to tell us. . . . ' Yes, we *must* learn and accept it; so I have always urged. But if the savages tell us about totems, are they not then 'casual native informants'? If a Maori tells you, as he does, of traditional hymns containing ideas worthy of Heraclitus, is *that* quite trustworthy; whereas, if he tells you about his idols and taboos, *that* cannot possibly be worthy of attention?

Perception of the Infinite

From these extraordinary examples of abstract thought in savages, our author goes on to say that his theory of 'the perception of the Infinite' as the origin of religion was received 'with a storm of unfounded obloquy' (i. 292). I myself criticised the *Hibbert Lectures*, in *Mind*; on reading the essay over, I find no obloquy and no storm. I find, however, that I deny, what our author says that I assert, the primitiveness of contemporary savages.

In that essay, which, of course, our author had no reason to read, much was said about fetishism, a topic discussed by Mr. Max Müller in his *Hibbert Lectures*. Fetishism is, as he says, an ill word, and has caused much confusion.

Fetishism and Anthropological Method

Throughout much of his work our author's object is to invalidate the anthropological method. That method sets side by side the customs, ideas, fables, myths, proverbs, riddles, rites, of different races. Of their *languages* it does not necessarily take account in this process. Nobody (as we shall see) knows the languages of all, or of most, of the races whose ideas he compares. Now the learned professor establishes the ‘harm done’ by our method in a given instance. He seems to think that, if a method has been misapplied, therefore the method itself is necessarily erroneous. The case stands thus: De Brosses first compared ‘the so-called fetishes’ of the Gold Coast with Greek and Roman amulets and other material objects of old religions. But he did this, we learn, without trying to find out *why* a negro made a fetish of a pebble, shell, or tiger’s tail, and without endeavouring to discover whether the negro’s motives really were the motives of his ‘postulated fetish worship’ in Greece, Rome, or Palestine.

Origin of Fetishes

If so, *tant pis pour monsieur le President*. But how does the unscientific conduct attributed to De Brosses implicate the modern anthropologist? Do *we* not try to find out, and really succeed sometimes in finding out, *why* a savage cherishes this or that scrap as a ‘fetish’? I give a string of explanations in *Custom and Myth* (p-230). Sometimes the so-called fetish had an accidental, which was taken to be a causal, connection with a stroke of good luck. Sometimes the thing — an odd-shaped stone, say — had a superficial resemblance to a desirable object, and so was thought likely to aid in the acquisition of such objects by ‘sympathetic magic.’

Other ‘fetishes’ are revealed in dreams, or by ghosts, or by spirits appearing in semblance of animals.

‘Telekinetic’ Origin of Fetishism

As I write comes in *Mélusine*, viii. 7, with an essay by M. Lefébure on *Les Origines du Fétichisme*. He derives some fetishistic practices from what the Melanesians call *Mana*, which, says Mr. Max Müller, ‘may often be rendered by supernatural or magic power, present in an individual, a stone, or in formulas or charms’ (i. 294). How, asks Mr. Lefébure, did men come to attribute this *vis vivida* to persons and things? Because, in fact, he says, such an unexplored force does really exist and display itself. He then cites Mr. Crookes’ observations on scientifically registered ‘telekinetic’ performances by Daniel Dunglas Home, he cites Despine on Madame Schmitz-Baud, with examples from Dr. Tylor, P. de la Rissachère, Dr. Gibier, and other authorities, good or bad. Grouping, then, his facts under the dubious title of *le magnétisme*, M. Lefébure finds in savage observation of such facts ‘the chief cause of fetishism.’

Some of M. Lefébure’s ‘facts’ (of objects moving untouched) were certainly frauds, like the tricks of Eusapia. But, even if all the facts recorded were frauds, such impostures, performed by savage conjurers, who certainly profess to produce the phenomena, might originate, or help to originate, the respect paid to ‘fetishes’ and the belief in *Mana*. But probably Major Ellis’s researches into the religion of the Tshi-speaking races throw most light on the real ideas of African fetishists. The subject is vast and complex. I am content to show that, whatever De Brosses did, *we* do not abandon a search for the motives of the savage fetishist. Indeed, De Brosses himself did seek and find at least one African motive, ‘The conjurers (*jongleurs*) persuade them that little instruments in their possession are endowed with a living spirit.’ So far, fetishism is spiritualism.

Civilised ‘Fetishism’

De Brosses did not look among civilised fetishists for the motives which he neglected among savages (i. 196). *Tant pis pour monsieur le Président*. But we and our method no more stand or fall with De Brosses and his, than Mr. Max Müller’s etymologies stand or fall with those in the *Cratylus* of Plato. If, in a civilised people, ancient or modern, we find a practice vaguely styled ‘fetishistic,’ we examine it in its details. While we have talismans, amulets, gamblers’ *fétiches*, I do not think that, except among some children, we have anything nearly analogous to Gold Coast fetishism as a whole. Some one seems to have called the *palladium* a fetish. I don’t exactly know what the *palladium* (called a fetish by somebody) was. The *hasta fetialis* has been styled a fetish — an apparent abuse of language. As to the Holy Cross *qua* fetish, why discuss such free-thinking credulities?

Modern anthropologists — Tylor, Frazer, and the rest — are not under the censure appropriate to the illogical.

More Mischiefs of Comparison

The ‘Nemesis’ (i. 196) of De Brosses’ errors did not stay in her ravaging progress. Fetishism was represented as ‘the very beginning of religion,’ first among the negroes, then among all races. As I, for one, persistently proclaim that the beginning of religion is an inscrutable mystery, the Nemesis has somehow left me scatheless, propitiated by my piety. I said, long ago, ‘the train of ideas which leads man to believe in and to treasure fetishes is *one among the earliest springs* of religious belief.’ But from even this rather guarded statement

I withdraw. ‘No man can watch the idea of GOD in the making or in the beginning.’

Still more Nemesis

The new Nemesis is really that which I have just put far from me — namely, that ‘modern savages represent everywhere the Eocene stratum of religion.’ They *probably* represent an *early* stage in religion, just as, *teste*. Mr. Max Müller, they represent an early stage in language ‘In savage languages we see what we can no longer expect to see even in the most ancient Sanskrit or Hebrew. We watch the childhood of language, with all its childish pranks.’

Now, if the tongues spoken by modern savages represent the ‘childhood’ and ‘childish pranks’ of language, why should the beliefs of modern savages not represent the childhood and childish pranks of religion? I am not here averring that they do so, nor even that Mr. Max Müller is right in *his* remark on language. The Australian blacks have been men as long as the Prussian nobility. Their language has had time to outgrow ‘childish pranks,’ but apparently it has not made use of its opportunities, according to our critic. Does he know why?

One need not reply to the charge that anthropologists, if they are meant, regard modern savages ‘as just evolved from the earth, or the sky,’ or from monkeys (i. 197). ‘Savages have a far-stretching unknown history behind them.’ ‘The past of savages, I say, must have been a long past.’ So, once more, the Nemesis of De Brosses fails to touch me — and, of course, to touch more learned anthropologists.

There is yet another Nemesis — the postulate that Aryans and Semites, or rather their ancestors, must have passed through the savage state. Dr. Tylor writes:— ‘So far as history is to be our criterion, progression is primary and degradation secondary. *Culture must be gained before it can be lost*.’ Now a person who has not gained what Dr. Tylor calls ‘culture’ (*not* in Mr. Arnold’s sense) is a man without tools, instruments, or clothes. He is certainly, so far, like a savage; is very much lower in ‘culture’ than any race with which we are acquainted. As a matter of hypothesis, anyone may say that man was born ‘with everything handsome about him.’ He has then to account for the savage elements in Greek myth and rite.

For Us or Against Us?

We now hear that the worst and last penalty paid for De Brosses' audacious comparison of savage with civilised superstitions is the postulate that Aryan and Semitic peoples have passed through a stage of savagery. 'However different the languages, customs and myths, the colour and the skulls of these modern savages might be from those of Aryan and Semitic people, the latter must once have passed through the same stage, must once have been what the negroes of the West Coast of Africa are to-day. This postulate has not been, and, according to its very nature, cannot be proved. But the mischief done by acting on such postulates is still going on, and in several cases it has come to this — that what in historical religions, such as our own, is known to be the most modern, the very last outcome, namely, the worship of relics or a belief in amulets, has been represented as the first necessary step in the evolution of all religions' (i. 197).

I really do not know who says that the prehistoric ancestors of Aryans and Semites were once in the same stage as the 'negroes of the West Coast of Africa are to-day.' These honest fellows are well acquainted with coined money, with the use of firearms, and other resources of civilisation, and have been in touch with missionaries, Miss Kingsley, traders, and tourists. The ancestors of the Aryans and Semites enjoyed no such advantages. Mr. Max Müller does not tell us who says that they did. But that the ancestors of all mankind passed through a stage in which they had to develop for themselves tools, languages, clothes, and institutions, is assuredly the belief of anthropologists. A race without tools, language, clothes, pottery, and social institutions, or with these in the shape of undeveloped speech, stone knives, and 'possum or other skins, is what we call a race of savages. Such we believe the ancestors of mankind to have been — at any rate after the Fall.

Now when Mr. Max Müller began to write his book, he accepted this postulate of anthropology (i. 15). When he reached i. 197 he abandoned and denounced this postulate.

I quote his acceptance of the postulate (i. 15): —

'Even Mr. A. Lang has to admit that we have not got much beyond Fontenelle, when he wrote in the last century:

'"Why are the legends about men, beasts, and gods so wildly incredible and revolting? . . . The answer is that the earliest men were in a state of almost inconceivable ignorance and savagery, and that the Greeks inherited their myths from people in the same savage stage (*en un pareil état de sauvagerie*). Look at the Kaffirs and Iroquois if you want to know what the earliest men were like, and remember that the very Iroquois and Kaffirs have a long past behind them"' — that is to say, are polite and cultivated compared to the earliest men of all.

Here is an uncompromising statement by Fontenelle of the postulate that the

Greeks (an Aryan people) must have passed through the same stage as modern savages — Kaffirs and Iroquois — now occupy. But (i. 15) Mr. Max Müller eagerly accepts the postulate: —

'There is not a word of Fontenelle's to which I should not gladly subscribe; there is no advice of his which I have not tried to follow in all my attempts to explain the myths of India and Greece by an occasional reference to Polynesian or African folklore.'

Well, if Mr. Max Müller 'gladly subscribes,' in , to the postulate of an original universal stage of savagery, whence civilised races inherit their incredibly repulsive myths, why, in p, 198, does he denounce that very postulate as not proven, not capable of being proved, very mischievous, and one of the evils resulting from our method of comparing savage and civilised rites and beliefs? I must be permitted to complain that I do not know which is Mr. Max Müller's real opinion — that given with such hearty conviction in , or that stated with no less earnestness in p, 198. I trust that I shall not be thought to magnify a mere slip of the pen. Both passages — though, as far as I can see, self-contradictory — appear to be written with the same absence of levity. Fontenelle, I own, speaks of Greeks, not Semites, as being originally savages. But I pointed out that he considered it safer to 'hedge' by making an exception of the Israelites. There is really nothing in Genesis against the contention that the naked, tool-less, mean, and frivolous Adam was a savage.

The Fallacy of 'Admits'

As the purpose of this essay is mainly logical, I may point out the existence of a fallacy not marked, I think, in handbooks of Logic. This is the fallacy of saying that an opponent 'admits' what, on the contrary, he has been the first to point out and proclaim. He is thus suggested into an attitude which is the reverse of his own. Some one — I am sorry to say that I forget who he was — showed me that Fontenelle, in *De l'Origine des Fables,* briefly stated the anthropological theory of the origin of myths, or at least of that repulsive element in them which 'makes mythology mythological,' as Mr. Max Müller says. I was glad to have a predecessor in a past less remote than that of Eusebius of Cæsarea. 'A briefer and better system of mythology,' I wrote, 'could not be devised; but the Mr. Casaubons of this world have neglected it, and even now it is beyond their comprehension.' To say this in this manner is not to '*admit* that we have not got much beyond Fontenelle.' I do not want to get beyond Fontenelle. I want to go back to his 'forgotten common-sense,' and to apply his ideas with method and criticism to a range of materials which he did not possess or did not investigate.

Now, on , Mr. Max Müller had got as far as accepting Fontenelle; on p, 198 he burns, as it were, that to which he had ‘gladly subscribed.’

Conclusion as to our Method

All this discussion of fetishes arose out of our author’s selection of the subject as an example of the viciousness of our method. He would not permit us ‘simply to place side by side’ savage and Greek myths and customs, because it did harm (i. 195); and the harm done was proved by the Nemesis of De Brosses. Now, first, a method may be a good method, yet may be badly applied. Secondly, I have shown that the Nemesis does not attach to all of us modern anthropologists. Thirdly, I have proved (unless I am under some misapprehension, which I vainly attempt to detect, and for which, if it exists, I apologise humbly) that Mr. Max Müller, on , accepts the doctrine which he denounces on . Again, I am entirely at one with Mr. Max Müller when he says () ‘we have as yet really no scientific treatment of Shamanism.’ This is a pressing need, but probably a physician alone could do the work — a physician *doublé* with a psychologist. See, however, the excellent pages in Dr. Tylor’s *Primitive Culture*, and in Mr. William James’s *Principles of Psychology*, on ‘Mediumship.’

THE RIDDLE THEORY

What the Philological Theory Needs

The great desideratum of the philological method is a proof that the 'Disease of Language,' *ex hypothesi* the most fertile source of myths, is a *vera causa*. Do simple poetical phrases, descriptive of heavenly phenomena, remain current in the popular mouth after the meanings of appellatives (Bright One, Dark One, &c.) have been forgotten, so that these appellatives become proper names — Apollo, Daphne, &c.? Mr. Max Müller seems to think some proof of this process as a *vera causa* may be derived from 'Folk Riddles.'

The Riddle Theory

We now come, therefore, to the author's treatment of popular riddles (*devinettes*), so common among savages and peasants. Their construction is simple: anything in Nature you please is described by a poetical periphrasis, and you are asked what it is. Thus Geistiblindr asks,

What is the Dark One
That goes over the earth,
Swallows water and wood,
But is afraid of the wind? &c.

Or we find,

What is the gold spun from one window to another?

The answers, the obvious answers, are (1) 'mist' and (2) 'sunshine.'

In Mr. Max Müller's opinion these riddles 'could not but lead to what we call popular myths or legends.' Very probably; but this does not aid us to accept the philological method. The very essence of that method is the presumed absolute loss of the meaning of, *e.g.* 'the Dark One.' Before there can be a myth, *ex hypothesi* the words *Dark One* must have become hopelessly unintelligible, must have become a proper name. Thus suppose, for argument's sake only, that Cronos once meant *Dark One,* and was understood in that sense. People (as in the Norse riddle just cited) said, 'Cronos swallows water and wood.' Then they forgot that Cronos was their old word for the Dark One, and was mist; but they kept up, and understood, all the rest of the phrase about what mist does. The expression now ran, ‘Cronos swallows water and wood.’ But water comes from mist, and water nourishes wood, therefore ‘Cronos swallows his children.’ Such would be the development of a myth on Mr. Max Müller’s system. He would interpret ‘Cronos swallows his children,’ by finding, if he could, the original meaning of Cronos. Let us say that he did discover it to mean ‘the Dark One.’ Then he might think Cronos meant ‘night;’ ‘mist’ he would hardly guess.

That is all very clear, but the point is this — in *devinettes*, or riddles, the meaning of ‘the Dark One’ is *not* lost: —

‘Thy riddle is *easy*
Blind Gest,
To read’ —

Heidrick answers.

What the philological method of mythology needs is to prove that such poetical statements about natural phenomena as the *devinettes* contain survived in the popular mouth, and were perfectly intelligible except just the one *mot d’énigme* — say, ‘the Dark One.’ That (call it Cronos=‘Dark One’), and that alone, became unintelligible in the changes of language, and so had to be accepted as a proper name, Cronos — a god who swallows things at large.

Where is the proof of such endurance of intelligible phrases with just the one central necessary word obsolete and changed into a mysterious proper name? The world is full of proper names which have lost their meaning — Athene, Achilles, Artemis, and so on but we need proof that poetical sayings, or riddles, survive and are intelligible except one word, which, being unintelligible, becomes a proper name. Riddles, of course, prove nothing of this kind: —

Thy riddle is easy
Blind Gest
To read!

Yet Mr. Max Müller offers the suggestion that the obscurity of many of these names of mythical gods and heroes ‘may be due . . . to the riddles to which they had given rise, and which would have ceased to be riddles if the names had been clear and intelligible, like those of Helios and Selene’ (i. 92). People, he thinks, in making riddles ‘would avoid the ordinary appellatives, and the use of little-known names in most mythologies would thus find an intelligible explanation.’ Again, ‘we can see how essential it was that in such mythological riddles the principal agents should not be called by their regular names.’ This last remark, indeed, is obvious. To return to the Norse riddle of the Dark One that swallows wood and water. It would never do in a riddle to call the Dark One by his ordinary name, ‘Mist.’ You would not amuse a rural audience by asking ‘What is the mist that swallows wood and water?’ That would be even easier than Mr. Burnand’s riddle for very hot weather: —

My first is a boot, my second is a jack.

Conceivably Mr. Max Müller may mean that in riddles an almost obsolete word was used to designate the object. Perhaps, instead of ‘the Dark One,’ a peasant would say, ‘What is the Rooky One?’ But as soon as nobody knew what ‘the Rooky One’ meant, the riddle would cease to exist — Rooky One and all. You cannot imagine several generations asking each other —

What is the Rooky One that swallows?

if nobody knew the answer. A man who kept boring people with a mere ‘sell’ would be scouted; and with the death of the answerless riddle the difficult word ‘Rooky’ would die. But Mr. Max Müller says, ‘Riddles would cease to be riddles if the names had been clear and intelligible.’ The reverse is the fact. In the riddles he gives there are seldom any ‘names;’ but the epithets and descriptions are as clear as words can be: —

Who are the mother and children in a house, all having bald heads? — The moon and stars.

Language cannot be clearer. Yet the riddle has not ‘ceased to be a riddle,’ as Mr. Max Müller thinks it must do, though the words are ‘clear and intelligible.’ On the other hand, if the language is *not* clear and intelligible, the riddle would cease to exist. It would not amuse if nobody understood it. You might as well try to make yourself socially acceptable by putting conundrums in Etruscan as by asking riddles in words not clear and intelligible in themselves, though obscure in their reference. The difficulty of a riddle consists, not in the obscurity of words or names, but in the description of familiar things by terms, clear as terms, denoting their appearance and action. The mist is described as ‘dark,’ ‘swallowing,’ ‘one that fears the wind,’ and so forth. The *words* are pellucid.

Thus ‘ordinary appellatives’ (i. 99) are *not* ‘avoided’ in riddles, though *names* (sun, mist) cannot be used in the question because they give the answer to the riddle.

For all these reasons ancient riddles cannot explain the obscurity of mythological names. As soon as the name was too obscure, the riddle and the name would be forgotten, would die together. So we know as little as ever of the purely hypothetical process by which a riddle, or popular poetical saying, remains intelligible in a language, while the *mot d’énigme*, becoming unintelligible, turns into a proper name — say, Cronos. Yet the belief in this process as a *vera causa* is essential to our author’s method.

Here Mr. Max Müller warns us that his riddle theory is not meant to explain 'the obscurities of *all* mythological names. This is a stratagem that should be stopped from the very first.' It were more graceful to have said 'a misapprehension.'

Another 'stratagem' I myself must guard against. I do not say that *no* unintelligible strings of obsolete words may continue to live in the popular mouth. Old hymns, ritual speeches, and charms may and do survive, though unintelligible. They are reckoned all the more potent, because all the more mysterious. But an unintelligible riddle or poetical saying does not survive, so we cannot thus account for mythology as a disease of language.

Mordvinian Mythology

Still in the very natural and laudable pursuit of facts which will support the hypothesis of a disease of language, Mr. Max Müller turns to Mordvinian mythology. 'We have the accounts of real scholars' about Mordvinian prayers, charms, and proverbs (i. 235). The Mordvinians, Ugrian tribes, have the usual departmental Nature-gods — as Chkaï, god of the sun (*chi*=sun). He 'lives in the sun, or is the sun' (i. 236). His wife is the Earth or earth goddess, Védiava. They have a large family, given to incest. The morals of the Mordvinian gods are as lax as those of Mordvinian mortals. (Compare the myths and morals of Samos, and the Samian Hera.) Athwart the decent god Chkaï comes the evil god Chaitan — obviously Shaitan, a Mahommedan contamination. There are plenty of minor gods, and spirits good and bad. Dawn was a Mordvinian girl; in Australia she was a *lubra* addicted to lubricity.

How does this help philological mythology?

Mr. Max Müller is pleased to find solar and other elemental gods among the Mordvinians. But the discovery in no way aids his special theory. Nobody has ever denied that gods who are the sun or live in the sun are familiar, and are the centres of myths among most races. I give examples in *C. and M.* (p, 133, New Zealand and North America) and in *M. R. R.* (i. 124-135, America, Africa, Australia, Aztec, Hervey Islands, Samoa, and so on). Such Nature-myths — of sun, sky, earth — are perhaps universal; but they do not arise from disease of language. These myths deal with natural phenomena plainly and explicitly. The same is the case among the Mordvinians. 'The few names preserved to us are clearly the names of the agents behind the salient phenomena of Nature, in some cases quite intelligible, in others easily restored to their original meaning.' The meanings of the names not being forgotten, but obvious, there is no disease of language. All this does not illustrate the case of Greek divine names by resemblance, but by difference. Real scholars know what Mordvinian divine names mean. They do not know what many Greek divine names mean — as Hera, Artemis, Apollo, Athene; there is even much dispute about Demeter.

No anthropologist, I hope, is denying that Nature-myths and Nature-gods exist. We are only fighting against the philological effort to get at the elemental phenomena which may be behind Hera, Artemis, Athene, Apollo, by means of contending etymological conjectures. We only oppose the philological attempt to account for all the features in a god's myth as manifestations of the elemental qualities denoted by a name which may mean at pleasure dawn, storm, clear air, thunder, wind, twilight, water, or what you will. Granting Chkaï to be the sun, does that explain why he punishes people who bake bread on Friday? (237.) Our opponent does not seem to understand the *portée* of our objections. The same remarks apply to the statement of Finnish mythology here given, and familiar in the *Kalewala*. Departmental divine beings of natural phenomena we find everywhere, or nearly everywhere, in company, of course, with other elements of belief — totemism, worship of spirits, perhaps with monotheism in the background. That is as much our opinion as Mr. Max Müller's. What we are opposing is the theory of disease of language, and the attempt to explain, by philological conjectures, gods and heroes whose obscure *names* are the only sources of information.

Helios is the sun-god; he is, or lives in, the sun. Apollo may have been the sun-god too, but we still distrust the attempts to prove this by contending guesses at the origin of his name. Moreover, if all Greek gods could be certainly explained, by undisputed etymologies, as originally elemental, we still object to such logic as that which turns Saranyu into 'grey dawn.' We still object to the competing interpretations by which almost every detail of very composite myths is explained as a poetical description of some elemental process or phenomenon. Apollo *may* once have been the sun, but why did he make love as a dog?

Lettish Mythology

These remarks apply equally well to our author's dissertation on Lettish mythology (ii. 430 *et seq*.). The meaning of statements about the sun and sky 'is not to be mistaken in the mythology of the Letts.' So here is no disease of language. The meaning is not to be mistaken. Sun and moon and so on are spoken of by their natural unmistakable names, or in equally unmistakable poetical periphrases, as in riddles. The daughter of the sun hung a red cloak on a great oak-tree. This 'can hardly have been meant for anything but the red of the evening or the setting sun, sometimes called her red cloak' (ii. 439). Exactly so, and the Australians of Encounter Bay also think that the sun is a woman. 'She has a lover among the dead, who has given her a red kangaroo skin, and in this she appears at her rising.' This tale was told to Mr. Meyer in 1846, before Mr. Max Müller's *Dawn* had become 'inevitable,' as he says.

The Lettish and Australian myths are folk-poetry; they have nothing to do with a disease of language or forgotten meanings of words which become proper names. All this is surely distinct. We proclaim the abundance of poetical Nature-myths; we 'disable' the hypothesis that they arise from a disease of language.

The Chances of Fancy

One remark has to be added. Mannhardt regarded many or most of the philological solutions of gods into dawn or sun, or thunder or cloud, as empty *jeux d'esprit*. And justly, for there is no name named among men which a philologist cannot easily prove to be a synonym or metaphorical term for wind or weather, dawn or sun. Whatever attribute any word connotes, it can be shown to connote some attribute of dawn or sun. Here parody comes in, and gives a not overstrained copy of the method, applying it to Mr. Gladstone, Dr. Nansen, or whom you please. And though a jest is not a refutation, a parody may plainly show the absolutely capricious character of the philological method.

ARTEMIS

I do not here examine our author's constructive work. I have often criticised its logical method before, and need not repeat myself. The etymologies, of course, I leave to be discussed by scholars. As we have seen, they are at odds on the subject of phonetic laws and their application to mythological names. On the mosses and bogs of this Debatable Land some of them propose to erect the science of comparative mythology. Meanwhile we look on, waiting till the mosses shall support a ponderous edifice.

Our author's treatment of Artemis, however, has for me a peculiar interest (ii. 733-743). I really think that it is not mere vanity which makes me suppose that in this instance I am at least one of the authors whom Mr. Max Müller is writing *about* without name or reference. If so, he here sharply distinguishes between me on the one hand and 'classical scholars' on the other, a point to which we shall return. He says — I cite textually (ii. 732): —

Artemis

'The last of the great Greek goddesses whom we have to consider is Artemis. Her name, we shall see, has received many interpretations, but none that can be considered as well established — none that, even if it were so, would help us much in disentangling the many myths told about her. Easy to understand as her character seems when we confine our attention to Homer, it becomes extremely complicated when we take into account the numerous local forms of worship of which she was the object.

'We have here a good opportunity of comparing the interpretations put forward by *those who think that a study of the myths and customs of uncivilised tribes can help us towards an understanding of Greek deities, and the views advocated by classical scholars* who draw their information, first of all, from Greek sources, and afterwards only from a comparison of the myths and customs of cognate races, more particularly from what is preserved to us in ancient Vedic literature, before they plunge into the whirlpool of ill-defined and unintelligible Kafir folklore. The former undertake to explain Artemis by showing us the progress of human intelligence from the coarsest spontaneous and primitive ideas to the most beautiful and brilliant conception of poets and sculptors. They point out traces of hideous cruelties amounting almost to cannibalism, and of a savage cult of beasts in the earlier history of the goddess, who was celebrated by dances of young girls disguised as bears or imitating the movements of bears, &c. She was represented as À¿»Å¼±ÃÄ¿Â, and this idea, we are told, was borrowed from the East, which is a large term. We are told that her most ancient history is to be studied in Arkadia, where we can see the goddess still closely connected with the worship of animals, a characteristic feature of the lowest stage of religious worship among the lowest races of mankind. We are then told the old story of Lykâon, the King of Arkadia, who had a beautiful daughter called Kallisto. As Zeus fell in love with her, Hêra from jealousy changed her into a bear, and Artemis killed her with one of her arrows. Her child, however, was saved by Hermes, at the command of Zeus; and while Kallisto was changed to the constellation of the Ursa, her son Arkas became the ancestor of the Arkadians. Here, we are told, we have a clear instance of men being the descendants of animals, and of women being changed into wild beasts and stars — beliefs well known among the Cahrocs and the Kamilarois.'

*

Here I recognise Mr. Max Müller's version of my remarks on Artemis. Our author has just remarked in a footnote that Schwartz 'does not mention the title of the book where his evidence has been given.' It *is* an inconvenient practice, but with Mr. Max Müller this reticence is by no means unusual. *He* 'does not mention the book where 'my 'evidence is given.'

Anthropologists are here (unless I am mistaken) contrasted with 'classical scholars who draw their information, first of all, from Greek sources.' I need not assure anyone who has looked into my imperfect works that I also drew my information about Artemis 'first of all from Greek sources,' in the original. Many of these sources, to the best of my knowledge, are not translated: one, Homer, I have translated myself, with Professor Butcher and Messrs. Leaf and Myers, my old friends.

The idea and representation of Artemis as À¿»Å¼±ÃÄ¿Â (many-breasted), 'we are told, was borrowed from the East, a large term.' I say 'she is even blended in ritual with a monstrous many-breasted divinity of Oriental religion.' Is this 'large term' too vague? Then consider the Artemis of Ephesus and 'the alabaster statuette of the goddess' in Roscher's *Lexikon*, . Compare, for an Occidental parallel, the many-breasted goddess of the maguey plant, in Mexico. Our author writes, 'we are told that Artemis's most ancient history is to be studied in Arkadia.' My words are, 'The *Attic* and Arcadian legends of Artemis are confessedly *among the oldest*.' Why should 'Attic' and the qualifying phrase be omitted?

Otfried Müller

Mr. Max Müller goes on — citing, as I also do, Otfried Müller:— ‘Otfried Müller in 1825 treated the same myth without availing himself of the light now to be derived from the Cahrocs and the Kamilarois. He quoted Pausanias as stating that the tumulus of Kallisto was near the sanctuary of Artemis Kallistê, and he simply took Kallisto for an epithet of Artemis, which, as in many other cases, had been taken for a separate personality.’ Otfried also pointed out, as we both say, that at Brauron, in Attica, Artemis was served by young maidens called ±ÁºÄ¿¹ (bears); and he concluded, ‘This cannot possibly be a freak of chance, but the metamorphosis has its foundation in the fact that the animal was sacred to the goddess.’

Thus it is acknowledged that Artemis, under her name of Callisto, was changed into a she-bear, and had issue, Arkas — whence the Arcadians. Mr. Max Müller proceeds (ii. 734)— ‘He did not go so far as some modern mythologists who want us to believe that originally the animal, the she-bear, was the goddess, and that a later worship had replaced the ancient worship of the animal *pur et simple*.’

Did I, then, tell anybody that ‘originally the she-bear was the goddess’? No, I gave my reader, not a dogma, but the choice between two alternative hypotheses. I said, ‘It will become probable that the she-bear actually *was* the goddess at an extremely remote period, or at all events that the goddess succeeded to, and threw her protection over, an ancient worship of the animal’ (ii. 212, 213).

Mr. Max Müller’s error, it will be observed, consists in writing ‘and’ where I wrote ‘or.’ To make such rather essential mistakes is human; to give references is convenient, and not unscholarly.

In fact, this is Mr. Max Müller’s own opinion, for he next reports his anonymous author (myself) as saying (‘we are now told’), ‘though without any reference to Pausanias or any other Greek writers, that the young maidens, the ±ÁºÄ¿¹, when dancing around Artemis, were clad in bearskins, and that this is a pretty frequent custom in the dances of totemic races. In support of this, however, we are not referred to really totemic races . . . but to the Hirpi of Italy, and to the ”¹¿Â ºÉ´É½ in Egypt.’ Of course I never said that the ±ÁºÄ¿¹ danced around Artemis! I did say, after observing that they were described as ‘playing the bear,’ ‘they even in archaic ages wore bearskins,’ for which I cited Claus and referred to Suchier, including the reference in brackets to indicate that I borrowed it from a book which I was unable to procure. I then gave references for the classical use of a saffron vest by the ±ÁºÄ¿¹.

Beast Dances

For the use of beast-skins in such dances among totemists I cite Bancroft (iii. 168) and (*M. R. R.* ii. 107) Robinson (same authority). I may now also refer to Robertson Smith: 'the meaning of such a disguise *is well known from many savage rituals*; it means that the worshipper presents himself as a fish,' as a bear, or what not. Doubtless I might have referred more copiously to savage rituals, but really I thought that savage dances in beast-skins were familiar from Catlin's engravings of Mandan and Nootka wolf or buffalo dances. I add that the Brauronian rites 'point to a time when the goddess was herself a bear,' having suggested an alternative theory, and added confirmation. But I here confess that while beast-dances and wearing of skins of sacred beasts are common, to prove these sacred beasts to be totems is another matter. It is so far inferred rather than demonstrated. Next I said that the evolution of the bear into the classical Artemis 'almost escapes our inquiry. We find nothing more akin to it than the relation borne by the Samoan gods to the various totems in which they are supposed to be manifest.' This Mr. Max Müller quotes (of course, without reference or marks of quotation) and adds, '*pace* Dr. Codrington.' Have I incurred Dr. Codrington's feud? He doubts or denies totems in Melanesia. Is Samoa in Melanesia, *par exemple*? Our author (i. 206) says that 'Dr. Codrington will have no totems in his islands.' But Samoa is not one of the doctor's fortunate isles. For Samoa I refer, not to Dr. Codrington, but to Mr. Turner. In Samoa the 'clans' revere each its own sacred animals, 'but combine with it the belief that the spiritual deity reveals itself in each separate animal.' I expressly contrast the Samoan creed with 'pure totemism.'

So much for our author's success in stating and criticising my ideas. If he pleases, I will not speak of Samoan totems, but of Samoan sacred animals. It is better and more exact.

The View of Classical Scholars

They (ii. 735) begin by pointing out Artemis's connection with Apollo and the moon. So do I! 'If Apollo soon disengages himself from the sun . . . Artemis retains as few traces of any connection with the moon.' 'If Apollo was of solar origin,' asks the author (ii. 735), 'what could his sister Artemis have been, from the very beginning, if not some goddess connected with the moon?' Very likely; *quis negavit*? Then our author, like myself (*loc. cit.*), dilates on Artemis as 'sister of Apollo.' 'Her chapels,' I say, 'are in the wild wood; she is the abbess of the forest nymphs,' 'chaste and fair, the maiden of the precise life.' How odd! The classical scholar and I both say the same things; and I add a sonnet to

Artemis in this aspect, rendered by me from the *Hippolytus* of Euripides. Could a classical scholar do more? Our author then says that the Greek sportsman ‘surprised the beasts in their lairs’ by night. Not very sportsmanlike! I don’t find it in Homer or in Xenophon. Oh for exact references! The moon, the nocturnal sportswoman, is Artemis: here we have also the authority of Théodore de Banville (*Diane court dans la noire forêt*). And the nocturnal hunt *is Dian’s*; so she is protectress of the chase. Exactly what I said!

All this being granted by me beforehand (though possibly that might not be guessed from my critic), our author will explain Artemis’s human sacrifice of a girl in a fawn-skin — bloodshed, bear and all — with no aid from Kamilarois, Cahrocs, and Samoans.

Mr. Max Müller’s Explanation

Greek races traced to Zeus — usually disguised, for amorous purposes, as a brute. The Arcadians had an eponymous heroic ancestor, ‘Areas;’ they also worshipped Artemis. Artemis, as a virgin, could not become a mother of Areas by Zeus, or by anybody. Callisto was also Artemis. Callisto was the mother of Areas. But, to save the character of Artemis, Callisto was now represented as one of her nymphs. Then, Areas reminding the Arcadians of ±ÁºÄ¿Â (a bear), while they knew the Bear constellation, ‘what was more natural than that Callisto should be changed into an *arktos,* a she-bear . . . placed by Zeus, her lover, in the sky’ as the Bear?

Nothing could be more natural to a savage; they all do it. But that an Aryan, a Greek, should talk such nonsense as to say that he was the descendant of a bear who was changed into a star, and all merely because ‘Areas reminded the Arcadians of *arktos,*’ seems to me an extreme test of belief, and a very unlikely thing to occur.

Wider Application of the Theory

Let us apply the explanation more widely. Say that a hundred animal names are represented in the known totem-kindreds of the world. Then had each such kin originally an eponymous hero whose name, like that of Areas in Arcady, accidentally ‘reminded’ his successors of a beast, so that a hundred beasts came to be claimed as ancestors? Perhaps this was what occurred; the explanation, at all events, fits the wolf of the Delawares and the other ninety-nine as well as it fits the Arcades. By a curious coincidence all the names of eponymous heroes chanced to remind people of beasts. But *whence come the names of eponymous heroes*? From their tribes, of course — Ion from Ionians, Dorus from Dorians, and so on. Therefore (in the hundred cases) the names of the *tribes* derive from names of animals. Indeed, the names of totem-kins *are* the names of animals — wolves, bears, cranes. Mr. Max Müller remarks that the name ‘Arcades’ *may* come from ±ÁºÄ¿Â, a bear (i. 738); so the Arcadians (Proselenoi, the oldest of races, ‘men before the moon’) may be — Bears. So, of course (in this case), they would necessarily be Bears *before* they invented Areas, an eponymous hero whose name is derived from the pre-existing tribal name. His name, then, could not, before they invented it, remind them of a bear. It was from their name ‘ÁºÄ¿¹ (Bears) that they developed *his* name Areas, as in all such cases of eponymous heroes. I slightly incline to hold that this is exactly what occurred. A bear-kin claimed descent from a bear, and later, developing an eponymous hero, Areas, regarded him as son of a bear. Philologically ‘it is possible;’ I say no more.

The Bear Dance

‘The dances of the maidens called ±ÁºÄ¿¹, would receive an easy interpretation. They were Arkades, and why not ±ÁºÄ¿¹ (bears)?’ And if ±ÁºÄ¿¹, why not clad in bearskins, and all the rest? (ii. 738). This is our author’s explanation; it is also my own conjecture. The Arcadians were bears, knew it, and possibly danced a bear dance, as Mandans or Nootkas dance a buffalo dance or a wolf dance. But all such dances are not totemistic. They have often other aims. One only names such dances totemistic when performed by people who call themselves by the name of the animal represented, and claim descent from him. Our author says genially, ‘if anybody prefers to say that the *arctos* was something like a totem of the Arcadians . . . why not?’ But, if the *arctos* was a totem, that fact explains the Callisto story and Attic bear dance, while the philological theory — Mr. Max Müller’s theory — does not explain it. What is oddest of all, Mr. Max Müller, as we have seen, says that the bear-dancing girls were ‘Arkades.’ Now we hear of no bear dances in Arcadia. The dancers were *Athenian* girls. This, indeed, is the point. We have a bear Callisto (Artemis) in Arcady, where a folk etymology might explain it by stretching a point. But no etymology will explain bear dances to Artemis in Attica. So we find bears doubly connected with Artemis. The Athenians were not Arcadians.

As to the meaning and derivation of Artemis, or Artamis, our author knows nothing (ii. 741). I say, ‘even ‘ÁºÄµ¼¹Â (±ÁºÄ¿Â, bear) has occurred to inventive men.’ Possibly I invented it myself, though not addicted to etymological conjecture.

THE FIRE-WALK

The Method of Psychical Research

As a rule, mythology asks for no aid from Psychical Research. But there are problems in religious rite and custom where the services of the Cendrillon of the sciences, the despised youngest sister, may be of use. As an example I take the famous mysterious old Fire-rite of the Hirpi, or wolf-kin, of Mount Soracte. I shall first, following Mannhardt, and making use of my own trifling researches in ancient literature, describe the rite itself.

Mount Soracte

Everyone has heard of Mount Soracte, white with shining snow, the peak whose distant cold gave zest to the blazing logs on the hearth of Horace. Within sight of his windows was practised, by men calling themselves ‘wolves’ (*Hirpi*), a rite of extreme antiquity and enigmatic character. On a peak of Soracte, now Monte di Silvestre, stood the ancient temple of Soranus, a Sabine sun-god. Virgil identifies Soranus with Apollo. At the foot of the cliff was the precinct of *Feronia*, a Sabine goddess. Mr. Max Müller says that Feronia corresponds to the Vedic *Bhuranyu*, a name of Agni, the Vedic fire-god (ii. 800). Mannhardt prefers, of course, a derivation from *far* (grain), as in *confarreatio*, the ancient Roman bride-cake form of marriage. *Feronia Mater*=Sanskrit *bharsani mata*, *Getreide Mutter*. It is a pity that philologists so rarely agree in their etymologies. In Greek the goddess is called *Anthephorus*, *Philostephanus*, and even *Persephone* — probably the Persephone of flowers and garlands.

Hirpi Sorani

Once a year a *fête* of Soranus and Feronia was held, in the precinct of the goddess at Soracte. The ministrants were members of certain local families called Hirpi (wolves). Pliny says, ‘A few families, styled Hirpi, at a yearly sacrifice, walk over a burnt pile of wood, yet are not scorched. On this account they have a perpetual exemption, by decree of the Senate, from military and all other services.’ Virgil makes Aruns say, ‘Highest of gods, Apollo, guardian of Soracte, thou of whom we are the foremost worshippers, thou for whom the burning pile of pinewood is fed, while we, strong in faith, walk through the midst of the fire, and press our footsteps in the glowing mass. . . .' Strabo gives the same facts. Servius, the old commentator on Virgil, confuses the Hirpi, not unnaturally, with the Sabine 'clan,' the Hirpini. He says, 'Varro, always an enemy of religious belief, writes that the Hirpini, when about to walk the fire, smear the soles of their feet with a drug' (*medicamentum*). Silius Italicus (v. 175) speaks of the ancient rite, when 'the holy bearer of the bow (Apollo) rejoices in the kindled pyres, and the ministrant thrice gladly bears entrails to the god through the harmless flames.' Servius gives an ætiological myth to account for the practice. 'Wolves came and carried off the entrails from the fire; shepherds, following them, were killed by mortal vapours from a cave; thence ensued a pestilence, because they had followed the wolves. An oracle bade them "play the wolf," *i.e.* live on plunder, whence they were called *Hirpi*, wolves,' an attempt to account for a wolf clan-name. There is also a story that, when the grave of Feronia seemed all on fire, and the people were about carrying off the statue, it suddenly grew green again.

Mannhardt decides that the so-called wolves leaped through the sun-god's fire, in the interest of the health of the community. He elucidates this by a singular French popular custom, held on St. John's Eve, at Jumièges. The Brethren of the Green Wolf select a leader called Green Wolf, there is an ecclesiastical procession, *curé* and all, a *souper maigre*, the lighting of the usual St. John's fire, a dance round the fire, the capture of next year's Green Wolf, a mimicry of throwing him into the fire, a revel, and next day a loaf of *pain bénit*, above a pile of green leaves, is carried about.

The wolf, thinks Mannhardt, is the Vegetation-spirit in animal form. Many examples of the 'Corn-wolf' in popular custom are given by Mr. Frazer in *The Golden Bough* (ii. 3-6). The Hirpi of Soracte, then, are so called because they play the part of Corn-wolves, or *Korndämonen* in wolf shape. But Mannhardt adds, 'this *seems*, at least, to be the explanation.' He then combats Kuhn's theory of Feronia as lightning goddess. He next compares the strange Arcadian cannibal rites on Mount Lycæus.

Mannhardt's Deficiency

In all this ingenious reasoning, Mannhardt misses a point. What the Hirpi did was *not* merely to leap through light embers, as in the Roman *Palilia*, and the parallel doings in Scotland, England, France, and elsewhere, at Midsummer (St. John's Eve). The Hirpi would not be freed from military service and all other State imposts for merely doing what any set of peasants do yearly for nothing. Nor would Varro have found it necessary to explain so easy and common a feat by the use of a drug with which the feet were smeared. Mannhardt, as Mr. Max Müller says, ventured himself little ‘among red skins and black skins.’ He read Dr. Tylor, and appreciated the method of illustrating ancient rites and beliefs from the living ways of living savages. But, in practice, he mainly confined himself to illustrating ancient rites and beliefs by survival in modern rural folk-lore. I therefore supplement Mannhardt’s evidence from European folk-lore by evidence from savage life, and by a folk-lore case which Mannhardt did not know.

The Fire-walk

A modern student is struck by the cool way in which the ancient poets, geographers, and commentators mention a startling circumstance, the Fire-walk. The only hint of explanation is the statement that the drug or juice of herbs preserved the Hirpi from harm. That theory may be kept in mind, and applied if it is found useful. Virgil’s theory that the ministrants walk, *pietate freti*, corresponds to Mrs. Wesley’s belief, when, after praying, she ‘waded the flames’ to rescue her children from the burning parsonage at Epworth. The hypothesis of Iamblichus, when he writes about the ecstatic or ‘possessed’ persons who cannot be injured by fire, is like that of modern spiritualists — the ‘spirit’ or ‘dæmon’ preserves them unharmed.

I intentionally omit cases which are vaguely analogous to that of the Hirpi. In Icelandic sagas, in the *Relations* of the old Jesuit missionaries, in the Travels of Pallas and Gmelin, we hear of medicine-men and Berserks who take liberties with red-hot metal, live coals, and burning wood. Thus in the Icelandic *Flatey Book* (vol. i.) we read about the fighting evangelist of Iceland, a story of Thangbrandr and the foreign Berserkir. ‘The Berserkir said: “I can walk through the burning fire with my bare feet.” Then a great fire was made, which Thangbrandr hallowed, and the Berserkir went into it without fear, and burned his feet’ — the Christian spell of Thangbrandr being stronger than the heathen spell of the Berserkir. What the saga says is not evidence, and some of the other tales are merely traditional. Others may be explained, perhaps, by conjuring. The mediæval ordeal by fire may also be left on one side. In 1826 Lockhart published a translation of the Church Service for the Ordeal by Fire, a document given, he says, by Büsching in *Die Vorzeit* for 1817. The accused communicates before carrying the red-hot iron bar, or walking on the red-hot ploughshare. The consecrated wafer is supposed to preserve him from injury, if he be guiltless. He carries the iron for nine yards, after which his hands are sealed up in a linen cloth and examined at the end of three days. ‘If he be found clear of scorch or scar, glory to God.' Lockhart calls the service 'one of the most extraordinary records of the craft, the audacity, and the weakness of mankind.'

The fraud is more likely to have lain in the pretended failure to find scorch or scar than in any method of substituting cold for hot iron, or of preventing the metal from injuring the subject of the ordeal. The rite did not long satisfy the theologians and jurists of the Middle Ages. It has been discussed by Lingard in his *History of England*, and by Dr. E. B. Tylor in *Primitive Culture*.

For the purpose of the present inquiry I also omit all the rites of leaping sportfully, and of driving cattle through light fires. Of these cases, from the Roman *Palilia*, or *Parilia*, downwards, there is a useful collection in Brand's *Popular Antiquities* under the heading 'Midsummer Eve.' One exception must be made for a passage from Torreblanca's *Demonologia* (). People are said 'pyras circumire et transilire in futuri mali averruncatione' — to 'go round about and leap over lighted pyres for the purpose of averting future evils,' as in Mannhardt's theory of the Hirpi. This may be connected with the Bulgarian rite, to be described later, but, as a rule, in all these instances, the fire is a light one of straw, and no sort of immunity is claimed by the people who do not walk through, but leap across it.

These kinds of analogous examples, then, it suffices merely to mention. For the others, in all affairs of this sort, the wide diffusion of a tale of miracle is easily explained. The fancy craves for miracles, and the universal mode of inventing a miracle is to deny the working, on a given occasion, of a law of Nature. Gravitation was suspended, men floated in air, inanimate bodies became agile, or fire did not burn. No less natural than the invention of the myth is the attempt to feign it by conjuring or by the use of some natural secret. But in the following modern instances the miracle of passing through the fire uninjured is apparently feigned with considerable skill, or is performed by the aid of some secret of Nature not known to modern chemistry. The evidence is decidedly good enough to prove that in Europe, India, and Polynesia the ancient rite of the Hirpi of Soracte is still a part of religious or customary ceremony.

Fijian Fire-walk

The case which originally drew my attention to this topic is that given by Mr. Basil Thomson in his *South Sea Yarns* (). Mr. Thomson informs me that he wrote his description on the day after he witnessed the ceremony, a precaution which left no room for illusions of memory. Of course, in describing a conjuring trick, one who is not an expert records, not what actually occurred, but what he was able to see, and the chances are that he did not see, and therefore omits, an essential circumstance, while he misstates other circumstances. I am informed by Mrs. Steel, the author of *The Potter's Thumb* and other stories of Indian life, that, in watching an Indian conjurer, she generally, or frequently, detects his method. She says that the conjurer often begins by whirling rapidly before the eyes of the spectators a small polished skull of a monkey, and she is inclined to think that the spectators who look at this are, in some way, more easily deluded. These facts are mentioned that I may not seem unaware of what can be said to impugn the accuracy of the descriptions of the Fire Rite, as given by Mr. Thomson and other witnesses.

Mr. Thomson says that the Wesleyan missionaries have nearly made a clean sweep of all heathen ceremonial in Fiji. 'But in one corner of Fiji, the island of Nbengga, a curious observance of mythological origin has escaped the general destruction, probably because the worthy iconoclasts had never heard of it.' The myth tells how the ancestor of the clan received the gift of fire-walking from a god, and the existence of the myth raises a presumption in favour of the antiquity of the observance.

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'Once every year the *masáwe*, a dracæna that grows in profusion on the grassy hillsides of the island, becomes fit to yield the sugar of which its fibrous root is full. To render it fit to eat, the roots must be baked among hot stones for four days. A great pit is dug, and filled with large stones and blazing logs, and when these have burned down, and the stones are at white heat, the oven is ready for the *masáwe*. It is at this stage that the clan Na Ivilankata, favoured of the gods, is called on to "leap into the oven" (*rikata na lovo*), and walk unharmed upon the hot stones that would scorch and wither the feet of any but the descendants of the dauntless Tui Nkualita. Twice only had Europeans been fortunate enough to see the *masáwe* cooked, and so marvellous had been the tales they told, and so cynical the scepticism with which they had been received, that nothing short of another performance before witnesses and the photographic camera would have satisfied the average "old hand."

'As we steamed up to the chiefs village of Waisoma, a cloud of blue smoke rolling up among the palms told us that the fire was newly lighted. We found a shallow pit, nineteen feet wide, dug in the sandy soil, a stone's throw from high-water mark, in a small clearing among the cocoanuts between the beach and the dense forest. The pit was piled high with great blazing logs and round stones the size of a man's head. Mingled with the crackling roar of the fire were loud reports as splinters flew off from the stones, warning us to guard our eyes. A number of men were dragging up more logs and rolling them into the blaze, while, above all, on the very brink of the fiery pit, stood Jonathan Dambea, directing the proceedings with an air of noble calm. As the stones would not be hot enough for four hours, there was ample time to hear the tradition that warrants the observance of the strange ceremony we were to see.

‘When we were at last summoned, the fire had been burning for more than four hours. The pit was filled with a white-hot mass shooting out little tongues of white flame, and throwing out a heat beside which the scorching sun was a pleasant relief. A number of men were engaged, with long poles to which a loop of thick vine had been attached, in noosing the pieces of unburnt wood by twisting the pole, like a horse’s twitch, until the loop was tight, and dragging the log out by main force. When the wood was all out there remained a conical pile of glowing stones in the middle of the pit. Ten men now drove the butts of green saplings into the base of the pile, and held the upper end while a stout vine was passed behind the row of saplings. A dozen men grasped each end of the vine, and with loud shouts hauled with all their might. The saplings, like the teeth of an enormous rake, tore through the pile of stones, flattening them out towards the opposite edge of the pit. The saplings were then driven in on the other side and the stones raked in the opposite direction, then sideways, until the bottom of the pit was covered with an even layer of hot stones. This process had taken fully half an hour, but any doubt as to the heat of the stones at the end was set at rest by the tongues of flame that played continually among them. The cameras were hard at work, and a large crowd of people pressed inwards towards the pit as the moment drew near. They were all excited except Jonathan, who preserved, even in the supreme moment, the air of holy calm that never leaves his face. All eyes are fixed expectant on the dense bush behind the clearing, whence the Shadrachs, Meshachs and Abednegos of the Pacific are to emerge. There is a cry of “*Vutu*! *Vutu*!” and forth from the bush, two and two, march fifteen men, dressed in garlands and fringes. They tramp straight to the brink of the pit. The leading pair show something like fear in their faces, but do not pause, perhaps because the rest would force them to move forward. They step down upon the stones and continue their march round the pit, planting their feet squarely and firmly on each stone. The cameras snap, the crowd surges forward, the bystanders fling in great bundles of green leaves. But the bundles strike the last man of the procession and cut him off from his fellows; so he stays where he is, trampling down the leaves as they are thrown to line the pit, in a dense cloud of steam from the boiling sap. The rest leap back to his assistance, shouting and trampling, and the pit turns into the mouth of an Inferno, filled with dusky frenzied fiends, half seen through the dense volume that rolls up to heaven and darkens the sunlight. After the leaves, palm-leaf baskets of the dracæna root are flung to them, more leaves, and then bystanders and every one join in shovelling earth over all till the pit is gone, and a smoking mound of fresh earth takes its place. This will keep hot for four days, and then the *masáwe* will be cooked.

'As the procession had filed up to the pit, by a preconcerted arrangement with the noble Jonathan, a large stone had been hooked out of the pit to the feet of one of the party, who poised a pocket-handkerchief over it, and dropped it lightly upon the stone when the first man leapt into the oven, and snatched what remained of it up as the last left the stones. During the fifteen or twenty seconds it lay there every fold that touched the stone was charred, and the rest of it scorched yellow. So the stones were not cool. We caught four or five of the performers as they came out, and closely examined their feet. They were cool, and showed no trace of scorching, nor were their anklets of dried tree-fern leaf burnt. This, Jonathan explained, is part of the miracle; for dried tree-fern is as combustible as tinder, and there were flames shooting out among the stones. Sceptics had affirmed that the skin of a Fijian's foot being a quarter of an inch thick, he would not feel a burn. Whether this be true or not of the ball and heel, the instep is covered with skin no thicker than our own, and we saw the men plant their insteps fairly on the stone.'

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Mr. Thomson's friend, Jonathan, said that young men had been selected because they would look better in a photograph, and, being inexperienced, they were afraid. A stranger would share the gift if he went in with one of the tribe. Some years ago a man fell and burned his shoulders. 'Any trick?' 'Here Jonathan's ample face shrunk smaller, and a shadow passed over his candid eye.' Mr. Thomson concludes: 'Perhaps the Na Ivilankata clan have no secret, and there is nothing wonderful in their performance; but, miracle or not, I am very glad I saw it.' The handkerchief dropped on the stone is 'alive to testify to it.' Mr. Thomson's photograph of the scene is ill-developed, and the fumes of steam somewhat interfere with the effect. A rough copy is published in *Folk-Lore* for September, 1895, but the piece could only be reproduced by a delicate drawing with the brush.

The parallel to the rite of the Hirpi is complete, except that red-hot stones, not the pyre of pine-embers, is used in Fiji. Mr. Thomson has heard of a similar ceremony in the Cook group of islands. As in ancient Italy, so in Fiji, a certain *clan* have the privilege of fire-walking. It is far enough from Fiji to Southern India, as it is far enough from Mount Soracte to Fiji. But in Southern India the Klings practise the rite of the Hirpi and the Na Ivilankata. I give my informant's letter exactly as it reached me, though it has been published before in *Longman's*

Magazine:

Kling Fire-walk

‘Dear Sir, — Observing from your note in *Longman’s Magazine* that you have mislaid my notes *re* fire-walking, I herewith repeat them. I have more than once seen it done by the “Klings,” as the low-caste Tamil-speaking Hindus from Malabar are called, in the Straits Settlements. On one occasion I was present at a “fire-walking” held in a large tapioca plantation in Province Wellesley, before many hundreds of spectators, all the Hindu coolies from the surrounding estates being mustered. A trench had been dug about twenty yards long by six feet wide and two deep. This was piled with faggots and small wood four or five feet high. This was lighted at midday, and by four p.m. the trench was a bed of red-hot ashes, the heat from which was so intense that the men who raked and levelled it with long poles could not stand it for more than a minute at a time. A few yards from the end of the trench a large hole had been dug and filled with water. When all was ready, six men, ordinary coolies, dressed only in their “dholis,” or loin-cloths, stepped out of the crowd, and, amidst tremendous excitement and a horrible noise of conches and drums, passed over the burning trench from end to end, in single file, at a quick walk, plunging one after the other into the water. Not one of them showed the least sign of injury. They had undergone some course of preparation by their priest, not a Brahman, but some kind of devil-doctor or medicine-man, and, as I understood it, they took on themselves and expiated the sins of the Kling community for the past year (a big job, if thieving and lying count; probably not). They are not, however, always so lucky, for I heard that on the next occasion one of the men fell and was terribly burnt, thus destroying the whole effect of the ceremony. I do not think this to be any part of the Brahmanical religion, though the ordeal by fire as a test of guilt is, or was, in use all over India. The fact is that the races of Southern India, where the Aryan element is very small, have kept all their savage customs and devil-worship under the form of Brahmanism.

‘Another curious feat I saw performed at Labuan Deli, in Sumatra, on the Chinese New Year. A Chinaman of the coolie class was squatted stark naked on the roadside, holding on his knees a brass pan the size of a wash-hand basin, piled a foot high with red-hot charcoal. The heat reached one’s face at two yards, but if it had been a tray of ices the man couldn’t have been more unconcerned. There was a crowd of Chinese round him, all eagerly asking questions, and a pile of coppers accumulating beside him. A Chinese shopkeeper told me that the man “told fortunes,” but from the circumstance of a gambling-house being close by, I concluded that his customers were getting tips on a system.

‘Hoping these notes may be of service to you,
‘I remain,
‘Yours truly,
‘STEPHEN PONDER.’

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In this rite the fire-pit is thrice as long (at a rough estimate) as that of the Fijians. The fire is of wooden embers, not heated stones. As in Fiji, a man who falls is burned, clearly suggesting that the feet and legs, *but not the whole body*, are in some way prepared to resist the fire. As we shall find to be the practice in Bulgaria, the celebrants place their feet afterwards in water. As in Bulgaria, drums are beaten to stimulate the fire-walkers. Neither here nor in Fiji are the performers said to be entranced, like the Bulgarian *Nistinares*. On the whole, the Kling rite (which the Klings, I am informed, also practise in the islands whither they are carried as coolies) so closely resembles the Fijian and the Tongan that one would explain the likeness by transmission, were the ceremony not almost as like the rite of the Hirpi. For the Tongan fire-ritual, the source is *The Polynesian Society’s Journal*, vol. ii. No. 2. p-108. My attention was drawn to this by Mr. Laing, writing from New Zealand. The article is by Miss Tenira Henry, of Honolulu, a young lady of the island. The Council of the Society, not having seen the rite, ‘do not guarantee the truth of the story, but willingly publish it for the sake of the incantation.’ Miss Henry begins with a description of the *ti*-plant (*Dracæna terminalis*), which ‘requires to be well baked before being eaten.’ She proceeds thus: ‘The *ti*-ovens are frequently thirty feet in diameter, and the large stones, heaped upon small logs of wood, take about twenty-four hours to get properly heated. Then they are flattened down, by means of long green poles, and the trunks of a few banana-trees are stripped up and strewn over them to cause steam. The *ti*-roots are then thrown in whole, accompanied by short pieces of *apé-root* (*Arum costatum*), that are not quite so thick as the *ti*, but grow to the length of six feet and more. The oven is then covered over with large leaves and soil, and left so for about three days, when the *ti* and the *apé* are taken out well cooked, and of a rich, light-brown colour. The *apé* prevents the *ti* from getting too dry in the oven.

‘There is a strange ceremony connected with the Uum Ti (or *ti*-oven), that used to be practised by the heathen priests at Raiatea, but can now be performed by only two individuals (Tupua and Taero), both descendants of priests. This ceremony consisted in causing people to walk in procession through the hot oven when flattened down, before anything had been placed in it, and without any preparation whatever, bare-footed or shod, and on their emergence not even smelling of fire. The manner of doing this was told by Tupua, who heads the procession in the picture, to Monsieur Morné, Lieutenant de Vaisseau, who also took the photograph of it, about two years ago, at Uturoa, Raiatea, which, being on bad paper, was copied off by Mr. Barnfield, of Honolulu. All the white residents of the place, as well as the French officers, were present to see the ceremony, which is rarely performed nowadays.

'No one has yet been able to solve the mystery of this surprising feat, but it is to be hoped that scientists will endeavour to do so while those men who practise it still live.

Tupua's Incantation used in Walking Over the Uum-Ti. — Translation

'Hold the leaves of the *ti*-plant before picking them, and say: "O hosts of gods! awake, arise! You and I are going to the *ti*-oven to-morrow."

'If they float in the air, they are gods, but if their feet touch the ground they are human beings. Then break the *ti*-leaves off and look towards the direction of the oven, and say: "O hosts of gods! go to-night, and to-morrow you and I shall go." Then wrap the *ti*-leaves up in *han* (*Hibiscus*) leaves, and put them to sleep in the *marae*, where they must remain until morning, and say in leaving: '"Arise! awake! O hosts of gods! Let your feet take you to the *ti*-oven; fresh water and salt water come also. Let the dark earthworm and the light earthworm go to the oven. Let the redness and the shades of fire all go. You will go; you will go to-night, and to-morrow it will be you and I; we shall go to the Uum-Ti." (This is for the night.) 'When the *ti*-leaves are brought away, they must be tied up in a wand and carried straight to the oven, and opened when all are ready to pass through; then hold the wand forward and say: '"O men (spirits) who heated the oven! let it die out! O dark earthworms! O light earthworms! fresh water and salt water, heat of the oven and redness of the oven, hold up the footsteps of the walkers, and fan the heat of the bed. O cold beings, let us lie in the midst of the oven! O Great-Woman-who-set-fire-to-the-skies! hold the fan, and let us go into the oven for a little while!" Then, when all are ready to walk in, we say:
"Holder of the first footstep!
Holder of the second footstep!
Holder of the third footstep!
Holder of the fourth footstep!
Holder of the fifth footstep!

Holder of the sixth footstep!
Holder of the seventh footstep!
Holder of the eighth footstep!
Holder of the ninth footstep!
Holder of the tenth footstep!
“O Great-Woman-who-set-fire-to-the-skies! all is covered!”

‘Then everybody walks through without hurt, into the middle and around the oven, following the leader, with the wand beating from side to side.

‘The Great-Woman-who-set-fire-to-the-skies was a high-born woman in olden times, who made herself respected by the oppressive men when they placed women under so many restrictions. She is said to have had the lightning at her command, and struck men with it when they encroached on her rights.

‘All the above is expressed in old Tahitian, and when quickly spoken is not easily understood by the modern listener. Many of the words, though found in the dictionary, are now obsolete, and the arrangement of others is changed. *Oe* and *tana* are never used now in place of the plural *outou* and *tatou*; but in old folk-lore it is the classical style of addressing the gods in the collective sense. *Tahutahu* means sorcery, and also to kindle a fire.’

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So far Miss Henry, on this occasion, and the archaic nature of the hymn, with the reference to a mythical leader of the revolt of women, deserves the attention of anthropologists, apart from the singular character of the rite described. In the third number of the *Journal* (vol. ii.) the following editorial note is published: ‘Miss Tenira Henry authorises us to say that her sister and her sister’s little child were some of those who joined in the Uum-Ti ceremony referred to in vol. ii. , and in the preceding note, and actually walked over the red-hot stones. The illustration of the performance given in the last number of the *Journal*, it appears, is actually from a photograph taken by Lieutenant Morné, the original of which Miss Henry has sent us for inspection. — EDITOR.’

Corroborative Evidence

The following corroborative account is given in the *Journal*, from a source vaguely described as ‘a pamphlet published in San Francisco, by Mr. Hastwell:’

‘The natives of Raiatea have some performances so entirely out of the ordinary course of events as to institute (*sic*) inquiry relative to a proper solution.

‘On September 20, 1885, I witnessed the wonderful, and to me inexplicable, performance of passing through the “fiery furnace.”

‘The furnace that I saw was an excavation of three or four feet in the ground, in a circular form (sloping upwards), and about thirty feet across. The excavation was filled with logs and wood, and then covered with large stones. A fire was built underneath, and kept burning for a day. When I witnessed it, on the second day, the flames were pouring up through the interstices of the rocks, which were heated to a red and white heat. When everything was in readiness, and the furnace still pouring out its intense heat, the natives marched up with bare feet to the edge of the furnace, where they halted for a moment, and after a few passes of the wand made of the branches of the *ti*-plant by the leader, who repeated a few words in the native language, they stepped down on the rocks and walked leisurely across to the other side, stepping from stone to stone. This was repeated five times, without any preparation whatever on their feet, and without injury or discomfort from the heated stones. There was not even the smell of fire on their garments.’

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Mr. N. J. Tone, in the same periodical (ii. 3,193), says that he arrived just too late to see the same rite at Bukit Mestajam, in Province Wellesley, Straits Settlements; he did see the pit and the fire, and examined the naked feet, quite uninjured, of the performers. He publishes an extract to this effect from his diary. The performers, I believe, were Klings. Nothing is said to indicate any condition of trance, or other abnormal state, in the fire-walkers.

The Fire-walk in Trinidad.

Mr. Henry E. St. Clair, writing on September 14. 1896, says: ‘In Trinidad, British West Indies, the rite is performed annually about this time of the year among the Indian coolie immigrants resident in the small village of Peru, a mile or so from Port of Spain. I have personally witnessed the passing, and the description given by Mr. Ponder tallies with what I saw, except that, so far as I can remember, the number of those who took part in the rite was greater than six. In addition, there is this circumstance, which was not mentioned by that gentleman: each of the “passers” carried one or two lemons, which they dropped into the fire as they went along. These lemons were afterwards eagerly scrambled for by the bystanders, who, so far as I can recollect, attributed a healing influence to them.’

Bulgarian Fire-walk

As to the Bulgarian rite, Dr. Schischmanof writes to me: ‘I am sure the observance will surprise you; I am even afraid that you will think it rather fantastic, but you may rely on my information. The *danse de feu* was described long ago in a Bulgarian periodical by one of our best known writers. What you are about to read only confirms his account. What I send you is from the *Recueil de Folk Lore*, *de Littérature et de Science* (vol. vi.), edited, with my aid and that of my colleague, Mastov, by the Minister of Public Instruction. How will you explain these *hauts faits de l'extase religieuse*? I cannot imagine! For my part, I think of the self-mutilations and tortures of Dervishes and Fakirs, and wonder if we have not here something analogous.'

The article in the Bulgarian serial is called 'The Nistinares.' The word is not Bulgarian; possibly it is Romaic.

The scene is in certain villages in Turkey, on the Bulgarian frontier, and not far from the town of Bourgas, on the Euxine, in the department of Lozen Grad. The ministrants (*Nistinares*) have the gift of fire-walking as a hereditary talent; they are specially *just*, and the gift is attributed as to a god in Fiji, in Bulgaria to St. Constantine and St. Helena.

'These *just ones* feel a desire to dance in the flames during the month of May; they are filled at the same time with some unknown force, which enables them to predict the future. The best *Nistinare* is he who can dance longest in the live flame, and utter the most truthful prophecies.'

The *Nistinares* may be of either sex.

On May 1 the *Nistinares* hold a kind of religious festival at the house of one of their number. Salutations are exchanged, and presents of food and *raki* are made to the chief *Nistinare*. The holy *icones* of saints are wreathed with flowers, and perfumed with incense. Arrangements are made for purifying the holy wells and springs.

On May 21, the day of St. Helena and St. Constantine, the parish priest says Mass in the grey of dawn. At sunrise all the village meets in festal array; the youngest *Nistinare* brings from the church the *icones* of the two saints, and drums are carried behind them in procession. They reach the sacred well in the wood, which the priest blesses. This is parallel to the priestly benediction on 'Fountain Sunday' of the well beneath the Fairy Tree at Domremy, where Jeanne d'Arc was accused of meeting the Good Ladies. Everyone drinks of the water, and there is a sacrifice of rams, ewes, and oxen. A festival follows, as was the use of Domremy in the days of the Maid; then all return to the village. The holy drum, which hangs all the year before St. Helena in the church, is played upon. A mock combat between the *icones* which have visited the various holy wells is held.

Meanwhile, in each village, pyres of dry wood, amounting to thirty, fifty, or even a hundred cartloads, have been piled up. The wood is set on fire before the procession goes forth to the hallowing of the fountains. On returning, the crowd dances a *horo* (round dance) about the glowing logs. Heaps of embers (*Pineus acervus*) are made, and water is thrown on the ground. The musicians play the tune called ‘L’Air Nistinar.’ A *Nistinare* breaks through the dance, *turns blue*, trembles like a leaf, and glares wildly with his eyes. The dance ends, and everybody goes to the best point of view. Then the wildest *Nistinare* seizes the *icon*, turns it to the crowd, and with naked feet climbs the pyre of glowing embers. The music plays, and the *Nistinare* dances to the tune in the fire. If he is so disposed he utters prophecies. He dances till his face resumes its ordinary expression; then he begins to feel the burning; he leaves the pyre, and places his feet in the mud made by the libations of water already described. The second *Nistinare* then dances in the fire, and so on. The predictions apply to villages and persons; sometimes sinners are denounced, or repairs of the church are demanded in this queer parish council. All through the month of May the *Nistinares* call out for fire when they hear the *Nistinare* music playing. They are very temperate men and women. Except in May they do not clamour for fire, and cannot dance in it.

In this remarkable case the alleged gift is hereditary, is of saintly origin, and is only exercised when the *Nistinare* is excited, and (apparently) entranced by music and the dance, as is the manner also of medicine-men among savages. The rite, with its sacrifices of sheep and oxen, is manifestly of heathen origin. They ‘pass through the fire’ to St. Constantine, but the observance must be far older than Bulgarian Christianity. The report says nothing as to the state of the feet of the *Nistinares* after the fire-dance. Medical inspection is desirable, and the photographic camera should be used to catch a picture of the wild scene. My account is abridged from the French version of the Bulgarian report sent by Dr. Schischmanof.

Indian Fire-walk

Since these lines were written the kindness of Mr. Tawney, librarian at the India Office, has added to my stock of examples. Thus, Mr. Stokes printed in the *Indian Antiquary* (ii.) notes of evidence taken at an inquest on a boy of fourteen, who fell during the fire-walk, was burned, and died on that day. The rite had been forbidden, but was secretly practised in the village of Periyângridi. The fire-pit was 27 feet long by 7½ feet broad and a span in depth. Thirteen persons walked through the hot wood embers, which, in Mr. Stokes’s opinion (who did not see the performance), ‘would hardly injure the tough skin of the sole of a labourer’s foot,’ yet killed a boy. The treading was usually done by men under vows, perhaps vows made during illness. One, at least, walked ‘because it is my duty as Pûjâri.’ Another says, ‘I got down into the fire at the east end, meditating on Draupatî, walked through to the west, and up the bank.’ Draupatî is a goddess, wife of the Pândavas. Mr. Stokes reports that, according to the incredulous, experienced fire-walkers smear their feet with oil of the green frog. No report is made as to the condition of their feet when they emerge from the fire.

Another case occurs in Oppert’s work, *The Original Inhabitants of India* (). As usual, a pit is dug, filled with faggots. When these have burned down ‘a little,’ and ‘while the heat is still unbearable in the neighbourhood of the ditch, those persons who have made the vow . . . walk . . . on the embers in the pit, without doing themselves as a rule much harm.’

Again, in a case where butter is poured over the embers to make a blaze, ‘one of the tribal priests, in a state of religious afflatus, walks through the fire. It is said that the sacred fire is harmless, but some admit that a certain preservative ointment is used by the performers.’ A chant used at Mirzapur (as in Fiji) is cited.

In these examples the statements are rather vague. No evidence is adduced as to the actual effect of the fire on the feet of the ministrants. We hear casually of ointments which protect the feet, and of the thickness of the skins of the fire-walkers, and of the unapproachable heat, but we have nothing exact, no trace of scientific precision. The Government ‘puts down,’ but does not really investigate the rite.

Psychical Parallels

I now very briefly, and ‘under all reserves,’ allude to the only modern parallel in our country with which I am acquainted. We have seen that Iamblichus includes insensibility to fire among the privileges of Græco-Egyptian ‘mediums.’ The same gift was claimed by Daniel Dunglas Home, the notorious American spiritualist. I am well aware that as Eusapia Paladino was detected in giving a false impression that her hands were held by her neighbours in the dark, therefore, when Mr. Crookes asserts that he saw Home handle fire in the light, his testimony on this point can have no weight with a logical public. Consequently it is not as evidence to the *fact* that I cite Mr. Crookes, but for another purpose. Mr. Crookes’s remarks I heard, and I can produce plenty of living witnesses to the same experiences with *D. D. Home*: ‘I several times saw the fire test, both at my own and at other houses. On one occasion he called me to him when he went to the fire, and told me to watch carefully. He certainly put his hand in the grate and handled the red-hot coals in a manner which would have been impossible for me to have imitated without being severely burnt. I once saw him go to a bright wood fire, and, taking a large piece of red-hot charcoal, put it in the hollow of one hand, and, covering it with the other, blow into the extempore furnace till the coal was white hot, and the flames licked round his fingers. No sign of burning could be seen then or afterwards on his hands.'

On these occasions Home was, or was understood to be, 'entranced,' like the Bulgarian Nistinares. Among other phenomena, the white handkerchief on which Home laid a red-hot coal was not scorched, nor, on analysis, did it show any signs of chemical preparation. Home could also (like the Fijians) communicate his alleged immunity to others present; for example, to Mr. S. C. Hall. But it burned and marked a man I know. Home, entranced, and handling a red-hot coal, passed it to a gentleman of my acquaintance, whose hand still bears the scar of the scorching endured in 1867. Immunity was not *always* secured by experimenters.

I only mention these circumstances because Mr. Crookes has stated that he knows no chemical preparation which would avert the ordinary action of heat. Mr. Clodd (on the authority of Sir B. W. Richardson) has suggested diluted sulphuric acid (so familiar to Klings, Hirpi, Tongans, and Fijians). But Mr. Clodd produced no examples of successful or unsuccessful experiment. The nescience of Mr. Crookes may be taken to cover these valuable properties of diluted sulphuric acid, unless Mr. Clodd succeeds in an experiment which, if made on his own person, I would very willingly witness.

Merely for completeness, I mention Dr. Dozous's statement, that he timed by his watch Bernadette, the seer of Lourdes, while, for fifteen minutes, she, in an ecstatic condition, held her hands in the flame of a candle. He then examined her hands, which were not scorched or in any way affected by the fire. This is called, at Lourdes, the *Miracle du Cierge*.

Here ends my list of examples, in modern and ancient times, of a rite which deserves, though it probably will not receive, the attention of science. The widely diffused religious character of the performance will, perhaps, be admitted as demonstrated. As to the method by which the results are attained, whether by a chemical preparation, or by the influence of a certain mental condition, or by thickness of skin, or whether all the witnesses fable with a singular unanimity (shared by photographic cameras), I am unable even to guess. On May 21, in Bulgaria, a scientific observer might come to a conclusion. At present I think it possible that the Jewish 'Passing through the Fire' may have been a harmless rite.

Conclusion as to Fire-walk

In all these cases, and others as to which I have first-hand evidence, there are decided parallels to the Rite of the Hirpi, and to Biblical and ecclesiastical miracles. The savage examples are *rites*, and appear intended to secure good results in food supplies (Fiji), or general well-being, perhaps by expiation for sins, as in the Attic Thargelia. The Bulgarian rite also aims at propitiating general good luck.

Psychical Research

But how is the Fire-walk done? That remains a mystery, and perhaps no philologist, folk-lorist, anthropologist, or physiologist, has seriously asked the question. The *medicamentum* of Varro, the green frog fat of India, the diluted sulphuric acid of Mr. Clodd, are guesses in the air, and Mr. Clodd has made no experiment. The possibility of plunging the hand, unhurt, in molten metal, is easily accounted for, and is not to the point. In this difficulty Psychical Research registers, and no more, the well-attested performances of D. D. Home (entranced, like the Nistinares); the well observed and timed *Miracle du Cierge* at Lourdes — Bernadette being in an ecstatic condition; the Biblical story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace; the researches of Iamblichus; the case of Madame Shchapoff, carefully reported, and other examples. There is no harm in collecting examples, and the question remains, are all those rites, from those of Virgil's Hirpi to Bulgaria of to-day, based on some actual but obscure and scientifically neglected fact in nature? At all events, for the Soranus-Feronia rite philology only supplies her competing etymologies, folk-lore her modern rural parallels, anthropology her savage examples, psychical research her 'cases' at first-hand. Anthropology had neglected the collection of these, perhaps because the Fire-walk is 'impossible.'

THE ORIGIN OF DEATH

Yama

This excursus on ‘The Fire-walk’ has been introduced, as an occasion arose, less because of controversy about a neglected theme than for the purpose of giving something positive in a controversial treatise. For the same reason I take advantage of Mr. Max Müller’s remarks on Yama, ‘the first who died,’ to offer a set of notes on myths of the Origin of Death. Yama, in our author’s opinion, is ‘the setting sun’ (i. 45; ii. 563). Agni (Fire) is ‘the first who was born;’ as the other twin, Yama, he was also the first who died (ii. 568). As ‘the setting sun he was the first instance of death.’ Kuhn and others, judging from a passage in the *Atharva Veda* (xviii. 3, 13), have, however, inferred that Yama ‘was really a human being and the first of mortals.’ He is described in the *Atharva* as ‘the gatherer of men, who died the first of mortals, who went forward the first to that world.’ In the *Atharva* we read of ‘reverence to Yama, to Death, who first approached the precipice, finding out the path for many.’ ‘The myth of Yama is perfectly intelligible, if we trace its roots back to the sun of evening’ (ii. 573). Mr. Max Müller then proposes on this head ‘to consult the traditions of real *Naturvölker’* (savages). The Harvey Islanders speak of dying as ‘following the sun’s track.’ The Maoris talk of ‘going down with the sun’ (ii. 574). No more is said here about savage myths of ‘the first who died.’ I therefore offer some additions to the two instances in which savages use a poetical phrase connecting the sun’s decline with man’s death.

The Origin of Death

Civilised man in a scientific age would never invent a myth to account for ‘God’s great ordinance of death.’ He regards it as a fact, obvious and necessarily universal; but his own children have not attained to his belief in death. The certainty and universality of death do not enter into the thoughts of our little ones.

For in the thought of immortality
Do children play about the flowery meads.

Now, there are still many childlike tribes of men who practically disbelieve in death. To them death is always a surprise and an accident — an unnecessary, irrelevant intrusion on the living world. 'Natural deaths are by many tribes regarded as supernatural,' says Dr. Tylor. These tribes have no conception of death as the inevitable, eventual obstruction and cessation of the powers of the bodily machine; the stopping of the pulses and processes of life by violence or decay or disease. To persons who regard Death thus, *his* intrusion into the world (for Death, of course, is thought to be a person) stands in great need of explanation. That explanation, as usual, is given in myths.

Death, regarded as Unnatural

But before studying these widely different myths, let us first establish the fact that death really is regarded as something non-natural and intrusive. The modern savage readily believes in and accounts in a scientific way for *violent* deaths. The spear or club breaks or crushes a hole in a man, and his soul flies out. But the deaths he disbelieves in are *natural* deaths. These he is obliged to explain as produced by some supernatural cause, generally the action of malevolent spirits impelled by witches. Thus the savage holds that, violence apart and the action of witches apart, man would even now be immortal. 'There are rude races of Australia and South America,' writes Dr. Tylor, 'whose intense belief in witchcraft has led them to declare that if men were never bewitched, and never killed by violence, *they would never die at all*. Like the Australians, the Africans will inquire of their dead "what sorcerer slew them by his wicked arts."' 'The natives,' says Sir George Grey, speaking of the Australians, 'do not believe that there is such a thing as death from natural causes.' On the death of an Australian native from disease, a kind of magical coroner's inquest is held by the conjurers of the tribe, and the direction in which the wizard lives who slew the dead man is ascertained by the movements of worms and insects. The process is described at full length by Mr. Brough Smyth in his *Aborigines of Victoria* (i. 98-102). Turning from Australia to Hindustan, we find that the Puwarrees (according to Heber's narrative) attribute all natural deaths to a supernatural cause — namely, witchcraft. That is, the Puwarrees do not yet believe in the universality and necessity of Death. He is an intruder brought by magic arts into our living world. Again, in his *Ethnology of Bengal* (p, 200), Dalton tells us that the Hos (an aboriginal non-Aryan race) are of the same opinion as the Puwarrees. 'They hold that all disease in men or animals is attributable to one of two causes: the wrath of some evil spirit or the spell of some witch or sorcerer. These superstitions are common to all classes of the population of this province.’ In the New Hebrides disease and death are caused, as Mr. Codrington found, by *tamates*, or ghosts. In New Caledonia, according to Erskine, death is the result of witchcraft practised by members of a hostile tribe, for who would be so wicked as to bewitch his fellow-tribesman? The Andaman Islanders attribute all natural deaths to the supernatural influence of *e rem chaugala*, or to *jurn-win*, two spirits of the jungle and the sea. The death is avenged by the nearest relation of the deceased, who shoots arrows at the invisible enemy. The negroes of Central Africa entertain precisely similar ideas about the non-naturalness of death. Mr. Duff Macdonald, in *Africana*, writes: ‘Every man who dies what we call a natural death is really killed by witches.’ It is a far cry from the Blantyre Mission in Africa to the Eskimo of the frozen North; but so uniform is human nature in the lower races that the Eskimo precisely agree, as far as theories of death go, with the Africans, the aborigines of India, the Andaman Islanders, the Australians, and the rest. Dr. Rink found that ‘sickness or death coming about in an accidental manner was always attributed to witchcraft, and it remains a question whether death on the whole was not originally accounted for as resulting from magic.’ Père Paul le Jeune, writing from Quebec in 1637, says of the Red Men: ‘Je n’en voy mourir quasi aucun, qui ne pense estre ensorcelé.’ It is needless to show how these ideas survived into civilisation. Bishop Jewell, denouncing witches before Queen Elizabeth, was, so far, mentally on a level with the Eskimo and the Australian. The familiar and voluminous records of trials for witchcraft, whether at Salem or at Edinburgh, prove that all abnormal and unwonted deaths and diseases, in animals or in men, were explained by our ancestors as the results of supernatural mischief.

It has been made plain (and the proof might be enlarged to any extent) that the savage does not regard death as ‘God’s great ordinance,’ universal and inevitable and natural. But, being curious and inquisitive, he cannot help asking himself, ‘How did this terrible invader first enter a world where he now appears so often?’ This is, properly speaking, a scientific question; but the savage answers it, not by collecting facts and generalising from them, but by inventing a myth. That is his invariable habit. Does he want to know why this tree has red berries, why that animal has brown stripes, why this bird utters its peculiar cry, where fire came from, why a constellation is grouped in one way or another, why his race of men differs from the whites — in all these, and in all other intellectual perplexities, the savage invents a story to solve the problem. Stories about the Origin of Death are, therefore, among the commonest fruits of the savage imagination. As those legends have been produced to meet the same want by persons in a very similar mental condition, it inevitably follows that they all resemble each other with considerable closeness. We need not conclude that all the myths we are about to examine came from a single original source, or were handed about — with flint arrow-heads, seeds, shells, beads, and weapons — in the course of savage commerce. Borrowing of this sort may — or, rather, must — explain many difficulties as to the diffusion of some myths. But the myths with which we are concerned now, the myths of the Origin of Death, might easily have been separately developed by simple and ignorant men seeking to discover an answer to the same problem.

Why Men are Mortal

The myths of the Origin of Death fall into a few categories. In many legends of the lower races men are said to have become subject to mortality because they infringed some mystic prohibition or *taboo* of the sort which is common among untutored peoples. The apparently untrammelled Polynesian, or Australian, or African, is really the slave of countless traditions, which forbid him to eat this object or to touch that, or to speak to such and such a person, or to utter this or that word. Races in this curious state of ceremonial subjection often account for death as the punishment imposed for breaking some *taboo*. In other cases, death is said to have been caused by a sin of omission, not of commission. People who have a complicated and minute ritual (like so many of the lower races) persuade themselves that Death burst on the world when some passage of the ritual was first omitted, or when some custom was first infringed. Yet again, Death is fabled to have first claimed us for his victims in consequence of the erroneous delivery of a favourable message from some powerful supernatural being, or because of the failure of some enterprise which would have resulted in the overthrow of Death, or by virtue of a pact or covenant between Death and the gods. Thus it will be seen that death is often (though by no means invariably) the penalty of infringing a command, or of indulging in a culpable curiosity. But there are cases, as we shall see, in which death, as a tolerably general law, follows on a mere accident. Some one is accidentally killed, and this ‘gives Death a lead’ (as they say in the hunting-field) over the fence which had hitherto severed him from the world of living men. It is to be observed in this connection that the first of men who died is usually regarded as the discoverer of a hitherto ‘unknown country,’ the land beyond the grave, to which all future men must follow him. Bin dir Woor, among the Australians, was the first man who suffered death, and he (like Yama in the Vedic myth) became the Columbus of the new world of the dead.

Savage Death-Myths

Let us now examine in detail a few of the savage stories of the Origin of Death. That told by the Australians may be regarded with suspicion, as a refraction from a careless hearing of the narrative in Genesis. The legend printed by Mr. Brough Smyth was told to Mr. Bulwer by 'a black fellow far from sharp,' and this black fellow may conceivably have distorted what his tribe had heard from a missionary. This sort of refraction is not uncommon, and we must always guard ourselves against being deceived by a savage corruption of a Biblical narrative. Here is the myth, such as it is:— 'The first created man and woman were told' (by whom we do not learn) 'not to go near a certain tree in which a bat lived. The bat was not to be disturbed. One day, however, the woman was gathering firewood, and she went near the tree. The bat flew away, and after that came Death.' More evidently genuine is the following legend of how Death 'got a lead' into the Australian world. 'The child of the first man was wounded. If his parents could heal him, Death would never enter the world. They failed. Death came.' The wound in this legend was inflicted by a supernatural being. Here Death acts on the principle *ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte,* and the *premier pas* was made easy for him. We may continue to examine the stories which account for death as the result of breaking a *taboo*. The Ningphos of Bengal say they were originally immortal. They were forbidden to bathe in a certain pool of water. Some one, greatly daring, bathed, and ever since Ningphos have been subject to death. The infringement, not of a *taboo*, but of a custom, caused death in one of the many Melanesian myths on this subject. Men and women had been practically deathless because they cast their old skins at certain intervals; but a grandmother had a favourite grandchild who failed to recognise her when she appeared as a young woman in her new skin. With fatal good-nature the grandmother put on her old skin again, and instantly men lost the art of skin-shifting, and Death finally seized them.

The Greek Myth

The Greek myth of the Origin of Death is the most important of those which turn on the breaking of a prohibition. The story has unfortunately become greatly confused in the various poetical forms which have reached us. As far as can be ascertained, death was regarded in one early Greek myth as the punishment of indulgence in forbidden curiosity. Men appear to have been free from death before the quarrel between Zeus and Prometheus. In consequence of this quarrel Hephæstus fashioned a woman out of earth and water, and gave her to Epimetheus, the brother of the Titan. Prometheus had forbidden his brother to accept any gift from the gods, but the bride was welcomed nevertheless. She brought her tabooed coffer: this was opened; and men — who, according to Hesiod, had hitherto lived exempt from ‘maladies that bring down Fate’ — were overwhelmed with the ‘diseases that stalk abroad by night and day.’ Now, in Hesiod (*Works and Days*, 70-100) there is nothing said about unholy curiosity. Pandora simply opened her casket and scattered its fatal contents. But Philodemus assures us that, according to a variant of the myth, it was Epimetheus who opened the forbidden coffer, whence came Death.

Leaving the myths which turn on the breaking of a *taboo*, and reserving for consideration the New Zealand story, in which the Origin of Death is the neglect of a ritual process, let us look at some African myths of the Origin of Death. It is to be observed that in these (as in all the myths of the most backward races) many of the characters are not gods, but animals.

The Bushman story lacks the beginning. The mother of the little Hare was lying dead, but we do not know how she came to die. The Moon then struck the little Hare on the lip, cutting it open, and saying, ‘Cry loudly, for your mother will not return, as *I* do, but is quite dead.’ In another version the Moon promises that the old Hare shall return to life, but the little Hare is sceptical, and is hit in the mouth as before. The Hottentot myth makes the Moon send the Hare to men with the message that they will revive as he (the Moon) does. But the Hare ‘loses his memory as he runs’ (to quote the French proverb, which may be based on a form of this very tale), and the messenger brings the tidings that men shall surely die and never revive. The angry Moon then burns a hole in the Hare’s mouth. In yet another Hottentot version the Hare’s failure to deliver the message correctly caused the death of the Moon’s mother (Bleek, *Bushman Folklore*). Compare Sir James Alexander’s *Expedition*, ii. 250, where the Namaquas tell this tale. The Fijians say that the Moon wished men to die and be born again, like herself. The Rat said, ‘No, let them die, like rats;’ and they do.

The Serpent

In this last variant we have death as the result of a failure or transgression. Among the more backward natives of South India (Lewin’s *Wild Races of South India*) the serpent is concerned, in a suspicious way, with the Origin of Death. The following legend might so easily arise from a confused understanding of the Mohammedan or Biblical narrative that it is of little value for our purpose. At the same time, even if it is only an adaptation, it shows the characteristics of the adapting mind: — God had made the world, trees, and reptiles, and then set to work to make man out of clay. A serpent came and devoured the still inanimate clay images while God slept. The serpent still comes and bites us all, and the end is death. If God never slept, there would be no death. The snake carries us off while God is asleep. But the oddest part of this myth remains. Not being able always to keep awake, God made a dog to drive away the snake by barking. And that is why dogs always howl when men are at the point of death. Here we have our own rural superstition about howling dogs twisted into a South Indian myth of the Origin of Death. The introduction of Death by a pure accident recurs in a myth of Central Africa reported by Mr. Duff Macdonald. There was a time when the man blessed by Sancho Panza had not yet 'invented sleep.' A woman it was who came and offered to instruct two men in the still novel art of sleeping. 'She held the nostrils of one, and he never awoke at all,' and since then the art of dying has been facile.

Dualistic Myths

A not unnatural theory of the Origin of Death is illustrated by a myth from Pentecost Island and a Red Indian myth. In the legends of very many races we find the attempt to account for the Origin of Death and Evil by a simple dualistic myth. There were two brothers who made things; one made things well, the other made them ill. In Pentecost Island it was Tagar who made things well, and he appointed that men should die for five days only, and live again. But the malevolent Suque caused men 'to die right out.'   The Red Indian legend of the same character is printed in the *Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (1879-80), . The younger of the Cin-au-av brothers, who were wolves, said, 'When a man dies, send him back in the morning and let all his friends rejoice.' 'Not so,' said the elder; 'the dead shall return no more.' So the younger brother slew the child of the elder, and this was the beginning of death.

Economic Myth

There is another and a very quaint myth of the Origin of Death in Banks Island. At first, in Banks Island, as elsewhere, men were immortal. The economical results were just what might have been expected. Property became concentrated in the hands of the few — that is, of the first generations — while all the younger people were practically paupers. To heal the disastrous social malady, Qat (the maker of things, who was more or less a spider) sent for Mate — that is, Death. Death lived near a volcanic crater of a mountain, where there is now a by-way into Hades — or Panoi, as the Melanesians call it. Death came, and went through the empty forms of a funeral feast for himself. Tangaro the Fool was sent to watch Mate, and to see by what way he returned to Hades, that men might avoid that path in future. Now when Mate fled to his own place, this great fool Tangaro noticed the path, but forgot which it was, and pointed it out to men under the impression that it was the road to the *upper*, not to the *under*, world. Ever since that day men have been constrained to follow Mate's path to Panoi and the dead. Another myth is somewhat different, but, like this one, attributes death to the imbecility of Tangaro the Fool.

Maui and Yama

The New Zealand myth of the Origin of Death is pretty well known, as Dr. Tylor has seen in it the remnants of a solar myth, and has given it a 'solar' explanation. It is an audacious thing to differ from so cautious and learned an anthropologist as Dr. Tylor, but I venture to give my reasons for dissenting in this case from the view of the author of *Primitive Culture* (i. 335). Maui is the great hero of Maori mythology. He was not precisely a god, still less was he one of the early elemental gods, yet we can scarcely regard him as a man. He rather answers to one of the race of Titans, and especially to Prometheus, the son of a Titan. Maui was prematurely born, and his mother thought the child would be no credit to her already numerous and promising family. She therefore (as native women too often did in the South-Sea Islands) tied him up in her long tresses and tossed him out to sea. The gales brought him back to shore: one of his grandparents carried him home, and he became much the most illustrious and successful of his household. So far Maui had the luck which so commonly attends the youngest and least-considered child in folklore and mythology. This feature in his myth may be a result of the very widespread custom of *jüngsten Recht* (Borough English), by which the youngest child is heir at least of the family hearth. Now, unluckily, at the baptism of Maui (for a pagan form of baptism is a Maori ceremony) his father omitted some of the Karakias, or ritual utterances proper to be used on such occasions. This was the fatal original mistake whence came man's liability to death, for hitherto men had been immortal. So far, what is there 'solar' about Maui? Who are the sun's brethren? — and Maui had many. How could the sun catch the sun in a snare, and beat him so as to make him lame? This was one of Maui's feats, for he meant to prevent the sun from running too fast through the sky. Maui brought fire, indeed, from the under-world, as Prometheus stole it from the upper-world; but many men and many beasts do as much as the myths of the world, and it is hard to see how the exploit gives Maui 'a solar character.' Maui invented barbs for hooks, and other appurtenances of early civilisation, with which the sun has no more to do than with patent safety-matches. His last feat was to attempt to secure human immortality for ever. There are various legends on this subject.

Maui Myths

Some say Maui noticed that the sun and moon rose again from their daily death, by virtue of a fountain in Hades (Hine-nui-te-po) where they bathed. Others say he wished to kill Hine-nui-te-po (conceived of as a woman) and to carry off her heart. Whatever the reason, Maui was to be swallowed up in the giant frame of Hades, or Night, and, if he escaped alive, Death would never have power over men. He made the desperate adventure, and would have succeeded but for the folly of one of the birds which accompanied him. This little bird, which sings at sunset, burst out laughing inopportunely, wakened Hine-nui-te-po, and she crushed to death Maui and all hopes of earthly immortality. Had he only come forth alive, men would have been deathless. Now, except that the bird which laughed sings at sunset, what is there 'solar' in all this? *The sun does daily what Maui failed to do*, passes through darkness and death back into light and life. Not only does the sun daily succeed where Maui failed, but it was his observation of this fact which encouraged Maui to risk the adventure. If Maui were the sun, we should all be immortal, for Maui's ordeal is daily achieved by the sun. But Dr. Tylor says: 'It is seldom that solar characteristics are more distinctly marked in the several details of a myth than they are here.' To us the characteristics seem to be precisely the reverse of solar. Throughout the cycle of Maui he is constantly set in direct opposition to the sun, and the very point of the final legend is that what the sun could do Maui could not. Literally the one common point between Maui and the sun is that the little bird, the *tiwakawaka*, which sings at the daily death of day, sang at the eternal death of Maui.

Without pausing to consider the Tongan myth of the Origin of Death, we may go on to investigate the legends of the Aryan races. According to the *Satapatha Brahmana*, Death was made, like the gods and other creatures, by a being named Prajapati. Now of Prajapati, half was mortal, half was immortal. With his mortal half he feared Death, and concealed himself from Death in earth and water. Death said to the gods, 'What hath become of him who created us?' They answered, 'Fearing thee, hath he entered the earth.' The gods and Prajapati now freed themselves from the dominion of Death by celebrating an enormous number of sacrifices. Death was chagrined by their escape from the 'nets and clubs' which he carries in the *Aitareya Brahmana*. 'As you have escaped me, so will men also escape,' he grumbled. The gods appeased him by the promise that, *in the body*, no man henceforth for ever should evade Death. 'Every one who is to become immortal shall do so by first parting with his body.'

Yama

Among the Aryans of India, as we have already seen, Death has a protomartyr, Tama, ‘the first of men who reached the river, spying out a path for many.’ In spying the path Yama corresponds to Tangaro the Fool, in the myth of the Solomon Islands. But Yama is not regarded as a maleficent being, like Tangaro. The *Rig Veda* (x. 14) speaks of him as ‘King Yama, who departed to the mighty streams and sought out a road for many;’ and again, the *Atharva Veda* names him ‘the first of men who died, and the first who departed to the celestial world.’ With him the Blessed Fathers dwell for ever in happiness. Mr. Max Müller, as we said, takes Yama to be ‘a character suggested by the setting sun’ — a claim which is also put forward, as we have seen, for the Maori hero Maui. It is Yama, according to the *Rig Veda*, who sends the birds — a pigeon is one of his messengers (compare the White Bird of the Oxenhams) — as warnings of approaching death. Among the Iranian race, Yima appears to have been the counterpart of the Vedic Yama. He is now King of the Blessed; originally he was the first of men over whom Death won his earliest victory.

Inferences

That Yama is mixed up with the sun, in the *Rig Veda*, seems certain enough. Most phenomena, most gods, shade into each other in the Vedic hymns. But it is plain that the conception of a ‘first man who died’ is as common to many races as it is natural. Death was regarded as unnatural, yet here it is among us. How did it come? By somebody dying first, and establishing a bad precedent. But need that somebody have been originally the sun, as Mr. Max Müller and Dr. Tylor think in the cases of Yama and Maui? This is a point on which we may remain in doubt, for death in itself was certain to challenge inquiry among savage philosophers, and to be explained by a human rather than by a solar myth. Human, too, rather than a result of ‘disease of language’ is, probably, the myth of the Fire-stealer.

The Stealing of Fire

The world-wide myth explaining how man first became possessed of fire — namely, by *stealing* it — might well serve as a touchstone of the philological and anthropological methods. To Mr. Max Müller the interest of the story will certainly consist in discovering connections between Greek and Sanskrit names of fire-gods and of fire bringing heroes. He will not compare the fire-myths of other races all over the world, nor will he even try to explain why — in almost all of these myths we find a thief of fire, a Fire-stealer. This does not seem satisfactory to the anthropologist, whose first curiosity is to know why fire is everywhere said to have been obtained for men by sly theft or 'flat burglary.' Of course it is obvious that a myth found in Australia and America cannot possibly be the result of disease of Aryan languages not spoken in those two continents. The myth of fire-stealing must necessarily have some other origin.

'Fire Totems'

Mr. Max Müller, after a treatise on Agni and other fire-gods, consecrates two pages to 'Fire Totems.' 'If we are assured that there are some dark points left, and that these might be illustrated and rendered more intelligible by what are called fire totems among the Red Indians of North America, let us have as much light as we can get' (ii. 804). Alas! I never heard of fire totems before. Probably some one has been writing about them, somewhere, unless we owe them to Mr. Max Müller's own researches. Of course, he cites no authority for his fire totems. 'The fire totem, we are told, would thus naturally have become the god of the Indians.' 'We are told' — where, and by whom? Not a hint is given on the subject, so we must leave the doctrine of fire totems to its mysterious discoverer. 'If others prefer to call Prometheus a fire totem, no one would object, if only it would help us to a better understanding of Prometheus' (ii. 810). Who are the 'others' who speak of a Greek 'culture-hero' by the impossibly fantastic name of 'a fire totem'?

Prometheus

Mr. Max Müller 'follows Kuhn' in his explanation of Prometheus, the Fire-stealer, but he does not follow him all the way. Kuhn tried to account for the myth that Prometheus *stole* fire, and Mr. Max Müller does not try. Kuhn connects *Prometheus* with the Sanskrit *pramantha*, the stick used in producing fire by drilling a pointed into a flat piece of wood. The Greeks, of course, made Prometheus mean 'foresighted,' *providens*; but let it be granted that the Germans know better. *Pramantha* next is associated with the verb *mathnami*, 'to rub *or* grind;' and that, again, with Greek ¼±½¸±½É, 'to learn.' We too talk of a student as a 'grinder,' by a coincidence. The root *manth* likewise means 'to rob;' and we can see in English how a fire-stick, a 'fire-rubber,' might become a 'fire-robber,' a stealer of fire. A somewhat similar confusion in old Aryan languages converted the fire-stick into a person, the thief of fire, Prometheus; while a Greek misunderstanding gave to Prometheus (*pramantha*, 'fire-stick') the meaning of 'foresighted,' with the word for prudent foresight, ÀÁ¿¼·¸µ¹±. This, roughly stated, is the view of Kuhn. Mr. Max Müller concludes that

Prometheus, the producer of fire, is also the fire-god, a representative of Agni, and necessarily ‘of the inevitable Dawn’— ‘of Agni as the *deus matutinus*, a frequent character of the Vedic Agni, the *Agni aushasa*, or the daybreak’ (ii. 813).

But Mr. Max Müller does not say one word about Prometheus as the Fire-stealer. Now, that he *stole* fire is of the essence of his myth; and this myth of the original procuring of fire by theft occurs all over the world. As Australian and American savages cannot conceivably have derived the myth of fire-stealing from the root *manth* and its double sense of stealing and rubbing, there must be some other explanation. But this fact could not occur to comparative mythologists who did not compare, probably did not even know, similar myths wherever found.

Savage Myths of Fire-stealing

In *La Mythologie* (p-195) I have put together a small collection of savage myths of the theft of fire. Our text is the line of Hesiod (*Theogony*, 566), ‘Prometheus *stole* the far-seen ray of unwearied fire in a hollow stalk of fennel.’ The same stalk is still used in the Greek isles for carrying fire, as it was of old — whence no doubt this feature of the myth. How did Prometheus steal fire? Some say from the altar of Zeus, others that he lit his rod at the sun. The Australians have the same fable; fire was obtained by a black fellow who climbed by a rope to the sun. Again, in Australia fire was the possession of two women alone. A man induced them to turn their backs, and stole fire. A very curious version of the myth occurs in an excellent book by Mrs. Langloh Parker. There was no fire when Rootoolgar, the crane, married Gooner, the kangaroo rat. Rootoolgar, idly rubbing two sticks together, discovered the art of fire-making. ‘This we will keep secret,’ they said, ‘from all the tribes.’ A fire-stick they carried about in their *comebee*. The tribes of the Bush discovered the secret, and the fire-stick was stolen by Reeargar, the hawk. We shall be told, of course, that the hawk is the lightning, or the Dawn. But in this savage Jungle Book all the characters are animals, and Reeargar is no more the Dawn than is the kangaroo rat. In savage myths animals, not men, play the leading *rôles*, and the fire-stealing bird or beast is found among many widely scattered races. In Normandy the wren is the fire-bringer. A bird brings fire in the Andaman Isles. Among the Ahts a fish owned fire; other beasts stole it. The raven hero of the Thlinkeets, Yehl, stole fire. Among the Cahrocs two old women possessed it, and it was stolen by the coyote. Are these theftuous birds and beasts to be explained as Fire-gods? Probably not. Will any philologist aver that in Cahroc, Thlinkeet. Australian, Andaman, and so forth, the word for ‘rub’ resembled the word for ‘rob,’ and so produced by ‘a disease of language’ the myth of the Fire-stealer?

Origin of the Myth of Fire-stealing

The myth arose from the nature of savage ideas, not from unconscious puns. Even in a race so civilised as the Homeric Greeks, to make fire was no easy task. Homer speaks of a man, in a lonely upland hut, who carefully keeps the embers alive, that he may not have to go far afield in search of the seed of fire. Obviously he had no ready means of striking a light. Suppose, then, that an early savage loses his seed of fire. His nearest neighbours, far enough off, may be hostile. If he wants fire, as they will not give it, he must *steal* it, just as he must steal a wife. People in this condition would readily believe, like the Australian blacks, that the original discoverers or possessors of a secret so valuable as fire would not give it away, that others who wanted it would be obliged to get it by theft. In Greece, in a civilised race, this very natural old idea survives, though fire is not the possession of a crane, or of an old woman, but of the gods, and is stolen, not by a hawk or a coyote, but by Prometheus, the culture-hero and demiurge. Whether his name ‘Foresighted’ is a mistaken folk-etymology from the root *manth*, or not, we have, in the ancient inevitable idea, that the original patentees of fire would not willingly part with their treasure, the obvious origin of the myth of the Fire-stealer. And this theory does not leave the analogous savage myths of fire-stealing unexplained and out in the cold, as does the philological hypothesis. In this last instance, as in others, the origin of a world-wide myth is found, not in a ‘disease of language,’ but in a form of thought still natural. If a foreign power wants what answers among us to the exclusive possession of fire, or wants the secret of its rival’s new explosive, it has to *steal* it.

CONCLUSION

Here ends this ‘Gentle and Joyous Passage of Arms.’ I showed, first, why anthropological students of mythology, finding the philological school occupying the ground, were obliged in England to challenge Mr. Max Müller. I then discoursed of some inconveniences attending his method in controversy. Next, I gave a practical example, the affair of Tuna and Daphne. This led to a comparison of the philological and the anthropological ways of treating the Daphne myth. The question of our allies then coming up, I stated my reasons for regarding Prof. Tiele ‘rather as an ally than an adversary,’ the reason being his own statement. Presently, I replied to Prof. Tiele’s criticism of my treatment of the myth of Cronos. After a skirmish on Italian fields, I gave my reasons for disagreeing with Mr. Max Müller’s view of Mannhardt’s position. His theory of Demeter Erinnys was contrasted with that of Mr. Max Müller. Totemism occupied us next, and the views of Mr. Max Müller and Mr. J. G. Frazer were criticised. Then I defended anthropological and criticised philological evidence. Our method of universal comparison was next justified in the matter of Fetishism. The Riddle Theory of Mr. Max Müller was presently discussed. Then followed a review of our contending methods in the explanation of Artemis, of the Fire-walk, of Death Myths, and of the Fire-stealer. Thus a number of points in mythological interpretation have been tested on typical examples.

Much more might be said on a book of nearly 900 pages. Many points might be taken, much praise (were mine worth anything) might be given; but I have had but one object, to defend the method of anthropology from a running or dropping fire of criticism which breaks out in many points all along the line, through *Contributions to the Science of Mythology*. If my answer be desultory and wandering, remember the sporadic sharpshooting of the adversary! For adversary we must consider Mr. Max Müller, so long as we use different theories to different results. If I am right, if he is wrong, in our attempts to untie this old Gordian knot, he loses little indeed. That fame of his, the most steady and brilliant light of all which crown the brows of contemporary scholars, is the well-earned reward, not of mythological lore nor of cunning fence in controversy, but of wide learning and exquisitely luminous style.

I trust that I have imputed no unfairness, made no charge of conscious misrepresentation (to accidents of exposition we are all liable), have struck no foul blow, hazarded no discourteous phrase. If I have done so, I am thereby, even more than in my smattering of unscholarly learning, an opponent more absolutely unworthy of the Right Hon. Professor than I would fain believe myself.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: The Fire-walk in Spain

One study occasionally illustrates another. In examining the history of the Earl Marischal, who was exiled after the rising of 1715, I found, in a letter of a correspondent of d'Alembert, that the Earl met a form of the fire-walk in Spain. There then existed in the Peninsula a hereditary class of men who, by dint of 'charms' permitted by the Inquisition, could enter fire unharmed. The Earl Marischal said that he would believe in their powers if he were allowed first to light the fire, and then to look on. But the fire-walkers would not gratify him, as not knowing what kind of fire a heretic might kindle.

APPENDIX B: Mr. Macdonell on Vedic Mythology

Too late for use here came *Vedic Mythology,* from *Grundriss der indo-arischen Philologie,* by Mr. A. Macdonell, the representative of the historic house of Lochgarry. This even a non-scholar can perceive to be a most careful and learned work. As to philological 'equations' between names of Greek and Vedic gods, Mr. Macdonell writes: 'Dyaus=–µÅÂ is the only one which can be said to be beyond the range of doubt.' As to the connection of Prometheus with Sanskrit Pramantha, he says: ' Á¿¼·¸µÅÂ has every appearance of being a purely Greek formation, while the Indian verb *math*, to twirl, is found compounded only with *nis*, never with *pra*, to express the art of producing fire by friction.' (See above, .) If Mr. Macdonell is right here, the Greek myth of the fire-stealer cannot have arisen from 'a disease of language.' But scholars must be left to reconcile this last typical example of their ceaseless differences in the matter of etymology of names.

THE MAKING OF RELIGION

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TO THE PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS

DEAR PRINCIPAL DONALDSON, I hope you will permit me to lay at the feet of the University of St. Andrews, in acknowledgment of her life-long kindnesses to her old pupil, these chapters on the early History of Religion. They may be taken as representing the Gifford Lectures delivered by me, though in fact they contain very little that was spoken from Lord Gifford's chair. I wish they were more worthy of an Alma Mater which fostered in the past the leaders of forlorn hopes that were destined to triumph; and the friends of lost causes who fought bravely against Fate — Patrick Hamilton, Cargill, and Argyll, Beaton and Montrose, and Dundee.

Believe me Very sincerely yours, ANDREW LANG.

*

PREFACE

‘The only begetter’ of this work is Monsieur Lefébure, author of ‘Les Yeux d’Horus,’ and other studies in Egyptology. He suggested the writing of the book, but is in no way responsible for the opinions expressed.

The author cannot omit the opportunity of thanking Mr. Frederic Myers for his kindness in reading the proof sheets of the earlier chapters and suggesting some corrections of statement. Mr. Myers, however, is probably not in agreement with the author on certain points; for example, in the chapter on ‘Possession.’ As the second part of the book differs considerably from the opinions which have recommended themselves to most anthropological writers on early Religion, the author must say here, as he says later, that no harm can come of trying how facts look from a new point of view, and that he certainly did not expect them to fall into the shape which he now presents for criticism.

ST. ANDREWS: *April 3, 1898.*

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

The modern Science of the History of Religion has attained conclusions which already possess an air of being firmly established. These conclusions may be briefly stated thus: Man derived the conception of ‘spirit’ or ‘soul’ from his reflections on the phenomena of sleep, dreams, death, shadow, and from the experiences of trance and hallucination. Worshipping first the departed souls of his kindred, man later extended the doctrine of spiritual beings in many directions. Ghosts, or other spiritual existences fashioned on the same lines, prospered till they became gods. Finally, as the result of a variety of processes, one of these gods became supreme, and, at last, was regarded as the one only God. Meanwhile man retained his belief in the existence of his own soul, surviving after the death of the body, and so reached the conception of immortality. Thus the ideas of God and of the soul are the result of early fallacious reasonings about misunderstood experiences.

It may seem almost wanton to suggest the desirableness of revising a system at once so simple, so logical, and apparently so well bottomed on facts. But there can never be any real harm in studying masses of evidence from fresh points of view. At worst, the failure of adverse criticism must help to establish the doctrines assailed. Now, as we shall show, there are two points of view from which the evidence as to religion in its early stages has not been steadily contemplated. Therefore we intend to ask, first, what, if anything, can be ascertained as to the nature of the ‘visions’ and hallucinations which, according to Mr. Tylor in his celebrated work ‘Primitive Culture,’ lent their aid to the formation of the idea of ‘spirit.’ Secondly, we shall collect and compare the accounts which we possess of the High Gods and creative beings worshipped or believed in, by the most backward races. We shall then ask whether these relatively Supreme Beings, so conceived of by men in very rudimentary social conditions, can be, as anthropology declares, mere developments from the belief in ghosts of the dead.

We shall end by venturing to suggest that the savage theory of the soul may be based, at least in part, on experiences which cannot, at present, be made to fit into any purely materialistic system of the universe. We shall also bring evidence tending to prove that the idea of God, in its earliest known shape, need not logically be derived from the idea of spirit, however that idea itself may have been attained or evolved. The conception of God, then, need not be evolved out of reflections on dreams and ‘ghosts.’

If these two positions can be defended with any success, it is obvious that the whole theory of the Science of Religion will need to be reconsidered. But it is no less evident that our two positions do not depend on each other. The first may be regarded as fantastic, or improbable, or may be ‘masked’ and left on one side. But the strength of the second position, derived from evidence of a different character, will not, therefore, be in any way impaired. Our first position can only be argued for by dint of evidence highly unpopular in character, and, as a general rule, condemned by modern science. The evidence is obtained by what is, at all events, a legitimate anthropological proceeding. We may follow Mr. Tylor’s example, and collect savage *beliefs* about visions, hallucinations, ‘clairvoyance,’ and the acquisition of knowledge apparently not attainable through the normal channels of sense. We may then compare these savage beliefs with attested records of similar *experiences* among living and educated civilised men. Even if we attain to no conclusion, or a negative conclusion, as to the actuality and supernormal character of the alleged experiences, still to compare data of savage and civilised psychology, or even of savage and civilised illusions and fables, is decidedly part, though a neglected part, of the function of anthropological science. The results, whether they do or do not strengthen our first position, must be curious and instructive, if only as a chapter in the history of human error. That chapter, too, is concerned with no mean topic, but with what we may call the X region of our nature. Out of that region, out of miracle, prophecy, vision, have certainly come forth the great religions, Christianity and Islam; and the great religious innovators and leaders, our Lord Himself, St. Francis, John Knox, Jeanne d’Arc, down to the founder of the new faith of the Sioux and Arapahoe. It cannot, then, be unscientific to compare the barbaric with the civilised beliefs and experiences about a region so dimly understood, and so fertile in potent influences. Here the topic will be examined rather by the method of anthropology than of psychology. We may conceivably have something to learn (as has been the case before) from the rough observations and hasty inferences of the most backward races.

We may illustrate this by an anecdote:

‘The Northern Indians call the *Aurora Borealis* “Edthin,” that is “Deer.” Their ideas in this respect are founded on a principle one would not imagine. Experience has shown them that when a hairy deer-skin is briskly stroked with the hand on a dark night, it will emit many sparks of electrical fire.’

So says Hearne in his ‘Journey,’ published in 1795 ().

This observation of the Red Men is a kind of parable representing a part of the purport of the following treatise. The Indians, making a hasty inference from a trivial phenomenon, arrived unawares at a probably correct conclusion, long unknown to civilised science. They connected the Aurora Borealis with electricity, supposing that multitudes of deer in the sky rubbed the sparks out of each other! Meanwhile, even in the last century, a puzzled populace spoke of the phenomenon as ‘Lord Derwentwater’s Lights.’ The cosmic pomp and splendour shone to welcome the loyal Derwentwater into heaven, when he had given his life for his exiled king.

Now, my purpose in the earlier portion of this essay is to suggest that certain phenomena of human nature, apparently as trivial as the sparks rubbed out of a deer’s hide in a dark night, may indicate, and may be allied to a force or forces, which, like the Aurora Borealis, may shine from one end of the heavens to the other, strangely illumining the darkness of our destiny. Such phenomena science has ignored, as it so long ignored the sparks from the stroked deer-skin, and the attractive power of rubbed amber. These trivial things were not known to be allied to the lightning, or to indicate a force which man could tame and use. But just as the Indians, by a rapid careless inference, attributed the Aurora Borealis to electric influences, so (as anthropology assures us) savages everywhere have inferred the existence of soul or spirit, intelligence that

’Does not know the bond of Time,
Nor wear the manacles of Space,’

in part from certain apparently trivial phenomena of human faculty. These phenomena, as Mr. Tylor says, ‘the great intellectual movement of the last two centuries has simply thrown aside as worthless.’ I refer to alleged experiences, merely odd, sporadic, and, for commercial purposes, useless, such as the transference of thought from one mind to another by no known channel of sense, the occurrence of hallucinations which, *prima facie*, correspond coincidentally with unknown events at a distance, all that is called ‘second sight,’ or ‘clairvoyance,’ and other things even more obscure. Reasoning on these real or alleged phenomena, and on other quite normal and accepted facts of dream, shadow, sleep, trance, and death, savages have inferred the existence of spirit or soul, exactly as the Indians arrived at the notion of electricity (not so called by them, of course) as the cause of the Aurora Borealis. But, just as the Indians thought that the cosmic lights were caused by the rubbing together of crowded deer in the heavens (a theory quite childishly absurd), so the savage has expressed, in rude fantastic ways, his conclusion as to the existence of spirit. He believes in wandering separable souls of men, surviving death, and he has peopled with his dreams the whole inanimate universe.

My suggestion is that, in spite of his fantasies, the savage had possibly drawn from his premises an inference not wholly, or not demonstrably erroneous. As the sparks of the deer-skin indicated electricity, so the strange lights in the night of human nature may indicate faculties which science, till of late and in a few instances, has laughed at, ignored, 'thrown aside as worthless.'

It should be observed that I am not speaking of 'spiritualism,' a word of the worst associations, inextricably entangled with fraud, bad logic, and the blindest credulity. Some of the phenomena alluded to have, however, been claimed as their own province by 'spiritists,' and need to be rescued from them. Mr. Tylor writes:

'The issue raised by the comparison of savage, barbaric, and civilised spiritualism is this: Do the Red Indian medicine-man, the Tatar necromancer, the Highland ghost-seer, and the Boston medium, share the possession of belief and knowledge of the highest truth and import, which, nevertheless, the great intellectual movement of the last two centuries has simply thrown aside as worthless?'

Distinguo! That does not seem to me to be the issue. In my opinion the issue is: 'Have the Red Indian, the Tatar, the Highland seer, and the Boston medium (the least reputable of the menagerie) observed, and reasoned wildly from, and counterfeited, and darkened with imposture, certain genuine by-products of human faculty, which do not *prima facie* deserve to be thrown aside?'

That, I venture to think, is the real issue. That science may toss aside as worthless some valuable observations of savages is now universally admitted by people who know the facts. Among these observations is the whole topic of Hypnotism, with the use of suggestion for healing purposes, and the phenomena, no longer denied, of 'alternating personalities.' For the truth of this statement we may appeal to one of the greatest of Continental anthropologists, Adolf Bastian. The missionaries, like Livingstone, usually supposed that the savage seer's declared ignorance — after his so-called fit of inspiration — of what occurred in that state, was an imposture. But nobody now doubts the similar oblivion of what has passed that sometimes follows the analogous hypnotic sleep. Of a remarkable cure, which the school of the Salpêtrière or Nancy would ascribe, with probable justice, to 'suggestion,' a savage example will be given later.

Savage hypnotism and 'suggestion,' among the Sioux and Arapahoe, has been thought worthy of a whole volume in the Reports of the Ethnological Bureau of the Smithsonian Institute (Washington, U.S., 1892-98). Republican Governments publish scientific matter 'regardless of expense,' and the essential points might have been put more shortly. They illustrate the fact that only certain persons can hypnotise others, and throw light on some peculiarities of *rapport.*

In brief, savages anticipated us in the modern science of experimental psychology, as is frankly acknowledged by the Society for Experimental Psychology of Berlin. ‘That many mystical phenomena are much more common and prominent among savages than among ourselves is familiar to everyone acquainted with the subject. The *ethnological* side of our inquiry demands penetrative study.’

That study I am about to try to sketch. My object is to examine some ‘superstitious practices’ and beliefs of savages by aid of the comparative method. I shall compare, as I have already said, the ethnological evidence for savage usages and beliefs analogous to thought-transference, coincidental hallucinations, alternating personality, and so forth, with the best attested modern examples, experimental or spontaneous. This raises the question of our evidence, which is all-important. We proceed to defend it. The savage accounts are on the level of much anthropological evidence; they may, that is, be dismissed by adversaries as ‘travellers’ tales.’ But the best testimony for the truth of the reports as to actual belief in the facts is the undesigned coincidence of evidence from all ages and quarters. When the stories brought by travellers, ancient and modern, learned and unlearned, pious or sceptical, agree in the main, we have all the certainty that anthropology can offer. Again, when we find practically the same strange neglected sparks, not only rumoured of in European popular superstition, but attested in many hundreds of depositions made at first hand by respectable modern witnesses, educated and responsible, we cannot honestly or safely dismiss the coincidence of report as indicating a mere ‘survival’ of savage superstitious belief, and nothing more.

We can no longer do so, it is agreed, in the case of hypnotic phenomena. I hope to make it seem possible that we should not do so in the matter of the hallucinations provoked by gazing in a smooth deep, usually styled ‘crystal-gazing.’ Ethnologically, this practice is at least as old as classical times, and is of practically world-wide distribution. I shall prove its existence in Australia, New Zealand, North America, South America, Asia, Africa, Polynesia, and among the Incas, not to speak of the middle and recent European ages. The universal idea is that such visions may be ‘clairvoyant.’ To take a Polynesian case, ‘resembling the Hawaiian *wai harru*.’ When anyone has been robbed, the priest, after praying, has a hole dug in the floor of the house, and filled with water. Then he gazes into the water, ‘over which the god is supposed to place the spirit of the thief…. The image of the thief was, according to their account, reflected in the water, and being perceived by the priest, he named the individual, or the parties.’ Here the statement about the ‘spirit’ is a mere savage philosophical explanation. But the fact that hallucinatory pictures can really be seen by a fair percentage of educated Europeans, in water, glass balls, and so forth, is now confirmed by frequent experiment, and accepted by opponents, ‘non-mystical writers,’ like Dr. Parish of Munich. I shall bring evidence to suggest that the visions may correctly reflect, as it were, persons and places absolutely unknown to the gazer, and that they may even reveal details unknown to every one present. Such results among savages, or among the superstitious, would be, and are, explained by the theory of ‘spirits.’ Modern science has still to find an explanation consistent with recognised laws of nature, but ‘spirits’ we shall not invoke.

In the same way I mean to examine all or most of the ‘so-called mystical phenomena of savage life.’ I then compare them with the better vouched for modern examples. To return to the question of evidence, I confess that I do not see how the adverse anthropologist, psychologist, or popular agnostic is to evade the following dilemma: To the anthropologist we say, ‘The evidence we adduce is your own evidence, that of books of travel in all lands and countries. If *you* may argue from it, so may we. Some of it is evidence to unusual facts, more of it is evidence to singular beliefs, which we think not necessarily without foundation. As raising a presumption in favour of that opinion, we cite examples in which savage observations of abnormal and once rejected facts, are now admitted by science to have a large residuum of truth, we argue that what is admitted in some cases may come to be admitted in more. No *a priori* line can here be drawn.’

To the psychologist who objects that our modern instances are mere anecdotes, we reply by asking, ‘Dear sir, what are *your* modern instances? What do you know of “Mrs. A.,” whom you still persistently cite as an example of morbid recurrent hallucinations? Name the German servant girl who, in a fever, talked several learned languages, which she had heard her former master, a scholar, declaim! Where did she live? Who vouches for her, who heard her, who understood her? There is, you know, no evidence at all; the anecdote is told by Coleridge: the phenomena are said by him to have been observed “in a Roman Catholic town in Germany, a year or two before my arrival at Göttingen…. Many eminent physiologists and psychologists visited the town.” Why do you not name a few out of the distinguished crowd?’ This anecdote, a rumour of a rumour of a Protestant explanation of a Catholic marvel, was told by Coleridge at least twenty years after the possible date. The psychologists copy it, one after the other, as a flock of sheep jump where their leader has jumped. An example by way of anecdote may be permitted.

According to the current anthropological theory, the idea of soul or spirit was suggested to early men by their experiences in dreams. They seemed, in sleep, to visit remote places; therefore, they argued, something within them was capable of leaving the body and wandering about.

This something was the soul or spirit. Now it is obvious that this opinion of early men would be confirmed if they ever chanced to acquire, in dreams, knowledge of places which they had never visited, and of facts as to which, in their waking state, they could have no information. This experience, indeed, would suggest problems even To Mr. Herbert Spencer, if it occurred to him.

Conversing on this topic with a friend of acknowledged philosophical eminence, I illustrated my meaning by a story of a dream. It was reported to me by the dreamer, with whom I am well acquainted, was of very recent occurrence, and was corroborated by the evidence of another person, to whom the dream was narrated, before its fulfilment was discovered. I am not at liberty to publish the details, for good reasons, but the essence of the matter was this: A. and B. (the dreamer) had common interests. A. had taken certain steps about which B. had only a surmise, and a vague one, that steps had probably been taken. A. then died, and B. in an extremely vivid dream (a thing unfamiliar to him) seemed to read a mass of unknown facts, culminating in two definite results, capable of being stated in figures. These results, by the very nature of the case, could not be known to A., so that, before he was placed out of B.'s reach by death, he could not have stated them to him, and, afterwards, had assuredly no means of doing so.

The dream, two days after its occurrence, and after it had been told to C., proved to be literally correct. Now I am not asking the reader's belief for this anecdote (for that could only be yielded in virtue of knowledge of the veracity of B. and C.), but I invite his attention to the psychological explanation. My friend suggested that A. had told B. all about the affair, that B. had not listened (though his interests were vitally concerned), and that the crowd of curious details, naturally unfamiliar to B., had reposed in his subconscious memory, and had been revived in the dream.

Now B.'s dream was a dream of reading a mass of minute details, including names of places entirely unknown to him. It may be admitted, in accordance with the psychological theory, that B. might have received all this information from A., but, by dint of inattention— 'the malady of not marking' — might never have been *consciously* aware of what he heard. Then B.'s subconscious memory of what he did not *consciously* know might break upon him in his dream. Instances of similar mental phenomena are not uncommon. But the general result of the combined details was one which could not possibly be known to A. before his death; nor to B. could it be known at all. Yet B.'s dream represented this general result with perfect accuracy, which cannot be accounted for by the revival of subconscious memory in sleep. Neither asleep nor awake can a man remember what it is impossible for him to have known. The dream contained no *prediction* for the results were now fixed; but (granting the good faith of the narrator) the dream did contain information not normally accessible.

However, by way of psychological explanation of the dream, my friend cited Coleridge’s legend, as to the German girl and her unconscious knowledge of certain learned languages. ‘And what is the evidence for the truth of Coleridge’s legend?’ Of course, there is none, or none known to all the psychologists who quote it from Coleridge. Neither, if true, was the legend to the point. However, psychology will accept such unauthenticated narratives, and yet will scoff at first baud, duly corroborated testimony from living and honourable people, about recent events.

Only a great force of prejudice can explain this acceptance, by psychologists, of one kind of marvellous tale on no evidence, and this rejection of another class of marvellous tale, when supported by first hand, signed and corroborated evidence, of living witnesses. I see only one escape for psychologists from this dilemma. Their marvellous tales are *possible*, though unvouched for, because they have always heard them and repeated them in lectures, and read and repeated them in books. *Our* marvellous tales are impossible, because the psychologists know that they are impossible, which means that they have not been familiar with them, from youth upwards, in lectures and manuals. But man has no right to have ‘clear ideas of the possible and impossible,’ like Faraday, *a priori*, except in the exact sciences. There are other instances of weak evidence which satisfies psychologists.

Hamilton has an anecdote, borrowed from Monboddo, who got it from Mr. Hans Stanley, who, ‘about twenty-six years ago,’ heard it from the subject of the story, Madame de Laval. ‘I have the memorandum somewhere in my papers,’ says Mr. Stanley, vaguely. Then we have two American anecdotes by Dr. Flint and Mr. Rush; and such is Sir William Hamilton’s equipment of odd facts for discussing the unconscious or subconscious. The least credible and worst attested of these narratives still appears in popular works on psychology. Moreover, all psychology, except experimental psychology, is based on anecdotes which people tell about their own subjective experiences. Mr. Galton, whose original researches are well known, even offered rewards in money for such narratives about visualised rows of coloured figures, and so on.

Clearly the psychologist, then, has no *prima facie* right to object to our anecdotes of experiences, which he regards as purely subjective. As evidence, we only accept them at first hand, and, when possible, the witnesses have been cross-examined personally. Our evidence then, where it consists of travellers’ tales, is on a level with that which satisfies the anthropologist. Where it consists of modern statements of personal experience, our evidence is often infinitely better than much which is accepted by the nonexperimental psychologist. As for the agnostic writer on the Non-Religion of the Future, M. Guyau actually illustrates the Resurrection of our Lord by an American myth about a criminal, of whom a hallucinatory phantasm appeared to each of his gaol companions, separately and successively, on a day after his execution! For this prodigious fable no hint of reference to authority is given. Yet the evidence appears to satisfy M. Guyau, and is used by him to reinforce his argument.

The anthropologist and psychologist, then, must either admit that their evidence is no better than ours, if as good, or must say that they only believe evidence as to 'possible' facts. They thus constitute themselves judges of what is possible, and practically regard themselves as omniscient. Science has had to accept so many things once scoffed at as 'impossible,' that this attitude of hers, as we shall show in chapter ii., ceases to command respect.

My suggestion is that the trivial, rejected, or unheeded phenomena vouched for by the evidence here defended may, not inconceivably, be of considerable importance. But, stating the case at the lowest, if we are only concerned with illusions and fables, it cannot but be curious to note their persistent uniformity in savage and civilised life.

To make the first of our two main positions clear, and in part to justify ourselves in asking any attention for such matters, we now offer an historical sketch of the relations between Science and the so-called 'Miraculous' in the past.

II

SCIENCE AND ‘MIRACLES’

Historical Sketch

Research in the X region is not a new thing under the sun. When Saul disguised himself before his conference with the Witch of Endor, he made an elementary attempt at a scientific test of the supernormal. Croesus, the king, went much further, when he tested the clairvoyance of the oracles of Greece, by sending an embassy to ask what he was doing at a given hour on a given day, and by then doing something very *bizarre*. We do not know how the Delphic oracle found out the right answer, but various easy methods of fraud at once occur to the mind. However, the procedure of Croesus, if he took certain precautions, was relatively scientific. Relatively scientific also was the inquiry of Porphyry, with whose position our own is not unlikely to be compared. Unable, or reluctant, to accept Christianity, Porphyry ‘sought after a sign’ of an element of supernormal truth in Paganism. But he began at the wrong end, namely at Pagan spiritualistic *séances*, with the usual accompaniments of darkness and fraud. His perplexed letter to Anebo, with the reply attributed to Iamblichus, reveal Porphyry wandering puzzled among mediums, floating lights, odd noises, queer dubious ‘physical phenomena.’ He did not begin with accurate experiments as to the existence of rare, and apparently supernormal human faculties, and he seems to have attained no conclusion except that ‘spirits’ are ‘deceitful.’

Something more akin to modern research began about the time of the Reformation, and lasted till about 1680. The fury for burning witches led men of sense, learning, and humanity to ask whether there was any reality in witchcraft, and, generally, in the marvels of popular belief. The inquiries of Thyraeus, Lavaterus, Bodinus, Wierus, Le Loyer, Reginald Scot, and many others, tended on the whole to the negative side as regards the wilder fables about witches, but left the problems of ghosts and haunted houses pretty much where they were before. It may be observed that Lavaterus (circ. 1580) already put forth a form of the hypothesis of telepathy (that ‘ghosts’ are hallucinations produced by the direct action of one mind, or brain, upon another), while Thyraeus doubted whether the noises heard in ‘haunted houses’ were not mere hallucinations of the sense of hearing. But all these early writers, like Cardan, were very careless of first-hand evidence, and, indeed, preferred ghosts vouched for by classical authority, Pliny, Plutarch, or Suetonius. With the Rev. Joseph Glanvil, F.R.S. (circ. 1666), a more careful examination of evidence came into use. Among the marvels of Glanvil’s and other tracts usually published together in his ‘Sadducismus Triumphatus’ will be found letters which show that he and his friends, like Henry More and Boyle, laboured to collect first-hand evidence for second sight, haunted houses, ghosts, and wraiths. The confessed object was to procure a ‘Whip for the Droll,’ a reply to the laughing scepticism of the Restoration. The result was to bring on Glanvil a throng of bores — he was ‘worse haunted than Mr. Mompesson’s house,’ he says-and Mr. Pepys found his arguments ‘not very convincing.’ Mr. Pepys, however, was alarmed by ‘our young gib-cat,’ which he mistook for a ‘spright.’ With Henry More, Baxter, and Glanvil practically died, for the time, the attempt to investigate these topics scientifically, though an impression of doubt was left on the mind of Addison. Witchcraft ceased to win belief, and was abolished, as a crime, in 1736. Some of the Scottish clergy, and John Wesley, clung fondly to the old faith, but Wodrow, and Cotton Mather (about 1710-1730) were singularly careless and unlucky in producing anything like evidence for their narratives. Ghost stories continued to be told, but not to be investigated.

Then one of the most acute of philosophers decided that investigation ought never to be attempted. This scientific attitude towards X phenomena, that of refusing to examine them, and denying them without examination, was fixed by David Hume in his celebrated essay on ‘Miracles.’ Hume derided the observation and study of what he called ‘Miracles,’ in the field of experience, and he looked for an *a priori* argument which would for ever settle the question without examination of facts. In an age of experimental philosophy, which derided *a priori* methods, this was Hume’s great contribution to knowledge. His famous argument, the joy of many an honest breast, is a tissue of fallacies which might be given for exposure to beginners in logic, as an elementary exercise. In announcing his discovery, Hume amusingly displays the self-complacency and the want of humour with which we Scots are commonly charged by our critics:

‘I flatter myself that I have discovered an argument which, if just, will, with the wise and learned, be an everlasting check to all kinds of superstitious delusions, and consequently will be useful as long as the world endures.’

He does not expect, however, to convince the multitude. Till the end of the world, ‘accounts of miracles and prodigies, I suppose, will be found in all histories, sacred and profane.’ Without saying here what he means by a miracle, Hume argues that ‘experience is our only guide in reasoning.’ He then defines a miracle as ‘a violation of the laws of nature.’ By a ‘law of nature’ he means a uniformity, not of all experience, but of each experience as he will deign to admit; while he excludes, without examination, all evidence for experience of the absence of such uniformity. That kind of experience cannot be considered.

‘There must be a uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation.’ If there be any experience in favour of the event, that experience does not count. A miracle is counter to universal experience, no event is counter to universal experience, therefore no event is a miracle. If you produce evidence to what Hume calls a miracle (we shall see examples) he replies that the evidence is not valid, unless its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact. Now no error of human evidence can be more miraculous than a ‘miracle.’ Therefore there can be no valid evidence for ‘miracles.’ Fortunately, Hume now gives an example of what he means by ‘miracles.’ He says: —

‘For, first, there is *not to be found*, in *all history*, any miracle attested by a *sufficient number* of men, of such unquestioned *good sense*, *education*, and *learning*, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves; of such undoubted *integrity*, as to place them beyond all suspicion of any design to deceive others; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to lose in case of their being detected in any falsehood; and at the same time attesting facts performed in such a *public manner*, and in so *celebrated a part of the world*, as to render the detection unavoidable; all which circumstances are requisite to give us a full assurance in the testimony of men.’

Hume added a note at the end of his book, in which he contradicted every assertion which he had made in the passage just cited; indeed, be contradicted himself before he had written six pages.

‘There surely never was a greater number of miracles ascribed to one person than those which were lately said to have been wrought in France upon the tomb of Abbé Paris, the famous Jansenist, with whose sanctity the people were so long deluded. The curing of the sick, giving hearing to the deaf, and sight to the blind, were everywhere talked of as the usual effects of that holy sepulchre. But what is more extraordinary, many of the miracles were *immediately proved upon the spot, before judges of unquestioned integrity*, attested by *witnesses of credit and distinction*, in *a learned age*, and on the most *eminent theatre* that is *now in the world*. Nor is this all. A relation of them was published and dispersed everywhere; nor were the Jesuits, though a learned body, supported by the civil magistrate, and determined enemies to those opinions, in whose favour the miracles were said to have been wrought, ever able *distinctly to refute or detect them*. Where shall we find such a number of circumstances, agreeing to the corroboration of one fact? And what have we to oppose to such a cloud of witnesses, but the absolute *impossibility, or miraculous nature* of the events which they relate? And this, surely, in the eyes of all reasonable people, will alone be regarded as a sufficient refutation.’

Thus Hume, first denies the existence of such evidence, given in such circumstances as he demands, and then he produces an example of that very kind of evidence. Having done this, he abandons (as Mr. Wallace observes) his original assertion that the evidence does not exist, and takes refuge in alleging ‘the absolute impossibility’ of the events which the evidence supports. Thus Hume poses as a perfect judge of the possible, in a kind of omniscience. He takes his stand on the uniformity of all experience that is not hostile to his idea of the possible, and dismisses all testimony to other experience, even when it reaches his standard of evidence. He is remote indeed from Virchow’s position ‘that what we call the laws of nature must vary according to our frequent new experiences.’ In his note, Hume buttresses and confirms his evidence for the Jansenist miracles. They have even a martyr, M. Montgeron, who wrote an account of the events, and, says Hume lightly, ‘is now said to be somewhere in a dungeon on account of his book.’ ‘Many of the miracles of the Abbé Paris were proved immediately by witnesses before the Bishop’s court at Paris, under the eye of Cardinal Noailles….’ ‘His successor was an enemy to the Jansenists, yet twenty-two *curés* of Paris … pressed him to examine these miracles … *But he wisely forbore*.’ Hume adds his testimony to the character of these *curés*. Thus it is wisdom, according to Hume, to dismiss the most public and well-attested ‘miracles’ without examination. This is experimental science of an odd kind.

The phenomena were cases of healing, many of them surprising, of cataleptic rigidity, and of insensibility to pain, among visitors to the tomb of the Abbé Paris (1731). Had the cases been judicially examined (all medical evidence was in their favour), and had they been proved false, the cause of Hume would have profited enormously. A strong presumption would have been raised against the miracles of Christianity. But Hume applauds the wisdom of not giving his own theory this chance of a triumph. The cataleptic seizures were of the sort now familiar to science. These have, therefore, emerged from the miraculous. In fact, the phenomena which occurred at the tomb of the Abbé Paris have emerged almost too far, and now seem in danger of being too readily and too easily accepted. In 1887 MM. Binet and Féré, of the school of the Salpêtrière, published in English a popular manual styled ‘Animal Magnetism.’ These authors write with great caution about such alleged phenomena as the reading, by the hypnotised patient, of the thoughts in the mind of the hypnotiser. But as to the phenomena at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, they say that ‘suggestion explains them.’ That is, in the opinion of MM. Binet and Féré the so-called ‘miracles’ really occurred, and were worked by ‘the imagination,’ by ‘self-suggestion.’

The most famous case — that of *Mlle.* Coirin — has been carefully examined by

Dr. Charcot.

Mlle. Coirin had a dangerous fall from her horse, in September 1716, in her thirty-first year. The medical details may be looked for in Dr. Charcot's essay or in Montgeron. 'Her disease was diagnosed as cancer of the left breast,' the nipple 'fell off bodily.' Amputation of the breast was proposed, but Madame Coirin, believing the disease to be radically incurable, refused her consent. Paralysis of the left side set in (1718), the left leg shrivelling up. On August 9, 1731, *Mlle.* Coirin 'tried the off chance' of a miracle, put on a shift that had touched the tomb of Paris, and used some earth from the grave. On August 11, *Mlle.* Coirin could turn herself in bed; on the 12th the horrible wound 'was staunched, and began to close up and heal.' The paralysed side recovered life and its natural proportions. By September 3, *Mlle.* Coirin could go out for a drive.

All her malady, says Dr. Charcot, paralysis, 'cancer,' and all, was 'hysterical;' 'hysterical oedema,' for which he quotes many French authorities and one American. 'Under the physical influence brought to bear by the application of the shift … the oedema, which was due to vaso-motor trouble, disappeared almost instantaneously. The breast regained its normal size.'

Dr. Charcot generously adds that shrines, like Lourdes, have cured patients in whom he could not 'inspire the operation of the faith cure.' He certainly cannot explain everything which claims to be of supernatural origin in the faith cure. We have to learn the lesson of patience. I am among the first to recognise that Shakespeare's words hold good to-day:

'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.'

If Dr. Charcot had believed in what the French call *suggestion mentale* — suggestion by thought-transference (which I think he did not) — he could have explained the healing of the Centurion's servant, 'Say the word, Lord, and my servant shall be healed,' by suggestion & distance (telepathy), and by premising that the servant's palsy was 'hysterical.' But what do we mean by 'hysterical'? Nobody knows. The 'mind,' somehow, causes gangrenes, if not cancers, paralysis, shrinking of tissues; the mind, somehow, cures them. And what is the 'mind'? As my object is to give savage parallels to modern instances better vouched for. I quote a singular Red Indian cure by 'suggestion.' Hearne, travelling in Canada, in 1770, met a native who had 'dead palsy,' affecting the whole of one side. He was dragged on a sledge, ‘reduced to a mere skeleton,’ and so was placed in the magic lodge. The first step in his cure was the public swallowing by a conjurer of a board of wood, ‘about the size of a barrel-stave,’ twice as wide across as his mouth. Hearne stood beside the man, ‘naked as he was born,’ ‘and, notwithstanding I was all attention, I could not detect the deceit.’ Of course, Hearne believes that this was mere legerdemain, and () mentions a most suspicious circumstance. The account is amusing, and deserves the attention of Mr. Neville Maskelyne. The same conjurer had previously swallowed a cradle! Now bayonet swallowing, which he also did, is possible, though Hearne denies it ().

The real object of these preliminary feats, however performed, is, probably, to inspire *faith,* which Dr. Charcot might have done by swallowing a cradle. The Indians explain that the barrel staves apparently swallowed are merely dematerialised by ‘spirits,’ leaving only the forked end sticking out of the conjurer’s mouth. In fact, Hearne caught the conjurer in the act of making a separate forked end.

Faith being thus inspired, the conjurer, for three entire days, blew, sang, and danced round ‘the poor paralytic, fasting.’ ‘And it is truly wonderful, though the strictest truth, that when the poor man was taken from the conjuring house … he was able to move all the fingers and toes of the side that had been so long dead…. At the end of six weeks he went a-hunting for his family’ (). Hearne kept up his acquaintance, and adds, what is very curious, that he developed almost a secondary personality. ‘Before that dreadful paralytic stroke, he had been distinguished for his good nature and benevolent disposition, was entirely free from every appearance of avarice,… but after this event he was the most fractious, quarrelsome, discontented, and covetous wretch alive’ ().

Dr. Charcot, if he had been acquainted with this case, would probably have said that it ‘is of the nature of those which Professor Russell Reynolds has classified under the head of “paralysis dependent on idea.”’ Unluckily, Hearne does not tell us how his hunter, an untutored Indian, became ‘paralysed by idea.’

Dr. Charcot adds: ‘In every case, science is a foe to systematic negation, which the morrow may cause to melt away in the light of its new triumphs.’ The present ‘new triumph’ is a mere coincidence with the dicta of our Lord, ‘Thy faith hath made thee whole…. I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.’ There are cures, as there are maladies, caused ‘by idea.’ So, in fact, we had always understood. But the point is that science, wherever it agrees with David Hume, is not a foe, but a friend to ‘systematic negation.’

A parallel case of a ‘miracle,’ the stigmata of St. Francis, was, of course, regarded by science as a fable or a fraud. But, now that blisters and other lesions can be produced by suggestion, the fable has become a probable fact, and, therefore, not a miracle at all. Mr. James remarks: ‘As so often happens, a fact is denied till a welcome interpretation comes with it. Then it is admitted readily enough, and evidence quite insufficient to back a claim, so long as the Church had an interest in making it, proves to be quite sufficient for modern scientific enlightenment the moment it appears that a reputed saint can thereby be claimed as a case of “hystero-epilepsy.”’

But the Church continues to have an interest in the matter. As the class of facts which Hume declined to examine begins to be gradually admitted by science, the thing becomes clear. The evidence which could safely convey these now admittedly possible facts, say from the time of Christ, is so far proved to be not necessarily mythical — proved to be not incapable of carrying statements probably correct, which once seemed absolutely false. If so, where, precisely, ends its power of carrying facts? Thus considered, the kinds of marvellous events recorded in the Gospels, for example, are no longer to be dismissed on *a priori* grounds as ‘mythical.’ We cannot now discard evidence as necessarily false because it clashes with our present ideas of the possible, when we have to acknowledge that the very same evidence may safely convey to us facts which clashed with our fathers’ notions of what is possible, but which are now accepted. Our notions of the possible cease to be a criterion of truth or falsehood, and our contempt for the Gospels as myths must slowly die, as ‘miracle’ after ‘miracle’ is brought within the realm of acknowledged law. With each such admission the hypothesis that the Gospel evidence is mythical must grow weaker, and weaker must grow the negative certainty of popular science.

The occurrences which took place at and near the tomb of Paris were attested, as Hume truly avers, by a great body of excellent evidence. But the wisdom which declined to make a judicial examination has deprived us of the best kind of record. Analogous if not exactly similar events now confessedly take place, and are no longer looked upon as miraculous. But as long as they were held to be miraculous, not to examine the evidence, said Hume, was the policy of ‘all reasonable people.’ The result was to deprive Science of the best sort of record of facts which she welcomes as soon as she thinks she can explain them. Examples of the folly of *a priori* negation are common. The British Association refused to hear the essay which Braid, the inventor of the word ‘hypnotism,’ had written upon the subject. Braid, Elliotson, and other English inquirers of the mid-century, were subjected to such persecutions as official science could inflict. We read of M. Deslon, a disciple of Mesmer, about 1783, that he was ‘condemned by the Faculty of Medicine, without any examination of the facts.’ The Inquisition proceeded more fairly than these scientific obscurantists.

Another curious example may be cited. M. Guyau, in his work ‘The Non-Religion of the Future,’ argues that Religion is doomed. ‘Poetic genius has withdrawn its services,’ witness Tennyson and Browning! ‘Among orthodox Protestant nations miracles do not happen.’ But ‘marvellous facts’ *do* happen. These ‘marvellous facts,’ accepted by M. Guyau, are what Hume called ‘miracles,’ and advised the ‘wise and learned’ to laugh at, without examination. They were not facts, and could not be, he said. Now to M. Guyau’s mind they *are* facts, and therefore are not miracles. He includes ‘mental suggestion taking place even at a distance.’ A man ‘can transmit an almost compulsive command, it appears nowadays, by a simple tension of his will.’ If this be so, if ‘will’ can affect matter from a distance, obviously the relations of will and matter are not what popular science tells us that they are. Again, if this truth is now established, and won from that region which Hume and popular science forbid us to investigate, who knows what other facts may be redeemed from that limbo, or how far they may affect our views of possibilities? The admission of mental action, operative *à distance,* is, of course, personal only to M. Guyau, among friends of the new negative tradition.

We return to Hume. He next argues that the pleasures of wonder make all accounts of ‘miracles’ worthless. He has just given an example of the equivalent pleasures of dogmatic disbelief. Then Religion is a disturbing force; but so, manifestly, is irreligion. ‘The wise and learned are content to deride the absurdity, without informing themselves of the particular facts.’ The wise and learned are applauded for their scientific attitude. Again, miracles destroy each other, for all religions have their miracles, but all religions cannot be true. This argument is no longer of force with people who look on ‘miracles’ as = ‘X phenomena,’ not as divine evidences to the truth of this or that creed. ‘The gazing populace receives, without examination, whatever soothes superstition,’ and Hume’s whole purpose is to make the wise and learned imitate the gazing populace by rejecting alleged facts ‘without examination.’ The populace investigated more than did the wise and learned.

Hume has an alternative definition of a miracle— ‘a miracle is a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent.’ We reply that what Hume calls a ‘miracle’ may result from the operation of some as yet unascertained law of nature (say self-suggestion), and that our business, at present, is to examine such events, not to account for them.

It may fairly be said that Hume is arguing against men who wished to make so-called ‘miracles’ a test of the truth of Jansenism, for example, and that he could not be expected to answer, by anticipation, ideas not current in his day.

But he remains guilty of denouncing the investigation of apparent facts. No attitude can be less scientific than his, or more common among many men of science.

According to the humorous wont of things in this world, the whole question of the marvellous had no sooner been settled for ever by David Hume than it was reopened by Emanuel Swedenborg. Now, Kant was familiar with certain of the works of Hume, whether he had read his ‘Essay on Miracles’ or not. Far from declining to examine the portentous ‘visions’ of Swedenborg, Kant interested himself deeply in the topic. As early as 1758 he wrote his first remarks on the seer, containing some reports of stories or legends about Swedenborg’s ‘clairvoyance.’ In the true spirit of psychical research, Kant wrote a letter to Swedenborg, asking for information at first hand. The seer got the letter, but he never answered it. Kant, however, prints one or two examples of Swedenborg’s successes. Madame Harteville, widow of the Dutch envoy in Stockholm, was dunned by a silversmith for a debt of her late husband’s. She believed that it had been paid, but could not find the receipt. She therefore asked Swedenborg to use his renowned gifts. He promised to see what he could do, and, three days later, arrived at the lady’s house while she was giving a tea, or rather a coffee, party. To the assembled society Swedenborg remarked, ‘in a cold-blooded way, that he had seen her man, and spoken to him.’ The late M. Harteville declared to Swedenborg that he had paid the bill, seven months before his decease: the receipt was in a cupboard upstairs. Madame Harteville replied that the cupboard had been thoroughly searched to no purpose. Swedenborg answered that, as he learned from the ghost, there was a secret drawer behind the side-plank within the cupboard. The drawer contained diplomatic correspondence, and the missing receipt. The whole company then went upstairs, found the secret drawer, and the receipt among the other papers. Kant adds Swedenborg’s clairvoyant vision, from Gothenburg, of a great fire at Stockholm (dated September 1756). Kant pined to see Swedenborg himself, and waited eagerly for his book, ‘Arcana Coelestia.’ At last he obtained this work, at the ransom, ruinous to Kant at that time, of 7£. But he was disappointed with what he read, and in ‘Träume eines Geistersehers,’ made a somewhat sarcastic attempt at a metaphysical theory of apparitions.

’Velut aegri somnia vanae
Finguntur species’

is his motto.

Kant’s real position about all these matters is, I venture to say, almost identical with that of Sir Walter Scott. A Scot himself, by descent, Kant may have heard tales of second-sight and bogles. Like Scott, he dearly loved a ghost-story; like Scott he was canny enough to laugh, publicly, at them and at himself for his interest in them. Yet both would take trouble to inquire. As Kant vainly wrote to Swedenborg and others — as he vainly spent 7£. on ‘Arcana Coelestia,’ so Sir Walter was anxious to go to Egypt to examine the facts of ink-gazing clairvoyance. Kant confesses that each individual ghost-story found him sceptical, whereas the cumulative mass made a considerable impression.

The first seventy pages of the ‘Tribune’ are devoted to a perfectly serious discussion of the metaphysics of ‘Spirits.’ On page 73 he pleasantly remarks, ‘Now we shall understand that all said hitherto is superfluous,’ and he will not reproach the reader who regards seers *not* as citizens of two worlds (Plotinus), but as candidates for Bedlam.

Kant’s irony is peculiarly Scottish. He does not himself know how far he is in earnest, and, to save his self-respect and character for canniness, he ‘jocks wi’ deeficulty.’ He amuses himself with trying how far he can carry speculations on metaphysics (not yet reformed by himself) into the realm of the ghostly. He makes admissions about his own tendency to think that he has an immaterial soul, and that these points are, or may be, or some day will be, scientifically solved. These admissions are eagerly welcomed by Du Prel in his ‘Philosophy of Mysticism;’ but they are only part of Kant’s joke, and how far they are serious, Kant himself does not know. If spiritualists knew their own business, they would translate and publish Kant’s first seventy pages of ‘Träume.’ Something like telepathy, action of spirit, even discarnate, on spirit, is alluded to, but the idea is as old as Lavaterus at least (). Kant has a good deal to say, like Scott in his ‘Demonology,’ on the physics of Hallucination, but it is antiquated matter. He thinks the whole topic of spiritual being only important as bearing on hopes of a future life. As speculation, all is ‘in the air,’ and as in such matters the learned and unlearned are on a level of ignorance, science will not discuss them. He then repeats the Swedenborg stories, and thinks it would be useful to posterity if some one would investigate them while witnesses are alive and memories are fresh.

In fact, Kant asks for psychical research.

As for Swedenborg’s so costly book, Kant laughs at it. There is in it no evidence, only assertion. Kant ends, having pleased nobody, he says, and as ignorant as when he began, by citing *cultivons notre jardin*.

Kant returned to the theme in ‘Anthropologische Didaktik.’ He discusses the unconscious, or sub-conscious, which, till Sir William Hamilton lectured, seems to have been an absolutely unknown topic to British psychologists. ‘So ist das Feld dunkler Vorstellungen das grösste in Menschen.’ He has a chapter on ‘The

Divining Faculty' (p-93). He will not hear of presentiments, and, unlike Hegel, he scouts the Highland second-sight. The 'possessed' of anthropology are epileptic patients. Mystics (Swedenborg) are victims of *Schwärmerei*.

This reference to Swedenborg is remarked upon by Schubert in his preface to the essay of Kant. He points out that 'it is interesting to compare the circumspection, the almost uncertainty of Kant when he had to deliver a judgment on the phenomena described by himself and as to which he had made inquiry , and the very decided opinions he expressed forty years later on Swedenborg and his companions' .

On the whole Kant is interested, but despairing. He wants facts, and no facts are given to him but the book of the Prophet Emanuel. But, as it happened, a new, or a revived, order of facts was just about to solicit scientific attention. Kant had (1766) heard rumours of healing by magnetism, and of the alleged effect of the magnet on the human frame. The subject was in the air, and had already won the attention of Mesmer, about whom Kant had information. It were superfluous to tell again the familiar story of Mesmer's performances at Paris. While Mesmer's theory of 'magnetism' was denounced by contemporary science, the discovery of the hypnotic sleep was made by his pupil, Puységur. This gentleman was persuaded that instances of 'thought-transference' (not through known channels of sense) occurred between the patient and the magnetiser, and he also believed that he had witnessed cases of 'clairvoyance,' 'lucidity,' *vue à distance*, in which the patient apparently beheld places and events remote in space. These things would now be explained by 'unconscious suggestion' in the more sceptical schools of psychological science. The Revolution interrupted scientific study in France to a great degree, but 'somnambulism' (the hypnotic sleep) and 'magnetism' were eagerly examined in Germany. Modern manuals, for some reason, are apt to overlook these German researches and speculations. (Compare Mr. Vincent's 'Elements of Hypnotism,' .) The Schellings were interested; Ritter thought he had detected a new force, 'Siderism.' Mr. Wallace, in his preface to Hegel's 'Philosophie des Geistes,' speaks as if Ritter had made experiments in telepathy. He may have done so, but his 'Siderismus' (Tübingen, 1808) is a Report undertaken for the Academy of Munich, on the doings of an Italian water-finder, or 'dowser.' Ritter gives details of seventy-four experiments in 'dowsing' for water, metals, or coal. He believes in the faculty, but not in 'psychic' explanations, or the Devil. He talks about 'electricity' (p, 190). He describes his precautions to avoid vulgar fraud, but he took no precautions against unconscious thought-transference. He reckoned the faculty 'temperamental' and useful.

Amoretti, at Milan, examined hundreds of cases of the so-called Divining

Rod, and Jung Stilling became an early spiritualist and ‘full-welling fountain head’ of ghost stories.

Probably the most important philosophical result of the early German researches into the hypnotic slumber is to be found in the writings of Hegel. Owing to his peculiar use of a terminology, or scientific language, all his own, it is extremely difficult to make Hegel’s meaning even moderately clear. Perhaps we may partly elucidate it by a similitude of Mr. Frederic Myers. Suppose we compare the ordinary everyday consciousness of each of us to a *spectrum*, whose ends towards each extremity fade out of our view.

Beyond the range of sight there may be imagined a lower or physiological end: for our ordinary consciousness, of course, is unaware of many physiological processes which are eternally going on within us. Digestion, so long as it is healthy, is an obvious example. But hypnotic experiment makes it certain that a patient, in the *hypnotic* condition, can consciously, or at least purposefully, affect physiological processes to which the *ordinary* consciousness is blind — for example, by raising a blister, when it is suggested that a blister must be raised. Again (granting the facts hypothetically and merely for the sake of argument), at the *upper* end of the spectrum, beyond the view of ordinary everyday consciousness, knowledge may be acquired of things which are out of the view of the consciousness of every day. For example (for the sake of argument let us admit it), unknown and remote people and places may be seen and described by clairvoyance, or *vue à distance*.

Now Hegel accepted as genuine the facts which we here adduce merely for the sake of argument, and by way of illustrations. But he did not regard the clairvoyant consciousness (or whatever we call it) which, *ex hypothesi*, is untrammelled by space, or even by time, as occupying what we style the *upper* end of the psychical spectrum. On the contrary, he placed it at the *lower* end. Hegel’s upper end ‘loses itself in light;’ the lower end, *qui voit tant de choses*, as La Fontaine’s shepherd says, is *not* ‘a sublime mental phase, and capable of conveying general truths.’ Time and space do not thwart the consciousness at Hegel’s *lower* end, which springs from ‘the great soul of nature.’ But that lower end, though it may see for Jeanne d’Arc at Valcouleurs a battle at Rouvray, a hundred leagues away, does not communicate any lofty philosophic truths. The phenomena of clairvoyance, in Hegel’s opinion, merely indicate that the ‘material’ is really ‘ideal,’ which, perhaps, is as much as we can ask from them. ‘The somnambulist and clairvoyant see without eyes, and carry their visions directly into regions where the waiting consciousness of orderly intelligence cannot enter’ (Wallace). Hegel admits, however, that ‘in ordinary self-possessed conscious life’ there are traces of the ‘magic tie,’ ‘especially between female friends of delicate nerves,' to whom he adds husband and wife, and members of the same family. He gives (without date or source) a case of a girl in Germany who saw her brother lying dead in a hospital at Valladolid. Her brother was at the time in the hospital, but it was another man in the nest bed who was dead. 'It is thus impossible to make out whether what the clairvoyants really see preponderates over what they deceive themselves in.'

As long as the facts which Hegel accepted are not officially welcomed by science, it may seem superfluous to dispute as to whether they are attained by the lower or the higher stratum of our consciousness. But perhaps the question here at issue may be elucidated by some remarks of Dr. Max Dessoir. Psychology, he says, has proved that in every conception and idea an image or group of images must be present. These mental images are the recrudescence or recurrence of perceptions. We see a tree, or a man, or a dog, and whenever we have before our minds the conception or idea of any of these things the original perception of them returns, though of course more faintly. But in Dr. Dessoir's opinion these revived mental images would reach the height of actual hallucinations (so that the man, dog, or tree would seem visibly present) if other memories and new sensations did not compete with them and check their development.

Suppose, to use *Mlle.* Ferrand's metaphor, a human body, living, but with all its channels of sensation hitherto unopened. Open the sense of sight to receive a flash of green colour, and close it again. Apparently, whenever the mind informing this body had the conception of green (and it could have no other) it would also have an hallucination of green, thus

'Annihilating all that's made,
To a green thought in a green shade.'

Now, in sleep or hypnotic trance the competition of new sensations and other memories is removed or diminished, and therefore the idea of a man, dog, or tree once suggested to the hypnotised patient, does become an actual hallucination. The hypnotised patient sees the absent object which he is told to see, the sleeper sees things not really present.

Our primitive state, before the enormous competition of other memories and new sensations set in, would thus be a state of hallucination. Our normal present condition, in which hallucination is checked by competing memories and new sensations, is a suppression of our original, primitive, natural tendencies. Hallucination represents 'the main trunk of our psychical existence.' In Dr. Dessoir's theory this condition of hallucination is man's original and most primitive condition, but it is not a *higher*, rather a lower state of spiritual activity than the everyday practical unhallucinated consciousness.

This is also the opinion of Hegel, who supposes our primitive mental condition to be capable of descrying objects remote in space and time. Mr. Myers, as we saw, is of the opposite opinion, as to the relative dignity and relative reality of the present everyday self, and the old original fundamental Self. Dr. Dessoir refrains from pronouncing a decided opinion as to whether the original, primitive, hallucinated self within us does ‘preside over powers and actions at a distance,’ such as clairvoyance; but he believes in hypnotisation at a distance. His theory, like Hegel’s, is that of ‘atavism,’ or ‘throwing back’ to some very remote ancestral condition. This will prove of interest later.

Hegel, at all events, believed in the fact of clairvoyance (though deeming it of little practical use); he accepted telepathy (‘the magic tie’); he accepted interchange of sensations between the hypnotiser and the hypnotised; he believed in the divining rod, and, unlike Kant, even in ‘Scottish second-sight.’ ‘The intuitive soul oversteps the conditions of time and space; it beholds things remote, things long past, and things to come.’

The pendulum of thought has swung back a long way from the point whither it was urged by David Hume. Hegel remarks: ‘The facts, it might seem, first of all call for verification. But such verification would be superfluous to those on whose account it was called for, since they facilitate the inquiry for themselves by declaring the narratives, infinitely numerous though they be, and accredited by the education and character of the witnesses, to be mere deception and imposture. Their *a priori* conceptions are so rooted that no testimony can avail against them, and they have even denied what they have seen with their own eyes,’ and reported under their own hands, like Sir David Brewster. Hegel, it will be observed, takes the facts as given, and works them into his general theory of the Sensitive Soul (*fühlende Seele*). He does not try to establish the facts; but to establish, or at least to examine them, is the first business of Psychical Research. Theorising comes later.

The years which have passed between the date of Hegel’s ‘Philosophy of Mind’ and our own time have witnessed the long dispute over the existence, the nature, and the causes of the hypnotic condition, and over the reality and limitations of the phenomena. Thus the Academy of Medicine in Paris appointed a Committee to examine the subject in 1825. The Report on ‘Animal Magnetism,’ as it was then styled, was presented in 1831. The Academy lacked the courage to publish it, for the Report was favourable even to certain of the still disputed phenomena. At that time, in accordance with a survival of the theory of Mesmer, the agent in hypnotic cases was believed to be a kind of efflux of a cosmic fluid from the ‘magnetiser’ to the patient. There was ‘a magnetic connection.’

Though no distinction between mesmerism and hypnotism is taken in popular language, ‘mesmerism’ is a word implying this theory of ‘magnetic’ or other unknown personal influence. ‘Hypnotism,’ as will presently be seen, implies no such theory. The Academy’s Report (1831) attested the development, under ‘magnetism,’ of ‘new faculties,’ such as clairvoyance and intuition, also the production of ‘great changes in the physical economy,’ such as insensibility, and sudden increase of strength. The Report declared it to be ‘demonstrated’ that sleep could be produced ‘without suggestion,’ as we say now, though the term was not then in use. ‘Sleep has been produced in circumstances in which the persons could not see or were ignorant of the means employed to produce it.’

The Academy did its best to suppress this Report, which attests the phenomena that Hegel accepted, phenomena still disputed. Six years later (1837), a Committee reported against the pretensions of a certain Berna, a ‘magnetiser.’ No person acted on both Committees, and this Report was accepted. Later, a number of people tried to read a letter in a box, and failed. ‘This,’ says Mr. Vincent, ‘settled the question with regard to clairvoyance;’ though it might be more logical to say that it settled the pretensions of the competitors on that occasion. The Academy now decided that, because certain persons did not satisfy the expectations raised by their preliminary advertisements, therefore the question of magnetism was definitely closed.

We have often to regret that scientific eminence is not always accompanied by scientific logic. Where science neglects a subject, charlatans and dupes take it up. In England ‘animal magnetism’ had been abandoned to this class of enthusiasts, till Thackeray’s friend, Dr. Elliotson, devoted himself to the topic. He was persecuted as doctors know how to persecute; but in 1841, Braid, of Manchester, discovered that the so-called ‘magnetic sleep’ could be produced without any ‘magnetism,’ He made his patients stare fixedly at an object, and encouraged them to expect to go to sleep. He called his method ‘Hypnotism,’ a term which begs no question. Seeming to cease to be mysterious, hypnotism became all but respectable, and was being used in surgical operations, till it was superseded by chloroform. In England, the study has been, and remains, rather *suspect*, while on The Continent hypnotism is used both for healing purposes and in the inquiries of experimental psychology. Wide differences of opinion still exist, as to the nature of the hypnotic sleep, as to its physiological concomitants, and as to the limits of the faculties exercised in or out of the slumber. It is not even absolutely certain that the exercise of the stranger faculties — for instance, that the production of anaesthesia and rigidity — are the results merely of ‘suggestion’ and expectancy. A hypnotised patient is told that the middle finger of his left hand will become rigid and incapable of sensation. This occurs, and is explained by ‘suggestion,’ though *how* ‘suggestion’ produces the astonishing effect is another problem. The late Mr. Gurney, however, made a number of experiments in which no suggestion was pronounced, nor did the patients know which of their fingers was to become rigid and incapable of pain. The patient’s hands were thrust through a screen; on the other side of which the hypnotist made passes above the finger which was to become rigid. The lookers-on selected the finger, and the insensibility was tested by a strong electric current. The effect was also produced *without* passes, the operator merely pointing at the selected finger, and ‘willing’ the result. If he did not ‘will’ it, nothing occurred, nor did anything occur if he willed without pointing. The proximity of the operator’s hand produced no effect if he did not ‘will,’ nor was his ‘willing’ successful if he did not bring his hand near that of the patient. Other people’s hands, similarly situated, produced no effect.

Experiments in transferring taste, as of salt, sugar, cayenne pepper, from operator to subject, were also successful. Drs. Janet and Gibert also produced sleep in a woman at a distance, by ‘willing’ it, at hours which were selected by a system of drawing lots. These facts, of course, rather point to an element of truth in the old mesmeric hypothesis of some specific influence in the operator. They cannot very well be explained by suggestion and expectancy. But these facts and facts of clairvoyance and thought-transference will be rejected as superstitious delusions by people who have not met them in their own experience. This need not prevent us from examining them, because *all* the facts, including those now universally accepted by Continental and scarcely impeached by British science, have been noisily rejected again and again on Hume’s principles.

The rarer facts, as Mr. Gurney remarks, ‘still go through the hollow form of taking place.’ Here is an example of the mode in which these phenomena are treated by popular science. Mr. Vincent says that ‘clairvoyance and phrenology were Elliotson’s constant stock in trade.’ (Phrenology was also Braid’s stock in trade.) ‘It is a matter of congratulation to have been so soon delivered from what Dr. Lloyd Tuckey has well called “a mass of superincumbent rubbish.”’ Clairvoyance is part of a mass of rubbish, on page 57. On page 67, Mr. Vincent says: ‘There are many interesting questions, such as telepathy, thought-reading, clairvoyance, upon which it would be perhaps rash to give any decided opinion…. All these strange psychical conditions present problems of great interest,’ and are only omitted because ‘they have not a sufficient bearing on the normal states of hypnosis….’ Thus what was ‘rubbish’ in one page ‘presents problems of great interest’ ten pages later, and, after offering a decided opinion that clairvoyance is rubbish, Mr. Vincent thinks it rash to give any decided opinion. It is rather rash to give a decided opinion, and then to say that it is rash to do so.

This brief sketch shows that science is confronted by certain facts, which, in his time, Hume dismissed as incredible miracles, beneath the contempt of the wise and learned. We also see that the stranger and rarer phenomena which Hegel accepted as facts, and interwove with his general philosophy, are still matters of dispute. Admitted by some men of science, they are doubted by others; by others, again, are denied, while most of the journalists and authors of cheap primers, who inspire popular tradition, regard the phenomena as frauds or fables of superstition. But it is plain that these phenomena, like the more ordinary facts of hypnotism, *may* finally be admitted by science. The scientific world laughed, not so long ago, at Ogham inscriptions, meteorites, and at palaeolithic weapons as impostures, or freaks of nature. Now nobody has any doubt on these matters, and clairvoyance, thought-transference, and telepathy may, not inconceivably, be as fortunate in the long run as meteorites, or as the more usual phenomena of hypnotism.

It is only Lord Kelvin who now maintains, or lately maintained, that in hypnotism there is nothing at all but fraud and malobservation. In years to come it may be that only some similar belated voice will cry that in thought-transference there is nothing but malobservation and fraud. At present the serious attention and careful experiment needed for the establishment of the facts are more common among French than among English men of science. When published, these experiments, if they contain any affirmative instances, are denounced as ‘superstitious,’ or criticized after what we must charitably deem to be a very hasty glance, by the guides of popular opinion. Examples of this method will be later quoted. Meanwhile the disputes as to these alleged facts are noticed here, because of their supposed relation to the Origin of Religion.

III

ANTHROPOLOGY AND RELIGION

Among the various forms of science which are reaching and affecting the new popular tradition, we have reckoned Anthropology. Pleasantly enough, Anthropology has herself but recently emerged from that limbo of the unrecognised in which Psychical Research is pining. The British Association used to reject anthropological papers as ‘vain dreams based on travellers’ tales.’ No doubt the British Association would reject a paper on clairvoyance as a vain dream based on old wives’ fables, or on hysterical imposture. Undeniably the study of such themes is hampered by fable and fraud, just as anthropology has to be ceaselessly on its guard against ‘travellers’ tales,’ against European misunderstandings of savage ideas, and against civilised notions and scientific theories unconsciously read into barbaric customs, rites, traditions, and usages. Man, *ondoyant et divers*, is the subject alike of anthropology and of psychical research. Man (especially savage man) cannot be secluded from disturbing influences, and watched, like the materials of a chemical experiment in a laboratory. Nor can man be caught in a ‘primitive’ state: his intellectual beginnings lie very far behind the stage of culture in which we find the lowest known races. Consequently the matter on which anthropology works is fluctuating; the evidence on which it rests needs the most sceptical criticism, and many of its conclusions, in the necessary absence of historical testimony as to times far behind the lowest known savages, must be hypothetical.

For these sound reasons official science long looked askance on Anthropology. Her followers were not regarded as genuine scholars, and, perhaps as a result of this contempt, they were often ‘broken men,’ intellectual outlaws, people of one wild idea. To the scientific mind, anthropologists or ethnologists were a horde who darkly muttered of serpent worship, phallus worship, Arkite doctrines, and the Ten Lost Tribes that kept turning up in the most unexpected places. Anthropologists were said to gloat over dirty rites of dirty savages, and to seek reason where there was none. The exiled, the outcast, the pariah of Science, is, indeed, apt to find himself in odd company. Round the camp-fire of Psychical Research too, in the unofficial, unstaked waste of Science, hover odd, menacing figures of Esoteric Buddhists, *Satanistes*, Occultists, Christian Scientists, Spiritualists, and Astrologers, as the Arkites and Lost Tribesmen haunted the cradle of anthropology.

But there was found at last to be reason in the thing, and method in the madness. Evolution was in it. The acceptance, after long ridicule, of palaeolithic weapons as relics of human culture, probably helped to bring Anthropology within the sacred circle of permitted knowledge. Her topic was full of illustrations of the doctrine of Mr. Darwin. Modern writers on the theme had been anticipated by the less systematic students of the eighteenth century — Goguet, de Brosses, Millar, Fontenelle, Lafitau, Boulanger, or even Hume and Voltaire. As pioneers these writers answer to the early mesmerists and magnetists, Puységur, Amoretti, Ritter, Elliotson, Mayo, Gregory, in the history of Psychical Research. They were on the same track, in each case, as Lubbock, Tylor, Spencer, Bastian, and Frazer, or as Gurney, Richet, Myers, Janet, Dessoir, and Von Schrenck-Notzing. But the earlier students were less careful of method and evidence.

Evidence! that was the stumbling block of anthropology. We still hear, in the later works of Mr. Max Müller, the echo of the old complaints. Anything you please, Mr. Max Müller says, you may find among your useful savages, and (in regard to some anthropologists) his criticism is just. You have but to skim a few books of travel, pencil in hand, and pick out what suits your case. Suppose, as regards our present theme, your theory is that savages possess broken lights of the belief in a Supreme Being. You can find evidence for that. Or suppose you want to show that they have no religious ideas at all; you can find evidence for that also. Your testimony is often derived from observers ignorant of the language of the people whom they talk about, or who are themselves prejudiced by one or other theory or bias. How can you pretend to raise a science on such foundations, especially as the savage informants wish to please or to mystify inquirers, or they answer at random, or deliberately conceal their most sacred institutions, or have never paid any attention to the subject?

To all these perfectly natural objections Mr. Tylor has replied. Evidence must be collected, sifted, tested, as in any other branch of inquiry. A writer, ‘of course, is bound to use his best judgment as to the trustworthiness of all authors he quotes, and, if possible, to obtain several accounts to certify each point in each locality.’ Mr. Tylor then adduces ‘the test of recurrence,’ of undesigned coincidence in testimony, as Millar had already argued in the last century. If a mediaeval Mahommedan in Tartary, a Jesuit in Brazil, a Wesleyan in Fiji, one may add a police magistrate in Australia, a Presbyterian in Central Africa, a trapper in Canada, agree in describing some analogous rite or myth in these diverse lands and ages, we cannot set down the coincidence to chance or fraud. ‘Now, the most important facts of ethnography are vouched for in this way.’

We may add that even when the ideas of savages are obscure, we can often detect them by analysis of the institutions in which they are expressed.

Thus anthropological, like psychical or any other evidence, must be submitted to conscientious processes of testing and sifting. Contradictory instances must be hunted for sedulously. Nothing can be less scientific than to snatch up any traveller’s tale which makes for our theory, and to ignore evidence, perhaps earlier, or later, or better observed, which makes against it. Yet this, unfortunately, in certain instances (which will be adduced) has been the occasional error of Mr. Huxley and Mr. Spencer. Mr. Spencer opens his ‘Ecclesiastical Institutions’ by the remark that ‘the implication is that the religious ideas of civilised men are not innate’ (who says they are?), and this implication Mr. Spencer supports by ‘proofs that among various savages religious ideas do not exist.’ ‘Sir John Lubbock has given many of these.’ But it would be well to advise the reader to consult Roskoff’s confutation of Sir John Lubbock, and Mr. Tylor’s masterly statement. Mr. Spencer cited Sir Samuel Baker for savages without even ‘a ray of superstition’ or a trace of worship. Mr. Tylor, twelve years before Mr. Spencer wrote, had demolished Sir Samuel Baker’s assertion, as regards many tribes, and so shaken it as regards the Latukas, quoted by Mr. Spencer. The godless Dinkas have ‘a good deity and heaven-dwelling creator,’ carefully recorded years before Sir Samuel’s ‘rash denial.’ We show later that Mr. Spencer, relying on a single isolated sentence in Brough Smyth, omits all his essential information about the Australian Supreme Being; while Mr. Huxley — overlooking the copious and conclusive evidence as to their ethical religion — charges the Australians with having merely a non-moral belief in casual spirits. We have also to show that Mr. Huxley, under the dominance of his theory, and inadvertently, quotes a good authority as saying the precise reverse of what he really does say.

If the facts not fitting their theories are little observed by authorities so popular as Mr. Huxley and Mr. Spencer; if *instantiae contradictoriae* are ignored by them, or left vague; if these things are done in the green tree, we may easily imagine what shall be done in the dry. But we need not war with hasty *vulgarisateurs* and headlong theorists.

Enough has been said to show the position of anthropology as regards evidence, and to prove that, if he confines his observations to certain anthropologists, the censures of Mr. Max Müller are justified. It is mainly for this reason that the arguments presently to follow are strung on the thread of Mr. Tylor’s truly learned and accurate book, ‘Primitive Culture.’

Though but recently crept forth, *vix aut ne vix quidem*, from the chill shade of scientific disdain, Anthropology adopts the airs of her elder sisters among the sciences, and is as severe as they to the Cinderella of the family, Psychical Research. She must murmur of her fairies among the cinders of the hearth, while they go forth to the ball, and dance with provincial mayors at the festivities of the British Association. This is ungenerous, and unfortunate, as the records of anthropology are rich in unexamined materials of psychical research. I am unacquainted with any work devoted by an anthropologist of renown to the hypnotic and kindred practices of the lower races, except Herr Bastian’s very meagre tract, ‘Über psychische Beobachtungen bei Naturvölkern.’ We possess, none the less, a mass of scattered information on this topic, the savage side of psychical phenomena, in works of travel, and in Mr. Tylor’s monumental ‘Primitive Culture.’ Mr. Tylor, however, as we shall see, regards it as a matter of indifference, or, at least, as a matter beyond the scope of his essay, to decide whether the parallel supernormal phenomena believed in by savages, and said to recur in civilisation, are facts of actual experience, or not.

Now, this question is not otiose. Mr. Tylor, like other anthropologists, Mr. Huxley, Mr. Herbert Spencer, and their followers and popularisers, constructs on anthropological grounds, a theory of the Origin of Religion.

That origin anthropology explains as the result of early and fallacious reasonings on a number of biological and psychological phenomena, both normal and (as is alleged by savages) supernormal. These reasonings led to the belief in souls and spirits. Now, first, anthropology has taken for granted that the Supreme Deities of savages are envisaged by them as ‘spirits.’ This, paradoxical as the statement may appear, is just what does not seem to be proved, as we shall show. Next, if the supernormal phenomena (clairvoyance, thought-transference, phantasms of the dead, phantasms of the dying, and others) be real matters of experience, the inferences drawn from them by early savage philosophy may be, in some degree, erroneous. But the inferences drawn by materialists who reject the supernormal phenomena will also, perhaps, be, let us say, incomplete. Religion will have been, in part, developed out of facts, perhaps inconsistent with materialism in its present dogmatic form. To put it less trenchantly, and perhaps more accurately, the alleged facts ‘are not merely dramatically strange, they are not merely extraordinary and striking, but they are “odd” in the sense that they will not easily fit in with the views which physicists and men of science generally give us of the universe in which we live’ (Mr. A.J. Balfour, President’s Address, ‘Proceedings,’ S.P.R. vol. x. , 1894).

As this is the case, it might seem to be the business of Anthropology, the Science of Man, to examine, among other things, the evidence for the actual existence of those alleged unusual and supernormal phenomena, belief in which is given as one of the origins of religion.

To make this examination, in the ethnographic field, is almost a new labour. As we shall see, anthropologists have not hitherto investigated such things as the

‘Fire-walk’ of savages, uninjured in the flames, like the Three Holy Children. The world-wide savage practice of divining by hallucinations induced through gazing into a smooth deep (crystal-gazing) has been studied, I think, by no anthropologist. The veracity of ‘messages’ uttered by savage seers when (as they suppose) ‘possessed’ or ‘inspired’ has not been criticised, and probably cannot be, for lack of detailed information. The ‘physical phenomena’ which answer among savages to the use of the ‘divining rod,’ and to ‘spiritist’ marvels in modern times, have only been glanced at. In short, all the savage parallels to the so-called ‘psychical phenomena’ now under discussion in England, America, Germany, Italy, and France, have escaped critical analysis and comparison with their civilised counterparts.

An exception among anthropologists is Mr. Tylor. He has not suppressed the existence of these barbaric parallels to our modern problems of this kind. But his interest in them practically ends when he has shown that the phenomena helped to originate the savage belief in ‘spirits,’ and when he has displayed the ‘survival’ of that belief in later culture. He does not ask ‘Are the phenomena real?’ he is concerned only with the savage philosophy of the phenomena and with its relics in modern spiritism and religion. My purpose is to do, by way only of *ébauche*, what neither anthropology nor psychical research nor psychology has done: to put the savage and modern phenomena side by side. Such evidence as we can give for the actuality of the modern experiences will, so far as it goes, raise a presumption that the savage beliefs, however erroneous, however darkened by fraud and fancy, repose on a basis of real observation of actual phenomena.

Anthropology is concerned with man and what is in man — *humani nihil a se alienum putat*. These researches, therefore, are within the anthropological province, especially as they bear on the prevalent anthropological theory of the Origin of Religion. By ‘religion’ we mean, for the purpose of this argument, the belief in the existence of an Intelligence, or Intelligences not human, and not dependent on a material mechanism of brain and nerves, which may, or may not, powerfully control men’s fortunes and the nature of things. We also mean the additional belief that there is, in man, an element so far kindred to these Intelligences that it can transcend the knowledge obtained through the known bodily senses, and may possibly survive the death of the body. These two beliefs at present (though not necessarily in their origin) appear chiefly as the faith in God and in the Immortality of the Soul.

It is important, then, to trace, if possible, the origin of these two beliefs. If they arose in actual communion with Deity (as the first at least did, in the theory of the Hebrew Scriptures), or if they could be proved to arise in an unanalysable *sensus numinis*, or even in ‘a perception of the Infinite’ (Max Müller), religion would have a divine, or at least a necessary source. To the Theist, what is inevitable cannot but be divinely ordained, therefore religion is divinely preordained, therefore, in essentials, though not in accidental details, religion is true. The atheist, or non-theist, of course draws no such inferences.

But if religion, as now understood among men, be the latest evolutionary form of a series of mistakes, fallacies, and illusions, if its germ be a blunder, and its present form only the result of progressive but unessential refinements on that blunder, the inference that religion is untrue — that nothing actual corresponds to its hypothesis — is very easily drawn. The inference is not, perhaps, logical, for all our science itself is the result of progressive refinements upon hypotheses originally erroneous, fashioned to explain facts misconceived. Yet our science is true, within its limits, though very far from being exhaustive of the truth. In the same way, it might be argued, our religion, even granting that it arose out of primitive fallacies and false hypotheses, may yet have been refined, as science has been, through a multitude of causes, into an approximate truth.

Frequently as I am compelled to differ from Mr. Spencer both as to facts and their interpretation, I am happy to find that he has anticipated me here. Opponents will urge, he says, that ‘if the primitive belief’ (in ghosts) ‘was absolutely false, all derived beliefs from it must be absolutely false?’ Mr. Spencer replies: ‘A germ of truth was contained in the primitive conception — the truth, namely, that the power which manifests itself in consciousness is but a differently conditioned form of the power which manifests itself beyond consciousness.’ In fact, we find Mr. Spencer, like Faust as described by Marguerite, saying much the same thing as the priests, but not quite in the same way. Of course, I allow for a much larger ‘germ of truth’ in the origin of the ghost theory than Mr. Spencer does. But we can both say ‘the ultimate form of the religious consciousness is’ (will be?) ‘the final development of a consciousness which at the outset contained a germ of truth obscured by multitudinous errors.’

’One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.’

Coming at last to Mr. Tylor, we find that he begins by dismissing the idea that any known race of men is devoid of religious conceptions. He disproves, out of their own mouths, the allegations of several writers who have made this exploded assertion about ‘godless tribes.’ He says: ‘The thoughts and principles of modern Christianity are attached to intellectual clues which run back through far pre-Christian ages to the very origin of human civilisation, *perhaps even of human existence*.’ So far we abound in Mr. Tylor’s sense. ‘As a minimum definition of religion’ he gives ‘the belief in spiritual beings,’ which appears ‘among all low races with whom we have attained to thoroughly intimate relations.’ The existence of this belief at present does not prove that no races were ever, at any time, destitute of all belief. But it prevents us from positing the existence of such creedless races, in any age, as a demonstrated fact. We have thus, in short, no opportunity of observing, *historically,* man’s development from blank unbelief into even the minimum or most rudimentary form of belief. We can only theorise and make more or less plausible conjectures as to the first rudiments of human faith in God and in spiritual beings. We find no race whose mind, as to faith, is a *tabula rasa*.

To the earliest faith Mr. Tylor gives the name of *Animism*, a term not wholly free from objection, though ‘Spiritualism’ is still less desirable, having been usurped by a form of modern superstitiousness. This Animism, ‘in its full development, includes the belief in souls and in a future state, in controlling deities and subordinate spirits.’ In Mr. Tylor’s opinion, as in Mr. Huxley’s, Animism, in its lower (and earlier) forms, has scarcely any connection with ethics. Its ‘spirits’ do not ‘make for righteousness.’ This is a side issue to be examined later, but we may provisionally observe, in passing, that the ethical ideas, such as they are, even of Australian blacks are reported to be inculcated at the religious mysteries (*Bora*) of the tribes, which were instituted by and are performed in honour of the gods of their native belief. But this topic must be reserved for our closing chapters.

Mr. Tylor, however, is chiefly concerned with Animism as ‘an ancient and world-wide philosophy, of which belief is the theory, and worship is the practice.’ Given Animism, then, or the belief in spiritual beings, as the earliest form and minimum of religious faith, what is the origin of Animism? It will be seen that, by Animism, Mr. Tylor does not mean the alleged early theory, implicitly if not explicitly and consciously held, that all things whatsoever are animated and are personalities. Judging from the behaviour of little children, and from the myths of savages, early man may have half-consciously extended his own sense of personal and potent and animated existence to the whole of nature as known to him. Not only animals, but vegetables and inorganic objects, may have been looked on by him as persons, like what he felt himself to be. The child (perhaps merely because *taught* to do so) beats the naughty chair, and all objects are persons in early mythology. But this *feeling*, rather than theory, may conceivably have existed among early men, before they developed the hypothesis of ‘spirits,’ ‘ghosts,’ or souls. It is the origin of *that* hypothesis, ‘Animism,’ which Mr. Tylor investigates.

What, then, is the origin of Animism? It arose in the earliest traceable speculations on ‘two groups of biological problems:

(1) ‘What is it that makes the difference between a living body and a dead one; what causes waking, sleep, trance, disease, and death?’

(2) ‘What are those human shapes which appear in dreams and visions?’

Here it should be noted that Mr. Tylor most properly takes a distinction between sleeping ‘dreams’ and waking ‘visions,’ or ‘clear vision.’ The distinction is made even by the blacks of Australia. Thus one of the Kurnai announced that his *Yambo,* or soul, could ‘go out’ during sleep, and see the distant and the dead. But ‘while any one might be able to communicate with the ghosts, *during sleep,* it was only the wizards who were able to do so in waking hours.’ A wizard, in fact, is a person susceptible (or feigning to be susceptible) when awake to hallucinatory perceptions of phantasms of the dead. ‘Among the Kulin of Wimmera River a man became a wizard who, as a boy, had seen his mother’s ghost sitting at her grave.’ These facts prove that a race of savages at the bottom of the scale of culture do take a formal distinction between normal dreams in sleep and waking hallucinations — a thing apt to be denied.

Thus Mr. Herbert Spencer offers the massive generalisation that savages do not possess a language enabling a man to say ‘I dreamed that I saw,’ instead of ‘I saw’ (‘Principles of Sociology,’). This could only be proved by giving examples of such highly deficient languages, which Mr. Spencer does not do. In many savage speculations there occur ideas as subtly metaphysical as those of Hegel. Moreover, even the Australian languages have the verb ‘to see,’ and the substantive ‘sleep.’ Nothing, then, prevents a man from saying ‘I saw in sleep’ (*insomnium,*).

We have shown too, that the Australians take an essential distinction between waking hallucinations (ghosts seen by a man when awake) and the common hallucinations of slumber. Anybody can have these; the man who sees ghosts when awake is marked out for a wizard.

At the same time the vividness of dreams among certain savages, as recorded in Mr. Im Thurn’s ‘Indians of Guiana,’ and the consequent confusion of dreaming and waking experiences, are certain facts. Wilson says the same of some negroes, and Mr. Spencer illustrates from the confusion of mind in dreamy children. They, we know, are much more addicted to somnambulism than grown-up people. I am unaware that spontaneous somnambulism among savages has been studied as it ought to be. I have demonstrated, however, that very low savages can and do draw an essential distinction between sleeping and waking hallucinations.

Again, the crystal-gazer, whose apparently telepathic crystal pictures are discussed later (cha.), was introduced to a crystal just because she had previously been known to be susceptible to waking and occasionally veracious hallucinations.

It was not only on the dreams of sleep, so easily forgotten as they are, that the savage pondered, in his early speculations about the life and the soul. He included in his materials the much more striking and memorable experiences of waking hours, as we and Mr. Tylor agree in holding.

Reflecting on these things, the earliest savage reasoners would decide: (1) that man has a ‘life’ (which leaves him temporarily in sleep, finally in death); (2) that man also possesses a ‘phantom’ (which appears to other people in their visions and dreams). The savage philosopher would then ‘combine his information,’ like a celebrated writer on Chinese metaphysics. He would merely ‘combine the life and the phantom,’ as ‘manifestations of one and the same soul.’ The result would be ‘an apparitional soul,’ or ‘ghost-soul.’

This ghost-soul would be a highly accomplished creature, ‘a vapour, film, or shadow,’ yet conscious, capable of leaving the body, mostly invisible and impalpable, ‘yet also manifesting physical power,’ existing and appearing after the death of the body, able to act on the bodies of other men, beasts, and things.

When the earliest reasoners, in an age and in mental conditions of which we know nothing historically, had evolved the hypothesis of this conscious, powerful, separable soul, capable of surviving the death of the body, it was not difficult for them to develop the rest of Religion, as Mr. Tylor thinks. A powerful ghost of a dead man might thrive till, its original owner being long forgotten, it became a God. Again (souls once given) it would not be a very difficult logical leap, perhaps, to conceive of souls, or spirits, that had never been human at all. It is, we may say, only *le premier pas qui coûte*, the step to the belief in a surviving separable soul. Nevertheless, when we remember that Mr. Tylor is theorising about savages in the dim background of human evolution, savages whom we know nothing of by experience, savages far behind Australians and Bushmen (who possess Gods), we must admit that he credits them with great ingenuity, and strong powers of abstract reasoning. He may be right in his opinion. In the same way, just as primitive men were keen reasoners, so early bees, more clever than modern bees, may have evolved the system of hexagonal cells, and only an early fish of genius could first have hit on the plan, now hereditary of killing a fly by blowing water at it.

To this theory of metaphysical genius in very low savages I have no objection to offer. We shall find, later, astonishing examples of savage abstract speculation, certainly not derived from missionary sources, because wholly out of the missionary's line of duty and reflection.

As early beasts had genius, so the earliest reasoners appear to have been as logically gifted as the lowest savages now known to us, or even as some Biblical critics. By Mr. Tylor's hypothesis, they first conceived the extremely abstract idea of Life, 'that which makes the difference between a living body and a dead one.' This highly abstract conception must have been, however, the more difficult to early man, as, to him, all things, universally, are 'animated.' Mr. Tylor illustrates this theory of early man by the little child's idea that 'chairs, sticks, and wooden horses are actuated by the same sort of personal will as nurses and children and kittens…. In such matters the savage mind well represents the childish stage.'

Now, nothing can be more certain than that, if children think sticks are animated, they don't think so because they have heard, or discovered, that they possess souls, and then transfer souls to sticks. We may doubt, then, if primitive man came, in this way, by reasoning on souls, to suppose that all things, universally, were animated. But if he did think all things animated — a corpse, to his mind, was just as much animated as anything else. Did he reason: 'All things are animated. A corpse is not animated. Therefore a corpse is not a thing (within the meaning of my General Law)'?

How, again, did early man conceive of Life, before he identified Life (1) with 'that which makes the difference between a living body and a dead one' (a difference which, *ex hypothesi*, he did not draw, *all* things being animated to his mind) and (2) with 'those human shapes which appear in dreams and visions'? 'The ancient savage philosophers probably reached the obvious inference that every man had two things belonging to him, a life and a phantom.' But everything was supposed to have 'a life,' as far as one makes out, before the idea of separable soul was developed, at least if savages arrived at the theory of universal animation as children are said to do.

We are dealing here quite conjecturally with facts beyond our experience.

In any case, early man excogitated (by the hypothesis) the abstract idea of Life, *before* he first 'envisaged' it in material terms as 'breath,' or 'shadow.' He next decided that mere breath or shadow was not only identical with the more abstract conception of Life, but could also take on forms as real and full-bodied as, to him, are the hallucinations of dream or waking vision. His reasoning appears to have proceeded from the more abstract (the idea of Life) to the more concrete, to the life first shadowy and vaporous, then clothed in the very aspect of the real man.

Mr. Tylor has thus (whether we follow his logic or not) provided man with a theory of active, intelligent, separable souls, which can survive the death of the body. At this theory early man arrived by speculations on the nature of life, and on the causes of phantasms of the dead or living beheld in ‘dreams and visions.’ But our author by no means leaves out of sight the effects of alleged supernormal phenomena believed in by savages, with their parallels in modern civilisation. These supernormal phenomena, whether real or illusory, are, he conceives, facts in that mass of experiences from which savages constructed their belief in separable, enduring, intelligent souls or ghosts, the foundation of religion.

While we are, perhaps owing to our own want of capacity, puzzled by what seem to be two kinds of early philosophy — (1) a sort of instinctive or unreasoned belief in universal animation, which Mr. Spencer calls ‘Animism’ and does not believe in, (2) the reasoned belief in separable and surviving souls of men (and in things), which Mr. Spencer believes in, and Mr. Tylor calls ‘Animism’ — we must also note another difficulty. Mr. Tylor may seem to be taking it for granted that the earliest, remote, unknown thinkers on life and the soul were existing on the same psychical plane as we ourselves, or, at least, as modern savages. Between modern savages and ourselves, in this regard, he takes certain differences, but takes none between modern savages and the remote founders of religion.

Thus Mr. Tylor observes:

‘The condition of the modern ghost-seer, whose imagination passes on such slight excitement into positive hallucination, is rather the rule than the exception among uncultured and intensely imaginative tribes, whose minds may be thrown off their balance by a touch, a word, a gesture, an unaccustomed noise.’

I find evidence that low contemporary savages are *not* great ghost-seers, and, again, I cannot quite accept Mr. Tylor’s psychology of the ‘modern ghost-seer.’ Most such favoured persons whom I have known were steady, unimaginative, unexcitable people, with just one odd experience. Lord Tennyson, too, after sleeping in the bed of his recently lost father on purpose to see his ghost, decided that ghosts ‘are not seen by imaginative people.’

We now examine, at greater length, the psychical conditions in which, according to Mr. Tylor, contemporary savages differ from civilised men. Later we shall ask what may be said as to possible or presumable psychical differences between modern savages and the datelessly distant founders of the belief in souls. Mr. Tylor attributes to the lower races, and even to races high above their level, ‘morbid ecstasy, brought on by meditation, fasting, narcotics, excitement, or disease.’ Now, we may still ‘meditate’ — and how far the result is ‘morbid’ is a matter for psychologists and pathologists to determine. Fasting we do not practise voluntarily, nor would we easily accept evidence from an Englishman as to the veracity of voluntary fasting visions, like those of Cotton Mather. The visions of disease we should set aside, as a rule, with those of 'excitement,' produced, for instance, by 'devil-dances.' Narcotic and alcoholic visions are not in question. For our purpose the *induced* trances of savages (in whatever way voluntarily brought on) are analogous to the modern induced hypnotic trance. Any supernormal acquisitions of knowledge in these induced conditions, among savages, would be on a par with similar alleged experiences of persons under hypnotism.

We do not differ from known savages in being able to bring on non-normal psychological conditions, but we produce these, as a rule, by other methods than theirs, and such experiments are not made on *all* of us, as they were on all Red Indian boys and girls in the 'medicine-fast,' at the age of puberty.

Further, in their normal state, known savages, or some of them, are more 'suggestible' than educated Europeans at least. They can be more easily hallucinated in their normal waking state by suggestion. Once more, their intervals of hunger, followed by gorges of food, and their lack of artificial light, combine to make savages more apt to see what is not there than are comfortable educated white men. But Mr. Tylor goes too far when he says 'where the savage could see phantasms, the civilised man has come to amuse himself with fancies.' The civilised man, beyond all doubt, is capable of being *enfantosmé*.

In all that he says on this point, the point of psychical condition, Mr. Tylor is writing about known savages as they differ from ourselves. But the savages who *ex hypothesi* evolved the doctrine of souls lie beyond our ken, far behind the modern savages, among whom we find belief not only in souls and ghosts, but in moral gods. About the psychical condition of the savages who worked out the theory of souls and founded religion we necessarily know nothing. If there be such experiences as clairvoyance, telepathy, and so on, these unknown ancestors of ours may (for all that we can tell) have been peculiarly open to them, and therefore peculiarly apt to believe in separable souls. In fact, when we write about these far-off founders of religion, we guess in the dark, or by the flickering light of analogy. The lower animals have faculties (as in their power of finding their way home through new unknown regions, and in the ants' modes of acquiring and communicating knowledge to each other) which are mysteries to us. The terror of dogs in 'haunted houses' and of horses in passing 'haunted' scenes has often been reported, and is alluded to briefly by Mr. Tylor. Balaam's ass, and the dogs which crouched and whined before Athene, whom Eumaeus could not see, are 'classical' instances.

The weakness of the anthropological argument here is, we must repeat, that we know little more about the mental condition and experiences of the early thinkers who developed the doctrine of Souls than we know about the mental condition and experiences of the lower animals. And the more firmly a philosopher believes in the Darwinian hypothesis, the less, he must admit, can he suppose himself to know about the twilight ages, between the lower animal and the fully evolved man. What kind of creature was man when he first conceived the germs, or received the light, of Religion? All is guess-work here! We may just allude to Hegel’s theory that clairvoyance and hypnotic phenomena are produced in a kind of temporary *atavism*, or ‘throwing hack’ to a remotely ancient condition of the ‘sensitive soul’ (*füklende Seele*). The ‘sensitive’ faculty or ‘soul’ is ‘a disease when it becomes a state of the self-conscious, educated, self-possessed human being of civilisation.’ ‘Second sight,’ Hegel thinks, was a product of an earlier day and earlier mental condition than ours.

Approaching this almost untouched subject — the early psychical condition of man — not from the side of metaphysical speculations like Hegel, but with the instruments of modern psychology and physiology, Dr. Max Dessoir, of Berlin, following, indeed, M. Taine, has arrived, as we saw, at somewhat similar conclusions. ‘This fully conscious life of the spirit,’ in which we moderns now live, ‘seems to rest upon a substratum of reflex action of a hallucinatory type.’ Our actual modern condition is *not* ‘fundamental,’ and ‘hallucination represents, at least in its nascent condition, the main trunk of our psychical existence.’

Now, suppose that the remote and unknown ancestors of ours who first developed the doctrine of souls had not yet spread far from ‘the main trunk of our psychical existence,’ far from constant hallucination. In that case (at least, according to Dr. Dessoir’s theory) their psychical experiences would be such as we cannot estimate, yet cannot leave, as a possibility influencing religion, out of our calculations.

If early men were ever in a condition in which telepathy and clairvoyance (granting their possibility) were prevalent, one might expect that faculties so useful would be developed in the struggle for existence. That they are deliberately cultivated by modern savages we know. The Indian foster-mother of John Tanner used, when food was needed, to suggest herself into an hypnotic condition, so that she became *clairvoyante* as to the whereabouts of game. Tanner, an English boy, caught early by the Indians, was sceptical, but came to practise the same art, not unsuccessfully, himself. His reminiscences, which he dictated on his return to civilisation, were certainly not feigned in the interests of any theories. But the most telepathic human stocks, it may be said, ought, *ceteris paribus*, to have been the most successful in the struggle for existence. We may infer that the *cetera* were not *paria*, the clairvoyant state not being precisely the best for the practical business of life. But really we know nothing of the psychical state of the earliest men. They may have had experiences tending towards a belief in ‘spirits,’ of which we can tell nothing. We are obliged to guess, in considerable ignorance of the actual conditions, and this historical ignorance inevitably besets all anthropological speculation about the origin of religion.

The knowledge of our nescience as to the psychical condition of our first thinking ancestors may suggest hesitation as to taking it for granted that early man was on our own or on the modern savage level in ‘psychical’ experience. Even savage races, as Mr. Tylor justly says, attribute superior psychical knowledge to neighbouring tribes on a yet lower level of culture than themselves. The Finn esteems the Lapp sorcerers above his own; the Lapp yields to the superior pretensions of the Samoyeds. There may be more ways than one of explaining this relative humility: there is Hegel’s way and there is Mr. Tylor’s way. We cannot be certain, *a priori*, that the earliest man knew no more of supernormal or apparently supernormal experiences than we commonly do, or that these did not influence his thoughts on animism.

It is an example of the chameleon-like changes of science (even of ‘science falsely so called’ if you please) that when he wrote his book, in 1871, Mr. Tylor could not possibly have anticipated this line of argument.

‘Psychical planes’ had not been invented; hypnotism, with its problems, had not been much noticed in England. But ‘Spiritualism’ was flourishing. Mr. Tylor did not ignore this revival of savage philosophy. He saw very well that the end of the century was beholding the partial rehabilitation of beliefs which were scouted from 1660 to 1850. Seventy years ago, as Mr. Tylor says, Dr. Macculloch, in his ‘Description of the Western Islands of Scotland,’ wrote of ‘the famous Highland second sight’ that ‘ceasing to be believed it has ceased to exist.’

Dr. Macculloch was mistaken in his facts. ‘Second sight’ has never ceased to exist (or to be believed to exist), and it has recently been investigated in the ‘Journal’ of the Caledonian Medical Society. Mr. Tylor himself says that it has been ‘reinstated in a far larger range of society, and under far better circumstances of learning and prosperity.’ This fact he ascribes generally to ‘a direct revival from the regions of savage philosophy and peasant folklore,’ a revival brought about in great part by the writings of Swedenborg. To-day things have altered. The students now interested in this whole class of alleged supernormal phenomena are seldom believers in the philosophy of Spiritualism in the American sense of the word.

Mr. Tylor, as we have seen, attributes the revival of interest in this obscure class of subjects to the influence of Swedenborg. It is true, as has been shown, that Swedenborg attracted the attention of Kant. But modern interest has chiefly been aroused and kept alive by the phenomena of hypnotism. The interest is now, among educated students, really scientific.

Thus Mr. William James, Professor of Psychology in the University of Harvard, writes:

> ‘I was attracted to this subject (Psychical Research) some years ago by my love of fair play in Science.’

Mr. Tylor is not incapable of appreciating this attitude. Even the so-called ‘spirit manifestations,’ he says, ‘should be discussed on their merits,’ and the investigation ‘would seem apt to throw light on some most interesting psychological questions.’ Nothing can be more remote from the logic of Hume.

The ideas of Mr. Tylor on the causes of the origin of religion are now criticised, not from the point of view of spiritualism, but of experimental psychology. We hold that very probably there exist human faculties of unknown scope; that these conceivably were more powerful and prevalent among our very remote ancestors who founded religion; that they may still exist in savage as in civilised races, and that they may have confirmed, if they did not originate, the doctrine of separable souls. If they *do* exist, the circumstance is important, in view of the fact that modern ideas rest on a denial of their existence.

Mr. Tylor next examines the savage and other *names* for the ghost-soul, such as shadow (*umbra*), breath (*spiritus*), and he gives cases in which the *shadow* of a man is regarded as equivalent to his *life*. Of course, the shadow in the sunlight does not resemble the phantasm in a dream. The two, however, were combined and identified by early thinkers, while *breath* and *heart* were used as symbols of ‘that in men which makes them live,’ a phrase found among the natives of Nicaragua in 1528. The confessedly symbolical character of the phrase, ‘it is *not* precisely the heart, but that in them which makes them live,’ proves that to the speaker life was *not* ‘heart’ or ‘breath,’ but that these terms were known to be material word-counters for the conception of life. Whether the earliest thinkers identified heart, breath, shadow, with life, or whether they consciously used words of material origin to denote an immaterial conception, of course we do not know. But the word in the latter case would react on the thought, till the Roman inhaled (as his life?) the last breath of his dying kinsman, he well knowing that the Manes of the said kinsman were elsewhere, and not to be inhaled.

Subdivisions and distinctions were then recognised, as of the Egyptian *Ka,* the ‘double,’ the Karen *kelah*, or ‘personal life-phantom’ (*wraith*), on one side, and the Karen *thah*, ‘the responsible moral soul,’ on the other. The Roman *umbra* hovers about the grave, the *manes* go to Orcus, the *spiritus* seeks the stars.

We are next presented with a crowd of cases in which sickness or lethargy is ascribed by savages to the absence of the patient’s spirit, or of one of his spirits. This idea of migratory spirit is next used by savages to explain certain proceedings of the sorcerer, priest, or seer. His soul, or one of his souls is thought to go forth to distant places in quest of information, while the seer, perhaps, remains lethargic. Probably, in the struggle for existence, he lost more by being lethargic than he gained by being clairvoyant!

Now, here we touch the first point in Mr. Tylor’s theory, where a critic may ask, Was this belief in the wandering abroad of the seer’s spirit a theory not only false in its form (as probably it is), but also wholly unbased on experiences which might raise a presumption in favour of the existence of phenomena really supernormal? By ‘supernormal’ experiences I here mean such as the acquisition by a human mind of knowledge which could not be obtained by it through the recognised channels of sensation. Say, for the sake of argument, that a person, savage or civilised, obtains in trance information about distant places or events, to him unknown, and, through channels of sense, unknowable. The savage will explain this by saying that the seer’s soul, shadow, or spirit, wandered out of the body to the distant scene. This is, at present, an unverified theory. But still, for the sake of argument, suppose that the seer did honestly obtain this information in trance, lethargy, or hypnotic sleep, or any other condition. If so, the modern savage (or his more gifted ancestors) would have other grounds for his theory of the wandering soul than any ground presented by normal occurrences, ordinary dreams, shadows, and so forth. Again, in human nature there would be (if such things occur) a potentiality of experiences other and stranger than materialism will admit as possible. It will (granting the facts) be impossible to aver that there is *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*. The soul will be not *ce qu’un vain peuple pense* under the new popular tradition, and the savage’s theory of the spirit will be, at least in part, based on other than normal and every-day facts. That condition in which the seer acquires information, not otherwise accessible, about events remote in space, is what the mesmerists of the mid-century called ‘travelling clairvoyance.’

If such an experience be *in rerum natura*, it will not, of course, justify the savage’s theory that the soul is a separable entity, capable of voyaging, and also capable of existing after the death of the body. But it will give the savage a better excuse for his theory than normal experiences provide; and will even raise a presumption that reflection on mere ordinary experiences — death, shadow, trance — is not the sole origin of his theory. For a savage so acute as Mr. Tylor’s hypothetical early reasoner might decline to believe that his own or a friend's soul had been absent on an expedition, unless it brought back information not normally to be acquired. However, we cannot reason, *a priori*, as to how far the logic of a savage might or might not go on occasion.

In any case, a scientific reasoner might be expected to ask: 'Is this alleged acquisition of knowledge, *not* through the ordinary channels of sense, a thing *in rerum natura*?' Because, if it is, we must obviously increase our list of the savage's reasons for believing in a soul: we must make his reasons include 'psychical' experiences, and there must be an X region to investigate.

These considerations did not fail to present themselves to Mr. Tylor. But his manner of dealing with them is peculiar. With his unequalled knowledge of the lower races, it was easy for him to examine travellers' tales about savage seers who beheld distant events in vision, and to allow them what weight he thought proper, after discounting possibilities of falsehood and collusion. He might then have examined modern narratives of similar performances among the civilised, which are abundant. It is obvious and undeniable that if the supernormal acquisition of knowledge in trance is a *vera causa*, a real process, however rare, Mr. Tylor's theory needs modifications; while the character of the savage's reasoning becomes more creditable to the savage, and appears as better bottomed than we had been asked to suppose. But Mr. Tylor does not examine this large body of evidence at all, or, at least, does not offer us the details of his examination. He merely writes in this place:

'A typical spiritualistic instance may be quoted from Jung-Stilling, who says that examples have come to his knowledge of sick persons who, longing to see absent friends, have fallen into a swoon, during which they have appeared to the distant objects of their affection.'

Jung-Stilling (though he wrote before modern 'Spiritualism' came in) is not a very valid authority; there is plenty of better evidence than his, but Mr. Tylor passes it by, merely remarking that 'modern Europe has kept closely enough to the lines of early philosophy.' Modern Europe has indeed done so, if it explains the supernormal acquisition of knowledge, or the hallucinatory appearance of a distant person to his friend by a theory of wandering 'spirits.' But facts do not cease to be facts because wrong interpretations have been put upon them by savages, by Jung-Stilling, or by anyone else. The real question is, Do such events occur among lower and higher races, beyond explanation by fraud and fortuitous coincidence? We gladly grant that the belief in Animism, when it takes the form of a theory of 'wandering spirits,' is probably untenable, as it is assuredly of savage origin. But we are not absolutely so sure that in this aspect the theory is not based on actual experiences, not of a normal and ordinary kind.

If so, the savage philosophy and its supposed survivals in belief will appear in a new light. And we are inclined to hold that an examination of the mass of evidence to which Mr. Tylor offers here so slight an allusion will at least make it wise to suspend our judgment, not only as to the origins of the savage theory of spirits, but as to the materialistic hypothesis of the absence of a psychical element in man.

I may seem to have outrun already the limits of permissible hypothesis. It may appear absurd to surmise that there can exist in man, savage or civilised, a faculty for acquiring information not accessible by the known channels of sense, a faculty attributed by savage philosophers to the wandering soul. But one may be permitted to quote the opinion of M. Charles Richet, Professor of Physiology in the Faculty of Medicine in Paris. It is not cited because M. Richet is a professor of physiology, but because he reached his conclusion after six years of minute experiment. He says: ‘There exists in certain persons, at certain moments, a faculty of acquiring knowledge which has no *rapport* with our normal faculties of that kind.’

Instances tending to raise a presumption in favour of M. Richet’s idea may now be sought in savage and civilised life.

IV

‘

OPENING THE GATES OF DISTANCE’

‘To open the Gates of Distance’ is the poetical Zulu phrase for what is called clairvoyance, or *vue à distance*. This, if it exists, is the result of a faculty of undetermined nature, whereby knowledge of remote events may be acquired, not through normal channels of sense. As the Zulus say: ‘*Isiyezi* is a state in which a man becomes slightly insensible. He is awake, but still sees things which he would not see if he were not in a state of ecstasy (*nasiyesi*).’ The Zulu description of *isiyezi* includes what is technically styled ‘dissociation.’ No psychologist or pathologist will deny that visions of an hallucinatory sort may occur in dissociated states, say in the *petit mal* of epilepsy. The question, however, is whether any such visions convey actual information not otherwise to be acquired, beyond the reach of chance coincidence to explain.

A Scottish example, from the records of a court of law, exactly illustrates the Zulu theory. At the moment when the husband of Jonka Dyneis was in danger six miles from her house in his boat, Jonka ‘was found, and seen standing at her own house wall in a trance, and being taken, she could not give answer, but stood as bereft of her senses, and when she was asked why she was so moved, she answered, “If our boat be not lost, she was in great hazard.”’ (October 2, 1616.)

The belief in opening the Gates of Distance is, of course, very widely diffused. The gift is attributed to Apollonius of Tyana, to Plotinus, to many Saints, to Catherine de’ Medici, to the Rev. Mr. Peden, and to Jeanne d’Arc, while the faculty is the stock in trade of savage seers in all regions.

The question, however, on which Mr. Tylor does not touch, is, *Are any of the stories true?* If so, of course they would confirm in the mind of the savage his theory of the wandering soul. Now, to find anything like attested cases of successful clairvoyance among savages is a difficult task. White men either scout the idea, or are afraid of seeming superstitious if they give examples, or, if they do give examples, are accused of having sunk to the degraded level of Zulus or Red Indians. Even where travellers, like Scheffer, have told about their own experiences, the narratives are omitted by modern writers on savage divination. We must therefore make our own researches, and it is to be noted that the stories of successful savage clairvoyance are given as illustrations merely, not as evidence to facts, for we cannot cross-examine the witnesses.

Mr. Tylor dismisses the topic in a manner rather cavalier:

‘Without discussing on their merits the accounts of what is called “second sight,” it may be pointed out that they are related among savage tribes, as when Captain Jonathan Carver obtained from a Cree medicine-man a true prophecy of the arrival of a canoe with news next day at noon; or when Mr. J. Mason Brown, travelling with two *voyageurs* on the Copper Mine River, was met by Indians of the very band he was seeking, these having been sent by their medicine-man, who, on enquiry, stated that “he saw them coming, and heard them talk on their journey.”’

Now, in our opinion, the ‘merits’ of stories of second sight need discussion, because they may, if well attested, raise a presumption that the savage’s theory has a better foundation than Mr. Tylor supposes. Oddly enough, though Mr. Tylor does not say so, Dr. Brinton (from whom he borrows his two anecdotes) is more or less of our opinion.

‘There are,’ says Dr. Brinton, ‘statements supported by unquestionable testimony, which ought not to be passed over in silence, and yet I cannot but approach them with hesitation. They are so revolting to the laws of exact science, so alien, I had almost said, to the experience of our lives. Yet is this true, or are such experiences only ignored and put aside without serious consideration?’

That is exactly what we complain of; the alleged facts are ‘put aside without serious consideration.’

We, at least, are not slaves to the idea that ‘the laws of exact science’ must be the only laws at work in the world. Science, however exact, does not pretend to have discovered all ‘laws.’

To return to actual examples of the alleged supernormal acquisition of knowledge by savages: Dr. Brinton gives an example from Charlevoix and General Mason Brown’s anecdote. In General Mason Brown’s instance the medicine-man, at a great distance, bade his emissaries ‘seek three whites, whose horses, arms, attire, and personal appearance he minutely described, which description was repeated to General Brown by the warriors *before they saw his two companions.’* General Brown assured Dr. Brinton of ‘the accuracy of this in every particular.’ Mr. Tylor has certainly not improved the story in his condensed version. Dr. Brinton refers to ‘many’ tales such as these, and some will be found in ‘Among the Zulus,’ by Mr. David Leslie (1875).

Mr. Leslie was a Scottish sportsman, brought up from boyhood in familiarity with the Zulus. His knowledge of their language and customs was minute, and his book, privately printed, contains much interesting matter. He writes:

‘I was obliged to proceed to the Zulu country to meet my Kaffir elephant-hunters, the time for their return having arrived. They were hunting in a very unhealthy country, and I had agreed to wait for them on the North-East border, the nearest point I could go to with safety. I reached the appointed rendezvous, but could not gain the slightest intelligence of my people at the kraal.

'After waiting some time, and becoming very uneasy about them, one of my servants recommended me to go to the doctor, and at last, out of curiosity and *pour passer le temps*, I did go.

'I stated what I wanted — information about my hunters — and I was met by a stern refusal. "I cannot tell anything about white men," said he, "and I know nothing of their ways." However, after some persuasion and promise of liberal payment, impressing upon him the fact that it was not white men but Kaffirs I wanted to know about, he at last consented, saying "he would *open the Gate of Distance*, and would travel through it, even although his body should lie before me."

'His first proceeding was to ask me the number and names of my hunters. To this I demurred, telling him that if he obtained that information from me he might easily substitute some news which he may have heard from others, instead of the "spiritual telegraphic news" which I expected him to get from his "familiar."

'To this he answered: "I told you I did not understand white men's ways; but if I am to do anything for you it must be done in my way — not yours." On receiving this fillip I felt inclined to give it up, as I thought I might receive some rambling statement with a considerable dash of truth, it being easy for anyone who knew anything of hunting to give a tolerably correct idea of their motions.

'However, I conceded this point also, and otherwise satisfied him.

'The doctor then made eight little fires — that being the number of my hunters; on each he cast some roots, which emitted a curious sickly odour and thick smoke; into each he cast a small stone, shouting, as he did so, the name to which the stone was dedicated; then he ate some "medicine," and fell over in what appeared to be a trance for about ten minutes, during all which time his limbs kept moving. Then he seemed to wake, went to one of the fires, raked the ashes about, looked at the stone attentively, described the man faithfully, and said: "This man has died of the fever, and your gun is lost."

'To the next fire as before: "This man" (correctly described) "has killed four elephants," and then he described the tusks. The next: "This man" (again describing him) "has been killed by an elephant, but your gun is coming home," and so on through the whole, the men being minutely and correctly described; their success or non-success being equally so. I was told where the survivors were, and what they were doing, and that in three months they would come out, but as they would not expect to find me waiting on them there so long after the time appointed, they would not pass that way.

‘I took a particular note of all this information at the time, and to my utter amazement *it turned out correct in every particular*.

‘It was scarcely within the bounds of possibility that this man could have had ordinary intelligence of the hunters; they were scattered about in a country two hundred miles away.’

Mr. Leslie could discover no explanation, nor was any suggested by friends familiar with the country and the natives whom he consulted. He gives another example, which may be explained by ‘suggestion.’ A parallel case from Central Africa will be found in the ‘Journal of the Anthropological Institute,’ November 1897, , where ‘private information,’ as usual, would explain the singular facts.

The Zulus themselves lay claim to a kind of clairvoyance which looks like the result of intense visualising power, combined with the awakening of the subconscious memory.

‘There is among black men a something which is divination within them. When anything valuable is lost, they look for it at once; when they cannot find it, each one begins to practise this inner divination, trying to feel where the thing is; for, not being able to see it, he feels internally a pointing, which tells him if he will go down to such a place it is there, and he will find it. At length it says he will find it; at length he sees it, and himself approaching it; before he begins to move from where he is, he sees it very clearly indeed, and there is an end of doubt. That sight is so clear that it is as though it was not an inner sight, but as if he saw the very thing itself, and the place where it is; so he quickly arises and goes to the place. If it is a hidden place he throws himself into it, as though there was something that impelled him to go as swiftly as the wind; and, in fact, he finds the thing, if he has not acted by mere head-guessing. If it has been done by real inner divination, he really sees it. But if it is done by mere head-guessing and knowledge that he has not gone to such a place and such a place, and that therefore it must be in such another place, he generally misses the mark.’

Other Zulu instances will be given under the heads ‘Possession’ and ‘Fetishism.’

To take a Northern people: In his ‘History of the Lapps’ Scheffer describes mechanical modes of divination practised by that race, who use a drum and other objects for the purpose. These modes depend on more traditional rules for interpreting the accidental combinations of lots. But a Lapp confessed to Scheffer, with tears, that he could not help seeing visions, as he proved by giving Scheffer a minute relation ‘of whatever particulars had happened to me in my journey to Lapland. And he further complained that he know not how to make use of his eyes, since things altogether distant were presented to them.’ This Lapp was anxious to become a Christian, hence his regret at being a ‘rare and valuable’ example of clairvoyance. Torfaeus also was posed by the clairvoyance of a Samoyed, as was Regnard by a Lapp seer.

The next case is of old date, and, like the other savage examples, is merely given for purposes of illustration.

‘*25e Lettre*.

‘“*Suite des Traditions des Sauvages.*”

‘Au Fort de la Rivière de St. Joseph, ce 14 Septembre 1721.

‘“*Des Jongleurs*” — … Vous ayez vu à Paris Madame de Marson, & elle y est encore; voici ce que M. le Marquis de Vaudreuil son Gendre, actuellement notre Gouverneur Général, me raconta cet Hyver, & qu’il a sçû de cette Dame, qui n’est rien moíns qu’un esprit foible. Elle etoit un jour fort inquiette an sujet de M. de Marson, son Mari, lequel commandoit dans un Poste, que nous avions en Accadie; et etoit absent, & le tems qu’il avoit marqué pour son retour, etoit passé.

‘Une Femme Sauvage, qui vit Madame de Marson en peine, lui en demanda la cause, & l’ayant apprise, lui dit, après y avoir un peu rêvé, de ne plus se chagriner, que son Epoux reviendroit tel jour et à telle heure, qu’elle lui marqua, avec un chapeau gris sur la tête. Comme elle s’apperçut que la Dame n’ajoutoit point foi à sa prédiction, au jour & à l’heure, qu’elle avoit assignée, elle rotourna chez elle, lui demanda si elle ne vouloit pas venir voir arriver son Mari, & la pressa de telle sorte de la suivre, qu’elle l’entraîna au bord de la Rivière.

‘A peine y etoíent-elles arrivées, que M. de Marson parut dans un Canot, un chapeau gris sur la tête; & ayant appris ce qui s’etoit passé, assûra qu’il ne pouvoit pas comprendre comment la Sauvagesse avoit pû sçavoir l’heure & le jour de son arrivée.’

It is unusual for European travellers and missionaries to give anecdotes which might seem to ‘confirm the delusions of benighted savages.’ Such anecdotes, again, are among the *arcana* of these wild philosophers, and are not readily communicated to strangers. When successful cases are reported, it is natural to assert that they come through Europeans who have sunk into barbarous superstition, or that they may be explained by fraud and collusion. It is certain, however, that savage proficients believe in their own powers, though no less certainly they will eke them out by imposture. Seers are chosen in Zululand, as among Eskimos and Samoyeds, from the class which in Europe supplies the persons who used to be, but are no longer the most favourite hypnotic subjects, ‘abnormal children,’ epileptic and hysterical. These are subjected to ‘a long and methodical course of training.’ Stoll, speaking of Guatemala, says that ‘certainly most of the induced and spontaneous phenomena with which we are familiar occur among savages,’ and appeals to travellers for observations. Information is likely to come in, as educated travellers devote attention to the topic.

Dr. Callaway translates some Zulu communications which indicate the amount of belief in this very practical and sceptical people. Amusing illustrations of their scepticism will be quoted later, under ‘Possession,’ but they do accept as seers certain hysterical patients. These are tested by their skill in finding objects which have been hidden without their knowledge. They then behave much like Mr. Stuart Cumberland, but have not the advantage of muscular contact with the person who knows where the hidden objects are concealed. The neighbours even deny that they have hidden anything at all. ‘When they persist in their denial … he finds all the things that they have hidden. They see that he is a great *inyanga* (seer) when he has found all the things they have concealed.’ No doubt he is guided, perhaps in a super-sensitive condition, by the unconscious indications of the excited spectators.

The point is that, while the savage conjurer will doubtless use fraud wherever he can, still the experience of low races is in favour of employing as seers the class of people who in Europe were, till recently, supposed to make the best hypnotic subjects. Thus, in West Africa, ‘the presiding elders, during your initiation to the secret society of your tribe, discover this gift , and so select you as “a witch doctor.”’ Among the Karens, the ‘Wees,’ or prophets, ‘are nervous excitable men, such as would become mediums,’ as mediums are diagnosed by Mr. Tylor.

In short, not to multiply examples, there is an element of actual observation and of *bona fides* entangled in the trickery of savage practice. Though the subjects may be selected partly because of the physical phenomena of convulsions which they exhibit, and which favourably impress their clients, they are also such subjects as occasionally yield that evidence of supernormal faculty which is investigated by modern psychologists, like Richet, Janet, and William James.

The following example, by no means unique, shows the view taken by savages of their own magic, after they have become Christians. Catherine Wabose, a converted Red Indian seeress, described her preliminary fast, at the age of puberty. After six days of abstention from food she was rapt away to an unknown place, where a radiant being welcomed her. Later a dark round object promised her the gift of prophecy. She found her natural senses greatly sharpened by lack of food. She first exercised her powers when her kinsfolk in large numbers were starving, a medicine-lodge, or ‘tabernacle’ as Lufitau calls it, was built for her, and she crawled in. As is well known, these lodges are violently shaken during the magician's stay within them, which the early Jesuits at first attributed to muscular efforts by the seers. In 1637 Père Lejeune was astonished by the violent motions of a large lodge, tenanted by a small man. One sorcerer, with an appearance of candour, vowed that 'a great wind entered boisterously,' and the Father was assured that, if he went in himself, he would become clairvoyant. He did not make the experiment. The Methodist convert, Catherine, gave the same description of her own experience: 'The lodge began shaking violently by supernatural means. I knew this by the compressed current of air above, and the noise of motion.' She had been beating a small drum and singing, now she lay quiet. The radiant 'orbicular' spirit then informed her that they 'must go westwards for game; how short-sighted you are!' 'The advice was taken and crowned by instant success.' This established her reputation. Catherine's conversion was led up to by a dream of her dying son, who beheld a Sacred Figure, and received from Him white raiment. Her magical songs tell how unseen hands shake the magic lodge. They invoke the Great Spirit that

'Illumines earth
Illumines heaven!
Ah, say what Spirit, or Body, is this Body,
That fills the world around,
Speak, man, ah say
What Spirit, or Body, is this Body?'

It is like a savage hymn to Hegel's *fühlende Seele*: the all-pervading Sensitive Soul. We are reminded, too, of 'the doctrine of the Sanscrit Upanishads: There is no limit to the knowing of the Self that knows.'

Unluckily Catherine was not asked to give other examples of what she considered her successes.

Acosta, who has not the best possible repute as an authority, informs us that Peruvian clairvoyants 'tell what hath passed in the furthest parts before news can come. In the distance of two or three hundred leagues they would tell what the Spaniards did or suffered in their civil wars.' To Du Pont, in 1606, a sorcerer 'rendered a true oracle of the coming of Poutrincourt, saying his Devil had told him so.'

We now give a modern case, from a scientific laboratory, of knowledge apparently acquired in no normal way, by a person of the sort usually chosen to be a prophet, or wizard, by savages.

Professor Richet writes:

‘On Monday, July 2, 1888, after having passed all the day in my laboratory, I hypnotised Léonie at 8 P.M., and while she tried to make out a diagram concealed in an envelope I said to her quite suddenly: “What has happened to M. Langlois?” Léonie knows M. Langlois from having seen him two or three times some time ago in my physiological laboratory, where he acts as my assistant.— “He has burnt himself,” Léonie replied,— “Good,” I said, “and where has he burnt himself?”— “On the left hand. It is not fire: it is — I don’t know its name. Why does he not take care when he pours it out?”— “Of what colour,” I asked, “is the stuff which he pours out?”— “It is not red, it is brown; he has hurt himself very much — the skin puffed up directly.”

‘Now, this description is admirably exact. At 4 P.M. that day M. Langlois had wished to pour some bromine into a bottle. He had done this clumsily, so that some of the bromine flowed on to his left hand, which held the funnel, and at once burnt him severely. Although he at once put his hand into water, wherever the bromine had touched it a blister was formed in a few seconds — a blister which one could not better describe than by saying, “the skin puffed up.” I need not say that Léonie had not left my house, nor seen anyone from my laboratory. Of this I am *absolutely certain,* and I am certain that I had not mentioned the incident of the burn to anyone. Moreover, this was the first time for nearly a year that M. Langlois had handled bromine, and when Léonie saw him six months before at the laboratory he was engaged in experiments of quite another kind.’

Here the savage reasoner would infer that Léonie’s spirit had visited M. Langlois. The modern inquirer will probably say that Léonie became aware of what was passing in the mind of M. Richet. This supranormal way of acquiring knowledge was observed in the last century by M. de Puységur in one of his earliest cases of somnambulism. MM. Binet and Féré say: ‘It is not yet admitted that the subject is able to divine the thoughts of the magnetiser without any material communication;’ while they grant, as a minimum, that ‘research should be continued in this direction.’ They appear to think that Léonie may have read ‘involuntary signs’ in the aspect of M. Richet. This is a difficult hypothesis.

Here follows a case recorded in his diary by Mr. Dobbie, of Adelaide, Australia, who has practised hypnotism for curative purposes. He explains (June 10, 1884) that he had mesmerised Miss —— on several occasions to relieve rheumatic pain and sore throat. He found her to be clairvoyant.

‘The following is a verbatim account of the second time I tested her powers in this respect, April 12, 1884. There were four persons present during the *séance*. One of the company wrote down the replies as they were spoken.

‘Her father was at the time over fifty miles away, but we did not know exactly where, so I questioned her as follows: “Can you find your father at the present moment?” At first she replied that she could not see him, but in a minute or two she said, “Oh, yes; now I can see him, Mr. Dobbie.” “Where is he?” “Sitting at a large table in a large room, and there are a lot of people going in and out.” “What is he doing?” “Writing a letter, and there is a book in front of him.” “Whom is he writing to?” “To the newspaper.” Here she paused and laughingly said, “Well, I declare, he is writing to the A B” (naming a newspaper). “You said there was a book there. Can you tell me what book it is?” “It has gilt letters on it.” “Can you read them, or tell me the name of the author?” She read, or pronounced slowly, “W.L.W.” (giving the full surname of the author). She answered several minor questions *re* the furniture in the room, and I then said to her, “Is it any effort or trouble to you to travel in this way?” “Yes, a little; I have to think.”

‘I now stood behind her, holding a half-crown in my hand, and asked her if she could tell me what I had in my hand, to which she replied, “It is a shilling.” It seemed as though she could see what was happening miles away easier than she could see what was going on in the room.

‘Her father returned home nearly a week afterwards, and was perfectly astounded when told by his wife and family what he had been doing on that particular evening; and, although previous to that date he was a thorough sceptic as to clairvoyance, he frankly admitted that my clairvoyant was perfectly correct in every particular. He also informed us that the book referred to was a new one, which he had purchased after he had left his home, so that there was no possibility of his daughter guessing that he had the book before him. I may add that the letter in due course appeared in the paper; and I saw and handled the book.’

A number of cases of so-called ‘clairvoyance’ will be found in the ‘Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research.’ As the authors of these essays remark, even after discounting, in each case, fraud, malobservation, and misreporting, the residue of cases can seldom justify either the savage theory of the wandering soul (which is not here seriously proposed) or Hegel’s theory that the *fühlende Seele* is unconditioned by space. For, if thought transference be a fact, the apparent clairvoyant may only be reading the mind of a person at a distance. The results, however, when successful, would naturally suggest to the savage thinker the belief in the wandering soul, or corroborate it if it had already been suggested by the common phenomena of dreaming.

To these instances of knowledge acquired otherwise than by the recognised channels of sense we might add the Scottish tales of ‘second sight.’ That phrase is merely a local term covering examples of what is called ‘clairvoyance’ — views of things remote in space, hallucinations of sight that coincide with some notable event, premonitions of things future, and so on. The belief and hallucinatory experiences are still very common in the Highlands, where I have myself collected many recent instances. Mr. Tylor observes that the examples ‘prove a little too much; they vouch not only for human apparitions, but for such phantoms as demon dogs, and for still more fanciful symbolic omens.’ This is perfectly true. I have found no cases of demon dogs; but wandering lights, probably of meteoric or miasmatic origin, are certainly regarded as tokens of death. This is obviously a superstitious hypothesis, the lights being real phenomena misconstrued. Again, funerals are not uncommonly seen where no funeral is taking place; it is then alleged that a real funeral, similar and similarly situated, soon afterwards occurred. On the hypothesis of believers, the percipients somehow behold

’Such refraction of events
As often rises ere they rise.’

Even the savage cannot account for this experience by the wandering of the soul in space; nor do I suggest any explanation. I give, however, one or two instances. They are published in the ‘Journal of the Caledonian Medical Society,’ 1897, by Dr. Alastair Macgregor, on the authority of the MSS. of his father, a minister in the island of Skye.

‘He once told me that when he first went to Skye he scoffed at the idea of such a power as second sight being genuine; but he said that, after having been there for some years as a clergyman, he had been so often consulted *beforehand* by people who said they had seen visions of events which subsequently occurred, to my father’s knowledge, in exact accordance with the form and details of the vision as foretold, that he was compelled to confess that some folks had, apparently at least, the unfortunate faculty.

‘As my father expressed it, this faculty was “neither voluntary nor constant, and was considered rather annoying than agreeable to the possessors of it. The gift was possessed by individuals of both sexes, and its fits came on within doors and without, sitting and standing, at night and by day, and at whatever employment the votary might chance to be engaged.”’

Here follows a typical example of the vision of a funeral:

‘The session clerk at Dull, a small village in Perthshire, was ill, and my grandfather, clergyman there at the time, had to do duty for him. One fine summer evening, about 7 o'clock, a young man and woman came to get some papers filled up, as they were going to be married. My grandfather was with the couple in the session clerk's room, no doubt attending to the papers, when suddenly *all three* saw through the window a funeral procession passing along the road. From their dress the bulk of the mourners seemed to be farm labourers — indeed the young woman recognised some of them as natives of Dull, who had gone to live and work near Dunkeld. Remarks were naturally made by my grandfather and the young couple about the untimely hour for a funeral, and, hastily filling in the papers, my grandfather went out to get the key of the churchyard, which was kept in the manse, as, without the key, the procession could not get into God's acre. Wondering how it was that he had received no intimation of the funeral, he went to the manse by a short cut, got the key, and hurried down to the churchyard gate, where, of course, he expected to find the cortège waiting. *Not a soul was there* except the young couple, who were as amazed as my grandfather!

'Well, at the same hour in the evening of the same day in the following week the funeral, this time in reality, arrived quite unexpectedly. The facts were that a boy, a native of Dull, had got gored by a bull at Dunkeld, and was so shockingly mangled that his remains were picked up and put into a coffin and taken without delay to Dull. A grave was dug as quickly as possible — the poor lad having no relatives — and the remains were interred. My grandfather and the young couple recognised several of the mourners as being among those whom they had seen out of the session clerk's room, exactly a week previously, in the phantom cortège. The young woman knew some of them personally, and related to them what she had seen, but they of course denied all knowledge of the affair, having been then in Dunkeld.'

I give another example, because the experience was auditory, as well as visual, and the prediction was announced before the event.

'The parishioners in Skye were evidently largely imbued with the Romanist-like belief in the powers of intercession vested in their clergyman; so when they had a "warning" or "vision" they usually consulted my father as to what they could do to prevent the coming disaster befalling their relatives or friends. In this way my father had the opportunity of noting down the minutiae of the "warning" or "vision" directly it was told him. Having had the advantage of a medical, previous to his theological, training, he was able to note down sound facts, unembellished by superadded imagination. Entering into this method of case-taking with a mind perfectly open, except for a slight touch of scepticism, he was greatly surprised to discover how very frequently realisations occurred exactly in conformance with the minutiae of the vision as detailed in his note-book. Finally, he was compelled to discard his scepticism, and to admit that some people had undoubtedly the uncanny gift. Almost the first case he took (Case X.) was that of a woman who had one day a vision of her son falling over a high rock at Uig, in Skye, with a sheep or lamb.

‘CASE X. — She heard her son exclaim in Gaelic, “This is a fatal lamb for me.” As her son lived several miles from Uig, and was a fisherman, realisation seemed to my father very unlikely, but one month afterwards the realisation occurred only too true. Unknown to his mother, who had warned him against having anything to do with sheep or lambs, the son one day, instead of going out in his boat, thought he would take a holiday inland, and went off to Uig, where a farmer enlisted his services in separating some lambs from the ewes. One of the lambs ran away, and the fisher lad ran headlong after it, and not looking where he was going, on catching the lamb was pulled by it to the edge of one of the very picturesque but exceedingly dangerous rocks at Uig. Too late realizing his critical position, he exclaimed, “This is a fatal lamb for me,” but going with such an impetus he was unable to bring himself up in time, and, along with the lamb, fell over into the ravine below, and was, of course, killed on the spot. The farmer, when he saw the lad’s danger, ran to his assistance, but was only in time to hear him cry out in Gaelic before disappearing over the brink of the precipice. This was predicted by the mother a month before. Was this simply a coincidence?’

Dr. Macgregor’s remarks on the involuntary and unwelcome nature of the visions is borne out by what Scheffer, as already quoted, says concerning the Lapps.

In addition to visions which thus come unsought, contributing knowledge of things remote or even future, we may glance at visions which are provoked by various methods. Drugs (*impepo*) are used, seers whirl in a wild dance till they fall senseless, or trance is induced by various kinds of self-suggestion or ‘auto-hypnotism.’ Fasting is also practised. In modern life the self-induced trance is common among ‘mediums’ — a subject to which we recur later.

So far, it will be observed, our evidence proves that precisely similar *beliefs* as to man’s occasional power of opening the gates of distance have been entertained in a great variety of lands and ages, and by races in every condition of culture. The alleged experiences are still said to occur, and have been investigated by physiologists of the eminence of M. Richet. The question cannot but arise as to the residuum of fact in these narrations, and it keeps on arising.

In the following chapter we discuss a mode of inducing hallucinations which has for anthropologists the interest of universal diffusion. The width of its range in savage races has not, we believe, been previously observed. We then add facts of modern experience, about the authenticity of which we, personally, entertain no doubt; and the provisional conclusion appears to be that savages have observed a psychological circumstance which has been ignored by professed psychologists, and which, certainly, does not fit into the ordinary materialistic hypothesis.

CRYSTAL VISIONS, SAVAGE AND CIVILISED

Among savage methods of provoking hallucinations whence knowledge may be supernormally obtained, various forms of ‘crystal-gazing’ are the most curious. We find the habit of looking into water, usually in a vessel, preferably a glass vessel, among Red Indians (Lejeune), Romans (Varro, cited in *Civitas Dei*, iii. 457), Africans of Fez (Leo Africanus); while Maoris use a drop of blood (Taylor), Egyptians use ink (Lane), and Australian savages employ a ball of polished stone, into which the seer ‘puts himself’ to descry the results of an expedition.

I have already given, in the Introduction, Ellis’s record of the Polynesian case. A hole being dug in the door of his house, and filled with water, the priest looks for a vision of the thief who has carried off stolen goods. The Polynesian theory is that the god carries the spirit of the thief over the water, in which it is reflected. Lejeune’s Red Indians make their patients gaze into the water, in which they will see the pictures of the things in the way of food or medicine that will do them good. In modern language, the instinctive knowledge existing implicitly in the patient’s subconsciousness is thus brought into the range of his ordinary consciousness.

In 1887 the late Captain J. T. Bourke, of the U.S. Cavalry, an original and careful observer, visited the Apaches in the interests of the Ethnological Bureau. He learned that one of the chief duties of the medicine-men was to find out the whereabouts of lost or stolen property. Na-a-cha, one of these *jossakeeds*, possessed a magic quartz crystal, which he greatly valued. Captain Bourke presented him with a still finer crystal. ‘He could not give me an explanation of its magical use, except that by looking into it he could see everything he wanted to see,’ Captain Bourke appears never to have heard of the modern experiments in crystal-gazing. Captain Bourke also discovered that the Apaches, like the Greeks, Australians, Africans, Maoris, and many other, races, use the bull-roarer, turndun, or *rhombos* — a piece of wood which, being whirled round, causes a strange windy roar — in their mystic ceremonies. The wide use of the rhombos was known to Captain Bourke; that of the crystal was not.

For the Iroquois, Mrs. Erminie Smith supplies information about the crystal. ‘Placed in a gourd of water, it could render visible the apparition of a person who has bewitched another.’ She gives a case in European times of a medicine-man who found the witch’s habitat, but got only an indistinct view of her face.

On a second trial he was successful. One may add that treasure-seekers among the Huille-che ‘look earnestly’ for what they want to find ‘into a smooth slab of black stone, which I suppose to be basalt.’

The kindness of Monsieur Lefébure enables me to give another example from Madagascar. Flacourt, describing the Malagasies, says that they *squillent* (a word not in Littré), that is, divine by crystals, which ‘fall from heaven when it thunders,’ Of course the rain reveals the crystals, as it does the flint instruments called ‘thunderbolts’ in many countries. ‘Lorsqu’ils squillent, ils ont une de ces pierres au coing de leurs tablettes, disans qu’elle à la vertu de faire faire operation à leur figure de geomance.’ Probably they used the crystals as do the Apaches. On July 15 a Malagasy woman viewed, whether in her crystal or otherwise, two French vessels which, like the Spanish fleet, were ‘not in sight,’ also officers, and doctors, and others aboard, whom she had seen, before their return to France, in Madagascar. The earliest of the ships did not arrive till August 11.

Dr. Callaway gives the Zulu practice, where the chief ‘sees what will happen by looking into the vessel.’ The Shamans of Siberia and Eastern Russia employ the same method. The case of the Inca, Yupanqui, is very curious. ‘As he came up to a fountain he saw a piece of crystal fall into it, within which he beheld a figure of an Indian in the following shape … The apparition then vanished, while the crystal remained. The Inca took care of it, and they say that he afterwards saw everything he wanted in it.’

Here, then, we find the belief that hallucinations can be induced by one or other form of crystal-gazing, in ancient Peru, on the other side of the continent among the Huille-che, in Fez, in Madagascar, in Siberia, among Apaches, Hurons, Iroquois, Australian black fellows, Maoris, and in Polynesia. This is assuredly a wide range of geographical distribution. We also find the practice in Greece (Pausanias, VII. xxi. 12), in Rome (Varro), in Egypt, and in India.

Though anthropologists have paid no attention to the subject, it was of course familiar to later Europe. ‘Miss X’ has traced it among early Christians, in early Councils, in episcopal condemnations of *specularii,* and so to Dr. Dee, under James VI.; Aubrey; the Regent d’Orléans in St. Simon’s Memoirs; the modern mesmerists (Gregory, Mayo) and the mid-Victorian spiritualists, who, as usual, explained the phenomena, in their prehistoric way, by ‘spirits.’ Till this lady examined the subject, nobody had thought of remarking that a belief so universal had probably some basis of facts, or nobody if we except two professors of chemistry and physiology, Drs. Gregory and Mayo. Miss X made experiments, beginning by accident, like George Sand, when a child.

The hallucinations which appear to her eyes in ink, or crystal, are:

1. Revived memories ‘arising thus, and thus only, from the subconscious strata;’

’2. Objectivation of ideas or images — (a) consciously or (b) unconsciously — in the mind of the percipient;

‘3. Visions, possibly telepathic or clairvoyant, implying acquirement of knowledge by supernormal means.’

The examples given of the last class, the class which would be so useful to a priest or medicine-man asked to discover things lost, are of very slight interest.

Since Miss X drew attention to this subject, experiments have proved beyond doubt that a fair percentage of people, sane and healthy, can see vivid landscapes, and figures of persons in motion, in glass balls and other vehicles. This faculty Dr. Parish attributes to ‘dissociation,’ practically to drowsiness. But he speaks by conjecture, and without having witnessed experiments, as will be shown later. I now offer a series of experiments with a glass ball, coming under my own observation, in which knowledge was apparently acquired in no ordinary way. Of the absence of fraud I am personally convinced, not only by the characters of all concerned, but by the nature of the circumstances. That adaptive memory did not later alter the narratives, as originally told, I feel certain, because they were reported to me, when I was not present, within less than a week, precisely as they are now given, except in cases specially noted.

Early in the present year (1897) I met a young lady who told me of three or four curious hallucinatory experiences of her own, which were sufficiently corroborated. She was innocent of psychical studies, and personally was, and is, in perfect health; the pale cast of thought being remote from her. I got a glass ball, and was present when she first looked into it. She saw, I remember, the interior of a house, with a full-length portrait of a person unknown. There were, I think, one or two other fancy pictures of the familiar kind. But she presently (living as she was, among strangers) developed a power of ‘seeing’ persons and places unknown to her, but familiar to them. These experiences do seem to me to be good examples of what is called ‘thought transference;’ indeed, I never before could get out of a level balance of doubt on that subject, a balance which now leans considerably to the affirmative side. There may be abundance of better evidence, but, knowing the persons and circumstances, and being present once at what seemed to me a crucial example, I was more inclined to be convinced. This attitude appears, to myself, illogical, but it is natural and usual.

We cannot tell what indications may be accidentally given in experiments in thought transference. But, in these cases of crystal-gazing, the detail was too copious to be conveyed, by a looker-on, in a wink or a cough. I do not mean to say that success was invariable. I thought of Dr. W.G. Grace, and the scryer saw an old man crawling along with a stick. But I doubt if Dr. Grace is very deeply seated in that mystic entity, my subconscious self. The ‘scries’ which came right were sometimes, but not always, those of which the ‘agent’ (or person scried for) was consciously thinking. But the examples will illustrate the various kinds of occurrences.

Here one should first consider the arguments against accepting recognition of objects merely described by another person. The crystal-gazer may know the inquirer so intimately as to have a very good guess at the subject of his meditation. Again, a man is likely to be thinking of a woman, and a woman of a man, so the field of conjecture is limited. In answer to the first objection I may say that the crystal-gazer was among strangers, all of whom, myself included, she now saw for the first time. Nor could she have studied their histories beforehand, for she could not know (normally) when she left home, that she was about to be shown a glass ball, or whom she would meet. The second objection is met by the circumstance that ladies were *not* usually picked out for men, nor men for women. Indeed, these choices were the exceptions, and in each case were marked by minutely particular details. A third objection is that credulity, or the love of strange novelties, or desire to oblige, biases the inquirers, and makes them anxious to recognise something familiar in the scryer’s descriptions. In the same way we know how people recognise faces in the most blurred and vague of spiritist photographs, or see family resemblances in the most rudimentary doughfaced babies. Take descriptions of persons in a passport, or in a proclamation sketching the personal appearance of a criminal. These fit the men or women intended, but they also fit a crowd of other people. The description given by the scryer then may come right by a fortuitous coincidence, or may be too credulously recognised.

The complex of coincidences, however, could not be attributed to chance selection out of the whole possible field of conjecture. We must remember, too, that a series of such hits increases, at an enormous rate, the odds against accidental conjecture. Of such mere luck I may give an example. I was writing a story of which the hero was George Kelly, one of the ‘Seven Men of Moidart.’ A year after composing my tale, I found the Government description of Mr. Kelly (1736). It exactly tallied with my purely fanciful sketch, down to eyes, and teeth, and face, except that I made my hero ‘about six feet,’ whereas the Government gave him five feet ten. But I knew beforehand that Mr. Kelly was a clergyman; his curious career proved him to be a person of great activity and geniality — and he was of Irish birth. Even a dozen such guesses, equally correct, could not suggest any powers of ‘vision,’ when so much was known beforehand about the person guessed at. I now give cases in the experience of Miss Angus, as one may call the crystal-gazer. The first occurred the day after she got the glass ball for the first time. She writes:

‘I. — A lady one day asked me to scry out a friend of whom she would think. Almost immediately I exclaimed “Here is an old, old lady looking at me with a triumphant smile on her face. She has a prominent nose and nut-cracker chin. Her face is very much wrinkled, especially at the sides of her eyes, as if she were always smiling. She is wearing a little white shawl with a black edge. *But!* … she *can’t* be old as her hair is quite brown! although her face looks so very very old.” The picture then vanished, and the lady said that I had accurately described her friend’s *mother* instead of himself; that it was a family joke that the mother must dye her hair, it was so brown and she was eighty-two years old. The lady asked me if the vision were distinct enough for me to recognise a likeness in the son’s photograph; next day she laid several photographs before me, and in a moment, without the slightest hesitation I picked him out from his wonderful likeness to my vision!’

The inquirer verbally corroborated all the facts to me, within a week, but leaned to a theory of ‘electricity.’ She has read and confirms this account.

‘II. — One afternoon I was sitting beside a young lady whom I had never seen or heard of before. She asked if she might look into my crystal, and while she did so I happened to look over her shoulder and saw a ship tossing on a very heavy choppy sea, although land was still visible in the dim distance. That vanished, and, as suddenly, a little house appeared with five or six (I forget now the exact number I then counted) steps leading up to the door. On the second step stood an old man reading a newspaper. In front of the house was a field of thick stubbly grass where some *lambs*, I was going to say, but they were more like very small sheep.. were grazing.

‘When the scene vanished, the young lady told me I had vividly described a spot in Shetland where she and her mother were soon going to spend a few weeks.’

I heard of this case from Miss Angus within a day or two of its occurrence, and it was then confirmed to me, verbally, by the other lady. She again confirms it (December 21, 1897). Both ladies had hitherto been perfect strangers to each other. The old man was the schoolmaster, apparently. In her MS., Miss Angus writes ‘Skye,’ but at the time both she and the other lady said Shetland (which I have restored). In Shetland the sheep, like the ponies, are small. Fortuitous coincidence, of course, may be invoked. The next account is by another lady, say Miss Rose.

‘III. — Writes Miss Rose — My first experience of crystal gazing was not a pleasant one, as will be seen from the following which I now relate as exactly as I can remember. I asked my friend, Miss Angus, to allow me to look in her crystal, and, after doing so for a short time, gave up, saying it was very unsatisfactory, as, although I saw a room with a bright fire in it and a bed all curtained and people coming and going, I could not make out who they were, so I returned the crystal to Miss Angus, with the request that she might look for me. She said at once, “I see a bed with a man in it looking very ill and a lady in black beside it.” Without saying any more Miss Angus still kept looking, and, after some time, I asked to have one more look, and on her passing the ball back to me, I received quite a shock, for there, perfectly clearly in a bright light, I saw stretched out in bed an old man apparently dead; for a few minutes I could not look, and on doing so once more there appeared a lady in black and out of dense darkness a long black object was being carried and it stopped before a dark opening overhung with rocks. At the time I saw this I was staying with cousins, and it was a Friday evening. On Sunday we heard of the death of the father-in-law of one of my cousins; of course I knew the old gentleman was very ill, but my thoughts were not in the least about him when looking in the crystal. I may also say I did not recognise in the features of the dead man those of the old gentleman whose death I mention. On looking again on Sunday, I once more saw the curtained bed and some people.’

I now give Miss Angus’s version of this case, as originally received from her (December 1897). I had previously received an oral version, from a person present at the scrying. It differed, in one respect, from what Miss Angus writes. Her version is offered because it is made independently, without consultation, or attempt to reconcile recollections.

‘At a recent experience of gazing, for the first time I was able to make another see what *I* saw in the crystal. Miss Rose called one afternoon, and begged me to look in the ball for her. I did so, and immediately exclaimed, “Oh! here is a bed, with a man in it looking very ill , and there is a lady dressed in black sitting beside the bed.” I did not recognise the man to be anyone I knew, so I told her to look. In a very short time she called out, “Oh! I see the bed too! But, oh! take it away, the man is *dead*!” She got quite a shock, and said she would never look in it again. Soon, however, curiosity prompted her to have one more look, and the scene at once came back again, and slowly, from a misty object at the side of the bed, the lady in black became quite distinct. Then she described several people in the room, and said they were carrying something all draped in black. When she saw this, she put the ball down and would not look at it again. She called again on Sunday (this had been on Friday) with her cousin, and we teased her about being *afraid* of the crystal, so she said she would just look in it once more. She took the ball, but immediately laid it down again, saying, “No, I won’t look, as the bed with the awful man in it is there again!”

‘When they went home, they heard that the cousin’s father-in-law had died that afternoon, but to show he had never been in our thoughts, although we *all* knew he had not been well, *no one* suggested him; his name was never mentioned in connection with the vision.’

‘Clairvoyance,’ of course, is not illustrated here, the corpse being unrecognised, and the coincidence, doubtless, accidental.

The next case is attested by a civilian, a slight acquaintance of Miss Angus’s, who now saw him for the second time only, but better known to her family.

‘IV. — On Thursday, March — ? 1897, I was lunching with my friends the Anguses, and during luncheon the conversation turned upon crystal balls and the visions that, by some people, can be seen in them. The subject arose owing to Miss Angus having just been presented with a crystal ball by Mr. Andrew Lang. I asked her to let me see it, and then to try and see if she could conjure up a vision of any person of whom I might think…. I fixed my mind upon a friend, a young trooper in the , as I thought his would be a striking and peculiar personality, owing to his uniform, and also because I felt sure that Miss Angus could not possibly know of his existence. I fixed my mind steadily upon my friend, and presently Miss Angus, who had already seen two cloudy visions of faces and people, called out, “Now I see a man on a horse most distinctly; he is dressed most queerly, and glitters all over — why, it’s a soldier! a soldier in uniform, but it’s not an officer.” My excitement on hearing this was so great that I ceased to concentrate my attention upon the thought of my friend, and the vision faded away and could not afterwards be recalled. — December 2, 1897.’

The witness gives the name of the trooper, whom he had befriended in a severe illness. Miss Angus’s own account follows: she had told me the story in June 1897.

‘Shortly after I became the happy possessor of a “crystal” I managed to convert several very decided “sceptics,” and I will here give a short account of my experiences with two or three of them.

‘One was with a Mr. —— , who was so determined to baffle me, he said he would think of a friend it would not be *possible* for me to describe!

‘I had only met Mr. —— the day before, and knew utmost nothing about him or his personal friends.

‘I took up the ball, which immediately became misty, and out of this mist gradually a crowd of people appeared, but too indistinctly for me to recognise anyone, until suddenly a man on horseback came galloping along. I remember saying, “I can’t describe what he is like, but he is dressed in a very queer way — in something so bright that the sun shining on him quite dazzles me, and I cannot make him out!” As he came nearer I exclaimed. “Why, it’s a *soldier* in shining armour, but it’s not an *officer*, only a soldier!” Two friends who were in the room said Mr. — — ‘s excitement was intense, and my attention was drawn from the ball by hearing him call out, “It’s wonderful! it’s perfectly true! I was thinking of a young boy, a son of a crofter, in whom I am deeply interested, and who is a trooper in the —— in London, which would account for the crowd of people round him in the street!”’

The next case is given, first in the version of the lady who was unconsciously scried for, and next in that of Miss Angus. The other lady writes:

‘V. — I met Miss A. for the first time in a friend’s house in the south of England, and one evening mention was made of a crystal ball, and our hostess asked Miss A. to look in it, and, if possible, tell her what was happening to a friend of hers. Miss A. took the crystal, and our hostess put her hand on Miss A.’s forehead to “will her.” I, not believing in this, took up a book and went to the other side of the room. I was suddenly very much startled to hear Miss A., in quite an agitated way, describe a scene that had most certainly been very often in my thoughts, but of which I had never mentioned a word, She accurately described a race-course in Scotland, and an accident which happened to a friend of mine only a week or two before, and she was evidently going through the same doubt and anxiety that I did at the time as to whether he was actually killed or only very much hurt. It really was a most wonderful revelation to me, as it was the very first time I had seen a crystal. Our hostess, of course, was very much annoyed that she had not been able to influence Miss A., while I, who had appeared so very indifferent, should have affected her. — November 28, 1897.’

Miss Angus herself writes:

‘Another case was a rather interesting one, as I somehow got inside the thoughts of *one* lady while *another* was doing her best to influence me!

‘Miss —— , a friend in Brighton, has strange “magnetic” powers, and felt quite sure of success with me and the ball.

‘Another lady, Miss H., who was present, laughed at the whole thing, especially when Miss —— insisted on holding my hand and patting her other hand on my forehead! Miss H. in a scornful manner took up a book, and, crossing to the other side of the room, left us to our folly.

‘In a very short time I felt myself getting excited, which had never happened before, when I looked in the crystal. I saw a crowd of people, and in some strange way I felt I was in it, and we all seemed to be waiting for something. Soon a rider came past, young, dressed for racing. His horse ambled past, and he smiled and nodded to those he knew in the crowd, and then was lost to sight.

‘In a moment we all seemed to feel as if something had happened, and I went through great agony of suspense trying to see what seemed *just* beyond my view. Soon, however, two or three men approached, and carried him past before my eyes, and again my anxiety was intense to discover if he were only very badly hurt or if life were really extinct. All this happened in a few moments, but long enough to have left me so agitated that I could not realise it had only been a vision in a glass ball.

‘By this time Miss H. had laid aside her book, and came forward quite startled, and told me that I had accurately described a scene on a race-course in Scotland which she had witnessed just a week or two before — a scene that had very often been in her thoughts, but, as we were strangers to each other, she had never mentioned. She also said I had exactly described her own feelings at the time, and had brought it all back in a most vivid manner.

‘The other lady was rather disappointed that, after she had concentrated her thoughts so hard, I should have been influenced instead by one who had jeered at the whole affair.’

VI. — I may briefly add an experiment of December 21, 1897. A gentleman had recently come from England to the Scottish town where Miss Angus lives. He dined with her family, and about 10.15 to 10.30 P.M. she proposed to look in the glass for a scene or person of whom he was to think. He called up a mental picture of a ball at which he had recently been, and of a young lady to whom he had there been introduced. The lady’s face, however, he could not clearly visualise, and Miss Angus reported nothing but a view of an empty ball-room, with polished floor and many lights. The gentleman made another effort, and remembered his partner with some distinctness. Miss Angus then described another room, not a ball-room, comfortably furnished, in which a girl with brown hair drawn back from her forehead, and attired in a high-necked white blouse, was reading, or writing letters, under a bright light in an unshaded glass globe. The description of the features, figure, and height tallied with Mr. — — ‘s recollection; but he had never seen this Geraldine of an hour except in ball dress. He and Miss Angus noted the time by their watches (it was 10.30), and Mr. —— said that on the first opportunity he would ask the young lady how she had been dressed and how employed at that hour on December 21. On December 22 he met her at another dance, and her reply corroborated the crystal picture. She had been writing letters, in a high-necked white blouse, under an incandescent gas lamp with an unshaded glass globe. She was entirely unknown to Miss Angus, and had only been seen once by Mr. —— . Mr. —— and the lady of the crystal picture corroborated all this in writing.

I now suggested an experiment to Miss Angus, which, after all, was clearly not of a nature to establish a ‘test’ for sceptics. The inquirer was to write down, and inclose in an envelope, a statement of his thoughts; Miss Angus was to do the same with her description of the picture seen by her; and these documents were to be sent to me, without communication between the inquirer and the crystal-gazer. Of course, this could in no way prove absence of collusion, as the two parties might arrange privately beforehand what the vision was to be.

Indeed, nobody is apt to be convinced, or shaken, unless he is himself the inquirer and a stranger to the seeress, as the people in these experiments were. Evidence interesting to *them* — and, in a secondary degree, to others who know them — can thus be procured; but strangers are left to the same choice of doubts as in all reports of psychological experiences, ‘chromatic audition,’ views of coloured numerals, and the other topics illustrated by Mr. Galton’s interesting researches.

In this affair of the envelopes the inquirer was a Mr. Pembroke, who had just made Miss Angus’s acquaintance, and was but a sojourner in the land. He wrote, before knowing what Miss Angus had seen in the ball:

‘VII. — On Sunday, January 23, 1898, whilst Miss Angus was looking in the crystal ball, I was thinking of my brother, who was, I believe, at that time, somewhere between Sabathu (Punjab, India) and Egypt. I was anxious to know what stage of his journey he had reached.’

Miss Angus saw, and wrote, before telling Mr. Pembroke:

‘A long and very white road, with tall trees at one side; on the other, a river or lake of greyish water. Blue sky, with a crimson sunset. A great black ship is anchored near, and on the deck I see a man lying, apparently very ill. He is a powerful-looking man, fair, and very much bronzed. Seven or eight Englishmen, in very light clothes, are standing on the road beside the boat.

‘January 28, 1898.’

‘A great black ship,’ anchored in ‘a river or lake,’ naturally suggests the Suez Canal, where, in fact, Mr. Pembroke’s brother was just arriving, as was proved by a letter received from him eight days after the experiment was recorded, on January 31. At that date Mr. Pembroke had not yet been told the nature of Miss Angus’s crystal picture, nor had she any knowledge of his brother’s whereabouts.

In February 1898, Miss Angus again came to the place where I was residing. We visited together the scene of an historical crime, and Miss Angus looked into the glass ball. It was easy for her to ‘visualise’ the incidents of the crime (the murder of Cardinal Beaton), for they are familiar enough to many people. What she did see in the ball was a tall, pale lady, ‘about forty, but looking thirty-five,’ with hair drawn back from the brows, standing beside a high chair, dressed in a wide farthingale of stiff grey brocade, without a ruff. The costume corresponds well (as we found) with that of 1546, and I said, ‘I suppose it is Mariotte Ogilvy’ — to whom Miss Angus’s historical knowledge (and perhaps that of the general public) did not extend. Mariotte was the Cardinal’s lady-love, and was in the Castle on the night before the murder, according to Knox. She had been in my mind, whence (on the theory of thought transference) she may have passed to Miss Angus’s mind; but I had never speculated on Mariotte’s costume. Nothing but conjecture, of course, comes of these apparently ‘retrospective’ pictures; though a most singular and picturesque coincidence occurred, which may be told in a very different connection.

The next example was noted at the same town. The lady who furnishes it is well known to me, and it was verbally corroborated by Miss Angus, to whom the lady, her absent nephew, and all about her, were entirely strange.

‘VIII. — I was very anxious to know whether my nephew would be sent to India this year, so I told Miss Angus that I had thought of something, and asked her to look in the glass ball. She did so, but almost immediately turned round and looked out of the window at the sea, and said, “I saw a ship so distinctly I thought it must be a reflection.” She looked in the ball again, and said, “It is a large ship, and it is passing a huge rock with a lighthouse on it. I can’t see who are on the ship, but the sky is very clear and blue. Now I see a large building, something like a club, and in front there are a great many people sitting and walking about. I think it must be some place abroad, for the people are all dressed in very light clothes, and it seems to be very sunny and warm. I see a young man sitting on a chair, with his feet straight out before him. He is not talking to anyone, but seems to be listening to something. He is dark and slight, and not very tall; and his eyebrows are dark and very distinctly marked.”

‘I had not had the pleasure of meeting Miss Angus before, and she knew nothing whatever about my nephew; but the young man described was exactly like him, both in his appearance and in the way he was sitting.’

In this case thought transference may be appealed to. The lady was thinking of her nephew in connection with India. It is not maintained, of course, that the picture was of a prophetic character.

The following examples have some curious and unusual features. On Wednesday, February 2, 1897, Miss Angus was looking in the crystal, to amuse six or seven people whose acquaintance she had that day made. A gentleman, Mr. Bissett, asked her ‘what letter was in his pocket,’ She then saw, under a bright sky, and, as it were, a long way off, a large building, in and out of which many men were coming and going. Her impression was that the scene must be abroad. In the little company present, it should be added, was a lady, Mrs. Cockburn, who had considerable reason to think of her young married daughter, then at a place about fifty miles away. After Miss Angus had described the large building and crowds of men, some one asked, ‘Is it an exchange?’ ‘It might be,’ she said. ‘Now comes a man in a great hurry. He has a broad brow, and short, curly hair; hat pressed low down on his eyes. The face is very serious; but he has a delightful smile.’ Mr. and Mrs. Bissett now both recognised their friend and stockbroker, whose letter was in Mr. Bissett’s pocket.

The vision, which interested Miss Angus, passed away, and was interrupted by that of a hospital nurse, and of a lady in a *peignoir*, lying on a sofa, *with bare feet*. Miss Angus mentioned this vision as a bore, she being more interested in the stockbroker, who seems to have inherited what was once in the possession of another stockbroker— ‘the smile of Charles Lamb.’ Mrs. Cockburn, for whom no pictures appeared, was rather vexed, and privately expressed with freedom a very sceptical opinion about the whole affair. But, on Saturday, February 5, 1897, Miss Angus was again with Mr. and Mrs. Bissett. When Mrs. Bissett announced that she had ‘thought of something,’ Miss Angus saw a walk in a wood or garden, beside a river, under a brilliant blue sky. Here was a lady, very well dressed, twirling a white parasol on her shoulder as she walked, in a curious ‘stumpy’ way, beside a gentleman in light clothes, such as are worn in India. He was broad-shouldered, had a short neck and a straight nose, and seemed to listen, laughing, but indifferent, to his obviously vivacious companion. The lady had a ‘drawn’ face, indicative of ill health. Then followed a scene in which the man, without the lady, was looking on at a number of Orientals busy in the felling of trees. Mrs. Bissett recognised, in the lady, her sister, Mrs. Clifton, in India — above all, when Miss Angus gave a realistic imitation of Mrs. Clifton’s walk, the peculiarity of which was caused by an illness some years ago. Mrs. and Mr. Bissett also recognised their brother-in-law in the gentleman seen in both pictures. On being shown a portrait of Mrs. Clifton as a girl, Miss Angus said it was ‘like, but too pretty.’ A photograph done recently, however, showed her ‘the drawn face’ of the crystal picture.

Next day, Sunday, February 6, Mrs. Bissett received, what was not usual — a letter from her sister in India, Mrs. Clifton, dated January 20. Mrs. Clifton described a place in a native State, where she had been at a great ‘function,’ in certain gardens beside a river. She added that they were going to another place for a certain purpose, ‘and then we go into camp till the end of February.’ One of Mr. Clifton’s duties is to direct the clearing of wood preparatory to the formation of the camp, as in Miss Angus’s crystal picture. The sceptical Mrs. Cockburn heard of these coincidences, and an idea occurred to her. She wrote to her daughter, who has been mentioned, and asked whether, on Wednesday, February 2, she had been lying on a sofa in her bed-room, with bare feet. The young lady confessed that it was indeed so; and, when she heard how the fact came to be known, expressed herself with some warmth on the abuse of glass balls, which tend to rob life of its privacy.

In this case the *prima facie* aspect of things is that a thought of Mr. Bissett's about his stockbroker, *dulce ridentem*, somehow reflected itself into Miss Angus's mind by way of the glass ball, and was interrupted by a thought of Mrs. Cockburn's, as to her daughter. But how these thoughts came to display the unknown facts concerning the garden by the river, the felling of trees for a camp, and the bare feet, is a question about which it is vain to theorise.

On the vanishing of the jungle scene there appeared a picture of a man in a dark undress uniform, beside a great bay, in which were ships of war. Wooden huts, as in a plague district, were on shore. Mr. Bissett asked, 'What is the man's expression?' 'He looks as if he had been giving a lot of last orders.' Then appeared 'a place like a hospital, with five or six beds — no, berths: it is a ship. Here is the man again.' He was minutely described, one peculiarity being the way in which his hair grew — or, rather, did not grow — on his temples.

Miss Angus now asked, 'Where is my little lady?' — meaning the lady of the twirling parasol and *staccato* walk. 'Oh, I've left off thinking of her,' said Mrs. Bissett, who had been thinking of, and recognised in the officer in undress uniform, her brother, the man with the singular hair, whose face, in fact, had been scarred in that way by an encounter with a tiger. He was expected to sail from Bombay, but news of his setting forth has not been received (February 10) at the moment when this is written.

In these Indian cases, 'thought transference' may account for the correspondence between the figures seen by Miss Angus and the ideas in the mind of Mr. and Mrs. Bissett. But the hypothesis of thought transference, while it would cover the wooden huts at Bombay (Mrs. Bissett knowing that her brother was about to leave that place), can scarcely explain the scene in the garden by the river and the scene with the trees. The incident of the bare feet may be regarded as a fortuitous coincidence, since Miss Angus saw the young lady foreshortened, and could not describe her face.

In the Introductory Chapter it was observed that the phenomena which apparently point to some unaccountable supernormal faculty of acquiring knowledge are 'trivial.' These anecdotes illustrate the triviality; but the facts certainly left a number of people, wholly unfamiliar with such experiments, under the impression that Miss Angus's glass ball was like Prince Ali's magical telescope in the ‘Arabian Nights.’ These experiments, however, occasionally touch on intimate personal matters, and cannot be reported in such instances.

It will be remarked that the faculty is freakish, and does not always respond to conscious exertion of thought in the mind of the inquirer. Thus, in Case I. a connection of the person thought of is discerned; in another the mind of a stranger present seems to be read. In another case (not given here) the inquirer tried to visualise a card for a person present to guess, while Miss Angus was asked to describe an object which the inquirer was acquainted with, but which he banished from his conscious thought. The double experiment was a double-barrelled success.

It seems hardly necessary to point out that chance coincidence will not cover this set of cases, where in each ‘guess’ the field of conjecture is boundless, and is not even narrowed by the crystal-gazer’s knowledge of the persons for whose diversion she makes the experiment. As ‘muscle-reading’ is not in question (in the one case of contact between inquirer and crystal-gazer the results were unexpected), and as no unconsciously made signs could convey, for example, the idea of a cavalry soldier in uniform, or an accident on a race-course in two *tableaux*, I do not at present see any more plausible explanation than that of thought transference, though how that is to account for some of the cases given I do not precisely understand.

Any one who can accept the assurance of my personal belief in the good faith of all concerned will see how very useful this faculty of crystal-gazing must be to the Apache or Australian medicine-man or Polynesian priest. Freakish as the faculty is, a few real successes, well exploited and eked out by fraud, would set up a wizard’s reputation. That a faculty of being thus affected is genuine seems proved, apart from modern evidence, by the world-wide prevalence of crystal-gazing in the ethnographic region. But the discovery of this prevalence had not been made, to my knowledge, before modern instances induced me to notice the circumstances, sporadically recorded in books of travel.

The phenomena are certainly of a kind to encourage the savage theory of the wandering soul. How else, thinkers would say, can the seer visit the distant place or person, and correctly describe men and scenes which, in the body, he never saw? Or they would encourage the Polynesian belief that the ‘spirit’ of the thing or person looked for is suspended by a god over the water, crystal, blood, ink, or whatever it may be. Thus, to anthropologists, the discovery of crystal-gazing as a thing widely diffused and still flourishing ought to be grateful, however much they may blame my childish credulity. I may add that I have no ground to suppose that crystal-gazing will ever be of practical service to the police or to persons who have lost articles of portable property. But I have no objection to experiments being made at Scotland Yard.

VI

ANTHROPOLOGY AND HALLUCINATIONS

We have been examining cases, savage or civilised, in which knowledge is believed to be acquired through no known channel of sense. All such instances among savages, whether of the nature of clairvoyance simple, or by aid of gazing in a smooth surface, or in dreams, or in trance, or through second sight, would confirm if they did not originate the belief in the separable soul. The soul, if it is to visit distant places and collect information, must leave the body, it would be argued, and must so far be capable of leading an independent life. Perhaps we ought next to study cases of ‘possession,’ when knowledge is supposed to be conveyed by an alien soul, ghost, spirit, or god, taking up its abode in a man, and speaking out of his lips. But it seems better first to consider the alleged super-normal phenomena which may have led the savage reasoner to believe that *he* was not the only owner of a separable soul: that other people were equally gifted.

The sense, as of separation, which a savage dreamer or seer would feel after a dream or vision in which he visited remote places, would satisfy him that *his* soul, at least, was volatile. But some experience of what he would take to be visits from the spirits of others, would be needed before he recognised that other men, as well as he, had the faculty of sending their souls a journeying.

Now, ordinary dreams, in which the dreamer seemed to see persons who were really remote; would supply to the savage reasoner a certain amount of affirmative evidence. It is part of Mr. Tylor’s contention that savages (like some children) are subject to the difficulty which most of us may have occasionally felt in deciding ‘Did this really happen, or did I dream it?’ Thus, ordinary dreams would offer to the early thinker some evidence that other men’s souls could visit his, as he believes that his can visit them.

But men, we may assume, were not, at the assumed stage of thought, so besotted as not to take a great practical distinction between sleeping and waking experience on the whole. As has been shown, the distinction is made by the lowest savages of our acquaintance. One clear *waking* hallucination, on the other hand, of the presence of a person really absent, could not but tell more with the early philosopher than a score of dreams, for to be easily forgotten is of the essence of a dream. Savages, indeed, oddly enough, have hit on our theory, ‘dreams go by contraries.’ Dr. Callaway illustrates this for the Zulus, and Mr. Scott for the Mang’anza. Thus they *do* discriminate between sleeping and waking. We must therefore examine *waking* hallucinations in the field of actual experience, and on such recent evidence as may be accessible. If these hallucinations agree, in a certain ratio, beyond what fortuitous coincidence can explain, with real but unknown events, then such hallucinations would greatly strengthen, in the mind of an early thinker, the savage theory that a man at a distance may, voluntarily or involuntarily, project his spirit on a journey, and be seen where he is not present.

When Mr. Tylor wrote his book, the study of the occasional waking hallucinations of the sane and healthy was in its infancy. Much, indeed, had been written about hallucinations, but these were mainly the chronic false perceptions of maniacs, of drunkards, and of persons in bad health such as Nicolai and Mrs. A. The hallucinations of persons of genius — Jeanne d'Arc, Luther, Socrates, Pascal, were by some attributed to lunacy in these famous people. Scarcely any writers before Mr. Galton had recognised the occurrence of hallucinations once in a life, perhaps, among healthy, sober, and mentally sound people. If these were known to occur, they were dismissed as dreams of an unconscious sleep. This is still practically the hypothesis of Dr. Parish, as we shall see later. But in the last twenty years the infrequent hallucinations of the sane have been recognised by Mr. Galton, and discussed by Professor James, Mr. Gurney, Dr. Parish, and many other writers.

Two results have followed. First, 'ghosts' are shown to be, when not illusions caused by mistaking one object for another, then hallucinations. As these most frequently represent a living person who is not present, by parity of reason the appearance of a dead person is on the same level, is not a space-filling 'ghost,' but merely an hallucination. Such an appearance can, *prima facie*, suggest no reasonable inference as to the continued existence of the dead. On the other hand, the new studies have raised the perhaps insoluble question, 'Do not hallucinations of the sane, representing the living, coincide more frequently than mere luck can account for, with the death or other crisis of the person apparently seen?' If this could be proved, then there would seem to be a causal *nexus*, a relation of cause and effect between the hallucination and the coincident crisis. That connection would be provisionally explained by some not understood action of the mind or brain of the person in the crisis, on that of the person who has the hallucination. This is no new idea; only the name, Telepathy, is modern. Of course, if all this were accepted, it would be the next step to ask whether hallucinations representing the dead show any signs of being caused by some action on the side of the departed. That is a topic on which the little that we have to say must be said later.

In the meantime the reader who has persevered so far is apt to go no further.

The prejudice against ‘wraiths’ and ‘ghosts’ is very strong; but, then, our innocent phantasms are neither (as we understand their nature) ghosts nor wraiths. Kant broke the edges of his metaphysical tools against, not these phantasms, but the logically inconceivable entities which were at once material and non-material, at once ‘spiritual’ and ‘space-filling.’ There is no such difficulty about hallucinations, which, whatever else may be said about them, are familiar facts of experience. The only real objections are the statements that hallucinations are always *morbid* (which is no longer the universal belief of physiologists and psychologists), and that the alleged coincidences of a phantasm of a person with the unknown death of that person at a distance are ‘pure flukes.’ That is the question to which we recur later.

In the meantime, the defenders of the theory, that there is some not understood connection of cause and effect between the death or other crisis at one end and the perception representing the person affected by the crisis at the other end, point out that such hallucinations, or other effects on the percipient, exist in a regular rising scale of potency and perceptibility. Suppose that ‘A’s’ death in Yorkshire is to affect the consciousness of ‘B’ in Surrey before he knows anything about the fact (suppose it for the sake of argument), then the effect may take place (1) on ‘B’s’ emotions, producing a vague *malaise* and gloom; (2) on his motor nerves, urging him to some act; (3) or may translate itself into his senses, as a touch felt, a voice heard, a figure seen; or (4) may render itself as a phrase or an idea.

Of these, (1) the emotional effect is, of course, the vaguest. We may all have had a sudden fit of gloom which we could not explain. People rarely act on such impressions, and, when they do, are often wrong. Thus a friend of my own was suddenly so overwhelmed, at golf, with inexplicable misery (though winning his match) that he apologised to his opponent and walked home from the ninth hole. Nothing was wrong at home. Probably some real ground of apprehension had obscurely occurred to his mind and expressed itself in his emotion.

But one may illustrate what did look like a coincidence by the experience of the same friend. He inhabited, as a young married man, a flat in a house belonging to an acquaintance. The hall was covered by a kind of glass roof, over part of its extent. He was staying in the country with his wife, and as they travelled home the lady was beset with an irresistible conviction that something terrible had occurred, *not* to her children. On reaching their house they found that one of their maids had fallen through the glass roof and killed herself. They also learned that the girl’s sister had arrived at the house, immediately after the accident, explaining that she was driven to come by a sense that something dreadful had happened. The lawyer, too, who represented the owner of the house, had appeared, unsummoned, from a conviction, which he could not resist, that for some reason unknown he was wanted there. Here, then, was not an hallucination, but an emotional effect simultaneously reaching the consciousness of three persons, and coinciding with an unknown crisis.

Cases in which a person feels urged to an act (2) are also recorded. Indeed, the lawyer's in our anecdote is such an instance. Not to trouble ourselves (3) with 'voices,' hallucinations of sight, coinciding with a distant unknown crisis, are traced from a mere feeling that somebody is in the room, followed by a *mental*, or *mind's eye* picture of a person dying at a distance, up to a kind of 'vision' of a person or scene, and so on to hallucinations appealing, at once, to touch, sight, and hearing. As some hundreds of these narratives of coincidental hallucinations in every degree have been collected from witnesses at first hand, often personally known, and usually personally cross-questioned, by the student, it is difficult to deny that there is a *prima facie* case for inquiry.

There is here no question of 'spirits,' with all their physical and metaphysical difficulties. Nor is there any desire to shirk the fact that many 'presentiments' and hallucinations of the sane coincide with no ascertainable fact. We only provisionally posit the possibility of an influence, in its nature unknown, of one mind on another at a distance, such influence translating itself into an hallucination. An inquiry into this subject, in the ethnographic and modern fields, may be new but involves no 'superstition.'

We now return to Mr. Tylor, who treats of hallucinations among other experiences which led early savage thinkers to believe in ghosts or separable souls, the origin of religion.

As to the causes of hallucinations in general, Mr. Tylor has something to say, but it is nothing systematic. 'Sickness, exhaustion, and excitement' cause savages to behold 'human spectres,' in 'the objective reality' of which they believe. But if an educated modern, not sick, nor exhausted, nor excited, has an hallucination of a friend's presence, he, too, believes that it is 'objective,' is his friend in flesh and blood, till he finds out his mistake, by examination or reflection. As Professor William James remarks, in his 'Principles of Psychology,' such solitary hallucinations of the sane and healthy, once in a life-time, are difficult to account for, and are by no means rare. 'Sometimes,' Mr. Tylor observes, 'the phantom has the characteristic quality of not being visible to all of an assembled company,' and he adds 'to assert or imply that they are visible sometimes, and to some persons, but not always, or to everyone, is to lay down an explanation of facts which is not, indeed, our usual modern explanation, but which is a perfectly rational and intelligible product of early science.'

It is, indeed, nor has later science produced any rational and intelligible explanation of collective hallucinations, shared by several persons at once, and perhaps not perceived by others who are present. Mr. Tylor, it is true, asserts that ‘in civilised countries a rumour of some one having seen a phantom is enough to bring a sight of it to others whose minds are in a properly receptive state.’ But this is arguing in a circle; What is ‘a properly receptive state’? If illness, overwork, ‘expectant attention,’ make ‘a properly receptive state,’ I should have seen several phantoms in several ‘haunted houses.’ But the only thing of the sort I ever saw occurred when I was thinking of nothing less, when I was in good health, and when I did not know (nor did I learn till long after) that it was the right and usual phantom to see. Mr. Podmore remarks that various members of the Psychical Society have sojourned in various ‘haunted houses,’ ‘some of them in a state of expectancy and nervous excitement,’ which never caused them to see phantoms, for they saw none.

Mr. Tylor treats of waking hallucinations in much the same manner as he deals with ‘travelling clairvoyance.’ He does not study them ‘in the field of experience.’ He is not concerned with the truth of the facts, important as we think it would be, but with his theory that hallucinations, among other causes, would naturally give rise to the belief in spirits, and thus to the early philosophy of Animism. Now, certainly, the hallucination of a person’s presence, say at the moment of his death at a distance, would suggest to a savage that something of the dying man’s, something symbolised in the word ‘shadow,’ or ‘breath’ *(spiritus)*, had come to say farewell. The modern ‘spiritualistic’ theory, again, that the dead man’s ‘spirit’ is actually present to the percipient, in space, corresponds to, and is derived from, the animistic philosophy of the savage. But we may believe in such ‘death-wraiths,’ or hallucinatory appearances of the dying, without being either savages or spiritualists. We may believe without pretending to explain, or we may advance the theory of ‘Telepathy,’ Hegel’s ‘magical tie,’ according to which the distant mind somehow impresses itself, in a more or less perfect hallucination, on the mind of the person who perceives the wraith. If this be so, or even if no explanation be offered, the truth of the stories of coincidental apparitions becomes important, as pointing to a new region of psychical inquiry. Then the evidence of savages as to hallucinations of their own, coincident with the death of their absent friends, will confirm, *quantum valeat*, the evidence of many modern observers in all ranks of life, and all degrees of culture, from Lord Brougham to an old nurse.

As to hallucinations coincident with the death of the person apparently seen, Mr. Tylor says: ‘Narratives of this class I can here only specify without arguing on them, they are abundantly in circulation.’ Now, the modern hallucinations themselves can scarcely, perhaps, be called ‘survivals from savagery,’ though the opinion that an hallucination of a person must be his ‘spirit’ is really such a survival. It is with that opinion, with Animism in its hallucinatory origins, that Mr. Tylor is concerned, not with the hallucinations themselves or with the evidence for their veridical existence.

Mr. Tylor gives three anecdotes, narrated to him, in two cases, by the seers, of phantasms of the living beheld by them (and in one case by a companion also) when the real person was dying at a distance. He adds: ‘My own view is that nothing but dreams and visions could have ever put into men’s minds such an idea as that of souls being ethereal images of bodies.’ The idea may be perfectly erroneous; but if the occurrence of such coincidental appearances as Mr. Tylor tells us about could be shown to be too frequent for mere chance to produce, then there would be a presumption in favour of some unknown faculties in our nature — a proper theme for anthropology.

The hallucinations of which we hear most are those in which a person sees the phantom of another person, who, unknown to him, is in or near the hour of death. Mr. Tylor, in addition to his three instances in civilised life, alludes to one in savage life, with references to other cases. We turn to his savage instance, offering it at full length from the original.

‘Among the Maoris’ (says Mr. Shortland) ‘it is always ominous to see the figure of an absent person. If the figure is very shadowy, and its face is not seen, death, although he may ere long be expected, has not seized his prey. If the face of the absent person is seen, the omen forewarns the beholder that he is already dead.’

The following statement is from the mouth of an eyewitness:

‘A party of natives left their village, with the intention of being absent some time, on a pig-hunting expedition. One night, while they were seated in the open air around a blazing fire, the figure of a relative who had been left ill at home was seen to approach. The apparition appeared to two of the party only, and vanished immediately on their making an exclamation of surprise. When they returned to the village they inquired for the sick man, and then learnt that he had died about the time he was said to have been seen.’

I now give Maori cases, communicated to me by Mr. Tregear, F.R.G.S., author of a ‘Maori Comparative Dictionary.’

A very intelligent Maori chief said to me, ‘I have seen but two ghosts. I was a boy at school in Auckland, and one morning was asleep in bed when I found myself aroused by some one shaking me by the shoulder. I looked up, and saw bending over me the well-known form of my uncle, whom I supposed to be at the Bay of Islands. I spoke to him, but the form became dim and vanished. The next mail brought me the news of his death. Years passed away, and I saw no ghost or spirit — not even when my father and mother died, and I was absent in each case. Then one day I was sitting reading, when a dark shadow fell across my book. I looked up, and saw a man standing between me and the window. His back was turned towards me. I saw from his figure that he was a Maori, and I called out to him, “Oh friend!” He turned round, and I saw my other uncle, Ihaka. The form faded away as the other had done. I had not expected to hear of my uncle’s death, for I had seen him hale and strong a few hours before. However, he had gone into the house of a missionary, and he (with several white people) was poisoned by eating of a pie made from tinned meat, the tin having been opened and the meat left in it all night. That is all I myself had seen of spirits.’

One more Maori example may be offered:

From Mr. Francis Dart Fenton, formerly in the Native Department of the Government, Auckland, New Zealand. He gave the account in writing to his friend, Captain J.H. Crosse, of Monkstown, Cork, from whom we received it. In 1852, when the incident occurred, Mr. Fenton was ‘engaged in forming a settlement on the banks of the Waikato.’

‘March 25, 1860

‘Two sawyers, Frank Philps and Jack Mulholland, were engaged cutting timber for the Rev. R. Maunsell at the mouth of the Awaroa creek — a very lonely place, a vast swamp, no people within miles of them. As usual, they had a Maori with them to assist in felling trees. He came from Tihorewam, a village on the other side of the river, about six miles off. As Frank and the native were cross-cutting a tree, the native stopped suddenly, and said, “What are you come for?” looking in the direction of Frank. Frank replied, “What do you mean?” He said, “I am not speaking to you; I am speaking to my brother.” Frank said, “Where is he?” The native replied, “Behind you. What do you want?” (to the other Maori), Frank looked round and saw nobody. The native no longer saw anyone, but bid down the saw and said, “I shall go across the river; my brother is dead.”

‘Frank laughed at him, and reminded him that be had left him quite well on Sunday (five days before), and there had been no communication since. The Maori spoke no more, but got into his canoe and pulled across. When he arrived at the landing-place, he met people coming to fetch him. His brother had just died. I knew him well.’

In answer to inquiries as to his authority for this narrative, Mr. Fenton writes:

‘December 18, 1883.

‘I knew all the parties concerned well, and it is quite true, *valeat quantum,* as the lawyers say. Incidents of this sort are not infrequent among the Maoris.

‘F.D. FENTON, *‘Late Chief Judge, Native Law-Court of N.Z.’*

Here is a somewhat analogous example from Tierra del Fuego:

‘Jemmy Button was very superstitious’ (says Admiral Fitzroy, speaking of a Fuegian brought to England). ‘While at sea, on board the “Beagle,” he said one morning to Mr. Bynoe that in the night some man came to the side of his hammock and whispered in his ear that his father was dead. He fully believed that such was the case,’ and he was perfectly right…. ‘He reminded Bennett of the dream.’

Mr. Darwin also mentions this case, a coincidental auditory hallucination.

I have found no other savage cases quite to the point. This is, undeniably, ‘a puir show for Kirkintilloch,’ a meagre collection of savage death-wraiths, but it may be so meagre by reason of want of research, or of lack of records, travellers usually pooh-poohing the benighted superstitions of the heathen, or fearing to seem superstitious if they chronicle instances. However few the instances, they are, undeniably, exact parallels to those recorded in civilised life.

In filling up the lacuna in Mr. Tylor’s anthropological work, in asking questions as to the proportion between phantasms of the living which coincide with a crisis in the experience of the person seen, and those which do not, it is obviously necessary to reject all evidence of people who were ill, or anxious, or overworked, or in poignant grief at the time of the hallucination. It will be seen later that neither grief nor amatory passion (dominating the association of our ideas as they do) beget many phantasms. Our business, however, is with the false perceptions of persons trustworthy, as far as we know, sane, healthy, not usually visionary, and in an unperturbed state of mind.

There remains a normal cause of subjective hallucinations, expectancy. This appears to be a real cause of hallucination or, at least, of illusion. Waiting for the sound of a carriage you may hear it often before it comes, you taking other sounds for that which you desire. Again, in an inquiry embracing 17,000 people, the S.P.R. collected thirteen cases of an hallucinatory appearance of one person to another who was *expecting* his arrival. Once more, it is very conceivable that a trifle, the accidental opening of a door, a noise of a familiar kind in an unfamiliar place, may touch the brain into originating an hallucination of a person passing through the door, or of the place where the sound now heard used once to be familiar. Expectancy, again, and nervousness, might doubtless cause an hallucination to a person who felt uncomfortable in a house with a name to be ‘haunted,’ though, as we have seen, the effect is far less common than the cause. All these sorts of causes are undoubtedly more apt to be prevalent among superstitious savages than among educated Europeans. And it stands to reason that savages, where one man ‘thinks he sees something,’ will be readier than we are to think they ‘see something’ too. Yet collective hallucinations, which are shared by several persons at once, are especially puzzling. Even if they occur when all are in a strained condition of expectancy, it is odd that all see them in *the same way*. Examples will occur later. When there is no excitement, the mystery is increased. We may note that, among the expectant multitudes who looked on while Bernadette was viewing the Blessed Virgin at Lourdes, not one person, however superstitious or hysterical, pretended to share the vision. Again, only one person, and he on doubtful evidence, is asserted to have shared, once, the visions of Jeanne d’Arc. In both cases all the conditions said to produce collective hallucination were present in the highest degree. Yet no collective hallucination occurred.

Narratives about hallucinations coincident with a death, narratives well attested, are abundant in modern times, so abundant that one need only refer the curious to Messrs. Gurney and Myers’s two large volumes, ‘Phantasms of the Living,’ and to the S.P.R ‘Report of Census of Hallucinations’ (1894). Mr. Tylor says: ‘The spiritualistic theory specially insists on cases of apparitions, where the person’s death corresponds more or less nearly with the time when some friend perceives his phantom.’ But visionaries, he remarks truly, often see phantoms of living persons when nothing occurs. That is the case, and the question arises whether more such phantoms are viewed (*not* by ‘visionaries’) in connection with the death or other crisis of the person whose hallucinatory appearance is perceived, than ought to occur, if there be no connection of some unknown cause between deaths and appearances. As Mr. Tylor observes, ‘Man, as yet in a low intellectual condition, came to associate in thought those things which he found by experience to be connected in fact.’ Did early man, then, find *in experience* that apparitions of his friends were ‘connected in fact’ with their deaths? And, if so, was that discovered connection in fact the origin of his belief that an hallucinatory appearance of an absent person sometimes announced his death?

That the belief exists in New Zealand we saw, and find confirmed by this instance, one of ‘many such relations,’ says the author. A Maori chief was long absent on the war-path. One day he entered his wife’s hut, and sat mute by the hearth. She ran to bring witnesses, but on her return the phantasm was no longer visible. The woman soon afterwards married again.

Her husband then returned in perfect health, and pardoned the lady, as she had acted on what, to a Maori mind, seemed good legal evidence of his decease. Of course, even if she fabled, the story is evidence to the existence of the belief.

What, then, is the cause of the belief that a phantom of a man is a token of his death? On the theory of savage philosophy, as explained by Mr. Tylor himself, a man’s soul may leave his body and become visible to others, not at death only, but on many other occasions, in dream, trance, lethargy. All these are much more frequent conditions, in every man’s career, than the fact of dying. Why, then, is the phantasm supposed by savages to announce death? Is it because, in a sufficient ratio of cases to provoke remark, early man has found the appearance and the death to be ‘things connected in fact’?

I give an instance in which the philosophy of savages would lead them *not* to connect a phantasm of a living man with his death.

The Woi Worung, an Australian tribe, hold that ‘the Murup of an individual could be sent from him by magic, as, for instance, when a hunter incautiously went to sleep when out hunting.’ In this case the hunter is exposed to the magic of his enemies. But the Murup, or detached soul, would be visible to people at a distance when its owner is only asleep — according to the savage philosophy. Why, then, when the wraith is seen, is the owner believed to be dying? Are the things bound to be ‘connected in fact’?

As is well known, the Society for Psychical Research has attempted a little census, for the purpose of discovering whether hallucinations representing persons at a distance coincided, within twelve hours, with their deaths, in a larger ratio than the laws of chance allow as possible. If it be so, the Maori might have some ground for his theory that such hallucinations betoken a decease. I do not believe that any such census can enable us to reach an affirmative conclusion which science will accept. In spite of all precautions taken, all warnings before, and ‘allowances’ made later, collectors of evidence will ‘select’ affirmative cases already known, or (which is equally fatal) will be suspected of doing so. Again, illusions of memory, increasing the closeness of the coincidence, will come in — or it will be easy to say that they came in. ‘Allowances’ for them will not be accepted.

Once more, 17,000 cases, though a larger number than is usual in biological inquiries, are decidedly not enough for a popular argument on probabilities; a million, it will be said, would not be too many. Finally, granting honesty, accurate memory, and non-selection (none of which will be granted by opponents), it is easy to say that odd things *must* occur, and that the large proportion of affirmative answers as to coincidental hallucinations is just a specimen of these odd things.

Other objections are put forward by teachers of popular science who have not examined — or, having examined, misreport — the results of the Census in detail. I may give an example of their method.

Mr. Edward Clodd is the author of several handbooks of science— ‘The Story of Creation,’ ‘A Manual of Evolution,’ and others. Now, in a signed review of a book, a critique published in ‘The Sketch’ (October 13, 1897), Mr. Clodd wrote about the Census: ‘Thousands of persons were asked whether they had ever seen apparitions, and out of these some hundreds, mostly unintelligent foreigners, replied in the affirmative. Some eight or ten of the number — envied mortals — had seen “angels,” but the majority, like the American in the mongoose story, had seen only “snakes.”… In weighing evidence we have to take into account the competency as well as the integrity of the witnesses.’ Mr. Clodd has most frankly and good-humouredly acknowledged the erroneousness of his remark. Otherwise we might ask: Does Mr. Clodd prefer to be considered not ‘competent’ or not ‘veracious’? He cannot be both on this occasion, for his signed and published remarks were absolutely inaccurate. First, thousands of persons were *not* asked ‘whether they had seen apparitions.’ They were asked: ‘Have you ever, when believing yourself to be perfectly awake, had a vivid impression of seeing, or being touched by a living being or inanimate object, or of hearing a voice; which impression, so far as you could discover, was not due to any external physical cause?’ Secondly, it is not the fact that ‘some hundreds, *mostly unintelligent foreigners*, replied in the affirmative.’ Of English-speaking men and women, 1,499 answered the question quoted above in the affirmative. Of foreigners (naturally ‘unintelligent’), 185 returned affirmative answers. Thirdly, when Mr. Clodd says, ‘The majority had seen only “snakes,”’ it is not easy to know what precise sense ‘snakes’ bears in the terminology of popular science. If Mr. Clodd means, by ‘snakes,’ fantastic hallucinations of animals, these amounted to 25, as against 830 representing human forms of persons recognised, unrecognised, living or dead. But, if by ‘snakes’ Mr. Clodd means purely subjective hallucinations, not known to coincide with any event — and this *is* his meaning — his statement agrees with that of the Census. His observations, of course, were purely accidental errors.

The number of hallucinations representing living or dying recognised persons in the answers received, was 352. Of first-hand cases, in which coincidence of the hallucination with the death of the person apparently seen was affirmed, there were 80, of which 26 are given.

The non-coincidental hallucinations were multiplied by four, to allow for forgetfulness of ‘misses.’ The results being compared, it was decided that the hallucinations collected coincided with death 440 more often than ought to be the case by the law of probabilities. Therefore there was proof, or presumption, in favour of some relation of cause and effect between A’s death and B’s hallucination.

If we were to attack the opinion of the Committee on Hallucinations, that ‘Between deaths and apparitions of the dying a connection exists which is not due to chance alone,’ the assault should be made not only on the method, but on the details. The events were never of very recent, and often were of remote occurrence. The remoteness was less than it seems, however, as the questions were often answered several years before the publication of the Report (1894). There was scarcely any documentary evidence, any note or letter written between the hallucination and the arrival of news of the death. Such letters, the evidence alleged, had in some cases existed, but had been lost, burnt, eaten by white ants, or written on a sheet of blotting paper or the whitewashed wall of a barrack room. If I may judge by my own lifelong success in mislaying, losing, and casually destroying papers, from cheques to notes made for literary purposes, from interesting letters of friends to the manuscripts of novelists, or if I may judge by Sir Walter Scott’s triumphs of the same kind, I should not think much of the disappearance of documentary evidence to death-wraiths. Nobody supposed, when these notes were written, that Science would ask for their production; and even if people had guessed at this, it is human to lose or destroy old papers.

The remoteness of the occurrences is more remarkable, for, if these things happen, why were so few recent cases discovered? Again, the seers were sometimes under anxiety, though such cases were excluded from the final computation: they frequently knew that the person seen was in bad health: they were often very familiar with his personal aspect. Now what are called ‘subjective hallucinations,’ non-coincidental hallucinations, usually represent persons very familiar to us, persons much in our minds. I know seven cases in which such hallucinations occurred. 1, 2, of husband to wife; 3, son to mother; 4, brother to sister; 5, sister to sister; 6, cousin (living in the same house) to cousin; 7, friend (living a mile away) to two friends. In no case was there a death-coincidence. Only in case 4 was there any kind of coincidence, the brother having intended to do (unknown to the sister) what he was seen doing — driving in a dog-cart with a lady. But he had *not* driven. We cannot, of course, *prove* that these seven cases were *not* telepathic, but there is no proof that they were. Now most of the coincidental cases, on which the Committee relied as their choicest examples, represented persons familiarly known to the seers. This looks as if they were casual; but, of course, if telepathy does exist, it is most likely (as Hegel says) to exist between kinsfolk and friends.

The dates might be fresher!

In case 1, percipient knew that his aunt in England (he being in Australia) was not very well. No anxiety.

2. Casual acquaintance. No anxiety. Case of accident or suicide.

3. Acquaintance who feared to die in childbed, and did. Percipient not much interested, nor at all anxious.

4. Father in England to son in India. No anxiety.

5. Uncle to niece. Sudden death. No anxiety. No knowledge of illness.

6. Brother-in-law to sister-in-law, and her maid. No anxiety reported. *Russian*.

7. Father to son. No anxiety reported. *Russian*.

8. Friend to friend. No knowledge of illness or anxiety reported.

9. Grandmother to grandson. No anxiety. No knowledge of illness.

10. Casual acquaintance, to seven people, and apparently to a dog. Illness known. *Russian.*

11. Step-brother to step-brother. No anxiety. No knowledge of illness.

12. Friend to friend. No anxiety or knowledge of illness.

13. Casual acquaintance. No anxiety.

14. Aunt to nephew and to his wife. Illness known. No anxiety.

15. Sister to brother. Illness known. No anxiety.

16. Father to daughter. No knowledge of illness. No anxiety.

17. Father to son. Much anxiety. (Uncounted.)

18. Sister to sister. Illness known. ‘No immediate danger’ surmised.

19. Father to son. Much anxiety. *Russian.* (Uncounted.)

20. Friend to friend. Illness known. Percipient had been nursing patient. *Brazilian.* (Very bad case!)

21 Friend to friend. Illness known. No anxiety.

22. Brother to brother. Illness known. No anxiety.

23. Grandfather to grand-daughter. Illness known. No pressing anxiety.

24. Grandfather to grandson. Illness known. No anxiety.

25. Father’s *hand.* Illness chronic. No anxiety. Percipient a daughter. *Russian.*

20. Husband to wife. Anxiety in time of war.

27. Brother to sister. Slightly anxious from receiving no letter.

28. Friend to friend. No anxiety.

Anxiety is only reported, or to be surmised, in two or three cases. In a dozen the existence of illness was known.

It may therefore be argued, adversely, that in the selected coincidental hallucinations, the persons seen were in the class most usually beheld in non-coincidental and, probably, purely subjective hallucinations representing real persons; also, that knowledge of their illness, even when no anxiety existed, kept them in some cases before the mind; also, that several cases are foreign, and that ‘most foreigners are fools.’ On the other hand, affection, familiarity, and knowledge of illness had *not* produced hallucinations even in the case of these percipients, till within the twelve hours (often much less) of the event of death.

It would have been desirable, of course, to publish all the *non*-coincidental cases, and show how far, in these not *veridical* cases, the recognised phantasms were those of kindred, dear friends, known to be ill, and subjects of anxiety.

The Census, in fact, does contain a chapter on ‘Mental and Nervous Conditions in connection with Hallucinations,’ such as anxiety, grief, and overwork. Do these produce, or probably produce, many empty hallucinations *not* coincident with death or any great crisis? If they do, then all cases in which a coincidental hallucination occurred to a person in anxiety, or overstrained, will seem to be, probably, fortuitous coincidences like the others. All percipients, of all sorts of hallucinations, hits or misses, were asked if they were in grief or anxiety. Now, out of 1,622 cases of hallucination of all known kinds (coincidental or not), mental strain was reported in 220 instances; of which 131 were cases of grief about known deaths or anxiety. These mental conditions, therefore, occur only in twelve per cent. of the instances. On the whole, it does not seem fair to argue that anxiety produces so much hallucination that it will account by itself for those which we have analysed as coincidental.

The impression left on my own mind by the Census does pretty closely agree with that of its authors. Fairly well persuaded of the possibility of telepathy, on other grounds, and even inclined to believe that it does produce coincidental hallucinations, the evidence of the Census, by itself, would not convince me nor its authors. We want better records; we want documentary evidence recording cases before the arrival of news of the coincidence. Memories are very adaptive. The authors, however, made a gallant effort, at the cost of much labour, and largely allowed for all conceivable drawbacks.

I am, personally, illogical enough to agree with Kant, and to be more convinced by the cumulative weight of the hundreds of cases in ‘Phantasms of the Living,’ in other sources, in my own circle of acquaintance, and even by the coincident traditions of European and savage peoples, than by the statistics of the Census. The whole mass, Census and all, is of very considerable weight, and there exist individual cases which one feels unable to dispute. Thus while I would never regard the hallucinatory figure of a friend, perceived by myself, as proof of his death, I would entertain some slight anxiety till I heard of his well-being.

On this topic I will offer, in a Kantian spirit, an anecdote of the kind which, occurring in great quantities, disposes the mind to a sort of belief. It is not given as evidence to go to a jury, for I only received it from the lips of a very gallant and distinguished officer and V.C., whose own part in the affair will be described.

This gentleman was in command of a small British force in one of the remotest and least accessible of our dependencies, not connected by telegraph, at the time of the incident, with the distant mainland. In the force was a particularly folly young captain. One night he went to a dance, and, as the sleeping accommodation was exhausted, he passed the night, like a Homeric hero, on a couch beneath the echoing *loggia*. Next day, contrary to his wont, he was in the worst of spirits, and, after moping for some time, asked leave to go a three days’ voyage to the nearest telegraph station. His commanding officer, my informant, was good-natured, and gave leave. At the end of a week Captain —— returned, in his usual high spirits. He now admitted that, while lying awake in the verandah, after the ball, he had seen a favourite brother of his, then in, say, Peru. He could not shake off the impression; he had made the long voyage to the nearest telegraph station, and thence had telegraphed to another brother in, let us say, Hong Kong, ‘Is all well with John?’ He received a reply, ‘All well by last mail,’ and so returned, relieved in mind, to his duties. But the next mail bringing letters from Peru brought news of his Peruvian brother’s death on the night of the vision in the verandah.

This, of course, is not offered as evidence. For evidence we need Captain —— ‘s account, his Hong Kong brother’s account, date of the dance, official date of the Peruvian brother’s death, and so on. But the character of my informant indisposes me to disbelief. The names of places are intentionally changed, but the places were as remote from each other as those given in the text.

We find ourselves able to understand the Master of Ravenswood’s cogitations after he saw the best wraith in fiction:

‘She died expressing her eager desire to see me. Can it be, then — can strong and earnest wishes, formed during the last agony of nature, survive its catastrophe, surmount the awful bounds of the spiritual world, and place before us its inhabitants in the hues and colouring of life? And why was that manifested to the eye, which could not unfold its tale to the ear?’ (‘Her withered lips moved fast, although no sound issued from them.’) ‘And wherefore should a breach be made in the laws of nature, yet its purpose remain unknown?’

The Master’s reasonings are such as, in hearing similar anecdotes, must have occurred to Scott. They no longer represent our views. The death and apparition were coincidental almost to the minute: it would be impossible to prove that life was utterly extinct, when Alice seemed to die, ‘as the clock in the distant village tolled one, just before’ Ravenswood’s experience. We do not, like him, postulate ‘a breach in the laws of nature,’ only a possible example of a law. The tale was not ‘unfolded to the ear,’ as the telepathic impact only affected the sense of sight.

Here, perhaps, ought to follow a reply to certain scientific criticisms of the theory that telepathy, or the action of one distant mind, or brain, upon another, may be the cause of ‘coincidental hallucinations,’ whether among savage or civilised races. But, not to delay the argument by controversy, the Reply to Objections has been relegated to the Appendix.

VII

DEMONIACAL POSSESSION

There is a kind of hallucinations — namely, Phantasms of the Dead — about which it seems better to say nothing in this place. If such phantasms are seen by savages when awake, they will doubtless greatly corroborate that belief in the endurance of the soul after death, which is undeniably suggested to the early reasoner by the phenomena of dreaming. But, while it is easy enough to produce evidence to recognised phantasms of the dead in civilised life, it would be very difficult indeed to discover many good examples in what we know about savages. Some Fijian instances are given by Mr. Fison in his and Mr. Howitt's 'Kamilaroi and Kurnai,' Others occur in the narrative of John Tanner, a captive from childhood among the Red Indians. But the circumstance, already noted, that an Australian lad became a wizard on the strength of having seen a phantasm of his dead mother, proves that such experiences are not common; and Australian black fellows have admitted that they, for their part, never did see a ghost, but only heard of ghosts from their old men. Mr. David Leslie, previously cited, gives some first-hand Zulu evidence about a haunted wood, where the *Esemkofu*, or ghosts of persons killed by a tyrannical chief, were heard and felt by his native informant; the percipient was also pelted with stones, as by the European *Poltergeist*. The Zulu who dies commonly becomes an Ihlozi, and receives his share of sacrifice. The *Esemkofu* on the other hand, are disturbed and haunting spirits.

As a rule, so far as our information goes, it is not recognised phantasms of the dead, in waking vision, which corroborate the savage belief in the persistence of the spirit of the departed. The savage reasoner rather rests his faith on the alleged phenomena of noises and physical movements of objects apparently untouched, which cause so many houses in civilised society to be shut up, or shunned, as 'haunted.' Such disturbances the savage naturally ascribes to 'spirits.' Our evidence, therefore, for recognised phantasms of the savage dead is very meagre, so it is unnecessary to examine the much more copious civilised evidence. The facts attested may, of course, be theoretically explained as the result of telepathy from a mind no longer incarnate; and, were the evidence as copious as that for coincidental hallucinations of the living, or dying, it would be of extreme importance. But it is not so copious, and, granting even that it is accurate, various explanations not involving anything so distasteful to science as the action of a discarnate intelligence may be, and have been, put forward.

We turn, therefore, from a theme in which civilised testimony is more bulky than that derived from savage life, to a topic in which savage evidence is much more full than modern civilised records. This topic is the so-called Demoniacal Possession.

In the philosophy of Animism, and in the belief of many peoples, savage and civilised, spirits of the dead, or spirits at large, can take up their homes in the bodies of living men. Such men, or women, are spoken of as ‘inspired,’ or ‘possessed.’ They speak in voices not their own, they act in a manner alien to their natural character, they are said to utter prophecies, and to display knowledge which they could not have normally acquired, and, in fact, do not consciously possess, in their normal condition. All these and similar phenomena the savage explains by the hypothesis that an alien spirit — perhaps a demon, perhaps a ghost, or a god — has taken possession of the patient. The possessed, being full of the spirit, delivers sermons, oracles, prophecies, and what the Americans call ‘inspirational addresses,’ before he returns to his normal consciousness. Though many such prophets are conscious impostors, others are sincere. Dr. Mason mentions a prophet who became converted to Christianity. ‘He could not account for his former exercises, but said that it certainly appeared to him as though a spirit spoke, and he must tell what it communicated.’ Dr. Mason also gives the following anecdote:

‘…Another individual had a familiar spirit that he consulted and with which he conversed; but, on hearing the Gospel, he professed to become converted, and had no more communication with his spirit. It had left him, he said; it spoke to him no more. After a protracted trial I baptised him. I watched his case with interest, and for several years he led an unimpeachable Christian life; but, on losing his religious zeal, and disagreeing with some of the church members, he removed to a distant village, where he could not attend the services of the Sabbath, and it was soon after reported that he had communications with his familiar spirit again. I sent a native preacher to visit him. The man said he heard the voice which had conversed with him formerly, but it spoke very differently. Its language was exceedingly pleasant to hear, and produced great brokenness of heart. It said, “Love each other; act righteously — act uprightly,” with other exhortations such us he had heard from the teachers. An assistant was placed in the village near him, when the spirit left him again; and ever since he has maintained the character of a consistent Christian.’

This anecdote illustrates what is called by spiritists ‘change of control.’ After receiving, and deserting, Christian doctrine, the patient again spoke unconsciously, but under the influence of the faith which he had abandoned. In the same way we shall find that a modern American ‘Medium,’ after being for a time constantly in the society of educated and psychological observers, obtained new ‘controls’ of a character more urbane and civilised than her old ‘familiar spirit.’

It is admitted that the possessed sometimes display an eloquence which they are incapable of in their normal condition. In China, possessed women, who never composed a line of poetry in their normal lives, utter their thoughts in verse, and are said to give evidence of clairvoyant powers.

The book — *Demon Possession in China* — of Dr. Nevius, for forty years a missionary, was violently attacked by the medical journals of his native country, the United States. The doctor had the audacity to declare that he could find no better explanation of the phenomena than the theory of the Apostles — namely, that the patients were possessed. Not having the fear of man before his eyes, he also remarked that the current scientific explanations had the fault of not explaining anything.

For example, ‘Mr. Tylor intimates that all cases of supposed demoniacal possession are identical with hysteria, delirium, and mania, and suchlike bodily and mental derangements.’ Dr. Nevius, however, gave what he conceived to be the notes of possession, and, in his diagnosis, distinguished them from hysteria (whatever that may mean), delirium, and mania. Nor can it honestly be denied that, if the special notes of possession actually exist, they do mark quite a distinct species of mental affection. Dr. Nevius then observed that, according to Mr. Tylor, ‘scientific physicians now explain the facts on a different principle,’ but, says Dr. Nevius, ‘we search in vain to discover what this principle is.’ Dr. Nevius, who had the courage of his opinions, then consulted a work styled ‘Nervous Derangement,’ by Dr. Hammond, a Professor in the Medical School of the University of New York. He found this scientific physician admitting that we know very little about the matter. He knew, what is very gratifying, that ‘mind is the result of nervous action,’ and that so-called ‘possession’ is the result of ‘material derangements of the organs or functions of the system.’

Dr. Nevius was ready to admit this latter doctrine in cases of idiocy, insanity, epilepsy, and hysteria; but then, said he, these are not what I call possession. The Chinese have names for all these maladies, ‘which they ascribe to physical causes,’ but for possession they have a different name. He expected Dr. Hammond to account for the abnormal conditions in so-called possession, but ‘he has hardly even attempted to do this.’ Dr. Nevius next perused the works of Dr. Griesinger, Dr. Baelz, Professor William James, M. Ribot, and, generally, the literature of ‘alternating personality.’ He found Mr. James professing his conviction that the ‘alternating personality’ (in popular phrase, the demon, or familiar spirit) of Mrs. Piper knew a great deal about things which Mrs. Piper, in her normal state, did not, and could not know. Thus, after consulting many physicians, Dr. Nevius was none the better, and came back to his faith in Diabolical Possession. He was therefore informed that he had written ‘one of the most extraordinarily perverted books of the present day’ on the evidence of ‘transparent ghost stories’ — which do not occur in his book.

The attitude of Dr. Nevius cannot be called strictly scientific. Because pathologists and psychologists are unable to explain, or give the *modus* of a set of phenomena, it does not follow that the devil, or a god, or a ghost, is in it.

But this, of course, was precisely the natural inference of savages.

Dr. Nevius catalogues the symptoms of possession thus:

1. The automatic, persistent and consistent acting out of a new personality, which calls himself *shieng* (genius) and calls the patient *hiang to* (incense burner, ‘medium’).

2. Possession of knowledge and intellectual power not owned by the patient (in his normal state), nor explainable on the pathological hypothesis.

3. Complete change of moral character in the patient.

Of these notes, the second would, of course, most confirm the savage belief that a new intelligence had entered into the patient. If he displayed knowledge of the future, or of the remote, the inference that a novel and wiser intelligence had taken possession of the patient’s body would be, to the savage, irresistible. But the more cautious modern, *even if he accepted the facts*, would be reduced to no such extreme conclusion. He would say that knowledge of the remote in space, or in the past, might be telepathically communicated to the brain of some living person; while, for knowledge of the future, he could fly, with Hartmann, to contact with the Absolute.

But the question of evidence for the facts is, of course, the only real question. Now, in Dr. Nevius’s book, this evidence rests almost entirely on the written reports of native Christian teachers, for the Chinese were strictly reticent when questioned by Europeans. ‘My heathen brother, you have a sister who is a demoniac?’ asks the intelligent European. The reply of the heathen brother is best left in the obscurity of a remarkably difficult and copious Oriental language. We are thus obliged to fall back on the reports of Mr. Leng and other native Christian teachers. They are perfectly modest and rational in style. We learn that Mrs. Sen, a lady in her normal state incapable of lyrical efforts, lisped in numbers in her secondary personality, and detected the circumstance that Mr. Leng was on his way to see her, when she could not have learned the fact in any normal way. ‘They are now crossing the stream, and will be here when the sun is about so high;’ which was correct. The other witnesses were examined, and corroborated. Dr. Nevius himself examined Mrs. Kwo, when possessed, talking in verse, and, physically, limp.

The narratives are of this type; the patient, on recovering consciousness, knows nothing of what has occurred; Christian prayers are often efficacious, and there are many anecdotes of movements of objects untouched.

By a happy accident, as this chapter was passing through the press, a scientific account of a demoniac and his cure was published by Dr. Pierre Janet. Dr. Janet has explained, with complete success, everything in the matter of possession, except the facts which, in the opinion of Dr. Nevius, were in need of explanation. These facts did not occur in the case of the demoniac 'exorcised' by Dr. Janet. Thus the learned essay of that eminent authority would not have satisfied Dr. Nevius. The facts in which he was interested did not present themselves in Dr. Janet's patient, and so Dr. Janet does not explain them.

The simplest plan, here, is to deny that the facts in which Dr. Nevius believes ever present themselves at all; but, if they ever do, Dr. Janet's explanation does not explain them.

1. His patient, Achille, did *not* act out a new personality.

2. Achille displayed *no* knowledge or intellectual power which he did not possess in his normal state.

3. His moral character was *not* completely changed; he was only more hypochondriacal and hysterical than usual.

Achille was a poor devil of a French tradesman who, like Captain Booth, had infringed the laws of strict chastity and virtue. He brooded on this till he became deranged, and thought that Satan had him. He was convulsed, anaesthetic, suicidal, involuntarily blasphemous. He was not 'exorcised' by a prayer or by a command, but after a long course of mental and physical treatment. His cure does not explain the cures in which Dr. Nevius believed. His case did not present the features of which Dr. Nevius asked science for an explanation. Dr. Janet's essay is the *dernier cri* of science, and leaves Dr. Nevius just where it found him.

Science, therefore, can, and does, tell Dr. Nevius that his evidence for his facts is worthless, through the lips of Professor W. Romaine Newbold, in 'Proceedings, S.P.R.,' February 1898 (p-604). And the same number of the same periodical shows us Dr. Hodgson accepting facts similar to those of Dr. Nevius, and explaining them by — possession! ().

Dr. Nevius's observations practically cover the whole field of 'possession' in non-European peoples. But other examples from other areas are here included.

A rather impressive example of possession may be selected from Livingstone's 'Missionary Travels' (). The adventurous Sebituane was harried by the Matabele in a new land of his choice. He thought of descending the

Zambesi till he was in touch with white men; but Tlapáne, ‘who held intercourse with gods,’ turned his face westwards. Tlapáne used to retire, ‘perhaps into some cave, to remain in a hypnotic or mesmeric state’ until the moon was full. Then he would return *en prophète*. ‘Stamping, leaping, and shouting in a peculiarly violent manner, or beating the ground with a club’ (to summon those under earth), ‘they induce a kind of fit, and while in it pretend that their utterances are unknown to themselves,’ as they probably are, when the condition is genuine. Tlapáne, after inducing the ‘possessed’ state, pointed east: ‘There, Sebituane, I behold a fire; shun it, it may scorch thee. The gods say, Go not thither!’ Then, pointing west, he said, ‘I see a city and a nation of black men, men of the water, their cattle are red, thine own tribe are perishing, thou wilt govern black men, spare thy future tribe.’

So far, mere advice; then,

‘Thou, Ramosinii, thy village will perish utterly. If Mokari moves first from the village, he will perish first; and thou, Ramosinii, wilt be the last to die.’

Then,

’Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance,’

> ’The gods have given other men water to drink, but to me they have given bitter water. They call me away. I go.’

Tlapáne died, Mokari died, Ramosinii died, their village was destroyed soon after, and so Sebituane wandered westward, not disobedient to the voice, was attacked by the Baloiana, conquered, and spared them.

Such is ‘possession’ among savages. It is superfluous to multiply instances of this world-wide belief, so freely illustrated in the New Testament, and in trials for witchcraft. The scientific study of the phenomena, as Littré complained, ‘had hardly been sketched’ forty years ago. In the intervening years, psychologists and hypnotists have devoted much attention to the theme of these ‘secondary personalities,’ which Animism explains by the theory of possession. The explanations of modern philosophers differ, and it is not our business to discuss their physiological and pathological ideas. Our affair is to ask whether, in the field of experience, there is any evidence that persons thus ‘possessed’ really evince knowledge which they could not have acquired through normal channels? If such evidence exists, the facts would naturally strengthen the conviction that the possessed person was inspired by an intelligence not his own, that is, by a spirit. Now it is the firm conviction of several men of science that a certain Mrs.

Piper, an American, does display, in her possessed condition, knowledge which she could not normally acquire. The case of this lady is precisely on a level with that of certain savage or barbaric seers. Thus: ‘The Fijian priest sits looking steadily at a whale’s tooth ornament, amid dead silence. In a few minutes he trembles, slight twitchings of face and limbs come on, which increase to strong convulsions…. Now the god has entered.’

In China, ‘the professional woman sits at a table in contemplation, till the soul of a deceased person from whom communication is desired enters her body and talks through her to the living….’

The latter account exactly describes Mrs. Piper. When consulted she passes through convulsions into a trance, after which she talks in a new voice, assumes a fresh personality, and affects to be possessed by the spirit of a French doctor (who does not know French) — Dr. Phinuit. She then displays a varying amount of knowledge of dead and living people connected with her clients, who are usually strangers, often introduced under feigned names. Mrs. Piper and her husband have been watched by detectives, and have not been discovered in any attempts to procure information. She was for some months in England under the charge of the S.P.R. Other ghosts, besides Dr. Phinuit, ghosts more civilised than he, now influence her, and her latest performances are said to exceed her former efforts.

Volumes of evidence about Mrs. Piper have been published by Dr. Hodgson, who unmasked Madame Blavatsky and Eusapia Paladino. He was at first convinced that Mrs. Piper, in her condition of trance, obtains knowledge not otherwise and normally accessible to her. It was admitted that her familiar spirit guesses, attempts to extract information from the people who sit with her, and tries sophistically to conceal his failures. Here follow the statements of Professor James of Harvard.

‘The most convincing things said about my own immediate household were either very intimate or very trivial. Unfortunately the former things cannot well be published. Of the trivial things I have forgotten the greater number, but the following, *rarae nantes*, may serve as samples of their class. She said that we had lost recently a rug, and I a waistcoat. (She wrongly accused a person of stealing the rug, which was afterwards found in the house.) She told of my killing a grey-and-white cat with ether, and described how it had “spun round and round” before dying. She told how my New York aunt had written a letter to my wife, warning her against all mediums, and then went off on a most amusing criticism, full of *traits vifs*, of the excellent woman’s character. (Of course, no one but my wife and I knew the existence of the letter in question.) She was strong on the events in our nursery, and gave striking advice during our first visit to her about the way to deal with certain "tantrums" of our second child— "little Billy-boy," as she called him, reproducing his nursery name. She told how the crib creaked at night, how a certain rocking-chair creaked mysteriously, how my wife had heard footsteps on a stair, &c. &c. Insignificant as these things sound when read, the accumulation of them has an irresistible effect; and I repeat again what I said before, that, taking everything that I know of Mrs. Piper into account, the result is to make me feel as absolutely certain as I am of any personal fact in the world that she knows things in her trances which she cannot possibly have heard in her waking state, and that the definitive philosophy of her trances is yet to be found. The limitations of her trance information, its discontinuity and fitfulness, and its apparent inability to develop beyond a certain point, although they end by arousing one's moral and human impatience with the phenomenon, yet are, from a scientific point of view, amongst its most interesting peculiarities, since where there are limits there are conditions, and the discovery of them is always the beginning of an explanation.

'This is all I cam tell you of Mrs. Piper. I wish it were more "scientific." But *valcat quantum!* it is the best I can do.'

Elsewhere Mr. James writes:

'Mr. Hodgson and others have made prolonged study of this lady's trances, and are all convinced that supernormal powers of cognition are displayed therein. They are, *prima facie*, due to "spirit control." But the conditions are so complex that a dogmatic decision either for or against the hypothesis must as yet be postponed.'

Again —

'In the trances of this medium I cannot resist the conviction that knowledge appears which she has never gained by the ordinary waking use of her eyes, ears, and wits.

'The trances have broken down, for my own mind, the limits of the admitted order of nature.'

M. Paul Bourget (who is not superstitious), after consulting Mrs. Piper, concludes:

'L'esprit a des procédés de connaître non soupçonnés par notre analyse.'

In this treatise I may have shown 'the will to believe' in an unusual degree; but, for me, the interest of Mrs. Piper is purely anthropological. She exhibits a survival or recrudescence of savage phenomena, real or feigned, of convulsion and of secondary personality, and entertains a survival of the animistic explanation.

Mrs. Piper's honesty and excellent character, in her normal condition, are vouched for by her friends and observers in England and America; nor do I impeach her normal character. But ‘secondary personalities’ have often more of Mr. Hyde than of Dr. Jekyll in their composition. It used to be admitted that, when ‘possessed,’ Mrs. Piper would cheat when she could — that is to say, she would make guesses, try to worm information out of her sitter, describe a friend of his, alive or dead, as ‘Ed.,’ who may be Edgar, Edmund, Edward, Edith, or anybody. She would shuffle, and repeat what she had picked up in a former sitting with the same person; and the vast majority of her answers started from vague references to probable facts (as that an elderly man is an orphan), and so worked on to more precise statements. Professor Macalister wrote:

‘She is quite wide-awake enough all through to profit by suggestions. I let her see a blotch of ink on my finger, and she said that I was a writer…. Except the guess about my sister Helen, who is alive, there was not a single guess which was nearly right. Mrs. Piper is not anaesthetic during the so-called trance, and if you ask my private opinion, it is that the whole thing is an imposture, and a poor one.’

Mr. Barkworth said that, as far as his experience went, ‘Mrs. Piper’s powers are of the ordinary thought-reading kind, dependent on her hold of the visitor’s hand.’ Each of these gentlemen had only one ‘sitting.’ M. Paul Bourget also informed me, in conversation, that Mrs. Piper held his hand while she told the melancholy tale connected with a key in his possession, and that she did not tell the story promptly and fluently, but very slowly and hesitatingly. Even so, he declared that he did not feel able to account for her performance.

As these pages were passing through the press, Dr. Hodgson’s last report on Mrs. Piper was published. It is quite impossible, within the space allotted, to criticise this work. It would be necessary to examine minutely scores of statements, in which many facts are suppressed as too intimate, while others are remarkably incoherent. Dr. Hodgson deserves the praise of extraordinary patience and industry, displayed in the very distasteful task of watching an unfortunate lady in the vagaries of ‘trance.’ His reasonings are perfectly calm, perfectly unimpassioned, and his bias has not hitherto seemed to make for credulity. We must, in fact, regard him as an expert in this branch of psychology. But he himself makes it clear that, in his opinion, no written reports can convey the impressions produced by several years of personal experience. The results of that experience he sums up in these words:

‘At the present time I cannot profess to have any doubt but that the chief “communicators” to whom I have referred in the foregoing pages are veritably the personalities that they claim to be, that they have survived the change we call death, and that they have directly communicated with us, whom we call living, through Mrs. Piper’s entranced organism.’

This means that Dr. Hodgson, at present, in this case, accepts the hypothesis of 'possession' as understood by Maoris and Fijians, Chinese and Karens.

The published reports do not produce on me any such impression. As a personal matter of opinion, I am convinced that those whom I have honoured in this life would no more avail themselves of Mrs. Piper's 'entranced organism' (if they had the chance) than I would voluntarily find myself in a 'sitting' with that lady. It is unnecessary to wax eloquent on this head; and the curious can consult the writings of Dr. Hodgson for themselves. Meanwhile we have only to notice that an American 'possessed' woman produces on a highly educated and sceptical modern intelligence the same impression as the Zulu 'possessed' produce on some Zulu intelligences.

The Zulus admit 'possession' and divination, but are not the most credulous of mankind. The ordinary possessed person is usually consulted as to the disease of an absent patient. The inquirers do not assist the diviner by holding his hand, but are expected to smite the ground violently if the guess made by the diviner is right; gently if it is wrong. A sceptical Zulu, named John, having a shilling to expend on psychical research, smote violently at *every* guess. The diviner was hopelessly puzzled; John kept his shilling, and laid it out on a much more meritorious exhibition of animated sticks.

Uguise gave Dr. Callaway an account of a female possessed person with whom Mrs. Piper could not compete. Her spirit spoke, not from her mouth, but from high in the roof. It gave forth a kind of questioning remarks which were always correct. It then reported correctly a number of singular circumstances, ordered some remedies for a diseased child, and offered to return the fee, if ample satisfaction was not given.

In China and Zululand, as in Mrs. Piper's case, the spirits are fond of diagnosing and prescribing for absent patients.

A good example of savage possession is given in his travels by Captain
Jonathan Carver (1763).

Carver was waiting impatiently for the arrival of traders with provisions, near the Thousand Lakes. A priest, or jossakeed, offered to interview the Great Spirit, and obtain information. A large lodge was arranged, and the covering drawn up (which is unusual), so that what went on within might be observed. In the centre was a chest-shaped arrangement of stakes, so far apart from each other 'that whatever lay within them was readily to be discerned.' The tent was illuminated 'by a great number of torches.' The priest came in, and was first wrapped in an elk's skin, as Highland seers were wrapped in a black bull's hide. Forty yards of rope made of elk’s hide were then coiled about him, till he ‘was wound up like an Egyptian mummy.’

I have elsewhere shown that this custom of binding with bonds the seer who is to be inspired, existed in Graeco-Egyptian spiritualism, among Samoyeds, Eskimo, Canadian Hareskin Indians, and among Australian blacks.

‘The head, body, and limbs are wound round with stringy bark cords.’ This is an extraordinary range of diffusion of a ceremony apparently meaningless. Is the idea that, by loosing the bonds, the seer demonstrates the agency of spirits, after the manner of the Davenport Brothers? But the Graeco-Egyptian medium did *not* undo the swathings of linen, in which he was rolled, *like a mummy*. They had to be unswathed for him, by others. Again, a dead body, among the Australians, is corded up tight, as soon as the breath is out of it, if it is to be buried, or before being exposed on a platform, if that is the custom. Again, in the Highlands second-sight was thus acquired: the would-be seer ‘must run a Tedder (tether) of Hair, *which bound a corpse to the Bier*, about his Middle from end to end,’ and then look between his legs till he sees a funeral cross two marches. The Greenland seer is bound ‘with his head between his legs.’

Can it be possible, judging from Australia, Scotland, Egypt, that the binding, as of a corpse or mummy, is a symbolical way of putting the seer on a level with the dead, who will then communicate with him? In three remote points, we find seer-binding and corpse-binding; but we need to prove that corpses are, or have been, bound at the other points where the seer is tied up — in a reindeer skin among the Samoyeds, an elk skin in North America, a bull’s hide in the Highlands.

Binding the seer is not a universal Red Indian custom; it seems to cease in Labrador, and elsewhere, southwards, where the prophet enters a magic lodge, unbound. Among the Narquapees, he sits cross-legged, and the lodge begins to answer questions by leaping about. The Eskimo bounds, though he is tied up.

It would be decisive, if we could find that, wherever the sorcerer is bound, the dead are bound also. I note the following examples, but the Creeks do not, I think, bind the magician.

Among the Creeks,

‘The corpse is placed in a hole, with a blanket wrapped about it, and the legs bent under it *and tied together*.’ The dead Greenlanders were ‘wrapped and sewed up in their best deer-skins.’

Carver could only learn that, among the Indians he knew, dead bodies were ‘wrapped in skins;’ that they were also swathed with cords he does not allege, but he was not permitted to see all the ceremonies.

My theory is, at least, plausible, for this manner of burying the dead, tied tightly up, with the head between the legs (as in the practice of Scottish and Greenland seers), is very old and widely diffused. Ellis says, of the Tahitians, ‘the body of the dead man was … placed in a sitting posture, with the knees elevated, *the face pressed down between the knees*,… and the whole body tied with cord or cinet, wound repeatedly round.’

The binding may originally have been meant to keep the corpse, or ghost, from ‘walking.’ I do not know that Tahitian prophets were ever tied up, to await inspiration. But I submit that the frequency of the savage form of burial with the corpse tied up, or swathed, sometimes with the head between the legs; and the recurrence of the savage practice of similarly binding the sorcerer, probably points to a purpose of introducing the seer to the society of the dead. The custom, as applied to prophets, might survive, even where the burial rite had altered, or cannot be ascertained, and might survive, for corpses, where it had gone out of use, for seers. The Scotch used to justify their practice of putting the head between the knees when, bound with a corpse’s hair tether, they learned to be second-sighted, by what Elijah did. The prophet, on the peak of Carmel, ‘cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees.’ But the cases are not analogous. Elijah had been hearing a premonitory ‘sound of abundance of rain’ in a cloudless sky. He was probably engaged in prayer, not in prophecy.

Kirk, by the way, notes that if the wind changes, while the Scottish seer is bound, he is in peril of his life. So children are told, in Scotland, that, if the wind changes while they are making faces, the grimace will be permanent. The seer will, in the same way, become what he pretends to be, a corpse.

This desertion of Carver’s tale may be pardoned for the curiosity of the topic. He goes on:

‘Being thus bound up like an Egyptian mummy’ (Carver unconsciously making my point), ‘the seer was lifted into the chest-like enclosure. I could now also discern him as plain as I had ever done, and I took care not to turn my eyes away a moment’ — in which effort he probably failed.

The priest now began to mutter, and finally spoke in a mixed jargon of scarcely intelligible dialects. He now yelled, prayed, and foamed at the mouth, till in about three quarters of an hour he was exhausted and speechless. ‘But in an instant he sprang upon his feet, notwithstanding at the time he was put in it appeared impossible for him to move either his legs or arms, and shaking off his covering, as quick as if the bands with which it had been bound were burst asunder,’ he prophesied. The Great Spirit did not say when the traders would arrive, but, just after high noon, next day, a canoe would arrive, and the people in it would tell when the traders were to appear.

Next day, just after high noon, a canoe came round a point of land about a league away, and the men in it, who had met the traders, said they would come in two days, which they did. Carver, professing freedom from any tincture of credulity, leaves us ‘to draw what conclusions we please.’

The natural inference is ‘private information,’ about which the only difficulty is that Carver, who knew the topography and the chances of a secret messenger arriving to prompt the Jossakeed, does not allude to this theory. He seems to think such successes not uncommon.

All that psychology can teach anthropology, on this whole topic of ‘possession;’ is that secondary or alternating personalities are facts *in rerum natura*, that the man or woman in one personality may have no conscious memory of what was done or said in the other, and that cases of knowledge said to be supernormally gained in the secondary state are worth inquiring about, if there be a chance of getting good evidence.

A few fairly respectable savage instances are given in Dr. Gibier’s ‘Le Fakirisme Occidental’ and in Mr. Manning’s ‘Old New Zealand;’ but, while modern civilised parallels depend on the solitary case of Mrs. Piper (for no other case has been well observed), no affirmative conclusion can be drawn from Chinese, Maori, Zulu, or Red Indian practice.

VIII

FETISHISM AND SPIRITUALISM

It has been shown how the doctrine of souls was developed according to the anthropological theory. The hypothesis as to how souls of the dead were later elevated to the rank of gods, or supplied models after which such gods might be inventively fashioned, will be criticised in a later chapter. Here it must suffice to say that the conception of a separable surviving soul of a dead man was not only not essential to the savage's idea of his supreme god, as it seems to me, but would have been wholly inconsistent with that conception. There exist, however, numerous forms of savage religion in addition to the creed in a Supreme Being, and these contribute their streams to the ocean of faith. Thus among the kinds of belief which served in the development of Polytheism, was Fetishism, itself an adaptation and extension of the idea of separable souls. In this regard, like ancestor-worship, it differs from the belief in a Supreme Being, which, as we shall try to demonstrate, is not derived from the theory of ghosts or souls at all.

Fetish (*fétiche*) seems to come from Portuguese *feitiço*, a talisman or amulet, applied by the Portuguese to various material objects regarded by the negroes of the west coast with more or less of religious reverence. These objects may be held sacred in some degree for a number of incongruous reasons. They may be tokens, or may be of value in sympathetic magic, or merely *odd*, and therefore probably endowed with unknown mystic qualities. Or they may have been pointed out in a dream, or met in a lucky hour and associated with good fortune, or they may (like a tree with an unexplained stir in its branches, as reported by Kohl) have seemed to show signs of life by spontaneous movements; in fact, a thing may be what Europeans call a fetish for scores of reasons. For our present purpose, as Mr. Tylor says, 'to class an object as a fetish demands explicit statement that a spirit is considered as embodied in it, or acting through it, or communicating by it, or, at least, that the people it belongs to do habitually think this of such objects; or it must be shown that the object is treated as having personal consciousness or power, is talked with, worshipped…' and so forth. The in-dwelling spirit may be human, as when a fetish is made out of a friend's skull, the spirit in which may even be asked for oracles, like the Head of Bran in Welsh legend.

We have tried to show that the belief in human souls may be, in part at least, based on supernormal phenomena which Materialism disregards. We shall now endeavour to make it probable that Fetishism (the belief in the souls tenanting inanimate objects) may also have sources which perhaps are not normal, or which at all events seemed supernormal to savages. We say ‘perhaps not normal’ because the phenomena now to be discussed are of the most puzzling character. We may lean to the belief in a supernormal cause of certain hallucinations, but the alleged movements of inanimate objects which probably supply one origin of Fetishism, one suggestion of the presence of a spirit in things dead, leave the inquiring mind in perplexity. In following Mr. Tylor’s discussion of the subject, it is necessary to combine what he says about Spiritualism in his fourth with what he says about Fetishism in his fourteenth and later chapters. For some reason his book is so arranged that he criticises ‘Spiritualism’ long before he puts forward his doctrine of the origin and development of the belief in spirits.

We have seen a savage reason for supposing that human spirits inhabit certain lifeless things, such as skulls and other relics of the dead. But how did it come to be thought that a spirit dwelt in a lifeless and motionless piece of stone or stick? Mr. Tylor, perhaps, leads us to a plausible conjecture by writing: ‘Mr. Darwin saw two Malay women in Keeling Island, who held a wooden spoon dressed in clothes like a doll: this spoon had been carried to the grave of a dead man, and becoming inspired at full moon, in fact lunatic, it danced about convulsively, like a table or a hat at a modern spirit séance.’ Now M. Lefébure has pointed out (in ‘Mélusine’) that, according to De Brosses, the African conjurers gave an appearance of independent motion to small objects, which were then accepted as fetishes, being visibly animated. M. Lefébure next compares, like Mr. Tylor, the alleged physical phenomena of spiritualism, the flights and movements of inanimate objects apparently untouched.

The question thus arises, Is there any truth whatever in these world-wide and world-old stories of inanimate objects acting like animated things? Has fetishism one of its origins in the actual field of supernormal experience in the X region? This question we do not propose to answer, as the evidence, though practically universal, may be said to rest on imposture and illusion. But we can, at least, give a sketch of the nature of the evidence, beginning with that as to the apparently *voluntary* movements of objects, *not* untouched. Mr. Tylor quotes from John Bell’s ‘Journey in Asia’ (1719) an account of a Mongol Lama who wished to discover certain stolen pieces of damask. His method was to sit on a bench, when ‘he carried it, or, as was commonly believed, it carried him, to the very tent’ of the thief. Here the bench is innocently believed to be self-moving. Again, Mr. Rowley tells how in Manganjah the sorcerer, to find out a criminal, placed, with magical ceremonies, two staffs of wood in the hands of some young men. ‘The sticks whirled and dragged the men round like mad,’ and finally escaped and rolled to the feet of the wife of a chief, who was then denounced as the guilty person.

Mr. Duff Macdonald describes the same practice among the Yaos:

‘The sorcerer occasionally makes men take hold of a stick, which, after a time, begins to move as if endowed with life, and ultimately carries them off bodily and with great speed to the house of the thief.’

The process is just that of Jacques Aymard in the celebrated story of the detection of the Lyons murderer.

In Melanesia, far enough away, Dr. Codrington found a similar practice, and here the sticks are explicitly said by the natives to be moved by *spirits*. The wizard and a friend hold a bamboo stick by each end, and ask what man’s ghost is afflicting a patient. At the mention of the right ghost ‘the stick becomes violently agitated.’ In the same way, the bamboo ‘would run about’ with a man holding it only on the palms of his hands. Again, a hut is built with a partition down the middle. Men sit there with their hands *under* one end of the bamboo, while the other end is extended into the empty half of the hut. They then call over the names of the recently dead, till ‘they feel the bamboo moving in their hands.’ A bamboo placed on a sacred tree, ‘when the name of a ghost is called, moves of itself, and will lift and drag people about.’ Put up into a tree, it would lift them from the ground. In other cases the holding of the sticks produces convulsions and trance. The divining sticks of the Maori are also ‘guided by spirits,’ and those of the Zulu sorcerers rise, fall, and jump about.

These Zulu performances must be really very curious. In the last chapter we told how a Zulu named John, having a shilling to lay out in the interests of psychical research, declined to pay a perplexed diviner, and reserved his capital far a more meritorious performance. He tried a medium named Unomantshintshi, who divined by Umabakula, or dancing sticks —

‘If they say “no,” they fall suddenly; if they say “yes,” they arise and jump about very much, and leap on the person who has come to inquire. They “fix themselves on the place where the sick man is affected; … if the head, they leap on his head…. Many believe in Umabakula more than in the diviner. But there are not many who have the Umabakula.”’

Dr. Callaway’s informant only knew two Umabakulists, John was quite satisfied, paid his shilling, and went home.

The sticks are about a foot long. It is not reported that they are moved by spirits, nor do they seem to be regarded as fetishes.

Mr. Tylor also cites a form of the familiar pendulum experiment. Among the Karens a ring is suspended by a thread over a metal basin. The relations of the dead strike the basin, and when he who was dearest to the ghost touches it the spirit twists the thread till it breaks, and the ring falls into the basin. With us a ring is held by a thread over a tumbler, and our unconscious movements swing it till it strikes the hour. How the Karens manage it is less obvious. These savage devices with animated sticks clearly correspond to the more modern ‘table-turning.’ Here, when the players are honest, the pushing is certainly *unconscious*.

I have tested this in two ways — first by trying the minimum of *conscious* muscular action that would stir a table at which I was alone, and by comparing the absolute unconsciousness of muscular action when the table began to move in response to no *voluntary* push. Again, I tried with a friend, who said, ‘You are pushing,’ when I gently removed my hands altogether, though they seemed to rest on the table, which still revolved. My friend was himself unconsciously pushing. It is undeniable that, to a solitary experimenter, the table *seems* to make little darts of its own will in a curious way. Thus, the unconsciousness of muscular action on the part of savages engaged in the experiment with sticks would lead them to believe that spirits were animating the wood. The same fallacy beset the table-turners of 1855-65, and was, to some extent, exposed by Faraday. Of course, savages would be even more convinced by the dancing spoon of Mr. Darwin’s tale, by the dancing sticks of the Zulus, and the rest, whether the phenomena were supernormal or merely worked by unseen strings. The same remark applies to modern experimenters, when, as they declare, various objects move untouched, without physical contact.

Still more analogous than turning tables to the savage use of inspired sticks for directing the inquirer to a lost object or to a criminal, is the modern employment of the divining-rod — a forked twig which, held by the ends, revolves in the hands of the performer when he reaches the object of his quest. He, like the savage cited, is occasionally agitated in a convulsive manner; and cases are quoted in which the twig writhes when held in a pair of tongs! The best-known modern treatise on the divining-rod is that of M. Chevreul, ‘La Baguette Divinatoire’ (1854). We have also ‘L’Histoire du Merveilleux dans les Temps Modernes,’ by M. Figuier (1860). In 1781 Thouvenel published his 600 experiments with Bleton and others; and Hegel refers to Amoretti’s collection of hundreds of cases. The case of Jacques Aymard, who in the seventeenth century discovered a murderer by the use of the rod in true savage fashion, is well known. In modern England the rod is used in the interests of private individuals and public bodies (such as Trinity College, Cambridge) for the discovery of water.

Professor Barrett has lately published a book of 280 pages, in which evidence of failures and successes is collected. Professor Barrett gives about one hundred and fifty cases, in which he was only able to discover, on good authority, twelve failures. He gives a variety of tests calculated to check frauds and chance coincidence, and he publishes opinions, hostile or agnostic, by geologists. The evidence, as a general rule, is what is called first-hand in other inquiries. The actual spectators, and often the owners of the land, or the persons in whose interest water was wanted, having been present, give their testimony; and it is certain that the 'diviner' is called in by people of sense and education, commonly too practical to have a theory, and content with getting what they want, especially where scientific experts have failed.

In Mr. Barrett's opinion, the subconscious perception of indications of the presence of water produces an equally unconscious muscular 'spasm,' which twirls the rod till it often breaks. Yet 'it is almost impossible to imitate its characteristic movement by any voluntary effort.' I have myself held the hands of an amateur performer when the twig was moving, and neither by sight nor touch could I detect any muscular movement on his part, much less a spasm. The person was bailiff on a large estate, and, having accidentally discovered that he possessed the gift, used it when he wanted wells dug for the tenants on the property.

The whole topic is obscure; nor am I concerned here with the successes or failures of the divining-rod. But the movements of the twig have never, to my knowledge, been attributed by modern English performers to the operation of spirits. They say 'electricity.' Mr. Tylor merely writes:

'The action of the famous divining-rod, with its curiously versatile sensibility to water, ore, treasure, and thieves, seems to belong partly to trickery and partly to more or less conscious direction by honester operators.'

As the divining-rod is the only instance in which automatism, whatever its nature and causes, has been found of practical value by practical men, and as it is obviously associated with a number of analogous phenomena, both in civilised and savage life, it certainly deserves the attention of science. But no advance will be made till scientifically trained inquirers themselves arrange and test a large number of experiments. Knowledge of the geological ignorance of the dowsers, examples of fraud on their part, and cases of failure or reported failure, with a general hostile bias, may prevent such experiments from being made by scientific experts on an adequate scale. Such experts ought, of course, to avoid working the dowsers into a state of irritation.

It is just worth while to notice cases in which the rod acts like those of the Melanesians, Africans, and other savages. A Mr. Thomas Welton published an English translation of 'La Verge de Jacob' (Lyon, 1693). In 1651 he asked his servant to bring into the garden 'a stick that stood behind the parlour door. In great terror she brought it to the garden, her hand firmly clutched on it, nor could she let it go.’ When Mrs. Welton took the stick, ‘it drew her with very considerable velocity to nearly the centre of the garden,’ where a well was found. Mr. Welton is not likely to have known of the lately published savage examples. The coincidence with the African and Melanesian cases is, therefore, probably undesigned.

Again, in 1694, the rod was used by le Père Menestrier and others, just as it is by savages, to indicate by its movements answers to all sorts of questions. Experiments of this kind have not been made by Professor Barrett, and other modern inquirers, except by M. Richet, as a mode of detecting automatic action. But it would be just as sensible to use the twig as to use planchette or any other ‘autoscopic’ apparatus. If these elicit knowledge unconsciously present to the mind, mere water-finding ought not to be the sole province of the rod. In the same class as these rods is the forked twig which, in China, is held at each end by two persons, and made to write in the sand. The little apparatus called *planchette*, or the other, the *ouija*, is of course, consciously or unconsciously, pushed by the performers. In the case of the twig, as held by water-seekers, the difficulty of consciously moving it so as to escape close observation is considerable.

In the case of the *ouija* (a little tripod, which, under the operators’ hands, runs about a table inscribed with letters at which it points), I have known curious successes to be achieved by amateurs. Thus, in the house of a lady who owned an old *château* in another county, the *ouija*, operated on by two ladies known to myself, wrote a number of details about a visit paid to the *château* for a certain purpose by Mary Stuart. That visit, and its object, a purely personal one, are unknown to history, and the *château* is not spoken of in Mr. Hay Fleming’s careful, but unavoidably incomplete, itinerary of the Queen’s residence in Scotland. After the communication had been made, the owner of the *château* explained that she was already acquainted with the circumstances described, as she had recently read them in documents in her charter chest, where they remain.

Of course, the belief we extend to such narratives is entirely conditioned by our knowledge of the personal character of the performers. The point here is merely the civilised and savage practice of *automatism*, the apparent eliciting of knowledge not otherwise accessible, by the movements of a stick, or a bit of wood. These movements, made without conscious exertion or direction, seem, to savage philosophy, to be caused by in-dwelling spirits, the sources of Fetishism.

These examples, then, demonstrating unconscious movement of objects by the operators, make it clear that movements even of touched objects, may be attributed, by some civilised and by savage amateurs, to ‘spirits.’ The objects so moved may, by savages, be regarded in some cases as fetishes, and their movements may have helped to originate the belief that spirits can inhabit inanimate objects. When objects apparently quite untouched become volatile, the mystery is deeper. This apparent animation and frolicsome behaviour of inanimate objects is reported all through history, and attested by immense quantities of evidence of every degree. It would be tedious to give a full account of the antiquity and diffusion of reports about such occurrences. We find them among Neo-Platonists, in the English and Continental Middle Ages, among Eskimo, Hurons, Algonkins, Tartars, Zulus, Malays, Nasquapees, Maoris, in witch trials, in ancient Peru (immediately after the Spanish Conquest), in China, in modern Russia, in New England (1680), all through the career of modern spiritualism, in Hayti (where they are attributed to 'Obeah'), and, sporadically, everywhere.

Among all these cases, we must dismiss whatever the modern paid medium does in the dark. The only thing to be done with the ethnographic and modern accounts of such marvels is to 'file them for reference.' If a spontaneous example occurs, under proper inspection, we can then compare our old tales. Professor James says: 'Their mutual resemblances suggest a natural type, and I confess that till these records, or others like them, are positively explained away, I cannot feel (in spite of such vast amounts of detected frauds) as if the case of physical mediumship itself, as a freak of nature, were definitely closed…. So long as the stories multiply in various lands, and so few are positively explained away, it is bad method to ignore them.' Here they are not ignored, because, whatever the cause or causes of the phenomena, they would buttress, if they did not originate, the savage belief in spirits tenanting inanimate matter, whence came Fetishism. As to facts, we cannot, of course, 'explain away' events of this kind, which we know only through report. A conjurer cannot explain a trick merely from a description, especially a description by a non-conjurer. But, as a rule, nothing so much leads to doubt on this theme as the 'explanation' given — except, of course, in the case of 'dark séances' got up and prepared by paid mediums. We know, sometimes, how the 'explanation' arose.

Thus, the house of a certain M. Zoller, a lawyer and member of the Swiss Federal Council, a house at Stans, in Unterwalden, was made simply uninhabitable in 1860-1862. The disturbances, including movements of objects, were of a truly odious description, and occurred in full daylight. M. Zoller, deeply attached to his home, which had many interesting associations with the part his family played in the struggle against revolutionary France, was obliged to abandon the place. He had made every conceivable sort of research, and had called in the local police and *savants*, to no purpose.

But the affair was explained away thus: While the phenomena could still be concealed from public curiosity, a client called to see M. Zoller, who was out. The client, therefore, remained in the drawing-room. Loud and heavy blows resounded through the room. The client, as it chanced, had once felt the effects of an electric battery, for some medical reason, apparently. M. Zoller writes: ‘My eldest son was present at the time, and, when my client asked whether there was such a thing as an electrical machine in the house (the family having been enjoined to keep the disturbances as secret as possible), he allowed S. to think that there was.’ Consequently, the phenomena were set down to M. Zoller’s singular idea of making his house untenantable with an ‘electric machine’ — which he did not possess. A number of the most respected citizens, including the Superintendent of Police, and the chief magistrate for law, published a statement that neither Zoller, nor any of his family, nor any of themselves, produced or could have produced the phenomena witnessed by them in August 1862. This declaration they put forth in the ‘Schwytzer Zeitung,’ October 5, 1863. No electric machine known to mortals could have produced the vast variety of alleged effects, none was ever found; and as M. Zoller changed his servants without escaping his tribulations, they can hardly be blamed for what, *prima facie*, it seems that they could not possibly do. However, ‘electricity,’ like Mesopotamia, is ‘a blessed word.’

My own position in this matter of ‘physical phenomena’ is, I hope, clear. They interest me, for my present purpose, as being, whatever their real nature and origin, things which would suggest to a savage his theory of Fetishism. ‘An inanimate object may be tenanted by a spirit, as is proved by its extraordinary movements.’ Thus the early thinker might reason, and go on to revere the object. It is to be wished that competent observers would pay more attention to such savage practices as crystal-gazing and automatism as illustrated by the sticks of the Melanesians, Zulus, and Yaos. Our scanty information we pick up out of stray allusions, but it has the advantage of being uncontaminated by theory, the European spectator not knowing the wide range of such practices and their value in experimental psychology.

We have now finished our study of the less normal and usual phenomena, which gave rise to belief in separable, self-existing, conscious, and powerful souls. We have shown that the supernormal factors which, when reflected on, probably supported this belief, are represented in civilised as well as in savage life, while as to their existence among the founders of religion we can historically know nothing at all. If we may infer from certain considerations, the supernormal experiences were possibly more prevalent among the remote ancestors of known savage races than among their modern descendants. We have suggested that clairvoyance, thought transference, and telepathy cannot be dismissed as mere fables, by a cautious inquirer, while even the far more obscure stories of ‘physical manifestations’ are but poorly explained away by those who cannot explain them. Again, these faculties have presented — in the acquisition of otherwise unattainable knowledge, in coincidental hallucinations, and in other ways — just the kind of facts on which the savage doctrine of souls might be based, or by which it might be buttressed. Thus, while the actuality of the supernormal facts and faculties remains at least an open question, the prevalent theory of Materialism cannot be admitted as dogmatically certain in its present shape. No more than any other theory, nay, less than some other theories, can it account for the psychical facts which, at the lowest, we may not honestly leave out of the reckoning.

We have therefore no more to say about the supernormal aspects of the origins of religion. We are henceforth concerned with matters of verifiable belief and practice. We have to ask whether, when once the doctrine of souls was conceived by early men, it took precisely the course of development usually indicated by anthropological science.

IX

EVOLUTION OF THE IDEA OF GOD

To the anthropological philosopher ‘a plain man’ would naturally put the question: ‘Having got your idea of spirit or soul — your theory of Animism — out of the idea of ghosts, and having got your idea of ghosts out of dreams and visions, how do you get at the Idea of God?’ Now by ‘God’ the proverbial ‘plain man’ of controversy means a primal eternal Being, author of all things, the father and friend of man, the invisible, omniscient guardian of morality.

The usual though not invariable reply of the anthropologist might be given in the words of Mr. Im Thurn, author of a most interesting work on the Indians of British Guiana:

‘From the notion of ghosts,’ says Mr. Im Thurn, ‘a belief has arisen, but very gradually, in higher spirits, and eventually in a Highest Spirit, and, keeping pace with the growth of these beliefs, a habit of reverence for, and worship of spirits…. The Indians of Guiana know no God.’

As another example of Mr. Im Thurn’s hypothesis that God is a late development from the idea of spirit may be cited Mr. Payne’s learned ‘History of the New World,’ a work of much research:

‘The lowest savages not only have no gods, but do not even recognise those lower beings usually called spirits, the conception of which has invariably preceded that of gods in the human mind.’

Mr. Payne here differs, *toto caelo*, from Mr. Tylor, who finds no sufficient proof for wholly non-religious savages, and from Roskoff, who has disposed of the arguments of Sir John Lubbock. Mr. Payne, then, for ethnological purposes, defines a god as ‘a benevolent spirit, permanently embodied in some tangible object, usually an image, and to whom food, drink,’ and so on, ‘are regularly offered for the purpose of securing assistance in the affairs of life.’

On this theory ‘the lowest savages’ are devoid of the idea of god or of spirit. Later they develop the idea of spirit, and when they have secured the spirit, as it were, in a tangible object, and kept it on board wages, then the spirit has attained to the dignity and the savage to the conception of a god. But while a god of this kind is, in Mr. Payne’s opinion, relatively a late flower of culture, for the hunting races generally (with some exceptions) have no gods, yet ‘the conception of a creator or maker of all things … obviously a great spirit’ is ‘one of the earliest efforts of primitive logic.’

Mr. Payne’s own logic is not very clear. The ‘primitive logic’ of the savage leads him to seek for a cause or maker of things, which he finds in a great creative spirit. Yet the lowest savages have no idea even of spirit, and the hunting races, as a rule, have no god. Does Mr. Payne mean that a great creative spirit is *not* a god, while a spirit kept on board wages in a tangible object is a god? We are unable, by reason of evidence later to be given, to agree with Mr. Payne's view of the facts, while his reasoning appears somewhat inconsistent, the lowest savages having, in his opinion, no idea of spirit, though the idea of a creative spirit is, for all that, one of the earliest efforts of primitive logic.

On any such theories as these the belief in a moral Supreme Being is a very late (or a very early?) result of evolution, due to the action of advancing thought upon the original conception of ghosts. This opinion of Mr. Im Thurn's is, roughly stated, the usual theory of anthropologists. We wish, on the other hand, to show that the idea of God, as he is conceived of by our inquiring plain man, is shadowed forth (among contradictory fables) in the lowest-known grades of savagery, and therefore cannot arise from the later speculation of men, comparatively civilised and advanced, on the original datum of ghosts. We shall demonstrate, contrary to the opinion of Mr. Spencer, Mr. Huxley, and even Mr. Tylor, that the Supreme Being, and, in one case at least, the casual sprites of savage faith, are active moral influences. What is even more important, we shall make it undeniable that Anthropology has simplified her problem by neglecting or ignoring her facts. While the real problem is to account for the evolution out of ghosts of the eternal, creative moral god of the 'plain man,' the germ of such a god or being in the creeds of the lowest savages is by anthropologists denied, or left out of sight, or accounted for by theories contradicted by facts, or, at best, is explained away as a result of European or Islamite influences. Now, as the problem is to account for the evolution of the highest conception of God, as far as that conception exists among the most backward races, the problem can never be solved while that highest conception of God is practically ignored.

Thus, anthropologists, as a rule, in place of facing and solving their problem, have merely evaded it — doubtless unwittingly. This, of course, is not the practice of Mr. Tylor, though even his great work is professedly much more concerned with the development of the idea of spirit and with the lower forms of animism than with the real crux — the evolution of the idea (always obscured by mythology) of a moral, uncreated, undying God among the lowest savages. This negligence of anthropologists has arisen from a single circumstance. They take it for granted that God is always (except where the word for God is applied to a living human being) regarded as Spirit. Thus, having accounted for the development of the idea of spirit, they regard God as that idea carried to its highest power, and as the final step in its evolution. But, if we can show that the early idea of an undying, moral, creative being does not necessarily or logically imply the doctrine of spirit (or ghost), then this idea of an eternal, moral, creative being may have existed even before the doctrine of spirit was evolved.

We may admit that Mr. Tylor's account of the process by which Gods were evolved out of ghosts is a little *touffu* — rather buried in facts. We 'can scarcely see the wood for the trees.' We want to know how Gods, makers of things (or of most things), fathers in heaven, and friends, guardians of morality, seeing what is good or bad in the hearts of men, were evolved, as is supposed, out of ghosts or surviving souls of the dead. That such moral, practically omniscient Gods are known to the very lowest savages — Bushmen, Fuegians, Australians — we shall demonstrate.

Here the inquirer must be careful not to adopt the common opinion that Gods improve, morally and otherwise, in direct ratio to the rising grades in the evolution of culture and civilisation. That is not necessarily the case; usually the reverse occurs. Still less must we take it for granted, following Mr. Tylor and Mr. Huxley, that the 'alliance belongs almost, or wholly, to religions above the savage level — not to the earlier and lower creeds;' or that 'among the Australian savages,' and 'in its simplest condition,' 'theology is wholly independent of ethics.' These statements can be proved (by such evidence as anthropology is obliged to rely upon) to be erroneous. And, just because these statements are put forward, Anthropology has an easier task in explaining the origin of religion; while, just because these statements are incorrect, her conclusion, being deduced from premises so far false, is invalidated.

Given souls, acquired by thinking on the lines already described, Mr. Tylor develops Gods out of them. But he is not one of the writers who is certain about every detail. He 'scarcely attempts to clear away the haze that covers great parts of the subject.'

The human soul, he says, has been the model on which man 'framed his ideas of spiritual beings in general, from the tiniest elf that sports in the grass up to the heavenly creator and ruler of the world, the Great Spirit.' Here it is taken for granted that the Heavenly Ruler was from the first envisaged as a '*spiritual* being' — which is just the difficulty. Was He?

The process of framing these ideas is rather obscure. The savage 'lives in terror of the souls of the dead as harmful spirits.' This might yield a Devil; it would not yield a God who 'makes for righteousness.' Happily, 'deified ancestors are regarded, on the whole, as kindly spirits.' The dead ancestor is 'now passed into a deity.' Examples of ancestor-worship follow. But we are no nearer home. For among the Zulus many Amatongo (ancestral spirits) are sacred. 'Yet their father is far before all others when they worship the Amatongo….

They do not know the ancients who are dead, nor their laud-giving names, nor their names.’ Thus, each new generation of Zulus must have a new first worshipful object — its own father’s Itongo. This father, and his very name, are, in a generation or two, forgotten. The name of such a man, therefore, cannot survive as that of the God or Supreme Being from age to age; and, obviously, such a real dead man, while known at all, is much too well known to be taken for the creator and ruler of the world, despite some African flattering titles and superstitions about kings who control the weather. The Zulus, about as ‘godless’ a people as possible, have a mythical first ancestor, Unkulunkulu, but he is ‘beyond the reach of rites,’ and is a centre of myths rather than of worship or of moral ideas.

After other examples of ancestor-worship, Mr. Tylor branches off into a long discussion of the theory of ‘possession’ or inspiration, which does not assist the argument at the present point. Thence he passes to fetishism (already discussed by us), and the transitions from the fetish — (1) to the idol; (2) to the guardian angel (‘subliminal self’); (3) to tree and river spirits, and local spirits which cause volcanoes; and (4) to polytheism. A fetish may inhabit a tree; trees being generalised, the fetish of one oak becomes the god of the forest. Or, again, fetishes rise into ‘species gods;’ the gods of *all* bees, owls, or rabbits are thus evolved.

Next,

‘As chiefs and kings are among men, so are the great gods among the lesser spirits…. With little exception, wherever a savage or barbaric system of religion is thoroughly described, great gods make their appearance in the spiritual world as distinctly as chiefs in the human tribe.’

Very good; but whence comes the great God among tribes which have neither chief nor king and probably never had, as among the Fuegians, Bushmen, and Australians? The maker and ruler of the world known to *these* races cannot be the shadow of king or chief, reflected and magnified on the mist of thought; for chief or king these peoples have none. This theory (Hume’s) will not work where people have a great God but no king or chief; nor where they have a king but no Zeus or other supreme King-god, as (I conceive) among the Aztecs.

We now reach, in Mr. Tylor’s theory, great fetish deities, such as Heaven and Earth, Sun and Moon, and ‘departmental deities,’ gods of Agriculture, War, and so forth, unknown to low savages.

Next Mr. Tylor introduces an important personage. ‘The theory of family Manes, carried back to tribal Gods, leads to the recognition of superior deities of the nature of Divine Ancestor, or First Man,’ who sometimes ranks as Lord of the Dead. As an instance, Mr. Tylor gives the Maori Maui, who, like the Indian

Yama, trod first of men the path of death. But whether Maui and Yama are the Sun, or not, both Maori and Sanskrit religion regard these heroes as much later than the Original Gods. In Kamschatka the First Man is the ‘son’ of the Creator, and it is about the origin of the idea of the Creator, not of the First Man, that we are inquiring. Adam is called ‘the son of God’ in a Biblical genealogy, but, of course, Adam was made, not begotten. The case of the Zulu belief will be analysed later. On the whole, we cannot explain away the conception of the Creator as a form of the conception of an idealised divine First Ancestor, because the conception of a Creator occurs where ancestor-worship does not occur; and again, because, supposing that the idea of a Creator came first, and that ancestor-worship later grew more popular, the popular idea of Ancestor might be transferred to the waning idea of Creator. The Creator might be recognised as the First Ancestor, *après coup*.

Mr. Tylor next approaches Dualism, the idea of hostile Good and Bad Beings. We must, as he says, be careful to discount European teaching, still, he admits, the savage has this dualistic belief in a ‘primitive’ form. But the savage conception is not merely that of ‘good = friendly to me,’ ‘bad = hostile to me.’ Ethics, as we shall show, already come into play in his theology.

Mr. Tylor arrives, at last, at the Supreme Being of savage creeds. His words, well weighed, must be cited textually —

‘To mark off the doctrines of monotheism, closer definition is required , assigning the distinctive attributes of Deity to none save the Almighty Creator. It may be declared that, in this strict sense, no savage tribe of monotheists has been ever known. Nor are any fair representatives of the lower culture in a strict sense pantheists. The doctrine which they do widely hold, and which opens to them a course tending in one or other of these directions, is polytheism culminating in the rule of one supreme divinity. High above the doctrine of souls, of divine Manes, of local nature gods, of the great gods of class and element, there are to be discerned in barbaric theology, shadowings, quaint or majestic, of the conception of a Supreme Deity, henceforth to be traced onward in expanding power and brightening glory along the history of Religion. It is no unimportant task, partial as it is, to select and group the typical data which show the nature and position of the doctrine of supremacy, as it comes into view within the lower culture.

We shall show that certain low savages are as monotheistic as some Christians. They have a Supreme Being, and the ‘distinctive attributes of Deity’ are not by them assigned to other beings, further than as Christianity assigns them to Angels, Saints, the Devil, and, strange as it appears, among savages, to mediating ‘Sons.’

It is not known that, among the Andamanese and other tribes, this last notion is due to missionary influence. But, in regard to the whole chapter of savage Supreme Beings, we must, as Mr. Tylor advises, keep watching for Christian and Islamite contamination. The savage notions, as Mr. Tylor says, even when thus contaminated, may have ‘to some extent, a native substratum.’ We shall select such savage examples of the idea of a Supreme Being as are attested by ancient native hymns, or are inculcated in the most sacred and secret savage institutions, the religious Mysteries (manifestly the last things to be touched by missionary influence), or are found among low insular races defended from European contact by the jealous ferocity and poisonous jungles of people and soil. We also note cases in which missionaries found such native names as ‘Father,’ ‘Ancient of Heaven,’ ‘Maker of All,’ ready-made to their hands.

It is to be remarked that, while this branch of the inquiry is practically omitted by Mr. Spencer, Mr. Tylor can spare for it but some twenty pages out of his large work. He arranges the probable germs of the savage idea of a Supreme Being thus: A god of the polytheistic crowd is simply raised to the primacy, which, of course, cannot occur where there is no polytheism. Or the principle of Manes worship may make a Supreme Deity out of ‘a primeval ancestor’ say Unkulunkulu, who is so far from being supreme, that he is abject. Or, again, a great phenomenon or force in Nature-worship, say Sun, or Heaven, is raised to supremacy. Or speculative philosophy ascends from the Many to the One by trying to discern through and beyond the universe a First Cause. Animistic conceptions thus reach their utmost limit in the notion of the Anima Mundi. He may accumulate all powers of all polytheistic gods, or he may ‘loom vast, shadowy, and calm … too benevolent to need human worship … too merely existent to concern himself with the petty race of men.’ But he is always animistic.

Now, in addition to the objections already noted in passing, how can we tell that the Supreme Being of low savages was, in original conception, *animistic* at all? How can we know that he was envisaged, originally, as *Spirit*? We shall show that he probably was not, that the question ‘spirit or not spirit’ was not raised at all, that the Maker and Father in Heaven, prior to Death, was merely regarded as a deathless *Being*, no question of ‘spirit’ being raised. If so, Animism was not needed for the earliest idea of a moral Eternal. This hypothesis will be found to lead to some very singular conclusions.

It will be more fully stated and illustrated, presently, but I find that it had already occurred to Dr. Brinton. He is talking specially of a heaven-god; he says ‘it came to pass that the idea of God was linked to the heavens *long ere man asked himself, Are the heavens material and God spiritual*?’ Dr. Brinton, however, does not develop his idea, nor am I aware that it has been developed previously.

The notion of a God about whose spirituality nobody has inquired is new to us. To ourselves, and doubtless or probably to barbarians on a certain level of culture, such a Divine Being *must* be animistic, *must* be a ‘spirit.’ To take only one case, to which we shall return, the Banks Islanders (Melanesia) believe in ghosts, ‘and in the existence of Beings who were not, and never had been, human. All alike might be called spirits,’ says Dr. Codrington, but, *ex hypothesi*, the Beings ‘who never were human’ are only called ‘spirits,’ by us, because our habits of thought do not enable us to envisage them *except* as ‘spirits.’ They never were men, ‘the natives will always maintain that he (the *Vui*) was *something different*, and deny to him the fleshly body of a man,’ while resolute that he was not a ghost.

This point will be amply illustrated later, as we study that strangely neglected chapter, that essential chapter, the Higher beliefs of the Lowest savages. Of the existence of a belief in a Supreme Being, not as merely ‘alleged,’ there is as good evidence as we possess for any fact in the ethnographic region.

It is certain that savages, when first approached by curious travellers, and missionaries, have again and again recognised our God in theirs.

The mythical details and fables about the savage God are, indeed, different; the ethical, benevolent, admonishing, rewarding, and creative aspects of the Gods are apt to be the same.

‘There is no necessity for beginning to tell even the most degraded of these people of the existence of God, or of a future state, ‘the facts being universally admitted.’

‘Intelligent men among the Bakwains have scouted the idea of any of them ever having been without a tolerably clear conception of good and evil, God and the future state; Nothing we indicate as sin ever appeared to them as otherwise,’ except polygamy, says Livingstone.

Now we may agree with Mr. Tylor that modern theologians, familiar with savage creeds, will scarcely argue that ‘they are direct or nearly direct products of revelation’ (vol. ii.). But we may argue that, considering their nascent ethics (denied or minimised by many anthropologists) and the distance which separates the high gods of savagery from the ghosts out of which they are said to have sprung; considering too, that the relatively pure and lofty element which, *ex hypothesi*, is most recent in evolution, is also, *not* the most honoured, but often just the reverse; remembering, above all, that we know nothing historically of the mental condition of the founders of religion, we may hesitate to accept the anthropological hypothesis *en masse*. At best it is conjectural, and the facts are such that opponents have more justification than is commonly admitted for regarding the bulk of savage religion as degenerate, or corrupted, from its own highest elements. I am by no means, as yet, arguing positively in favour of that hypothesis, but I see what its advocates mean, or ought to mean, and the strength of their position. Mr. Tylor, with his unique fairness, says ‘the degeneration theory, no doubt in some instances with justice, may claim such beliefs as mutilated and perverted remains of higher religion’ (vol. ii.).

I do not pretend to know how the lowest savages evolved the theory of a God who reads the heart and ‘makes for righteousness,’ It is as easy, almost, for me to believe that they ‘were not left without a witness,’ as to believe that this God of theirs was evolved out of the maleficent ghost of a dirty mischievous medicine-man.

Here one may repeat that while the ‘quaint or majestic foreshadowings’ of a Supreme Being, among very low savages, are only sketched lightly by Mr. Tylor; in Mr. Herbert Spencer’s system they seem to be almost omitted. In his ‘Principles of Sociology’ and ‘Ecclesiastical Institutions’ one looks in vain for an adequate notice; in vain for almost any notice, of this part of his topic. The watcher of conduct, the friendly, creative being of low savage faith, whence was he evolved? The circumstance of his existence, as far as I can see; the chastity, the unselfishness, the pitifulness, the loyalty to plighted word, the prohibition of even extra-tribal homicide, enjoined in various places on his worshippers, are problems that appear somehow to have escaped Mr. Spencer’s notice. We are puzzled by endless difficulties in his system: for example as to how savages can forget their great-grandfathers’ very names, and yet remember ‘traditional persons from generation to generation,’ so that ‘in time any amount of expansion and idealisation can be reached,’

Again, Mr. Spencer will argue that it is a strange thing if ‘primitive men had, as some think, the consciousness of a Universal Power whence they and all other things proceeded,’ and yet ‘spontaneously performed to that Power an act like that performed by them to the dead body of a fellow savage’ — by offerings of food.

Now, first, there would be nothing strange in the matter if the crude idea of ‘Universal Power’ came *earliest*, and was superseded, in part, by a later propitiation of the dead and ghosts. The new religious idea would soon refract back on, and influence by its ritual, the older conception. And, secondly, it is precisely this ‘Universal Power’ that is *not* propitiated by offerings of food, in Tonga, (despite Mr. Huxley) Australia, and Africa, for example. We cannot escape the difficulty by saying that there the old ghost of Universal Power is regarded as dead, decrepit, or as a *roi-fainéant* not worth propitiating, for that is not true of the punisher of sin, the teacher of generosity, and the solitary sanction of faith between men and peoples.

It would appear then, on the whole, that the question of the plain man to the anthropologist, ‘Having got your idea of spirit into the savage’s mind, how does he develop out of it what I call God?’ has not been answered. God cannot be a reflection from human kings where there have been no kings; nor a president elected out of a polytheistic society of gods where there is as yet no polytheism; nor an ideal first ancestor where men do not worship their ancestors; while, again, the spirit of a man who died, real or ideal, does not answer to a common savage conception of the Creator. All this will become much more obvious as we study in detail the highest gods of the lowest races.

Our study, of course, does not pretend to embrace the religion of all the savages in the world. We are content with typical, and, as a rule, well-observed examples. We range from the creeds of the most backward and worst-equipped nomad races, to those of peoples with an aristocracy, hereditary kings, houses and agriculture, ending with the Supreme Being of the highly civilised Incas, and with the Jehovah of the Hebrews.

HIGH GODS OF LOW RACES

To avoid misconception we must repeat the necessary cautions about accepting evidence as to high gods of low races. The missionary who does not see in every alien god a devil is apt to welcome traces of an original supernatural revelation, darkened by all peoples but the Jews. We shall not, however, rely much on missionary evidence, and, when we do, we must now be equally on our guard against the anthropological bias in the missionary himself. Having read Mr. Spencer and Mr. Tylor, and finding himself among ancestor-worshippers (as he sometimes does), he is apt to think that ancestor-worship explains any traces of a belief in the Supreme Being. Against each and every bias of observers we must be watchful.

It may be needful, too, to point out once again another weak point in all reasoning about savage religion, namely that we cannot always tell what may have been borrowed from Europeans. Thus, the Fuegians, in 1830-1840, were far out of the way, but one tribe, near Magellan’s Straits, worshipped an image called Cristo. Fitzroy attributes this obvious trace of Catholicism to a Captain Pelippa, who visited the district some time before his own expedition. It is less probable that Spaniards established a belief in a moral Deity in regions where they left no material traces of their faith. The Fuegians are not easily proselytised. ‘When discovered by strangers, the instant impulse of a Fuegian family is to run off into the woods.’ Occasionally they will emerge to barter, but ‘sometimes nothing will induce a single individual of the family to appear.’ Fitzroy thought they had no idea of a future state, because, among other reasons not given, ‘the evil spirit torments them in *this* world, if they do wrong, by storms, hail, snow, &c.’ Why the evil spirit should punish evil deeds is not evident. ‘A great black man is supposed to be always wandering about the woods and mountains, who is certain of knowing every word and every action, who cannot be escaped and who influences the weather according to men’s conduct.’

There are no traces of propitiation by food, or sacrifice, or anything but conduct. To regard the Deity as ‘a magnified non-natural man’ is not peculiar to Fuegian theologians, and does not imply Animism, but the reverse. But the point is that this ethical judge of perhaps the lowest savages ‘makes for righteousness’ and searches the heart. His morality is so much above the ordinary savage standard that he regards the slaying of a stranger and an enemy, caught redhanded in robbery, as a sin. York’s brother (York was a Fuegian brought to England by Fitzroy) killed a ‘wild man’ who was stealing his birds. ‘Rain come down, snow come down, hail come down, wind blow, blow, very much blow. Very bad to kill man. Big man in woods no like it, he very angry.’ Here be ethics in savage religion. The Sixth Commandment is in force. The Being also prohibits the slaying of flappers before they can fly. ‘Very bad to shoot little duck, come wind, come rain, blow, very much blow.’

Now this big man is not a deified chief, for the Fuegians ‘have no superiority of one over another … but the doctor-wizard of each party has much influence.’ Mr. Spencer disposes of this moral ‘big man’ of the Fuegians as ‘evidently a deceased weather-doctor.’ But, first, there is no evidence that the being is regarded as ever having died. Again, it is not shown that Fuegians are ancestor-worshippers. Next, Fitzroy did not think that the Fuegians believed in a future life. Lastly, when were medicine-men such notable moralists? The worst spirits among the neighbouring Patagonians are those of dead medicine-men. As a rule everywhere the ghost of a ‘doctor-wizard,’ shaman, or whatever he may be called, is the worst and wickedest of all ghosts. How, then, the Fuegians, who are not proved to be ancestor-worshippers, evolved out of the malignant ghost of an ancestor a being whose strong point is morality, one does not easily conceive. The adjacent Chonos ‘have great faith in a good spirit, whom they call Yerri Yuppon, and consider to be the author of all good; him they invoke in distress or danger.’ However starved they do not touch food till a short prayer has been muttered over each portion, ‘the praying man looking upward.’ They have magicians, but no details are given as to spirits or ghosts. If Fuegian and Chono religion is on this level, and if this be the earliest, then the theology of many other higher savages (as of the Zulus) is decidedly degenerate. ‘The Bantu gives one accustomed to the negro the impression that he once had the same set of ideas, *but has forgotten half of them*,’ says Miss Kingsley.

Of all races now extant, the Australians are probably lowest in culture, and, like the fauna of the continent, are nearest to the primitive model. They have neither metals, bows, pottery, agriculture, nor fixed habitations; and no traces of higher culture have anywhere been found above or in the soil of the continent. This is important, for in some respects their religious conceptions are so lofty that it would be natural to explain them as the result either of European influence, or as relics of a higher civilisation in the past. The former notion is discredited by the fact that their best religious ideas are imparted in connection with their ancient and secret mysteries, while for the second idea, that they are degenerate from a loftier civilisation, there is absolutely no evidence.

It has been suggested, indeed, by Mr. Spencer that the singularly complex marriage customs of the Australian blacks point to a more polite condition in their past history. Of this stage, as we said, no material traces have ever been discovered, nor can degeneration be recent. Our earliest account of the Australians is that of Dampier, who visited New Holland in the unhappy year 1688. He found the natives ‘the miserablest people in the world. The Hodmadods, of Mononamatapa, though a nasty people, yet for wealth are gentlemen to these: who have no houses, sheep, poultry, and fruits of the earth…. They have no houses, but lie in the open air.’ Curiously enough, Dampier attests their *unselfishness*: the main ethical feature in their religious teaching. ‘Be it little or be it much they get, every one has his part, as well the young and tender as the old and feeble, who are not able to go abroad, as the strong and lusty.’ Dampier saw no metals used, nor any bows, merely boomerangs (‘wooden cutlasses’), and lances with points hardened in the fire. ‘Their place of dwelling was only a fire with a few boughs before it’ (the *gunyeh*).

This description remains accurate for most of the unsophisticated Australian tribes, but Dampier appears only to have seen ichthyophagous coast blacks.

There is one more important point. In the *Bora*, or Australian mysteries, at which knowledge of ‘The Maker’ and of his commandments is imparted, the front teeth of the initiated are still knocked out. Now, Dampier observed ‘the two fore-teeth of their upper jaw are wanting in all of them, men and women, old and young.’ If this is to be taken quite literally, the Bora rite, in 1688, must have included the women, at least locally. Dampier was on the north-west coast in latitude 16 degrees, longitude 122-1/4 degrees east (Dampier Land, West Australia). The natives had neither boats, canoes, nor bark logs; but it seems that they had their religious mysteries and their unselfishness, two hundred years ago.

The Australians have been very carefully studied by many observers, and the results entirely overthrow Mr. Huxley’s bold statement that ‘in its simplest condition, such as may be met with among the Australian savages, theology is a mere belief in the existence, powers, and dispositions (usually malignant) of ghost-like entities who may be propitiated or scared away; but no cult can properly be said to exist. And in this stage theology is wholly independent of ethics.’

Remarks more crudely in defiance of known facts could not be made. The Australians, assuredly, believe in ‘spirits,’ often malicious, and probably in most cases regarded as ghosts of men. These aid the wizard, and occasionally inspire him. That these ghosts are *worshipped* does not appear, and is denied by Waitz. Again, in the matter of cult, ‘there is none’ in the way of *sacrifice* to higher gods, as there should be if these gods were hungry ghosts. The cult among the Australians is the keeping of certain ‘laws,’ expressed in moral teaching, supposed to be in conformity with the institutes of their God. Worship takes the form, as at Eleusis, of tribal mysteries, originally instituted, as at Eleusis, by the God. The young men are initiated with many ceremonies, some of which are cruel and farcical, but the initiation includes ethical instruction, in conformity with the supposed commands of a God who watches over conduct. As among ourselves, the ethical ideal, with its theological sanction, is probably rather above the moral standard of ordinary practice. What conclusion we should draw from these facts is uncertain, but the facts, at least, cannot be disputed, and precisely contradict the statement of Mr. Huxley. He was wholly in the wrong when he said: ‘The moral code, such as is implied by public opinion, derives no sanction from theological dogmas,’ It reposes, for its origin and sanction, on such dogmas.

The evidence as to Australian religion is abundant, and is being added to yearly. I shall here content myself with Mr. Howitt’s accounts.

As regards the possible evolution of the Australian God from ancestor-worship, it must be noted that Mr. Howitt credits the groups with possessing ‘headmen,’ a kind of chiefs, whereas some inquirers, in Brough Smyth’s collection, disbelieve in regular chiefs. Mr. Howitt writes: —

‘The Supreme Spirit, who is believed in by all the tribes I refer to here , either as a benevolent, or more frequently as a malevolent being, it seems to me represents the defunct headman.’

Now, the traces of ‘headmanship’ among the tribes are extremely faint; no such headman rules large areas of country, none is known to be worshipped after death, and the malevolence of the Supreme Spirit is not illustrated by the details of Mr. Howitt’s own statement, but the reverse. Indeed, he goes on at once to remark that ‘*Darumulun* was not, it seems to me, everywhere thought a malevolent being, but he was dreaded as one who could severely punish the trespasses committed against these tribal ordinances and customs whose first institution is ascribed to him.’

To punish transgressions of his law is not the essence of a malevolent being. Darumulun ‘watched the youths from the sky, prompt to punish, by disease or death, the breach of his ordinances,’ moral or ritual. His name is too sacred to be spoken except in whispers, and the anthropologist will observe that the names of the human dead are also often tabooed. But the divine name is not thus tabooed and sacred when the mere folklore about him is narrated. The informants of Mr. Howitt instinctively distinguished between the mythology and the religion of Darumulun. This distinction — the secrecy about the religion, the candour about the mythology — is essential, and accounts for our ignorance about the inner religious beliefs of early races. Mr. Howitt himself knew little till he was initiated. The grandfather of Mr. Howitt's friend, *before the white men came to Melbourne*, took him out at night, and, pointing to a star, said: 'You will soon be a man; you see *Bunjil* up there, and he can see you, and all you do down here.' Mr. Palmer, speaking of the Mysteries of Northern Australians (mysteries under divine sanction), mentions the nature of the moral instruction. Each lad is given, 'by one of the elders, advice so kindly, fatherly, and impressive, as often to soften the heart, and draw tears from the youth.' He is to avoid adultery, not to take advantage of a woman if he finds her alone, he is not to be quarrelsome.

At the Mysteries Darumulun's real name may be uttered, at other times he is 'Master' (*Biamban*) or 'Father' (*Papang*), exactly as we say 'Lord' and 'Father.'

It is known that all these things are not due to missionaries, whose instructions would certainly not be conveyed in the *Bora*, or tribal mysteries, which, again, are partly described by Collins as early as 1798, and must have been practised in 1688. Mr. Howitt mentions, among moral lessons divinely sanctioned, respect for old age, abstinence from lawless love, and avoidance of the sins so popular, poetic, and sanctioned by the example of Gods, in classical Greece. A representation is made of the Master, Biamban; and to make such idols, except at the Mysteries, is forbidden 'under pain of death.' Those which are made are destroyed as soon as the rites are ended. The future life (apparently) is then illustrated by the burial of a living elder, who rises from a grave. This may, however, symbolise the 'new life' of the Mystae, 'Worse have I fled; better have I found,' as was sung in an Athenian rite. The whole result is, by what Mr. Howitt calls 'a quasi-religious element,' to 'impress upon the mind of the youth, in an indelible manner, those rules of conduct which form the moral law of the tribe.'

Many other authorities could be adduced for the religious sanction of morals in Australia. A watchful being observes and rewards the conduct or men; he is named with reverence, if named at all; his abode is the heavens; he is the Master and Lord of things; his lessons 'soften the heart,'

'What wants this Knave
That a *God* should have?'

I shall now demonstrate that the religion patronised by the Australian Supreme Being, and inculcated in his Mysteries, is actually used to counteract the immoral character which natives acquire by associating with Anglo-Saxon Christians.

Mr. Howitt gives an account of the Jeraeil, or Mysteries of the Kurnai. The old men deemed that through intercourse with whites 'the lads had become selfish and no longer inclined to share that which they obtained by their own exertions, or had given them, with their friends.' One need not say that selflessness is the very essence of goodness, and the central moral doctrine of Christianity. So it is in the religious Mysteries of the African Yao; a selfish man, we shall see, is spoken of as 'uninitiated.' So it is with the Australian Kurnai, whose mysteries and ethical teaching are under the sanction of their Supreme Being. So much for the anthropological dogma that early theology has no ethics.

The Kurnai began by kneading the stomachs of the lads about to be initiated (that is, if they have been associating with Christians), to expel selfishness and greed. The chief rite, later, is to blindfold every lad, with a blanket closely drawn over his head, to make whirring sounds with the *tundun*, or Greek *rhombos*, then to pluck off the blankets, and bid the initiate raise their faces to the sky. The initiator points to it, calling out, 'Look there, look there, look there!' They have seen in this solemn way the home of the Supreme Being, 'Our Father,' Mungan-ngaur (Mungan = 'Father,' ngaur = 'our'), whose doctrine is then unfolded by the old initiator ('headman') 'in an impressive manner.' 'Long ago there was a great Being, Mungan-ngaur, who lived on the earth.' His son Tundun is *direct ancestor* of the Kurnai. Mungan initiated the rites, and destroyed earth by water when they were impiously revealed. 'Mungan left the earth, and ascended to the sky, where he still remains.'

Here Mungan-ngaur, a Being not defined as spirit, but immortal, and dwelling in heaven, is Father, or rather grandfather, not maker, of the Kurnai. This *may* be interpreted as ancestor-worship, but the opposite myth, of making or creating, is of frequent occurrence in many widely-severed Australian districts, and co-exists with evolutionary myths. Mungan-ngaur's precepts are:

1. *To listen to and obey the old men*. 2. *To share everything they have with their friends*. 3. *To live peaceably with their friends*.

4. *Not to interfere with girls or married women*.

5. *To obey the food restrictions until they are released from them by the old men*.

Mr. Howitt concludes: 'I venture to assert that it can no longer be maintained that the Australians have no belief which can be called religious, that is, in the sense of beliefs which govern tribal and individual morality under a supernatural sanction.' On this topic Mr. Hewitt's opinion became more affirmative the more deeply he was initiated.

The Australians are the lowest, most primitive savages, yet no propitiation by food is made to their moral Ruler, in heaven, as if he were a ghost.

The laws of these Australian divine beings apply to ritual as well as to ethics, as might naturally be expected. But the moral element is conspicuous, the reverence is conspicuous: we have here no mere ghost, propitiated by food or sacrifice, or by purely magical rites. His very image (modelled on a large scale in earth) is no vulgar idol: to make such a thing, except on the rare sacred occasions, is a capital offence. Meanwhile the mythology of the God has often, in or out of the rites, nothing rational about it.

On the whole it is evident that Mr. Herbert Spencer, for example, underrates the nature of Australian religion. He cites a case of addressing the ghost of a man recently dead, which is asked not to bring sickness, ‘or make loud noises in the night,’ and says: ‘Here we may recognise the essential elements of a cult.’ But Mr. Spencer does not allude to the much more essentially religious elements which he might have found in the very authority whom he cites, Mr. Brough Smyth. This appears, as far as my scrutiny goes, to be Mr. Spencer’s solitary reference to Australia in the work on ‘Ecclesiastical Institutions.’ Yet the facts which he and Mr. Huxley ignore throw a light very different from theirs on what they consider ‘the simplest condition of theology.’

Among the causes of confusion in thought upon religion, Mr. Tylor mentions ‘the partial and one-sided application of the historical method of inquiry into theological doctrines.’ Here, perhaps, we have examples. In its highest aspect that ‘simplest theology’ of Australia is free from the faults of popular theology in Greece. The God discourages sin, though, in myth, he is far from impeccable. He is almost too revered to be named (except in mythology) and is not to be represented by idols. He is not moved by sacrifice; he has not the chance; like Death in Greece, ‘he only, of all Gods, loves not gifts.’ Thus the status of theology does not correspond to what we look for in very low culture. It would scarcely be a paradox to say that the popular Zeus, or Ares, is degenerate from Mungan-ngaur, or the Fuegian being who forbids the slaying of an enemy, and almost literally ‘marks the sparrow’s fall.’

If we knew all the mythology of Darumulun, we should probably find it (like much of the myth of Pundjel or Bunjil) on a very different level from the theology. There are two currents, the religious and the mythical, flowing together through religion. The former current, religious, even among very low savages, is pure from the magical ghost-propitiating habit. The latter current, mythological, is full of magic, mummery, and scandalous legend. Sometimes the latter stream quite pollutes the former, sometimes they flow side by side, perfectly distinguishable, as in Aztec ethical piety, compared with the bloody Aztec ritualism. Anthropology has mainly kept her eyes fixed on the impure stream, the lusts, mummeries, conjurings, and frauds of priesthoods, while relatively, or altogether, neglecting (as we have shown) what is honest and of good report.

The worse side of religion is the less sacred, and therefore the more conspicuous. Both elements are found co-existing, in almost all races, and nobody, in our total lack of historical information about the beginnings, can say which, if either, element is the earlier, or which, if either, is derived from the other. To suppose that propitiation of corpses and then of ghosts came first is agreeable, and seems logical, to some writers who are not without a bias against all religion as an unscientific superstition. But we know so little! The first missionaries in Greenland supposed that there was not, there, a trace of belief in a Divine Being. 'But when they came to understand their language better, they found quite the reverse to be true … and not only so, but they could plainly gather from a free dialogue they had with some perfectly wild Greenlanders (at that time avoiding any direct application to their hearts) that their ancestors must have believed in a Supreme Being, and did render him some service, which their posterity neglected little by little…' Mr. Tylor does not refer to this as a trace of Christian Scandinavian influence on the Eskimo.

That line, of course, may be taken. But an Eskimo said to a missionary, 'Thou must not imagine that no Greenlander thinks about these things' (theology). He then stated the argument from design. 'Certainly there must be some Being who made all these things. He must be very good too… Ah, did I but know him, how I would love and honour him.' As St. Paul writes: 'That which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them … being understood by the things which are made … but they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.' In fact, mythology submerged religion. St. Paul's theory of the origin of religion is not that of an 'innate idea,' nor of a direct revelation. People, he says, reached the belief in a God from the Argument for Design. Science conceives herself to have annihilated teleological ideas. But they are among the probable origins of religion, and would lead to the belief in a Creator, whom the Greenlander thought beneficent, and after whom he yearned. This is a very different initial step in religious development, if initial it was, from the feeding of a corpse, or a ghost.

From all this evidence it does not appear how non-polytheistic, non-monarchical, non-Manes-worshipping savages evolved the idea of a relatively supreme, moral, and benevolent Creator, unborn, undying, watching men's lives. 'He can go everywhere, and do everything.'

XI

SUPREME GODS NOT NECESSARILY DEVELOPED OUT OF ‘SPIRITS’

Before going on to examine the high gods of other low savages, I must here again insist on and develop the theory, not easily conceived by us, that the Supreme Being of savages belongs to another branch of faith than ghosts, or ghost-gods, or fetishes, or Totems, and need not be — probably is not — essentially derived from these. We must try to get rid of our theory that a powerful, moral, eternal Being was, from the first, *ex officio*, conceived as ‘spirit;’ and so was necessarily derived from a ghost.

First, what was the process of development?

We have examined Mr. Tylor’s theory. But, to take a practical case: Here are the Australians, roaming in small bands, without more formal rulers than ‘headmen’ at most; not ancestor worshippers; not polytheists; with no departmental deities to select and aggrandise; not apt to speculate on the *Anima Mundi*. How, then, did they bridge the gulf between the ghost of a soon-forgotten fighting man, and that conception of a Father above, ‘all-seeing,’ moral, which, under various names, is found all over a huge continent? I cannot see that this problem has been solved or frankly faced.

The distinction between the Australian deity, at his highest power, unpropitiated by sacrifice, and the ordinary, waning, easily forgotten, cheaply propitiated ghost of a tribesman, is essential. It is not easy to show how, in ‘the dark backward’ of Australian life, the notion of Mungan-ngaur grew from the idea of the ghost of a warrior. But there is no logical necessity for the belief in the evolution of this god out of that ghost. These two factors in religion — ghost and god — seem to have perfectly different sources, and it appears extraordinary that anthropologists have not (as far as I am aware) observed this circumstance before.

Mr. Spencer, indeed, speaks frequently of living human beings adored as gods. I do not know that these are found on the lowest levels of savagery, and Mr. Jevons has pointed out that, before you can hail a man as a god, you must have the idea of God. The murder of Captain Cook notoriously resulted from a scientific experiment in theology. ‘If he is a god, he cannot be killed.’ So they tried with a dagger, and found that the honest captain was but a mortal British mariner — no god at all. ‘There are degrees.’ Mr. Spencer’s men-gods become real gods — after death.

Now the Supreme Being of savage faith, as a rule, never died at all. He belonged to a world that knew not Death.

One cause of our blindness to the point appears to be this: We have from childhood been taught that ‘God is a Spirit.’ We, now, can only conceive of an eternal being as a ‘spirit.’ We know that legions of savage gods are now regarded as spirits. And therefore we have never remarked that there is no reason why we should take it for granted that the earliest deities of the earliest men were supposed by them to be ‘spirits’ at all. These gods might most judiciously be spoken of, not as ‘spirits,’ but as ‘undefined eternal beings.’ To us, such a being is necessarily a spirit, but he was by no means necessarily so to an early thinker, who may not yet have reached the conception of a ghost.

A ghost is said, by anthropologists, to have developed into a god. Now, the very idea of a ghost (apart from a wraith or fetch) implies the previous *death* of his proprietor. A ghost is the phantasm of a *dead* man. But anthropologists continually tell us, with truth, that the idea of death as a universal ordinance is unknown to the savage. Diseases and death are things that once did not exist, and that, normally, ought not to occur, the savage thinks. They are, in his opinion, supernormally caused by magicians and spirits. Death came into the world by a blunder, an accident, an error in ritual, a decision of a god who was before Death was. Scores of myths are told everywhere on this subject.

The savage Supreme Being, with added power, omniscience, and morality, is the idealisation of the savage, as conceived of by himself, *minus* fleshly body (as a rule), and *minus* Death. He is not necessarily a ‘spirit,’ though that term may now be applied to him. He was not originally differentiated as ‘spirit’ or ‘not spirit.’ He is a Being, conceived of without the question of ‘spirit,’ or ‘no spirit’ being raised; perhaps he was originally conceived of before that question could be raised by men. When we call the Supreme Being of savages a ‘spirit’ we introduce our own animistic ideas into a conception where it may not have originally existed. If the God is ‘the savage himself raised to the nth power’ so much the less of a spirit is he. Mr. Matthew Arnold might as well have said: ‘The British Philistine has no knowledge of God. He believes that the Creator is a magnified non-natural man, living in the sky.’ The Gippsland or Fuegian or Blackfoot Supreme Being is just a *Being*, anthropomorphic, not a *mrart*, or ‘spirit.’ The Supreme Being is a *wesen*, Being, *Vui*; we have hardly a term for an immortal existence so undefined. If the being is an idealised first ancestor (as among the Kurnai), he is not, on that account, either man or ghost of man. In the original conception he is a powerful intelligence who was from the first: who was already active long before, by a breach of his laws, an error in the delivery of a message, a breach of ritual, or what not, death entered the world. He was not affected by the entry of death, he still exists.

Modern minds need to become familiar with this indeterminate idea of the savage Supreme Being, which, logically, may be prior to the evolution of the notion of ghost or spirit.

But how does it apply when, as by the Kurnai, the Supreme Being is reckoned an ancestor?

It can very readily be shown that, when the Supreme Being of a savage people is thus the idealised First Ancestor, he can never have been envisaged by his worshippers as at any time a *ghost*; or, at least, cannot logically have been so envisaged where the nearly universal belief occurs that death came into the world by accident, or needlessly.

Adam is the mythical first ancestor of the Hebrews, but he died, , and was not worshipped. Yama, the first of Aryan men who died, was worshipped by Vedic Aryans, but *confessedly* as a ghost-god. Mr. Tylor gives a list of first ancestors deified. The Ancestor of the Maudans did not die, consequently is no ghost; *emigravit*, he ‘moved west.’ Where the First Ancestor is also the Creator (Dog-rib Indians), he can hardly be, and is not, regarded as a mortal. Tamoi, of the Guaranis, was ‘the ancient of heaven,’ clearly no mortal man. The Maori Maui was the first who died, but he is not one of the original Maori gods. Haetsh, among the Kamchadals, precisely answers to Yama. Unkulunkulu will be described later.

This is the list: Where the First Ancestor is equivalent to the Creator, and is supreme, he is — from the first — deathless and immortal. When he dies he is a confessed ghost-god.

Now, ghost-worship and dead ancestor-worship are impossible before the ancestor is dead and is a ghost. But the essential idea of Mungan-ngaur, and Baiame, and most of the high gods of Australia, and of other low races, is that *they never died at all*. They belong to the period before death came into the world, like Qat among the Melanesians. They arise in an age that knew not death, and had not reflected on phantasms nor evolved ghosts. They could have been conceived of, in the nature of the case, by a race of immortals who never dreamed of such a thing as a ghost. For these gods, the ghost-theory is not required, and is superfluous, even contradictory. The early thinkers who developed these beings did not need to know that men die (though, of course, they did know it in practice), still less did they need to have conceived by abstract speculation the hypothesis of ghosts. Baiame, Cagn, Bunjil, in their adorers’ belief, were *there*; death later intruded among men, but did not affect these divine beings in any way.

The ghost-theory, therefore, by the evidence of anthropology itself, is not needed for the evolution of the high gods of savages. It is only needed for the evolution of ghost-propitiation and genuine dead-ancestor worship. Therefore, the high gods described were not necessarily once ghosts — were not idealised *mortal* ancestors. They were, naturally, from the beginning, from before the coming in of death, immortal Fathers, now dwelling on high. Between them and apotheosised mortal ancestors there is a great gulf fixed — the river of death.

The explicitly stated distinction that the high creative gods never were mortal men, while other gods are spirits of mortal men, is made in every quarter. ‘Ancestors *known* to be human were *not* worshipped as gods, and ancestors worshipped as gods were not believed to have been human.’

Both kinds may have a generic name, such as *kalou*, or *wakan*, but the specific distinction is universally made by low savages. On one hand, original gods; on the other, non-original gods that were once ghosts. Now, this distinction is often calmly ignored; whereas, when any race has developed (like late Scandinavians) the Euhemeristic hypothesis (‘all gods were once men’), that hypothesis is accepted as an historical statement of fact by some writers.

It is part of my theory that the more popular ghost-worship of souls of people whom men have loved, invaded the possibly older religion of the Supreme Father. Mighty beings, whether originally conceived of as ‘spirits’ or not, came, later, under the Animistic theory, to be reckoned as spirits. They even (but not among the lowest savages) came to be propitiated by food and sacrifice. The alternative, for a Supreme Being, when once Animism prevailed, was sacrifice (as to more popular ghost deities) or neglect. We shall find examples of both alternatives. But sacrifice does not prove that a God was, in original conception, a ghost, or even a spirit. ‘The common doctrine of the Old Testament is not that God is spirit, but that the spirit of Jehovah, going forth from him, works in the world and among men.’

To resume. The high Gods of savagery — moral, all-seeing directors of things and of men — are not explicitly envisaged as spirits at all by their adorers. The notion of soul or spirit is here out of place. We can best describe Pirnmeheal, and Nápi and Baiame as ‘magnified non-natural men,’ or undefined beings who were from the beginning and are undying. They are, like the easy Epicurean Gods, *nihil indiga nostri*. Not being ghosts, they crave no food from men, and receive no sacrifice, as do ghosts, or gods developed out of ghosts, or gods to whom the ghost-ritual has been transferred. For this very reason, apparently, they seem to be spoken of by Mr. Grant Allen as ‘gods to talk about, not gods to adore; mythological conceptions rather than religious beings.’ All this is rather hard on the lowest savages. If they sacrifice to a god, then the god is a hungry ghost; if they don’t, then the god is ‘a god to talk about, not to adore,’ Luckily, the facts of the Bora ritual and the instruction given there prove that Mungan-nganr and other names *are* gods to adore, by ethical conformity to their will and by solemn ceremony, not merely gods to talk about.

Thus, the highest element in the religion of the lowest savages does not appear to be derived from their theory of ghosts. As far as we can say, in the inevitable absence of historical evidence, the highest gods of savages may have been believed in, as Makers and Fathers and Lords of an indeterminate nature, before the savage had developed the idea of souls out of dreams and phantasms. It is logically conceivable that savages may have worshipped deities like Baiame and Darumulun before they had evolved the notion that Tom, Dick, or Harry has a separable soul, capable of surviving his bodily decease. Deities of the higher sort, by the very nature of savage reflections on death and on its non-original casual character, are prior, or may be prior, or cannot be shown not to be prior, to the ghost theory — the alleged origin of religion. For their evolution the ghost theory is not logically demanded; they can do without it. Yet *they,* and not the spirits, bogles, Mrarts, *Brewin*, and so forth, are the high gods, the gods who have most analogy — as makers, moral guides, rewarders, and punishers of conduct (though that duty is also occasionally assumed by ancestral spirits) — with our civilised conception of the divine. Our conception of God descends not from ghosts, but from the Supreme Beings of non-ancestor-worshipping peoples.

As it seems impossible to point out any method by which low, chiefless, non-polytheistic, non-metaphysical savages (if any such there be) evolved out of ghosts the eternal beings who made the world, and watch over morality: as the people themselves unanimously distinguish such beings from ghost-gods, I take it that such beings never were ghosts. In this case the Animistic theory seems to me to break down completely. Yet these high gods of low savages preserve from dimmest ages of the meanest culture the sketch of a God which our highest religious thought can but fill up to its ideal. Come from what germ he may, Jehovah or Allah does not come from a ghost.

It may be retorted that this makes no real difference. If savages did not invent gods in consequence of a fallacious belief in spirit and soul, still, in some other equally illogical way they came to indulge the hypothesis that they had a Judge and Father in heaven. But, if the ghost theory of the high Gods is wrong, as it is conspicuously superfluous, that *does* make some difference. It proves that a widely preached scientific conclusion may be as spectral as Bathybius. On other more important points, therefore, we may differ from the newest scientific opinion without too much diffident apprehensiveness.

XII

SAVAGE SUPREME BEINGS

It is among ‘the lowest savages’ that the Supreme Beings are most regarded as eternal, moral (as the morality of the tribe goes, or above its habitual practice), and *powerful*. I have elsewhere described the Bushman god Cagn, as he was portrayed to Mr. Orpen by Qing, who ‘had never before seen a white man except fighting.’ Mr. Orpen got the facts from Qing by inducing him to explain the natives’ pictures on the walls of caves. ‘Cagn made all things, and we pray to him,’ thus: ‘O Cagn, O Cagn, are we not thy children? Do you not see us hunger? Give us food.’ As to ethics, ‘At first Cagn was very good, but he got spoilt through fighting so many things.’ ‘How came he into the world?’ ‘Perhaps with those who brought the Sun: only the initiated know these things.’ It appears that Qing was not yet initiated in the dance (answering to a high rite of the Australian *Bora*) in which the most esoteric myths were unfolded.

In Mr. Spencer’s ‘Descriptive Sociology’ the religion of the Bushmen is thus disposed of. ‘Pray to an insect of the caterpillar kind for success in the chase.’ That is rather meagre. They make arrow-poison out of caterpillars, though Dr. Bleek, perhaps correctly, identifies Cagn with i-kaggen, the insect.

The case of the Andaman Islanders may be especially recommended to believers in the anthropological science of religion. For long these natives were the joy of emancipated inquirers as the ‘godless Andamanese.’ They only supply Mr. Spencer’s ‘Ecclesiastical Institutions’ with a few instances of the ghost-belief. Yet when the Andamanese are scientifically studied *in situ* by an educated Englishman, Mr. Man, who knows their language, has lived with them for eleven years, and presided over our benevolent efforts ‘to reclaim them from their savage state,’ the Andamanese turn out to be quite embarrassingly rich in the higher elements of faith. They have not only a profoundly philosophical *religion*, but an excessively absurd *mythology*, like the Australian blacks, the Greeks, and other peoples. If, on the whole, the student of the Andamanese despairs of the possibility of an ethnological theory of religion, he is hardly to be blamed.

The people are probably Negritos, and probably ‘the original inhabitants, whose occupation dates from prehistoric times.’ They use the bow, they make pots, and are considerably above the Australian level. They have second-sighted men, who obtain status ‘by relating an extraordinary dream, the details of which are declared to have been borne out subsequently by some unforeseen event, as, for instance, a sudden death or accident.’ They have to produce fresh evidential dreams from time to time. They see phantasms of the dead, and coincidental hallucinations. All this is as we should expect it to be.

Their religion is probably not due to missionaries, as they always shot all foreigners, and have no traditions of the presence of aliens on the islands before our recent arrival. Their God, Puluga, is ‘like fire,’ but invisible. He was never born, and is immortal. By him were all things created, except the powers of evil. He knows even the thoughts of the heart. He is angered by *yubda* = sin, or wrong-doing, that is falsehood, theft, grave assault, murder, adultery, bad carving of meat, and (as a crime of witchcraft) by burning wax. ‘To those in pain or distress he is pitiful, and sometimes deigns to afford relief.’ He is Judge of Souls, and the dread of future punishment ‘to *some* extent is said to affect their course of action in the present life.’

This Being could not be evolved out of the ordinary ghost of a second-sighted man, for I do not find that ancestral ghosts are worshipped, nor is there a trace of early missionary influence, while Mr. Man consulted elderly and, in native religion, well-instructed Andamanese for his facts.

Yet Puluga lives in a large stone house (clearly derived from ours at Port Blair), eats and drinks, foraging for himself, and is married to a green shrimp. There is the usual story of a Deluge caused by the moral wrath of Puluga. The whole theology was scrupulously collected from natives unacquainted with other races.

The account of Andamanese religion does not tally with the anthropological hypothesis. Foreign influence seems to be more than usually excluded by insular conditions and the jealousy of the ‘original inhabitants.’ The evidence ought to make us reflect on the extreme obscurity of the whole problem.

Anthropological study of religion has hitherto almost entirely overlooked the mysteries of various races, except in so far as they confirm the entry of the young people into the ranks of the adult. Their esoteric moral and religious teaching is nearly unknown to us, save in a few instances. It is certain that the mysteries of Greece were survivals of savage ceremonies, because we know that they included specific savage rites, such as the use of the *rhombos* to make a whirring noise, and the custom of ritual daubing with dirt; and the sacred *ballets d’action*, in which, as Lucian and Qing say, mystic facts are ‘danced out.’ But, while Greece retained these relics of savagery, there was something taught at Eleusis which filled minds like Plato’s and Pindar’s with a happy religious awe. Now, similar ‘softening of the heart’ was the result of the teaching in the Australian *Bora*: the Yao mysteries inculcate the victory over self; and, till we are admitted to the secrets of all other savage mysteries throughout the world, we cannot tell whether, among mummeries, frivolities, and even license, high ethical doctrines are not presented under the sanction of religion. The New Life, and perhaps the future life, are undeniably indicated in the Australian mysteries by the simulated Resurrection.

I would therefore no longer say, as in 1887, that the Hellenic genius must have added to ‘an old medicine dance’ all that the Eleusinian mysteries possessed of beauty, counsel, and consolation. These elements, as well as the barbaric factors in the rites, may have been developed out of such savage doctrine as softens the hearts of Australians and Yaos. That this kind of doctrine receives religious sanction is certain, where we know the secret of savage mysteries. It is therefore quite incorrect, and strangely presumptuous, to deny, with almost all anthropologists, the alliance of ethics with religion among the most backward races. We must always remember their secrecy about their inner religion, their frankness about their mythological tales. These we know: the inner religion we ought to begin to recognise that we do not know.

The case of the Andamanese has taught us how vague, even now, is our knowledge, and how obscure is our problem. The example of the Melanesians enforces these lessons. It is hard to bring the Melanesians within any theory. Dr. Codrington has made them the subject of a careful study, and reports that while the European inquirer can communicate pretty freely on common subjects ‘the vocabulary of ordinary life in almost useless when the region of mysteries and superstitions is approached.’ The Banks Islanders are most free from an Asiatic element of population on one side, and a Polynesian element on the other.

The Banks Islanders ‘believe in two orders of intelligent beings different from living men.’ (1) Ghosts of the dead, (2) ‘Beings who were not, and never had been, human.’ This, as we have shown, and will continue to show, is the usual savage doctrine. On the one hand are separable souls of men, surviving the death of the body. On the other are beings, creators, who were before men were, and before death entered the world. It is impossible, logically, to argue that these beings are only ghosts of real remote ancestors, or of ideal ancestors. These higher beings are not safely to be defined as ‘spirits,’ their essence is vague, and, we repeat, the idea of their existence might have been evolved *before the ghost theory was attained by men*. Dr. Codrington says, ‘the conception can hardly be that of a purely spiritual being, yet, by whatever name the natives call them, they are such as in English must be called spirits.’

That is our point. ‘God is a spirit,’ these beings are Gods, therefore ‘these are spirits.’ But to their initial conception our idea of ‘spirit’ is lacking. They are beings who existed before death, and still exist.

The beings which never were human, never died, are *Vui*, the ghosts are

Tamate. Dr. Codrington uses ‘ghosts’ for *Tamate*, ‘spirits’ for *Vui*. But as to render *Vui* ‘spirits’ is to yield the essential point, we shall call *Vui* ‘beings,’ or, simply, *Vui*. A Vui is not a spirit that has been a ghost; the story may represent him as if a man, ‘but the native will always maintain that he was something different, and deny to him the fleshly body of a man.’

This distinction, ghost on one side — original being, not a man, not a ghost of a man, on the other — is radical and nearly universal in savage religion. Anthropology, neglecting the essential distinction insisted on, in this case, by Dr. Codrington, confuses both kinds under the style of ‘spirits,’ and derives both from ghosts of the dead. Dr. Codrington, it should be said, does not generalise, but confines himself to the savages of whom he has made a special study. But, from the other examples of the same distinction which we have offered, and the rest which we shall offer, we think ourselves justified in regarding the distinction between a primeval, eternal, being or beings, on one hand, and ghosts or spirits exalted from ghost’s estate, on the other, as common, if not universal.

There are corporeal and incorporeal Vuis, but the body of the corporeal Vui is ‘*not* a human body.’ The chief is Qat, ‘still at hand to help and invoked in prayers.’ ‘Qat, Marawa, look down upon me, smooth the sea for us two, that I may go safely over the sea!’ Qat ‘created men and animals,’ though, in a certain district, he is claimed as an *ancestor* (). Two strata of belief have here been confused.

The myth of Qat is a jungle of facetiae and frolic, with one or two serious incidents, such as the beginning of Death and the coming of Night. His mother was, or became, a stone; stones playing a considerable part in the superstitions.

The incorporeal Vuis, ‘with nothing like a human life, have a much higher place than Qat and his brothers in the religious system.’ They have neither names, nor shapes, nor legends, they receive sacrifice, and are in some uncertain way connected with stones; these stones usually bear a fanciful resemblance to fruits or animals (). The only sacrifice, in Banks Islands, is that of shell-money. The mischievous spirits are Tamate, ghosts of men. There is a belief in *mana* (magical *rapport*). Dr. Codrington cannot determine the connection of this belief with that in spirits. Mana is the uncanny, is X, the unknown. A revived impression of sense is *nunuai*, as when a tired fisher, half asleep at night, feels the ‘draw’ of a salmon, and automatically strikes. The common ghost is a bag of *nunuai*, as living man, in the opinion of some philosophers, is a bag of ‘sensations.’ Ghosts are only seen as spiritual lights, which so commonly attend hallucinations among the civilised. Except in the prayers to Qat and Marawa, prayer only invokes the dead (). ‘In the western islands the offerings are made to ghosts, and consumed by fire; in the eastern (Banks) isles they are made to spirits (beings, *Vui*), and there is no sacrificial fire.' Now, the worship of ghosts goes, in these isles, with the higher culture, 'a more considerable advance in the arts of life;' the worship of non-ghosts, *Vui*, goes with the lower material culture. This is rather the reverse of what we should expect, in accordance with the anthropological theory. According, however, to our theory, Animism and ghost-worship may be of later development, and belong to a higher level of culture, than worship of a being, or beings, that never were ghosts. In Leper's Isle, 'ghosts do not appear to have prayers or sacrifices offered to them,' but cause disease, and work magic.

The belief in the soul, in Melanesia, does *not* appear to proceed 'from their dreams or visions in which deceased or absent persons are presented to them, for they do not appear to believe that the soul goes out from the dreamer, or presents itself as an object in his dreams,' nor does belief in other spirits seem to be founded on 'the appearance of life or motion in inanimate things.'

To myself it rather looks as if all impressions had their *nunuai*, real, bodiless, persistent, after-images; that the soul is the complex of all of these *nunuai*; that there is in the universe a kind of magical other, called *mana*, possessed, in different proportions, by different men, *Vui*, *tamate*, and material objects, and that the *atai* or *ataro* of a man dead, his ghost, retains its old, and acquires new *mana*. It is an odd kind of metaphysic to find among very backward and isolated savages. But the lesson of Melanesia teaches us how very little we really know of the religion of low races, how complex it is, how hardly it can be forced into our theories, if we take it as given in our knowledge, allow for our ignorance, and are not content to select facts which suit our hypothesis, while ignoring the rest. On a higher level of material culture than the Melanesians are the Fijians.

Fijian religion, as far as we understand, resembles the others in drawing an impassable line between ghosts and eternal gods. The word *Kalou* is applied to all supernal beings, and mystic or magical things alike. It seems to answer to *mana* in New Zealand and Melanesia, to *wakan* in North America, and to *fée* in old French, as when Perrault says, about Bluebeard's key, 'now the key was *fée*.' All Gods are *Kalou*, but all things that are *Kalou* are not Gods. Gods are *Kalou vu*; deified ghosts are *Kalou yalo*. The former are eternal, without beginning of days or end of years; the latter are subject to infirmity and even to death.

The Supreme Being, if we can apply the term to him, is Ndengei, or Degei, 'who seems to be an impersonation of the abstract idea of eternal existence.' This idea is not easily developed out of the conception of a human soul which has died into a ghost and may die again. His myth represents him as a serpent, emblem of eternity, or a body of stone with a serpent's head. His one manifestation is given by eating. So neglected is he that a song exists about his lack of worshippers and gifts. ‘We made men,’ says Ndengei, ‘placed them on earth, and yet they share to us only the under shell.’ Here is an extreme case of the self-existent creative Eternal, mythically lodged in a serpent’s body, and reduced to a jest.

It is not easy to see any explanation, if we reject the hypothesis that this is an old, fallen form of faith, ‘with scarcely a temple.’ The other unborn immortals are mythical warriors and adulterers, like the popular deities of Greece. Yet Ndengei receives prayers through two sons of his, mediating deities. The priests are possessed, or inspired, by spirits and gods. One is not quite clear as to whether Ndengei is an inspiring god or not; but that prayers are made to him is inconsistent with the belief in his eternal inaction. A priest is represented as speaking for Ndengei, probably by inspiration. ‘My own mind departs from me, and then, when it is truly gone, my god speaks by me,’ is the account of this ‘alternating personality’ given by a priest.

After informing us that Ndengei is starved, Mr. Williams next tells about offerings to him, in earlier days, of hundreds of hogs. He sends rain on earth. Animals, men, stones, may all be *Kalou*. There is a Hades as fantastic as that in the Egyptian ‘Book of the Dead,’ and second sight flourishes.

The mysteries include the sham raising of the dead, and appear to be directed at propitiatory ghosts rather than at Ndengei. There are scenes of license; ‘particulars of almost incredible indecency have been privately forwarded to Dr. Tylor.’

Suppose a religious reformer were to arise in one of the many savage tribes who, as we shall show, possess, but neglect, an Eternal Creator. He would do what, in the secular sphere, was done by the Mikado of Japan. The Mikado was a political Dendid or Ndengei — an awful, withdrawn, impotent potentate. Power was wielded by the Tycoon. A Mikado of genius asserted himself; hence arose modern Japan. In the same way, a religious reformer like Khuen Ahten in Egypt would preach down minor gods, ghosts and sacred beasts, and proclaim the primal Maker, Ndengei, Dendid, Mtanga. ‘The king shall hae his ain again.’ Had it not been for the Prophets, Israel, by the time that Greece and Rome knew Israel, would have been worshipping a horde of little gods, and even beasts and ghosts, while the Eternal would have become a mere name — perhaps, like Ndengei and Atahocan and Unkulunkulu, a jest. The Old Testament is the story of the prolonged effort to keep Jehovah in His supreme place. To make and to succeed in that effort was the *differentia*, of Israel. Other peoples, even the lowest, had, as we prove, the germinal conception of a God — assuredly not demonstrated to be derived from the ghost theory, logically in no need of the ghost theory, everywhere explicitly contrasted with the ghost theory. ‘But their foolish heart was darkened.’

It is impossible to prove, historically, which of the two main elements in belief — the idea of an Eternal Being or Beings, or the idea of surviving ghosts — came first into the minds of men. The idea of primeval Eternal Beings, as understood by savages, does not depend on, or require, the ghost theory. But, as we almost always find ghosts and a Supreme Being together, where we find either, among the lowest savages, we have no historical ground for asserting that either is prior to the other. Where we have no evidence to the belief in the Maker, we must not conclude that no such belief exists. Our knowledge is confused and scanty; often it is derived from men who do not know the native language, or the native sacred language, or have not been trusted with what the savage treasures as his secret. Moreover, if anywhere ghosts are found without gods, it is an inference from the argument that an idea familiar to very low savage tribes, like the Australians, and falling more and more into the background elsewhere, though still extant and traceable, might, in certain cases, be lost and forgotten altogether.

To take an example of half-forgotten deity. Mr. Im Thurn, a good observer, has written on ‘The Animism of the Indians of British Guiana.’ Mr. Im Thurn justly says: ‘The man who above all others has made this study possible is Mr. Tylor.’ But it is not unfair to remark that Mr. Im Thurn naturally sees most distinctly that which Mr. Tylor has taught him to see — namely, Animism. He has also been persuaded, by Mr. Dorman, that the Great Spirit of North American tribes is ‘almost certainly nothing more than a figure of European origin, reflected and transmitted almost beyond recognition on the mirror of the Indian mind,’ That is not my opinion: I conceive that the Red Indians had their native Eternal, like the Australians, Fijians, Andamanese, Dinkas, Yao, and so forth, as will be shown later.

Mr. Im Thurn, however, dilates on the dream origin of the ghost theory, giving examples from his own knowledge of the difficulty with which Guiana Indians discern the hallucinations of dreams from the facts of waking life. Their waking hallucinations are also so vivid as to be taken for realities. Mr. Im Thurn adopts the hypothesis that, from ghosts, ‘a belief has arisen, but very gradually, in higher spirits, and, eventually, in a Highest Spirit; and, keeping pace with the growth of these beliefs, a habit of reverence for and worship of spirits.’ On this hypothesis, the spirit latest evolved, and most worshipful, ought, of course, to be the ‘Highest Spirit.’ But the reverse, as usual, is the case. The Guiana Indians believe in the continued, but not in the everlasting, existence of a man’s ghost. They believe in no spirits which were not once tenants of material bodies.

The belief in a Supreme Spirit is only attained ‘in the highest form of religion’

— Andamanese, for instance — as Mr. Im Thurn uses ‘spirit’ where we should say ‘being.’ ‘The Indians of Guiana know no god.’

‘But it is true that various words have been found in all, or nearly all, the languages of Guiana which have been supposed to be names of a Supreme Being, God, a Great Spirit, in the sense which those phrases bear in the language of the higher religions.’

Being interpreted, these Guiana names mean —

The Ancient One,
The Ancient One in Sky-land,
Our Maker,
Our Father,
Our Great Father.

‘None of those in any way involves the attributes of a god.’

The Ancient of Days, Our Father in Sky-land, Our Maker, do rather convoy the sense of God to a European mind. Mr. Im Thurn, however, decides that the beings thus designated were supposed ancestors who came into Guiana from some other country, ‘sometimes said to have been that entirely natural country (?) which is separated from Guiana by the ocean of the air.’

Mr. Im Thurn casually observed (having said nothing about morals in alliance with Animism):

‘The fear of unwittingly offending the countless visible and invisible beings … kept the Indians very strictly within their own rights and from offending against the rights of others.’

This remark dropped out at a discussion of Mr. Im Thurn’s paper, and clearly demonstrated that even a very low creed ‘makes for righteousness.’

Probably few who have followed the facts given here will agree with Mr. Im Thurn’s theory that ‘Our Maker,’ ‘Our Father,’ ‘The Ancient One of the Heaven,’ is merely an idealised human ancestor. He falls naturally into his place with the other high gods of low savages. But we need much more information on the subject than Mr. Im Thurn was able to give.

His evidence is all the better, because he is a loyal follower of Mr. Tylor. And Mr. Tylor says: ‘Savage Animism is almost devoid of that ethical element which to the educated modern mind is the very mainspring of practical religion.’ ‘Yet it keeps the Indians very strictly within their own rights and from offending the rights of others.’ Our own religion is rarely so successful.

In the Indians of Guiana we have an alleged case of a people still deep in the animistic or ghost-worshipping case, who, by the hypothesis, have not yet evolved the idea of a god at all.

When the familiar names for God, such as Maker, Father, Ancient of Days, occur in the Indian language, Mr. Im Thurn explains the neglected Being who bears these titles as a remote deified ancestor. Of course, when a Being with similar titles occurs where ancestors are not worshipped, as in Australia and the Andaman Islands, the explanation suggested by Mr. Im Thurn for the problem of religion in Guiana, will not fit the facts.

It is plain that, *a priori*, another explanation is conceivable. If a people like the Andamanese, or the Australian tribes whom we have studied, had such a conception as that of Puluga, or Baiame, or Mungan-ngaur and then, *later*, developed ancestor-worship with its propitiatory sacrifices and ceremonies, ancestor-worship, as the newest evolved and infinitely the most practical form of cult, would gradually thrust the belief in a Puluga, or Mungan-ngaur, or Cagn into the shade. The ancestral spirit, to speak quite plainly, can be ‘squared’ by the people in whom he takes a special interest for family reasons. The equal Father of all men cannot be ‘squared,’ and declines (till corrupted by the bad example of ancestral ghosts) to make himself useful to one man rather than to another. For these very intelligible, simple, and practical reasons, if the belief in a Mungan-ngaur came first in evolution, and the belief in a practicable bribable family ghost came second, the ghost-cult would inevitably crowd out the God-cult. The name of the Father and Maker would become a mere survival, *nominis umbra*, worship and sacrifice going to the ancestral ghost. That explanation would fit the state of religion which Mr. Im Thurn has found, rightly or wrongly, in British Guiana.

But, if the idea of a universal Father and Maker came last in evolution, as a refinement, then, of course, it ought to be the newest, and therefore the most fashionable and potent of Guianese cults. Precisely the reverse is said to be the case. Nor can the belief indicated in such names as Father and Maker be satisfactorily explained as a refinement of ancestor-worship, because, we repeat, it occurs where ancestors are not worshipped.

These considerations, however unpleasant to the devotees of Animism, or the ghost theory, are not, in themselves, illogical, nor contradictory of the theory of evolution, which, on the other hand, fits them perfectly well. That god thrives best who is most suited to his environment. Whether an easy-going, hungry ghost-god with a liking for his family, or a moral Creator not to be bribed, is better suited to an environment of not especially scrupulous savages, any man can decide. Whether a set of not particularly scrupulous savages will readily evolve a moral unbribable Creator, when they have a serviceable family ghost-god eager to oblige, is a question as easily resolved.

Beyond all doubt, savages who find themselves under the watchful eye of a moral deity whom they cannot ‘square’ will desert him as soon as they have evolved a practicable ghost-god, useful for family purposes, whom they *can* square. No less manifestly, savages, who already possess a throng of serviceable ghost-gods, will not enthusiastically evolve a moral Being who despises gifts, and only cares for obedience. ‘There is a great deal of human nature in man,’ and, if Mr. Im Thurn’s description of the Guianese be correct, everything we know of human nature, and of evolution, assures us that the Father, or Maker, or Ancient of Days came first; the ghost-gods, last. What has here been said about the Indians of Guiana (namely, that they are now more ghost and spirit worshippers, with only a name surviving to attest a knowledge of a Father and Maker in Heaven) applies equally well to the Zulus. The Zulus are the great standing type of an animistic or ghost-worshipping race without a God. But, had they a God (on the Australian pattern) whom they have forgotten, or have they not yet evolved a God out of Animism?

The evidence, collected by Dr. Callaway, is honest, but confused. One native, among others, put forward the very theory here proposed by us as an alternative to that of Mr. Im Thurn. ‘Unkulunkulu’ (the idealised but despised First Ancestor) ‘was not worshipped . For it is not worship when people see things, as rain, or food, or corn, and say, “Yes, these things were made by Unkulunkulu…. Afterwards they had power to change those things, that they might become the Amatongos” . *They took them away from Unkulunkulu*.’

Animism supplanted Theism. Nothing could be more explicit. But, though we have found an authentic Zulu text to suit our provisional theory, the most eminent philosophical example must not reduce us into supposing that this text settles the question. Dr. Callaway collected great masses of Zulu answers to his inquiries, and it is plain that a respondent, like the native theologian whom we have cited, may have adapted his reply to what he had learned of Christian doctrine. Having now the Christian notion of a Divine Creator, and knowing, too, that the unworshipped Unkulunkulu is said to have ‘made things,’ while only ancestral spirits, are worshipped, the native may have inferred that worship (by Christians given to the Creator) was at some time transferred by the Zulus from Unkulunkulu to the Amatongo. The truth is that both the anthropological theory (spirits first, Gods last), and our theory (Supreme Being first, spirits next) can find warrant in Dr. Callaway’s valuable collections. For that reason, the problem must be solved after a survey of the whole field of savage and barbaric religion; it cannot be settled by the ambiguous case of the Zulus alone.

Unkulunkulu is represented as ‘the First Man, who broke off in the beginning.’ ‘They are ancestor-worshippers,’ says Dr. Callaway, ‘and believe that their first ancestor, the First Man, was the Creator.' But they may, like many other peoples, have had a different original tradition, and have altered it, just because they are now such fervent ancestor-worshippers. Unkulunkulu was prior to Death, which came among men in the usual mythical way. Whether Unkulunkulu still exists, is rather a moot question: Dr. Callaway thinks that he does not. If not, he is an exception to the rule in Australia, Andaman, among the Bushmen, the Fuegians, and savages in general, who are less advanced in culture than the Zulus. The idea, then, of a Maker of things who has ceased to exist occurs, if at all, not in a relatively primitive, but in a relatively late religion. On the analogy of pottery, agriculture, the use of iron, villages, hereditary kings, and so on, the notion of a dead Maker is late, not early. It occurs where men have iron, cattle, agriculture, kings, houses, a disciplined army, *not* where men have none of these things. The Zulu godless ancestor-worship, then, by parity of reasoning, is, like their material culture, not an early but a late development. The Zulus 'hear of a King which is above'— 'the heavenly King.' 'We did not hear of him first from white men…. But he is not like Unkulunkulu, who, we say, made all things.'

Here may be dimly descried the ideas of a God, and a subordinate demiurge. 'The King is above, Unkulunkulu is beneath.' The King above punishes sin, striking the sinner by lightning. Nor do the Zulus know how they have sinned. 'There remained only that word about the heaven,' 'which,' says Dr. Callaway, 'implies that there might have been other words which are now lost.' There is great confusion of thought. Unkulunkulu made the heaven, where the unknown King reigns, a hard task for a First Man.

'In process of time we have come to worship the Amadhlozi (spirits) only, because we know not what to say about Unkulunkulu.' 'It is on that account, then, that we seek out for ourselves the Amadhlozi (spirits), that we may not always be thinking about Unkulunkulu.'

All this attests a faint lingering shadow of a belief too ethereal, too remote, for a practical conquering race, which prefers intelligible serviceable ghosts, with a special regard for their own families.

Ukoto, a very old Zulu, said: 'When we were children it was said "The Lord is in heaven." … They used to point to the Lord on high; we did not hear his name.' Unkulunkulu was understood, by this patriarch, to refer to immediate ancestors, whose mimes and genealogies he gave. 'We heard it said that the Creator of the world was the Lord who is above; people used always, when I was growing up, to point towards heaven.'

A very old woman was most reluctant to speak of Unkulunkulu; at last she said, 'Ah, it is he in fact who is the Creator, who is in heaven, of whom the ancients spoke.’ Then the old woman began to babble humorously of how the white men made all things. Again, Unkulunkulu is said to have been created by Utilexo. Utilexo was invisible, Unkulunkulu was visible, and so got credit not really his due. When the heaven is said to be the Chief’s (the chief being a living Zulu) ‘they do not believe what they say,’ the phrase is a mere hyperbolical compliment.

On this examination of the evidence, it certainly seems as logical to conjecture that the Zulus had once such an idea of a Supreme Being as lower races entertain, and then nearly lost it; as to say that Zulus, though a monarchical race, have not yet developed a King-God out of the throng of spirits (Amatongo). The Zulus, the Norsemen of the South, so to speak, are a highly practical military race. A Deity at all abstract was not to their liking. Serviceable family spirits, who continually provided an excuse for a dinner of roast beef, were to their liking. The less developed races do not kill their flocks commonly for food. A sacrifice is needed as a pretext. To the gods of Andamanese, Bushmen, Australians, no sacrifice is offered. To the Supreme Being of most African peoples no sacrifice is offered. There is no festivity in the worship of these Supreme Beings, no feasting, at all events. They are not to be ‘got at’ by gifts or sacrifices. The Amatongo are to be ‘got at,’ are bribable, supply an excuse for a good dinner, and thus the practical Amatongo are honoured, while, in the present generation of Zulus, Unkulunkulu is a joke, and the Lord in Heaven is the shadow of a name. Clearly this does not point to the recent but to the remote development of the higher ideas, now superseded by spirit-worship.

We shall next see how this view, the opposite of the anthropological theory, works when applied to other races, especially to other African races.

XIII

MORE SAVAGE SUPREME BEINGS

If many of the lowest savages known to us entertain ideas of a Supreme Being such as we find among Fuegians, Australians, Bushmen, and Andamanese, are there examples, besides the Zulus, of tribes higher in material culture who seem to have had such notions, but to have partly forgotten or neglected them? Miss Kingsley, a lively, observant, and unprejudiced, though rambling writer, gives this very account of the Bantu races. Oblivion, or neglect, will show itself in leaving the Supreme Being alone, as he needs no propitiation, while devoting sacrifice and ritual to fetishes and ghosts. That this should be done is perfectly natural if the Supreme Being (who wants no sacrifice) were the first evolved in thought, while venal fetishes and spirits came in as a result of the ghost theory. But if, as a result of the ghost theory, the Supreme Being came last in evolution, he ought to be the most fashionable object of worship, the latest developed, the most powerful, and most to be propitiated. He is the reverse.

To take an example: the Dinkas of the Upper Nile ('godless,' says Sir Samuel Baker) 'pay a very theoretical kind of homage to the all-powerful Being, dwelling in heaven, whence he sees all things. He is called "Dendid" (great rain, that is, universal benediction?).' He is omnipotent, but, being all beneficence, can do no evil; so, not being feared, he is not addressed in prayer. The evil spirit, on the other hand, receives sacrifices. The Dinkas have a strange old chant:

'At the beginning, when Dendid made all things,
He created the Sun,
And the Sun is born, and dies, and comes again!
He created the Stars,
And the Stars are born, and die, and come again!
He created Man,
And Man is born, and dies, and returns no more!'

It is like the lament of Moschus.

Russegger compares the Dinkas, and all the neighbouring peoples who hold the same beliefs, to modern Deists. They are remote from Atheism and from cult! Suggestions about an ancient Egyptian influence are made, but popular Egyptian religion was not monotheistic, and priestly thought could scarcely influence the ancestors of the Dinkas. M. Lejean says these peoples are so practical and utilitarian that missionary religion takes no hold on them. Mr.

Spencer does not give the ideas of the Dinkas, but it is not easy to see how the too beneficent Dendid could be evolved out of ghost-propitiation, ‘the origin of all religions.’ Rather the Dinkas, a practical people, seem to have simply forgotten to be grateful to their Maker; or have decided, more to the credit of the clearness of their heads than the warmth of their hearts, that gratitude he does not want. Like the French philosopher they cultivate *l’indépendance du coeur*, being in this matter strikingly unlike the Pawnees.

Let us now take a case in which ancestor-worship, and no other form of religion (beyond mere superstitions), has been declared to be the practice of an African people. Mr. Spencer gives the example of natives of the south-eastern district of Central Africa described by Mr. Macdonald in ‘Africana.’ The dead man becomes a ghost-god, receives prayer and sacrifice, is called a Mulungu (= great ancestor or = sky?), is preferred above older spirits, now forgotten; such old spirits may, however, have a mountain top for home, a great chief being better remembered; the mountain god is prayed to for rain; higher gods were probably similar local gods in an older habitat of the Yao.

Such is in the main Mr. Spencer’s *résumé* of Mr. Duff Macdonald’s report. He omits whatever Mr. Macdonald says about a Being among the Yaos, analogous to the Dendid of the Dinkas, or the Darumulun of Australia, or the Huron Ahone. Yet analysis detects, in Mr. Macdonald’s report, copious traces of such a Being, though Mr. Macdonald himself believes in ancestor-worship as the Source of the local religion. Thus, Mulungu, or Mlungu, used as a proper name, ‘is said to be the great spirit, *msimu*, of all men, a spirit formed by adding all the departed spirits together. This is a singular stretch of savage philosophy, and indicates (says Mr. Macdonald) ‘a grasping after a Being who is the totality of all individual existence…. If it fell from the lips of civilised men instead of savages, it would be regarded as philosophy. Expressions of this kind among the natives are partly traditional, and partly dictated by the big thoughts of the moment.’ Philosophy it is, but a philosophy dependent on the ghost theory.

I go on to show that the Wayao have, though Mr. Spencer omits him, a Being who precisely answers to Darumulun, if stripped (perhaps) of his ethical aspect. On this point we are left in uncertainty, just because Mr. Macdonald could not ascertain the secrets of his mysteries, which, in Australia, have been revealed to a few Europeans.

Where Mulungu is used as a proper name, it ‘certainly points to a personal Being, by the Wayao sometimes said to be the same as Mtanga. At other times he is a Being that possesses many powerful servants, but is himself kept a good deal beyond the scene of earthly affairs, like the gods of Epicurus.’

This is, of course, precisely the feature in African theology which interests us.

The Supreme Being, in spite of the potency which his supposed place as latest evolved out of the ghost-world should naturally give him, is neglected, either as half forgotten, or for philosophical reasons. For these reasons Epicurus and Lucretius make their gods *otiosi*, unconcerned, and the Wayao, with their universal collective spirit, are no mean philosophers.

‘This Mulungu’ or Mtanga, ‘in the world beyond the grave, is represented as assigning to spirits their proper places,’ whether for ethical reasons or not we are not informed. Santos (1586) says ‘they acknowledge a God who, both in this world and the next, measures retribution for the good or evil done in this.’

‘In the native hypothesis about creation “the people of Mulungu” play a very important part.’ These ministers of his who do his pleasure are, therefore, as is Mulungu himself, regarded as prior to the existing world. Therefore they cannot, in Wayao opinion, be ghosts of the dead at all; nor can we properly call them ‘spirits.’ They are *beings*, original, creative, but undefined. The word Mulungu, however, is now applied to spirits of individuals, but whether it means ‘sky’ (Salt) or whether it means ‘ancestor’ (Bleek), it cannot be made to prove that Mulungu himself was originally envisaged as ‘spirit.’ For, manifestly, suppose that the idea of powerful beings, undefined, came first in evolution, and was followed by the ghost idea, that idea might then be applied to explaining the pre-existent creative powers.

Mtanga is by ‘some’ localised as the god of Mangochi, an Olympus left behind by the Yao in their wanderings. Here, some hold, his voice is still audible. ‘Others say that Mtanga never was a man … he was concerned in the first introduction of men into the world. He gets credit for … making mountains and rivers. He is intimately associated with a year of plenty. He is called Mchimwene juene, ‘a very chief.’ He has a kind of evil opposite, *Chitowe*, but this being, the Satan of the creed, ‘is a child or subject of Mtanga,’ an evil angel, in fact.

The thunder god, Mpambe, in Yao, Njasi (lightning) is also a minister of the Supreme Being. ‘He is sent by Mtanga with rain.’ Europeans are cleverer than natives, because we ‘stayed longer with the people of God (Mulungu).’

I do not gather that, though associated with good crops, Mtanga or Mulungu receives any sacrifice or propitiation. ‘The chief addresses his own god;’ the chief ‘will not trouble himself about his great-great-grand-father; he will present his offering to his own immediate predecessor, saying, ‘O father, I do not know all your relatives; you know them all: invite them to feast with you.’

‘All the offerings are supposed to point to some want of the spirit,’
Mtanga, on the other hand, is *nihil indiga nostri*.

A village god is given beer to drink, as Indra got Soma. A dead chief is propitiated by human sacrifices. I find no trace of any gift to Mtanga. His mysteries are really unknown to Mr. Macdonald: they were laughed at by a travelled and ‘emancipated’ Yao.

‘These rites are supposed to be inviolably concealed by the initiated, who often say that they would die if they revealed them.’

How can we pretend to understand a religion if we do not know its secret? That secret, in Australia, yields the certainty of the ethical character of the Supreme Being. Mr. Macdonald says about the initiator (a grotesque figure): —

‘He delivers lectures, and is said to give much good advice … the lectures condemn selfishness, and a selfish person is called *mwisichana*, that is, “uninitiated.”’

There could not be better evidence of the presence of the ethical element in the religious mysteries. Among the Yao, as among the Australian Kurnai, the central secret lesson of religion is the lesson of unselfishness.

It is not stated that Mtanga instituted or presides over the mysteries. Judging from the analogy of Eleusis, the Bora, the Red Indian initiations, and so on, we may expect this to be the belief; but Mr. Macdonald knows very little about the matter.

The legendary tales say ‘all things in this world were made by “God.”’ ‘At first there were not people, but “God” and beasts.’ ‘God’ here, is Mlungu. The other statement is apparently derived from existing ancestor-worship, people who died became ‘God’ (Mlungu). But God is prior to death, for the Yao have a form of the usual myth of the origin of death, also of sleep: ‘death and sleep are one word, they are of one family.’ God dwells on high, while a malevolent ‘great one,’ who disturbed the mysteries and slew the initiated, was turned into a mountain.

In spite of information confessedly defective, I have extracted from Mr. Spencer’s chosen authority a mass of facts, pointing to a Yao belief in a primal being, maker of mountains and rivers; existent before men were; not liable to death — which came late among them — beneficent; not propitiated by sacrifice (as far as the evidence goes); moral (if we may judge by the analogy of the mysteries), and yet occupying the religious background, while the foreground is held by the most recent ghosts. To prove Mr. Spencer’s theory, he ought to have given a full account of this being, and to have shown how he was developed out of ghosts which are forgotten in inverse ratio to their distance from the actual generation. I conceive that Mr. Spencer would find a mid-point between a common ghost and Mtanga, in a ghost of a chief attached to a mountain, the place and place-name preserving the ghost’s name and memory. But it is, I think, a far cry from such a chief’s ghost to the pre-human, angel-served Mtanga.

Of ancestor worship and ghost worship, we have abundant evidence. But the position of Mtanga raises one of these delicate and crucial questions which cannot be solved by ignoring their existence. Is Mtanga evolved out of an ancestral ghost? If so, why, as greatest of divine beings, ‘Very Chief,’ and having powerful ministers under him, is he left unpropitiated, unless it be by moral discourses at the mysteries? As a much more advanced idea than that of a real father’s ghost, he ought to be much later in evolution, fresher in conception, and more adored. How do we explain his lack of adoration? Was he originally envisaged as a ghost at all, and, if so, by what curious but uniform freak of savage logic is he regarded as prior to men, and though a ghost, prior to death? Is it not certain that such a being could be conceived of by men who had never dreamed of ghosts? Is there any logical reason why Mtanga should not be regarded as originally on the same footing as Munganngaur, but now half forgotten and neglected, for practical or philosophical reasons?

On these problems light is thrown by a successor of Mr. Spencer’s authority, Mr. Duff Macdonald, in the Blantyre Mission. This gentleman, the Rev. David Clement Scott, has published ‘A Cyclopaedic Dictionary of the Mang’anja Language in British Central Africa.’ Looking at ancestral spirits first, we find *Mzimu*, ‘spirits of the departed, supposed to come in dreams.’ Though abiding in the spirit world, they also haunt thickets, they inspire Mlauli, prophets, and make them rave and utter predictions. Offerings are made to them. Here is a prayer: ‘Watch over me, my ancestor, who died long ago; tell the great spirit at the head of my race from whom my mother came.’ There are little hut-temples, and the chief directs the sacrifices of food, or of animals. There are religious pilgrimages, with sacrifice, to mountains. God, like men in this region, has various names, as Chiuta, ‘God in space and the rainbow sign across;’ Mpambe, ‘God Almighty’ (or rather ‘pre-excellent’); Mlezi, ‘God the Sustainer,’ and Mulungu, ‘God who is spirit.’ Mulungu = God, ‘not spirits or fetish.’ ‘You can’t put the plural, as God is One,’ say the natives. ‘There are no idols called gods, and spirits are spirits of people who have died, not gods.’ Idols are *Zitunzi-zitunzi*. ‘Spirits are supposed to be with Mulungu.’ God made the world and man. Our author says ‘when the chief or people sacrifice it is to God,’ but he also says that they sacrifice to ancestral spirits. There is some confusion of ideas here: Mr. Macdonald says nothing of sacrifice to Mtanga.

Mr. Scott does not seem to know more about the Mysteries than Mr. Macdonald, and his article on Mulungu does not much enlighten us. Does

Mulungu, as Creative God, receive sacrifice, or not? Mr. Scott gives no instance of this, under *Nsembe* (sacrifice), where ancestors, or hill-dwelling ghosts of chiefs, are offered food; yet, as we have seen, under *Mulungu*, he avers that the chiefs and people do sacrifice to God. He appears to be confusing the Creator with spirits, and no reliance can be placed on this part of his evidence. 'At the back of all this' (sacrifice to spirits) 'there is God.' If I understand Mr. Scott, sacrifices are really made only to spirits, but he is trying to argue that, after all, the theistic conception is at the back of the animistic practice, thus importing his theory into his facts. His theory would, really, be in a better way, if sacrifice is *not* offered to the Creator, but this had not occurred to Mr. Scott.

It is plain, in any case, that the religion of the Africans in the Blantyre region has an element not easily to be derived from ancestral spirit-worship, an element not observed by Mr. Spencer.

Nobody who has followed the examples already adduced will be amazed by what Waitz calls the 'surprising result' of recent inquiries among the great negro race. Among the branches where foreign influence is least to be suspected, we discover, behind their more conspicuous fetishisms and superstitions, something which we cannot exactly call Monotheism, yet which tends in that direction. Waitz quotes Wilson for the fact that, their fetishism apart, they adore a Supreme Being as the Creator: and do not honour him with sacrifice.

The remarks of Waitz may be cited in full:

'The religion of the negro may be considered by some as a particularly rude form of polytheism and may be branded with the special name of fetishism. It would follow, from a minute examination of it, that — apart from the extravagant and fantastic traits, which are rooted in the character of the negro, and which radiate therefrom over all his creations — in comparison with the religions of other savages it is neither very specially differentiated nor very specially crude in form.

'But this opinion can be held to be quite true only while we look at the *outside* of the negro's religion, or estimate its significance from arbitrary presuppositions, as is specially the case with Ad. Wuttke.

'By a deeper insight, which of late several scientific investigators have succeeded in attaining, we reach, rather, the surprising conclusion that several of the negro races — on whom we cannot as yet prove, and can hardly conjecture, the influence of a more civilised people — in the embodying of their religious conceptions are further advanced than almost all other savages, so far that, even if we do not call them monotheists, we may still think of them as standing on the boundary of monotheism, seeing that their religion is also mixed with a great mass of rude superstition which, in turn, among other peoples, seems to overrun completely the purer religious conceptions.’

This conclusion as to an element of pure faith in negro religion would not have surprised Waitz, had recent evidence as to the same creed among lower savages lain before him as he worked.

This volume of his book was composed in 1860. In 1872 he had become well aware of the belief in a good Maker among the Australian natives, and of the absence among them of ancestor worship.

Waitz’s remarks on the Supreme Being of the Negro are well worth noting, from his unconcealed astonishment at the discovery.

Wilson’s observations on North and South Guinea religion were published in 1856. After commenting on the delicate task of finding out what a savage religion really is, he writes: ‘The belief in one great Supreme Being, who made and upholds all things, is universal.’ The names of the being are translated ‘Maker,’ ‘Preserver,’ ‘Benefactor,’ ‘Great Friend.’ Though compact of all good qualities, the being has allowed the world to ‘come under the control of evil spirits,’ who, alone, receive religious worship. Though he leaves things uncontrolled, yet the chief being (as in Homer) ratifies the Oath, at a treaty, and is invoked to punish criminals when ordeal water is to be drunk. So far, then, he has an ethical influence. ‘Grossly wicked people’ are buried outside of the regular place. Fetishism prevails, with spiritualism, and Wilson thinks that mediums might pick up some good tricks in Guinea. He gives no examples. Their inspired men do things ‘that cannot be accounted for,’ by the use of narcotics.

The South Guinea Creator, Anyambia (= good spirit?), is good, but capricious. He has a good deputy, Ombwiri (spelled ‘Mbuiri’ by Miss Kingsley); *he alone has no priests*, but communicates directly with men. The neighbouring Shekuni have mysteries of the Great Spirit. No details are given. This great being, Mwetyi, witnesses covenants and punishes perjury. This people are ancestor-worshippers, but their Supreme Being is not said to receive sacrifice, as ghosts do, while he is so far from being powerless, like Unkulunkulu, that, but for fear of his wrath, ‘their national treaties would have little or no force.’ Having no information about the mysteries, of course, we know nothing of other moral influences which are, or may be exercised by these great, powerful, and not wholly otiose beings.

The celebrated traveller, Mungo Park, who visited Africa in 1805, had good opportunities of understanding the natives. He did not hurry through the land with a large armed force, but alone, or almost alone, paid his way with his brass buttons. ‘I have conversed with all ranks and conditions upon the subject of their faith,’ he says, ‘and can pronounce, without the smallest shadow of doubt, that the belief in one God and in a future state of reward and punishment is entire and universal among them.’ This cannot strictly be called monotheism, as there are many subordinate spirits who may be influenced by ‘magical ceremonies.’ But if monotheism means belief in One Spirit alone, or religious regard paid to One Spirit alone, it exists nowhere — no, not in Islam.

Park thinks it remarkable that ‘the Almighty’ only receives prayers at the new moon (of sacrifice to the Almighty he says nothing), and that, being the creator and preserver of all things, he is ‘of so exalted a nature that it is idle to imagine the feeble supplications of wretched mortals can reverse the decrees and change the purpose of unerring Wisdom.’ The new moon prayers are mere matters of tradition; ‘our fathers did it before us.’ ‘Such is the blindness of unassisted nature,’ says Park, who is not satirising, in Swift’s manner, the prayers of Presbyterians at home on Yarrow.

Thus, the African Supreme Being is unpropitiated, while inferior spirits are constrained by magic or propitiated with food.

We meet our old problem: How has this God, in the conception of whom there is so much philosophy, developed out of these hungry ghosts? The influence of Islam can scarcely be suspected, Allah being addressed, of course, in endless prayers, while the African god receives none. Indeed, it would be more plausible to say that Mahomet borrowed Allah from the widespread belief which we are studying, than that the negro’s Supreme Being was borrowed from Allah.

Park had, as we saw, many opportunities of familiar discussion with the people on whose mercies he threw himself.

‘But it is not often that the negroes make their religious opinions the subject of conversation; when interrogated, in particular, concerning their ideas of a future state, they express themselves with great reverence, but endeavour to shorten the discussion by saying, “*Mo o mo inta allo*” (“No man knows anything about it”).’

Park himself, in extreme distress, and almost in despair, chanced to observe the delicate beauty of a small moss-plant, and, reflecting that the Creator of so frail a thing could not be indifferent to any of His creatures, plucked up courage and reached safety. He was not of the negro philosophy, and is the less likely to have invented it. The new moon prayer, said in a whisper, was reported to Park, ‘by many different people,’ to contain ‘thanks to God for his kindness during the existence of the past moon, and to solicit a continuation of his favour during the new one.’ This, of course, may prove Islamite influence, and is at variance with the general tendency of the religious philosophy as described.

We now arrive at a theory of the Supreme Being among a certain African race which would be entirely fatal to my whole hypothesis on this topic, if it could be demonstrated correct in fact, and if it could be stretched so as to apply to the

Australians, Fuegians, Andamanese, and other very backward peoples. It is the hypothesis that the Supreme Being is a ‘loan-god,’ borrowed from Europeans.

The theory is very lucidly set forth in Major Ellis’s ‘Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast.’ Major Ellis’s opinion coincides with that of Waitz in his ‘Introduction to Anthropology’ (an opinion to which Waitz does not seem bigoted) — namely, that ‘the original form of all religion is a raw, unsystematic polytheism,’ nature being peopled by inimical powers or spirits, and everyone worshipping what he thinks most dangerous or most serviceable. There are few general, many local or personal, objects of veneration. Major Ellis only met this passage when he had formed his own ideas by observation of the Tshi race. We do not pretend to guess what ‘the original form of all religion’ may have been; but we have given, and shall give, abundant evidence for the existence of a loftier faith than this, among peoples much lower in material culture than the Tshi races, who have metals and an organised priesthood. They occupy, in small villages (except Coomassie and Djuabin), the forests of the Gold Coast. The mere mention of Coomassie shows how vastly superior in civilisation the Tshis (Ashantis and Fantis) are to the naked, houseless Australians. Their inland communities, however, are ‘mere specks in a vast tract of impenetrable forest.’ The coast people have for centuries been in touch with Europeans, but the ‘Tshi-speaking races are now much in the same condition, both socially and morally, as they were at the time of the Portuguese discovery.’

Nevertheless, Major Ellis explains their Supreme Being as the result of European influence! *A priori* this appears highly improbable. That a belief should sweep over all these specks in impenetrable forest, from the coast-tribes in contact with Europeans, and that this belief should, though the most recent, be infinitely the least powerful, cannot be regarded as a plausible hypothesis. Moreover, on Major Ellis’s theory the Supreme Beings of races which but recently came for the first time in contact with Europeans, Supreme Beings kept jealously apart from European ken, and revered in the secrecy of ancient mysteries, must also, by parity of reason, be the result of European influence. Unfortunately, Major Ellis gives no evidence for his statements about the past history of Tshi religion. Authorities he must have, and references would be welcome.

‘With people in the condition in which the natives of the Gold Coast now are, religion is not in any way allied with moral ideas.’ We have given abundant evidence that among much more backward tribes morals rest on a religious sanction. If this be not so on the Gold Coast we cannot accept these relatively advanced Fantis and Ashantis as representing the ‘original’ state of ethics and religion, any more than those people with cities, a king, a priesthood, iron, and gold, represent the ‘original’ material condition of society. Major Ellis also shows that the Gods exact chastity from aspirants to the priesthood. The present beliefs of the Gold Coast are kept up by organised priesthoods as ‘lucrative business.’ Where there is no lucre and no priesthood, as among more backward races, this kind of business cannot be done. On the Gold Coast men can only approach gods through priests. This is degeneration.

Obviously, if religion began in a form relatively pure and moral, it *must* degenerate, as civilisation advances, under priests who ‘exploit’ the lucrative, and can see no money in the pure elements of belief and practice. That the lucrative elements in Christianity were exploited by the clergy, to the neglect of ethics, was precisely the complaint of the Reformers. From these lucrative elements the creed of the Apostles was free, and a similar freedom marks the religion of Australia or of the Pawnees. We cannot possibly, then, expect to find the ‘original’ state of religion among a people subdued to a money-grubbing priesthood, like the Tshi races. Let religion begin as pure as snow, it would be corrupted by priestly trafficking in its lucrative animistic aspect. And priests are developed relatively late.

Major Ellis discriminates Tshi gods as —

1. General, worshipped by an entire tribe or more tribes. 2. Local deities of river, hill, forest, or sea. 3. Deities of families or corporations. 4. Tutelary deities of individuals.

The second class, according to the natives, were appointed by the first class, who are ‘too distant or indifferent to interfere ordinarily in human affairs.’ Thus, the Huron god, Ahone, punishes nobody. He is all sweetness and light, but has a deputy god, called Okeus. On our hypothesis this indifference of high gods suggests the crowding out of the great disinterested God by venal animistic competition. All of class II. ‘appear to have been originally malignant.’ Though, in native belief, class I. was prior to, and ‘appointed’ class II., Major Ellis thinks that malignant spirits of class II. were raised to class I. as if to the peerage, while classes III. and IV. ‘are clearly the product of priesthood’ — therefore late.

Major Ellis then avers that when Europeans reached the Gold Coast, in the fifteenth century, they ‘appear to have found’ a Northern God, Tando, and a Southern God, Bobowissi, still adored. Bobowissi makes thunder and rain, lives on a hill, and receives, or received, human sacrifices. But, ‘after an intercourse of some years with Europeans,’ the villagers near European forts ‘added to their system a new deity, whom they termed Nana Nyankupon. This was the God of the Christians, borrowed from them, and adapted under a new designation, meaning ‘Lord of the sky.’ (This is conjectural. *Nyankum* = rain. *Nyansa* has ‘a later meaning, “craft.”’)

Now Major Ellis, later, has to contrast Bosman’s account of fetishism (1700) with his own observations. According to Bosman’s native source of information, men then selected their own fetishes. These are *now* selected by priests. Bosman’s authority was wrong — or priesthood has extended its field of business. Major Ellis argues that the revolution from amateur to priestly selection of fetishes could not occur in 190 years, ‘over a vast tract of country, amongst peoples living in semi-isolated communities, in the midst of pathless forests, where there is but little opportunity for the exchange of ideas, *and where we know they have been uninfluenced by any higher race*.’

Yet Major Ellis’s theory is that this isolated people *were* influenced by a higher race, to the extent of adopting a totally new Supreme Being, from Europeans, a being whom they in no way sought to propitiate, and who was of no practical use. And this they did, he says, not under priestly influence, but in the face of priestly opposition.

Major Ellis’s logic does not appear to be consistent. In any case we ask for evidence how, in the ‘impenetrable forests’ did a new Supreme Deity become universally known? Are we certain that travellers (unquoted) did not discover a deity with no priests, or ritual, or ‘money in the concern,’ later than they discovered the blood-stained, conspicuous, lucrative Bobowissi? Why was Nyankupon, the supposed new god of a new powerful set of strangers, left wholly unpropitiated? The reverse was to be expected.

Major Ellis writes: ‘Almost certainly the addition of one more to an already numerous family’ of gods, ‘was strenuously resisted by the priesthood,’ who, confessedly, are adding now lower gods every day! Yet Nyankupon is universally known, in spite of priestly resistance. Nyankupon, I presume = Anzambi, Anyambi, Nyambi, Nzambi, Anzam, Nyam, the Nzam of the Fans, ‘and of all Bantu coast races, the creator of man, plants, animals, and the earth; he takes no further interest in the affair.’ The crowd of *spirits* take only too much interest; and, therefore, are the lucrative element in religion.

It is not very easy to believe that Nyam, under all his names, was picked up from the Portuguese, and passed apparently from negroes to Bantu all over West Africa, despite the isolation of the groups, and the resistance of the priesthood among tribes ‘uninfluenced by any higher race.’

Nyam, like Major Ellis’s class I., appoints a subordinate god to do his work: he is truly good, and governs the malevolent spirits.

The spread of Nyankupon, as described by Major Ellis, is the more remarkable, since ‘five or six miles from the sea, or even less, the country was a *terra incognita* to Europeans,’ Nyankupon was, it is alleged, adopted, because our superiority proved Europeans to be ‘protected by a deity of greater power than any of those to which they themselves' (the Tshi races) 'offered sacrifices.'

Then, of course, Nyankupon would receive the best sacrifices of all, as the most powerful deity? Far from that, Nyankupon received no sacrifice, and had no priests. No priest would have a traditional way of serving him. As the unlucky man in Voltaire says to his guardian angel, 'It is well worth while to have a presiding genius,' so the Tshis and Bantu might ironically remark, 'A useful thing, a new Supreme Being!' A quarter of a continent or so adopts a new foreign god, and leaves him *planté là*; unserved, unhonoured, and unsung. He therefore came to be thought too remote, or too indifferent, 'to interfere directly in the affairs of the world.' 'This idea was probably caused by the fact that the natives had not experienced any material improvement in their condition … although they also had become followers of the god of the whites.'

But that was just what they had not done! Even at Magellan's Straits, the Fuegians picked up from a casual Spanish sea-captain and adored an image of Cristo. Name and effigy they accepted. The Tshi people took neither effigy nor name of a deity from the Portuguese settled among them. They neither imitated Catholic rites nor adapted their own; they prayed not, nor sacrificed to the 'new' Nyankupon. Only his name and the idea of his nature are universally diffused in West African belief. He lives in no definite home, or hill, but 'in Nyankupon's country.' Nyankupon, at the present day, is 'ignored rather than worshipped,' while Bobowissi has priests and offerings.

It is clear that Major Ellis is endeavouring to explain, by a singular solution (namely, the borrowing of a God from Europeans), and that a solution improbable and inadequate, a phenomenon of very wide distribution. Nyankupon cannot be explained apart from Taaroa, Puluga, Ahone, Ndengei, Dendid, and Ta-li-y-Tochoo, Gods to be later described, who cannot, by any stretch of probabilities, be regarded as of European origin. All of these represent the primeval Supreme Being, more or less or altogether stripped, under advancing conditions of culture, of his ethical influence, and crowded out by the horde of useful greedy ghosts or ghost gods, whose business is lucrative. Nyankupon has no pretensions to be, or to have been a 'spirit.'

Major Ellis's theory is a natural result of his belief in a tangle of polytheism as 'the original state of religion.' If so, there was not much room for the natural development of Nyankupon, in whom 'the missionaries find a parallel to the Jahveh of the Jews.' On our theory Nyankupon takes his place in the regular process of the corruption of theism by animism.

The parallel case of Nzambi Mpungu, the Creator among the Fiorts (a Bantu stock), is thus stated by Miss Kingsley:

'I have no hesitation in saying I fully believe Nzambi Mpungu to be a purely native god, and that he is a great god over all things, but the study of him is even more difficult than the study of Nzambi, because the Jesuit missionaries who gained so great an influence over the Fiorts in the sixteenth century identified him with Jehovah, and worked on the native mind from that stand-point. Consequently semi-mythical traces of Jesuit teaching linger, even now, in the religious ideas of the Fiorts.'

Nzambi Mpungu lives 'behind the firmament.' 'He takes next to no interest in human affairs;' which is not a Jesuit idea of God.

In all missionary accounts of savage religion, we have to guard against two kinds of bias. One is the bias which makes the observer deny any religion to the native race, except devil-worship. The other is the bias which lends him to look for traces of a pure primitive religious tradition. Yet we cannot but observe this reciprocal phenomenon: missionaries often find a native name and idea which answer so nearly to their conception of God that they adopt the idea and the name, in teaching. Again, on the other side, the savages, when first they hear the missionaries' account of God, recognise it, as do the Hurons and Bakwain, for what has always been familiar to them. This is recorded in very early pre-missionary travels, as in the book of William Strachey on Virginia (1612), to which we now turn. The God found by Strachey in Virginia cannot, by any latitude of conjecture, be regarded as the result of contact with Europeans. Yet he almost exactly answers to the African Nyankupon, who is explained away as a 'loan-god.' For the belief in relatively pure creative beings, whether they are morally adored, without sacrifice, or merely neglected, is so widely diffused, that Anthropology must ignore them, or account for them as 'loan-gods' — or give up her theory!

XIV

AHONE. TI-RA-WÁ. NÀ-PI. PACHACAMAC. TUI LAGA. TAA-ROA

In this chapter it is my object to set certain American Creators beside the African beings whom we have been examining. We shall range from Hurons to Pawnees and Blackfeet, and end with Pachacamac, the supreme being of the old Inca civilisation, with Tui Laga and Taa-roa. It will be seen that the Hurons have been accidentally deprived of their benevolent Creator by a bibliographical accident, while that Creator corresponds very well with the Peruvian Pachucamac, often regarded as a mere philosophical abstraction. The Pawnees will show us a Creator involved in a sacrificial ritual, which is not common, while the Blackfeet present a Creator who is not envisaged as a spirit at all, and, on our theory, represents a very early stage of the theistic conception.

To continue the argument from analogy against Major Ellis's theory of the European origin of Nyankupon, it seems desirable first to produce a parallel to his case, and to that of his blood-stained subordinate deity, Bobowissi, from a quarter where European influence is absolutely out of the question. Virginia was first permanently colonised by Englishmen in 1607, and the 'Historie of Travaile into Virginia,' by William Strachey, Gent., first Secretary of the Colony, dates from the earliest years (1612-1616). It will hardly be suggested, then, that the natives had already adopted *our* Supreme Being, especially as Strachey says that the native priests strenuously opposed the Christian God. Strachey found a house-inhabiting, agricultural, and settled population, under chiefs, one of whom, Powhattan, was a kind of Bretwalda. The temples contained the dried bodies of the *weroances*, or aristocracy, beside which was their Okeus, or Oki, an image 'ill favouredly carved,' all black dressed, 'who doth them all the harm they suffer. He is propitiated by sacrifices of their own children' (probably an error) 'and of strangers.'

Mr. Tylor quotes a description of this Oki, or Okeus, with his idol and bloody rites, from Smith's 'History of Virginia' (1632). The two books, Strachey's and Smith's, are here slightly varying copies of one original. But, after censuring Smith's (and Strachey's) hasty theory that Okeus is 'no other than a devil,' Mr. Tylor did not find in Smith what follows in Strachey. Okeus has human sacrifices, like Bobowissi, 'whilst the great God (the priests tell them) who governes all the world, and makes the son to shine, creatyng the moone and starrs his companyons … they calling (*sic*) Ahone. The good and peaceable God requires no such dutyes, nor needs to be sacrificed unto, for he intendeth all good unto them,' Okeus, on the contrary, 'looking into all men's accions, and examining the same according to the severe scheme of justice, punisheth them…. Such is the misery and thraldome under which Sathan hath bound these wretched miscreants.'

As if, in Mr. Strachey's own creed, Satan does not punish, in hell, the offences of men against God!

Here, then, in addition to a devil (or rather a divine police magistrate), and general fetishism and nature worship, we find that the untutored Virginian is equipped with a merciful Creator, without idol, temple, or sacrifice, as needing nought of ours. It is by the merest accident, the use of Smith's book (1632) instead of Strachey's book (1612), that Mr. Tylor is unaware of these essential facts.

Dr. Brinton, like Mr. Tylor, cites Smith for the nefarious or severe Okeus, and omits any mention of Ahone, the benevolent Creator. Now, Strachey's evidence is early (1612), is that of a well-educated man, fond of airing his Greek, and not prejudiced in favour of these worshippers of 'Sathan.' In Virginia he found the unpropitiated loving Supreme Being, beside a subordinate, like Nyankupon beside Bobowissi in Africa.

Each highest deity, in Virginia or on the Gold Coast, is more or less eclipsed in popular esteem by nascent polytheism and nature worship. This is precisely what we should expect to find, if Ahone, the Creator, were earlier in evolution, while Okeus and the rest were of the usual greedy class of animistic corruptible deities, useful to priests. This could not be understood while Ahone was left out of the statement.

Probably Mr. Strachey's narrative justifies, by analogy, our suspicion of Major Ellis's theory that the African Supreme Being is of European origin. The purpose in the Ahone-Okeus creed is clear. God (Ahone) is omnipotent and good, yet calamities beset mankind. How are these to be explained? Clearly as penalties for men's sins, inflicted, not by Ahone, but by his lieutenant, Okeus. But that magistrate can be, and is, appeased by sacrifices, which it would be impious, or, at all events, useless, to offer to the Supreme Being, Ahone. It is a logical creed, but how was the Supreme Being evolved out of the ghost of a 'people-devouring king' like Powhattan? The facts, very fairly attested, do not fit the anthropological theory. It is to be remarked that Strachey's Ahone is a much less mythological conception than that which, on very good evidence, he attributes to the Indians of the Patowemeck River. Their Creator is spoken of as 'a godly Hare,' who receives their souls into Paradise, whence they are reborn on earth again, as in Plato's myth. They also regard the four winds as four Gods.

How the god took the mythological form of a hare is diversely explained.

Meanwhile the Ahone-Okeus creed corresponds to the Nyankupon-Bobowissi creed. The American faith is certainly not borrowed from Europe, so it is less likely that the African creed is borrowed.

As illustrations of the general theory here presented, we may now take two tribal religions among the North American Indians. The first is that of the equestrian Pawnees, who, thirty years ago, were dwelling on the Loup Fork in Nebraska. The buffaloes have since been destroyed, the lands seized, and the Pawnees driven into a ‘Reservation,’ where they are, or lately were, cheated and oppressed in the usual way. They were originally known to Europeans in four hordes, the fourth being the Skidi or Wolf Pawnees. They seem to have come into Kansas and Nebraska, at a date relatively remote, from Mexico, and are allied with the Lipans and Tonkaways of that region. The Tonkaways are a tribe who, in a sacred mystery, are admonished to ‘live like the wolves,’ in exactly the same way as were the Hirpi (wolf tribe), of Mount Soracte, who practised the feat of walking unhurt through fire. The Tonkaways regard the Pawnees, who also have a wolf tribe, as a long-separated branch of their race. If, then, they are of Mexican origin, we might expect to find traces of Aztec ritual among the Pawnees.

Long after they obtained better weapons they used flint-headed arrows for slaying the only two beasts which it was lawful to sacrifice, the deer and the buffalo. They have long been a hunting and also an agricultural people. The corn was given to them originally by the Ruler: their god, *Ti-ra-wá*, ‘the Spirit Father.’ They offer the sacrifice of a deer with peculiar solemnity, and are a very prayerful people. The priest ‘held a relation to the Pawnees and their deity not unlike that occupied by Moses to Jehovah and the Israelites.’ A feature in ritual is the sacred bundles of unknown contents, brought from the original home in Mexico. The Pawnees were created by Ti-ra-wá. They believe in a happy future life, while the wicked die, and there is an end of them. They cite their dreams of the dead as an argument for a life beyond the tomb. ‘We see ourselves living with Ti-ra-wá!’ An evil earlier race, which knew not Ti-ra-wá, was destroyed by him in the Deluge; evidence is found in large fossil bones, and it would be an interesting inquiry whether such fossils are always found where the story of a ‘sin-flood’ occurs. If so, fossils must be universally diffused.

As is common, the future life is attested, not only by dreams, but in the experience of men who ‘have died’ and come back to life, like Secret Pipe Chief, who told the story to Mr. Grinnell. These visions in a state of apparent death are not peculiar to savages, and, no doubt, have had much effect on beliefs about the next world. Ghosts are rarely seen, but auditory hallucinations, as of a voice giving good advice in time of peril, are regarded as the speech of ghosts. The beasts are also friendly, as fellow children with men of Ti-ra-wá. To the Morning Star the Skidi or Wolf Pawnees offered on rare occasions a captive man. The ceremony was not unlike that of the Aztecs, though less cruel. Curiously enough, the slayer of the captive had instantly to make a mock flight, as in the Attic *Bouphonia*. This, however, was a rite paid to the Morning Star, not to Ti-ra-wá, 'the power above that moves the universe and controls all things.' Sacrifice to Ti-ra-wá was made on rare and solemn occasions out of his two chief gifts, deer and buffalo. 'Through corn, deer, buffalo, and the sacred bundles, we worship *Ti-ra-wá*.'

The flesh was burned in the fire, while prayers were made with great earnestness. In the old Skidi rite the women told the fattened captive what they desired to gain from the Ruler. It is occasionally said that the human sacrifice was made to *Ti-ra-wá* himself. The sacrificer not only fled, but fasted and mourned. It is possible that, as among the Aztecs, the victim was regarded as also an embodiment of the God, but this is not certain, the rite having long been disused. Mr. Grinnell got the description from a very old Skidi. There was also a festival of thanks to Ti-ra-wá for corn. During a sacred dance and hymn the corn is held up to the Ruler by a woman. Corn is ritually called 'The Mother,' as in Peru. 'We are like seed, and we worship through the Corn.'

Disease is caused by evil spirits, and many American soldiers were healed by Pawnee doctors, though their hurts had refused to yield to the treatment of the United States Army Surgeons.

The miracles wrought by Pawnee medicine men, under the eyes of Major North, far surpass what is told of Indian jugglery. But this was forty years ago, and it is probably too late to learn anything of these astounding performances of naked men on the hard floor of a lodge. 'Major North told me' (Mr. Grinnell) 'that he saw with his own eyes the doctors make the corn grow,' the doctor not manipulating the plant, as in the Mango trick, but standing apart and singing. Mr. Grinnell says: 'I have never found any one who could even suggest an explanation.'

This art places great power in the hands of the doctors, who exhibit many other prodigies. It is notable that in this religion we hear nothing of ancestor-worship; all that is stated as to ghosts has been reported. We find the cult of an all-powerful being, in whose ritual sacrifice is the only feature that suggests ghost-worship. The popular tales and historical reminiscences of the last generation entirely bear out by their allusions Mr. Grinnell's account of the Pawnee faith, in which the ethical element chiefly consists in a sense of dependence on and touching gratitude to Ti-ra-wá, as shown in fervent prayer.

Theft he abhors, he applauds valour, he punishes the wicked by annihilation, the good dwell with him in his heavenly home. He is addressed as A-ti-us ta-kaw-a, ‘Our father in all places.’

It is not so easy to see how this Being was developed out of ancestor-worship, of which we find no traces among Pawnees. For ancestor-worship among the Sioux, it is usual to quote a remark of one Prescott, an interpreter: ‘Sometimes an Indian will say, “Wah negh on she wan da,” which means, “Spirits of the dead have mercy on me.” Then they will add what they want. That is about the amount of an Indian’s prayer.’ Obviously, when we compare Mr. Grinnell’s account of Pawnee religion, based on his own observations, and those of Major North, and Mr. Dunbar, who has written on the language of the tribe, we are on much safer ground, than when we follow a contemptuous, half-educated European.

The religion of the Blackfoot Indians appears to be a ruder form of the Pawnee faith. Whether the differences arise from tribal character, or from decadence, or because the Blackfoot belief is in an earlier and more backward condition than that of the Pawnees, it is not easy to be certain. As in China, there exists a difficulty in deciding whether the Supreme Being is identical with the great nature-god; in China the Heaven, among the Blackfeet the Sun; or is prior to him in conception, or has been, later, substituted for him, or placed beside him. The Blackfoot mythology is low, crude, and, except in tales of Creation, is derisive. As in Australia, there is a specific difference of tone between mythology and religion.

The Blackfoot country runs east from the summit of the Rocky Mountains, to the mouth of the Yellowstone river on the Missouri, then west to the Yellowstone sources, across the Rocky Mountains to the Beaverhead, thence to their summit.

As to spirits, the Blackfeet believe in, or at least tell stories of, ghosts, which conduct themselves much as in our old-fashioned ghost stories. They haunt people in a rather sportive and irresponsible way. The souls or shadows of respectable persons go to the bleak country called the Sand Hills, where they live in a dull, monotonous kind of Sheol. The shades of the wicked are ‘earth-bound’ and mischievous, especially ghosts of men slain in battle. They cause paralysis and madness, but dread interiors of lodges; they only ‘tap on the lodge-skins.’ Like many Indian tribes, the Blackfeet have the Eurydice legend. A man grieving for his dead wife finds his way to Hades, is pitied by the dead, and allowed to carry the woman back with him, under certain ritual prohibitions, one of which he unhappily infringes. The range of this deeply touching story among the Red Men, and its close resemblance to the tale of Orpheus, is one of the most curious facts in mythology. Mr. Grinnell’s friend Young Bear, when lost with his wife in a fog, heard a Voice, ‘It is well. Go on, you are going right.’ ‘The top of my head seemed to lift up. It seemed as if a lot of needles were running into it…. This must have been a ghost.’ As the wife also heard the Voice it was probably human, not hallucinatory.

Animals receive the usual amount of friendly respect from the Blackfeet. They have also an inchoate polytheism, ‘Above Persons, Ground Persons, and Under Water Persons.’ Of the first, Thunder is most important, and is worshipped. There is the Cold Maker, a white figure on a white horse, the Wind, and so on.

The Creator is Nà-pi, Old Man; Dr. Brinton thinks he is a personification of Light, but Mr. Grinnell reckons it absurd to attribute so abstract a conception to the Blackfeet. Nà-pi is simply a primal Being, an Immortal Man, who was before Death came into the world, concerning which one of the usual tales of the Origin of Death is told. ‘All things that he had made understood him when he spoke to them — birds, animals, and people,’ as in the first chapters of Genesis. With Nà-pi, Creation worked on the lines of adaptation to environment. He put the bighorn on the prairie. There it was awkward, so he set it on rocky places, where it skipped about with ease. The antelope fell on the rocks, so he removed it to the level prairie. Nà-pi created man and woman, out of clay, but the folly of the woman introduced Death. Nà-pi, as a Prometheus, gave fire, and taught the forest arts. He inculcated the duty of prayer; his will should be done by emissaries in the shape of animals. Then he went to other peoples. The misfortunes of the Indians arise from disobedience to his laws.

Chiefs were elective, for conduct, courage, and charity.

Though weapons and utensils were buried with the dead, or exposed on platforms, and though great men were left to sleep in their lodges, henceforth never to be entered by the living, there is no trace known to me of continued ancestor-worship. As many Blackfeet change their names yearly, ancestral names are not likely to become those of gods.

The Sun is by many believed to have taken the previous place of Nà-pi in religion; or perhaps Nà-pi *is* the Sun. However, he is still separately addressed in prayer. The Sun receives presents of furs and so forth; a finger, when the prayer is for life, has been offered to him. Fetishism probably shows itself in gifts to a great rock. There is daily prayer, both to the Sun and to Nà-pi. Women institute Medicine Lodges, praying, ‘Pity me, Sun. You have seen my life. You know that

I am pure.’ ‘We look on the Medicine Lodge woman as you white people do on the Roman Catholic Sisters.’ Being ‘virtuous in deed, serious, and clean-minded,’ the Medical Lodge woman is in spiritual *rapport* with Nà-pi and the Sun. To this extent, at least, Blackfoot religion is an ethical influence.

The creed seems to be a nascent polytheism, subordinate to Nà-pi as supreme Maker, and to the personified Sun. As Blackfoot ghosts are ‘vaporous, ineffectual’ for good, there seems to be nothing like ancestor worship.

These two cults and beliefs, Pawnee and Blackfoot, may be regarded as fairly well authenticated examples of un-Christianised American religion among races on the borderland of agriculture and the chase. It would be difficult to maintain that ghost-worship or ancestor-worship is a potent factor in the evolution of the deathless Ti-ra-wá or the immortal Creator Nà-pi, who has nothing of the spirit about him, especially as ghosts are not worshipped.

Let us now look at the Supreme Being of a civilised American people. There are few more interesting accounts of religion than Garcilasso de la Vega’s description of faith in Peru. Garcilasso was of Inca parentage on the spindle side; he was born in 1540, and his book, taken from the traditions of an uncle, and aided by the fragmentary collections of Father Blas Valera, was published in 1609. In Garcilasso’s theory the original people of Peru, Totemists and worshippers of hills and streams, Earth and Sea, were converted to Sun worship by the first Inca, a child of the Sun. Even the new religion included ancestor-worship and other superstitions. But behind Sun worship was the faith in a Being who ‘advanced the Sun so far above all the stars of heaven.’ This Being was Pachacamac, ‘the sustainer of the world.’ The question then arises, Is Pachacamac a form of the same creative being whom we find among the lowest savages; or is he the result of philosophical reflection? The latter was the opinion of Garcilasso. ‘The Incas and their Amautas’ (learned class) ‘were philosophers.’

‘Pacha,’ he says, = universe, and ‘cama’ = soul. Pachacamac, then, is *Anima Mundi*. ‘They did not even take the name of Pachacamac into their mouths,’ or but seldom and reverently, as the Australians will not, in religious matters, mention Darumulun. Pachacamac had no temple, ‘but they worshipped him in their hearts.’ That he was the Creator appears in an earlier writer, cited by Garcilasso, Agustin de Zarate (ii. ch. 5). Garcilasso, after denying the existence of temples to Pachacamac, mentions one, but only one. He insists, at length, and with much logic, that He whom, as a Christian, he worships, is in Quichua styled Pachacamac. Moreover, the one temple to Pachacamac was not built by an Inca, but by a race which, having heard of the Inca god, borrowed his name, without understanding his nature, that of a Being who dwells not in temples made with hands (ii. 186). In the temple this people, the Yuncas, offered even human sacrifices. By the Incas to Pachacamac no sacrifice was offered (ii. 189). This negative custom they also imposed upon the Yuncas, and they removed idols from the Yunca temple of Pachacamac (ii. 190). Yunca superstitions, however, infested the temple, and a Voice gave oracles therein. The Yuncas also had a talking idol, which the Inca, in accordance with a religious treaty, occasionally consulted.

While Pachacamac, without temple or rite, was reckoned the Creator, we must understand that Sun-worship and ancestor-worship were the practical elements of the Inca cult. This appears to have been distasteful to the Inca Huayna Ccapac, for at a Sun feast he gazed hard on the Sun, was remonstrated with by a priest, and replied that the restless Sun 'must have another Lord more powerful than himself.'

This remark could not have been necessary if Pachacamac were really an article of living and universal belief. Perhaps we are to understand that this Inca, like his father, who seems to have been the original author of the saying, meant to sneer at the elaborate worship bestowed on the Sun, while Pachacamac was neglected, as far as ritual went.

In Garcilasso's book we have to allow for his desire to justify the creed of his maternal ancestors. His criticism of Spanish versions is acute, and he often appeals to his knowledge of Quichua, and to the direct traditions received by him from his uncle. Against his theory of Pachacamac as a result of philosophical thought, it may be urged that similar conceptions, or nearly similar, exist among races not civilised like the Incas, and not provided with colleges of learned priests. In fact, the position of Pachacamac and the Sun is very nearly that of the Blackfoot Creator Nà-pi, and the Sun, or of Shang-ti and the Heaven, in China. We have the Creative Being whose creed is invaded by that of a worshipped aspect of nature, and whose cult, quite logically, is *nil*, or nearly *nil*. There are also, in different strata of the Inca empire, ancestor-worship, or mummy-worship, Totemism and polytheism, with a vague mass of *huaca = Elohim, kalou, wakan.*

Perhaps it would not be too rash to conjecture that Pachacamac is not a merely philosophical abstraction, but a survival of a Being like Nà-pi or Ahone. Cieza de Leon calls Pachacamac 'a devil,' whose name means 'creator of the world'! The name, when it *was* uttered, was spoken with genuflexions and signs of reverence. So closely did Pachacamac resemble the Christian Deity, that Cieza de Leon declares the devil to have forged and insisted on the resemblance! It was open to Spanish missionaries to use Pachacamac, as to the Jesuits among the Bantu to use Mpungu, as a fulcrum for the introduction of Christianity. They preferred to regard Pachacamac as a fraudulent fiend. Now Nzambi Mpungu, among the Bantu, is assuredly not a creation of a learned priesthood, for the Bantu have no learned priests, and Mpungu would be useless to the greedy conjurers whom they do consult, as he is not propitiated. On grounds of analogy, then, Pachacamac may be said to resemble a savage Supreme Being, somewhat etherealised either by Garcilasso or by the Amautas, the learned class among the subjects of the Incas. He does not seem, even so, much superior to the Ahone of the Virginians.

We possess, however, a different account of Inca religion, from which Garcilasso strongly dissents. The best version is that of Christoval de Molina, who was chaplain of the hospital for natives, and wrote between 1570 and 1584. Christoval assembled a number of old priests and other natives who had taken part in the ancient services, and collected their evidence. He calls the Creator ('not born of woman, unchangeable and eternal') by the name Pachayachachi. 'Teacher of the world' and 'Tecsiviracocha,' which Garcilasso dismisses as meaningless. He also tells the tale of the Inca Yupanqui and the Lord of the Sun, but says that the Incas had already knowledge of the Creator. To Yupanqui he attributes the erection of a gold image of the Creator, utterly denied by Garcilasso. Christoval declares, again contradicted by Garcilasso, that sacrifices were offered to the Creator. Unlike the Sun, Christoval says, the Creator had no woman assigned to him, 'because, as he created them, they all belonged to him' (), which, of course, is an idea that would also make sacrifice superfluous.

Christoval gives prayers in Quichua, wherein the Creator is addressed as *Uiracocha*.

Christoval assigns images, sacrifice, and even human sacrifice, to the Creator Uiracocha. Garcilasso denies that the Creator Pachacamac had any of these things, he denies that Uiracocha was the name of the Creator, and he denies it, knowing that the Spaniards made the assertion. Who is right? Uiracocha, says Garcilasso, is one thing, with his sacrifices; the Creator, Pachacamac, without sacrifices, is another, is GOD.

Mr. Markham thinks that Garcilasso, writing when he did, and not consciously exaggerating, was yet less trustworthy (though 'wonderfully accurate') than Christoval. Garcilasso, however, is 'scrupulously truthful.' 'The excellence of his memory is perhaps best shown in his topographical details…. He does not make a single mistake,' in the topography of three hundred and twenty places! A scrupulously truthful gentleman, endowed with an amazing memory, and a master of his native language, flatly contradicts the version of a Spanish priest, who also appears to have been careful and honourable.

I shall now show that Christoval and Garcilasso have different versions of the same historical events, and that Garcilasso bases his confutation of the Spanish theory of the Inca Creator on his form of this historical tradition, which follows:

The Inca Yahuarhuaccac, like George II., was at odds with his Prince of Wales. He therefore banished the Prince to Chita, and made him serve as shepherd of the llamas of the Sun. Three years later the disgraced Prince came to Court, with what the Inca regarded as a cock-and-bull story of an apparition of the kind technically styled ‘Borderland.’ Asleep or awake, he knew not, he saw a bearded robed man holding a strange animal. The appearance declared himself as Uiracocha (Christoval’s name for the Creator), a Child of the Sun; by no means as Pachacamac, the Creator of the Sun. He announced a distant rebellion, and promised his aid to the Prince. The Inca, hearing this narrative, replied in the tones of Charles II., when he said about Monmouth, ‘Tell James to go to hell!’ The predicted rebellion, however, broke out, the Inca fled, the Prince saved the city, dethroned his father, and sent him into the country. He then adopted, from the apparition, the throne-name *Uiracocha,* grew a beard, and dressed like the apparition, to whom he erected a temple, roofless, and unique in construction. Therein he had an image of the god, for which he himself gave frequent sittings. When the Spaniards arrived, bearded men, the Indians called them Uiracochas (as all the Spanish historians say), and, to flatter them, declared falsely that Uiracocha was their word for the Creator. Garcilasso explodes the Spanish etymology of the name, in the language of Cuzco, which he ‘sucked in with his mother’s milk.’ ‘The Indians said that the chief Spaniards were children of the Sun, to make gods of them, just as they said they were children of the apparition, Uiracocha.’ Moreover, Garcilasso and Cieza de Leon agree in their descriptions of the image of Uiracocha, which, both assert, the Spaniards conceived to represent a Christian early missionary, perhaps St. Bartholomew. Garcilasso had seen the mummy of the Inca Uiracocha, and relates the whole tale from the oral version of his uncle, adding many native comments on the Court revolution described.

To Garcilasso, then, the invocations of Uiracocha, in Christoval’s collection of prayers, are a native adaptation to Spanish prejudice: even in them Pachacamac occurs.

Now, Christoval has got hold of a variant of Garcilasso’s narrative, which, in Garcilasso, has plenty of humour and human nature. According to Christoval it was not the Prince, later Inca Uiracocha, who beheld the apparition, but the Inca Uiracocha’s *son,* Prince of Wales, as it were, of the period, later the Inca Yupanqui.

Garcilasso corrects Christoval. Uiracocha saw the apparition, as Père Acosta rightly says, and Yupanqui was *not* the son but the grandson of this Inca Uiracocha. Uiracocha’s own son was Pachacutec, which simply means

‘Revolution,’ ‘they say, by way of by-word *Pachamcutin,* which means “the world changes.”’

Christoval’s form of the story is peculiarly gratifying in one way. Yupanqui saw the apparition *in a piece of crystal,* ‘the apparition vanished, while the piece of crystal remained. The Inca took care of it, and they say that he afterwards saw everything he wanted in it.’ The apparition, in human form and in Inca dress, gave itself out for the Sun; and Yupanqui, when he came to the throne, ‘ordered a statue of the Sun to be made, as nearly as possible resembling the figure he had seen in the crystal.’ He bade his subjects to ‘reverence the new deity, as they had heretofore worshipped the Creator,’ who, therefore, was prior to Uiracocha.

Interesting as a proof of Inca crystal-gazing, this legend of Christoval’s cannot compete as evidence with Acosta and Garcilasso. The reader, however, must decide as to whether he prefers Garcilasso’s unpropitiated Pachacamac, or Christoval’s Uiracocha, human sacrifices, and all.

Mr. Tylor prefers the version of Christoval, making Pachacamac a title of Uiracocha. He thinks that we have, in Inca religion, an example of ‘a subordinate god’ (the Sun) ‘usurping the place of the supreme deity,’ ‘the rivalry between the Creator and the divine Sun.’ In China, as we shall see, Mr. Tylor thinks, on the other hand, that Heaven is the elder god, and that Shang-ti, the Supreme Being, is the usurper.

The truth in the Uiracocha *versus* Pachacamac controversy is difficult to ascertain. I confess a leaning toward Garcilasso, so truthful and so wonderfully accurate, rather than to the Spanish priest. Christoval, it will be remarked, says that ‘Chanca-Uiracocha was a *huaca* (sacred place) in Chuqui-chaca.’ Now Chuqui-chaca is the very place where, according to Garcilasso, the Inca Uiracocha erected a temple to ‘his Uncle, the Apparition.’ Uiracocha, then, the deity who receives human sacrifice, would be a late, royally introduced ancestral god, no real rival of the Creator, who receives no sacrifice at all, and, as he was bearded, his name would be easily transferred to the bearded Spaniards, whose arrival the Inca Uiracocha was said to have predicted. But to call several or all Spaniards by the name given to the Creator would be absurd. Mr. Tylor and Mr. Markham do not refer to the passage in which Christoval obviously gets hold of a wrong version of the story of the apparition.

There is yet another version of this historical legend, written forty years after Christoval’s date by Don Juan de Santa Cruz Pachacuti-yamqui Salcamayhua. He ranks after Garcilasso and Christoval, but before earlier *Spanish* writers, such as Acosta, who knew not Quichua. According to Salcamayhuia, the Inca Uiracocha was like James III., fond of architecture and averse to war. He gave the realm to his bastard, Urca, who was defeated and killed by the Chancas.

Uiracocha meant to abandon the contest, but his legitimate son, Yupanqui, saw a fair youth on a rock, who promised him success in the name of the Creator, and then vanished. The Prince was victorious, and the Inca Uiracocha retired into private life. This appears to be a mixture of the stories of Garcilasso and Christoval.

It is not, in itself, a point of much importance whether the Creator was called Uiracocha (which, if it means anything, means ‘sea of grease!’), or whether he was called Pachacamac, maker of the world, or by both names. The important question is as to whether the Creator received even human sacrifices (Christoval) or none at all (Garcilasso). As to Pachacamac, we must consult Mr. Payne, who has the advantage of being a Quichua scholar. He considers that Pachacamac combines the conception of a general spirit of living things with that of a Creator or maker of all things. ‘Pachacamac and the Creator are one and the same,’ but the conception of Pachayachacic, ‘ruler of the world,’ ‘belongs to the later period of the Incas.’ Mr. Payne appears to prefer Christoval’s legend of the Inca crystal-gazer, to the rival version of Garcilasso. The Yunca form of the worship of Pachacamac Mr. Payne regards as an example of degradation. He disbelieves Garcilasso’s statement, that human sacrifices were not made to the Sun. Garcilasso must, if Mr. Payne is right, have been a deliberate liar, unless, indeed, he was deceived by his Inca kinsfolk. The reader can now estimate for himself the difficulty of knowing much about Peruvian religion, or, indeed, of any religion. For, if Mr. Payne is right about the lowest savages having no conception of God, or even of spirit, though the idea of a great Creator, a spirit, is one of the earliest efforts of ‘primitive logic,’ we, of course, have been merely fabling throughout.

Garcilasso’s evidence, however, seems untainted by Christian attempts to find a primitive divine tradition. Garcilasso may possibly be refining on facts, but he asks for no theory of divine primitive tradition in the case of Pachacamac, whom he attributes to philosophical reflection.

In the following chapter we discuss ‘the old Degeneration theory,’ and contrast it with the scheme provisionally offered in this book. We have already observed that the Degeneration theory biasses the accounts of some missionaries who are obviously anxious to find traces of a Primitive Tradition, originally revealed to all men, but only preserved in a pure form by the Jews. To avoid deception by means of this bias we have chosen examples of savage creative beings from wide areas, from diverse ages, from non-missionary statements, from the least contaminated backward peoples, and from their secret mysteries and hymns.

Thus, still confining ourselves to the American continent, we have the ancient hymns of the Zuñis, in no way Christianised, and never chanted in the presence of the Mexican Spanish, These hymns run thus: ‘Before the beginning of the New Making, Awonawilona, the Maker and container of All, the All-Father, solely had being.’ He then evolved all things ‘by thinking himself outward in space.’ Hegelian! but so are the dateless hymns of the Maoris, despite the savage mythology which intrudes into both sets of traditions. The old fable of Ouranos and Gaia recurs in Zuñi as in Maori.

I fail to see how Awonawilona could be developed out of the ghost of chief or conjurer. That in which all things potentially existed, yet who was more than all, is not the ghost of a conjurer or chief. He certainly is not due to missionary influence. No authority can be better than that of traditional sacred chants found among a populace which will not sing them before one of their Mexican masters.

We have tried to escape from the bias of belief in a primitive divine tradition, but bias of every kind exists, and must exist. At present the anthropological hypothesis of ancestor-worship as the basis, perhaps (as in Mr. Spencer’s theory) the only basis of religion, affects observers.

Before treating the theory of Degeneration let us examine a case of the anthropological bias. The Fijians, as we learned from Williams, have ancestral gods, and also a singular form of the creative being, Ndengei, or, as Mr. Basil Thomson calls him, Degei. Mr. Thomson writes: ‘It is clear that the Fijians humanised their gods, because they had once existed on earth in human form…. Like other primitive people, the Fijians deified their ancestors.’ Yet the Fijians ‘may have forgotten the names of their ancestors three generations back’! How in the world can you deify a person whom you don’t remember? Moreover, only malevolent chiefs were deified, so apparently a Fijian god is really a well-born human scoundrel, so considerable that *he* for one is not forgotten — just as if we worshipped the wicked Lord Lyttelton! Of course a god like Ahone could not be made out of such materials as these, and, in fact, we learn from Mr. Thomson that there are other Fijian gods of a different origin.

‘It is probable that there were here and there, *gods that were the creation of the priests that ministered to them, and were not the spirits of dead chiefs*. Such was the god of the Bure Tribe on the Ra coast, who was called Tui Laga or “Lord of Heaven.” When the missionaries first went to convert this town they found the heathen priest their staunch ally. He declared that they had come to preach the same god that he had been preaching, the Tui Laga, and that more had been revealed to them than to him of the mysteries of the god.’

Mr. Thomson is reminded of St. Paul at Athens, ‘whom then ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.’

Mr. Thomson has clearly no bias in favour of a God like our own, known to savages, and *not* derived from ghost-worship. He deduces this god, Tui Laga, from priestly reflection and speculation. But we find such a God where we find no priests, where a priesthood has not been developed. Such a God, being usually unpropitiated by sacrifice and lucrative private practice, is precisely the kind of deity who does not suit a priesthood. For these reasons — that a priesthood ‘sees no money in’ a God of this kind, and that Gods of this kind, ethical and creative, are found where there are no priesthoods — we cannot look on the conception as a late one of priestly origin, as Mr. Thomson does, though a learned caste, like the Peruvian Amantas, may refine on the idea. Least of all can such a God be ‘the creation of the priests that minister to him,’ when, as in Peru, the Andaman Isles, and much of Africa, this God is ministered to by no priests. Nor, lastly, can we regard the absence of sacrifice to the Creative Being as a mere proof that he is an ancestral ghost who ‘had lived on earth at too remote a time;’ for this absence of sacrifice occurs where ghosts are dreaded, but are not propitiated by offerings of food (as among Australians, Andamanese, and Blackfoot Indians), while the Creative Being is not and never was a ghost, according to his worshippers.

At this point criticism may naturally remark that whether the savage Supreme Being is fêted, as by the Comanches, who offer puffs of smoke: or is apparently half forgotten, as by the Algonquins and Zulus: whether he is propitiated by sacrifice (which is very rare indeed), or only by conduct, I equally claim him as the probable descendant in evolution of the primitive, undifferentiated, not necessarily ‘spiritual’ Being of such creeds as the Australian.

One must reply that this pedigree cannot, indeed, be historically traced, but that it presents none of the logical difficulties inherent in the animistic pedigree — namely, that the savage Supreme Being is the last and highest result of evolution on animistic lines out of ghosts. It does not run counter to the evidence universally offered by savages, that their Supreme Being never was mortal man. It is consistent, whereas the animistic hypothesis is, in this case, inconsistent, with the universal savage theory of Death. Finally, as has been said before, granting my opinion that there are two streams of religious thought, one rising in the conception of an undifferentiated Being, eternal, moral, and creative, the other rising in the ghost-doctrine, it stands to reason that the latter, as best adapted to everyday needs and experiences, normal and supernormal, may contaminate the former, and introduce sacrifice and food-propitiation into the ritual of Beings who, by the original conception, ‘need nothing of ours.’ At the same time, the conception of ‘spirit,’ once attained, would inevitably come to be attached to the idea of the Supreme Being, even though he was not at first conceived of as a spirit. We know, by our own experience, how difficult it has become for us to think of an eternal, powerful, and immortal being, except as a spirit. Yet this way of looking at the Supreme Being, merely as *being*, not as spirit, must have existed, granting that the idea of spirit has ghost for its first expression, as, by their very definition, the high gods of savages are not ghosts, and never were ghosts, but are prior to death.

Here let me introduce, by way of example, a Supreme Being *not* of the lowest savage level. Metaphysically he is improved on in statement, morally he is stained with the worst crimes of the hungry ghost-god, or god framed on the lines of animism. This very interesting Supreme Being, in a middle barbaric race, is the Polynesian Taa-roa, as described by Ellis in that fascinating book ‘Polynesian Researches.’ ‘Several of their *taata-paari*, or wise men, pretend that, according to other traditions, Taa-roa was only a man who was deified after death.’ Euhemerism, in fact, is a natural theory of men acquainted with ancestor-worship, but a Euhemeristic hypothesis by a Polynesian thinker is not a statement of national belief. Taa-roa was ‘uncreated, existing from the beginning, or from the time he emerges from the *po*, or world of darkness.’ In the Leeward Isles Taa-roa was *Toivi*, fatherless and motherless from all eternity. In the highest heavens he dwells alone. He created the gods of polytheism, the gods of war, of peace, and so on. Says a native hymn, ‘He was: he abode in the void. No earth, *no sky*, no men! He became the universe.’ In the Windward Isles he has a wife, Papa the rock = Papa, Earth, wife of Rangi, Heaven, in Maori mythology. Thus it may be argued, Taa-roa is no ‘primaeval theistic idea,’ but merely the Heaven-God (Ouranos in Greece). But we may distinguish: in the Zuñi hymn we have the myth of the marriage of Heaven and Earth, but Heaven is not the Eternal, Awonawilona, who ‘thought himself out into the void,’ before which, as in the Polynesian hymn, ‘there was no sky.’

Whence came the idea of Taa-roa? The Euhemeristic theory that he was a ghost of a dead man is absurd. But as we are now among polytheists it may be argued that, given a crowd of gods on the animistic model, an origin had to be found for them, and that origin was Taa-roa. This would be more plausible if we did not find Supreme Beings where there is no departmental polytheism to develop them out of. In Tahiti, *Atuas* are gods, *Oramutuas tiis* are spirits; the chief of the spirits were ghosts of warriors. These were mischievous: they, their images, and the skulls of the dead needed propitiation, and these ideas (perhaps) were reflected on to Taa-roa, to whom human victims were sacrificed.

Now this kind of horror, human sacrifice, is unknown, I think, in early savage religions of Supreme Beings, as in Australia, among the Bushmen, the Andamanese, and so on. I therefore suggest that in an advanced polytheism, such as that of Polynesia, the evil sacrificial rites unpractised by low savages come to be attached to the worship even of the Supreme Being. Ghosts and ghost-gods demanded food, and food was therefore also offered to the Supreme Being.

It was found difficult, or impossible, to induce Christian converts, in Polynesia, to repeat the old prayers. They began, trembled, and abstained. They had a ritual ‘for almost every act of their lives,’ a thing unfamiliar to low savages. In fact, beyond all doubt, religious criminal acts, from human sacrifice to the burning of Jeanne d’Arc, increase as religion and culture move away from the stage of Bushmen and Andamanese to the stage of Aztec and Polynesian culture. The Supreme Being is succeeded in advancing civilisation, and under the influences of animism, by ruthless and insatiable ghost-gods, full of the worst human qualities. Thus there is what we may really call degeneration, moral and religious, inevitably accompanying early progress.

That this is the case, that the first advances in culture *necessarily* introduce religious degeneration, we shall now try to demonstrate. But we may observe, in passing, that our array of moral or august savage supreme beings (the first who came to hand) will, for some reason, not be found in anthropological treatises on the Origin of Religion. They appear, somehow, to have been overlooked by philosophers. Yet the evidence for them is sufficiently good. Its excellence is proved by its very uniformity, assuredly undesigned. An old, nay, an obsolete theory — that of degeneration in religion — has facts at its basis, which its very supporters have ignored, which orthodoxy has overlooked. Thus the Rev. Professor Flint informs the audience in the Cathedral of St. Giles’s, that, in the religions ‘at the bottom of the religious scale,’ ‘it is always easy to see how wretchedly the divine is conceived of; how little conscious of his own true wants … is the poor worshipper.’ The poor worshipper of Baiame wishes to obey His Law, which makes, to some extent, for righteousness.

XV

THE OLD DEGENERATION THEORY

If any partisan of the anthropological theory has read so far into this argument, he will often have murmured to himself, ‘The old degeneration theory!’ On this Dr. Brinton remarked in 1868:

‘The supposition that in ancient times and in very unenlightened conditions, before mythology had grown, a monotheism prevailed which afterwards, at various times, was revived by reformers, is a belief that should have passed away when the delights of savage life and the praises of a state of nature ceased to be the theme of philosophers.’

‘The old degeneration theory’ practically, and fallaciously, resolved itself, as Mr. Tylor says, into two assumptions— ‘first, that the history of culture began with the appearance on earth of a semi-civilised race of men; and second, that from this stage culture has proceeded in two ways — backward to produce savages, and forward to produce civilised men.’ That hypothesis is false to all our knowledge of evolution.

The hypothesis here provisionally advocated makes no assumptions at all. It is a positive fact that among some of the lowest savages there exists, not a doctrinal and abstract Monotheism, but a belief in a moral, powerful, kindly, creative Being, while this faith is found in juxtaposition with belief in unworshipped ghosts, totems, fetishes, and so on. The powerful creative Being of savage belief sanctions truth, unselfishness, loyalty, chastity, and other virtues. I have set forth the difficulties involved in the attempt to derive this Being from ghosts and other lower forms of belief.

Now, it is mere matter of fact, and not of assumption, that the Supreme Being of many rather higher savages differs from the Supreme Being of certain lower savages by the neglect in which he is left, by the epicurean repose with which he is credited, and by his comparative lack of moral control over human conduct. In his place a mob of ghosts and spirits, supposed to be potent and helpful in everyday life, attract men’s regard and adoration, and get paid by sacrifice — even by human sacrifice.

Turning to races yet higher in material culture, we find a crowd of hungry and cruel gods.

On this point Mr. Jevons remarks, in accordance with my own observation, that ‘human sacrifice appears at a much earlier period in the rites for the dead than it does in the ritual of the gods.’ The dead chief needs servants and wives in

Hades, who are offered to him. The Australians have some elements of cannibalism, but do not, as a general rule, offer any human victims. So far, then, ancestor-worship introduced a sadly ‘degenerate’ rite, compared with the moral faith in unfed gods.

To gods the human sacrifice was probably extended (in some cases) either by a cannibal civilised race, like the Aztecs, or by way of *piacula*, the god being conciliated for man’s sin by the offering of what man most prized, the ‘jealousy’ of the god being appeased in a similar way. But these are relatively advanced conceptions, not to be found, to my knowledge, among the lowest and most backward races. Therefore, advance to the idea of spirit at one point, meant degeneration at another point, to the extent of human sacrifice.

Thus, on looking at relatively advanced races, we find them worshipping polytheistic deities and ghosts of the kings just dead, who are often propitiated by terrible massacres of human victims, while, as in the case of Taa-roa, the blood spurts back even on the uncreated Creator, who was before earth was, or sea, sun, or sky.

Undeniably the hungry, cruel gods are degenerate from the Australian Father in Heaven, who receives no sacrifice but that of men’s lusts and selfishness; who desires obedience, not the fat of kangaroos; who needs nothing of ours; is unfed and unbribed. Thus, in this particular respect the degeneration of religion from the Australian or Andamanese to the Dinka standard — and infinitely more to the Polynesian, or Aztec, or popular Greek standard — is as undeniable as any fact in human history.

Anthropology has only escaped the knowledge of this circumstance by laying down the rule, demonstrably unbased on facts, that ‘the divine sanction of ethical laws … belongs almost or wholly to religions above the savage level, not to the earlier and lower creeds;’ that ‘savage Animism is almost devoid of that ethical element which to the educated modern mind is the very mainspring of practical religion.’

I have argued, indeed, that the God of low savages who imparts the divine sanction of ethical laws is *not* of animistic origin. But even where Mr. Im Thurn finds, in Guiana, nothing but Animism of the lowest conceivable type, he also finds in that Animism the only or most potent moral restraint on the conduct of men.

While Anthropology holds the certainly erroneous idea that the religion of the most backward races is always non-moral, of course she cannot know that there has, in fact, been great degeneration in religion (if religion began on the Australian and Andamanese level, or even higher) wherever religion is non-moral or immoral.

Again, Anthropology, while fixing her gaze on totems, on worshipped mummies, adored ghosts, and treasured fetishes, has not, to my knowledge, made a comparative study of the higher and purer religious ideas of savages. These have been passed by, with a word about credulous missionaries and Christian influences, except in the brief summary for which Mr. Tylor found room. In this work I only take a handful of cases of the higher religious opinions of savages, and set them side by side for purposes of comparison. Much more remains to be done in this field. But the area covered is wide, the evidence is the best attainable, and it seems proved beyond doubt that savages have ‘felt after’ a conception of a Creator much higher than that for which they commonly get credit. Now, if that conception is original, or is very early (and nothing in it suggests lateness of development), then the other elements of their faith and practice are degenerate.

‘How,’ it has been asked, ‘could all mankind forget a pure religion?’ That is what I now try to explain. That degeneration I would account for by the attractions which animism, when once developed, possessed for the naughty natural man, ‘the old Adam.’ A moral creator in need of no gifts, and opposed to lust and mischief, will not help a man with love-spells, or with malevolent ‘sendings’ of disease by witchcraft; will not favour one man above his neighbour, or one tribe above its rivals, as a reward for sacrifice which he does not accept, or as constrained by charms which do not touch his omnipotence. Ghosts and ghost-gods, on the other hand, in need of food and blood, afraid of spells and binding charms, are a corrupt, but, to man, a useful constituency. Man being what he is, man was certain to ‘go a-whoring’ after practically useful ghosts, ghost-gods, and fetishes which he could keep in his wallet or medicine bag. For these he was sure, in the long run, first to neglect his idea of his Creator; next, perhaps, to reckon Him as only one, if the highest, of the venal rabble of spirits or deities, and to sacrifice to Him, as to them. And this is exactly what happened! If we are not to call it ‘degeneration,’ what are we to call it? It may be an old theory, but facts ‘winna ding,’ and are on the side of an old theory. Meanwhile, on the material plane, culture kept advancing, the crafts and arts arose; departments arose, each needing a god; thought grew clearer; such admirable ethics as those of the Aztecs were developed, and while bleeding human hearts smoked on every altar, Nezahuatl conceived and erected a bloodless fane to ‘The Unknown God, Cause of Causes,’ without altar or idol; and the Inca, Yupanqui, or another, declared that ‘Our Father and Master, the Sun, must have a Lord.’

But, at this stage of culture, the luck of the state, and the interests of a rich and powerful clergy, were involved in the maintenance of the old, animistic, relatively non-moral system, as in Cuzco, Greece, and Rome. That popular and political regard for the luck of the state, that priestly self-interest (quite natural), could only be swept away by the moral monotheism of Christianity or of Islam. Nothing else could do it. In the case of Christianity, the central and most potent of many combined influences, apart from the Life and Death of Our Lord, was the moral Monotheism of the Hebrew religion of Jehovah.

Now, it is undeniable that Jehovah, at a certain period of Hebrew history, had become degraded and anthropomorphized, far below Darumulun, and Puluga, and Pachacamac, and Ahone, as conceived of in their purest form, and in the high mood of savage mysteries which yet contain so much that is grotesque. Even the Big Black Man of the Fuegians is on a higher level (as *we* reckon morals), when he forbids the slaying of a robber enemy, than certain examples of early Hebrew conduct. But our knowledge of the Fuegians is lamentably scanty.

Again, traces of human sacrifice appear in the ritual of Israel, and it is only relatively late that the great prophets, justly declaring Jehovah to be indifferent to the blood of bulls and rams, try to bring back his service to that of the unpropitiated, unbought Dendid, or Ahone, or Pundjel. Here is degeneration, even in Israel. How the conception of Jehovah arose in Israel, whether it was a revival of a half-obliterated idea, such as we find among low savages; or whether it was borrowed from some foreign creed; or was the result of meditation on the philosophical Supreme Being of high Egyptian theology, is another question. The Biblical statement leans to the first alternative. Jehovah, not by that name, had been the God of Israel’s fathers. The question will be discussed later; but, unless new facts are discovered, we must accept the version of the Pentateuch, or take refuge in conjecture.

Not only is there degeneration from the Australian conception of Mungan-ngaur, at its best, to the conception of the Semitic gods in general, but, ‘humanly speaking,’ if religion began in a pure form among low savages, degeneration was inevitable. Advancing social conditions compelled men into degeneration. Mungan-ngaur is, so far, in line with our own ideas of divinity because he is not localised. He dwelleth not in temples made with hands; it is not likely that he should, when his worshippers have neither house, tent, nor tabernacle. As Mr. Robertson Smith says, ‘where the God had a house or a temple, we recognise the work of men who were no longer pure nomads, but had begun to form fixed homes.’ By the nature of Australian society, a deity could not be tied to a temple, and temple-ritual, and consequent myths to explain that ritual, could not arise. Nor could Darumulun be attached to a district, just as ‘the nomad Arabs could not assimilate the conception of a god as a land-owner, and apply it to their own tribal deities, for the simple reason that in the desert private property in land was unknown.’

Darumulun is thus not capable of degenerating into ‘a local god, as *Baal*, or lord of the land,’ because this ‘involves a series of ideas unknown to the primitive life of the savage huntsman,’ like the widely spread Murring tribes.

Nor could Darumulun be tied down to a place in Semitic fashion, first by manifesting himself there, therefore by receiving an altar of sacrifice there, and in the end a sanctuary, for Darumulun receives no sacrifice at all.

Again, the scene of the Bora could not become a permanent home of Darumulun, because, when the rites are over, the effigy of the god is scrupulously destroyed. Thus Darumulun, in his own abode ‘beyond the sky,’ can ‘go everywhere and do everything’ (is omnipresent and omnipotent), dwells in no earthly places, has no temple, nor tabernacle, nor sacred mount, nor, like Jehovah, any limit of land.

The early Hebrew conception of Jehovah, then, is infinitely more conditioned, practically, by space, than the Supreme Being, ‘The Master,’ in the conception of some Australian blacks.

‘By a prophet like Isaiah the residence of Jehovah in Zion is almost wholly dematerialised…. Conceiving Jehovah as the King of Israel, he necessarily conceives His kingly activity as going forth from the capital of the nation.’

But nomad hunter tribes, with no ancestor-worship, no king and no capital, cannot lower their deity by the conditions, or limit him by the limitations, of an earthly monarchy.

In precisely the same way, Major Ellis proves the degeneration of deity in Africa, so far as being localised in place of being the Universal God, implies degeneration, as it certainly does to our minds. By being attached to a given hill or river ‘the gods, instead of being regarded as being interested in the whole of mankind, would eventually come to be regarded as being interested in separate tribes or nations alone.’

To us Milton seems nobly Chauvinistic when he talks of what God has done by ‘His English.’ But this localised and essentially degenerate conception was inevitable, as soon as, in advancing civilisation, the god who had been ‘interested in the whole of mankind’ was settled on a hill, river, or lagoon, amidst a nation of worshippers.

In the course of the education of mankind, this form of degeneration (abstractly so considered) was to work, as nothing else could have worked, towards the lofty conception of universal Deity. For that conception was only brought into practical religion (as apart from philosophic speculation) by the union between Israel and the God of Sinai and Zion. The Prophets, recognising in the God of Sinai, their nation’s God — One to whom righteousness was infinitely dearer than even his Chosen People — freed the conception of God from local ties, and made it overspread the world.

Mr. Robertson Smith has pointed out, again, the manner in which the different political development of East and West affected the religion of Greece and of the Semites. In Greece, monarchy fell, at an early period, before the aristocratic houses. The result was ‘a divine aristocracy of many gods, only modified by a weak reminiscence of the old kingship in the not very effective sovereignty’ (or *prytany*) ‘of Zeus. In the East the national god tended to acquire a really monarchic sway.’ Australia escaped polytheistic degeneracy by having no aristocracy, as in Polynesia, where aristocracy, as in early Greece, had developed polytheism. Ghosts and spirits the Australians knew, but not polytheistic gods, nor departmental deities, as of war, agriculture, art. The savage had no agriculture, and his social condition was not departmental. In yet another way, political advance produces religious degeneration, if polytheism be degeneration from the conception of one relatively supreme moral being. To make a nation, several tribes must unite. Each has its god, and the nation is apt to receive them all, equally, into its Pantheon. Thus, if worshippers of Baiame, Pundjel, and Darumulun coalesced into a nation, we might find all three gods living together in a new polytheism. In fact, granting a relatively pure starting-point, degeneration from it must accompany every step of civilisation, to a certain distance.

Unlike Semitic gods, Darumulun receives no sacrifice. As we have said, he has no kin with ghosts, and their sacrifices could not be carried on into his cult, if Waitz-Gerland (vi. 811) are right in saying that the Australians have no ancestor-worship. The Kurnai ghosts ‘were believed to live upon plants,’ which are not offered to them. Chill ghosts, unfed by men, would come to waning camp-fires and batten on the broken meats. The Ngarego and Wolgal held, more handsomely, that Tharamulun (Darumulun) met the just departed spirit ‘and conducted it to its future home beyond the sky.’ Ghosts might also accompany relics of the body, such as the dead hand, carried about by the family, who would wave the black fragment at the dreaded Aurora Borealis, crying, ‘Send it away!’ I am unacquainted with any sacrifices to ancestral ghosts among this people who cannot long remember their ancestors, consequently the practice has not been refracted on their supreme Master’s cult. In the cult of Darumulun, and of other highest gods of lowest savages, nothing answers to the Hebrew technical priestly word for sacrifice, ‘food of the deity.’ Nobody feeds Puluga, nobody fed Ahone. We hear of no Fuegian sacrifices. Mr. Robertson Smith says: ‘In all religions in which the gods have been developed out of totems the ritual act of laying food before the deity is perfectly intelligible.’ Pundjel, an Australian Supreme Being, is mixed up with animals in some myths, but it is not easy to see how such Supreme Beings as he could be ‘developed out of totems’! I am not aware, again, that any Australian tribe feeds the animals who are its totems, so Darumulun could not, and did not inherit sacrifice through them. Mr. Robertson Smith had a celebrated theory that cereal sacrifice is a tribute to a god, while sacrifice of a beast or man is an act of communion with the god. Men and gods dined together. ‘The god himself was conceived of as a being of the same stock as his comrades.’ Beasts were also of the same stock, one beast, say a lobster, was of the same blood as a lobster kin, and its god. Occasionally the sacred beast of the kin, usually not to be slain or tasted, is ‘eaten as a kind of mystic sacrament a most dubious fact.’

Now, there is, I believe, some evidence, lately collected if not published, which makes in favour of the eating of totems by Australians, at a certain very rare and solemn mystery. It would not even surprise me (‘from information received’) if a very deeply initiated person were occasionally slain, as the highest degree of initiation, on certain most unusual occasions. This remains uncertain, but I have at present no evidence that, either by one road or another, either from ghost-feeding or totem-feeding, or feeding on totems, any Australian Supreme Being receives any sacrifice at all. Much less, as among Pawnees and Semitic peoples (to judge from certain traces), is the Australian Supreme Being a cause of and partaker in human sacrifice. The horrible idea of the Man who is the God, and is eaten in the God’s honour, occurs among polytheistic Aztecs, on a high level of material culture, not among Australians, Andamanese, Bushmen, or Fuegians.

Thus, in religion, the Darumulun, or other Supreme Being of the lowest known savages, men roaming wild, when originally met, on a continent peopled by older kinds of animals than ours, was (as we regard purity) on a higher plane by far than the gods of Greeks and Semites in their earliest known myths. Setting mythology aside and looking only at cult, the God of the Murring or the Kurnai, whose precepts soften the heart, who knows the heart’s secrets, who inculcates chastity, respect of age, unselfishness, who is not bound by conditions of space or place, who receives no blood of slaughtered man or beast, is a conception from which the ordinary polytheistic gods of infinitely more polite peoples are frankly degenerate. The animistic superstitions wildly based on the belief in the soul have not soiled him, and the social conditions of aristocracy, agriculture, architecture, have not made him one in a polytheistic crowd of rapacious gods, nor fettered him as a Baal to his estate, nor localised him in a temple built with hands. He cannot appear as a ‘God of Battles;’ no *Te Deum* can be sung to him for victory in a cause perhaps unjust, for he is the Supreme Being of a certain group of allied local tribes. One of these tribes has no more interest with him than another, and the whole group do not, as a body, wage war on another alien group. The social conditions of his worshippers, then, preserve Darumulun from the patent blots on the escutcheon of gods among much more advanced races.

Once more, the idea of Animism admits of endless expansion. A spirit can be located anywhere, in any stone, stick, bush, person, hill, or river. A god made on the animistic model can be assigned to any department of human activity, down to sports, or lusts, or the province of Cloacina. Thus religion becomes a mere haunted and pestilential jungle of beliefs. But the theistic conception, when not yet envisaged as spiritual, cannot be subdivided and *éparpillé*. Thus, from every point of view, and on every side, Animism is full of the seeds of religious degeneration, which do not and cannot exist in what I take to be the earliest known form of the theistic conception: that of a Being about whose metaphysical nature — spirit or not spirit — no questions were asked, as Dr. Brinton long ago remarked.

That conception alone could neither supply the moral motive of ‘a soul to be saved,’ nor satisfy the metaphysical instinct of advancing mankind. To meet these wants, to supply ‘soul,’ with its moral stimulus, and to provide a phrase or idea under which the Deity could be envisaged (i.e. as a *spirit*) by advancing thought, Animism was necessary. The blending of the theistic and the animistic beliefs was indispensable to religion. But, in the process of animistic development under advancing social conditions, degeneration was necessarily implied. Degeneration of the theistic conception for a while, therefore, occurred. The facts are the proofs; and only contradictory facts, in sufficient quantity, can annihilate the old theory of Degeneration when it is presented in this form.

It mast be repeated that on this theory an explanation is given of what the old Degeneration hypothesis does not explain. Granting a primal religion relatively pure in its beginnings, why did it degenerate?

Mr. Max Mullet, looking on religion as the development of the sentiment of the Infinite, regards fetishism as a secondary and comparatively late form of belief. We find it, he observes, in various forms of Christianity; Christianity, therefore, is primary there, relic worship is secondary. Religion beginning, according to him, in the sense of the infinite, as awakened in man by tall trees, high hills, and so on, it advances to the infinite of space and sky, and so to the infinitely divine. This is primary: fetishism is secondary. Arguing elsewhere against this idea, I have asked: What was the *modus* of degeneration which produced similar results in Christianity, and in African and other religions? How did it work? I am not aware that Mr. Max Müller has answered this question. But how degeneration worked — namely, by Animism supplanting Theism — is conspicuously plain on our theory.

Take the early chapters of Genesis, or any savage cosmogonic myth you please. Deathless man is face to face with the Creator. He cannot degenerate in religion. He cannot offer sacrifice, for the Creator obviously needs nothing, and again, as there is no death, he cannot slay animals for the Creator. But, in one way or another, usually by breach of a taboo, Death enters the world. Then comes, by process of evolution, belief in hungry spirits, belief in spirits who may inhabit stones or sticks; again there arise priests who know how to propitiate spirits and how to tempt them into sticks and stones. These arts become lucrative and are backed by the cleverest men, and by the apparent evidence of prophecies by convulsionaries. Thus every known kind of degeneration in religion is inevitably introduced as a result of the theory of Animism. We do not need an hypothesis of Original Sin as a cause of degeneration, and, if Mr. Max Müller’s doctrine of the Infinite were *viable*, we have supplied, in Animism, under advancing social conditions, what he does not seem to provide, a cause and *modus* of degeneration. Fetishism would thus be really ‘secondary,’ *ex hypothesi*, but as we nowhere find Fetishism alone, without the other elements of religion, we cannot say, historically, whether it is secondary or not. Fetishism logically needs, in some of its aspects, the doctrine of spirits, and Theism, in what we take to be its earliest known form, does not logically need the doctrine of spirits as given matter. So far we can go, but not farther, as to the fact of priority in evolution. Nevertheless we meet, among the most backward peoples known to us, among men just emerged from the palaeolithic stage of culture, men who are involved in dread of ghosts, a religious Idea which certainly is not born of ghost-worship, for by these men, ancestral ghosts are not worshipped.

In their hearts, on their lips, in their moral training we find (however blended with barbarous absurdities, and obscured by rites of another origin) the faith in a Being who created or constructed the world; who was from time beyond memory or conjecture; who is primal, who makes for righteousness, and who loves mankind. This Being has not the notes of degeneration; his home is ‘among the stars,’ not in a hill or in a house. To him no altar smokes, and for him no blood is shed.

‘God, that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though He needed any thing … and hath made of one blood all nations of men … that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being.’

That the words of St. Paul are literally true, as to the feeling after a God who needs not anything at man’s hands, the study of anthropology seems to us to demonstrate. That in this God ‘we have our being,’ in so far as somewhat of ours may escape, at moments, from the bonds of Time and the manacles of Space, the earlier part of this treatise is intended to suggest, as a thing by no means necessarily beyond a reasonable man’s power to conceive. That these two beliefs, however attained (a point on which we possess no positive evidence), have commonly been subject to degeneration in the religions of the world, is only too obvious.

So far, then, the nature of things and of the reasoning faculty does not seem to give the lie to the old Degeneration theory.

To these conclusions, as far as they are matters of scientific opinion, we have been led by nothing but the study of anthropology.

XVI

THEORIES OF JEHOVAH

All speculation on the curly history of religion is apt to end in the endeavour to see how far the conclusions can be made to illustrate the faith of Israel. Thus, the theorist who believes in ancestor-worship as the key of all the creeds will see in Jehovah a developed ancestral ghost, or a kind of fetish-god, attached to a stone — perhaps an ancient sepulchral stele of some desert sheikh.

The exclusive admirer of the hypothesis of Totemism will find evidence for his belief in worship of the golden calf and the bulls. The partisan of nature-worship will insist on Jehovah’s connection with storm, thunder, and the fire of Sinai. On the other hand, whoever accepts our suggestions will incline to see, in the early forms of belief in Jehovah, a shape of the widely diffused conception of a Moral Supreme Being, at first (or, at least, when our information begins) envisaged in anthropomorphic form, but gradually purged of all local traits by the unexampled and unique inspiration of the great Prophets. They, as far as our knowledge extends, were strangely indifferent to the animistic element in religion, to the doctrine of surviving human souls, and so, of course, to that element of Animism which is priceless — the purification of the soul in the light of the hope of eternal life. Just as the hunger after righteousness of the Prophets is intense, so their hope of finally sating that hunger in an eternity of sinless bliss and enjoyment of God is confessedly inconspicuous. In short, they have carried Theism to its austere extreme— ‘though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him’ — while unconcerned about the rewards of Animism. This is certainly a strange result of a religion which, according to the anthropological theory, has Animism for its basis.

We therefore examine certain forms of the animistic hypothesis as applied to account for the religion of Israel. The topic is one in which special knowledge of Hebrew and other Oriental languages seems absolutely indispensable; but anthropological speculators have not been Oriental scholars (with rare exceptions), while some Oriental scholars have borrowed from popular anthropology without much critical discrimination. These circumstances must be our excuse for venturing on to this difficult ground.

It is probably impossible for us to trace with accuracy the rise of the religion of Jehovah. ‘The wise and learned’ dispute endlessly over dates of documents, over the amount of later doctrine interpolated into the earlier texts, over the nature, source, and quantity of foreign influence — Chaldaean, Accadian, Egyptian, or Assyrian. We know that Israel had, in an early age, the conception of the moral Eternal; we know that, at an early age, that conception was contaminated and anthropomorphised; and we know that it was rescued, in a great degree, from this corruption, while always retaining its original ethical aspect and sanction. Why matters went thus in Israel and not elsewhere we know not, except that such was the will of God in the mysterious education of the world. How mysterious that education has been is best known to all who have studied the political and social results of Totemism. On the face of it a perfectly crazy and degrading belief — on the face of it meant for nothing but to make the family a hell of internecine hatred — Totemism rendered possible — nay, inevitable — the union of hostile groups into large and relatively peaceful tribal societies. Given the materials as we know them, we never should have educated the world thus; and we do not see why it should thus have been done. But we are very anthropomorphic, and totally ignorant of the conditions of the problem.

An example of anthropological theory concerning Jehovah was put forth by Mr. Huxley. Mr. Huxley's general idea of religion as it is on the lowest known level of material culture — through which the ancestors of Israel must have passed like other people — has already been criticised. He denied to the most backward races both cult and religious sanction of ethics. He was demonstrably, though unconsciously, in error as to the facts, and therefore could not start from the idea that Israel, in the lowest historically known condition of savagery, possessed, or, like other races, might possess, the belief in an Eternal making for righteousness. 'For my part,' he says, 'I see no reason to doubt that, like the rest of the world, the Israelites had passed through a period of mere ghost-worship, and had advanced through ancestor-worship and Fetishism and Totemism to the theological level at which we find them in the Books of Judges and Samuel.'

But why does he think the Israelites did all this? The Hebrew ghosts, abiding, according to Mr. Huxley, in a rather torpid condition in Sheol, would not be of much practical use to a worshipper. A reference in Deuteronomy xxvi. 14 (Deuteronomy being, *ex hypothesi,* a late pious imposture) does not prove much. The Hebrew is there bidden to remind himself of the stay of his ancestors in Egypt, and to say, 'Of the hallowed things I have not given aught for the dead' — namely, of the tithes dedicated to the Levites and the poor. A race which abode for centuries among the Egyptians, as Israel did — among a people who elaborately fed the *kas* of the departed — might pick up a trace of a custom, the giving of food for the dead, still persevered in by St. Monica till St. Ambrose admonished her. But Mr. Huxley is hard put to it for evidence of ancestor-worship or ghost-worship in Israel when he looks for indications of these rites in 'the singular weight attached to the veneration of parents in the Fourth

Commandment.’ The *Fourth* Commandment, of course, is a slip of the pen. He adds: ‘The Fifth Commandment, as it stands, would be an excellent compromise between ancestor-worship and Monotheism.’ Long may children practise this excellent compromise! It is really too far-fetched to reason thus: ‘People were bidden to honour their parents, as a compromise between Monotheism and ghost-worship.’ Hard, hard bestead is he who has to reason in that fashion! This comes of ‘training in the use of the weapons of precision of science.’

Mr. Huxley goes on: ‘The Ark of the Covenant may have been a relic of ancestor-worship;’ ‘there is a good deal to be said for that speculation.’ Possibly there is, by way of the valuable hypothesis that Jehovah was a fetish stone which had been a grave-stone, or perhaps a *lingam*, and was kept in the Ark on the plausible pretext that it was the two Tables of the Law!

However, Mr. Huxley really finds it safer to suppose that references to ancestor-worship in the Bible were obliterated by late monotheistic editors, who, none the less, are so full and minute in their descriptions of the various heresies into which Israel was eternally lapsing, and must not be allowed to lapse again. Had ancestor-worship been a *péché mignon* of Israel, the Prophets would have let Israel hear their mind on it.

The Hebrews’ indifference to the departed soul is, in fact, a puzzle, especially when we consider their Egyptian education — so important an element in Mr. Huxley’s theory.

Mr. Herbert Spencer is not more successful than Mr. Huxley in finding ancestor-worship among the Hebrews. On the whole subject he writes:

‘Where the levels of mental nature and social progress are lowest, we usually find, along with an absence of religious ideas generally, an absence, or very slight development, of ancestor-worship…. Cook , telling us what the Fuegians were before contact with Europeans had introduced foreign ideas, said there were no appearances of religion among them; and we are not told by him or others that they were ancestor-worshippers.’

Probably they are not; but they do possess a Being who reads their hearts, and who certainly shows no traces of European ideas. If the Fuegians are not ancestor-worshippers, this Being was not developed out of ancestor-worship.

The evidence of Captain Cook, no anthropologist, but a mariner who saw and knew little of the Fuegians, is precisely of the sort against which Major Ellis warns us. The more a religion consists in fear of a moral guardian of conduct, the less does it show itself, by sacrifice or rite, to the eyes of Captain Cook, of his Majesty’s ship *Endeavour*. Mr. Spencer places the Andamanese on the same level as the Fuegians, ‘so far as the scanty evidence may be trusted.’ We have shown that (as known to Mr. Spencer in 1876) it may not be trusted at all; the

Andamanese possessing a moral Supreme Being, though they are not, apparently, ancestor-worshippers. The Australians ‘show us not much persistence in ghost-propitiation,’ which, if it exists, ceases when the corpses are tied up and buried, or after they are burned, or after the bones, carried about for a while, are exposed on platforms. Yet many Australian tribes possess a moral Supreme Being.

In fact ghost-worship, in Mr. Spencer’s scheme, cannot be fairly well developed till society reaches the level of ‘settled groups whose burial-places are in their midst.’ Hence the development of a moral Supreme Being among tribes *not* thus settled, is inconceivable, on Mr. Spencer’s hypothesis. By that hypothesis, ‘worshipped ancestors, according to their remoteness, were regarded as divine, semi-divine, and human.’ Where we find, then, the Divine Being among nomads who do not remember their great-grandfathers, the Spencerian theory is refuted by facts. We have the effect, the Divine Being, without the cause, worship of ancestors.

Coming to the Hebrews, Mr. Spencer argues that ‘the silence of their legends (as to ancestor-worship) is but a negative fact, which may be as misleading as negative facts usually are.’ They are, indeed; witness Mr. Spencer’s own silence about savage Supreme Beings. But we may fairly argue that if Israel had been given to ancestor-worship (as might partly be surmised from the mystery about the grave of Moses) the Prophets would not have spared them for their crying. The Prophets were unusually outspoken men, and, as they undeniably do scold Israel for every other kind of conceivable heresy, they were not likely to be silent about ancestor-worship, if ancestor-worship existed. Mr. Spencer, then, rather heedlessly, though correctly, argues that ‘nomadic habits are unfavourable to evolution of the ghost-theory.’ Alas, this gives away the whole case! For, if all men began as nomads, and nomadic habits are unfavourable even to the ordinary ghost, how did the Australian and other nomads develop the Supreme Being, who, *ex hypothesi*, is the final fruit of the ghost-flower? If you cannot have ‘an established ancestor-worship’ till you abandon nomadic habits, how, while still nomadic, do you evolve a Supreme Being? Obviously not out of ancestor-worship.

Mr. Spencer then assigns, as evidence for ancestor-worship in Israel, mourning dresses, fasting, the law against self-bleeding and cutting off the hair for the dead, and the text (Deut. xxvi. 14) about ‘I have not given aught thereof for the dead.’ ‘Hence, the conclusion must be that ancestor-worship had developed as far as nomadic habits allowed, before it was repressed by a higher worship.’ But whence came that higher worship which seems to have intervened immediately after the cessation of nomadic habits?

There are obvious traces of grief expressed in a primitive way among the Hebrews. ‘Ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead’ (Deut. xiv. 1). ‘Neither shall men lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them; neither shall men tear themselves for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead’ (by way of counter-irritant to grief); ‘neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or their mother,’ because the Jews were to be removed from their homes. ‘Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you.’

It may be usual to regard inflictions, such as cutting, by mourners, as sacrifices to the ghost of the dead. But one has seen a man strike himself a heavy blow on receiving news of a loss *not* by death, and I venture to fancy that cuttings and gashings at funerals are merely a more violent form of appeal to a counter-irritant of grief, and, again, a token of recklessness caused by a sorrow which makes void the world. One of John Nicholson’s native adorers killed himself on news of that warrior’s death, saying, ‘What is left worth living for?’ This was not a sacrifice to the Manes of Nicholson. The sacrifice of the mourner’s hair, as by Achilles, argues a similar indifference to personal charm. Once more, the text in Psalm cvi. 28, ‘They joined themselves unto Baal-Peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead,’ is usually taken by commentators as a reference to the ritual of gods who are no gods. But it rather seems to indicate an acquiescence in foreign burial rites. All this additional evidence does not do much to prove ancestor-worship in Israel, though the secrecy of the burial of Moses, ‘in a valley of the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day,’ may indicate a dread of a nascent worship of the great leader. The scene of the defection in Psalm cvi., Beth-peor, is indicated in Numbers xxv., where Israel runs after the girls and the gods of Moab: ‘And Moab called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods; and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor.’ Psalm cvi. is obviously a later restatement of this addiction to the Moabite gods, and the Psalm adds ‘they ate the sacrifices of the dead.’

It is plain that, for whatever reason, ancestor-worship among the Hebrews was, at the utmost, rudimentary. Otherwise it must have been clearly denounced by the Prophets among the other heresies of Israel. Therefore, as being at the most rudimentary, ancestor-worship in Israel could not be developed at once into the worship of Jehovah.

Though ancestor-worship among the Hebrews could not be fully developed, according to Mr. Spencer, because of their nomadic habits, it *was* fully developed, according to the Rev. A.W. Oxford. ‘Every family, like every old

Roman and Greek family, was firmly held together by the worship of its ancestors, the hearth was the altar, the head of the family the priest…. The bond which kept together the families of a tribe was its common religion, the worship of its reputed ancestor. The chief of the tribe was, of course, the priest of the cult.’ Of course; but what a pity that Mr. Huxley and Mr. Spencer omitted facts so invaluable to their theory! And how does the Rev. Mr. Oxford know? Well, ‘there is no direct proof,’ oddly enough, of so marked a feature in Hebrew religion but we are referred to 1 Sam. xx. 29 and Judges xviii. 19. 1 Sam. xx. 29 makes Jonathan say that David wants to go to a family sacrifice, that is, a family dinner party. This hardly covers the large assertions made by Mr. Oxford. His second citation is so unlucky as to contradict his observation that ‘of course’ the chief of the tribe was the priest of the cult. Micah, in Judges xvii., xviii., is *not* the chief of his tribe (Ephraim), neither is he even the priest in his own house. He ‘consecrated one of his own sons who became his priest,’ till he got hold of a casual young Levite, and said, ‘Be unto me a *father* and a priest,’ for ten shekels *per annum*, a suit of clothes, and board and lodging.

In place, then, of any remote reference to a chief’s being priest of his ancestral ghosts, we have here a man of one tribe who is paid rather handsomely to be family chaplain to a member of another tribe. Some moss-troopers of the tribe of Dan then kidnapped this valuable young Levite, and seized a few idols which Micah had permitted himself to make. And all this, according to our clerical authority, is evidence for ancestor-worship!

All this appears to be derived from some incoherent speculations of Stade. For example, that learned German cites the story of Micah as a proof that the different tribes or clans had different religions. This *must* be so, because the Danites asked the young Levite whether it was not better to be priest to a clan than to an individual? It is as if a patron offered a rich living to somebody’s private chaplain, saying that the new position was more creditable and lucrative. This would hardly prove a difference of religion between the individual and the parish.

Mr. Oxford next avers that ‘the earliest form of the Israelite religion was Fetishism or Totemism.’ This is another example of Stade’s logic. Finding, as he believes, names suggestive of Totemism in Simeon, Levi, Rachel, and so on, Stade leaps to the conclusion that Totemism in Israel was prior to anything resembling monotheism. For monotheism, he argues, could not give the germs of the clan or tribal organisation, while Totemism could do so. Certainly it could, but as, in many regions (America, Australia), we find Totemism and the belief in a benevolent Supreme Being co-existing among savages, when first observed by Europeans, we cannot possibly say dogmatically whether a rough monotheism or whether Totemism came first in order of evolution. This holds as good of Israel (if once totemistic) as it does of Pawnees or Kurnai. Stade has overlooked these well-known facts, and his opinion filters into a cheap handbook, and is set in examinations!

We also learn from Mr. Oxford's popular manual of German Biblical conjecture that 'Jehovah was not represented as a loving Father, but as a Being easily roused to wrath,' a thing most incident to loving fathers.

Again, Mr. Oxford avers that 'the old Israelites knew no distinction between physical and moral evil…. The conception of Jehovah's holiness had nothing moral in it' (). This rather contradicts Wellhausen: 'In all ancient primitive peoples … religion furnishes a motive for law and morals; in the case of none did it become so with such purity and power as in that of the Israelites.'

We began by examining Mr. Huxley's endeavours to find traces of ancestor-worship (in his opinion the origin of Jehovah-worship) among the Israelites. We next criticised Mr. Spencer's efforts in the same quest, and the more dogmatic assertions of Mr. Oxford and Stade. We now return to Mr. Huxley's account of the evolution from ghost-cult to the cult of Jehovah.

From the history of the Witch of Endor, which Mr. Huxley sees no reason to regard as other than a sincere statement of what really occurred, he gathers that the Witch cried out, 'I see Elohim.' These Elohim proved to be the phantasm of the dead Samuel. Moved by this hallucination the Witch uttered a veridical premonition, totally adverse to her own interests, and uncommonly dangerous to her life. This is, psychically, interesting. The point, however, is that *Elohim* is a term equivalent to Red Indian *Wakan*, Fijian *Kahu*, Maori or Melanesian *Mana*, meaning the 'supernatural,' the vaguely powerful — in fact X. This particular example of *Elohim* was a phantasm of the dead, but *Elohim* is also used of the highest Divine Being, therefore the highest Divine Being is of the same genus as a ghost — so Mr. Huxley reasons. 'The difference which was supposed to exist between the different Elohim was one of degree, not of kind.'

'If Jehovah was thus supposed to differ only in degree from the undoubtedly zoomorphic or anthropomorphic "gods of the nations," why is it to be assumed that he also was not thought to have a human shape?' He *was* thought to have a human shape, at one time, by some theorists: no doubt exists on that head. That, however, is not where we demur. We demur when, because an hallucination of the Witch of Endor (probably still incompletely developed) is called by her *Elohim*, therefore the highest *Elohim* is said by Mr. Huxley to differ from a ghost only in degree, not in kind. *Elohim*, or *El*, the creative, differs from a ghost in kind, because he, in Hebrew belief, never was a ghost, he is immortal and without beginning.

Mr. Huxley now enforces his theory by a parallel between the religion of Tonga and the religion of Israel under the Judges. He quotes Mariner, whose statement avers that there is a supreme Tongan being: ‘of his origin they had no idea, rather supposing him to be eternal. His name is Tá-li-y-Tooboo = “Wait-there-Tooboo.”’ ‘He is a great chief from the top of the sky down to the bottom of the earth.’ He, and other ‘*original* gods’ of his making, are carefully and absolutely discriminated from the *atua*, which are ‘the human soul after its separation from the body.’ All Tongan gods are *atua* (*Elohim*), but all *atua* are not ‘original gods,’ unserved by priests, and unpropitiated by food or libation, like the highest God, Tá-li-y-Tooboo, the Eternal of Tonga. ‘He occasionally inspires the How’ (elective King), but often a How is not inspired at all by Tá-li-y-Tooboo, any more than Saul, at last, was inspired by Jehovah.

Surely there is a difference *in kind* between an eternal, immortal God, and a ghost, though both are *atua*, or both are *Elohim* — the unknown X.

Many people call a ghost ‘supernatural;’ they also call God ‘supernatural,’ but the difference between a phantasm of a dead man and the Deity they would admit, I conceive, to be a difference of kind. We have shown, or tried to show, that the conceptions of ‘ghost’ and ‘Supreme Being’ are different, not only in kind, but in origin. The ghost comes from, and depends on, the animistic theory; the Supreme Being, as originally thought of, does not. All Gods are *Elohim, kalou, wakan*; all *Elohim, kalou, wakan* are not Gods.

A ghost-god should receive food or libation. Mr. Huxley says that Tá-li-y-Tooboo did so. ‘If the god, like Tá-li-y-Tooboo, had no priest, then the chief place was left vacant, and was supposed to be occupied by the god himself. *When the first cup of Kava was filled*, the mataboole who acted as master of the ceremonies said, “Give it to your god,” and it was offered, though only as a matter of form.’

This is incorrect. In the case of Tá-li-y-Tooboo *‘there is no cup filled for the god.’ ‘Before any cup is filled* the man by the side of the bowl says: “The Kava is in the cup”’ (which it is not), ‘and the mataboole answers, “Give it to your god;”’ but the Kava is *not* in the cup, and the Tongan Eternal receives no oblation.

The sacrifice, says Mr. Huxley, meant ‘that the god was either a deified ghost, or, at any rate, a being of like nature to these.’ But as Tá-li-y-Tooboo had no sacrifice, contrary to Mr. Huxley’s averment, he was *not* ‘a deified ghost, or a being of like nature to these.’ To the lower, non-ghostly Tongan gods the animistic habit of sacrifice had been extended, but not yet to the Supreme Being.

Ah, if Mr. Gladstone, or the Duke of Argyll, or some bishop had made a misstatement of this kind, how Mr. Huxley would have crushed him! But it is a mere error of careless reading, such as we all make daily.

It is manifest that we cannot prove Jehovah to be a ghost by the parallel of a Tongan god, who, by ritual and by definition, was *not* a ghost. The proof therefore rests on the anthropomorphised pre-prophetic accounts, and on the ritual, of Jehovah. But man naturally ‘anthropises’ his deities: he does not thereby demonstrate that they were once ghosts.

As regards the sacrifices to Jehovah, the sweet savour which he was supposed to enjoy (contrary to the opinion of the Prophets), these sacrifices afford the best presumption that Jehovah was a ghost-god, or a god constructed on ghostly lines.

But we have shown that among the lowest races neither are ghosts worshipped by sacrifice, nor does the Supreme Being, Darumulun or Puluga, receive food offerings. We have also instanced many Supreme Beings of more advanced races, Ahone, and Dendid, and Nyankupon, who do not sniff the savour of any offerings. If then (as in the case of Taa-roa), a Supreme Being *does* receive sacrifice, we may argue that a piece of animistic ritual, not connected with the Supreme Being in Australia or Andaman, not connected with his creed in Virginia or Africa (where ghost-gods do receive sacrifice), may in other regions be transferred from ghost-gods to the Supreme Being, who never was a ghost. There seems to be nothing incredible or illogical in the theory of such transference.

On a God who never was a ghost men may come to confer sacrifices (which are not made to Baiame and the rest) because, being in the habit of thus propitiating one set of bodiless powers, men may not think it civil or safe to leave another set of powers out. By his very nature, man must clothe all gods with some human passions and attributes, unless, like a large number of savages, he leaves his high God severely alone, and is the slave of fetishes and spectres. But that practice makes against the ghost-theory.

In the attempt to account thus, namely by transference, for the sacrifices to Jehovah, we are met by a difficulty of our own making. If the Israelites did not sacrifice to ancestors (as we have shown that there is very scant reason for supposing that they did), how could they transfer to Jehovah the rite which, by our hypothesis, they are not proved to have offered to ancestors?

This is certainly a hard problem, harder (or perhaps easier) because we know so very little of the early history of the Hebrews. According to their own traditions, Israel had been in touch with all manner of races much more advanced than themselves in material culture, and steeped in highly developed polytheistic Animism. According to their history, the Israelites ‘went a-whoring’ incorrigibly after strange gods. It is impossible, perhaps, to disentangle the foreign and the native elements.

It may therefore be tentatively suggested that early Israel had its Ahone in a Being perhaps not yet named Jehovah. Israel entertained, however, perhaps by reason of ‘nomadic habits,’ only the scantiest concern about ancestral ghosts. We then find an historical tradition of secular contact between Israel and Egypt, from which Israel emerges with Jehovah for God, and a system of sacrifices. Regarding Jehovah as a revived memory of the moral Supreme Being whom Israel must have known in extremely remote ages (unless Israel was less favoured than Australians, Bushmen, or Andamanese), we might look on the sacrifices to him as an adaptation from the practices of religion among races more settled than Israel, and more civilised.

Speculation on subjects so remote must be conjectural, but our suggestion would, perhaps, account for sacrifices to Jehovah, paid by a race which, by reason of ‘nomadic habits,’ was never much given to ancestor-worship, but had been in contact with great sacrificing, polytheistic civilisations. Mr. Huxley, however, while he seems to slur the essential distinction between ghost-gods and the Eternal, grants, later, that ‘there are very few people(s?) without additional gods, which cannot, with certainty, be accounted for as deified ancestors.’ Tá-li-y-Tooboo, of course, is one of these gods, as is Jehovah. Mr. Huxley gives no theory of *how* these gods came into belief, except the suggestion that ‘the polytheistic theology has become modified by the selection of the cosmic or tribal god, as the only god to whom worship is due on the part of that nation,’ without prejudice to the right of other nations to worship other gods. This is ‘monolatry,’ and ‘the ethical code, often of a very high order, comes into closer relation with the theological creed,’ *why*, we are not informed. Nor do we learn out of what polytheistic deities Jehovah was selected, nor for what reason. The hypothesis, as usual, breaks down on the close relation between the ethical code and the theological creed, among low savages, with a relatively Supreme Being, but without ancestor-worship, and without polytheistic gods from whom to select a heavenly chief.

Whence came the moral element in the idea of Jehovah? Mr. Huxley supposes that, during their residence in the land of Goshen (and *a fortiori* before it), the Israelites ‘knew nothing of Jehovah.’ They were polytheistic idolaters. This follows, apparently, from Ezekiel xx. 5: ‘In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, *and made myself known unto them* in the land of Egypt.’ The Biblical account is that the God of Moses’s fathers, the God of Abraham, enlightened Moses in Sinai, giving his name as ‘I am that I am’ (Exodus iii. 6, 14; translation uncertain). We are to understand that Moses, a religious reformer, revived an old, and, in the Egyptian bondage, a half-obliterated creed of the ancient nomadic Beni-Israel. They were no longer to ‘defile themselves with the idols of Egypt,’ as they had obviously done. We really know no more about the matter. Wellhausen says that Jehovah was ‘originally a family or tribal god, either of the family of Moses or of the tribe of Joseph.’ How a family could develop a Supreme Being all to itself, we are not informed, and we know of no such analogous case in the ethnographic field. Again, Jehovah was ‘only a special name of El, current within a powerful circle.’ And who was El? ‘Moses was not the first discoverer of the faith.’ Probably not, but Mr. Huxley seems to think that he was.

Wellhausen’s and other German ideas filter into popular traditions, as we saw, through ‘A Short Introduction to the History of Ancient Israel’ (p, 20), by the Rev. A.W. Oxford, M.A., Vicar of St. Luke’s, Soho. Here follows Mr. Oxford’s undeniably ‘short way with Jehovah.’ ‘Moses was the founder of the Israelite religion. Jehovah, his family or tribal god, perhaps originally the God of the Kenites, was taken as a tribal god by all the Israelite tribes…. That Jehovah was not the original god of Israel’ (as the Bible impudently alleges) ‘but was the god of the Kenites, we see mainly from Deut. xxxiii. 2, Judges v. 4, 5, and from the history of Jethro, who, according to Judges i. 16, was a Kenite.’

The first text says that, according to Moses, ‘the Lord came from Sinai,’ rose up from Seir, and shone from Mount Paran. The second text mentions Jehovah’s going up out of Seir and Sinai. The third text says that Jethro, Moses’s Kenite (or Midianite) father-in-law, dwelt among the people of Judah; Jethro being a priest of Midian. How all this proves that ‘Moses was a great impostor,’ as the poet says, and that Jehovah was not ‘the original God of Israel,’ but (1) Moses’s family or tribal god, or (2) ‘the god of the Kenites,’ I profess my inability to comprehend.

Wellhausen himself had explained Jehovah as ‘a family or tribal god, either of the family of Moses’ (tribe of Levi) ‘or of the tribe of Joseph.’ It seems to be all one to Mr. Oxford whether Jehovah was a god of Moses’s tribe or quite the reverse, ‘a Kenite god.’ Yet it really makes a good deal of difference! For in a complex of tribes, speaking one language, it is to the last degree unexampled (within my knowledge) that one tribe, or family, possesses, all to itself, a family god who is also the Creator and is later accepted as such by all the other tribes. One may ask for instances of such a thing in any known race, in any stage of culture. Peru will not help us — not the Creator, Pachacamac, but the Sun, is the god of the Inca family. If, on the other hand, Jehovah was a Kenite god, the Kenites were a half-Arab Semitic people connected with Israel, and may very well have retained traditions of a Supreme Being which, in Egypt, were likely to be dimmed, as Exodus asserts, by foreign religions. The learned Stade, to be sure, may disbelieve in Israel’s sojourn in Egypt, but that revolutionary opinion is not necessarily binding on us and involves a few difficulties.

Have critics and manual-makers no knowledge of the science of comparative religion? Are they unaware that peoples infinitely more backward than Israel was at the date supposed have already moral Supreme Beings acknowledged over vast tracts of territory? Have they a tittle of positive evidence that early Israel was benighted beyond the darkness of Bushmen, Andamanese, Pawnees, Blackfeet, Hurons, Indians of British Guiana, Dinkas, Negroes, and so forth? Unless Israel had this rare ill-luck (which Israel denies) of course Israel must have had a secular tradition, however dim, of a Supreme Being. We must ask for a single instance of a family or tribe, in a complex of semi-barbaric but not savage tribes of one speech, owning a private deity who happened to be the Maker and Ruler of the world, and, as such, was accepted by all the tribes. Jehovah came out from Sinai, because, there having been a Theophany at Sinai, that mountain was regarded as one of his seats.

We have seen that it seemed to make no difference to Mr. Oxford whether Jehovah was a god of Moses’s family or tribe or a Kenite god. The former (with the alternative of *Joseph’s* family or tribal god) is Wellhausen’s theory. The latter is Stade’s. Each is inconsistent with the other; Wellhausen’s fancy is inconsistent with all that we know of religious development: Stade’s is hopelessly inconsistent with Exodus iv. 24-26, where Moses’s Kenite wife reproaches him for a ceremony of his, not of her, religion. Therefore the Kenite differed from the Hebrew *sacra*.

The passage is very extraordinary, and is said by critics to be very archaic. After the revelation of the Burning Bush, Jehovah met Moses and his Kenite wife, Zipporah, and their child, at a khan. Jehovah was anxious to slay Moses, nobody ever knew why, so Zipporah appeased Jehovah’s wrath by circumcising her boy *with a flint*. ‘A bloody husband art thou to me,’ she said, ‘because of the circumcision’ — an Egyptian, but clearly not a Kenite practice. Whatever all this may mean, it does not look as if Zipporah expected such rites as circumcision in the faith of a Kenite husband, nor does it favour the idea that the *sacra* of Moses were of Kenite origin.

Without being a scholar, or an expert in Biblical criticism, one may protest against the presentation to the manual-reading intellectual middle classes of a theory so vague, contradictory, and (by all analogy) so impossible as Mr. Oxford collects from German writers. Of course, the whole subject, so dogmatically handled, is mere matter of dissentient opinion among scholars. Thus M. Renan derives the name of Jehovah from Assyria, from ‘Aramaised Chaldaeanism.’ In that case the name was long anterior to the residence in Egypt. But again, perhaps Jehovah was a local god of Sinai, or a provincial deity in Palestine. He was known to very ancient sages, who preferred such names as El Shaddai and Elohim. In short, we have no certainty on the subject.

I need hardly say, perhaps, that I have no antiquated prejudice against Biblical criticism. Assuredly the Bible must be studied like any other collection of documents, linguistically, historically, and in the light of the comparative method. The leading ideas of Wellhausen, for example, are conspicuous for acumen: the humblest layman can see that. But one may protest against criticising the Bible, or Homer, by methods like those which prove Shakspeare to have been Bacon. One must protest, too, against the presentation of inconsistent and probably baseless critical hypotheses in the dogmatic brevity of cheap handbooks.

Yet again, whence comes the moral element in Jehovah? Mr. Huxley thinks that it possibly came from the ethical practice and theory of Egypt. In the Egyptian Book of the Dead, ‘a sort of Guide to Spirit Land,’ there are moral chapters; the ghost tells his judges in Amenti what sins he has *not* committed. Many of these sins are forbidden in the Ten Commandments.

They are just as much forbidden in the nascent morality of savage peoples. Moses did not need the Book of the Dead to teach him elementary morals. From the mysteries of Mtanga he might have learned, also, had he been present, the virtue of unselfish generosity. If the creed of Jehovah, or of El, retained only as much of ethics as is under divine sanction among the Kurnai, adaptation from the Book of the Dead was superfluous.

The care for the departed, the ritual of the Ka, the intense pre-occupation with the future life, which, far more than its morality, are the essential characteristics of the Book of the Dead — Israel cared for none of these animistic things, brought none of these, or very little of these, out of the land of Egypt. Moses was certainly very eclectic; he took only the morality of Egypt. But as Mr. Huxley advances this opinion tentatively, as having no secure historical authority about Moses, it hardly answers our question, Whence came the moral element in Jehovah? One may surmise that it was the survival of the primitive divinely sanctioned ethics of the ancient savage ancestors of the Israelite, known to them, as to the Kurnai, before they had a pot, or a bronze knife, or seed to sow, or sheep to herd, or even a tent over their heads. In the counsels of eternity Israel was chosen to keep burning, however obscured with smoke of sacrifice, that flame which illumines the darkest places of the earth, ‘a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel’ — a flame how litten a light whence shining, history cannot inform us, and anthropology can but conjecture. Here scientific nescience is wiser than the cocksureness of popular science, with her ghosts and fetish-stones, and gods that sprang from ghosts, which ghosts, however, could not be developed, owing to nomadic habits.

It appears, then, if our general suggestion meets with any acceptance, that what occurred in the development of Hebrew religion was precisely what the Bible tells us did occur. This must necessarily seem highly paradoxical to our generation; but the whole trend of our provisional system makes in favour of the paradox. If savage nomadic Israel had the higher religious conceptions proved to exist among several of the lowest known races, these conceptions might be revived by a leader of genius. They might, in a crisis of tribal fortunes, become the rallying point of a new national sentiment. Obscured, in some degree, by acquaintance with ‘the idols of Egypt,’ and restricted and localised by the very national sentiment which they fostered, these conceptions were purified and widened far beyond any local, tribal, or national restrictions — widened far as the *flammantia moenia mundi* — by the historically unique genius of the Prophets. Blended with the doctrine of our Lord, and recommended by the addition of Animism in its pure and priceless form — the reward of faith, hope, and charity in eternal life — the faith of Israel enlightened the world.

All this is precisely what occurred, according to the Old and New Testaments. All this is just what, on our hypothesis, might be expected to occur if, out of the many races which, in their most backward culture, had a rude conception of a Moral Creative Being, relatively supreme, one race endured the education of Israel, showed the comparative indifference of Israel to Animism and ghost-gods, listened to the Prophets of Israel, and gave birth to a greater than Moses and the Prophets.

To this result the Logos, as Socrates says, has led us, by the path of anthropology.

XVII

CONCLUSION

We may now glance backward at the path which we have tried to cut through the jungles of early religions. It is not a highway, but the track of a solitary explorer; and this essay pretends to be no more than a sketch — not an exhaustive survey of creeds. Its limitations are obvious, but may here be stated. The higher and even the lower polytheisms are only alluded to in passing, our object being to keep well in view the conception of a Supreme, or practically Supreme, Being, from the lowest stages of human culture up to Christianity. In polytheism that conception is necessarily obscured, showing itself dimly either in the *Prytanis*, or President of the Immortals, such as Zeus; or in Fate, behind and above the Immortals; or in Mr. Max Müller's *Henotheism,* where the god addressed — Indra, or Soma, or Agni — is, for the moment, envisaged as supreme, and is adored in something like a monotheistic spirit; or, finally, in the etherealised deity of advanced philosophic speculation.

It has not been necessary, for our purpose, to dwell on these civilised religions. Granting our hypothesis of an early Supreme Being among savages, obscured later by ancestor-worship and ghost-gods, but not often absolutely lost to religious tradition, the barbaric and the civilised polytheisms easily take their position in line, and are easily intelligible. Space forbids a discussion of all known religions; only typical specimens have been selected. Thus, nothing has been said of the religion of the great Chinese empire. It appears to consist, on its higher plane, of the worship of Heaven as a great fetish-god — a worship which may well have begun in days, as Dr. Brinton says, 'long ere man had asked himself, "Are the heavens material and God spiritual?"' — perhaps, for all we know, before the idea of 'spirit' had been evolved. Thus, if it contains nothing more august, the Chinese religion is, so far, beneath that of the Zuñis, or the creed in Taa-roa, in Beings who are eternal, who were before earth was or sky was. The Chinese religion of Heaven is also coloured by Chinese political conditions; Heaven (Tien) corresponds to the Emperor, and tends to be confounded with Shang-ti, the Emperor above. 'Dr. Legge charges Confucius,' says Mr. Tylor, 'with an inclination to substitute, in his religious teaching, the name of Tien, Heaven, for that known to more ancient religion, and used in more ancient books — Shang-ti, the personal ruling deity.' If so, China too has its ancient Supreme Being, who is not a divinised aspect of nature.

But Mr. Tylor's reading, in harmony with his general theory, is different:

‘It seems, rather, that the sage was, in fact, upholding the tradition of the ancient faith, thus acting according to the character on which he prided himself — that of a transmitter, not a maker, a preserver of old knowledge, not a new revealer.’

This, of course, is purely a question of evidence, to be settled by Sinologists. If the personal Supreme Being, Shang-ti, occupies in older documents the situation held by Tien (Heaven) in Confucius’s later system, why are we to say that Confucius, by putting forward Heaven in place of Shang-ti, was restoring an older conception? Mr. Tylor’s affection for his theory leads him, perhaps, to that opinion; while my affection for my theory leads me to prefer documentary evidence in its favour.

The question can only be settled by specialists. As matters stand, it seems to me probable that ancient China possessed a Supreme Personal Being, more remote and original than Heaven, just as the Zuñis do. On the lower plane, Chinese religion is overrun, as everyone knows, by Animism and ancestor-worship. This is so powerful that it has given rise to a native theory of Euhemerism. The departmental deities of Chinese polytheism are explained by the Chinese on Euhemeristic principles:

‘According to legend, the War God, or Military Sage, was once, in human life, a distinguished soldier; the Swine God was a hog-breeder who lost his pigs and died of sorrow; the God of Gamblers was *un décavé*.’

These are not statements of fact, but of Chinese Euhemeristic theory. On that hypothesis, Confucius should now be a god; but of course he is not; his spirit is merely localised in his temple, where the Emperor worships him twice a year as ancestral spirits are worshipped.

Every theorist will force facts into harmony with his system, but I do not see that the Chinese facts are contrary to mine. On the highest plane is either a personal Supreme Being, Shang-ti, or there is Tien, Heaven (with Earth, parent of men), neither of them necessarily owing, in origin, anything to Animism. Then there is the political reflection of the Emperor on Religion (which cannot exist where there is no Emperor, King, or Chief, and therefore must be late), there is the animistic rabble of spirits ancestral or not, and there is departmental polytheism. The spirits are, of course, fed and furnished by men in the usual symbolical way. Nothing shows or hints that Shang-ti is merely an imaginary idealised first ancestor. Indeed, about all such explanations of the Supreme Being (say among the Kurnai) as an idealised imaginary first ancestor, M. Réville justly observes as follows: ‘Not only have we seen that, in wide regions of the uncivilised world, the worship of ancestors has invaded a domain previously occupied by “Naturism” and Animism properly so called, that it is, therefore, posterior to these; but, farther, we do not understand, in Mr. Spencer’s system, why, in so many places, the first ancestor is the Maker, if not the Creator of the world, Master of life and death, and possessor of divine powers, not held by any of his descendants. This proves that it was not the first ancestor who became God, in the belief of his descendants, but much rather the Divine Maker and Beginner of all, who, in the creed of his adorers, became the first ancestor.’

Our task has been limited, in this way, mainly to examination of the religion of some of the very lowest races, and of the highest world-religions, such as Judaism. The historical aspect of Christianity, as arising in the Life, Death, and Resurrection of our Lord, would demand a separate treatise. This would, in part, be concerned with the attempts to find in the narratives concerning our Lord, a large admixture of the mythology and ritual connected with the sacrificed *Rex Nemorensis*, and whatever else survives in peasant folk-lore of spring and harvest.

After these apologies for the limitations of this essay, we may survey the backward track. We began by showing that savages may stumble, and have stumbled, on theories not inconsistent with science, but not till recently discovered by science. The electric origin of the Aurora Borealis (whether absolutely certain or not) was an example; another was the efficacy of ‘suggestion,’ especially for curative purposes. It was, therefore, hinted that, if savages blundered (if you please) into a belief in God and the Soul, however obscurely envisaged, these beliefs were not therefore necessarily and essentially false. We then stated our purpose of examining the alleged supernormal phenomena, savage or civilised, which, on Mr. Tylor’s hypothesis, help to originate the conception of ‘spirits.’ We defended the nature of our evidence, as before anthropologists, by showing that, for the savage belief in the supernormal phenomena, we have exactly the kind of evidence on which all anthropological science reposes. The relative weakness of that evidence, our need of more and better evidence, we would be the very last to deny, indeed it is part of our case. Our existing evidence will hardly support any theory of religion. Anyone who is in doubt on that head has only to read M. Réville’s ‘Les Religions des Peuples Non-Civilisés,’ under the heads ‘Mélanésiens,’ ‘Mincopies,’ ‘Les Australiens’ (ii. 116-143), when he will observe that this eminent French authority is ignorant of the facts about these races here produced. In 1883 they had not come within his ken. Such minute and careful inquiries by men closely intimate with the peoples concerned, as Dr. Codrington’s, Mr. Hewitt’s, Mr. Man’s, and the authorities compiled by Mr. Brough Smyth, were unfamiliar to M. Réville, Thus, in turn, new facts, or facts unknown to us, may upset my theory. This peril is of the essence of scientific theorising on the history of religion.

Having thus justified our evidence for the savage *belief* in supernormal phenomena, as before anthropologists, we turned to a court of psychologists in defence of our evidence for the *fact* of exactly the same supernormal phenomena in civilised experience. We pointed out that for subjective psychological experiences, say of telepathy, we had precisely the same evidence as all non-experimental psychology must and does rest upon. Nay, we have even experimental evidence, in experiments in thought-transference. We have chiefly, however, statements of subjective experience. For the coincidence of such experience with unknown events we have such evidence as, in practical life, is admitted by courts of law.

Experimental psychology, of course, relies on experiments conducted under the eyes of the expert, for example, by hypnotism or otherwise, under Dr. Hack Tuke, Professor James, M. Richet, M. Janet. The evidence is the conduct rather than the statements of the subject. There is also physiological experiment, by vivisection (I regret to say) and post-mortem dissection. But non-experimental psychology reposes on the self-examination of the student, and on the statements of psychological experiences made to him by persons whom he thinks he can trust. The psychologist, however, if he be, as Mr. Galton says, ‘unimaginative in the strict but unusual sense of that ambiguous word,’ needs Mr. Galton’s ‘word of warning.’ He is asked ‘to resist a too frequent tendency to assume that the minds of every other sane and healthy person must be like his own. The psychologist should inquire into the minds of others as he should into those of animals of different races, and be prepared to find much to which his own experience can afford little if any clue.’ Mr. Galton had to warn the unimaginative psychologist in this way, because he was about to unfold his discovery of the faculty which presents numbers to some minds as visualised coloured numerals, ‘so vivid as to be undistinguishable from reality, except by the aid of accidental circumstances.’

Mr. Galton also found in his inquiries that occasional hallucinations of the sane are much more prevalent than he had supposed, or than science had ever taken into account. All this was entirely new to psychologists, many of whom still (at least many popular psychologists of the press) appear to be unacquainted with the circumstances. One of them informed me, quite gravely, that ‘*he* never had an hallucination,’ therefore — *his* mind being sane and healthy — the inference seemed to be that no sane and healthy mind was ever hallucinated. Mr. Galton has replied to *that* argument! His reply covers, logically, the whole field of psychological faculties little regarded, for example, by Mr. Sully, who is not exactly an imaginative psychologist.

It covers the whole field of automatism (as in automatic writing) perhaps of the divining rod, certainly of crystal visions and of occasional hallucinations, as Mr. Galton, in this last case, expressly declares. Psychologists at least need not be told that such faculties cannot, any more than other human faculties, be always evoked for study and experiment. Our evidence for these faculties and experiences, then, is usually of the class on which the psychologist relies. But, when the psychologist, following Leibnitz, Sir William Hamilton, and Kant, discusses the Subconscious (for example, knowledge, often complex and abundant, unconsciously acquired) we demonstrated by examples that the psychologist will contentedly repose on evidence which is not evidence at all. He will swallow an undated, unlocalised legend of Coleridge, reaching Coleridge on the testimony of rumour, and told at least twenty years after the unverified occurrences. Nay, the psychologist will never dream of procuring contemporary evidence for such a monstrous statement as that an ignorant German wench unconsciously acquired and afterwards subconsciously reproduced huge cantles of dead languages, by virtue of having casually heard a former master recite or read aloud from Hebrew and Greek books. This legend do psychologists accept on no evidence at all, because it illustrates a theory which is, doubtless, a very good theory, though, in this case, carried to an extent ‘imagination boggles at.’

Here the psychologist may reply that much less evidence will content him for a fact to which he possesses, at least, analogies in accredited experience, than for a fact (say telepathic crystal-gazing) to which *he* knows, in experience, nothing analogous. Thus, for the mythical German handmaid, he has the analogy of languages learned in childhood, or passages got up by rote, being forgotten and brought back to ordinary conscious memory, or delirious memory, during an illness, or shortly before death. Strong in these analogies, the psychologist will venture to accept a case of language *not* learned, but reproduced in delirious memory, on no evidence at all. But, not possessing analogies for telepathic crystal-gazing, he will probably decline to examine ours.

I would first draw his attention to the difference between revived memory of a language once known (Breton and Welsh in known examples), or learned by rote (as Greek, in an anecdote of Goethe’s), and verbal reproduction of a language *not* known or learned by rote but overheard — each passage probably but once — as somebody recited fragments. In this instance (that of the mythical maid) ‘the difficulty … is that the original impressions had not the strength — that is, the distinctness — of the reproduction. An unknown language overheard is a mere sound….’

The distinction here drawn is so great and obvious that for proof of the German girl’s case we need better evidence than Coleridge’s rumour of a rumour, cited, as it is, by Hamilton, Maudsley, Carpenter, Du Prel, and the common run of manuals.

Not that I deny, *a priori*, the possibility of Coleridge's story. As Mr. Huxley says, 'strictly speaking, I am unaware of anything that has a right to the title of an "impossibility," except a contradiction in terms.' To the horror of some of his admirers, Mr. Huxley would not call the existence of demons and demoniacal possession 'impossible.' Mr. Huxley was no blind follower of Hume. I, too, do not call Coleridge's tale 'impossible,' but, unlike the psychologists, I refuse to accept it on 'Bardolph's security.' And I contrast their conduct, in swallowing Coleridge's legend, with their refusal (if they do refuse) to accept the evidence for the automatic writing of not-consciously-known languages (as of eleventh-century French poetry and prose by Mr. Schiller), or their refusal (if they do refuse) to look at the evidence for telepathic crystal-gazing, or any other supernormal exhibitions of faculty, attested by living and honourable persons.

I wish I saw a way for orthodox unimaginative psychology out of its dilemma.

After offering to anthropologists and psychologists these considerations, which I purposely reiterate, we examined historically the relations of science to 'the marvellous,' showing for example how Hume, following his *a priori* theory of the impossible, would have declined to investigate, because they were 'miraculous,' certain occurrences which, to Charcot, were ordinary incidents in medical experience.

We next took up and criticised the anthropological theory of religion as expounded by Mr. Tylor. We then collected from his work a series of alleged supernormal phenomena in savage belief, all making for the foundation of animistic religion. Through several chapters we pursued the study of these phenomena, choosing savage instances, and setting beside them civilised testimony to facts of experience. Our conclusion was that such civilised experiences, if they occurred, as they are universally said to do, among savages, would help to originate, and would very strongly support the savage doctrine of souls, the base of religion in the theory of English anthropologists. But apart from the savage doctrine of 'spirits' (whether they exist or not), the evidence points to the existence of human faculties not allowed for in the current systems of materialism.

We next turned from the subject of supernormal experiences to the admitted facts about early religion. Granting the belief in souls and ghosts and spirits, however attained, how was the idea of a Supreme Being to be evolved out of that belief? We showed that, taking the creed as found in the lowest races, the processes put forward by anthropologists could not account for its evolution. The facts would not fit into, but contradicted, the anthropological theory. The necessary social conditions postulated were not found in places where the belief is found. Nay, the necessary social conditions for the evolution even of ancestor-worship were confessedly not found where the supposed ultimate result of ancestor-worship, the belief in a Supreme Being, flourished abundantly.

Again, the belief in a Supreme Being, *ex hypothesi* the latest in evolution, therefore the most potent, was often shelved and half forgotten, or neglected, or ridiculed, where the belief in Animism (*ex hypothesi* the earlier) was in full vigour. We demonstrated by facts that Anthropology had simplified her task by ignoring that essential feature, *the prevalent alliance of ethics with religion*, in the creed of the lowest and least developed races. Here, happily, we have not only the evidence of an earnest animist, Mr. Im Thurn, on our side, but that of a distinguished Semitic scholar, the late Mr. Robertson Smith. ‘We see that even in its rudest forms Religion was a moral force, the powers that man reveres were on the side of social order and moral law; and the fear of the gods was a motive to enforce the laws of society, which were also the laws of morality.’ Wellhausen has already been cited to the same effect.

However, the facts proving that truth, and unselfishness, surely a large element of Christian ethics, are divinely sanctioned in savage religion are more potent than the most learned opinion on that side.

Our next step was to examine in detail several religions of the most remote and backward races, of races least contaminated with Christian or Islamite teaching. Our evidence, when possible, was derived from ancient and secret tribal mysteries, and sacred native hymns. We found a relatively Supreme Being, a Maker, sanctioning morality, and unpropitiated by sacrifice, among peoples who go in dread of ghosts and wizards, but do not always worship ancestors. We showed that the anthropological theory of the evolution of God out of ghosts in no way explains the facts in the savage conception of a Supreme Being. We then argued that the notion of ‘spirit,’ derived from ghost-belief, was not logically needed for the conception of a Supreme Being in its earliest form, was detrimental to the conception, and, by much evidence, was denied to be part of the conception. The Supreme Being, thus regarded, may be (though he cannot historically be shown to be) prior to the first notion of ghost and separable souls.

We then traced the idea of such a Supreme Being through the creeds of races rising in the scale of material culture, demonstrating that he was thrust aside by the competition of ravenous but serviceable ghosts, ghost-gods, and shades of kingly ancestors, with their magic and their bloody rites. These rites and the animistic conception behind them were next, in rare cases, reflected or refracted back on the Supreme Eternal. Aristocratic institutions fostered polytheism with the old Supreme Being obscured, or superseded, or enthroned as Emperor-God, or King-God. We saw how, and in what sense, the old degeneration theory could be defined and defended. We observed traces of degeneration in certain archaic aspects of the faith in Jehovah; and we proved that (given a tolerably pure low savage belief in a Supreme Being) that belief *must* degenerate, under social conditions, as civilisation advanced. Next, studying what we may call the restoration of Jehovah, under the great Prophets of Israel, we noted that they, and Israel generally, were strangely indifferent to that priceless aspect of Animism, the care for the future happiness, as conditioned by the conduct of the individual soul. That aspect had been neglected neither by the popular instinct nor the priestly and philosophic reflection of Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Christianity, last, combined what was good in Animism, the care for the individual soul as an immortal spirit under eternal responsibilities, with the One righteous Eternal of prophetic Israel, and so ended the long, intricate, and mysterious theological education of humanity. Such is our theory, which does not, to us, appear to lack evidence, nor to be inconsistent (as the anthropological theory is apparently inconsistent) with the hypothesis of evolution.

All this, it must be emphatically insisted on, is propounded ‘under all reserves.’ While these four stages, say (1) the Australian unpropitiated Moral Being, (2) the African neglected Being, still somewhat moral, (3) the relatively Supreme Being involved in human sacrifice, as in Polynesia, and (4) the Moral Being reinstated philosophically, as in Israel, do suggest steps in evolution, we desire to base no hard-and-fast system of ascending and descending degrees upon our present evidence. The real object is to show that facts may be regarded in this light, as well as in the light thrown by the anthropological theory, in the hands whether of Mr. Tylor, Mr. Spencer, M. Réville, or Mr. Jevons, whose interesting work comes nearest to our provisional hypothesis.

We only ask for suspense of judgment, and for hesitation in accepting the dogmas of modern manual makers. An exception to them certainly appears to be Mr. Clodd, if we may safely attribute to him a review (signed C.) of Mr. Grant Allen’s ‘Evolution of the Idea of God.’

‘We fear that all our speculations will remain summaries of probabilities. No documents are extant to enlighten us; we have only mobile, complex and confused ideas, incarnate in eccentric, often contradictory theories. That this character attaches to such ideas should keep us on guard against framing theories whose symmetry is sometimes their condemnation’ (‘Daily Chronicle,’ December 10, 1897).

Nothing excites my own suspicion of my provisional hypothesis more than its symmetry. It really seems to fit the facts, as they appear to me, too neatly. I would suggest, however, that ancient savage sacred hymns, and practices in the mysteries, are really rather of the nature of ‘documents;’ more so, at least, than the casual observations of some travellers, or the gossip extracted from natives much in contact with Europeans.

Supposing that the arguments in this essay met with some acceptance, what effect would they have, if any, on our thoughts about religion? What is their practical tendency? The least dubious effect would be, I hope, to prevent us from accepting the anthropological theory of religion, or any other theory, as a foregone conclusion, I have tried to show how dim is our knowledge, how weak, often, is our evidence, and that, finding among the lowest savages all the elements of all religions already developed in different degrees, we cannot, historically, say that one is earlier than another. This point of priority we can never historically settle. If we met savages with ghosts and no gods, we could not be sure but that they once possessed a God, and forgot him. If we met savages with a God and no ghosts, we could not be historically certain that a higher had not obliterated a lower creed. For these reasons dogmatic decisions about the *origin* of religion seem unworthy of science. They will appear yet more futile to any student who goes so far with me as to doubt whether the highest gods of the lowest races could be developed, or can be shown to have been developed, by way of the ghost-theory. To him who reaches this point the whole animistic doctrine of ghosts as the one germ of religion will appear to be imperilled. The main practical result, then, will be hesitation about accepting the latest scientific opinion, even when backed by great names, and published in little primers.

On the hypothesis here offered to criticism there are two chief sources of Religion, (1) the belief, how attained we know not, in a powerful, moral, eternal, omniscient Father and Judge of men; (2) the belief (probably developed out of experiences normal and supernormal) in somewhat of man which may survive the grave. This second belief is not, logically, needed as given material for the first, in its apparently earliest form. It may, for all we know, be the later of the two beliefs, chronologically. But this belief, too, was necessary to religion; first, as finally supplying a formula by which advancing intellects could conceive of the Mighty Being involved in the former creed; next, as elevating man’s conception of his own nature. By the second belief he becomes the child of the God in whom, perhaps, he already trusted, and in whom he has his being, a being not destined to perish with the death of the body. Man is thus not only the child but the heir of God, a ‘nurseling of immortality,’ capable of entering into eternal life. On the moral influence of this belief it is superfluous to dwell.

From the most backward races historically known to us, to those of our own status, all have been more or less washed by the waters of this double stream of religion. The Hebrews, as far as our information goes, were chiefly influenced by the first belief, the faith in the Eternal, and had comparatively slight interest in whatever posthumous fortunes might await individual souls. Other civilised peoples, say the Greeks, extended the second, or animistic theory, into forms of beautiful fantasy, the material of art. Yet both in Greece and Rome, as we learn from the 'Republic' (Books i. iii.) of Plato, and from the whole scope of the poem of Lucretius, and from the Painted Porch at Delphi, answering to the frescoes of the Pisan Campo Santo, there existed, among the people, what was unknown to the Hebrews, an extreme anxiety about the posthumous fortunes and possible punishment of the individual soul. A kind of pardoners and indulgence-sellers made a living out of that anxiety in Greece. For the Greek pardoners, who testify to an interest in the future happiness of the soul not found in Israel, Mr. Jevons may be cited:

'The *agyrtes* professed by means of his rites to purify men from the sins they had themselves committed … and so to secure to those whom he purified an exemption from the evil lot in the next world which awaited those who were not initiated.' 'A magic mirror' (crystal-gazing) 'was among his properties.'

In Egypt a moral life did not suffice to secure immortal reward. There was also required knowledge of the spells that baffle the demons who, in Amenti, as in the Red Indian and Polynesian Hades, lie in wait for souls. That knowledge was contained in copies of the Book of the Dead — the *gagne-pain* of priests and scribes.

Early Israel, having, as far as we know, a singular lack of interest in the future of the soul, was born to give himself up to developing, undisturbed, the theistic conception, the belief in a righteous Eternal.

Polytheism everywhere — in Greece especially — held of the animistic conception, with its freakish, corruptible deities. Greek philosophy could hardly restore that Eternal for whom the Prophets battled in Israel; whom some of the lowest savages know and fear; whom the animistic theory or cult everywhere obscures with its crowd of hungry, cruel, interested, food-propitiated ghost-gods. In the religion of our Lord and the Apostles the two currents of faith in one righteous God and care for the individual soul were purified and combined. 'God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.' Man also is a spirit, and, as such, is in the hands of a God not to be propitiated by man's sacrifice or monk's ritual. We know how this doctrine was again disturbed by the Animism, in effect, and by the sacrifice and ritual of the Mediaeval Church. Too eager 'to be all things to all men,' the august and beneficent Mother of Christendom readmitted the earlier Animism in new forms of saint-worship, pilgrimage, and popular ceremonial — things apart from, but commonly supposed to be substitutes for, righteousness of life and the selflessness enjoined in savage mysteries. For the softness, no less than for the hardness of men’s hearts, these things were ordained: such as masses for the beloved dead.

Modern thought has deanthropomorphised what was left of anthropomorphic in religion, and, in the end, has left us for God, at most, ‘a stream of tendency making for righteousness,’ or an energy unknown and unknowable — the ghost of a ghost. For the soul, by virtue of his belief in which man raised himself in his own esteem, and, more or less, in ethical standing, is left to us a negation or a wistful doubt.

To this part of modern scientific teaching the earlier position of this essay suggests a demurrer. By aid of the tradition of and belief in supernormal phenomena among the low races, by attested phenomena of the same kinds of experience among the higher races, I have ventured to try to suggest that ‘we are not merely brain;’ that man has his part, we know not how, in we know not what — has faculties and vision scarcely conditioned by the limits of his normal purview. The evidence of all this deals with matters often trivial, like the electric sparks rubbed from the deer’s hide, which yet are cognate with an illimitable, essential potency of the universe. Not being able to explain away these facts, or, in this place, to offer what would necessarily be a premature theory of them, I regard them, though they seem shadowy, as grounds of hope, or, at least, as tokens that men need not yet despair. Not now for the first time have weak things of the earth been chosen to confound things strong. Nor have men of this opinion been always the weakest; not among the feeblest are Socrates, Pascal, Napoleon, Cromwell, Charles Gordon, St. Theresa, and Jeanne d’Arc.

I am perfectly aware that the ‘superstitiousness’ of the earlier part of this essay must injure any effect which the argument of the latter part might possibly produce on critical opinion. Yet that argument in no way depends on what we think about the phenomena — normal, supernormal, or illusory — on which the theory of ghost, soul, or spirit may have been based. It exhibits religion as probably beginning in a kind of Theism, which is then superseded, in some degree, or even corrupted, by Animism in all its varieties. Finally, the exclusive Theism of Israel receives its complement in a purified Animism, and emerges as Christianity.

Quite apart, too, from any favourable conclusion which may, by some, be drawn from the phenomena, and quite apart from the more general opinion that all modern instances are compact of imposture, malobservation, mythopoeic memory, and superstitious bias, the systematic comparison of civilised and savage beliefs and alleged experiences of this kind cannot wisely be neglected by Anthropology. *Humani nihil a se alienum putat.*

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

OPPOSITIONS OF SCIENCE

The most elaborate reply to the arguments for telepathy, based on The Report of the Census of Hallucinations, is that of Herr Parish, in his ‘Hallucinations and Illusions.’

Herr Parish is, at present, opposed to the theory that the Census establishes a telepathic cause in the so-called ‘coincidental’ stories, ‘put forward,’ as he says, ‘with due reserve, and based on an astonishing mass of materials, to some extent critically handled.’

He first demurs to an allowance of twelve hours for the coincidence of hallucination and death; but, if we reflect that twelve hours is little even in a year, coincidences within twelve hours, it may be admitted, *donnent à penser*, even if we reject the theory that, granted a real telepathic impact, it may need time and quiet for its development into a complete hallucination. We need not linger over the very queer cases from Munich, as these are not in the selected thirty of the Report. Herr Parish then dwells on that *hallucination of memory*, in which we feel as if everything that is going on had happened before. It may have occurred to most of us to be reminded by some association of ideas during the day, of some dream of the previous night, which we had forgotten. For instance, looking at a brook from a bridge, and thinking of how I would fish it, I remembered that I had dreamed, on the previous night, of casting a fly for practice, on a lawn. Nobody would think of disputing the fact that I really had such a dream, forgot it and remembered it when reminded of it by association of ideas. But if the forgotten dream had been ‘fulfilled,’ and been recalled to memory only in the moment of fulfilment, science would deny that I ever had such a dream at all. The alleged dream would be described as an ‘hallucination of memory.’ Something occurring, it would be said, I had the not very unusual sensation, ‘This has occurred to me before,’ and the sensation would become a false memory that it *had* occurred — in a dream. This theory will be advanced, I think, not when an ordinary dream is recalled by a waking experience, but only when the dream coincides with and foreruns that experience, which is a thing that dreams have no business to do. Such coincidental dreams are necessarily ‘false memories,’ scientifically speaking. Now, how does this theory of false memory bear on coincidental hallucinations?

The insane, it seems, are apt to have the false memory ‘This occurred before,’ and *then* to say that the event was revealed to them in a vision. The insane may be recommended to make a note of the vision, and have it properly attested, *before* the event. The same remark applies to the ‘presentiments’ of the sane. But it does *not* apply if Jones tells me ‘I saw my great aunt last night,’ and if news comes *after* this remark that Jones’s aunt died, on that night, in Timbuctoo. Yet Herr Parish () seems to think that the argument of fallacious memory comes in part, even when an hallucination has been reported to another person *before* its fulfilment. Of course all depends on the veracity of the narrator and the person to whom he told his tale. To take a case given: Brown, say, travelling with his wife, dreams that a mad dog bit his boy at home on the elbow. He tells his wife. Arriving at home Brown finds that it was so. Herr Parish appears to argue thus:

Brown dreamed nothing at all, but he gets excited when he hears the bad news at home; he thinks, by false memory, that he has a recollection of it, he says to his wife, ‘My dear, didn’t I tell you, last night, I had dreamed all this?’ and his equally excited wife replies, ‘True, my Brown, you did, and I said it was only one of your dreams.’ And both now believe that the dream occurred. This is very plausible, is it not? only science would not say anything about it if the dream had *not* been fulfilled — if Brown had remarked, ‘Egad, my dear, seeing that horse reminds me that I was dreaming last night of driving in a dog-cart.’ For then Brown was not excited.

None of this exquisite reasoning as to dreams applies to waking hallucinations, reported before the alleged coincidence, unless we accept a collective hallucination of memory in seer or seers, and also in the persons to whom their story was told.

But, it is obvious, memory is apt to become mythopoeic, so far as to exaggerate closeness of coincidence, and to add romantic details. We do not need Herr Parish to tell us *that*; we meet the circumstance in all narratives from memory, whatever the topic, even in Herr Parish’s own writings.

We must admit that the public, in ghostly, as in all narratives on all topics, is given to ‘fanciful addenda.’ Therefore, as Herr Parish justly remarks, we should ‘maintain a very sceptical attitude to all accounts’ of veridical hallucinations.

‘Not that we should dismiss them as old wives’ fables — an all too common method — or even doubt the narrator’s good faith.’ We should treat them like tales of big fish that get away; sometimes there is good corroborative evidence that they really were big fish, sometimes not. We shall return to these false memories.

Was there a coincidence at all in the Society’s cases printed in the Census? Herr Parish thinks three of the selected twenty-six cases very dubious. In one case is a *possible* margin of four days, another (wrongly numbered by the way) does not occur at all among the twenty-six. In the third, Herr Parish is wrong in his statement. This is a lovely example of the sceptical slipshod, and, accompanied by the miscitation of the second case, shows that inexactitude is not all on the side of the seers. However the case is not very good, the two percipients fancying that the date of the event was less remote than it really was. Unluckily Herr Parish only criticises these three cases, how accurately we have remarked. He had no room for more.

Herr Parish next censures the probable selection of good cases by collectors, on which the editors of the Census have already made observations, as they have also made large allowances for this cause of error. He then offers the astonishing statement that, ‘in the view of the English authors, a view which is, of course, assumed in all calculations of the kind, an hallucination persists equally long in the memory and is equally readily recalled in reply to a question, whether the experience made but a slight impression on the percipient, or affected him deeply, as would be the case, for instance, if the hallucination had been found to coincide with the death of a near relative or friend.’ This assertion of Herr Parish’s is so erroneous that the Report expressly says ‘as years recede into the distance,’ the proportion of the hallucinations that are remembered in them to those which are forgotten, or at least ignored, ‘is very large.’ Again, ‘Hallucinations of the most impressive class will not only be better remembered than others, but will, we may reasonably suppose, be more often mentioned by the percipients to their friends.’

Yet Herr Parish avers that, in all calculations, it is assumed that hallucinations are equally readily recalled whether impressive or not! Once more, the Report says (), ‘*It is not the case*’ that coincidental (and impressive) hallucinations are as easily subject to oblivion as non-coincidental, and non-impressive ones. The editors therefore multiply the non-coincidental cases by four, arguing that no coincidental cases (hits) are forgotten, while three out of four non-coincidentals (misses) are forgotten, or may be supposed likely to be forgotten. Immediately after declaring that the English authors suppose all hallucinations to be equally well remembered (which is the precise reverse of what they do say), Herr Parish admits that the authors multiply the misses by four, ‘influenced by other considerations’ (). By what other considerations? They give their reason (that very reason which they decline to entertain, says Herr Parish), namely, that misses are four times as likely to be forgotten as hits. ‘To go into the reason for adopting this plan would lead us too far,’ he writes. Why, it is the very reason which, he says, does *not* find favour with the English authors!

How curiously remote from being ‘coincidental’ with plain facts, or ‘veridical’ at all, is this scientific criticism! Herr Parish says that a ‘view’ (which does not exist) is ‘of course assumed in all calculations;’ and, on the very same page, he says that it is *not* assumed! ‘The witnesses of the report — influenced, it is true, by other considerations’ (which is not the case), ‘have sought to turn the point of this objection by multiplying the whole number of (non-coincidental) cases by four.’ Then the ‘view’ is *not* ‘assumed in all calculations,’ as Herr Parish has just asserted.

What led Herr Parish, an honourable and clearheaded critic, into this maze of incorrect and contradictory assertions? It is interesting to try to trace the causes of such *non-veridical illusions*, to find the *points de repère* of these literary hallucinations. One may suggest that when Herr Parish ‘recast the chapters’ of his German edition, as he says in his preface to the English version, he accidentally left in a passage based on an earlier paper by Mr. Gurney, not observing that it was no longer accurate or appropriate.

After this odd passage, Herr Parish argues that a ‘veridical’ hallucination is regarded by the English authors as ‘coincidental,’ even when external circumstances have made that very hallucination a probable occurrence by producing ‘tension of the corresponding nerve element groups.’ That is to say, a person is in a condition — a nervous condition — likely, *a priori*, to beget an hallucination. An hallucination *is* begotten, quite naturally; and so, if it happens to coincide with an event, the coincidence should not count — it is purely fortuitous.

Here is an example. A lady, facing an old sideboard, saw a friend, with no coat on, and in a waistcoat with a back of shiny material. Within an hour she was taken to where her friend lay dying, without a coat, and in a waistcoat with a shiny back. Here is the scientific explanation of Herr Parish: ‘The shimmer of a reflecting surface formed the occasion for the hallucinatory emergence of a subconsciously perceived *shiny black waistcoat* , and an individual subconsciously associated with that impression. I ask any lady whether she, consciously or subconsciously, associates the men she knows with the backs of their waistcoats. Herr Parish’s would be a brilliantly satisfactory explanation if it were only true to the printed words that lay under his eyes when he wrote. There was no ‘shiny black waistcoat’ in the case, but a waistcoat with a shiny *back*. Gentlemen, and especially old gentlemen who go about in bath-chairs (like the man in this story), don’t habitually take off their coats and show the backs of their waistcoats to ladies of nineteen in England. And, if Herr Parish had cared to read his case, he would have found it expressly stated that the lady ‘had never seen the man without his coat’ (and so could not associate him with an impression of a shiny back to his waistcoat) till *after* the hallucination, when she saw him coatless on his death-bed. In this instance Herr Parish had an hallucinatory memory, all wrong, of the page under his eyes. The case is got rid of, then, by aid of the ‘fanciful addenda,’ to which Herr Parish justly objects. He first gives the facts incorrectly, and then explains an occurrence which, as reported by him, did not occur, and was not asserted to occur.

I confess that, if Herr Parish’s version were as correct as it is essentially inaccurate, his explanation would leave me doubtful. For the circumstances were that the old gentleman of the story lunched daily with the young lady’s mother. Suppose that she was familiar (which she was not) with the shiny back of his waistcoat, still, she saw him daily, and daily, too, was in the way of seeing the (hypothetically) shiny surface of the sideboard. That being the case, she had, every day, the materials, subjective and objective, of the hallucination. Yet it only occurred *once*, and then it precisely coincided with the death agony of the old gentleman, and with his coatless condition. Why only that once? *C’est là le miracle!* ‘How much for this little veskit?’ as the man asked David Copperfield.

Herr Parish next invents a cause for an hallucination, which, I myself think, ought not to have been reckoned, because the percipient had been sitting up with the sick man. This he would class as a ‘suspicious’ case. But, even granting him his own way of handling the statistics, he would still have far too large a proportion of coincidences for the laws of chance to allow, if we are to go by these statistics at all.

His next argument practically is that hallucinations are always only a kind of dreams. He proves this by the large number of coincidental hallucinations which occurred in sleepy circumstances. One man went to bed early, and woke up early; another was ‘roused from sleep;’ two ladies were sitting up in bed, giving their babies nourishment; a man was reading a newspaper on a sofa; a lady was lying awake at seven in the morning; and there are eight other English cases of people ‘awake’ in bed during an hallucination. Now, in Dr. Parish’s opinion, we must argue that they were *not* awake, or not much; so the hallucinations were mere dreams. Dreams are so numerous that coincidences in dreams can be got rid of as pure flukes. People may say, to be sure, ‘I am used to dreams, and don’t regard them; *this* was something solitary in my experience.’ But we must not mind what people say.

Yet I fear we must mind what they say. At least, we must remember that sleeping dreams are, of all things, most easily forgotten; while a full-bodied hallucination, when we, at least, believe ourselves awake, seems to us on a perfectly different plane of impressiveness, and (*experto crede*) is really very difficult to forget. Herr Parish cannot be allowed, therefore, to use the regular eighteenth-century argument— ‘All dreams!’ For the two sorts of dreams, in sleep and in apparent wakefulness, seem, to the subject, to differ in *kind*. And they really do differ in kind. It is the essence of the every night dream that we are unconscious of our actual surroundings and conscious of a fantastic environment. It is the essence of wideawakeness to be conscious of our actual surroundings. In the ordinary dream, nothing actual competes with its visions. When we are conscious of our surroundings, everything actual does compete with any hallucination. Therefore, an hallucination which, when we are conscious of our material environment, does compete with it in reality, is different *in kind* from an ordinary dream. Science gains nothing by arbitrarily declaring that two experiences so radically different are identical. Anybody would see this if he were not arguing under a dominant idea.

Herr Parish next contends that people who see pictures in crystal balls, and so on, are not so wide awake as to be in their normal consciousness. There is ‘dissociation’ (practically drowsiness), even if only a little. Herr Moll also speaks of crystal-gazing pictures as ‘hypnotic phenomena.’ Possibly neither of these learned men has ever seen a person attempt crystal-gazing. Herr Parish never asserts any such personal experience as the basis of his opinion about the non-normal state of the gazer. He reaches this conclusion from an anecdote reported, as a not unfamiliar phenomenon, by a friend of Miss X. But the phenomenon occurred when Miss X. was not crystal-gazing at all! She was looking out of a window in a brown study. This is a noble example of logic. Some one says that Miss X. was not in her normal consciousness on a certain occasion when she was *not* crystal-gazing, and that this condition is familiar to the observer. Therefore, argues Herr Parish, nobody is in his normal consciousness when he is crystal-gazing.

In vain may ‘so good an observer as Miss X. think herself fully awake’ (as she does think herself) when crystal-gazing, because once, when she happened to have ‘her eyes *fixed on the window,*’ her expression was ‘*associated*’ by a friend ‘with *something uncanny,*’ and she afterwards spoke ‘*in a dreamy, far-away tone*’ (). Miss X., though extremely ‘wide awake,’ may have looked dreamily at a window, and may have seen mountains and marvels. But the point is that she was not voluntarily gazing at a crystal for amusement or experiment — perhaps trying to see how a microscope affected the pictures — or to divert a friend.

I appeal to the shades of Aristotle and Bacon against scientific logic in the hands of Herr Parish. Here is his syllogism:

A. is occasionally dreamy when *not* crystal-gazing.
A. is human.
Therefore every human being, when crystal-gazing, is more or less asleep.

He infers a general affirmative from a single affirmative which happens not to be to the point. It is exactly as if Herr Parish argued:

Mrs. B. spends hours in shopping.
Mrs. B. is human.
Therefore every human being is always late for dinner.

Miss X., I think, uplifted her voice in some review, and maintained that, when crystal-gazing, she was quite in her normal state, *dans son assiette*.

Yet Herr Parish would probably say to any crystal-gazer who argued thus, ‘Oh, no; pardon me, you were *not* wholly awake — you were a-dream. I know better than you.’ But, as he has not seen crystal-gazers, while I have, many scores of times, I prefer my own opinion. And so, as this assertion about the percipient’s being ‘dissociated,’ or asleep, or not awake, is certainly untrue of all crystal-gazers in my considerable experience, I cannot accept it on the authority of Herr Parish, who makes no claim to any personal experience at all.

As to crystal-gazing, when the gazer is talking, laughing, chatting, making experiments in turning the ball, changing the light, using prisms and magnifying-glasses, dropping matches into the water-jug, and so on, how can we possibly say that ‘it is impossible to distinguish between waking hallucinations and those of sleep’ ()? If so, it is impossible to distinguish between sleeping and waking altogether. We are all like the dormouse! Herr Parish is reasoning here *a priori*, without any personal knowledge of the facts; and, above all, he is under the ‘dominant idea’ of his own theory — that of *dissociation*.

Herr Parish next crushes telepathy by an argument which — like one of the reasons why the bells were not rung for Queen Elizabeth, namely, that there were no bells to ring — might have come first, and alone. We are told (in italics — very impressive to the popular mind): *‘No matter how great the number of* *coincidences, they afford not even the shadow of a proof for telepathy'* (). What, not even if all hallucinations, or ninety-nine per cent., coincided with the death of the person seen? In heaven's name, why not? Why, because the 'weightiest' cause of all has been omitted from our calculations, namely, our good old friend, *the association of ideas* (). Our side cannot prove the *absence* (italics) of *the association of ideas*. Certainly we cannot; but ideas in endless millions are being associated all day long. A hundred thousand different, unnoticed associations may bring Jones to my mind, or Brown. But I don't therefore see Brown, or Jones, who is not there. Still less do I see Dr. Parish, or Nebuchadnezzar, or a monkey, or a salmon, or a golf ball, or Arthur's Seat (all of which may be brought to my mind by association of ideas), when they are not present.

Suppose, then, that once in my life I see the absent Jones, who dies in that hour (or within twelve hours). I am puzzled. Why did Association choose that day, of all days in my life, for her solitary freak? And, if this choice of freaks by Association occurs among other people, say two hundred times more often than chance allows, the freak begins to suggest that it may have a cause.

Not even the circumstance cited by Herr Parish, that a drowsy tailor, 'sewing on in a dream,' poor fellow, saw a client in his shop while the client was dying, solves the problem. The tailor is not said even once to have seen a customer who was *not* dying; yet he writes, 'I was accustomed to work all night frequently.' The tailor thinks he was asleep, because he had been making irregular stitches, and perhaps he was. But, out of all his vigils and all his customers, association only formed *one* hallucination, and that was of a dying client whom he supposed to be perfectly well. Why on earth is association so fond of dying people — granting the statistics, which are 'another story'? The explanation explains nothing. Herr Parish only moves the difficulty back a step, and, as we cannot live without association of ideas, they are taken for granted by our side. Association of ideas does not cause hallucinations, as Mrs. Sidgwick remarks, though it may determine their contents.

The difficult theme of coincidental collective hallucinations, as when two or more people at once have, or profess to have, the same false perception of a person who is really absent and dying, is next disposed of by Herr Parish. The same *points de repère*, the same sound, or flicker of light, or arrangement of shadow, may beget the same or a similar false perception in two or more people at once. Thus two girls, in different rooms, are looking out on different parts of the hall in their house. 'Both heard, at the same time, an noise' (). Then, says Herr Parish, '*the one sister saw her father cross the hall* after entering; the other saw the dog (the usual companion of his walks) run past her door.' Father and dog had not left the dining-room. Herr Parish decides that the same *point de* *repère* (the apparent noise of a key in the lock of the front door) ‘acted by way of suggestion on both sisters,’ producing, however, different hallucinations, ‘in virtue of the difference of the connected associations.’ One girl associated the sound with her honoured sire, the other with his faithful hound; so one saw a dog, and the other saw an elderly gentleman. Now, first, if so, this should *always* be occurring, for we all have different associations of ideas. Thus, we are in a haunted house; there is a noise of a rattling window; I associate it with a burglar, Brown with a milkman, Miss Jones with a lady in green, Miss Smith with a knight in armour. That collection of phantasms should then be simultaneously on view, like the dog and old gentleman; all our reports should vary. But this does not occur. Most unluckily for Herr Parish, he illustrates his theory by telling a story which happens not to be correctly reported. At first I thought that a fallacy of memory, or an optical delusion, had betrayed him again, as in his legend of the waistcoat. But I am now inclined to believe that what really occurred was this: Herr Parish brought out his book in German, before the Report of the Census of Hallucinations was published. In his German edition he probably quoted a story which precisely suited his theory of the origin of collective hallucinations. This anecdote he had found in Prof. Sidgwick’s Presidential Address of July 1890. As stated by Prof. Sidgwick, the case just fitted Herr Parish, who refers to it on , and again on . He gives no reference, but his version reads like a traditional variant of Prof. Sidgwick’s. Now Prof. Sidgwick’s version was erroneous, as is proved by the elaborate account of the case in the Report of the Census, which Herr Parish had before him, but neglected when he prepared his English edition. The story was wrong, alas! in the very point where, for Herr Parish’s purpose, it ought to have been right. The hallucination is believed not to have been collective, yet Herr Parish uses it to explain collective hallucinations. Doubtless he overlooked the accurate version in the Report.

The facts, as there reported, were not what he narrates, but as follows:

Miss C.E. was in the breakfast-room, about 6:30 P.M., in January 1883, and supposed her father to be taking a walk with his dog. She heard noises, which may have had any other cause, but which she took to be the sounds of a key in the door lock, a stick tapping the tiles of the hall, and the patter of the dog’s feet on the tiles. She then saw the dog pass the door. Miss C.E. next entered the hall, where she found nobody; but in the pantry she met her sisters — Miss E., Miss H.G.E. — and a working-woman. Miss E. and the working-woman had been in the hall, and there had heard the sound, which they, like Miss C.E., took for that of a key in the lock. They were breaking a little household rule in the hall, so they ‘ran straightway into the pantry, meeting Miss H.G.E. on the way.’ Miss C.E. and Miss E. and the working-woman all heard the noise as of a key in the lock, but nobody is said to have ‘seen the father cross the hall’ (as Herr Parish asserts). ‘Miss H.G.E. was of opinion that Miss E. (now dead) saw *nothing*, and Miss C.E. was inclined to agree with her.’ Miss E. and the work-woman (now dead) were ‘emphatic as to the father having entered the house;’ but this the two only *inferred* from hearing the noise, after which they fled to the pantry. Now, granting that some other noise was mistaken for that of the key in the lock, we have here, *not* (as Herr Parish declares) a *collective* yet discrepant hallucination — the discrepancy being caused ‘by the difference of connected associations’ — but a *solitary* hallucination. Herr Parish, however, inadvertently converts a solitary into a collective hallucination, and then uses the example to explain collective hallucinations in general. He asserts that Miss E. ‘saw her father cross the hall.’ Miss E.’s sisters think that she saw no such matter. Now, suppose that Mr. E. had died at the moment, and that the case was claimed on our part as a ‘collective coincidental hallucination,’ How righteously Herr Parish might exclaim that all the evidence was against its being collective! The sound in the lock, heard by three persons, would be, and probably was, another noise misinterpreted. And, in any case, there is no evidence for its having produced *two* hallucinations; the evidence is in exactly the opposite direction.

Here, then, Herr Parish, with the printed story under his eyes, once more illustrates want of attention. In one way his errors improve his case. ‘If I, a grave man of science, go on telling distorted legends out of my own head, while the facts are plain in print before me,’ Herr Parish may reason, ‘how much more are the popular tales about coincidental hallucinations likely to be distorted?’ It is really a very strong argument, but not exactly the argument which Herr Parish conceives himself to be presenting.

This unlucky inexactitude is chronic, as we have shown, in Herr Parish’s work, and is probably to be explained by inattention to facts, by ‘expectation’ of suitable facts, and by ‘anxiety’ to prove a theory. He explains the similar or identical reports of witnesses to a collective hallucination by ‘the case with which such appearances adapt themselves in recollection’ (), especially, of course, after lapse of time. And then he unconsciously illustrates his case by the case with which printed facts under his very eyes adapt themselves, quite erroneously, to his own memory and personal bias as he copies them on to his paper.

Finally he argues that even if collective hallucinations are also ‘with comparative frequency’ coincidental, that is to be explained thus: ‘The rarity and the degree of interest compelled by it’ (by such an hallucination) ‘will naturally tend to connect itself with some other prominent event; and, conversely, the occurrence of such an event as the death or mortal danger of a friend is most calculated to produce memory illusions of this kind.'

In the second case, the excitement caused by the death of a friend is likely, it seems, to make two or more sane people say, and *believe,* that they saw him somewhere else, when he was really dying. The only evidence for this fact is that such illusions occasionally occur, *not* collectively, in some lunatic asylums. 'It is not, however, a form of mnemonic error often observed among the insane.' 'Kraepelin gives two cases.' 'The process occurs sporadically in certain sane people, under certain exciting conditions.' No examples are given! What is rare as an *individual* folly among lunatics, is supposed by Herr Parish to explain the theoretically 'false memory' whereby sane people persuade themselves that they had an hallucination, and persuade others that they were told of it, when no such thing occurred.

To return to our old example. Jones tells me that he has just seen his aunt, whom he knows to be in Timbuctoo. News comes that the lady died when Jones beheld her in his smoking-room. 'Oh, nonsense,' Herr Parish would argue, 'you, Jones, saw nothing of the kind, nor did you tell Mr. Lang, who, I am sorry to find, agrees with you. What happened was *this*: When the awful news came to-day of your aunt's death, you were naturally, and even creditably, excited, especially as the poor lady was killed by being pegged down on an ant-heap. This excitement, rather praiseworthy than otherwise, made you *believe* you had seen your aunt, and *believe* you had told Mr. Lang. He also is a most excitable person, though I admit he never saw your dear aunt in his life. He, therefore (by virtue of his excitement), now *believes* you told him about seeing your unhappy kinswoman. This kind of false memory is very common. Two cases are recorded by Kraepelin, among the insane. Surely you quite understand my reasoning?'

I quite understand it, but I don't see how it comes to seem good logic to
Herr Parish.

The other theory is funnier still. Jones never had an hallucination before. 'The rarity and the degree of interest compelled by it' made Jones 'connect it with some other prominent event,' say, the death of his aunt, which, really, occurred, say, nine months afterwards. But this is a mere case of *evidence,* which it is the affair of the S.P.R. to criticise.

Herr Parish is in the happy position called in American speculative circles 'a straddle.' If a man has an hallucination when alone, he was in circumstances conducive to the sleeping state. So the hallucination is probably a dream. But, if the seer was in company, who all had the same hallucination, then they all had the same *points de repère*, and the same adaptive memories. So Herr Parish kills with both barrels.

If anything extraneous could encourage a belief in coincidental and veridical hallucinations, it would be these ‘Oppositions of Science.’ If a learned and fair opponent can find no better proofs than logic and (unconscious) perversions of facts like the logic and the statements of Herr Parish, the case for telepathic hallucinations may seem strong indeed. But we must grant him the existence of the adaptive and mythopoeic powers of memory, which he asserts, and also illustrates. I grant, too, that a census of 17,000 inquiries may only have ‘skimmed the cream off’ (). Another dip of the net, bringing up 17,000 fresh answers, might alter the whole aspect of the case, one way or the other. Moreover, we cannot get scientific evidence in this way of inquiry. If the public were interested in the question, and understood its nature, and if everybody who had an hallucination at once recorded it in black and white, duly attested on oath before a magistrate, by persons to whom he reported, before the coincidence was known, and if all such records, coincidental or not, were kept in the British Museum for fifty years, then an examination of them might teach us something. But all this is quite impossible. We may form a belief, on this point of veridical hallucinations, for ourselves, but beyond that it is impossible to advance. Still, Science might read her brief!

APPENDIX B

THE POLTERGEIST AND HIS EXPLAINERS.

In the chapter on ‘Fetishism and Spiritualism’ it was suggested that the movements of inanimate objects, apparently without contact, may have been one of the causes leading to fetishism, to the opinion that a spirit may inhabit a stick, stone, or what not. We added that, whether such movements were caused by trickery or not, was inessential as long as the savage did not discover the imposture.

The evidence for the genuine supernormal character of such phenomena was not discussed, that we might preserve the continuity of the general argument. The history of such phenomena is too long for statement here. The same reports are found ‘from China to Peru,’ from Eskimo to the Cape, from Egyptian magical papyri to yesterday’s provincial newspaper.

About 1850-1870 phenomena, which had previously been reported as of sporadic and spontaneous occurrence, were domesticated and organised by Mediums, generally American. These were imitators of the enigmatic David Dunglas Home, who was certainly a most oddly gifted man, or a most successful impostor. A good deal of scientific attention was given to the occurrences; Mr. Darwin, Mr. Tyndall, Dr. Carpenter, Mr. Huxley, had all glanced at the phenomena, and been present at *séances*. In most cases the exhibitions, in the dark, or in a very bad light, were impudent impostures, and were so regarded by the *savants* who looked into them. A series of exposures culminated in the recent detection of Eusapia Paladino by Dr. Hodgson and other members of the S.P.R. at Cambridge.

There was, however, an apparent exception. The arch mystagogue, Home, though by no means a clever man, was never detected in fraudulent productions of fetishistic phenomena. This is asserted here because several third-hand stories of detected frauds by Home are in circulation, and it is hoped that a well-attested first-hand case of detection may be elicited.

Of Home’s successes with Sir William Crookes, Lord Crawford, and others, something remains to be said; but first we shall look into attempted explanations of alleged physical phenomena occurring *not* in the presence of a paid or even of a recognised ‘Medium.’ It will appear, we think, that the explanations of evidence so widely diffused, so uniform, so old, and so new, are far from satisfactory. Our inference would be no more than that our eyes should be kept on such phenomena, if they are reported to recur.

Mr. Tylor says, ‘I am well aware that the problem is one to be discussed on its merits, in order to arrive at a distinct opinion how far it may be connected with facts insufficiently appreciated and explained by science, and how far with superstition, delusion, and sheer knavery. Such investigation, pursued by careful observation in a scientific spirit, would seem apt to throw light on some interesting psychological questions.’

Acting on Mr. Tylor’s hint, Mr. Podmore puts forward as explanations (1) fraud; (2) hallucinations caused by excited expectation, and by the *Schwärmerei* consequent on sitting in hushed hope of marvels.

To take fraud first: Mr. Podmore has collected, and analyses, eleven recent sporadic cases of volatile objects. His first instance (Worksop, 1883) yields no proof of fraud, and can only be dismissed by reason of the bad character of the other cases, and because Mr. Podmore took the evidence five weeks after the events. To this example we confine ourselves. This case appears to have been first reported in the ‘Retford and Gainsborough Times’ ‘early in March,’ 1883 (really March 9). It does not seem to have struck Mr. Podmore that he should publish these contemporary reports, to show us how far they agree with evidence collected by him on the spot five weeks later. To do this was the more necessary, as he lays so much stress on failure of memory. I have therefore secured the original newspaper report, by the courtesy of the editor. To be brief, the phenomena began on February 20 or 21, by the table voluntarily tipping up, and upsetting a candle, while Mrs. White only saved the wash tub by alacrity and address. ‘The whole incident struck her as very extraordinary.’ It is not in the newspaper report. On February 26, Mr. White left his home, and a girl, Eliza Rose, ‘child of a half-imbecile mother,’ was admitted by the kindness of Mrs. White to share her bed. The girl was eighteen years of age, was looking for a place as servant, and nothing is said in the newspaper about her mother. Mr. White returned on Wednesday night, but left on Thursday morning, returning on Friday afternoon. On Thursday, in Mr. White’s absence, phenomena set in. On Thursday night, in Mr. White’s presence, they increased in vigour. A doctor was called in, also a policeman. On Saturday, at 8 A.M., the row recommenced. At 4 P.M. Mr. White sent Eliza Rose away, and peace returned. We now offer the

STATEMENT OF POLICE CONSTABLE HIGGS. A man of good intelligence, and believed to be entirely honest….

‘On the night of Friday, March 2nd, I heard of the disturbances at Joe White’s house from his young brother, Tom. I went round to the house at 11.55 P.M., as near as I can judge, and found Joe White in the kitchen of his house. There was one candle lighted in the room, and a good fire burning, so that one could see things pretty clearly. The cupboard doors were open, and White went and shut them, and then came and stood against the chest of drawers. I stood near the outer door. No one else was in the room at the time. White had hardly shut the cupboard doors when they flew open, and a large glass jar came out past me, and pitched in the yard outside, smashing itself. I didn’t see the jar leave the cupboard, or fly through the air; it went too quick. But I am quite sure that it wasn’t thrown by White or any one else. White couldn’t have done it without my seeing him. The jar couldn’t go in a straight line from the cupboard out of the door; but it certainly did go.

‘Then White asked me to come and see the things which had been smashed in the inner room. He led the way and I followed. As I passed the chest of drawers in the kitchen I noticed a tumbler standing on it. Just after I passed I heard a crash, and looking round, I saw that the tumbler had fallen on the ground in the direction of the fireplace, and was broken. I don’t know how it happened. There was no one else in the room.

‘I went into the inner room, and saw the bits of pots and things on the floor, and then I came back with White into the kitchen. The girl Rose had come into the kitchen during our absence. She was standing with her back against the bin near the fire. There was a cup standing on the bin, rather nearer the door. She said to me, “Cup’ll go soon; it has been down three times already.” She then pushed it a little farther on the bin, and turned round and stood talking to me by the fire. She had hardly done so, when the cup jumped up suddenly about four or five feet into the air, and then fell on the floor and smashed itself. White was sitting on the other side of the fire.

‘Then Mrs. White came in with Dr. Lloyd; also Tom White and Solomon Wass. After they had been in two or three minutes, something else happened. Tom White and Wass were standing with their backs to the fire, just in front of it. Eliza Rose and Dr. Lloyd were near them, with their backs turned towards the bin, the doctor nearer to the door. I stood by the drawers, and Mrs. White was by me near the inner door. Then suddenly a basin, which stood on the end of the bin near the door, got up into the air, *turning over and over as it went. It went up not very quickly, not as quickly as if it had been thrown*. When it reached the ceiling it fell plump and smashed. I called Dr. Lloyd’s attention to it, and we all saw it. No one was near it, and I don’t know how it happened. I stayed about ten minutes more, but saw nothing else. I don’t know what to make of it all. I don’t think White or the girl could possibly have done the things which I saw.’

This statement was made five weeks after date to Mr. Podmore. We compare it with the intelligent constable’s statement made between March 3 and March 8, that is, immediately after the events, and reported in the local paper of March 9.

STATEMENT BY POLICE CONSTABLE HIGGS. — During Friday night, Police Constable Higgs visited the house, and concerning the visit he makes the following statement.

‘About ten minutes past twelve on Friday night, I was met in Bridge Street by Buck Ford, and Joe’s brother, Tom White and Dr. Lloyd. Tom said to me, “Will you go with us to Joe’s, and you will see something you have never seen before?” I went; and when I got into the house Joe went and shut the cupboard doors. No sooner had he done so than the doors flew open again, and an ordinary sized glass jar flew across the kitchen, out of the door into the yard. A sugar jar also flew out of the cupboard unseen. In fact, we saw nothing and heard nothing until we heard it smash. The distance travelled by the articles was about seven yards. I stood a minute or two, and then the glass which I noticed on the drawers jumped off the drawers a yard away, and broke in about a hundred bits. The next thing was a cup, which stood on the flour-bin just beyond the yard door. It flew upwards, and then fell to the ground and broke. The girl said that this cup had been on the floor three times, and that she had picked it up just before it went off the bench. I said, "I suppose the cup will be the next." The cup fell a distance of two yards away from the flour-bin. Dr. Lloyd had been in the next house lancing the back of a little boy who had been removed there. He now came in, and we began talking, the doctor saying, "It is a most mysterious thing." He turned with his back to the flour-bin, on which stood a basin. The basin flew up into the air obliquely, went over the doctor's head, and fell at his feet in pieces. The doctor then went out. I stood a short time longer, but saw nothing farther. There were six persons in the room while these things were going on, and so far as I could see, there was no human agency at work. I had not the slightest belief in anything appertaining to the super-natural. I left just before one o'clock, having been in the house thirty minutes.'

As the policeman says, there was nothing 'super-natural,' but there was an appearance of something rather supernormal. On the afternoon of Saturday White sent the girl Rose away, and a number of people watched in his house till after midnight. Though the sceptical reporter thought that objects were placed where they might easily be upset, none were upset. The ghost was laid. 'Excited expectation' was so false to its function as to beget no phenomena.

The newspaper reports contain no theory that will account for White's breaking his furniture and crockery, nor for Rose's securing her own dismissal from a house where she was kindly received by wilfully destroying the property of her hostess. An amateur published a theory of silken threads attached to light articles, and thick cords to heavy articles, whereof no trace was found by witnesses who examined the volatile objects. An elaborate machinery of pulleys fixed in the ceiling, the presence of a trickster in a locked pantry, apparent errors in the account of the flight of the objects, and a number of accomplices, were all involved in this local explanation, the explainer admitting that he could not imagine *why* the tricks were played. Six or eight pounds' worth of goods were destroyed, nor is it singular that poor Mrs. White wept over her shattered penates.

The destruction began, of course, in the *absence* of White. The girl Rose gave to the newspaper the same account as the other witnesses, but, as White thought *she* was the agent, so she suspected White, though she admitted that he was not at home when the trouble arose.

Mr. Podmore, reviewing the case, says, 'The phenomena described are quite inexplicable by ordinary mechanical means. Yet he elsewhere suggests that Rose herself, 'as the instrument of mysterious agencies, or simply as a half-witted girl, gifted with abnormal cunning and love of mischief, may have been directly responsible for all that took place.' That is to say, a half-witted girl could do (barring ‘mysterious agencies’) ‘what is quite inexplicable by ordinary mechanical means,’ while, according to the policeman, she was not even present on some occasions. But it is not easy to make out, in the evidence of White, the other witness, whether this girl Rose was present or not when the jar flew circuitously out of the cupboard, a thing easily worked by a half-witted girl. Such discrepancies are common in all evidence to the most ordinary events. In any case a half-witted girl, in Mr. Podmore’s theory, can do what ‘is quite inexplicable by ordinary mechanical means.’ There is not the shadow of evidence that the girl Rose had the inestimable advantage of being ‘half-witted;’ she is described by Mr. Podmore as ‘the child of an imbecile mother.’ The phenomena began, in an isolated case (the tilted table), *before* Rose entered the house. She was admitted in kindness, acted as a maid, and her interest was *not* to break the crockery and upset furniture. The troubles, which began before the girl’s arrival, were apparently active when she was not present, and, if she *was* present, she could not have caused them ‘by ordinary mechanical means,’ while of extraordinary mechanical means there was confessedly no trace. The disturbances ceased after she was dismissed — nothing else connects her with them.

Mr. Podmore’s attempt at a normal explanation by fraud, therefore, is of no weight. He has to exaggerate the value, as disproof, of such discrepancies as occur in all human evidence on all subjects. He has to lay stress on the interval of five weeks between the events and the collection of testimony by himself. But contemporary accounts appeared in the local newspapers, and he does not compare the contemporary with the later evidence, as we have done. There is one discrepancy which looks as if a witness, not here cited, came to think he had seen what he heard talked about. Finally, after abandoning the idea that mechanical means can possibly have produced the effect, Mr. Podmore falls back on the cunning of a half-witted girl whom nothing shows to have been half-witted. The alternative is that the girl was ‘the instrument of mysterious agencies.’

So much for the hypothesis of a fraud, which has been identical in results from China to Peru and from Greenland to the Cape.

We now turn to the other, and concomitantly active cause, in Mr. Podmore’s theory, hallucination. ‘Many of the witnesses described the articles as moving slowly through the air, or exhibiting some peculiarity of flight.’ (See *e.g.* the Worksop case.) Mr. Podmore adds another English case, presently to be noted, and a German one. ‘In default of any experimental evidence’ (how about Mr. William Crookes’s?) ‘that disturbances of this kind are ever due to abnormal agency, I am disposed to explain the appearance of moving slowly or flying as a sensory illusion, conditioned by the excited state of the percipient.' ('Studies,' 157, 158.)

Before criticising this explanation, let us give the English affair, alluded to by Mr. Podmore.

The most curious modern case known to me is not of recent date, but it occurred in full daylight, in the presence of many witnesses, and the phenomena continued for weeks. The events were of 1849, and the record is expanded, by Mr. Bristow, a spectator, from an account written by him in 1854. The scene was Swanland, near Hull, in a carpenter's shop, where Mr. Bristow was employed with two fellow workmen. To be brief, they were pelted by odds and ends of wood, about the size of a common matchbox. Each blamed the others, till this explanation became untenable. The workrooms and space above were searched to no purpose. The bits of wood sometimes danced along the floor, more commonly sailed gently along, or "moved as if borne on gently heaving waves." This sort of thing was repeated during six weeks. One piece of wood "came from a distant corner of the room towards me, describing what may be likened to a geometrical square, or corkscrew of about eighteen inches diameter…. Never was a piece seen to come in at the doorway." Mr. Bristow deems this period 'the most remarkable episode in my life.' (June 27, 1891.) The phenomena 'did not depend on the presence of any one person or number of persons.'

Going to Swanland, in 1891, Mr. Sidgwick found one surviving witness of these occurrences, who averred that the objects could not have been thrown because of the eccentricities of their course, which he described in the same way as Mr. Bristow. The thrower must certainly have had a native genius for 'pitching' at base-ball. This witness, named Andrews, was mentioned by Mr. Bristow in his report, but not referred to by him for confirmation. Those to whom he referred were found to be dead, or had emigrated. The villagers had a superstitious theory about the phenomena being provoked by a dead man, whose affairs had not been settled to his liking. So Mr. Darwin's spoon danced — on a grave.

This case has a certain interest *à propos* of Mr. Podmore's surmise that all such phenomena arise in trickery, which produces excitement in the spectators, while excitement begets hallucination, and hallucination takes the form of seeing the thrown objects move in a non-natural way. Thus, I keep throwing things about. You, not detecting this stratagem, get excited, consequently hallucinated, and you believe you see the things move in spirals, or undulate as if on waves, or hop, or float, or glide in an impossible way. So close is the uniformity of hallucination that these phenomena are described, in similar terms, by witnesses (hallucinated, of course) in times old and new, as in cases cited by Glanvil, Increase Mather, Telfer (of Rerrick), and, generally, in works of the seventeenth century. Nor is this uniform hallucination confined to England. Mr. Podmore quotes a German example, and I received a similar testimony (to the flight of an object round a corner) from a gentleman who employed Esther Teed, ‘the Amherst Mystery,’ in his service. *He* was not excited, for he was normally engaged in his normal stable, when the incident occurred unexpectedly as he was looking after his live stock. One may add the case of Cideville (1851) and Sir W. Crookes’s evidence, and that of Mr. Schhapoff.

Mr. Podmore must, therefore, suppose that, in states of excitement, the same peculiar form of hallucination develops itself uniformly in America, France, Germany, and England (not to speak of Russia), and persists through different ages. This is a novel and valuable psychological law. Moreover, Mr. Podmore must hold that ‘excitement’ lasted for six weeks among the carpenters in the shop at Swanland, one of whom writes like a man of much intelligence, and has thriven to be a master in his craft. It is difficult to believe that he was excited for six weeks, and we still marvel that excitement produces the same uniformity of hallucination, affecting policemen, carpenters, marquises, and a F.R.S. We allude to Sir W. Crookes’s case.

Strictly scientific examination of these prodigies has been very rare. The best examples are the experiments of Sir William Crookes, F.R.S., with Home. He demonstrated, by means of a machine constructed for the purpose, and automatically registering, that, in Home’s presence, a balance was affected to the extent of two pounds when Home was not in contact with the table on which the machine was placed. He also saw objects float in air, with a motion like that of a piece of wood on small waves of the sea (clearly excitement producing hallucination), while Home was at a distance, other spectators holding his hands, and his feet being visibly enclosed in a kind of cage. All present held each other’s hands, and all witnessed the phenomena. Sir W. Crookes being, professionally, celebrated for the accuracy of his observations, these circumstances are difficult to explain, and these are but a few cases among multitudes.

I venture to conceive that, on reflection, Mr. Podmore will doubt whether he has discovered an universal law of excited malperception, or whether the remarkable, and certainly undesigned, coincidence of testimony to the singular flight of objects does not rather point to an ‘abnormal agency’ uniform in its effects. Contagious hallucination cannot affect witnesses ignorant of each other’s existence in many lands and ages, nor could they cook their reports to suit reports of which they never heard.

We now turn to peculiarities in the so-called Medium, such as floating in air, change of bulk, and escape from lesion when handling or treading in fire. Mr. Tylor says nothing of Sir William Crookes's cases (1871), but speaks of the alleged levitation, or floating in air, of savages and civilised men. These are recorded in Buddhist and Neoplatonic writings, and among Red Indians, in Tonquin (where a Jesuit saw and described the phenomena, 1730), in the 'Acta Sanctorum,' and among modern spiritualists. In 1760, Lord Elcho, being at Home, was present at the *procès* for canonising a Saint (unnamed), and heard witnesses swear to having seen the holy man levitated. Sir W. Crookes attests having seen Home float in air on several occasions. In 1871, the Master of Lindsay, now Lord Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., gave the following evidence, which was corroborated by the two other spectators, Lord Adare and Captain Wynne.

'I was sitting with Mr. Home and Lord Adare and a cousin of his. During the sitting, Mr. Home went into a trance, and in that state was carried out of the window in the room next to where we were, and was brought in at our window. The distance between the windows was about seven feet six inches, and there was not the slightest foothold between them, nor was there more than a twelve-inch projection to each window, which served as a ledge to put flowers on. *We heard the window in the next room lifted up*, and almost immediately after we saw Home floating in the air outside our window. The moon was shining full into the room; my back was to the light, and I saw the shadow on the wall of the window sill, and Home's feet about six inches above it. He remained in this position for a few seconds, then raised the window and glided into the room feet foremost and sat down.

'Lord Adare then went into the next room to look at the window from which he had been carried. It was raised about eighteen inches, and he expressed his wonder how Mr. Home had been taken through so narrow an aperture. Home said, still entranced, "I will show you," and then with his back to the window he leaned back and was shot out of the aperture, head first, with the body rigid, and then returned quite quietly. The window is about seventy feet from the ground.' The hypothesis of a mechanical arrangement of ropes or supports outside has been suggested, but does not cover the facts as described.

Mr. Podmore, who quotes this, offers the explanation that the witnesses were excited, and that Home 'thrust his head and shoulders out of the window.' But, if he did, they could not see him do it, for he was in the next room. A brick wall was between them and him. Their first view of Home was 'floating in the air outside our window.' It is not very easy to hold that a belief to which the collective evidence is so large and universal, as the belief in levitation, was caused by a series of saints, sorcerers, and others thrusting their heads and, shoulders, out of windows where the observers could not see them. Nor in Lord Crawford’s case is it easy to suppose that three educated men, if hallucinated, would all be hallucinated in the same way.

The argument of excited expectation and consequent hallucination does not apply to Mr. Hamilton Aïdé and M. Alphonse Karr, neither of whom was a man of science. Both were extremely prejudiced against Home, and at Nice went to see, and, if possible, to expose him. Home was a guest at a large villa in Nice, M. Karr and Mr. Aïdé were two of a party in a spacious brilliantly lighted salon, where Home received them. A large heavy table, remote from their group, moved towards them. M. Karr then got under a table which rose in air, and carefully examined the space beneath, while Mr. Aïdé observed it from above. Neither of them could discover any explanation of the phenomenon, and they walked away together, disgusted, disappointed, and reviling Home.

In this case there was neither excitement nor desire to believe, but a strong wish to disbelieve and to expose Home. If two such witnesses could be hallucinated, we must greatly extend our notion of the limits of the capacity for entertaining hallucinations.

One singular phenomenon was reported in Home’s case, which has, however, little to do with any conceivable theory of spirits. He was said to become elongated in trance. Mr. Podmore explains that ‘perhaps he really stretched himself to his full height’ — one of the easiest ways conceivable of working a miracle, Iamblichus reports the same phenomenon in his possessed men. Iamblichus adds that they were sometimes broadened as well as lengthened. Now, M. Féré observes that ‘any part of the body of an hysterical patient may change in volume, simply owing to the fact that the patient’s attention is fixed on that part.’ Conceivably the elongation of Home and the ancient Egyptian mediums may have been an extreme case of this ‘change of volume.’ Could this be proved by examples, Home’s elongation would cease to be a ‘miracle.’ But it would follow that in this case observers were *not* hallucinated, and the presumption would be raised that they were not hallucinated in the other cases. Indeed, this argument is of universal application.

There is another class of ‘physical phenomena,’ which has no direct bearing on our subject. Many persons, in many ages, are said to have handled or walked through fire, not only without suffering pain, but without lesion of the skin. Iamblichus mentions this as among the peculiarities of his ‘possessed’ men; and in ‘Modern Mythology’ (1897) I have collected first-hand evidence for the feat in classical times, and in India, Fiji, Bulgaria, Trinidad, the Straits Settlements, and many other places. The evidence is that of travellers, officials, missionaries, and others, and is backed (for what photographic testimony is worth) by photographs of the performance. To hold glowing coals in his hand, and to communicate the power of doing so to others, was in Home’s *répertoire*. Lord Crawford saw it done on eight occasions, and himself received from Home’s hand the glowing coal unharmed. A friend of my own, however, still bears the blister of the hurt received in the process. Sir W. Crookes’s evidence follows:

‘At Mr. Home’s request, whilst he was entranced, I went with him to the fireplace in the back drawing-room. He said, “We want you to notice particularly what Dan is doing.” Accordingly I stood close to the fire, and stooped down to it when he put his hands in….

‘Mr. Home then waved the handkerchief about in the air two or three times, held it above his head, and then folded it up and laid it on his hand like a cushion. Putting his other hand into the fire, he took out a large lump of cinder, red-hot at the lower part, and placed the red part on the handkerchief. Under ordinary circumstances it would have been in a blaze. In about half a minute he took it off the handkerchief with his hand, saying, “As the power is not strong, if we leave the coal longer it will burn.” He then put it on his hand, and brought it to the table in the front room, where all but myself had remained seated.’

Mr. Podmore explains that only two candles and the fire gave light on one occasion, and that ‘possibly’ Home’s hands were protected by some ‘non-conducting substance.’ He does not explain how this substance was put on Lord Crawford’s hands, nor tell us what this valuable substance may be. None is known to science, though it seems to be known to Fijians, Tongans, Klings, and Bulgarians, who walk through fire unhurt.

It is not necessary to believe Sir W. Crookes’s assertions that he saw Home perform the fire-tricks, for we can fall back on the lack of light (only two candles and the fire-light), as also on the law of hallucination caused by excitement. But it *is* necessary to believe this distinguished authority’s statement about his ignorance of ‘some non-conducting substance:’

‘Schoolboys’ books and mediaeval tales describe how this can be done with alum and other ingredients. It is possible that the skin may be so hardened and thickened by such preparations that superficial charring might take place without the pain becoming great; but the surface of the skin would certainly suffer severely. After Home had recovered from the trance, I examined his hand with care to see if there were any signs of burning or of previous preparation. I could detect no trace or injury to the skin, which was soft and delicate, like a woman’s. Neither were there signs of any preparation having been previously applied. I have often seen conjurers and others handle red-hot coals and iron, but there were always palpable signs of burning.’

In September 1897 a crew of passengers went from New Zealand to see the

Fijian rites, which, as reported in the ‘Fiji Times,’ corresponded exactly with the description published by Mr. Basil Thomson, himself a witness. The interesting point, historically, is the combination in Home of all the *répertoire* of the possessed men in Iamblichus. We certainly cannot get rid of the fire-trick by aid of a hypothetical ‘non-conducting substance.’ Till the ‘substance’ is tested experimentally it is not a *vera causa*. We might as well say ‘spirits’ at once. Both that ‘substance’ and those ‘spirits’ are equally ‘in the air.’ Yet Mr. Podmore’s ‘explanations’ (not satisfactory to himself) are conceived so thoroughly in the spirit of popular science — one of them casually discovering a new psychological law, a second contradicting the facts it seeks to account for, a third generously inventing an unknown substance — that they ought to be welcomed by reviewers and lecturers.

It seems wiser to admit our ignorance and suspend our belief.

Here closes the futile chapter of explanations. Fraud is a *vera causa*, but an hypothesis difficult of application when it is admitted that the effects could not be caused by ordinary mechanical means. Hallucination, through excitement, is a *vera causa*, but its remarkable uniformity, as described by witnesses from different lands and ages, knowing nothing of each other, makes us hesitate to accept a sweeping hypothesis of hallucination. The case for it is not confirmed, when we have the same reports from witnesses certainly not excited.

This extraordinary bundle, then, of reports, practically identical, of facts paralysing to belief, this bundle made up of statements from so many ages and countries, can only be ‘filed for reference.’ But it is manifest that any savage who shared the experiences of Sir W. Crookes, Lord Crawford, Mr. Hamilton Aïdé, M. Robert de St. Victor at Cideville, and Policeman Higgs at Worksop, would believe that a spirit might tenant a stick or stone — so believing he would be a Fetishist. Thus even of Fetishism the probable origin is in a region of which we know nothing — the *X* region.

APPENDIX C

CRYSTAL-GAZING

Since the chapter on crystal-gazing was in type, a work by Dr. Pierre Janet has appeared, styled ‘Les Névroses et les Idées Fixes.’ It contains a chapter on crystal-gazing. The opinion of Dr. Janet, as that of a savant familiar, at the Salpêtrière, with ‘neurotic’ visionaries, cannot but be interesting. Unluckily, the essay must be regarded as seriously impaired in value by Dr. Janet’s singular treatment of his subject. Nothing is more necessary in these researches than accuracy of statement. Now, Dr. Janet has taken a set of experiences, or experiments, of Miss X.’s from that lady’s interesting essay, already cited; has attributed them, not to Miss X., but to various people — for example, to *une jeune fille, une pauvre voyante, une personne un peu mystique*; has altered the facts in the spirit of romance; and has triumphantly given that explanation, revival of memory, which was assigned by Miss X. herself.

Throughout his paper Dr. Janet appears as the calm man of science pronouncing judgment on the visionary vagaries of ‘haunted’ young girls and disappointed seeresses. No such persons were concerned; no such hauntings, supposed premonitions, or ‘disillusions’ occurred; the romantic and ‘marvellous’ circumstances are mythopoeic accretions due to Dr. Janet’s own memory or fancy; his scientific explanation is that given by his trinity of *jeune fille*, *pauvre voyante*, and *personne un peu mystique*.

Being much engaged in the study of ‘neurotic’ and hysterical patients, Dr. Janet thinks that they are most apt to see crystal visions. Perhaps they are; and one doubts if their descriptions are more to be trusted than the romantic essay of their medical attendant. In citing Miss X.’s paper (as he did), Dr. Janet ought to have reported her experiments correctly, ought to have attributed them to herself, and should, decidedly, have remarked that the explanation he offered was her own hypothesis, verified by her own exertions.

Not having any acquaintances in neurotic circles, I am unable to say whether such persons supply more cases of the faculty of crystal vision than ordinary people; while their word, one would think, is much less to be trusted than that of men and women in excellent health. The crystal visions which I have cited from my own knowledge (and I could cite scores of others) were beheld by men and women engaged in the ordinary duties of life. Students, barristers, novelists, lawyers, school-masters, school-mistresses, golfers — to all of whom the topic was perfectly new — have all exhibited the faculty. It is curious that an Arabian author of the thirteenth century, Ibn Khaldoun, cited by M. Lefébure, offers the same account of *how* the visions appear as that given by Miss Angus in the *Journal* of the S.P.R., April 1898. M. Lefébure’s citation was sent to me in a letter.

I append M. Lefébure’s quotation from Ibn Khaldoun. The original is translated in ‘Notices et Extraits des MSS. de la Bibliothèque Impériale,’ I. xix.

-645.
‘Ibn Kaldoun admet que certains hommes ont la faculté de deviner l’avenir.

‘“Ceux, ajoute-t-il, qui regardent dans les corps diaphanes, tels que les miroirs, les cuvettes remplies d’eau et les liquides; ceux qui inspectent les coeurs, les foies et les os des animaux, … tous ces gens-là appartiennent aussi à la catégorie des devins, mais, à cause de l’imperfection de leur nature, ils y occupent un rang inférieur. Pour écarter le voile des sens, le vrai devin n’a pas besoin de grands efforts; quant aux autres, ils tâchent d’arriver au but en *essayant de concentrer en un seul sens toutes leurs perceptions*. Comme la vue est le sens le plus noble, ils lui donnent la préférence; fixant leur regard sur on objet à superficie unie, ils le considèrent avec attention jusqu’à ce qu’ils y aperçoivent la chose qu’ils veulent annoncer. Quelques personnes croient que l’image aperçue de cette manière se dessine sur la surface du miroir; mais ils se trompent. Le devin regarde fixement cette surface jusqu’à ce qu’elle disparaisse et qu’un rideau, semblable à un brouillard, s’interpose entre lui et le miroir. Sur ce rideau se dessinent les choses *qu’il désira apercevoir*, et cela lui permet de donner des indications soit affirmatives, soit négatives, sur ce que l’on désire savoir. Il raconte alors les perceptions telles qu’il les reçoit. Les devins, pendant qu’ils sont dans cet état, n’aperçoivent pas ce qui se voit réellement dans le miroir; c’est un autre mode de perception qui naît chez eux et qui s’opère, non pas au moyen de la vue, mais de l’âme. Il est vrai que, *pour eux, les perceptions de l’âme ressemblent à celles des sens au point de les tromper*; fait qui, du reste, est bien connu. La même chose arrive à ceux qui examinent les coeurs et les foies d’animaux. Nous avons vu quelques-uns de ces individus *entraver l’opération des sens* par l’emploi de simples *fumigations*, puis se servir d’*incantations* afin de donner à l’âme la disposition requise; ensuite ils racontent ce qu’ils ont aperçu. Ces formes, disent-ils, se montrent dans l’air et représentent des personnages: elles leur apprennent, au moyen d’emblèmes et de signes, les choses qu’ils cherchent à savoir. Les individus de cette classe se détachent moins de l’influence des sens que ceux de la classe précédente.”’

Cette agitation d’esprit, jointe à l’emploi des moyens intrinsèques dont nous avons parlé, excite dans son coeur des idées que cet organe exprime par le ministère de la langne. Les paroles qu’il prononce sont tantôt vraies, tantôt fausses. En effet, le devin, voulant suppléer à l’imperfection de son naturel, se sert de moyens tout à fait étrangers à sa faculté perceptive et qui ne s’accordent en aucune façon avec elle. Donc la vérité et l’erreur se présentent à lui en même temps, aussi ne doit on mettre aucune confiance en ses paroles. Quelquefois même il a recours à des suppositions et à des conjectures dans l’espoir de

rencontrer la vérité et de tromper ceux qui l'interrogent.']

APPENDIX D

CHIEFS IN AUSTRALIA

In the remarks on Australian religion, it is argued that chiefs in Australia are, at most, very inconspicuous, and that a dead chief cannot have thriven into a Supreme Being. Attention should be called, however, to Mr. Howitt's remarks on Australian 'Head-men,' in his tract on 'The Organisation of Australian Tribes' (p-113).

He attaches more of the idea of power to 'Head-men' than does Mr. Curr in his work, 'The Australian Race.' The Head-men, as a rule, arrive at such influence as they possess by seniority, if accompanied by courage, wisdom, and, in some cases, by magical acquirements. There are traces of a tendency to keep the office (if it may be called one) in the same kinship. 'But Vich Ian Vohr or Chingahgook are not to be found in Australian tribes' (). I do not observe that the manes or ghost of a dead Head-man receives any worship or service calculated to fix him in the tribal memory, and so lead to the evolution of a deity, though one Head-man was potent through the whole Dieyri tribe over three hundred miles of country. Such a person, if propitiated after death, might conceivably develop into a hero, if not into a creative being. But we must await evidence to the effect that any posthumous reverence was paid to this man, Ialina Piramurane (New Moon). Mr. Howitt's essay is in the 'Transactions of the Royal Society of Victoria for 1889.'

ALFRED TENNYSON

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INTRODUCTION

In writing this brief sketch of the Life of Tennyson, and this attempt to appreciate his work, I have rested almost entirely on the Biography by Lord Tennyson (with his kind permission) and on the text of the Poems. As to the Life, doubtless current anecdotes, not given in the Biography, are known to me, and to most people. But as they must also be familiar to the author of the Biography, I have not thought it desirable to include what he rejected. The works of the "localisers" I have not read: Tennyson disliked these researches, as a rule, and they appear to be unessential, and often hazardous. The professed commentators I have not consulted. It appeared better to give one's own impressions of the Poems, unaffected by the impressions of others, except in one or two cases where matters of fact rather than of taste seemed to be in question. Thus on two or three points I have ventured to differ from a distinguished living critic, and have given the reasons for my dissent. Professor Bradley's Commentary on In Memoriam came out after this sketch was in print. Many of the comments cited by Mr Bradley from his predecessors appear to justify my neglect of these curious inquirers. The "difficulties" which they raise are not likely, as a rule, to present themselves to persons who read poetry "for human pleasure."

I have not often dwelt on parallels to be found in the works of earlier poets. In many cases Tennyson deliberately reproduced passages from Greek, Latin, and old Italian writers, just as Virgil did in the case of Homer, Theocritus, Apollonius Rhodius, and others. There are, doubtless, instances in which a phrase is unconsciously reproduced by automatic memory, from an English poet. But I am less inclined than Mr Bradley to think that unconscious reminiscence is more common in Tennyson than in the poets generally. I have not closely examined Keats and Shelley, for example, to see how far they were influenced by unconscious memory. But Scott, confessedly, was apt to reproduce the phrases of others, and once unwittingly borrowed from a poem by the valet of one of his friends! I believe that many of the alleged borrowings in Tennyson are either no true parallels at all or are the unavoidable coincidences of expression which must inevitably occur. The poet himself stated, in a lively phrase, his opinion of the hunters after parallels, and I confess that I am much of his mind. They often remind me of Mr Punch's parody on an unfriendly review of Alexander Smith -

“Most WOMEN have NO CHARACTER at all.” — POPE.
“No CHARACTER that servant WOMAN asked.” — SMITH.

I have to thank Mr Edmund Gosse and Mr Vernon Rendall for their kindness in reading my proof-sheets. They have saved me from some errors, but I may have occasionally retained matter which, for one reason or another, did not recommend itself to them. In no case are they responsible for the opinions expressed, or for the critical estimates. They are those of a Tennysonian, and, no doubt, would be other than they are if the writer were younger than he is. It does not follow that they would necessarily be more correct, though probably they would be more in vogue. The point of view must shift with each generation of readers, as ideas or beliefs go in or out of fashion, are accepted, rejected, or rehabilitated. To one age Tennyson may seem weakly superstitious; to another needlessly sceptical. After all, what he must live by is, not his opinions, but his poetry. The poetry of Milton survives his ideas; whatever may be the fate of the ideas of Tennyson his poetry must endure.

CHAPTER I — BOYHOOD — CAMBRIDGE — EARLY POEMS.

The life and work of Tennyson present something like the normal type of what, in circumstances as fortunate as mortals may expect, the life and work of a modern poet ought to be. A modern poet, one says, because even poetry is now affected by the division of labour. We do not look to the poet for a large share in the practical activities of existence: we do not expect him, like AEschylus and Sophocles, Theognis and Alcaeus, to take a conspicuous part in politics and war; or even, as in the Age of Anne, to shine among wits and in society. Life has become, perhaps, too specialised for such multifarious activities. Indeed, even in ancient days, as a Celtic proverb and as the picture of life in the Homeric epics prove, the poet was already a man apart — not foremost among statesmen and rather backward among warriors. If we agree with a not unpopular opinion, the poet ought to be a kind of "Titanic" force, wrecking himself on his own passions and on the nature of things, as did Byron, Burns, Marlowe, and Musset. But Tennyson's career followed lines really more normal, the lines of the life of Wordsworth, wisdom and self-control directing the course of a long, sane, sound, and fortunate existence. The great physical strength which is commonly the basis of great mental vigour was not ruined in Tennyson by poverty and passion, as in the case of Burns, nor in forced literary labour, as in those of Scott and Dickens. For long he was poor, like Wordsworth and Southey, but never destitute. He made his early effort: he had his time of great sorrow, and trial, and apparent failure. With practical wisdom he conquered circumstances; he became eminent; he outlived reaction against his genius; he died in the fulness of a happy age and of renown. This full-orbed life, with not a few years of sorrow and stress, is what Nature seems to intend for the career of a divine minstrel. If Tennyson missed the "one crowded hour of glorious life," he had not to be content in "an age without a name."

It was not Tennyson's lot to illustrate any modern theory of the origin of genius. Born in 1809 of a Lincolnshire family, long connected with the soil but inconspicuous in history, Tennyson had nothing Celtic in his blood, as far as pedigrees prove. This is unfortunate for one school of theorists. His mother (genius is presumed to be derived from mothers) had a genius merely for moral excellence and for religion. She is described in the poem of Isabel, and was "a remarkable and saintly woman." In the male line, the family was not (as the families of genius ought to be) brief of life and unhealthy. “The Tennysons never die,” said the sister who was betrothed to Arthur Hallam. The father, a clergyman, was, says his grandson, “a man of great ability,” and his “excellent library” was an element in the education of his family. “My father was a poet,” Tennyson said, “and could write regular verse very skilfully.” In physical type the sons were tall, strong, and unusually dark: Tennyson, when abroad, was not taken for an Englishman; at home, strangers thought him “foreign.” Most of the children had the temperament, and several of the sons had some of the accomplishments, of genius: whence derived by way of heredity is a question beyond conjecture, for the father’s accomplishment was not unusual. As Walton says of the poet and the angler, they “were born to be so”: we know no more.

The region in which the paternal hamlet of Somersby lies, “a land of quiet villages, large fields, grey hillsides, and noble tall-towered churches, on the lower slope of a Lincolnshire wold,” does not appear to have been rich in romantic legend and tradition. The folk-lore of Lincolnshire, of which examples have been published, does seem to have a peculiar poetry of its own, but it was rather the humorous than the poetical aspect of the country-people that Tennyson appears to have known. In brief, we have nothing to inform us as to how genius came into that generation of Tennysons which was born between 1807 and 1819. A source and a cause there must have been, but these things are hidden, except from popular science.

Precocity is not a sign of genius, but genius is perhaps always accompanied by precocity. This is especially notable in the cases of painting, music, and mathematics; but in the matter of literature genius may chiefly show itself in acquisition, as in Sir Walter Scott, who when a boy knew much, but did little that would attract notice. As a child and a boy young Tennyson was remarked both for acquisition and performance. His own reminiscences of his childhood varied somewhat in detail. In one place we learn that at the age of eight he covered a slate with blank verse in the manner of Jamie Thomson, the only poet with whom he was then acquainted. In another passage he says, “The first poetry that moved me was my own at five years old. When I was eight I remember making a line I thought grander than Campbell, or Byron, or Scott. I rolled it out, it was this -

‘With slaughterous sons of thunder rolled the flood’ -

great nonsense, of course, but I thought it fine!”

It WAS fine, and was thoroughly Tennysonian. Scott, Campbell, and Byron probably never produced a line with the qualities of this nonsense verse. “Before I could read I was in the habit on a stormy day of spreading my arms to the wind and crying out, ‘I hear a voice that’s speaking in the wind,’ and the words ‘far,

far away' had always a strange charm for me." A late lyric has this overword, FAR, FAR AWAY!

A boy of eight who knew the contemporary poets was more or less precocious. Tennyson also knew Pope, and wrote hundreds of lines in Pope's measure. At twelve the boy produced an epic, in Scott's manner, of some six thousand lines. He "never felt himself more truly inspired," for the sense of "inspiration" (as the late Mr Myers has argued in an essay on the "Mechanism of Genius") has little to do with the actual value of the product. At fourteen Tennyson wrote a drama in blank verse. A chorus from this play (as one guesses), a piece from "an unpublished drama written very early," is published in the volume of 1830:-

"The varied earth, the moving heaven,
  The rapid waste of roving sea,
The fountain-pregnant mountains riven
  To shapes of wildest anarchy,
By secret fire and midnight storms
  That wander round their windy cones."

These lines are already Tennysonian. There is the classical transcript, "the varied earth," daedala tellus. There is the geological interest in the forces that shape the hills. There is the use of the favourite word "windy," and later in the piece -

"The troublous autumn's SALLOW gloom."

The young poet from boyhood was original in his manner.

Byron made him blase at fourteen. Then Byron died, and Tennyson scratched on a rock "Byron is dead," on "a day when the whole world seemed darkened for me." Later he considered Byron's poetry "too much akin to rhetoric." "Byron is not an artist or a thinker, or a creator in the higher sense, but a strong personality; he is endlessly clever, and is now unduly depreciated." He "did give the world another heart and new pulses, and so we are kept going." But "he was dominated by Byron till he was seventeen, when he put him away altogether."

In his boyhood, despite the sufferings which he endured for a while at school at Louth; despite bullying from big boys and masters, Tennyson would "shout his verses to the skies." "Well, Arthur, I mean to be famous," he used to say to one of his brothers. He observed nature very closely by the brook and the thundering sea-shores: he was never a sportsman, and his angling was in the manner of the lover of The Miller's Daughter. He was seventeen (1826) when Poems by Two Brothers (himself and his brother Frederick) was published with the date 1827. These poems contain, as far as I have been able to discover, nothing really Tennysonian. What he had done in his own manner was omitted, "being thought too much out of the common for the public taste." The young poet had already saving common-sense, and understood the public. Fragments of the true gold are found in the volume of 1830, others are preserved in the Biography. The ballad suggested by The Bride of Lammermoor was not unworthy of Beddoes, and that novel, one cannot but think, suggested the opening situation in Maud, where the hero is a modern Master of Ravenswood in his relation to the rich interloping family and the beautiful daughter. To this point we shall return. It does not appear that Tennyson was conscious in Maud of the suggestion from Scott, and the coincidence may be merely accidental.

The Lover's Tale, published in 1879, was mainly a work of the poet's nineteenth year. A few copies had been printed for friends. One of these, with errors of the press, and without the intended alterations, was pirated by an unhappy man in 1875. In old age Tennyson brought out the work of his boyhood. "It was written before I had ever seen Shelley, though it is called Shelleyan," he said; and indeed he believed that his work had never been imitative, after his earliest efforts in the manner of Thomson and of Scott. The only things in The Lover's Tale which would suggest that the poet here followed Shelley are the Italian scene of the story, the character of the versification, and the extraordinary luxuriance and exuberance of the imagery. As early as 1868 Tennyson heard that written copies of The Lover's Tale were in circulation. He then remarked, as to the exuberance of the piece: "Allowance must be made for abundance of youth. It is rich and full, but there are mistakes in it. . . . The poem is the breath of young love."

How truly Tennysonian the manner is may be understood even from the opening lines, full of the original cadences which were to become so familiar:-

"Here far away, seen from the topmost cliff,
Filling with purple gloom the vacancies
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas
Hung in mid-heaven, and half way down rare sails,
White as white clouds, floated from sky to sky."

The narrative in parts one and two (which alone were written in youth) is so choked with images and descriptions as to be almost obscure. It is the story, practically, of a love like that of Paul and Virginia, but the love is not returned by the girl, who prefers the friend of the narrator. Like the hero of Maud, the speaker has a period of madness and illusion; while the third part, "The Golden

Supper" — suggested by a story of Boccaccio, and written in maturity — is put in the mouth of another narrator, and is in a different style. The discarded lover, visiting the vault which contains the body of his lady, finds her alive, and restores her to her husband. The whole finished legend is necessarily not among the author's masterpieces. But perhaps not even Keats in his earliest work displayed more of promise, and gave more assurance of genius. Here and there come turns and phrases, "all the charm of all the Muses," which remind a reader of things later well known in pieces more mature. Such lines are -

"Strange to me and sweet,
Sweet through strange years,"

and -

"Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky
Hung round with RAGGED RIMS and burning folds."

And -

"Like sounds without the twilight realm of dreams,
Which wander round the bases of the hills."

We also note close observation of nature in the curious phrase -

"Cries of the partridge like a rusty key
Turned in a lock."

Of this kind was Tennyson's adolescent vein, when he left

"The poplars four
That stood beside his father's door,"

the Somersby brook, and the mills and granges, the seas of the Lincolnshire coast, and the hills and dales among the wolds, for Cambridge. He was well read in old and contemporary English literature, and in the classics. Already he was acquainted with the singular trance-like condition to which his poems occasionally allude, a subject for comment later. He matriculated at Trinity, with his brother Charles, on February 20, 1828, and had an interview of a not quite friendly sort with a proctor before he wore the gown.

That Tennyson should go to Cambridge, not to Oxford, was part of the nature of things, by which Cambridge educates the majority of English poets, whereas Oxford has only "turned out" a few — like Shelley. At that time, as in

Macaulay’s day, the path of university honours at Cambridge lay through Mathematics, and, except for his prize poem in 1829, Tennyson took no honours at all. His classical reading was pursued as literature, not as a course of grammar and philology. No English poet, at least since Milton, had been better read in the classics; but Tennyson’s studies did not aim at the gaining of academic distinction. His aspect was such that Thompson, later Master of Trinity, on first seeing him come into hall, said, “That man must be a poet.” Like Byron, Shelley, and probably Coleridge, Tennyson looked the poet that he was: “Six feet high, broad-chested, strong-limbed, his face Shakespearian and with deep eyelids, his forehead ample, crowned with dark wavy hair, his head finely poised.”

Not much is recorded of Tennyson as an undergraduate. In our days efforts would have been made to enlist so promising a recruit in one of the college boats; but rowing was in its infancy. It is a peculiarity of the universities that little flocks of men of unusual ability come up at intervals together, breaking the monotony of idlers, prize scholars, and honours men. Such a group appeared at Balliol in Matthew Arnold’s time, and rather later, at various colleges, in the dawn of Pre-Raphaelitism. The Tennysons — Alfred, Frederick, and Charles — were members of such a set. There was Arthur Hallam, son of the historian, from Eton; there was Spedding, the editor and biographer of Bacon; Milnes (Lord Houghton), Blakesley (Dean of Lincoln), Thompson, Merivale, Trench (a poet, and later, Archbishop of Dublin), Brookfield, Buller, and, after Tennyson the greatest, Thackeray, a contemporary if not an “Apostle.” Charles Buller’s, like Hallam’s, was to be an “unfulfilled renown.” Of Hallam, whose name is for ever linked with his own, Tennyson said that he would have been a great man, but not a great poet; “he was as near perfection as mortal man could be.” His scanty remains are chiefly notable for his divination of Tennyson as a great poet; for the rest, we can only trust the author of In Memoriam and the verdict of tradition.

The studies of the poet at this time included original composition in Greek and Latin verse, history, and a theme that he alone has made poetical, natural science. All poetry has its roots in the age before natural science was more than a series of nature-myths. The poets have usually, like Keats, regretted the days when

“There was an awful rainbow once in heaven,”

when the hills and streams were not yet “dispeopled of their dreams.” Tennyson, on the other hand, was already finding material for poetry in the world as seen through microscope and telescope, and as developed through “aeonian” processes of evolution. In a notebook, mixed with Greek, is a poem on the Moon — not the moon of Selene, “the orbed Maiden,” but of astronomical science. In Memoriam recalls the conversations on labour and politics, discussions of the age of the Reform Bill, of rick-burning (expected to "make taters cheaper"), and of Catholic emancipation; also the emancipation of such negroes as had not yet tasted the blessings of freedom. In politics Tennyson was what he remained, a patriot, a friend of freedom, a foe of disorder. His politics, he said, were those "of Shakespeare, Bacon, and every sane man." He was one of the Society of Apostles, and characteristically contributed an essay on Ghosts. Only the preface survives: it is not written in a scientific style; but bids us "not assume that any vision IS baseless." Perhaps the author went on to discuss "veridical hallucinations," but his ideas about these things must be considered later.

It was by his father's wish that Tennyson competed for the English prize poem. The theme, Timbuctoo, was not inspiring. Thackeray wrote a good parody of the ordinary prize poem in Pope's metre:-

"I see her sons the hill of glory mount,
And sell their sugars on their own account;
Prone to her feet the prostrate nations come,
Sue for her rice and barter for her rum."

Tennyson's work was not much more serious: he merely patched up an old piece, in blank verse, on the battle of Armageddon. The poem is not destitute of Tennysonian cadence, and ends, not inappropriately, with "All was night." Indeed, all WAS night.

An ingenious myth accounts for Tennyson's success: At Oxford, says Charles Wordsworth, the author was more likely to have been rusticated than rewarded. But already (1829) Arthur Hallam told Mr Gladstone that Tennyson "promised fair to be the greatest poet of our generation, perhaps of our century."

In 1830 Tennyson published the first volume of which he was sole author. Browning's Pauline was of the year 1833. It was the very dead hours of the Muses. The great Mr Murray had ceased, as one despairing of song, to publish poetry. Bulwer Lytton, in the preface to Paul Clifford (1830), announced that poetry, with every other form of literature except the Novel, was unremunerative and unread. Coleridge and Scott were silent: indeed Sir Walter was near his death; Wordsworth had shot his bolt, though an arrow or two were left in the quiver. Keats, Shelley, and Byron were dead; Milman's brief vogue was departing. It seemed as if novels alone could appeal to readers, so great a change in taste had been wrought by the sixteen years of Waverley romances. The slim volume of Tennyson was naturally neglected, though Leigh Hunt reviewed it in the Tatler. Hallam's comments in the Englishman's Magazine, though enthusiastic (as was right and natural), were judicious. "The author imitates no one." Coleridge did not read all the book, but noted "things of a good deal of beauty. The misfortune is that he has begun to write verses without very well understanding what metre is." As Tennyson said in 1890, "So I, an old man, who get a poem or poems every day, might cast a casual glance at a book, and seeing something which I could not scan or understand, might possibly decide against the book without further consideration." As a rule, the said books are worthless. The number of versifiers makes it hard, indeed, for the poet to win recognition. One little new book of rhyme is so like another, and almost all are of so little interest!

The rare book that differs from the rest has a bizarrerie with its originality, and in the poems of 1830 there was, assuredly, more than enough of the bizarre. There were no hyphens in the double epithets, and words like "tendriltwine" seemed provokingly affected. A kind of lusciousness, like that of Keats when under the influence of Leigh Hunt, may here and there be observed. Such faults as these catch the indifferent eye when a new book is first opened, and the volume of 1830 was probably condemned by almost every reader of the previous generation who deigned to afford it a glance. Out of fifty-six pieces only twenty-three were reprinted in the two volumes of 1842, which won for Tennyson the general recognition of the world of letters. Five or six of the pieces then left out were added as Juvenilia in the collected works of 1871, 1872. The whole mass deserves the attention of students of the poet's development.

This early volume may be said to contain, in the germ, all the great original qualities of Tennyson, except the humour of his rural studies and the elaboration of his Idylls. For example, in Mariana we first note what may be called his perfection and accomplishment. The very few alterations made later are verbal. The moated grange of Mariana in Measure for Measure, and her mood of desertion and despair, are elaborated by a precision of truth and with a perfection of harmony worthy of Shakespeare himself, and minutely studied from the natural scenes in which the poet was born. If these verses alone survived out of the wreck of Victorian literature, they would demonstrate the greatness of the author as clearly as do the fragments of Sappho. Isabel (a study of the poet's mother) is almost as remarkable in its stately dignity; while Recollections of the Arabian Nights attest the power of refined luxury in romantic description, and herald the unmatched beauty of The Lotos-Eaters. The Poet, again, is a picture of that which Tennyson himself was to fulfil; and Oriana is a revival of romance, and of the ballad, not limited to the ballad form as in its prototype, Helen of Kirkconnell. Curious and exquisite experiment in metre is indicated in the

Leonine Elegiacs, in Claribel, and several other poems. Qualities which were not for long to find public expression, speculative powers brooding, in various moods, on ultimate and insoluble questions, were attested by The Mystic, and Supposed Confessions of a Second-rate Sensitive Mind not in Unity with Itself, an unlucky title of a remarkable performance. “In this, the most agitated of all his poems, we find the soul urging onward

‘Thro’ utter dark a full-sail’d skiff,
Unpiloted i’ the echoing dance
Of reboant whirlwinds;’

and to the question, ‘Why not believe, then?’ we have as answer a simile of the sea, which cannot slumber like a mountain tarn, or

‘Draw down into his vexed pools
All that blue heaven which hues and paves’

the tranquil inland mere.”

The poet longs for the faith of his infant days and of his mother -

“Thy mild deep eyes upraised, that knew
The beauty and repose of faith,
And the clear spirit shining thro’.”

That faith is already shaken, and the long struggle for belief has already begun.

Tennyson, according to Matthew Arnold, was not un esprit puissant. Other and younger critics, who have attained to a cock-certain mood of negation, are apt to blame him because, in fact, he did not finally agree with their opinions. If a man is necessarily a weakling or a hypocrite because, after trying all things, he is not an atheist or a materialist, then the reproach of insincerity or of feebleness of mind must rest upon Tennyson. But it is manifest that, almost in boyhood, he had already faced the ideas which, to one of his character, almost meant despair: he had not kept his eyes closed. To his extremely self-satisfied accusers we might answer, in lines from this earliest volume (The Mystic):-

“Ye scorn him with an undiscerning scorn;
Ye cannot read the marvel in his eye,
The still serene abstraction.”

He would behold

“One shadow in the midst of a great light,
One reflex from eternity on time,
One mighty countenance of perfect calm,
Awful with most invariable eyes.”

His mystic of these boyish years -

”Often lying broad awake, and yet
Remaining from the body, and apart
In intellect and power and will, hath heard
Time flowing in the middle of the night,
And all things creeping to a day of doom.”

In this poem, never republished by the author, is an attempt to express an experience which in later years he more than once endeavoured to set forth in articulate speech, an experience which was destined to colour his finial speculations on ultimate problems of God and of the soul. We shall later have to discuss the opinion of an eminent critic, Mr Frederic Harrison, that Tennyson’s ideas, theological, evolutionary, and generally speculative, “followed, rather than created, the current ideas of his time.” “The train of thought” (in In Memoriam), writes Mr Harrison, “is essentially that with which ordinary English readers had been made familiar by F. D. Maurice, Professor Jowett, Dr Martineau, Ecce Homo, Hypatia.” Of these influences only Maurice, and Maurice only orally, could have reached the author of The Mystic and the Supposed Confessions. Ecce Homo, Hypatia, Mr Jowett, were all in the bosom of the future when In Memoriam was written. Now, The Mystic and the Supposed Confessions are prior to In Memoriam, earlier than 1830. Yet they already contain the chief speculative tendencies of In Memoriam; the growing doubts caused by evolutionary ideas (then familiar to Tennyson, though not to “ordinary English readers”), the longing for a return to childlike faith, and the mystical experiences which helped Tennyson to recover a faith that abode with him. In these things he was original. Even as an undergraduate he was not following “a train of thought made familiar” by authors who had not yet written a line, and by books which had not yet been published.

So much, then, of the poet that was to be and of the philosopher existed in the little volume of the undergraduate. In The Mystic we notice a phrase, two words long, which was later to be made familiar, “Daughters of time, divinely tall,” reproduced in the picture of Helen:-

“A daughter of the Gods, divinely tall,
  And most divinely fair.”

The reflective pieces are certainly of more interest now (though they seem to have satisfied the poet less) than the gallery of airy fairy Lilians, Adelines, Rosalinds, and Eleanores:-

“Daughters of dreams and of stories,”

like

“Faustine, Fragoletta, Dolores,
Felise, and Yolande, and Juliette.”

Cambridge, which he was soon to leave, did not satisfy the poet. Oxford did not satisfy Gibbon, or later, Shelley; and young men of genius are not, in fact, usually content with universities which, perhaps, are doing their best, but are neither governed nor populated by minds of the highest and most original class.

”You that do profess to teach
And teach us nothing, feeding not the heart.”

The universities, in fact, teach a good deal of that which can be learned, but the best things cannot be taught. The universities give men leisure, books, and companionship, to learn for themselves. All tutors cannot be, and at that time few dreamed of being, men like Jowett and T. H. Green, Gamaliels at whose feet undergraduates sat with enthusiasm, “did EAGERLY frequent,” like Omar Khayyam. In later years Tennyson found closer relations between dons and undergraduates, and recorded his affection for his university. She had supplied him with such companionship as is rare, and permitted him to “catch the blossom of the flying terms,” even if tutors and lecturers were creatures of routine, terriblement enfonces dans la matiere, like the sire of Madelon and Cathos, that honourable citizen.

Tennyson just missed, by going down, a visit of Wordsworth to Cambridge. The old enthusiast of revolution was justifying passive obedience: thirty years had turned the almost Jacobin into an almost Jacobite. Such is the triumph of time. In the summer of 1830 Tennyson, with Hallam, visited the Pyrenees. The purpose was political — to aid some Spanish rebels. The fruit is seen in OEnone and Mariana in the South.

In March 1831 Tennyson lost his father. “He slept in the dead man’s bed, earnestly desiring to see his ghost, but no ghost came.” “You see,” he said, “ghosts do not generally come to imaginative people;” a remark very true, though ghosts are attributed to “imagination.” Whatever causes these phantasms, it is not the kind of phantasia which is consciously exercised by the poet. Coleridge had seen far too many ghosts to believe in them; and Coleridge and Donne apart, with the hallucinations of Goethe and Shelley, who met themselves, what poet ever did “see a ghost”? One who saw Tennyson as he wandered alone at this period called him “a mysterious being, seemingly lifted high above other mortals, and having a power of intercourse with the spirit world not granted to others.” But it was the world of the poet, not of the “medium.”

The Tennysons stayed on at the parsonage for six years. But, anticipating their removal, Arthur Hallam in 1831 dealt in prophecy about the identification in the district of places in his friend’s poems— “critic after critic will trace the wanderings of the brook,” as, — in fact, critic after critic has done. Tennyson disliked — these “localisers.” The poet’s walks were shared by Arthur Hallam, then affianced to his sister Emily.

CHAPTER II. — POEMS OF 1831-1833.

By 1832 most of the poems of Tennyson's second volume were circulating in MS. among his friends, and no poet ever had friends more encouraging. Perhaps bards of to-day do not find an eagerness among their acquaintance for effusions in manuscript, or in proof-sheets. The charmed volume appeared at the end of the year (dated 1833), and Hallam denounced as "infamous" Lockhart's review in the Quarterly. Infamous or not, it is extremely diverting. How Lockhart could miss the great and abundant poetry remains a marvel. Ten years later the Scorpion repented, and invited Sterling to review any book he pleased, for the purpose of enabling him to praise the two volumes of 1842, which he did gladly. Lockhart hated all affectation and "preciosity," of which the new book was not destitute. He had been among Wordsworth's most ardent admirers when Wordsworth had few, but the memories of the war with the "Cockney School" clung to him, the war with Leigh Hunt, and now he gave himself up to satire. Probably he thought that the poet was a member of a London clique. There is really no excuse for Lockhart, except that he DID repent, that much of his banter was amusing, and that, above all, his censures were accepted by the poet, who altered, later, many passages of a fine absurdity criticised by the infamous reviewer. One could name great prose-writers, historians, who never altered the wondrous errors to which their attention was called by critics. Prose-writers have been more sensitively attached to their glaring blunders in verifiable facts than was this very sensitive poet to his occasional lapses in taste.

The Lady of Shalott, even in its early form, was more than enough to give assurance of a poet. In effect it is even more poetical, in a mysterious way, if infinitely less human, than the later treatment of the same or a similar legend in Elaine. It has the charm of Coleridge, and an allegory of the fatal escape from the world of dreams and shadows into that of realities may have been really present to the mind of the young poet, aware that he was "living in phantasy." The alterations are usually for the better. The daffodil is not an aquatic plant, as the poet seems to assert in the first form -

"The yellow-leaved water-lily,
The green sheathed daffodilly,
Tremble in the water chilly,
   Round about Shalott."

Nobody can prefer to keep

“Though the squally east wind keenly
Blew, with folded arms serenely
By the water stood the queenly
Lady of Shalott.”

However stoical the Lady may have been, the reader is too seriously sympathetic with her inevitable discomfort -

“All raimented in snowy white
That loosely flew,”

as she was. The original conclusion was distressing; we were dropped from the airs of mysterious romance:-

“They crossed themselves, their stars they blest,
Knight, minstrel, abbot, squire, and guest;
There lay a parchment on her breast,
That puzzled more than all the rest
The well-fed wits at Camelot.”

Hitherto we have been “puzzled,” but as with the sublime incoherences of a dream. Now we meet well-fed wits, who say, “Bless my stars!” as perhaps we should also have done in the circumstances — a dead lady arriving, in a very cold east wind, alone in a boat, for “her blood was frozen slowly,” as was natural, granting the weather and the lady’s airy costume. It is certainly matter of surprise that the young poet’s vision broke up in this humorous manner. And, after all, it is less surprising that the Scorpion, finding such matter in a new little book by a new young man, was more sensitive to the absurdity than to the romance. But no lover of poetry should have been blind to the almost flawless excellence of Mariana in the South, inspired by the landscape of the Provencal tour with Arthur Hallam. In consequence of Lockhart’s censures, or in deference to the maturer taste of the poet, The Miller’s Daughter was greatly altered before 1842. It is one of the earliest, if not the very earliest, of Tennyson’s domestic English idylls, poems with conspicuous beauties, but not without sacrifices to that Muse of the home affections on whom Sir Barnes Newcome delivered his famous lecture. The seventh stanza perhaps hardly deserved to be altered, as it is, so as to bring in “minnows” where “fish” had been the reading, and where “trout” would best recall an English chalk stream. To the angler the rising trout, which left the poet cold, is at least as welcome as the “reflex of a beauteous form.” “Every woman seems an angel at the water-side,” said “that good old angler, now with God,” Thomas Todd Stoddart, and so “the long and listless boy” found it to be. It is no wonder that the mother was “SLOWLY brought to yield consent to my desire.” The domestic affections, in fact, do not adapt themselves so well to poetry as the passion, unique in Tennyson, of Fatima. The critics who hunt for parallels or plagiarisms will note -

“O Love, O fire! once he drew
With one long kiss my whole soul thro’
My lips,”

and will observe Mr Browning’s

”Once he kissed
My soul out in a fiery mist.”

As to OEnone, the scenery of that earliest of the classical idylls is borrowed from the Pyrenees and the tour with Hallam. “It is possible that the poem may have been suggested by Beattie’s Judgment of Paris,” says Mr Collins; it is also possible that the tale which

”Quintus Calaber
Somewhat lazily handled of old”

may have reached Tennyson’s mind from an older writer than Beattie. He is at least as likely to have been familiar with Greek myth as with the lamented “Minstrel.” The form of 1833, greatly altered in 1842, contained such unlucky phrases as “cedar shadowy,” and “snowycoloured,” “marblecold,” “violet-eyed” — easy spoils of criticism. The alterations which converted a beautiful but faulty into a beautiful and flawless poem perhaps obscure the significance of OEnone’s “I will not die alone,” which in the earlier volume directly refers to the foreseen end of all as narrated in Tennyson’s late piece, The Death of OEnone. The whole poem brings to mind the glowing hues of Titian and the famous Homeric lines on the divine wedlock of Zeus and Hera.

The allegory or moral of The Palace of Art does not need explanation. Not many of the poems owe more to revision. The early stanza about Isaiah, with fierce Ezekiel, and “Eastern Confutzee,” did undeniably remind the reader, as Lockhart said, of The Groves of Blarney.

“With statues gracing that noble place in,
All haythen goddesses most rare,
Petrarch, Plato, and Nebuchadnezzar,
All standing naked in the open air.”

In the early version the Soul, being too much “up to date,”
“Lit white streams of dazzling gas,”
like Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford.

“Thus her intense, untold delight,
In deep or vivid colour, smell, and sound,
Was flattered day and night.”

Lockhart was not fond of Sir Walter’s experiments in gas, the “smell” gave him no “deep, untold delight,” and his “infamous review” was biassed by these circumstances.

The volume of 1833 was in nothing more remarkable than in its proof of the many-sidedness of the author. He offered mediaeval romance, and classical perfection touched with the romantic spirit, and domestic idyll, of which The May Queen is probably the most popular example. The “mysterious being,” conversant with “the spiritual world,” might have been expected to disdain topics well within the range of Eliza Cook. He did not despise but elevated them, and thereby did more to introduce himself to the wide English public than he could have done by a century of Fatimas or Lotos-Eaters. On the other hand, a taste more fastidious, or more perverse, will scarcely be satisfied with pathos which in process of time has come to seem “obvious.” The pathos of early death in the prime of beauty is less obvious in Homer, where Achilles is to be the victim, or in the laments of the Anthology, where we only know that the dead bride or maiden was fair; but the poor May Queen is of her nature rather commonplace.

“That good man, the clergyman, has told me words of peace,”

strikes a note rather resembling the Tennysonian parody of Wordsworth -

“A Mr Wilkinson, a clergyman.”

The Lotos-Eaters, of course, is at the opposite pole of the poet’s genius. A few plain verses of the Odyssey, almost bald in their reticence, are the point de repere of the most magical vision expressed in the most musical verse. Here is the languid charm of Spenser, enriched with many classical memories, and pictures of natural beauty gorgeously yet delicately painted. After the excision of some verses, rather fantastical, in 1842, the poem became a flawless masterpiece, — one of the eternal possessions of song.

On the other hand, the opening of The Dream of Fair Women was marred in 1833 by the grotesque introductory verses about “a man that sails in a balloon.” Young as Tennyson was, these freakish passages are a psychological marvel in the work of one who did not lack the saving sense of humour. The poet, wafted on the wing and “pinion that the Theban eagle bear,” cannot conceivably be likened to an aeronaut waving flags out of a balloon — except in a spirit of self-mockery which was not Tennyson’s. His remarkable self-discipline in excising the fantastic and superfluous, and reducing his work to its classical perfection of thought and form, is nowhere more remarkable than in this magnificent vision. It is probably by mere accidental coincidence of thought that, in the verses To J. S. (James Spedding), Tennyson reproduces the noble speech on the warrior’s death which Sir Walter Scott places in the lips of the great Dundee: “It is the memory which the soldier leaves behind him, like the long train of light that follows the sunken sun, THAT is all that is worth caring for,” the light which lingers eternally on the hills of Atholl. Tennyson’s lines are a close parallel:-

“His memory long will live alone
  In all our hearts, as mournful light
That broods above the fallen sun,
  And dwells in heaven half the night.”

Though Tennyson disliked the exhibition of “the chips of the workshop,” we have commented on them, on the early readings of the early volumes. They may be regarded more properly as the sketches of a master than as “chips,” and do more than merely engage the idle curiosity of the fanatics of first editions. They prove that the poet was studious of perfection, and wisely studious, for his alterations, unlike those of some authors, were almost invariably for the better, the saner, the more mature in taste. The early readings are also worth notice, because they partially explain, by their occasionally fantastic and humourless character, the lack of early and general recognition of the poet’s genius. The native prejudice of mankind is not in favour of a new poet. Of new poets there are always so many, most of them bad, that nature has protected mankind by an armour of suspiciousness. The world, and Lockhart, easily found good reasons for distrusting this new claimant of the ivy and the bays: moreover, since about 1814 there had been a reaction against new poetry. The market was glutted. Scott had set everybody on reading, and too many on writing, novels. The great reaction of the century against all forms of literature except prose fiction had begun. Near the very date of Tennyson’s first volume Bulwer Lytton, as we saw, had frankly explained that he wrote novels because nobody would look at anything else. Tennyson had to overcome this universal, or all but universal, indifference to new poetry, and, after being silent for ten years, overcome it he did — a remarkable victory of art and of patient courage. Times were even worse for poets than to-day. Three hundred copies of the new volume were sold! But Tennyson's friends were not puffers in league with pushing publishers.

Meanwhile the poet in 1833 went on quietly and undefeated with his work. He composed The Gardener's Daughter, and was at work on the Morte d'Arthur, suppressed till the ninth year, on the Horatian plan. Many poems were produced (and even written out, which a number of his pieces never were), and were left in manuscript till they appeared in the Biography. Most of these are so little worthy of the author that the marvel is how he came to write them — in what uninspired hours. Unlike Wordsworth, he could weed the tares from his wheat. His studies were in Greek, German, Italian, history (a little), and chemistry, botany, and electricity— "cross-grained Muses," these last.

It was on September 15, 1833, that Arthur Hallam died. Unheralded by sign or symptom of disease as it was, the news fell like a thunderbolt from a serene sky. Tennyson's and Hallam's love had been "passing the love of women." A blow like this drives a man on the rocks of the ultimate, the insoluble problems of destiny. "Is this the end?" Nourished as on the milk of lions, on the elevating and strengthening doctrines of popular science, trained from childhood to forego hope and attend evening lectures, the young critics of our generation find Tennyson a weakling because he had hopes and fears concerning the ultimate renewal of what was more than half his life — his friendship.

"That faith I fain would keep,
  That hope I'll not forego:
Eternal be the sleep -
  Unless to waken so,"

wrote Lockhart, and the verses echoed ceaselessly in the widowed heart of Carlyle. These men, it is part of the duty of critics later born to remember, were not children or cowards, though they dreamed, and hoped, and feared. We ought to make allowance for failings incident to an age not yet fully enlightened by popular science, and still undivorced from spiritual ideas that are as old as the human race, and perhaps not likely to perish while that race exists. Now and then even scientific men have been mistaken, especially when they have declined to examine evidence, as in this problem of the transcendental nature of the human spirit they usually do. At all events Tennyson was unconvinced that death is the end, and shortly after the fatal tidings arrived from Vienna he began to write fragments in verse preluding to the poem of In Memoriam. He also began, in a mood of great misery, The Two Voices; or, Thoughts of a Suicide. The poem seems to have been partly done by September 1834, when Spedding commented on it, and on the beautiful Sir Galahad, "intended for something of a male counterpart to St Agnes." The Morte d'Arthur Tennyson then thought "the best thing I have managed lately." Very early in 1835 many stanzas of In Memoriam had taken form. "I do not wish to be dragged forward in any shape before the reading public at present," wrote the poet, when he heard that Mill desired to write on him. His OEnone he had brought to its new perfection, and did not desire comments on work now several years old. He also wrote his Ulysses and his Tithonus.

If ever the term "morbid" could have been applied to Tennyson, it would have been in the years immediately following the death of Arthur Hallam. But the application would have been unjust. True, the poet was living out of the world; he was unhappy, and he was, as people say, "doing nothing." He was so poor that he sold his Chancellor's prize gold medal, and he did not

”Scan his whole horizon
In quest of what he could clap eyes on,”

in the way of money-making, which another poet describes as the normal attitude of all men as well as of pirates. A careless observer would have thought that the poet was dawdling. But he dwelt in no Castle of Indolence; he studied, he composed, he corrected his verses: like Sir Walter in Liddesdale, "he was making himsel' a' the time." He did not neglect the movements of the great world in that dawn of discontent with the philosophy of commercialism. But it was not his vocation to plunge into the fray, and on to platforms.

It is a very rare thing anywhere, especially in England, for a man deliberately to choose poetry as the duty of his life, and to remain loyal, as a consequence, to the bride of St Francis — Poverty. This loyalty Tennyson maintained, even under the temptation to make money in recognised ways presented by his new-born love for his future wife, Miss Emily Sellwood. They had first met in 1830, when she, a girl of seventeen, seemed to him like "a Dryad or an Oread wandering here." But admiration became the affection of a lifetime when Tennyson met Miss Sellwood as bridesmaid to her sister, the bride of his brother Charles, in 1836. The poet could not afford to marry, and, like the hero of Locksley Hall, he may have asked himself, "What is that which I should do?" By 1840 he had done nothing tangible and lucrative, and correspondence between the lovers was forbidden. That neither dreamed of Tennyson's deserting poetry for a more normal profession proved of great benefit to the world. The course is one which could only be justified by the absolute certainty of possessing genius.

CHAPTER III. — 1837-1842.

In 1837 the Tennysons left the old rectory; till 1840 they lived at High Beech in Epping Forest, and after a brief stay at Tunbridge Wells went to Boxley, near Maidstone.

It appears that at last the poet had "beat his music out," though his friends "still tried to cheer him." But the man who wrote Ulysses when his grief was fresh could not be suspected of declining into a hypochondriac. "If I mean to make my mark at all, it must be by shortness," he said at this time; "for the men before me had been so diffuse, and most of the big things, except King Arthur, had been done." The age had not la tete epique: Poe had announced the paradox that there is no such thing as a long poem, and even in dealing with Arthur, Tennyson followed the example of Theocritus in writing, not an epic, but epic idylls. Long poems suit an age of listeners, for which they were originally composed, or of leisure and few books. At present epics are read for duty's sake, not for the only valid reason, "for human pleasure," in FitzGerald's phrase.

Between 1838 and 1840 Tennyson made some brief tours in England with FitzGerald, and, coming from Coventry, wrote Godiva. His engagement with Miss Sellwood seemed to be adjourned sine die, as they were forbidden to correspond.

By 1841 Tennyson was living at Mablethorpe on the Lincolnshire coast; working at his volumes of 1842, much urged by FitzGerald and American admirers, who had heard of the poet through Emerson. Moxon was to be the publisher, himself something of a poet; but early in 1842 he had not yet received the MS. Perhaps Emerson heard of Tennyson through Carlyle, who, says Sterling, "said more in your praise than in any one's except Cromwell, and an American backwoodsman who has killed thirty or forty people with a bowie-knife." Carlyle at this time was much attached to Lockhart, editor of the Quarterly Review, and it may have been Carlyle who converted Lockhart to admiration of his old victim. Carlyle had very little more appreciation of Keats than had Byron, or (in early days) Lockhart, and it was probably as much the man of heroic physical mould, "a life-guardsman spoilt by making poetry," and the unaffected companion over a pipe, as the poet, that attracted him in Tennyson. As we saw, when the two triumphant volumes of 1842 did appear, Lockhart asked Sterling to review whatever book he pleased (meaning the

Poems) in the Quarterly. The praise of Sterling may seem lukewarm to us, especially when compared with that of Spedding in the Edinburgh. But Sterling, and Lockhart too, were obliged to “gang warily.” Lockhart had, to his constant annoyance, “a partner, Mr Croker,” and I have heard from the late Dean Boyle that Mr Croker was much annoyed by even the mild applause yielded in the Quarterly to the author of the Morte d’Arthur.

While preparing the volumes of 1842 at Boxley, Tennyson’s life was divided between London and the society of his brother-in-law, Mr Edmund Lushington, the great Greek scholar and Professor of Greek at Glasgow University. There was in Mr Lushington’s personal aspect, and noble simplicity of manner and character, something that strongly resembled Tennyson himself. Among their common friends were Lord Houghton (Monckton Milnes), Mr Lear of the Book of Nonsense (“with such a pencil, such a pen”), Mr Venables (who at school modified the profile of Thackeray), and Lord Kelvin. In town Tennyson met his friends at The Cock, which he rendered classic; among them were Thackeray, Forster, Maclise, and Dickens. The times were stirring: social agitation, and “Carol philosophy” in Dickens, with growls from Carlyle, marked the period. There was also a kind of optimism in the air, a prophetic optimism, not yet fulfilled.

“Fly, happy happy sails, and bear the Press!”

That mission no longer strikes us as exquisitely felicitous. “The mission of the Cross,” and of the missionaries, means international complications; and “the markets of the Golden Year” are precisely the most fruitful causes of wars and rumours of wars:-

”Sea and air are dark
With great contrivances of Power.”

Tennyson’s was not an unmitigated optimism, and had no special confidence in

“The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings
That every sophister can lime.”

His political poetry, in fact, was very unlike the socialist chants of Mr William Morris, or Songs before Sunrise. He had nothing to say about

“The blood on the hands of the King,
And the lie on the lips of the Priest.”

The hands of Presidents have not always been unstained; nor are statements of a mythical nature confined to the lips of the clergy. The poet was anxious that freedom should “broaden down,” but “slowly,” not with indelicate haste. Persons who are more in a hurry will never care for the political poems, and it is certain that Tennyson did not feel sympathetically inclined towards the Iberian patriot who said that his darling desire was “to cut the throats of all the cures,” like some Covenanters of old. “Mais vous connaissez mon coeur”— “and a pretty black one it is,” thought young Tennyson. So cautious in youth, during his Pyrenean tour with Hallam in 1830, Tennyson could not become a convinced revolutionary later. We must accept him with his limitations: nor must we confuse him with the hero of his Locksley Hall, one of the most popular, and most parodied, of the poems of 1842: full of beautiful images and “confusions of a wasted youth,” a youth dramatically conceived, and in no way autobiographical.

In so marvellous a treasure of precious things as the volumes of 1842, perhaps none is more splendid, perfect, and perdurable than the Morte d’Arthur. It had been written seven years earlier, and pronounced by the poet “not bad.” Tennyson was never, perhaps, a very deep Arthurian student. A little cheap copy of Malory was his companion. He does not appear to have gone deeply into the French and German “literature of the subject.” Malory’s compilation (1485) from French and English sources, with the Mabinogion of Lady Charlotte Guest, sufficed for him as materials. The whole poem, enshrined in the memory of all lovers of verse, is richly studded, as the hilt of Excalibur, with classical memories. “A faint Homeric echo” it is not, nor a Virgilian echo, but the absolute voice of old romance, a thing that might have been chanted by

“The lonely maiden of the Lake”

when

“Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps,
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.”

Perhaps the most exquisite adaptation of all are the lines from the Odyssey -

“Where falls not hail nor rain, nor any snow.”

“Softly through the flutes of the Grecians” came first these Elysian numbers, then through Lucretius, then through Tennyson’s own Lucretius, then in Mr Swinburne’s Atalanta in Calydon:-

“Lands indiscoverable in the unheard-of west
Round which the strong stream of a sacred sea
Rolls without wind for ever, and the snow
There shows not her white wings and windy feet,
Nor thunder nor swift rain saith anything,
Nor the sun burns, but all things rest and thrive.”

So fortunate in their transmission through poets have been the lines of “the Ionian father of the rest,” the greatest of them all.

In the variety of excellences which marks Tennyson, the new English idylls of 1842 hold their prominent place. Nothing can be more exquisite and more English than the picture of “the garden that I love.” Theocritus cannot be surpassed; but the idyll matches to the seventh of his, where it is most closely followed, and possesses such a picture of a girl as the Sicilian never tried to paint.

Dora is another idyll, resembling the work of a Wordsworth in a clime softer than that of the Fells. The lays of Edwin Morris and Edward Bull are not among the more enduring of even the playful poems. The St Simeon Stylites appears “made to the hand” of the author of Men and Women rather than of Tennyson. The grotesque vanity of the anchorite is so remote from us, that we can scarcely judge of the truth of the picture, though the East has still her parallels to St Simeon. From the almost, perhaps quite, incredible ascetic the poet lightly turns to “society verse” lifted up into the air of poetry, in the charm of The Talking Oak, and the happy flitting sketches of actual history; and thence to the strength and passion of Love and Duty. Shall

”Sin itself be found

The cloudy porch oft opening on the Sun?”

That this is the province of sin is a pretty popular modern moral. But Honour is the better part, and here was a poet who had the courage to say so; though, to be sure, the words ring strange in an age when highly respectable matrons assure us that “passion,” like charity, covers a multitude of sins. Love and Duty, we must admit, is “early Victorian.”

The Ulysses is almost a rival to the Morte d’Arthur. It is of an early date, after Arthur Hallam’s death, and Thackeray speaks of the poet chanting his

“Great Achilles whom we knew,”

as if he thought that this was in Cambridge days. But it is later than these. Tennyson said, “Ulysses was written soon after Arthur Hallam’s death, and gave my feeling about the need of going forward, and braving the struggle of life, perhaps more simply than anything in In Memoriam.” Assuredly the expression is more simple, and more noble, and the personal emotion more dignified for the classic veil. When the plaintive Pessimist (“‘proud of the title,’ as the Living Skeleton said when they showed him”) tells us that “not to have been born is best,” we may answer with Ulysses -

”Life piled on life
Were all too little.”

The Ulysses of Tennyson, of course, is Dante’s Ulysses, not Homer’s Odysseus, who brought home to Ithaca not one of his mariners. His last known adventure, the journey to the land of men who knew not the savour of salt, Odysseus was to make on foot and alone; so spake the ghost of Tiresias within the poplar pale of Persephone.

The Two Voices expresses the contest of doubts and griefs with the spirit of endurance and joy which speaks alone in Ulysses. The man who is unhappy, but does not want to put an end to himself, has certainly the better of the argument with the despairing Voice. The arguments of “that barren Voice” are, indeed, remarkably deficient in cogency and logic, if we can bring ourselves to strip the discussion of its poetry. The original title, Thoughts of a Suicide, was inappropriate. The suicidal suggestions are promptly faced and confuted, and the mood of the author is throughout that of one who thinks life worth living:-

“Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly long’d for death.

’Tis life whereof our nerves are scant,
Oh life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that I want.”

This appears to be a satisfactory reply to the persons who eke out a livelihood by publishing pessimistic books, and hooting, as the great Alexandre Dumas says, at the great drama of Life.

With The Day-Dream (of The Sleeping Beauty) Tennyson again displays his matchless range of powers. Verse of Society rises into a charmed and musical fantasy, passing from the Berlin-wool work of the period

(“Take the broidery frame, and add
A crimson to the quaint Macaw”)

into the enchanted land of the fable: princes immortal, princesses eternally young and fair. The St Agnes and Sir Galahad, companion pieces, contain the romance, as St Simeon Stylites shows the repulsive side of asceticism; for the saint and the knight are young, beautiful, and eager as St Theresa in her childhood. It has been said, I do not know on what authority, that the poet had no recollection of composing Sir Galahad, any more than Scott remembered composing The Bride of Lammermoor, or Thackeray parts of Pendennis. The haunting of Tennyson’s mind by the Arthurian legends prompted also the lovely fragment on the Queen’s last Maying, Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere, a thing of perfect charm and music. The ballads of Lady Clare and The Lord of Burleigh are not examples of the poet in his strength; for his power and fantasy we must turn to The Vision of Sin, where the early passages have the languid voluptuous music of The Lotos-Eaters, with the ethical element superadded, while the portion beginning -

“Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin

is in parts reminiscent of Burns’s Jolly Beggars. In Break, Break, Break, we hear a note prelusive to In Memoriam, much of which was already composed.

The Poems of 1842 are always vocal in the memories of all readers of English verse. None are more familiar, at least to men of the generations which immediately followed Tennyson’s. FitzGerald was apt to think that the poet never again attained the same level, and I venture to suppose that he never rose above it. For FitzGerald’s opinion, right or wrong, it is easy to account. He had seen all the pieces in manuscript; they were his cherished possession before the world knew them. C’est mon homme, he might have said of Tennyson, as Boileau said of Moliere. Before the public awoke FitzGerald had “discovered Tennyson,” and that at the age most open to poetry and most enthusiastic in friendship. Again, the Poems of 1842 were SHORT, while The Princess, Maud, and The Idylls of the King were relatively long, and, with In Memoriam, possessed unity of subject. They lacked the rich, the unexampled variety of topic, treatment, and theme which marks the Poems of 1842. These were all reasons why FitzGerald should think that the two slim green volumes held the poet’s work at its highest level. Perhaps he was not wrong, after all.

CHAPTER IV. — 1842-848 — THE PRINCESS.

The Poems, and such criticisms as those of Spedding and Sterling, gave Tennyson his place. All the world of letters heard of him. Dean Bradley tells us how he took Oxford by storm in the days of the undergraduateship of Clough and Matthew Arnold. Probably both of these young writers did not share the undergraduate enthusiasm. Mr Arnold, we know, did not reckon Tennyson un esprit puissant. Like Wordsworth (who thought Tennyson “decidedly the first of our living poets, . . . he has expressed in the strongest terms his gratitude to my writings”), Arnold was no fervent admirer of his contemporaries. Besides, if Tennyson’s work is “a criticism of Life,” the moral criticism, so far, was hidden in flowers, like the sword of Aristogiton at the feast. But, on the whole, Tennyson had won the young men who cared for poetry, though Sir Robert Peel had never heard of him: and to win the young, as Theocritus desired to do, is more than half the battle. On September 8, 1842, the poet was able to tell Mr Lushington that “500 of my books are sold; according to Moxon’s brother, I have made a sensation.” The sales were not like those of Childe Harold or Marmion; but for some twenty years new poetry had not sold at all. Novels had come in about 1814, and few wanted or bought recent verse. But Carlyle was converted. He spoke no more of a spoiled guardsman. “If you knew what my relation has been to the thing called ‘English Poetry’ for many years back, you would think such a fact” (his pleasure in the book) “surprising.” Carlyle had been living (as Mrs Carlyle too well knew) in Oliver Cromwell, a hero who probably took no delight in Lycidas or Comus, in Lovelace or Carew. “I would give all my poetry to have made one song like that,” said Tennyson of Lovelace’s Althea. But Noll would have disregarded them all alike, and Carlyle was full of the spirit of the Protector. To conquer him was indeed a victory for Tennyson; while Dickens, not a reading man, expressed his “earnest and sincere homage.”

But Tennyson was not successful in the modern way. Nobody “interviewed” him. His photograph, of course, with disquisitions on his pipes and slippers, did not adorn the literary press. His literary income was not magnified by penny-a-liners. He did not become a lion; he never would roar and shake his mane in drawing-rooms. Lockhart held that Society was the most agreeable form of the stage: the dresses and actresses incomparably the prettiest. But Tennyson liked Society no better than did General Gordon. He had friends enough, and no desire for new acquaintances. Indeed, his fortune was shattered at this time by a strange investment in wood-carving by machinery. Ruskin had only just begun to write, and wood-carving by machinery was still deemed an enterprise at once philanthropic and aesthetic. “My father’s worldly goods were all gone,” says Lord Tennyson. The poet’s health suffered extremely: he tried a fashionable “cure” at Cheltenham, where he saw miracles of healing, but underwent none. In September 1845 Peel was moved by Lord Houghton to recommend the poet for a pension (200 pounds annually). “I have done nothing slavish to get it: I never even solicited for it either by myself or others.” Like Dr Johnson, he honourably accepted what was offered in honour. For some reason many persons who write in the press are always maddened when such good fortune, however small, however well merited, falls to a brother in letters. They, of course, were “causelessly bitter.” “Let them rave!”

If few of the rewards of literary success arrived, the penalties at once began, and only ceased with the poet’s existence. “If you only knew what a nuisance these volumes of verse are! Rascals send me theirs per post from America, and I have more than once been knocked up out of bed to pay three or four shillings for books of which I can’t get through one page, for of all books the most insipid reading is second-rate verse.”

Would that versifiers took the warning! Tennyson had not sent his little firstlings to Coleridge and Wordsworth: they are only the hopeless rhymers who bombard men of letters with their lyrics and tragedies.

Mr Browning was a sufferer. To one young twitterer he replied in the usual way. The bard wrote acknowledging the letter, but asking for a definite criticism. “I do not think myself a Shakespeare or a Milton, but I KNOW I am better than Mr Coventry Patmore or Mr Austin Dobson.” Mr Browning tried to procrastinate: he was already deeply engaged with earlier arrivals of volumes of song. The poet was hurt, not angry; he had expected other things from Mr Browning: HE ought to know his duty to youth. At the intercession of a relation Mr Browning now did his best, and the minstrel, satisfied at last, repeated his conviction of his superiority to the authors of The Angel in the House and Beau Brocade. Probably no man, not even Mr Gladstone, ever suffered so much from minstrels as Tennyson. He did not suffer them gladly.

In 1846 the Poems reached their fourth edition. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton (bitten by what fly who knows?) attacked Tennyson in The New Timon, a forgotten satire. We do not understand the ways of that generation. The cheap and spiteful genre of satire, its forged morality, its sham indignation, its appeal to the ape-like passions, has gone out. Lytton had suffered many things (not in verse) from Jeames Yellowplush: I do not know that he hit back at Thackeray, but he "passed it on" to Thackeray's old college companion. Tennyson, for once, replied (in Punch: the verses were sent thither by John Forster); the answer was one of magnificent contempt. But he soon decided that

"The noblest answer unto such
Is perfect stillness when they brawl."

Long afterwards the poet dedicated a work to the son of Lord Lytton. He replied to no more satirists. Our difficulty, of course, is to conceive such an attack coming from a man of Lytton's position and genius. He was no hungry hack, and could, and did, do infinitely better things than "stand in a false following" of Pope. Probably Lytton had a false idea that Tennyson was a rich man, a branch of his family being affluent, and so resented the little pension. The poet was so far from rich in 1846, and even after the publication of The Princess, that his marriage had still to be deferred for four years.

On reading The Princess afresh one is impressed, despite old familiarity, with the extraordinary influence of its beauty. Here are, indeed, the best words best placed, and that curious felicity of style which makes every line a marvel, and an eternal possession. It is as if Tennyson had taken the advice which Keats gave to Shelley, "Load every rift with ore." To choose but one or two examples, how the purest and freshest impression of nature is re-created in mind and memory by the picture of Melissa with

”All her thoughts as fair within her eyes,
As bottom agates seen to wave and float
In crystal currents of clear morning seas."

The lyric, "Tears, idle tears," is far beyond praise: once read it seems like a thing that has always existed in the world of poetic archetypes, and has now been not so much composed as discovered and revealed. The many pictures and similitudes in The Princess have a magical gorgeousness:-

”From the illumined hall
Long lanes of splendour slanted o'er a press
Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded ewes,
And rainbow robes, and gems and gem-like eyes,
And gold and golden heads; they to and fro
Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some red, some pale."

The "small sweet Idyll" from

“A volume of the poets of her land”

pure Theocritus. It has been admirably rendered into Greek by Mr Gilbert Murray. The exquisite beauties of style are not less exquisitely blended in the confusions of a dream, for a dream is the thing most akin to The Princess. Time does not exist in the realm of Gama, or in the ideal university of Ida. We have a bookless North, severed but by a frontier pillar from a golden and learned South. The arts, from architecture to miniature-painting, are in their highest perfection, while knights still tourney in armour, and the quarrel of two nations is decided as in the gentle and joyous passage of arms at Ashby de la Zouche. Such confusions are purposefully dream-like: the vision being a composite thing, as dreams are, haunted by the modern scene of the holiday in the park, the “gallant glorious chronicle,” the Abbey, and that “old crusading knight austere,” Sir Ralph. The seven narrators of the scheme are like the “split personalities” of dreams, and the whole scheme is of great technical skill. The earlier editions lacked the beautiful songs of the ladies, and that additional trait of dream, the strange trance-like seizures of the Prince: “fallings from us, vanishings,” in Wordsworthian phrase; instances of “dissociation,” in modern psychological terminology. Tennyson himself, like Shelley and Wordsworth, had experience of this kind of dreaming awake which he attributes to his Prince, to strengthen the shadowy yet brilliant character of his romance. It is a thing of normal and natural points de repere; of daylight suggestion, touched as with the magnifying and intensifying elements of haschish-begotten phantasmagoria. In the same way opium raised into the region of brilliant vision that passage of Purchas which Coleridge was reading before he dreamed Kubla Khan. But in Tennyson the effects were deliberately sought and secured.

One might conjecture, though Lord Tennyson says nothing on the subject, that among the suggestions for The Princess was the opening of Love’s Labour’s Lost. Here the King of Navarre devises the College of Recluses, which is broken up by the arrival of the Princess of France, Rosaline, and the other ladies:-

King. Our Court shall be a little Academe,
Still and contemplative in living art.
You three, Biron, Domain, and Longaville,
Have sworn for three years’ term to live with me,
My fellow-scholars, and to keep those statutes.
*
Biron. That is, to live and study here three years.
But there are other strict observances;
As, not to see a woman in that term.

*

‘That no woman shalt come within a mile of my Court:’ Hath
this been proclaimed?
Long. Four days ago.
Biron. Let’s see the penalty. ‘On pain of losing her
tongue.’

The Princess then arrives with her ladies, as the Prince does with Cyril and Florian, as Charles did, with Buckingham, in Spain. The conclusion of Shakespeare is Tennyson’s conclusion -

“We cannot cross the cause why we are born.”

The later poet reverses the attitude of the sexes in Love’s Labour’s Lost: it is the women who make and break the vow; and the women in The Princess insist on the “grand, epic, homicidal” scenes, while the men are debarred, more or less, from a sportive treatment of the subject. The tavern catch of Cyril; the laughable pursuit of the Prince by the feminine Proctors; the draggled appearance of the adventurers in female garb, are concessions to the humour of the situation. Shakespeare would certainly have given us the song of Cyril at the picnic, and comic enough the effect would have been on the stage. It may be a gross employment, but The Princess, with the pretty chorus of girl undergraduates,

“In colours gayer than the morning mist,”

went reasonably well in opera. Merely considered as a romantic fiction, The Princess presents higher proofs of original narrative genius than any other such attempt by its author.

The poem is far from being deficient in that human interest which Shelley said that it was as vain to ask from HIM, as to seek to buy a leg of mutton at a gin-shop. The characters, the protagonists, with Cyril, Melissa, Lady Blanche, the child Aglaia, King Gama, the other king, Arac, and the hero’s mother — beautifully studied from the mother of the poet — are all sufficiently human. But they seem to waver in the magic air, “as all the golden autumn woodland reels athwart the fires of autumn leaves. For these reasons, and because of the designed fantasy of the whole composition, The Princess is essentially a poem for the true lovers of poetry, of Spenser and of Coleridge. The serious motive, the question of Woman, her wrongs, her rights, her education, her capabilities, was not “in the air” in 1847. To be sure it had often been “in the air.” The Alexandrian Platonists, the Renaissance, even the age of Anne, had their emancipated and learned ladies. Early Greece had Sappho, Corinna, and Erinna, the first the chief of lyric poets, even in her fragments, the two others applauded by all Hellas. The French Revolution had begotten Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin and her Vindication of the Rights of Women, and in France George Sand was prominent and emancipated enough while the poet wrote. But, the question of love apart, George Sand was “very, very woman,” shining as a domestic character and fond of needlework. England was not excited about the question which has since produced so many disputants, inevitably shrill, and has not been greatly meddled with by women of genius, George Eliot or Mrs Oliphant. The poem, in the public indifference as to feminine education, came rather prematurely. We have now ladies’ colleges, not in haunts remote from man, but by the sedged banks of Cam and Cherwell. There have been no revolutionary results: no boys have spied these chaste nests, with echoing romantic consequences. The beauty and splendour of the Princess’s university have not arisen in light and colour, and it is only at St Andrews that girls wear the academic and becoming costume of the scarlet gown. The real is far below the ideal, but the real in 1847 seemed eminently remote, or even impossible.

The learned Princess herself was not on our level as to knowledge and the past of womankind. She knew not of their masterly position in the law of ancient Egypt. Gynaeocracy and matriarchy, the woman the head of the savage or prehistoric group, were things hidden from her. She “glanced at the Lycian custom,” but not at the Pictish, a custom which would have suited George Sand to a marvel. She maligned the Hottentots.

“The highest is the measure of the man,
And not the Kaffir, Hottentot, Malay.”

The Hottentots had long ago anticipated the Princess and her shrill modern sisterhood. If we take the Greeks, or even ourselves, we may say, with Dampier (1689), “The Hodmadods, though a nasty people, yet are gentlemen to these” as regards the position of women. Let us hear Mr Hartland: “In every Hottentot’s house the wife is supreme. Her husband, poor fellow, though he may wield wide power and influence out of doors, at home dare not even take a mouthful of sour-milk out of the household vat without her permission . . . The highest oath a man can take is to swear by his eldest sister, and if he abuses this name he forfeits to her his finest goods and sheep.”

However, in 1847 England had not yet thought of imitating the Hodmadods. Consequently, and by reason of the purely literary and elaborately fantastical character of The Princess, it was not of a nature to increase the poet’s fame and success. “My book is out, and I hate it, and so no doubt will you,” Tennyson wrote to FitzGerald, who hated it and said so. “Like Carlyle, I gave up all hopes of him after The Princess,” indeed it was not apt to conciliate Carlyle. “None of the songs had the old champagne flavour," said Fitz; and Lord Tennyson adds, "Nothing either by Thackeray or by my father met FitzGerald's approbation unless he had first seen it in manuscript." This prejudice was very human. Lord Tennyson remarks, as to the poet's meaning in this work, born too early, that "the sooner woman finds out, before the great educational movement begins, that 'woman is not undeveloped man, but diverse,' the better it will be for the progress of the world."

But probably the "educational movement" will not make much difference to womankind on the whole. The old Platonic remark that woman "does the same things as man, but not so well," will eternally hold good, at least in the arts, and in letters, except in rare cases of genius. A new Jeanne d'Arc, the most signal example of absolute genius in history, will not come again; and the ages have waited vainly for a new Sappho or a new Jane Austen. Literature, poetry, painting, have always been fields open to woman. But two names exhaust the roll of women of the highest rank in letters — Sappho and Jane Austen. And "when did woman ever yet invent?" In "arts of government" Elizabeth had courage, and just saving sense enough to yield to Cecil at the eleventh hour, and escape the fate of "her sister and her foe," the beautiful unhappy queen who told her ladies that she dared to look on whatever men dared to do, and herself would do it if her strength so served her." "The foundress of the Babylonian walls" is a myth; "the Rhodope that built the Pyramid" is not a creditable myth; for exceptions to Knox's "Monstrous Regiment of Women" we must fall back on "The Palmyrene that fought Aurelian," and the revered name of the greatest of English queens, Victoria. Thus history does not encourage the hope that a man-like education will raise many women to the level of the highest of their sex in the past, or even that the enormous majority of women will take advantage of the opportunity of a man-like education. A glance at the numerous periodicals designed for the reading of women depresses optimism, and the Princess's prophecy of

"Two plummets dropped for one to sound the abyss
Of science, and the secrets of the mind,"

is not near fulfilment. Fortunately the sex does not "love the Metaphysics," and perhaps has not yet produced even a manual of Logic. It must suffice man and woman to

"Walk this world
Yoked in all exercise of noble end,"

of a more practical character, while woman is at liberty

”To live and learn and be
All that not harms distinctive womanhood.”

This was the conclusion of the poet who had the most chivalrous reverence for womanhood. This is the eirenicon of that old strife between the women and the men — that war in which both armies are captured. It may not be acceptable to excited lady combatants, who think man their foe, when the real enemy is (what Porson damned) the Nature of Things.

A new poem like The Princess would soon reach the public of our day, so greatly increased are the uses of advertisement. But The Princess moved slowly from edition to revised and improved edition, bringing neither money nor much increase of fame. The poet was living with his family at Cheltenham, where among his new acquaintances were Sydney Dobell, the poet of a few exquisite pieces, and F. W. Robertson, later so popular as a preacher at Brighton. Meeting him for the first time, and knowing Robertson’s “wish to pluck the heart from my mystery, from pure nervousness I would only talk of beer.” This kind of shyness beset Tennyson. A lady tells me that as a girl (and a very beautiful girl) she and her sister, and a third, nec diversa, met the poet, and expected high discourse. But his speech was all of that wingless insect which “gets there, all the same,” according to an American lyrist; the insect which fills Mrs Carlyle’s letters with bulletins of her success or failure in domestic campaigns.

Tennyson kept visiting London, where he saw Thackeray and the despair of Carlyle, and at Bath House he was too modest to be introduced to the great Duke whose requiem he was to sing so nobly. Oddly enough Douglas Jerrold enthusiastically assured Tennyson, at a dinner of a Society of Authors, that “you are the one who will live.” To that end, humanly speaking, he placed himself under the celebrated Dr Gully and his “water-cure,” a foible of that period. In 1848 he made a tour to King Arthur’s Cornish bounds, and another to Scotland, where the Pass of Brander disappointed him: perhaps he saw it on a fine day, and, like Glencoe, it needs tempest and mist lit up by the white fires of many waterfalls. By bonny Doon he “fell into a passion of tears,” for he had all of Keats’s sentiment for Burns: “There never was immortal poet if he be not one.” Of all English poets, the warmest in the praise of Burns have been the two most unlike himself — Tennyson and Keats. It was the songs that Tennyson preferred; Wordsworth liked the Cottar’s Saturday Night.

CHAPTER V. — IN MEMORIAM.

In May 1850 a few, copies of In Memoriam were printed for friends, and presently the poem was published without author’s name. The pieces had been composed at intervals, from 1833 onwards. It is to be observed that the “section about evolution” was written some years before 1844, when the ingenious hypotheses of Robert Chambers, in Vestiges of Creation, were given to the world, and caused a good deal of talk. Ten years, again, after In Memoriam, came Darwin’s Origin of Species. These dates are worth observing. The theory of evolution, of course in a rude mythical shape, is at least as old as the theory of creation, and is found among the speculations of the most backward savages. The Arunta of Central Australia, a race remote from the polite, have a hypothesis of evolution which postulates only a few rudimentary forms of life, a marine environment, and the minimum of supernormal assistance in the way of stimulating the primal forms in the direction of more highly differentiated developments. “The rudimentary forms, Inapertwa, were in reality stages in the transformation of various plants and animals into human beings. . . . They had no distinct limbs or organs of sight, hearing, or smell.” They existed in a kind of lumps, and were set free from the cauls which enveloped them by two beings called Ungambikula, “a word which means ‘out of nothing,’ or ‘self-existing.’ Men descend from lower animals thus evolved.”

This example of the doctrine of evolution in an early shape is only mentioned to prove that the idea has been familiar to the human mind from the lowest known stage of culture. Not less familiar has been the theory of creation by a kind of supreme being. The notion of creation, however, up to 1860, held the foremost place in modern European belief. But Lamarck, the elder Darwin, Monboddo, and others had submitted hypotheses of evolution. Now it was part of the originality of Tennyson, as a philosophic poet, that he had brooded from boyhood on these early theories of evolution, in an age when they were practically unknown to the literary, and were not patronised by the scientific, world. In November 1844 he wrote to Mr Moxon, “I want you to get me a book which I see advertised in the Examiner: it seems to contain many speculations with which I have been familiar for years, and on which I have written more than one poem.” This book was Vestiges of Creation. These poems are the stanzas in In Memoriam about “the greater ape,” and about Nature as careless of the type: “all shall go.” The poetic and philosophic originality of Tennyson thus faced the popular inferences as to the effect of the doctrine of evolution upon religious beliefs long before the world was moved in all its deeps by Darwin’s Origin of Species. Thus the geological record is inconsistent, we learned, with the record of the first chapters of Genesis. If man is a differentiated monkey, and if a monkey has no soul, or future life (which is taken for granted), where are man’s title-deeds to these possessions? With other difficulties of an obvious kind, these presented themselves to the poet with renewed force when his only chance of happiness depended on being able to believe in a future life, and reunion with the beloved dead. Unbelief had always existed. We hear of atheists in the Rig Veda. In the early eighteenth century, in the age of Swift -

“Men proved, as sure as God’s in Gloucester,
That Moses was a great impostor.”

distrust of Moses increased with the increase of hypotheses of evolution. But what English poet, before Tennyson, ever attempted “to lay the spectres of the mind”; ever faced world-old problems in their most recent aspects? I am not acquainted with any poet who attempted this task, and, whatever we may think of Tennyson’s success, I do not see how we can deny his originality.

Mr Frederic Harrison, however, thinks that neither “the theology nor the philosophy of In Memoriam are new, original, with an independent force and depth of their own.” “They are exquisitely graceful re-statements of the theology of the Broad Churchman of the school of F. D. Maurice and Jowett — a combination of Maurice’s somewhat illogical piety with Jowett’s philosophy of mystification.” The piety of Maurice may be as illogical as that of Positivism is logical, and the philosophy of the Master of Balliol may be whatever Mr Harrison pleases to call it. But as Jowett’s earliest work (except an essay on Etruscan religion) is of 1855, one does not see how it could influence Tennyson before 1844. And what had the Duke of Argyll written on these themes some years before 1844? The late Duke, to whom Mr Harrison refers in this connection, was born in 1823. His philosophic ideas, if they were to influence Tennyson’s In Memoriam, must have been set forth by him at the tender age of seventeen, or thereabouts. Mr Harrison’s sentence is, “But does In Memoriam teach anything, or transfigure any idea which was not about that time” (the time of writing was mainly 1833-1840) “common form with F. D. Maurice, with Jowett, C. Kingsley, F. Robertson, Stopford Brooke, Mr Ruskin, and the Duke of Argyll, Bishops Westcott and Boyd Carpenter?”

The dates answer Mr Harrison. Jowett did not publish anything till at least fifteen years after Tennyson wrote his poems on evolution and belief. Dr Boyd

Carpenter's works previous to 1840 are unknown to bibliography. F. W. Robertson was a young parson at Cheltenham. Ruskin had not published the first volume of Modern Painters. His Oxford prize poem is of 1839. Mr Stopford Brooke was at school. The Duke of Argyll was being privately educated: and so with the rest, except the contemporary Maurice. How can Mr Harrison say that, in the time of In Memoriam, Tennyson was "in touch with the ideas of Herschel, Owen, Huxley, Darwin, and Tyndall"? When Tennyson wrote the parts of In Memoriam which deal with science, nobody beyond their families and friends had heard of Huxley, Darwin, and Tyndall. They had not developed, much less had they published, their "general ideas." Even in his journal of the Cruise of the Beagle Darwin's ideas were religious, and he naively admired the works of God. It is strange that Mr Harrison has based his criticism, and his theory of Tennyson's want of originality, on what seems to be a historical error. He cites parts of In Memoriam, and remarks, "No one can deny that all this is exquisitely beautiful; that these eternal problems have never been clad in such inimitable grace . . . But the train of thought is essentially that with which ordinary English readers have been made familiar by F. D. Maurice, Professor Jowett, Ecce Homo, Hypatia, and now by Arthur Balfour, Mr Drummond, and many valiant companies of Septem contra Diabolum." One must keep repeating the historical verity that the ideas of In Memoriam could not have been "made familiar by" authors who had not yet published anything, or by books yet undreamed of and unborn, such as Ecce Homo and Jowett's work on some of St Paul's Epistles. If these books contain the ideas of In Memoriam, it is by dint of repetition and borrowing from In Memoriam, or by coincidence. The originality was Tennyson's, for we cannot dispute the evidence of dates.

When one speaks of "originality" one does not mean that Tennyson discovered the existence of the ultimate problems. But at Cambridge (1828-1830) he had voted "No" in answer to the question discussed by "the Apostles," "Is an intelligible First Cause deducible from the phenomena of the universe?" He had also propounded the theory that "the development of the human body might possibly be traced from the radiated vermicular molluscous and vertebrate organisms," thirty years before Darwin published The Origin of Species. To be concerned so early with such hypotheses, and to face, in poetry, the religious or irreligious inferences which may be drawn from them, decidedly constitutes part of the poetic originality of Tennyson. His attitude, as a poet, towards religious doubt is only so far not original, as it is part of the general reaction from the freethinking of the eighteenth century. Men had then been freethinkers avec delices. It was a joyous thing to be an atheist, or something very like one; at all events, it was glorious to be "emancipated." Many still find it glorious, as we read in the tone of Mr Huxley, when he triumphs and tramples over pious dukes and bishops. Shelley said that a certain schoolgirl “would make a dear little atheist.” But by 1828-1830 men were less joyous in their escape from all that had hitherto consoled and fortified humanity. Long before he dreamed of In Memoriam, in the Poems chiefly Lyrical of 1830 Tennyson had written -

“‘Yet,’ said I, in my morn of youth,
The unsunn’d freshness of my strength,
When I went forth in quest of truth,
‘It is man’s privilege to doubt.’ . . .
   Ay me! I fear
All may not doubt, but everywhere
Some must clasp Idols. Yet, my God,
Whom call I Idol? Let Thy dove
Shadow me over, and my sins
Be unremember’d, and Thy love
Enlighten me. Oh teach me yet
Somewhat before the heavy clod
Weighs on me, and the busy fret
Of that sharp-headed worm begins
In the gross blackness underneath.

Oh weary life! oh weary death!
Oh spirit and heart made desolate!
Oh damned vacillating state!”

Now the philosophy of In Memoriam may be, indeed is, regarded by robust, first-rate, and far from sensitive minds, as a “damned vacillating state.” The poet is not so imbued with the spirit of popular science as to be sure that he knows everything: knows that there is nothing but atoms and ether, with no room for God or a soul. He is far from that happy cock-certainty, and consequently is exposed to the contempt of the cock-certain. The poem, says Mr Harrison, “has made Tennyson the idol of the Anglican clergyman — the world in which he was born and the world in which his life was ideally passed- -the idol of all cultured youth and of all aesthetic women. It is an honourable post to fill” — that of idol. “The argument of In Memoriam apparently is . . . that we should faintly trust the larger hope.” That, I think, is not the argument, not the conclusion of the poem, but is a casual expression of one mood among many moods.

The argument and conclusion of In Memoriam are the argument and conclusion of the life of Tennyson, and of the love of Tennyson, that immortal passion which was a part of himself, and which, if aught of us endure, is living yet, and must live eternally. From the record of his Life by his son we know that his trust in "the larger hope" was not "faint," but strengthened with the years. There are said to have been less hopeful intervals.

His faith is, of course, no argument for others, — at least it ought not to be. We are all the creatures of our bias, our environment, our experience, our emotions. The experience of Tennyson was unlike the experience of most men. It yielded him subjective grounds for belief. He "opened a path unto many," like Yama, the Vedic being who discovered the way to death. But Tennyson's path led not to death, but to life spiritual, and to hope, and he did "give a new impulse to the thought of his age," as other great poets have done. Of course it may be an impulse to wrong thought. As the philosophical Australian black said, "We shall know when we are dead."

Mr Harrison argues as if, unlike Tennyson, Byron, Wordsworth, Shelley, and Burns produced "original ideas fresh from their own spirit, and not derived from contemporary thinkers." I do not know what original ideas these great poets discovered and promulgated; their ideas seem to have been "in the air." These poets "made them current coin." Shelley thought that he owed many of his ideas to Godwin, a contemporary thinker. Wordsworth has a debt to Plato, a thinker not contemporary. Burns's democratic independence was "in the air," and had been, in Scotland, since Elder remarked on it in a letter to Ingles in 1515. It is not the ideas, it is the expression of the ideas, that marks the poet. Tennyson's ideas are relatively novel, though as old as Plotinus, for they are applied to a novel, or at least an unfamiliar, mental situation. Doubt was abroad, as it always is; but, for perhaps the first time since Porphyry wrote his letter to Abammon, the doubters desired to believe, and said, "Lord, help Thou my unbelief." To robust, not sensitive minds, very much in unity with themselves, the attitude seems contemptible, or at best decently futile. Yet I cannot think it below the dignity of mankind, conscious that it is not omniscient. The poet does fail in logic (In Memoriam, cxx.) when he says -

"Let him, the wiser man who springs
Hereafter, up from childhood shape
His action like the greater ape,
But I was BORN to other things."

I am not well acquainted with the habits of the greater ape, but it would probably be unwise, and perhaps indecent, to imitate him, even if “we also are his offspring.” We might as well revert to polyandry and paint, because our Celtic or Pictish ancestors, if we had any, practised the one and wore the other. However, petulances like the verse on the greater ape are rare in In Memoriam. To declare that “I would not stay” in life if science proves us to be “cunning casts in clay,” is beneath the courage of the Stoical philosophy.

Theologically, the poem represents the struggle with doubts and hopes and fears, which had been with Tennyson from his boyhood, as is proved by the volume of 1830. But the doubts had exerted, probably, but little influence on his happiness till the sudden stroke of loss made life for a time seem almost unbearable unless the doubts were solved. They WERE solved, or stoically set aside, in the Ulysses, written in the freshness of grief, with the conclusion that we must be

”Strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.”

But the gnawing of grief till it becomes a physical pain, the fever fits of sorrow, the aching desiderium, bring back in many guises the old questions. These require new attempts at answers, and are answered, “the sad mechanic exercise” of verse allaying the pain. This is the genesis of In Memoriam, not originally written for publication but produced at last as a monument to friendship, and as a book of consolation.

No books of consolation can console except by sympathy; and in In Memoriam sympathy and relief have been found, and will be found, by many. Another, we feel, has trodden our dark and stony path, has been shadowed by the shapes of dread which haunt our valley of tribulation: a mind almost infinitely greater than ours has been our fellow-sufferer. He has emerged from the darkness of the shadow of death into the light, whither, as it seems to us, we can scarcely hope to come. It is the sympathy and the example, I think, not the speculations, mystical or scientific, which make In Memoriam, in more than name, a book of consolation: even in hours of the sharpest distress, when its technical beauties and wonderful pictures seem shadowy and unreal, like the yellow sunshine and the woods of that autumn day when a man learned that his friend was dead. No, it was not the speculations and arguments that consoled or encouraged us. We did not listen to Tennyson as to Mr Frederic Harrison’s glorified Anglican clergyman. We could not murmur, like the Queen of the May -

“That good man, the Laureate, has told tis words of peace.”

What we valued was the poet's companionship. There was a young reader to whom All along the Valley came as a new poem in a time of recent sorrow.

"The two-and-thirty years were a mist that rolls away,"

said the singer of In Memoriam, and in that hour it seemed as if none could endure for two-and-thirty years the companionship of loss. But the years have gone by, and have left

"Ever young the face that dwells
With reason cloister'd in the brain."

In this way to many In Memoriam is almost a life-long companion: we walk with Great-heart for our guide through the valley Perilous.

In this respect In Memoriam is unique, for neither to its praise nor dispraise is it to be compared with the other famous elegies of the world. These are brief outbursts of grief — real, as in the hopeless words of Catullus over his brother's tomb; or academic, like Milton's Lycidas. We are not to suppose that Milton was heart-broken by the death of young Mr King, or that Shelley was greatly desolated by the death of Keats, with whom his personal relations had been slight, and of whose poetry he had spoken evil. He was nobly stirred as a poet by a poet's death — like Mr Swinburne by the death of Charles Baudelaire; but neither Shelley nor Mr Swinburne was lamenting dimidium animae suae, or mourning for a friend

"Dear as the mother to the son,
More than my brothers are to me."

The passion of In Memoriam is personal, is acute, is life-long, and thus it differs from the other elegies. Moreover, it celebrates a noble object, and thus is unlike the ambiguous affection, real or dramatic, which informs the sonnets of Shakespeare. So the poem stands alone, cloistered; not fiery with indignation, not breaking into actual prophecy, like Shelley's Adonais; not capable, by reason even of its meditative metre, of the organ music of Lycidas. Yet it is not to be reckoned inferior to these because its aim and plan are other than theirs.

It is far from my purpose to "class" Tennyson, or to dispute about his relative greatness when compared with Wordsworth or Byron, Coleridge, Shelley, or Burns. He rated one song of Lovelace above all his lyrics, and, in fact, could no more have written the Cavalier's To Althea from Prison than Lovelace could have written the Morte d'Arthur. "It is not reasonable, it is not fair," says Mr Harrison, after comparing In Memoriam with Lycidas, "to compare Tennyson with Milton," and it is not reasonable to compare Tennyson with any poet whatever. Criticism is not the construction of a class list. But we may reasonably say that In Memoriam is a noble poem, an original poem, a poem which stands alone in literature. The wonderful beauty, ever fresh, howsoever often read, of many stanzas, is not denied by any critic. The marvel is that the same serene certainty of art broods over even the stanzas which must have been conceived while the sorrow was fresh. The second piece,

“Old yew, which graspest at the stones,”

must have been composed soon after the stroke fell. Yet it is as perfect as the proem of 1849. As a rule, the poetical expression of strong emotion appears usually to clothe the memory of passion when it has been softened by time. But here already “the rhythm, phrasing, and articulation are entirely faultless, exquisitely clear, melodious, and rare.” It were superfluous labour to point at special beauties, at the exquisite rendering of nature; and copious commentaries exist to explain the course of the argument, if a series of moods is to be called an argument. One may note such a point as that (xiv.) where the poet says that, were he to meet his friend in life,

“I should not feel it to be strange.”

It may have happened to many to mistake, for a section of a second, the face of a stranger for the face seen only in dreams, and to find that the recognition brings no surprise.

Pieces of a character apart from the rest, and placed in a designed sequence, are xcii., xciii., xcv. In the first the poet says -

“If any vision should reveal
   Thy likeness, I might count it vain
   As but the canker of the brain;
Yea, tho’ it spake and made appeal

To chances where our lots were cast
   Together in the days behind,
   I might but say, I hear a wind
Of memory murmuring the past.

Yea, tho’ it spake and bared to view
   A fact within the coming year;
   And tho’ the months, revolving near,
Should prove the phantom-warning true,

They might not seem thy prophecies,
But spiritual presentiments,
And such refraction of events
As often rises ere they rise."

The author thus shows himself difficile as to recognising the personal identity of a phantasm; nor is it easy to see what mode of proving his identity would be left to a spirit. The poet, therefore, appeals to some perhaps less satisfactory experience:-

"Descend, and touch, and enter; hear
The wish too strong for words to name;
That in this blindness of the frame
My Ghost may feel that thine is near."

The third poem is the crown of In Memoriam, expressing almost such things as are not given to man to utter:-

And all at once it seem'd at last
The living soul was flash'd on mine,

And mine in this was wound, and whirl'd
About empyreal heights of thought,
And came on that which is, and caught
The deep pulsations of the world,

AEonian music measuring out
The steps of Time — the shocks of Chance -
The blows of Death. At length my trance
Was cancell'd, stricken thro' with doubt.

Vague words! but ah, how hard to frame
In matter-moulded forms of speech,
Or ev'n for intellect to reach
Thro' memory that which I became."

Experiences like this, subjective, and not matter for argument, were familiar to Tennyson. Jowett said, "He was one of those who, though not an upholder of miracles, thought that the wonders of Heaven and Earth were never far absent from us.” In The Mystic, Tennyson, when almost a boy, had shown familiarity with strange psychological and psychical conditions. Poems of much later life also deal with these, and, more or less consciously, his philosophy was tinged, and his confidence that we are more than “cunning casts in clay” was increased, by phenomena of experience, which can only be evidence for the mystic himself, if even for him. But this dim aspect of his philosophy, of course, is “to the Greeks foolishness.”

His was a philosophy of his own; not a philosophy for disciples, and “those that eddy round and round.” It was the sum of his reflection on the mass of his impressions. I have shown, by the aid of dates, that it was not borrowed from Huxley, Mr Stopford Brooke, or the late Duke of Argyll. But, no doubt, many of the ideas were “in the air,” and must have presented themselves to minds at once of religious tendency, and attracted by the evolutionary theories which had always existed as floating speculations, till they were made current coin by the genius and patient study of Darwin. That Tennyson’s opinions between 1830 and 1840 were influenced by those of F. D. Maurice is reckoned probable by Canon Ainger, author of the notice of the poet in The Dictionary of National Biography. In the Life of Maurice, Tennyson does not appear till 1850, and the two men were not at Cambridge together. But Maurice’s ideas, as they then existed, may have reached Tennyson orally through Hallam and other members of the Trinity set, who knew personally the author of Letters to a Quaker. However, this is no question of scientific priority: to myself it seems that Tennyson “beat his music out” for himself, as perhaps most people do. Like his own Sir Percivale, “I know not all he meant.”

Among the opinions as to In Memoriam current at the time of its publication Lord Tennyson notices those of Maurice and Robertson. They “thought that the poet had made a definite step towards the unification of the highest religion and philosophy with the progressive science of the day.” Neither science nor religion stands still; neither stands now where it then did. Conceivably they are travelling on paths which will ultimately coincide; but this opinion, of course, must seem foolishness to most professors of science. Bishop Westcott was at Cambridge when the book appeared: he is one of Mr Harrison’s possible sources of Tennyson’s ideas. He recognised the poet’s “splendid faith (in the face of every difficulty) in the growing purpose of the sum of life, and in the noble destiny of the individual man.” Ten years later Professor Henry Sidgwick, a mind sufficiently sceptical, found in some lines of In Memoriam “the indestructible and inalienable minimum of faith which humanity cannot give up because it is necessary for life; and which I know that I, at least so far as the man in me is deeper than the methodical thinker, cannot give up.” But we know that many persons not only do not find an irreducible minimum of faith “necessary for life,” but are highly indignant and contemptuous if any one else ventures to suggest the logical possibility of any faith at all.

The mass of mankind will probably never be convinced unbelievers — nay, probably the backward or forward swing of the pendulum will touch more convinced belief. But there always have been, since the Rishis of India sang, superior persons who believe in nothing not material — whatever the material may be. Tennyson was, it is said, “impatient” of these esprits forts, and they are impatient of him. It is an error to be impatient: we know not whither the logos may lead us, or later generations; and we ought not to be irritated with others because it leads them into what we think the wrong path. It is unfortunate that a work of art, like In Memoriam, should arouse theological or anti-theological passions. The poet only shows us the paths by which his mind travelled: they may not be the right paths, nor is it easy to trace them on a philosophical chart. He escaped from Doubting Castle. Others may “take that for a hermitage,” and be happy enough in the residence. We are all determined by our bias: Tennyson’s is unconcealed. His poem is not a tract: it does not aim at the conversion of people with the contrary bias, it is irksome, in writing about a poet, to be obliged to discuss a philosophy which, certainly, is not stated in the manner of Spinoza, but is merely the equilibrium of contending forces in a single mind.

The most famous review of In Memoriam is that which declared that “these touching lines evidently come from the full heart of the widow of a military man.” This is only equalled, if equalled, by a recent critique which treated a fresh edition of Jane Eyre as a new novel, “not without power, in parts, and showing some knowledge of Yorkshire local colour.”

CHAPTER VI. — AFTER IN MEMORIAM.

On June 13 Tennyson married, at Shiplake, the object of his old, long-tried, and constant affection. The marriage was still “imprudent,” — eight years of then uncontested supremacy in English poetry had not brought a golden harvest. Mr Moxon appears to have supplied 300 pounds “in advance of royalties.” The sum, so contemptible in the eyes of first-rate modern novelists, was a competence to Tennyson, added to his little pension and the epaves of his patrimony. “The peace of God came into my life when I married her,” he said in later days. The poet made a charming copy of verses to his friend, the Rev. Mr Rawnsley, who tied the knot, as he and his bride drove to the beautiful village of Pangbourne. Thence they went to the stately Clevedon Court, the seat of Sir Abraham Elton, hard by the church where Arthur Hallam sleeps. The place is very ancient and beautiful, and was a favourite haunt of Thackeray. They passed on to Lynton, and to Glastonbury, where a collateral ancestor of Mrs Tennyson’s is buried beside King Arthur’s grave, in that green valley of Avilion, among the apple-blossoms. They settled for a while at Tent Lodge on Coniston Water, in a land of hospitable Marshalls.

After their return to London, on the night of November 18, Tennyson dreamed that Prince Albert came and kissed him, and that he himself said, “Very kind, but very German,” which was very like him. Next day he received from Windsor the offer of the Laureateship. He doubted, and hesitated, but accepted. Since Wordsworth’s death there had, as usual, been a good deal of banter about the probable new Laureate: examples of competitive odes exist in Bon Gaultier. That by Tennyson is Anacreontic, but he was not really set on kissing the Maids of Honour, as he is made to sing. Rogers had declined, on the plea of extreme old age; but it was worthy of the great and good Queen not to overlook the Nestor of English poets. For the rest, the Queen looked for “a name bearing such distinction in the literary world as to do credit to the appointment.” In the previous century the great poets had rarely been Laureates. But since Sir Walter Scott declined the bays in favour of Southey, for whom, again, the tale of bricks in the way of Odes was lightened, and when Wordsworth succeeded Southey, the office became honourable. Tennyson gave it an increase of renown, while, though in itself of merely nominal value, it served his poems, to speak profanely, as an advertisement. New editions of his books were at once in demand; while few readers had ever heard of Mr Browning, already his friend, and already author of Men and Women.

The Laureateship brought the poet acquainted with the Queen, who was to be his debtor in later days for encouragement and consolation. To his Laureateship we owe, among other good things, the stately and moving Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington, a splendid heroic piece, unappreciated at the moment. But Tennyson was, of course, no Birthday poet. Since the exile of the House of Stuart our kings in England have not maintained the old familiarity with many classes of their subjects. Literature has not been fashionable at Court, and Tennyson could in no age have been a courtier. We hear the complaint, every now and then, that official honours are not conferred (except the Laureateship) on men of letters. But most of them probably think it rather distinguished not to be decorated, or to carry titles borne by many deserving persons unvisited by the Muses. Even the appointment to the bays usually provokes a great deal of jealous and spiteful feeling, which would only be multiplied if official honours were distributed among men of the pen. Perhaps Tennyson's laurels were not for nothing in the chorus of dispraise which greeted the Ode on the Duke of Wellington, and Maud.

The year 1851 was chiefly notable for a tour to Italy, made immortal in the beautiful poem of The Daisy, in a measure of the poet's own invention. The next year, following on the Coup d'etat and the rise of the new French empire, produced patriotic appeals to Britons to "guard their own," which to a great extent former alien owners had been unsuccessful in guarding from Britons. The Tennysons had lost their first child at his birth: perhaps he is remembered in The Grandmother, "the babe had fought for his life." In August 1852 the present Lord Tennyson was born, and Mr Maurice was asked to be godfather. The Wellington Ode was of November, and was met by "the almost universal depreciation of the press," — why, except because, as I have just suggested, Tennyson was Laureate, it is impossible to imagine. The verses were worthy of the occasion: more they could not be.

In the autumn of 1853 the poet visited Ardtornish on the Sound of Mull, a beautiful place endeared to him who now writes by the earliest associations. It chanced to him to pass his holidays there just when Tennyson and Mr Palgrave had left— "Mr Tinsmith and Mr Pancake," as Robert the boatman, a very black Celt, called them. Being then nine years of age, I heard of a poet's visit, and asked, "A real poet, like Sir Walter Scott?" with whom I then supposed that "the Muse had gone away." "Oh, not like Sir Walter Scott, of course," my mother told me, with loyalty unashamed. One can think of the poet as Mrs Sellar, his hostess, describes him, beneath the limes of the avenue at Acharn, planted, Mrs Sellar says, by a cousin of Flora Macdonald. I have been told that the lady who planted the lilies, if not the limes, was the famed Jacobite, Miss Jennie Cameron, mentioned in Tom Jones. An English engraving of 1746 shows the Prince between these two beauties, Flora and Jennie.

"No one," says Mrs Sellar, "could have been more easy, simple, and delightful," and indeed it is no marvel that in her society and that of her husband, the Greek professor, and her cousin, Miss Cross, and in such scenes, "he blossomed out in the most genial manner, making us all feel as if he were an old friend."

In November Tennyson took a house at Farringford, "as it was beautiful and far from the haunts of men." There he settled to a country existence in the society of his wife, his two children (the second, Lionel, being in 1854 the baby), and there he composed Maud, while the sound of the guns, in practice for the war of the Crimea, boomed from the coast. In May Tennyson saw the artists, of schools oddly various, who illustrated his poems. Millais, Rossetti, and Holman Hunt gave the tone to the art, but Mr Horsley, Creswick, and Mulgrave were also engaged. While Maud was being composed Tennyson wrote The Charge of the Light Brigade; a famous poem, not in a manner in which he was born to excel — at least in my poor opinion. "Some one HAD blundered," and that line was the first fashioned and the keynote of the poem; but, after all, "blundered" is not an exquisite rhyme to "hundred." The poem, in any case, was most welcome to our army in the Crimea, and is a spirited piece for recitation.

In January 1855 Maud was finished; in April the poet copied it out for the press, and refreshed himself by reading a very different poem, The Lady of the Lake. The author, Sir Walter, had suffered, like the hero of Maud, by an unhappy love affair, which just faintly colours The Lady of the Lake by a single allusion, in the description of Fitz-James's dreams:-

"Then, — from my couch may heavenly might
Chase that worst phantom of the night! -
Again returned the scenes of youth,
Of confident undoubting truth;
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead;
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubt distracts him at the view -
Oh, were his senses false or true?

Dreamed he of death, or broken vow,
Or is it all a vision now?"

We learn from Lady Louisa Stuart, to whom Scott read these lines, that they referred to his lost love. I cite the passage because the extreme reticence of Scott, in his undying sorrow, is in contrast with what Tennyson, after reading The Lady of the Lake, was putting into the mouth of his complaining lover in Maud.

We have no reason to suppose that Tennyson himself had ever to bewail a faithless love. To be sure, the hero of Locksley Hall is in this attitude, but then Locksley Hall is not autobiographical. Less dramatic and impersonal in appearance are the stanzas -

"Come not, when I am dead,
   To drop thy foolish tears upon my grave;"

and

“Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest.”

No biographer tells us whether this was a personal complaint or a mere set of verses on an imaginary occasion. In In Memoriam Tennyson speaks out concerning the loss of a friend. In Maud, as in Locksley Hall, he makes his hero reveal the agony caused by the loss of a mistress. There is no reason to suppose that the poet had ever any such mischance, but many readers have taken Locksley Hall and Maud for autobiographical revelations, like In Memoriam. They are, on the other hand, imaginative and dramatic. They illustrate the pangs of disappointed love of woman, pangs more complex and more rankling than those inflicted by death. In each case, however, the poet, who has sung so nobly the happiness of fortunate wedded loves, has chosen a hero with whom we do not readily sympathise — a Hamlet in miniature,

“With a heart of furious fancies,”

as in the old mad song. This choice, thanks to the popular misconception, did him some harm. As a “monodramatic Idyll,” a romance in many rich lyric measures, Maud was at first excessively unpopular. “Tennyson’s Maud is Tennyson’s Maudlin,” said a satirist, and “morbid,” “mad,” “rampant,” and “rabid bloodthirstiness of soul,” were among the amenities of criticism. Tennyson hated war, but his hero, at least, hopes that national union in a national struggle will awake a nobler than the commercial spirit. Into the rights and wrongs of our quarrel with Russia we are not to go. Tennyson, rightly or wrongly, took the part of his country, and must “thole the feud” of those high-souled citizens who think their country always in the wrong — as perhaps it very frequently is. We are not to expect a tranquil absence of bias in the midst of military excitement, when very laudable sentiments are apt to misguide men in both directions. In any case, political partisanship added to the enemies of the poem, which was applauded by Henry Taylor, Ruskin, George Brimley, and Jowett, while Mrs Browning sent consoling words from Italy. The poem remained a favourite with the author, who chose passages from it often, when persuaded to read aloud by friends; and modern criticism has not failed to applaud the splendour of the verse and the subtlety of the mad scenes, the passion of the love lyrics.

These merits have ceased to be disputed, but, though a loyal Tennysonian, I have never quite been able to reconcile myself to Maud as a whole. The hero is an unwholesome young man, and not of an original kind. He is un beau tenebreux of 1830. I suppose it has been observed that he is merely The Master of Ravenswood in modern costume, and without Lady Ashton. Her part is taken by Maud's brother. The situations of the hero and of the Master (whose acquaintance Thackeray never renewed after he lost his hat in the Kelpie Flow) are nearly identical. The families and fathers of both have been ruined by "the gray old wolf," and by Sir William Ashton, representing the house of Stair. Both heroes live dawdling on, hard by their lost ancestral homes. Both fall in love with the daughters of the enemies of their houses. The loves of both are baffled, and end in tragedy. Both are concerned in a duel, though the Master, on his way to the ground, "stables his steed in the Kelpie Flow," and the wooer in Maud shoots Lucy Ashton's brother, — I mean the brother of Maud, — though duelling in England was out of date. Then comes an interval of madness, and he recovers amid the patriotic emotions of the ill-fated Crimean expedition. Both lovers are gloomy, though the Master has better cause, for the Tennysonian hero is more comfortably provided for than Edgar with his "man and maid," his Caleb and Mysie. Finally, both The Bride of Lammermoor, which affected Tennyson so potently in boyhood

("A merry merry bridal,
A merry merry day"),

and Maud, excel in passages rather than as wholes.

The hero of Maud, with his clandestine wooing of a girl of sixteen, has this apology, that the match had been, as it were, predestined, and desired by the mother of the lady. Still, the brother did not ill to be angry; and the peevishness of the hero against the brother and the parvenu lord and rival strikes a jarring note. In England, at least, the general sentiment is opposed to this moody, introspective kind of young man, of whom Tennyson is not to be supposed to approve. We do not feel certain that his man and maid were "ever ready to slander and steal." That seems to be part of his jaundiced way of looking at everything and everybody. He has even a bad word for the "man-god" of modern days, -

"The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and vain,
An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor."

Rien n'est sacre for this cynic, who thinks himself a Stoic. Thus Maud was made to be unpopular with the author's countrymen, who conceived a prejudice against Maud's lover, described by Tennyson as "a morbid poetic soul, . . . an egotist with the makings of a cynic." That he is "raised to sanity" (still in

Tennyson's words) "by a pure and holy love which elevates his whole nature," the world failed to perceive, especially as the sanity was only a brief lucid interval, tempered by hanging about the garden to meet a girl of sixteen, unknown to her relations. Tennyson added that "different phases of passion in one person take the place of different characters," to which critics replied that they wanted different characters, if only by way of relief, and did not care for any of the phases of passion. The learned Monsieur Janet has maintained that love is a disease like another, and that nobody falls in love when in perfect health of mind and body. This theory seems open to exception, but the hero of Maud is unhealthy enough. At best and last, he only helps to give a martial force a "send-off":-

"I stood on a giant deck and mixed my breath
With a loyal people shouting a battle-cry."

He did not go out as a volunteer, and probably the Crimean winters brought him back to his original estate of cynical gloom — and very naturally.

The reconciliation with Life is not like the reconciliation of In Memoriam. The poem took its rise in old lines, and most beautiful lines, which Tennyson had contributed in 1837 to a miscellany:-

"O that 'twere possible,
  After long grief and pain,
To find the arms of my true love
  Round me once again."

Thence the poet, working back to find the origin of the situation, encountered the ideas and the persons of Maud.

I have tried to state the sources, in the general mind, of the general dislike of Maud. The public, "driving at practice," disapproved of the "criticism of life" in the poem; confused the suffering narrator with the author, and neglected the poetry. "No modern poem," said Jowett, "contains more lines that ring in the ears of men. I do not know any verse out of Shakespeare in which the ecstacy of love soars to such a height." With these comments we may agree, yet may fail to follow Jowett when he says, "No poem since Shakespeare seems to show equal power of the same kind, or equal knowledge of human nature." Shakespeare could not in a narrative poem have preferred the varying passions of one character to the characters of many persons.

Tennyson was "nettled at first," his son says, "by these captious remarks of the 'indolent reviewers,' but afterwards he would take no notice of them except to speak of them in a half-pitiful, half-humorous, half-mournful manner.” The besetting sin and error of the critics was, of course, to confound Tennyson’s hero with himself, as if we confused Dickens with Pip.

Like Aurora Leigh, Lucile, and other works, Maud is under the disadvantage of being, practically, a novel of modern life in verse. Criticised as a tale of modern life (and it was criticised in that character), it could not be very highly esteemed. But the essence of Maud, of course, lies in the poetical vehicle. Nobody can cavil at the impressiveness of the opening stanzas -

“I hate the dreadful hollow behind the little wood”;

with the keynotes of colour and of desolation struck; the lips of the hollow “dabbled with blood-red heath,” the “red-ribb’d ledges,” and “the flying gold of the ruin’d woodlands”; and the contrast in the picture of the child Maud -

“Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall.”

The poem abounds in lines which live in the memory, as in the vernal description -

“A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime”;

and the voice heard in the garden singing

“A passionate ballad gallant and gay,”

as Lovelace’s Althea, and the lines on the far-off waving of a white hand, “betwixt the cloud and the moon.” The lyric of

“Birds in the high Hall-garden
  When twilight was falling,
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
  They were crying and calling,”

was a favourite of the poet.

“What birds were these?” he is said to have asked a lady suddenly, when reading to a silent company.

“Nightingales,” suggested a listener, who did not probably remember any other fowl that is vocal in the dusk.

“No, they were rooks,” answered the poet.

“Come into the Garden, Maud,” is as fine a love-song as Tennyson ever wrote, with a triumphant ring, and a soaring exultant note. Then the poem drops from its height, like a lark shot high in heaven; tragedy comes, and remorse, and the beautiful interlude of the

“lovely shell, Small and pure as a pearl.”

Then follows the exquisite

“O that ‘twere possible,”

and the dull consciousness of the poem of madness, with its dumb gnawing confusion of pain and wandering memory; the hero being finally left, in the author’s words, “sane but shattered.”

Tennyson’s letters of the time show that the critics succeeded in wounding him: it was not a difficult thing to do. Maud was threatened with a broadside from “that pompholygous, broad-blown Apollodorus, the gifted X.” People who have read Aytoun’s diverting Firmilian, where Apollodorus plays his part, and who remember “gifted Gilfillan” in Waverley, know who the gifted X. was. But X. was no great authority south of Tay.

Despite the almost unanimous condemnation by public critics, the success of Maud enabled Tennyson to buy Farringford, so he must have been better appreciated and understood by the world than by the reviewers.

In February 1850 Tennyson returned to his old Arthurian themes, “the only big thing not done,” for Milton had merely glanced at Arthur, Dryden did not

“Raise the Table Round again,”

and Blackmore has never been reckoned adequate. Vivien was first composed as Merlin and Nimue, and then Geraint and Enid was adapted from the Mabinogion, the Welsh collection of Marchen and legends, things of widely different ages, now rather Celtic, or Brythonic, now amplifications made under the influence of mediaeval French romance. Enid was finished in Wales in August, and Tennyson learned Welsh enough to be able to read the Mabinogion, which is much more of Welsh than many Arthurian critics possess. The two first Idylls were privately printed in the summer of 1857, being very rare and much desired of collectors in this embryonic shape. In July Guinevere was begun, in the middle, with Arthur’s valedictory address to his erring consort. In autumn Tennyson visited the late Duke of Argyll at Inveraray: he was much attached to the Duke — unlike Professor Huxley. Their love of nature, the Duke being as keen-eyed as the poet was short-sighted, was one tie of union. The Indian Mutiny, or at least the death of Havelock, was the occasion of lines which the author was too wise to include in any of his volumes: the poem on Lucknow was of later composition.

Guinevere was completed in March 1858; and Tennyson met Mr Swinburne, then very young. “What I particularly admired in him was that he did not press upon me any verses of his own.” Tennyson would have found more to admire if he had pressed for a sight of the verses. Neither he nor Mr Matthew Arnold was very encouraging to young poets: they had no sons in Apollo, like Ben Jonson. But both were kept in a perpetual state of apprehension by the army of versifiers who send volumes by post, to whom that can only be said what Tennyson did say to one of them, “As an amusement to yourself and your friends, the writing it” (verse) “is all very well.” It is the friends who do not find it amusing, while the stranger becomes the foe. The psychology of these pests of the Muses is bewildering. They do not seem to read poetry, only to write it and launch it at unoffending strangers. If they bought each other’s books, all of them could afford to publish.

The Master of Balliol, the most adviceful man, if one may use the term, of his age, appears to have advised Tennyson to publish the Idylls at once. There had been years of silence since Maud, and the Master suspected that “mosquitoes” (reviewers) were the cause. “There is a note needed to show the good side of human nature and to condone its frailties which Thackeray will never strike.” To others it seems that Thackeray was eternally striking this note: at that time in General Lambert, his wife, and daughters, not to speak of other characters in The Virginians. Who does not condone the frailties of Captain Costigan, and F. B., and the Chevalier Strong? In any case, Tennyson took his own time, he was (1858) only beginning Elaine. There is no doubt that Tennyson was easily pricked by unsympathetic criticism, even from the most insignificant source, and, as he confessed, he received little pleasure from praise. All authors, without exception, are sensitive. A sturdier author wrote that he would sometimes have been glad to meet his assailant “where the muir-cock was bailie.” We know how testily Wordsworth replied in defence to the gentlest comments by Lamb.

The Master of Balliol kept insisting, “As to the critics, their power is not really great. . . . One drop of natural feeling in poetry or the true statement of a single new fact is already felt to be of more value than all the critics put together.” Yet even critics may be in the right, and of all great poets, Tennyson listened most obediently to their censures, as we have seen in the case of his early poems. His prolonged silences after the attacks of 1833 and 1855 were occupied in work and reflection: Achilles was not merely sulking in his tent, as some of his friends seem to have supposed. An epic in a series of epic idylls cannot be dashed off like a romantic novel in rhyme; and Tennyson’s method was always one of waiting for maturity of conception and execution.

Mrs Tennyson, doubtless by her lord’s desire, asked the Master (then tutor of Balliol) to suggest themes. Old age was suggested, and is treated in The Grandmother. Other topics were not handled. “I hold most strongly,” said the Master, “that it is the duty of every one who has the good fortune to know a man of genius to do any trifling service they can to lighten his work.” To do every service in his power to every man was the Master’s life-long practice. He was not much at home, his letters show, with Burns, to whom he seems to have attributed John Anderson, my jo, John, while he tells an anecdote of Burns composing Tam o’ Shanter with emotional tears, which, if true at all, is true of the making of To Mary in Heaven. If Burns wept over Tam o’ Shanter, the tears must have been tears of laughter.

The first four Idylls of the King were prepared for publication in the spring of 1859; while Tennyson was at work also on Pelleas and Ettarre, and the Tristram cycle. In autumn he went on a tour to Lisbon with Mr F. T. Palgrave and Mr Craufurd Grove. Returning, he fell eagerly to reading an early copy of Darwin’s Origin of Species, the crown of his own early speculations on the theory of evolution. “Your theory does not make against Christianity?” he asked Darwin later (1868), who replied, “No, certainly not.” But Darwin has stated the waverings of his own mind in contact with a topic too high for a priori reasoning, and only to be approached, if at all, on the strength of the scientific method applied to facts which science, so far, neglects, or denies, or “explains away,” rather than explains.

The Idylls, unlike Maud, were well received by the press, better by the public, and best of all by friends like Thackeray, the Duke of Argyll, the Master of Balliol, and Clough, while Ruskin showed some reserve. The letter from Thackeray I cannot deny myself the pleasure of citing from the Biography: it was written “in an ardour of claret and gratitude,” but posted some six weeks later:-

FOLKESTONE, September. 36 ONSLOW SQUARE, October.

My Dear Old Alfred, — I owe you a letter of happiness and thanks. Sir, about three weeks ago, when I was ill in bed, I read the Idylls of the King, and I thought, “Oh, I must write to him now, for this pleasure, this delight, this splendour of happiness which I have been enjoying.” But I should have blotted the sheets, ’tis ill writing on one’s back. The letter full of gratitude never went as far as the post-office, and how comes it now?

D’abord, a bottle of claret. (The landlord of the hotel asked me down to the cellar and treated me.) Then afterwards sitting here, an old magazine, Fraser’s Magazine, 1850, and I come on a poem out of The Princess which says, “I hear the horns of Elfland blowing, blowing,” — no, it’s “the horns of Elfland faintly blowing” (I have been into my bedroom to fetch my pen and it has made that blot), and, reading the lines, which only one man in the world could write, I thought about the other horns of Elfland blowing in full strength, and Arthur in gold armour, and Guinevere in gold hair, and all those knights and heroes and beauties and purple landscapes and misty gray lakes in which you have made me live. They seem like facts to me, since about three weeks ago (three weeks or a month was it?) when I read the book. It is on the table yonder, and I don’t like, somehow, to disturb it, but the delight and gratitude! You have made me as happy as I was as a child with the Arabian Nights, — every step I have walked in Elfland has been a sort of Paradise to me. (The landlord gave TWO bottles of his claret and I think I drank the most) and here I have been lying back in the chair and thinking of those delightful Idylls, my thoughts being turned to you: what could I do but be grateful to that surprising genius which has made me so happy? Do you understand that what I mean is all true, and that I should break out were you sitting opposite with a pipe in your mouth? Gold and purple and diamonds, I say, gentlemen, and glory and love and honour, and if you haven't given me all these why should I be in such an ardour of gratitude? But I have had out of that dear book the greatest delight that has ever come to me since I was a young man; to write and think about it makes me almost young, and this I suppose is what I'm doing, like an after-dinner speech.

P.S. — I thought the "Grandmother" quite as fine. How can you at 50 be doing things as well as at 35?

October 16th. — (I should think six weeks after the writing of the above.)

The rhapsody of gratitude was never sent, and for a peculiar reason: just about the time of writing I came to an arrangement with Smith & Elder to edit their new magazine, and to have a contribution from T. was the publishers' and editor's highest ambition. But to ask a man for a favour, and to praise and bow down before him in the same page, seemed to be so like hypocrisy, that I held my hand, and left this note in my desk, where it has been lying during a little French-Italian-Swiss tour which my girls and their papa have been making.

Meanwhile S. E. & Co. have been making their own proposals to you, and you have replied not favourably, I am sorry to hear; but now there is no reason why you should not have my homages, and I am just as thankful for the Idylls, and love and admire them just as much, as I did two months ago when I began to write in that ardour of claret and gratitude. If you can't write for us you can't. If you can by chance some day, and help an old friend, how pleased and happy I shall be! This however must be left to fate and your convenience: I don't intend to give up hope, but accept the good fortune if it comes. I see one, two, three quarterlies advertised to-day, as all bringing laurels to laureatus. He will not refuse the private tribute of an old friend, will he? You don't know how pleased the girls were at Kensington t'other day to hear you quote their father's little verses, and he too I daresay was not disgusted. He sends you and yours his very best regards in this most heartfelt and artless

(note of admiration)! Always yours, my dear Alfred, W. M. THACKERAY.

Naturally this letter gave Tennyson more pleasure than all the converted critics with their favourable reviews. The Duke of Argyll announced the conversion of Macaulay. The Master found Elaine “the fairest, sweetest, purest love poem in the English language.” As to the whole, “The allegory in the distance GREATLY STRENGTHENS, ALSO ELEVATES, THE MEANING OF THE POEM.”

Ruskin, like some other critics, felt “the art and finish in these poems a little more than I like to feel it.” Yet Guinevere and Elaine had been rapidly written and little corrected. I confess to the opinion that what a man does most easily is, as a rule, what he does best. We know that the “art and finish” of Shakespeare were spontaneous, and so were those of Tennyson. Perfection in art is sometimes more sudden than we think, but then “the long preparation for it, — that unseen germination, THAT is what we ignore and forget.” But he wisely kept his pieces by him for a long time, restudying them with a fresh eye. The “unreality” of the subject also failed to please Ruskin, as it is a stumbling-block to others. He wanted poems on “the living present,” a theme not selected by Homer, Shakespeare, Spenser, Milton, Virgil, or the Greek dramatists, except (among surviving plays) in the Persae of AEschylus. The poet who can transfigure the hot present is fortunate, but most, and the greatest, have visited the cool quiet purlieus of the past.

CHAPTER VII. — THE IDYLLS OF THE KING.

The Idylls may probably be best considered in their final shape: they are not an epic, but a series of heroic idyllia of the same genre as the heroic idyllia of Theocritus. He wrote long after the natural age of national epic, the age of Homer. He saw the later literary epic rise in the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius, a poem with many beauties, if rather an archaistic and elaborate revival as a whole. The time for long narrative poems, Theocritus appears to have thought, was past, and he only ventured on the heroic idyllia of Heracles, and certain adventures of the Argonauts. Tennyson, too, from the first believed that his pieces ought to be short. Therefore, though he had a conception of his work as a whole, a conception long mused on, and sketched in various lights, he produced no epic, only a series of epic idyllia. He had a spiritual conception, "an allegory in the distance," an allegory not to be insisted upon, though its presence was to be felt. No longer, as in youth, did Tennyson intend Merlin to symbolise "the sceptical understanding" (as if one were to "break into blank the gospel of" Herr Kant), or poor Guinevere to stand for the Blessed Reformation, or the Table Round for Liberal Institutions. Mercifully Tennyson never actually allegorised Arthur in that fashion. Later he thought of a musical masque of Arthur, and sketched a scenario. Finally Tennyson dropped both the allegory of Liberal principles and the musical masque in favour of the series of heroic idylls. There was only a "parabolic drift" in the intention. "There is no single fact or incident in the Idylls, however seemingly mystical, which cannot be explained without any mystery or allegory whatever. The Idylls ought to be read (and the right readers never dream of doing anything else) as romantic poems, just like Browning's Childe Roland, in which the wrong readers (the members of the Browning Society) sought for mystic mountains and marvels. Yet Tennyson had his own interpretation, "a dream of man coming into practical life and ruined by one sin." That was his "interpretation," or "allegory in the distance."

People may be heard objecting to the suggestion of any spiritual interpretation of the Arthur legends, and even to the existence of elementary morality among the Arthurian knights and ladies. There seems to be a notion that "bold bawdry and open manslaughter," as Roger Ascham said, are the staple of Tennyson's sources, whether in the mediaeval French, the Welsh, or in Malory's compilation, chiefly from French sources. Tennyson is accused of "Bowdlerising" these, and of introducing gentleness, courtesy, and conscience into a literature where such qualities were unknown. I must confess myself ignorant of any early and popular, or “primitive” literature, in which human virtues, and the human conscience, do not play their part. Those who object to Tennyson’s handling of the great Arthurian cycle, on the ground that he is too refined and too moral, must either never have read or must long have forgotten even Malory’s romance. Thus we read, in a recent novel, that Lancelot was an homme aux bonnes fortunes, whereas Lancelot was the most loyal of lovers.

Among other critics, Mr Harrison has objected that the Arthurian world of Tennyson “is not quite an ideal world. Therein lies the difficulty. The scene, though not of course historic, has certain historic suggestions and characters.” It is not apparent who the historic characters are, for the real Arthur is but a historic phantasm. “But then, in the midst of so much realism, the knights, from Arthur downwards, talk and act in ways with which we are familiar in modern ethical and psychological novels, but which are as impossible in real mediaeval knights as a Bengal tiger or a Polar bear would be in a drawing-room.” I confess to little acquaintance with modern ethical novels; but real mediaeval knights, and still more the knights of mediaeval romance, were capable of very ethical actions. To halt an army for the protection and comfort of a laundress was a highly ethical action. Perhaps Sir Redvers Buller would do it: Bruce did. Mr Harrison accuses the ladies of the Idylls of soul-bewildering casuistry, like that of women in Middlemarch or Helbeck of Bannisdale. Now I am not reminded by Guinevere, and Elaine, and Enid, of ladies in these ethical novels. But the women of the mediaeval Cours d’Amour (the originals from whom the old romancers drew) were nothing if not casuists. “Spiritual delicacy” (as they understood it) was their delight.

Mr Harrison even argues that Malory’s men lived hot-blooded lives in fierce times, “before an idea had arisen in the world of ‘reverencing conscience,’ ‘leading sweet lives,’” and so on. But he admits that they had “fantastic ideals of ‘honour’ and ‘love.’” As to “fantastic,” that is a matter of opinion, but to have ideals and to live in accordance with them is to “reverence conscience”, which the heroes of the romances are said by Mr Harrison never to have had an idea of doing. They are denied even “amiable words and courtliness.” Need one say that courtliness is the dominant note of mediaeval knights, in history as in romance? With discourtesy Froissart would “head the count of crimes.” After a battle, he says, Scots knights and English would thank each other for a good fight, “not like the Germans.” “And now, I dare say,” said Malory’s Sir Ector, “thou, Sir Lancelot, wast the curtiest knight that ever bare shield, . . . and thou wast the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies.” Observe Sir Lancelot in the difficult pass where the Lily Maid offers her love: “Jesu defend me, for then I rewarded your father and your brother full evil for their great goodness. . . . But because, fair damsel, that ye love me as ye say ye do, I will, for your good will and kindness, show you some goodness, . . . and always while I live to be your true knight.” Here are “amiable words and courtesy.” I cannot agree with Mr Harrison that Malory’s book is merely “a fierce lusty epic.” That was not the opinion of its printer and publisher, Caxton. He produced it as an example of “the gentle and virtuous deeds that some knights used in these days, . . . noble and renowned acts of humanity, gentleness, and chivalry. For herein may be seen noble chivalry, courtesy, humanity, friendliness, love, cowardice, murder, hate, virtue, and sin. Do after the good and leave the evil.”

In reaction against the bold-faced heroines and sensual amours of some of the old French romances, an ideal of exaggerated asceticism, of stainless chastity, notoriously pervades the portion of Malory’s work which deals with the Holy Grail. Lancelot is distraught when he finds that, by dint of enchantment, he has been made false to Guinevere (Book XI. cha.) After his dreaming vision of the Holy Grail, with the reproachful Voice, Sir Lancelot said, “My sin and my wickedness have brought me great dishonour, . . . and now I see and understand that my old sin hindereth and shameth me.” He was human, the Lancelot of Malory, and “fell to his old love again,” with a heavy heart, and with long penance at the end. How such good knights can be deemed conscienceless and void of courtesy one knows not, except by a survival of the Puritanism of Ascham. But Tennyson found in the book what is in the book — honour, conscience, courtesy, and the hero -

“Whose honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.”

Malory’s book, which was Tennyson’s chief source, ends by being the tragedy of the conscience of Lancelot. Arthur is dead, or “In Avalon he groweth old.” The Queen and Lancelot might sing, as Lennox reports that Queen Mary did after Darnley’s murder -

“Weel is me
For I am free.”

“Why took they not their pastime?” Because conscience forbade, and Guinevere sends her lover far from her, and both die in religion. Thus Malory’s “fierce lusty epic” is neither so lusty nor so fierce but that it gives Tennyson his keynote: the sin that breaks the fair companionship, and is bitterly repented.

“The knights are almost too polite to kill each other,” the critic urges. In

Malory they are sometimes quite too polite to kill each other. Sir Darras has a blood-feud against Sir Tristram, and Sir Tristram is in his dungeon. Sir Darras said, “Wit ye well that Sir Darras shall never destroy such a noble knight as thou art in prison, howbeit that thou hast slain three of my sons, whereby I was greatly aggrieved. But now shalt thou go and thy fellows. . . . All that ye did,” said Sir Darras, “was by force of knighthood, and that was the cause I would not put you to death” (Book IX. cha.)

Tennyson is accused of “emasculating the fierce lusty epic into a moral lesson, as if it were to be performed in a drawing-room by an academy of young ladies” — presided over, I daresay, by “Anglican clergymen.” I know not how any one who has read the Morte d’Arthur can blame Tennyson in the matter. Let Malory and his sources be blamed, if to be moral is to be culpable. A few passages apart, there is no coarseness in Malory; that there are conscience, courtesy, “sweet lives,” “keeping down the base in man,” “amiable words,” and all that Tennyson gives, and, in Mr Harrison’s theory, gives without authority in the romance, my quotations from Malory demonstrate. They are chosen at a casual opening of his book. That there “had not arisen in the world” “the idea of reverencing conscience” before the close of the fifteenth century A.D. is an extraordinary statement for a critic of history to offer.

Mr Harrison makes his protest because “in the conspiracy of silence into which Tennyson’s just fame has hypnotised the critics, it is bare honesty to admit defects.” I think I am not hypnotised, and I do not regard the Idylls as the crown of Tennyson’s work. But it is not his “defect” to have introduced generosity, gentleness, conscience, and chastity where no such things occur in his sources. Take Sir Darras: his position is that of Priam when he meets Achilles, who slew his sons, except that Priam comes as a suppliant; Sir Darras has Tristram in his hands, and may slay him. He is “too polite,” as Mr Harrison says: he is too good a Christian, or too good a gentleman. One would not have given a tripod for the life of Achilles had he fallen into the hands of Priam. But between 1200 B.C. (or so) and the date of Malory, new ideas about “living sweet lives” had arisen. Where and when do they not arise? A British patrol fired on certain Swazis in time of truce. Their lieutenant, who had been absent when this occurred, rode alone to the stronghold of the Swazi king, Sekukoeni, and gave himself up, expecting death by torture. “Go, sir,” said the king; “we too are gentlemen.” The idea of a “sweet life” of honour had dawned even on Sekukoeni: it lights up Malory’s romance, and is reflected in Tennyson’s Idylls, doubtless with some modernism of expression.

That the Idylls represent no real world is certain. That Tennyson modernises and moralises too much, I willingly admit; what I deny is that he introduces gentleness, courtesy, and conscience where his sources have none. Indeed this is not a matter of critical opinion, but of verifiable fact. Any one can read Malory and judge for himself. But the world in which the Idylls move could not be real. For more than a thousand years different races, different ages, had taken hold of the ancient Celtic legends and spiritualised them after their own manner, and moulded them to their own ideals. There may have been a historical Arthur, Comes Britanniae, after the Roman withdrawal. Ye Amherawdyr Arthur, "the Emperor Arthur," may have lived and fought, and led the Brythons to battle. But there may also have been a Brythonic deity, or culture hero, of the same, or of a similar name, and myths about him may have been assigned to a real Arthur. Again, the Arthur of the old Welsh legends was by no means the blameless king — even in comparatively late French romances he is not blameless. But the process of idealising him went on: still incomplete in Malory's compilation, where he is often rather otiose and far from royal. Tennyson, for his purpose, completed the idealisation.

As to Guinevere, she was not idealised in the old Welsh rhyme -

"Guinevere, Giant Ogurvan's daughter,
Naughty young, more naughty later."

Of Lancelot, and her passion for him, the old Welsh has nothing to say. Probably Chretien de Troyes, by a happy blunder or misconception, gave Lancelot his love and his pre-eminent part. Lancelot was confused with Peredur, and Guinevere with the lady of whom Peredur was in quest. The Elaine who becomes by Lancelot the mother of Galahad "was Lancelot's rightful consort, as one recognises in her name that of Elen, the Empress, whom the story of Peredur" (Lancelot, by the confusion) "gives that hero to wife." The second Elaine, the maid of Astolat, is another refraction from the original Elen. As to the Grail, it may be a Christianised rendering of one or another of the magical and mystic caldrons of Welsh or Irish legend. There is even an apparent Celtic source of the mysterious fisher king of the Grail romance.

A sketch of the evolution of the Arthurian legends might run thus:-

Sixth to eighth century, growth of myth about an Arthur, real, or supposed to be real.

Tenth century, the Duchies of Normandy and Brittany are in close relations; by the eleventh century Normans know Celtic Arthurian stories.

After, 1066, Normans in contact with the Celtic peoples of this island are in touch with the Arthur tales.

1130-1145, works on Arthurian matter by Geoffrey of Monmouth.

1155, Wace’s French translation of Geoffrey.

1150-1182, Chretien de Troyes writes poems on Arthurian topics.

French prose romances on Arthur, from, say, 1180 to 1250. Those romances reach Wales, and modify, in translations, the original Welsh legends, or, in part, supplant them.

Amplifications and recastings are numerous. In 1485 Caxton publishes Malory’s selections from French and English sources, the whole being Tennyson’s main source, Le Mort d’Arthur.

Thus the Arthur stories, originally Celtic, originally a mass of semi-pagan legend, myth, and marchen, have been retold and rehandled by Norman, Englishman, and Frenchman, taking on new hues, expressing new ideals — religious, chivalrous, and moral. Any poet may work his will on them, and Tennyson’s will was to retain the chivalrous courtesy, generosity, love, and asceticism, while dimly or brightly veiling or illuminating them with his own ideals. After so many processes, from folk-tale to modern idyll, the Arthurian world could not be real, and real it is not. Camelot lies “out of space, out of time,” though the colouring is mainly that of the later chivalry, and “the gleam” on the hues is partly derived from Celtic fancy of various dates, and is partly Tennysonian.

As the Idylls were finally arranged, the first, The Coming of Arthur, is a remarkable proof of Tennyson’s ingenuity in construction. Tales about the birth of Arthur varied. In Malory, Uther Pendragon, the Bretwalda (in later phrase) of Britain, besieges the Duke of Tintagil, who has a fair wife, Ygerne, in another castle. Merlin magically puts on Uther the shape of Ygerne’s husband, and as her husband she receives him. On that night Arthur is begotten by Uther, and the Duke of Tintagil, his mother’s husband, is slain in a sortie. Uther weds Ygerne; both recognise Arthur as their child. However, by the Celtic custom of fosterage the infant is intrusted to Sir Ector as his dalt, or foster-child, and Uther falls in battle. Arthur is later approven king by the adventure of drawing from the stone the magic sword that no other king could move. This adventure answers to Sigmund’s drawing the sword from the Branstock, in the Volsunga Saga, “Now men stand up, and none would fain be the last to lay hand to the sword,” apparently stricken into the pillar by Woden. “But none who came thereto might avail to pull it out, for in nowise would it come away howsoever they tugged at it, but now up comes Sigmund, King Volsung’s son, and sets hand to the sword, and pulls it from the stock, even as if it lay loose before him.” The incident in the Arthurian as in the Volsunga legend is on a par with the Golden Bough, in the sixth book of the AEneid. Only the predestined champion, such as AEneas, can pluck, or break, or cut the bough -

”Ipse volens facilisque sequetur
Si te fata vocant.”

All this ancient popular element in the Arthur story is disregarded by Tennyson. He does not make Uther approach Ygerne in the semblance of her lord, as Zeus approached Alcmena in the semblance of her husband, Amphitryon. He neglects the other ancient test of the proving of Arthur by his success in drawing the sword. The poet’s object is to enfold the origin and birth of Arthur in a spiritual mystery. This is deftly accomplished by aid of the various versions of the tale that reach King Leodogran when Arthur seeks the hand of his daughter Guinevere, for Arthur’s title to the crown is still disputed, so Leodogran makes inquiries. The answers first leave it dubious whether Arthur is son of Gorlois, husband of Ygerne, or of Uther, who slew Gorlois and married her:-

“Enforced she was to wed him in her tears.”

The Celtic custom of fosterage is overlooked, and Merlin gives the child to Anton, not as the customary dalt, but to preserve the babe from danger. Queen Bellicent then tells Leodogran, from the evidence of Bleys, Merlin’s master in necromancy, the story of Arthur’s miraculous advent.

“And down the wave and in the flame was borne
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin’s feet,
Who stoopt and caught the babe, and cried ‘The King!
Here is an heir for Uther!’”

But Merlin, when asked by Bellicent to corroborate the statement of
Bleys, merely

“Answer’d in riddling triplets of old time.”

Finally, Leodogran’s faith is confirmed by a vision. Thus doubtfully, amidst rumour and portent, cloud and spiritual light, comes Arthur: “from the great deep” he comes, and in as strange fashion, at the end, “to the great deep he goes” — a king to be accepted in faith or rejected by doubt. Arthur and his ideal are objects of belief. All goes well while the knights hold that

“The King will follow Christ, and we the King, In whom high God hath breathed a secret thing."

In history we find the same situation in the France of 1429 -

"The King will follow Jeanne, and we the King."

While this faith held, all went well; when the king ceased to follow, the spell was broken, — the Maid was martyred. In this sense the poet conceives the coming of Arthur, a sign to be spoken against, a test of high purposes, a belief redeeming and ennobling till faith fails, and the little rift within the lute, the love of Lancelot and Guinevere, makes discord of the music. As matter of legend, it is to be understood that Guinevere did not recognise Arthur when first he rode below her window -

"Since he neither wore on helm or shield
The golden symbol of his kinglihood."

But Lancelot was sent to bring the bride -

"And return'd
Among the flowers, in May, with Guinevere."

Then their long love may have begun, as in the story of Tristram sent to bring Yseult to be the bride of King Mark. In Malory, however, Lancelot does not come on the scene till after Arthur's wedding and return from his conquering expedition to Rome. Then Lancelot wins renown, "wherefore Queen Guinevere had him in favour above all other knights; and in certain he loved the Queen again above all other ladies damosels of his life." Lancelot, as we have seen, is practically a French creation, adopted to illustrate the chivalrous theory of love, with its bitter fruit. Though not of the original Celtic stock of legend, Sir Lancelot makes the romance what it is, and draws down the tragedy that originally turned on the sin of Arthur himself, the sin that gave birth to the traitor Modred. But the mediaeval romancers disguised that form of the story, and the process of idealising Arthur reached such heights in the middle ages that Tennyson thought himself at liberty to paint the Flos Regum, "the blameless King." He followed the Brut ab Arthur. "In short, God has not made since Adam was, the man more perfect than Arthur." This is remote from the Arthur of the oldest Celtic legends, but justifies the poet in adapting Arthur to the ideal hero of the Idylls:-

"Ideal manhood closed in real man,
Rather than that grey king, whose name, a ghost,

Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from mountain-peak,
And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still; or him
Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's, one
Touched by the adulterous finger of a time
That hovered between war and wantonness,
And crownings and dethronements."

The poetical beauties of The Coming of Arthur excel those of Gareth and Lynette. The sons of Lot and Bellicent seem to have been originally regarded as the incestuous offspring of Arthur and his sister, the wife of King Lot. Next it was represented that Arthur was ignorant of the relationship. Mr Rhys supposes that the mythical scandal (still present in Malory as a sin of ignorance) arose from blending the Celtic Arthur (as Culture Hero) with an older divine personage, such as Zeus, who marries his sister Hera. Marriages of brother and sister are familiar in the Egyptian royal house, and that of the Incas. But the poet has a perfect right to disregard a scandalous myth which, obviously crystallised later about the figure of the mythical Celtic Arthur, was an incongruous accretion to his legend. Gareth, therefore, is merely Arthur's nephew, not son, in the poem, as are Gawain and the traitor Modred. The story seems to be rather mediaeval French than Celtic — a mingling of the spirit of fabliau and popular fairy tale. The poet has added to its lightness, almost frivolity, the description of the unreal city of Camelot, built to music, as when

"Ilion, like a mist, rose into towers."

He has also brought in the allegory of Death, which, when faced, proves to be "a blooming boy" behind the mask. The courtesy and prowess of Lancelot lead up to the later development of his character.

In The Marriage of Geraint, a rumour has already risen about Lancelot and the Queen, darkening the Court, and presaging

"The world's loud whisper breaking into storm."

For this reason Geraint removes Enid from Camelot to his own land — the poet thus early leading up to the sin and the doom of Lancelot. But this motive does not occur in the Welsh story of Enid and Geraint, which Tennyson has otherwise followed with unwonted closeness. The tale occurs in French romances in various forms, but it appears to have returned, by way of France and coloured with French influences, to Wales, where it is one of the later Mabinogion. The characters are Celtic, and Nud, father of Edyrn, Geraint's defeated antagonist, appears to be recognised by Mr Rhys as "the Celtic Zeus." The manners and the tournaments are French. In the Welsh tale Geraint and Enid are bedded in Arthur's own chamber, which seems to be a symbolic commutation of the jus primae noctis a custom of which the very existence is disputed. This unseemly antiquarian detail, of course, is omitted in the Idyll.

An abstract of the Welsh tale will show how closely Tennyson here follows his original. News is brought into Arthur's Court of the appearance of a white stag. The king arranges a hunt, and Guinevere asks leave to go and watch the sport. Next morning she cannot be wakened, though the tale does not aver, like the Idyll, that she was

"Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her love
For Lancelot."

Guinevere wakes late, and rides through a ford of Usk to the hunt. Geraint follows, "a golden-hilted sword was at his side, and a robe and a surcoat of satin were upon him, and two shoes of leather upon his feet, and around him was a scarf of blue purple, at each corner of which was a golden apple":-

"But Guinevere lay late into the morn,
Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her love
For Lancelot, and forgetful of the hunt;
But rose at last, a single maiden with her,
Took horse, and forded Usk, and gain'd the wood;
There, on a little knoll beside it, stay'd
Waiting to hear the hounds; but heard instead
A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince Geraint,
Late also, wearing neither hunting-dress
Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted brand,
Came quickly flashing thro' the shallow ford
Behind them, and so gallop'd up the knoll.
A purple scarf, at either end whereof
There swung an apple of the purest gold,
Sway'd round about him, as he gallop'd up
To join them, glancing like a dragon-fly
In summer suit and silks of holiday."

The encounter with the dwarf, the lady, and the knight follows. The prose of the Mabinogi may be compared with the verse of Tennyson:-

"Geraint," said Gwenhwyvar, "knowest thou the name of that tall knight yonder?" "I know him not," said he, "and the strange armour that he wears prevents my either seeing his face or his features." "Go, maiden," said Gwenhwyvar, "and ask the dwarf who that knight is." Then the maiden went up to the dwarf; and the dwarf waited for the maiden, when he saw her coming towards him. And the maiden inquired of the dwarf who the knight was. “I will not tell thee,” he answered. “Since thou art so churlish as not to tell me,” said she, “I will ask him himself.” “Thou shalt not ask him, by my faith,” said he. “Wherefore?” said she. “Because thou art not of honour sufficient to befit thee to speak to my Lord.” Then the maiden turned her horse’s head towards the knight, upon which the dwarf struck her with the whip that was in his hand across the face and the eyes, until the blood flowed forth. And the maiden, through the hurt she received from the blow, returned to Gwenhwyvar, complaining of the pain. “Very rudely has the dwarf treated thee,” said Geraint. “I will go myself to know who the knight is.” “Go,” said Gwenhwyvar. And Geraint went up to the dwarf. “Who is yonder knight?” said Geraint. “I will not tell thee,” said the dwarf. “Then will I ask him himself,” said he. “That wilt thou not, by my faith,” said the dwarf; “thou art not honourable enough to speak with my Lord.” Said Geraint, “I have spoken with men of equal rank with him.” And he turned his horse’s head towards the knight; but the dwarf overtook him, and struck him as he had done the maiden, so that the blood coloured the scarf that Geraint wore. Then Geraint put his hand upon the hilt of his sword, but he took counsel with himself, and considered that it would be no vengeance for him to slay the dwarf, and to be attacked unarmed by the armed knight, so he returned to where Gwenhwyvar was.

”And while they listen’d for the distant hunt,
And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,
King Arthur’s hound of deepest mouth, there rode
Full slowly by a knight, lady, and dwarf;
Whereof the dwarf lagg’d latest, and the knight
Had vizor up, and show’d a youthful face,
Imperious, and of haughtiest lineaments.
And Guinevere, not mindful of his face
In the King’s hall, desired his name, and sent
Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf;
Who being vicious, old and irritable,
And doubling all his master’s vice of pride,
Made answer sharply that she should not know.
‘Then will I ask it of himself,’ she said.
‘Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not,’ cried the dwarf;
‘Thou art not worthy ev’n to speak of him’;
And when she put her horse toward the knight,

Struck at her with his whip, and she return’d
Indignant to the Queen; whereat Geraint
Exclaiming, ‘Surely I will learn the name,’
Made sharply to the dwarf, and ask’d it of him,
Who answer’d as before; and when the Prince
Had put his horse in motion toward the knight,
Struck at him with his whip, and cut his cheek.
The Prince’s blood spirted upon the scarf,
Dyeing it; and his quick, instinctive hand
Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him:
But he, from his exceeding manfulness
And pure nobility of temperament,
Wroth to be wroth at such a worm, refrain’d
From ev’n a word.”

The self-restraint of Geraint, who does not slay the dwarf,

”From his exceeding manfulness
And pure nobility of temperament,”

may appear “too polite,” and too much in accord with the still undiscovered idea of “leading sweet lives.” However, the uninvented idea does occur in the Welsh original: “Then Geraint put his hand upon the hilt of his sword, but he took counsel with himself, and considered that it would be no vengeance for him to slay the dwarf,” while he also reflects that he would be “attacked unarmed by the armed knight.” Perhaps Tennyson may be blamed for omitting this obvious motive for self-restraint. Geraint therefore follows the knight in hope of finding arms, and arrives at the town all busy with preparations for the tournament of the sparrow-hawk. This was a challenge sparrow-hawk: the knight had won it twice, and if he won it thrice it would be his to keep. The rest, in the tale, is exactly followed in the Idyll. Geraint is entertained by the ruined Yniol. The youth bears the “costrel” full of “good purchased mead” (the ruined Earl not brewing for himself), and Enid carries the manchet bread in her veil, “old, and beginning to be worn out.” All Tennyson’s own is the beautiful passage -

”And while he waited in the castle court,
The voice of Enid, Yniol’s daughter, rang
Clear thro’ the open casement of the hall,
Singing; and as the sweet voice of a bird,
Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,

Moves him to think what kind of bird it is
That sings so delicately clear, and make
Conjecture of the plumage and the form;
So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint;
And made him like a man abroad at morn
When first the liquid note beloved of men
Comes flying over many a windy wave
To Britain, and in April suddenly
Breaks from a coppice gemm’d with green and red,
And he suspends his converse with a friend,
Or it may be the labour of his hands,
To think or say, ‘There is the nightingale’;
So fared it with Geraint, who thought and said,
‘Here, by God’s grace, is the one voice for me.’”

Yniol frankly admits in the tale that he was in the wrong in the quarrel with his nephew. The poet, however, gives him the right, as is natural. The combat is exactly followed in the Idyll, as is Geraint’s insistence in carrying his bride to Court in her faded silks. Geraint, however, leaves Court with Enid, not because of the scandal about Lancelot, but to do his duty in his own country. He becomes indolent and uxorious, and Enid deplores his weakness, and awakes his suspicions, thus:-

And one morning in the summer time they were upon their couch, and Geraint lay upon the edge of it. And Enid was without sleep in the apartment which had windows of glass. And the sun shone upon the couch. And the clothes had slipped from off his arms and his breast, and he was asleep. Then she gazed upon the marvellous beauty of his appearance, and she said, “Alas, and am I the cause that these arms and this breast have lost their glory and the warlike fame which they once so richly enjoyed!” And as she said this, the tears dropped from her eyes, and they fell upon his breast. And the tears she shed, and the words she had spoken, awoke him; and another thing contributed to awaken him, and that was the idea that it was not in thinking of him that she spoke thus, but that it was because she loved some other man more than him, and that she wished for other society, and thereupon Geraint was troubled in his mind, and he called his squire; and when he came to him, “Go quickly,” said he, “and prepare my horse and my arms, and make them ready. And do thou arise,” said he to Enid, “and apparel thyself; and cause thy horse to be accoutred, and clothe thee in the worst riding-dress that thou hast in thy possession. And evil betide me,” said he, “if thou returnest here until thou knowest whether I have lost my strength so completely as thou didst say. And if it be so, it will then be easy for thee to seek the society thou didst wish for of him of whom thou wast thinking.” So she arose, and clothed herself in her meanest garments. “I know nothing, Lord,” said she, “of thy meaning.” “Neither wilt thou know at this time,” said he.

”At last, it chanced that on a summer morn
(They sleeping each by either) the new sun
Beat thro’ the blindless casement of the room,
And heated the strong warrior in his dreams;
Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside,
And bared the knotted column of his throat,
The massive square of his heroic breast,
And arms on which the standing muscle sloped,
As slopes a wild brook o’er a little stone,
Running too vehemently to break upon it.
And Enid woke and sat beside the couch,
Admiring him, and thought within herself,
Was ever man so grandly made as he?
Then, like a shadow, past the people’s talk
And accusation of uxoriousness
Across her mind, and bowing over him,
Low to her own heart piteously she said:

’O noble breast and all-puissant arms,
Am I the cause, I the poor cause that men
Reproach you, saying all your force is gone?
I AM the cause, because I dare not speak
And tell him what I think and what they say.
And yet I hate that he should linger here;
I cannot love my lord and not his name.
Far liefer had I gird his harness on him,
And ride with him to battle and stand by,
And watch his mightful hand striking great blows
At caitiffs and at wrongers of the world.
Far better were I laid in the dark earth,
Not hearing any more his noble voice,
Not to be folded more in these dear arms,
And darken’d from the high light in his eyes,
Than that my lord thro’ me should suffer shame.

Am I so bold, and could I so stand by,
And see my dear lord wounded in the strife,
Or maybe pierced to death before mine eyes,
And yet not dare to tell him what I think,
And how men slur him, saying all his force
Is melted into mere effeminacy?
O me, I fear that I am no true wife.’

Half inwardly, half audibly she spoke,
And the strong passion in her made her weep
True tears upon his broad and naked breast,
And these awoke him, and by great mischance
He heard but fragments of her later words,
And that she fear’d she was not a true wife.
And then he thought, ‘In spite of all my care,
For all my pains, poor man, for all my pains,
She is not faithful to me, and I see her
Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur’s hall.’
Then tho’ he loved and reverenced her too much
To dream she could be guilty of foul act,
Right thro’ his manful breast darted the pang
That makes a man, in the sweet face of her
Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable.
At this he hurl’d his huge limbs out of bed,
And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried,
‘My charger and her palfrey’; then to her,
‘I will ride forth into the wilderness;
For tho’ it seems my spurs are yet to win,
I have not fall’n so low as some would wish.
And thou, put on thy worst and meanest dress
And ride with me.’ And Enid ask’d, amazed,
‘If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault.’
But he, ‘I charge thee, ask not, but obey.’
Then she bethought her of a faded silk,
A faded mantle and a faded veil,
And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,
Wherein she kept them folded reverently
With sprigs of summer laid between the folds,

She took them, and array'd herself therein,
Remembering when first he came on her
Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it,
And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey to her, as himself
Had told her, and their coming to the court."

Tennyson's

"Arms on which the standing muscle sloped,
As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
Running too vehemently to break upon it,"

is suggested perhaps by Theocritus— "The muscles on his brawny arms stood out like rounded rocks that the winter torrent has rolled and worn smooth, in the great swirling stream" (Idyll xxii.)

The second part of the poem follows the original less closely. Thus Limours, in the tale, is not an old suitor of Enid; Edyrn does not appear to the rescue; certain cruel games, veiled in a magic mist, occur in the tale, and are omitted by the poet; "Gwyffert petit, so called by the Franks, whom the Cymry call the Little King," in the tale, is not a character in the Idyll, and, generally, the gross Celtic exaggerations of Geraint's feats are toned down by Tennyson. In other respects, as when Geraint eats the mowers' dinner, the tale supplies the materials. But it does not dwell tenderly on the reconciliation. The tale is more or less in the vein of "patient Grizel," and he who told it is more concerned with the fighting than with amoris redintegratio, and the sufferings of Enid. The Idyll is enriched with many beautiful pictures from nature, such as this:-

"But at the flash and motion of the man
They vanish'd panic-stricken, like a shoal
Of darting fish, that on a summer morn
Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,
But if a man who stands upon the brink
But lift a shining hand against the sun,
There is not left the twinkle of a fin
Betwixt the cressy islets white in flower;
So, scared but at the motion of the man,
Fled all the boon companions of the Earl,
And left him lying in the public way."

In Balin and Balan Tennyson displays great constructive power, and remarkable skill in moulding the most recalcitrant materials. Balin or Balyn, according to Mr Rhys, is the Belinus of Geoffrey of Monmouth, “whose name represents the Celtic divinity described in Latin as Apollo Belenus or Belinus.” In Geoffrey, Belinus, euphemerised, or reduced from god to hero, has a brother, Brennius, the Celtic Bran, King of Britain from Caithness to the Humber. Belinus drives Bran into exile. “Thus it is seen that Belinus or Balyn was, mythologically speaking, the natural enemy” (as Apollo Belinus, the radiant god) “of the dark divinity Bran or Balan.”

If this view be correct, the two brothers answer to the good and bad principles of myths like that of the Huron Iouskeha the Sun, and Anatensic the Moon, or rather Taouiscara and Iouskeha, the hostile brothers, Black and White. These mythical brethren are, in Malory, two knights of Northumberland, Balin the wild and Balan. Their adventures are mixed up with a hostile Lady of the Lake, whom Balin slays in Arthur’s presence, with a sword which none but Balin can draw from sheath; and with an evil black-faced knight Garlon, invisible at will, whom Balin slays in the castle of the knight’s brother, King Pellam. Pursued from room to room by Pellam, Balin finds himself in a chamber full of relics of Joseph of Arimathea. There he seizes a spear, the very spear with which the Roman soldier pierced the side of the Crucified, and wounds Pellam. The castle falls in ruins “through that dolorous stroke.” Pellam becomes the maimed king, who can only be healed by the Holy Grail. Apparently Celtic myths of obscure antiquity have been adapted in France, and interwoven with fables about Joseph of Arimathea and Christian mysteries. It is not possible here to go into the complicated learning of the subject. In Malory, Balin, after dealing the dolorous stroke, borrows a strange shield from a knight, and, thus accoutred, meets his brother Balan, who does not recognise him. They fight, both die and are buried in one tomb, and Galahad later achieves the adventure of winning Balin’s sword. “Thus endeth the tale of Balyn and of Balan, two brethren born in Northumberland, good knights,” says Malory, simply, and unconscious of the strange mythological medley under the coat armour of romance.

The materials, then, seemed confused and obdurate, but Tennyson works them into the course of the fatal love of Lancelot and Guinevere, and into the spiritual texture of the Idylls. Balin has been expelled from Court for the wildness that gives him his name, Balin le Sauvage. He had buffeted a squire in hall. He and Balan await all challengers beside a well. Arthur encounters and dismounts them. Balin devotes himself to self-conquest. Then comes tidings that Pellam, of old leagued with Lot against Arthur, has taken to religion, collects relics, claims descent from Joseph of Arimathea, and owns the sacred spear that pierced the side of Christ. But Garlon is with him, the knight invisible, who appears to come from an Irish source, or at least has a parallel in Irish legend. This Garlon has an unknightly way of killing men by viewless blows from the rear. Balan goes to encounter Garlon. Balin remains, learning courtesy, modelling himself on Lancelot, and gaining leave to bear Guinevere’s Crown Matrimonial for his cognisance, — which, of course, Balan does not know, -

“As golden earnest of a better life.”

But Balin sees reason to think that Lancelot and Guinevere love even too well.

”Then chanced, one morning, that Sir Balin sat
Close-bower’d in that garden nigh the hall.
A walk of roses ran from door to door;
A walk of lilies crost it to the bower:
And down that range of roses the great Queen
Came with slow steps, the morning on her face;
And all in shadow from the counter door
Sir Lancelot as to meet her, then at once,
As if he saw not, glanced aside, and paced
The long white walk of lilies toward the bower.
Follow’d the Queen; Sir Balin heard her ‘Prince,
Art thou so little loyal to thy Queen,
As pass without good morrow to thy Queen?’
To whom Sir Lancelot with his eyes on earth,
‘Fain would I still be loyal to the Queen.’
‘Yea so,’ she said, ‘but so to pass me by -
So loyal scarce is loyal to thyself,
Whom all men rate the king of courtesy.
Let be: ye stand, fair lord, as in a dream.’

Then Lancelot with his hand among the flowers,
‘Yea — for a dream. Last night methought I saw
That maiden Saint who stands with lily in hand
In yonder shrine. All round her prest the dark,
And all the light upon her silver face
Flow’d from the spiritual lily that she held.
Lo! these her emblems drew mine eyes — away:
For see, how perfect-pure! As light a flush
As hardly tints the blossom of the quince

Would mar their charm of stainless maidenhood.’

’Sweeter to me,’ she said, ‘this garden rose
Deep-hued and many-folded sweeter still
The wild-wood hyacinth and the bloom of May.
Prince, we have ridd’n before among the flowers
In those fair days — not all as cool as these,
Tho’ season-earlier. Art thou sad? or sick?
Our noble King will send thee his own leech -
Sick? or for any matter anger’d at me?’

Then Lancelot lifted his large eyes; they dwelt
Deep-tranced on hers, and could not fall: her hue
Changed at his gaze: so turning side by side
They past, and Balin started from his bower.

’Queen? subject? but I see not what I see.
Damsel and lover? hear not what I hear.
My father hath begotten me in his wrath.
I suffer from the things before me, know,
Learn nothing; am not worthy to be knight;
A churl, a clown!’ and in him gloom on gloom
Deepen’d: he sharply caught his lance and shield,
Nor stay’d to crave permission of the King,
But, mad for strange adventure, dash’d away.”

Balin is “disillusioned,” his faith in the Ideal is shaken if not shattered. He rides at adventure. Arriving at the half-ruined castle of Pellam, that dubious devotee, he hears Garlon insult Guinevere, but restrains himself. Next day, again insulted for bearing “the crown scandalous” on his shield, he strikes Garlon down, is pursued, seizes the sacred spear, and escapes. Vivien meets him in the woods, drops scandal in his ears, and so maddens him that he defaces his shield with the crown of Guinevere. Her song, and her words,

”This fire of Heaven,
This old sun-worship, boy, will rise again,
And beat the cross to earth, and break the King
And all his Table,”

might be forced into an allegory of the revived pride of life, at the Renaissance and after. The maddened yells of Balin strike the ear of Balan, who thinks he has met the foul knight Garlon, that

“Tramples on the goodly shield to show
His loathing of our Order and the Queen.”

They fight, fatally wound, and finally recognise each other: Balan trying to restore Balin’s faith in Guinevere, who is merely slandered by Garlon and Vivien. Balin acknowledges that his wildness has been their common bane, and they die, “either locked in either’s arms.”

There is nothing in Malory, nor in any other source, so far as I am aware, which suggested to Tennyson the clou of the situation — the use of Guinevere’s crown as a cognisance by Balin. This device enables the poet to weave the rather confused and unintelligible adventures of Balin and Balan into the scheme, and to make it a stage in the progress of his fable. That Balin was reckless and wild Malory bears witness, but his endeavours to conquer himself and reach the ideal set by Lancelot are Tennyson’s addition, with all the tragedy of Balin’s disenchantment and despair. The strange fantastic house of Pellam, full of the most sacred things,

“In which he scarce could spy the Christ for Saints,”

yet sheltering the human fiend Garlon, is supplied by Malory, whose predecessors probably blended more than one myth of the old Cymry into the romance, washed over with Christian colouring. As Malory tells this part of the tale it is perhaps more strange and effective than in the Idyll. The introduction of Vivien into this adventure is wholly due to Tennyson: her appearance here leads up to her triumph in the poem which follows, Merlin and Vivien.

The nature and origin of Merlin are something of a mystery. Hints and rumours of Merlin, as of Arthur, stream from hill and grave as far north as Tweedside. If he was a historical person, myths of magic might crystallise round him, as round Virgil in Italy. The process would be the easier in a country where the practices of Druidry still lingered, and revived after the retreat of the Romans. The mediaeval romancers invented a legend that Merlin was a virgin-born child of Satan. In Tennyson he may be guessed to represent the fabled esoteric lore of old religions, with their vague pantheisms, and such magic as the tapas of Brahmanic legends. He is wise with a riddling evasive wisdom: the builder of Camelot, the prophet, a shadow of Druidry clinging to the Christian king. His wisdom cannot avail him: if he beholds “his own mischance with a glassy countenance,” he cannot avoid his shapen fate. He becomes assotted of

Vivien, and goes open-eyed to his doom.

The enchantress, Vivien, is one of that dubious company of Ladies of the Lake, now friendly, now treacherous. Probably these ladies are the fairies of popular Celtic tradition, taken up into the more elaborate poetry of Cymric literature and mediaeval romance. Mr Rhys traces Vivien, or Nimue, or Nyneue, back, through a series of palaeographic changes and errors, to Rhiannon, wife of Pwyll, a kind of lady of the lake he thinks, but the identification is not very satisfactory. Vivien is certainly "one of the damsels of the lake" in Malory, and the damsels of the lake seem to be lake fairies, with all their beguilements and strange unstable loves. "And always Merlin lay about the lady to have her maidenhood, and she was ever passing weary of him, and fain would have been delivered of him, for she was afraid of him because he was a devil's son. . . . So by her subtle working she made Merlin to go under that stone to let her wit of the marvels there, but she wrought so there for him that he came never out for all the craft he could do. And so she departed and left Merlin." The sympathy of Malory is not with the enchanter. In the Idylls, as finally published, Vivien is born on a battlefield of death, with a nature perverted, and an instinctive hatred of the good. Wherefore she leaves the Court of King Mark to make mischief in Camelot. She is, in fact, the ideal minx, a character not elsewhere treated by Tennyson:-

”She hated all the knights, and heard in thought
Their lavish comment when her name was named.
For once, when Arthur walking all alone,
Vext at a rumour issued from herself
Of some corruption crept among his knights,
Had met her, Vivien, being greeted fair,
Would fain have wrought upon his cloudy mood
With reverent eyes mock-loyal, shaken voice,
And flutter'd adoration, and at last
With dark sweet hints of some who prized him more
Than who should prize him most; at which the King
Had gazed upon her blankly and gone by:
But one had watch'd, and had not held his peace:
It made the laughter of an afternoon
That Vivien should attempt the blameless King.
And after that, she set herself to gain
Him, the most famous man of all those times,
Merlin, who knew the range of all their arts,

Had built the King his havens, ships, and halls,
Was also Bard, and knew the starry heavens;
The people call'd him Wizard; whom at first
She play'd about with slight and sprightly talk,
And vivid smiles, and faintly-venom'd points
Of slander, glancing here and grazing there;
And yielding to his kindlier moods, the Seer
Would watch her at her petulance, and play,
Ev'n when they seem'd unloveable, and laugh
As those that watch a kitten; thus he grew
Tolerant of what he half disdain'd, and she,
Perceiving that she was but half disdain'd,
Began to break her sports with graver fits,
Turn red or pale, would often when they met
Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him
With such a fixt devotion, that the old man,
Tho' doubtful, felt the flattery, and at times
Would flatter his own wish in age for love,
And half believe her true: for thus at times
He waver'd; but that other clung to him,
Fixt in her will, and so the seasons went."

Vivien is modern enough — if any type of character is modern: at all events there is no such Blanche Amory of a girl in the old legends and romances. In these Merlin fatigues the lady by his love; she learns his arts, and gets rid of him as she can. His forebodings in the Idyll contain a magnificent image:-

"There lay she all her length and kiss'd his feet,
As if in deepest reverence and in love.
A twist of gold was round her hair; a robe
Of samite without price, that more exprest
Than hid her, clung about her lissome limbs,
In colour like the satin-shining palm
On sallows in the windy gleams of March:
And while she kiss'd them, crying, 'Trample me,
Dear feet, that I have follow'd thro' the world,
And I will pay you worship; tread me down
And I will kiss you for it'; he was mute:
So dark a forethought roll'd about his brain,

As on a dull day in an Ocean cave
The blind wave feeling round his long sea-hall
In silence.”

We think of the blinded Cyclops groping round his cave, like “the blind wave feeling round his long sea-hall.”

The richness, the many shining contrasts and immortal lines in Vivien, seem almost too noble for a subject not easily redeemed, and the picture of the ideal Court lying in full corruption. Next to Elaine, Jowett wrote that he “admired Vivien the most (the naughty one), which seems to me a work of wonderful power and skill. It is most elegant and fanciful. I am not surprised at your Delilah beguiling the wise man; she is quite equal to it.” The dramatic versatility of Tennyson’s genius, his power of creating the most various characters, is nowhere better displayed than in the contrast between the Vivien and the Elaine. Vivien is a type, her adventure is of a nature, which he has not elsewhere handled. Thackeray, who admired the Idylls so enthusiastically, might have recognised in Vivien a character not unlike some of his own, as dark as Becky Sharp, more terrible in her selfishness than that Beatrix Esmond who is still a paragon, and, in her creator’s despite, a queen of hearts. In Elaine, on the other hand, Tennyson has drawn a girl so innocently passionate, and told a tale of love that never found his earthly close, so delicately beautiful, that we may perhaps place this Idyll the highest of his poems on love, and reckon it the gem of the Idylls, the central diamond in the diamond crown. Reading Elaine once more, after an interval of years, one is captivated by its grace, its pathos, its nobility. The poet had touched on some unidentified form of the story, long before, in The Lady of Shalott. That poem had the mystery of romance, but, in human interest, could not compete with Elaine, if indeed any poem of Tennyson’s can be ranked with this matchless Idyll.

The mere invention, and, as we may say, charpentage, are of the first order. The materials in Malory, though beautiful, are simple, and left a field for the poet’s invention.

Arthur, with the Scots and Northern knights, means to encounter all comers at a Whitsuntide tourney. Guinevere is ill, and cannot go to the jousts, while Lancelot makes excuse that he is not healed of a wound. “Wherefore the King was heavy and passing wroth, and so he departed towards Winchester.” The Queen then blamed Lancelot: people will say they deceive Arthur. “Madame,” said Sir Lancelot, “I allow your wit; it is of late come that ye were wise.” In the Idyll Guinevere speaks as if their early loves had been as conspicuous as, according to George Buchanan, were those of Queen Mary and Bothwell.

Lancelot will go to the tourney, and, despite Guinevere’s warning, will take part against Arthur and his own fierce Northern kinsmen. He rides to Astolat— “that is, Gylford” — where Arthur sees him. He borrows the blank shield of “Sir Torre,” and the company of his brother Sir Lavaine. Elaine “cast such a love unto Sir Lancelot that she would never withdraw her love, wherefore she died.” At her prayer, and for better disguise (as he had never worn a lady’s favour), Lancelot carried her scarlet pearl-embroidered sleeve in his helmet, and left his shield in Elaine’s keeping. The tourney passes as in the poem, Gawain recognising Lancelot, but puzzled by the favour he wears. The wounded Lancelot “thought to do what he might while he might endure.” When he is offered the prize he is so sore hurt that he “takes no force of no honour.” He rides into a wood, where Lavaine draws forth the spear. Lavaine brings Lancelot to the hermit, once a knight. “I have seen the day,” says the hermit, “I would have loved him the worse, because he was against my lord, King Arthur, for some time. I was one of the fellowship of the Round Table, but I thank God now I am otherwise disposed.” Gawain, seeking the wounded knight, comes to Astolat, where Elaine declares “he is the man in the world that I first loved, and truly he is the last that ever I shall love.” Gawain, on seeing the shield, tells Elaine that the wounded knight is Lancelot, and she goes to seek him and Lavaine. Gawain does not pay court to Elaine, nor does Arthur rebuke him, as in the poem. When Guinevere heard that Lancelot bore another lady’s favour, “she was nigh out of her mind for wrath,” and expressed her anger to Sir Bors, for Gawain had spoken of the maid of Astolat. Bors tells this to Lancelot, who is tended by Elaine. “‘But I well see,’ said Sir Bors, ‘by her diligence about you that she loveth you entirely.’ ‘That me repenteth,’ said Sir Lancelot. Said Sir Bors, ‘Sir, she is not the first that hath lost her pain upon you, and that is the more pity.’” When Lancelot recovers, and returns to Astolat, she declares her love with the frankness of ladies in mediaeval romance. “Have mercy upon me and suffer me not to die for thy love.” Lancelot replies with the courtesy and the offers of service which became him. “Of all this,” said the maiden, “I will none; for but if ye will wed me, or be my paramour at the least, wit you well, Sir Lancelot, my good days are done.”

This was a difficult pass for the poet, living in other days of other manners. His art appears in the turn which he gives to Elaine’s declaration:-

”But when Sir Lancelot’s deadly hurt was whole,
To Astolat returning rode the three.
There morn by morn, arraying her sweet self
In that wherein she deem’d she look’d her best,

She came before Sir Lancelot, for she thought
‘If I be loved, these are my festal robes,
If not, the victim’s flowers before he fall.’
And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid
That she should ask some goodly gift of him
For her own self or hers; ‘and do not shun
To speak the wish most near to your true heart;
Such service have ye done me, that I make
My will of yours, and Prince and Lord am I
In mine own land, and what I will I can.’
Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,
But like a ghost without the power to speak.
And Lancelot saw that she withheld her wish,
And bode among them yet a little space
Till he should learn it; and one morn it chanced
He found her in among the garden yews,
And said, ‘Delay no longer, speak your wish,
Seeing I go to-day’: then out she brake:
‘Going? and we shall never see you more.
And I must die for want of one bold word.’
‘Speak: that I live to hear,’ he said, ‘is yours.’
Then suddenly and passionately she spoke:
‘I have gone mad. I love you: let me die.’
‘Ah, sister,’ answer’d Lancelot, ‘what is this?’
And innocently extending her white arms,
‘Your love,’ she said, ‘your love — to be your wife.’
And Lancelot answer’d, ‘Had I chosen to wed,
I had been wedded earlier, sweet Elaine:
But now there never will be wife of mine.’
‘No, no’ she cried, ‘I care not to be wife,
But to be with you still, to see your face,
To serve you, and to follow you thro’ the world.’
And Lancelot answer’d, ‘Nay, the world, the world,
All ear and eye, with such a stupid heart
To interpret ear and eye, and such a tongue
To blare its own interpretation — nay,
Full ill then should I quit your brother’s love,
And your good father’s kindness.’ And she said,
‘Not to be with you, not to see your face -

Alas for me then, my good days are done.'"

So she dies, and is borne down Thames to London, the fairest corpse, "and she lay as though she had smiled." Her letter is read. "Ye might have showed her," said the Queen, "some courtesy and gentleness that might have preserved her life;" and so the two are reconciled.

Such, in brief, is the tender old tale of true love, with the shining courtesy of Lavaine and the father of the maid, who speak no word of anger against Lancelot. "For since first I saw my lord, Sir Lancelot," says Lavaine, "I could never depart from him, nor nought I will, if I may follow him: she doth as I do." To the simple and moving story Tennyson adds, by way of ornament, the diamonds, the prize of the tourney, and the manner of their finding:-

"For Arthur, long before they crown'd him King,
Roving the trackless realms of Lyonnesse,
Had found a glen, gray boulder and black tarn.
A horror lived about the tarn, and clave
Like its own mists to all the mountain side:
For here two brothers, one a king, had met
And fought together; but their names were lost;
And each had slain his brother at a blow;
And down they fell and made the glen abhorr'd:
And there they lay till all their bones were bleach'd,
And lichen'd into colour with the crags:
And he, that once was king, had on a crown
Of diamonds, one in front, and four aside.
And Arthur came, and labouring up the pass,
All in a misty moonshine, unawares
Had trodden that crown'd skeleton, and the skull
Brake from the nape, and from the skull the crown
Roll'd into light, and turning on its rims
Fled like a glittering rivulet to the tarn:
And down the shingly scaur he plunged, and caught,
And set it on his head, and in his heart
Heard murmurs, 'Lo, thou likewise shalt be King.'"

The diamonds reappear in the scene of Guinevere's jealousy:-

"All in an oriel on the summer side,
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward the stream,

They met, and Lancelot kneeling utter'd, 'Queen,
Lady, my liege, in whom I have my joy,
Take, what I had not won except for you,
These jewels, and make me happy, making them
An armlet for the roundest arm on earth,
Or necklace for a neck to which the swan's
Is tawnier than her cygnet's: these are words:
Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin
In speaking, yet O grant my worship of it
Words, as we grant grief tears. Such sin in words,
Perchance, we both can pardon: but, my Queen,
I hear of rumours flying thro' your court.
Our bond, as not the bond of man and wife,
Should have in it an absoluter trust
To make up that defect: let rumours be:
When did not rumours fly? these, as I trust
That you trust me in your own nobleness,
I may not well believe that you believe.'

While thus he spoke, half turn'd away, the Queen
Brake from the vast oriel-embowering vine
Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast them off,
Till all the place whereon she stood was green;
Then, when he ceased, in one cold passive hand
Received at once and laid aside the gems
There on a table near her, and replied:

'It may be, I am quicker of belief
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the Lake.
Our bond is not the bond of man and wife.
This good is in it, whatsoe'er of ill,
It can be broken easier. I for you
This many a year have done despite and wrong
To one whom ever in my heart of hearts
I did acknowledge nobler. What are these?
Diamonds for me! they had been thrice their worth
Being your gift, had you not lost your own.
To loyal hearts the value of all gifts

Must vary as the giver's. Not for me!
For her! for your new fancy. Only this
Grant me, I pray you: have your joys apart.
I doubt not that however changed, you keep
So much of what is graceful: and myself
Would shun to break those bounds of courtesy
In which as Arthur's Queen I move and rule:
So cannot speak my mind. An end to this!
A strange one! yet I take it with Amen.
So pray you, add my diamonds to her pearls;
Deck her with these; tell her, she shines me down:
An armlet for an arm to which the Queen's
Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck
O as much fairer — as a faith once fair
Was richer than these diamonds — hers not mine -
Nay, by the mother of our Lord himself,
Or hers or mine, mine now to work my will -
She shall not have them.'

Saying which she seized,
And, thro' the casement standing wide for heat,
Flung them, and down they flash'd, and smote the stream.
Then from the smitten surface flash'd, as it were,
Diamonds to meet them, and they past away.
Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half disdain
At love, life, all things, on the window ledge,
Close underneath his eyes, and right across
Where these had fallen, slowly past the barge
Whereon the lily maid of Astolat
Lay smiling, like a star in blackest night."

This affair of the diamonds is the chief addition to the old tale, in which we already see the curse of lawless love, fallen upon the jealous Queen and the long-enduring Lancelot. "This is not the first time," said Sir Lancelot, "that ye have been displeased with me causeless, but, madame, ever I must suffer you, but what sorrow I endure I take no force" (that is, "I disregard").

The romance, and the poet, in his own despite, cannot but make Lancelot the man we love, not Arthur or another. Human nature perversely sides with Guinevere against the Blameless King:-

”She broke into a little scornful laugh:
‘Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless King,
That passionate perfection, my good lord -
But who can gaze upon the Sun in heaven?
He never spake word of reproach to me,
He never had a glimpse of mine untruth,
He cares not for me: only here to-day
There gleam’d a vague suspicion in his eyes:
Some meddling rogue has tamper’d with him — else
Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round,
And swearing men to vows impossible,
To make them like himself: but, friend, to me
He is all fault who hath no fault at all:
For who loves me must have a touch of earth;
The low sun makes the colour: I am yours,
Not Arthur’s, as ye know, save by the bond.”

It is not the beautiful Queen who wins us, our hearts are with “the innocence of love” in Elaine. But Lancelot has the charm that captivated Lavaine; and Tennyson’s Arthur remains

“The moral child without the craft to rule,
Else had he not lost me.”

Indeed the romance of Malory makes Arthur deserve “the pretty popular name such manhood earns” by his conduct as regards Guinevere when she is accused by her enemies in the later chapters. Yet Malory does not finally condone the sin which baffles Lancelot’s quest of the Holy Grail.

Tennyson at first was in doubt as to writing on the Grail, for certain respects of reverence. When he did approach the theme it was in a method of extreme condensation. The romances on the Grail outrun the length even of mediaeval poetry and prose. They are exceedingly confused, as was natural, if that hypothesis which regards the story as a Christianised form of obscure Celtic myth be correct. Sir Percivale’s sister, in the Idyll, has the first vision of the Grail:-

“Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail:
For, waked at dead of night, I heard a sound
As of a silver horn from o’er the hills
Blown, and I thought, ‘It is not Arthur’s use

To hunt by moonlight'; and the slender sound
As from a distance beyond distance grew
Coming upon me — O never harp nor horn,
Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch with hand,
Was like that music as it came; and then
Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and silver beam,
And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail,
Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,
Till all the white walls of my cell were dyed
With rosy colours leaping on the wall;
And then the music faded, and the Grail
Past, and the beam decay'd, and from the walls
The rosy quiverings died into the night.
So now the Holy Thing is here again
Among us, brother, fast thou too and pray,
And tell thy brother knights to fast and pray,
That so perchance the vision may be seen
By thee and those, and all the world be heal'd."

Galahad, son of Lancelot and the first Elaine (who became Lancelot's mistress by art magic), then vows himself to the Quest, and, after the vision in hall at Camelot, the knights, except Arthur, follow his example, to Arthur's grief. "Ye follow wandering fires!" Probably, or perhaps, the poet indicates dislike of hasty spiritual enthusiasms, of "seeking for a sign," and of the mysticism which betokens want of faith. The Middle Ages, more than many readers know, were ages of doubt. Men desired the witness of the senses to the truth of what the Church taught, they wished to see that naked child of the romance "smite himself into" the wafer of the Sacrament. The author of the Imitatio Christi discourages such vain and too curious inquiries as helped to rend the Church, and divided Christendom into hostile camps. The Quest of the actual Grail was a knightly form of theological research into the unsearchable; undertaken, often in a secular spirit of adventure, by sinful men. The poet's heart is rather with human things:-

"'O brother,' ask'd Ambrosius,— 'for in sooth
These ancient books — and they would win thee — teem,
Only I find not there this Holy Grail,
With miracles and marvels like to these,
Not all unlike; which oftentime I read,

Who read but on my breviary with ease,
Till my head swims; and then go forth and pass
Down to the little thorpe that lies so close,
And almost plaster'd like a martin's nest
To these old walls — and mingle with our folk;
And knowing every honest face of theirs
As well as ever shepherd knew his sheep,
And every homely secret in their hearts,
Delight myself with gossip and old wives,
And ills and aches, and teethings, lyings-in,
And mirthful sayings, children of the place,
That have no meaning half a league away:
Or lulling random squabbles when they rise,
Chafferings and chatterings at the market-cross,
Rejoice, small man, in this small world of mine,
Yea, even in their hens and in their eggs."'

This appears to be Tennyson's original reading of the Quest of the Grail. His own mysticism, which did not strive, or cry, or seek after marvels, though marvels might come unsought, is expressed in Arthur's words:-

"'"And spake I not too truly, O my knights?
Was I too dark a prophet when I said
To those who went upon the Holy Quest,
That most of them would follow wandering fires,
Lost in the quagmire? — lost to me and gone,
And left me gazing at a barren board,
And a lean Order — scarce return'd a tithe -
And out of those to whom the vision came
My greatest hardly will believe he saw;
Another hath beheld it afar off,
And leaving human wrongs to right themselves,
Cares but to pass into the silent life.
And one hath had the vision face to face,
And now his chair desires him here in vain,
However they may crown him otherwhere.

’”And some among you held, that if the King
Had seen the sight he would have sworn the vow:
Not easily, seeing that the King must guard
That which he rules, and is but as the hind
To whom a space of land is given to plow
Who may not wander from the allotted field
Before his work be done; but, being done,
Let visions of the night or of the day
Come, as they will; and many a time they come,
Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,
This air that smites his forehead is not air
But vision — yea, his very hand and foot -
In moments when he feels he cannot die,
And knows himself no vision to himself,
Nor the high God a vision, nor that One
Who rose again: ye have seen what ye have seen.”

‘So spake the King: I knew not all he meant.’”

The closing lines declare, as far as the poet could declare them, these subjective experiences of his which, in a manner rarely parallelled, coloured and formed his thought on the highest things. He introduces them even into this poem on a topic which, because of its sacred associations, he for long did not venture to touch.

In Pelleas and Ettarre — which deals with the sorrows of one of the young knights who fill up the gaps left at the Round Table by the mischances of the Quest — it would be difficult to trace a Celtic original. For Malory, not Celtic legend, supplied Tennyson with the germinal idea of a poem which, in the romance, has no bearing on the final catastrophe. Pelleas, a King of the Isles, loves the beautiful Ettarre, “a great lady,” and for her wins at a tourney the prize of the golden circlet. But she hates and despises him, and Sir Gawain is a spectator when, as in the poem, the felon knights of Ettarre bind and insult their conqueror, Pelleas. Gawain promises to win the love of Ettarre for Pelleas, and, as in the poem, borrows his arms and horse, and pretends to have slain him. But in place of turning Ettarre’s heart towards Pelleas, Gawain becomes her lover, and Pelleas, detecting them asleep, lays his naked sword on their necks. He then rides home to die; but Nimue (Vivien), the Lady of the Lake, restores him to health and sanity. His fever gone, he scorns Ettarre, who, by Nimue’s enchantment, now loves him as much as she had hated him. Pelleas weds Nimue, and Ettarre dies of a broken heart. Tennyson, of course, could not make Nimue (his Vivien) do anything benevolent. He therefore closes his poem by a repetition of the effect in the case of Balin. Pelleas is driven desperate by the treachery of Gawain, the reported infidelity of Guinevere, and the general corruption of the ideal. A shadow falls on Lancelot and Guinevere, and Modred sees that his hour is drawing nigh. In spite of beautiful passages this is not one of the finest of the Idylls, save for the study of the fierce, hateful, and beautiful grande dame, Ettarre. The narrative does little to advance the general plot. In the original of Malory it has no connection with the Lancelot cycle, except as far as it reveals the treachery of Gawain, the gay and fair-spoken "light of love," brother of the traitor Modred. A simpler treatment of the theme may be read in Mr Swinburne's beautiful poem, The Tale of Balen.

It is in The Last Tournament that Modred finds the beginning of his opportunity. The brief life of the Ideal has burned itself out, as the year, in its vernal beauty when Arthur came, is burning out in autumn. The poem is purposely autumnal, with the autumn, not of mellow fruitfulness, but of the "flying gold of the ruined woodlands" and the dank odours of decay. In that miserable season is held the Tourney of the Dead Innocence, with the blood-red prize of rubies. With a wise touch Tennyson has represented the Court as fallen not into vice only and crime, but into positive vulgarity and bad taste. The Tournament is a carnival of the "smart" and the third-rate. Courtesy is dead, even Tristram is brutal, and in Iseult hatred of her husband is as powerful as love of her lover. The satire strikes at England, where the world has never been corrupt with a good grace. It is a passage of arms neither gentle nor joyous that Lancelot presides over:-

"The sudden trumpet sounded as in a dream
To ears but half-awaked, then one low roll
Of Autumn thunder, and the jousts began:
And ever the wind blew, and yellowing leaf
And gloom and gleam, and shower and shorn plume
Went down it. Sighing weariedly, as one
Who sits and gazes on a faded fire,
When all the goodlier guests are past away,
Sat their great umpire, looking o'er the lists.
He saw the laws that ruled the tournament
Broken, but spake not; once, a knight cast down
Before his throne of arbitration cursed
The dead babe and the follies of the King;

And once the laces of a helmet crack’d,
And show’d him, like a vermin in its hole,
Modred, a narrow face: anon he heard
The voice that billow’d round the barriers roar
An ocean-sounding welcome to one knight,
But newly-enter’d, taller than the rest,
And armour’d all in forest green, whereon
There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,
And wearing but a holly-spray for crest,
With ever-scattering berries, and on shield
A spear, a harp, a bugle — Tristram — late
From overseas in Brittany return’d,
And marriage with a princess of that realm,
Isolt the White — Sir Tristram of the Woods -
Whom Lancelot knew, had held sometime with pain
His own against him, and now yearn’d to shake
The burthen off his heart in one full shock
With Tristram ev’n to death: his strong hands gript
And dinted the gilt dragons right and left,
Until he groan’d for wrath — so many of those,
That ware their ladies’ colours on the casque,
Drew from before Sir Tristram to the bounds,
And there with gibes and flickering mockeries
Stood, while he mutter’d, ‘Craven crests! O shame!
What faith have these in whom they sware to love?
The glory of our Round Table is no more.’

So Tristram won, and Lancelot gave, the gems,
Not speaking other word than ‘Hast thou won?
Art thou the purest, brother? See, the hand
Wherewith thou takest this, is red!’ to whom
Tristram, half plagued by Lancelot’s languorous mood,
Made answer, ‘Ay, but wherefore toss me this
Like a dry bone cast to some hungry hound?
Let be thy fair Queen’s fantasy. Strength of heart
And might of limb, but mainly use and skill,
Are winners in this pastime of our King.
My hand — belike the lance hath dript upon it -

No blood of mine, I trow; but O chief knight,
Right arm of Arthur in the battlefield,
Great brother, thou nor I have made the world;
Be happy in thy fair Queen as I in mine.’

And Tristram round the gallery made his horse
Caracole; then bow’d his homage, bluntly saying,
‘Fair damsels, each to him who worships each
Sole Queen of Beauty and of love, behold
This day my Queen of Beauty is not here.’
And most of these were mute, some anger’d, one
Murmuring, ‘All courtesy is dead,’ and one,
‘The glory of our Round Table is no more.’

Then fell thick rain, plume droopt and mantle clung,
And pettish cries awoke, and the wan day
Went glooming down in wet and weariness:
But under her black brows a swarthy one
Laugh’d shrilly, crying, ‘Praise the patient saints,
Our one white day of Innocence hath past,
Tho’ somewhat draggled at the skirt. So be it.
The snowdrop only, flowering thro’ the year,
Would make the world as blank as Winter-tide.
Come — let us gladden their sad eyes, our Queen’s
And Lancelot’s, at this night’s solemnity
With all the kindlier colours of the field.’”

Arthur’s last victory over a robber knight is ingloriously squalid:-

”He ended: Arthur knew the voice; the face
Wellnigh was helmet-hidden, and the name
Went wandering somewhere darkling in his mind.
And Arthur deign’d not use of word or sword,
But let the drunkard, as he stretch’d from horse
To strike him, overbalancing his bulk,
Down from the causeway heavily to the swamp
Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching wave,
Heard in dead night along that table-shore,

Drops flat, and after the great waters break
Whitening for half a league, and thin themselves,
Far over sands marbled with moon and cloud,
From less and less to nothing; thus he fell
Head-heavy; then the knights, who watch'd him, roar'd
And shouted and leapt down upon the fall'n;
There trampled out his face from being known,
And sank his head in mire, and slimed themselves:
Nor heard the King for their own cries, but sprang
Thro' open doors, and swording right and left
Men, women, on their sodden faces, hurl'd
The tables over and the wines, and slew
Till all the rafters rang with woman-yells,
And all the pavement stream'd with massacre:
Then, echoing yell with yell, they fired the tower,
Which half that autumn night, like the live North,
Red-pulsing up thro' Alioth and Alcor,
Made all above it, and a hundred meres
About it, as the water Moab saw
Come round by the East, and out beyond them flush'd
The long low dune, and lazy-plunging sea."

Guinevere is one of the greatest of the Idylls. Malory makes Lancelot more sympathetic; his fight, unarmed, in Guinevere's chamber, against the felon knights, is one of his most spirited scenes. Tennyson omits this, and omits all the unpardonable behaviour of Arthur as narrated in Malory. Critics have usually condemned the last parting of Guinevere and Arthur, because the King doth preach too much to an unhappy woman who has no reply. The position of Arthur is not easily redeemable: it is difficult to conceive that a noble nature could be, or should be, blind so long. He does rehabilitate his Queen in her own self-respect, perhaps, by assuring her that he loves her still:-

"Let no man dream but that I love thee still."

Had he said that one line and no more, we might have loved him better. In the Idylls we have not Malory's last meeting of Lancelot and Guinevere, one of the scenes in which the wandering composite romance ends as nobly as the Iliad.

The Passing of Arthur, except for a new introductory passage of great beauty and appropriateness, is the Morte d'Arthur, first published in 1842:-

"So all day long the noise of battle roll'd

Among the mountains by the winter sea."

The year has run its course, spring, summer, gloomy autumn, and dies in the mist of Arthur's last wintry battle in the west -

"And the new sun rose, bringing the new year."

The splendid and sombre procession has passed, leaving us to muse as to how far the poet has fulfilled his own ideal. There could be no new epic: he gave a chain of heroic Idylls. An epic there could not be, for the Iliad and Odyssey have each a unity of theme, a narrative compressed into a few days in the former, in the latter into forty days of time. The tragedy of Arthur's reign could not so be condensed; and Tennyson chose the only feasible plan. He has left a work, not absolutely perfect, indeed, but such as he conceived, after many tentative essays, and such as he desired to achieve. His fame may not rest chiefly on the Idylls, but they form one of the fairest jewels in the crown that shines with unnumbered gems, each with its own glory.

CHAPTER VIII. — ENOCH ARDEN. THE DRAMAS.

The success of the first volume of the Idylls recompensed the poet for the slings and arrows that gave Maud a hostile welcome. His next publication was the beautiful Tithonus, a fit pendant to the Ulysses, and composed about the same date (1833-35). “A quarter of a century ago,” Tennyson dates it, writing in 1860 to the Duke of Argyll. He had found it when “ferreting among my old books,” he said, in search of something for Thackeray, who was establishing the Cornhill Magazine. What must the wealth of the poet have been, who, possessing Tithonus in his portfolio, did not take the trouble to insert it in the volumes of 1842! Nobody knows how many poems of Tennyson’s never even saw pen and ink, being composed unwritten, and forgotten. At this time we find him recommending Mr Browning’s Men and Women to the Duke, who, like many Tennysonians, does not seem to have been a ready convert to his great contemporary. The Duke and Duchess urged the Laureate to attempt the topic of the Holy Grail, but he was not in the mood. Indeed the vision of the Grail in the early Sir Galahad is doubtless happier than the allegorical handling of a theme so obscure, remote, and difficult, in the Idylls. He wrote his Boadicea, a piece magnificent in itself, but of difficult popular access, owing to the metrical experiment.

In the autumn of 1860 he revisited Cornwall with F. T. Palgrave, Mr Val Prinsep, and Mr Holman Hunt. They walked in the rain, saw Tintagel and the Scilly Isles, and were feted by an enthusiastic captain of a little river steamer, who was more interested in “Mr Tinman and Mr Pancake” than the Celtic boatman of Ardtornish. The winter was passed at Farringford, and the Northern Farmer was written there, a Lincolnshire reminiscence, in the February of 1861. In autumn the Pyrenees were visited by Tennyson in company with Arthur Clough and Mr Dakyns of Clifton College. At Cauteretz in August, and among memories of the old tour with Arthur Hallam, was written All along the Valley. The ways, however, in Auvergne were “foul,” and the diet “unhappy.” The dedication of the Idylls was written on the death of the Prince Consort in December, and in January 1862 the Ode for the opening of an exhibition. The poet was busy with his “Fisherman,” Enoch Arden. The volume was published in 1864, and Lord Tennyson says it has been, next to In Memoriam, the most popular of his father’s works. One would have expected the one volume containing the poems up to 1842 to hold that place. The new book, however, mainly dealt with English, contemporary, and domestic themes— “the poetry of the affections.” An old woman, a district visitor reported, regarded Enoch Arden as “more beautiful” than the other tracts which were read to her. It is indeed a tender and touching tale, based on a folk-story which Tennyson found current in Brittany as well as in England. Nor is the unseen and unknown landscape of the tropic isle less happily created by the poet’s imagination than the familiar English cliffs and hazel copses:-

”The mountain wooded to the peak, the lawns
And winding glades high up like ways to Heaven,
The slender coco’s drooping crown of plumes,
The lightning flash of insect and of bird,
The lustre of the long convolvuluses
That coil’d around the stately stems, and ran
Ev’n to the limit of the land, the glows
And glories of the broad belt of the world,
All these he saw; but what he fain had seen
He could not see, the kindly human face,
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,
The league-long roller thundering on the reef,
The moving whisper of huge trees that branch’d
And blossom’d in the zenith, or the sweep
Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,
As down the shore he ranged, or all day long
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,
A shipwreck’d sailor, waiting for a sail:
No sail from day to day, but every day
The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
Among the palms and ferns and precipices;
The blaze upon the waters to the east;
The blaze upon his island overhead;
The blaze upon the waters to the west;
Then the great stars that globed themselves in Heaven,
The hollower-bellowing ocean, and again
The scarlet shafts of sunrise — but no sail.”

Aylmer’s Field somewhat recalls the burden of Maud, the curse of purse-proud wealth, but is too gloomy to be a fair specimen of Tennyson’s art. In Sea Dreams (first published in 1860) the awful vision of crumbling faiths is somewhat out of harmony with its environment:-

”But round the North, a light,
A belt, it seem’d, of luminous vapour, lay,
And ever in it a low musical note
Swell’d up and died; and, as it swell’d, a ridge
Of breaker issued from the belt, and still
Grew with the growing note, and when the note
Had reach’d a thunderous fulness, on those cliffs
Broke, mixt with awful light (the same as that
Living within the belt) whereby she saw
That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs no more,
But huge cathedral fronts of every age,
Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could see,
One after one: and then the great ridge drew,
Lessening to the lessening music, back,
And past into the belt and swell’d again
Slowly to music: ever when it broke
The statues, king or saint or founder fell;
Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin left
Came men and women in dark clusters round,
Some crying, ‘Set them up! they shall not fall!’
And others, ‘Let them lie, for they have fall’n.’
And still they strove and wrangled: and she grieved
In her strange dream, she knew not why, to find
Their wildest wailings never out of tune
With that sweet note; and ever as their shrieks
Ran highest up the gamut, that great wave
Returning, while none mark’d it, on the crowd
Broke, mixt with awful light, and show’d their eyes
Glaring, and passionate looks, and swept away
The men of flesh and blood, and men of stone,
To the waste deeps together.

’Then I fixt
My wistful eyes on two fair images,
Both crown’d with stars and high among the stars, -

The Virgin Mother standing with her child
High up on one of those dark minster-fronts -
Till she began to totter, and the child
Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry
Which mixt with little Margaret's, and I woke,
And my dream awed me: — well — but what are dreams?"

The passage is rather fitted for a despairing mood of Arthur, in the Idylls, than for the wife of the city clerk ruined by a pious rogue.

The Lucretius, later published, is beyond praise as a masterly study of the great Roman sceptic, whose heart is at eternal odds with his Epicurean creed. Nascent madness, or fever of the brain drugged by the blundering love philtre, is not more cunningly treated in the mad scenes of Maud. No prose commentary on the De Rerum Natura, however long and learned, conveys so clearly as this concise study in verse the sense of magnificent mingled ruin in the mind and poem of the Roman.

The "Experiments in Quantity" were, perhaps, suggested by Mr Matthew Arnold's Lectures on the Translating of Homer. Mr Arnold believed in a translation into English hexameters. His negative criticism of other translators and translations was amusing and instructive: he had an easy game to play with the Yankee-doodle metre of F. W. Newman, the ponderous blank verse of Cowper, the tripping and clipping couplets of Pope, the Elizabethan fantasies of Chapman. But Mr Arnold's hexameters were neither musical nor rapid: they only exhibited a new form of failure. As the Prince of Abyssinia said to his tutor, "Enough; you have convinced me that no man can be a poet," so Mr Arnold went some way to prove that no man can translate Homer.

Tennyson had the lowest opinion of hexameters as an English metre for serious purposes.

"These lame hexameters the strong-wing'd music of Homer!"

Lord Tennyson says, "German hexameters he disliked even more than English." Indeed there is not much room for preference. Tennyson's Alcaics (Milton) were intended to follow the Greek rather than the Horatian model, and resulted, at all events, in a poem worthy of the "mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies." The specimen of the Iliad in blank verse, beautiful as it is, does not, somehow, reproduce the music of Homer. It is entirely Tennysonian, as in

"Roll'd the rich vapour far into the heaven."

The reader, in that one line, recognises the voice and trick of the English poet, and is far away from the Chian:-

“As when in heaven the stars about the moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every height comes out, and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the stars
Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in his heart:
So many a fire between the ships and stream
Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of Troy,
A thousand on the plain; and close by each
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;
And eating hoary grain and pulse the steeds,
Fixt by their cars, waited the golden dawn.”

This is excellent, is poetry, escapes the conceits of Pope (who never “wrote with his eye on the object”), but is pure Tennyson. We have not yet, probably we never shall have, an adequate rendering of the Iliad into verse, and prose translations do not pretend to be adequate. When parents and dominies have abolished the study of Greek, something, it seems, will have been lost to the world, — something which even Tennyson could not restore in English. He thought blank verse the proper equivalent; but it is no equivalent. One even prefers his own prose:-

Nor did Paris linger in his lofty halls, but when he had girt on his gorgeous armour, all of varied bronze, then he rushed thro’ the city, glorying in his airy feet. And as when a stall-kept horse, that is barley-fed at the manger, breaketh his tether, and dasheth thro’ the plain, spurning it, being wont to bathe himself in the fair-running river, rioting, and reareth his head, and his mane flieth back on either shoulder, and he glorieth in his beauty, and his knees bear him at the gallop to the haunts and meadows of the mares; so ran the son of Priam, Paris, from the height of Pergamus, all in arms, glittering like the sun, laughing for light-heartedness, and his swift feet bare him.

In February 1865 Tennyson lost the mother whose portrait he drew in Isabel,— “a thing enskied and sainted.”

In the autumn of 1865 the Tennysons went on a Continental tour, and visited Waterloo, Weimar, and Dresden; in September they entertained Emma I., Queen of the Sandwich Islands. The months passed quietly at home or in town. The poet had written his Lucretius, and, to please Sir George Grove, wrote The Song of the Wrens, for music. Tennyson had not that positive aversion to music which marked Dr Johnson, Victor Hugo, Theophile Gautier, and some other poets. Nay, he liked Beethoven, which places him higher in the musical scale than Scott, who did not rise above a Border lilt or a Jacobite ditty. The Wren songs, entitled The Window, were privately printed by Sir Ivor Guest in 1867, were set to music by Sir Arthur Sullivan, and published by Strahan in December 1870. “A puppet,” Tennyson called the song-book, “whose only merit is, perhaps, that it can dance to Mr Sullivan’s instrument. I am sorry that my puppet should have to dance at all in the dark shadow of these days” (the siege of Paris), “but the music is now completed, and I am bound by my promise.” The verses are described as “partly in the old style,” but the true old style of the Elizabethan and cavalier days is lost.

In the summer of 1867 the Tennysons moved to a farmhouse near Haslemere, at that time not a centre of literary Londoners. “Sandy soil and heather-scented air” allured them, and the result was the purchase of land, and the building of Aldworth, Mr Knowles being the architect. In autumn Tennyson visited Lyme Regis, and, like all other travellers thither, made a pilgrimage to the Cobb, sacred to Louisa Musgrove. The poet now began the study of Hebrew, having a mind to translate the Book of Job, a vision unfulfilled. In 1868 he thought of publishing his boyish piece, The Lover’s Tale, but delayed. An anonymously edited piracy of this and other poems was perpetrated in 1875, limited, at least nominally, to fifty copies.

In July Longfellow visited Tennyson. “The Longfellows and he talked much of spiritualism, for he was greatly interested in that subject, but he suspended his judgment, and thought that, if in such manifestations there is anything, ‘Pucks, not the spirits of dead men, reveal themselves.’” This was Southey’s suggestion, as regards the celebrated disturbances in the house of the Wesleys. “Wit might have much to say, wisdom, little,” said Sam Wesley. Probably the talk about David Dunglas Home, the “medium” then in vogue, led to the discussion of “spiritualism.” We do not hear that Tennyson ever had the curiosity to see Home, whom Mr Browning so firmly detested.

In September The Holy Grail was begun: it was finished “in about a week. It came like a breath of inspiration.” The subject had for many years been turned about in the poet’s mind, which, of course, was busy in these years of apparent inactivity. At this time (August 1868) Tennyson left his old publishers, the Moxons, for Mr Strahan, who endured till 1872. Then he was succeeded by Messrs H. S. King & Co., who gave place (1879) to Messrs Kegan Paul & Co., while in 1884 Messrs Macmillan became, and continue to be, the publishers. A few pieces, except Lucretius (Macmillan's Magazine, May 1868) unimportant, appeared in serials.

Very early in 1869 The Coming of Arthur was composed, while Tennyson was reading Browning's The Ring and the Book. He and his great contemporary were on terms of affectionate friendship, though Tennyson, perhaps, appreciated less of Browning than Browning of Tennyson. Meanwhile "Old Fitz" kept up a fire of unsympathetic growls at Browning and all his works. "I have been trying in vain to read it" (The Ring and the Book), "and yet the Athenaeum tells me it is wonderfully fine." FitzGerald's ply had been taken long ago; he wanted verbal music in poetry (no exorbitant desire), while, in Browning, carmina desunt. Perhaps, too, a personal feeling, as if Browning was Tennyson's rival, affected the judgment of the author of Omar Khayyam. We may almost call him "the author."

The Holy Grail, with the smaller poems, such as Lucretius, was published at the end of 1869. FitzGerald appears to have preferred The Northern Farmer, "the substantial rough-spun nature I knew," to all the visionary knights in the airy Quest. To compare "—" (obviously Browning) with Tennyson, was "to compare an old Jew's curiosity shop with the Phidian Marbles." Tennyson's poems "being clear to the bottom as well as beautiful, do not seem to cockney eyes so deep as muddy waters."

In November 1870 The Last Tournament was begun; it was finished in May 1871. Conceivably the vulgar scandals of the last days of the French Imperial regime may have influenced Tennyson's picture of the corruption of Arthur's Court; but the Empire did not begin, like the Round Table, with aspirations after the Ideal. In the autumn of the year Tennyson entertained, and was entertained by, Mr Huxley. In their ideas about ultimate things two men could not vary more widely, but each delighted in the other's society. In the spring of 1872 Tennyson visited Paris and the ruins of the Louvre. He read Victor Hugo, and Alfred de Musset, whose comedies he admired. The little that we hear of his opinion of the other great poet runs to this effect, "Victor Hugo is an unequal genius, sometimes sublime; he reminds one that there is but one step between the sublime and the ridiculous," but the example by which Tennyson illustrated this was derived from one of the poet's novels. In these we meet not only the sublime and the ridiculous, but passages which leave us in some perplexity as to their true category. One would have expected Hugo's lyrics to be Tennyson's favourites, but only Gastibelza is mentioned in that character. At this time Tennyson was vexed by

"Art with poisonous honey stolen from France," a phrase which cannot apply to Hugo. Meanwhile Gareth was being written, and the knight's song for The Coming of Arthur. Gareth and Lynette, with minor pieces, appeared in 1872. Balin and Balan was composed later, to lead up to Vivien, to which, perhaps, Balin and Balan was introduction sufficient had it been the earlier written. But the Idylls have already been discussed as arranged in sequence. The completion of the Idylls, with the patriotic epilogue, was followed by the offer of a baronetcy. Tennyson preferred that he and his wife "should remain plain Mr and Mrs," though "I hope that I have too much of the old-world loyalty not to wear my lady's favours against all comers, should you think that it would be more agreeable to her Majesty that I should do so."

The Idylls ended, Tennyson in 1874 began to contemplate a drama, choosing the topic, perhaps neither popular nor in an Aristotelian sense tragic, of Mary Tudor. This play was published, and put on the stage by Sir Henry Irving in 1875. Harold followed in 1876, The Cup in 1881 (at the Lyceum), The Promise of May (at the Globe) in 1882, Becket in 1884, with The Foresters in 1892. It seems best to consider all the dramatic period of Tennyson's work, a period reached so strangely late in his career, in the sequence of the Plays. The task is one from which I shrink, as conscious of entire ignorance of the stage and of lack of enthusiasm for the drama. Great dramatic authors have, almost invariably, had long practical knowledge of the scenes and of what is behind them. Shakespeare and his contemporaries, Moliere and his contemporaries, had lived their lives on the boards and in the foyer, actors themselves, or in daily touch with actors and actresses. In the present day successful playwrights appear to live much in the world of the players. They have practical knowledge of the conventions and conditions which the stage imposes. Neither Browning nor Mr Swinburne (to take great names) has had, it seems, much of this practical and daily experience; their dramas have been acted but rarely, if at all, and many examples prove that neither poetical genius nor the genius for prose fiction can enable men to produce plays which hold their own on the boards. This may be the fault of public taste, or partly of public taste, partly of defect in practical knowledge on the side of the authors. Of the stage, by way of practice, Tennyson had known next to nothing, yet his dramas were written to be acted, and acted some of them were. "For himself, he was aware," says his biographer, "that he wanted intimate knowledge of the mechanical details necessary for the modern stage, although in early and middle life he had been a constant playgoer, and would keenly follow the action of a play, criticising the characterisation, incidents, scenic effects, situations, language, and dramatic points." He was quite prepared to be "edited" for acting purposes by the players. Miss Mary Anderson says that "he was ready to sacrifice even his MOST beautiful lines for the sake of a real dramatic effect.”

This proved unusual common-sense in a poet. Modern times and manners are notoriously unfavourable to the serious drama. In the age of the Greek tragedians, as in the days of “Eliza and our James,” reading was not very common, and life was much more passed in public than among ourselves, when people go to the play for light recreation, or to be shocked. So various was the genius of Tennyson, that had he devoted himself early to the stage, and had he been backed by a manager with the enterprise and intelligence of Sir Henry Irving, it is impossible to say how much he might have done to restore the serious drama. But we cannot regret that he was occupied in his prime with other things, nor can we expect to find his noblest and most enduring work in the dramatic experiments of his latest years. It is notable that, in his opinion, “the conditions of the dramatic art are much more complex than they were.” For example, we have “the star system,” which tends to allot what is, or was, technically styled “the fat,” to one or two popular players. Now, a poet like Tennyson will inevitably distribute large quantities of what is most excellent to many characters, and the consequent difficulties may be appreciated by students of our fallen nature. The poet added that to be a first-rate historical playwright means much more work than formerly, seeing that “exact history” has taken the part of the “chance chronicle.”

This is a misfortune. The dramas of the Attic stage, with one or two exceptions, are based on myth and legend, not on history, and even in the Persae, grounded on contemporary events, AEschylus introduced the ghost of Darius, not vouched for by “exact history.” Let us conceive Shakespeare writing Macbeth in an age of “exact history.” Hardly any of the play would be left. Fleance and Banquo must go. Duncan becomes a young man, and far from “gracious.” Macbeth appears as the defender of the legitimist prince, Lulach, against Duncan, a usurper. Lady Macbeth is a pattern to her sex, and her lord is a clement and sagacious ruler. The witches are ruled out of the piece. Difficulties arise about the English aid to Malcolm. History, in fact, declines to be dramatic. Liberties must be taken. In his plays of the Mary Stuart cycle, Mr Swinburne telescopes the affair of Darnley into that of Chastelard, which was much earlier. He makes Mary Beaton (in love with Chastelard) a kind of avenging fate, who will never leave the Queen till her head falls at Fotheringay; though, in fact, after a flirtation with Randolph, Mary Beaton married Ogilvy of Boyne (really in love with Lady Bothwell), and not one of the four Maries was at Fotheringay. An artist ought to be allowed to follow legend, of its essence dramatic, or to manipulate history as he pleases. Our modern scrupulosity is pedantic. But Tennyson read a long list of books for his Queen Mary, though it does not appear that he made original researches in MSS. These labours occupied 1874 and 1875. Yet it would be foolish to criticise his Queen Mary as if we were criticising “exact history.” “The play’s the thing.”

The poet thought that “Bloody Mary” “had been harshly judged by the verdict of popular tradition.” So have most characters to whom popular dislike affixes the popular epithet— “Bloody Claverse,” “Bloody Mackenzie,” “Bloody Balfour.” Mary had the courage of the Tudors. She “edified all around her by her cheerfulness, her piety, and her resignation to the will of Providence,” in her last days (Lingard). Camden calls her “a queen never praised enough for the purity of her morals, her charity to the poor” (she practised as a district visitor), “and her liberality to the nobles and the clergy.” She was “pious, merciful, pure, and ever to be praised, if we overlook her erroneous opinions in religion,” says Godwin. She had been grievously wronged from her youth upwards. In Elizabeth she had a sister and a rival, a constant intriguer against her, and a kinswoman far from amiable. Despite “the kindness and attention of Philip” (Lingard), affairs of State demanded his absence from England. The disappointment as to her expected child was cruel. She knew that she had become unpopular, and she could not look for the success of her Church, to which she was sincerely attached. M. Auguste Filon thought that Queen Mary might secure dramatic rank for Tennyson, “if a great actress arose who conceived a passion for the part of Mary.” But that was not to be expected. Mary was middle-aged, plain, and in aspect now terrible, now rueful. No great actress will throw herself with passion into such an ungrateful part. “Throughout all history,” Tennyson said, “there was nothing more mournful than the final tragedy of this woman.” MOURNFUL it is, but not tragic. There is nothing grand at the close, as when Mary Stuart conquers death and evil fame, redeeming herself by her courage and her calm, and extending over unborn generations that witchery which her enemies dreaded more than an army with banners.

Moreover, popular tradition can never forgive the fires of Smithfield. It was Mary Tudor’s misfortune that she had the power to execute, on a great scale, that faculty of persecution to the death for which her Presbyterian and other Protestant opponents pined in vain. Mr Froude says of her, “For the first and last time the true Ultramontane spirit was dominant in England, the genuine conviction that, as the orthodox prophets and sovereigns of Israel slew the worshippers of Baal, so were Catholic rulers called upon, as their first duty, to extirpate heretics as the enemies of God and man.” That was precisely the spirit of Knox and other Presbyterian denouncers of death against “Idolaters” (Catholics). But the Scottish preachers were always thwarted: Mary and her advisers had their way, as, earlier, Latimer had preached against sufferers at the stake. To the stake, which he feared so greatly, Cranmer had sent persons not of his own fleeting shade of theological opinion. These men had burned Anabaptists, but all that is lightly forgotten by Protestant opinion. Under Mary (whoever may have been primarily responsible) Cranmer and Latimer were treated as they had treated others. Moreover, some two hundred poor men and women had dared the fiery death. The persecution was on a scale never forgiven or forgotten, since Mary began cerdonibus esse timenda. Mary was not essentially inclement. Despite Renard, the agent of the Emperor, she spared that lord of fluff and feather, Courtenay, and she spared Elizabeth. Lady Jane she could not save, the girl who was a queen by grace of God and of her own royal nature. But Mary will never be pardoned by England. "Few men or women have lived less capable of doing knowingly a wrong thing," says Mr Froude, a great admirer of Tennyson's play. Yet, taking Mr Froude's own view, Mary's abject and superannuated passion for Philip; her ecstasies during her supposed pregnancy; "the forlorn hours when she would sit on the ground with her knees drawn to her face," with all her "symptoms of hysterical derangement, leave little room, as we think of her, for other feelings than pity." Unfortunately, feelings of pity for a person so distraught, so sourly treated by fortune, do not suffice for tragedy. When we contemplate Antigone or OEdipus, it is not with a sentiment of pity struggling against abhorrence.

For these reasons the play does not seem to have a good dramatic subject. The unity is given by Mary herself and her fortunes, and these are scarcely dramatic. History prevents the introduction of Philip till the second scene of the third act. His entrance is manque; he merely accompanies Cardinal Pole, who takes command of the scene, and Philip does not get in a word till after a long conversation between the Queen and the Cardinal. Previously Philip had only crossed the stage in a procession, yet when he does appear he is bereft of prominence. The interest as regards him is indicated, in Act I. scene v., by Mary's kissing his miniature. Her blighted love for him is one main motive of the tragedy, but his own part appears too subordinate in the play as published. The interest is scattered among the vast crowd of characters; and Mr R. H. Hutton remarked at the time that he "remains something of a cold, cruel, and sensual shadow." We are more interested in Wyatt, Cranmer, Gardiner, and others; or at least their parts are more interesting. Yet in no case does the interest of any character, except of Mary and Elizabeth, remain continuous throughout the play. Tennyson himself thought that "the real difficulty of the drama is to give sufficient relief to its intense sadness. . . . Nothing less than the holy calm of the meek and penitent Cranmer can be adequate artistic relief." But not much relief can be drawn from a man about to be burned alive, and history does not tempt us to keen sympathy with the recanting archbishop, at least if we agree with Macaulay rather than with Froude.

I venture to think that historical tradition, as usual, offered a better motive than exact history. Following tradition, we see in Mary a cloud of hateful gloom, from which England escapes into the glorious dawn of “the Gospel light,” and of Elizabeth, who might be made a triumphantly sympathetic character. That is the natural and popular course which the drama might take. But Tennyson’s history is almost critical and scientific. Points of difficult and debated evidence (as to Elizabeth’s part in Wyatt’s rebellion) are discussed. There is no contest of day and darkness, of Truth and Error. The characters are in that perplexed condition about creeds which was their actual state after the political and social and religious chaos produced by Henry VIII. Gardiner is a Catholic, but not an Ultramontane; Lord William Howard is a Catholic, but not a fanatic; we find a truculent Anabaptist, or Socialist, and a citizen whose pride is his moderation. The native uncritical tendency of the drama is to throw up hats and halloo for Elizabeth and an open Bible. In place of this, Cecil delivers a well-considered analysis of the character of Elizabeth

”Eliz. God guide me lest I lose the way.
, his fault in swearing the oath to William. The hero himself; recking little, after a superstitious moment, of the concealed relics over which he swore, deems his offence to lie in swearing a vow which he never meant to keep. The persuasions which urge him to this course are admirably presented: England, Edith, his brother’s freedom, were at stake. Casuistry, or even law, would have absolved him easily; an oath taken under duresse is of no avail. But Harold’s “honour rooted in dishonour stood,” and he cannot so readily absolve himself. Bruce and the bishops who stood by Bruce had no such scruples: they perjured themselves often, on the most sacred relics, especially the bishops. But Harold rises above the mediaeval and magical conception of the oath, and goes to his doom conscious of a stain on his honour, of which only a deeper stain, that of falseness to his country, could make him clean. This is a truly tragic stroke of destiny. The hero’s character is admirably noble, patient, and simple. The Confessor also is as true in art as to history, and his vision of the fall and rise of England is a noble passage. In Aldwyth we have something of Vivien, with a grain of conscience, and the part of Edith Swan’s-neck has a restrained and classic pathos in contrast with the melancholy of Wulfnoth. The piece, as the poet said, is a “tragedy of doom,” of deepening and darkening omens, as in the Odyssey and Njal’s Saga. The battle scene, with the choruses of the monks, makes a noble close.

FitzGerald remained loyal, but it was to “a fairy Prince who came from other skies than these rainy ones,” and “the wretched critics,” as G. H. Lewes called them, seem to have been unfriendly. In fact (besides the innate wretchedness of all critics), they grudged the time and labour given to the drama, in an undramatic age. Harold had not what FitzGerald called “the old champagne flavour” of the vintage of 1842.

Becket was begun in 1876, printed in 1879, and published in 1884. Before that date, in 1880, Tennyson produced one of the volumes of poetry which was more welcome than a play to most of his admirers. The intervening years passed in the Isle of Wight, at Aldworth, in town, and in summer tours, were of no marked biographical interest. The poet was close on three score and ten — he reached that limit in 1879. The days darkened around him, as darken they must: in the spring of 1879 he lost his favourite brother, himself a poet of original genius, Charles Tennyson Turner. In May of the same year he published The Lover’s Tale, which has been treated here among his earliest works. His hours, and (to some extent) his meals, were regulated by Sir Andrew Clark. He planted trees, walked, read, loitered in his garden, and kept up his old friendships, while he made that of the great Gordon. Compliments passed between him and Victor Hugo, who had entertained Lionel Tennyson in Paris, and wrote: “Je lis avec emotion vos vers superbes; c’est un reflet de gloire que vous m’envoyez.” Mr Matthew Arnold’s compliment was very like Mr Arnold’s humour: “Your father has been our most popular poet for over forty years, and I am of opinion that he fully deserves his reputation”: such was “Mat’s sublime waggery.” Tennyson heaped coals of fire on the other poet, bidding him, as he liked to be bidden, to write more poetry, not “prose things.” Tennyson lived much in the society of Browning and George Eliot, and made the acquaintance of Renan. In December 1879 Mr and Mrs Kendal produced The Falcon, which ran for sixty-seven nights; it is “an exquisite little poem in action,” as Fanny Kemble said. During a Continental tour Tennyson visited Catullus’s Sirmio: “here he made his Frater Ave atque Vale,” and the poet composed his beautiful salutation to the

“Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred years ago.”

In 1880 Ballads and other Poems proved that, like Titian, the great poet was not to be defeated by the years. The First Quarrel was in his most popular English style. Rizpah deserved and received the splendid panegyric of Mr Swinburne. The Revenge is probably the finest of the patriotic pieces, and keeps green the memory of an exploit the most marvellous in the annals of English seamen. The Village Wife is a pendant worthy of The Northern Farmer. The poem In the Children’s Hospital caused some irritation at the moment, but there was only one opinion as to the Defence of Lucknow and the beautiful re-telling of the Celtic Voyage of Maeldune. The fragment of Homeric translation was equally fortunate in choice of subject and in rendering.

In the end of 1880 the poet finished The Cup, which had been worked on occasionally since he completed The Falcon in 1880. The piece was read by the author to Sir Henry Irving and his company, and it was found that the manuscript copy needed few alterations to fit it for the stage. The scenery and the acting of the protagonists are not easily to be forgotten. The play ran for a hundred and thirty nights. Sir Henry Irving had thought that Becket (then unpublished) would prove too expensive, and could only be a succes d’estime. Tennyson had found out that “the worst of writing for the stage is, you must keep some actor always in your mind.” To this necessity authors like Moliere and Shakespeare were, of course, resigned and familiar; they knew exactly how to deal with all their means. But this part of the business of play-writing must always be a cross to the poet who is not at one with the world of the stage.

In The Cup Miss Ellen Terry made the strongest impression, her part being noble and sympathetic, while Sir Henry Irving had the ungrateful part of the villain. To be sure, he was a villain of much complexity; and Tennyson thought that his subtle blend of Roman refinement and intellectuality, and barbarian, self-satisfied sensuality, was not “hit off.” Synorix is, in fact, half-Greek, half-Celt, with a Roman education, and the “blend” is rather too remote for successful representation. The traditional villain, from Iago downwards, is not apt to utter such poetry as this:-

“O Thou, that dost inspire the germ with life,
The child, a thread within the house of birth,
And give him limbs, then air, and send him forth
The glory of his father — Thou whose breath
Is balmy wind to robe our bills with grass,
And kindle all our vales with myrtle-blossom,
And roll the golden oceans of our grain,
And sway the long grape-bunches of our vines,
And fill all hearts with fatness and the lust
Of plenty — make me happy in my marriage!”

The year 1881 brought the death of another of the old Cambridge friends, James Spedding, the biographer of Bacon; and Carlyle also died, a true friend, if rather intermittent in his appreciation of poetry. The real Carlyle did appreciate it, but the Carlyle of attitude was too much of the iron Covenanter to express what he felt. The poem Despair irritated the earnest and serious readers of “know-nothing books.” The poem expressed, dramatically, a mood like another, a human mood not so very uncommon. A man ruined in this world’s happiness curses the faith of his youth, and the unfaith of his reading and reflection, and tries to drown himself. This is one conclusion of the practical syllogism, and it is a free country. However, there were freethinkers who did not think that Tennyson’s kind of thinking ought to be free. Other earnest persons objected to “First drink a health,” in the re-fashioned song of Hands all Round. They might have remembered a royal health drunk in water an hour before the drinkers swept Mackay down the Pass of Killiecrankie. The poet did not specify the fluid in which the toast was to be carried, and the cup might be that which “cheers but not inebriates.” “The common cup,” as the remonstrants had to be informed, “has in all ages been the sacred symbol of unity.”

The Promise of May was produced in November 1882, and the poet was once more so unfortunate as to vex the susceptibilities of advanced thinkers. The play is not a masterpiece, and yet neither the gallery gods nor the Marquis of Queensberry need have felt their withers wrung. The hero, or villain, Edgar, is a perfectly impossible person, and represents no kind of political, social, or economical thinker. A man would give all other bliss and all his worldly wealth for this, to waste his whole strength in one kick upon this perfect prig. He employs the arguments of evolution and so forth to justify the seduction of a little girl of fifteen, and later, by way of making amends, proposes to commit incest by marrying her sister. There have been evolutionists, to be sure, who believed in promiscuity, like Mr Edgar, as preferable to monogamy. But this only proves that an evolutionist may fail to understand evolution. There be also such folk as Stevenson calls “squirradicals” — squires who say that “the land is the people’s.” Probably no advocate of promiscuity, and no squirradical, was present at the performances of The Promise of May. But people of advanced minds had got it into their heads that their doctrines were to be attacked, so they went and made a hubbub in the sacred cause of freedom of thought and speech. The truth is, that controversial topics, political topics, ought not to be brought into plays, much less into sermons. Tennyson meant Edgar for “nothing thorough, nothing sincere.” He is that venomous thing, the prig-scoundrel: he does not suit the stage, and his place, if anywhere, is in the novel. Advocates of marriage with a deceased wife’s sister might have applauded Edgar for wishing to marry the sister of a mistress assumed to be deceased, but no other party in the State wanted anything except the punching of Edgar’s head by Farmer Dobson.

In 1883 died Edward FitzGerald, the most kind, loyal, and, as he said, crotchety of old and dear Cambridge friends. He did not live to see the delightful poem which Tennyson had written for him. In almost his latest letter he had remarked, superfluously, that when he called the task of translating The Agamemnon “work for a poet,” he “was not thinking of Mr Browning.”

In the autumn of 1883 Tennyson was taken, with Mr Gladstone, by Sir Donald Currie, for a cruise round the west coast of Scotland, to the Orkneys, and to Copenhagen. The people of Kirkwall conferred on the poet and the statesman the freedom of the burgh, and Mr Gladstone, in an interesting speech, compared the relative chances of posthumous fame of the poet and the politician. Pericles is not less remembered than Sophocles, though Shakespeare is more in men’s minds than Cecil. Much depends, as far as the statesmen are considered, on contemporary historians. It is Thucydides who immortalises Pericles. But it is improbable that the things which Mr Gladstone did, and attempted, will be forgotten more rapidly than the conduct and characters of, say, Burleigh or Lethington.

In 1884, after this voyage, with its royal functions and celebrations at Copenhagen, a peerage was offered to the poet. He “did not want to alter his plain Mr,” and he must have known that, whether he accepted or refused, the chorus of blame would be louder than that of applause. Scott had desired “such grinning honour as Sir Walter hath”; the title went well with the old name, and pleased his love of old times. Tennyson had been blamed “by literary men” for thrice evading a baronetcy, and he did not think that a peerage would make smooth the lives of his descendants. But he concluded, “Why should I be selfish and not suffer an honour (as Gladstone says) to be done to literature in my name?” Politically, he thought that the Upper House, while it lasts, partly supplied the place of the American “referendum.” He voted in July 1884 for the extension of the franchise, and in November stated his views to Mr Gladstone in verse. In prose he wrote to Mr Gladstone, “I have a strong conviction that the more simple the dealings of men with men, as well as of man with man, are — the better,” a sentiment which, perhaps, did not always prevail with his friend. The poet’s reflections on the horror of Gordon’s death are not recorded. He introduced the idea of the Gordon Home for Boys, and later supported it by a letter, “Have we forgotten Gordon?” to the Daily Telegraph. They who cannot forget Gordon must always be grateful to Tennyson for providing this opportunity of honouring the greatest of an illustrious clan, and of helping, in their degree, a scheme which was dear to the heroic leader.

The poet, very naturally, was most averse to personal appearance in public matters. Mankind is so fashioned that the advice of a poet is always regarded as unpractical, and is even apt to injure the cause which he advocates. Happily there cannot be two opinions about the right way of honouring Gordon. Tennyson’s poem, The Fleet, was also in harmony with the general sentiment.

In the last month of 1884 Becket was published. The theme of Fair Rosamund had appealed to the poet in youth, and he had written part of a lyric which he judiciously left unpublished. It is given in his Biography. In 1877 he had visited Canterbury, and had traced the steps of Becket to his place of slaughter in the Cathedral. The poem was printed in 1879, but not published till seven years later. In 1879 Sir Henry Irving had thought the play too costly to be produced with more than a succes d’estime; but in 1891 he put it on the stage, where it proved the most successful of modern poetic dramas. As published it is, obviously, far too long for public performance. It is not easy to understand why dramatic poets always make their works so much too long. The drama seems, by its very nature, to have a limit almost as distinct as the limit of the sonnet. It is easy to calculate how long a play for the stage ought to be, and we might think that a poet would find the natural limit serviceable to his art, for it inculcates selection, conciseness, and concentration. But despite these advantages of the natural form of the drama, modern poets, at least, constantly overflow their banks. The author ruit profusus, and the manager has to reduce the piece to feasible proportions, such as it ought to have assumed from the first.

Becket has been highly praised by Sir Henry Irving himself, for its “moments of passion and pathos, . . . which, when they exist, atone to an audience for the endurance of long acts.” But why should the audience have such long acts to endure? The reader, one fears, is apt to use his privilege of skipping. The long speeches of Walter Map and the immense period of Margery tempt the student to exercise his agility. A “chronicle play” has the privilege of wandering, but Becket wanders too far and too long. The political details of the quarrel between Church and State, with its domestic and international complexities, are apt to fatigue the attention. Inevitable and insoluble as the situation was, neither protagonist is entirely sympathetic, whether in the play or in history. The struggle in Becket between his love of the king and his duty to the Church (or what he takes to be his duty) is nobly presented, and is truly dramatic, while there is grotesque and terrible relief in the banquet of the Beggars. In the scene of the assassination the poet “never stoops his wing,” and there are passages of tender pathos between Henry and Rosamund, while Becket’s keen memories of his early days, just before his death, are moving.

”Becket. I once was out with Henry in the days
When Henry loved me, and we came upon
A wild-fowl sitting on her nest, so still

I reach’d my hand and touch’d; she did not stir;
The snow had frozen round her, and she sat
Stone-dead upon a heap of ice-cold eggs.
Look! how this love, this mother, runs thro’ all
The world God made — even the beast — the bird!
John of Salisbury. Ay, still a lover of the beast and bird?
But these arm’d men — will you not hide yourself?
Perchance the fierce De Brocs from Saltwood Castle,
To assail our Holy Mother lest she brood
Too long o’er this hard egg, the world, and send
Her whole heart’s heat into it, till it break
Into young angels. Pray you, hide yourself.
Becket. There was a little fair-hair’d Norman maid
Lived in my mother’s house: if Rosamund is
The world’s rose, as her name imports her — she
Was the world’s lily.
John of Salisbury. Ay, and what of her?
Becket. She died of leprosy.”

But the part of Rosamund, her innocent ignorance especially, is not very readily intelligible, not quite persuasive, and there is almost a touch of the burlesque in her unexpected appearance as a monk. To weave that old and famous story of love into the terribly complex political intrigue was a task almost too great. The character of Eleanor is perhaps more successfully drawn in the Prologue than in the scene where she offers the choice of the dagger or the bowl, and is interrupted, in a startlingly unexpected manner, by the Archbishop himself. The opportunities for scenic effects are magnificent throughout, and must have contributed greatly to the success on the stage. Still one cannot but regard the published Becket as rather the marble from which the statue may be hewn than as the statue itself. There are fine scenes, powerful and masterly drawing of character in Henry, Eleanor, and Becket, but there is a want of concentration, due, perhaps, to the long period of time covered by the action. So, at least, it seems to a reader who has admitted his sense of incompetency in the dramatic region. The acuteness of the poet’s power of historical intuition was attested by Mr J. R. Green and Mr Bryce. “One cannot imagine,” said Mr Bryce, “a more vivid, a more perfectly faithful picture than it gives both of Henry and Thomas.” Tennyson’s portraits of these two “go beyond and perfect history.” The poet’s sympathy ought, perhaps, to have been, if not with the false and ruffianly Henry, at least with Henry’s side of the question. For Tennyson had made Harold leave

   ”To England
My legacy of war against the Pope
From child to child, from Pope to Pope, from age to age,
Till the sea wash her level with her shores,
Or till the Pope be Christ’s.”

CHAPTER IX. — LAST YEARS.

The end of 1884 saw the publication of Tiresias and other Poems, dedicated to “My good friend, Robert Browning,” and opening with the beautiful verses to one who never was Mr Browning’s friend, Edward FitzGerald. The volume is rich in the best examples of Tennyson’s later work. Tiresias, the monologue of the aged seer, blinded by excess of light when he beheld Athene unveiled, and under the curse of Cassandra, is worthy of the author who, in youth, wrote OEnone and Ulysses. Possibly the verses reflect Tennyson’s own sense of public indifference to the voice of the poet and the seer. But they are of much earlier date than the year of publication:-

   ”For when the crowd would roar
For blood, for war, whose issue was their doom,
To cast wise words among the multitude
Was flinging fruit to lions; nor, in hours
Of civil outbreak, when I knew the twain
Would each waste each, and bring on both the yoke
Of stronger states, was mine the voice to curb
The madness of our cities and their kings.
   Who ever turn’d upon his heel to hear
My warning that the tyranny of one
Was prelude to the tyranny of all?
My counsel that the tyranny of all
Led backward to the tyranny of one?
   This power hath work’d no good to aught that lives.”

The conclusion was a favourite with the author, and his blank verse never reached a higher strain:-

      ”But for me,
I would that I were gather’d to my rest,
And mingled with the famous kings of old,
On whom about their ocean-islets flash
The faces of the Gods — the wise man’s word,
Here trampled by the populace underfoot,
There crown’d with worship — and these eyes will find

The men I knew, and watch the chariot whirl
About the goal again, and hunters race
The shadowy lion, and the warrior-kings,
In height and prowess more than human, strive
Again for glory, while the golden lyre
Is ever sounding in heroic ears
Heroic hymns, and every way the vales
Wind, clouded with the grateful incense-fume
Of those who mix all odour to the Gods
On one far height in one far-shining fire.”

Then follows the pathetic piece on FitzGerald’s death, and the prayer, not unfulfilled -

”That, when I from hence
Shall fade with him into the unknown,
My close of earth’s experience
May prove as peaceful as his own.”

The Ancient Sage, with its lyric interludes, is one of Tennyson’s meditations on the mystery of the world and of existence. Like the poet himself, the Sage finds a gleam of light and hope in his own subjective experiences of some unspeakable condition, already recorded in In Memoriam. The topic was one on which he seems to have spoken to his friends with freedom:-

“And more, my son! for more than once when I
Sat all alone, revolving in myself
The word that is the symbol of myself,
The mortal limit of the Self was loosed,
And past into the Nameless, as a cloud
Melts into Heaven. I touch’d my limbs, the limbs
Were strange not mine — and yet no shade of doubt,
But utter clearness, and thro’ loss of Self
The gain of such large life as match’d with ours
Were Sun to spark — unshadowable in words,
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world.”

The poet’s habit of

”Revolving in myself

The word that is the symbol of myself" -

that is, of dwelling on the sound of his own name, was familiar to the Arabs. M. Lefebure has drawn my attention to a passage in the works of a mediaeval Arab philosopher, Ibn Khaldoun: "To arrive at the highest degree of inspiration of which he is capable, the diviner should have recourse to the use of certain phrases marked by a peculiar cadence and parallelism. Thus he emancipates his mind from the influence of the senses, and is enabled to attain an imperfect contact with the spiritual world." Ibn Khaldoun regards the "contact" as extremely "imperfect." He describes similar efforts made by concentrating the gaze on a mirror, a bowl of water, or the like. Tennyson was doubtless unaware that he had stumbled accidentally on a method of "ancient sages." Psychologists will explain his experience by the word "dissociation." It is not everybody, however, who can thus dissociate himself. The temperament of genius has often been subject to such influence, as M. Lefebure has shown in the modern instances of George Sand and Alfred de Musset: we might add Shelley, Goethe, and even Scott.

The poet's versatility was displayed in the appearance with these records of "weird seizures", of the Irish dialect piece To-morrow, the popular Spinster's Sweet-Arts, and the Locksley Hall Sixty Years After. The old fire of the versification is unabated, but the hero has relapsed on the gloom of the hero of Maud. He represents himself, of course, not Tennyson, or only one of the moods of Tennyson, which were sometimes black enough. A very different mood chants the Charge of the Heavy Brigade, and speaks of

"Green Sussex fading into blue
  With one gray glimpse of sea."

The lines To Virgil were written at the request of the Mantuans, by the most Virgilian of all the successors of the

"Wielder of the stateliest measure
  ever moulded by the lips of man."

Never was Tennyson more Virgilian than in this unmatched panegyric, the sum and flower of criticism of that

"Golden branch amid the shadows,
  kings and realms that pass to rise no more."

Hardly less admirable is the tribute to Catullus, and the old poet is young again in the bird-song of Early Spring. The lines on Poets and their Bibliographies, with The Dead Prophet, express Tennyson’s lifelong abhorrence of the critics and biographers, whose joy is in the futile and the unimportant, in personal gossip and the sweepings of the studio, the salvage of the wastepaper basket. The Prefatory Poem to my Brother’s Sonnets is not only touching in itself, but proves that the poet can “turn to favour and to prettiness” such an affliction as the ruinous summer of 1879.

The year 1880 brought deeper distress in the death of the poet’s son Lionel, whose illness, begun in India, ended fatally in the Red Sea. The interest of the following years was mainly domestic. The poet’s health, hitherto robust, was somewhat impaired in 1888, but his vivid interest in affairs and in letters was unabated. He consoled himself with Virgil, Keats, Wordsworth, Gibbon, Euripides, and Mr Leaf’s speculations on the composite nature of the Iliad, in which Coleridge, perhaps alone among poets, believed. “You know,” said Tennyson to Mr Leaf; “I never liked that theory of yours about the many poets.” It would be at least as easy to prove that there were many authors of Ivanhoe, or perhaps it would be a good deal more easy. However, he admitted that three lines which occur both in the Eighth and the Sixteenth Books of the Iliad are more appropriate in the later book. Similar examples might be found in his own poems. He still wrote, in the intervals of a malady which brought him “as near death as a man could be without dying.” He was an example of the great physical strength which, on the whole, seems usually to accompany great mental power. The strength may be dissipated by passion, or by undue labour, as in cases easily recalled to memory, but neither cause had impaired the vigour of Tennyson. Like Goethe, he lived out all his life; and his eightieth birthday was cheered both by public and private expressions of reverence and affection.

Of Tennyson’s last three years on earth we may think, in his own words, that his

”Life’s latest eve endured
Nor settled into hueless grey.”

Nature was as dear to him and as inspiring as of old; men and affairs and letters were not slurred by his intact and energetic mind. His Demeter and other Poems, with the dedication to Lord Dufferin, appeared in the December of the year. The dedication was the lament for the dead son and the salutation to the Viceroy of India, a piece of resigned and manly regret. The Demeter and Persephone is a modern and tender study of the theme of the most beautiful Homeric Hymn. The ancient poet had no such thought of the restored

Persephone as that which impels Tennyson to describe her

“Faint as a climate-changing bird that flies
All night across the darkness, and at dawn
Falls on the threshold of her native land.”

The spring, the restored Persephone, comes more vigorous and joyous to the shores of the AEgean than to ours. All Tennyson’s own is Demeter’s awe of those “imperial disimpassioned eyes” of her daughter, come from the bed and the throne of Hades, the Lord of many guests. The hymn, happy in its ending, has no thought of the grey heads of the Fates, and their answer to the goddess concerning “fate beyond the Fates,” and the breaking of the bonds of Hades. The ballad of Owd Roa is one of the most spirited of the essays in dialect to which Tennyson had of late years inclined. Vastness merely expresses, in terms of poetry, Tennyson’s conviction that, without immortality, life is a series of worthless contrasts. An opposite opinion may be entertained, but a man has a right to express his own, which, coming from so great a mind, is not undeserving of attention; or, at least, is hardly deserving of reproof. The poet’s idea is also stated thus in The Ring, in terms which perhaps do not fall below the poetical; or, at least, do not drop into “the utterly unpoetical”:-

“The Ghost in Man, the Ghost that once was Man,
But cannot wholly free itself from Man,
Are calling to each other thro’ a dawn
Stranger than earth has ever seen; the veil
Is rending, and the Voices of the day
Are heard across the Voices of the dark.
No sudden heaven, nor sudden hell, for man,
But thro’ the Will of One who knows and rules -
And utter knowledge is but utter love -
AEonian Evolution, swift or slow,
Thro’ all the Spheres — an ever opening height,
An ever lessening earth.”

The Ring is, in fact, a ghost story based on a legend told by Mr Lowell about a house near where he had once lived; one of those houses vexed by

“A footstep, a low throbbing in the walls,
A noise of falling weights that never fell,
Weird whispers, bells that rang without a hand,

Door-handles turn’d when none was at the door,
And bolted doors that open’d of themselves.”

These phenomena were doubtless caused by rats and water-pipes, but they do not destroy the pity and the passion of the tale. The lines to Mary Boyle are all of the normal world, and worthy of a poet’s youth and of the spring. Merlin and the Gleam is the spiritual allegory of the poet’s own career:-

“Arthur had vanish’d
I knew not whither,
The king who loved me,
And cannot die.”

So at last

”All but in Heaven
Hovers The Gleam,”

whither the wayfarer was soon to follow. There is a marvellous hope and pathos in the melancholy of these all but the latest songs, reminiscent of youth and love, and even of the dim haunting memories and dreams of infancy. No other English poet has thus rounded all his life with music. Tennyson was in his eighty-first year, when there “came in a moment” the crown of his work, the immortal lyric, Crossing the Bar. It is hardly less majestic and musical in the perfect Greek rendering by his brother-in-law, Mr Lushington. For once at least a poem has been “poured from the golden to the silver cup” without the spilling of a drop. The new book’s appearance was coincident with the death of Mr Browning, “so loving and appreciative,” as Lady Tennyson wrote; a friend, not a rival, however the partisans of either poet might strive to stir emulation between two men of such lofty and such various genius.

CHAPTER X. — 1890.

In the year 1889 the poet's health had permitted him to take long walks on the sea-shore and along the cliffs, one of which, by reason of its whiteness, he had named "Taliessin," "the splendid brow." His mind ran on a poem founded on an Egyptian legend (of which the source is not mentioned), telling how "despair and death came upon him who was mad enough to try to probe the secret of the universe." He also thought of a drama on Tristram, who, in the Idylls, is treated with brevity, and not with the sympathy of the old writer who cries, "God bless Tristram the knight: he fought for England!" But early in 1890 Tennyson suffered from a severe attack of influenza. In May Mr Watts painted his portrait, and

"Divinely through all hindrance found the man."

Tennyson was a great admirer of Miss Austen's novels: "The realism and life-likeness of Miss Austen's Dramatis Personae come nearest to those of Shakespeare. Shakespeare, however, is a sun to which Jane Austen, though a bright and true little world, is but an asteroid." He was therefore pleased to find apple-blossoms co-existing with ripe strawberries on June 28, as Miss Austen has been blamed, by minute philosophers, for introducing this combination in the garden party in Emma. The poet, like most of the good and great, read novels eagerly, and excited himself over the confirmation of an adult male in a story by Miss Yonge. Of Scott, "the most chivalrous literary figure of the century, and the author with the widest range since Shakespeare," he preferred Old Mortality, and it is a good choice. He hated "morbid and introspective tales, with their oceans of sham philosophy." At this time, with catholic taste, he read Mr Stevenson and Mr Meredith, Miss Braddon and Mr Henry James, Ouida and Mr Thomas Hardy; Mr Hall Caine and Mr Anstey; Mrs Oliphant and Miss Edna Lyall. Not everybody can peruse all of these very diverse authors with pleasure. He began his poem on the Roman gladiatorial combats; indeed his years, fourscore and one, left his intellectual eagerness as unimpaired as that of Goethe. "A crooked share," he said to the Princess Louise, "may make a straight furrow." "One afternoon he had a long waltz with M-in the ballroom." Speaking of

"All the charm of all the Muses
  Often flowering in a lonely word"

in Virgil, he adduced, rather strangely, the cunctantem ramum, said of the

Golden Bough, in the Sixth AEneid. The choice is odd, because the Sibyl has just told AEneas that, if he be destined to pluck the branch of gold, ipse volens facilisque sequetur, “it will come off of its own accord,” like the sacred ti branches of the Fijians, which bend down to be plucked for the Fire rite. Yet, when the predestined AEneas tries to pluck the bough of gold, it yields reluctantly (cunctantem), contrary to what the Sibyl has foretold. Mr Conington, therefore, thought the phrase a slip on the part of Virgil. “People accused Virgil of plagiarising,” he said, “but if a man made it his own there was no harm in that (look at the great poets, Shakespeare included).” Tennyson, like Virgil, made much that was ancient his own; his verses are often, and purposefully, a mosaic of classical reminiscences. But he was vexed by the hunters after remote and unconscious resemblances, and far-fetched analogies between his lines and those of others. He complained that, if he said that the sun went down, a parallel was at once cited from Homer, or anybody else, and he used a very powerful phrase to condemn critics who detected such repetitions. “The moanings of the homeless sea,”— “moanings” from Horace, “homeless” from Shelley. “As if no one else had ever heard the sea moan except Horace!” Tennyson’s mixture of memory and forgetfulness was not so strange as that of Scott, and when he adapted from the Greek, Latin, or Italian, it was of set purpose, just as it was with Virgil. The beautiful lines comparing a girl’s eyes to bottom agates that seem to

”Wave and float
In crystal currents of clear running seas,”

he invented while bathing in Wales. It was his habit, to note down in verse such similes from nature, and to use them when he found occasion. But the higher criticism, analysing the simile, detected elements from Shakespeare and from Beaumont and Fletcher.

In June 1891 the poet went on a tour in Devonshire, and began his Akbar, and probably wrote June Bracken and Heather; or perhaps it was composed when “we often sat on the top of Blackdown to watch the sunset.” He wrote to Mr Kipling -

“The oldest to the youngest singer
That England bore”

(to alter Mr Swinburne’s lines to Landor), praising his Flag of England. Mr Kipling replied as “the private to the general.”

Early in 1892 The Foresters was successfully produced at New York by Miss

Ada Rehan, the music by Sir Arthur Sullivan, and the scenery from woodland designs by Whymper. Robin Hood (as we learn from Mark Twain) is a favourite hero with the youth of America. Mr Tom Sawyer himself took, in Mark Twain's tale, the part of the bold outlaw.

The Death of OEnone was published in 1892, with the dedication to the
Master of Balliol -

”Read a Grecian tale retold
Which, cast in later Grecian mould,
Quintus Calaber
Somewhat lazily handled of old.”

Quintus Calaber, more usually called Quintus Smyrnaeus, is a writer of perhaps the fourth century of our era. About him nothing, or next to nothing, is known. He told, in so late an age, the conclusion of the Tale of Troy, and (in the writer's opinion) has been unduly neglected and disdained. His manner, I venture to think, is more Homeric than that of the more famous and doubtless greater Alexandrian poet of the Argonautic cycle, Apollonius Rhodius, his senior by five centuries. His materials were probably the ancient and lost poems of the Epic Cycle, and the story of the death of OEnone may be from the Little Iliad of Lesches. Possibly parts of his work may be textually derived from the Cyclics, but the topic is very obscure. In Quintus, Paris, after encountering evil omens on his way, makes a long speech, imploring the pardon of the deserted OEnone. She replies, not with the Tennysonian brevity; she sends him back to the helpless arms of her rival, Helen. Paris dies on the hills; never did Helen see him returning. The wood-nymphs bewail Paris, and a herdsman brings the bitter news to Helen, who chants her lament. But remorse falls on OEnone. She does not go

”Slowly down
By the long torrent's ever-deepened roar,”

but rushes “swift as the wind to seek and spring upon the pyre of her lord.” Fate and Aphrodite drive her headlong, and in heaven Selene, remembering Endymion, bewails the lot of her sister in sorrow. OEnone reaches the funeral flame, and without a word or a cry leaps into her husband's arms, the wild Nymphs wondering. The lovers are mingled in one heap of ashes, and these are bestowed in one vessel of gold and buried in a howe. This is the story which the poet rehandled in his old age, completing the work of his happy youth when he walked with Hallam in the Pyrenean hills, that were to him as Ida. The romance of OEnone and her death condone, as even Homer was apt to condone, the sins of beautiful Paris, whom the nymphs lament, despite the evil that he has wrought. The silence of the veiled OEnone, as she springs into her lover's last embrace, is perhaps more affecting and more natural than Tennyson's

”She lifted up a voice
Of shrill command, 'Who burns upon the pyre?'”

The St Telemachus has the old splendour and vigour of verse, and, though written so late in life, is worthy of the poet's prime:-

”Eve after eve that haggard anchorite
Would haunt the desolated fane, and there
Gaze at the ruin, often mutter low
'Vicisti Galilaee'; louder again,
Spurning a shatter'd fragment of the God,
'Vicisti Galilaee!' but — when now
Bathed in that lurid crimson — ask'd 'Is earth
On fire to the West? or is the Demon-god
Wroth at his fall?' and heard an answer 'Wake
Thou deedless dreamer, lazying out a life
Of self-suppression, not of selfless love.'
And once a flight of shadowy fighters crost
The disk, and once, he thought, a shape with wings
Came sweeping by him, and pointed to the West,
And at his ear he heard a whisper 'Rome,'
And in his heart he cried 'The call of God!'
And call'd arose, and, slowly plunging down
Thro' that disastrous glory, set his face
By waste and field and town of alien tongue,
Following a hundred sunsets, and the sphere
Of westward-wheeling stars; and every dawn
Struck from him his own shadow on to Rome.
Foot-sore, way-worn, at length he touch'd his goal,
The Christian city.”

Akbar's Dream may be taken, more or less, to represent the poet's own theology of a race seeking after God, if perchance they may find Him, and the closing Hymn was a favourite with Tennyson. He said, “It is a magnificent metre”:-

“HYMN.

I.

Once again thou flamest heavenward, once again we see thee rise.
Every morning is thy birthday gladdening human hearts and eyes.
   Every morning here we greet it, bowing lowly down before thee,
Thee the Godlike, thee the changeless in thine ever-changing skies.

II.

Shadow-maker, shadow-slayer, arrowing light from clime to clime,
Hear thy myriad laureates hail thee monarch in their woodland rhyme.
   Warble bird, and open flower, and, men, below the dome of azure
Kneel adoring Him the Timeless in the flame that measures Time!”

In this final volume the poet cast his handful of incense on the altar of Scott, versifying the tale of Il Bizarro, which the dying Sir Walter records in his Journal in Italy. The Churchwarden and the Curate is not inferior to the earlier peasant poems in its expression of shrewdness, humour, and superstition. A verse of Poets and Critics may be taken as the poet’s last word on the old futile quarrel:-

“This thing, that thing is the rage,
Helter-skelter runs the age;
Minds on this round earth of ours
Vary like the leaves and flowers,
   Fashion’d after certain laws;
Sing thou low or loud or sweet,
All at all points thou canst not meet,
   Some will pass and some will pause.

What is true at last will tell:
Few at first will place thee well;
Some too low would have thee shine,

Some too high — no fault of thine -
   Hold thine own, and work thy will!
Year will graze the heel of year,
But seldom comes the poet here,
   And the Critic's rarer still."

Still the lines hold good -

"Some too low would have thee shine,
Some too high — no fault of thine."

The end was now at hand. A sense of weakness was felt by the poet on September 3, 1892: on the 28th his family sent for Sir Andrew Clark; but the patient gradually faded out of life, and expired on Thursday, October 6, at 1.35 A.M. To the very last he had Shakespeare by him, and his windows were open to the sun; on the last night they were flooded by the moonlight. The description of the final scenes must be read in the Biography by the poet's son. "His patience and quiet strength had power upon those who were nearest and dearest to him; we felt thankful for the love and the utter peace of it all." "The life after death," Tennyson had said just before his fatal illness, "is the cardinal point of Christianity. I believe that God reveals Himself in every individual soul; and my idea of Heaven is the perpetual ministry of one soul to another." He had lived the life of heaven upon earth, being in all his work a minister of things honourable, lovely, consoling, and ennobling to the souls of others, with a ministry which cannot die. His body sleeps next to that of his friend and fellow-poet, Robert Browning, in front of Chaucer's monument in the Abbey.

CHAPTER XI. — LAST CHAPTER.

“O, that Press will get hold of me now,” Tennyson said when he knew that his last hour was at hand. He had a horror of personal tattle, as even his early poems declare -

“For now the Poet cannot die,
   Nor leave his music as of old,
   But round him ere he scarce be cold
Begins the scandal and the cry.”

But no “carrion-vulture” has waited
“To tear his heart before the crowd.”

About Tennyson, doubtless, there is much anecdotage: most of the anecdotes turn on his shyness, his really exaggerated hatred of personal notoriety, and the odd and brusque things which he would say when alarmed by effusive strangers. It has not seemed worth while to repeat more than one or two of these legends, nor have I sought outside the Biography by his son for more than the biographer chose to tell. The readers who are least interested in poetry are most interested in tattle about the poet. It is the privilege of genius to retain the freshness and simplicity, with some of the foibles, of the child. When Tennyson read his poems aloud he was apt to be moved by them, and to express frankly his approbation where he thought it deserved. Only very rudimentary psychologists recognised conceit in this freedom; and only the same set of persons mistook shyness for arrogance. Effusiveness of praise or curiosity in a stranger is apt to produce bluntness of reply in a Briton. “Don’t talk d-d nonsense, sir,” said the Duke of Wellington to the gushing person who piloted him, in his old age, across Piccadilly. Of Tennyson Mr Palgrave says, “I have known him silenced, almost frozen, before the eager unintentional eyes of a girl of fifteen. And under the stress of this nervous impulse compelled to contradict his inner self (especially when under the terror of leonisation . . .), he was doubtless at times betrayed into an abrupt phrase, a cold unsympathetic exterior; a moment’s ‘defect of the rose.’” Had he not been sensitive in all things, he would have been less of a poet. The chief criticism directed against his mode of life is that he WAS sensitive and reserved, but he could and did make himself pleasant in the society of les pauvres d’esprit. Curiosity alarmed him, and drove him into his shell: strangers who met him in that mood carried away false impressions, which developed into myths. As the Master of Balliol has recorded, despite his shyness “he was extremely hospitable, often inviting not only his friends, but the friends of his friends, and giving them a hearty welcome. For underneath a sensitive exterior he was thoroughly genial if he was understood.” In these points he was unlike his great contemporary, Browning; for instance, Tennyson never (I think) was the Master’s guest at Balliol, mingling, like Browning, with the undergraduates, to whom the Master’s hospitality was freely extended. Yet, where he was familiar, Tennyson was a gay companion, not shunning jest or even paradox. “As Dr Johnson says, every man may be judged of by his laughter”: but no Boswell has chronicled the laughters of Tennyson. “He never, or hardly ever, made puns or witticisms” (though one pun, at least, endures in tradition), “but always lived in an attitude of humour.” Mr Jowett writes (and no description of the poet is better than his) -

If I were to describe his outward appearance, I should say that he was certainly unlike any one else whom I ever saw. A glance at some of Watts’ portraits of him will give, better than any description which can be expressed in words, a conception of his noble mien and look. He was a magnificent man, who stood before you in his native refinement and strength. The unconventionality of his manners was in keeping with the originality of his figure. He would sometimes say nothing, or a word or two only, to the stranger who approached him, out of shyness. He would sometimes come into the drawing-room reading a book. At other times, especially to ladies, he was singularly gracious and benevolent. He would talk about the accidents of his own life with an extraordinary freedom, as at the moment they appeared to present themselves to his mind, the days of his boyhood that were passed at Somersby, and the old school of manners which he came across in his own neighbourhood: the days of the “apostles” at Cambridge: the years which he spent in London; the evenings enjoyed at the Cock Tavern, and elsewhere, when he saw another side of life, not without a kindly and humorous sense of the ridiculous in his fellow-creatures. His repertory of stories was perfectly inexhaustible; they were often about slight matters that would scarcely bear repetition, but were told with such lifelike reality, that they convulsed his hearers with laughter. Like most story-tellers, he often repeated his favourites; but, like children, his audience liked hearing them again and again, and he enjoyed telling them. It might be said of him that he told more stories than any one, but was by no means the regular story-teller. In the commonest conversation he showed himself a man of genius.

To this description may be added another by Mr F. T. Palgrave:-

Every one will have seen men, distinguished in some line of work, whose conversation (to take the old figure) either “smelt too strongly of the lamp,” or lay quite apart from their art or craft. What, through all these years, struck me about Tennyson, was that whilst he never deviated into poetical language as such, whether in rhetoric or highly coloured phrase, yet throughout the substance of his talk the same mode of thought, the same imaginative grasp of nature, the same fineness and gentleness in his view of character, the same forbearance and toleration, the aurea mediocritas despised by fools and fanatics, which are stamped on his poetry, were constantly perceptible: whilst in the easy and as it were unsought choiceness, the conscientious and truth-loving precision of his words, the same personal identity revealed itself. What a strange charm lay here, how deeply illuminating the whole character, as in prolonged intercourse it gradually revealed itself! Artist and man, Tennyson was invariably true to himself, or rather, in Wordsworth’s phrase, he “moved altogether”; his nature and his poetry being harmonious aspects of the same soul; as botanists tell us that flower and fruit are but transformations of root and stem and leafage. We read how, in mediaeval days, conduits were made to flow with claret. But this was on great occasions only. Tennyson’s fountain always ran wine.

Once more: In *Mme.* Recamier’s salon, I have read, at the time when conversation was yet a fine art in Paris, guests famous for esprit would sit in the twilight round the stove, whilst each in turn let fly some sparkling anecdote or bon-mot, which rose and shone and died out into silence, till the next of the elect pyrotechnists was ready. Good things of this kind, as I have said, were plentiful in Tennyson’s repertory. But what, to pass from the materials to the method of his conversation, eminently marked it was the continuity of the electric current. He spoke, and was silent, and spoke again: but the circuit was unbroken; there was no effort in taking up the thread, no sense of disjunction. Often I thought, had he never written a line of the poems so dear to us, his conversation alone would have made him the most interesting companion known to me. From this great and gracious student of humanity, what less, indeed, could be expected? And if, as a converser, I were to compare him with Socrates, as figured for us in the dialogues of his great disciple, I think that I should have the assent of that eminently valued friend of Tennyson’s, whose long labour of love has conferred English citizenship upon Plato.

We have called him shy and sensitive in daily intercourse with strangers, and as to criticism, he freely confessed that a midge of dispraise could sting, while applause gave him little pleasure. Yet no poet altered his verses so much in obedience to censure unjustly or irritatingly stated, yet in essence just. He readily rejected some of his “Juvenilia” on Mr Palgrave’s suggestion. The same friend tells how well he took a rather fierce attack on an unpublished piece, when Mr Palgrave “owned that he could not find one good line in it.” Very few poets, or even versifiers (fiercer they than poets are), would have continued to show their virgin numbers to a friend so candid, as Tennyson did. Perhaps most of the genus irritabile will grant that spoken criticism, if unfavourable, somehow annoys and stirs opposition in an author; probably because it confirms his own suspicions about his work. Such criticism is almost invariably just. But Campbell, when Rogers offered a correction, “bounced out of the room, with a ‘Hang it! I should like to see the man who would dare to correct me.’”

Mr Jowett justly recognised in the life of Tennyson two circumstances which made him other than, but for these, he would have been. He had intended to do with the Arthurian subject what he never did, “in some way or other to have represented in it the great religions of the world. . . . It is a proof of Tennyson’s genius that he should have thus early grasped the great historical aspect of religion.” His intention was foiled, his early dream was broken, by the death of Arthur Hallam, and by the coldness and contempt with which, at the same period, his early poems were received.

Mr Jowett (who had a firm belief in the “great work”) regretted the change of plan as to the Arthurian topic, regretted it the more from his own interest in the History of Religion. But we need not share the regrets. The early plan for the Arthur (which Mr Jowett never saw) has been published, and certainly the scheme could not have been executed on these lines. Moreover, as the Master observed, the work would have been premature in Tennyson’s youth, and, indeed, it would still be premature. The comparative science of religious evolution is even now very tentative, and does not yield materials of sufficient stability for an epic, even if such an epic could be forced into the mould of the Arthur legends, a feat perhaps impossible, and certainly undesirable. A truly fantastic allegory must have been the result, and it is fortunate that the poet abandoned the idea in favour of more human themes. Moreover, he recognised very early that his was not a Muse de longue haleine; that he must be “short.” We may therefore feel certain that his early sorrow and discouragement were salutary to him as a poet, and as a man. He became more sympathetic, more tender, and was obliged to put forth that stoical self-control, and strenuous courage and endurance, through which alone his poetic career was rendered possible. “He had the susceptibility of a child or a woman,” says his friend; “he had also” (it was a strange combination) “the strength of a giant or of a god.” Without these qualities he must have broken down between 1833 and 1842 into a hypochondriac, or a morose, if majestic, failure. Poor, obscure, and unhappy, he overcame the world, and passed from darkness into light. The “poetic temperament" in another not gifted with his endurance and persistent strength would have achieved ruin.

Most of us remember Taine's parallel between Tennyson and Alfred de Musset. The French critic has no high approval of Tennyson's "respectability" and long peaceful life, as compared with the wrecked life and genius of Musset, l'enfant perdu of love, wine, and song. This is a theory like another, and is perhaps attractive to the young. The poet must have strong passions, or how can he sing of them: he must be tossed and whirled in the stress of things, like Shelley's autumn leaves; -

"Ghosts from an enchanter fleeing."

Looking at Burns, Byron, Musset, or even at Shelley's earlier years, youth sees in them the true poets, "sacred things," but also "light," as Plato says, inspired to break their wings against the nature of existence, and the flammantia maenia mundi. But this is almost a boyish idea, this idea that the true poet is the slave of the passions, and that the poet who dominates them has none, and is but a staid domestic animal, an ass browsing the common, as somebody has written about Wordsworth. Certainly Tennyson's was no "passionless perfection." He, like others, was tempted to beat with ineffectual wings against the inscrutable nature of life. He, too, had his dark hour, and was as subject to temptation as they who yielded to the stress and died, or became unhappy waifs, "young men with a splendid past." He must have known, no less than Musset, the attractions of many a paradis artificiel, with its bright visions, its houris, its offers of oblivion of pain. "He had the look of one who had suffered greatly," Mr Palgrave writes in his record of their first meeting in 1842. But he, like Goethe, Scott, and Victor Hugo, had strength as well as passion and emotion; he came unscorched through the fire that has burned away the wings of so many other great poets. This was no less fortunate for the world than for himself. Of his prolonged dark hour we know little in detail, but we have seen that from the first he resisted the Tempter; Ulysses is his Retro Sathanas!

About "the mechanism of genius" in Tennyson Mr Palgrave has told us a little; more appears incidentally in his biography. "It was his way that when we had entered on some scene of special beauty or grandeur, after enjoying it together, he should always withdraw wholly from sight, and study the view, as it were, in a little artificial solitude."

Tennyson's poems, Mr Palgrave says, often arose in a kind of point de repere (like those forms and landscapes which seem to spring from a floating point of light, beheld with closed eyes just before we sleep). "More than once he said that his poems sprang often from a 'nucleus,' some one word, maybe, or brief melodious phrase, which had floated through the brain, as it were, unbidden.

And perhaps at once while walking they were presently wrought into a little song. But if he did not write it down at once the lyric fled from him irrecoverably.” He believed himself thus to have lost poems as good as his best. It seems probable that this is a common genesis of verses, good or bad, among all who write. Like Dickens, and like most men of genius probably, he saw all the scenes of his poems “in his mind’s eye.” Many authors do this, without the power of making their readers share the vision; but probably few can impart the vision who do not themselves “visualise” with distinctness. We have seen, in the cases of The Holy Grail and other pieces, that Tennyson, after long meditating a subject, often wrote very rapidly, and with little need of correction. He was born with “style”; it was a gift of his genius rather than the result of conscious elaboration. Yet he did use “the file,” of which much is now written, especially for the purpose of polishing away the sibilants, so common in our language. In the nine years of silence which followed the little book of 1833 his poems matured, and henceforth it is probable that he altered his verses little, if we except the modifications in The Princess. Many slight verbal touches were made, or old readings were restored, but important changes, in the way of omission or addition, became rare.

Of nature Tennyson was scrupulously observant till his very latest days, eagerly noting, not only “effects,” as a painter does, but their causes, botanical or geological. Had man been scientific from the beginning he would probably have evolved no poetry at all; material things would not have been endowed by him with life and passion; he would have told himself no stories of the origins of stars and flowers, clouds and fire, winds and rainbows. Modern poets have resented, like Keats and Wordsworth, the destruction of the old prehistoric dreams by the geologist and by other scientific characters. But it was part of Tennyson’s poetic originality to see the beautiful things of nature at once with the vision of early poetic men, and of moderns accustomed to the microscope, telescope, spectrum analysis, and so forth. Thus Tennyson received a double delight from the sensible universe, and it is a double delight that he communicates to his readers. His intellect was thus always active, even in apparent repose. His eyes rested not from observing, or his mind from recording and comparing, the beautiful familiar phenomena of earth and sky. In the matter of the study of books we have seen how deeply versed he was in certain of the Greek, Roman, and Italian classics. Mr Jowett writes: “He was what might be called a good scholar in the university or public-school sense of the term, . . . yet I seem to remember that he had his favourite classics, such as Homer, and Pindar, and Theocritus. . . . He was also a lover of Greek fragments. But I am not sure whether, in later life, he ever sat down to read consecutively the greatest works of AEschylus and Sophocles, although he used occasionally to dip into them.” The Greek dramatists, in fact, seem to have affected Tennyson’s work but slightly, while he constantly reminds us of Virgil, Homer, Theocritus, and even Persius and Horace. Mediaeval French, whether in poetry or prose, and the poetry of the “Pleiad” seems to have occupied little of his attention. Into the oriental literatures he dipped — pretty deeply for his Akbar; and even his Locksley Hall owed something to Sir William Jones’s version of “the old Arabian Moallakat.” The debt appears to be infinitesimal. He seems to have been less closely familiar with Elizabethan poetry than might have been expected: a number of his obiter dicta on all kinds of literary points are recorded in the Life by Mr Palgrave. “Sir Walter Scott’s short tale, My Aunt Margaret’s Mirror (how little known!), he once spoke of as the finest of all ghost or magical stories.” Lord Tennyson adds, “The Tapestried Chamber also he greatly admired.” Both are lost from modern view among the short pieces of the last volumes of the Waverley novels. Of the poet’s interest in and attitude towards the more obscure pyschological and psychical problems — to popular science foolishness — enough has been said, but the remarks of Professor Tyndall have not been cited:-

My special purpose in introducing this poem, however, was to call your attention to a passage further on which greatly interested me. The poem is, throughout, a discussion between a believer in immortality and one who is unable to believe. The method pursued is this. The Sage reads a portion of the scroll, which he has taken from the hands of his follower, and then brings his own arguments to bear upon that portion, with a view to neutralising the scepticism of the younger man. Let me here remark that I read the whole series of poems published under the title “Tiresias,” full of admiration for their freshness and vigour. Seven years after I had first read them your father died, and you, his son, asked me to contribute a chapter to the book which you contemplate publishing. I knew that I had some small store of references to my interview with your father carefully written in ancient journals. On the receipt of your request, I looked up the account of my first visit to Farringford, and there, to my profound astonishment, I found described that experience of your father’s which, in the mouth of the Ancient Sage, was made the ground of an important argument against materialism and in favour of personal immortality eight-and-twenty years afterwards. In no other poem during all these years is, to my knowledge, this experience once alluded to. I had completely forgotten it, but here it was recorded in black and white. If you turn to your father’s account of the wonderful state of consciousness superinduced by thinking of his own name, and compare it with the argument of the Ancient Sage, you will see that they refer to one and the same phenomenon.

And more, my son! for more than once when I
Sat all alone, revolving in myself
The word that is the symbol of myself,
The mortal limit of the Self was loosed,
And past into the Nameless, as a cloud
Melts into heaven. I touch’d my limbs, the limbs
Were strange, not mine — and yet no shade of doubt,
But utter clearness, and thro’ loss of Self
The gain of such large life as match’d with ours
Were Sun to spark — unshadowable in words,
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world.

Any words about Tennyson as a politician are apt to excite the sleepless prejudice which haunts the political field. He probably, if forced to “put a name to it,” would have called himself a Liberal. But he was not a social agitator. He never set a rick on fire. “He held aloof, in a somewhat detached position, from the great social seethings of his age” (Mr Frederic Harrison). But in youth he helped to extinguish some flaming ricks. He spoke of the “many-headed beast” (the reading public) in terms borrowed from Plato. He had no higher esteem for mobs than Shakespeare or John Knox professed, while his theory of tyrants (in the case of Napoleon III. about 1852) was that of Liberals like Mr Swinburne and Victor Hugo. Though to modern enlightenment Tennyson may seem as great a Tory as Dr Johnson, yet he had spoken his word in 1852 for the freedom of France, and for securing England against the supposed designs of a usurper (now fallen). He really believed, obsolete as the faith may be, in guarding our own, both on land and sea. Perhaps no Continental or American critic has ever yet dispraised a poetical fellow-countryman merely for urging the duties of national union and national defence. A critic, however, writes thus of Tennyson: “When our poet descends into the arena of party polemics, in such things as Riflemen, Form! Hands all Round, . . . The Fleet, and other topical pieces dear to the Jingo soul, it is not poetry but journalism.” I doubt whether the desirableness of the existence of a volunteer force and of a fleet really is within the arena of PARTY polemics. If any party thinks that we ought to have no volunteers, and that it is our duty to starve the fleet, what is that party’s name? Who cries, “Down with the Fleet! Down with National Defence! Hooray for the Disintegration of the Empire!”?

Tennyson was not a party man, but he certainly would have opposed any such party. If to defend our homes and this England be “Jingoism,” Tennyson, like Shakespeare, was a Jingo. But, alas! I do not know the name of the party which opposes Tennyson, and which wishes the invader to trample down England — any invader will do for so philanthropic a purpose. Except when resisting this unnamed party, the poet seldom or never entered “the arena of party polemics.” Tennyson could not have exclaimed, like Squire Western, “Hurrah for old England! Twenty thousand honest Frenchmen have landed in Kent!” He undeniably did write verses (whether poetry or journalism) tending to make readers take an unfavourable view of honest invaders. If to do that is to be a “Jingo,” and if such conduct hurts the feelings of any great English party, then Tennyson was a Jingo and a partisan, and was, so far, a rhymester, like Mr Kipling. Indeed we know that Tennyson applauded Mr Kipling’s The English Flag. So the worst is out, as we in England count the worst. In America and on the continent of Europe, however, a poet may be proud of his country’s flag without incurring rebuke from his countrymen. Tennyson did not reckon himself a party man; he believed more in political evolution than in political revolution, with cataclysms. He was neither an Anarchist nor a Home Ruler, nor a politician so generous as to wish England to be laid defenceless at the feet of her foes.

If these sentiments deserve censure, in Tennyson, at least, they claim our tolerance. He was not born in a generation late enough to be truly Liberal. Old prejudices about “this England,” old words from Henry V. and King John, haunted his memory and darkened his vision of the true proportions of things. We draw in prejudice with our mother’s milk. The mother of Tennyson had not been an Agnostic or a Comtist; his father had not been a staunch true-blue anti-Englander. Thus he inherited a certain bias in favour of faith and fatherland, a bias from which he could never emancipate himself. But tout comprendre c’est tout pardonner. Had Tennyson’s birth been later, we might find in him a more complete realisation of our poetic ideal — might have detected less to blame or to forgive.

With that apology we must leave the fame of Tennyson as a politician to the clement consideration of an enlightened posterity. I do not defend his narrow insularities, his Jingoism, or the appreciable percentage of faith which blushing analysis may detect in his honest doubt: these things I may regret or condemn, but we ought not to let them obscure our view of the Poet. He was led away by bad examples. Of all Jingoes Shakespeare is the most unashamed, and next to him are Drayton, Scott, and Wordsworth, with his

“Oh, for one hour of that Dundee!”

In the years which followed the untoward affair of Waterloo young Tennyson fell much under the influence of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, and the other offenders, and these are extenuating circumstances. By a curious practical paradox, where the realms of poetry and politics meet, the Tory critics seem milder of mood and more Liberal than the Liberal critics. Thus Mr William Morris was certainly a very advanced political theorist; and in theology Mr Swinburne has written things not easily reconcilable with orthodoxy. Yet we find Divine-Right Tories, who in literature are fervent admirers of these two poets, and leave their heterodoxies out of account. But many Liberal critics appear unable quite to forgive Tennyson because he did not wish to starve the fleet, and because he held certain very ancient, if obsolete, beliefs. Perhaps a general amnesty ought to be passed, as far as poets are concerned, and their politics and creeds should be left to silence, where "beyond these voices there is peace."

One remark, I hope, can excite no prejudice. The greatest of the Gordons was a soldier, and lived in religion. But the point at which Tennyson's memory is blended with that of Gordon is the point of sympathy with the neglected poor. It is to his wise advice, and to affection for Gordon, that we owe the Gordon training school for poor boys, — a good school, and good boys come out of that academy.

The question as to Tennyson's precise rank in the glorious roll of the Poets of England can never be determined by us, if in any case or at any time such determinations can be made. We do not, or should not, ask whether Virgil or Lucretius, whether AEschylus or Sophocles, is the greater poet. The consent of mankind seems to place Homer and Shakespeare and Dante high above all. For the rest no prize-list can be settled. If influence among aliens is the test, Byron probably takes, among our poets, the next rank after Shakespeare. But probably there is no possible test. In certain respects Shelley, in many respects Milton, in some Coleridge, in some Burns, in the opinion of a number of persons Browning, are greater poets than Tennyson. But for exquisite variety and varied exquisiteness Tennyson is not readily to be surpassed. At one moment he pleases the uncritical mass of readers, in another mood he wins the verdict of the raffine. It is a success which scarce any English poet but Shakespeare has excelled. His faults have rarely, if ever, been those of flat-footed, "thick-ankled" dulness; of rhetoric, of common-place; rather have his defects been the excess of his qualities. A kind of John Bullishness may also be noted, especially in derogatory references to France, which, true or untrue, are out of taste and keeping. But these errors could be removed by the excision of half-a-dozen lines. His later work (as the Voyage of Maeldune) shows a just appreciation of ancient Celtic literature. A great critic, F. T. Palgrave, has expressed perhaps the soundest appreciation of Tennyson:-

It is for “the days that remain” to bear witness to his real place in the great hierarchy, amongst whom Dante boldly yet justly ranked himself. But if we look at Tennyson’s work in a twofold aspect, — HERE, on the exquisite art in which, throughout, his verse is clothed, the lucid beauty of the form, the melody almost audible as music, the mysterious skill by which the words used constantly strike as the INEVITABLE words (and hence, unforgettable), the subtle allusive touches, by which a secondary image is suggested to enrich the leading thought, as the harmonic “partials” give richness to the note struck upon the string; THERE, when we think of the vast fertility in subject and treatment, united with happy selection of motive, the wide range of character, the dramatic force of impersonation, the pathos in every variety, the mastery over the comic and the tragic alike, above all, perhaps, those phrases of luminous insight which spring direct from imaginative observation of Humanity, true for all time, coming from the heart to the heart, — his work will probably be found to lie somewhere between that of Virgil and Shakespeare: having its portion, if I may venture on the phrase, in the inspiration of both.

A professed enthusiast for Tennyson can add nothing to, and take nothing from, these words of one who, though his friend, was too truly a critic to entertain the admiration that goes beyond idolatry.

ADVENTURES AMONG BOOKS

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PREFACE

Of the Essays in this volume "Adventures among Books," and "Rab's Friend," appeared in *Scribner's Magazine*; and "Recollections of Robert Louis Stevenson" (to the best of the author's memory) in *The North American Review*. The Essay on "Smollett" was in the *Anglo-Saxon*, which has ceased to appear; and the shorter papers, such as "The Confessions of Saint Augustine," in a periodical styled *Wit and Wisdom*. For "The Poems of William Morris" the author has to thank the Editor of *Longman's Magazine*; for "The Boy," and "Mrs. Radcliffe's Novels," the Proprietors of *The Cornhill Magazine*; for "Enchanted Cigarettes," and possibly for "The Supernatural in Fiction," the Proprietors of *The Idler*. The portrait, after Sir William Richmond, R.A., was done about the time when most of the Essays were written — and that was not yesterday.

CHAPTER I: ADVENTURES AMONG BOOKS

I

In an age of reminiscences, is there room for the confessions of a veteran, who remembers a great deal about books and very little about people? I have often wondered that a *Biographia Literaria* has so seldom been attempted — a biography or autobiography of a man in his relations with other minds. Coleridge, to be sure, gave this name to a work of his, but he wandered from his apparent purpose into a world of alien disquisitions. The following pages are frankly bookish, and to the bookish only do they appeal. The habit of reading has been praised as a virtue, and has been denounced as a vice. In no case, if we except the perpetual study of newspapers (which cannot fairly be called reading), is the vice, or the virtue, common. It is more innocent than opium-eating, though, like opium-eating, it unlocks to us artificial paradises. I try to say what I have found in books, what distractions from the world, what teaching (not much), and what consolations.

In beginning an *autobiographia literaria*, an account of how, and in what order, books have appealed to a mind, which books have ever above all things delighted, the author must pray to be pardoned for the sin of egotism. There is no other mind, naturally, of which the author knows so much as of his own. *On n'a que soi*, as the poor girl says in one of M. Paul Bourget's novels. In literature, as in love, one can only speak for himself. This author did not, like Fulke Greville, retire into the convent of literature from the strife of the world, rather he was born to be, from the first, a dweller in the cloister of a library. Among the poems which I remember best out of early boyhood is Lucy Ashton's song, in the "Bride of Lammermoor": —

"Look not thou on beauty's charming,
Sit thou still when kings are arming,
Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,
Speak not when the people listens,
Stop thine ear against the singer,
From the red gold keep thy finger,
Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,
Easy live and quiet die."

The rhymes, unlearned, clung to my memory; they would sing themselves to me on the way to school, or cricket-field, and, about the age of ten, probably without quite understanding them, I had chosen them for a kind of motto in life, a tune to murmur along the *fallentis semita vitæ*. This seems a queer idea for a small boy, but it must be confessed.

"It takes all sorts to make a world," some are soldiers from the cradle, some merchants, some orators; nothing but a love of books was the gift given to me by the fairies. It was probably derived from forebears on both sides of my family, one a great reader, the other a considerable collector of books which remained with us and were all tried, persevered with, or abandoned in turn, by a student who has not blanched before the *Epigoniad*.

About the age of four I learned to read by a simple process. I had heard the elegy of Cock Robin till I knew it by rote, and I picked out the letters and words which compose that classic till I could read it for myself. Earlier than that, "Robinson Crusoe" had been read aloud to me, in an abbreviated form, no doubt. I remember the pictures of Robinson finding the footstep in the sand, and a dance of cannibals, and the parrot. But, somehow, I have never read "Robinson" since: it is a pleasure to come.

The first books which vividly impressed me were, naturally, fairy tales, and chap-books about Robert Bruce, William Wallace, and Rob Roy. At that time these little tracts could be bought for a penny apiece. I can still see Bruce in full armour, and Wallace in a kilt, discoursing across a burn, and Rob Roy slipping from the soldier's horse into the stream. They did not then awaken a precocious patriotism; a boy of five is more at home in Fairyland than in his own country. The sudden appearance of the White Cat as a queen after her head was cut off, the fiendish malice of the Yellow Dwarf, the strange cake of crocodile eggs and millet seed which the mother of the Princess Frutilla made for the Fairy of the Desert — these things, all fresh and astonishing, but certainly to be credited, are my first memories of romance. One story of a White Serpent, with a woodcut of that mysterious reptile, I neglected to secure, probably for want of a penny, and I have regretted it ever since. One never sees those chap books now. "The White Serpent," in spite of all research, remains *introuvable*. It was a lost chance, and Fortune does not forgive. Nobody ever interfered with these, or indeed with any other studies of ours at that time, as long as they were not prosecuted on Sundays. "The fightingest parts of the Bible," and the Apocrypha, and stories like that of the Witch of Endor, were sabbatical literature, read in a huge old illustrated Bible. How I advanced from the fairy tales to Shakespeare, what stages there were on the way — for there must have been stages — is a thing that memory cannot recover. A nursery legend tells that I was wont to arrange six open books on six chairs, and go from one to the others, perusing them by turns. No doubt this was what people call "desultory reading," but I did not hear the criticism till later, and then too often for my comfort. Memory holds a picture, more vivid than most, of a small boy reading the "Midsummer Night's Dream" by firelight, in a room where candles were lit, and some one touched the piano, and a young man and a girl were playing chess. The Shakespeare was a volume of Kenny Meadows' edition; there are fairies in it, and the fairies seemed to come out of Shakespeare's dream into the music and the firelight. At that moment I think that I was happy; it seemed an enchanted glimpse of eternity in Paradise; nothing resembling it remains with me, out of all the years.

We went from the border to the south of England, when the number of my years was six, and in England we found another paradise, a circulating library with brown, greasy, ill-printed, odd volumes of Shakespeare and of the "Arabian Nights." How their stained pages come before the eyes again — the pleasure and the puzzle of them! What did the lady in the Geni's glass box want with the Merchants? what meant all these conversations between the Fat Knight and *Ford*, in the "Merry Wives"? It was delightful, but in parts it was difficult. Fragments of "The Tempest," and of other plays, remain stranded in my memory from these readings: *Ferdinand* and *Miranda* at chess, *Cleopatra* cuffing the messenger, the asp in the basket of figs, the *Friar* and the *Apothecary, Troilus* on the Ilian walls, a vision of *Cassandra* in white muslin with her hair down. People forbid children to read this or that. I am sure they need not, and that even in our infancy the magician, Shakespeare, brings us nothing worse than a world of beautiful visions, half realised. In the Egyptian wizard's little pool of ink, only the pure can see the visions, and in Shakespeare's magic mirror children see only what is pure. Among other books of that time I only recall a kind of Sunday novel, "Naomi; or, The Last Days of Jerusalem." Who, indeed, could forget the battering-rams, and the man who cried on the battlements, "Woe, woe to myself and to Jerusalem!" I seem to hear him again when boys break the hum of London with yells of the latest "disaster."

We left England in a year, went back to Scotland, and awoke, as it were, to know the glories of our birth. We lived in Scott's country, within four miles of Abbotsford, and, so far, we had heard nothing of it. I remember going with one of the maids into the cottage of a kinsman of hers, a carpenter; a delightful place, where there was sawdust, where our first fishing-rods were fashioned. Rummaging among the books, of course, I found some cheap periodical with verses in it. The lines began —

“The Baron of Smaylhome rose with day,
He spurred his courser on,
Without stop or stay, down the rocky way
That leads to Brotherstone.”

A rustic tea-table was spread for us, with scones and honey, not to be neglected. But they *were* neglected till we had learned how —

“The sable score of fingers four
Remains on that board impressed,
And for evermore that lady wore
A covering on her wrist.”

We did not know nor ask the poet’s name. Children, probably, say very little about what is in their minds; but that unhappy knight, Sir Richard of Coldinghame, and the Priest, with his chamber in the east, and the moody Baron, and the Lady, have dwelt in our mind ever since, and hardly need to be revived by looking at “The Eve of St. John.”

Soon after that we were told about Sir Walter, how great he was, how good, how, like Napoleon, his evil destiny found him at last, and he wore his heart away for honour’s sake. And we were given the “Lay,” and “The Lady of the Lake.” It was my father who first read “Tam o’ Shanter” to me, for which I confess I did not care at that time, preferring to take witches and bogies with great seriousness. It seemed as if Burns were trifling with a noble subject. But it was in a summer sunset, beside a window looking out on Ettrick and the hill of the Three Brethren’s Cairn, that I first read, with the dearest of all friends, how —

“The stag at eve had drunk his fill
Where danced the moon on Monan’s rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney’s hazel shade.”

Then opened the gates of romance, and with Fitz-James we drove the chase, till —

“Few were the stragglers, following far,
That reached the lake of Vennachar,
And when the Brig of Turk was won,
The foremost horseman rode alone.”

From that time, for months, there was usually a little volume of Scott in one’s pocket, in company with the miscellaneous collection of a boy’s treasures. Scott certainly took his fairy folk seriously, and the Mauth Dog was rather a disagreeable companion to a small boy in wakeful hours. After this kind of introduction to Sir Walter, after learning one’s first lessons in history from the “Tales of a Grandfather,” nobody, one hopes, can criticise him in cold blood, or after the manner of Mr. Leslie Stephen, who is not sentimental. Scott is not an author like another, but our earliest known friend in letters; for, of course, we did not ask who Shakespeare was, nor inquire about the private history of Madame d’Aulnoy. Scott peopled for us the rivers and burnsides with his reivers; the Fairy Queen came out of Eildon Hill and haunted Carterhaugh; at Newark Tower we saw “the embattled portal arch” —

“Whose ponderous grate and massy bar
Had oft rolled back the tide of war,” —

just as, at Foulshiels, on Yarrow, we beheld the very roofless cottage whence Mungo Park went forth to trace the waters of the Niger, and at Oakwood the tower of the Wizard Michael Scott.

Probably the first novel I ever read was read at Elgin, and the story was “Jane Eyre.” This tale was a creepy one for a boy of nine, and Rochester was a mystery, St. John a bore. But the lonely little girl in her despair, when something came into the room, and her days of starvation at school, and the terrible first Mrs. Rochester, were not to be forgotten. They abide in one’s recollection with a Red Indian’s ghost, who carried a rusty ruined gun, and whose acquaintance was made at the same time.

I fancy I was rather an industrious little boy, and that I had minded my lessons, and satisfied my teachers — I know I was reading Pinnock’s “History of Rome” for pleasure — till “the wicked day of destiny” came, and I felt a “call,” and underwent a process which may be described as the opposite of “conversion.” The “call” came from Dickens. “Pickwick” was brought into the house. From that hour it was all over, for five or six years, with anything like industry and lesson-books. I read “Pickwick” in convulsions of mirth. I dropped Pinnock’s “Rome” for good. I neglected everything printed in Latin, in fact everything that one was understood to prepare for one’s classes in the school whither I was now sent, in Edinburgh. For there, living a rather lonely small boy in the house of an aged relation, I found the Waverley Novels. The rest is transport. A conscientious tutor dragged me through the Latin grammar, and a constitutional dislike to being beaten on the hands with a leather strap urged me to acquire a certain amount of elementary erudition. But, for a year, I was a young hermit, living with Scott in the "Waverleys" and the "Border Minstrelsy," with Pope, and Prior, and a translation of Ariosto, with Lever and Dickens, David Copperfield and Charles O'Malley, Longfellow and Mayne Reid, Dumas, and in brief, with every kind of light literature that I could lay my hands upon. Carlyle did not escape me; I vividly remember the helpless rage with which I read of the Flight to Varennes. In his work on French novelists, Mr. Saintsbury speaks of a disagreeable little boy, in a French romance, who found Scott *assommant*, stunningly stupid. This was a very odious little boy, it seems (I have not read his adventures), and he came, as he deserved, to a bad end. Other and better boys, I learn, find Scott "slow." Extraordinary boys! Perhaps "Ivanhoe" was first favourite of yore; you cannot beat Front de Boeuf, the assault on his castle, the tournament. No other tournament need apply. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, greatly daring, has attempted to enter the lists, but he is a mere Ralph the Hospitaller. Next, I think, in order of delight, came "Quentin Durward," especially the hero of the scar, whose name Thackeray could not remember, Quentin's uncle. Then "The Black Dwarf," and Dugald, our dear Rittmeister. I could not read "Rob Roy" then, nor later; nay, not till I was forty. Now Di Vernon is the lady for me; the queen of fiction, the peerless, the brave, the tender, and true.

The wisdom of the authorities decided that I was to read no more novels, but, as an observer remarked, "I don't see what is the use of preventing the boy from reading novels, for he's just reading 'Don Juan' instead." This was so manifestly no improvement, that the ban on novels was tacitly withdrawn, or was permitted to become a dead letter. They were far more enjoyable than Byron. The worst that came of this was the suggestion of a young friend, whose life had been adventurous — indeed he had served in the Crimea with the Bashi Bazouks — that I should master the writings of Edgar Poe. I do not think that the "Black Cat," and the "Fall of the House of Usher," and the "Murders in the Rue Morgue," are very good reading for a boy who is not peculiarly intrepid. Many a bad hour they gave me, haunting me, especially, with a fear of being prematurely buried, and of waking up before breakfast to find myself in a coffin. Of all the books I devoured in that year, Poe is the only author whom I wish I had reserved for later consideration, and whom I cannot conscientiously recommend to children.

I had already enjoyed a sip of Thackeray, reading at a venture, in "Vanity Fair," about the Battle of Waterloo. It was not like Lever's accounts of battles, but it was enchanting. However, "Vanity Fair" was under a taboo. It is not easy to say why; but Mr. Thackeray himself informed a small boy, whom he found reading “Vanity Fair” under the table, that he had better read something else. What harm can the story do to a child? He reads about Waterloo, about fat Jos, about little George and the pony, about little Rawdon and the rat-hunt, and is happy and unharmed.

Leaving my hermitage, and going into the very different and very disagreeable world of a master’s house, I was lucky enough to find a charming library there. Most of Thackeray was on the shelves, and Thackeray became the chief enchanter. As Henry Kingsley says, a boy reads him and thinks he knows all about life. I do not think that the mundane parts, about Lady Kew and her wiles, about Ethel and the Marquis of Farintosh, appealed to one or enlightened one. Ethel was a mystery, and not an interesting mystery, though one used to copy Doyle’s pictures of her, with the straight nose, the impossible eyes, the impossible waist. It was not Ethel who captivated us; it was Clive’s youth and art, it was J. J., the painter, it was jolly F. B. and his address to the maid about the lobster. “A finer fish, Mary, my dear, I have never seen. Does not this solve the vexed question whether lobsters are fish, in the French sense?” Then “The Rose and the Ring” came out. It was worth while to be twelve years old, when the Christmas books were written by Dickens and Thackeray. I got hold of “The Rose and the Ring,” I know, and of the “Christmas Carol,” when they were damp from the press. King Valoroso, and Bulbo, and Angelica were even more delightful than Scrooge, and Tiny Tim, and Trotty Veck. One remembers the fairy monarch more vividly, and the wondrous array of egg-cups from which he sipped brandy — or was it right Nantes? — still “going on sipping, I am sorry to say,” even after “Valoroso was himself again.”

But, of all Thackeray’s books, I suppose “Pendennis” was the favourite. The delightful Marryat had entertained us with Peter Simple and O’Brien (how good their flight through France is!) with Mesty and Mr. Midshipman Easy, with Jacob Faithful (Mr. Thackeray’s favourite), and with Snarleyyow; but Marryat never made us wish to run away to sea. That did not seem to be one’s vocation. But the story of Pen made one wish to run away to literature, to the Temple, to streets where Brown, the famous reviewer, might be seen walking with his wife and umbrella. The writing of poems “up to” pictures, the beer with Warrington in the mornings, the suppers in the back-kitchen, these were the alluring things, not society, and Lady Rockminster, and Lord Steyne. Well, one has run away to literature since, but where is the matutinal beer? Where is the back-kitchen? Where are Warrington, and Foker, and F. B.? I have never met them in this living world, though Brown, the celebrated reviewer, is familiar to me, and also Mr. Sydney Scraper, of the Oxford and Cambridge Club. Perhaps back-kitchens exist, perhaps there are cakes and ale in the life literary, and F. B. may take his walks by the Round Pond. But one never encounters these rarities, and Bungay and Bacon are no longer the innocent and ignorant rivals whom Thackeray drew. They do not give those wonderful parties; Miss Bunnion has become quite conventional; Percy Popjoy has abandoned letters; Mr. Wenham does not toady; Mr. Wagg does not joke any more. The literary life is very like any other, in London, or is it that we do not see it aright, not having the eyes of genius? Well, a life on the ocean wave, too, may not be so desirable as it seems in Marryat's novels: so many a lad whom he tempted into the navy has discovered. The best part of the existence of a man of letters is his looking forward to it through the spectacles of Titmarsh.

One can never say how much one owes to a school-master who was a friend of literature, who kept a houseful of books, and who was himself a graceful scholar, and an author, while he chose to write, of poetic and humorous genius. Such was the master who wrote the "Day Dreams of a Schoolmaster," Mr. D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, to whom, in this place, I am glad to confess my gratitude after all these many years. While we were deep in the history of Pendennis we were also being dragged through the Commentaries of Caius Julius Cæsar, through the Latin and Greek grammars, through Xenophon, and the Eclogues of Virgil, and a depressing play of Euripides, the "Phœnissæ." I can never say how much I detested these authors, who, taken in small doses, are far, indeed, from being attractive. Horace, to a lazy boy, appears in his Odes to have nothing to say, and to say it in the most frivolous and vexatious manner. Then Cowper's "Task," or "Paradise Lost," as school-books, with notes, seems arid enough to a schoolboy. I remember reading ahead, in Cowper, instead of attending to the lesson and the class-work. His observations on public schools were not uninteresting, but the whole English school-work of those days was repugnant. One's English education was all got out of school.

As to Greek, for years it seemed a mere vacuous terror; one invented for one's self all the current arguments against "compulsory Greek." What was the use of it, who ever spoke in it, who could find any sense in it, or any interest? A language with such cruel superfluities as a middle voice and a dual; a language whose verbs were so fantastically irregular, looked like a barbaric survival, a mere plague and torment. So one thought till Homer was opened before us. Elsewhere I have tried to describe the vivid delight of first reading Homer, delight, by the way, which St. Augustine failed to appreciate. Most boys not wholly immersed in dulness felt it, I think; to myself, for one, Homer was the real beginning of study. One had tried him, when one was very young, in Pope, and had been baffled by Pope, and his artificial manner, his "fairs," and "swains." Homer seemed better reading in the absurd "crib" which Mr. Buckley wrote for Bohn’s series. Hector and Ajax, in that disguise, were as great favourites as Horatius on the Bridge, or the younger Tarquin. Scott, by the way, must have made one a furious and consistent Legitimist. In reading the “Lays of Ancient Rome,” my sympathies were with the expelled kings, at least with him who fought so well at Lake Regillus: —

“Titus, the youngest Tarquin,
  Too good for such a breed.”

Where —

“Valerius struck at Titus,
  And lopped off half his crest;
But Titus stabbed Valerius
  A span deep in the breast,” —

I find, on the margin of my old copy, in a schoolboy’s hand, the words “Well done, the Jacobites!” Perhaps my politics have never gone much beyond this sentiment. But this is a digression from Homer. The very sound of the hexameter, that long, inimitable roll of the most various music, was enough to win the heart, even if the words were not understood. But the words proved unexpectedly easy to understand, full as they are of all nobility, all tenderness, all courage, courtesy, and romance. The “Morte d’Arthur” itself, which about this time fell into our hands, was not so dear as the “Odyssey,” though for a boy to read Sir Thomas Malory is to ride at adventure in enchanted forests, to enter haunted chapels where a light shines from the Graal, to find by lonely mountain meres the magic boat of Sir Galahad.

After once being initiated into the mysteries of Greece by Homer, the work at Greek was no longer tedious. Herodotus was a charming and humorous story-teller, and, as for Thucydides, his account of the Sicilian Expedition and its ending was one of the very rare things in literature which almost, if not quite, brought tears into one’s eyes. Few passages, indeed, have done that, and they are curiously discrepant. The first book that ever made me cry, of which feat I was horribly ashamed, was “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” with the death of Eva, Topsy’s friend. Then it was trying when Colonel Newcome said *Adsum*, and the end of Socrates in the *Phaedo* moved one more than seemed becoming — these, and a passage in the history of Skalagrim Lamb’s Tail, and, as I said, the ruin of the Athenians in the Syracusan Bay. I have read these chapters in an old French version derived through the Italian from a Latin translation of Thucydides. Even in this far-descended form, the tale keeps its pathos; the calm, grave stamp of that tragic telling cannot be worn away by much handling, by long time, by the many changes of human speech. “Others too,” says Nicias, in that fatal speech, when —

“*All was done that men may do,*
And all was done in vain,” —

“having achieved what men may, have borne what men must.” This is the very burden of life, and the last word of tragedy. For now all is vain: courage, wisdom, piety, the bravery of Lamachus, the goodness of Nicias, the brilliance of Alcibiades, all are expended, all wasted, nothing of that brave venture abides, except torture, defeat, and death. No play not poem of individual fortunes is so moving as this ruin of a people; no modern story can stir us, with all its eloquence, like the brief gravity of this ancient history. Nor can we find, at the last, any wisdom more wise than that which bids us do what men may, and bear what men must. Such are the lessons of the Greek, of the people who tried all things, in the morning of the world, and who still speak to us of what they tried in words which are the sum of human gaiety and gloom, of grief and triumph, hope and despair. The world, since their day, has but followed in the same round, which only seems new: has only made the same experiments, and failed with the same failure, but less gallantly and less gloriously.

One’s schoolboy adventures among books ended not long after winning the friendship of Homer and Thucydides, of Lucretius and Catullus. One’s application was far too desultory to make a serious and accurate scholar.

I confess to having learned the classical languages, as it were by accident, for the sake of what is in them, and with a provokingly imperfect accuracy. Cricket and trout occupied far too much of my mind and my time: Christopher North, and Walton, and Thomas Tod Stoddart, and “The Moor and the Loch,” were my holiday reading, and I do not regret it. Philologists and Ireland scholars are not made so, but you can, in no way, fashion a scholar out of a casual and inaccurate intelligence. The true scholar is one whom I envy, almost as much as I respect him; but there is a kind of mental short-sightedness, where accents and verbal niceties are concerned, which cannot be sharpened into true scholarship. Yet, even for those afflicted in this way, and with the malady of being “idle, careless little boys,” the ancient classics have a value for which there is no substitute. There is a charm in finding ourselves — our common humanity, our puzzles, our cares, our joys, in the writings of men severed from us by race, religion, speech, and half the gulf of historical time — which no other literary pleasure can equal. Then there is to be added, as the university preacher observed, “the pleasure of despising our fellow-creatures who do not know Greek." Doubtless in that there is great consolation.

It would be interesting, were it possible, to know what proportion of people really care for poetry, and how the love of poetry came to them, and grew in them, and where and when it stopped. Modern poets whom one meets are apt to say that poetry is not read at all. Byron's Murray ceased to publish poetry in 1830, just when Tennyson and Browning were striking their preludes. Probably Mr. Murray was wise in his generation. But it is also likely that many persons, even now, are attached to poetry, though they certainly do not buy contemporary verse. How did the passion come to them? How long did it stay? When did the Muse say good-bye? To myself, as I have remarked, poetry came with Sir Walter Scott, for one read Shakespeare as a child, rather in a kind of dream of fairyland and enchanted isles, than with any distinct consciousness that one was occupied with poetry. Next to Scott, with me, came Longfellow, who pleased one as more reflective and tenderly sentimental, while the reflections were not so deep as to be puzzling. I remember how "Hiawatha" came out, when one was a boy, and how delightful was the free forest life, and Minnehaha, and Paupukkeewis, and Nokomis. One did not then know that the same charm, with a yet fresher dew upon it, was to meet one later, in the "Kalewala." But, at that time, one had no conscious pleasure in poetic style, except in such ringing verse as Scott's, and Campbell's in his patriotic pieces. The pleasure and enchantment of style first appealed to me, at about the age of fifteen, when one read for the first time —

"So all day long the noise of battle rolled
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonnesse about their Lord."

Previously one had only heard of Mr. Tennyson as a name. When a child I was told that a poet was coming to a house in the Highlands where we chanced to be, a poet named Tennyson. "Is he a poet like Sir Walter Scott?" I remember asking, and was told, "No, he was not like Sir Walter Scott." Hearing no more of him, I was prowling among the books in an ancient house, a rambling old place with a ghost-room, where I found Tupper, and could not get on with "Proverbial Philosophy." Next I tried Tennyson, and instantly a new light of poetry dawned, a new music was audible, a new god came into my medley of a Pantheon, a god never to be dethroned. "Men scarcely know how beautiful fire is," Shelley says. I am convinced that we scarcely know how great a poet Lord

Tennyson is; use has made him too familiar. The same hand has “raised the Table Round again,” that has written the sacred book of friendship, that has lulled us with the magic of the “Lotus Eaters,” and the melody of “Tithonus.” He has made us move, like his own Prince —

”Among a world of ghosts,
And feel ourselves the shadows of a dream.”

He has enriched our world with conquests of romance; he has recut and reset a thousand ancient gems of Greece and Rome; he has roused our patriotism; he has stirred our pity; there is hardly a human passion but he has purged it and ennobled it, including “this of love.” Truly, the Laureate remains the most various, the sweetest, the most exquisite, the most learned, the most Virgilian of all English poets, and we may pity the lovers of poetry who died before Tennyson came.

Here may end the desultory tale of a desultory bookish boyhood. It was not in nature that one should not begin to rhyme for one’s self. But those exercises were seldom even written down; they lived a little while in a memory which has lost them long ago. I do remember me that I tried some of my attempts on my dear mother, who said much what Dryden said to “Cousin Swift,” “You will never be a poet,” a decision in which I straightway acquiesced. For to rhyme is one thing, to be a poet quite another. A good deal of mortification would be avoided if young men and maidens only kept this obvious fact well posed in front of their vanity and their ambition.

In these bookish memories I have said nothing about religion and religious books, for various reasons. But, unlike other Scots of the pen, I got no harm from “The Shorter Catechism,” of which I remember little, and neither then nor now was or am able to understand a single sentence. Some precocious metaphysicians comprehended and stood aghast at justification, sanctification, adoption, and effectual calling. These, apparently, were necessary processes in the Scottish spiritual life. But we were not told what they meant, nor were we distressed by a sense that we had not passed through them. From most children, one trusts, Calvinism ran like water off a duck’s back; unlucky were they who first absorbed, and later were compelled to get rid of, “The Shorter Catechism!”

One good thing, if no more, these memories may accomplish. Young men, especially in America, write to me and ask me to recommend “a course of reading.” Distrust a course of reading! People who really care for books *read all of them*. There is no other course. Let this be a reply. No other answer shall they get from me, the inquiring young men.

II

People talk, in novels, about the delights of a first love. One may venture to doubt whether everybody exactly knows which was his, or her, first love, of men or women, but about our first loves in books there can be no mistake. They were, and remain, the dearest of all; after boyhood the bloom is off the literary rye. The first parcel of these garrulities ended when the author left school, at about the age of seventeen. One’s literary equipment seems to have been then almost as complete as it ever will be, one’s tastes definitely formed, one’s favourites already chosen. As long as we live we hope to read, but we never can “recapture the first fine careless rapture.” Besides, one begins to write, and that is fatal. My own first essays were composed at school — for other boys. Not long ago the gentleman who was then our English master wrote to me, informing me he was my earliest public, and that he had never credited my younger brother with the essays which that unscrupulous lad (“I speak of him but brotherly”) was accustomed to present for his consideration.

On leaving school at seventeen I went to St. Leonard’s Hall, in the University of St. Andrews. That is the oldest of Scotch universities, and was founded by a papal bull. St. Leonard’s Hall, after having been a *hospitium* for pilgrims, a home for old ladies (about 1500), and a college in the University, was now a kind of cross between a master’s house at school, and, as before 1750, a college. We had more liberty than schoolboys, less than English undergraduates. In the Scotch universities the men live scattered, in lodgings, and only recently, at St. Andrews, have they begun to dine together in hall. We had a common roof, common dinners, wore scarlet gowns, possessed football and cricket clubs, and started, of course, a kind of weekly magazine. It was only a manuscript affair, and was profusely illustrated. For the only time in my life, I was now an editor, under a sub-editor, who kept me up to my work, and cut out my fine passages. The editor’s duty was to write most of the magazine — to write essays, reviews (of books by the professors, very severe), novels, short stories, poems, translations, also to illustrate these, and to “fag” his friends for “copy” and drawings. A deplorable flippancy seems, as far as one remembers, to have been the chief characteristic of the periodical — flippancy and an abundant use of the supernatural. These were the days of Lord’ Lytton’s “Strange Story,” which I continue to think a most satisfactory romance. Inspired by Lord Lytton, and aided by the University library, I read Cornelius Agrippa, Trithemius, Petrus de Abano, Michael Scott, and struggled with Iamblichus and Plotinus.

These are really but disappointing writers. It soon became evident enough that the devil was not to be raised by their prescriptions, that the philosopher's stone was beyond the reach of the amateur. Iamblichus is particularly obscure and tedious. To any young beginner I would recommend Petrus de Abano, as the most adequate and gruesome of the school, for "real deevilry and pleesure," while in the wilderness of Plotinus there are many beautiful passages and lofty speculations. Two winters in the Northern University, with the seamy side of school life left behind, among the kindest of professors — Mr. Sellar, Mr. Ferrier, Mr. Shairp — in the society of the warden, Mr. Rhoades, and of many dear old friends, are the happiest time in my life. This was true literary leisure, even if it was not too well employed, and the *religio loci* should be a liberal education in itself. We had debating societies — I hope I am now forgiven for an attack on the character of Sir William Wallace, *latro quidam*, as the chronicler calls him, "a certain brigand." But I am for ever writing about St. Andrews — writing inaccurately, too, the Scotch critics declare. "Farewell," we cried, "dear city of youth and dream," eternally dear and sacred.

Here we first made acquaintance with Mr. Browning, guided to his works by a parody which a lady wrote in our little magazine. Mr. Browning was not a popular poet in 1861. His admirers were few, a little people, but they were not then in the later mood of reverence, they did not awfully question the oracles, as in after years. They read, they admired, they applauded, on occasion they mocked, good-humouredly. The book by which Mr. Browning was best known was the two green volumes of "Men and Women." In these, I still think, is the heart of his genius beating most strenuously and with an immortal vitality. Perhaps this, for its compass, is the collection of poetry the most various and rich of modern English times, almost of any English times. But just as Mr. Fitzgerald cared little for what Lord Tennyson wrote after 1842, so I have never been able to feel quite the same enthusiasm for Mr. Browning's work after "Men and Women." He seems to have more influence, though that influence is vague, on persons who chiefly care for thought, than on those who chiefly care for poetry. I have met a lady who had read "The Ring and the Book" often, the "Lotus Eaters" not once. Among such students are Mr. Browning's disciples of the Inner Court: I dwell but in the Court of the Gentiles. While we all — all who attempt rhyme — have more or less consciously imitated the manner of Lord Tennyson, Mr. Swinburne, Mr. Rossetti, such imitations of Mr. Browning are uncommonly scarce. He is lucky enough not to have had the seed of his flower stolen and sown everywhere till —

"Once again the people

Called it but a weed.”

The other new poet of these days was Mr. Clough, who has many undergraduate qualities. But his peculiar wistful scepticism in religion had then no influence on such of us as were still happily in the ages of faith. Anything like doubt comes less of reading, perhaps, than of the sudden necessity which, in almost every life, puts belief on her trial, and cries for an examination of the creeds hitherto held upon authority, and by dint of use and wont. In a different way one can hardly care for Mr. Matthew Arnold, as a boy, till one has come under the influence of Oxford. So Mr. Browning was the only poet added to my pantheon at St. Andrews, though Macaulay then was admitted and appeared to be more the true model of a prose writer than he seems in the light of later reflection. Probably we all have a period of admiring Carlyle almost exclusively. College essays, when the essayist cares for his work, are generally based on one or the other. Then they recede into the background. As for their thought, we cannot for ever remain disciples. We begin to see how much that looks like thought is really the expression of temperament, and how individual a thing temperament is, how each of us must construct his world for himself, or be content to wait for an answer and a synthesis “in that far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves.” So, for one, in these high matters, I must be content as a “masterless man” swearing by no philosopher, unless he be the imperial Stoic of the hardy heart, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

Perhaps nothing in education encourages this incredulity about “masters” of thought like the history of philosophy. The professor of moral philosophy, Mr. Ferrier, was a famous metaphysician and scholar. His lectures on “The History of Greek Philosophy” were an admirable introduction to the subject, afterwards pursued, in the original authorities, at Oxford. Mr. Ferrier was an exponent of other men’s ideas so fair and persuasive that, in each new school, we thought we had discovered the secret. We were physicists with Thales and that pre-Socratic “company of gallant gentlemen” for whom Sydney Smith confessed his lack of admiration. We were now Empedocleans, now believers in Heraclitus, now in Socrates, now in Plato, now in Aristotle. In each lecture our professor set up a new master and gently disintegrated him in the next. “Amurath to Amurath succeeds,” as Mr. T. H. Green used to say at Oxford. He himself became an Amurath, a sultan of thought, even before his apotheosis as the guide of that bewildered clergyman, Mr. Robert Elsmere. At Oxford, when one went there, one found Mr. Green already in the position of a leader of thought, and of young men. He was a tutor of Balliol, and lectured on Aristotle, and of him eager youth said, in the words of Omar Khayyam, “*He knows*! *he knows*!” What was it that Mr. Green knew? Where was the secret? To a mind already sceptical about masters, it seemed that the secret (apart from the tutor's noble simplicity and rare elevation of character) was a knack of translating St. John and Aristotle alike into a terminology which we then believed to be Hegelian. Hegel we knew, not in the original German, but in lectures and in translations. Reasoning from these inadequate premises, it seemed to me that Hegel had invented evolution before Mr. Darwin, that his system showed, so to speak, the spirit at work in evolution, the something within the wheels. But this was only a personal impression made on a mind which knew Darwin, and physical speculations in general, merely in the vague popular way. Mr. Green's pupils could generally write in his own language, more or less, and could "envisage" things, as we said then, from his point of view. To do this was believed, probably without cause, to be useful in examinations. For one, I could never take it much more seriously, never believed that "the Absolute," as the *Oxford Spectator* said, had really been "got into a corner." The Absolute has too often been apparently cornered, too often has escaped from that situation. Somewhere in an old notebook I believe I have a portrait in pencil of Mr. Green as he wrestled at lecture with Aristotle, with the Notion, with his chair and table. Perhaps he was the last of that remarkable series of men, who may have begun with Wycliffe, among whom Newman's is a famous name, that were successively accepted at Oxford as knowing something esoteric, as possessing a shrewd guess at the secret.

”None the less
I still came out no wiser than I went."

All of these masters and teachers made their mark, probably won their hold, in the first place, by dint of character, not of some peculiar views of theology and philosophy. Doubtless it was the same with Socrates, with Buddha. To be like them, not to believe with them, is the thing needful. But the younger we are, the less, perhaps, we see this clearly, and we persuade ourselves that there is some mystery in these men's possession, some piece of knowledge, some method of thinking which will lead us to certainty and to peace. Alas, their secret is incommunicable, and there is no more a philosophic than there is a royal road to the City.

This may seem a digression from Adventures among Books into the Book of Human Life. But while much of education is still orally communicated by lectures and conversations, many thoughts which are to be found in books, Greek or German, reach us through the hearing. There are many pupils who can best be taught in this way; but, for one, if there be aught that is desirable in a book, I then, as now, preferred, if I could, to go to the book for it.

Yet it is odd that one remembers so little of one's undergraduate readings, apart from the constant study of the ancient classics, which might not be escaped. Of these the calm wisdom of Aristotle, in moral thought and in politics, made perhaps the deepest impression. Probably politicians are the last people who read Aristotle's "Politics." The work is, indeed, apt to disenchant one with political life. It is melancholy to see the little Greek states running the regular round — monarchy, oligarchy, tyranny, democracy in all its degrees, the "ultimate democracy" of plunder, lawlessness, license of women, children, and slaves, and then tyranny again, or subjection to some foreign power. In politics, too, there is no secret of success, of the happy life for all. There is no such road to the City, either democratic or royal. This is the lesson which Aristotle's "Polities" impresses on us, this and the impossibility of imposing ideal constitutions on mankind.

"Whate'er is best administered is best." These are some of the impressions made at Oxford by the studies of the schools, the more or less inevitable "curricoolum," as the Scotch gentleman pronounced the word. But at Oxford, for most men, the regular work of the schools is only a small part of the literary education. People read, in different degrees, according to their private tastes. There are always a few men, at least, who love literary studies for their own sake, regardless of lectures and of "classes." In my own time I really believe you could know nothing which might not "pay" in the schools and prove serviceable in examinations. But a good deal depended on being able to use your knowledge by way of literary illustration. Perhaps the cleverest of my own juniors, since very well known in letters, did not use his own special vein, even when he had the chance, in writing answers to questions in examinations. Hence his academic success was much below his deserts. For my own part, I remember my tutor saying, "Don't write as if you were writing for a penny paper." Alas, it was "a prediction, cruel, smart." But, "as yet no sin was dreamed."

At my own college we had to write weekly essays, alternately in English and Latin. This might have been good literary training, but I fear the essays were not taken very seriously. The chief object was to make the late learned Dr. Scott bound on his chair by paradoxes. But nobody ever succeeded. He was experienced in trash. As for what may be called unacademic literature, there were not many essays in that art. There have been very literary generations, as when Corydon and Thyrsis "lived in Oxford as if it had been a great country house;" so Corydon confessed. Probably many of the poems by Mr. Matthew Arnold and many of Mr. Swinburne's early works were undergraduate poems.

A later generation produced "Love in Idleness," a very pleasing volume. But the gods had not made us poetical. In those days I remember picking up, in the Union Reading-room, a pretty white quarto, "Atalanta in Calydon," by A. C. Swinburne. Only once had I seen Mr. Swinburne's name before, signing a brief tale in *Once a Week*. "Atalanta" was a revelation; there was a new and original poet here, a Balliol man, too. In my own mind "Atalanta" remains the best, the most beautiful, the most musical of Mr. Swinburne's many poems. He instantly became the easily parodied model of undergraduate versifiers.

Swinburnian prize poems, even, were attempted, without success. As yet we had not seen Mr. Matthew Arnold's verses. I fell in love with them, one long vacation, and never fell out of love. He is not, and cannot be, the poet of the wide world, but his charm is all the more powerful over those whom he attracts and subdues. He is the one Oxford poet of Oxford, and his "Scholar Gypsy" is our "Lycidas." At this time he was Professor of Poetry; but, alas, he lectured just at the hour when wickets were pitched on Cowley Marsh, and I never was present at his discourses, at his humorous prophecies of England's fate, which are coming all too true. So many weary lectures had to be attended, could not be "cut," that we abstained from lectures of supererogation, so to speak. For the rest there was no "literary movement" among contemporary undergraduates. They read for the schools, and they rowed and played cricket. We had no poets, except the stroke of the Corpus boat, Mr. Bridges, and he concealed his courtship of the Muse. Corpus is a small college, but Mr. Bridges pulled its boat to the proud place of second on the river. B. N. C. was the head boat, and even B. N. C. did Corpus bump. But the triumph was brief. B. N. C. made changes in its crew, got a new ship, drank the foaming grape, and bumped Corpus back. I think they went head next year, but not that year. Thus Mr. Bridges, as Kingsley advises, was doing noble deeds, not dreaming them, at that moment.

There existed a periodical entirely devoted to verse, but nobody knew anybody who wrote in it. A comic journal was started; I remember the pride with which when a freshman, I received an invitation to join its councils as an artist. I was to do the caricatures of all things. Now, methought, I shall meet the Oxford wits of whom I have read. But the wits were unutterably disappointing, and the whole thing died early and not lamented. Only one piece of academic literature obtained and deserved success. This was *The Oxford Spectator*, a most humorous little periodical, in shape and size like Addison's famous journal. The authors were Mr. Reginald Copleston, now Bishop of Colombo, Mr. Humphry Ward, and Mr. Nolan, a great athlete, who died early. There have been good periodicals since; many amusing things occur in the *Echoes from the Oxford Magazine*, but the *Spectator* was the flower of academic journals. "When I look back to my own experience," says the *Spectator*, "I find one scene, of all Oxford, most deeply engraved upon 'the mindful tablets of my soul.' And yet not a scene, but a fairy compound of smell and sound, and sight and thought. The wonderful scent of the meadow air just above Iffley, on a hot May evening, and the gay colours of twenty boats along the shore, the poles all stretched out from the bank to set the boats clear, and the sonorous cries of 'ten seconds more,' all down from the green barge to the lasher. And yet that unrivalled moment is only typical of all the term; the various elements of beauty and pleasure are concentrated there."

Unfortunately, life at Oxford is not all beauty and pleasure. Things go wrong somehow. Life drops her happy mask. But this has nothing to do with books.

About books, however, I have not many more confessions that I care to make. A man's old self is so far away that he can speak about it and its adventures almost as if he were speaking about another who is dead. After taking one's degree, and beginning to write a little for publication, the topic has a tendency to become much more personal. My last undergraduate literary discoveries were of France and the Renaissance. Accidentally finding out that I could read French, I naturally betook myself to Balzac. If you read him straight on, without a dictionary, you begin to learn a good many words. The literature of France has been much more popular in England lately, but thirty years agone it was somewhat neglected. There does seem to be something in French poetry which fails to please "the German paste in our composition." Mr. Matthew Arnold, a disciple of Sainte-Beuve, never could appreciate French poetry. A poet-critic has even remarked that the French language is nearly incapable of poetry! We cannot argue in such matters, where all depends on the taste and the ear.

Our ancestors, like the author of the "Faery Queen," translated and admired Du Bellay and Ronsard; to some critics of our own time this taste seems a modish affectation. For one, I have ever found an original charm in the lyrics of the Pleiad, and have taken great delight in Hugo's amazing variety of music, in the romance of Alfred de Musset, in the beautiful cameos of Gautier. What is poetical, if not the "Song of Roland," the only true national epic since Homer? What is frank, natural verse, if not that of the old *Pastourelles*? Where is there *naïveté* of narrative and unconscious charm, if not in *Aucassin et Nicolette*? In the long normally developed literature of France, so variously rich, we find the nearest analogy to the literature of Greece, though that of England contains greater masterpieces, and her verse falls more winningly on the ear. France has no Shakespeare and no Milton; we have no Molière and no "Song of Roland." One star differs from another in glory, but it is a fortunate moment when this planet of France swims into our ken. Many of our generation saw it first through

Mr. Swinburne’s telescope, heard of it in his criticisms, and are grateful to that watcher of the skies, even if we do not share all his transports. There then arose at Oxford, out of old French, and old oak, and old china, a “school” or “movement.” It was æsthetic, and an early purchaser of Mr. William Morris’s wall papers. It existed ten or twelve years before the public “caught on,” as they say, to these delights. But, except one or two of the masters, the school were only playing at æsthetics, and laughing at their own performances. There was more fun than fashion in the cult, which was later revived, developed, and gossiped about more than enough.

To a writer now dead, and then first met, I am specially bound in gratitude — the late Mr. J. F. M’Lennan. Mr. M’Lennan had the most acute and ingenious of minds which I have encountered. His writings on early marriage and early religion were revelations which led on to others. The topic of folklore, and the development of custom and myths, is not generally attractive, to be sure. Only a few people seem interested in that spectacle, so full of surprises — the development of all human institutions, from fairy tales to democracy. In beholding it we learn how we owe all things, humanly speaking, to the people and to genius. The natural people, the folk, has supplied us, in its unconscious way, with the stuff of all our poetry, law, ritual: and genius has selected from the mass, has turned customs into codes, nursery tales into romance, myth into science, ballad into epic, magic mummery into gorgeous ritual. The world has been educated, but not as man would have trained and taught it. “He led us by a way we knew not,” led, and is leading us, we know not whither; we follow in fear.

The student of this lore can look back and see the long trodden way behind him, the winding tracks through marsh and forest and over burning sands. He sees the caves, the camps, the villages, the towns where the race has tarried, for shorter times or longer, strange places many of them, and strangely haunted, desolate dwellings and inhospitable. But the scarce visible tracks converge at last on the beaten ways, the ways to that city whither mankind is wandering, and which it may never win. We have a foreboding of a purpose which we know not, a sense as of will, working, as we would not have worked, to a hidden end.

This is the lesson, I think, of what we call folklore or anthropology, which to many seems trivial, to many seems dull. It may become the most attractive and serious of the sciences; certainly it is rich in strange curiosities, like those mystic stones which were fingered and arrayed by the pupils in that allegory of Novalis. I am not likely to regret the accident which brought me up on fairy tales, and the inquisitiveness which led me to examine the other fragments of antiquity. But the poetry and the significance of them are apt to be hidden by the enormous crowd of details. Only late we find the true meaning of what seems like a mass of fantastic, savage eccentricities. I very well remember the moment when it occurred to me, soon after taking my degree, that the usual ideas about some of these matters were the reverse of the truth, that the common theory had to be inverted. The notion was “in the air,” it had already flashed on Mannhardt, probably, but, like the White Knight in “Alice,” I claimed it for “my own invention.”

These reminiscences and reflections have now been produced as far as 1872, or thereabouts, and it is not my intention to pursue them further, nor to speak of any living contemporaries who have not won their way to the classical. In writing of friends and teachers at Oxford, I have not ventured to express gratitude to those who still live, still teach, still are the wisest and kindest friends of the hurrying generations. It is a silence not of thanklessness, but of respect and devotion. About others — contemporaries, or juniors by many years — who have instructed, consoled, strengthened, and amused us, we must also be silent.

CHAPTER II: RECOLLECTIONS OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

TUSITALA

We spoke of a rest in a Fairy hill of the north, but he
   Far from the firths of the east and the racing tides of the west
Sleeps in the sight and the sound of the infinite southern sea,
   Weary and well content, in his grave on the Vaëa crest.

Tusitala, the lover of children, the teller of tales,
   Giver of counsel and dreams, a wonder, a world's delight,
Looks o'er the labour of men in the plain and the hill, and the sails
   Pass and repass on the sea that he loved, in the day and the night.

Winds of the west and the east in the rainy season blow,
   Heavy with perfume, and all his fragrant woods are wet,
Winds of the east and the west as they wander to and fro,
   Bear him the love of the lands he loved, and the long regret.

Once we were kindest, he said, when leagues of the limitless sea,
   Flowed between us, but now that no range of the refluent tides
Sunders us each from each, yet nearer we seem to be,
   When only the unbridged stream of the River of Death divides.

Before attempting to give any "reminiscences" of Mr. Stevenson, it is right to observe that reminiscences of him can best be found in his own works. In his essay on "Child's Play," and in his "Child's Garden of Verse," he gave to the world his vivid recollections of his imaginative infancy. In other essays he spoke of his boyhood, his health, his dreams, his methods of work and study. "The Silverado Squatters" reveals part of his experience in America. The Parisian scenes in "The Wrecker" are inspired by his sojourn in French

Bohemia; his journeys are recorded in "Travels with a Donkey" and "An Inland Voyage"; while his South Sea sketches, which appeared in periodicals, deal with his Oceanic adventures. He was the most autobiographical of authors, with an egoism nearly as complete, and to us as delightful, as the egoism of Montaigne. Thus, the proper sources of information about the author of "Kidnapped" are in his delightful books.

"John's own John," as Dr. Holmes says, may be very unlike his neighbour's John; but in the case of Mr. Stevenson, his Louis was very similar to my Louis; I mean that, as he presents his personality to the world in his writings, even so did that personality appear to me in our intercourse. The man I knew was always a boy.

"Sing me a song of the lad that is gone,"

he wrote about Prince Charlie, but in his own case the lad was never "gone." Like Keats and Shelley, he was, and he looked, of the immortally young. He and I were at school together, but I was an elderly boy of seventeen, when he was lost in the crowd of "gytes," as the members of the lowest form are called. Like all Scotch people, we had a vague family connection; a great-uncle of his, I fancy, married an aunt of my own, called for her beauty, "The Flower of Ettrick." So we had both heard; but these things were before our day. A lady of my kindred remembers carrying Stevenson about when he was "a rather peevish baby," and I have seen a beautiful photograph of him, like one of Raffael's children, taken when his years were three or four. But I never had heard of his existence till, in 1873, I think, I was at Mentone, in the interests of my health. Here I met Mr. Sidney Colvin, now of the British Museum, and, with Mr. Colvin, Stevenson. He looked as, in my eyes, he always did look, more like a lass than a lad, with a rather long, smooth oval face, brown hair worn at greater length than is common, large lucid eyes, but whether blue or brown I cannot remember, if brown, certainly light brown. On appealing to the authority of a lady, I learn that brown *was* the hue. His colour was a trifle hectic, as is not unusual at Mentone, but he seemed, under his big blue cloak, to be of slender, yet agile frame. He was like nobody else whom I ever met. There was a sort of uncommon celerity in changing expression, in thought and speech. His cloak and Tyrolese hat (he would admit the innocent impeachment) were decidedly dear to him. On the frontier of Italy, why should he not do as the Italians do? It would have been well for me if I could have imitated the wearing of the cloak!

I shall not deny that my first impression was not wholly favourable. "Here," I thought, "is one of your æsthetic young men, though a very clever one." What the talk was about, I do not remember; probably of books. Mr. Stevenson afterwards told me that I had spoken of Monsieur Paul de St. Victor, as a fine writer, but added that "he was not a British sportsman." Mr. Stevenson himself, to my surprise, was unable to walk beyond a very short distance, and, as it soon appeared, he thought his thread of life was nearly spun. He had just written his essay, "Ordered South," the first of his published works, for his "Pentland Rising" pamphlet was unknown, a boy's performance. On reading "Ordered South," I saw, at once, that here was a new writer, a writer indeed; one who could do what none of us, *nous autres*, could rival, or approach. I was instantly "sealed of the Tribe of Louis," an admirer, a devotee, a fanatic, if you please. At least my taste has never altered. From this essay it is plain enough that the author (as is so common in youth, but with better reason than many have) thought himself doomed. Most of us have gone through that, the Millevoye phase, but who else has shown such a wise and gay acceptance of the apparently inevitable? We parted; I remember little of our converse, except a shrewd and hearty piece of encouragement given me by my junior, who already knew so much more of life than his senior will ever do. For he ran forth to embrace life like a lover: *his* motto was never Lucy Ashton's —

"Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,
Easy live and quiet die."

Mr. Stevenson came presently to visit me at Oxford. I make no hand of reminiscences; I remember nothing about what we did or said, with one exception, which is not going to be published. I heard of him, writing essays in the *Portfolio* and the *Cornhill*, those delightful views of life at twenty-five, so brave, so real, so vivid, so wise, so exquisite, which all should know. How we looked for "R. L. S." at the end of an article, and how devout was our belief, how happy our pride, in the young one!

About 1878, I think (I was now a slave of the quill myself), I received a brief note from Mr. Stevenson, introducing to me the person whom, in his essay on his old college magazine, he called "Glasgow Brown." What his real name was, whence he came, whence the money came, I never knew. G. B. was going to start a weekly Tory paper. Would I contribute? G. B. came to see me. Mr. Stevenson has described him, *not* as I would have described him: like Mr. Bill Sikes's dog, I have the Christian peculiarity of not liking dogs "as are not of my breed." G. B.'s paper, *London*, was to start next week. He had no writer of political leading articles. Would I do a "leader"? But I was *not* in favour of Lord Lytton's Afghan policy. How could I do a Tory leader? Well, I did a neutral-tinted thing, with citations from Aristophanes! I found presently some other scribes for G. B.

What a paper that was! I have heard that G. B. paid in handfuls of gold, in handfuls of bank-notes. Nobody ever read *London*, or advertised in it, or heard of it. It was full of the most wonderfully clever verses in old French forms. They were (it afterwards appeared) by Mr. W. E. Henley. Mr. Stevenson himself astonished and delighted the public of *London* (that is, the contributors) by his "New Arabian Nights." Nobody knew about them but ourselves, a fortunate few. Poor G. B. died and Mr. Henley became the editor. I may not name the contributors, the flower of the young lions, elderly lions now, there is a new race. But one lion, a distinguished and learned lion, said already that fiction, not essay, was Mr. Stevenson's field. Well, both fields were his, and I cannot say whether I would be more sorry to lose *Virginibus Puerisque* and "Studies of Men and Books," or "Treasure Island" and "Catriona." With the decease of G. B., Pactolus dried up in its mysterious sources, *London* struggled and disappeared.

Mr. Stevenson was in town, now and again, at the old Saville Club, in Saville Row, which had the tiniest and blackest of smoking-rooms. Here, or somewhere, he spoke to me of an idea of a tale, a Man who was Two Men. I said "'William Wilson' by Edgar Poe," and declared that it would never do. But his "Brownies," in a vision of the night, showed him a central scene, and he wrote "Jekyll and Hyde." My "friend of these days and of all days," Mr. Charles Longman, sent me the manuscript. In a very commonplace London drawing-room, at 10.30 P.M., I began to read it. Arriving at the place where Utterson the lawyer, and the butler wait outside the Doctor's room, I threw down the manuscript and fled in a hurry. I had no taste for solitude any more. The story won its great success, partly by dint of the moral (whatever that may be), more by its terrible, lucid, visionary power. I remember Mr. Stevenson telling me, at this time, that he was doing some "regular crawlers," for this purist had a boyish habit of slang, and I *think* it was he who called Julius Cæsar "the howlingest cheese who ever lived." One of the "crawlers" was "Thrawn Janet"; after "Wandering Willie's Tale" (but certainly *after* it), to my taste, it seems the most wonderful story of the "supernatural" in our language.

Mr. Stevenson had an infinite pleasure in Boisgobey, Montépin, and, of course, Gaboriau. There was nothing of the "cultured person" about him. Concerning a novel dear to culture, he said that he would die by my side, in the last ditch, proclaiming it the worst fiction in the world. I make haste to add that I have only known two men of letters as free as Mr. Stevenson, not only from literary jealousy, but from the writer's natural, if exaggerated, distaste for work which, though in his own line, is very different in aim and method from his own. I do not remember another case in which he dispraised any book. I do remember his observations on a novel then and now very popular, but not to his taste, nor, indeed, by any means, impeccable, though stirring; his censure and praise were both just. From his occasional fine efforts, the author of this romance, he said, should have cleared away acres of brushwood, of ineffectual matter. It was so, no doubt, as the writer spoken of would be ready to acknowledge. But he was an improviser of genius, and Mr. Stevenson was a conscious artist.

Of course we did by no means always agree in literary estimates; no two people do. But when certain works — in his line in one way — were stupidly set up as rivals of his, the person who was most irritated was not he, but his equally magnanimous contemporary. There was no thought of rivalry or competition in either mind. The younger romancists who arose after Mr. Stevenson went to Samoa were his friends by correspondence; from them, who never saw his face, I hear of his sympathy and encouragement. Every writer knows the special temptations of his tribe: they were temptations not even felt, I do believe, by Mr. Stevenson. His heart was far too high, his nature was in every way as generous as his hand was open. It is in thinking of these things that one feels afresh the greatness of the world's loss; for "a good heart is much more than style," writes one who knew him only by way of letters.

It is a trivial reminiscence that we once plotted a Boisgobesque story together. There was a prisoner in a Muscovite dungeon.

"We'll extract information from him," I said.

"How?"

"With corkscrews."

But the mere suggestion of such a process was terribly distasteful to him; not that I really meant to go to these extreme lengths. We never, of course, could really have worked together; and, his maladies increasing, he became more and more a wanderer, living at Bournemouth, at Davos, in the Grisons, finally, as all know, in Samoa. Thus, though we corresponded, not unfrequently, I never was of the inner circle of his friends. Among men there were school or college companions, or companions of Paris or Fontainebleau, cousins, like Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson, or a stray senior, like Mr. Sidney Colvin. From some of them, or from Mr. Stevenson himself, I have heard tales of "the wild Prince and Poins." That he and a friend travelled utterly without baggage, buying a shirt where a shirt was needed, is a fact, and the incident is used in "The Wrecker." Legend says that once he and a friend *did* possess a bag, and also, nobody ever knew why, a large bottle of scent. But there was no room for the bottle in the bag, so Mr. Stevenson spilled the whole contents over the other man's head, taking him unawares, that nothing might be wasted. I think the tale of the endless staircase, in "The Wrecker," is founded on fact, so are the stories of the *atelier*, which I have heard Mr. Stevenson narrate at the Oxford and Cambridge Club. For a nocturnal adventure, in the manner of the "New Arabian Nights," a learned critic already spoken of must be consulted. It is not my story. In Paris, at a café, I remember that Mr. Stevenson heard a Frenchman say the English were cowards. He got up and slapped the man's face.

"*Monsieur, vous m'avez frappé*!" said the Gaul.

"*A ce qu'il parait*," said the Scot, and there it ended. He also told me that years ago he was present at a play, I forget what play, in Paris, where the moral hero exposes a woman "with a history." He got up and went out, saying to himself:

"What a play! what a people!"

"*Ah, Monsieur, vous êtes bien jeune*!" said an old French gentleman.

Like a right Scot, Mr. Stevenson was fond of "our auld ally of France," to whom our country and our exiled kings owed so much.

I rather vaguely remember another anecdote. He missed his train from Edinburgh to London, and his sole portable property was a return ticket, a meerschaum pipe, and a volume of Mr. Swinburne's poems. The last he found unmarketable; the pipe, I think, he made merchandise of, but somehow his provender for the day's journey consisted in one bath bun, which he could not finish.

These trivial tales illustrate a period in his life and adventures which I only know by rumour. Our own acquaintance was, to a great degree, literary and bookish. Perhaps it began "with a slight aversion," but it seemed, like madeira, to be ripened and improved by his long sea voyage; and the news of his death taught me, at least, the true nature of the affection which he was destined to win. Indeed, our acquaintance was like the friendship of a wild singing bird and of a punctual, domesticated barn-door fowl, laying its daily "article" for the breakfast-table of the citizens. He often wrote to me from Samoa, sometimes with news of native manners and folklore. He sent me a devil-box, the "luck" of some strange island, which he bought at a great price. After parting with its "luck," or fetish (a shell in a curious wooden box), the island was unfortunate, and was ravaged by measles.

I occasionally sent out books needed for Mr. Stevenson's studies, of which more will be said. But I must make it plain that, in the body, we met but rarely. His really intimate friends were Mr. Colvin and Mr. Baxter (who managed the practical side of his literary business between them); Mr. Henley (in partnership with whom he wrote several plays); his cousin, Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson; and, among other *literati*, Mr. Gosse, Mr. Austin Dobson, Mr. Saintsbury, Mr Walter

Pollock, knew him well. The best portrait of Mr. Stevenson that I know is by Sir. W. B. Richmond, R.A., and is in that gentleman's collection of contemporaries, with the effigies of Mr. Holman Hunt, Mr. William Morris, Mr. Browning, and others. It is unfinished, owing to an illness which stopped the sittings, and does not show the subject at his best, physically speaking. There is also a brilliant, slight sketch, almost a caricature, by Mr. Sargent. It represents Mr. Stevenson walking about the room in conversation.

The people I have named, or some of them, knew Mr. Stevenson more intimately than I can boast of doing. Unlike each other, opposites in a dozen ways, we always were united by the love of letters, and of Scotland, our dear country. He was a patriot, yet he spoke his mind quite freely about Burns, about that apparent want of heart in the poet's amours, which our countrymen do not care to hear mentioned. Well, perhaps, for some reasons, it had to be mentioned once, and so no more of it.

Mr. Stevenson possessed, more than any man I ever met, the power of making other men fall in love with him. I mean that he excited a passionate admiration and affection, so much so that I verily believe some men were jealous of other men's place in his liking. I once met a stranger who, having become acquainted with him, spoke of him with a touching fondness and pride, his fancy reposing, as it seemed, in a fond contemplation of so much genius and charm. What was so taking in him? and how is one to analyse that dazzling surface of pleasantry, that changeful shining humour, wit, wisdom, recklessness; beneath which beat the most kind and tolerant of hearts?

People were fond of him, and people were proud of him: his achievements, as it were, sensibly raised their pleasure in the world, and, to them, became parts of themselves. They warmed their hands at that centre of light and heat. It is not every success which has these beneficent results. We see the successful sneered at, decried, insulted, even when success is deserved. Very little of all this, hardly aught of all this, I think, came in Mr. Stevenson's way. After the beginning (when the praises of his earliest admirers were irritating to dull scribes) he found the critics fairly kind, I believe, and often enthusiastic. He was so much his own severest critic that he probably paid little heed to professional reviewers. In addition to his "Rathillet," and other MSS. which he destroyed, he once, in the Highlands, long ago, lost a portmanteau with a batch of his writings. Alas, that he should have lost or burned anything! "King's chaff," says our country proverb, "is better than other folk's corn."

I have remembered very little, or very little that I can write, and about our last meeting, when he was so near death, in appearance, and so full of courage — how can I speak? His courage was a strong rock, not to be taken or subdued.

When unable to utter a single word, his pencilled remarks to his attendants were pithy and extremely characteristic. This courage and spiritual vitality made one hope that he would, if he desired it, live as long as Voltaire, that reed among oaks. There were of course, in so rare a combination of characteristics, some which were not equally to the liking of all. He was highly original in costume, but, as his photographs are familiar, the point does not need elucidation. Life was a drama to him, and he delighted, like his own British admirals, to do things with a certain air. He observed himself, I used to think, as he observed others, and "saw himself" in every part he played. There was nothing of the *cabotin* in this self-consciousness; it was the unextinguished childish passion for "playing at things" which remained with him. I have a theory that all children possess genius, and that it dies out in the generality of mortals, abiding only with people whose genius the world is forced to recognise. Mr. Stevenson illustrates, and perhaps partly suggested, this private philosophy of mine.

I have said very little; I have no skill in reminiscences, no art to bring the living aspect of the man before those who never knew him. I faintly seem to see the eager face, the light nervous figure, the fingers busy with rolling cigarettes; Mr. Stevenson talking, listening, often rising from his seat, standing, walking to and fro, always full of vivid intelligence, wearing a mysterious smile. I remember one pleasant dark afternoon, when he told me many tales of strange adventures, narratives which he had heard about a murderous lonely inn, somewhere in the States. He was as good to hear as to read. I do not recollect much of that delight in discussion, in controversy, which he shows in his essay on conversation, where he describes, I believe, Mr. Henley as "Burley," and Mr. Symonds as "Opalstein." He had great pleasure in the talk of the late Professor Fleeming Jenkin, which was both various and copious. But in these *noctes coenaeque deum* I was never a partaker. In many topics, such as angling, golf, cricket, whereon I am willingly diffuse, Mr. Stevenson took no interest. He was very fond of boating and sailing in every kind; he hazarded his health by long expeditions among the fairy isles of ocean, but he "was not a British sportsman," though for his measure of strength a good pedestrian, a friend of the open air, and of all who live and toil therein.

As to his literary likings, they appear in his own confessions. He revelled in Dickens, but, about Thackeray — well, I would rather have talked to somebody else! To my amazement, he was of those (I think) who find Thackeray "cynical." "He takes you into a garden, and then pelts you with" — horrid things! Mr. Stevenson, on the other hand, had a free admiration of Mr. George Meredith. He did not so easily forgive the *longueus* and lazinesses of Scott, as a Scot should do. He read French much; Greek only in translations.

Literature was, of course, his first love, but he was actually an advocate at the Scottish Bar, and, as such, had his name on a brazen door-plate. Once he was a competitor for a Chair of Modern History in Edinburgh University; he knew the romantic side of Scottish history very well. In his novel, "Catriona," the character of James Mohr Macgregor is wonderfully divined. Once I read some unpublished letters of Catriona's unworthy father, written when he was selling himself as a spy (and lying as he spied) to the Hanoverian usurper. Mr. Stevenson might have written these letters for James Mohr; they might be extracts from "Catriona."

In turning over old Jacobite pamphlets, I found a forgotten romance of Prince Charles's hidden years, and longed that Mr. Stevenson should retell it. There was a treasure, an authentic treasure; there were real spies, a real assassin; a real, or reported, rescue of a lovely girl from a fire at Strasbourg, by the Prince. The tale was to begin *sur le pont d'Avignon*: a young Scotch exile watching the Rhone, thinking how much of it he could cover with a salmon fly, thinking of the Tay or Beauly. To him enter another shady tramping exile, Blairthwaite, a murderer. And so it was to run on, as the author's fancy might lead him, with Alan Breck and the Master for characters. At last, in unpublished MSS. I found an actual Master of Ballantrae, a Highland chief — noble, majestically handsome — and a paid spy of England! All these papers I sent out to Samoa, too late. The novel was to have been dedicated to me, and that chance of immortality is gone, with so much else.

Mr. Stevenson's last letters to myself were full of his concern for a common friend of ours, who was very ill. Depressed himself, Mr. Stevenson wrote to this gentleman — why should I not mention Mr. James Payn? — with consoling gaiety. I attributed his depression to any cause but his own health, of which he rarely spoke. He lamented the "ill-staged fifth act of life"; he, at least, had no long hopeless years of diminished force to bear.

I have known no man in whom the pre-eminently manly virtues of kindness, courage, sympathy, generosity, helpfulness, were more beautifully conspicuous than in Mr. Stevenson, no man so much loved — it is not too strong a word — by so many and such various people. He was as unique in character as in literary genius.

CHAPTER III: RAB'S FRIEND

To say what ought to be said concerning Dr. John Brown, a man should have known him well and long, and should remember much of that old generation of Scotchmen to whom the author of "Rab and his Friends" belonged. But that generation has departed. One by one these wits and scholars of the North, these *epigoni* who were not, indeed, of the heroes, but who had seen and remembered Scott and Wilson, have passed away. Aytoun and Carlyle and Dr. Burton, and last, Dr. Brown, are gone. Sir Theodore Martin alone is left. In her memoir of Dr. Burton — the historian of Scotland, and author of "The Book-hunter" — Mrs. Burton remarks that, in her husband's later days, only Dr. John Brown and Professor Blackie remained of all her husband's ancient friends and coevals, of all who remembered Lockhart, and Hogg, and their times. But many are left who knew Dr. Brown far better and more intimately than the author of this notice. I can hardly say when I first became acquainted with him, probably it was in my childhood. Ever since I was a boy, certainly, I used to see him at intervals, especially in the Christmas vacations. But he seldom moved from Edinburgh, except in summer, which he frequently passed in the country house of certain friends of his, whose affection made much of the happiness of his latest years, and whose unfailing kindness attended him in his dying hours. Living always in Scotland, Dr. Brown was seen but rarely by his friends who resided in England. Thus, though Dr. Brown's sweetness of disposition and charm of manner, his humour, and his unfailing sympathy and encouragement, made one feel toward him as to a familiar friend, yet, of his actual life I saw but little, and have few reminiscences to contribute. One can only speak of that singular geniality of his, that temper of goodness and natural tolerance and affection, which, as Scotsmen best know, is not universal among the Scots. Our race does not need to pray, like the mechanic in the story, that Providence will give us "a good conceit of ourselves." But we must acknowledge that the Scotch temper is critical if not captious, argumentative, inclined to look at the seamy side of men and of their performances, and to dwell on imperfections rather than on merits and virtues. An example of these blemishes of the Scotch disposition, carried to an extreme degree in the nature of a man of genius, is offered to the world in the writings and "Reminiscences" of Mr. Carlyle.

Now, Dr. John Brown was at the opposite pole of feeling. He had no mawkish toleration of things and people intolerable, but he preferred not to turn his mind that way. His thoughts were with the good, the wise, the modest, the learned, the brave of times past, and he was eager to catch a reflection of their qualities in the characters of the living, of all with whom he came into contact. He was, for example, almost optimistic in his estimate of the work of young people in art or literature. From everything that was beautiful or good, from a summer day by the Tweed, or from the eyes of a child, or from the humorous saying of a friend, or from treasured memories of old Scotch worthies, from recollections of his own childhood, from experience of the stoical heroism of the poor, he seemed to extract matter for pleasant thoughts of men and the world, and nourishment for his own great and gentle nature. I have never known any man to whom other men seemed so dear — men dead, and men living. He gave his genius to knowing them, and to making them better known, and his unselfishness thus became not only a great personal virtue, but a great literary charm. When you met him, he had some "good story" or some story of goodness to tell — for both came alike to him, and his humour was as unfailing as his kindness. There was in his face a singular charm, blended, as it were, of the expressions of mirth and of patience. Being most sensitive to pain, as well as to pleasure, he was an exception to that rule of Rochefoucauld's— "*nous avons tous assez de force pour supporter les maux d'autrui*."

He did not bear easily the misfortunes of others, and the evils of his own lot were heavy enough. They saddened him; but neither illness, nor his poignant anxiety for others, could sour a nature so unselfish. He appeared not to have lost that anodyne and consolation of religious hope, which had been the strength of his forefathers, and was his best inheritance from a remarkable race of Scotsmen. Wherever he came, he was welcome; people felt glad when they had encountered him in the streets — the streets of Edinburgh, where almost every one knows every one by sight — and he was at least as joyously received by the children and the dogs as by the grown-up people of every family. A friend has kindly shown me a letter in which it is told how Dr. Brown's love of dogs, his interest in a half-blind old Dandy which was attached to him, was evinced in the very last hours of his life. But enough has been said, in general terms, about the character of "the beloved physician," as Dr. Brown was called in Edinburgh, and a brief account may be given, in some detail, of his life and ways.

Dr. John Brown was born in Biggar, one of the gray, slaty-looking little towns in the pastoral moorlands of southern Scotland. These towns have no great beauty that they should be admired by strangers, but the natives, as Scott said to Washington Irving, are attached to their "gray hills," and to the Tweed, so beautiful where man's greed does not pollute it, that the Border people are all in love with it, as Tyro, in Homer, loved the divine Enipeus. We hold it "far the fairest of the floods that run upon the earth." How dear the border scenery was to Dr. John Brown, and how well he knew and could express its legendary magic, its charm woven of countless ancient spells, the music of old ballads, the sorcery of old stories, may be understood by readers of his essay on "Minchmoor." The father of Dr. Brown was the third in a lineage of ministers of the sect called Seceders. To explain who the Seceders were, it would be necessary to explore the sinking morasses of Scotch ecclesiastical history. The minister was proud of being not only a "Seceder" but a "Burgher." He inherited, to be brief, the traditions of a most spiritually-minded and most spirited set of men, too much bent, it may appear to us, on establishing delicate distinctions of opinions, but certainly most true to themselves and to their own ideals of liberty and of faith. Dr. Brown's great-grandfather had been a shepherd boy, who taught himself Greek that he might read the New Testament; who walked twenty-four miles — leaving his folded sheep in the night — to buy the precious volume in St. Andrews, and who, finally, became a teacher of much repute among his own people. Of Dr. Brown's father, he himself wrote a most touching and beautiful account in his "Letter to John Cairns, D.D." This essay contains, perhaps, the very finest passages that the author ever penned. His sayings about his own childhood remind one of the manner of Lamb, without that curious fantastic touch which is of the essence of Lamb's style. The following lines, for example, are a revelation of childish psychology, and probably may be applied, with almost as much truth, to the childhood of our race: —

"Children are long of seeing, or at least of looking at what is above them; they like the ground, and its flowers and stones, its 'red sodgers' and lady-birds, and all its queer things; *their world is about three feet high*, and they are more often stooping than gazing up. I know I was past ten before I saw, or cared to see, the ceilings of the rooms in the manse at Biggar."

I have often thought that the earliest fathers of our race, child-like in so many ways, were child-like in this, and worshipped, not the phenomena of the heavens, but objects more on a level with their eyes — the "queer things" of their low-lying world. In this essay on his father, Dr. Brown has written lines about a child's first knowledge of death, which seem as noteworthy as Steele's famous passage about his father's death and his own half-conscious grief and anger. Dr. Brown describes a Scottish funeral — the funeral of his own mother — as he saw it with the eyes of a boy of five years old, while his younger brother, a baby of a few months —

"leaped up and crowed with joy at the strange sight — the crowding horsemen, the coaches, and the nodding plumes of the hearse . . . Then, to my surprise and alarm, the coffin, resting on its bearers, was placed over the dark hole, and I watched with curious eye the unrolling of those neat black bunches of cords, which I have often enough seen since. My father took the one at the head, and also another much smaller, springing from the same point as his, which he had caused to be placed there, and unrolling it, put it into my hand. I twisted it firmly round my fingers, and awaited the result; the burial men with their real ropes lowered the coffin, and when it rested at the bottom it was too far down for me to see it. The grave was made very deep, as he used afterwards to tell us, that it might hold us all. My father first and abruptly let his cord drop, followed by the rest. This was too much. I now saw what was meant, and held on and fixed my fist and feet, and I believe my father had some difficulty in forcing open my small fingers; he let the little black cord drop, and I remember, in my misery and anger, seeing its open end disappearing in the gloom."

The man who wrote this, and many another passage as true and tender, might surely have been famous in fiction, if he had turned his powers that way. He had imagination, humour, pathos; he was always studying and observing life; his last volume, especially, is like a collection of fragments that might have gone toward making a work, in some ways not inferior to the romances of Scott. When the third volume of Essays was published, in the spring of his last year, a reviewer, who apparently had no personal knowledge of Dr. Brown, asked why he did not write a novel. He was by that time over seventy years of age, and, though none guessed it, within a few weeks of his death. What he might have done, had he given himself to literature only, it is impossible to guess. But he caused so much happiness, and did so much good, in that gentle profession of healing which he chose, and which brought him near to many who needed consolation more than physic, that we need not forget his deliberate choice. Literature had only his *horae subsecivae*, as he said: *Subseciva quaedam tempora quae ego perire non patior*, as Cicero writes, "shreds and waste ends of time, which I suffer not to be lost."

The kind of life which Dr. Brown's father and his people lived at Biggar, the austere life of work, and of thought intensely bent on the real aim of existence, on God, on the destiny of the soul, is perhaps rare now, even in rural Scotland. We are less obedient than of old to the motto of that ring found on Magus Moor, where Archbishop Shairp was murdered, *Remember upon Dethe*. If any reader has not yet made the acquaintance of Dr. Brown's works, one might counsel him to begin with the "Letter to John Cairns, D.D.," the fragment of biography and autobiography, the description of the fountainheads from which the genius of the author flowed. In his early boyhood, John Brown was educated by his father, a man who, from his son's affectionate description, seems to have confined a fiery and romantic genius within the channels of Seceder and Burgher theology. When the father received a call to the "Rose Street Secession Church," in Edinburgh, the son became a pupil of that ancient Scottish seminary, the High School — the school where Scott was taught not much Latin and no Greek worth mentioning. Scott was still alive and strong in those days, and Dr. Brown describes how he and his school companions would take off their hats to the Shirra as he passed in the streets.

"Though lame, he was nimble, and all rough and alive with power; had you met him anywhere else, you would say he was a Liddesdale store farmer, come of gentle blood— 'a stout, blunt carle,' as he says of himself, with the swing and stride and the eye of a man of the hills — a large, sunny, out-of-door air all about him. On his broad and stooping shoulders was set that head which, with Shakespeare's and Bonaparte's, is the best known in all the world." Scott was then living in 39 Castle Street. I do not know whether the many pilgrims, whom one meets moving constantly in the direction of Melrose and Abbotsford, have thought of making pilgrimage to Castle Street, and to the grave, there, of Scott's "dear old friend," — his dog Camp. Of Dr. Brown's schoolboy days, one knows little — days when "Bob Ainslie and I were coming up Infirmary Street from the High School, our heads together, and our arms intertwisted, as only lovers and boys know how or why." Concerning the doctor's character, he has left it on record that he liked a dog-fight. "'A dog-fight,' shouted Bob, and was off, and so was I, both of us all hot, praying that it might not be over before we were up . . . Dogs like fighting; old Isaac (Watts, not Walton) says they 'delight' in it, and for the best of all reasons; and boys are not cruel because they like to see the fight. This is a very different thing from a love of making dogs fight." And this was the most famous of all dog-fights — since the old Irish Brehons settled the laws of that sport, and gravely decided what was to be done if a child interfered, or an idiot, or a woman, or a one-eyed man — for this was the dog-fight in which Rab first was introduced to his historian.

Six years passed after this battle, and Dr. Brown was a medical student and a clerk at Minto Hospital. How he renewed his acquaintance there, and in what sad circumstances, with Rab and his friends, it is superfluous to tell, for every one who reads at all has read that story, and most readers not without tears. As a medical student in Edinburgh, Dr. Brown made the friendship of Mr. Syme, the famous surgeon — a friendship only closed by death. I only saw them once together, a very long time ago, and then from the point of view of a patient. These occasions are not agreeable, and patients, like the old cock which did not crow when plucked, are apt to be "very much absorbed"; but Dr. Brown's attitude toward the man whom he regarded with the reverence of a disciple, as well as with the affection of a friend, was very remarkable.

When his studies were over, Dr. Brown practised for a year as assistant to a surgeon in Chatham. It must have been when he was at Chatham that a curious event occurred. Many years later, Charles Dickens was in Edinburgh, reading his stories in public, and was dining with some Edinburgh people. Dickens began to speak about the panic which the cholera had caused in England: how ill some people had behaved. As a contrast, he mentioned that, at Chatham, one poor woman had died, deserted by every one except a young physician. Some one, however, ventured to open the door, and found the woman dead, and the young doctor asleep, overcome with the fatigue that mastered him on his patient's death, but quite untouched by the general panic. "Why, that was Dr. John Brown," one of the guests observed; and it seems that, thus early in his career, the doctor had been setting an example of the courage and charity of his profession. After a year spent in Chatham, he returned to Edinburgh, where he spent the rest of his life, busy partly with his art of healing, partly with literature. He lived in Rutland Street, near the railway station, by which Edinburgh is approached from the west, and close to Princes Street, the chief street of the town, separated by a green valley, once a loch, from the high Castle Rock. It was the room in which his friends were accustomed to see Dr. Brown, and a room full of interest it was. In his long life, the doctor had gathered round him many curious relics of artists and men of letters; a drawing of a dog by Turner I remember particularly, and a copy of "Don Juan," in the first edition, with Byron's manuscript notes. Dr. Brown had a great love and knowledge of art and of artists, from Turner to Leech; and he had very many friends among men of letters, such as Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Thackeray. Dr. Brown himself was a clever designer of rapid little grotesques, rough sketches of dogs and men. One or two of them are engraved in the little paper-covered booklets in which some of his essays were separately published — booklets which he was used to present to people who came to see him and who were interested in all that he did. I remember some vivacious grotesques which he drew for one of my brothers when we were schoolboys. These little things were carefully treasured by boys who knew Dr. Brown, and found him friendly, and capable of sustaining a conversation on the points of a Dandy Dinmont terrier and other mysteries important to youth. He was a bibliophile — a taste which he inherited from his father, who "began collecting books when he was twelve, and was collecting to his last hours."

The last time I ever saw Dr. Brown, a year before his death, he was kind enough to lend me one of the rarest of his treasures, "Poems," by Mr. Ruskin. Probably Mr. Ruskin had presented the book to his old friend; in no other way were it easy to procure writings which the author withdrew from publication, if, indeed, they ever were, properly speaking, published. Thus Dr. Brown was all things to all men, and to all boys. He “had a word for every one,” as poor people say, and a word to the point, for he was as much at home with the shepherd on the hills, or with the angler between Hollylea and Clovenfords, as with the dusty book-hunter, or the doggy young Border yeoman, or the child who asked him to “draw her a picture,” or the friend of genius famous through all the world, Thackeray, when he “spoke, as he seldom did, of divine things.”

Three volumes of essays are all that Dr. Brown has left in the way of compositions: a light, but imperishable literary baggage. His studies are usually derived from personal experience, which he reproduced with singular geniality and simplicity, or they are drawn from the tradition of the elders, the reminiscences of long-lived Scotch people, who, themselves, had listened attentively to those who went before them. Since Scott, these ancient ladies with wonderful memories have had no such attentive listener or appreciative reporter as Dr. Brown. His paper called “Mystifications,” a narrative of the pranks of Miss Stirling Graham, is a brief, vivid record of the clever and quaint society of Scotland sixty years ago. Scotland, or at least Scottish society, is now only English society — a little narrower, a little prouder, sometimes even a little duller. But old people of position spoke the old Scotch tongue sixty years ago, and were full of wonderful genealogies, full of reminiscences of the “‘45,” and the adventures of the Jacobites. The very last echoes of that ancient world are dying now from memory, like the wide reverberations of that gun which Miss Nelly MacWilliam heard on the day when Prince Charles landed, and which resounded strangely all through Scotland.

The children of this generation, one fears, will hardly hear of these old raids and duels, risings and rebellions, by oral tradition handed down, unbroken, through aunts and grandmothers. Scott reaped a full, late harvest of the memories of clannish and feudal Scotland; Dr. Brown came as a later gleaner, and gathered these stirring tales of “A Jacobite Family” which are published in the last volume of his essays. When he was an observer, not a hearer only, Dr. Brown chiefly studied and best wrote of the following topics: passages and characters of humour and pathos which he encountered in his life and profession; children, dogs, Border scenery, and fellow-workers in life and science. Under one or other of these categories all his best compositions might be arranged. The most famous and most exquisite of all his works in the first class is the unrivalled “Rab and his Friends” — a study of the stoicism and tenderness of the Lowland character worthy of Scott. In a minor way the little paper on “Jeems,” the door-keeper in a Dissenting house of the Lord, is interesting to Scotch people, though it must seem a rather curious revelation to all others. "Her last Half-crown" is another study of the honesty that survived in a starving and outcast Scotch girl, when all other virtues, as we commonly reckon virtue, had gone before her character to some place where, let us hope, they may rejoin her; for if we are to suffer for the vices which have abandoned us, may we not get some credit for the virtues that we have abandoned, but that once were ours, in some heaven paved with bad resolutions unfulfilled? "The Black Dwarf's Bones" is a sketch of the misshapen creature from whom Scott borrowed the character that gives a name to one of his minor Border stories. The real Black Dwarf (David Ritchie he was called among men) was fond of poetry, but hated Burns. He was polite to the fair, but classed mankind at large with his favourite aversions: ghosts, fairies, and robbers. There was this of human about the Black Dwarf, that "he hated folk that are aye gaun to dee, and never do't." The village beauties were wont to come to him for a Judgment of Paris on their charms, and he presented each with a flower, which was of a fixed value in his standard of things beautiful. One kind of rose, the prize of the most fair, he only gave thrice. Paris could not have done his dooms more courteously, and, if he had but made judicious use of rose, lily, and lotus, as prizes, he might have pleased all the three Goddesses; Troy still might be standing, and the lofty house of King Priam.

Among Dr. Brown's papers on children, that called "Pet Marjorie" holds the highest place. Perhaps certain passages are "wrote too sentimentally," as Marjorie Fleming herself remarked about the practice of many authors. But it was difficult to be perfectly composed when speaking of this wonderful fairy-like little girl, whose affection was as warm as her humour and genius were precocious. "Infant phenomena" are seldom agreeable, but Marjorie was so humorous, so quick-tempered, so kind, that we cease to regard her as an intellectual "phenomenon." Her memory remains sweet and blossoming in its dust, like that of little Penelope Boothby, the child in the mob cap whom Sir Joshua painted, and who died very soon after she was thus made Immortal.

It is superfluous to quote from the essay on Marjorie Fleming; every one knows about her and her studies: "Isabella is teaching me to make simme colings, nots of interrigations, peorids, commoes, &c." Here is a Shakespearian criticism, of which few will deny the correctness: "'Macbeth' is a pretty composition, but awful one." Again, "I never read sermons of any kind, but I read novelettes and my Bible." "'Tom Jones' and Gray's 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard' are both excellent, and much spoke of by both sex, particularly by the men." Her Calvinistic belief in "*unquestionable* fire and brimston" is unhesitating, but the young theologian appears to have substituted "unquestionable" for "unquenchable." There is something humorous in the alteration, as if Marjorie refused to be put off with an "excellent family substitute" for fire and brimstone, and demanded the "unquestionable" article, no other being genuine, please observe trade mark.

Among Dr. Brown's contributions to the humorous study of dogs, "Rab," of course, holds the same place as Marjorie among his sketches of children. But if his "Queen Mary's Child Garden," the description of the little garden in which Mary Stuart did *not* play when a child, is second to "Marjorie," so "Our Dogs" is a good second to "Rab." Perhaps Dr. Brown never wrote anything more mirthful than his description of the sudden birth of the virtue of courage in Toby, a comic but cowardly mongrel, a cur of low degree.

"Toby was in the way of hiding his culinary bones in the small gardens before his own and the neighbouring doors. Mr. Scrymgeour, two doors off, a bulky, choleric, red-faced man — *torvo vultu* — was, by law of contrast, a great cultivator of flowers, and he had often scowled Toby into all but non-existence by a stamp of his foot and a glare of his eye. One day, his gate being open, in walks Toby with a huge bone, and making a hole where Scrymgeour had two minutes before been planting some precious slip, the name of which on paper and on a stick Toby made very light of, substituted his bone, and was engaged covering it, or thinking he was covering it up with his shovelling nose, when S. spied him through the inner glass door, and was out upon him, like the Assyrian, with a terrific *gowl*. I watched them. Instantly Toby made at him with a roar too, and an eye more torve than Scrymgeour's, who, retreating without reserve, fell prostrate, there is reason to believe, in his own lobby. Toby contented himself with proclaiming his victory at the door, and, returning, finished his bone-planting at his leisure; the enemy, who had scuttled behind the glass door, glared at him. From this moment Toby was an altered dog. Pluck at first sight was lord of all . . . That very evening he paid a visit to Leo, next door's dog, a big tyrannical bully and coward . . . To him Toby paid a visit that very evening, down into his den, and walked about, as much as to say, 'Come on, Macduff'; but Macduff did not come on."

This story is one of the most amazing examples of instant change of character on record, and disproves the sceptical remark that "no one was ever converted, except prize-fighters, and colonels in the army." I am sorry to say that Dr. Brown was too fond of dogs to be very much attached to cats. I never heard him say anything against cats, or, indeed, against anybody; but there are passages in his writings which tend to show that, when young and thoughtless, he was not far from regarding cats as "the higher vermin." He tells a story of a Ghazi puss, so to speak, a victorious cat, which, entrenched in a drain, defeated three dogs with severe loss, and finally escaped unharmed from her enemies. Dr. Brown's family gloried in the possession of a Dandy Dinmont named John Pym, whose cousin (Auld Pepper) belonged to one of my brothers. Dr. Brown was much interested in Pepper, a dog whose family pride was only matched by that of the mother of Candide, and, at one time, threatened to result in the extinction of this branch of the House of Pepper. Dr. Brown had remarked, and my own observations confirm it, that when a Dandy is not game, his apparent lack of courage arises "from kindness of heart."

Among Dr. Brown's landscapes, as one may call his descriptions of scenery, and of the ancient historical associations with Scotch scenery, "Minchmoor" is the most important. He had always been a great lover of the Tweed. The walk which he commemorates in "Minchmoor" was taken, if I am not mistaken, in company with Principal Shairp, Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, and author of one of the most beautiful of Tweedside songs, a modern "Bush aboon Traquair:" —

   "And what saw ye there,
   At the bush aboon Traquair;
Or what did ye hear that was worth your heed?
   I heard the cushie croon
   Thro' the gowden afternoon,
And the Quair burn singing doon to the vale o' Tweed."

There is in the country of Scott no pleasanter walk than that which Dr. Brown took in the summer afternoon. Within a few miles, many places famous in history and ballad may be visited: the road by which Montrose's men fled from Philiphaugh fight; Traquair House, with the bears on its gates, as on the portals of the Baron of Bradwardine; Williamhope, where Scott and Mungo Park, the African explorer, parted and went their several ways. From the crest of the road you see all the Border hills, the Maiden Paps, the Eildons cloven in three, the Dunion, the Windburg, and so to the distant Cheviots, and Smailholm Tower, where Scott lay when a child, and clapped his hands at the flashes of the lightning, *haud sine Dis animosus infans*, like Horace.

From the crest of the hill you follow Dr. Brown into the valley of Yarrow, and the deep black pools, now called the "dowie dens," and so, "through the pomp of cultivated nature," as Wordsworth says, to the railway at Selkirk, passing the plain where Janet won back Tamlane from the queen of the fairies. All this country was familiar to Dr. Brown, and on one of the last occasions when I met him, he was living at Hollylea, on the Tweed, just above Ashestiel, Scott's home while he was happy and prosperous, before he had the unhappy thought of building Abbotsford. At the time I speak of, Dr. Brown had long ceased to write, and his health suffered from attacks of melancholy, in which the world seemed very dark to him. I have been allowed to read some letters which he wrote in one of these intervals of depression. With his habitual unselfishness, he kept his melancholy to himself, and, though he did not care for society at such times, he said nothing of his own condition that could distress his correspondent. In the last year of his life, everything around him seemed to brighten: he was unusually well, he even returned to his literary work, and saw his last volume of collected essays through the press. They were most favourably received, and the last letters which I had from him spoke of the pleasure which this success gave him. Three editions of his book ("John Leech, and Other Essays") were published in some six weeks. All seemed to go well, and one might even have hoped that, with renewed strength, he would take up his pen again. But his strength was less than we had hoped. A cold settled on his lungs, and, in spite of the most affectionate nursing, he grew rapidly weaker. He had little suffering at the end, and his mind remained unclouded. No man of letters could be more widely regretted, for he was the friend of all who read his books, as, even to people who only met him once or twice in life, he seemed to become dear and familiar.

In one of his very latest writings, "On Thackeray's Death," Dr. Brown told people (what some of them needed, and still need to be told) how good, kind, and thoughtful for others was our great writer — our greatest master of fiction, I venture to think, since Scott. Some of the lines Dr. Brown wrote of Thackerary might be applied to himself: "He looked always fresh, with that abounding silvery hair, and his young, almost infantile face" — a face very pale, and yet radiant, in his last years, and mildly lit up with eyes full of kindness, and softened by sorrow. In his last year, Mr. Swinburne wrote to Dr. Brown this sonnet, in which there seems something of the poet's prophetic gift, and a voice sounds as of a welcome home: —

"Beyond the north wind lay the land of old,
   Where men dwelt blithe and blameless, clothed and fed
   With joy's bright raiment, and with love's sweet bread, —
The whitest flock of earth's maternal fold,
None there might wear about his brows enrolled
   A light of lovelier fame than rings your head,
   Whose lovesome love of children and the dead
All men give thanks for; I, far off, behold

A dear dead hand that links us, and a light
The blithest and benignest of the night, —
   The night of death’s sweet sleep, wherein may be
A star to show your spirit in present sight
   Some happier isle in the Elysian sea
   Where Rab may lick the hand of Marjorie.”

CHAPTER IV: OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Never but once did I enjoy the privilege of meeting the author of “Elsie Venner” — Oliver Wendell Holmes. It was at a dinner given by Mr. Lowell, and of conversation with Dr. Holmes I had very little. He struck me as being wonderfully erect, active, and vivacious for his great age. He spoke (perhaps I should not chronicle this impression) — he spoke much, and freely, but rather as if he were wound up to speak, so to say — wound up, I mean, by a sense of duty to himself and kindness to strangers, who were naturally curious about so well-known a man. In his aspect there was a certain dryness, and, altogether, his vivacity, his ceaselessness, and a kind of equability of tone in his voice, reminded me of what Homer says concerning the old men around Priam, above the gate of Troy, how they “chirped like cicalas on a summer day.” About the matter of his talk I remember nothing, only the manner remains with me, and mine may have been a false impression, or the manner may have been accidental, and of the moment: or, again, a manner appropriate for conversation with strangers, each coming up one after the other, to view respectfully so great a lion. Among his friends and intimates he was probably a different man, with a tone other and more reposeful.

He had a long, weary task before him, then, to talk his way, ever courteous, alert, attentive, through part of a London season. Yet, when it was all over, he seems to have enjoyed it, being a man who took pleasure in most sorts of experience. He did not affect me, for that one time, with such a sense of pleasure as Mr. Lowell did — Mr. Lowell, whom I knew so much better, and who was so big, strong, humorous, kind, learned, friendly, and delightfully natural.

Dr. Holmes, too, was a delightful companion, and I have merely tried to make a sort of photographic “snap-shot” at him, in a single casual moment, one of myriads of such moments. Turning to Dr. Holmes’s popular, as distinct from his professional writings, one is reminded, as one often is, of the change which seems to come over some books as the reader grows older. Many books are to one now what they always were; some, like the Waverley novels and Shakespeare, grow better on every fresh reading. There are books which filled me, in boyhood or in youth, with a sort of admiring rapture, and a delighted wonder at their novelty, their strangeness, freshness, greatness. Thus Homer, and the best novels of Thackeray, and of Fielding, the plays of Molière and

Shakespeare, the poems of — well, of all the real poets, moved this astonishment of admiration, and being read again, they move it still. On a different level, one may say as much about books so unlike each other, as those of Poe and of Sir Thomas Browne, of Swift and of Charles Lamb.

There are, again, other books which caused this happy emotion of wonder, when first perused, long since, but which do so no longer. I am not much surprised to find Charles Kingsley's novels among them.

In the case of Dr. Holmes's books, I am very sensible of this disenchanting effect of time and experience. "The Professor at the Breakfast Table" and the novels came into my hands when I was very young, in "green, unknowing youth." They seemed extraordinary, new, fantasies of wisdom and wit; the reflections were such as surprised me by their depth, the illustrations dazzled by their novelty and brilliance. Probably they will still be as fortunate with young readers, and I am to be pitied, I hope, rather than blamed, if I cannot, like the wise thrush —

”Recapture
The first fine careless rapture."

By this time, of course, one understands many of the constituents of Dr. Holmes's genius, the social, historical, ancestral, and professional elements thereof. Now, it is the business of criticism to search out and illustrate these antecedents, and it seems a very odd and unlucky thing, that the results of this knowledge when acquired, should sometimes be a partial disenchantment. But we are not disenchanted at all by this kind of science, when the author whom we are examining is a great natural genius, like Shakespeare or Shelley, Keats or Scott. Such natures bring to the world far more than they receive, as far as our means of knowing what they receive are concerned. The wind of the spirit that is not of this earth, nor limited by time and space, breathes through their words, and thoughts, and deeds. They are not mere combinations, however deft and subtle, of *known* atoms. They must continually delight, and continually surprise; custom cannot stale them; like the heaven-born Laws in Sophocles, age can never lull them to sleep. Their works, when they are authors, never lose hold on our fancy and our interest.

As far as my own feelings and admiration can inform me, Dr. Holmes, though a most interesting and amiable and kindly man and writer, was not of this class. As an essayist, a delineator of men and morals, an unassuming philosopher, with a light, friendly wit, he certainly does not hold one as, for example, Addison does. The old *Spectator* makes me smile, pleases, tickles, diverts me now, even more than when I lay on the grass and read it by Tweedside, as a boy, when the trout were sluggish, in the early afternoon. It is only a personal fact that Dr. Holmes, read in the same old seasons, with so much pleasure and admiration and surprise, no longer affects me in the old way. Carlyle, on the other hand, in his "Frederick," which used to seem rather long, now entertains me far more than ever. But I am well aware that this is a mere subjective estimate; that Dr. Holmes may really be as great a genius as I was wont to think him, for criticism is only a part of our impressions. The opinion of mature experience, as a rule, ought to be sounder than that of youth; in this case I cannot but think that it is sounder.

Dr. Holmes was a New Englander, and born in what he calls "the Brahmin caste," the class which, in England, before the sailing of the *May Flower*, and ever since, had always been literary and highly educated. "I like books; I was born and bred among them," he says, "and have the easy feeling, when I get into their presence, that a stable-boy has among horses." He is fond of books, and, above all, of old books — strange, old medical works, for example — full of portents and prodigies, such as those of Wierus.

New England, owing to its famous college, Harvard, and its steady maintenance of the literary and learned tradition among the clergy, was, naturally, the home of the earliest great American school of writers. These men — Longfellow, Lowell, Ticknor, Prescott, Hawthorne, and so many others — had all received the same sort of education as Europeans of letters used to receive. They had not started as printers' devils, or newspaper reporters, or playwrights for the stage, but were academic. It does not matter much how a genius begins — as a rural butcher, or an apothecary, or a clerk of a Writer to the Signet. Still, the New Englanders were academic and classical. New England has, by this time, established a tradition of its literary origin and character. Her children are sons of the Puritans, with their independence, their narrowness, their appreciation of comfort, their hardiness in doing without it, their singular scruples of conscience, their sense of the awfulness of sin, their accessibility to superstition. We can read of the later New Englanders in the making, among the works of Cotton Mather, his father Increase Mather, and the witch-burning, periwig-hating, doctrinal Judge Sewall, who so manfully confessed and atoned for his mistake about the Salem witches. These men, or many of them, were deeply-learned Calvinists, according to the standard of their day, a day lasting from, say, the Restoration to 1730. Cotton Mather, in particular, is erudite, literary — nay, full of literary vanity — mystical, visionary, credulous to an amusing degree.

But he is really as British as Baxter, or his Scottish correspondent and counterpart, Wodrow. The sons or grandsons of these men gained the War of Independence. Of this they are naturally proud, and the circumstance is not infrequently mentioned in Dr. Holmes's works. Their democracy is not roaring modern democracy, but that of the cultivated middle classes. Their stern Calvinism slackened into many "isms," but left a kind of religiosity behind it. One of Dr. Holmes's mouthpieces sums up his whole creed in the two words *Pater Noster*. All these hereditary influences are consciously made conspicuous in Dr. Holmes's writings, as in Hawthorne's. In Hawthorne you see the old horror of sin, the old terror of conscience, the old dread of witchcraft, the old concern about conduct, converted into æsthetic sources of literary pleasure, of literary effects.

As a physician and a man of science, Dr. Holmes added abundant knowledge of the new sort; and apt, unexpected bits of science made popular, analogies and illustrations afforded by science are frequent in his works. Thus, in "Elsie Venner," and in "The Guardian Angel," "heredity" is his theme. He is always brooding over the thought that each of us is so much made up of earlier people, our ancestors, who bequeath to us so many disagreeable things — vice, madness, disease, emotions, tricks of gesture. No doubt these things are bequeathed, but all in such new proportions and relations, that each of us is himself and nobody else, and therefore had better make up his mind to *be* himself, and for himself responsible.

All this doctrine of heredity, still so dimly understood, Dr. Holmes derives from science. But, in passing through his mind, that of a New Englander conscious of New England's past, science takes a stain of romance and superstition. Elsie Venner, through an experience of her mother's, inherits the nature of the serpent, so the novel is as far from common life as the tale of "Mélusine," or any other echidna. The fantasy has its setting in a commonplace New England environment, and thus recalls a Hawthorne less subtle and concentrated, but much more humorous. The heroine of the "Guardian Angel," again, exposes a character in layers, as it were, each stratum of consciousness being inherited from a different ancestor — among others, a red Indian. She has many personalities, like the queer women we read about in French treatises on hysterics and nervous diseases. These stories are "fairy tales of science," by a man of science, who is also a humourist, and has a touch of the poet, and of the old fathers who were afraid of witches. The "blend" is singular enough, and not without its originality of fascination.

Though a man of science Dr. Holmes apparently took an imaginative pleasure in all shapes of superstition that he could muster. I must quote a passage from "The Professor at the Breakfast Table," as peculiarly illustrative of his method, and his ways of half accepting the abnormally romantic — accepting just enough for pleasure, like Sir Walter Scott. Connected with the extract is a curious anecdote.

"I think I am a little superstitious. There were two things, when I was a boy, that diabolised my imagination, — I mean, that gave me a distinct apprehension of a formidable bodily shape which prowled round the neighbourhood where I was born and bred. The first was a series of marks called the 'Devil's footsteps.' These were patches of sand in the pastures, where no grass grew, where even the low-bush blackberry, the 'dewberry,' as our Southern neighbours call it, in prettier and more Shakespearian language, did not spread its clinging creepers, where even the pale, dry, sadly-sweet 'everlasting' could not grow, but all was bare and blasted. The second was a mark in one of the public buildings near my home, — the college dormitory named after a Colonial Governor. I do not think many persons are aware of the existence of this mark, — little having been said about the story in print, as it was considered very desirable, for the sake of the Institution, to hush it up. In the north-west corner, and on the level of the third or fourth storey, there are signs of a breach in the walls, mended pretty well, but not to be mistaken. A considerable portion of that corner must have been carried away, from within outward. It was an unpleasant affair, and I do not care to repeat the particulars; but some young men had been using sacred things in a profane and unlawful way, when the occurrence, which was variously explained, took place. The story of the Appearance in the chamber was, I suppose, invented afterwards; but of the injury to the building there could be no question; and the zigzag line, where the mortar is a little thicker than before, is still distinctly visible.

"The queer burnt spots, called the 'Devil's footsteps,' had never attracted attention before this time, though there is no evidence that they had not existed previously, except that of the late Miss M., a 'Goody,' so called, who was positive on the subject, but had a strange horror of referring to an affair of which she was thought to know something . . . I tell you it was not so pleasant for a little boy of impressible nature to go up to bed in an old gambrel-roofed house, with untenanted locked upper chambers, and a most ghostly garret, — with 'Devil's footsteps' in the fields behind the house, and in front of it the patched dormitory, where the unexplained occurrence had taken place which startled those godless youths at their mock devotions, so that one of them was epileptic from that day forward, and another, after a dreadful season of mental conflict, took to religion, and became renowned for his ascetic sanctity."

It is a pity that Dr. Holmes does not give the whole story, instead of hinting at it, for a similar tale is told at Brazenose College, and elsewhere. Now take, along with Dr. Holmes's confession to a grain of superstition, this remark on, and explanation of, the curious coincidences which thrust themselves on the notice of most people.

"Excuse me, — I return to my story of the Commonstable. Young fellows being always hungry, and tea and dry toast being the meagre fare of the evening meal, it was a trick of some of the boys to impale a slice of meat upon a fork, at dinner-time, and stick the fork, holding it, beneath the table, so that they could get it at tea-time. The dragons that guarded this table of the Hesperides found out the trick at last, and kept a sharp look-out for missing forks; — they knew where to find one, if it was not in its place. Now the odd thing was, that, after waiting so many years to hear of this College trick, I should hear it mentioned a *second time* within the same twenty-four hours by a College youth of the present generation. Strange, but true. And so it has happened to me and to every person, often and often, to be hit in rapid succession by these twinned facts or thoughts, as if they were linked like chain-shot.

"I was going to leave the simple reader to wonder over this, taking it as an unexplained marvel. I think, however, I will turn over a furrow of subsoil in it. The explanation is, of course, that in a great many thoughts there must be a few coincidences, and these instantly arrest our attention. Now we shall probably never have the least idea of the enormous number of impressions which pass through our consciousness, until in some future life we see the photographic record of our thoughts and the stereoscopic picture of our actions.

"Now, my dear friends, who are putting your hands to your foreheads, and saying to yourselves that you feel a little confused, as if you had been waltzing until things began to whirl slightly round you, is it possible that you do not clearly apprehend the exact connection of all I have been saying, and its bearing on what is now to come? Listen, then. The number of these living elements in our bodies illustrates the incalculable multitude of our thoughts; the number of our thoughts accounts for those frequent coincidences spoken of; these coincidences in the world of thought illustrate those which we constantly observe in the world of outward events."

Now for the anecdote — one of Mark Twain's.

Some years ago, Mark Twain published in *Harper's Magazine* an article on "Mental Telegraphy." He illustrated his meaning by a story of how he once wrote a long letter on a complicated subject, which had popped into his head between asleep and awake, to a friend on the other side of America. He did not send the letter, but, by return of post, received one from his friend. "Now, I'll tell you what he is going to say," said Mark Twain, read his own unsent epistle aloud, and then, opening his friend's despatch, proved that they were essentially identical. This is what he calls “Mental Telegraphy”; others call it “Telepathy,” and the term is merely descriptive.

Now, on his own showing, in our second extract, Dr. Holmes should have explained coincidences like this as purely the work of chance, and I rather incline to think that he would have been right. But Mark Twain, in his article on “Mental Telegraphy,” cites Dr. Holmes for a story of how he once, after dinner, as his letters came in, felt constrained to tell, *à propos des bottes*, the story of the last challenge to judicial combat in England (1817). He then opened a newspaper directed to him from England, the *Sporting Times*, and therein his eyes lighted on an account of this very affair — Abraham Thornton’s challenge to battle when he was accused of murder, in 1817. According to Mark Twain, Dr. Holmes was disposed to accept “Mental Telegraphy” rather than mere chance as the cause of this coincidence. Yet the anecdote of the challenge seems to have been a favourite of his. It occurs in, “The Professor,” in the fifth section. Perhaps he told it pretty frequently; probably that is why the printed version was sent to him; still, he was a little staggered by the coincidence. There was enough of Cotton Mather in the man of science to give him pause.

The form of Dr. Holmes’s best known books, the set concerned with the breakfast-table and “Over the Teacups,” is not very fortunate. Much conversation at breakfast is a weariness of the flesh. We want to eat what is necessary, and then to go about our work or play. If American citizens in a boarding-house could endure these long palavers, they must have been very unlike the hasty feeders caricatured in “Martin Chuzzlewit.” Macaulay may have monologuised thus at his breakfast parties in the Albany; but breakfast parties are obsolete — an unregrettable parcel of things lost. The monologues, or dialogues, were published serially in the *Atlantic Monthly*, but they have had a vitality and a vogue far beyond those of the magazine *causerie*. Some of their popularity they may owe to the description of the other boarders, and to the kind of novel which connects the fortunes of these personages. But it is impossible for an Englishman to know whether these American types are exactly drawn or not. Their fortunes do not strongly interest one, though the “Sculpin” — the patriotic, deformed Bostonian, with his great-great-grandmother’s ring (she was hanged for a witch) — is a very original and singular creation. The real interest lies in the wit, wisdom, and learning. The wit, now and then, seems to-day rather in the nature of a “goak.” One might give examples, but to do so seems ill-natured and ungrateful.

There are some very perishable puns. The learning is not so *recherché* as it appeared when we knew nothing of Cotton Mather and Robert Calef, the author of a book against the persecution of witches. Calef, of course, was in the right, but I cannot forgive him for refusing to see a lady, known to Mr. Mather, who floated about in the air. That she did so was no good reason for hanging or burning a number of parishioners; but, did she float, and, if so, how? Mr. Calef said it would be a miracle, so he declined to view the performance. His logic was thin, though of a familiar description. Of all old things, at all events, Dr. Holmes was fond. He found America scarcely aired, new and raw, devoid of history and of associations. “The Tiber has a voice for me, as it whispers to the piers of the Pons Ælius, even more full of meaning than my well-beloved Charles, eddying round the piles of West Boston Bridge.” No doubt this is a common sentiment among Americans.

Occasionally, like Hawthorne, they sigh for an historical atmosphere, and then, when they come to Europe and get it, they do not like it, and think Schenectady, New York, “a better place.” It is not easy to understand what ailed Hawthorne with Europe; he was extremely caustic in his writings about that continent, and discontented. Our matrons were so stout and placid that they irritated him. Indeed, they are a little heavy in hand, still there are examples of agreeable slimness, even in this poor old country. Fond as he was of the historical past, Mr. Holmes remained loyal to the historical present. He was not one of those Americans who are always censuring England, and always hankering after her. He had none of that irritable feeling, which made a great contemporary of his angrily declare that *he* could endure to hear “Ye Mariners of England” sung, because of his own country’s successes, some time ago. They were gallant and conspicuous victories of the American frigates; we do not grudge them. A fair fight should leave no rancour, above all in the victors, and Dr. Holmes’s withers would have been unwrung by Campbell’s ditty.

He visited England in youth, and fifty years later. On the anniversary of the American defeat at Bunker’s Hill (June 17), Dr. Holmes got his degree in the *old* Cambridge. He received degrees at Edinburgh and at Oxford, in his “Hundred Days in Europe” he says very little about these historic cities. The men at Oxford asked, “Did he come in the ‘One Hoss Shay’?” the name of his most familiar poem in the lighter vein. The whole visit to England pleased and wearied him. He likened it to the *shass caffy* of Mr. Henry Foker — the fillip at the end of the long banquet of life. He went to see the Derby, for he was fond of horses, of racing, and, in a sportsmanlike way, of boxing. He had the great boldness once, *audax juventa*, to write a song in praise of that comfortable creature — wine. The prudery of many Americans about the juice of the grape is a thing very astonishing to a temperate Briton. An admirable author, who wrote an account of the old convivial days of an American city, found that reputable magazines could not accept such a degrading historical record. There was no nonsense about Dr. Holmes. His poems were mainly “occasional” verses for friendly meetings; or humorous, like the celebrated “One Horse Shay.” Of his serious verses, the “Nautilus” is probably too familiar to need quotation; a noble fancy is nobly and tunefully “moralised.” Pleasing, cultivated, and so forth, are adjectives not dear to poets. To say “sublime,” or “magical,” or “strenuous,” of Dr. Holmes’s muse, would be to exaggerate. How far he maintained his scholarship, I am not certain; but it is odd that, in his preface to “The Guardian Angel,” he should quote from “Jonathan Edwards the younger,” a story for which he might have cited Aristotle.

Were I to choose one character out of Dr. Holmes’s creations as my favourite, it would be “a frequent correspondent of his,” and of mine — the immortal Gifted Hopkins. Never was minor poet more kindly and genially portrayed. And if one had to pick out three of his books, as the best worth reading, they would be “The Professor,” “Elsie Venner,” and “The Guardian Angel.” They have not the impeccable art and distinction of “The House of the Seven Gables” and “The Scarlet Letter,” but they combine fantasy with living human interest, and with humour. With Sir Thomas Browne, and Dr. John Brown, and — may we not add Dr. Weir Mitchell? — Dr. Holmes excellently represents the physician in humane letters. He has left a blameless and most amiable memory, unspotted by the world. His works are full of the savour of his native soil, naturally, without straining after “Americanism;” and they are national, not local or provincial. He crossed the great gulf of years, between the central age of American literary production — the time of Hawthorne and Poe — to our own time, and, like Nestor, he reigned among the third generation. As far as the world knows, the shadow of a literary quarrel never fell on him; he was without envy or jealousy, incurious of his own place, never vain, petulant, or severe. He was even too good-humoured, and the worst thing I have heard of him is that he could never say “no” to an autograph hunter.

CHAPTER V: MR. MORRIS’S POEMS

“Enough,” said the pupil of the wise Imlac, “you have convinced me that no man can be a poet.” The study of Mr. William Morris’s poems, in the new collected edition, has convinced me that no man, or, at least, no middle-aged man, can be a critic. I read Mr. Morris’s poems (thanks to the knightly honours conferred on the Bard of Penrhyn, there is now no ambiguity as to ‘Mr. Morris’), but it is not the book only that I read. The scroll of my youth is unfolded. I see the dear place where first I perused “The Blue Closet”; the old faces of old friends flock around me; old chaff, old laughter, old happiness re-echo and revive. St. Andrews, Oxford, come before the mind’s eye, with

”Many a place
That’s in sad case
Where joy was wont afore, oh!”

as Minstrel Burne sings. These voices, faces, landscapes mingle with the music and blur the pictures of the poet who enchanted for us certain hours passed in the paradise of youth. A reviewer who finds himself in this case may as well frankly confess that he can no more criticise Mr. Morris dispassionately than he could criticise his old self and the friends whom he shall never see again, till he meets them

“Beyond the sphere of time,
And sin, and grief’s control,
Serene in changeless prime
Of body and of soul.”

To write of one’s own “adventures among books” may be to provide anecdotage more or less trivial, more or less futile, but, at least, it is to write historically. We know how books have affected, and do affect ourselves, our bundle of prejudices and tastes, of old impressions and revived sensations. To judge books dispassionately and impersonally, is much more difficult — indeed, it is practically impossible, for our own tastes and experiences must, more or less, modify our verdicts, do what we will. However, the effort must be made, for to say that, at a certain age, in certain circumstances, an individual took much pleasure in “The Life and Death of Jason,” the present of a college friend, is certainly not to criticise “The Life and Death of Jason.”

There have been three blossoming times in the English poetry of the nineteenth century. The first dates from Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, and, later, from Shelley, Byron, Keats. By 1822 the blossoming time was over, and the second blossoming time began in 1830-1833, with young Mr. Tennyson and Mr. Browning. It broke forth again, in 1842 and did not practically cease till England's greatest laureate sang of the "Crossing of the Bar." But while Tennyson put out his full strength in 1842, and Mr. Browning rather later, in "Bells and Pomegranates" ("Men and Women"), the third spring came in 1858, with Mr. Morris's "Defence of Guenevere," and flowered till Mr. Swinburne's "Atalanta in Calydon" appeared in 1865, followed by his poems of 1866. Mr. Rossetti's book of 1870 belonged, in date of composition, mainly to this period.

In 1858, when "The Defence of Guenevere" came out, Mr. Morris must have been but a year or two from his undergraduateship. Every one has heard enough about his companions, Mr. Burne Jones, Mr. Rossetti, Canon Dixon, and the others of the old *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, where Mr. Morris's wonderful prose fantasies are buried. Why should they not be revived, these strangely coloured and magical dreams? As literature, I prefer them vastly above Mr. Morris's later romances in prose— "The Hollow Land" above "News from Nowhere!" Mr. Morris and his friends were active in the fresh dawn of a new romanticism, a mediæval and Catholic revival, with very little Catholicism in it for the most part. This revival is more "innerly," as the Scotch say, more intimate, more "earnest" than the larger and more genial, if more superficial, restoration by Scott. The painful doubt, the scepticism of the Ages of Faith, the dark hours of that epoch, its fantasy, cruelty, luxury, no less than its colour and passion, inform Mr. Morris's first poems. The fourteenth and the early fifteenth century is his "period." In "The Defence of Guenevere" he is not under the influence of Chaucer, whose narrative manner, without one grain of his humour, inspires "The Life and Death of Jason" and "The Earthly Paradise." In the early book the rugged style of Mr. Browning has left a mark. There are cockney rhymes, too, such as "short" rhyming to "thought." But, on the whole, Mr. Morris's early manner was all his own, nor has he ever returned to it. In the first poem, "The Queen's Apology," is this passage: —

"Listen: suppose your time were come to die,
And you were quite alone and very weak;
Yea, laid a-dying, while very mightily

"The wind was ruffling up the narrow streak
Of river through your broad lands running well:

Suppose a hush should come, then some one speak:

"'One of these cloths is heaven, and one is hell,
Now choose one cloth for ever, which they be,
I will not tell you, you must somehow tell

"'Of your own strength and mightiness; here, see!'
Yea, yea, my lord, and you to ope your eyes,
At foot of your familiar bed to see

"A great God's angel standing, with such dyes,
Not known on earth, on his great wings, and hands,
Held out two ways, light from the inner skies

"Showing him well, and making his commands
Seem to be God's commands, moreover, too,
Holding within his hands the cloths on wands;

"And one of these strange choosing-cloths was blue,
Wavy and long, and one cut short and red;
No man could tell the better of the two.

"After a shivering half-hour you said,
'God help! heaven's colour, the blue;' and he said, 'Hell.'
Perhaps you then would roll upon your bed,

"And cry to all good men that loved you well,
'Ah, Christ! if only I had known, known, known.'"

There was nothing like that before in English poetry; it has the *bizarrerie* of a new thing in beauty. How far it is really beautiful how can I tell? How can I discount the "personal bias"? Only I know that it is unforgettable. Again (Galahad speaks): —

    "I saw
One sitting on the altar as a throne,
   Whose face no man could say he did not know,

And, though the bell still rang, he sat alone,
  With raiment half blood-red, half white as snow.”

Such things made their own special ineffaceable impact.

Leaving the Arthurian cycle, Mr. Morris entered on his especially sympathetic period — the gloom and sad sunset glory of the late fourteenth century, the age of Froissart and wicked, wasteful wars. To Froissart it all seemed one magnificent pageant of knightly and kingly fortunes; he only murmurs a “great pity” for the death of a knight or the massacre of a town. It is rather the pity of it that Mr. Morris sees: the hearts broken in a corner, as in “Sir Peter Harpedon’s End,” or beside “The Haystack in the Floods.” Here is a picture like life of what befell a hundred times. Lady Alice de la Barde hears of the death of her knight: —

“ALICE

    ”Can you talk faster, sir?
Get over all this quicker? fix your eyes
On mine, I pray you, and whate’er you see
Still go on talking fast, unless I fall,
Or bid you stop.

“SQUIRE

    ”I pray your pardon then,
And looking in your eyes, fair lady, say
I am unhappy that your knight is dead.
Take heart, and listen! let me tell you all.
We were five thousand goodly men-at-arms,
And scant five hundred had he in that hold;
His rotten sandstone walls were wet with rain,
And fell in lumps wherever a stone hit;
Yet for three days about the barriers there
The deadly glaives were gather’d, laid across,
And push’d and pull’d; the fourth our engines came;
But still amid the crash of falling walls,
And roar of bombards, rattle of hard bolts,

The steady bow-strings flash'd, and still stream'd out
St. George's banner, and the seven swords,
And still they cried, 'St. George Guienne,' until
Their walls were flat as Jericho's of old,
And our rush came, and cut them from the keep."

The astonishing vividness, again, of the tragedy told in "Geffray Teste Noire" is like that of a vision in a magic mirror or a crystal ball, rather than like a picture suggested by printed words. "Shameful Death" has the same enchanted kind of presentment. We look through a "magic casement opening on the foam" of the old waves of war. Poems of a pure fantasy, unequalled out of Coleridge and Poe, are "The Wind" and "The Blue Closet." Each only lives in fantasy. Motives, and facts, and "story" are unimportant and out of view. The pictures arise distinct, unsummoned, spontaneous, like the faces and places which are flashed on our eyes between sleeping and waking. Fantastic, too, but with more of a recognisable human setting, is "Golden Wings," which to a slight degree reminds one of Théophile Gautier's *Château de Souvenir*.

"The apples now grow green and sour
   Upon the mouldering castle wall,
   Before they ripen there they fall:
There are no banners on the tower,

The draggled swans most eagerly eat
   The green weeds trailing in the moat;
   Inside the rotting leaky boat
You see a slain man's stiffen'd feet."

These, with "The Sailing of the Sword," are my own old favourites. There was nothing like them before, nor will be again, for Mr. Morris, after several years of silence, abandoned his early manner. No doubt it was not a manner to persevere in, but happily, in a mood and a moment never to be re-born or return, Mr. Morris did fill a fresh page in English poetry with these imperishable fantasies. They were absolutely neglected by "the reading public," but they found a few staunch friends. Indeed, I think of "Guenevere" as FitzGerald did of Tennyson's poems before 1842. But this, of course, is a purely personal, probably a purely capricious, estimate. Criticism may aver that the influence of Mr. Rossetti was strong on Mr. Morris before 1858. Perhaps so, but we read Mr. Morris first (as the world read the "Lay" before "Christabel"), and my own preference is for Mr. Morris.

It was after eight or nine years of silence that Mr. Morris produced, in 1866 or 1867, “The Life and Death of Jason.” Young men who had read “Guenevere” hastened to purchase it, and, of course, found themselves in contact with something very unlike their old favourite. Mr. Morris had told a classical tale in decasyllabic couplets of the Chaucerian sort, and he regarded the heroic age from a mediæval point of view; at all events, not from an historical and archæological point of view. It was natural in Mr. Morris to “envisage” the Greek heroic age in this way, but it would not be natural in most other writers. The poem is not much shorter than the “Odyssey,” and long narrative poems had been out of fashion since “The Lord of the Isles” (1814).

All this was a little disconcerting. We read “Jason,” and read it with pleasure, but without much of the more essential pleasure which comes from magic and distinction of style. The peculiar qualities of Keats, and Tennyson, and Virgil are not among the gifts of Mr. Morris. As people say of Scott in his long poems, so it may be said of Mr. Morris — that he does not furnish many quotations, does not glitter in “jewels five words long.”

In “Jason” he entered on his long career as a narrator; a poet retelling the immortal primeval stories of the human race. In one guise or another the legend of Jason is the most widely distributed of romances; the North American Indians have it, and the Samoans and the Samoyeds, as well as all Indo-European peoples. This tale, told briefly by Pindar, and at greater length by Apollonius Rhodius, and in the “Orphica,” Mr. Morris took up and handled in a single and objective way. His art was always pictorial, but, in “Jason” and later, he described more, and was less apt, as it were, to flash a picture on the reader, in some incommunicable way.

In the covers of the first edition were announcements of the “Earthly Paradise”: that vast collection of the world’s old tales retold. One might almost conjecture that “Jason” had originally been intended for a part of the “Earthly Paradise,” and had outgrown its limits. The tone is much the same, though the “criticism of life” is less formally and explicitly stated.

For Mr. Morris came at last to a “criticism of life.” It would not have satisfied Mr. Matthew Arnold, and it did not satisfy Mr. Morris! The burden of these long narrative poems is *vanitas vanitatum*: the fleeting, perishable, unsatisfying nature of human existence, the dream “rounded by a sleep.” The lesson drawn is to make life as full and as beautiful as may be, by love, and adventure, and art. The hideousness of modern industrialism was oppressing to Mr. Morris; that hideousness he was doing his best to relieve and redeem, by poetry, and by all the many arts and crafts in which he was a master. His narrative poems are, indeed, part of his industry in this field. He was not born to slay monsters, he says, “the idle singer of an empty day.” Later, he set about slaying monsters, like Jason, or unlike Jason, scattering dragon’s teeth to raise forces which he could not lay, and could not direct.

I shall go no further into politics or agitation, and I say this much only to prove that Mr. Morris’s “criticism of life,” and prolonged, wistful dwelling on the thought of death, ceased to satisfy himself. His own later part, as a poet and an ally of Socialism, proved this to be true. It seems to follow that the peculiarly level, lifeless, decorative effect of his narratives, which remind us rather of glorious tapestries than of pictures, was no longer wholly satisfactory to himself. There is plenty of charmed and delightful reading— “Jason” and the “Earthly Paradise” are literature for The Castle of Indolence, but we do miss a strenuous rendering of action and passion. These Mr. Morris had rendered in “The Defence of Guinevere”: now he gave us something different, something beautiful, but something deficient in dramatic vigour. Apollonius Rhodius is, no doubt, much of a pedant, a literary writer of epic, in an age of Criticism. He dealt with the tale of “Jason,” and conceivably he may have borrowed from older minstrels. But the Medea of Apollonius Rhodius, in her love, her tenderness, her regret for home, in all her maiden words and ways, is undeniably a character more living, more human, more passionate, and more sympathetic, than the Medea of Mr. Morris. I could almost wish that he had closely followed that classical original, the first true love story in literature. In the same way I prefer Apollonius’s spell for soothing the dragon, as much terser and more somniferous than the spell put by Mr. Morris into the lips of Medea. Scholars will find it pleasant to compare these passages of the Alexandrine and of the London poets. As a brick out of the vast palace of “Jason” we may select the song of the Nereid to Hylas — Mr. Morris is always happy with his Nymphs and Nereids: —

”I know a little garden-close
Set thick with lily and with rose,
Where I would wander if I might
From dewy dawn to dewy night,
And have one with me wandering.
And though within it no birds sing,
And though no pillared house is there,
And though the apple boughs are bare
Of fruit and blossom, would to God,
Her feet upon the green grass trod,
And I beheld them as before.

There comes a murmur from the shore,
And in the place two fair streams are,
Drawn from the purple hills afar,
Drawn down unto the restless sea;
The hills whose flowers ne’er fed the bee,
The shore no ship has ever seen,
Still beaten by the billows green,
Whose murmur comes unceasingly
Unto the place for which I cry.
For which I cry both day and night,
For which I let slip all delight,
That maketh me both deaf and blind,
Careless to win, unskilled to find,
And quick to lose what all men seek.
Yet tottering as I am, and weak,
Still have I left a little breath
To seek within the jaws of death
An entrance to that happy place,
To seek the unforgotten face
Once seen, once kissed, once rest from me
Anigh the murmuring of the sea.”

“Jason” is, practically, a very long tale from the “Earthly Paradise,” as the “Earthly Paradise” is an immense treasure of shorter tales in the manner of “Jason.” Mr. Morris reverted for an hour to his fourteenth century, a period when London was “clean.” This is a poetic license; many a plague found mediæval London abominably dirty! A Celt himself, no doubt, with the Celt’s proverbial way of being *impossibilium cupitor*, Mr. Morris was in full sympathy with his Breton Squire, who, in the reign of Edward III., sets forth to seek the Earthly Paradise, and the land where Death never comes. Much more dramatic, I venture to think, than any passage of “Jason,” is that where the dreamy seekers of dreamland, Breton and Northman, encounter the stout King Edward III., whose kingdom is of this world. Action and fantasy are met, and the wanderers explain the nature of their quest. One of them speaks of death in many a form, and of the flight from death: —

”His words nigh made me weep, but while he spoke
I noted how a mocking smile just broke
The thin line of the Prince’s lips, and he

Who carried the afore-named armoury
Puffed out his wind-beat cheeks and whistled low:
But the King smiled, and said, ‘Can it be so?
I know not, and ye twain are such as find
The things whereto old kings must needs be blind.
For you the world is wide — but not for me,
Who once had dreams of one great victory
Wherein that world lay vanquished by my throne,
And now, the victor in so many an one,
Find that in Asia Alexander died
And will not live again; the world is wide
For you I say, — for me a narrow space
Betwixt the four walls of a fighting place.
   Poor man, why should I stay thee? live thy fill
Of that fair life, wherein thou seest no ill
But fear of that fair rest I hope to win
One day, when I have purged me of my sin.
   Farewell, it yet may hap that I a king
Shall be remembered but by this one thing,
That on the morn before ye crossed the sea
Ye gave and took in common talk with me;
But with this ring keep memory with the morn,
O Breton, and thou Northman, by this horn
Remember me, who am of Odin’s blood.’”

All this encounter is a passage of high invention. The adventures in Anahuac are such as Bishop Erie may have achieved when he set out to find Vinland the Good, and came back no more, whether he was or was not remembered by the Aztecs as Quetzalcoatl. The tale of the wanderers was Mr. Morris’s own; all the rest are of the dateless heritage of our race, fairy tales coming to us, now “softly breathed through the flutes of the Grecians,” now told by Sagamen of Iceland. The whole performance is astonishingly equable; we move on a high tableland, where no tall peaks of Parnassus are to be climbed. Once more literature has a narrator, on the whole much more akin to Spenser than to Chaucer, Homer, or Sir Walter. Humour and action are not so prominent as contemplation of a pageant reflected in a fairy mirror. But Mr. Morris has said himself, about his poem, what I am trying to say: —

”Death have we hated, knowing not what it meant;

Life have we loved, through green leaf and through sere,
Though still the less we knew of its intent;
The Earth and Heaven through countless year on year,
Slow changing, were to us but curtains fair,
Hung round about a little room, where play
Weeping and laughter of man's empty day."

Mr. Morris had shown, in various ways, the strength of his sympathy with the heroic sagas of Iceland. He had rendered one into verse, in "The Earthly Paradise," above all, "Grettir the Strong" and "The Volsunga" he had done into English prose. His next great poem was "The Story of Sigurd," a poetic rendering of the theme which is, to the North, what the Tale of Troy is to Greece, and to all the world. Mr. Morris took the form of the story which is most archaic, and bears most birthmarks of its savage origin — the version of the "Volsunga," not the German shape of the "Nibelungenlied." He showed extraordinary skill, especially in making human and intelligible the story of Regin, Otter, Fafnir, and the Dwarf Andvari's Hoard.

"It was Reidmar the Ancient begat me; and now was he waxen old,
And a covetous man and a king; and he bade, and I built him a hall,
And a golden glorious house; and thereto his sons did he call,
And he bade them be evil and wise, that his will through them might be wrought.
Then he gave unto Fafnir my brother the soul that feareth nought,
And the brow of the hardened iron, and the hand that may never fail,
And the greedy heart of a king, and the ear that hears no wail.

"But next unto Otter my brother he gave the snare and the net,
And the longing to wend through the wild-wood, and wade the highways wet;
And the foot that never resteth, while aught be left alive
That hath cunning to match man's cunning or might with his might to strive.

"And to me, the least and the youngest, what gift for the slaying of ease?
Save the grief that remembers the past, and the fear that the future sees;
And the hammer and fashioning-iron, and the living coal of fire;
And the craft that createth a semblance, and fails of the heart's desire;
And the toil that each dawning quickens, and the task that is never done;
And the heart that longeth ever, nor will look to the deed that is won.

“Thus gave my father the gifts that might never be taken again;
Far worse were we now than the Gods, and but little better than men.
But yet of our ancient might one thing had we left us still:
We had craft to change our semblance, and could shift us at our will
Into bodies of the beast-kind, or fowl, or fishes cold;
For belike no fixèd semblance we had in the days of old,
Till the Gods were waxen busy, and all things their form must take
That knew of good and evil, and longed to gather and make.”

But when we turn to the passage of the *éclaircissement* between Sigurd and Brynhild, that most dramatic and most *modern* moment in the ancient tragedy, the moment where the clouds of savage fancy scatter in the light of a hopeless human love, then, I must confess, I prefer the simple, brief prose of Mr. Morris’s translation of the “Volsunga” to his rather periphrastic paraphrase. Every student of poetry may make the comparison for himself, and decide for himself whether the old or the new is better. Again, in the final fight and massacre in the hall of Atli, I cannot but prefer the Slaying of the Wooers, at the close of the “Odyssey,” or the last fight of Roland at Roncesvaux, or the prose version of the “Volsunga.” All these are the work of men who were war-smiths as well as song-smiths. Here is a passage from the “murder grim and great”: —

“So he saith in the midst of the foemen with his war-flame reared on high,
But all about and around him goes up a bitter cry
From the iron men of Atli, and the bickering of the steel
Sends a roar up to the roof-ridge, and the Niblung war-ranks reel
Behind the steadfast Gunnar: but lo, have ye seen the corn,
While yet men grind the sickle, by the wind streak overborne
When the sudden rain sweeps downward, and summer groweth black,
And the smitten wood-side roareth ‘neath the driving thunder-wrack?
So before the wise-heart Hogni shrank the champions of the East
As his great voice shook the timbers in the hall of Atli’s feast,
There he smote and beheld not the smitten, and by nought were his edges stopped;
He smote and the dead were thrust from him; a hand with its shield he lopped;
There met him Atli’s marshal, and his arm at the shoulder he shred;
Three swords were upreared against him of the best of the kin of the dead;
And he struck off a head to the rightward, and his sword through a throat he thrust,
But the third stroke fell on his helm-crest, and he stooped to the ruddy dust,

And uprose as the ancient Giant, and both his hands were wet:
Red then was the world to his eyen, as his hand to the labour he set;
Swords shook and fell in his pathway, huge bodies leapt and fell;
Harsh grided shield and war-helm like the tempest-smitten bell,
And the war-cries ran together, and no man his brother knew,
And the dead men loaded the living, as he went the war-wood through;
And man ‘gainst man was huddled, till no sword rose to smite,
And clear stood the glorious Hogni in an island of the fight,
And there ran a river of death ‘twixt the Niblung and his foes,
And therefrom the terror of men and the wrath of the Gods arose.”

I admit that this does not affect me as does the figure of Odysseus raining his darts of doom, or the courtesy of Roland when the blinded Oliver smites him by mischance, and, indeed, the Keeping of the Stair by Umslopogaas appeals to me more vigorously as a strenuous picture of war. To be just to Mr. Morris, let us give his rendering of part of the Slaying of the Wooers, from his translation of the “Odyssey”: —

“And e’en as the word he uttered, he drew his keen sword out
Brazen, on each side shearing, and with a fearful shout
Rushed on him; but Odysseus that very while let fly
And smote him with the arrow in the breast, the pap hard by,
And drove the swift shaft to the liver, and adown to the ground fell the sword
From out of his hand, and doubled he hung above the board,
And staggered; and whirling he fell, and the meat was scattered around,
And the double cup moreover, and his forehead smote the ground;
And his heart was wrung with torment, and with both feet spurning he smote
The high-seat; and over his eyen did the cloud of darkness float.

“And then it was Amphinomus, who drew his whetted sword
And fell on, making his onrush ‘gainst Odysseus the glorious lord,
If perchance he might get him out-doors: but Telemachus him forewent,
And a cast of the brazen war-spear from behind him therewith sent
Amidmost of his shoulders, that drave through his breast and out,
And clattering he fell, and the earth all the breadth of his forehead smote.”

There is no need to say more of Mr. Morris’s “Odysseus.” Close to the letter of the Greek he usually keeps, but where are the surge and thunder of Homer? Apparently we must accent the penultimate in “Amphinomus” if the line is to scan. I select a passage of peaceful beauty from Book V.: —

“But all about that cavern there grew a blossoming wood,
Of alder and of poplar and of cypress savouring good;
And fowl therein wing-spreading were wont to roost and be,
For owls were there and falcons, and long-tongued crows of the sea,
And deeds of the sea they deal with and thereof they have a care
But round the hollow cavern there spread and flourished fair
A vine of garden breeding, and in its grapes was glad;
And four wells of the white water their heads together had,
And flowing on in order four ways they thence did get;
And soft were the meadows blooming with parsley and violet.
Yea, if thither indeed had come e’en one of the Deathless, e’en he
Had wondered and gladdened his heart with all that was there to see.
And there in sooth stood wondering the Flitter, the Argus-bane.
But when o’er all these matters in his soul he had marvelled amain,
Then into the wide cave went he, and Calypso, Godhead’s Grace,
Failed nowise there to know him as she looked upon his face;
For never unknown to each other are the Deathless Gods, though they
Apart from one another may be dwelling far away.
But Odysseus the mighty-hearted within he met not there,
Who on the beach sat weeping, as oft he was wont to wear
His soul with grief and groaning, and weeping; yea, and he
As the tears he was pouring downward yet gazed o’er the untilled sea.”

This is close enough to the Greek, but
“*And flowing on in order four ways they thence did get*”
is not precisely musical. Why is Hermes “The Flitter”? But I have often ventured to remonstrate against these archaistic peculiarities, which to some extent mar our pleasure in Mr. Morris’s translations. In his version of the rich Virgilian measure they are especially out of place. The “Æneid” is rendered with a roughness which might better befit a translation of Ennius. Thus the reader of Mr. Morris’s poetical translations has in his hands versions of almost literal closeness, and (what is extremely rare) versions of poetry by a poet. But his acquaintance with Early English and Icelandic has added to the poet a strain of the philologist, and his English in the “Odyssey,” still more in the “Æneid,” is occasionally more *archaic* than the Greek of 900 B.C. So at least it seems to a reader not unversed in attempts to fit the classical poets with an English rendering. But the true test is in the appreciation of the lovers of poetry in

general.

To them, as to all who desire the restoration of beauty in modern life, Mr. Morris has been a benefactor almost without example. Indeed, were adequate knowledge mine, Mr. Morris's poetry should have been criticised as only a part of the vast industry of his life in many crafts and many arts. His place in English life and literature is unique as it is honourable. He did what he desired to do — he made vast additions to simple and stainless pleasures.

CHAPTER VI: MRS. RADCLIFFE'S NOVELS

Does any one now read Mrs. Radcliffe, or am I the only wanderer in her windy corridors, listening timidly to groans and hollow voices, and shielding the flame of a lamp, which, I fear, will presently flicker out, and leave me in darkness? People know the name of "The Mysteries of Udolpho;" they know that boys would say to Thackeray, at school, "Old fellow, draw us Vivaldi in the Inquisition." But have they penetrated into the chill galleries of the Castle of Udolpho? Have they shuddered for Vivaldi in face of the sable-clad and masked Inquisition? Certainly Mrs. Radcliffe, within the memory of man, has been extremely popular. The thick double-columned volume in which I peruse the works of the Enchantress belongs to a public library. It is quite the dirtiest, greasiest, most dog's-eared, and most bescribbled tome in the collection. Many of the books have remained, during the last hundred years, uncut, even to this day, and I have had to apply the paper knife to many an author, from Alciphron (1790) to Mr. Max Müller, and Dr. Birkbeck Hill's edition of Bozzy's "Life of Dr. Johnson." But Mrs. Radcliffe has been read diligently, and copiously annotated.

This lady was, in a literary sense, and though, like the sire of Evelina, he cast her off, the daughter of Horace Walpole. Just when King Romance seemed as dead as Queen Anne, Walpole produced that Gothic tale, "The Castle of Otranto," in 1764. In that very year was born Anne Ward, who, in 1787, married William Radcliffe, Esq., M.A., Oxon. In 1789 she published "The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne." The scene, she tells us, is laid in "the most romantic part of the Highlands, the north-east coast of Scotland." On castles, anywhere, she doted. Walpole, not Smollett or Miss Burney, inspired her with a passion for these homes of old romance. But the north-east coast of Scotland is hardly part of the Highlands at all, and is far from being very romantic. The period is "the dark ages" in general. Yet the captive Earl, when "the sweet tranquillity of evening threw an air of tender melancholy over his mind . . . composed the following sonnet, which (having committed it to paper) he the next evening dropped upon the terrace. He had the pleasure to observe that the paper was taken up by the ladies, who immediately retired into the castle." These were not the manners of the local Mackays, of the Sinclairs, and of "the small but fierce clan of Gunn," in the dark ages.

But this was Mrs. Radcliffe's way. She delighted in descriptions of scenery, the more romantic the better, and usually drawn entirely from her inner consciousness. Her heroines write sonnets (which never but once *are* sonnets) and other lyrics, on every occasion. With his usual generosity Scott praised her landscape and her lyrics, but, indeed, they are, as Sir Walter said of Mrs. Hemans, “too poetical,” and probably they were skipped, even by her contemporary devotees. “The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne” frankly do not permit themselves to be read, and it was not till 1790, with “A Sicilian Romance,” that Mrs. Radcliffe “found herself,” and her public. After reading, with breathless haste, through, “A Sicilian Romance,” and “The Romance of the Forest,” in a single day, it would ill become me to speak lightly of Mrs. Radcliffe. Like Catherine Morland, I love this lady’s tender yet terrific fancy.

Mrs. Radcliffe does not always keep on her highest level, but we must remember that her last romance, “The Italian,” is by far her best. She had been feeling her way to this pitch of excellence, and, when she had attained to it, she published no more. The reason is uncertain. She became a Woman’s Rights woman, and wrote “The Female Advocate,” not a novel! Scott thinks that she may have been annoyed by her imitators, or by her critics, against whom he defends her in an admirable passage, to be cited later. Meanwhile let us follow Mrs. Radcliffe in her upward course.

The “Sicilian Romance” appeared in 1790, when the author’s age was twenty-six. The book has a treble attraction, for it contains the germ of “Northanger Abbey,” and the germ of “Jane Eyre,” and — the germ of Byron! Like “Joseph Andrews,” “Northanger Abbey” began as a parody (of Mrs. Radcliffe) and developed into a real novel of character. So too Byron’s gloomy scowling adventurers, with their darkling past, are mere repetitions in rhyme of Mrs. Radcliffe’s Schedoni. This is so obvious that, when discussing Mrs. Radcliffe’s Schedoni, Scott adds, in a note, parallel passages from Byron’s “Giaour.” Sir Walter did not mean to mock, he merely compared two kindred spirits. “The noble poet” “kept on the business still,” and broke into octosyllabics, borrowed from Scott, his descriptions of miscreants borrowed from Mrs. Radcliffe.

“A Sicilian Romance” has its scene in the palace of Ferdinand, fifth Marquis of Mazzini, on the northern coast of Sicily. The time is about 1580, but there is nothing in the manners or costume to indicate that, or any other period. Such “local colour” was unknown to Mrs. Radcliffe, as to Clara Reeve. In Horace Walpole, however, a character goes so far in the mediæval way as to say “by my halidome.”

The Marquis Mazzini had one son and two daughters by his first amiable consort, supposed to be long dead when the story opens. The son is the original of Henry Tilney in “Northanger Abbey,” and in General Tilney does Catherine

Morland recognise a modern Marquis of Mazzini. But the Marquis's wife, to be sure, is *not* dead; like the first Mrs. Rochester she is concealed about the back premises, and, as in "Jane Eyre," it is her movements, and those of her gaolers, that produce mystery, and make the reader suppose that "the place is haunted." It is, of course, only the mystery and the "machinery" of Mrs. Radcliffe that Miss Brontë adapted. These passages in "Jane Eyre" have been censured, but it is not easy to see how the novel could do without them. Mrs. Radcliffe's tale entirely depends on its machinery. Her wicked Marquis, having secretly immured Number One, has now a new and beautiful Number Two, whose character does not bear inspection. This domestic position, as Number Two, we know, was declined by the austere virtue of Jane Eyre.

"Phenomena" begin in the first chapter of "A Sicilian Romance," mysterious lights wander about uninhabited parts of the castle, and are vainly investigated by young Ferdinand, son of the Marquis. This Hippolytus the Chaste, loved all in vain by the reigning Marchioness, is adored by, and adores, her stepdaughter, Julia. Jealousy and revenge are clearly indicated. But, in chasing mysterious lights and figures through mouldering towers, Ferdinand gets into the very undesirable position of David Balfour, when he climbs, in the dark, the broken turret stair in his uncle's house of Shaws (in "Kidnapped"). Here is a *fourth* author indebted to Mrs. Radcliffe: her disciples are Miss Austen, Byron, Miss Brontë, and Mr. Louis Stevenson! Ferdinand "began the ascent. He had not proceeded very far, when the stones of a step which his foot had just quitted gave way, and, dragging with them those adjoining, formed a chasm in the staircase that terrified even Ferdinand, who was left tottering on the suspended half of the steps, in momentary expectation of falling to the bottom with the stone on which he rested. In the terror which this occasioned, he attempted to save himself by catching at a kind of beam which suspended over the stairs, when the lamp dropped from his hand, and he was left in total darkness."

Can anything be more "amazing horrid," above all as there are mysterious figures in and about the tower? Mrs. Radcliffe's lamps always fall, or are blown out, in the nick of time, an expedient already used by Clara Reeve in that very mild but once popular ghost story, "The Old English Baron" (1777). All authors have such favourite devices, and I wonder how many fights Mr. Stanley Weyman's heroes have fought, from the cellar to their favourite tilting ground, the roof of a strange house!

Ferdinand hung on to the beam for an hour, when the ladies came with a light, and he scrambled back to solid earth. In his next nocturnal research, "a sullen groan arose from beneath where he stood," and when he tried to force a door (there are scores of such weird doors in Mrs. Radcliffe) "a groan was repeated, more hollow and dreadful than the first. His courage forsook him" — and no wonder! Of course he could not know that the author of the groans was, in fact, his long-lost mother, immured by his father, the wicked Marquis. We need not follow the narrative through the darkling crimes and crumbling galleries of this terrible castle on the north coast of Sicily. Everybody is always "gazing in silent terror," and all the locks are rusty. "A savage and dexterous banditti" play a prominent part, and the imprisoned Ferdinand "did not hesitate to believe that the moans he heard came from the restless spirit of the murdered della Campo." No working hypothesis could seem more plausible, but it was erroneous. Mrs. Radcliffe does not deal in a single avowed ghost. She finally explains away, by normal causes, everything that she does not forget to explain. At the most, she indulges herself in a premonitory dream. On this point she is true to common sense, without quite adopting the philosophy of David Hume. "I do not say that spirits have appeared," she remarks, "but if several discreet unprejudiced persons were to assure me that they had seen one — I should not be bold or proud enough to reply, it is impossible!" But Hume *was* bold and proud enough: he went further than Mrs. Radcliffe.

Scott censures Mrs. Radcliffe's employment of explanations. He is in favour of "boldly avowing the use of supernatural machinery," or of leaving the matter in the vague, as in the appearance of the wraith of the dying Alice to Ravenswood. But, in Mrs. Radcliffe's day, common sense was so tyrannical, that the poor lady's romances would have been excluded from families, if she had not provided normal explanations of her groans, moans, voices, lights, and wandering figures. The ghost-hunt in the castle finally brings Julia to a door, whose bolts, "strengthened by desperation, she forced back." There was a middle-aged lady in the room, who, after steadily gazing on Julia, "suddenly exclaimed, 'My daughter!' and fainted away." Julia being about seventeen, and Madame Mazzini, her mamma, having been immured for fifteen years, we observe, in this recognition, the force of the maternal instinct.

The wicked Marquis was poisoned by the partner of his iniquities, who anon stabbed herself with a poniard. The virtuous Julia marries the chaste Hippolytus, and, says the author, "in reviewing this story, we perceive a singular and striking instance of moral retribution."

We also remark the futility of locking up an inconvenient wife, fabled to be defunct, in one's own country house. Had Mr. Rochester, in "Jane Eyre," studied the "Sicilian Romance," he would have shunned an obsolete system, inconvenient at best, and apt, in the long run, to be disastrous.

In the "Romance of the Forest" (1791), Mrs. Radcliffe remained true to Mr. Stanley Weyman's favourite period, the end of the sixteenth century. But there are no historical characters or costumes in the story, and all the persons, as far as language and dress go, might have been alive in 1791.

The story runs thus: one de la Motte, who appears to have fallen from dissipation to swindling, is, on the first page, discovered flying from Paris and the law, with his wife, in a carriage. Lost in the dark on a moor, he follows a light, and enters an old lonely house. He is seized by ruffians, locked in, and expects to be murdered, which he knows that he cannot stand, for he is timid by nature. In fact, a ruffian puts a pistol to La Motte's breast with one hand, while with the other he drags along a beautiful girl of eighteen. "Swear that you will convey this girl where I may never see her more," exclaims the bully, and La Motte, with the young lady, is taken back to his carriage. "If you return within an hour you will be welcomed with a brace of bullets," is the ruffian's parting threat.

So La Motte, Madame La Motte, and the beautiful girl drive away, La Motte's one desire being to find a retreat safe from the police of an offended justice.

Is this not a very original, striking, and affecting situation; provocative, too, of the utmost curiosity? A fugitive from justice, in a strange, small, dark, ancient house, is seized, threatened, and presented with a young and lovely female stranger. In this opening we recognise the hand of a master genius. There *must* be an explanation of proceedings so highly unconventional, and what can the reason be? The reader is *empoigné* in the first page, and eagerly follows the flight of La Motte, also of Peter, his coachman, an attached, comic, and familiar domestic. After a few days, the party observe, in the recesses of a gloomy forest, the remains of a Gothic abbey. They enter; by the light of a flickering lamp they penetrate "horrible recesses," discover a room handsomely provided with a trapdoor, and determine to reside in a dwelling so congenial, though, as La Motte judiciously remarks, "not in all respects strictly Gothic." After a few days, La Motte finds that somebody is inquiring for him in the nearest town. He seeks for a hiding-place, and explores the chambers under the trapdoor. Here he finds, in a large chest — what do you suppose he finds? It was a human skeleton! Yet in this awful vicinity he and his wife, with Adeline (the fair stranger) conceal themselves. The brave Adeline, when footsteps are heard, and a figure is beheld in the upper rooms, accosts the stranger. His keen eye presently detects the practicable trapdoor, he raises it, and the cowering La Motte recognises in the dreaded visitor — his own son, who had sought him out of filial affection.

Already Madame La Motte has become jealous of Adeline, especially as her husband is oddly melancholy, and apt to withdraw into a glade, where he mysteriously disappears into the recesses of a genuine Gothic sepulchre. This, to the watchful eyes of a wife, is proof of faithlessness on the part of a husband. As the son, Louis, really falls in love with Adeline, Madame La Motte becomes doubly unkind to her, and Adeline now composes quantities of poems to Night, to Sunset, to the Nocturnal Gale, and so on.

In this uncomfortable situation, two strangers arrive in a terrific thunderstorm. One is young, the other is a Marquis. On seeing this nobleman, “La Motte’s limbs trembled, and a ghastly paleness overspread his countenance. The Marquis was little less agitated,” and was, at first, decidedly hostile. La Motte implored forgiveness — for what? — and the Marquis (who, in fact, owned the Abbey, and had a shooting lodge not far off) was mollified. They all became rather friendly, and Adeline asked La Motte about the stories of hauntings, and a murder said to have been, at some time, committed in the Abbey. La Motte said that the Marquis could have no connection with such fables; still, there *was* the skeleton.

Meanwhile, Adeline had conceived a flame for Theodore, the young officer who accompanied his colonel, the Marquis, on their first visit to the family. Theodore, who returned her passion, had vaguely warned her of an impending danger, and then had failed to keep tryst with her, one evening, and had mysteriously disappeared. Then unhappy Adeline dreamed about a prisoner, a dying man, a coffin, a voice from the coffin, and the appearance within it of the dying man, amidst torrents of blood. The chamber in which she saw these visions was most vividly represented. Next day the Marquis came to dinner, and, *though reluctantly*, consented to pass the night: Adeline, therefore, was put in a new bedroom. Disturbed by the wind shaking the mouldering tapestry, she found a concealed door behind the arras and a suite of rooms, *one of which was the chamber of her dream*! On the floor lay a rusty dagger! The bedstead, being touched, crumbled, and disclosed a small roll of manuscripts. They were not washing bills, like those discovered by Catherine Morland in “Northanger Abbey.” Returning to her own chamber, Adeline heard the Marquis professing to La Motte a passion for herself. Conceive her horror! Silence then reigned, till all was sudden noise and confusion; the Marquis flying in terror from his room, and insisting on instant departure. His emotion was powerfully displayed.

What had occurred? Mrs. Radcliffe does not say, but horror, whether caused by a conscience ill at ease, or by events of a terrific and supernatural kind, is plainly indicated. In daylight, the Marquis audaciously pressed his unholy suit, and even offered marriage, a hollow mockery, for he was well known to be already a married man. The scenes of Adeline’s flight, capture, retention in an elegant villa of the licentious noble, renewed flight, rescue by Theodore, with Theodore’s arrest, and wounding of the tyrannical Marquis, are all of breathless interest. Mrs. Radcliffe excels in narratives of romantic escapes, a topic always thrilling when well handled. Adeline herself is carried back to the Abbey, but La Motte, who had rather not be a villain if he could avoid it, enables her again to secure her freedom. He is clearly in the power of the Marquis, and his life has been unscrupulous, but he retains traces of better things. Adeline is now secretly conveyed to a peaceful valley in Savoy, the home of the honest Peter (the coachman), who accompanies her. Here she learns to know and value the family of La Luc, the kindred of her Theodore (by a romantic coincidence), and, in the adorable scenery of Savoy, she throws many a ballad to the Moon.

La Motte, on the discovery of Adeline's flight, was cast into prison by the revengeful Marquis, for, in fact, soon after settling in the Abbey, it had occurred to La Motte to commence highwayman. His very first victim had been the Marquis, and, during his mysterious retreats to a tomb in a glade in the forest, he had, in short, been contemplating his booty, jewels which he could not convert into ready money. Consequently, when the Marquis first entered the Abbey, La Motte had every reason for alarm, and only pacified the vindictive aristocrat by yielding to his cruel schemes against the virtue of Adeline.

Happily for La Motte, a witness appeared at his trial, who cast a lurid light on the character of the Marquis. That villain, to be plain, had murdered his elder brother (the skeleton of the Abbey), and had been anxious to murder, it was added, his own natural daughter — that is, Adeline! His hired felons, however, placed her in a convent, and, later (rather than kill her, on which the Marquis insisted), simply thrust her into the hands of La Motte, who happened to pass by that way, as we saw in the opening of this romance. Thus, in making love to Adeline, his daughter, the Marquis was, unconsciously, in an awkward position. On further examination of evidence, however, things proved otherwise. Adeline was *not* the natural daughter of the Marquis, but his niece, the legitimate daughter and heiress of his brother (the skeleton of the Abbey). The MS. found by Adeline in the room of the rusty dagger added documentary evidence, for it was a narrative of the sufferings of her father (later the skeleton), written by him in the Abbey where he was imprisoned and stabbed, and where his bones were discovered by La Motte. The hasty nocturnal flight of the Marquis from the Abbey is thus accounted for: he had probably been the victim of a terrific hallucination representing his murdered brother; whether it was veridical or merely subjective Mrs. Radcliffe does not decide. Rather than face the outraged justice of his country, the Marquis, after these revelations, took poison. La Motte was banished; and Adeline, now mistress of the Abbey, removed the paternal skeleton to "the vault of his ancestors." Theodore and Adeline were united, and virtuously resided in a villa on the beautiful banks of the Lake of

Geneva.

Such is the “Romance of the Forest,” a fiction in which character is subordinate to plot and incident. There is an attempt at character drawing in La Motte, and in his wife; the hero and heroine are not distinguishable from Julia and Hippolytus. But Mrs. Radcliffe does not aim at psychological niceties, and we must not blame her for withholding what it was no part of her purpose to give. “The Romance of the Forest” was, so far, infinitely the most thrilling of modern English works of fiction. “Every reader felt the force,” says Scott, “from the sage in his study, to the family group in middle life,” and nobody felt it more than Scott himself, then a young gentleman of nineteen, who, when asked how his time was employed, answered, “I read no Civil Law.” He did read Mrs. Radcliffe, and, in “The Betrothed,” followed her example in the story of the haunted chamber where the heroine faces the spectre attached to her ancient family.

“The Mysteries of Udolpho,” Mrs. Radcliffe’s next and most celebrated work, is not (in the judgment of this reader, at least) her masterpiece. The booksellers paid her what Scott, erroneously, calls “the unprecedented sum of £500” for the romance, and they must have made a profitable bargain. “The public,” says Scott, “rushed upon it with all the eagerness of curiosity, and rose from it with unsated appetite.” I arise with a thoroughly sated appetite from the “Mysteries of Udolpho.” The book, as Sir Walter saw, is “The Romance of the Forest” raised to a higher power. We have a similar and similarly situated heroine, cruelly detached from her young man, and immured in a howling wilderness of a brigand castle in the Apennines. In place of the Marquis is a miscreant on a larger and more ferocious scale. The usual mysteries of voices, lights, secret passages, and innumerable doors are provided regardless of economy. The great question, which I shall not answer, is, *what did the Black Veil conceal*? *Not* “the bones of Laurentina,” as Catherine Morland supposed.

Here is Emily’s adventure with the veil. “She paused again, and then, with a timid hand, lifted the veil; but instantly let it fall — perceiving that what it had concealed was no picture, and before she could leave the chamber she dropped senseless on the floor. When she recovered her recollection, . . . horror occupied her mind.” Countless mysteries coagulate around this veil, and the reader is apt to be disappointed when the awful curtain is withdrawn. But he has enjoyed, for several hundred pages, the pleasures of anticipation. A pedantic censor may remark that, while the date of the story is 1580, all the virtuous people live in an idyllic fashion, like creatures of Rousseau, existing solely for landscape and the affections, writing poetry on Nature, animate and inanimate, including the common Bat, and drawing in water colours. In those elegant avocations began, and in these, after an interval of adventures “amazing horrid,” concluded the career of Emily.

Mrs. Radcliffe keeps the many entangled threads of her complex web well in hand, and incidents which puzzle you at the beginning fall naturally into place before the end. The character of the heroine’s silly, vain, unkind, and unreasonable aunt is vividly designed (that Emily should mistake the corse of a moustached bandit for that of her aunt is an incident hard to defend). Valancourt is not an ordinary spotless hero, but sows his wild oats, and reaps the usual harvest; and Annette is a good sample of the usual *soubrette*. When one has said that the landscapes and bandits of this romance are worthy of Poussin and Salvator Rosa, from whom they were probably translated into words, not much remains to be added. Sir Walter, after repeated perusals, considered “Udolpho” “a step beyond Mrs. Radcliffe’s former work, high as that had justly advanced her.” But he admits that “persons of no mean judgment” preferred “The Romance of the Forest.” With these amateurs I would be ranked. The ingenuity and originality of the “Romance” are greater: our friend the skeleton is better than that Thing which was behind the Black Veil, the escapes of Adeline are more thrilling than the escape of Emily, and the “Romance” is not nearly so long, not nearly so prolix as “Udolpho.”

The roof and crown of Mrs. Radcliffe’s work is “The Italian” (1797), for which she received £800. The scene is Naples, the date about 1764; the topic is the thwarted loves of Vivaldi and Ellena; the villain is the admirable Schedoni, the prototype of Byron’s lurid characters.

“The Italian” is an excellent novel. The Prelude, “the dark and vaulted gateway,” is not unworthy of Hawthorne, who, I suspect, had studied Mrs. Radcliffe. The theme is more like a theme of this world than usual. The parents of a young noble might well try to prevent him from marrying an unknown and penniless girl. The Marchese Vivaldi only adopts the ordinary paternal measures; the Marchesa, and her confessor the dark-souled Schedoni, go farther — as far as assassination. The casuistry by which Schedoni brings the lady to this pass, while representing her as the originator of the scheme, is really subtle, and the scenes between the pair show an extraordinary advance on Mrs. Radcliffe’s earlier art. The mysterious Monk who counteracts Schedoni remains an unsolved mystery to me, but of that I do not complain. He is as good as the Dweller in the Catacombs who haunts Miriam in Hawthorne’s “Marble Faun.” The Inquisition, its cells, and its tribunals are coloured

”As when some great painter dips
His pencil in the gloom of earthquake and eclipse.”

The comic valet, Paulo, who insists on being locked up in the dungeons of the Inquisition merely because his master is there, reminds one of Samuel Weller, he is a Neapolitan Samivel. The escapes are Mrs. Radcliffe's most exciting escapes, and to say that is to say a good deal. Poetry is not written, or not often, by the heroine. The scene in which Schedoni has his dagger raised to murder Ellena, when he discovers that she is his daughter, "is of a new, grand, and powerful character" (Scott), while it is even more satisfactory to learn later that Ellena was *not* Schedoni's daughter after all.

Why Mrs. Radcliffe, having reached such a pitch of success, never again published a novel, remains more mysterious than any of her Mysteries. Scott justly remarks that her censors attacked her "by showing that she does not possess the excellences proper to a style of composition totally different from that which she has attempted." This is the usual way of reviewers. Tales that fascinated Scott, Fox, and Sheridan, "which possess charms for the learned and unlearned, the grave and gay, the gentleman and clown," do not deserve to be dismissed with a sneer by people who have never read them. Following Horace Walpole in some degree, Mrs. Radcliffe paved the way for Scott, Byron, Maturin, Lewis, and Charlotte Brontë, just as Miss Burney filled the gap between Smollett and Miss Austen. Mrs. Radcliffe, in short, kept the Lamp of Romance burning much more steadily than the lamps which, in her novels, are always blown out, in the moment of excited apprehension, by the night wind walking in the dank corridors of haunted abbeys. But mark the cruelty of an intellectual parent! Horace Walpole was Mrs. Radcliffe's father in the spirit. Yet, on September 4, 1794, he wrote to Lady Ossory: "I have read some of the descriptive verbose tales, of which your Ladyship says I was the patriarch by several mothers" (Miss Reeve and Mrs. Radcliffe?). "All I can say for myself is that I do not think my concubines have produced issue more natural for excluding the aid of anything marvellous."

CHAPTER VII: A SCOTTISH ROMANTICIST OF 1830

The finding of a rare book that you have wanted long is one of the happier moments in life. Whatever we may think of life when we contemplate it as a whole, it is a delight to discover what one has sought for years, especially if the book be a book which you really want to read, and not a thing whose value is given by the fashion of collecting. Perhaps nobody ever collected before

THE
DEATH-WAKE, OR LUNACY
A NECROMAUNT

In Three Chimeras
BY THOMAS T. STODDART.

“Is’t like that lead contains her? —
It were too gross
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.” —
Shakespeare.

EDINBURGH:
Printed for HENRY CONSTABLE, Edinburgh,
And HURST, CHANCE, & CO., London.

MDCCCXXXI.

This is my rare book, and it is rare for an excellent good reason, as will be shown. But first of the author. Mr. Thomas Tod Stoddart was born in 1810. He died in 1880. Through all his pilgrimage of three-score years and ten, his “rod and staff did comfort him,” as the Scottish version of the Psalms has it; nay, his staff was his rod. He “was an angler,” as he remarked when a friend asked: “Well, Tom, what are you doing now.” He was the patriarch, the Father Izaak, of Scottish fishers, and he sleeps, according to his desire, like Scott, within hearing of the Tweed. His memoir, published by his daughter, in “Stoddart’s Angling Songs” (Blackwood), is an admirable biography, *quo fit ut omnis Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella Vita senis*.

But it is with the “young Tom Stoddart,” the poet of twenty, not with the old angling sage, that we have to do. Miss Stoddart has discreetly republished only the Angling Songs of her father, the pick of them being classical in their way. Now, as Mr. Arnold writes: —

“Two desires toss about
The poet’s feverish blood,
One drives him to the world without,
And one to solitude.”

The young Stoddart’s two desires were poetry and fishing. He began with poetry. “At the age of ten his whole desire was to produce an immortal tragedy . . . Blood and battle were the powers with which he worked, and with no meaner tool. Every other dramatic form he despised.” It is curious to think of the schoolboy, the born Romanticist, labouring at these things, while Gérard de

Nerval, and Victor Hugo, and Théophile Gautier, and Pétrus Borel were boys also — boys of the same ambitions, and with much the same romantic tastes. Stoddart had, luckily, another love besides the Muse. "With the spring and the May fly, the dagger dipped in gore paled before the supple rod, and the dainty midge." Finally, the rod and midge prevailed.

"Wee dour-looking hooks are the thing,
Mouse body and laverock wing."

But before he quite abandoned all poetry save fishing ditties, he wrote and published the volume whose title-page we have printed, "The Death Wake." The lad who drove home from an angling expedition in a hearse had an odd way of combining his amusements. He lived among poets and critics who were anglers — Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd (who cast but a heavy line, they say, in Yarrow), Aytoun, Christopher North, De Quincey —

"No fisher
But a well-wisher
To the game,"

as Scott has it — these were his companions, older or younger. None of these, certainly not Wilson, nor Hogg, nor Aytoun, were friends of the Romantic school, as illustrated by Keats and Shelley. None of them probably knew much of Gautier, De Nerval, Borel, le lycanthrope, and the other boys in that boyish movement of 1830. It was only Stoddart, unconsciously in sympathy with Paris, and censured by his literary friends, who produced the one British Romantic work of 1830. The title itself shows that he was partly laughing at his own performance; he has the mockery of *Les Jeunes France* in him, as well as the wormy and obituary joys of *La Comédie de la Mort*. The little book came out, inspired by "all the poetasters." Christopher North wrote, four years later, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, a tardy review. He styled it "an ingeniously absurd poem, with an ingeniously absurd title, written in a strange, namby-pamby sort of style, between the weakest of Shelley and the strongest of Barry Cornwall." The book "fell dead from the Press," far more dead than "Omar Khayyam." Nay, misfortune pursued it, Miss Stoddart kindly informs me, and it was doomed to the flames. The "remainder," the bulk of the edition, was returned to the poet in sheets, and by him was deposited in a garret. The family had a cook, one Betty, a descendant, perhaps, of "that unhappy Betty or Elizabeth Barnes, cook of Mr. Warburton, Somerset Herald," who burned, among other quartos, Shakespeare's "Henry I.," "Henry II.," and "King Stephen." True to her inherited instincts, Mr. Stoddart's Betty, slowly, relentlessly, through forty years, used "The Death Wake" for the needs and processes of her art. The whole of the edition, except probably a few "presentation copies," perished in the kitchen. As for that fell cook, let us hope that

"The Biblioclastic Dead
   Have diverse pains to brook,
They break Affliction's bread
   With Betty Barnes, the Cook,"

as the author of "The Bird Bride" sings.

Miss Stoddart had just informed me of this disaster, which left one almost hopeless of ever owning a copy of "The Death Wake," when I found a brown paper parcel among many that contained to-day's minor poetry "with the author's compliments," and lo, in this unpromising parcel was the long-sought volume! Ever since one was a small boy, reading Stoddart's "Scottish Angler," and old *Blackwood's*, one had pined for a sight of "The Necromaunt," and here, clean in its "pure purple mantle" of smooth cloth, lay the desired one!

"Like Dian's kiss, unasked, unsought,
It gave itself, and was not bought,"

being, indeed, the discovery and gift of a friend who fishes and studies the Lacustrine Muses.

The copy has a peculiar interest; it once belonged to Aytoun, the writer of "The Scottish Cavaliers," of "The Bon Gaultier Ballads," and of "Firmilian," the scourge of the Spasmodic School. Mr. Aytoun has adorned the margins with notes and with caricatures of skulls and cross-bones, while the fly-leaves bear a sonnet to the author, and a lyric in doggerel. Surely this is, indeed, a literary curiosity. The sonnet runs thus: —

"O wormy Thomas Stoddart, who inheritest
   Rich thoughts and loathsome, nauseous words and rare,
Tell me, my friend, why is it that thou ferretest
   And gropest in each death-corrupted lair?
Seek'st thou for maggots such as have affinity
   With those in thine own brain, or dost thou think
   That all is sweet which hath a horrid stink?
Why dost thou make Haut-gout thy sole divinity?
Here is enough of genius to convert

Vile dung to precious diamonds and to spare,
Then why transform the diamond into dirt,
And change thy mind, which should be rich and fair,
Into a medley of creations foul,
As if a Seraph would become a Ghoul?"

No doubt Mr. Stoddart's other passion for angling, in which he used a Scottish latitude concerning bait, impelled him to search for "worms and maggots": —

"Fire and faggots,
Worms and maggots,"

as Aytoun writes on the other fly-leaf, are indeed the matter of "The Death Wake."

Then, why, some one may ask, write about "The Death Wake" at all? Why rouse again the nightmare of a boy of twenty? Certainly I am not to say that "The Death Wake" is a pearl of great price, but it does contain passages of poetry — of poetry very curious because it is full of the new note, the new melody which young Mr. Tennyson was beginning to waken. It anticipates Beddoes, it coincides with Gautier and *Les Chimères* of Gérard, it answers the accents, then unheard in England, of Poe. Some American who read out of the way things, and was not too scrupulous, recognised, and robbed, a brother in Tom Stoddart. Eleven years after "The Death Wake" appeared in England, it was published in *Graham's Magazine*, as "Agatha, a Necromaunt in Three Chimeras," by Louis Fitzgerald Tasistro. Now Poe was closely connected with *Graham's Magazine*, and after "Arthur Gordon Pym," "Louis Fitzgerald Tasistro" does suggest Edgar Allen Poe. But Poe was not Tasistro.

So much for the literary history of the Lunacy.

The poem begins — Chimera I. begins: —

"An anthem of a sister choristry!
And, like a windward murmur of the sea,
O'er silver shells, so solemnly it falls!"

The anthem accompanies a procession of holy fathers towards a bier;

"Agathè
Was on the lid — a name. And who? No more!
'Twas only Agathè."

A solitary monk is prowling around in the moonlit cathedral; he has a brow of stony marble, he has raven hair, and he falters out the name of Agathè. He has said adieu to that fair one, and to her sister Peace, that lieth in her grave. He has loved, and loves, the silent Agathè. He was the son of a Crusader,

”And Julio had fain
Have been a warrior, but his very brain
Grew fevered at the sickly thought of death,
And to be stricken with a want of breath.”

On the whole he did well not to enter the service. Mr. Aytoun has here written — “A rum Cove for a hussar.”

”And he would say
A curse be on their laurels.
And anon
Was Julio forgotten and his line —
No wonder for this frenzied tale of mine.”

How? asks Aytoun, nor has the grammatical enigma yet been unriddled.

“Oh! he was wearied of this passing scene!
But loved not Death; his purpose was between
Life and the grave; and it would vibrate there
Like a wild bird that floated far and fair
Betwixt the sun and sea!”

So “he became monk,” and was sorry he had done so, especially when he met a pretty maid,

“And this was Agathè, young Agathè,
A motherless fair girl,”

whose father was a kind of Dombey, for

”When she smiled
He bade no father’s welcome to the child,
But even told his wish, and will’d it done,
For her to be sad-hearted, and a nun!”

So she “took the dreary veil.”

They met like a blighted Isabella and Lorenzo:

“They met many a time
In the lone chapels after vesper chime,
They met in love and fear.”

Then, one day,

”He heard it said:
Poor Julio, thy Agathè is dead.”

She died

“Like to a star within the twilight hours
Of morning, and she was not! Some have thought
The Lady Abbess gave her a mad draught.”

Here Mr. Aytoun, with sympathy, writes “Damn her!” (the Lady Abbess, that is) and suggests that thought must be read “thaft.”

Through “the arras of the gloom” (arras is good), the pale breezes are moaning, and Julio is wan as stars unseen for paleness. However, he lifts the tombstone “as it were lightsome as a summer gladness.” “A summer gladness,” remarks Mr. Aytoun, “may possibly weigh about half-an-ounce.” Julio came on a skull, a haggard one, in the grave, and Mr. Aytoun kindly designs a skeleton, ringing a bell, and crying “Dust ho!”

Now go, and give your poems to your friends!

Finally Julio unburies Agathè: —

”Thou must go,
My sweet betrothed, with me, but not below,
Where there is darkness, dream, and solitude,
But where is light, and life, and one to brood
Above thee, till thou wakest. Ha, I fear
Thou wilt not wake for ever, sleeping here,
Where there are none but the winds to visit thee.
And Convent fathers, and a choristry
Of sisters saying Hush! But I will sing
Rare songs to thy pure spirit, wandering
Down on the dews to hear me; I will tune
The instrument of the ethereal moon,
And all the choir of stars, to rise and fall
In harmony and beauty musical.”

Is this not melodious madness, and is this picture of the distraught priest, setting forth to sail the seas with his dead lady, not an invention that Nanteuil might have illustrated, and the clan of Bousingots approved?

The Second Chimera opens nobly: —

“A curse! a curse! the beautiful pale wing
Of a sea-bird was worn with wandering,
And, on a sunny rock beside the shore,

It stood, the golden waters gazing o’er;
And they were nearing a brown amber flow
Of weeds, that glittered gloriously below!”

Julio appears with Agathè in his arms, and what ensues is excellent of its kind: —

“He dropt upon a rock, and by him placed,
Over a bed of sea-pinks growing waste,
The silent ladye, and he mutter’d wild,
Strange words about a mother and no child.
“And I shall wed thee, Agathè! although
Ours be no God-blest bridal — even so!”
And from the sand he took a silver shell,
That had been wasted by the fall and swell
Of many a moon-borne tide into a ring —
A rude, rude ring; it was a snow-white thing,
Where a lone hermit limpet slept and died
In ages far away. ‘Thou art a bride,
Sweet Agathè! Wake up; we must not linger!’
He press’d the ring upon her chilly finger,
And to the sea-bird on its sunny stone
Shouted, ‘Pale priest that liest all alone
Upon thy ocean altar, rise, away
To our glad bridal!’ and its wings of gray
All lazily it spread, and hover’d by
With a wild shriek — a melancholy cry!
Then, swooping slowly o’er the heaving breast
Of the blue ocean, vanished in the west.”

Julio sang a mad song of a mad priest to a dead maid: —

. . .

“A rosary of stars, love! a prayer as we glide,
And a whisper on the wind, and a murmur on the tide,
And we’ll say a fair adieu to the flowers that are seen,
With shells of silver sown in radiancy between.

“A rosary of stars, love! the purest they shall be,

Like spirits of pale pearls in the bosom of the sea;
Now help thee, Virgin Mother, with a blessing as we go,
Upon the laughing waters that are wandering below."

One can readily believe that Poe admired this musical sad song, if, indeed, he ever saw the poem.

One may give too many extracts, and there is scant room for the extraordinary witchery of the midnight sea and sky, where the dead and the distraught drift wandering,

"And the great ocean, like the holy hall,
Where slept a Seraph host maritimal,
Was gorgeous with wings of diamond" —

it was a sea
“Of radiant and moon-breasted emerald.”

There follows another song —

“’Tis light to love thee living, girl, when hope is full and fair,
In the springtide of thy beauty, when there is no sorrow there
No sorrow on thy brow, and no shadow on thy heart,
When, like a floating sea-bird, bright and beautiful thou art

. . .

“But when the brow is blighted, like a star at morning tide
And faded is the crimson blush upon the cheek beside,
It is to love as seldom love the brightest and the best,
When our love lies like a dew upon the one that is at rest.”

We ought to distrust our own admiration of what is rare, odd, novel to us, found by us in a sense, and especially one must distrust one’s liking for the verses of a Tweedside angler, of a poet whose forebears lie in the green kirkyard of Yarrow. But, allowing for all this, I cannot but think these very musical, accomplished, and, in their place, appropriate verses, to have been written by a boy of twenty. Nor is it a common imagination, though busy in this vulgar field of horrors, that lifts the pallid bride to look upon the mirror of the sea —

“And bids her gaze into the startled sea,
And says, ‘Thine image, from eternity,
Hath come to meet thee, ladye!’ and anon
He bade the cold corse kiss the shadowy one
That shook amid the waters.”

The picture of the madness of thirst, allied to the disease of the brain, is extremely powerful, the delirious monk tells the salt sea waves

“That ye have power, and passion, and a sound
As of the flying of an angel round
The mighty world; that ye are one with time!”

Here, I can’t but think, is imagination.

Mr. Aytoun, however, noted none of those passages, nor that where, in tempest and thunder, a shipwrecked sailor swims to the strange boat, sees the Living Love and the Dead, and falls back into the trough of the wave. But even the friendly pencil of Bon Gaultier approves the passage where an isle rises above the sea, and the boat is lightly stranded on the shore of pure and silver shells. The horrors of corruption, in the Third Chimera, may be left unquoted, Aytoun parodies —

“The chalk, the chalk, the cheese, the cheese, the cheeses,
And straightway dropped he down upon his kneeses.”

Julio comes back to reason, hates the dreadful bride, and feeds on limpets, “by the mass, he feasteth well!”

There was a holy hermit on the isle,

“I ween like other hermits, so was he.”

He is Agathè’s father, and he has retired to an eligible island where he may repent his cruelty to his daughter. Julio tells his tale, and goes mad again. The apostrophe to Lunacy which follows is marked “Beautiful” by Aytoun, and is in the spirit of Charles Lamb’s remark that madness has pleasures unknown to the sane.

”Thou art, thou art alone,
A pure, pure being, but the God on high
Is with thee ever as thou goest by.”

Julio watches again beside the Dead, till morning comes, bringing

“A murmur far and far, of those that stirred
Within the great encampment of the sea.”

The tide sweeps the mad and the dead down the shores. “He perished in a dream.” As for the Hermit, he buried them, not knowing who they were, but on a later day found and recognised the golden cross of Agathè,

“For long ago he gave that blessed cross
To his fair girl, and knew the relic still.”

So the Hermit died of remorse, and one cannot say, with Walton, “and I hope the reader is sorry.”

The “other poems” are vague memories of Shelley, or anticipations of Poe. One of them is curiously styled “Her, a Statue,” and contains a passage that reminds us of a rubaiyat of Omar’s,

”She might see

A love-wing’d Seraph glide in glory by,
Striking the tent of its mortality.

“But that is but a tent wherein may rest
A Sultan to the realm of Death addrest;
The Sultan rises, and the dark Ferrásh
Strikes, and prepares it for another guest.”

Most akin to Poe is the “Hymn to Orion,”

“Dost thou, in thy vigil, hail
Arcturus on his chariot pale,
Leading him with a fiery flight —
Over the hollow hill of night?”

This, then, is a hasty sketch, and incomplete, of a book which, perhaps, is only a curiosity, but which, I venture to think, gave promise of a poet. Where is the lad of twenty who has written as well to-day — nay, where is the mature person of forty? There was a wind of poetry abroad in 1830, blowing over the barricades of Paris, breathing by the sedges of Cam, stirring the heather on the hills of Yarrow. Hugo, Mr. Browning, Lord Tennyson, caught the breeze in their sails, and were borne adown the Tigris of romance. But the breath that stirred the loch where Tom Stoddart lay and mused in his boat, soon became to him merely the curl on the waters of lone St. Mary’s or Loch Skene, and he began casting over the great uneducated trout of a happier time, forgetful of the Muse. He wrote another piece, with a sonorous and delightful title, “Ajalon of the Winds.” Where is “Ajalon of the Winds”? Miss Stoddart knows nothing of it, but I fancy that the thrice-loathed Betty could have told a tale.

MALIM CONVIVIS QVAM PLACVISSE COQVIS.

We need not, perhaps, regret that Mr. Stoddart withdrew from the struggles and competitions of poetic literature. No very high place, no very glorious crown, one fancies, would have been his. His would have been anxiety, doubt of self, disappointment, or, if he succeeded, the hatred, and envyings, and lies which even then dogged the steps of the victor. It was better to be quiet and go a-fishing.

“Sorrow, sorrow speed away
  To our angler’s quiet mound,
With the old pilgrim, twilight gray,

Enter through the holy ground;
There he sleeps whose heart is twined
With wild stream and wandering burn,
Wooer of the western wind
Watcher of the April morn!”

CHAPTER VIII: THE CONFESSIONS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

My copy of the Confessions is a dark little book, “a size uncumbersome to the nicest hand,” in the format of an Elzevir, bound in black morocco, and adorned with “blind-tooled,” that is ungilt, skulls and crossbones. It has lost the title-page with the date, but retains the frontispiece, engraved by Huret. Saint Augustine, in his mitre and other episcopal array, with a quill in his hand, sits under a flood of inspiring sunshine. The dumpy book has been much read, was at some time the property of Mr. John Philips, and bears one touching manuscript note, of which more hereafter. It is, I presume, a copy of the translation by Sir Toby Matthew. The author of the Preface declares, with truth, that the translator “hath consulted so closely and earnestly with the saint that he seemeth to have lighted his torch att his fire, and to speak in the best and most significant English, what and how he would have done had he understood our language.”

There can be no better English version of this famous book, in which Saint Augustine tells the story of his eager and passionate youth — a youth tossed about by the contending tides of Love, human and divine. Reading it to-day, with a mundane curiosity, we may half regret the space which he gives to theological metaphysics, and his brief tantalising glimpses of what most interests us now — the common life of men when the Church was becoming mistress of the world, when the old Religions were dying of allegory and moral interpretations and occult dreams. But, even so, Saint Augustine’s interest in himself, in the very obscure origins of each human existence, in the psychology of infancy and youth, in school disputes, and magical pretensions; his ardent affections, his exultations, and his faults, make his memoirs immortal among the unveilings of the spirit. He has studied babies, that he may know his dark beginnings, and the seeds of grace and of evil. “Then, by degrees, I began to find where I was; and I had certain desires to declare my will to those by whom it might be executed. But I could not do it, . . . therefore would I be tossing my arms, and sending out certain cryes, . . . and when they obeyed me not . . . I would fall into a rage, and that not against such as were my subjects or servants, but against my Elders and my betters, and I would revenge myself upon them by crying.” He has observed that infants “begin to laugh, first sleeping, and then shortly waking;” a curious note, but he does not ask wherefore the sense of humour, or the expression of it, comes to children first in their slumber. Of what do babies dream? And what do the nested swallows chirrup to each other in their sleep?

"Such have I understood that such infants are as I could know, and such have I been told that I was by them who brought me up, though even they may rather be accounted not to know, than to know these things." One thing he knows, "that even infancy is subject to sin." From the womb we are touched with evil. "Myselfe have seene and observed some little child, who could not speake; and yet he was all in an envious kind of wrath, looking pale with a bitter countenance upon his foster-brother." In an envious kind of wrath! Is it not the motive of half our politics, and too much of our criticism? Such is man's inborn nature, not to be cured by laws or reforms, not to be washed out of his veins, though "blood be shed like rain, and tears like a mist." For "an infant cannot endure a companion to feed with him in a fountain of milk which is richly abounding and overflowing, although that companion be wholly destitute, and can take no other food but that." This is the Original Sin, inherited, innate, unacquired; for this are "babes span-long" to suffer, as the famous or infamous preacher declared. "Where, or at what time, was I ever innocent?" he cries, and hears no answer from "the dark backward and abysm" of the pre-natal life.

Then the Saint describes a child's learning to speak; how he amasses verbal tokens of things, "having tamed, and, as it were, broken my mouth to the pronouncing of them." "And so I began to launch out more deeply into the tempestuous traffique and society of mankind." Tempestuous enough he found or made it — this child of a Pagan father and a Christian saint, Monica, the saint of Motherhood. The past generations had "chalked out certain laborious ways of learning," and, perhaps, Saint Augustine never forgave the flogging pedagogue — the *plagosus Orbilius* of his boyhood. Long before his day he had found out that the sorrows of children, and their joys, are no less serious than the sorrows of mature age. "Is there, Lord, any man of so great a mind that he can think lightly of those racks, and hooks, and other torments, for the avoiding whereof men pray unto Thee with great fear from one end of the world to the other, as that he can make sport at such as doe most sharply inflict these things upon them, as our parents laughed at the torments which we children susteyned at our master's hands?" Can we suppose that Monica laughed, or was it only the heathen father who approved of "roughing it?" "Being yet a childe, I began to beg Thy ayde and succour; and I did loosen the knots of my tongue in praying Thee; and I begged, being yet a little one, with no little devotion, that I might not be beaten at the schoole." One is reminded of Tom Tulliver, who gave up even praying that he might learn one part of his work: "Please make Mr. — say that I am not to do mathematics."

The Saint admits that he lacked neither memory nor wit, "but he took delight in playing." "The plays and toys of men are called business, yet, when children fall unto them, the same men punish them." Yet the schoolmaster was "more fed upon by rage," if beaten in any little question of learning, than the boy; "if in any match at Ball I had been maistered by one of my playfellows." He "aspired proudly to be victorious in the matches which he made," and I seriously regret to say that he would buy a match, and pay his opponent to lose when he could not win fairly. He liked romances also, "to have myne eares scratched with lying fables" — a "lazy, idle boy," like him who dallied with Rebecca and Rowena in the holidays of Charter House.

Saint Augustine, like Sir Walter Scott at the University of Edinburgh, was "The Greek Dunce." Both of these great men, to their sorrow and loss, absolutely and totally declined to learn Greek. "But what the reason was why I hated the Greeke language, while I was taught it, being a child, I do not yet understand." The Saint was far from being alone in that distaste, and he who writes loathed Greek like poison — till he came to Homer. Latin the Saint loved, except "when reading, writing, and casting of accounts was taught in Latin, which I held not for lesse paynefull or penal than the very Greeke. I wept for Dido's death, who made herselfe away with the sword," he declares, "and even so, the saying that two and two makes foure was an ungrateful song in mine ears; whereas the wooden horse full of armed men, the burning of Troy, and the very Ghost of Creusa, was a most delightful spectacle of vanity."

In short, the Saint was a regular Boy — a high-spirited, clever, sportive, and wilful creature. He was as fond as most boys of the mythical tales, "and for that I was accounted to be a towardly boy." Meanwhile he does not record that Monica disliked his learning the foolish dear old heathen fables— "that flood of hell!"

Boyhood gave place to youth, and, allowing for the vanity of self-accusation, there can be little doubt that the youth of Saint Augustine was *une jeunesse orageuse*. "And what was that wherein I took delight but to love and to be beloved." There was ever much sentiment and affection in his amours, but his soul "could not distinguish the beauty of chast love from the muddy darkness of lust. Streams of them did confusedly boyl in me" — in his African veins. "With a restless kind of weariness" he pursued that Other Self of the Platonic dream, neglecting the Love of God:

"Oh, how late art thou come, O my Joy!"

The course of his education — for the Bar, as we should say — carried him from home to Carthage, where he rapidly forgot the pure counsels of his mother "as old wife's consailes." "And we delighted in doing ill, not only for the pleasure of the fact, but even for the affection of prayse." Even Monica, it seems, justified the saying:

"Every woman is at heart a Rake."

Marriage would have been his making, Saint Augustine says, "but she desired not even that so very much, lest the cloggs of a wife might have hindered her hopes of me . . . In the meantime the reins were loosed to me beyond reason." Yet the sin which he regrets most bitterly was nothing more dreadful than the robbery of an orchard! Pears he had in plenty, none the less he went, with a band of roisterers, and pillaged another man's pear tree. "I loved the sin, not that which I obtained by the same, but I loved the sin itself." There lay the sting of it! They were not even unusually excellent pears. "A Peare tree ther was, neere our vineyard, heavy loaden with fruite, which tempted not greatly either the sight or tast. To the shaking and robbing thereof, certaine most wicked youthes (whereof I was one) went late at night. We carried away huge burthens of fruit from thence, not for our owne eating, but to be cast before the hoggs."

Oh, moonlit night of Africa, and orchard by these wild seabanks where once Dido stood; oh, laughter of boys among the shaken leaves, and sound of falling fruit; how do you live alone out of so many nights that no man remembers? For Carthage is destroyed, indeed, and forsaken of the sea, yet that one hour of summer is to be unforgotten while man has memory of the story of his past.

Nothing of this, to be sure, is in the mind of the Saint, but a long remorse for this great sin, which he earnestly analyses. Nor is he so penitent but that he is clear-sighted, and finds the spring of his mis-doing in the Sense of Humour! "It was a delight and laughter which tickled us, even at the very hart, to find that we were upon the point of deceiving them who feared no such thing from us, and who, if they had known it, would earnestly have procured the contrary."

Saint Augustine admits that he lived with a fast set, as people say now— "the Depravers" or "Destroyers"; though he loved them little, "whose actions I ever did abhor, that is, their Destruction of others, amongst whom I yet lived with a kind of shameless bashfulness." In short, the "Hell-Fire Club" of that day numbered a reluctant Saint among its members! It was no Christian gospel, but the Hortensius of Cicero which won him from this perilous society. "It altered my affection, and made me address my prayers to Thee, O Lord, and gave me other desires and purposes than I had before. All vain hopes did instantly grow base in myne eyes, and I did, with an incredible heat of hart, aspire towards the Immortality of Wisdom." Thus it was really "Saint Tully," and not the mystic call of *Tolle*! *Lege*! that "converted" Augustine, diverting the current of his life into the channel of Righteousness. "How was I kindled then, oh, my God, with a desire to fly from earthly things towards Thee."

There now remained only the choice of a Road. Saint Augustine dates his own conversion from the day of his turning to the strait Christian orthodoxy. Even the Platonic writings, had he known Greek, would not have satisfied his desire. "For where was that Charity that buildeth upon the foundation of Humility, which is Christ Jesus? . . . These pages" (of the Platonists) "carried not in them this countenance of piety — the tears of confession, and that sacrifice of Thine which is an afflicted spirit, a contrite and humbled heart, the salvation of Thy people, the Spouse, the City, the pledge of Thy Holy Spirit, the Cup of our Redemption. No man doth there thus express himself. Shall not my soul be subject to God, for of Him is my salvation? For He is my God, and my salvation, my protectour; I shall never be moved. No man doth there once call and say to him: 'Come unto me all you that labour.'"

The heathen doctors had not the grace which Saint Augustine instinctively knew he lacked — the grace of Humility, nor the Comfort that is not from within but from without. To these he aspired; let us follow him on the path by which he came within their influence; but let us not forget that the guide on the way to the City was kind, clever, wordy, vain old Marcus Tullius Cicero. It is to the City that all our faces should be set, if we knew what belongs to our peace; thither we cast fond, hopeless, backward glances, even if we be of those whom Tertullian calls "Saint Satan's Penitents." Here, in Augustine, we meet a man who found the path — one of the few who have found it, of the few who have won that Love which is our only rest. It may be worth while to follow him to the journey's end.

The treatise of Cicero, then, inflamed Augustine "to the loving and seeking and finding and holding and inseparably embracing of wisdom itself, wheresoever it was." Yet, when he looked for wisdom in the Christian Scriptures, all the literary man, the rhetorician in him, was repelled by the simplicity of the style. Without going further than Mr. Pater's book, "Marius, the Epicurean," and his account of Apuleius, an English reader may learn what kind of style a learned African of that date found not too simple. But Cicero, rather than Apuleius, was Augustine's ideal; that verbose and sonorous eloquence captivated him, as it did the early scholars when learning revived. Augustine had dallied a little with the sect of the Manichees, which appears to have grieved his mother more than his wild life.

But she was comforted by a vision, when she found herself in a wood, and met "a glorious young man," who informed her that "where she was there should her son be also." Curious it is to think that this very semblance of a glorious young man haunts the magical dreams of heathen Red Indians, advising them where they shall find game, and was beheld in such ecstasies by John Tanner, a white man who lived with the Indians, and adopted their religion. The Greeks would have called this appearance Hermes, even in this guise Odysseus met him in the oak wood of Circe's Isle. But Augustine was not yet in his mother's faith; he still taught and studied rhetoric, contending for its prizes, but declining to be aided by a certain wizard of his acquaintance. He had entered as a competitor for a "Tragicall poeme," but was too sportsmanlike to seek victory by art necromantic. Yet he followed after Astrologers, because they used no sacrifices, and did not pretend to consult spirits. Even the derision of his dear friend Nebridius could not then move him from those absurd speculations. His friend died, and "his whole heart was darkened;" "mine eyes would be looking for him in all places, but they found him not, and I hated all things because they told me no news of him." He fell into an extreme weariness of life, and no less fear of death. He lived but by halves; having lost *dimidium animae suae*, and yet dreaded death, "Lest he might chance to have wholy dyed whome I extremely loved." So he returned to Carthage for change, and sought pleasure in other friendships; but "Blessed is the man that loves Thee and his friend in Thee and his enemy for Thee. For he only never loseth a dear friend to whom all men are dear, for His sake, who is never lost."

Here, on the margin of the old book, beside these thoughts, so beautiful if so helpless, like all words, to console, some reader long dead has written: —

"Pray for your poor servant, J. M."

And again,

"Pray for your poor friend."

Doubtless, some Catholic reader, himself bereaved, is imploring the prayers of a dear friend dead; and sure we need their petitions more than they need ours, who have left this world of temptation, and are at peace.

After this loss Saint Augustine went to Rome, his ambition urging him, perhaps, but more his disgust with the violent and riotous life of students in Carthage. To leave his mother was difficult, but "I lyed to my mother, yea, such a mother, and so escaped from her." And now he had a dangerous sickness, and afterwards betook himself to converse with the orthodox, for example at Milan with Saint Ambrose. In Milan his mother would willingly have continued in the African ritual — a Pagan survival — carrying wine and food to the graves of the dead; but this Saint Ambrose forbade, and she obeyed him for him "she did extremely affect for the regard of my spirituall good."

From Milan his friend Alipius preceded him to Rome, and there "was damnably delighted" with the gladiatorial combats, being "made drunk with a delight in blood." Augustine followed him to Rome, and there lost the girl of his heart, “so that my heart was wounded, as that the very blood did follow.” The lady had made a vow of eternal chastity, “having left me with a son by her.” But he fell to a new love as the old one was departed, and yet the ancient wound pained him still “after a more desperate and dogged manner.”

Haeret letalis arundo!

By these passions his conversion was delayed, the carnal and spiritual wills fighting against each other within him. “Give me chastity and continency, O Lord,” he would pray, “but do not give it yet,” and perhaps this is the frankest of the confessions of Saint Augustine. In the midst of this war of the spirit and the flesh, “Behold I heard a voyce, as if it had been of some boy or girl from some house not farre off, uttering and often repeating these words in a kind of singing voice,

“*Tolle, Lege; Tolle, Lege,*
Take up and read, take up and read.”

So he took up a Testament, and, opening it at random, after the manner of his Virgilian lots, read: —

“Not in surfeiting and wantonness, not in causality and uncleanness,” with what follows. “Neither would I read any further, neither was there any cause why I should.” Saint Augustine does not, perhaps, mean us to understand (as his translator does), that he was “miraculously called.” He knew what was right perfectly well before; the text only clinched a resolve which he has found it very hard to make. Perhaps there was a trifle of superstition in the matter. We never know how superstitious we are. At all events, henceforth “I neither desired a wife, nor had I any ambitious care of any worldly thing.” He told his mother, and Monica rejoiced, believing that now her prayers were answered.

Such is the story of the conversion of Saint Augustine. It was the maturing of an old purpose, and long deferred. Much stranger stories are told of Bunyan and Colonel Gardiner. He gave up rhetoric; another man was engaged “to sell words” to the students of Milan. Being now converted, the Saint becomes less interesting, except for his account of his mother’s death, and of that ecstatic converse they held “she and I alone, leaning against a window, which had a prospect upon the garden of our lodging at Ostia.” They

“Came on that which is, and heard
The vast pulsations of the world.”

“And whilest we thus spake, and panted towards the divine, we grew able to take a little taste thereof, with the whole strife of our hearts, and we sighed profoundly, and left there, confined, the very top and flower of our souls and spirits; and we returned to the noyse of language again, where words are begun and ended."

Then Monica fell sick to death, and though she had ever wished to lie beside her husband in Africa, she said: "Lay this Body where you will. Let not any care of it disquiet you; only this I entreat, that you will remember me at the altar of the Lord, wheresoever you be." "But upon the ninth day of her sickness, in the six-and-fiftieth year of her age, and the three-and-thirtieth of mine, that religious and pious soul was discharged from the prison of her body."

The grief of Augustine was not less keen, it seems, than it had been at the death of his friend. But he could remember how "she related with great dearness of affection, how she never heard any harsh or unkind word to be darted out of my mouth against her." And to this consolation was added who knows what of confidence and tenderness of certain hope, or a kind of deadness, perhaps, that may lighten the pain of a heart very often tried and inured to every pain. For it is certain that "this green wound" was green and grievous for a briefer time than the agony of his earlier sorrows. He himself, so earnest in analysing his own emotions, is perplexed by the short date of his tears, and his sharpest grief: "Let him read it who will, and interpret it as it pleaseth him."

So, with the death of Monica, we may leave Saint Augustine. The most human of books, the "Confessions," now strays into theology. Of all books that which it most oddly resembles, to my fancy at least, is the poems of Catullus. The passion and the tender heart they have in common, and in common the war of flesh and spirit; the shameful inappeasable love of Lesbia, or of the worldly life; so delightful and dear to the poet and to the saint, so despised in other moods conquered and victorious again, among the battles of the war in our members. The very words in which the Veronese and the Bishop of Hippo described the pleasure and gaiety of an early friendship are almost the same, and we feel that, born four hundred years later, the lover of Lesbia, the singer of Sirmio might actually have found peace in religion, and exchanged the earthly for the heavenly love.

CHAPTER IX: SMOLLETT

The great English novelists of the eighteenth century turned the course of English Literature out of its older channel. Her streams had descended from the double peaks of Parnassus to irrigate the enamelled fields and elegant parterres of poetry and the drama, as the critics of the period might have said. But Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, diverted the waters, from poetry and plays, into the region of the novel, whither they have brought down a copious alluvial deposit. Modern authors do little but till this fertile Delta: the drama is now in the desert, poetry is a drug, and fiction is literature. Among the writers who made this revolution, Smollett is, personally, the least well known to the world, despite the great part which autobiography and confessions play in his work. He is always talking about himself, and introducing his own experiences. But there is little evidence from without; his extant correspondence is scanty; he was not in Dr. Johnson's circle, much less was he in that of Horace Walpole. He was not a popular man, and probably he has long ceased to be a popular author. About 1780 the vendors of children's books issued abridgments of "Tom Jones" and "Pamela," "Clarissa" and "Joseph Andrews," adapted to the needs of infant minds. It was a curious enterprise, certainly, but the booksellers do not seem to have produced "Every Boy's Roderick Random," or "Peregrine Pickle for the Young." Smollett, in short, is less known than Fielding and Sterne, even Thackeray says but a word about him, in the "English Humorists," and he has no place in the series of "English Men of Letters."

What we know of Smollett reveals a thoroughly typical Scot of his period; a Scot of the species absolutely opposed to Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, and rather akin to the species of Robert Burns. "Rather akin," we may say, for Smollett, like Burns, was a humorist, and in his humour far from dainty; he was a personal satirist, and a satirist far from chivalrous. Like Burns, too, he was a poet of independence; like Burns, and even more than Burns, in a time of patronage he was recalcitrant against patrons. But, unlike Burns, he was *farouche* to an extreme degree; and, unlike Burns, he carried very far his prejudices about his "gentrice," his gentle birth. Herein he is at the opposite pole from the great peasant poet.

Two potent characteristics of his country were at war within him. There was, first, the belief in "gentrice," in a natural difference of kind between men of coat armour and men without it. Thus Roderick Random, the starving cadet of a line of small lairds, accepts the almost incredible self-denial and devotion of Strap as merely his due. Prince Charles could not have taken the devotion of Henry Goring, or of Neil MacEachain, more entirely as a matter of course, involving no consideration in return, than Roderick took the unparalleled self-sacrifice of his barber friend and school-mate. Scott has remarked on this contemptuous and ungrateful selfishness, and has contrasted it with the relations of Tom Jones and Partridge. Of course, it is not to be assumed that Smollett would have behaved like Roderick, when, "finding the fire in my apartment almost extinguished, I vented my fury upon poor Strap, whose ear I pinched with such violence that he roared hideously with pain . . . " To be sure Roderick presently "felt unspeakable remorse . . . foamed at the mouth, and kicked the chairs about the room." Now Strap had rescued Roderick from starvation, had bestowed on him hundreds of pounds, and had carried his baggage, and dined on his leavings. But Strap was not gently born! Smollett would not, probably, have acted thus, but he did not consider such conduct a thing out of nature.

On the other side was Smollett's Scottish spirit of independence. As early as 1515, James Ingles, chaplain of Margaret Tudor, wrote to Adam Williamson, "You know the use of this country. . . . The man hath more words than the master, and will not be content except he know the master's counsel. There is no order among us." Strap had the instinct of feudal loyalty to a descendant of a laird. But Smollett boasts that, being at the time about twenty, and having burdened a nobleman with his impossible play, "The Regicide," "resolved to punish his barbarous indifference, and actually discarded my Patron." *He* was not given to "booing" (in the sense of bowing), but had, of all known Scots, the most "canty conceit o' himsel'." These qualities, with a violence of temper which took the form of beating people when on his travels, cannot have made Smollett a popular character. He knew his faults, as he shows in the dedication of "Ferdinand, Count Fathom," to himself. "I have known you trifling, superficial, and obstinate in dispute; meanly jealous and awkwardly reserved; rash and haughty in your resentment; and coarse and lowly in your connections."

He could, it is true, on occasion, forgive (even where he had not been wronged), and could compensate, in milder moods, for the fierce attacks made in hours when he was "meanly jealous." Yet, in early life at least, he regarded his own Roderick Random as "modest and meritorious," struggling nobly with the difficulties which beset a "friendless orphan," especially from the "selfishness, envy, malice, and base indifference of mankind." Roderick himself is, in fact, the incarnation of the basest selfishness. In one of his adventures he is guilty of that extreme infamy which the d'Artagnan of "The Three Musketeers" and of the "Memoirs" committed, and for which the d'Artagnan of *Le Vicomte de*

Bragelonne took shame to himself. While engaged in a virtuous passion, Roderick not only behaves like a vulgar debauchee, but pursues the meanest arts of the fortune-hunter who is ready to marry any woman for her money. Such is the modest and meritorious orphan, and mankind now carries its "base indifference" so far, that Smollett's biographer, Mr. Hannay, says, "if Roderick had been hanged, I, for my part, should have heard the tidings unmoved . . . Smollett obviously died without realising how nearly the hero, who was in some sort a portrait of himself, came to being a ruffian."

Dr. Carlyle, in 1758, being in London, found Smollett "much of a humorist, and not to be put out of his way." A "humorist," here, means an overbearingly eccentric person, such as Smollett, who lived much in a society of literary dependants, was apt to become. But Dr. Carlyle also found that, though Smollett "described so well the characters of ruffians and profligates," he did not resemble them. Dr. Robertson, the historian, "expressed great surprise at his polished and agreeable manners, and the great urbanity of his conversation." He was handsome in person, as his portrait shows, but his "nervous system was exceedingly irritable and subject to passion," as he says in the Latin account of his health which, in 1763, he drew up for the physician at Montpellier. Though, when he chose, he could behave like a man of breeding, and though he undeniably had a warm heart for his wife and daughter, he did not always choose to behave well. Except Dr. Moore, his biographer, he seems to have had few real friends during most of his career.

As to persons whom he chose to regard as his enemies, he was beyond measure rancorous and dangerous. From his first patron, Lord Lyttelton, to his last, he pursued them with unscrupulous animosity. If he did not mean actually to draw portraits of his grandfather, his cousins, his schoolmaster, and the apothecary whose gallipots he attended — in "Roderick Random," — yet he left the originals who suggested his characters in a very awkward situation. For assuredly he did entertain a spite against his grandfather: and as many of the incidents in "Roderick Random" were autobiographical, the public readily inferred that others were founded on fact.

The outlines of Smollett's career are familiar, though gaps in our knowledge occur. Perhaps they may partly be filled up by the aid of passages in his novels, plays, and poems: in these, at all events, he describes conditions and situations through which he himself may, or must, have passed.

Born in 1721, he was a younger son of Archibald, a younger son of Sir James Smollett of Bonhill, a house on the now polluted Leven, between Loch Lomond and the estuary of the Clyde. Smollett's father made an imprudent marriage: the grandfather provided a small, but competent provision for him and his family, during his own life. The father, Archibald, died; the grandfather left nothing to the mother of Tobias and her children, but they were assisted with scrimp decency by the heirs. Hence the attacks on the grandfather and cousins of Roderick Random: but, later, Smollett returned to kinder feelings.

In some ways Tobias resembled his old grandsire. About 1710 that gentleman wrote a Memoir of his own life. Hence we learn that *he*, in childhood, like Roderick Random, was regarded as "a clog and burden," and was neglected by his father, ill-used by his step-mother. Thus Tobias had not only his own early poverty to resent, but had a hereditary grudge against fortune, and "the base indifference of mankind." The old gentleman was lodged "with very hard and penurious people," at Glasgow University. He rose in the world, and was a good Presbyterian Whig, but "had no liberty" to help to forfeit James II. "The puir child, his son" (James III. and VIII.), "if he was really such, was innocent, and it were hard to do anything that would touch the son for the father's fault." The old gentleman, therefore, though a Member of Parliament, evaded attending the first Parliament after the Union: "I had no freedom to do it, because I understood that the great business to be agitated therein was to make laws for abjuring the Pretender . . . which I could not go in with, being always of opinion that it was hard to impose oaths on people who had not freedom to take them."

This was uncommonly liberal conduct, in a Whig, and our Smollett, though no Jacobite, was in distinct and courageous sympathy with Jacobite Scotland. Indeed, he was as patriotic as Burns, or as his own Lismahago. These were times, we must remember, in which Scottish patriotism was more than a mere historical sentiment. Scotland was inconceivably poor, and Scots, in England, were therefore ridiculous. The country had, so far, gained very little by the Union, and the Union was detested even by Scottish Whig Earls. It is recorded by Moore that, while at the Dumbarton Grammar School, Smollett wrote "verses to the memory of Wallace, of whom he became an early admirer," having read "Blind Harry's translation of the Latin poems of John Blair," chaplain to that hero. There probably never were any such Latin poems, but Smollett began with the same hero-worship as Burns. He had the attachment of a Scot to his native stream, the Leven, which later he was to celebrate. Now if Smollett had credited Roderick Random with these rural, poetical, and patriotic tastes, his hero would have been much more human and amiable. There was much good in Smollett which is absent in Random. But for some reason, probably because Scotland was unpopular after the Forty-Five, Smollett merely describes the woes, ill usage, and retaliations of Roderick. That he suffered as Random did is to the last degree improbable. He had a fair knowledge of Latin, and was not destitute of Greek, while his master, a Mr. Love, bore a good character both for humanity and scholarship. He must have studied the classics at Glasgow University, where he was apprenticed to Mr. Gordon, a surgeon. Gordon, again, was an excellent man, appreciated by Smollett himself in after days, and the odious Potion of "Roderick Random" must, like his rival, Crab, have been merely a fancy sketch of meanness, hypocrisy, and profligacy. Perhaps the good surgeon became the victim of that "one continued string of epigrammatic sarcasms," such as Mr. Colquhoun told Ramsay of Ochtertyre, Smollett used to play off on his companions, "for which no talents could compensate." Judging by Dr. Carlyle's Memoirs this intolerable kind of display was not unusual in Caledonian conversation: but it was not likely to make Tobias popular in England.

Thither he went in 1739, with very little money, "and a very large assortment of letters of recommendation: whether his relatives intended to compensate for the scantiness of the one by their profusion in the other is uncertain; but he has often been heard to declare that their liberality in the last article was prodigious." The Smolletts were not "kinless loons"; they had connections: but who, in Scotland, had money? Tobias had passed his medical examinations, but he rather trusted in his MS. tragedy, "The Regicide." Tragical were its results for the author. Inspired by George Buchanan's Latin history of Scotland, Smollett had produced a play, in blank verse, on the murder of James I. That a boy, even a Scottish boy, should have an overweening passion for this unlucky piece, that he should expect by such a work to climb a step on fortune's ladder, is nowadays amazing. For ten years he clung to it, modified it, polished, improved it, and then published it in 1749, after the success of "Roderick Random." Twice he told the story of his theatrical mishaps and disappointments, which were such as occur to every writer for the stage. He wailed over them in "Roderick Random," in the story of Mr. Melopoyn; he prolonged his cry, in the preface to "The Regicide," and probably the noble whom he "lashed" (very indecently) in his two satires ("Advice," 1746, "Reproof," 1747, and in "Roderick Random") was the patron who could not get the tragedy acted. First, in 1739, he had a patron whom he "discarded." Then he went to the West Indies, and, returning in 1744, he lugged out his tragedy again, and fell foul again of patrons, actors, and managers. What befell him was the common fate. People did not, probably, hasten to read his play: managers and "supercilious peers" postponed that entertainment, or, at least, the noblemen could not make the managers accept it if they did not want it. Our taste differs so much from that of the time which admired Home's "Douglas," and "The Regicide" was so often altered to meet objections, that we can scarcely criticise it. Of course it is absolutely unhistorical; of course it is empty of character, and replete with fustian, and ineffably tedious; but perhaps it is not much worse than other luckier tragedies of the age. Naturally a lover calls his wounded lady “the bleeding fair.” Naturally she exclaims —

”Celestial powers
Protect my father, shower upon his — oh!” (Dies).

Naturally her adorer answers with —

”So may our mingling souls
To bliss supernal wing our happy — oh!” (Dies).

We are reminded of —

”Alas, my Bom!” (Dies).
“‘Bastes’ he would have said!”

The piece, if presented, must have been damned. But Smollett was so angry with one patron, Lord Lyttelton, that he burlesqued the poor man’s dirge on the death of his wife. He was so angry with Garrick that he dragged him into “Roderick Random” as Marmozet. Later, obliged by Garrick, and forgiving Lyttelton, he wrote respectfully about both. But, in 1746 (in “Advice”), he had assailed the “proud lord, who smiles a gracious lie,” and “the varnished ruffians of the State.” Because Tobias’s play was unacted, people who tried to aid him were liars and ruffians, and a great deal worse, for in his satire, as in his first novel, Smollett charges men of high rank with the worst of unnamable crimes. Pollio and Lord Strutwell, whoever they may have been, were probably recognisable then, and were undeniably libelled, though they did not appeal to a jury. It is improbable that Sir John Cope had ever tried to oblige Smollett. His ignoble attack on Cope, after that unfortunate General had been fairly and honourably acquitted of incompetence and cowardice, was, then, wholly disinterested. Cope is “a courtier Ape, appointed General.”

“Then Pug, aghast, fled faster than the wind,
Nor deign’d, in three-score miles, to look behind;
While every band for orders bleat in vain,
And fall in slaughtered heaps upon the plain,” —

of Preston Pans.

Nothing could be more remote from the truth, or more unjustly cruel. Smollett had not here even the excuse of patriotism. Sir John Cope was no Butcher Cumberland. In fact the poet’s friend is not wrong, when, in “Reproof,” he calls Smollett "a flagrant misanthrope." The world was out of joint for the cadet of Bonhill: both before and after his very trying experiences as a ship surgeon the managers would not accept "The Regicide." This was reason good why Smollett should try to make a little money and notoriety by penning satires. They are fierce, foul-mouthed, and pointless. But Smollett was poor, and he was angry; he had the examples of Pope and Swift before him; which, as far as truculence went, he could imitate. Above all, it was then the fixed belief of men of letters that some peer or other ought to aid and support them; and, as no peer did support Smollett, obviously they were "varnished ruffians." He erred as he would not err now, for times, and ways of going wrong, are changed. But, at best, how different are his angry couplets from the lofty melancholy of Johnson's satires!

Smollett's "small sum of money" did not permit him long to push the fortunes of his tragedy, in 1739; and as for his "very large assortment of letters of recommendation," they only procured for him the post of surgeon's mate in the *Cumberland* of the line. Here he saw enough of the horrors of naval life, enough of misery, brutality, and mismanagement, at Carthagena (1741), to supply materials for the salutary and sickening pages on that theme in "Roderick Random." He also saw and appreciated the sterling qualities of courage, simplicity, and generosity, which he has made immortal in his Bowlings and Trunnions.

It is part of a novelist's business to make one half of the world know how the other half lives; and in this province Smollett anticipated Dickens. He left the service as soon as he could, when the beaten fleet was refitting at Jamaica. In that isle he seems to have practised as a doctor; and he married, or was betrothed to, a Miss Lascelles, who had a small and far from valuable property. The real date of his marriage is obscure: more obscure are Smollett's resources on his return to London, in 1744. Houses in Downing Street can never have been cheap, but we find "Mr. Smollett, surgeon in Downing Street, Westminster," and, in 1746, he was living in May Fair, not a region for slender purses. His tragedy was now bringing in nothing but trouble, to himself and others. His satires cannot have been lucrative. As a dweller in May Fair he could not support himself, like his Mr. Melopoyn, by writing ballads for street singers. Probably he practised in his profession. In "Count Fathom" he makes his adventurer "purchase an old chariot, which was new painted for the occasion, and likewise hire a footman . . . This equipage, though much more expensive than his finances could bear, he found absolutely necessary to give him a chance of employment . . . A walking physician was considered as an obscure pedlar." A chariot, Smollett insists, was necessary to "every raw surgeon"; while Bob

Sawyer's expedient of "being called from church" was already *vieux jeu*, in the way of advertisement. Such things had been "injudiciously hackneyed." In this passage of Fathom's adventures, Smollett proclaims his insight into methods of getting practice. A physician must ingratiate himself with apothecaries and ladies' maids, or "acquire interest enough" to have an infirmary erected "by the voluntary subscriptions of his friends." Here Smollett denounces hospitals, which "encourage the vulgar to be idle and dissolute, by opening an asylum to them and their families, from the diseases of poverty and intemperance." This is odd morality for one who suffered from "the base indifference of mankind." He ought to have known that poverty is not a vice for which the poor are to be blamed; and that intemperance is not the only other cause of their diseases. Perhaps the unfeeling passage is a mere paradox in the style of his own Lismahago.

With or without a chariot, it is probable that Tobias had not an insinuating style, or "a good bedside manner"; friends to support a hospital for his renown he had none; but, somehow, he could live in May Fair, and, in 1746, could meet Dr. Carlyle and Stewart, son of the Provost of Edinburgh, and other Scots, at the Golden Ball in Cockspur Street. There they were enjoying "a frugal supper and a little punch," when the news of Culloden arrived. Carlyle had been a Whig volunteer: he, probably, was happy enough; but Stewart, whose father was in prison, grew pale, and left the room. Smollett and Carlyle then walked home through secluded streets, and were silent, lest their speech should bewray them for Scots. "John Bull," quoth Smollett, "is as haughty and valiant to-day, as he was abject and cowardly on the Black Wednesday when the Highlanders were at Derby."

"Weep, Caledonia, weep!" he had written in his tragedy. Now he wrote "Mourn, hapless Caledonia, mourn." Scott has quoted, from Graham of Gartmore, the story of Smollett's writing verses, while Gartmore and others were playing cards. He read them what he had written, "The Tears of Scotland," and added the last verse on the spot, when warned that his opinions might give offence.

"Yes, spite of thine insulting foe,
My sympathising verse shall flow."

The "Tears" are better than the "Ode to Blue-Eyed Ann," probably Mrs. Smollett. But the courageous author of "The Tears of Scotland," had manifestly broken with patrons. He also broke with Rich, the manager at Covent Garden, for whom he had written an opera libretto. He had failed as doctor, and as dramatist; nor, as satirist, had he succeeded. Yet he managed to wear wig and sword, and to be seen in good men's company. Perhaps his wife's little fortune supported him, till, in 1748, he produced "Roderick Random." It is certain that we never find Smollett in the deep distresses of Dr. Johnson and Goldsmith. Novels were now in vogue; "Pamela" was recent, "Joseph Andrews" was yet more recent, "Clarissa Harlowe" had just appeared, and Fielding was publishing "Tom Jones." Smollett, too, tried his hand, and, at last, he succeeded.

His ideas of the novel are offered in his preface. The Novel, for him, is a department of Satire; "the most entertaining and universally improving." To Smollett, "Roderick Random" seemed an "improving" work! *Où le didacticisme va t'il se nicher*? Romance, he declares, "arose in ignorance, vanity, and superstition," and declined into "the ludicrous and unnatural." Then Cervantes "converted romance to purposes far more useful and entertaining, by making it assume the sock, and point out the follies of ordinary life." Romance was to revive again some twenty years after its funeral oration was thus delivered. As for Smollett himself, he professedly "follows the plan" of Le Sage, in "Gil Blas" (a plan as old as Petronius Arbiter, and the "Golden Ass" of Apuleius); but he gives more place to "compassion," so as not to interfere with "generous indignation, which ought to animate the reader against the sordid and vicious disposition of the world." As a contrast to sordid vice, we are to admire "modest merit" in that exemplary orphan, Mr. Random. This gentleman is a North Briton, because only in North Britain can a poor orphan get such an education as Roderick's "birth and character require," and for other reasons. Now, as for Roderick, the schoolmaster "gave himself no concern about the progress I made," but, "should endeavour, with God's help, to prevent my future improvement." It must have been at Glasgow University, then, that Roderick learned "Greek very well, and was pretty far advanced in the mathematics," and here he must have used his genius for the *belles lettres*, in the interest of his "amorous complexion," by "lampooning the rivals" of the young ladies who admired him.

Such are the happy beginnings, accompanied by practical jokes, of this interesting model. Smollett's heroes, one conceives, were intended to be fine, though not faultless young fellows; men, not plaster images; brave, generous, free-living, but, as Roderick finds once, when examining his conscience, pure from serious stains on that important faculty. To us these heroes often appear no better than ruffians; Peregrine Pickle, for example, rather excels the infamy of Ferdinand, Count Fathom, in certain respects; though Ferdinand is professedly "often the object of our detestation and abhorrence," and is left in a very bad, but, as "Humphrey Clinker" shows, in by no means a hopeless way. Yet, throughout, Smollett regarded himself as a moralist, a writer of improving tendencies; one who “lashed the vices of the age.” He was by no means wholly mistaken, but we should probably wrong the eighteenth century if we accepted all Smollett’s censures as entirely deserved. The vices which he lashed are those which he detected, or fancied that he detected, in people who regarded a modest and meritorious Scottish orphan with base indifference. Unluckily the greater part of mankind was guilty of this crime, and consequently was capable of everything.

Enough has probably been said about the utterly distasteful figure of Smollett’s hero. In Chapter LX. we find him living on the resources of Strap, then losing all Strap’s money at play, and then “I bilk my taylor.” That is, Roderick orders several suits of new clothes, and sells them for what they will fetch. Meanwhile Strap can live honestly anywhere, while he has his ten fingers. Roderick rescues himself from poverty by engaging, with his uncle, in the slave trade. We are apt to consider this commerce infamous. But, in 1763, the Evangelical director who helped to make Cowper “a castaway,” wrote, as to the slaver’s profession: “It is, indeed, accounted a genteel employment, and is usually very profitable, though to me it did not prove so, the Lord seeing that a large increase of wealth could not be good for me.” The reverend gentleman had, doubtless, often sung —

”*Time for us to go,*
Time for us to go,
And when we’d got the hatches down,
’Twas *time for us to go*!”

Roderick, apart from “black ivory,” is aided by his uncle and his long lost father. The base world, in the persons of Strap, Thompson, the uncle, Mr. Sagely, and other people, treats him infinitely better than he deserves. His very love (as always in Smollett) is only an animal appetite, vigorously insisted upon by the author. By a natural reaction, Scott, much as he admired Smollett, introduced his own blameless heroes, and even Thackeray could only hint at the defects of youth, in “Esmond.” Thackeray is accused of making his good people stupid, or too simple, or eccentric, and otherwise contemptible. Smollett went further: Strap, a model of benevolence, is ludicrous and a coward; even Bowling has the stage eccentricities of the sailor. Mankind was certain, in the long run, to demand heroes more amiable and worthy of respect. Our inclinations, as Scott says, are with “the open-hearted, good-humoured, and noble-minded Tom Jones, whose libertinism (one particular omitted) is perhaps rendered but too amiable by his good qualities." To be sure Roderick does befriend "a reclaimed street-walker" in her worst need, but why make her the *confidante* of the virginal Narcissa? Why reward Strap with her hand? Fielding decidedly, as Scott insists, "places before us heroes, and especially heroines, of a much higher as well as more pleasing character, than Smollett was able to present."

"But the deep and fertile genius of Smollett afforded resources sufficient to make up for these deficiencies . . . If Fielding had superior taste, the palm of more brilliancy of genius, more inexhaustible richness of invention, must in justice be awarded to Smollett. In comparison with his sphere, that in which Fielding walked was limited . . . " The second part of Scott's parallel between the men whom he considered the greatest of our novelists, qualifies the first. Smollett's invention was not richer than Fielding's, but the sphere in which he walked, the circle of his experience, was much wider. One division of life they knew about equally well, the category of rakes, adventurers, card-sharpers, unhappy authors, people of the stage, and ladies without reputations, in every degree. There were conditions of higher society, of English rural society, and of clerical society, which Fielding, by birth and education, knew much better than Smollett. But Smollett had the advantage of his early years in Scotland, then as little known as Japan; with the "nautical multitude," from captain to loblolly boy, he was intimately familiar; with the West Indies he was acquainted; and he later resided in Paris, and travelled in Flanders, so that he had more experience, certainly, if not more invention, than Fielding.

In "Roderick Random" he used Scottish "local colour" very little, but his life had furnished him with a surprising wealth of "strange experiences." Inns were, we must believe, the favourite home of adventures, and Smollett could ring endless changes on mistakes about bedrooms. None of them is so innocently diverting as the affair of Mr. Pickwick and the lady in yellow curl-papers; but the absence of that innocence which heightens Mr. Pickwick's distresses was welcome to admirers of what Lady Mary Wortley Montagu calls "gay reading."

She wrote from abroad, in 1752, "There is something humorous in R. Random, that makes me believe that the author is H. Fielding" — her kinsman. Her ladyship did her cousin little justice. She did not complain of the morals of "R. Random," but thought "Pamela" and "Clarissa" "likely to do more general mischief than the works of Lord Rochester." Probably "R. Random" did little harm. His career is too obviously ideal. Too many ups and downs occur to him, and few orphans of merit could set before themselves the ideal of bilking their tailors, gambling by way of a profession, dealing in the slave trade, and wheedling heiresses.

The variety of character in the book is vast; in Morgan we have an excellent, fiery, Welshman, of the stage type; the different minor miscreants are all vividly designed; the eccentric lady author may have had a real original; Miss Snapper has much vivacity as a wit; the French adventures in the army are, in their rude barbaric way, a forecast of Barry Lyndon's; and, generally, both Scott and Thackeray owe a good deal to Smollett in the way of suggestions. Smollett's extraordinary love of dilating on noisome smells and noisome sights, that intense affection for the physically nauseous, which he shared with Swift, is rather less marked in "Roderick" than in "Humphrey Clinker," and "The Adventures of an Atom." The scenes in the Marshalsea must have been familiar to Dickens. The terrible history of Miss Williams is Hogarth's Harlot's Progress done into unsparing prose. Smollett guides us at a brisk pace through the shady and brutal side of the eighteenth century; his vivacity is as unflagging as that of his disagreeable rattle of a hero. The passion usually understood as love is, to be sure, one of which he seems to have no conception; he regards a woman much as a greedy person might regard a sirloin of beef, or, at least, a plate of ortolans. At her marriage a bride is "dished up;" that is all.

Thus this "gay writing" no longer makes us gay. In reading "Peregrine Pickle" and "Humphrey Clinker," a man may find himself laughing aloud, but hardly in reading "Roderick Random." The fun is of the cruel primitive sort, arising merely from the contemplation of somebody's painful discomfiture. Bowling and Rattlin may be regarded with affectionate respect; but Roderick has only physical courage and vivacity to recommend him. Whether Smollett, in Flaubert's deliberate way, purposely abstained from moralising on the many scenes of physical distress which he painted; or whether he merely regarded them without emotion, has been debated. It seems more probable that he thought they carried their own moral. It is the most sympathetic touch in Roderick's character, that he writes thus of his miserable crew of slaves: "Our ship being freed from the disagreeable lading of negroes, *to whom indeed I had been a miserable slave since our leaving the coast of Guinea*, I began to enjoy myself." Smollett was a physician, and had the pitifulness of his profession; though we see how casually he makes Random touch on his own unwonted benevolence.

People had not begun to know the extent of their own brutality in the slave trade, but Smollett probably did know it. If a curious prophetic letter attributed to him, and published more than twenty years after his death, be genuine; he had the strongest opinions about this form of commercial enterprise. But he did not wear his heart on his sleeve, where he wore his irritable nervous system. It is probable enough that he felt for the victims of poverty, neglect, and oppression (despite his remarks on hospitals) as keenly as Dickens. We might regard his offensively ungrateful Roderick as a purely dramatic exhibition of a young man, if his other heroes were not as bad, or worse; if their few redeeming qualities were not stuck on in patches; and if he had omitted his remark about Roderick's "modest merit." On the other hand, the good side of Matthew Bramble seems to be drawn from Smollett's own character, and, if that be the case, he can have had little sympathy with his own humorous Barry Lyndons. Scott and Thackeray leaned to the favourable view: Smollett, his nervous system apart, was manly and kindly.

As regards plot, "Roderick Random" is a mere string of picturesque adventures. It is at the opposite pole from "Tom Jones" in the matter of construction. There is no reason why it should ever stop except the convenience of printers and binders. Perhaps we lay too much stress on the somewhat mechanical art of plot-building. Fielding was then setting the first and best English example of a craft in which the very greatest authors have been weak, or of which they were careless. Smollett was always rather more incapable, or rather more indifferent, in plot-weaving, than greater men.

In our day of royalties, and gossip about the gains of authors, it would be interesting to know what manner and size of a cheque Smollett received from his publisher, the celebrated Mr. Osborne. We do not know, but Smollett published his next novel "on commission," "printed for the Author"; so probably he was not well satisfied with the pecuniary result of "Roderick Random." Thereby, says Dr. Moore, he "acquired much more reputation than money." So he now published "The Regicide" "by subscription, that method of publication being then more reputable than it has been thought since" (1797). Of "The Regicide," and its unlucky preface, enough, or more, has been said. The public sided with the managers, not with the meritorious orphan.

For the sake of pleasure, or of new experiences, or of economy, Smollett went to Paris in 1750, where he met Dr. Moore, later his biographer, the poetical Dr. Akenside, and an affected painter. He introduced the poet and painter into "Peregrine Pickle"; and makes slight use of a group of exiled Jacobites, including Mr. Hunter of Burnside. In 1750, there were Jacobites enough in the French capital, all wondering very much where Prince Charles might be, and quite unconscious that he was their neighbour in a convent in the Rue St. Dominique. Though Moore does not say so (he is provokingly economical of detail), we may presume that Smollett went wandering in Flanders, as does Peregrine Pickle. It is curious that he should introduce a Capucin, a Jew, and a black-eyed damsel, all in the Ghent diligence, when we know that Prince Charles did live in Ghent, with the black-eyed Miss Walkenshaw, did go about disguised as a Capucin, and was tracked by a Jewish spy, while the other spy, Young

Glengarry, styled himself "Pickle." But all those events occurred about a year after the novel was published in 1751.

Before that date Smollett had got an M.D. degree from Aberdeen University, and, after returning from France, he practised for a year or two at Bath. But he could not expect to be successful among fashionable invalids, and, in "Humphrey Clinker," he make Matthew Bramble give such an account of the Bath waters as M. Zola might envy. He was still trying to gain ground in his profession, when, in March 1751, Mr. D. Wilson published the first edition of "Peregrine Pickle" "for the Author," unnamed. I have never seen this first edition, which was "very curious and disgusting." Smollett, in his preface to the second edition, talks of "the art and industry that were used to stifle him in the birth, by certain booksellers and others." He now "reformed the manners, and corrected the expressions," removed or modified some passages of personal satire, and held himself exempt from "the numerous shafts of envy, rancour, and revenge, that have lately, both in private and public, been levelled at his reputation." Who were these base and pitiless dastards? Probably every one who did not write favourably about the book. Perhaps Smollett suspected Fielding, whom he attacks in several parts of his works, treating him as a kind of Jonathan Wild, a thief-taker, and an associate with thieves. Why Smollett thus misconducted himself is a problem, unless he was either "meanly jealous," or had taken offence at some remarks in Fielding's newspaper. Smollett certainly began the war, in the first edition of "Peregrine Pickle." He made a kind of palinode to the "trading justice" later, as other people of his kind have done.

A point in "Peregrine Pickle" easily assailed was the long episode about a Lady of Quality: the beautiful Lady Vane, whose memoirs Smollett introduced into his tale. Horace Walpole found that she had omitted the only feature in her career of which she had just reason to be proud: the number of her lovers. Nobody doubted that Smollett was paid for casting his mantle over Lady Vane: moreover, he might expect a success of scandal. The *roman à clef* is always popular with scandal-mongers, but its authors can hardly hope to escape rebuke.

It was not till 1752 that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in Italy, received "Peregrine," with other fashionable romances— "Pompey the Little," "The Parish Girl," "Eleanora's Adventures," "The Life of Mrs. Theresa Constantia Phipps," "The Adventures of Mrs. Loveil," and so on. Most of them contained portraits of real people, and, no doubt, most of them were therefore successful. But where are they now? Lady Mary thought Lady Vane's part of "Peregrine" "more instructive to young women than any sermon that I know." She regarded Fielding as with Congreve, the only "original" of her age, but Fielding had to write for bread, and that is "the most contemptible way of getting bread." She did not, at this time, even know Smollett's name, but she admired him, and, later, calls him "my dear Smollett." This lady thought that Fielding did not know what sorry fellows his Tom Jones and Captain Booth were. Not near so sorry as Peregine Pickle were they, for this gentleman is a far more atrocious ruffian than Roderick Random.

None the less "Peregrine" is Smollett's greatest work. Nothing is so rich in variety of character, scene, and adventure. We are carried along by the swift and copious volume of the current, carried into very queer places, and into the oddest miscellaneous company, but we cannot escape from Smollett's vigorous grasp. Sir Walter thought that "Roderick" excelled its successor in "ease and simplicity," and that Smollett's sailors, in "Pickle," "border on caricature." No doubt they do: the eccentricities of Hawser Trunnion, Esq., are exaggerated, and Pipes is less subdued than Rattlin, though always delightful. But Trunnion absolutely makes one laugh out aloud: whether he is criticising the sister of Mr. Gamaliel Pickle in that gentleman's presence, at a pot-house; or riding to the altar with his squadron of sailors, tacking in an unfavourable gale; or being run away into a pack of hounds, and clearing a hollow road over a waggoner, who views him with "unspeakable terror and amazement." Mr. Winkle as an equestrian is not more entirely acceptable to the mind than Trunnion. We may speak of "caricature," but if an author can make us sob with laughter, to criticise him solemnly is ungrateful.

Except Fielding occasionally, and Smollett, and Swift, and Sheridan, and the authors of "The Rovers," one does not remember any writers of the eighteenth century who quite upset the gravity of the reader. The scene of the pedant's dinner after the manner of the ancients, does not seem to myself so comic as the adventures of Trunnion, while the bride is at the altar, and the bridegroom is tacking and veering with his convoy about the fields. One sees how the dinner is done: with a knowledge of Athenæus, Juvenal, Petronius, and Horace, many men could have written this set piece. But Trunnion is quite inimitable: he is a child of humour and of the highest spirits, like Mr. Weller the elder. Till Scott created Mause Headrig, no Caledonian had ever produced anything except "Tam o' Shanter," that could be a pendant to Trunnion. His pathos is possibly just a trifle overdone, though that is not my own opinion. Dear Trunnion! he makes me overlook the gambols of his detestable *protégé,* the hero.

That scoundrel is not an impossible caricature of an obstinate, vain, cruel libertine. Peregrine was precisely the man to fall in love with Emilia *pour le bon motif*, and then attempt to ruin her, though she was the sister of his friend, by devices worthy of Lovelace at his last and lowest stage. Peregrine's overwhelming vanity, swollen by facile conquests, would inevitably have degraded him to this abyss. The intrigue was only the worst of those infamous practical jokes of his, in which Smollett takes a cruel and unholy delight. Peregrine, in fact, is a hero of *naturalisme*, except that his fits of generosity are mere patches daubed on, and that his reformation is a farce, in which a modern *naturaliste* would have disdained to indulge. Emilia, in her scene with Peregrine in the *bouge* to which he has carried her, rises much above Smollett's heroines, and we could like her, if she had never forgiven behaviour which was beneath pardon.

Peregrine's education at Winchester bears out Lord Elcho's description of that academy in his lately published Memoirs. It was apt to develop Peregrines; and Lord Elcho himself might have furnished Smollett with suitable adventures. There can be no doubt that Cadwallader Crabtree suggested Sir Malachi Malagrowther to Scott, and that Hatchway and Pipes, taking up their abode with Peregrine in the Fleet, gave a hint to Dickens for Sam Weller and Mr. Pickwick in the same abode. That "Peregrine" "does far excel 'Joseph Andrews' and 'Amelia'," as Scott declares, few modern readers will admit. The world could do much better without "Peregrine" than without "Joseph"; while Amelia herself alone is a study greatly preferable to the whole works of Smollett: such, at least, is the opinion of a declared worshipper of that peerless lady. Yet "Peregrine" is a kind of Odyssey of the eighteenth century: an epic of humour and of adventure.

In February 1753, Smollett "obliged the town" with his "Adventures of Ferdinand, Count Fathom," a cosmopolitan swindler and adventurer. The book is Smollett's "Barry Lyndon," yet as his hero does not tell his own story, but is perpetually held up as a "dreadful example," there is none of Thackeray's irony, none of his subtlety. "Here is a really bad man, a foreigner too," Smollett seems to say, "do not be misled, oh maidens, by the wiles of such a Count! Impetuous youth, play not with him at billiards, basset, or gleek. Fathers, on such a rogue shut your doors: collectors, handle not his nefarious antiques. Let all avoid the path and shun the example of Ferdinand, Count Fathom!"

Such is Smollett's sermon, but, after all, Ferdinand is hardly worse than Roderick or Peregrine. The son of a terrible old sutler and camp-follower, a robber and slayer of wounded men, Ferdinand had to live by his wits, and he was hardly less scrupulous, after all, than Peregrine and Roderick. The daubs of casual generosity were not laid on, and that is all the difference. As Sophia Western was mistaken for Miss Jenny Cameron, so Ferdinand was arrested as Prince Charles, who, in fact, caused much inconvenience to harmless travellers. People were often arrested as "The Pretender's son" abroad as well as in England.

The life and death of Ferdinand's mother, shot by a wounded hussar in her moment of victory, make perhaps the most original and interesting part of this hero's adventures. The rest is much akin to his earlier novels, but the history of Rinaldo and Monimia has a passage not quite alien to the vein of Mrs. Radcliffe. Some remarks in the first chapter show that Smollett felt the censures on his brutality and "lowness," and he promises to seek "that goal of perfection where nature is castigated almost even to still life . . . where decency, divested of all substance, hovers about like a fantastic shadow."

Smollett never reached that goal, and even the shadow of decency never haunted him so as to make him afraid with any amazement. Smollett avers that he "has had the courage to call in question the talents of a pseudo-patron," and so is charged with "insolence, rancour, and scurrility." Of all these things, and of worse, he had been guilty; his offence had never been limited to "calling in question the talents" of persons who had been unsuccessful in getting his play represented. Remonstrance merely irritated Tobias. His new novel was but a fainter echo of his old novels, a panorama of scoundrelism, with the melodramatic fortunes of the virtuous Monimia for a foil. If read to-day, it is read as a sketch of manners, or want of manners. The scene in which the bumpkin squire rooks the accomplished Fathom at hazard, in Paris, is prettily conceived, and Smollett's indignation at the British system of pews in church is edifying. But when Monimia appears to her lover as he weeps at her tomb, and proves to be no phantom, but a "warm and substantial" Monimia, capable of being "dished up," like any other Smollettian heroine, the reader is sensibly annoyed. Tobias as *un romantique* is absolutely too absurd; "not here, oh Tobias, are haunts meet for thee."

Smollett's next novel, "Sir Launcelot Greaves," was not published till 1761, after it had appeared in numbers, in *The British Magazine*. This was a sixpenny serial, published by Newbery. The years between 1753 and 1760 had been occupied by Smollett in quarrelling, getting imprisoned for libel, editing the *Critical Review*, writing his "History of England," translating (or adapting old translations of) "Don Quixote," and driving a team of literary hacks, whose labours he superintended, and to whom he gave a weekly dinner. These exploits are described by Dr. Carlyle, and by Smollett himself, in "Humphrey Clinker." He did not treat his vassals with much courtesy or consideration; but then they expected no such treatment. We have no right to talk of his doings as "a blood-sucking method, literary sweating," like a recent biographer of Smollett. Not to speak of the oddly mixed metaphor, we do not know what Smollett's relations to his retainers really were. As an editor he had to see his contributors. The work of others he may have recommended, as "reader" to publishers. Others may have made transcripts for him, or translations. That Smollett “sweated” men, or sucked their blood, or both, seems a crude way of saying that he found them employment. Nobody says that Johnson “sweated” the persons who helped him in compiling his Dictionary; or that Mr. Jowett “sweated” the friends and pupils who aided him in his translation of Plato. Authors have a perfect right to procure literary assistance, especially in learned books, if they pay for it, and acknowledge their debt to their allies. On the second point, Smollett was probably not in advance of his age.

“Sir Launcelot Greaves” is, according to Chambers, “a sorry specimen of the genius of the author,” and Mr. Oliphant Smeaton calls it “decidedly the least popular” of his novels, while Scott astonishes us by preferring it to “Jonathan Wild.” Certainly it is inferior to “Roderick Random” and to “Peregrine Pickle,” but it cannot be so utterly unreal as “The Adventures of an Atom.” I, for one, venture to prefer “Sir Launcelot” to “Ferdinand, Count Fathom.” Smollett was really trying an experiment in the fantastic. Just as Mr. Anstey Guthrie transfers the mediæval myth of Venus and the Ring, or the Arabian tale of the bottled-up geni (or djinn) into modern life, so Smollett transferred Don Quixote. His hero, a young baronet of wealth, and of a benevolent and generous temper, is crossed in love. Though not mad, he is eccentric, and commences knight-errant. Scott, and others, object to his armour, and say that, in his ordinary clothes, and with his well-filled purse, he would have been more successful in righting wrongs. Certainly, but then the comic fantasy of the armed knight arriving at the ale-house, and jangling about the rose-hung lanes among the astonished folk of town and country, would have been lost. Smollett is certainly less unsuccessful in wild fantasy, than in the ridiculous romantic scenes where the substantial phantom of Monimia disports itself. The imitation of the knight by the nautical Captain Crowe (an excellent Smollettian mariner) is entertaining, and Sir Launcelot’s crusty Sancho is a pleasant variety in squires. The various forms of oppression which the knight resists are of historical interest, as also is the contested election between a rustic Tory and a smooth Ministerialist: “sincerely attached to the Protestant succession, in detestation of a popish, an abjured, and an outlawed Pretender.” The heroine, Aurelia Darrel, is more of a lady, and less of a luxury, than perhaps any other of Smollett’s women. But how Smollett makes love! “Tea was called. The lovers were seated; he looked and languished; she flushed and faltered; all was doubt and delirium, fondness and flutter.”

“All was gas and gaiters,” said the insane lover of Mrs. Nickleby, with equal delicacy and point.

Scott says that Smollett, when on a visit to Scotland, used to write his chapter of “copy” in the half-hour before the post went out. Scott was very capable of having the same thing happen to himself. “Sir Launcelot” is hurriedly, but vigorously written: the fantasy was not understood as Smollett intended it to be, and the book is blotted, as usual, with loathsome medical details. But people in Madame du Deffand’s circle used openly to discuss the same topics, to the confusion of Horace Walpole. As the hero of this book is a generous gentleman, as the most of it is kind and manly, and the humour provocative of an honest laugh, it is by no means to be despised, while the manners, if caricatured, are based on fact.

It is curious to note that in “Sir Launcelot Greaves,” we find a character, Ferret, who frankly poses as a *strugforlifeur*. M. Daudet’s *strugforlifeur* had heard of Darwin. Mr. Ferret had read Hobbes, learned that man was in a state of nature, and inferred that we ought to prey upon each other, as a pike eats trout. Miss Burney, too, at Bath, about 1780, met a perfectly emancipated young “New Woman.” She had read Bolingbroke and Hume, believed in nothing, and was ready to be a “Woman who Did.” Our ancestors could be just as advanced as we are.

Smollett went on compiling, and supporting himself by his compilations, and those of his vassals. In 1762 he unluckily edited a paper called *The Briton* in the interests of Lord Bute. *The Briton* was silenced by Wilkes’s *North Briton*. Smollett lost his last patron; he fell ill; his daughter died; he travelled angrily in France and Italy. His “Travels” show the choleric nature of the man, and he was especially blamed for not admiring the Venus de Medici. Modern taste, enlightened by the works of a better period of Greek art, has come round to Smollett’s opinions. But, in his own day, he was regarded as a Vandal and a heretic.

In 1764, he visited Scotland, and was warmly welcomed by his kinsman, the laird of Bonhill. In 1769, he published “The Adventures of an Atom,” a stupid, foul, and scurrilous political satire, in which Lord Bute, having been his patron, was “lashed” in Smollett’s usual style. In 1768, Smollett left England for ever. He desired a consulship, but no consulship was found for him, which is not surprising. He died at Monte Nova, near Leghorn, in September (others say October) 1771. He had finished “Humphrey Clinker,” which appeared a day or two before his death.

Thackeray thought “Humphrey Clinker” the most laughable book that ever was written. Certainly nobody is to be envied who does not laugh over the epistles of Winifred Jenkins. The book is too well known for analysis. The family of Matthew Bramble, Esq., are on their travels, with his nephew and niece, young Melford and Lydia Melford, with Miss Jenkins, and the squire’s tart, greedy, and amorous old maid of a sister, Tabitha Bramble. This lady's persistent amours and mean avarice scarcely strike modern readers as amusing. Smollett gave aspects of his own character in the choleric, kind, benevolent Matthew Bramble, and in the patriotic and paradoxical Lieutenant Lismahago. Bramble, a gouty invalid, is as full of medical abominations as Smollett himself, as ready to fight, and as generous and open-handed. Probably the author shared Lismahago's contempt of trade, his dislike of the Union (1707), his fiery independence (yet he *does* marry Tabitha!), and those opinions in which Lismahago heralds some of the social notions of Mr. Ruskin.

Melford is an honourable kind of "walking gentleman"; Lydia, though enamoured, is modest and dignified; Clinker is a worthy son of Bramble, with abundant good humour, and a pleasing vein of Wesleyan Methodism. But the grotesque spelling, rural vanity, and *naïveté* of Winifred Jenkins, with her affection for her kitten, make her the most delightful of this wandering company. After beholding the humours and partaking of the waters of Bath, they follow Smollett's own Scottish tour, and each character gives his picture of the country which Smollett had left at its lowest ebb of industry and comfort, and found so much more prosperous. The book is a mine for the historian of manners and customs: the novel-reader finds Count Fathom metamorphosed into Mr. Grieve, an exemplary apothecary, "a sincere convert to virtue," and "unaffectedly pious."

Apparently a wave of good-nature came over Smollett: he forgave everybody, his own relations even, and he reclaimed his villain. A patron might have played with him. He mellowed in Scotland: Matthew there became less tart, and more tolerant; an actual English Matthew would have behaved quite otherwise. "Humphrey Clinker" is an astonishing book, as the work of an exiled, poor, and dying man. None of his works leaves so admirable an impression of Smollett's virtues: none has so few of his less amiable qualities.

With the cadet of Bonhill, outworn with living, and with labour, died the burly, brawling, picturesque old English novel of humour and of the road. We have nothing notable in this manner, before the arrival of Mr. Pickwick. An exception will scarcely be made in the interest of Richard Cumberland, who, as Scott says, "has occasionally . . . become disgusting, when he meant to be humorous." Already Walpole had begun the new "Gothic romance," and the "Castle of Otranto," with Miss Burney's novels, was to lead up to Mrs. Radcliffe and Scott, to Miss Edgeworth and Miss Austen.

CHAPTER X: NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

Sainte-Beuve says somewhere that it is impossible to speak of “The German Classics.” Perhaps he would not have allowed us to talk of the American classics. American literature is too nearly contemporary. Time has not tried it. But, if America possesses a classic author (and I am not denying that she may have several), that author is decidedly Hawthorne. His renown is unimpeached: his greatness is probably permanent, because he is at once such an original and personal genius, and such a judicious and determined artist.

Hawthorne did not set himself to “compete with life.” He did not make the effort — the proverbially tedious effort — to say everything. To his mind, fiction was not a mirror of commonplace persons, and he was not the analyst of the minutest among their ordinary emotions. Nor did he make a moral, or social, or political purpose the end and aim of his art. Moral as many of his pieces naturally are, we cannot call them didactic. He did not expect, nor intend, to better people by them. He drew the Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale without hoping that his Awful Example would persuade readers to “make a clean breast” of their iniquities and their secrets. It was the moral situation that interested him, not the edifying effect of his picture of that situation upon the minds of novel-readers.

He set himself to write Romance, with a definite idea of what Romance-writing should be; “to dream strange things, and make them look like truth.” Nothing can be more remote from the modern system of reporting commonplace things, in the hope that they will read like truth. As all painters must do, according to good traditions, he selected a subject, and then placed it in a deliberately arranged light — not in the full glare of the noonday sun, and in the disturbances of wind, and weather, and cloud. Moonshine filling a familiar chamber, and making it unfamiliar, moonshine mixed with the “faint ruddiness on walls and ceiling” of fire, was the light, or a clear brown twilight was the light by which he chose to work. So he tells us in the preface to “The Scarlet Letter.” The room could be filled with the ghosts of old dwellers in it; faint, yet distinct, all the life that had passed through it came back, and spoke with him, and inspired him. He kept his eyes on these figures, tangled in some rare knot of Fate, and of Desire: these he painted, not attending much to the bustle of existence that surrounded them, not permitting superfluous elements to mingle with them, and to distract him.

The method of Hawthorne can be more easily traced than that of most artists as great as himself. Pope's brilliant passages and disconnected trains of thought are explained when we remember that "paper-sparing," as he says, he wrote two, or four, or six couplets on odd, stray bits of casual writing material. These he had to join together, somehow, and between his "Orient Pearls at Random Strung" there is occasionally "too much string," as Dickens once said on another opportunity. Hawthorne's method is revealed in his published note-books. In these he jotted the germ of an idea, the first notion of a singular, perhaps supernatural moral situation. Many of these he never used at all, on others he would dream, and dream, till the persons in the situations became characters, and the thing was evolved into a story. Thus he may have invented such a problem as this: "The effect of a great, sudden sin on a simple and joyous nature," and thence came all the substance of "The Marble Faun" ("Transformation"). The original and germinal idea would naturally divide itself into another, as the protozoa reproduce themselves. Another idea was the effect of nearness to the great crime on a pure and spotless nature: hence the character of Hilda. In the preface to "The Scarlet Letter," Hawthorne shows us how he tried, by reflection and dream, to warm the vague persons of the first mere notion or hint into such life as characters in romance inherit. While he was in the Civil Service of his country, in the Custom House at Salem, he could not do this; he needed freedom. He was dismissed by political opponents from office, and instantly he was himself again, and wrote his most popular and, perhaps, his best book. The evolution of his work was from the prime notion (which he confessed that he loved best when "strange") to the short story, and thence to the full and rounded novel. All his work was leisurely. All his language was picked, though not with affectation. He did not strive to make a style out of the use of odd words, or of familiar words in odd places. Almost always he looked for "a kind of spiritual medium, seen through which" his romances, like the Old Manse in which he dwelt, "had not quite the aspect of belonging to the material world."

The spiritual medium which he liked, he was partly born into, and partly he created it. The child of a race which came from England, robust and Puritanic, he had in his veins the blood of judges — of those judges who burned witches and persecuted Quakers. His fancy is as much influenced by the old fanciful traditions of Providence, of Witchcraft, of haunting Indian magic, as Scott's is influenced by legends of foray and feud, by ballad, and song, and old wives' tales, and records of conspiracies, fire-raisings, tragic love-adventures, and border wars. Like Scott, Hawthorne lived in phantasy — in phantasy which returned to the romantic past, wherein his ancestors had been notable men. It is a commonplace, but an inevitable commonplace, to add that he was filled with the idea of Heredity, with the belief that we are all only new combinations of our fathers that were before us. This has been made into a kind of pseudo-scientific doctrine by M. Zola, in the long series of his Rougon-Macquart novels. Hawthorne treated it with a more delicate and a serener art in “The House of the Seven Gables.”

It is curious to mark Hawthorne’s attempts to break away from himself — from the man that heredity, and circumstance, and the divine gift of genius had made him. He naturally “haunts the mouldering lodges of the past”; but when he came to England (where such lodges are abundant), he was ill-pleased and cross-grained. He knew that a long past, with mysteries, dark places, malisons, curses, historic wrongs, was the proper atmosphere of his art. But a kind of conscientious desire to be something other than himself — something more ordinary and popular — make him thank Heaven that his chosen atmosphere was rare in his native land. He grumbled at it, when he was in the midst of it; he grumbled in England; and how he grumbled in Rome! He permitted the American Eagle to make her nest in his bosom, “with the customary infirmity of temper that characterises this unhappy fowl,” as he says in his essay “The Custom House.” “The general truculency of her attitude” seems to “threaten mischief to the inoffensive community” of Europe, and especially of England and Italy.

Perhaps Hawthorne travelled too late, when his habits were too much fixed. It does not become Englishmen to be angry because a voyager is annoyed at not finding everything familiar and customary in lands which he only visits because they are strange. This is an inconsistency to which English travellers are particularly prone. But it is, in Hawthorne’s case, perhaps, another instance of his conscientious attempts to be, what he was not, very much like other people. His unexpected explosions of Puritanism, perhaps, are caused by the sense of being too much himself. He speaks of “the Squeamish love of the Beautiful” as if the love of the Beautiful were something unworthy of an able-bodied citizen. In some arts, as in painting and sculpture, his taste was very far from being at home, as his Italian journals especially prove. In short, he was an artist in a community for long most inartistic. He could not do what many of us find very difficult — he could not take Beauty with gladness as it comes, neither shrinking from it as immoral, nor getting girlishly drunk upon it, in the æsthetic fashion, and screaming over it in an intoxication of surprise. His tendency was to be rather shy and afraid of Beauty, as a pleasant but not immaculately respectable acquaintance. Or, perhaps, he was merely deferring to Anglo-Saxon public opinion.

Possibly he was trying to wean himself from himself, and from his own genius, when he consorted with odd amateur socialists in farm-work, and when he mixed, at Concord, with the "queer, strangely-dressed, oddly-behaved mortals, most of whom took upon themselves to be important agents of the world's destiny, yet were simple bores of a very intense water." They haunted Mr. Emerson as they haunted Shelley, and Hawthorne had to see much of them. But they neither made a convert of him, nor irritated him into resentment. His long-enduring kindness to the unfortunate Miss Delia Bacon, an early believer in the nonsense about Bacon and Shakespeare, was a model of manly and generous conduct. He was, indeed, an admirable character, and his goodness had the bloom on it of a courteous and kindly nature that loved the Muses. But, as one has ventured to hint, the development of his genius and taste was hampered now and then, apparently, by a desire to put himself on the level of the general public, and of their ideas. This, at least, is how one explains to oneself various remarks in his prefaces, journals, and note-books. This may account for the moral allegories which too weirdly haunt some of his short, early pieces. Edgar Poe, in a passage full of very honest and well-chosen praise, found fault with the allegorical business.

Mr. Hutton, from whose "Literary Essays" I borrow Poe's opinion, says: "Poe boldly asserted that the conspicuously ideal scaffoldings of Hawthorne's stories were but the monstrous fruits of the bad transcendental atmosphere which he breathed so long." But I hope this way of putting it is not Poe's. "Ideal scaffoldings," are odd enough, but when scaffoldings turn out to be "fruits" of an "atmosphere," and monstrous fruits of a "bad transcendental atmosphere," the brain reels in the fumes of mixed metaphors. "Let him mend his pen," cried Poe, "get a bottle of visible ink, come out from the Old Manse, cut Mr. Alcott," and, in fact, write about things less impalpable, as Mr. Mallock's heroine preferred to be loved, "in a more human sort of way."

Hawthorne's way was never too ruddily and robustly human. Perhaps, even in "The Scarlet Letter," we feel too distinctly that certain characters are moral conceptions, not warmed and wakened out of the allegorical into the real. The persons in an allegory may be real enough, as Bunyan has proved by examples. But that culpable clergyman, Mr. Arthur Dimmesdale, with his large, white brow, his melancholy eyes, his hand on his heart, and his general resemblance to the High Church Curate in Thackeray's "Our Street," is he real? To me he seems very unworthy to be Hester's lover, for she is a beautiful woman of flesh and blood. Mr. Dimmesdale was not only immoral; he was unsportsmanlike. He had no more pluck than a church-mouse. His miserable passion was degraded by its brevity; how could he see this woman's disgrace for seven long years, and never pluck up heart either to share her shame or *peccare forliter*? He is a lay figure, very cleverly, but somewhat conventionally made and painted.

The vengeful husband of Hester, Roger Chillingworth, is a Mr. Casaubon stung into jealous anger. But his attitude, watching ever by Dimmesdale, tormenting him, and yet in his confidence, and ever unsuspected, reminds one of a conception dear to Dickens. He uses it in "David Copperfield," where Mr. Micawber (of all people!) plays this trick on Uriah Heep; he uses it in "Hunted Down"; he was about using it in "Edwin Drood"; he used it (old Martin and Pecksniff) in "Martin Chuzzlewit." The person of Roger Chillingworth and his conduct are a little too melodramatic for Hawthorne's genius.

In Dickens's manner, too, is Hawthorne's long sarcastic address to Judge Pyncheon (in "The House of the Seven Gables"), as the judge sits dead in his chair, with his watch ticking in his hand. Occasionally a chance remark reminds one of Dickens; this for example: He is talking of large, black old books of divinity, and of their successors, tiny books, Elzevirs perhaps. "These little old volumes impressed me as if they had been intended for very large ones, but had been unfortunately blighted at an early stage of their growth." This might almost deceive the elect as a piece of the true Boz. Their widely different talents did really intersect each other where the perverse, the grotesque, and the terrible dwell.

To myself "The House of the Seven Gables" has always appeared the most beautiful and attractive of Hawthorne's novels. He actually gives us a love story, and condescends to a pretty heroine. The curse of "Maule's Blood" is a good old romantic idea, terribly handled. There is more of lightness, and of a cobwebby dusty humour in Hepzibah Pyncheon, the decayed lady shopkeeper, than Hawthorne commonly cares to display. Do you care for the "first lover," the Photographer's Young Man? It may be conventional prejudice, but I seem to see him going about on a tricycle, and I don't think him the right person for Phoebe. Perhaps it is really the beautiful, gentle, oppressed Clifford who haunts one's memory most, a kind of tragic and thwarted Harold Skimpole. "How pleasant, how delightful," he murmured, but not as if addressing any one. "Will it last? How balmy the atmosphere through that open window! An open window! How beautiful that play of sunshine. Those flowers, how very fragrant! That young girl's face, how cheerful, how blooming. A flower with the dew on it, and sunbeams in the dewdrops . . . " This comparison with Skimpole may sound like an unkind criticism of Clifford's character and place in the story — it is only a chance note of a chance resemblance.

Indeed, it may be that Hawthorne himself was aware of the resemblance. "An individual of Clifford's character," he remarks, "can always be pricked more acutely through his sense of the beautiful and harmonious than through his heart." And he suggests that, if Clifford had not been so long in prison, his æsthetic zeal "might have eaten out or filed away his affections." This was what befell Harold Skimpole — himself "in prisons often" — at Coavinses! The Judge Pyncheon of the tale is also a masterly study of swaggering black-hearted respectability, and then, in addition to all the poetry of his style, and the charm of his haunted air, Hawthorne favours us with a brave conclusion of the good sort, the old sort. They come into money, they marry, they are happy ever after. This is doing things handsomely, though some of our modern novelists think it coarse and degrading. Hawthorne did not think so, and they are not exactly better artists than Hawthorne.

Yet he, too, had his economies, which we resent. I do not mean his not telling us what it was that Roger Chillingworth saw on Arthur Dimmesdale's bare breast. To leave that vague is quite legitimate. But what had Miriam and the spectre of the Catacombs done? Who was the spectre? What did he want? To have told all this would have been better than to fill the novel with padding about Rome, sculpture, and the Ethics of Art. As the silly saying runs: "the people has a right to know" about Miriam and her ghostly acquaintance. But the "Marble Faun" is not of Hawthorne's best period, beautiful as are a hundred passages in the tale.

Beautiful passages are as common in his prose as gold in the richest quartz. How excellent are his words on the first faint but certain breath of Autumn in the air, felt, perhaps, early in July. "And then came Autumn, with his immense burthen of apples, dropping them continually from his overladen shoulders as he trudged along." Keats might have written so of Autumn in the orchards — if Keats had been writing prose.

There are geniuses more sunny, large, and glad than Hawthorne's, none more original, more surefooted, in his own realm of moonlight and twilight.

CHAPTER XI: THE PARADISE OF POETS

We were talking of Love, Constancy, the Ideal. "Who ever loved like the poets?" cried Lady Violet Lebas, her pure, pale cheek flushing. "Ah, if ever I am to love, he shall be a singer!"

"Tenors are popular, very," said Lord Walter.

"I mean a poet," she answered witheringly.

Near them stood Mr. Witham, the author of "Heart's Chords Tangled."

"Ah," said he, "that reminds me. I have been trying to catch it all the morning. That reminds me of my dream."

"Tell us your dream," murmured Lady Violet Lebas, and he told it.

"It was through an unfortunate but pardonable blunder," said Mr. Witham, "that I died, and reached the Paradise of Poets. I had, indeed, published volumes of verse, but with the most blameless motives. Other poets were continually sending me theirs, and, as I could not admire them, and did not like to reply by critical remarks, I simply printed some rhymes for the purpose of sending them to the gentlemen who favoured me with theirs. I always wrote on the fly-leaf a quotation from the 'Iliad,' about giving copper in exchange for gold; and the few poets who could read Greek were gratified, while the others, probably, thought a compliment was intended. Nothing could be less culpable or pretentious, but, through some mistake on the part of Charon, I was drafted off to the Paradise of Poets.

"Outside the Golden Gate a number of Shadows were waiting, in different attitudes of depression and languor. Bavius and Maevius were there, still complaining of 'cliques,' railing at Horace for a mere rhymer of society, and at Virgil as a plagiarist, 'Take away his cribs from Homer and Apollonius Rhodius,' quoth honest Maevius, 'and what is there left of him?' I also met a society of gentlemen, in Greek costume, of various ages, from a half-naked minstrel with a tortoiseshell lyre in his hand to an elegant of the age of Pericles. They all consorted together, talking various dialects of Aeolic, Ionian, Attic Greek, and so forth, which were plainly not intelligible to each other. I ventured to ask one of the company who he was, but he, with a sweep of his hand, said, 'We are Homer!' When I expressed my regret and surprise that the Golden Gate had not yet opened for so distinguished, though collective, an artist, my friend answered that, according to Fick, Peppmüller, and many other learned men, they were Homer. 'But an impostor from Chios has got in somehow,' he said; 'they don’t pay the least attention to the Germans in the Paradise of Poets.’

“At this moment the Golden Gates were thrown apart, and a fair lady, in an early Italian costume, carrying a laurel in her hand, appeared at the entrance. All the Shadows looked up with an air of weary expectation, like people waiting for their turn in a doctor’s consulting-room. She beckoned to me, however, and I made haste to follow her. The words ‘Charlatan!’ ‘You a poet!’ in a variety of languages, greeted me by way of farewell from the Shadows.

“‘The renowned Laura, if I am not mistaken,’ I ventured to remark, recognising her, indeed, from the miniature in the Laurentian library at Florence.

“She bowed, and I began to ask for her adorer, Petrarch.

“‘Excuse me,’ said Laura, as we glided down a mossy path, under the shade of trees particularly dear to poets, ‘excuse me, but the sonneteer of whom you speak is one whose name I cannot bear to mention. His conduct with Burns’s Clarinda, his heartless infatuation for Stella—’

“‘You astonish me,’ I said. ‘In the Paradise of Poets—’

“‘They are poets still — incorrigible!’ answered the lady; then slightly raising her voice of silver, as a beautiful appearance in a toga drew near, she cried ‘*Catullo mio*!’

“The greeting between these accomplished ghosts was too kindly to leave room for doubt as to the ardour of their affections.

“‘Will you, my Catullus,’ murmured Laura, ‘explain to this poet from the land of fogs, any matters which, to him, may seem puzzling and unfamiliar in our Paradise?’

“The Veronese, with a charming smile, took my hand, and led me to a shadowy arbour, whence we enjoyed a prospect of many rivers and mountains in the poets’ heaven. Among these I recognised the triple crest of the Eildons, Grongar Hill, Cithaeron and Etna; while the reed-fringed waters of the Mincius flowed musically between the banks and braes o’ bonny Doon to join the Tweed. Blithe ghosts were wandering by, in all varieties of apparel, and I distinctly observed Dante’s Beatrice, leaning loving on the arm of Sir Philip Sidney, while Dante was closely engaged in conversation with the lost Lenore, celebrated by Mr. Edgar Allan Poe.

“‘In what can my knowledge of the Paradise of Poets be serviceable to you, sir?’ said Catullus, as he flung himself at the feet of Laura, on the velvet grass.

“‘I am disinclined to seem impertinently curious,’ I answered, ‘but the ladies in this fair, smiling country — have the gods made them poetical?’

“‘Not generally,’ replied Catullus. ‘Indeed, if you would be well with them, I may warn you never to mention poetry in their hearing. They never cared for it while on earth, and in this place it is a topic which the prudent carefully avoid among ladies. To tell the truth, they have had to listen to far too much poetry, and too many discussions on the caesura. There are, indeed, a few lady poets — very few. Sappho, for example; indeed I cannot recall any other at this moment. The result is that Phaon, of all the shadows here, is the most distinguished by the fair. He was not a poet, you know; he got in on account of Sappho, who adored him. They are estranged now, of course.'

"'You interest me deeply,' I answered. 'And now, will you kindly tell me why these ladies are here, if they were not poets?'

"'The women that were our ideals while we dwelt on earth, the women we loved but never won, or, at all events, never wedded, they for whom we sighed while in the arms of a recognised and legitimate affection, have been chosen by the Olympians to keep us company in Paradise!'

"'Then wherefore,' I interrupted, 'do I see Robert Burns loitering with that lady in a ruff, — Cassandra, I make no doubt — Ronsard's Cassandra? And why is the incomparable Clarinda inseparable from Petrarch; and Miss Patty Blount, Pope's flame, from the Syrian Meleager, while *his* Heliodore is manifestly devoted to Mr. Emerson, whom, by the way, I am delighted, if rather surprised, to see here?'

"'Ah,' said Catullus, 'you are a new-comer among us. Poets will be poets, and no sooner have they attained their desire, and dwelt in the company of their earthly Ideals, than they feel strangely, yet irresistibly drawn to Another. So it was in life, so it will ever be. No Ideal can survive a daily companionship, and fortunate is the poet who did not marry his first love!'

"'As far as that goes,' I answered, 'most of you were highly favoured; indeed, I do not remember any poet whose Ideal was his wife, or whose first love led him to the altar.'

"'I was not a marrying man myself,' answered the Veronese; 'few of us were. Myself, Horace, Virgil — we were all bachelors.'

"'And Lesbia!'

"I said this in a low voice, for Laura was weaving bay into a chaplet, and inattentive to our conversation.

"'Poor Lesbia!' said Catullus, with a suppressed sigh. 'How I misjudged that girl! How cruel, how causeless were my reproaches,' and wildly rending his curled locks and laurel crown, he fled into a thicket, whence there soon arose the melancholy notes of the Ausonian lyre.'

"'He is incorrigible,' said Laura, very coldly; and she deliberately began to tear and toss away the fragments of the chaplet she had been weaving. 'I shall never break him of that habit of versifying. But they are all alike.'

"'Is there nobody here,' said I, 'who is happy with his Ideal — nobody but has exchanged Ideals with some other poet?’

“‘There is one,’ she said. ‘He comes of a northern tribe; and in his life-time he never rhymed upon his unattainable lady, or if rhyme he did, the accents never carried her name to the ears of the vulgar. Look there.’

“She pointed to the river at our feet, and I knew the mounted figure that was riding the ford, with a green-mantled lady beside him like the Fairy Queen.

“Surely I had read of her, and knew her —

“‘She whose blue eyes their secret told,
Though shaded by her locks of gold.’

“‘They are different; I know not why. They are constant,’ said Laura, and rising with an air of chagrin, she disappeared among the boughs of the trees that bear her name.

“‘Unhappy hearts of poets,’ I mused. ‘Light things and sacred they are, but even in their Paradise, and among their chosen, with every wish fulfilled, and united to their beloved, they cannot be at rest!’

“Thus moralising, I wended my way to a crag, whence there was a wide prospect. Certain poets were standing there, looking down into an abyss, and to them I joined myself.

“‘Ah, I cannot bear it!’ said a voice, and, as he turned away, his brow already clearing, his pain already forgotten, I beheld the august form of Shakespeare.

“Marking my curiosity before it was expressed, he answered the unuttered question.

“‘That is a sight for Pagans,’ he said, ‘and may give them pleasure. But my Paradise were embittered if I had to watch the sorrows of others, and their torments, however well deserved. The others are gazing on the purgatory of critics and commentators.’

“He passed from me, and I joined the ‘Ionian father of the rest’ — Homer, who, with a countenance of unspeakable majesty, was seated on a throne of rock, between the Mantuan Virgil of the laurel crown, Hugo, Sophocles, Milton, Lovelace, Tennyson, and Shelley.

“At their feet I beheld, in a vast and gloomy hall, many an honest critic, many an erudite commentator, an army of reviewers. Some were condemned to roll logs up insuperable heights, whence they descended thundering to the plain. Others were set to impositions, and I particularly observed that the Homeric commentators were obliged to write out the ‘Iliad’ and ‘Odyssey’ in their complete shape, and were always driven by fiends to the task when they prayed for the bare charity of being permitted to leave out the ‘interpolations.’ Others, fearful to narrate, were torn into as many fragments as they had made of these immortal epics. Others, such as Aristarchus, were spitted on their own critical signs of disapproval. Many reviewers were compelled to read the books which they had criticised without perusal, and it was terrible to watch the agonies of the worthy pressmen who were set to this unwonted task. ‘May we not be let off with the preface?’ they cried in piteous accents. ‘May we not glance at the table of contents and be done with it?’ But the presiding demons (who had been Examiners in the bodily life) drove them remorseless to their toils.

“Among the condemned I could not but witness, with sympathy, the punishment reserved for translators. The translators of Virgil, in particular, were a vast and motley assemblage of most respectable men. Bishops were there, from Gawain Douglas downwards; Judges, in their ermine; professors, clergymen, civil servants, writhing in all the tortures that the blank verse, the anapaestic measure, the metre of the ‘Lay of the Last Minstrel,’ the heroic couplet and similar devices can inflict. For all these men had loved Virgil, though not wisely: and now their penance was to hear each other read their own translations.”

“That must have been more than they could bear,” said Lady Violet

“Yes,” said Mr. Witham; “I should know, for down I fell into Tartarus with a crash, and writhed among the Translators.”

“Why?” asked Lady Violet.

“Because I have translated Theocritus!”

“Mr. Witham,” said Lady Violet, “did you meet your ideal woman when you were in the Paradise of Poets?”

“She yet walks this earth,” said the bard, with a too significant bow.

Lady Violet turned coldly away.

*

Mr. Witham was never invited to the Blues again — the name of Lord Azure’s place in Kent.

The Poet is shut out of Paradise.

CHAPTER XII: PARIS AND HELEN

The first name in romance, the most ancient and the most enduring, is that of Argive Helen. During three thousand years fair women have been born, have lived, and been loved, “that there might be a song in the ears of men of later time,” but, compared to the renown of Helen, their glory is dim. Cleopatra, who held the world’s fate in her hands, and lay in the arms of Cæsar; Mary Stuart (*Maria Verticordia*), for whose sake, as a northern novelist tells, peasants have lain awake, sorrowing that she is dead; Agnes Sorel, Fair Rosamond, la belle Stuart, “the Pompadour and the Parabère,” can still enchant us from the page of history and chronicle. “Zeus gave them beauty, which naturally rules even strength itself,” to quote the Greek orator on the mistress of them all, on her who, having never lived, can never die, the Daughter of the Swan.

While Helen enjoys this immortality, and is the ideal of beauty upon earth, it is curious to reflect on the *modernité* of her story, the oldest of the love stories of the world. In Homer we first meet her, the fairest of women in the song of the greatest of poets. It might almost seem as if Homer meant to justify, by his dealing with Helen, some of the most recent theories of literary art. In the “Iliad” and “Odyssey” the tale of Helen is without a beginning and without an end, like a frieze on a Greek temple. She crosses the stage as a figure familiar to all, the poet’s audience clearly did not need to be told who Helen was, nor anything about her youth.

The famous judgment of Paris, the beginning of evil to Achaeans and Ilian men, is only mentioned once by Homer, late, and in a passage of doubtful authenticity. Of her reconciliation to her wedded lord, Menelaus, not a word is said; of her end we are told no more than that for her and him a mansion in Elysium is prepared —

“Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow.”

We leave her happy in Argos, a smile on her lips, a gift in her hands, as we met her in Troy, beautiful, adored despite her guilt, as sweet in her repentance as in her unvexed Argive home. Women seldom mention her, in the epic, but with horror and anger; men never address her but in gentle courtesy. What is her secret? How did she leave her home with Paris — beguiled by love, by magic, or driven by the implacable Aphrodite? Homer is silent on all of these things; these things, doubtless, were known by his audience. In his poem Helen moves as a thing of simple grace, courtesy, and kindness, save when she rebels against her doom, after seeing her lover fly from her husband’s spear. Had we only Homer, by far our earliest literary source, we should know little of the romance of Helen; should only know that a lawless love brought ruin on Troy and sorrow on the Achaeans; and this is thrown out, with no moral comment, without praise or blame. The end, we learn, was peace, and beauty was reconciled to life. There is no explanation, no *dénouement*; and we know how much *dénouement* and explanations hampered Scott and Shakespeare. From these trammels Homer is free, as a god is free from mortal limitations.

All this manner of telling a tale — a manner so ancient, so original — is akin, in practice, to recent theories of what art should be, and what art seldom is, perhaps never is, in modern hands.

Modern enough, again, is the choice of a married woman for the heroine of the earliest love tale. Apollonius Rhodius sings (and no man has ever sung so well) of a maiden’s love; Virgil, of a widow’s; Homer, of love that has defied law, blindly obedient to destiny, which dominates even Zeus. Once again, Helen is not a very young girl; ungallant chronologists have attributed to her I know not what age. We think of her as about the age of the Venus of Milo; in truth, she was “ageless and immortal.” Homer never describes her beauty; we only see it reflected in the eyes of the old men, white and weak, thin-voiced as cicalas: but hers is a loveliness “to turn an old man young.” “It is no marvel,” they say, “that for her sake Trojans and Achaeans slay each other.”

She was embroidering at a vast web, working in gold and scarlet the sorrows that for her sake befell mankind, when they called her to the walls to see Paris fight Menelaus, in the last year of the war. There she stands, in raiment of silvery white, her heart yearning for her old love and her own city. Already her thought is far from Paris. Was her heart ever with Paris? That is her secret. A very old legend, mentioned by the Bishop of Thessalonica, Eustathius, tells us that Paris magically beguiled her, disguised in the form of Menelaus, her lord, as Uther beguiled Ygerne. She sees the son of Priam play the dastard in the fight; she turns in wrath on Aphrodite, who would lure her back to his arms; but to his arms she must go, “for the daughter of Zeus was afraid.” Violence is put upon beauty; it is soiled, or seems soiled, in its way through the world. Helen urges Paris again into the war. He has a heart invincibly light and gay; shame does not weigh on him. “Not every man is valiant every day,” he says; yet once engaged in battle, he bears him bravely, and his arrows rain death among the mail-clad Achaeans.

What Homer thinks of Paris we can only guess. His beauty is the bane of Ilios; but Homer forgives so much to beauty. In the end of the “Iliad,” Helen sings the immortal dirge over Hector, the stainless knight, “with thy loving kindness and thy gentle speech."

In the "Odyssey," she is at home again, playing the gracious part of hostess to Odysseus's wandering son, pouring into the bowl the magic herb of Egypt, "which brings forgetfulness of sorrow." The wandering son of Odysseus departs with a gift for his bride, "to wear upon the day of her desire, a memorial of the hands of Helen," the beautiful hands, that in Troy or Argos were never idle.

Of Helen, from Homer, we know no more. Grace, penitence in exile, peace at home, these are the portion of her who set East and West at war and ruined the city of Priam of the ashen spear. As in the strange legend preserved by Servius, the commentator on Virgil, who tells us that Helen wore a red "star-stone," whence fell gouts of blood that vanished ere they touched her swan's neck; so all the blood shed for her sake leaves Helen stainless. Of Homer's Helen we know no more.

The later Greek fancy, playing about this form of beauty, wove a myriad of new fancies, or disinterred from legend old beliefs untouched by Homer. Helen was the daughter of the Swan — that is, as was later explained, of Zeus in the shape of a swan. Her loveliness, even in childhood, plunged her in many adventures. Theseus carried her off; her brothers rescued her. All the princes of Achaea competed for her hand, having first taken an oath to avenge whomsoever she might choose for her husband. The choice fell on the correct and honourable, but rather inconspicuous, Menelaus, and they dwelt in Sparta, beside the Eurotas, "in a hollow of the rifted hills." Then, from across the sea, came the beautiful and fatal Paris, son of Priam, King of Troy. As a child, Paris had been exposed on the mountains, because his mother dreamed that she brought forth a firebrand. He was rescued and fostered by a shepherd; he tended the flocks; he loved the daughter of a river god, Œnone. Then came the naked Goddesses, to seek at the hand of the most beautiful of mortals the prize of beauty. Aphrodite won the golden apple from the queen of heaven, Hera, and from the Goddess of war and wisdom, Athena, bribing the judge by the promise of the fairest wife in the world. No incident is more frequently celebrated in poetry and art, to which it lends such gracious opportunities. Paris was later recognised as of the royal blood of Troy. He came to Lacedaemon on an embassy, he saw Helen, and destiny had its way.

Concerning the details in this most ancient love-story, we learn nothing from Homer, who merely makes Paris remind Helen of their bridal night in the isle of Cranaë. But from Homer we learn that Paris carried off not only the wife of Menelaus, but many of his treasures. To the poet of the "Iliad," the psychology of the wooing would have seemed a simple matter. Like the later vase-painters, he would have shown us Paris beside Helen, Aphrodite standing near, accompanied by the figure of Peitho — Persuasion.

Homer always escapes our psychological problems by throwing the weight of our deeds and misdeeds on a God or a Goddess, or on destiny. To have fled from her lord and her one child, Hermione, was not in keeping with the character of Helen as Homer draws it. Her repentance is almost Christian in its expression, and repentance indicates a consciousness of sin and of shame, which Helen frequently professes. Thus she, at least, does not, like Homer, in his chivalrous way, throw all the blame on the Immortals and on destiny. The cheerful acquiescence of Helen in destiny makes part of the comic element in *La Belle Hélène*, but the mirth only arises out of the incongruity between Parisian ideas and those of ancient Greece.

Helen is freely and bitterly blamed in the “Odyssey” by Penelope, chiefly because of the ruinous consequences which followed her flight. Still, there is one passage, when Penelope prudently hesitates about recognising her returned lord, which makes it just possible that a legend chronicled by Eustathius was known to Homer, — namely, the tale already mentioned, that Paris beguiled her in the shape of Menelaus. The incident is very old, as in the story of Zeus and Amphitryon, and might be used whenever a lady’s character needed to be saved. But this anecdote, on the whole, is inconsistent with the repentance of Helen, and is not in Homer’s manner.

The early lyric poet, Stesichorus, is said to have written harshly against Helen. She punished him by blindness, and he indited a palinode, explaining that it was not she who went to Troy, but a woman fashioned in her likeness, by Zeus, out of mist and light. The real Helen remained safely and with honour in Egypt. Euripides has made this idea, which was calculated to please him, the groundwork of his “Helena,” but it never had a strong hold on the Greek imagination. Modern fancy is pleased by the picture of the cloud-bride in Troy, Greeks and Trojans dying for a phantasm. “Shadows we are, and shadows we pursue.”

Concerning the later feats, and the death of Paris, Homer says very little. He slew Achilles by an arrow-shot in the Scaean gate, and prophecy was fulfilled. He himself fell by another shaft, perhaps the poisoned shaft of Philoctetes. In the fourth or fifth century of our era a late poet, Quintus Smyrnaeus, described Paris’s journey, in quest of a healing spell, to the forsaken Œnone, and her refusal to aid him; her death on his funeral pyre. Quintus is a poet of extraordinary merit for his age, and scarcely deserves the reproach of laziness affixed on him by Lord Tennyson.

On the whole, Homer seems to have a kind of half-contemptuous liking for the beautiful Paris. Later art represents him as a bowman of girlish charms, wearing a Phrygian cap. There is a late legend that he had a son, Corythus, by Œnone, and that he killed the lad in a moment of jealousy, finding him with Helen and failing to recognise him. On the death of Paris, perhaps by virtue of the custom of the Levirate, Helen became the wife of his brother, Deïphobus.

How her reconciliation with Menelaus was brought about we do not learn from Homer, who, in the "Odyssey," accepts it as a fact. The earliest traditional hint on the subject is given by the famous "Coffer of Cypselus," a work of the seventh century, B.C., which Pausanias saw at Olympia, in A.D. 174. Here, on a band of ivory, was represented, among other scenes from the tale of Troy, Menelaus rushing, sword in hand, to slay Helen. According to Stesichorus, the army was about to stone her after the fall of Ilios, but relented, amazed by her beauty.

Of her later life in Lacedaemon, nothing is known on really ancient authority, and later traditions vary. The Spartans showed her sepulchre and her shrine at Therapnae, where she was worshipped. Herodotus tells us how Helen, as a Goddess, appeared in her temple and healed a deformed child, making her the fairest woman in Sparta, in the reign of Ariston. It may, perhaps, be conjectured that in Sparta, Helen occupied the place of a local Aphrodite. In another late story she dwells in the isle of Leuke, a shadowy bride of the shadowy Achilles. The mocking Lucian, in his *Vera Historia*, meets Helen in the Fortunate Islands, whence she elopes with one of his companions. Again, the sons of Menelaus, by a concubine, were said to have driven Helen from Sparta on the death of her lord, and she was murdered in Rhodes, by the vengeance of Polyxo, whose husband fell at Troy. But, among all these inventions, that of Homer stands out pre-eminent. Helen and Menelaus do not die, they are too near akin to Zeus; they dwell immortal, not among the shadows of heroes and of famous ladies dead and gone, but in Elysium, the paradise at the world's end, unvisited by storms.

"Beyond these voices there is peace."

It is plain that, as a love-story, the tale of Paris and Helen must to modern readers seem meagre. To Greece, in every age, the main interest lay not in the passion of the beautiful pair, but in its world-wide consequences: the clash of Europe and Asia, the deaths of kings, the ruin wrought in their homes, the consequent fall of the great and ancient Achaean civilisation. To the Greeks, the Trojan war was what the Crusades are in later history. As in the Crusades, the West assailed the East for an ideal, not to recover the Holy Sepulchre of our religion, but to win back the living type of beauty and of charm. Perhaps, ere the sun grows cold, men will no more believe in the Crusades, as an historical fact, than we do in the siege of Troy. In a sense, a very obvious sense, the myth of

Helen is a parable of Hellenic history. They sought beauty, and they found it; they bore it home, and, with beauty, their bane. Wherever Helen went "she brought calamity," in this a type of all the famous and peerless ladies of old days, of Cleopatra and of Mary Stuart. Romance and poetry have nothing less plausible than the part which Cleopatra actually played in the history of the world, a world well lost by Mark Antony for her sake. The flight from Actium might seem as much a mere poet's dream as the gathering of the Achaeans at Aulis, if we were not certain that it is truly chronicled.

From the earliest times, even from times before Homer (whose audience is supposed to know all about Helen), the imagination of Greece, and later, the imagination of the civilised world, has played around Helen, devising about her all that possibly could be devised. She was the daughter of Zeus by Nemesis, or by Leda; or the daughter of the swan, or a child of the changeful moon, brooding on "the formless and multi-form waters." She could speak in the voices of all women, hence she was named "Echo," and we might fancy that, like the witch of the Brocken, she could appear to every man in the likeness of his own first love. The ancient Egyptians either knew her, or invented legends of her to amuse the inquiring Greeks. She had touched at Sidon, and perhaps Astaroth is only her Sidonian name. Whatever could be told of beauty, in its charm, its perils, the dangers with which it surrounds its lovers, the purity which it retains, unsmirched by all the sins that are done for beauty's sake, could be told of Helen.

Like a golden cup, as M. Paul de St. Victor says, she was carried from lips to lips of heroes, but the gold remains unsullied and unalloyed. To heaven she returns again, to heaven which is her own, and looks down serenely on men slain, and women widowed, and sinking ships, and burning towns. Yet with death she gives immortality by her kiss, and Paris and Menelaus live, because they have touched the lips of Helen. Through the grace of Helen, for whom he fell, Sarpedon's memory endures, and Achilles and Memnon, the son of the Morning, and Troy is more imperishable than Carthage, or Rome, or Corinth, though Helen

"Burnt the topless towers of Ilium."

In one brief passage, Marlowe did more than all poets since Stesichorus, or, at least since the epithalamium of Theocritus, for the glory of Helen. Roman poets knew her best as an enemy of their fabulous ancestors, and in the "Æneid," Virgil's hero draws his sword to slay her. Through the Middle Ages, in the romances of Troy, she wanders as a shining shadow of the ideally fair, like Guinevere, who so often recalls her in the Arthurian romances. The chivalrous mediæval poets and the Celts could understand better than the Romans the philosophy of “the world well lost” for love. Modern poetry, even in Goethe’s “Second part of Faust,” has not been very fortunately inspired by Helen, except in the few lines which she speaks in “The Dream of Fair Women.”

“I had great beauty; ask thou not my name.”

Mr. William Morris’s Helen, in the “Earthly Paradise,” charms at the time of reading, but, perhaps, leaves little abiding memory. The Helen of “Troilus and Cressida” is not one of Shakespeare’s immortal women, and Mr. Rossetti’s ballad is fantastic and somewhat false in tone — a romantic *pastiche*. Where Euripides twice failed, in the “Troades” and the “Helena,” it can be given to few to succeed. Helen is best left to her earliest known minstrel, for who can recapture the grace, the tenderness, the melancholy, and the charm of the daughter of Zeus in the “Odyssey” and “Iliad”? The sightless eyes of Homer saw her clearest, and Helen was best understood by the wisdom of his unquestioning simplicity.

As if to prove how entirely, though so many hands paltered with her legend, Helen is Homer’s alone, there remains no great or typical work of Greek art which represents her beauty, and the breasts from which were modelled cups of gold for the service of the gods. We have only paintings on vases, or work on gems, which, though graceful, is conventional and might represent any other heroine, Polyxena, or Eriphyle. No Helen from the hands of Phidias or Scopas has survived to our time, and the grass may be growing in Therapnae over the shattered remains of her only statue.

As Stesichorus fabled that only an *eidolon* of Helen went to Troy, so, except in the “Iliad” and “Odyssey,” we meet but shadows of her loveliness, phantasms woven out of clouds, and the light of setting suns.

CHAPTER XIII: ENCHANTED CIGARETTES

To dream over literary projects, Balzac says, is like “smoking enchanted cigarettes,” but when we try to tackle our projects, to make them real, the enchantment disappears. We have to till the soil, to sow the seed, to gather the leaves, and then the cigarettes must be manufactured, while there may be no market for them after all. Probably most people have enjoyed the fragrance of these enchanted cigarettes, and have brooded over much which they will never put on paper. Here are some of “the ashes of the weeds of my delight” — memories of romances whereof no single line is written, or is likely to be written.

Of my earliest novel I remember but little. I know there had been a wreck, and that the villain, who was believed to be drowned, came home and made himself disagreeable. I know that the heroine’s mouth was *not* “too large for regular beauty.” In that respect she was original. All heroines are “muckle-mou’d,” I know not why. It is expected of them. I know she was melancholy and merry; it would not surprise me to learn that she drowned herself from a canoe. But the villain never descended to crime, the first lover would not fall in love, the heroine’s own affections were provokingly disengaged, and the whole affair came to a dead stop for want of a plot. Perhaps, considering modern canons of fiction, this might have been a very successful novel. It was entirely devoid of incident or interest, and, consequently, was a good deal like real life, as real life appears to many cultivated authors. On the other hand, all the characters were flippant. This would never have done, and I do not regret novel No. I., which had not even a name.

The second story had a plot, quantities of plot, nothing but plot. It was to have been written in collaboration with a very great novelist, who, as far as we went, confined himself to making objections. This novel was stopped (not that my friend would ever have gone on) by “Called Back,” which anticipated part of the idea. The story was entitled “Where is Rose?” and the motto was —

”*Rosa quo locorum*
Sera moratur.”

The characters were — (1) Rose, a young lady of quality. (2) The Russian Princess, her friend (need I add that, to meet a public demand, *her* name was Vera?). (3) Young man engaged to Rose. (4) Charles, his friend. (5) An enterprising person named “The Whiteley of Crime,” the universal Provider of Iniquity. In fact, he anticipated Sir Arthur Doyle’s Professor Moriarty. The rest were detectives, old ladies, mob, and a wealthy young Colonial larrikin. Neither my friend nor I was fond of describing love scenes, so we made the heroine disappear in the second chapter, and she never turned up again till chapter the last. After playing in a comedy at the house of an earl, Rosa and Vera entered her brougham. Soon afterwards the brougham drew up, *empty*, at Rose’s own door. Where *was* Rose? Traces of her were found, of all places, in the Haunted House in Berkeley Square, which is not haunted any longer. After that Rose was long sought in vain.

This, briefly, is what had occurred. A Russian detective “wanted” Vera, who, to be sure, was a Nihilist. To catch Vera he made an alliance with “The Whiteley of Crime.” He was a man who would destroy a parish register, or forge a will, or crack a crib, or break up a Pro-Boer meeting, or burn a house, or kidnap a rightful heir, or manage a personation, or issue amateur bank-notes, or what you please. Thinking to kill two birds with one stone, he carried off Rose for her diamonds and Vera for his friend, the Muscovite police official, lodging them both in the Haunted House. But there he and the Russian came to blows, and, in the confusion, Vera made her escape, while Rose was conveyed, *as Vera*, to Siberia. Not knowing how to dispose of her, the Russian police consigned her to a nunnery at the mouth of the Obi. Her lover, in a yacht, found her hiding-place, and got a friendly nun to give her some narcotic known to the Samoyeds. It was the old *truc* of the Friar in “Romeo and Juliet.” At the mouth of the Obi they do not bury the dead, but lay them down on platforms in the open air. Rose was picked up there by her lover (accompanied by a chaperon, of course), was got on board the steam yacht, and all went well. I forget what happened to “The Whiteley of Crime.” After him I still rather hanker — he was a humorous ruffian. Something could be made of “The Whiteley of Crime.” Something *has* been made, by the author of “Sherlock Holmes.”

In yet another romance, a gentleman takes his friend, in a country place, to see his betrothed. The friend, who had only come into the neighbourhood that day, is found dead, next morning, hanging to a tree. Gipsies and others are suspected. But the lover was the murderer. He had been a priest, in South America, and the lady was a Catholic (who knew not of his Orders). Now the friend fell in love with the lady at first sight, on being introduced to her by the lover. As the two men walked home, the friend threatened to reveal the lover’s secret — his tonsure — which would be fatal to his hopes. They quarrelled, parted, and the ex-priest lassoed his friend. The motive, I think, is an original one, and not likely to occur to the first comer. The inventor is open to offers.

The next novel, based on a dream, was called “In Search of Qrart.”

What is *Qrart*? I decline to divulge this secret beyond saying that *Qrart* was a product of the civilisation which now sleeps under the snows of the pole. It was an article of the utmost value to humanity. Farther I do not intend to commit myself. The Bride of a God was one of the characters.

The next novel is, at present, my favourite cigarette. The scene is partly in Greece, partly at the Parthian Court, about 80-60 B.C. Crassus is the villain. The heroine was an actress in one of the wandering Greek companies, splendid strollers, who played at the Indian and Asiatic Courts. The story ends with the representation of the “Bacchae,” in Parthia. The head of Pentheus is carried by one of the Bacchae in that drama. Behold, it is not a mask, but *the head of Crassus*, and thus conveys the first news of the Roman defeat. Obviously, this is a novel that needs a great deal of preliminary study, as much, indeed, as “Salammbo.”

Another story will deal with the Icelandic discoverers of America. Mr. Kipling, however, has taken the wind out of its sails with his sketch, “The Finest Story in the World.” There are all the marvels and portents of the *Eyrbyggja Saga* to draw upon, there are Skraelings to fight, and why should not Karlsefni’s son kill the last mastodon, and, as Quetzalcoatl, be the white-bearded god of the Aztecs? After that a romance on the intrigues to make Charles Edward King of Poland sounds commonplace. But much might be made of that, too, if the right man took it in hand. Believe me, there are plenty of stories left, waiting for the man who can tell them. I have said it before, but I say it again, if I were king I would keep court officials, Mr. Stanley Weyman, Mr. Mason, Mr. Kipling, and others, to tell me my own stories. I know the kind of thing which I like, from the discovery of *Qrart* to that of the French gold in the burn at Loch Arkaig, or in “the wood by the lochside” that Murray of Broughton mentions.

Another cigarette I have, the adventures of a Poet, a Poet born in a Puritan village of Massachusetts about 1670. Hawthorne could have told me my story, and how my friend was driven into the wilderness and lived among the Red Men. I think he was killed in an attempt to warn his countrymen of an Indian raid; I think his MS. poems have a bullet-hole through them, and blood on the leaves. They were in Carew’s best manner, these poems.

Another tale Hawthorne might have told me, the tale of an excellent man, whose very virtues, by some baneful moral chemistry, corrupt and ruin the people with whom he comes in contact. I do not mean by goading them into the opposite extremes, but rather something like a moral *jettatura*. This needs a great deal of subtlety, and what is to become of the hero? Is he to plunge into vice till everybody is virtuous again? It wants working out. I have omitted, after all, a schoolboy historical romance, explaining *why Queen Elizabeth was never married*. A Scottish paper offered a prize for a story of Queen Mary Stuart's reign. I did not get the prize — perhaps did not deserve it, but my story ran thus: You must know that Queen Elizabeth was singularly like Darnley in personal appearance. What so natural as that, disguised as a page, her Majesty should come spying about the Court of Holyrood? Darnley sees her walking out of Queen Mary's room, he thinks her an hallucination, discovers that she is real, challenges her, and they fight at Faldonside, by the Tweed, Shakespeare holding Elizabeth's horse. Elizabeth is wounded, and is carried to the Kirk of Field, and laid in Darnley's chamber, while Darnley goes out and makes love to my rural heroine, the lady of Fernilee, a Kerr. That night Bothwell blows up the Kirk of Field, Elizabeth and all. Darnley has only one resource. Borrowing the riding habit of the rural heroine, the lady of Fernilee, he flees across the Border, and, for the rest of his life, personates Queen Elizabeth. That is why Elizabeth, who was Darnley, hated Mary so bitterly (on account of the Kirk of Field affair), and *that is why Queen Elizabeth was never married*. Side-lights on Shakespeare's Sonnets were obviously cast. The young man whom Shakespeare admired so, and urged to marry, was — Darnley. This romance did not get the prize (the anachronism about Shakespeare is worthy of Scott), but I am conceited enough to think it deserved an honourable mention.

Enough of my own cigarettes. But there are others of a more fragrant weed. Who will end for me the novel of which Byron only wrote a chapter; who, as Bulwer Lytton is dead? A finer opening, one more mysteriously stirring, you can nowhere read. And the novel in letters, which Scott began in 1819, who shall finish it, or tell us what he did with his fair Venetian courtezan, a character so much out of Sir Walter's way? He tossed it aside — it was but an enchanted cigarette — and gave us "The Fortunes of Nigel" in its place. I want both. We cannot call up those who "left half told" these stories. In a happier world we shall listen to their endings, and all our dreams shall be coherent and concluded. Meanwhile, without trouble, and expense, and disappointment, and reviews, we can all smoke our cigarettes of fairyland. Would that many people were content to smoke them peacefully, and did not rush on pen, paper, and ink!

CHAPTER XIV: STORIES AND STORY-TELLING

(From STRATH NAVER)

We have had a drought for three weeks. During a whole week this northern strath has been as sunny as the Riviera is expected to be. The streams can be crossed dry-shod, kelts are plunging in the pools, but even kelts will not look at a fly. Now, by way of a pleasant change, an icy north wind is blowing, with gusts of snow, not snow enough to swell the loch that feeds the river, but just enough snow (as the tourist said of the water in the River Styx) “to swear by,” or at! *The Field* announces that a duke, who rents three rods on a neighbouring river, has not yet caught one salmon. The acrimoniously democratic mind may take comfort in that intelligence, but, if the weather will not improve for a duke, it is not likely to change for a mere person of letters. Thus the devotee of the Muses is driven back, by stress of climate, upon literature, and as there is nothing in the lodge to read he is compelled to write.

Now certainly one would not lack material, if only one were capable of the art of fiction. The genesis of novels and stories is a topic little studied, but I am inclined to believe that, like the pearls in the mussels of the river, fiction is a beautiful disease of the brain. Something, an incident or an experience, or a reflection, gets imbedded, incrusted, in the properly constituted mind, and becomes the nucleus of a pearl of romance. Mr. Marion Crawford, in a recent work, describes his hero, who is a novelist, at work. This young gentleman, by a series of faults or misfortunes, has himself become a centre of harrowing emotion. Two young ladies, to each of whom he has been betrothed, are weeping out their eyes for him, or are kneeling to heaven with despairing cries, or are hardening their hearts to marry men for whom they “do not care a bawbee.” The hero’s aunt has committed a crime; everybody, in fact, is in despair, when an idea occurs to the hero. Indifferent to the sorrows of his nearest and dearest, he sits down with his notion and writes a novel — writes like a person possessed.

He has the proper kind of brain, the nucleus has been dropped into it, the pearl begins to grow, and to assume prismatic hues. So he is happy, and even the frozen-out angler might be happy if he could write a novel in the absence of salmon. Unluckily, my brain is not capable of this æsthetic malady, and to save my life, or to “milk a fine warm cow rain,” as the Zulus say, I could not write a novel, or even a short story. About The Short Story, as they call it, with capital letters, our critical American cousins have much to say. Its germ, one fancies, is usually an incident, or a mere anecdote, according to the nature of the author's brain; this germ becomes either the pearl of a brief *conte*, or the seed of a stately tree, in three volumes. An author of experience soon finds out how he should treat his material. One writer informs me that, given the idea, the germinal idea, it is as easy for him to make a novel out of it as a tale — as easy, and much more satisfactory and remunerative. Others, like M. Guy de Maupassant, for example, seem to find their strength in brevity, in cutting down, not in amplifying; in selecting and reducing, not in allowing other ideas to group themselves round the first, other characters to assemble about those who are essential. That seems to be really the whole philosophy of this matter, concerning which so many words are expended. The growth of the germinal idea depends on the nature of an author's talent — he may excel in expansion, or in reduction; he may be economical, and out of an anecdote may spin the whole cocoon of a romance; or he may be extravagant, and give a capable idea away in the briefest form possible.

These ideas may come to a man in many ways, as we said, from a dream, from a fragmentary experience (as most experiences in life are fragmentary), from a hint in a newspaper, from a tale told in conversation. Not long ago, for example, I heard an anecdote out of which M. Guy de Maupassant could have made the most ghastly, the most squalid, and the most supernaturally moving of all his *contes*. Indeed, that is not saying much, as he did not excel in the supernatural. Were it written in French, it might lie in my lady's chamber, and, as times go, nobody would be shocked. But, by our curious British conventions, this tale cannot be told in an English book or magazine. It was not, in its tendency, immoral; those terrible tales never are. The events were rather calculated to frighten the hearer into the paths of virtue. When Mr. Richard Cameron, the founder of the Cameronians, and the godfather of the Cameronian Regiment, was sent to his parish, he was bidden by Mr. Peden to "put hell-fire to the tails" of his congregation. This vigorous expression was well fitted to describe the *conte* which I have in my mind (I rather wish I had it not), and which is not to be narrated here, nor in English.

For a combination of pity and terror, it seemed to me unmatched in the works of the modern fancy, or in the horrors of modern experience; whether in experience or in imagination it had its original source. But even the English authors, who plume themselves on their audacity, or their realism, or their contempt for "the young person," would not venture this little romance, much less, then, is a timidly uncorrect pen-man likely to tempt Mr. Mudie with the *conte*. It is one of two tales, both told as true, which one would like to be able to narrate in the language of Molière. The other is also very good, and has a wonderful scene with a corpse and a *chapelle ardente*, and a young lady; it is historical, and of the last generation but one.

Even our frozen strath here has its modern legend, which may be told in English, and out of which, I am sure, a novelist could make a good short story, or a pleasant opening chapter of a romance. What is the mysterious art by which these things are done? What makes the well-told story seem real, rich with life, actual, engrossing? It is the secret of genius, of the novelist's art, and the writer who cannot practise the art might as well try to discover the Philosopher's Stone, or to "harp fish out of the water." However, let me tell the legend as simply as may be, and as it was told to me.

The strath runs due north, the river flowing from a great loch to the Northern sea. All around are low, undulating hills, brown with heather, and as lonely almost as the Sahara. On the horizon to the south rise the mountains, Ben this and Ben that, real mountains of beautiful outline, though no higher than some three thousand feet. Before the country was divided into moors and forests, tenanted by makers of patent corkscrews, and boilers of patent soap, before the rivers were distributed into beats, marked off by white and red posts, there lived over to the south, under the mountains, a sportsman of athletic frame and adventurous disposition. His name I have forgotten, but we may call him Dick Lindsay. It is told of him that he once found a poacher in the forest, and, being unable to catch the intruder, fired his rifle, not at him, but in his neighbourhood, whereon the poacher, deliberately kneeling down, took a long shot at Dick. How the duel ended, and whether either party flew a flag of truce, history does not record.

At all events, one stormy day in late September, Dick had stalked and wounded a stag on the hills to the south-east of the strath. Here, if only one were a novelist, one could weave several pages of valuable copy out of the stalk. The stag made for the strath here, and Dick, who had no gillie, but was an independent sportsman of the old school, pursued on foot. Plunging down the low, birch-clad hills, the stag found the flooded river before him, black and swollen with rain. He took the water, crossing by the big pool, which looked almost like a little loch, tempestuous under a north wind blowing up stream, and covered with small white, vicious crests. The stag crossed and staggered up the bank, where he stood panting. It is not a humane thing to leave a deer to die slowly of a rifle bullet, and Dick, reaching the pool, hesitated not, but threw off his clothes, took his skene between his teeth, plunged in, and swam the river.

All naked as he was he cut the stag's throat in the usual manner, and gralloched him with all the skill of Bucklaw. This was very well, and very well it would be to add a description of the stag at bay; but as I never happened to see a stag at bay, I omit all that. Dick had achieved success, but his clothes were on one side of a roaring river in spate, and he and the dead stag were on the other. There was no chance of fording the stream, and there was then no bridge. He did not care to swim back, for the excitement was out of him. He was trembling with cold, and afraid of cramp. "A mother-naked man," in a wilderness, with a flood between him and his raiment, was in a pitiable position. It did not occur to him to flay the stag, and dress in the hide, and, indeed, he would have been frozen before he could have accomplished that task. So he reconnoitred.

There was nobody within sight but one girl, who was herding cows. Now for a naked man, with a knife, and bedabbled with blood, to address a young woman on a lonely moor is a delicate business. The chances were that the girl would flee like a startled fawn, and leave Dick to walk, just as he was, to the nearest farmhouse, about a mile away. However, Dick had to risk it; he lay down so that only his face appeared above the bank, and he shouted to the maiden. When he had caught her attention he briefly explained the unusual situation. Then the young woman behaved like a trump, or like a Highland Nausicaa, for students of the "Odyssey" will remember how Odysseus, simply clad in a leafy bough of a tree, made supplication to the sea-king's daughter, and how she befriended him. Even if Dick had been a reader of Homer, which is not probable, there were no trees within convenient reach, and he could not adopt the leafy covering of Odysseus.

"You sit still; if you move an inch before I give you the word, I'll leave you where you are!" said Miss Mary. She then cast her plaid over her face, marched up to the bank where Dick was crouching and shivering, dropped her ample plaid over him, and sped away towards the farmhouse. When she had reached its shelter, and was giving an account of the adventure, Dick set forth, like a primeval Highlander, the covering doing duty both for plaid and kilt. Clothes of some kind were provided for him at the cottage, a rickety old boat was fetched, and he and his stag were rowed across the river to the place where his clothes lay.

That is all, but if one were a dealer in romance, much play might be made with the future fortunes of the sportsman and the maiden, happy fortunes or unhappy. In real life, the lassie "drew up with" a shepherd lad, as Miss Jenny Denison has it, married him, and helped to populate the strath. As for Dick, history tells no more of his adventures, nor is it alleged that he ever again visited the distant valley, or beheld the face of his Highland Nausicaa.

Now, if one were a romancer, this mere anecdote probably would "rest, lovely pearl, in the brain, and slowly mature in the oyster," till it became a novel.

Properly handled, the incident would make a very agreeable first chapter, with the aid of scenery, botany, climate, and remarks on the manners and customs of the red deer stolen from St. John, or the Stuarts d'Albanie. Then, probably, one would reflect on the characters of Mary and of Richard; Mary must have parents, of course, and one would make them talk in Scottish. Probably she already had a lover; how should she behave to that lover? There is plenty of room for speculation in that problem. As to Dick, is he to be a Lothario, or a lover *pour le bon motif*? What are his distinguished family to think of the love affair, which would certainly ensue in fiction, though in real life nobody thought of it at all? Are we to end happily, with a marriage or marriages, or are we to wind all up in the pleasant, pessimistic, realistic, fashionable modern way? Is Mary to drown the baby in the Muckle Pool? Is she to suffer the penalty of her crime at Inverness? Or, happy thought, shall we not make her discarded rival lover meet Dick in the hills on a sunny day and then — are they not (taking a hint from facts) to fight a duel with rifles? I see Dick lying, with a bullet in his brow, on the side of a corrie; his blood crimsons the snow, an eagle stoops from the sky. That makes a pretty picturesque conclusion to the unwritten romance of the strath.

Another anecdote occurs to me; good, I think, for a short story, but capable, also, of being dumped down in the middle of a long novel. It was in the old coaching days. A Border squire was going north, in the coach, alone. At a village he was joined by a man and a young lady: their purpose was manifest, they were a runaway couple, bound for Gretna Green. They had not travelled long together before the young lady, turning to the squire, said, "*Vous parlez français, Monsieur*?" He did speak French — it was plain that the bridegroom did not — and, to the end of the journey, that remarkable lady conducted a lively and affectionate conversation with the squire in French! Manifestly, he had only to ask and receive, but, alas! he was an unadventurous, plain gentleman; he alighted at his own village; he drove home in his own dogcart; the fugitive pair went forward, and the Gretna blacksmith united them in holy matrimony. The rest is silence.

I would give much to know what that young person's previous history and adventures had been, to learn what befell her after her wedding, to understand, in brief, her conduct and her motives. Were I a novelist, a Maupassant, or a Meredith, the Muse, "from whatsoever quarter she chose," would enlighten me about all, and I would enlighten you. But I can only marvel, only throw out the hint, only deposit the grain of sand, the nucleus of romance, in some more fertile brain. Indeed the topic is much more puzzling than the right conclusion for my Highland romance. In that case fancy could find certain obvious channels, into one or other of which it must flow. But I see no channels for the lives of these three queerly met people in the coach.

As a rule, fancies are capable of being arranged in but a few familiar patterns, so that it seems hardly worth while to make the arrangement. But he who looks at things thus will never be a writer of stories. Nay, even of the slowly unfolding tale of his own existence he may weary, for the combinations therein have all occurred before; it is in a hackneyed old story that he is living, and you, and I. Yet to act on this knowledge is to make a bad affair of our little life: we must try our best to take it seriously. And so of story-writing. As Mr. Stevenson says, a man must view "his very trifling enterprise with a gravity that would befit the cares of empire, and think the smallest improvement worth accomplishing at any expense of time and industry. The book, the statue, the sonata, must be gone upon with the unreasoning good faith and the unflagging spirit of children at their play."

That is true, that is the worst of it. The man, the writer, over whom the irresistible desire to mock at himself, his work, his puppets and their fortunes has power, will never be a novelist. The novelist must "make believe very much"; he must be in earnest with his characters. But how to be in earnest, how to keep the note of disbelief and derision "out of the memorial"? Ah, there is the difficulty, but it is a difficulty of which many authors appear to be insensible. Perhaps they suffer from no such temptations.

CHAPTER XV: THE SUPERNATURAL IN FICTION

It is a truism that the supernatural in fiction should, as a general rule, be left in the vague. In the creepiest tale I ever read, the horror lay in this — *there was no ghost*! You may describe a ghost with all the most hideous features that fancy can suggest — saucer eyes, red staring hair, a forked tail, and what you please — but the reader only laughs. It is wiser to make as if you were going to describe the spectre, and then break off, exclaiming, “But no! No pen can describe, no memory, thank Heaven, can recall, the horror of that hour!” So writers, as a rule, prefer to leave their terror (usually styled “The Thing”) entirely in the dark, and to the frightened fancy of the student. Thus, on the whole, the treatment of the supernaturally terrible in fiction is achieved in two ways, either by actual description, or by adroit suggestion, the author saying, like cabmen, “I leave it to yourself, sir.” There are dangers in both methods; the description, if attempted, is usually overdone and incredible: the suggestion is apt to prepare us too anxiously for something that never becomes real, and to leave us disappointed.

Examples of both methods may be selected from poetry and prose. The examples in verse are rare enough; the first and best that occurs in the way of suggestion is, of course, the mysterious lady in “Christabel.”

“She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée.”

Who was she? What did she want? Whence did she come? What was the horror she revealed to the night in the bower of Christabel?

“Then drawing in her breath aloud
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast.
Her silken robe and inner vest
Dropt to her feet, and full in view
Behold her bosom and half her side —
A sight to dream of, not to tell!
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!”

And then what do her words mean?

“Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow,
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow.”

What was it — the “sight to dream of, not to tell?”

Coleridge never did tell, and, though he and Mr. Gilman said he knew, Wordsworth thought he did not know. He raised a spirit that he had not the spell to lay. In the Paradise of Poets has he discovered the secret? We only know that the mischief, whatever it may have been, was wrought.

“O sorrow and shame! Can this be she —
The lady who knelt at the old oak tree?”
. . .
“A star hath set, a star hath risen,
 O Geraldine, since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady’s prison.
 O Geraldine, one hour was thine.”

If Coleridge knew, why did he never tell? And yet he maintains that “in the very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness no less than with the liveliness of a vision,” and he expected to finish the three remaining parts within the year. The year was 1816, the poem was begun in 1797, and finished, as far as it goes, in 1800. If Coleridge ever knew what he meant, he had time to forget. The chances are that his indolence, or his forgetfulness, was the making of “Christabel,” which remains a masterpiece of supernatural suggestion.

For description it suffices to read the “Ancient Mariner.” These marvels, truly, are *speciosa miracula*, and, unlike Southey, we believe as we read. “You have selected a passage fertile in unmeaning miracles,” Lamb wrote to Southey (1798), “but have passed by fifty passages as miraculous as the miracles they celebrate.” Lamb appears to have been almost alone in appreciating this masterpiece of supernatural description. Coleridge himself shrank from his own wonders, and wanted to call the piece “A Poet’s Reverie.” “It is as bad as Bottom the weaver’s declaration that he is not a lion, but only the scenical representation of a lion. What new idea is gained by this title but one subversive of all credit — which the tale should force upon us — of its truth?” Lamb himself was forced, by the temper of the time, to declare that he “disliked all the miraculous part of it,” as if it were not *all* miraculous! Wordsworth wanted the Mariner “to have a character and a profession,” perhaps would have liked him to be a gardener, or a butler, with “an excellent character!” In fact, the love of the supernatural was then at so low an ebb that a certain Mr. Marshall “went to sleep while the ‘Ancient Mariner’ was reading,” and the book was mainly bought by seafaring men, deceived by the title, and supposing that the “Ancient Mariner” was a nautical treatise.

In verse, then, Coleridge succeeds with the supernatural, both by way of description in detail, and of suggestion. If you wish to see a failure, try the ghost, the moral but not affable ghost, in Wordsworth’s “Laodamia.” It is blasphemy to ask the question, but is the ghost in “Hamlet” quite a success? Do we not see and hear a little too much of him? Macbeth’s airy and viewless dagger is really much more successful by way of suggestion. The stage makes a ghost visible and familiar, and this is one great danger of the supernatural in art. It is apt to insist on being too conspicuous. Did the ghost of Darius, in “Æschylus,” frighten the Athenians? Probably they smiled at the imperial spectre. There is more discretion in Cæsar’s ghost —

“I think it is the weakness of mine eyes
That shapes this monstrous apparition,”

says Brutus, and he lays no very great stress on the brief visit of the appearance. For want of this discretion, Alexandre Dumas’s ghosts, as in “The Corsican Brothers,” are failures. They make themselves too common and too cheap, like the spectre in Mrs. Oliphant’s novel, “The Wizard’s Son.” This, indeed, is the crux of the whole adventure. If you paint your ghost with too heavy a hand, you raise laughter, not fear. If you touch him too lightly, you raise unsatisfied curiosity, not fear. It may be easy to shudder, but it is difficult to teach shuddering.

In prose, a good example of the over vague is Miriam’s mysterious visitor — the shadow of the catacombs — in “Transformation; or, The Marble Faun.” Hawthorne should have told us more or less; to be sure his contemporaries knew what he meant, knew who Miriam and the Spectre were. The dweller in the catacombs now powerfully excites curiosity, and when that curiosity is unsatisfied, we feel aggrieved, vexed, and suspect that Hawthorne himself was puzzled, and knew no more than his readers. He has not — as in other tales he has — managed to throw the right atmosphere about this being. He is vague in the wrong way, whereas George Sand, in *Les Dames Vertes*, is vague in the right way. We are left in *Les Dames Vertes* with that kind of curiosity which persons really engaged in the adventure might have felt, not with the irritation of having a secret kept from us, as in “Transformation.”

In “Wandering Willie’s Tale” (in “Redgauntlet”), the right atmosphere is found, the right note is struck. All is vividly real, and yet, if you close the book, all melts into a dream again. Scott was almost equally successful with a described horror in “The Tapestried Chamber.” The idea is the commonplace of haunted houses, the apparition is described as minutely as a burglar might have been; and yet we do not mock, but shudder as we read. Then, on the other side — the side of anticipation — take the scene outside the closed door of the vanished Dr. Jekyll, in Mr. Stevenson’s well-known apologue:

They are waiting on the threshold of the chamber whence the doctor has disappeared — the chamber tenanted by what? A voice comes from the room. “Sir,” said Poole, looking Mr. Utterson in the eyes, “was that my master’s voice?”

A friend, a man of affairs, and a person never accused of being fanciful, told me that he read through the book to that point in a lonely Highland chateau, at night, and that he did not think it well to finish the story till next morning, but rushed to bed. So the passage seems “well-found” and successful by dint of suggestion. On the other side, perhaps, only Scotsmen brought up in country places, familiar from childhood with the terrors of Cameronian myth, and from childhood apt to haunt the lonely churchyards, never stirred since the year of the great Plague choked the soil with the dead, perhaps *they* only know how much shudder may be found in Mr. Stevenson’s “Thrawn Janet.” The black smouldering heat in the hills and glens that are commonly so fresh, the aspect of the Man, the Tempter of the Brethren, we know them, and we have enough of the old blood in us to be thrilled by that masterpiece of the described supernatural. It may be only a local success, it may not much affect the English reader, but it is of sure appeal to the lowland Scot. The ancestral Covenanter within us awakens, and is terrified by his ancient fears.

Perhaps it may die out in a positive age — this power of learning to shudder. To us it descends from very long ago, from the far-off forefathers who dreaded the dark, and who, half starved and all untaught, saw spirits everywhere, and scarce discerned waking experience from dreams. When we are all perfect positivist philosophers, when a thousand generations of nurses that never heard of ghosts have educated the thousand and first generation of children, then the supernatural may fade out of fiction. But has it not grown and increased since Wordsworth wanted the “Ancient Mariner” to have “a profession and a character,” since Southey called that poem a Dutch piece of work, since Lamb had to pretend to dislike its “miracles”? Why, as science becomes more cock-sure, have men and women become more and more fond of old follies, and more pleased with the stirring of ancient dread within their veins?

As the visible world is measured, mapped, tested, weighed, we seem to hope more and more that a world of invisible romance may not be far from us, or, at least, we care more and more to follow fancy into these airy regions, *et inania regna*. The supernatural has not ceased to tempt romancers, like Alexandre Dumas, usually to their destruction; more rarely, as in Mrs. Oliphant's "Beleaguered City," to such success as they do not find in the world of daily occupation. The ordinary shilling tales of "hypnotism" and mesmerism are vulgar trash enough, and yet I can believe that an impossible romance, if the right man wrote it in the right mood, might still win us from the newspapers, and the stories of shabby love, and cheap remorses, and commonplace failures.

"But it needs Heaven-sent moments for this skill."

CHAPTER XVI: AN OLD SCOTTISH PSYCHICAL RESEARCHER

ADVERTISEMENT

"If any Gentlemen, and others, will be pleased to send me any relations about Spirits, Witches, and Apparitions, In any part of the Kingdom; or any Information about the Second Sight, Charms, Spells, Magic, and the like, They shall oblige the Author, and have them publisht to their satisfaction.

"Direct your Relations to Alexander Ogstouns, Shop Stationer, at the foot of the Plain-stones, at Edinburgh, on the North-side of the Street."

Is this not a pleasing opportunity for Gentlemen, and Others, whose Aunts have beheld wraiths, doubles, and fetches? It answers very closely to the requests of the Society for Psychical Research, who publish, as some one disparagingly says, "the dreams of the middle classes." Thanks to Freedom, Progress, and the decline of Superstition, it is now quite safe to see apparitions, and even to publish the narrative of their appearance.

But when Mr. George Sinclair, sometime Professor of Philosophy in Glasgow, issued the invitation which I have copied, at the end of his "Satan's Invisible World Discovered," the vocation of a seer was not so secure from harm. He, or she, might just as probably be burned as not, on the charge of sorcery, in the year of grace, 1685. However, Professor Sinclair managed to rake together an odd enough set of legends, "proving clearly that there are Devils," a desirable matter to have certainty about. "Satan's Invisible World Discovered" is a very rare little book; I think Scott says in a MS. note that he had great difficulty in procuring it, when he was at work on his "infernal demonology." As a copy fell in my way, or rather as I fell in its way, a helpless victim to its charms and its blue morocco binding, I take this chance of telling again the old tales of 1685.

Mr. Sinclair began with a long dedicatory Epistle about nothing at all, to the Lord Winton of the period. The Earl dug coal-mines, and constructed "a moliminous rampier for a harbour." A "moliminous rampier" is a choice phrase, and may be envied by novelists who aim at distinction of style. "Your defending the salt pans against the imperious waves of the raging sea from the NE. is singular," adds the Professor, addressing "the greatest coal and salt-master in

Scotland, who is a nobleman, and the greatest nobleman who is a Coal and Salt Merchant." Perhaps it is already plain to the modern mind that Mr. George Sinclair, though a Professor of Philosophy, was not a very sagacious character.

Mr. Sinclair professes that his proofs of the existence of Devils "are no old wife's trattles about the fire, but such as may bide the test." He lived, one should remember, in an age when faith was really seeking aid from ghost stories. Glanvil's books — and, in America, those of Cotton Mather — show the hospitality to anecdotes of an edifying sort, which we admire in Mr. Sinclair. Indeed, Sinclair borrows from Glanvil and Henry More, authors who, like himself, wished to establish the existence of the supernatural on the strange incidents which still perplex us, but which are scarcely regarded as safe matter to argue upon. The testimony for a Ghost would seldom go to a jury in our days, though amply sufficient in the time of Mr. Sinclair. About "The Devil of Glenluce" he took particular care to be well informed, and first gave it to the world in a volume on — you will never guess what subject — Hydrostatics! In the present work he offers us

"The Devil of Glenluce Enlarged
With several Remarkable Additions
from an Eye and Ear Witness,
A Person of undoubted
Honesty."

Mr. Sinclair recommends its "usefulness for refuting Atheism." Probably Mr. Sinclair got the story, or had it put off on him rather, through one Campbell, a student of philosophy in Glasgow, the son of Gilbert Campbell, a weaver of Glenluce, in Galloway; the scene in our own time, of a mysterious murder. Campbell had refused alms to Alexander Agnew, a bold and sturdy beggar, who, when asked by the Judge whether he believed in a God, answered: "He knew no God but Salt, Meal, and Water." In consequence of the refusal of alms, "The Stirs first began." The "Stirs" are ghostly disturbances. They commenced with whistling in the house and out of it, "such as children use to make with their small, slender glass whistles." "About the Middle of November," says Mr. Sinclair, "the Foul Fiend came on with his extraordinary assaults." Observe that he takes the Foul Fiend entirely for granted, and that he never tells us the date of the original quarrel, and the early agitation. Stones were thrown down the chimney and in at the windows, but nobody was hurt.

Naturally Gilbert Campbell carried his tale of sorrow to the parish Minister. This did not avail him. His warp and threads were cut on his loom, and even the clothes of his family were cut while they were wearing them. At night something tugged the blankets off their beds, a favourite old spiritual trick, which was played, if I remember well, on a Roman Emperor, according to Suetonius. Poor Campbell had to remove his stock-in-trade, and send his children to board out, "to try whom the trouble did most follow." After this, all was quiet (as perhaps might be expected), and quiet all remained, till a son named Thomas was brought home again. Then the house was twice set on fire, and it might have been enough to give Thomas a beating. On the other hand, Campbell sent Thomas to stay with the Minister. But the troubles continued in the old way. At last the family became so accustomed to the Devil, "that they were no more afraid to keep up the Clash" (chatter) "with the Foul Fiend than to speak to each other." They were like the Wesleys, who were so familiar with the fiend Jeffrey, that haunted their home.

The Minister, with a few of the gentry, heard of their unholy friendship, and paid Campbell a visit. "At their first coming in the Devil says: '*Quum Literarum* is good Latin.'" These are the first words of the Latin rudiments which scholars are taught when they go to the Grammar School. Then they all prayed, and a Voice came from under the bed: "Would you know the Witches of Glenluce?" The Voice named a few, including one long dead. But the Minister, with rare good sense, remarked that what Satan said was not evidence.

Let it be remarked that "the lad Tom" had that very day "come back with the Minister." The Fiend then offered terms. "Give me a spade and shovel, and depart from the house for seven days, and I will make a grave, and lie down in it, and trouble you no more." Hereon Campbell, with Scottish caution, declined to give the Devil the value of a straw. The visitors then hunted after the voice, observing that some of the children were in bed. They found nothing, and then, as the novelists say, "a strange thing happened."

There appeared a naked hand and an arm, from the elbow down, beating upon the floor till the house did shake again. "The Fiend next exclaimed that if the candle were put out he would appear in the shape of Fireballs."

Let it be observed that now, for the first time, we learn that all the scene occurred in candle-light. The appearance of floating balls of fire is frequent (if we may believe the current reports) at spiritualistic séances. But what a strange, ill-digested tale is Mr. Sinclair's! He lets slip an expression which shows that the investigators were in one room, the But, while the Fiend was diverting himself in the other room, the Ben! The Fiend (nobody going Ben) next chaffed a gentleman who wore a fashionable broad-brimmed hat, "whereupon he presently imagined that he felt a pair of shears going about his hat," but there was no such matter. The voice asked for a piece of bread, which the others were eating, and said the maid gave him a crust in the morning. This she denied, but admitted that something had "clicked" a piece of bread out of her hand.

The séance ended, the Devil slapping a safe portion of the children's bodies, with a sound resembling applause. After many months of this really annoying conduct, poor Campbell laid his case before the Presbyters, in 1655, thirty years before the date of publication. So a "solemn humiliation" was actually held all through the bounds of the synod. But to little purpose did Glenluce sit in sackcloth and ashes. The good wife's plate was snatched away before her very eyes, and then thrown back at her. In similar "stirs," described by a Catholic missionary in Peru soon after Pizarro's conquest, the cup of an Indian chief was lifted up by an invisible hand, and set down empty. In that case, too, stones were thrown, as by the Devil of Glenluce.

And what was the end of it all? Mr. Sinclair has not even taken the trouble to inquire. It seems by some conjuration or other, the Devil suffered himself to be put away, and gave the weaver a habitation. The weaver "has been a very Odd man that endured so long these marvellous disturbances."

This is the tale which Mr. Sinclair offers, without mentioning his authority. He complains that Dr. Henry More had plagiarised it, from his book of Hydrostatics. Two points may be remarked. First: modern Psychical Inquirers are more particular about evidence than Mr. Sinclair. Not for nothing do we live in an age of science. Next: the stories of these "stirs" are always much the same everywhere, in Glenluce, at Tedworth, where the Drummer came, in Peru, in Wesley's house, in heroic Iceland, when Glam, the vampire, "rode the roofs." It is curious to speculate on how the tradition of making themselves little nuisances in this particular manner has been handed down among children, if we are to suppose that children do the trick. Last autumn a farmer's house in Scotland was annoyed exactly as the weaver's home was, and that within a quarter of a mile of a well-known man of science. The mattress of the father was tenanted by something that wriggled like a snake. The mattress was opened, nothing was found, and the disturbance began again as soon as the bed was restored to its place. This occurred when the farmer's children had been sent to a distance.

One cannot but be perplexed by the problem which these tales suggest. Almost bare of evidence as they are, their great number, their wide diffusion, in many countries and in times ancient and modern, may establish some substratum of truth. Scott mentions a case in which the imposture was detected by a sheriff's officer. But a recent anecdote makes me almost distrust the detection.

Some English people, having taken a country house in Ireland, were vexed by the usual rappings, stone-throwings, and all the rest of the business. They sent to Dublin for two detectives, who arrived. On their first night, the lady of the house went into a room, where she found one of the policemen asleep in his chair. Being a lively person, she rapped twice or thrice on the table. He awakened, and said: “Ah, so I suspected. It was hardly worth while, madam, to bring us so far for this.” And next day the worthy men withdrew in dudgeon, but quite convinced that they had discovered the agent in the hauntings.

But they had not!

On the other hand, Scott (who had seen one ghost, if not two, and had heard a “warning”) states that Miss Anne Robinson managed the Stockwell disturbances by tying horsehairs to plates and light articles, which then demeaned themselves as if possessed.

Here we have *vera causa*, a demonstrable cause of “stirs,” and it may be inferred that all the other historical occurrences had a similar origin. We have, then, only to be interested in the persistent tradition, in accordance with which mischievous persons always do exactly the same sort of thing. But this is a mere example of the identity of human nature.

It is curious to see how Mr. Sinclair plumes himself on this Devil of Glenluce as a “moliminous rampier” against irreligion. “This one Relation is worth all the price that can be given for the Book.” The price I have given for the volume is Ten Golden Guineas, and perhaps the Foul Thief of Glenluce is hardly worth the money.

“I believe if the Obdurest Atheist among men would seriously and in good earnest consider that relation, and ponder all the circumstances thereof, he would presently cry out, as a Dr. of Physick did, hearing a story less considerable, ‘I believe I have been in the wrong all the time — if this be true.’”

Mr. Sinclair is also a believer in the Woodstock devils, on which Scott founded his novel. He does not give the explanation that Giles Sharp, alias Joseph Collins of Oxford, alias Funny Joe, was all the Devil in that affair. Scott had read the story of Funny Joe, but could never remember “whether it exists in a separate collection, or where it is to be looked for.”

Indifferent to evidence, Mr. Sinclair confutes the Obdurest Atheists with the Pied Piper of Hamelin, with the young lady from Howells’ “Letters,” whose house, like Rahab’s, was “on the city wall,” and with the ghost of the Major who appeared to the Captain (as he had promised), and scolded him for not keeping his sword clean. He also gives us Major Weir, at full length, convincing us that, as William Erskine said, “The Major was a disgusting fellow, a most ungentlemanlike character.” Scott, on the other hand, remarked, long before “Waverley,” “if I ever were to become a writer of prose romances, I think I would choose Major Weir, if not for my hero, at least for an agent and a leading one, in my production.” He admitted that the street where the Major lived was haunted by a woman “twice the common length,” “but why should we set him down for an ungentlemanly fellow?” Readers of Mr. Sinclair will understand the reason very well, and it is not necessary, nor here even possible, to justify Erskine’s opinion by quotations. Suffice it that, by virtue of his enchanted staff, which was burned with him, the Major was enabled “to commit evil not to be named, yea, even to reconcile man and wife when at variance.” His sister, who was hanged, had Redgauntlet’s horse-shoe mark on her brow, and one may marvel that Scott does not seem to have remembered this coincidence. “There was seen an exact Horse-shoe, shaped for nails, in her wrinkles. Terrible enough, I assure you, to the stoutest beholder!”

Most modern readers will believe that both the luckless Major and his sister were religious maniacs. Poverty, solitude, and the superstition of their time were the true demon of Major Weir, burned at the stake in April 1670. Perhaps the most singular impression made by “Satan’s Invisible World Discovered” is that in Sinclair’s day, people who did not believe in bogies believed in nothing, while people who shared the common creed of Christendom were capable of believing in everything.

Atheists are as common as ghosts in his marvellous relations, and the very wizards themselves were often Atheists.

NOTE. — I have said that Scott himself had seen one ghost, if not two, and heard a “warning.” The ghost was seen near Ashestiel, on an open spot of hillside, “please to observe it was before dinner.” The anecdote is in Gillis’s, “Recollections of Sir Walter Scott,” . The vision of Lord Byron standing in the great hall of Abbotsford is described in the “Demonology and Witchcraft .” Scott alleges that it resolved itself into “great coats, shawls, and plaids” — a hallucination. But Lockhart remarks (“Life,” ix.) that he did not care to have the circumstance discussed in general. The “stirs” in Abbotsford during the night when his architect, Bullock, died in London, are in Lockhart, v. p-315. “The noise resembled half-a-dozen men hard at work putting up boards and furniture, and nothing can be more certain than that there was nobody on the premises at the time.” The noise, unluckily, occurred twice, April 28 and 29, 1818, and Lockhart does not tell us on which of these two nights Mr. Bullock died. Such is the casualness of ghost story-tellers. Lockhart adds that the coincidence made a strong impression on Sir Walter’s mind. He did not care to ascertain the point in his own mental constitution “where incredulity began to waver,” according to his friend, Mr. J. L. Adolphus.

CHAPTER XVII: THE BOY

As a humble student of savage life, I have found it necessary to make researches into the manners and customs of boys. Boys are not what a vain people supposes. If you meet them in the holidays, you find them affable and full of kindness and good qualities. They will condescend to your weakness at lawn-tennis, they will aid you in your selection of fly-hooks, and, to be brief, will behave with much more than the civility of tame Zulus or Red Men on a missionary settlement. But boys at school and among themselves, left to the wild justice and traditional laws which many generations of boys have evolved, are entirely different beings. They resemble that Polynesian prince who had rejected the errors of polytheism for those of an extreme sect of Primitive Seceders. For weeks at a time this prince was known to be "steady," but every month or so he disappeared, and his subjects said he was "lying off." To adopt an American idiom, he "felt like brandy and water"; he also "felt like" wearing no clothes, and generally rejecting his new conceptions of duty and decency. In fact, he had a good bout of savagery, and then he returned to his tall hat, his varnished boots, his hymn-book, and his edifying principles. The life of small boys at school (before they get into long-tailed coats and the upper-fifth) is often a mere course of "lying-off" — of relapse into native savagery with its laws and customs.

If any one has so far forgotten his own boyhood as to think this description exaggerated, let him just fancy what our comfortable civilised life would be, if we could become boys in character and custom. Let us suppose that you are elected to a new club, of which most of the members are strangers to you. You enter the doors for the first time, when two older members, who have been gossiping in the hall, pounce upon you with the exclamation, "Hullo, here's a new fellow! You fellow, what's your name?" You reply, let us say, "Johnson." "I don't believe it, it's such a rum name. What's your father?" Perhaps you are constrained to answer "a Duke" or (more probably) "a solicitor." In the former case your friends bound up into the smoking-room, howling, "Here's a new fellow says his father is a Duke. Let's take the cheek out of him." And they "take it out" with umbrellas, slippers, and other surgical instruments. Or, in the latter case (your parent being a solicitor) they reply, "Then your father must be a beastly cad. All solicitors are sharks. *My* father says so, and he knows. How many sisters have you?" The new member answers, "Four." "Any of them married?” “No.” “How awfully awkward for you.”

By this time, perhaps, luncheon is ready, or the evening papers come in, and you are released for a moment. You sneak up into the library, where you naturally expect to be entirely alone, and you settle on a sofa with a novel. But an old member bursts into the room, spies a new fellow, and puts him through the usual catechism. He ends with, “How much tin have you got?” You answer “twenty pounds,” or whatever the sum may be, for perhaps you had contemplated playing whist. “Very well, fork it out; you must give a dinner, all new fellows must, and *you* are not going to begin by being a stingy beast?” Thus addressed, as your friend is a big bald man, who looks mischievous, you do “fork out” all your ready money, and your new friend goes off to consult the cook. Meanwhile you “shed a blooming tear,” as Homer says, and go home heart-broken. Now, does any grown-up man call this state of society civilisation? Would life be worth living (whatever one’s religious consolations) on these terms? Of course not, and yet this picture is a not overdrawn sketch of the career of some new boy, at some schools new or old. The existence of a small schoolboy is, in other respects, not unlike that of an outsider in a lawless “Brotherhood,” as the Irish playfully call their murder clubs.

The small boy is *in* the society, but not *of* it, as far as any benefits go. He has to field out (and I admit that the discipline is salutary) while other boys bat. Other boys commit the faults, and compel him to copy out the impositions — say five hundred lines of Virgil — with which their sins are visited. Other boys enjoy the pleasures of football, while the small boy has to run vaguely about, never within five yards of the ball. Big boys reap the glories of paperchases, the small boy gets lost in the bitter weather, on the open moors, or perhaps (as in one historical case) is frozen to death within a measurable distance of the school playground. And the worst of it is that, as a member of the great school secret society, the small boy can never complain of his wrongs, or divulge the name of his tormentors. It is in this respect that he resembles a harmless fellow, dragged into the coils of an Anarchist “Inner Brotherhood.” He is exposed to all sorts of wrongs from his neighbours, and he can only escape by turning “informer,” by breaking the most sacred law of his society, losing all social status, and, probably, obliging his parents to remove him from school. Life at school, as among the Celtic peoples, turns on the belief that law and authority are natural enemies, against which every one is banded.

The chapter of bullying among boys is one on which a man enters with reluctance. Boys are, on the whole, such good fellows, and so full of fine unsophisticated qualities, that the mature mind would gladly turn away its eyes from beholding their iniquities. Even a cruel bully does not inevitably and invariably develop into a bad man. He is, let us hope, only passing through the savage stage, in which the torture of prisoners is a recognised institution. He has, perhaps, too little imagination to understand the pain he causes. Very often bullying is not physically cruel, but only a perverted sort of humour, such as Kingsley, in "Hypatia," recognised among his favourite Goths. I remember a feeble foolish boy at school (feeble he certainly was, and was thought foolish) who became the subject of much humorous bullying. His companions used to tie a thin thread round his ear, and attach this to a bar at such a height that he could only avoid breaking it by standing on tiptoe. But he was told that he must not break the thread. To avoid infringing this commandment, he put himself to considerable inconvenience and afforded much enjoyment to the spectators.

Men of middle age, rather early middle age, remember the two following species of bullying to which they were subjected, and which, perhaps, are obsolescent. Tall stools were piled up in a pyramid, and the victim was seated on the top, near the roof of the room. The other savages brought him down from this bad eminence by hurling other stools at those which supported him. Or the victim was made to place his hands against the door, with the fingers outstretched, while the young tormentors played at the Chinese knife-trick. They threw knives, that is to say, at the door between the apertures of the fingers, and, as a rule, they hit the fingers and not the door. These diversions I know to be correctly reported, but the following pretty story is, perhaps, a myth. At one of the most famous public schools, a praepostor, or monitor, or sixth-form boy having authority, heard a pistol-shot in the room above his own. He went up and found a big boy and a little boy. They denied having any pistol. The monitor returned to his studies, again was sure he heard a shot, went up, and found the little boy dead. The big boy had been playing the William Tell trick with him, and had hit his head instead of the apple. That is the legend. Whether it be true or false, all boys will agree that the little victim could not have escaped by complaining to the monitor. No. Death before dishonour. But the side not so seamy of this picture of school life is the extraordinary power of honour among boys. Of course the laws of the secret society might well terrify a puerile informer. But the sentiment of honour is even more strong than fear, and will probably outlast the very disagreeable circumstances in which it was developed.

People say bullying is not what it used to be. The much abused monitorial system has this in it of good, that it enables a clever and kindly boy who is high up in the school to stop the cruelties (if he hears of them) of a much bigger boy who is low in the school. But he seldom hears of them. Habitual bullies are very cunning, and I am acquainted with instances in which they carry their victims off to lonely torture cells (so to speak) and deserted places fit for the sport. Some years ago a small boy, after a long course of rope's-ending in out-of-the-way dens, revealed the abominations of some naval cadets. There was not much sympathy with him in the public mind, and perhaps his case was not well managed. But it was made clear that whereas among men an unpopular person is only spoken evil of behind his back, an unpopular small boy among boys is made to suffer in a more direct and very unpleasant way.

Most of us leave school with the impression that there was a good deal of bullying when we were little, but that the institution has died out. The truth is that we have grown too big to be bullied, and too good-natured to bully ourselves. When I left school, I thought bullying was an extinct art, like encaustic painting (before it was rediscovered by Sir William Richmond). But a distinguished writer, who was a small boy when I was a big one, has since revealed to me the most abominable cruelties which were being practised at the very moment when I supposed bullying to have had its day and ceased to be. Now, the small boy need only have mentioned the circumstances to any one of a score of big boys, and the tormentor would have been first thrashed, and then, probably, expelled.

A friend of my own was travelling lately in a wild and hilly region on the other side of the world, let us say in the Mountains of the Moon. In a mountain tavern he had thrust upon him the society of the cook, a very useless young man, who astonished him by references to one of our universities, and to the enjoyments of that seat of learning. This youth (who was made cook, and a very bad cook too, because he could do nothing else) had been expelled from a large English school. And he was expelled because he had felled a bully with a paving-stone, and had expressed his readiness to do it again. Now, there was no doubt that this cook in the mountain inn was a very unserviceable young fellow. But I wish more boys who have suffered things literally unspeakable from bullies would try whether force (in the form of a paving stone) is really no remedy.

The Catholic author of a recent book ("Schools," by Lieut.-Col. Raleigh Chichester), is very hard on "Protestant Schools," and thinks that the Catholic system of constant watching is a remedy for bullying and other evils. "Swing-doors with their upper half glazed, might have their uses," he says, and he does not see why a boy should not be permitted to complain, if he is roasted, like Tom Brown, before a large fire. The boys at one Catholic school described by Colonel Raleigh Chichester, "are never without surveillance of some sort." This is true of most French schools, and any one who wishes to understand the consequences (there) may read the published confessions of a *pion* — an usher, or "spy." A more degraded and degrading life than that of the wretched *pion*, it is impossible to imagine. In an English private school, the system of *espionnage* and tale bearing, when it exists, is probably not unlike what Mr. Anstey describes in *Vice Versâ*. But in the Catholic schools spoken of by Colonel Raleigh Chichester, the surveillance may be, as he says, “that of a parent; an aid to the boys in their games rather than a check.” The religious question as between Catholics and Protestants has no essential connection with the subject. A Protestant school might, and Grimstone’s did, have tale-bearers; possibly a Catholic school might exist without parental surveillance. That system is called by its foes a “police,” by its friends a “paternal” system. But fathers don’t exercise the “paternal” system themselves in this country, and we may take it for granted that, while English society and religion are as they are, surveillance at our large schools will be impossible. If any one regrets this, let him read the descriptions of French schools and schooldays, in Balzac’s *Louis Lambert*, in the “Memoirs” of M. Maxime du Camp, in any book where a Frenchman speaks his mind about his youth. He will find spying (of course) among the ushers, contempt and hatred on the side of the boys, unwholesome and cruel punishments, a total lack of healthy exercise; and he will hear of holidays spent in premature excursions into forbidden and shady quarters of the town.

No doubt the best security against bullying is in constant occupation. There can hardly (in spite of Master George Osborne’s experience in “Vanity Fair”) be much bullying in an open cricket-field. Big boys, too, with good hearts, should not only stop bullying when they come across it, but make it their business to find out where it exists. Exist it will, more or less, despite all precautions, while boys are boys — that is, are passing through a modified form of the savage state.

There is a curious fact in the boyish character which seems, at first sight, to make good the opinion that private education, at home, is the true method. Before they go out into school life, many little fellows of nine, or so, are extremely original, imaginative, and almost poetical. They are fond of books, fond of nature, and, if you can win their confidence, will tell you all sorts of pretty thoughts and fancies which lie about them in their infancy. I have known a little boy who liked to lie on the grass and to people the alleys and glades of that miniature forest with fairies and dwarfs, whom he seemed actually to see in a kind of vision. But he went to school, he instantly won the hundred yards race for boys under twelve, and he came back a young barbarian, interested in “the theory of touch” (at football), curious in the art of bowling, and no more capable than you or I of seeing fairies in a green meadow. He was caught up into the air of the boy’s world, and his imagination was in abeyance for a season.

This is a common enough thing, and rather a melancholy spectacle to behold. One is tempted to believe that school causes the loss of a good deal of genius, and that the small boys who leave home poets, and come back barbarians, have been wasted. But, on the other hand, if they had been kept at home and encouraged, the chances are that they would have blossomed into infant phenomena and nothing better. The awful infancy of Mr. John Stuart Mill is a standing warning. Mr. Mill would probably have been a much happier and wiser man if he had not been a precocious linguist, economist, and philosopher, but had passed through a healthy stage of indifference to learning and speculation at a public school. Look again, at the childhood of Bishop Thirlwall. His *Primitiae* were published (by Samuel Tipper, London, 1808), when young Connop was but eleven years of age. His indiscreet father "launched this slender bark," as he says, and it sailed through three editions between 1808 and 1809. Young Thirlwall was taught Latin at three years of age, "and at four read Greek with an ease and fluency which astonished all who heard him." At seven he composed an essay, "On the Uncertainty of Human Life," but "his taste for poetry was not discovered till a later period." His sermons, some forty, occupy most of the little volume in which these *Primitiae* were collected.

He was especially concerned about Sabbath desecration. "I confess," observes this sage of ten, "when I look upon the present and past state of our public morals, and when I contrast our present luxury, dissipation, and depravity, with past frugality and virtue, I feel not merely a sensation of regret, but also of terror, for the result of the change." "The late Revolution in France," he adds, "has afforded us a remarkable lesson how necessary religion is to a State, and that from a deficiency on that head arise the chief evils which can befall society." He then bids us "remember that the Nebuchadnezzar who may destroy our Israel is near at hand," though it might be difficult to show how Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Israel.

As to the uncertainty of life, he remarks that "Edward VI. died in his minority, and disappointed his subjects, to whom he had promised a happy reign." Of this infant's thirty-nine sermons (just as many as the Articles), it may be said that they are in no way inferior to other examples of this class of literature. But sermons are among the least "scarce" and "rare" of human essays, and many parents would rather see their boy patiently acquiring the art of wicket-keeping at school than moralising on the uncertainty of life at home. Some one "having presented to the young author a copy of verses on the trite and familiar subject of the Ploughboy," he replied with an ode on "The Potboy."

"Bliss is not always join'd to wealth,
  Nor dwells beneath the gilded roof
For poverty is bliss with health,

Of that my potboy stands a proof."

The volume ends with this determination,

"Still shall I seek Apollo's shelt'ring ray,
To cheer my spirits and inspire my lay."

If any parent or guardian desires any further information about *Les Enfans devenus célèbres par leurs écrits*, he will find it in a work of that name, published in Paris in 1688. The learned Scioppius published works at sixteen, "which deserved" (and perhaps obtained) "the admiration of dotards." M. Du Maurier asserts that, at the age of fifteen, Grotius pleaded causes at the Bar. At eleven Meursius made orations and harangues which were much admired. At fifteen, Alexandre le Jeune wrote anacreontic verses, and (less excusably) a commentary on the Institutions of Gaius. Grevin published a tragedy and two comedies at the age of thirteen, and at fifteen Louis Stella was a professor of Greek. But no one reads Grevin now, nor Stella, nor Alexandre le Jeune, and perhaps their time might have been better occupied in being "soaring human boys" than in composing tragedies and commentaries. Monsieur le Duc de Maine published, in 1678, his *Œuvres d'un Auteur de Sept Ans*, a royal example to be avoided by all boys. These and several score of other examples may perhaps reconcile us to the spectacle of puerile genius fading away in the existence of the common British schoolboy, who is nothing of a poet, and still less of a jurisconsult.

The British authors who understand boys best are not those who have written books exclusively about boys. There is Canon Farrar, for example, whose romances of boyish life appear to be very popular, but whose boys, somehow, are not real boys. They are too good when they are good, and when they are bad, they are not perhaps too bad (that is impossible), but they are bad in the wrong way. They are bad with a mannish and conscious vice, whereas even bad boys seem to sin less consciously and after a ferocious fashion of their own. Of the boys in "Tom Brown" it is difficult to speak, because the Rugby boy under Arnold seems to have been of a peculiar species. A contemporary pupil was asked, when an undergraduate, what he conceived to be the peculiar characteristic of Rugby boys. He said, after mature reflection, that "the *differentia* of the Rugby boy was his moral thoughtfulness." Now the characteristic of the ordinary boy is his want of what is called moral thoughtfulness.

He lives in simple obedience to school traditions. These may compel him, at one school, to speak in a peculiar language, and to persecute and beat all boys who are slow at learning this language. At another school he may regard dislike of the manly game of football as the sin with which "heaven heads the count of crimes." On the whole this notion seems a useful protest against the prematurely artistic beings who fill their studies with photographs of Greek fragments, vases, etchings by the newest etcher, bits of China, Oriental rugs, and very curious old brass candlesticks. The "challenge cup" soon passes away from the keeping of any house in a public school where Bunthorne is a popular and imitated character. But when we reach æsthetic boys, we pass out of the savage stage into hobbledehoyhood. The bigger boys at public schools are often terribly "advanced," and when they are not at work or play, they are vexing themselves with the riddle of the earth, evolution, agnosticism, and all that kind of thing. Latin verses may not be what conservatives fondly deem them, and even cricket may, it is said, become too absorbing a pursuit, but either or both are better than precocious freethinking and sacrifice on the altar of the Beautiful.

A big boy who is tackling Haeckel or composing *virelais* in playtime is doing himself no good, and is worse than useless to the society of which he is a member. The small boys, who are the most ardent of hero-worshippers, either despise him or they allow him to address them in *chansons royaux*, and respond with trebles in *triolets*. At present a great many boys leave school, pass three years or four at the universities, and go back as masters to the place where some of their old schoolfellows are still pupils. It is through these very young masters, perhaps, that "advanced" speculations and tastes get into schools, where, however excellent in themselves, they are rather out of place. Indeed, the very young master, though usually earnest in his work, must be a sage indeed if he can avoid talking to the elder boys about the problems that interest him, and so forcing their minds into precocious attitudes. The advantage of Eton boys used to be, perhaps is still, that they came up to college absolutely destitute of "ideas," and guiltless of reading anything more modern than Virgil. Thus their intellects were quite fallow, and they made astonishing progress when they bent their fresh and unwearied minds to study. But too many boys now leave school with settled opinions derived from the very latest thing out, from the newest German pessimist or American socialist. It may, however, be argued that ideas of these sorts are like measles, and that it is better to take them early and be done with them for ever.

While schools are reformed and Latin grammars of the utmost ingenuity and difficulty are published, boys on the whole change very little. They remain the beings whom Thackeray understood better than any other writer: Thackeray, who liked boys so much and was so little blind to their defects. I think he exaggerates their habit of lying to masters, or, if they lied in his day, their character has altered in that respect, and they are more truthful than many men find it expedient to be. And they have given up fighting; the old battles between Berry and Biggs, or Dobbin and Cuff (major) are things of the glorious past. Big boys don't fight, and there is a whisper that little boys kick each other's shins when in wrath. That practice can hardly be called an improvement, even if we do not care for fisticuffs. Perhaps the gloves are the best peacemakers at school. When all the boys, by practice in boxing, know pretty well whom they can in a friendly way lick, they are less tempted to more crucial experiments "without the gloves."

But even the ascertainment of one's relative merits with the gloves hurts a good deal, and one may thank heaven that the fountain of youth (as described by Pontus de Tyarde) is not a common beverage. By drinking this liquid, says the old Frenchman, one is insensibly brought back from old to middle age, and to youth and boyhood. But one would prefer to stop drinking of the fountain before actually being reduced to boy's estate, and passing once more through the tumultuous experiences of that period. And of these, *not having enough to eat* is by no means the least common. The evidence as to execrable dinners is rather dispiriting, and one may end by saying that if there is a worse fellow than a bully, it is a master who does not see that his boys are supplied with plenty of wholesome food. He, at least, could not venture, like a distinguished headmaster, to preach and publish sermons on "Boys' Life: its Fulness." A schoolmaster who has boarders is a hotel-keeper, and thereby makes his income, but he need not keep a hotel which would be dispraised in guide books. Dinners are a branch of school economy which should not be left to the wives of schoolmasters. *They* have never been boys.

JAMES VI AND THE GOWRIE MYSTERY

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TO THE LADY CECILY BAILLIE-HAMILTON
this inquiry is gratefully dedicated

A.L.

INTRODUCTION

An old Scottish lady, four generations ago, used to say, ‘It is a great comfort to think that, at the Day of Judgment, we shall know the whole truth about the Gowrie Conspiracy at last.’ Since the author, as a child, read ‘The Tales of a Grandfather,’ and shared King Jamie’s disappointment when there was no pot of gold, but an armed man, in the turret, he had supposed that we do know all about the Gowrie Conspiracy, that it was a plot to capture the King, carry him to Fastcastle, and ‘see how the country would take it,’ as in the case of the Gunpowder Plot. But just as Father Gerard has tried to show that the Gunpowder affair may have been Cecil’s plot, so modern historians doubt whether the Gowrie mystery was not a conspiracy by King James himself. Mr. Hume Brown appears rather to lean to this opinion, in the second volume of his ‘History of Scotland,’ and Dr. Masson, in his valuable edition of the ‘Register of the Privy Council,’ is also dubious. Mr. Louis Barbé, in his ‘Tragedy of Gowrie House,’ holds a brief against the King. Thus I have been tempted to study this ‘auld misterie’ afresh, and have convinced myself that such historians as Sir Walter Scott, Mr. Frazer Tytler, and Mr. Hill Burton were not wrong; the plot was not the King’s conspiracy, but the desperate venture of two very young men. The precise object remains obscure in detail, but the purpose was probably to see how a deeply discontented Kirk and country ‘would take it.’

In working at this fascinatingly mysterious puzzle, I have made use of manuscript materials hitherto uncited. The most curious of these, the examinations and documents of the ‘country writer,’ Sprot, had been briefly summarised in Sir William Fraser’s ‘Memorials of the Earls of Haddington.’ My attention was drawn to this source by the Rev. John Anderson, of the General Register House, who aided Sir William Fraser in the compilation of his book. The Earl of Haddington generously permitted me to have copies made of the documents, which Lady Cecily Baillie-Hamilton was kind enough to search for and rediscover in an enormous mass of documents bequeathed by the learned first Earl.

On reading the Calendars of the Hatfield MSS. I had observed that several letters by the possible conspirator, Logan of Restalrig, were in the possession of the Marquis of Salisbury, who was good enough to permit photographs of some specimens to be taken. These were compared, by Mr. Anderson, with the alleged plot-letters of Logan at Edinburgh; while photographs of the plot-letters were compared with Logan's authentic letters at Hatfield, by Mr. Gunton, to whose acuteness and energy I owe the greatest gratitude. The results of the comparison settle the riddle of three centuries.

The other hitherto unused manuscripts are in no more recondite place than the Record Office in London, and I do not know how they managed to escape the notice of previous writers on the subject. To Dr. Masson's 'Register of the Privy Council' I am indebted for the sequel of the curious adventure of Mr. Robert Oliphant, whose part in the mystery, hitherto overlooked, is decisive, if we accept the evidence — a point on which the reader must form his own opinion. For copies made at the Record Office I have to thank the care and accuracy of Miss E. M. Thompson.

To Mr. Anderson's learning and zest in this 'longest and sorest chase' (as King James called his hunt on the morning of the fatal August 5) I am under the deepest obligations. The allurements of a romantic conclusion have never tempted him to leave the strait path of historical impartiality.

I have also to thank Mr. Henry Paton for his careful copies of the Haddington MSS., extracts from the Treasurer's accounts, and other researches.

For permission to reproduce the picture of Fastcastle by the Rev. Mr. Thomson of Duddingston, I have to thank the kindness of Mrs. Blackwood-Porter. The painting, probably of about 1820, when compared with the photograph of to-day, shows the destruction wrought by wind and weather in the old fortalice.

My obligations to Sir James Balfour Paul (Lyon King of Arms) for information on points of Heraldry ought to be gratefully acknowledged.

Since this book was written, the author has had an opportunity to read an Apology for the Ruthvens by the late Andrew Bisset. This treatise is apt to escape observation: it is entitled 'Sir Walter Scott,' and occupies p–303 in 'Essays on Historical Truth,' long out of print. On many points Mr. Bisset agreed with Mr. Barbé in his 'Tragedy of Gowrie House,' and my replies to Mr. Barbé serve for his predecessor. But Mr. Bisset found no evidence that the King had formed a plot against Gowrie. By a modification of the contemporary conjecture of Sir William Bowes he suggested that a brawl between the King and the Master of Ruthven occurred in the turret, occasioned by an atrocious insult offered to the Master by the King. This hypothesis, for various reasons, does not deserve discussion. Mr. Bisset appeared to attribute the Sprot papers to the combined authorship of the King and Sir Thomas Hamilton: which our new materials disprove. A critic who, like Mr. Bisset, accused the King of poisoning Prince Henry, and many other persons, was not an unprejudiced historian.

I. THE MYSTERY AND THE EVIDENCE

There are enigmas in the annals of most peoples; riddles put by the Sphinx of the Past to the curious of the new generations. These questions do not greatly concern the scientific historian, who is busy with constitution-making, statistics, progress, degeneration, in short with human evolution. These high matters, these streams of tendency, form the staple of history, but the problems of personal character and action still interest some inquiring minds. Among these enigmas nearly the most obscure, 'The Gowrie Conspiracy,' is our topic.

This affair is one of the haunting mysteries of the past, one of the problems that nobody has solved. The events occurred in 1600, but the interest which they excited was so keen that belief in the guilt or innocence of the two noble brothers who perished in an August afternoon, was a party shibboleth in the Wars of the Saints against the Malignants, the strife of Cavaliers and Roundheads. The problem has ever since attracted the curious, as do the enigma of Perkin Warbeck, the true character of Richard III, the real face behind 'The Iron Mask,' the identity of the False Pucelle, and the innocence or guilt of Mary Stuart.

In certain respects the Gowrie mystery is necessarily less attractive than that of 'the fairest and most pitiless Queen on earth.' There is no woman in the story. The world, of course, when the Ruthvens died, at once acted on the maxim, *cherchez la femme*. The woman in the case, men said, was the beautiful Queen, Anne of Denmark, wife of James VI. That fair and frivolous dame, 'very very woman,' certainly did her best, by her behaviour, to encourage the belief that she was the cause of these sorrows. Even so, when the Bonny Earl Moray — the tallest and most beautiful man in Scotland — died like a lion dragged down by wolves, the people sang:

He was a brave gallant,
  And he rode at the ring,
And the Bonny Earl Moray,
  He might have been the King.

He was a brave gallant,
  And he rode at the glove,

And the Bonny Earl Moray
  He was the Queen's love.

On one side was a beautiful Queen mated with James VI, a pedant and a clown. On the other side were, first the Bonny Earl, then the Earl of Gowrie, both young, brave, handsome, both suddenly slain by the King's friends: none knew why. The opinion of the godly, of the Kirk, of the people, and even of politicians, leaped to the erroneous conclusion that the young men perished, like Königsmarck, because they were beautiful and beloved, and because the Queen was fair and kind, and the King was ugly, treacherous, and jealous. The rumour also ran, at least in tradition, that Gowrie 'might have been the King,' an idea examined in Appendix A. Here then was an explanation of the slaying of the Ruthvens on the lines dear to romance. The humorous King Jamie (who, if he was not always sensible, at least treated his flighty wife with abundance of sense) had to play the part of King Mark of Cornwall to Gowrie's Sir Tristram. For this theory, we shall show, no evidence exists, and, in 'looking for the woman,' fancy found two men. The Queen was alternately said to love Gowrie, and to love his brother, the Master of Ruthven, a lad of nineteen — if she did not love both at once. It is curious that the affair did not give rise to ballads; if it did, none has reached us.

In truth there was no woman in the case, and this of course makes the mystery much less exciting than that of Mary Stuart, for whom so many swords and pens have been drawn. The interest of character and of love is deficient. Of Gowrie's character, and even of his religion, apart from his learning and fascination, we really know almost nothing. Did he cherish that strongest and most sacred of passions, revenge; had he brooded over it in Italy, where revenge was subtler and craftier than in Scotland? Did this passion blend with the vein of fanaticism in his nature? Had he been biding his time, and dreaming, over sea, boyish dreams of vengeance and ambition? All this appears not improbable, and would, if true, explain all; but evidence is defective. Had Gowrie really cherished the legacy of revenge for a father slain, and a mother insulted; had he studied the subtleties of Italian crime, pondered over an Italian plot till it seemed feasible, and communicated his vision to the boy brother whom he found at home — the mystery would be transparent.

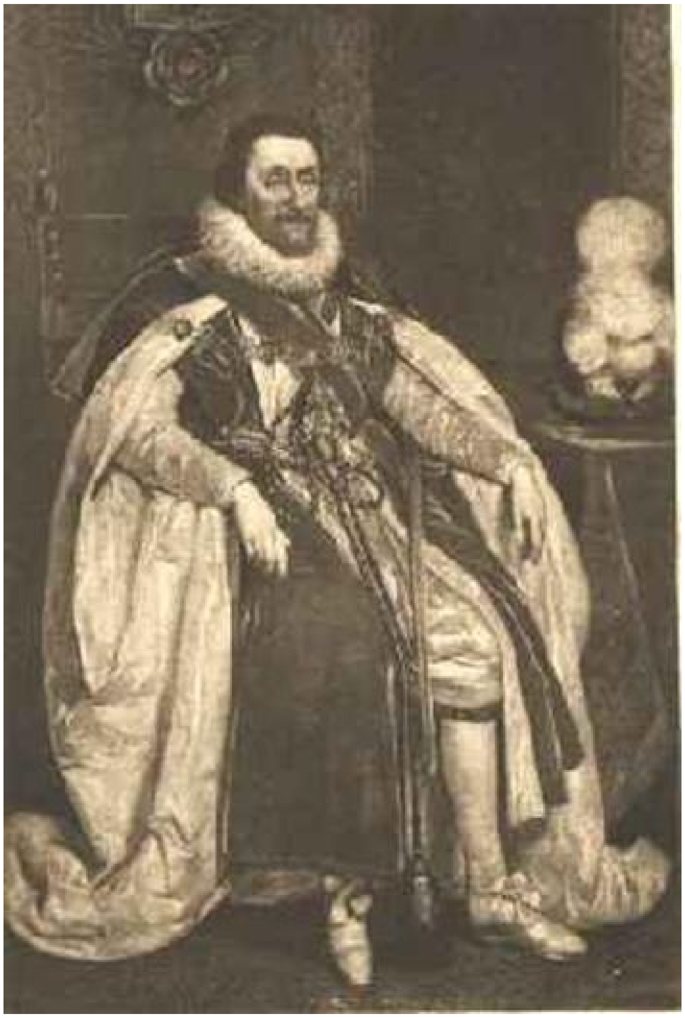

As to King James, we know him well. The babe ‘wronged in his mother’s womb;’ threatened by conspirators before his birth; terrified by a harsh tutor as a child; bullied; preached at; captured; insulted; ruled now by debauched favourites, now by godly ruffians; James naturally grew up a dissembler, and betrayed his father’s murderer with a kiss. He was frightened into deceit: he could be cruel; he became, as far as he might, a tyrant. But, though not the abject coward of tradition, James (as he himself observed) was never the man to risk his life in a doubtful brawl, on the chance that his enemies might perish while he escaped. For him a treachery of that kind, an affair of sword and dagger fights on staircases and in turrets and chambers, in the midst of a town of doubtful loyalty, had certainly no attractions. Moreover, he had a sense of humour. This has been the opinion of our best historians, Scott, Mr. Tytler, and Mr. Hill Burton; but enthusiastic writers have always espoused the cause of the victims, the Ruthvens, so young, brave, handsome; so untimely slain, as it were on their own hearthstone. Other authors, such as Dr. Masson in our own day, and Mr. S. R. Gardiner, have abstained from a verdict, or have attempted the *via* *media*; have leaned to the idea that the Ruthvens died in an accidental brawl, caused by a nervous and motiveless fit of terror on the part of the King. Thus the question is unsettled, the problem is unsolved. Why did the jolly hunt at Falkland, in the bright August morning, end in the sanguinary scuffle in the town house at Perth; the deaths of the Ruthvens; the tumult in the town; the King's homeward ride through the dark and dripping twilight; the laying of the dead brothers side by side, while the old family servant weeps above their bodies; and the wailing of the Queen and her ladies in Falkland Palace, when the torches guide the cavalcade into the palace court, and the strange tale of slaughter is variously told, 'the reports so fighting together that no man could have any certainty'? Where lay the actual truth?

This problem, with which the following pages are concerned, is much darker and more complex than that of the guilty 'Casket Letters' attributed to Mary, Queen of Scots. The Queen did write these, in the madness of a criminal passion; or she wrote parts of them, the rest being garbled or forged. In either case, her motives, and the motives of the possible forgers, are distinct, and are human. The Queen was in love with one man, and hated another to the death; or her enemies desired to prove that these were her moods. Absolute certainty escapes us, but, either way, motives and purposes are intelligible.

Not so with the Gowrie mystery. The King, Mary's son, after hunting for four hours, rides to visit Lord Gowrie, a neighbour. After luncheon, that nobleman and his brother are slain, in their own house, by the King's attendants. The King gives his version of the events instantly; he never varies from it in any essential point, but the story is almost incredible. On the other hand, the slain men cannot speak, and only one of them, if both were innocent, could have told what occurred. But one of their apologists, at the time, produced a version of the events which is, beyond all doubt, boldly mendacious. It was easy to criticise and ridicule the King's version; but the opposite version, hitherto unknown to historians, destroys itself by its conspicuous falsehoods. In the nature of the case, as will appear, no story accounting for such wild events could be easily credible, so extraordinary, motiveless, and inexplicable do the circumstances appear. If we try the theory that the King wove a plot, we are met by the fact that his plot could not have succeeded without the voluntary and vehement collaboration of one of his victims, a thing that no man could have reckoned on. If we adopt the idea that the victims had laid a trap for the King, we have only a vague surmise as to its aim, purpose, and method. The later light which seemed to fall on the affair, as we shall see, only darkens what was already obscure. The inconceivable iniquity of the Government, at a later date, reflects such discredit on all concerned on their side, that we might naturally, though illogically, be inclined to believe that, from the first, the King was the conspirator. But *that*, we shall find, was almost, or quite, a physical impossibility.

Despite these embroilments, I am, in this case, able to reach a conclusion satisfactory to myself, a thing which, in the affair of the Casket Letters and Queen Mary, I was unable to do. There is no doubt, in my own mind, that the Earl of Gowrie and his brother laid a trap for King James, and fell into the pit which they had digged.

To what precise end they had plotted to seize the King's person, what they meant to do with him when they had got him, must remain matter of conjecture. But that they intended to seize him, I have no doubt at all.

These pages, on so old and vexed a problem, would not have been written, had I not been fortunate enough to obtain many unpublished manuscript materials. Some of these at least clear up the secondary enigma of the sequel of the problem of . Different readers will probably draw different conclusions from some of the other documents, but perhaps nobody will doubt that they throw strange new lights on Scottish manners and morals.

The scheme adopted here is somewhat like that of Mr. Browning's poem, 'The Ring and the Book.' The personages tell their own stories of the same set of events, in which they were more or less intimately concerned. This inevitably entails some repetition, but I am unable to find any plan less open to objection.

It must, of course, be kept in mind that all the evidence is of a suspicious nature. The King, if he were the conspirator, or even if innocent, had to clear himself; and, frankly, his Majesty's word was not to be relied upon. However, he alone was cross-examined, by an acute and hostile catechist, and that upon oath, though not in a court of justice. The evidence of his retinue, and of some other persons present, was also taken on oath, three months after the events, before a Parliamentary Committee, 'The Lords of the Articles.' We shall see that, nine years later, a similar Committee was deceived shamelessly by the King's Government, he himself being absent in England. But the nature of the evidence, in the second case, was entirely different: it did not rest on the sworn testimony of a number of nobles, gentlemen, and citizens, but on a question of handwriting, *comparatio literarum*, as in the case of the Casket Letters. That the witnesses in 1600 did not perjure themselves, in the trial which followed on the slaughter of the Ruthvens, is what I have to argue. Next, we have the evidence, taken under torture, of three of the slain Earl's retainers, three weeks after the events. No such testimony is now reckoned of value, but it will be shown that the statements made by the tortured men only compromise the Earl and his brother incidentally, and in a manner probably not perceived by the deponents themselves. They denied all knowledge of a plot, disclaimed belief in a plot by the Earl, and let out what was suspicious in a casual way, without observing the import of their own remarks.

Finally, we have the evidence of the only living man, except the King, who was present at the central point of the occurrences. That this man was a most false and evasive character, that he was doubtless amenable to bribes, that he was richly rewarded, I freely admit. But I think it can be made probable, by evidence hitherto overlooked, that he really was present on the crucial occasion, and that, with all allowances for his character and position, his testimony fits into the facts, while, if it be discarded, no hypothesis can account for *him*, and his part in the adventure. In short, the King's tale, almost incredible as it appears, contains the only explanation which is not demonstrably impossible. To this conclusion, let me repeat, I am drawn by no sentiment for that unsentimental Prince, 'gentle King Jamie.' He was not the man to tell the truth, 'if he could think of anything better.' But, where other corroboration is impossible, by the nature of the circumstances, facts corroborate the King's narrative. His version 'colligates' them; though extravagant they become not incoherent. No other hypothesis produces coherency: each guess breaks down on demonstrated facts.

II. THE SLAUGHTER OF THE RUTHVENS

In the month of August 1600 his Majesty the King of Scotland, James, sixth of that name, stood in more than common need of the recreation of the chase. Things had been going contrary to his pleasure in all directions. ‘His dearest sister,’ Queen Elizabeth (as he pathetically said), seemed likely ‘to continue as long as Sun or Moon,’ and was in the worst of humours. Her minister, Cecil, was apparently more ill disposed towards the Scottish King than usual, while the minister’s rival, the Earl of Essex, had been suggesting to James plans for a military demonstration on the Border. Money was even more than normally scarce; the Highlands were more than common unruly; stories of new conspiracies against the King’s liberty were flying about; and, above all, a Convention of the Estates had just refused, in June, to make a large grant of money to his Majesty. It was also irritating that an old and trusted servant, Colonel Stewart, wished to quit the country, and take English service against the Irish rebels. This gentleman, sixteen years before, had been instrumental in the arrest and execution of the Earl of Gowrie; the new young Earl, son of the late peer, had just returned from the Continent to Scotland, and Colonel Stewart was afraid that Gowrie might wish to avenge his father. Therefore he desired to take service in Ireland.

With all these frets, the King needed the refreshment of hunting the buck in his park of Falkland. He ordered his own hunting costume; it was delivered early in August, and (which is singular) was paid for instantly. Green English cloth was the basis of his apparel, and five ounces of silver decorated his second-best ‘socks.’ His boots had velvet tops, embroidered; his best ‘socks’ were adorned with heavy gold embroidery; he even bought a new horse. His gentlemen, John Ramsay, John Murray, George Murray, and John Auchmuty, were attired, at the Royal expense, in coats of green cloth, like the King.

Thus equipped, the Royal party rose early on the morning of Tuesday, August 5, left the pleasant house of Falkland, with its strong round towers that had lately protected James from an attack by his cousin, wild Frank Stewart, the Earl of Bothwell; and rode to the stables in the park; ‘the weather,’ says his Majesty, ‘being wonderful pleasant and seasonable.’ ‘All the jolly hunt was there;’ ‘Tell True’ and the other hounds were yelping at the limits of their leashes; the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Mar, friends of James from his youth, and honourable men, were the chief nobles in the crowd; wherein were two or three of the loyal family of Erskine, cousins of Mar, and a Dr. Herries, remarkable for a club foot.

At the stables, hacks were discarded, hunters were led out, men were mounting, the King had his foot in the stirrup, when a young gentleman, the Master of Ruthven, rode swiftly up from the town of Falkland. He had trotted over, very early, from the town house, at Perth (some twelve or fourteen miles away), of his brother, the Earl of Gowrie. He was but nineteen years of age, tall, handsome, and brother of the Queen's favourite maid of honour, Mrs. Beatrix Ruthven. That he was himself one of the Gentlemen of the Household has often been said, but we find no trace of money spent for him in the Royal accounts: in fact he had asked for the place, but had not yet obtained it. However, if we may believe the Royal word (which is a matter of choice), James 'loved the young Master like a brother.'

The Master approached the King, and entered into conversation with him. James's account of what he had to say must be given later. For the present we may be content with the depositions on oath, which were made later, at a trial in November, by the attendants of the King and other witnesses. Among these was the Duke of Lennox, who swore to the following effect. They hunted their buck, and killed him. The King, in place of trotting back to lunch at the House of Falkland (to which the progress of the chase had led the sportsmen round in a circle), bade the Duke accompany him to Perth, some twelve miles away, 'to speak with the Earl of Gowrie.' His Majesty then rode on. Lennox despatched his groom for his sword, and for a fresh horse (another was sent after the King); he then mounted and followed. When he rejoined James, the King said 'You cannot guess what errand I am riding for; I am going to get a treasure in Perth. The Master of Ruthven' ('Mr. Alexander Ruthven') 'has informed me that he has found a man with a pitcher full of gold coins of great sorts.' James also asked Lennox what he deemed of the Master, whose manner he reckoned very strange. 'Nothing but an honest, discreet gentleman,' said the Duke. The King next gave details about the treasure, and Lennox said he thought the tale 'unlikely,' as it was, more or less. James then bade Lennox say nothing on the matter to Ruthven, who wanted it to be a secret. At about a mile from Perth, the Master galloped forward, to warn his brother, the Earl, who met the Royal party, on foot, with some companions, near the town. This was about one o'clock in the afternoon.

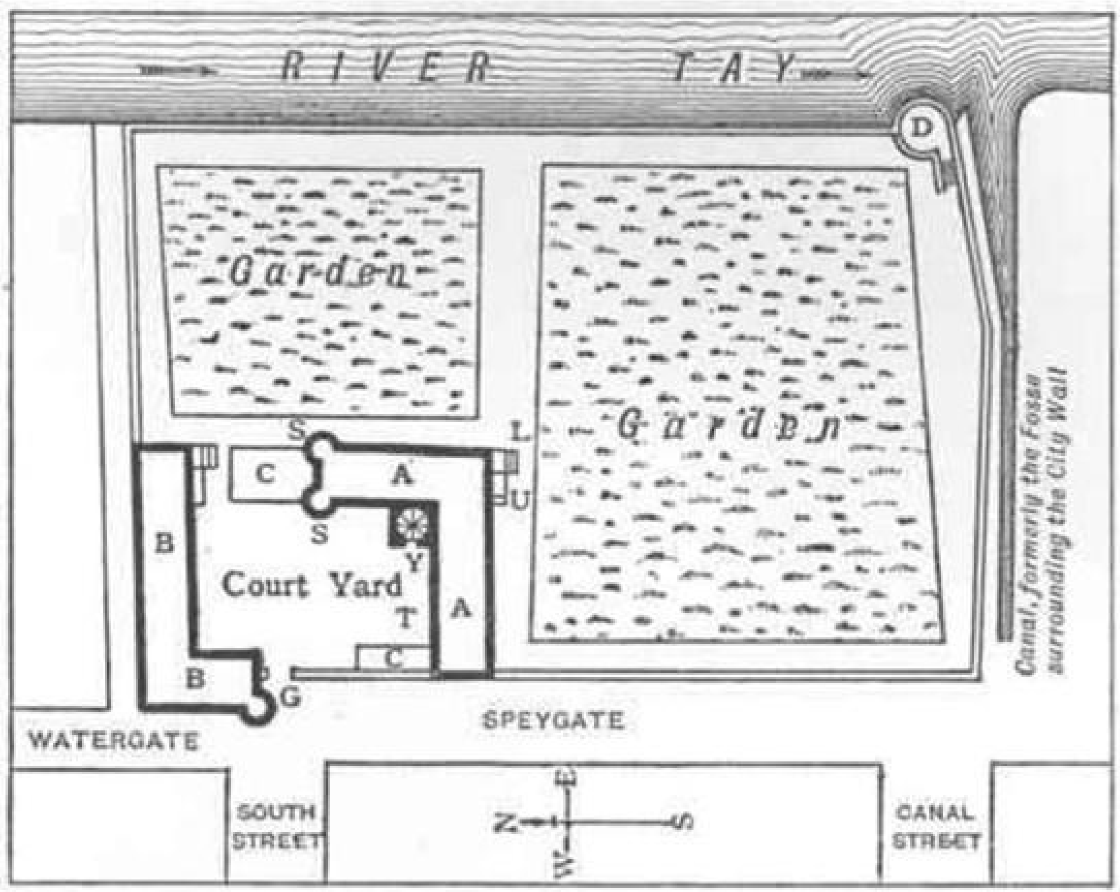
RIVER TAY
D
Garden
Garden
S
L
C
A
U
S
B
Y
Court Yard
T
A
C
B
G
WATERGATE
SPEYGATE
SOUTH STREET
CANAL STREET
N
S
E
W
Canal, formerly the Fosse surrounding the City Wall

The Royal party, of thirteen nobles and gentlemen, then entered the Earl’s house. It faced the street, as the House of Falkland also does, and, at the back, had gardens running down to the Tay. It is necessary to understand the situation and topography of Gowrie House. Passing down South Street, or ‘Shoe Gait,’ the chief street in Perth, then a pretty little town, you found it crossed at right angles by a street called, on the left, Water Gate, on the right, Spey Gate. Immediately fronting you, as you came to the end of South Street, was the gateway of Gowrie House, the garden wall continuing towards your right. On your left were the houses in Water Gate, occupied by rich citizens and lairds. Many will understand the position if they fancy themselves walking down one of the streets which run from the High Street, at Oxford, towards the river. You then find Merton College facing you, the street being continued to the left in such old houses as Beam Hall. The gate of Gowrie House fronted you, as does the gate-tower of Merton, and led into a quadrangle, the front court, called The Close. Behind Gowrie House was the garden, and behind that ran the river Tay, as the Isis flows behind Merton and Corpus. Entering the quadrangle of Gowrie House you found, on your right and facing you, a pile of buildings like an inverted L (). The basement was occupied by domestic offices: at the angle of the was the main entrance. On your right, and much nearer to you than the main entrance, a door opened on a narrow spiral staircase, so dark that it was called the Black Turnpike.

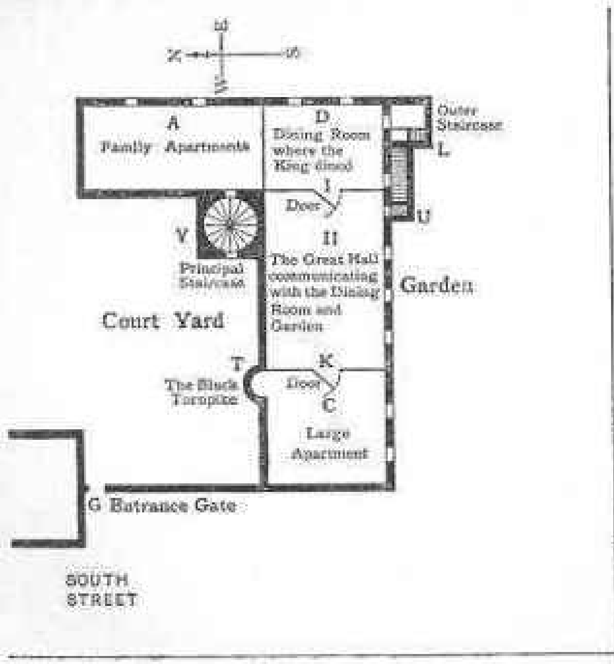
A
Family Apartments
D
Dining Room where the King dined
Outer Staircase
L
I
Door
U
Y
Principal Staircase
H
The Great Hall communicating with the Dining Room and Garden
Garden
Court Yard
T
The Black Turnpike
K
Door
C
Large Apartment
G Entrance Gate
SOUTH STREET

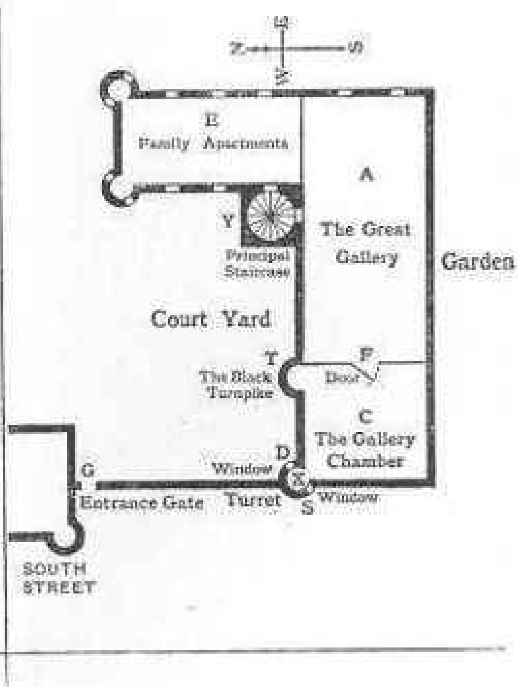
E
Family Apartments
A
Y
The Great Gallery
Garden
Principal Staircase
Court Yard
T
The Black Turnpike
F
Door
C
The Gallery Chamber
D
Window
G
Entrance Gate
Turret
S
Window
SOUTH STREET

As to the interior, entering the main doorway you found yourself in the hall. A door led thence into a smaller dining-room on the left. The hall itself had a door and external stair giving on the garden behind. The chief staircase, which you entered from the hall, led to the Great Gallery, built and decorated by the late Earl. This extended above the dining-room and the hall, and, to the right, was separated by a partition and a door from the large upstairs room on the same flat called ‘The Gallery Chamber.’ At the extremity of this chamber, on the left hand as you advanced, was a door leading into a ‘round,’ or turret, or little circular-shaped ‘study,’ of which one window seems to have looked to the gateway, the other to the street. People below in the street could see a man looking out of the turret window. A door in the gallery chamber gave on the narrow staircase called ‘The Black Turnpike,’ by which the upper floor might be reached by any one from the quadrangle, without entering the main door, and going up the broad chief staircase. Thus, to quote a poet who wrote while Gowrie House was extant (in 1638):

The Palace kythes, may nam’d be Perth’s White Hall
With orchards like these of Hesperides.

The palace was destroyed, to furnish a site for a gaol and county buildings, in 1807, but the most interesting parts had long been in ruins.

In 1774, an antiquary, Mr. Cant, writes that the palace, after the Forty Five, was converted into artillery barracks. ‘We see nothing but the remains of its former grandeur.’ The coats of arms of ‘the nobility and gentlemen of fortune,’ who dwelt in Spey Gate and Water Gate, were, in 1774, still visible on the walls of their houses. A fragment of the old palace is said to exist to-day in the Gowrie Inn. Into this palace the King was led by Gowrie: he was taken to the dining chamber on the left of the great hall; in the hall itself Lennox, Mar, and the rest of the retinue waited and wearied, for apparently no dinner had been provided, and even a drink for his thirsty Majesty was long in coming. Gowrie and the Master kept going in and out, servants were whispered to, and Sir Thomas Erskine sent a townsman to buy him a pair of green silk stockings in Perth. He wanted to dine comfortably.

Leaving the King’s retinue in the hall, and the King in the dining chamber off the hall, we may note what, up to this point, the nobles and gentlemen of the suite had to say, at the trial in November, about the adventures of that August morning. Mar had not seen the Master at Falkland; after the kill Mar did not succeed in rejoining James till they were within two or three miles of Perth.

Drummond of Inchaffray had nodded to the Master, at Falkland, before the Master met the King at the stables. He later saw the Master in conference for about a quarter of an hour with James, outside the stables. The Master then left the King: Inchaffray invited him to breakfast, but he declined, ‘as his Majesty had ordered him to wait upon him.’ (According to other evidence he had already breakfasted at Falkland.) Inchaffray then breakfasted in Falkland town, and next rode along the highway towards his own house. On the road he overtook Lennox, Lindores, Urchill, Hamilton of Grange, Finlay Taylor, the King, and the Master, riding Perthwards. He joined them, and went with them into Gowrie House.

Nobody else, among the witnesses, did anything but agree with Lennox’s account up to this point. But four menials of James, for example, a cellarer and a porter, were at Gowrie House, in addition to the nobles and gentlemen who gave this evidence.

To return to Lennox’s tale: dinner was not ready for his hungry Majesty, as we have said, till an hour after his arrival; was not ready, indeed, till about two o’clock. He had obviously not been expected, or Gowrie did not wish it to be known that he was expected, and himself had dined before the King’s arrival, between twelve and one o’clock. A shoulder of mutton, a fowl, and a solitary grouse were all that the Earl’s caterer could procure, except cold meat: obviously a poor repast to set before a king. It is said that the Earl had meant to leave Perth in the afternoon. When James reached the stage of dessert, Gowrie, who had waited on him, entered the hall, and invited the suite to dine. When they had nearly finished, Gowrie returned to them in the hall, and sent round a grace-cup, in which all pledged the King. Lennox then rose, to rejoin the King (who now passed, with the Master, across and out of the hall), but Gowrie said ‘His Majesty was gone upstairs quietly some quiet errand.’ Gowrie then called for the key of the garden, on the banks of the Tay, and he, Lindores, the lame Dr. Herries, and others went into the garden, where, one of them tells us, they ate cherries. While they were thus engaged, Gowrie’s equerry, or master stabler, a Mr. Thomas Cranstoun, who had been long in France, and had returned thence with the Earl in April, appeared, crying, ‘The King has mounted, and is riding through the Inch,’ that is, the Inch of Perth, where the famous clan battle of thirty men a side had been fought centuries ago. Gowrie shouted ‘Horses! horses!’ but Cranstoun said ‘Your horse is at Scone,’ some two miles off, on the further side of the Tay. Why the Earl that day kept his horse so remote, in times when men of his rank seldom walked, we may conjecture later (cf. , *infra*).

The Earl, however (says Lennox), affected not to hear Cranstoun, and still shouted ‘Horses!’ He and Lennox then passed into the house, through to the front yard, or Close, and so to the outer gate, giving on the street. Here Lennox asked the porter, Christie, if the King had gone. The porter said he was certain that the King had not left the house. On this point Lindores, who had been with Gowrie and Lennox in the garden, and accompanied them to the gate, added (as indeed Lennox also did) that Gowrie now explained to the porter that James had departed by the back gate. ‘That cannot be, my Lord,’ said the porter, ‘for I have the key of the back gate.’ Andrew Ray, a bailie of Perth, who had been in the house, looking on, told the same tale, adding that Gowrie gave the porter the lie. The porter corroborated all this at the trial, and quoted his own speech about the key, as it was given by Lindores. He had the keys, and must know whether the King had ridden away or not.

In this odd uncertainty, Gowrie said to Lennox, ‘I am sure the King has gone; but stay, I shall go upstairs, and get your lordship the very certainty.’ Gowrie thereon went from the street door, through the court, and up the chief staircase of the house, whence he came down again at once, and anew affirmed to Lennox that ‘the King was forth at the back gate and away.’ They all then went out of the front gate, and stood in the street there, talking, and wondering where they should seek for his Majesty.

Where was the King? Here we note a circumstance truly surprising. It never occurred to the Earl of Gowrie, when dubiously told that the King had ‘loupen on’ — and ridden off — to ask, *Where is the King’s horse*? If the Royal nag was in the Earl’s stable, then James had not departed. Again — a thing more astonishing still — it has never occurred to any of the unnumbered writers on the Gowrie conspiracy to ask, ‘How did the Earl, if guilty of falsehood as to the King’s departure, mean to get over the difficulty about the King’s horse?’ If the horse was in the stable, then the King had not ridden away, as the Earl declared. Gowrie does not seem to have kidnapped the horse. We do not hear, from the King, or any one, that the horse was missing when the Royal party at last rode home.

The author is bound, in honour, to observe that this glaring difficulty about the horse did not occur to him till he had written the first draft of this historical treatise, after reading so many others on the subject. And yet the eagle glance of Mr. Sherlock Holmes would at once have lighted on his Majesty’s mount. However, neither at the time, nor in the last three centuries (as far as we know), was any one sensible enough to ask ‘How about the King’s horse?’

We return to the question, ‘Where was the King?’

Some time had elapsed since he passed silently from the chamber where he had lunched, through the hall, with the Master, and so upstairs, ‘going quietly a quiet errand,’ Gowrie had explained to the men of the retinue. The gentlemen had then strolled in the garden, till Cranstoun came out to them with the news of the King’s departure. Young John Ramsay, one of James’s gentlemen, had met the Laird of Pittencrieff in the hall, and had asked where his Majesty was. Both had gone upstairs, had examined the fair gallery filled with pictures collected by the late Earl, and had remained ‘a certain space’ admiring it. They thence went into the front yard, the Close, where Cranstoun met them and told them that the King had gone. Instead of joining the gentlemen whom we left loitering and wondering outside the front gate, on the street, Ramsay ran to the stables for his horse, he said, and, as he waited at the stable door (being further from the main entrance than Lennox, Mar, and the rest), he heard James’s voice, ‘but understood not what he spake.’

The others, on the street, just outside the gate, being nearer the house than Ramsay, suddenly heard the King’s voice, and even his words. Lennox said to Mar, ‘The King calls, be he where he will.’ They all glanced up at the house, and saw, says Lennox, ‘his Majesty looking out at the window, hatless, his face red, and a hand gripping his face and mouth.’ The King called: ‘I am murdered. Treason! My Lord of Mar, help, help!’ Mar corroborated: Inchaffray saw the King vanish from the window, ‘and in his judgment, his Majesty was pulled, perforce, in at the same window.' Bailie Ray of Perth saw the window pushed up, saw the King's face appear, and heard his cries. Murray of Arbany, who had come to Perth from another quarter, heard the King. Murray seems to have been holding the King's falcon on his wrist, in hall; he had later handed the bird to young Ramsay.

On beholding this vision of the King, hatless, red-faced, vociferous, and suddenly vanishing, most of his lords and gentlemen, and Murray of Arbany, rushed through the gate, through the Close, into the main door of the house, up the broad staircase, through the long fair gallery, *and there they were stopped by a locked door*. They could not reach the King! Finding a ladder, they used it as a battering-ram, but it broke in their hands. They sent for hammers, and during some half an hour they thundered at the door, breaking a hole in a panel, but unable to gain admission.

Now these facts, as to the locked door, and the inability of most of the suite to reach the King, are denied by no author. They make it certain that, if James had contrived a plot against the two Ruthvens, he had not taken his two nobles, Mar and Lennox, and these other gentlemen, and Murray of Arbany, into the scheme. He had not even arranged that another of his retinue should bring them from their futile hammer-work, to his assistance, by another way.

For there *was* another way. Young Ramsay was not with Lennox and the rest, when they saw and heard the flushed and excited King cry out of the window. Ramsay, he says, was further off than the rest; was at the stable door: he heard and recognised James's voice, but saw nothing of him, and distinguished no words. He ran into the front yard, through the outer gate. Lennox and the rest had already vanished within the house. Ramsay noticed the narrow door in the wall of the house, giving on the quadrangle, and nearer him than the main door of entrance, to reach which he must cross the quadrangle diagonally. He rushed into the narrow doorway, ran up a dark corkscrew staircase, found a door at the top, heard a struggling and din of men's feet within, 'dang open' the door, *caught a glimpse of a man behind the King's back*, and saw James and the Master 'wrestling together in each other's arms.'

James had the Master's head under his arm, the Master, 'almost upon his knees,' had his hand on the King's face and mouth. 'Strike him low,' cried the King, 'because he wears a secret mail doublet' — such as men were wont to wear on a doubtful though apparently peaceful occasion, like a Warden's Day on the Border. Ramsay threw down the King's falcon, which he had taken from Murray and bore on his wrist, drew his dagger or *couteau de chasse*, and struck the Master on the face and neck. The King set his foot on the falcon's leash, and so held it. Ramsay might have spared and seized the Master, instead of wounding him; James later admitted *that*, but ‘Man,’ he said, ‘I had neither God nor the Devil before me, but my own defence.’ Remember that hammers were thundering on a door hard by, and that neither James nor Ramsay knew who knocked so loud — enemies or friends.

The King then, says Ramsay, pushed the wounded Master down the steep narrow staircase up which the young man had run. The man of whom Ramsay had caught a glimpse, standing behind the King, had vanished like a wraith. Ramsay went to a window, looked out, and, seeing Sir Thomas Erskine, cried, ‘Come up to the top of the staircase.’

Where was Erskine, and what was he doing? He had not followed Lennox and Mar in their rush back into the house. On hearing James’s cries from the window, he and his brother had tried to seize Gowrie, who had been with the party of Lennox and Mar. If James was in peril, within Gowrie’s house, they argued, naturally, that Gowrie was responsible. Not drawing sword or dagger — daggers, indeed, they had none — the two Erskine brothers rushed on Gowrie, who was crying ‘What is the matter? I know nothing!’ They bore him, or nearly bore him, to the ground, but his retainers separated the stragglers, and one, a Ruthven, knocked Sir Thomas down with his fist. The knight arose, and ran into the front court, where Dr. Herries asked him ‘what the matter meant.’ At this moment Erskine heard Ramsay cry ‘Come up here,’ from the top of the narrow dark staircase, he says, *not* from the window; Ramsay may have called from both. Erskine, who was accompanied by the lame Dr. Herries, and by a menial of his brother’s named Wilson, found the bleeding Master near the foot of the stair, and shouted ‘This is the traitor, strike him.’ The stricken lad fell, saying, ‘Alas, I had not the wyte of it,’ and the three entered the chamber where now were only the King and Ramsay. Words, not very intelligible as reported by Erskine (we consider them later), passed between him and the King. Though Erskine does not say so, they shut James up in the turret opening into the chamber where they were, and instantly Cranstoun, the Earl’s equerry, entered with a drawn sword, followed by Gowrie, with ‘two swords,’ while some other persons followed Gowrie.

Where had Gowrie been since the two Erskines tried to seize him in the street, and were separated from him by a throng of his retainers? Why was Gowrie, whose honour was interested in the King’s safety, later in reaching the scene than Erskine, the limping Dr. Herries, and the serving man, Wilson? The reason appears to have been that, after the two Erskines were separated from Gowrie, Sir Thomas ran straight from the street, through the gateway, into the front court of the house, meeting, in the court, Dr. Herries, who was slow in his movements. But Gowrie, on the other hand, was detained by certain of

Tullibardine’s servants, young Tullibardine being present. This, at least, was the story given under examination by Mr. Thomas Cranstoun, Gowrie’s master stabler, while other witnesses mention that Gowrie became involved in a struggle, and went ‘back from’ his house, further up or down the street. Young Tullibardine, present at this fray, was the heir of Murray of Tullibardine, and ancestor, in the male line, of the present Duke of Atholl. He later married a niece of the Earl of Gowrie. His father being a man of forty in 1600, young Tullibardine must have been very young indeed. The Murrays were in Perth on the occasion of the marriage of one of their clan, an innkeeper.

Some of their party were in the street, and seeing an altercation in which two of the King’s gentlemen were prevented from seizing Gowrie, they made an ineffectual effort to capture the Earl. Gowrie ran from them along the street, and there ‘drew his two swords out of one scabbard,’ says Cranstoun. The Earl had just arrived in Scotland from Italy, where he had acquired the then fashionable method of fencing with twin-swords, worn in a single scabbard. Gowrie, then, had retreated from the Murrays to the house of one Macbreck, as Cranstoun and Macbreck himself declared. Cranstoun too drew his sword, and let his cloak fall, asking Gowrie ‘what the fray was.’ The Earl said that ‘he would enter his own house, or die by the way.’ Cranstoun said that he would go foremost, ‘but at whom should he strike, for he knew not who was the enemy?’ He had only seen the Erskines collar Gowrie, then certain Murrays interfere, and he was entirely puzzled. Gowrie did not reply, and the pair advanced to the door of the house through a perplexed throng. A servant of Gowrie’s placed a steel cap on his head, and with some four or five of Gowrie’s friends (Hew Moncrieff, Alexander Ruthven, Harry Ruthven, and Patrick Eviot) the Earl and Cranstoun entered the front court.

Here Cranstoun saw the body of a man, whether dead or wounded he knew not, lying at ‘the old turnpike door,’ the entry to the dark narrow staircase up which Ramsay had run to the King’s rescue. ‘Who lies there?’ asked Cranstoun. Gowrie only replied, ‘Up the stair!’ Cranstoun led the way, Gowrie came next; the other four must have followed, for several witnesses presently saw them come down again, wounded and bleeding. Cranstoun found Erskine, Ramsay, and Herries with drawn swords in the chamber. The King, then in the turret, he did not see. He taunted Herries; Ramsay and Gowrie crossed swords; Cranstoun dealt, he says, with Herries, Erskine, and perhaps Wilson. But, though Cranstoun ‘nowise knew who followed him,’ the four men already named, two Ruthvens, a Moncrieff, and Eviot, were in the fray, though there was some uncertainty about Eviot.

The position of the King, at this moment, was unenviable. He was shut up in the little round turret room. On the other side of the door, in the chamber, swords were clashing, feet were stamping. James knew that he had four defenders, one of them a lame medical man; who or how many their opponents might be, he could not know. The air rang with the thunder of hammers on the door of the chamber where the fight raged; were they wielded by friends or enemies? From the turret window the King could hear the town bell ringing, and see the gathering of the burgesses of Perth, the friends of their Provost, Gowrie. We know that they could easily muster eight hundred armed men. Which side would they take? The Murrays, as we saw, had done nothing, except that some of them had crowded round Gowrie. Meanwhile there was clash of steel, stamping of feet, noise of hammers, while the King, in the turret, knew not how matters were going.

Cranstoun only saw his own part of the fight in the chamber. How Ramsay and Gowrie sped in their duel he knew not. Ramsay, he says, turned on *him*, and ran him through the body; Herries also struck him. Of Gowrie he saw nothing; he fled, when wounded, down the turret stair, his companions following or preceding him. Gowrie, in fact, had fallen, leaving Ramsay free to deal with Cranstoun. Writers of both parties declare that Ramsay had cried to Gowrie, ‘You have slain the King!’ that Gowrie dropped his points, and that Ramsay lunged and ran him through the body. Erskine says that he himself was wounded in the right hand by Cranstoun; Herries lost two fingers. When Ramsay ran Gowrie through, the Earl, says Erskine, fell into the arms of a man whom he himself knew not; Gowrie’s party retreated, but it seems they returned to the head of the narrow staircase, and renewed hostilities by pushing swords and halberts under the narrow staircase door. This appears from the evidence of Lennox.

After pounding at the door so long, Lennox’s party at last sent Robert Brown (a servant of James’s, who had brought the hammers) round to discover another way of reaching the King. Brown, too, now went up the narrow staircase, and in the gallery chamber he found the King, with Herries, Erskine, Ramsay, Wilson, and the dead Earl. He reassured James; the hammerers were his friends. They handed, says Lennox, one of the hammers to the King’s party, through a shattered panel, ‘and they within broke the doors, and gave them entry.’ At this time, halberts and swords were being struck, by Gowrie’s retainers, under the door, and through the sides of the door, of the chamber; this door apparently being that from the chamber to the narrow staircase. Murray of Arbany (who had come into the house at the end of dinner) was stricken through the leg by one of these weapons. Deacon Rhynd of Perth saw Hew Moncrieff striking with ‘a Jeddart staff,’ a kind of halbert. A voice, that of Alexander Ruthven (a cousin of the fallen Earl), cried ‘For God’s sake, my lord, tell me how the Earl of Gowrie does.’ ‘He is well. Go your way; you are a fool; you will get no thanks for this labour,’ answered Lennox, and all was silence. Alexander Ruthven and the rest retreated; Ruthven rushed to the town, rousing the people, and rifling shops in search of gunpowder. The King and the nobles knelt in prayer on the bloody floor of the chamber where the dead Gowrie lay. For some time the confused mob yelled outside, shaking their fists at the King’s party in the window: men and women crying ‘Come down, Green-coats, ye have committed murder! Bloody butchers!’ Others cried ‘The King is shot!’ The exits of the house were guarded by retainers of Gowrie — Rentoul, Bissett, and others.

Mar and Lennox, from the window, explained to the mob that the King was well. James showed himself, the magistrates and nobles pacified the people, who, some armed, some unarmed, were all perplexed, whether they were anxious about the King or about their Provost, the Earl. From the evidence of scores of burghers, it appears that the tumult did not last long. One man was reaping in the Morton haugh. Hearing the town bell he hastened in, ‘when all the tumult was ceased,’ and the magistrates, Ray and others, were sending the people to their houses, as also did young Tullibardine. A baker, hearing the bell, went to the town cross, and so to Gowrie’s house, where he met the stream of people coming away. Another baker was at work, and stayed with his loaves, otherwise he ‘would have lost his whole baking.’ The King represents that it was between seven and eight in the evening before matters were quiet enough for him to ride home to Falkland, owing to the tumult. The citizens doubtless minimised, and James probably exaggerated, the proportions and duration of the disturbance.

This version of that strange affair, the slaughter of the Ruthvens, is taken entirely from the lips of sworn witnesses. We still know no more than we did as to what passed between the moment when James and the Master, alone, left the dining chamber, and the moment when the King cried ‘Treason!’ out of the turret window.

The problem is, had James lured the Master to Falkland for the purpose of accompanying him back to Perth, as if by the Master’s invitation, and of there craftily begetting a brawl, in which Gowrie and the Master should perish at the hands of Ramsay? Or had the Master, with or without his brother’s knowledge, lured James to Perth for some evil end? The question divided Scotland; France and England were sceptical as to the King’s innocence. Our best historians, like Mr. Hill Burton and Mr. Tytler, side with the King; others are dubious, or believe that James was the conspirator, and that the Ruthvens were innocent victims.

III. THE KING’S OWN NARRATIVE

So far we have not gained any light on the occurrences of the mysterious interval between the moment when the King and Alexander Ruthven passed alone through the hall, after dinner, up the great staircase, and the moment when the King cried ‘Treason!’ out of the turret window. In the nature of the case, the Master being for ever silent, only James could give evidence on the events of this interval, James and *one other man*, of whose presence in the turret we have hitherto said little, as only one of the witnesses could swear to having seen a man there, none to having seen him escaping thence, or in the tumult. Now the word of James was not to be relied on, any more than that of the unequalled Elizabeth. If we take the King’s word in this case, it is from no prejudice in his favour, but merely because his narrative seems best to fit the facts as given on oath by men like Lennox, Mar, and other witnesses of all ranks. It also fits, with discrepancies to be noted, the testimony of *the other man*, the man who professed to have been with the Master and the King in the turret.

The evidence of that other man was also subject, for reasons which will appear presently, to the gravest suspicion. James, if himself guilty of the plot, had to invent a story to excuse himself; the other man had to adopt the version of the King, to save his own life from the gibbet. On the other hand, James, if innocent, could not easily have a credible story to tell. If the Master was sane, it was hardly credible that, as James averred, he should menace the King with murder, in his brother’s house, with no traceable preparations either for flight or for armed resistance. In James’s narrative the Master is made at least to menace the King with death. However true the King’s story might be, his adversaries, the party of the Kirk and the preachers, would never accept it. In Lennox’s phrase they ‘liked it not, because it was not likely.’ Emphatically it was not likely, but the contradictory story put forward by the Ruthven apologist, as we shall see, was not only improbable, but certainly false.

There was living at that time a certain Mr. David Calderwood, a young Presbyterian minister, aged twenty-five. He was an avid collector of rumour, of talk, and of actual documents, and his ‘History of the Kirk of Scotland,’ composed at a much later date, is wonderfully copious and accurate. As it was impossible for King James to do anything at which Calderwood did not carp, assigning the worst imaginable motives in every case, we shall find in Calderwood the sum of contemporary hostile criticism of his Majesty’s narrative. But the criticism is negative. Calderwood's critics only pick holes in the King's narrative, but do not advance or report any other explanation of the events, any complete theory of the King's plot from the Ruthven side. Any such story, any such hypothesis, must be to the full as improbable as the King's narrative.

There is nothing probable in the whole affair; every system, every hypothesis is *difficile à croire*. Yet the events did occur, and we cannot reject James's account merely because it is 'unlikely.' The improbabilities, however, were enormously increased by the King's theory that the Ruthvens meant to *murder* him. This project (not borne out by the King's own version of Ruthven's conduct) would have been insane: the Ruthvens, by murdering James, would have roused the whole nation and the Kirk itself against them. But if their object was to kidnap James, to secure his person, to separate him from his Ministers (who were either secretly Catholics, or Indifferents), and to bring in a new administration favourable to Kirk, or Church, then the Ruthvens were doing what had several times been done, and many times attempted. James had been captured before, even in his own palace, while scores of other plots, to take him, for instance, when hunting in Falkland woods, remote from his retinue, had been recently planned, and had failed. To kidnap the King was the commonest move in politics; but as James thought, or said, that the idea at Gowrie House was to *murder* him, his tale, even if true, could not be easily credible.

The first narrative was drawn up at Falkland in the night of August 5. Early on August 6 the letter reached the Chancellor in Edinburgh, and the contents of the letter were repeated orally by the Secretary of State (Elphinstone, later Lord Balmerino) to Nicholson, the English resident at the Court of Holyrood. Nicholson on the same day reported what he remembered of what the Secretary remembered of the Falkland letter, to Cecil. Yet though at third hand Nicholson's written account of the Falkland letter of August 5 contains the same version as James later published, with variations so few and so unessential that it is needless to dwell upon them, they may safely be attributed to the modifications which a story must suffer in passing through the memories of two persons. Whatever the amount of truth in his narrative, the King had it ready at once in the form to which he adhered, and on which he voluntarily underwent severe cross-examination, on oath, by Mr. Robert Bruce, one of the Edinburgh ministers; a point to which we return.

James declares in a later narrative printed and published about the end of August 1600, that the Master, when he first met him at Falkland, made a very low bow, which was not his habit. The Master then said (their conference, we saw, occupied a quarter of an hour) that, while walking alone on the previous evening, he had met a cloaked man carrying a great pot, full of gold in large coined pieces. Ruthven took the fellow secretly to Gowrie House, 'locked him *in a privy derned house*, and, after locking many doors on him, left him there and his pot with him.'

It might be argued that, as the man was said to be locked in a *house*, and as James was not taken out of Gowrie House to see him, James must have known that, when he went upstairs with the Master, he was not going to see the prisoner. The error here is that, in the language of the period, a *house* often means a *room*, or chamber. It is so used by James elsewhere in this very narrative, and endless examples occur in the letters and books of the period.

Ruthven went on to explain, what greatly needed explanation, that he had left Perth so early in the morning that James might have the first knowledge of this secret treasure, concealed hitherto even from Gowrie. James objected that he had no right to the gold, which was not treasure trove. Ruthven replied that, if the King would not take it, others would. James now began to suspect, very naturally, that the gold was foreign coin. Indeed, what else could it well be? Coin from France, Italy, or Spain, brought in often by political intriguers, was the least improbable sort of minted gold to be found in poor old Scotland. In the troubles of 1592–1596 the supplies of the Catholic rebels were in Spanish money, whereof some was likely enough to be buried by the owners. James, then, fancied that Jesuits or others had brought in gold for seditious purposes, 'as they have ofttimes done before.' Sceptics of the period asked how one pot of gold could cause a sedition. The question is puerile. There would be more gold where the potful came from, if Catholic intrigues were in the air. James then asked the Master 'what kind of coin it was.' 'They seemed to be foreign and uncouth' (unusual) 'strokes of coin,' said Ruthven, and the man, he added, was a stranger to him.

James therefore suspected that the man might be a disguised Scottish priest: the few of them then in Scotland always wore disguises, as they tell us in their reports to their superiors. The King's inferences as to *popish* plotters were thus inevitable, though he may have emphasised them in his narrative to conciliate the preachers. His horror of 'practising Papists,' at this date, was unfeigned. He said to the Master that he could send a servant with a warrant to Gowrie and the magistrates of Perth to take and examine the prisoner and his hoard. Contemporaries asked why he did not 'commit the credit of this matter to another.' James had anticipated the objection. He *did* propose this course, but Ruthven replied that, if others once touched the money, the King 'would get a very bad account made to him of that treasure.' He implored his Majesty to act as he advised, and not to forget him afterwards. This suggestion may seem mean in Ruthven, but the age was not disinterested, nor was Ruthven trying to persuade a high-souled man. The King was puzzled and bored, ‘the morning was fair, the game already found,’ the monarch was a keen sportsman, so he said that he would think the thing over and answer at the end of the hunt.

Granting James’s notorious love of disentangling a mystery, granting his love of money, and of hunting, I agree with Mr. Tytler in seeing nothing improbable in this narration. If the Master wanted to lure the King to Perth, I cannot conceive a better device than the tale which, according to the King, he told. The one improbable point, considering the morals of the country, was that Ruthven should come to James, in place of sharing the gold with his brother. But Ruthven, we shall see, had possibly good reasons, known to James, for conciliating the Royal favour, and for keeping his brother ignorant. Moreover, to seize the money would not have been a safe thing for Ruthven to do; the story would have leaked out, questions would have been asked. James had hit on the only plausible theory to account for a low fellow with a pot of gold; he *must* be ‘a practising Papist.’ James could neither suppose, nor expect others to believe that he supposed, one pot of foreign gold enough ‘to bribe the country into rebellion.’ But the pot, and the prisoner, supplied a clue worth following. Probabilities strike different critics in different ways. Mr. Tytler thinks James’s tale true, and that he acted in character. That is my opinion; his own the reader must form for himself.

Ruthven still protested. This hunt of gold was well worth a buck! The prisoner, he said, might attract attention by his cries, a very weak argument, but Ruthven was quite as likely to invent it on the spur of the moment, as James was to attribute it to him falsely, on cool reflection. Finally, if James came at once, Gowrie would then be at the preaching (Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays were preaching days), and the Royal proceedings with the captive would be undisturbed.

Now, on the hypothesis of intended kidnapping, this was a well-planned affair. If James accepted Ruthven’s invitation, he, with three or four servants, would reach Gowrie House while the town of Perth was quiet. Nothing would be easier than to seclude him, seize his person, and transport him to the seaside, either by Tay, or down the north bank of that river, or in disguise across Fife, to the Firth of Forth, in the retinue of Gowrie, before alarm was created at Falkland. Gowrie had given out (so his friends declared) that he was to go that night to Dirleton, his castle near North Berwick, a strong hold, manned, and provisioned. Could he have carried the King in disguise across Fife to Elie, Dirleton was within a twelve miles sail, on summer seas. Had James’s curiosity and avarice led him to ride away at once with Ruthven, and three or four servants, the plot might have succeeded. We must criticise the plot on these lines. Thus, if at all, had the Earl and his brother planned it. But Fate interfered, the unexpected occurred — *but the plot could not be dropped*. The story of the pot of gold could not be explained away. The King, with royal rudeness, did not even reply to the new argument of the Master. 'Without any further answering him,' his Majesty mounted, Ruthven staying still in the place where the King left him. At this moment Inchaffray, as we saw, met Ruthven, and invited him to breakfast, but he said that he was ordered to wait on the King.

At this point, James's narrative contains a circumstance which, confessedly, was not within his own experience. He did not know, he says, that the Master had any companion. But, from the evidence of another, he learned that the Master had a companion, indeed two companions. One was Andrew Ruthven, about whose presence nobody doubts. The other, one Andrew Henderson, was not seen by James at this time. However, the King says, on Henderson's own evidence, that the Master now sent him (about seven o'clock) to warn Gowrie that the King was to come. Really it seems that Henderson was despatched rather later, during the first check in the run.

It was all-important to the King's case to prove that Henderson had been at Falkland, and had returned at once with a message to Gowrie, for this would demonstrate that, in appearing to be unprepared for the King's arrival (as he did), Gowrie was making a false pretence. It was also important to prove that the ride of Ruthven and Henderson to Falkland and back had been concealed, by them, from the people at Gowrie House. Now this *was* proved. Craigengelt, Gowrie's steward, who was tortured, tried, convicted, and hanged, deponed that, going up the staircase, just after the King's arrival, he met the Master, booted, and asked 'where he had been.' 'An errand not far off,' said the Master, concealing his long ride to Falkland. Again, John Moncrieff, a gentleman who was with Gowrie, asked Henderson (who had returned to Perth much earlier than the King's arrival) where he had been, and he said 'that he had been two or three miles above the town.' Henderson himself later declared that Gowrie had told him to keep his ride to Falkland secret. The whole purpose of all this secrecy was to hide the fact that the Ruthvens had brought the King to Perth, and that Gowrie had early notice, by about 10 a.m., of James's approach, from Henderson. Therefore to make out that Henderson had been in Falkland, and had given Gowrie early notice of James's approach, though Gowrie for all that made no preparations to welcome James, was almost necessary for the Government. They specially questioned all witnesses on this point. Yet not one of their witnesses would swear to having seen Henderson at Falkland. This disposes of the theory of wholesale perjury.

The modern apologist for the Ruthvens, Mr. Louis Barbé, writes: ‘We believe that Henderson perjured himself in swearing that he accompanied Alexander’ (the Master) ‘and Andrew Ruthven when . . . they rode to Falkland. We believe that Henderson perjured himself when he asserted, on oath, that the Master sent him back to Perth with the intelligence of the King’s coming.’

On the other hand, George Hay, lay Prior of the famous Chartreux founded by James I in Perth, deponed that Henderson arrived long before Gowrie’s dinner, and Peter Hay corroborated. But Hay averred that Gowrie asked Henderson ‘who was at Falkland with the King?’ It would not follow that Henderson had been at Falkland himself. John Moncrieff deponed that Gowrie said nothing of Henderson’s message, but sat at dinner, feigning to have no knowledge of the King’s approach, till the Master arrived, a few minutes before the King. Mr. Rhynd, Gowrie’s tutor, deponed that Andrew Ruthven (the Master’s other companion in the early ride to Falkland) told him that the Master had sent on Henderson with news of the King’s coming. If Henderson had been at Falkland, he had some four hours’ start of the King and his party, and must have arrived at Perth, and spoken to Gowrie, long before dinner, he himself says at 10 a.m. Dinner was at noon, or, on this day, half an hour later. Yet Gowrie made no preparations for welcoming the King.

It is obvious that, though the Hays and Moncrieff both saw Henderson return, booted, from a ride somewhere or other, at an early hour, none of them could *prove* that he had ridden to Falkland and back. There was, in fact, no evidence that Henderson had been at Falkland except his own, and that of the poor tortured tutor, Rhynd, to the effect that Andrew Ruthven had confessed as much to him. But presently we shall find that, while modern apologists for Gowrie deny that Henderson had been at Falkland, the contemporary Ruthven apologist insists that he had been there.

To return to James’s own narrative, he asserts Henderson’s presence at Falkland, but not from his own knowledge. He did not see Henderson at Falkland. Ruthven, says James, sent Henderson to Gowrie just after the King mounted and followed the hounds. Here it must be noted that Henderson himself says that Ruthven did not actually despatch him till after he had some more words with the King. This is an instance of James’s *insouciance* as to harmonising his narrative with Henderson’s, or causing Henderson to conform to his. ‘Cooked’ evidence, collusive evidence, would have avoided these discrepancies. James says that, musing over the story of the pot of gold, he sent one Naismith, a surgeon (he had been with James at least since 1592), to bring Ruthven to him, during a check, and told Ruthven that he would, after the hunt, come to Perth. James thought that this was *after* the despatch of Henderson, but probably it was before, to judge by Henderson’s account.

During this pause, the hounds having hit on the scent again, the King was left behind, but spurred on. At every check, the Master kept urging him to make haste, so James did not tarry to break up the deer, as usual. The kill was but two bowshots from the stables, and the King did not wait for his sword, or his second horse, which had to gallop a mile before it reached him. Mar, Lennox, and others did wait for their second mounts, some rode back to Falkland for fresh horses, some dragged slowly along on tired steeds, and did not rejoin James till later.

Ruthven had tried, James says, to induce him to refuse the company of the courtiers. Three or four servants, he said, would be enough. The others ‘might mar the whole purpose.’ James was ‘half angry,’ he began to entertain odd surmises about Ruthven. One was ‘it might be that the Earl his brother *had handled him so hardly*, that the young gentleman, being of a high spirit, had taken such displeasure, as he was become somewhat beside himself.’ But why should Gowrie handle his brother hardly?

The answer is suggested by an unpublished contemporary manuscript, ‘The True Discovery of the late Treason,’ &c. ‘Some offence had passed betwixt the said Mr. Alexander Ruthven’ (the Master) ‘and his brother, for that the said Alexander, both of himself and by his Majesty’s mediation, had craved of the Earl his brother the demission and release of the Abbey of Scone, which his Majesty had bestowed upon the said Earl during his life. . . . His suit had little success.’

If this be fact (and there is no obvious reason for its invention), James might have reason to suspect that Gowrie had ‘handled his brother hardly:’ Scone being a valuable estate, well worth keeping. To secure the King’s favour as to Scone, Ruthven had a motive, as James would understand, for making him, and not Gowrie, acquainted with the secret of the treasure. Thus the unpublished manuscript casually explains the reason of the King’s suspicion that the Earl might have ‘handled the Master hardly.’

On some such surmise, James asked Lennox (who corroborates) whether he thought the Master quite ‘settled in his wits.’ Lennox knew nothing but good of him (as he said in his evidence), but Ruthven, observing their private talk, implored James to keep the secret, and come *alone* with him — at first — to see the captive and the treasure. James felt more and more uneasy, but he had started, and rode on, while the Master now despatched Andrew Ruthven to warn Gowrie. Within a mile of Perth the Master spurred on his weary horse, and gave the news to Gowrie, who, despite the messages of Henderson and Andrew Ruthven, was at dinner, unprepared for the Royal arrival. However, Gowrie met

James with sixty men (four, says the Ruthven apologist).

James's train then consisted of fifteen persons. Others must have dropped in later: they had no fresh mounts, but rested their horses, the King says, and let them graze by the way. They followed because, learning that James was going to Perth, they guessed that he intended to apprehend the Master of Oliphant, who had been misconducting himself in Angus. Thus the King accounts for the number of his train.

An hour passed before dinner: James pressed for a view of the treasure, but the Master asked the King not to converse with him then, as the whole affair was to be kept secret from Gowrie. If the two brothers had been at odds about the lands of Scone, the Master's attitude towards his brother might seem intelligible, a point never allowed for by critics unacquainted with the manuscript which we have cited. At last the King sat down to dinner, Gowrie in attendance, whispering to his servants, *and often going in and out of the chamber*. The Master, too, was seen on the stairs by Craigengelt.

If Gowrie's behaviour is correctly described, it might be attributed to anxiety about a Royal meal so hastily prepared. But if Gowrie had plenty of warning, from Henderson (as I do not doubt), that theory is not sufficient. If engaged in a conspiracy, Gowrie would have reason for anxiety. The circumstances, owing to the number of the royal retinue, were unfavourable, yet, as the story of the pot of gold had been told by Ruthven, the plot could not be abandoned. James even 'chaffed' Gowrie about being so pensive and *distrait*, and about his neglect of some little points of Scottish etiquette. Finally he sent Gowrie into the hall, with the grace-cup for the gentlemen, and then called the Master. He sent Gowrie, apparently, that he might slip off with the Master, as that gentleman wished. 'His Majesty desired Mr. Alexander to bring Sir Thomas Erskine with him, who' (Ruthven) 'desiring the King to go forward with him, and promising that he should make any one or two follow him that he pleased to call for, desiring his Majesty to command *publicly* that none should follow him.' This seems to mean, James and the Master were to cross the hall and go upstairs; James, or the Master for him, bidding no one follow (the Master, according to Balgonie, did say that the King would be alone), while, presently, the Master should return and privately beckon on one or two to join the King. The Master's excuse for all this was the keeping from Gowrie and others, for the moment, of the secret of the prisoner and the pot of gold.

Now, if we turn back to Sir Thomas Erskine's evidence, we find that, when he joined James in the chamber, after the slaying of the Master, he said 'I thought your Majesty would have concredited more to me, than to have commanded me to await your Majesty at the door, if you thought it not meet to have taken me with you.' The King replied, 'Alas, the traitor deceived me in that, as in all else, for I commanded him expressly to bring you to me, and he returned back, as I thought, to fetch you, but he did nothing but *steik* the door.'

What can these words mean? They appear to me to imply that James sent the Master back, according to their arrangement, to bring Erskine, that the Master gave Erskine some invented message about waiting at some door, that he then shut a door between the King and his friends, but told the King that Erskine was to follow them. Erskine was, beyond doubt, in the street with the rest of the retinue, before the brawl in the turret reached its crisis, when Gowrie had twice insisted that James had ridden away.

In any case, to go on with James's tale, he went with Ruthven up a staircase (the great staircase), 'and through three or four rooms'— 'three or four sundry *houses*'— 'the Master ever locking behind him every door as he passed, and so into a little study' — the turret. This is perplexing. We nowhere hear in the evidence of more than two doors, in the suite, which were locked. The staircase perhaps gave on the long gallery, with a door between them. The gallery gave on a chamber, which had a door (the door battered by Lennox and Mar), and the chamber gave on a turret, which had a door between it and the chamber.

We hear, in the evidence, of no other doors, or of no other locked doors. However, in the Latin indictment of the Ruthvens, 'many doors' are insisted on. As all the evidence tells of opposition from only *one* door — that between the gallery and the chamber of death — James's reason for talking of 'three or four doors' must be left to conjecture. 'The True Discourse' (MS.) gives but the gallery, chamber, and turret, but appears to allow for a door between stair and gallery, which the Master 'closed,' while he 'made fast' the next door, that between gallery and chamber. One Thomas Hamilton, who writes a long letter (MS.) to a lady unknown, also speaks of several doors, on the evidence of the King, and some of the Lords. This manuscript has been neglected by historians.

Leaving this point, we ask why a man already suspicious, like James, let the Master lock any door behind him. We might reply that James had dined, and that 'wine and beer produce a careless state of mind,' as a writer on cricket long ago observed. We may also suppose that, till facts proved the locking of one door at least (for about that there is no doubt), James did not know that any door *was* locked. On August 11 the Rev. Mr. Galloway, in a sermon preached before the King and the populace at the Cross of Edinburgh, says that the Master led the monarch upstairs, 'and through a *trans*' (a passage), 'the door whereof, so soon as they had entered, *chekit to with ane lok*, then through a gallery, whose door also *chekit to*, through a chamber, and the door thereof *chekit to*, also,' and thence into the turret of which he 'also locked the door.'

Were the locks that ‘chekit to’ spring locks, and was James unaware that he was locked in? But Ramsay, before the affray, had wandered into ‘a gallery, very fair,’ and unless there were two galleries, he could not do this, if the gallery door was locked. Lennox and Mar and the rest speak of opposition from only one door.

While we cannot explain these things, *that* door, at least, between the gallery and the gallery chamber, excluded James from most of his friends. Can the reader believe that he purposely had that door locked, we know not how, or by whom, on the system of compelling Gowrie to ‘come and be killed’ by way of the narrow staircase? Could we see Gowrie House, and its ‘secret ways,’ as it then was, we might understand this problem of the locked doors. Contemporary criticism, as minutely recorded by Calderwood, found no fault with the number of locked doors, but only asked ‘how could the King’s fear but increase, perceiving Mr. Alexander’ (the Master) ‘ever to lock the doors behind them?’ If the doors closed with spring locks (of which the principle had long been understood and used), the King may not have been aware of the locking. The problem cannot be solved; we only disbelieve that the King himself had the door locked, to keep his friends out, and let Gowrie in.

Note. — *The Abbey of Scone*. On page 48 we have quoted the statement that James had bestowed on Gowrie the Abbey of Scone ‘during his life.’ This was done in 1580 (*Registrum Magni Sigilli*, vol. iii. No. 3011). On May 25, 1584, William Fullarton got this gift, the first Earl of Gowrie and his children being then forfeited. But on July 23, 1586, the Gowrie of the day was restored to all his lands, and the Earldom of Gowrie included the old church lands of Scone (*Reg. Mag. Sig.* iv. No. 695, No. 1044). How, then, did John, third Earl of Gowrie, hold only ‘for his life’ the Commendatorship of the Abbey of Scone, as is stated in S. P. Scot. (Eliz.) vol. lxvi. No. 50?

IV. THE KING’S NARRATIVE — II. THE MAN IN THE TURRET

We left James entering the little ‘round,’ or ‘study,’ the turret chamber. Here, at last, he expected to find the captive and the pot of gold. And here the central mystery of his adventure began. His Majesty saw standing, ‘with a very abased countenance, not a bondman but a freeman, with a dagger at his girdle.’ Ruthven locked the door, put on his hat, drew the man’s dagger, and held the point to the King’s breast, ‘*avowing now that the King behoved to be at his will, and used as he list*; swearing many bloody oaths that if the King cried one word, or opened a window to look out, that dagger should go to his heart.’

If this tale is true, murder was not intended, unless James resisted: the King was only being *threatened* into compliance with the Master’s ‘will.’ Ruthven added that the King’s conscience must now be burthened ‘for murdering his father,’ that is, for the execution of William, Earl of Gowrie, in 1584. His conviction was believed to have been procured in a dastardly manner, later to be explained.

James was unarmed, and obviously had no secret coat of mail, in which he could not have hunted all day, perhaps. Ruthven had his sword; as for the other man he stood ‘trembling and quaking.’ James now made to the Master the odd harangue reported even in Nicholson’s version of the Falkland letter of the same day. As for Gowrie’s execution, the King said, he had then been a minor (he was eighteen in 1584), and Gowrie was condemned ‘by the ordinary course of law’ — which his friends denied. James had restored, he said, all the lands and dignities of the House, two of Ruthven’s sisters were maids of honour. Ruthven had been educated by the revered Mr. Rollock, he ought to have learned better behaviour. If the King died he would be avenged: Gowrie could not hope for the throne. The King solemnly promised forgiveness and silence, if Ruthven let him go.

Ruthven now uncovered his head, and protested that the King’s life should be safe, if he made no noise or cry: in that case Ruthven would now bring Gowrie to him. ‘Why?’ asked James; ‘you could gain little by keeping such a prisoner?’ Ruthven said that he could not explain; Gowrie would tell him the rest. Turning to *the other man*, he said ‘I make you the King’s keeper till I come again, and see that you keep him upon your peril.’ He then went out, and locked the door. The person who later averred that he had been the man in the turret, believed that

Ruthven never went far from the door. James believed, indeed averred, that he ran downstairs, and consulted Gowrie.

If there was an armed man in the turret, he was either placed there by the King, to protect him while he summoned his minions by feigned cries of treason, or he was placed there by Gowrie to help the Master to seize the King. In the latter case, the Master's position was now desperate; in lieu of an ally he had procured a witness against himself. Great need had he to consult Gowrie, but though Gowrie certainly entered the house, went upstairs, and returned to Lennox with the assurance that James had ridden away, it is improbable that he and his brother met at this moment. James, however, avers that they met, Ruthven running rapidly downstairs, but this was mere inference on the King's part.

James occupied the time of Ruthven's absence in asking the man of the turret what he knew of the conspiracy. The man replied that he knew nothing, he had but recently been locked into the little chamber. Indeed, while Ruthven was threatening, the man (says James) was trembling, and adjuring the Master not to harm the King. James, having sworn to Ruthven that he would not open the window himself, now, characteristically, asked the man to open the window 'on his right hand.' If the King had his back to the turret door, the window on his right opened on the courtyard, the window on his left opened on the street. The man readily opened the window, says the King, and the person claiming to be the man deponed later that he first opened what the King declared to be the wrong window, but, before he could open the other, in came the Master, who, 'casting his hands abroad in desperate manner, said "he could not mend it, his Majesty behoved to die."' Instead of stabbing James, however, he tried to bind the Royal hands with a garter, 'swearing he behoved to be bound.' (A garter was later picked up on the floor by one of the witnesses, Graham of Balgonie, and secured by Sir Thomas Erskine.)

A struggle then began, James keeping the Master's right hand off his sword-hilt; the Master trying to silence James with his left hand. James dragged the Master to the window, which the other man had opened. (In the Latin indictment of the dead Ruthvens, James opens the window himself.) The turret man said, in one of two depositions, that he stretched across the wrestlers, and opened the window. The retinue and Gowrie were passing, as we know, or loitering below; Gowrie affected not to hear the cries of treason; Lennox, Mar, and the rest rushed up the great staircase. Meanwhile, struggling with the Master, James had brought him out of the turret into the chamber, so he says, though, more probably, the Master brought *him*. They were now near the door of the chamber that gave on the narrow staircase, and James was 'throwing the

Master's sword out of his hand, thinking to have stricken him therewith,' when Ramsay entered, and wounded the Master, who was driven down the stairs, and there killed by Erskine and Herries. Gowrie then invaded the room with seven others: James was looking for the Master's sword, which had fallen, but he was instantly shut into the turret by his friends, and saw none of the fight in which Gowrie fell. After that Lennox and the party with hammers were admitted, and — the tumult appeased — James rode back, through a dark rainy night, to Falkland.

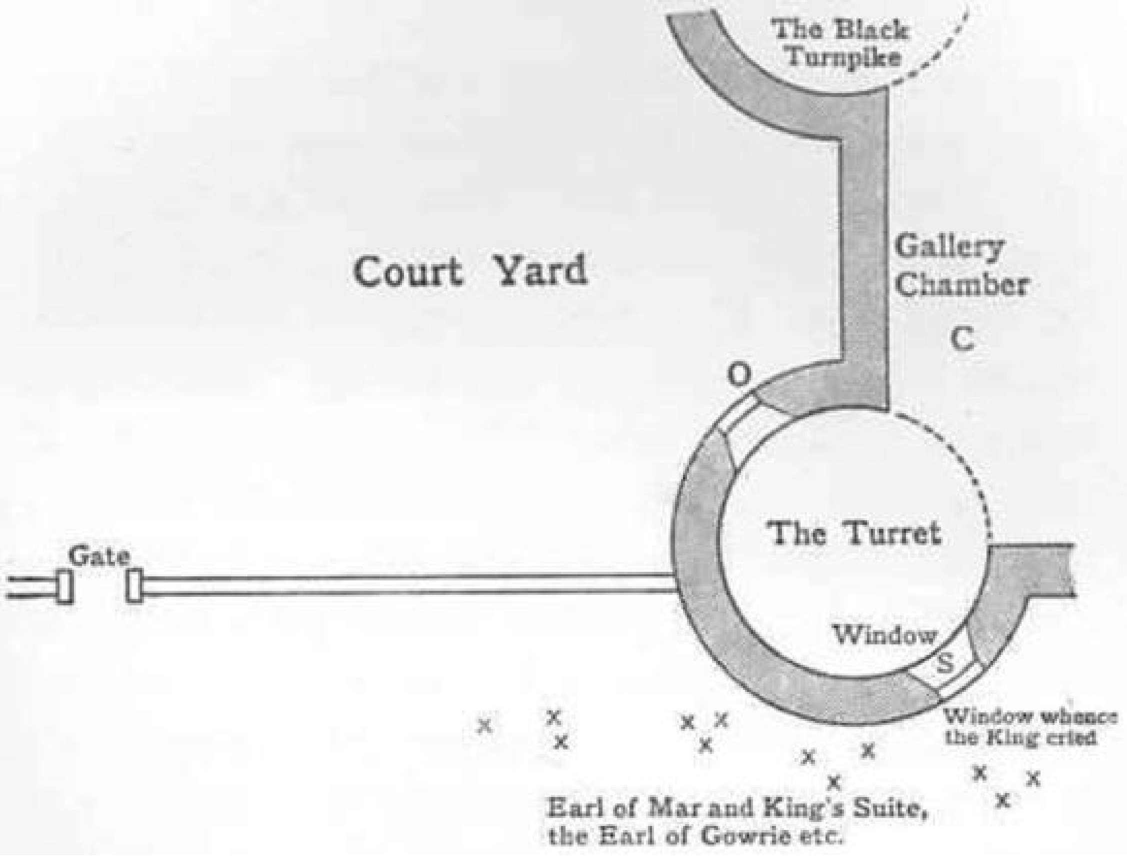
The Black Turnpike
Court Yard
Gallery Chamber
C
O
The Turret
Gate
Window
S
Window whence the King cried
Earl of Mar and King's Suite, the Earl of Gowrie etc.

V. HENDERSON’S NARRATIVE

The man in the turret had vanished like a ghost. Henderson, on the day after the tragedy, was also not to be found. Like certain Ruthvens, Hew Moncrieff, Eviot, and others, who had fought in the death-chamber, or been distinguished in the later riot, Henderson had fled. He was, though a retainer of Gowrie, a member of the Town Council of Perth, and ‘chamberlain,’ or ‘factor,’ of the lands of Scone, then held by Gowrie from the King. To find any one who had seen him during the tumult was difficult or impossible. William Robertson, a notary of Perth, examined in November before the Parliamentary Committee, said then that he only saw Gowrie, with his two drawn swords, and seven or eight companions, in the forecourt of the house, and so, ‘being afraid, he passed out of the place.’ The same man, earlier, on September 23, when examined with other citizens of Perth, had said that he followed young Tullibardine and some of his men, who were entering the court ‘to relieve the King.’ He saw the Master lying dead at the foot of the stair, and saw Henderson ‘come out of the said turnpike, over the Master’s belly.’ He spoke to Henderson, who did not answer. He remembered that Murray of Arbany was present. Arbany, before the Parliamentary Committee in November, said nothing on this subject, *nor did Robertson*. His evidence would have been important, had he adhered to what he said on September 23. But, oddly enough, if he perjured himself on the earlier occasion (September 23), he withdrew his perjury, when it would have been useful to the King’s case, in the evidence given before the Lords of the Articles, in November. Mr. Barbé, perhaps misled by the sequence of versions in Pitcairn, writes: ‘Apparently it was only when his memory had been stimulated by the treatment of those whose evidence was found to be favourable to the King that the wily notary recalled the details by which he intended to corroborate Henderson’s statement. . . . ‘

The reverse is the case: the wily notary did not offer, at the trial in November, the evidence which he had given, in September, at the examination of the citizens of Perth. It may perhaps be inferred that perjury was not encouraged, but depressed.

Despite the premiums on perjury which Ruthven apologists insist on, not one witness would swear to having seen Henderson during or after the tumult. Yet he instantly fled, with others who had been active in the brawl, and remained in concealment. Calderwood, the earnest collector of contemporary gossip and documents, assures us that when the man in the turret could not be found, the first proclamation identified him with a Mr. Robert Oliphant, a 'black grim man,' but that Oliphant proved his absence from Perth. One Gray and one Lesley were also suspected, and one Younger (hiding when sought for, it is said) was killed. But we have no copy of the proclamation as to Mr. Robert Oliphant. To Mr. Robert Oliphant, who had an alibi, we shall return, for this gentleman, though entirely overlooked by our historians, was probably at the centre of the situation (, *infra*).

Meanwhile, whatever Henderson had done, he mysteriously vanished from Gowrie House, during or after the turmoil, 'following darkness like a dream.' Nobody was produced who could say anything about seeing Henderson, after Moncrieff and the Hays saw him on his return from Falkland, at about ten o'clock in the morning of August 5.

By August 12, Henderson was still in hiding, and was still being proclaimed for, with others, of whom Mr. Robert Oliphant was not one: they were Moncrieff, Eviot, and two Ruthvens. But, on August 11 at the Cross of Edinburgh, in presence of the King, his chaplain, the Rev. Patrick Galloway, gave news of Henderson. Mr. Galloway had been minister of Perth, and a fierce Presbyterian of old.

Blow, Galloway, the trumpet of the Lord!

exclaimed a contemporary poet. But James had tamed Galloway, he was now the King's chaplain, he did not blow the trumpet of the Lord any longer, and, I fear, was capable of anything. He had a pension, Calderwood tells us, from the lands of Scone, and knew Henderson, who, as Chamberlain, or steward, paid the money. In his exciting sermon, Galloway made a dramatic point. Henderson was found, and Henderson was the man in the turret! Galloway had received a letter from Henderson, in his own hand; any listener who knew Henderson's hand might see the letter. Henderson tells his tale therein; Galloway says that it differs almost nothing from the King's story, of which he had given an abstract in his discourse. And he adds that Henderson stole downstairs while Ramsay was engaged with the Master.

Henderson, being now in touch with Galloway, probably received promise of his life, and of reward, for he came in before August 20, and, at the trial in November, was relieved of the charge of treason, and gave evidence.

Here we again ask, Why did Henderson take to flight? What had he to do with the matter? None fled but those who had been seen, sword in hand, in the fatal chamber, or stimulating the populace to attack the King during the tumult. Andrew Ruthven, who had ridden to Falkland with Henderson and the Master, did not run away, no proclamation for *him* is on record. Nobody swore to seeing

Henderson, like his fellow fugitives, armed or active, yet he fled and skulked. Manifestly Henderson had, in one way or other, been suspiciously concerned in the affair. He had come in, and was at Falkland, by August 20, when he was examined before the Chancellor, Montrose, the King's Advocate, Sir Thomas Hamilton, Sir George Hume of Spot (later Earl of Dunbar), and others, in the King's absence. He deponed that, on the night of August 4, Gowrie bade him and Andrew Ruthven ride early to Falkland with the Master, and return, if the Master ordered him so to do, with a message. At Falkland they went into a house, and the Master sent him to learn what the King was doing. He came back with the news; the Master talked with the King, then told Henderson to carry to Gowrie the tidings of the King's visit, 'and that his Majesty would be quiet.' Henderson asked if he was to start at once. Ruthven told him to wait till he spoke to the King again. They did speak, at a gap in a wall, during the check in the run; Ruthven returned to Henderson, sent him off, and Henderson reached Perth about ten o'clock. Gowrie, on his arrival, left the company he was with (the two Hays), and here George Hay's evidence makes Gowrie ask Henderson 'who was with the King at Falkland?' Hay said that Gowrie then took Henderson into another room. Henderson says nothing about a question as to the King's company, asked in presence of Hay, a compromising and improbable question, if Gowrie wished to conceal the visit to Falkland.

Apart, Gowrie put some other questions to Henderson as to how the King received the Master. Henderson then went to his house; an hour later Gowrie bade him put on his secret coat of mail, and plate sleeves, as he had to arrest a Highlander. Henderson did as commanded; at twelve the steward told him to bring up dinner, as Craigengelt (the caterer) was ill. Dinner began at half-past twelve; at the second course the Master entered, Andrew Ruthven had arrived earlier. The company rose from table, and Henderson, who was not at the moment in the room, heard them moving, and thought that they were 'going to make breeks for Maconilduy,' that is, to catch the Highlander. Finding he was wrong, he threw his steel gauntlet into the pantry, and sent his boy to his house with his steel cap. He then followed Gowrie to meet the King, and, after he had fetched 'a drink' (which James says 'was long in coming'), the Master bade him ask Mr. Rhynd, Gowrie's old tutor, for the key of the gallery, which Rhynd brought to the Master. Gowrie then went up, and spoke with the Master, and, after some coming and going, Henderson was sent to the Master in the gallery. Thither Gowrie returned, and bade Henderson do whatever the Master commanded. (The King says that Gowrie came and went from the room, during his dinner.) The Master next bade Henderson enter the turret, and locked him in. He passed the time in terror and in prayer.

There follows the story of the entry of James and the Master, and Henderson now avers that he ‘threw’ the dagger out of the Master’s hand. He declares that the Master said that he wanted ‘a promise from the King,’ on what point Gowrie would explain. The rest is much as in the King’s account, but Henderson was ‘pressing to have opened the window,’ he says, when the Master entered for the second time, with the garter to bind the King’s hands. During the struggle Henderson removed the Master’s hand from the King’s mouth, and opened the window. The Master said to him, ‘Wilt thou not help? Woe betide thee, thou wilt make us all die.’

Henderson’s later deposition, at the trial in November, was mainly, but not without discrepancies, to the same effect as his first. He said that he prayed, when alone in the turret, but omits the statement (previously made by him) that he deprived Ruthven of his dagger, a very improbable tale, told falsely at first, no doubt, as Robertson the notary at first invented his fable about meeting with Henderson, coming out of the dark staircase. This myth Robertson narrated when examined in September, but omitted it in the trial in November. Henderson now explained about his first opening the wrong window, but he sticks to it that he took the garter from Ruthven, of which James says nothing. He vows that he turned the key of the door on the staircase, so that Ramsay could enter, whereas Ramsay averred that he himself forced the door. Mr. Hudson (James’s resident at the Court of England), who in October 1600 interviewed both Henderson and the King, says that, in fact, the Master had not locked the door, on his re-entry. Henderson slunk out when Ramsay came in. He adds that it was *his* steel cap which was put on Gowrie’s head by a servant (there was plenty of evidence that a steel cap was thus put on).

One singular point in Henderson’s versions is this: after Ruthven, in deference to James’s harangue in the turret, had taken off his hat, the King said, ‘What is it ye crave, man, if ye crave not my life?’ ‘*Sir, it is but a promise*,’ answered Ruthven. The King asked ‘What promise?’ and Ruthven said that his brother would explain. This tale looks like a confusion made, by Henderson’s memory, in a passage in James’s narrative. ‘His Majesty inquired what the Earl would do with him, since (if his Majesty’s life were safe, *according to promise*) they could gain little in keeping such a prisoner.’ Ruthven then, in James’s narrative, said ‘that the Earl would tell his Majesty at his coming.’ It appears that the word ‘promise’ in the Royal version, occurring at this point in the story, clung to Henderson’s memory, and so crept into his tale. Others have thought that the Ruthvens wished to extort from James a promise about certain money which he owed to Gowrie. But to extort a promise, by secluding and threatening the King, would have been highly treasonable and dangerous, nor need James have kept a promise made under duress.

Perhaps few persons who are accustomed to weigh and test evidence, who know the weaknesses of human memories, and the illusions which impose themselves upon our recollections, will lay great stress on the discrepancies between Henderson’s first deposition (in August), his second (in November), and the statement of the King. In the footnote printed below, Hudson explains the origin of certain differences between the King’s narrative and Henderson’s evidence, given in August. Hudson declares that James boasted of having taken the dagger out of Ruthven’s hands (which, in fact, James does not do, in his published narration), and that Henderson claimed to have snatched the dagger away, ‘to move mercy by more merit.’ It is clear that James would not accept his story of disarming Ruthven; Henderson omits *that* in his second deposition. For the rest, James, who was quite clever enough to discover the discrepancies, let them stand, at the end of his own printed narrative, with the calm remark, that if any differences existed in the depositions, they must be taken as ‘uttered by the deponer in his own behouf, for obtaining of his Majesty’s princely grace and favour.’ Henderson’s first deposition was one of these which James printed with his own narrative, and thus treated *en prince*. He was not going to harmonise his evidence with Henderson’s, or Henderson’s with his. On the other hand, from the first, Henderson had probably the opportunity to frame his confession on the Falkland letter of August 5 to the Chancellor, and the Provost of Edinburgh; and, later, on the printed narrative officially issued at the close of August 1600. He varied, when he did vary, in hopes of ‘his Majesty’s princely grace and favour,’ and he naturally tried to make out that he was not a mere trembling expostulating caitiff. He clung to the incident of the garter which he snatched from the Master’s hand.

Henderson had no Royal model for his account of how he came to be in the turret, which James could only learn from himself. Now that is the most incredible part of Henderson’s narrative. However secret the Ruthvens may have desired to be, how could they trust everything to the chance that the town councillor of Perth, upper footman, and Chamberlain of Scone, would act the desperate part of seizing a king, without training and without warning?

But *was* Henderson unwarned and uninstructed, or, did he fail after ample instruction? That is the difficult point raised by the very curious case of Mr. Robert Oliphant, which has never been mentioned, I think, by the many minute students of this bewildering affair.

VI. THE STRANGE CASE OF MR. ROBERT OLIPHANT

Suppose that men like the Ruthvens, great and potent nobles, had secretly invited their retainer, Andrew Henderson, to take the *rôle* of the armed man in the turret, what could Henderson have done? Such proposals as this were a danger dreaded even by the most powerful. Thus, in March 1562, James Hepburn, the wicked Earl of Bothwell, procured, through John Knox, a reconciliation with his feudal enemy, Arran. The brain of Arran was already, it seems, impaired. A few days after the reconciliation he secretly consulted Knox on a delicate point. Bothwell, he said, had imparted to him a scheme whereby they should seize Queen Mary's person, and murder her secretary, Lethington, and her half-brother, Lord James Stuart, later Earl of Moray. Arran explained to Knox that, if ever the plot came to light, he would be involved in the crime of guilty concealment of foreknowledge of treason. But, if he divulged the plan, Bothwell would challenge him to trial by combat. Knox advised secrecy, but Arran, now far from sane, revealed the real or imagined conspiracy.

To a man like Henderson, the peril in simply listening to treasonable proposals from the Ruthvens would be even greater. If he merely declined to be a party, and kept silence, or fled, he lost his employment as Gowrie's man, and would be ruined. If the plot ever came to light, he would be involved in guilty concealment of foreknowledge. If he instantly revealed to the King what he knew, his word would not be accepted against that of Gowrie: he would be tortured, to get at the very truth, and probably would be hanged by way of experiment, to see if he would adhere to his statement on the scaffold — a fate from which Henderson, in fact, was only saved by the King.

What then, if the Gowries offered to Henderson the *rôle* of the man in the turret, could Henderson do? He could do what, according to James and to himself, he did, he could tremble, expostulate, and assure the King of his ignorance of the purpose for which he was locked up, 'like a dog,' in the little study.

That this may have been the real state of affairs is not impossible. We have seen that Calderwood mentions a certain Mr. Robert Oliphant (Mr. means Master of Arts) as having been conjectured at, immediately after the tragedy, as the man in the turret. He must therefore have been, and he was, a trusted retainer of Gowrie. But Oliphant at once proved an alibi; he was not in Perth on

August 5. His name never occurs in the voluminous records of the proceedings. He is not, like Henderson, among the persons who fled, and for whom search was made, as far as the documents declare, though Calderwood says that he was described as a ‘black grim man’ in ‘the first proclamation.’ If so, it looks ill for James, as Henderson was a brown fair man. In any case, Oliphant at once cleared himself.

But we hear of him again, though historians have overlooked the fact. Among the Acts of Caution of 1600 — that is, the records of men who become sureties for the good behaviour of others — is an entry in the Privy Council Register for December 5, 1600. ‘Mr. Alexander Wilky in the Canongate for John Wilky, tailor there, 200*l.*, not to harm John Lyn, also tailor there; further, to answer when required touching his (John Wilky’s) pursuit of Lyn for revealing certain speeches spoken to him by Mr. Robert Oliphant anent his foreknowledge of the treasonable conspiracy of the late John, sometime Earl of Gowrie.’

Thus Robert Oliphant, M.A., had spoken to tailor Lyn, or so Lyn had declared, about his own foreknowledge of the plot; Lyn had blabbed; tailor Wilky had ‘pursued’ or attacked Lyn; and Alexander Wilky, who was bailie of the Canongate, enters into recognisances to the amount of 200*l.* that John Wilky shall not further molest Lyn.

Now what had Oliphant said?

On the very day, December 5, when Alexander Wilky became surety for the good behaviour of John Wilky, Nicholson, the English resident at Holyrood, described the facts to Robert Cecil. Nicholson says that, at a house in the Canongate, Mr. Robert Oliphant was talking of the Gowrie case. He was a man who had travelled, and he inveighed against the unfairness of Scottish procedure in the case of Cranstoun.

We have seen that Mr. Thomas Cranstoun, Gowrie’s equerry, first brought to Lennox and others, in the garden, the report that the King had ridden away. We have seen that he was deeply wounded by Ramsay just before or after Gowrie fell. Unable to escape, he was taken, examined, tortured, tried on August 22, and, on August 23, hanged at Perth. He had invaded and wounded Herries, and Thomas Erskine, and had encouraged the mob to beleaguer the back gate of Gowrie House, against the King’s escape. He had been in France, he said, since 1589, had come home with Gowrie, but, he swore, had not spoken six words with the Ruthvens during the last fortnight. This is odd, as he was their Master Stabler, and as they, by their friends’ account, had been making every preparation to leave for Dirleton, which involved arrangements about their horses.

In any case, Mr. Robert Oliphant, in a house in the Canongate, in November or early December 1600, declared that Cranstoun, who, he said, knew nothing of the conspiracy, had been hanged, while Henderson, *who was in the secret, and had taken the turret part*, escaped, and retained his position as Chamberlain of Scone. Henderson, at the critical moment, had 'fainted,' said Oliphant; that is, had failed from want of courage. Oliphant went on to say that he himself had been with Gowrie in Paris (February-March 1600), and that, both in Paris and at home in Scotland later, Gowrie had endeavoured to induce him to take the part later offered to Henderson. He had tried, but in vain, to divert Gowrie's mind from his dangerous project. This talk of Oliphant's leaked out (through Lyn as we know), and Oliphant, says Nicholson, 'fled again.'

Of Oliphant we learn no more till about June . At that time, the King, in England, heard a rumour that he had been connected with the conspiracy. A Captain Patrick Heron obtained a commission to find Oliphant, and arrested him at Canterbury: he was making for Dover and for France. Heron seized Oliphant's portable property, 'eight angels, two half rose-nobles, one double pistolet, two French crowns and a half, one Albertus angel; two English crowns; one Turkish piece of gold, two gold rings, and a loose stone belonging to one; three Netherland dollars; one piece of four royals; two *quart decuria*; seven pieces of several coins of silver; two purses, one sword; one trunk, one "mail," and two budgetts.' Oliphant himself lay for nine months in 'the Gate House of Westminster,' but Heron, 'careless to justify his accusation, and discovering his aim in that business' (writes the King), 'presently departed from hence.' 'We have tried the innocency of Mr. Robert Oliphant,' James goes on, 'and have freed him from prison.' The Scottish Privy Council is therefore ordered, on March 6, 1609, to make Heron restore Oliphant's property. On May 16, 1609, Heron was brought before the Privy Council in Edinburgh, and was bidden to make restitution. He was placed in the Tolbooth, but released by Lindsay, the keeper of the prison. In March 1610, Oliphant having again gone abroad, Heron expressed his readiness to restore the goods, except the trunk and bags, which he had given to the English Privy Council, who restored them to Robert Oliphant. The brother of Robert, Oliphant of Bauchiltoun, represented him in his absence, and, in 1611, Robert got some measure of restitution from Heron.

We know no more of Mr. Robert Oliphant. His freedom of talk was amazing, but perhaps he had been drinking when he told the story of his connection with the plot. By 1608 nothing could be proved against him in London: in 1600, had he not fled from Edinburgh in December, something might have been extracted. We can only say that his version of the case is less improbable than Henderson's. Henderson — if approached by Gowrie, as Oliphant is reported to have said that he *was* — could not divulge the plot, could not, like Oliphant, a gentleman, leave Perth, and desert his employment. So perhaps he drifted into taking the *rôle* of the man in the turret. If so, he had abundance of time to invent his most improbable story that he was shut up there in ignorance of the purpose of his masters.

Henderson was not always of the lamblike demeanour which he displayed in the turret. On March 5, 1601, Nicholson reports that 'Sir Hugh Herries,' the lame doctor, 'and Henderson fell out and were at offering of strokes,' whence 'revelations' were anticipated. They never came, and, for all that we know, Herries may have taunted Henderson with Oliphant's version of his conduct. He was pretty generally suspected of having been in the conspiracy, and of having failed, from terror, and then betrayed his masters, while pretending not to have known why he was placed in the turret.

It is remarkable that Herries did not appear as a witness at the trial in November. He was knighted and rewarded: every one almost was rewarded out of Gowrie's escheats, or forfeited property. But that was natural, whether James was guilty or innocent; and we repeat that the rewards, present or in prospect, did not produce witnesses ready to say that they saw Henderson at Falkland, or in the tumult, or in the turret. Why men so freely charged with murderous conspiracy and false swearing were so dainty on these and other essential points, the advocates of the theory of perjury may explain. How James treated discrepancies in the evidence we have seen. His account was the true account, he would not alter it, he would not suppress the discrepancies of Henderson, except as to the dagger. Witnesses might say this or that to secure the King's princely favour. Let them say: the King's account is true. This attitude is certainly more dignified, and wiser, than the easy method of harmonising all versions before publication. Meanwhile, if there were discrepancies, they were held by sceptics to prove falsehood; if there had been absolute harmony, that would really have proved collusion. On one point I suspect suppression at the trial. Almost all versions aver that Ramsay, or another, said to Gowrie, 'You have slain the King,' and that Gowrie (who certainly did not mean murder) then dropped his points and was stabbed. Of this nothing is said, at the trial, by any witnesses.

VII. THE CONTEMPORARY RUTHVEN VINDICATION

We now come to the evidence which is most fatally damaging to the two unfortunate Ruthvens. It is the testimony of their contemporary Vindication. Till a date very uncertain, a tradition hung about Perth that some old gentlemen remembered having seen a Vindication of the Ruthvens; written at the time of the events. Antiquaries vainly asked each other for copies of this valuable apology. Was it printed, and suppressed by Royal order? Did it circulate only in manuscript?

In 1812 a Mr. Panton published a vehement defence of the Ruthvens. Speaking of the King's narrative, he says, 'In a short time afterwards a reply, or counter manifesto, setting forth the matter in its true light, written by some friend of the Ruthven family, made its appearance. The discovery of this performance would now be a valuable acquisition; but there is no probability that any such exists, as the Government instantly ordered the publication to be suppressed. . . .'

The learned and accurate Lord Hailes, writing in the second half of the eighteenth century (1757), says, 'It appears by a letter of Sir John Carey, Governor' (really Deputy Governor) 'of Berwick, to Cecil, 4th September, 1600, that some treatise had been published in Scotland, in vindication of Gowrie.' That 'treatise,' or rather newsletter, unsigned, and overlooked by our historians (as far as my knowledge goes), is extant in the Record Office. We can identify it as the document mentioned by Carey to Cecil in his letter of September 4, 1600. Carey was then in command of Berwick, the great English frontier fortress, for his chief, 'the brave Lord Willoughby,' was absent on sick leave. On September 4, then, from Berwick, Carey wrote to Sir Robert Cecil, 'I have thought good to send you such' (information) 'as I have received out of Scotland this morning on both sides, both on the King's part and the Earl's part, that you may read them both together.'

Now we possess a manuscript, 'The Verie Maner of the Erll of Gowrie and his brother their Death, quha war killit at Perth, the fyft of August, by the Kingis Servanttis, his Majestie being present.' This paper is directed to 'My Lord Governor,' and, as Carey was acting for 'My Lord Governor,' Lord Willoughby, at Berwick, he received and forwarded the document to Cecil. This is the Vindication, at least I know no other, and no printed copy, though Nicholson writes that a ‘book on the Ruthven side was printed in England’ (October 28, 1600).

The manuscript is in bad condition, in parts illegible; acids appear to have been applied to it. The story, however, from the Gowrie side, can be easily made out. It alleges that, ‘on Saturday, August 1’ (really August 2), the lame Dr Herries came, on some pretext, to Gowrie’s house. ‘This man by my Lord was convoyed through the house, and the secret parts shown him.’

Now there was no ‘secret part’ in the house, as far as the narratives go. The entry to the narrow staircase was inconspicuous, but was noticed by Ramsay, and, of course, was familiar to Gowrie and his men. On Tuesday, the fatal day (according to the Ruthven Vindication), Gowrie’s retainers were preparing to go with him ‘to Lothian,’ that is to Dirleton, a castle of his on the sea, hard by North Berwick. The narrator argues, as all the friends of the Ruthvens did, that, if Gowrie had intended any treason, his men would not have been busy at their houses with preparations for an instant removal. The value of this objection is null. If Gowrie had a plot, it probably was to carry the King to Dirleton with him, in disguise.

The Master, the apology goes on, whom the King had sent for ‘divers times before, and on August 5,’ rode early to Falkland, accompanied by Andrew Ruthven, and *Andrew Henderson*. None of James’s men, nor James himself, as we have remarked, saw Henderson at Falkland, and modern opponents of the King deny (as the aforesaid Mr. Panton does) that he was there. Here they clash with ‘The Verie Manner’ &c. issued at the time by Gowrie’s defenders. It avers that the Master, and his two men, did not intend to return from Falkland to Perth. They meant to sleep at Falkland on the night of the Fifth, and meet Gowrie, next day, August 6, ‘at the waterside,’ and cross with him to the south coast of the Firth of Forth, thence riding on (as other friendly accounts allege) to Dirleton, near North Berwick. ‘And Andrew Henderson’s confessions testified this.’ As published, they do nothing of the sort. The Master ‘took his lodging in Falkland for this night.’ Hearing that James was to hunt, the Master breakfasted, and went to look for him. After a conversation with James, he bade Henderson ride back to Perth, and tell Gowrie that, ‘*for what occasion he knew not,*’ the King was coming. Now after they all arrived at Perth, the Master told Gowrie’s caterer, Craigengelt, that the King had come, ‘because Robert Abercrombie, that false knave, had brought the King there, to make his Majesty take order for his debt.’ This fact was stated by Craigengelt himself, under examination. If Ruthven spoke the truth, he did know the motive, or pretext, of the King’s coming, which the apologist denies. But Ruthven was not speaking the truth; he told Craigengelt, as we saw, that he had been ‘on an errand not far off.’

As to the debt, James owed Gowrie a large sum, with accumulated interest, for expenses incurred by Gowrie's father, when Lord Treasurer of Scotland (1583–1584). James, in June 1600, as we shall see, gave Gowrie a year's respite from the pursuit of his father's creditors, hoping to pay him in the meanwhile. Whether this exemption would not have defended Gowrie from Robert Abercromby; whether James would act as debt collector for Robert Abercromby (a burgess of Edinburgh, the King's saddler), the reader may decide. But the Master gave to Craigengelt this reason for James's unexpected arrival, though his contemporary apologist says, as to James's motive for coming to Perth, that the Master '*knew nothing*.'

Henderson having cantered off with his message, James rode to Perth (nothing is said by the apologist of the four hours spent in hunting), 'accompanied by sixty horsemen, of whom thirty came a little before him.' No trace of either the sixty or the thirty appears anywhere in the evidence. No witness alludes to the arrival of any of the King's party in front of him. On hearing from Henderson of the King's approach, says the Vindication, Gowrie, who was dining, ordered a new meal to be prepared. All the other evidence shows that Henderson came back to Perth long before Gowrie dined, and that nevertheless Gowrie made no preparations at all. Gowrie, with four others, then met the King, on the Inch of Perth says the apologist. James kissed him when they met, the kiss of Judas, we are to understand. He entered the house, and all the keys were given to James's retainers. The porter, as we saw, really had the keys, and Gowrie opened the garden gate with one of them. The apologist is mendacious.

Dinner was soon over. James sent the Master to bid Ramsay and Erskine 'follow him to his chamber, where his Majesty, Sir Thomas Erskine, John Ramsay, Dr. Herries, and Mr. Wilson, being convened, slew the Master, and threw him down the stair, how, and for what cause they themselves.' Of course it is absolutely certain that the Master did not bring the other three men to James, in the chamber where the Master was first wounded. Undeniably Herries, Ramsay, and Erskine were not brought by the Master, at James's command, to this room. They did not enter it till after the cries of 'Treason' were yelled by James from the window of the turret. A servant of James's, says the apologist, now brought the news that the King had ridden away. Cranstoun, Gowrie's man, really did this, as he admitted. Gowrie, the author goes on, hearing of James's departure, called for his horse, and went out into the street. There he stood 'abiding his horse.' Now Cranstoun, as he confessed, had told Gowrie that his horse was at Scone, two miles away. By keeping his horses there, Gowrie made it impossible for him to accompany the Royal retinue as they went on their useless errand (, *supra*). In the street Gowrie 'hears his Majesty call on him out at the chamber window, “My Lord of Gowrie, traitors has murdered your brother already, and ye suffer me to be murdered also!”’

Nobody else heard this, and, if Gowrie heard it, how inept it was in him to go about asking ‘What is the matter?’ He was occupied thus while Lennox, Mar, and the others were rushing up the great staircase to rescue the King. James, according to the Ruthven apologist, had told Gowrie what the matter was, his brother was slain, and slain by Erskine, who, while the Earl asked ‘What is the matter?’ was trying to collar that distracted nobleman. The Master had brought Erskine to the King, says the apologist, Erskine had slain the Master, yet, simultaneously, he tried to seize Gowrie in the street. Erskine was in two places at once. The apology is indeed ‘a valuable acquisition.’ Gowrie and Cranstoun, and they alone, the apologist avers, were now permitted by James’s servants to enter the house. We know that many of James’s men were really battering at the locked door, and we know that others of Gowrie’s people, besides Cranstoun, entered the house, and were wounded in the scuffle. Cranstoun himself says nothing of any opposition to their entry to the house, after Gowrie drew his two swords.

Cranstoun, according to the apologist, first entered the chamber, alone, and was wounded, and drawn back by Gowrie — which Cranstoun, in his own statement, denies. After his wounds he fled, he says, seeing no more of Gowrie. Then, according to the apologist, Gowrie himself at last entered the chamber; the King’s friends attacked him, but he was too cunning of fence for them. They therefore parleyed, and promised to let him see the King (who was in the turret). Gowrie dropped his points, Ramsay stabbed him, he died committing his soul to God, and declaring that he was a true subject.

This narrative, we are told by its author, is partly derived from the King’s men, partly from the confessions of Cranstoun, Craigengelt, and Baron (accused of having been in the chamber-fight, and active in the tumult). All these three were tried and hanged. The apologist adds that James’s companions will swear to whatever he pleases. This was unjust; Ramsay would not venture to recognise the man of whom he caught a glimpse in the turret, and nobody pretended to have seen Henderson at Falkland, though the presence of Henderson at Falkland and in the chamber was an essential point. But, among the King’s crew of perjurers, not a man swore to either fact.

What follows relates to Gowrie’s character; ‘he had paid all his father’s debts,’ which most assuredly he had not done. As to the causes of his taking off, they are explained by the apologist, but belong to a later part of the inquiry.

Such was the contemporary Vindication of Gowrie, sent to Carey, at Berwick, for English reading, and forwarded by Carey to Cecil. The narrative is manifestly false, on the points which we have noted. It is ingeniously asserted by the vindicator that *a servant of James* brought the report that he had ridden away. It is not added that the false report was really brought by Cranstoun, and twice confirmed by Gowrie, once after he had gone to make inquiry upstairs. Again, the apologist never even hints at the locked door of the gallery chamber, whereat Mar, Lennox, and the rest so long and so vainly battered. Who locked that door, and why? The subject is entirely omitted by the apologist. On the other hand, the apologist never alludes to the Murrays, who were in the town. Other writers soon after the events, and in our own day, allege that James had arranged his plot so as to coincide with the presence of the Murrays in Perth. What they did to serve him we have heard. John Murray was wounded by a Ruthven partisan after the Earl and Master were dead. Some Murrays jostled Gowrie, before he rushed to his death. Young Tullibardine helped to pacify the populace. That is all. Nothing more is attributed to the Murrays, and the contemporary apologist did not try to make capital out of them.

Though the narrative of the contemporary apologist for the Ruthvens appears absolutely to lack evidence for its assertions, it reveals, on analysis, a consistent theory of the King's plot. It may not be verifiable; in fact it cannot be true, but there is a theory, a system, which we do not find in most contemporary, or in more recent arguments. James, by the theory, is intent on the destruction of the Ruthvens. His plan was to bring the Master to Falkland, and induce the world to believe that it was the Master who brought *him* to Perth. The Master refuses several invitations; at last, on his way to Dirleton, he goes to Falkland, taking with him Andrew Ruthven and Andrew Henderson. The old apologist asserts, what modern vindicators deny, that Henderson was at Falkland.

Then the Master sends Henderson first, Andrew Ruthven later, to warn Gowrie that, for some unknown reason, the King is coming. To conceal his bloody project (though the apologist does not mention the circumstance), James next passes four hours in hunting. *To omit this certain fact is necessary for the apologist's purpose*. The King sends thirty horsemen in front of him, and follows with thirty more. After dinner he leaves the hall with the Master, but sends him back for Erskine, Wilson, and Ramsay. James having secured their help, and next lured the Master into a turret, the minions kill Ruthven and throw his body downstairs; one of them, simultaneously, is in the street. James has previously arranged that one of his servants shall give out that the King has ridden away. This he does announce at the nick of time (though Gowrie's servant did it), so that Gowrie shall go towards the stables (where he expects to find his horse, though he knows it is at Scone), thus coming within earshot of the turret window. Thence James shouts to Gowrie that traitors are murdering him, and have murdered the Master. Now this news would bring, not only Gowrie, but all the Royal retinue, to his Majesty's assistance. But, as not knowing the topography of the house, the retinue, James must have calculated, will run up the main stairs, to rescue the King. Their arrival would be inconvenient to the King (as the nobles would find that James has only friends with him, not traitors), so the King has had the door locked (we guess, though we are not told this by the apologist) to keep out Lennox, Mar, and the rest. Gowrie, however, has to be admitted, and killed, and Gowrie, knowing the house, will come, the King calculates, by the dark stair, and the unlocked door. Therefore James's friends, in the street, will let him and Cranstoun enter the house; these two alone, and no others with them. They, knowing the narrow staircase, go up that way, naturally. As naturally, Gowrie lets Cranstoun face the danger of four hostile swords, alone. Waiting till Cranstoun is disabled, Gowrie then confronts, alone, the same murderous blades, is disarmed by a *ruse*, and is murdered.

This explanation has a method, a system. Unfortunately it is contradicted by all the evidence now to be obtained, from whatever source it comes, retainers of Gowrie, companions of James, or burgesses of Perth. We must suppose that Gowrie, with his small force of himself and Cranstoun, both fencers from the foreign schools, would allow that force to be cut off in detail, one by one. We must suppose that Erskine was where he certainly was not, in two places at once, and that Ramsay and Herries and he, unseen, left the hall and joined the King, on a message brought by the Master, unmarked by any witness. We must suppose that the King's witnesses, who professed ignorance on essential points, perjured themselves on others, in batches. But, if we grant that Mar, Lennox, and the rest — gentlemen, servants, retainers and menials of the Ruthvens, and citizens of Perth — were abandoned perjurers on some points, while scrupulously honourable on others equally essential, the narrative of the Ruthven apologist has a method, a consistency, which we do not find in modern systems unfavourable to the King.

For example, the modern theories easily show how James trapped the Master. He had only to lure him into a room, and cry 'Treason.' Then, even if untutored in his part, some hot-headed young man like Ramsay would stab Ruthven. But to deal with Gowrie was a more difficult task. He would be out in the open, surrounded by men like Lennox and Mar, great nobles, and his near kinsmen. They would attest the innocence of the Earl. They must therefore be separated from him, lured away to attack the locked door, while Gowrie would stand in the street asking 'What is the matter?' though James had told him, and detained by the Murrays till they saw fit to let him and Cranstoun go within the gate, alone. Then, knowing the topography, Gowrie and Cranstoun would necessarily make for the murder-chamber, by the dark stair, and perish. The Royal wit never conceived a subtler plot, it is much cleverer than that invented by Mr. G. P. R. James, in his novel, ‘Gowrie.’ Nothing is wrong with the system of the apologist, except that the facts are false, and the idea a trifle too subtle, while, instead of boldly saying that the King had the gallery chamber locked against his friends, the apologist never hints at that circumstance.

We have to help the contemporary vindicator out, by adding the detail of the locked door (which he did not see how to account for and therefore omitted), and by explaining that the King had it locked himself, that Lennox, Mar, and the rest might not know the real state of the case, and that Gowrie might be trapped through taking the other way, by the narrow staircase.

An author so conspicuously mendacious as he who wrote the Apology for English consumption is unworthy of belief on any point. It does not follow that Henderson was really at Falkland because the apologist says that he was. But it would appear that this vindicator could not well deny the circumstance, and that, to work it conveniently into his fable, he had to omit the King’s hunting, and to contradict the Hays and Moncrieff by making Henderson arrive at Perth after twelve instead of about ten o’clock.

The value of the Apology, so long overlooked, is to show how very poor a case was the best that the vindicator of the Ruthvens was able to produce. But no doubt it was good enough for people who wished to believe.

VIII. THE THEORY OF AN ACCIDENTAL BRAWL

So far, the King's narrative is least out of keeping with probability.

But had James been insulted, menaced, and driven to a personal struggle, as he declared? Is the fact not that, finding himself alone with Ruthven, and an armed man (or no armed man, if you believe that none was there), James lost his nerve, and cried 'Treason!' in mere panic? The rest followed from the hot blood of the three courtiers, and the story of James was invented, after the deaths of the Gowries, to conceal the truth, and to rob by forfeiture the family of Ruthven. But James had certainly told Lennox the story of Ruthven and the pot of gold, before they reached Perth. If he came with innocent intent, he had not concocted that story as an excuse for coming.

We really must be consistent. Mr. Barbé, a recent Ruthven apologist, says that the theory of an accidental origin of 'the struggle between James and Ruthven may possibly contain a fairly accurate conjecture.' But Mr. Barbé also argues that James had invented the pot of gold story before he left Falkland; that, if James was guilty, 'the pretext had been framed' — the myth of the treasure had been concocted— 'long before their meeting in Falkland, and was held in readiness to use whenever circumstances required.' If so, then there is no room at all for the opinion that the uproar in the turret was accidental, but Mr. Barbé's meaning is that James thus forced a quarrel on Ruthven. For there was no captive with a pot of gold, nor can accident have caused the tragedy, if Ruthven lured James to Falkland with the false tale of the golden hoard. That tale, confided by James to Lennox on the ride to Perth, was either an invention of the King's — in which case James is the crafty conspirator whom Mr. Bruce, in 1602, did not believe him to be (as shall be shown); — or it is true that Ruthven brought James to Perth by the feigned story — in which case Ruthven is a conspirator. I reject, for reasons already given, the suggestion that Lennox perjured himself, when he swore that James told him about Ruthven's narrative as to the captive and his hoard. For these reasons alone, there is no room for the hypothesis of accident: either James or Ruthven was a deliberate traitor. If James invented the pot of gold, he is the plotter: if Ruthven did, Ruthven is guilty. There is no *via media*, no room for the theory of accident.

The *via media*, the hypothesis of accident, was suggested by Sir William Bowes, who wrote out his theory, in a letter to Sir John Stanhope, from Bradley, on September 2, 1600. Bowes had been English ambassador in Scotland, probably with the usual commission to side with the King's enemies, and especially (much as Elizabeth loathed her own Puritans) with the party of the Kirk. His coach had been used for the kidnapping of an English gentleman then with James, while the Governor of Berwick supplied a yacht, in case it seemed better to carry off the victim by sea (1599). Consequently Bowes was unpopular, and needed, and got, a guard of forty horsemen for his protection. He was no friend, as may be imagined, of the King.

Bowes had met Preston, whom James sent to Elizabeth with his version of the Gowrie affair. Bowes's theory of it all was this: James, the Master, 'and one other attending' (the man of the turret) were alone in a chamber of Gowrie House. Speech arose about the late Earl of Gowrie, Ruthven's father, whether by occasion of his portrait on the wall, or otherwise. 'The King angrily said he was a traitor, whereat the youth showing a grieved and expostulatory countenance, and haplie Scotlike words, the King, seeing himself alone and without weapon, cried Treason!' The Master placed his hand on James's mouth, and knelt to deprecate his anger, but Ramsay stabbed him as he knelt, and Gowrie was slain, Preston said, after Ramsay had made him drop his guard by crying that the King was murdered. The tale of the conspiracy was invented by James to cover the true state of the case.

This Bowes only puts forth as a working hypothesis. It breaks down on the King's narrative to Lennox about Ruthven's captive and hoard. It breaks down on 'one other attending' — the man in the turret — whatever else he may have been, he was no harmless attendant. It breaks down on the locked door between the King, and Lennox and Mar, which Bowes omits. It is ruined by Gowrie's repeated false assurances that the King had ridden away, which Bowes ignores.

The third hypothesis, the *via media*, is impossible. There was a deliberate plot on one side or the other. To make the theory of Bowes quite clear, his letter is appended to this section.

IX. CONTEMPORARY CLERICAL CRITICISM

The most resolute sceptics as to the guilt of the Ruthvens were the Edinburgh preachers. They were in constant opposition to the King, and the young Gowrie was their favourite nobleman. As to what occurred when the news of the tragedy reached Edinburgh, early on July 6, we have the narrative of Mr. Robert Bruce, then the leader of the Presbyterians. His own version is printed in the first volume of the Bannatyne Club Miscellany, and is embodied, with modifications, and without acknowledgment (as references to such sources were usually omitted at that period), in Calderwood's History.

It is thus better to follow Mr. Bruce's own account, as far as it goes.

The preachers heard the 'bruit,' or rumour of the tragedy, by nine o'clock on the morning of August 6. By ten o'clock arrived a letter from James to the Privy Council: the preachers were called first 'before the Council of the town,' and the King's epistle was read to them. '*It bore that his Majesty was delivered out of a peril*, and therefore that we should be commanded to go to our Kirks, convene our people, ring bells, and give God praises.' While the preachers were answering, the *Privy* Council sent for the Provost and some of the *Town* Council.

The preachers then went to deliberate in the East Kirk, and decided 'that we could not enter into the particular defence of' (the existence of?) 'the treason, seeing that the King was silent of the treason in his own letter, and the reports of courtiers varied among themselves.'

This is not easily intelligible. The letter from Falkland of which Nicholson gives an account on August 6, was exceedingly 'particular as to the treason.' It is my impression, based mainly on the Burgh Records quoted by Pitcairn, that the letter with full particulars cited by Nicholson, was written, more or less officially, by the notary, David Moysie, who was at Falkland, and that the King's letter was brief, only requiring thanksgiving to be offered. Yet Nicholson says that the letter with details (written by the King he seems to think), was meant for the preachers as well as for the Privy Council (cf. , note).

The preachers, in any case, were now brought before the Privy Council and desired, by Montrose, the Chancellor, to go to church, and thank God for the King's 'miraculous delivery from that vile treason.' They replied that 'they could not be certain of the treason,' but would speak of delivery 'from a great danger.' Or they would wait, and, when quite sure of the treason, would blaze it abroad.

‘They’ (the Council) ‘said it should be sufficient to read his Majesty’s letter.’

This appears to mean that the preachers would content the Lords by merely reading James’s letter aloud to the public.

‘We answered that we could not read his letter’ (aloud to the people?) ‘and doubt of the truth of it. It would be better to say generally, “if the *report* be true.”’

The preachers would have contented the Lords by merely reading James’s letter aloud to their congregations. But this they declined to do; they wished, in the pulpit, to evade the Royal *letter*, and merely to talk, conditionally, of the possible truth of the *report*, or ‘bruit.’ This appears to have been a *verbal* narrative brought by Graham of Balgonie, which seemed to vary from the long letter probably penned by Moysie. At this moment the Rev. David Lindsay, who had been at Falkland, and had heard James’s story from his own mouth, arrived. He, therefore, was sent to tell the tale publicly, at the Cross. The Council reported to James that the six Edinburgh preachers ‘would in no ways praise God for his delivery.’ In fact, they would only do so in general terms.

On August 12, James took the preachers to task. Bruce explained that they could thank, and on Sunday had thanked God for the King’s delivery, but could go no further into detail, ‘in respect we had no certainty.’ ‘Had you not my letter?’ asked the King. Bruce replied that the letter spoke only ‘of a danger in general.’ Yet the letter reported by Nicholson was ‘full and particular,’ but that letter the preachers seem to have regarded as unofficial. ‘Could not my Council inform you of the particulars?’ asked the King. The President (Fyvie, later Chancellor Dunfermline) said that they had assured the preachers of the certainty of the treason. On this Bruce replied that they had only a report, brought orally by Balgonie, and a letter by Moysie, an Edinburgh notary then at Falkland, and that these testimonies ‘fought so together that no man could have any certainty.’ The Secretary (Elphinstone, later Lord Balmerino) denied the discrepancies.

James now asked what was the preachers’ present opinion? They had heard the King himself, the Council, and Mar. Bruce replied that, as a minister, he was not fully persuaded. Four of the preachers adhered to their scepticism. Two, Hewat and Robertson, now professed conviction. The other four were forbidden to preach, under pain of death, and forbidden to come within ten miles of Edinburgh. They offered terms, but these were refused. The reason of James’s ferocity was that the devout regarded the preachers as the mouthpieces of God, and so, if *they* doubted his word, the King’s character would, to the godly, seem no better than that of a mendacious murderer.

From a modern point of view, the ministers, if doubtful, had a perfect right to be silent, and one of them, Hall, justly objected that he ought to wait for the verdict in the civil trial of the dead Ruthvens. We shall meet this Hall, and Hewatt (one of the two ministers who professed belief), in very strange circumstances later (). Here it is enough to have explained the King's motives for severity.

In September the recalcitrants came before the King at Stirling. All professed to be convinced (one, after inquiries in Fife), except Bruce. We learn what happened next from a letter of his to his wife. He had heard from one who had been at Craigengelt's execution (August 23), that Craigengelt had then confessed that Henderson had told him how he was placed by Gowrie in the turret. Bruce had sent to verify this. Moreover he would believe, if Henderson were hanged, and adhered to his deposition to the last: a pretty experiment! The Comptroller asked, 'Will you believe a condemned man better than the King and Council?' Mr. Bruce admitted that such was his theory of the Grammar of Assent. 'If Henderson die penitently I will trust him.' Later, as we shall see, this pleasing experiment was tried in another case, but, though the witness died penitently, and clinging to his final deposition, not one of the godly sceptics was convinced.

'But Henderson saved the King's life,' replied the Comptroller to Mr. Bruce.

'As to that I cannot tell,' said Mr. Bruce, and added that, if Henderson took the dagger from Ruthven, he deserved to die for not sheathing it in Ruthven's breast.

Henderson later, we know, withdrew his talk of his seizure of the dagger, which James had never admitted. James now said that he knew not what became of the dagger.

'Suppose,' said the Comptroller, 'Henderson goes back from that deposition?'

'Then his testimony is the worse,' said Mr. Bruce.

'Then it were better to keep him alive,' said the Comptroller; but Mr. Bruce insisted that Henderson would serve James best by dying penitently. James said that Bruce made him out a murderer. 'If I would have taken their lives, I had causes enough' (his meaning is unknown), 'I need not have hazarded myself so.' By the 'causes,' can James have meant Gowrie's attempts to entangle him in negotiations with the Pope? These were alleged by Mr. Galloway, in a sermon preached on August 11, in the open air, before the King and the populace of Edinburgh (see *infra*,).

Mar wondered that Bruce would not trust men who (like himself) heard the King cry, and saw the hand at his throat. Mr. Bruce said that Mar might believe, 'as he were there to hear and see.'

He was left to inform himself, but Calderwood says, that the story about Craigengelt's dying confession was untrue. Bruce had frankly given the lie to the King and Mar, though he remarked that he had never heard Mar and Lennox tell the tale ‘out of their own mouths.’ Mar later (September 24) most solemnly assured Mr. Bruce by letter, that the treason, ‘in respect of that I saw,’ was a certain fact. This he professed ‘before God in heaven.’ Meanwhile Mr. Hall was restored to his Edinburgh pulpit, and Mr. Bruce, after a visit to *Restalrig*, a place close to Edinburgh and Leith, went into banishment. If he stayed with the Laird of Restalrig, he had, as will presently appear, a strange choice in friends (p–167).

A later letter of Bruce’s now takes up the tale. In 1601, Bruce was in London, when Mar was there as James’s envoy. They met, and Bruce said he was content to abide by the verdict in the Gowrie trial of November 1600. What he boggled at, henceforward, was a public apology for his disbelief, an acceptance, from the pulpit, of the King’s veracity, as to the events. In London, Bruce had found that the Puritans, as to the guilt of Essex (which was flagrant), were in the same position as himself, regarding the guilt of Gowrie. But they bowed to the law, and so would he— ‘for the present.’

The Puritans in England would not *preach* that they were persuaded of the guilt of Essex, nor would Bruce preach his persuasion of the guilt of Gowrie, ‘from my knowledge and from my persuasion.’ He assured Mar ‘that it was not possible for any man to be fully persuaded, or to take on their conscience, but so many as saw and heard.’ However Bruce is self-contradictory. He *would* be persuaded, if Henderson swung for it, adhering to his statement. Such were Mr. Brace’s theories of evidence. He added that he was not fully persuaded that there was any hell to go to, yet probably he scrupled not to preach ‘tidings of damnation.’ He wanted to be more certain of Gowrie’s guilt, than he was that there is hell-fire. ‘Spiteful taunts’ followed, Mar’s repartee to the argument about hell being obvious. Bruce must have asserted the existence of hell, from the pulpit: though not ‘fully persuaded’ of hell. So why not assert the King’s innocence?

Bruce returned later to Scotland, and met the King in April 1602. Now, he said, according to Calderwood, that he was ‘resolved,’ that is, convinced. What convinced him? Mar’s oath. ‘How could *he* swear?’ asked James; ‘he neither saw nor heard’ — that is, what passed between James, the man in the turret, and the Master. ‘I cannot tell you how he could swear, but indeed he swore very deeply,’ said Bruce, and reported the oath, which must have been a fine example. James took Bruce’s preference of Mar’s oath to his own word very calmly. Bruce was troubled about the exact state of affairs between James and the Master. ‘Doubt ye of that?’ said the King, ‘then ye could not but count me a murderer.’ ‘It followeth not, if it please you, Sir,’ said Mr. Robert, ‘*for ye might have had some secret cause*.’

Strange ethics! A man may slay another, without incurring the guilt of murder, if he has ‘a secret cause.’ Bruce probably referred to the tattle about a love intrigue between Gowrie, or Ruthven, and the King’s wife. Even now, James kept his temper. He offered his whole story to Bruce for cross-examination. ‘Mr. Robert uttered his doubt where he found occasion. The King heard him gently, and with a constant countenance, which Mr. Robert admired.’ But Mr. Robert would not *preach* his belief: would not apologise from the pulpit. ‘I give it but a doubtsome trust,’ he said.

Again, on June 24, 1602, James invited cross-examination. Bruce asked how he could possibly know the direction of his Majesty’s intention when he ordered Ramsay to strike the Master. ‘I will give you leave to pose me’ (interrogate me), said James.

‘Had you a purpose to slay my Lord?’ — that is, Gowrie.

‘As I shall answer to God, I knew not that my Lord was slain, till I saw him in his last agony, and was very sorry, yea, prayed in my heart for the same.’

‘What say ye then concerning Mr. Alexander?’

‘I grant I was art and part in Mr. Alexander’s slaughter, for it was in my own defence.’

‘Why brought you not him to justice, seeing you should have God before your eyes?’

‘I had neither God nor the Devil, man, before my eyes, but my own defence.’

‘Here the King began to fret,’ and no wonder. He frankly said that ‘he was one time minded to have spared Mr. Alexander, but being moved for the time, the motion’ (passion) ‘prevailed.’ He swore, in answer to a question, that, in the morning, he loved the Master ‘as his brother.’

Bruce was now convinced that James left Falkland innocent of evil purpose, but, as he was in a passion and revengeful, while struggling with the Master, ‘he could not be innocent before God.’

Here we leave Mr. Bruce. He signed a declaration of belief in James’s narrative; public apologies in the pulpit he would not make. He was banished to Inverness, and was often annoyed and ‘put at,’ James reckoning him a firebrand.

The result, on the showing of the severe and hostile Calderwood, is that, in Bruce’s opinion, in June 1602, James was guiltless of a plot against the Ruthvens. The King’s crime was, not that strangely complicated project of a double murder, to be inferred from the Ruthven apology, but words spoken in the heat of blood. Betrayed, captured, taunted, insulted, struggling with a subject whom he had treated kindly, James cried to Ramsay ‘Strike low!’ He knew not the nature and extent of the conspiracy against him, he knew not what knocking that was at the door of the chamber, and he told Ramsay to strike; we have no assurance that the wounds were deadly.

This is how the matter now appeared to Mr. Bruce. The King swore very freely to the truth of his tale, and that influenced Bruce, but the King's candour as to what passed in his own mind, when he bade Ramsay strike Ruthven, is more convincing, to a modern critic, than his oaths. For some reason, Bruce's real point, that he was satisfied of the King's innocence of a plot, but not satisfied as regards his yielding to passion when attacked, is ignored by the advocates of the Ruthvens. Mr. Barbé observes: 'What slight success there ever was remained on Bruce's side, for, in one conference, he drew from the King the confession that he might have saved Ruthven's life, and brought him to justice.' That confession shows unexpected candour in James, but does not in the slightest degree implicate him in a conspiracy, and of a conspiracy even the rigid Bruce now acquitted the King. Mr. Pitcairn, at first a strong King's man, in an appendix to his third volume credits Bruce with the best of the argument. This he does, illogically, because the King never ceased to persecute Bruce, whom he thought a firebrand. However wicked this conduct of James may have been, it in no way affects the argument as to his guilt in the conspiracy. Of *that* Mr. Bruce acquitted the King. Calderwood's words (vi. 156) are 'Mr. Robert, by reason of his oaths, thought him innocent of any purpose that day in the morning to slay them. Yet because he confessed he had not God or justice before his eyes, but was in a heat and mind to revenge, he could not be innocent before God, and had great cause to repent, and to crave mercy for Christ's sake.' The thing is perfectly clear. Bruce acquitted James of the infamous plot against the Ruthvens. What, then, was the position of the Ruthvens, if the King was not the conspirator? Obviously they were guilty, whether James, at a given moment, was carried away by passion or not.

X. POPULAR CRITICISM OF THE DAY

Calderwood has preserved for us the objections taken by sceptics to the King's narrative. First, the improbability of a *murderous* conspiracy, by youths so full of promise and Presbyterianism as Gowrie and his brother. To Gowrie's previous performances we return later. The objection against a scheme of murder hardly applies to a plan for kidnapping a King who was severe against the Kirk.

The story of the pot of gold, and the King's desire to inspect it and the captive who bore it, personally, and the folly of thinking that one pot of gold could suffice to disturb the peace of the country, are next adversely criticised. We have already replied to the criticism (). The story was well adapted to entrap James VI.

The improbabilities of Ruthven's pleas for haste need not detain us: the King did not think them probable.

Next it was asked 'Why did James go alone upstairs with Ruthven?'

He may have had wine enough to beget valour, or, as he said, he may have believed that he was being followed by Erskine. The two reasons may well have combined.

'Why did not Gowrie provide better cheer, if forewarned?' (by Henderson?) it was asked.

To give the impression, we reply, that he was taken by surprise, and that the King came uninvited and unexpected.

'Why did Ruthven aim a dagger at James, and then hold parley?'

Because he wanted to frighten the King into being 'at his will.'

'How could Ruthven trust the King, with the armed man alone in the turret?'

What else could he do? He locked them in, and was, through the failure of the man, in a quandary which made clear reflection necessary — and impossible.

'It was strange that the man had not been trained in his task.'

If Oliphant is correctly reported, he had been trained, but 'fainted.'

'Why bind the King with a garter?'

In helpless pursuit of the forlorn idea of capturing him.

'Why execute the enterprise when the courtiers were passing the window?'

Ruthven could not have known that they were coming at that moment; it was Gowrie's ill-timed falsehoods, to the effect that the King had ridden away, which brought them there. Gowrie had not allowed for Henderson's failure.

‘How could the King struggle successfully with the stalwart Master?’

He fought for his life, and Ruthven probably even then did not wish to injure him bodily.

‘Why was not the Master made prisoner?’

James answered this question when ‘posed’ by Mr. Bruce. His blood was up, and he said ‘Strike!’

‘The Earl likewise might, after he was stricken, have been preserved alive.’

Perhaps — by miracle; he died instantly.

The discrepancies as to the dagger and the opening of the window we have already treated, also the locking and unlocking, or leaving unlocked, of the chamber door, giving on the dark staircase, after Ruthven’s last hurried entrance ().

There follow arguments, to be later considered, about the relations between James and the Earl previous to the tragedy, and a statement, with no authority cited, that James had written to Gowrie’s uncle, to meet him at Perth on August 5, implying that James had made up his mind to be there, and did not go on Ruthven’s sudden invitation.

‘The Earl and Cranstoun were alone with the four in the fatal chamber. The others who were wounded there went up after Gowrie’s death.’

It may be so, but the bulk of the evidence is on the other side.

‘It is reported’ that Henderson was eating an egg in the kitchen, and went into the town when the fray arose.

It is also denied, on oath, by Gowrie’s cook, who added that he was ‘content to be hanged,’ if it could be proved.

The Ruthven apologist (MS.) says that Henderson was waiting on the Lords who dined in the hall, and was *there* when *the King’s servant* brought the news that the King had ridden away.

‘The Master’s sword, after his death, was found rusted tight in his scabbard.’

The Master must have been a very untidy gallant. No authority is cited for the story.

The Murrays (who were well rewarded) were in Perth, ‘whether of set purpose let the reader judge.’

By all means let the reader judge.

The King knew Henderson (so the anonymous Goodman of Pitmillie said), but did not recognise the man in the turret. It was reported that Patrick Galloway, the king’s chaplain, induced Henderson to pretend to be the man in the turret.

As to the good man of Pitmillie, Calderwood did not even know his name. This is mere gossip.

Again, Calderwood, who offers these criticisms, does not ask why, of all concerned, Henderson was the only man that fled who had not been seen in connection with the fray and the tumult. If he was not the man of the turret, and if Andrew Ruthven, who also had ridden to Falkland, did not abscond, why did Henderson?

As to the man in the turret, if not a retainer of Ruthven, he was a minion of James, or there was no man at all. If there was no man at all, could James be so absurd as to invent him, on the off chance that somebody, anybody, would turn up, and claim to have been the man? That is, frankly, incredible. But if James managed to insert a man into the turret, he was not so silly as not to have his man ready to produce in evidence. Yet Henderson could not be produced, he had fled, and certainly had not come in by August 12, when he was proclaimed.

That James had introduced and suborned Henderson and that Henderson fled to give tone and colour to his narrative, is not among the most probable of conjectures. I do not find that this desperate hypothesis was put forward at the time. It could not be, for apologists averred (1) that Henderson was eating an egg in the kitchen: (2) that he was waiting on the gentlemen in the hall, at the moment when, by the desperate hypothesis, he was, by some machination of James, in the turret: (3) there is a third myth, a Perth tradition, that Henderson had been at Scone all day, and first heard the tragic news, when all was over, as, on his return, he crossed the bridge over Tay. As it is incredible that there was no man in the turret at all, and that James took the outside chance that somebody, anybody, would claim to be the man; the assailants of the King must offer a working hypothesis of this important actor in the drama. My own fancy can suggest none. Was he in four places at once, in the kitchen, in the hall, on the bridge, and in the turret? If he was in the kitchen, in the hall, or on the bridge, why did he instantly abscond? If *James* put him in the turret, why did he fly?

The King's word, I repeat, was the word that no man could rely on. But, among competing improbabilities, the story which was written on the night of August 5, and to which he adhered under Bruce's cross-examination, is infinitely the least improbable. The Master of Gray, an abominable character, not in Scotland when the events occurred, reported, *not* from Scotland, that Lennox had said that, if put on his oath, 'he could not say whether the practice proceeded from Gowrie or the King.' (Sept 30, 1600) The Master of Gray wrote from Chillingham, on the English side of the Border, where he was playing the spy for Cecil. Often he played the double spy, for England and for Rome. Lennox may well have been puzzled, he may have said so, but the report rests on the evidence of one who did not hear his words, who wished to flatter the scepticism of James's English enemies, and whose character (though on one point he is unjustly accused) reeks with infamy.

That of James does not precisely ‘smell sweet and blossom in the dust.’ But if the question arises, whether a man of James’s position, age, and temperament, or whether a young man, with the antecedents which we are about to describe, was the more likely to embark on a complicated and dangerous plot — in James’s case involving two murders at inestimable personal risk — it is not unnatural to think that the young man is the more likely to ‘have the wyte of it.’

XI. THE KING AND THE RUTHVENS

Having criticised the contemporary criticism of the Gowrie affair, we must look back, and examine the nature of Gowrie's ancestral and personal relations with James before the day of calamity. There were grounds enough for hatred between the King and the Earl, whether such hatred existed or not, in a kind of hereditary feud, and in political differences. As against James's grandmother, Mary of Guise, the grandfather of Gowrie, Lord Ruthven, had early joined the Reformers, who opposed her in arms. Later, in 1566, it was Gowrie's grandfather who took the leading part in the murder of Riccio. He fled to England, and there died soon after his exploit, beholding, it was said, a vision of angels. His son, Gowrie's father (also one of the Riccio murderers), when Mary was imprisoned in Loch Leven (June 1567) was in charge of her, but was removed, 'as he began to show great favour to her, and gave her intelligence.' Mary herself, through the narrative of Nau, her secretary, declares that Ruthven (then a married man) persecuted her by his lust. He aided Lindsay in extorting her abdication at Loch Leven. Such was his record as regards Mary: James too had little reason to love him.

The early reign of James in Scotland was a series of Court revolutions, all of the same sort. James was always either, unwillingly, under nobles who were allies of Elizabeth, and who used the Kirk as their instrument, or under vicious favourites who delivered him from these influences. When Morton fell in 1581, the King was under D'Aubigny (Lennox), a false Protestant and secret Catholic intriguer, and Arran (Captain James Stewart), a free lance, and, in religion, an Indifferent. Lennox entangled James in relations with the Guises and Catholic Powers; Gowrie, and the Protestant nobles, being threatened by Arran and Lennox, captured James, in an insulting manner, at Gowrie's castle of Ruthven. He came as a guest, for hunting; he remained a prisoner. (1582.) The Kirk approved and triumphed: James waited and dissembled, while Gowrie was at the head of the Government. In June 1583, James, by a sudden flight to St. Andrews Castle, where his friends surrounded him, shook himself free of Gowrie, who, however, secured a pardon for his share in James's capture, in the 'Raid of Ruthven' of 1582. Lennox being dead, the masterful and unscrupulous Arran now again ruled the King, and a new Lennox came from France, the Duke of Lennox who was present at the tragedy of August 5, 1600.

The Lords who had lost power by James's escape to St. Andrews now conspired anew. Angus, Mar, and others were to march on Stirling, Gowrie was waiting at Dundee. (April 1584) Arran knew of the plot, and sent Colonel Stewart to arrest Gowrie. After holding his house against Stewart's men, the Earl was taken and carried to Edinburgh. The other Lords, his allies, failed and fled. Gowrie was brought to trial. He had a pardon for the Raid of Ruthven, he had done nothing ostensible in the recent rising, which followed his capture at Dundee. Nevertheless he was tried, condemned, executed, and forfeited. There exists a manuscript of the date, which, at least, shows what Gowrie's friends thought of the method by which his conviction was procured. Arran and Sir Robert Melville, it is said, visited him in prison, and advised him to make his peace with James. How was that to be done? Gowrie entreated for the kind offices of Melville and Arran. They advised him to write to the King confessing that he had been in several conspiracies against his person which he could reveal in a private interview. 'I should confess an untruth,' said Gowrie, 'and frame my own indictment.'

The letter, the others urged, being general, would move the King's curiosity: he would grant an interview, at which Gowrie might say that the letter was only an expedient to procure a chance of stating his own case.

Gowrie, naturally, rejected so perilous a practice.

'You *must* confess the foreknowledge of these things,' said Arran, 'or you must die.'

Gowrie replied that, if assured of his life, he would take the advice. Arran gave his word of honour that Gowrie should be safe. He wrote the letter, he received no answer, but was sent to Stirling. He was tried, nothing was proved against him, and Arran produced his letter before the Court. Gowrie was called, confessed to his handwriting, and told the tale of Arran's treachery, which he repeated to the people from the scaffold.

This is, briefly, the statement of a newsletter to England, written, as usual, against the Government, and in the Protestant interest. A manuscript in the British Museum gives a somewhat different version. One charge against Gowrie, we learn, was that of treasonable intercommuning with Hume of Godscroft, an envoy of the Earl of Angus, who, before Gowrie's arrest, was arranging a conspiracy. This charge was perfectly true. Godscroft, in his History of the Douglases (ii. 317–318), describes the circumstances, and mentions the very gallery whose door resisted Lennox and Mar on August 5, 1600. Godscroft rode from the Earl of Angus to Gowrie in his house at Perth. 'Looking very pitifully upon his gallery, where we were walking at that time, which he had but newly built and decored with pictures, he brake out into these words, having first fetched a deep sigh. "*Cousin*" says he, "*is there no remedy*?

Et impius haec tam culta novalia miles habebit? *Barbarus has segetes*?" Whereupon Godscroft was persuaded of his sincerity, and at his return persuaded the Earl of Angus thereof also.' So the plot went on, Gowrie pretending that he meant to leave the country, says his accomplice, Godscroft, while both the Court and the conspirators were uncertain as to his trimming intentions. He trimmed too long; he was taken, the plot exploded and failed. Gowrie was thus within the danger of the law, for treasonably concealing foreknowledge of the conspiracy.

According to the British Museum MS., Gowrie now told the jury that he was being accused on the strength of his own letter, treacherously extorted under promise of life, by Montrose, Doune, Maitland, Melville, Colonel Stewart, and the Captain of Dumbarton, *not* by Arran. In Gowrie's letter of confession, to the King, as printed by Spottiswoode, he does not mention Godscroft, but another intriguer, Erskine. However, in this letter he certainly confesses his concern with the conspiracy. But, says the MS., the nobles charged by Gowrie with having betrayed him under promise of life denied the accusations on oath. Gowrie himself, according to another copy of the MS., denied knowing Hume of Godscroft; if he did, he spoke untruly, *teste* Godscroft.

However matters really stood, the Earl's friends, at all events, believed that he had been most cruelly and shamefully betrayed to the death, and, as the King was now eighteen, they would not hold him guiltless.

These were not the only wrongs of the Ruthvens. While the power of Arran lasted (and it was, on the whole, welcome to James, though he had moments of revolt), the family of Ruthven was persecuted. The widow of Gowrie was a daughter (see Appendix A) of Henry Stewart, Lord Methven, who, as a young man, had married Margaret, sister of Henry VIII, widow of James IV, and divorced from the Earl of Angus. As this lady, our Gowrie's mother, knelt to implore the pity of James in the street after her Lord's death, Arran pushed her aside, and threw her down. He received the Earl's forfeited estate and castle of Dirleton, near North Berwick.

In October 1585, Arran fell, in his turn; Angus, Mar, and others drove him into retirement. James acquiesced; his relations with the house of Mar remained most friendly. The house of Ruthven was now restored to its lands and dignities, in 1586, the new Earl being James, who died in early youth. He was succeeded by his brother, the Gowrie of our tragedy, who was born about 1577. He had many sisters; the eldest, Mary, married the Earl of Atholl, a Stewart, in January 1580. Lady Gowrie was thus mother-in-law of the Earl of Atholl, who died at Gowrie House in August 1594. Her grand-daughter, Dorothea (daughter of Atholl and Mary Ruthven, sister of our Gowrie), in 1604 married that young Tullibardine who was in Perth at the tragedy of August 5, 1600. Lady Atholl is said to have opposed the marriage. Another sister of Gowrie, Sophia, married (before 1600, she was dead by that time) the Duke of Lennox who was at the slaughter of the Ruthvens. Another sister, Beatrix, was Maid of Honour to James's Queen, and later married Hume of Cowdenknowes; hence come the Earls of Home. Gowrie had two younger brothers, Patrick and William, who fled to England from his castle of Dirleton, the day after the tragedy, and were forfeited and persecuted by James; Patrick was long imprisoned in the Tower.

The new Earl, John, the victim of 1600, does not come into public notice till 1592, when he was elected Provost of Perth. He went to Edinburgh University; his governor was the respected Mr. Rollock. Here a curious fact occurs. On August 12, 1593, young Gowrie read his thesis for his Master's degree. Three weeks earlier, on July 24, the wild Francis Stewart, Earl of Bothwell, had captured, in Holyrood, his King, who was half dressed and untrussed. James at the time was suspected of favouring the Catholic Earls of the North, Huntly, Errol, and a new unpresbyterian Angus. The King was on ill terms with the Kirk; England had secretly abetted Bothwell; the clan of Stewart, including Lennox, lent aid and countenance, *but Bothwell's success was due to Gowrie's mother*, the widow of the decapitated Earl, and to his sister, Lady Atholl. Bothwell entered Lady Gowrie's house, adjoining the palace, spent the night there, stole into Holyrood by a passage-way left open by Lady Atholl, and appeared before the King, sword in hand, when his Majesty was half dressed. Meanwhile our Gowrie, reading for his thesis, may not have been uninterested in the plot of his mother and sister. This was, in a way, the second successful Ruthven plot to seize the King; the first was the Raid of Ruthven. The new success was not enduring. James shook off Bothwell in September 1593, and, in October, Gowrie's brother-in-law Atholl, with our Gowrie himself, entered into alliance with Bothwell against King James, and offered their services to Queen Elizabeth.

James moved out against Atholl, Gowrie, and the Master of Montrose, who were at Castle Doune, intending to join hands with Bothwell, and seize the King. But Bothwell found the plan impracticable: Atholl fled; Gowrie and the Master of Montrose were pursued and taken. No harm was done to them: their excuses were accepted, but young Gowrie and Atholl continued to conspire. In April, 1594, Atholl, signing for himself and Gowrie, and Bothwell, signing for his associates, wrote a manifesto to the Kirk. They were in arms, they said, for Protestant purposes, and wished commissioners from among the preachers to attend them, and watch their proceedings. Bothwell then took action, he made a demonstration in arms against Edinburgh, but the forces of Atholl and Gowrie did not arrive and Bothwell retreated. Atholl was threatened for this affair, but pardoned by the King, and died in August.

In the same month Gowrie informed the Town Council of Perth that he was going to study abroad. They retained him in the position of Provost. He went, with his tutor, Mr. Rhynd, to Padua, an university where Protestantism was protected by the toleration of the Republic of Venice, and where there was an Anglo-Scottish 'Nation' among the students. In 'The Return from Parnassus,' a satirical play of 1601, we find Gullio, the admirer of Shakespeare, professing to have studied at Padua. Gowrie is said to have been elected Rector, but I cannot find his name in the lists. He does appear in the roll of Scottish scholars, some of them characterised (unlike the English scholars) by personal marks. Most have scars on the face or hand; Archibald Douglas has a scar on the brow from left to right. James Lindsay, of Gowrie's year (1596–1597), has also a scar on his brow. Next him is Andrew Keith, with a scar on his right hand, and then *Dominus Ioannes Ruthuen, Scotus, cum signo albo in mento,* 'with a white mark on his chin.' Then we have his luckless tutor, Mr. Rhynd, who was tortured, *Scotus cum ledigine super facie*. Robert Ker of Newbattle ('Kerrus de Heubattel') is another of Gowrie's college companions. All were students of law. Magic was not compulsory at Padua, though Gowrie was said to have studied that art.

Concerning Gowrie's behaviour at Padua but a single circumstance is known. Probably through one of his fellow-students, Douglas, Ker, Keith, Lindsay or another, the report reached Scotland that the young Earl had left in Padua 'a strange relique,' an emblematic figure emblazoned; and had made, on the subject, a singular remark. The emblematic figure represented 'a blackamoor reaching at a crown with a sword, in a stretched posture:' the remark of Gowrie, 'the Earl's own *mot*,' was to the effect that the emblem displayed, *in umbra*, or foreshadowed, what was to be done *in facto*. This emblem was secured at Padua, in 1609, by Sir Robert Douglas, who had heard of it in Scotland, and it was sent to King James. If such ideas were in Gowrie's mind, he showed no signs of them in an early correspondence with the King. In 1595, James wrote 'a most loving letter' to Gowrie; the Earl replied in a tone of gratitude. At the same time Gowrie wrote to a preacher in Perth, extolling the conduct of an English fanatic, who had thrown down and trampled on the Host, at Rome. He hoped, he said, when he returned to Scotland, 'to amend whatever is amiss for lack of my presence.' Nevertheless, on December 25, 1598, Nicholson informed Cecil that Gowrie had been converted to Catholicism. In the Venice despatches and Vatican transcripts I find no corroboration. Gowrie appears to have visited Rome; the Ruthven apologist declares that he was there 'in danger for his religion.' Galloway, on August 11, 1600, in presence of the King and the people of Edinburgh, vowed that Gowrie, since his return from Italy, had laboured to make James 'revolt from Religion, at least in inward sincerity, to entertain purpose with the Pope, and he himself promised to furnish intelligence.'

If so, Gowrie was, indeed, 'a deep dissimulate hypocrite.'

Galloway's informant must have been the King. If Gowrie did or said anything to colour the story, it may have been for the purpose of discovering, by pretending to approve of them, these intrigues with Rome, of which James was constantly being accused.

A new complexity is added here, by a list of Scottish Catholic nobles, ready to join an invading Spanish force, which the Earl of Bothwell handed in to Philip III. of Spain, at a date not absolutely certain. At a time conjectured at by Major Hume, as 1600, Bothwell laid before the Spanish ministry a scheme for an invasion of Scotland. He made another more elaborate proposal at a date which, to all seeming, was July 1601. In the appended list of Scottish Catholic nobles appear the names of the Earl of Gowrie, and of 'Baron Rastellerse,' that is, Logan of Restalrig. But, in 1601, there was no Earl of Gowrie; the title was extinct, the lands were forfeited, and Gowrie's natural heir, William Ruthven, his brother, was a poor student at Cambridge. Could Bothwell refer to him, who was no Catholic? Can he have handed in (in 1601) an earlier list of 1600, without deleting the name of the dead Gowrie? As to Gowrie's real creed, Bothwell must have known the truth, through Home, a reluctant convert to Presbyterianism, who went from Paris to Brussels to meet Bothwell, leaving Gowrie in Paris, just before Home and Gowrie openly, and, as it was said, Bothwell secretly, returned to Scotland in April 1600. Was the Gowrie conspiracy a Bothwellian plot?

We know little more about Gowrie, after his letters of 1595, till, on August 18, 1599, Colville reports to Cecil that the party of the Kirk (who were now without a leader among the greater nobles) intend to summon home the Earl. He is said to have stayed for three months at Geneva with Beza, the famous reformer, who was devoted to him. He was in Paris, in February and March 1600. The English ambassador, Neville, recommended Gowrie to Cecil, as 'a man of whom there may be exceeding good use made.' Elizabeth and Cecil were then on the worst terms with James. At Paris, Gowrie would meet Lord Home, who, as we have said and shall prove in a later connection, had an interview with the exiled Bothwell, still wandering, plotting and threatening descents on Scotland ().

On April 3, Gowrie was in London. He was very well received; 'a cabinet of plate,' it is said, was given to him by Elizabeth; what else passed we do not know. In May Gowrie returned to Scotland, and rode into Edinburgh among a cavalcade of his friends. According to Sir John Carey, writing to Cecil, from

Berwick, on May 29, James displayed jealousy of Gowrie, 'giving him many jests and pretty taunts,' on his reception by Elizabeth, and 'marvelling that the ministers met him not.' Calderwood adds a rumour that James, talking of Gowrie's entry to Edinburgh, said, 'there were more with his father when he went to the scaffold.' Again, as the Earl leaned on the King's chair at breakfast, James talked of dogs and hawks, and made an allusion to the death of Riccio, in which Gowrie's father and grandfather took part.

These are rumours; it is certain that the King (June 20) gave Gowrie a year's respite from pursuit of his creditors, to whom he was in debt for moneys owed to him by the Crown, expenditure by the late Earl of Gowrie when in power (1583).

It is also certain that Gowrie opposed the King's demands for money, in a convention of June 21. But so did Lord President Fyvie, who never ceased to be James's trusted minister, and later, Chancellor, under the title of Earl of Dunfermline. Calderwood reports that, after Gowrie's speech, Sir David Murray said, 'Yonder is an unhappy man; they are but seeking occasion of his death, which now he has given.' This is absurd: Fyvie and the Laird of Easter Wemyss opposed the King as stoutly, and no harm followed to them; Fyvie rising steadily (and he had opposed the King yet more sturdily before) to the highest official position.

Calderwood adds a silly tale of Dr. Herries. Beatrix Ruthven laughed at his lame leg; he looked in her palm, and predicted a great disaster. The same anecdote, with, of course, another subject, is told of Gowrie's own prediction that a certain man would come to be hanged, which was fulfilled. Gowrie had been at Perth, before the convention at Holyrood of June 21. To Perth he returned; thence, some time in July (about the 20th), he went to his castle of Strabran, in Atholl, to hunt. Whether his brother the Master remained with him continuously till the Earl's return to Perth on Saturday, August 2, I know not how to ascertain. If there is anything genuine in the plot-letters produced eight years later, the Master once or twice visited Edinburgh in July, but that may have been before going to Strabran.

Concerning the Master, a romantic story of unknown source, but certainly never alluded to in the surviving gossip of the day, was published, late in the eighteenth century, by Lord Hailes. 'A report is handed down that Lord *Gowrie's* brother received from the Queen a ribbon which she had got from the King, that *Mr. Alexander* went into the King's garden at Falkland on a sultry hot day, and lay down in a shade, and fell asleep. His breast being open, the King passed that way and discovered part of the ribbon about his neck below his cravat, upon which he made quick haste into the palace, which was observed by one of the Queen's ladies who passed the same way. She instantly took the ribbon from his neck, went a near way to the Queen's closet, where she found her Majesty at her toilet, whom she requested to lay the ribbon in a drawer.' James entered, and asked to be shown the ribbon. The Queen produced it, and James retired, muttering, 'Devil tak' me, but like is an ill mark.'

Legend does not say when, or in what year this occurred. But the fancy of authors has identified the Queen's lady with Beatrix Ruthven, and has added that the Master, in disgrace (though undetected), retired with Gowrie to Strabane, or Strabran. History has no concern with such fables. It is certain, however, or at least contemporary letters aver, that Queen Anne of Denmark was grieved and angered by the slaying of the Gowries. On October 21, 1600, Carey, writing to Cecil from Woodrington, mentions this, and the tattle to the effect that, as the Queen is about to have a child (Charles I.), 'she shall be kept as prisoner ever after.' Was the Master supposed to be father of the Queen's child? Carey goes on, 'There is a letter found with a bracelet in it, sent from the Queen to the Earl of Gowrie, to persuade him to leave his country life and come to Court, assuring him that he should enjoy any contents that Court could afford.' Can some amorous promise underlie this, as in the case of Mr. Pickwick's letter to Mrs. Bardell, about the warming-pan? 'This letter the King hath,' says Carey. Was it with Gowrie, not the Master, that the Queen was in love? She was very fond of Beatrix Ruthven, and would disbelieve in the guilt of her brothers; hence these tears and that anger of the Queen.

But James also, says Calderwood, was as anxious as Carey declares that the Queen was, to bring Gowrie to Falkland. 'When the Earl was in Strabran, fifteen days before the fact, the King wrote sundry letters to the Earl, desiring him to come and hunt with him in the wood of Falkland; which letters were found in my Lord's pocket, at his death, as is reported, but were destroyed.'

So James was not jealous; both he and the Queen were inviting Gowrie to their country house, the Queen adding the gift of a bracelet. She may have worked it herself, like the bracelet which Queen Mary is said to have sent to Bothwell.

All this is the idlest gossip. But it is certain that, on one occasion, at the end of July, 'close letters' were sent from the Court at Edinburgh to Atholl and Gowrie; and, later, to Inchaffray and the Master, the first three are in Bothwell's list of Catholics ready to meet the Spanish invaders. The fact of the letters appears from the Treasurer's accounts, where the money paid to the boy who carried the letters is recorded, without dates of the days of the month. The boy got 33 shillings, Scots, for the journey from Edinburgh to the Earls of Gowrie and Atholl; 24 for the other two, which he carried from Falkland. Craigengelt, in his deposition, 'denies that during my Lord's being in Strabran, neither yet in

Perth, after his coming from Strabran, he knew any man or page to come from Court to my Lord, or that he commanded to give them any meat or drink.'

No conclusion as to James's guilt can be drawn, either from the fact that he wrote to Atholl, Inchaffray, the Master, and Gowrie at the end of July, or from the circumstance that Craigengelt professed to know nothing about any messenger. James might write to ask the Earl to hunt, we cannot guess what he had to say, at the same time, to Atholl or Inchaffray or the Master. He may even have written about the affair of the Abbey of Scone, if it is true that the Master wished to get it from his brother. We really cannot infer that, as the Ruthvens would not come and be killed, when invited, at Falkland, James went to kill them at Perth. Even if he summoned the Master for August 5, intending to make it appear that the Master had asked him to come to Perth, the Master need not have arrived before seven in the morning, when the King went and hunted for four hours. What conceivable reason had the Master, if innocent, for leaving Perth at 4 a.m. and visiting his sovereign at seven in the morning?

As to the coming of the Gowries to Perth from Strabran or Strabane before the tragedy, we only know what Craigengelt stated. His language is not lucid.

'Depones that, my Lords being in Strabrand, Alexander Ruthven' (a kinsman) 'came from Dunkeld to my Lord. And that upon Friday (August 1) my Lord commanded Captain Ruthven to ride, and tell my Lady' (Gowrie's mother), 'that he was to come, and Captain Ruthven met my Lord at the ferry-boat, and rode back to Dunkeld with my Lord, where he' (Gowrie) 'having supped, returned to his bed at Trochene, the deponer being in his company.'

Where, at the end of July, was Lady Gowrie? Was she within a day's ride of her sons? Was she at Perth? We know that she was at Dirleton Castle, near North Berwick, on August 6. Had she left the neighbourhood of Perth between the 1st and 5th of August? Captain Ruthven seems to have ridden to Lady Gowrie, and back again to Dunkeld with Gowrie. If so (and I can make no other sense of it), she was in Perthshire on August 1, and went at once to Dirleton. Did she keep out of the way of the performances of August 5?

It is curious that no apologist for Gowrie, as far as I have observed, makes any remark on this perplexing affair of 'my Lady.' We know that she had once already set a successful trap for the King. He had not punished her; he took two of her daughters, Barbara and Beatrix, into his household; and restored to Gowrie his inheritance of the lands of Scone, which, as we know, had been held by his father. He had written a loving letter to Gowrie at Padua, after the young man had for many months been conspiring against him with his most dangerous enemy, the wild Earl of Bothwell.

On the morning of the fatal August 5, Gowrie went to sermon. What else he did, we learn from John Moncrieff, who was the Earl’s cautioner, or guarantee, for a large sum due by him to one Robert Jolly. He was also brother of Hew Moncrieff, who fled after having been with Gowrie in arms, against Herries, Ramsay, and Erskine. Both Moncrieffs, says John, were puzzled when they found that the Master had ridden from Perth so early in the morning. Gowrie, says Moncrieff, did not attend the Town Council meeting after church; he excused himself on account of private affairs. He also sent away George Hay who was with him on business when Henderson arrived from Falkland, saying that he had other engagements. For the same reason, he, at first, declined to do a piece of business with Moncrieff, who dined with him and two other gentlemen. ‘He made him to misknow all things,’ that is affected to take no notice, when Andrew Ruthven came in, and ‘rounded to him’ (whispered to him) about the King’s approach. Then the Master entered, and Gowrie went out to meet the King.

The rest we know, as far as evidence exists.

We now have all the essential facts which rest on fairly good evidence, and we ask, did the Ruthvens lay a plot for the King, or did the King weave a web to catch the Ruthvens? Looking first at character and probable motives, we dismiss the gossip about the amorous Queen and the jealous King. The tatlers did not know whether to select Gowrie or the Master as the object of the Queen’s passion, or whether to allege that she had a polyandrous affection for both at once. The letters of the age hint at no such amour till after the tragedy, when tales of the *liaison* of Anne of Denmark with the elder or younger Ruthven, or both, arose as a myth to account for the events. The Queen, no doubt, was deeply grieved in a womanly way for the sake of her two maidens, Beatrix and Barbara Ruthven. Her Majesty, also in a womanly way, had a running feud with Mar and the whole house of Erskine. To Mar, certainly one of the few men of honour as well as of rank in Scotland, James had entrusted his son, Prince Henry; the care of the heir to the Crown was a kind of hereditary charge of the Erskines. The Queen had already, in her resentment at not having the custody of her son, engaged in one dangerous plot against Mar; she made another quarrel on this point at the time (1603) when the King succeeded to the crown of England. Now Mar was present at the Gowrie tragedy, and his cousin, Sir Thomas Erskine, took part in the deeds. Hating the Erskines, devoted to the Ruthven ladies, and always feebly in opposition to her husband, the Queen, no doubt, paraded her grief, her scepticism, and her resentment. This was quite in keeping with her character, and this conduct lent colour to the myth that she loved Gowrie, or the Master, or both, *par amours*. The subject is good for a ballad or a novel, but history has nothing to make with the legend on which Mr. G. P. R.

James based a romance, and Mr. Pinkerton a theory.

Leaving fable for fact, what motives had James for killing both the Ruthvens? He had dropped the hereditary feud, and had taken no measures against the young Earl to punish his conspiracies with Bothwell in 1593–1594. Of Gowrie, on his return to Scotland in May, he may have entertained some jealousy. The Earl had been for months in Paris, caressed by the English ambassador, and probably, as we have seen, in touch with the exiled and ceaselessly conspiring Bothwell. In London the Earl had been well received by Elizabeth, and by Lord Willoughby, who, a year earlier, as Governor of Berwick, had insulted James by kidnapping, close to Edinburgh, an English gentleman, Ashfield, on a visit to the King's Court. Guevara, a cousin of Lord Willoughby, lured Ashfield into the coach of the English envoy Bowes, and drove him to the frontier. Lord Willoughby had a swift yacht lying off Leith, in case it was thought better to abduct Ashfield by sea. This is an example of English insolence to the Scottish King — also of English kidnapping — and Lord Willoughby, the manager, had made friends with Gowrie in England.

Thus James, who was then on the worst terms, short of open war, with England, may have suspected and disliked the Earl, who had once already put himself at the service of Elizabeth, and might do so again. In the April of 1600, rumours of a conspiracy by Archibald Douglas, the infamous traitor; Douglas of Spot, one of Morton's brood, and John Colville — who, with Bothwell and, later, independently, had caught James, had tried to catch him, and proposed to Essex to catch him again, — were afloat. Colville was in Paris at the same time as Gowrie; Bothwell was reported to have come secretly to Scotland in April or May, and this combination of facts or rumours may have aroused the King's mistrust. Again, the Kirk was restive; the preachers, in need of a leader, were said by Colville to have summoned Gowrie home. Moreover there were persons about James — for example, Colonel Stewart — who had reason to dread the Earl's vengeance for his father. The Ruthven Apologist mentions this fact, and the predilection of the Kirk for Gowrie, among the motives for destroying him.

Once more there are hints, very vague, that, in 1593, Bothwell aimed at changing the dynasty. The fable that Gowrie was a maternal grandson of Margaret Tudor, widow of James IV, by Henry Stewart, Lord Methven, her third husband, and that Gowrie was thus a candidate for the succession to the English throne, perhaps also for the hand of Arabella Stuart, may conceivably have existed. (Compare Appendix A.) Again, Gowrie had sided with the burgesses and minor barons, as against the nobles, by refusing a grant of money to James, in the convention of June 1600, and James owed money to Gowrie, as he did to most people. But we have already seen that an exemption had been granted to Gowrie for a year from pursuit of creditors, as far, that is, as regarded his *father's* debts (80,000*l.* Scots), (June 20, 1600). The College of Justice refused to grant any new legal summonses of creditors against Gowrie, and suspended all that were extant.

Mr. Barbé accuses the King of 'utter and unblushing disregard for common truth and common honesty.' Be this as it may, the exemption granted to Gowrie was not regarded by his father's creditors as extending to his mother, after his dishonoured death. On November 1, 1600, Lady Gowrie implored Elphinstone, the Secretary, to bring her suit for relief before the King. The security for these debts was on her 'conjunct fee lands,' and creditors, because, I suppose, the Gowrie estates were about to be forfeited, pressed Lady Gowrie, who, of course, had no exemption. We know nothing as to the success of Lady Gowrie's petition, but we have seen that her daughters married very well. I presume that Gowrie, not his mother, had previously paid interest on the debts, 'he had already paid many sums of money.' James had already restored to Gowrie the valuable lands of Scone.

However, taking things as the King's adversaries regard them, the cumulative effect of these several grudges (and of the mystery of Gowrie's Catholicism) would urge James to lay his very subtle plot. He would secretly call young Ruthven to Falkland by six in the morning of August 5, he would make it appear that Ruthven had invited *him* to Perth, he would lure the youth to a turret, managing to be locked in with him and an armed man; he would post Ramsay below the turret window, and warn him to run up the dark staircase at the King's cry of treason. By the locked door he would exclude Lennox and Mar, while his minions would first delay Gowrie's approach, by the narrow stairs, and then permit him to enter with only one companion, Cranstoun. He would cause a report of his own departure to be circulated, exactly at the right moment to bring Gowrie under the turret window, and within reach of his cries. This plot requires the minutest punctuality, everything must occur at the right moment, and all would have been defeated had Gowrie told the truth about the King's departure, or even asked 'Where is the King's horse?' Or Gowrie might have stood in the streets of Perth, and summoned his burgesses in arms. The King and the courtiers, with their dead man, would have been beleaguered, without provisions, in Gowrie's house. Was James the man, on the strength of the grudges which we have carefully enumerated, to risk himself, unarmed, in this situation? As to how he managed to have the door locked, so as to exclude the majority of his suite, who can conjecture? How, again, did he induce Gowrie to aver, and that after making inquiry, that he *had* ridden homewards?

I cannot believe that any sane man or monarch, from the motives specified, would or could have laid, and that successfully, the plot attributed to the King.

Turning to Gowrie, we find that his grudges against James may have been deep and many. If revengeful, he had the treacherous method of his father's conviction, and the insults to his mother, to punish. For a boy of seventeen he had already attempted a good deal, in 1593–1594. His mother had set him an example of King-catching, and it looks as if his mother had been near him in Perth, while he was at Strabane. If ambitious, and devoted to Elizabeth and England (as he had been), Gowrie had motives for a new Raid of Ruthven, the unceasing desire of the English Government. He might, if successful, head a new administration resting on the support of England and the Kirk. Such a change was due in the natural course of things. Or, quite the reverse, if a secret Catholic he might hand the King over to Bothwell.

Thus Gowrie may well have wished to revenge his father; his mother had once already helped to betray James to an attack of the most insulting nature; he himself was strong for the Kirk, over which James was playing the despot; *or*, he desired toleration for Catholics; he had been well received in England, where all such plots — their name was legion — had always been fostered; he was very young, and he risked everything. Only his method was new — that of strict secrecy. He had previously spoken to Mr. Cowper, minister of Perth, in a general way, about the failure of plots for lack of deep secrecy, and through the admission of too many confederates. Cowper told this to Spottiswoode, at Falkland. Mr. Rhynd, Gowrie's tutor, told Cowper and the Comptroller, 'unrequired' (not under torture, nor in answer to a question under examination), that Gowrie, when abroad, several times said that 'he was not a wise man that, having the execution of a high and dangerous purpose, communicated the same to any but himself.'

As to this secrecy, we must remember that Gowrie was very young; that in Italy he may have heard or read of romantic and crafty plots; and may long have dreamed (as Robert Oliphant's reported allegation declared) of some such scheme as that in which he failed. We must remember, too, that James's own account at least suggests a plan quite feasible. To bring James to Gowrie House, early in the day, when the townsmen were at kirk, to bring him with only three or four attendants, then to isolate him and carry him off, was far from impossible; they might hurry him, disguised, to Dirleton, a castle garrisoned and provisioned, according to Carey, who reports the version of Gowrie's friends. A Scottish judge, Gibson (the ancestor of Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael), was later carried from Leith Sands across the Border, with perfect success. A fault of the plan was that, once undertaken, it could not be dropped, even though James came late and well attended. Ruthven could not tell the King that his story about a captive and a pot of gold was false. To do that would have subjected him to a charge of treason. He could have only one motive for thus deceiving his Majesty. Thus the plot *had* to go on, even under circumstances very unfavourable. There was no place for repentance.

Thus considered, the conspiracy looks like the plot of a romance, not without meritorious points, but painfully amateurish.

As proof of Gowrie's guilt, the evidence, I think, distinctly proves that he intentionally concealed from those about him the ride of his brother, Henderson, and Andrew Ruthven to Perth; that he concealed his knowledge, derived from Henderson, of the King's approach; and that Ruthven concealed from Craigengelt, on his return, his long ride to Falkland, saying that he had been on 'an errand not far off.' Moncrieff swore that Henderson gave him a similar answer. Asked by Moncrieff where he had been, he said 'he had been two or three miles above the town.' Henderson corroborated Moncrieff's evidence on this point. There can have been no innocent motive for all this secrecy. It would have been natural for Gowrie to order luncheon for the King to be prepared, as soon as Henderson arrived.

Finally, the Earl's assertions that James had ridden away, assertions repeated after he had gone upstairs to inquire and make sure, are absolutely incompatible with innocence. They could have only one motive, to induce the courtiers to ride off and leave the King in his hands.

What was to happen next? Who can guess at the plot of such a plotter? It is perhaps least improbable that the King was to be conveyed secretly, by sea or across Fife, to Dirleton in the first place. Gowrie may have had an understanding with Guevara at Berwick. James himself told Nicholson that a large English ship had hovered off the coast, refusing communication with the shore. Bothwell, again, now desperate, may have lately been nearer home than was known; finally, Fastcastle, the isolated eyrie on its perpendicular rock above the Northern Sea, may have been at Gowrie's disposal. I am disinclined to conjecture, being only certain that a young man with Gowrie's past—'Italianate,' and of dubious religion — was more apt to form a wild and daring plot than was his canny senior, the King of Scots. But that a plot of some kind Gowrie had laid, I am convinced by his secrecy, and by his falsehoods as to the King's departure. Among the traps for the King contrived by Bothwell and Colville, and reported by Colville to his English paymasters, were schemes quite as wild as that which Gowrie probably entertained. The King once in the pious hands of so godly a man as Gowrie, the party of the Kirk, or the party of the Church, would have come in and made themselves useful.

XII. LOGAN OF RESTALRIG

We now arrive at an extraordinary sequel of the Gowrie mystery: a sequel in which some critics have seen final and documentary proof of the guilt of the Ruthvens. Others have remarked only a squalid intrigue, whereby James's ministers threw additional disgrace on their master. That they succeeded in disgracing themselves, we shall make only too apparent, but if the evidence which they handled proves nothing against the Ruthvens, it does not on that account invalidate the inferences which we have drawn as to their conspiracy. We come to the story of the Laird and the country writer.

That we may know the Laird better, a brief description of his home may be introduced. Within a mile and a half of the east end of Princes Street, Edinburgh, lies, on the left of the railway to the south, a squalid suburb. You drive or walk on a dirty road, north-eastwards, through unambitious shops, factories, tall chimneys, flaming advertisements, and houses for artisans. The road climbs a hill, and you begin to find, on each side of you, walls of ancient construction, and traces of great old doorways, now condemned. On the left are ploughed fields, and even clumps of trees with blackened trunks. Grimy are the stacks of corn in the farmyard to the left, at the crest of the hill. On the right, a gateway gives on a short avenue which leads to a substantial modern house. Having reached this point in my pilgrimage, I met a gentleman who occupies the house, and asked if I might be permitted to view the site. The other, with much courtesy, took me up to the house, of which only the portion in view from the road was modern. Facing the west all was of the old Scottish château style, with gables, narrow windows, and a strange bulky chimney on the north, bulging out of the wall. The west side of the house stood on the very brink of a steep precipice, beneath which lay what is now but a large deep waterhole, but, at the period of the Gowrie conspiracy, was a loch fringed with water weeds, and a haunt of wild fowl. By this loch, Restalrig Loch, the witch more than three centuries ago met the ghost of Tam Reid, who fell in Pinkie fight, and by the ghost was initiated into the magic which brought her to the stake.

I scrambled over a low wall with a deep drop, and descended the cliff so as to get a view of the ancient château that faces the setting sun. Beyond the loch was a muddy field, then rows on rows of ugly advertisements, then lines of 'smoky dwarf houses,' and, above these, clear against a sky of March was the leonine profile of Arthur's Seat. Steam rose and trailed from the shrieking southward trains between the loch and the mountain, old and new were oddly met, for the château was the home of an ancient race, the Logans of Restalrig, ancestors of that last Laird with whom our story has to do. Their rich lands stretched far and wide; their huge dovecot stands, sturdy as a little pyramid, in a field to the north, towards the firth. They had privileges over Leith Harbour which must have been very valuable: they were of Royal descent, through a marriage of a Logan with a daughter of Robert II. But their glory was in their ancestor, Sir Robert Logan, who fell where the good Lord James of Douglas died, charging the Saracens on a field of Spain, and following the heart of Bruce. So Barbour sings, and to be named by Barbour, for a deed and a death so chivalrous, is honour enough.

The Logans flourished in their eyrie above the Loch of Restalrig, and intermarried with the best houses, Sinclairs, Ogilvys, Homes, and Ramsays of Dalhousie. It may be that some of them sleep under the muddy floor of St. Triduana's Chapel, in the village of Restalrig, at the foot of the hill on the eastern side of their old château. This village, surrounded by factories, is apparently just what it used to be in the days of James VI. The low thick-walled houses with fore-stairs, retain their ancient, high-pitched, red-tiled roofs, with dormer windows, and turn their tall narrow gables to the irregular street. 'A mile frae Embro town,' you find yourself going back three hundred years in time. On the right hand of the road, walking eastward, what looks like a huge green mound is visible above a high ancient wall. This is all that is left of St. Triduana's Chapel, and she was a saint who came from Achaia with St. Regulus, the mythical founder of St. Andrews. She died at Restalrig on October 8, 510, and may have converted the Celts, who then dwelt in a crannog in the loch; at all events we hear that, in a very dry summer, the timbers of a crannog were found in the sandy deposit of the lake margin. The chapel (or chapter-house?), very dirty and disgracefully neglected, has probably a crypt under it, and certainly possesses a beautiful groined roof, springing from a single short pillar in the centre. The windows are blocked up with stones, the exterior is a mere mound of grass like a sepulchral tumulus. On the floor lies, broken, the gravestone of a Lady Restalrig who died in 1526. Outside is a patched-up church; the General Assembly of 1560 decreed that the church should be destroyed as 'a monument of idolatry' (it was a collegiate church, with a dean, and prebendaries), and in 1571 the wrought stones were used to build a new gate inside the Netherbow Port. The whole edifice was not destroyed, but was patched up, in 1836, into a Presbyterian place of worship. This old village and kirk made up 'Restalrig Town,' a place occupied by the English during the siege of Leith in 1560. So much of history may be found in this odd corner, where the sexton of the kirk speaks to the visitor about 'the Great Logan,' meaning that Laird who now comes into the sequel of the Gowrie mystery.

For some thirty years before the date of which we are speaking, a Robert Logan had been laird of Restalrig, and of the estate of Flemington, in Berwickshire, where his residence was the house of Gunnisgreen, near Eyemouth, on the Berwickshire coast. He must have been a young boy when, in 1560, the English forces besieging Leith (then held by the French for Mary of Guise) pitched their camp at Restalrig.

In 1573, Kirkcaldy of Grange and Maitland of Lethington gallantly held the last strength of the captive Mary Stuart, the Castle of Edinburgh. The fortress was to fall under the guns of the English allies of that Earl of Gowrie (then Lord Ruthven), who was the father of the Gowrie of our mystery.

On April 17, 1573, a compact was made between Lord Ruthven and Drury, the English general. One provision was (the rest do not here concern us) that Alexander, Lord Home; Lethington; and Robert Logan of Restalrig, if captured, ‘shall be reserved to be justified by the laws of Scotland,’ which means, hanged by the neck. But neither on that nor on any other occasion was our Logan hanged. He somehow escaped death and forfeiture, when Kirkcaldy was gibbeted after the fall of the castle. In 1577, we find him, with Lord Lindsay and Mowbray of Barnbogle (now Dalmeny) surety for Queen Mary’s half-brother, the Lord Robert Stewart, who vainly warned Darnley to escape from Kirk o’ Field. Lord Robert was then confined by the Regent Morton in Linlithgow, and Logan with the rest was surety in 10,000*l.* that he would not attempt to escape. Later, Logan was again surety that Lord Robert would return after visiting his dominions, the Orkney Islands.

Logan, though something of a pirate, was clearly a man of substance and of a good house, which he strengthened by alliances. One of his wives, Elizabeth Macgill, was the daughter of the Laird of Cranstoun Riddell, and one of her family was a member of the Privy Council. From Elizabeth Logan was divorced; she was, apparently, the mother of his eldest son, Robert. By the marriage of an ancestor of Logan’s with an heiress of the family of Hume, he acquired the fortress and lands of Fastcastle, near St. Abbs, on the Berwickshire coast. The castle, now in ruins, is the model of Wolfscrag in ‘The Bride of Lammermoor.’ Standing on the actual verge of a perpendicular cliff above the sea, whence it is said to have been approached by a staircase cut in the living rock, it was all but inaccessible, and was strongly fortified. Though commanded by the still higher cliff to the south, under which it nestled on its narrow plateau of rock, Fastcastle was then practically impregnable, and twenty men could have held it against all Scotland. Around it was, and is, a roadless waste of bent and dune, from which it was severed by a narrow rib of rock jutting seawards, the ridge being cut by a cavity which was spanned by a drawbridge. Master of this inaccessible eyrie, Logan was most serviceable to the plotters of these troubled times.

His religion was doubtful, his phraseology could glide into Presbyterian cant, but we know that he indifferently lent the shelter of his fastness to the Protestant firebrand, wild Frank Stewart, Earl of Bothwell (who, like Carey writing from Berwick to Cecil, reckons Logan among Catholics), or to George Ker, the Catholic intriguer with Spain. Logan loved a plot for its own sake, as well as for chances of booty and promotion. He was a hard drinker, and associate of rough yeomen and lairds like Ninian Chirnside of Whitsumlaws (Bothwell's emissary to the wizard, Richard Graham), yet a man of ancient family and high connections. He seems to have been intimate with the family of Sir John Cranstoun of Cranstoun. On one occasion he informs Archibald Douglas, the detested and infamous murderer and deeply dyed traitor, that 'John of Cranstoun is the one man now that bears you best good will.' (January 1587?)

In January 1600, the year of the Gowrie plot, we find Sir John Cranstoun in trouble for harbouring an outlawed Mr. Thomas Cranstoun, who was, with Douglas, the Laird of Spot, one of Bothwell's allies in all his most desperate raids on the person of King James. In 1592, Mr. Thomas Cranstoun was forfeited, he was informed against for 'new conspiracies against his Majesty's life and estate,' and, in January 1600, Sir John Cranstoun was sheltering this dangerous and desperate Bothwellian outlaw, as was his son-in law, Mr. William Cranstoun.

Now the Mr. Thomas Cranstoun who was hanged for his part in the Gowrie affair, was brother of Sir John Cranstoun of Cranstoun, the ally of that other Mr. Thomas Cranstoun who was so deep in Bothwell's wild raids on the King's person. In the spring of 1600 (as we have said, but must here repeat) there were reports that Bothwell had secretly returned to Scotland, and, on April 20, 1600, just before the date of Gowrie's arrival in Edinburgh from London, Nicholson reports suspected plots of Archibald Douglas, of John Colville, a ruined Bothwellian, and a spy, and of the Laird of Spot.   This Colville had recently hinted to Essex that he could do a serviceable enterprise. 'As for the service I mean to do, if matters go to the worst, it shall be such, God willing — if I lose not my life in doing thereof — as no other can do with a million of gold, and yet I shall not exceed the bonds of humanity,' that is, he will not *murder* the King. 'But for conscience sake and worldly honesty, I must first be absolved of my natural allegiance.' (April 27, 1598; again, October 20, 1598.)

The point for us to mark is that all these conspirators and violent men, Bothwell (in exile or secretly in Scotland), Colville (in 1600 an exile in Paris), the Laird of Spot, the Cranstouns, the infamous Archibald Douglas, with Richard Douglas his nephew, and Logan of Restalrig, were united, if not by real friendship, at least, as Thucydides says, by ‘partnership in desperate enterprises’ and by 1600 were active in a subterranean way. If it is fair to say, *noscitur a sociis*, ‘a man is known by the company he keeps,’ Logan of Restalrig bears the mark of the secret conspirator. He had relations with persons more distinguished than his Chirnsides and Whittingham Douglases, though they were of near kin to the Earl of Morton. His mother, a daughter of Lord Gray, married Lord Home, after the death of Logan’s father. The Laird of Restalrig was thus a half-brother of the new Lord Home, a Warden of the Border, and also was first cousin of the beautiful, accomplished, and infamous Master of Gray, the double spy of England and of Rome.

Logan, too, like the Master, had diplomatic ambitions. In 1586 (July 29) we find him corresponding with the infamous Archibald Douglas, one of Darnley’s murderers, whom James had sent, in the crisis of his mother’s fate, as his ambassador to Elizabeth. In 1586, Logan, with two other Logans, was on the packed jury which acquitted Douglas of Darnley’s murder. Logan was a retainer of Bothwell, that meteor-like adventurer and king-catcher, and he asks Douglas to try to procure him employment (of course as a spy) from Walsingham, the English statesman.

In October of the same year, we find the Master of Gray writing to Douglas, thus: ‘Of late I was forced, at Restalrig’s suit, to pawn some of my plate, and the best jewel I had, to get him money for his marriage’ — his second marriage, apparently. By December 1586 we find Logan riding to London, as part of the suite of the Master of Gray, who was to plead with Elizabeth for Mary’s life. He was the Master’s most intimate confidant, and, as such, in February-March 1587, proposed to sell all his secrets to Walsingham! Nevertheless, when Gray was driven into exile, later in 1587, Logan was one of his ‘cautioners,’ or sureties. He had been of the party of Gowrie’s father, during that nobleman’s brief tenure of power in 1582, 1583, and, when Gowrie fell, Logan was ordered to hand his eyrie of Fastcastle over, at six hours’ notice, to the officers of the King. Through the stormy years of Bothwell’s repeated raids on James (1592–1594) Logan had been his partisan, and had been denounced a rebel. Later he appears in trouble for highway robbery committed by his retainers. Among the diversions of this country gentleman was flat burglary. In December 1593, ‘when nichts are lang and mirk,’ the Laird helped himself to the plate-chest of William Nesbit of Newton. ‘Under silence of night he took spuilzie of certain gold and silver to the value of three thousand merks Scots.’ The executors of Nesbit did not bring their action till after Logan died, in July 1606, ‘in respect the said clandestine deed and fact came not to our knowledge, nor light as to who had committed the same,' till just before the action was brought.

In 1599, when conspiracies were in the air, Logan was bound over not to put Fastcastle in the hands of his Majesty's enemies and rebels.

This brief sketch of a turbulent life is derived from Logan's own letters to Archibald Douglas, now among the Cecil Papers at Hatfield; from the 'Papers relating to the Master of Gray,' in which we find Logan, under a cypher name, betraying the Master, his cousin and ally, and from the Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, in which all that dead world, from the King to the crofter, may be traced, often in circumstances peculiarly private.

At that time, civil processes of 'horning,' 'putting to the horn,' or outlawry, were the common resort of creditors against procrastinating debtors. Many of the most respectable persons, gentlemen and ladies, appear in these suits; Robert Abercromby sues a lady of rank for 150*l.* Scots. He is the burgess of Edinburgh, the King's saddler, who, as the Master of Ruthven told Craigengelt, had brought the King from Falkland to Perth, 'to take order for his debt.' Now the singular thing is that we never find Logan of Restalrig recorded as under 'horning' for debt, whereas, considering his character, we might expect him never to be free from 'the horn.' On the other hand, we know him to have been a lender, not a borrower. He was *sui profusus*. On January 1, 1599, Cecil had been making inquiries as to Logan, from Lord Willoughby commanding at Berwick. Cecil always had his eyes on Border Scots, likely to be useful in troubling King James. Willoughby replies, 'There is sutch a laird of Lesterigge as you write of, a vain lose man, a greate favourer of thefes reputed, yet a man of a good clan, as they here tearme it, and a gud felow.'

Such was Logan of Restalrig, 'Old Rugged and Dangerous.' In 1601, May 30, we find him appearing as surety for Philip Mowbray, one of the Mowbrays of Barnbogle, whose sister stood by Queen Mary at the scaffold, and whose brother Francis was with the bold Buccleuch, when he swam 'that wan water' of Esk, and rescued Kinmont Willie from Carlisle Castle. This Francis Mowbray and his brother Philip were (1601–1603) mixed up with Cecil in some inscrutable spy-work, and intrigues for the murder of King James. The Mowbrays were old friends of Logan: they had been engaged in privateering enterprises together, but could produce no letters of marque! In 1603, Francis Mowbray, abandoned and extradited by Cecil, was killed in an attempt to escape from Edinburgh Castle. He had been accused, by an Italian fencing-master, of a conspiracy to kill James. Cecil had, of course, by this time made peace and alliance with James, who was on the point of ascending the English throne, and he gave up Francis. Mowbray challenged the Italian fencing-master to judicial combat; the Italian came down to fight him, the lists were actually pitched at Holyrood, when (January 31, 1603) Francis preferred to try the chance of flight; the rope of knotted sheet to which he trusted broke, and he was dashed to pieces on the Castle rocks.

Since 1592, Mowbray had been corresponding with Logan's friend, Archibald Douglas, and offering his services to Cecil. To Cecil, in September 1600, he was again applying, regarding Elizabeth as his debtor. In 1600, he was in touch with Henry Locke, who had been Cecil's go-between in his darkest intrigues against James, and his agent with Bothwell, Atholl, and the Gowrie slain on August 5, 1600. But, in the autumn of 1602, Cecil had become the secret ally of James, and gave up poor Francis, a broken tool of his and of Elizabeth's.

We have now learned a good deal about Logan's habitual associates, and we have merely glanced at a few of the numberless plots against James which were encouraged by the English Government. If James was nervously apprehensive of treason, he had good cause. But of Logan at the moment of the Gowrie Plot, we know nothing from public documents. We do know, however, on evidence which has previously been in part unpublished, in part unobserved, that from August 1600 onwards, Logan was oddly excited and restless. Though not in debt — or at least though no record of his 'horning' exists — he took to selling his lands, Restalrig, Flemington, Gunnisgreen, Fastcastle. After 1600 he sold them all; he wallowed in drink; he made his wife wretched; with his eldest son he was on ill terms; he wandered to London, and to France in 1605, and he returned to die (of plague, it seems) in the Canongate, a landless but a monied man, in July 1606.

Why did Logan sell all his lands, investing in shipping property? The natural inference, at the time, was that he had been engaged in 'some ill turn,' some mysterious conspiracy, and people probably (certainly, if we believe the evidence to follow) thought that he had been an accomplice in the Gowrie affair.

He died, and his children by his first wives dissociated themselves from his executorship. The bulk of it was the unpaid part of the purchase money for his lands, sold by him to Balmerino, and Dunbar, James's trusted ministers, who owed some 33,000 marks to the estate.

Logan had a 'doer,' or law agent, a country writer, or notary, named Sprot, who dwelt at Eyemouth, a hungry creature, who did not even own a horse. When Logan rode to Edinburgh, Sprot walked thither to join him. Yet the two were boon companions; Sprot was always loitering and watching at Gunnisgreen, always a guest at the great Christmas festivals, given by the Laird to his rough neighbours. The death of Logan was a disaster to Sprot, and to all the parasites of the Laird.

Logan died, we saw, in July 1606. In April, 1608, Sprot was arrested by a legal official, named Watty Doig. He had been blabbing in his cups, it is said, about the Gowrie affair; certainly most compromising documents, apparently in Logan's hand, and with his signature, were found on Sprot's person. They still bear the worn softened look of papers carried for long in the pockets. Sprot was examined, and confessed that he knew beforehand of the Gowrie conspiracy, and that the documents in his possession were written by Logan to Gowrie and other plotters. He was tortured and in part recanted; Logan, he said, had *not* written the guilty letters: he himself had forged them. This was all before July 5, 1608, while Mr. Robert Oliphant lay in prison, in London, on the same charge of guilty foreknowledge. Early in July 1608, the Earl of Dunbar came from London to Edinburgh, to deal with the affairs of the Kirk. He took Sprot out of his dungeon, gave him a more wholesome chamber, secluded him from gentlemen who came and threatened him (or so he said) if he made revelations, and Dunbar provided him with medical attendance. The wounds inflicted in 'the boot' were healed.

For six weeks Sprot was frequently examined, before members of the Privy Council and others, without torture. What he said the public did not know, nor, till now, have historians been better informed. Throughout, after July 5, 1608, he persisted in declaring Logan's complicity in the Gowrie conspiracy, and his own foreknowledge. He was tried, solely on the evidence of guilty foreknowledge alleged in his own confessions, and of extracts, *given by him from memory only*, of a letter from Gowrie to Logan (*not* one of those which he claimed to have forged), and another of Logan to Gowrie, both of July 1600. On August 12, Sprot was hanged at Edinburgh. He repeated his confession of guilt from every corner of the scaffold. He uttered a long religious speech of contrition. Once, he said, he had been nearly drowned: but God preserved him for this great day of confession and repentance. But 'no unbeliever in the guilt of Gowrie,' says Calderwood, 'was one whit the more convinced.' Of course not, nor would the death of Henderson — which they clamoured for — have convinced them. They said, falsely, that Sprot was really condemned as a forger, and, having to die, took oath to his guilt in the Gowrie conspiracy, in consideration of promises of help to his wife and family.

Nearly a year later, in June 1609, the exhumed remains of Logan were brought into court (a regular practice in the case of dead traitors), and were tried for treason. Five letters by Logan, of July 1600, were now produced. Three were from Logan to conspirators unnamed and unknown. One was to a retainer and messenger of his, Laird Bower, who had died in January 1606. These letters were declared, by several honourable witnesses, to be in Logan's very unusual handwriting and orthography: they were compared with many genuine letters of his, and no difference was found. The Parliamentary Committee, 'The Lords of the Articles,' previously sceptical, were convinced by the five letters, the evidence to handwriting, the energy of the Earl of Dunbar, and the eloquence of the King's Advocate. Logan's children were all forfeited, and Dunbar saved the money which he owed to Logan's estate. This trial is not alluded to, either by Calderwood or Archbishop Spottiswoode, in their histories. The five letters produced in the trial of Logan exist, and have been accepted as authentic by Mr. Tytler and Mr. Hill Burton, but not by writers who favour the Ruthvens. We print all five letters in Appendix C.

Meanwhile what had Sprot really said, under private examination, between July 5 and August 12, 1608, when he was executed?

This question is to be answered, from the hitherto unpublished records, in the following chapters. But, in common charity, the reader must be warned that the exposition is inevitably puzzling and complex. Sprot, under examination, lied often, lied variously, and, perhaps, lied to the last. Moreover much, indeed everything, depends here on exact dates, and Sprot's are loose, as was natural in the circumstances, the events of which he spoke being so remote in time.

Consequently the results of criticism of his confession may here be stated with brevity. The persevering student, the reader interested in odd pictures of domestic life, and in strange human characters may read on at his own peril. But the actual grains of fact, extracted from tons of falsehood, may be set down in very few words.

The genuine and hitherto unknown confessions of Sprot add no absolute certainty as to the existence of a Gowrie conspiracy. His words, when uncorroborated, can have no weight with a jury. He confessed that *all* the alleged Logan papers which, up to two days before his death, were in possession of the Privy Council, were forgeries by himself. But, on August 10, he announced that he had possessed one *genuine* letter of Logan to Gowrie (dated July 29, 1600). That letter (our Letter IV) or a forged copy was then found in his repositories. Expert evidence, however, decides that this document, like all the others, is in a specious imitation of Logan's hand, but that it has other characteristics of Sprot's own hand, and was penned by Sprot himself. Why he kept it back so long, why he declared that it alone was genuine, we do not know. That it *is* genuine, *in substance*, and was copied by Sprot from a real letter of Logan's in an imitation of Logan's hand, and that, if so, it proves Logan's accession to the conspiracy, is my own private opinion. But that opinion is based on mere literary considerations, on what is called 'internal evidence,' and is, therefore, purely a matter of subjective impression, like one's idea of the possible share of Shakespeare in a play mainly by Fletcher or another. Evidence of this kind is not historical evidence. It follows that the whole affair of Sprot, and of the alleged Logan letters, adds nothing certain to the reasons for believing that there was a Gowrie conspiracy. As far as Sprot and his documents are concerned, we know that all, as they stand, are pure fictitious counterfeits by that unhappy man, while, as to whether one letter (IV) and perhaps another (I) are genuine *in substance*, every reader must form his own opinion, on literary grounds, and no opinion is of much value. Such is a brief summary of the facts. But the tenacious inquirer who can follow us through the tangled mazes of Sprot's private confessions, will perhaps agree with me that they contain distinguishable grains of fact, raising a strong surmise that Logan was really involved with Gowrie in a plot. Yet this, again, is a subjective impression, which may vary with each reader.

XIII. THE SECRETS OF SPROT

The final and deepest mystery of the mysterious Gowrie affair rises, like a mist from a marsh, out of these facts concerning Sprot. When he was convicted, and hanged, persisting in his confessions, on August 12, 1608, no letters by Gowrie, or any other conspirator, were produced in Court. Extracts, however, of a letter from Gowrie to Logan, and of one from Logan to Gowrie, were quoted in Sprot's formal Indictment. They were also quoted in an official publication, an account of Sprot's case, prepared by Sir William Hart, the Chief Justice, and issued in 1608. Both these documents (to which we return) are given by Mr. Pitcairn, in the second volume of his 'Criminal Trials.' But later, when the dead Logan was tried in 1609, five of his alleged plot letters (never *publicly* mentioned in Sprot's trial) were produced by the prosecution, and not one of these was identical with the letter of Logan cited in the Indictment of Sprot, and in the official account of his trial. There were strong resemblances between Logan's letter, quoted but not produced, in 1608, and a letter of Logan's produced, and attested to be in his handwriting, in 1609. But there were also remarkable variations.

Of these undeniable facts most modern historians who were convinced of the guilt of the Ruthvens take no notice; though the inexplicable discrepancies between the Logan letters *quoted* in 1608, and the letters *produced* as his in 1609, had always been matters of comment and criticism.

As to the letters of 1609, Mr. Tytler wrote, 'their import cannot be mistaken; *their authenticity has never been questioned*; they still exist . . . ' Now assuredly the letters exist. The five alleged originals were found by Mr. Pitcairn, among the Warrants of Parliament, in the General Register House, in Edinburgh, and were published by him, but without their endorsements, in his 'Criminal Trials' in Scotland. (1832). Copies of the letters are also 'bookit,' or engrossed, in the Records of Parliament. These 'bookit' transcripts were made carelessly, and the old copyist was puzzled by the handwriting and orthography of the alleged originals before him. The controversy about the genuineness of the five letters took new shapes after Mr. Pitcairn discovered those apparently in Logan's hand, and printed them in 1832. Mr. Hill Burton accepts them with no hint of doubt, and if Mr. Tytler was the most learned and impartial, Mr. Hill Burton was the most sceptical of our historians. Yet on this point of authenticity these historians were too hasty. The authenticity of the letters (except one, No. IV) was denied by the very man, Sprot, in whose possession most of them were originally found.

The evidence of his denial has been extant ever since Calderwood wrote, who tells us, clearly on the authority of an older and anonymous History in MS. (now in the Advocates' Library), that Sprot, when first taken (April 13–19, 1608), accused Logan of writing the letters, but withdrew the charge under torture, and finally, when kindly treated by Lord Dunbar, and healed of his wounds, declared that he himself had forged all the Logan letters (save one). Yet Logan was, to Sprot's certain knowledge (so Sprot persistently declared), involved in the Gowrie conspiracy.

Now assuredly this appeared to be an incredible assertion of Calderwood, or of his MS. source. He was a stern Presbyterian, an enemy of the King (who banished him), and an intimate friend of the Cranstoun family, who, in 1600, were closely connected with conspirators of their name. Thus prejudiced, Calderwood was believed by Mr. Pitcairn to have made an untrue or confused statement. Logan is in a plot; Sprot knows it, and yet Sprot forges letters to prove Logan's guilt, and these letters, found in Sprot's possession, prove his own guilty knowledge. There seems no sense in such behaviour. It might have been guessed that Sprot knew of Logan's guilt, but had no documentary evidence of it, and therefore forged evidence for the purpose of extorting blackmail from Logan. But, by 1608, when Sprot was arrested with some of the documents in his pocket, Logan had been dead for nearly two years.

The guess, that Sprot knew of Logan's treason, but forged the proof of it, for purposes of blackmailing him, was not made by historians. The guess was getting 'warm,' as children say in their game, was very near the truth, but it was not put forward by criticism. Historians, in fact, knew that Logan would not have stood an attempt at extortion. He was not that kind of man. In 1594, he made a contract with Napier of Merchistoun, the inventor of Logarithms. Tradition declared that there was a hoard of gold in 'the place of Fastcastle.' Napier was to discover it (probably by the Divining Rod), and Logan was to give him a third of the profits. But Napier, knowing his man, inserted a clause in the deed, to the effect that, after finding the gold, *he was to be allowed a free exit from Fastcastle*. Whether he found the hoard or not, we do not know. But, two years later, in letting a portion of his property, Napier introduced the condition that his tenant should never sublet it to any person of the name of Logan! If he found the gold he probably was not allowed to carry off his third share. Logan being a resolute character of this kind, Sprot, a cowering creature, would not forge letters to blackmail him. He would have been invited to dine at Fastcastle. The cliffs are steep, the sea is deep, and tells no tales.

Thus where was Sprot's motive for forging letters in Logan's hand, and incriminating the Laird of Restalrig, and for carrying them about in his pocket in 1608? But where was his motive for confessing when taken and examined that he *did* forge the letters, if his confession was untrue, while swearing, to his certain destruction, that he had a guilty foreknowledge of the Gowrie conspiracy? He *might* conciliate Government and get pardoned as King's evidence, by producing what he called genuine Logan letters, and thus proving the conspiracy, and clearing the King's character; but this he did not do. He swore to the last that Logan and he were both guilty (so Calderwood's authority rightly reported), but that the plot letters were forged by himself, to what end Calderwood did not say. All this appeared midsummer madness. Calderwood, it was argued, must be in error.

A theory was suggested that Sprot really knew nothing of the Gowrie mystery; that he had bragged falsely of his knowledge, in his cups; that the Government pounced on him, made him forge the letters of Logan to clear the King's character by proving a conspiracy, and then hanged him, still confessing his guilt. But Mr. Mark Napier, a learned antiquary, replied (in a long Appendix to the third volume of the History by the contemporary Spottiswoode) to this not very probable conjecture by showing that, when they tried Sprot, Government produced no letters at all, only an alleged account by Sprot of two letters unproduced. Therefore, in August 1608, Mr. Napier argued, Government had no letters; if they had possessed them, they would infallibly have produced them. That seemed sound reasoning. In 1608 Government had no plot letters; therefore, the five produced in the trial of the dead Logan were forged for the Government, by somebody, between August 1608 and June 1609. Mr. Napier refused to accept Calderwood's wild tale that Sprot, while confessing Logan's guilt and his own, also confessed to having forged Logan's letters.

Yet Calderwood's version (or rather that of his anonymous authority in MS.) was literally accurate. Sprot, in *private* examinations (July 5, August 11, 1608), confessed to having forged all the letters but one, the important one, Letter IV, Logan to Gowrie. This confession the Government burked.

The actual circumstances have remained unknown and are only to be found in the official, but *suppressed*, reports of Sprot's private examinations, now in the muniment room of the Earl of Haddington. These papers enable us partly to unravel a coil which, without them, no ingenuity could disentangle. Sir Thomas Hamilton, the King's Advocate, popularly styled 'Tam o' the Cowgate,' from his house in that old 'street of palaces,' was the ancestor of Lord Haddington, who inherits his papers. Sir Thomas was an eminent financier, lawyer, statesman, and historical collector and inquirer, who later became Lord Binning, and finally Earl of Haddington. As King's Advocate he held, and preserved, the depositions, letters, and other documents, used in the private examinations of Sprot, on and after July 5, 1608. The records of Sprot's examinations between April 19 and July 5, 1600, are not known to be extant.

Sir Thomas's collection consists of summonses, or drafts of summonses, for treason, against the dead Logan (1609). There is also a holograph letter of confession (July 5, 1608) from Sprot to the Earl of Dunbar. There are the records of the *private* examinations of Sprot (July 5-August 11, 1600) and of other persons whom he more or less implicated. There are copies by Sprot, in his 'course,' that is, current, handwriting, of two of the five letters in Logan's hand (or in an imitation of it). These are letters I and IV, produced at the posthumous trial of Logan in June 1609. Finally, there are letters in Logan's hand (or in an imitation of it), addressed to James Bower and to one Ninian Chirnside, with allusions to the plot, and there is a long memorandum of matters of business, also containing hints about the conspiracy, in Logan's hand, or in an imitation thereof, addressed to John Bell, and James Bower.

Of these compromising papers, one, a letter to Chirnside, was found by the Rev. Mr. Anderson (in 1902) torn into thirteen pieces (whereof one is missing), wrapped up in a sheet of foolscap of the period. Mr. Anderson has placed the pieces together, and copied the letter. Of all these documents, only five letters (those published by Mr. Pitcairn) were 'libelled,' or founded on, and produced by the Government in the posthumous trial of Logan (1609). Not one was produced before the jury who tried Sprot on August 12, 1608. He was condemned, we said, merely on his own confession. In his 'dittay,' or impeachment, and in the official account of the affair, published in 1608, were cited fragments of two letters *quoted from memory by Sprot under private examination*. These quotations from memory differ, we saw, in many places from any of the five letters produced in the trial of 1609, a fact which has aroused natural suspicions. This is the true explanation of the discrepancies between the plot letter cited in Sprot's impeachment, and in the Government pamphlet on his case; and the similar, though not identical, letter produced in 1609. The indictment and the tract published by Government contain merely Sprot's recollections of the epistle from Logan to Gowrie. The letter (IV) produced in 1609 is the genuine letter of Logan, or so Sprot seems, falsely, to swear. *This* document did not come into the hands of Government till after the Indictment, containing Sprot's quotation of the letter from memory, was written, or, if it did, was kept back.

All this has presently to be proved in detail.

As the Government (a fact unknown to our historians) possessed all the alleged Logan letters and papers *before* Sprot was hanged, and as, at his trial, they concealed this circumstance even from Archbishop Spottiswoode (who was present at Sprot's public trial by jury), a great deal of perplexity has been caused, and many ingenious but erroneous conjectures have been invented. The Indictment or 'dittay' against Sprot, on August 12, 1608, is a public document, but not an honest one. It contains the following among other averments. We are told that Sprot, in July 1600, at Fastcastle, saw and read the beginning of a letter from Logan to Gowrie (Letter IV). Logan therein expresses delight at receiving a letter of Gowrie's: he is anxious to avenge 'the Macchiavelian massacre of our dearest friends' (the Earl decapitated in 1584). He advises Gowrie to be circumspect, 'and be earnest with your brother, that he be not rash in any speeches touching the purpose of Padua.'

This letter, *as thus cited*, is not among the five later produced in 1609; it is a blurred reminiscence of parts of *two* of them. The reason of these discrepancies is that the letter is quoted in the Indictment, *not* from the document itself (which apparently reach the prosecution after the Indictment was framed), but from a version given from memory by Sprot, in one of his private examinations. Next, Sprot is told in his Indictment that, some time later, Logan asked Bower to find this letter, which Gowrie, for the sake of secrecy, had returned to Bower to be delivered to Logan. We know that this was the practice of intriguers. After the December riot at Edinburgh in 1596, the Rev. Robert Bruce, writing to ask Lord Hamilton to head the party of the Kirk, is said to request him to return his own letter by the bearer. Gowrie and Logan practised the same method. The indictment goes on to say that Bower, being unable to read, asked Sprot to search for Logan's letter to Gowrie, among his papers, that Sprot found it, 'abstracted' it (stole it), retained it, and 'read it divers times,' a *false quotation of the MS. confession*. Sprot really said that he kept the stolen letter (IV) '*till*' he had framed on it, as a model, three forged letters. It contained a long passage of which the 'substance' is quoted. This passage as printed in Sprot's Indictment is not to be found textually, in any of the five letters later produced. It is, we repeat, merely the version given from memory, by Sprot, at one of his last private examinations, before the letter itself came into the hands of Government. In either form, the letter meant high treason.

Such is the evidence of the Indictment against Sprot, of August 12, 1608. In the light of Sprot's real confessions, hitherto lying in the Haddington muniment room, we know the Indictment to be a false and garbled document. Next, on the part of Government, we have always had a published statement by Sir William Hart, the King's Justice, with an introduction by Dr. George Abbot, later Archbishop of Canterbury, who was in Edinburgh, and present when Sprot was hanged. This tract was published by Bradewood, London, in 1608, and is reprinted by Pitcairn.

After a verbose, pious, and pedantic diatribe, Abbot comes to the point. Sprot was arrested in April 1608, first on the strength 'of some words that fell from himself,' and, next, '*of some papers found upon him*.' What papers? They are never mentioned in the Indictment of Sprot. They are never alluded to in the sequel of Abbot's pamphlet, containing the official account, by Sir William Hart, of Sprot's Trial and Examinations. In mentioning 'some papers found upon' Sprot, Dr. Abbot 'let the cat out of the bag,' but writers like Mr. Napier, and other sceptics of his way of thinking, deny that any of the compromising letters were found at all.

No letters, we say, are mentioned by Sir William Hart, in Abbot's tract (1608), *as having been produced*. Archbishop Spottiswoode, who was present at Sprot's public trial (August 12, 1608), thought the man one of those insane self-accusers who are common enough, and observes that he did not 'show the letter' — that of Logan to Gowrie (IV). This remark of Spottiswoode, an Archbishop, a converted Presbyterian, a courtier, and an advocate for the King, has been a source of joy to all Ruthven apologists. 'Spottiswoode saw though the farce,' they say; 'there was no letter at all, and, courtier and recreant as he was, Spottiswoode had the honesty to say so in his History.'

To this there used to be no reply. But now we know the actual and discreditable truth. The Government was, in fact, engaged in a shameful scheme to which Archbishops were better not admitted. They meant to use this letter (IV) on a later occasion, but they also meant to use some of the other letters which Sprot (unknown to Spottiswoode) had confessed to be forgeries. The archiepiscopal conscience might revolt at such an infamy, Spottiswoode might tell the King, so the Scottish Government did not then allow the Archbishop, or the public, to know that they had any Logan letters. No letter at all came into open and public Court in 1608. Hart cites a short one, from Gowrie to Logan. Gowrie hopes to see Logan, or, at least, to send a trusty messenger, 'anent the purpose you know. But rather would I wish yourself to come, not only for that errand, but for some other thing that I have to advise with you.' There is no date of place or day. This letter, harmless enough, was never produced in Court, and Mr. Barbé supposes that it was a concoction of Hart's. This is an unlucky conjecture. The Haddington MSS. prove that Sprot really recited Gowrie's letter, or professed to do so, from memory, in one of his private examinations. The prosecution never pretended to possess or produce Gowrie's letter.

Next, Hart cites, *as Logan's answer to Gowrie's first letter* (which it was not), the passages already quoted by the prosecution in Sprot's Indictment, passages out of a letter of Logan's given by Sprot from memory only. Hart goes on to describe, as if on Sprot's testimony, certain movements of the Laird's after he received Gowrie's reply to his own answer to Gowrie. Logan's letter (as given in 1609) is dated July 29, and it is argued that his movements, after receiving Gowrie's reply, are inconsistent with any share in the plot which failed on August 5. Even if it were so, the fact is unimportant, for Sprot was really speaking of movements at a date much earlier than July 29; he later gave a separate account of what Logan was doing at the time of the outbreak of the plot, an account *not* quoted by Hart, who fraudulently or accidentally confused the dates. And next we find it as good as explicitly stated, by Hart, that this letter of Logan's to Gowrie was never produced in open Court. 'Being demanded where this above written letter, written by Restalrig to the Earl of Gowrie, which was returned again by James Bower, is now? Deponeth . . . that he (Sprot) left the above written letter in his chest, among his writings, when he was taken and brought away, and that it is closed and folded within a piece of paper,' so Hart declares in Abbot's tract. He falsified the real facts. He could not give the question as originally put to Sprot, for that involved the publication of the fact that all the letters but one were forged. The question in the authentic *private* report ran thus: 'Demanded where is that letter which Restalrig wrote to the Earl of Gowrie, *whereupon the said George Sprot wrote and forged the missives produced*?' (August 10).

The real letter of Logan to Gowrie, the only genuine letter (if in any sense genuine), had not on August 10 been produced. The others were in the hands of the Government. Hart, in his tract, veils these circumstances. The Government meant to put the letters to their own uses, on a later occasion, at the trial of the dead Logan.

Meanwhile we must keep one fact steadily in mind. When Sprot confessed to having forged treasonable letters in Logan's handwriting (as Calderwood correctly reports that he did confess), he *did not include among them Letter IV* (Logan to Gowrie July 29, 1600). *That* letter was never heard of by Sprot's examiners till August 10, and never came into the hands of his examiners till late on August 11, or early on August 12, the day when Sprot was hanged. Spottiswoode was never made aware that the letter had been produced. Why Sprot reserved this piece of evidence so long, why, under the shadow of the gibbet, he at last produced it, we shall later attempt to explain, though with but little confidence in any explanation.

Meanwhile, at Sprot's public trial in 1608, the Government were the conspirators. They burked the fact that they possessed plot-letters alleged to be by Logan. They burked the fact that Sprot confessed all these, with one or, perhaps, two exceptions, to be forgeries by himself. What they quoted, as letters of Logan and Gowrie, were merely descriptions of such letters given by Sprot from memory of their contents.

XIV. THE LAIRD AND THE NOTARY

We have now to track Sprot through the labyrinth of his confessions and evasions, as attested by the authentic reports of his private examinations between July 5 and the day of his death. It will be observed that, while insisting on his own guilt, and on that of Logan, he produced no documentary evidence, no genuine letter attributed by him to Logan, nothing but his own confessed forgeries, till the cord was almost round his neck — if he did then.

In his confessions he paints with sordid and squalid realism, the life of a debauched laird, tortured by terror, and rushing from his fears to forgetfulness in wine, travel, and pleasure; and to strange desperate dreams of flight. As a ‘human document’ the confessions of Sprot are unique, for that period.

On July 5, 1608, Sprot, in prison, wrote, in his own ordinary hand, the tale of how he knew of Logan’s guilt: the letter was conveyed to the Earl of Dunbar, who, with Dunfermline, governed Scotland, under the absent King. The prisoner gave many sources of his knowledge, but the real source, if any (Letter IV), he reserved till he was certain of death (August 10). Sprot ‘knew perfectly,’ he said, on July 5, that one letter from Gowrie and one from his brother, Alexander Ruthven, reached Logan, at Fastcastle and at Gunnisgreen, a house hard by Eyemouth, where Sprot was a notary, and held cottage land. Bower carried Logan’s answers, and ‘long afterwards’ showed Sprot ‘the first of Gowrie’s letters’ (the harmless one about desiring an interview) and also a note of Logan’s to Bower himself, ‘which is amongst the rest of the letters produced.’ It is No. II, but in this confession of July 5, Sprot appears to say that Gowrie’s innocent letter to Logan, asking for an interview, was the source of his forgeries. ‘I framed them all to the true meaning and purpose of the letter that Bower let me see, to make the matter more clear by these arguments and circumstances, for the cause which I have already’ (before July 5) ‘shewn to the Lords’ — that is, for purposes of extorting money from Logan’s executors.

This statement was untrue. The brief letter to Logan from Gowrie was not the model of Sprot’s forgeries; as he later confessed he had another model, in a letter of Logan to Gowrie, which he held back till the last day of his life. But in this confession of July 5, Sprot admits that he saw, not only Gowrie’s letter to Logan of July 6 (?) 1600 (a letter never produced), but also a ‘direction’ or letter from Logan to his retainer, Bower, dated ‘The Canongate, July 18, 1600.’ This is our Letter II. Had it been genuine, then, taken with Gowrie’s letter to Logan, it must have aroused Sprot's suspicions. But this Letter II, about which Sprot told discrepant tales, is certainly not genuine. It is dated, as we said, 'The Canongate, July 18, 1600.' Its purport is to inform Bower, then at Brockholes, near Eyemouth, that Logan had received a *new* letter from Gowrie, concerning certain proposals already made orally to him by the Master of Ruthven. Logan hoped to get the lands of Dirleton for his share in the enterprise. He ends 'keep all things very secret, that my Lord, my brother' (Lord Home) 'get no knowledge of our purposes, for I' (would) 'rather be *eirdit quick*,' that is, buried alive ().

Now we shall show, later, the source whence Sprot probably borrowed this phrase as to Lord Home, and being *eirdit quick*, which he has introduced into his forged letter. Moreover, the dates are impossible. The first of the five letters purports to be from Logan to an unnamed conspirator, addressed as 'Right Honourable Sir.' It is not certain whether this letter was in the hands of the prosecution before the day preceding Sprot's execution, nor is it certain whether it is ever alluded to by Sprot under examination. But it is dated from Fastcastle on July 18, and tells the unknown conspirator that Logan has just heard from Gowrie. It follows that Logan had heard from Gowrie on July 18 at Fastcastle, that he thence rode to Edinburgh, and from Edinburgh wrote his letter (II) to Bower, bidding Bower hasten to Edinburgh, to consult. This is absurd. Logan would have summoned Bower from Fastcastle, much nearer Bower's home than Edinburgh. Again, in Letter I, Logan informs the unknown man that he is to answer Gowrie 'within ten days at furthest.' That being so, he does not need Bower in such a hurry, unless it be to carry the letter to the Unknown. But, in that case, he would have summoned Bower from Fastcastle, he would not have ridden to Edinburgh and summoned him thence. Once more, Sprot later confessed, as we shall see, that this letter to Bower was dictated to himself by Logan, and that the copy produced, apparently in Logan's hand, was forged by him from the letter as dictated to him. He thus contradicted his earlier statement that Letter II was shown to him by Bower. He never says that he was in Edinburgh with Logan on July 18. Besides, it is not conceivable that, by dictating Letter II to Sprot, Logan would have voluntarily put himself in the power of the notary.

This is a fair example of Sprot's apparently purposeless lying. His real interest throughout was to persuade the Government that he was giving them genuine Logan letters. This, however, he denied, with truth, yet he lied variously about the nature of his confessed forgeries.

Sprot was so false, that Government might conceive his very confession of having forged the letters to be untrue. The skill in handwriting of that age could not detect them for impostures; Government might deem that he had stolen genuine letters from Bower; letters which might legitimately be produced as evidence. Indeed this charitable view is perhaps confirmed by the extraordinary fact, to be later proved, that three Edinburgh ministers, Mr. Hall, Mr. Hewat, and Mr. Galloway, with Mr. Lumisden, minister of Duddingston, were present on occasions when Sprot confessed to having forged the letters. Yet these four preachers said nothing, as far as we hear, when the letters, confessedly forged, were produced as evidence, in 1609, to ruin Logan's innocent child. Did the preachers think the letters genuine in spite of the confession that they were forged? We shall see later, in any case, that the *contents* of the three letters to the Unknown, and a torn letter, when compared with Letter IV, demonstrate that Sprot's final confession to having forged them on the model of IV is true; indeed the fact ought to have been discovered, on internal evidence, even by critics unaware of his confessions.

We now pursue Sprot's written deposition of July 5. He gives, as grounds of his knowledge of Logan's guilt, certain conversations among Logan's intimates, yeomen or 'bonnet lairds,' or servants, from which he inferred that Logan was engaged in treason. Again, just before Logan's death in July 1606, he was delirious, and raved of forfeiture. But Logan had been engaged in various treasons, so his ravings need not refer to the Gowrie affair. He had been on Bothwell's enterprises, and had privy dealings with 'Percy,' probably Thomas Percy, who, in 1602, secretly visited Hume of Manderston, a kinsman of Logan. That intrigue was certainly connected merely with James's succession to the English crown. But one of Logan's retainers, when this affair of Percy was spoken of among them, said, according to Sprot, that the Laird had been engaged in treason 'nearer home.'

Sprot then writes that 'about the time of the conspiracy,' Logan, with Matthew Logan, rode to Dundee, where they enjoyed a three days' drinking bout, and never had the Laird such a surfeit of wine. But this jaunt could not be part of the Gowrie plot, and probably occurred after its failure. Later, Sprot gave a different version of Logan's conduct immediately before and after Gowrie's death. Once more, after Logan's death, one Wallace asked Sprot to be silent, if ever he had heard of 'the Laird's conspiracy.' Sprot ended by confessing contritely that he had forged all the letters (except Letter IV) 'to the true meaning and purpose of the letter that Bower let me see,' a passage already quoted, and a falsehood.

What was the 'cause' for which Sprot forged? It was a purpose to blackmail, not Logan, but Logan's heirs or executors, one of whom was Lord Home. If Sprot wanted to get anything out of *them*, he could terrify them by threatening to show the forged Logan letters, as genuine, to the Government, so securing the ruin of Logan’s heirs by forfeiture. He did not do this himself, but he gave forged letters, for money, to men who were in debt to the dead Logan’s estate, and who might use the letters to extort remission of what they owed.

On July 15, Sprot was examined before Dunfermline, Dunbar, Hart, the King’s Advocate (Sir Thomas Hamilton), and other gentlemen. He said that, about July 6, 1600, Logan received a letter from Gowrie, which, two days later, Bower showed to him at Fastcastle. This is the harmless Gowrie letter, which Sprot now quoted from memory, as it is printed in Hart’s official account.

Now begins a new puzzle, caused by Sprot’s dates. Of these we can only give a conjectural version, for the sake of argument. Logan received a letter from Gowrie about July 6, 1600. He returned a reply, by Bower, but when did Bower start with the reply? Let us say on July 9. Bower returned, says Sprot, ‘within five days,’ with ‘a new letter’ from Gowrie. That would bring us to July 14, but in Letters I and II, dated July 18, Logan is informing his unknown correspondent, and Bower, of the receipt of ‘a new letter’ from Gowrie. Why inform Bower of this, if Bower was the bearer of the new letter? But the ‘new letter’ mentioned in Letters I and II was brought by a retainer of Gowrie. In any case, supposing by way of conjecture that Bower returned from Gowrie about July 15, he spent the night, says Sprot, with Logan at Gunnisgreen, and next day (July 16) rode to Edinburgh with Bower, Boig of Lochend, and Matthew Logan. In Edinburgh he remained ‘a certain short space,’ say four days, which would bring us to July 20. Needless to say that this does not fit Letter II, Logan to Bower, July 18, and Letter I, Logan to the Unknown, Fastcastle, July 18.

After Logan’s return from Edinburgh (which, according to Sprot, seems to be of about July 20) Sprot heard Logan and Bower discuss some scheme by which Logan should get Gowrie’s estate of Dirleton, without payment. Bower said nothing could be done till Logan rode west himself. He discouraged the whole affair, but Logan said, in the hearing of several persons, that he would hazard his life with Gowrie. Lady Restalrig blamed Bower for making Logan try to sell the lands of Fastcastle (they were not sold till 1602), of which Bower protested his innocence. This was *after* Logan’s return from Edinburgh (say July 20; that is, say five days after Logan’s return, say July 25). Bower and Logan had a long conference in the open air. Sprot was lounging and spying about beside the river; a sea-fisher had taken a basket of blenneys, or ‘green-banes.’ Logan called to Sprot to bring him the fish, and they all supped. Before supper, however, Sprot walked about with Bower, and tried to ‘pump’ him as to what was going forward. Bower said that ‘the Laird should get Dirleton without either gold or silver, but he feared it should be as dear to him. They had another pie in hand than the selling of land.’ Bower then asked Sprot not to meddle, for he feared that ‘in a few days the Laird would be either landless or lifeless.’

Certainly this is a vivid description; Bower and Logan were sitting on a bench ‘at the byre end;’ Sprot, come on the chance of a supper, was peeping and watching; Peter Mason, the angler, at the river side, ‘near the stepping stones,’ had his basket of blenneys on his honest back, his rod or net in his hand; the Laird was calling for the fish, was taking a drink, and, we hope, offering a drink to Mason. Then followed the lounge and the talk with Bower before supper, all in the late afternoon of a July day, the yellow light sleeping on the northern sea below. Vivid this is, and plausible, but is it true?

We have reached the approximate date of July 25 (though, of course, after an interval of eight years, Sprot’s memory of dates must be vague). Next day (July 26) Logan, with Bower and others, rode to Nine Wells (where David Hume the philosopher was born), thence, the same night, back to Gunnisgreen, next night, July 27, to Fastcastle, and thence to Edinburgh. This brings us (allowing freely for error of memory) to about July 27, ‘the hinder end of July,’ says Sprot. If we make allowance for a vagueness of four or five days, this does not fit in badly. Logan’s letter to Gowrie (No. IV), which Sprot finally said that he used as a model for his forgeries, is dated ‘Gunnisgreen, July 29.’ ‘At the beginning of August,’ says Sprot (clearly there are four or five days lost in the reckoning), Logan and Bower, with Matthew Logan and Willie Crockett, rode to Edinburgh, ‘*and there stayed three days*, and the Laird, with Matthew Logan, came home, and Bower came to his own house of the Brockholes, where he stayed four days,’ and then was sent for by Logan, ‘and the Laird was very sad and sorry,’ obviously because of the failure of the plot on August 5.

How do these dates fit into the narrative? Logan was at Gunnisgreen (his letter (IV) proves it) on July 29. (Later we show another error of Sprot’s on this point.) He writes that he is sending Bower as bearer of his letter to Gowrie. If Bower left Edinburgh on July 30, he could deliver the letter to Gowrie, at Perth, on August 2, and be back in Edinburgh (whither Logan now went) on August 5, and Logan could leave Edinburgh on August 6, after hearing of the deaths of his fellow-conspirators. We must not press Sprot too hard as to dates so remote in time. We may grant that Bower, bearing Logan’s letter of July 29, rode with Logan and the others to Edinburgh; that at Edinburgh Logan awaited his return, with a reply; that he thence learned that August 5 was the day for the enterprise, and that, early on August 6, he heard of its failure, and rode sadly home: all this being granted for the sake of argument.

Had the news of August 6 been that the King had mysteriously disappeared, we may conceive that Logan would have hurried to Dirleton, met the Ruthvens there, with their prisoner, and sailed with them to Fastcastle. Or he might have made direct to Fastcastle, and welcomed them there. His reason for being at Restalrig or in the Canongate was to get the earliest news from Perth, brought across Fife, and from Bruntisland to Leith.

Whether correct or not, this scheme, allowing for lapse of memory as to dates, is feasible. Who can, remote from any documents, remember the dates of occurrences all through a month now distant by eight years? There were no daily newspapers, no ready means of ascertaining a date. Queen Mary's accusers, in their chronological account of her movements about the time of Darnley's death, are often out in their dates. In legal documents of the period the date of the day of the month of an event is often left blank. This occurs in the confirmation of Logan's own will. 'He died — July, 1606.' When lawyers with plenty of leisure for inquiry were thus at a loss for dates of days of the month (having since the Reformation no Saints' days to go by), Sprot, in prison, might easily go wrong in his chronology.

In any case, taking Letter IV provisionally as genuine in substance, we note that, on July 29, Logan did not yet know the date fixed for Gowrie's enterprise. He suggested 'the beginning of harvest,' and, by August 5, harvest had begun. One of the Perth witnesses was reaping in the 'Morton haugh,' when he heard the town bell call the citizens to arms. But Gowrie must have acted in great haste, Logan not knowing, till, say, August 2 or 3, the date of a plot that exploded on August 5.

Gowrie may have thought, as Lord Maxwell said when arranging his escape from Edinburgh Castle, 'Sic interprysis are nocht effectuat with deliberationis and advisments, bot with suddane resolutionis.'

It is very important, we must freely admit, as an argument against the theory of carrying James to Logan's impregnable keep of Fastcastle, that only one question, in our papers, is asked as to the provisioning of Fastcastle, and *that* merely as to the supply of drink! Possibly this had been ascertained in Sprot's earlier and unrecorded examinations (April 19-July 5). One poor hogshead of wine (a trifle to Logan) had been sent in that summer; so Matthew Logan deponed. As Logan had often used Fastcastle before, for treasonable purposes, he was not (it may be supposed) likely to leave it without provisions. Moreover these could be brought by sea, from Dirleton, where Carey (August 11) says that Gowrie had stored 'all his provision.' Moreover Government did not wish to prove intent to *kidnap* the King. That was commonly regarded as a harmless constitutional practice, not justifying the slaughter of the Ruthvens. From the first, Government insisted that *murder* was intended. In the Latin indictment of the dead Logan this is again dwelt on; Fastcastle is only to be the safe haven of the murderers. This is a misreading of Letter IV, where Fastcastle is merely spoken of as to be used for a meeting, and 'the concluding of our plot.'

Thus it cannot be concealed that, on July 29 (granting Letter IV to have a basis), the plot, as far as Logan knew, was 'in the air.' If Fastcastle was to be used by the conspirators, it must have been taken in the rough, on the chance that it was provided, or that Gowrie could bring his own supplies from Dirleton by sea. This extreme vagueness undeniably throws great doubt on Logan's part in the plot; Letter IV, if genuine, being the source of our perplexity. But, if it is not genuine, that is, *in substance*, there is only rumour, later to be discussed, to hint that Logan was in any way connected with Gowrie.

We left Bower and Logan conversing dolefully some days after the failure of the plot. At this point the perhaps insuperable difficulty arises, why did they not, as soon as they returned from Edinburgh, destroy every inch of paper connected with the conspiracy? One letter at least (Logan's to Gowrie, July 29) was not burned, according to Sprot, but was later stolen by himself from Bower; though he reserved *this* confession to the last day of his life but two. We might have expected Logan to take the letter from Bower as soon as they met, and to burn or, for that matter, swallow it if no fire was convenient! Yet, according to Sprot, in his final confession, Logan let Bower keep the damning paper for months. If this be true, we can only say *quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat*. People do keep damning letters, constant experience proves the fact.

After Bower had met Logan in his melancholy mood, he rode away, and remained absent for four days, on what errand Sprot did not know, and during the next fortnight, while Scotland was ringing with the Gowrie tragedy, Sprot saw nothing of Logan.

Next, Logan went to church at Coldinghame, on a Sunday, and met Bower: next day they dined together at Gunnisgreen. Bower was gloomy. Logan said, 'Be it as it will, I must take my fortune, and I will tell you, Laird Bower, the scaffold is the best death that a man can die.' Logan, if he said this, must have been drunk; he very often was.

It was at this point, in answer to a question, that Sprot confessed that Logan's letter to Bower (No. II) was a forgery by himself. The actual letter, Sprot said, was dictated by Logan to him, and he made a counterfeit copy in imitation of Logan's handwriting. We have stated the difficulties involved in this obvious falsehood. Sprot was trying every ruse to conceal his alleged source and model, Letter IV.

Sprot was next asked about a certain memorandum by Logan directed to Bower and to one John Bell, in 1605. This document was actually found in Sprot's 'pocquet' when he was arrested, and it contained certain very compromising items. Sprot replied that he forged the memorandum, in the autumn of 1606, when he forged the other letters. He copied most of it from an actual but innocent note of Logan's on business matters, and added the compromising items out of his own invention. He made three copies of this forgery, one was produced; he gave another to a man named Heddilstane or Heddilshaw, a dweller in Berwick, in September 1607; the third, 'in course hand,' he gave to another client, 'the goodman of Rentoun,' Hume. One was to be used to terrorise Logan's executors, to whom Heddilstane, but not Rentoun, was in debt. Sprot's words are important. 'He omitted nothing that was in the original' (Logan's memorandum on business matters), 'but *eikit*' (added) 'two articles to his copy, the one concerning Ninian Chirnside' (as to a dangerous plot-letter lost by Bower), 'the other, where the Laird ordered Bower to tear his missive letters. *He grants that he wrote another copy with his course hand, copied from his copy*, and gave it to the goodman of Rentoun,' while the copy given to Heddilstane 'was of his counterfeited writing,' an imitation of Logan's hand.

Perhaps Sprot had two methods and scales of blackmail. For one, he invented damning facts, and wrote them out in imitation of Logan's writing. The other species was cheaper: a copy in his 'course hand' of his more elaborate forgeries in Logan's hand. Now the two copies of Letters I and IV, which, at the end of his life, as we shall see, Sprot attested by signed endorsements, were in his 'course hand.' He had them ready for customers, when he was arrested in April 1608, and they were doubtless found in his 'kist' on the day before his death, with the alleged original of Letter IV. Up to August 11, at a certain hour, Government had neither the alleged original, nor Sprot's 'course hand copy' of Letter IV, otherwise he would not have needed to quote IV from memory, as he did on that occasion.

Among these minor forgeries, to be used in blackmailing operations, was a letter nominally from Logan to one Ninian or Ringan Chirnside. This man was a member of the family of Chirnside of Easter Chirnside; his own estate was Whitsumlaws. All these Chirnsides and Humes of Berwickshire were a turbulent and lawless gang, true borderers. Ninian is addressed, by Logan, as 'brother;' they were most intimate friends. It was Ninian who (as the endorsement shows) produced our Letter V, on April 19; he had purchased it, for the usual ends, from Sprot, being a great debtor (as Logan's will proves) to his estate.

To track these men through the background of history is to have a notion of the Day of Judgment. Old forgotten iniquities and adventures leap to light.

Chirnside, like Logan and the Douglases of Whittingham, and John Colville, and the Laird of Spot, had followed the fortunes of wild Frank Stewart, Earl of Bothwell, and nephew of the Bothwell of Queen Mary. Frank Bothwell was driven into his perilous courses by a charge of practising witchcraft against the King's life. Absurd as this sounds, Bothwell had probably tried it for what it was worth. When he was ruined, pursued, driven, child of the Kirk as he seemed, into the Catholic faction, his old accomplice, Colville, took a solemn farewell of him. 'By me your lordship was cleared of the odious imputation of witchcraft . . . but God only knows how far I hazarded my conscience in making black white, and darkness light for your sake' (September 12, 1594).

After Bothwell, when he trapped the King by aid of Lady Gowrie (July 1593), recovered power for a while, he defended himself on this charge of witchcraft. He *had* consulted and employed the wizard, Richard Graham, who now accused him of attempting the King's life by sorcery. But he had only employed Graham to heal the Earl of Angus, himself dying of witchcraft. Bothwell was charged with employing a retainer, *Ninian* Chirnside, to arrange more than twenty-one meetings with the wizard Graham; the result being the procurement of a poison, 'adder skins, toad skins, and the hippomanes in the brain of a young foal,' to ooze the juices on the King, 'a poison of such vehemency as should have presently cut him off.' Isobel Gowdie, accused of witchcraft in 1622, confessed to having employed a similar charm. All this Bothwell, instructed by Colville, denied, but admitted that he had sent Ninian Chirnside twice to the wizard, all in the interests of the dying Earl of Angus.

This Chirnside, then, was a borderer prone to desperate enterprises and darkling rides, and midnight meetings with the wizard Graham in lonely shepherds' cottages, as was alleged. He could also sink to blackmailing the orphan child of his 'brother,' Logan of Restalrig.

To go on with Sprot's confessions; he had forged, he said, receipts from Logan to the man named Edward or Ned Heddilstane for some of the money which Heddilstane owed him. For these forgeries his client paid him well, if not willingly. Sprot frequently blackmailed Ned, 'whenever he want siller.'

It must be granted that Sprot was a liar so complex, and a forger so skilled (for the time, that is), that nothing which he said or produced can be reckoned, as such, as evidence. On the other hand, his power of describing or inventing scenes, real or fictitious, was of high artistic merit, so that he appears occasionally either to deviate into truth, or to have been a realistic novelist born centuries too early. Why then, it may be asked, do we doubt that Sprot may have forged, without a genuine model, Letter IV? The answer will appear in due time. Letter IV, as Sprot confessed, is certainly the model of all the letters which he forged, whether those produced or those suppressed. He was afraid to wander from his model, which he repeated in Letters I (?), III, V, and in the unproduced letters, including one which we have found in twelve torn fragments, with the signature missing.

XV. THE FINAL CONFESSIONS OF THE NOTARY

On July 16, Sprot was again examined. Spottiswoode, Archbishop of Glasgow, the historian, was present, on this occasion only, with Dunfermline, Dunbar, Sir Thomas Hamilton, Hart, and other nobles and officials. None of them signs the record, which, in this case only, is merely attested by the signature of Primrose, the Clerk of Council, one of Lord Rosebery's family. In this session Sprot said nothing about forging the letters. The Archbishop was not to know.

Asked if he had any more reminiscences, Sprot said that, in November 1602, Fastcastle having been sold, Logan asked Bower 'for God's sake' to bring him any of the letters about the Gowrie affair which he might have in keeping. Bower said that he had no dangerous papers except one letter from Alexander Ruthven, and another from 'Mr. Andro Clerk.' This Clerk was a Jesuit, who chiefly dealt between Spain and the Scotch Catholics. He was involved in the affair called 'The Spanish Blanks' (1593), and visited the rebel Catholic peers of the North, Angus, Errol, and Huntly. Logan, like Bothwell, was ready to intrigue either with the Kirk or the Jesuits, and he seems to have had some personal acquaintance with Father Andrew.

Bower left Logan, to look for these letters at his own house at Brockholes, and Logan passed a night of sleepless anxiety. One of the mysteries of the case is that Logan entrusted Bower, who could not read, with all his papers. If one of them was needed, Bower had to employ a person who could read to find it: probably he used, as a rule, the help of his better educated son, Valentine. After Logan's restless night, Bower returned with the two letters, Ruthven's and Clerk's, which Logan 'burned in the fire.'

(Let it be remembered that Sprot has not yet introduced Letter IV into his depositions, though that was by far the most important.)

After burning Clerk's and Ruthven's letters, Logan dictated to Sprot a letter to John Baillie of Littlegill, informing him of the fact. Bower rode off with the letter, and Logan bade Sprot be silent about all these things, for he had learned, from Bower, that Sprot knew a good deal. Here the amateur of the art of fiction asks, why did Sprot drag in Mr. John Baillie of Littlegill? If Logan, as Sprot swore, informed Baillie about the burned letters, then Baillie had a guilty knowledge of the conspiracy. Poor Baillie was instantly 'put in ward' under the charge of the Earl of Dunfermline. But, on the day after Sprot was hanged, namely on August 13, Baillie was set free, on bail of 10,000 marks to appear before the Privy Council if called upon. Three of Sprot's other victims, Maul, Crockett, and William Galloway, were set free on their personal recognisances, but Mossman and Matthew Logan were kept in prison, and Chirnside was not out of danger of the law for several years, as we learn from the Privy Council Register. Nothing was ever proved against any of these men. After the posthumous trial of Logan (June 1609) the King bade the Council discharge John Baillie from his bail, 'as we rest now fully persuaded that there was no just cause of imputation against the said John.' So the Register of the Privy Council informs us. Thus, if Sprot told the truth about all these men, no corroborative facts were discovered, while the only proofs of his charges against Logan were the papers which, with one exception, he confessed to be forgeries, executed by himself, for purposes of extortion.

To go on with his confessions: The Christmas of 1602 arrived, and 'The Laird keepit ane great Yule at Gunnisgreen.' On the third day of the feast, Logan openly said to Bower, at table, 'I shall sleep better this night than that night when I sent you for the letters' (in November), 'for now I am sure that none of these matters will ever come to further light, if you be true.' Bower answered, 'I protest before God I shall be counted the most damnable traitor in the world, if any man on earth know, for I have buried them.'

After supper, Bower and Logan called Sprot out on to the open hill-side. Logan said that Bower confessed to having shown Sprot a letter of Gowrie's. What, he asked, did Sprot think of the matter? Sprot, with protestations of loyalty, said that he thought that Logan had been in the Gowrie conspiracy. Logan then asked for an oath of secrecy, promising 'to be the best sight you ever saw,' and taking out 12*l.* (Scots) bade Sprot buy corn for his children. Asked who were present at the scene of the supper, Sprot named eight yeomen. 'The lady' (Lady Restalrig) 'was also present at table that night, and at her rising she said, "The Devil delight in such a feast, that will make all the children weep hereafter," and this she spoke, as she went past the end of the table. And, after entering the other chamber, she wept a while, 'and we saw her going up and down the chamber weeping.'

A fortnight later, Lady Restalrig blamed Bower for the selling of Fastcastle. Bower appealed to Logan; it was Logan's fault, not his. 'One of two things,' said Bower, 'must make you sell your lands; either you think your children are bastards, or you have planned some treason.' The children were not those of Lady Restalrig, but by former marriages. Logan replied, 'If I had all the land between the Orient and the Occident, I would sell the same, and, if I could not get money for it, I would give it to good fellows.' On another occasion Logan said to Bower, 'I am for no land, I told you before and will tell you again. You have not learned the art of memory.'

In fact, Logan did sell, not only Fastcastle, but Flemington and Restalrig. We know how the Scot then clung to his acres. Why did Logan sell all? It does not appear, as we have shown, that he was in debt. If he had been, his creditors would have had him 'put to the horn,' proclaimed a recalcitrant debtor, and the record thereof would be found in the Privy Council Register. But there is no such matter. Sprot supposed that Logan wished to turn his estates into money, to be ready for flight, if the truth ever came out. The haste to sell all his lands is certainly a suspicious point against Logan. He kept on giving Sprot money (hush money, and for forgeries to defraud others, sometimes) and taking Sprot's oath of secrecy.

A remarkable anecdote follows; remarkable on this account. In the letter (II) which Logan is said by Sprot to have written to Bower (July 18, 1600) occurs the phrase, 'Keep all things very secret, that my lord my brother get no knowledge of our purposes, *for I rather be eirdit quik*' — would rather be buried alive (). This 'my lord my brother' is obviously meant for Alexander, sixth Lord Home, whose father, the fifth lord, had married Agnes, sister of Patrick, sixth Lord Gray, and widow of Sir Robert Logan of Restalrig. By Sir Robert, Lady Restalrig had a son, the Logan of this affair; and, when, after Sir Robert's death, she married the fifth Lord Home, she had to him a son, Alexander, sixth Lord Home. Our Logan and the sixth Lord Home were, therefore, brothers uterine.

Now, if we accept as genuine (in substance) the one letter which Sprot declared to be really written by Logan (No. IV), Gowrie was anxious that Home, a person of great importance, Warden on the Border, should be initiated into the conspiracy. As Gowrie had been absent from Scotland, between August 1594 (when he, as a lad, was in league with the wild king-catcher, Francis Stewart of Bothwell), and May 1600, we ask, what did Gowrie know of Home, and why did he think him an useful recruit? The answer is that (as we showed in another connection,) Gowrie was in Paris in February-April 1600, that Home was also in Paris at the same time (arriving in Scotland, at his house of Douglas, April 18, 1600), and that Home did not go to Court, on his return, owing to the King's displeasure because of his 'trysting with Bothwell' in Brussels.

Here then we have, in March 1600, Gowrie and Home, in Paris, and Bothwell, the King-catcher, meeting Home in Brussels. Therefore, when Letter IV represents Gowrie as anxious to bring Home, who had been consulting Bothwell, into his plot, nothing can be more natural. Gowrie himself conceivably met his old rebellious ally, Bothwell; he was certain to meet Home in Paris, and Home, owning Douglas Castle and Home Castle near the Border, would have been a most serviceable assistant. It must also be remembered that Home was, at heart, a Catholic, a recent and reluctant Protestant convert, 'compelled to come in,' by the Kirk. Bothwell was a Catholic; Gowrie, he declared, was another; Logan was a trafficker with Jesuits, and an 'idolater' in the matter of 'keeping great Yules.' Logan, however, if Letter IV is genuine, in substance, wrote that he 'utterly dissented' from Gowrie's opinion. He would not try his brother's, Home's, mind in the matter, or 'consent that he ever should be counsellor thereto, for, in good faith, he will never help his friend, nor harm his foe.'

Such being the relations (if we accept Letter IV as in substance genuine) between Gowrie, Home, and Logan, we can appreciate Sprot's anecdote, now to be given, concerning Lady Home. Logan, according to Sprot, said to him, in Edinburgh, early in 1602, 'Thou rememberest what my Lady Home said to me, when she would not suffer my lord to subscribe my contract for Fentoun, because I would not allow two thousand marks to be kept out of the security, and take her word for them? She said to me, *which was a great knell to my heart*, that since her coming to the town, she knew that I had been in some dealing with the Earl of Gowrie about Dirleton.' Now Dirleton, according to Sprot, was to have been Logan's payment from Gowrie, for his aid in the plot.

Logan then asked Sprot if he had blabbed to Lady Home, but Sprot replied that 'he had never spoken to her Ladyship but that same day, although he had read the contract' (as to Fentoun) 'before him and her in the abbey,' of Coldingham, probably. Logan then requested Sprot to keep out of Lady Home's sight, lest she should ask questions, '*for I had rather be eirdit quick than either my Lord or she knew anything of it*.'

Now, in Letter II (July 18, 1600), from Logan to Bower, Logan, as we saw, is made to write, 'See that my Lord, my brother, gets no knowledge of our purposes, *for I* (*sic*) *rather be eirdit quik*.' The phrase recurs in another of the forged letters not produced in court.

It is thus a probable inference that Logan did use this expression to Sprot, in describing the conversation about Lady Home, and that Sprot inserted it into his forged Letter II (Logan to Bower). But, clever as Sprot was, he is scarcely likely to have invented the conversation of Logan with Lady Home, arising out of Logan's attempt to do some business with Lord Home about Fentoun. A difficulty, raised by Lady Home, led up to the lady's allusion to Dirleton, 'which was a great knell to my heart,' said Logan. This is one of the passages which indicate a basis of truth in the confessions of Sprot. Again, as Home and Gowrie were in Paris together, while Bothwell was in Brussels, in February 1600, and as Home certainly, and Gowrie conceivably, met Bothwell, it may well have been that Gowrie heard of Logan from Bothwell, the old ally of both, and marked him as a useful hand. Moreover, he could not but have heard of Logan's qualities and his keep, Fastcastle, in the troubles and conspiracies of 1592–1594. After making these depositions, Sprot attested them, with phrases of awful solemnity, 'were I presently within one hour to die.' He especially insisted that he had written, to Logan's dictation, the letter informing John Baillie of Littlegill that all Gowrie's papers were burned. As we saw, in November 1609, the King deliberately cleared Baillie of all suspicion. There could be no evidence. Bower, the messenger, was dead.

Baillie was now called. He denied on oath that he had ever received the letter from Logan. He had never seen Gowrie, 'except on the day he came first home, and rode up the street of Edinburgh.' Confronted with Baillie, 'Sprot abides by his deposition.'

Willie Crockett was then called. He had been at Logan's 'great Yule' in Gunnisgreen, where Logan, according to Sprot, made the imprudent speeches. Crockett had also been at Dundee with Logan, he said, but it was in the summer of 1603. He did not hear Logan's imprudent speech to Bower, at the Yule supper. As to the weeping of Lady Restalrig, he had often seen her weep, and heard her declare that Logan would ruin his family. He only remembered, as to the Yule supper, a quarrel between Logan and Willie Home.

This was the only examination at which Archbishop Spottiswoode attended. Neither he nor any of the Lords (as we have said already) signed the record, which is attested only by James Primrose, Clerk of Council, signing at the foot of each page. Had the Lords 'quitted the diet'?

The next examination was held on July 22, Dunfermline, Dunbar, Sir Thomas Hamilton, the President of the Court of Session, and other officials, all laymen, being present. Sprot incidentally remarked that Logan visited London, in 1603, after King James ascended the English throne. Logan appears to have gone merely for pleasure; he had seen London before, in the winter of 1586. On his return he said that he would 'never bestow a groat on such vanities' as the celebration of the King's holiday, August 5, the anniversary of the Gowrie tragedy; adding 'when the King has cut off all the noblemen of the country he will live at ease.' But many citizens disliked the 5th of August holiday as much as Logan did.

In the autumn of 1605, Logan again visited London. In Sprot's account of his revels there, and his bad reception, we have either proof of Logan's guilt, if the tale be true, or high testimony to Sprot's powers as an artist in fiction. He says that Matthew Logan accompanied the Laird to town in September 1605, and in

November was sent back with letters to Bower. Eight days later, Matthew took Sprot to Coldingham, to meet Bower, and get his answer to the letters. It was a Sunday; these devotees heard sermon, and then dined together at John Corsar's. After dinner Bower took Sprot apart, and showed him two letters. Would Sprot read to him the first few words, that he might know which letter he had to answer? The first letter shown (so Sprot writes on the margin of his recorded deposition) referred to the money owed to Logan, by the Earl of Dunbar, for Gunnisgreen and the lands of Remington. Logan had expected to get the purchase money from Dunbar in London; he never got more than 18,000 out of 33,000 marks. Sprot wrote for Bower the answer to this business letter, and gave it to Matthew Logan to be sent to Logan in London. Matthew, being interrogated, denied that he sent any letter back to Logan, though he owned that Sprot wrote one; and he denied that Sprot and Bower had any conference at all on the occasion. But Sprot had asserted that the conference with Bower occurred after Matthew Logan left them at Corsar's house, where they dined, as Matthew admitted, after sermon. Matthew denied too much.

A curious conference it was. Bower asked Sprot to read to him the other of Logan's two letters, directed to himself. It ran, 'Laird Bower, — I wot not what I should say or think of this world! It is very hard to trust in any man, for apparently there is no constancy or faithfulness. For since I cam here they whom I thought to have been my most entire friends have uttered to me most injurie, and have given me the defiance, and say I am not worthy to live, "and if the King heard what has moved you to put away all your lands, and *debosch* yourself, you would not make such merryness, and play the companion in London, as you do so near his Majestie."'

Logan went on to express his fear that Bower's rash speeches had roused these suspicions of 'the auld misterie ye ken of.' 'God forgive you, but I have had no rest since these speeches were upcast to me.' Bower was to take great care of this letter, 'for it is within three letters enclosed,' and is confided to Matthew Logan (who travelled by sea) as a trusty man.

Bower was much moved by this melancholy letter, and denied that he had been gossiping. He had twice, before Logan rode south, advised him to be very careful never even to mention the name of Gowrie.

Sprot said that he, too, was uneasy, for, if anything came out, he himself was in evil case. Logan visited France, as well as London, at this time; he returned home in the spring of 1606, but Bower expressed the belief that he would go on to Spain, 'to meet Bothwell and Father Andrew Clerk, and if he come home it will be rather to die in his own country than for any pleasure he has to live.' Bothwell and Father Andrew, of course, were both Catholic intriguers, among whom Bothwell reckoned Logan and Gowrie.

Now the letter to Bower here attributed to Logan, telling of the new ‘knell at his heart’ when he is rebuked and insulted as he plays the merry companion in London, and near the Court; his touching complaint of the falseness of the world (he himself being certainly the blackest of traitors), with the distress of Bower, do make up a very natural description. The ghost of his guilt haunts Logan, he cannot drown it in a red sea of burgundy: life has lost its flavour; if he returns, it will be with the true Scottish desire to die in his own country, though of his ancient family’s lands he has not kept an acre. Pleasant rich Restalrig, strong Fastcastle, jolly Gunnisgreen of the ‘great Yules,’ all are gone. Nothing is left.

Surely, if Sprot invented all this, he was a novelist born out of due time. Either he told truth, or, in fiction, he rivalled De Foe.

Matthew Logan, being called, contradicted Sprot, as we have already said. He himself had seen Bower when he brought him Logan’s letter from London, take his son, Valentine, apart, and knew that Valentine read a letter to him. ‘It was a meikle letter,’ Matthew said, and, if Sprot tell truth, it contained three enclosures. Bower may have stopped his son from reading the melancholy and compromising epistle, and kept it to be read by Sprot. Logan’s folly in writing at all was the madness that has ruined so many men and women.

Matthew could not remember having ridden to Edinburgh with Logan in July 1600, just before the Gowrie affair, as Sprot had declared that he did. We could scarcely expect him to remember that. He could remember nothing at all that was compromising, nothing of Logan’s rash speeches. As to the Yule feast at Gunnisgreen, he averred that Lady Restalrig only said, ‘The Devil delight in such a feast that makes discord, and makes the house ado’ — that is, gives trouble. Asked if wine and beer were stored in Fastcastle, in 1600, he said, as has already been stated, that a hogshead of wine was therein. He himself, he said, had been ‘in the west,’ at the time of the Gowrie tragedy, and first heard of it at Falkirk.

On August 6, Sprot was interrogated again. Only lay lords were present: there were no clergymen nor lawyers. He denied that he had received any promise of life or reward. He asked to be confronted with Matthew Logan, and reported a conversation between them, held when Lord Dunbar took possession of Gunnisgreen. Matthew then hoped to ride with the Laird to London (1605), but said, ‘Alas, Geordie Sprot, what shall we all do now, now nothing is left? I was aye feared for it, for I know the Laird has done some evil turn, and he will not bide in the country, and woe’s me therefor.’

Sprot asked what the ‘evil turn’ was. Matthew answered, ‘I know well enough, but, as the proverb goes, “what lies not in my way breaks not my shins."'

Sprot added that, after Bower's death (January 1606), Logan wrote to him from London, not having heard the news of his decease. Lady Restalrig opened the letter and wrote a postscript 'Give this to Laird Bower, for I trow that he be ridden to Hell, as he ofttimes said to the Laird that he would do.' In Letter IV. Logan tells Gowrie that he believes Bower 'would ride to Hell's gate to pleasure him.'

Sprot was now asked about two letters. One of these (Logan to Chirnside) is endorsed, 'Production by Niniane Chirnesyde. XIII April 1608.' Another is Letter V, endorsed 'produced by Ninian Chirnside,' a fact first noted by Mr. Anderson. Yet another is the letter in twelve torn pieces. Logan, in the first of these three letters, requests Chirnside to find a letter which Bower lost in Dunglas. The letter imperils Logan's life and lands. The date is September 23, and purports, falsely, to be written before Logan goes to London (1605). Sprot explained that he forged the letters, that Chirnside might blackmail Logan's executors, and make them forgive him the debts which (as Logan's will proves) he owed to the estate.

Here we cite the letter of the twelve fragments. It is, of course, a forgery by Sprot, to enable Chirnside to terrorise his creditors, Logan's executors. But, as it directly implicates Chirnside himself in the Gowrie conspiracy, probably he disliked it, and tore it up. Yet the artist could not part with his work; it still lies, now reconstructed, in the old folio sheet of paper. The reader will remark that, like Letters I (?), III, and V, this torn letter is a mere *pastiche* framed (as Sprot confessed) on ideas and expressions in Letter IV.

Letter found among the Haddington MSS. torn into thirteen pieces (*one lost*) — *these have been placed in order, but at least one line of the piece is wanting.*

Brother, according to my promise the last day ve met in the kannogate I have sent this berair to my lord vith my answer of all thingis, and, I pray you ryde vith him till his lordschip, and bevar that he speik vith na other person bot his lordschipis self and M.A. his lordschipis brother, and specially let nocht his lordschipis pedagog ken ony thing of the matter, bot forder him hame agane, becawse the purpos is parilouse, as ye knaw the danger. And yit for my ain part I protest befoir God I sall keip trew condicion till his lordschip, and sall hasard albeit it var to the vary skafald, and bid his lordschip tak nane other opinion bot gude of the trustyness of this silly ald man for I dar baldlie concredit my lyf and all other thing I have elliss in this varld onto his credit, and I trow he sall nocht frustrat my gude expectacion. Burn or send bak agane as I did vith you, so till meitting, and ever I rest, Yowre brother to power redy, Restalrige.

Beseik his lordschip bavar that my lord my brother get na intelligense of thir townis as he lowfis all owr veillis, for be God he vill be our greittest enemy.

(A line or more wanting)

On the same day (August 6) Sprot withdrew a deposition (made before July 5) that the Unknown, for whom Letters I, III, V were meant, was the Laird of Kinfauns, Sir Harry Lindsay, who, in 1603, tried to shoot Patrick Eviot, one of the Gowrie fugitives. The Constable of Dundee (Sir James Scrymgeour) Sprot had also accused falsely. The Letters (I (?), III, V), he says, were 'imagined by me.'

On August 8, three ministers, Patrick Galloway, John Hall, and Peter Hewatt, were present. The two former were now preachers of the courtly party, the third received a pension of 500 marks from the King, after the posthumous trial of Logan (1609), at which the five letters were produced, but this reward may have been a mere coincidence. The ministers Hall and Hewatt, in August 1600, had at first, as we saw, declined to accept James's version of the affair at Gowrie House (p–103).

Sprot now confesses that he knows he is to die, deposes that no man has promised him life, and that he has stated nothing in hope of life. With tears he deplores that he has taken God's name in vain, in swearing to the truth of his depositions before that of July 5. His last five depositions under examination are 'true in all points and circumstances, and he will go to the death with the same.'

'Further the said George Sprot remembers that in the summertide of 1601, the Laird of Restalrig had indented with the Lord Willoughby, then Governor of Berwick, concerning my Lord's ship then built and lying at Berwick, whereof the Laird should have been equal partner with my Lord, and to take voyage with the said ship, either by the Laird himself, or some other person whom it pleased him to appoint . . . to pass to the Indies, the Canarys, and through the Straits, for such conditions as were set down in the indenture betwixt my Lord and him, which was framed by Sir John Guevara,' Willoughby's cousin, the kidnapper of Ashfield in 1599.

Now this ship of Lord Willoughby's, at all events, was a real ship; and here is a grain of fact in the narrative of Sprot. The ship was built by Lord Willoughby to protect English commerce from the piracies of the Dunkirkers. On March 28, 1601, he writes from Berwick to Cecil, 'The respect of my country and the pity of those hurt by such' (the Dunkirkers) 'persuaded me to build a ship, and moves me now to offer to serve her Majesty at as reasonable a rate as any ship of 140 tons, with sixteen pieces of artillery, and 100 men can be maintained with. . . . If this offer seem good to you and the Council, my ship shall presently be fitted, if not I purpose to dispose otherwise of her' (to Logan), 'being not able to maintain her.' ('Border Calendar,' ii. 738). On April 19, Willoughby wrote that he had pursued, with his ship, a pirate which had carried an English prize into the Forth. But he cannot, unaided, maintain the ship, even for one summer. On June 14, Willoughby 'took a great cold' in his ship, lying at the haven mouth, awaiting a wind, and died suddenly. On July 20, Carey says that his body has been placed, with all honourable rites, on board his ship.

It appears, then, that Willoughby, unable to maintain his ship, and not subsidised by Government, in the summer of 1601 admitted Logan to a half of the venture, carrying great expenses. Logan settled the business at Robert Jackson's house, in Bridge Street, Berwick, being accompanied by Sprot, Bower, and Matthew Logan. Matthew said privately to Sprot, 'Wae's me that ever I should see this day, that the Laird should grow a seaman! I wot not what it means, for it is for no good, and I fear this shall be one of the sorrowful blocks that ever the Laird made. It is true that I have oft thought that the Laird would pass away, for he is minded to sell all that he has, and would to God that he had never been born, what should he do with such conditions, to go or to send to the sea? He might have lived well enough at home. I find he has ever been *carried*' (excited), 'and his mind has ever been set on passing out of the country this year past,' that is since the Gowrie affair.

Now all this tale has much *vraisemblance*. The facts about Logan's adventure with Willoughby, stopped by Willoughby's death, were easily verifiable. Logan, at his death, owned a ship, rated at 500 marks (so we read in his inventory), but this can hardly have been the ship of Willoughby. He was restless, excited, selling land to supply a maritime enterprise.

At this time Lady Restalrig was deeply distressed, she wished Logan at the Indies, if only he would first settle Flemington on herself. 'If it be God's will, I desire never to have a child to him,' she said. 'I have a guess what this mystery means, woe's me for his motherless children,' that is, children of former marriages. Later, Lady Restalrig had a daughter, Anna, by Logan.

Matthew Logan, as usual, denied every word attributed to him by Sprot, except regrets for his own condition. Matthew could do no less to save his own life.

On August 9, before other witnesses, and the Rev. Messrs. Galloway, Hall, and Hewatt, Sprot solemnly confessed to having forged the letters in Logan's hand (then in possession of his examiners). On August 10, the same clergymen and many Lords, and Hart, being present, Sprot came to the point at last. Where, he was asked, after a prayer offered, at his request, by Mr. Galloway, *was the letter of Logan to Gowrie, whereon, as model, the rest were forged*? Now he had not previously mentioned, as far as the reports go, a letter of Logan to

Gowrie, as the model of his forgeries. He had mentioned, as his model, the brief harmless letter of Gowrie to Logan. On August 9, he had been very solemnly told that he was to die, and that he would see the faces of the Lords of the Council no more. Probably, after they left him, he told, to a minister or a servant in the gaol, the fact that he had used, as his model, a letter from Logan to Gowrie. The result was that he did again see, on August 10, the Lords of the Council, who asked him 'where the letter now was.' This is Letter IV, the letter of Logan to Gowrie, of July 29, 1600. Sprot, in place of answering directly, cited from memory, and erroneously, the opening of the letter. He had read it, while it was still unfinished, in July 1600, at Fastcastle. Logan, who had been writing it, was called by Bower, went out, and thrust it between a bench and the wall: there Sprot found, read, and restored the unfinished epistle to its place. But the letter is dated 'from Gunnisgreen,' at the conclusion. Logan, according to Sprot, left Gunnisgreen one day at the end of July, 1600, or beginning of August, thence rode to Fastcastle, and thence, next day, to Edinburgh ().

Now Logan, in the letter (IV), says that he took two days to write it. One day would be at Fastcastle, when he was interrupted; the other, the day of dating, at Gunnisgreen. This, however, does not tally with Sprot's account () of Logan's movements (Nine Wells, Gunnisgreen, Fastcastle, Edinburgh), if these are the days of writing Letter IV. Yet, if Sprot forged Letter IV, he knew where he dated it from; if the Government had it forged, they knew, from Sprot's confession, that it should have been dated from Fastcastle. Perhaps we should not bear too heavily on this point. A man may mention the wrong name by inadvertence, or the clerk, by inadvertence, may write the wrong name. Mr. Mark Napier in his essay on this matter twice or thrice prints 'Logan' for 'Sprot,' or 'Sprot' for 'Logan.' 'Fastcastle,' in Sprot's confession, may be a slip of tongue or pen for 'Gunnisgreen,' or he may have been confused among the movements to and from Gunnisgreen and Fastcastle. The present writer finds similar errors in the manuscript of this work.

Sprot next alleged that, three months after the Gowrie affair, Logan bade Bower hunt among his papers for this very letter. He had been at Berwick, with Lord Willoughby, and Bower told Sprot that he was 'taking order' with all who knew of his part in the Gowrie plot. Here is the old difficulty. Why was the letter kept for one moment after Bower brought it back? Why leave it with Bower for three months? At all events, as Bower could not read, Sprot helped him to look for the letter, found it, and kept it '*till* he framed three new letters upon it,' after which he does not say what he did with it.

Here Sprot cited, from memory, but not accurately, more of Letter IV. The existence of such errors is not remarkable. Sprot again swore to the truth of all his depositions since July 5. But if *this* story is true, how can it be true that Logan was at ease in his mind, after burning the letter from Alexander Ruthven, and another from Father Andrew Clerk, Jesuit, as Sprot previously swore? There was still Letter IV, lost, unburned, a haunting fear. It may be suggested that Sprot only kept this letter '*till*' he had made his forgeries on its model, and then, in a later search, pretended to find and returned it, having first copied it out in Logan's hand; that copy being our Letter IV. Sprot first would make a copy, in his ordinary hand, of the letter, then restore the original, and, after Logan's death, copy his copy, in imitation of Logan's hand, and frame I, III, V, and the torn letter on his copy of IV. Finally, Sprot said that '*he believes* this letter is in his chest among his writings, because he left it there when he was taken by Watty Doig and deposes that it is closed and folded within a piece of paper.' Sprot said this on August 10. On August 12 he was hanged. Now was this letter, on which he forged three others, found 'in his kist,' before his death? That it was so found, we have direct evidence, though not from the best of sources.

In the year 1713, an aged nobleman, Lord Cromarty, published a defence of the King's conduct in the Gowrie affair. Lord Cromarty, in 1713, was aged eighty-three. Born about 1630, he remembered the beginnings of the Civil War, and says that the Covenanters, about 1640–1645, made great political capital out of King James's alleged guilt in the slaughter of the Ruthvens. Later, Lord Cromarty occupied, in the Restoration, the highest judicial offices, and, as Clerk Registrar, had access to public documents. He was an old courtier, he may have been forgetful, he may have been unscrupulous, but, as to the letter in Sprot's kist, he writes 'the letter was found there by the Sheriff Depute, who was ordered by Sir William Hart, Lord Justice of Scotland, to seize the said chest, and make search for this letter, which he found, and delivered to the King's Advocate, Sir Thomas Hamilton.'

Now this Sir Thomas Hamilton was the ancestor of the Earl of Haddington, who inherits many of his papers. Among these we find a copy, in Sprot's 'course hand,' or rapid current hand, of Letter IV, and another of Letter I, but no such copies of II, III. and V. Each of these is endorsed by James Primrose, Clerk of Council, is endorsed by Sprot, in faded ink, and is *also* endorsed in Sprot's ordinary everyday hand, very firm and clear, thus:

'This is copyitt off the principal' (the original), 'lykeas the note writtin upon the bak is writtin by me, George Sprott.'

There is, in fact, another 'note on the back,' in ink more faded, on a dirty rubbed part of the paper.

Now certainly the last endorsation was written by Sprot either on August 11 or

August 12, 1600. He had not the original or this copy by him on August 10, or on August 11 when examined, for on August 10 he could only give a version of Letter IV from memory, and erroneously, the version cited in his indictment. On August 11 he still had not the original or his copy, for he quoted from memory, what he believed to be a *postscript* to the original Letter IV, a passage which is really in the *text* of Letter IV. He could not have made this error if, at that hour of August 11, he had either the original of Letter IV, or his exact copy before him, nor would there have been any reason why he should quote from memory, if Government had the documents. Yet he re-endorsed his copies of Letters I and IV before his death. This endorsement is firm and clear, the text of the two copies is fainter and much of the paper more rubbed, as if from being kept in the pocket. The copies are older than the final endorsement on the copies. It follows that the Sheriff Depute found these two copies (I, IV) and the originals, in Sprot's kist, and brought them to Sprot's examiners after that hour of August 11, when he could only quote from memory. He then endorsed them formally, one of the last acts of his life.

The originals were also found, for it will not be argued that Government employed another forger to forge them from Sprot's copies in 'course hand.' We know that Sprot had a secondary species of blackmailing documents, these in current hand; one of them he gave to the Goodman of Rentoun. For this, or some other purpose, he had made the 'course hand' copies of Letters I and IV, which he endorsed just before his death, or perhaps he made them from the original, which he then destroyed or surreptitiously returned. When he was examined on August 11, the three preachers, Galloway, Hall, and Hewatt, and the minister of Duddingston, Mr. Lumisden, were present. He was entreated not to perjure himself to the injury of innocent people, dead or alive, 'by making and forging of lies.' He renewed his protestations of truth, asked Mr. Galloway to pray for him, wept, and repeated his averments.

On August 12 Sprot was tried and hanged at Edinburgh. He renewed his protestations from every corner of the scaffold, in the most vigorous language. Abbot, who was present, declares that he thrice gave a loud clap with his hands while he swung, as a proof that he adhered in death to his last words. A similar story is told of Kirkcaldy of Grange, and I think in other cases. Nothing of the sort is in the first draft of the official account of his dying behaviour (a draft manifestly drawn up near the spot), nor in the official account itself.

Much value was set on dying confessions. When the preacher, Robert Bruce, refused to believe the King's account of the Gowrie tragedy, he said that one proof would satisfy him. Let Andrew Henderson, the man in the turret, be hanged. If he persisted in his confession on the scaffold, Mr. Bruce would believe. The King declined to make this abominable experiment. In Sprot's case his dying confession did not move the Kirk party. Calderwood hints that Mr. Galloway 'had the most speech to Sprot on the scaffold,' and so kept him true to a dying lie. He adds that Spottiswoode said to Galloway 'I am afraid this man make us all ashamed,' that is, by retracting his confessions. Mr. Patrick answered, 'Let alone, my Lord, I shall warrant him.' Had Andrew Henderson swung, constant to his confession, the Presbyterian sceptics would have found similar reasons for disbelief.

What are *we* to believe? Did Sprot go wherever he went with a blasphemous lie in his mouth? A motive for such vehemence of religious hypocrisy is difficult to find. Conceivably he had promise of benefits to his family. Conceivably he was an atheist, and 'took God in his own hand.' Conceivably his artistic temperament induced him to act his lie well, as he had a lie to act.

Yet all this is not satisfactory.

Let us take the unromantic view of common sense. It is this: Logan was a restless, disappointed intriguer and debauchee. He sold his lands, some to acquire a partnership with Lord Willoughby in a vessel trading to America; this vessel, or another, is among his assets recorded in his inventory. All his lands he sold — not that he was in debt, he was a large lender — for purposes of profligacy. These proceedings gave rise to gossip. The Laird must be selling his lands to evade forfeiture. He *must* have been engaged in the Gowrie mystery. Then Logan dies (July 1606). Bower is also dead (January 1606). It occurs to Sprot that there is money in all this, and, having lost Logan's business, the hungry Sprot needs money. He therefore makes a pact with some of Logan's debtors. He, for pay, will clear them of their debts to Logan's executors, whom he will enable them to blackmail. Logan's descendants by two marriages were finally his heirs, with Anna, a minor, daughter of his last wife, who had hoped to have no children by him, the free-spoken Lady Restalrig, *née* Ker (Marion). They, of course, were robbed, by Logan's forfeiture, of 33,000 marks, owed to Logan by Dunbar and Balmerino. Meanwhile, just after Logan's death, in autumn 1606, Sprot forges Letters I, II, III, IV, V, and the torn letter, with two compromising letters to Bower, two to Ninian Chirnside, and an 'eik,' or addition, of compromising items to a memorandum on business, which, in September 1605, Logan gave to Bower and John Bell before he started for London and Paris. All these documents, the plot-letters, I, II, III, IV, V, and the rest (which lie before me), are mere instruments of blackmail, intended to terrorise the guardians of the Logans.

So far, all is clear. But, in April 1608, Sprot has blabbed and is arrested. The forgeries are found among his papers, or given up by Chirnside. Sprot confesses to the plot, to Logan's share of it, and to the authenticity of the letters and papers. He is then tortured, recants his confession, and avows the forgery of the papers. The Government is disappointed. In July, Dunbar comes down from town, treats Sprot leniently, and gives him medical attendance. Sprot now confesses to his genuine knowledge of the plot, but unflinchingly maintains that all the papers so far produced are forgeries, based on facts.

Why does he do this? He has a better chance of pardon, if he returns to the statement that they are genuine. If they are, the Government, which he must propitiate, has a far stronger hand, for the forgeries then defied detection. However, for no conceivable reason, unless it be either conscience or the vanity of the artist, Sprot now insists on claiming the letters as his own handiwork. On this point he was inaccessible to temptation, if temptation was offered. If he lies as to Letter II having been dictated by Logan, he lies by way of relapse into the habit of a lifetime, and so on other points. He keeps back all mention of Letter IV, till the last ember of hope of life is extinct.

It has not been hitherto known, either that Sprot kept back Letter IV till almost his dying day, or that he then, at last, revealed it. Lord Cromarty's averment that it was found in Sprot's kist was disbelieved. It is true, however, and now we ask, why did Sprot keep back Letter IV to the last, and why, having so long concealed it, did he say where it was, after all hope of life was over?

The answer can only be conjectural. Some might guess thus: till Letter IV was confessed to and found, Government had not received from Sprot one scrap of documentary evidence that could be used against Logan's heirs. Scoundrel as he was, Sprot could not guess that the Privy Council would use papers which were confessed forgeries to save Dunbar and Balmerino from paying some 33,000 marks to Logan's executors. The wretched Sprot had robbed the orphans on a small scale, but he would not, by producing the genuine Logan letter, enable the Lords to ruin them utterly. Bad as he was, the Laird had been kind to Sprot. Therefore he kept back, and by many a lie concealed, his real pieces of evidence, Letter IV, and I, if I is genuine. So far he acted on a remnant of natural conscience.

But Sprot, alas, had a religious conscience. He had a soul to be saved. The preachers had prayed with him. When death was but forty-eight hours distant, he feared to die with a lie in his mouth. So *now*, at last, he spoke of Letter IV as his real model. Perhaps he hoped that it would not be found, and probably it was in some secret drawer or false bottom of his kist. It was found, and was used, along with the confessed forgeries (which even Sprot could not have anticipated), to destroy the inheritance of the children, at Logan's posthumous trial in 1609.

But the obvious reply to this hypothesis is, that Letter IV, by the evidence of modern experts (evidence unanimous and irresistible), is just as much forged as all the rest, is just as certainly in Sprot's imitation of Logan's handwriting. This being so, why did Sprot keep it back so long, and why, having kept it back, did he, almost in his last hour, produce it, and say (if he did) that it was genuine, and his model, as it certainly was? This is the last enigma of Sprot. His motives defy my poor efforts to decipher them. Even if the substance of IV is genuine, what were Sprot's motives? I do not feel assured that Sprot really maintained the genuineness of the *handwriting* of Letter IV. His remark that he kept Logan's letter only *till* he forged others on it, as a model, certainly implies that he did not keep it *after* he had done his forgeries, and therefore that our Letter IV is, confessedly, *not* Logan's original. Certainly it is not.

XVI. WHAT IS LETTER IV?

The crucial question now arises, *What is Letter IV*? If it be genuine (in substance), then, whatever the details of the Gowrie Conspiracy may have been, a conspiracy there was. This can only be denied by ignorance. If the enterprise fails, says the author of Letter IV, the plotters will lose their lives, their lands and houses will be ‘wrecked,’ their very names will be extirpated; and, in fact, James did threaten to extirpate the name of Ruthven. The letter deliberately means High Treason. The objection of Calderwood, and of all the Ruthven apologists, that Sprot confessed to having forged *all* the letters, we have shown to rest on lack of information. He said, at last, that he had forged many papers (some did not appear in Court in 1609), and that he forged *three* letters on the model of Letter IV. These three letters may either be I, III, and V; or III, V, and the torn letter. The case of Letter I is peculiar. Though it contains much that is in Letter IV, and might have been taken from it, the repetitions need not imply copying from Letter IV. Byron and others would say the same things, on the same day, to two or three correspondents. Letter IV is subsequent, as dated, to Letter I, and Logan might say to the Unknown, on July 18, what, after the announced interval of ten days, he said to Gowrie. Letter I contains this remark on the nature of the plot: ‘It is not far by’ (not unlike) ‘that form, with the like stratagem, whereof we had conference in Cap. h,’ which may be Capheaton, on the English side of the Border. Probably Logan often discussed ingenious ways of catching the King: new plots were hatched about once a month, as Cecil’s and the other correspondence of the age abundantly proves. The plot (the letter says) is like that in a Paduan story of a nobleman. The rest of the letter is identical with the matter of III, IV, and V. We cannot be sure whether Letter I is one of the three forged on IV or not.

One thing is certain, Letters III and V, to the Unknown, *are* modelled on IV, as is the torn letter. Sprot said this was the case, and every reader of III, V, and the torn letter (given above) must see that he tells the truth. These letters contain no invention at all, they merely repeat Letter IV. Any man who could invent IV had genius enough to alter his tunes in III, V. and the torn letter. But Sprot never deserts his model. This is an argument for the authenticity in substance of Letter IV. The other three contain nothing that is not in Letter IV, and everything that is in it, except what is personal to Gowrie, and would be inappropriate if addressed to the Unknown (I, III, V), or to Chirnside (torn letter).

There is (1) the mention of a Paduan adventure, the basis of the plot, a thing that Sprot is very unlikely to have invented. With all my admiration for Sprot, I do think that the Paduan touch is beyond him. This occurs in Letter IV, ‘the good sport that M.A., your lordship’s brother, told me of a nobleman in Padua. It is a parasteur’ (? *à propos*) ‘to this purpose we have in hand.’ This appears in Letter I, ‘reckless toys of Padua,’ and in Letter V, ‘bid M. A. remember on the sport he told me of Padua.’

2. The constant applause of Bower. This is in Letter IV, and in I, III, V, and the torn letter.

3. Meeting with Alexander Ruthven. This is in IV, and in I and V.

4. The meeting at Fastcastle, which is to be quiet and well-provisioned. This is in IV, and in I, III, V.

5. Lord Home and Mr. Rhynd are to know nothing. This is in IV, and in I, and V, and the torn letter, utterly needless repetition.

6. The King’s hunting, the opportunity for the plot. This is in IV, and in I, but that is natural.

7. Directions as to returning the letters. These are in IV, in I, III, V, and the torn letter.

8. Injunctions of secrecy. These are in IV, and I, III, V, and in the torn letter.

9. Logan will be true, ‘although the scaffold were already set up.’ This is a phrase of Letter IV, and recurs in Letter III and in the torn letter.

10. Logan’s elevation of heart on receipt of Gowrie’s letter. This occurs in IV and in V.

Who can doubt that Letter IV is the source, followed servilely by the forger, of the torn letter and I (?), III, V? If Sprot could invent the substance of IV, why was he so chary of invention in all the other letters?

It is clear, moreover, that the Unknown himself is derived from a line in Letter IV: ‘I have already sent another letter to the gentleman your Lordship knows, as the bearer will inform you of his answer.’ The bearer is always Bower, so the ‘gentleman’ is to be conceived as in Gowrie’s neighbourhood, or on the route thither, as one bearer serves both for Gowrie and the gentleman. Therefore, before July 5, Sprot (who had no idea as to who the gentleman was) identified the ‘gentleman,’ the Unknown of I, III, V, with the laird of Kinfauns, near Perth, or with the Constable of Dundee; but he withdrew these imputations, craving the pardon of the accused.

Thus it stands to reason that I (?), III, V, and the torn letter are forged on the model of IV. Sprot introduces no novelties in I, III, V, or the torn epistle. He harps eternally on the strings of IV. The only variation is (V) the mention of ‘one other man with you,’ in the proposed sail to Fastcastle.

It is not easy for criticism to evade the conclusion that I (?), III, V, and the torn letter are, indeed, forgeries modelled on IV. And what is IV?

Is Letter IV in substance genuine? If not, why did Sprot keep it back till the rope was noosed for his neck? A guess at his possible reasons for so keeping it back (as the only real documentary evidence extant against the orphans of Logan) we have given, but this fails if Letter IV was a forgery: as in handwriting it was.

Then there are the contents of Letter IV. To myself, and to Mr. Anderson, it does not seem probable, it seems hardly credible, that Sprot could have *invented* the contents of Letter IV. If he did, his power of rendering character might have been envied by the author of the Waverley Novels. In IV Logan is painted, the 'main loose man, but a good fellow,' with a master hand. The thing is freely, largely, and spontaneously executed. What especially moves me to think IV no invention, is the reference to the Paduan incident or romance, 'the good sport that Mr. Alexander told me of the nobleman of Padua, it is *à propos* to the purpose we have in hand.' This is casually inserted in the last words of the postscript, not blazoned in the text, as in the forgeries confessedly modelled on this letter. The whole tone of the letter is in keeping with the alleged author's temperament. It is respectful, but far from servile. Gowrie is a great Earl, but Logan is of an old and good name. There is the genial sensualism of the man, with his promise of wine and 'a fine hattit kit' (a kind of syllabub). There is the joyous forward glance at an anniversary dinner, with Bothwell, to which the King's hunting of *this* year shall furnish the dainty cheer; '*hoc jocose*!' At this dinner Bothwell and Gowrie, old allies, are to meet at Logan's board, which may suggest that Bothwell and Gowrie are still working together.

The contempt for Lord Home as a conspirator— 'in good faith he will never help his friend or harm his foe' — and the praises of Bower, are characteristic, and, here, are in place; elsewhere they are idle repetitions, mere copies. The apology for bad writing — Logan could not employ a secretary in this case — is natural: the two days writing agrees with Sprot's evidence. (.)

Could Sprot have invented all this: and, in his confessed forgeries, failed to invent anything? Would not the fertility of his genius have hurried him into fresh developments, and characteristic details, appropriate to the imaginary correspondent whom he addresses? These considerations may seem a mere leaning on 'internal evidence,' and 'literary instinct,' broken reeds. But the case is buttressed by the long and, on any theory, purposeless retention of Letter IV, the secrecy concerning it, and the confession, so obviously true, that Letter IV is the source and model of the forgeries. These facts have hitherto been unknown to writers who believed the whole correspondence to be a forgery done for the

Government.

Both Mr. Anderson (who has greatly aided me by his acuteness and learned experience of old MSS.) and myself disbelieve that Logan's hand wrote Letter IV. The matter, the contents of Letter IV, may be Logan's, but the existing document may be 'a Sprot after Logan.' Sprot may have reinserted the genuine Logan IV among Bower's collection of papers, pretended to find it, and returned it to Logan, after copying it *in Logan's hand*. Or he may have copied it in his 'course hand' (the copy in the Haddington MSS.), and later, in autumn 1606, after Logan's death, have rewritten his copy in an imitation of Logan's hand. The contents, Mr. Anderson believes, as I do, are, none the less, genuine Logan.

If readers accept these conclusions, there was a Gowrie conspiracy, and Logan was in it. 'I trow your Lordship has a proof of my constancy already ere now,' he says in Letter IV, and Gowrie may have had a proof, in his early conspiracies of 1593–1594, or in a testimonial to Logan from Bothwell, Gowrie's old ally.

But, if readers do not accept our conclusions, they may still rest, perhaps, on the arguments adduced in the earlier chapters of this essay, to demonstrate that neither accident nor the machinations of the King, but an enterprise of their own, caused the Slaughter of the Ruthvens. The infamous conduct of the Privy Council in 1608–1609 does not prove that, in 1600, the King carried out a conspiracy in itself impossible.

I have found nothing tending to show that King James was ever made aware of Sprot's confessions of forgery. It is true that Sir William Hart, the Lord Justice, went to Court after Sprot's death, and, in September, the Scottish Privy Council asked James to send him home again. But Hart need not have told all the truth to James.

There is a kind of rejoicing *naïveté* in all of James's references to the Gowrie affair, which seems to me hardly consistent with his disbelief in his own prowess on that occasion. If one may conjecture, one would guess that the Privy Council and the four preachers managed to persuade themselves, Sprot being the liar whom we know, that he lied when he called his Logan papers forgeries. The real facts may have been concealed from the King. Mr. Gunton, the Librarian at Hatfield, informs me that, had he not seen Letter IV (which he is sure was *written* by Sprot), he does not think he should have suspected the genuineness of Letters II and III, after comparing them with the undoubted letters of Logan in the Cecil manuscripts. The Government and the four preachers, with such documents in their hands, documents still apt to delude, may easily have brought themselves to disbelieve Sprot's assertion that they were all forgeries. Let us hope that they did!

XVII. INFERENCES AS TO THE CASKET LETTERS

The affair of Sprot has an obvious bearing on that other mystery, the authenticity of the Casket Letters attributed to Queen Mary. As we know, she, though accused, was never allowed to see the letters alleged to be hers. We know that, in December 1568, these documents were laid before an assembly of English nobles at Hampton Court. They were compared, for orthography and handwriting, with genuine letters written by the Queen to Elizabeth, and Cecil tells us that ‘no difference was found.’ It was a rapid examination, by many persons, on a brief winter day, partly occupied by other business. If experts existed, we are not informed that they were present. The Casket Letters have disappeared since the death of the elder Gowrie, in 1584. From him, Elizabeth had vainly sought to purchase them. They were indispensable, said Bowes, her ambassador, to ‘the secrecy of the cause.’ Gowrie would not be tempted, and it is not improbable that he carried so valuable a treasure with him, when, in April 1584, he retired to Dundee, to escape by sea if the Angus conspiracy failed.

At Dundee he was captured, after defending the house in which he was residing. That house was pulled down recently; nothing was discovered. But fable runs that, at the destruction of another ancient house in Dundee, ‘Lady Wark’s Stairs,’ *a packet of old letters in French* was found in a hiding hole contrived within a chimney. The letters were not examined by any competent person, and nobody knows what became of them. Romance relates that they were the Casket Letters, entrusted by Gowrie to a friend. It is equally probable that he yielded them to the King, when he procured his remission for the Raid of Ruthven. In any case, they are lost.

Consequently we cannot compare the Casket Letters with genuine letters by Mary. On the other hand, as I chanced to notice that genuine letters of Logan’s exist at Hatfield, I was enabled, by the kindness of the Marquis of Salisbury, and of Sir Stair Agnew, to have both the Hatfield Logan letters, and the alleged Logan letters produced in 1609, photographed and compared, at Hatfield and at the General Register House in Edinburgh. By good fortune, the Earl of Haddington also possesses (what we could not expect to find in the case of the Casket Letters) documents in the ordinary handwriting of George Sprot, the confessed forger of the plot-letters attributed to Logan. The result of comparison has been to convince Mr. Gunton at Hatfield, Mr. Anderson in Edinburgh, Professor Hume Brown, and other gentlemen of experience, that Sprot forged all the plot-letters. Their reasons for holding this opinion entirely satisfy me, and have been drawn up by Mr. Anderson, in a convincing report. To put the matter briefly, the forged letters present the marked peculiarities of Logan's orthography, noted by the witnesses in 1609. But they also contain many peculiarities of spelling which are not Logan's, but are Sprot's. The very dotting of the 'i's' is Sprot's, not Logan's. The long 's' of Logan is heavily and clumsily imitated. There is a distinct set of peculiarities never found in Logan's undisputed letters: in Sprot's own letters always found. The hand is more rapid and flowing than that of Logan. Not being myself familiar with the Scottish handwriting of the period, my own opinion is of no weight, but I conceive that the general effect of Logan's hand, in 1586, is not precisely like that of the plot-letters.

My point, however, is that, in 1609, Sprot's forgeries were clever enough to baffle witnesses of unblemished honour, very familiar with the genuine handwriting of Logan. The Rev. Alexander Watson, minister of the Kirk of Coldinghame (where Logan was wont to attend), alleged that '*the character of every letter* resembles perfectly Robert's handwrit, *every way*.' The spelling, which was peculiar, was also Logan's as a rule. Mr. Watson produced three genuine letters by Logan, before the Lords of the Articles (who were very sceptical), and satisfied them that the plot-letters were the laird's. Mr. Alexander Smith, minister of Chirnside, was tutor to Logan's younger children; he gave identical evidence. Sir John Arnott, Provost of Edinburgh, a man of distinction and eminence, produced four genuine letters by the Laird, 'agreeing perfectly in spelling and character with the plot-letters. The sheriff clerk of Berwick, William Home, in Aytoun Mill (a guest, I think, at Logan's 'great Yules'), and John Home, notary in Eyemouth, coincided. The minister of Aytoun, Mr. William Hogg, produced a letter of Logan to the Laird of Aytoun, but was not absolutely so certain as the other witnesses. 'He thinks them' (the plot-letters) 'like his writing, and that the same appear to be very like his write, by the conformity of letters and spelling.'

Thus, at the examination of Logan's real and forged letters, as at the examination of Queen Mary's real and Casket letters, in spelling and handwriting 'no difference was found.' Yet the plot-letters were all forged, and Mr. Anderson shows that, though 'no difference was *found*,' many differences existed. Logan had a better chance of acquittal than Mary. The Lords of the Articles, writes Sir Thomas Hamilton to the King (June 21, 1609), 'had preconceived hard opinions of Restalrig's process.' Yet they were convinced by the evidence of the witnesses, and by their own eyes.

From the error of the Lords of the Articles, in 1609, it obviously follows that the English Lords, at Hampton Court, in 1568, may have been unable to detect proofs of forgery in the Casket Letters, which, if the Casket Letters could now be compared with those of Mary, would be at once discovered by modern experts. In short, the evidence as to Mary's handwriting, even if as unanimously accepted, by the English Lords, as Cecil declares, is not worth a 'hardhead,' a debased copper Scottish coin. It is worth no more than the opinion of the Lords of the Articles in the case of the letters attributed to Restalrig.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. THE FRONTISPIECE

Gowrie's Arms and Ambitions

The frontispiece of this volume is copied from the design of the Earl of Gowrie's arms, in what is called 'Workman's MS.,' at the Lyon's office in Edinburgh. The shield displays, within the royal treasure, the arms of Ruthven in the first and fourth, those of Cameron and Halyburton in the second and third quarters. The supporters are, dexter, a Goat; sinister, a Ram; the crest is a Ram's head. The motto is not given; it was Deid Schaw. The shield is blotted by transverse strokes of the pen, the whole rude design having been made for the purpose of being thus scored out, after Gowrie's death, posthumous trial and forfeiture, in 1600.

On the left of the sinister supporter is an armed man, in the Gowrie livery. His left hand grasps his sword-hilt, his right is raised to an imperial crown, hanging above him in the air; from his lips issue the words, Tibi Soli, 'for thee alone.' Sir James Balfour Paul, Lyon, informs me that he knows no other case of such additional supporter, or whatever the figure ought to be called.

This figure does not occur on any known Ruthven seal. It is not on that of the first Earl of Gowrie, affixed to a deed of February 1583–1584. It is not on a seal used in 1597, by John, third Earl, given in Henry Laing's 'Catalogue of Scottish Seals' (vol. i. under 'Ruthven'). But, in Crawford's 'Peerage of Scotland' (1716), , the writer gives the arms of the third Earl (John, the victim of August 5, 1600). In place of the traditional Scottish motto *Deid Schaw*, is the Latin translation, *Facta Probant*. The writer says (Note C), 'This from an authentic copy of his arms, *richly illuminated in the year* 1597, with his name and titles, *viz.* "Joannes Ruthven, Comes de Gowry, Dominus de Ruthven," &c., in my hands.'

In 1597, as the archives of the Faculty of Law, in the University of Padua, show, Gowrie was a student of Padua. It is also probable that, in 1597, he attained his majority. He certainly had his arms richly illuminated, and he added to his ancestral bearings what Crawfurd describes thus: 'On the dexter a chivaleer, garnish'd with the Earl's coat of arms, *pointing with a sword upward to an imperial crown*, with this device, Tibi Soli.'

In Workman's MS., the figure points to the crown with the open right hand, and the left hand is on the sword-hilt. The illuminated copy of 1597, once in the possession of Crawfurd, must be the more authentic; the figure *here* points the sword at a crown, which is *Tibi Soli*, ‘For thee’ (Gowrie?) ‘alone.’

Now on no known Ruthven seal, as we saw, does this figure appear, not even on a seal of Gowrie himself, used in 1597. Thus it is perhaps not too daring to suppose that Gowrie, when in Italy in 1597, added this emblematic figure to his ancestral bearings. What does the figure symbolise?

On this point we have a very curious piece of evidence. On June 22, 1609, Ottavio Baldi wrote, from Venice, to James, now King of England. His letter was forwarded by Sir Henry Wotton. Baldi says that he has received from Sir Robert Douglas, and is sending to the King by his nephew — a Cambridge student— ‘a strange relique out of this country.’ He obtained it thus: Sir Robert Douglas, while at home in Scotland, had ‘heard speech’ of ‘a certain emblem or impresa,’ left by Gowrie in Padua. Meeting a Scot in Padua, Douglas asked where this emblem now was, and he was directed to the school of a teacher of dancing. There the emblem hung, ‘among other devices and remembrances of his scholars.’ Douglas had a copy of the emblem made; and immediately ‘acquainted me with the quality of the thing,’ says Baldi. ‘We agreed together, that it should be fit, if possible, to obtain the very original itself, and to leave in the room thereof the copy that he had already taken, which he did effect by well handling the matter.

‘Thus hath your Majesty now a view, *in umbra*, of those detestable thoughts which afterwards appeared *in facto*, according to the said Earl’s own *mot*. For what other sense or allusion can the reaching at a crown with a sword in a stretched posture, and the impersonating of his device in a blackamore, yield to any intelligent and honest beholder?’

From Baldi’s letter we learn that, in the device left by Gowrie at Padua, the figure pointing a sword at the crown was a negro, thus varying from the figure in Workman’s MS., and that in the illuminated copy emblazoned in 1597, and possessed in 1716 by Crawfurd. Next, we learn that Sir Robert Douglas had heard talk of this emblem in Scotland, before he left for Italy. Lastly, a *mot* on the subject by the Earl himself was reported, to the effect that the device set forth ‘in a shadow,’ what was intended to be executed ‘in very deed.’

Now how could Sir Robert Douglas, in Scotland, hear talk of what had been done and said years ago by Gowrie in Padua? Sir Robert Douglas was descended from Archibald Douglas of Glenbervie (*ob.* 1570), who was ancestor of the Catholic Earl of Angus (*flor.* 1596). This Archibald of Glenbervie had a son, Archibald, named in his father’s testament, but otherwise unknown. Rather senior to Gowrie at the University of Padua, and in the same faculty of law, was an Archibald Douglas. He may have been a kinsman of Sir Robert Douglas, himself of the Glenbervie family, and from him Sir Robert, while still in

Scotland, may have heard of Gowrie's device, left by him at Padua, and of his *mot* about *in umbra* and *in facto*. But, even if these two Douglases were not akin, or did not meet, still Keith, Lindsay, and Ker of Newbattle, all contemporaries of Gowrie at Padua, might bring home the report of Gowrie's enigmatic device, and of his *mot* there-anent. Had the emblem been part of the regular arms of Ruthven, Sir Robert Douglas, and every Scot of quality, would have known all about it, and seen no mystery in it.

It will scarcely be denied that the assumption by Gowrie of the figure in his livery, pointing a sword at the crown, and exclaiming 'For Thee Only,' does suggest that wildly ambitious notions were in the young man's mind. What other sense can the emblem bear? How can such ideas be explained?

In an anonymous and dateless MS. cited in 'The Life of John Earl of Gowrie,' by the Rev. John Scott of Perth (1818), it is alleged that Elizabeth, in April 1600, granted to Gowrie, then in London, the guard and honours appropriate to a Prince of Wales. The same Mr. Scott suggests a Royal pedigree for Gowrie. His mother, wife of William, first Earl, was Dorothea Stewart, described in a list of Scottish nobles (1592) as 'sister of umquhile Lord Methven.' Now Henry Stewart, Lord Methven ('Lord Muffin,' as Henry VIII used to call him), was the third husband of the sister of Henry VIII, Margaret Tudor, wife, first of James IV, then of the Earl of Angus (by whom she had Margaret, Countess of Lennox, and grandmother of James VI), then of Lord Methven. Now if Margaret Tudor had issue by Henry Stewart, Lord Methven, and if that issue was Dorothea, mother of John, third Earl of Gowrie, or was Dorothea's father or mother, that Earl was Elizabeth's cousin. Now Burnet, touching on the Gowrie mystery, says that his own father had 'taken great pains to inquire into that matter, and did always believe it was a real conspiracy. . . . Upon the King's death, Gowrie stood next to the succession of the crown of England,' namely, as descended from Margaret Tudor by Henry (Burnet says 'Francis'!), Lord Methven. Margaret and Methven, says Burnet, had a son, 'made Lord Methven by James V. In the patent he is called *frater noster uterinus*'— 'Our brother uterine.' '*He* had only a daughter, who was mother or grandmother to the Earl of Gowrie, so that by this he might be glad to put the King out of the way, that so he might stand next to the succession of the crown of England.' If this were true, the meaning of Gowrie's device would be flagrantly conspicuous. But where is that patent of James V? Burnet conceivably speaks of it on the information of his father, who 'took great pains to inquire into the particulars of that matter,' so that he could tell his son, 'one thing which none of the historians have taken any notice of,' namely, our Gowrie's Tudor descent, and his claims (failing James *and his issue*) to the crown of England. Now Burnet's father was almost a contemporary of the Gowrie affair. Of the preachers of that period, the King's enemies, Burnet's father knew Mr. Davidson (*ob.* 1603) and Mr. Robert Bruce, and had listened to their prophecies. 'He told me,' says Burnet, 'of many of their predictions that he himself heard them throw out, which had no effect.' Davidson was an old man in ; Bruce, for his disbelief in James's account of the conspiracy, was suspended in that year, though he lived till 1631, and, doubtless, prophesied in select circles. Mr. Bruce long lay concealed in the house of Burnet's great-grandmother, daughter of Sir John Arnot, a witness in the trial of Logan of Restalrig. Thus Burnet's father had every means of knowing the belief of the contemporaries of Gowrie, and he may conceivably be Burnet's source for the tale of Gowrie's Tudor descent and Royal claims. They were almost or rather quite baseless, but they were current.

In fact, Dorothea Stewart, mother of Gowrie, was certainly a daughter of Henry Stewart, Lord Methven, and of Janet Stewart, of the House of Atholl. We find no trace of issue born to Margaret Tudor by her third husband, Lord Methven. Yet Gowrie's emblem, adopted by him at Padua in 1597, and his device left in the Paduan dancing school, do distinctly point to some wild idea of his that some crown or other was 'for him alone.' At the trial of Gowrie's father, in 1584, we find mention of his 'challenginge that honor to be of his Hignes blud,' but *that* must refer to the relationship of the Ruthvens and the King through the Angus branch of the Douglases.

This question as to the meaning of Gowrie's emblem came rather early into the controversy. William Sanderson, in 1656, published Lives of Mary and of James VI; he says: 'I have a manuscript which relates that, in Padua, the Earl of Gowrie, among other impressa (*sic*) in a fencing school, caused to be painted, for his devise, a hand and sword aiming at a crown.' Mr. Scott, in 1818, replied that the device, with the Ruthven arms, 'is engraven on a stone taken from Gowrie House in Perth, and preserved in the house of Freeland' (a Ruthven house). 'There is also, I have been told, a seal with the same engraving upon it, which probably had been used by the Earls of Gowrie and by their predecessors, the Lords of Ruthven.' But we know of no such seal among Gowrie or Ruthven seals, nor do we know the date of the engraving on stone cited by Mr. Scott. In his opinion the armed man and crown might be an addition granted by James III to William, first Lord Ruthven, in 1487–88. Ruthven took the part of the unhappy King, who was mysteriously slain near Bannockburn. Mr. Scott then guesses that this addition of 1488 implied that the armed man pointed his sword at the crown, and exclaimed *Tibi Soli*, meaning 'For Thee, O James III alone, *not* for thy rebellious son,' James IV. It may be so, but we have no evidence for the use of the emblem before 1597. Moreover, in Gowrie's arms, in Workman's

MS., the sword is sheathed. Again, the emblem at Padua showed a 'black-a-more,' or negro, and Sir Robert Douglas could not but have recognised that the device was only part of the ancestral Ruthven arms, if that was the case. The 'black-a-more' was horrifying to Ottavio Baldi, as implying a dark intention.

Here we leave the additional and certainly curious mystery of Gowrie's claims, as 'shadowed' in his chosen emblem. I know not if it be germane to the matter to add that after Bothwell, in 1593, had seized James, by the aid of our Gowrie's mother and sister, he uttered a singular hint to Toby Matthew, Dean of Durham. He intruded himself on the horrified Dean, hot from his successful raid, described with much humour the kidnapping of the untrussed monarch, and let it be understood that he was under the protection of Elizabeth, *that there was a secret candidate for James's crown*, and that he expected to be himself Lieutenant of the realm of Scotland. Bothwell was closely *lié* with Lady Gowrie (Dorothea Stewart), and our Gowrie presently joined him in a 'band' to serve Elizabeth and subdue James.

APPENDIX B: THE CONTEMPORARY RUTHVEN VINDICATION

(State Papers, Scotland (Elizabeth), vol. lxvi. No. 52)
The verie maner of the Erll of Gowrie and his brother their death, quha war killit at Perth the fyft of August by the kingis servanttis his Matie being present.

Vpone thurisday the last of July . . . . Perth from Strebrane . . . . bene ahunting accompainit wth . . . . purpose to have ridden to . . . . mother. Bot he had no sooner . . . . aspersauit fyn . . . . vpone such . . . . addressit thame selffis . . . thay continewit daylie . . . Amangis the rest Doctor Herries . . . Satirday the first of August feinying himself to . . . of purpose to . . . and my lordis house. This man be my Lord was w . . . and convoyit throche . . the house and the secreit pairts schawin him.

Vpon tysday my servanttis vnderstanding that my was to ryde to Lot . . . obteinit licence to go . . . thair effairis and to prepare thameselfis. Whylk my lord wold have grantit to thame if they . . . any treason in . . .

The same day Mr. Alexander being send for be the king . . . tymes befoir, raid to facland accompaneit wth Andro Ruthven and Andro Hendirson, of mynd not to have returnit . . . bot to have met his brother my lord the next morning at the watter syde. And Andro Hendirsonis confessioun testifeit this . . . tuke his ludgeing in facland for this nygt.

At his cuming to facland he learnit that his Matie was a huntting, quhair eftir brekfast he addrest him self. And eftir conference wt his Matie, he directit Andro Hendirsone to ryd befoir, and schaw my lord the king wald come to Perth quhat occasion he knew not, and desyrit him to haist becaus he knew my lord vnforsene and vnprovydit for his cuming.

The kingis Matie eftir this resolution raid to Perth accompaneit wth thrie score horse quhair (?) threttie come a lytle before him . . . remainit . . .

My lord being at dennar Andro Hendirsone cwmes and sayis to his Lordship that the kingis Matie was cummand. My lord . . . quhat his Matie . . . his hienes was. The vther ansuris . . . Then my Lord caused discover the tabel and directit his Officeris to go to the towne to seik prouision for his Mateis dennare. His Lordship’s self accompaneit wt fower men (?) . . . twa onlie war his awin servanttis went to the south . . . of Perth to meit his Matie quhair in presence of all the company his Matie kyssit my lord at meitting.

When his Matie enterit in my lordis house his Maties awin porteris resavit the

keyis of the gaitt . . . ylk thay keipit quh . . . murther was endit.

His Mateis self commandit to haist the dennare wt all expedition becaus he was hungrie eftir huntting quhilk . . . the schort warning and suddentlie dispaschit. His Mateis sendis Mr. Alexander to call Sir Thomas Erskyne and Jon Ramsay to folow him to the challmer, quhair his Matie, Sir Thomas Erskyne, Jon Ramsay, Doctor Hereis, and Mr. Wilsone being convenit slew and threw him down the stair, how and for quhat cause . . . thame selfis, and no doubt wald reveill if thay war was als straytlie toyit in the . . . men . . . kingis servanttis cummes to the . . . at dennare in the hall the . . . saying my lordis will ye . . . calling for horse . . . at his Maties . . . suddaine departure . . . and callit for his horse and stayit not . . . past out to the streit qr abyding his horse he hearis His Matie call on him out at the chalmer window my Lord of Gowrie traittoris hes murtherit yor brother alreddie and . . . ye suffir me to be murtherit also. My Lord hering yis makis to the yait (?) quhair himself was . . . in and Mr. Thomas Cranstoun that thrust in before him, the rest was excludit by violence of the kingis servanttis and cumpany quha . . . the hous and yett. My lord being in at the yett and entering in the turnpyck to pass vp to his Matie he fand his brother thrawin down ye stairs dead. And when he came to the chalmer dure Mr. Thomas Cranstoun being before him was stricken throw the body twyse and drawin bak be my lord, quha enterit in the chalmer calling if the king was alyve, bot the . . . , quhylk was in the chalmer . . . him wt stroke of sworde, bot being unable to ovircum him, and some of thame woundit, they promisit him to lat him see the king alyve according to his desyre, and in the meantyme he croceing his two swordis was be Jon Ramsay strok throw ye body, and falling wt the stroke recommendit his saule to God, protesting before his heavinlie Matie that he deit his trew subiect and the kingis. And this far is certanely knawin & collectit pairtly be the trew affirmacione of sum quha war present of the kingis awin folkis and last of all be the deposicionnis of Mr. Thomas Cranstoun, George Craigingelt, and J. (?) Barroun, quha eftir grevous & intolerable torturis tuke it vponn thair saluaciun & damnatioun that they never knew the Earle of Gowrie to carie any evill mynd to the kyng lat be to intend treasoun against him, bot rather wald die wt that that the Earle of Gowrie his brother and thay thame selfis deit innocent: . . . Hendersone if he be put to the lyke tryall . . . bot he will confess that he was servind the Lordis al . . . in the hall quhen the Mr was murtherit and quhen the kingis broght the newis that his Matie was away & fra that I hear . . . that he was sene till the king causit him to come vponn promeis that his lyfe and landis suld be saif, for quhat cause the effect will . . . As for the buke of Necromancie whiche was alledgit to have bene deprehendit on my lord it (?) was proposeit to the earles pedagog Mr. Wr Rind (?), quha schawis that he knew my lord to have ane memoriall buik quhairin he wreat all the notable thingis he learned in his absence, ather be sicht or hearing, bot as for any buik of Necromancie nor his medling wt necromanceis he never knew thereof.

It may be my gude Lord governor that the maner of the earle of Gowrie and his brotheris death befoir writtin be so far frome yor honoure in mynd that yt (?) may move farther doubtes to aryse theryn. The cause hereof I vnderstand is pairtlie the difference of the last report frome the reporttis preceidding in that it determines na thing concerning the cause of his Maties sending for the Mr of Gowrie nor concerning. . . . speiches and . . . and in the chalmer. . . . pairtlie becaus . . . prevaile . . . or speik against his Matie albeit thay kowe . . . some thair be that corse . . . apat (?) to his Maties sayingis that thay will swear thame all albeit thair consciences persuade thame of contrair. Sua it is hard for yor Lordship to be resoluit be reporttis. Bot if it will pleas yor Lordship to be acquent wt the causis and incidentis preceidding this dolorous effect, I hoip yor Lordship wilbe the mair easilie persuadit of the treuth. And first of all the evill mynd careit be my lord. . . . Colonel (?) Stewart and his privie complaint & informacioune to his Matie thair anent.

Secondlie the opposition laid (?) be my lord himself in the Conventioun and be the barronnis, as is thocht be his instigacioun, against (?) his Matie.

Thirdlie the great haitrent and envy of the courtieris in particularis, quha had persavit him to be ane great staye of thair commoditie, and sa be fals reportis and calumneis did go about to kendle and incense his Maties wrath against him privilie.

And fourtlie the over great expectatioune the Kirk and cuntrie had of him wt ane singular lowe preceding yr fra and vther causis qlk is not neidfull to be exprest. All these causis makis the kingis pairt to be deadlie suspected be those quha knawis thame to be of veritie.

As for my lordis pairt if yor Lordship knew how weill he was trainit be Mr Robert Rollok ane of the godliest men in Scotland at scoolis, and quhat testificatioun of gude inclinacioun and behaviour he had ressauit fra him yor honor wald hardlie beleue him a traitor.

Secondlie if yor Lordship knew wt quhat accompt and good opinioun of all gude men he passit sobirlie and quyetlie out of his . . . how wiselie and godlie he behauit him self in all natiounis quhairsoever he come, how he sufferit in Rome itself . . . for the treuth of his religion . . . as I am sure he . . . be suspect to be a traittor.

Thirdlie to quhat end suld my lord of Gourie have maid hes leving frie, brocht hame furniture and ornamenttis for his hous and payit all his. . . fatheris debtis and setlit himself to be a gude iusticiar in his awin landis as is notoriouslie knawin gif wtin the space of twa monethis haveing scairslie . . . countrie he suld resolue to . . . & murther his Prince be . . . cause and sa to quyt his countrie his leving his welth his . . . & lyfe, lat be the ruitting out of his name & posteritie for evir.

APPENDIX C.

FIVE LETTERS FORGED BY SPROT, AS FROM LOGAN

(1) *Robert Logan of Restalrig to . . .*

Rycht Honorabill Sir, — My dewty with servise remembred. Pleise yow onderstand, my Lo. of Gowry and some vtheris his Lo. frendis and veill villeris, qha tendaris his Lo. better preferment, ar vpon the resolucion ye knaw, for the revenge of that cawse; and his Lo. hes vrettin to me anent that purpose, qhairto I vill accorde, incase ye vill stand to and beir a part: and befoir ye resolve, meet me and M.A.R. in the Cannogat on Tysday the nixt owk, and be als var as ye kan. Indeid M.A.R. spak with me fowr or fywe dayis syn, and I hew promised his Lo. ane answar within ten dayis at farrest. As for the purpose how M.A.R. and I hes sett down the cowrse, it vill be ane very esy done twrne, and nocht far by that forme, vith the lyke stratagem, qhairof ve had conference in Cap. h. Bot incase ye and M.A.R. forgader, becawse he is someqhat consety, for Godis saik be very var vith his raklese toyis of Padoa: For he tald me ane of the strangest taillis of ane nobill man of Padoa that ever I hard in my lyf, resembling the lyk purpose. I pray yow, Sir, think nathing althocht this berare onderstand of it, for he is the special secretair of my lyf; His name is Lard Bower, and vas ald Manderstonis man for deid and lyf, and evin so now for me. And for my awin part, he sall knaw of all that I do in this varld, so lang as ve leif togidder, for I mak him my howsehald man: He is veill vorthy of credit, and I recommend him to yow. Alvyse to the purpose, I think best for our plat that ve meet all at my house of Fastcastell; for I hew concludit with M.A.R. how I think it sall be meittest to be convoyit quyetest in ane bote, be sey; at qhilk tyme vpon swre adwartisment I sall hew the place very quyet and veill provydit; and as I receve yowr answer I vill post this berair to my Lo. and therfoir I pray yow, as ye luf yowr awin lyf, becawse it is nocht ane matter of mowise, be circumspect in all thingis, and tak na feir bot all sall be veill. I hew na vill that ather my brother or yit M.W.R. my Lo. ald pedagog knaw ony thing of the matter, qhill all be done that ve vald hew done; and thane I cair nocht qha get vit, that lufis vs. Qhen ye hew red, send this my letter bak agane vith the berar, that I may se it brunt my self, for sa is the fasson in sic errandis; and if ye please, vryyt our (?) answer on the bak herof, incase ye vill tak my vord for the credit of the berair: and vse all expedicioun, for the twrne vald nocht be lang delayit. Ye knaw the kingis hwnting vill be schortly, and than sall be best tyme, as M.A.R. has asswred me,

that my Lo. has resolved to interpryse that matter. Lwking for yowr answer, committis yow to Chrystis haly protectioun. Frome Fastcastell, the awchtan day of July 1600.

(Sic subscribitur) Yowris to vtter power redy Restalrige.

On the back ‘Sprott,’ ‘bookit’ (2).

(2) *Robert Logan of Restalrig to Laird Bower*.

Lard Bower, — I pray yow hast yow hast to me abowt the erand I tald yow, and ve sall confer at lenth of all thingis. I hew recevit an new letter fra my Lo(rd) of Go(wrie) concerning the purpose that M.A. his Lo. brothir spak to me befoir, and I perseif I may hew avantage of Dirleton, incase his other matter tak effect, as ve hope it sall. Alvayse I beseik yow be at me the morne at evin, for I hew asswred his lo. servand, that I sall send yow over the vatter vithin thre dayis, vith an full resolucion of all my vill, anent all purposes; As I sall indeid recommend yow and yowr trustiness till his lo. as ye sall find an honest recompense for yowr panes in the end. I cair nocht for all the land I hew in this kingdome, incase I get an grip of Dirleton, for I estem it the plesantest dwelling in Scotland. For Goddis cawse, keip all thingis very secret, that my lo. my brothir get na knawlege of owr purposes, for I (wald?) rather be eirdit quik. And swa lwking for yow, I rest till meitting. Fra the Kannogait, the xviij day of July.

(Sic subscribitur) Yowris to power redy Restalrige.

I am verie ill at eise and thairfoir speid yow hither.

On the back ‘Sprott,’ ‘Secund,’ ‘bookit.’

(3) *Robert Logan of Restalrig to . . . .*

Rycht honorable Sir, — All my hartly duty vith humbill servise remembred. Sen I hew takin on hand to interpryse vith my lo(rd) of Go(wrie) yowr speciall and only best belowed, as ve hew set down the plat alredy, I vill request yow that ye vill be very circumspek and vyse, that na man may get ane avantage of vs. I dowt nocht bot ye knaw the perell to be bayth lyf, land and honowr, incase the mater be nocht vyslie vsed: And for my avin part, I sall hew an speciall respek to my promise that I hew maid till his Lo. and M.A. his lo(rdschipis) brother, althocht the skafald var set vp. If I kan nocht vin to Fakland the first nycht, I sall be tymelie in St Johnestoun on the morne. Indeid I lipnit for my lo(rd) himself or ellise M.A. his lo. brother at my howse of Fast(castell) as I vret to them bayth. Alwyse I repose on yowr advertysment of the precyse day, vith credit to the berar: for howbeit he be bot ane silly ald gleyd carle, I vill answer for him that he sall be very trew. I pray yow, sir, reid and ather bwrne or send agane vith the berare; for I dar haserd my lyf and all I hew ellise in the varld on his

message, I hew sik pruif of his constant trewth. Sa committis yow to Chrystis holy protectioun. Frome the Kannogait the xxvij day of July 1600.

(Sic subscribitur)

Yowris till all power vt humbill servise redy
Restalrige.

I vse nocht to vryt on the bak of ony of my letteris concerning this errand.

On the back ‘Sprott,’ ‘bookit’ (3).

(4) *Robert Logan of Restalrig to the Earl of Gowrie*.

My Lo. — My maist humbill dewtie vith servise in maist hartly maner remembred. At the resset of yowr lo(rdchipis) letter I am so comforted, especially at your Lo: purpose communicated onto me thairin, that I kan nather vtter my joy nor find myself habill how to enconter yowr lo. vith dew thankis. Indeid my lo. at my being last in the town M.A. your lo. brother imperted somqhat of yowr lo(rdschipis) intentioun anent that matter onto me; and if I had nocht bene busyed abowt sum turnis of my avin, I thoght till hew cummit over to S. Jo. and spokin vith your lo(rdschip). Yit alvayse my lo. I beseik your lo. bayth for the saifty of yowr honowr, credit and mair nor that, yowr lyf, my lyf, and the lyfis of mony otheris qha may perhapis innocently smart for that turne eftirwartis, incase it be reveilled be ony; and lykvyse, the vtter vraking of our landis and howsis, and extirpating of owr names, lwke that ve be all alse sure as yowr lo. and I myself sall be for my avin part, and than I dowt nocht, bot vith Godis g(race) we sall bring our matter till ane fine, qhilk sall bring contentment to vs all that ever vissed for the revenge of the Maschevalent massakering of our deirest frendis. I dowt nocht bot M.A. yowr lo. brother hes informed yowr lo. qhat cowrse I laid down, to bring all your lo(rdschipis) associatis to my howse of Fast(castell) be sey, qhair I suld hew all materiallis in reddyness for thair saif recayving a land, and into my howse; making as it ver bot a maner of passing time, in ane bote on the sey, in this fair somer tyde; and nane other strangeris to hant my howse, qhill ve had concluded on the laying of owr plat, quhilk is alredy devysed be M.A. and me. And I vald viss that yowr lo. wald ather come or send M.A. to me, and thareftir I sowld meit yowr lo. in Leith, or quyetly in Restal(rig) qhair ve sowld hew prepared ane fyne hattit kit, vt succar, comfeitis, and vyn; and thereftir confer on matteris. And the soner ve broght owr purpose to pass it ver the better, before harwest. Let nocht M.W.R. yowr awld pedagog ken of your comming, bot rather vald I, if I durst be so bald, to intreit yowr lo. anis to come and se my avin howse, qhair I hew keipit my lo(rd) Bo(thwell) in his gretest extremityis, say the King and his consell qhat they vald. And incase God grant vs ane hapy swccess in this errand, I hope baith to haif yowr lo. and his lo., vith mony otheris of yowr loveries and his, at ane gude dyner, before I dy. Alvyse I hope that the K(ingis) bwk hunting at Falkland, this yeir, sall prepair sum daynty cheir for ws, agan that dinner the nixt yeir. *Hoc jocose*, till animat yowr lo. at this tyme; bot eftirvartis, ve sall hew better occasion to mak mery. I protest, my lo. before God, I viss nathing vith a better hart, nor to atchive to that qhilk yowr lo. vald fane atteyn onto; and my continewall prayer sall tend to that effect; and vith the large spending of my landis gudis, yea the haserd of my lyf, sall not afray me fra that, althocht the skaffold var alredy sett vp, befoir I sowld falsify my promise to yowr lo. and perswade yowr lo(rdschip) therof. I trow yowr lo. hes ane pruife of my constancy alredy or now. Bot my lo. qharas your lo. desyris in yowr letter, that I craif my lo. my brotheris mynd anent this matter, I alvterly disasent fra that that he sowld ever be ane counsalowr therto; for in gude fayth, he vill newer help his frend nor harme his fo. Yowr lo. may confyde mair in this ald man, the beirer heirof, my man La(ird) Bowr, nor in my brother; for I lippin my lyf and all I hew ells in his handis; and I trow he vald nocht spair to ryde to Hellis yet to plesour me; and he is nocht begylit of my pairt to him. Alvyse, my lo. qhen yowr lo. hes red my letter, delyver it to the berair agane, that I may se it brunt vith my awin ein; as I hew sent yowr Lo: letter to yowr Lo. agane; for so is the fassone I grant. And I pray yowr lo. rest fully perswaded of me and all that I hew promesed; for I am resolved, howbeit it ver to dy the morne. I man intreit yowr lo. to expede Bowr, and gif him strait directioun, on payn of his lyf, that he tak never ane vink sleip, qhill he se me agane; or ellise he vill vtterly vndo vs. I hew alredy sent an other letter to the gentill man yowr lo. kennis, as the berare vill informe yowr lo. of his answer and forvardness vith yowr lo.; and I sall schaw yowr lo. forder, at meting, qhen and qhair yowr lo. sall think meittest. To qhilk tyme and ever committis yowr lo. to the proteccioun of the Almychtie God. From Gwnisgrene, the twenty nynt of Julij 1600.

(Sic subscribitur) Your lo. awin sworne and bundman to obey and serve vt efauld and ever redy seruise to his vttir power till his lyfis end.

Restalrige.

Prayis yowr lo. hald me excused for my vnsemly letter, qhilk is nocht sa veil vrettin as mister var: For I durst nocht let ony of my vryteris ken of it, but tuke twa syndry ydill dayis to it my self.

I vill never foryet the gude sporte that M.A. yowr lo: brother tald me of ane nobill man of Padoa, it comiss sa oft to my memory. And indeid it is a parastevr to this purpose ve hew in hand.

On the back ‘Sprott,’ ‘bookit’ (4).

(5) *Robert Logan of Restalrig to . . .*

Rycht honorabill Sir, — My hartly dewty remembred. Ye knaw I tald yow at owr last meitting in the Cannogat that M.A.R. my lo. of Go(wries) brother had spokin vith me, anent the matter of owr conclusion; and for my awin part I sall nocht be hindmest; and sensyne I gat ane letter from his lo. selff, for that same purpose; and apon the resset tharof, onderstanding his lo. frankness and fordvardness in it, God kennis if my hart vas nocht liftit ten stagess! I postit this same berare till his lo. to qhome ye may concredit all yowr hart in that asveill as I; for and it var my very sowl, I durst mak him messinger therof, I hew sic experiense of his treuth in mony other thingis: He is ane silly ald gleyd carle, bot vonder honest: And as he hes reportit to me his lo. awin answer, I think all matteris sall be concluded at my howse of Fa(stcastell); for I and M.A.R. conclude that ye sowld come vith him and his lo. and only ane other man vith yow, being bot only fowr in company, intill ane of the gret fisching botis, be sey to my howse, qher ye sall land as saifly as on Leyth schoir; and the howse agane his lo. comming to be quyet: And qhen ye ar abowt half a myll fra schoir, as it ver passing by the howse, to gar set forth ane vaf. Bot for Godis sek, let nether ony knawlege come to my lo. my brotheris eiris, nor yit to M.W.R. my lo. ald pedagog; for my brother is kittill to scho behind, and dar nocht interpryse, for feir; and the other vill disswade vs fra owr purpose vith ressonis of religion, qhilk I can newer abyd. I think thar is nane of a nobill hart, or caryis ane stomak vorth an pini, bot they vald be glad to se ane contented revenge of Gray Steillis deid: And the soner the better, or ellse ve may be marrit and frustrat; and therfor, pray his lo(rdschip) be qwik and bid M.A. remember on the sport he tald me of Padoa; for I think vith my self that the cogitacion on that sowld stimulat his lo(rdschip). And for Godis cawse vse all yowr cowrses *cum discrecione*. Fell nocht, sir, to send bak agan this letter; for M.A. leirit me that fasson, that I may se it distroyed my self. Sa till your comming, and ever, committis yow hartely to Chrystis holy protection. From Gwnisgrene, the last of July 1600.

On the back ‘xiij Aprilis 1608 producit be Ninian Chirnesyde (8).’

Also ‘Sprott,’ ‘Fyft. bookit.’

HISTORICAL MYSTERIES

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PREFACE

These Essays, which appeared, with two exceptions, in *The Cornhill Magazine*, 1904, have been revised, and some alterations, corrections, and additions have been made in them. ‘Queen Oglethorpe,’ in which Miss Alice Shield collaborated, doing most of the research, is reprinted by the courteous permission of the editor, from *Blackwood’s Magazine*. A note on ‘The End of Jeanne de la Motte,’ has been added as a sequel to ‘The Cardinal’s Necklace:’ it appeared in *The Morning Post*, the Editor kindly granting leave to republish.

The author wishes to acknowledge the able assistance of Miss E.M. Thompson, who made researches for him in the British Museum and at the Record Office.

I

THE CASE OF ELIZABETH CANNING

Don’t let your poor little
Lizzie be blamed!
Thackeray.

‘Everyone has heard of the case of Elizabeth Canning,’ writes Mr. John Paget; and till recently I agreed with him. But five or six years ago the case of Elizabeth Canning repeated itself in a marvellous way, and then but few persons of my acquaintance had ever heard of that mysterious girl.

The recent case, so strange a parallel to that of 1753, was this: In Cheshire lived a young woman whose business in life was that of a daily governess. One Sunday her family went to church in the morning, but she set off to skate, by herself, on a lonely pond. She was never seen of or heard of again till, in the dusk of the following Thursday, her hat was found outside of the door of her father’s farmyard. Her friend discovered her further off in a most miserable condition, weak, emaciated, and with her skull fractured. Her explanation was that a man had seized her on the ice, or as she left it, had dragged her across the fields, and had shut her up in a house, from which she escaped, crawled to her father’s home, and, when she found herself unable to go further, tossed her hat towards the farm door. Neither such a man as she described, nor the house in which she had been imprisoned, was ever found. The girl’s character was excellent, nothing pointed to her condition being the result *d’une orgie échevelée*; but the neighbours, of course, made insinuations, and a lady of my acquaintance, who visited the girl’s mother, found herself almost alone in placing a charitable construction on the adventure.

My theory was that the girl had fractured her skull by a fall on the ice, had crawled to and lain in an unvisited outhouse of the farm, and on that Thursday night was wandering out, in a distraught state, not wandering in. Her story would be the result of her cerebral condition — concussion of the brain.

It was while people were discussing this affair, a second edition of Elizabeth Canning’s, that one found out how forgotten was Elizabeth.

On January 1, 1753, Elizabeth was in her eighteenth year. She was the daughter of a carpenter in Aldermanbury; her mother, who had four younger children, was a widow, very poor, and of the best character. Elizabeth was short of stature, ruddy of complexion, and, owing to an accident in childhood — the falling of a garret ceiling on her head — was subject to fits of unconsciousness on any alarm. On learning this, the mind flies to hysteria, with its accompaniment of diabolical falseness, for an explanation of her adventure. But hysteria does not serve the turn. The girl had been for years in service with a Mr. Wintlebury, a publican. He gave her the highest character for honesty and reserve; she did not attend to the customers at the bar, she kept to herself, she had no young man, and she only left Wintlebury's for a better place — at a Mr. Lyon's, a near neighbour of her mother. Lyon, a carpenter, corroborated, as did all the neighbours, on the points of modesty and honesty.

On New Year's Day, 1753, Elizabeth wore her holiday best— 'a purple masquerade stuff gown, a white handkerchief and apron, a black quilted petticoat, a green undercoat, black shoes, blue stockings, a white shaving hat with green ribbons,' and 'a very ruddy colour.' She had her wages, or Christmas-box, in her pocket — a golden half guinea in a little box, with three shillings and a few coppers, including a farthing. The pence she gave to three of her little brothers and sisters. One boy, however, 'had huffed her,' and got no penny. But she relented, and, when she went out, bought for him a mince-pie. Her visit of New Year's Day was to her maternal aunt, Mrs. Colley, living at Saltpetre Bank (Dock Street, behind the London Dock). She meant to return in time to buy, with her mother, a cloak, but the Colleys had a cold early dinner, and kept her till about 9 p.m. for a hot supper.

Already, at 9 p.m., Mr. Lyon had sent to Mrs. Canning's to make inquiries; the girl was not wont to stay out so late on a holiday. About 9 p.m., in fact, the two Colleys were escorting Elizabeth as far as Houndsditch.

The rest is mystery!

On Elizabeth's non-arrival Mrs. Canning sent her lad, a little after ten, to the Colleys, who were in bed. The night was passed in anxious search, to no avail; by six in the morning inquiries were vainly renewed. Weeks went by. Mrs. Canning, aided by the neighbours, advertised in the papers, mentioning a report of shrieks heard from a coach in Bishopsgate Street in the small morning hours of January 2. The mother, a Churchwoman, had prayers put up at several churches, and at Mr. Wesley's chapel. She also consulted a cheap 'wise man,' whose aspect alarmed her, but whose wisdom took the form of advising her to go on advertising. It was later rumoured that he said the girl was in the hands of 'an old black woman,' and would return; but Mrs. Canning admitted nothing of all this. Sceptics, with their usual acuteness, maintained that the disappearance was meant to stimulate charity, and that the mother knew where the daughter was; or, on the other hand, the daughter had fled to give birth to a child in secret, or for another reason incident to ‘the young and gay,’ as one of the counsel employed euphemistically put the case. The medical evidence did not confirm these suggestions. Details are needless, but these theories were certainly improbable. The character of La Pucelle was not more stainless than Elizabeth’s.

About 10.15 p.m. on January 29, on the Eve of the Martyrdom of King Charles — as the poor women dated it — Mrs. Canning was on her knees, praying — so said her apprentice — that she might behold even if it were but an apparition of her daughter; such was her daily prayer. It was as in Wordsworth’s *Affliction of Margaret*:

I look for ghosts, but none will force
Their way to me; ’tis falsely said
That ever there was intercourse
Between the living and the dead!

At that moment there was a sound at the door. The ‘prentice opened it, and was aghast; the mother’s prayer seemed to be answered, for there, bleeding, bowed double, livid, ragged, with a cloth about her head, and clad in a dirty dressing-jacket and a filthy draggled petticoat, was Elizabeth Canning. She had neglected her little brother that ‘huffed her’ on New Year’s Day, but she had been thinking of him, and now she gave her mother for him all that she had — the farthing!

You see that I am on Elizabeth’s side: that farthing touch, and another, with the piety, honesty, loyalty, and even the superstition of her people, have made me her partisan, as was Mr. Henry Fielding, the well-known magistrate.

Some friends were sent for, Mrs. Myers, Miss Polly Lyon, daughter of her master, and others; while busybodies flocked in, among them one Robert Scarrat, a toiler, who had no personal knowledge of Elizabeth. A little wine was mulled; the girl could not swallow it, emaciated as she was. Her condition need not be described in detail, but she was very near her death, as the medical evidence, and that of a midwife (who consoled Mrs. Canning on one point), proves beyond possibility of cavil.

The girl told her story; but what did she tell? Mr. Austin Dobson, in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, says that her tale ‘gradually took shape under the questions of sympathising neighbours,’ and certainly, on some points, she gave affirmative answers to leading questions asked by Robert Scarrat. The difficulty is that the neighbours’ accounts of what Elizabeth said in her woful condition were given when the girl was tried for perjury in April-May 1754. We must therefore make allowance for friendly bias and mythopœic memory. On January 31, 1753, Elizabeth made her statement before Alderman Chitty, and the chief count against her is that what she told Chitty did not tally with what the neighbours, in May 1754, swore that she told them when she came home on January 29, 1753. This point is overlooked by Mr. Paget in his essay on the subject.

On the other hand, by 1754 the town was divided into two factions, believers and disbelievers in Elizabeth; and Chitty was then a disbeliever. Chitty took but a few notes on January 31, 1753. ‘I did not make it so distinct as I could wish, not thinking it could be the subject of so much inquiry,’ he admitted in 1754. Moreover, the notes which he then produced were *not* the notes which he made at the time, ‘but what I took since from that paper I took then’ (January 31, 1753) ‘of hers and other persons that were brought before me.’ This is not intelligible, and is not satisfactory. If Elizabeth handed in a paper, Chitty should have produced it in 1754. If he took notes of the evidence, why did he not produce the original notes?

These notes, made when, and from what source, is vague, bear that Elizabeth’s tale was this: At a dead wall by Bedlam, in Moorfields, about ten p.m., on January 1, 1753, two men stripped her of gown, apron, and hat, robbed her of thirteen shillings and sixpence, ‘struck her, stunned her, and pushed her along Bishopsgate Street.’ She lost consciousness — one of her ‘fits’ — and recovered herself (near Enfield Wash). Here she was taken to a house, later said to be ‘Mother Wells’s,’ where ‘several persons’ were. Chitty, unluckily, does not say what sort of persons, and on that point all turns. She was asked ‘to do as they did,’ ‘a woman forced her upstairs into a room, and cut the lace of her stays,’ told her there were bread and water in the room, and that her throat would be cut if she came out. The door was locked on her. (There was no lock; the door was merely bolted.) She lived on fragments of a quartern loaf and water ‘*in a pitcher,*’ with the mince-pie bought for her naughty little brother. She escaped about four in the afternoon of January 29. In the room were ‘an old stool or two, *an old picture* over the chimney,’ two windows, an old table, and so on. She forced a pane in a window, ‘and got out on a small shed of boards or penthouse,’ and so slid to the ground. She did not say, the alderman added, that there was any hay in the room. Of bread there were ‘four or five’ or ‘five or six pieces.’ ‘*She never mentioned the name of Wells.*’ Some one else did that at a venture. ‘She said she could tell nothing of the woman’s name.’ The alderman issued a warrant against this Mrs. Wells, apparently on newspaper suggestion.

The chief points against Elizabeth were that, when Wells’s place was examined, there was no penthouse to aid an escape, and no old picture. But, under a wretched kind of bed, supporting the thing, was a picture, on wood, of a Crown. Madam Wells had at one time used this loyal emblem as a sign, she keeping a very ill-famed house of call. But, in December 1745, when certain Highland and Lowland gentlemen were accompanying bonny Prince Charlie towards the metropolis, Mrs. Wells removed into a room the picture of the Crown, as being apt to cause political emotions. This sign may have been 'the old picture.' As to hay, there *was* hay in the room later searched; but penthouse there was none.

That is the worst point in the alderman's notes, of whatever value these enigmatic documents may be held.

One Nash, butler to the Goldsmiths' Company, was present at the examination before Chitty on January 31, 1753. He averred, in May 1754, what Chitty did not, that Elizabeth spoke of the place of her imprisonment as 'a little, square, darkish room,' with 'a few old pictures.' Here the *one* old picture of the notes is better evidence, if the notes are evidence, than Nash's memory. But I find that he was harping on 'a few old pictures' as early as March 1753. Elizabeth said she hurt her ear in getting out of the window, and, in fact, it was freshly cut and bleeding when she arrived at home.

All this of Nash is, so far, the better evidence, as next day, February 1, 1753, when a most tumultuous popular investigation of the supposed house of captivity was made, he says that he and others, finding the dungeon not to be square, small, and darkish, but a long, narrow slit of a loft, half full of hay, expressed disbelief. Yet it was proved that he went on suggesting to Lyon, Elizabeth's master, that people should give money to Elizabeth, and 'wished him success.' The proof was a letter of his, dated February 10, 1753. Also, Nash, and two like-minded friends, hearing Elizabeth perjure herself, as they thought, at the trial of Mrs. Wells (whom Elizabeth never mentioned to Chitty), did not give evidence against her — on the most absurdly flimsy excuses. One man was so horrified that, in place of denouncing the perjury, he fled incontinent! Another went to a dinner, and Nash to Goldsmiths' Hall, to his duties as butler. Such was then the vigour of their scepticism.

On the other hand, at the trial in 1754 the neighbours reported Elizabeth's tale as told on the night when she came home, more dead than alive. Mrs. Myers had known Elizabeth for eleven years, 'a very sober, honest girl as any in England.' Mrs. Myers found her livid, her fingers 'stood crooked;' Mrs. Canning, Mrs. Woodward, and Polly Lyon were then present, and Mrs. Myers knelt beside Elizabeth to hear her story. It was as Chitty gave it, till the point where she was carried into a house. The 'several persons' there, she said, were 'an elderly woman and two young ones.' Her stays were cut by the old woman. She was then thrust upstairs into a room, wherein was *hay*, *a pitcher of water*, and bread in pieces. Bread may have been brought in, water too, while she slept, a point never noted in the trials. She 'heard the name of Mother Wills, or Wells, mentioned.'

Now Scarrat, in 1754, said that he, being present on January 29, 1753, and hearing of the house, 'offered to bet a guinea to a farthing that it was Mother Wells's.' But Mrs. Myers believed that Elizabeth had mentioned hearing that name earlier; and Mrs. Myers must have heard Scarrat, if he suggested it, before Elizabeth named it. The point is uncertain.

Mrs. Woodward was in Mrs. Canning's room a quarter of an hour after Elizabeth's arrival. The girl said she was almost starved to death in a house on the Hertfordshire road, which she knew by seeing the Hertford coach, with which she was familiar, go by. The woman who cut her stays was 'a tall, black, swarthy woman.' Scarrat said 'that was not Mrs. Wells,' which was fair on Scarrat's part. Elizabeth described the two young women as being one fair, the other dark; so Scarrat swore. Wintlebury, her old master, and several others corroborated.

If these accounts by Mrs. Myers, Mrs. Woodward, Scarrat, Wintlebury, and others are trustworthy, then Elizabeth Canning's narrative is true, for she found the two girls, the tall, swarthy woman, the hay, and the broken water-pitcher, and almost everything else that she had mentioned on January 29, at Mother Wells's house when it was visited on February 1. But we must remember that most accounts of what Elizabeth said on January 29 and on January 31 are fifteen months after date, and are biassed on both sides.

To Mother Wells's the girl was taken on February 1, in what a company! The coach, or cab, was crammed full, some friends walked, several curious citizens rode, and, when Elizabeth arrived at the house, Nash, the butler, and other busybodies had made a descent on it. The officer with the warrant was already there. Lyon, Aldridge, and Hague were with Nash in a cab, and were met by others 'riding hard,' who had seized the people found at Mrs. Wells's. There was a rabble of persons on foot and on horse about the door.

On entering the doorway the parlour was to your left, the house staircase in front of you, on your right the kitchen, at the further end thereof was a door, and, when that was opened, a flight of stairs led to a long slit of a loft which, Nash later declared, did not answer to Elizabeth's description, especially as there was hay, and, before Chitty, Elizabeth had mentioned none. There was a filthy kind of bed, on which now slept a labourer and his wife, Fortune and Judith Natus. Nash kept talking about the hay, and one Adamson rode to meet Elizabeth, and came back saying that she said there *was* hay. By Adamson's account he only asked her, ‘What kind of place was it?’ and she said, ‘A wild kind of place with hay in it,’ as in the neighbours’ version of her first narrative. Mrs. Myers, who was in the coach, corroborated Adamson.

The point of the sceptics was that till Adamson rode back to her on her way to Wells’s house she had never mentioned hay. They argued that Adamson had asked her, ‘Was there hay in the room?’ and that she, taking the hint, had said ‘Yes!’ By May 1754 Adamson and Mrs. Myers, who was in the cab with Elizabeth, would believe that Adamson had asked ‘What kind of place is it?’ and that Elizabeth then spoke, without suggestion, of the hay. The point would be crucial, but nobody in 1754 appears to have remembered that on February 21, three weeks after the event, at the trial of Mother Wells, Adamson had given exactly the same evidence as in May 1754. ‘I returned to meet her, and asked her about the room. She described the room with some hay in it ... an odd sort of an empty room.’

Arriving at Mother Wells’s, Elizabeth, very faint, was borne in and set on a dresser in the kitchen. Why did she not at once say, ‘My room was up the stairs, beyond the door at the further end of the room’? I know not, unless she was dazed, as she well might be. Next she, with a mob of the curious, was carried into the parlour, where were all the inmates of the house. She paid no attention to Mrs. Wells, but at once picked out a tall old woman huddled over the fire smoking a pipe. She did this, by the sceptical Nash’s evidence, instantly and without hesitation. The old woman rose. She was ‘tall and swarthy,’ a gipsy, and according to all witnesses inconceivably hideous, her underlip was ‘the size of a small child’s arm,’ and she was marked with some disease. ‘Pray look at this face,’ she said; ‘I think God never made such another.’ She was named Mary Squires. She added that on January 1 she was in Dorset— ‘at Abbotsbury,’ said her son George, who was present.

In 1754 thirty-six people testified to Mary Squires’s presence in Dorset, or to meeting her on her way to London, while twenty-seven, at Enfield alone, swore as positively that they had seen her and her daughter at or near Mrs. Wells’s, and had conversed with her, between December 18, 1752, and the middle of January. Some of the Enfield witnesses were of a more prosperous and educated class than the witnesses for the gipsy. Many, on both sides, had been eager to swear, indeed, many had made affidavits as early as March 1753.

This business of the cross-swearing is absolutely inexplicable; on both sides the same entire certainty was exhibited, as a rule, yet the woman was unmistakable, as she justly remarked. The gipsy, at all events, had her *alibi* ready at once; her denial was as prompt and unhesitating as Elizabeth’s accusation. But, if guilty, she had enjoyed plenty of time since the girl’s escape to think out her line of defence. If guilty, it was wiser to allege an *alibi* than to decamp when Elizabeth made off, for she could not hope to escape pursuit. George Squires, her son, so prompt with his ‘at Abbotsbury on January 1,’ could not tell, in May 1754, where he had passed the Christmas Day before that New Year’s Day, and Christmas is a notable day. Elizabeth also recognised in Lucy Squires, the gipsy’s daughter, and in Virtue Hall, the two girls, dark and fair, who were present when her stays were cut.

After the recognition, Elizabeth was carried through the house, and, according to Nash, in the loft up the stairs from the kitchen she said, in answer to his question, ‘This is the room, for here is the hay I lay upon, but I think there is more of it.’ She also identified the pitcher with the broken mouth, which she certainly mentioned to Chitty, as that which held her allowance of water. A chest, or nest, of drawers she declared that she did not remember. An attempt was made to suggest that one of her party brought the pitcher in with him to confirm her account. This attempt failed; but that she had mentioned the pitcher was admitted. Mrs. Myers, in May 1754, quoted Elizabeth’s words as to there being more hay exactly in the terms of Nash. Mrs. Myers was present in the loft, and added that Elizabeth ‘took her foot, and put the hay away, and showed the gentlemen two holes, and said they were in the room when she was in it before.’

On February 7, Elizabeth swore to her narrative, formally made out by her solicitor, before the author of *Tom Jones*, and Mr. Fielding, by threats of prosecution if she kept on shuffling, induced Virtue Hall to corroborate, after she had vexed his kind heart by endless prevarications. But as Virtue Hall was later ‘got at’ by the other side and recanted, we leave her evidence on one side.

On February 21-26 Mary Squires was tried at the Old Bailey and condemned to death, Virtue Hall corroborating Elizabeth. Mrs. Wells was branded on the hand. Three Dorset witnesses to the gipsy’s *alibi* were not credited, and Fortune and Judith Natus did not appear in court, though subpœnaed. In 1754 they accounted for this by their fear of the mob. The three sceptics, Nash, Hague, and Aldridge, held their peace. The Lord Mayor, Sir Crispin Gascoyne, who was on the bench at the trial of Squires and Wells, was dissatisfied. He secured many affidavits which seem unimpeachable, for the gipsy’s *alibi*, and so did the other side for her presence at Enfield. He also got at Virtue Hall, or rather a sceptical Dr. Hill got at her and handed her over to Gascoyne. She, as we saw, recanted. George Squires, the gipsy’s son, with an attorney, worked up the evidence for the gipsy’s *alibi*; she received a free pardon, and on April 29, 1754, there began the trial of Elizabeth Canning for ‘wilful and corrupt perjury.’

Mr. Davy, opening for the Crown, charitably suggested that Elizabeth had absconded ‘to preserve her character,’ and had told a romantic story to raise money! ‘And, having by this time subdued all remains of virtue, she preferred the offer of money, though she must wade through innocent blood’ — that of the gipsy— ‘to attain it.’

These hypotheses are absurd; her character certainly needed no saving.

Mr. Davy then remarked on the gross improbabilities of the story of Elizabeth. They are glaring, but, as Fielding said, so are the improbabilities of the facts. Somebody had stripped and starved and imprisoned the girl; that is absolutely certain. She was brought ‘within an inch of her life.’ She did not suffer all these things to excite compassion; that is out of the question. Had she plunged into ‘gaiety’ on New Year’s night, the consequences would be other than instant starvation. They might have been ‘guilty splendour.’ She had been most abominably misused, and it was to the last degree improbable that any mortal should so misuse an honest quiet lass. But the grossly improbable had certainly occurred. It was next to impossible that, in 1856, a respectable-looking man should offer to take a little boy for a drive, and that, six weeks later, the naked body of the boy, who had been starved to death, should be found in a ditch near Acton. But the facts occurred. To Squires and Wells a rosy girl might prove more valuable than a little boy to anybody.

That Elizabeth could live for a month on a loaf did not surprise Mrs. Canning. ‘When things were very hard with her,’ said Mrs. Canning, ‘the child had lived on half a roll a day.’ This is that other touch which, with the story of the farthing, helps to make me a partisan of Elizabeth.

Mr. Davy said that on January 31, before Chitty, Elizabeth ‘did not pretend to certainty’ about Mrs. Wells. She never did at any time; she neither knew, nor affected to know, anything about Mrs. Wells. She had only seen a tall, swarthy woman, a dark girl, and a fair girl, whom she recognised in the gipsy, her daughter, and Virtue Hall. Mr. Davy preferred Nash’s evidence to that of all the neighbours, and even to Chitty’s notes, when Nash and Chitty varied. Mr. Davy said that Nash ‘withdrew his assistance’ after the visit to the house. It was proved, we saw, by his letter of February 10, that he did not withdraw his assistance, which, like that of Mr. Tracy Tupman, took the form of hoping that other people would subscribe money.

Certain varieties of statement as to the time when Elizabeth finished the water proved fatal, and the penthouse of Chitty’s notes was played for all that it was worth. It was alleged, as matter of fact, that Adamson brought the broken pitcher into the house — this by Mr. Willes, later Solicitor-General. Now, for three months before February 1, Adamson had not seen Elizabeth Canning, nor had he heard her description of the room. He was riding, and could not carry a gallon pitcher in his coat pocket. He could not carry it in John Gilpin’s fashion; and, whatever else was denied, it was admitted that from the first Elizabeth mentioned the pitcher. The statement of Mr. Willes, that Adamson brought in the pitcher, was one that no barrister should have made.

The Natus pair were now brought in to say that they slept in the loft during the time that Elizabeth said she was there. As a reason for not giving evidence at the gipsy's trial, they alleged fear of the mob, as we saw.

The witnesses for the gipsy's *alibi* were called. Mrs. Hopkins, of South Parrot, Dorset, was not very confident that she had seen the gipsy at her inn on December 29, 1752. She, if Mary Squires she was, told Mrs. Hopkins that they 'sold hardware'; in fact they sold soft ware, smuggled nankin and other stuffs. Alice Farnham recognised the gipsies, whom she had seen after New Christmas (new style). 'They said they would come to see me after the Old Christmas holidays' — which is unlikely!

Lucy Squires, the daughter, was clean, well dressed, and, *teste* Mr. Davy, she was pretty. She was not called.

George Squires was next examined. He had been well tutored as to what he did *after* December 29, but could not tell where he was on Christmas Day, four days earlier! His memory only existed from the hour when he arrived at Mrs. Hopkins's inn, at South Parrot (December 29, 1752). His own counsel must have been amazed; but in cross-examination Mr. Morton showed that, for all time up to December 29, 1752, George's memory was an utter blank. On January 1, George dined, he said, at Abbotsbury, with one Clarke, a sweetheart of his sister. They had two boiled fowls. But Clarke said they had only 'a part of a fowl between them.' There was such a discrepancy of evidence here as to time on the part of one of the gipsy's witnesses that Mr. Davy told him he was drunk. Yet he persisted that he kissed Lucy Squires, at an hour when Lucy, to suit the case, could not have been present.

There was documentary evidence — a letter of Lucy to Clarke, from Basingstoke. It was dated January 18, 1753, but the figure after 175 was torn off the postmark; that was the only injury to the letter. Had there not been a battalion of as hard swearers to the presence of the gipsies at Enfield in December-January 1752-1753 as there was to their absence from Enfield and to their presence in Dorset, the gipsy party would have proved their case. As matters stand, we must remember that the Dorset evidence had been organised by a solicitor, that the route was one which the Squires party habitually used; that by the confession of Mr. Davy, the prosecuting counsel, the Squires family 'stood in' with the smuggling interest, compact and unscrupulous. They were 'gipsies dealing in smuggled goods,' said Mr. Davy. Again, while George Squires had been taught his lesson like a parrot, the prosecution dared not call his sister, pretty Lucy, as a witness. They said that George was ‘stupid,’ but that Lucy was much more dull. The more stupid was George, the less unlikely was he to kidnap Elizabeth Canning as prize of war after robbing her. But she did not swear to him.

As to the presence of the gipsies at Mrs. Wells’s, at Enfield, as early as January 19, Mrs. Howard swore. Her husband lived on his own property, and her house, with a well, which she allowed the villagers to use, was opposite Mrs. Wells’s. Mrs. Howard had seen the gipsy girl at the well, and been curtsied to by her, at a distance of three or four yards. She had heard earlier from her servants of the arrival of the gipsies, and had ‘looked wishfully,’ or earnestly, at them. She was not so positive as to Mary Squires, whom she had seen at a greater distance.

William Headland swore to seeing Mary Squires on January 9; he fixed the date by a market-day. Also, on the 12th, he saw her in Mrs. Wells’s house. He picked up a blood-stained piece of thin lead under the window from which Elizabeth escaped, and took it to his mother, who corroborated. Samuel Story, who knew Mary Squires from of old, saw her on December 22 in White Webs Lane, so called from the old house noted as a meeting-place of the Gunpowder Plot conspirators. Story was a retired clockmaker. Mr. Smith, a tenant of the Duke of Portland, saw Mary Squires in his cowhouse on December 15, 1752. She wanted leave to camp there, as she had done in other years. The gipsies then lost a pony. Several witnesses swore to this, and one swore to conversations with Mary Squires about the pony. She gave her name, and said that it was on the clog by which the beast was tethered.

Loomworth Dane swore to Mary Squires, whom he had observed so closely as to note a great hole in the heel of her stocking. The date was Old Christmas Day, 1752. Dane was landlord of the Bell, at Enfield, and a maker of horse-collars. Sarah Star, whose house was next to Mrs. Wells’s, saw Mary Squires in her own house on January 18 or 19; Mary wanted to buy pork, and hung about for three-quarters of an hour, offering to tell fortunes. Mrs. Star got rid of her by a present of some pig’s flesh. She fixed the date by a document which she had given to Miles, a solicitor; it was not in court. James Pratt swore to talk with Mary Squires before Christmas as to her lost pony; she had then a man with her. He was asked to look round the court to see if the man was present, whereon George Squires ducked his head, and was rebuked by the prosecuting counsel, Mr. Davy, who said ‘It does not look well.’ It was hardly the demeanour of conscious innocence. But Pratt would not swear to him. Mary Squires told Pratt that she would consult ‘a cunning-man about the lost pony,’ and Mr. Nares foolishly asked why a cunning woman should consult a cunning man? ‘One black fellow will often tell you that he can and does something magical, whilst all the time he is perfectly aware that he cannot, and yet firmly believes that some other man can really do it.' So write Messrs. Spencer and Gillen in their excellent book on *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (); and so it was with the gipsy, who, though a 'wise woman,' believed in a 'wise man.'

This witness (Pratt) said, with great emphasis: 'Upon my oath, that is the woman.... I am positive in my conscience, and I am sure that it was no other woman; this is the woman I saw at that blessed time.' Moreover, she gave him her name as the name on the clog of the lost pony. The affair of the pony was just what would impress a man like Pratt, and, on the gipsies' own version, they had no pony with them in their march from Dorset.

All this occurred *before* Pratt left his house, which was on December 22, 'three days before New Christmas.' He then left Enfield for Cheshunt, and his evidence carries conviction.

In some other cases witnesses were very stupid — could not tell in what month Christmas fell. One witness, an old woman, made an error, confusing January 16 with January 23. A document on which she relied gave the later date.

If witnesses on either side were a year out in their reckoning, the discrepancies would be accountable; but Pratt, for example, could not forget when he left Enfield for Cheshunt, and Farmer Smith and Mrs. Howard could be under no such confusion of memory. It may be prejudice, but I rather prefer the Enfield evidence in some ways, as did Mr. Paget. In others, the Dorset evidence seems better.

Elizabeth had sworn to having asked a man to point out the way to London after she escaped into the lane beside Mrs. Wells's house. A man, Thomas Bennet, swore that on January 29, 1753, he met 'a miserable, poor wretch, about half-past four,' 'near the ten-mile stone,' in a lane. She asked her way to London; 'she said she was affrighted by the tanner's dog.' The tanner's house was about two hundred yards nearer London, and the prosecution made much of this, as if a dog, with plenty of leisure and a feud against tramps, could not move two hundred yards, or much more, if he were taking a walk abroad, to combat the object of his dislike. Bennet knew that the dog was the tanner's; probably he saw the dog when he met the wayfarer, and it does not follow that the wayfarer herself called it 'the tanner's dog.' Bennet fixed the date with precision. Four days later, hearing of the trouble at Mrs. Wells's, Bennet said, 'I will be hanged if I did not meet the young woman near this place and told her the way to London.' Mr. Davy could only combat Bennet by laying stress on the wayfarer's talking of 'the tanner's dog.' But the dog, at the moment of the meeting, was probably well in view. Bennet knew him, and Bennet was not asked, 'Did the woman call the dog “the tanner’s dog,” or do you say this of your own knowledge?’ Moreover, the tannery was well in view, and the hound may have conspicuously started from that base of operations. Mr. Davy’s reply was a quibble.

His closing speech merely took up the old line: Elizabeth was absent to conceal ‘a misfortune’; her cunning mother was her accomplice. There was no proof of Elizabeth’s unchastity; nay, she had an excellent character, ‘but there is a time, gentlemen, when people begin to be wicked.’ If engaged for the other side Mr. Davy would have placed his ‘*Nemo repente fuit turpissimus*’ — no person of unblemished character wades straight into ‘innocent blood,’ to use his own phrase.

The Recorder summed up against Elizabeth. He steadily assumed that Nash was always right, and the neighbours always wrong, as to the girl’s original story. He said nothing of Bennet; the tanner’s dog had done for Bennet. He said that, if the Enfield witnesses were right, the Dorset witnesses were wilfully perjured. He did not add that, if the Dorset witnesses were right, the Enfield testifiers were perjured.

The jury brought in a verdict of ‘Guilty of perjury, but not wilful and corrupt.’ This was an acquittal, but, the Recorder refusing the verdict, they did what they were desired to do, and sentence was passed. Two jurors made affidavit that they never intended a conviction. The whole point had turned, in the minds of the jury, on a discrepancy as to when Elizabeth finished the water in the broken pitcher — on Wednesday, January 27, or on Friday, January 29. Both accounts could not be true. Here, then, was ‘perjury,’ thought the jury, but not ‘wilful and corrupt,’ not purposeful. But the jury had learned that ‘the court was impatient;’ they had already brought Elizabeth in guilty of perjury, by which they meant guilty of a casual discrepancy not unnatural in a person hovering between life and death. They thought that they could not go back on their ‘Guilty,’ and so they went all the way to ‘corrupt and wilful perjury’ — murder by false oath — and consistently added ‘an earnest recommendation to mercy’!

By a majority of one out of seventeen judges, Elizabeth was banished for seven years to New England. She was accused in the Press of being an ‘enthusiast,’ but the Rev. William Reyner, who attended her in prison, publicly proclaimed her a good Churchwoman and a good girl (June 7, 1754). Elizabeth (June 24) stuck to her guns in a manifesto — she had not once ‘knowingly deviated from the truth.’

Mr. Davy had promised the jury that when Elizabeth was once condemned all would come out — the whole secret. But though the most careful attempts were made to discover her whereabouts from January 1 to January 29, 1753, nothing was ever found out — a fact most easily explained by the hypothesis that she was where she said she was, at Mother Wells's.

As to Elizabeth's later fortunes, accounts differ, but she quite certainly married, in Connecticut, a Mr. Treat, a respectable yeoman, said to have been opulent. She died in Connecticut in June 1773, leaving a family.

In my opinion Elizabeth Canning was a victim of the common sense of the eighteenth century. She told a very strange tale, and common-sense holds that what is strange cannot be true. Yet something strange had undeniably occurred. It was very strange if Elizabeth on the night of January 1, retired to become a mother, of which there was no appearance, while of an amour even gossip could not furnish a hint. It was very strange if, having thus retired, she was robbed, starved, stripped and brought to death's door, bleeding and broken down. It was very strange that no vestige of evidence as to her real place of concealment could ever be discovered. It was amazingly strange that a girl, previously and afterwards of golden character, should in a moment aim by perjury at 'innocent blood.' But the eighteenth century, as represented by Mr. Davy, Mr. Willes, the barrister who fabled in court, and the Recorder, found none of these things one half so strange as Elizabeth Canning's story. Mr. Henry Fielding, who had some knowledge of human nature, was of the same opinion as the present candid inquirer. 'In this case,' writes the author of *Tom Jones*, 'one of the most simple girls I ever saw, if she be a wicked one, hath been too hard for me. I am firmly persuaded that Elizabeth Canning is a poor, honest, simple, innocent girl.'

Moi aussi, but — I would not have condemned the gipsy!

In this case the most perplexing thing of all is to be found in the conflicting unpublished affidavits sworn in March 1753, when memories as to the whereabouts of the gipsies were fresh. They form a great mass of papers in State Papers Domestic, at the Record Office. I owe to Mr. Courtney Kenny my knowledge of the two unpublished letters of Fielding to the Duke of Newcastle which follow:

'My Lord Duke, — I received an order from my Lord Chancellor immediately after the breaking up of the Council to lay before your Grace all the Affidavits I had taken since the Gipsy Trial which related to that Affair. I then told the Messenger that I had taken none, as indeed the fact is the Affidavits of which I gave my Lord Chancellor an Abstract having been all sworn before Justices of the Peace in the Neighbourhood of Endfield, and remain I believe in the Possession of an Attorney in the City.

‘However in Consequence of the Commands with which your Grace was pleased to honour me yesterday, I sent my Clerk immediately to the Attorney to acquaint him with the Commands, which I doubt not he will instantly obey. This I did from my great Duty to your Grace, for I have long had no Concern in this Affair, nor have I seen any of the Parties lately unless once when I was desired to send for the Girl (Canning) to my House that a great number of Noblemen and Gentlemen might see her and ask her what Questions they pleased. I am, with the highest Duty,

‘My Lord,

‘Your Grace’s most obedient
and most humble Servant,

‘Henry Fielding.

‘Ealing; April 14, 1753.
‘His Grace the Duke of Newcastle.’

‘*Endorsed*: Ealing, April 14th, 1753
Mr. Fielding.
R. 16th.’

‘My Lord Duke, — I am extremely concerned to see by a Letter which I have just received from Mr. Jones by Command of your Grace that the Persons concerned for the Prosecution have not yet attended your Grace with the Affidavits in Canning’s Affair. I do assure you upon my Honour that I sent to them the moment I first received your Grace’s Commands, and having after three Messages prevailed with them to come to me I desired them to fetch the Affidavits that I might send them to your Grace, being not able to wait on you in Person. This they said they could not do, but would go to Mr. Hume Campbell their Council, and prevail with him to attend your Grace with all their Affidavits, many of which I found were sworn after the Day mentioned in the Order of Council. I told them I apprehended the latter could not be admitted but insisted in the strongest Terms on their laying the others immediately before your Grace, and they at last promised me they would, nor have I ever seen them since.

‘I have now again ordered my Clerk to go to them to inform them of the last Commands I have received, but as I have no Compulsory Power over them I

cannot answer for their Behaviour, which *indeed I have long disliked*, and have therefore long ago declined giving them any advice, nor would I *unless in Obedience to your Grace have anything to say to a set of the most obstinate fools I ever saw, and who seem to me rather to act from a Spleen against my Lord Mayor, than from any motive of Protecting Innocence, tho' that was certainly their motive at first*. In Truth, if I am not deceived, I suspect that they desire that the Gipsey should be pardoned, and then to convince the World that she was guilty in order to cast the greater Reflection on him who was principally instrumental in obtaining such Pardon. I conclude with assuring your Grace that I have acted in this Affair, as I shall on all Occasions, with the most dutiful Regard to your Commands, and that if my Life had been at Stake, as many know, I could have done no more. I am, with the highest Respect,
'My Lord Duke,

'Yr. Grace's most obedient
and most humble Servant,

'Henry Fielding.

'Ealing; April 27, 1753.
'His Grace the Duke of Newcastle.'

Endorsed: 'Ealing: April 27th, 1753.
Mr. Fielding.'

II

THE MURDER OF ESCOVEDO

‘Many a man,’ says De Quincey, ‘can trace his ruin to a murder, of which, perhaps, he thought little enough at the time.’ This remark applies with peculiar force to Philip II. of Spain, to his secretary, Antonio Perez, to the steward of Perez, to his page, and to a number of professional ruffians. All of these, from the King to his own scullion, were concerned in the slaying of Juan de Escovedo, secretary of Philip’s famous natural brother, Don John of Austria. All of them, in different degrees, had bitter reason to regret a deed which, at the moment, seemed a commonplace political incident.

The puzzle in the case of Escovedo does not concern the manner of his taking off, or the identity of his murderers. These things are perfectly well known; the names of the guilty, from the King to the bravo, are ascertained. The mystery clouds the motives for the deed. *Why* was Escovedo done to death? Did the King have him assassinated for purely political reasons, really inadequate, but magnified by the suspicious royal fancy? Or were the secretary of Philip II. and the monarch of Spain rivals in the affections of a one-eyed widow of rank? and did the secretary, Perez, induce Philip to give orders for Escovedo’s death, because Escovedo threatened to reveal to the King their guilty intrigue? Sir William Stirling-Maxwell and Monsieur Mignet accepted, with shades of difference, this explanation. Mr. Froude, on the other hand, held that Philip acted for political reasons, and with the full approval of his very ill-informed conscience. There was no lady as a motive in the case, in Mr. Froude’s opinion. A third solution is possible: Philip, perhaps, wished to murder Escovedo for political reasons, and without reference to the tender passion; but Philip was slow and irresolute, while Perez, who dreaded Escovedo’s interference with his love affair, urged his royal master on to the crime which he was shirking. We may never know the exact truth, but at least we can study a state of morals and manners at Madrid, compared with which the blundering tragedies of Holyrood, in Queen Mary’s time, seem mere child’s play. The ‘lambs’ of Bothwell are lambs playful and gentle when set beside the instruments of Philip II.

The murdered man, Escovedo, and the ‘first murderer,’ as Shakespeare says, Antonio Perez, had both been trained in the service of Ruy Gomez, Philip’s famous minister. Gomez had a wife, Aña de Mendoza, who, being born in 1546, was aged thirty-two, not thirty-eight (as M. Mignet says), in 1578, when Escovedo was killed. But 1546 may be a misprint for 1540. She was blind in one eye in 1578, but probably both her eyes were brilliant in 1567, when she really seems to have been Philip's mistress, or was generally believed so to be. Eleven years later, at the date of the murder, there is no obvious reason to suppose that Philip was constant to her charms. Her husband, created Prince d'Eboli, had died in 1573 (or as Mr. Froude says in 1567); the Princess was now a widow, and really, if she chose to distinguish her husband's old secretary, at this date the King's secretary, Antonio Perez, there seems no reason to suppose that Philip would have troubled himself about the matter. That he still loved Aña with a constancy far from royal, that she loved Perez, that Perez and she feared that Escovedo would denounce them to the King, is M. Mignet's theory of the efficient cause of Escovedo's murder. Yet M. Mignet holds, and rightly, that Philip had made up his mind, as far as he ever did make up his mind, to kill Escovedo, long before that diplomatist became an inconvenient spy on the supposed lovers.

To raise matters to the tragic height of the *Phœdra* of Euripides, Perez was said to be the natural son of his late employer, Gomez, the husband of his alleged mistress. Probably Perez was nothing of the sort; he was the bastard of a man of his own name, and his alleged mistress, the widow of Gomez, may even have circulated the other story to prove that her relations with Perez, though intimate, were innocent. They are a pretty set of people!

As for Escovedo, he and Perez had been friends from their youth upwards. While Perez passed from the service of Gomez to that of Philip, in 1572 Escovedo was appointed secretary to the nobly adventurous Don John of Austria. The Court believed that he was intended to play the part of spy on Don John, but he fell under the charm of that gallant heart, and readily accepted, if he did not inspire, the most daring projects of the victor of Lepanto, the Sword of Christendom. This was very inconvenient for the leaden-footed Philip, who never took time by the forelock, but always brooded over schemes and let opportunity pass. Don John, on the other hand, was all for forcing the game, and, when he was sent to temporise and conciliate in the Low Countries, and withdraw the Spanish army of occupation, his idea was to send the Spanish forces out of the Netherlands by sea. When once they were on blue water he would make a descent on England; rescue the captive Mary Stuart; marry her (he was incapable of fear!); restore the Catholic religion, and wear the English crown. A good plot, approved of by the Pope, but a plot which did not suit the genius of Philip. He placed his leaden foot upon the scheme and on various other gallant projects, conceived in the best manner of Alexandre Dumas. Now Escovedo, to whom Don John was devotedly attached, was the soul of all these chivalrous designs, and for that reason Philip regarded him as a highly dangerous person. Escovedo was at Madrid when Don John first went to the Low Countries (1576). He kept urging Philip to accept Don John's fiery proposals, though Antonio Perez entreated him to be cautious. At this date, 1576, Perez was really the friend of Escovedo. But Escovedo would not be advised; he wrote an impatient memorial to the King, denouncing his stitchless policy (*descosido*), his dilatory, shambling, idealess proceedings. So, at least, Sir William Stirling-Maxwell asserts in his *Don John of Austria*: 'the word used by Escovedo was *descosido*, "unstitched."' But Mr. Froude says that *Philip* used the expression, later, in reference to *another* letter of Escovedo's which he also called 'a bloody letter' (January 1578). Here Mr. Froude can hardly be right, for Philip's letter containing that vulgar expression is of July 1577.

In any case, in 1576 Philip was induced, by the intercession of Perez, to overlook the fault, and Escovedo, whose presence Don John demanded, was actually sent to him in December 1576. From this date both Don John and Escovedo wrote familiarly to their friend Perez, while Perez lured them on, and showed their letters to the King. Just as Charles I. commissioned the Duke of Hamilton to spy on the Covenanted nobles, and pretend to sympathise with them, and talk in their godly style, so Philip gave Perez orders to entrap Don John and Escovedo. Perez said: 'I want no theology but my own to justify me,' and Philip wrote in reply, 'My theology takes the same view of the matter as your own.'

At this time, 1577, Perez, though a gambler and a profligate, who took presents from all hands, must have meant nothing worse, on M. Mignet's theory, than to serve Philip as he loved to be served, and keep him well informed of Don John's designs. Escovedo was not yet, according to M. Mignet, an obstacle to the amours of Perez and the King's mistress, the Princess d'Eboli. Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, on the other hand, holds that the object of Perez already was to ruin Don John; for what reason Sir William owns that he cannot discover. Indeed Perez had no such object, unless Don John confided to him projects treasonous or dangerous to the Government of his own master, the King.

Now did Don John, or Escovedo, entrust Perez with designs not merely chivalrous and impracticable, but actually traitorous? Certainly Don John did nothing of the kind. Escovedo left him and went, without being called for, to Spain, arriving in July 1577. During his absence Don John defeated the Dutch Protestants in the battle of Gemblours, on January 31, 1578. He then wrote a letter full of chivalrous loyalty to Escovedo and Perez at Madrid. He would make Philip master indeed of the Low Countries; he asked Escovedo and Perez to inspire the King with resolution. To do that was impossible, but Philip could never have desired to murder Escovedo merely because he asked help for Don John. Yet, no sooner did Escovedo announce his return to Spain, in July 1577, than Philip, in a letter to Perez, said, ‘we must hasten to despatch him before he kills us.’ There seems to be no doubt that the letter in which this phrase occurs is authentic, though we have it only in a copy. But is the phrase correctly translated? The words ‘*priesa á despacherle antes que nos mate*’ certainly may be rendered, ‘we must be quick and despatch *him*’ (Escovedo) ‘before he kills *us*.’ But Mr. Froude, much more lenient to Philip than to Mary Stuart, proposes to render the phrase, ‘we must despatch Escovedo quickly’ (*i.e.* send him about his business) ‘before he worries us to death.’ Mr. Froude thus denies that, in 1577, Philip already meant to kill Escovedo. It is unlucky for Mr. Froude’s theory, and for Philip’s character, if the King used the phrase *twice*. In March 1578 he wrote to Perez, about Escovedo, ‘act quickly *antes que nos mate*, — before he kills us.’ So Perez averred, at least, but is his date correct? This time Perez did act, and Escovedo was butchered! If Perez tells truth, in 1577, Philip meant what he said, ‘Despatch him before he kills us.’

Why did Philip thus dread Escovedo? We have merely the published statements of Perez, in his account of the affair. After giving the general causes of Philip’s distrust of Don John, and the ideas which a deeply suspicious monarch may very well have entertained, considering the adventurous character of his brother, Perez adds a special charge against Escovedo. He vowed, says Perez, that, after conquering England, he and Don John would attack Spain. Escovedo asked for the captaincy of a castle on a rock commanding the harbour of Santander; he was *alcalde* of that town. He and Don John would use this fortress, as Aramis and Fouquet, in the novel of Dumas, meant to use Belle Isle, against their sovereign. As a matter of fact, Escovedo had asked for the command of Mogro, the fortress commanding Santander, in the spring of 1577, and Perez told Philip that the place should be strengthened, for the protection of the harbour, but not entrusted to Escovedo. Don John’s loyalty could never have contemplated the use of the place as a keep to be held in an attack on his King. But, if Perez had, in 1577, no grudge against Escovedo as being perilous to his alleged amour with the Princess d’Eboli, then the murderous plan of Philip must have sprung from the intense suspiciousness of his own nature, not from the promptings of Perez.

Escovedo reached Spain in July 1577. He was not killed till March 31, 1578, though attempts on his life were made some weeks earlier. M. Mignet argues that, till the early spring of 1578, Philip held his hand because Perez lulled his fears; that Escovedo then began to threaten to disclose the love affair of Perez to his royal rival, and that Perez, in his own private interest, now changed his tune, and, in place of mollifying Philip, urged him to the crime. But Philip was so dilatory that he could not even commit a murder with decent promptitude. Escovedo was not dangerous, even to his mind, while he was apart from Don John. But as weeks passed, Don John kept insisting, by letter, on the return of Escovedo, and for *that* reason, possibly, Philip screwed his courage to the (literally) ‘sticking’ point, and Escovedo was ‘stuck.’ Major Martin Hume, however, argues that, by this time, circumstances had changed, and Philip had now no motive for murder.

The impression of M. Mignet, and of Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, the biographer of Don John, is quite different. They hold that the Princess d’Eboli, in 1578, was Philip’s mistress; that she deceived him with Perez; that Escovedo threatened to tell all, and that Perez therefore hurried on his murder. Had this been the state of affairs, would Escovedo have constantly accepted the invitations of Perez to dinner? The men would necessarily have been on the worst of terms, if Escovedo was threatening Perez, but Escovedo, in fact, kept on dining with Perez. Again, the policy of Perez would have been to send Escovedo where he wanted to go, to Flanders, well out of the way, back to Don John. It seems probable enough, though not certain, that, in 1567, the Princess and Philip were lovers. But it is, most unlikely, and it is not proved, that Philip was still devoted to the lady in 1578. Some of the Princess’s family, the Mendozas, now wanted to kill Perez, as a dishonour to their blood. At the trial of Perez later, much evidence was given to show that he loved the Princess, or was suspected of doing so, but it is not shown that this was a matter about which Philip had any reason to concern himself. Thus it is not inconceivable that Escovedo disliked the relations between Perez and the Princess, but nothing tends to show that he could have made himself dangerous by revealing them to the King. Moreover, if he spoke his mind to Perez on the matter, the two would not have remained, as apparently they did, on terms of the most friendly intercourse. A squire of Perez described a scene in which Escovedo threatened to denounce the Princess, but how did the squire become a witness of the scene, in which the Princess defied Escovedo in terms of singular coarseness?

At all events, when Philip consulted the Marquis of Los Velez on the propriety of killing Escovedo rather than sending him back to Don John, the reasons, which convinced the Marquis, were mere political suspicions.

It was at that time a question of conscience whether a king might have a subject assassinated, if the royal motives, though sufficient, were not such as could be revealed with safety in a court of justice. On these principles Queen

Mary had a right to take Darnley off, for excellent political causes which could not safely be made public; for international reasons. Mary, however, unlike Philip, did not consult her confessor, who believed her to be innocent of her husband's death. The confessor of Philip told him that the King had a perfect right to despatch Escovedo, and Philip gave his orders to Perez. He repeated, says Perez, in 1578, his words used in 1577: 'Make haste before he kills us.'

As to this point of conscience, the right of a king to commit murder on a subject for reasons of State, Protestant opinion seems to have been lenient. When the Ruthvens were killed at Perth, on August 5, 1600, in an affair the most mysterious of all mysteries, the Rev. Robert Bruce, a stern Presbyterian, refused to believe that James VI. had not planned their slaughter. 'But your Majesty might have secret reasons,' said Bruce to the King, who, naturally and truly, maintained his own innocence. This looks as if Mr. Bruce, like the confessor of Philip, held that a king had a right to murder a subject for secret reasons of State. The Inquisition vigorously repudiated the doctrine, when maintained by a Spanish preacher, but Knox approved of King Henry's (Darnley's) murder of Riccio. My sympathies, on this point, are with the Inquisition.

Perez, having been commissioned to organise the crime, handed on the job to Martinez, his steward. Martinez asked a ruffianly page, Enriquez, 'if I knew anybody in my country' (Murcia) 'who would stick a knife into a person.' Enriquez said, 'I will speak about it to a muleteer of my acquaintance, as, in fact, I did, and the muleteer undertook the business.' But later, hearing that a man of importance was to be knifed, Enriquez told Perez that a muleteer was not noble enough: the job 'must be entrusted to persons of more consideration.'

Enriquez, in 1585, confessed for a good reason; Perez had absurdly mismanaged the business. All sorts of people were employed, and, after the murder, they fled, and began to die punctually in an alarming manner. Naturally Enriquez thought that Perez was acting like the Mures of Auchendrane, who despatched a series of witnesses and accomplices in their murder of Kennedy. As they always needed a new accomplice to kill the previous accomplice, then another to slay the slayer, and so on, the Mures if unchecked would have depopulated Scotland. Enriquez surmised that *his* turn to die would soon come; so he confessed, and was corroborated by Diego Martinez. Thus the facts came out, and this ought to be a lesson to murderers.

As the muleteer hung fire, Perez determined to poison Escovedo. But he did not in the least know how to set about it. Science was hardly in her infancy. If you wanted to poison a man in Scotland, you had to rely on a vulgar witch, or send a man to France, at great expense, to buy the stuff, and the messenger was detected and tortured. The Court of Spain was not more scientific.

Martinez sent Enriquez to Murcia, to gather certain poisonous herbs, and these were distilled by a venal apothecary. The poison was then tried on a barndoor fowl, which was not one penny the worse. But Martinez somehow procured ‘a certain water that was good to be given as a drink.’ Perez asked Escovedo to dinner, Enriquez waited at table, and in each cup of wine that Escovedo drank, he, rather homœopathically, put ‘a nutshellful of the water.’ Escovedo was no more poisoned than the cock of the earlier experiment. ‘It was ascertained that the beverage produced no effect whatever.’

A few days later, Escovedo again dined with the hospitable Perez. On this occasion they gave him some white powder in a dish of cream, and also gave him the poisoned water in his wine, thinking it a pity to waste that beverage. This time Escovedo was unwell, and again, when Enriquez induced a scullion in the royal kitchen to put more of the powder in a basin of broth in Escovedo’s own house. For this the poor kitchenmaid who cooked the broth was hanged in the public square of Madrid, *sin culpa*.

Pious Philip was demoralising his subjects at a terrible rate! But you cannot make an omelet without breaking eggs. Philip slew that girl of his kitchen as surely as if he had taken a gun and shot her, but probably the royal confessor said that all was as it should be.

In spite of the resources of Spanish science, Escovedo persisted in living, and Perez determined that he must be shot or stabbed. Enriquez went off to his own country to find a friend who was an assassin, and to get ‘a stiletto with a very fine blade, much better than a pistol to kill a man with.’ Enriquez, keeping a good thing in the family, enlisted his brother: and Martinez, from Aragon, brought ‘two proper kind of men,’ Juan de Nera and Insausti, who, with the King’s scullion, undertook the job. Perez went to Alcala for Holy Week, just as the good Regent Murray left Edinburgh on the morning of Darnley’s murder, after sermon. ‘Have a halibi’ was the motto of both gentlemen.

The underlings dogged Escovedo in the evening of Easter Monday. Enriquez did not come across him, but Insausti did his business with one thrust, in a workmanlike way. The scullion hurried to Alcala, and told the news to Perez, who ‘was highly delighted.’

We leave this good and faithful servant, and turn to Don John. When he, far away, heard the news he was under no delusions about love affairs as the cause of the crime. He wrote to his wretched brother the King ‘in grief greater than I can describe.’ The King, he said, had lost the best of servants, ‘a man without the aims and craft which are now in vogue.’ ‘I may with just reason consider *myself* to have been the cause of his death,’ the blow was really dealt at Don John. He expressed the most touching anxiety for the wife and children of

Escovedo, who died poor, because (unlike Perez) ‘he had clean hands.’ He besought Philip, by the love of our Lord, ‘to use every possible diligence to know whence the blow came and to punish it with the rigour which it deserves.’ He himself will pay the most pressing debts of the dead. (From Beaumont, April 20, 1578.)

Probably the royal caitiff was astonished by this letter. On September 20 Don John wrote his last letter to his brother ‘desiring more than life some decision on your Majesty’s part. Give me orders for the conduct of affairs!’ Philip scrawled in the margin, ‘I will not answer.’ But Don John had ended his letter ‘Our lives are at stake, and all we ask is to lose them with honour.’ These are like the last words of the last letter of the great Montrose to Charles II., ‘with the more alacrity and vigour I go to search my death.’ Like Montrose Don John ‘carried with him fidelity and honour to the grave.’ He died, after a cruel illness, on October 1. Brantôme says that he was poisoned by order of the King, at the instigation of Perez. ‘The side of his breast was yellow and black, as if burned, and crumbled at the touch.’ These things were always said when a great personage died in his bed. They are probably untrue, but a king who could conscientiously murder his brother’s friend could as conscientiously, and for the same reasons, murder his brother.

The Princess d’Eboli rewarded and sheltered one of the murderers of Escovedo. They were all gratified with chains of gold, silver cups, abundance of golden *écus*, and commissions in the army; all were sent out of the country, and some began to die strangely, which, as we saw, frightened Enriquez into his confession (1585).

At once Perez was suspected. He paid a visit of condolence to young Escovedo: he spoke of a love affair of Escovedo’s in Flanders; an injured husband must be the guilty man! But suspicion darkened. Perez complained to the King that he was dogged, watched, cross-examined by the *alcalde* and his son. The Escovedo family had a friend in Vasquez, another royal secretary. Knowing nothing of the King’s guilt, and jealous of Perez, he kept assuring the King that Perez was guilty: that there was an amour, detected by Escovedo: that Escovedo perished for a woman’s sake: that Philip must investigate the case, and end the scandal. The woman, of course, was the Princess d’Eboli. Philip cared nothing for her, now at least. Mr. Froude says that Don Gaspar Moro, in his work on the Princess, ‘has disproved conclusively the imagined *liaison* between the Princess and Philip II.’ On the other hand, Philip was darkly concerned in litigations about property, *against* the Princess; these affairs Vasquez conducted, while Perez naturally was on the side of the widow of his benefactor. On these points, more than a hundred letters of Vasquez exist. Meanwhile he left, and the

Escovedo family left, no stone unturned to prove that Perez murdered Escovedo because Escovedo thwarted his amour with the Princess.

Philip had promised, again and again, to stand by Perez. But the affair was coming to light, and if it must come out, it suited Philip that Vasquez should track Perez on the wrong trail, the trail of the amour, not follow the right scent which led straight to the throne, and the wretch who sat on it. But neither course could be quite pleasant to the King.

Perez offered to stand his trial, knowing that evidence against him could not be found. His accomplices were far away; he would be acquitted, as Bothwell was acquitted of Darnley's death. Philip could not face the situation. He bade Perez consult the President of the Council, De Pazos, a Bishop, and tell him all, while De Pazos should mollify young Escovedo. The Bishop, a casuist, actually assured young Escovedo that Perez and the Princess 'are as innocent as myself.' The Bishop did not agree with the Inquisition: he could say that Perez was innocent, because he only obeyed the King's murderous orders. Young Escovedo retreated: Vasquez persevered, and the Princess d'Eboli, writing to the King, called Vasquez 'a Moorish dog.' Philip had both Perez and the Princess arrested, for Vasquez was not to be put down; *his* business in connection with the litigations was to pursue the Princess, and Philip could not tell Vasquez that he was on the wrong trail. The lady was sent to her estates; this satisfied Vasquez, and Perez and he were bound over to keep the peace. But suspicion hung about Perez, and Philip preferred that it should be so. The secretary was accused of peculation, he had taken bribes on all hands, and he was sentenced to heavy fines and imprisonment (January 1585). Now Enriquez confessed, and a kind of secret inquiry, of which the records survive, dragged its slow course along. Perez was under arrest, in a house near a church. He dropped out of a window and rushed into the church, the civil power burst open the gates, violated sanctuary, and found our friend crouching, all draped with festoons of cobwebs, in the timber work under the roof. The Church censured the magistrates, but they had got Perez, and Philip defied the ecclesiastical courts. Perez, a prisoner, tried to escape by the aid of one of Escovedo's murderers, who was staunch, but failed, while his wife was ill treated to make him give up all the compromising letters of the King. He did give up two sealed trunks full of papers. But his ally and steward, Martinez, had first (it is said) selected and secreted the royal notes which proved the guilt of Philip.

Apparently the King thought himself safe now, and actually did not take the trouble to see whether his compromising letters were in the sealed trunks or not! At least, if he did know that they were absent, and that Perez could produce proof of his guilt, it is hard to see why, with endless doubts and hesitations, he allowed the secret process for murder against Perez to drag on, after a long interruption, into 1590. Vasquez examined and re-examined Perez, but there was still only one witness against him, the scoundrel Enriquez. One was not enough.

A new step was taken. The royal confessor assured Perez that he would be safe if he told the whole truth and declared openly that he had acted by the royal orders! Perez refused, Philip commanded again (Jan. 4, 1590). Perez must now reveal the King's motive for decreeing the murder. If Philip was setting a trap for Perez that trap only caught him if he could not produce the King's compromising letters, which, in fact, he still possessed. Mr. Froude asserts that Philip had heard from his confessor, and *he* from the wife of Perez, that the letters were still secreted and could be produced. If so, Perez would be safe, and the King's character would be lost. What was Philip's aim and motive? Would he declare the letters to be forgeries? No other mortal (of that day) wrote such an unmistakable hand as his, it was the worst in the world. He must have had some loophole, or he would never have pressed Perez to bear witness to his own crime. A loophole he had, and Perez knew it, for otherwise he would have obeyed orders, told the whole story, and been set free. He did not. Mr. Froude supposes that he did not think the royal authority would satisfy the judges. But they could not condemn Perez, a mere accessory to Philip, without condemning the King, and how could the judges do that? Perez, I think, would have taken his chance of the judges' severity, as against their King, rather than disobey the King's command to confess all, and so have to face torture. He did face the torture, which proves, perhaps, that he knew Philip could, somehow, escape from the damning evidence of his own letters. Philip's loophole, Major Martin Hume thinks, was this: if Perez revealed the King's reasons for ordering the murder, they would appear as obsolete, at the date of the deed. Pedro alone would be culpable. In any case he faced torture.

Like most people in his circumstances, he miscalculated his own power of bearing agony. He had not the endurance of the younger Auchendrane murderer: of Mitchell, the choice Covenanting assassin: of the gallant Jacobite Nevile Payne, tortured nearly to death by the minions of the Dutch usurper, William of Orange. All of these bore the torment and kept their secrets. But 'eight turns of the rope' opened the mouth of Perez, whose obstinacy had merely put him to great inconvenience. Yet he did not produce Philip's letters in corroboration; he said that they had been taken from him. However, next day, Diego Martinez, who had hitherto denied all, saw that the game was up, and admitted the truth of all that Enriquez had confessed in 1585.

About a month after the torture Perez escaped. His wife was allowed to visit him in prison. She had been the best, the bravest, the most devoted of women. If she had reason for jealousy of the Princess, which is by no means certain, she had forgiven all. She had moved heaven and earth to save her husband. In the Dominican church, at high mass, she had thrown herself upon the King's confessor, demanding before that awful Presence on the altar that the priest should refuse to absolve the King unless he set Perez free.

Admitted to her husband's prison, she played the trick that saved Lord Ogilvy from the dungeon of the Covenanters, that saved Argyle, Nithsdale, and James Mòr Macgregor. Perez walked out of gaol in the dress of his wife. We may suppose that the guards were bribed: there is *always* collusion in these cases. One of the murderers had horses round the corner, and Perez, who cannot have been badly injured by the rack, rode thirty leagues, and crossed the frontier of Aragon.

We have not to follow his later adventures. The refusal of the Aragonese to give him up to Castile, their rescue of him from the Inquisition, cost them their constitution, and about seventy of them were burned as heretics. But Perez got clear away. He visited France, where Henry IV. befriended him; he visited England, where Bacon was his host. In 1594 (?) he published his *Relaciones* and told the world the story of Philip's conscience. That story must not be relied on, of course, and the autograph letters of Philip as to the murder of Escovedo are lost. But the copies of them at the Hague are regarded as authentic, and the convincing passages are underlined in red ink.

Supposing it possible that Philip after all secured the whole of the autograph correspondence, and that Perez only succeeded in preserving the copies now at the Hague, we should understand why Perez would not confess the King's crime: he had only copies of his proofs to show; and copies were valueless as evidence. But it is certain that Perez really had the letters.

'Bloody Perez,' as Bacon's mother called him, died at Paris in November 1611, outliving the wretched master whom he had served so faithfully. Queen Elizabeth tried to induce Amyas Paulet to murder Mary Stuart. Paulet, as a man of honour, refused; he knew, too, that Elizabeth would abandon him to the vengeance of the Scots. Perez ought to have known that Philip would desert him: his folly was rewarded by prison, torture, and confiscation, which were not more than the man deserved, who betrayed and murdered the servant of Don John of Austria.

Note. — This essay was written when I was unaware that Major Martin Hume had treated the problem in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 1894, p-107, and in *Españoles é Ingleses* (1903). The latter work doubtless represents Major Hume's final views. He has found among the Additional MSS. of the British Museum (28,269) a quantity of the contemporary letters of Perez, which supplement the copies, at the Hague, of other letters destroyed after the death of Perez. From these MSS. and other original sources unknown to Mr. Froude, and to Monsieur Mignet (see the second edition of his *Antonio Perez*; Paris, 1846), Major Hume's theory is that, for *political* reasons, Philip gave orders that Escovedo should be assassinated. This was in late October or early November, 1577. The order was not then carried out; the reason of the delay I do not clearly understand. The months passed, and Escovedo's death ceased, in altered circumstances, to be politically desirable, but he became a serious nuisance to Perez and his mistress, the Princess d'Eboli. Philip had never countermanded the murder, but Perez, according to Major Hume, falsely alleges that the King was still bent on the murder, and that other statesmen were consulted and approved of it, *shortly before the actual deed*. Perez gives this impression by a crafty manipulation of dates in his narrative. When he had Escovedo slain, he was fighting for his own hand; but Philip, who had never countermanded the murder, was indifferent, till, in 1582, when he was with Alva in Portugal. The King now learned that Perez had behaved abominably, had poisoned his mind against his brother Don Juan, had communicated State secrets to the Princess d'Eboli, and had killed Escovedo, not in obedience to the royal order, but using that order as the shield of his private vengeance. Hence Philip's severities to Perez; hence his final command that Perez should disclose the royal motives for the destruction of Escovedo. They would be found to have become obsolete at the date when the crime was committed, and on Perez would fall the blame.

Such is Major Hume's theory, if I correctly apprehend it. The hypothesis leaves the moral character of Philip as black as ever: he ordered an assassination which he never even countermanded. His confessor might applaud him, but he knew that the doctors of the Inquisition, like the common sentiment of mankind, rejected the theory that kings had the right to condemn and execute, by the dagger, men who had been put to no public trial.

III

THE CAMPDEN MYSTERY

I

The ordinary historical mystery is at least so far clear that one or other of two solutions must be right, if we only knew which. Perkin Warbeck was the rightful King, or he was an impostor. Giacopo Stuardo at Naples (1669) was the eldest son of Charles II., or he was a humbug. The Man in the Iron Mask was *certainly* either Mattioli or Eustache Dauger. James VI. conspired against Gowrie, or Gowrie conspired against James VI., and so on. There is reason and human nature at the back of these puzzles. But at the back of the Campden mystery there is not a glimmer of reason or of sane human nature, except on one hypothesis, which I shall offer. The occurrences are, to all appearance, motiveless as the events in a feverish dream. 'The whole Matter is dark and mysterious; which we must therefore leave unto Him who alone knoweth all Things, in His due Time, to reveal and to bring to Light.'

So says the author of 'A True and Perfect Account of the Examination, Confession, Trial, and Execution of *Joan Perry*, and her two Sons, *John* and *Richard Perry*, for the Supposed Murder of *Will Harrison*, Gent., Being One of the most remarkable Occurrences which hath happened in the Memory of Man. Sent in a Letter (by *Sir Thomas Overbury*, of *Burton*, in the County of *Gloucester*, Knt., and one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace) to *Thomas Shirly*, Doctor of Physick, in London. Also Mr. *Harrison's* Own account,' &c. (London. Printed for John Atkinson, near the Chapter House, in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*. No date, but apparently of 1676.)

Such is the vast and breathless title of a pamphlet which, by undeserved good luck, I have just purchased. The writer, Sir Thomas Overbury, 'the nephew and heir,' says Mr. John Paget, 'of the unhappy victim of the infamous Countess of Somerset' (who had the elder Overbury poisoned in the Tower), was the Justice of the Peace who acted as *Juge d'Instruction* in the case of Harrison's disappearance.

To come to the story. In 1660, William Harrison, Gent., was steward or 'factor' to the Viscountess Campden, in Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, a single-streeted town among the Cotswold hills. The lady did not live in Campden House, whose owner burned it in the Great Rebellion, to spite the rebels; as Castle Tirrim was burned by its Jacobite lord in the '15. Harrison inhabited a portion of the building which had escaped destruction. He had been for fifty years a servant of the Hickeses and Campdens, his age was seventy (which deepens the mystery), he was married, and had offspring, including Edward, his eldest son.

On a market day, in 1659, Mr. Harrison's house was broken into, at high noon, while he and his whole family were 'at the Lecture,' in church, a Puritan form of edification. A ladder had been placed against the wall, the bars of a window on the second story had been wrenched away with a ploughshare (which was left in the room), and 140*l.* of Lady Campden's money were stolen. The robber was never discovered — a curious fact in a small and lonely village. The times, however, were disturbed, and a wandering Cavalier or Roundhead soldier may have 'cracked the crib.' Not many weeks later, Harrison's servant, Perry, was heard crying for help in the garden. He showed a 'sheep-pick,' with a hacked handle, and declared that he had been set upon by two men in white, with naked swords, and had defended himself with his rustic tool. It is curious that Mr. John Paget, a writer of great acuteness, and for many years police magistrate at Hammersmith, says nothing of the robbery of 1659, and of Perry's crazy conduct in the garden. Perry's behaviour there, and his hysterical invention of the two armed men in white, give the key to his character. The two men in white were never traced of course, but, later, we meet three men not less flagitious, and even more mysterious. They appear to have been three 'men in buckram.'

At all events, in quiet Campden, adventures obviously occurred to the unadventurous. They culminated in the following year, on August 16, 1660. Harrison left his house in the morning (?) and walked the two miles to Charringworth to collect his lady's rents. The autumn day closed in, and between eight and nine o'clock old Mrs. Harrison sent the servant, John Perry, to meet his master on the way home. Lights were also left burning in Harrison's window. That night neither master nor man returned, and it is odd that the younger Harrison, Edward, did not seek for his father till very early next morning: he had the convenience, for nocturnal search, of a moon which rose late. In the morning, Edward went out and met Perry, returning alone: he had not found his master. The pair walked to Ebrington, a village half way between Campden and Charringworth, and learned that Harrison had called, on the previous evening, as he moved home through Ebrington, at the house of one Daniel. The hour is not given, but Harrison certainly disappeared when just beyond Ebrington, within less than a mile from Campden. Edward and Perry next heard that a poor woman had picked up on the highway, beyond Ebrington, near some whins or furze, a hat, band, and comb, which were Harrison's; they were found within about half a mile of his own house. The band was bloody, the hat and comb were hacked and cut. Please observe the precise words of Sir Thomas Overbury, the justice who took the preliminary examinations: 'The Hat and Comb being hacked and cut, and the Band bloody, but nothing more could there be found.' Therefore the hat and comb were not on Harrison's head when they were hacked and cut: otherwise they must have been blood-stained; the band worn about the throat was bloody, but there was no trace of blood on the road. This passage contains the key to the puzzle.

On hearing of the discovery of these objects all the people rushed to hunt for Harrison's corpse, which they did not find.

An old man like Harrison was not likely to stay at Charringworth very late, but it seems that whatever occurred on the highway happened after twilight.

Suspicion fell on John Perry, who was haled before the narrator, Sir Thomas Overbury, J.P. Perry said that after starting for Charringworth to seek his master on the previous evening, about 8.45 p.m., he met by the way William Reed of Campden, and explained to him that as he was timid in the dark he would go back and take Edward Harrison's horse and return. Perry did as he had said, and Reed left him 'at Mr. Harrison's Court gate.' Perry dallied there till one Pierce came past, and with Pierce (he did not say why) 'he went a bow's shot into the fields,' and so back once more to Harrison's gate. He now lay for an hour in a hen house, he rose at midnight, and again — the moon having now risen and dispelled his fears — he started for Charringworth. He lost his way in a mist, slept by the road-side, proceeded in the dawn to Charringworth, and found that Harrison had been there on the previous day. Then he came back and met Edward Harrison on his way to seek his father at Charringworth.

Perry's story is like a tale told by an idiot, but Reed, Pierce, and two men at Charringworth corroborated as far as their knowledge went. Certainly Perry had been in company with Reed and Pierce, say between nine and ten on the previous night. Now, if evil had befallen Harrison it must have been before ten at night; he would not stay so late, if sober, at Charringworth. Was he usually sober? The cool way in which his wife and son took his absence suggests that he was a late-wandering old boy. They may have expected Perry to find him in his cups and tuck him up comfortably at Charringworth or at Ebrington.

Till August 24 Perry was detained in prison, or, odd to say, at the inn! He told various tales; a tinker or a servant had murdered his master and hidden him in a bean-rick, where, on search being made, *non est inventus*. Harrison, and the rents he had collected, were vanished in the azure. Perry now declared that he would tell all to Overbury, and to no other man. To him Perry averred that his mother and brother, Joan and Richard Perry, had murdered Harrison! It was his brother who, by John Perry's advice and connivance, had robbed the house in the previous year, while John 'had a Halibi,' being at church. The brother, said John, buried the money in the garden. It was sought for, but was not found. His story of the 'two men in white,' who had previously attacked him in the garden, was a lie, he said. I may add that it was not the lie of a sane man. Perry was conspicuously crazy.

He went on with his fables. His mother and brother, he declared, had often asked him to tell them when his master went to collect rents. He had done so after Harrison started for Charringworth on the morning of August 16. John Perry next gave an account of his expedition with his brother in the evening of the fatal day, an account which was incompatible with his previous tale of his doings and with the authentic evidence of Reed and Pierce. Their honest version destroyed Perry's new falsehood. He declared that Richard Perry and he had dogged Harrison, as he came home at night, into Lady Campden's grounds; Harrison had used a key to the private gate. Richard followed him into the grounds; John Perry, after a brief stroll, joined him there and found his mother (how did she come thither?) and Richard standing over the prostrate Harrison, whom Richard incontinently strangled. They seized Harrison's money and meant to put his body 'in the great sink by Wallington's Mill.' John Perry left them, and knew not whether the body was actually thrown into the sink. In fact, *non est inventus* in the sink, any more than in the bean-rick. John next introduced his meeting with Pierce, but quite forgot that he had also met Reed, and did not account for that part of his first story, which Reed and Pierce had both corroborated. The hat, comb, and band John said that he himself had carried away from Harrison's body, had cut them with his knife, and thrown them into the highway. Whence the blood on the band came he neglected to say.

On the strength of this impossible farrago of insane falsehoods, Joan and Richard Perry were arrested and brought before Overbury. Not only the 'sink' but the Campden fish-pools and the ruinous parts of the house were vainly searched in quest of Harrison's body. On August 25 the three Perrys were examined by Overbury, and Richard and the mother denied all that John laid to their charge. John persisted in his story, and Richard admitted that he and John had spoken together on the morning of the day when Harrison vanished, 'but nothing passed between them to that purpose.'

As the three were being brought back from Overbury’s house to Campden an unfortunate thing happened. John was going foremost when Richard, a good way behind, dropped ‘a ball of inkle from his pocket.’ One of his guards picked it up, and Richard said that it ‘was only his wife’s hair-lace.’ At one end, however, was a slip-knot. The finder took it to John, who, being a good way in front, had not seen his brother drop it. On being shown the string John shook his head, and said that ‘to his sorrow he knew it, for that was the string his brother strangled his master with.’ To this circumstance John swore at the ensuing trial.

The Assizes were held in September, and the Perrys were indicted both for the robbery in 1659 and the murder in 1660. They pleaded ‘Guilty’ to the first charge, as some one in court whispered to them to do, for the crime was covered by the Act of Pardon and Oblivion passed by Charles II. at his happy Restoration. If they were innocent of the robbery, as probably they were, they acted foolishly in pleading guilty. We hear of no evidence against them for the robbery, except John’s confession, which was evidence perhaps against John, but was none against *them*. They thus damaged their case, for if they were really guilty of the robbery from Harrison’s house, they were the most likely people in the neighbourhood to have robbed him again and murdered him. Very probably they tied the rope round their own necks by taking advantage of the good King’s indemnity. They later withdrew their confession, and probably were innocent of the theft in 1659.

On the charge of murder they were not tried in September. Sir Christopher Turner would not proceed ‘because the body of Harrison was not found.’ There was no *corpus delicti*, no evidence that Harrison was really dead. Meanwhile John Perry, as if to demonstrate his lunacy, declared that his mother and brother had tried to poison him in prison! At the Spring Assizes in 1661, Sir B. Hyde, less legal than Sir Christopher Turner, did try the Perrys on the charge of murder. How he could do this does not appear, for the account of the trial is not in the Record House, and I am unable at present to trace it. In the *Arminian Magazine*, John Wesley publishes a story of a man who was hanged for murdering another man, whom he afterwards met in one of the Spanish colonies of South America. I shall not here interrupt the tale of the Perrys by explaining how a hanged man met a murdered man, but the anecdote proves that to inflict capital punishment for murder without proof that murder has been committed is not only an illegal but an injudicious proceeding. Probably it was assumed that Harrison, if alive, would have given signs of life in the course of nine or ten months.

At the trial in spring all three Perrys pleaded ‘not guilty.’ John’s confession being proved against him, ‘he told them he was then mad and knew not what he said.’ There must have been *some* evidence against Richard. He declared that his brother had accused others besides him. Being asked to prove this, he answered ‘that most of those that had given evidence against him knew it,’ but named none. So evidence had been given (perhaps to the effect that Richard had been flush of money), but by whom, and to what effect, we do not know.

The Perrys were probably not of the best repute. The mother, Joan, was supposed to be a witch. This charge was seldom brought against popular well-living people. How intense was the fear of witches, at that date, we know from the stories and accounts of trials in Glanvil’s *Sadducismus Triumphatus*. The neighbours probably held that Joan Perry would, as a witch, be ‘nane the waur o’ a hanging.’ She was put to death first, under the belief that any hypnotic or other unholy influence of hers, which prevented her sons from confessing, would be destroyed by her death. We are not aware that post-hypnotic suggestion is removed by the death of the suggester; the experiment has not been tried. The experiment failed in Joan’s case. Poor Richard, who was hanged next, could not induce the ‘dogged and surly’ John to clear his character by a dying declaration. Such declarations were then held irrefragable evidence, at least in Scotland, except when (as in the case of George Sprot, hanged for the Gowrie conspiracy) it did not suit the Presbyterians to believe the dying man. When John was being turned off, he said that ‘he knew nothing of his master’s death, nor what was become of him, but they might hereafter (possibly) hear.’ Did John know something? It would not surprise me if he had an inkling of the real state of the case.

II

They *did* hear; but what they heard, and what I have now to tell, was perfectly incredible. When ‘some’ years (two apparently) had passed, Will Harrison, Gent., like the three silly ewes in the folk-rhyme, ‘came hirpling hame.’ Where had the old man been? He explained in a letter to Sir Thomas Overbury, but his tale is as hard to believe as that of John Perry.

He states that he left his house in the afternoon (not the morning) of Thursday, August 16, 1660. He went to Charringworth to collect rents, but Lady Campden’s tenants were all out harvesting. August seems an odd month for rent-collecting when one thinks of it. They came home late, which delayed Harrison ‘till the close of the evening.’ He only received 23 *l.*, which John Perry said, at his first examination in 1660, had been paid by one Edward Plaisterer, and

Plaisterer corroborated. Harrison then walked homeward, in the dusk probably, and, near Ebrington, where the road was narrow, and bordered by whins, ‘there met me one horseman who said “*Art thou there?*”’ Afraid of being ridden over, Harrison struck the horse on the nose, and the rider, with a sword, struck at him and stabbed him in the side. (It was at this point of the road, where the whins grew, that the cut hat and bloody band were found, but a thrust in the side would not make a neck-band bloody.) Two other horsemen here came up, one of them wounded Harrison in the thigh. They did not now take his 23*l.*, but placed him behind one of them on horseback, handcuffed him, and threw a great cloak over him.

Now, is it likely that highwaymen would carry handcuffs which closed, says Harrison, with a spring and a snap? The story is pure fiction, and bad at that. Suppose that kidnapping, not robbery, was the motive (which would account for the handcuffs), what had any mortal to gain by kidnapping, for the purpose of selling him into slavery, a ‘gent.’ of seventy years of age?

In the night they took Harrison’s money and ‘tumbled me down a stone-pit.’ In an hour they dragged him out again, and he naturally asked what they wanted with him, as they had his money already. One of these miscreants wounded Harrison again, and — stuffed his pockets full of ‘a great quantity of money.’ If they had a great quantity of money, what did they want with 23*l.*? We hear of no other robberies in the neighbourhood, of which misdeeds the money might have been the profits. And why must Harrison carry the money? (It has been suggested that, to win popular favour, they represented themselves as smugglers, and Harrison, with the money, as their gallant purser, wounded in some heroic adventure.)

They next rode till late on August 17, and then put Harrison down, bleeding and ‘sorely bruised with the carriage of the money,’ at a lonely house. Here they gave their victim broth and brandy. On Saturday they rode all day to a house, where they slept, and on Sunday they brought Harrison to Deal, and laid him down on the ground. This was about three in the afternoon. Had they wanted to make for the sea, they would naturally have gone to the *west* coast. While one fellow watched Harrison, two met a man, and ‘I heard them mention seven pounds.’ The man to whom seven pounds were mentioned (Wrenshaw was his name, as Harrison afterwards heard — where?) said that he thought Harrison would die before he could be put on board a ship. *Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?* Harrison was, however, put on board a casual vessel, and remained in the ship for six weeks.

Where was the land to which the ship would go?

Far, far ahead is all the sailors know!

Harrison does not say into what ‘foam of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn’ the ship went wandering for six mortal weeks. Like Lord Bateman:

He sailéd East, and he sailéd West,
Until he came to famed Turkee,
Where he was taken and put in prison,
Till of his life he was wear — ee!

‘Then the Master of the ship came and told me, and *the rest who were in the same condition*, that he discovered three Turkish ships.’ ‘The rest who were in the same condition’! We are to understand that a whole cargo of Harrisons was kidnapped and consigned captive to a vessel launched on ocean, on the off chance that the captain might meet three Turkish rovers who would snap them up. At this rate of carrying on, there must have been disappearances as strange as Harrison’s, from dozens of English parishes, in August 1660. Had a crew of kidnappers been taking captives for purposes of private fiscal policy, they would have shipped them to the Virginian plantations, where Turkish galleys did not venture, and they would not have kidnapped men of seventy. Moreover, kidnappers would not damage their captives by stabbing them in the side and thigh, when no resistance was made, as was done to Harrison.

‘The rest who were in the same condition’ were ‘dumped down’ near Smyrna, where the valuable Harrison was sold to ‘a grave physician.’ ‘This Turk he’ was eighty-seven years of age, and ‘preferred Crowland in Lincolnshire before all other places in England.’ No inquiries are known to have been made about a Turkish medical man who once practised at Crowland in Lincolnshire, though, if he ever did, he was likely to be remembered in the district. This Turk he employed Harrison in the still room, and as a hand in the cotton fields, where he once knocked his slave down with his fist — pretty well for a Turk of eighty-seven! He also gave Harrison (whom he usually employed in the chemical department of his business) ‘a silver bowl, double gilt, to drink in, and named him Boll’ — his way of pronouncing bowl — no doubt he had acquired a Lincolnshire accent.

This Turk fell ill on a Thursday, and died on Saturday, when Harrison tramped to the nearest port, bowl and all. Two men in a Hamburg ship refused to give him a passage, but a third, for the price of his silver-gilt bowl, let him come aboard. Harrison was landed, without even his bowl, at Lisbon, where he instantly met a man from Wisbech, in Lincolnshire. This good Samaritan gave

Harrison wine, strong waters, eight stivers, and his passage to Dover, whence he came back to Campden, much to the amazement of mankind. We do not hear the names of the ship and skipper that brought Harrison from Lisbon to Dover. Wrenshaw (the man to whom seven pounds 'were mentioned') is the only person named in this delirious tissue of nonsense.

The editor of our pamphlet says, 'Many question the truth of this account Mr. Harrison gives of himself, and his transportation, believing he was never out of England.' I do not wonder at their scepticism. Harrison had 'all his days been a man of sober life and conversation,' we are told, and the odd thing is that he 'left behind him a considerable sum of his Lady's money in his house.' He did not see any of the Perrys on the night of his disappearance. The editor admits that Harrison, as an article of merchandise, was not worth his freight to Deal, still less to Smyrna. His son, in his absence, became Lady Campden's steward, and behaved but ill in that situation. Some suspected that this son arranged the kidnapping of Harrison, but, if so, why did he secure the hanging of John Perry, in chains, on Broadway hill, 'where he might daily see him'?

That might be a blind. But young Harrison could not expect John Perry to assist him by accusing himself and his brother and mother, which was the most unlooked-for event in the world. Nor could he know that his father would come home from Charringworth on August 16, 1660, in the dark, and so arrange for three horsemen, in possession of a heavy weight of specie, to stab and carry off the aged sire. Young Harrison had not a great fardel of money to give them, and if they were already so rich, what had they to gain by taking Harrison to Deal, and putting him, with 'others in the same condition,' on board a casual ship? They could have left him in the 'stone-pit:' he knew not who they were, and the longer they rode by daylight, with a hatless, handcuffed, and sorely wounded prisoner, his pockets overburdened with gold, the more risk of detection they ran. A company of three men ride, in broad daylight, through England from Gloucestershire to Deal. Behind one of them sits a wounded, *and hatless*, and handcuffed captive, his pockets bulging with money. Nobody suspects anything, no one calls the attention of a magistrate to this extraordinary *démarche*! It is too absurd!

The story told by Harrison is conspicuously and childishly false. At every baiting place, at every inn, these weird riders must have been challenged. If Harrison told truth, he must have named the ship and skipper that brought him to Dover.

Dismissing Harrison's myth, we ask, what could account for his disappearance? He certainly walked, on the evening of August 16, to within about half a mile of his house. He would not have done that had he been bent on a senile amour involving his absence from home, and had that scheme of pleasure been in his mind, he would have provided himself with money. Again, a fit of ‘ambulatory somnambulism,’ and the emergence of a split or secondary personality with forgetfulness of his real name and address, is not likely to have seized on him at that very moment and place. If it did, as there were no railways, he could not rush off in a crowd and pass unnoticed through the country.

Once more, the theory of ambulatory somnambulism does not account for his hacked hat and bloody band found near the whins on the road beyond Ebrington. Nor does his own story account for them. He was stabbed in the side and thigh, he says. This would not cut his hat or ensanguine his band. On the other hand, he would leave pools and tracks of blood on the road— ‘the high way.’ ‘But nothing more could there be found,’ no pools or traces of blood on the road. It follows that the hacked hat and bloody band were a designed false trail, *not* left there by John Perry, as he falsely swore, but by some other persons.

The inference is that for some reason Harrison’s presence at Campden was inconvenient to somebody. He had lived through most troubled times, and had come into a changed state of affairs with new masters. He knew some secret of the troubled times: he was a witness better out of the way. He may conceivably have held a secret that bore on the case of one of the Regicides; or that affected private interests, for he was the trusted servant of a great family. He was therefore spirited away: a trail certainly false — the cut hat and bloody band — was laid. By an amazing coincidence his servant, John Perry, went more or less mad — he was not sane on the evening of Thursday, August 16, and accused himself, his brother, and mother. Harrison was probably never very far from Campden during the two or three years of his disappearance. It was obviously made worth his while to tell his absurd story on his return, and to accept the situation. No other hypothesis ‘colligates the facts.’ What Harrison knew, why his absence was essential, we cannot hope to discover. But he never was a captive in ‘famed Turkee.’ Mr. Paget writes: ‘It is impossible to assign a sufficient motive for kidnapping the old man ... much profit was not likely to arise from the sale of the old man as a slave.’ Obviously there was no profit, especially as the old man was delivered in a wounded and imperfect condition. But a motive for keeping Harrison out of the way is only hard to seek because we do not know the private history of his neighbours. Roundheads among them may have had excellent reasons, under the Restoration, for sequestering Harrison till the revenges of the Restoration were accomplished. On this view the mystery almost ceases to be mysterious, for such mad self-accusations as that of John Perry are not uncommon.

IV

THE CASE OF ALLAN BRECK

Who killed the Red Fox? What was the secret that the Celts would not communicate to Mr. R.L. Stevenson, when he was writing *Kidnapped*? Like William of Deloraine, ‘I know but may not tell’; at least, I know all that the Celt knows. The great-grandfather and grandfather of a friend of mine were with James Stewart of the Glens, the victim of Hanoverian injustice, in a potato field, near the road from Ballachulish Ferry to Appin, when they heard a horse galloping at a break-neck pace. ‘Whoever the rider is,’ said poor James, ‘he is not riding his own horse.’ The galloper shouted, ‘Glenure has been shot!’

‘Well,’ said James to his companion, ‘whoever did it, I am the man that will hang for it.’

Hanged he was. The pit in which his gibbet stood is on the crest of a circular ‘knowe,’ or hummock, on the east side of the Ballachulish Hotel, overlooking the ferry across the narrows, where the tide runs like a great swift river.

I have had the secret from two sources; the secret which I may not tell. One informant received it from his brother, who, when he came to man’s estate, was taken apart by his uncle. ‘You are old enough to know now,’ said that kinsman, ‘and I tell you that it may not be forgotten.’ The gist of the secret is merely what one might gather from the report of the trial, that though Allan Breck was concerned in the murder of Campbell of Glenure, he was not alone in it.

The truth is, according to tradition, that as Glenure rode on the fatal day from Fort William to his home in Appin, the way was lined with marksmen of the Camerons of Lochaber, lurking with their guns among the brushwood and behind the rocks. But their hearts failed them, no trigger was drawn, and when Glenure landed on the Appin side of the Ballachulish Ferry, he said, ‘I am safe now that I am out of my mother’s country,’ his mother having been of clan Cameron. But he had to reckon with the man with the gun, who was lurking in the wood of Letter More (‘the great hanging coppice’), about three-quarters of a mile on the Appin side of Ballachulish Ferry. The gun was not one of the two dilapidated pieces shown at the trial of James of the Glens, nor, I am told, was it the Fasnacloich gun. The real homicidal gun was found some years ago in a hollow tree. People remember these things well in Appin and Glencoe, though the affair is a hundred and fifty years old, and though there are daily steamers bringing the newspapers. There is even a railway, not remarkable for speed, while tourists, English, French, and American, are for ever passing to view Glencoe, and to write their names in the hotel book after luncheon, then flying to other scenes. There has even been a strike of long duration at the Ballachulish Quarries, and Labour leaders have perorated to the Celts; but Gaelic is still spoken, second sight is nearly as common as short sight, you may really hear the fairy music if you bend your ear, on a still day, to the grass of the fairy knowe. Only two generations back a fairy boy lived in a now ruinous house, noted in the story of the Massacre of Glencoe, beside the brawling river: and a woman, stolen by the fairies, returned for an hour to her husband, who became very unpopular, as he neglected the means for her rescue; I think he failed to throw a dirk over her shoulder. Every now and then mysterious lights may be seen, even by the Sassenach, speeding down the road to Callart on the opposite side of the narrow sea-loch, ascending the hill, and running down into the salt water. The causes of these lights, and of the lights on the burial isle of St. Mun, in the middle of the sea strait, remain a mystery. Thus the country is still a country of prehistoric beliefs and of fairly accurate traditions. For example, at the trial of James Stewart for the murder of Glenure, one MacColl gave damaging evidence, the MacColls being a sept subordinate to the MacIans or Macdonalds of Glencoe, who, by the way, had no hand in the murder. Till recently these MacColls were still disliked for the part played by the witness, and were named ‘King George’s MacColls.’

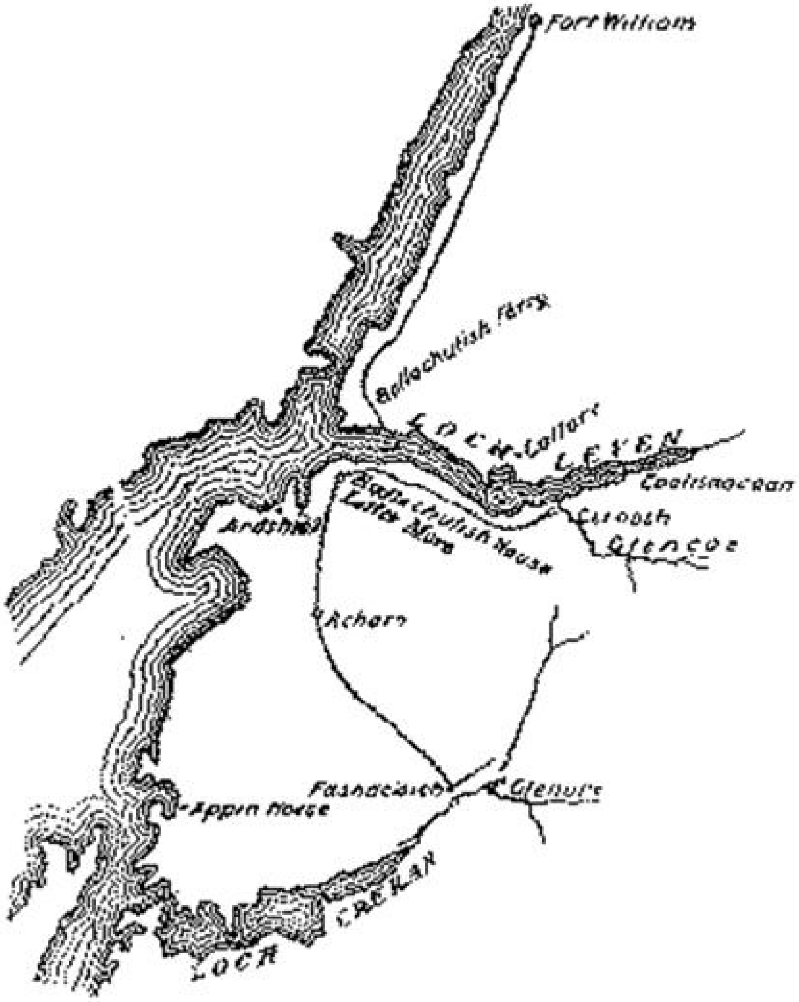
Fort William
Ballachulish Ferry
LOCH LEVEN
Callart
Caolisnacoan
Carnoch
Glencoe
Ballachulish House
Letter More
Ardshiel
Acharn
Fasnacloich
Glenure
Appin House
LOCH CRERAN

But we must come to the case of Allan Breck. To understand it, some knowledge of topography is necessary. Leaving Oban by steamer, you keep on the inside of the long narrow island of Lismore, and reach the narrow sea inlet of Loch Creran on your right. The steamer does not enter it, but, taking a launch or a boat, you go down Loch Creran. On your left is the peninsula of Appin; its famous green hills occupy the space bounded by Loch Creran on the south and Glencoe on the north. Landing near the head of Loch Creran, a walk of two miles takes you to the old house of Fasnacloich, where Allan Breck was wont to stay. Till two or three years ago it belonged to the Stewarts of Fasnacloich, cadets of the chief, the Laird of Appin; all Appin was a Stewart country and loyal to the King over the Water, their kinsman. About a mile from Fasnacloich, further inland, is the rather gloomy house of Glenure, the property of Campbell of Glenure, the Red Fox who was shot on the road under Letter More. Walking across the peninsula to Appin House, you pass Acharn in Duror, the farm of James Stewart of the Glens, himself an illegitimate kinsman of the Laird of

Appin. To the best of my memory the cottage is still standing, and has a new roof of corrugated iron. It is an ordinary Highland cottage, and Allan, when he stayed with James, his kinsman and guardian, slept in the barn. Appin House is a large plain country house, close to the sea. Further north-east, the house of Ardshiel, standing high above the sea, is visible from the steamer going to Fort William. At Ardshiel, Rob Roy fought a sword and target duel with the laird, and Ardshiel led the Stewarts in the rising of 1745; Appin, the chief, held aloof. The next place of importance is Ballachulish House, also an old house of Stewart of Ballachulish. It is on the right hand of the road from Ballachulish Pier to Glencoe, beneath a steep wooded hill, down which runs the burn where Allan Breck was fishing on the morning of the day of Glenure's murder, done at a point on the road three-quarters of a mile to the south-west of Ballachulish House, where Allan had slept on the previous night. From the house the road passes on the south side of the salt Loch Leven (not Queen Mary's Loch Leven). Here is Ballachulish Ferry, crossing to Lochaber. Following the road you come opposite the House of Carnoch, then possessed by Macdonalds (the house has been pulled down; there is a good recent ghost story about that business), and the road now enters Glencoe. On high hills, well to the left of the road and above Loch Leven, are Corrynakeigh and Coalisnacoan (the Ferry of the Dogs), overtopping the narrows of Loch Leven. Just opposite the House of Carnoch, on the Cameron side of Loch Leven, is the House of Callart (Mrs. Cameron Lucy's). Here and at Carnoch, as at Fasnacloich, Acharn, and Ballachulish, Allan Breck was much at home among his cousins.

From Loch Leven north to Fort William, with its English garrison, all is a Cameron country. Campbell of Glenure was an outpost of Whiggery and Campbells, in a land of loyal Stewarts, Camerons, and Macdonalds or MacIans of Glencoe. Of the Camerons, the gentle Lochiel had died in France; his son, a boy, was abroad; the interests of the clan were represented by Cameron of Fassifern, Lochiel's uncle, living a few miles west by north of Fort William. Fassifern, a well-educated man and a burgess of Glasgow, had not been out with Prince Charles, but (for reasons into which I would rather not enter) was not well trusted by Government. Ardshiel, also, was in exile, and his tenants, under James Stewart of the Glens, loyally paid rent to him, as well as to the commissioners of his forfeited estates. The country was seething with feuds among the Camerons themselves, due to the plundering by —— , of —— , of the treasure left by Prince Charles in the hands of Cluny. The state of affairs was such that the English commander in Fort William declared that, if known, it 'would shock even Lochaber consciences.' 'A great ox hath trodden on my tongue' as to *this* business. Despite the robbery of Prince Charles's gold, deep poverty prevailed.

In February, 1749, Campbell of Glenure had been appointed Factor for Government over the forfeited estates of Ardshiel (previously managed by James Stewart of the Glens), of Lochiel, and of Callart. In the summer of 1751, Glenure evicted James from a farm, and in April, 1752, took measures for evicting other farmers on Ardshiel estates. Such measures were almost unheard of in the country, and had, years before, caused some agrarian outrages among Gordons and Camerons; these were appeased by the King over the Water, James VIII. and III. James Stewart, in April, 1752, went to Edinburgh, and obtained a legal sist, or suspension of the evictions, against Glenure, which was withdrawn on Glenure's application, who came home from Edinburgh, and intended to turn the tenants out on May 15, 1752. They were assailed merely as of Jacobite name and tendencies. Meanwhile Allan Breck — who had deserted the Hanoverian army after Prestonpans, had joined Prince Charles, fought at Culloden, escaped to France, and entered the French army — was lodging about Appin among his cousins, perhaps doing a little recruiting for King Louis. He was a tall thin man, marked with smallpox.

Cruising about the country also was another Jacobite soldier, 'the Sergent More,' a Cameron, later betrayed by —— , of —— , who robbed the Prince's hoard of gold. But the Sergeant More had nothing to do, as has been fancied, with the murder of Glenure. The state of the country was ticklish; Prince Charles expected to invade with Swedish forces, under the famous Marshal Keith, by the connivance of Frederick the Great, and he had sent Lochgarry, with Dr. Archibald Cameron and others, to feel the pulse of the western clans. As Government knew all about these intrigues from Pickle the Spy, they were evicting Jacobite tenants from Ardshiel's lands, and meant to do the same, by agency of Campbell of Glenure, in Lochaber, Lochiel's country.

On Monday, May 11, Campbell, who intended to do the evictions on May 15, left Glenure for Fort William, on business; the distance is computed at sixteen miles, by the old hill road. Allan Breck, on the 11th, was staying at Fasnacloich, near Glenure, where the fishing is very good. When Glenure moved north to Fort William, Allan went to James Stewart's cottage of Acharn. Glenure's move was talked of, and that evening Allan changed his own blue coat, scarlet vest, and black velvet breeches for a dark short coat with silver buttons, a blue bonnet, and trousers (the Highlanders had been diskilted), all belonging to James Stewart. He usually did make these changes when residing with friends. In these clothes next day (Tuesday, May 12) Allan, with young Fasnacloich, walked to Carnoch, the house of Macdonald of Glencoe, situated just where the Water of Coe or Cona enters Loch Leven. The dowager of the house was natural sister of James of the Glens, and full sister of the exiled Stewart of Ardshiel. From Carnoch, Allan, on the same day, crossed the sea-strait to Callart opposite, where Mrs. Cameron was another half-sister to James of the Glens. On Wednesday Allan recrossed, called at Carnoch, and went to stay at Ballachulish House. On Thursday, when Glenure would certainly return home by Ballachulish Ferry, Allan, about mid-day, was seen to go fishing up Ballachulish burn, where he caught no trout, and I do not wonder at it.

The theory of the prosecution was that, from the high ground to the left of the burn he watched the ferry, having one or two guns, though how he got them unobserved to the place is the difficulty; he could not have walked the roads from Acharn unobserved with a gun, for the Highlanders had been disarmed. At this point he must have had the assistance and the gun of *the other man*. Allan came down from the hill, asked the ferryman if Glenure had crossed, and returned to his point of observation. About five o'clock in the afternoon, Glenure, with a nephew of his, Mungo Campbell, a 'writer' or solicitor, crossed the ferry, and was greeted and accompanied for three-quarters of a mile on his homeward way by old Stewart of Ballachulish, who turned back and went to his house. A sheriff's officer walked ahead of Glenure, who, like Mungo, was mounted. Behind both, mounted, was Campbell's servant, John Mackenzie. The old road was (and is) a rough track, through thick coppice. There came a shot, and Glenure, pierced by two balls, fell and died.

John Mackenzie, Glenure's servant, now rode onwards at a great gallop to find Campbell of Ballieveolan, and on his way came to Acharn and met James Stewart, with the two ancestors of my friend, as already described. He gave the news to James, who 'wrung his hands and expressed great concern at what had happened, as what might bring innocent people to trouble.' In fact, he had once, or oftener, when drinking, expressed a desire to have a shot at Glenure, and so had Allan. But James was a worthy, sensible man when sober, and must have known that, while he could not frighten the commissioners of forfeited estates by shooting their agent, he was certain to be suspected if their agent was shot. As a matter of fact, as we shall see, he had taken active steps to secure the presence of a Fort William solicitor at the evictions on Friday, May 15, to put in a legal protest. But he thought it unadvisable to walk three or four miles and look after Glenure's corpse; the Highlanders, to this day, have a strong dread or dislike of corpses. That night James bade his people hide his arms, four swords, a long Spanish gun, and a shorter gun, neither of which weapons, in fact, did the trick, nor could be depended on not to miss fire.

Where, meanwhile, was Allan? In the dusk, above Ballachulish House, he was seen by Kate MacInnes, a maid of the house; they talked of the murder, and she told Donald Stewart, a very young man, son-in-law of Ballachulish, where Allan was out on the hillside. Donald Stewart averred that, on hearing from Kate that Allan wanted to see him (Kate denied that she said this), he went to the hill, accused Allan of the crime, and was told, in reply, that Allan was innocent, though, as a deserter from the Hanoverian army, and likely to be suspected, he must flee the country. Other talk passed, to which we shall return. At three in the morning of Friday, May 15, Allan knocked at the window of Carnoch House (Glencoe's), passed the news, was asked no questions, refused a drink and made for the sheiling, or summer hut, high on the hill side of Coalisnacoan, whence you look down on the narrows of Loch Leven.

There we leave Allan for the moment, merely remarking that he had no money, no means of making his escape. As he is supposed by the prosecution to have planned the slaying of Glenure with James Stewart on May 11, it seems plain that James would then have given him money to use in his escape, or, if he had no money by him, would have sent at once to Fort William or elsewhere to raise it. He did not do this, and neither at Carnoch, Callart, nor Ballachulish House did Allan receive any money.

But, on May 12, when Allan went to Carnoch and Callart, James sent a servant to a very old Mr. Stewart, father of Charles Stewart, notary public. The father was a notary also, and James, who wanted a man of law to be at the evictions on May 15, and thought that Charles Stewart was absent in Moidart, conceived that the old gentleman would serve the turn. But his messenger missed the venerable sportsman, who had gone a-fishing. Learning later that Charles had returned from Moidart, James, at 8 a.m. on May 14 (the day of the murder), sent a servant to Charles at Fort William, bidding him come to the evictions on May 15, 'as everything must go wrong without a person that can act, and that I can trust.' In a postscript he added, 'As I have no time to write to William (Stewart), let him send down immediately 8*l.* to pay for four milk cows I bought for his wife at Ardshiel.' His messenger had also orders to ask William Stewart for the money.

Nothing could seem more harmless, but the prosecution might have argued that this letter was, as to the coming of the notary, a 'blind,' and that the real object was, under the plea of sending for the notary, to send the messenger for William Stewart's 8*l.*, destined to aid Allan in his escape. There was no proof or even suggestion that, on May 12, James had asked old Mr. Stewart to send money for Allan's use, or had asked William Stewart, as having none by him he would have done — that is, if James had concerted the murder with Allan. If, on May 14, James was trying to raise money to help a man who, as he knew, would need it after committing a murder on that day, he showed strange want of foresight. He might not get the money, or might not be able to send it to Allan.

In fact, that day James did not get the money. The prosecution argued that the money was sent for on May 14, to help Allan Breck, and did not even try to show that James had sent for money on May 12; when it would have arrived in good time. Indeed James did not, on May 12, send any message to William Stewart at Fort William, from whom, not from Charles or the old gentleman, he tried to raise the cash on May 14. A friendly or a just jury would have noted that if James planned a murder on the night of May 11, and had no money, his very first move, on May 12, would be to try to raise money for the assassin's escape. No mortal would put off that step till the morning of the crime; indeed, it is amazing that Allan, if he meant to do the deed, did not first try to obtain cash for his escape. The relations of Glenure suspected, at the time, that Allan was not the assassin, that he fled merely to draw suspicion away from the real criminal (as he does in *Kidnapped*), and they even wished to advertise a pardon for him, if he would come in and give evidence. These facts occur in a copious unpublished correspondence of the day between Glenure's brothers and kinsmen; Mr. Stevenson had never heard of these letters. Thus, up to the day of the murder, Allan may not have contemplated it; he may have been induced, unprepared, to act as accessory to *the other man*.

The point where, according to the prosecution, the evidence 'pinched' James of the Glens was his attempt to raise money on May 14. What could he want with so large a sum as 8*l.*, so suddenly, as he had no bill to meet? Well, as a number of his friends were to be thrown out of their farms, with their cattle, next day, James might need money for their relief, and it seems certain that he had made no effort to raise money at the moment when he inevitably must have done so, if guilty, that is, on May 12, immediately after concerting, as was alleged, the plot with Allan Breck. Failing to get money from William Stewart at Fort William on May 14, James did on May 15 procure a small sum from him or his wife, and did send what he could scrape together to Allan Breck at Coalisnacoan. This did not necessarily imply guilt on James's part. Allan, whether guilty or not, was in danger as a suspected man and a deserter; James was his father's friend, had been his guardian, and so, in honour, was bound to help him.

But how did he know where Allan was to be found? If both were guilty they would have arranged, on May 11, a place where Allan might lurk. If they did arrange that, both were guilty. But Donald Stewart, who went, as we have said, and saw Allan on the hillside on the night of the murder, added to his evidence that Allan had then told him to tell James of the Glens where he might be found, that is, at Coalisnacoan. These tidings Donald gave to James on the morning of May 15. James then sent a pedlar, Allan's cousin, back to William Stewart, got

3*l.*, added, in the evening of the 16th, more money of his own, and sent it to Allan. There was a slight discrepancy between the story of the maid, Kate MacInnes, and that of Donald Stewart, as to what exactly passed between them, concerning Allan, on the night of the murder, and whether Allan did or did not give her a definite message to Donald. The prosecution insisted on this discrepancy, which really, as James's advocate told the jury, rather went to prove their want of collusion in the manufacture of testimony. Had their memories been absolutely coincident, we might suspect collusion — that they had been 'coached' in their parts. But a discrepancy of absolutely no importance rather suggests independent and honest testimony. If this be so, Allan and James had arranged no trysting-place on May 11, as they must have done if Allan was to murder Glenure, and James was to send him money for his escape.

But there was a discrepancy of evidence as to the hour when the pedlar sent by James to Fort William on May 15 arrived there. Was he despatched after the hour when Donald Stewart swore that he gave Allan's message to James of the Glens, or earlier, with no knowledge on James's part of the message carried by Donald? We really cannot expect certainty of memory, after five months, as to hours of the clock. Also James did not prove that he sent a message to Allan at Coalisnacoan, bidding him draw on William Stewart for money; yet on Friday, May 15, James did, by the pedlar, bid William Stewart give Allan credit, and on Saturday, May 16, Allan did make a pen from a bird's feather, and ink with powder and water, and write a letter for money, on the strength of James's credit, to William Stewart. This is certainly a difficulty for James, since he suggested John Breck MacColl, a tenant of Appin's at Coalisnacoan, for the intermediary between Allan and William Stewart, and Allan actually did employ this man to carry his letter. But Allan knew this tenant well, as did James, and there was nobody else at that desolate spot, Coalisnacoan, whom Allan could employ. So lonely is the country that a few years ago a gentleman of my acquaintance, climbing a rocky cliff, found the bones of a man gnawed by foxes and eagles; a man who never had been missed or inquired after. Remains of pencils and leather shoe strings among the bones proved that the man had been a pedlar, like James Stewart's messenger, who had fallen over the precipice in trying to cross from Coalisnacoan to the road through Glencoe. But he never was missed, nor is the date of his death known to this day.

The evidence of the lonely tenant at Coalisnacoan, as to his interviews with Allan, is familiar to readers of *Kidnapped*. The tenant had heard of the murder before he saw Allan. Two poor women, who came up from Glencoe, told the story, saying that '*two men* were seen going from the spot where Glenure was killed, and that Allan Breck was one of them.' Thus early does the mysterious figure of *the other man* haunt the evidence. The tenant’s testimony was not regarded as trustworthy by the Stewart party; it tended to prove that Allan expected a change of clothes and money to be sent to him, and he also wrote the letter (with a wood-pigeon’s quill, and powder and water) to William Stewart, asking for money. But Allan might do all this relying on his own message sent by Donald Stewart, on the night of the murder, to James of the Glens, and knowing, as he must have done, that William Stewart was James’s agent in his large financial operations.

On the whole, then, the evidence, even where it ‘pinches’ James most, is by no means conclusive proof that on May 11 he had planned the murder with Allan. If so, he must have begun to try to raise money before the very day of the murder. James and his son were arrested on May 16, and taken to Fort William; scores of other persons were arrested, and the Campbells, to avenge Glenure, made the most minute examinations of hundreds of people. Meanwhile Allan, having got 5*l.* and his French clothes by the agency of his cousin the pedlar, decamped from Coalisnacoan in the night, and marched across country to the house of an uncle in Rannoch. Thence he escaped to France, where he was seen in Paris by an informant of Sir Walter Scott’s in the dawn of the French Revolution; a tall, thin, quiet old man, wearing the cross of St. Louis, and looking on at a revolutionary procession.

The activities of the Campbells are narrated in their numerous unpublished letters. We learn from a nephew of Glenure’s that he had been ‘several days ago forewarned,’ by whom we cannot guess; tradition tells, as I have said, that he feared danger only in Lochiel’s country, Lochaber, and thought himself safe in Appin. The warning, then, probably came from a Cameron in Lochaber, not from a Stewart in Appin. In coincidence with this is a dark anonymous blackmailing letter to Fassifern, as if *he* had urged the writer to do the deed:

‘You will remember what you proposed on the night that Culchena was buried, betwixt the hill and Culchena. I cannot deny but that I had breathing’ (a whisper), ‘and not only that, but proposal of the same to myself to do. Therefore you must excuse me, when it comes to the push, for telling the thing that happened betwixt you and me that night.... If you do not take this to heart, you may let it go as you will.’ (June 6, 1752.)

Fassifern, who had no hand in the murder, ‘let it go,’ and probably handed the blackmailer’s letter over to the Campbells. Later, —— , —— of —— , the blackest villain in the country, offered to the Government to accuse Fassifern of the murder. The writer of the anonymous letter to Fassifern is styled ‘Blarmachfildich,’ or ‘Blarmackfildoch,’ in the correspondence. I think he was a Mr. Millar, employed by Fassifern to agitate against Glenure.

In the beginning of July a man, suspected of being Allan, was arrested at Annan on the Border, by a sergeant of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. He really seems to have changed clothes with Allan; at least he wore gay French clothes like Allan's, but he was not that hero. Young Ballachulish, at this time, knew that Allan was already across the sea. Various guesses occur as to who *the other man* was; for example, a son of James of the Glens was suspected, so there *was* another man.

The 'precognitions,' or private examinations of witnesses before the trial, extended to more than seven hundred persons. It was matter of complaint by the Stewart party that 'James Drummond's name appeared in the list of witnesses;' this is Mr. Stevenson's James More, really MacGregor, the son of Rob Roy, and father of Catriona, later Mrs. David Balfour of Shaws, in *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*. 'James More's character is reflected upon, and I believe he cannot be called worse than he deserves,' says one of the Campbells. He alleges, however, that in April, before the murder, James of the Glens visited James More, then a prisoner in Edinburgh Castle, 'caressed him,' and had a private conversation with him. The abject James More averred that, in this conversation, James of the Glens proposed that James More's brother, Robin Oig, should kill Glenure for money. James More was not examined at the trial of James of the Glens, perhaps because he had already escaped, thanks to Catriona and collusion; but his evidence appears to have reached the jury, almost all of them Campbells, who sat at Inveraray, the Duke of Argyll on the bench, and made no difficulty about finding James of the Glens 'Guilty.' To be sure, James, if guilty, was guilty as an accessory to Allan, and that Allan was guilty was not proved; he was not even before the court. It was not proved that the bullets which slew Glenure fitted the bore of James's small gun with which Allan was alleged to have perpetrated the murder, but it was proved that the lock of that gun had only one fault — it missed fire four times out of five, and, when the gun did not miss fire, it did not carry straight — missed a blackcock, sitting! *That* gun was not the gun used in the murder.

The jury had the case for James of the Glens most clearly and convincingly placed before them, in the speech of Mr. Brown for the accused. He made, indeed, the very points on which I have insisted; for example, that if James concerted a murder with Allan on May 11, he would not begin to hunt for money for Allan's escape so late as May 14, the day of the murder. Again, he proved that, without any information from James, Allan would *naturally* send for money to William Stewart, James's usual source of supply; while at Coalisnacoan there was no man to go as messenger except the tenant, John Breck MacColl. A few women composed his family, and, as John MacColl had been the servant of

James of the Glens, he was well known already to Allan. In brief, there was literally no proof of concert, and had the case been heard in Edinburgh, not in the heart of the Campbell country, by a jury of Campbells, a verdict of 'Not Guilty' would have been given: probably the jury would not even have fallen back upon 'Not Proven.' But, moved by clan hatred and political hatred, the jury, on September 24, found a verdict against James of the Glens, who, in a touching brief speech, solemnly asserted his innocence before God, and chiefly regretted 'that after ages should think me guilty of such a horrid and barbarous murder.'

He was duly hanged, and left hanging, on the little knoll above the sea ferry, close to the Ballachulish Hotel.

And *the other man*?

Tradition avers that, on the day of the execution, he wished to give himself up to justice, though his kinsmen told him that he could not save James, and would merely share his fate; but, nevertheless, he struggled so violently that his people mastered and bound him with ropes, and laid him in a room still existing. Finally, it is said that strange noises and knockings are still heard in that place, a mysterious survival of strong human passions attested in other cases, as on the supposed site of the murder of James I. of Scotland in Perth.

Do I believe in this identification of *the other man*? I have marked every trace of him in the documents, published or unpublished, and I remain in doubt. But if Allan had an accessory in the crime, who was seen at the place, an accomplice who, for example, supplied the gun, perhaps fired the shot, while Allan fled to distract suspicion, that accessory was probably the person named by legend. Though he was certainly under suspicion, so were scores of other people. The crime does not seem to me to have been the result of a conspiracy in Appin, but the act of one hot-headed man or of two hot-headed men. I hope I have kept the Celtic secret, and I defy anyone to discover *the other man* by aid of this narrative.

That James would have been quite safe with an Edinburgh jury was proved by the almost contemporary case of the murder of the English sergeant Davies. He was shot on the hillside, and the evidence against the assassins was quite strong enough to convict them. But some of the Highland witnesses averred that the phantasm of the sergeant had appeared to them, and given information against the criminals, and though there was testimony independent of the ghost's, his interference threw ridicule over the affair. Moreover the Edinburgh jury was in sympathy with Mr. Lockhart, the Jacobite advocate who defended the accused. Though undeniably guilty, they were acquitted: much more would James of the Glens have obtained a favourable verdict. He was practically murdered under forms of law, and what was thought of the Duke of Argyll’s conduct on the bench is familiar to readers of *Kidnapped*. I have never seen a copy of the pamphlet put forth after the hanging by the Stewart party, and only know it through a reply in the Campbell MSS.

The tragedy remains as fresh in the memories of the people of Appin and Lochaber as if it were an affair of yesterday. The reason is that the crime of cowardly assassination was very rare indeed among the Highlanders. Their traditions were favourable to driving ‘creaghs’ of cattle, and to clan raids and onfalls, but in the wildest regions the traveller was far more safe than on Hounslow or Bagshot Heaths, and shooting from behind a wall was regarded as dastardly.

V

THE CARDINAL’S NECKLACE

‘Oh, Nature and Thackeray, which of you imitated the other?’ One inevitably thinks of the old question thus travestied, when one reads, in the fifth edition, revised and augmented, of Monsieur Funck-Brentano’s *L’Affaire du Collier*, the familiar story of Jeanne de Valois, of Cardinal Rohan, and of the fatal diamond necklace. Jeanne de Valois might have sat, though she probably did not, for Becky Sharp. Her early poverty, her pride in the blood of Valois, recall Becky’s youth, and her boasts about ‘the blood of the Montmorencys.’ Jeanne had her respectable friends, as Becky had the Sedleys; like Becky, she imprudently married a heavy, unscrupulous young officer; her expedients for living on nothing a year were exactly those of Mrs. Rawdon Crawley; her personal charms, her fluent tongue, her good nature, even, were those of that accomplished lady. Finally she has her Marquis of Steyne in the wealthy, luxurious Cardinal de Rohan; she robs him to a tune beyond the dreams of Becky, and, incidentally, she drags to the dust the royal head of the fairest and most unhappy of queens. Even now there seem to be people who believe that Marie Antoinette was guilty, that she cajoled the Cardinal, and robbed him of the diamonds, fateful as the jewels of Eriphyle.

That theory is annihilated by M. Funck-Brentano. But the story is so strangely complicated; the astuteness and the credulity of the Cardinal are so oddly contrasted; a momentary folly of the Queen is so astonishing and fatal; the general mismanagement of the Court is so crazy, that, had we lived in Paris at the moment, perhaps we could hardly have believed the Queen to be innocent. Even persons greatly prejudiced in her favour might well have been deceived, and the people ‘loveth to think the worst, and is hardly to be moved from that opinion,’ as was said of the Scottish public at the date of the Gowrie conspiracy.

An infidelity of Henri II. of France to his wedded wife, Catherine de Médicis, and the misplaced affection of Louis XV. for Madame du Barry, were the remote but real causes that helped to ruin the House of France. Without the amour of Henri II., there would have been no Jeanne de Valois; without the hope that Louis XV. would stick at nothing to please Madame du Barry, the diamond necklace would never have been woven.

Henri II. loved, about 1550, a lady named Nicole de Savigny, and by her had a son, Henri de Saint-Remy, whom he legitimated. Saint-Remy was the great, great, great, great-grandfather of Jeanne de Valois, the flower of minxes. Her father, a ruined man, dwelt in a corner of the family *château*, a predacious, poaching, athletic, broken scion of royalty, who drank and brawled with the peasants, and married his mistress, a servant-girl. Jeanne was born at the *château* of Fontette, near Bar-sur-Aube, on April 22, 1756, and she and her brother and little sister starved in their mouldering tower, kept alive by the charity of the neighbours and of the *curé,* who begged clothes for these descendants of kings. But their scutcheon was — and Jeanne never forgot the fact — argent, three *fleurs de lys* or, on a fesse azure. The *noblesse* of the family was later scrutinised by the famous d'Hozier and pronounced authentic. Jeanne, with bare feet, and straws in her hair, is said to have herded the cows, a discontented indolent child, often beaten by her peasant mother. When her father had eaten up his last acre, he and the family tramped to Paris in 1760. As Jeanne was then but four years old, I doubt if she ever 'drove the cattle home,' as M. Funck-Brentano finds recorded in the MSS. of the advocate Target, who defended Jeanne's victim, Cardinal Rohan.

The Valois crew lived in a village near Paris. Jeanne's mother turned Jeanne's father out of doors, took a soldier in his place, and sent the child to beg daily in the streets. 'Pity a poor orphan of the blood of Valois,' she piped; 'alms, in God's name, for two orphans of the blood of Valois!' When she brought home little she was cruelly flogged, so she says, and occasionally she deviated into the truth. A kind lady, the Marquise de Boulainvilliers, investigated her story, found it true, and took up the Valois orphans. The wicked mother went back to Bar-sur-Aube, which Jeanne was to dazzle with her opulence, after she got possession of the diamonds.

By the age of twenty-one (1777), Jeanne was a pretty enchanting girl, with a heart full of greed and envy; two years later she and her sister fled from the convent where her protectress had placed them: a merry society convent it was. A Madame de Surmont now gave them shelter, at Bar-sur-Aube, and Jeanne married, very disreputably, her heavy admirer, La Motte, calling himself Count, and to all appearance a stupid young officer of the *gendarmerie*. The pair lived as such people do, and again made prey of Madame de Boulainvilliers, in 1781, at Strasbourg. The lady was here the guest of the sumptuous, vain, credulous, but honourable Cardinal Rohan, by this time a man of fifty, and the fanatical adorer of Cagliostro, with his philosopher's stone, his crystal gazers, his seeresses, his Egyptian mysteries, and his powers of healing diseases, and creating diamonds out of nothing.

Cagliostro doubtless lowered the Cardinal’s moral and mental tone, but it does not appear that he had any connection with the great final swindle. In his supernormal gifts and graces the Cardinal did steadfastly believe. Ten years earlier, Rohan had blessed Marie Antoinette on her entry into France, and had been ambassador at the Court of Maria Theresa, the Empress. A sportsman who once fired off 1,300 cartridges in a day (can this be true?), a splendid festive churchman, who bewitched Vienna, and even the Emperor and Count Kaunitz, by his lavish entertainments, Rohan made himself positively loathed — for his corrupting luxury and his wicked wit — by the austere Empress. She procured Rohan’s recall, and so worked on her daughter, Marie Antoinette, the young Queen of France, that the prelate, though Grand Almoner, was socially boycotted by the Court, his letters of piteous appeal to the Queen were not even opened, and his ambitions to sway politics, like a Tencin or a Fleury, were ruined.

So here are Rohan, Cagliostro, and Jeanne all brought acquainted. The Cardinal (and this is one of the oddest features in the affair) was to come to believe that Jeanne was the Queen’s most intimate friend, and could and would make his fortune with her; while, at the same time, he was actually relieving her by little tips of from two to five louis! This he was doing, even after, confiding in Jeanne, he handed to her the diamond necklace for the Queen, and, as he believed, had himself a solitary midnight interview with her Majesty. If Jeanne was so great with the Queen as Rohan supposed, how could Jeanne also be in need of small charities? Rohan was a man of the world. His incredible credulity seems a fact so impossible to accept that it was not accepted by public opinion. The Queen, people could not but argue, must have taken his enormous gifts, and then robbed and denounced him. With the case before our eyes of Madame Humbert, who swindled scores of hard-headed financiers by the flimsiest fables, we can no longer deem the credulity of the Cardinal incredible, even though he displayed on occasion a sharpness almost as miraculous as his stupidity.

Rohan conferred a few small favours on Jeanne; her audacity was as great as that of Madame Humbert, and, late in 1781, she established herself both at Paris and in Versailles. The one card in her hand was the blood of the Valois, and for long she could not play it to any purpose. Her claims were too old and musty. If a lady of the name of Stewart were to appear to-day, able to prove that she was of royal blood, as being descended from Francis, Earl of Bothwell (who used to kidnap James VI., was forfeited, and died in exile about 1620), she could not reasonably expect to be peculiarly cherished and comforted by our royal family. Now Jeanne’s claims were no better, and no nearer, in 1781, than those of our supposed Stewart adventuress in 1904. But Jeanne was sanguine. Something must be done, by hook or by crook, for the blood of the Valois. She must fasten on her great relations, the royal family. By 1783 Jeanne was pawning her furniture and dining at the expense of her young admirers, or of her servants, for, somehow, they were attached to a mistress who did not pay their wages. She bought goods on her credit as a countess, and sold them on the same day. She fainted in the crowd at Versailles, and Madame Elizabeth sent her a few louis, and had her tiny pension doubled. Jeanne fainted again under the eyes of the Queen, who never noticed her.

Her plan was to persuade small suitors that she could get them what they wanted by her backstairs influence with her royal cousin; she had a lover, Retaux de Villette, who was an expert forger, and by April 1784, relying on his skill, she began to hint to Rohan that she could win for him the Queen’s forgiveness. Her Majesty had seen her faint and had been full of kindness. Nothing should be refused to the interesting daughter of the Valois. Letters from the Queen to Jeanne, forged by Villette on paper stamped with blue *fleurs de lys*, were laid before the eyes of the infatuated prelate. Villette later confessed to his forgeries; all confessed; but as all recanted their confessions, this did not impress the public. The letters proved that the Queen was relenting, as regarded Rohan. Cagliostro confirmed the fact. At a *séance* in Rohan’s house, he introduced a niece of Jeanne’s husband, a girl of fifteen, who played the part of crystal gazer, and saw, in the crystal, whatever Cagliostro told her to see. All was favourable to the wishes of Rohan, who was as easy of belief as any spiritualist, being entirely dominated by the Neapolitan. Cagliostro, none the less, knew nothing of the great final *coup*, despite his clairvoyance.

So far, in the summer of 1784, the great diamond fraud had not risen into Jeanne’s consciousness. Her aim was merely to convince the Cardinal that she could win for him the Queen’s favour, and then to work upon his gratitude. It was in July 1784 that Jeanne’s husband made the acquaintance of Marie Laguay, a pretty and good-humoured but quite ‘unfortunate’ young woman— ‘the height of honesty and dissoluteness’ — who might be met in the public gardens, chaperoned solely by a nice little boy. Jeanne de Valois was not of a jealous temperament. Mademoiselle Laguay was the friend of her husband, the tawdry Count. For Jeanne that was enough. She invited the young lady to her house, and by her royal fantasy created her Baronne Gay d’Oliva (*Valoi*, an easy anagram).

She presently assured the Baronne that the Queen desired her collaboration in a practical joke, her Majesty would pay 600*l.* for the freak. This is the Baronne’s own version; her innocence, she averred, readily believed that Marie Antoinette desired her assistance.

‘You are only asked to give, some evening, a note and a rose to a great lord, in an alley of the gardens of Versailles. My husband will bring you hither to-morrow evening.’

Jeanne later confessed that the Baronne really was stupid enough to be quite satisfied that the whole affair was a jest.

Judged by their portraits, d’Oliva, who was to personate the Queen, in an interview with the Cardinal, was not at all like Marie Antoinette. Her short, round, buxom face bears no resemblance to the long and noble outlines of the features of the Queen. But both women were fair, and of figures not dissimilar. On August 11, 1784, Jeanne dressed up d’Oliva in the *chemise* or *gaulle*, the very simple white blouse which Marie Antoinette wears in the contemporary portrait by Madame Vigée-Lebrun, a portrait exhibited at the Salon of 1783. The ladies, with La Motte, then dined at the best restaurant in Versailles, and went out into the park. The sky was heavy, without moon or starlight, and they walked into the sombre mass of the Grove of Venus, so styled from a statue of the goddess which was never actually placed there. Nothing could be darker than the thicket below the sullen sky.

A shadow of a man appeared: *Vous voilà!* said the Count, and the shadow departed. It was Villette, the forger of the Queen’s letters, the lover and accomplice of Jeanne de Valois.

Then the gravel of a path crackled under the feet of three men. One approached, heavily cloaked. D’Oliva was left alone, a rose fell from her hand, she had a letter in her pocket which she forgot to give to the cloaked man, who knelt, and kissed the skirt of her dress. She murmured something; the cloaked Cardinal heard, or thought he heard, her say: ‘You may hope that the past is forgotten.’

Another shadow flitted past, whispering: ‘Quick! Quick! Come on! Here are Madame and Madame d’Artois!’

They dispersed. Later the Cardinal recognised the whispering shadow that fled by, in Villette, the forger. How could he recognise a fugitive shade vaguely beheld in a dark wood, on a sultry and starless night? If he mistook the girl d’Oliva for the Queen, what is his recognition of the shadow worth?

The conspirators had a jolly supper, and one Beugnot, a friend of Jeanne, not conscious of the plot, escorted the Baronne d’Oliva back to her rooms in Paris.

The trick, the transparent trick was played, and Jeanne could extract from the Cardinal what money she wanted, in the name of the Queen that gave him a rose in the Grove of Venus. Letters from the Queen were administered at intervals by Jeanne, and the prelate never dreamed of comparing them with the authentic handwriting of Marie Antoinette.

We naturally ask ourselves, was Rohan in love with the daughter of the

Valois? Does his passion account for his blindness? Most authors have believed what Jeanne later proclaimed, that she was the Cardinal’s mistress. This the divine steadily denied. There was no shadow of proof that they were even on familiar terms, except a number of erotic letters, which Jeanne showed to a friend, Beugnot, saying that they were from the Cardinal, and then burned. The Cardinal believed all things, in short, and verified nothing, in obedience to his dominating idea — the recovery of the Queen’s good graces.

Meanwhile, Jeanne drew on him for large sums, which the Queen, she said, needed for acts of charity. It was proved that Jeanne instantly invested the money in her own name, bought a large house with another loan, and filled it with splendid furniture. She was as extravagant as she was greedy; *alieni appetens, sui profusa*.

The Cardinal was in Alsace, at his bishopric, when in November-December 1784, Jeanne was brought acquainted with the jewellers, Böhmer and Bassenge, who could not find a customer for their enormous and very hideous necklace of diamonds, left on their hands by the death of Louis XV. The European Courts were poor; Marie Antoinette had again and again refused to purchase a bauble like a ‘comforter’ made of precious stones, or to accept it from the King. ‘We have more need of a ship of war,’ she said, and would not buy, though the jeweller fell on his knees, and threatened to drown himself. There were then no American millionaires, and the thickest and ugliest of necklaces was ‘eating its head off,’ for the stones had been bought with borrowed money.

In the jewellers Jeanne found new victims; they, too, believed in her credit with the Queen; they, too, asked no questions, and held that she could find them a purchaser. Jeanne imposed on them thus, while the Cardinal was still in Alsace. He arrived at Paris in January 1785. He learned, from Jeanne, that the Queen wished him to deal for her with the jewellers! She would pay the price, 60,000*l.*, by quarterly instalments.

The Cardinal could believe that the Queen, who, as he supposed, had given him a darkling interview, would entrust him with such a commission, for an article which she had notoriously refused. But there is a sane spot in every man’s mind, and on examining the necklace (January 24, 1785), he said that it was in very poor taste. However, as the Queen wanted to wear it at a ceremony on February 2, he arranged the terms, and became responsible for the money. His guarantee was a document produced by Jeanne, and signed ‘Marie Antoinette de France.’ As Cagliostro pointed out to Rohan later, too late, the Queen could not possibly use this signature. Neither the prelate nor the tradesmen saw the manifest absurdity. Rohan carried the necklace to Jeanne, who gave it to the alleged messenger of the Queen. Rohan only saw the *silhouette* of this man, in a dusky room, through a glass door, but he later declared that in him he recognised the fleeting shade who whispered the warning to fly, in the dark Grove of Venus. It was Villette, the forger.

Naturally people asked, 'If you could not tell the Queen from *Mlle.* d'Oliva when you kissed her robe in the grove, how could you recognise, through a dim glass door, the man of whom you had only caught a glimpse as a fleeting shadow? If you are so clever, why, it *was* the Queen whom you met in the wood. You cannot have been mistaken in her.'

These obvious arguments told against the Queen as well as against the Cardinal.

The Queen did not wear the jewels at the feast for which she had wanted them. Strange to say, she never wore them at all, to the surprise of the vendors and of the Cardinal. The necklace was, in fact, hastily cut to pieces with a blunt heavy knife, in Jeanne's house; her husband crossed to England, and sold many stones, and bartered more for all sorts of trinkets, to Grey, of New Bond Street, and Jeffreys, of Piccadilly. Villette had already been arrested with his pockets full of diamonds, but the luck of the House of Valois, and the astuteness of Jeanne, procured his release. So the diamonds were, in part, 'dumped down' in England; many were kept by the La Mottes; and Jeanne paid some pressing debts in diamonds.

The happy La Mottes, with six carriages, a stud of horses, silver plate of great value, and diamonds glittering on many portions of their raiment, now went off to astonish their old friends at Bar-sur-Aube. The inventories of their possessions read like pages out of *The Arabian Nights*. All went merrily, till at a great ecclesiastical feast, among her friends the aristocracy, on August 17, 1785, Jeanne learned that the Cardinal had been arrested at Versailles, in full pontificals, when about to celebrate the Mass. She rushed from table, fled to Versailles, and burned her papers. She would not fly to England; she hoped to brazen out the affair.

The arrest of the Cardinal was caused thus: On July 12, 1785, the jeweller, Böhmer, went to Versailles with a letter of thanks to the Queen, dictated by Rohan. The date for the payment of the first instalment had arrived, nothing had been paid, a reduction in price had been suggested and accepted. Böhmer gave the letter of thanks to the Queen, but the Controller-General entered, and Böhmer withdrew, without waiting for a reply. The Queen presently read the letter of thanks, could not understand it, and sent for the jeweller, who had gone home. Marie Antoinette thought he was probably mad, certainly a bore, and burned his note before the eyes of Madame Campan.

'Tell the man, when you next see him, that I do not want diamonds, and shall never buy any more.’

Fatal folly! Had the Queen insisted on seeing Böhmer, all would have been cleared up, and her innocence established. Böhmer’s note spoke of the recent arrangements, of the jeweller’s joy that the greatest of queens possesses the handsomest of necklaces — and Marie Antoinette asked no questions!

Jeanne now (August 3) did a great stroke. She told Bassenge that the Queen’s guarantee to the Cardinal was a forgery. She calculated that the Cardinal, to escape the scandal, would shield her, would sacrifice himself and pay the 60,000*l.*

But the jewellers dared not carry the news to the Cardinal. They went to Madame Campan, who said that they had been gulled: the Queen had never received the jewels. Still, they did not tell the Cardinal. Jeanne now sent Villette out of the way, to Geneva, and on August 4 Bassenge asked the Cardinal whether he was sure that the man who was to carry the jewels to the Queen had been honest? A pleasant question! The Cardinal kept up his courage; all was well, he could not be mistaken. Jeanne, with cunning audacity, did not fly: she went to her splendid home at Bar-sur-Aube.

Villette was already out of reach; d’Oliva, with her latest lover, was packed off to Brussels; there was no proof against Jeanne; her own flight would have been proof. The Cardinal could not denounce her; he had insulted the Queen by supposing that she gave him a lonely midnight tryst, a matter of high treason; the Cardinal could not speak. He consulted Cagliostro. ‘The guarantee is forged,’ said the sage; ‘the Queen could not sign “Marie Antoinette de France.” Throw yourself at the King’s feet, and confess all.’ The wretched Rohan now compared the Queen’s forged notes to him with authentic letters of hers in the possession of his family. The forgery was conspicuous, but he did not follow the advice of Cagliostro. On August 12, the Queen extracted the whole facts, as far as known to them, from the jewellers. On August 15, the day of the Assumption, when the Cardinal was to celebrate, the King asked him: ‘My cousin, what is this tale of a diamond necklace bought by you in the name of the Queen?’

The unhappy man, unable to speak coherently, was allowed to write the story, in fifteen lines.

‘How could you believe,’ asked the Queen with angry eyes, ‘that I, who have not spoken to you for eight years, entrusted you with this commission?’

How indeed could he believe it?

He offered to pay for the jewels. The thing might still have been hushed up. The King is blamed, first for publicly arresting Rohan as he did, an enormous scandal; next for handing over the case, for public trial, to the Parlement, the hereditary foes of the Court. Fréteau de Saint-Just, one of the Bar, cried: ‘What a triumph for Liberal ideas! A Cardinal a thief! The Queen implicated! Mud on the crosier and the sceptre!'

He had his fill of Liberal ideas, for he was guillotined on June 14, 1794!

Kings and queens are human beings. They like a fair and open trial. Mary Stuart prayed for it in vain, from the Estates of Scotland, and from Elizabeth. Charles I. asked for public trial in vain, from the Estates of Scotland, at the time of the unsolved puzzle of 'The Incident.' Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette had the publicity they wanted; to their undoing. The Parlement was to acquit Rohan of the theft of the necklace (a charge which Jeanne tried to support by a sub-plot of romantic complexity), and that acquittal was just. But nothing was said of the fatal insult which he had dealt to the Queen. Villette, who had forged the royal name, was merely exiled, left free to publish fatal calumnies abroad, though high treason, as times went, was about the measure of his crime. Gay d'Oliva, whose personation of the Queen also verged on treason, was merely acquitted with a recommendation 'not to do it again.' Pretty, a young mother, and profoundly dissolute, she was the darling of Liberal and *sensible* hearts.

Jeanne de Valois, indeed, was whipped and branded, but Jeanne, in public opinion, was the scapegoat of a cruel princess, and all the mud was thrown on the face of the guiltless Queen. The friends of Rohan were all the clergy, all the many nobles of his illustrious house, all the courtly foes of the Queen (they began by the basest calumnies, the ruin that the people achieved), all the friends of Liberal ideas, who soon, like Fréteau de Saint-Just, had more of Liberalism than they liked.

These were the results which the King obtained by offering to the Cardinal his choice between the royal verdict and that of the public Court of Justice. Rohan said that, if the King would pronounce him innocent, he would prefer to abide by the royal decision. He *was* innocent of all but being a presumptuous fool; the King might, even now, have recognised the fact. Mud would have been thrown, but not all the poached filth of the streets of Paris. On the other hand, had Louis withheld the case from public trial, we might still be doubtful of the Queen's innocence. Napoleon acknowledged it: 'The Queen was innocent, and to make her innocence the more public, she wished the Parlement to be the judge. The result was that she was taken to be guilty.' Napoleon thought that the King should have taken the case into his own hand. This might have been wisdom for the day, but not for securing the verdict of posterity. The pyramidal documents of the process, still in existence, demonstrate the guilt of the La Mottes and their accomplices at every step, and prove the stainless character of the Queen.

La Motte could not be caught. He had fled to Edinburgh, where he lived with an aged Italian teacher of languages. This worthy man offered to sell him for

10,000*l.*, and a pretty plot was arranged by the French ambassador to drug La Motte, put him on board a collier at South Shields and carry him to France. But the old Italian lost heart, and, after getting 1,000*l.* out of the French Government in advance, deemed it more prudent to share the money with the Count. Perhaps the Count invented the whole stratagem; it was worthy of the husband and pupil of Jeanne de Valois. That poor lady’s cause was lost when Villette and Gay d’Oliva were brought back across the frontier, confessed, and corroborated each other’s stories. Yet she made a wonderfully good fight, changing her whole defence into another as plausible and futile, before the very eyes of the Court, and doing her best to ruin Rohan as a thief, and Cagliostro as the forger of the Queen’s guarantee. The bold Neapolitan was acquitted, but compelled to leave the country, and attempt England, where the phlegmatic islanders trusted him no more than they trusted Madame Humbert. We expended our main capital of credulity on Titus Oates and Bedloe, and the warming-pan lie — our imaginative innocence being most accessible in the region of religion. The French are more open to the appeal of romance, and to dissolute honesty in the person of Miss Gay d’Oliva, to injured innocence as represented by Jeanne de Valois. That class of rogues suits a gay people, while we are well mated with such a seductive divine as Dr. Oates.

VI

THE MYSTERY OF KASPAR HAUSER: THE CHILD OF EUROPE

The story of Kaspar Hauser, a boy, apparently idiotic, who appeared, as if from the clouds, in Nuremberg (1828), divided Germany into hostile parties, and caused legal proceedings as late as 1883. Whence this lad came, and what his previous adventures had been, has never been ascertained. His death by a dagger-wound, in 1833 — whether inflicted by his own hand or that of another — deepened the mystery. According to one view, the boy was only a waif and an impostor, who had strayed from some peasant home, where nobody desired his return. According to the other theory, he was the Crown Prince of Baden, stolen as an infant in the interests of a junior branch of the House, reduced to imbecility by systematic ill-treatment, turned loose on the world at the age of sixteen, and finally murdered, lest his secret origin might be discovered.

I state first the theory of the second party in the dispute, which believed that Kaspar was some great one: I employ language as romantic as my vocabulary affords.

Darkness in Karlsruhe! ’Tis the high noon of night: October 15, 1812. Hark to the tread of the Twelve Hours as they pass on the palace clock, and join their comrades that have been! The vast corridors are still; in the shadows lurk two burly minions of ambitious crime, Burkard and Sauerbeck. Is that a white moving shadow which approaches through the gloom? There arises a shriek, a heavy body falls, ’tis a lacquey who has seen and recognised *The White Lady of the Grand Ducal House,* that walks before the deaths of Princes. Burkard and Sauerbeck spurn the inanimate body of the menial witness. The white figure, bearing in her arms a sleeping child, glides to the tapestried wall, and vanishes through it, into the Chamber of the Crown Prince, a babe of fourteen days. She returns carrying *another* unconscious infant form, she places it in the hands of the ruffian Sauerbeck, she disappears. The miscreant speeds with the child through a postern into the park, you hear the trample of four horses, and the roll of the carriage on the road. Next day there is silence in the palace, broken but by the shrieks of a bereaved though Royal (or at least Grand Ducal) mother. Her babe lies a corpse! The Crown Prince has died in the night! The path to the throne lies open to the offspring of the Countess von Hochberg, morganatic wife of the reigning Prince, Karl Friedrich, and mother of the children of Ludwig Wilhelm August, his youngest son.

Sixteen years fleet by; years rich in Royal crimes. ’Tis four of a golden Whit Monday afternoon, in old Nuremberg, May 26, 1828. The town lies empty, dusty, silent; her merry people are rejoicing in the green wood, and among the suburban beer-gardens. One man alone, a shoemaker, stands by the door of his house in the Unschlitt Plas: around him lie the vacant streets of the sleeping city. His eyes rest on the form, risen as it were out of the earth or fallen from the skies, of a boy, strangely clad, speechless, incapable either of standing erect or of moving his limbs. That boy is the Royal infant placed of yore by the White Shadow in the hands of the cloaked ruffian. Thus does the Crown Prince of Baden return from the darkness to the daylight! He names himself Kaspar Hauser. He is to die by the dagger of a cruel courtier, or of a hireling English Earl.

Thus briefly, and, I trust, impressively, have I sketched the history of Kaspar Hauser, ‘the Child of Europe,’ as it was presented by various foreign pamphleteers, and, in 1892, by Miss Elizabeth E. Evans. But, as for the ‘authentic records’ on which the partisans of Kaspar Hauser based their version, they are anonymous, unauthenticated, discredited by the results of a libel action in 1883; and, in short, are worthless and impudent rubbish.

On all sides, indeed, the evidence as to Kaspar Hauser is in bewildering confusion. In 1832, four years after his appearance, a book about him was published by Paul John Anselm Von Feuerbach. The man was mortal, had been a professor, and, though a legal reformer and a learned jurist, was ‘a nervous invalid’ when he wrote, and he soon after died of paralysis (or poison according to Kasparites). He was approaching a period of life in which British judges write books to prove that Bacon was Shakespeare, and his arguments were like theirs. His *Kaspar Hauser* is composed in a violently injudicial style. ‘To seek the giant perpetrator of such a crime’ (as the injustice to Kaspar), ‘it would be necessary ... to be in possession of Joshua’s ram’s horns, or at least of Oberon’s horn, in order, for some time at least, to suspend the activity of the powerful enchanted Colossi that guard the golden gates of certain castles,’ that is, of the palace at Karlsruhe. Such early Nuremberg records of Kaspar’s first exploits as existed were ignored by Feuerbach, who told Lord Stanhope, that any reader of these ‘would conceive Kaspar to be an impostor.’ ‘They ought to be burned.’ The records, which were read and in part published, by the younger Meyer (son of one of Kaspar’s tutors) and by President Karl Schmausz, have disappeared, and, in 1883, Schmausz could only attest the general accuracy of Meyer’s excerpts from the town’s manuscripts.

Taking Feuerbach’s romantic narrative of 1832, we find him averring that, about 4.30 p.m. on Whit Monday, May 26, 1828, a citizen, unnamed, was loitering at his door, in the Unschlitt Plas, Nuremberg, intending to sally out by the New Gate, when he saw a young peasant, standing in an attitude suggestive of intoxication, and apparently suffering from locomotor ataxia, ‘unable to govern fully the movements of his legs.’ The citizen went to the boy, who showed him a letter directed to the captain of a cavalry regiment. The gallant captain lived near the New Gate (654 paces from the citizen’s house), and thither the young peasant walked with the citizen. So he *could* ‘govern fully the movements of his legs.’ At the house, the captain being out, the boy said, ‘I would be a horseman as my father was,’ also ‘Don’t know.’ Later he was taken to the prison, up a steep hill, and the ascent to his room was one of over ninety steps. Thus he could certainly walk, and when he spoke of himself he said ‘I’ like other people. Later he took to speaking of himself as ‘Kaspar,’ in the manner of small children, and some hysterical patients under hypnotism. But this was an after-thought, for Kaspar’s line came to be that he had only learned a few words, like a parrot, words which he used to express all senses indifferently. His eyesight, when he first appeared, seems to have been normal, at the prison he wrote his own name as ‘Kaspar Hauser,’ and covered a sheet of paper with writing. Later he could see best in the dark.

So says Feuerbach, in 1832. What he does not say is whence he got his information as to Kaspar’s earliest exploits. Now our earliest evidence, on oath, before a magistrate, is dated November 4, 1829. George Weichmann, shoemaker (Feuerbach’s anonymous ‘citizen’), then swore that, on May 26, 1828, he saw Kaspar, not making paralysed efforts to walk, but trudging down a hilly street, shouting ‘Hi!’ (‘or any loud cry’), and presently asking, ‘with tolerable distinctness,’ ‘New Gate Street?’ He took the boy that way, and the boy gave him the letter for the captain. Weichmann said that they had better ask for him at the New Gate Guard House, and the boy said ‘Guard House? Guard House? New Gate no doubt just built?’ He said he came from Ratisbon, and was in Nuremberg for the first time, but clearly did not understand what Weichmann meant when he inquired as to the chances of war breaking out. In May 1834 Weichmann repeated his evidence as to Kaspar’s power of talking and walking, and was corroborated by one Jacob Beck, not heard of in 1829. On December 20, 1829, Merk, the captain’s servant, spoke to Kaspar’s fatigue, ‘he reeled as he walked,’ and would answer no questions. In 1834 Merk expanded, and said ‘we had a long chat.' Kaspar averred that he could read and write, and had crossed the frontier daily on his way to school. 'He did not know where he came from.' Certainly Merk, in 1834, remembered much more than in 1829. Whether he suppressed facts in 1829, or, in 1834, invented fables, we do not know. The cavalry captain (November 2, 1829) remembered several intelligent remarks made by Kaspar. His dress was new and clean (denied by Feuerbach), he was tired and footsore. The evidence of the police, taken in 1834, was remote in time, but went to prove that Kaspar's eyesight and power of writing were normal. Feuerbach absolutely discredits all the sworn evidence of 1829, without giving his own sources. The early evidence shows that Kaspar could both walk and talk, and see normally, by artificial and natural light, all of which is absolutely inconsistent with Kaspar's later account of himself.

The personal property of Kaspar was a horn rosary, and several Catholic tracts with prayers to the Guardian Angel, and so forth. Feuerbach holds that these were furnished by 'devout villains' — a very sound Protestant was Feuerbach — and that Kaspar was ignorant of the being of a Deity, at least of a Protestant Deity. The letter carried by the boy said that the writer first took charge of him, as an infant, in 1812, and had never let him 'take a single step out of my house.... I have already taught him to read and write, *and he writes my handwriting exactly as I do*.' In the same hand was a letter in Latin characters, purporting to come from Kaspar's mother, 'a poor girl,' as the author of the German letter was 'a poor day-labourer.' Humbug as I take Kaspar to have been, I am not sure that he wrote these pieces. If not, somebody else was in the affair; somebody who wanted to get rid of Kaspar. As that youth was an useless, false, convulsionary, and hysterical patient, no one was likely to want to keep him, if he could do better. No specified reward was offered at the time for information about Kaspar; no portrait of him was then published and circulated. The Burgomaster, Binder, had a portrait, and a facsimile of Kaspar's signature engraved, but Feuerbach would not allow them to be circulated, heaven knows why.

How Kaspar fell, as it were from the clouds, and unseen, into the middle of Nuremberg, even on a holiday when almost every one was out of town, is certainly a puzzle. The earliest witnesses took him for a journeyman tailor lad (he was about sixteen), and perhaps nobody paid any attention to a dusty travelling tradesman, or groom out of place. Feuerbach (who did not see Kaspar till July) says that his feet were covered with blisters, the gaoler says that they were merely swollen by the tightness of his boots.

Once in prison, Kaspar, who asked to be taken home, adopted the *rôle* of 'a semi-unconscious animal,' playing with toy horses, 'blind though he saw,' yet, not long after, he wrote a minute account of all that he had then observed. He could only eat bread and water: meat made him shudder, and Lord Stanhope says that this peculiarity did occur in the cases of some peasant soldiers. He had no sense of hearing, which means, perhaps, that he did not think of pretending to be amazed by the sound of church bells till he had been in prison for some days. Till then he had been deaf to their noise. This is Feuerbach's story, but we shall see that it is contradicted by Kaspar himself, in writing. Thus the alleged facts may be explained without recourse even to a theory of intermittent deafness. Kaspar was no more deaf than blind. He 'was all there,' and though, ten days after his arrival, he denied that he had ever seen Weichmann, in ten days more his memory for faces was deemed extraordinary, and he minutely described all that, on May 26 and later, he had observed. Kaspar was taught to write by the gaoler's little boy, though he could write when he came — in the same hand as the author of his mysterious letter. Though he had but half a dozen words on May 26, according to Feuerbach, by July 7 he had furnished Binder with his history — pretty quick work! Later in 1828 he was able to write that history himself. In 1829 he completed a work of autobiography.

Kaspar wrote that till the age of sixteen he was kept in 'a prison,' 'perhaps six or seven feet long, four broad, and five high.' There were two small windows, with closed black wooden shutters. He lay on straw, lived on bread and water, and played with toy horses, and blue and red ribbons. That he could see colours in total darkness is a proof of his inconsistent fables, or of his 'hyperæsthesia' — abnormal acuteness of the senses. 'The man' who kept him was not less hyperæsthetic, for he taught Kaspar to write in the dark. He never heard any noise, but avers that, in prison, he was alarmed by the town clock striking, on the first morning, though Feuerbach says that he did not hear the bells for several days.

Such is Kaspar's written account (1829); the published account of July 1828, derived from 'the expressions of a half-dumb animal' (as Feuerbach puts it), is much more prolix and minute in detail. The animal said that he had sat on the ground, and never seen daylight, till he came to Nuremberg. He used to be hocussed with water of an evil taste, and wake in a clean shirt. 'The man' once hit him and hurt him, for making too much noise. The man taught him his letters and the Arabic numerals. Later he gave him instructions in the art of standing. Next he took him out, and taught him about nine words. He was made by the man to walk he knew not how far, or how long, the man leading him. Nobody saw this extraordinary pair on the march. Feuerbach, who maintains that Kaspar's feet were covered with cruel blisters, from walking, also supposes that 'perhaps for the greater part of the way' he was carried in a carriage or waggon! Whence then the cruel blisters caused by walking? There is medical evidence that his legs were distorted by confinement, but the medical *post-mortem* evidence says that this was not the case. He told Binder that his windows were shuttered: he told Hiltel, the gaoler, that from his windows he saw ‘a pile of wood and above it the top of a tree.’

Obviously Kaspar’s legends about himself, whether spoken in June 1828, or written in February 1829, are absurdly false. He was for three weeks in the tower, and was daily visited by the curious. Yet in these three weeks the half-conscious animal ‘learned to read tolerably well, to count, to write figures’ (*that* he could do when he arrived, Feuerbach says), ‘he made progress in writing a good hand, and learned a simple tune on the harpsichord,’ pretty well for a half-unconscious animal.

In July 1828, after being adopted by the excited town of Nuremberg, he was sent to be educated by and live with a schoolmaster named Daumer, and was studied by Feuerbach. They found, in Kaspar, a splendid example of the ‘sensitive,’ and a noble proof of the powers of ‘animal magnetism.’ In Germany, at this time, much was talked and written about ‘somnambulism’ (the hypnotic state), and about a kind of ‘animal magnetism’ which, in accordance with Mesmer’s theory, was supposed to pass between stars, metals, magnets, and human beings. The effects produced on the patient by the hypnotist (now ascribed to ‘suggestion’) were attributed to a ‘magnetic efflux,’ and Reichenbach’s subjects saw strange currents flowing from metals and magnets. His experiments have never, perhaps, been successfully repeated, though hysterical persons have pretended to feel the traditional effects, even when non-magnetic objects were pointed at them. Now Kaspar was really a ‘sensitive,’ or feigned to be one, with hysterical cunning. Anything unusual would throw him into convulsions, or reduce him to unconsciousness. He was addicted to the tears of sensibility. Years later Meyer read to him an account of the Noachian Deluge, and he wept bitterly. Meyer thought this rather too much, the Deluge being so remote an event, and, after that, though Meyer read pathetic things in his best manner, Kaspar remained unmoved. He wrote a long account of his remarkable magnetic sensations during and before the first thunderstorm after his arrival at Nuremberg. Yet, before his appearance there, he must have heard plenty of thunderstorms, though he pretended that this was his first. The sight of the moon produced in him ‘emotions of horror.’ He had visions, like the Rev. Ansel Bourne, later to be described, of a beautiful male figure in a white garment, who gave him a garland. He was taken to a ‘somnambulist,’ and felt ‘magnetic’ pulls and pushes, and a strong current of air. Indeed the tutor, Daumer, shared these sensations, obviously by virtue of ‘suggestion.’ They are out of fashion, the doctrine of animal magnetism being as good as exploded, and nobody feels pulled or pushed or blown upon, when he consults Mrs. Piper or any other ‘medium.’

From a letter of Feuerbach of September 20, 1828, we learn that Kaspar, ‘*without being an albino*,’ can see as well in utter darkness as in daylight. Perhaps the man who taught Kaspar to write, in the dark, *was* an albino: Kaspar never saw his face. Kaspar’s powers of vision abated, as he took to beef, but he remained hyperæsthetic, and could see better in a bad light than Daumer or Feuerbach. Some ‘dowsers,’ we know, can detect subterranean water, by the sensations of their hands, without using a twig, or divining rod, and others can ‘spot’ gold hidden under the carpet, with the twig. Kaspar, merely with the bare hand, detected (without touching it?) a needle under a table cloth. He gradually lost these gifts, and the theory seems to have been that they were the result of his imprisonment in the dark, and a proof of it. The one thing certain is that Kaspar had the sensitive or ‘mediumistic’ temperament, which usually — though not always — is accompanied by hysteria, while hysteria means cunning and fraud, whether conscious or not so conscious. Meanwhile the boy was in the hands of men credulous, curious, and, in the case of Daumer, capable of odd sensations induced by suggestion. From such a boy, in such company, the truth could not be expected, above all if, like some other persons of his class, he was subject to ‘dissociation’ and obliviousness as to his own past.

Rather curiously we find in Feuerbach’s own published collection of Trials the case of a boy, Sörgel, who had ‘paroxysms of second consciousness ... of which he was ignorant upon returning to his ordinary state of consciousness.’ We have also the famous case of the atheistic carpenter, Ansel Bourne, who was struck deaf, dumb, and blind, and miraculously healed, in a dissenting chapel, to the great comfort of ‘a large and warm congregation.’ Mr. Bourne then became a preacher, but later forgot who he was, strolled to a distant part of the States, called himself Browne, set up a ‘notions store,’ and, one day, awoke among his notions to the consciousness that he was Bourne, not Browne, a preacher, not a dealer in cheap futilities. Bourne was examined, under hypnotism, by Professor William James and others.

Many such instances of ‘ambulatory automatism’ are given. In my view, Kaspar was, to put it mildly, an ambulatory automatist, who had strayed away, like the Rev. Mr. Bourne, from some place where nobody desired his return: rather his lifelong absence was an object of hope. The longer Kaspar lived, the more frequently was he detected in every sort of imposture that could make him notorious, or enable him to shirk work.

Kaspar had for months been the pet mystery of Nuremberg. People were sure that, like the mysterious prisoner of Pignerol, Les Exiles, and the Isle Sainte-

Marguerite (1669-1703?), Kaspar was some great one, ‘kept out of his own.’ Now the prisoner of Pignerol was really a valet, and Kaspar was a peasant. Some thought him a son of Napoleon: others averred (as we saw) that he was the infant son of the Grand Duke Karl of Baden, born in 1812, who had not died within a fortnight of his birth, but been spirited away by a lady disguised as the spectral ‘White Lady of Baden,’ an aristocratic *ban-shie*. The subtle conspirators had bred the Grand Duke Kaspar in a dark den, the theory ran, hoping that he would prove, by virtue of such education, an acceptable recruit for the Bavarian cavalry, and that no questions would be asked. Unluckily questions were now being asked, for a boy who could only occasionally see and hear was not (though he could smell a cemetery at a distance of five hundred yards), an useful man on a patrol, at least the military authorities thought not. Had they known that Kaspar could see in the dark, they might have kept him as a guide in night attacks, but they did not know. The promising young hussar (he rode well but clumsily) was thus left in the hands of civilians: the Grand Ducal secret might be discovered, so an assassin was sent to take off the young prince.

The wonder was not unnaturally expressed that Kaspar had not smelled out the villain, especially as he was probably the educational albino, who taught him to write in the dark. On hearing of this, later, Kaspar told Lord Stanhope that he *had* smelled the man: however, he did not mention this at the time. To make a long story short, on October 17, 1829, Kaspar did not come to midday eating, but was found weltering in his gore, in the cellar of Daumer’s house. Being offered refreshment in a cup, he bit out a piece of the porcelain and swallowed it. He had ‘an inconsiderable wound’ on the forehead; to that extent the assassin had effected his purpose. Feuerbach thinks that the murderer had made a shot at Kaspar’s throat with a razor, that Kaspar ducked cleverly, and got it on the brow, and that the assassin believed his crime to be consummated, and fled, after uttering words in which Kaspar recognised the voice of his tutor, the possible albino. No albino or other suspicious character was observed. Herr Daumer, before this cruel outrage, had remarked, in Kaspar, ‘a highly regrettable tendency to dissimulation and untruthfulness,’ and, just before the attack, had told the pupil that he was a humbug. Lord Stanhope quoted a paper of Daumer’s in the *Universal Gazette* of February 6, 1834 (*Allgemeine Zeitung*), in which he says that ‘lying and deceit were become to Kaspar a second nature.’ When did they begin to become a second nature? In any case Daumer clove to the romantic theory of Kaspar’s origin. Kaspar left Daumer’s house and stayed with various good people, being accompanied by a policeman in his walks. He was sent to school, and Feuerbach bitterly complains that he was compelled to study the Latin grammar, ‘and finally even Cæsar’s Commentaries!’ Like other boys, Kaspar protested that he ‘did not see the use of Latin,’ and indeed many of our modern authors too obviously share Kaspar’s indifference to the dead languages. He laughed, in 1831, says Feuerbach, at the popish superstition ‘of his early attendants’ (we only hear of one, and about *his* theological predilections we learn nothing), and he also laughed at ghosts. In his new homes Kaspar lied terribly, was angry when detected, and wounded himself — he said accidentally — with a pistol, after being reproached for shirking the Commentaries of Julius Cæsar, and for mendacity. He was very vain, very agreeable as long as no one found fault with him, very lazy, and very sentimental.

In May 1831 Lord Stanhope, who, since the attack on Kaspar in 1829, had been curious about him, came to Nuremberg, and ‘took up’ the hero, with fantastic fondness. Though he recognised Kaspar’s mythopœic tendencies, he believed him to be the victim of some nefarious criminals, and offered a reward of 500 florins, anonymously, for information. It never was claimed.

Already had arisen a new theory, that Kaspar was the son of an Hungarian magnate. Later, Lord Stanhope averred, on oath, that inquiries made in Hungary proved Kaspar to be an impostor. In 1830, a man named Müller, who had been a Protestant preacher, and was now a Catholic priest, denounced a preacher named Wirth, and a Miss Dalbonn, a governess, as kidnappers of Kaspar from the family of a Countess, living near Pesth. Müller was exposed, his motives were revealed, and the newspapers told the story. Kaspar was therefore tried with Hungarian words, and seemed to recognise some, especially Posonbya (Pressburg). He thought that some one had said that his father was at Pressburg: and thither Lord Stanhope sent him, with Lieutenant Hickel. This was in 1831, but Kaspar recognised nothing: his companions, however, found that he pretended to be asleep in the carriage, to hear what was said about him. They ceased to speak of him, and Kaspar ceased to slumber. A later expedition into Hungary, by Hickel, in February 1832, on the strength of more Hungarian excitement on Kaspar’s part, discovered that there was nothing to discover, and shook the credulity of Lord Stanhope. He could not believe Kaspar’s narrative, but still hoped that he had been terrorised into falsehood. He could not believe both that the albino had never spoken to Kaspar in his prison, and also that ‘the man always taught me to do what I was told.’ To Lord Stanhope Kaspar averred that ‘the man with whom he had always lived said nothing to him till he was on his journey.’ Yet, during his imprisonment, the man had taught him, he declared, the phrases which, by his account, were all the words that he knew when he arrived at Nuremberg.

For these and other obvious reasons, Lord Stanhope, though he had relieved Nuremberg of Kaspar (November 1831), and made ample provision for him, was deeply sceptical about his narrative. The town of Nuremberg had already tried to shift the load of Kaspar on to the shoulders of the Bavarian Government. Lord Stanhope did not adopt him, but undertook to pay for his maintenance, and left him, in January 1832, under the charge of a Dr. Meyer, at Anspach. He had a curator, and a guardian, and escaped from the Commentaries of Julius Cæsar into the genial society of Feuerbach. That jurist died in May 1833 (poisoned, say the Kasparites), a new guardian was appointed, and Kaspar lived with Dr. Meyer. Finding him incurably untruthful, the doctor ceased to provoke him by comments on his inaccuracies, and Kaspar got a small clerkly place. With this he was much dissatisfied, for he, like Feuerbach, had expected Lord Stanhope to take him to England. Feuerbach, in the dedication to Lord Stanhope of his book (1832), writes, ‘Beyond the sea, in fair old England, you have prepared for him a secure retreat, until the rising sun of Truth shall have dispersed the darkness which still hangs over his mysterious fate.’ If Lord Stanhope ever made this promise, his growing scepticism about Kaspar prevented him from fulfilling it. On December 9, 1833, Meyer was much provoked by Kaspar’s inveterate falseness, and said that he did not know how to face Lord Stanhope, who was expected to visit Anspach at Christmas. For some weeks Kaspar had been sulky, and there had been questions about a journal which he was supposed to keep, but would not show. He was now especially resentful. On two earlier occasions, after a scene with his tutor, Kaspar had been injured, once by the assassin who cut his forehead; once by a pistol accident. On December 14, he rushed into Dr. Meyer’s room, pointed to his side, and led Meyer to a place distant about five hundred yards from his house. So agitated was he that Meyer would go no further, especially as Kaspar would answer no questions. On their return, Kaspar said, ‘Went Court Garden — Man — had a knife — gave a bag — struck — I ran as I could — bag must lie there.’ Kaspar was found to have a narrow wound, ‘two inches and a half under the centre of the left breast,’ clearly caused by a very sharp double-edged weapon. In three or four days he died, the heart had been injured. He was able to depose, but not on oath, that on the morning of the 14th a man in a blouse (who had addressed him some days earlier) brought him a verbal message from the Court gardener, asking him to come and view some clay from a newly bored well, where, in fact, no work was being done at this time. He found no one at the well, and went to the monument of the rather forgotten poet Uz. Here a man came forward, gave him a bag, stabbed him, and fled. Of the man he gave discrepant descriptions. He became incoherent, and died.

There was snow lying, when Kaspar was stabbed, but there were no footmarks near the well, and elsewhere, only one man’s track was in the Hofgarten. Was that track Kaspar's? We are not told. No knife was found. Kaspar was left-handed, and Dr. Horlacher declared that the blow must have been dealt by a left-handed man. Lord Stanhope suggested that Kaspar himself had inflicted the wound by pressure, and that, after he had squeezed the point of the knife through his wadded coat, it had penetrated much deeper than he had intended, a very probable hypothesis.

As for the bag which the assassin gave him, it was found, and Dr. Meyer said that it was very like a bag which he had seen in Kaspar's possession. It contained a note, folded, said Madame Meyer, as Kaspar folded his own notes. The writing was in pencil, in *Spiegelschrift*, that is, it had to be read in a mirror. Kaspar, on his deathbed, kept muttering incoherences about 'what is written with lead, no one can read.' The note contained vague phrases about coming from the Bavarian frontier.

After Kaspar's death, the question of 'murder or suicide?' agitated Germany, and gave birth to a long succession of pamphlets. A wild woman, Countess Albersdorf ('*née* Lady Graham,' says Miss Evans, who later calls her 'Lady Caroline Albersdorf'), saw visions, dreamed dreams, and published nonsense. Other pamphlets came out, directed against the House of Baden. In 1870 an anonymous French pamphleteer offered the Baden romance, as from the papers of a Major von Hennenhofer, the villain in chief of the White Lady plot. Lord Stanhope was named as the ringleader in the attacks on Kaspar, both at Nuremberg and Anspach. In 1883 all the fables were revived in a pamphlet produced at Ratisbon, a mere hash of the libels of 1834, 1839, 1840, and 1870. Dr. Meyer was especially attacked, his sons defended his reputation by an action for libel on the dead, an action which German law permits. There was no defence, and the publisher was fined, and ordered to destroy all the copies. In 1892 the libels were repeated, by 'Baron Alexander von Artin:' two documents of a palpably fraudulent character were added, the rest was the old stuff. The reader may find it in Miss Evans's *Kaspar Hauser* (1892). For example, Daumer knew a great deal. He even, in 1833, received an anonymous letter from Anspach, containing the following statement: 'Lord Daniel Alban Durteal, advocate of the Royal Court in London, said to me, "I am firmly convinced that Kaspar Hauser was murdered. It was all done by bribery. Stanhope has no money, and lives by this affair."' Daumer and Miss Evans appear to have seen nothing odd in relying on an anonymous letter about Lord Daniel Alban Durteal!

Lord Stanhope, says Miss Evans, 'was known to have subsisted principally upon the sale of his German hymnbook, and other devotional works, for which he was a colporteur.' Weary of piety, Lord Stanhope became a hired assassin. Perhaps this nonsense still has its believers, seduced by 'Lady Caroline

Albersdorf, *née* Lady Graham,' by Lord Daniel Alban Durteal, and by the spirit of Kaspar himself, who, summoned by Daniel Dunglas Home, at a *séance* with the Empress Eugénie, apparently, announced himself as Prince of Baden. No authority for this interesting ghost of one who disbelieved in ghosts is given.

It is quite possible that Kaspar Hauser no more knew who he was than the valet of 1669-1703 knew why he was a prisoner, no more than Mr. Browne, when a dealer in 'notions,' knew that he was Mr. Bourne, a dissenting preacher. Nothing is certain, except that Kaspar was an hysterical humbug, whom people of sense suspected from the first, and whom believers in animal magnetism and homœopathy accepted as some great one, educated by his Royal enemies in total darkness — to fit him for the military profession.

It is difficult, of course, to account for the impossibility of finding whence Kaspar had come to Nuremberg. But, in 1887, it proved just as impossible to discover whither the Rev. Ansel Bourne had gone. Mr. Bourne's lot was cast, not in the sleepy Royalist Bavaria of 1828, but in the midst of the admired 'hustle' of the great Western Republic. He was one of the most remarkable men in the country, not a yokel of sixteen. He was last seen at his nephew's store, 121 Broad Street, Providence, R.I., on January 17. On January 20, the hue and cry arose in the able and energetic press of his State. Mr. Bourne, as a travelling evangelist, was widely known, but, after a fortnight unaccounted for, he arrived, as A.J. Browne, at Norristown, Pa., sold notions there, and held forth with acceptance at religious meetings. On March 14 he awoke, still undiscovered, and wondered where he was. He remembered nothing since January 17, so he wired to Providence, R.I., for information. He had a whole fortnight to account for, between his departure from Providence, R.I., and his arrival at Norristown, Pa. Nobody could help him, he had apparently walked invisible, like Kaspar on his way to Nuremberg. He was hypnotised by Professor William James, and brought into his Browne condition, but could give practically no verifiable account of Browne's behaviour in that missing fortnight. He said that he went from Providence to Pawtucket, and was for some days at Philadelphia, Pa., where he really seems to have been; as to the rest 'back of that it was mixed up.' We do not hear that Kaspar was ever hypnotised and questioned, but probably he also would have been 'mixed up,' like Mr. Bourne.

The fable about a Prince of Baden had not a single shred of evidence in its favour. It is true that the Grand Duchess was too ill to be permitted to see her dead baby, in 1812, but the baby's father, grandmother, and aunt, with the ten Court physicians, the nurses and others, must have seen it, in death, and it is too absurd to suppose, on no authority, that they were all parties to the White Lady's plot. We might as well believe, as Miss Evans seems to do, on the authority of an unnamed Paris newspaper, that a Latin letter, complaining of imprisonment, was picked up in the Rhine, signed ‘S. Haues Spraucio,’ that the words ought to be read ‘Hares Sprauka,’ and that they are an anagram of Kaspar Hauser. This occurred in 1816, when Kaspar, being about four years of age, could not write Latin. No one in the secret could have hoped that the Royal infant and captive would be recognised under the name of Spraucio or even of Sprauka. Abject credulity, love of mystery, love of scandal, and political passions, produced the ludicrous mass of fables to which, as late as 1893, the Duchess of Cleveland thought it advisable to reply. In England it is quite safe to accuse a dead man of murder, or of what you please, as far as the Duchess understood the law of libel, so she had no legal remedy.

VII

THE GOWRIE CONSPIRACY

The singular events called ‘The Gowrie Conspiracy,’ or ‘The Slaying of the Ruthvens,’ fell out, on evidence which nobody disputes, in the following manner. On August 5, 1600, the King, James VI., was leaving the stables at the House of Falkland to hunt a buck, when the Master of Ruthven rode up and had an interview with the monarch. This occurred about seven o’clock in the morning. The Master was a youth of nineteen; he was residing with his brother, the Earl of Gowrie, aged twenty-two, at the family town house in Perth, some twelve or fourteen miles from Falkland. The interview being ended, the King followed the hounds, and the chase, ‘long and sore,’ ended in a kill, at about eleven o’clock, near Falkland. Thence the King and the Master, with some fifteen of the Royal retinue, including the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Mar, rode, without any delay, to Perth. Others of the King’s company followed: the whole number may have been, at most, twenty-five.

On their arrival at Perth it appeared that they had not been expected. The Earl had dined at noon, the Royal dinner was delayed till two o’clock, and after the scanty meal the King and the Master went upstairs alone, while the Earl of Gowrie took Lennox and others into his garden, bordering on the Tay, at the back of the house. While they loitered there eating cherries, a retainer of Gowrie, Thomas Cranstoun (brother of Sir John of that ilk), brought a report that the King had already mounted, and ridden off through the Inch of Perth. Gowrie called for horses, but Cranstoun told him that his horses were at Scone, across the Tay, two miles off. The gentlemen then went to the street door of the house, where the porter said that the King had *not* ridden away. Gowrie gave him the lie, re-entered the house, went upstairs, and returning, assured Lennox that James had certainly departed. All this is proved on oath by Lennox, Mar, Lindores, and many other witnesses.

While the company stood in doubt, outside the gate, a turret window above them opened, and the King looked forth, much agitated, shouting ‘Treason!’ and crying for help to Mar. With Lennox and most of the others, Mar ran to the rescue up the main staircase of the house, where they were stopped by a locked door, which they could not break open. Gowrie had not gone with his guests to aid the King; he was standing in the street, asking, ‘What is the matter? I know nothing;’ when two of the King’s household, Thomas and James Erskine, tried to seize him, the ‘treason’ being perpetrated under Gowrie’s own roof. *His* friends drove the Erskines off, and some of the Murrays of Tullibardine, who were attending a wedding in Perth, surrounded him. Gowrie retreated, drew a pair of ‘twin swords,’ and, accompanied by Cranstoun and others, made his way into the quadrangle of his house. At the foot of a small dark staircase they saw the body of a man lying — wounded or dead. Cranstoun now rushed up the dark stairs, followed by Gowrie, two Ruthvens, Hew Moncrieff, Patrick Eviot, and perhaps others. At the head of the narrow spiral stair they found, in a room called the Gallery Chamber, Sir Thomas Erskine, a lame Dr. Herries, a young gentleman of the Royal Household named John Ramsay, and Wilson, a servant, with drawn swords. A fight began; Cranstoun was wounded; he and his friends fled, leaving Gowrie, who had been run through the body by Ramsay. All this while the other door of the long Gallery Chamber was ringing under the hammer-strokes of Lennox and his company, and the town bell was summoning the citizens. Erskine and Ramsay now locked the door opening on the narrow stair, at which the retainers of Gowrie struck with axes. The King’s party, by means of a hammer handed by their friends through a hole in the other door of the gallery, forced the lock, and admitted Lennox, Mar, and the rest of the King’s retinue. They let James out of a small turret opening from the Gallery Chamber, and, after some dealings with the angry mob and the magistrates of Perth, they conveyed the King to Falkland after nightfall.

The whole results were the death of Gowrie and of his brother, the Master (his body it was that lay at the foot of the narrow staircase), and a few wounds to Ramsay, Dr. Herries, and some of Gowrie’s retainers.

The death of the Master of Ruthven was explained thus: — When James cried ‘Treason!’ young Ramsay, from the stable door, had heard his voice, but not his words. He had sped into the quadrangle, charged up the narrow stairs, found a door behind which was the sound of a struggle, ‘dang in’ the door, and saw the King wrestling with the Master. *Behind them stood a man, the centre of the mystery, of whom he took no notice.* He drew his whinger, slashed the Master in the face and throat, and pushed him downstairs. Ramsay then called from the window to Sir Thomas Erskine, who, with Herries and Wilson, ran to his assistance, slew the wounded Master, and shut up James (who had no weapon) in the turret. Then came the struggle in which Gowrie died. No more was seen of the mysterious man in the turret, except by a townsman, who later withdrew his evidence.

Such was the whole affair, as witnessed by the King’s men, the retainers of

Gowrie, and some citizens of Perth. Not a vestige of plot or plan by Gowrie and his party was discoverable. His friends maintained that he had meant, on that day, to leave Perth for ‘Lothian,’ that is, for his castle at Dirleton, near North Berwick, whither he had sent most of his men and provisions. James had summoned the Master to meet him at Falkland, they said, and Gowrie had never expected the return of the Master with the King.

James’s own version was given in a public letter of the night of the events, which we only know through the report of Nicholson, the English resident at Holyrood (August 6), and Nicholson only repeated what Elphinstone, the secretary, told him of the contents of the letter, written to the King’s dictation at Falkland by David Moysie, a notary. At the end of August James printed and circulated a full narrative, practically identical with Nicholson’s report of Elphinstone’s report of the contents of the Falkland letter of August 5.

The King’s narrative is universally accepted on all hands, till we come to the point where he converses with Alexander Ruthven, at Falkland, before the buck-hunt began. There was such an interview, lasting for about a quarter of an hour, but James alone knew its nature. He says that, after an unusually low obeisance, Ruthven told the following tale: — Walking alone, on the previous evening, in the fields near Perth, he had met ‘a base-like fellow, unknown to him, with a cloak cast about his mouth,’ a common precaution to avoid recognition. Asked who he was, and what his errand ‘in so solitary a part, being far from all ways,’ the fellow was taken aback. Ruthven seized him, and, under his arm, found ‘a great wide pot, all full of coined gold in great pieces.’ Ruthven keeping the secret to himself, took the man to Perth, and locked him in ‘a privy derned house’ — that is, a room. At 4 a.m. he himself left Perth to tell the King, urging him to ‘take order’ in the matter at once, as not even Lord Gowrie knew of it. When James said that it was no business of his, the gold not being treasure trove, Ruthven called him ‘over scrupulous,’ adding that his brother, Gowrie, ‘and other great men,’ might interfere. James then, suspecting that the gold might be foreign, brought in by Jesuits for the use of Catholic intriguers, asked what the coins and their bearer were like. Ruthven replied that the bearer seemed to be a ‘Scots fellow,’ hitherto unknown to him, and that the gold was apparently of foreign mintage. Hereon James felt sure that the gold was foreign and the bearer a disguised Scots priest. He therefore proposed to send back with Ruthven a retainer of his own with a warrant to Gowrie, then Provost of Perth, and the Bailies, to take over the man and the money. Ruthven replied that, if they did, the money would be ill reckoned, and begged the King to ride over at once, be ‘the first seer,’ and reward him ‘at his own honourable discretion.’

The oddity of the tale and the strangeness of Ruthven’s manner amazed

James, who replied that he would give an answer when the hunt was over. Ruthven said the man might make a noise, and discover the whole affair, causing the treasure to be meddled with. He himself would be missed by Gowrie, whereas, if James came at once, Gowrie and the townsfolk would be 'at the sermon.' James made no answer, but followed the hounds. Still he brooded over the story, sent for Ruthven, and said that the hunt once ended he would accompany him to Perth.

Here James adds that, though he himself knew not that any man was with Ruthven, he had two companions, one of whom, Andrew Henderson, he now despatched to Gowrie, bidding him prepare dinner for the King. This is not part of James's direct evidence. He was *unknowing and unsuspecting that any man living had come* with Ruthven.

Throughout the chase Ruthven was ever near the King, always urging him 'to hasten the end of the hunting.' The buck was slain close to the stables, and Ruthven would not allow James to wait for a second horse: that was sent after him. So the King did not even tarry to 'brittle' the buck, and merely told the Duke of Lennox, Mar, and others that he was riding to Perth to speak with Gowrie, and would return before evening. Some of the Court went to Falkland for fresh horses, other followed slowly with weary steeds. They followed 'undesired by him,' because a report rose that the King had some purpose to apprehend the oppressive Master of Oliphant. Ruthven implored James not to bring Lennox and Mar, but only three or four servants, to which the King answered 'half angrily.'

This odd conduct roused suspicion in James. He had been well acquainted with Ruthven, who was suing for the place of a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, or Cubicular. 'The farthest that the King's suspicion could reach to was, that it might be that the Earl, his brother, had handled him so hardly, that the young gentleman, being of a high spirit, had taken such displeasure as he was beside himself;' hence his curious, agitated, and moody behaviour. James, as they rode, consulted Lennox, whose first wife had been a sister of Gowrie. Lennox had never seen anything of mental unsettlement in young Ruthven, but James bade the Duke 'accompany him into that house' (room), where the gold and the bearer of it lay. Lennox thought the story of the gold 'unlikely.' Ruthven seeing them in talk, urged that James should be secret, and bring nobody with him to the first inspection of the treasure. The King thus rode forward 'between trust and distrust.' About two miles from Perth, Ruthven sent on his other companion, Andrew Ruthven, to Gowrie. When within a mile of Perth, Ruthven himself rode forward in advance. Gowrie was at dinner, having taken no notice of the two earlier messengers.

Gowrie, with fifty or sixty men, met James 'at the end of the Inch;' the Royal retinue was then of fifteen persons, with swords alone, and no daggers or 'whingers.' Dinner did not appear till an hour had gone by (say 2 p.m.). James whispered to Ruthven that he had better see the treasure at once: Ruthven bade him wait, and not arouse Gowrie's suspicions by whispering ('rounding'). James therefore directed his conversation to Gowrie, getting from him 'but half words and imperfect sentences.' When dinner came Gowrie stood pensively by the King's table, often whispering to the servants, 'and oft-times went in and out,' as he also did before dinner. The suite stood about, as was custom, till James had nearly dined, when Gowrie took them to their dinner, separately in the hall; 'he sat not down with them as the common manner is,' but again stood silent beside the King, who bantered him 'in a homely manner.'

James having sat long enough, Ruthven whispered that he wished to be rid of his brother, so James sent Gowrie into the hall to offer a kind of grace-cup to the suite, as was usual — this by Ruthven's desire. James then rose to follow Ruthven, asking him to bring Sir Thomas Erskine with him. Ruthven requested James to 'command publicly' that none should follow at once, promising that 'he should make any one or two follow that he pleased to call for.'

The King then, expecting attendants who never came because Ruthven never summoned them, walked alone with Ruthven across the end of the hall, up a staircase, and through three or four chambers, Ruthven 'ever locking behind him every door as he passed.' We do not know whether James observed the locking of the doors, or inferred it from the later discovery that one door was locked. Then Ruthven showed 'a more smiling countenance than he had all the day before, ever saying that he had him sure and safe enough kept.' At last they reached 'a little study' (a turret chamber), where James found, 'not a bondman, but a freeman, with a dagger at his girdle,' and 'a very abased countenance.' Ruthven locked the turret door, put his hat on his head, drew the man's dagger, pointed it at the King's breast, 'avowing now that the King behoved to be in his will and used as he list,' threatening murder if James cried out, or opened the window. He also reminded the King of the death of the late Gowrie, his father (executed for treason in 1584). Meanwhile the other man stood 'trembling and quaking.' James made a long harangue on many points, promising pardon and silence if Ruthven at once let him go. Ruthven then uncovered, and promised that James's life should be safe if he kept quiet; the rest Gowrie would explain. Then, bidding the other man ward the King, he went out, locking the door behind him. He had first made James swear not to open the window. In his brief absence James learned from the armed man that he had but recently been locked up in the turret, he knew not why. James bade him open the window 'on his right hand.’ The man did as he was commanded.

Here the King’s narrative reverts to matter not within his own observation (the events which occurred downstairs during his own absence). His narrative is amply confirmed, on oath, by many nobles and gentlemen. He says (here we repeat what we began by stating) that, during his own absence, as his train was rising from dinner, one of the Earl’s servants, Cranstoun, came hastily in, assuring the Earl that the King had got to horse, and ‘was away through the Inch’ (isle) of Perth. The Earl reported this to the nobles, and all rushed to the gate. The porter assured them that the King had not departed. Gowrie gave the porter the lie, but, turning to Lennox and Mar, said that he would get sure information. He then ran back across the court, and upstairs, and returned, running, with the news that ‘the King was gone, long since, by the back gate, and, unless they hasted, would not be overtaken.’

The nobles, going towards the stables for their horses, necessarily passed under the window of the turret on the first floor where James was imprisoned. Ruthven by this time had returned thither, ‘casting his hands abroad in a desperate manner as a man lost.’ Then, saying that there was no help for it, the King must die, he tried to bind the royal hands with his garter. In the struggle James drew Ruthven towards the window, already open. At this nick of time, when the King’s friends were standing in the street below, Gowrie with them, James, ‘holding out the right side of his head and his right elbow,’ shouted for help. Gowrie stood ‘ever asking what it meant,’ but Lennox, Mar, and others, as we saw, instantly ran in, and up the chief staircase to find the King. Meanwhile James, in his agony, pushed Ruthven out of the turret, ‘the said Mr. Alexander’s head under his arms, and himself on his knees,’ towards the chamber door which opened on the dark staircase. James was trying to get hold of Ruthven’s sword and draw it, ‘the other fellow doing nothing but standing behind the King’s back and trembling all the time.’ At this moment a young gentleman of the Royal Household, John Ramsay, entered from the dark *back* staircase, and struck Ruthven with his dagger. ‘The other fellow’ withdrew. James then pushed Ruthven down the back stairs, where he was slain by Sir Thomas Erskine and Dr. Herries, who were coming up by that way. The rest, with the death of Gowrie, followed. A tumult of the townsmen, lasting for two or three hours, delayed the return of James to Falkland.

Such is the King’s published narrative. It tallies closely with the letter written by Nicholson, the English agent, to Cecil, on August 6.

James had thus his version, from which he never varied, ready on the evening of the fatal day, August 5. From his narrative only one inference can be drawn. Gowrie and his brother had tried to lure James, almost unattended, to their house. In the turret they had an armed man, who would assist the Master to seize the King. Events frustrated the conspiracy; James was well attended; the armed man turned coward, and Gowrie proclaimed the King's departure falsely to make his suite follow back to Falkland, and so leave the King in the hands of his captors. The plot, once arranged, could not be abandoned, because the plotters had no prisoner with a pot of gold to produce, so their intended treason would have been manifest.

How far is James's tale corroborated? At the posthumous trial of the Ruthvens in November, witnesses like Lennox swore to his quarter of an hour of talk with Ruthven at Falkland before the hunt. The *early* arrival of Andrew Henderson at Gowrie's house, about half-past ten, is proved by two gentlemen named Hay, and one named Moncrieff, who were then with Gowrie on business to which he at once refused to attend further, in the case of the Hays. Henderson's presence with Ruthven at Falkland is also confirmed by a manuscript vindication of the Ruthvens issued at the time. None of the King's party saw him, and their refusal to swear that they did see him shows their honesty, the point being essential. Thus the circumstance that Gowrie ordered no dinner for the King, despite Henderson's early arrival with news of his coming, shows that Gowrie meant to affect being taken by surprise. Again, the flight of Henderson on the very night of August 5 proves that he was implicated: why else should a man fly who had not been seen by anyone (except a Perth witness who withdrew his evidence) in connection with the fatal events? No other man fled, except some of Gowrie's retainers who took open part in the fighting.

James's opinion that Ruthven was deranged, in consequence of harsh treatment by his brother, Gowrie, is explained by a dispute between the brothers about the possession of the church lands of Scone, which Gowrie held, and Ruthven desired, the King siding with Ruthven. This is quite casually mentioned in a contemporary manuscript. Again, Lennox, on oath, averred that, as they rode to Perth, James told him the story of the lure, the pot of gold. Lennox was a man of honour, and he had married Gowrie's sister.

Ruthven, on his return to Gowrie's house, told a retainer, Craigingelt, that he 'had been on an errand not far off,' and accounted for the King's arrival by saying that he was 'brought' by the royal saddler to exact payment of a debt to the man. Now James had just given Gowrie a year's immunity from pursuit of creditors, and there is no trace of the saddler's presence. Clearly Ruthven lied to Craigingelt; he had been at Falkland, *not* 'on an errand not far off.'

That Cranstoun, Gowrie's man, brought the news, or rumour, of the King's departure was admitted by himself. That Gowrie went into the house to verify the fact; insisted that it was true; gave the lie to the porter, who denied it; and tried to make the King’s party take horse and follow, was proved by Lennox, Lindores, Ray (a magistrate of Perth), the porter himself, and others, on oath.

That the King was locked in by a door which could not be burst open is matter of undisputed certainty.

All these are facts that ‘winna ding, and downa be disputed.’ They *were* disputed, however, when Henderson, Gowrie’s factor, or steward, and a town councillor of Perth, came out of hiding between August 11 and August 20, told his story and confessed to having been the man in the turret. He said that on the night of August 4 Gowrie bade him ride very early next day with the Master of Ruthven to Falkland, and return with any message that Ruthven might send. He did return — when the Hays and Moncrieff saw him — with news that the King was coming. An hour later Gowrie bade him put on a shirt of mail and plate sleeves, as he meant to arrest a Highlander in the Shoe-gait. Later, the King arriving, Henderson was sent to Ruthven, in the gallery, and told to do whatever he was bidden. Ruthven then locked him up in the turret, giving no explanation. Presently the King was brought into the turret, and Henderson pretends that, to a faint extent, he hampered the violence of Ruthven. During the struggle between Ramsay and Ruthven he slunk downstairs, went home, and fled that night.

It was denied that Henderson had been at Falkland at all. Nobody swore to his presence there, yet it is admitted by the contemporary apologist, who accuses the King of having organised the whole conspiracy against the Ruthvens. It was said that nobody saw Henderson slink away out of the narrow stair, though the quadrangle was crowded. One Robertson, however, a notary of Perth, gave evidence (September 23) that he did see Henderson creep out of the narrow staircase and step over the Master’s dead body; Robertson spoke to him, but he made no reply. If Robertson perjured himself on September 23, he withdrew his evidence, or rather, he omitted it, at the trial in November. His life would not have been worth living in Perth — where the people were partisans of the Ruthvens — if he had adhered to his first statement. In the absence of other testimony many fables were circulated as to Henderson’s absence from Perth all through the day, and, on the other hand, as to his presence, in the kitchen, during the crisis. He was last seen, for certain, in the house just before the King’s dinner, and then, by his account, was locked up in the turret by the Master. Probably Robertson’s first story was true. Other witnesses, to shield their neighbours, denied having seen retainers of Gowrie’s who most assuredly were present at the brawls in the quadrangle. It was never explained why Henderson fled at once if he was not the man in the turret. I therefore conceive that, as he certainly was at Falkland, and certainly returned early, his story is true in the main.

Given all this, only one of two theories is possible. The affair was not accidental; James did not fall into a panic and bellow ‘Treason!’ out of the window, merely because he found himself alone in a turret — and why in a secluded turret? — with the Master. To that theory the locked door of the gallery is a conclusive reply. Somebody locked it for some reason. Therefore either the Ruthvens plotted against the King, or the King plotted against the Ruthvens. Both parties had good grounds for hatred, as we shall show — that is, Gowrie and James had motives for quarrel; but with the young Master, whose cause, as regards the lands of Scone, the King espoused, he had no reason for anger. If James was guilty, how did he manage his intrigue?

With motives for hating Gowrie, let us say, the King lays his plot. He chooses for it a day when he knows that the Murrays of Tullibardine will be in Perth at the wedding of one of the clan. They will defend the King from the townsfolk, clients of their Provost, Gowrie. James next invites Ruthven to Falkland (this was asserted by Ruthven’s defenders): he arrives at the strangely early hour of 6.30 a.m. James has already invented the story of the pot of gold, to be confided to Lennox, as proof that Ruthven is bringing him to Perth — that he has not invited Ruthven.

Next, by secretly spreading a rumour that he means to apprehend the Master of Oliphant, James secures a large train of retainers, let us say twenty-five men, without firearms, while he escapes the suspicion that would be aroused if he ordered them to accompany him. James has determined to sacrifice Ruthven (with whom he had no quarrel whatever), merely as bait to draw Gowrie into a trap.

Having put Lennox off with a false reason for his accompanying Ruthven alone in the house of Gowrie, James privately arranges that Ruthven shall quietly summon him, or Erskine, to follow upstairs, meaning to goad Ruthven into a treasonable attitude just as they appear on the scene. He calculates that Lennox, Erskine, or both, will then stab Ruthven without asking questions, and that Gowrie will rush up, to avenge his brother, and be slain.

But here his Majesty’s deeply considered plot, on a superficial view, breaks down, since Ruthven (for reasons best known to himself) summons neither Lennox nor Erskine. James, observing this circumstance, rapidly and cleverly remodels his plot, and does not begin to provoke the brawl till, being, Heaven knows why, in the turret, he hears his train talking outside in the street. He had shrewdly provided for their presence there by ordering a servant of his own to spread the false rumour of his departure, which Cranstoun innocently brought. Why did the King do this, as his original idea involved no need of such a stratagem? He had also, somehow, persuaded Gowrie to credit the rumour, in the face of the porter’s denial of its possibility, and to persist in it, after making no very serious attempt to ascertain its truth. To succeed in making Gowrie do this, in place of thoroughly searching the house, is certainly the King’s most striking and inexplicable success.

The King has thus two strings to his nefarious bow. The first was that Ruthven, by his orders, would bring Erskine and Lennox, and, just as they appeared, James would goad Ruthven into a treasonable attitude, whereon Lennox and Erskine would dirk him. The second plan, if this failed (as it did, because Ruthven did not obey orders), was to deceive Gowrie into bringing the retinue under the turret window, so that the King could open the window and cry ‘Treason!’ as soon as he heard their voices and footsteps below. This plan succeeds. James yells out of the window. Not wanting many spectators, he has, somehow, locked the door leading into the gallery, while giving Ramsay a hint to wait outside of the house, within hearing, and to come up by the back staircase, which was built in a conspicuous tower.

The rest is easy. Gowrie may bring up as many men as he pleases, but Ramsay has had orders to horrify him by saying that the King is slain (this was alleged), and then to run him through as he gives ground, or drops his points; this after a decent form of resistance, in which three of the King’s four men are wounded.

‘Master of the human heart,’ like Lord Bateman, James knows that Ruthven will not merely leave him, when goaded by insult, and that Gowrie, hearing of his brother’s death, will not simply stand in the street and summon the citizens.

To secure a witness to the truth of his false version of the matter James must have begun by artfully bribing Henderson, Gowrie’s steward, either simply to run away, and then come in later with corroboration, or actually to be present in the turret, and then escape. Or perhaps the King told his man-in-the-turret tale merely ‘in the air;’ and then Henderson, having run away in causeless panic, later ‘sees money in it,’ and appears, with a string of falsehoods. ‘Chance loves Art,’ says Aristotle, and chance might well befriend an artist so capable and conscientious as his Majesty. To be sure Mr. Hill Burton says ‘the theory that the whole was a plot of the Court to ruin the powerful House of Gowrie must at once, after a calm weighing of the evidence, be dismissed as beyond the range of sane conclusions. Those who formed it had to put one of the very last men in the world to accept of such a destiny into the position of an unarmed man who, without any preparation, was to render himself into the hands of his armed adversaries, and cause a succession of surprises and acts of violence, which, by his own courage and dexterity, he would rule to a determined and preconcerted plan.’

If there was a royal plot, *without a plan*, then James merely intended to raise a brawl and ‘go it blind.’ This, however, is almost beyond the King’s habitual and romantic recklessness. We must prefer the theory of a subtly concerted and ably conducted plan, constructed with alternatives, so that, if one string breaks, another will hold fast. That plan, to the best of my poor powers, I have explained.

To drop the figure of irony, all this hypothesis is starkly incredible. James was not a recklessly adventurous character to go weaponless with Ruthven, who wore a sword, and provoke him into insolence. If he had been ever so brave, the plot is of a complexity quite impossible; no sane man, still less a timid man, could conceive and execute a plot at the mercy of countless circumstances, not to be foreseen. Suppose the Master slain, and Gowrie a free man in the street. He had only to sound the tocsin, summon his devoted townsmen, surround the house, and ask respectfully for explanations.

Take, on the other hand, the theory of Gowrie’s guilt. Here the motives for evil will on either side may be briefly stated. Since the murder of Riccio (1566) the Ruthvens had been the foes of the Crown. Gowrie’s grandfather and father were leaders in the attack on Mary and Riccio; Gowrie’s father insulted Queen Mary, while caged in Loch Leven Castle, by amorous advances — so she declares. In 1582 Gowrie’s father captured James and held him in degrading captivity. He escaped, and was reconciled to his gaoler, who, in 1584, again conspired, and was executed, while the Ruthven lands were forfeited. By a new revolution (1585-1586) the Ruthvens were reinstated. In July 1593 Gowrie’s mother, by an artful ambuscade, enabled the Earl of Bothwell again to kidnap the King. In 1594 our Gowrie, then a lad, joined Bothwell in open rebellion. He was pardoned, and in August 1594 went abroad, travelled as far as Rome, studied at Padua, and, summoned by the party of the Kirk, came to England in March 1600. Here he was petted by Elizabeth, then on almost warlike terms with James. For thirty years every treason of the Ruthvens had been backed by Elizabeth; and Cecil, ceaselessly and continuously, had abetted many attempts to kidnap James. These plots were rife as late as April 1600. The object always was to secure the dominance of the Kirk over the King, and Gowrie, as the natural noble leader of the Kirk, was recalled to Scotland, in 1600, by the Rev. Mr. Bruce, the chief of the political preachers, whom James had mastered in 1596-97. Gowrie, arriving, instantly headed the Opposition, and, on June 21, 1600, successfully resisted the King’s request for supplies, rendered necessary by his hostile relations with England. Gowrie then left the Court, and about July 20 went to hunt in Atholl; his mother (who had once already lured James into a snare) residing at his Perth house. On August 1 Gowrie warned his mother of his return, and she went to their strong castle of Dirleton, near North Berwick and the sea, while Gowrie came to his Perth house on August 3, it being understood that he was to ride to Dirleton on August 5. Thither he had sent on most of his men and provisions. On August 5, we know he went on a longer journey.

We have shown that a plot by James is incredible. There is no evidence to prove a plot by Gowrie, beyond the whole nature of the events, and the strange conduct of himself and his brother. But, if plot he did, he merely carried out, in the interests of his English friends, the traditional policy of his grandfather, his father, his mother, and his ally, Bothwell, at this time an exile in Spain, maturing a conspiracy in which he claimed Gowrie as one of his confederates. While the King was a free man, Gowrie could not hope to raise the discontented Barons, and emancipate the preachers — yet more bitterly discontented — who had summoned him home. Let the King vanish, and the coast was clear; the Kirk's party, the English party, would triumph.

The inference is that the King was to be made to disappear, and that Gowrie undertook to do it. Two witnesses — Mr. Cowper, minister of Perth, and Mr. Rhynd, Gowrie's old tutor — averred that he was wont to speak of the need of extreme secrecy 'in the execution of a high and dangerous purpose.' Such a purpose as the trapping of the King by a secret and sudden onfall was the mere commonplace of Scottish politics. Cecil's papers, at this period and later, are full of such schemes, submitted by Scottish adventurers. That men so very young as the two Ruthvens should plan such a device, romantic and perilous, is no matter for marvel.

The plot itself must be judged by its original idea, namely, to lure James to Perth, with only two or three servants, at an early hour in the day. Matters fell out otherwise; but, had the King entered Gowrie House early, and scantly attended, he might have been conveyed across Fife, disguised, in the train of Gowrie as he went to Dirleton. Thence he might be conveyed by sea to Fastcastle, the impregnable eyrie of Gowrie's and Bothwell's old ally, the reckless intriguer, Logan of Restalrig. The famous letters which Scott, Tytler, and Hill Burton regarded as proof of that plot, I have shown, by comparison of handwritings, to be all forged; but one of them, claimed by the forger as his model for the rest, is, I think, a feigned copy of a genuine original. In that letter (of Logan to Gowrie) he is made to speak of their scheme as analogous to one contrived against 'a nobleman of Padua,' where Gowrie had studied. This remark, in a postscript, can hardly have been invented by the forger, Sprot, a low country attorney, a creature of Logan's. All the other letters are mere variations on the tune set by this piece.

A plot of this kind is, at least, not impossible, like the quite incredible conspiracy attributed to James. The scheme was only one of scores of the same sort, constantly devised at that time. The thing next to impossible is that Henderson was left, as he declared, in the turret, by Ruthven, without being tutored in his *rôle*. The King's party did not believe that Henderson here told truth; he had accepted the *rôle*, they said, but turned coward. This is the more likely as, in December 1600, a gentleman named Robert Oliphant, a retainer of Gowrie, fled from Edinburgh, where certain revelations blabbed by him had come into publicity. He had said that, in Paris, early in 1600, Gowrie moved him to take the part of the armed man in the turret; that he had 'with good reason dissuaded him; that the Earl thereon left him and dealt with Henderson in that matter; that Henderson undertook it and yet fainted' — that is, turned craven. Though nine years later, in England, the Privy Council acquitted Oliphant of concealing treason, had he not escaped from Edinburgh in December 1600 the whole case might have been made clear, for witnesses were then at hand.

We conclude that, as there certainly was a Ruthven plot, as the King could not possibly have invented and carried out the affair, and that as Gowrie, the leader of the Kirk party, was young, romantic, and 'Italianate,' he did plan a device of the regular and usual kind, but was frustrated, and fell into the pit which he had digged. But the Presbyterians would never believe that the young leader of the Kirk party attempted what the leaders of the godly had often done, and far more frequently had conspired to do, with the full approval of Cecil and Elizabeth. The plot was an orthodox plot, but, to this day, historians of Presbyterian and Liberal tendencies prefer to believe that the King was the conspirator. The dead Ruthvens were long lamented, and even in the nineteenth century the mothers, in Perthshire, sang to their babes, 'Sleep ye, sleep ye, my bonny Earl o' Gowrie.'

A lady has even written to inform me that she is the descendant of the younger Ruthven, who escaped after being stabbed by Ramsay and Erskine, fled to England, married, and had a family. I in vain replied that young Ruthven's body was embalmed, exhibited in the Scottish Parliament, and hacked to pieces, which were set on spikes in public places, and that after these sufferings he was unlikely to marry. The lady was not to be shaken in her belief.

In *The Athenæum* for August 28, 1902, Mr. Edmund Gosse recognises Ramsay the Ruthven slayer as author of a Century of English Sonnets (1619), of which Lord Cobham possesses a copy apparently unique. The book was published at Paris, by Réné Giffart. The Scottish name, Gifford, was at that time spelled 'Giffart,' so the publisher was of Scottish descent.

VIII

THE STRANGE CASE OF DANIEL DUNGLAS HOME

The case of Daniel Dunglas Home is said, in the *Dictionary of National Biography,* to present a curious and unsolved problem. It really presents, I think, two problems equally unsolved, one scientific, and the other social. How did Mr. Home, the son of a Scottish mother in the lower middle class at highest, educated (as far as he was educated at all) in a village of Connecticut, attain his social position? I do not ask why he was ‘taken up’ by members of noble English families: ‘the caresses of the great’ may be lavished on athletes, and actors, and musicians, and Home’s remarkable performances were quite enough to make him welcome in country houses. Moreover, he played the piano, the accordion, and other musical instruments. For his mysterious ‘gift’ he might be invited to puzzle and amuse royal people (not in England), and continental emperors, and kings. But he did much more than what Houdin or Alexis, a conjuror and a clairvoyant, could do. He successively married, with the permission and good will of the Czar, two Russian ladies of noble birth, a feat inexplicable when we think of the rules of the continental *noblesse*. A duc, or a prince, or a marquis may marry the daughter of an American citizen who has made a fortune in lard. But the daughters of the Russian *noblesse* do not marry poor American citizens with the good will of the Czar. By his marriages Home far outwent such famous charlatans as Cagliostro, Mesmer, and the mysterious Saint Germain the deathless. Cagliostro and Saint Germain both came on the world with an appearance of great wealth and display. The source of the opulence of Saint Germain is as obscure as was the source of the sudden enrichment of Beau Wilson, whom Law, the financier, killed in a duel. Cagliostro, like Law, may have acquired his diamonds by gambling or swindling. But neither these two men nor Mesmer, though much in the society of princes, could have hoped, openly and with the approval of Louis XV. or Louis XVI., to wed a noble lady. Yet Home did so twice, though he had no wealth at all.

Cagliostro was a low-born Neapolitan ruffian. But he had a presence! In the

Memoirs of Madame d’Oberkirch she tells us how much she disliked and distrusted Cagliostro, always avoiding him, and warning Cardinal Rohan against him — in vain. But she admits that the man dominated her, or would have dominated her, by something inexplicable in his eyes, his bearing, and his unaccountable knowledge, as when he publicly announced, on a certain day, the death of the great Empress, Maria Theresa, of which the news did not arrive till five days later. Now Home had none of this dominating personality. He has been described to me, by a lady who knew him in his later years, when he had ceased to work drawing-room miracles in society, as a gentle, kindly, quiet person, with no obvious fault, unless a harmless and childlike vanity be a fault. Thus he struck an observer not of his intimate circle. He liked to give readings and recitations, and he played the piano with a good deal of feeling. He was a fair linguist, he had been a Catholic, he was of the middle order of intelligence, he had no ‘mission’ except to prove that disembodied spirits exist, if that were a legitimate inference from the marvels which attended him.

Mr. Robert Bell in *The Cornhill Magazine*, Vol. II., 1860, described Home’s miracles in an article called ‘Stranger than Fiction.’ His account of the man’s personality is exactly like what I have already given. Home was ‘a very mild specimen of familiar humanity.’ His health was bad. ‘The expression of his face in repose’ (he was only twenty-seven) ‘is that of physical suffering.... There is more kindliness and gentleness than vigour in the character of his features.... He is yet so young that the playfulness of boyhood has not passed away, and he never seems so thoroughly at ease with himself and others as when he is enjoying some light and temperate amusement.’

Thus there was nothing in Home to dominate, or even to excite personal curiosity. He and his more intimate friends, not marchionesses but middle-class people, corresponded in a style of rather distasteful effusiveness. He was a pleasant young man in a house, not a Don Juan. I have never heard a whisper about light loves — unless Mr. Hamilton Aïdé, to be quoted later, reports such a whisper — not a word against his private character, except that he allowed a terribly vulgar rich woman to adopt him, and give him a very large sum of money, later withdrawn. We shall see that she probably had mixed motives both for giving and for withdrawing the gift, but it was asserted, though on evidence far from sound, that ‘the spirits’ had rapped out a command to give Home some thirty thousand pounds. Spirits ought not to do these things, and, certainly, it would have been wiser in Home to refuse the widow’s gold even if they did. Beyond this one affair, and an alleged case of imposture at a *séance*, Home’s private character raised no scandals that have survived into our knowledge. It is a very strange thing, as we shall see, that the origin of Home’s miracles in broad daylight or artificial light, could never be traced to fraud, or, indeed, to any known cause; while the one case in which imposture is alleged on first-hand evidence occurred under conditions of light so bad as to make detection as difficult as belief in such circumstances, ought to have been impossible. It is not easy to feel sure that we have certainly detected a fraud in a dim light; but it is absurd to believe in a miracle, when the conditions of light are such as to make detection difficult.

Given this mild young musical man, the problems of how he achieved his social successes, and how he managed to escape exposure, if he did his miracles by conjuring, are almost equally perplexing. The second puzzle is perhaps the less hard of the two, for Home did not make money as a medium (though he took money's worth), and in private society few seized and held the mystic hands that moved about, or when they seized they could not hold them. The hands melted away, so people said.

A sketch of Home's life must now be given. He was born in 1833, at Currie, a village near Edinburgh. In his later years he sent to his second wife a photograph of the street of cottages beside the burn, in one of which he first saw the light. His father had a right to bear the arms of the Earls of Home, with a *brisure*, being the natural son of Alexander, tenth Earl of Home. The Medium's ancestor had fought, or, according to other accounts, had shirked fighting, at Flodden Field, as is popularly known from the ballad *The Sutors of Selkirk*. The maiden name of Home's mother was Macneil. He was adopted by an aunt, who, about 1842, carried the wondrous child to America. He had, since he was four years old, given examples of second sight; it was in the family. Home's mother, who died in 1850, was second-sighted, as were her great-uncle, an Urquhart, and her uncle, a Mackenzie. So far there was nothing unusual or alarming in Home's case, at least to any intelligent Highlander. Not till 1850, after his mother's death, did Home begin to hear 'loud blows on the head of my bed, as if struck by a hammer.' The Wesley family, in 1716-17, had been quite familiar with this phenomenon, and with other rappings, and movements of objects untouched. In fact all these things are of world-wide diffusion, and I know no part of the world, savage or civilised, where such events do not happen, according to the evidence.

In no instance, as far as I am informed, did anything extraordinary occur in connection with Home which cannot be paralleled in the accounts of Egyptian mediums in Iamblichus.

In 1850 America was interested in 'The Rochester Knockings,' and the case of the Fox girls, a replica of the old Cock Lane case which amused Dr. Johnson and Horace Walpole. The Fox girls became professional mediums, and, long afterwards, confessed that they were impostors. They were so false that their confession is of no value as evidence, but certainly they were humbugs. The air was full of talk about them, and other people like them, when Home, aged seventeen, was so constantly attended by noises of rappings that his aunt threw a chair at him, summoned three preachers, an Independent, a Baptist, and a Wesleyan (Home was then a Wesleyan), and plunged into conflict with the devil. The furniture now began to move about, untouched by man, and Home's aunt turned him out of the house. Home went to a friend in another little town, people crowded to witness the phenomena, and the press blazoned the matter abroad. Henceforth, Home was a wonder worker; but once, for a whole year — February 1856 to February 1857— 'the power' entirely deserted him, and afterwards, for shorter periods.

In 1852 he was examined by the celebrated American poet, Bryant, by a professor of Harvard, and others, who reported the usual physical phenomena, and emphatically declared that 'we know we were not imposed upon or deceived.' 'Spirits' spoke through the voice of the entranced Home, or rapped out messages, usually gushing, and Home floated in the air, at the house of Mr. Ward Cheney, at South Manchester, Connecticut. This phenomenon is constantly reported in the Bible, in the Lives of the Saints by the Bollandists, in the experiences of the early Irvingites, in witch trials, in Iamblichus, and in savage and European folklore. Lord Elcho, who was out with Prince Charles in the Forty-Five, writes in his unpublished Memoirs that, being at Rome about 1767, he went to hear the evidence in the process of canonising a saint, recently dead, and heard witnesses swear that they had seen the saint, while alive, floating about in the air, like Home. St. Theresa was notorious for this accomplishment. Home's first feat of this kind occurred 'in a darkened room,' a very dark room indeed, as the evidence shows. It had been darkened on purpose to try an experiment in seeing 'N rays,' which had been recently investigated by Reichenbach. Science has brought them recently back into notice. The evidence for the fact, in this case, was that people felt Home's feet in mid air. 'I have been lifted in the light of day only once, and that was in America;' also, in the light of four gas lamps 'in a room in Sloane Street.'

After attracting a good deal of notice in New York, Home, on April 9, 1855, turned up at Cox's Hotel, Jermyn Street, where Mr. Cox gave him hospitality as a *non*-'paying guest.' Now occurred the affair of Sir David Brewster and Lord Brougham. Both were capable of hallucinations. Lord Brougham published an account of a common death-bed wraith, which he saw once while in a bath (the vision coincided with the death of the owner of the wraith), and Sir David's daughter tells how that philosopher saw that of the Rev. Mr. Lyon, in St. Leonard's College, St. Andrews, a wraith whose owner was in perfect health. Sir

David sent letters, forming a journal, to his family, and, in June (no day given) 1855, described his visit to Home. He says that he, Lord Brougham, Mr. Cox, and Home sat down ‘at a moderately sized table, *the structure of which we were invited to examine*. In a short time the table shuddered and a tremulous motion ran up our arms.... The table actually rose from the ground, when no hand was upon it. A larger table was produced, and exhibited similar movements. An accordion was held in Lord Brougham’s hand, and gave out a single note.... A small hand-bell was then laid with its mouth on the carpet, and after lying for some time, it actually rang when nothing could have touched it. The bell was then placed upon the other side, still upon the carpet, and it came over to me, and placed itself in my hand. It did the same to Lord Brougham. These were the principal experiments: we could give no explanation of them, and could not conjecture how they could be produced by any kind of mechanism.... We do not believe that it was the work of spirits.’

So Sir David wrote in a private letter of June 1855, just after the events. But the affair came to be talked about, and, on September 29, 1855, Sir David wrote to *The Morning Advertiser*. He had seen, he said, ‘several mechanical effects which I was unable to explain.... But I saw enough to convince myself that they could all be produced by human feet and hands,’ though he also, in June, ‘could not conjecture how they could be produced by any kind of mechanism.’ Later, October 9, Sir David again wrote to the newspaper. This time he said that he might have discovered the fraud, had he ‘been permitted to take a peep beneath the drapery of the table.’ But in June he said that he ‘was invited to examine the structure of the table.’ He denied that ‘a large table was moved about in a most extraordinary way.’ In June he had asserted that this occurred. He declared that the bell did not ring. In June he averred that it rang ‘when nothing could have touched it.’ In October he suggested that machinery attached to ‘the lower extremities of Mr. Home’s body’ could produce the effects: in June ‘we could not conjecture how they could be produced by any kind of mechanism.’ On Sir David’s death, his daughter and biographer, Mrs. Gordon, published (1869) his letter of June 1855. Home then scored rather freely, as the man of science had denied publicly, in October 1855, what he had privately written to his family in June 1855, when the events were fresh in his memory. This was not the only case in which ‘a scientist of European reputation did not increase his reputation’ for common veracity in his attempts to put down Home.

The adventures of Home in the Courts of Europe, his desertion of the errors of Wesleyan Methodism for those of the Church of Rome, his handsome entertainment by diamond-giving emperors, his expulsion from Rome as a sorcerer, and so forth, cannot be dealt with here for lack of space. We come to the great Home-Browning problem.

In 1855, Home met Mr. and Mrs. Browning at the house of a Mr. Rymer, at Ealing, the first of only two meetings. On this occasion, says Home, a wreath of clematis rose from the table and floated towards Mrs. Browning, behind whom her husband went and stood. The wreath settled on the lady's head, not on that of Mr. Browning, who, Home thought, was jealous of the favour. This is manifestly absurd. Soon after, all but Mr. Rymer were invited to leave the room. Two days later, Mr. Browning asked to be allowed to bring a friend for another *séance*, but the arrangements of the Rymers, with whom Home was staying, made this impossible. Later, Home, with Mrs. Rymer, called on the Brownings in town, and Mr. Browning declined to notice Home; there was a scene, and Mrs. Browning (who was later a three-quarters believer in 'spirits') was distressed. In 1864, after Mrs. Browning's death, Mr. Browning published *Mr. Sludge, the Medium*, which had the air of a personal attack on Home as a detected and confessing American impostor. Such is Home's account. It was published in 1872, and was open to contradiction. I am not aware that Mr. Browning took any public notice of it.

In July 1889 the late Mr. F.W.H. Myers and Professor W.F. Barrett published, in the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, , the following statement: 'We have found no allegations of *fraud*' (in Home) 'on which we should be justified in laying much stress. Mr. Robert Browning has told to one of us' (Mr. Myers) 'the circumstances which mainly led to that opinion of Home which was expressed in *Mr. Sludge, the Medium*.' It appears that a lady (since dead) repeated to Mr. Browning a statement made to her by a lady and gentleman (since dead) as to their finding Home in the act of experimenting with phosphorus on the production of 'spirit lights,' 'which (so far as Mr. Browning remembers) were to be rubbed round the walls of the room, near the ceiling, so as to appear when the room was darkened. This piece of evidence powerfully impressed Mr. Browning; but it comes to us at third hand, without written record, and at a distance of nearly forty years.'

Clearly this story is not evidence against Home.

But, several years ago, an eminent writer, whom I need not name, published in a newspaper another version. Mr. Browning had told him, he said, that, sitting with Home and Mrs. Browning (apparently alone, these three) in a darkened room, he saw a white object rise above the table. This Home represented as the phantasm of a child of Mr. and Mrs. Browning, which died in infancy. Mr. Browning seized the phantasm, which was Home's naked foot.

But it must be remembered that (1) Mr. and Mrs. Browning had no child which died in infancy; and (2) Mrs. Browning's belief survived the shock. On

December 5, 1902, in the *Times Literary Supplement*, a letter by Mr. R. Barrett Browning appeared. He says: ‘Mr. Hume, who subsequently changed his name to Home’ (‘Home’ is pronounced ‘Hume’ in Scotland), ‘was detected in a “vulgar fraud,” for I have heard my father repeatedly describe how he caught hold of his foot *under* the table.’ In the other story the foot was *above* the table; in the new version no infant phantasm occurs. Moreover, to catch a man’s foot under a table in itself proves nothing. What was the foot doing, and why did Mr. Browning not tell this, but quite a different story, to Mr. Myers? We ‘get no forrarder.’

On November 28, 1902, Mr. Merrifield, in the *Times Literary Supplement*, published a letter on August 30 (?), 1855, from Mrs. Browning to Miss De Gaudrion, as to the *séance* with the Brownings at Ealing. Mrs. Browning enclosed a letter from Mr. Browning, giving his impressions. ‘*Mine, I must frankly say, were entirely different*,’ wrote Mrs. Browning; and Home says: ‘Mrs. Browning was much moved, and she not only then but ever since expressed her entire belief and pleasure in what occurred.’ In her letter, Mrs. Browning adds: ‘For my own part, and in my own conscience, I find no reason for considering the medium in question responsible for anything seen or heard on that occasion.’ But ‘I consider that the seeking for intercourse with any particular spirit would be apt to end either in disappointment or delusion,’ and she uses the phrase ‘the supposed spirits.’

This lady who wrote thus at the time cannot conceivably have been looking for the ghost of a child that never was born, and been deceived by Home’s white foot, which Mr. Browning then caught hold of — an incident which Mrs. Browning could not have forgotten by August 30, 1855, if it occurred in July of that year. Yet Mr. —— has published the statement that Mr. Browning told him that story of Home’s foot, dead child, and all, and Mr. —— is a man of undoubted honour, and of the acutest intelligence.

Mr. Browning (August 30, 1855) assured Miss De Gaudrion that he held ‘the whole display of hands,’ ‘spirit utterances,’ &c., to be ‘a cheat and imposture.’ He acquitted the Rymers (at whose house the *séance* was held) of collusion, and spoke very highly of their moral character. But he gave no reason for his disbelief, and said nothing about catching hold of Home’s foot either under or above the table. He simply states his opinion; the whole affair was ‘melancholy stuff.’ How can we account for the story of Mr. Browning and Home’s foot? Can poets possess an imagination too exuberant, or a memory not wholly accurate?

But Mr. Merrifield had written, on August 18, 1855, a record of an Ealing *séance* of July 1855. About fourteen people sat round a table, in a room of which two windows opened on the lawn. The nature of the light is not stated. There was ‘heaving up of the table, tapping, playing an accordion under the table, and so on.’ No details are given; but there were no visible hands. Later, by such light as exists when the moon has set on a July night, Home gave another *séance*. ‘The outlines of the windows we could well see, and the form of any large object intervening before them, though not with accuracy of outline.’ In these circumstances, in a light sufficient, he thinks, Mr. Merrifield detected ‘an object resembling a child’s hand with a long white sleeve attached to it’ and also attached to Home’s shoulder and arm, and moving as Home moved. A lady, who later became Mrs. Merrifield, corroborated.

This is the one known alleged case of detection of fraud, on Home’s part, given on first-hand evidence, and written only a few weeks after the events. One other case I was told by the observer, very many years after the event, and in this case fraud was not necessarily implied. It is only fair to remark that Mr. F.W.H. Myers thought these ‘phantasmal arms instructive in more than one respect,’ as supplying ‘a missing link between mere phantasms and ectoplastic phenomena.’

Now this is the extraordinary feature in the puzzle. There are many attested accounts of hands seen, in Home’s presence, in a good light, with no attachment; and no fraud is known ever to have been detected in such instances. The strange fact is that if we have one record of a detection of Home in a puerile fraud in a faint light, we have none of a detection in his most notable phenomena in a good light. To take one example. In *The Nineteenth Century* for April 1896 Mr. Hamilton Aïdé published the following statement, of which he had made the record in his Diary, ‘more than twenty years ago.’ Mr. Aïdé also told me the story in conversation. He was ‘prejudiced’ against Home, whom he met at Nice, ‘in the house of a Russian lady of distinction.’ ‘His *very* physical manifestations, I was told, had caused his expulsion from more than one private house.’ Of these aberrations one has not heard elsewhere. Mr. Aïdé was asked to meet M. Alphonse Karr, ‘one of the hardest-headed, the wittiest, and most sceptical men in France’ (a well-merited description), at a *séance* with Home. Mr. Aïdé’s prejudice, M. Karr’s hard-headed scepticism, prove them witnesses not biassed in favour of hocus-pocus.

The two arrived first at the villa, and were shown into a very large, uncarpeted, and brilliantly lighted salon. The furniture was very heavy, the tables were ‘mostly of marble, *and none of them had any cloths upon them*.’ There were about twenty candles in sconces, all lit, and a moderator lamp in the centre of ‘the ponderous round rosewood table at which we were to sit.’ Mr. Aïdé ‘examined the room carefully,’ and observed that wires could not possibly be attached to the heavy furniture ranged along the walls, and on the polished floor wires could not escape notice. The number present, including Home, was nine when all had arrived. All hands were on the table, but M. Alphonse Karr insisted on being allowed to break the circle, go under the table, or make any other sort of search whenever he pleased. ‘This Home made no objection to.’ Raps ‘went *round* under the table, fluttering hither and thither in a way difficult to account for by the dislocation of the medium’s toe’ (or knee), ‘the common explanation.’ (I may remark that this kind of rapping is now so rare that I think Mr. Frederick Myers, with all his experience, never heard it.) Mr. Aïdé was observant enough to notice that a lady had casually dropped her bracelet, though she vowed that it ‘was snatched from her by a spirit.’ ‘It was certainly removed from her lap, and danced about under the table....’

Then suddenly ‘a heavy armchair, placed against the wall at the further end of the *salotto,* ran violently out into the middle of the room towards us.’ Other chairs rushed about ‘with still greater velocity.’ The heavy table then tilted up, and the moderator lamp, with some pencils, slid to the lower edge of the table, but did not fall off. Mr. Aïdé looked under the table: Home’s legs were inactive. Home said that he thought the table would ‘ascend,’ and Alphonse Karr dived under it, and walked about on all fours, examining everybody’s feet — the others were standing up. The table rose ‘three or four feet,’ at highest, and remained in air ‘from two to three minutes.’ It rose so high that ‘all could see Karr, and see also that no one’s legs moved.’ M. Karr was not a little annoyed; but, as ‘Sandow could not have lifted the table evenly,’ even if allowed to put his hands beneath it, and as Home, at one side, had his hands above it, clearly Home did not lift it.

All alike beheld this phenomenon, and Mr. Aïdé asks ‘was I hypnotised?’ Were all hypnotised? People have tried to hypnotise Mr. Aïdé, never with success, and certainly no form of hypnotism known to science was here concerned. No process of that sort had been gone through, and, except when Home said that he thought the table would ascend, there had been no ‘verbal suggestion;’ nobody was told what to look out for. In hypnotic experiment it is found that A. (if told to see anything not present) will succeed, B. will fail, C. will see something, and so on, though these subjects have been duly hypnotised, which Mr. Aïdé and the rest had not. That an unhypnotised company (or a company wholly unaware that any hypnotic process had been performed on them) should all be subjected by any one to the same hallucination, by an unuttered command, is a thing unknown to science, and most men of science would deny that even one single person could be hallucinated by a special suggestion not indicated by outward word, gesture, or otherwise. We read of such feats in tales of ‘glamour,’ like that of the Goblin Page in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel,* but to psychological science, I repeat, they are absolutely unknown. The explanation is not what is technically styled a *vera causa*. Mr. Aïdé's story is absolutely unexplained, and it is one of scores, attested in letters to Home from people of undoubted sense and good position. Mr. Myers examined and authenticated the letters by post marks, handwriting, and other tests.

In one case the theory of hallucination induced by Home, so that people saw what did not occur, was asserted by Dr. Carpenter, F.R.S. Dr. Carpenter, who was a wondrously superior person, wrote: 'The most diverse accounts of a *séance* will be given by a believer and a sceptic. One will declare that a table rose in the air, while another (who had been watching its feet) is confident that it never left the ground.' Mr. Aïdé's statement proves that this explanation does not fit *his* case. Dr. Carpenter went on to say what was not true: 'A whole party of believers will affirm that they saw Mr. Home float in at one window and out at another, whilst a single honest sceptic declares that Mr. Home was sitting in his chair all the time.' This was false. Dr. Carpenter referred to the published statement of Lord Adare (Dunraven) and Lord Lindsay (the Earl of Crawford), that they saw Home float into a window of the room where they were sitting, out of the next room, where Home was, *and float back again*, at Ashley Place, S.W., December 16, 1868. No 'honest sceptic' was present and denied the facts. The other person present, Captain Wynne, wrote to Home, in a letter printed (with excisions of some contemptuous phrases) by Madame Home, and read in the original MS. by Mr. Myers. He said: 'I wrote to the *Medium* to say I was present as a witness. I don't think that any one who knows me would for one moment say that I was a victim to hallucination or any humbug of that kind.' Dr. Carpenter, in 1871, writing in the *Quarterly Review* (Vol. 131, p, 337), had criticised Lord Lindsay's account of what occurred on December 16, 1868. He took exception to a point in Lord Lindsay's grammar, he asked why Lord Lindsay did not cite the two other observers, and he said (what I doubt) that the observations were made by moonlight. So Lord Lindsay had said; but the curious may consult the almanack. Even in a fog, however, people in a room can see a man come in by the window, and go out again, 'head first, with the body rigid,' at a great height above the ground.

Mr. Podmore has suggested that Home thrust his head and shoulders out of the window, and that the three excited friends fancied the rest; but they first saw him in the air outside of the window of their room. Nothing is explained, in this case, by Dr. Carpenter's explanation. Dr. Carpenter (1871) discredited the experiments made on Home by Sir William Crookes and attested by Sir William Huggins, because the latter was only 'an amateur in a branch of research which tasks the keenest powers of observation,' not of experiment; while, in the chemical experiments of Sir William Crookes, ‘the ability he displayed was purely *technical*.’ Neither gentleman could dream ‘that there are *moral* sources of error.’

Alas, Dr. Carpenter, when he boldly published (in 1876) the thing that was not, proved that a ‘scientist’ may be misled by ‘moral sources of error’!

In 1890, in *Proceedings of the S.P.R.*, Sir William Crookes published full contemporary accounts, noted by himself, of his experiments on Home in 1871, with elaborate mechanical tests as to alteration of weights; and recorded Home’s feats in handling red-hot coals, and communicating the power of doing so to others, and to a fine cambric handkerchief on which a piece of red-hot charcoal lay some time. Beyond a hole of half an inch in diameter, to which Home drew attention, the cambric was unharmed. Sir William tested it: it had undergone no chemical preparation.

Into the details of the mechanical tests as to alterations of weights I cannot go. Mr. Angelo Lewis (Professor Hoffman), an expert in conjuring, says that, accepting Sir William’s veracity, and that he was not hallucinated, the phenomena ‘seem to me distinctly to be outside the range of trick, and therefore to be good evidence, so far as we can trust personal evidence at all, of Home’s power of producing motion, without contact, in inanimate bodies.’ Sir William himself writes (1890): ‘I have discovered no flaw in the experiments, or in the reasoning I based upon them.’ The notes of the performances were written while they were actually in course of proceeding. Thus ‘the table rose completely off the ground several times, whilst the gentlemen present took a candle, and, kneeling down, deliberately examined the position of Mr. Home’s knees and feet, and saw the three feet of the table quite off the ground.’ Every observer in turn satisfied himself of the facts; they could not all be hallucinated.

I have not entered on the ‘spiritual’ part of the puzzle, the communications from ‘spirits’ of matters not *consciously* known to persons present, but found to be correct. That is too large a subject. Nor have I entered into the case of Mrs. Lyon’s gift to Home, for the evidence only proved, as the judge held, that the gift was prompted, at least to some extent, by what Home declared to be spiritual rappings. But the only actual witness to the fact, Mrs. Lyon herself, was the reverse of a trustworthy witness, being a foolish capricious underbred woman. Hume’s mystery, as far as the best of the drawing-room miracles are concerned, is solved by no theory or combination of theories, neither by the hypothesis of conjuring, nor of collective hallucination, nor of a blend of both. The cases of Sir David Brewster and of Dr. Carpenter prove how far some ‘scientists’ will go, rather than appear in an attitude of agnosticism, of not having a sound explanation.

Note. — Since this paper was written, I have been obliged by several interesting communications from a person very intimate with Home. Nothing in these threw fresh light on the mystery of his career, still less tended to confirm any theory of dishonesty on his part. His legal adviser, a man of honour, saw no harm in his accepting Mrs. Lyon’s proffered gift, though he tried, in vain, to prevent her from increasing her original present.

IX

THE CASE OF CAPTAIN GREEN

‘Play on Captain Green’s wuddie,’ said the caddy on Leith Links; and his employer struck his ball in the direction of the Captain’s gibbet on the sands. Mr. Duncan Forbes of Culloden sighed, and, taking off his hat, bowed in the direction of the unhappy mariner’s monument.

One can imagine this little scene repeating itself many a time, long after Captain Thomas Green, his mate, John Madder or Mather, and another of his crew were taken to the sands at Leith on the second Wednesday in April 1705, being April 11, and there hanged within the floodmark upon a gibbet till they were dead. Mr. Forbes of Culloden, later President of the Court of Session, and, far more than the butcher Cumberland, the victor over the rising of 1745, believed in the innocence of Captain Green, wore mourning for him, attended the funeral at the risk of his own life, and, when the Porteous Riot was discussed in Parliament, rose in his place and attested his conviction that the captain was wrongfully done to death.

Green, like his namesake in the Popish Plot, was condemned for a crime of which he was probably innocent. Nay more, he died for a crime which was not proved to have been committed, though it really may have been committed by persons with whom Green had no connection, while Green may have been guilty of other misdeeds as bad as that for which he was hanged. Like the other Green, executed for the murder of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey during the Popish Plot, the captain was the victim of a fit of madness in a nation, that nation being the Scottish. The cause of their fury was not religion — the fever of the Covenant had passed away — but commerce.

‘Twere long to tell and sad to trace the origin of the Caledonian frenzy. In 1695 the Scottish Parliament had passed, with the royal assent, an Act granting a patent to a Scottish company dealing with Africa, the Indies, and, incidentally, with the globe at large. The Act committed the occupant of the Scottish throne, William of Orange, to backing the company if attacked by alien power. But it was unlucky that England was then an alien power, and that the Scots Act infringed the patent of the much older English East India Company. Englishmen dared not take shares, finally, in the venture of the Scots; and when the English Board of Trade found out, in 1697, the real purpose of the Scottish company — namely, to set up a factory in Darien and anticipate the advantages dreamed of by France in the case of M. de Lesseps's Panama Canal— 'a strange thing happened.' The celebrated philosopher, Mr. John Locke, and the other members of a committee of the English Board of Trade, advised the English Government to plagiarise the Scottish project, and seize the section of the Isthmus of Panama on which the Scots meant to settle. This was not done; but the Dutch Usurper, far from backing the Scots company, bade his colonies hold no sort of intercourse with them. The Scots were starved out of their settlement. The few who remained fled to New York and Jamaica, and there, perishing of hunger, were refused supplies by the English colonial governors. A second Scottish colony succumbed to a Spanish fleet and army, and the company, with a nominal capital of 400,000*l.* and with 220,000*l.* paid up, was bankrupt. Macaulay calculates the loss at about the same as a loss of forty millions would have been to the Scotland of his own day; let us say twenty-two millions.

We remember the excitement in France over the Panama failure. Scotland, in 1700, was even more furious, and that led to the hanging of Captain Green and his men. There were riots; the rioters were imprisoned in the Heart of Midlothian — the Tolbooth — the crowd released them; some of the crowd were feebly sentenced to the pillory, the public pelted them — with white roses; and had the Chevalier de St. George not been a child of twelve, he would have had a fair chance of recovering his throne. The trouble was tided over; William III. died in 1702. Queen Anne came to the Crown. But the bankrupt company was not dead. Its charter was still legal, and, with borrowed money, it sent out vessels to trade with the Indies. The company had a vessel, the 'Annandale,' which was seized in the Thames, at the instance of the East India Company, and condemned for a breach of that company's privileges.

This capture awakened the sleeping fury among my fiery countrymen (1704). An English ship, connected with either the English East India Company or the rival Million Company, put into Leith Road to repair. Here was a chance; for the charter of the Scots company authorised them 'to make reprisals and to seek and take reparation of damage done by sea and land.' On the strength of this clause, which was never meant to apply to Englishmen in Scottish waters, but to foreigners of all kinds on the Spanish Main, the Scottish Admiralty took no steps. But the company had a Celtic secretary, Mr. Roderick Mackenzie, and the English Parliament, in 1695, had summoned Mr. Mackenzie before them, and asked him many questions of an impertinent and disagreeable nature. This outrageous proceeding he resented, for he was no more an English than he was a

Japanese subject. The situation of the ‘Worcester’ in Scottish waters gave Roderick his chance. His chief difficulty, as he informed his directors, was ‘to get together a sufficient number of such genteel, pretty fellows as would, of their own free accord, on a sudden advertisement, be willing to accompany me on this adventure’ (namely, the capture of the ‘Worcester’), ‘and whose dress and behaviour would not render them suspected of any uncommon design in going aboard.’ A scheme more sudden and daring than the seizure, by a few gentlemen, of a well-armed English vessel had not been executed since the bold Buccleuch forced Carlisle Castle and carried away Kinmont Willie. The day was Saturday, and Mr. Mackenzie sauntered to the Cross in the High Street, and invited genteel and pretty fellows to dine with him in the country. They were given an inkling of what was going forward, and some dropped off, like the less resolute guests in Mr. Stevenson’s adventure of the hansom cabs. When they reached Leith, Roderick found himself at the head of eleven persons, of whom ‘most be as good gentlemen, and (I must own) much prettier fellows than I pretend to be.’ They were of the same sort as Roy, Middleton, Haliburton, and Dunbar, who, fourteen years earlier, being prisoners on the Bass Rock, seized the castle, and, through three long years, held it for King James against the English navy.

The eleven chose Mr. Mackenzie as chief, and, having swords, pistols, ‘and some with bayonets, too,’ set out. Mackenzie, his servant, and three friends took a boat at Leith, with provision of wine, brandy, sugar, and lime juice; four more came, as a separate party, from Newhaven; the rest first visited an English man-of-war in the Firth, and then, in a convivial manner, boarded the ‘Worcester.’ The punch-bowls were produced, liquor was given to the sailors, while the officers of the ‘Worcester’ drank with the visitors in the cabin. Mackenzie was supposed to be a lord. All was festivity, ‘a most compleat scene of a comedy, acted to the life,’ when, as a Scottish song was being sung, each officer of the ‘Worcester’ found a pistol at his ear. The carpenter and some of the crew rushed at the loaded blunderbusses that hung in the cabin; but there were shining swords between them and the blunderbusses. By nine at night, on August 12, Mackenzie’s followers were masters of the English ship, and the hatches, gunroom, chests, and cabinets were sealed with the official seal of the Scottish African and East India Company. In a day or two the vessel lay without rudder or sails, in Bruntisland Harbour, ‘as secure as a thief in a mill.’ Mackenzie landed eight of the ship’s guns and placed them in an old fort commanding the harbour entry, manned them with gunners, and all this while an English man-of-war lay in the Firth!

For a peaceful secretary of a commercial company, with a scratch eleven picked up in the street on a Saturday afternoon, to capture a vessel with a crew of twenty-four, well accustomed to desperate deeds, was ‘a sufficient camisado or onfall.’ For three or four days and nights Mr. Mackenzie had scarcely an hour’s sleep. By the end of August he had commenced an action in the High Court of Admiralty for condemning the ‘Worcester’ and her cargo, to compensate for the damages sustained by his company through the English seizure of their ship, the ‘Annandale.’ When Mackenzie sent in his report on September 4, he added that, from ‘very odd expressions dropt now and then from some of the ship’s crew,’ he suspected that Captain Green, of the ‘Worcester,’ was ‘guilty of some very unwarrantable practices.’

The Scottish Privy Council were now formally apprised of the affair, which they cautiously handed over to the Admiralty. The Scottish company had for about three years bewailed the absence of a ship of their own, the ‘Speedy Return,’ which had never returned at all. Her skipper was a Captain Drummond, who had been very active in the Darien expedition; her surgeon was Mr. Andrew Wilkie, brother of James Wilkie, tailor and burgess of Edinburgh. The pair were most probably descendants of the Wilkie, tailor in the Canongate, who was mixed up in the odd business of Mr. Robert Oliphant, in the Gowrie conspiracy of 1600. Friends of Captain Drummond, Surgeon Wilkie, and others who had disappeared in the ‘Speedy Return,’ began to wonder whether the crew of the ‘Worcester,’ in their wanderings, had ever come across news of the missing vessel. One George Haines, of the ‘Worcester,’ hearing of a Captain Gordon, who was the terror of French privateers, said: ‘Our sloop was more terrible upon the coast of Malabar than ever Captain Gordon will be to the French.’ Mackenzie asking Haines if he had ever heard of the ‘Speedy Return,’ the missing ship, Haines replied: ‘You need not trouble your head about her, for I believe you won’t see her in haste.’ He thought that Captain Drummond had turned pirate.

Haines now fell in love with a girl at Bruntisland, aged nineteen, named Anne Seaton, and told her a number of things, which she promised to repeat to Mackenzie, but disappointed him, though she had blabbed to others. It came to be reported that Captain Green had pirated the ‘Speedy Return,’ and murdered Captain Drummond and his crew. The Privy Council, in January 1705, took the matter up. A seal, or forged copy of the seal, of the Scottish African and East India Company was found on board the ‘Worcester,’ and her captain and crew were judicially interrogated, after the manner of the French *Juge d’Instruction*.

On March 5, 1705, the Scottish Court of Admiralty began the trial of Green and his men. Charles May, surgeon of the ‘Worcester,’ and two negroes, Antonio Ferdinando, cook’s mate, and Antonio Francisco, captain’s man, were ready to give evidence against their comrades. They were accused of attacking, between February and May, 1703, off the coast of Malabar a vessel bearing a red flag, and having English or Scots aboard. They pursued her in their sloop, seized and killed the crew, and stole the goods.

Everyone in Scotland, except resolute Whigs, believed the vessel attacked to have been Captain Drummond’s ‘Speedy Return.’ But there was nothing definite to prove the fact; there was no *corpus delicti*. In fact the case was parallel to that of the Campden mystery, in which three people were hanged for killing old Mr. Harrison, who later turned up in perfect health. In Green’s, as in the Campden case, some of the accused confessed their guilt, and yet evidence later obtained tends to prove that Captain Drummond and his ship and crew were all quite safe at the date of the alleged piracy by Captain Green. None the less, it does appear that Captain Green had been pirating somebody, and perhaps he was ‘none the waur o’ a hanging,’ though, as he had an English commission to act against pirates, it was argued that, if he had been fighting at all, it was against pirates that he had been making war. Now Haines’s remark that Captain Drummond, as he heard, had turned pirate, looks very like a ‘hedge’ to be used in case the ‘Worcester’ was proved to have attacked the ‘Speedy Return.’

There was a great deal of preliminary sparring between the advocates as to the propriety of the indictment. The jury of fifteen contained five local skippers. Most of the others were traders. One of them, William Blackwood, was of a family that had been very active in the Darien affair. Captain Green had no better chance with these men than James Stewart of the Glens in face of a jury of Campbells. The first witness, Ferdinando, the black sea cook, deponed that he saw Green’s sloop take a ship under English colours, and that Green, his mate, Madder, and others, killed the crew of the captured vessel with hatchets. Ferdinando’s coat was part of the spoil, and was said to be of Scottish cloth. Charles May, surgeon of the ‘Worcester,’ being on shore, heard firing at sea, and, later, dressed a wound, a gunshot he believed, on the arm of the black cook; dressed wounds, also, of two sailors, of the ‘Worcester,’ Mackay and Cuming — Scots obviously, by their names. He found the deck of the ‘Worcester,’ when he came on board, lumbered with goods and chests. He remarked on this, and Madder, the mate, cursed him, and bade him ‘mind his plaister box.’ He added that the ‘Worcester,’ before his eyes, while he stood on shore, was towing another vessel, which, he heard, was sold to a native dealer — Coge Commodo — who told the witness that the ‘Worcester’ ‘had been fighting.’ The ‘Worcester’ sprang a leak, and sailed for five weeks to a place where she was repaired, as if she were anxious to avoid inquiries.

Antonio Francisco, Captain Green’s black servant, swore that, being chained and nailed to her forecastle, he heard the ‘Worcester’ fire six shots. Two days later a quantity of goods was brought on board (captured, it would seem, by the terrible sloop of the ‘Worcester’), and Ferdinando then told this witness about the killing of the captured crew, and showed his own wounded arm. Francisco himself lay in chains for two months, and, of course, had a grudge against Captain Green. It was proved that the ‘Worcester’ had a cipher wherein to communicate with her owners, who used great secrecy; that her cargo consisted of arms, and was of such slight value as not to justify her voyage, unless her real business was piracy. The ship was of 200 tons, twenty guns, thirty-six men, and the value of the cargo was but 1,000*l.* Really, things do not look very well for the enterprise of Captain Green! There was also found a suspicious letter to one of the crew, Reynolds, from his sister-in-law, advising him to confess, and referring to a letter of his own in which he said that some of the crew ‘had basely confessed.’ The lady’s letter and a copy of Reynolds’s, admitted by him to be correct, were before the Court.

Again, James Wilkie, tailor, had tried at Bruntisland to ‘pump’ Haines about Captain Drummond; Haines swore profane, but later said that he heard Drummond had turned pirate, and that off the coast of Malabar they had manned their sloop, lest Drummond, whom they believed to be on that coast, should attack them. Other witnesses corroborated Wilkie, and had heard Haines say that it was a wonder the ground did not open and swallow them for the wickedness ‘that had been committed during the last voyage on board of that old *Bess*.’ Some one telling Haines that the mate’s uncle had been ‘burned in oil’ for trying to burn Dutch ships at Amsterdam, ‘the said George Haines did tell the deponent that if what Captain Madder had done during his last voyage were known, he deserved as much as his uncle had met with.’ Anne Seaton, the girl of Haines’s heart, admitted that Haines had told her ‘that he knew more of Captain Drummond than he would express at that time,’ and she had heard his expressions of remorse. He had blabbed to many witnesses of a precious something hidden aboard the ‘Worcester;’ to Anne he said that he had now thrown it overboard. We shall see later what this object was. Anne was a reluctant witness. Glen, a goldsmith, had seen a seal of the Scots East India Company in the hands of Madder, the inference being that it was taken from the ‘Speedy Return.’

Sir David Dalrymple, for the prosecution, made the most he could of the evidence. The black cook’s coat, taken from the captured vessel, ‘in my judgment appears to be Scots rugg.’ He also thought it a point in favour of the cook’s veracity that he was very ill, and forced to lie down in court; in fact, the cook died suddenly on the day when Captain Green was condemned, and the

Scots had a high opinion of dying confessions. The white cook, who joined the ‘Worcester’ after the sea-fight, said that the black cook told him the whole story at that time. Why did the ‘Worcester’ sail for thirty-five days to repair her leak, which she might have done at Goa or Surat, instead of sailing some 700 leagues for the purpose? The jury found that there was ‘one clear witness to robbery, piracy, and murder,’ and accumulative corroboration.

The judges ordered fourteen hangings, to begin with those of Green, Madder, and three others on April 4. On March 16, at Edinburgh, Thomas Linsteed made an affidavit that the ‘Worcester’ left him on shore, on business, about January 1703; that fishing crews reported the fight of the sloop against a vessel unknown; they left before the fight ended; that the Dutch and Portuguese told him how the ‘Worcester’s’ men had sold a prize, and thought but little of it, ‘because it is what is ordinary on that coast,’ and that the ‘Worcester’s’ people told him to ask them no questions. On March 27 George Haines made a full confession of the murder of a captured crew, he being accessory thereto, at Sacrifice Rock, between Tellicherry and Calicut; and that he himself, after being seized by Mackenzie, threw his journal of the exciting events overboard. Now, in his previous blabbings before the trial, as we have seen, Haines had spoken several times about something on board the ‘Worcester’ which the Scots would be very glad to lay hands on, thereby indicating this journal of his; and he told Anne Seaton, as she deponed at the trial, that he had thrown the precious something overboard. In his confession of March 27 he explained what the mysterious something was. He also declared (March 28) that the victims of the piracy ‘spoke the Scots language.’ A sailor named Bruckley also made full confession. These men were reprieved, and doubtless expected to be; but Haines, all the while remorseful, I think, told the truth. The ‘Worcester’ had been guilty of piracy.

But had she pirated the Scottish ship, the ‘Speedy Return,’ Captain Drummond? As to that point, on April 5, in England, two of the crew of the ‘Worcester,’ who must somehow have escaped from Mackenzie’s raid, made affidavit that the ‘Worcester’ fought no ship during her whole voyage. This would be more satisfactory if we knew more of the witnesses. On March 21, at Portsmouth, two other English mariners made affidavit that they had been of the crew of the ‘Speedy Return;’ that she was captured by pirates, while Captain Drummond and Surgeon Wilkie were on shore, at Maritan in Madagascar; and that these two witnesses ‘went on board a Moca ship called the “Defiance,”’ escaped from her at the Mauritius, and returned to England in the ‘Raper’ galley. Of the fate of Drummond and Wilkie, left ashore in Madagascar, they naturally knew nothing. If they spoke truth, Captain Green certainly did not seize the

‘Speedy Return,’ whatever dark and bloody deeds he may have done off the coast of Malabar.

In England, as Secretary Johnstone, son of the caitiff Covenanter, Waristoun, wrote to Baillie of Jerviswoode, the Whigs made party capital out of the proceedings against Green: they said it was a Jacobite plot. I conceive that few Scottish Whigs, to be sure, marched under Roderick Mackenzie.

In Scotland the Privy Council refused Queen Anne’s demand that the execution of Green should be suspended till her pleasure was known, but they did grant a week’s respite. On April 10 a mob, partly from the country, gathered in Edinburgh; the Privy Council, between the mob and the Queen, let matters take their course. On April 11 the mob raged round the meeting-place of the Privy Council, rooms under the Parliament House, and chevied the Chancellor into a narrow close, whence he was hardly rescued. However, learning that Green was to swing after all, the mob withdrew to Leith sands, where they enjoyed the execution of an Englishman. The whole affair hastened the Union of 1707, for it was a clear case of Union or war between the two nations.

As for Drummond, many years later, on the occasion of the Porteous riot, Forbes of Culloden declared in the House of Commons that a few months after Green was hanged letters came from Captain Drummond, of the ‘Speedy Return,’ ‘and from the very ship for whose capture the unfortunate person suffered, informing their friends that they were all safe.’ But the ‘Speedy Return’ was taken by pirates, two of her crew say, off Madagascar, and burned. What was the date of the letters from the ‘Speedy Return’ to which, long afterwards, Forbes, and he alone, referred? What was the date of the capture of the ‘Speedy Return,’ at Maritan, in Madagascar? Without the dates we are no wiser.

Now comes an incidental and subsidiary mystery. In 1729 was published *Madagascar, or Robert Drury’s Journal during Fifteen Years’ Captivity on that Island, written by Himself, digested into order, and now published at the Request of his Friends*. Drury says, as we shall see, that he, a lad of fifteen, was prisoner in Madagascar from *about* 1703 to 1718, and that there he met Captain Drummond, late of the ‘Speedy Return.’ If so, Green certainly did not kill Captain Drummond. But Drury’s narrative seems to be about as authentic and historical as the so-called *Souvenirs of Madame de Créquy*. In the edition of 1890 of Drury’s book, edited by Captain Pasfield Oliver, R.A., author of *Madagascar,* the Captain throws a lurid light on Drury and his volume. Captain Pasfield Oliver first candidly produces what he thinks the best evidence for the genuineness of Drury’s story; namely a letter of the Rev. Mr. Hirst, on board H.M.S. ‘Lenox,’ off Madagascar, 1759. This gentleman praises Drury’s book as the best and most authentic, for Drury says that he was wrecked in the

‘Degrave,’ East Indiaman, and his story ‘exactly agrees, as far as it goes, with the journal kept by Mr. John Benbow,’ second mate of the ‘Degrave.’ That journal of Benbow’s was burned, in London, in 1714, but several of his friends remembered that it tallied with Drury’s narrative. But, as Drury’s narrative was certainly ‘edited,’ probably by Defoe, that master of fiction may easily have known and used Benbow’s journal. Otherwise, if Benbow’s journal contained the same references to Captain Drummond in Madagascar as Drury gives, then the question is settled: Drummond died in Madagascar after a stormy existence of some eleven years on that island. As to Drury, Captain Pasfield Oliver thinks that his editor, probably Defoe, or an imitator of Defoe, ‘faked’ the book, partly out of De Flacourt’s *Histoire de Madagascar* (1661), and a French authority adds another old French source, Dapper’s *Description de l’Afrique*. Drury was himself a pirate, his editor thinks: Defoe picked his brains, or an imitator of Defoe did so, and Defoe, or whoever was the editor, would know the story that Drummond really lost the ‘Speedy Return’ in Madagascar, and could introduce the Scottish adventurer into Drury’s romance.

We can never be absolutely certain that Captain Drummond lost his ship, but lived on as a kind of *condottiere* to a native prince in Madagascar. Between us and complete satisfactory proof a great gulf has been made by fire and water, ‘foes of old’ as the Greek poet says, which conspired to destroy the journal kept by Haines and the journal kept by Benbow. The former would have told us what piratical adventures Captain Green achieved in the ‘Worcester;’ the latter, if it spoke of Captain Drummond in Madagascar, would have proved that the captain and the ‘Speedy Return’ were not among the ‘Worcester’s’ victims. If we could be sure that Benbow’s journal corroborated Drury’s romance, we could not be sure that the editor of the romance did not borrow the facts from the journal of Benbow, and we do not know that this journal made mention of Captain Drummond, for the only valid testimony as to the captain’s appearance in Madagascar is the affidavit of Israel Phippany and Peter Freeland, at Portsmouth, March 31, 1705, and these mariners may have perjured themselves to save the lives of English seamen condemned by the Scots.

Yet, as a patriotic Scot, I have reason for believing in the English affidavit at Portsmouth. The reason is simple, but sufficient. Captain Drummond, if attacked by Captain Green, was the man to defeat that officer, make prize of his ship, and hang at the yardarm the crew which was so easily mastered by Mr. Roderick Mackenzie and eleven pretty fellows. Hence I conclude that the ‘Worcester’ really had been pirating off the coast of Malabar, but that the ship taken by Captain Green in these waters was not the ‘Speedy Return,’ but another, unknown. If so, there was no great miscarriage of justice, for the indictment against Captain Green did not accuse him of seizing the ‘Speedy Return,’ but of piracy, robbery, and murder, though the affair of the ‘Speedy Return’ was brought in to give local colour. This fact and the national excitement in Scotland probably turned the scale with the jury, who otherwise would have returned a verdict of ‘Not Proven.’ That verdict, in fact, would have been fitted to the merits of the case; but ‘there was mair tint at Shirramuir’ than when Captain Green was hanged. That Green was deeply guilty, I have inferred from the evidence. To Mr. Stephen Ponder I owe corroboration. He cites a passage from Hamilton’s *New Account of the East Indies* (1727), cha, which is crucial.

‘The unfortunate Captain Green, who was afterwards hanged in Scotland, came on board my ship at sunset, very much overtaken in drink and several of his men in the like condition (at Calicut, February 1703). He wanted to sell Hamilton some arms and ammunition, and told me that they were what was left of a large quantity that he had brought from England, but had been at Madagascar and had disposed of the rest to good advantage among the pirates. I told him that in prudence he ought to keep these as secrets lest he might be brought in trouble about them. He made but little account of my advice, and so departed. About ten in the night his chief mate Mr. Mather came on board of my ship and seemed to be very melancholy.... He burst out in tears and told me he was afraid that he was undone, that they had acted such things in their voyage that would certainly bring them to shame and punishment, if they should come to light; and he was assured that such a company of drunkards as their crew was composed of could keep no secret. I told him that I had heard at Coiloan (Quilon) that they had not acted prudently nor honestly in relation to some Moors’ ships they had visited and plundered *and in sinking a sloop with ten or twelve Europeans in her* off Coiloan. Next day I went ashore and met Captain Green and his supercargo Mr. Callant, who had sailed a voyage from Surat to Sienly with me. Before dinner-time they were both drunk, and Callant told me that he did not doubt of making the greatest voyage that ever was made from England on so small a stock as 500*l.*

‘In the evening their surgeon accosted me and asked if I wanted a surgeon. He said he wanted to stay in India, for his life was uneasy on board of his ship, that though the captain was civil enough, yet Mr. Mather had treated him with blows for asking a pertinent question of some wounded men, who were hurt in the engagement with the sloop. I heard too much to be contented with their conduct, and so I shunned their conversation for the little time I staid at Calicut.

‘Whether Captain Green and Mr. Mathew had justice impartially in their trial and sentence I know not. I have heard of as great innocents condemned to death as they were.’

The evidence of Hamilton settles the question of the guilt of Green and his crew, as regards some unfortunate vessel, or sloop. Had the ‘Speedy Return’ a sloop with her?

X

QUEEN OGLETHORPE

(*In collaboration with* Miss Alice Shield).

‘Her Oglethorpe majesty was kind, acute, resolute, and of good counsel. She gave the Prince much good advice that he was too weak to follow, and loved him with a fidelity which he returned with an ingratitude quite Royal.’

So writes Colonel Henry Esmond, describing that journey of his to Bar-le-Duc in Lorraine, whence he brought back ‘Monsieur Baptiste,’ all to win fair Beatrix Esmond. We know how ‘Monsieur Baptiste’ stole his lady-love from the glum Colonel, and ran after the maids, and drank too much wine, and came to the King’s Arms at Kensington the day after the fair (he was always ‘after the fair’), and found Argyll’s regiment in occupation, and heard King George proclaimed.

Where in the world did Thackeray pick up the materials of that brilliant picture of James VIII., gay, witty, reckless, ready to fling away three crowns for a fine pair of eyes or a neat pair of ankles? His Majesty’s enemies brought against him precisely the opposite kind of charges. There is a broad-sheet of 1716, *Hue and Cry after the Pretender*, which is either by Swift or by one of ‘the gentlemen whom,’ like Captain Bobadil, he ‘had taught to write almost or altogether as well as himself.’ As to gaiety in James, ‘you tell him it is a fine day, and he weeps, and says he was unfortunate from his mother’s womb.’ As to ladies, ‘a weakness for the sex remarked in many popular monarchs’ (as Atterbury said to Lady Castlewood), our pamphleteer tells the opposite tale. Two Highland charmers being introduced ‘to comfort him after the comfort of a man,’ James displayed ‘an incredible inhumanity to beauty and clean linen,’ merely asking them ‘whether they thought the Duke of Argyll would stand another battle?’ It is hard on a man to be stamped by history as recklessly gay and amorous, also as a perfect Mrs. Gummidge for tearful sentiment, and culpably indifferent to the smiles of beauty. James is greatly misunderstood: the romance of his youth — sword and cloak and disguise, pistol, dagger and poison, prepared for him; story of true love blighted by a humorous cast of destiny; voyages, perils, shipwrecks, dances at inns — all is forgotten or is unknown.

Meanwhile, who was her ‘Oglethorpean majesty,’ and why does the pamphleteer of 1716 talk of ‘James Stuart, *alias* Oglethorpe’? By a strange combination of his bad luck, James is called Miss Oglethorpe’s ungrateful lover by Thackeray, and Miss Oglethorpe’s brother by the pamphleteer, and by Whig slander in general. Thackeray, in fact, took Miss Oglethorpe from the letter which Bolingbroke wrote to Wyndham, after St. Germains found him out, as St. James’s had done, for a traitor. Bolingbroke merely mentions Fanny Oglethorpe as a busy intriguer. There is no evidence that she ever was at Bar-le-Duc in her life, none that she ever was ‘Queen Oglethorpe.’ We propose to tell, for the first time, the real story of this lady and her sisters.

The story centres round The Meath Home for Incurables! This excellent institution occupies Westbrook Place, an old house at Godalming, close to the railway, which passes so close as to cut off one corner of the park, and of the malodorous tanyard between the remnant of grounds and the river Wey that once washed them. On an October day, the Surrey hills standing round about in shadowy distances, the silence of two centuries is scarcely broken by the rustle of leaves dropping on their own deep carpet, and the very spirit of a lost cause dwells here, slowly dying. The house stands backed by a steep wooded hill, beyond which corn-fields ‘clothe the wold and meet the sky;’ the mansion is a grey, two-storied parallelogram flanked by square towers of only slighter elevation; their projecting bays surmounted by open-work cornices of leafy tracery in whiter stone.

The tale used to run (one has heard it vaguely in conversation) that the old house at Godalming is haunted by the ghost of Prince Charlie, and one naturally asks, ‘What is *he* doing there?’ What he was doing there will appear later.

In 1688, the year of the *Regifugium*, Westbrook Place was sold to Theophilus Oglethorpe, who had helped to drive

the Whigs
Frae Bothwell Brigs,

and, later, to rout Monmouth at Sedgemoor. This gentleman married Eleanor Wall, of an Irish family, a Catholic— ‘a cunning devil,’ says Swift. The pair had five sons and four daughters, about whom county histories and dictionaries of biography blunder in a helpless fashion. We are concerned with Anne Henrietta, born, probably, about 1680-83, Eleanor (1684), James (June 1, 1688, who died in infancy), and Frances Charlotte, Bolingbroke’s ‘Fanny Oglethorpe.’ The youngest brother, James Edward, born 1696, became the famous philanthropist, General Oglethorpe, governor of Georgia, patron of the Wesleys, and, in extreme old age, the ‘beau’ of Hannah More, and the gentleman who remembered shooting snipe on the site of Conduit Street.

After the Revolution Sir Theophilus was engaged with Sir John Fenwick, was with him when he cocked his beaver in the face of the Princess of Orange, had to fly to France, after the failure at La Hogue, and in 1693 was allowed to settle peacefully at Westbrook Place. Anne and Eleanor were left in France, where they were brought up as Catholics at St. Germains, and befriended by the exiled James and Mary of Modena. Now in 1699 Theophilus, one of the Oglethorpe boys, was sent out to his father’s old friend Mr. Pitt, Governor of Fort St. George in India, the man of the Pitt Diamond. His outfit had to be prepared in a hurry, and a young gentlewoman, Frances Shaftoe, was engaged to help with the sewing of his several dozens of linen shirts, ‘the flourishing of neckcloths and drawing of cotton stripes;’ as young gentlewomen of limited means were used to do before they discovered hospitals and journalism. This girl, who developed a political romance of her own, was of good Northumberland family, related to Sir John Fenwick and the Delavals. Her father, a merchant in Newcastle, had educated her ‘in a civil and virtuous manner,’ and she had lived there about eighteen years, behaving herself discreetly, modestly, and honestly, as nine Northumbrian justices of the peace were ready to testify under their hand. The strange story she later told of her experiences at Westbrook and afterwards cannot, therefore, be wholly dismissed as a tale trumped up for political purposes, though its most thrilling incident is so foolish a lie as to discredit the whole.

On the Saturday before Christmas 1699 (so ran her later ‘revelations,’ made in 1707) she took the coach from Godalming, obedient to instructions by letter from Sir Theophilus. A little way down the Strand he joined her in the coach, accompanied by two young ladies — friends, she was told, of Lady Oglethorpe; and for some time she knew no more of who they were and whence they came. They were very secret, appeared in no company, but made themselves useful in the pleasant, homely ways of English country life of that time: helped with the sewing, made their own bed, swept their chamber, dressed the two little girls, Mary and Fanny, and waited on each other. Presently it turned out that they were Anne and Eleanor Oglethorpe, who had been eleven years in France, at the Court of James II., where they were known as Anne and Eleanor Barkly. They had taken advantage of the peace to come secretly ‘over a long sea,’ and had waited at the house of their mother’s brother-in-law, Mr. Cray the City wine-merchant, until Parliament was up and their father could take them home for Christmas. A member of Parliament must not be compromised by the presence of Catholic daughters from St. Germains, whom it was treason even to harbour.

Fanny Shaftoe was admitted into the family, she says, on quite familiar terms, but ‘always behaved very meek and humble, ready to help any of the servants to make beds or to take care of the little boy’ (the General) ‘when his nurse was busy helping in the garden.’ Anne and Eleanor were merry, friendly girls, and chatted only too freely with Fanny Shaftoe over the sewing. She certainly heard a great deal of ‘treason’ talked. She heard how Sir Theophilus and his wife went back and forward, disguised, between England and St. Germains; how Lady Oglethorpe had taken charge of the Queen’s diamonds when she fled from Whitehall and safely returned them three years later, travelling as an old doctor-woman in a riding-hood, selling powders and plasters in a little basket. There was unseemly jubilation over the death of Queen Anne’s son, the little Duke of Gloucester, in July 1700 — though Fanny admits they were sorry at first — and somewhat partisan comparisons were drawn between him, ‘a poor, soft child who had no wit’ (he was really a very promising, spirited boy), and the little Prince of Wales, ‘who was very witty.’

To this careless chatter Fanny Shaftoe added exaggerations and backstairs gossip, and an astounding statement which lived as the feeblest lie *can* live. Anne Oglethorpe, she said, informed her that the real Prince of Wales (born June 10, 1688) had died at Windsor of convulsions when five or six weeks old; that Lady Oglethorpe hurried up to town with her little son James, born a few days before the Prince, and that the Oglethorpe baby died, or *was lost on the road*. The truth was a secret between her mother and the Queen! All they knew was that their little brother never turned up again. Anne added, confusing the story by too much detail, as all accounts of the royal fraud are confused, that the children had been sick together; that the Prince had then died, and her brother had been substituted for him.

In November 1700 Frances Shaftoe (according to her later revelations) left Westbrook: her mother had written from Newcastle to say her sister was dying. Anne and Eleanor were very sympathetic — they were really nice girls. Lady Oglethorpe was very kind, and gave her four guineas for her eleven months’ services; and she seems to have been satisfied with it as handsome remuneration. She asserts, inconsistently, that she had much ado to get away; but she never went to Newcastle. Three months later, being still in London, she was sent for to a house in the Strand, where she met Anne Oglethorpe. Anne gave her a letter from her mother, which had been kept back because Anne had expected to come up sooner to town, otherwise she would have sent it. Anne had a cold and a swelled face. She and Eleanor were going to France, and she persuaded Fanny to go with them. To make a long tale short, they shut her up in a convent lest she should blab the great secret, ‘James Stuart is really James Oglethorpe!’

In September 1701 James II. died, and Lady Oglethorpe carried to the Princess Anne the affecting letter of farewell he wrote to her, commending his family to her care. Anne and Eleanor went to England in November 1702, and from that date until Easter 1706 Fanny Shaftoe says she heard no more about them. In April 1702 Sir Theophilus died, and was buried in St. James’s, Piccadilly, where the memorial erected by his widow may be seen.

Theophilus, the heir, probably remained a while in the far East with Pitt; but there were Oglethorpes nearer home to dabble in the Scots plot of that year (1704). In June several Scottish officers — Sir George Maxwell, Captain Livingstone, and others, amounting to fifteen or sixteen, with three ladies, one of whom was Anne Oglethorpe, embarked at the Hague for Scotland. Sir George had tried in vain to procure a passport from Queen Anne’s envoy, so, though it was in war-time, they sailed without one. Harley informed by Captain Lacan, late of Galway’s Foot in Piedmont, told Lord Treasurer Godolphin, who had the party arrested on landing. The Queen, who plotted as much as anybody on behalf of her brother, was indulgent to fellow-conspirators, and, though it was proved their purpose had been ‘to raise commotions in Scotland,’ they were soon set at liberty, and the informer sent back to Holland with empty pockets.

Anne Oglethorpe, nevertheless, having crossed without a pass, lay at the mercy of the Government, but, as with Joseph in Egypt, her misfortune turned into her great opportunity. The late Mr. H. Manners, in an article in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, supposes she had been King James’s mistress before she left St. Germains. Now, see how Thackeray has misled historians! *He* makes *Fanny* Oglethorpe, James’s mistress, ‘Queen Oglethorpe,’ at Bar-le-Duc in 1714. And, resting on this evidence, Mr. Manners represents *Anne* Oglethorpe as James’s mistress at St. Germains in 1704! Anne left St. Germains before James was sixteen, and her character is blasted by the easy plan of mistaking her for her younger sister, who was no more Queen Oglethorpe than *she* was.

Poor Anne did not ‘scape calumny, perhaps deserved it. Boyer says that Godolphin and Harley quarrelled for her smiles, which beamed on Harley (Lord Oxford, Swift’s ‘Dragon’), and ‘an irreconcilable enmity’ arose. In 1713 Schutz describes Anne Oglethorpe as Oxford’s mistress, but she had troubles of her own before that date. She arrived in England, a Jacobite conspirator, in 1704. Her wit and beauty endeared her to Harley, and she probably had a foot in both camps, Queen Anne’s and King James’s.

But in 1706 strange rumours came from the North. Mrs. Shaftoe had, after five years’ silence, received letters from her daughter Fanny, the sempstress, by a secret hand, and was filling Newcastle with lamentations over trepanning, imprisonment, and compulsory conversion, with the object of making Fanny a nun. A young English priest, agent for supplying the Catholic squires of Northumberland with chaplains, was sent to France by her Catholic cousin, Mrs. Delaval, to find out the truth. The consequence of his inquiries was that Anne Oglethorpe was arrested in England, and charged before the Queen and Council with trepanning and trying to force Fanny Shaftoe to become a nun. Anne flung herself at the Queen's feet and implored mercy. She escaped being sent to Newgate, but was imprisoned in a Messenger's house to await further proceedings, and ordered to produce Fanny Shaftoe as a witness.

Eleanor Oglethorpe was in France, and rushed to the convent where Fanny Shaftoe was held captive, told her how Anne was in prison on her account, and entreated her to sign a statement that she had come to France and become a Catholic of her own free will. But Fanny refused. Her long detailed story was printed and published for the prosecution in 1707, at the moment when the Chevalier's chances in Scotland were most promising. Had he landed only with his valet, says Ker of Kersland, Scotland would have been his. Cameronians and Cavaliers alike would have risen. But the French Admiral would not put him on shore. As for Anne she was discharged, having great allies; but Fanny Shaftoe's story did its work. James Stuart, for Whig purposes, was 'James Oglethorpe,' Anne's brother. Fanny's narrative was republished in 1745, to injure Prince Charlie.

Restored to society and Harley, Anne queened it royally. If we believe old Tom Hearne, whose MSS. are in the Bodleian, Anne practically negotiated the Treaty of Utrecht. She found a French priest, whose sister was in the household of Madame de Maintenon, she wrote mysterious letters to him, he showed them to Louis XIV., and the priest was presently lurking in Miss Oglethorpe's town house. Harley visited his Egeria; she introduced the abbé; Gauthier (the abbé himself?) and Messager were appointed by France to treat. Harley insisted on the surrender of Dunkirk! Louis offered Anne Oglethorpe 2,000,000 livres if she would save Dunkirk for France. Her Oglethorpean majesty refused the gold, but did Louis's turn, on condition that he would restore King James! For all this magnanimity we have only Tom Hearne's word. Swift, for example, was not likely to reveal these romantic circumstances about the Lady and the Dragon.

Swift does not mention Anne in his letters, but being so deep in the greatest intrigues of the day and in the smallest, she was a valuable source of information to Thomas Carte, the nonjuring historian and her lifelong correspondent, when he was gathering materials for his Life of the first Duke of Ormond and his *History of England*. In 1713, Nairne, James's secretary, desires Abram (Menzies) to inquire if Mrs. *Oglethorpe* had credit with Honyton (Harley), and how far? Schutz, the Hanoverian envoy, writes to Bothmar, November 21, 1713: ‘Miss Oglethorpe, the Lord Treasurer’s mistress, said that the Pretender was to travel, and she said it on the very day the news came from Holland that the Bishop of London had declared to the plenipotentiaries who are there, that the Queen entreated their masters not to receive the Pretender in their dominions.’ She knew all the particulars of Harley’s opposition to the Duke of Ormond’s schemes for improving the army, and what the Exchequer could and could not supply to back them. She knew all about Lady Masham’s quarrel with her cousin, Lord Oxford, in 1713, over the 100,000*l.* in ten per cents which Lady Masham had expected to make out of the Quebec expedition and Assiento contract, had not his lordship so ‘disobliged her.’ Anne acted as intermediary, hunting up her friend the Duke of Ormond, with whom her mother had great influence, and fetching him to meet Lady Masham at Kensington — who told him how ill the Queen was, and how uneasy at nothing being done for her brother, the Chevalier. If Ormond would but secure Lady Masham 30,000*l.* of the 100,000*l.*, she would join with him, and he should have the modelling of the army as he pleased. Ormond also failed to oblige Lady Masham, but Bolingbroke, whom she hated, snatched his opportunity in the quarrel and got her the money; in return for which service, Lady Masham had Harley turned out of office and Bolingbroke set in his place. And then Queen Anne died.

Miss Oglethorpe also knew that Sir Thomas Hanmer and Bishop Atterbury were the two persons who sent the messenger (mentioned only as Sir C.P. in the Carte Papers) to warn Ormond to escape to France in 1715. Women seem to have managed the whole political machine in those days, as the lengthy and mysterious letters of ‘Mrs. White,’ ‘Jean Murray,’ and others in the Carte MSS. testify.

We are not much concerned with the brothers of the Oglethorpe girls, but the oldest, Theophilus, turned Jacobite. That he had transferred his allegiance and active service to King James is proved by his letters from Paris to James, and to Gualterio in 1720 and 1721. According to the second report on the Stuart Papers at Windsor, he was created a baron by James III in 1717. In 1718 he was certainly outlawed, for his younger brother, James Edward (the famous General Oglethorpe), succeeded to the Westbrook property in that year.

In July 1714 Fanny Oglethorpe, now about nineteen, turns up as an active politician. The Chevalier at Bar and his adherents in Paris, Scotland, and London, were breathlessly waiting for the death of Queen Anne, which was expected to restore him to the throne of his ancestors. Fanny had been brought up a Protestant by her mother in England, under whose auspices she had served her apprenticeship to plotting. Then she came to France, but Fanny cannot have been Thackeray’s ‘Queen Oglethorpe’ at Bar-le-Duc. In the first place, she was not there; in the second, a lady of Lorraine was reigning monarch.

With the fall of Oxford in 1714 ended Anne’s chief opportunity of serving her King. The historian therefore turns to her sister Eleanor, who had been with her in the Fanny Shaftoe affair, but remained in France. Penniless as she was, Eleanor’s beauty won the heart of the Marquis de Mézières, a great noble, a man over fifty, ugly, brave, misshapen. Theirs, none the less, was a love match, as the French Court admiringly proclaimed. ‘The frog-faced’ Marquis, the vainest of men, was one of the most courageous. Their daughters became the Princesses de Montauban and de Ligne, whose brilliant marriages caused much envy. Of their sons we shall hear later. Young Fanny Oglethorpe, a girl of twenty in 1715, resided with her sister Eleanor (Madame de Mézières), and now Bolingbroke, flying from the Tower, and become the Minister of James, grumbles at the presence of Fanny, and of Olive Trant, among the conspirators for a Restoration. Olive, the Regent’s mistress, was ‘the great wheel of the machine,’ in which Fanny ‘had her corner,’ at Saint Germains. ‘Your female teazers,’ James calls them in a letter to Bolingbroke. Not a word is said of a love affair.

How the Fifteen ended we all know. Ill-managed by Mar, perhaps betrayed by Bolingbroke, the rising collapsed. Returning to France, James dismissed Bolingbroke and retired to Avignon, thence to Urbino, and last to Rome. In 1719 he describes ‘Mrs. Oglethorpe’s letters’ as politically valueless, and full of self-justifications, and ‘old stories.’ He answers them only through his secretary; but in 1722 he consoled poor Anne by making her a Countess of Ireland. Anne’s bolt was shot, she had had her day, but the day of her fair sisters was dawning. Mr. John Law, of Lauriston *soi-disant*, had made England too hot to hold him. His great genius for financial combinations was at this time employed by him in gleek, trick-track, quadrille, whist, loo, ombre, and other pastimes of mingled luck and skill. In consequence of a quarrel about a lady, Mr. Law fought and slew Beau Wilson, that mysterious person, who, from being a poverty-stricken younger son, hanging loose on town, became in a day, no man knows how, the richest and most splendid of blades. The Beau’s secret died with him; but Law fled to France with 100,000 crowns in his valise. Here the swagger, courage, and undeniable genius of Mr. Law gained the favour of the Regent d’Orléans, the Bank and the Mississippi Scheme were floated, the Rue Quincampoix was crowded, France swam in a dream of gold, and the friends of Mr. Law, ‘coming in on the ground-floor,’ or buying stock before issue at the lowest prices, sold out at the top of the market.

Paris was full of Jacobites from Ireland and Scotland — Seaforth, Tullibardine, Campbell of Glendaruel, George Kelly (one of the Seven Men of

Moidart), Nick Wogan, gayest and bravest of Irishmen, all engaged in a pleasing plan for invading England with a handful of Irish soldiers in Spanish service. The Earl Marischal and Keith his brother (the Field-Marshal) came into Paris broken men, fleeing from Glenshiel. *They* took no Mississippi shares, but George Kelly, Fanny Oglethorpe, and Olive Trant, all *liés* with Law and Orléans, ‘plunged,’ and emerged with burdens of gold. Fanny for her share had 800,000 livres, and carried it as her dowry to the Marquis des Marches, whom she married in 1719, and so ceased conspiring. The Oglethorpe girls, for penniless exiles, had played their cards well. Fanny and Eleanor had won noble husbands. Poor Anne went back to Godalming, where — in the very darkest days of the Jacobite party, when James was a heart-broken widower, and the star of Prince Charles’s natal day shone only on the siege of Gaeta — she plotted with Thomas Carte, the historian.

The race of 1715 was passing, the race of 1745 was coming on, and touching it is to read in the brown old letters the same loyal names — Floyds, Wogans, Gorings, Trants, Dillons, Staffords, Sheridans, the Scots of course, and the French descendants of the Oglethorpe girls. Eleanor’s infants, the de Mézières family, had been growing up in beauty and honour, as was to be expected of the children of the valiant Marquis and the charming Eleanor. Their eldest daughter, Eléonore Eugénie, married Charles de Rohan, Prince de Montauban, younger brother of the Duc de Montbazon, whose wife was the daughter of the Duc de Bouillon and Princess Caroline Sobieska, and so first cousin to the sons of James III. That branch of Oglethorpes thus became connected with the royal family, which would go far towards rousing their hereditary Jacobitism when the Forty-Five cast its shadow before.

In May 1740, Madame de Mézières took it into her head to run over to England, and applied to Newcastle for a pass, through Lady Mary Herbert of Powis — a very *suspect* channel! The Minister made such particular inquiries as to the names of the servants she intended to bring, that she changed her mind and did not go. One wonders what person purposed travelling in her suite whose identity dared not stand too close scrutiny. There was a brave and eager Prince of Wales over the water, nearly twenty, who had some years ago fleshed his maiden sword with honour, and who was in secret correspondence on his own account with his father’s English supporters. Could he have had some such plan even then of putting fate to the touch? He is reported in Coxe’s *Walpole* to have been in Spain, in disguise, years before.

In 1742 Eleanor had the sorrow of losing a daughter in a tragic way. She had recently become a canoness of Povesay, a very noble foundation, indeed, in Lorraine, where the Sisters wore little black ribbons on their heads which they called ‘husbands.’ She was twenty-five, very pretty, and most irreligiously devoted to shooting and hunting. Though these chapters of noble canonesses are not by any means strict after the use of ordinary convents, there were serious expostulations made when the novice insisted upon constantly carrying a gun and shooting. She fell one day when out with her gun as usual. It went off and killed her on the spot.

Whatever Eleanor aimed at in 1740 by a journey to England, was baulked by Newcastle’s caution. In 1743 the indefatigable lady, ‘and a Scottish lord,’ submitted a scheme to Louis XV., but it was thwarted by de Noailles. Then Prince Charles rode secretly out of Rome, landed, like Napoleon, at Fréjus, and at the expedition of Dunkirk met the Earl Marischal and young Glengarry.

The Chevalier de Mézières, too, Eleanor’s son, went to Dunkirk with Saxe to embark for England. There was a great storm, and the ships went aground. Several officers and soldiers jumped into the sea, and some were drowned. The Chevalier de Mézières came riding along the shore, to hear that a dear friend was drowning. The sea was going back, but very heavy, and de Mézières rode straight into the raging waters to seek his friend. The waves went over his head and carried away his hat, but he persevered until he had seized a man. He dragged him ashore, to find it was a common soldier. He hastened back, and saved several soldiers and two or three officers. His friend, after all, had never been in danger.

The Saxe expedition never sailed, so Eugène de Mézières went to beat Hanoverians elsewhere, and was wounded at Fontenoy. Consequently he could not follow the Prince to Scotland. His mother, Eleanor, plunged into intrigue for the forward party (Prince Charlie’s party), distrusted by James at Rome. ‘She is a mad woman,’ said James. She and Carte, the historian, were working up an English rising to join the Prince’s Scottish adventure, but were baffled by James’s cautious, helpless advisers. Then came the Forty-Five. Eleanor was not subdued by Culloden: the undefeated old lady was a guest at the great dinner, with the splendid new service of plate, which the Prince gave to the Princesse de Talmond and his friends in 1748. He was braving all Europe, in his hopeless way, and refusing to leave France, in accordance with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. When he was imprisoned at Vincennes, Eleanor was threatened. Catholic as she was, she frankly declared that Prince Charles had better declare himself a Protestant, and marry a German Protestant Princess. He therefore proposed to one, a day or two before he disappeared from Avignon, in February 1749, and he later went over to London, and embraced the Anglican faith.

It was too late; but Eleanor Oglethorpe was not beaten. In October 1752 ‘the great affair’ was being incubated again. Alexander Murray, of the Elibank family, exasperated by his imprisonment for a riot at the Westminster election, had taken service with Prince Charles. He had arranged that a body of young Jacobite officers in foreign service, with four hundred Highlanders under young Glengarry, should overpower the Guards, break into St. James's Palace, and seize King George; while the Westminster mob, Murray's lambs, should create an uproar. Next day Glengarry would post north, the Highlanders would muster at the House of Touch, and Charles would appear among his beloved subjects. The very medal to commemorate the event was struck, with its motto, *Laetamini Cives*. The Prince was on the coast in readiness — nay, if we are not mistaken, the Prince was in Westbrook House at Godalming!

This we conjecture because, in that very budding time of the Elibank Plot, Newcastle suddenly discovered that the unwearied Eleanor Oglethorpe, Marquise de Mézières, was in England, — had arrived secretly, without any passport. He tracked her down at Westbrook House, that lay all desolate and deserted, the windows closed, the right-of-way through the grounds illegally shut up. General Oglethorpe after 1746 had abandoned his home, for he had been court-martialled on a charge of not attacking Cluny and Lord George Murray, when the Highlanders stood at bay, at Clifton, and defeated Cumberland's advanced-guard. The general was acquitted, but, retiring to his wife's house at Carham, he deserted Westbrook Place.

The empty house, retired in its woodlands, on the Portsmouth road, convenient for the coast, was the very place for Prince Charles to lurk in, while Murray and Glengarry cleared the way to the throne. And so, in fact, we find Eleanor Oglethorpe secretly ensconced at Westbrook Place while the plot ripened, and local tradition still shows the vault in which 'the Pretender' could take refuge if the house was searched. All this, again, coincides with the vague legend of the tall, brown-haired ghost who haunts Westbrook Place, — last home of a last hope.

The young Glengarry, as we know, carried all the tale of the plot to the English Prime Minister, while he made a merit of his share in it with James at Rome. Eleanor, too, was run to earth at Westbrook Place. She held her own gallantly. As to having no passport, she reminded Newcastle that she *had* asked for a passport twelve years ago, in 1740. She was now visiting England merely to see her sister Anne, who 'could not outlast the winter,' but who did so, none the less. Nor could Anne have been so very ill, for on arriving at Dover in October Eleanor did not hasten to Anne's sick-bed. Far from that, she first spent an agreeable week — with whom? With my Lady Westmoreland, at Mereworth, in Kent. Now, Lord Westmoreland was the head of the English Jacobites, and at Mereworth, according to authentic family tradition, Prince Charles held his last

Council on English ground. The whole plot seems delightfully transparent, and it must be remembered that in October Newcastle knew nothing of it; he only received Glengarry’s information early in November.

The letter of Madame de Mézières, with her account of her innocent proceedings, is written in French exactly like that of the Dowager Countess of Castlewood, in *Esmond*. She expressed her special pleasure in the hope of making Newcastle’s personal acquaintance. She went to Bath; she made Lady Albemarle profoundly uncomfortable about her lord’s famous mistress in Paris, and no doubt she plunged, on her return, into the plots with Prussia for a Restoration. In the Privy Council, in November 1753, her arrest was decided on. Newcastle jots down, on a paper of notes: ‘To seize Madame de Mézières with her papers. No expense to be spared to find the Pretender’s son. Sir John Gooderich to be sent after him. Lord Anson to have frigates on the Scotch and Irish coasts.’

By 1759 Eleanor was, perhaps, weary of conspiring. Her daughter, the Princesse de Ligne, was the fair patroness of that expedition which Hawke crushed in Quibéron Bay, while Charles received the news at Dunkirk.

All was ended. For seventy-two years the Oglethorpe women had used their wit and beauty, through three generations, for a lost cause. They were not more lucky, with the best intentions, than Eleanor’s grandson, the Prince de Lambesc. With hereditary courage he rescued an old woman from a burning cottage, and flung her into a duck-pond to extinguish her blazing clothes. The old woman was drowned!

Not long ago a lady of much wit, but of no occult pretensions, and wholly ignorant of the Oglethorpes, looked over Westbrook Place, then vacant, with the idea of renting it. On entering it she said, ‘I have a feeling that very interesting things have happened here’! Probably they had.

XI

THE CHEVALIER D'ÉON

The mystery of the Chevalier d'Éon (1728-1810), the question of his sex, on which so many thousand pounds were betted, is no mystery at all. The Chevalier was a man, and a man of extraordinary courage, audacity, resource, physical activity, industry, and wit. The real mystery is the problem why, at a mature age (forty-two) did d'Éon take upon him, and endure for forty years, the travesty of feminine array, which could only serve him as a source of notoriety — in short, as an advertisement? The answer probably is that, having early seized opportunity by the forelock, and having been obliged, after an extraordinary struggle, to leave his hold, he was obliged to clutch at some mode of keeping himself perpetually in the public eye. Hence, probably, his persistent assumption of feminine costume. If he could be distinguished in no other way, he could shine as a mystery; there was even lucre in the pose.

Charles d'Éon was born on October 7, 1728, near Tonnerre. His family was of *chétive noblesse*, but well protected, and provided for by 'patent places.' He was highly educated, took the degree of doctor of law, and wrote with acceptance on finance and literature. His was a studious youth, for he was as indifferent to female beauty as was Frederick the Great, and his chief amusements were fencing, of which art he was a perfect master, and society, in which his wit and gaiety made the girlish-looking lad equally welcome to men and women. All were fond of 'le petit d'Éon,' so audacious, so ambitious, and so amusing.

The Prince de Conti was his chief early patron, and it was originally in support of Conti's ambition to be King of Poland that Louis XV. began his incredibly foolish 'secret' — a system of foreign policy conducted by hidden agents behind the backs of his responsible ministers at Versailles and in the Courts of Europe. The results naturally tend to recall a Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera of diplomacy. We find magnificent ambassadors gravely trying to carry out the royal orders, and thwarted by the King's secret agents. The King seems to have been too lazy to face his ministers, and compel them to take his own line, while he was energetic enough to work like Tiberius or Philip II. of Spain at his secret Penelope's task of undoing by night the warp and woof which his ministers wove by day. In these mysterious labours of his the Comte de Broglie, later a firm friend of d’Éon, was, with Tercier, one of his main assistants.

The King thus enjoyed all the pleasures and excitements of a conspirator in his own kingdom, dealing in ciphered despatches, with the usual cant names, carried in the false bottoms of snuff-boxes, precisely as if he had been a Jacobite plotter. It was entertaining, but it was not diplomacy, and, sooner or later, Louis was certain to be ‘blackmailed’ by some underling in his service. That underling was to be d’Éon.

In 1755 Louis wished to renew relations, long interrupted, with Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, the lady whom Prince Charlie wanted to marry, and from whose offered hand the brave James Keith fled as fast as horses could carry him. Elizabeth, in 1755, was an ally of England, but was known to be French in her personal sympathies, though she was difficult of access. As a messenger, Louis chose a Scot, described by Captain Buchan Telfer as a Mackenzie, a Jesuit, calling himself the Chevalier Douglas, and a Jacobite exile. He is not to be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. A Sir James and a Sir John Douglas — if both were not the same man — were employed as political agents between the English and Scottish Jacobites in 1746, and, in 1749, between the Prince and the Landgrave of Hesse. Whatever the true name of the Douglas of Louis XV., I suspect that he was one or the other of these dim Jacobites of the Douglas clan. In June 1755 this Chevalier Douglas was sent by Louis to deal with Elizabeth. He was certainly understood by Louis to be a real Douglas, a fugitive Jacobite, and he was to use in ciphered despatches precisely the same silly sort of veiled language about the fur trade as Prince Charles’s envoys had just been using about ‘the timber trade’ with Sweden.

Douglas set forth, disguised as an intellectual British tourist, in the summer of 1755, and it is Captain Buchan Telfer’s view that d’Éon joined him, also as a political agent, in female apparel, on the road, and that, while Douglas failed and left Russia by October 1755, d’Éon remained at St. Petersburg, attired as a girl, Douglas’s niece, and acting as the *lectrice* of the Empress, whom he converted to the French alliance! This is the traditional theory, but is almost certainly erroneous. Sometimes, in his vast MSS., d’Éon declares that he went to Russia disguised in 1755. But he represents himself as then aged twenty, whereas he was really twenty-seven, and this he does in 1773, before he made up his mind to pose for life as a woman. He had a running claim against the French government for the expenses of his first journey to Russia. This voyage, in 1776, he dates in 1755, but in 1763, in an official letter, he dates his journey to Russia, of which the expenses were not repaid, in 1756. That is the true chronology. Nobody denies that he did visit Russia in 1756 attired as a male diplomatist, but few now believe that in 1755 he accompanied Douglas as that gentleman’s pleasing young niece.

MM. Homberg and Jousselin, in their recent work, declare that among d’Éon’s papers, which lay for a century in the back shop of a London bookseller, they find letters to him, from June 1756, written by Tercier, who managed the secret of Louis XV. There are no known proofs of d’Éon’s earlier presence in Russia, and in petticoats, in 1755.

He did talk later of a private letter of Louis XV., of October 4, 1763, in which the King wrote that he ‘had served him usefully in the guise of a female, and must now resume it,’ and that letter is published, but all the evidence, to which we shall return, tends to prove that this paper is an ingenious deceptive ‘interpolation.’ If the King did write it, then he was deceiving the manager of his secret policy — Tercier — for, in the note, he bids d’Éon remain in England, while he was at the same time telling Tercier that he was uneasy as to what d’Éon might do in France, when he obeyed his *public* orders to return. If, then, the royal letter of October 4, 1763, testifying to d’Éon’s feminine disguise in Russia, be genuine, Louis XV. had three strings to his bow. He had his public orders to ministers, he had his private conspiracy worked through Tercier, and he had his secret intrigue with d’Éon, of which Tercier was allowed to know nothing. This hypothesis is difficult, if not impossible, and the result is that d’Éon was not current in Russia as Douglas’s pretty French niece and as reader to the Empress Elizabeth in 1755.

In 1756, in his own character as a man and a secretary, he did work under Douglas, then on his second visit, public and successful, to gain Russia to the French alliance; for, dismissed in October 1755, Douglas came back and publicly represented France at the Russian Court in July 1756. This was, to the highest degree of probability, d’Éon’s first entrance into diplomacy, and he triumphed in his mission. He certainly made the acquaintance of the Princess Dashkoff, and she, as certainly, in 1769-1771, when on a visit to England, gave out that d’Éon was received by Elizabeth in a manner more appropriate to a woman than a man. It is not easy to ascertain precisely what the tattle of the Princess really amounted to, but d’Éon represents it so as to corroborate his tale about his residence at Elizabeth’s Court, as *lectrice*, in 1755. The evidence is of no value, being a biassed third-hand report of the Russian lady’s gossip. There is a mezzotint, published in 1788, from what professes to be a copy, by Angelica Kauffmann, of a portrait of d’Éon in female costume, at the age of twenty-five. If these attributions are correct, d’Éon was masquerading as a girl three years before he went to Russia, and, if the portrait is exact, was wearing the order of St. Louis ten years before it was conferred on him. The evidence as to this copy of an alleged portrait of d’Éon is full of confusions and anachronisms, and does not even prove that he thus travestied his sex in early life.

In Russia, when he joined Douglas there in the summer of 1756, d’Éon was a busy secretary of legation. In April 1757, he went back to Versailles bearing rich diplomatic sheaves with him, and one of those huge presents of money in gold, to Voltaire, which no longer come in the way of men of letters. While he was at Vienna, on his way back to St. Petersburg, tidings came of the battle of Prague; d’Éon hurried to Versailles with the news, and, though he broke his leg in a carriage accident, he beat the messenger whom Count Kaunitz officially despatched, by thirty-six hours. This unladylike proof of energy and endurance procured for d’Éon a gold snuff-box (Elizabeth only gave him a trumpery snuff-box in tortoiseshell), with the King’s miniature, a good deal of money, and a commission in the dragoons, for the little man’s heart was really set on a military rather than a diplomatic career. However, as diplomat he ferreted out an important secret of Russian internal treachery, and rejected a bribe of a diamond of great value. The money’s worth of the diamond was to be paid to him by his own Government, but he no more got that than he got the 10,000 livres for his travelling expenses.

Thus early was he accommodated with a grievance, and because d’Éon had not the wisdom to see that a man with grievances is a ruined man, he overthrew, later, a promising career, in the violence of his attempts to obtain redress. This was d’Éon’s bane, and the cause of the ruinous eccentricities for which he is remembered. In 1759 he ably seconded the egregious Louis XV. in upsetting the policy which de Choiseul was carrying on by the King’s orders. De Choiseul’s duty was to make the Empress mediate for peace in the Seven Years’ War. The duty of d’Éon was to secure the failure of de Choiseul, without the knowledge of the French ambassador, the Marquis de l’Hospital, of whom he was the secretary. Possessed of this pretty secret, d’Éon was a man whom Louis could not safely offend and snub, and d’Éon must therefore have thought that there could scarcely be a limit to his success in life. But he disliked Russia, and left it for good in August 1760.

He received a life pension of 2,000 livres, and was appointed aide-de-camp to the Maréchal de Broglie, commanding on the Upper Rhine. He distinguished himself, in August 1761, by a very gallant piece of service in which, he says, truly or not, he incurred the ill-will of the Comte de Guerchy. The pair were destined to ruin each other a few years later. D’Éon also declares that he led a force which ‘dislodged the Highland mountaineers in a gorge of the mountain at Einbeck.’ I know not what Highland regiment is intended, but D’Éon’s orders bear that he was to *withdraw* troops opposed to the Highlanders, and a certificate in his favour from the Duc and the Comte de Broglie does not allude to the circumstance that, instead of retreating before the plaids, he drove them back to the English camp. It may therefore be surmised that, though D'Éon often distinguished himself, and was wounded in the thigh at Ultrop, his claim of a victory over a Highland regiment is— 'an interpolation.' De Broglie writes, 'we purpose retreating. I send M. d'Éon to withdraw the Swiss and Grenadiers of Champagne, who are holding in check the Scottish Highlanders lining the wood on the crest of the mountain, whence they have caused us much annoyance.' The English outposts were driven in; but, after that was done, the French advance was checked by the plaided Gael: d'Éon did not

quell the mountaineer
As their tinchel quells the game.

Not a word is said about his triumph even in the certificate of the two de Broglies which d'Éon published in 1764.

In 1762, France and England, weary of war, began the preliminaries of peace, and d'Éon was attached as secretary of legation to the French negotiator in London, the Duc de Nivernais, who was on terms so intimate with Madame de Pompadour that she addressed him, in writing, as *petit époux*. In the language of the affections as employed by the black natives of Australia, this would have meant that de Nivernais was the recognised rival of Louis XV. in the favour of the lady; but the inference must not be carried to that length. There are different versions of a trick which d'Éon, as secretary, played on Mr. Robert Wood, author of an interesting work on Homer, and with the Jacobite *savant*, Jemmy Dawkins, the explorer of Palmyra. The story as given by Nivernais is the most intelligible account. Mr. Wood, as under secretary of state, brought to Nivernais, and read to him, a diplomatic document, but gave him no copy. D'Éon, however, opened Wood's portfolio, while he dined with Nivernais, and had the paper transcribed. To this d'Éon himself adds that he had given Wood more than his 'whack,' during dinner, of a heady wine grown in the vineyards of his native Tonnerre.

In short, the little man was so serviceable that, in the autumn of 1762, de Nivernais proposed to leave him in England, as interim Minister, after the Duc's own return to France. 'Little d'Éon is very active, very discreet, never curious or officious, neither distrustful nor a cause of distrust in others.' De Nivernais was so pleased with him, and so anxious for his promotion, that he induced the British Ministers, contrary to all precedent, to send d'Éon, instead of a British subject, to Paris with the treaty, for ratification. He then received from Louis

XV. the order of St. Louis, and, as de Nivernais was weary of England, where he had an eternal cold, and resigned, d’Éon was made minister plenipotentiary in London till the arrival of the new ambassador, de Guerchy.

Now de Guerchy, if we believe d’Éon, had shown the better part of valour in a dangerous military task, the removal of ammunition under fire, whereas d’Éon had certainly conducted the operation with courage and success. The two men were thus on terms of jealousy, if the story is true, while de Nivernais did not conceal from d’Éon that he was to be the brain of the embassy, and that de Guerchy was only a dull figure-head. D’Éon possessed letters of de Broglie and de Praslin, in which de Guerchy was spoken of with pitying contempt; in short, his despatch-boxes were magazines of dangerous diplomatic combustibles. He also succeeded in irritating de Praslin, the French minister, before returning to his new post in London, for d’Éon was a partisan of the two de Broglies, now in the disgrace of Madame de Pompadour and of Louis XV.; though the Comte de Broglie, ‘disgraced’ as he was, still managed the secret policy of the French King.

D’Éon’s position was thus full of traps. He was at odds with the future ambassador, de Guerchy, and with the minister, de Praslin; and would not have been promoted at all, had it been known to the minister that he was in correspondence with, and was taking orders from, the disgraced Comte de Broglie. But, by the fatuous system of the King, d’Éon, in fact, was doing nothing else. De Broglie, exiled from Court, was d’Éon’s real master, he did not serve de Guerchy and de Praslin, and Madame de Pompadour, who was not in the secret of her royal lover.

The King’s secret now (1763) included a scheme for the invasion of England, which d’Éon and a military agent were to organise, at the very moment when peace had been concluded. There is fairly good evidence that Prince Charles visited London in this year, no doubt with an eye to mischief. In short, the new minister plenipotentiary to St. James’s, unknown to the French Government, and to the future ambassador, de Guerchy, was to manage a scheme for the ruin of the country to which he was accredited. If ever this came out, the result would be, if not war with England, at least war between Louis XV., his minister, and Madame de Pompadour, a result which frightened Louis XV. more than any other disaster.

The importance of his position now turned d’Éon’s head, in the opinion of Horace Walpole, who, of course, had not a guess at the true nature of the situation. D’Éon, in London, entertained French visitors of eminence, and the best English society, it appears, with the splendour of a full-blown ambassador, and at whose expense? Certainly not at his own, and neither the late ambassador, de Nivernais, nor the coming ambassador, de Guerchy, a man far from wealthy, had the faintest desire to pay the bills. Angry and tactless letters, therefore, passed between d’Éon in London and de Guerchy, de Nivernais, and de Praslin in Paris. De Guerchy was dull and clumsy; d’Éon used him as the whetstone of his wit, with a reckless abandonment which proves that he was, as they say, ‘rather above himself,’ like Napoleon before the march to Moscow. London, in short, was the Moscow of little d’Éon. When de Guerchy arrived, and d’Éon was reduced to *secrétariser*, and, indeed, was ordered to return to France, and not to show himself at Court, he lost all self-control. The recall came from the minister, de Praslin, but d’Éon, as we know, though de Praslin knew it not, was secretly representing the King himself. He declares that, at this juncture (October 11, 1763), Louis XV. sent him the extraordinary private autograph letter, speaking of his previous services in female attire, and bidding him remain with his papers in England disguised as a woman. The improbability of this action by the King has already been exposed. (P, 243 *supra*.)

But when we consider the predicament of Louis, obliged to recall d’Éon publicly, while all his ruinous secrets remained in the hands of that disgraced and infuriated little man, it seems not quite impossible that he may have committed the folly of writing this letter. For the public recall says nothing about the secret papers of which d’Éon had quantities. What was to become of them, if he returned to France in disgrace? If they reached the hands of de Guerchy they meant an explosion between Louis XV. and his mistress, and his ministers. To parry the danger, then, according to d’Éon, Louis privately bade him flee disguised, with his cargo of papers, and hide in female costume. If Louis really did this (and d’Éon told the story to the father of Madame de Campan), he had three strings to his bow, as we have shown, and one string was concealed, a secret within a secret, even from Tercier. Yet what folly was so great as to be beyond the capacity of Louis?

Meanwhile d’Éon simply refused to obey the King’s public orders, and denied their authenticity. They were only signed with a *griffe*, or stamp, not by the King’s pen and hand. He would not leave London. He fought de Guerchy with every kind of arm, accused him of suborning an assassin, published private letters and his own version of the affair, fled from a charge of libel, could not be extradited (by virtue of what MM. Homberg and Jousselin call ‘the law of *Home Rule*!’), fortified his house, and went armed. Probably there really were designs to kidnap him, just as a regular plot was laid for the kidnapping of de la Motte, at Newcastle, after the affair of the Diamond Necklace. In 1752 a Marquis de Fratteau was collared by a sham marshal court officer, put on board a boat at Gravesend, and carried to the Bastille!

D’Éon, under charge of libel, lived a fugitive and cloistered existence till the man who, he says, was to have assassinated him, de Vergy, sought his alliance, and accused de Guerchy of having suborned him to murder the little daredevil. A grand jury brought in a true bill against the French ambassador, and the ambassador’s butler, accused of having drugged d’Éon, fled. But the English Government, by aid of what the Duc de Broglie calls a *noli prosequi* (*nolle* being usual), tided over a difficulty of the gravest kind. The granting of the *nolle prosequi* is denied. The ambassador was mobbed and took leave of absence, and Louis XV., through de Broglie, offered to d’Éon terms humiliating to a king. The Chevalier finally gave up the warrant for his secret mission in exchange for a pension of 12,000 livres, but he retained all other secret correspondence and plans of invasion. As for de Guerchy, he resigned (1767), and presently died of sheer annoyance, while his enemy, the Chevalier, stayed in England as London correspondent of Louis XV. He reported, in 1766, that Lord Bute was a Jacobite, and de Broglie actually took seriously the chance of restoring, by Bute’s aid, Charles III., who had just succeeded, by the death of the Old Chevalier, to ‘a kingdom not of this world.’

The death of Louis XV., in 1774, brought the folly of the secret policy to an end, but in the same year rumours about d’Éon’s dubious sex appeared in the English newspapers on the occasion of his book, *Les Loisirs du Chevalier d’Éon*, published at Amsterdam. Bets on his sex were made, and d’Éon beat some bookmakers with his stick. But he persuaded Drouet, an envoy from France, that the current stories were true, and this can only be explained, if explained at all, by his perception of the fact that, his secret employment being gone, he felt the need of an advertisement. Overtures for the return of the secret papers were again made to d’Éon, but he insisted on the restoration of his diplomatic rank, and on receiving 14,000*l.* on account of expenses. He had aimed too high, however, and was glad to come to a compromise with the famous Beaumarchais. The extraordinary bargain was struck that d’Éon, for a consideration, should yield the secret papers, and, to avoid a duel with the son of de Guerchy, and the consequent scandal, should pretend to be a woman, and wear the dress of that sex. In his new capacity he might return to France and wear the cross of the Order of St. Louis.

Beaumarchais was as thoroughly taken in as any dupe in his own comedies. In d’Éon he ‘saw a blushing spinster, a kind of Jeanne d’Arc of the eighteenth century, pining for the weapons and uniform of the martial sex, but yielding her secret, and forsaking her arms, in the interest of her King. On the other side the blushless captain of dragoons listened, with downcast eyes, to the sentimental compliments of Beaumarchais, and suffered himself, without a smile, to be compared to the Maid of Orleans,’ says the Duc de Broglie. ‘Our manners are obviously softened,’ wrote Voltaire. ‘D’Éon is a Pucelle d’Orléans who has not been burned.’ To de Broglie, d’Éon described himself as ‘the most unfortunate of unfortunate females!’ D’Éon returned to France, where he found himself but a nine days’ wonder. It was observed that this *pucelle* too obviously shaved; that in the matter of muscular development she was a little Hercules; that she ran upstairs taking four steps at a stride; that her hair, like that of Jeanne d’Arc, was *coupé en rond*, of a military shortness; and that she wore the shoes of men, with low heels, while she spoke like a grenadier! At first d’Éon had all the social advertisement which was now his one desire, but he became a nuisance, and, by his quarrels with Beaumarchais, a scandal. In drawing-room plays he acted his English adventures with the great play-writer, whose part was highly ridiculous. Now d’Éon pretended to desire to ‘take the veil’ as a nun, now to join the troops being sent to America. He was consigned to retreat in the Castle of Dijon (1779); he had become a weariness to official mankind. He withdrew (1781-85) to privacy at Tonnerre, and then returned to London in the semblance of a bediamonded old dame, who, after dinner, did not depart with the ladies. He took part in fencing matches with great success, and in 1791 his library was sold at Christie’s, with his swords and jewels. The catalogue bears the motto, from Juvenal,

Quale decus rerum, si virginis auctio fiat,

no doubt selected by the learned little man. The snuff-box of the Empress Elizabeth, a gift to the diplomatist of 1756, fetched 2*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*! The poor old boy was badly hurt at a fencing match in his sixty-eighth year, and henceforth lived retired from arms in the house of a Mrs. Cole, an object of charity. He might have risen to the highest places if discretion had been among his gifts, and his career proves the *quantula sapientia* of the French Government before the Revolution. In no other time or country could ‘the King’s Secret’ have run a course far more incredible than even the story of the Chevalier d’Éon.

XII

SAINT-GERMAIN THE DEATHLESS

Among the best brief masterpieces of fiction are Lytton’s *The Haunters and the Haunted*, and Thackeray’s *Notch on the Axe* in *Roundabout Papers*. Both deal with a mysterious being who passes through the ages, rich, powerful, always behind the scenes, coming no man knows whence, and dying, or pretending to die, obscurely — you never find authentic evidence of his decease. In other later times, at other courts, such an one reappears and runs the same course of luxury, marvel, and hidden potency.

Lytton returned to and elaborated his idea in the Margrave of *A Strange Story*, who has no ‘soul,’ and prolongs his physical and intellectual life by means of an elixir. Margrave is not bad, but he is inferior to the hero, less elaborately designed, of *The Haunters and the Haunted*. Thackeray’s tale is written in a tone of mock mysticism, but he confesses that he likes his own story, in which the strange hero, through all his many lives or reappearances, and through all the countless loves on which he fatuously plumes himself, retains a slight German-Jewish accent.

It appears to me that the historic original of these romantic characters is no other than the mysterious Comte de Saint-Germain — not, of course, the contemporary and normal French soldier and minister, of 1707-1778, who bore the same name. I have found the name, with dim allusions, in the unpublished letters and MSS. of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, and have not always been certain whether the reference was to the man of action or to the man of mystery. On the secret of the latter, the deathless one, I have no new light to throw, and only speak of him for a single reason. Aristotle assures us, in his *Poetics*, that the best known myths dramatised on the Athenian stage were known to very few of the Athenian audience. It is not impossible that the story of Saint-Germain, though it seems as familiar as the myth of Œdipus or Thyestes, may, after all, not be vividly present to the memory of every reader. The omniscient Larousse, of the *Dictionnaire Universel*, certainly did not know one very accessible fact about Saint-Germain, nor have I seen it mentioned in other versions of his legend. We read, in Larousse, ‘Saint-Germain is not heard of in France before 1750, when he established himself in Paris. No adventure had called attention to his existence; it was only known that he had moved about Europe, lived in Italy, Holland, and in England, and had borne the names of Marquis de Montferrat and of Comte de Bellamye, which he used at Venice.'

Lascelles Wraxall, again, in *Remarkable Adventures* (1863), says: 'Whatever truth there may be in Saint-Germain's travels in England and the East Indies, it is indubitable that, for from 1745 to 1755, he was a man of high position in Vienna,' while in Paris he does not appear, according to Wraxall, till 1757, having been brought from Germany by the Maréchal de Belle-Isle, whose 'old boots,' says Macallester the spy, Prince Charles freely damned, 'because they were always stuffed with projects.' Now we hear of Saint-Germain, by that name, as resident, not in Vienna, but in London, at the very moment when Prince Charles, evading Cumberland, who lay with his army at Stone, in Staffordshire, marched to Derby. Horace Walpole writes to Mann in Florence (December 9, 1745):

'We begin to take up people ... the other day they seized an odd man who goes by the name of Count Saint-Germain. He has been here these two years, and will not tell who he is, or whence, but professes that he does not go by his right name. He sings, plays on the violin wonderfully, composes, is mad, and not very sensible. He is called an Italian, a Spaniard, a Pole; a somebody that married a great fortune in Mexico, and ran away with her jewels to Constantinople; a priest, a fiddler, a vast nobleman. The Prince of Wales has had unsatiated curiosity about him, but in vain. However, nothing has been made out against him; he is released, and, what convinces me he is not a gentleman, stays here, and talks of his being taken up for a spy.'

Here is our earliest authentic note on Saint-Germain; a note omitted by his French students. He was in London from 1743 to 1745, under a name not his own, but that which he later bore at the Court of France. From the allusion to his jewels (those of a deserted Mexican bride?), it appears that he was already as rich in these treasures as he was afterwards, when his French acquaintances marvelled at them. As to his being 'mad,' Walpole may refer to Saint-Germain's way of talking as if he had lived in remote ages, and known famous people of the past.

Having caught this daylight glimpse of Saint-Germain in Walpole, having learned that in December 1745 he was arrested and examined as a possible Jacobite agent, we naturally expect to find contemporary official documents about his examination by the Government. Scores of such records exist, containing the questions put to, and the answers given by, suspected persons. But we vainly hunt through the Newcastle MSS. and the State Papers, Domestic, in the Record Office, for a trace of the examination of Saint-Germain. I am not aware that he has anywhere left his trail in official documents; he lives in more or less legendary memoirs, alone.

At what precise date Saint-Germain became an intimate of Louis XV., the Duc de Choiseul, Madame de Pompadour, and the Maréchal de Belle-Isle, one cannot ascertain. The writers of memoirs are the vaguest of mortals about dates; only one discerns that Saint-Germain was much about the French Court, and high in the favour of the King, having rooms at Chambord, during the Seven Years' War, and just before the time of the peace negotiations of 1762-1763. The art of compiling false or forged memoirs of that period was widely practised; but the memoirs of Madame du Hausset, who speaks of Saint-Germain, are authentic. She was the widow of a poor man of noble family, and was one of two *femmes de chambre* of Madame de Pompadour. Her manuscript was written, she explains, by aid of a brief diary which she kept during her term of service. One day M. Senac de Meilhan found Madame de Pompadour's brother, M. de Marigny, about to burn a packet of papers. 'It is the journal,' he said, 'of a *femme de chambre* of my sister, a good kind woman.' De Meilhan asked for the manuscript, which he later gave to Mr. Crawford, one of the Kilwinning family, in Ayrshire, who later helped in the escape of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette to Varennes, where they were captured. With the journal of Madame du Hausset were several letters to Marigny on points of historical anecdote.

Crawford published the manuscript of Madame du Hausset, which he was given by de Meilhan, and the memoirs are thus from an authentic source. The author says that Louis XV. was always kind to her, but spoke little to her, whereas Madame de Pompadour remarked, 'The King and I trust you so much that we treat you like a cat or a dog, and talk freely before you.'

As to Saint-Germain, Madame du Hausset writes: 'A man who was as amazing as a witch came often to see Madame de Pompadour. This was the Comte de Saint-Germain, who wished to make people believe that he had lived for several centuries. One day Madame said to him, while at her toilet, "What sort of man was Francis I., a king whom I could have loved?" "A good sort of fellow," said Saint-Germain; "too fiery — I could have given him a useful piece of advice, but he would not have listened." He then described, in very general terms, the beauty of Mary Stuart and La Reine Margot. "You seem to have seen them all," said Madame de Pompadour, laughing. "Sometimes," said Saint-Germain, "I amuse myself, not by making people believe, but by letting them believe, that I have lived from time immemorial." "But you do not tell us your age, and you give yourself out as very old. Madame de Gergy, who was wife of the French ambassador at Venice fifty years ago, I think, says that she knew you there, and that you are not changed in the least.” “It is true, madame, that I knew Madame de Gergy long ago.” “But according to her story you must now be over a century old.” “It may be so, but I admit that even more possibly the respected lady is in her dotage.”’

At this time Saint-Germain, says Madame du Hausset, looked about fifty, was neither thin nor stout, seemed clever, and dressed simply, as a rule, but in good taste. Say that the date was 1760, Saint-Germain looked fifty; but he had looked the same age, according to Madame de Gergy, at Venice, fifty years earlier, in 1710. We see how pleasantly he left Madame de Pompadour in doubt on that point.

He pretended to have the secret of removing flaws from diamonds. The King showed him a stone valued at 6,000 francs — without a flaw it would have been worth 10,000. Saint-Germain said that he could remove the flaw in a month, and in a month he brought back the diamond — flawless. The King sent it, without any comment, to his jeweller, who gave 9,600 francs for the stone, but the King returned the money, and kept the gem as a curiosity. Probably it was not the original stone, but another cut in the same fashion, Saint-Germain sacrificing 3,000 or 4,000 francs to his practical joke. He also said that he could increase the size of pearls, which he could have proved very easily — in the same manner. He would not oblige Madame de Pompadour by giving the King an elixir of life: ‘I should be mad if I gave the King a drug.’ There seems to be a reference to this desire of Madame de Pompadour in an unlikely place, a letter of Pickle the Spy to Mr. Vaughn (1754)! This conversation Madame du Hausset wrote down on the day of its occurrence.

Both Louis XV. and Madame de Pompadour treated Saint-Germain as a person of consequence. ‘He is a quack, for he says he has an elixir,’ said Dr. Quesnay, with medical scepticism. ‘Moreover, our master, the King, is obstinate; he sometimes speaks of Saint-Germain as a person of illustrious birth.’

The age was sceptical, unscientific, and, by reaction, credulous. The *philosophes*, Hume, Voltaire, and others, were exposing, like an ingenious American gentleman, ‘the mistakes of Moses.’ The Earl Marischal told Hume that life had been chemically produced in a laboratory, so what becomes of Creation? Prince Charles, hidden in a convent, was being tutored by *Mlle.* Luci in the sensational philosophy of Locke, ‘nothing in the intellect which does not come through the senses’ — a queer theme for a man of the sword to study. But, thirty years earlier, the Regent d’Orléans had made crystal-gazing fashionable, and stories of ghosts and second-sight in the highest circles were popular. Mesmer had not yet appeared, to give a fresh start to the old savage practice of hypnotism; Cagliostro was not yet on the scene with his free-masonry of the ancient Egyptian school. But people were already in extremes of doubt and of belief; there might be something in the elixir of life and in the philosopher’s stone; it might be possible to make precious stones chemically, and Saint-Germain, who seemed to be over a century old at least, might have all these secrets.

Whence came his wealth in precious stones, people asked, unless from some mysterious knowledge, or some equally mysterious and illustrious birth?

He showed Madame de Pompadour a little box full of rubies, topazes, and diamonds. Madame de Pompadour called Madame du Hausset to look at them; she was dazzled, but sceptical, and made a sign to show that she thought them paste. The Count then exhibited a superb ruby, tossing aside contemptuously a cross covered with gems. ‘That is not so contemptible,’ said Madame du Hausset, hanging it round her neck. The Count begged her to keep the jewel; she refused, and Madame de Pompadour backed her refusal. But Saint-Germain insisted, and Madame de Pompadour, thinking that the cross might be worth forty louis, made a sign to Madame du Hausset that she should accept. She did, and the jewel was valued at 1,500 francs — which hardly proves that the other large jewels were genuine, though Von Gleichen believed that they were, and thought the Count’s cabinet of old masters very valuable.

The fingers, the watch, the snuff-box, the shoe buckles, the garter studs, the solitaires of the Count, on high days, all burned with diamonds and rubies, which were estimated, one day, at 200,000 francs. His wealth did not come from cards or swindling — no such charges are ever hinted at; he did not sell elixirs, nor prophecies, nor initiations. His habits do not seem to have been extravagant. One might regard him as a clever eccentric person, the unacknowledged child, perhaps, of some noble, who had put his capital mainly into precious stones. But Louis XV. treated him as a serious personage, and probably knew, or thought he knew, the secret of his birth. People held that he was a bastard of a king of Portugal, says Madame du Hausset. Perhaps the most ingenious and plausible theory of the birth of Saint-Germain makes him the natural son, not of a king of Portugal, but of a queen of Spain. The evidence is not evidence, but a series of surmises. Saint-Germain, on this theory, ‘wrop his buth up in a mistry’ (like that of Charles James Fitzjames de la Pluche), out of regard for the character of his royal mamma. I believe this about as much as I believe that a certain Rev. Mr. Douglas, an obstreperous Covenanting minister, was a descendant of the captive Mary Stuart. However, Saint-Germain is said, like Kaspar Hauser, to have murmured of dim memories of his infancy, of diversions on magnificent terraces, and of palaces glowing beneath an azure sky. This is reported by Von

Gleichen, who knew him very well, but thought him rather a quack. Possibly he meant to convey the idea that he was Moses, and that he had dwelt in the palaces of the Ramessids. The grave of the prophet was never known, and Saint-Germain may have insinuated that he began a new avatar in a cleft of Mount Pisgah; he was capable of it.

However, a less wild surmise avers that, in 1763 the secrets of his birth and the source of his opulence were known in Holland. The authority is the ‘Memoirs’ of Grosley (1813). Grosley was an archæologist of Troyes; he had travelled in Italy, and written an account of his travels; he also visited Holland and England, and later, from a Dutchman, he picked up his information about Saint-Germain. Grosley was a Fellow of our Royal Society, and I greatly revere the authority of a F.R.S. His later years were occupied in the compilation of his Memoirs, including an account of what he did and heard in Holland, and he died in 1785. According to Grosley’s account of what the Dutchman knew, Saint-Germain was the son of a princess who fled (obviously from Spain) to Bayonne, and of a Portuguese Jew dwelling in Bordeaux.

What fairy and fugitive princess can this be, whom not in vain the ardent Hebrew wooed? She was, she must have been, as Grosley saw, the heroine of Victor Hugo’s *Ruy Blas*. The unhappy Charles II. of Spain, a kind of ‘mammet’ (as the English called the Richard II. who appeared up in Islay, having escaped from Pomfret Castle), had for his first wife a daughter of Henrietta, the favourite sister of our Charles II. This childless bride, after some ghostly years of matrimony, after being exorcised in disgusting circumstances, died in February 1689. In May 1690 a new bride, Marie de Neubourg, was brought to the grisly side of the crowned mammet of Spain. She, too, failed to prevent the wars of the Spanish Succession by giving an heir to the Crown of Spain. Scandalous chronicles aver that Marie was chosen as Queen of Spain for the levity of her character, and that the Crown was expected, as in the Pictish monarchy, to descend on the female side; the father of the prince might be anybody. What was needed was simply a son of the *Queen* of Spain. She had, while Queen, no son, as far as is ascertained, but she had a favourite, a Count Andanero, whom she made minister of finance. ‘He was not a born Count,’ he was a financier, this favourite of the Queen of Spain. That lady did go to live in Bayonne in 1706, six years after the death of Charles II., her husband. The hypothesis is, then, that Saint-Germain was the son of this ex-Queen of Spain, and of the financial Count, Andanero, a man, ‘not born in the sphere of Counts,’ and easily transformed by tradition into a Jewish banker of Bordeaux. The Duc de Choiseul, who disliked the intimacy of Louis XV. and of the Court with Saint-Germain, said that the Count was ‘the son of a Portuguese Jew, *who deceives the*

Court. It is strange that the King is so often allowed to be almost alone with this man, though, when he goes out, he is surrounded by guards, as if he feared assassins everywhere.’ This anecdote is from the ‘Memoirs’ of Gleichen, who had seen a great deal of the world. He died in 1807.

It seems a fair inference that the Duc de Choiseul knew what the Dutch bankers knew, the story of the Count’s being a child of a princess retired to Bayonne — namely, the ex-Queen of Spain — and of a Portuguese-Hebrew financier. De Choiseul was ready to accept the Jewish father, but thought that, in the matter of the royal mother, Saint-Germain ‘deceived the Court.’

A queen of Spain might have carried off any quantity of the diamonds of Brazil. The presents of diamonds from her almost idiotic lord must have been among the few comforts of her situation in a Court overridden by etiquette. The reader of Madame d’Aulnoy’s contemporary account of the Court of Spain knows what a dreadful dungeon it was. Again, if born at Bayonne about 1706, the Count would naturally seem to be about fifty in 1760. The purity with which he spoke German, and his familiarity with German princely Courts — where I do not remember that Barry Lyndon ever met him — are easily accounted for if he had a royal German to his mother. But, alas! if he was the son of a Hebrew financier, Portuguese or Alsatian (as some said), he was likely, whoever his mother may have been, to know German, and to be fond of precious stones. That Oriental taste notoriously abides in the hearts of the Chosen People.

Nay, never shague your gory locks at me,
Dou canst not say I did it.

quotes Pinto, the hero of Thackeray’s *Notch on the Axe*. ‘He pronounced it, by the way, I *dit* it, by which I *know* that Pinto was a German,’ says Thackeray. I make little doubt but that Saint-Germain, too, was a German, whether by the mother’s side, and of princely blood, or quite the reverse.

Grosley mixes Saint-Germain up with a lady as mysterious as himself, who also lived in Holland, on wealth of an unknown source, and Grosley inclines to think that the Count found his way into a French prison, where he was treated with extraordinary respect.

Von Gleichen, on the other hand, shows the Count making love to a daughter of Madame Lambert, and lodging in the house of the mother. Here Von Gleichen met the man of mystery and became rather intimate with him. Von Gleichen deemed him very much older than he looked, but did not believe in his elixir.

In any case, he was not a cardsharper, a swindler, a professional medium, or a spy. He passed many evenings almost alone with Louis XV., who, where men were concerned, liked them to be of good family (about ladies he was much less exclusive). The Count had a grand manner; he treated some great personages in a cavalier way, as if he were at least their equal. On the whole, if not really the son of a princess, he probably persuaded Louis XV. that he did come of that blue blood, and the King would have every access to authentic information. Horace Walpole's reasons for thinking Saint-Germain 'not a gentleman' scarcely seem convincing.

The Duc de Choiseul did not like the fashionable Saint-Germain. He thought him a humbug, even when the doings of the deathless one were perfectly harmless. As far as is known, his recipe for health consisted in drinking a horrible mixture called 'senna tea' — which was administered to small boys when I was a small boy — and in not drinking anything at his meals. Many people still observe this regimen, in the interest, it is said, of their figures. Saint-Germain used to come to the house of de Choiseul, but one day, when Von Gleichen was present, the minister lost his temper with his wife. He observed that she took no wine at dinner, and told her she had learned that habit of abstinence from Saint-Germain; that *he* might do as he pleased, 'but you, madame, whose health is precious to me, I forbid to imitate the regimen of such a dubious character.' Gleichen, who tells the anecdote, says that he was present when de Choiseul thus lost his temper with his wife. The dislike of de Choiseul had a mournful effect on the career of Saint-Germain.

In discussing the strange story of the Chevalier d'Éon, we have seen that Louis XV. amused himself by carrying on a secret scheme of fantastic diplomacy through subordinate agents, behind the backs and without the knowledge of his responsible ministers. The Duc de Choiseul, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, was excluded, it seems, from all knowledge of these double intrigues, and the Maréchal de Belle-Isle, Minister of War, was obviously kept in the dark, as was Madame de Pompadour. Now it is stated by Von Gleichen that the Maréchal de Belle-Isle, from the War Office, started a *new* secret diplomacy behind the back of de Choiseul, at the Foreign Office. The King and Madame de Pompadour (who was not initiated into the general scheme of the King's secret) were both acquainted with what de Choiseul was not to know — namely, Belle-Isle's plan for secretly making peace through the mediation, or management, at all events, of Holland. All this must have been prior to the death of the Maréchal de Belle-Isle in 1761; and probably de Broglie, who managed the regular old secret policy of Louis XV., knew nothing about this new clandestine adventure; at all events, the late Duc de Broglie says nothing about it in his book *The King's Secret*.

The story, as given by Von Gleichen, goes on to say that Saint-Germain offered to conduct the intrigue at the Hague. As Louis XV. certainly allowed that maidenly captain of dragoons, d’Éon, to manage his hidden policy in London, it is not at all improbable that he really entrusted this fresh cabal in Holland to Saint-Germain, whom he admitted to great intimacy. To the Hague went Saint-Germain, diamonds, rubies, senna tea, and all, and began to diplomatise with the Dutch. But the regular French minister at the Hague, d’Affry, found out what was going on behind his back — found it out either because he was sharper than other ambassadors, or because a personage so extraordinary as Saint-Germain was certain to be very closely watched, or because the Dutch did not take to the Undying One, and told d’Affry what he was doing. D’Affry wrote to de Choiseul. An immortal but dubious personage, he said, was treating, in the interests of France, for peace, which it was d’Affry’s business to do if the thing was to be done at all. Choiseul replied in a rage by the same courier. Saint-Germain, he said, must be extradited, bound hand and foot, and sent to the Bastille. Choiseul thought that he might practise his regimen and drink his senna tea, to the advantage of public affairs, within those venerable walls. Then the angry minister went to the King, told him what orders he had given, and said that, of course, in a case of this kind it was superfluous to inquire as to the royal pleasure. Louis XV. was caught; so was the Maréchal de Belle-Isle. They blushed and were silent.

It must be remembered that this report of a private incident could only come to the narrator, Von Gleichen, from de Choiseul, with whom he professes to have been intimate. The King and the Maréchal de Belle-Isle would not tell the story of their own discomfiture. It is not very likely that de Choiseul himself would blab. However, the anecdote avers that the King and the Minister for War thought it best to say nothing, and the demand for Saint-Germain’s extradition was presented at the Hague. But the Dutch were not fond of giving up political offenders. They let Saint-Germain have a hint; he slipped over to London, and a London paper published a kind of veiled interview with him in June 1760.

His name, we read, when announced after his death, will astonish the world more than all the marvels of his life. He has been in England already (1743-17 — ?); he is a great unknown. Nobody can accuse him of anything dishonest or dishonourable. When he was here before we were all mad about music, and so he enchanted us with his violin. But Italy knows him as an expert in the plastic arts, and Germany admires in him a master in chemical science. In France, where he was supposed to possess the secret of the transmutation of metals, the police for two years sought and failed to find any normal source of his opulence. A lady of forty-five once swallowed a whole bottle of his elixir. Nobody recognised her, for she had become a girl of sixteen without observing the transformation!

Saint-Germain is said to have remained in London but for a short period. Horace Walpole does not speak of him again, which is odd, but probably the Count did not again go into society. Our information, mainly from Von Gleichen, becomes very misty, a thing of surmises, really worthless. The Count is credited with a great part in the palace conspiracies of St. Petersburg; he lived at Berlin, and, under the name of Tzarogy, at the Court of the Margrave of Anspach. Thence he went, they say, to Italy, and then north to the Landgrave, Charles of Hesse, who dabbled in alchemy. Here he is said to have died about 1780-85, leaving his papers to the Landgrave; but all is very vague after he disappeared from Paris in 1760. When next I meet Saint-Germain he is again at Paris, again mysteriously rich, again he rather disappears than dies, he calls himself Major Fraser, and the date is in the last years of Louis Philippe. My authority may be cavilled at; it is that of the late ingenious Mr. Van Damme, who describes Major Fraser in a book on the characters of the Second Empire. He does not seem to have heard of Saint-Germain, whom he does not mention.

Major Fraser, ‘in spite of his English (*sic*) name, was decidedly not English, though he spoke the language.’ He was (like Saint-Germain) ‘one of the best dressed men of the period.... He lived alone, and never alluded to his parentage. He was always flush of money, though the sources of his income were a mystery to every one.’ The French police vainly sought to detect the origin of Saint-Germain’s supplies, opening his letters at the post-office. Major Fraser’s knowledge of every civilised country at every period was marvellous, though he had very few books. ‘His memory was something prodigious.... Strange to say, he used often to hint that his was no mere book knowledge. ‘“Of course, it is perfectly ridiculous,”’ he remarked, with a strange smile, ‘“but every now and then I feel as if this did not come to me from reading, but from personal experience. At times I become almost convinced that I lived with Nero, that I knew Dante personally, and so forth.”’ At the major’s death not a letter was found giving a clue to his antecedents, and no money was discovered. *Did* he die? As in the case of Saint-Germain, no date is given. The author had an idea that the major was ‘an illegitimate son of some exalted person’ of the period of Charles IV. and Ferdinand VII. of Spain.

The author does not mention Saint-Germain, and may never have heard of him. If his account of Major Fraser is not mere romance, in that warrior we have the undying friend of Louis XV. and Madame de Pompadour. He had drunk at Medmenham with Jack Wilkes; as Riccio he had sung duets with the fairest of unhappy queens; he had extracted from Blanche de Béchamel the secret of Goby de Mouchy. As Pinto, he told much of his secret history to Mr. Thackeray, who says: ‘I am rather sorry to lose him after three little bits of *Roundabout Papers*.’

Did Saint-Germain really die in a palace of Prince Charles of Hesse about 1780-85? Did he, on the other hand, escape from the French prison where Grosley thought he saw him, during the French Revolution? Was he known to Lord Lytton about 1860? Was he then Major Fraser? Is he the mysterious Muscovite adviser of the Dalai Lama? Who knows? He is a will-o’-the-wisp of the memoir-writers of the eighteenth century. Whenever you think you have a chance of finding him in good authentic State papers, he gives you the slip; and if his existence were not vouched for by Horace Walpole, I should incline to deem of him as Betsy Prig thought of Mrs. Harris.

Note. — Since the publication of these essays I have learned, through the courtesy of a Polish nobleman, that there was nothing mysterious in the origin and adventures of the Major Fraser mentioned in p-276. He was of the Saltoun family, and played a part in the civil wars of Spain during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Major Fraser was known, in Paris, to the father of my Polish correspondent.

XIII

THE MYSTERY OF THE KIRKS

No historical problem has proved more perplexing to Englishmen than the nature of the differences between the various Kirks in Scotland. The Southron found that, whether he worshipped in a church of the Established Kirk (‘The Auld Kirk’), of the Free Church, or of the United Presbyterian Church (the U.P.’s), it was all the same thing. The nature of the service was exactly similar, though sometimes the congregation stood at prayers, and sat when it sang; sometimes stood when it sang and knelt at prayer. Not one of the Kirks used a prescribed liturgy. I have been in a Free Kirk which had no pulpit; the pastor stood on a kind of raised platform, like a lecturer in a lecture-room, but that practice is unessential. The Kirks, if I mistake not, have different collections of hymns, which, till recent years, were contemned as ‘things of human invention,’ and therefore ‘idolatrous.’ But hymns are now in use, as also are organs, or harmoniums, or other musical instruments. Thus the faces of the Kirks are similar and sisterly:

Facies non omnibus una
Nec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum.

What, then, the Southron used to ask, *is* the difference between the Free Church, the Established Church, and the United Presbyterian Church? If the Southron put the question to a Scottish friend, the odds were that the Scottish friend could not answer. He might be a member of the Scottish ‘Episcopal’ community, and as ignorant as any Anglican. Or he might not have made these profound studies in Scottish history, which throw glimmerings of light on this obscure subject.

Indeed, the whole aspect of the mystery has shifted, of late, like the colours in a kaleidoscope. The more conspicuous hues are no longer ‘Auld Kirk,’ ‘Free Kirk,’ and ‘U.P.’s,’ but ‘Auld Kirk,’ ‘Free Kirk,’ and ‘United Free Kirk.’ The United Free Kirk was composed in 1900 of the old ‘United Presbyterians’ (as old as 1847), with the overwhelming majority of the old Free Kirk, while the Free Kirk, of the present moment, consists of a tiny minority of the old Free

Kirk, which declined to join the recent union. By a judgment (one may well call it a ‘judgment’) of the House of Lords (August 1, 1904), the Free Kirk, commonly called ‘The Wee Frees,’ now possesses the wealth that was the old Free Kirk’s before, in 1900, it united with the United Presbyterians, and became the United Free Church. It is to be hoped that common sense will discover some ‘outgait,’ or issue, from this distressing imbroglio. In the words which Mr. R.L. Stevenson, then a sage of twenty-four, penned in 1874, we may say ‘Those who are at all open to a feeling of national disgrace look forward eagerly to such a possibility; they have been witnesses already too long to the strife that has divided this small corner of Christendom.’ The eternal schisms of the Kirk, said R.L.S., exhibit ‘something pitiful for the pitiful man, but bitterly humorous for others.’

The humour of the present situation is only too manifest. Two generations ago about half of the ministers of the Kirk of Scotland left their manses and pleasant glebes for the sake of certain ideas. Of these ideas they abandoned some, or left them in suspense, a few years since, and, as a result, they have lost, if only for the moment, their manses, stipends, colleges, and pleasant glebes.

Why should all these things be so? The answer can only be found in the history — and a history both sad and bitterly humorous it is — of the Reformation in Scotland. When John Knox died, on November 24, 1572, a decent burgess of Edinburgh wrote in his Diary, ‘John Knox, minister, deceased, who had, as was alleged, the most part of the blame of all the sorrows of Scotland, since the slaughter of the late Cardinal,’ Beaton, murdered at St. Andrews in 1546. ‘The sorrows of Scotland’ had endured when Knox died for but twenty-six years. Since his death, 332 years have gone by, and the present sorrows of the United Free Kirk are the direct, though distant, result of some of the ideas of John Knox.

The whole trouble springs from his peculiar notions, and the notions of his followers, about the relations between Church and State. In 1843, half the ministers of the Established Kirk in Scotland, or more, left the Kirk, and went into the wilderness for what they believed to be the ideal of Knox. In 1904 they have again a prospect of a similar exodus, because they are no longer rigid adherents of the very same ideal! A tiny minority of some twenty-seven ministers clings to what it considers to be the Knoxian ideal, and is rewarded by all the wealth bestowed on the Free Kirk by pious benefactors during sixty years.

The quarrel, for 344 years (1560-1904), has been, we know, about the relations of Church and State. The disruption of 1843, the departure of the Free Kirk out of the Established Kirk, arose thus, according to Lord Macnaghten, who gave one of the two opinions in favour of the United Free Kirk’s claim to the possessions held by the Free Kirk before its union, in 1900, with the United Presbyterians. Before 1843, there were, says the sympathetic judge, two parties in the Established Church — the 'Moderates' and the 'Evangelicals' (also called 'The Wild Men', 'the Highland Host' or the 'High Flyers'). The Evangelicals became the majority and 'they carried matters with a high hand. They passed Acts in the Assembly ... altogether beyond the competence of a Church established by law.... The State refused to admit their claims. The strong arm of the law restrained their extravagancies. Still they maintained that their proceedings were justified, and required by the doctrine of the Headship of Christ ... to which they attached peculiar and extraordinary significance.'

Now the State, in 1838-1843, could not and would not permit these 'extravagancies' in a State-paid Church. The Evangelical party therefore seceded, maintaining, as one of their leaders said, that 'we are still the Church of Scotland, the only Church that deserves the name, the only Church that can be known and recognised by the maintaining of those principles to which the Church of our fathers was true when she was on the mountain and on the field, when she was under persecution, when she was an outcast from the world.'

Thus the Free Kirk was *the* Kirk, and the Established Kirk was heretical, was what Knox would have called 'ane rottin Laodicean.' Now the fact is that the Church of Scotland had been, since August 1560, a Kirk established by law (or by what was said to be a legal Parliament), yet had never, perhaps, for an hour attained its own full ideal relation to the State; had never been granted its entire claims, but only so much or so little of these as the political situation compelled the State to concede, or enabled it to withdraw. There had always been members of the Kirk who claimed all that the Free Kirk claimed in 1843; but they never got quite as much as they asked; they often got much less than they wanted; and the full sum of their desires could be granted by no State to a State-paid Church. Entire independence could be obtained only by cutting the Church adrift from the State. The Free Kirk, then, did cut themselves adrift, but they kept on maintaining that they were *the* Church of Scotland, and that the State *ought* in duty to establish and maintain *them,* while granting them absolute independence.

The position was stated thus, in 1851, by an Act and Declaration of the Free Kirk's Assembly: 'She holds still, *and through God's grace ever will hold*, that it is the duty of civil rulers to recognise the truth of God according to His word, and to promote and support the Kingdom of Christ without assuming any jurisdiction in it, or any power over it....'

The State, in fact, if we may speak carnally, ought to pay the piper, but must not presume to call the tune.

Now we touch the skirt of the mystery, what was the difference between the

Free Kirk and the United Presbyterians, who, since 1900, have been blended with that body? The difference was that the Free Kirk held it to be the duty of the State to establish *her*, and leave her perfect independence; while the United Presbyterians maintained the absolutely opposite opinion — namely, that the State cannot, and must not, establish any Church, or pay any Church out of the national resources. When the two Kirks united, in 1900, then, the Free Kirk either abandoned the doctrine of which, in 1851, she said that 'she holds it still, and through God's grace ever will hold it,' or she regarded it as a mere pious opinion, which did not prevent her from coalescing with a Kirk of contradictory ideas. The tiny minority — the Wee Frees, the Free Kirk of to-day — would not accept this compromise, 'hence these tears,' to leave differences in purely metaphysical theology out of view.

Now the root of all the trouble, all the schisms and sufferings of more than three centuries, lies, as we have said, in some of the ideas of John Knox, and one asks, of what Kirk would John Knox be, if he were alive in the present state of affairs? I venture to think that the venerable Reformer would be found in the ranks of the Established Kirk, 'the Auld Kirk.' He would not have gone out into the wilderness in 1843, and he would most certainly have opposed the ideas of the United Presbyterians. This theory may surprise at a first glance, but it has been reached after many hours of earnest consideration.

Knox's ideas, as far as he ever reasoned them out, reposed on this impregnable rock, namely that Calvinism, as held by himself, was an absolutely certain thing in every detail. If the State or 'the civil magistrate,' as he put the case, entirely agreed with Knox, then Knox was delighted that the State should regulate religion. The magistrate was to put down Catholicism, and other aberrations from the truth as it was in John Knox, with every available engine of the law, corporal punishment, prison, exile, and death. If the State was ready and willing to do all this, then the State was to be implicitly obeyed in matters of religion, and the power in its hands was God-given — in fact, the State was the secular aspect of the Church. Looking at the State in this ideal aspect, Knox writes about the obedience due to the magistrate in matters religious, after the manner of what, in this country, would be called the fiercest 'Erastianism.' The State 'rules the roast' in all matters of religion and may do what Laud and Charles I. perished in attempting, may alter forms of worship — always provided that the State absolutely agrees with the Kirk.

Thus, under Edward VI., Knox would have desired the secular power in England, the civil magistrate, to forbid people to kneel at the celebration of the Sacrament. *That* was entirely within the competence of the State, simply and solely because Knox desired that people should *not* kneel. But when, long after

Knox’s death, the civil magistrate insisted, in Scotland, that people should kneel, the upholders of Knox’s ideas denied that the magistrate (James VI.) had any right to issue such an order, and they refused to obey while remaining within the Established Church. They did not ‘disrupt,’ like the Free Church; they simply acted as they pleased, and denounced their obedient brethren as no ‘lawful ministers.’ The end of it all was that they stirred up the Civil War, in which the first shot was fired by the legendary Jenny Geddes, throwing her stool at the reader in St. Giles’s. Thus we see that the State was to be obeyed in matters of religion, when the State did the bidding of the Kirk, and not otherwise. When first employed as a ‘licensed preacher,’ and agent of the State in England, Knox accepted just as much of the State’s liturgy as he pleased; the liturgy ordered the people to kneel, Knox and his Berwick congregation disobeyed. With equal freedom, he and the other royal chaplains, at Easter, preaching before the King, denounced his ministers, Northumberland and the rest. Knox spoke of them in his sermon as Judas, Shebna, and some other scriptural malignants. Later he said that he repented having put things so mildly; he ought to have called the ministers by their names, not veiled things in a hint. Now we cannot easily conceive a chaplain of her late Majesty, in a sermon preached before her, denouncing the Chancellor of the Exchequer, say Mr. Gladstone, as ‘Judas.’ Yet Knox, a licensed preacher of a State Church, indulged his ‘spiritual independence’ to that extent, and took shame to himself that he had not gone further.

Obviously, if this is ‘Erastianism,’ it is of an unusual kind. The idea of Knox is that in a Catholic State the ruler is not to be obeyed in religious matters by the true believers; sometimes Knox wrote that the Catholic ruler ought to be met by ‘passive resistance;’ sometimes that he ought to be shot at sight. He stated these diverse doctrines in the course of eighteen months. In a Protestant country, the Catholics must obey the Protestant ruler, or take their chances of prison, exile, fire and death. The Protestant ruler, in a Protestant State, is to be obeyed, in spiritual matters, by Protestants, just as far as the Kirk may happen to approve of his proceedings, or even further, in practice, if there is no chance of successful resistance.

We may take it that Knox, if he had been alive and retained his old ideas in 1843, would not have gone out of the Established Church with the Free Church, because, in his time, he actually did submit to many State regulations of which he did not approve. For example, he certainly did not approve of bishops, and had no bishops in the Kirk as established on his model in 1560. But, twelve years later, bishops were reintroduced by the State, in the person of the Regent Morton, a ruffian, and Knox did not retire to ‘the mountain and the fields,’ but made the most practical efforts to get the best terms possible for the Kirk. He was old and outworn, and he remained in the Established Kirk, and advised no man to leave it. It was his theory, again, as it was that of the Free Kirk, that there should be no ‘patronage,’ no presentation of ministers to cures by the patron. The congregations were to choose and ‘call’ any properly qualified person, at their own pleasure, as they do now in all the Kirks, including (since 1874) the Established Church. But the State, in Knox’s lifetime, overrode this privilege of the Church. The most infamous villain of the period, Archibald Douglas, was presented to the Kirk of Glasgow, and, indeed, the nobles made many such presentations of unscrupulous and ignorant cadets to important livings. Morton gave a bishopric to one of the murderers of Riccio! Yet Knox did not advise a secession; he merely advised that non-residence, or a scandalous life, or erroneous doctrine, on the part of the person presented, should make his presentation ‘null and of no force or effect, and this to have place also in the nomination of the bishops.’ Thus Knox was, on occasion, something of an opportunist. If alive in 1843, he would probably have remained in the Establishment, and worked for that abolition of ‘patronage’ which was secured, from within, in 1874. If this conjecture is right the Free Kirk was more Knoxian than John Knox, and departed from his standard. He was capable of sacrificing a good deal of ‘spiritual independence’ rather than break with the State. Many times, long after he was dead, the National Church, under stress of circumstances, accepted compromises.

Knox knew the difference between the ideal and the practical. It was the ideal that all non-convertible Catholics ‘should die the death.’ But the ideal was never made real; the State was not prepared to oblige the Kirk in this matter. It was the ideal that any of ‘the brethren,’ conscious of a vocation, and seeing a good opportunity, should treat an impenitent Catholic ruler as Jehu treated Jezebel. But if any brother had consulted Knox as to the propriety of assassinating Queen Mary, in 1561-67, he would have found out his mistake, and probably have descended the Reformer’s stairs much more rapidly than he mounted them.

Yet Knox, though he could submit to compromise, really had a remarkably mystical idea of what the Kirk was, and of the attributes of her clergy. The editor of *The Free Church Union Case*, Mr. Taylor Innes (himself author of a biography of the Reformer), writes, in his preface to *The Judgment of the House of Lords*: ‘The Church of Scotland, as a Protestant Church, had its origin in the year 1560, for its first Confession dates from August, and its first Assembly from December in that year.’ In fact, the Confession was accepted and passed as law, by a very dubiously legal Convention of the Estates, in August 1560. But Knox certainly conceived that the Protestant Church *in*, if not *of*, Scotland existed a year before that date, and before that date it possessed ‘the power of the Keys’ and even, it would perhaps seem, ‘the power of the Sword.’ To his mind, as soon as a local set of men of his own opinions met, and chose a pastor and preacher, who also administered the Sacraments, the Protestant Church was ‘a Church in being.’ The Catholic Church, then by law established, was, Knox held, no Church at all; her priests were not ‘lawful ministers,’ her Pope was the man of Sin *ex officio*, and the Church was ‘the Kirk of the malignants’— ‘a lady of pleasure in Babylon bred.’

On the other hand, the real Church — it might be of but 200 men — was confronting the Kirk of the malignants, and alone was genuine. The State did not make and could not unmake ‘the Trew Church,’ but was bound to establish, foster, *and obey it*.

It was this last proviso which caused 130 years of bloodshed and ‘persecution’ and general unrest in Scotland, from 1559 to 1690. Why was the Kirk so often out ‘in the heather,’ and hunted like a partridge on the field and the mountain? The answer is that when the wilder spirits of the Kirk were not being persecuted they were persecuting the State and bullying the individual subject. All this arose from Knox’s idea of the Church. To constitute a Church no more was needed than a local set of Calvinistic Protestants and ‘a lawful minister.’ To constitute a lawful minister, at first (later far more was required), no more was needed than a ‘call’ to a preacher from a local set of Calvinistic Protestants. But, when once the ‘call’ was given and accepted, that ‘lawful minister’ was, by the theory, as superior to the laws of the State as the celebrated emperor was superior to grammar. A few ‘lawful ministers’ of this kind possessed ‘the power of the Keys;’ they could hand anybody over to Satan by excommunicating the man, and (apparently) they could present ‘the power of the Sword’ to any town council, which could then decree capital punishment against any Catholic priest who celebrated Mass, as, by the law of the State, he was in duty bound to do. Such were the moderate and reasonable claims of Knox’s Kirk in May 1559, even before it was accepted by the Convention of Estates in August 1560. It was because, not the Church, but the wilder spirits among the ministers, persevered in these claims, that the State, when it got the chance, drove them into moors and mosses and hanged not a few of them.

I have never found these facts fully stated by any historian or by any biographer of Knox, except by the Reformer himself, partly in his *History*, partly in his letters to a lady of his acquaintance. The mystery of the Kirks turns on the Knoxian conception of the ‘lawful minister,’ and his claim to absolutism.

To give examples, Knox himself, about 1540-43, was ‘a priest of the altar,’ ‘one of Baal’s shaven sort.’ On that score he later claimed nothing. After the murder of Cardinal Beaton, the murderers and their associates, forming a congregation in the Castle of St. Andrews, gave Knox a call to be their preacher. He was now ‘a lawful minister.’ In May 1559 he, with about four or five equally lawful ministers, two of them converted friars, one of them a baker, and one, Harlow, a tailor, were in company with their Protestant backers, who destroyed the monasteries in Perth, and the altars and ornaments of the church there. They at once claimed ‘the power of the Keys,’ and threatened to excommunicate such of their allies as did not join them in arms. They, ‘the brethren,’ also denounced capital punishment against any priest who celebrated Mass at Perth. Now the lawful ministers could not think of hanging the priests themselves. They must therefore have somehow bestowed ‘the power of the Sword’ on the baillies and town council of Perth, I presume, for the Regent, Mary of Guise, when she entered the town, dismissed these men from office, which was regarded as an unlawful and perfidious act on her part. Again, in the summer of 1560, the baillies of Edinburgh — while Catholicism was still by law established — denounced the death penalty against recalcitrant Catholics. The Kirk also allotted lawful ministers to several of the large towns, and thus established herself before she was established by the Estates in August 1560. Thus nothing could be more free, and more absolute, than the Kirk in her early bloom. On the other hand, as we saw, even in Knox’s lifetime, the State, having the upper hand under the Regent Morton, a strong man, introduced prelacy of a modified kind and patronage; did not restore to the Kirk her ‘patrimony,’ — the lands of the old Church; and only hanged one priest, not improbably for a certain reason of a private character.

There was thus, from the first, a battle between the Protestant Church and State. At various times one preacher is said to have declared that he was the solitary ‘lawful minister’ in Scotland; and one of these men, Mr. Cargill, excommunicated Charles II.; while another, Mr. Renwick, denounced a war of assassination against the Government. Both gentlemen were hanged.

These were extreme assertions of ‘spiritual independence,’ and the Kirk, or at least the majority of the preachers, protested against such conduct, which might be the logical development of the doctrine of the ‘lawful minister,’ but was, in practice, highly inconvenient. The Kirk, as a whole, was loyal.

Sometimes the State, under a strong man like Morton, or James Stewart, Earl of Arran (a thoroughpaced ruffian), put down these pretensions of the Church. At other times, as when Andrew Melville led the Kirk, under James VI., she maintained that there was but one king in Scotland, Christ, and that the actual King, the lad, James VI., was but ‘Christ’s silly vassal.’ He was supreme in temporal matters, but the judicature of the Church was supreme in spiritual matters.

This sounds perfectly fair, but who was to decide what matters were spiritual and what were temporal? The Kirk assumed the right to decide that question; consequently it could give a spiritual colour to any problem of statesmanship: for example, a royal marriage, trade with Catholic Spain, which the Kirk forbade, or the expulsion of the Catholic peers. ‘There is a judgment above yours,’ said the Rev. Mr. Pont to James VI., ‘and that is God’s; *put in the hand of the ministers*, for “we shall judge the angels,” saith the apostle.’ Again, ‘“Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones and judge”’ (quoted Mr. Pont), ‘which is chiefly referred to the apostles, and consequently to ministers.’

Things came to a head in 1596. The King asked the representatives of the Kirk whether he might call home certain earls, banished for being Catholics, if they ‘satisfied the Kirk.’ The answer was that he might not. Knox had long before maintained that ‘a prophet’ might preach treason (he is quite explicit), and that the prophet, and whoever carried his preaching into practical effect, would be blameless. A minister was accused, at this moment, of preaching libellously, and he declined to be judged except by men of his own cloth. If they acquitted him, as they were morally certain to do, what Court of Appeal could reverse the decision of men who claimed to ‘judge angels’? A riot arose in Edinburgh, the King seized his opportunity, he grasped his nettle, the municipal authorities backed him, and, in effect, the claims of true ministers thenceforth gave little trouble till the folly of Charles I. led to the rise of the Covenant. The Sovereign had overshot his limits of power as wildly as ever the Kirk had tried to do, and the result was that the Kirk, having now the nobles and the people in arms on her side, was absolutely despotic for about twelve years. Her final triumph was to resist the Estates in Parliament, with success, and to lay Scotland open to the Cromwellian conquest. What Plantagenets and Tudors could never do Noll effected, he conquered Scotland, the Kirk having paralysed the State. The preachers found that Cromwell was a perfect ‘Malignant,’ that he would not suffer prophets to preach treason, nor even allow the General Assembly to meet. Angels they might judge if they pleased, but not Ironsides; excommunication and ‘Kirk discipline’ were discountenanced; even witches were less frequently burned. The preachers, Cromwell said, ‘had done their do,’ had shot their bolt.

At this time they split into two parties: the Extremists, calling themselves ‘the godly,’ and the men of milder mood.

Charles II., at the Restoration, ought probably to have sided with the milder party, some of whom were anxious to see their fierce brethren banished to Orkney, out of the way. But Charles’s motto was ‘Never again,’ and by a pettifogging fraud he reintroduced bishops without the hated liturgy. After years of risings and suppressions the ministers were brought to submission, accepting an ‘indulgence’ from the State, while but a few upholders of the old pretensions of the clergy stood out in the wildernesses of South-western Scotland. There might be three or four such ministers, there might be only one, but they, or he, to the mind of ‘the Remnant,’ were the only ‘lawful ministers.’ At the Revolution of 1688-89 the Remnant did not accept the compromise under which the Presbyterian Kirk was re-established. They stood out, breaking into many sects; the spiritual descendants of most of these blended into one body as ‘The United Presbyterian Kirk’ in 1847. In the Established Kirk the Moderates were in the majority till about 1837, when the inheritors of those extreme views which Knox compromised about, and which the majority of ministers disclaimed before the Revolution of 1688, obtained the upper hand. They had planted the remotest parishes of the Highlands with their own kind of ministers, who swamped, in 1838, the votes of the Lowland Moderates, exactly as, under James VI., Highland ‘Moderates’ had swamped the votes of the Lowland Extremists. The majority of Extremists, or most of it, left the Kirk in 1843, and made the Free Kirk. In 1900, when the Free Kirk joined the United Presbyterians, it was Highland ministers, mainly, who formed the minority of twenty-seven, or so, who would not accept the new union, and now constitute the actual Free Kirk, or Wee Frees, and possess the endowments of the old Free Kirk of 1843. We can scarcely say *Beati possidentes*.

It has been shown, or I have tried, erroneously or not, to show that, wild and impossible as were the ideal claims of Knox, of Andrew Melville, of Mr. Pont, and others, the old Scottish Kirk of 1560, by law established, was capable of giving up or suppressing these claims, even under Knox, and even while the Covenant remained in being. The mass of the ministers, after the return of Charles II. before Worcester fight, before bloody Dunbar, were not irreconcilables. The Auld Kirk, the Kirk Established, has some right to call herself the Church of Scotland by historical continuity, while the opposite claimants, the men of 1843, may seem rather to descend from people like young Renwick, the last hero who died for their ideas, but not, in himself, the only ‘lawful minister’ between Tweed and Cape Wrath. ‘Other times, other manners.’ All the Kirks are perfectly loyal; now none persecutes; interference with private life, ‘Kirk discipline,’ is a vanishing minimum; and, but for this recent ‘garboil’ (as our old writers put it) we might have said that, under differences of nomenclature, all the Kirks are united at last, in the only union worth having, that of peace and goodwill. That union may be restored, let us hope, by good temper and common sense, qualities that have not hitherto been conspicuous in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland, or of England.

XIV

THE END OF JEANNE DE LA MOTTE

In the latest and best book on Marie Antoinette and the Diamond Necklace, *L'Affaire du Collier*, Monsieur Funck-Brentano does not tell the sequel of the story of Jeanne de la Motte, *née* de Saint-Remy, and calling herself de Valois. He leaves this wicked woman at the moment when (June 21, 1786) she has been publicly flogged and branded, struggling, scratching, and biting like a wild cat. Her husband, at about the same time, was in Edinburgh, and had just escaped from being kidnapped by the French police. In another work Monsieur Funck-Brentano criticises, with his remarkable learning, the conclusion of the history of Jeanne de la Motte. Carlyle, in his well-known essay, *The Diamond Necklace*, leaves Jeanne's later adventures obscure, and is in doubt as to the particulars of her death.

Perhaps absolute certainty (except as to the cause of Jeanne's death) is not to be obtained. How she managed to escape from her prison, the Salpétrière, later so famous for Charcot's hypnotic experiments on hysterical female patients, remains a mystery. It was certain that if she was once at liberty Jeanne would tell the lies against the Queen which she had told before, and tell some more equally false, popular, and damaging. Yet escape she did in 1787, the year following that of her imprisonment at the Salpétrière; she reached England, compiled the libels which she called her memoirs, and died strangely in 1791.

On June 21, 1786, to follow M. Funck-Brentano, Jeanne was taken, after her flogging, to her prison, reserved for dissolute women. The majority of the captives slept as they might, confusedly, in one room. To Jeanne was allotted one of thirty-six little cells of six feet square, given up to her by a prisoner who went to join the promiscuous horde. Probably the woman was paid for this generosity by some partisan of Jeanne. On September 4 the property of the swindler and of her husband, including their valuable furniture, jewels, books, and plate, was sold at Bar-sur-Aube, where they had a house.

So far we can go, guided by M. Funck-Brentano, who relies on authentic documents. For what followed we have only the story of Jeanne herself in her memoirs: I quote the English translation, which appears to vary from the French. How did such a dangerous prisoner make her escape? We cannot but wonder that she was not placed in a prison more secure. Her own version, of course, is not to be relied on. She would tell any tale that suited her purpose. A version which contradicts hers has reached me through the tradition of an English family, but it presents some difficulties. Jeanne says that about the end of November or early in December, 1786, she was allowed to have a maid named Angelica. This woman was a prisoner of long standing, condemned on suspicion of having killed her child. One evening a soldier on guard in the court of the Salpétrière passed his musket through a hole in the wall (or a broken window) and tried to touch Angelica. He told her that many people of rank were grateful to her for her kindness to Madame La Motte. He would procure writing materials for her that she might represent her case to them. He did bring gilt-edged paper, pens, and ink, and a letter for Angelica, who could not read.

The letter contained, in invisible ink, brought out by Jeanne, the phrase, ‘It is understood. Be sure to be discreet.’ ‘People are intent on changing your condition’ was another phrase which Jeanne applied to herself. She conceived the probable hypothesis that her victims, the Queen and the Cardinal de Rohan, had repented of their cruelty, had discovered her to be innocent and were plotting for her escape. Of course, nothing could be more remote from the interests of the Queen. Presently the soldier brought another note. Jeanne must procure a model of the key that locked her cell and other doors. By dint of staring at the key in the hands of the nuns who looked after the prisoners, Jeanne, though unable to draw, made two sketches of it, and sent them out, the useful soldier managing all communications. How Jeanne procured the necessary pencil she does not inform us. Practical locksmiths may decide whether it is likely that, from two amateur drawings, not to scale, any man could make a key which would fit the locks. The task appears impossible. In any case, in a few days the soldier pushed the key through the hole in the wall; Jeanne tried it on the door of her cell and on two doors in the passages, found that it opened them, and knelt in gratitude before her crucifix. In place of running away Jeanne now wrote to ladies of her acquaintance, begging them to procure the release of Angelica. Her nights she spent in writing three statements for the woman, each occupying a hundred and eighty pages, presumably of gilt-edged paper. Soon she heard that the King had signed Angelica’s pardon, and on May 1 the woman was released.

The next move of Jeanne was to ask her unknown friend outside to send her a complete male costume, a large blue coat, a flannel waistcoat, a pair of half boots, and a tall, round-shaped hat, with a switch. The soldier presently pushed these commodities through the hole in the wall. The chaplain next asked her to write out all her story, but Sister Martha, her custodian, would not give her writing materials, and it did not apparently occur to her to bid the soldier bring fresh supplies. Cut off from the joys of literary composition, Jeanne arranged with her unknown friend to escape on June 8. First the handy soldier, having ample leisure, was to walk for days about ‘the King’s garden,’ disguised as a waggoner, and carrying a whip. The use of this manœuvre is not apparent, unless Jeanne, with her switch, was to be mistaken for the familiar presence of the carter.

Jeanne ended by devising a means of keeping one of the female porters away from her door. She dressed as a man, opened four doors in succession, walked through a group of the nuns, or ‘Sisters,’ wandered into many other courts, and at last joined herself to a crowd of sight-seeing Parisians and left the prison in their company. She crossed the Seine, and now walking, now hiring coaches, and using various disguises, she reached Luxembourg. Here a Mrs. MacMahon met her, bringing a note from M. de la Motte. This was on July 27. Mrs. MacMahon and Jeanne started next day for Ostend, and arrived at Dover after a passage of forty-two hours. Jeanne then repaired with Mr. MacMahon to that lady’s house in the Haymarket.

This tale is neither coherent nor credible. On the other hand, the tradition of an English family avers that a Devonshire gentleman was asked by an important personage in France to succour an unnamed lady who was being smuggled over in a sailing boat to our south-west coast. Another gentleman, not unknown to history, actually entertained this French angel unawares, not even knowing her name, and Jeanne, when she departed for London, left a miniature of herself which is still in the possession of the English family. Which tale is true and who was the unknown friend that suborned the versatile soldier, and sent in not only gilt-edged paper and a suit of male attire, but money for Jeanne’s journey? Only the Liberals in France had an interest in Jeanne’s escape; she might exude more useful venom against the Queen in books or pamphlets, and she did, while giving the world to understand that the Queen had favoured her flight. The escape is the real mystery of the affair of the Necklace; the rest we now understand.

The death of Jeanne was strange. The sequel to her memoirs, in English, avers that in 1791 a bailiff came to arrest her for a debt of 30*l.* She gave him a bottle of wine, slipped from the room, and locked him in. But he managed to get out, and discovered the wretched woman in a chamber in ‘the two-pair back.’ She threw up the window, leaped out, struck against a tree, broke one knee, shattered one thigh, knocked one eye out, yet was recovering, when, on August 21, 1791, she partook too freely of mulberries (to which she was very partial), and died on Tuesday, August 23. This is confirmed by two newspaper paragraphs, which I cite in full.

First, the *London Chronicle* writes (from Saturday, August 27, to Tuesday, August 30, 1791):

‘The unfortunate Countess de la Motte, who died on Tuesday last in consequence of a hurt from jumping out of a window, was the wife of Count de la Motte, who killed young Grey, the jeweller, in a duel a few days ago at Brussels.’ (This duel is recorded in the *London Chronicle*, August 20-23.)

Next, the *Public Advertiser* remarks (Friday, August 26, 1791):

‘The noted Countess de la Motte, of Necklace memory, and who lately jumped out of a two-pair of stairs window to avoid the bailiffs, died on Tuesday night last, at eleven o’clock, at her lodgings near Astley’s Riding School.’

But why did La Motte fight the young jeweller? It was to Grey, of New Bond Street, that La Motte sold a number of the diamonds from the necklace; Grey gave evidence to that fact, and La Motte killed him. La Motte himself lived to a bad old age.

On studying M. Funck-Brentano’s work, styled *Cagliostro & Company* in the English translation, one observes a curious discrepancy. According to the *Gazette d’Utrecht*, cited by M. Funck-Brentano, the window in Jeanne’s cell was ‘at a height of ten feet above the floor.’ Yet the useful soldier, outside, introduced the end of his musket ‘through a broken pane of glass.’ This does not seem plausible. Again, the *Gazette d’Utrecht* (August 1, 1780) says that Jeanne made a hole in the wall of her room, but failed to get her body through that aperture. Was *that* the hole through which, in the English translation published after Jeanne’s death, the soldier introduced the end of his musket? There are difficulties in both versions, and it is not likely that Jeanne gave a truthful account of her escape.

JOHN KNOX AND THE REFORMATION

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PREFACE

In this brief Life of Knox I have tried, as much as I may, to get behind Tradition, which has so deeply affected even modern histories of the Scottish Reformation, and even recent Biographies of the Reformer. The tradition is based, to a great extent, on Knox's own "History," which I am therefore obliged to criticise as carefully as I can. In his valuable *John Knox*, *a Biography*, Professor Hume Brown says that in the "History" "we have convincing proof alike of the writer's good faith, and of his perception of the conditions of historic truth." My reasons for dissenting from this favourable view will be found in the following pages. If I am right, if Knox, both as a politician and an historian, resembled Charles I. in "sailing as near the wind" as he could, the circumstance (as another of his biographers remarks) "only makes him more human and interesting."

Opinion about Knox and the religious Revolution in which he took so great a part, has passed through several variations in the last century. In the *Edinburgh Review* of 1816 (No. liii. p-180), is an article with which the present biographer can agree. Several passages from Knox's works are cited, and the reader is expected to be "shocked at their principles." They are certainly shocking, but they are not, as a rule, set before the public by biographers of the Reformer.

Mr. Carlyle introduced a style of thinking about Knox which may be called platonically Puritan. Sweet enthusiasts glide swiftly over all in the Reformer that is specially distasteful to us. I find myself more in harmony with the outspoken Hallam, Dr. Joseph Robertson, David Hume, and the Edinburgh reviewer of 1816, than with several more recent students of Knox.

"The Reformer's violent counsels and intemperate speech were remarkable," writes Dr. Robertson, "even in his own ruthless age," and he gives fourteen examples. "Lord Hailes has shown," he adds, "how little Knox's statements" (in his "History") "are to be relied on even in matters which were within the Reformer's own knowledge." In Scotland there has always been the party of Cavalier and White Rose sentimentalism. To this party Queen Mary is a saintly being, and their admiration of Claverhouse goes far beyond that entertained by Sir Walter Scott. On the other side, there is the party, equally sentimental, which musters under the banner of the Covenant, and sees scarcely a blemish in Knox. A pretty sample of the sentiment of this party appears in a biography (1905) of the Reformer by a minister of the Gospel. Knox summoned the organised brethren, in 1563, to overawe justice, when some men were to be tried on a charge of invading in arms the chapel of Holyrood. No proceeding could be more anarchic than Knox's, or more in accordance with the lovable customs of my dear country, at that time. But the biographer of 1905, "a placed minister," writes that "the doing of it" (Knox's summons) "was only an assertion of the liberty of the Church, and of the members of the Commonwealth as a whole, to assemble for purposes which were clearly lawful" — the purposes being to overawe justice in the course of a trial!

On sentiment, Cavalier or Puritan, reason is thrown away.

I have been surprised to find how completely a study of Knox's own works corroborates the views of Dr. Robertson and Lord Hailes. That Knox ran so very far ahead of the Genevan pontiffs of his age in violence; and that in his "History" he needs such careful watching, was, to me, an unexpected discovery. He may have been "an old Hebrew prophet," as Mr. Carlyle says, but he had also been a young Scottish notary! A Hebrew prophet is, at best, a dangerous anachronism in a delicate crisis of the Church Christian; and the notarial element is too conspicuous in some passages of Knox's "History."

That Knox was a great man; a disinterested man; in his regard for the poor a truly Christian man; as a shepherd of Calvinistic souls a man fervent and considerate; of pure life; in friendship loyal; by jealousy untainted; in private character genial and amiable, I am entirely convinced. In public and political life he was much less admirable; and his "History," vivacious as it is, must be studied as the work of an old-fashioned advocate rather than as the summing up of a judge. His favourite adjectives are "bloody," "beastly," "rotten," and "stinking."

Any inaccuracies of my own which may have escaped my correction will be dwelt on, by enthusiasts for the Prophet, as if they are the main elements of this book, and disqualify me as a critic of Knox's "History." At least any such errors on my part are involuntary and unconscious. In Knox's defence we must remember that he never saw his "History" in print. But he kept it by him for many years, obviously re-reading, for he certainly retouched it, as late as 1571.

In quoting Knox and his contemporaries, I have used modern spelling: the letter from the State Papers printed on p, 147, shows what the orthography of the period was really like. Consultation of the original MSS. on doubtful points, proves that the printed Calendars, though excellent guides, cannot be relied on as authorities.

The portrait of Knox, from Beza's book of portraits of Reformers, is posthumous, but is probably a good likeness drawn from memory, after a description by Peter Young, who knew him, and a design, presumably by "Adrianc Vaensoun," a Fleming, resident in Edinburgh.

There is an interesting portrait, possibly of Knox, in the National Gallery of Portraits, but the work has no known authentic history.

The portrait of Queen Mary, at the age of thirty-six, and a prisoner, is from the Earl of Morton's original; it is greatly superior to the "Sheffield" type of likenesses, of about 1578; and, with Janet's and other drawings (1558-1561), the Bridal medal of 1558, and (in my opinion) the Earl of Leven and Melville's portrait, of about 1560-1565, is the best extant representation of the Queen.

The Leven and Melville portrait of Mary, young and charming, and wearing jewels which are found recorded in her Inventories, has hitherto been overlooked. An admirable photogravure is given in Mr. J. J. Foster's "True Portraiture of Mary, Queen of Scots" (1905), and I understand that a photograph was done in 1866 for the South Kensington Museum.

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CHAPTER I: ANCESTRY, BIRTH, EDUCATION, ENVIRONMENT: 1513(?)-1546

“*November* 24, 1572.

“John Knox, minister, deceased, who had, as was alleged, the most part of the blame of all the sorrows of Scotland since the slaughter of the late Cardinal.”

It is thus that the decent burgess who, in 1572, kept *The Diurnal* of such daily events as he deemed important, cautiously records the death of the great Scottish Reformer. The sorrows, the “cumber” of which Knox was “alleged” to bear the blame, did not end with his death. They persisted in the conspiracies and rebellions of the earlier years of James VI.; they smouldered through the later part of his time; they broke into far spreading flame at the touch of the Covenant; they blazed at “dark Worcester and bloody Dunbar”; at Preston fight, and the sack of Dundee by Monk; they included the Cromwellian conquest of Scotland, and the shame and misery of the Restoration; to trace them down to our own age would be invidious.

It is with the “alleged” author of the Sorrows, with his life, works, and ideas that we are concerned.

John Knox, son of William Knox and of — Sinclair, his wife, unlike most Scotsmen, unlike even Mr. Carlyle, had not “an ell of pedigree.” The common scoff was that each Scot styled himself “the King’s poor cousin.” But John Knox declared, “I am a man of base estate and condition.” The genealogy of Mr. Carlyle has been traced to a date behind the Norman Conquest, but of Knox’s ancestors nothing is known. He himself, in 1562, when he “ruled the roast” in Scotland, told the ruffian Earl of Bothwell, “my grandfather, my maternal grandfather, and my father, have served your Lordship’s predecessors, and some of them have died under their standards; and this” (namely goodwill to the house of the feudal superior) “is a part of the obligation of our Scottish kindness.” Knox, indeed, never writes very harshly of Bothwell, partly for the reason he gives; partly, perhaps, because Bothwell, though an infamous character, and a political opponent, was not in 1562-67 “an idolater,” that is, a Catholic: if ever he had been one; partly because his “History” ends before Bothwell’s murder of Darnley in 1567.

Knox’s ancestors were, we may suppose, peasant farmers, like the ancestors of Burns and Hogg; and Knox, though he married a maid of the Queen’s kin, bore traces of his descent. “A man ungrateful and unpleasable,” Northumberland styled him: he was one who could not "smiling, put a question by"; if he had to remonstrate even with a person whom it was desirable to conciliate, he stated his case in the plainest and least flattering terms. "Of nature I am churlish, and in conditions different from many," he wrote; but this side of his character he kept mainly for people of high rank, accustomed to deference, and indifferent or hostile to his aims. To others, especially to women whom he liked, he was considerate and courteous, but any assertion of social superiority aroused his wakeful independence. His countrymen of his own order had long displayed these peculiarities of humour.

The small Scottish cultivators from whose ranks Knox rose, appear, even before his age, in two strangely different lights. If they were not technically "kindly tenants," in which case their conditions of existence and of tenure were comparatively comfortable and secure, they were liable to eviction at the will of the lord, and, to quote an account of their condition written in 1549, "were in more servitude than the children of Israel in Egypt." Henderson, the writer of 1549 whom we have quoted, hopes that the agricultural class may yet live "as substantial commoners, not miserable cottars, charged daily to war and slay their neighbours *at their own expense*," as under the standards of the unruly Bothwell House. This Henderson was one of the political observers who, before the Scottish Reformation, hoped for a secure union between Scotland and England, in place of the old and romantic league with France. That alliance had, indeed, enabled both France and Scotland to maintain their national independence. But, with the great revolution in religion, the interest of Scotland was a permanent political league with England, which Knox did as much as any man to forward, while, by resisting a religious union, he left the seeds of many sorrows.

If the Lowland peasantry, from one point of view, were terribly oppressed, we know that they were of independent manners. In 1515 the chaplain of Margaret Tudor, the Queen Mother, writes to one Adam Williamson: "You know the use of this country. Every man speaks what he will without blame. The man hath more words than the master, and will not be content unless he knows the master's counsel. There is no order among us."

Thus, two hundred and fifty years before Burns, the Lowland Scot was minded that "A man's a man for a' that!" Knox was the true flower of this vigorous Lowland thistle. Throughout life he not only "spoke what he would," but uttered "the Truth" in such a tone as to make it unlikely that his "message" should be accepted by opponents. Like Carlyle, however, he had a heart rich in affection, no breach in friendship, he says, ever began on his side; while, as "a good hater," Dr. Johnson might have admired him. He carried into political and theological conflicts the stubborn temper of the Border prickers, his fathers, who had ridden under the Roses and the Lion of the Hepburns. So far Knox was an example of the doctrine of heredity; that we know, however little we learn in detail about his ancestors.

The birthplace of Knox was probably a house in a suburb of Haddington, in a district on the path of English invasion. The year of his birth has long been dated, on a late statement of little authority, as 1505. Seven years after his death, however, a man who knew him well, namely, Peter Young, tutor and librarian of James VI., told Beza that Knox died in his fifty-ninth year. Dr. Hay Fleming has pointed out that his natal year was probably 1513-15, not 1505, and this reckoning, we shall see, appears to fit in better with the deeds of the Reformer.

If Knox was born in 1513-15, he must have taken priest's orders, and adopted the profession of a notary, at nearly the earliest moment which the canonical law permitted. No man ought to be in priest's orders before he was twenty-five; Knox, if born in 1515, was just twenty-five in 1540, when he is styled "Sir John Knox" (one of "The Pope's Knights") in legal documents, and appears as a notary. He certainly continued in orders and in the notarial profession as late as March 1543. The law of the Church did not, in fact, permit priests to be notaries, but in an age when "notaires" were often professional forgers, the additional security for character yielded by Holy Orders must have been welcome to clients, and Bishops permitted priests to practise this branch of the law.

Of Knox's near kin no more is known than of his ancestors. He had a brother, William, for whom, in 1552, he procured a licence to trade in England as owner of a ship of 100 tons. Even as late as 1656, there were not a dozen ships of this burden in Scotland, so William Knox must have been relatively a prosperous man. In 1544-45, there was a William Knox, a fowler or gamekeeper to the Earl of Westmoreland, who acted as a secret agent between the Scots in English pay and their paymasters. We much later (1559) find the Reformer's brother, William, engaged with him in a secret political mission to the Governor of Berwick; probably this William knew shy Border paths, and he may have learned them as the Lord Westmoreland's fowler in earlier years.

About John Knox's early years and education nothing is known. He certainly acquired such Latin (*satis humilis*, says a German critic) as Scotland then had to teach; probably at the Burgh School of Haddington. A certain John Knox matriculated at the University of Glasgow in 1522, but he cannot have been the Reformer, if the Reformer was not born till 1513-15. Beza, on the other hand (1580), had learned, probably from the Reformer, whom he knew well, that Knox was a St. Andrews man, and though his name does not occur in the

University Register, the Register was very ill kept. Supposing Knox, then, to have been born in 1513-15, and to have been educated at St. Andrews, we can see how he comes to know so much about the progress of the new religious ideas at that University, between 1529 and 1535. "The Well of St. Leonard's College" was a notorious fountain of heresies, under Gawain Logie, the Principal. Knox very probably heard the sermons of the Dominicans and Franciscans "against the pride and idle life of bishops," and other abuses. He speaks of a private conversation between Friar Airth and Major (about 1534), and names some of the persons present at a sermon in the parish church of St. Andrews, as if he had himself been in the congregation. He gives the text and heads of the discourse, including "merry tales" told by the Friar. If Knox heard the sermons and stories of clerical scandals at St. Andrews, they did not prevent him from taking orders. His Greek and Hebrew, what there was of them, Knox must have acquired in later life, at least we never learn that he was taught by the famous George Wishart, who, about that time, gave Greek lectures at Montrose.

The Catholic opponents of Knox naturally told scandalous anecdotes concerning his youth. These are destitute of evidence: about his youth we know nothing. It is a characteristic trait in him, and a fact much to his credit, that, though he is fond of expatiating about himself, he never makes confessions as to his earlier adventures. On his own years of the wild oat St. Augustine dilates in a style which still has charm: but Knox, if he sowed wild oats, is silent as the tomb. If he has anything to repent, it is not to the world that he confesses. About the days when he was "one of Baal's shaven sort," in his own phrase; when he was himself an "idolater," and a priest of the altar: about the details of his conversion, Knox is mute. It is probable that, as a priest, he examined Lutheran books which were brought in with other merchandise from Holland; read the Bible for himself; and failed to find Purgatory, the Mass, the intercession of Saints, pardons, pilgrimages, and other accessories of mediæval religion in the Scriptures. Knox had only to keep his eyes and ears open, to observe the clerical ignorance and corruption which resulted in great part from the Scottish habit of securing wealthy Church offices for ignorant, brutal, and licentious younger sons and bastards of noble families. This practice in Scotland was as odious to good Catholics, like Quentin Kennedy, Ninian Winzet, and, rather earlier, to Ferrerius, as to Knox himself. The prevalent anarchy caused by the long minorities of the Stuart kings, and by the interminable wars with England, and the difficulty of communications with Rome, had enabled the nobles thus to rob and deprave the Church, and so to provide themselves with moral reasons good for robbing her again; as a punishment for the iniquities which they had themselves introduced!

The almost incredible ignorance and profligacy of the higher Scottish clergy (with notable exceptions) in Knox's youth, are not matter of controversy. They are as frankly recognised by contemporary Catholic as by Protestant authors. In the very year of the destruction of the monasteries (1559) the abuses are officially stated, as will be told later, by the last Scottish Provincial Council. Though three of the four Scottish universities were founded by Catholics, and the fourth, Edinburgh, had an endowment bequeathed by a Catholic, the clerical ignorance, in Knox's time, was such that many priests could hardly read.

If more evidence is needed as to the debauched estate of the Scottish clergy, we obtain it from Mary of Guise, widow of James V., the Regent then governing Scotland for her child, Mary Stuart. The Queen, in December 1555, begged Pius IV. to permit her to levy a tax on her clergy, and to listen to what Cardinal Sermoneta would tell him about their need of reformation. The Cardinal drew a terrible sketch of the nefarious lives of "every kind of religious women" in Scotland. They go about with their illegal families and dower their daughters out of the revenues of the Church. The monks, too, have bloated wealth, while churches are allowed to fall into decay. "The only hope is in the Holy Father," who should appoint an episcopal commission of visitation. For about forty years prelates have been alienating Church lands illegally, and churches and monasteries, by the avarice of those placed in charge, are crumbling to decay. Bishops are the chief dealers in cattle, fish, and hides, though we have, in fact, good evidence that their dealings were very limited, "sma' sums."

Not only the clergy, but the nobles and people were lawless. "They are more difficult to manage than ever," writes Mary of Guise (Jan. 13, 1557). They are recalcitrant against law and order; every attempt at introducing these is denounced as an attack on their old laws: not that their laws are bad, but that they are badly administered. Scotland, in brief, had always been lawless, and for centuries had never been godly. She was untouched by the first fervour of the Franciscan and other religious revivals. Knox could not fail to see what was so patent: many books of the German reformers may have come in his way; no more was wanted than the preaching of George Wishart in 1543-45, to make him an irreconcilable foe of the doctrine as well as the discipline of his Church.

Knox had a sincerely religious nature, and a conviction that he was, more than most men, though a sinner, in close touch with Him "in whom we live and move and have our being." We ask ourselves, had Knox, as "a priest of the altar," never known the deep emotions, which tongue may not utter, that the ceremonies and services of his Church so naturally awaken in the soul of the believer? These emotions, if they were in his experience, he never remembered tenderly, he flung them from him without regret; not regarding them even as dreams, beautiful and dear, but misleading, that came through the Ivory Gate. To Knox's opponent in controversy, Quentin Kennedy, the mass was "the blessed Sacrament of the Altar . . . which is one of the chief Sacraments whereby our Saviour, for the salvation of mankind, has appointed the fruit of His death and passion to be daily renewed and applied." In this traditional view there is nothing unedifying, nothing injurious to the Christian life. But to Knox the wafer is an idol, a god "of water and meal," "but a feeble and miserable god," that can be destroyed "by a bold and puissant mouse." "Rats and mice will desire no better dinner than white round gods enough."

The Reformer and the Catholic take up the question "by different handles"; and the Catholic grounds his defence on a text about Melchizedek! To Knox the mass is the symbol of all that he justly detested in the degraded Church as she then was in Scotland, "that horrible harlot with her filthiness." To Kennedy it was what we have seen.

Knox speaks of having been in "the puddle of papistry." He loathes what he has left behind him, and it is natural to guess that, in his first years of priesthood, his religious nature slept; that he became a priest and notary merely that he "might eat a morsel of bread"; and that real "conviction" never was his till his studies of Protestant controversialists, and also of St. Augustine and the Bible, and the teaching of Wishart, raised him from a mundane life. Then he awoke to a passionate horror and hatred of his old routine of "mumbled masses," of "rites of human invention," whereof he had never known the poetry and the mystic charm. Had he known them, he could not have so denied and detested them. On the other hand, when once he had embraced the new ideas, Knox's faith in them, or in his own form of them, was firm as the round world, made so fast that it cannot be moved. He had now a *pou sto*, whence he could, and did, move the world of human affairs. A faith not to be shaken, and enormous energy were the essential attributes of the Reformer. It is almost impossible to find an instance in which Knox allows that he may have been mistaken: *d'avoir toujours raison* was his claim. If he admits an error in details, it is usually an error of insufficient severity. He did not attack Northumberland or Mary Stuart with adequate violence; he did not disapprove enough of our prayer book; he did not hand a heretic over to the magistrates.

While acting as a priest and notary, between 1540, at latest, and 1543, Knox was engaged as private tutor to a boy named Brounefield, son of Brounefield of Greenlaw, and to other lads, spoken of as his "bairns." In this profession of tutor he continued till 1547.

Knox's personal aspect did not give signs of the uncommon strength which his unceasing labours demanded, but, like many men of energy, he had a perpetual youth of character and vigour. After his death, Peter Young described him as he appeared in his later years. He was somewhat below the "just" standard of height; his limbs were well and elegantly shaped; his shoulders broad, his fingers rather long, his head small, his hair black, his face somewhat swarthy, and not unpleasant to behold. There was a certain geniality in a countenance serious and stern, with a natural dignity and air of command; his eyebrows, when he was in anger, were expressive. His forehead was rather narrow, depressed above the eyebrows; his cheeks were full and ruddy, so that the eyes seemed to retreat into their hollows: they were dark grey, keen, and lively. The face was long, the nose also; the mouth was large, the upper lip being the thicker. The beard was long, rather thick and black, with a few grey hairs in his later years. The nearest approach to an authentic portrait of Knox is a woodcut, engraved after a sketch from memory by Peter Young, and after another sketch of the same kind by an artist in Edinburgh. Compared with the peevish face of Calvin, also in Beza's *Icones*, Knox looks a broad-minded and genial character.

Despite the uncommon length to which Knox carried the contemporary approval of persecution, then almost universal, except among the Anabaptists (and any party out of power), he was not personally rancorous where religion was not concerned. But concerned it usually was! He was the subject of many anonymous pasquils and libels, we know, but he entirely disregarded them. If he hated any mortal personally, and beyond what true religion demands of a Christian, that mortal was the mother of Mary Stuart, an amiable lady in an impossible position. Of jealousy towards his brethren there is not a trace in Knox, and he told Queen Mary that he could ill bear to correct his own boys, though the age was as cruel to schoolboys as that of St. Augustine.

The faults of Knox arose not in his heart, but in his head; they sprung from intellectual errors, and from the belief that he was always right. He applied to his fellow-Christians — Catholics — the commands which early Israel supposed to be divinely directed against foreign worshippers of Chemosh and Moloch. He endeavoured to force his own theory of what the discipline of the Primitive Apostolic Church had been upon a modern nation, following the example of the little city state of Geneva, under Calvin. He claimed for preachers chosen by local congregations the privileges and powers of the apostolic companions of Christ, and in place of "sweet reasonableness," he applied the methods, quite alien to the Founder of Christianity, of the "Sons of Thunder." All controversialists then relied on isolated and inappropriate scriptural texts, and Biblical analogies which were not analogous; but Knox employed these things, with perhaps unusual inconsistency, in varying circumstances. His "History" is not more scrupulous than that of other partisans in an exciting contest, and examples of his taste for personal scandal are not scarce.

CHAPTER II: KNOX, WISHART, AND THE MURDER OF BEATON: 1545-1546

Our earliest knowledge of Knox, apart from mention of him in notarial documents, is derived from his own *History of the Reformation*. The portion of that work in which he first mentions himself was written about 1561-66, some twenty years after the events recorded, and in reading all this part of his Memoirs, and his account of the religious struggle, allowance must be made for errors of memory, or for erroneous information. We meet him first towards the end of “the holy days of Yule” — Christmas, 1545. Knox had then for some weeks been the constant companion and armed bodyguard of George Wishart, who was calling himself “the messenger of the Eternal God,” and preaching the new ideas in Haddington to very small congregations. This Wishart, Knox’s master in the faith, was a Forfarshire man; he is said to have taught Greek at Montrose, to have been driven thence in 1538 by the Bishop of Brechin, and to have recanted certain heresies in 1539. He had denied the merits of Christ as the Redeemer, but afterwards dropped that error, when persistence meant death at the stake. It was in Bristol that he “burned his faggot,” in place of being burned himself. There was really nothing humiliating in this recantation, for, after his release, he did not resume his heresy; clearly he yielded, not to fear, but to conviction of theological error.

He next travelled in Germany, where a Jew, on a Rhine boat, inspired or increased his aversion to works of sacred art, as being “idolatrous.” About 1542-43 he was reading with pupils at Cambridge, and was remarked for the severity of his ascetic virtue, and for his great charity. At some uncertain date he translated the Helvetic Confession of Faith, and he was more of a Calvinist than a Lutheran. In July 1543 he returned to Scotland; at least he returned with some “commissioners to England,” who certainly came home in July 1543, as Knox mentions, though later he gives the date of Wishart’s return in 1544, probably by a slip of the pen.

Coming home in July 1543, Wishart would expect a fair chance of preaching his novel ideas, as peace between Scotland and Protestant England now seemed secure, and Arran, the Scottish Regent, the chief of the almost Royal House of Hamilton, was, for the moment, himself a Protestant. For five days (August 28-September 3, 1543) the great Cardinal Beaton, the head of the party of the Church, was outlawed, and Wishart’s preaching at Dundee, about that date, is supposed by some to have stimulated an attack then made on the monasteries in the town. But Arran suddenly recanted, deserted the Protestants and the faction attached to England, and joined forces with Cardinal Beaton, who, in November 1543, visited Dundee, and imprisoned the ringleaders in the riots. They are called "the honestest men in the town," by the treble traitor and rascal, Crichton, laird of Brunston in Lothian, at this time a secret agent of Sadleir, the envoy of Henry VIII. (November 25, 1543).

By April 1544, Henry was preparing to invade Scotland, and the "earnest professors" of Protestant doctrines in Scotland sent to him "a Scottish man called Wysshert," with a proposal for the kidnapping or murder of Cardinal Beaton. Brunston and other Scottish lairds of Wishart's circle were agents of the plot, and in 1545-46 our George Wishart is found companioning with them. When Cassilis took up the threads of the plot against Beaton, it was to Cassilis's country in Ayrshire that Wishart went and there preached. Thence he returned to Dundee, to fight the plague and comfort the citizens, and, towards the end of 1545, moved to Lothian, expecting to be joined there by his westland supporters, led by Cassilis — but entertaining dark forebodings of his doom.

There were, however, other Wisharts, Protestants, in Scotland. It is not possible to prove that this reformer, though the associate, was the agent of the murderers, or was even conscious of their schemes. Yet if he had been, there was no matter for marvel. Knox himself approved of and applauded the murders of Cardinal Beaton and of Riccio, and, in that age, too many men of all creeds and parties believed that to kill an opponent of their religious cause was to imitate Phinehas, Jael, Jehu, and other patriots of Hebrew history. Dr. M'Crie remarks that Knox "held the opinion, that persons who, according to the law of God and the just laws of society, have forfeited their lives by the commission of flagrant crimes, such as notorious murderers and tyrants, may warrantably be put to death by private individuals, provided all redress in the ordinary course of justice is rendered impossible, in consequence of the offenders having usurped the executive authority, or being systematically protected by oppressive rulers." The ideas of Knox, in fact, varied in varying circumstances and moods, and, as we shall show, at times he preached notions far more truculent than those attributed to him by his biographer; at times was all for saint-like submission and mere "passive resistance."

The current ideas of both parties on "killing no murder" were little better than those of modern anarchists. It was a prevalent opinion that a king might have a subject assassinated, if to try him publicly entailed political inconveniences. The Inquisition, in Spain, vigorously repudiated this theory, but the Inquisition was in advance of the age. Knox, as to the doctrine of "killing no murder," was, and

Wishart may have been, a man of his time. But Knox, in telling the story of a murder which he approves, unhappily displays a glee unbecoming a reformer of the Church of Him who blamed St. Peter for his recourse to the sword. The very essence of Christianity is cast to the winds when Knox utters his laughter over the murders or misfortunes of his opponents, yielding, as Dr. M'Crie says, "to the strong propensity which he felt to indulge his vein of humour." Other good men rejoiced in the murder of an enemy, but Knox chuckled.

Nothing has injured Knox more in the eyes of posterity (when they happen to be aware of the facts) than this "humour" of his.

Knox might be pardoned had he merely excused the murder of "the devil's own son," Cardinal Beaton, who executed the law on his friend and master, George Wishart. To Wishart Knox bore a tender and enthusiastic affection, crediting him not only with the virtues of charity and courage which he possessed, but also with supernormal premonitions; "he was so clearly illuminated with the spirit of prophecy." These premonitions appear to have come to Wishart by way of vision. Knox asserted some prophetic gift for himself, but never hints anything as to the method, whether by dream, vision, or the hearing of voices. He often alludes to himself as "the prophet," and claims certain privileges in that capacity. For example the prophet may blamelessly preach what men call "treason," as we shall see. As to his actual predictions of events, he occasionally writes as if they were mere deductions from Scripture. God will punish the idolater; A or B is an idolater; therefore it is safe to predict that God will punish him or her. "What man then can cease to prophesy?" he asks; and there is, if we thus consider the matter, no reason why anybody should ever leave off prophesying.

But if the art of prophecy is common to all Bible-reading mankind, all mankind, being prophets, may promulgate treason, which Knox perhaps would not have admitted. He thought himself more specially a seer, and in his prayer after the failure of his friends, the murderers of Riccio, he congratulates himself on being favoured above the common sort of his brethren, and privileged to "forespeak" things, in an unique degree.

"I dare not deny . . . but that God hath revealed unto me secrets unknown to the world," he writes ; and these claims soar high above mere deductions from Scripture. His biographer, Dr. M'Crie, doubts whether we can dismiss, as necessarily baseless, all stories of "extraordinary premonitions since the completion of the canon of inspiration." Indeed, there appears to be no reason why we should draw the line at a given date, and "limit the operations of divine Providence." I would be the last to do so, but then Knox's premonitions are sometimes, or usually, without documentary and contemporary corroboration;

once he certainly prophesied after the event (as we shall see), and he never troubles himself about his predictions which were unfulfilled, as against Queen Elizabeth.

He supplied the Kirk with the tradition of supernormal premonitions in preachers — second-sight and clairvoyance — as in the case of Mr. Peden and other saints of the Covenant. But just as good cases of clairvoyance as any of Mr. Peden's are attributed to Catherine de Medici, who was not a saint, by her daughter, La Reine Margot, and others. In Knox, at all events, there is no trace of visual or auditory hallucinations, so common in religious experiences, whatever the creed of the percipient. He was not a visionary. More than this we cannot safely say about his prophetic vein.

The enthusiasm which induced a priest, notary, and teacher like Knox to carry a claymore in defence of a beloved teacher, Wishart, seems more appropriate to a man of about thirty than a man of forty, and, so far, supports the opinion that, in 1545, Knox was only thirty years of age. In that case, his study of the debates between the Church and the new opinions must have been relatively brief. Yet, in 1547, he already reckoned himself, not incorrectly, as a skilled disputant in favour of ideas with which he cannot have been very long familiar.

Wishart was taken, was tried, was condemned; was strangled, and his dead body was burned at St. Andrews on March 1, 1546. It is highly improbable that Knox could venture, as a marked man, to be present at the trial. He cites the account of it in his "History" from the contemporary Scottish narrative used by Foxe in his "Martyrs," and Laing, Knox's editor, thinks that Foxe "may possibly have been indebted for some" of the Scottish accounts "to the Scottish Reformer." It seems, if there be anything in evidence of tone and style, that what Knox quotes from Foxe in 1561-66 is what Knox himself actually wrote about 1547-48. Mr. Hill Burton observes in the tract "the mark of Knox's vehement colouring," and adds, "it is needless to seek in the account for precise accuracy." In "precise accuracy" many historians are as sadly to seek as Knox himself, but his peculiar "colouring" is all his own, and is as marked in the pamphlet on Wishart's trial, which he cites, as in the "History" which he acknowledged.

There are said to be but few copies of the first edition of the black letter tract on Wishart's trial, published in London, with Lindsay's "Tragedy of the Cardinal," by Day and Seres. I regard it as the earliest printed work of John Knox. The author, when he describes Lauder, Wishart's official accuser, as "a fed sow . . . his face running down with sweat, and frothing at the mouth like ane bear," who "spat at Maister George's face, . . . " shows every mark of Knox's vehement and pictorial style. His editor, Laing, bids us observe "that all these opprobrious terms are copied from Foxe, or rather from the black letter tract." But the black letter tract, I conceive, must be Knox's own. Its author, like Knox, "indulges his vein of humour" by speaking of friars as "fiends"; like Knox he calls Wishart "Maister George," and "that servand of God."

The peculiarities of the tract, good and bad, the vivid familiar manner, the vehemence, the pictorial quality, the violent invective, are the notes of Knox's "History." Already, by 1547, or not much later, he was the perfect master of his style; his tone no more resembles that of his contemporary and fellow-historian, Lesley, than the style of Mr. J. R. Green resembles that of Mr. S. R. Gardiner.

CHAPTER III: KNOX IN ST. ANDREWS CASTLE: THE GALLEYS: 1547-1549

We now take up Knox where we left him: namely when Wishart was arrested in January 1546. He was then tutor to the sons of the lairds of Langniddrie and Ormiston, Protestants and of the English party. Of his adventures we know nothing, till, on Beaton's murder (May 29, 1546), the Cardinal's successor, Archbishop Hamilton, drove him "from place to place," and, at Easter, 1547, he with his pupils entered the Castle of St. Andrews, then held, with some English aid, against the Regent Arran, by the murderers of Beaton and their adherents.

Knox was not present, of course, at Beaton's murder, about which he writes so "merrily," in his manner of mirth; nor at the events of Arran's siege of the castle, prior to April 1547. He probably, as regards these matters, writes from recollection of what Kirkcaldy of Grange, James Balfour, Balnaves, and the other murderers or associates of the murderers of the Cardinal told him in 1547, or later communicated to him as he wrote, about 1565-66. With his unfortunate love of imputing personal motives, he attributes the attacks by the rulers on the murderers mainly to the revengeful nature of Mary of Guise; the Cardinal having been "the comfort to all gentlewomen, *and especially to wanton widows*. His death must be revenged."

Knox avers that the besiegers of St. Andrews Castle, despairing of their task, near the end of January 1547 made a fraudulent truce with the assassins, hoping for the betrayal of the castle, or of some of the leaders. In his narrative we find partisanship or very erroneous information. The conditions were, he says, that (1) the murderers should hold the castle till Arran could obtain for them, from the Pope, a sufficient absolution; (2) that they should give hostages, as soon as the absolution was delivered to them; (3) that they and their friends should not be prosecuted, nor undergo any legal penalties for the murder of the Cardinal; (4) that they should meanwhile keep the eldest son of Arran as hostage, so long as their own hostages were kept. The Government, however, says Knox, "never minded to keep word of them" (of these conditions), "as the issue did declare."

There is no proof of this accusation of treachery on the part of Arran, or none known to me. The constant aim of Knox, his fixed idea, as an historian, is to accuse his adversaries of the treachery which often marked the negotiations of his friends.

From this point, the truce, dated by Knox late in January 1547, he devotes eighteen pages to his own call to the ministry by the castle people, and to his controversies and sermons in St. Andrews. He then returns to history, and avers that, about June 21, 1547, the papal absolution was presented to the garrison merely as a veil for a treasonable attack, but was rejected, as it included the dubious phrase, *Remittimus irremissibile*— "We remit the crime that cannot be remitted." Nine days later, June 29, he says, by "the treasonable mean" of Arran, Archbishop Hamilton, and Mary of Guise, twenty-one French galleys, and such an army as the Firth had never seen, hove into view, and on June 30 summoned the castle to surrender. The siege of St Andrews Castle, from the sea, by the French then began, but the garrison and castle were unharmed, and many of the galley slaves and some French soldiers were slain, and a ship was driven out of action. The French "shot two days" only. On July 19 the siege was renewed by land, guns were mounted on the spires of St. Salvator's College chapel and on the Cathedral, and did much scathe, though, during the first three weeks of the siege, the garrison "had many prosperous chances." Meanwhile Knox prophesied the defeat of his associates, because of "their corrupt life." They had robbed and ravished, and were probably demoralised by Knox's prophecies. On the last day of July the castle surrendered. Knox adds that his friends would deal with France alone, as "Scottish men had all traitorously betrayed them."

Now much of this narrative is wrong; wrong in detail, in suggestion, in omission. That a man of fifty, or sixty, could attribute the attacks on Beaton's murderers to mere revenge, specially to that of a "wanton widow," Mary of Guise (who had, we are to believe, so much of the Cardinal's attentions as his mistress, Mariotte Ogilvy, could spare), is significant of the spirit in which Knox wrote history. He had a strong taste for such scandals as this about the "wanton widow."

Wherever he touches on Mary of Guise (who once treated him in a spirit of banter), he deals a stab at her name and fame. On all that concerns her personal character and political conduct, he is unworthy of credit when uncorroborated by better authority. Indeed Knox's spirit is so unworthy that for this, among other reasons, Archbishop Spottiswoode declined to believe in his authorship of the "History." The actual facts were not those recorded by Knox.

As regards the "Appointment" or arrangement of the Scottish Government with the Castilians, it was not made late in January 1547, but was at least begun by December 17-19, 1546. On January 11, 1547, a spy of England, Stewart of Cardonald, reports that the garrison have given pledges and await their absolution from Rome. With regard to Knox's other statements in this place, it was not *after* this truce, first, but before it, on November 26, that Arran invited

French assistance, if England would not include Scotland in a treaty of peace with France. An English invasion was expected in February 1547, and Arran's object in the "Appointment" with the garrison was to prevent the English from becoming possessed of the Castle of St. Andrews. Far from desiring a papal pardon — a mere pretext to gain time for English relief — the garrison actually asked Henry VIII. to request the Emperor, to implore the Pope, "to stop and hinder their absolution." Knox very probably knew nothing of all this, but his efforts to throw the blame of treachery on his opponents are obviously futile.

As to the honesty of his associates — before the death of Henry VIII. (January 28, 1547), the Castilians had promised him not to surrender the place without his consent, and to put Arran's son in his hands, promises which they also made, on Henry's death, to the English Government; in February they repeated these promises, quite incompatible with their vow to surrender if absolved. Knox represents them as merely promising to Henry that they would return Arran's son, and support the plan of marrying Mary Stuart to Prince Edward of Wales! In March 1547, English ships gathered at Holy Island, to relieve the castle. Not on June 21, 1547, as Knox alleges, but before April 2, the papal absolution for the murderers arrived. They mocked at it; and the spy who reports the facts is told that they "would rather have a boll of wheat than all the Pope's remissions."

Whatever the terms of the papal remission, they had already, before it arrived, bound themselves to England not to accept it save with English concurrence; and England, then preparing to invade Scotland, could not possibly concur. Such was the honesty of Knox's party, and we already see how far his "History" deserves to be accepted as historical.

Next, what is most surprising, Knox's account of the month of ineffectual siege by the French, while he was actually in the castle, rests on a strange error of his memory. The contemporary diary, *Diurnal of Occurrences* dates the *sending* (the arrival must be meant) of the French galleys, not on June 29, as Knox dates their arrival, but on July 24. Professor Hume Brown says that the *Diurnal* gives the date as *June* 24 (a slip of the pen), "but Knox had surely the best opportunity of knowing both facts" — that is, the number of the galleys, and the date of their coming. Despite his unrivalled opportunities of knowledge, Knox did not know. It is not quite correct to say that "Knox in his 'History' shows throughout a conscientious regard to accuracy of statement." Whatever the number of the galleys (Knox says twenty-one; the *Diurnal* says sixteen), on July 13-14, they are reported by Lord Eure, at Berwick, as passing or having just passed Eyemouth. They did not therefore suffer for three weeks at the garrison's hands, or for three weeks desert the siege, but probably reached the scene of action before the date in the *Diurnal* (July 24), as, on July 23, the

French Ambassador in England heard that they were investing the castle. Allowing five or six days for transmission of news, they probably began the attack from the sea about July 16 or 17, not, as Knox says, on June 30. Perhaps he is right in saying that the French galleys only fired for two days and retreated, rather battered, to Dundee. Land forces next attacked the hold, which surrendered on July 29 (as was known in London on August 5), that is, on the first day that the *land* battery was erected.

Knox gives a much more full account of his own controversies, in April-June 1547, than of political events. He first, on arrival at the castle, drew up a catechism for his pupils, and publicly catechised them on its tenets, in the parish kirk in South Street. It is unfortunate that we do not possess this catechism. At the time when he wrote, Knox was possibly more of "Martin's" mind, as he familiarly terms Luther, both as to the Sacrament and as to the Order of Bishops, than he was after his residence in Geneva. Wishart, however, was well acquainted with Helvetic doctrine; he had, as we saw, translated a Helvetic Confession of Faith, perhaps with the view of introducing it into Scotland, and Knox may already have imbibed Calvinism from him. He was not yet — he never was — a full-blown Presbyterian, and, while thinking nothing of "orders," would not have rejected a bishop, if the bishop *preached* and was of godly and frugal life. Already sermons were the most important part of public worship in the mind of Knox.

In addition to public catechising he publicly expounded, and lectured on the Fourth Gospel, in the chapel of the castle. He doubted if he had "a lawful vocation" to *preach*. The castle pulpit was then occupied by an ex-friar named Rough. This divine, later burned in England, preached a sermon declaring a doctrine accepted by Knox, namely, that any congregation could call on any man in whom they "espied the gifts of God" to be their preacher; he offered Knox the post, and all present agreed. Knox wept, and for days his gloom declared his sense of his responsibility: such was "his holy vocation." The garrison was, confessedly, brutal, licentious, and rapacious, but they "all" partook of the holy Communion.

In controversy, Knox declared the Church to be "the synagogue of Satan," and in the Pope he detected and denounced "the Man of Sin." On the following Sunday he proved, from Daniel, that the Roman Church is "that last Beast." The Church is also anti-Christ, and "the Hoore of Babylon," and Knox dilated on the personal misconduct of Popes and "all shavelings for the most part." He contrasted Justification by Faith with the customs of pardons and pilgrimages.

After these remarks, a controversy was held between Knox and the sub-prior, Wynram, the Scottish Vicar of Bray, Knox being understood to maintain that no bishop who did not preach was really a bishop; that the Mass is “abominable idolatry”; that Purgatory does not exist; and that the tithes are not necessarily the property of churchmen — a doctrine very welcome to the hungry nobles of Scotland. Knox, of course, easily overcame an ignorant opponent, a friar, who joined in the fray. His own arguments he later found time to write out fully in the French galleys, in which he was a prisoner, after the fall of the castle. If he “wrate in the galleys,” as he says, they cannot have been always such floating hells as they are usually reckoned.

That Knox, and other captives from the castle, were placed in the galleys after their surrender, was an abominable stretch of French power. They were not subjects of France. The terms on which they surrendered are not exactly known. Knox avers that they were to be free to live in France, and that, if they wished to leave, they were to be conveyed, at French expense, to any country except Scotland. Buchanan declares that only the lives of the garrison and their friends were secured by the terms of surrender. Lesley supports Knox, who is probably accurate.

To account for the French severity, Knox tells us that the Pope insisted on it, appealing to both the Scottish and French Governments; and Scotland sent an envoy to France to beg “that those of the castle should be sharply handled.” Men of birth were imprisoned, the rest went to the galleys. Knox’s life cannot have been so bad as that of the Huguenot galley slaves under Louis XIV. He was allowed to receive letters; he read and commented on a treatise written in prison by Balnaves; and he even wrote a theological work, unless this work was his commentary on Balnaves. These things can only have been possible when the galleys were not on active service. In a very manly spirit, he never dilated on his sufferings, and merely alludes to “the torment I sustained in the galleys.” He kept up his heart, always prophesying deliverance; and once (June, 1548?), when in view of St. Andrews, declared that he should preach again in the kirk where his career began. Unluckily, the person to whom he spoke, at a moment when he himself was dangerously ill, denied that he had ever been in the galleys at all! He was Sir James Balfour, a notorious scoundrel, quite untrustworthy; according to Knox, he had spoken of the prophecy, in Scotland, long before its fulfilment.

Knox’s health was more or less undermined, while his spiritual temper was not mollified by nineteen months of the galleys, mitigated as they obviously were.

It is, doubtless, to his “torment” in the galleys that Knox refers when he writes: “I know how hard the battle is between the spirit and the flesh, under the heavy cross of affliction, where no worldly defence, but present death, does appear. . . . Rests only Faith, provoking us to call earnestly, and pray for assistance of God’s spirit, wherein if we continue, our most desperate calamities shall turn to gladness, and to a prosperous end. . . . With experience I write this.”

In February or March, 1549, Knox was released; by April he was in England, and, while Edward VI. lived, was in comparative safety.

CHAPTER IV: KNOX IN ENGLAND: THE BLACK RUBRIC: EXILE: 1549-1554

Knox at once appeared in England in a character revolting to the later Presbyterian conscience, which he helped to educate. The State permitted no cleric to preach without a Royal license, and Knox was now a State licensed preacher at Berwick, one of many "State officials with a specified mission." He was an agent of the English administration, then engaged in forcing a detested religion on the majority of the English people. But he candidly took his own line, indifferent to the compromises of the rulers in that chaos of shifting opinions. For example, the Prayer Book of Edward VI. at that time took for granted kneeling as the appropriate attitude for communicants. Knox, at Berwick, on the other hand, bade his congregation sit, as he conceived that to have been the usage at the first institution of the rite. Possibly the Apostles, in fact, supped in a recumbent attitude, as Cranmer justly remarked later (John xiii. 25), but Knox supposed them to have sat. In a letter to his Berwick flock, he reminds them of his practice on this point; but he would not dissent from kneeling if "magistrates make known, as that they" (would?) "have done if ministers were willing to do their duties, that kneeling is not retained in the Lord's Supper for maintenance of any superstition," much less as "adoration of the Lord's Supper." This, "for a time," would content him: and this he obtained.

Here Knox appears to make the civil authority— "the magistrates" — governors of the Church, while at the same time he does not in practice obey them unless they accept his conditions.

This letter to the Berwick flock must be prior to the autumn of 1552, in which, as we shall see, Knox obtained his terms as to kneeling. He went on, in his epistle to the Berwickians, to speak in "a tone of moderation and modesty," for which, says Dr. Lorimer, not many readers will be prepared. In this modest passage, Knox says that, as to "the chief points of religion," he, with God's help, "will give place to neither man nor angel teaching the contrary" of his preaching. Yet an angel might be supposed to be well informed on points of doctrine! "But as to ceremonies or rites, things of smaller weight, I was not minded to move contention. . . ." The one point which— "because I am but one, having in my contrary magistrates, common order, and judgments, and many learned" — he is prepared to yield, and that for a time, is the practice of kneeling, but only on three conditions. These being granted, "with patience will

I bear that one thing, daily thirsting and calling unto God for reformation of that and others." But he did not bear that one thing; he would *not* kneel even after his terms were granted! This is the sum of Knox's "moderation and modesty"!

Though he is not averse from talking about himself, Knox, in his "History," spares but three lines to his five years' residence in England (1549-54). His first charge was Berwick (1549-51), where we have seen he celebrated holy Communion by the Swiss rite, all meekly sitting. The Second Prayer Book, of 1552, when Knox ministered in Newcastle, bears marks of his hand. He opposed, as has been said, the rubric bidding the communicants kneel; the attitude savoured of "idolatry."

The circumstances in which Knox carried his point on this question are most curious. Just before October 12, 1552, a foreign Protestant, Johannes Utenhovius, wrote to the Zurich Protestant, Bullinger, to the effect that a certain *vir bonus, Scotus natione* (a good man and a Scot), a preacher (*concionator*), of the Duke of Northumberland, had delivered a sermon before the King and Council, "in which he freely inveighed against the Anglican custom of kneeling at the Lord's Supper." Many listeners were greatly moved, and Utenhovius prayed that the sermon might be of blessed effect. Knox was certainly in London at this date, and was almost certainly the excellent Scot referred to by Utenhovius. The Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. was then in such forwardness that Parliament had appointed it to be used in churches, beginning on November 1. The book included the command to kneel at the Lord's Supper, and any agitation against the practice might seem to be too late. Cranmer, the Primate, was in favour of the rubric as it stood, and on October 7, 1552, addressed the Privy Council in a letter which, without naming Knox, clearly shows his opinion of our Reformer. The book, *as it stood*, said Cranmer, had the assent of King and Parliament — now it was to be altered, apparently, "without Parliament." The Council ought not to be thus influenced by "glorious and unquiet spirits." Cranmer calls Knox, as Throckmorton later called Queen Mary's Bothwell, "glorious" in the sense of the Latin *gloriosus*, "swaggering," or "arrogant."

Cranmer goes on to denounce the "glorious and unquiet spirits, which can like nothing but that is after their own fancy, and cease not to make trouble and disquietude when things be most quiet and in good order." Their argument (Knox's favourite), that whatever is not commanded in Scripture is unlawful and ungodly, "is a subversion of all order as well in religion as in common policy."

Cranmer ends with the amazing challenge: "I will set my foot by his to be tried in the fire, that his doctrine is untrue, and not only untrue but seditious, and perilous to be heard of any subjects, as a thing breaking the bridle of obedience and loosing them from the bond of all princes' laws."

Cranmer had a premonition of the troubled years of James VI. and of the Covenant, when this question of kneeling was the first cause of the Bishops' wars. But Knox did not accept, as far as we know, the mediæval ordeal by fire.

Other questions about practices enjoined in the Articles arose. A "Confession," in which Knox's style may be traced, was drawn up, and consequently that "Declaration on Kneeling" was intercalated into the Prayer Book, wherein it is asserted that the attitude does not imply adoration of the elements, or belief in the Real Presence, "for that were idolatry." Elizabeth dropped, and Charles II. restored, this "Black Rubric" which Anglicanism owes to the Scottish Reformer. He "once had a good opinion," he says, of the Liturgy as it now stood, but he soon found that it was full of idolatries.

The most important event in the private life of Knox, during his stay at Berwick, was his acquaintance with a devout lady of tormented conscience, Mrs. Bowes, wife of the Governor of Norham Castle on Tweed. Mrs. Bowes's tendency to the new ideas in religion was not shared by her husband and his family; the results will presently be conspicuous. In April 1550, Knox preached at Newcastle a sermon on his favourite doctrine that the Mass is "Idolatry," because it is "of man's invention," an opinion not shared by Tunstall, then Bishop of Durham. Knox used "idolatry" in a constructive sense, as when we talk of "constructive treason." But, in practice, he regarded Catholics as "idolaters," in the same sense as Elijah regarded Hebrew worshippers of alien deities, Chemosh or Moloch, and he later drew the inference that idolaters, as in the Old Testament, must be put to death. Thus his was logically a persecuting religion.

Knox was made a King's chaplain and transferred to Newcastle. He saw that the country was, by preference, Catholic; that the life of Edward VI. hung on a thread; and that with the accession of his sister, Mary Tudor, Protestant principles would be as unsafe as under "umquhile the Cardinal." Knox therefore, "from the foresight of troubles to come" (so he writes to Mrs. Bowes, February 28, 1554), declined any post, a bishopric, or a living, which would in honour oblige him to face the fire of persecution. At the same time he was even then far at odds with the Church of England that he had sound reasons for refusing benefices.

On Christmas day, 1552, he preached at Newcastle against Papists, as "thirsting nothing more than the King's death, which their iniquity would procure." In two brief years Knox was himself publicly expressing his own thirst for the Queen's death, and praying for a Jehu or a Phinehas, slayers of idolaters, such as Mary Tudor. If any fanatic had taken this hint, and the life of

Mary Tudor, Catholics would have said that Knox's "iniquity procured" the murder, and they would have had fair excuse for the assertion.

Meanwhile charges were brought against the Reformer, on the ground of his Christmas sermon of peace and goodwill. Northumberland (January 9, 1552-53) sends to Cecil "a letter of poor Knox, by the which you may perceive what perplexity the poor soul remaineth in at this present." We have not Knox's interesting letter, but Northumberland pled his cause against a charge of treason. In fact, however, the Court highly approved of his sermon. He was presently again in what he believed to be imminent danger of life: "I fear that I be not yet ripe, nor able to glorify Christ by my faith," he wrote to Mrs. Bowes, "but what lacketh now, God shall perform in His own time." We do not know what peril threatened the Reformer now (probably in March 1553), but he frequently, later, seems to have doubted his own "ripeness" for martyrdom. His reluctance to suffer did not prevent him from constant attendance to the tedious self-tormentings of Mrs. Bowes, and of "three honest poor women" in London.

Knox, at all events, was not so "perplexed" that he feared to speak his mind in the pulpit. In Lent, 1553, preaching before the boy king, he denounced his ministers in trenchant historical parallels between them and Achitophel, Shebna, and Judas. Later, young Mr. Mackail, applying the same method to the ministers of Charles II., was hanged. "What wonder is it then," said Knox, "that a young and innocent king be deceived by crafty, covetous, wicked, and ungodly councillors? I am greatly afraid that Achitophel be councillor, that Judas bear the purse, and that Shebna be scribe, comptroller, and treasurer."

This appears the extreme of audacity. Yet nothing worse came to Knox than questions, by the Council, as to his refusal of a benefice, and his declining, as he still did, to kneel at the Communion (April 14, 1553). His answers prove that he was out of harmony with the fluctuating Anglicanism of the hour. Northumberland could not then resent the audacities of pulpiteers, because the Protestants were the only party who might stand by him in his approaching effort to crown Lady Jane Grey. Now all the King's preachers, obviously by concerted action, "thundered" against Edward's Council, in the Lent or Easter of 1553. Manifestly, in the old Scots phrase, "the Kirk had a back"; had some secular support, namely that of their party, which Northumberland could not slight. Meanwhile Knox was sent on a preaching tour in Buckinghamshire, and there he was when Edward VI. died, in the first week of July 1553.

Knox's official attachment to England expired with his preaching license, on the death of Edward VI. and the accession of Mary Tudor. He did not at once leave the country, but preached both in London and on the English border, while the new queen was settling herself on the throne. While within Mary's reach, Knox did not encourage resistance against that idolatress; he did not do so till he was safe in France. Indeed, in his prayer used after the death of Edward VI., before the fires of Oxford and Smithfield were lit, Knox wrote: "Illuminate the heart of our Sovereign Lady, Queen Mary, with pregnant gifts of the Holy Ghost. . . . Repress thou the pride of those that would rebel. . . . Mitigate the hearts of those that persecute us."

In the autumn of 1553, Knox's health was very bad; he had gravel, and felt his bodily strength broken. Moreover, he was in the disagreeable position of being betrothed to a very young lady, Marjorie Bowes, with the approval of her devout mother, the wife of Richard Bowes, commander of Norham Castle, near Berwick, but to the anger and disgust of the Bowes family in general. They by no means shared Knox's ideas of religion, rather regarding him as a penniless unfrocked "Scot runagate," whose alliance was discreditable and distasteful, and might be dangerous. "Maist unpleasing words" passed, and it is no marvel that Knox, being persecuted in one city, fled to another, leaving England for Dieppe early in March 1554.

His conscience was not entirely at ease as to his flight. "Why did I flee? Assuredly I cannot tell, but of one thing I am sure, the fear of death was not the chief cause of my fleeing," he wrote to Mrs. Bowes from Dieppe. "Albeit that I have, in the beginning of this battle, appeared to play the faint-hearted and feeble soldier (the cause I remit to God), yet my prayer is that I may be restored to the battle again." Knox was, in fact, most valiant when he had armed men at his back; he had no enthusiasm for taking part in the battle when unaided by the arm of flesh. On later occasions this was very apparent, and he has confessed, as we saw, that he did not choose to face "the trouble to come" without means of retreat. His valour was rather that of the general than of the lonely martyr. The popular idea of Knox's personal courage, said to have been expressed by the Regent Morton in the words spoken at his funeral, "here lieth a man who in his life never feared the face of man," is entirely erroneous. His learned and sympathetic editor, David Laing, truly writes: "Knox cannot be said to have possessed the impetuous and heroic boldness of a Luther when surrounded with danger. . . . On more than one occasion Knox displayed a timidity or shrinking from danger, scarcely to have been expected from one who boasted of his willingness to endure the utmost torture, or suffer death in his Master's cause. Happily he was not put to the test. . . ."

Dr. Laing puts the case more strongly than I feel justified in doing, for Knox, far from "boasting of his willingness to face the utmost torture," more than once doubts his own readiness for martyrdom. We must remember that even Blessed Edmund Campion, who went gaily to torture and death, had doubts as to the necessity of that journey.

Nor was there any reason why Knox should stay in England to be burned, if he could escape — with less than ten groats in his pocket — as he did. It is not for us moderns to throw the first stone at a reluctant martyr, still less to applaud useless self-sacrifice, but we do take leave to think that, having fled early, himself, from the martyr's crown, Knox showed bad taste in his harsh invectives against Protestants who, staying in England, conformed to the State religion under Mary Tudor.

It is not impossible that his very difficult position as the lover of Marjorie Bowes — a position of which, while he remained in England, the burden fell on the poor girl — may have been one reason for Knox's flight, while the entreaties of his friends that he would seek safety must have had their influence.

On the whole it seems more probable that when he committed himself to matrimony with a young girl, the fifth daughter of Mrs. Bowes, he was approaching his fortieth rather than his fiftieth year. Older than he are happy husbands made, sometimes, though Marjorie Bowes's choice may have been directed by her pious mother, whose soul could find no rest in the old faith, and not much in the new.

At thirty-eight the Reformer, we must remember, must have been no uncomely wooer. His conversation must have been remarkably vivid: he had adventures enough to tell, by land and sea; while such a voice as he raised withal in the pulpit, like Edward Irving, has always been potent with women, as Sir Walter Scott remarks in Irving's own case. His expression, says Young, had a certain geniality; on the whole we need not doubt that Knox could please when he chose, especially when he was looked up to as a supreme authority. He despised women in politics, but had many friends of the sex, and his letters to them display a manly tenderness of affection without sentimentality.

Writing to Mrs. Bowes from London in 1553, Knox mentions, as one of the sorrows of life, that "such as would most gladly remain together, for mutual comfort, cannot be suffered so to do. Since the first day that it pleased the providence of God to bring you and me in familiarity, I have always delighted in your company." He then wanders into religious reflections, but we see that he liked Mrs. Bowes, and Marjorie Bowes too, no doubt: he is careful to style the elderly lady "Mother." Knox's letters to Mrs. Bowes show the patience and courtesy with which the Reformer could comfort and counsel a middle-aged lady in trouble about her innocent soul. As she recited her infirmities, he reminds her, he "started back, and that is my common consuetude when anything pierces or touches my heart. Call to your mind what I did standing at the cupboard at Alnwick; in very deed I thought that no creature had been tempted as I was" —

not by the charms of Mrs. Bowes, of course: he found that Satan troubled the lady with “the very same words that he troubles me with.” Mrs. Bowes, in truth, with premature scepticism, was tempted to think that “the Scriptures of God are but a tale, and no credit to be given to them.” The Devil, she is reminded by Knox, has induced “some philosophers to affirm that the world never had a beginning,” which he refutes by showing that God predicted the pains of childbearing; and Mrs. Bowes, as the mother of twelve, knows how true *this* is.

The circular argument may or may not have satisfied Mrs. Bowes.

The young object of Knox’s passion, Marjorie Bowes, is only alluded to as “she whom God hath offered unto me, and commanded me to love as my own flesh,” — after her, Mrs. Bowes is the dearest of mankind to Knox. No mortal was ever more long-suffering with a spiritual hypochondriac, who avers that “the sins that reigned in Sodom and Gomore reign in me, and I have small power or none to resist!” Knox replies, with common sense, that Mrs. Bowes is obviously ignorant of the nature of these offences.

Writing to his betrothed he says nothing personal: merely reiterates his lessons of comfort to her mother. Meanwhile the lovers were parted, Knox going abroad; and it is to be confessed that he was not eager to come back.

CHAPTER V: EXILE: APPEALS FOR A PHINEHAS, AND A JEHU: 1554

No change of circumstances could be much more bitter than that which exile brought to Knox. He had been a decently endowed official of State, engaged in bringing a reluctant country into the ecclesiastical fold which the State, for the hour, happened to prefer. His task had been grateful, and his congregations, at least at Berwick and Newcastle, had, as a rule, been heartily with him. Wherever he preached, affectionate women had welcomed him and hung upon his words. The King and his ministers had hearkened unto him — young Edward with approval, Northumberland with such emotions as we may imagine — while the Primate of England had challenged him to a competitive ordeal by fire, and had been defeated, apparently without recourse to the fire-test.

But now all was changed; Knox was a lonely rover in a strange land, supported probably by collections made among his English friends, and by the hospitality of the learned. In his wanderings his heart burned within him many a time, and he abruptly departed from his theory of passive resistance. Now he eagerly desired to obtain, from Protestant doctors and pontiffs, support for the utterly opposite doctrine of armed resistance. Such support he did not get, or not in a satisfactory measure, so he commenced prophet on his own lines, and on his own responsibility.

When Knox's heart burned within him, he sometimes seized the pen and dashed off fiery tracts which occasionally caused inconvenience to the brethren, and trouble to himself in later years. In cooler moments, and when dubious or prosperous, he now and again displayed a calm opportunism much at odds with the inspirations of his grief and anger.

After his flight to Dieppe in March 1554, Knox was engaged, then, with a problem of difficulty, one of the central problems of his career and of the distracted age. In modern phrase, he wished to know how far, and in what fashion, persons of one religion might resist another religion, imposed upon them by the State of which they were subjects. On this point we have now no doubt, but in the sixteenth century "Authority" was held sacred, and martyrdom, according to Calvin, was to be preferred to civil war. If men were Catholics, and if the State was Protestant, they were liable, later, under Knox, to fines, exile, and death; but power was not yet given to him. If they were Protestants under a Catholic ruler, or Puritans under Anglican authority, Knox himself had laid down the rule of their conduct in his letter to his Berwick congregation. “Remembering always, beloved brethren, that due obedience be given to magistrates, rulers, and princes, without tumult, grudge, or sedition. For, howsoever wicked themselves be in life, or howsoever ungodly their precepts or commandments be, ye must obey them for conscience’ sake; except in chief points of religion, and then ye ought rather to obey God than man: *not to pretend to defend God’s truth or religion, ye being subjects, by violence or sword, but patiently suffering what God shall please be laid upon you for constant confession of your faith and belief*.” Man or angel who teaches contrary doctrine is corrupt of judgment, sent by God to blind the unworthy. And Knox proceeded to teach contrary doctrine!

His truly Christian ideas are of date 1552, with occasional revivals as opportunity suggested. In exile he was now asking (1554), how was a Protestant minority or majority to oppose the old faith, backed by kings and princes, fire and sword? He answered the question in direct contradiction of his Berwick programme: he was now all for active resistance. Later, in addressing Mary of Guise, and on another occasion, he recurred to his Berwick theory, and he always found biblical texts to support his contradictory messages.

At this moment resistance seemed hopeless enough. In England the Protestants of all shades were decidedly in a minority. They had no chance if they openly rose in arms; their only hope was in the death of Mary Tudor and the succession of Elizabeth — itself a poor hope in the eyes of Knox, who detested the idea of a female monarch. Might they “bow down in the House of Rimmon” by a feigned conformity? Knox, in a letter to the Faithful, printed in 1554, entirely rejected this compromise, to which Cecil stooped, thereby deserving hell, as the relentless Knox (who had fled) later assured him.

In the end of March 1554, probably, Knox left Dieppe for Geneva, where he could consult Calvin, not yet secure in his despotism, though he had recently burned Servetus. Next he went to Zurich, and laid certain questions before Bullinger, who gave answers in writing as to Knox’s problems.

Could a woman rule a kingdom by divine right, and transfer the same to her husband? — Mary Tudor to Philip of Spain, is, of course, to be understood. Bullinger replied that it was a hazardous thing for the godly to resist the laws of a country. Philip the eunuch, though converted, did not drive Queen Candace out of Ethiopia. If a tyrannous and ungodly Queen reign, godly persons “have example and consolation in the case of Athaliah.” The transfer of power to a husband is an affair of the laws of the country.

Again, must a ruler who enforces “idolatry” be obeyed? May true believers, in command of garrisons, repel “this ungodly violence”? Bullinger answered, in effect, that "it is very difficult to pronounce upon every particular case." He had not the details before him. In short, nothing definite was to be drawn out of Bullinger.

Dr. M'Crie observes, indeed, that Knox submitted to the learned of Switzerland "certain difficult questions, which were suggested by the present condition of affairs in England, and about which his mind had been greatly occupied. Their views with respect to these coinciding with his own, he was confirmed in the judgment which he had already formed for himself."

In fact, Knox himself merely says that he had "reasoned with" pastors and the learned; he does not say that they agreed with him, and they certainly did not. Despite the reserve of Bullinger and of Calvin, Knox was of his new opinions still. These divines never backed his views.

By May, Knox had returned to Dieppe, and published an epistle to the Faithful. The rebellion of Sir Thomas Wyatt had been put down, a blow to true religion. We have no evidence that Knox stimulated the rising, but he alludes once to his exertions in favour of the Princess Elizabeth. The details are unknown.

In July, apparently, Knox printed his "Faithful Admonition to the Professors of God's Truth in England," and two editions of the tract were published in that country. The pamphlet is full of violent language about "the bloody, butcherly brood" of persecutors, and Knox spoke of what might have occurred had the Queen "been sent to hell before these days." The piece presents nothing, perhaps, so plain spoken about the prophet's right to preach treason as a passage in the manuscript of an earlier Knoxian epistle of May 1554 to the Faithful. "The prophets of God sometimes may teach treason against kings, and yet neither he, nor such as obey the word spoken in the Lord's name by him, offends God." That sentence contains doctrine not submitted to Bullinger by Knox. He could not very well announce himself to Bullinger as a "prophet of God." But the sentence, which occurs in manuscript copies of the letter of May 1554, does not appear in the black letter printed edition. Either Knox or the publisher thought it too risky.

In the published "Admonition," however, of July 1554, we find Knox exclaiming: "God, for His great mercy's sake, stir up some Phineas, Helias, or Jehu, that the blood of abominable idolaters may pacify God's wrath, that it consume not the whole multitude. Amen." This is a direct appeal to the assassin. If anybody will play the part of Phinehas against "idolaters" — that is the Queen of England and Philip of Spain — God's anger will be pacified. "Delay not thy vengeance, O Lord, but let death devour them in haste . . . For there is no hope of their amendment, . . . He shall send Jehu to execute his just judgments against idolaters. Jezebel herself shall not escape the vengeance and plagues that are prepared for her portion." These passages are essential. Professor Hume Brown expresses our own sentiments when he remarks: "In casting such a pamphlet into England at the time he did, Knox indulged his indignation, in itself so natural under the circumstances, at no personal risk, while he seriously compromised those who had the strongest claims on his most generous consideration." This is plain truth, and when some of Knox's English brethren later behaved to him in a manner which we must wholly condemn, their conduct, they said, had for a motive the mischief done to Protestants in England by his fiery "Admonition," and their desire to separate themselves from the author of such a pamphlet.

Knox did not, it will be observed, here call all or any of the faithful to a general massacre of their Catholic fellow-subjects. He went to that length later, as we shall show. In an epistle of 1554 he only writes: "Some shall demand, 'What then, shall we go and slay all idolaters?' *That* were the office, dear brethren, of every civil magistrate within his realm. . . . The slaying of idolaters appertains not to every particular man."

This means that every Protestant king should massacre all his inconvertible Catholic subjects! This was indeed a counsel of perfection; but it could never be executed, owing to the carnal policy of worldly men.

In writing about "the office of the civil magistrate," Knox, a Border Scot of the age of the blood feud, seems to have forgotten, first, that the Old Testament prophets of the period were not unanimous in their applause of Jehu's massacre of the royal family; next, that between the sixteenth century A.D. and Jehu, had intervened the Christian revelation. Our Lord had given no word of warrant to murder or massacre! No persecuted apostle had dealt in appeals to the dagger. As for Jehu, a prophet had condemned *his* conduct. Hosea writes that the Lord said unto him, "Yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu," but doubtless Knox would have argued that Hosea was temporarily uninspired, as he argued about St. Paul and St. James later.

However this delicate point may be settled, the appeal for a Phinehas is certainly unchristian. The idolaters, the unreformed, might rejoice, with the Nuncio of 1583, that the Duc de Guise had a plan for murdering Elizabeth, though it was not to be communicated to the Vicar of God, who should have no such dealings against "that wicked woman." To some Catholics, Elizabeth: to Knox, Mary was as Jezebel, and might laudably be assassinated. In idolaters nothing can surprise us; when persecuted they, in their unchristian fashion, may retort with the dagger or the bowl. But that Knox should have frequently maintained the doctrine of death to religious opponents is a strange and deplorable circumstance. In reforming the Church of Christ he omitted some elements of Christianity.

Suppose, for a moment, that in deference to the teaching of the Gospel, Knox had never called for a Jehu, but had ever denounced, by voice and pen, those murderous deeds of his own party which he celebrates as “godly facts,” he would have raised Protestantism to a moral pre-eminence. Dark pages of Scottish history might never have been written: the consciences of men might have been touched, and the cruelties of the religious conflict might have been abated. Many of them sprang from the fear of assassination.

But Knox in some of his writings identified his cause with the palace revolutions of an ancient Oriental people. Not that he was a man of blood; when in France he dissuaded Kirkcaldy of Grange and others from stabbing the gaolers in making their escape from prison. Where idolaters in official position were concerned, and with a pen in his hand, he had no such scruples. He was a child of the old pre-Christian scriptures; of the earlier, not of the later prophets.

CHAPTER VI: KNOX IN THE ENGLISH PURITAN TROUBLES AT FRANKFORT: 1554-1555

The consequences of the “Admonition” came home to Knox when English refugees in Frankfort, impeded by him and others in the use of their Liturgy, accused him of high treason against Philip and Mary, and the Emperor, whom he had compared to Nero as an enemy of Christ.

The affair of “The Troubles at Frankfort” brought into view the great gulf for ever fixed between Puritanism and the Church of England. It was made plain that Knox and the Anglican community were of incompatible temperaments, ideas, and, we may almost say, instincts. To Anglicans like Cranmer, Knox, from the first, was as antipathetic as they were to him. “We can assure you,” wrote some English exiles for religion’s sake to Calvin, “that that outrageous pamphlet of Knox’s” (his “Admonition”) “added much oil to the flame of persecution in England. For before the publication of that book not one of our brethren had suffered death; but as soon as it came forth we doubt not but you are well aware of the number of excellent men who have perished in the flames; to say nothing of how many other godly men have been exposed to the risk of all their property, and even life itself, on the sole ground of either having had this book in their possession or having read it.”

Such were the charges brought against Knox by these English Protestant exiles, fleeing from the persecution that followed the “Admonition,” and, they say, took fresh ferocity from that tract.

The quarrel between Knox and them definitely marks the beginning of the rupture between the fathers of the Church of England and the fathers of Puritanism, Scottish Presbyterianism, and Dissent. The representatives of Puritans and of Anglicans were now alike exiled, poor, homeless, without any abiding city. That they should instantly quarrel with each other over their prayer book (that which Knox had helped to correct) was, as Calvin told them, “extremely absurd.” Each faction probably foresaw — certainly Knox’s party foresaw — that, in the English congregation at Frankfort, a little flock barely tolerated, was to be settled the character of Protestantism in England, if ever England returned to Protestantism. “This evil” (the acceptance of the English Second Book of Prayer of Edward VI.) “shall in time be established . . . and never be redressed, neither shall there for ever be an end of this controversy in England,” wrote Knox’s party to the Senate of Frankfort. The religious disruption in England was, in fact, incurable, but so it would have been had the Knoxians prevailed in Frankfort. The difference between the Churchman and the Dissenter goes to the root of the English character; no temporary triumph of either side could have brought Peace and union. While the world stands they will not be peaceful and united.

The trouble arose thus. At the end of June 1554, some English exiles of the Puritan sort, men who objected to surplices, responses, kneeling at the Communion, and other matters of equal moment, came to Frankfort. They obtained leave to use the French Protestant Chapel, provided that they "should not dissent from the Frenchmen in doctrine or ceremonies, lest they should thereby minister occasions of offence." They had then to settle what Order of services they should use; "anything they pleased," said the magistrates of Frankfort, "as long as they and the French kept the peace." They decided to adopt the English Order, barring responses, the Litany, the surplice, "and many other things." The Litany was regarded by Knox as rather of the nature of magic than of prayer, the surplice was a Romish rag, and there was some other objection to the congregation's taking part in the prayers by responses, though they were not forbidden to mingle their voices in psalmody. *Dissidium valde absurdum*— "a very absurd quarrel," among exiled fellow-countrymen, said Calvin, was the dispute which arose on these points. The Puritans, however, decided to alter the service to their taste, and enjoyed the use of the chapel. They had obtained a service which they were not likely to have been allowed to enforce in England had Edward VI. lived; but on this point they were of another opinion.

This success was providential. They next invited English exiles abroad to join them at Frankfort, saying nothing about their mutilations of the service book. If these brethren came in, when they were all restored to England, if ever they were restored, their example, that of sufferers, would carry the day, and their service would for ever be that of the Anglican Church. The other exiled brethren, on receiving this invitation, had enough of the wisdom of the serpent to ask, "Are we to be allowed to use our own prayer book?" The answer of the godly of Frankfort evaded the question. At last the Frankfort Puritans showed their hand: they disapproved of various things in the Prayer Book. Knox, summoned from Geneva, a reluctant visitor, was already one of their preachers. In November 1554 came Grindal, later Archbishop of Canterbury, from Zurich, ready to omit some ceremonies, so that he and his faction might have "the substance" of the Prayer Book. Negotiations went on, and it was proposed by the Puritans to use the Geneva service. But Knox declined to do that, without the knowledge of the non-Puritan exiles at Zurich and elsewhere, or to use the English book, and offered his resignation. Nothing could be more fair and above-board.

There was an inchoate plan for a new Order. That failed; and Knox, with others, consulted Calvin, giving him a sketch of the nature of the English service. They drew his attention to the surplice; the Litany, “devised by Pope Gregory,” whereby “we use a certain conjuring of God”; the kneeling at the Communion; the use of the cross in baptism, and of the ring in marriage, clearly a thing of human, if not of diabolical invention, and the “imposition of hands” in confirmation. The churching of women, they said, is both Pagan and Jewish. “Other things not so much shame itself as a certain kind of pity compelleth us to keep close.”

“The tone of the letter throughout was expressly calculated to prejudice Calvin on the point submitted to him,” says Professor Hume Brown. Calvin replied that the quarrel might be all very well if the exiles were happy and at ease in their circumstances, though in the Liturgy, as described, there were “tolerable (endurable) follies.” On the whole he sided with the Knoxian party. The English Liturgy is not pure enough; and the English exiles, not at Frankfort, merely like it because they are accustomed to it. Some are partial to “popish dregs.”

To the extreme Reformers no break with the past could be too abrupt and precipitous: the framers of the English Liturgy had rather adopted the principle of evolution than of development by catastrophe, and had wedded what was noblest in old Latin forms and prayers to music of the choicest English speech. To this service, for which their fellow-religionists in England were dying at the stake, the non-Frankfortian exiles were attached. They were Englishmen; their service, they said, should bear “an English face”: so Knox avers, who could as yet have no patriotic love of any religious form as exclusively and essentially Scottish.

A kind of truce was now proclaimed, to last till May 1, 1555; Knox aiding in the confection of a service without responses, “some part taken out of the English book, and other things put to,” while Calvin, Bullinger, and three others were appointed as referees. The Frankfort congregation had now a brief interval of provisional peace, till, on March 13, 1555, Richard Cox, with a band of English refugees, arrived. He had been tutor to Edward VI., the young Marcellus of Protestantism, but for Frankfort he was not puritanic enough. His company would give a large majority to the anti-Knoxian congregation. He and his at once uttered the responses, and on Sunday one of them read the Litany. This was an unruly infraction of the provisional agreement. Cox and his party (April 5) represented to Calvin that they had given up surplices, crosses, and other things, “not as impure and papistical,” but as indifferent, and for the sake of peace. This was after they had driven Knox from the place, as they presently did; in the beginning it was distinctly their duty to give up the Litany and responses, while the truce lasted, that is, till the end of April. In the afternoon of the Sunday Knox preached, denouncing the morning's proceedings, the "impurity" of the Prayer Book, of which "I once had a good opinion," and the absence, in England, of "discipline," that is, interference by preachers with private life. Pluralities also he denounced, and some of the exiles had been pluralists.

For all this Knox was "very sharply reproved," as soon as he left the pulpit. Two days later, at a meeting, he insisted that Cox's people should have a vote in the congregation, thus making the anti-puritans a majority; Knox's conduct was here certainly chivalrous: "I fear not your judgment," he said. He had never wished to go to Frankfort; in going he merely obeyed Calvin, and probably he had no great desire to stay. He was forbidden to preach by Cox and his majority; and a later conference with Cox led to no compromise. It seems probable that Cox and the anti-puritans already cherished a grudge against Knox for his tract, the "Admonition." He had a warning that they would use the pamphlet against him, and he avers that "some devised how to have me cast into prison." The anti-puritans, admitting in a letter to Calvin that they brought the "Admonition" before the magistrates of Frankfort as "a book which would supply their enemies with just ground for overturning the whole Church, and one which had added much oil to the flame of persecution in England," deny that they desired more than that Knox might be ordered to quit the place. The passages selected as treasonable in the "Admonition" do not include the prayer for a Jehu. They were enough, however, to secure the dismissal of Knox from Frankfort.

Cox had accepted the Order used by the French Protestant congregation, probably because it committed him and his party to nothing in England; however, Knox had no sooner departed than the anti-puritans obtained leave to use, without surplice, cross, and some other matters, the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. In September the Puritans seceded, the anti-puritans remained, squabbling with the Lutherans and among themselves.

In the whole affair Knox acted the most open and manly part; in his "History" he declines to name the opponents who avenged themselves, in a manner so dubious, on his "Admonition." If they believed their own account of the mischief that it wrought in England, their denunciation of him to magistrates, who were not likely to do more than dismiss him, is the less inexcusable. They did not try to betray him to a body like the Inquisition, as Calvin did in the case of Servetus. But their conduct was most unworthy and unchivalrous.

CHAPTER VII: KNOX IN SCOTLAND: LETHINGTON: MARY OF GUISE: 1555-1556

Meanwhile the Reformer returned to Geneva (April 1555), where Calvin was now supreme. From Geneva, "the den of mine own ease, the rest of quiet study," Knox was dragged, "maist contrarious to mine own judgement," by a summons from Mrs. Bowes. He did not like leaving his "den" to rejoin his betrothed; the lover was not so fervent as the evangelist was cautious. Knox had at that time probably little correspondence with Scotland. He knew that there was no refuge for him in England under Mary Tudor, "who nowise may abide the presence of God's prophets."

In Scotland, at this moment, the Government was in the hands of Mary of Guise, a sister of the Duke of Guise and of the Cardinal. Mary was now aged forty; she was born in 1515, as Knox probably was. She was a tall and stately woman; her face was thin and refined; Henry VIII., as being himself a large man, had sought her hand, which was given to his nephew, James V. On the death of that king, Mary, with Cardinal Beaton, kept Scotland true to the French alliance, and her daughter, the fair Queen of Scots, was at this moment a child in France, betrothed to the Dauphin. As a Catholic, of the House of Lorraine, Mary could not but cleave to her faith and to the French alliance. In 1554 she had managed to oust from the Regency the Earl of Arran, the head of the all but royal Hamiltons, now gratified with the French title of Duc de Chatelherault. To crown her was as seemly a thing, says Knox, "if men had but eyes, as a saddle upon the back of *ane unrewly kow*." She practically deposed Huntly, the most treacherous of men, from the Chancellorship, substituting, with more or less reserve, a Frenchman, de Rubay; and d'Oysel, the commander of the French troops in Scotland, was her chief adviser.

Writing after the death of Mary of Guise, Knox avers that she only waited her chance "to cut the throats of all those in whom she suspected the knowledge of God to be, within the realm of Scotland." As a matter of fact, the Regent later refused a French suggestion that she should peacefully call Protestants together, and then order a massacre after the manner of the Bartholomew: itself still in the womb of the future. "Mary of Guise," says Knox's biographer, Professor Hume Brown, "had the instincts of a good ruler — the love of order and justice, and the desire to stand well with the people."

Knox, however, believed, or chose to say, that she wanted to cut all Protestant throats, just as he believed that a Protestant king should cut all Catholic throats. He attributed to her, quite erroneously and uncharitably, his own unsparing fervour. As he held this view of her character and purposes, it is not strange that a journey to Scotland was "contrairious to his judgement."

He did not understand the situation. Ferocious as had been the English invasion of Scotland in 1547, the English party in Scotland, many of them paid traitors, did not resent these "rebukes of a friend," so much as both the nobles and the people now began to detest their French allies, and were jealous of the Queen Mother's promotion of Frenchmen.

There were not, to be sure, many Scots whom she, or any one, could trust. Some were honestly Protestant: some held pensions from England: others would sacrifice national interests to their personal revenges and clan feuds. The Rev. the Lord James Stewart, Mary's bastard brother, Prior of St. Andrews and of Pittenweem, was still very young. He had no interest in his clerical profession beyond drawing his revenues as prior of two abbeys; and his nearness to the Crown caused him to be suspected of ambition: moreover, he tended towards the new ideas in religion. He had met Knox in London, apparently in 1552. Morton was a mere wavering youth; Argyll was very old: Chatelherault was a rival of the Regent, a competitor for the Crown and quite incompetent. The Regent, in short, could scarcely have discovered a Scottish adviser worthy of employment, and when she did trust one, he was the brilliant "chamaeleon," young Maitland of Lethington, who would rather betray his master cleverly than run a straight course, and did betray the Regent. Thus Mary, a Frenchwoman and a Catholic, governing Scotland for her Catholic daughter, the Dauphiness, with the aid of a few French troops who had just saved the independence of the country, naturally employed French advisers. This made her unpopular; her attempts to bring justice into Scottish courts were odious, and she would not increase the odium by persecuting the Protestants. The Duke's bastard brother, again, the Archbishop, sharing his family ambition, was in no mood for burning heretics. The Queen Mother herself carried conciliation so far as to pardon and reinstate such trebly dyed traitors as the notorious Crichton of Brunston, and she employed Kirkcaldy of Grange, who intrigued against her while in her employment. An Edinburgh tailor, Harlaw, who seems to have been a deacon in English orders, was allowed to return to Scotland in 1554. He became a very notable preacher.

Going from Mrs. Bowes's house to Edinburgh, Knox found that "the fervency" of the godly "did ravish him." At the house of one Syme "the trumpet blew the auld sound three days thegither," he informed Mrs. Bowes, and Knox himself was the trumpeter. He found another lady, "who, by reason that she had a troubled conscience, delighted much in the company of the said John." There were pleasant sisters in Edinburgh, who later consulted Knox on the delicate subject of dress. He was more tolerant in answering them than when he denounced "the stinking pride of women" at Mary Stuart's Court; admitting that "in clothes, silks, velvets, gold, and other such, there is no uncleanness," yet "I cannot praise the common superfluity which women now use in their apparel." He was quite opposed, however, to what he pleasingly calls "correcting natural beauty" (as by dyeing the hair), and held that "farthingales cannot be justified."

On the whole, he left the sisters fairly free to dress as they pleased. His curious phrase, in a letter to a pair of sisters, "the prophets of God are often impeded to pray for such as carnally they love unfeignedly," is difficult to understand. We leave it to the learned to explain this singular limitation of the prophet, which Knox says that he had not as yet experienced. He must have heard about it from other prophets.

Knox found at this time a patron remarkable, says Dr. M'Crie, "for great respectability of character," Erskine of Dun. Born in 1508, about 1530 he slew a priest named Thomas Froster, in a curiously selected place, the belfry tower of Montrose. Nobody seems to have thought anything of it, nor should we know the fact, if the record of the blood-price paid by Mr. Erskine to the priest's father did not testify to the fervent act. Six years later, according to Knox, "God had marvellously illuminated" Erskine, and the mildness of his nature is frequently applauded. He was, for Scotland, a man of learning, and our first amateur of Greek. Why did he kill a priest in a bell tower!

In the winter or autumn of 1555, Erskine gave a supper, where Knox was to argue against crypto-protestantism. When once the Truth, whether Anglican or Presbyterian, was firmly established, Catholics were compelled, under very heavy fines, to attend services and sermons which they believed to be at least erroneous, if not blasphemous. I am not aware that, in 1555, the Catholic Church, in Scotland, thus vigorously forced people of Protestant opinions to present themselves at Mass, punishing nonconformity with ruin. I have not found any complaints to this effect, at that time. But no doubt an appearance of conformity might save much trouble, even in the lenient conditions produced by the character of the Regent and by the political situation. Knox, then, discovered that "divers who had a zeal to godliness made small scruple to go to the Mass, or to communicate with the abused sacraments in the Papistical manner." He himself, therefore, "began to show the impiety of the Mass, and how dangerous a thing it was to communicate in any sort with idolatry."

Now to many of his hearers this essential article of his faith — that the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist and form of celebration were "idolatry" —

may have been quite a new idea. It was already, however, a commonplace with Anglican Protestants. Nothing of the sort was to be found in the *first* Prayer Book of Edward VI.; broken lights of various ways of regarding the Sacrament probably played, at this moment, over the ideas of Knox's Scottish disciples. Indeed, their consciences appear to have been at rest, for it was *after* Knox's declaration about the "idolatrous" character of the Mass that "the matter began to be agitated from man to man, the conscience of some being afraid."

To us it may seem that the sudden denunciation of a Christian ceremony, even what may be deemed a perverted Christian ceremony, as sheer "idolatry," equivalent to the worship of serpents, bulls, or of a foreign Baal in ancient Israel — was a step calculated to confuse the real issues and to provoke a religious war of massacre. Knox, we know, regarded extermination of idolaters as a counsel of perfection, though in the Christian scriptures not one word could be found to justify his position. He relied on texts about massacring Amalekites and about Elijah's slaughter of the prophets of Baal. The Mass was idolatry, was Baal worship; and Baal worshippers, if recalcitrant, must die.

These extreme unchristian ideas, then, were new in Scotland, even to "divers who had a zeal to godliness." For their discussion, at Erskine of Dun's party, were present, among others, Willock, a Scots preacher returned from England, and young Maitland of Lethington. We are not told what part Willock took in the conversation. The arguments turned on biblical analogies, never really coincident with the actual modern circumstances. The analogy produced in discussion by those who did not go to all extremes with Knox did not, however, lack appropriateness. Christianity, in fact, as they seem to have argued, did arise out of Judaism; retaining the same God and the same scriptures, but, in virtue of the sacrifice of its Founder, abstaining from the sacrifices and ceremonial of the law. In the same way Protestantism arose out of mediæval Catholicism, retaining the same God and the same scriptures, but rejecting the mediæval ceremonial and the mediæval theory of the sacrifice of the Mass. It did not follow that the Mass was sheer "idolatry," at which no friend of the new ideas could be present.

As a proof that such presence or participation was not unlawful, was not idolatry, in the existing state of affairs, was adduced the conduct of St. Paul and the advice given to him by St. James and the Church in Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 18-36). Paul was informed that many thousands of Jews "believed," yet remained zealous for the law, the old order. They had learned that Paul advised the Jews in Greece and elsewhere not to "walk after the customs." Paul should prove that "he also kept the law." For this purpose he, with four Christian Jews under a vow, was to purify himself, and he went into the Temple, "until that an offering should be offered for every one of them."

"Offerings," of course, is the term in our version for sacrifices, whether of animals or of "unleavened wafers anointed with oil." The argument from analogy was, I infer, that the Mass, with its wafer, was precisely such an "offering," such a survival in Catholic ritual, as in Jewish ritual St. Paul consented to, by the advice of the Church of Jerusalem; consequently Protestants in a Catholic country, under the existing circumstances, might attend the Mass. The Mass was not "idolatry." The analogy halts, like all analogies, but so, of course, and to fatal results, does Knox's analogy between the foreign worships of Israel and the Mass. "She thinks not *that* idolatry, but good religion," said Lethington to Knox once, speaking of Queen Mary's Mass. "So thought they that offered their children unto Moloch," retorted the reformer. Manifestly the Mass is, of the two, much more on a level with the "offering" of St. Paul than with human sacrifices to Moloch!

In his reply Knox, as he states his own argument, altogether overlooked the *offering* of St. Paul, which, as far as we understand, was the essence of his opponents' contention. He said that "to pay *vows* was never idolatry," but "the Mass from the original was and remained odious idolatry, therefore the facts were most unlike. Secondly, I greatly doubt whether either James's commandment or Paul's obedience proceeded from the Holy Ghost," about which Knox was, apparently, better informed than these Apostles and the Church of Jerusalem. Next, Paul was presently in danger from a mob, which had been falsely told that he took Greeks into the Temple. Hence it was manifest "that God approved not that means of reconciliation." Obviously the danger of an Apostle from a misinformed mob is no sort of evidence to divine approval or disapproval of his behaviour. We shall later find that when Knox was urging on some English nonconformists the beauty of conformity (1568), he employed the very precedent of St. Paul's conduct at Jerusalem, which he rejected when it was urged at Erskine's supper party!

We have dwelt on this example of Knox's logic, because it is crucial. The reform of the Church of Christ could not be achieved without cruel persecution on both parts, while Knox was informing Scotland that all members of the old Faith were as much idolaters as Israelites who sacrificed their children to a foreign God, while to extirpate idolaters was the duty of a Christian prince. Lethington, as he soon showed, was as clear-sighted in regard to Knox's logical methods as any man of to-day, but he "concluded, saying, I see perfectly that our shifts will serve nothing before God, seeing that they stand us in so small stead before man." But either Lethington conformed and went to Mass, or Mary of Guise expected nothing of the sort from him, for he remained high in her favour, till he betrayed her in 1559.

Knox's opinion being accepted — it obviously was a novelty to many of his hearers — the Reformers must either convert or persecute the Catholics even to extermination. Circumstances of mere worldly policy forbade the execution of this counsel of perfection, but persistent "idolaters," legally, lay after 1560 under sentence of death. There was to come a moment, we shall see, when even Knox shrank from the consequences of a theory ("a murderous syllogism," writes one of his recent biographers, Mr. Taylor Innes), which divided his countrymen into the godly, on one hand, and idolaters doomed to death by divine law, on the other. But he put his hesitation behind him as a suggestion of Satan.

Knox now associated with Lord Erskine, then Governor of Edinburgh Castle, the central strength of Scotland; with Lord Lorne, soon to be Earl of Argyll (a "Christian," but not a remarkably consistent walker), with "Lord James," the natural brother of Queen Mary (whose conscience, as we saw, permitted him to draw the benefices of the Abbacy of St. Andrews, of Pittenweem, and of an abbey in France, without doing any duties), and with many redoubtable lairds of the Lothians, Ayrshire, and Forfarshire. He also preached for ten days in the town house, at Edinburgh, of the Bishop of Dunkeld. On May 15, 1556, he was summoned to appear in the church of the Black Friars. As he was backed by Erskine of Dun, and other gentlemen, according to the Scottish custom when legal proceedings were afoot, no steps were taken against him, the clergy probably dreading Knox's defenders, as Bothwell later, in similar circumstances, dreaded the assemblage under the Earl of Moray; as Lennox shrank from facing the supporters of Bothwell, and Moray from encountering the spears of Lethington's allies. It was usual to overawe the administrators of justice by these gatherings of supporters, perhaps a survival of the old "compurgators." This, in fact, was "part of the obligation of our Scottish kyndness," and the divided ecclesiastical and civil powers shrank from a conflict.

Glencairn and the Earl Marischal, in the circumstances, advised Knox to write a letter to Mary of Guise, "something that might move her to hear the Word of God," that is, to hear Knox preach. This letter, as it then stood, was printed in a little black-letter volume, probably of 1556. Knox addresses the Regent and Queen Mother as "her humble subject." The document has an interest almost pathetic, and throws light on the whole character of the great Reformer. It appears that Knox had been reported to the Regent by some of the clergy, or by rumour, as a heretic and seducer of the people. But Knox had learned that the "dew of the heavenly grace" had quenched her displeasure, and he hoped that the Regent would be as clement to others in his case as to him. Therefore he returns to his attitude in the letter to his Berwick congregation (1552). He calls for no

Jehu, he advises no armed opposition to the sovereign, but says of "God's chosen children" (the Protestants), that "their victory standeth not in resisting but in suffering," "in quietness, silence, and hope," as the Prophet Isaiah recommends. The Isaiahs (however numerous modern criticism may reckon them) were late prophets, not of the school of Elijah, whom Knox followed in 1554 and 1558-59, not in 1552 or 1555, or on one occasion in 1558-59. "The Elect of God" do not "shed blood and murder," Knox remarks, though he approves of the Elect, of the brethren at all events, when they *do* murder and shed blood.

Meanwhile Knox is more than willing to run the risks of the preacher of the truth, "partly because I would, with St. Paul, wish myself accursed from Christ, as touching earthly pleasures" (whatever that may mean), "for the salvation of my brethren and illumination of your Grace." He confesses that the Regent is probably not "so free as a public reformation perhaps would require," for that required the downcasting of altars and images, and prohibition to celebrate or attend Catholic rites. Thus Knox would, apparently, be satisfied for the moment with toleration and immunity for his fellow-religionists. Nothing of the sort really contented him, of course, but at present he asked for no more.

Yet, a few days later, he writes, the Regent handed his letter to the Archbishop of Glasgow, saying, "Please you, my Lord, to read a pasquil," an offence which Knox never forgave and bitterly avenged in his "History."

It is possible that the Regent merely glanced at his letter. She would find herself alluded to in a biblical parallel with "the Egyptian midwives," with Nebuchadnezzar, and Rahab the harlot. Her acquaintance with these amiable idolaters may have been slight, but the comparison was odious, and far from tactful. Knox also reviled the creed in which she had been bred as "a poisoned cup," and threatened her, if she did not act on his counsel, with "torment and pain everlasting." Those who drink of the cup of her Church "drink therewith damnation and death." As for her clergy, "proud prelates do Kings maintain to murder the souls for which the blood of Christ Jesus was shed."

These statements were dogmatic, and the reverse of conciliatory. One should not, in attempting to convert any person, begin by reviling his religion. Knox adopted the same method with Mary Stuart: the method is impossible. It is not to be marvelled at if the Regent did style the letter a "pasquil."

Knox took his revenge in his "History" by repeating a foolish report that Mary of Guise had designed to poison her late husband, James V. "Many whisper that of old his part was in the pot, and that the suspicion thereof caused him to be inhibited the Queen's company, while the Cardinal got his secret business sped of that gracious lady either by day or night." He styled her, as we saw, "a wanton widow”; he hinted that she was the mistress of Cardinal Beaton; he made similar insinuations about her relations with d’Oysel (who was “*a secretis mulierum*”); he said, as we have seen, that she only waited her chance to cut the throats of all suspected Protestants; he threw doubt on the legitimacy of her daughter, Mary Stuart; and he constantly accuses her of treachery, as will appear, when the charge is either doubtful, or, as far as I can ascertain, absolutely false.

These are unfortunately examples of Knox’s Christianity. It is very easy for modern historians and biographers to speak with genial applause of the prophet’s manly bluffness. But if we put ourselves in the position of opponents whom he was trying to convert, of the two Marys for example, we cannot but perceive that his method was hopelessly mistaken. In attempting to evangelise an Euahlayi black fellow, we should not begin by threats of damnation, and by railing accusations against his god, Baiame.

CHAPTER VIII: KNOX’S WRITINGS FROM ABROAD: BEGINNING OF THE SCOTTISH REVOLUTION, 1556-1558

Knox was about this time summoned to be one of the preachers to the English at Geneva. He sent in advance Mrs. Bowes and his wife, visited Argyll and Glenorchy (now Breadalbane), wrote (July 7) an epistle bidding the brethren be diligent in reading and discussing the Bible, and went abroad. His effigy was presently burned by the clergy, as he had not appeared in answer to a second summons, and he was outlawed in absence.

It is not apparent that Knox took any part in the English translation of the Bible, then being executed at Geneva. Greek and Hebrew were not his forte, though he had now some knowledge of both tongues, but he preached to the men who did the work. The perfections of Genevan Church discipline delighted him. “Manners and religion so sincerely reformed I have not yet seen in any other place.” The genius of Calvin had made Geneva a kind of Protestant city state º±Ä’ µÅÇ·½; a Calvinistic Utopia — everywhere the vigilant eyes of the preachers and magistrates were upon every detail of daily life. Monthly and weekly the magistrates and ministers met to point out each other’s little failings. Knox felt as if he were indeed in the City of God, and later he introduced into Scotland, and vehemently abjured England to adopt, the Genevan “discipline.” England would none of it, and would not, even in the days of the Solemn League and Covenant, suffer the excommunication by preachers to pass without lay control.

It is unfortunate that the ecclesiastical polity and discipline of a small city state, like a Greek À¿»¹Â, feasible in such a community as Geneva at a moment of spiritual excitement, was brought by Knox and his brethren into a nation like Scotland. The results were a hundred and twenty-nine years of unrest, civil war, and persecution.

Though happy in the affection of his wife and Mrs. Bowes, Knox, at this time, needed more of feminine society. On November 19, 1556, he wrote to his friend, Mrs. Locke, wife of a Cheapside merchant: “You write that your desire is earnest to see me. Dear sister, if I should express the thirst and languor which I have had for your presence, I should appear to pass measure. . . . Your presence is so dear to me that if the charge of this little flock . . . did not impede me, my presence should anticipate my letter.” Thus Knox was ready to brave the fires of

Smithfield, or, perhaps, forgot them for the moment in his affection for Mrs. Locke. He writes to no other woman in this fervid strain. On May 8, 1557, Mrs. Locke with her son and daughter (who died after her journey), joined Knox at Geneva.

He was soon to be involved in Scottish affairs. After his departure from his country, omens and prodigies had ensued. A comet appeared in November-December 1556. Next year some corn-stacks were destroyed by lightning. Worse, a calf with two heads was born, and was exhibited as a warning to Mary of Guise by Robert Ormistoun. The idolatress merely sneered, and said "it was but a common thing." Such a woman was incorrigible. Mary of Guise is always blamed for endangering Scotland in the interests of her family, the Guises of the House of Lorraine. In fact, so far as she tried to make Scotland a province of France, she was serving the ambition of Henri II. It could not be foreseen, in 1555, that Henri II. would be slain in 1559, leaving the two kingdoms in the hands of Francis II. and Mary Stuart, who were so young, that they would inevitably be ruled by the Queen's uncles of the House of Lorraine. Shortly before Knox arrived in Scotland in 1555, the Duc de Guise had advised the Regent to "use sweetness and moderation," as better than "extremity and rigour"; advice which she acted on gladly.

Unluckily the war between France and Spain, in 1557, brought English troops into collision with French forces in the Low Countries (Philip II. being king of England); this led to complications between Scotland, as ally of France, and the English on the Borders. Border raids began; d'Oysel fortified Eyemouth, as a counterpoise to Berwick, war was declared in November, and the discontented Scots, such as Chatelherault, Huntly, Cassilis, and Argyll, mutinied and refused to cross Tweed. Thus arose a breach between the Regent and some of her nobles, who at last, in 1559, rebelled against her on the ground of religion. While the weak war languished on, in 1557-58, "the Evangel of Jesus Christ began wondrously to flourish," says Knox. Other evangelists of his pattern, Harlaw, Douglas, Willock, and a baker, Methuen (later a victim of the intolerably cruel "discipline" of the Kirk Triumphant), preached at Dundee, and Methuen started a reformed Kirk (though not without being declared rebels at the horn). When these persons preached, their hearers were apt to raise riots, wreck churches, and destroy works of sacred art. No Government could for ever wink at such lawless actions, and it was because the pulpiteers, Methuen, Willock, Douglas, and the rest, were again "put at," after being often suffered to go free, that the final crash came, and the Reformation began in the wrack and ruin of monasteries and churches.

There was drawing on another thunder-cloud. The policy of Mary of Guise certainly tended to make Scotland a mere province of France, a province infested by French forces, slender, but ill-paid and predacious. Before marrying the Dauphin, in April 1558, Mary Stuart, urged it is said by the Guises, signed away the independence of her country, to which her husband, by these deeds, was to succeed if she died without issue. Young as she was, Mary was perfectly able to understand the infamy of the transaction, and probably was not so careless as to sign the deeds unread.

Even before this secret treaty was drafted, on March 10, 1557, Glencairn, Lorne, Erskine, and the Prior of St. Andrews — best known to us in after years as James Stewart, Earl of Moray — informed Knox that no "cruelty" by way of persecution was being practised; that his presence was desired, and that they were ready to jeopard their lives and goods for the cause. The rest would be told to Knox by the bearer of the letter. Knox received the letter in May 1557, with verbal reports by the bearers, but was so far from hasty that he did not leave Geneva till the end of September, and did not reach Dieppe on his way to Scotland till October 24. Three days later he wrote to the nobles who had summoned him seven months earlier. He had received, he said, at Dieppe two private letters of a discouraging sort; one correspondent said that the enterprise was to be reconsidered, the other that the boldness and constancy required "for such an enterprise" were lacking among the nobles. Meanwhile Knox had spent his time, or some of it, in asking the most godly and the most learned of Europe, including Calvin, for opinions of such an adventure, for the assurance of his own conscience and the consciences of the Lord James, Erskine, Lorne, and the rest. This indicates that Knox himself was not quite sure of the lawfulness of an armed rising, and perhaps explains his long delay. Knox assures us that Calvin and other godly ministers insisted on his going to Scotland. But it is quite certain that of an armed rising Calvin absolutely disapproved. On April 16, 1561, writing to Coligny, Calvin says that he was consulted several months before the tumult of Amboise (March 1560) and absolutely discouraged the appeal to arms. "Better that we all perish a hundred times than that the name of Christianity and the Gospel should come under such disgrace." If Calvin bade Knox go to Scotland, he must have supposed that no rebellion was intended. Knox tells his correspondents that they have betrayed themselves and their posterity ("in conscience I can except none that bear the name of nobility"), they have made him and their own enterprise ridiculous, and they have put him to great trouble. What is he to say when he returns to Geneva, and is asked why he did not carry out his purpose? He then encourages them to be resolute.

Knox "certainly made the most," says Professor Hume Brown, "of the two letters from correspondents unknown to us." He at once represented them as the cause of his failure to keep tryst; but, in April 1558, writing from Geneva to “the sisters,” he said, “the cause of my stop to this day I do not clearly understand.” He did not know why he left England before the Marian persecutions; and he did not know why he had not crossed over to Scotland in 1557. “It may be that God justly permitted Sathan to put in my mind such cogitations as these: I heard such troubles as appeared in that realm;” — troubles presently to be described.

Hearing, at Dieppe, then, in October 1557, of the troubles, and of the faint war with England, and moved, perhaps, he suggests, by Satan, Knox “began to dispute with himself, as followeth, ‘Shall Christ, the author of peace, concord, and quietness, be preached where war is proclaimed, and tumults appear to rise? What comfort canst thou have to see the one part of the people rise up against the other,’” and so forth. These truly Christian reflections, as we may think them, “yet do trouble and move my wicked heart,” says Knox. He adds, hypothetically, that perhaps the letters received at Dieppe “did somewhat discourage me.” He was only certain that the devil was at the bottom of the whole affair.

The “tumults that appear to arise” are probably the dissensions between the Regent and the mutinous nobles who refused to invade England at her command. D’Oysel needed a bodyguard; and he feared that the Lords would seize and carry off the Regent. Arran, in 1564, speaks of a plot to capture her in Holyrood. Here were promises of tumults. There were also signs of a renewed feud between the house of Hamilton and the Stewart Earl of Lennox, the rival claimant of the crown. There seems, moreover, to have been some tumultuary image-breaking.

Knox may have been merely timid: he is not certain, but his delay passed in consulting the learned, for the satisfaction of his conscience, and his confessed doubts as to whether Christianity should be pushed by civil war, seem to indicate that he was not always the prophet patron of modern Jehus, that he did, occasionally, consult the Gospel as well as the records of pre-Christian Israel.

The general result was that, from October 1557 to March 1558, Knox stayed in Dieppe, preaching with great success, raising up a Protestant church, and writing.

His condition of mind was unenviable. He had been brought all the way across France, leaving his wife and family; he had, it seems, been met by no letters from his noble friends, who may well have ceased to expect him, so long was his delay. He was not at ease in his conscience, for, to be plain, he was not sure that he was not afraid to risk himself in Scotland, and he was not certain that his new scruples about the justifiableness of a rising for religion were not the excuses suggested by his own timidity. Perhaps they were just that, not whisperings either of conscience or of Satan. Yet in this condition Knox was extremely active. On December 1 and 17 he wrote, from Dieppe, a "Letter to His Brethren in Scotland," and another to "The Lords and Others Professing the Truth in Scotland." In the former he censures, as well he might, "the dissolute life of (some) such as have professed Christ's holy Evangel." That is no argument, he says, against Protestantism. Many Turks are virtuous; many orthodox Hebrews, Saints, and Patriarchs occasionally slipped; the Corinthians, though of a "trew Kirk," were notoriously profligate. Meanwhile union and virtue are especially desirable; for Satan "fiercely stirreth his terrible tail." We do not know what back-slidings of the brethren prompted this letter.

The Lords, in the other letter, are reminded that they had resolved to hazard life, rank, and fortune for the delivery of the brethren: the first step must be to achieve a godly frame of mind. Knox hears rumours "that contradiction and rebellion is made by some to the Authority" in Scotland. He advises "that none do suddenly disobey or displease the established authority in things lawful," nor rebel from private motives. By "things lawful" does he mean the command of the Regent to invade England, which the nobles refused to do? They may "lawfully attempt the extremity," if Authority will not cease to persecute, and permit Protestant preaching and administration of the Sacraments (which usually ended in riot and church-wrecking). Above all, they are not to back the Hamiltons, whose chief, Chatelherault, had been a professor, had fallen back, and become a persecutor. "Flee all confederacy with that generation," the Hamiltons; with whom, after all, Knox was presently to be allied, though by no means fully believing in the "unfeigned and speedy repentance" of their chief.

All the movements of that time are not very clear. Apparently Lorne, Lord James, and the rest, in their letter of March 10, 1557, intended an armed rising: they were "ready to jeopardise lives and goods" for "the glory of God." If no more than an appeal to "the Authority" for tolerance was meant, why did Knox consult the learned so long, on the question of conscience? Yet, in December 1557, he bids his allies first of all seek the favour of "the Authority," for bare toleration of Protestantism.

From the scheme of March 10, of which the details, unknown to us, were *orally* delivered by bearer, he appears to have expected civil war.

Again, just when Knox was writing to Scotland in December 1557, his allies there, he says, made "a common Band," a confederacy and covenant such as the Scots usually drew up before a murder, as of Riccio or Darnley, or for slaying Argyll and "the bonny Earl o' Murray," under James VI. These Bands were illegal. A Band, says Knox, was now signed by Argyll, Lorne, Glencairn, Morton, and Erskine of Dun, and many others unknown, on December 3, 1557.

It is alleged that "Satan cruelly doth rage." Now, how was Satan raging in December 1557? Myln, the last martyr, was not pursued till April 1558, by Knox's account.

The first godly Band being of December 1557, and drawn up, perhaps, on the impulse of Knox's severe letter from Dieppe of October 27, in that year; just after they signed the Band, what were the demands of the Banders? They asked, apparently, that the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. should be read in all parish churches, with the Lessons: *if the curates are able to read*: if not, then by any qualified parishioner. Secondly, preaching must be permitted in private houses, "without great conventions of the people." Whether the Catholic service was to be concurrently permitted does not appear; it is not very probable, for that service is idolatrous, and the Band itself denounces the Church as "the Congregation of Satan." Dr. M'Crie thinks that the Banders, or Congregation of God, did not ask for the universal adoption of the English Prayer Book, but only requested that they themselves might bring it in "in places to which their authority and influence extended." They took that liberty, certainly, without waiting for leave, but their demand appears to apply to all parish churches. War, in fact, was denounced against Satan's Congregation; if it troubles the Lords' Congregation, there could therefore be little idea of tolerating their nefarious creed and ritual.

Probably Knox, at Dieppe in 1557 and early in 1558, did not know about the promising Band made in Scotland. He was composing his "First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women." In England and in Scotland were a Catholic Queen, a Catholic Queen Mother, and the Queen of Scotland was marrying the idolatrous Dauphin. It is not worth while to study Knox's general denunciation of government by ladies: he allowed that (as Calvin suggested) miraculous exceptions to their inability might occur, as in the case of Deborah. As a rule, a Queen was an "idol," and that was enough. England deserved an idol, and an idolatrous idol, for Englishmen rejected Kirk discipline; "no man would have his life called in trial" by presbyter or preacher. A Queen regnant has, *ex officio*, committed treason against God: the Realm and Estates may have conspired with her, but her rule is unlawful. Naturally this skirl on the trumpet made Knox odious to Elizabeth, for to impeach her succession might cause a renewal of the wars of the Roses. Nothing less could have happened, if a large portion of the English people had believed in the Prophet of God, John Knox. He could predict vengeance on Mary Tudor, but could not see that, as Elizabeth would succeed, his Blast would bring inconvenience to his cause; or, seeing it, he stood to his guns.

He presently reprinted and added to his letter to Mary of Guise, arguing that civil magistrates have authority in religion, but, of course, he must mean only as far as they carry out his ideas, which are the truth. In an "Appellation" against the condemnation of himself, in absence, by the Scottish clergy, he labours the same idea. Moreover, "no idolater can be exempted from punishment by God's law." Now the Queen of Scotland happened to be an idolater, and every true believer, as a private individual, has a right to punish idolaters. That right and duty are not limited to the King, or to "the chief Nobility and Estates," whom Knox addresses. "I would your Honours should note for the first, that no idolater can be exempted from punishment by God's Law. The second is, that the punishment of such crimes as are idolatry, blasphemy, and others, that touch the Majesty of God, doth not appertain to kings and chief rulers only" (as he had argued that they do, in 1554), "but also to the whole body of that people, and to every member of the same, according to the vocation of every man, and according to that possibility and occasion which God doth minister to revenge the injury done against His glory, what time that impiety is manifestly known. . . . *Who dare be so impudent as to deny this to be most reasonable and just*?"

Knox's method of argument for his doctrine is to take, among other texts, Deuteronomy xiii. 12-18, and apply the sanguinary precepts of Hebrew fanatics to the then existing state of affairs in the Church Christian. Thus, in Deuteronomy, cities which serve "other gods," or welcome missionaries of other religions, are to be burned, and every living thing in them is to be destroyed. "To the carnal man, . . . " says Knox, "this may rather seem to be pronounced in a rage than in wisdom." God wills, however, that "all creatures stoop, cover their faces, *and desist from reasoning*, when commandment is given to execute his judgement." Knox, then, desists from reasoning so far as to preach that every Protestant, with a call that way, has a right to punish any Catholic, if he gets a good opportunity. This doctrine he publishes to his own countrymen. Thus any fanatic who believed in the prophet Knox, and was conscious of a "vocation," might, and should, avenge God's wrongs on Mary of Guise or Mary Stuart, "he had a fair opportunity, for both ladies were idolaters. This is a plain inference from the passage just cited.

Appealing to the Commonalty of Scotland, Knox next asked that he might come and justify his doctrine, and prove Popery "abominable before God." Now, could any Government admit a man who published the tidings that any member of a State might avenge God on an idolater, the Queen being, according to him, an idolater? This doctrine of the right of the Protestant individual is merely monstrous. Knox has wandered far from his counsel of "passive resistance" in his letter to his Berwick congregation; he has even passed beyond his "Admonition," which merely prayed for a Phinehas or Jehu: he has now proclaimed the right and duty of the private Protestant assassin. The "Appellation" containing these ideas was published at Geneva in 1558, with the author's, but without the printer's name on the title-page.

"The First Blast" had neither the author's nor printer's name, nor the name of the place of publication. Calvin soon found that it had given grave offence to Queen Elizabeth. He therefore wrote to Cecil that, though the work came from a press in his town, he had not been aware of its existence till a year after its publication. He now took no public steps against the book, not wishing to draw attention to its origin in Geneva, lest, "by reason of the reckless arrogance of one man" ('the ravings of others'), "the miserable crowd of exiles should have been driven away, not only from this city, but even from almost the whole world." As far as I am aware, no one approached Calvin with remonstrance about the monstrosities of the "Appellation," nor are the passages which I have cited alluded to by more than one biographer of Knox, to my knowledge. Professor Hume Brown, however, justly remarks that what the Kirk, immediately after Knox's death, called "Erastianism" (in ordinary parlance the doctrine that the Civil power may interfere in religion) could hardly "be approved in more set terms" than by Knox. He avers that "the ordering and reformation of religion . . . doth especially appertain to the Civil Magistrate . . . " "The King taketh upon him to command the Priests." The opposite doctrine, that it appertains to the Church, is an invention of Satan. To that diabolical invention, Andrew Melville and the Kirk returned in the generation following, while James VI. held to Knox's theory, as stated in the "Appellation."

The truth is that Knox contemplates a State in which the civil power shall be entirely and absolutely of his own opinions; the King, as "Christ's silly vassal," to quote Andrew Melville, being obedient to such prophets as himself. The theories of Knox regarding the duty to revenge God's feud by the private citizen, and regarding religious massacre by the civil power, ideas which would justify the Bartholomew horrors, appear to be forgotten in modern times. His address to the Commonalty, as citizens with a voice in the State, represents the progressive and permanent element in his politics. We have shown, however, that, before Knox's time, the individual Scot was a thoroughly independent character. "The man hath more words than the master, and will not be content unless he knows the master's counsel."

By March 1558, Knox had returned from Dieppe to Geneva. In Scotland, since the godly Band of December 1557, events were moving in two directions. The Church was continuing in a belated and futile attempt at reformation of manners (and wonderfully bad manners they confessedly were), and of education from within. The Congregation, the Protestants, on the other hand, were preparing openly to defend themselves and their adherents from persecution, an honest, manly, and laudable endeavour, so long as they did not persecute other Christians. Their preachers — such as Harlaw, Methuen, and Douglas — were publicly active. A moment of attempted suppression must arrive, greatly against the personal wishes of Archbishop Hamilton, who dreaded the conflict.

In March 1558, Hamilton courteously remonstrated with Argyll for harbouring Douglas. He himself was "heavily murmured against" for his slackness in the case of Argyll, by churchmen and other "well given people," and by Mary of Guise, whose daughter, by April 24, 1558, was married to the Dauphin of France. Argyll replied that he knew how the Archbishop was urged on, but declined to abandon Douglas.

"It is a far cry to Loch Awe"; Argyll, who died soon after, was too powerful to be attacked. But, sometime in April 1558 apparently, a poor priest of Forfarshire, Walter Myln, who had married and got into trouble under Cardinal Beaton, was tried for heresy, and, without sentence of a secular judge, it is said, was burned at St. Andrews, displaying serene courage, and hoping to be the last martyr in Scotland. Naturally there was much indignation; if the Lords and others were to keep their Band they must bestir themselves. They did bestir themselves in defence of their favourite preachers — Willock, Harlaw, Methuen; a *ci-devant* friar, Christison; and Douglas. Some of these men were summoned several times throughout 1558, and Methuen and Harlaw, at least, were "at the horn" (outlawed), but were protected — Harlaw at Dumfries, Methuen at Dundee — by powerful laymen. At Dundee, as we saw, by 1558, Methuen had erected a church of reformed aspect; and "reformed" means that the Kirk had already been purged of altars and images. Attempts to bring the ringleaders of Protestant riots to law were made in 1558, but the precise order of events, and of the protests of the Reformers, appears to be dislocated in Knox's narrative. He himself was not present, and he seems never to have mastered the sequence of occurrences. Fortunately there exists a fragment by a well-informed writer, apparently a contemporary, the "Historie of the Estate of Scotland" covering the events from July 1558 to 1560. There are also imperfect records of the Parliament of November-December 1558, and of the last Provincial Council of the Church, in March 1559.

For July 28 four or five of the brethren were summoned to "a day of law," in Edinburgh; their allies assembled to back them, and they were released on bail to appear, if called on, within eight days. At this time the "idol" of St. Giles, patron of the city, was stolen, and a great riot occurred at the saint's *fête*, September 3.

Knox describes the discomfiture of his foes in one of his merriest passages, frequently cited by admirers of “his vein of humour.” The event, we know, was at once reported to him in Geneva, by letter.

Some time after October, if we rightly construe Knox, a petition was delivered to the Regent, from the Reformers, by Sandilands of Calder. They asserted that they should have defended the preachers, or testified with them. The wisdom of the Regent herself sees the need of reform, spiritual and temporal, and has exhorted the clergy and nobles to employ care and diligence thereon, a fact corroborated by Mary of Guise herself, in a paper, soon to be quoted, of July 1559. They ask, as they have the reading of the Scriptures in the vernacular, for common prayers in the same. They wish for freedom to interpret and discuss the Bible “in our conventions,” and that Baptism and the Communion may be done in Scots, and they demand the reform of the detestable lives of the prelates.

Knox’s account, in places, appears really to refer to the period of the Provincial Council of March 1559, though it does not quite fit that date either.

The Regent is said on the occasion of Calder’s petition, and after the unsatisfactory replies of the clergy (apparently at the Provincial Council, March 1559), to have made certain concessions, till Parliament established uniform order. But the Parliament was of November-December 1558. Before that Parliament, at all events (which was mainly concerned with procuring the “Crown Matrimonial” for the Dauphin, husband of Mary Stuart), the brethren offered a petition, in the first place shown to the Regent, asking for (1) the suspension of persecuting laws till after a General Council has “decided all controversies in religion” — that is, till the Greek Calends. (2) That prelates shall not be judges in cases of heresy, but only accusers before secular tribunals. (3) That all lawful defences be granted to persons accused. (4) That the accused be permitted to explain “his own mind and meaning.” (5) That “none be condemned for heretics unless by the manifest Word of God they be convicted to have erred from the faith which the Holy Spirit witnesses to be necessary to salvation.” According to Knox this petition the Regent put in her pocket, saying that the Churchmen would oppose it, and thwart her plan for getting the “Crown Matrimonial” given to her son-in-law, Francis II., and, in short, gave good words, and drove time.

The Reformers then drew up a long Protestation, which was read in the House, but not enrolled in its records. They say that they have had to postpone a formal demand for Reformation, but protest that “it be lawful to us to use ourselves in matters of religion and conscience as we must answer to God,” and they are ready to prove their case. They shall not be liable, meanwhile, to any penalties for breach of the existing Acts against heresy, “nor for violating such rites as man, without God’s commandment or word, hath commanded.” They disclaim all responsibility for the ensuing tumults. In fact, they aver that they will not only worship in their own way, but prevent other people from worshipping in the legal way, and that the responsibility for the riots will lie on the side of those who worship legally. And this was the chief occasion of the ensuing troubles. The Regent promised to “put good order” in controverted matters, and was praised by the brethren in a letter to Calvin, not now to be found.

Another threat had been made by the brethren, in circumstances not very obscure. As far as they are known they suggest that in January 1559 the zealots deliberately intended to provoke a conflict, and to enlist “the rascal multitude” on their side, at Easter, 1559. The obscurity is caused by a bookbinder. He has, with the fatal ingenuity of his trade, cut off the two top lines from a page in one manuscript copy of Knox’s “History.” The text now runs thus (in its mutilated condition): “ . . . Zealous Brether . . . upon the gates and posts of all the Friars’ places within this realm, in the month of January 1558 (1559), preceding that Whitsunday that they dislodged, which is this . . .”

Then follows the Proclamation.

Probably we may supply the words: “. . . Zealous Brethren caused a paper to be affixed upon the gates and posts,” and so on. The paper so promulgated purported to be a warning from the poor of Scotland that, before Whitsunday, “we, the lawful proprietors,” will eject the Friars and residents on the property, unlawfully withheld by the religious— “our patrimony.” This feat will be performed, “with the help of God, *and assistance of his Saints on earth*, *of whose ready support we doubt not*.”

As the Saints, in fact, were the “Zealous Brether . . .” who affixed the written menace on “all the Friars’ places,” they knew what they were talking about, and could prophesy safely. To make so many copies of the document, and fix them on “all the Friars’ places,” implies organisation, and a deliberate plan — riots and revolution — before Whitsunday. The poor, of course, only exchanged better for worse landlords, as they soon discovered. The “Zealous Brethren” — as a rule small lairds, probably, and burgesses — were the nucleus of the Revolution. When townsfolk and yeomen in sufficient number had joined them in arms, then nobles like Argyll, Lord James, Glencairn, Ruthven, and the rest, put themselves at the head of the movement, and won the prizes which had been offered to the “blind, crooked, widows, orphans, and all other poor.”

After Parliament was over, at the end of December 1558, the Archbishop of St. Andrews again summoned the preachers, Willock, Douglas, Harlaw, Methuen, and Friar John Christison to a “day of law” at St. Andrews, on

February 2, 1559. (This is the statement of the “Historie.”) The brethren then “caused inform the Queen Mother that the said preachers would appear with such multitude of men professing their doctrine, as was never seen before in such like cases in this country,” and kept their promise. The system of overawing justice by such gatherings was usual, as we have already seen; Knox, Bothwell, Lethington, and the Lord James Stewart all profited by the practice on various occasions.

Mary of Guise, “fearing some uproar or sedition,” bade the bishops put off the summons, and, in fact, the preachers never were summoned, finally, for any offences prior to this date.

On February 9, 1559, the Regent issued proclamations against eating flesh in Lent (this rule survived the Reformation by at least seventy years) and against such disturbances of religious services as the Protest just described declared to be imminent, all such deeds being denounced under “pain of death” — as pain of death was used to be threatened against poachers of deer and wild fowl.

Mary, however, had promised, as we saw, that she would summon the nobles and Estates, “to advise for some reformation in religion” (March 7, 1559), and the Archbishop called a Provincial Council to Edinburgh for March. At this, or some other juncture, for Knox’s narrative is bewildering, the clergy offered free discussion, but refused to allow exiles like himself to be present, and insisted on the acceptance of the Mass, Purgatory, the invocation of saints, with security for their ecclesiastical possessions. In return they would grant prayers and baptism in English, if done privately and not in open assembly. The terms, he says, were rejected; appeal was made to Mary of Guise, and she gave toleration, except for public assemblies in Edinburgh and Leith, pending the meeting of Parliament. To the clergy, who, “some say,” bribed her, she promised to “put order” to these matters. The Reformers were deceived, and forbade Douglas to preach in Leith. So writes Knox.

Now the “Historie” dates all this, bribe and all, *after the end of December* 1558. Knox, however, by some confusion, places the facts, bribe and all, *before April* 28, 1558, Myln’s martyrdom! Yet he had before him as he wrote the Chronicle of Bruce of Earlshall, who states the bribe, Knox says, at £40,000; the “Historie” says “within £15,000.”

In any case Knox, who never saw his book in print, has clearly dislocated the sequence of events. At this date, namely March 1559, the preaching agitators were at liberty, nor were they again put at for any of their previous proceedings. But defiances had been exchanged. The Reformers in their Protestation (December 1558) had claimed it as lawful, we know, that they should enjoy their own services, and put down those of the religion by law established, until such time as the Catholic clergy "be able to prove themselves the true ministers of Christ's Church" and guiltless of all the crimes charged against them by their adversaries. That was the challenge of the Reformers, backed by the menace affixed to the doors of all the monasteries. The Regent in turn had thrown down her glove by the proclamation of February 9, 1559, against disturbing services and "bosting" (bullying) priests. How could she possibly do less in the circumstances? If her proclamation was disobeyed, could she do less than summon the disobedient to trial? Her hand was forced.

It appears to myself, under correction, that all this part of the history of the Reformation has been misunderstood by our older historians. Almost without exception, they represent the Regent as dissembling with the Reformers till, on conclusion of the peace of Cateau Cambresis (which left France free to aid her efforts in Scotland), April 2, 1559, and on the receipt of a message from the Guises, "she threw off the mask," and initiated an organised persecution. But there is no evidence that any such message commanding her to persecute at this time came from the Guises before the Regent had issued her proclamations of February 9 and March 23, denouncing attacks on priests, disturbance of services, administering of sacraments by lay preachers, and tumults at large. Now, Sir James Melville of Halhill, the diplomatist, writing in old age, and often erroneously, makes the Cardinal of Lorraine send de Bettencourt, or Bethencourt, to the Regent with news of the peace of Cateau Cambresis and an order to punish heretics with fire and sword, and says that, though she was reluctant, she consequently published her proclamation of March 23. Dates prove part of this to be impossible.

Obviously the Regent had issued her proclamations of February-March 1559 in anticipation of the tumults threatened by the Reformers in their "Beggar's Warning" and in their Protestation of December, and arranged to occur with violence at Easter, as they did. The three or four preachers (two of them apparently "at the horn" in 1558) were to preach publicly, and riots were certain to ensue, as the Reformers had threatened. Riots were part of the evangelical programme. Of Paul Methuen, who first "reformed" the Church in Dundee, Pitscottie writes that he "ministered the sacraments of the communion at Dundee and Cupar, and caused the images thereof to be cast down, and abolished the Pope's religion so far as he passed or preached." For this sort of action he was now summoned.

The Regent, therefore, warned in her proclamations men, often challenged previously, and as often allowed, under fear of armed resistance, to escape. All that followed was but a repetition of the feeble policy of outlawing these four or five men. Finally, in May 1559, these preachers had a strong armed backing, and seized a central strategic point, so the Revolution blazed out on a question which had long been smouldering and on an occasion that had been again and again deferred. The Regent, far from having foreseen and hardened her heart to carry out an organised persecution and "cut the throats" of all Protestants in Scotland, was, in fact, intending to go to France, being in the earlier stages of her fatal malady. This appears from a letter of Sir Henry Percy, from Norham Castle, to Cecil and Parry (April 12, 1559) Percy says that the news in his latest letters (now lost) was erroneous. The Regent, in fact, "is not as yet departed." She is very ill, and her life is despaired of. She is at Stirling, where the nobles had assembled to discuss religious matters. Only her French advisers were on the side of the Regent. "The matter is pacified for the time," and in case of the Regent's death, Chatelherault, d'Oysel, and de Rubay are to be a provisional committee of Government, till the wishes of the King and Queen, Francis and Mary, are known. Again, in her letter of May 16 to Henri II. of France, she stated that she was in very bad health, and, at about the same date (May 18), the English ambassador in France mentions her intention to visit that country at once. But the Revolution of May 11, breaking out in Perth, condemned her to suffer and die in Scotland.

This, however, does not amount to proof that no plan of persecution in Scotland was intended. Throckmorton writes, on May 18, that the Marquis d'Elboeuf is to go thither. "He takes with him both men of conduct and some of war; it is thought his stay will not be long." Again (May 23, 24), Throckmorton reports that Henri II. means to persecute extremely in Poitou, Guienne, and Scotland. "Cecil may take occasion to use the matter in Scotland as may seem best to serve the turn." This was before the Perth riot had been reported (May 26) by Cecil to Throckmorton. Was d'Elboeuf intended to direct the persecution? The theory has its attractions, but Henri, just emerged with maimed forces from a ruinous war, knew that a persecution which served Cecil's "turn" did not serve *his*. To persecute in Scotland would mean renewed war with England, and could not be contemplated. If Sir James Melville can be trusted for once, the Constable, about June 1, told him, in the presence of the French King, that if the Perth revolt were only about religion, "we mon commit Scottismen's saules unto God." Melville was then despatched with promise of aid to the Regent — if the rising was political, not religious.

It is quite certain that the Regent issued her proclamations without any commands from France; and her health was inconsistent with an intention to put Protestants to fire and sword.

In the records of the Provincial Council of March 1559, the foremost place is given to "Articles" presented to the Regent by "some temporal Lords and

Barons," and by her handed to the clergy. They are the proposals of conservative reformers. They ask for moral reformation of the lives of the clergy: for sermons on Sundays and holy days: for due examination of the doctrine, life, and learning of all who are permitted to preach. They demand that no vicar or curate shall be appointed unless he can read the catechism (of 1552) plainly and distinctly: that expositions of the sacraments should be clearly pronounced in the vernacular: that common prayer should be read in the vernacular: that certain exactions of gifts and dues should be abolished. Again, no one should be allowed to dishonour the sacraments, or the service of the Mass: no unqualified person should administer the sacraments: Kirk rapine, destruction of religious buildings and works of art, should not be permitted.

The Council passed thirty-four statutes on these points. The clergy were to live cleanly, and not to keep their bastards at home. They were implored, "in the bowels of Christ" to do their duty in the services of the Church. No one in future was to be admitted to a living without examination by the Ordinary. Ruined churches were to be rebuilt or repaired. Breakers of ornaments and violators or burners of churches were to be pursued. There was to be preaching as often as the Ordinary thought fit: if the Rector could not preach he must find a substitute who could. Plain expositions of the sacraments were made out, were to be read aloud to the congregations, and were published at twopence ("The Twopenny Faith"). Administration of the Eucharist except by priests was to be punished by excommunication. Knox himself desired *death* for others than true ministers who celebrated the sacrament. His "true ministers," about half-a-dozen of them at this time, of course came under the penalty of the last statute.

He says, with the usual error, that *after* peace was made between France and England, on April 2, 1559 (the treaty of Cateau Cambresis), the Regent "began to spew forth and disclose the latent venom of her double heart." She looked "frowardly" on Protestants, "commanded her household to use all abominations at Easter," she herself communicated, "and it is supposed that after that day the devil took more violent and strong possession in her than he had before . . . For incontinent she caused our preachers to be summoned."

But *why* did she summon the same set of preachers as before, for no old offence? The Regent, says the "Historie," made proclamation, during the Council (as the moderate Reformers had asked her to do), "that no manner of person should . . . preach or minister the sacraments, except they were admitted by the Ordinary or a Bishop on no less pain than death." The Council, in fact, made excommunication the penalty. Now it was for ministering the sacrament after the proclamation of March 13, for preaching heresy, and stirring up "seditions and tumults," that Methuen, Brother John Christison, William Harlaw, and John Willock were summoned to appear at Stirling on May 10, 1559.

How could any governor of Scotland abstain from summoning them in the circumstances? There seems to be no new suggestion of the devil, no outbreak of Guisian fury. The Regent was in a situation whence there was no “outgait”: she must submit to the seditions and tumults threatened in the Protestation of the brethren, the disturbances of services, the probable wrecking of churches, or she must use the powers legally entrusted to her. She gave insolent answers to remonstrances from the brethren, says Knox. She would banish the preachers (not execute them), “albeit they preached as truly as ever did St. Paul.” Being threatened, as before, with the consequent “inconvenients,” she said “she would advise.” However, summon the preachers she did, for breach of her proclamations, “tumults and seditions.”

Knox himself was present at the Revolution which ensued, but we must now return to his own doings in the autumn and winter of 1558-59.

CHAPTER IX: KNOX ON THE ANABAPTISTS: HIS APPEAL TO ENGLAND: 1558-1559

While the inevitable Revolution was impending in Scotland, Knox was living at Geneva. He may have been engaged on his "Answer" to the "blasphemous cavillations" of an Anabaptist, his treatise on Predestination. Laing thought that this work was "chiefly written" at Dieppe, in February-April 1559, but as it contains more than 450 pages it is probably a work of longer time than two months. In November 1559 the English at Geneva asked leave to print the book, which was granted, provided that the name of Geneva did not appear as the place of printing; the authorities knowing of what Knox was capable from the specimen given in his "First Blast." There seem to be several examples of the Genevan edition, published by Crispin in 1560; the next edition, less rare, is of 1591 (London).

The Anabaptist whom Knox is discussing had been personally known to him, and had lucid intervals. "Your chief Apollos," he had said, addressing the Calvinists, "be persecutors, on whom the blood of Servetus crieth a vengeance. . . . They have set forth books affirming it to be lawful to persecute and put to death such as dissent from them in controversies of religion. . . . Notwithstanding they, before they came to authority, were of another judgment, and did both say and write that no man ought to be persecuted for his conscience' sake. . . ." Knox replied that Servetus was a blasphemer, and that Moses had been a more wholesale persecutor than the Edwardian burners of Joan of Kent, and the Genevan Church which roasted Servetus (October 1553). He incidentally proves that he was better than his doctrine. In England an Anabaptist, after asking for secrecy, showed him a manuscript of his own full of blasphemies. "In me I confess there was great negligence, that neither did retain his book nor present him to the magistrate" to burn. Knox could not have done that, for the author "earnestly required of me closeness and fidelity," which, probably, Knox promised. Indeed, one fancies that his opinions and character would have been in conflict if a chance of handing an idolater over to death had been offered to him.

The death of Mary Tudor on November 17, 1558, does not appear to have been anticipated by him. The tidings reached him before January 12, 1559, when he wrote from Geneva a singular "Brief Exhortation to England for the Spedie Embrasing of Christ's Gospel heretofore by the Tyrannie of Marie

Suppressed and Banished."

The gospel to be embraced by England is, of course, not nearly so much Christ's as John Knox's, in its most acute form and with its most absolute, intolerant, and intolerable pretensions. He begins by vehemently rebuking England for her "shameful defection" and by threatening God's "horrible vengeances which thy monstrous unthankfulness hath long deserved," if the country does not become much more puritan than it had ever been, or is ever likely to be. Knox "wraps you all in idolatry, all in murder, all in one and the same iniquity," except the actual Marian martyrs; those who "abstained from idolatry;" and those who "avoided the realm" or ran away. He had set one of the earliest examples of running away: to do so was easier for him than for family men and others who had "a stake in the country," for which Knox had no relish. He is hardly generous in blaming all the persons who felt no more "ripe" for martyrdom than he did, yet stayed in England, where the majority were, and continued to be, Catholics.

Having asserted his very contestable superiority and uttered pages of biblical threatenings, Knox says that the repentance of England "requireth two things," first, the expulsion of "all dregs of Popery" and the treading under foot of all "glistering beauty of vain ceremonies." Religious services must be reduced, in short, to his own bare standard. Next, the Genevan and Knoxian "kirk discipline" must be introduced. No "power or liberty (must) be permitted to any, of what estate, degree, or authority they be, either to live without the yoke of discipline by God's word commanded," or "to alter . . . one jot in religion which from God's mouth thou hast received. . . . If prince, king, or emperor would enterprise to change or disannul the same, that he be of thee reputed enemy to God," while a prince who erects idolatry . . . "must be adjudged to death."

Each bishopric is to be divided into ten. The Founder of the Church and the Apostles "all command us to preach, to preach." A brief sketch of what The Book of Discipline later set forth for the edification of Scotland is recommended to England, and is followed by more threatenings in the familiar style.

England did not follow the advice of Knox: her whole population was not puritan, many of her martyrs had died for the prayer book which Knox would have destroyed. His tract cannot have added to the affection which Elizabeth bore to the author of "The First Blast." In after years, as we shall see, Knox spoke in a tone much more moderate in addressing the early English nonconformist secessionists (1568). Indeed, it is as easy almost to prove, by isolated passages in Knox's writings, that he was a sensible, moderate man, loathing and condemning active resistance in religion, as to prove him to be a senselessly violent man. All depends on the occasion and opportunity. He speaks with two voices. He was very impetuous; in the death of Mary Tudor he suddenly saw the chance of bringing English religion up, or down, to the Genevan level, and so he wrote this letter of vehement rebuke and inopportune advice.

Knox must have given his biographers "medicines to make them love him." The learned Dr. Lorimer finds in this epistle, one of the most fierce of his writings, "a programme of what this Reformation reformed should be — a programme which was honourable alike to Knox's zeal and his moderation." The "moderation" apparently consists in not abolishing bishoprics, but substituting "ten bishops of moderate income for one lordly prelate." Despite this moderation of the epistle, "its intolerance is extreme," says Dr. Lorimer, and Knox's advice "cannot but excite astonishment." The party which agreed with him in England was the minority of a minority; the Catholics, it is usually supposed, though we have no statistics, were the majority of the English nation. Yet the only chance, according to Knox, that England has of escaping the vengeance of an irritable Deity, is for the smaller minority to alter the prayer book, resist the Queen, if she wishes to retain it unaltered, and force the English people into the "discipline" of a Swiss Protestant town.

Dr. Lorimer, a most industrious and judicious writer, adds that, in these matters of "discipline," and of intolerance, Knox "went to a tragical extreme of opinion, of which none of the other leading reformers had set an example;" also that what he demanded was substantially demanded by the Puritans all through the reign of Elizabeth. But Knox averred publicly, and in his "History," that for everything he affirmed in Scotland he had heard the judgments "of the most godly and learned that be known in Europe . . . and for my assurance I have the handwritings of many." Now he had affirmed frequently, in Scotland, the very doctrines of discipline and persecution "of which none of the other leading Reformers had set an example," according to Dr. Lorimer. Therefore, either they agreed with Knox, or what Knox told the Lords in June 1564 was not strictly accurate. In any case Knox gave to his country the most extreme of Reformations.

The death of Mary Tudor, and the course of events at home, were now to afford our Reformer the opportunity of promulgating, in Scotland, those ideas which we and his learned Presbyterian student alike regret and condemn. These persecuting ideas "were only a mistaken theory of Christian duty, and nothing worse," says Dr. Lorimer. Nothing could possibly be worse than a doctrine contrary in the highest degree to the teaching of Our Lord, whether the doctrine was proclaimed by Pope, Prelate, or Calvinist.

Here it must be observed that a most important fact in Knox's career, a most important element in his methods, has been little remarked upon by his biographers. Ever since he failed, in 1554, to obtain the adhesion of Bullinger and Calvin to his more extreme ideas, he had been his own prophet, and had launched his decrees of the right of the people, of part of the people, and of the individual, to avenge the insulted majesty of God upon idolaters, not only without warrant from the heads of the Calvinistic Church, but to their great annoyance and disgust. Of this an example will now be given.

CHAPTER X: KNOX AND THE SCOTTISH REVOLUTION, 1559

Knox had learned from letters out of Scotland that Protestants there now ran no risks; that "without a shadow of fear they might hear prayers in the vernacular, and receive the sacraments in the right way, the impure ceremonies of Antichrist being set aside." The image of St. Giles had been broken by a mob, and thrown into a sewer; "the impure crowd of priests and monks" had fled, throwing away the shafts of the crosses they bore, and "hiding the golden heads in their robes." Now the Regent thinks of reforming religion, on a given day, at a convention of the whole realm. So William Cole wrote to Bishop Bale, then at Basle, without date. The riot was of the beginning of September 1558, and is humorously described by Knox.

This news, though regarded as "very certain," was quite erroneous except as to the riot. One may guess that it was given to Knox in letters from the nobles, penned in October 1558, which he received in November 1558; there was also a letter to Calvin from the nobles, asking for Knox's presence. It seemed that a visit to Scotland was perfectly safe; Knox left Geneva in January, he arrived in Dieppe in February, where he learned that Elizabeth would not allow him to travel through England. He had much that was private to say to Cecil, and was already desirous of procuring English aid to Scottish reformers. The tidings of the Queen's refusal to admit him to England came through Cecil, and Knox told him that he was "worthy of Hell" (for conformity with Mary Tudor); and that Turks actually granted such safe conducts as were now refused to him. Perhaps he exaggerated the amenity of the Turks. His "First Blast," if acted on, disturbed the succession in England, and might beget new wars, a matter which did not trouble the prophet. He also asked leave to visit his flock at Berwick. This too was refused.

Doubtless Knox, with his unparalleled activity, employed the period of delay in preaching the Word at Dieppe. After his arrival in Scotland, he wrote to his Dieppe congregation, upbraiding them for their Laodicean laxity in permitting idolatry to co-exist with true religion in their town. Why did they not drive out the idolatrous worship? These epistles were intercepted by the Governor of Dieppe, and their contents appear to have escaped the notice of the Reformer's biographers. A revolt followed in Dieppe. Meanwhile Knox's doings at Dieppe had greatly exasperated François Morel, the chief pastor of the Genevan congregation in Paris, and president of the first Protestant Synod held in that town. The affairs of the French Protestants were in a most precarious condition; persecution broke into fury early in June 1559. A week earlier, Morel wrote to Calvin, “Knox was for some time in Dieppe, waiting on a wind for Scotland.” “He dared publicly to profess the worst and most infamous of doctrines: ‘Women are unworthy to reign; Christians may protect themselves by arms against tyrants!’” The latter excellent doctrine was not then accepted by the Genevan learned. “I fear that Knox may fill Scotland with his madness. He is said to have a boon companion at Geneva, whom we hear that the people of Dieppe have called to be their minister. If he be infected with such opinions, for Christ’s sake pray that he be not sent; or if he has already departed, warn the Dieppe people to beware of him.” A French ex-capuchin, Jacques Trouillé, was appointed as Knox’s successor at Dieppe.

Knox’s ideas, even the idea that Christians may bear the sword against tyrants, were all his own, were anti-Genevan; and though Calvin (1559-60) knew all about the conspiracy of Amboise to kill the Guises, he ever maintained that he had discouraged and preached against it. We must, therefore, credit Knox with originality, both in his ideas and in his way of giving it to be understood that they had the approval of the learned of Switzerland. The reverse was true.

By May 3, Knox was in Edinburgh, “come in the brunt of the battle,” as the preachers’ summons to trial was for May 10. He was at once outlawed, “blown loud to the horn,” but was not dismayed. On this occasion the battle would be a fair fight, the gentry, under their Band, stood by the preachers, and, given a chance in open field with the arm of the flesh to back him, Knox’s courage was tenacious and indomitable. It was only for lonely martyrdom that he never thought himself ready, and few historians have a right to throw the first stone at him for his backwardness.

As for armed conflict, at this moment Mary of Guise could only reckon surely on the small French garrison of Scotland, perhaps 1500 or 2000 men. She could place no confidence in the feudal levies that gathered when the royal standard was raised. The Hamiltons merely looked to their own advancement; Lord James Stewart was bound to the Congregation; Huntly was a double dealer and was remote; the minor *noblesse* and the armed burghers, with Glencairn representing the south-west, Lollard from of old, were attached to Knox’s doctrines, while the mob would flock in to destroy and plunder.

Meanwhile Mary of Guise was at Stirling, and a multitude of Protestants were at Perth, where the Reformation had just made its entry, and had secured a walled city, a thing unique in Scotland. The gentry of Angus and the people of Dundee, at Perth, were now anxious to make a “demonstration” (unarmed, says

Knox) at Stirling, if the preachers obeyed the summons to go thither, on May 10. Their strategy was excellent, whether carefully premeditated or not.

The Regent, according to Knox, amused Erskine of Dun with promises of "taking some better order" till the day of May 10 arrived, when, the preachers and their backers having been deluded into remaining at Perth instead of "demonstrating" at Stirling, she outlawed the preachers and fined their sureties ("assisters"). She did not outlaw the sureties. Her treachery (alleged only by Knox and others who follow him) is examined in Appendix A. Meanwhile it is certain that the preachers were put to the horn in absence, and that the brethren, believing themselves (according to Knox) to have been disgracefully betrayed, proceeded to revolutionary extremes, such as Calvin energetically denounced.

If we ask who executed the task of wrecking the monasteries at Perth, Knox provides two different answers.

In the "History" Knox says that after the news came of the Regent's perfidy, and after a sermon "vehement against idolatry," a priest began to celebrate, and "opened a glorious tabernacle" on the high altar. "Certain godly men and a young boy" were standing near; they all, or the boy alone (the sentence may be read either way), cried that this was intolerable. The priest struck the boy, who "took up a stone" and hit the tabernacle, and "the whole multitude" wrecked the monuments of idolatry. Neither the exhortation of the preacher nor the command of the magistrate could stay them in their work of destruction. Presently "the rascal multitude" convened, *without* the gentry and "earnest professors," and broke into the Franciscan and Dominican monasteries. They wrecked as usual, and the "common people" robbed, but the godly allowed Forman, Prior of the Charter House, to bear away about as much gold and silver as he was able to carry. We learn from Mary of Guise and Lesley's "History" that the very orchards were cut down.

If, thanks to the preachers, "no honest man was enriched the value of a groat," apparently dishonest men must have sacked the gold and silver plate of the monasteries; nothing is said by Knox on this head, except as to the Charter House.

Writing to Mrs. Locke, on the other hand, on June 23, Knox tells her that "the brethren," after "complaint and appeal made" against the Regent, levelled with the ground the three monasteries, burned all "monuments of idolatry" accessible, "and priests were commanded under pain of death, to desist from their blasphemous mass." Nothing is said about a spontaneous and uncontrollable popular movement. The professional "brethren," earnest professors of course, reap the glory. Which is the true version?

If the version given to Mrs. Locke be accurate, Knox had sufficient reasons for producing a different account in that portion of his "History" (Book ii.) which is a tract written in autumn, 1559, and in purpose meant for contemporary foreign as well as domestic readers. The performances attributed to the brethren, in the letter to the London merchant's wife, were of a kind which Calvin severely rebuked. Similar or worse violences were perpetrated by French brethren at Lyons, on April 30, 1562. The booty of the church of St. Jean had been sold at auction. There must be no more robbery and pillage, says Calvin, writing on May 13, to the Lyons preachers. The ruffians who rob ought rather to be abandoned, than associated with to the scandal of the Gospel. "Already reckless zeal was shown in the ravages committed in the churches" (altars and images had been overthrown), "but those who fear God will not rigorously judge what was done in hot blood, from devout emotion, but what can be said in defence of looting?"

Calvin spoke even more distinctly to the "consistory" of Nîmes, who suspended a preacher named Tartas for overthrowing crosses, altars, and images in churches (July-August, 1561). The zealot was even threatened with excommunication by his fellow religionists. Calvin heard that this fanatic had not only consented to the outrages, but had incited them, and had "the insupportable obstinacy" to say that such conduct was, with him, "a matter of conscience." "But *we*" says Calvin, "know that the reverse is the case, for God never commanded any one to overthrow idols, except every man in his own house, and, in public, those whom he has armed with authority. Let that firebrand" (the preacher) "show us by what title *he* is lord of the land where he has been burning things."

Knox must have been aware of Calvin's opinion about such outrages as those of Perth, which, in a private letter, he attributes to the brethren: in his public "History" to the mob. At St. Andrews, when similar acts were committed, he says that "the provost and bailies . . . did agree to remove all monuments of idolatry," whether this would or would not have satisfied Calvin.

Opponents of my view urge that Knox, though he knew that the brethren had nothing to do with the ruin at Perth, yet, in the enthusiasm of six weeks later, claimed this honour for them, when writing to Mrs. Locke. Still later, when cool, he told, in his "History," "the frozen truth," the mob alone was guilty, despite his exhortations and the commandment of the magistrate. Neither alternative is very creditable to the prophet.

In the "Historie of the Estate of Scotland," it is "the brethren" who break, burn, and destroy. In Knox's "History" no mention is made of the threat of death against the priests. In the letter to Mrs. Locke he says, apparently of the threat, perhaps of the whole affair, "which thing did so enrage the venom of the serpent's seed," that she decreed death against man, woman, and child in Perth, after the fashion of Knox's favourite texts in Deuteronomy and Chronicles. This was "beastlie crueltie." The "History" gives the same account of the Regent's threatening "words which might escape her in choler" (of course we have no authority for her speaking them at all), but, in the "History," Knox omits the threat by the brethren of death against the priests — a threat which none of his biographers mentions!

If the menace against the priests and the ruin of monasteries were not seditious, what is sedition? But Knox's business, in Book II. of his "History" (much of it written in September-October 1559), is to prove that the movement was *not* rebellious, was purely religious, and all for "liberty of conscience" — for Protestants. Therefore, in the "History," he disclaims the destruction by the brethren of the monasteries — the mob did that; and he burkes the threat of death to priests: though he told the truth, privately, to Mrs. Locke.

Mary did not move at once. The Hamiltons joined her, and she had her French soldiers, perhaps 1500 men. On May 22 "The Faithful Congregation of Christ Jesus in Scotland," but a few gentlemen being concerned, wrote from Perth, which they were fortifying, to the Regent. If she proceeds in her "cruelty," they will take up the sword, and inform all Christian princes, and their Queen in France, that they have revolted solely because of "this cruel, unjust, and most tyrannical murder, intended against towns and multitudes." As if they had not revolted already! Their pretext seems to mean that they do not want to alter the sovereign authority, a quibble which they issued for several months, long after it was obviously false. They also wrote to the nobles, to the French officers in the Regent's service, and to the clergy.

What really occurred was that many of the brethren left Perth, after they had "made a day of it," as they had threatened earlier: that the Regent called her nobles to Council, concentrated her French forces, and summoned the levies of Clydesdale and Stirlingshire. Meanwhile the brethren flocked again into Perth, at that time, it is said, the only wall-girt town in Scotland: they strengthened the works, wrote everywhere for succour, and loudly maintained that they were not rebellious or seditious.

Of these operations Knox was the life and soul. There is no mistaking his hand in the letter to Mary of Guise, or in the epistle to the Catholic clergy. That letter is courteously addressed "To the Generation of Anti-Christ, the Pestilent Prelates and their Shavelings within Scotland, the Congregation of Jesus within the same saith."

The gentle Congregation saith that, if the clergy "proceed in their cruelty," they shall be "apprehended as murderers." "We shall begin that same war which

God commanded Israel to execute against the Canaanites . . .” This they promise in the names of God, Christ, and the Gospel. Any one can recognise the style of Knox in this composition. David Hume remarks: “With these outrageous symptoms commenced in Scotland that hypocrisy and fanaticism which long infested that kingdom, and which, though now mollified by the lenity of the civil power, is still ready to break out on all occasions.” Hume was wrong, there was no touch of hypocrisy in Knox; he believed as firmly in the “message” which he delivered as in the reality of the sensible universe.

A passage in the message to the nobility displays the intense ardour of the convictions that were to be potent in the later history of the Kirk. That priests, by the prescription of fifteen centuries, should have persuaded themselves of their own power to damn men’s souls to hell, cut them off from the Christian community, and hand them over to the devil, is a painful circumstance. But Knox, from Perth, asserts that the same awful privilege is vested in the six or seven preachers of the nascent Kirk with the fire-new doctrine! Addressing the signers of the godly Band and other sympathisers who have not yet come in, he (if he wrote these fiery appeals) observes, that if they do *not* come in, “ye shall be *excommunicated* from our Society, and from all participation with us in the administration of the Sacraments . . . Doubt we nothing but that our church, *and the true ministers of the same*, have the power which our Master, Jesus Christ, granted to His apostles in these words, ‘Whose sins ye shall forgive, shall be forgiven, and whose sins ye shall retain, shall be retained’ . . . “ Men were to be finally judged by Omnipotence on the faith of what Willock, Knox, Harlaw, poor Paul Methuen, and the apostate Friar Christison, “trew ministeris,” thought good to decide! With such bugbears did Guthrie and his companions think, a century later, to daunt “the clear spirit of Montrose.”

While reading the passages just cited, we are enabled to understand the true cause of the sorrows of Scotland for a hundred and thirty years. The situation is that analysed by Thomas Lüber, a Professor of Medicine at Heidelberg, well or ill known in Scottish ecclesiastical disputes by his Graecised name, Erastus. He argued, about 1568, that excommunication has no certain warrant in Holy Writ, under a Christian prince. Erastus writes: —

“Some men were seized on by a certain excommunicatory fever, which they did adorn with the name of ‘ecclesiastical discipline.’ . . . They affirmed the manner of it to be this: that certain presbyters should sit in the name of the whole Church, and should judge who were worthy or unworthy to come to the Lord’s Supper. I wonder that then they consulted about these matters, when we neither had men to be excommunicated, nor fit excommunicators; for scarcely a thirtieth part of the people did understand or approve of the reformed religion.”

"There was," adds Erastus, "another fruit of the same tree, that almost every one thought men had the power of opening and shutting heaven to whomsoever they would."

What men have this power in Scotland in 1559? Why, some five or six persons who, being fluent preachers, have persuaded local sets of Protestants to accept them as ministers. These preachers having a "call" — it might be from a set of perfidious and profligate murderers — are somehow gifted with the apostolic grace of binding on earth what shall be bound in heaven. Their successors, down to Mr. Cargill, who, of his own fantasy, excommunicated Charles II., were an intolerable danger to civilised society. For their edicts of "boycotting" they claimed the sanction of the civil magistrate, and while these almost incredibly fantastic pretentions lasted, there was not, and could not be, peace in Scotland.

The seed of this Upas tree was sown by Knox and his allies in May 1559. An Act of 1690 repealed civil penalties for the excommunicated.

To face the supernaturally gifted preachers the Regent had but a slender force, composed in great part of sympathisers with Knox. Croft, the English commander at Berwick, writing to the English Privy Council, on May 22, anticipated that there would be no war. The Hamiltons, numerically powerful, and strong in martial gentlemen of the name, were with the Regent. But of the Hamiltons it might always be said, as Charles I. was to remark of their chief, that "they were very active for their own preservation," and for no other cause. For centuries but one or two lives stood between them and the throne, the haven where they would be. They never produced a great statesman, but their wealth, numbers, and almost royal rank made them powerful.

At this moment the eldest son of the house, the Earl of Arran, was in France. As a boy, he had been seized by the murderers of Cardinal Beaton, and held as a hostage in the Castle of St. Andrews. Was he there converted to the Reformers' ideas by the eloquence of Knox? We know not, but, as heir to his father's French duchy of Chatelherault, he had been some years in France, commanding the Scottish Archer Guard. In France too, perhaps, he was more or less a pledge for his father's loyalty in Scotland. He was now a Protestant in earnest, had retired from the French Court, had refused to return thither when summoned, and fled from the troops who were sent to bring him; lurking in woods and living on strawberries. Cecil despatched Thomas Randolph to steer him across the frontier to Zurich. He was a piece in the game much more valuable than his father, whose portrait shows us a weak, feebly cunning, good-natured, and puzzled-looking old nobleman.

Till Arran returned to Scotland, the Hamiltons, it was certain, would be trusty allies of neither faith and of neither party. When the Perth tumult broke out, Lord James rode with the Regent, as did Argyll. But both had signed the godly Band of December 3, 1557, and could no more be trusted by the Regent than the Hamiltons.

Meanwhile, the gentry of Fife and Forfarshire, with the town of Dundee, joined Knox in the walled town of Perth, though Lord Ruthven, provost of Perth, deserted, for the moment, to the Regent. On the other hand, the courageous Glencairn, with a strong body of the zealots of Renfrewshire and Ayrshire, was moving by forced marches to join the brethren. On May 24, the Regent, instead of attacking, halted at Auchterarder, fourteen miles away, and sent Argyll and Lord James to parley. They were told that the brethren meant no rebellion (as the Regent said and doubtless thought that they did), but only desired security for their religion, and were ready to "be tried" (by whom?) "in lawful judgment." Argyll and Lord James were satisfied. On May 25, Knox harangued the two lords in his wonted way, but the Regent bade the brethren leave Perth on pain of treason. By May 28, however, she heard of Glencairn's approach with Lord Ochiltree, a Stewart (later Knox's father-in-law); Glencairn, by cross roads, had arrived within six miles of Perth, with 1200 horse and 1300 foot. The western Reformers were thus nearer Perth than her own untrustworthy levies at Auchterarder. Not being aware of this, the brethren proposed obedience, if the Regent would amnesty the Perth men, let their faith "go forward," and leave no garrison of "French soldiers." To Mrs. Locke Knox adds that no idolatry should be erected, or alteration made within the town. The Regent was now sending Lord James, Argyll, and Mr. Gawain Hamilton to treat, when Glencairn and his men marched into Perth. Argyll and Lord James then promised to join the brethren, if the Regent broke her agreement; Knox and Willock assured their hearers that break it she would — and so the agreement was accepted (May 28).

It was thus necessary for the brethren to allege that the covenant was broken; and it was not easy for Mary to secure order in Perth without taking some step that could be seized on as a breach of her promise; Argyll and Lord James could then desert her for the party of Knox. The very Band which Argyll and Lord James signed with the Congregation provided that the godly should go on committing the disorders which it was the duty of the Regent to suppress, and they proceeded in that holy course, "breaking down the altars and idols in all places where they came." "At their whole powers" the Congregations are "to destroy and put away all that does dishonour to God's name"; that is, monasteries and works of sacred art. They are all to defend each other against "any power whatsoever" that shall trouble them in their pious work. Argyll and Lord James signed this new Band, with Glencairn, Lord Boyd, and Ochiltree.

The Queen's emissaries thus deserted her cause on the last day of May 1559, or earlier, for the chronology is perplexing.

As to the terms of truce with the Regent, Knox gives no document, but says that no Perth people should be troubled for their recent destruction of idolatry "and for down casting the places of the same; that she would suffer the religion begun to go forward, and leave the town at her departing free from the garrisons of French soldiers." The "Historie" mentions no terms except that "she should leave no men of war behind her."

Thus, as it seems, the brethren by their Band were to go on wrecking the homes of the Regent's religion, while she was not to enjoy her religious privileges in the desecrated churches of Perth, for to do that was to prevent "the religion begun" from "going forward." On the Regent's entry her men "discharged their volley of hackbuts," probably to clear their pieces, a method of unloading which prevailed as late as Waterloo. But some aimed, says Knox, at the house of Patrick Murray and hit a son of his, a boy of ten or twelve, "who, being slain, was had to the Queen's presence." She mocked, and wished it had been his father, "but seeing that it so chanced, we cannot be against fortune." It is not very probable that Mary of Guise was "merry," in Knox's manner of mirth, over the death of a child (to Mrs. Locke Knox says "children"), who, for all we know, may have been the victim of accident, like the Jacobite lady who was wounded at a window as Prince Charles's men discharged their pieces when entering Edinburgh after the victory of Prestonpans. (This brave lady said that it was fortunate she was not a Whig, or the accident would have been ascribed to design.) This event at Perth was called a breach of terms, so was the attendance at Mass, celebrated on any chance table, as "the altars were not so easy to be repaired again." The soldiers were billeted on citizens, whose houses were "oppressed by" the Frenchmen, and the provost, Ruthven (who had anew deserted to the Congregation), and the bailies, were deposed.

These magistrates probably had been charged with the execution of priests who dared to do their duty; at least in the following year, on June 10, 1560, we find the provost, bailies, and town council of Edinburgh decreeing death for the third offence against idolaters who do not instantly profess their conversion. The Edinburgh municipality did this before the abolition of Catholicism by the Convention of Estates in August 1560. It does not appear that any authority in Perth except that of the provost and bailies could sentence priests to death; was their removal, then, a breach of truce? At all events it seemed necessary in the circumstances, and Mary of Guise when she departed left no *French* soldiers to protect the threatened priests, but four companies of Scots who had been in French service, under Stewart of Cardonell and Captain Cullen, the Captain of

Queen Mary's guard after the murder of Riccio. The Regent is said by Knox to have remarked that she was not bound to keep faith with heretics, and that, with as fair an excuse, she would make little scruple to take the lives and goods of "all that sort." We do not know Knox's authority for these observations of the Regent.

The Scots soldiers left by Mary of Guise may have been Protestants, they certainly were not Frenchmen; and, in a town where death had just been threatened to all priests who celebrated the Mass, Mary could not abandon her clerics unprotected.

Taking advantage of what they called breach of treaty as regards the soldiers left in Perth, Lord James and Argyll, with Ruthven, had joined the brethren, accompanied by the Earl of Menteith and Murray of Tullibardine, ancestor of the ducal house of Atholl. Argyll and Lord James went to St. Andrews, summoning their allies thither for June 3. Knox meanwhile preached in Crail and Anstruther, with the usual results. On Sunday, June 11, and for three days more, despising the threats of the Archbishop, backed by a hundred spears, and referring to his own prophecy made when he was in the galleys, he thundered at St. Andrews. The poor ruins of some sacred buildings "are alive to testify" to the consequences, and a head of the Redeemer found in the latrines of the abbey is another mute witness to the destruction of that day.

It is not my purpose to dilate on the universal destruction of so much that was beautiful, and that to Scots, however godly, should have been sacred. The tomb of the Bruce in Dunfermline, for example, was wrecked by the mob, as the statue of Jeanne d'Arc on the bridge of Orleans was battered to pieces by the Huguenots. Nor need we ask what became of church treasures, perhaps of great value and antiquity. In some known cases, the magistrates held and sold those of the town churches. Some of the plate and vestments at Aberdeen were committed to the charge of Huntly, but about 1900 ounces of plate were divided among the Prebendaries, who seem to have appropriated them. The Church treasures of Glasgow were apparently carried abroad by Archbishop Beaton. If Lord James, as Prior, took possession of the gold and silver of St. Andrews, he probably used the bullion (he spent some 13,000 crowns) in his defence of the approaches to the town, against the French, in December 1559. A silver mace of St. Salvator's College escaped the robbers.

There is no sign of the possession of much specie by the Congregation in the months that followed the sack of so many treasuries of pious offerings. Lesley says that they wanted to coin the plate in Edinburgh, and for that purpose seized, as they certainly did, the dies of the mint. In France, when the brethren sacked Tours, they took twelve hundred thousand *livres d'or*; the country was enriched for the moment. Not so Scotland. In fact the plate of Aberdeen cathedral, as inventoried in the Register, is no great treasure. Monasteries and cathedrals were certain to perish sooner or later, for the lead of every such roof except Coldingham had been stripped and sold by 1585, while tombs had been desecrated for their poor spoils, and the fanes were afterwards used as quarries of hewn stone. Lord James had a peculiar aversion to idolatrous books, and is known to have ordered the burning of many manuscripts; — the loss to art was probably greater than the injury to history or literature. The fragments of things beautiful that the Reformers overlooked, were destroyed by the Covenanters. An attempt has been made to prove that the Border abbeys were not wrecked by Reformers, but by English troops in the reign of Henry VIII., who certainly ravaged them. Lesley, however, says that the abbeys of Kelso and Melrose were "by them (the Reformers) broken down and wasted." If there was nothing left to destroy on the Border, why did the brethren march against Kelso, as Cecil reports, on July 9, 1559?

After the devastation the Regent meant to attack the destroyers, intending to occupy Cupar, six miles, by Knox's reckoning, from St. Andrews. But, by June 13, the brethren had anticipated her with a large force, rapidly recruited, including three thousand men under the Lothian professors; Ruthven's horse; the levies of the Earl of Rothes (Leslie), and many burgesses. Next day the Regent's French horse found the brethren occupying a very strong post; their numbers were dissembled, their guns commanded the plains, and the Eden was in their front. A fog hung over the field; when it lifted, the French commander, d'Oysel, saw that he was outnumbered and outmanœuvred. He sent on an envoy to parley, "which gladly of us being granted, the Queen offered a free remission for all crimes past, so that they would no further proceed against friars and abbeys, and that no more preaching should be used publicly," for *that* always meant kirk-wrecking. When Wishart preached at Mauchline, long before, in 1545, it was deemed necessary to guard the church, where there was a tempting tabernacle, "beutyfull to the eie."

The Lords and the whole brethren "refused such appointment" . . . says Knox to Mrs. Locke; they would not "suffer idolatrie to be maintained in the bounds committed to their charge." To them liberty of conscience from the first meant liberty to control the consciences and destroy the religion of all who differed from them. An eight days' truce was made for negotiations; during the truce neither party was to "enterprize" anything. Knox in his "History" does not mention an attack on the monastery of Lindores during the truce. He says that his party expected envoys from the Regent, as in the terms of truce, but perceived "her craft and deceit."

In fact, the brethren were the truce-breakers. Knox gives only the assurances signed by the Regent's envoys, the Duke of Chatelherault and d'Oysel. They include a promise "not to invade, trouble, or disquiet the Lords," the reforming party. But, though Knox omits the fact, the Reformers made a corresponding and equivalent promise: "That the Congregation should enterprise nothing nor make no invasion, for the space of six days following, for the Lords and principals of the Congregation read the rest on another piece of paper."

The situation is clear. The two parties exchanged assurances. Knox prints that of the Regent's party, not that, "on another piece of paper," of the Congregation. They broke their word; they "made invasion" at Lindores, during truce, as Knox tells Mrs. Locke, but does not tell the readers of his "History."   It is true that Knox was probably preaching at St. Andrews on June 13, and was not present at Cupar Muir. But he could easily have ascertained what assurances the Lords of the Congregation "read from another piece of paper" on that historic waste.

CHAPTER XI: KNOX’S INTRIGUES, AND HIS ACCOUNT OF THEM, 1559

The Reformers, and Knox as their secretary and historian, had now reached a very difficult and delicate point in their labours. Their purpose was, not by any means to secure toleration and freedom of conscience, but to extirpate the religion to which they were opposed. It was the religion by law existing, the creed of “Authority,” of the Regent and of the King and Queen whom she represented. The position of the Congregation was therefore essentially that of rebels, and, in the state of opinion at the period, to be rebels was to be self-condemned. In the eyes of Calvin and the learned of the Genevan Church, kings were the Lord’s appointed, and the Gospel must not be supported by the sword. “Better that we all perish a hundred times,” Calvin wrote to Coligny in 1561. Protestants, therefore, if they would resist in arms, had to put themselves in order, and though Knox had no doubt that to exterminate idolaters was thoroughly in order, the leaders of his party were obliged to pay deference to European opinion.

By a singular coincidence they adopted precisely the same device as the more militant French Protestants laid before Calvin in August 1559-March 1560. The Scots and the Protestant French represented that they were illegally repressed by foreigners: in Scotland by Mary of Guise with her French troops; in France by the Cardinal and Duc de Guise, foreigners, who had possession of the persons and authority of the “native prince” of Scotland, Mary, and the “native prince” of France, Francis II., both being minors. The French idea was that, if they secured the aid of a native Protestant prince (Condé), they were in order, as against the foreign Guises, and might kill these tyrants, seize the King, and call an assembly of the Estates. Calvin was consulted by the chief of the conspiracy, La Renaudie; he disapproved; the legality lent by one native prince was insufficient; the details of the plot were “puerile,” and Calvin waited to see how the country would take it. The plot failed, at Amboise, in March 1560.

In Scotland, as in France, devices about a prince of the native blood suggested themselves. The Regent, being of the house of Guise, was a foreigner, like her brothers in France. The “native princes” were Chatelherault and his eldest son, Arran. The leaders, soon after Lord James and Argyll formally joined the zealous brethren, saw that without foreign aid their enterprise was desperate. Their levies must break up and go home to work; the Regent’s nucleus of French troops could not be ousted from the sea fortress of Dunbar, and would in all probability be joined by the army promised by Henri II. His death, the Huguenot risings, the consequent impotence of the Guises to aid the Regent, could not be foreseen. Scotland, it seemed, would be reduced to a French province; the religion would be overthrown.

There was thus no hope, except in aid from England. But by the recent treaty of Cateau Cambresis (April 2, 1559), Elizabeth was bound not to help the rebels of the French Dauphin, the husband of the Queen of Scots. Moreover, Elizabeth had no stronger passion than a hatred of rebels. If she was to be persuaded to help the Reformers, they must produce some show of a legitimate "Authority" with whom she could treat. This was as easy to find as it was to the Huguenots in the case of Condé. Chatelherault and Arran, native princes, next heirs to the crown while Mary was childless, could be produced as legitimate "Authority." But to do this implied a change of "Authority," an upsetting of "Authority," which was plain rebellion in the opinion of the Genevan doctors. Knox was thus obliged, in sermons and in the pamphlet (Book II. of his "History"), to maintain that nothing more than freedom of conscience and religion was contemplated, while, as a matter of fact, he was foremost in the intrigue for changing the "Authority," and even for depriving Mary Stuart of "entrance and title" to her rights. He therefore, in Book II. (much of which was written in August-October or September-October 1559, as an apologetic contemporary tract), conceals the actual facts of the case, and, while perpetually accusing the Regent of falsehood and perfidy, displays an extreme "economy of truth," and cannot hide the pettifogging prevarications of his party. His wiser plan would have been to cancel this Book, or much of it, when he set forth later to write a history of the Reformation. His party being then triumphant, he could have afforded to tell most of the truth, as in great part he does in his Book III. But he could not bring himself to throw over the narrative of his party pamphlet (Book II.), and it remains much as it was originally written, though new touches were added.

The point to be made in public and in the apologetic tract was that the Reformers contemplated no alteration of "Authority." This was untrue.

Writing later (probably in 1565-66) in his Third Book, Knox boasts of his own initiation of the appeal to England, which included a scheme for the marriage of the Earl of Arran, son of the Hamilton chief, Chatelherault, to Queen Elizabeth. Failing issue of Queen Mary, Arran was heir to the Scottish throne, and if he married the Queen of England, the rightful Queen of Scotland would not be likely to wear her crown. The contemplated match was apt to involve a change of dynasty. The lure of the crown for his descendants was likely to bring Chatelherault, and perhaps even his brother the Archbishop, over to the side of the Congregation: in short it was an excellent plot. Probably the idea occurred to the leaders of the Congregation at or shortly after the time when Argyll and Lord James threw in their lot definitely with the brethren on May 31. On June 14 Croft, from Berwick, writes to Cecil that the leaders, "from what I hear, will likely seek her Majesty's" (Elizabeth's) "assistance," and mean to bring Arran home. Some think that he is already at Geneva, and he appears to have made the acquaintance of Calvin, with whom later he corresponded. "They are likely to motion a marriage you know where"; of Arran, that is, with Elizabeth. Moreover, one Whitlaw was at this date in France, and by June 28, communicated the plan to Throckmorton, the English Ambassador. Thus the scheme was of an even earlier date than Knox claims for his own suggestion.

He tells us that at St. Andrews, after the truce of Cupar Muir (June 13), he "burstit forth," in conversation with Kirkcaldy of Grange, on the necessity of seeking support from England. Kirkcaldy long ago had watched the secret exit from St. Andrews Castle, while his friends butchered the Cardinal. He was taken in the castle when Knox was taken; he was a prisoner in France; then he entered the French service, acting, while so engaged, as an English spy. Before and during the destruction of monasteries he was in the Regent's service, but she justly suspected him of intending to desert her at this juncture. Kirkcaldy now wrote to Cecil, without date, but probably on June 21, and with the signature "Zours as ye knaw." Being in the Regent's party openly, he was secretly betraying her; he therefore accuses her of treachery. (He left her publicly, after a pension from England had been procured for him.) He says that the Regent averred that "favourers of God's word should have liberty to live after their consciences," "yet, in the conclusion of the peace" (the eight days' truce) "she has uttered her deceitful mind, having now declared that she will be enemy to all them that shall not live after her religion." *Consequently*, the Protestants are wrecking "all the friaries within their bounds." But Knox has told us that they declared their intention of thus enjoying liberty of conscience *before* "the conclusion of the peace," and wrecked Lindores Abbey during the peace! Kirkcaldy adds that the Regent already suspects him.

Kirkcaldy, having made the orthodox charge of treachery against the woman whom he was betraying, then asks Cecil whether Elizabeth will accept their "friendship," and adds, with an eye to Arran, "I wish likewise her Majesty were not too hasty in her marriage." On June 23, writing from his house, Grange, and signing his name, Kirkcaldy renews his proposals. In both letters he anticipates the march of the Reformers to turn the Regent's garrison out of Perth. On June 25 he announces that the Lords are marching thither. They had already the secret aid of Lethington, who remained, like the traitor that he was, in the

Regent's service till the end of October. Knox also writes at this time to Cecil from St. Andrews.

On June 1, Henri II. of France had written to the Regent promising to send her strong reinforcements, but he was presently killed in a tourney by the broken lance shaft of Montgomery.

The Reformers now made tryst at Perth for June 25, to restore "religion" and expel the Scots in French service. The little garrison surrendered (their opponents are reckoned by Kirkcaldy at 10,000 men), idolatry was again suppressed, and Perth restored to her municipal constitution. The ancient shrines of Scone were treated in the usual way, despite the remonstrances of Knox, Lord James, and Argyll. They had threatened Hepburn, Bishop of Moray, that if he did not join them "they neither could spare nor save his place." This was on June 20, on the same day he promised to aid them and vote with them in Parliament. Knox did his best, but the Dundee people began the work of wrecking; and the Bishop, in anger, demanded and received the return of his written promise of joining the Reformers. On the following day, irritated by some show of resistance, the people of Dundee and Perth burned the palace of Scone and the abbey, "whereat no small number of us was offended." An old woman said that "filthy beasts" dwelt "in that den," to her private knowledge, "at whose words many were pacified." The old woman is an excellent authority.

The pretext of perfect loyalty was still maintained by the Reformers; their honesty we can appreciate. They did not wish, they said, to overthrow "authority"; merely to be allowed to worship in their own way (and to prevent other people from worshipping in theirs, which was the order appointed by the State). That any set of men may rebel and take their chances is now recognised, but the Reformers wanted to combine the advantages of rebellion with the reputation of loyal subjects. Persons who not only band against the sovereign, but invoke foreign aid and seek a foreign alliance, are, however noble their motives, rebels. There is no other word for them. But that they were *not* rebels Knox urged in a sermon at Edinburgh, which the Reformers, after devastating Stirling, reached by June 28-29 (?), and the Second Book of his "History" labours mainly to prove this point; no change of "authority" is intended.

What Knox wanted is very obvious. He wanted to prevent Mary Stuart from enjoying her hereditary crown. She was a woman, as such under the curse of "The First Blast of the Trumpet," and she was an idolatress. Presently, as we shall see, he shows his hand to Cecil.

Before the Reformers entered Edinburgh Mary of Guise retired to the castle of Dunbar, where she had safe access to the sea. In Edinburgh Knox says that the poor sacked the monasteries "before our coming." The contemporary *Diurnal of*

Occurrents attributes the feat to Glencairn, Ruthven, Argyll, and the Lord James.

Knox was chosen minister of Edinburgh, and as soon as they arrived the Lords, according to the "Historie of the Estate of Scotland," sent envoys to the Regent, offering obedience if she would "relax" the preachers, summoned on May 10, "from the horn" and allow them to preach. The Regent complied, but, of course, peace did not ensue, for, according to Knox, in addition to a request "that we might enjoy liberty of conscience," a demand for the withdrawal of all French forces out of Scotland was made. This could not be granted.

Presently Mary of Guise issued before July 2, in the name of the King and Queen, Francis II. and Mary Stuart, certain charges against the Reformers, which Knox in his "History" publishes. A remark that Mary Stuart lies like her mother, seems to be written later than the period (September-October 1559) when this Book II. was composed. The Regent says that the rising was only under pretence of religion, and that she has offered a Parliament for January 1560. "A manifest lie," says Knox, "for she never thought of it till we demanded it." He does not give a date to the Regent's paper, but on June 25 Kirkcaldy wrote to Percy that the Regent "is like to grant the other party" (the Reformers) "all they desire, which in part she has offered already."

Knox seizes on the word "offered" as if it necessarily meant "offered though unasked," and so styles the Regent's remark "a manifest lie." But Kirkcaldy, we see, uses the words "has in part offered already" when he means that the Regent has "offered" to grant some of the wishes of his allies.

Meanwhile the Regent will allow freedom of conscience in the country, and especially in Edinburgh. But the Reformers, her paper goes on, desire to subvert the crown. To prove this she says that they daily receive messengers from England and send their own; and they have seized the stamps in the Mint (a capital point as regards the crown) and the Palace of Holyrood, which Lesley says that they sacked. Knox replies, "there is never a sentence in the narrative true," except that his party seized the stamps merely to prevent the issue of base coin (not to coin the stolen plate of the churches and monasteries for themselves, as Lesley says they did). But Knox's own letters, and those of Kirkcaldy of Grange and Sir Henry Percy, prove that they *were* intriguing with England as early as June 23-25. Their conduct, with the complicity of Percy, was perfectly well known to the Regent's party, and was denounced by d'Oysel to the French ambassador in London in letters of July. Elizabeth, on August 7, answered the remonstrances of the Regent, promising to punish her officials if guilty. Nobody lied more frankly than "that imperial votaress."

When Knox says "there is never a sentence in the narrative true," he is very bold. It was not true that the rising was merely under pretext of religion. It may have been untrue that messengers went *daily* to England, but five letters were written between June 21 and June 28. To stand on the words of the Regent—"*every day*" — would be a babyish quibble. All the rest of her narrative was absolutely true.

Knox, on June 28, asked leave to enter England for secret discourse; he had already written to the same effect from St. Andrews. If Henri sends French reinforcement, Knox "is uncertain what will follow"; we may guess that authority would be in an ill way. Cecil temporised; he wanted a better name than Kirkcaldy's — a man in the Regent's service — to the negotiations (July 4). "Anywise kindle the fire," he writes to Croft (July 8). Croft is to let the Reformers know that Arran has escaped out of France. Such a chance will not again "come in our lives." We see what the chance is!

On July 19 Knox writes again to Cecil, enclosing what he means to be an apology for his "Blast of the Trumpet," to be given to Elizabeth. He says, while admitting Elizabeth's right to reign, as "judged godly," though a woman, that they "must be careful not to make entrance and title to many, by whom not only shall the truth be impugned, but also shall the country be brought to bondage and slavery. God give you eyes to foresee and wisdom to avoid the apparent danger."

The "many" to whom "entrance and title" are not to be given, manifestly are Mary Stuart, Queen of France and Scotland.

It is not very clear whether Knox, while thus working against a woman's "entrance and title" to the crown on the ground of her sex, is thinking of Mary Stuart's prospects of succession to the throne of England or of her Scottish rights, or of both. His phrase is cast in a vague way; "many" are spoken of, but it is not hard to understand what particular female claimant is in his mind.

Thus Knox himself was intriguing with England against his Queen at the very moment when in his "History" he denies that communications were frequent between his party and England, or that any of the Regent's charges are true. As for opposing authority and being rebellious, the manifest fundamental idea of the plot is to marry Elizabeth to Arran and deny "entrance and title" to the rightful Queen. It was an admirable scheme, and had Arran not become a lunatic, had Elizabeth not been "that imperial votaress" vowed to eternal maidenhood, their bridal, with the consequent loss of the Scottish throne by Mary, would have been the most fortunate of all possible events. The brethren had, in short, a perfect right to defend their creed in arms; a perfect right to change the dynasty; a perfect right to intrigue with England, and to resist a French landing, if they could. But for a reformer of the Church to give a dead lady the lie in his "History" when the economy of truth lay rather on his own side, as he knew, is not so well. We shall see that Knox possibly had the facts in his mind during the first interview with Mary Stuart.

The Lords, July 2, replied to the proclamation of Mary of Guise, saying that she accused them of a purpose "to invade her person." There is not a word of the kind in the Regent's proclamation as given by Knox himself. They denied what the Regent in her proclamation had not asserted, and what she had asserted about their dealings with England they did not venture to deny; "whereby," says Spottiswoode in his "History," "it seemed there was some dealing that way for expelling the Frenchmen, which they would not deny, and thought not convenient as then openly to profess." The task of giving the lie to the Regent when she spoke truth was left to the pen of Knox.

Meanwhile, at Dunbar, Mary of Guise was in evil case. She had sounded Erskine, the commander of the Castle, who, she hoped, would stand by her. But she had no money to pay her French troops, who were becoming mutinous, and d'Oysel "knew not to what Saint to vow himself." The Earl of Huntly, before he would serve the Crown, insisted on a promise of the Earldom of Moray; this desire was to be his ruin. Huntly was a double dealer; "the gay Gordons" were ever brave, loyal, and bewildered by their chiefs. By July 22, the Scots heard of the fatal wound of Henri II., to their encouragement. Both parties were in lack of money, and the forces of the Congregation were slipping home by hundreds. Mary, according to Knox, was exciting the Duke against Argyll and Lord James, by the charge that Lord James was aiming at the crown, in which if he succeeded, he would deprive not only her daughter of the sovereignty, but the Hamiltons of the succession. Young and ambitious as Lord James then was, and heavily as he was suspected, even in England, it is most improbable that he ever thought of being king.

The Congregation refused to let Argyll and Lord James hold conference with the Regent. Other discussions led to no result, except waste of time, to the Regent's advantage; and, on July 22, Mary, in council with Lord Erskine, Huntly, and the Duke, resolved to march against the Reformers at Edinburgh, who had no time to call in their scattered levies in the West, Angus, and Fife. Logan of Restalrig, lately an ally of the godly, surrendered Leith, over which he was the superior, to d'Oysel; and the Congregation decided to accept a truce (July 23-24).

At this point Knox's narrative becomes so embroiled that it reminds one of nothing so much as of Claude Nau's attempts to glide past an awkward point in the history of his employer, Mary Stuart. I have puzzled over Knox's narrative again and again, and hope that I have disentangled the knotted and slippery thread.

It is not wonderful that the brethren made terms, for the "Historie" states that their force numbered but 1500 men, whereas d'Oysel and the Duke led twice that number, horse and foot. They also heard from Erskine, in the Castle, that, if they did not accept "such appointment as they might have," he "would declare himself their enemy," as he had promised the Regent. It seems that she did not want war, for d'Oysel's French alone should have been able to rout the depleted ranks of the Congregation.

The question is, What were the terms of treaty? for it is Knox's endeavour to prove that the Regent broke them, and so justified the later proceedings of the Reformers. The terms, in French, are printed by Teulet. They run thus: —

1. The Protestants, not being inhabitants of Edinburgh, shall depart next day.

2. They shall deliver the stamps for coining to persons appointed by the Regent, hand over Holyrood, and Ruthven and Pitarro shall be pledges for performance.

3. They shall be dutiful subjects, except in matters of religion.

4. They shall not disturb the clergy in their persons or by withholding their rents, &c., before January 10, 1560.

5. They shall not attack churches or monasteries before that date.

6. The town of Edinburgh shall enjoy liberty of conscience, and shall choose its form of religion as it pleases till that date.

7. The Regent shall not molest the preachers nor suffer the clergy to molest them for cause of religion till that date.

8. Keith, Knox, and Spottiswoode, add that no garrisons, French or Scots, shall occupy Edinburgh, but soldiers may repair thither from their garrisons for lawful business.

The French soldiers are said to have swaggered in St. Giles's, but no complaint is made that they were garrisoned in Edinburgh. In fact, they abode in the Canongate and Leith.

Now, these were the terms accepted by the Congregation. This is certain, not only because historians, Knox excepted, are unanimous, but because the terms were either actually observed, or were evaded, on a stated point of construction.

1. The Congregation left Edinburgh.

2. They handed over the stamps of the Mint, Holyrood, and the two pledges.

3. 4, 5. We do not hear that they attacked any clerics or monastery before they broke off publicly from the treaty, and Knox (i. 381) admits that Article 4 was accepted.

6. They would not permit the town of Edinburgh to choose its religion by "voting of men." On July 29, when Huntly, Chatelherault, and Erskine, the neutral commander of the Castle, asked for a *plébiscite*, as provided in the treaty

of July 24, the Truth, said the brethren, was not a matter of human votes, and, as the brethren held St. Giles's Church before the treaty, under Article 7 they could not be dispossessed. The Regent, to avoid shadow of offence, yielded the point as to Article 6, and was accused of breach of treaty because, occupying Holyrood, she had her Mass there. Had Edinburgh been polled, the brethren knew that they would have been outvoted.

Now, Knox's object, in that part of Book II. of his "History," which was written in September-October 1559 as a tract for contemporary reading, is to prove that the Regent was the breaker of treaty. His method is first to give "the heads drawn by us, which we desired to be granted." The heads are —

1. No member of the Congregation shall be troubled in any respect by any authority for the recent "innovation" before the Parliament of January 10, 1560, decides the controversies.

2. Idolatry shall not be restored where, on the day of treaty, it has been suppressed.

3. Preachers may preach wherever they have preached and wherever they may chance to come.

4. No soldiers shall be in garrison in Edinburgh.

5. The French shall be sent away on "a reasonable day" and no more brought in without assent of the whole Nobility and Parliament.

These articles make no provision for the safety of Catholic priests and churches, and insist on suppression of idolatry where it has been put down, and the entire withdrawal of French forces. Knox's party could not possibly denounce these terms which they demanded as "things unreasonable and ungodly," for they were the very terms which they had been asking for, ever since the Regent went to Dunbar. Yet, when the treaty was made, the preachers did say "our case is not yet so desperate that we need to grant to things unreasonable and ungodly." Manifestly, therefore, the terms actually obtained, as being "unreasonable and ungodly," were *not* those for which the Reformers asked, and which, *they publicly proclaimed*, had been conceded.

Knox writes, "These our articles were altered, and another form disposeth." And here he translates the terms as given in the French, terms which provide for the safety of Catholics, the surrender of Holyrood and the Mint, but say nothing about the withdrawal of the French troops or the non-restoration of "idolatry" where it has been suppressed.

He adds, "This alteration in words and order was made" (so it actually *was* made) "without the knowledge and consent of those whose counsel we had used in all cases before" — clearly meaning the preachers, and also implying that the consent of the noble negotiators for the Congregation *was* obtained to the French articles.

Next day the Congregation left Edinburgh, after making solemn proclamation of the conditions of truce, in which they omitted all the terms of the French version, except those in their own favour, and stated (in Knox's version) that all of their own terms, except the most important, namely, the removal of the French, and the promise to bring in no more, had been granted! It may be by accident, however, that the proclamation of the Lords, as given by Knox, omits the article securing the departure of the French. There exist two MS. copies of the proclamation, in which the Lords dare to assert "that the Frenchmen should be sent away at a reasonable date, and no more brought in except by assent of the whole nobility and Parliament."

Of the terms really settled, except as regards the immunity of their own party, the Lords told the public not one word; they suppressed what was true, and added what was false.

Against this formal, public, and impudent piece of mendacity, we might expect Knox to protest in his "History"; to denounce it as a cause of God's wrath. On the other hand he states, with no disapproval, the childish quibbles by which his party defended their action.

On reading or hearing the Lords' proclamation, the Catholics, who knew the real terms of treaty, said that the Lords "in their proclamation had made no mention of anything promised to *them*," and "had proclaimed more than was contained in the Appointment;" among other things, doubtless, the promise to dismiss the French.

The brethren replied to these "calumnies of Papists" (as Calderwood styles them), that they "proclaimed nothing that was not *finally* agreed upon, *in word and promise*, betwixt us and those with whom the Appointment was made, *whatsoever their scribes had after written,* who, in very deed, had altered, both in words and sentences, our Articles, *as they were first conceived*; and yet if their own writings were diligently examined, the self same thing shall be found *in substance*."

This is most complicated quibbling! Knox uses his ink like the cuttle-fish, to conceal the facts. The "own writings" of the Regent's party are before us, and do not contain the terms proclaimed by the Congregation. Next, in drawing up the terms which the Congregation was compelled to accept, the "scribes" of the Regent's party necessarily, and with the consent of the Protestant negotiators, altered the terms proposed by the brethren, but not granted by the Regent's negotiators. Thirdly, the Congregation now asserted that "*finally*" an arrangement in conformity with their proclamation was "agreed upon *in word and promise*"; that is, verbally, which we never find them again alleging. The game was to foist false terms on public belief, and then to accuse the Regent of perfidy in not keeping them.

These false terms were not only publicly proclaimed by the Congregation with sound of trumpets, but they were actually sent, by Knox or Kirkcaldy, or both, to Croft at Berwick, for English reading, on July 24. In a note I print the letter, signed by Kirkcaldy, but in the holograph of Knox, according to Father Stevenson. It will be remarked that the genuine articles forbidding attacks on monasteries and ensuring priests in their revenues are here omitted, while the false articles on suppression of idolatry, and expulsion of the French forces are inserted, and nothing is said about Edinburgh's special liberty to choose her religion.

The sending of this false intelligence was not the result of a misunderstanding. I have shown that the French terms were perfectly well understood, and were observed, except Article 6, on which the Regent made a concession. How then could men professionally godly venture to misreport the terms, and so make them at once seem more favourable to themselves and less discouraging to Cecil than they really were, while at the same time (as the Regent could not keep terms which she had never granted) they were used as a ground of accusation against her?

This is the point that has perplexed me, for Knox, no less than the Congregation, seems to have deliberately said good-bye to truth and honour, unless the Lords elaborately deceived their secretary and diplomatic agent. The only way in which I can suppose that Knox and his friends reconciled their consciences to their conduct is this:

Knox tells us that "when all points were communed and agreed upon by mid-persons," Chatelherault and Huntly had a private interview with Argyll, Glencairn, and others of his party. They promised that they would be enemies to the Regent if she broke any one jot of the treaty. "As much promised the duke that *he* would do, if in case that she would not remove her French at a reasonable day . . . " the duke being especially interested in their removal. But Huntly is not said to have made *this* promise — the removal of the French obviously not being part of the "Appointment."

Next, the brethren, in arguing with the Catholics about their own mendacious proclamation of the terms, said that "we proclaimed nothing which was not *finally* agreed upon, *in word and promise*, betwixt us and those with whom the Appointment was made. . . . "

I can see no explanation of Knox's conduct, except that he and his friends pacified their consciences by persuading themselves that non-official words of Huntly and Chatelherault (whatever these words may have been), spoken after "all was agreed upon," cancelled the treaty with the Regent, became the real treaty, and were binding on the Regent! Thus Knox or Kirkcaldy, or both, by letter; and Knox later, orally in conversation with Croft, could announce false terms of treaty. So great, if I am right, is a good man's power of self-persuasion! I shall welcome any more creditable theory of the Reformer's behaviour, but I can see no alternative, unless the Lords lied to Knox.

That the French should be driven out was a great point with Cecil, for he was always afraid that the Scots might slip back from the English to the old French alliance. On July 28, after the treaty of July 24, but before he heard of it, he insisted on the necessity of expelling the French, in a letter to the Reformers. He "marvels that they omit such an opportunity to help themselves." He sent a letter of vague generalities in answer to their petitions for aid. When he received, as he did, a copy of the terms of the treaty of July 24, in French, he would understand.

As further proof that Cecil was told what Knox and Kirkcaldy should have known to be untrue, we note that on August 28 the Regent, weary of the perpetual charges of perfidy anew brought against her, "ashamed not," writes Knox, to put forth a proclamation, in which she asserted that nothing, in the terms of July 23-24, forbade her to bring in more French troops, "as may clearly appear by inspection of the said Appointment, which the bearer has presently to show."

Why should the Regent have been "ashamed" to tell the truth? If the bearer showed a false and forged treaty, the Congregation must have denounced it, and produced the genuine document with the signatures. Far from that, in a reply (from internal evidence written by Knox), they admit, "neither do we *here* allege the breaking of the Appointment made at Leith (which, nevertheless, has manifestly been done), but" — and here the writer wanders into quite other questions. Moreover, Knox gives another reply to the Regent, "by some men," in which they write "we dispute not so much whether the bringing in of more Frenchmen be violating of the Appointment, which the Queen and her faction cannot deny to be manifestly broken by them in more cases than one," in no way connected with the French. One of these cases will presently be stated — it is comic enough to deserve record — but, beyond denial, the brethren could not, and did not even attempt to make out their charge as to the Regent's breach of truce by bringing in new, or retaining old, French forces.

Our historians, and the biographers of Knox, have not taken the trouble to unravel this question of the treaty of July 24. But the behaviour of the Lords and of Knox seems characteristic, and worthy of examination.

It is not argued that Mary of Guise was, or became, incapable of worse than dissimulation (a case of forgery by her in the following year is investigated in Appendix B). But her practices at this time were such as Knox could not throw the first stone at. Her French advisers were in fact "perplexed," as Throckmorton wrote to Elizabeth (August 8). They made preparations for sending large reinforcements: they advised concession in religion: they waited on events, and the Regent could only provide, at Leith (which was jealous of Edinburgh and anxious to be made a free burgh), a place whither she could fly in peril. Meantime she would vainly exert her woman's wit among many dangers.

Knox, too, was exerting his wit in his own way. Busied in preaching and in acting as secretary and diplomatic agent to the Congregation as he was, he must also have begun in or not much later than August 1559, the part of his "History" first written by him, namely Book II. That book, as he wrote to a friend named Railton on October 23, 1559 (when much of it was already penned), is meant as a defence of his party against the charge of sedition, and was clearly intended (we reiterate) for contemporary reading at home and abroad, while the strife was still unsettled. This being so, Knox continues his policy of blaming the Regent for breach of the misreported treaty of July 24: for treachery, which would justify the brethren's attack on her before the period of truce (January 10, 1559) ran out.

One clause, we know, secured the Reformers from molestation before that date. Despite this, Knox records a case of "oppressing" a brother, "which had been sufficient to prove the Appointment to be plainly violated." Lord Seton, of the Catholic party, "broke a chair on Alexander Whitelaw as he came from Preston (pans) accompanied by William Knox . . . and this he did supposing that Alexander Whitelaw had been John Knox."

So much Knox states in his Book II., writing probably in September or October 1559. But he does not here say what Alexander Whitelaw and William Knox had been doing, or inform us how he himself was concerned in the matter. He could not reveal the facts when writing in the early autumn of 1559, because the brethren were then still taking the line that they were loyal, and were suffering from the Regent's breaches of treaty, as in the matter of the broken chair.

The sole allusion here made by Knox to the English intrigues, before they were manifest to all mankind in September, is this, "Because England was of the same religion, and lay next to us, it was judged expedient first to prove them, which we did by one or two messengers, as hereafter, in its own place, more amply shall be declared." He later inserted in Book III. some account of the intrigues of July-August 1559, "in its own place," namely, in a part of his work occupied with the occurrences of January 1560.

Cecil, prior to the compact of July 24, had wished to meet Knox at Stamford. On July 30 Knox received his instructions as negotiator with England. His employers say that they hear that Huntly and Chatelherault have promised to join the Reformers if the Regent breaks a jot of the treaty of July 24, the terms of which Knox can declare. They ask money to enable them to take Stirling Castle, and "strength by sea" for the capture of Broughty Castle, on Tay. Yet they later complained of the Regent when she fortified Leith. They actually *did* take Broughty Castle, and then had the hardihood to aver that they only set about this when they heard in mid-September of the fortification of Leith by the Regent. They aimed at it six days after their treaty of July 24. They asked for soldiers to lie in garrison, for men, ships, and money for their Lords.

Bearing these instructions Knox sailed from Fife to Holy Island, near Berwick, and there met Croft, the Governor of that town. Croft kept him, not with sufficient secrecy, in Berwick, where he was well known, while Whitelaw was coming from Cecil with his answers to the petitions of the brethren. Meanwhile Croft held converse with Knox, who, as he reports, says that, as to the change of "Authority" (that is of sovereignty, temporary at least), the choice of the brethren would be subject to Elizabeth's wishes. Yet the brethren contemplated no change of Authority! Arran ought to be kept secretly in England "till wise men considered what was in him; if misliked he put Lord James second." As to what Knox told Croft about the terms of treaty of July 24, it is best to state the case in Croft's own words. "He (Knox) excusys the Protestantes, for that the French as commyng apon them at Edynbrogh when theyr popoll were departed to make new provysyon of vytaylles, forcyd them to make composycyon wyth the quene. Whereyn (sayeth he) the frenchmen ar apoynted to departe out of Scotland by the xth of thys monthe, and they truste verely by thys caus to be stronger, for that the Duke, apon breche of promys on the quene's part, wyll take playne parte withe the Protestantes."

This is quite explicit. Knox, as envoy of the Lords, declares that in the treaty it is "appointed" that the French force shall leave Scotland on August 10. (The printed calendars are not accurate.) No such matter occurred in the treaty "wyth the quene." Knox added, next day, that he himself "was unfit to treat of so great matters," and Croft appears to have agreed with him, for, by the Reformer's lack of caution, his doings in Holy Island were "well known and published." Consequently, when Whitelaw returned to Knox with Cecil's reply to the requests of the brethren, the performances of Knox and Whitelaw were no secrets, in outline at least, to the Regent's party. For this reason, Lord Seton, mistaking Whitelaw for Knox (who had set out on August 3 to join the brethren at Stirling), pursued and broke a chair on the harmless Brother Whitelaw. Such was the Regent's treacherous breach of treaty!

During this episode in his curious adventures as a diplomatist, Knox recommended Balnaves, author of a treatise on "Justification by Faith," as a better agent in these courses, and with Balnaves the new envoy of Elizabeth, Sadleir, a veteran diplomatist (wheedled in 1543 by Mary of Guise), transacted business henceforth. Sadleir was ordered to Berwick on August 6. Elizabeth infringed the treaty of Cateau Cambresis, then only four months old, by giving Sadleir £3000 in gold, or some such sum, for the brethren. "They were tempting the Duke by all means possible," but he will only promise neutrality if it comes to the push, and they, Argyll and Lord James say (Glasgow, August 13), are not yet ready "to discharge this authority," that is, to depose the Regent. Chatelherault's promise was less vigorous than it had been reported!

Knox, who now acted as secretary for the Congregation, was not Sir Henry Wotton's ideal ambassador, "an honest man sent to lie abroad for his country." When he stooped to statements which seem scarcely candid, to put it mildly, he did violence to his nature. He forced himself to proclaim the loyalty of his party from the pulpit, when he could not do so without some economy of truth. He inserted things in his "History," and spoke things to Croft, which he should have known to be false. But he carried his point. He did advance the "union of hearts" with England, if in a blundering fashion, and we owe him eternal gratitude for his interest in the match, though "we like not the manner of the wooing." The reluctant hand of Elizabeth was now inextricably caught in the gear of that great machine which broke the ancient league of France and Scotland, and saved Scotland from some of the sorrows of France.

The papers of Sadleir, Elizabeth's secret agent with the Scots, show the godly pursuing their old plan of campaign. To make treaty with the Regent; to predict from the pulpit that she would break it; to make false statements about the terms of the treaty; to accuse her of their infringement; to profess loyalty; to aim at setting up a new sovereign power; to tell the populace that Mary of Guise's scanty French reinforcements — some 1500 men — came by virtue of a broken treaty; to tell Sadleir that they were very glad that the French *had* come, as they would excite popular hatred; to make out that the fortification of Leith was breach of treaty; — such, in brief, were the methods of the Reformers.

They now took a new method of proving the Regent's breach of treaty, that she had "set up the Mass in Holyrood, which they had before suppressed." *They* were allowed to have their sermons in St. Giles's, but *she* was not to have her rites in her own abbey. Balnaves still harped on the non-dismissal of the French as a breach of treaty!

Arran, returning from Switzerland, had an interview with Elizabeth in

England, in mid-September, was smuggled across the Border with the astute and unscrupulous Thomas Randolph in his train. With Arran among them, Chatelherault might waver as he would. Meanwhile Knox and Willock preached up and down the country, doubtless repeating to the people their old charges against the Regent. Lethington, the secretary of that lady, still betrayed her, telling Sadleir "that he attended upon the Regent no longer than he might have a good occasion to revolt unto the Protestants" (September 16).

Balnaves got some two to three thousand pounds in gold (the sum is variously stated) from Sadleir. "He saith, whatever pretence they make, the principal mark they shoot at is to make an alteration of the State and authority." This at least is explicit enough. The Reformers were actually renewing the civil war on charges so stale and so false. The Duke had possibly promised to desert her if she broke the truce, and now he seized on the flimsy pretence, because the Congregation, as the leaders said, had "tempted him" sufficiently. They had come up to his price. Arran, the hoped-for Hamilton king, the hoped-for husband of the Queen of England, had arrived, and with Arran the Duke joined the Reformers. About September 20 they forbade the Regent to fortify Leith.

The brethren say that they have given no "provocation." Six weeks earlier they had requested England to help them to seize and hold Broughty Castle, though the Regent may not have known that detail.

The Regent replied as became her, and Glencairn, with Erskine of Dun, wrecked the rich abbey of Paisley. The brethren now broke the truce with a vengeance.

CHAPTER XII: KNOX IN THE WAR OF THE CONGREGATION: THE REGENT ATTACKED: HER DEATH: CATHOLICISM ABOLISHED, 1559-1560

Though the Regent was now to be deposed and attacked by armed force, Knox tells us that there were dissensions among her enemies. Some held "that the Queen was heavily done to," and that the leaders "sought another end than religion." Consequently, when the Lords with their forces arrived at Edinburgh on October 16, the local brethren showed a want of enthusiasm. The Congregation nevertheless summoned the Regent to depart from Leith, and on October 21 met at the Tolbooth to discuss her formal deposition from office. Willock moved that this might lawfully be done. Knox added, with more reserve than usual, that their hearts must not be withdrawn from their King and Queen, Mary and Francis. The Regent, too, ought to be restored when she openly repented and submitted. Willock dragged Jehu into his sermon, but Knox does not appear to have remarked that Francis and Mary were Ahab and Jezebel, idolaters. He was now in a position of less freedom and more responsibility than while he was a wandering prophet at large.

On October 24 the Congregation summoned Leith, having deposed the Regent *in the name of the King and Queen, Francis and Mary*, and of themselves as Privy Council! They did more. They caused one James Cocky, a gold worker, to forge the great seal of Francis and Mary, "wherewith they sealed their pretended laws and ordinances, tending to constrain the subjects of the kingdom to rebel and favour their usurpations." Their proclamations with the forged seal they issued at St. Andrews, Glasgow, Linlithgow, Perth, and elsewhere; using this seal in their letters to noblemen, who were ordered to obey Arran. The gold worker, whose name is variously spelled in the French record, says that the device for the coins which the Congregation meant to issue and ordered him to execute was on one side a cross with a crown of thorns, on the other the words VERBUM DEI. The artist, Cocky, was dilatory, and when the brethren were driven out of Edinburgh he gave the dies, unfinished, to John Achison, the chief official of the Mint, who often executed coins of Queen Mary. As Professor Hume Brown says of the audacious statement of the brethren, that they acted in the name of their King and Queen, their use of the forged Royal seal, "as covering their action with an appearance of law, served its purpose in their appeals to the people." Cocky and Kirkcaldy were hanged by Morton in 1573.

The idea of forging the great seal may have arisen in the fertile brain of Lethington, who about October 25 had at last deserted the Regent, and now took Knox's place as secretary of the Congregation. Henceforth their manifestoes say little about religion, and a great deal about the French design to conquer Scotland.

To the wit of Lethington we may plausibly attribute a proposal which, on October 25, Knox submitted to Croft. It was that England should lend 1000 men for the attack on the Regent in Leith. Peace with France need not be broken, for the men may come as private adventurers, and England may denounce them as rebels. Croft declined this proposal as dishonourable, and as too clearly a breach of treaty. Knox replied that he had communicated Croft's letter "to such as partly induced me before to write" (October 29). Very probably Lethington suggested the idea, leaving the burden of its proposal on Knox. Dr. M'Crie says that it is a solitary case of the Reformer's recommending dissimulation; but the proceeding was in keeping with Knox's previous statements about the nature of the terms made in July; with the protestations of loyalty; with the lie given to Mary of Guise when she spoke, on the whole, the plain truth; and generally with the entire conduct of the prophet and of the Congregation. Dr. M'Crie justly remarks that Knox "found it difficult to preserve integrity and Christian simplicity amidst the crooked wiles of political intrigue."

On the behaviour of the godly heaven did not smile — for the moment. Scaling-ladders had been constructed in St. Giles's church, "so that preaching was neglected." "The preachers spared not openly to say that they feared the success of that enterprise should not be prosperous," for this reason, "God could not suffer such contempt of His word . . . long to be unpunished." The Duke lost heart; the waged soldiers mutinied for lack of pay; Morton deserted the cause; Bothwell wounded Ormiston as he carried money from Croft, and seized the cash — behaving treacherously, if it be true that he was under promise not to act against the brethren. The French garrison of Leith made successful sorties; and despite the valour of Arran and Lord James and the counsel of Lethington, the godly fled from Edinburgh on November 5, under taunts and stones cast by the people of the town.

The fugitives never stopped till they reached Stirling, when Knox preached to them. He lectured at great length on discomfitures of the godly in the Old Testament, and about the Benjamites, and the Levite and his wife. Coming to practical politics, he reminded his audience that after the accession of the

Hamiltons to their party, “there was nothing heard but This lord will bring these many hundred spears . . . if this Earl be ours, no man in such a district will trouble us.” The Duke ought to be ashamed of himself. Before Knox came to Scotland we know he had warned the brethren against alliance with the Hamiltons. The Duke had been on the Regent’s side, “yet without his assistance they could not have compelled us to appoint with the Queen upon such unequal conditions” in the treaty of July. So the terms *were* in favour of the Regent, after all is said and done!

God had let the brethren fall, Knox said, into their present condition because they put their trust in man — in the Duke — a noble whose repentance was very dubious.

Then Knox rose to the height of the occasion. “Yea, whatsoever becomes of us and our mortal carcases, I doubt not but that this Cause (in despite of Satan) shall prevail in the realm of Scotland. For as it is the eternal truth of the eternal God, so shall it once prevail . . .” Here we have the actual genius of Knox, his tenacity, his courage in an uphill game, his faith which might move mountains. He adjured all to amendment of life, prayer, and charity. “The minds of men began to be wonderfully erected.” In Arran and Lord James too, manifestly not jealous rivals, Randolph found “more honour, stoutness, and courage than in all the rest” (November 3).

Already, before the flight, Lethington was preparing to visit England. The conduct of diplomacy with England was thus in capable hands, and Lethington was a *persona grata* to the English Queen. Meanwhile the victorious Regent behaved with her wonted moderation. “She pursueth no man that hath showed himself against her at this time.” She pardoned all burgesses of Edinburgh, and was ready to receive the Congregation to her grace, if they would put away the traitor Lethington, Balnaves, and some others. Knox, however, says that she gave the houses of the most honest men to the French. The Regent was now very ill; *graviter aegrotat*, say Francis and Mary (Dec. 4, 1559).

The truth is that the Cause of Knox, far from being desperate, as for an hour it seemed to the faint-hearted, had never looked so well. Cecil and the English Council saw that they were committed; their gift of money was known, they must bestir themselves. While they had “nourished the garboil” in Scotland, fanned the flame, they professed to believe that France was aiming, through Scotland, at England. They arranged for a large levy of forces at Berwick; they promised money without stint: and Cecil drew up the paper adopted, as I conceive, by the brethren in their Latin appeal to all Christian princes. The Scots were to say that they originally took arms in defence of their native dynasty (the Hamiltons), Mary Stuart having no heirs of her body, and France intending to annex Scotland — which was true enough, but was not the cause of the rising at Perth. That England is also aimed at is proved by the fact that Mary and Francis, on the seal of Scotland, quarter the arms of England. Knox himself had seen, and had imparted the fact to Cecil, a jewel on which these fatal heraldic pretensions were made. The Queen is governed by “the new authority of the House of Guise.” In short, Elizabeth must be asked to intervene for these political reasons, not in defence of the Gospel, and large preparations for armed action in Scotland were instantly made. Meanwhile Cecil’s sketch of the proper manifesto for the Congregation to make, was embodied in Lethington’s instructions (November 24) from the Congregation, as well as adapted in their Latin appeal to Christian princes.

We may suppose that a man of Knox’s unbending honesty was glad to have thrown off his functions as secretary to the brethren. Far from disclaiming their idolatrous King and Queen (the ideal policy), they were issuing proclamations headed “Francis and Mary,” and bearing the forged signet. Examples with the seal were, as late as 1652, in the possession of the Erskine of Dun of that day. In them Francis and Mary denounce the Pope as Antichrist! Keith, who wrote much later, styles these proclamations “pretty singular,” and Knox must have been of the same opinion.

After Lethington took the office of secretary to the Congregation, Knox had for some time no great public part in affairs. Fife was invaded by “these bloody worms,” as he calls the French; and he preached what he tells us was a “comfortable sermon” to the brethren at Cupar. But Lethington had secured the English alliance: Lord Grey was to lead 4000 foot and 2000 horse to the Border; Lord Winter with fourteen ship set sail, and was incommoded by a storm, in which vessels of d’Elboeuf, with French reinforcements for the Regent, were, some lost, some driven back to harbour. As in Jacobite times, French aid to the loyal party was always unfortunate, and the arrival of Winter’s English fleet in the Forth caused d’Oysel to retreat out of Fife back to Leith. He had nearly reached St. Andrews, where Knox dwelt in great agony of spirit. He had “great need of a good horse,” probably because, as in October 1559, money was offered for his head. But private assassination had no terrors for the Reformer.

Knox, as he wrote to a friend on January 29, 1560, had forsaken all public assemblies and retired to a life of study, because “I am judged among ourselves too extreme.” When the Duke of Norfolk, with the English army, was moving towards Berwick, where he was to make a league with the Protestant nobles of Scotland, Knox summoned Chatelherault, and the gentlemen of his party, then in Glasgow. They wished Norfolk to come to them by Carlisle, a thing inconvenient to Lord James. Knox chid them sharply for sloth, and want of wisdom and discretion, praising highly the conduct of Lord James. They had "unreasonable minds." "Wise men do wonder what my Lord Duke's friends do mean, that are so slack and backward in this Cause." The Duke did not, however, write to France with an offer of submission. That story, *ben trovato* but not *vero*, rests on a forgery by the Regent! The fact is that the Duke was not a true Protestant, his advisers, including his brother the Archbishop, were Catholics, and the successes of d'Oysel in winter had terrified him; but, seeing an English army at hand, he assented to the league with England at Berwick, as "second person of the realm of Scotland" (February 27, 1560). Elizabeth "accepted the realm of Scotland" — Chatelherault being recognised as heir-apparent to the throne thereof — for so long as the marriage of Queen Mary and Francis I. endured, and a year later. The Scots, however, remain dutiful subjects of Queen Mary, they say, except so far as lawless attempts to make Scotland a province of France are concerned. Chatelherault did not *sign* the league till May 10, with Arran, Huntly, Morton (at last committed to the Cause), and the usual leaders of the Congregation.

With the details of the siege of Leith, and with the attempts at negotiation, we are not here concerned. France, in fact, was powerless to aid the Regent. Since the arrival of Throckmorton in France, as ambassador of England, in the previous summer (1559), the Huguenots had been conspiring. They were in touch with Geneva, in the east; on the north, in Brittany, they appear to have been stirred up by Tremaine, a Cornish gentleman, and emissary of Cecil, who joined Throckmorton at Blois, in March 1560. Stories were put about that the young French King was a leper, and was kidnapping fair-haired children, in whose blood he meant to bathe. The Huguenots had been conspiring ever since September 1559, when they seem to have sent to Elizabeth for aid in money. More recently they had held a kind of secret convention at Nantes, and summoned bands who were to lurk in the woods, concentrate at Amboise, attack the château, slay the Guises, and probably put the King and Queen Mary under the Prince de Condé, who was by the plotters expected to take the part which Arran played in Scotland. It is far from certain that Condé had accepted the position. In all this we may detect English intrigue and the gold of Elizabeth. Calvin had been consulted; he disapproved of the method of the plot, still more of the plot itself. But he knew all about it. "All turns on killing Antonius," he wrote, "Antonius" being either the Cardinal or the Duc de Guise.

The conspiracy failed at Amboise, on March 17-19, 1560. Throckmorton was present, and describes the panic and perplexity of the Court, while he eagerly asks to be promptly and secretly recalled, as suspicion has fallen on himself. He sent Tremaine home through Brittany, where he gathered proposals for betraying

French towns to Elizabeth, rather prematurely. Surrounded by treachery, and destitute of funds, the Guises could not aid the Regent, and Throckmorton kept advising Cecil to “strike while the iron was hot,” and paralyse French designs. The dying Regent of Scotland never lost heart in circumstances so desperate.

Even before the outbreak at Perth, Mary of Guise had been in very bad health. When the English crossed the Border to beleaguer Leith, Lord Erskine, who had maintained neutrality in Edinburgh Castle, allowed her to come there to die (April 1, 1560).

On April 29, from the Castle of Edinburgh, she wrote a letter to d’Oysel, commanding in Leith. She told him that she was suffering from dropsy; “one of her legs begins to swell. . . . You know there are but three days for the dropsy in this country.” The letter was intercepted by her enemies, and deciphered. On May 7, the English and Scots made an assault, and were beaten back with loss of 1000 men. According to Knox, the French stripped the fallen, and allowed the white carcases to lie under the wall, as also happened in 1746, after the English defeat at Falkirk. The Regent saw them, Knox says, from the Castle, and said they were “a fair tapestry.” “Her words were heard of some,” and carried to Knox, who, from the pulpit, predicted “that God should revenge that contumely done to his image . . . even in such as rejoiced thereat. And the very experience declared that he was not deceived, for within few days thereafter (yea, some say that same day) began her belly and loathsome legs to swell, and so continued, till that God did execute his judgments upon her.”

Knox wrote thus on May 16, 1566. He was a little irritated at that time by Queen Mary’s triumph over his friends, the murderers of Riccio, and his own hasty flight from Edinburgh to Kyle. This may excuse the somewhat unusual and even unbecoming nature of his language concerning the dying lady, but his memory was quite wrong about his prophecy. The symptoms of the Regent’s malady had begun more than a week before the Anglo-Scottish defeat at Leith, and the nature of her complaint ought to have been known to the prophet’s party, as her letter, describing her condition, had been intercepted and deciphered. But the deciphering may have been done in England, which would cause delay. We cannot, of course, prove that Knox was informed as to the Regent’s malady before he prophesied; if so, he had forgotten the fact before he wrote as he did in 1566. But the circumstances fail to demonstrate that he had a supernormal premonition, or drew a correct deduction from Scripture, and make it certain that the Regent did not fall ill after his prophecy.

The Regent died on June 11, half-an-hour after the midnight of June 10. A report was written on June 13, from Edinburgh Castle, to the Cardinal of Lorraine, by Captain James Cullen, who some twelve years later was hanged by the Regent Morton. He says that since June 7, Lord James and Argyll, Marischal, and Glencairn, had assiduously attended on the dying lady. Two hours before her death she spoke apart for a whole hour with Lord James. Chatelherault had seen her twice, and Arran once. Knox mentions the visits of these lords, and says that d'Oysel was forbidden to speak with her, "belike she would have bidden him farewell, for auld familiarity was great."

According to Knox, the Regent admitted the errors of her policy, attributing it to Huntly, who had deserted her, and to "the wicked counsel of her friends," that is, her brothers. At the request of the Lords, she saw Willock, and said, as she naturally would, that "there was no salvation but in and by the death of Jesus Christ." "She was compelled . . . to approve the chief head of our religion, wherein we dissent from all papists and popery." Knox had strange ideas about the creed which he opposed. "Of any virtue that ever was espied in King James V. (*whose daughter she,*" Mary Stuart, "*is called*"), "to this hour (1566) we have seen no sparkle to appear."

With this final fling at the chastity of Mary of Guise, the Reformer takes leave of the woman whom he so bitterly hated. Yet, "Knox was not given to the practice so common in his day, of assassinating reputations by vile insinuations." Posterity has not accepted, contemporary English historians did not accept, Knox's picture of Mary of Guise as the wanton widow, the spawn of the serpent, who desired to cut the throat of every Protestant in Scotland. She was placed by circumstances in a position from which there was no issue. The fatal French marriage of her daughter was a natural step, at a moment when Scottish independence could only be maintained by help of France. Had she left the Regency in the hands of Chatelherault, that is, of Archbishop Hamilton, the prelate was not the man to put down Protestantism by persecution, and so save the situation. If he had been, Mary of Guise was not the woman to abet him in drastic violence. The nobles would have revolted against the feeble Duke.

On July 6, the treaty of Edinburgh was concluded by representatives of England (Cecil was one) and of France. The Reformers carried a point of essential importance, the very point which Knox told Croft had been secured by the Appointment of July 1559. All French forces were to be dismissed the country, except one hundred and twenty men occupying Dunbar and Inchkeith, in the Firth of Forth. A clause by which Cecil thought he had secured "the kernel" for England, and left the shell to France, a clause recognising the "rightfulness" of Elizabeth's alliance with the rebels, afforded Mary Stuart ground, or excuse, for never ratifying the treaty.

It is needless here to discuss the question — was the Convention of Estates held after the treaty, in August, a lawful Parliament? There was doubt enough, at least, to make Protestants feel uneasy about the security of the religious settlement achieved by the Convention. Randolph, the English resident, foresaw that the Acts might be rescinded.

Before the Convention of Estates met, a thanksgiving day was held by the brethren in St. Giles's, and Knox, if he was the author of the address to the Deity, said with scientific precision, "Neither in us, nor yet in our confederates was there any cause why thou shouldst have given unto us so joyful and sudden a deliverance, for neither of us both ceased to do wickedly, even in the midst of our greatest troubles." Elizabeth had lied throughout with all her natural and cultivated gift of falsehood: of the veracity of the brethren several instances have been furnished.

Ministers were next appointed to churches, Knox taking Edinburgh, while Superintendents (who were by no means Bishops) were appointed, one to each province. Erskine of Dun, a layman, was Superintendent of Angus. A new anti-Catholic Kirk was thus set up on July 20, before the Convention met and swept away Catholicism. Knox preached vigorously on "the prophet Haggeus" meanwhile, and "some" (namely Lethington, Speaker in the Convention) "said in mockage, we must now forget ourselves, and bear the barrow to build the houses of God." The unawakened Lethington, and the gentry at large, merely dilapidated the houses of God, so that they became unsafe, as well as odiously squalid. That such fervent piety should grudge repairs of church buildings (many of them in a wretched state already) is a fact creditable rather to the thrift than to the state of grace of the Reformers. After all their protestations, full of texts, the lords and lairds starved their preachers, but provided, by roofless aisles and unglazed windows, for the ventilation of the kirks. These men so bubbling over with gospel fervour were, in short, when it came to practice, traitors and hypocrites; nor did Knox spare their unseemly avarice. The cause of the poor, and of the preachers, lay near his heart, and no man was more insensible of the temptations of wealth.

Lethington did not address the Parliament as Speaker till August 9. Never had such a Parliament met in Scotland. One hundred and six barons, not of the higher order, assembled; in 1567, when Mary was a prisoner and the Regent Moray held the assembly, not nearly so many came together, nor on any later occasion at this period. The newcomers claimed to sit "as of old custom"; it was a custom long disused, and not now restored to vitality.

A supplication was presented by "the Barons, gentlemen, Burgesses, and others" to "the nobility and Estates" (of whom they do not seem to reckon themselves part, contrasting *themselves* with "yourselves"). They reminded the Estates how they had asked the Regent "for freedom and liberty of conscience with a godly reformation of abuses." They now, by way of freedom of conscience, ask that Catholic doctrine "be abolished by Act of this Parliament, and punishment appointed for the transgressors." The Man of Sin has been distributing the whole patrimony of the Church, so that "the trew ministers," the schools, and the poor are kept out of their own. The actual clergy are all thieves and murderers and "rebels to the lawful authority of Emperors, Kings, and Princes." Against these charges (murder, rebellion, profligacy) they must answer now or be so reputed. In fact, it was the nobles, rather than the Pope, who had been robbing the Kirk, education, and the poor, which they continued to do, as Knox attests. But as to doctrine, the barons and ministers were asked to lay a Confession before the House.

It will be observed that, in the petition, "Emperors, Kings, and Princes" have "lawful authority" over the clergy. But that doctrine assumes, tacitly, that such rulers are of Knox's own opinions: the Kirk later resolutely stood up against kings like James VI., Charles I., and Charles II.

The Confession was drawn up, presented, and ratified in a very few days: it was compiled in four. The Huguenots in Paris, in 1559, "established a record" by drawing up a Confession containing eighty articles in three days. Knox and his coadjutors were relatively deliberate. They aver that all points of belief necessary for salvation are contained in the canonical books of the Bible. Their interpretation pertains to no man or Church, but solely to "the spreit of God." That "spreit" must have illuminated the Kirk as it then existed in Scotland, "for we dare not receive and admit any interpretation which directly repugns to any principal point of our faith, to any other *plain* text of Scripture, or yet unto the rule of charity."

As we, the preachers of the Kirk then extant, were apostate monks or priests or artisans, about a dozen of us, in Scotland, mankind could not be expected to regard "our" interpretation, "our faith" as infallible. The framers of the Confession did not pretend that it was infallible. They request that, "if any man will note in this our Confession any article or sentence repugning to God's Holy Word," he will favour them with his criticism in writing. As Knox had announced six years earlier, that, "as touching the chief points of religion, I neither will give place to man or angel . . . teaching the contrair to that which ye have heard," a controversialist who thought it worth while to criticise the Confession must have deemed himself at least an archangel. Two years later, written criticism was offered, as we shall see, with a demand for a written reply. The critic escaped arrest by a lucky accident.

The Confession, with practically no criticism or opposition, was passed *en bloc* on August 17. The Evangel is candidly stated to be "death to the sons of perdition," but the Confession is offered hopefully to "weak and infirm brethren." Not to enter into the higher theology, we learn that the sacraments can only be administered "by lawful ministers." We learn that *they* are "such as are appointed to the preaching of the Word, or into whose mouth God has put some sermon of exhortation" and who are "lawfully chosen thereto by some Kirk." Later, we find that rather more than this, and rather more than some of the "trew ministeris" then had, is required.

As the document reaches us, it appears to have been "mitigated" by Lethington and Wynram, the Vicar of Bray of the Reformation. They altered, according to the English resident, Randolph, "many words and sentences, which sounded to proceed rather of some evil conceived opinion than of any sound judgment." As Lethington certainly was not "a lawful minister," it is surprising if Knox yielded to his criticism.

Lethington and Wynram also advised that the chapter on obedience to the sovereign power should be omitted, as "an unfit matter to be treated at this time," when it was not very obvious who the "magistrate" or authority might be. In this sense Randolph, Arran's English friend, wrote to Cecil. The chapter, however, was left standing. The sovereign, whether in empire, kingdom, duke, prince, or in free cities, was accepted as "of God's holy ordinance. To him chiefly pertains the reformation of the religion," which includes "the suppression of idolatry and superstition"; and Catholicism, we know, is idolatry. Superstition is less easily defined, but we cannot doubt that, in Knox's mind, the English liturgy was superstitious. To resist the Supreme Power, "doing that which pertains to his charge" (that is, suppressing Catholicism and superstition, among other things), is to resist God. It thus appears that the sovereign is not so supreme but that he must be disobeyed when his mandates clash with the doctrine of the Kirk. Thus the "magistrate" or "authority" — the State, in fact — is limited by the conscience of the Kirk, which may, if it pleases, detect idolatry or superstition in some act of secular policy. From this theory of the Kirk arose more than a century of unrest.

On August 24, the practical consequences of the Confession were set forth in an Act, by which all hearers or celebrants of the Mass are doomed, for the first offence, to mere confiscation of all their goods and to corporal punishment: exile rewards a repetition of the offence: the third is punished by death. "Freedom from a persecuting spirit is one of the noblest features of Knox's character," says Laing; "neither led away by enthusiasm nor party feelings nor success, to retaliate the oppressions and atrocities that disgraced the adherents of popery." This is an amazing remark! Though we do not know that Knox was ever "accessory to the death of a single individual for his religious opinions," we do know that he had not the chance; the Government, at most, and years later, put one priest to death. But Knox always insisted, vainly, that idolaters “must die the death.”

To the carnal mind these rules appear to savour of harshness. The carnal mind would not gather exactly what the new penal laws were, if it confined its study to the learned Dr. M’Crie’s *Life of Knox*. This erudite man, a pillar of the early Free Kirk, mildly remarks, “The Parliament . . . prohibited, under certain penalties, the celebration of the Mass.” He leaves his readers to discover, in the Acts of Parliament and in Knox, what the “certain penalties” were. The Act seems, as Knox says about the decrees of massacre in Deuteronomy, “rather to be written in a rage” than in a spirit of wisdom. The majority of the human beings then in Scotland probably never had the dispute between the old and new faiths placed before them lucidly and impartially. Very many of them had never heard the ideas of Geneva stated at all. “So late as 1596,” writes Dr. Hay Fleming, “there were above four hundred parishes, not reckoning Argyll and the Isles, which still lacked ministers.” “The rarity of learned and godly men” of his own persuasion, is regretted by Knox in the Book of Discipline. Yet Catholics thus destitute of opportunity to know and recognise the Truth, are threatened with confiscation, exile, and death, if they cling to the only creed which they have been taught — after August 17, 1560. The death penalty was threatened often, by Scots Acts, for trifles. In this case the graduated scale of punishment shows that the threat is serious.

This Act sounds insane, but the Convention was wise in its generation. Had it merely abolished the persecuting laws of the Church, Scotland might never have been Protestant. The old faith is infinitely more attractive to mankind than the new Presbyterian verity. A thing of slow and long evolution, the Church had assimilated and hallowed the world-old festivals of the year’s changing seasons. She provided for the human love of recreation. Her Sundays were holidays, not composed of gloomy hours in stuffy or draughty kirks, under the current voice of the preacher. Her confessional enabled the burdened soul to lay down its weight in sacred privacy; her music, her ceremonies, the dim religious light of her fanes, naturally awaken religious emotion. While these things, with the native tendency to resist authority of any kind, appealed to the multitude, the position of the Church, in later years, recommended itself to many educated men in Scotland as more logical than that of Knox; and convert after convert, in the noble class, slipped over to Rome. The missionaries of the counter-Reformation, but for the persecuting Act, would have arrived in a Scotland which did not persecute, and the work of the Convention of 1560 might all have been undone, had not the stringent Act been passed.

That Act apparently did not go so far as the preachers desired. Thus Archbishop Hamilton, writing to Archbishop Beaton in Paris, the day after the passing of the Act, says, “All these new preachers openly persuade the nobility in the pulpit, to put violent hands, and slay all churchmen that will not concur and adopt their opinion. They only reproach my Lord Duke” (the Archbishop’s brother), “that he will not begin first, and either cause me to do as they do, or else to use rigour on me by slaughter, sword, or, at least, perpetual prison.” It is probable that the Archbishop was well informed as to what the bigots were saying, though he is not likely to have “sat under” them; moreover, he would hear of their advice from his brother, the Duke, with whom he had just held a long conference. Lesley, Bishop of Ross, in his “History,” praises the humanity of the nobles, “for at this time few Catholics were banished, fewer were imprisoned, and none were executed.” The nobles interfering, the threatened capital punishment was not carried out. Mob violence, oppression by Protestant landlords, Kirk censure, imprisonment, fine, and exile, did their work in suppressing idolatry and promoting hypocrisy.

No doubt this grinding ceaseless daily process of enforcing Truth, did not go far enough for the great body of the brethren, especially the godly burgesses of the towns; indeed, as early as June 10, 1560, the Provost, Bailies, and Town Council of Edinburgh proclaimed that idolaters must instantly and publicly profess their conversion before the Ministers and Elders on the penalty of the pillory for the first offence, banishment from the town for the second, and death for the third.

It must always be remembered that the threat of the death penalty often meant, in practice, very little. It was denounced, under Mary of Guise (February 9, 1559), against men who bullied priests, disturbed services, and ate meat in Lent. It was denounced against shooters of wild fowl, and against those, of either religious party, who broke the Proclamation of October 1561. Yet “nobody seemed one penny the worse” as regards their lives, though the punishments of fining and banishing were, on occasions, enforced against Catholics.

We may marvel that, in the beginning, Catholic martyrs did not present themselves in crowds to the executioner. But even under the rule of Rome it would not be easy to find thirty cases of martyrs burned at the stake by “the bloudie Bishops,” between the fifteenth century and the martyrdom of Myln. By 1560 the old Church was in such a hideous decline — with ruffianly men of quality in high spiritual places; with priests who did not attend Mass, and in many cases could not read; with churches left to go to ruin; with license so notable that, in one foundation, the priest is only forbidden to keep a *constant* concubine — that faith had waxed cold, and no Catholic felt “ripe” for martyrdom. The elements of a League, as in France, did not exist. There was no fervently Catholic town population like that of Paris; no popular noble warriors, like the Ducs de Guise, to act as leaders. Thus Scotland, in this age, ran little risk of a religious civil war. No organised and armed faction existed to face the Congregation. When the counter-Reformation set in, many Catholics endured fines and exile with constancy.

The theology of the Confession of Faith is, of course, Calvinistic. No "works" are, technically, "good" which are not the work of the Spirit of our Lord, dwelling in our hearts by faith. "Idolaters," and wicked people, not having that spirit, can do no good works. The blasphemy that "men who live according to equity and justice shall be saved, what religion soever they have professed," is to be abhorred. "The Kirk is invisible," consisting of the Elect, "who are known only to God." This gave much cause of controversy to Knox's Catholic opponents. "The notes of the true Church" are those of Calvin's. As to the Sacrament, though the elements be not the *natural* body of Christ, yet "the faithful, in the right use of the Lord's Table, so do eat the body and drink the blood of the Lord Jesus that He remains in them and they in Him . . . in such conjunction with Christ Jesus as the natural man cannot comprehend."

This is a highly sacramental and confessedly mystical doctrine, not less unintelligible to "the natural man" than the Catholic theory which Knox so strongly reprobated. Alas, that men called Christian have shed seas of blood over the precise sense of that touching command of our Lord, which, though admitted to be incomprehensible, they have yet endeavoured to comprehend and define!

A serious task for Knox was to draw up, with others, a "Book of the Policy and Discipline of the Kirk," a task entrusted to them in April 1560. In politics, till January 1561, the Lords hoped that they might induce Elizabeth (then entangled with Leicester, as Knox knew) to marry Arran, but whether "Glycerium" (as Bishop Jewel calls her) had already detected in "the saucy youth" "a half crazy fool," as Mr. Froude says, or not, she firmly refused. She much preferred Lord Robert Dudley, whose wife had just then broken her neck. The unfortunate Arran had fought resolutely, Knox tells us, by the side of Lord James, in the winter of 1559, but he already, in 1560, showed strange moods, and later fell into sheer lunacy. In December died "the young King of France, husband to our Jezebel — unhappy Francis . . . he suddenly perished of a rotten ear . . . in that deaf ear that never would hear the truth of God" (December 5, 1560). We have little of Knox's poetry, but he probably composed a translation, in verse, of a Latin poem indited by one of "the godly in France," whence he borrowed his phrase "a rotten ear" (*aure putrefacta corruit*).

“Last Francis, that unhappy child,
His father’s footsteps following plain,
To Christ’s crying deaf ears did yield,
A rotten ear was then his bane.”

The version is wonderfully close to the original Latin.

Meanwhile, Francis was hardly cold before Arran wooed his idolatrous widow, Queen Mary, “with a gay gold ring.” She did not respond favourably, and “the Earl bare it heavily in his heart, and more heavily than many would have wissed,” says Knox, with whom Arran was on very confidential terms. Knox does not rebuke his passion for Jezebel. He himself “was in no small heaviness by reason of the late death of his dear bedfellow, Marjorie Bowes,” of whom we know very little, except that she worked hard to lighten the labours of Knox’s vast correspondence. He had, as he says, “great intelligence both with the churches and some of the Court of France,” and was the first to receive news of the perilous illness of the young King. He carried the tidings to the Duke and Lord James, at the Hamilton house near Kirk o’ Field, but would not name his informant. Then came the news of the King’s death from Lord Grey de Wilton, at Berwick, and a Convention of the Nobles was proclaimed for January 15, 1561, to “peruse newly over again” the Book of Discipline.

CHAPTER XIII: KNOX AND THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

This Book of Discipline, containing the model of the Kirk, had been seen by Randolph in August 1560, and he observed that its framers would not come into ecclesiastical conformity with England. They were "severe in that they profess, and loth to remit anything of that they have received." As the difference between the Genevan and Anglican models contributed so greatly to the Civil War under Charles I., the results may be regretted; Anglicans, by 1643, were looked on as "Baal worshippers" by the precise Scots.

In February 1561, Randolph still thought that the Book of Discipline was rather in advance of what fallen human nature could endure. Idolatry, of course, was to be removed universally; thus the Queen, when she arrived, was constantly insulted about her religion. The Lawful Calling of Ministers was explained; we have already seen that a lawful minister is a preacher who can get a local set of men to recognise him as such. Knox, however, before his return to Scotland, had advised the brethren to be very careful in examining preachers before accepting them. The people and "every several Congregation" have a right to elect their minister, and, if they do not do so in six weeks, the Superintendent (a migratory official, in some ways superior to the clergy, but subject to periodical "trial" by the Assembly, who very soon became extinct), with his council, presents a man who is to be examined by persons of sound judgment, and next by the ministers and elders of the Kirk. Nobody is to be "violently intrused" on any congregation. Nothing is said about an university training; moral character is closely scrutinised. On the admission of a new minister, some other ministers should preach "touching the obedience which the Kirk owe to their ministers. . . . The people should be exhorted to reverence and honour their chosen ministers as the servants and ambassadors of the Lord Jesus, obeying the commandments which they speak from God's mouth and Book, even as they would obey God himself. . . ."

The practical result of this claim on the part of the preachers to implicit obedience was more than a century of turmoil, civil war, revolution, and reaction. The ministers constantly preached political sermons, and the State — the King and his advisers — was perpetually arraigned by them. To "reject" them, "and despise their ministry and exhortation" (as when Catholics were not put to death on their instance), was to "reject and despise" our Lord! If accused of libel, or treasonous libel, or "leasing making," in their sermons, they demanded to be judged by their brethren. Their brethren acquitting them, where was there any other judicature? These pretensions, with the right to inflict excommunication (in later practice to be followed by actual outlawry), were made, we saw, when there were not a dozen "true ministers" in the nascent Kirk, and, of course, the claims became more exorbitant when "true ministers" were reckoned by hundreds. No State could submit to such a clerical tyranny.

People who only know modern Presbyterianism have no idea of the despotism which the Fathers of the Kirk tried, for more than a century, to enforce. The preachers sat in the seats of the Apostles; they had the gift of the Keys, the power to bind and loose. Yet the Book of Discipline permits no other ceremony, at the induction of these mystically gifted men, than "the public approbation of the people, and declaration of the chief minister" — later there was no "*chief* minister," there was "parity" of ministers. Any other ceremony "we cannot approve"; "for albeit the Apostles used the imposition of hands, yet seeing the miracle is ceased, the using of the ceremony we judge it not necessary." The miracle had *not* ceased, if it was true that "the commandments" issued in sermons — political sermons often — really deserved to be obeyed, as men "would obey God himself." *C'est lá le miracle*! There could be no more amazing miracle than the infallibility of preachers! "The imposition of hands" was, twelve years later, restored; but as far as infallible sermons were concerned, the State agreed with Knox that "the miracle had ceased."

The political sermons are sometimes justified by the analogy of modern discussion in the press. But leading articles do not pretend to be infallible, and editors do not assert a right to be obeyed by men, "even as they would obey God himself." The preachers were often right, often wrong: their sermons were good, or were silly; but what no State could endure was the claim of preachers to implicit obedience.

The difficulty in finding really qualified ministers must be met by fervent prayer, and by compulsion on the part of the Estates of Parliament.

Failing ministers, Readers, capable of reading the Common Prayers (presently it was Knox's book of these) and the Bible must be found; they may later be promoted to the ministry.

Stationary ministers are to receive less sustenance than the migratory Superintendents; the sons of the preachers must be educated, the daughters "honestly dowered." The payment is mainly in "bolls" of meal and malt. The state of the poor, "fearful and horrible" to say, is one of universal contempt. Provision must be made for the aged and weak. Superintendents, after election, are to be examined by all the ministers of the province, and by three or more

Superintendents. Other ceremonies "we cannot allow." In 1581, a Scottish Catholic, Burne, averred that Willock objected to ceremonies of Ordination, because people would say, if these are necessary, what minister ordained *you*? The query was hard to answer, so ceremonies of Ordination could not be allowed. The story was told to Burne, he says, by an eyewitness, who heard Willock.

Every church must have a schoolmaster, who ought to be able to teach grammar and Latin. Education should be universal: poor children of ability must be enabled to pass on to the universities, through secondary schools. At St. Andrews the three colleges were to have separate functions, not clashing, and culminating in Divinity.

Whence are the funds to be obtained? Here the authors bid "your Honours" "have respect to your poor brethren, the labourers of the ground, who by these cruel beasts, the papists, have been so oppressed . . . " They ought only to pay "reasonable teinds, that they may feel some benefit of Christ Jesus, now preached unto them. With grief of heart we hear that some gentlemen are now as cruel over their tenants as ever were the papists, requiring of them whatsoever they paid to the Church, so that the papistical tyranny shall only be changed into the tyranny of the landlord or laird." Every man should have his own teinds, or tithes; whereas, in fact, the great lay holders of tithes took them off other men's lands, a practice leading to many blood-feuds. The attempt of Charles I. to let "every man have his own tithes," and to provide the preachers with a living wage, was one of the causes of the distrust of the King which culminated in the great Civil War. But Knox could not "recover for the Church her liberty and freedom, and that only for relief of the poor." "*We speak not for ourselves*" the Book says, "but in favour of the poor, and the labourers defrauded . . . The Church is only bound to sustain and nourish her charges . . . to wit the Ministers of the Kirk, the Poor, and the teachers of youth." The funds must be taken out of the tithes, the chantries, colleges, chaplainries, and the temporalities of Bishops, Deans, and cathedrals generally.

The ministers are to have their manses, and glebes of six acres; to this many of the Lords assented, except, oddly enough, those redoubtable leaders of the Congregation, Glencairn and Morton, with Marischal. All the part of the book which most commands our sympathy, the most Christian part of the book, regulating the disposition of the revenues of the fallen Church for the good of the poor, of education, and of the Kirk, remained a dead letter. The Duke, Arran, Lord James, and a few barons, including the ruffian Andrew Ker of Faldonside, with Glencairn and Ochiltree, signed it, in token of approval, but little came of it all. Lethington, probably, was the scoffer who styled these provisions "devout imaginations." The nobles and lairds, many of them, were converted, in matter of doctrine; in conduct they were the most avaricious, bloody, and treacherous of all the generations which had banded, revelled, robbed, and betrayed in Scotland.

There is a point in this matter of the Kirk's claim to the patrimony of the old Church which perhaps is generally misunderstood. That point is luminous as regards the absolute disinterestedness of Knox and his companions, both in respect to themselves and their fellow-preachers. The Book of Discipline contains a sentence already quoted, conceived in what we may justly style a chivalrous contempt of wealth. "Your Honours may easily understand *that we speak not now for ourselves,* but in favour of the Poor, and the labourers defrauded . . . " Not having observed a point which "their Honours" were not the men to "understand easily," Father Pollen writes, "the new preachers were loudly *claiming for themselves* the property of the rivals whom they had displaced." For themselves they were claiming a few merks, and a few bolls of meal, a decent subsistence. Mr. Taylor Innes points out that when, just before Darnley's murder, Mary offered "a considerable sum for the maintenance of the ministers," Knox and others said that, for their sustentation, they "craved of the auditors the things that were necessary, as of duty the pastors might justly crave of their flock. The General Assembly accepted the Queen's gift, but only of necessity; it was by their flock that they ought to be sustained. To take from others contrary to their will, whom they serve not, they judge it not their duty, nor yet reasonable."

Among other things the preachers, who were left with a hard struggle for bare existence, introduced a rule of honour scarcely known to the barons and nobles, except to the bold Buccleuch who rejected an English pension from Henry VIII., with a sympathetic explosion of strong language. The preachers would not take gifts from England, even when offered by the supporters of their own line of policy.

Knox's failure in his admirable attempt to secure the wealth of the old Church for national purposes was, as it happened, the secular salvation of the Kirk. Neither Catholicism nor Anglicanism could be fully introduced while the barons and nobles held the tithes and lands of the ancient Church. Possessing the wealth necessary to a Catholic or Anglican establishment, they were resolutely determined to cling to it, and oppose any Church except that which they starved. The bishops of James I., Charles I., and Charles II. were detested by the nobles. Rarely from them came any lordly gifts to learning and the Universities, while from the honourably poor ministers such gifts could not come. The Universities were founded by prelates of the old Church, doing their duty with their wealth.

The arrangements for discipline were of the drastic nature which lingered into the days of Burns and later. The results may be studied in the records of Kirk Sessions; we have no reason to suppose that sexual morality was at all improved, on the whole, by “discipline,” though it was easier to enforce “Sabbath observance.” A graduated scale of admonitions led up to excommunication, if the subject was refractory, and to boycotting with civil penalties. The processes had no effect, or none that is visible, in checking lawlessness, robbery, feuds, and manslayings; and, after the Reformation, witchcraft increased to monstrous proportions, at least executions of people accused of witchcraft became very numerous, in spite of provision for sermons thrice a week, and for weekly discussions of the Word.

The Book of Discipline, modelled on the Genevan scheme, and on that of A’Lasco for his London congregation, rather reminds us of the “Laws” of Plato. It was a well meant but impracticable ideal set before the country, and was least successful where it best deserved success. It certainly secured a thoroughly moral clergy, till, some twelve years later, the nobles again thrust licentious and murderous cadets into the best livings and the bastard bishoprics, before and during the Regency of Morton. Their example did not affect the genuine ministers, frugal God-fearing men.

CHAPTER XIV: KNOX AND QUEEN MARY, 1561

In discussing the Book of Discipline, that great constructive effort towards the remaking of Scotland, we left Knox at the time of the death of his first wife. On December 20, 1560, he was one of some six ministers who, with more numerous lay representatives of districts, sat in the first General Assembly. They selected some new preachers, and decided that the church of Restalrig should be destroyed as a monument of idolatry. A fragment of it is standing yet, enclosing tombs of the wild Logans of Restalrig.

The Assembly passed an Act against lawless love, and invited the Estates and Privy Council to "use sharp punishment" against some "idolaters," including Eglintoun, Cassilis, and Quentin Kennedy, Abbot of Crosraguel, who disputed later against Knox, the Laird of Gala (a Scott) and others.

In January 1561 a Convention of nobles and lairds at Edinburgh perused the Book of Discipline, and some signed it, platonically, while there was a dispute between the preachers and certain Catholics, including Lesley, later Bishop of Ross, an historian, but no better than a shifty and dangerous partisan of Mary Stuart. The Lord James was selected as an envoy to Mary, in France. He was bidden to refuse her even the private performance of the rites of her faith, but declined to go to that extremity; the question smouldered through five years. Randolph expected "a mad world" on Mary's return; he was not disappointed.

Meanwhile the Catholic Earls of the North, of whom Huntly was the fickle leader, with Bothwell, "come to work what mischief he can," are accused by Knox of a design to seize Edinburgh, before the Parliament in May 1561. Nothing was done, but there was a very violent Robin Hood riot; the magistrates were besieged and bullied, Knox declined to ask for the pardon of the brawlers, and, after excursions and alarms, "the whole multitude was excommunicate" until they appeased the Kirk. They may have borne the spiritual censure very unconcernedly.

The Catholic Earls now sent Lesley to get Mary's ear before the Lord James could reach her. Lesley arrived on April 14, with the offer to raise 20,000 men, if Mary would land in Huntly's region. They would restore the Mass in their bounds, and Mary would be convoyed by Captain Cullen, a kinsman of Huntly, and already mentioned as the Captain of the Guards after Riccio's murder.

It is said by Lesley that Mary had received, from the Regent, her mother, a description of the nobles of Scotland. If so, she knew Huntly for the ambitious traitor he was, a man peculiarly perfidious and self-seeking, with a son who might be thrust on her as a husband, if once she were in Huntly's hands. The Queen knew that he had forsaken her mother's cause; knew, perhaps, of his old attempt to betray Scotland to England, and she was aware that no northern Earl had raised his banner to defend the Church. She, therefore, came to no agreement with Lesley, but confided more in the Lord James, who arrived on the following day. Mary knew her brother's character fairly well, and, if Lesley says with truth that he now asked for, and was promised, the earldom of Moray, the omen was evil for Huntly, who practically held the lands. A bargain, on this showing, was initiated. Lord James was to have the earldom, and he got it; Mary was to have his support.

Much has been said about Lord James's betrayal to Throckmorton of Mary's intentions, as revealed by her to himself. But what Lord James said to Throckmorton amounts to very little. I am not certain that, both in Paris with Throckmorton, and in London with Elizabeth and Cecil, he did not moot his plan for friendship between Mary and Elizabeth, and Elizabeth's recognition of Mary's rights as her heir. Lord James proposed all this to Elizabeth in a letter of August 6, 1561. He had certainly discussed this admirable scheme with Lord Robert Dudley at Court, in May 1561, on his return from France. Nothing could be more statesmanlike and less treacherous.

Meanwhile (May 27, 1561) the brethren presented a supplication to the Parliament, with clauses, which, if conceded, would have secured the stipends of the preachers. The prayers were granted, in promise, and a great deal of church wrecking was conscientiously done; the Lord James, on his return, paid particular attention to idolatry in his hoped for earldom, but the preachers were not better paid.

Meanwhile the Protestants looked forward to the Queen's arrival with great searchings of heart. She had not ratified the treaty of Leith, but already Cardinal Guise hoped that she and Elizabeth would live in concord, and heard that Mary ceded all claims to the English throne in return for Elizabeth's promise to declare her the heir, if she herself died childless (August 21).

Knox, who had not loved Mary of Guise, was not likely to think well of her daughter. Mary, again, knew Knox as the chief agitator in the tumults that embittered her mother's last year, and shortened her life. In France she had threatened to deal with him severely, ignorant of his power and her own weakness. She could not be aware that Knox had suggested to Cecil opposition to her succession to the throne on the ground of her sex. Knox uttered his forebodings of the Queen's future: they were as veracious as if he had really been a prophet. But he was, to an extent which can only be guessed, one of the causes of the fulfilment of his own predictions. To attack publicly, from the pulpit, the creed and conduct of a girl of spirit; to provoke cruel insults to her priests whom she could not defend; was apt to cause, at last, in great measure that wild revolt of temper which drove Mary to her doom. Her health suffered frequently from the attempt to bear with a smiling face such insults as no European princess, least of all Elizabeth, would have endured for an hour. There is a limit to patience, and before Mary passed that limit, Randolph and Lethington saw, and feebly deplored, the amenities of the preacher whom men permitted to "rule the roast." "Ten thousand swords" do not leap from their scabbards to protect either the girl Mary Stuart or the woman Marie Antoinette.

Not that natural indignation was dead, but it ended in words. People said, "The Queen's Mass and her priests will we maintain; this hand and this rapier will fight in their defence." So men bragged, as Knox reports, but when after Mary's arrival priests were beaten or pilloried, not a hand stirred to defend them, not a rapier was drawn. The Queen might be as safely as she was deeply insulted through her faith. She was not at this time devoutly ardent in her creed, though she often professed her resolution to abide in it. Gentleness might conceivably have led her even to adopt the Anglican faith, or so it was deemed by some observers, but insolence and outrage had another effect on her temper.

Mary landed at Leith in a thick fog on August 19, 1561. She was now in a country where she lay under sentence of death as an idolater. Her continued existence was illegal. With her came Mary Seton, Mary Beaton, Mary Livingstone, and Mary Fleming, the comrades of her childhood; and her uncles, the Duc d'Aumale, Francis de Lorraine, and the noisy Marquis d'Elboeuf. She was not very welcome. As late as August 9, Randolph reports that her brother, Lord James, Lethington, and Morton "wish, as you do, she might be stayed yet for a space, and if it were not for their obedience sake, some of them care not though they never see her face." None the less, on June 8 Lord James tells Mary that he had given orders for her palace to be prepared by the end of July. He informs her that "many" hope that she will never come home. Nothing is "so necessary . . . as your Majesty's own presence"; and he hopes she will arrive punctually. If she cannot come she should send her commission to some of her Protestant advisers, by no means including the Archbishop of St. Andrews (Hamilton), with whom he will never work. It is not easy to see why Lord James should have wished that Mary "might be stayed," unless he merely dreaded her arrival while Elizabeth was in a bad temper. His letter to Elizabeth of August 6 is incompatible with treachery on his part. "Mr. Knox is determined to abide the uttermost, and others will not leave him till God have taken his life and theirs together." Of what were these heroes afraid? A "familiar," a witch, of Lady

Huntly's predicted that the Queen would never arrive. "If false, I would she were burned for a witch," adds honest Randolph. Lethington deemed his "own danger not least." Two galleys full of ladies are not so alarming; did these men, practically hinting that English ships should stop their Queen, think that the Catholics in Scotland were too strong for them?

Not a noble was present to meet Mary when in the fog and filth of Leith she touched Scottish soil, except her natural brother, Lord Robert. The rest soon gathered with faces of welcome. She met some Robin Hood rioters who lay under the law, and pardoned these roisterers (with their excommunication could she interfere?), because, says Knox, she was instructed that they had acted "in despite of the religion." Their festival had been forbidden under the older religion, as it happens, in 1555, and was again forbidden later by Mary herself.

All was mirth till Sunday, when the Queen's French priest celebrated Mass in her own chapel before herself, her three uncles, and Montrose. The godly called for the priest's blood, but Lord James kept the door, and his brothers protected the priest. Disappointed of blood, "the godly departed with great grief of heart," collecting in crowds round Holyrood in the afternoon. Next day the Council proclaimed that, till the Estates assembled and deliberated, no innovation should be made in the religion "publicly and universally standing." The Queen's servants and others from France must not be molested — on pain of death, the usual empty threat. They were assaulted, and nobody was punished for the offence. Arran alone made a protest, probably written by Knox. Who but Knox could have written that the Mass is "much more abominable and odious in the sight of God" than murder! Many an honest brother was conspicuously of the opinion which Arran's protest assigned to Omnipotence. Next Sunday Knox "thundered," and later regretted that "I did not that I might have done" (caused an armed struggle?), . . . "for God had given unto me credit with many, who would have put into execution God's judgments if I would only have consented thereto." Mary might have gone the way of Jezebel and Athaliah but for the mistaken lenity of Knox, who later "asked God's mercy" for not being more vehement. In fact, he rather worked "to slokin that fervency." Let us hope that he is forgiven, especially as Randolph reports him extremely vehement in the pulpit. His repentance was publicly expressed shortly before the murder of Riccio. (In December 1565, probably, when the Kirk ordered the week's fast that, as it chanced, heralded Riccio's doom.) Privately to Cecil, on October 7, 1561, he uttered his regret that he had been so deficient in zeal. Cecil had been recommending moderation.

On August 26, Randolph, after describing the intimidation of the priest, says "John Knox thundereth out of the pulpit, so that I fear nothing so much as that one day he will mar all. He ruleth the roast, and of him all men stand in fear." In public at least he did not allay the wrath of the brethren.

On August 26, or on September 2, Knox had an interview with the Queen, and made her weep. Randolph doubted whether this was from anger or from grief. Knox gives Mary's observations in the briefest summary; his own at great length, so that it is not easy to know how their reasoning really sped. Her charges were his authorship of the "Monstrous Regiment of Women"; that he caused great sedition and slaughter in England; and that he was accused of doing what he did by necromancy. The rest is summed up in "&c."

He stood to his guns about the "Monstrous Regiment," and generally took the line that he merely preached against "the vanity of the papistical religion" and the deceit, pride, and tyranny of "that Roman Antichrist." If one wishes to convert a young princess, bred in the Catholic faith, it is not judicious to begin by abusing the Pope. This too much resembles the arbitrary and violent method of Peter in *The Tale of a Tub* (by Dr. Jonathan Swift); such, however, was the method of Knox.

Mary asking if he denied her "just authority," Knox said that he was as well content to live under her as Paul under Nero. This, again, can hardly be called an agreeable historical parallel! Knox hoped that he would not hurt her or her authority "so long as ye defile not your hands with the blood of the saints of God," as if Mary was panting to distinguish herself in that way. His hope was unfulfilled. No "saints" suffered, but he ceased not to trouble.

Knox also said that if he had wanted "to trouble your estate because you are a woman, I might have chosen a time more convenient for that purpose than I can do now, when your own presence is in the realm." He *had*, in fact, chosen the convenient time in his letter to Cecil, already quoted (July 19, 1559), but he had not succeeded in his plan. He said that nobody could *prove* that the question of discarding Mary, on the ground of her sex, "was at any time moved in public or in secret." Nobody could *prove* it, for nobody could publish his letter to Cecil. Probably he had this in his mind. He did not say that the thing had not happened, only that "he was assured that neither Protestant nor papist shall be able to prove that any such question was at any time moved, either in public or in secret."

He denied that he had caused sedition in England, nor do we know what Mary meant by this charge. His appeals, from abroad, to a Phinehas or Jehu had not been answered. As to magic, he always preached against the practice.

Mary then said that Knox persuaded the people to use religion not allowed by their princes. He justified himself by biblical precedents, to which she replied that Daniel and Abraham did not resort to the sword. They had not the chance, he answered, adding that subjects might resist a prince who exceeded his bounds, as sons may confine a maniac father.

The Queen was long silent, and then said, “I perceive my subjects shall obey you and not me.” Knox said that all should be subject unto God and His Church; and Mary frankly replied, “I will defend the Church of Rome, for I think that it is the true Church of God.” She could not defend it! Knox answered with his wonted urbanity, that the Church of Rome was a harlot, addicted to “all kinds of fornication.”

He was so accustomed to this sort of rhetoric that he did not deem it out of place on this occasion. His admirers, familiar with his style, forget its necessary effect on “a young princess unpersuaded,” as Lethington put it. Mary said that her conscience was otherwise minded, but Knox knew that all consciences of “man or angel” were wrong which did not agree with his own. The Queen had to confess that in argument as to the unscriptural character of the Mass, he was “owre sair” for her. He said that he wished she would “hear the matter reasoned to the end.” She may have desired that very thing: “Ye may get that sooner than ye believe,” she said; but Knox expressed his disbelief that he would ever get it. Papists would never argue except when “they were both judge and party.” Knox himself never answered Ninian Winzet, who, while printing his polemic, was sought for by the police of the period, and just managed to escape.

There was, however, a champion who, on November 19, challenged Knox and the other preachers to a discussion, either orally or by interchange of letters. This was Mary’s own chaplain, René Benoit. Mary probably knew that he was about to offer to meet “the most learned John Knox and other most erudite men, called ministers”; it is thus that René addresses them in his “Epistle” of November 19.

He implores them not to be led into heresy by love of popularity or of wealth; neither of which advantages the preachers enjoyed, for they were detested by loose livers, and were nearly starved. Benoit’s little challenge, or rather request for discussion, is a model of courtesy. Knox did not meet him in argument, as far as we are aware; but in 1562, Fergusson, minister of Dunfermline, replied in a tract full of scurrility. One quite unmentionable word occurs, and “impudent lie,” “impudent and shameless shavelings,” “Baal’s chaplains that eat at Jezebel’s table,” “pestilent papistry,” “abominable mass,” “idol Bishops,” “we Christians and you Papists,” and parallels between Benoit and “an idolatrous priest of Bethel,” between Mary and Jezebel are among the amenities of this meek servant of Christ in Dunfermline.

Benoit presently returned to France, and later was confessor to Henri IV. The discussion which Mary anticipated never occurred, though her champion was ready. Knox does not refer to this affair in his "History," as far as I am aware. Was René the priest whom the brethren menaced and occasionally assaulted?

Considering her chaplain's offer, it seems not unlikely that Mary was ready to listen to reasoning, but to call the Pope "Antichrist," and the Church "a harlot," is not argument. Knox ended his discourse by wishing the Queen as blessed in Scotland as Deborah was in Israel. The mere fact that Mary spoke with him "makes the Papists doubt what shall come of the world," says Randolph; and indeed nobody knows what possibly might have come, had Knox been sweetly reasonable. But he told his friends that, if he was not mistaken, she had "a proud mind, a crafty wit, and an indurate heart against God and His truth." She showed none of these qualities in the conversation as described by himself; but her part in it is mainly that of a listener who returns not railing with railing.

Knox was going about to destroy the scheme of *les politiques*, Randolph, Lethington, and the Lord James. They desired peace and amity with England, and the two Scots, at least, hoped to secure these as the Cardinal Guise did, by Mary's renouncing all present claim to the English throne, in return for recognition as heir, if Elizabeth died without issue. Elizabeth, as we know her, would never have granted these terms, but Mary's ministers, Lethington then in England, Lord James at home, tried to hope. Lord James had heard Mary's outburst to Knox about defending her own insulted Church, but he was not nervously afraid that she would take to dipping her hands in the blood of the saints. Neither he nor Lethington could revert to the old faith; they had pecuniary reasons, as well as convictions, which made that impossible.

Lethington, returned to Edinburgh (October 25), spoke his mind to Cecil. "The Queen behaves herself . . . as reasonably as we can require: if anything be amiss the fault is rather in ourselves. You know the vehemency of Mr. Knox's spirit which cannot be bridled, and yet doth utter sometimes such sentences as cannot easily be digested by a weak stomach. I would wish he should deal with her more gently, being a young princess unpersuaded. . . . Surely in her comporting with him she declares a wisdom far exceeding her age." Vituperation is not argument, and gentleness is not unchristian. St. Paul did not revile the gods of Felix and Festus.

But, prior to these utterances of October, the brethren had been baiting Mary. On her public entry (which Knox misdates by a month) her idolatry was rebuked by a pageant of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Huntly managed to stop a burning in effigy of a priest at the Mass. They never could cease from insulting the Queen in the tenderest point. The magistrates next coupled "mess-mongers" with notorious drunkards and adulterers, "and such filthy persons," in a proclamation, so the Provost and Bailies were "warded" (Knox says) in the

Tolbooth. Knox blamed Lethington and Lord James, in a letter to Cecil; in his "History" he says, "God be merciful to some of our own."

The Queen herself, as a Papist, was clearly insulted in the proclamation. Moray and Lethington, the latter touched by her "readiness to hear," and her gentleness in the face of Protestant brutalities; the former, perhaps, lured by the hope of obtaining, as the price of his alliance, the earldom of Moray, were by the end of October still attempting to secure amity between her and Elizabeth, and to hope for the best, rather than drive the Queen wild by eternal taunts and menaces. The preachers denounced her rites at Hallowmass (All Saints), and a servant of her brother, Lord Robert, beat a priest; but men actually doubted whether subjects might interfere between the Queen and her religion. There was a discussion on this point between the preachers and the nobles, and the Church in Geneva (Calvin) was to be consulted. Knox offered to write, but Lethington said that he would write, as much stood on the "information"; that is, on the manner of stating the question. Lethington did not know, and Knox does not tell us in his "History" that he had himself, a week earlier, put the matter before Calvin in his own way. Even Lord James, he says to Calvin, though the Abdiel of godliness, "is afraid to overthrow that idol by violence" — *idolum illud missalicum*.

Knox's letter to Calvin represents the Queen as alleging that he has already answered the question, declaring that Knox's party has no right to interfere with the Royal mass. This rumour Knox disbelieves. He adds that Arran would have written, but was absent.

Apparently Arran did write to Calvin, anonymously, and dating from London, November 18, 1561. The letter, really from Scotland, is in French. The writer acknowledges the receipt, about August 20, of an encouraging epistle from Calvin. He repeats Knox's statements, in the main, and presses for a speedy reply. He says that he goes seldom to Court, both on account of "that idol," and because "sobriety and virtue" have been exiled. As Arran himself "is known to have had company of a good handsome wench, a merchant's daughter," which led to a riot with Bothwell, described by Randolph (December 27, 1561), his own "virtue and sobriety" are not conspicuous. He was in Edinburgh on November 15-19, and the London date of his anonymous letter is a blind.

It does not appear that Calvin replied to Knox, and to the anonymous correspondent, in whom I venture to detect Arran; or, if he answered, his letter was probably unfavourable to Knox, as we shall argue when the subject later presents itself.

Finally— "the votes of the Lords prevailed against the ministers"; the Queen was allowed her Mass, but Lethington, a minister of the Queen, did not consult a foreigner as to the rights of her subjects against her creed.

The lenity of Lord James was of sudden growth. At Stirling he and Argyll had gallantly caused the priests to leave the choir “with broken heads and bloody ears,” the Queen weeping. So Randolph reported to Cecil (September 24).

Why her brother, foremost to insult Mary and her faith, unless Randolph errs, in September, took her part in a few weeks, we do not know. At Perth, Mary was again offended, and suffered in health by reason of the pageants; “they did too plainly condemn the errors of the world. . . . I hear she is troubled with such sudden passions after any great unkindness or grief of mind,” says Randolph. She was seldom free from such godly chastisements. At Perth, however, some one gave her a cross of five diamonds with pendant pearls.

Meanwhile the statesmen did not obey the Ministers as men ought to obey God: a claim not easily granted by carnal politicians.

CHAPTER XV: KNOX AND QUEEN MARY (continued), 1561-1564

Had Mary been a mere high-tempered and high-spirited girl, easily harmed in health by insults to herself and her creed, she might now have turned for support to Huntly, Cassilis, Montrose, and the other Earls who were Catholic or "unpersuaded." Her great-grandson, Charles II., when as young as she now was, did make the "Start" — the schoolboy attempt to run away from the Presbyterians to the loyalists of the North. But Mary had more self-control.

The artful Randolph found himself as hardly put to it now, in diplomacy, as the Cardinal's murderers had done, in war, when they met the scientific soldier, Strozzi. "The trade is now clean cut off from me," wrote Randolph (October 27); "I have to traffic now with other merchants than before. They know the value of their wares, and in all places how the market goeth. . . . Whatsoever policy is in all the chief and best practised heads of France; whatsoever craft, falsehood, or deceit is in all the subtle brains of Scotland," said the unscrupulous agent, "is either fresh in this woman's memory, or she can bring it out with a wet finger."

Mary, in fact, was in the hands of Lethington (a pensioner of Elizabeth) and of Lord James: "subtle brains" enough. *She* was the "merchandise," and Lethington and Lord James wished to make Elizabeth acknowledge the Scottish Queen as her successor, the alternative being to seek her price as a wife for an European prince. An "union of hearts" with England might conceivably mean Mary's acceptance of the Anglican faith. It is not a kind thing to say about Mary, but I suspect that, if assured of the English succession, she might have gone over to the Prayer Book. In the first months of her English captivity (July 1568) Mary again dallied with the idea of conversion, for the sake of freedom. She told the Spanish Ambassador that "she would sooner be murdered," but if she could have struck her bargain with Elizabeth, I doubt that she would have chosen the Prayer Book rather than the dagger or the bowl. Her conversion would have been bitterness as of wormwood to Knox. In his eyes Anglicanism was "a bastard religion," "a mingle-mangle now commanded in your kirks." "Peculiar services appointed for Saints' days, diverse Collects as they falsely call them in remembrance of this or that Saint . . . are in my conscience no small portion of papistical superstition." "Crossing in Baptism is a diabolical invention; kneeling at the Lord's table, mummelling," (uttering the responses, apparently), “or singing of the Litany.” All these practices are “diabolical inventions,” in Knox’s candid opinion, “with Mr. Parson’s pattering of his constrained prayers, and with the mass-munging of Mr. Vicar, and of his wicked companions . . .” (A blank in the MS.) “Your Ministers, before for the most part, were none of Christ’s ministers, but mass-mumming priests.” He appears to speak of the Anglican Church as it was under Edward VI. (To Mrs. Locke, Dieppe, April 6, 1559.) As Elizabeth brought in “cross and candle,” her Church must have been odious to our Reformer. Calvin had regarded the “silly things” in our Prayer Book as “endurable,” not so Knox. Before he came back to Scotland, the Reformers were content with the English Prayer Book. By rejecting it, Knox and his allies disunited Scotland and England.

Knox’s friend Arran was threatening to stir up the Congregation for the purpose of securing him in the revenues of three abbeys, including St. Andrews, of which Lord James was Prior. The extremists raised the question, “whether the Queen, being an idolater, may be obeyed in all civil and political actions.”

Knox later made Chatelherault promise this obedience; what his views were in November 1561 we know not. Lord James was already distrusted by his old godly friends; it was thought he would receive what he had long desired, the Earldom of Moray (November 11, 1561), and the precise professors meditated a fresh revolution. “It must yet come to a new day,” they said. Those about Arran were discontented, and nobody was more in his confidence than Knox, but at this time Arran was absent from Edinburgh; was at St. Andrews.

Meanwhile, at Court, “the ladies are merry, dancing, lusty, and fair,” wrote Randolph, who flirted with Mary Beaton (November 18); and long afterwards, in 1578, when she was Lady Boyne, spoke of her as “a very dear friend.” Knox complains that the girls danced when they “got the house alone”; not a public offence! He had his intelligencers in the palace.

There was, on November 16, a panic in the unguarded palace: “the poor damsels were left alone,” while men hid in fear of nobody knew what, except a rumour that Arran was coming, with his congregational friends, “to take away the Queen.” The story was perhaps a fable, but Arran had been uttering threats. Mary, however, expected to be secured by an alliance with Elizabeth. “The accord between the two Queens will quite overthrow them” (the Bishops), “and they say plainly that she cannot return a true Christian woman,” writes Randolph.

Lethington and Randolph both suspected that if Mary abandoned idolatry, it would be after conference with Elizabeth, and rather as being converted by that fair theologian than as compelled by her subjects. Unhappily Elizabeth never would meet Mary, who, for all that we know, might at this hour have adopted the

Anglican *via media*, despite her protests to Knox and to the Pope of her fidelity to Rome. Like Henri IV., she may at this time have been capable of preferring a crown — that of England — to a dogma. Her Mass, Randolph wrote, “is rather for despite than devotion, for those that use it care not a straw for it, and jest sometimes against it.”

Randolph, at this juncture, reminded Mary that advisers of the Catholic party had prevented James V. from meeting Henry VIII. She answered, “Something is reserved for us that was not then,” possibly hinting at her conversion. Lord James shared the hopes of Lethington and Randolph. “The Papists storm, thinking the meeting of the queens will overthrow Mass and all.”

The Ministers of Mary, *les politiques*, indulged in dreams equally distasteful to the Catholics and to the more precise of the godly; dreams that came through the Ivory Gate; with pictures of the island united, and free from the despotism of Giant Pope and Giant Presbyter. A schism between the brethren and their old leaders and advisers, Lord James and Lethington, was the result. At the General Assembly of December 1561, the split was manifest. The parties exchanged recriminations, and there was even question of the legality of such conventions as the General Assembly. Lethington asked whether the Queen “allowed” the gathering. Knox (apparently) replied, “Take from us the freedom of Assemblies, and take from us the Evangel . . .” He defended them as necessary for order among the preachers; but the objection, of course, was to their political interferences. The question was to be settled for Cromwell in his usual way, with a handful of hussars. It was now determined that the Queen might send Commissioners to the Assembly to represent her interests.

The plea of the godly that Mary should ratify the Book of Discipline was countered by the scoffs of Lethington. He and his brothers ever tormented Knox by *persiflage*. Still the preachers must be supported, and to that end, by a singular compromise, the Crown assumed dominion over the property of the old Church, a proceeding which Mary, if a good Catholic, could not have sanctioned. The higher clergy retained two-thirds of their benefices, and the other third was to be divided between the preachers and the Queen. Vested rights, those of the prelates, and the interests of the nobles to whom, in the troubles, they had feued parts of their property, were thus secured; while the preachers were put off with a humble portion. Among the abbeys, that of St. Andrews, held by the good Lord James, was one of the richest. He appears to have retained all the wealth, for, as Bishop Keith says, “the grand gulf that swallowed up the whole extent of the thirds were pensions given gratis by the Queen to those about the Court . . . of which last the Earl of Moray was always sure to obtain the thirds of his priories of St. Andrews and Pittenweem.” In all, the whole reformed clergy received annually (but not in 1565-66) £24,231, 17s. 7d. Scots, while Knox and four superintendents got a few chalders of wheat and "bear." In 1568, when Mary had fallen, a gift of £333, 6s. 8d. was made to Knox from the fund, about a seventh of the money revenue of the Abbey of St. Andrews. Nobody can accuse Knox of enriching himself by the Revolution. "In the stool of Edinburgh," he declared that two parts were being given to the devil, "and the third must be divided between God and the devil," between the preachers and the Queen, and the Earl of Moray, among others. The eminently godly Laird of Pitarro had the office of paying the preachers, in which he was so niggardly that the proverb ran, "The good Laird of Pitarro was an earnest professor of Christ, but the great devil receive the Comptroller."

It was argued that "many Lords have not so much to spend" as the preachers; and this was not denied (if the preachers were paid), but it was said the Lords had other industries whereby they might eke out their revenues. Many preachers, then or later, were driven also to other industries, such as keeping public-houses. Knox, at this period, gracefully writes of Mary, "we call her not a hoore." When she scattered his party after Riccio's murder, he went the full length of the expression, in his "History."

"Simplicity," says Thucydides, "is no small part of a noble nature," and Knox was now to show simplicity in conduct, and in his narrative of a very curious adventure.

The Hamiltons had taken little but loss by joining the Congregation. Arran could not recover his claims, on whatever they were founded, over the wealth of St. Andrews and Dunfermline. Chatelherault feared that Mary would deprive him of his place of refuge, the castle of Dumbarton, to which he confessed that his right was "none," beyond a verbal promise of a nineteen years "farm" (when given we know not), from Mary of Guise. Randolph began to believe that Arran really had contemplated a raid on Mary at Holyrood, where she had no guards. "Why," asked Arran, "was it not as easy to take her out of the Abbey, as once it had been intended to do with her mother?"

Here were elements of trouble, and Knox adds that, according to the servants of Chatelherault, Huntly and the Hamiltons devised to slay Lord James, who in January received the Earldom of Moray, but bore the title of Earl of Mar, which earldom he held for a brief space. Huntly had claims on Moray, and hence hated Lord James. Arran was openly sending messengers to France; "his councils are too patent." Randolph at the same time found Knox and the preachers "as wilfull as learned, which heartily I lament" (January 30). The rumour that Mary had been persuaded by the Cardinal to turn Anglican "makes them run almost wild" (February 12). If the Queen were an Anglican the new

Kirk would be in an ill way. Arran still sent retainers to France, and was reported to speak ill of Mary (February 21), but the Duke tried to win Randolph to a marriage between Arran and the Queen. The intended bridegroom lay abed for a week, “tormented by imaginations,” but was contented, not to be reconciled with Bothwell, but to pass his misdeeds in “oblivion,” as he declared to the Privy Council (February 20).

In these threatening circumstances Bothwell made Knox’s friend, Barron, a rich burgess who “financed” the Earl, introduce him to our Reformer. The Earl explained that his feud with Arran was very expensive; he had for his safety to keep “a number of wicked and unprofitable men about him” — his “Lambs,” the Ormistouns, young Hay of Tala, probably, and the rest. He therefore repented, and wished to be reconciled to Arran. Knox, pleased at being a reconciler where nobler men had failed, and moved, after long refusal, by the entreaties of the godly, as he tells Mrs. Locke, advised Bothwell first to be reconciled to God. So Bothwell presently was, going to sermon for that very purpose. Knox promised to approach Arran, and Bothwell, with his usual impudence, chose that moment to seize an old pupil of Knox’s, the young Laird of Ormiston (Cockburn). The young laird, to be sure, had fired a pistol at his enemy. However, Bothwell repented of this lapse, and at the Hamilton’s great house of Kirk-of-Field, Knox made him and Arran friends. Next day they went to sermon together; on the following day they visited Chatelherault at Kinneil, some twelve miles from Edinburgh. But on the ensuing day (March 26) came the wild end of the reconciliation.

Knox had delivered his daily sermon, and was engaged with his vast correspondence, when Arran was announced, with an advocate and the town clerk. Arran began a conference with tears, said that he was betrayed, and told his tale. Bothwell had informed him that he would seize the Queen, put her in Dumbarton, kill her misguiders, the “Earl of Moray” (Mar, Lord James), Lethington, and others, “and so shall he and I rule all.”

But Arran believed Bothwell really intended to accuse him of treason, or knowledge of treason, so he meant to write to Mary and Mar. Knox asked whether he had assented to the plot, and advised him to be silent. Probably he saw that Arran was distraught, and did not credit his story. But Arran said that Bothwell (as he had once done before, in 1559) would challenge him to a judicial combat — such challenges were still common, but never led to a fight. He then walked off with his legal advisers, and wrote to Mary at Falkland. If Arran went mad, he went mad “with advice of counsel.” There had come the chance of “a new day,” which the extremists desired, but its dawn was inauspicious.

Arran rode to his father’s house of Kinneil, where, either because he was insane, or because there really was a Bothwell-Hamilton plot, he was locked up in a room high above the ground. He let himself down from the window, reached Halyards (a place of Kirkcaldy of Grange), and was thence taken by Mar (whom Knox appears to have warned) to the Queen at Falkland. Bothwell and Gawain Hamilton were also put in ward there. Randolph gives (March 31) a similar account, but believed that there really was a plot, which Arran denied even before he arrived at Falkland. Bothwell came to purge himself, but “was found guilty on his own confession on some points.”

The Queen now went to St. Andrews, where the suspects were placed in the Castle. Arran wavered, accusing Mar’s mother of witchcraft. Mary was “not a little offended with Bothwell to whom she has been so good.” Randolph (April 7) continued to think that Arran should be decapitated. He and Bothwell were kept in ward, and his father, the Duke, was advised to give up Dumbarton to the Crown, which he did. This was about April 23. Knox makes a grievance of the surrender; the Castle, he says, was by treaty to be in the Duke’s hands till the Queen had lawful issue. Chatelherault himself, as we said, told Randolph that he had no right in the place, beyond a verbal and undated promise of the late Regent.

Knox now again illustrates his own historical methods. Mary, riding between Falkland and Lochleven, fell, was hurt, and when Randolph wrote from Edinburgh on May 11, was not expected there for two or three days. But Knox reports that, on her return from Fife to Edinburgh, she danced excessively till after midnight, because she had received letters “that persecution was begun again in France,” by the Guises. Now as, according to Knox elsewhere, “Satan stirreth his terrible tail,” so did one of Mary’s uncles, the Duc de Guise, “stir his tail” against one of the towns appointed to pay Mary’s jointure, namely Vassy, in Champagne. Here, on March 1, 1562, a massacre of Huguenots, by the Guise’s retainers, began the war of religion afresh.

Now, in the first place, this could not be joyful news to set Mary dancing; as it was apt to prevent what she had most at heart, her personal interview with Elizabeth. She understood this perfectly well, and, in conversation with Randolph, after her return to Edinburgh, lamented the deeds of her uncles, as calculated “to bring them in hate and disdain of many princes,” and also to chill Elizabeth’s amity for herself — on which her whole policy now depended (May 29). She wept when Randolph said that, in the state of France, Elizabeth was not likely to move far from London for their interview. In this mood how could Mary give a dance to celebrate an event which threatened ruin to her hopes?

Moreover, if Knox, when he speaks of “persecution begun again,” refers to the slaughter of Huguenots by Guise's retinue, at Vassy, that untoward event occurred on March 1, and Mary cannot have been celebrating it by a ball at Holyrood as late as May 14, at earliest. Knox, however, preached against her dancing, if she danced "for pleasure at the displeasure of God's people"; so he states the case. Her reward, in that case, would he "drink in hell." In his "History" he declares that Mary did dance for the evil reason attributed to her, a reason which must have been mere matter of inference on his part, and that inference wrong, judging by dates, if the reference is to the affair of Vassy. In April both French parties were committing brutalities, but these were all contrary to Mary's policy and hopes.

If Knox heard a rumour against any one, his business, according to the "Book of Discipline," was not to go and preach against that person, even by way of insinuation. Mary's offence, if any existed, was not "public," and was based on mere suspicion, or on tattle. Dr. M'Crie, indeed, says that on hearing of the affair of Vassy, the Queen "immediately after gave a splendid ball to her foreign servants." Ten weeks after the Vassy affair is not "immediately"; and Knox mentions neither foreign servants nor Vassy.

The Queen sent for Knox, and made "a long harangue," of which he does not report one word. He gives his own oration. Mary then said that she could not expect him to like her uncles, as they differed in religion. But if he heard anything of herself that he disapproved of, "come to myself and tell me, and I shall hear you." He answered that he was not bound to come "to every man in particular," but she *could* come to his sermons! If she would name a day and hour, he would give her a doctrinal lecture. At this very moment he "was absent from his book"; his studies were interrupted.

"You will not always be at your book," she said, and turned her back. To some papists in the antechamber he remarked, "Why should the pleasing face of a gentlewoman affray me? I have looked in the faces of many angry men, and yet have not been afraid above measure."

He was later to flee before that pleasing face.

Mary can hardly be said to have had the worse, as far as manners and logic went, of this encounter, at which Morton, Mar, and Lethington were present, and seem to have been silent.

Meanwhile, Randolph dates this affair, the dancing, the sermon, the interview, not in May, but about December 13-15, 1562, and connects the dancing with no event in France, nor can I find any such event in late November which might make Mary glad at heart. Knox, Randolph writes, mistrusts all that the Queen does or says, "as if he were of God's Privy Council, that knew how he had determined of her in the beginning, or that he knew the secrets of her heart so well that she neither did nor could have one good thought of God or of his true religion." His doings could not increase her respect for his religion.

The affair of Arran had been a sensible sorrow to Knox. "God hath further humbled me since that day which men call Good Friday," he wrote to Mrs. Locke (May 6), "than ever I have been in my life. . . ." He had rejoiced in his task of peace-making, in which the Privy Council had practically failed, and had shown great *naïveté* in trusting Bothwell. The best he could say to Mrs. Locke was that he felt no certainty about the fact that Bothwell had tempted Arran to conspire.

The probability is that the reckless and impoverished Bothwell did intend to bring in the desirable "new day," and to make the Hamiltons his tools. Meanwhile he was kept out of mischief and behind stone walls for a season. Knox had another source of annoyance which was put down with a high hand.

The dominie of the school at Linlithgow, Ninian Winzet by name, had lost his place for being an idolater. In February he had brought to the notice of our Reformer and of the Queen the question, "Is John Knox a lawful minister?" If he was called by God, where were his miracles? If by men, by what manner of men? On March 3, Winzet asked Knox for "your answer in writing." He kept launching letters at Knox in March; on March 24 he addressed the general public; and, on March 31, issued an appeal to the magistrates, who appear to have been molesting people who kept Easter. The practice was forbidden in a proclamation by the Queen on May 31. "The pain is death," writes Randolph. If Mary was ready to die for her faith, as she informed a nuncio who now secretly visited her, she seems to have been equally resolved that her subjects should not live in it.

Receiving no satisfactory *written* answer from Knox, Winzet began to print his tract, and then he got his reply from "soldiers and the magistrates," for the book was seized, and he himself narrowly escaped to the Continent. Knox was not to be brought to a written reply, save so far as he likened his calling to that of Amos and John the Baptist. In September he referred to his "Answer to Winzet's Questions" as forthcoming, but it never appeared. Winzet was Mary's chaplain in her Sheffield prison in 1570-72; she had him made Abbot of Ratisbon, and he is said, by Lethington's son, to have helped Lesley in writing his "History."

On June 29 the General Assembly, through Knox probably, drew up the address to the Queen, threatening her and the country with the wrath of God on her Mass, which, she is assured, is peculiarly distasteful to the Deity. The brethren are deeply disappointed that she does not attend their sermons, and ventures to prefer "your ain preconceived vain opinion." They insist that adulterers must be punished with death, and they return to their demands for the poor and the preachers. A new rising is threatened if wicked men trouble the ministers and disobey the Superintendents.

Lethington and Knox had one of their usual disputes over this manifesto; the Secretary drew up another. "Here be many fair words," said the Queen on reading it; "I cannot tell what the hearts are." She later found out the nature of Lethington's heart, a pretty black one. The excesses of the Guises in France were now the excuse or cause of the postponement of Elizabeth's meeting with Mary. The Queen therefore now undertook a northern progress, which had been arranged for in January, about the time when Lord James was made Earl of Moray.

He could not "brook" the Earldom of Moray before the Earl of Huntly was put down, Huntly being a kind of petty king in the east and north. There is every reason to suppose that Mary understood and utterly distrusted Huntly, who, though the chief Catholic in the country, had been a traitor whenever occasion served for many a year. One of his sons, John, in July, wounded an Ogilvy in Edinburgh in a quarrel over property. This affair was so managed as to drive Huntly into open rebellion, neither Mary nor her brother being sorry to take the opportunity.

The business of the ruin of Huntly has seemed more of a mystery to historians than it was, though an attack by a Catholic princess on her most powerful Catholic subject does need explanation. But Randolph was with Mary during the whole expedition, and his despatches are better evidence than the fables of Buchanan and the surmises of Knox and Mr. Froude. Huntly had been out of favour ever since Lord James obtained the coveted Earldom of Moray in January, and he was thought to be opposed to Mary's visit to Elizabeth. Since January, the Queen had been bent on a northern progress. Probably the Archbishop of St. Andrews, as reported by Knox, rightly guessed the motives. At table he said, "The Queen has gone into the north, belike to seek disobedience; she may perhaps find the thing that she seeks." She wanted a quarrel with Huntly, and a quarrel she found. Her northward expedition, says Randolph, "is rather devised by herself than greatly approved by her Council." She would not visit Huntly at Strathbogie, contrary to the advice of her Council; his son, who wounded Ogilvy, had broken prison, and refused to enter himself at Stirling Castle. Huntly then supported his sons in rebellion, while Bothwell broke prison and fortified himself in Hermitage Castle. Lord James's Earldom of Moray was now publicly announced (September 18), and Huntly was accused of a desire to murder him and Lethington, while his son John was to seize the Queen. Mary was "utterly determined to bring him to utter confusion." Huntly was put to the horn on October 18; his sons took up arms. Huntly, old and corpulent, died during a defeat at Corrichie without stroke of sword; his mischievous son John was taken and executed, Mary being pleased with her success, and declaring that Huntly thought "to have married her where he would," and to have slain her brother. John Gordon confessed to the murder plot. His eldest brother, Lord Gordon, who had tried to enlist Bothwell and the Hamiltons, lay long in prison (his sister married Bothwell just before Riccio's murder). The Queen had punished the disobedience which she "went to seek," and Moray was safe in his rich earldom, while a heavy blow was dealt at the Catholicism which Huntly had protected. Cardinal Guise reports her success to de Rennes, in Austria, with triumph, and refers to an autograph letter of hers, of which Lethington's draft has lately perished by fire, unread by historians. As the Cardinal reports that she says she is trying to win her subjects back to the Church, "in which she wishes to live and die" (January 30, 1562-63), Lethington cannot be the author of that part of her lost letter.

Knox meanwhile, much puzzled by the news from the north, was in the western counties. He induced the lairds of Ayrshire to sign a Protestant band, and he had a controversy with the Abbot of Crosraguel. In misapplication of texts the abbot was even more eccentric than Knox, though he only followed St. Jerome. In his "History" Knox "cannot certainly say whether there was any secret paction and confederacy between the Queen herself and Huntly." Knox decides that though Mary executed John Gordon and other rebels, yet "it was the destruction of others that she sought," namely, of her brother, whom she hated "for his godliness and upright plainness." His upright simplicity had won him an earldom and the destruction of his rival! He and Lethington may have exaggerated Huntly's iniquities in council with Mary, but the rumours reported against her by Knox could only be inspired by the credulity of extreme ill-will. He flattered himself that he kept the Hamiltons quiet, and, at a supper with Randolph in November, made Chatelherault promise to be a good subject in civil matters, and a good Protestant in religion.

Knox says that preaching was done with even unusual vehemence in winter, when his sermon against the Queen's dancing for joy over some unknown Protestant misfortune was actually delivered, and the good seed fell on ground not wholly barren. The Queen's French and Scots musicians would not play or sing at the Queen's Christmas-day Mass, whether pricked in heart by conscience, or afraid for their lives. "Her poor soul is so troubled for the preservation of her silly Mass that she knoweth not where to turn for defence of it," says Randolph. These persecutions may have gone far to embitter the character of the victim.

Mr. Froude is certainly not an advocate of Mary Stuart, rather he is conspicuously the reverse. But he remarks that when she determined to marry Darnley, "divide Scotland," and trust to her Catholic party, she did so because she was "weary of the mask which she had so long worn, and unable to endure any longer these wild insults to her creed and herself." She had, in fact, given the policy of submission to "wild insults" rather more than a fair chance; she had, for a spirited girl, been almost incredibly long-suffering, when "barbarously baited," as Charles I. described his own treatment by the preachers and the Covenanters.

CHAPTER XVI: KNOX AND QUEEN MARY (continued): 1563-1564

The new year, 1563, found Knox purging the Kirk from that fallen brother, Paul Methuen. This preacher had borne the burden and heat of the day in 1557-58, erecting, as we have seen, the first “reformed” Kirk, that of the Holy Virgin, in Dundee, and suffering some inconvenience, if no great danger, from the clergy of the religion whose sacred things he overthrew. He does not appear to have been one of the more furious of the new apostles. Contrasted with John Brabner, “a vehement man inculcating the law and pain thereof,” Paul is described as “a milder man, preaching the evangel of grace and remission of sins in the blood of Christ.”

Paul was at this time minister of Jedburgh. He had “an ancient matron” to wife, recommended, perhaps, by her property, and she left him for two months with a servant maid. Paul fell, but behaved not ill to the mother of his child, sending her “money and clothes at various times.” Knox tried the case at Jedburgh; Paul was excommunicated, and fled the realm, sinking so low, it seems, as to take orders in the Church of England. Later he returned — probably he was now penniless— “and prostrated himself before the whole brethren with weeping and howling.” He was put to such shameful and continued acts of public penance up and down the country that any spirit which he had left awoke in him, and the Kirk knew him no more. Thus “the world might see what difference there is between darkness and light.”

Knox presently had to record a scandal in a higher place, the capture and execution of the French minor poet, Chastelard, who, armed with sword and dagger, hid under the Queen’s bed in Holyrood; and invaded her room with great insolence at Burntisland as she was on her way to St. Andrews. There he was tried, condemned, and executed in the market-place. It seems fairly certain that Chastelard, who had joined the Queen with despatches during the expedition against Huntly, was a Huguenot. The Catholic version, and Lethington’s version, of his adventure was that some intriguing Huguenot lady had set him on to sully Queen Mary’s character; other tales ran that he was to assassinate her, as part of a great Protestant conspiracy.

Randolph, who knew as much as any one, thought the Queen far too familiar with the poet, but did not deem that her virtue was in fault. Knox dilates on Mary’s familiarities, kisses given in a vulgar dance, dear to the French society of the period, and concludes that the fatuous poet "lacked his head, that his tongue should not utter the secrets of our Queen."

There had been a bad harvest, and a dearth, because the Queen's luxury "provoked God" (who is represented as very irritable) "to strike the staff of bread," and to "give His malediction upon the fruits of the earth. But oh, alas, who looked, or yet looks, to the very cause of all our calamities!"

Some savage peoples are said to sacrifice their kings when the weather is unpropitious. Knox's theology was of the same kind. The preachers, says Randolph (February 28), "pray daily . . . that God will either turn the Queen's heart or grant her short life. Of what charity or spirit this proceeds, I leave to be discussed by great divines." The prayers sound like encouragement to Jehus.

At this date Ruthven was placed, "by Lethington's means only," on the Privy Council. Moray especially hated Ruthven "for his sorcery"; the superstitious Moray affected the Queen with this ill opinion of one of the elect — in the affair of Riccio's murder so useful to the cause of Knox. "There is not an unworthier in Scotland" than Ruthven, writes Randolph. Meanwhile Lethington was in England to negotiate for peace in France; if he could, to keep an eye on Mary's chances for the succession, and (says Knox) to obtain leave for Lennox, the chief of the Stuarts and the deadly foe of the Hamiltons, to visit Scotland, whence, in the time of Henry VIII., he had been driven as a traitor. But Lethington was at that time confuting Lennox's argument that the Hamilton chief, Chatelherault, was illegitimate. Knox is not positive, he only reports rumours. Lethington's serious business was to negotiate a marriage for the Queen.

Despite the recent threats of death against priests who celebrated Mass, the Archbishop Hamilton and Knox's opponent, the Abbot of Crossraguel, with many others, did so at Easter. The Ayrshire brethren "determined to put to their own hands," captured some priests, and threatened others with "the punishment that God has appointed to idolaters by His law." The Queen commanded Knox to meet her at Lochleven in mid-April — Lochleven, where she was later to be a prisoner. In that state lay the priests of her religion, who had been ministering to the people, "some in secret houses, some in barns, some in woods and hills," writes Randolph, "all are in prison."

Mary, for two hours before supper, implored Knox to mediate with the western fanatics. He replied, that if princes would not use the sword against idolaters, there was the leading case of Samuel's slaughter of Agag; and he adduced another biblical instance, of a nature not usually cited before young ladies. He was on safer ground in quoting the Scots law as it stood. Judges within their bounds were to seek out and punish "mass-mongers" — that was his courteous term.

The Queen, rather hurt, went off to supper, but next morning did her best to make friends with Knox over other matters. She complained of Ruthven, who had given her a ring for some magical purpose, later explained by Ruthven, who seems to have despised the superstition of his age. The Queen, says Ruthven, was afraid of poison; he gave her the ring, saying that it acted as an antidote. Moray was at Lochleven with the Queen, and Moray believed, or pretended to believe, in Ruthven's "sossery," as Randolph spells "sorcery." She, rather putting herself at our Reformer's mercy, complained that Lethington alone placed Ruthven in the Privy Council.

"That man is absent," said Knox, "and therefore I will speak nothing on that behalf." Mary then warned him against "the man who was at time most familiar with the said John, in his house and at table," the despicable Bishop of Galloway, and Knox later found out that the warning was wise. Lastly, she asked him to reconcile the Earl and Countess of Argyll— "do this much for my sake"; and she promised to summon the offending priests who had done their duty.

Knox, with his usual tact, wrote to Argyll thus: "Your behaviour toward your wife is very offensive unto many godly." He added that, if all that was said of Argyll was true, and if he did not look out, he would be damned.

"This bill was not well accepted of the said Earl," but, like the rest of them, he went on truckling to Knox, "most familiar with the said John."

Nearly fifty priests were tried, but no one was hanged. They were put in ward; "the like of this was never heard within the realm," said pleased Protestants, not "smelling the craft." Neither the Queen nor her Council had the slightest desire to put priests to death. Six other priests "as wicked as" the Archbishop were imprisoned, and the Abbot of Crossraguel was put to the horn in his absence, just as the preachers had been. The Catholic clergy "know not where to hide their heads," says Randolph. Many fled to the more tender mercies of England; "it will be the common refuge of papists that cannot live here . . ." The tassels on the trains of the ladies, it was declared by the preachers, "would provoke God's vengeance . . . against the whole realm . . "

The state of things led to a breach between Knox and Moray, which lasted till the Earl found him likely to be useful, some eighteen months later.

The Reformer relieved his mind in the pulpit at the end of May or early in June, rebuking backsliders, and denouncing the Queen's rumoured marriage with any infidel, "and all Papists are infidels." Papists and Protestants were both offended. There was a scene with Mary, in which she wept profusely, an infirmity of hers; we constantly hear of her weeping in public. She wished the Lords of the Articles to see whether Knox's "manner of speaking" was not punishable, but nothing could be done. Elizabeth would have found out a way.

The fact that while Knox was conducting himself thus, nobody ventured to put a dirk or a bullet into him — despite the obvious strength of the temptation in many quarters — proves that he was by far the most potent human being in Scotland. Darnley, Moray, Lennox were all assassinated, when their day came, though the feeblest of the three, Darnley, had a powerful clan to take up his feud. We cannot suppose that any moral considerations prevented the many people whom Knox had offended from doing unto him as the Elect did to Riccio. Manifestly, nobody had the courage. No clan was so strong as the warlike brethren who would have avenged the Reformer, and who probably would have been backed by Elizabeth.

Again, though he was estranged from Moray, that leader was also, in some degree, estranged from Lethington, who did not allow him to know the details of his intrigues, in France and England, for the Queen's marriage. The marriage question was certain to reunite Moray and Knox. When Knox told Mary that, as "a subject of this realm," he had a right to oppose her marriage with any infidel, he spoke the modern constitutional truth. For Mary to wed a Royal Catholic would certainly have meant peril for Protestantism, war with England, and a tragic end. But what Protestant could she marry? If a Scot, he would not long have escaped the daggers of the Hamiltons; indeed, all the nobles would have borne the fiercest jealousy against such an one as, say, Glencairn, who, we learn, could say anything to Mary without offence. She admired a strong brave man, and Glencairn, though an opponent, was gallant and resolute. England chose only to offer the infamous and treacherous Leicester, whose character was ruined by the mysterious death of his wife (Amy Robsart), and who had offered to sell England and himself to idolatrous Spain. Mary's only faint chance of safety lay in perpetual widowhood, or in marrying Knox, by far the most powerful of her subjects, and the best able to protect her and himself.

This idea does not seem to have been entertained by the subtle brain of Lethington. Between February and May 1563, the Cardinal of Lorraine had reopened an old negotiation for wedding the Queen to the Archduke, and Mary had given an evasive reply; she must consult Parliament. In March, with the Spanish Ambassador in London, Lethington had proposed for Don Carlos. Philip II., as usual, wavered, consented (in August), considered, and reconsidered. Lethington, in France, had told the Queen-Mother that the Spanish plan was only intended to wring concessions from Elizabeth; and, on his return to England, had persuaded the Spanish Ambassador that Charles IX. was anxious to succeed to his brother's widow. This moved Philip to be favourable to the Don Carlos marriage, but he waited; there was no sign from France, and

Philip withdrew, wavering so much that both the Austrian and Spanish matches became impossible. On October 6, Knox, who suspected more than he knew, told Cecil that out of twelve Privy Councillors, nine would consent to a Catholic marriage. The only hope was in Moray, and Knox "daily thirsted" for death. He appealed to Leicester (about whose relations with Elizabeth he was, of course, informed) as to a man who "may greatly advance the purity of religion."

These letters to Cecil and Leicester are deeply pious in tone, and reveal a cruel anxiety. On June 20, three weeks after Knox's famous sermon, Lethington told de Quadra, the Spanish Ambassador, that Elizabeth threatened to be Mary's enemy if she married Don Carlos or any of the house of Austria. On August 26, 1563, Randolph received instructions from Elizabeth, in which the tone of menace was unconcealed. Elizabeth would offer an English noble: "we and our country cannot think any mighty prince a meet husband for her."

Knox was now engaged in a contest wherein he was triumphant; an affair which, in later years, was to have sequels of high importance. During the summer vacation of 1563, while Mary was moving about the country, Catholics in Edinburgh habitually attended at Mass in her chapel. This was contrary to the arrangement which permitted no Mass in the whole realm, except that of the Queen, when her priests were not terrorised. The godly brawled in the Chapel Royal, and two of them were arrested, two very dear brethren, named Cranstoun and Armstrong; they were to be tried on October 24. Knox had a kind of Dictator's commission from the Congregation, "to see that the Kirk took no harm," and to the Congregation he appealed by letter. The accused brethren had only "noted what persons repaired to the Mass," but they were charged with divers crimes, especially invading her Majesty's palace. Knox therefore convoked the Congregation to meet in Edinburgh on the day of trial, in the good old way of overawing justice. Of course we do not know to what lengths the dear brethren went in their pious indignation. The legal record mentions that they were armed with pistols, in the town and Court suburb; and it was no very unusual thing, later, for people to practise pistol shooting at each other even in their own Kirk of St. Giles's.

Still, pistols, if worn in the palace chapel have not a pacific air. The brethren are also charged with assaulting some of the Queen's domestic servants.

Archbishop Spottiswoode, son of one of the Knoxian Superintendents, says that the brethren "forced the gates, and that some of the worshippers were taken and carried to prison. . . . " Knox admits in his "History" that "some of the brethren *burst in*" to the chapel. In his letter to stir up the godly, he says that the brethren "passed" (in), "and that *in most quiet manner*."

On receiving Knox's summons the Congregation prepared its levies in every town and province. The Privy Council received a copy of Knox's circular, and concluded that it "imported treason."

To ourselves it does seem that for a preacher to call levies out of every town and province, to meet in the capital on a day when a trial was to be held, is a thing that no Government can tolerate. The administration of justice is impossible in the circumstances. But it was the usual course in Scotland, and any member of the Privy Council might, at any time, find it desirable to call a similar convocation of his allies. Mary herself, fretted by the perfidies of Elizabeth, had just been consoled by that symbolic jewel, a diamond shaped like a rock, and by promises in which she fondly trusted when she at last sought an asylum in England, and found a prison. For two months she had often been in deep melancholy, weeping for no known cause, and she was afflicted by the "pain in her side" which ever haunted her (December 13-21).

Accused by the Master of Maxwell of unbecoming conduct, Knox said that such things had been done before, and he had the warrant "of God, speaking plainly in his Word." The Master (later Lord Herries), not taking this view of the case, was never friendly with Knox again; the Reformer added this comment as late as December 1571.

Lethington and Moray, like Maxwell, remonstrated vainly with our Reformer. Randolph (December 21) reports that the Lords assembled "to take order with Knox and his faction, who intended by a mutinous assembly made by his letter before, to have rescued two of their brethren from course of law. . . . " Knox was accompanied to Holyrood by a force of brethren who crowded "the inner close and all the stairs, even to the chamber door where the Queen and Council sat." Probably these "slashing communicants" had their effect on the minds of the councillors. Not till after Riccio's murder was Mary permitted to have a strong guard.

According to Knox, Mary laughed a horse laugh when he entered, saying, "Yon man gart me greit, and grat never tear himself. I will see gif I can gar him greit." Her Scots, textually reported, was certainly idiomatic.

Knox acknowledged his letter to the Congregation, and Lethington suggested that he might apologise. Ruthven said that Knox made convocation of people daily to hear him preach; what harm was there in his letter merely calling people to convocation. This was characteristic pettifogging. Knox said that he convened the people to meet on the day of trial according to the order "that the brethren has appointed . . . at the commandment of the general Kirk of the Realm."

Mary seems, strangely enough, to have thought that this was a valid reply. Perhaps it was, and the Kirk's action in that sense, directed against the State, finally enabled Cromwell to conquer the Kirk-ridden country. Mary appears to have admitted the Kirk's *imperium in imperio*, for she diverted the discussion from the momentous point really at issue — the right of the Kirk to call up an armed multitude to thwart justice. She now fell on Knox's employment of the word "cruelty." He instantly started on a harangue about "pestilent Papists," when the Queen once more introduced a personal question; he had caused her to weep, and he recounted all their interview after he attacked her marriage from the pulpit.

He was allowed to go home — it might not have been safe to arrest him, and the Lords, unanimously, voted that he had done no offence. They repeated their votes in the Queen's presence, and thus a precedent for "mutinous convocation" by Kirkmen was established, till James VI. took order in 1596. We have no full narrative of this affair except that of Knox. It is to be guessed that the nobles wished to maintain the old habit of mutinous convocation which, probably, saved the life of Lethington, and helped to secure Bothwell's acquittal from the guilt of Darnley's murder. Perhaps, too, the brethren who filled the whole inner Court and overflowed up the stairs of the palace, may have had their influence.

This was a notable triumph of our Reformer, and of the Kirk; to which, on his showing, the Queen contributed, by feebly wandering from the real point at issue. She was no dialectician. Knox's conduct was, of course, approved of and sanctioned by the General Assembly. He had, in his circular, averred that Cranstoun and Armstrong were summoned "that a door may be opened to execute cruelty upon a greater multitude." To put it mildly, the General Assembly sanctioned contempt of Court. Unluckily for Scotland contempt of Court was, and long remained, universal, the country being desperately lawless, and reeking with blood shed in public and private quarrels. When a Prophet followed the secular example of summoning crowds to overawe justice, the secular sinners had warrant for thwarting the course of law.

As to the brethren and the idolaters who caused these troubles, we know not what befell them. The penalty, both for the attendants at Mass and for the disturbers thereof, should have been death! The dear brethren, if they attacked the Queen's servants, came under the Proclamation of October 1561; so did the Catholics, for *they* "openly made alteration and innovation of the state of religion. . . . " They ought "to be punished to the death with all rigour." Three were outlawed, and their sureties "unlawed." Twenty-one others were probably not hanged; the records are lost. For the same reason we know not what became of the brethren Armstrong, Cranstoun, and George Rynd, summoned with the other malefactors for November 13.

CHAPTER XVII: KNOX AND QUEEN MARY (continued), 1564-1567

During the session of the General Assembly in December 1563, Knox was compelled to chronicle domestic enormities. The Lord Treasurer, Richardson, having, like Captain Booth, "offended the law of Dian," had to do penance before the whole congregation, and the sermon (unfortunately it is lost, probably it never was written out) was preached by Knox. A French apothecary of the Queen's, and his mistress, were hanged on a charge of murdering their child.

On January 9, 1564-65, Randolph noted that one of the Queen's Maries, Mary Livingstone, is to marry John Sempill, son of Robert, third Lord Sempill, by an English wife. Knox assures us that "it is well known that shame hastened marriage between John Sempill, called 'the Dancer,' and Mary Livingstone, surnamed 'the Lusty.'" The young people appear, however, to have been in no pressing hurry, as Randolph, on January 9, did not expect their marriage till the very end of February; they wished the Earl of Bedford, who was coming on a diplomatic mission, to be present. Mary, on March 9, 1565, made them a grant of lands, since "it has pleased God to move their hearts to join together in the state of matrimony." She had ever since January been making the bride presents of feminine finery.

These proceedings indicating no precipitate haste, we may think that Mary Livingstone, like Mary of Guise, is only a victim of the Reformer's taste for "society journalism." Randolph, though an egregious gossip, says of the Four Maries, "they are all good," but Knox writes that "the ballads of that age" did witness to the "bruit" or reputation of these maidens. As is well known the old ballad of "Mary Hamilton," which exists in more than a dozen very diverse variants, in some specimens confuses one of the Maries, an imaginary "Mary Hamilton," with the French maid who was hanged at the end of 1563. The balladist is thus responsible for a scandal against the fair sisterhood; there was no "Mary Hamilton," and no "Mary Carmichael," in their number — Beaton, Seton, Fleming, and Livingstone.

An offended Deity now sent frost in January 1564, and an aurora borealis in February, Knox tells us, and "the threatenings of the preachers were fearful," in face of these unusual meteorological phenomena.

Vice rose to such a pitch that men doubted if the Mass really was idolatry! Knox said, from the pulpit, that if the sceptics were right, *he* was "miserably deceived." "Believe me, brethren, in the bowels of Christ, it is possible that you may be mistaken," Cromwell was to tell the Commissioners of the General Assembly, on a day that still was in the womb of the future; the dawn of common sense rose in the south.

On March 20, much to the indignation of the Queen, the banns were read twice between Knox and a lady of the Royal blood and name, Margaret Stewart, daughter of Lord Ochiltree, a girl not above sixteen, in January 1563, when Randolph first speaks of the wooing. The good Dr. M'Crie does not mention the age of the bride! The lady was a very near kinswoman of Chatelherault. She had plenty of time for reflection, and as nobody says that she was coerced into the marriage, while Nicol Burne attributes her passion to sorcery, we may suppose that she was in love with our Reformer. She bore him several daughters, and it is to be presumed that the marriage, though in every way *bizarre*, was happy. Burne says that Knox wished to marry a Lady Fleming, akin to Chatelherault, but was declined; if so, he soon consoled himself.

At this time Riccio — a *valet de chambre* of the Queen in 1561-62— "began to grow great in Court," becoming French Secretary at the end of the year. By June 3, 1565, Randolph is found styling Riccio "only governor" to Darnley. His career might have rivalled that of the equally low-born Cardinal Alberoni, but for the daggers of Moray's party.

In the General Assembly of June 1564, Moray, Morton, Glencairn, Pitarro, Lethington, and other Lords of the Congregation held aloof from the brethren, but met the Superintendents and others to discuss the recent conduct of our Reformer, who was present. He was invited, by Lethington, to "moderate himself" in his references to the Queen, as others might imitate him, "albeit not with the same modesty and foresight," for Lethington could not help bantering Knox. Knox, of course, rushed to his doctrine of "idolatry" as provocative of the wrath of God — we have heard of the bad harvest, and the frost in January. It is not worth while to pursue in detail the discourses, in which Knox said that the Queen rebelled against God "in all the actions of her life." Ahab and Jezebel were again brought on the scene. It profited not Lethington to say that all these old biblical "vengeances" were "singular motions of the Spirit of God, and appertain nothing to our age." If Knox could have understood *that*, he would not have been Knox. The point was intelligible; Lethington perceived it, but Knox never chose to do so. He went on with his isolated texts, Lethington vainly replying "the cases are nothing alike." Knox came to his old stand, "the idolater must die the death," and the executioners must be "the people of God." Lethington quoted many opinions against Knox's, to no purpose, opinions of Luther, Melanchthon, Bucer, Musculus, and Calvin, but our Reformer brought out the case of “Amasiath, King of Judah,” and “The Apology of Magdeburg.” As to the opinion of Calvin and the rest he drew a distinction. They had only spoken of the godly who were suffering under oppression, not of the godly triumphant in a commonwealth. He forgot, or did not choose to remember, a previous decision of his own, as we shall see.

When the rest of the party were discussing the question, Makgill, Clerk Register, reminded them of their previous debate in November 1561, when Knox, after secretly writing to Calvin, had proposed to write to him for his opinion about the Queen’s Mass, and Lethington had promised to do so himself. But Lethington now said that, on later reflection, as Secretary of the Queen, he had scrupled, without her consent, to ask a foreigner whether her subjects might prevent her from enjoying the rites of her own religion — for that was what the “controversies” between her Highness and her subjects really and confessedly meant.

Knox was now requested to consult Calvin, “and the learned in other Kirks, to know their judgment in that question.” The question, judging from Makgill’s interpellation, was “whether subjects might lawfully take her Mass from the Queen.” As we know, Knox had already put the question to Calvin by a letter of October 24, 1561, and so had the anonymous writer of November 18, 1561, whom I identify with Arran. Knox now refused to write to “Mr. Calvin, and the learned of other Kirks,” saying (I must quote him textually, or be accused of misrepresentation), “I myself am not only fully resolved in conscience, but also I have heard the judgments in this, and all other things that I have affirmed in this Realm, of the most godly and most learned that be known in Europe. I come not to this Realm without their resolution; and for my assurance I have the handwritings of many; and therefore if I should move the same question again, what else should I do but either show my own ignorance and forgetfulness, or else inconstancy?” He therefore said that his opponents might themselves “write and complain upon him,” and so learn “the plain minds” of the learned — but nobody took the trouble. Knox’s defence was worded with the skill of a notary. He said that he had “heard the judgments” of “the learned and godly”; he did not say what these judgments were. Calvin, Morel, Bullinger, and such men, we know, entirely differed from his extreme ideas. He “came not without their resolution,” or approval, to Scotland, but that was not the question at issue.

If Knox had received from Calvin favourable replies to his own letter, and Arran’s, of October 24, November 18, 1561, can any one doubt that he would now have produced them, unless he did not wish the brethren to find out that he himself had written without their knowledge? We know what manner of answers he received, in 1554, orally from Calvin, in writing from Bullinger, to his questions about resistance to the civil power. I am sceptical enough to suppose that, if Knox had now possessed letters from Calvin, justifying the propositions which he was maintaining, such as that "the people, yea, *or ane pairt of the people*, may execute God's jugementis against their King, being ane offender," he would have exhibited them. I do not believe that he had any such letters from such men as Bullinger and Calvin. Indeed, we may ask whether the question of the Queen's Mass had arisen in any realm of Europe except Scotland. Where was there a Catholic prince ruling over a Calvinistic state? If nowhere, then the question would not be raised, except by Knox in his letter to Calvin of October 24, 1561. And where was Calvin's answer, and to what effect?

Knox may have forgotten, and Lethington did not know, that, about 1558-59, in a tract, already noticed (p-103 *supra*), of 450 pages against the Anabaptists, Knox had expressed the reverse of his present opinion about religious Regicide. He is addressing the persecuting Catholic princes of Europe: " . . . Ye shall perish, both temporally and for ever. And by whom doth it most appear that temporally ye shall be punished? By *us*, whom ye banish, whom ye spoil and rob, whom cruelly ye persecute, and whose blood ye daily shed? There is no doubt, but as the victory which overcometh the world is our faith, so it behoveth us to possess our souls in our patience. We neither privily nor openly deny the power of the Civil Magistrate. . . ."

The chosen saints and people of God, even when under oppression, lift not the hand, but possess their souls in patience, says Knox, in 1558-59. But the idolatrous shall be temporally punished — by other hands. "And what instruments can God find in this life more apt to punish you than those" (the Anabaptists), "that hate and detest all lawful powers? . . . God will not use his saints and chosen people to punish you. *For with them there is always mercy*, yea, even although God have pronounced a curse and malediction, as in the history of Joshua is plain."

In this passage Knox is speaking for the English exiles in Geneva. He asserts that we "neither publicly nor privately deny the power of the Civil Magistrate," in face of his own published tracts of appeal to a Jehu or a Phinehas, and of his own claim that the Prophet may preach treason, and that his instruments may commit treason. To be sure all the English in Geneva were not necessarily of Knox's mind.

It is altogether a curious passage. God's people are more merciful than God! Israel was bidden to exterminate all idolaters in the Promised Land, but, as the Book of Joshua shows, they did not always do it: "for with them is always mercy"; despite the massacres, such as that of Agag, which Knox was wont to cite as examples to the backward brethren! Yet, relying on another set of texts, not in *Joshua*, Knox now informed Lethington that the executors of death on idolatrous princes were "the people of God"— "the people, or a part of the people."

Mercy! Happily the policy of carnal men never allowed Knox's "people of God" to show whether, given a chance to destroy idolaters, they would display the mercy on which he insists in his reply to the Anabaptist.

It was always useless to argue with Knox; for whatever opinion happened to suit him at the moment (and at different moments contradictory opinions happened to suit him), he had ever a Bible text to back him. On this occasion, if Lethington had been able to quote Knox's own statement, that with the people of God "there is always mercy" (as in the case of Cardinal Beaton), he could hardly have escaped by saying that there was always mercy, *when the people of God had not the upper hand in the State*, when unto them God has *not* "given sufficient force." For in the chosen people of God "there is *always* mercy, yea even although God have pronounced a curse and malediction."

In writing against Anabaptists (1558-59), Knox wanted to make *them*, not merciful Calvinists, the objects of the fear and revenge of Catholic rulers. He even hazarded one of his unfulfilled prophecies: Anabaptists, wicked men, will execute those divine judgments for which Protestants of his species are too tender-hearted; though, somehow, they make exceptions in the cases of Beaton and Riccio, and ought to do so in the case of Mary Stuart!

Lethington did not use this passage of our Reformer's works against him, though it was published in 1560. Probably the secretary had not worked his way through the long essay on Predestination. But we have, in the book against the Anabaptists and in the controversy with Lethington, an example of Knox's fatal intellectual faults. As an individual man, he would not have hurt a fly. As a prophet, he deliberately tried to restore, by a pestilent anachronism, in a Christian age and country, the ferocities attributed to ancient Israel. This he did not even do consistently, and when he is inconsistent with his prevailing mood, his biographers applaud his "moderation"! If he saw a chance against an Anabaptist, or if he wanted to conciliate Mary of Guise, he took up a Christian line, backing it by texts appropriate to the occasion.

His influence lasted, and the massacre of Dunavertie (1647), and the slaying of women in cold blood, months after the battle of Philiphaugh, and the "rouping" of covenanted "ravens" for the blood of cavaliers taken under quarter, are the direct result of Knox's intellectual error, of his appeals to Jehu, Phinehas, and so forth.

At this point the Fourth Book of Knox's "History" ends with a remark on the total estrangement between himself and Moray. The Reformer continued to revise and interpolate his work, up to 1571, the year before his death, and made collections of materials, and notes for the continuation. An uncertain hand has put these together in Book V. But we now miss the frequent references to "John Knox," and his doings, which must have been vigorous during the troubles of 1565, after the arrival in Scotland of Darnley (February 1565), and his courtship and marriage of the Queen. These events brought together Moray, Chatelherault, and many of the Lords in the armed party of the Congregation. They rebelled; they were driven by Mary into England, by October 1565, and Bothwell came at her call from France. The Queen had new advisers — Riccio, Balfour, Bothwell, the eldest son of the late Huntly, and Lennox, till the wretched Darnley in a few weeks proved his incapacity. Lethington, rather neglected, hung about the Court, as he remained with Mary of Guise long after he had intended to desert her.

Mary, whose only chance lay in outstaying Elizabeth in the policy of celibacy, had been driven, or led, by her rival Queen into a marriage which would have been the best possible, had Darnley been a man of character and a Protestant. He was the typical "young fool," indolent, incapable, fierce, cowardly, and profligate. His religion was dubious. After his arrival (on February 26, 1565) he went with Moray to hear Knox preach, but he had been bred by a Catholic mother, and, on occasion, posed as an ardent Catholic. It is unfortunate that Randolph is silent about Knox during all the period of the broils which preceded and followed Mary's marriage.

On August 19, 1565, Darnley, now Mary's husband, went to hear Knox preach in St. Giles's, on the text, "O Lord our God, other lords than Thou have ruled over us." "God," he said, "sets in that room (for the offences and ingratitude of the people) boys and women." Ahab also appeared, as usual. Ahab "had not taken order with that harlot, Jezebel." So Book V. says, and "harlot" would be a hit at Mary's alleged misconduct with Riccio. A hint in a letter of Randolph's of August 24, may point to nascent scandal about the pair. But the printed sermon, from Knox's written copy, reads, not "harlot" but "idolatrous wife." At all events, Darnley was so moved by this sermon that he would not dine. Knox was called "from his bed" to the Council chamber, where were Atholl, Ruthven, Lethington, the Justice Clerk, and the Queen's Advocate. He was attended by a great crowd of notable citizens, but Lethington forbade him to preach for a fortnight or three weeks. He said that, "If the Church would command him to preach or abstain he would obey, so far as the Word of God would permit him."

It seems that he would only obey even the Church as far as he chose.

The Town Council protested against the deprivation, and we do not know how long Knox desisted from preaching. Laing thinks that, till Mary fell, he preached only "at occasional intervals." But we shall see that he did presently go on preaching, with Lethington for a listener. He published his sermon, without name of place or printer. The preacher informs his audience that "in the Hebrew there is no conjunction copulative" in a certain sentence; probably he knew more Hebrew than most of our pastors.

The sermon is very long, and, wanting the voice and gesture of the preacher, is no great proof of eloquence; in fact, is tedious. Probably Darnley was mainly vexed by the length, though he may have had intelligence enough to see that he and Mary were subjects of allusions. Knox wrote the piece from memory, on the last of August, in "the terrible roaring of guns, and the noise of armour." The banded Lords, Moray and the rest, had entered Edinburgh, looking for supporters, and finding none. Erskine, commanding the Castle, fired six or seven shots as a protest, and the noise of these disturbed the prophet at his task. As a marginal note says, "The Castle of Edinburgh was shooting against the exiled for Christ Jesus' sake" — namely, at Moray and his company. Knox prayed for them in public, and was accused of so doing, but Lethington testified that he had heard "the sermons," and found in them no ground of offence.

Moray, Ochiltree, Pitarro, and many others being now exiles in England, whose Queen had subsidised and repudiated them and their revolution, things went hard with the preachers. For a whole year at least (December 1565-66) their stipends were not paid, the treasury being exhausted by military and other expenses, and Pitarro being absent. At the end of December, Knox and his colleague, Craig, were ordered by the General Assembly to draw up and print a service for a general Fast, to endure from the last Sunday in February to the first in March, 1566. One cause alleged is that the Queen's conversion had been hoped for, but now she said that she would "maintain and defend" her own faith. She had said no less to Knox at their first interview, but now she had really written, when invited to abolish her Mass, that her subjects may worship as they will, but that she will not desert her religion. It was also alleged that the godly were to be destroyed all over Europe, in accordance with decrees of the Council of Trent. Moreover, vice, manslaughter, and oppression of the poor continued, prices of commodities rose, and work was scamped. The date of the Fast was fixed, not to coincide with Lent, but because it preceded an intended meeting of Parliament, a Parliament interrupted by the murder of Riccio, and the capture of the Queen. No games were to be played during the two Sundays of the Fast, which looks as if they were still permitted on other Sundays. The appointed lessons were from Judges, Esther, Chronicles, Isaiah, and Esdras; the

New Testament, apparently, supplied nothing appropriate. It seldom did. The lay attendants of the Assembly of Christmas Day which decreed the Fast, were Morton, Mar, Lindsay, Lethington, with some lairds.

The Protestants must have been alarmed, in February 1566, by a report, to which Randolph gave circulation, that Mary had joined a Catholic League, with the Pope, the Emperor, the King of Spain, the Duke of Savoy, and others. Lethington may have believed this; at all events he saw no hope of pardon for Moray and his abettors— "no certain way, unless we chop at the very root, you know where it lieth" (February 9). Probably he means the murder of Riccio, not of the Queen. Bedford said that Mary had not yet signed the League. We are aware of no proof that there was any League to sign, and though Mary was begging money both from Spain and the Pope, she probably did not expect to procure more than tolerance for her own religion. The rumours, however, must have had their effect in causing apprehension. Moreover, Darnley, from personal jealousy; Morton, from fear of losing the Seals; the Douglases, kinsmen of Morton and Darnley; and the friends of the exiled nobles, seeing that they were likely to be forfeited, conspired with Moray in England to be Darnley's men, to slay Riccio, and to make the Queen subordinate to Darnley, and "to fortify and maintain" the Protestant faith. Mary, indeed, had meant to reintroduce the Spiritual Estate into Parliament, as a means of assisting her Church; so she writes to Archbishop Beaton in Paris.

Twelve wooden altars, to be erected in St. Giles's, are said by Knox's continuator to have been found in Holyrood.

Mary's schemes, whatever they extended to, were broken by the murder of Riccio in the evening of March 9. He was seized in her presence, and dirked by fifty daggers outside of her room. Ruthven, who in June 1564 had come into Mary's good graces, and Morton were, with Darnley, the leaders of the Douglas feud, and of the brethren.

The nobles might easily have taken, tried, and hanged Riccio, but they yielded to Darnley and to their own excited passions, when once they had torn him from the Queen. The personal pleasure of dirking the wretch could not be resisted, and the danger of causing the Queen's miscarriage and death may have entered into the plans of Darnley. Knox does not tell the story himself; his "History" ends in June 1564. But "in plain terms" he "lets the world understand what we mean," namely, that Riccio "was justly punished," and that "the act" (of the murderers) was "most just and most worthy of *all* praise." This Knox wrote just after the event, while the murderers were still in exile in England, where Ruthven died — seeing a vision of angels! Knox makes no drawback to the entirely and absolutely laudable character of the deed. He goes out of his way to tell us “in plain terms what we mean,” in a digression from his account of affairs sixteen years earlier. Thus one fails to understand the remark, that “of the manner in which the deed was done we may be certain that Knox would disapprove as vehemently as any of his contemporaries.” The words may be ironical, for vehement disapproval was not conspicuous among Protestant contemporaries. Knox himself, after Mary scattered the party of the murderers and recovered power, prayed that heaven would “put it into the heart of a multitude” to treat Mary like Athaliah.

Mary made her escape from Holyrood to Dunbar, to safety, in the night of March 11. March 12 found Knox on his knees; the game was up, the blood had been shed in vain. The Queen had not died, but was well, and surrounded by friends; and the country was rather for her than against her. The Reformer composed a prayer, repenting that “in quiet I am negligent, in trouble impatient, tending to desperation,” which shows insight. He speaks of his pride and ambition, also of his covetousness and malice. That he was really covetous we cannot believe, nor does he show malice except against idolaters. He “does not doubt himself to be elected to eternal salvation,” of which he has “assured signs.” He has “knowledge above the common sort of my brethren” (pride has crept in again!), and has been compelled to “forespeak,” or prophesy. He implores mercy for his “desolate bedfellow,” for her children, and for his sons by his first wife. “Now, Lord, put end to my misery!” (Edinburgh, March 12, 1566). Knox fled from Edinburgh, “with a great mourning of the godly of religion,” says a Diarist, on the same day as the chief murderers took flight, March 17; his place of refuge was Kyle in Ayrshire (March 21, 1566).

In Randolph’s letter, recording the flight of these nobles, he mentions eight of their accomplices, and another list is pinned to the letter, giving names of men “all at the death of Davy and privy thereunto.” This applies to about a dozen men, being a marginal note opposite their names. A line lower is added, “John Knox, John Craig, preachers.” There is no other evidence that Knox, who fled, or Craig, who stood to his pulpit, were made privy to the plot. When idolaters thought it best not to let the Pope into a scheme for slaying Elizabeth, it is hardly probable that Protestants would apprise their leading preachers. On the other hand, Calvin was consulted by the would-be assassins of the Duc de Guise, in 1559-60, and he prevented the deed, as he assures the Duchesse de Ferrare, the mother-in-law of the Duc, after that noble was murdered in good earnest. Calvin, we have shown, knew beforehand of the conspiracy of Amboise, which aimed at the death of “Antonius,” obviously Guise. He disapproved of but did not reveal the plot. Knox, whether privy to the murder or not, did not, when he ran away, take the best means of disarming suspicion. Neither his name nor that of Craig occurs in two lists containing those of between seventy and eighty persons "delated," and it is to be presumed that he fled because he did not feel sure of protection against Mary's frequently expressed dislike.

In earlier days, with a strong backing, he had not feared "the pleasing face of a gentlewoman," as he said, but now he did fear it. Kyle suited him well, because the Earl of Cassilis, who had been an idolater, was converted by a faithful bride, in August. Dr. M'Crie says that Mary "wrote to a nobleman in the west country with whom Knox resided, to banish him from his house." The evidence for this is a letter of Parkhurst to Bullinger, in December 1567. Parkhurst tells Bullinger, among other novelties, that Riccio was a necromancer, who happened to be dirked; by whom he does not say. He adds that Mary commanded "a certain pious earl" not to keep Knox in his house.

In Kyle Knox worked at his "History." On September 4 he signed a letter sent from the General Assembly at St. Andrews to Beza, approving of a Swiss confession of faith, except so far as the keeping of Christmas, Easter, and other Christian festivals is concerned. Knox himself wrote to Beza, about this time, an account of the condition of Scotland. It would be invaluable, as the career of Mary was rushing to the falls, but it is lost.

On December 24, Mary pardoned all the murderers of Riccio; and Knox appears to have been present, though it is not certain, at the Christmas General Assembly in Edinburgh. He received permission to visit his sons in England, and he wrote two letters: one to the Protestant nobles on Mary's attempt to revive the consistorial jurisdiction of the Primate; the other to the brethren. To England he carried a remonstrance from the Kirk against the treatment of Puritans who had conscientious objections to the apparel— "Romish rags" — of the Church Anglican. Men ought to oppose themselves boldly to Authority; that is, to Queen Elizabeth, if urged further than their consciences can bear.

Being in England, Knox, of course, did not witness the events associated with the Catholic baptism of the baby prince (James VI.); the murder of Darnley, in February 1567; the abduction of Mary by Bothwell, and her disgraceful marriage to her husband's murderer, in May 1567. If Knox excommunicated the Queen, it was probably about this date. Long afterwards, on April 25, 1584, Mary was discussing the various churches with Waad, an envoy of Cecil. Waad said that the Pope stirred up peoples not to obey their sovereigns. "Yet," said the Queen, "a Pope shall excommunicate *you,* but *I* was excommunicated by a pore minister, Knokes. In fayth I feare nothinge else but that they will use my sonne as they have done the mother."

CHAPTER XVIII: THE LAST YEARS OF KNOX: 1567-1572

The Royal quarry, so long in the toils of Fate, was dragged down at last, and the doom forespoken by the prophet was fulfilled. A multitude had their opportunity with this fair Athaliah; and Mary had ridden from Carberry Hill, a draggled prisoner, into her own town, among the yells of “burn the harlot.” But one out of all her friends was faithful to her. Mary Seton, to her immortal honour, rode close by the side of her fallen mistress and friend.

For six years insulted and thwarted; her smiles and her tears alike wasted on greedy, faithless courtiers and iron fanatics; perplexed and driven desperate by the wiles of Cecil and Elizabeth; in bodily pain and constant sorrow — the sorrow wrought by the miscreant whom she had married; without one honest friend; Mary had wildly turned to the man who, it is to be supposed, she thought could protect her, and her passion had dragged her into unplumbed deeps of crime and shame.

The fall of Mary, the triumph of Protestantism, appear to have, in some degree, rather diminished the prominence of Knox. He would never make Mary weep again. He had lost the protagonist against whom, for a while, he had stood almost alone, and soon we find him complaining of neglect. He appeared at the General Assembly of June 25, 1567 — a scanty gathering. George Buchanan, a layman, was Moderator: the Assembly was adjourned to July 21, and the brethren met in arms; wherefore Argyll, who had signed the band for Darnley’s murder, declined to come. The few nobles, the barons, and others present, vowed to punish the murder of Darnley and to defend the child prince; and it was decided that henceforth all Scottish princes should swear to “set forward the true religion of Jesus Christ, as at present professed and established in this realm” — as they are bound to do— “by Deuteronomy and the second chapter of the Book of Kings,” which, in fact, do not speak of establishing Calvinism.

Among those who sign are Morton, who had guilty foreknowledge of the murder; while his kinsman, Archibald Douglas, was present at the doing; Sir James Balfour, who was equally involved; Lethington, who signed the murder covenant; and Douglas of Whittingham, and Ker of Faldonside, two of Riccio’s assassins. Most of the nobles stood aloof.

Presently Throckmorton arrived, sent by Elizabeth with the pretence, at least, of desiring to save Mary’s life, which, but for his exertions, he thought would have been taken. He "feared Knox's austerity as much as any man's" (July 14).

On July 17 Knox arrived from the west, where he had been trying to unite the Protestants. Throckmorton found Craig and Knox "very austere," well provided with arguments from the Bible, history, the laws of Scotland, and the Coronation Oath. Knox in his sermons "threatened the great plague of God to this whole nation and country if the Queen be spared from her condign punishment."

Murderers were in the habit of being lightly let off, in Scotland, and, as to Mary, she could easily have been burned for husband-murder, but not so easily convicted thereof with any show of justice. The only direct evidence of her complicity lay in the Casket Letters, and several of her lordly accusers were (if she were guilty) her accomplices. Her prayer to be heard in self-defence at the ensuing Parliament of December was refused, for excellent reasons; and her opponents had the same good reasons for not bringing her to trial. Knox was perfectly justified if he desired her to be tried, but several lay members of the General Assembly could not have faced that ordeal, and Randolph later accused Lethington, in a letter to him, of advising her assassination.

On July 29 Knox preached at the Coronation of James VI. at Stirling, protesting against the rite of anointing. True, it was Jewish, but it had passed through the impure hands of Rome, as, by the way, had Baptism. Knox also preached at the opening of Parliament, on December 15. We know little of him at this time. He had sent his sons to Cambridge, into danger of acquiring Anglican opinions, which they did; but now he seems to have taken a less truculent view of Anglicanism than in 1559-60. He had been drawing a prophetic historical parallel between Chatelherault (more or less of the Queen's party) and Judas Iscariot, and was not loved by the Hamiltons. The Duke was returning from France, "to restore Satan to his kingdom," with the assistance of the Guises. Knox mentions an attempt to assassinate Moray, now Regent, which is obscure. "I live as a man already dead from all civil things." Thus he wrote to Wood, Moray's agent, then in England on the affair of the Casket Letters (September 10, 1568).

He had already (February 14) declined to gratify Wood by publishing his "History." He would not permit it to appear during his life, as "it will rather hurt me than profit them" (his readers). He was, very naturally, grieved that the conduct of men was not conformable to "the truth of God, now of some years manifest." He was not concerned to revenge his own injuries "by word or writ," and he foresaw schism in England over questions of dress and rites.

He was neglected. "Have not thine oldest and stoutest acquaintance" (Moray, or Kirkcaldy of Grange?) "buried thee in present oblivion, and art thou not in that estate, by age, that nature itself calleth thee from the pleasure of things temporal?" (August 19, 1569).

"*In trouble impatient, tending to desperation*," Knox had said of himself. He was still unhappy. "Foolish Scotland" had "disobeyed God by sparing the Queen's life," and now the proposed Norfolk marriage of Mary and her intended restoration were needlessly dreaded. A month later, Lethington, thrown back on Mary by his own peril for his share in Darnley's murder, writes to the Queen that some ministers are reconcilable, "but Nox I think be inflexible."

A year before Knox wrote his melancholy letter, just cited, he had some curious dealings with the English Puritans. In 1566 many of them had been ejected from their livings, and, like the Scottish Catholics, they "assembled in woods and private houses to worship God." The edifying controversies between these precisians and Grindal, the Bishop of London, are recorded by Strype. The bishop was no zealot for surplices and the other momentous trifles which agitate the human conscience, but Elizabeth insisted on them; and "Her Majesty's Government must be carried on." The precisians had deserted the English Liturgy for the Genevan Book of Common Order; both sides were appealing to Beza, in Geneva, and were wrangling about the interpretation of that Pontiff's words.

Calvin had died in 1564, but the Genevan Church and Beza were still umpires, whose decision was eagerly sought, quibbled over, and disputed. The French Puritans, in fact, extremely detested the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Thus, in 1562, De la Vigne, a preacher at St. Lô, consulted Calvin about the excesses of certain Flemish brethren, who adhered to "a certain bobulary (*bobulaire*) of prayers, compiled, or brewed, in the days of Edward VI." The Calvinists of St. Lô decided that these Flemings must not approach their holy table, and called our communion service "a disguised Mass." The Synod (Calvinistic) of Poictiers decided that our Liturgy contains "impieties," and that Satan was the real author of the work! There are saints' days, "with epistles, lessons, or gospels, as under the papacy." They have heard that the Prayer Book has been condemned by Geneva.

The English sufferers from our Satanic Prayer Book appealed to Geneva, and were answered by Beza (October 24, 1567). He observed, "Who are we to give any judgment of these things, which, as it seems to us, can be healed only by prayers and patience." Geneva has not heard both sides, and does not pretend to judge. The English brethren complain that ministers are appointed "without any lawful consent of the Presbytery," the English Church not being Presbyterian, and not intending to be. Beza hopes that it will become Presbyterian. He most dreads that any should "execute their ministry contrary to the will of her Majesty and the Bishops," which is exactly what the seceders did. Beza then speaks out about the question of costume, which ought not to be forced on the ministers. But he does not think that the vestments justify schism. In other points the brethren should, in the long run, "give way to manifest violence," and "live as private men." "Other defilements" (kneeling, &c.) Beza hopes that the Queen and Bishops will remove. Men must "patiently bear with one another, and heartily obey the Queen's Majesty and all their Bishops."

As far as this epistle goes, Beza and his colleagues certainly do not advise the Puritan seceders to secede.

Bullinger and Gualterus in particular were outworn by the pertinacious English Puritans who visited them. One Sampson had, when in exile, made the life of Peter Martyr a burden to him by his "clamours," doubts, and restless dissatisfaction. "England," wrote Bullinger to Beza (March 15, 1567), "has many characters of this sort, who cannot be at rest, who can never be satisfied, and who have always something or other to complain about." Bullinger and Gualterus "were unwilling to contend with these men like fencing-masters," tired of their argufying; unable to "withdraw our entire confidence from the Bishops." "If any others think of coming hither, let them know that they will come to no purpose."

Knox may have been less unsympathetic, but his advice agreed with the advice of the Genevans. Some of the seceders were imprisoned; Cecil and the Queen's commissioners encouraged others "to go and preach the Gospel in Scotland," sending with them, as it seems, letters commendatory to the ruling men there. They went, but they were not long away. "They liked not that northern climate, but in May returned again," and fell to their old practices. One of them reported that, at Dunbar, "he saw men going to the church, on Good Friday, barefooted and bare-kneed, and creeping to the cross!" "If this be so," said Grindal, "the Church of Scotland will not be pure enough for our men."

These English brethren, when in Scotland, consulted Knox on the dispute which they made a ground of schism. One brother, who was uncertain in his mind, visited Knox in Scotland at this time. The result appears in a letter to Knox from a seceder, written just after Queen Mary escaped from Lochleven in May 1568. The dubiously seceding brother "told the Bishop" (Grindal) "that you are flat against and condemn all our doings . . . whereupon the Church" (the seceders) "did excommunicate him"! He had reviled "the Church," and they at once caught "the excommunicatory fever." Meanwhile the earnestly seceding brother thought that he had won Knox to *his* side. But a letter from our Reformer proved his error, and the letter, as the brother writes, "is not in all points liked." They would not "go back again to the wafer-cake and kneelings" (the Knoxian Black Rubric had been deleted from Elizabeth's prayer book), "and to other knackles of Popery.”

In fact they obeyed Knox’s epistle to England of January 1559. “Mingle-mangle ministry, Popish order, and Popish apparel,” they will not bear. Knox’s arguments in favour of their conforming, for the time at all events, are quoted and refuted: “And also concerning Paul his purifying at Jerusalem.” The analogy of Paul’s conformity had been rejected by Knox, at the supper party with Lethington in 1556. He had “doubted whether either James’s commandment or Paul’s obedience proceeded from the Holy Ghost.” Yet now Knox had used the very same argument from Paul’s conformity which, in 1556, he had scouted! The Mass was not in question in 1568; still, if Paul was wrong (and he did get into peril from a mob!), how could Knox now bid the English brethren follow his example? (See p-67 *supra*.)

To be sure Mary was probably at large, when Knox wrote, with 4000 spears at her back. The Reformer may have rightly thought it an ill moment to irritate Elizabeth, or he may have grown milder than he was in 1559, and come into harmony with Bullinger. In February of the year of this correspondence he had written, “God comfort that dispersed little flock,” apparently the Puritans of his old Genevan congregation, now in England, and in trouble, “amongst whom I would be content to end my days. . . . “

In January 1570, Knox, “with his one foot in the grave,” as he says, did not despair of seeing his desire upon his enemy. Moray was asking Elizabeth to hand over to him Queen Mary, giving hostages for the safety of her life. Moray sent his messenger to Cecil, on January 2, 1570, and Knox added a brief note. “If ye strike not at the root,” he said, “the branches that appear to be broken will bud again. . . . More days than one would not suffice to express what I think.” What he thought is obvious; “stone dead hath no fellow.” But Mary’s day of doom had not yet come; Moray was not to receive her as a prisoner, for the Regent was shot dead, in Linlithgow, on January 23, by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, to the unconcealed delight of his sister, for whom his death was opportune.

The assassin, Bothwellhaugh, in May 1568, had been pardoned for his partisanship of Mary, at Knox’s intercession. “Thy image, O Lord, did so clearly shine on that personage” (Moray) — he said in his public prayer at the Regent’s funeral— “that the devil, and the people to whom he is Prince, could not abide it.” We know too much of Moray to acquiesce, without reserve, in this eulogium.

Knox was sorely disturbed, at this time, by the publication of a *jeu d’esprit*, in which the author professed to have been hidden in a bed, in the cabinet of a room, while the late Regent held a council of his friends. The tone and manner of Lindsay, Wood, Knox and others were admirably imitated; in their various ways, and with appropriate arguments, some of them urged Moray to take the crown for his life. By no people but the Scots, perhaps, could this jape have been taken seriously, but, with a gravity that would have delighted Charles Lamb, Knox denounced the skit from the pulpit as a fabrication by the Father of Lies. The author, the human penman, he said (according to Calderwood), was fated to die friendless in a strange land. The galling shaft came out of the Lethington quiver; it may have been composed by several of the family, but Thomas Maitland, who later died in Italy, was regarded as the author, perhaps because he did die alone in a strange country.

At this time the Castle of Edinburgh was held in the Queen's interest by Kirkcaldy of Grange, who seems to have been won over by the guile of Lethington. That politician needed a shelter from the danger of the Lennox feud, and the charge of having been guilty of Darnley's murder. To take the place was beyond the power of the Protestant party, and it did not fall under the guns of their English allies during the life of the Reformer.

He had a tedious quarrel with Kirkcaldy in December 1570-January 1571. A retainer of Kirkcaldy's had helped to kill a man whom his master only wanted to be beaten. The retainer was put into the Tolbooth; Kirkcaldy set him free, and Knox preached against Kirkcaldy. Hearing that Knox had styled him a murderer, Kirkcaldy bade Craig read from the pulpit a note in which he denied the charge. He prayed God to decide whether he or Knox "has been most desirous of innocent blood." Craig would not read the note: Kirkcaldy appealed in a letter to the kirk-session. He explained the origin of the trouble: the slain man had beaten his brother; he bade his agents beat the insulter, who drew his sword, and got a stab. On this Knox preached against him, he was told, as a cut-throat.

Next Sunday Knox reminded his hearers that he had not called Kirkcaldy a murderer (though in the case of the Cardinal, he was), but had said that the lawless proceedings shocked him more than if they had been done by common cut-throats. Knox then wrote a letter to the kirk-session, saying that Kirkcaldy's defence proved him "to be a murderer at heart," for St. John says that "whoso loveth not his brother is a man-slayer"; and Kirkcaldy did not love the man who was killed. All this was apart from the question: had Knox called Kirkcaldy a common cut-throat? Kirkcaldy then asked that Knox's explanation of what he said in the pulpit might be given in writing, as his words had been misreported, and Knox, "creeping upon his club," went personally to the kirk-session, and requested the Superintendent to admonish Kirkcaldy of his offences. Next Sunday he preached about his eternal Ahab, and Kirkcaldy was offended by the historical parallel. When he next was in church Knox went at him again; it was believed that Kirkcaldy would avenge himself, but the western brethren wrote to remind him of their “great care” for Knox’s person. So the quarrel, which made sermons lively, died out.

There was little goodwill to Knox in the Queen’s party, and as the conflict was plainly to be decided by the sword, Robert Melville, from the Castle, advised that the prophet should leave the town, in May 1571. The “Castilian” chiefs wished him no harm, they would even shelter him in their hold, but they could not be responsible for his “safety from the multitude and rascal,” in the town, for the craftsmen preferred the party of Kirkcaldy. Knox had a curious interview in the Castle with Lethington, now stricken by a mortal malady. The two old foes met courteously, and parted even in merriment; Lethington did not mock, and Knox did not threaten. They were never again to see each other’s faces, though the dying Knox was still to threaten, and the dying Lethington was still to mock.

July found Knox and his family at St. Andrews, in the New Hospice, a pre-Reformation ecclesiastical building, west of the Cathedral, and adjoining the gardens of St. Leonard’s College. At this time James Melville, brother of the more celebrated scholar and divine, Andrew Melville, was a golf-playing young student of St. Leonard’s College. He tells us how Knox would walk about the College gardens, exhorting the St. Leonard’s lads to be staunch Protestants; for St. Salvator’s and St. Mary’s were not devoted to the Reformer and his party. The smitten preacher (he had suffered a touch of apoplexy) walked slowly, a fur tippet round his neck in summer, leaning on his staff, and on the shoulder of his secretary, Bannatyne. He returned, at St. Andrews, in his sermons, to the Book of Daniel with which, nearly a quarter of a century ago, he began his pulpit career. In preaching he was moderate — for half-an-hour; and then, warming to his work, he made young Melville shudder and tremble, till he could not hold his pen to write. No doubt the prophet was denouncing “that last Beast,” the Pope, and his allies in Scotland, as he had done these many years ago. Ere he had finished his sermon “he was like to ding the pulpit to blads and fly out of it.” He attended a play, written by Davidson, later a famous preacher, on the siege and fall of the Castle, exhibiting the hanging of his old ally, Kirkcaldy, “according to Mr. Knox’s doctrine,” says Melville. This cheerful entertainment was presented at the marriage of John Colville, destined to be a traitor, a double spy, and a renegade from the Kirk to “the Synagogue of Satan.”

Knox now collected historical materials from Alexander Hay, Clerk of the Privy Council, and heard of the publication of Buchanan’s scurrilous “Detection” of Queen Mary, in December 1571.

Knox had denounced the Hamiltons as murderers, so one of that name accused our Reformer of having signed a band for the murder of Darnley — not the murder at Kirk o' Field, but a sketch for an attempt at Perth! He had an interview with Knox, not of the most satisfactory, and there was a quarrel with another Hamilton, who later became a Catholic and published scurrilous falsehoods about Knox, in Latin. In fact our Reformer had quarrels enough on his hands at St. Andrews, and to one adversary he writes about what he would do, if he had his old strength of body.

Not in the Regency, but mainly under the influence of Morton, bishops were reintroduced, at a meeting of the Kirk held at Leith, in January 1572. The idea was that each bishop should hand over most of his revenues to Morton, or some other person in power. Knox, of course, objected; he preached at St. Andrews before Morton inducted a primate of his clan, but he refused to "inaugurate" the new prelate. The Superintendent of Fife did what was to be done, and a bishop (he of Caithness) was among the men who imposed their hands on the head of the new Archbishop of St. Andrews. Thus the imposition of hands, which Knox had abolished in the Book of Discipline, crept back again, and remains in Presbyterian usage.

Had Knox been in vigour he might have summoned the brethren in arms to resist; but he was weak of body, and Morton was an ill man to deal with. Knox did draw up articles intended to minimise the mischief of these bastard and simoniacal bishoprics and abused patronages (August 1572). On May 26, 1572, he describes himself as "lying in St. Andrews, half dead." He was able, however, to preach at a witch, who was probably none the better for his distinguished attentions.

On August 17, during a truce between the hostile parties, Knox left St. Andrews for Edinburgh, "not without dolour and displeasure of the few godly that were in the town, but to the great joy and pleasure of the rest;" for, "half dead" as he was, Knox had preached a political sermon every Sunday, and he was in the pulpit at St. Giles's on the last Sunday of August. As his colleague, Craig, had disgusted the brethren by his moderation and pacific temper, a minister named Lawson was appointed as Knox's coadjutor.

Late in August came the news of the St. Bartholomew massacre (August 24). Knox rose to the occasion, and, preaching in the presence of du Croc, the French ambassador, bade him tell his King that he was a murderer, and that God's vengeance should never depart from him or his house. The prophecy was amply fulfilled. Du Croc remonstrated, "but the Lords answered they could not stop the mouths of ministers to speak against themselves."

There was a convention of Protestants in Edinburgh on October 20, but lords did not attend, and few lairds were present. The preachers and other brethren in the Assembly proposed that all Catholics in the realm should be compelled to recant publicly, to lose their whole property and be banished if they were recalcitrant, and, if they remained in the country, that all subjects should be permitted, lawfully, to put them to death. ("To invade them, and every one of them, to the death.") This was the ideal, embodied in law, of the brethren in 1560. Happily they were not permitted to disgrace Scotland by a Bartholomew massacre of her own.

Mr. Hume Brown thinks that these detestable proposals "if not actually penned by Knox, must have been directly inspired by him." He does not, however, mention the demand for massacre, except as "pains and penalties for those who *preached* the old religion." "Without exception of persons, great or small," *all* were to be obliged to recant, or to be ruined and exiled, or to be massacred. Dr. M'Crie does not hint at the existence of these articles, "to be given to the Regent and Council." They included a very proper demand for the reformation of vice at home. Certainly Knox did not pen or dictate the Articles, for none of his favourite adjectives occurs in the document.

At this time Elizabeth, Leicester, and Cecil desired to hand over Queen Mary to Mar, the Regent, "to proceed with her by way of justice," a performance not to be deferred, "either for Parliament or a great Session." Very Petty Sessions indeed, if any, were to suffice for the trial of the Queen. There are to be no "temporising solemnities," all are to be "stout and resolute *in execution*," Leicester thus writes to an unknown correspondent on October 10. Killigrew, who was to arrange the business with Mar, was in Scotland by September 19. On October 6, Killigrew writes that Knox is very feeble but still preaching, and that he says, if he is not a bishop, it is by no fault of Cecil's. "I trust to satisfy Morton," says Killigrew, "and as for John Knox, that thing, as you may see by my letter to Mr. Secretary, is done and doing daily; the people in general well bent to England, abhorring the fact in France, and fearing their tyranny."

"That thing" is *not* the plan for murdering Mary without trial; if Killigrew meant that he had obtained Knox's assent to *that*, he would not write "that thing is doing daily." Even Morton, more scrupulous than Elizabeth and Cecil, said that "there must be some kind of process" (trial, *procès*), attended secretly by the nobles and the ministers. The trial would be in Mary's absence, or would be brief indeed, for the prisoner was not to live three hours after crossing the Border! Others, unnamed, insisted on a trial; the Queen had never been found guilty. Killigrew speaks of "two ministers" as eager for the action, but nothing proves that Knox was one of them. While Morton and Mar were haggling for the price of Mary's blood, Mar died, on October 28, and the whole plot fell through. Anxious as Knox had declared himself to be to "strike at the root," he could not, surely, be less scrupulous about a trial than Morton, though the decision of the Court was foredoomed. Sandys, the Bishop of London, advised that Mary's head should be chopped off!

On November 9, 1572, Knox inducted Mr. Lawson into his place as minister at St. Giles's. On the 13th he could not read the Bible aloud, he paid his servants, and gave his man a present, the last, in addition to his wages. On the 15th two friends came to see Knox at noon, dinner time. He made an effort, and for the last time sat at meat with them, ordering a fresh hogshead of wine to be drawn. "He willed Archibald Stewart to send for the wine so long as it lasted, for he would never tarry until it were drunken." On the 16th the Kirk came to him, by his desire; and he protested that he had never hated any man personally, but only their errors, nor had he made merchandise of the Word. He sent a message to Kirkcaldy bidding him repent, or the threatenings should fall on him and the Castle. His exertions increased his illness. There had been a final quarrel with the dying Lethington, who complained that Knox, in sermons and otherwise, charged him with saying there is "neither heaven nor hell," an atheistic position of which (see his eloquent prayer before Corrichie fight, wherein Huntly died) he was incapable. On the 16th he told "the Kirk" that Lethington's conduct proved that he really did disbelieve in God, and a future of rewards and punishments. That was not the question. The question was — Did Knox, publicly and privately, as Lethington complained, attribute to him words which he denied having spoken, asking that the witnesses should be produced. We wish that Knox had either produced good evidences, or explained why he could not produce them, or had apologised, or had denied that he spoke in the terms reported to Lethington.

James Melville says that the Rev. Mr. Lindsay, of Leith, told him that Knox bade him carry a message to Kirkcaldy in the Castle. After compliments, it ran: "He shall be disgracefully dragged from his nest to punishment, and hung on a gallows before the face of the sun, unless he speedily amend his life, and flee to the mercy of God." Knox added: "That man's soul is dear to me, and I would not have it perish, if I could save it." Kirkcaldy consulted Maitland, and returned with a reply which contained Lethington's last scoff at the prophet. However, Morton, when he had the chance, did hang Kirkcaldy, as in the play acted before Knox at St. Andrews, "according to Mr. Knox's doctrine." "The preachers clamoured for blood to cleanse blood."

As to a secret conference with Morton on the 17th, the Earl, before his execution, confessed that the dying man asked him, "if he knew anything of the King's (Darnley's) murder?" "I answered, indeed, I knew nothing of it" — perhaps a pardonable falsehood in the circumstances. Morton said that the people who had suffered from Kirkcaldy and the preachers daily demanded the soldier's death.

Other sayings of the Reformer are reported. He repressed a lady who, he thought, wished to flatter him: "Lady, lady, the black ox has never trodden yet upon your foot!" "I have been in heaven and have possession, and I have tasted of these heavenly joys where presently I am," he said, after long meditation, beholding, as in Bunyan's allegory, the hills of Beulah. He said the Creed, which soon vanished from Scottish services; and in saying "Our Father," broke off to murmur, "Who can pronounce so holy words?" On November 24 he rose and dressed, but soon returned to bed. His wife read to him the text, "where I cast my first anchor," St. John's Gospel, chapter xvii. About half-past ten he said, "Now it is come!" and being asked for a sign of his steadfast faith, he lifted up one hand, "and so slept away without any pain."

Knox was buried on November 26 in the churchyard south of St. Giles. A flat stone, inscribed J. K., beside the equestrian statue of Charles II., is reported to mark his earthly resting-place. He died as he had lived, a poor man; a little money was owed to him; all his debts were paid. His widow, two years later, married Andrew Ker of Faldonside, so notorious for levelling a pistol at the Queen on the occasion of Riccio's murder. Ker appears to have been intimate with the Reformer. Bannatyne speaks of a story of Lady Atholl's witchcraft, told by a Mr. Lundie to Knox, at dinner, "at Falsyde." This was a way of spelling Faldonside, the name of Ker's place, hard by the Tweed, within a mile of Abbotsford. Probably Ker and his wife sleep in the family burying-ground, the disused kirkyard of Lindean, near a little burn that murmurs under the broad burdock leaves on its way to join the Ettrick.

APPENDIX A: ALLEGED PERFIDY OF MARY OF GUISE

The Regent has usually been accused of precipitating, or causing the Revolution of 1559, by breaking a pledge given to the Protestants assembled at Perth (May 10-11, 1559). Knox's "History" and a letter of his are the sources of this charge, and it is difficult to determine the amount of truth which it may contain.

Our earliest evidence on the matter is found in a letter to the English Privy Council, from Sir James Croft, commanding at Berwick. The letter, of May 19, is eight days later than the riots at Perth. It is not always accurately informed; Croft corrects one or two statements in later despatches, but the points corrected are not those with which we are here concerned. Neither in this nor in other English advices do I note any charge of ill faith brought against the Regent on this occasion. Croft says that, on Knox's arrival, many nobles and a multitude of others repaired to Dundee to hear him and others preach. The Regent then summoned these preachers before her to Stirling, but as they had a "train" of 5000 or 6000, she "dismissed the appearance," putting the preachers to the horn, and commanding the nobility to appear before her in Edinburgh. The "companies" then retired and wrecked monasteries at Perth. The Lords and they had *previously* sent Erskine of Dun to the Regent, offering to appear before her with only their household servants, to hear the preachers dispute with the clergy, if she would permit. The Regent, "taking displeasure with" Erskine of Dun, bade him begone out of her sight. He rode off (to Perth), and she had him put to the horn (as a fact, he was only fined in his recognisances as bail for one of the preachers). The riots followed his arrival in Perth.

Such is our earliest account; there is no mention of a promise broken by the Regent.

Knox himself wrote two separate and not always reconcilable accounts of the first revolutionary explosion; one in a letter of June 23 to Mrs. Locke, the other in a part of Book II. of his "History," composed at some date before October 23, 1559. That portion of his "History" is an *apologia* for the proceedings of his party, and was apparently intended for contemporary publication.

This part of the "History," therefore, as the work of an advocate, needs to be checked, when possible, by other authorities. We first examine Knox's letter of June 23, 1559, to Mrs. Locke. He says that he arrived in Edinburgh on May 2, and, after resting for a day, went (on May 4) to the brethren assembled at

Dundee. They all marched to Perth, meaning thence to accompany the preachers to their day of law at Stirling, May 10. But, lest the proceeding should seem rebellious, they sent a baron (Erskine of Dun, in fact) to the Regent, "with declaration of our minds." The Regent *and Council* in reply, bade the multitude "stay, and not come to Stirling . . . and so should no extremity be used, but the summons should be continued" (deferred) "till further advisement. Which, being gladly granted of us, some of the brethren returned to their dwelling-places. But the Queen *and her Council*, nothing mindful of her and their promise, incontinent did call" (summon) "the preachers, and for lack of their appearance, did exile and put them and their assistants to the horn. . . . "

It would be interesting to know who the Regent's Council were on this occasion. The Reformer errs when he tells Mrs. Locke that the Regent outlawed "the assisters" of the preachers. Dr. M'Crie publishes an extract from the "Justiciary Records" of May 10, in which Methuen, Christison, Harlaw, and Willock, and no others, are put to the horn, or outlawed, in absence, for breach of the Regent's proclamations, and for causing "tumults and seditions." No one else is put to the horn, but the sureties for the preachers' appearance are fined.

In his "History," Knox says that the Regent, when Erskine of Dun arrived at Stirling as an emissary of the brethren, "began to craft with him, soliciting him to stay the multitude, and the preachers also, with promise that she would take some better order." Erskine wrote to the brethren, "to stay and not to come forward, showing what promise and *hope* he had of the Queen's Grace's favours." Some urged that they should go forward till the summons was actually "discharged," otherwise the preachers and their companions would be put to the horn. Others said that the Regent's promises were "not to be suspected . . . and so did the whole multitude with their preachers stay. . . . The Queen, perceiving that the preachers did not appear, began to utter her malice, and notwithstanding any request made on the contrary, gave command to put them to the horn. . . ." Erskine then prudently withdrew, rode to Perth, and "did conceal nothing of the Queen's craft and falsehood."

In this version the Regent bears all the blame, nothing is said of the Council. "The whole multitude stay" — at Perth, or it may perhaps be meant that they do not come forward towards Stirling. The Regent's promise is merely that she would "take some better order." She does not here promise to *postpone* the summons, and refuses "any request made" to abstain from putting them to the horn. The account, therefore, is somewhat more vague than that in the letter to Mrs. Locke. Prof. Hume Brown puts it that the Regent "in her understanding with Erskine of Dun *had publicly cancelled* the summons of the preachers for the 10th of May," which rather overstates the case perhaps. That she should "publicly cancel" or "discharge" the summons was what a part of the brethren desired, and did not get.

We now turn to a fragmentary and anonymous "Historie of the Estate of Scotland," concerning which Prof. Hume Brown says, "Whoever the author may have been, he writes as a contemporary, or from information supplied by a contemporary . . . what inspires confidence in him is that certain of his facts not recorded by other contemporary Scottish historians are corroborated by the despatches of d'Oysel and others in Teulet."

I elsewhere give reasons for thinking that this "Historie" is perhaps the chronicle of Bruce of Earl's Hall, a contemporary gentleman of Fife. I also try to show that he writes, on one occasion, as an eye-witness.

This author, who is a strong partisan of the Reformers, says nothing of the broken promise of the Regent and Council. He mentions the intention to march to Stirling, and then writes: "And although the Queen Regent was most earnestly requested and persuaded to continue" — that is to defer the summons—"nevertheless she remained wilful and obstinate, so that the counsel of God must needs take effect. Shortly, the day being come, because they appeared not, their sureties were outlawed, and the preachers ordered to be put to the horn. The Laird of Dun, who was sent from Perth by the brethren, perceiving her obstinacy, they" (who?) "turned from Stirling, and coming to Perth, declared to the brethren the obstinacy they found in the Queen. . . ."

This sturdy Protestant's version, which does not accuse the Regent of breaking troth, is corroborated by a Catholic contemporary, Lesley, Bishop of Ross. He says that Erskine of Dun was sent to beg the Regent not to impose a penalty on the preachers in their absence. But as soon as Dun returned and Knox learned from him that the Regent would not grant their request, he preached the sermon which provoked the devastation of the monasteries. Buchanan and Spottiswoode follow Knox, but they both use Knox's book, and are not independent witnesses.

The biographers of Knox do not quote "The Historie of the Estate of Scotland," where it touches on the beginning of the Revolution, without disparaging the Regent's honour. We have another dubious witness, Sir James Melville, who arrived on a mission from France to the Regent on June 13; he left Paris about June 1. This is the date of a letter in which Henri II. offers the Regent every assistance in the warmest terms. Melville writes, however, that in his verbal orders, delivered by the Constable in the royal presence, the Constable said, "I have intelligence that the Queen Regent has not kept all things promised to them." But Melville goes on to say that the Constable quoted d'Elboeuf's failure to reach Scotland with his fleet, as a reason for not sending the troops which were promised by Henri. As d'Elboeuf's failure occurred long after the date of the alleged conversation, the evidence of Melville is here incorrect. He wrote his "Memoirs" much later, in old age, but Henri may have written to the Regent in one sense, and given Melville orders in another.

We find that Knox's charge against the Regent is not made in our earliest information, Croft's letter of May 19: is not made by the Protestant (and, we think, contemporary) author of the "Historie," and, of course, is not hinted at by Lesley, a Catholic. We have seen throughout that Knox vilifies Mary of Guise in cases where she is blameless. On the other hand, Knox is our only witness who was at Perth at the time of the events, and it cannot be doubted that what he told Mrs. Locke was what he believed, whether correctly or erroneously. He could believe anything against Mary of Guise. Archbishop Spottiswoode says, "The author of the story" ("History") "ascribed to John Knox in his whole discourse showeth a bitter and hateful spite against the Regent, forging dishonest things which were never so much as suspected by any, setting down his own conjectures as certain truths, yea, the least syllable that did escape her in passion, he maketh it an argument of her cruel and inhuman disposition . . . " In the MS. used by Bishop Keith, Spottiswoode added, after praising the Regent, "these things I have heard my father often affirm"; he had the like testimony "from an honourable and religious lady, who had the honour to wait near her person." Spottiswoode was, therefore, persuaded that the "History" "was none of Mr. Knox his writings." In spite of this opinion, Spottiswoode, writing about 1620-35, accepts most of the hard things that Knox says of the Regent's conduct in 1559, and indeed exaggerates one or two of them; that is, as relates to her political behaviour, for example, in the affair of the broken promise of May 10. It may be urged that here Spottiswoode had the support of the reminiscences of his father, a Superintendent in the Knoxian church.

APPENDIX B: FORGERY PROCURED BY MARY OF GUISE

In the writer's opinion several of Knox's accusations of perfidy against the Regent, in 1559, are not proved, and the attempts to prove them are of a nature which need not be qualified. But it is necessary to state the following facts as tending to show that the Regent was capable of procuring a forgery against the Duke of Chatelherault. A letter attributed to him exists in the French Archives, dated Glasgow, January 25, 1560, in which the Duke curries favour with Francis II., and encloses his blank bond, *un blanc scellé,* offering to send his children to France. *On January* 28, the Regent writes from Scotland to de Noailles, then the French Ambassador to England, bidding him to mention this submission to Elizabeth, and even show the Duke's letter and blank bond, that Elizabeth may see how little he is to be trusted. Now how could the Regent, on January 28, have a letter sent by the Duke to France on January 25? She must have intercepted it in Scotland. Next, on March 15, 1560, the Duke, writing to Norfolk, denies the letter attributed to him by the French. He said that any one of a hundred Hamiltons would fight M. de Seurre (the French Ambassador who, in February, succeeded de Noailles) on this quarrel.

There exists a document, in the cipher of Throckmorton, English Ambassador in France, purporting to be a copy of a letter from the Regent to the Duc and Cardinal de Guise, dated Edinburgh, March 27, 1560. The Regent, at that date, was in Leith, not in Edinburgh Castle, where she went on April 1. In that letter she is made to say that de Seurre has "very evil misunderstood" the affair of the letter attributed to Chatelherault. She had procured "blanks" of his "by one of her servants here" (at Leith) "to the late Bishop of Ross"; the Duke's alleged letter and submission of January 25 had been "filled up" on a "blank," the Duke knowing nothing of the matter.

This letter of the Regent, then, must also, if authentic, have been somehow intercepted or procured by Throckmorton, in France. It is certain that Throckmorton sometimes, by bribery, did obtain copies of secret French papers, but I have not found him reporting to Cecil or Queen Elizabeth this letter of the Regent's. The reader must estimate for himself the value of that document. I have stated the case as fairly as I can, and though the evidence against the Regent, as it stands, would scarcely satisfy a jury, I believe that, corrupted by the evil example of the Congregation, the Regent, in January 1560, did procure a forgery intended to bring suspicion on Chatelherault. But how could she be surprised that de Seurre did not understand the real state of the case? The Regent may have explained the true nature of the affair to de Noailles, but it may have been unknown to de Seurre, who succeeded that ambassador. Yet, how could she ask any ambassador to produce a confessed forgery as genuine?

THE CLYDE MYSTERY A STUDY IN FORGERIES AND FOLKLORE

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PREFACE

The author would scarcely have penned this little specimen of what Scott called "antiquarian old womanries," but for the interest which he takes in the universally diffused archaic patterns on rocks and stones, which offer a singular proof of the identity of the working of the human mind. Anthropology and folklore are the natural companions and aids of prehistoric and proto-historic archaeology, and suggest remarks which may not be valueless, whatever view we may take of the disputed objects from the Clyde sites.

While only an open verdict on these objects is at present within the competence of science, the author, speaking for himself, must record his private opinion that, as a rule, they are ancient though anomalous. He cannot pretend to certainty as to whether the upper parts of the marine structures were throughout built of stone, as in Dr. Munro's theory, which is used as the fundamental assumption in this book; or whether they were of wood, as in the hypothesis of Mr. Donnelly, illustrated by him in the Glasgow *Evening Times* (Sept. 11, 1905). The point seems unessential. The author learns from Mr. Donnelly that experiments in shaping piles with an ancient stone axe have been made by Mr. Joseph Downes, of Irvine, as by Monsieur Hippolyte Müller in France, with similar results, a fact which should have been mentioned in the book. It appears too, that a fragment of fallow deer horn at Dumbuck, mentioned by Dr. Munro, turned out to be "a decayed *humerus* of the *Bos Longifrons*," and therefore no evidence as to date, as post-Roman.

Mr. Donnelly also protests that his records of his excavations "were exceptionally complete," and that he "took daily notes and sketches of all features and finds with measurements." I must mention these facts, as, in the book, I say that Mr. Donnelly "kept no minute and hourly dated log book of his explorations, with full details as to the precise positions of the objects discovered."

If in any respect I have misconceived the facts and arguments, I trust that the fault will be ascribed to nothing worse than human fallibility.

I have to thank Mr. Donnelly for permission to photograph some objects from Dumbuck and for much information.

To Dr. Munro, apart from his most valuable books of crannog lore, I owe his kind attention to my private inquiries, and hope that I successfully represent his position and arguments. It is quite undeniable that the disputed objects are most anomalous as far as our present knowledge goes, and I do not think that science can give more than all I plead for, an open verdict. Dr. Ricardo Severe generously permitted me to reproduce a few (by no means the most singular) of his designs and photographs of the disputed Portuguese objects. A serious illness has prevented him from making a visit recently to the scene of the discoveries (see his paper in *Portugalia*, vol. ii., part 1). I trust that Dr. de Vasconcellos, from whom I have not yet heard, will pardon the reproduction of three or four figures from his *Religiões*, an important work on prehistoric Portugal.

To Dr. Joseph Anderson, of the National Museum, I owe much gratitude for information, and for his great kindness in superintending the photographing of some objects now in that Museum.

Dr. David Murray obliged me by much information as to the early navigation of the Clyde, and the alterations made in the bed of the river. To Mr. David Boyle, Ontario, I owe the knowledge of Red Indian magic stones parallel to the perforated and inscribed stone from Tappock.

As I have quoted from Dr. Munro the humorous tale of the palaeolithic designs which deceived M. Lartet and Mr. Christie, I ought to observe that, in *L'Anthropologie*, August, 1905, a reviewer of Dr. Munro's book, Prof. Boule, expresses some doubt as to the authenticity of the *historiette*.

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Inscribed Stone, Langbank.
2. Grotesque Face on Stone, Langbank.
3. Late Celtic Comb, Langbank.
4. Bronze Brooch, Langbank.
5. *Churinga Irula*, Wooden Bull-roarers, Arunta Tribe.
6. *Churinga Nanja*, Inscribed Sacred Stone, Arunta.
7. Sacred Stone Uninscribed, Arunta.
8. Collection of Arunta Sacred Stones.
9, 10. Inscribed Perforated Stone from Tappock. Age of Iron.
11. Perforated and Inscribed Stone from Dunbuie.
12, 13. Perforated Inscribed Stones from Ontario, Canada.
14. Perforated Inscribed Stones from Portugal, Neolithic.
15. Perforated Inscribed Stones from Portugal, Neolithic.
16. Perforated "Cup and Duct" Stone, Portugal, Neolithic.
17, 18. Large Slate Spear-head, Dumbuck.
19. Stone Figurine of Woman, Dumbuck.
20, 21. Cup and Duct Stones, Portuguese, Dolmen Site, Villa d'Aguiar.
22. Stone Figurine of Woman, Portuguese, Dolmen Site, Villa d'Aguiar.
23. Heart-shaped Stone, Villa d'Aguiar.
24. Cupped Stone, Villa d'Aguiar.
25. Stone Pendant, Men in Boat, Scottish.

Figures 1-4 from *Transactions*, with permission of Glasgow Archaeological Society. Figures 5-8, Spencer and Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*; with permission of Messrs. Macmillan and Co. 9-11. With permission of Scottish Society of Antiquaries. 12-13. Bulletin of Board of Education of Ontario. 14-16. *Religiões*, etc., L. de Vasconcellos. 17-19. With permission of Mr. W. H. Donnelly. 20-24. With permission of Sr. Ricardo Severo. 25. With permission of Scottish Society of Antiquarians.

I — THE CLYDE MYSTERY

The reader who desires to be hopelessly perplexed, may desert the contemplation of the Fiscal Question, and turn his eyes upon *The Mystery of the Clyde*. "Popular" this puzzle cannot be, for there is no "demmed demp disagreeable body" in the Mystery. No such object was found in Clyde, near Dumbarton, but a set of odd and inexpensive looking, yet profoundly enigmatic scraps of stone, bone, slate, horn and so forth, were discovered and now repose in a glass case at the National Museum in Queen Street, Edinburgh.

There, as in the Morgue, lies awaiting explanation the *corpus delicti* of the Clyde Mystery. We stare at it and ask what are these slate spear heads engraved with rude ornament, and certainly never meant to be used as "lethal weapons"? What are these many-shaped perforated plaques of slate, shale, and schist, scratched with some of the old mysterious patterns that, in almost every part of the world, remain inscribed on slabs and faces of rock? Who incised similar patterns on the oyster-shells, some old and local, some fresh — *and American*! Why did any one scratch them? What is the meaning, if meaning there be, of the broken figurines or stone "dolls"? They have been styled "totems" by persons who do not know the meaning of the word "totem," which merely denotes the *natural* object, — usually a plant or animal, — after which sets of kinsfolk are named among certain savage tribes. Let us call the little figures "figurines," for that commits us to nothing.

Then there are grotesque human heads, carved in stone; bits of sandstone, marked with patterns, and so forth. Mixed with these are the common rude appliances, quern stones for grinding grain; stone hammers, stone polishers, cut antlers of deer, pointed bones, such as rude peoples did actually use, in early Britain, and may have retained into the early middle ages, say 400-700 a.d.

This mixed set of objects, *plus* the sites in which they were found, and a huge canoe, 35 feet long, is the material part of the Clyde Mystery. The querns and canoe and stone-polishers, and bones, and horns are commonly found, we say, in dwellings of about 400-700 a.d. The peculiar and enigmatic things are *not* elsewhere known to Scottish antiquaries. How did the two sets of objects come to be all mixed up together, in an old hill fort, at Dunbuie on Clyde; and among the wooden foundations of two mysterious structures, excavated in the mud of the Clyde estuary at Dumbuck and Langbank, near Dumbarton? They were dug up between 1896 and 1902.

This is the question which has been debated, mainly in newspaper controversy, for nearly ten years. A most rambling controversy it has been, casting its feelers as far as central Australia, in space, and as far back as, say, 1200 b.c. in time.

Either the disputed objects at the Museum are actual relics of life lived in the Clyde basin many centuries ago; or the discoverers and excavators of the old sites are dogged by a forger who "dumps down" false relics of kinds unknown to Scottish antiquaries; or some of the unfamiliar objects are really old, while others are jocose imitations of these, or — there is some other explanation!

The modern "Clyde artists" are credited by Dr. Robert Munro with "some practical artistic skill," and some acquaintance with the very old and mysterious designs on great rocks among the neighbouring hills. What man of artistic skill, no conscience, and a knowledge of archaic patterns is associated with the Clyde?

The "faker" is not the mere mischievous wag of the farm-house or the country shop. It is possible that a few "interpolations" of false objects have been made by another and less expert hand, but the weight of the problem rests on these alternatives, — the disputed relics which were found are mainly genuine, though unfamiliar; or a forger not destitute of skill and knowledge has invented and executed them — or — there is some other explanation.

Three paths, as usual, are open to science, in the present state of our knowledge of the question. We may pronounce the unfamiliar relics genuine, and prove it if we can. We may declare them to be false objects, manufactured within the last ten years. We may possess our souls in patience, and "put the objects to a suspense account," awaiting the results of future researches and of new information.

This attitude of suspense is not without precedent in archaeology. "Antiquarian lore," as Dr. Munro remarks by implication, *can* "distinguish between true and false antiquities." But time is needed for the verdict, as we see when Dr. Munro describes "the Breonio Controversy" about disputed stone objects, a controversy which began in 1885, and appears to be undecided in 1905. I propose to advocate the third course; the waiting game, and I am to analyse Dr. Munro's very able arguments for adopting the second course, and deciding that the unfamiliar relics are assuredly impostures of yesterday's manufacture.

II — DR. MUNRO’S BOOK ON THE MYSTERY

Dr. Munro’s acute and interesting book, *Archaeology and False Antiquities*, does not cover the whole of its amusing subject. False gems, coins, inscriptions, statues, and pictures are scarcely touched upon; the author is concerned chiefly with false objects of the pre-historic and “proto-historic” periods, and with these as bearing on the Clyde controversy of 1896-1905. Out of 292 pages, at least 130 treat directly of that local dispute: others bear on it indirectly.

I have taken great interest in this subject since I first heard of it by accident, in the October or November of 1898. As against Dr. Munro, from whose opinions I provisionally dissent, I may be said to have no *locus standi*. He is an eminent and experienced archaeologist in matters of European pre-historic and proto-historic times. Any one is at liberty to say of me what another celebrated archaeologist, Mr. Charles Hercules Read, said, in a letter to Dr. Munro, on December 7, 1901, about some one else: a person designated as “ — ,” and described as “a merely literary man, who cannot understand that to practised people the antiquities are as readable as print, and a good deal more accurate.” But though “merely literary,” like Mr. “ — ,” I have spent much time in the study of comparative anthropology; of the manners, ideas, customs, implements, and sacred objects of uncivilised and peasant peoples. Mr. “—” may not have done so, whoever he is. Again, as “practised people” often vary widely in their estimates of antique objects, or objects professing to be antique, I cannot agree with Mr. Read that “the antiquities” are “as readable as print,” — if by “antiquities” he means antiquities in general. At the British Museum I can show Mr. Read several admirable specimens of the art of faking, standing, like the Abomination of Desolation, where they ought not. It was not by unpractised persons that they were purchased at the national expense. We are all fallible, even the oldest of us. I conceive Mr. Read, however, to mean the alleged and disputed “antiquities” of the Clyde sites, and in that case, his opinion that they are a “curious swindle” is of the most momentous weight.

But, as to practised opinion on antiquities in general, Dr. Munro and I agree that it is really very fallible, now and again. The best authorities, he proves, may read antiquities differently. He is not certain that he has not himself, on occasion, taken “fakes” for true antiques. The *savants* of the Louvre were lately caught by the notorious “tiara of Saitaphernes,” to the pecuniary loss of France; were caught on April 1, 1896, and were made *poissons d’Avril*, to the golden tune of 200,000 francs (£8000).

Again, M. Lartet and Mr. Christy betted a friend that he could not hoax them with a forged palaeolithic drawing. They lost their bet, and, after M. Lartet's death, the forged object was published, as genuine, in the scientific journal, *Matériaux* (1874). As M. Reinach says of another affair, it was "a *fumisterie*." Every archaeologist may be the victim of a *fumisterie*, few have wholly escaped, and we find Dr. Furtwangler and Mr. Cecil Smith at odds as to whether a head of Zeus in terra-cotta be of the fifth century b.c. or, quite the contrary, of the nineteenth or twentieth century a.d.

Verily all "practised people" do not find "antiquities as readable as print." On the other hand, my late friend, Dr. A. S. Murray, Keeper of Classical Antiquities in the British Museum, "read" the Mycenaean antiquities erroneously, placing them many centuries too late. M. de Mortillet reckoned them forgeries, and wrote of the discoverer, Dr. Schliemann, and even of Mrs. Schliemann, in a tone unusual in men of science and gentlemen.

The great palaeolithic discoveries of M. Boucher de Perthes, the very bases of our study of the most ancient men, were "read" as impostures by many "practised people." M. Cartailhac, again, has lately, in the most candid and honourable way, recanted his own original disbelief in certain wall-paintings in Spanish caves, of the period called "palaeolithic," for long suspected by him of being "clerical" impostures.

Thus even the most "practised people," like General Councils, "may err and have erred," when confronted either with forgeries, or with objects old in fact, but new to them. They have *not* always found antiquities "as readable as print." Dr. Munro touches but faintly on these "follies of the wise," but they are not unusual follies. This must never be forgotten.

Where "practised people" may be mistaken through a too confirmed scepticism, the "merely literary man" may, once in an azure moon, happen to be right, or not demonstrably wrong; that is my excuse for differing, provisionally, from "practised people." It is only provisionally that I dissent from Dr. Munro as to some of the points at issue in the Clyde controversy. I entered on it with very insufficient knowledge: I remain, we all remain, imperfectly informed: and like people rich in practice, — Dr. Joseph Anderson, and Sir Arthur Mitchell, — I "suspend my judgement" for the present.

This appears to me the most scientific attitude. Time is the great revealer. But Dr. Munro, as we saw, prefers not to suspend his judgment, and says plainly and pluckily that the disputed objects in the Clyde controversy are "spurious"; are what the world calls "fakes," though from a delicate sense of the proprieties of language, he will not call them "forgeries." They are reckoned by him among “false antiquities,” while, for my part, I know not of what age they are, but incline I believe that many of them are not of the nineteenth century. This is the extent of our difference. On the other hand I heartily concur with Dr. Munro in regretting that his advice, — to subject the disputed objects at the earliest possible stage of the proceedings, to a jury of experts, — was not accepted.

One observation must be made on Dr. Munro’s logical method, as announced by himself. “My role, on the present occasion, is to advocate the correctness of my own views on purely archaeological grounds, without any special effort to refute those of my opponents.” As my view is that the methods of Dr. Munro are perhaps, — and I say it with due deference, and with doubt, — capable of modification, I shall defend my opinions as best I may. Moreover, my views, in the course of seven long years (1898-1905) have necessarily undergone some change, partly in deference to the arguments of Dr. Munro, partly because much new information has come to my knowledge since 1898-99. Moreover, on one occasion, I misstated my own view, and, though I later made my real opinion perfectly dear, some confusion was generated.

III — THE CLYDE CONTROVERSY

It is necessary, after these prefatory remarks, to give an account of the rise of the Clyde controversy, and I may be pardoned for following the example of Dr. Munro, who adds, and cannot but add, a pretty copious narrative of his own share in the discussion. In 1896, the hill fort of Dunbuie, "about a mile-and-a-half to the east of Dumbarton Castle, and three miles to the west of the Roman Wall," was discovered by Mr. W. A. Donnelly: that is to say, Mr. Donnelly suggested that the turf might conceal something worth excavating, and the work was undertaken, under his auspices, by the Helensburgh Antiquarian Society.

As Mr. Donnelly's name constantly occurs in the discussion, it may be as well to state that, by profession, he is an artist, — a painter and designer in black and white, — and that, while keenly interested in the pre-historic or proto-historic relics of Clydesdale, he makes no claim to be regarded as a trained archaeologist, or widely-read student. Thus, after Mr. Donnelly found a submarine structure at Dumbuck in the estuary of the Clyde, Dr. Munro writes: "I sent Mr. Donnelly some literature on crannogs." So Mr. Donnelly, it appears, had little book lore as to crannogs. He is, in fact, a field worker in archaeology, rather than an archaeologist of the study and of books. He is a member of a local archaeological Society at Helensburgh on the Clyde, and, before he found the hill fort of Dunbuie, he had discovered an interesting set of "cup and ring" marked rocks at Auchentorlie, "only a short distance from Dunbuie."

Mr. Donnelly's position, then, as regards archaeological research, was, in 1896-1898, very like that of Dr. Schliemann when he explored Troy. Like Dr. Schliemann he was no erudite savant, but an enthusiast with an eye for likely sites. Like Dr. Schliemann he discovered certain objects hitherto unknown to Science, (at least to Scottish science,) and, like Dr. Schliemann, he has had to take "the consequences of being found in such a situation."

It must be added that, again like Dr. Schliemann he was not an excavator of trained experience. I gather that he kept no minute and hourly-dated log-book of his explorations, with full details as to the precise positions of the objects discovered, while, again like Dr. Schliemann, he had theories of his own, with some of which I do not concur.

Dr. Munro justly insists on "the absolute necessity of correctly recording the facts and relics brought to light by excavations." An excavator should be an engineer, or be accompanied by a specialist who can assign exact measurements for the position of every object discovered. Thus Dr. Munro mentions the case of a man who, while digging a drain in his garden in Scotland, found an adze of jade and a pre-historic urn. Dr. Munro declares, with another expert, that the jade adze is “a modern Australian implement,” which is the more amazing as I am not aware that the Australians possess any jade. The point is that the modern Australian adze was *not*, as falsely reported, in the pre-historic urn.

Here I cannot but remark that while Dr. Munro justly regrets the absence of record as to precise place of certain finds, he is not more hospitable to other finds of which the precise locality is indicated. Things are found by Mr. Bruce as he clears out the interior of a canoe, or imbedded in the dock on the removal of the canoe, or in the “kitchen midden” — the refuse heap — but Dr. Munro does not esteem the objects more highly because we have a distinct record as to the precise place of their finding.

IV — DUNBUIE

To return to the site first found, the hill fort of Dunbuie, excavated in 1896. Dr. Munro writes:

“There is no peculiarity about the position or structure of this fort which differentiates it from many other forts in North Britain. Before excavation there were few indications that structural remains lay beneath the débris, but when this was accomplished there were exposed to view the foundations of a circular wall, 13½ feet thick, enclosing a space 30 to 32 feet in diameter. Through this wall there was one entrance passage on a level with its base, 3 feet 2 inches in width, protected by two guard chambers, one on each side, analogous to those so frequently met with in the Brochs. The height of the remaining part of the wall varied from 18 inches to 3 feet 6 inches. The interior contained no dividing walls nor any indications of secondary occupation.”

Thus writes Dr. Munro (p, 131), repeating his remarks on with this addition,

“Had any remains of intra-mural chambers or of a stone stair been detected it would unhesitatingly be pronounced a broch; nor, in the absence of such evidence, can it be definitely dissociated from that peculiar class of Scottish buildings, because the portion of wall then remaining was not sufficiently high to exclude the possibility of these broch characteristics having been present at a higher level — a structural deviation which has occasionally been met with.”

“All the brochs,” Dr. Munro goes on, “hitherto investigated have shown more or less precise evidence of a post-Roman civilisation, their range, according to Dr. Joseph Anderson, being “not earlier than the fifth and not later than the ninth century.” “Although from more recent discoveries, as, for example, the broch of Torwodlee, Selkirkshire, there is good reason to believe that their range might legitimately be brought nearer to Roman times, it makes no difference in the correctness of the statement that they all belong to the Iron Age.”

So far the “broch,” or hill fort, was not unlike other hill forts and brochs, of which there are hundreds in Scotland. But many of the relics alleged to have been found in the soil of Dunbuie were unfamiliar in character in these islands. There was not a shard of pottery, there was not a trace of metal, but absence of such things is no proof that they were unknown to the inhabitants of the fort. I may go further, and say that if any person were capable of interpolating false antiquities, they were equally capable of concealing such real antiquities in metal or pottery as they might find; to support their theories, or to serve other private and obscure ends.

Thus, at Langbank, were found a bronze brooch, and a “Late Celtic” (200 b.c.? — a.d.) comb. These, of course, upset the theory held by some inquirers, that the site was Neolithic, that is, was very much earlier than the Christian era. If the excavators held that theory, and were unscrupulous, was it not as easy for them to conceal the objects which disproved the hypothesis, as to insert the disputed objects — which do not prove it?

Of course Dr. Munro nowhere suggests that any excavator is the guilty “faker.”

I now quote Dr. Munro’s account of the *unfamiliar* objects alleged to have been found in Dunbuie. He begins by citing the late Mr. Adam Millar, F.S.A.Scot., who described Dunbuie in the *Proceedings S. A. Scot.* (vol. xxx. p-308.)

“The fort,” writes Mr. Millar, “has been examined very thoroughly by picking out the stones in the interior one by one, and riddling the fine soil and small stones. The same treatment has been applied to the refuse heap which was found on the outside, and the result of the search is a very remarkable collection of weapons, implements, ornaments, and figured stones.” There is no description of the precise position of any of these relics in the ruins, with the exception of two upper stones of querns and a limpet shell having on its inner surface the presentation of a human face, which are stated to have been found in the interior of the fort. No objects of metal or fragments of pottery were discovered in course of the excavations, and of bone there were only two small pointed objects and an awl having a perforation at one end. The majority of the following worked objects of stone, bone, and shell are so remarkable and archaic in character that their presence in a fort, which cannot be placed earlier than the Broch period, and probably long after the departure of the Romans from North Britain, has led some archaeologists to question their genuineness as relics of any phase of Scottish civilisation.

Objects of Stone. — Nine spear-heads, like arrow-points, of slate, six of which have linear patterns scratched on them. Some are perforated with round holes, and all were made by grinding and polishing. One object of slate, shaped like a knife, was made by chipping. “This knife,” says Mr. Millar, “has a feature common to all these slate weapons — they seem to have been saturated with oil or fat, as water does not adhere to them, but runs off as from a greasy surface.” Another highly ornamental piece of cannel coal is in the form of a short spear-head with a thickish stem. The stem is adorned with a series of hollows and ridges running across it; radiating lines running from the stem to the margin. Another group of these remarkable objects shows markings of the cup-and-ring order, circles, linear incisions, and perforations. Some of these ornamentations are deeply cut on the naturally rough surfaces of flat pieces of sandstone, whilst others are on smooth stones artificially prepared for the purpose. A small piece of flint was supposed to have been inserted into a partially burnt handle. There are several examples of hammer-stones of the ordinary crannog type, rubbing-stones, whetstones, as well as a large number of water-worn stones which might have been used as hand-missiles or sling-stones. These latter were not native to the hill, and must have been transported from burns in the neighbourhood. There are also two upper quern stones.

Miscellaneous Objects. — A number of splintered pieces of bone, without showing any other evidence of workmanship, have linear incisions, like those on some of the stones, which suggest some kind of cryptic writing like ogams. There are also a few water-worn shells, like those seen on a sandy beach, having round holes bored through them and sharply-cut scratches on their pearly inner surface. But on the whole the edible molluscs are but feebly represented, as only five oyster, one cockle, three limpet, and two mussel shells were found, nearly all of which bore marks of some kind of ornamentation. But perhaps the most grotesque object in the whole collection is the limpet shell with a human face sculptured on its inner surface.

“The eyes,” writes Mr. Millar, “are represented by two holes, the nose by sharply-cut lines, and the mouth by a well-drawn waved line, the curves which we call Cupid’s bow being faithfully followed. There is nothing at all of an archaic character, however, in this example of shell-carving. We found it in the interior of the fort; it was one of the early finds — nothing like it has been found since; at the same time we have no reason for assuming that this shell was placed in the fort on purpose that we might find it. The fact that it was taken out of the fort is all that we say about it.”

Mr. Millar’s opinion of these novel handicraft remains was that they were the products of a pre-Celtic civilisation. “The articles found,” he writes, “are strongly indicative of a much earlier period than post-Roman; they point to an occupation of a tribe in their Stone Age.”

“We have no knowledge of the precise position in which the ‘queer things’ of Dunbuie were found, with the exception of the limpet shell showing the carved human face which, according to a recent statement in the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, September, 1901, “was excavated from a crevice in the living rock, over which tons of debris had rested. When taken out, the incrustations of dirt prevented any carving from being seen; it was only after being dried and cleaned that the ‘face’ appeared, as well as the suspension holes on each side.”

So, this unique piece of art was in the fort before it became a ruin and otherwise presented evidence of great antiquity; but yet it is stated in Mr. Millar's report that there was "nothing at all of an archaic character in this example of shell-carving."

I have nothing to do with statements made in *The Journal of the British Archaeological Association* about "*a carved oyster shell*." I stick to the limpet shell of Mr. Millar, which, to my eyes looks anything but archaic.

V — HOW I CAME INTO THE CONTROVERSY

Thus far, I was so much to be sympathised with as never to have heard of the names of Dunbuie and of Mr. Donnelly. In this ignorance I remained till late in October or early in November 1898. On an afternoon of that date I was reading the proof sheets, kindly lent to me by Messrs. Macmillan, of *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, a work, now justly celebrated, which was published early in 1899. I was much interested on finding, in this book, that certain tribes of Central Australia, — the Arunta "nation" and the Kaitish, — *paint* on sacred and other rocks the very same sorts of archaic designs as Mr. Donnelly found *incised* at Auchentorlie (of which I had not then heard). These designs are familiar in many other parts of Scotland and of the world. They play a great part in the initiations and magic of Central Australia. Designs of the same class are incised, by the same Australian tribes, on stones of various shapes and sizes, usually portable, and variously shaped which are styled *churinga nanja*. (*Churinga* merely means anything "sacred," that is, with a superstitious sense attached to it). They also occur on wooden slats, (*churinga irula,*) commonly styled "Bull roarers" by Europeans. The tribes are now in a "siderolithic" stage, using steel when they can get it, stone when they cannot. If ever they come to abandon stone implements, while retaining their magic or religion, they will keep on using their stone *churinga nanja*.

While I was studying these novel Australian facts, in the autumn of 1898, a friend, a distinguished member of Clan Diarmaid, passing by my window, in London, saw me, and came in. He at once began to tell me that, in the estuary of the Clyde, and at Dunbuie, some one had found small stones, marked with the same archaic kinds of patterns, "cup-and-ring," half circles, and so forth, as exist on our inscribed rocks, cists, and other large objects. I then showed him the illustrations of portable stones in Australia, with archaic patterns, not then published, but figured in the proof sheets of Messrs. Spencer and Gillen's work. My friend told me, later, that he had seen small stone incised with concentric circles, found in the excavation of a hill fort near Tarbert, in Kintyre. He made a sketch of this object, from memory: if found in Central Australia it would have been reckoned a *churinga nanja*.

I was naturally much interested in my friend's account of objects found in the Clyde estuary, which, *as far as his description went*, resembled in being archaically decorated the *churinga nanja* discovered by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen in Central Australia. I wrote an article on the subject of the archaic decorative designs, as found all over the world, for the *Contemporary Review*. I had then seen only pen and ink sketches of the objects, sent to me by Mr. Donnelly, and a few casts, which I passed on to an eminent authority. One of the casts showed a round stone with concentric circles. I know not what became of the original or of the casts.

While correcting proofs of this article, I read in the *Glasgow Herald* (January 7, 1899) a letter by Dr. Munro, impugning the authenticity of one set of finds by Mr. Donnelly, in a pile-structure at Dumbuck, on the Clyde, near Dumbarton. I wrote to the *Glasgow Herald*, adducing the Australian *churinga nanja* as parallel to Mr. Donnelly's inscribed stones, and thus my share in the controversy began. What Dr. Munro and I then wrote may be passed over in this place.

VI — DUMBUCK

It was in July 1898, that Mr. Donnelly, who had been prospecting during two years for antiquities in the Clyde estuary, found at low tide, certain wooden stumps, projecting out of the mud at low water. On August 16, 1898, Dr. Munro, with Mr. Donnelly, inspected these stumps, "before excavations were made." It is not easy to describe concisely the results of their inspection, and of the excavations which followed. "So far the facts" (of the site, not of the alleged relics), "though highly interesting as evidence of the hand of man in the early navigation of the Clyde basin present nothing very remarkable or important," says Dr. Munro.

I shall here quote Dr. Munro's descriptions of what he himself observed at two visits, of August 16, October 12, 1898, to Dumbuck. For the present I omit some speculative passages as to the original purpose of the structure.

"The so-called Dumbuck 'crannog,' that being the most convenient name under which to describe the submarine wooden structures lately discovered by Mr. W. A. Donnelly in the estuary of the Clyde, lies about a mile to the east of the rock of Dumbarton, and about 250 yards within high-water mark. At every tide its site is covered with water to a depth of three to eight feet, but at low tide it is left high and dry for a few hours, so that it was only during these tidal intervals that the excavations could be conducted.

On the occasion of my first visit to Dumbuck, before excavations were begun, Mr. Donnelly and I counted twenty-seven piles of oak, some 5 or 8 inches in diameter, cropping up for a few inches through the mud, in the form of a circle 56 feet in diameter. The area thus enclosed was occupied with the trunks of small trees laid horizontally close to each other and directed towards the centre, and so superficial that portions of them were exposed above the surrounding mud, but all hollows and interstices were levelled up with sand or mud. The tops of the piles which projected above the surface of the log-pavement were considerably worn by the continuous action of the muddy waters during the ebb and flow of the tides, a fact which suggested the following remarkable hypothesis: 'Their tops are shaped in an oval, conical form, meant to make a joint in a socket to erect the superstructure on.' These words are quoted from a 'Report of a Conjoint Visit of the Geological and Philosophical Societies to the Dumbuck Crannog, 8th April, 1899.'

The result of the excavations, so far as I can gather from observations made during my second visit to the ‘crannog,’ and the descriptions and plans published by various societies, may be briefly stated as follows.

The log-pavement within the circle of piles was the upper of three similar layers of timbers placed one above the other, the middle layer having its beams lying transversely to that immediately above and below it. One of the piles (about 4 feet long) when freshly drawn up, clearly showed that it had been pointed by a sharp metal implement, the cutting marks being like those produced by an ordinary axe. The central portion (about 6 feet in diameter) had no woodwork, and the circular cavity thus formed, when cleared of fallen stones, showed indications of having been walled with stones and clay. Surrounding this walled cavity — the so-called ‘well’ of the explorers, there was a kind of coping, in the form of five or six ‘raised mounds,’ arranged ‘rosette fashion,’ in regard to which Mr. Donnelly thus writes:

‘One feature that strikes me very much in the configuration of the structure in the centre is those places marked X, fig. 20, around which I have discovered the presence of soft wood piles 5 inches in diameter driven into the ground, and bounding the raised stone arrangement; the stones in these rude circular pavements or cairns are laid slightly slanting inwards.’

From this description, and especially the ‘slanting inwards’ of these ‘circular pavements’ or ‘cairns,’ it would appear that they formed the bases for wooden stays to support a great central pole, a suggestion which, on different grounds, has already been made by Dr. David Murray.

The surrounding piles were also attached to the horizontal logs by various ingenious contrivances, such as a fork, a natural bend, an artificial check, or a mortised hole; and some of the beams were pinned together by tree-nails, the perforations of which were unmistakable. This binding together of the wooden structures is a well-known feature in crannogs, as was demonstrated by my investigations at Lochlee and elsewhere. It would be still more necessary in a substratum of timbers that was intended (as will be afterwards explained) to bear the weight of a superincumbent cairn. Underneath the layers of horizontal woodwork some portions of heather, bracken, and brushwood were detected, and below this came a succession of thin beds of mud, loam, sand, gravel, and finally the blue clay which forms the solum of the river valley. The piles penetrated this latter, but not deeply, owing to its consistency; and so the blue clay formed an excellent foundation for a structure whose main object was resistance to superincumbent pressure.

Outside the circle of piles there was, at a distance of 12 to 14 feet, another wooden structure in the shape of a broad ring of horizontal beams and piles which surrounded the central area. The breadth of this outer ring was 7 feet, and it consisted of some nine rows of beams running circumferentially. Beyond this lay scattered about some rough cobble stones, as if they had fallen down from a stone structure which had been raised over the woodwork. The space intervening between these wooden structures was filled up in its eastern third with a refuse heap, consisting of broken and partially burnt bones of various animals, the shells of edible molluscs, and a quantity of ashes and charcoal, evidently the débris of human occupancy. On the north, or landward side, the outer and inner basements of woodwork appeared to coalesce for 5 or 6 yards, leaving an open space having stones embedded in the mud and decayed wood, a condition of things which suggested a rude causeway. When Mr. Donnelly drew my attention to this, I demurred to its being so characterised owing to its indefiniteness. At the outer limit of this so-called causeway, and about 25 feet north-east of the circle of piles, a canoe was discovered lying in a kind of dock, rudely constructed of side stones and wooden piling. The canoe measures 35½ feet long, 4 feet broad, and 1½ foot deep. It has a square stern with a movable board, two grasping holes near the stem, and three round perforations (2 inches in diameter) in its bottom. On the north-west border of the log-pavement a massive ladder of oak was found, one end resting on the margin of the log-pavement and the other projecting obliquely into the timberless zone between the former and the outer woodwork. It is thus described in the *Proceedings of the Glasgow Philosophical Society*:

‘Made of a slab of oak which has been split from the tree by wedges (on one side little has been done to dress the work), it is 15 feet 3 inches long, 2 feet broad, and 3½ inches thick. Six holes are cut for steps, 12 inches by 10 inches; the bottom of each is bevelled to an angle of 60 degrees to make the footing level when the ladder is in position. On one side those holes show signs of wear by long use.’

An under quern stone, 19 inches in diameter, was found about halfway between the canoe and the margin of the circle of piles, and immediately to the east of the so-called causeway already described.

I carefully examined the surface of the log-pavement with the view of finding evidence as to the possibility of its having been at any time the habitable area of this strange dwelling-place; but the result was absolutely negative, as not a single particle of bone or ash was discovered in any of its chinks. This fact, together with the impossibility of living on a surface that is submerged every twelve hours, and the improbability of any land subsidence having taken place since prehistoric times, or any adequate depression from the shrinkage of the under-structures themselves, compels me to summarily reject the theory that the Dumbuck structure in its present form was an ordinary crannog. The most probable hypothesis, and that which supplies a reasonable explanation of all the facts, is that the woodwork was the foundation of a superstructure of stones built sufficiently high to be above the action of the tides and waves, over which there had been some kind of dwelling-place. The unique arrangement of the wooden substructures suggests that the central building was in the form of a round tower with very thick walls, like the brochs and other forts of North Britain. The central space was probably occupied with a pole, firmly fixed at its base in the 'well,' and kept in position by suitable stays, resting partly on the stone 'cairns' already described, partly in wooden sockets fixed into the log-pavement, and partly on the inner wall of the tower. This suggestion seems to me to be greatly strengthened by the following description of some holed tree-roots in Mr. Bruce's paper to the Scottish Antiquaries:

'Midway between the centre and the outside piles of the structure what looked at first to be tree-roots or snags were noticed partly imbedded in the sand. On being washed of the adhering soil, holes of 12 inches wide by 25 inches deep were found cut in them at an angle, to all appearance for the insertion of struts for the support of an upper structure. On the outside, 14 inches down on either side, holes of 2 inches diameter were found intersecting the central hole, apparently for the insertion of a wooden key or trenail to retain the struts. These were found at intervals, and were held in position by stones and smaller jammers.'

The outer woodwork formed the foundation of another stone structure, of a horseshoe shape, having the open side to the north or landside of the tower, which doubtless was intended as a breakwater. By means of the ladder placed slantingly against the wall of the central stone building access could be got to the top in all states of the tides.

The people who occupied this watch-tower ground their own corn, and fared abundantly on beef, mutton, pork, venison, and shell-fish. The food refuse and other debris were thrown into the space between the central structure and the breakwater, forming in the course of time a veritable kitchen-midden.

Besides the causeway on the north side, Mr. Bruce describes 'a belt of stones, forming a pavement about six feet wide and just awash with the mud,' extending westwards about twenty yards from the central cavity, till it intersected the breakwater. These so-called pavements and causeways were probably formed during the construction of the tower with its central pole, or perhaps at the time of its demolition, as it would be manifestly inconvenient to transport stones to or from such a place, in the midst of so much slush, without first making some kind of firm pathway. Their present superficial position alone demonstrates the absurdity of assigning the Dumbuck structures to Neolithic times, as if the only change effected in the bed of the Clyde since then would be the deposition of a few inches of mud. At a little distance to the west of these wooden structures there is the terminal end of a modern ditch (‘the burn’ of Mr. Alston), extending towards the shore, and having on its eastern bank a row of stepping-stones; a fact which, in my opinion, partly accounts for the demolition of the stonework, which formerly stood over them. So far, the facts disclosed by the excavations of the structures at Dumbuck, though highly interesting as evidence of the hand of man in the early navigation of the Clyde basin, present nothing very remarkable or improbable. It is when we come to examine the strange relics which the occupants of this habitation have left behind them that the real difficulties begin.”

Dr. Munro next describes the disputed things found at Dumbuck. They were analogous to those alleged to have been unearthed at Dunbuie. They were

“A number of strange objects like spear-heads or daggers, showing more or less workmanship, and variously ornamented. One great spear-head (figure 1), like an arrow-point, is 11 inches long and 4¾ inches wide at the barbs. The stem is perforated with two holes, in one of which there was a portion of an oak pin. It has a flat body and rounded edges, and is carefully finished by rubbing and grinding. One surface is ornamented with three cup-marks from which lines radiate like stars or suns, and the other has only small cups and a few transverse lines. There are some shaped stones, sometimes perforated for suspension, made of the same material; while another group of similar objects is made of cannel coal. All these are highly ornamented by a fantastic combination of circles, dots, lines, cup-and-rings with or without gutters, and perforations. A small pebble (plate xv. no. 10) shows, on one side, a boat with three men plying their oars, and on the other an incised outline of a left hand having a small cup-and-ring in the palm. The most sensational objects in the collection are, however, four rude figures, cut out of shale (figs. 50-53), representing portions of the human face and person. One, evidently a female (figure 2), we are informed was found at the bottom of the kitchen midden, a strange resting-place for a goddess; the other three are grotesque efforts to represent a human face. There are also several oyster-shells, ornamented like some of the shale ornaments, and very similar to the oyster-shell ornaments of Dunbuie. A splinter of a hard stone is inserted into the tine of a deer-horn as a handle (plate xiii. no. 5); and another small blunt implement (no. 1) has a bone handle. A few larger stones with cup-marks and some portions of partially worked pieces of shale complete the art gallery of Dumbuck.”

It seemed as if some curse were on Mr. Donnelly! Whether he discovered an unique old site of human existence in the water or on the land, some viewless fiend kept sowing the soil with *bizarre* objects unfamiliar to Dr. Munro, and by him deemed incongruous with the normal and known features of human life on such sites.

VII — LANGBANK

The Curse, (that is, the forger,) unwearied and relentless, next smote Mr. John Bruce, F.S.A.Scot., merely, as it seems, because he and Mr. Donnelly were partners in the perfectly legitimate pastime of archaeological exploration. Mr. Bruce's share of the trouble began at Dumbuck. The canoe was found, the genuine canoe. "It was at once cleared out by myself," writes Mr. Bruce. In the bottom of the canoe he found "a spear-shaped slate object," and "an ornamented oyster shell, which has since mouldered away," and "a stone pendant object, and an implement of bone."

Such objects have no business to be found in a canoe just discovered under the mud of Clyde, and cleared out by Mr. Bruce himself, a man or affairs, and of undisputed probity. In this case the precise site of the dubious relics is given, by a man of honour, at first hand. I confess that my knowledge of human nature does not enable me to contest Mr. Bruce's written attestation, while I marvel at the astuteness of the forger. As a finder, on this occasion, Mr. Bruce was in precisely the same position as Dr. Munro at Elie when, as he says, "as the second piece of pottery was disinterred by myself, I was able to locate its precise position at six inches below the surface of the relic bed." Mr. Bruce was able to locate *his* finds at the bottom of the canoe.

If I understand Mr. Bruce's narrative, a canoe was found under the mud, and was "cleared out inside," by Mr. Bruce himself. Had the forger already found the canoe, kept the discovery dark, inserted fraudulent objects, and waited for others to rediscover the canoe? Or was he present at the first discovery, and did he subtly introduce, unnoted by any one, four objects of shell, stone, and bone, which he had up his sleeve, ready for an opportunity? One or other alternative must be correct, and either hypothesis has its difficulties.

Meanwhile Sir Arthur Mitchell, not a credulous savant, says: "The evidence of authenticity in regard to these doubted objects from Dumbuck is the usual evidence in such circumstances . . . it is precisely the same evidence of authenticity which is furnished in regard to all the classes of objects found in the Dumbuck exploration — that is, in regard to the canoe, the quern, the bones *etc.* — about the authenticity of which no doubts have been expressed, as in regard to objects about which doubts have been expressed."

Of another object found by a workman at Dumbuck Dr. Munro writes "is it not very remarkable that a workman, groping with his hand in the mud, should accidentally stumble on this relic — the only one found in this part of the site? Is it possible that he was an unconscious thought-reader, and was thus guided to make the discovery" of a thing which "could as readily have been inserted there half-an-hour before?"

This passage is "rote sarcustic." But surely Dr. Munro will not, he cannot, argue that Mr. Bruce was "an unconscious thought-reader" when *he* "cleared out" the interior of the canoe, and found three disputed objects "in the bottom."

If we are to be "psychical," there seems less evidence for "unconscious thought-reading," than for the presence of what are technically styled *apports*, — things introduced by an agency of supra-normal character, vulgarly called a "spirit."

Undeterred by an event which might have struck fear *in constantem virum*, Mr. Bruce, in the summer of 1901, was so reckless as to discover a fresh "submarine wooden structure" at Langbank, on the left, or south bank of the Clyde Estuary opposite Dumbarton Castle. The dangerous object was cautiously excavated under the superintendence of Mr. Bruce, and a committee of the Glasgow Archaeological Society. To be brief, the larger features were akin to those of Dumbuck, without the central "well," or hole, supposed by Dr. Munro to have held the pole of a beacon-cairn. The wooden piles, as at Dumbuck, had been fashioned by "sharp metal tools." This is Mr. Bruce's own opinion. This evidence of the use of metal tools is a great point of Dr. Munro, against such speculative minds as deem Dumbuck and Langbank "neolithic," that is, of a date long before the Christian era. *They* urged that stone tools could have fashioned the piles, but I know not that partisans of either opinion have made experiments in hewing trees with stone-headed axes, like the ingenious Monsieur Hippolyte Müller in France. I am, at present, of opinion that all the sites are of an age in which iron was well known to the natives, and bronze was certainly known.

The relics at Langbank were (1) of a familiar, and (2) of an unfamiliar kind. There was (1) a small bone comb with a "Late Celtic" (200 b.c.-? a.d.) design of circles and segments of circles; there was a very small penannular brooch of brass or bronze; there were a few cut fragments of deer horn, pointed bones, stone polishers, and so forth, all familiar to science and acceptable.

On the other hand, the Curse fell on Mr. Bruce in the shape of two perforated shale objects: on one was cut a grotesque face, on the other two incomplete concentric circles, "a stem line with little nicks," and two vague incised marks, which may, or may not, represent "fragments of deer horn."

We learn from Mr. Bruce that he first observed the Langbank circle of stones from the window of a passing train, and that he made a few slight excavations, apparently at the end of September, 1901. More formal research was made in

October; and again, under the superintendence of members of the Glasgow Archaeological Society, in September, October, 1902. No members of the Glasgow Committee were present when either the undisputed Late Celtic comb, or the inscribed, perforated, and disputed pieces of cannel coal were discovered. Illustrations of these objects and of the bronze penannular ring are here given, (figures 1, 2, 3, 4), (two shale objects are omitted,) by the kindness of the Glasgow Archaeological Society (*Transactions*, vol. v.).

The brooch (allowed to be genuine) "might date from Romano-British times, say 100-400 a.d. to any date up to late mediaeval times." Good evidence to date, in a wide sense, would be the "osseous remains," the bones left in the refuse at Langbank and Dumbuck. Of the bones, I only gather as peculiarly interesting, that Dr. Bryce has found those of *Bos Longifrons*. Of *Bos Longifrons* as a proof of date, I know little. Mr. Ridgeway, Disney Professor of Archaeology in the University of Cambridge, is not "a merely literary man." In his work *The Early Age of Greece*, vol. i., p, 335 (Cambridge University Press, 1901), Mr. Ridgeway speaks of *Bos* as the Celtic ox, co-eval with the Swiss Lake Dwellings, and known as *Bos brachyceros*— "short horn" — so styled by Rutimeyer. If he is "Celtic" I cannot say how early *Bos* may have existed among the Celts of Britain, but the Romans are thought by some persons to have brought the Celtic ox to the Celts of our island. If this be so, the Clyde sites are not earlier (or *Bos* in these sites is not earlier) than the Roman invasion. He lasted into the seventh or eighth centuries a.d. at least, and is found on a site discovered by Dr. Munro at Elie. Meanwhile archaeology is so lazy, that, after seven years, Dr. Bryce's "reports on the osseous remains" of Langbank and Dumbuck is but lately published.

Dr. Bryce, in his report to the Glasgow Archaeological Society, says that "*Bos Longifrons* has a wide range in time, from Neolithic down to perhaps even medieval times. It was the domestic ox in Scotland for an unknown period, before, during, and for an unknown time after the Roman invasion. . . . The occurrence of extinct, probably long extinct, breeds, and these only, make the phenomena in this respect at Langbank exactly comparable with those observed at sites of pile buildings in Scotland generally, and thus it becomes indirect evidence against the thesis that the structure belongs to some different category, and to quite recent times."

The evidence of the bones, then, denotes any date except a relatively recent date, of 1556-1758; contrary to an hypothesis to be touched on later. It follows, from the presence of *Bos* at Elie (700 a.d.) that the occupants of the Clyde sites at Langbank may have lived there as late as, say, 750 a.d. But when they *began* to occupy the sites is another question.

If Roman objects are found, as they are, in brochs which show many relics of bronze, it does not follow that the brochs had not existed for centuries before the inhabitants acquired the waifs and strays of Roman civilisation. In the Nine Caithness Brochs described by Dr. Joseph Anderson, there was a crucible . . . with a portion of melted bronze, a bronze ring, moulds for ingots, an ingot of bronze, bits of Roman "Samian ware," but no iron. We can be sure that the broch folk were at some time in touch of Roman goods, brought by traffickers perhaps, but how can we be sure that there were no brochs before the arrival of the Romans?

We shall return to the question of the disputable relics of the Clyde, after discussing what science has to say about the probable date and original purpose of the wooden structures in the Clyde estuary. Nobody, it is admitted, forged *them*, but on the other hand Dr. Munro, the one most learned authority on "Lake Dwellings," or "Crannogs," does not think that the sites were ever occupied by regular "crannogs," or lacustrine settlements, Lake Dwellings.

VIII — THE ORIGINAL DATE AND PURPOSE OF DUMBUCK AND LANGBANK

The actual structures of Langbank and Dumbuck, then, are confessedly ancient remains; they are *not* of the nineteenth century; they are "unique" in our knowledge, and we ask, what was the purpose of their constructors, and what is their approximate date?

Dr. Munro quotes and discusses a theory, or a tentative guess of Dr. David Murray. That scholar writes "River cairns are commonly built on piled platforms, *and my doubt is* whether this is not the nature of the structure in question" (Dumbuck). A river cairn is a solid pile of stonework, with, perhaps, a pole in the centre. At Dumbuck there is the central "well" of six feet in diameter. Dr. Murray says that a pole "carried down to the bottom would probably be sunk in the clay, which would produce a hole, or well-like cavity similar to that of the Dumbuck structure."

It is not stated that the poles of river cairns usually demand accommodation to the extent of six feet of diameter, in the centre of the solid mass of stones, and, as the Langbank site has no central well, the tentative conjecture that it was a river cairn is not put forward. Dr. Murray suggests that the Dumbuck cairn "may have been one of the works of 1556 or 1612," that is, of the modern age of Queen Mary and James VI. The object of such Corporation cairns "was no doubt to mark the limit of their jurisdiction, and also to serve as a beacon to vessels coming up the river."

Now the Corporation, with its jurisdiction and beacons, is purely modern. In 1758 the Corporation had a "lower cairn, if it did not occupy this very spot" (Dumbuck) "it stood upon the same line and close to it. There are, however, no remains of such cairn," says Dr. Murray. He cites no evidence for the date and expenses of the demolition of the cairn from any municipal book of accounts.

Now we have to ask (1) Is there any evidence that men in 1556-1758 lived on the tops of such modern cairns, dating from the reign of Mary Stuart? (2) If men then lived on the top of a cairn till their food refuse became "a veritable kitchen midden," as Dr. Munro says, would that refuse exhibit bones of *Bos Longifrons*; and over ninety bone implements, sharpened antlers of deer, stone polishers, hammer stones, "a saddle stone" for corn grinding, and the usual *débris* of sites of the fifth to the twelfth centuries? (3) Would such a modern site exhibit these archaic relics, plus a "Late Celtic" comb and "penannular brooch," and exhibit not one modern article of metal, or one trace of old clay tobacco pipes, crockery, or glass?

The answers to these questions are obvious. It is not shown that any men ever lived on the tops of cairns, and, even if they did so in modern times (1556-1758) they could not leave abundant relics of the broch and crannog age (said to be of 400-1100 a.d.), and leave no relics of modern date. This theory, or suggestion, is therefore demonstrably untenable and unimaginable.

Dr. Munro, however, "sees nothing against the supposition" that "Dr. Murray is right," but Dr. Munro's remarks about the hypothesis of modern cairns, as a theory "against which he sees nothing," have the air of being an inadvertent *obiter dictum*. For, in his conclusion and summing up he writes, "We claim to have established that the structures of Dunbuie, Dumbuck, and Langbank are remains of inhabited sites of the early-Iron Age, dating to some time between the fifth and twelfth centuries." I accept this conclusion, and will say as little as may be about the theory of a modern *origin* of the sites, finally discarded by Dr. Munro. I say "discarded," for his theory is that the modern corporation utilised an earlier structure as a cairn or beacon, or boundary mark, which is perfectly possible. But, if this occurred, it does not affect the question, for this use of the structure has left no traces of any kind. There are no relics, except relics of the fifth (?) to twelfth (?) centuries.

In an earlier work by Dr. Munro, *Prehistoric Scotland* (), published in 1899, he observes that we have no evidence as to the when, or how of the removal of the stones of the hypothetical "Corporation cairn," or "round tower with very thick walls," or "watch tower," which is supposed to have been erected above the wooden sub-structure at Dumbuck. He tentatively suggests that the stones may have been used, perhaps, for the stone causeway now laid along the bank of the recently made canal, from a point close to the crannog to the railway. No record is cited. He now offers guesses as to the stones "in the so-called pavements and causeways." First, the causeways may have probably been made "during the construction of the tower with its central pole," (here the cairn is a habitable beacon, habitable on all hypotheses,) or, again, "perhaps at the time of its demolition" about which demolition we know nothing, except that the most of the stones are not now *in situ.*

Several authentic stone crannogs in Scotland, as to which we have information, possessed no central pole, but had a stone causeway, still extant, leading, *e.g.* from the crannog to the shore of the Ashgrove loch, "a causeway of rough blocks of sandstone slabs." If one stone crannog had a stone causeway, why should this ancient inhabited cairn or round tower not possess a stone causeway? Though useless at high water, at low water it would afford better going. In a note to *Ivanhoe*, and in his Northern tour of 1814, Scott describes a stone causeway to a broch on an artificial island in Loch Cleik-him-in, near Lerwick. Now this loch, says Scott, was, at the time when the broch was inhabited, open to the flow of tide water.

As people certainly did live on these structures of Langbank and Dunbuie during the broch and crannog age (centuries 5-12) it really matters not to our purpose *why* they did so, or *how* they did so. Let us suppose that the circular wall of the stone superstructure slanted inwards, as is not unusual. In that case the habitable area at the top may be reduced to any extent that is thought probable, with this limitation: — the habitable space must not be too small for the accommodation of the persons who filled up the eastern third of an area of from twelve to fourteen feet in breadth, and in some places a foot in thickness, with a veritable kitchen-midden, of "broken and partially burned bones of various animals, shells of edible molluscs, and a quantity of ashes and charcoal . . . ."

But Dr. Munro assures me that the remains discovered could be deposited in a few years of regular occupancy by two or three persons.

The structure certainly yielded habitable space enough to accommodate the persons who, in the fifth to twelfth centuries, left these traces of their occupancy. Beyond that fact I do not pretend to estimate the habitable area.

Why did these people live on this structure in the fifth to twelfth centuries? Almost certainly, not for the purpose of directing the navigation of the Clyde. At that early date, which I think we may throw far back in the space of the six centuries of the estimate, or may even throw further back still, the Clyde was mainly navigated by canoes of two feet or so in depth, though we ought to have statistics of remains of larger vessels discovered in the river bed. I think we may say that the finances of Glasgow, in St. Kentigern's day, about 570-600 a.d., would not be applied to the construction of Dr. Munro's "tower with its central pole and very thick walls" erected merely for the purpose of warning canoes off shoals in the Clyde.

That the purpose of the erection was to direct the navigation of Clyde by canoes, or by the long vessels of the Viking raiders, appears to me improbable. I offer, *periculo meo*, a different conjecture, of which I shall show reason to believe that Dr. Munro may not disapprove.

The number of the dwellers in the structure, and the duration of their occupancy, does not affect my argument. If two natives, in a very few years, could deposit the "veritable kitchen midden," with all the sawn horns, bone implements, and other undisputed relics, we must suppose that the term of occupancy was very brief, or not continuous, and that the stone structure "with very thick walls like the brochs" represented labours which were utilised for a few years, or seldom. My doubt is as to whether the structure was intended for the benefit of navigators of the Clyde — in shallow canoes!

IX — A GUESS AT THE POSSIBLE PURPOSE OF LANGBANK AND DUMBUCK

The Dumbuck structure, when occupied, adjoined and commanded a *ford* across the undeepened Clyde of uncommercial times. So Sir Arthur Mitchell informs us. The Langbank structure, as I understand, is opposite to that of Dumbuck on the southern side of the river. If two strongly built structures large enough for occupation exist on opposite sides of a ford, their purpose is evident: they guard the ford, like the two stone camps on each side of the narrows of the Avon at Clifton.

Dr. Munro, on the other hand, says, “the smallness of the habitable area on both “sites” puts them out of the category of military forts.” My suggestion is that the structure was so far “military” as is implied in its being occupied, with Langbank on the opposite bank of Clyde by keepers of the ford. In 1901 Dr. Munro wrote, “even the keepers of the watch-tower at the ford of Dumbuck had their quern, and ground their own corn.” This idea has therefore passed through Dr. Munro’s mind, though I did not know the fact till after I had come to the same hypothesis. The habitable area was therefore, adequate to the wants of these festive people. I conjecture that these “keepers of the watch-tower at the ford” were military “watchers of the ford,” for that seems to me less improbable than that “a round tower with very thick walls, like the brochs and other forts of North Britain,” was built in the interests of the navigation of Clyde at a very remote period.

But really all this is of no importance to the argument. People lived in these sites, perhaps as early as 400 a.d. or earlier. Such places of safety were sadly needed during the intermittent and turbulent Roman occupation.

X — THE LAST DAY AT OLD DUMBUCK

Suppose the sites were occupied by the watchers of the ford. There they lived, no man knows how long, on their perch over the waters of Clyde. They dwelt at top of a stone structure some eight feet above low water mark, for they could not live on the ground floor, of which the walls, fifty feet thick at the base, defied the waves of the high tides driven by the west wind.

There our friends lived, and probably tatooed themselves, and slew *Bos Longifrons* and the deer that, in later ages, would have been forbidden game to them. If I may trust Bede, born in 672, and finishing his History in 731, our friends were Picts, and spoke a now unknown language, *not* that of the Bretonnes, or Cymri, or Welsh, who lived on the northern side of the Firth of Clyde. Or the occupants of Dumbuck, on the north side of the river, were Cymri; those of Langbank, on the south side, were Picts. I may at once say that I decline to be responsible for Bede, and his ethnology, but he lived nearer to those days than we do.

With their ladder of fifteen feet long, a slab of oak, split from the tree by wedges, and having six holes chopped out of the solid for steps, they climbed to their perch, the first floor of their abode. I never heard of a ladder made in this way, but the Zuñis used simply to cut notches for the feet in the trunk of a tree, and "sich a getting up stairs" it must have been, when there was rain, and the notches were wet!

Time passed, the kitchen midden grew, and the Cymri founded Ailcluith, "Clyde rock," now Dumbarton; "to this day," says Bede, "the strongest city of the Britons." Then the Scots came, and turned the Britons out; and St. Columba came, and St. Kentigern from Wales (573-574), and began to spread the Gospel among the pagan Picts and Cymri. Stone amulets and stone idols, (if the disputed objects are idols and amulets,) "have had their day," (as Bob Acres says "Damns have had their day,") and, with Ailcluith in Scots' hands, "'twas time for us to go" thought the Picts and Cymri of Langbank and Dumbuck.

Sadly they evacuate their old towers or cairns before the Scots who now command the Dumbuck ford from Dumbarton. They cross to land on their stone causeway at low water. They abandon the old canoe in the little dock where it was found by Mr. Bruce. They throw down the venerable ladder. They leave behind only the canoe, the deer horns, stone-polishers, sharpened bones, the lower stone of a quern, and the now obsolete, or purely folk-loreish stone "amulets," or "pendants," and the figurines, which to call "idols" is unscientific, while to call them "totems" is to display "facetious and rejoicing ignorance." Dr. Munro merely quotes this foolish use of the term totem by others.

These old things the evicted Picts and Cymri abandoned, while they carried with them their more valuable property, their Early Iron axes and knives, their treasured bits of red "Samian ware," inherited from Roman times, their amber beads, and the rest of their bibelots, down to the minutest fragment of pottery.

Or it may not have been so: the conquering Scots may have looted the cairns, and borne the Pictish cairn-dwellers into captivity.

Looking at any broch, or hill fort, or crannog, the fancy dwells on the last day of its occupation: the day when the canoe was left to subside into the mud and decaying vegetable matter of the loch. In changed times, in new conditions, the inhabitants move away to houses less damp, and better equipped with more modern appliances. I see the little troop, or perhaps only two natives, cross the causeway, while the Minstrel sings in Pictish or Welsh a version of

"The Auld Hoose, the Auld Hoose,
What though the rooms were sma',
Wi' six feet o' diameter,
And a rung gaun through the ha'!"

The tears come to my eyes, as I think of the Last Day of Old Dumbuck, for, take it as you will, there *was* a last day of Dumbuck, as of windy Ilios, and of "Carthage left deserted of the sea."

So ends my little idyllic interlude, and, if I am wrong, blame Venerable Bede!

XI — MY THEORY OF PROVISIONAL DATE

Provisionally, and for the sake of argument merely, may I suggest that the occupancy of these sites may be dated by me, about 300-550 a.d.? That date is well within the Iron Age: iron had long been known and used in North Britain. But to the non-archaeological reader, the terms Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age, are apt to prove misleading. The early Iron Age, like the Bronze Age, was familiar with the use of implements of stone. In the Scottish crannogs, admirably described by Dr. Munro, in his *Ancient Scottish Lake Dwellings*, were found implements of flint, a polished stone axe-head, an iron knife at the same lowest level, finger rings of gold, a forged English coin of the sixth or seventh century a.d., well-equipped canoes (a common attendant of crannogs), the greater part of a stone inscribed with concentric circles, a cupped stone, and a large quartz crystal of the kind which Apaches in North America, and the Euahlayi tribe in New South Wales, use in crystal gazing. In early ages, after the metals had been worked, stone, bronze, and iron were still used as occasion served, just as the Australian black will now fashion an implement in "palaeolithic" wise, with a few chips; now will polish a weapon in "neolithic" fashion; and, again, will chip a fragment of glass with wonderful delicacy; or will put as good an edge as he can on a piece of hoop iron.

I venture, then, merely for the sake of argument, to date the origin of the Clyde sites in the dark years of unrecorded turmoil which preceded and followed the Roman withdrawal. The least unpractical way of getting nearer to their purpose is the careful excavation of a structure of wood and stone near Eriska, where Prince Charles landed in 1745. Dr. Munro has seen and described this site, but is unable to explain it. Certainly it cannot be a Corporation cairn.

XII — THE DISPUTED OBJECTS

We now approach the disputed and very puzzling objects found in the three Clyde sites. My object is, not to demonstrate that they were actually fashioned in, say, 410-550 a.d., or that they were relics of an age far more remote, but merely to re-state the argument of Dr. Joseph Anderson, Keeper of the Scottish National Museum, and of Sir Arthur Mitchell, both of them most widely experienced and sagacious archaeologists. They play the waiting game, and it may be said that they "sit upon the fence"; I am proud to occupy a railing in their company. Dr. Anderson spoke at a meeting of the Scots Society of Antiquaries, May 14, 1900, when Mr. Bruce read a paper on Dumbuck, and exhibited the finds. "With regard to the relics, he said that there was nothing exceptional in the chronological horizon of a portion of them from both sites (Dumbuck and Dunbuie), but as regards another portion, he could find no place for it in any archaeological series, as it had 'no recognisable affinity with any objects found anywhere else.'"

"For my part," said Dr. Anderson, (and he has not altered his mind,) "I do not consider it possible or necessary in the meantime that there should be a final pronouncement on these questions. In the absence of decisive evidence, which time may supply, I prefer to suspend my judgment — merely placing the suspected objects (as they place themselves) in the list of things that must wait for further evidence, because they contradict present experience. It has often happened that new varieties of things have been regarded with suspicion on account of their lack of correspondence with things previously known, and that the lapse of time has brought corroboration of their genuineness through fresh discoveries. If time brings no such corroboration, they still remain in their proper classification as things whose special character has not been confirmed by archaeological experience."

Sir Arthur Mitchell spoke in the same sense, advising suspension of judgment, and that we should await the results of fresh explorations both at Dumbuck and elsewhere. Dr. Murray said that the disputed finds "are puzzling, but we need not condemn them because we do not understand them." Dr. Munro will not suspend *his* judgment: the objects, he declares, are spurious.

XIII — METHOD OF INQUIRY

I remarked, early in this tract, that "with due deference, and with doubt, I think Dr. Munro's methods capable of modification." I meant that I prefer, unlike Dr. Munro in this case, to extend the archaeological gaze beyond the limits of things already known to occur in the Scottish area which — by the way — must contain many relics still unknown. I

"Let Observation with extensive view
Survey mankind from China to Peru,"

to discover whether objects analogous to those under dispute occur anywhere among early races of the past or present. This kind of wide comparison is the method of Anthropology. Thus Prof. Rhys and others find so very archaic an institution as the reckoning of descent in the female line, — inheritance going through the Mother, — among the Picts of Scotland, and they even find traces of totemism, an institution already outworn among several of the naked tribes of Australia, who reckon descent in the male line.

Races do not, in fact, advance on a straight and unbroken highway of progress. You find that the Kurnai of Australia are more civilised, as regards the evolution of the modern Family, than were the Picts who built crannogs and dug canoes, and cultivated the soil, and had domesticated animals, and used iron, all of them things that the Kurnai never dreamed of doing.

As to traces of Totemism in Scotland and Ireland, I am not persuaded by Professor Rhys that they occur, and are attested by Celtic legends about the connection of men and kinships with animals, and by personal and kinship names derived from animals. The question is very obscure. But as the topic of Totemism has been introduced, I may say that many of the mysterious archaic markings on rocks, and decorations of implements, in other countries, are certainly known to be a kind of shorthand design of the totem animal. Thus a circle, whence proceeds a line ending in a triple fork, represents the raven totem in North America: another design, to our eyes meaningless, stands for the wolf totem; a third design, a set of bands on a spear shaft, does duty for the gerfalcon totem, and so on. Equivalent marks, such as spirals, and tracks of emu's feet, occur on sacred stones found round the graves of Australian blacks on the Darling River. They were associated with rites which the oldest blacks decline to explain. The markings are understood to be totemic. Occasionally they are linear, as in Ogam writing.

Any one who is interested in the subject of the origin, in certain places, of the patterns, may turn to Mr. Haddon’s *Evolution of Art*. Mr. Haddon shows how the Portuguese pattern of horizontal triangles is, in the art of the uncivilised natives of Brazil, meant to represent bats. A cross, dotted, within a circle, is directly derived, through several stages, from a representation of an alligator.

We cannot say whether or not the same pattern, found at Dumbuck, in Central Australia, and in tropical America, arose in the “schematising” of the same object in nature, in all three regions, or not. Without direct evidence, we cannot assign a meaning to the patterns.

XIV — THE POSSIBLE MEANINGS OF THE MARKS AND OBJECTS

My private opinion as to the meaning of the archaic marks and the Clyde objects which bear them, has, in part by my own fault, been misunderstood by Dr. Munro. He bases an argument on the idea that I suppose the disputed "pendants" to have had, in Clydesdale, precisely the same legendary, customary, and magical significance as the stone churinga of the Arunta tribe in Australia. That is not my theory. Dr. Munro quotes me, without indicating the source, (which, I learn, is my first letter on the subject to the *Glasgow Herald*, Jan. 10th, 1899), as saying that the Clyde objects "are in absolutely startling agreement" with the Arunta *churinga*.

Doubtless, before I saw the objects, I thus overstated my case, in a letter to a newspaper, in 1899. But in my essay originally published in the *Contemporary Review*, (March 1899,) and reprinted in my book, *Magic and Religion*, of 1901, I stated my real opinion. This is a maturely considered account of my views as they were in 1899-1901, and, unlike old newspaper correspondence, is easily accessible to the student. It is *not* "out of print." I compared the Australian marks on small stones and on rock walls, and other "fixtures in the landscape," with the markings on Scottish boulders, rock walls, cists, and so forth, and also with the marks on the disputed objects. I added "the startling analogy between Australia and old Scottish markings *saute aux yeux*," and I spoke truth. Down to the designs which represent footmarks, the analogy is "startling," is of great interest, and was never before made the subject of comment.

I said that we could not know whether or not the markings, in Scotland and Australia, had the same meaning.

As to my opinion, then, namely that we cannot say what is the significance of an archaic pattern in Scotland, or elsewhere, though we may know the meaning assigned to it in Central Australia, there can no longer be any mistake. I take the blame of having misled Dr. Munro by an unguarded expression in a letter to the Society of Scottish Antiquaries, saying that, if the disputed objects were genuine, they implied the survival, on Clyde, "of a singularly archaic set of ritual and magical ideas," namely those peculiar to the Arunta and Kaitish tribes of Central Australia. But that was a slip of the pen, merely.

This being the case, I need not reply to arguments of Dr. Munro (p-250) against an hypothesis which no instructed person could entertain, beginning with the assumption that from an unknown centre, some people who held Arunta ideas migrated to Central Australia, and others to the Clyde. Nobody supposes that the use of identical or similar patterns, and of stones of superstitious purpose, implies community of race. These things may anywhere be independently evolved, and in different regions may have quite different meanings, if any; while the use of “charm stones” or witch stones, is common among savages, and survives, in England and Scotland, to this day. The reader will understand that I am merely applying Mr. E. B. Tylor’s method of the study of “survivals in culture,” which all anthropologists have used since the publication of Mr. Tylor’s *Primitive Culture*, thirty-five years ago.

XV — QUESTION OF METHOD CONTINUED

What is admitted to be true of survivals in the Family among the Picts may also be true as to other survivals in art, superstition, and so forth. I would, therefore, compare the disputed Clyde objects with others analogous to them, of known or unknown purpose, wheresoever they may be found. I am encouraged in this course by observing that it is pursued, for example, by the eminent French archaeologist, Monsieur Cartailhac, in his book *Les Ages Préhistoriques de France et d'Espagne*. He does not hesitate, as we shall see, to compare peculiar objects found in France or Spain, with analogous objects of doubtful purpose, found in America or the Antilles. M. Cartailhac writes that, to find anything resembling certain Portuguese "thin plaques of slate in the form of a crook, or crozier," he "sought through all ethnographic material, ancient and modern." He did find the parallels to his Portuguese objects, one from Gaudeloup, the other either French, or from the Antilles.

Sir John Evans, again, compares British with Australian objects; in fact the practice is recognised. I therefore intend to make use of this comparative method. On the other hand, Dr. Munro denies that any of my analogies drawn from remote regions are analogous, and it will be necessary to try to prove that they are, — that my Australian, American, Portuguese, and other objects are of the same kind, apparently, as some of the disputed relics of the Clyde.

If I succeed, one point will be made probable. Either the Clyde objects are old, or the modern maker knew much more of archaeology than many of his critics and used his knowledge to direct his manufacture of spurious things; or he kept coinciding *accidentally* with genuine relics of which he knew nothing.

XVI — MAGIC

Again, I must push my method beyond that of Dr. Munro, by considering the subject of Magic, in relation to perforated and other stones, whether inscribed with designs, or uninscribed. Among the disputed objects are many such stones, and it is legitimate for me to prove, not only that they occur in many sites of ancient life, but that their magical uses are still recognised, or were very recently recognised in the British Folk-lore of to-day.

A superstition which has certainly endured to the nineteenth century may obviously have existed among the Picts, or whoever they were, of the crannog and broch period on Clyde. The only *a priori* objection is the absence of such objects among finds made on British soil, but our discoveries cannot be exhaustive: time may reveal other examples, and already we have a few examples, apart from the objects in dispute.

XVII — DISPUTED OBJECTS CLASSIFIED

Dr. Munro classifies the disputed objects as *Weapons*, *Implements*, "*Amulets*" *or Pendants*, *Cup-and-Ring Stones*, "*Human Figurines or Idols*."

For reasons of convenience, and because what I heard about group 3, the "amulets or pendants" first led me into this discussion, I shall here first examine them. Dr. Munro reproduces some of them in one plate (xv.). He does not say by what process they are reproduced; merely naming them . . . "objects of slate and stone from Dumbuck."

Dr. Munro describes the "amulets" or "pendants" thus: "The largest group of objects (plate xv.) consists of the so-called amulets or pendants of stone, shale, and shell, some fifteen to twenty specimens of which have been preserved and recorded as having been found on the different stations, viz., three from Dunbuie (exclusive of a few perforated oyster shells), eleven from Dumbuck, and one from Langbank. Their ornamentation is chiefly of the cup-and-ring order, only a few having patterns composed of straight lines. Some of them are so large as to be unfit to be used as amulets or pendants, such, for example, as that represented by no. 14, which is 9 inches long, 3½ inches broad, and ½ inch thick. The ornamentation consists of a strongly incised line running downwards from the perforation with small branch lines directed alternately right and left. Any human being, who would wear this object, either as an ornament or religious emblem, would be endowed with the most archaic ideas of decorative art known in the history of human civilisation. Yet we can have no doubt that the individual who manufactured it, if he were an inhabitant of any of the Clyde sites, was at the same time living in a period not devoid of culture, and was in possession of excellent cutting implements, most likely of iron, with which he manipulated wood, deer-horn, and other substances. These objects are nearly all perforated, as if intended for suspension, but sometimes, in addition to this, there is a large central hole around which there is always an ornamentation, generally consisting of incised circles or semicircles, with divergent lines leading into small hollow points, the so-called cup-marks."

I shall return to the theory that the stones were "ornaments"; meanwhile I proceed to the consideration of "cup-marks" on stones, large or small.

XVIII — CUP MARKS IN CRANNOGS

As to cup marks, or *cupules,* little basins styled also *écuelles*, now isolated, now grouped, now separate, now joined by hollowed lines, they are familiar on rocks, funeral cists, and so forth in Asia, Europe, and North America (and Australia), as M. Cartailhac remarks in reviewing Dr. Magni’s work on Cupped Rocks near Como. “Their meaning escapes us,” says M. Cartailhac.

These cups, or cupules, or *écuelles* occur, not only at Dumbuck, but in association with a Scottish crannog of the Iron age, admirably described by Dr. Munro himself. He found a polished celt, and a cupped stone, and he found a fragmentary block of red sandstone, about a foot in length, inscribed with concentric circles, surrounding a cup. The remainder of the stone, with the smaller part of the design, was not found.

Here, then, we have these archaic patterns and marks on isolated stones, one of them about 13 inches long, in a genuine Scottish crannog, of the genuine Iron age, while flint celts also occur, and objects of bronze. Therefore cup markings, and other archaic markings are not unknown or suspicious things in a genuine pile structure in Scotland. Why, then, suspect them at Dumbuck? At Dumbuck the cups occur on a triangular block of sandstone, 14½ inches long and 4 inches thick. Another cupped block is of 21½ inches by 16½.

No forger brought these cupped stones in his waistcoat pocket.

We have thus made good the point that an isolated cupped stone, and an isolated stone inscribed with concentric circles round a cup, do occur in a crannog containing objects of the stone, bronze, and iron ages. The meaning, if any, of these inscribed stones, in the Lochlee crannog, is unknown. Many of the disputed objects vary from them in size, while presenting examples of archaic patterns. Are they to be rejected because they vary in size?

We see that the making of this class of decorative patterns, whether they originally had a recognised meaning; or whether, beginning as mere decorations, perhaps “schematistic” designs of real objects, they later had an arbitrary symbolic sense imposed upon them, is familiar to Australians of to-day, who use, indifferently, stone implements of the neolithic or of the palaeolithic type. We also know that “in a remote corner of tropical America,” the rocks are inscribed with patterns “typically identical with those engraved in the British rocks.” These markings are in the country of the Chiriquis, an extinct gold-working neolithic people, very considerable artists, especially in the making of painted ceramics. The Picts and Scots have left nothing at all approaching to their pottery work.

These identical patterns, therefore, have been independently evolved in places most remote in space and in stage of civilisation, while in Galloway, as I shall show, I have seen some of them scrawled in chalk on the flag stones in front of cottage doors. The identity of many Scottish and Australian patterns is undenied, while I disclaim the opinion that, in each region, they had the same significance.

I have now established the coincidence between the markings of rocks in Australia, in tropical America, and in Scotland. I have shown that such markings occur, in Scotland, associated with remains, in a crannog, of the Age of Iron. They also occur on stones, large (cupped) and small, in Dumbuck. My next business is, if I can, to establish, what Dr. Munro denies, a parallelism between these disputed Clyde stones, and the larger or smaller inscribed stones of the Arunta and Kaitish, in Australia, and other small stones, decorated or plain, found in many ancient European sites. Their meaning we know not, but probably they were either reckoned ornamental, or magical, or both.

XIX — PARALLELISM BETWEEN THE DISPUTED OBJECTS AND OTHER OBJECTS ELSEWHERE

On Clyde (if the disputed things be genuine) we find decorated plaques or slabs of soft stone, of very various dimensions and shapes. In Australia some of these objects are round, many oval, others elongated, others thin and pointed, like a pencil; others oblong — while on Clyde, some are round, one is coffin-shaped, others are palette-shaped, others are pear-shaped (the oval tapering to one extremity), one is triangular, one is oblong. In Australia, as on Clyde, the stones bear some of the archaic markings common on the rock faces both in Scotland and in Central Australia: on large rocks they are *painted*, in Australia, in Scotland they are *incised*. I maintain that there is a singularly strong analogy between the two sets of circumstances, Scottish and Australian; large rocks inscribed with archaic designs; smaller stones inscribed with some of these designs. Is it not so? Dr. Munro, on the other hand, asserts that there is no such parallelism.

But I must point out that there is, to some extent, an admitted parallelism. “The familiar designs which served as models to the Clyde artists”— “plain cups and rings, with or without gutter channels, spirals, circles, concentric circles, semicircles, horseshoe and harp-shaped figures, etc.,” occur, or a selection of them occurs, both on the disputed objects, and on the rocks of the hills. So Dr. Munro truly says ().

The same marks, plain cups, cups and rings, spirals, concentric circles, horseshoes, medial lines with short slanting lines proceeding from them, like the branches on a larch, or the spine of a fish, occur on the rocks of the Arunta hills, and also on plaques of stone cherished and called churinga (“sacred”) by the Arunta. Here is what I call “parallelism.”

Dr. Munro denies this parallelism.

There are, indeed, other parallelisms with markings other than those of the rocks at Auchentorlie which Dr. Munro regards as the sources of the faker’s inspiration. Thus, on objects from Dumbuck (Munro, plate xv. figs, 11 and 12), there are two “signs”: one is a straight line, horizontal, with three shorter lines under it at right angles, the other a line with four lines under it. These signs “are very frequent in Trojan antiquities,” and on almost all the “hut urns” found “below the lava at Marino, near Albano, or on ancient tombs near Corneto.”

Whatever they mean, (and Prof. Sayce finds the former of the two "signs" "as a Hittite hieroglyph,") I do not know them at Auchentorlie. After "a scamper among the surrounding hills," the faker may have passed an evening with Dr. Schliemann's *Troja* (1884, p, 127) and may have taken a hint from the passages which have just been cited. Or he may have cribbed the idea of these archaic markings from Don Manuel de Góngora y Martinez, his *Antigüedades Pre-históricas de Andalucía* (Madrid, 1868, , figures 70, 71). In these Spanish examples the marks are, clearly, "schematised" or rudimentary designs of animals, in origin. Our faker is a man of reading. But, *enfin*, the world is full of just such markings, which may have had one meaning here, another there, or may have been purely decorative. "Race" has nothing to do with the markings. They are "universally human," though, in some cases, they may have been transmitted by one to another people.

The reader must decide as to whether I have proved my parallelisms, denied by Dr. Munro, between the Clyde, Australian, and other markings, whether on rocks or on smaller stones.

It suffices me to have tried to prove the parallelism between Australian and Clyde things, and to record Dr. Munro's denial thereof— "I unhesitatingly maintain that there is no parallelism whatever between the two sets of objects."

XX — UNMARKED CHARM STONES

It must be kept in mind that churinga, “witch stones,” “charm stones,” or whatever the smaller stones may be styled, are not necessarily marked with any pattern. In Australia, in Portugal, in Russia, in France, in North America, in Scotland, as we shall see, such stones may be unmarked, may bear no inscription or pattern. These are plain magic stones, such as survive in English peasant superstition.

In Dr. Munro’s *Ancient Lake Dwellings of Europe*, plain stone discs, perforated, do occur, but rarely, and there are few examples of pendants with cupped marks. Of these two, as being cupped pendants, might look like analogues of the disputed Clyde stones, but Dr. Munro, owing to the subsequent exposure of the “Horn Age” forgeries, now has “a strong suspicion that he was taken in” by the things.

To return to Scottish stones.

In Mr. Graham Callander’s essay on perforated stones, he publishes an uninscribed triangular stone, with a perforation, apparently for suspension. This is one of several such Scottish stones, and though we cannot prove it, may have had a superstitious purpose. Happily Sir Walter Scott discovered and describes the magical use to which this kind of charm stone was put in 1814. When a person was unwell, in the Orkney Isles, the people, like many savages, supposed that a wizard had stolen his heart. “The parties’ friends resort to a cunning man or woman, who hangs about the neck a triangular stone in the shape of a heart.”

This is a thoroughly well-known savage superstition, the stealing of the heart, or vital spirit, and its restoration by magic.

This use of triangular or heart-shaped perforated stones was not inconsistent with the civilisation of the nineteenth century, and, of course, was not inconsistent with the civilisation of the Picts. A stone may have magical purpose, though it bears no markings. Meanwhile most churinga, and many of the disputed objects, have archaic markings, which also occur on rock faces.

XXI — QUALITY OF ART ON THE STONES

Dr. Munro next reproduces two *wooden* churinga (*churinga irula*), as being very unlike the Clydesdale objects *in stone* (figures 5, 6). They are: but I was speaking of Australian *churinga nanja*, of *stone*. A stone churinga presented, I think, by Mr. Spencer through me to the Scottish Society of Antiquaries (also reproduced by Dr. Munro), is a much better piece of work, as I saw when it reached me, than most of the Clyde things. “The Clyde amulets are,” says Dr. Munro, “neither strictly oval,” (*nor are very many Australian samples*,) “nor well finished, nor symmetrical, being generally water-worn fragments of shale or clay slate. . . .” They thus resemble ancient Red Indian pendants.

As to the art of the patterns, the Australians have a considerable artistic gift; as Grosse remarks, while either the Clyde folk had less, or the modern artists had *not* “some practical artistic skill.” But Dr. Munro has said that any one with “some practical artistic skill” could whittle the Clyde objects. He also thinks that in one case they “disclose the hand of one not altogether ignorant of art” ().

Let me put a crucial question. Are the archaic markings on the disputed objects better, or worse, or much on a level with the general run of such undisputably ancient markings on large rocks, cists, and cairns in Scotland? I think the art in both cases is on the same low level. When the art on the disputed objects is more formal and precise, as on some shivered stones at Dunbuie, “the stiffness of the lines and figures reminds one more of rule and compass than of the free-hand work of prehistoric artists.” The modern faker sometimes drew his marks “free-hand,” and carelessly; sometimes his regularities suggest line and compass.

Now, as to the use of compasses, a small pair were found with Late Celtic remains, at Lough Crew, and plaques of bone decorated by aid of such compasses, were also found, in a cairn of a set adorned with the archaic markings, cup and ring, concentric circles, medial lines with shorter lines sloping from them on either side, and a design representing, apparently, an early mono-cycle!

For all that I know, a dweller in Dunbuie might have compasses, like the Lough Crew cairn artist.

If I have established the parallelism between Arunta churinga nanja and the disputed Clyde “pendants,” which Dr. Munro denies, we are reduced to one of two theories. Either the Picts of Clyde, or whoever they were, repeated on stones, usually small, some of the patterns on the neighbouring rocks; or the modern faker, for unknown reasons, repeated these and other archaic patterns on smaller stones. His motive is inscrutable: the Australian parallels were unknown to European science, — but he may have used European analogues. On the other hand, while Dr. Munro admits that the early Clyde people might have repeated the rock decorations "on small objects of slate and shale," he says that the objects "would have been, even then, as much out of place as surviving remains of the earlier Scottish civilisation as they are at the present day."

How can we assert that magic stones, or any such stone objects, perforated or not, were necessarily incongruous with "the earlier Scottish civilisation?" No civilisation, old or new, is incapable of possessing such stones; even Scotland, as I shall show, can boast two or three samples, such as the stone of the Keiss broch, a perfect circle, engraved with what looks like an attempt at a Runic inscription; and another in a kind of cursive characters.

XXII — SURVIVAL OF MAGIC OF STONES

If “incongruous with the earlier Scottish civilisation” the use of “charm stones” is not incongruous with the British civilisation of the nineteenth century.

In the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries* (Scot.) (1902-1903, *et seq.*) Mr. Graham Callander, already cited, devotes a very careful essay to such perforated stones, circular or triangular, or otherwise shaped, found in the Garioch. They are of slate, or “heather stone,” and of various shapes and sizes. Their original purpose is unknown. The perforation, or cup not perforated, is sometimes in the centre, in a few cases in “near the end.” Mr. Graham Callander heard of a recent old lady in Roxburghshire, who kept one of these stones, of irregularly circular shape, behind the door for luck. “It was always spoken of as a charm,” though its ancient maker may have intended it for some prosaic practical use.

I take the next example that comes to hand.

“Thin flat oolite stones, having a natural perforation, are found in abundance on the Yorkshire coast. They are termed “witch stones,” and are tied to door keys, or suspended by a string behind the cottage door, “to keep witches out.”

“A thin flat perforated witch stone,” answers to an uninscribed Arunta churinga; “a magic thing,” and its use survives in Britain, as in Yorkshire and Roxburghshire. We know no limit to the persistence of survival of superstitious things, such as magic stones. This is the familiar lesson of Anthropology and of Folk Lore, and few will now deny the truth of the lesson.

XXIII — MODERN SURVIVAL OF MAGICAL WOOD CHURINGA

I take another example of modern survival in magic. Dr. Munro, perhaps, would think wooden churinga, used for magical ends, “incongruous with the earlier Scottish civilisation.” But such objects have not proved to be incongruous with the Scottish civilisation of the nineteenth century.

The term *churinga*, “sacred,” is used by the Arunta to denote not only the stone churinga nanja, a local peculiarity of the Arunta and Kaitish, but also the decorated and widely diffused elongated wooden slats called “Bull Roarers” by the English. These are swung at the end of a string, and produce a whirring roar, supposed to be the voice of a supernormal being, all over Australia and elsewhere.

I am speaking of *survivals*, and these wooden churinga, at least, *survive* in Scotland, and, in Aberdeenshire they are, or were lately called “thunner spells” or “thunder bolts.” “It was believed that the use of this instrument during a thunderstorm saved one from being struck by the thunner bolt.” In North and South America the bull roarer, on the other hand, is used, not to avert, but magically to produce thunder and lightning. Among the Kaitish thunder is caused by the churinga of their “sky dweller,” Atnatu.

Wherever the toy is used for a superstitious purpose, it is, so far, *churinga*, and, so far, modern Aberdeenshire had the same *churinga irula* as the Arunta. The object was familiar to palaeolithic man.

XXIV — CONCLUSION OF ARGUMENT FROM SURVIVALS IN MAGIC

I have made it perfectly certain that magic stones, “witch stones,” “charm stones,” and that *churinga irula*, wooden magical slats of wood, exist in Australia and other savage regions, and survive, as magical, into modern British life. The point is beyond doubt, and it is beyond doubt that, in many regions, the stones, and the slats of wood, may be inscribed with archaic markings, or may be uninscribed. This will be proved more fully later. Thus Pictish, like modern British civilisation, may assuredly have been familiar with charm stones. There is no *a priori* objection as to the possibility.

Why should Pictish stones *not* be inscribed with archaic patterns familiar to the dwellers among inscribed rocks, perhaps themselves the inscribers of the rocks? Manifestly there is no *a priori* improbability. I have seen the archaic patterns of concentric circles and fish spines, (or whatever we call the medial line with slanting side lines,) neatly designed in white on the flag stones in front of cottage doors in Galloway. The cottagers dwelt near the rocks with similar patterns on the estate of Monreith, but are not likely to have copied them; the patterns, I presume, were mere survivals in tradition.

The Picts, or whoever they were, might assuredly use charm stones, and the only objection to the idea that they might engrave archaic patterns on them is the absence of record of similarly inscribed small stones in Britain. The custom of using magic stones was not at all incongruous with the early Pictish civilisation, which retained a form of the Family now long outworn by the civilisation of the Arunta. The sole objection is that *a silentio*, silence of archaeological records as to *inscribed* small stones. That is not a closer of discussion, nor is the silence absolute, as I shall show.

Moreover, the appearance of an unique and previously unheard-of set of inscribed stones, in a site of the usual broch and crannog period, is not invariably ascribed to forgery, even by the most orthodox archaeologists. Thus Sir Francis Terry found unheard-of things, not to mention “a number of thin flat circular discs of various sizes” in his Caithness brochs. In Wester broch “the most remarkable things found” were three egg-shaped quartzite pearls “having their surface painted with spots in a blackish or blackish-brown pigment.” He also found a flattish circular disc of sandstone, inscribed with a duck or other water-fowl, while on one side was an attempt, apparently, to write runes, on the other an inscription in unknown cursive characters. There was a boulder of sandstone with nine cup marks, and there were more painted pebbles, the ornaments now resembling ordinary cup marks, now taking the shape of a cross, and now of lines and other patterns, one of which, on an Arunta rock, is of unknown meaning, among many of known totemic significance.

Dr. Joseph Anderson compares these to "similar pebbles painted with a red pigment" which M. Piette found in the cavern of Mas d'Azil, of which the relics are, in part at least, palaeolithic, or "mesolithic," and of dateless antiquity. In *L'Anthropologie* (Nov. 1894), Mr. Arthur Bernard Cook suggests that the pebbles of Mas d'Azil may correspond to the stone churinga nanja of the Arunta; a few of which appear to be painted, not incised. I argued, on the contrary, that things of similar appearance, at Mas d'Azil: in Central Australia: and in Caithness, need not have had the same meaning and purpose.

It is only certain that the pebbles of the Caithness brochs are as absolutely unfamiliar as the inscribed stones of Dumbuck. But nobody says that the Caithness painted pebbles are forgeries or modern fabrications. Sauce for the Clyde goose is not sauce for the Caithness gander.

The use of painted pebbles and of inscribed stones, may have been merely *local*.

In Australia the stone churinga are now, since 1904, known to be *local*, confined to the Arunta "nation," and the Kaitish, with very few sporadic exceptions in adjacent tribes.

The purely local range of the inscribed stones in Central Australia, makes one more anxious for further local research in the Clyde district and south-west coast.

XXV — MY MISADVENTURE WITH THE CHARM STONE

As Dr. Munro introduces the subject, I may draw another example of the survival of charm stones, from an amusing misadventure of my own. I was once entrusted with a charm stone used in the nineteenth century for the healing of cattle in the Highlands. An acquaintance of mine, a Mac — by the mother's side, inherited this heirloom with the curious box patched with wicker-work, which was its Ark. It was exactly of the shape of a "stone churinga of the Arunta tribe," later reproduced by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen. On the surfaces of the ends were faintly traced concentric rings, that well-known pattern. I wrote in the *Glasgow Herald* that, "*if* a Neolithic amulet, as it appears to be, it *may* supply the missing link in my argument," as being not only a magic stone (which it certainly was), but a magic stone with archaic markings. At the British Museum I presently learned the real nature of the object, to my rueful amusement. It had been the stone pivot of an old farm-gate, and, in turning on the upper and nether stones, had acquired the concentric circular marks. Not understanding what the thing was, the Highland maternal ancestors of my friend had for generations used it in the magical healing of cattle, a very pretty case of "survival."

Writing on October 19th, I explained the facts in a letter to the *Glasgow Herald*. A pseudonymous person then averred, in the same journal, that I had "recently told its readers that I had found the missing link in the chain that was to bind together the magic stones of the Arunta and the discs, images, and 'blue points' of the Clyde crannog man."

I never told any mortal that I had "found the missing link!" I said that "*if*" the stone be Neolithic, it "*may*" be the missing link in my argument. Dr. Munro prints the pseudonymous letter with approval, but does not correct the inaccurate statement of the writer. Dr. Munro, I need not say, argues with as much candour as courtesy, and the omission of the necessary correction is an oversight.

However, here was a survival of the use of charm stones, and I think that, had the stone been uninscribed (as it was accidentally inscribed with concentric circles by turning in its stone sockets), my friend’s Highland ancestors might have been less apt to think it a fairy thing, and use it in cattle healing.

I trust that I have now established my parallelisms. The archaic patterns of countries now civilised and of savage countries are assuredly parallel. The use of charm stones in civilisation and savagery is assuredly parallel. The application to these stones of the archaic patterns, by a rude race in Clydesdale, familiar with the patterns on rocks in the district, has in it nothing *a priori* improbable.

XXVI — EUROPEAN PARALLELS TO THE DISPUTED OBJECTS

I am not so sure as Dr. Munro is that we have not found small perforated stones, sometimes inscribed with archaic patterns, sometimes plain, even in Scotland; I shall later mention other places. For the present I leave aside the small stone, inscribed with concentric horse-shoes, and found in a hill-fort near Tarbert (Kintyre), which a friend already spoken of saw, and of which he drew for me a sketch from memory. In country houses any intrinsically valueless object of this kind is apt to fall out of sight and be lost beyond recovery.

Sir John Evans, however, in his work on *Ancient Stone Implements*, (1897), writes: "A pendant, consisting of a flat pear-shaped piece of shale, 2½ inches long, and 2 inches broad, and perforated at the narrow end, was found along with querns, stones with concentric circles, and cup-shaped indentations worked in them; stone balls, spindle whorls, and an iron axe-head, in excavating an underground chamber at the Tappock, Torwood, Stirlingshire. One face of this pendant was covered with scratches in a vandyked pattern. Though of smaller size this seems to bear some analogy with the flat amulets of schist of which several have been discovered in Portugal, with one face ornamented in much the same manner."

For these examples Sir John Evans refers to the *Transactions of the Ethnological Society*.

If by "a vandyked pattern," Sir John means, as I suppose, a pattern of triangles in horizontal lines (such as the Portuguese patterns on stone plaques), then the elements of this form of decoration appear to have been not unfamiliar to the designers of "cups and rings." On the cover of a stone cist at Carnwath we see inscribed concentric rings, and two large equilateral triangles, each containing three contingent triangles, round a square space, uninscribed. The photograph of the Tappock stone (figs. 9, 10), shows that the marks are not of a regular vandyked pattern, but are rather scribbles, like those on a Portuguese perforated stone, given by Vasconcellos, and on a Canadian stone pendant, published by Mr. David Boyle (figs. 12, 13).

Sir John Evans does not reject the pear-shaped object of shale, "a pendant," found in a Scottish site, and associated with querns, and an iron axe, and cup and ring stones. Sir John sees no harm in the "pendant," but Dr. Munro rejects a "pear-shaped" claystone "pendant" decorated with "cup-shaped indentations," found at Dunbuie. It has a perforation near each end, as is common in North American objects of similar nature (see fig. 11).

Why should the schist pendant of the Tappock chamber be all right, if the claystone pendant of Dunbuie be all wrong? One of them seems to me to have as good a claim to our respectful consideration as the other, and, like Sir John Evans, I shall now turn to Portugal in search of similar objects of undisputed authenticity.

XXVII — PORTUGUESE AND OTHER STONE PENDANTS

M. Cartailhac, the very eminent French archaeologist, found not in Portugal, but in the Cevennes, "plaques of slate, sometimes pierced with a hole for suspension, usually smaller than those of the Casa da Moura, not ornamented, *yet certainly analogous with these*." These are also analogous with "engraved plaques of schist found in prehistoric sites of the Rio Negro," "some resembling, others identical with those shewn at Lisbon by Carlos Ribeiro." But the Rio Negro objects appear doubtful.

Portugal has many such plaques, some adorned with designs, and some plain. The late Don Estacio da Veiga devotes a chapter to them, as if they were things peculiar to Portugal, in Europe. When they are decorated the ornament is usually linear; in two cases lines incised lead to "cups." One plaque is certainly meant to represent the human form. M. Cartailhac holds that all the plaques with a "vandyked" pattern in triangles, without faces, "are, none the less, *des représentations stylisées de silhouette humaine*."

Illustrations give an idea of them (figs. 14, 15, 16); they are more elaborate than the perforated inscribed plaques of shale or schist from Dumbuck. Two perforated stone plaques from Volósova, figured by Dr. Munro (p, 79), fall into line with other inscribed plaques from Portugal. Of these Russian objects referred to by Dr. Munro, one is (his fig. 25) a roughly pear-shaped thing in flint, perforated at the thin end; the other is a formless stone plaque, inscribed with a cross, three circles, not concentric, and other now meaningless scratches. It is not perforated. Dr. Munro does not dispute the genuine character of many strange figurines in flint, from Volósova, though the redoubtable M. de Mortillet denounced them as forgeries; they had the misfortune to corroborate other Italian finds against which M. de Mortillet had a grudge. But Dr. Munro thinks that the two plaques of Volósova may have been made for sale by knavish boys. In that case the boys fortuitously coincided, in their fake, with similar plaques, of undoubted antiquity, and, in some prehistoric Egyptian stones, occasionally inscribed with mere wayward scratches.

For these reasons I think the Volósova plaques as genuine as any other objects from that site, and corroborative, so far, of similar things from Clyde.

To return to Portugal, M. Cartailhac recognises that the *plain* plaques of slate from sites in the Cevennes "are certainly analogous" with the plaques from the Casa da Moura, even when these are elaborately ornamented with vandyked and other patterns. I find one published case of a Portuguese plaque with cups and ducts, as at Dumbuck (fig. 16). Another example is in *Antiguedades Prehistoricas de Andalucia*, . However, Dr. Munro leaves the Cevennes Andalusian, and Portuguese plaques out of his argument.

M. Cartailhac, then, found inscribed and perforated slate tablets "very common in Portugues neolithic sepulchres." The perforated holes showed signs of long wear from attachment to something or somebody. One, from New Jersey, with two holes, exactly as in the Dunbuie example, was much akin in ornament to the Portuguese plaques. One, of slate, was plain, as plain as "a bit of gas coal with a round hole bored through it," recorded by Dr. Munro from Ashgrove Loch crannog. A perforated shale, or slate, or schist or gas coal plaque, as at Ashgrove Loch, ornamented or plain, is certainly like another shale schist or slate plaque, plain or inscribed. We have shown that these occur in France, Portugal, Russia, America, and Scotland, not to speak of Central Australia.

My suggestion is that, if the Clyde objects are forged, the forger knew a good deal of archaeology — knew that perforated inscribed plaques of soft mineral occurred in many countries — but he did not slavishly imitate the patterns.

By a pleasant coincidence, at the moment of writing, comes to me the *Annual Archaeological Report*, 1904, of the Canadian Bureau of Education, kindly sent by Mr. David Boyle. He remarks, as to stone pendants found in Canadian soil, "The forms of what we call pendants varied greatly, and were probably made to adapt themselves to *the natural shapes of water-worn stones*. . . ." This is exactly what Dr. Munro says about the small stone objects from the three Clyde stations. "The pendants, amulets, and idols *appear to have been water-worn pieces of shale or slate*, before they were perforated, decorated, and polished" (Munro,). The forger may have been guided by the ancient Canadian pendants; that man knows everything!

Mr. Boyle goes on, speaking of the superstitious still surviving instinct of treasuring such stones, "For some unknown reason, many of us exhibit a desire to pick up pebbles so marked, and examples of the kind are often carried as pocket pieces," obviously "for luck." He gives one case of such a stone being worn for fifty years as a "watch pendant." Perforated stones have always had a "fetishness" attached to them, adds Mr. Boyle. He then publishes several figures of such stones. Two of these, with archaic markings like many in Portugal, and one with an undisputed analogue from a Scottish site, are reproduced (figs. 12, 13).

It is vain to tell us that the uses of such fetishistic stones are out of harmony with any civilisation. The civilisation of the dwellers in the Clyde sites was not so highly advanced as to reject a superstition which still survives. Nor is there any reason why these people should not have scratched archaic markings on the pebbles as they certainly cut them on stones in a Scottish crannog of the Iron age.

Dr. Munro agrees with me that rude scribings on shale or slate are found, of a post-Christian date, at St. Blane’s, in Bute. The art, if art it can be called, is totally different, of course, from the archaic types of decoration, but all the things have *this* in common, that they are rudely incised on shale or slate.

XXVIII — QUESTION AS TO THE OBJECTS AS ORNAMENTS OF THE PERSON

Dr. Munro now objects that among the objects reckoned by me as analogous to churinga is a perforated stone with an incised line, and smaller slanting side lines, said to have been found at Dumbuck; "9 inches long, 3½ inches broad, and ½ an inch thick." I wish that he gave us the weight. He says, "that no human being would wear this as an ornament."

No human being wears any churinga "as an ornament!" Nobody says that they do.

Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, moreover, speak of "a long stone churinga," and of "especially large ones" made by the mythical first ancestors of the race. Churinga, over a foot in length, they tell us, are not usually perforated; many churinga are not perforated, many are: *but the Arunta do not know why some are perforated*. There is a legend that, of old, men hung up the perforated churinga on the sacred *Nurtunja* pole: and so they still have *perforated* stone churinga, not usually more than a foot in length.

If Dr. Munro has studied Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, he cannot but know that churinga are not ornaments, are not all oval, but of many shapes and sizes, and that churinga larger than the 9 inch perforated stone from Dumbuck are perforated, and attached to strings. I cannot tell the reason why, any better than the Arunta can; and, of course, I cannot know why the 9 inch stone from Dumbuck (if genuine) was perforated. But what I must admire is the amazing luck or learning of Dr. Munro's supposed impostor. Not being "a semi-detached idiot" he must have known that no mortal would sling about his person, as an ornament, a chunk of stone 9 inches long, 3½ broad, and ½ an inch thick. Dr. Munro himself insists on the absurdity of supposing that "any human being" would do such a thing. Yet the forger drilled a neat hole, as if for a string for suspension, at the apex of the chunk. If he knew, before any other human being in England, that the Arunta do this very thing to some stone churinga, though seldom to churinga over a foot in length, — and if he imitated the Arunta custom, the impostor was a very learned impostor. If he did *not* know, he was a very lucky rogue, for the Arunta coincide in doing the same thing to great stone churinga: without being aware of any motive for the performance as they never suspend churinga to anything, though they say that their mythical ancestors did.

The impostor was also well aware of the many perforated stones that exist in

Scotland, not referred to by Dr. Munro. He perforated some which could not be worn as ornaments, just as the Arunta do. We shall find that the forger, either by dint of wide erudition, or by a startling set of chance coincidences, keeps on producing objects which are analogous to genuine relics found in many sites of early life.

This is what makes the forger so interesting.

My theory of the forger is at the opposite pole from the theory of Dr. Munro. He says that, "in applying these local designs" (the worldwide archaic patterns,) to unworked splinters of sandstone and pieces of water-worn shale and slate, "the manufacturers had evidently not sufficient archaeological knowledge to realise the significance of the fact that they were doing what prehistoric man, in this country, is never known to have done before."

But, (dismissing the Kintyre and Tappock stones,) the "manufacturers" did know, apparently, that perforated and inscribed, or uninscribed tablets and plaques of shale and schist and slate and gas coal were found in America, France, Russia, and Portugal, and imitated these things or coincided in the process by sheer luck. The "manufacturers" were, perhaps, better informed than many of their critics. But, if the things are genuine, more may be found by research in the locality.

XXIX — WEAPONS

Dr. Munro is less than kind to the forger in the matter of the “weapons” found at Dunbuie and Dumbuck. They are “absolutely worthless as real weapons,” he says, with perfect truth, for they are made of slate or shale, *not* of hard stony slate, which many races used to employ for lack of better material.

The forger was obviously not thinking of dumping down *serviceable* sham weapons. He could easily have bought as many genuine flint celts and arrow-heads and knives as he needed, had his aim been to prove his sites to be neolithic. So I argued long ago, in a newspaper letter. Dr. Munro replies among other things, that “nothing could be easier than to detect modern imitations of Neolithic relics.” I said not a word about “modern imitations.” I said that a forger, anxious to fake a Neolithic site, “would, of course, drop in a few Neolithic arrow-heads, ‘celts’ and so forth,” meaning genuine objects, very easily to be procured for money.

As the forger did not adopt a device so easy, so obvious, and so difficult of detection, (if he purchased Scottish flint implements) his aim was not to fake a Neolithic site. He put in, not well-known genuine Neolithic things, but things of a character with which some of his critics were not familiar, yet which have analogues elsewhere.

Why did he do that?

As to the blunt decorated slate weapons, the forger did not mean, I think, to pass off these as practicable arms of the Neolithic period. These he could easily have bought from the dealers. What he intended to dump down were not practical weapons, but, in one case at least, *armes d’apparat*, as French archaeologists call them, weapons of show or ceremony.

The strange “vandyked” crozier-like stone objects of schist or shale from Portugal were possibly *armes d’apparat*, or heads of staves of dignity. There is a sample in the American room at the British Museum, uninscribed. I submit that the three very curious and artistic stone axe-heads, figured by M. Cartailhac, representing, one an uncouth animal; another, a hooded human head, the third an extremely pretty girl, could never have been used for practical purposes, but were *armes d’apparat*. Perhaps such stone *armes d’apparat*, or magical or sacred arms, were not unknown, as survivals, in Scotland in the Iron

Age. A "celt" or stone axe-head of this kind, ornamented with a pattern of intercrossing lines, is figured and described by the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie (Kenmore) in the *Proceedings* of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries (1900-1901, *et seq.*). This axe-head, found near a cairn at Balnahannait, is of five inches long by two and a quarter broad. It is of "soft micaceous stone." The owners must have been acquainted with the use of the metals, Mr. Mackenzie thinks, for the stone exhibits "interlaced work of a late variety of this ornamentation." Mr. Mackenzie suggests that the ornament was perhaps added "after the axe had obtained some kind of venerated or symbolical character." This implies that a metal-working people, finding a stone axe, were puzzled by it, venerated it, and decorated it in their late style of ornament.

In that case, who, in earlier times, made an useless axe-head of soft micaceous stone, and why? It could be of no practical service. On the other hand, people who had the metals might fashion a soft stone into an *arme d'apparat*. "It cannot have been intended for ordinary use," "the axe may have been a sacred or ceremonial one," says Mr. Mackenzie, and he makes the same conjecture as to another Scottish stone axe-head.

Here, then, if Mr. Mackenzie be right, we have a soft stone axe-head, decorated with "later ornament," the property of a people who knew the metals, and regarded the object as "a sacred or ceremonial one," *enfin*, as an *arme d'apparat*.

Dr. Munro doubtless knows all that is known about *armes d'apparat*, but he unkindly forgets to credit the forger with the same amount of easily accessible information, when the forger dumps down a decorated slate spear-head, eleven inches long.

Believe me, this forger was no fool: he knew what he was about, and he must have laughed when critics said that his slate spear-heads would be useless. He expected the learned to guess what he was forging; not practicable weapons, but *armes d'apparat*; survivals of a ceremonial kind, like Mr. Mackenzie's decorated axe-head of soft stone.

That, I think, was our forger's little game; for even if he thought no more than Dr. Munro seems to do of the theory of "survivals," he knew that the theory is fashionable. "Nothing like these spear-heads . . . has hitherto been found in Scotland, so that they cannot be survivals from a previous state of things in our country," says Dr. Munro. The argument implies that there is nothing in the soil of our country of a nature still undiscovered. This is a large assumption, especially if Mr. Mackenzie be right about the sacred ceremonial decorated axe-head of soft stone. The forger, however, knew that elsewhere, if not in Scotland, there exist useless *armes d'apparat*, and he obviously meant to fake a few samples. He was misunderstood. I knew what he was doing, for it seems that "Mr. Lang . . . suggested that the spear-heads were not meant to be used as weapons, but as 'sacred things.'" I knew little; but I did know the sacred boomerang-shaped decorated Arunta churinga, and later looked up other *armes d'apparat*.

Apparently I must have "coached" the forger, and told him what kinds of things to fake. But I protest solemnly that I am innocent! He got up the subject for himself, and knew more than many of his critics. I had no more to do with the forger than M. Salomon Reinach had to do with faking the golden "tiara of Saitaphernes," bought by the Louvre for £8000. M. Reinack denies the suave suggestion that *he* was at the bottom of this imposture. I also am innocent of instructing the Clyde forger. He read books, English, French, German, American, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish.

From the *Bulletino di Palaetnologia Italiana*, vol. xi. , 1885, plate iv., and from Professor Pigorini's article there, he prigged the idea of a huge stone weapon, of no use, found in a grotto near Verona. This object is of flint, shaped like a flint arrow-head; is ten inches and a half in length, and "weighs over 3½ pounds." "Pigorini conjectured that it had some religious signification."

Inspired by this arrow-head of Gargantua, the Clyde forger came in with a still longer decorated slate spear-head, weighing I know not how much. It is here photographed (figs. 17, 18). Compare the decoration of three parallel horizontal lines with that on the broken Portuguese perforated stone (figs. 9, 10). Or did the Veronese forger come to Clyde, and carry on the business at Dumbuck? The man has read widely. Sometimes, however, he may have resorted to sources which, though excellent, are accessible and cheap, like Mr. Haddon's *Evolution in Art*. Here (p, 80) the faker could learn all that he needed to know about *armes d'apparat* in the form of stone axe-heads, "unwieldy and probably quite useless objects" found by Mr. Haddon in the chain of isles south-east of New Guinea. Mr. Romilly and Dr. Wyatt Gill attest the existence of similar axes of ceremony. "They are not intended for cleaving timber." We see "the metamorphosis of a practical object into an unpractical one."

The forger thus had sources for his great decorated slate spear-head; the smaller specimens may be sketches for that colossal work.

XXX — THE FIGURINES

Dr. Munro writes of “the carved figurines, ‘idols,’ or ‘totems,’ six in number,” four from Dumbuck, one from Langbank. Now, first, nobody knows the purpose of the rude figurines found in many sites from Japan to Troy, from Russia to the Lake Dwellings of Europe, and in West Africa, where the negroes use these figurines, when found, as “fetish,” knowing nothing of their origin (*Man*, No. 7, July, 1905). Like a figurine of a woman, found in the Dumbuck kitchen midden, they are discovered in old Japanese kitchen middens.

The astute forger, knowing that figurines were found in Japanese kitchen middens, knowing it before Y. Koganei published the fact in 1903, thought the Dumbuck kitchen midden an appropriate place for a figurine. Dr. Munro, possibly less well-informed, regards the bottom of a kitchen midden at Dumbuck as “a strange resting place for a goddess.” Now, as to “goddess” nobody knows anything. Dr. Schliemann thought that the many figurines of clay, in Troy, were meant for Hera and Athene. Nobody knows, but every one not wholly ignorant sees the absurdity of speaking of figurines as “totems”; of course the term is not Dr. Munro’s.

We know not their original meaning, but they occur “all over the place”; in amber on the Baltic coast, with grotesque faces carved in amber. In Russia and Finland, and in sites of prehistoric Egypt, on slate, and in other materials such grotesques are common. Egypt is a great centre of the Early Slate School of Art, the things ranging from slate plaques covered with disorderly scratchings “without a conscience or an aim,” to highly decorated *palettes*. There is even a perforated object like the slate crooks of M. Cartailhac, from Portugal, but rather more like the silhouette of a bird, and there are decorative mace-heads in soft stone. Some of the prehistoric figurines of human beings from Egypt are studded with “cups,” *cupules, écuelles,* or whatever we may be permitted to name them. In short, early and rude races turn out much the same set of crude works of art almost everywhere, and the extraordinary thing is, not that a few are found in a corner of Britain, but that scarce any have been found.

As to the Russo-Finnish flint figurines, Mr. Abercromby thinks that these objects may “have served as household gods or personal amulets,” and Dr. Munro regards Mr. Abercromby’s as “the most rational explanation of their meaning and purpose." He speaks of figurines of clay (the most usual material) in Carniola, Bosnia, and Transylvania. "Idols and amulets were indeed universally used in prehistoric times." "Objects which come under the same category" occur "in various parts of America." Mr. Bruce refers to M. Reinach's vast collection of designs of such figurines in *L'Anthropologie*, vol. v., 1894. Thus rude figurines in sites of many stages are very familiar objects. The forger knew it, and dumped down a few at Dumbuck. His female figurine (photographed in fig. 19), seems to me a very "plausible" figurine in itself. It does not appear to me "unlike anything in any collection in the British Isles, or elsewhere" — I mean *elsewhere*. Dr. Munro admits that it discloses "the hand of one not altogether ignorant of art." I add that it discloses the hand of one not at all ignorant of genuine prehistoric figurines representing women.

But I know nothing analogous from *British* sites. Either such things do not exist (of which we cannot be certain), or they have escaped discovery and record. Elsewhere they are, confessedly, well known to science, and therefore to the learned forger who, nobody can guess why, dumped them down with the other fraudulent results of his researches.

If the figurines be genuine, I suppose that the Clyde folk made them for the same reasons as the other peoples who did so, whatever those reasons may have been: or, like the West Africans, found them, relics of a forgotten age, and treasured them. If their reasons were religious or superstitious, how am I to know what were the theological tenets of the Clyde residents? They may have been more or less got at by Christianity, in Saint Ninian's time, but the influence might well be slight. On the other hand, neither men nor angels can explain why the forger faked his figurines, for which he certainly had a model — at least as regards the female figure — in a widely distributed archaic feminine type of "dolly." The forger knew a good deal!

Dr. Munro writes: "That the disputed objects are amusing playthings — the sportive productions of idle wags who inhabited the various sites — seems to be the most recent opinion which finds acceptance among local antiquaries. But this view involves the contemporaneity of occupancy of the respective sites, of which there is no evidence. . . ."

There is no evidence for "contemporaneity of occupancy" if Dunbuie be of 300-900 a.d., and Dumbuck and Langbank of 1556-1758. But we, and apparently Dr. Munro () have rejected the "Corporation cairn" theory, the theory of the cairn erected in 1556, or 1612, and lasting till 1758. The genuine undisputed relics, according to Dr. Munro, are such as "are commonly found on crannogs, brochs, and other early inhabited sites of Scotland." The sites are all, and the genuine relics in the sites are all "of some time between the fifth and twelfth centuries." The sites are all close to each other, the remains are all of the same period, (unless the late Celtic comb chance to be earlier,) yet Dr. Munro says that "for contemporaneity of occupancy there is no evidence." He none the less repeats the assertion that they are of "precisely the same chronological horizon." "The chronological horizon" (of Langbank and Dumbuck) "*seems to me to be precisely the same*, *viz.* a date well on in the early Iron Age, posterior to the Roman occupation of that part of Britain" ().

Thus Dr. Munro assigns to both sites "precisely the same chronological horizon," and also says that "there is no evidence" for the "contemporaneity of occupancy." This is not, as it may appear, an example of lack of logical consistency. "The range of the occupancy" (of the sites) "is uncertain, probably it was different in each case," writes Dr. Munro. No reason is given for this opinion, and as all the undisputed remains are confessedly of one stage of culture, the "wags" at all three sites were probably in the same stage of rudimentary humour and skill. If they made the things, the things are not modern forgeries. But the absence of the disputed objects from other sites of the same period remains as great a difficulty as ever. Early "wags" may have made them — but why are they only known in the three Clyde sites? Also, why are the painted pebbles only known in a few brochs of Caithness?

Have the *graffiti* on slate at St. Blane's, in Bute, been found — I mean have *graffiti* on slate like those of St. Blane's, been found elsewhere in Scotland? The kinds of art, writing, and Celtic ornament, at St. Blane's, are all familiar, but not their presence on scraps of slate. Some of the "art" of the Dumbuck things is also familiar, but not, in Scotland, on pieces of slate and shale. Whether they were done by early wags, or by a modern and rather erudite forger, I know not, of course; I only think that the question is open; is not settled by Dr. Munro.

XXXI — GROTESQUE HEADS. DISPUTED PORTUGUESE PARALLELS

Figurines are common enough things in ancient sites; by no means so common are the grotesque heads found at Dumbuck and Langbank. They have recently been found in Portugal. Did the forger know that? Did he forge them on Portuguese models? Or was it chance coincidence? Or was it undesigned parallelism? There is such a case according to Mortillet. M. de Mortillet flew upon poor Prof. Pigorini's odd things, denouncing them as forgeries; he had attacked Dr. Schliemann's finds in his violent way, and never apologised, to my knowledge.

Then a lively squabble began. Italian "archaeologists of the highest standing" backed Prof. Pigorini: Mortillet had not seen the Italian things, but he stood to his guns. Things found near Cracow were taken as corroborating the Breonio finds, also things from Volósova, in Russia. Mortillet replied by asking "why under similar conditions could not forgers" (very remote in space,) "equally fabricate objects of the same form." Is it likely?

Why should they forge similar unheard-of things in Russia, Poland, and Italy? Did the same man wander about forging, or was telepathy at work, or do forging wits jump? The Breonio controversy is undecided; "practised persons" can *not* "read the antiquities as easily as print," to quote Mr. Read. They often read them in different ways, here as fakes, there as authentic.

M. Boulle, reviewing Dr. Munro in *L'Anthropologie* (August, 1905), says that M. Cartailhac recognises the genuineness of some of the strange objects from Breonio.

But, as to our Dumbuck things, the Clyde forger went to Portugal and forged there; or the Clyde forger came from Portugal; or forging wits coincided fairly well, in Portugal and in Scotland, as earlier, at Volósova and Breonio.

In *Portugalia*, a Portuguese archaeological magazine, edited by Don Ricardo Severe, appeared an article by the Rev. Father José Brenha on the dolmens of Pouco d'Aguiar. Father Raphael Rodrigues, of that place, asked Father Brenha to excavate with him in the Christmas holidays of 1894. They published some of their discoveries in magazines, and some of the finds were welcomed by Dr. Leite de Vasconcellos, in his *Religiões da Lusitania* (vol. i.). They dug in the remote and not very cultured Transmontane province, and, in one dolmen found objects "the most extraordinary possible," says Father Brenha. There were perforated plaques with alphabetic inscriptions; stones engraved with beasts of certain or of dubious species, very fearfully and wonderfully drawn; there were stone figurines of females, as at Dumbuck; there were stones with cups and lines connecting the cups, (common in many places) and, as at Dumbuck, there were grotesque heads in stone. (See a few examples, figs. 20-24).

Figures 20, 21, 24 are cupped, or cup and duct stones; 22 is a female figurine; 23 is a heart-shaped charm stone.

On all this weighty mass of stone objects, Dr. Munro writes thus:

"Since the MS. of this volume was placed in the hands of the publishers a new side-issue regarding some strange objects, said to have been found in Portuguese dolmens, has been imported into the Clyde controversy, in which Mr. Astley has taken a prominent part. In a communication to the *Antiquary*, April, 1904, he writes: 'I will merely say here, on this point, that my arguments are brought to a scientific conclusion in my paper, 'Portuguese Parallels to Clydeside Discoveries,' reported in your issue for March, which will shortly be published.

"I have seen the article in *Portugalia* and the published 'scientific conclusion' of Mr. Astley (*Journal of B.A.A.*, April and August, 1904), and can only say that, even had I space to discuss the matter I would not do so for two reasons. First, because I see no parallelism whatever between the contrasted objects from the Portuguese dolmens and the Clyde ancient sites, beyond the fact that they are both 'queer things.' And, secondly, because some of the most eminent European scholars regard the objects described and illustrated in *Portugalia* as forgeries. The learned Director of the Musée de St. Germain, M. Saloman Reinach, thus writes about them: 'Jusqu'à nouvel ordre, c'est-à-dire jusqu'à preuve formelle du contraire je considère ces pierres sculptées et gravées comme le produit d'une mystification. J'aimerais connaitre, à ce sujet, l'opinion des autres savants du Portugal' (*Revue Archéologique*, 4th S., vol. ii., 1903,)."

I had brought the Portuguese things to the notice of English readers long before Mr. Astley did so, but that is not to the purpose.

The point is that Dr. Munro denies the parallelism between the Clyde and Portuguese objects. Yet I must hold that stone figurines of women, grotesque heads in stone, cupped stones, stones with cup and duct, stones with rays proceeding from a central point, and perforated stones with linear ornamentation, are rather "parallel," in Portugal and in Clydesdale.

So far the Scottish and the Portuguese fakers have hit on parallel lines of fraud. Meanwhile I know of no archaeologists except Portuguese archaeologists, who have seen the objects from the dolmen, and of no Portuguese archaeologist who disputes their authenticity. So there the matter rests. The parallelism appears to me to be noticeable. I do not say that the styles of art are akin, but that the artists, by a common impulse, have produced cupped stones, perforated and inscribed stones, figurines in stone, and grotesque heads in stone.

Is not this common impulse rather curious? And is suspicion of forgery to fall, in Portugal, on respectable priests, or on the very uncultured wags of Traz os Montes? Mortillet, educated by priests, hated and suspected all of them. M. Cartailhac suspected "clericals," as to the Spanish cave paintings, but acknowledged his error. I can guess no motive for the ponderous bulk of Portuguese forgeries, and am a little suspicious of the tendency to shout "Forgery" in the face of everything unfamiliar.

But the Portuguese things are suspected by M. Cartailhac, (who, however, again admits that he has been credulously incredulous before,) as well as by M. Reinach. The things ought to be inspected in themselves. I still think that they are on parallel lines with the work of the Clyde forger, who may have read about them in *A Vida Moderna* 1895, 1896, in *Archeologo Portugues*, in *Encyclopedia dar Familiar*, in various numbers, and in *Religiões da Lusitania*, vol. i. p, 342, (1897), a work by the learned Director of the Ethnological Museum of Portugal. To these sources the Dumbuck forger may have gone for inspiration.

Stated without this elegant irony, my opinion is that the parallelism of the figurines and grotesque stone faces of Villa d'Aguiar and of Clyde rather tends to suggest the genuineness of both sets of objects. But this opinion, like my opinion about the Australian and other parallelisms, is no argument against Dr. Munro, for he acknowledges none of these parallelisms. That point, — a crucial point, — are the various sets of things analogous in character or not? must be decided for each reader by himself, according to his knowledge, taste, fancy, and bias.

XXXII — DISPUTED OBJECTS FROM DUNBUIE

The faker occasionally changes his style. We have seen what slovenly designs in the archaic cup and ring and incomplete circle style he dumped down at Dumbuck. I quote Dr. Munro on his doings at Dunbuie, where the faker occasionally drops a pear-shaped slate perforated stone, with a design in cupules. Dr. Munro writes:

"The most meaningless group — if a degree of comparison be admissible in regard to a part when the whole is absolutely incomprehensible on archaeological principles — consists of a series of unprepared and irregularly shaped pieces of laminated sandstone (plate xvi.) similar to some of the stones of which the fort of Dunbuie was built, having one of their surfaces decorated with small cup-marks, sometimes symmetrically arranged so far as to indicate parts of geometrical figures, and at other times variously combined with lines and circles. Two fragments of bones, also from Dunbuie, are similarly adorned (plate xvi. nos. 13, 14). Eleven of the twelve sandstone fragments which make up the group were fractured in such a manner as to suggest that the line of fracture had intersected the original ornamentation, and had thus detached a portion of it. If this be so, there must have been originally at least two or three other portions which, if found, would fit along the margin of each of the extant portions, just as the fragments of a broken urn come together. Yet among these decorated stones not one single bit fits another, nor is any of the designs the counterpart of another. If we suppose that these decorated stones are portions of larger tablets on which the designs were completed, then either they were broken before being introduced into the debris of the fort, or the designs were intentionally executed in an incomplete state, just as they are now to be seen on the existing natural splinters of stone. The supposition that the occupiers of the fort possessed the original tablets, and that they had been smashed on the premises, is excluded by the significant fact that only one fragment of each tablet has been discovered. For, in the breaking up of such tablets, it would be inconceivable, according to the law of chances, that one portion, and only one, of each different specimen would remain while all the others had disappeared. On the other hand, the hypothesis that the occupiers of the fort carved these designs on the rough and unprepared splinters of stone in the precise manner they now come before us, seems to me to involve premeditated deception, for it is difficult to believe that such uncompleted designs could have any other finality of purpose.

Looking at these geometrical figures from the point of technique, they do not make a favourable impression in support of their genuineness. The so-called cup-marks consist of punctures of two or three different sizes, so many corresponding to one size and so many to another. The stiffness of the lines and circles reminds one more of ruler and compass than of the freehand work of prehistoric artists. The patterns are unprecedented for their strange combinations of art elements. For example, no. 9, plate xvi., looks as if it were a design for some modern machinery. The main ornament on another fragment of sandstone (no. 12), consisting of a cross and circle composed of a series of cup-marls, seems to be a completed design; but yet at the corner there are lines which are absolutely meaningless, unless we suppose that they formed part of a more enlarged tablet. Similar remarks apply to nos. 3 and 8."

Is it really contrary to "the law of chances" that, in some 1200 years of unknown fortunes, no two fragments of the same plates of red sandstone (some dozen in number) should be found at Dunbuie? Think of all that may have occurred towards the scattering of fragments of unregarded sandstone before the rise of soil hid them all from sight. Where is the smaller portion of the shattered cup and ring marked sandstone block found in the Lochlee crannog? On the other hand, in the same crannog, a hammerstone broken in two was found, each half in a different place, as were two parts of a figurine at Dumbuck. Where are the arms of the Venus of Milo, vainly sought beside and around the rest of the statue? Where are the lost noses, arms, and legs of thousands of statues? Nobody can guess where they are or how they vanished. Or where are the lost fragments of countless objects in pottery found in old sites?

It was as easy for the forger to work over a whole plaque of sandstone, break it, and bury the pieces, as for him to do what he has done.

These designs make an unfavourable impression because some, not all of them, are stiff and regular. The others make an unfavourable impression because they are so laxly executed. For what conceivable purpose did the forger here resort to the aid of compasses, and elsewhere do nothing of the kind? Why should the artist, if an old resident of Dunbuie fort, not have compasses, like the Cairn-wight of Lough Crew?

On inspecting the pieces, in the Museum, the regularity of design seems to me to be much exaggerated in Dr. Munro's figures, by whom drawn we are not informed.

As to Dr. Munro's figure 12, it seems to me to aim at a Celtic cross and circle, while part of his figure 3 suggests a crozier, and there is a cross on figure 18, as on a painted pebble from a broch in Caithness. The rest I cannot profess to explain; they look like idle work on sandstone, but may have had a meaning to their fashioner. His meaning, and that of the forger who here changes his style, are equally inscrutable.

I return to a strange perforated pebble, an intaglio from Dumbuck.

Dr. Munro quotes, as to this pebble, the *Journal* of the British Archaeological Association: "In the September number of the *Journal* () we are informed that a slaty spear-head, an arrow-head of bone, and a sinker stone were found in the débris inside the canoe. 'In the cavity of a large bone,' says the writer, 'was also got an ornament of a peculiar stone. The digger unearthed it from the deposit at the bottom of the canoe, about 14 feet from the bow and near to a circular hole cut in the bottom about 3½ inches in diameter.' What a funny place to hide a precious ornament, for I take this peculiar stone to be that with the human hand incised on one side and three men rowing in a boat on the other! (see plate xv. no. 10)."

Here the place of discovery in the canoe is given with precision, and its place within the cavity of the bone is pronounced by Dr. Munro to be "funny." As to the three men in a boat, the Rev. Geo. Wilson of Glenluce, on Feb. 14, 1887, presented to the Scots Antiquaries a bugle-shaped pendant of black shale or cannel-coal 2¼ inches long, with a central groove for suspension. On one side of the pendant was incised a sketch of two figures standing up in a boat or canoe with a high prow. The pendant is undisputed, the pebble is disputed, and we know nothing more about the matter (see fig. 25).

XXXIII — DISPUTABLE AND CERTAINLY FORGED OBJECTS

In his judicious remarks to the Society of Antiquaries, (*Proceedings*, xxxiv.,) Dr. Joseph Anderson observed that opinions would probably vary as to certain among the disputed objects. Among these are the inscribed oyster shells. I see nothing *a priori* improbable in the circumstance that men who incised certain patterns on schist or shale, should do so on oyster shells. Palaeolithic man did his usual sporting sketches on shells, and there was a vast and varied art of designing on shells among the pre-Columbian natives of North America. We here see the most primitive scratches developing into full-blown Aztec art.

If the markings were only on such inscribed shells as mouldered away — so Mr. Bruce tells us — when exposed to light and air, (I do not know whether the designs were copied before the shells crumbled,) these conchological drawings would not trouble us. No modern could make the designs on shells that were hurrying into dust. We have Mr. Bruce's word for these mouldering shells, and we have the absolute certainty that such decomposing shells could not be incised by a hand of to-day, as shale, slate, schist, and sandstone can now be engraved upon, fraudulently.

But when, as Professor Boyd Dawkins writes, the finds include "two fresh shells . . . unmistakable Blue Points," drilled with perforations, or inscribed, from Dunbuie, then there are only two possible alternatives.

1. They were made by the faker, or
2. They were "interpolated" into the Dunbuie site by somebody.

The forger himself is, I think, far too knowing a man to fake inscriptions on fresh shells, even if, not being a conchologist, he did not know that the oysters were American blue points.

I have written in vain if the reader, while believing in the hypothesis of a forger, thinks him such an egregious ass. For Blue Points as non-existent save in America, 1 rely on Prof. Boyd Dawkins.

As the public were allowed to break off and steal the prow of the Dumbuck canoe, it is plain that no guard was placed on the sites. They lay open for months to the interpolations of wags, and I think, for my own part, that one of them is likely to have introduced the famous blue points.

Dr. Munro tells us how a "large-worked stone," a grotesque head, was foisted through a horizontal hole, into the relic bed of his kitchen midden at Elie. "It lay under four inches of undisturbed black earth.” But it had been “interpolated” there by some “lousy tykes of Fife,” as the anti-covenanting song calls them.

It was rather easier to interpolate Blue Point oyster shells at Dunbuie. On the other hand, two splinters of stone, inserted into a bone and a tyne of deer’s horn, figured by Dr. Munro among Dumbuck and Dunbuie finds, seem to me rather too stupid fakes for the regular forger, and a trifle too clever for the Sunday holiday-maker. These two things I do not apologise for, or defend; my knowledge of primitive implements is that of a literary man, but for what it is worth, it does not incline me to regard these things as primitive implements.

XXXIV — CONCLUSION

Explicit! I have tried to show cause why we should not bluntly dismiss the mass of disputed objects as forgeries, but should rest in a balance of judgment, file the objects for reference, and await the results of future excavations. If there be a faker, I hope he appreciates my sympathetic estimate of his knowledge, assiduity, and skill in *leger de main*.

I am the forger's only friend, and I ask him to come forward and make a clean breast of it, like the young men who hoaxed the Society for Psychical Research with a faked wraith, or phantasm of the living.

"Let it fully now suffice,
  The gambol has been shown!"

It seems to me nearly equally improbable that a forger has been at work on a large scale, and that sets of objects, unexampled in our isle, have really turned up in some numbers. But then the Caithness painted pebbles were equally without precedent, yet are undisputed. The proverbial fence seems, in these circumstances, to be the appropriate perch for Science, in fact a statue of the Muse of Science might represent her as sitting, in contemplation, on the fence. The strong, the very strong point against authenticity is this: *numbers* of the disputed objects were found in sites of the early *Iron Age*. Now such objects, save for a few samples, are only known, — and that in non-British lands, — in *Neolithic* sites. The theory of survival may be thought not to cover the *number* of the disputed objects.

THE PUZZLE OF DICKENS'S LAST PLOT

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INTRODUCTION

Forster tells us that Dickens, in his later novels, from *Bleak House* onwards (1853), “assiduously cultivated” construction, “this essential of his art.” Some critics may think, that since so many of the best novels in the world “have no outline, or, if they have an outline, it is a demned outline,” elaborate construction is not absolutely “essential.” Really essential are character, “atmosphere,” humour.

But as, in the natural changes of life, and under the strain of restless and unsatisfied activity, his old buoyancy and unequalled high spirits deserted Dickens, he certainly wrote no longer in what Scott, speaking of himself, calls the manner of “hab nab at a venture.” He constructed elaborate plots, rich in secrets and surprises. He emulated the manner of Wilkie Collins, or even of Gaboriau, while he combined with some of the elements of the detective novel, or *roman policier*, careful study of character. Except *Great Expectations*, none of his later tales rivals in merit his early picaresque stories of the road, such as *Pickwick* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. “Youth will be served;” no sedulous care could compensate for the exuberance of “the first sprightly runnings.” In the early books the melodrama of the plot, the secrets of Ralph Nickleby, of Monk, of Jonas Chuzzlewit, were the least of the innumerable attractions. But Dickens was more and more drawn towards the secret that excites curiosity, and to the game of hide and seek with the reader who tried to anticipate the solution of the secret.

In April, 1869, Dickens, outworn by the strain of his American readings; of that labour achieved under painful conditions of ominously bad health - found himself, as Sir Thomas Watson reported, “on the brink of an attack of paralysis of his left side, and possibly of apoplexy.” He therefore abandoned a new series of Readings. We think of Scott’s earlier seizures of a similar kind, after which *Peveril*, he said, “smacked of the apoplexy.” But Dickens’s new story of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, first contemplated in July, 1869, and altered in character by the emergence of “a very curious and new idea,” early in August, does not “smack of the apoplexy.” We may think that the mannerisms of Mr. Honeythunder, the philanthropist, and of Miss Twinkleton, the schoolmistress, are not in the author’s best vein of humour. “The Billickin,” on the other hand, the lodging-house keeper, is “in very gracious fooling:” her unlooked-for sallies in skirmishes with Miss Twinkleton are rich in mirthful surprises. Mr.

Grewgious may be caricatured too much, but not out of reason; and Dickens, always good at boys, presents a *gamin*, in Deputy, who is in not unpleasant contrast with the pathetic Jo of *Bleak House*. Opinions may differ as to Edwin and Rosa, but the more closely one studies Edwin, the better one thinks of that character. As far as we are allowed to see Helena Landless, the restraint which she puts on her "tigerish blood" is admirable: she is very fresh and original. The villain is all that melodrama can desire, but what we do miss, I think, is the "atmosphere" of a small cathedral town. Here there is a lack of softness and delicacy of treatment: on the other hand, the opium den is studied from the life.

On the whole, Dickens himself was perhaps most interested in his plot, his secret, his surprises, his game of hide and seek with the reader. He threw himself into the sport with zest: he spoke to his sister-in-law, Miss Hogarth, about his fear that he had not sufficiently concealed his tracks in the latest numbers. Yet, when he died in June, 1870, leaving three completed numbers still unpublished, he left his secret as a puzzle to the curious. Many efforts have been made to decipher his purpose, especially his intentions as to the hero. Was Edwin Drood killed, or did he escape?

By a coincidence, in September, 1869, Dickens was working over the late Lord Lytton's tale for *All The Year Round*, "The Disappearance of John Ackland," for the purpose of mystifying the reader as to whether Ackland was alive or dead. But he was conspicuously defunct! (*All the Year Round*, September-October, 1869.)

The most careful of the attempts at a reply about Edwin, a study based on deep knowledge of Dickens, is "Watched by the Dead," by the late ingenious Mr. R. A. Proctor (1887). This book, to which I owe much aid, is now out of print. In 1905, Mr. Cuming Walters revived "the auld mysterie," in his "Clues to Dickens's Edwin Drood" (Chapman & Hall and Heywood, Manchester). From the solution of Mr. Walters I am obliged to dissent. Of Mr. Proctor's theory I offer some necessary corrections, and I hope that I have unravelled some skeins which Mr. Proctor left in a state of tangle. As one read and re-read the fragment, points very dark seemed, at least, to become suddenly clear: especially one appeared to understand the meaning half-revealed and half-concealed by Jasper's babblings under the influence of opium. He saw in his vision, "*that*, I never saw *that* before." We may be sure that he was to see "*that*" in real life. We must remember that, according to Forster, "such was Dickens's interest in things supernatural that, but for the strong restraining power of his common sense, he might have fallen into the follies of spiritualism." His interest in such matters certainly peeps out in this novel - there are two specimens of the supernormal - and he may have gone to the limited extent which my hypothesis requires. If I am right, Dickens went further, and fared worse, in the too material premonitions of "The Signalman" in *Mugby Junction*.

With this brief preface, I proceed to the analysis of Dickens's last plot. Mr. William Archer has kindly read the proof sheets and made valuable suggestions, but is responsible for none of my theories.

ANDREW LANG.

ST. ANDREWS,
September 4, 1905.

THE STORY - DRAMATIS PERSONAE

For the discovery of Dickens's secret in *Edwin Drood* it is necessary to obtain a clear view of the characters in the tale, and of their relations to each other.

About the middle of the nineteenth century there lived in Cloisterham, a cathedral city sketched from Rochester, a young University man, Mr. Bud, who had a friend Mr. Drood, one of a firm of engineers - somewhere. They were "fast friends and old college companions." Both married young. Mr. Bud wedded a lady unnamed, by whom he was the father of one child, a daughter, Rosa Bud. Mr. Drood, whose wife's maiden name was Jasper, had one son, Edwin Drood. Mrs. Bud was drowned in a boating accident, when her daughter, Rosa, was a child. Mr. Drood, already a widower, and the bereaved Mr. Bud "betrothed" the two children, Rosa and Edwin, and then expired, when the orphans were about seven and eleven years old. The guardian of Rosa was a lawyer, Mr. Grewgious, who had been in love with her mother. To Grewgious Mr. Bud entrusted his wife's engagement ring, rubies and diamonds, which Grewgious was to hand over to Edwin Drood, if, when he attained his majority, he and Rosa decided to marry.

Grewgious was apparently legal agent for Edwin, while Edwin's maternal uncle, John Jasper (aged about sixteen when the male parents died), was Edwin's "trustee," as well as his uncle and devoted friend. Rosa's little fortune was an annuity producing £250 a-year: Edwin succeeded to his father's share in an engineering firm.

When the story opens, Edwin is nearly twenty-one, and is about to proceed to Egypt, as an engineer. Rosa, at school in Cloisterham, is about seventeen; John Jasper is twenty-six. He is conductor of the Choir of the Cathedral, a "lay precentor;" he is very dark, with thick black whiskers, and, for a number of years, has been a victim to the habit of opium smoking. He began very early. He takes this drug both in his lodgings, over the gate of the Cathedral, and in a den in East London, kept by a woman nicknamed "The Princess Puffer." This hag, we learn, has been a determined drunkard, - "I drank heaven's-hard," - for sixteen years *before* she took to opium. If she has been dealing in opium for ten years (the exact period is not stated), she has been very disreputable for twenty-six years, that is ever since John Jasper's birth. Mr. Cuming Walters suggests that she is the mother of John Jasper, and, therefore, maternal grandmother of Edwin Drood. She detests her client, Jasper, and plays the spy on his movements, for reasons unexplained.

Jasper is secretly in love with Rosa, the *fiancée* of his nephew, and his own pupil in the musical art. He makes her aware of his passion, silently, and she fears and detests him, but keeps these emotions private. She is a saucy school-girl, and she and Edwin are on uncomfortable terms: she does not love him, while he perhaps does love her, but is annoyed by her manner, and by the gossip about their betrothal. "The bloom is off the plum" of their prearranged loves, he says to his friend, uncle, and confidant, Jasper, whose own concealed passion for Rosa is of a ferocious and homicidal character. Rosa is aware of this fact; "a glaze comes over his eyes," sometimes, she says, "and he seems to wander away into a frightful sort of dream, in which he threatens most . . . " The man appears to have these frightful dreams even when he is not under opium.

OPENING OF THE TALE

The tale opens abruptly with an opium-bred vision of the tower of Cloisterham Cathedral, beheld by Jasper as he awakens in the den of the Princess Puffer, between a Chinaman, a Lascar, and the hag herself. This Cathedral tower, thus early and emphatically introduced, is to play a great but more or less mysterious part in the romance: that is certain. Jasper, waking, makes experiments on the talk of the old woman, the Lascar and Chinaman in their sleep. He pronounces it "unintelligible," which satisfies him that his own babble, when under opium, must be unintelligible also. He is, presumably, acquainted with the languages of the eastern coast of India, and with Chinese, otherwise, how could he hope to understand the sleepers? He is being watched by the hag, who hates him.

Jasper returns to Cloisterham, where we are introduced to the Dean, a nonentity, and to Minor Canon Crisparkle, a muscular Christian in the pink of training, a classical scholar, and a good honest fellow. Jasper gives Edwin a dinner, and gushes over "his bright boy," a lively lad, full of chaff, but also full of confiding affection and tenderness of heart. Edwin admits that his betrothal is a bore: Jasper admits that he loathes his life; and that the church singing "often sounds to me quite devilish," - and no wonder. After this dinner, Jasper has a "weird seizure;" "a strange film comes over Jasper's eyes," he "looks frightfully ill," becomes rigid, and admits that he "has been taking opium for a pain, an agony that sometimes overcomes me." This "agony," we learn, is the pain of hearing Edwin speak lightly of his love, whom Jasper so furiously desires. "Take it as a warning," Jasper says, but Edwin, puzzled, and full of confiding tenderness, does not understand.

In the next scene we meet the school-girl, Rosa, who takes a walk and has a tiff with Edwin. Sir Luke Fildes's illustration shows Edwin as "a lad with the bloom of a lass," with a *classic profile*; *and a gracious head of long, thick, fair hair*, long, though we learn it has just been cut. He wears a soft slouched hat, and the pea-coat of the period.

SAPSEA AND DURDLES

Next, Jasper and Sapsea, a pompous ass, auctioneer, and mayor, sit at their wine, expecting a third guest. Mr. Sapsea reads his absurd epitaph for his late wife, who is buried in a "Monument," a vault of some sort in the Cathedral churchyard. To them enter Durdles, a man never sober, yet trusted with the key of the crypt, "as contractor for rough repairs." In the crypt "he habitually sleeps off the fumes of liquor." Of course no Dean would entrust keys to this incredibly dissipated, dirty, and insolent creature, to whom Sapsea gives the key of his vault, for no reason at all, as the epitaph, of course, is to be engraved on the outside, by Durdles's men. However, Durdles insists on getting the key of the vault: he has two other large keys. Jasper, trifling with them, keeps clinking them together, so as to know, even in the dark, by the sound, which is the key that opens Sapsea's vault, in the railed-off burial ground, beside the cloister arches. He has met Durdles at Sapsea's for no other purpose than to obtain access at will to Mrs. Sapsea's monument. Later in the evening Jasper finds Durdles more or less drunk, and being stoned by a *gamin*, "Deputy," a retainer of a tramp's lodging-house. Durdles fees Deputy, in fact, to drive him home every night after ten. Jasper and Deputy fall into feud, and Jasper has thus a new, keen, and omnipresent enemy. As he walks with Durdles that worthy explains (in reply to a question by Jasper), that, by tapping a wall, even if over six feet thick, with his hammer, he can detect the nature of the contents of the vault, "solid in hollow, and inside solid, hollow again. Old 'un crumbled away in stone coffin, in vault." He can also discover the presence of "rubbish left in that same six foot space by Durdles's men." Thus, if a foreign body were introduced into the Sapsea vault, Durdles could detect its presence by tapping the outside wall. As Jasper's purpose clearly is to introduce a foreign body - that of Edwin who stands between him and Rosa - into Mrs. Sapsea's vault, this "gift" of Durdles is, for Jasper, an uncomfortable discovery. He goes home, watches Edwin asleep, and smokes opium.

THE LANDLESSES

Two new characters are now introduced, Neville and Helena Landless, twins, orphans, of Cingalese extraction, probably Eurasian; very dark, the girl "almost of the gipsy type;" both are "fierce of look." The young man is to read with Canon Crisparkle and live with him; the girl goes to the same school as Rosa. The education of both has been utterly neglected; instruction has been denied to them. Neville explains the cause of their fierceness to Crisparkle. In Ceylon they were bullied by a cruel stepfather and several times ran away: the girl was the leader, always "*dressed as a boy, and showing the daring of a man*." Edwin Drood's air of supercilious ownership of Rosa Bud (indicated as a fault of youth and circumstance, not of heart and character), irritates Neville Landless, who falls in love with Rosa at first sight. As Rosa sings, at Crisparkle's, while Jasper plays the piano, Jasper's fixed stare produces an hysterical fit in the girl, who is soothed by Helena Landless. Helena shows her aversion to Jasper, who, as even Edwin now sees, frightens Rosa. "You would be afraid of him, under similar circumstances, wouldn't you, Miss Landless?" asks Edwin. "Not under any circumstances," answers Helena, and Jasper "thanks Miss Landless for this vindication of his character."

The girls go back to their school, where Rosa explains to Helena her horror of Jasper's silent love-making: "I feel that I am never safe from him . . . a glaze comes over his eyes and he seems to wander away into a frightful sort of dream in which he threatens most," as already quoted. Helena thus, and she alone, except Rosa, understands Jasper thoroughly. She becomes Rosa's protectress. "*Let whomsoever it most concerned look well to it*."

Thus Jasper has a new observer and enemy, in addition to the omnipresent street boy, Deputy, and the detective old hag of the opium den.

Leaving the Canon's house, Neville and Edwin quarrel violently over Rosa, in the open air; they are followed by Jasper, and taken to his house to be reconciled over glasses of mulled wine. Jasper drugs the wine, and thus provokes a violent scene; next day he tells Crisparkle that Neville is "murderous." "There is something of the tiger in his dark blood." He spreads the story of the *fracas* in the town.

Grewgious, Rosa's guardian, now comes down on business; the girl fails to explain to him the unsatisfactory relations between her and Edwin: Grewgious is to return to her "at Christmas," if she sends for him, and she does send.

Grewgious, “an angular man,” all duty and sentiment (he had loved Rosa’s mother), has an interview with Edwin’s trustee, Jasper, for whom he has no enthusiasm, but whom he does not in any way suspect. They part on good terms, to meet at Christmas. Crisparkle, with whom Helena has fallen suddenly in love, arranges with Jasper that Edwin and Landless shall meet and be reconciled, as both are willing to be, at a dinner in Jasper’s rooms, on Christmas Eve. Jasper, when Crisparkle proposes this, denotes by his manner “some close internal calculation.” We see that he is reckoning how the dinner suits his plan of campaign, and “*close* calculation” may refer, as in Mr. Proctor’s theory, to the period of the moon: *on Christmas Eve there will be no moonshine at midnight.* Jasper, having worked out this problem, accepts Crisparkle’s proposal, and his assurances about Neville, and shows Crisparkle a diary in which he has entered his fears that Edwin’s life is in danger from Neville. Edwin (who is not in Cloisterham at this moment) accepts, by letter, the invitation to meet Neville at Jasper’s on Christmas Eve.

Meanwhile Edwin visits Grewgious in his London chambers; is lectured on his laggard and supercilious behaviour as a lover, and receives the engagement ring of the late Mrs. Bud, Rosa’s mother, which is very dear to Grewgious - in the presence of Bazzard, Grewgious’s clerk, a gloomy writer of an amateur unacted tragedy. Edwin is to return the ring to Grewgious, if he and Rosa decide not to marry. The ring is in a case, and Edwin places it “in his breast.” We must understand, in the breast-pocket of his coat: no other interpretation will pass muster. “Her ring - will it come back to me?” reflects the mournful Grewgious.

THE UNACCOUNTABLE EXPEDITION

Jasper now tells Sapsea, and the Dean, that he is to make “a moonlight expedition with Durdles among the tombs, vaults, towers, and ruins to-night.” The impossible Durdles has the keys necessary for this, “surely an unaccountable expedition,” Dickens keeps remarking. The moon seems to rise on this night at about 7.30 p.m. Jasper takes a big case-bottle of liquor - drugged, of course and goes to the den of Durdles. In the yard of this inspector of monuments he is bidden to beware of a mound of quicklime near the yard gate. “With a little handy stirring, quick enough to eat your bones,” says Durdles. There is some considerable distance between this “mound” of quicklime and the crypt, of which Durdles has the key, but the intervening space is quite empty of human presence, as the citizens are unwilling to meet ghosts.

In the crypt Durdles drinks a good deal of the drugged liquor. "They are to ascend the great Tower," - and why they do that is part of the Mystery, though not an insoluble part. Before they climb, Durdles tells Jasper that he was drunk and asleep in the crypt, last Christmas Eve, and was wakened by "the ghost of one terrific shriek, followed by the ghost of the howl of a dog, a long dismal, woeful howl, such as a dog gives when a person's dead." Durdles has made inquiries and, as no one else heard the shriek and the howl, he calls these sounds "ghosts."

They are obviously meant to be understood as supranormal premonitory sounds; of the nature of second sight, or rather of second hearing. Forster gives examples of Dickens's tendency to believe in such premonitions: Dickens had himself a curious premonitory dream. He considerably overdid the premonitory business in his otherwise excellent story, *The Signalman*, or so it seems to a student of these things. The shriek and howl heard by Durdles are to be repeated, we see, in real life, later, on a Christmas Eve. The question is - when? More probably *not* on the Christmas Eve just imminent, when Edwin is to vanish, but, on the Christmas Eve following, when Jasper is to be unmasked.

All this while, and later, Jasper examines Durdles very closely, studying the effects on him of the drugged drink. When they reach the top of the tower, Jasper closely contemplates "that stillest part of it" (the landscape) "which the Cathedral overshadows; but he contemplates Durdles quite as curiously."

There is a motive for the scrutiny in either case. Jasper examines the part of the precincts in the shadow of the Cathedral, because he wishes to assure himself that it is lonely enough for his later undescribed but easily guessed proceedings in this night of mystery. He will have much to do that could not brook witnesses, after the drugged Durdles has fallen sound asleep. We have already been assured that the whole area over which Jasper is to operate is "utterly deserted," even when it lies in full moonlight, about 8.30 p.m. "One might fancy that the tide of life was stemmed by Mr. Jasper's own gate-house." The people of Cloisterham, we hear, would deny that they believe in ghosts; but they give this part of the precinct a wide berth (Chapter XII.). If the region is "utterly deserted" at nine o'clock in the evening, when it lies in the ivory moonlight, much more will it be free from human presence when it lies in shadow, between one and two o'clock after midnight. Jasper, however, from the tower top closely scrutinizes the area of his future operations. It is, probably, for this very purpose of discovering whether the coast be clear or not, that Jasper climbs the tower. He watches Durdles for the purpose of finding how the drug which he has administered works, with a view to future operations on Edwin. Durdles is now in such a state that "he deems the ground so far below on a level with the tower, and would as lief walk off the tower into the air as not."

All this is apparently meant to suggest that Jasper, on Christmas Eve, will repeat his expedition, *with Edwin*, whom he will have drugged, and that he will allow Edwin to "walk off the tower into the air." There are later suggestions to the same effect, as we shall see, but they are deliberately misleading. There are also strong suggestions to the very opposite effect: it is broadly indicated that Jasper is to strangle Edwin with a thick black-silk scarf, which he has just taken to wearing for the good of his throat.

The pair return to the crypt, Durdles falls asleep, dreams that Jasper leaves him, "and that something touches him and something falls from his hand. Then something clinks and gropes about," and the lines of moonlight shift their direction, as Durdles finds that they have really done when he wakens, with Jasper beside him, while the Cathedral clock strikes two. They have had many hours, not less than five, for their expedition. The key of the crypt lies beside Durdles on the ground. They go out, and as Deputy begins stone-throwing, Jasper half strangles him.

PURPOSE OF THE EXPEDITION

Jasper has had ample time to take models in wax of all Durdles's keys. But he could have done that in a few minutes, while Durdles slept, if he had wax with him, without leaving the crypt. He has also had time to convey several wheelbarrowfuls of quicklime from Durdles's yard to Mrs. Sapsea's sepulchre, of which monument he probably took the key from Durdles, and tried its identity by clinking. But even in a Cathedral town, even after midnight, several successive expeditions of a lay precentor with a wheelbarrow full of quicklime would have been apt to attract the comment of some belated physician, some cleric coming from a sick bed, or some local roysterers. Therefore it is that Dickens insists on the "utterly deserted" character of the area, and shows us that Jasper has made sure of that essential fact by observations from the tower top. Still, his was a perilous expedition, with his wheelbarrow! We should probably learn later, that Jasper was detected by the wakeful Deputy, who loathed him. Moreover, next morning Durdles was apt to notice that some of his quicklime had been removed. As far as is shown, Durdles noticed nothing of that kind, though he does observe peculiarities in Jasper's behaviour.

The next point in the tale is that Edwin and Rosa meet, and have sense enough to break off their engagement. But Edwin, represented as really good-hearted, now begins to repent his past behaviour, and, though he has a kind of fancy for Miss Landless, he pretty clearly falls deeper in love with his late *fiancée*, and weeps his loss in private: so we are told.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Christmas Eve comes, the day of the dinner of three, Jasper, Landless, and Edwin. The chapter describing this fateful day (xiv.) is headed, *When shall these Three meet again*? and Mr. Proctor argues that Dickens intends that *they shall* meet again. The intention, and the hint, are much in Dickens's manner. Landless means to start, next day, very early, on a solitary walking tour, and buys an exorbitantly heavy stick. We casually hear that Jasper knows Edwin to possess no jewellery, except a watch and chain and a scarf-pin. As Edwin moons about, he finds the old opium hag, come down from London, "seeking a needle in a bottle of hay," she says - that is, hunting vainly for Jasper.

Please remark that Jasper has run up to town, on December 23, and has saturated his system with a debauch of opium on the very eve of the day when he clearly means to kill Edwin. This was a most injudicious indulgence, in the circumstances. A maiden murder needs nerve! We know that "fiddlestrings was weakness to express the state of" Jasper's "nerves" on the day after the night of opium with which the story opens. On December 24, Jasper returned home, the hag at his heels. The old woman, when met by Edwin, has a curious film over her eyes; "he seems to know her." "Great heaven," he thinks, next moment. "Like Jack that night!" This refers to a kind of fit of Jasper's, after dinner, on the first evening of the story. Edwin has then seen Jack Jasper in one of his "filmy" seizures. The woman prays Edwin for three shillings and sixpence, to buy opium. He gives her the money; she asks his Christian name. "Edwin." Is "Eddy" a sweetheart's form of that? He says that he has no sweetheart. He is told to be thankful that his name is not Ned. Now, Jasper alone calls Edwin "Ned." "'Ned' is a threatened name, a dangerous name," says the hag, who has heard Jasper threaten "Ned" in his opium dreams.

Edwin determines to tell this adventure to Jasper, *but not on this night*: to-morrow will do. Now, *did* he tell the story to Jasper that night, in the presence of Landless, at dinner? If so, Helena Landless might later learn the fact from Neville. If she knew it, she would later tell Mr. Grewgious.

The three men meet and dine. There is a fearful storm. "Stones are displaced upon the summit of the great tower." Next morning, early, Jasper yells to

Crisparkle, who is looking out of his window in Minor Canon Row, that Edwin has disappeared. Neville has already set out on his walking tour.

AFTER THE DISAPPEARANCE

Men go forth and apprehend Neville, who shows fight with his heavy stick. We learn that he and Drood left Jasper's house at midnight, went for ten minutes to look at the river under the wind, and parted at Crisparkle's door. Neville now remains under suspicion: Jasper directs the search in the river, on December 25, 26, and 27. On the evening of December 27, Grewgious visits Jasper. Now, Grewgious, as we know, was to be at Cloisterham at Christmas. True, he was engaged to dine on Christmas Day with Bazzard, his clerk; but, thoughtful as he was of the moody Bazzard, as Edwin was leaving Cloisterham he would excuse himself. He would naturally take a great part in the search for Edwin, above all as Edwin had in his possession the ring so dear to the lawyer. Edwin had not shown it to Rosa when they determined to part. He "kept it in his breast," and the ring, we learn, was "*gifted with invincible force to hold and drag*," so Dickens warns us.

The ring is obviously to be a *pièce de conviction*. But our point, at present, is that we do not know how Grewgious, to whom this ring was so dear, employed himself at Cloisterham - after Edwin's disappearance - between December 25 and December 27. On the evening of the 27th, he came to Jasper, saying, "I have *just left Miss Landless*." He then slowly and watchfully told Jasper that Edwin's engagement was broken off, while the precentor gasped, perspired, tore his hair, shrieked, and finally subsided into a heap of muddy clothes on the floor. Meanwhile, Mr. Grewgious, calmly observing these phenomena, warmed his hands at the fire for some time before he called in Jasper's landlady.

Grewgious now knows by Jasper's behaviour that he believes himself to have committed a superfluous crime, by murdering Edwin, who no longer stood between him and Rosa, as their engagement was already at an end. Whether a Jasper, in real life, would excite himself so much, is another question. We do not know, as Mr. Proctor insists, what Mr. Grewgious had been doing at Cloisterham between Christmas Day and December 27, the date of his experiment on Jasper's nerves. Mr. Proctor supposes him to have met the living Edwin, and obtained information from him, after his escape from a murderous attack by Jasper. Mr. Proctor insists that this is the only explanation of Grewgious's conduct, any other "is absolutely impossible." In that case the experiment of Grewgious was not made to gain information from Jasper's demeanour, but was the beginning of his punishment, and was intended by Grewgious to be so.

But Dickens has been careful to suggest, with suspicious breadth of candour, another explanation of the source of Grewgious's knowledge. If Edwin has really escaped, and met Grewgious, Dickens does not want us to be sure of that, as Mr. Proctor was sure. Dickens deliberately puts his readers on another trail, though neither Mr. Walters nor Mr. Proctor struck the scent. As we have noted, Grewgious at once says to Jasper, "*I have just come from Miss Landless*." This tells Jasper nothing, but it tells a great deal to the watchful reader, who remembers that Miss Landless, and she only, is aware that Jasper loves, bullies, and insults Rosa, and that Rosa's life is embittered by Jasper's silent wooing, and his unspoken threats. Helena may also know that "Ned is a threatened name," as we have seen, and that the menace comes from Jasper. As Jasper is now known to be Edwin's rival in love, and as Edwin has vanished, the murderer, Mr. Grewgious reckons, is Jasper; and his experiment, with Jasper's consequent shriek and fit, confirms the hypothesis. Thus Grewgious had information enough, from Miss Landless, to suggest his experiment - Dickens intentionally made that clear (though not clear enough for Mr. Proctor and Mr. Cuming Walters) - while his experiment gives him a moral certainty of Jasper's crime, but yields no legal evidence.

But does Grewgious know no more than what Helena, and the fit and shriek of Jasper, have told him? Is his knowledge limited to the evidence that Jasper has murdered Edwin? Or does Grewgious know more, know that Edwin, in some way, has escaped from death?

That is Dickens's secret. But whereas Grewgious, if he believes Jasper to be an actual murderer, should take him seriously; in point of fact, he speaks of Jasper in so light a tone, as "our local friend," that we feel no certainty that he is not really aware of Edwin's escape from a murderous attack by Jasper, and of his continued existence.

Presently Crisparkle, under some mysterious impression, apparently telepathic (the book is rich in such psychical phenomena), visits the weir on the river, at night, and next day finds Edwin's watch and chain in the timbers; his scarf-pin in the pool below. The watch and chain must have been placed purposely where they were found, they could not float thither, and, if Neville had slain Edwin, he would not have stolen his property, of course, except as a blind, neutralised by the placing of the watch in a conspicuous spot. However, the increased suspicions drive Neville away to read law in Staple Inn, where Grewgious also dwells, and incessantly watches Neville out of his window.

About six months later, Helena Landless is to join Neville, who is watched at intervals by Jasper, who, again, is watched by Grewgious as the precentor lurks about Staple Inn.

DICK DATCHERY

About the time when Helena leaves Cloisterham for town, a new character appears in Cloisterham, “a white-headed personage with black eyebrows, *buttoned up in a tightish blue surtout*, with a buff waistcoat, grey trowsers, and something of a military air.” His shock of white hair was unusually thick and ample. This man, “a buffer living idly on his means,” named Datchery, is either, as Mr. Proctor believed, Edwin Drood, or, as Mr. Walters thinks, Helena Landless. By making Grewgious drop the remark that Bazzard, his clerk, a moping owl of an amateur tragedian, “is off duty here,” at his chambers, Dickens hints that Bazzard is Datchery. But that is a mere false scent, a ruse of the author, scattering paper in the wrong place, in this long paper hunt.

As for Helena, Mr. Walters justly argues that Dickens has marked her for some important part in the ruin of Jasper. “There was a slumbering gleam of fire in her intense dark eyes. Let whomsoever it most concerned look well to it.” Again, we have been told that Helena had high courage. She had told Jasper that she feared him “in no circumstances whatever.” Again, we have learned that in childhood she had dressed as a boy when she ran away from home; and she had the motives of protecting Rosa and her brother, Neville, from the machinations of Jasper, who needs watching, as he is trying to ruin Neville’s already dilapidated character, and, by spying on him, to break down his nerve. Really, of course, Neville is quite safe. There is no *corpus delicti*, no carcase of the missing Edwin Drood.

For the reasons given, Datchery might be Helena in disguise.

If so, the idea is highly ludicrous, while nothing is proved either by the blackness of Datchery’s eyebrows (Helena’s were black), or by Datchery’s habit of carrying his hat under his arm, not on his head. A person who goes so far as to wear a conspicuous white wig, would not be afraid also to dye his eyebrows black, if he were Edwin; while either Edwin or Helena *must* have “made up” the face, by the use of paint and sham wrinkles. Either Helena or Edwin would have been detected in real life, of course, but we allow for the accepted fictitious convention of successful disguise, and for the necessities of the novelist. A tightly buttoned surtout would show Helena’s feminine figure; but let that also pass. As to the hat, Edwin's own hair was long and thick: add a wig, and his hat would be a burden to him.

What is most unlike the stern, fierce, sententious Helena, is Datchery's habit of "chaffing." He fools the ass of a Mayor, Sapsea, by most exaggerated diference: his tone is always that of indolent mockery, which one doubts whether the "intense" and concentrated Helena could assume. He takes rooms in the same house as Jasper, to whom, as to Durdles and Deputy, he introduces himself on the night of his arrival at Cloisterham. He afterwards addresses Deputy, the little *gamin*, by the name "Winks," which is given to him by the people at the Tramps' lodgings: the name is a secret of Deputy's.

JASPER, ROSA, AND TARTAR

Meanwhile Jasper formally proposes to Rosa, in the school garden: standing apart and leaning against a sundial, as the garden is commanded by many windows. He offers to resign his hopes of bringing Landless to the gallows (perhaps this bad man would provide a *corpus delicti* of his own making!) if Rosa will accept him: he threatens to "pursue her to the death," if she will not; he frightens her so thoroughly that she rushes to Grewgious in his chambers in London. She now suspects Jasper of Edwin's murder, but keeps her thoughts to herself. She tells Grewgious, who is watching Neville, - "I have a fancy for keeping him under my eye," - that Jasper has made love to her, and Grewgious replies in a parody of "God save the King"!

"On Thee his hopes to fix
Damn him again!"

Would he fool thus, if he knew Jasper to have killed Edwin? He is not certain whether Rosa should visit Helena next day, in Landless's rooms, opposite; and Mr. Walters suggests that he may be aware that Helena, dressed as Datchery, is really absent at Cloisterham. However, next day, Helena is in her brother's rooms. Moreover, it is really a sufficient explanation of Grewgious's doubt that Jasper is lurking around, and that not till next day is a *private* way of communication arranged between Neville and his friends. In any case, next day, Helena is in her brother's rooms, and, by aid of a Mr. Tartar's rooms, she and Rosa can meet privately. There is a good deal of conspiring to watch Jasper when he watches Neville, and in this new friend, Mr. Tartar, a lover is provided for Rosa. Tartar is a miraculously agile climber over roofs and up walls, a retired Lieutenant of the navy, and a handy man, being such a climber, to chase Jasper about the roof of the Cathedral, when Jasper's day of doom arrives.

JASPER’S OPIUM VISIONS

In July, Jasper revisits the London opium den, and talks under opium, watched by the old hag. He speaks of a thing which he often does in visions: “a hazardous and perilous journey, over abysses where a slip would be destruction. Look down, look down! You see what lies at the bottom there?” He enacts the vision and says, “There was a fellow traveller.” He “speaks in a whisper, and as if in the dark.” The vision is, in this case, “a poor vision: no struggle, no consciousness of peril, no entreaty.” Edwin, in the reminiscent vision, dies very easily and rapidly. “When it comes to be real at last, it is so short that it seems unreal for the first time.” “And yet I never saw *that* before. Look what a poor miserable mean thing it is. *That* must be real. It’s over.”

What can all this mean? We have been told that, shortly before Christmas Eve, Jasper took to wearing a thick black-silk handkerchief for his throat. He hung it over his arm, “his face knitted and stern,” as he entered his house for his Christmas Eve dinner. If he strangled Edwin with the scarf, as we are to suppose, he did not lead him, drugged, to the tower top, and pitch him off. Is part of Jasper’s vision reminiscent - the brief, unresisting death - while another part is a separate vision, is *prospective*, “premonitory”? Does he see himself pitching Neville Landless off the tower top, or see him fallen from the Cathedral roof? Is Neville’s body “*that*” - “I never saw *that* before. Look what a poor miserable mean thing it is! *That* must be real.” Jasper “never saw *that*” - the dead body below the height - before. *This* vision, I think, is of the future, not of the past, and is meant to bewilder the reader who thinks that the whole represents the slaying of Drood. The tale is rich in “warnings” and telepathy.

DATCHERY AND THE OPIUM WOMAN

The hag now tracks Jasper home to Cloisterham. Here she meets Datchery, whom she asks how she can see Jasper? If Datchery is Drood, he now learns, *what he did not know before, that there is some connection between Jasper and the hag*. He walks with her to the place where Edwin met the hag, on Christmas Eve, and gave her money; and he jingles his own money as he walks. The place, or the sound of the money, makes the woman tell Datchery about Edwin’s gift of three shillings and sixpence for opium. Datchery, “with a sudden change of countenance, gives her a sudden look.” It does not follow that he is *not* Drood, for, though the hag’s love of opium was known to Drood, Datchery is not to reveal his recognition of the woman. He does what any stranger would do; he "gives a sudden look," as if surprised by the mention of opium.

Mr. Walters says, "Drood would not have changed countenance on hearing a fact he had known six months previously." But if Drood was playing at being somebody else, he would, of course, give a kind of start and stare, on hearing of the opium. When he also hears from the hag that her former benefactor's name was Edwin, he asks her how she knew that - "a fatuously unnecessary question," says Mr. Walters. A needless question for Datchery's information, if he be Drood, but as useful a question as another if Drood be Datchery, and wishes to maintain the conversation.

DATCHERY'S SCORE

Datchery keeps a tavern score of his discoveries behind a door, in cryptic chalk strokes. He does this, says Mr. Walters, because, being Helena, he would betray himself if he wrote in a female hand. But nobody would *write* secrets on a door! He adds "a moderate stroke," after meeting the hag, though, says Mr. Walters, "Edwin Drood would have learned nothing new whatever" from the hag.

But Edwin would have learned something quite new, and very important - that the hag was hunting Jasper. Next day Datchery sees the woman shake her fists at Jasper in church, and hears from her that she knows Jasper "better far than all the reverend parsons put together know him." Datchery then adds a long thick line to his chalked score, yet, says Mr. Walters, Datchery has learned "nothing new to Edwin Drood, if alive."

This is an obvious error. It is absolutely new to Edwin Drood that the opium hag is intimately acquainted with his uncle, Jasper, and hates Jasper with a deadly hatred. All this is not only new to Drood, if alive, but is rich in promise of further revelations. Drood, on Christmas Eve, had learned from the hag only that she took opium, and that she had come from town to Cloisterham, and had "hunted for a needle in a bottle of hay." That was the sum of his information. Now he learns that the woman knows, tracks, has found, and hates, his worthy uncle, Jasper. He may well, therefore, add a heavy mark to his score.

We must also ask, How could Helena, fresh from Ceylon, know "the old tavern way of keeping scores? Illegible except to the scorer. The scorer not committed, the scored debited with what is against him," as Datchery observes. An Eurasian girl of twenty, new to England, would not argue thus with herself: she would probably know nothing of English tavern scores. We do not hear that Helena ever opened a book: we do know that education had been denied to her. What acquaintance could she have with old English tavern customs?

If Drood is Datchery, then Dickens used a form of a very old and favourite *ficelle* of his: the watching of a villain by an improbable and unsuspected person, in this case thought to be dead. If Helena is Datchery, the "assumption" or personation is in the highest degree improbable, her whole bearing is quite out of her possibilities, and the personation is very absurd.

Here the story ends.

THEORIES OF THE MYSTERY

FORSTER'S EVIDENCE

We have some external evidence as to Dickens's solution of his own problem, from Forster. On August 6, 1869, some weeks before he began to work at his tale, Dickens, in a letter, told Forster, "I have a very curious and new idea for my new story. Not communicable (or the interest of the book would be gone), but a very strong one, though difficult to work." Forster must have instantly asked that the incommunicable secret should be communicated to *him*, for he tells us that "*immediately after* I learnt" - the secret. But did he learn it? Dickens was ill, and his plot, whatever it may have been, would be irritatingly criticized by Forster before it was fully thought out. "Fules and bairns should not see half-done work," and Dickens may well have felt that Forster should not see work not even begun, but merely simmering in the author's own fancy.

Forster does not tell us that Dickens communicated the secret in a letter. He quotes none: he says "I was told," orally, that is. When he writes, five years later (1874), "Landless was, *I think*, to have perished in assisting Tartar finally to unmask and seize the murderer," he is clearly trusting, not to a letter of Dickens's, but to a defective memory; and he knows it. He says that a nephew was to be murdered by an uncle. The criminal was to confess in the condemned cell. He was to find out that his crime had been needless, and to be convicted by means of the ring (Rosa's mother's ring) remaining in the quicklime that had destroyed the body of Edwin.

Nothing "new" in all this, as Forster must have seen. "The originality," he explains, "was to consist in the review of the murderer's career by himself at the close, when its temptations were to be dwelt upon as if, not he the culprit, but some other man, were the tempted."

But all this is not "hard to work," and is not "original." As Mr. Proctor remarks, Dickens had used that trick twice already. ("Madman's Manuscript," *Pickwick*; "Clock Case Confession," in *Master Humphrey's Clock*.) The quicklime trick is also very old indeed. The disguise of a woman as a man is as ancient as the art of fiction: yet Helena *may* be Datchery, though nobody guessed it before Mr. Cuming Walters. She ought not to be Datchery; she is quite out of keeping in her speech and manner as Datchery, and is much more like Drood.

“A NEW IDEA”

There are no new ideas in plots. “All the stories have been told,” and all the merit lies in the manner of the telling. Dickens had used the unsuspected watcher, as Mr. Proctor shows, in almost all his novels. In *Martin Chuzzlewit*, when Jonas finds that Nadgett has been the watcher, Dickens writes, “The dead man might have come out of his grave and not confounded and appalled him so.” Now, to Jasper, Edwin *was* “the dead man,” and Edwin’s grave contained quicklime. Jasper was sure that he had done for Edwin: he had taken Edwin’s watch, chain, and scarf-pin; he believed that he had left him, drugged, in quicklime, in a locked vault. Consequently the reappearance of Edwin, quite well, in the vault where Jasper had buried him, would be a very new idea to Jasper; would “confound and appall him.” Jasper would have emotions, at that spectacle, and so would the reader! It is not every day, even in our age of sixpenny novels, that a murderer is compelled to visit, alone, at night, the vault which holds his victim’s “cold remains,” and therein finds the victim “come up, smiling.”

Yes, for business purposes, this idea was new enough! The idea was “difficult to work,” says Dickens, with obvious truth. How was he to get the quicklime into the vault, and Drood, alive, out of the vault? As to the reader, he would at first take Datchery for Drood, and then think, “No, that is impossible, and also is stale. Datchery cannot be Drood,” and thus the reader would remain in a pleasant state of puzzledom, as he does, unto this day.

If Edwin is dead, there is not much “Mystery” about him. We have as good as seen Jasper strangle him and take his pin, chain, and watch. Yet by adroitly managing the conduct of Mr. Grewgious, Dickens persuaded Mr. Proctor that certainly, Grewgious knew Edwin to be alive. As Grewgious knew, from Helena, all that was necessary to provoke his experiment on Jasper’s nerves, Mr. Proctor argued on false premises, but that was due to the craft of Dickens. Mr. Proctor rejected Forster’s report, from memory, of what he understood to be the “incommunicable secret” of Dickens’s plot, and I think that he was justified in the rejection. Forster does not seem to have cared about the thing - he refers lightly to “the reader curious in such matters” - when once he had received his explanation from Dickens. His memory, in the space of five years, may have been inaccurate: he probably neither knew nor cared who Datchery was; and he may readily have misunderstood what Dickens told him, orally, about the ring, as the instrument of detection. Moreover, Forster quite overlooked one source of evidence, as I shall show later.

MR. PROCTOR’S THEORY

Mr. Proctor’s theory of the story is that Jasper, after Edwin’s return at midnight on Christmas Eve, recommended a warm drink - mulled wine, drugged - and then proposed another stroll of inspection of the effects of the storm. He then strangled him, somewhere, and placed him in the quicklime in the Sapsea vault, locked him in, and went to bed. Next, according to Mr. Proctor, Durdles, then, “lying drunk in the precincts,” for some reason taps with his hammer on the wall of the Sapsea vault, detects the presence of a foreign body, opens the tomb, and finds Drood in the quicklime, “his face fortunately protected by the strong silk shawl with which Jasper has intended to throttle him.”

A MISTAKEN THEORY

This is “thin,” very “thin!” Dickens must have had some better scheme than Mr. Proctor’s. Why did Jasper not “mak sikker” like Kirkpatrick with the Red Comyn? Why did he leave his silk scarf? It might come to be asked for; to be sure the quicklime would destroy it, but why did Jasper leave it? Why did the intoxicated Durdles come out of the crypt, if he was there, enter the graveyard, and begin tapping at the wall of the vault? Why not open the door? he had the key.

Suppose, however, all this to have occurred, and suppose, with Mr. Proctor, that Durdles and Deputy carried Edwin to the Tramps’ lodgings, would Durdles fail to recognize Edwin? We are to guess that Grewgious was present, or disturbed at his inn, or somehow brought into touch with Edwin, and bribed Durdles to silence, “until a scheme for the punishment of Jasper had been devised.”

All this set of conjectures is crude to the last degree. We do not know how Dickens meant to get Edwin into and out of the vault. Granting that Edwin was drugged, Jasper might lead Edwin in, considering the licence extended to the effects of drugs in novels, and might strangle him there. Above all, how did Grewgious, if in Cloisterham, come to be at hand at midnight?

ANOTHER WAY

If I must make a guess, I conjecture that Jasper had one of his "filmy" seizures, was "in a frightful sort of dream," and bungled the murder: made an incomplete job of it. Half-strangled men and women have often recovered. In Jasper's opium vision and reminiscence there was no resistance, all was very soon over. Jasper might even bungle the locking of the door of the vault. He was apt to have a seizure after opium, in moments of excitement, and *he had been at the opium den through the night of December* 23, for the hag tracked him from her house in town to Cloisterham on December 24, the day of the crime. Grant that his accustomed fit came upon him during the excitement of the murder, as it does come after "a nicht wi' opium," in chapter ii., when Edwin excites him by contemptuous talk of the girl whom Jasper loves so furiously - and then anything may happen!

Jasper murders Edwin inefficiently; he has a fit; while he is unconscious the quicklime revives Edwin, by burning his hand, say, and, during Jasper's swoon, Edwin, like another famous prisoner, "has a happy thought, he opens the door, and walks out."

Being drugged, he is in a dreamy state; knows not clearly what has occurred, or who attacked him. Jasper revives, "look on't again he dare not," - on the body of his victim - and *he* walks out and goes home, where his red lamp has burned all the time - "thinking it all wery capital."

"Another way," - Jasper not only fails to strangle Drood, but fails to lock the door of the vault, and Drood walks out after Jasper has gone. Jasper has, before his fit, "removed from the body the most lasting, the best known, and most easily recognizable things upon it, the watch and scarf-pin." So Dickens puts the popular view of the case against Neville Landless, and so we are to presume that Jasper acted. If he removed no more things from the body than these, he made a fatal oversight.

Meanwhile, how does Edwin, once out of the vault, make good a secret escape from Cloisterham? Mr. Proctor invokes the aid of Mr. Grewgious, but does not explain why Grewgious was on the spot. I venture to think it not inconceivable that Mr. Grewgious having come down to Cloisterham by a late train, on Christmas Eve, to keep his Christmas appointment with Rosa, paid a darkling visit to the tomb of his lost love, Rosa's mother. Grewgious was very sentimental, but too secretive to pay such a visit by daylight. "A night of memories and sighs" he might "consecrate" to his lost lady love, as Landor did to Rose Aylmer. Grewgious was to have helped Bazzard to eat a turkey on

Christmas Day. But he could get out of that engagement. He would wish to see Edwin and Rosa together, and Edwin was leaving Cloisterham. The date of Grewgious's arrival at Cloisterham is studiously concealed. I offer at least a conceivable motive for Grewgious's possible presence at the churchyard. Mrs. Bud, his lost love, we have been told, was buried hard by the Sapsea monument. If Grewgious visited her tomb, he was on the spot to help Edwin, supposing Edwin to escape. Unlikelier things occur in novels. I do not, in fact, call these probable occurrences in every-day life, but none of the story is probable. Jasper's "weird seizures" are meant to lead up to *something*. They may have been meant to lead up to the failure of the murder and the escape of Edwin. Of course Dickens would not have treated these incidents, when he came to make Edwin explain, - nobody else could explain, - in my studiously simple style. The drugged Edwin himself would remember the circumstances but mistily: his evidence would be of no value against Jasper.

Mr. Proctor next supposes, we saw, that Drood got into touch with Grewgious, and I have added the circumstances which might take Grewgious to the churchyard. Next, when Edwin recovered health, he came down, perhaps, as Datchery, to spy on Jasper. I have elsewhere said, as Mr. Cuming Walters quotes me, that "fancy can suggest no reason why Edwin Drood, if he escaped from his wicked uncle, should go spying about instead of coming openly forward. No plausible unfantastic reason could be invented." Later, I shall explain why Edwin, if he is Datchery, might go spying alone.

It is also urged that Edwin left Rosa in sorrow, and left blame on Neville Landless. Why do this? Mr. Proctor replies that Grewgious's intense and watchful interest in Neville, otherwise unexplained, is due to his knowledge that Drood is alive, and that Neville must be cared for, while Grewgious has told Rosa that Edwin lives. He also told her of Edwin's real love of her, hence Miss Bud says, "Poor, poor Eddy," quite *à propos de bottes*, when she finds herself many fathoms deep in love with Lieutenant Tartar, R.N. "'Poor, poor Eddy!' thought Rosa, as they walked along," Tartar and she. This is a plausible suggestion of Mr. Proctor. Edwin, though known to Rosa to be alive, has no chance! But, as to my own remark, "why should not Edwin come forward at once, instead of spying about?" Well, if he did, there would be no story. As for "an unfantastic reason" for his conduct, Dickens is not writing an "unfantastic" novel. Moreover, if things occurred as I have suggested, I do not see what evidence Drood had against Jasper. Edwin's clothes were covered with lime, but, when he told his story, Jasper would reply that Drood never returned to his house on Christmas Eve, but stayed out, "doing what was correct by the season, in the way of giving it the welcome it had the right to expect," like Durdles on another occasion. Drood's evidence, if it was what I have suggested, would sound like the dream of an intoxicated man, and what other evidence could be adduced? Thus I had worked out Drood's condition, if he really was not killed, in this way: I had supposed him to escape, in a very mixed frame of mind, when he would be encountered by Grewgious, who, of course, could make little out of him in his befogged state. Drood could not even prove that it was not Landless who attacked him. The result would be that Drood would lie low, and later, would have reason enough for disguising himself as Datchery, and playing the spy in Cloisterham.

At this point I was reinforced by an opinion which Mr. William Archer had expressed, unknown to me, in a newspaper article. I had described Edwin's confused knowledge of his own experience, if he were thoroughly drugged, and then half strangled. Mr. Archer also took that point, and added that Edwin being a good-hearted fellow, and fond of his uncle Jasper, he would not bring, or let Grewgious bring, a terrible charge against Jasper, till he knew more certainly the whole state of the case. For that reason, he would come disguised to Cloisterham and make inquiries. By letting Jasper know about the ring, he would compel him to enter the vault, and then, Mr. Archer thinks, would induce him to "repent and begin life afresh."

I scarcely think that Datchery's purpose was so truly honourable: he rather seems to be getting up a case against Jasper. Still, the idea of Mr. Archer is very plausible, and, at least, given Drood's need of evidence, and the lack of evidence against Jasper, we see reason good, in a novel of this kind, for his playing the part of amateur detective.

DICKENS'S UNUSED DRAFT OF A CHAPTER

Forster found, and published, a very illegible sketch of a chapter of the tale: "How Mr. Sapsea ceased to be a Member of the Eight Club, Told by Himself." This was "a cramped, interlined, and blotted" draft, on paper of only half the size commonly used by Dickens. Mr. Sapsea tells how his Club mocked him about a stranger, who had mistaken him for the Dean. The jackass, Sapsea, left the Club, and met the stranger, *a young man*, who fooled him to the top of his bent, saying, "If I was to deny that I came to this town to see and hear you, Sir, what would it avail me?" Apparently this paper was a rough draft of an idea for introducing a detective, as a *young* man, who mocks Sapsea just as Datchery does in the novel. But to make the spy *a young* man, whether the spy was Drood or Helena Landless, was too difficult; and therefore Dickens makes Datchery "an elderly buffer" in a white wig. If I am right, it was easier for Helena, a girl, to pose as a young man, than for Drood to reappear as a young man, not himself.

Helena *may* be Datchery, and yet Drood may be alive and biding his time; but I have disproved my old objection that there was no reason why Drood, if alive, should go spying about in disguise. There were good Dickensian reasons.

A QUESTION OF TASTE

Mr. Cuming Walters argues that the story is very tame if Edwin is still alive, and left out of the marriages at the close. Besides, "Drood is little more than a name-label, attached to a body, a man who never excites sympathy, whose fate causes no emotion, he is saved for no useful or sentimental purpose, and lags superfluous on the stage. All of which is bad art, so bad that Dickens would never have been guilty of it."

That is a question of taste. On rereading the novel, I see that Dickens makes Drood as sympathetic as he can. He is very young, and speaks of Rosa with bad taste, but he is really in love with her, much more so than she with him, and he is piqued by her ceaseless mockery, and by their false position. To Jasper he is singularly tender, and remorseful when he thinks that he has shown want of tact. There is nothing ominous about his gaiety: as to his one fault, we leave him, on Christmas Eve, a converted character: he has a kind word and look for every one whom he meets, young and old. He accepts Mr. Grewgious's very stern lecture in the best manner possible. In short, he is marked as faulty - "I am young," so he excuses himself, in the very words of Darnley to Queen Mary! (if the Glasgow letter be genuine); but he is also marked as sympathetic.

He was, I think, to have a lesson, and to become a good fellow. Mr. Proctor rightly argues (and Forster "thinks"), that Dickens meant to kill Neville Landless: Mr. Cuming Walters agrees with him, but Mr. Proctor truly adds that Edwin has none of the signs of Dickens's doomed men, his Sidney Cartons, and the rest. You can tell, as it were by the sound of the voice of Dickens, says Mr. Proctor, that Edwin is to live. The impression is merely subjective, but I feel the impression. The doom of Landless is conspicuously fixed, and why is Landless to be killed by Jasper? Merely to have a count on which to hang Jasper! He cannot be hanged for killing Drood, if Drood is alive.

MR. PROCTOR'S THEORY CONTINUED

Mr. Proctor next supposes that Datchery and others, by aid of the opium hag, have found out a great deal of evidence against Jasper. They have discovered from the old woman that his crime was long premeditated: he had threatened

"Ned" in his opiated dreams: and had clearly removed Edwin's trinkets and watch, because they would not be destroyed, with his body, by the quicklime. This is all very well, but there is still, so far, no legal evidence, on my theory, that Jasper attempted to take Edwin's life. Jasper's enemies, therefore, can only do their best to make his life a burden to him, and to give him a good fright, probably with the hope of terrifying him into avowals.

Now the famous ring begins "to drag and hold" the murderer. He is given to know, I presume, that, when Edwin disappeared, he had a gold ring in the pocket of his coat. Jasper is thus compelled to revisit the vault, at night, and there, in the light of his lantern, he sees the long-lost Edwin, with his hand in the breast of his great coat.

Horrified by this unexpected appearance, Jasper turns to fly. But he is confronted by Neville Landless, Crisparkle, Tartar, and perhaps by Mr. Grewgious, who are all on the watch. He rushes up through the only outlet, the winding staircase of the Cathedral tower, of which we know that he has had the key. Neville, who leads his pursuers, "receives his death wound" (and, I think, is pitched off the top of the roof). Then Jasper is collared by that agile climber, Tartar, and by Crisparkle, always in the pink of condition. There is now something to hang Jasper for - the slaying of Landless (though, as far as I can see, *that* was done in self-defence). Jasper confesses all; Tartar marries Rosa; Helena marries Crisparkle. Edwin is only twenty-one, and may easily find a consoler of the fair sex: indeed he is "ower young to marry yet."

The capture of Jasper was fixed, of course, for Christmas Eve. The phantom cry foreheard by Durdles, two years before, was that of Neville as he fell; and the dog that howled was Neville's dog, a character not yet introduced into the romance.

MR. CUMING WALTERS'S THEORY

Such is Mr. Proctor's theory of the story, in which I mainly agree. Mr. Proctor relies on a piece of evidence overlooked by Forster, and certainly misinterpreted, as I think I can prove to a certainty, by Mr. Cuming Walters, whose theory of the real conduct of the plot runs thus: After watching the storm at midnight with Edwin, Neville left him, and went home: "his way lay in an opposite direction. Near to the Cathedral Jasper intercepted his nephew. . . . Edwin may have been already drugged." How the murder was worked Mr. Cuming Walters does not say, but he introduces at this point, the two sounds foreheard by Durdles, without explaining "the howl of a dog." Durdles would hear the cries, and Deputy "had seen what he could not understand," whatever it was that he saw. Jasper, not aware of Drood's possession of the ring, takes only his watch, chain, and pin, which he places on the timbers of the weir, and in the river, to be picked up by that persistent winter-bather, Crisparkle of the telescopic and microscopic eyesight.

As to the ring, Mr. Cuming Walters erroneously declares that Mr. Proctor "ignores" the power of the ring "to hold and drag," and says that potent passage is "without meaning and must be disregarded." Proctor, in fact, gives more than three pages to the meaning of the ring, which "drags" Jasper into the vault, when he hears of its existence. Next, Mr. Cuming Walters supposes Datchery to learn from Durdles, whom he is to visit, about the second hearing of the cry and the dog's howl. Deputy may have seen Jasper "carrying his burden" (Edwin) "towards the Sapsea vault." In fact, Jasper probably saved trouble by making the drugged Edwin walk into that receptacle. "Datchery would not think of the Sapsea vault unaided." No - unless Datchery was Drood ! "Now Durdles is useful again. Tapping with his hammer he would find a change . . . inquiry must be made." Why should Durdles tap the Sapsea monument? As Durdles had the key, he would simply walk into the vault, and find the quicklime. Now, Jasper also, we presume, had a key, made from a wax impression of the original. If he had any sense, he would have removed the quicklime as easily as he inserted it, for Mr. Sapsea was mortal: he might die any day, and be buried, and then the quicklime, lying where it ought not, would give rise to awkward inquiries.

Inquiry being made, in consequence of Durdles's tappings, the ring would be found, as Mr. Cuming Walters says. But even then, unless Deputy actually saw Jasper carry a man into the vault, nobody could prove Jasper's connection with the presence of the ring in the vault. Moreover, Deputy hated Jasper, and if he saw Jasper carrying the body of a man, on the night when a man disappeared, he was clever enough to lead Durdles to examine the vault, *at once*. Deputy had a great dislike of the Law and its officers, but here was a chance for him to distinguish himself, and conciliate them.

However these things may be, Mr. Cuming Walters supposes that Jasper, finding himself watched, re-enters the vault, perhaps, "to see that every trace of the crime had been removed." In the vault he finds - Datchery, that is, Helena Landless! Jasper certainly visited the vault and found somebody.

EVIDENCE OF COLLINS'S DRAWINGS

We now come to the evidence which Forster strangely overlooked, which Mr. Proctor and Mr. Archer correctly deciphered, and which Mr. Cuming Walters misinterprets. On December 22, 1869, Dickens wrote to Forster that two numbers of his romance were "now in type. Charles Collins has designed an excellent cover." Mr. C. A. Collins had married a daughter of Dickens. He was an artist, a great friend of Dickens, and author of that charming book, “A Cruise on Wheels.” His design of the paper cover of the story (it appeared in monthly numbers) contained, as usual, sketches which give an inkling of the events in the tale. Mr. Collins was to have illustrated the book; but, finally, Mr. (now Sir) Luke Fildes undertook the task. Mr. Collins died in 1873. It appears that Forster never asked him the meaning of his designs - a singular oversight.

The cover lies before the reader. In the left-hand top corner appears an allegorical female figure of joy, with flowers. The central top space contains the front of Cloisterham Cathedral, or rather, the nave. To the left walks Edwin, with hyacinthine locks, and a thoroughly classical type of face, and Grecian nose. *Like Datchery, he does not wear, but carries his hat*; this means nothing, if they are in the nave. He seems bored. On his arm is Rosa; *she* seems bored; she trails her parasol, and looks away from Edwin, looks down, to her right. On the spectator’s right march the surpliced men and boys of the Choir. Behind them is Jasper, black whiskers and all; he stares after Edwin and Rosa; his right hand hides his mouth. In the corner above him is an allegorical female, clasping a stiletto.

Beneath Edwin and Rosa is, first, an allegorical female figure, looking at a placard, headed “LOST,” on a door. Under that, again, is a girl in a garden-chair; a young man, whiskerless, with wavy hair, kneels and kisses her hand. She looks rather unimpassioned. I conceive the man to be Landless, taking leave of Rosa after urging his hopeless suit, for which Helena, we learn, “seems to compassionate him.” He has avowed his passion, early in the story, to Crisparkle. Below, the opium hag is smoking. On the other side, under the figures of Jasper and the Choir, the young man who kneels to the girl is seen bounding up a spiral staircase. His left hand is on the iron railing; he stoops over it, looking down at others who follow him. His right hand, the index finger protruded, points upward, and, by chance or design, points straight at Jasper in the vignette above. Beneath this man (clearly Landless) follows a tall man in a “bowler” hat, a “cut-away” coat, and trousers which show an inch of white stocking above the low shoes. His profile is hid by the wall of the spiral staircase: he might be Grewgious of the shoes, white stockings, and short trousers, but he may be Tartar: he takes two steps at a stride. Beneath him a youngish man, in a low, soft, clerical hat and a black pea-coat, ascends, looking downwards and backwards. This is clearly Crisparkle. A Chinaman is smoking opium beneath.

In the central lowest space, a dark and whiskered man enters a dark chamber; his left hand is on the lock of the door; in his right he holds up a lantern. The light of the lantern reveals a young man in a soft hat of Tyrolese shape. His features are purely classical, his nose is Grecian, his locks are long (at least, according to the taste of to-day); he wears a light paletot, buttoned to the throat; his right arm hangs by his side; his left hand is thrust into the breast of his coat. He calmly regards the dark man with the lantern. That man, of course, is Jasper. The young man is EDWIN DROOD, of the Grecian nose, hyacinthine locks, and classic features, as in Sir L. Fildes's third illustration.

Mr. Proctor correctly understood the unmistakable meaning of this last design, Jasper entering the vault -

"*To-day the dead are living,*
The lost is found to-day."

Mr. Cuming Walters tells us that he did not examine these designs by Mr. Collins till he had formed his theory, and finished his book. "On the conclusion of the whole work the pictures were referred to for the first time, and were then found to support in the most striking manner the opinions arrived at," namely, that Drood was killed, and that Helena is Datchery. Thus does theory blind us to facts!

Mr. Cuming Walters connects the figure of the whiskerless young man kneeling to a girl in a garden seat, with the whiskered Jasper's proposal to Rosa in a garden seat. But Jasper does not kneel to Rosa; he stands apart, leaning on a sundial; he only once vaguely "touches" her, which she resents; he does not kneel; he does not kiss her hand (Rosa "took the kiss sedately," like Maud in the poem); and - Jasper had lustrous thick black whiskers.

Again, the same whiskerless young man, bounding up the spiral staircase in daylight, and wildly pointing upwards, is taken by Mr. Cuming Walters to represent Jasper climbing the staircase to reconnoitre, at night, with a lantern, and, of course, with black whiskers. The two well-dressed men on the stairs (Grewgious, or Tartar, and Crisparkle) also, according to Mr. Cuming Walters, "relate to Jasper's unaccountable expedition with Durdles to the Cathedral." Neither of them is Jasper; neither of them is Durdles, "in a suit of coarse flannel" - a disreputable jacket, as Sir L. Fildes depicts him - "with horn buttons," and a battered old tall hat. These interpretations are quite demonstrably erroneous and even impossible. Mr. Archer interprets the designs exactly as I do.

As to the young man in the light of Jasper's lamp, Mr. Cuming Walters says, "the large hat and the tightly-buttoned surtout must be observed; they are the articles of clothing on which most stress is laid in the description of Datchery. But the face is young." The face of Datchery was elderly, and he had a huge shock of white hair, a wig. Datchery wore "a tightish blue surtout, with a buff waistcoat and grey trousers; he had something of a military air." The young man in the vault has anything but a military air; he shows no waistcoat, and he does not wear "a tightish blue surtout," or any surtout at all.

The surtout of the period is shown, worn by Jasper, in Sir L. Fildes's sixth and ninth illustrations. It is a frock-coat; the collar descends far below the top of the waistcoat (buff or otherwise), displaying that garment; the coat is tightly buttoned beneath, revealing the figure; the tails of the coat do not reach the knees of the wearer. The young man in the vault, on the other hand, wears a loose paletot, buttoned to the throat (vaults are chilly places), and the coat falls so as to cover the knees; at least, partially. The young man is not, like Helena, "very dark, and fierce of look, . . . of almost the gipsy type." He is blonde, sedate, and of the classic type, as Drood was. He is no more like Helena than Crisparkle is like Durdles. Mr. Cuming Walters says that Mr. Proctor was "unable to allude to the prophetic picture by Collins." As a fact, this picture is fully described by Mr. Proctor, but Mr. Walters used the wrong edition of his book, unwittingly.

Mr. Proctor writes:- "Creeping down the crypt steps, oppressed by growing horror and by terror of coming judgment, sickening under fears engendered by the darkness of night and the charnel-house air he breathed, Jasper opens the door of the tomb and holds up his lantern, shuddering at the thought of what it may reveal to him.

"And what sees he? Is it the spirit of his victim that stands there, 'in his habit as he lived,' his hand clasped on his breast, where the ring had been when he was murdered? What else can Jasper deem it? There, clearly visible in the gloom at the back of the tomb, stands Edwin Drood, with stern look fixed on him - pale, silent, relentless!"

Again, "On the title-page are given two of the small pictures from the Love side of the cover, two from the Murder side, and the central picture below, which presents the central horror of the story - the end and aim of the 'Datchery assumption' and of Mr. Grewgious's plans - showing Jasper driven to seek for the proofs of his crime amid the dust to which, as he thought, the flesh and bones, and the very clothes of his victim, had been reduced."

There are only two possible choices; either Collins, under Dickens's oral instructions, depicted Jasper finding Drood alive in the vault, an incident which was to occur in the story; or Dickens bade Collins do this for the purpose of misleading his readers in an illegitimate manner; while the young man in the vault was really to be some person "made up" to look like Drood, and so to frighten Jasper with a pseudo-ghost of that hero. The latter device, the misleading picture, would be childish, and the pseudo-ghost, exactly like Drood, could not be acted by the gipsy-like, fierce Helena, or by any other person in the romance.

MR. WALTERS'S THEORY CONTINUED

Mr. Cuming Walters guesses that Jasper was to aim a deadly blow (with his left hand, to judge from the picture) at Helena, and that Neville "was to give his life for hers." But, manifestly, Neville was to lead the hunt of Jasper up the spiral stair, as in Collins's design, and was to be dashed from the roof: his body beneath was to be "*that*, I never saw before. *That* must be real. Look what a poor mean miserable thing it is!" as Jasper says in his vision.

Mr. Cuming Walters, pursuing his idea of Helena as both Datchery and also as the owner of "the *young* face" of the youth in the vault (and also of the young hands, a young girl's hands could never pass for those of "an elderly buffer"), exclaims: "Imagine the intense power of the dramatic climax, when Datchery, the elderly man, is re-transformed into Helena Landless, the young and handsome woman; and when she reveals the seemingly impenetrable secret which had been closed up in one guilty man's mind."

The situations are startling, I admit, but how would Canon Crisparkle like them? He is, we know, to marry Helena, "the young person, my dear," Miss Twinkleton would say, "who for months lived alone, at inns, wearing a blue surtout, a buff waistcoat, and grey - " Here horror chokes the utterance of Miss Twinkleton. "Then she was in the vault in *another* disguise, not more womanly, at that awful scene when poor Mr. Jasper was driven mad, so that he confessed all sorts of nonsense, for, my dear, all the Close believes that it *was* nonsense, and that Mr. Jasper was reduced to insanity by persecution. And Mr. Crisparkle, with that elegant dainty mother of his - it has broken her heart - is marrying this half-caste gipsy *trollop*, with her blue surtout and grey - oh, it is a disgrace to Cloisterham!"

The climax, in fact, as devised by Mr. Cuming Walters, is rather too dramatic for the comfort of a minor canon. A humorist like Dickens ought to have seen the absurdity of the situation. Mr. Walters *may* be right, Helena may be Datchery, but she ought not to be.

WHO WAS THE PRINCESS PUFFER?

Who was the opium hag, the Princess Puffer? Mr. Cuming Walters writes: "We make a guess, for Dickens gives us no solid facts. But when we remember that not a word is said throughout the volume of Jasper's antecedents, who he was, and where he came from; when we remember that but for his nephew he was a lonely man; when we see that he was both criminal and artist; when we observe his own wheedling propensity, his false and fulsome protestations of affection, his slyness, his subtlety, his heartlessness, his tenacity; and when, above all, we know that the opium vice is *hereditary*, and that a *young* man would not be addicted to it unless born with the craving; then, it is not too wild a conjecture that Jasper was the wayward progeny of this same opium-eating woman, all of whose characteristics he possessed, and, perchance, of a man of criminal instincts, but of a superior position. Jasper is a morbid and diseased being while still in the twenties, a mixture of genius and vice. He hates and he loves fiercely, as if there were wild gipsy blood in his veins. Though seemingly a model of decorum and devoted to his art, he complains of his "daily drudging round" and "the cramped monotony of his existence." He commits his crime with the ruthlessness of a beast, his own nature being wholly untamed. If we deduce that his father was an adventurer and a vagabond, we shall not be far wrong. If we deduce that his mother was the opium-eater, prematurely aged, who had transmitted her vicious propensity to her child, we shall almost certainly be right."

WHO WAS JASPER?

Who was Jasper? He was the brother-in-law of the late Mr. Drood, a respected engineer, and University man. We do not know whence came Mrs. Drood, Jasper's sister, but is it likely that her mother "drank heaven's-hard" - so the hag says of herself - then took to keeping an opium den, and there entertained her son Jasper, already an accomplished vocalist, but in a lower station than that to which his musical genius later raised him, as lay Precentor? If the Princess Puffer be, as on Mr. Cuming Walters's theory she is, Edwin's long-lost grandmother, her discovery would be unwelcome to Edwin. Probably she did not live much longer; "my lungs are like cabbage nets," she says. Mr. Cuming Walters goes on -

"Her purpose is left obscure. How easily, however, we see possibilities in a direction such as this. The father, perhaps a proud, handsome man, deserts the woman, and removes the child. The woman hates both for scorning her, but the father dies, or disappears, and is beyond her vengeance. Then the child, victim to the ills in his blood, creeps back to the opium den, not knowing his mother, but immediately recognized by her. She will make the child suffer for the sins of the father, who had destroyed her happiness. Such a theme was one which appealed to Dickens. It must not, however, be urged; and the crucial question after all is concerned with the opium woman as one of the unconscious instruments of justice, aiding with her trifle of circumstantial evidence the Nemesis awaiting Jasper.

“Another hypothesis - following on the Carker theme in ‘Dombey and Son’ - is that Jasper, a dissolute and degenerate man, lascivious, and heartless, may have wronged a child of the woman’s; but it is not likely that Dickens would repeat the Mrs. Brown story.”

Jasper, *père*, father of John Jasper and of Mrs. Drood, however handsome, ought not to have deserted Mrs. Jasper. Whether John Jasper, prematurely devoted to opium, became Edwin’s guardian at about the age of fifteen, or whether, on attaining his majority, he succeeded to some other guardian, is not very obvious. In short, we cannot guess why the Princess Puffer hated Jasper, a paying client of long standing. We are only certain that Jasper was a bad fellow, and that the Princess Puffer said, “I know him, better than all the Reverend Parsons put together know him.” On the other hand, Edwin “seems to know” the opium woman, when he meets her on Christmas Eve, which may be a point in favour of her being his long-lost grandmother.

Jasper was certainly tried and condemned; for Dickens intended “to take Mr. Fildes to a condemned cell in Maidstone, or some other gaol, in order to make a drawing.” Possibly Jasper managed to take his own life, in the cell; possibly he was duly hanged.

Jasper, after all, was a failure as a murderer, even if we suppose him to have strangled his nephew successfully. “It is obvious to the most excruciatingly feeble capacity” that, if he meant to get rid of proofs of the identity of Drood’s body by means of quicklime, it did not suffice to remove Drood’s pin, watch, and chain. Drood would have coins of the realm in his pockets, gold, silver, bronze. Quicklime would not destroy these metallic objects, nor would it destroy keys, which would easily prove Drood’s identity. If Jasper knew his business, he would, of course, rifle *all* of Edwin’s pockets minutely, and would remove the metallic buttons of his braces, which generally display the maker’s name, or the tailor’s. On research I find “H. Poole & Co., Savile Row” on my buttons. In this inquiry of his, Jasper would have discovered the ring in Edwin’s breast pocket, and would have taken it away. Perhaps Dickens never thought of that little fact: if he did think of it, no doubt he found some mode of accounting for Jasper’s unworkmanlike negligence. The trouser-buttons would have led any inquirer straight to Edwin’s tailor; I incline to suspect that neither Dickens nor Jasper noticed that circumstance. The conscientious artist in crime cannot afford to neglect the humblest and most obvious details.

CONCLUSION

According to my theory, which mainly rests on the unmistakable evidence of the cover drawn by Collins under Dickens's directions, all "ends well." Jasper comes to the grief he deserves: Helena, after her period of mourning for Neville, marries Crisparkle: Rosa weds her mariner. Edwin, at twenty-one, is not heart-broken, but, a greatly improved character, takes, to quote his own words, "a sensible interest in works of engineering skill, especially when they are to change the whole condition of an undeveloped country" - Egypt.

These conclusions are inevitable unless we either suppose Dickens to have arranged a disappointment for his readers in the *tableau* of Jasper and Drood, in the vault, on the cover, or can persuade ourselves that not Drood, but some other young man, is revealed by the light of Jasper's lantern. Now, the young man is very like Drood, and very unlike the dark fierce Helena Landless: disguised as Drood, this time, not as Datchery. All the difficulty as to why Drood, if he escaped alive, did not at once openly denounce Jasper, is removed when we remember, as Mr. Archer and I have independently pointed out, that Drood, when attacked by Jasper, was (like Durdles in the "unaccountable expedition") stupefied by drugs, and so had no valid evidence against his uncle. Whether science is acquainted with the drugs necessary for such purposes is another question. They are always kept in stock by starving and venal apothecaries in fiction and the drama, and are a recognized convention of romance.

So ends our unfolding of the Mystery of Edwin Drood.

HOMER AND HIS AGE

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To
R. W. RAPER IN ALL GRATITUDE

PREFACE

In *Homer and the Epic*, ten or twelve years ago, I examined the literary objections to Homeric unity. These objections are chiefly based on alleged discrepancies in the narrative, of which no one poet, it is supposed, could have been guilty. The critics repose, I venture to think, mainly on a fallacy. We may style it the fallacy of "the analytical reader." The poet is expected to satisfy a minutely critical reader, a personage whom he could not foresee, and whom he did not address. Nor are "contradictory instances" examined — that is, as Blass has recently reminded his countrymen, Homer is put to a test which Goethe could not endure. No long fictitious narrative can satisfy "the analytical reader."

The fallacy is that of disregarding the Homeric poet's audience. He did not sing for Aristotle or for Aristarchus, or for modern minute and reflective inquirers, but for warriors and ladies. He certainly satisfied them; but if he does not satisfy microscopic professors, he is described as a syndicate of many minstrels, living in many ages.

In the present volume little is said in defence of the poet's consistency. Several chapters on that point have been excised. The way of living which Homer describes is examined, and an effort is made to prove that he depicts the life of a single brief age of culture. The investigation is compelled to a tedious minuteness, because the points of attack — the alleged discrepancies in descriptions of the various details of existence — are so minute as to be all but invisible.

The unity of the Epics is not so important a topic as the methods of criticism. They ought to be sober, logical, and self-consistent. When these qualities are absent, Homeric criticism may be described, in the recent words of Blass, as "a swamp haunted by wandering fires, will o' the wisps."

In our country many of the most eminent scholars are no believers in separatist criticism. Justly admiring the industry and erudition of the separatists, they are unmoved by their arguments, to which they do not reply, being convinced in their own minds. But the number and perseverance of the separatists make on "the general reader" the impression that Homeric unity is chose *jugée*, that *scientia locuta est*, and has condemned Homer. This is far from being the case: the question is still open; "science" herself is subject to criticism; and new materials, accruing yearly, forbid a tame acquiescence in hasty theories.

May I say a word to the lovers of poetry who, in reading Homer, feel no more doubt than in reading Milton that, on the whole, they are studying a work of one age, by one author? Do not let them be driven from their natural impression by the statement that Science has decided against them. The certainties of the exact sciences are one thing: the opinions of Homeric commentators are other and very different things. Among all the branches of knowledge which the Homeric critic should have at his command, only philology, archaeology, and anthropology can be called “sciences”; and they are not exact sciences: they are but skirmishing advances towards the true solution of problems prehistoric and “proto-historic.”

Our knowledge shifts from day to day; on every hand, in regard to almost every topic discussed, we find conflict of opinions. There is no certain scientific decision, but there is the possibility of working in the scientific spirit, with breadth of comparison; consistency of logic; economy of conjecture; abstinence from the piling of hypothesis on hypothesis.

Nothing can be more hurtful to science than the dogmatic assumption that the hypothesis most in fashion is scientific.

Twenty years ago, the philological theory of the Solar Myth was preached as “scientific” in the books, primers, and lectures of popular science. To-day its place knows it no more. The separatist theories of the Homeric poems are not more secure than the Solar Myth, “like a wave shall they pass and be passed.”

When writing on “The Homeric House” (Chapter X.) I was unacquainted with Mr. Percy Gardner’s essay, “The Palaces of Homer” (*Journal of Hellenic Studies*, vol. iii. p-282). Mr. Gardner says that Dasent’s plan of the Scandinavian Hall “offers in most respects not likeness, but a striking contrast to the early Greek hall.” Mr. Monro, who was not aware of the parallel which I had drawn between the Homeric and Icelandic houses, accepted it on evidence more recent than that of Sir George Dasent. Cf. his *Odyssey*, vol. ii. p-494.

Mr. R. W. Raper, of Trinity College, Oxford, has read the proof sheets of this work with his habitual kindness, but is in no way responsible for the arguments. Mr. Walter Leaf has also obliged me by mentioning some points as to which I had not completely understood his position, and I have tried as far as possible to represent his ideas correctly. I have also received assistance from the wide and minute Homeric lore of Mr. A. Shewan, of St. Andrews, and have been allowed to consult other scholars on various points.

The first portion of the chapter on “Bronze and Iron” appeared in the Revue *Archéologique* for April 1905, and the editor, Monsieur Salomon Reinach, obliged me with a note on the bad iron swords of the Celts as described by Polybius.

The design of men in three shields of different shapes, from a Dipylon vase, is reproduced, with permission, from the British Museum *Guide to the Antiquities* *of the Iron Age*; and the shielded chessmen from Catalogue of Scottish Society of Antiquaries. Thanks for the two ships with men under shield are offered to the Rev. Mr. Browne, S.J., author of *Handbook of Homeric Studies* (Longmans). For the Mycenaean gold corslet I thank Mr. John Murray (Schliemann’s Mycenae and Tiryns), and for all the other Mycenaean illustrations Messrs. Macmillan and Mr. Leaf, publishers and author of Mr. Leaf’s edition of the *Iliad*.

CHAPTER I

THE HOMERIC AGE

The aim of this book is to prove that the Homeric Epics, as wholes, and apart from passages gravely suspected in antiquity, present a perfectly harmonious picture of the entire life and civilisation of one single age. The faint variations in the design are not greater than such as mark every moment of culture, for in all there is some movement; in all, cases are modified by circumstances. If our contention be true, it will follow that the poems themselves, as wholes, are the product of a single age, not a mosaic of the work of several changeful centuries.

This must be the case — if the life drawn is harmonious, the picture must be the work of a single epoch — for it is not in the nature of early uncritical times that later poets should adhere, or even try to adhere, to the minute details of law, custom, opinion, dress, weapons, houses, and so on, as presented in earlier lays or sagas on the same set of subjects. Even less are poets in uncritical times inclined to "archaise," either by attempting to draw fancy pictures of the manners of the past, or by making researches in graves, or among old votive offerings in temples, for the purpose of "preserving local colour." The idea of such archaising is peculiar to modern times. To take an instance much to the point, Virgil was a learned poet, famous for his antiquarian erudition, and professedly imitating and borrowing from Homer. Now, had Virgil worked as a man of to-day would work on a poem of Trojan times, he would have represented his heroes as using weapons of bronze. No such idea of archaising occurred to the learned Virgil. It is "the iron" that pierces the head of Remulus (*Aeneid*, IX. 633); it is "the iron" that waxes warm in the breast of Antiphates (IX. 701). Virgil's men, again, do not wear the great Homeric shield, suspended by a baldric: AEneas holds up his buckler (*clipeus*), borne "on his left arm" (X. 26 i). Homer, familiar with no buckler worn on the left arm, has no such description. When the hostile ranks are to be broken, in the *Aeneid* it is "with the iron" (X. 372), and so throughout.

The most erudite ancient poet, in a critical age of iron, does not archaise in our modern fashion. He does not follow his model, Homer, in his descriptions of shields, swords, and spears. But, according to most Homeric critics, the later continuators of the Greek Epics, about 800-540 B.C., are men living in an age of iron weapons, and of round bucklers worn on the left arm. Yet, unlike Virgil, they always give their heroes arms of bronze, and, unlike Virgil (as we shall see), they do not introduce the buckler worn on the left arm. They adhere conscientiously to the use of the vast Mycenaean shield, in their time obsolete. Yet, by the theory, in many other respects they innovate at will, introducing corslets and greaves, said to be unknown to the beginners of the Greek Epics, just as Virgil innovates in bucklers and iron weapons. All this theory seems inconsistent, and no ancient poet, not even Virgil, is an archaiser of the modern sort.

All attempts to prove that the Homeric poems are the work of several centuries appear to rest on a double hypothesis: first, that the later contributors to the *ILIAD* kept a steady eye on the traditions of the remote Achaean age of bronze; next, that they innovated as much as they pleased.

Poets of an uncritical age do not archaise. This rule is overlooked by the critics who represent the Homeric poems as a complex of the work of many singers in many ages. For example, Professor Percy Gardner, in his very interesting *New chapters in Greek History* (1892), carries neglect of the rule so far as to suppose that the late Homeric poets, being aware that the ancient heroes could not ride, or write, or eat boiled meat, consciously and purposefully represented them as doing none of these things. This they did “on the same principle on which a writer of pastoral idylls in our own day would avoid the mention of the telegraph or telephone.” “A writer of our own day,” — there is the pervading fallacy! It is only writers of the last century who practise this archaeological refinement. The authors of *Beowulf* and the *Nibelungenlied*, of the Chansons de *Geste* and of the Arthurian romances, always describe their antique heroes and the details of their life in conformity with the customs, costume, and armour of their own much later ages.

But Mr. Leaf, to take another instance, remarks as to the lack of the metal lead in the Epics, that it is mentioned in similes only, as though the poet were aware the metal was unknown in the heroic age. Here the poet is assumed to be a careful but ill-informed archaeologist, who wishes to give an accurate representation of the past. Lead, in fact, was perfectly familiar to the Mycenaean prime. The critical usage of supposing that the ancients were like the most recent moderns — in their archaeological preoccupations — is a survival of the uncritical habit which invariably beset old poets and artists. Ancient poets, of the uncritical ages, never worked “on the same principle as a writer in our day,” as regards archaeological precision; at least we are acquainted with no example of such accuracy.

Let us take another instance of the critical fallacy. The age of the Achaean warriors, who dwelt in the glorious halls of Mycenae, was followed, at an interval, by the age represented in the relics found in the older tombs outside the Dipylon gate of Athens, an age beginning, probably, about 900-850 B.C. The culture of this “Dipylon age,” a time of geometrical ornaments on vases, and of human figures drawn in geometrical forms, lines, and triangles, was quite unlike that of the Achaean age in many ways, for example, in mode of burial and in the use of iron for weapons. Mr. H. R. Hall, in his learned book, *The Oldest Civilisation of Greece* (1901), supposes the culture described in the Homeric poems to be contemporary in Asia with that of this Dipylon period in Greece. He says, “The Homeric culture is evidently the culture of the poet’s own days; there is no attempt to archaise here….” They do not archaise as to the details of life, but “the Homeric poets consciously and consistently archaised, in regard to the political conditions of continental Greece,” in the Achaean times. They give “in all probability a pretty accurate description” of the loose feudalism of Mycenaean Greece.

We shall later show that this Homeric picture of a past political and social condition of Greece is of vivid and delicate accuracy, that it is drawn from the life, not constructed out of historical materials. Mr. Hall explains the fact by “the conscious and consistent” archaeological precision of the Asiatic poets of the ninth century. Now to any one who knows early national poetry, early uncritical art of any kind, this theory seems not easily tenable. The difficulty of the theory is increased, if we suppose that the Achaeans were the recent conquerors of the Mycenaeans. Whether we regard the Achaeans as “Celts,” with Mr. Ridgeway, victors over an Aryan people, the Pelasgic Mycenaeans; or whether, with Mr. Hall, we think that the Achaeans were the Aryan conquerors of a non-Aryan people, the makers of the Mycenaean civilisation; in the stress of a conquest, followed at no long interval by an expulsion at the hands of Dorian invaders, there would be little thought of archaising among Achaean poets.

A distinction has been made, it is true, between the poet and other artists in this respect. Monsieur Perrot says, “The vase-painter reproduces what he sees; while the epic poets endeavoured to represent a distant past. If Homer gives swords of bronze to his heroes of times gone by, it is because he knows that such were the weapons of these heroes of long ago. In arming them with bronze he makes use, in his way, of what we call “local colour….” Thus the Homeric poet is a more conscientious historian than Virgil!”

Now we contend that old uncritical poets no more sought for antique “local colour” than any other artists did. M. Perrot himself says with truth, “the *CHANSON DE ROLAND*, and all the *Gestes* of the same cycle explain for us the Iliad and the Odyssey.” But the poet of the *CHANSON DE ROLAND* accoutres his heroes of old time in the costume and armour of his own age, and the later poets of the same cycle introduce the innovations of their time; they do not hunt for “local colour” in the *CHANSON DE ROLAND*. The very words “local colour” are a modern phrase for an idea that never occurred to the artists of ancient uncritical ages. The Homeric poets, like the painters of the Dipylon period, describe the details of life as they see them with their own eyes. Such poets and artists never have the fear of “anachronisms” before them. This, indeed, is plain to the critics themselves, for they, detect anachronisms as to land tenure, burial, the construction of houses, marriage customs, weapons, and armour in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. These supposed anachronisms we examine later: if they really exist they show that the poets were indifferent to local colour and archaeological precision, or were incapable of attaining to archaeological accuracy. In fact, such artistic revival of the past in its habit as it lived is a purely modern ideal.

We are to show, then, that the Epics, being, as wholes, free from such inevitable modifications in the picture of changing details of life as uncritical authors always introduce, are the work of the one age which they represent. This is the reverse of what has long been, and still is, the current theory of Homeric criticism, according to which the Homeric poems are, and bear manifest marks of being, a mosaic of the poetry of several ages of change.

Till Wolf published his *Prolegomena* to (1795) there was little opposition to the old belief that the *ILIAD* and Odyssey were, allowing for interpolations, the work of one, or at most of two, poets. After the appearance of Wolfs celebrated book, Homeric critics have maintained, generally speaking, that the *ILIAD* is either a collection of short lays disposed in sequence in a late age, or that it contains an ancient original “kernel” round which “expansions,” made throughout some centuries of changeful life, have accrued, and have been at last arranged by a literary redactor or editor.

The latter theory is now dominant. It is maintained that the *Iliad* is a work of at least four centuries. Some of the objections to this theory were obvious to Wolf himself — more obvious to him than to his followers. He was aware, and some of them are not, of the distinction between reading the *ILIAD* as all poetic literature is naturally read, and by all authors is meant to be read, for human pleasure, and studying it in the spirit of “the analytical reader.” As often as he read for pleasure, he says, disregarding the purely fanciful “historical conditions” which he invented for Homer; as often as he yielded himself to that running stream of action and narration; as often as he considered the *harmony* of *colour* and of characters in the Epic, no man could be more angry with his own destructive criticism than himself. Wolf ceased to be a Wolfian whenever he placed himself at the point of view of the reader or the listener, to whom alone every poet makes his appeal.

But he deemed it his duty to place himself at another point of view, that of the scientific literary historian, the historian of a period concerning whose history he could know nothing. “How could the thing be possible?” he asked himself. “How could a long poem like the *Iliad* come into existence in the historical circumstances?” . Wolf was unaware that he did not know what the historical circumstances were. We know how little we know, but we do know more than Wolf. He invented the historical circumstances of the supposed poet. They were, he said, like those of a man who should build a large ship in an inland place, with no sea to launch it upon. The *Iliad* was the large ship; the sea was the public. Homer could have no *readers*, Wolf said, in an age that, like the old hermit of Prague, “never saw pen and ink,” had no knowledge of letters; or, if letters were dimly known, had never applied them to literature. In such circumstances no man could have a motive for composing a long poem.

Yet if the original poet, “Homer,” could make “the greater part of the songs,” as Wolf admitted, what physical impossibility stood in the way of his making the whole? Meanwhile, the historical circumstances, as conceived of by Wolf, were imaginary. He did not take the circumstances of the poet as described in the Odyssey. Here a king or prince has a minstrel, honoured as were the minstrels described in the ancient Irish books of law. His duty is to entertain the prince and his family and guests by singing epic chants after supper, and there is no reason why his poetic narratives should be brief, but rather he has an opportunity that never occurred again till the literary age of Greece for producing a long poem, continued from night to night. In the later age, in the Asiatic colonies and in Greece, the rhapsodists, competing for prizes at feasts, or reciting to a civic crowd, were limited in time and gave but snatches of poetry. It is in this later civic age that a poet without readers would have little motive for building Wolfs great ship of song, and scant chance of launching it to any profitable purpose. To this point we return; but when once critics, following Wolf, had convinced themselves that a long early poem was impossible, they soon found abundant evidence that it had never existed.

They have discovered discrepancies of which, they say, no one sane poet could have been guilty. They have also discovered that the poems had not, as Wolf declared, “one ‘harmony of colour” (*unus color*). Each age, they say, during which the poems were continued, lent its own colour. The poets, by their theory, now preserved the genuine tradition of things old; cremation, cairn and urn burial; the use of the chariot in war; the use of bronze for weapons; a peculiar stage of customary law; a peculiar form of semi-feudal society; a peculiar kind of house. But again, by a change in the theory, the poets introduced later novelties; later forms of defensive armour; later modes of burial; later religious and speculative beliefs; a later style of house; an advanced stage of law; modernisms in grammar and language.

The usual position of critics in this matter is stated by Helbig; and we are to contend that the theory is contradicted by all experience of ancient literatures, and is in itself the reverse of consistent. “The *artists* of antiquity,” says Helbig, with perfect truth, “had no idea of archaeological studies…. They represented legendary scenes in conformity with the spirit of their own age, and reproduced the arms and implements and costume that they saw around them.”

Now a poet is an *artist*, like another, and he, too — no less than the vase painter or engraver of gems — in dealing with legends of times past, represents (in an uncritical age) the arms, utensils, costume, and the religious, geographical, legal, social, and political ideas of his own period. We shall later prove that this is true by examples from the early mediaeval epic poetry of Europe.

It follows that if the *Iliad* is absolutely consistent and harmonious in its picture of life, and of all the accessories of life, the *Iliad* is the work of a single age, of a single stage of culture, the poet describing his own environment. But Helbig, on the other hand, citing Wilamowitz Moellendorff, declares that the *Iliad* — the work of four centuries, he says — maintains its unity of colour by virtue of an uninterrupted poetical tradition. If so, the poets must have archaeologised, must have kept asking themselves, “Is this or that detail true to the past?” which artists in uncritical ages never do, as we have been told by Helbig. They must have carefully pondered the surviving old Achaean lays, which “were born when the heroes could not read, or boil flesh, or back a steed.” By carefully observing the earliest lays the late poets, in times of changed manners, “could avoid anachronisms by the aid of tradition, which gave them a very exact idea of the epic heroes.” Such is the opinion of Wilamowitz Moellendorff. He appears to regard the tradition as keeping the later poets in the old way automatically, not consciously, but this, we also learn from Helbig, did not occur. The poets often wandered from the way. Thus old Mycenaean lays, if any existed, would describe the old Mycenaean mode of burial. The Homeric poet describes something radically different. We vainly ask for proof that in any early national literature known to us poets have been true to the colour and manners of the remote times in which their heroes moved, and of which old minstrels sang. The thing is without example: of this proofs shall be offered in abundance.

Meanwhile, the whole theory which regards the *Iliad* as the work of four or five centuries rests on the postulate that poets throughout these centuries did what such poets never do, kept true to the details of a life remote from their own, and also did not.

For Helbig does not, after all, cleave to his opinion. On the other hand, he says that the later poets of the *Iliad* did not cling to tradition. “They allowed themselves to be influenced by their own environment: *this influence betrays ITSELF IN THE descriptions of DETAILS*…. The rhapsodists,” (reciters, supposed to have altered the poems at will), “did not fail to interpolate relatively recent elements into the oldest parts of the Epic.”

At this point comes in a complex inconsistency. The Tenth Book of the *Iliad*, thinks Helbig — in common with almost all critics— “is one of the most recent lays of the *Iliad*.” But in this recent lay (say of the eighth or seventh century) the poet describes the Thracians as on a level of civilisation with the Achaeans, and, indeed, as even more luxurious, wealthy, and refined in the matter of good horses, glorious armour, and splendid chariots. But, by the time of the Persian wars, says Helbig, the Thracians were regarded by the Greeks as rude barbarians, and their military equipment was totally un-Greek. They did not wear helmets, but caps of fox-skin. They had no body armour; their shields were small round bucklers; their weapons were bows and daggers. These customs could not, at the time of the Persian wars, be recent innovations in Thrace.

Had the poet of *ILIAD*, Book X., known the Thracians in *this* condition, says Helbig, as he was fond of details of costume and arms, he would have certainly described their fox-skin caps, bows, bucklers, and so forth. He would not here have followed the Epic tradition, which represented the Thracians as makers of great swords and as splendidly armed charioteers. His audience had met the Thracians in peace and war, and would contradict the poet’s description of them as heavily armed charioteers. It follows, therefore, that the latest poets, such as the author of Book X., did not introduce recent details, those of their own time, but we have just previously been told that to do so was their custom in the description of details.

Now Studniczka explains the picture of the Thracians in *Iliad*, Book X., on Helbig’s *other* principle, namely, that the very late author of the Tenth Book merely conforms to the conventional tradition of the Epic, adheres to the model set in ancient Achaean, or rather ancient Ionian times, and scrupulously preserved by the latest poets — that is, when the latest poets do not bring in the new details of their own age. But Helbig will not accept his own theory in this case, whence does it follow that the author of the Tenth Book must, in his opinion, have lived in Achaean times, and described the Thracians as they then were, charioteers, heavily armed, not light-clad archers? If this is so, we ask how Helbig can aver that the Tenth Book is one of the latest parts of the *Iliad?*

In studying the critics who hold that the *Iliad* is the growth of four centuries — say from the eleventh to the seventh century B.C. — no consistency is to be discovered; the earth is never solid beneath our feet. We find now that the poets are true to tradition in the details of ancient life — now that the poets introduce whatever modern details they please. The late poets have now a very exact knowledge of the past; now, the late poets know nothing about the past, or, again, some of the poets are fond of actual and very minute archaeological research! The theory shifts its position as may suit the point to be made at the moment by the critic. All is arbitrary, and it is certain that logic demands a very different method of inquiry. If Helbig and other critics of his way of thinking mean that in the *Iliad* (1) there are parts of genuine antiquity; other parts (2) by poets who, with stern accuracy, copied the old modes; other parts (3) by poets who tried to copy but failed; with passages (4) by poets who deliberately innovated; and passages (5) by poets who drew fanciful pictures of the past "from their inner consciousness," while, finally (6), some poets made minute antiquarian researches; and if the argument be that the critics can detect these six elements, then we are asked to repose unlimited confidence in critical powers of discrimination. The critical standard becomes arbitrary and subjective.

It is our effort, then, in the following pages to show that the *unus* color of Wolf does pervade the Epics, that recent details are not often, if ever, interpolated, that the poems harmoniously represent one age, and that a brief age, of culture; that this effect cannot, in a thoroughly uncritical period, have been deliberately aimed at and produced by archaeological learning, or by sedulous copying of poetic tradition, or by the scientific labours of an editor of the sixth century B.C. We shall endeavour to prove, what we have already indicated, that the hypotheses of expansion are not self-consistent, or in accordance with what is known of the evolution of early national poetry. The strongest part, perhaps, of our argument is to rest on our interpretation of archaeological evidence, though we shall not neglect the more disputable or less convincing contentions of literary criticism.

CHAPTER II

HYPOTHESES AS TO THE GROWTH OF THE EPICS

A theorist who believes that the Homeric poems are the growth of four changeful centuries, must present a definite working hypothesis as to how they escaped from certain influences of the late age in which much of them is said to have been composed. We must first ask to what manner of audiences did the poets sing, in the alleged four centuries of the evolution of the Epics. Mr. Leaf, as a champion of the theory of ages of "expansion," answers that "the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are essentially, and above all, Court poems. They were composed to be sung in the palaces of a ruling aristocracy … the poems are aristocratic and courtly, not popular." They are not *Volkspoesie*; they are not ballads. "It is now generally recognised that this conception is radically false."

These opinions, in which we heartily agree — there never was such a thing as a "popular" Epic — were published fourteen years ago. Mr. Leaf, however, would not express them with regard to "our" *Iliad* and Odyssey, because, in his view, a considerable part of the *Iliad*, as it stands, was made, not by Court bards in the Achaean courts of Europe, not for an audience of noble warriors and dames, but by wandering minstrels in the later Ionian colonies of Asia. They did not chant for a military aristocracy, but for the enjoyment of town and country folk at popular festivals. The poems were *begun*, indeed, he thinks, for "a wealthy aristocracy living on the product of their lands," in European Greece; were begun by contemporary court minstrels, but were continued, vastly expanded, and altered to taste by wandering singers and reciting rhapsodists, who amused the holidays of a commercial, expansive, and bustling Ionian democracy.

We must suppose that, on this theory, the later poets pleased a commercial democracy by keeping up the tone that had delighted an old land-owning military aristocracy. It is not difficult, however, to admit this as possible, for the poems continued to be admired in all ages of Greece and under every form of society. The real question is, would the modern poets be the men to keep up a tone some four or five centuries old, and to be true, if they were true, to the details of the heroic age? "It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that some part of the most primitive *Iliad* may have been actually sung by the court minstrel in the palace whose ruins can still be seen in Mycenae." But, by the expansionist theory, even the oldest parts of our *Iliad* are now full of what we may call quite recent Ionian additions, full of late retouches, and full, so to speak, of omissions of old parts.

Through four or five centuries, by the hypothesis, every singer who could find an audience was treating as much as he knew of a vast body of ancient lays exactly as he pleased, adding here, lopping there, altering everywhere. Moreover, these were centuries full of change. The ancient Achaean palaces were becoming the ruins which we still behold. The old art had faded, and then fallen under the disaster of the Dorian conquest. A new art, or a recrudescence of earlier art, very crude and barbaric, had succeeded, and was beginning to acquire form and vitality. The very scene of life was altered: the new singers and listeners dwelt on the Eastern side of the Aegean. Knights no longer, as in Europe, fought from chariots: war was conducted by infantry, for the most part, with mounted auxiliaries. With the disappearance of the war chariot the huge Mycenaean shields had vanished or were very rarely used. The early vase painters do not, to my knowledge, represent heroes as fighting from war chariots. They had lost touch with that method. Fighting men now carried relatively small round bucklers, and iron was the metal chiefly employed for swords, spears, and arrow points. Would the new poets, in deference to tradition, abstain from mentioning cavalry, or small bucklers, or iron swords and spears? or would they avoid puzzling their hearers by speaking of obsolete and unfamiliar forms of tactics and of military equipment? Would they therefore sing of things familiar — of iron weapons, small round shields, hoplites, and cavalry? We shall see that confused and self-contradictory answers are given by criticism to all these questions by scholars who hold that the Epics are not the product of one, but of many ages.

There were other changes between the ages of the original minstrel and of the late successors who are said to have busied themselves in adding to, mutilating, and altering his old poem. Kings and courts had passed away; old Ionian myths and religious usages, unknown to the Homeric poets, had come out into the light; commerce and pleasure and early philosophies were the chief concerns of life. Yet the poems continued to be aristocratic in manners; and, in religion and ritual, to be pure from recrudescences of savage poetry and superstition, though the Ionians "did not drop the more primitive phases of belief which had clung to them; these rose to the surface with the rest of the marvellous Ionic genius, and many an ancient survival was enshrined in the literature or mythology of Athens which had long passed out of all remembrance at Mycenas."

Amazing to say, none of these “more primitive phases of belief,” none of the recrudescent savage magic, was intruded by the late Ionian poets into the Iliad which they continued, by the theory. Such phases of belief were, indeed, by their time popular, and frequently appeared in the Cyclic poems on the Trojan war; continuations of the *ILIAD*, which were composed by Ionian authors at the same time as much of the *ILIAD* itself (by the theory) was composed. The authors of these Cyclic poems — authors contemporary with the makers of much of the *ILIAD* — *were* eminently “un-Homeric” in many respects. They had ideas very different from those of the authors of the *Iliad* and *ODYSSEY*, as these ideas have reached us.

Helbig states this curious fact, that the Homeric poems are free from many recent or recrudescent ideas common in other Epics composed during the later centuries of the supposed four hundred years of Epic growth. Thus a signet ring was mentioned in the *Ilias Puma*, and there are no rings in *Iliad* or *Odyssey*. But Helbig does not perceive the insuperable difficulty which here encounters his hypothesis. He remarks: “In certain poems which were grouping themselves around the *Iliad and* Odyssey, we meet data absolutely opposed to the conventional style of the Epic.” He gives three or four examples of perfectly un-Homeric ideas occurring in Epics of the eighth to seventh centuries, B.C., and a large supply of such cases can be adduced. But Helbig does not ask how it happened that, if poets of these centuries had lost touch with the Epic tradition, and had wandered into a new region of thought, as they had, examples of their notions do not occur in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. By his theory these poems were being added to and altered, even in their oldest portions, at the very period when strange fresh, or old and newly revived fancies were flourishing. If so, how were the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, unlike the Cyclic poems, kept uncontaminated, as they confessedly were, by the new romantic ideas?

Here is the real difficulty. Cyclic poets of the eighth and seventh centuries had certainly lost touch with the Epic tradition; their poems make that an admitted fact. Yet poets of the eighth to seventh centuries were, by the theory, busily adding to and altering the ancient lays of the *Iliad*. How did *they* abstain from the new or revived ideas, and from the new *genre* of romance? Are we to believe that one set of late Ionian poets — they who added to and altered the Iliad — were true to tradition, while another contemporary set of Ionian poets, the Cyclics — authors of new Epics on Homeric themes — are known to have quite lost touch with the Homeric taste, religion, and ritual? The reply will perhaps be a Cyclic poet said, “Here I am going to compose quite a new poem about the old heroes. I shall make them do and think and believe as I please, without reference to the evidence of the old poems.” But, it will have to be added, the rhapsodists of 800-540 B.C., and the general editor of the latter date, thought, *we* are continuing an old set of lays, and we must be very careful in adhering to manners, customs, and beliefs as described by our predecessors. For instance, the old heroes had only bronze, no iron, — and then the rhapsodists forgot, and made iron a common commodity in the *Iliad*. Again, the rhapsodists knew that the ancient heroes had no corslets — the old lays, we learn, never spoke of corslets — but they made them wear corslets of much splendour. This theory does not help us. In an uncritical age poets could not discern that their genre of romance and religion was alien from that of Homer.

To return to the puzzle about the careful and precise continuators of the *Iliad*, as contrasted with their heedless contemporaries, the authors of the Cyclic poems. How "non-Homeric" the authors of these Cyclic poems were, before and after 660 B.C., we illustrate from examples of their left hand backslidings and right hand fallings off. They introduced (1) The Apotheosis of the Dioscuri, who in Homer (*Iliad*, III. 243) are merely dead men (*Cypria*). (2) Story of Iphigenia *Cypria*. (3) Story of Palamedes, who is killed when angling by Odysseus and Diomede (Cypria).

Homer's heroes never fish, except in stress of dire necessity, in the Odyssey, and Homer's own Diomede and Odysseus would never stoop to assassinate a companion when engaged in the contemplative man's recreation. We here see the heroes in late degraded form as on the Attic stage. (4) The Cyclics introduce Helen as daughter of Nemesis, and describe the flight of Nemesis from Zeus in various animal forms, a Märchen of a sort not popular with Homer; an Ionic Märchen, Mr. Leaf would say. There is nothing like this in the Iliad and Odyssey. (5) They call the son of Achilles, not Neoptolemus, as Homer does, but Pyrrhus. (6) They represent the Achaean army as obtaining supplies through three magically gifted maidens, who produce corn, wine, and oil at will, as in fairy tales. Another Ionic non-Achaean Märchen! They bring in ghosts of heroes dead and buried. Such ghosts, in Homer's opinion, were impossible if the dead had been cremated. All these non-Homeric absurdities, save the last, are from the Cypria, dated by Sir Richard Jebb about 776 B.C., long before the Odyssey was put into shape, namely, after 660 B. C. in his opinion. Yet the alleged late compiler of the Odyssey, in the seventh century, never wanders thus from the Homeric standard in taste. What a skilled archaeologist he must have been! The author of the Cypria knew the Iliad, but his knowledge could not keep him true to tradition. (7) In the AEthiopis (about 776 B.C.) men are made immortal after death, and are worshipped as heroes, an idea foreign to Iliad and Odyssey. (8) There is a savage ritual of purification from blood shed by a homicide (compare Eumenides, line 273). This is unheard of in Iliad and Odyssey, though familiar to

Aeschylus. (9) Achilles, after death, is carried to the isle of Leuke. (10) The fate of Ilium, in the Cyclic Little *Iliad*, hangs on the Palladium, of which nothing is known in *Iliad* or *Odyssey*. The *Little Iliad* is dated about 700 B.C. (11) The *Nostoi* mentions Molossians, not named by Homer (which is a trifle); it also mentions the Asiatic city of Colophon, an Ionian colony, which is not a trivial self-betrayal on the part of the poet. He is dated about 750 B.C.

Thus, more than a century before the *Odyssey* received its final form, after 660 B.C., from the hands of one man (according to the theory), the other Ionian poets who attempted Epic were betraying themselves as non-Homeric on every hand.

Our examples are but a few derived from the brief notices of the Cyclic poets' works, as mentioned in ancient literature; these poets probably, in fact, betrayed themselves constantly. But their contemporaries, the makers of late additions to the *Odyssey*, and the later mosaic worker who put it together, never betrayed themselves to anything like the fatal extent of anachronism exhibited by the Cyclic poets. How, if the true ancient tone, taste, manners, and religion were lost, as the Cyclic poets show that they were, did the contemporary Ionian poets or rhapsodists know and preserve the old manner?

The best face we can put on the matter is to say that all the Cyclic poets were recklessly independent of tradition, while all men who botched at the *Iliad* were very learned, and very careful to maintain harmony in their pictures of life and manners, except when they introduced changes in burial, bride-price, houses, iron, greaves, and corslets, all of them things, by the theory, modern, and when they sang in modern grammar.

Yet despite this conscientiousness of theirs, most of the many authors of our *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were, by the theory, strolling irresponsible rhapsodists, like the later *jongleurs* of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in mediaeval France. How could these strollers keep their modern Ionian ideas, or their primitive, recrudescent phases of belief, out of their lays, as far as they *did* keep them out, while the contemporary authors of the *Cypria*, *The Sack of Ilios*, and other Cyclic poets were full of new ideas, legends, and beliefs, or primitive notions revived, and, save when revived, quite obviously late and quite un-Homeric in any case?

The difficulty is the greater if the Cyclic poems were long poems, with one author to each Epic. Such authors were obviously men of ambition; they produced serious works *de longue haleine*. It is from them that we should naturally expect conservative and studious adhesion to the traditional models. From casual strollers like the rhapsodists and chanters at festivals, we look for nothing of the sort. *They* might be expected to introduce great feats done by sergeants and privates, so to speak — men of the nameless , the host, the foot men — who in Homer are occasionally said to perish of disease or to fall under the rain of arrows, but are never distinguished by name. The strollers, it might be thought, would also be the very men to introduce fairy tales, freaks of primitive Ionian myth, discreditable anecdotes of the princely heroes, and references to the Ionian colonies.

But it is not so; the serious, laborious authors of the long Cyclic poems do such un-Homeric things as these; the gay, irresponsible strolling singers of a lay here and a lay there — lays now incorporated in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* — scrupulously avoid such faults. They never even introduce a signet ring. These are difficulties in the theory of the *Iliad* as a patchwork by many hands, in many ages, which nobody explains; which, indeed, nobody seems to find difficult. Yet the difficulty is insuperable. Even if we take refuge with Wilamowitz in the idea that the Cyclic and Homeric poems were at first mere protoplasm of lays of many ages, and that they were all compiled, say in the sixth century, into so many narratives, we come no nearer to explaining why the tone, taste, and ideas of two such narratives — Illiad and Odyssey — are confessedly distinct from the tone, taste, and ideas of all the others. The Cyclic poems are certainly the production of a late and changed age? The *Iliad* is not in any degree — save perhaps in a few interpolated passages — touched by the influences of that late age. It is not a complex of the work of four incompatible centuries, as far as this point is concerned — the point of legend, religion, ritual, and conception of heroic character.

CHAPTER III

HYPOTHESES OF EPIC COMPOSITION

Whosoever holds that the Homeric poems were evolved out of the lays of many men, in many places, during many periods of culture, must present a consistent and logical hypothesis as to how they attained their present plots and forms. These could not come by accident, even if the plots are not good — as all the world held that they were, till after Wolf's day — but very bad, as some critics now assert. Still plot and form, beyond the power of chance to produce, the poems do possess. Nobody goes so far as to deny that; and critics make hypotheses explanatory of the fact that a single ancient "kernel" of some 2500 lines, a "kernel" altered at will by any one who pleased during four centuries, became a constructive whole. If the hypotheses fail to account for the fact, we have the more reason to believe that the poems are the work of one age, and, mainly, of one man.

In criticising Homeric criticism as it is to-day, we cannot do better than begin by examining the theories of Mr. Leaf which are offered by him merely as "a working hypothesis." His most erudite work is based on a wide knowledge of German Homeric speculation, of the exact science of Grammar, of archaeological discoveries, and of manuscripts. His volumes are, I doubt not, as they certainly deserve to be, on the shelves of every Homeric student, old or young, and doubtless their contents reach the higher forms in schools, though there is reason to suppose that, about the unity of Homer, schoolboys remain conservative.

In this book of more than 1200 pages Mr. Leaf's space is mainly devoted to textual criticism, philology, and pure scholarship, but his Introductions, Notes, and Appendices also set forth his mature ideas about the Homeric problem in general. He has altered some of his opinions since the publication of his *Companion to the Iliad*(1892), but the main lines of his old system are, except on one crucial point, unchanged. His theory we shall try to state and criticise; in general outline it is the current theory of separatist critics, and it may fairly be treated as a good example of such theories.

The system is to the following effect: Greek tradition, in the classical period, regarded the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as the work of one man, Homer, a native of one or other of the Ionian colonies of Asia Minor. But the poems show few obvious signs of origin in Asia. They deal with dwellers, before the Dorian invasion (which the poet never alludes to), on the continent of Europe and in Crete. The lays are concerned with "good old times"; presumably between 1500 and 1100 B.C. Their pictures of the details of life harmonise more with what we know of the society of that period from the evidence of buildings and recent excavations, than with what we know of the life and the much more rude and barbaric art of the so-called "Dipylon" period of "geometrical" ornament considerably later. In the Dipylon age though the use of iron, even for swords (made on the lines of the old bronze sword), was familiar, art was on a most barbaric level, not much above the Bed Indian type, as far, at least, as painted vases bear witness. The human figure is designed as in Tommy Traddles's skeletons; there is, however, some crude but promising idea of composition.

The picture of life in the Homeric poems, then, is more like that of, say, 1500-1100 B.C. than of, say, 1000-850 B.C. in Mr. Leaf's opinion. Certainly Homer describes a wealthy aristocracy, subject to an Over-Lord, who rules, by right divine, from "golden Mycenae." We hear of no such potentate in Ionia. Homer's accounts of contemporary art seem to be inspired by the rich art generally dated about 1500-1200. Yet there are "many traces of apparent anachronism," of divergence from the more antique picture of life. In these divergences are we to recognise the picture of a later development of the ancient existence of 1500-1200 B.C.? Or have elements of the life of a much later age of Greece (say, 800-550 B.C.) been consciously or unconsciously introduced by the late poets? Here Mr. Leaf recognises a point on which we have insisted, and must keep insisting, for it is of the first importance. "It is *a priori* the most probable" supposition that, "in an uncritical age," poets do *not* "reproduce the circumstances of the old time," but "only clothe the old tale in the garb of their own days." Poets in an uncritical age always, in our experience, "clothe old tales with the garb of their own time," but Mr. Leaf thinks that, in the case of the Homeric poems, this idea "is not wholly borne out by the facts."

In fact, Mr. Leaf's hypothesis, like Helbig's, exhibits a come-and-go between the theory that his late poets clung close to tradition and so kept true to ancient details of life, and the theory that they did quite the reverse in many cases. Of this frequent examples will occur. He writes, "The Homeric period is certainly later than the shaft tombs" (discovered at Mycenae by Dr. Schliemann), "but it does not necessarily follow that it is post-Mycenaean. It is quite possible that certain notable differences between the poems and the monuments" (of Mycenae) "in burial, for instance, and in women's dress may be due to changes which arose within the Mycenaean age itself, in that later part of it of which our knowledge is defective — almost as defective as it is of the subsequent

‘Dipylon’ period. On the whole, the resemblance to the typical Mycenaean culture is more striking than the difference.”

So far Mr. Leaf states precisely the opinion for which we argue. The Homeric poems describe an age later than that of the famous tombs — so rich in relics — of the Mycenaean acropolis, and earlier than the tombs of the Dipylon of Athens. The poems thus spring out of an age of which, except from the poems themselves, we know little or nothing, because, as is shown later, no cairn burials answering to the frequent Homeric descriptions have ever been discovered — so relics corroborating Homeric descriptions are to seek. But the age attaches itself in many ways to the age of the Mycenaean tombs, while, in our opinion, it stands quite apart from the post-Dorian culture.

Where we differ from Mr. Leaf is in believing that the poems, as wholes, were composed in that late Mycenaean period of which, from material remains, we know very little; that “much new” was not added, as he thinks, in “the Ionian development” which lasted perhaps “from the ninth century B.C. to the seventh.” We cannot agree with Mr. Leaf, when he, like Helbig, thinks that much of the detail of the ancient life in the poems had early become so “stereotyped” that no continuator, however late, dared “intentionally to sap” the type, “though he slipped from time to time into involuntary anachronism.” Some poets are also asserted to indulge in *voluntary* anachronism when, as Mr. Leaf supposes, they equip the ancient warriors with corslets and greaves and other body armour of bronze such as, in his opinion, the old heroes never knew, such as never were mentioned in the oldest parts or “kernel” of the poems. Thus the traditional details of Mycenaean life sometimes are regarded as “stereotyped” in poetic tradition; sometimes as subject to modern alterations of a sweeping and revolutionary kind.

As to deliberate adherence to tradition by the poets, we have proved that the Cyclic epic poets of 800-660 B.C. wandered widely from the ancient models. If, then, every minstrel or rhapsodist who, anywhere, added at will to the old “kernel” of the *Achilles* was, so far as he was able, as conscientiously precise in his stereotyped archaeological details as Mr. Leaf sometimes supposes, the fact is contrary to general custom in such cases. When later poets in an uncritical age take up and rehandle the poetic themes of their predecessors, they always give to the stories “a new costume,” as M. Gaston Paris remarks in reference to thirteenth century dealings with French epics of the eleventh century. But, in the critics’ opinion, the late rehandlers of old Achaean lays preserved the archaic modes of life, war, costume, weapons, and so forth, with conscientious care, except in certain matters to be considered later, when they deliberately did the very reverse. Sometimes the late poets devoutly follow tradition. Sometimes they deliberately innovate. Sometimes they pedantically “archaise,” bringing in genuine, but by their time forgotten, Mycenaean things, and criticism can detect their doings in each case.

Though the late continuators of the *Iliad* were able, despite certain inadvertencies, to keep up for some four centuries in Asia the harmonious picture of ancient Achaean life and society in Europe, critics can distinguish four separate strata, the work of many different ages, in the *Iliad*. Of the first stratum composed in Europe, say about 1300-1150 B.C. (I give a conjectural date under all reserves), the topic was *THE Wrath of ACHILLES*. Of this poem, in Mr. Leaf’s opinion, (a) the First Book and fifty lines of the Second Book remain intact or, perhaps, are a blend of two versions. (b) The *Valour of Agamemnon* and *Defeat of THE Achaeans*. Of this there are portions in Book XI., but they were meddled with, altered, and generally doctored, “down to the latest period,” namely, the age of Pisistratus in Athens, the middle of the sixth century B.C. (c) The fight in which, after their defeat, the Achaeans try to save the ships from the torch of Hector, and the *Valour of Patroclus* (but some critics do not accept this), with his death (XV., XVI. in parts). (d) Some eighty lines on the *ARMING OF ACHILLES* (XIX.). (e) Perhaps an incident or two in Books XX., XXI. (f) The *Slaying OF*by Achilles, in Books XXI., XXII. (but some of the learned will not admit this, and we shall, unhappily, have to prove that, if Mr. Leaf’s principles be correct, we really know nothing about the *SLAYING OF HECTOR* in its original form).

Of these six elements only did the original poem consist, Mr. Leaf thinks; a rigid critic will reject as original even the *Valour of Patroclus* and the *DEATH OF HECTOR*, but Mr. Leaf refuses to go so far as that. The original poem, as detected by him, is really “the work of a single poet, perhaps the greatest in all the world’s history.” If the original poet did no more than is here allotted to him, especially if he left out the purpose of Zeus and the person of Thetis in Book I., we do not quite understand his unapproachable greatness. He must certainly have drawn a rather commonplace Achilles, as we shall see, and we confess to preferring the *Iliad* as it stands.

The brief narrative cut out of the mass by Mr. Leaf, then, was the genuine old original poem or “kernel.” What we commonly call the *ILIAD*, on the other hand, is, by his theory, a thing of shreds and patches, combined in a manner to be later described. The blend, we learn, has none of the masterly unity of the old original poem. Meanwhile, as criticism of literary composition is a purely literary question, critics who differ from Mr. Leaf have a right to hold that the *Iliad* as it stands contains, and always did contain, a plot of masterly perfection. We need not attend here so closely to Mr. Leaf’s theory in the matter of the First

Expansions, (2) and the Second Expansions, (3) but the latest Expansions (4) give the account of *The EMBASSY* to *Achilles* with his refusal of *Agamemnon's APOLOGY*(Book IX.), the (Book XXIV.), the *RECONCILIATION OF ACHILLES AND Agamemnon, AND the FUNERAL Games* of *Patroclus* (XXIII.). In all these parts of the poem there are, we learn, countless alterations, additions, and expansions, with, last of all, many transitional passages, "the work of the editor inspired by the statesman," that is, of an hypothetical editor who really by the theory made our *ILIAD*, being employed to that end by Pistratus about 540 B.C. .

Mr. Leaf and critics who take his general view are enabled to detect the patches and tatters of many ages by various tests, for example, by discovering discrepancies in the narrative, such as in their opinion no one sane poet could make. Other proofs of multiplex authorship are discovered by the critic's private sense of what the poem ought to be, by his instinctive knowledge of style, by detection of the poet's supposed errors in geography, by modernisms and false archaisms in words and grammar, and by the presence of many objects, especially weapons and armour, which the critic believes to have been unknown to the original minstrel.

Thus criticism can pick out the things old, fairly old, late, and quite recent, from the mass, evolved through many centuries, which is called the *Iliad*.

If the existing *ILIAD* is a mass of "expansions," added at all sorts of dates, in any number of places, during very different stages of culture, to a single short old poem of the Mycenaean age, science needs an hypothesis which will account for the *ILIAD* "as it stands." Everybody sees the need of the hypothesis, How was the medley of new songs by many generations of irresponsible hands codified into a plot which used to be reckoned fine? How were the manners, customs, and characters, *unus color*, preserved in a fairly coherent and uniform aspect? How was the whole Greek world, throughout which all manner of discrepant versions and incongruous lays must, by the theory, have been current, induced to accept the version which has been bequeathed to us? Why, and for what audience or what readers, did somebody, in a late age of brief lyrics and of philosophic poems, take the trouble to harmonise the body of discrepant wandering lays, and codify them in the *Iliad*?

An hypothesis which will answer all these questions is the first thing needful, and hypotheses are produced.

Believers like Mr. Leaf in the development of the *Iliad* through the changing revolutionary centuries, between say 1200 and 600 B.C., consciously stand in need of a working hypothesis which will account, above all, for two facts: first, the relatively correct preservation of the harmony of the picture of life, of ideas political and religious, of the characters of the heroes, of the customary law (such as the bride-price in marriage), and of the details as to weapons, implements, dress, art, houses, and so forth, when these are not (according to the theory) deliberately altered by late poets.

Next, the hypothesis must explain, in Mr. Leafs own words, how a single version of the *Iliad* came to be accepted, "where many rival versions must, from the necessity of the case, have once existed side by side."

Three hypotheses have, in fact, been imagined: the first suggests the preservation of the original poems in very early written texts; not, of course, in "Homer's autograph." This view Mr. Leaf, we shall see, discards. The second presents the notion of one old sacred college for the maintenance of poetic uniformity. Mr. Leaf rejects this theory, while supposing that there were schools for professional reciters.

Last, there is the old hypothesis of Wolf: "Pisistratus" (about 540 B.C.) "was the first who had the Homeric poems committed to writing, and brought into that order in which we now possess them."

This hypothesis, now more than a century old, would, if it rested on good evidence, explain how a single version of the various lays came to be accepted and received as authorised. The Greek world, by the theory, had only in various places various sets of incoherent chants *orally* current on the Wrath of The public was everywhere a public of listeners, who heard the lays sung on rare occasions at feasts and fairs, or whenever a strolling rhapsodist took up his pitch, for a day or two, at a street corner. There was, by the theory, no reading public for the Homeric poetry. But, by the time of Pisistratus, a reading public was coming into existence. The tyrant had the poems collected, edited, arranged into a continuous narrative, primarily for the purpose of regulating the recitals at the Panathenaic festival. When once they were written, copies were made, and the rest of Hellas adopted these for their public purposes.

On a small scale we have a case analogous. The old songs of Scotland existed, with the airs, partly in human memory, partly in scattered broadsheets. The airs were good, but the words were often silly, more often they were Fescennine—"more dirt than wit." Burns rewrote the words, which were published in handsome volumes, with the old airs, or with these airs altered, and his became the authorised versions, while the ancient anonymous chants were almost entirely forgotten.

The parallel is fairly close, but there are points of difference. Burns was a great lyric poet, whereas we hear of no great epic poet in the age of Pisistratus. The old words which Burns's songs superseded were wretched doggerel; not such were the ancient Greek heroic lays. The old Scottish songs had no sacred historic character; they did not contain the history of the various towns and districts of Scotland. The heroic lays of Greece were believed, on the other hand, to be a kind of Domesday book of ancient principalities, and cities, and worshipped heroes. Thus it was much easier for a great poet like Burns to supersede with his songs a mass of unconsidered "sculdudery" old lays, in which no man or set of men had any interest, than for a mere editor, in the age of Pisistratus, to supersede a set of lays cherished, in one shape or another, by every State in Greece. This holds good, even if, prior to Pisistratus, there existed in Greece no written texts of Homer, and no reading public, a point which we shall show reasons for declining to concede.

The theory of the edition of Pisistratus, if it rested on valid evidence, would explain "how a single version of the poems came to be accepted," namely, because the poem was now *written* for the first time, and oral versions fell out of memory. But it would not, of course, explain how, before Pisistratus, during four or five centuries of change, the new poets and reciters, throughout the Greek world, each adding such fresh verses as he pleased, and often introducing such modern details of life as he pleased, kept up the harmony of the Homeric picture of life, and character, and law, as far as it confessedly exists.

To take a single instance: the poems never allude to the personal armorial bearings of the heroes. They are unknown to or unnamed by Homer, but are very familiar on the shields in seventh century and sixth century vases, and AEschylus introduces them with great poetic effect in . How did late continuators, familiar with the serpents, lions, bulls' heads, crabs, doves, and so forth, on the contemporary shields, keep such picturesque and attractive details out of their new rhapsodies? In mediaeval France, we shall show, the epics (eleventh to thirteenth centuries) deal with Charlemagne and his peers of the eighth century A.D. But they provide these heroes with the armorial bearings which came in during the eleventh to twelfth century A.D. The late Homeric rhapsodists avoided such tempting anachronisms.

Wolf's theory, then, explains "how a single version came to be accepted." It was the first *WRITTEN* version; the others died out, like the old Scots orally repeated songs, when Burns published new words to the airs. But Wolf's theory does not explain the harmony of the picture of life, the absence of post-Homeric ideas and ways of living, in the first written version, which, practically, is our own version.

In 1892 (*COMPANION TO THE Iliad*) Mr. Leaf adopted a different theory, the hypothesis of a Homeric "school" "which busied itself with the tradition of the Homeric poetry," for there must have been some central authority to preserve the text intact when it could not be preserved in writing. Were there no such body to maintain a fixed standard, the poems must have ended by varying indefinitely, according to the caprice of their various reciters. This is perfectly obvious.

Such a school could keep an eye on anachronisms and excise them; in fact, the Maori priests, in an infinitely more barbarous state of society, had such schools for the preservation of their ancient hymns in purity. The older priests “insisted on a critical and verbatim rehearsal of all the ancient lore.” Proceedings were sanctioned by human sacrifices and many mystic rites. We are not told that new poems were produced and criticised; it does not appear that this was the case. Pupils attended from three to five years, and then qualified as priests or *tohunga* . Suppose that the Asiatic Greeks, like the Maoris and Zuñis, had Poetic Colleges of a sacred kind, admitting new poets, and keeping them up to the antique standard in all respects. If this were so, the relative rarity of “anachronisms” and of modernisms in language in the Homeric poems is explained. But Mr. Leaf has now entirely and with a light heart abandoned his theory of a school, which is unsupported by evidence, he says.’

“The great problem,” he writes, “for those who maintain the gradual growth of the poems by a process of crystallisation has been to understand how a single version came to be accepted, where many rival versions must, from the necessity of the case, have once existed side by side. The assumption of a school or guild of singers has been made,” and Mr. Leaf, in 1892, made the assumption himself: “as some such hypothesis we are bound to make in order to explain the possibility of any theory” (1892).

But now (1900) he says, after mentioning “the assumption of a school or guild of singers,” that “the rare mention of in Chios gives no support to this hypothesis, which lacks any other confirmation.” He therefore now adopts the Wolfian hypothesis that “an official copy of Homer was made in Athens at the time of Solon or Pisistratus,” from the rhapsodies existing in the memory of reciters. But Mr. Leaf had previously said that “the legend which connects his” (Pisistratus’s) “name with the Homeric poems is itself probably only conjectural, and of late date.” Now the evidence for Pisistratus which, in 1892, he thought “conjectural and of late date,” seems to him a sufficient basis for an hypothesis of a Pisistratean editor of the Iliad, while the evidence for an Homeric school which appeared to him good enough for an hypothesis in 1892 is rejected as worthless, though, in each case, the evidence itself remains just what it used to be.

This is not very satisfactory, and the Pisistratean hypothesis is much less useful to a theorist than the former hypothesis of an Homeric school, for the Pisistratean hypothesis cannot explain the harmony of the characters and the details in the *Iliad*, nor the absence of such glaring anachronisms as the Cyclic poets made, nor the general "pre-Odyssean" character of the language and grammar. By the Pisistratean hypothesis there was not, what Mr. Leaf in 1892 justly deemed essential, a school "to maintain a fixed standard," throughout the changes of four centuries, and against the caprice of many generations of fresh reciters and irresponsible poets. The hypothesis of a school *was* really that which, of the two, best explained the facts, and there is no more valid evidence for the first making and writing out of our *Iliad* under Pisistratus than for the existence of a Homeric school.

The evidence for the *Iliad* edited for Pisistratus is examined in a Note at the close of this chapter. Meanwhile Mr. Leaf now revives Wolf's old theory to account for the fact that somehow "a single version" (of the Homeric poems) "came to be accepted." His present theory, if admitted, does account for the acceptation of a single version of the poems, the first standard *written* version, but fails to explain how "the caprice of the different reciters" (as he says) did not wander into every variety of anachronism in detail and in diction, thus producing a chaos which no editor of about 540 A.D. could force into its present uniformity.

Such an editor is now postulated by Mr. Leaf. If his editor's edition, as being *written*, was accepted by Greece, then we "understand how a single version came to be accepted." But we do not understand how the editor could possibly introduce a harmony which could only have characterised his materials, as Mr. Leaf has justly remarked, if there was an Homeric school "to maintain a fixed standard." But now such harmony in the picture of life as exists in the poems is left without any explanation. We have now, by the theory, a crowd of rhapsodists, many generations of uncontrolled wandering men, who, for several centuries,

"Rave, recite, and madden through the land,"

with no written texts, and with no "fixed body to maintain a standard." Such men would certainly not adhere strictly to a stereotyped early tradition: *that* we cannot expect from them.

Again, no editor of about 540 B.C. could possibly bring harmony of manners, customs, and diction into such of their recitals as he took down in writing.

Let us think out the supposed editor's situation. During three centuries nine generations of strollers have worked their will on one ancient short poem, *The Wrath* of *Achilles*. This is, in itself, an unexampled fact. Poets turn to new topics; they do not, as a rule, for centuries embroider one single situation out of the myriads which heroic legend affords. Strolling reciters are the least careful of men, each would recite in the language and grammar of his day, and introduce the newly evolved words and idioms, the new and fashionable manners, costume, and weapons of his time. When war chariots became obsolete, he would bring in cavalry; when there was no Over-Lord, he would not trouble himself to maintain correctly the character and situation of Agamemnon. He would speak of coined money, in cases of buying and selling; his European geography would often be wrong; he would not ignore the Ionian cities of Asia; most weapons would be of iron, not bronze, in his lays. Ionian religious ideas could not possibly be excluded, nor changes in customary law, civil and criminal. Yet, we think, none of these things occurs in Homer.

The editor of the theory had to correct all these anachronisms and discrepancies. What a task in an uncritical age! The editor’s materials would be the lays known to such strollers as happened to be gathered, in Athens, perhaps at the Panathenaic festival. The *répertoire* of each stroller would vary indefinitely from those of all the others. One man knew this chant, as modified or made by himself; other men knew others, equally unsatisfactory.

The editor must first have written down from recitation all the passages that he could collect. Then he was obliged to construct a narrative sequence containing a plot, which he fashioned by a process of selection and rejection; and then he had to combine passages, alter them, add as much as he thought fit, remove anachronisms, remove discrepancies, accidentally bring in fresh discrepancies (as always happens), weave transitional passages, look with an antiquarian eye after the too manifest modernisms in language and manners, and so produce the . That, in the sixth century B.C., any man undertook such a task, and succeeded so well as to impose on Aristotle and all the later Greek critics, appears to be a theory that could only occur to a modern man of letters, who is thinking of the literary conditions of his own time. The editor was doing, and doing infinitely better, what Lönnrot, in the nineteenth century, tried in vain to achieve for the Finnish *Kalewala*.

Centuries later than Pisistratus, in a critical age, Apollonius Rhodius set about writing an epic of the Homeric times. We know how entirely he failed, on all hands, to restore the manner of Homer. The editor of 540 B.C. was a more scientific man. Can any one who sets before himself the nature of the editor’s task believe in him and it? To the master-less floating jellyfish of old poems and new, Mr. Leaf supposes that “but small and unimportant additions were made after the end of the eighth century or thereabouts,” especially as “the creative and imaginative forces of the Ionian race turned to other forms of expression,” to lyrics and to philosophic poems. But the able Pisistratean editor, after all, we find, introduced quantities of new matter into the poems — in the middle of the sixth century; that kind of industry, then, did not cease towards the end of the eighth century, as we have been told. On the other hand, as we shall learn, the editor contributed to the *Iliad*, among other things, Nestor's descriptions of his youthful adventures, for the purpose of flattering Nestor's descendant, the tyrant Pisistratus of Athens.

One hypothesis, the theory of an Homeric school — which would answer our question, "How was the harmony of the picture of life in remote ages preserved in poems composed in several succeeding ages, and in totally altered conditions of life?" — Mr. Leaf, as we know, rejects. We might suggest, again, that there were written texts handed down from an early period, and preserved in new copies from generation to generation. Mr. Leaf states his doubt that there were any such texts. "The poems were all this time handed down orally only by tradition among the singers (*sic*), who used to wander over Greece reciting them at popular festivals. Writing was indeed known through the whole period of epic development" (some four centuries at least), "but it is in the highest degree unlikely that it was ever employed to form a standard text of the Epic or *ANY* part of it. There can hardly have been any standard text; at best there was a continuous tradition of those parts of the poems which were especially popular, and the knowledge of which was a valuable asset to the professional reciter."

Now we would not contend for the existence of any text much before 600 B.C., and I understand Mr. Leaf not to deny, now, that there may have been texts of the *ODYSSEY* and *Iliad* before, say, 600-540 B.C. If cities and reciters had any ancient texts, then texts existed, though not "standard" texts: and by this means the harmony of thought, character, and detail in the poems might be preserved. We do not think that it is "in the highest degree unlikely" that there were no texts. Is this one of the many points on which every savant must rely on his own sense of what is "likely"? To this essential point, the almost certain existence of written texts, we return in our conclusion.

What we have to account for is not only the relative lack of anachronisms in poems supposed to have been made through a period of at least four hundred years, but also the harmony of the *CHARACTERS* in subtle details. Some of the characters will be dealt with later; meanwhile it is plain that Mr. Leaf, when he rejects both the idea of written texts prior to 600-540 B.C., and also the idea of a school charged with the duty of "maintaining a fixed standard," leaves a terrible task to his supposed editor of orally transmitted poems which, he says — if unpreserved by text or school— "must have ended by varying infinitely according to the caprice of their various reciters."

On that head there can be no doubt; in the supposed circumstances no harmony, no *unus* color, could have survived in the poems till the days of the sixth century editor.

Here, then, is another difficulty in the path of the theory that the *Iliad* is the work of four centuries. If it was, we are not enabled to understand how it came to be what it is. No editor could possibly tinker it into the whole which we possess; none could steer clear of many absurd anachronisms. These are found by critics, but it is our hope to prove that they do not exist.

NOTE

THE LEGEND OF THE MAKING OF THE "ILIAD" UNDER PISISTRATOS

It has been shown in the text that in 1892 Mr. Leaf thought the story about the making of the *Iliad* under Pisistratus, a legend without authority, while he regarded the traditions concerning an Homeric school as sufficient basis for an hypothesis, "which we are bound to make in order to explain the possibility of any theory." In 1900 he entirely reversed his position, the school was abandoned, and the story of Pisistratus was accepted. One objection to accepting any of the various legends about the composing and writing out, for the first time, of the *Iliad*, in the sixth century, the age of Pisistratus, was the silence of Aristarchus on the subject. He discussed the authenticity of lines in the *Iliad* which, according to the legend, were interpolated for a political purpose by Solon or Pisistratus, but, as far as his comments have reached us in the scholia, he never said a word about the tradition of Athenian interpolation. Now Aristarchus must, at least, have known the tradition of the political use of a disputed line, for Aristotle writes (*Rhetoric,* i. 15) that the Athenians, early in the sixth century, quoted *Iliad,* II. 558, to prove their right to Salamis. Aristarchus also discussed *Iliad,* II. 553, 555, to which the Spartans appealed on the question of supreme command against Persia (Herodotus, vii. 159). Again Aristarchus said nothing, or nothing that has reached us, about Athenian interpolation. Once more, Odyssey, II. 631, was said by Hereas, a Megarian writer, to have been interpolated by Pisistratus (Plutarch.) But "the scholia that represent the teaching of Aristarchus" never make any reference to the alleged dealings of Pisistratus with the *Iliad*. The silence of Aristarchus, however, affords no safe ground of argument to believers or disbelievers in the original edition written out by order of Pisistratus.

It can never be proved that the scholiasts did not omit what Aristarchus said, though we do not know why they should have done so; and it can never be proved that Aristarchus was ignorant of the traditions about Pisistratus, or that he thought them unworthy of notice. All is matter of conjecture on these points. Mr. Leaf's conversion to belief in the story that our *Iliad* was practically edited and first committed to writing under Pisistratus appears to be due to the probability that Aristarchus must have known the tradition. But if he did, there is no proof that he accepted it as historically authentic. There is not, in fact, any proof even that Aristarchus must have known the tradition. He had probably read Dieuchidas of Megara, for “Wilamowitz has shown that Dieuchidas wrote in the fourth century.” But, unluckily, we do not know that Dieuchidas stated that the *Iliad* was made and first committed to writing in the sixth century B.C. No mortal knows what Dieuchidas said: and, again, what Dieuchidas said is not evidence. He wrote as a partisan in a historical dispute.

The story about Pisistratus and his editor, the practical maker of the *Iliad*, is interwoven with a legend about an early appeal, in the beginning of the sixth century B.C., to Homer as an historical authority. The Athenians and Megarians, contending for the possession of the island of Salamis, the home of the hero Aias, are said to have laid their differences before the Spartans (*cir*. 600-580 B.C.). Each party quoted Homer as evidence. Aristotle, who, as we saw, mentions the tale (Rhetoric, i. 15), merely says that the Athenians cited *Iliad*, II. 558: “Aias led and stationed his men where the phalanxes of the Athenians were posted.” Aristarchus condemned this line, not (as far as evidence goes) because there was a tradition that the Athenians had interpolated it to prove their point, but because he thought it inconsistent with *Iliad*, III. 230; IV. 251, which, if I may differ from so great a critic, it is not; these two passages deal, not with the position of the camps, but of the men in the field on a certain occasion. But if Aristarchus had thought the tradition of Athenian interpolation of II. 558 worthy of notice, he might have mentioned it in support of his opinion. Perhaps he did. No reference to his notice has reached us. However this may be, Mr. Leaf mainly bases his faith in the Pisistratean editor (apparently, we shall see, an Asiatic Greek, residing in Athens), on a fragmentary passage of Diogenes Laertius (third century A.D.), concerned with the tale of Homer’s being cited about 600-580 B.C. as an authority for the early ownership of Salamis. In this text Diogenes quotes Dieuchidas as saying something about Pisistratus in relation to the Homeric poems, but what Dieuchidas really said is unknown, for a part has dropped out of the text.

The text of Diogenes Laertius runs thus (Solon, i. 57): “He (Solon) decreed that the Homeric poems should be recited by rhapsodists “ (words of disputed sense), so that where the first reciter left off thence should begin his successor. It was rather Solon, then, than Pisistratus who brought Homer to light (), as Diogenes says in the Fifth Book of his *Megarica*. And *the lines* were *especially these*: “They who held Athens,” &c. (*Iliad*, II. 546-558), the passage on which the Athenians rested in their dispute with the Megarians.

And *what* “lines were especially these”? Mr. Leaf fills up the gap in the sense, after “Pisistratus” thus, “for it was he” (Solon) “who interpolated lines in the

Catalogue, and not Pisistratus.” He says: “The natural sense of the passage as it stands” (in Diogenes Laertius) “is this: It was not Peisistratos, as is generally supposed, but Solon *who collected the scattered Homer* of *his* day, for he it was who interpolated the lines in the *Catalogue of the Ships*”…. But Diogenes neither says for himself nor quotes from Dieuchidas anything about “collecting the scattered Homer of his day.” That Pisistratus did so is Mr. Leafs theory, but there is not a hint about anybody collecting anything in the Greek. Ritschl, indeed, conjecturally supplying the gap in the text of Diogenes, invented the words, “Who *collected* the Homeric poems, and inserted some things to please the Athenians.” But Mr. Leaf rejects that conjecture as “clearly wrong.” Then why does he adopt, as “the natural sense of the passage,” “it was not Peisistratos but Solon who *collected* the scattered Homer of his day?” The testimony of Dieuchidas, as far as we can see in the state of the text, “refers,” as Mr. Monro says, “to the *interpolation* that has just been mentioned, and need not extend further back.” “Interpolation is a process that postulates a text in which the additional verses can be inserted,” whereas, if I understand Mr. Leaf, the very first text, in his opinion, was that compiled by the editor for Pisistratus. Mr. Leaf himself dismisses the story of the Athenian appeal to Homer for proof of their claim as “a fiction.” If, so, it does not appear that ancient commentaries on a fiction are of any value as proof that Pisistratus produced the earliest edition of the *Iliad*.

The lines disputed by the Megarians occur in the *Catalogue*, and, as to the date and original purpose of the *Catalogue*, the most various opinions prevail. In Mr. Leaf’s earlier edition of the *Iliad* (vol. i.), he says that “nothing convincing has been urged to show” that the *Catalogue* is “of late origin.” We know, from the story of Solon and the Megarians, that the *Catalogue* “was considered a classical work — the Domesday Book of Greece, at a very early date” — say 600-580 B.C. “It agrees with the poems in being pre-Dorian” (except in lines 653-670).

“There seems therefore to be no valid reason for doubting that it, like the bulk of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey,* was composed in Achaean times, and carried with the emigrants to the coast of Asia Minor….”

In his new edition (vol. ii.), Mr. Leaf concludes that the *Catalogue* “originally formed an introduction to the whole Cycle,” the compiling of “the whole Cycle” being of uncertain date, but very late indeed, on any theory. The author “studiously preserves an ante-Dorian standpoint. It is admitted that there can be little doubt that some of the material, at least, is old.”

These opinions are very different from those expressed by Mr. Leaf in 1886. He cannot now give “even an approximate date for the composition of the

Catalogue” which, we conceive, must be the latest thing in Homer, if it was composed “for that portion of the whole Cycle which, as worked up in a separate poem, was called the *Kypria*” for the *Kypria* is obviously a very late performance, done as a prelude to the *Iliad*.

I am unable to imagine how this mutilated passage of Diogenes, even if rightly restored, proves that Dieuchidas, a writer of the fourth century B.C., alleged that Pisistratus made a collection of scattered Homeric poems — in fact, made “a standard text.”

The Pisistratean hypothesis “was not so long ago unfashionable, but in the last few years a clear reaction has set in,” says Mr. Leaf.

The reaction has not affected that celebrated scholar, Dr. Blass, who, with Teutonic frankness, calls the Pisistratean edition “an absurd legend.” Meyer says that the Alexandrians rejected the Pisistratean story “as a worthless fable,” differing here from Mr. Leaf and Wilamowitz; and he spurns the legend, saying that it is incredible that the whole Greek world would allow the tyrants of Athens to palm off a Homer on them.

Mr. T. W. Allen, an eminent textual scholar, treats the Pisistratean editor with no higher respect. In an Egyptian papyrus containing a fragment of Julius Africanus, a Christian chronologer, Mr. Allen finds him talking confidently of the Pisistratidae. They “stitched together the rest of the epic,” but excised some magical formulae which Julius Africanus preserves. Mr. Allen remarks: “The statements about Pisistratus belong to a well-established category, that of Homeric mythology…. The anecdotes about Pisistratus and the poet himself are on a par with Dares, who ‘wrote the *Iliad* before Homer.’”

The editor of Pisistratus is hardly in fashion, though that is of no importance. Of importance is the want of evidence for the editor, and, as we have shown, the impossible character of the task allotted to him by the theory.

As I suppose Mr. Leaf to insinuate, “fashion” has really nothing to do with the question. People who disbelieve in written texts must, and do, oscillate between the theory of an Homeric “school” and the Wolfian theory that Pisistratus, or Solon, or somebody procured the making of the first written text at Athens in the sixth century — a theory which fails to account for the harmony of the picture of life in the poems, and, as Mr. Monro, Grote, Nutzhorn, and many others argue, lacks evidence.

As Mr. Monro reasons, and as Blass states the case bluntly, “Solon, or Pisistratus, or whoever it was, put a stop, at least as far as Athens was concerned, to the mangling of Homer” by the rhapsodists or reciters, each anxious to choose a pet passage, and not going through the whole *Iliad* in due sequence. “But the unity existed before the mangling. That this has been so long and so stubbornly misunderstood is no credit to German scholarship: blind uncritical credulity on one side, limitless and arbitrary theorising on the other!” We are not solitary sceptics when we decline to accept the theory of Mr. Leaf. It is neither bottomed on evidence nor does it account for the facts in the case. That is to say, the evidence appeals to Mr. Leaf as valid, but is thought worse than inadequate by other great scholars, such as Monro and Blass; while the fact of the harmony of the picture of life, preserved through four or five centuries, appears to be left without explanation.

Mr. Leaf holds that, in order to organise recitations in due sequence, the making of a text, presenting, for the first time, a due sequence, was necessary. His opponents hold that the sequence already existed, but was endangered by the desultory habits of the rhapsodists. We must here judge each for himself; there is no court of final appeal.

I confess to feeling some uncertainty about the correctness of my statement of Mr. Leaf’s opinions. He and I both think an early Attic “recension” probable, or almost certain. But (see’ “Conclusion”) I regard such recension as distinct from the traditional “edition” of Pisistratus. Mr. Leaf, I learn, does not regard the “edition” as having “made” the *Iliad*; yet his descriptions of the processes and methods of his Pisistratean editor correspond to my idea of the “making” of our *Iliad* as it stands. See, for example, Mr. Leaf’s Introduction to *Iliad*, Book II. He will not even insist on the early Attic as the first *written* text; if it was not, its general acceptance seems to remain a puzzle. He discards the idea of one Homeric “school” of paramount authority, but presumes that, as recitation was a profession, there must have been schools. We do not hear of them or know the nature of their teaching. The Beauvais “school” of *jongleurs* in Lent (fourteenth century A.D.) seems to have been a holiday conference of strollers.

CHAPTER IV

LOOSE FEUDALISM: THE OVER-LORD IN “ILIAD,” BOOKS I. AND II.

We now try to show that the Epics present an historical unity, a complete and harmonious picture of an age, in its political, social, legal, and religious aspects; in its customs, and in its military equipment. A long epic can only present an unity of historical ideas if it be the work of one age. Wandering minstrels, living through a succession of incompatible ages, civic, commercial, democratic, could not preserve, without flaw or failure, the attitude, in the first place, of the poet of feudal princes towards an Over-Lord who rules them by undisputed right divine, but rules weakly, violently, unjustly, being subject to gusts of arrogance, and avarice, and repentance. Late poets not living in feudal society, and unfamiliar alike with its customary law, its jealousy of the Over-Lord, its conservative respect for his consecrated function, would inevitably miss the proper tone, and fail in some of the many of the feudal situation. This is all the more certain, if we accept Mr. Leaf’s theory that each poet-rhapsodist’s *répertoire* varied from the *répertoires* of the rest. There could be no unity of treatment in their handling of the character and position of the Over-Lord and of the customary law that regulates his relations with his peers. Again, no editor of 540 B.C. could construct an harmonious picture of the Over-Lord in relation to the princes out of the fragmentary *répertoires* of strolling rhapsodists, which now lay before him in written versions. If the editor could do this, he was a man of Shakespearian genius, and had minute knowledge of a dead society. This becomes evident when, in place of examining the *Iliad* through microscopes, looking out for discrepancies, we study it in its large lines as a literary whole. The question being, Is the *Iliad* a literary whole or a mere literary mosaic? we must ask “What, taking it provisionally as a literary whole, are the qualities of the poet as a painter of what we may call feudal society?”

Choosing the part of the Over-Lord Agamemnon, we must not forget that he is one of several analogous figures in the national poetry and romance of other feudal ages. Of that great analogous figure, Charlemagne, and of his relations with his peers in the earlier and later French mediaeval epics we shall later speak. Another example is Arthur, in some romances “the blameless king,” in others *un roi fainéant*.

The parallel Irish case is found in the Irish saga of Diarmaid and Grainne. We read Mr. O'Grady's introduction on the position of Eionn Mac Cumhail, the legendary Over-Lord of Ireland, the Agamemnon of the Celts. "Fionn, like many men in power, is variable; he is at times magnanimous, at other times tyrannical and petty. Diarmaid, Oisin, Oscar, and Caoilte Mac Rohain are everywhere the of the Fenians; of them we never hear anything bad."

Human nature eternally repeats itself in similar conditions of society, French, Norse, Celtic, and Achaean. "We never hear anything bad" of Diomede, Odysseus, or Aias, and the evil in Achilles's resentment up to a certain point is legal, and not beyond what the poet thinks natural and pardonable in his circumstances.

The poet's view of Agamemnon is expressed in the speeches and conduct of the peers. In Book I. we see the bullying truculence of Agamemnon, wreaked first on the priest of Apollo, Chryses, then in threats against the prophet Chalcas, then in menaces against any prince on whom he chooses to avenge his loss of fair Chryseis, and, finally, in the Seizure of Briseis from Achilles.

This part of the First Book of the *Iliad* is confessedly original, and there is no varying, throughout the Epic, from the strong and delicate drawing of an historical situation, and of a complex character. Agamemnon is truculent, and eager to assert his authority, but he is also possessed of a heavy sense of his responsibilities, which often unmans him. He has a legal right to a separate "prize of honour" (geras) after each capture of spoil. Considering the wrath of Apollo for the wrong done in refusing his priest's offered ransom for his daughter, Agamemnon will give her back, "if that is better; rather would I see my folks whole than perishing."

Here we note points of feudal law and of kingly character. The giving and taking of ransom exists as it did in the Middle Ages; ransom is refused, death is dealt, as the war becomes more fierce towards its close. Agamemnon has sense enough to waive his right to the girlish prize, for the sake of his people, but is not so generous as to demand no compensation. But there are no fresh spoils to apportion, and the Over-Lord threatens to take the prize of one of his peers, even of Achilles.

Thereon Achilles does what was frequently done in the feudal age of western Europe, he "renounces his fealty," and will return to Phthia. He adds insult, "thou dog-face!" The whole situation, we shall show, recurs again and again in the epics of feudal France, the later epics of feudal discontent. Agamemnon replies that Achilles may do as he pleases. "I have others by my side that shall do me honour, and, above all, Zeus, Lord of Counsel" (I. 175). He rules, literally, by divine right, and we shall see that, in the French feudal epics, as in Homer, this claim of divine right is granted, even in the case of an insolent and cowardly Over-Lord. Achilles half draws “his great sword,” one of the long, ponderous cut-and-thrust bronze swords of which we have actual examples from Mycenae and elsewhere. He is restrained by Athene, visible only to him. “With words, indeed,” she says, “revile him …. hereafter shall goodly gifts come to thee, yea, in threefold measure….”

Gifts of atonement for “surquedry,” like that of Agamemnon, are given and received in the French epics, for example, in the . The *Iliad* throughout exhibits much interest in such gifts, and in the customary law as to their acceptance, and other ritual or etiquette of reconciliation. This fact, it will be shown, accounts for a passage which critics reject, and which is tedious to our taste, as it probably was tedious to the age of the supposed late poets themselves. (Book XIX.). But the taste of a feudal audience, as of the audience of the Saga men, delighted in “realistic” descriptions of their own customs and customary law, as in descriptions of costume and armour. This is fortunate for students of customary law and costume, but wearies hearers and readers who desire the action to advance. Passages of this kind would never be inserted by late poets, who had neither the knowledge of, nor any interest in, the subjects.

To return to Achilles, he is now within his right; the moral goddess assures him of that, and he is allowed to give the: reins to his tongue, as he does in passages to which the mediaeval epics offer many parallels. In the mediaeval epics, as in Homer, there is no idea of recourse to a duel between the Over-Lord and his peer. Achilles accuses Agamemnon of drunkenness, greed, and poltroonery. He does not return home, but swears by the sceptre that Agamemnon shall rue his *outrecuidance* when Hector slays the host. By the law of the age Achilles remains within his right. His violent words are not resented by the other peers. They tacitly admit, as Athene admits, that Achilles has the right, being so grievously injured, to “renounce his fealty,” till Agamemnon makes apology and gives gifts of atonement. Such, plainly, is the unwritten feudal law, which gives to the Over-Lord the lion’s share of booty, the initiative in war and council, and the right to command; but limits him by the privilege of the peers to renounce their fealty under insufferable provocation. In no Book is Agamemnon so direfully insulted as in the First, which is admitted to be of the original “kernel.” Elsewhere the sympathy of the poet occasionally enables him to feel the elements of pathos in the position of the over-tasked King of Men.

As concerns the apology and the gifts of atonement, the poet has feudal customary law and usage clearly before his eyes. He knows exactly what is due, and the limits of the rights of Over-Lord and prince, matters about which the late

Ionian poets could only pick up information by a course of study in constitutional history — the last thing they were likely to attempt — unless we suppose that they all kept their eyes on the “kernel,” and that steadily, through centuries, generations of strollers worked on the lines laid down in that brief poem.

Thus the poet of Book IX. — one of “the latest expansions,” — thoroughly understands the legal and constitutional situation, as between Agamemnon and Achilles. Or rather all the poets who collaborated in Book IX., which “had grown by a process of accretion,” understood the legal situation.

Returning to the poet’s conception of Agamemnon, we find in the character of Agamemnon himself the key to the difficulties which critics discover in the Second Book. The difficulty is that when Zeus, won over to the cause of Achilles by Thetis, sends a false Dream to Agamemnon, the Dream tells the prince that he shall at once take Troy, and bids him summon the host to arms. But Agamemnon, far from doing that, summons the host to a peaceful assembly, with the well-known results of demoralisation.

Mr. Leaf explains the circumstances on his own theory of expansions compiled into a confused whole by a late editor. He thinks that probably there were two varying versions even of this earliest Book of the poem. In one (A), the story went on from the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles, to the holding of a general assembly “to consider the altered state of affairs.” This is the Assembly of Book H, but debate, in version A, was opened by Thersites, not by Agamemnon, and Thersites proposed instant flight! That was probably the earlier version.

In the other early version (B), after the quarrel between the chiefs, the story did not, as in A, go on straight to the Assembly, but Achilles appealed to his mother, the fair sea-goddess, as in our Iliad, and she obtained from Zeus, as in the actual *Iliad*, his promise to honour Achilles by giving victory, in his absence, to the Trojans. The poet of version B, in fact, created the beautiful figure of Thetis, so essential to the development of the tenderness that underlies the ferocity of Achilles. The other and earliest poet, who treated of the Wrath of the author of version A, neglected that opportunity with all that it involved, and omitted the purpose of Zeus, which is mentioned in the fifth line of the Epic. The editor of 540 B.C., seeing good in both versions, A and B, “combined his information,” and produced Books I. and II. of the *ILIAD* as they stand.

Mr. Leaf suggests that “there is some ground for supposing that the oldest version of the Wrath of Achilles did not contain the promise of Zeus to Thetis; it was a tale played exclusively on the earthly stage.” In that case the author of the oldest form (A) must have been a poet very inferior indeed to the later author of

B who took up and altered his work. In *his* version, Book I. does not end with the quarrel of the princes, but Achilles receives, with all the courtesy of his character, the unwelcome heralds of Agamemnon, and sends Briseis with them to the Over-Lord. He then with tears appeals to his goddess-mother, Thetis of the Sea, who rose from the grey mere like a mist, leaving the sea deeps where she dwelt beside her father, the ancient one of the waters. Then sat she face to face with her son as he let the tears down fall, and caressed him, saying, "Child, wherefore weepest thou, for what sorrow of heart? Hide it not, tell it to me; that I may know it as well as thou." Here the poet strikes the keynote of the character of Achilles, the deadly in war, the fierce in council, who weeps for his lost lady and his wounded honour, and cries for help to his mother, as little children cry.

Such is the Achilles of the *Iliad* throughout and consistently, but such he was not to the mind of Mr. Leaf's probably elder poet, the author of version A. Thetis, in version B, promises to persuade Zeus to honour Achilles by making Agamemnon rue his absence, and, twelve days after the quarrel, wins the god's consent.

In Book II. Zeus reflects on his promise, and sends a false Dream to beguile Agamemnon, promising that now he shall take Troy. Agamemnon, while asleep, is full of hope; but when he wakens he dresses in mufti, in a soft doublet, a cloak, and sandals; takes his sword (swords were then worn as part of civil costume), and the ancestral sceptre, which he wields in peaceful assemblies. Day dawns, and "he bids the heralds…." A break here occurs, according to the theory.

Here (*Iliad*, Book II., line 50) the kernel ceases, Mr. Leaf says, and the editor of 540 B.C. plays his pranks for a while.

The kernel (or one of the *two* kernels), we are to take up again at Book II., 443-483, and thence "skip" to XI. 56, and now "we have a narrative masterly in conception and smooth in execution," says Mr. Leaf. This kernel is kernel B, probably the later kernel of the pair, that in which Achilles appeals to his lady mother, who wins from Zeus the promise to cause Achaean defeat, till Achilles is duly honoured. The whole Epic turns on this promise of Zeus, as announced in the fifth, sixth, and seventh lines of the very first Book. If kernel A is the first kernel, the poet left out the essence of the plot he had announced. However, let us first examine probable kernel B, reading, as advised, Book II. 1-50, ; XI. 56 ff.

We left Agamemnon (though the Dream bade him summon the host to arms) dressed in *civil costume*. His ancestral sceptre in his hand, he is going to hold a deliberative assembly of the unarmed host. His attire proves that fact (, says the scholiast). Then if we skip, as advised, to II. 443-483 he bids the heralds call the host not to peaceful council, for which his costume is appropriate, but to *war*! The host gathers, “and in their midst the lord Agamemnon,” — still in civil costume, with his sceptre (he has not changed his attire as far as we are told)—“in face and eyes like Zeus; in waist like Ares” (god of war); “in breast like Poseidon,” — yet, for all that we are told, entirely unarmed! The host, however, were dressed “in innumerable bronze,” “war was sweeter to them than to depart in their ships to their dear native land,” — so much did Athene encourage them.

But nobody had been speaking of flight, in THE KERNEL B: THAT proposal was originally made by Thersites, in kernel A, and was attributed to Agamemnon in the part of Book II. where the editor blends A and B. This part, at present, Mr. Leaf throws aside as a very late piece of compilation. Turning next, as directed, to XI. 56, we find the Trojans deploying in arms, and the hosts encounter with fury — Agamemnon still, for all that appears, in the raiment of peace, and with the sceptre of constitutional monarchy. “In he rushed, first of all, and slew Bienor,” and many other gentlemen of Troy, not with his sceptre!

Clearly all this is the reverse of “a narrative masterly in conception and smooth in execution:” it is an impossible narrative.

Mr. Leaf has attempted to disengage one of two forms of the old original poem from the parasitic later growths; he has promised to show us a smooth and masterly narrative, and the result is a narrative on which no Achasan poet could have ventured. In II. 50 the heralds are bidden , that is to summon the host — to *what*? To a peaceful assembly, as Agamemnon’s costume proves, says the next line (II. 51), but that is excised by Mr. Leaf, and we go on to II. 443, and the reunited passage now reads, “Agamemnon bade the loud heralds” (II. 50) “call the Achaeans to battle” (II. 443), and they came, in harness, but their leader — when did he exchange chiton, cloak, and sceptre for helmet, shield, and spear? A host appears in arms; a king who set out with sceptre and doublet is found with a spear, in bronze armour: and not another word is said about the Dream of Agamemnon.

It is perfectly obvious and certain that the two pieces of the broken kernel B do not fit together at all. Nor is this strange, if the kernel was really broken and endured the insertion of matter enough to fill nine Books (IL-XL). If kernel B really contained Book II., line 50, as Mr. Leaf avers, if Agamemnon, as in that line (50) “bade the clear-voiced heralds do….” something — what he bade them do was, necessarily, as his peaceful costume proves, to summon the peaceful assembly which he was to moderate with his sceptre. At such an assembly, or at a preliminary council of Chiefs, he would assuredly speak of his Dream, as he does in the part excised. Mr. Leaf, if he will not have a peaceful assembly as part of kernel B, must begin his excision at the middle of line 42, in II., where

Agamemnon wakens; and must make him dress not in mufti but in armour, and call the host of the Achaeans to arm, as the Dream bade him do, and as he does in II. 443. Perhaps we should then excise II. 45 2, 45 3, with the reference to the plan of retreat, for *THAT* is part of kernel A where there was no promise of Zeus, and no Dream sent to Agamemnon. Then from II. 483, the description of the glorious armed aspect of Agamemnon, Mr. Leaf may pass to XI. 56, the account of the Trojans under Hector, of the battle, of the prowess of Agamemnon, inspired by the Dream which he, contrary to Homeric and French epic custom, has very wisely mentioned to nobody — that is, in the part not excised.

This appears to be the only method by which Mr. Leaf can restore the continuity of his kernel B.

Though Mr. Leaf has failed to fit Book XI. to any point in Book II., of course it does not follow that Book XI. cannot be a continuation of the original *Wrath* of *Achilles* (version B). If so, we understand why Agamemnon plucks up heart, in Book XI., and is the chief cause of a temporary Trojan reverse. He relies on the Dream sent from Zeus in the opening lines of Book II., the Dream which was not in kernel A; the Dream which he communicated to nobody; the Dream conveying the promise that he should at once take Troy. This is perhaps a tenable theory, though Agamemnon had much reason to doubt whether the host would obey his command to arm, but an alternative theory of why and wherefore Agamemnon does great feats of valour, in Book XI., will later be propounded. Note that the events of Books XL.-XVIII., by Mr. Leaf's theory, all occur on the very day after Thetis (according to kernel B)' obtains from Zeus his promise to honour Achilles by the discomfiture of the Achaeans; they have suffered nothing till that moment, as far as we learn, from the absence of Achilles and his 2500 men: allowing for casualties, say 2000.

So far we have traced — from Books I. and II. to Book XI. — the fortunes of kernel B, of the supposed later of two versions of the opening of the *Iliad*. But there may have been a version (A) probably earlier, we have been told, in which Achilles did not appeal to his mother, nor she to Zeus, and Zeus did not promise victory to the Trojans, and sent no false Dream of success to Agamemnon. What were the fortunes of that oldest of all old kernels? In this version (A) Agamemnon, having had no Dream, summoned a peaceful assembly to discuss the awkwardness caused by the mutiny of Achilles. The host met (*Iliad,* II. 87-99). Here we pass from line 99 to 212-242: Thersites it is who opens the debate, (in version A) insults Agamemnon, and advises flight. The army rushed off to launch the ships, as in II. 142-210, and were brought back by Odysseus, who made a stirring speech, and was well backed by Agamemnon, urging to battle.

Version A appears to us to have been a version that no heroic audience would endure. A low person like Thersites opens a debate in an assembly called by the Over-Lord; this could not possibly pass unchallenged among listeners living in the feudal age. When a prince called an assembly, he himself opened the debate, as Achilles does in Book I. 54-67. That a lewd fellow, the buffoon and grumbler of the host, of "the people," nameless and silent throughout the Epic, should rush in and open debate in an assembly convoked by the Over-Lord, would have been regarded by feudal hearers, or by any hearers with feudal traditions, as an intolerable poetical license. Thersites would have been at once pulled down and beaten; the host would not have rushed to the ships on *his* motion. Any feudal audience would know better than to endure such an impossibility; they would have asked, "How could Thersites speak — without the sceptre?"

As the poem stands, and ought to stand, nobody less than the Over-Lord, acting within his right, (II. 73), could suggest the flight of the host, and be obeyed.

It is the absolute demoralisation of the host, in consequence of the strange test of their Lord, Agamemnon, making a feigned proposal to fly, and it is their confused, bewildered return to the assembly under the persuasions of Odysseus, urged by Athene, that alone, in the poem, give Thersites his unique opportunity to harangue. When the Over-Lord had called an assembly the first word, of course, was for to speak, as he does in the poem as it stands. That Thersifes should rise in the arrogance bred by the recent disorderly and demoralised proceedings is one thing; that he should open the debate when excitement was eager to hear Agamemnon, and before demoralisation set in, is quite another. We never hear again of Thersites, or of any one of the commonalty, daring to open his mouth in an assembly. Thersites sees his one chance, the chance of a life time, and takes it; because Agamemnon, by means of the test — a proposal to flee homewards — which succeeded, it is said, in the case of Cortès, — has reduced the host, already discontented, to a mob.

Before Agamemnon thus displayed his ineptitude, as he often does later, Thersites had no chance. All this appears sufficiently obvious, if we put ourselves at the point of view of the original listeners. Thersites merely continues, in full assembly, the mutinous babble which he has been pouring out to his neighbours during the confused rush to launch the ships and during the return produced by the influence of Odysseus. The poet says so himself (*Iliad*, II. 212). "The rest sat down … only Thersites still chattered on." No original poet could manage the situation in any other way.

We have now examined Mr. Leaf's two supposed earliest versions of the beginning of the *Iliad*. His presumed earlier version (A), with no Thetis, no promise of Zeus, and no Dream, and with Thersites opening debate, is jejune, unpoetical, and omits the gentler and most winning aspect of the character of Achilles, while it could not possibly have been accepted by a feudal audience for the reasons already given. His presumed later version (B), with Thetis, Zeus, and the false Dream, cannot be, or certainly has not been, brought by Mr. Leaf into congruous connection with Book XI., and it results in the fighting of the *unarmed* Agamemnon, which no poet could have been so careless as to invent. Agamemnon could not go into battle without helmet, shield, and spears (the other armour we need not dwell upon here), and Thersites could not have opened a debate when the Over-Lord had called the Assembly, nor could he have moved the chiefs to prepare for flight, unless, as in the actual *Iliad*, they had already been demoralised by the result of the feigned proposal of flight by Agamemnon, and its effect upon the host. Probably every reader who understands heroic society, temper, and manners will, so far, agree with us.

Our own opinion is that the difficulties in the poem are caused partly by the poet’s conception of the violent, wavering, excitable, and unstable character of Agamemnon; partly by some accident, now indiscoverable, save by conjecture, which has happened to the text.

The story in the actual *Iliad* is that Zeus, planning disaster for the Achaeans, in accordance with his promise to Thetis, sends a false Dream, to tell Agamemnon that he will take Troy instantly. He is bidden by the Dream to summon the host to arms. Agamemnon, *still asleep*, “has in his mind things not to be fulfilled: Him seemeth that he shall take Priam’s town that very day” (II. 36, 37). “Then he awoke” (II. 41), and, obviously, was no longer so sanguine, once awake!

Being a man crushed by his responsibility, and, as commander-in- chief, extremely timid, though personally brave, he disobeys the Dream, dresses in civil costume, and summons the host to a *peaceful* assembly, not to war, as the Dream bade him do. Probably he thought that the host was disaffected, and wanted to argue with them, in place of commanding.

Here it is that the difficulty comes in, and our perplexity is increased by our ignorance of the regular procedure in Homeric times. Was the host not in arms and fighting every day, when there was no truce? There seems to have been no armistice after the mutiny of Achilles, for we are told that, in the period between his mutiny and the day of the Dream of Agamemnon, Achilles “was neither going to the Assembly, nor into battle, but wasted his heart, abiding there, longing for war and the slogan” (I. 489, 492). Thus it seems that war went on, and that assemblies were being held, in the absence of Achilles. It appears, however, that the fighting was mere skirmishing and raiding, no general onslaught was attempted; and from Book II. *73*, 83 it seems to have been a matter of doubt, with Agamemnon and Nestor, whether the army would venture a pitched battle.

It also appears, from the passage cited (I. 489, 492) that assemblies were being regularly held; we are told that Achilles did not attend them. Yet, when we come to the assembly (II. 86-100) it seems to have been a special and exciting affair, to judge by the brilliant picture of the crowds, the confusion, and the cries. Nothing of the sort is indicated in the meeting of the assembly in I. *54-5* 8. Why is there so much excitement at the assembly of Book II.? Partly because it was summoned *at* dawn, whereas the usual thing was for the host to meet in arms before fighting on the plain or going on raids; assemblies were held when the day's work was over. The host, therefore, when summoned to an assembly *at dawn*, expects to hear of something out of the common — as the mutiny of Achilles suggests — and is excited.

We must ask, then, why does Agamemnon, after the Dream has told him merely to summon the host to arm — a thing of daily routine — call a deliberative morning assembly, a thing clearly not of routine? If Agamemnon is really full of confidence, inspired by the Dream, why does he determine, not to do what is customary, call the men to arms, but as Jeanne d'Arc said to the Dauphin, to "hold such long and weary councils"? Mr. Jevons speaks of Agamemnon's "confidence in the delusive dream" as at variance with his proceedings, and would excise II. 35-41, "the only lines which represent Agamemnon as confidently believing in the Dream." But the poet never once says that Agamemnon, awake, did believe confidently in the Dream! Agamemnon dwelt with hope *while* asleep; when he wakened — he went and called a peaceful morning assembly, though the Dream bade him call to arms. He did not dare to risk his authority. This was exactly in keeping with his character. The poet should have said, "When he woke, the Dream appeared to him rather poor security for success" (saying so in poetic language, of course), and then there would be no difficulty in the summoning of an assembly at dawn. But either the poet expected us to understand the difference between the hopes of Agamemnon sleeping, and the doubts of Agamemnon waking to chill realities — an experience common to all of us who dream — or some explanatory lines have been dropped out — one or two would have cleared up the matter.

If I am right, the poet has not been understood. People have not observed that Agamemnon hopes while asleep, and doubts, and acts on his doubt, when awake. Thus Mr. Leaf writes: "Elated by the dream, as we are led to suppose, Agamemnon summons the army — to lead them into battle? Nothing of the sort; he calls them to assembly." But we ought not to have been led to suppose that the waking Agamemnon was so elated as the sleeping Agamemnon. He was "disillusioned" on waking; his conduct proves it; he did not know what to think about the Dream; he did not know how the host would take the Dream; he doubted whether they would fight at his command, so he called an assembly.

Mr. Jevons very justly cites a parallel case. Grote has remarked that in Book VII. of Herodotus, “The dream sent by the Gods to frighten Xerxes when about to recede from his project,” has “a marked parallel in the *Iliad*.” Thus Xerxes, after the defection of Artabanus, was despondent, like Agamemnon after the mutiny of Achilles, and was about to recede from his project. To both a delusive dream is sent urging them to proceed. Xerxes calls an assembly, however, and says that he will not proceed. Why? Because, says Herodotus, “when day came, he thought nothing of his dream.” Agamemnon, once awake, thought doubtfully of *his* dream; he called a Privy Council, told the princes about his dream — of which Nestor had a very dubious opinion — and said that he would try the temper of the army by proposing instant flight: the chiefs should restrain the men if they were eager to run away.

Now the epic prose narrative of Herodotus is here clearly based on *Iliad*, II., which Herodotus must have understood as I do. But in Homer there is no line to say — and one line or two would have been enough — that Agamemnon, when awake, doubted, like Xerxes, though Agamemnon, when asleep, had been confident. The necessary line, for all that we know, still existed in the text used by Herodotus. Homer may lose a line as well as Dieuchidas of Megara, or rather Diogenes Laertius. Juvenal lost a whole passage, re-discovered by Mr. Winstedt in a Bodleian manuscript. If Homer expected modern critics to note the delicate distinction between Agamemnon asleep and Agamemnon awake, or to understand Agamemnon’s character, he expected too much. The poet then treats the situation on these lines: Agamemnon, awake and free from illusion, does not obey the dream, does *not* call the army to war; he takes a middle course.

In the whole passage the poet’s main motive, as Mr. Monro remarks with obvious truth, is “to let his audience become acquainted with the temper and spirit of the army as it was affected by the long siege … and by the events of the First Book.” The poet could not obtain his object if Agamemnon merely gave the summons to battle; and he thinks Agamemnon precisely the kind of waverer who will call, first the Privy Council of the Chiefs, and then an assembly. Herein the homesick host will display its humours, as it does with a vengeance. Agamemnon next tells his Dream to the chiefs (if he had a dream of this kind he would most certainly tell it), and adds (as has been already stated) that he will first test the spirit of the army by a feigned proposal of return to Greece, while the chiefs are to restrain them if they rush to launch the ships. Nestor hints that there is not much good in attending to dreams; however, this is the dream of the Over-Lord, who is the favoured of Zeus.

Agamemnon next, addressing the assembly, says that posterity will think it a shameful thing that the Achaeans raised the siege of a town with a population much smaller than their own army; but allies from many cities help the Trojans, and are too strong for him, whether posterity understands that or not. “Let us flee with our ships!”

On this the host break up, in a splendid passage of poetry, and rush to launch the ships, the passion of *nostalgie* carrying away even the chiefs, it appears — a thing most natural in the circumstances. But Athene finds Odysseus in grief: “neither laid he any hand upon his ship,” as the others did, and she encouraged him to stop the flight. This he does, taking the sceptre of Agamemnon from his unnerved hand.

He goes about reminding the princes “have we not heard Agamemnon’s real intention in council?” (II. 188-197), and rating the common sort. The assembly meets again in great confusion; Thersites seizes the chance to be insolent, and is beaten by Odysseus. The host then arms for battle.

The poet has thus shown Agamemnon in the colours which he wears consistently all through the *Iliad*. He has, as usual, contrasted with him Odysseus, the type of a wise and resolute man. This contrast the poet maintains without fail throughout. He has shown us the temper of the weary, homesick army, and he has persuaded us that he knows how subtle, dangerous, and contagious a thing is military panic. Thus, at least, I venture to read the passage, which, thus read, is perfectly intelligible. Agamemnon is no personal coward, but the burden of the safety of the host overcomes him later, and he keeps suggesting flight in the ships, as we shall see. Suppose, then, we read on from II. 40 thus: “The Dream left him thinking of things not to be, even that on this day he shall take the town of Priam…. But he awoke from sleep with the divine voice ringing in his ears. (*Then it seemed him that some dreams are true and* some *false, for all do* not *come through the Gate of* Horn.) So he arose and sat up and did on his soft tunic, and his great cloak, and grasped his ancestral sceptre … and bade the clear-voiced heralds summon the Achaeans of the long locks to the deliberative assembly.” He then, as in II. 53-75 told his Dream to the preliminary council, and proposed that he should try the temper of the host by proposing flight — which, if it began, the chiefs were to restrain — before giving orders to arm. The test of the temper of the host acted as it might be expected to act; all rushed to launch the ships, and the princes were swept away in the tide of flight, Agamemnon himself merely looking on helpless. The panic was contagious; only Odysseus escaped its influence, and redeemed the honour of the Achaeans, as he did again on a later day.

The passage certainly has its difficulties. But Erhardt expresses the proper state of the case, after giving his analysis. “The hearer’s imagination is so captured, first by the dream, then by the brawling assembly, by the rush to the ships, by the intervention of Odysseus, by the punishment of Thersites — all these living pictures follow each other so fleetly before the eyes that we have scarcely time to make objections.” . The poet aimed at no more and no less effect than he has produced, and no more should be required by any one, except by that anachronism— “the analytical reader.” *He* has “time to make objections”: the poet’s audience had none; and he must be criticised from their point of view. Homer did not sing for analytical readers, for the modern professor; he could not possibly conceive that Time would bring such a being into existence.

To return to the character of Agamemnon. In moments of encouragement Agamemnon is a valiant fighter, few better spearmen, yet “he attains not to the first Three,” Achilles, Aias, Diomede. But Agamemnon is unstable as water; again and again, as in Book II., the lives and honour of the Achaeans are saved in the Over-Lord’s despite by one or other of the peers. The whole *Iliad*, with consistent uniformity, pursues the scheme of character and conduct laid down in the two first Books. It is guided at once by feudal allegiance and feudal jealousy, like the *Chansons de Geste* and the early sagas or romances of Ireland. A measure of respect for Agamemnon, even of sympathy, is preserved; he is not degraded as the kings and princes are often degraded on the Attic stage, and even in the Cyclic poems. Would wandering Ionian reciters at fairs have maintained this uniformity? Would the tyrant Pisistratus have made his literary man take this view?

CHAPTER V

AGAMEMNON IN THE LATER “ILIAD”

In the Third Book, Agamemnon receives the compliments due to his supremacy, aspect, and valour from the lips of Helen and Priam. There are other warriors taller by a head, and Odysseus was shorter than he by a head, so Agamemnon was a man of middle stature. He is “beautiful and royal” of aspect; “a good king and a mighty spearman,” says Helen.

The interrupted duel between Menelaus and Paris follows, and then the treacherous wounding of Menelaus by Pandarus. One of Agamemnon’s most sympathetic characteristics is his intense love of his brother, for whose sake he has made the war. He shudders on seeing the arrow wound, but consoles Menelaus by the certainty that Troy will fall, for the Trojans have broken the solemn oath of truce. Zeus “doth fulfil at last, and men make dear amends.” But with characteristic inconsistency he discourages Menelaus by a picture of many a proud Trojan leaping on his tomb, while the host will return home-an idea constantly present to Agamemnon’s mind. He is always the first to propose flight, though he will “return with shame” to Mycenae. Menelaus is of much better cheer: “Be of good courage, ALL THE HOST OF THE “ — a thing which Agamemnon does habitually, though he is not a personal poltroon. As Menelaus has only a slight flesh wound after all, and as the Trojans are doomed men, Agamemnon is now “eager for glorious battle.” He encourages the princes, but, of all men, rebukes Odysseus as “last at a fray and first at a feast”: such is his insolence, for which men detest him.

This is highly characteristic in Agamemnon, who has just been redeemed from ruin by Odysseus. Rebuked by Odysseus, he “takes back his word” as usual, and goes on to chide Diomede as better at making speeches than at fighting! But Diomede made no answer, “having respect to the chiding of the revered King.” He even rebukes the son of Capaneus for answering Agamemnon haughtily. Diomede, however, does not forget; he bides his time. He now does the great deeds of his day of valour (Book V.). Agamemnon meanwhile encourages the host.

During Books V., VI. Agamemnon’s business is “to bid the rest keep fighting.” When Hector, in Book VII., challenges any Achaean, nobody volunteers except Menelaus, who has a strong sense of honour. Agamemnon restrains him, and lots are cast: the host pray that the lot may fall on Aias, Diomede, or Agamemnon (VII. 179-180). Thus the Over-Lord is acknowledged to be a man of his hands, especially good at hurling the spear, as we see again in Book XXIII.

A truce is proposed for the burial of the dead, and Paris offers to give up the wealth that he brought to Troy, and more, if the Achaeans will go home, but Helen he will not give up. We expect Agamemnon to answer as becomes him. But no! All are silent, till Diomede rises. They will not return, he says, even if Helen be restored, for even a fool knows that Troy is doomed, because of the broken oath. The rest shout acquiescence, and Agamemnon refuses the compromise. Apparently he would not have disdained it, but for Diomede's reply.

On the following day the Trojans have the better in the battle, and Agamemnon "has no heart to stand," nor have some of his peers. But Diomede has more courage, and finally Agamemnon begins to call to the host to fight, but breaks down, weeps, and prays to Zeus "that we ourselves at least flee and escape;" he is not an encouraging commander-in-chief! Zeus, in pity, sends a favourable omen; Aias fights well; night falls, and the Trojans camp on the open plain.

Agamemnon, in floods of tears, calls an assembly, and proposes to "return to Argos with dishonour." "Let us flee with our ships to our dear native land, for now shall we never take wide-wayed Troy," All are silent, till Diomede rises and reminds Agamemnon that "thou saidst I was no man of war, but a coward." (In Book V.; we are now in Book IX.) "Zeus gave thee the honour of the sceptre above all men, but valour he gave thee not…. Go thy way; thy way is before thee, and thy ships stand beside the sea. But all the other flowing-haired Achaeans will tarry here until we waste Troy."

Nestor advises Agamemnon to set an advanced guard, which that martialist had never thought of doing, and to discuss matters over supper. A force of 700 men, under Meriones and the son of Nestor, was posted between the foss and the wall round the camp; the council met, and Nestor advised Agamemnon to approach Achilles with gentle words and gifts of atonement. Agamemnon, full of repentance, acknowledges his folly and offers enormous atonement. Heralds and three ambassadors are sent; and how Achilles received them, with perfect courtesy, but with absolute distrust of Agamemnon and refusal of his gifts, sending the message that he will fight only when fire comes to his own ships, we know.

Achilles is now entirely in the wrong, and the Over-Lord is once more within his right. He has done all, or more than all, that customary law demands. In

Book IX. Phoenix states the case plainly. “If Agamemnon brought thee not gifts, and promised thee more hereafter, … then were I not he that should bid thee cast aside thine anger, and save the Argives….” (IX. 515-517). The case so stands that, if Achilles later relents and fights, the gifts of atonement will no longer be due to him, and he “will not be held in like honour” (IX. 604).

The poet knows intimately, and, like his audience, is keenly interested in the details of the customary law. We cannot easily suppose this frame of mind and this knowledge in a late poet addressing a late Ionian audience.

The ambassadors return to Agamemnon; their evil tidings are received in despairing silence. But Diomede bids Agamemnon take heart and fight next day, with his host arrayed “before the ships” (IX. 708). This appears to counsel defensive war; but, in fact, and for reasons, when it comes to fighting they do battle in the open.

The next Book (X.) is almost universally thought a late interpolation; an opinion elsewhere discussed (see). Let us, then, say with Mr. Leaf that the Book begins with “exaggerated despondency” and ends with “hasty exultation,” in consequence of a brilliant camisade, wherein Odysseus and Diomede massacre a Thracian contingent. Our point is that the poet carefully (see *The Doloneia*) continues the study of Agamemnon in despondency, and later, by his “hasty exultation,” preludes to the valour which the Over-Lord displays in Book XI.

The poet knows that something in the way of personal valour is due to Agamemnon’s position; he fights brilliantly, receives a flesh wound, retires, and is soon proposing a general flight in his accustomed way. When the Trojans, in Book XIV., are attacking the ships, Agamemnon remarks that he fears the disaffection of his whole army (XIV. 49, 51), and, as for the coming defeat, that he “knew it,” even when Zeus helped the Greeks. They are all to perish far from Argos. Let them drag the ships to the sea, moor them with stones, and fly, “For there is no shame in fleeing from ruin, even in the night. Better doth he fare who flees from trouble than he that is overtaken.” It is now the turn of Odysseus again to save the honour of the army. “Be silent, lest some other of the Achaeans hear this word, that no man should so much as suffer to pass through his mouth…. And now I wholly scorn thy thoughts, such a word hast thou uttered.” On this Agamemnon instantly repents. “Right sharply hast thou touched my heart with thy stern reproof:” he has not even the courage of his nervousness.

The combat is now in the hands of Aias and Patroclus, who is slain. Agamemnon, who is wounded, does not reappear till Book XIX., when Achilles, anxious to fight and avenge Patroclus at once, without formalities of reconciliation, professes his desire to let bygones be bygones. Agamemnon excuses his insolence to Achilles as an inspiration of Ate: a predestined fault—

"Not I am the cause, but Zeus and Destiny."

Odysseus, to clinch the reunion and fulfil customary law, advises Agamemnon to bring out the gifts of atonement (the gifts prepared in Book IX.), after which the right thing is for him to give a feast of reconciliation, "that Achilles may have nothing lacking of his right." The case is one which has been provided for by customary law in every detail. Mr. Leaf argues that all this part must be late, because of the allusion to the gifts offered in Book IX. But we reply, with Mr. Monro, that the Ninth Book is "almost necessary to any Achilleis." The question is, would a late editor or poet know all the details of customary law in such a case as a quarrel between Over-Lord and peer? would a feudal audience have been satisfied with a poem which did not wind the quarrel up in accordance with usage? and would a late poet, in a society no longer feudal, know how to wind it up? Would he find any demand on the part of his audience for a long series of statements, which to a modern seem to interrupt the story? To ourselves it appears that a feudal audience desired the customary details; to such an audience they were most interesting.

This is a taste which, as has been said, we find in all early poetry and in the sagas; hence the long "runs" of the Celtic sagas, minutely repeated descriptions of customary things. The Icelandic saga-men never weary, though modern readers do, of legal details. For these reasons we reckon the passages in Book XIX. about the reconciliation as original, and think they can be nothing else. It is quite natural that, in a feudal society of men who were sticklers for custom, the hearers should insist on having all things done duly and in order — the giving of the gifts and the feast of reconciliation — though the passionate Achilles himself desires to fight at once. Odysseus insists that what we may call the regular routine shall be gone through. It is tedious to the modern reader, but it is surely much more probable that a feudal poet thus gratified his peculiar audience (he looked for no other) than that a late poet, with a different kind of audience, thrust the Reconciliation in as an "after-thought." The right thing must be done, Odysseus assures Achilles, "for I was born first, and know more things." It is not the right thing to fight at once, unfed, and before the solemn sacrifice by the Over-Lord, the prayer, the Oath of Agamemnon, and the reception of the gifts by Achilles; only after these formalities, and after the army has fed, can the host go forth. "I know more than you do; you are a younger man," says Odysseus, speaking in accordance with feudal character, at the risk of wearying later unforeseen generations.

This is not criticism inspired by mere "literary feeling," for "literary feeling" is on the side of Achilles, and wishes the story to hurry to his revenge. But ours is criticism; we must think of the poet in relation to his audience and of their demands, which we can estimate by similar demands, vouched for by the supply, in the early national poetry of other peoples and in the Icelandic sagas.

We hear no more of Agamemnon till, in Book XXIII, 35-38, after the slaying of Hector, Achilles “was brought to noble Agamemnon” (for that, as Odysseus said, was the regular procedure) “by the Achaean chiefs, hardly persuading him thereto, for his heart was wroth for his comrade.” Here they feast, Achilles still full of grief and resentment. He merely goes through the set forms, much against his will. It does appear to us that the later the poet the less he would have known or cared about the forms. An early society is always much interested in forms and in funerals and funeral games, so the poet indulges their taste with the last rites of Patroclus. The last view of Agamemnon is given when, at the end of the games, Achilles courteously presents him with the flowered *lebes*, the prize for hurling the spear, without asking him to compete, since his superior skill is notorious. This act of courtesy is the real reconciliation; previously Achilles had but gone reluctantly through the set forms in such cases provided. Even when Agamemnon offered the gifts of atonement, Achilles said, “Give them, as is customary, or keep them, as you please” (XIX. 146, 148). Achilles, young and passionate, cares nothing for the feudal procedure.

This rapid survey seems to justify the conclusion that the poet presents an uniform and historically correct picture of the Over-Lord and of his relations with his peers, a picture which no late editor could have pieced together out of the widely varying *repertoires* of late strolling reciters. Such reciters would gladly have forgotten, and such an editor would gladly have “cut” the “business” of the reconciliation. They would also, in a democratic spirit, have degraded the Over-Lord into the tyrant, but throughout, however low Agamemnon may fall, the poet is guided by the knowledge that his right to rule is *jure divino*, that he has qualities, that his responsibilities are crushing, “I, whom among all men Zeus hath planted for ever among labours, while my breath abides within me, and my limbs move,” says the Over-Lord (X. Sg, go.). In short, the poet’s conception of the Over-Lord is throughout harmonious, is a contemporary conception entertained by a singer who lives among peers that own, and are jealous of, and obey an Over-Lord. The character and situation of Agamemnon are a poetic work of one age, one moment of culture.

CHAPTER VI

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE “ILIAD”. BURIAL AND CREMATION

In archaeological discoveries we find the most convincing proofs that the *Iliad*, on the whole, is the production of a single age, not the patchwork of several changeful centuries. This may seem an audacious statement, as archaeology has been interpreted of late in such a manner as to demand precisely the opposite verdict. But if we can show, as we think we can, that many recent interpretations of the archaeological evidence are not valid, because they are not consistent, our contention, though unexpected, will be possible. It is that the combined testimony of archaeology and of the Epic proves the *Iliad* to represent, as regards customs, weapons, and armour, a definite moment of evolution; a period between the age recorded in the art of the Mycenaean shaft graves and the age of early iron swords and the “Dipylon” period.

Before the discoveries of the material remains of the “Mycenzean” times, the evidence of archaeology was seldom appropriately invoked in discussions of the Homeric question. But in the thirty years since Schliemann explored the buried relics of the Mycenzean Acropolis, his “Grave of Agamemnon,” a series of excavations has laid bare the interments, the works of art, and the weapons and ornaments of years long prior to the revolution commonly associated with the “Dorian Invasion” of about 1100-1000 B.C. The objects of all sorts which have been found in many sites of Greece and the isles, especially of Cyprus and Crete, in some respects tally closely with Homeric descriptions, in others vary from them widely. Nothing can be less surprising, if the heroes whose legendary feats inspired the poet lived centuries before his time, as Charlemagne and his Paladins lived some three centuries before the composition of the earliest extant *Chansons de Geste* on their adventures. There was, in such a case, time for much change in the details of life, art, weapons and implements. Taking the relics in the graves of the Mycenaean Acropolis as a starting-point, some things would endure into the age of the poet, some would be modified, some would disappear.

We cannot tell how long previous to his own date the poet supposes the Achaean heroes to have existed. He frequently ascribes to them feats of strength which “no man of such as now are” could perform. This gives no definite period for the interval; he might be speaking of the great grandfathers of his own generation. But when he regards the heroes as closely connected by descent of one or two generations with the gods, and as in frequent and familiar intercourse with gods and goddesses, we must suppose that he did not think their period recent. The singers of the *Chansons de Geste* knew that angels' visits were few and far between at the period, say, of the Norman Conquest; but they allowed angels to appear in epics dealing with the earlier time, almost as freely as gods intervene in Homer. In short, the Homeric poet undeniably treats the age of his heroes as having already, in the phrase of Thucydides, "won its way to the mythical," and therefore as indefinitely remote.

It is impossible here to discuss in detail the complex problems of Mycenaean chronology. If we place the Mycenaean "bloom-time" from "the seventeenth or sixteenth to the twelfth century B.C.," it is plain that there is space to spare, between the poet's age and that of his heroes, for the rise of changes in war, weapons, and costume. Indeed, there are traces enough of change even in the objects and art discovered in the bloom-time, as represented by the Mycenaean acropolis itself and by other "Mycenaean" sites. The art of the fragment of a silver vase in a grave, on which a siege is represented, is not the art, the costumes are not the costumes, of the inlaid bronze dagger-blade. The men shown on the vase and the lion-hunters on the dagger both have their hair close cropped, but on the vase they are naked, on the dagger they wear short drawers. On the Vaphio cups, found in a *tholos* chamber-tomb near Amyclae, the men are "long-haired Achaeans," with heavy, pendent locks, like the man on a pyxis from Knossos, published by Mr. Evans; they are of another period than the close-cropped men of the vase and dagger. Two of the men on the silver vase are covered either with shields of a shape and size elsewhere unknown in Mycenaean art, or with cloaks of an unexampled form. The masonry of the city wall, shown on the vase in the Mycenaean grave, is not the ordinary masonry of Mycenae itself. On the vase the wall is "isodomic," built of cut stones in regular layers. Most of the Mycenaean walls, on the other hand, are of "Cyclopean" style, in large irregular blocks.

Art, good and very bad, exists in many various stages in Mycenaean relics. The drawing of a god, with a typical Mycenaean shield in the form of a figure 8, on a painted sarcophagus from Milato in Crete, is more crude and savage than many productions of the Australian aboriginals, the thing is on the level of Red Indian work. Meanwhile at Vaphio, Enkomi, Knossos, and elsewhere the art is often excellent.

In one essential point the poet describes a custom without parallel among the discovered relics of the Mycenaean age — namely, the disposal of the bodies of the dead. They are neither buried with their arms, in stately *tholos* tombs nor in shaft graves, as at Mycenae: whether they be princes or simple oarsmen, they are cremated. A pyre of wood is built; on this the warrior's body is laid, the pyre is lighted, the body is reduced to ashes, the ashes are placed in a vessel or box of gold, wrapped round with precious cloths (no arms are buried, as a general rule), and a mound, howe, barrow, or tumulus is raised over all. Usually a *stele* or pillar crowns the edifice. This method is almost uniform, and, as far as cremation and the cairn go, is universal in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* whenever a burial is described. Now this mode of interment must be the mode of a single age in Greek civilisation. It is confessedly not the method of the Mycenaeans of the shaft grave, or of the latter *tholos* or stone beehive-shaped grave; again, the Mycenaeans did not burn the dead; they buried. Once more, the Homeric method is not that of the Dipylon period (say 900-750 B.C.) represented by the tombs outside the Dipylon gate of Athens. The people of that age now buried, now burned, their dead, and did not build cairns over them. Thus the Homeric custom comes between the shaft graves and the latter *tholos* graves, on the one hand, and the Dipylon custom of burning or burying, with sunk or rock-hewn graves, on the other.

The Homeric poets describe the method of their own period. They assuredly do not adhere to an older epic tradition of shaft graves or *tholos* graves, though these must have been described in lays of the period when such methods of disposal of the dead were in vogue. The altar above the shaft-graves in Mycenae proves the cult of ancestors in Mycenae; of this cult in the *Iliad* there is no trace, or only a dim trace of survival in the slaughter of animals at the funeral. The Homeric way of thinking about the state of the dead, weak, shadowy things beyond the river Oceanus, did not permit them to be worshipped as potent beings. Only in a passage, possibly interpolated, of the *Odyssey*, do we hear that Castor and Polydeuces, brothers of Helen, and sons of Tyndareus, through the favour of Zeus have immortality, and receive divine honours.

These facts are so familiar that we are apt to overlook the strangeness of them in the history of religious evolution. The cult of ancestral spirits begins in the lowest barbarism, just above the level of the Australian tribes, who, among the Dieri, show some traces of the practice, at least, of ghost feeding. Sometimes, as in many African tribes, ancestor worship is almost the whole of practical cult. Usually it accompanies polytheism, existing beside it on a lower plane. It was prevalent in the Mycenae of the shaft graves; in Attica it was uninterrupted; it is conspicuous in Greece from the ninth century onwards. But it is unknown to or ignored by the Homeric poets, though it can hardly have died out of folk custom. Consequently, the poems are of one age, an age of cremation and of burial in barrows, with no ghost worship. Apparently some revolution as regards burial occurred between the age of the graves of the Mycenaean acropolis and the age of Homer. That age, coming with its form of burning and its absence of the cult of the dead, between two epochs of inhumation, ancestor worship, and absence of cairns, is as certainly and definitely an age apart, a peculiar period, as any epoch can be.

Cremation, with cairn burial of the ashes, is, then, the only form of burial mentioned by Homer, and, as far as the poet tells us, the period was not one in which iron was used for swords and spears. At Assarlik (Asia Minor) and in Thera early graves, prove the use of cremation, but also, unlike Homer, of iron weapons. In these graves the ashes are inurned. There are examples of the same usage in Salamis, without iron. In Crete, in graves of the period of geometrical ornament ("Dipylon"), burning is more common than inhumation. Cremation is attested in a *tholos* or beehive-shaped grave in Argos, where the vases were late Mycenaean. Below this stratum was an older shaft grave, as is usual in *tholos* interments; it had been plundered?

The cause of the marked change from Mycenaean inhumation to Homeric cremation is matter of conjecture. It has been suggested that burning was introduced during the migrations after the Dorian invasion. Men could carry the ashes of their friends to the place where they finally settled. The question may, perhaps, be elucidated by excavation, especially in Asia Minor, on the sites of the earliest Greek colonies. At Colophon are many cairns unexplored by science. Mr. Ridgeway, as is well known, attributes the introduction of cremation to a conquering northern people, the Achaeans, his "Celts." It is certain that cremation and urn burial of the ashes prevailed in Britain during the Age of Bronze, and coexisted with inhumation in the great cemetery of Hallstatt, surviving into the Age of Iron. Others suppose a change in Achaean ideas about the soul; it was no longer believed to haunt the grave and grave goods and be capable of haunting the living, but to be wholly set free by burning, and to depart for ever to the House of Hades, powerless and incapable of hauntings.

It is never easy to decide as to whether a given mode of burial is the result of a definite opinion about the condition of the dead, or whether the explanation offered by those who practise the method is an afterthought. In Tasmania among the lowest savages, now extinct, were found monuments over cremated human remains, accompanied with "characters crudely marked, similar to those which the aborigines tattooed on their forearms." In one such grave was a spear, "for the dead man to fight with when he is asleep," as a native explained. Some Tasmanian tribes burned the dead and carried the ashes about in amulets; others buried in hollow trees; others simply inhumed. Some placed the dead in a hollow tree, and cremated the body after lapse of time. Some tied the dead up tightly (a common practice with inhumation), and then burned him. Some buried the dead in an erect ‘posture. The common explanation of burning was that it prevented the dead from returning, thus it has always been usual to burn the bodies of vampires. Did a race so backward hit on an idea unknown to the Mycenaean Greeks? If the usual explanation be correct — burning prevents the return of the dead — how did the Homeric Greeks come to substitute burning for the worship and feeding of the dead, which had certainly prevailed? How did the ancient method return, overlapping and blent with the method of cremation, as in the early Dipylon interments? We can only say that the Homeric custom is definite and isolated, and that but slight variations occur in the methods of Homeric burial.

(1)In *Iliad*, VI, 4 I 6 *ff*, Andromache *SAYS* that Achilles slew her father, “yet he despoiled him not, for his soul had shame of that; but he burnt him in his inlaid armour, and raised a barrow over him.” We are not told that the armour was interred with the ashes of Eetion. This is a peculiar case. We always hear in the that the dead are burned, and the ashes of princes are placed in a vessel of gold within an artificial hillock; but we do not hear, except in this passage, that they are burned in their armour, or that it is burned, or that it is buried with the ashes of the dead. The invariable practice is for the victor, if he can, to despoil the body of the fallen foe; but Achilles for some reason spared that indignity in the case of Eetion.

(2) *ILIAD*, VII. 85. Hector, in his challenge to a single combat, makes the conditions that the victor shall keep the arms and armour of the vanquished, but shall restore his body to his friends. The Trojans will burn him, if he falls; if the Achaean falls, the others will do something expressed by the word probably a word surviving from an age of embalment. It has come to mean, generally, to do the funeral rites. The hero is to have a barrow or artificial howe or hillock built over him, “beside wide Hellespont,” a memorial of him, and of Hector’s valour.

On the River Helmsdale, near Kildonan, on the left bank, there is such a hillock which has never, it is believed, been excavated. It preserves the memory of its occupant, an early Celtic saint; whether he was cremated or not it is impossible to say. But his memory is not lost, and the howe, cairn, or hillock, in Homer is desired by the heroes as a MEMORIAL.

On the terms proposed by Hector the arms of the dead could not be either burned or buried with him.

(3) Iliad, IX. 546. Phoenix says that the Calydonian boar “brought many to the mournful pyre.” All were cremated.

(4) *Iliad*, XXII 50-55. Andromache in her dirge (the *regret* of the French

mediaeval epics) says that Hector lies unburied by the ships and naked, but she will burn raiment of his, "delicate and fair, the work of women … to thee no profit, since thou wilt never lie therein, yet this shall be honour to thee from the men and women of Troy." Her meaning is not very clear, but she seems to imply that if Hector's body were in Troy it would be clad in garments before cremation.

Helbig appears to think that to clothe the dead in *garments* was an Ionian, not an ancient epic custom. But in Homer the dead always wear at least one garment, the , a large mantle, either white or purple, such as Agamemnon wears in peace (Iliad, II 43), except when, like Eetion and Elpenor in the Odyssey, they are burned in their armour. In *Iliad,* XXIII. 69 *ff*., the shadow of the dead unburned Patroclus appears to Achilles in his sleep asking for "his dues of fire." The whole passage, with the account of the funeral of Patroclus, must be read carefully, and compared with the funeral rites of Hector at the end of Book XXIV. Helbig, in an essay of great erudition, though perhaps rather fantastic in its generalisations, has contrasted the burials of the two heroes. Patroclus is buried, he says, in a true portion of the old Aeolic epic (Sir Richard Jebb thought the whole passage "Ionic"), though even into this the late Ionian *bearbeiter* (a spectral figure), has introduced his Ionian notions. But the Twenty-fourth Book itself is late and Ionian, Helbig says, not genuine early Aeolian epic poetry. The burial of Patroclus, then, save for Ionian late interpolations, easily detected by Helbig, is, he assures us, genuine "kernel," while Hector's burial "is partly Ionian, and describes the destiny of the dead heroes otherwise than as in the old Aeolic epos."

Here Helbig uses that one of his two alternate theories according to which the late Ionian poets do not cling to old epic tradition, but bring in details of the life of their own date. By Helbig's other alternate theory, the late poets cling to the model set in old epic tradition in their pictures of details of life.

Disintegrationists differ: far from thinking that the late Ionian poet who buried Hector varied from the AEolic minstrel who buried Patroclus (in Book XXIII.), Mr. Leaf says that Hector's burial is "almost an abstract" of that of Patroclus. He adds that Helbig's attempts "to distinguish the older AEolic from the newer and more sceptical 'Ionic' faith seem to me visionary." Visionary, indeed, they do seem, but they are examples of the efforts made to prove that the Iliad bears marks of composition continued through several centuries. We must remember that, according to Helbig, the Ionians, colonists in a new country, "had no use for ghosts." A fresh colony does not produce ghosts. "There is hardly an English or Scottish castle without its spook (*spuck*). On the other hand, you look in vain for such a thing in the United States" — spiritualism apart.

This is a hasty generalisation! Helbig will, if he looks, find ghosts enough in the literature of North America while still colonial, and in Australia, a still more newly settled country, sixty years ago Fisher's ghost gave evidence of Fisher's murder, evidence which, as in another Australian case, served the ends of justice. More recent Australian ghosts are familiar to psychical research.

This colonial theory is one of Helbig's too venturous generalisations. He studies the ghost, or rather dream-apparition, of Patroclus after examining the funeral of Hector; but we shall begin with Patroclus. Achilles (XXIII. 4-16) first hails his friend "even in the House of Hades" (so he believes that spirits are in Hades), and says that he has brought Hector "raw for dogs to devour," and twelve Trojans of good family "to slaughter before thy pyre." That night, when Achilles is asleep (XXIII. 65) the spirit () of Patroclus appears to him, says that he is forgotten, and begs to be burned at once, that he may pass the gates of Hades, for the other spirits drive him off and will not let him associate with them "beyond the River," and he wanders vaguely along the wide-gated dwelling of Hades. "Give me thy hand, for never more again shall I come back from Hades, when ye have given me my due of fire." Patroclus, being newly discarnate, does not yet know that a spirit cannot take a living man's hand, though, in fact, tactile hallucinations are not uncommon in the presence of phantasms of the dead. "Lay not my bones apart from thine … let one coffer" () "hide our bones."

, like *larnax*, is a coffin (*Sarg*), or what the Americans call a "casket," in the opinion of Helbig: it is an oblong receptacle of the bones and dust. Hector was buried in a *larnax*; SO will Achilles and Patroclus be when Achilles falls, but the dust of Patroclus is kept, meanwhile, in a golden covered cup (phialae) in the quarters of Achilles; it is not laid in howe after his cremation (XXIII. 243).

Achilles tries to embrace Patroclus, but fails, like Odysseus with the shade of his mother in Hades, in the *ODYSSEY*. He exclaims that "there remaineth then even in the House of Hades a spirit and phantom of the dead, albeit the life" (or the wits) "be not anywise therein, for all night hath the spirit of hapless Patroclus stood over me…."

In this speech Helbig detects the hand of the late Ionian poet. What goes before is part of the genuine old Epic, the kernel, done at a time when men believed that spooks could take part in the affairs of the upper world. Achilles therefore (in his dream), thought that he could embrace his friend. It was the sceptical Ionian, in a fresh and spookless colony, who knew that he could not; he thinks the ghost a mere dream, and introduces his scepticism in XXIII. 99-107. He brought in "the ruling ideas of his own period." The ghost, says the Ionian *bearbeiter*, is intangible, though in the genuine old epic the ghost himself thought otherwise — he being new to the situation and without experience. This is the first sample of the critical Ionian spirit, later so remarkable in philosophy and natural science, says Helbig.

We need not discuss this acute critical theory. The natural interpretation of the words of Achilles is obvious; as Mr. Leaf remarks, the words are “the cry of sudden personal conviction in a matter which has hitherto been lazily accepted as an orthodox dogma.” Already, as we have seen, Achilles has made promises to Patroclus in the House of Hades, now he exclaims “there really is something in the doctrine of a feeble future life.”

It is vain to try to discriminate between an old epic belief in able-bodied ghosts and an Ionian belief in mere futile *shades*, in the Homeric poems. Everywhere the dead are too feeble to be worth worshipping after they are burned; but, as Mr. Leaf says with obvious truth, and with modern instances, “men are never so inconsistent as in their beliefs about the other world.” We ourselves hold various beliefs simultaneously. The natives of Australia and of Tasmania practise, or did practise, every conceivable way of disposing of the dead — burying, burning, exposure in trees, carrying about the bodies or parts of them, eating the bodies, and so forth. If each such practice corresponded, as archaeologists believe, to a different opinion about the soul, then all beliefs were held together at once, and this, in fact, is the case. There is not now one and now another hard and fast orthodoxy of belief about the dead, though now we find ancestor worship prominent and now in the shade.

After gifts of hair and the setting up of jars full of oil and honey, Achilles has the body laid on the top of the pyre in the centre. Bodies of sheep and oxen, two dogs and four horses, are strewed around: why, we know not, for the dead is not supposed to need food: the rite may be a survival, for there were sacrifices at the burials of the Mycenaean shaft graves. Achilles slays also the twelve Trojans, “because of mine anger at thy slaying,” he says (XXIII. 23). This was his reason, as far as he consciously had any reason, not that his friend might have twelve thralls in Hades. After the pyre is alit Achilles drenches it all night with wine, and, when the flame dies down, the dead hero’s bones are collected and placed in the covered cup of gold. The circle of the barrow is then marked out, stones are set up round it (we see them round Highland tumuli), and earth is heaped up; no more is done; the tomb is empty; the covered cup holding the ashes is in the hut of Achilles.

We must note another trait. After the body of Patroclus was recovered, it was washed, anointed, laid on a bier, and covered from head to foot , translated by Helbig, “with a linen sheet” (cf. XXIII. 254). The golden cup with the ashes is next wrapped ; here Mr. Myers renders the words “with a linen veil.” Scottish cremation burials of the Bronze Age retain traces of linen wrappings of the urn.

Over all a white (mantle) was spread. In *Iliad*, XXIV. 231, twelve with chitons, single cloaks, and other articles of dress, are taken to Achilles by Priam as part of the ransom of Hector's body. Such is the death-garb of Patroclus; but Helbig, looking for Ionian innovations in Book XXIV., finds that the death-garb of Hector is not the same as that of Patroclus in Book XXIII. One difference is that when the squires of Achilles took the ransom of Hector from the waggon of Priam, they left in it two and a well-spun chiton. The women washed and anointed Hector's body; they clad him in the chiton, and threw one over it; we are not told what they did with the other. Perhaps, as Mr. Leaf says, it was used as a cover for the bier, perhaps it was not, but was laid under the body (Helbig). All we know is that Hector's body was restored to Priam in a chiton and a , which do not seem to have been removed before he was burned; while Patroclus had no chiton in death, but a and, apparently, a linen sheet.

To the ordinary reader this does not seem, in the circumstances, a strong mark of different ages and different burial customs. Priam did not bring any linen sheet — or whatever may be — in the waggon as part of Hector's ransom; and it neither became Achilles to give nor Priam to receive any of Achilles's stuff as death-garb for Hector. The squires, therefore, gave back to Priam, to clothe his dead son, part of what he had brought; nothing can be more natural, and there, we may say, is an end on't. They did what they could in the circumstances. But Helbig has observed that, in a Cean inscription of the fifth century B.C., there is a sumptuary law, forbidding a corpse to wear more than three white garments, a sheet under him, a chiton, and a mantle cast over him. He supposes that Hector wore the chiton, and had one over him and the other under him, though Homer does not say that. The Laws of Solon also confined the dead man to three articles of dress. In doing so Solon sanctioned an old custom, and that Ionian custom, described by the author of Book XXIV., bewrays him, says Helbig, for a late Ionian *bearbeiter*, deserting true epic usages and inserting those of his own day. But in some Attic Dipylon vases, in the pictures of funerals, we see no garments or sheets over the corpses.

Penelope also wove a against the burial of old Laertes, but surely she ought to have woven for him; on Helbig's showing Hector had *two*, Patroclus had only one; Patroclus is in the old epic, Hector and Laertes are in the Ionian epics; therefore, Laertes should have had two but we only hear of one. Penelope had to finish the and show it; now if she wanted to delay her marriage, she should have begun the second just as necessary as the first, if Hector, with a pair of represents Ionian usage. But Penelope never thought of what, had she read Helbig, she would have seen to be so obvious. She thought of no funeral garments for the old man but one shroud (Odyssey, II. 102; XIX. 147); yet, being, by the theory, a character of late Ionian, not of genuine old AEolic epic, she should have known better. It is manifest that if even the acuteness and vast erudition of Helbig can only find such invisible differences as these between the manners of the genuine old epic and the late Ionian innovations, there is really no difference, beyond such trifles as diversify custom in any age.

Hector, when burned and when his ashes have been placed in the casket, is laid in a , a ditch or trench (*Iliad*, XV. 356; XVIII. 564); but here (XXIV. 797) is a chamber covered with great stones, within the howe, the casket being swathed with purple robes, and this was the end. The ghost of Hector would not revisit the sun, as ghosts do freely in the Cyclic poems, a proof that the Cyclics are later than the Homeric poems.

If the burning of the weapons of Eetion and Elpenor are traces of another than the *old* AEolic epic faith, they are also traces of another than the late *Ionic* epic faith, for no weapons are burned with Hector. In the *Odyssey* the weapons of Achilles are not burned; in the *Iliad* the armour of Patroclus is not burned. No victims of any kind are burned with Hector: possibly the poet was not anxious to repeat what he had just described (his last book is already a very long book); possibly the Trojans did not slay victims at the burning.

The howes or barrows built over the Homeric dead were hillocks high enough to be good points of outlook for scouts, as in the case of the barrow of AEsyetes (*Iliad*, II. 793) and “the steep mound,” the howe of lithe Myrine (II. 814). We do not know that women were usually buried in howe, but Myrine was a warrior maiden of the Amazons. We know, then, minutely what the Homeric mode of burial was, with such variations as have been noted. We have burning and howe even in the case of an obscure oarsman like Elpenor. It is not probable, however, that every peaceful mechanic had a howe all to himself; he may have had a small family cairn; he may not have had an expensive cremation.

The interesting fact is that no barrow burial precisely of the Homeric kind has ever been discovered in Greek sites. The old Mycenaeans buried either in shaft graves or in a stately *tholos*; and in rock chambers, later, in the town cemetery: they did not burn the bodies. The people of the Dipylon period sometimes cremated, sometimes inhumed, but they built no barrow over the dead. The Dipylon was a period of early iron swords, made on the lines of not the best type of bronze sword. Now, in Mr. Leaf’s opinion, our Homeric accounts of burial “are all late; the oldest parts of the poems tell us nothing.” We shall show, however, that Mr. Leaf’s “kernel” alludes to cremation. What is “late”? In this case it is not the Dipylon period, say 900-750 B.C. It is not any later period; one or two late barrow burials do not answer to the Homeric descriptions. The “late” parts of the poems, therefore, dealing with burials, in Books VI., VII., XIX., XXIII., XXIV., and the Odyssey, are of an age not in “the Mycenaean prime,” not in the Dipylon period, not in any later period, say the seventh or sixth centuries B.C., and, necessarily, not of any subsequent period. Yet nobody dreams of saying that the poets describe a purely fanciful form of interment. They speak of what they know in daily life. If it be argued that the late poets preserve, by sheer force of epic tradition, a form of burial unknown in their own age, we ask, “Why did epic tradition not preserve the burial methods of the Mycenaean prime, the shaft grave, or the *tholos*, without cremation?”

Mr. Leaf’s own conclusion is that the people of Mycenae were “spirit worshippers, practising inhumation, and partial mummification;” the second fact is dubious. “In the post-Mycenaean ‘Dipylon’ period, we find cremation and sepulture practised side by side. In the interval, therefore, two beliefs have come into conflict. It seems that the Homeric poems mark this intermediate point….” In that case the Homeric poems are of one age, or, at least, all of them save “the original kernel” are of one age, namely, a period subsequent to the Mycenaean prime, but considerably prior to the Dipylon period, which exhibits a mixture of custom; cremation and inhumation coexisting, without barrows or howes.

We welcome this conclusion, and note that (whatever may be the case with the oldest parts of the poems which say nothing about funerals) the latest expansions must be of about 1100-1000 B.C. (?). The poem is so early that it is prior to hero worship and ancestor worship; or it might be more judicious to say that the poem is of an age that did not, officially, practise ancestor worship, whatever may have occurred in folk-custom. The Homeric age is one which had outgrown ancestor and hero worship, and had not, like the age of the Cyclics, relapsed into it. *Enfin*, unless we agree with Helbig as to essential variations of custom, the poems are the work of one age, and that a brief age, and an age of peculiar customs, cremation and barrow burial; and of a religion that stood, without spirit worship, between the Mycenzean period and the ninth century. That seems as certain as anything in prehistoric times can be, unless we are to say, that after the age of shaft graves and spirit worship came an age of cremation and of no spirit worship; and that late poets consciously and conscientiously preserved the tradition of *this* period into their own ages of hero worship and inhumation, though they did not preserve the tradition of the shaft-grave period. We cannot accept this theory of adherence to stereotyped poetical descriptions, nor can any one consistently adopt it in this case.

The reason is obvious. Mr. Leaf, with many other critics, distinguishes several successive periods of “expansion.” In the first stratum we have the remains of “the original kernel.” Among these remains is The Slaying of Hector (XXII. 1-404), “with but slight additions.” In the Slaying of Hector that hero indicates cremation as the mode of burial. “Give them my body back again, that the Trojans and Trojans’ wives grant me my due of fire after my death.” Perhaps this allusion to cremation, in the “original kernel” in the Slaying of Hector, may be dismissed as a late borrowing from Book VII. 79, 80, where Hector makes conditions that the fallen hero shall be restored to his friends when he challenges the Achaeans to a duel. But whoever knows the curious economy by way of repetition that marks early national epics has a right to regard the allusion to cremation (XXII, 342,343) as an example of this practice. Compare *La Chancun de Williame,* lines 1041-1058 with lines 1140-1134. In both the dinner of a knight who has been long deprived of food is described in passages containing many identical lines. The poet, having found his formula, uses it whenever occasion serves. There are several other examples in the same epic. Repetitions in Homer need not indicate late additions; the artifice is part of the epic as it is of the ballad manner. If we are right, cremation is the mode of burial even in “the original kernel.” Hector, moreover, in the kernel (XXII. 256-259) makes, before his final fight with Achilles, the same proposal as he makes in his challenge to a duel (VII. 85 et *seqq*.). The victor shall give back the body of the vanquished to his friends, but how the friends are to bury it Hector does not say — in this place. When dying, he does say (XXII. 342, 343).

In the kernel and all periods of expansion, funeral rites are described, and in all the method is cremation, with a howe or a barrow. Thus the method of cremation had come in as early as the “kernel,” The Slaying of Hector, and as early as the first expansions, and it lasted till the period of the latest expansions, such as Books XXIII., XXIV.

But what is the approximate date of the various expansions of the original poem? On that point Mr. Leaf gives his opinion. The Making of the Arms of Achilles (Books XVIII., XIX. 1-39) is, with the Funeral of Patroclus (XXIII. 1-256), in the second set of expansions, and is thus two removes later than the original “kernel.” Now this is the period — the Making of the Shield for Achilles is, at least, in touch with the period — of “the eminently free and naturalistic treatment which we find in the best Mycenaean work, in the dagger blades, in the siege fragment, and notably in the Vaphio cups,” (which show long-haired men, not men close-cropped, as in the daggers and siege fragment). The poet of the age of the second expansions, then,’ is at least in touch with the work of the shaft grave and ages. He need not be contemporary with that epoch, but “may well have had in his mind the work of artists older than himself.” It is vaguely possible that he may have seen an ancient shield of the Mycenaean prime, and may be inspired by that.

Moreover, and still more remarkable, the ordinary Homeric form of cremation and howe-burial is even older than the period which, if not contemporary with, is clearly reminiscent of, the art of the shaft graves. For, in the period of the first expansions (VII. 1-3 I 2), the form of burial is cremation, with a barrow or tumulus. Thus Mr. Leaf's opinion might lead us to the conclusion that the usual Homeric form of burial occurs in a period *PRIOR* to an age in which the poet is apparently reminiscent of the work of two early epochs — the epoch of shaft graves and that of *THOLOS* graves. If this be so, cremation and urn burial in cairns may be nearly as old as the Mycenaean shaft graves, or as old as the *THOLOS* graves, and they endure into the age of the latest expansions.

We must not press, however, opinions founded on the apparent technical resemblance of the free style and coloured metal work on the shield of Achilles, to the coloured metal work and free design on the daggers of the Mycenaean shaft graves. It is enough for us to note that the passages concerning burial, from the "kernel" itself, and also from the earliest to the latest expansions, are all perfectly harmonious, and of a single age — unless we are convinced by Helbig's objections. That age must have been brief, indeed, for, before it arrives, the period of *tholos* graves, as at Vaphio, must expire, on one hand, while the blending of cremation with inhumation, in the Dipylon age, must have been evolved after the cremation age passed, on the other. That brief intervening age, however, was the age of the *ILIAD* and Odyssey. This conclusion can only be avoided by alleging that late poets, however recent and revolutionary, carefully copied the oldest epic model of burial, while they innovated in almost every other point, so we are told. We can go no further till we find an unrifled cairn burial answering to Homeric descriptions. We have, indeed, in Thessaly, "a large tumulus which contained a silver urn with burned remains." But the accompanying pottery dated it in the second century B.C. It is possible enough that all tumuli of the Homeric period have been robbed by grave plunderers in the course of the ages, as the Vikings are said to have robbed the cairns of Sutherlandshire, in which they were not likely to find a rich reward for their labours. A conspicuous howe invites robbery — the heroes of the Saga, like Grettir, occasionally rob a howe — and the fact is unlucky for the Homeric archaeologist.

We have now tried to show that, as regards (1) to the absence from Homer of new religious and ritual ideas, or of very old ideas revived in Ionia, (2) as concerns the clear conception of a loose form of feudalism, with an Over-Lord, and (3) in the matter of burial, the *Iliad* and Odyssey are self-consistent, and bear the impress of a single and peculiar moment of culture.

The fact, if accepted, is incompatible with the theory that the poets both introduced the peculiar conditions of their own later ages and also, on other occasions, consciously and consistently “archaised.” Not only is such archaising inconsistent with the art of an uncritical age, but a careful archaiser, with all the resources of Alexandrian criticism at his command, could not archaise successfully. We refer to Quintus Smyrnaeus, author of the *Post Homerica*, in fourteen books. Quintus does his best; but we never observe in him that *naïf* delight in describing weapons and works of art, and details of law and custom which are so conspicuous in Homer and in other early poets. He does give us Penthesilea’s great sword, with a hilt of ivory and silver; but of what metal was the blade? We are not told, and the reader of Quintus will observe that, though he knows , bronze, as a synonym for weapons, he scarcely ever, if ever, says that a sword or spear or arrow-head was of bronze — a point on which Homer constantly insists. When he names the military metal Quintus usually speaks of iron. He has no interest in the constitutional and legal sides of heroic life, so attractive to Homer.

Yet Quintus consciously archaises, in a critical age, with Homer as his model. Any one who believes that in an uncritical age rhapsodists archaised, with such success as the presumed late poets of the *ILIAD* must have done, may try his hand in our critical age, at a ballad in the style of the Border ballads. If he succeeds in producing nothing that will at once mark his work as modern, he will be more successful than any poet who has made the experiment, and more successful than the most ingenious modern forgers of gems, jewels, and terra-cottas. They seldom deceive experts, and, when they do, other experts detect the deceit.

CHAPTER VII

HOMERIC ARMOUR

Tested by their ideas, their picture of political society, and their descriptions of burial rites, the presumed authors of the alleged expansions of the *Iliad* all lived in one and the same period of culture. But, according to the prevalent critical theory, we read in the *Iliad* not only large “expansions” of many dates, but also briefer interpolations inserted by the strolling reciters or rhapsodists. “Until the final literary redaction had come,” says Mr. Leaf — that is about 540 B.C.— “we cannot feel sure that any details, even of the oldest work, were secure from the touch of the latest poet.”

Here we are far from Mr. Leaf’s own opinion that “the whole scenery of the poems, the details of armour, palaces, dress, decoration … had become stereotyped, and formed a foundation which the Epic poet dared not intentionally sap….” We now find that “the latest poet” saps as much as he pleases down to the middle of the sixth century B.C. Moreover, in the middle of the sixth century B.C., the supposed editor employed by Hsistratus made “constant additions of transitional passages,” and added many speeches by Nestor, an ancestor of Pisistratus.

Did these very late interlopers, down to the sixth century, introduce modern details into the picture of life? did they blur the *unus* color? We hope to prove that, if they did so at all, it was but slightly. That the poems, however, with a Mycenaean or sub-Mycenaean basis of actual custom and usage, contain numerous contaminations from the usage of centuries as late as the seventh, is the view of Mr. Leaf, and Reichel and his followers.

Reichel’s hypothesis is that the heroes of the original poet had no defensive armour except the great Mycenaean shields; that the ponderous shield made the use of chariots imperatively necessary; that, after the Mycenaean age, a small buckler and a corslet superseded the unwieldy shield; that chariots were no longer used; that, by the seventh century B.C., a warrior could not be thought of without a breastplate; and that new poets thrust corslets and greaves into songs both new and old.

How the new poets could conceive of warriors as always in chariots, whereas in practice they knew no war chariots, and yet could not conceive of them without corslets which the original poet never saw, is Reichel’s secret. The new poets had in the old lays a plain example to follow. They did follow it as to chariots and shields; as to corslets and greaves they reversed it. Such is the Reichelian theory.

THE SHIELD

As regards armour, controversy is waged over the shield, corslet, and bronze greaves. In Homer the shield is of leather, plated with bronze, and of bronze is the corslet. No shields of bronze plating and no bronze corslets have been found in Mycenaean excavations.

We have to ask, do the Homeric descriptions of shields tally with the representations of shields in works of art, discovered in the graves of Mycenae, Spata in Attica, Vaphio in Sparta, and elsewhere? If the descriptions in Homer vary from these relics, to what extent do they vary? and do the differences arise from the fact that the poet describes consistently what he sees in his own age, or are the variations caused by late rhapsodists in the Iron Age, who keep the great obsolete shields and bronze weapons, yet introduce the other military gear of their day, say 800-600 B.C. — gear unknown to the early singers?

It may be best to inquire, first, what does the poet, or what do the poets, say about shields? and, next, to examine the evidence of representations of shields in Mycenaean art; always remembering that the poet does not pretend to live, and beyond all doubt does not live, in the Mycenaean prime, and that the testimony of the tombs is liable to be altered by fresh discoveries.

In *Iliad,* II. 388, the shield (*aspis*) is spoken of as “covering a man about” (), while, in the heat of battle, the baldric (*telamon*), or belt of the shield, “shall be wet with sweat.” The shield, then, is not an Ionian buckler worn on the left arm, but is suspended by a belt, and covers a man, or most of him, just as Mycenaean shields are suspended by belts shown in works of art, and cover the body and legs. This (II. 388) is a general description applying to the shields of all men who fight from chariots. Their great shield answers to the great mediaeval shield of the knights of the twelfth century, the “double targe,” worn suspended from the neck by a belt. Such a shield covers a mounted knight’s body from mouth to stirrup in an ivory chessman of the eleventh to twelfth century A.D., so also in the Bayeux tapestry, and on seals. Dismounted men have the same shield ().

The shield of Menelaus (III. 348) is “equal in all directions,” which we might conceive to mean, mathematically “circular,” as the words do mean that. A shield is said to have “circles,” and a spear which grazes a shield — a shield which was , “every way equal” — rends both circles, the outer circle of bronze, and the inner circle of leather (*Iliad*, XX. 273-281). But the passage is not unjustly believed to be late; and we cannot rely on it as proof that Homer knew circular shields among others. The epithet , “of good circle,” is commonly given to the shields, but does not mean that the shield was circular, we are told, but merely that it was “made of circular plates.” As for the shield of Menelaus, and other shields described in the same words, “every way equal,” the epithet is not now allowed to mean “circular.” Mr. Leaf, annotating *Iliad*, I. 306, says that this sense is “intolerably mathematical and prosaic,” and translates as “well balanced on every side.” Helbig renders the epithets in the natural sense, as “circular.”

To the rendering “circular” it is objected that a circular shield of, say, four feet and a half in diameter, would be intolerably heavy and superfluously wide, while the shields represented in Mycenaean art are not circles, but rather resemble a figure of eight, in some cases, or a section of a cylinder, in others, or, again, a door (Fig. 5,).

What Homer really meant by such epithets as “equal every way,” “very circular,” “of a good circle,” cannot be ascertained, since Homeric epithets of the shield, which were previously rendered “circular,” “of good circle,” and so on, are now translated in quite other senses, in order that Homeric descriptions may be made to tally with Mycenaean representations of shields, which are never circular as represented in works of art. In this position of affairs we are unable to determine the shape, or shapes, of the shields known to Homer.

A scholar’s rendering of Homer’s epithets applied to the shield is obliged to vary with the variations of his theory about the shield. Thus, in 1883, Mr. Leaf wrote, “The poet often calls the shield by names which seem to imply that it was round, and yet indicates that it was large enough to cover the whole body of a man…. In descriptions the round shape is always implied.” The words which indicated that the shield (or one shield) “really looked like a tower, and really reached from neck to ankles” (in two or three cases), were “received by the poet from the earlier Achaean lays.” “But to Homer the warriors appeared as using the later small round shield. His belief in the heroic strength of the men of old time made it quite natural to speak of them as bearing a shield which at once combined the later circular shape and the old heroic expanse….”

Here the Homeric words which naturally mean “circular” or “round” are accepted as meaning “round” or “circular.” Homer, it is supposed, in practice only knows the round shields of the later age, 700 B.C., so he calls shields “round,” but, obedient to tradition, he conceives of them as very large.

But, after the appearance of Reichel’s speculations, the Homeric words for “round” and “circular” have been explained as meaning something else, and Mr. Leaf, in place of maintaining that Homer knew no shields but round shields, now writes (1900), “The small circular shield of later times…is equally unknown to Homer, with a very few curious exceptions,” which Reichel discovered — erroneously, as we shall later try to show.

Thus does science fluctuate! Now Homer knows in practice none but light round bucklers, dating from about 700 B.C.; again, he does not know them at all, though they were habitually used in the period at which the later parts of his Epic were composed. We shall have to ask, how did small round bucklers come to be unknown to late poets who saw them constantly?

Some scholars, then, believe that the old original poet always described Mycenaean shields, which are of various shapes, but never circular in Mycenaean art. If there are any circular shields in the poems, these, they say, must have been introduced by poets accustomed, in a much later age, to seeing circular bucklers. Therefore Homeric words, hitherto understood as meaning “circular,” must now mean something else — even if the reasoning seems circular.

Other scholars believe that the poet in real life saw various types of shields in use, and that some of them were survivals of the Mycenaean shields, semi-cylindrical, or shaped like figures of 8, or like a door; others were circular; and these scholars presume that Homer meant “circular” when he said “circular.” Neither school will convert the other, and we cannot decide between them. We do not pretend to be certain as to whether the original poet saw shields of various types, including the round shape, in use, though that is possible, or whether he saw only the Mycenaean types.

As regards size, Homer certainly describes, in several cases, shields very much larger than most which we know for certain to have been common after, say, 700 B.C. He speaks of shields reaching from neck to ankles, and “covering the body of a man about.” Whether he was also familiar with smaller shields of various types is uncertain; he does not explicitly say that any small bucklers were used by the chiefs, nor does he explicitly say that all shields were of the largest type. It is possible that at the time when the Epic was composed various types of shield were being tried, while the vast ancient shield was far from obsolete.

To return to the *size* of the shield. In a feigned tale of Odysseus (Odyssey, XIV. 474-477), men in a wintry ambush place their shields over their shoulders, as they lie on the ground, to be a protection against snow. But any sort of shield, large or small, would protect the shoulders of men in a recumbent position. Quite a large shield may seem to be indicated in *Iliad,* XIII. 400-405, where

Idomeneus curls up his whole person behind his shield; he was "hidden" by it. Yet, as any one can see by experiment, a man who crouched low would be protected entirely by a Highland targe of less than thirty inches in diameter, so nothing about the size of the shield is ascertained in this passage. On a black-figured vase in the British Museum (B, 325) the entire body of a crouching warrior is defended by a large Boeotian buckler, oval, and with *échancrures* in the sides. The same remark applies to *Z&ad*, XXII. 273-275. Hector watches the spear of Achilles as it flies; he crouches, and the spear flies over him. Robert takes this as an "old Mycenaean" dodge — to duck down to the bottom of the shield. The avoidance by ducking can be managed with no shield, or with a common Highland targe, which would cover a man in a crouching posture, as when Glenbucket's targe was peppered by bullets at Clifton (746), and Cluny shouted "What the devil is this?" the assailants firing unexpectedly from a ditch. A few moments of experiment, we repeat, prove that a round targe can protect a man in Hector's attitude, and that the Homeric texts here throw no light on the *size* of the shield.

The shield of Hector was of black bull's-hide, and as large and long as any represented in Mycenaean art, so that, as he walked, the rim knocked against his neck and ankles. The shape is not mentioned. Despite its size, he *walked* under it from the plain and field of battle into Troy (*Iliad*, VI. 116-118). This must be remembered, as Reichel maintains that a man could not walk under shield, or only for a short way; wherefore the war chariot was invented, he says, to carry the fighting man from point to point (Leaf, *Iliad*, vol. i.). Mr. Leaf elaborates these points: "Why did not the Homeric heroes ride? Because no man could carry such a shield on horseback." We reply that men could and did carry such shields on horseback, as we know on the evidence of works of art and poetry of the eleventh to twelfth centuries A.D. Mr. Ridgeway has explained the introduction of chariots as the result of horses too small to carry a heavy and heavily-armed man as a cavalier.

The shield (), we are told by followers of Reichel, was only worn by princes who could afford to keep chariots, charioteers, and squires of the body to arm and disarm them. But this can scarcely be true, for all the comrades of Diomede had the shield (, *Iliad*, X. 152), and the whole host of Pandarus of Troy, a noted bowman, were shield-bearers (, *Iliad*, IV. 90), and some of them held their shields () in front of Pandarus when he took a treacherous shot at Menelaus (IV. 113). The whole host could not have chariots and squires, we may presume, so the chariot was not indispensable to the *écuyer* or shield-bearing man.

The objections to this conjecture of Reichel are conspicuous, as we now prove.

No Mycenaean work of art shows us a shielded man in a chariot; the men with the monstrous shields are always depicted on foot. The only modern peoples who, to our knowledge, used a leather shield of the Mycenaean size and even of a Mycenaean shape had no horses and chariots, as we shall show. The ancient Eastern peoples, such as the Khita and Egyptians, who fought from chariots, carried *small* shields of various forms, as in the well-known picture of a battle between the Khita, armed with spears, and the bowmen of Rameses II, who kill horse and man with arrows from their chariots, and carry no spears; while the Khita, who have no bows, merely spears, are shot down as they advance. . Egyptians and Khita, who fight from chariots, use *small* bucklers, whence it follows that war chariots were not invented, or, at least, were not retained in use, for the purpose of giving mobility to men wearing gigantic shields, under which they could not hurry from point to point. War chariots did not cease to be used in Egypt, when men used small shields.

Moreover, Homeric warriors can make marches under shield, while there is no mention of chariots to carry them to the point where they are to lie in ambush (Odyssey, XIV. 470-510). If the shield was so heavy as to render a chariot necessary, would Homer make Hector trudge a considerable distance under shield, while Achilles, under shield, sprints thrice round the whole circumference of Troy? Helbig notices several other cases of long runs under shield. Either Reichel is wrong, when he said that the huge shield made the use of the war chariot necessary, or the poet is “late”; he is a man who never saw a large shield like Hector’s, and, though he speaks of such shields, he thinks that men could walk and run under them. When men did walk or run under shield, or ride, if they ever rode, they would hang it over the left side, like the lion-hunters on the famous inlaid dagger of Mycenae, or the warrior on the chessman referred to above ().

Aias, again, the big, brave, stupid Porthos of the *Iliad*, has the largest shield of all, “like a tower” (this shield cannot have been circular), and is recognised by his shield. But he never enters a chariot, and, like Odysseus, has none of his own, because both men come from rugged islands, unfit for chariot driving. Odysseus has plenty of shields in his house in Ithaca, as we learn from the account of the battle with the Wooers in the *Odyssey;* yet, in Ithaca, as at Troy, he kept no chariot. Here, then, we have nations who fight from chariots, yet use small shields, and heroes who wear enormous shields, yet never own a chariot. Clearly, the great shield cannot have been the cause of the use of the war chariot, as in the theory of Reichel.

Aias and his shield we meet in *Iliad*, VII. 206-220. “He clothed himself upon his flesh in *all* his armour” (), to quote Mr. Leaf’s translation; but the poet only *describes* his shield: his “towerlike shield of bronze, with sevenfold ox-hide, that Tychius wrought him cunningly; Tychius, the best of curriers, that had his home in Hyle, who made for him his glancing shield of sevenfold hides of stalwart bulls, and overlaid the seven with bronze.”

The shield known to Homer then is, in this case, so tall as to resemble a tower, and has bronze plating over bull’s hide. By tradition from an age of leather shields the Currier is still the shield-maker, though now the shield has metal plating. It is fairly clear that Greek tradition regarded the shield of Aias as of the kind which covered the body from chin to ankles, and resembled a bellying sail, or an umbrella unfurled, and drawn in at the sides in the middle, so as to offer the semblance of two bellies, or of one, pinched in at or near the centre. This is probable, because the coins of Salamis, where Aias was worshipped as a local hero of great influence, display this shield as the badge of the AEginetan dynasty, claiming descent from Aias. The shield is bossed, or bellied out, with two half-moons cut in the centre, representing the *waist*, or pinched — in part, of the ancient Mycenaean shield; the same device occurs on a Mycenaean ring from AEgina in the British Museum.

In a duel with Aias the spear of Hector pierced the bronze and six layers of hide on his shield, but stuck in the seventh. The spear of Aias went through the circular (or “every way balanced”) huge shield of Hector, and through his corslet and *chiton*, but Hector had doubled himself up laterally (, VII. 254), and was not wounded. The next stroke of Aias pierced his shield, and wounded his neck; Hector replied with a boulder that lighted on the centre of the shield of Aias, “on the boss,” whether that means a mere ornament or knob, or whether it was the genuine boss — which is disputed. Aias broke in the shield of Hector with another stone; and the gentle and joyous passage of arms was stopped.

The shield of Agamemnon was of the kind that “cover all the body of a man,” and was “every way equal,” or “circular.” It was plated with twelve circles of bronze, and had twenty , or ornamental knobs of tin, and the centre was of black cyanus (XI. 31-34). There was also a head of the Gorgon, with Fear and Panic. The description is not intelligible, and I do not discuss it.

A man could be stabbed in the middle of the belly, “under his shield” (XI. 424-425), not an easy thing to do, if shields covered the whole body to the feet; but, when a hero was leaping from his chariot (as in this case), no doubt a spear could be pushed up under the shield. The ancient Irish romances tell of a *gae bulg,* a spear held in the warrior’s toes, and jerked up under the shield of his enemy! Shields could be held up on high, in an attack on a wall garrisoned by archers (XII. 139), the great Norman shield, also, could be thus lifted.

The Locrians, light armed infantry, had no shields, nor bronze helmets, nor spears, but slings and bows (XIII. 714). Mr. Leaf suspects that this is a piece of "false archaism," but we do not think that early poets in an uncritical age are ever archaeologists, good or bad. The poet is aware that some men have larger, some smaller shields, just as some have longer and some shorter spears (XIV. 370-377); but this does not prove that the shields were of different types. A tall man might inherit the shield of a short father, or *versa*.

A man in turning to fly might trip on the rim of his shield, which proves how large it was: "it reached to his feet." This accident of tripping occurred to Periphetes of Mycenae, but it might have happened to Hector, whose shield reached from neck to ankles.

Achilles must have been a large man, for he knew nobody whose armour would fit him when he lost his own (though his armour fitted Patroclus), he could, however, make shift with the towerlike shield of Aias, he said.

The evidence of the Iliad, then, is mainly to the effect that the heroes carried huge shields, suspended by belts, covering the body and legs. If Homer means, by the epithets already cited, "of good circle" and "every way equal," that some shields of these vast dimensions were circular, we have one example in early Greek art which corroborates his description. This is "the vase of Aristonothos," signed by that painter, and supposed to be of the seventh century (Fig. 1). On one side, the companions of Odysseus are boring out the eye of the Cyclops; on the other, a galley is being rowed to the attack of a ship. On the raised deck of the galley stand three warriors, helmeted and bearing spears. The artist has represented their shields as covering their right sides, probably for the purpose of showing their devices or blazons. *Their* shields are small round bucklers. On the ship are three warriors whose shields, though circular, *cover THE BODY from CHIN TO ANKLES*, as in Homer. One shield bears a bull's head; the next has three crosses; the third blazon is a crab.

Such personal armorial bearings are never mentioned by Homer. It is not usually safe to argue, from his silence, that he is ignorant of anything. He never mentions seals or signet rings, yet they cannot but have been familiar to his time. Odysseus does not seal the chest with the Phaeacian presents; he ties it up with a cunning knot; there are no rings named among the things wrought by Hephaestus, nor among the offerings of the Wooers of Penelope.

But, if we are to admit that Homer knew not rings and seals, which lasted to the latest Mycenaean times, through the Dipylon age, to the very late AEginetan treasure (800 B.C.) in the British Museum, and appear again in the earliest dawn of the classical age and in a Cyclic poem, it is plain that all the expansionists lived in one, and that a most peculiar *ringless* age. This view suits our argument to a wish, but it is not credible that rings and seals and engraved stones, so very common in Mycenaean and later times, should have vanished wholly in the Homeric time. The poet never mentions them, just as Shakespeare never mentions a thing so familiar to him as tobacco. How often are finger rings mentioned in the whole mass of Attic tragic poetry? We remember no example, and instances are certainly rare: Liddell and Scott give none. Yet the tragedians were, of course, familiar with rings and seals.

Manifestly, we cannot say that Homer knew no seals, because he mentions none; but armorial blazons on shields could be ignored by no poet of war, if they existed.

Meanwhile, the shields of the warriors on the vase, being circular and covering body and legs, answer most closely to Homer's descriptions. Helbig is reduced to suggest, first, that these shields are worn by men aboard ship, as if warriors had one sort of shield when aboard ship and another when fighting on land, and as if the men in the other vessel were not equally engaged in a sea fight. No evidence in favour of such difference of practice, by sea and land, is offered. Again, Helbig does not trust the artist, in this case, though the artist is usually trusted to draw what he sees; and why should he give the men in the other ship or boat small bucklers, genuine, while bedecking the warriors in the adverse vessel with large, purely imaginary shields? It is not in the least "probable," as Helbig suggests, that the artist is shirking the trouble of drawing the figure.

Reichel supposes that round bucklers were novelties when the vase was painted (seventh century), and that the artist did not understand how to depict them. But he depicted them very well as regards the men in the galley, save that, for obvious aesthetic reasons, he chose to assume that the men in the galley were left-handed and wore their shields on their right arms, his desire being to display the blazons of both parties. We thus see, if the artist may be trusted, that shields, which both "reached to the feet" and were circular, existed in his time (the seventh century), so that possibly they may have existed in Homer's time and survived into the age of small bucklers. Tyrtaeus (late seventh century), as Helbig remarks, speaks of "a *wide* shield, covering thighs, shins, breast, and shoulders."

Nothing can be more like the large shields of the vase of Aristonothos. Thus the huge circular shield seems to have been a practicable shield in actual use. If so, when Homer spoke of large circular shields he may have meant large circular shields. On the Dodwell pyxis of 650 to 620 B.C., a man wears an oval shield, covering him from the base of the neck to the ankles. He wears it on his left arm.

Of shields certainly small and light, worn by the chiefs, there is not a notice in the *Iliad*, unless there be a hint to that effect in the accounts of heroes running, walking considerable distances, and “stepping lightly” under shields, supposed, by the critics, to be of crushing weight. In such passages the poet may be carried away by his own *verve*, or the heroes of ancient times may be deemed capable of exertions beyond those of the poet’s contemporaries, as he often tells us that, in fact, the old heroes were. A poet is not a scientific military writer; and in the epic poetry of all other early races very gross exaggeration is permitted, as in the the old Celtic romances, and, of course, the huge epics of India. In Homer “the skill of the poet makes things impossible convincing,” Aristotle says; and it is a critical error to insist on taking Homer absolutely and always *au pied de la lettre*. He seems, undeniably, to have large body-covering shields present to his mind as in common use.

Small shields of the Greek historic period are “unknown to Homer,” Mr. Leaf says, “with a very few curious exceptions,” detected by Reichel in Book X. 15 , where Diomede’s men sleep with their heads resting on their shields, whereas a big-bellied Mycenaean shield rises, he says, too high for a pillow. But some Mycenzean shields were perfectly flat; while, again, nothing could be more comfortable, as a head-rest, than the hollow between the upper and lower bulges of the Mycenzean huge shield. The Zulu wooden head-rest is of the same character. Thus this passage in Book X. does not prove that small circular shields were known to Homer, nor does X. 5 13. 526-530, an obscure text in which it is uncertain whether Diomede and Odysseus ride or drive the horses of Rhesus. They *could* ride, as every one must see, even though equipped with great body-covering shields. True, the shielded hero could neither put his shield at his back nor in front of him when he rode; but he could hang it sidewise, when it would cover his left side, as in the early Middle Ages (1060-1160 A.D.).

The taking of the shield from a man’s shoulders (XI. 374) does not prove the shield to be small; the shield hung by the belt (*telamon*) from the shoulder.

So far we have the results that Homer seems most familiar with vast body-covering shields; that such shields were suspended by a baldric, not worn on the left arm; that they were made of layers of hide, plated with bronze, and that such a shield as Aias wore must have been tall, doubtless oblong, “like a tower,” possibly it was semi-cylindrical. Whether the epithets denoting roundness refer to circular shields or to the double *targe*, g-shaped, of Mycenaean times is uncertain.

We thus come to a puzzle of unusual magnitude. If Homer does not know small circular shields, but refers always to huge shields, whereas, from the eighth century B.C. onwards, such shields were not in use (disregarding Tyrtaeus, and the vase of Aristonothos on which they appear conspicuously, and the Dodwell pyxis), where are we? Either we have a harmonious picture of war from a very ancient date of large shields, or late poets did not introduce the light round buckler of their own period. Meanwhile they are accused of introducing the bronze corslets and other defensive armour of their own period. Defensive armour was unknown, we are told, in the Mycenaean prime, which, if true, does not affect the question. Homer did not live in or describe the Mycenaean prime, with its stone arrow-tips. Why did the late poets act so inconsistently? Why were they ignorant of small circular shields, which they saw every day? Or why, if they knew them, did they not introduce them in the poems, which, we are told, they were filling with non-Mycenaean greaves and corslets?

This is one of the dilemmas which constantly arise to confront the advocates of the theory that the *Iliad* is a patchwork of many generations. "Late" poets, if really late, certainly in every-day life knew small parrying bucklers worn on the left arm, and huge body-covering shields perhaps they rarely saw in use. They also knew, and the original poet, we are told, did not know bronze corslets and greaves. The theory of critics is that late poets introduced the bronze corslets and greaves with which they were familiar into the poems, but scrupulously abstained from alluding to the equally familiar small shields. Why are they so recklessly anachronistic and "up-to-date" with the corslets and greaves, and so staunchly but inconsistently conservative about keeping the huge shields?

Mr. Leaf explains thus: "The groundwork of the Epos is Mycenaean, in the arrangement of the house, in the prevalence of copper" (as compared with iron), "and, as Reichel has shown, in armour. Yet in many points the poems are certainly later than the prime, at least, of the Mycenaean age" — which we are the last to deny. "Is it that the poets are deliberately trying to present the conditions of an age anterior to their own? or are they depicting the circumstances by which they are surrounded — circumstances which slowly change during the period of the development of the Epos? Cauer decides for the latter alternative, *the only one which is really conceivable* in an age whose views are in many ways so naïve as the poems themselves prove them to have been."

Here we entirely side with Mr. Leaf. No poet, no painter, no sculptor, in a naïf, uncritical age, ever represents in art anything but what he sees daily in costume, customs, weapons, armour, and ways of life. Mr. Leaf, however, on the other hand, occasionally chides pieces of deliberate archaeological pedantry in the poets, in spite of his opinion that they are always "depicting the circumstances by which they are surrounded." But as huge man-covering shields are *not* among the circumstances by which the supposed late poets were surrounded, why do they depict them? Here Mr. Leaf corrects himself, and his argument departs from the statement that only one theory is “conceivable,” namely, that the poets depict their own surroundings, and we are introduced to a new proposition. “Or rather we must recognise everywhere a compromise between two opposing principles: the singer, on the one hand, has to be conservatively tenacious of the old material which serves as the substance of his song; on the other hand, he has to be vivid and actual in the contributions which he himself makes to the common stock.”

The conduct of such singers is so weirdly inconsistent as not to be easily credible. But probably they went further, for “it is possible that the allusions” to the corslet “may have been introduced in the course of successive modernisation such as the oldest parts of the *Iliad* seem in many cases to have passed through. But, in fact, *Iliad*, XI. 234 is the only mention of a corslet in any of the oldest strata, so far as we can distinguish them, and here Reichel translates *thorex* ‘shield.’” Mr. Leaf’s statement we understand to mean that, when the singer or reciter was delivering an ANCIENT lay he did not introduce any of the military gear — light round bucklers, greaves, and corslets — with which his audience were familiar. But when the singer delivers a new lay, which he himself has added to “the kernel,” then he is “vivid and actual,” and speaks of greaves and corslets, though he still cleaves in his new lay to the obsolete chariot, the enormous shield, and, in an age of iron, to weapons of bronze. He is a sadly inconsistent new poet!

Meanwhile, sixteen allusions to the corslet “can be cut out,” as probably “some or all these are additions to the text made at a time when it seemed absurd to think of a man in full armour without a corslet.” Thus the reciters, after all, did not spare “the old material” in the matter of corslets. The late singers have thus been “conservatively tenacious” in clinging to chariots, weapons of bronze, and obsolete enormous shields, while they have also been “vivid and actual” and “up to date” in the way of introducing everywhere bronze corslets, greaves, and other armour unknown, by the theory, in “the old material which is the substance of their song.” By the way, they have not even spared the shield of the old material, for it was of leather or wood (we have no trace of metal plating on the old Mycenaean shields), and the singer, while retaining the size of it, has added a plating of bronze, which we have every reason to suppose that Mycenaean shields of the prime did not present to the stone-headed arrow.

This theory of singers, who are at once “conservatively tenacious” of the old and impudently radical in pushing in the new, appears to us to be logically untenable. We have, in Chapter I, observed the same inconsistency in Helbig, and shall have occasion to remark again on its presence in the work of that great archaeologist. The inconsistency is inseparable from theories of expansion through several centuries. “Many a method,” says Mr. Leaf, “has been proposed which, up to a certain point, seemed irresistible, but there has always been a residuum which returned to plague the inventor.” This is very true, and our explanation is that no method which starts from the hypothesis that the poems are the product of several centuries will work. The “residuum” is the element which cannot be fitted into any such hypothesis. But try the hypothesis that the poems are the product of a single age, and all is harmonious. There is no baffling “residuum.” The poet describes the details of a definite age, not that of the Mycenaean bloom, not that of 900-600 A.D.

We cannot, then, suppose that many generations of irresponsible reciters at fairs and public festivals conservatively adhered to the huge size of the shield, while altering its material; and also that the same men, for the sake of being “actual” and up to date, dragged bronze corslets and greaves not only into new lays, but into passages of lays by old poets who had never heard of such things. Consequently, the poetic descriptions of arms and armour must be explained on some other theory. If the poet, again, as others suppose — Mr. Ridgeway for one — knew such bronze-covered circular shields as are common in central and western Europe of the Bronze Age, why did he sometimes represent them as extending from neck to ankles, whereas the known bronze circular shields are not of more than 2 feet 2 inches to 2 feet 6 inches in diameter? Such a shield, without the wood or leather, weighed 5 lbs. 2 ozs., and a strong man might walk or run under it. Homer’s shields would be twice as heavy, at least, though, even then, not too heavy for a Hector, or an Aias, or Achilles. I do not see that the round bronze shields of Limerick, Yetholm, Beith, Lincolnshire, and Tarquinii, cited by Mr. Ridgeway, answer to Homer’s descriptions of huge shields. They are too small. But it is perfectly possible, or rather highly probable, that in the poet’s day shields of various sizes and patterns coexisted.

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE SHIELDS

Turning to archaeological evidence, we find no remains in the graves of the Mycenaean prime of the bronze which covered the ox-hides of Homeric shields, though we do find gold ornaments supposed to have been attached to shields. There is no evidence that the Mycenaean shield was plated with bronze. But if we judge from their shape, as represented in works of Mycenaean art, some of the Mycenaean shields were not of wood, but of hide. In works of art, such as engraved rings and a bronze dagger (Fig. 2) with pictures inlaid in other metals, the shield, covering the whole body, is of the form of a bellying sail, or a huge umbrella "up," and pinched at both sides near the centre: or is like a door, or a section of a cylinder; only one sort of shield resembles a big-bellied figure of 8. Ivory models of shields indicate the same figure. A gold necklet found at Enkomi, in Cyprus, consists of a line of models of this Mycenaean shield.

There also exists a set of small Mycenaean relics called Palladia, found at Mycenae, Spata and in the earliest strata of the Acropolis at Athens. They resemble "two circles joined together so as to intersect one another slightly," or "a long oval pinched in at the middle." They vary in size from six inches to half an inch, and are of ivory, glazed ware, or glass. Several such shields are engraved on Mycenaean gems; one, in gold, is attached to a silver vase. The ornamentation shown on them occurs, too, on Mycenaean shields in works of art; in short, these little objects are representations in miniature of the big double-bellied Mycenaean shield. Mr. Ernest Gardner concludes that these objects are the "schematised" reductions of an armed human figure, only the shield which covered the whole body is left. They are talismans symbolising an armed divinity, Pallas or another. A Dipylon vase (Fig. 3) shows a man with a shield, possibly evolved out of this kind, much scooped out at the waist, and reaching from neck to knees. The shield covers his side, not his back or front.

One may guess that the original pinch at the waist of the Mycenaean shield was evolved later into the two deep scoops to enable the warrior to use his arms more freely, while the shield, hanging from his neck by a belt, covered the front of his body. Fig. 4 shows shields of 1060-1160 A.D. equally designed to cover body and legs. Men wore shields, if we believe the artists of Mycenae, when lion-hunting, a sport in which speed of foot is desirable; so they cannot have been very weighty. The shield then was hung over one side, and running was not so very difficult as if it hung over back or front (*cf.* Fig. 5). The shields sometimes reach only from the shoulders to the calf of the leg. The wearer of the largest kind could only be got at by a sword-stab over the rim into the throat (Fig. 5). Some shields of this shape were quite small, if an engraved rock-crystal is evidence; here the shield is not half so high as an adjacent goat, but it may be a mere decoration to fill the field of the gem.

Other shields, covering the body from neck to feet, were sections of cylinders; several of these are represented on engraved Mycenaean ring stones or on the gold; the wearer was protected in front and flank (Fig. 5).

In a “maze of buildings” outside the precincts of the graves of Mycenae, Dr. Schliemann found fragments of vases much less ancient than the contents of the sepulchres. There was a large amphora, the “Warrior Vase” (Fig. 6). The men wear apparently a close-fitting coat of mail over a chiton, which reaches with its fringes half down the thigh. The shield is circular, with a half-moon cut out at the bottom. The art is infantile. Other warriors carry long oval shields reaching, at least, from neck to shin. They wear round leather caps, their enemies have helmets. On a Mycenaean painted *stele*, apparently of the same relatively late period, the costume is similar, and the shield — oval — reaches from neck to knee. The Homeric shields do not answer to the smaller of these late and ugly representations, while, in their bronze plating, Homeric shields seem to differ from the leather shields of the Mycenaean prime.

Finally, at Enkomi, near Salamis, in Cyprus, an ivory carving (in the British Museum) shows a fighting man whose perfectly circular shield reaches from neck to knee; this is one of several figures in which Mr. Arthur Evans finds “a most valuable illustration of the typical Homeric armour.” The shield, however, is not so huge as those of Aias, Hector, and Periphetes.

I can only conclude that Homer describes intermediate types of shield, as large as the Mycenaean but plated with bronze, for a reason to be given later. This kind of shield, the kind known to Homer, was not the invention of late poets living in an age of circular bucklers, worn on the left arm, and these supposed late poets never introduce into the epics such bucklers.

What manner of military needs prompted the invention of the great Mycenaean shields which, by Homer’s time, were differentiated by the addition of metal plating?

The process of evolution of the huge Mycenaean shields, and of the Homeric shields covering the body from chin to ankles, can easily be traced. The nature of the attack expected may be inferred from the nature of the defence employed. Body-covering shields were, obviously, at first, *defences against showers of arrows* tipped with stone. “In the earlier Mycenaean times the arrow-head of obsidian alone appears,” as in Mycenaean Grave IV. In the upper strata of Mycenae and in the later tombs the arrow-head is usually of bronze. No man going into battle naked, without body armour, like the Mycenaeans (if they had none), could protect himself with a small shield, or even with a round buckler of twenty-six inches in diameter, against the rain of shafts. In a fight, on the other hand, where man singled out man, and spears were the missiles, and when the warriors had body armour, or even when they had not, a small shield sufficed; as we see among the spear-throwing Zulus and the spear-throwing aborigines of

Australia (unacquainted with bows and arrows), who mainly use shields scarcely broader than a bat. On the other hand, the archers of the Algonquins in their wars with the Iroquois, about 1610, used clubs and tomahawks but no spears, no missiles but arrows, and their leather shield was precisely the of Homer, “covering the whole of a man.” It is curious to see, in contemporary drawings (1620), Mycenaean shields on Red Indian shoulders!

In Champlain’s sketches of fights between French and Algonquins against Iroquois (1610-1620), we see the Algonquins outside the Iroquois stockade, which is defended by archers, sheltering under huge shields shaped like the Mycenaean “tower” shield, though less cylindrical; in fact, more like the shield of the fallen hunter depicted on the dagger of Mycenae. These Algonquin shields partially cover the sides as well as the front of the warrior, who stoops behind them, resting the lower rim of the shield on the ground. The shields are oblong and rounded at the top, much like that of Achilles in Mr. Leaf’s restoration? The sides curve inward. Another shield, oval in shape and flat, appears to have been suspended from the neck, and covers an Iroquois brave from chin to feet. The Red Indian shields, like those of Mycenae, were made of leather; usually of buffalo hide, good against stone-tipped arrows. The braves are naked, like the unshielded archers on the Mycenaean silver vase fragment representing a siege (Fig. 7). The description of the Algonquin shields by Champlain, when compared with his drawings, suggests that we cannot always take artistic representations as exact. In his designs only a few Algonquins and one Iroquois carry the huge shields; the unshielded men are stark naked, as on the Mycenaean silver vase. But in his text Champlain says that the Iroquois, like the Algonquins, “carried arrow-proof shields” and “a sort of armour woven of cotton thread” — Homer’s (*Iliad*, II. 259, 850). These facts appear in only one of Champlain’s drawings (Fig. 8).

These Iroquois and Algonquin shields are the armour of men exposed, not to spears, but to a hail of flint-tipped arrows. As spears came in for missiles in Greek warfare, arrows did not wholly go out, but the noble warriors preferred spear and sword. Mr. Ridgeway erroneously says that “no Achaean warrior employs the bow for war.” Teucer, frequently, and Meriones use the bow; like Pandarus and Paris, on the Trojan side, they resort to bow or spear, as occasion serves. Odysseus, in *Iliad*, Book X., is armed with the bow and arrows of Meriones when acting as a spy; in the *Odyssey* his skill as an archer is notorious, but he would not pretend to equal famous bowmen of an older generation, such as Heracles and Eurytus of OEchalia, whose bow he possessed but did not take to Troy. Philoctetes is his master in archery.

The bow, however, was little esteemed by Greek warriors who desired to come to handstrokes, just as it was despised, to their frequent ruin, by the Scots in the old wars with England. Dupplin, Falkirk, Halidon Hill and many another field proved the error.

There was much need in Homeric warfare for protection against heavy showers of arrows. Mr. Monro is hardly correct when he says that, in Homer, “we do not hear of *BODIES* of archers, of arrows darkening the air, as in descriptions of oriental warfare.” These precise phrases are not used by Homer; but, nevertheless, arrows are flying thick in his battle pieces. The effects are not often noticed, because, in Homer, helmet, shield, corslet, *zoster*, and greaves, as a rule prevent the shafts from harming the well-born, well-armed chiefs; the nameless host, however, fall frequently. When Hector came forward for a parley (*Iliad*, III. 79), the Achaens “kept shooting at him with arrows,” which he took unconcernedly. Teucer shoots nine men in *Iliad*, VIII. 297-304. In XI. *85* the shafts () showered and the common soldiers fell — being arrows as well as thrown spears. Agamemnon and Achilles are as likely, they say, to be hit by arrow as by spear (XI. 191; XXI. 13). Machaon is wounded by an arrow. Patroclus meets Eurypylus limping, with an arrow in his thigh — archer unknown. Meriones, though an Achaean paladin, sends a bronze-headed arrow through the body of Harpalion (XIII. *650*). The light-armed Locrians are all bowmen and slingers (XIII. 716). Acamas taunts the Argives as “bowmen” (XIV. 479). “The war-cry rose on both sides, and the arrows leaped from the bowstrings” (XV. 313). Manifestly the arrows are always on the wing, hence the need for the huge Homeric and Mycenaean shields. Therefore, as the Achaeans in Homer wore but flimsy corslets (this we are going to prove), the great body-covering shield of the Mycenaean prime did not go out of vogue in Homer’s time, when bronze had superseded stone arrow-heads, but was strengthened by bronze plating over the leather. In a later age the bow was more and more neglected in Greek warfare, and consequently large shields went out, after the close of the Mycenaean age, and round parrying bucklers came into use.

The Greeks appear never to have been great archers, for some vases show even the old heroes employing the “primary release,” the arrow nock is held between the thumb and forefinger — an ineffectual release. The archers in early Greek art often stoop or kneel, unlike the erect archers of old England; the bow is usually small — a child’s weapon; the string is often drawn only to the breast, as by Pandarus in the *Iliad* (IV. i 23). By 730 B.C. the release with three fingers, our western release, had become known.

The course of evolution seems to be: (1) the Mycenaean prime of much archery, no body armour (?); huge leather “man-covering” shields are used, like those of the Algonquins; (2) the same shields strengthened with metal, light body armour-thin corslets — and archery is frequent, but somewhat despised (the Homeric age); (3) the parrying shield of the latest Mycenaean age (infantry with body armour); (4) the Ionian hoplites, with body armour and small circular bucklers.

It appears, then, that the monstrous Mycenaean shield is a survival of an age when bows and arrows played the same great part as they did in the wars of the Algonquins and Iroquois. The celebrated picture of a siege on a silver vase, of which fragments were found in Grave IV., shows archers skirmishing; there is an archer in the lion hunt on the dagger blade; thirty-five obsidian arrow-heads were discovered in Grave IV., while “in the upper strata of Mycenae and in the later tombs the arrow-head is usually of bronze, though instances of obsidian still occur.” In 1895 Dr. Tsountas found twenty arrow-heads of bronze, ten in each bundle, in a Mycenaean chamber tomb. Messrs. Tsountas and Manatt say, “In the Acropolis graves at Mycenae… the spear-heads were but few… arrow-heads, on the contrary, are comparatively abundant.” They infer that “picked men used shield and spear; the rank and file doubtless fought simply with bow and sling.”]. The great Mycenaean shield was obviously evolved as a defence against arrows and sling-stones flying too freely to be parried with a small buckler. What other purpose could it have served? But other defensive armour was needed, and was evolved, by Homer’s men, as also, we shall see, by the Algonquins and Iroquois. The Algonquins and Iroquois thus prove that men who thought their huge shields very efficient, yet felt the desirableness of the protection afforded by corslets, for they wore, in addition to their shields, such corslets as they were able to manufacture, made of cotton, and corresponding to the Homeric . (VIII 193; XIII. 407). These have been understood as meaning a brace through which the left arm went, and another brace which the left hand grasped. Herodotus says that the Carians first used shield grips, and that previously shields were suspended by belts from the neck and left shoulder (Herodotus, i. 171). It would be interesting to know how he learned these facts-perhaps from Homer; but certainly the Homeric shield is often described as suspended by a belt. Mr. Leaf used to explain the (XIII. 407) as “serving to attach the two ends of the baldrick to the shield” (*Hellenic* Society’s *Journal*, iv. 291), as does Mr. Ridgeway. But now he thinks that they were two pieces of wood, crossing each other, and making the framework on which the leather of the shield was stretched. The hero could grasp the cross-bar, at the centre of gravity, in his left hand, rest the lower rim of the shield on the ground, and crouch behind it (XI. 593; XIII 157). In neither passage cited is anything said about resting the lower rim “on the ground,” and in the second passage the warrior is actually advancing. In this attitude, however-grounding the lower rim of the great body-covering shield, and crouching behind it — we see Algonquin warriors of about 1610 in Champlain’s drawings of Red Indian warfare.]

Mr. Leaf, indeed, when reviewing Reichel, says that “the use of the Mycenaean shield is inconsistent with that of the metal breastplate; “the shield” covers the wearer in a way which makes a breastplate an useless encumbrance; or rather, it is ignorance of the breastplate which alone can explain the use of such frightfully cumbrous gear as the huge shield.”

But the Algonquins and Iroquois wore such breastplates as they could manufacture, though they also used shields of great size, suspended, in Mycenaean fashion, from the neck and shoulder by a *telamon* or belt. The knights of the eleventh century A.D., in addition to very large shields, wore ponderous hauberks or byrnies, as we shall prove presently. As this combination of great shield with corslet was common and natural, we cannot agree with Mr. Leaf when he says, “it follows that the Homeric warriors wore no metal breastplate, and that all the passages where the is mentioned are either later interpolations or refer to some other sort of armour,” which, *ex hypothesi*, would itself be superfluous, given the body-covering shield.

Shields never make corslets superfluous when men can manufacture corslets.

The facts speak for themselves: the largest shields are not exclusive, so to speak, of corslets; the Homeric warriors used both, just as did Red Indians and the mediaeval chivalry of Europe. The use of the aspis in Homer, therefore, throws no suspicion on the concomitant use of the corslet. The really surprising fact would be if late poets, who knew only small round bucklers, never introduced them into the poems, but always spoke of enormous shields, while they at the same time did introduce corslets, unknown to the early poems which they continued. Clearly Reichel’s theory is ill inspired and inconsistent. This becomes plain as soon as we trace the evolution of shields and corslets in ages when the bow played a great part in war. The Homeric bronze-plated shield and bronze corslet are defences of a given moment in military evolution; they are improvements on the large leather shield of Mycenaean art, but, as the arrows still fly in clouds, the time for the small parrying buckler has not yet come.

By the age of the Dipylon vases with human figures, the shield had been developed into forms unknown to Homer. In Fig. 3 () we see one warrior with a fantastic shield, slim at the waist, with horns, as it were, above and below; the greater part of the shield is expended uselessly, covering nothing in particular. In form this targe seems to be a burlesque parody of the figure of a Mycenaean shield. The next man has a short oblong shield, rather broad for its length —

perhaps a reduction of the Mycenaean door-shaped shield. The third warrior has a round buckler. All these shields are manifestly post-Homeric; the first type is the most common in the Dipylon art; the third survived in the eighth-century buckler.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BREASTPLATE

No “practicable” breastplates, hauberks, corslets, or any things of the kind have so far been discovered in graves of the Mycenaean prime. A corpse in Grave V. at Mycenae had, however, a golden breastplate, with oval bosses representing the nipples and with prettily interlaced spirals all over the remainder of the gold (Fig. 9). Another corpse had a plain gold breastplate with the nipples indicated. These decorative corslets of gold were probably funereal symbols of practicable breastplates of bronze, but no such pieces of armour are worn by the fighting-men on the gems and other works of art of Mycenae, and none are found in Mycenaean graves. But does this prove anything? Leg-guards, broad metal bands clasping the leg below the knee, are found in the Mycenaean shaft graves, but are never represented in Mycenaean art. Meanwhile, bronze corslets are very frequently mentioned in the “rarely alluded to,” says Mr. Leaf, but this must be a slip of the pen. Connected with the breastplate or *thorex* () is the verb , which means “to arm,” or “equip” in general.

The Achaeans are constantly styled in the *ILIAD* and in the *ODYSSEY* “*chalkochitones*,” “with bronze chitons.” epics have therefore boldly argued that by “bronze chitons” the poet pleasantly alludes to shields. But as the Mycenaeans seem scarcely to have worn any *CHITONS* in battle, as far as we are aware from their art, and are not known to have had any bronze shields, the argument evaporates, as Mr. Ridgeway has pointed out. Nothing can be less like a *chiton* or smock, loose or tight, than either the double-bellied huge shield, the tower-shaped cylindrical shield, or the flat, doorlike shield, covering body and legs in Mycenaean art. “The bronze *chiton*,” says Helbig, “is only a poetic phrase for the corslet.”

Reichel and Mr. Leaf, however, think that “bronze chitoned” is probably “a picturesque expression… and refers to the bronze-covered shield.” The breastplate covered the upper part of the *chiton*, and so might be called a “bronze *chiton*,” above all, if it had been evolved, as corselets usually have been, out of a real *chiton*, interwoven with small plates or rings of bronze. The process of evolution might be from a padded linen *chiton* () worn by Teucer, and on the Trojan side by Amphius (as by nervous Protestants during Oates’s “Popish Plot”), to a leathern *chiton*, strengthened by rings, or studs, or scales of bronze, and thence to plates. Here, in this armoured *chiton*, would be an object that a poet might readily call “a *chiton* of bronze.” But that, if he lived in the Mycenaean age, when, so far as art shows, *CHITONS* were not worn at all, or very little, and scarcely ever in battle, and when we know nothing of bronze-plating on shields, the poet should constantly call a monstrous double-bellied leather shield, or any other Mycemean type of shield, “a *bronze chiton*,” seems almost unthinkable. “A leather cloak” would be a better term for such shields, if cloaks were in fashion.

According to Mr. Myres (1899) the “stock line” in the *Iliad*, about piercing a or corslet, was inserted “to satisfy the practical criticisms of a corslet-wearing age,” the age of the later poets, the Age of Iron. But why did not such practical critics object to the constant presence in the poems of bronze weapons, in their age out of date, if they objected to the absence from the poems of the corslets with which they were familiar? Mr. Myres supposes that the line about the corslet was already old, but had merely meant “many-glittering body clothing” — garments set with the golden discs and other ornaments found in Mycemean graves. The bronze corslet, he says, would not be “many glittering,” but would reflect “a single star of light.” Now, first, even if the star were a single star, it would be as “many glittering” when the warrior was in rapid and changeful motion as the star that danced when Beatrix was born. Secondly, if the contemporary corslets of the Iron Age were NOT “many glittering,” practical corslet-wearing critics would ask the poet, “why do you call corslets ‘many glittering’?” Thirdly, may surely be translated “a thing of much art,” and Greek corslets were incised with ornamental designs. Thus Messrs. Hogarth and Bosanquet report “a very remarkable ‘Mycemean’ bronze breastplate” from Crete, which “shows four female draped figures, the two central ones holding a wreath over a bird, below which is a sacred tree. The two outer figures are apparently dancing. It is probably a ritual scene, and may help to elucidate the nature of early AEgean cults.” Here, — if that word means “artistically wrought.” Helbig thinks the Epics silent about the gold spangles on dresses.

Mr. Myres applauds Reichel’s theory that first meant a man’s chest. If *thorex* means a man’s breast, then *THOREX* in a secondary sense, one thinks, would mean “breastplate,” as waist of a woman means, first, her waist; next, her blouse (American). But Mr. Myres and Reichel say that the secondary sense of *THOREX* is not breastplate but “body clothing,” as if a man were all breast, or wore only a breast covering, whereas Mycenaean art shows men wearing nothing on their breasts, merely drawers or loin-cloths, which could not be called *THOREX*, as they cover the antipodes of the breast.

The verb , the theory runs on, merely meant “to put on body clothing,” which

Mycenaeans in works of art, if correctly represented, do not usually put on; they fought naked or in bathing drawers. Surely we might as well argue that a "waistcoat" might come to mean "body clothing in general," as that a word for the male breast became, first, a synonym for the covering of the male buttocks and for apparel in general, and, next, for a bronze breastplate. These arguments appear rather unconvincing, nor does Mycenaean art instruct us that men went into battle dressed in body clothing which was thickly set with many glittering gold ornaments, and was called "a many-glittering *thorex*."

Further, if we follow Reichel and Mr. Leaf, the Mycenaeans wore *chitons* and called them *chitons*. They also used bronze-plated shields, though of this we have no evidence. Taking the bronze-plated (?) shield to stand poetically for the *chiton*, the poet spoke of "*the bronze-chitoned Achaeans*" But, if we follow Mr. Myres, the Mycenaeans also applied the word *thorex* to body clothing at large, in place of the word *chiton*; and when a warrior was transfixed by a spear, they said that his "many-glittering, gold-studded *thorex*," that is, his body clothing in general, was pierced. It does seem simpler to hold that *chiton* meant *chiton*; that *thorex* meant, first, "breast," then "breastplate," whether of linen, or plaited leather, or bronze, and that to pierce a man through his meant to pierce him through his handsome corslet. No mortal ever dreamt that this was so till Reichel tried to make out that the original poet describes no armour except the large Mycenaean shield and the *mitrê*, and that all corslets in the poems were of much later introduction. Possibly they were, but they had plenty of time wherein to be evolved long before the eighth century, Reichel's date for corslets.

The argument is that a man with a large shield needs no body armour, or uses the shield because he has no body armour.

But the possession and use of a large shield did not in the Middle Ages, or among the Iroquois and Algonquins, make men dispense with corslets, even when the shield was worn, as in Homer, slung round the neck by a *telamon* (*guige* in Old French), belt, or baldric.

We turn to a French *Chanson de Geste — La Chancun de Willem* — of the twelfth century A.D., to judge by the handwriting. One of the heroes, Girard, having failed to rescue Vivien in battle, throws down his weapons and armour, blaming each piece for having failed him. Down goes the heavy lance; down goes the ponderous shield, suspended by a *telamon: "Ohitarge grant cume peises al col*!" down goes the plated byrnie, "*Ohi grant broine cum me vas apesant*"

The mediaeval warrior has a heavy byrnie as well as a great shield suspended from his neck. It will be remarked also that the Algonquins and Iroquois of the beginning of the seventeenth century, as described by Champlain, give us the whole line of Mycenaean evolution of armour up to a certain point. Not only had they arrow-proof, body-covering shields of buffalo hide, but, when Champlain used his arquebus against the Iroquois in battle, “they were struck amazed that two of their number should have been killed so promptly, seeing that they wore a sort of armour, woven of cotton thread, and carried arrow-proof shields.” We have already alluded to this passage, but must add that Parkman, describing from French archives a battle of Illinois against Iroquois in 1680, speaks of “corslets of tough twigs interwoven with cordage.” 1869.] Golden, in his *Five Nations*, writes of the Red Indians as wearing “a kind of cuirass made of pieces of wood joined together.”]

To the kindness of Mr. Hill Tout I also owe a description of the armour of the Indian tribes of north-west America, from a work of his own. He says: “For protective purposes in warfare they employed shields and coat-armour. The shields varied in form and material from tribe to tribe. Among the Interior Salish they were commonly made of wood, which was afterwards covered with hide. Sometimes they consisted of several thicknesses of hide only. The hides most commonly used were those of the elk, buffalo, or bear. After the advent of the Hudson’s Bay Co. some of the Indians used to beat out the large copper kettles they obtained from the traders and make polished circular shields of these. In some centres long rectangular shields, made from a single or double hide, were employed. These were often from 4 to 5 feet in length and from 3 to 4 feet in width — large enough to cover the whole body. Among the Déné tribes (Sikanis) the shield was generally made of closely-woven wicker-work, and was of an ovaloid form (exact size not given).

“The coat armour was *everywhere used*, and varied in form and style in almost every centre. There were two ways in which this was most commonly made. One of these was the slatted cuirass or corslet, which was formed of a series of narrow slats of wood set side by side vertically and fastened in place by interfacings of raw hide. It went all round the body, being hung from the shoulders with straps. The other was a kind of shirt of double or treble elk hide, fastened at the side with thongs. Another kind of armour, less common than that just described, was the long elk-hide tunic, which reached to and even *below the knees and was sleeved to the elbow.”*

Mr. Hill Tout’s minute description, with the other facts cited, leaves no doubt that even in an early stage, as in later stages of culture, the use of the great shield does not exclude the use of such body armour as the means of the warriors enable them to construct. To take another instance, Pausanias describes the corslets of the neolithic Sarmatae, which he saw dedicated in the temple of Asclepius at Athens. Corslets these bowmen and users of the lasso possessed, though they did not use the metals. They fashioned very elegant corslets out of horses' hoofs, cutting them into scales like those of a pine cone, and sewing them on to cloth. 6.]

Certain small, thin, perforated discs of stone found in Scotland have been ingeniously explained as plates to be strung together on a garment of cloth, a neolithic *chiton*. However this may be, since Iroquois and Algonquins and Déné had some sort of woven, or plaited, or wooden, or buff corslet, in addition to their great shields, we may suppose that the Achaeans would not be less inventive. They would pass from the (answering to the cotton corslet of the Iroquois) to a sort of jack or *jaseran* with rings, scales, or plates, and thence to bronze-plate corslets, represented only by the golden breastplates of the Mycenaean grave. Even if the Mycenaeans did not evolve the corslet, there is no reason why, in the Homeric times, it should not have been evolved.

For linen corslets, such as Homer mentions, in actual use and represented in works of art we consult Mr. Leaf on *The Armour* of *Homeric* Heroes.' He finds Memnon in a white corslet, on a black-figured vase in the British Museum. There is another white corsleted Memnon figured in the *Vases Peints* of the Duc de Luynes (plate xii.). Mr. Leaf suggests that the white colour represents "a corslet not of metal but of linen," and cites *Iliad*, II. 529, 5 30. "Xenophon mentions linen corslets as being worn by the Chalybes" (*Anabasis*, iv. 15). Two linen corslets, sent from Egypt to Sparta by King Amasis, are recorded by Herodotus (ii. 182; iii. 47). The corslets were of linen, embroidered in cotton and gold. Such a piece of armour or attire might easily develop into the of *Iliad*, V. 113, in which Aristarchus appears to have recognised chain or scale armour; but we find no such object represented in Mycenaean art, which, of course, does not depict Homeric armour or costume, and it seems probable that the bronze corslets mentioned by Homer were plate armour. The linen corslet lasted into the early sixth century B.C. In the poem called *Stasiotica*, Alcaeus (*No*. 5) speaks of his helmets, bronze greaves and corslets of linen () as a defence against arrows.

Meanwhile a "bronze *chiton*" or corslet would turn spent arrows and spent spears, and be very useful to a warrior whose shield left him exposed to shafts shot or spears thrown from a distance. Again, such a bronze *chiton* might stop a spear of which the impetus was spent in penetrating the shield. But Homeric corslets did not, as a rule, avail to keep out a spear driven by the hand at close quarters, or powerfully thrown from a short distance. Even the later Greek corslets do not look as if they could resist a heavy spear wielded by a strong hand.

I proceed to show that the Homeric corslet did not avail against a spear at close quarters, but could turn an arrow point (once), and could sometimes turn a spear which had perforated a shield. So far, and not further, the Homeric corslet was serviceable. But if a warrior’s breast or back was not covered by the shield, and received a thrust at close quarters, the corslet was pierced more easily than the pad of paper which was said to have been used as secret armour in a duel by the Master of Sinclair (1708). It is desirable to prove this feebleness of the corslet, because the poet often says that a man was smitten with the spear in breast or back when unprotected by the shield, without mentioning the corslet, whence it is argued by the critics that corslets were not worn when the original lays were fashioned, and that they have only been sporadically introduced, in an after age when the corslet was universal, by “modernising” later rhapsodists aiming at the up-to-date.

A weak point is the argument that Homer says back or breast was pierced, without mentioning the corslet, whence it follows that he knew no corslets. Quintus Smyrnaeus does the same thing. Of course, Quintus knew all about corslets, yet (Book I. 248, 256, 257) he makes his heroes drive spear or sword through breast or belly without mentioning the resistance of the corslet, even when (I. 144, 594) he has assured us that the victim was wearing a corslet. These facts are not due to inconsistent interpolation of corslets into the work of this post-Christian poet Quintus.

Corslets, in Homer, are flimsy; that of Lycaon, worn by Paris, is pierced by a spear which has also perforated his shield, though the spear came only from the weak hand of Menelaus (*Iliad*, III. 357, 358). The arrow of Pandarus whistles through the corslet of Menelaus (IV. 136). The same archer pierces with an arrow the corslet of Diomede (V. 99, 100). The corslet of Diomede, however, avails to stop a spear which has traversed his shield (V. 281). The spear of Idomeneus pierces the corslet of Othryoneus, and the spear of Antilochus perforates the corslet of a charioteer (XIII. 371, 397). A few lines later Diomede’s spear reaches the midriff of Hypsenor. No corslet is here mentioned, but neither is the shield mentioned (this constantly occurs), and we cannot argue that Hypsenor wore no corslet, unless we are also to contend that he wore no shield, or a small shield. Idomeneus drives his spear through the “*bronze chiton*” of Alcathöus (XIII. 439, 440). Mr. Leaf reckons these lines “probably an interpolation to turn the linen *chiton*, the rending of which is the sign of triumph, into a bronze corslet.” But we ask why, if an editor or rhapsodist went through the *Iliad* introducing corslets, he so often left them out, where the critics detect their absence because they are not mentioned?

The spear of Idomeneus pierces another feeble corslet over the victim’s belly (XIII. 506-508). It is quite a surprise when a corslet does for once avail to turn an arrow (XIII. 586-587). But Aias drives his spear through the corslet of

Phorcys, into his belly (XVII 311-312). Thus the corslet scarcely ever, by itself, protects a hero; it never protects him against an unspent spear; even when his shield stands between his corslet and the spear both are sometimes perforated. Yet occasionally the corslet saves a man when the spear has gone through the shield. The poet, therefore, sometimes gives us a man pierced in a part which the corslet covers, without mentioning the flimsy article that could not keep out a spear.

Reichel himself came to see, before his regretted death, that he could not explain away the *thorex* or corslet, on his original lines, as a mere general name for “a piece of armour”; and he inclined to think that jacks, with metal plates sewn on, did exist before the Ionian corslet. The gold breastplates of the Mycenaean graves pointed in this direction. But his general argument is that corslets were interpolated into the old lays by poets of a corslet-wearing age; and Mr. Leaf holds that corslets may have filtered in, “during the course of successive modernisation, such as the oldest parts of the *Iliad* seem in many cases to have passed through,” though the new poets were, for all that, “conservatively tenacious of the old material.” We have already pointed out the difficulty.

The poets who did not introduce the new small bucklers with which they were familiar, did stuff the *Iliad* full of corslets unknown, by the theory, to the original poet, but familiar to rhapsodists living centuries later. Why, if they were bent on modernising, did they not modernise the shields? and how, if they modernised unconsciously, as all uncritical poets do, did the shield fail to be unconsciously “brought up to date”? It seems probable that Homer lived at a period when both huge shield and rather feeble corslet were in vogue.

We shall now examine some of the passages in which Mr. Leaf, mainly following Reichel, raises difficulties about corslets. We do not know their mechanism; they were composed of , presumed to be a backplate and a breastplate. The word *gualon* appears to mean a hollow, or the converse, something convex. We cannot understand the mechanism (see a young man putting on a corslet, on an amphora by Euthymides. Walter, vol. ii.); but, if late poets, familiar with such corslets, did not understand how they worked, they were very dull men. When their descriptions puzzle us, that is more probably because we are not at the point of view than because poets interpolated mentions of pieces of armour which they did not understand, and therefore cannot have been familiar with, and, in that case, would not introduce.

Mr. Leaf starts with a passage in the *Iliad* (III. 357-360) — it recurs in another case: “Through the bright shield went the ponderous spear, and through the inwrought” (very artfully wrought), “breastplate it pressed on, and straight beside his flank it rent the tunic, but he swerved and escaped black death.” Mr. Leaf says, “It is obvious that, after a spear has passed through a breastplate, there is no longer any possibility for the wearer to bend aside and so to avoid the point….” But I suppose that the wearer, by a motion very natural, doubled up sideways, so to speak, and so the spear merely grazed his flesh. That is what I suppose the poet to intend. The more he knew of corslets, the less would he mention an impossible circumstance in connection with a corslet.

Again, in many cases the late poets, by the theory — though it is they who bring the corslets in — leave the corslets out! A man without shield, helmet, and spear calls himself “naked.” Why did not these late poets, it is asked, make him take off his corslet, if he had one, as well as his shield? The case occurs in XXII. 111-113,124-125. Hector thinks of laying aside helmet, spear, and shield, and of parleying with Achilles. “But then he will slay me naked,” that is, unarmed. “He still had his corslet,” the critics say, “so how could he be naked? or, if he had no corslet, this is a passage uncontaminated by the late poets of the corslet age.” Now certainly Hector *was* wearing a corslet, which he had taken from Patroclus: that is the essence of the story. He would, however, be “naked” or unprotected if he laid aside helmet, spear, and shield, because Achilles could hit him in the head or neck (as he did), or lightly drive the spear through the corslet, which, we have proved, was no sound defence against a spear at close quarters, though useful against chance arrows, and occasionally against spears spent by traversing the shield.

We next learn that no corslet occurs in the *Odyssey*, or in *Iliad*, Book X., called “very late”: Mr. Leaf suggests that it is of the seventh century B.C. But if the Odyssey and Iliad, Book X., are really very late, their authors and interpolators were perfectly familiar with Ionian corslets. Why did they leave corslets out, while their predecessors and contemporaries were introducing them all up and down the *Iliad*? In fact, in Book X, no prince is regularly equipped; they have been called up to deliberate in the dead of night, and when two go as spies they wear casual borrowed gear. It is more important that no corslet is mentioned in Nestor’s arms in his tent. But are we to explain this, and the absence of mention of corslets in the Odyssey (where there is little about regular fighting), on the ground that the author of *Iliad*, Book X., and all the many authors and editors of the *Odyssey* happened to be profound archaeologists, and, unlike their contemporaries, the later poets and interpolators of the *Iliad,* had formed the theory that corslets were not known at the time of the siege of Troy and therefore must not be mentioned? This is quite incredible. No hypothesis can be more improbable. We cannot imagine late Ionian rhapsodists listening to the *Iliad*, and saying, “These poets of the *Iliad* are all wrong: at the date of the

Mycenaean prime, as every educated man knows, corslets were not yet in fashion. So we must have no corslets in the *Odyssey*?”

A modern critic, who thinks this possible, is bringing the practice of archaising poets of the late nineteenth century into the minds of rhapsodists of the eighth century before Christ. Artists of the middle of the sixteenth century always depict Jeanne d’Arc in the armour and costume of their own time, wholly unlike those of 1430. This is the regular rule. Late rhapsodists would not delve in the archaeology of the Mycenaean prime. Indeed, one does not see how they could discover, in Asia, that corslets were not worn, five centuries earlier, on the other side of the sea.

We are told that Aias and some other heroes are never spoken of as wearing corslets. But Aias certainly did put on a set of pieces of armour, and did not trust to his shield alone, tower-like as it was. The description runs thus: The Achaeans have disarmed, before the duel of Aias and Hector. Aias draws the lucky lot; he is to ‘meet Hector, and bids the others pray to Zeus “while I clothe me in my armour of battle.” While they prayed, Aias “arrayed himself in flashing bronze. And when he had now clothed upon his flesh *all* his pieces of armour” () “he went forth to fight.” If Aias wore only a shield, as on Mr. Leaf’s hypothesis, he could sling it on before the Achaeans could breathe a *pater noster*. His sword he would not have taken off; swords were always worn. What, then, are “all his pieces of armour”? (VII. 193, 206).

Carl Robert cites passages in which the , taken from the shoulders, include corslets, and are late and Ionian, with other passages which are Mycenaean, with no corslet involved. He adds about twenty more passages in which include corslets. Among these references two are from the *Doloneia* (X. 254, 272), where Reichel finds no mention of corslets. How Robert can tell , which mean corslets, from , which exclude corslets, is not obvious. But, at all events, he does see corslets, as in VII. 122, where Reichel sees none, and he is obviously right.

It is a strong point with Mr. Leaf that “we never hear of the corslet in the case of Aias….” Robert, however, like ourselves, detects the corslet among “*al* the “ which Aias puts on for his duel with Hector (Iliad, VII. 193, 206-207).

In the same Book (VII. 101-103, 122) the same difficulty occurs. Menelaus offers to fight Hector, and says, “I will put on my harness” , and does “put on his fair pieces of armour” , Agamemnon forbids him to fight, and his friends “joyfully take his pieces of armour” “from his shoulders” (*Iliad*, VII. 206-207). They take off pieces of armour, in the plural, and a shield cannot be spoken of in the plural; while the sword would not be taken off — it was worn even in peaceful costume.

Idomeneus is never named as wearing a corslet, but he remarks that he has plenty of corslets (XIII. 264); and in this and many cases opponents of corslets prove their case by cutting out the lines which disprove it. Anything may be demonstrated if we may excise whatever passage does not suit our hypothesis. It is impossible to argue against this logical device, especially when the critic, not satisfied with a clean cut, supposes that some late enthusiast for corslets altered the prayer of Thetis to Hephaestus for the very purpose of dragging in a corslet. If there is no objection to a line except that a corslet occurs in it, where is the logic in excising the line because one happens to think that corslets are later than the oldest parts of the *Iliad*?

Another plan is to maintain that if the poet does not in any case mention a corslet, there was no corslet. Thus in V. 99, an arrow strikes Diomede "hard by the right shoulder, the plate of the corslet." Thirteen lines later (V. 112, 113) "Sthenelus drew the swift shaft right through out of Diomede's shoulder, and the blood darted up through the pliant *chiton*." We do not know what the word here translated "pliant" means, and Aristarchus seems to have thought it was "a coat of mail, chain, or scale armour." If so, here is the corslet, but in this case, if a corslet or jack with intertwisted small plates or scales or rings of bronze be meant, *gualon* cannot mean a large "plate," as it does. Mr. Ridgeway says, "It seems certain that means, as Aristarchus held, a shirt of mail." Mr. Leaf says just the reverse. As usual, we come to a deadlock; a clash of learned opinion. But any one can see that, in the space of thirteen lines, no poet or interpolator who wrote V. i 12, i 13 could forget that Diomede was said to be wearing a corslet in V. 99; and even if the poet could forget, which is out of the question, the editor of 540 B.C. was simply defrauding his employer, Piaistratus, if he did not bring a remedy for the stupid fault of the poet. When this or that hero is not specifically said to be wearing a corslet, it is usually because the poet has no occasion to mention it, though, as we have seen, a man is occasionally smitten, in the midriff, say, without any remark on the flimsy piece of mail.

That corslets are usually taken for granted as present by the poet, even when they are not explicitly named, seems certain. He constantly represents the heroes as "stripping the pieces of mail" , when they have time and opportunity, from fallen foes. If only the shield is taken, if there is nothing else in the way of bronze body armour to take, why have we the plural, ? The corslet, as well as the shield, must be intended. The stripping is usually "from the shoulders," and it is "from his shoulders" that Hector hopes to strip the corslet of Diomede (Iliad, VIII. 195) in a passage, to be sure, which the critics think interpolated. However this may be, the stripping of the (same Greek characters), cannot be the mere seizure of the shield, but must refer to other pieces of armour: "all the pieces of armour." So other pieces of defensive armour besides the shield are throughout taken for granted. If they were not there they could not be stripped. It is the chitons that Agamemnon does something to, in the case of two fallen foes (*Iliad*, XI. 100), and Aristarchus thought that these *chitons* were corslets. But the passage is obscure. In *Iliad*, XI. 373, when Diomede strips helmet from head, shield from shoulder, corslet from breast of Agastrophus, Reichel was for excising the corslet, because it was not mentioned when the hero was struck on the hip joint. I do not see that an inefficient corslet would protect the hip joint. To do that, in our eighteenth century cavalry armour, was the business of a *zoster*, as may be seen in a portrait of the Chevalier de St. George in youth. It is a thick ribbed *zoster* that protects the hip joints of the king.

Finally, Mr. Evans observes that the western invaders of Egypt, under Rameses III, are armed, on the monuments, with cuirasses formed of a succession of plates, "horizontal, or rising in a double curve," while the Enkomi ivories, already referred to, corroborate the existence of corslet, *zoster*, and *zoma* as articles of defensive armour. "Recent discoveries," says Mr. Evans, "thus supply a double corroboration of the Homeric tradition which carries back the use of the round shield and the cuirass or to the earlier epic period… With such a representation before us, a series of Homeric passages on which Dr. Reichel… has exhausted his powers of destructive criticism, becomes readily intelligible."

Homer, then, describes armour *later* than that of the Mycenaean prime, when, as far as works of art show, only a huge leathern shield was carried, though the gold breastplates of the corpses in the grave suggest that corslets existed. Homer's men, on the other hand, have, at least in certain cases quoted above, large bronze-plated shields and bronze cuirasses of no great resisting power, perhaps in various stages of evolution, from the byrnie with scales or small plates of bronze to the breastplate and backplate, though the plates for breast and back certainly appear to be usually worn.

It seems that some critics cannot divest themselves of the idea that "the original poet" of the "kernel" was contemporary with them who slept in the shaft graves of Mycenae, covered with golden ornaments, and that for body armour he only knew their monstrous shields. Mr. Leaf writes: "The armour of Homeric heroes corresponds closely to that of the Mykenaean age as we learn it from the monuments. The heroes wore no breastplate; their only defensive armour was the enormous Mykenaean shield…."

This is only true if we excise all the passages which contradict the statement, and go on with Mr. Leaf to say, "by the seventh century B.C., or thereabouts, the idea of a panoply without a breastplate had become absurd. By that time the epic poems had almost ceased to grow; but they still admitted a few minor episodes in which the round shield" (where ?) "and corslet played a part, as well as the interpolation of a certain number of lines and couplets in which the new armament was mechanically introduced into narratives which originally knew nothing of it.”

On the other hand, Mr. Leaf says that “the small circular shield of later times is unknown to Homer,” with “a very few curious exceptions,” in which the shields are not said to be small or circular.

Surely this is rather arbitrary dealing! We start from our theory that the original poet described the armour of “the monuments” though *they* are “of the, prime,” while he professedly lived long after the prime — lived in an age when there must have been changes in military equipment. We then cut out, as of the seventh century, whatever passages do not suit our theory. Anybody can prove anything by this method. We might say that the siege scene on the Mycenaean silver vase represents the Mycenaean prime, and that, as there is but one jersey among eight men otherwise stark naked, we must cut out seven-eighths of the *chitons* in the *Iliad*, these having been interpolated by late poets who did not run about with nothing on. We might call the whole poem late, because the authors know nothing of the Mycenaean bathing-drawers so common on the “monuments.” The argument compels Mr. Leaf to assume that a shield can be called in the plural, so, in *Iliad*, VII. 122, when the squires of Menelaus “take the from his shoulders,” we are assured that “the shield (aspis) was for the chiefs alone” (we have seen that all the host of Pandarus wore shields), “for those who could keep a chariot to carry them, and squires to assist them in taking off this ponderous defence” (see VII 122).

We do “see VII. 122,” and find that not a *single* shield, but pieces of gear in the plural number were taken off Menelaus. The feeblest warrior without any assistance could stoop his head and put it through the belt of his shield, as an angler takes off his fishing creel, and there he was, totally disarmed. No squire was needed to disarm him, any more than to disarm Girard in the *Chancun de Willame*. Nobody explains why a shield is spoken of as a number of things, in the plural, and that constantly, and in lines where, if the poet means a shield, prosody permits him to *say* a shield, .

It really does appear that Reichel’s logic, his power of visualising simple things and processes, and his knowledge of the evolution of defensive armour everywhere, were not equal to his industry and classical erudition. Homer seems to describe what he saw: shields, often of great size, made of leather, plated with bronze, and suspended by belts; and, for body armour, feeble bronze corslets and *zosters*. There is nothing inconsistent in all this: there was no more reason why an Homeric warrior should not wear a corslet as well as a shield than there was reason why a mediaeval knight who carried a *targe* should not also wear a hauberk, or why an Iroquois with a shield should not also wear his cotton or wicker-work armour. Defensive gear kept pace with offensive weapons. A big leather shield could keep out stone-tipped arrows; but as bronze-tipped arrows came in and also heavy bronze-pointed spears, defensive armour was necessarily strengthened; the shield was plated with bronze, and, if it did not exist before, the bronze corslet was developed.

To keep out stone-tipped arrows was the business of the Mycenaean wooden or leather shield. “Bronze arrow-heads, so common in the *Iliad*, are never found,” says Schuchardt, speaking of Schliemann’s Mycenaean excavations.

There was thus, as far as arrows went, no reason why Mycenaean shields should be plated with bronze. If the piece of wood in Grave V. was a shield, as seems probable, what has become of its bronze plates, if it had any? Gold ornaments, which could only belong to shields, were found, but bronze shield plates never. The inference is certain. The Mycenaean shields of the prime were originally wooden or leather defences against stone-headed arrows. Homer’s shields are bronze-plated shields to keep out bronze-headed or even, perhaps, iron-pointed arrows of primitive construction (IV. 123). Homer describes armour based on Mycenaean lines but developed and advanced as the means of attack improved.

Where everything is so natural it seems fantastic to explain the circumstances by the theory that poets in a late age sometimes did and sometimes did not interpolate the military gear of four centuries posterior to the things known by the original singer. These rhapsodists, we reiterate, are now said to be anxiously conservative of Mycenaean detail and even to be deeply learned archaeologists. At other times they are said to introduce recklessly part of the military gear of their own age, the corslets, while sternly excluding the bucklers. All depends on what the theory of very late developments of the Epic may happen to demand at this or that moment.

Again, Mr. Leaf informs us that “the first rhapsodies were born in the bronze age, in the day of the ponderous Mycenaean shield; the last in the iron age, when men armed themselves with breastplate and light round buckler.” We cannot guess how he found these things out, for corslets are as common in one “rhapsody” as in another when circumstances call for the mention of corslets, and are entirely unnamed in the Odyssey (save that the Achaeans are “bronze-chitoned”), while the Odyssey is alleged to be much later than the *Iliad*. As for “the iron age,” no “rhapsodist” introduces so much as one iron spear point. It is argued that he speaks of bronze in deference to tradition. Then why does he scout tradition in the matter of greaves and corslets, while he sometimes actually goes behind tradition to find Mycenaean things unknown to the original poets?

These theories appear too strangely inconsistent; really these theories cannot possibly be accepted. The late poets, of the theory, are in the iron age, and are, of course, familiar with iron weapons; yet, in conservative deference to tradition, they keep them absolutely out of their rhapsodies. They are equally familiar with bronze corslets, so, reckless this time of tradition, they thrust them even into rhapsodies which are centuries older than their own day. They are no less familiar with small bucklers, yet they say nothing about them and cling to the traditional body-covering shield. The source of the inconsistent theories which we have been examining is easily discovered. The scholars who hold these opinions see that several things in the Homeric picture of life are based on Mycenaean facts; for example, the size of the shields and their suspension by baldrics. But the scholars also do steadfastly believe, following the Wolfian tradition, that there could be no *long* epic in the early period. Therefore the greater part, much the greater part of the *Iliad*, must necessarily, they say, be the work of continuators through several centuries. Critics are fortified in this belief by the discovery of inconsistencies in the Epic, which, they assume, can only be explained as the result of a compilation of the patchwork of ages. But as, on this theory, many men in many lands and ages made the Epic, their contributions cannot but be marked by the inevitable changes in manners, customs, beliefs, implements, laws, weapons, and so on, which could not but arise in the long process of time. Yet traces of change in law, religion, manners, and customs are scarcely, if at all, to be detected; whence it logically follows that a dozen generations of irresponsible minstrels and vagrant reciters were learned, conscientious, and staunchly conservative of the archaic tone. Their erudite conservatism, for example, induced them, in deference to the traditions of the bronze age, to describe all weapons as of bronze, though many of the poets were living in an age of weapons of iron. It also prompted them to describe all shields as made on the far-away old Mycenaean model, though they were themselves used to small circular bucklers, with a bracer and a grip, worn on the left arm.

But at this point the learning and conservatism of the late poets deserted them, and into their new lays, also into the old lays, they eagerly introduced many unwarrantable corslets and greaves — things of the ninth to seventh centuries. We shall find Helbig stating, on the same page, that in the matter of usages “the epic poets shunned, as far as possible, all that was recent,” and also that for fear of puzzling their military audiences they did the reverse: “they probably kept account of the arms and armour of their own day.” Now the late poets, on this showing, must have puzzled warriors who used iron weapons by always speaking of bronze weapons. They pleased the critical warriors, on the other hand, by introducing the corslets and greaves which every military man of their late age possessed. But, again, the poets startled an audience which used light bucklers, worn on the left arm, by talking of enormous *targes*, slung round the neck.

All these inconsistencies of theory follow from the assumption that the *Iliad* *must* be a hotch-potch of many ages. If we assume that, on the whole, it is the work of one age, we see that the poet describes the usages which obtained in his own day. The dead are cremated, not, as in the Mycenaean prime, inhumed. The shield has been strengthened to meet bronze, not stone-tipped, arrows by bronze plates. Corslets and greaves have been elaborated. Bronze, however, is still the metal for swords and spears, and even occasionally for tools and implements, though these are often of iron. In short, we have in Homer a picture of a transitional age of culture; we have not a medley of old and new, of obsolete and modern. The poets do not describe inhumation, as they should do, if they are conservative archaeologists. In that case, though they burn, they would have made their heroes bury their dead, as they did at Mycenas. They do not introduce iron swords and spears, as they must do, if, being late poets, they keep in touch with the armament of their time. If they speak of huge shields only because they are conservative archaeologists, then, on the other hand, they speak of corslets and greaves because they are also reckless innovators.

They cannot be both at once. They are depicting a single age, a single "moment in culture." That age is certainly sundered from the Mycenaean prime by the century or two in which changing ideas led to the superseding of burial by burning, or it is sundered from the Mycenaean prime by a foreign conquest, a revolution, and the years in which the foreign conquerors acquired the language of their subjects.

In either alternative, and one or other must be actual, there was time enough for many changes in the culture of the Mycenaean prime to be evolved. These changes, we say, are represented by the descriptions of culture in the Iliad. That hypothesis explains, simply and readily, all the facts. The other hypothesis, that the *Iliad* was begun near the Mycenaean prime and was continued throughout four or five centuries, cannot, first, explain how the *Iliad* was *composed*, and, next, it wanders among apparent contradictories and through a maze of inconsistencies.

THE ZOSTER, ZOMA, AND MITRE

We are far from contending that it is always possible to understand Homer's descriptions of defensive armour. But as we have never seen the actual objects, perhaps the poet's phrases were clear enough to his audience and are only difficult to us. I do not, for example, profess to be sure of what happened when Pandarus shot at Menelaus. The arrow lighted “where the golden buckles of the *zoster* were clasped, and the doubled breastplate met them. So the bitter arrow alighted upon the firm *zoster*; through the wrought *zoster* it sped, and through the curiously wrought breastplate it pressed on, and through the *mitre* he wore to shield his flesh, a barrier against darts; and this best shielded him, yet it passed on even through this,” and grazed the hero’s flesh (*Iliad*, IV. I 32 seq.). Menelaus next says that “the glistering *zoster* in front stayed the dart, and the *zoma* beneath, and the *mitrê* that the coppersmiths fashioned” (IV. 185-187). Then the surgeon, Machaon, “loosed the glistering *zoster* and the *zoma*, and the *mitrê* beneath that the coppersmiths fashioned” (IV. 215, 216).

Reading as a mere student of poetry I take this to mean that the corslet was of two pieces, fastening in the middle of the back and the middle of the front of a man (though Mr. Monro thinks that the plates met and the *zoster* was buckled at the side); that the *zoster*, a mailed belt, buckled just above the place where the plates of the corslet met; that the arrow went through the meeting-place of the belt buckles, through the place where the plates of the corslet met, and then through the *mitrê*, a piece of bronze armour worn under the corslet, though the nature of this *mitrê* and of the *zoma* I do not know. Was the *mitrê* a separate article or a continuation of the breastplate, lower down, struck by a dropping arrow?

In 1883 Mr. Leaf wrote: “I take it that the *zoma* means the waist of the cuirass which is covered by the *zoster*, and has the upper edge of the *mitrê* or plated apron beneath it fastened round the warrior’s body. … This view is strongly supported by all the archaic vase paintings I have been able to find.” We see a “corslet with a projecting rim”; that rim is called zoma and holds the *zoster*. “The hips and upper part of the thighs were protected either by a belt of leather, sometimes plated, called the *mitrê*, or else only by the lower part of the *chiton*, and this corresponds exactly with Homeric description.”

At this time, in days before Reichel, Mr. Leaf believed in bronze corslets, whether of plates or plated jacks; he also believed, we have seen, that the huge shields, as of Aias, were survivals in poetry; that “Homer” saw small round bucklers in use, and supposed that the old warriors were muscular enough to wear circular shields as great as those in the vase of Aristonothos, already described.

On the corslet, as we have seen, Mr. Leaf now writes as a disciple of Reichel. But as to the *mitrê*, he rejects Helbig’s and Mr. Ridgeway’s opinion that it was a band of metal a foot wide in front and very narrow behind. Such things have been found in Euboea and in Italy. Mr. Ridgeway mentions examples from

Bologna, Corneto, Este, Hallstatt, and Hungary. The *zoster* is now, in Mr. Leaf's opinion, a "girdle" "holding up the waist-cloth (*zoma*), so characteristic of Mycenaean dress!" Reichel's arguments against corslets "militate just as strongly against the presence of such a *mitrê*, which is, in fact, just the lower half of a corslet…. The conclusion is that the metallic *mitrê* is just as much an intruder into the armament of the *Epos* as the corslet." The process of evolution was, Mr. Leaf suggests, first, the abandonment of the huge shield, with the introduction of small round bucklers in its place. Then, second, a man naturally felt very unprotected, and put on "the metallic *mitrê*" of Helbig (which covered a foot of him in front and three inches behind). "Only as technical skill improved could the final stage, that of the elaborate cuirass, be attained."

This appears to us an improbable sequence of processes. While arrows were flying thick, as they do fly in the *Iliad*, men would not reject body-covering shields for small bucklers while they were still wholly destitute of body armour. Nor would men arm only their stomachs when, if they had skill enough to make a metallic *mitrê,* they could not have been so unskilled as to be unable to make corslets of some more or less serviceable type. Probably they began with huge shields, added the *linothorex* (like the Iroquois cotton *thorex*), and next, as a rule, superseded that with the bronze *thorex*, while retaining the huge shield, because the bronze *thorex* was so inadequate to its purpose of defence. Then, when archery ceased to be of so much importance as coming to the shock with heavy spears, and as the bronze *thorex* really could sometimes keep out an arrow, they reduced the size of their shields, and retained surface enough for parrying spears and meeting point and edge of the sword. That appears to be a natural set of sequences, but I cannot pretend to guess how the corslet fastened or what the *mitrê* and *zoster* really were, beyond being guards of the stomach and lower part of the trunk.

HELMETS, GREAVES, SPEARS

No helmets of metal, such as Homer mentions, have been found in Mycenaean graves. A quantity of boars' teeth, sixty in all, were discovered in Grave V. and may have adorned and strengthened leather caps, now mouldered into dust. An ivory head from Mycenae shows a conical cap set with what may be boars' tusks, with a band of the same round the chin, and an earpiece which was perhaps of bronze? Spata and the graves of the lower town of Mycenae and the Enkomi ivories show similar headgear.

This kind of cap set with boars' tusks is described in *Iliad*, Book X., in the account of the hasty arraying of two spies in the night of terror after the defeat and retreat to the ships. The Trojan spy, Dolon, also wears a leather cap. The three spies put on no corslets, as far as we can affirm, their object being to remain inconspicuous and unburdened with glittering bronze greaves and corslets. The Trojan camp was brilliantly lit up with fires, and there may have been a moon, so the less bronze the better. In these circumstances alone the heroes of the Iliad are unequipped, certainly, with bronze helmets, corslets, and bronze greaves.

The author of Book X. is now regarded as a precise archaeologist, who knew that corslets and bronze helmets were not used in Agamemnon's time, but that leather caps with boars' tusks were in fashion; while again, as we shall see, he is said to know nothing about heroic costume (cf. The *Doloneia*). As a fact, he has to describe an incident which occurs nowhere else in Homer, though it may often have occurred in practice — a hurried council during a demoralised night, and the hasty arraying of two spies, who wish to be lightfooted and inconspicuous. The author's evidence as to the leather cap and its garnishing of boars' tusks testifies to a survival of such gear in an age of bronze battle-helmets, not to his own minute antiquarian research.

GREAVES

Bronze greaves are not found, so far, in Mycenaean tombs in Greece, and Reichel argued that the original Homer knew none. The greaves, "were gaiters of stuff or leather"; the one mention of bronze greaves is stuff and nonsense interpolated (VII. 41). But why did men who were interpolating bronze corslets freely introduce bronze so seldom, if at all, as the material of greaves?

Bronze greaves, however, have been found in a Cypro-Mycenaean grave at Enkomi (Tomb XV.), *accompanied* by *an early type* of *bronze* dagger, while bronze greaves adorned with Mycenaean ornament are discovered in the Balkan peninsula at Glassinavç. Thus all Homer's description of arms is here corroborated by archaeology, and cannot be cut out by what Mr. Evans calls "the Procrustean method" of Dr. Reichel.

A curious feature about the spear may be noticed. In Book X. while the men of Diomede slept, "their spears were driven into the ground erect on the spikes of the butts" (X. 153). Aristotle mentions that this was still the usage of the Illyrians in his day. Though the word for the spike in the butt (*sauroter*) does not elsewhere occur in the *Iliad*, the practice of sticking the spears erect in the ground during a truce is mentioned in III. 135: "They lean upon their shields" (clearly large high shields), “and the tall spears are planted by their sides.” No butt-spikes have been found in graves of the Mycenaean prime. The *sauroter* was still used, or still existed, in the days of Herodotus.

On the whole, Homer does not offer a medley of the military gear of four centuries — that view we hope to have shown to be a mass of inconsistencies — but describes a state of military equipment in advance of that of the most famous Mycenaean graves, but other than that of the late “warrior vase.” He is also very familiar with some uses of iron, of which, as we shall see, scarcely any has been found in Mycenaean graves of the central period, save in the shape of rings. Homer never mentions rings of any metal.

CHAPTER IX

BRONZE AND IRON

Taking the Iliad and Odyssey just as they have reached us they give, with the exception of one line, an entirely harmonious account of the contemporary uses of bronze and iron. Bronze is employed in the making of weapons and armour (with cups, ornaments, &c.); iron is employed (and bronze is also used) in the making of tools and implements, such as knives, axes, adzes, axles of a chariot (that of Hera; mortals use an axle tree of oak), and the various implements of agricultural and pastoral life. Meanwhile, iron is a substance perfectly familiar to the poets; it is far indeed from being a priceless rarity (it is impossible to trace Homeric stages of advance in knowledge of iron), and it yields epithets indicating strength, permanence, and stubborn endurance. These epithets are more frequent in the Odyssey and the “later” Books of the Iliad than in the “earlier” Books of the Iliad; but, as articles made of iron, the Odyssey happens to mention only one set of axes, which is spoken of ten times — axes and adzes as a class — and “iron bonds,” where “iron” probably means “strong,” “not to be broken.” . The statement of facts given here is much akin to Helbig’s account of the uses of bronze and iron in Homer. Helbig writes: “It is notable that in the Epic there is much more frequent mention of iron *implements* than of iron *weapons of war*.” He then gives examples, which we produce later, and especially remarks on what Achilles says when he offers a mass of iron as a prize in the funeral games of Patroclus. The iron, says Achilles, will serve for the purposes of the ploughman and shepherd, “a surprising speech from the son of Peleus, from whom we rather expect an allusion to the military uses of the metal.” Of course, if iron weapons were not in vogue while iron was the metal for tools and implements, the words of Achilles are appropriate and intelligible.

The facts being as we and Helbig agree in stating them, we suppose that the Homeric poets sing of the usages of their own time. It is an age when iron, though quite familiar, is not yet employed for armour, or for swords or spears, which must be of excellent temper, without great weight in proportion to their length and size. Iron is only employed in Homer for some knives, which are never said to be used in battle (not even for dealing the final stab, like the mediaeval poniard, the *miséricorde*), for axes, which have a short cutting edge, and may be thick and weighty behind the edge, and for the rough implements of the shepherd and ploughman, such as tips of ploughshares, of goads, and so forth.

As far as archaeological excavations and discoveries enlighten us, these relative uses of bronze and iron did not exist in the ages of Mycenaean culture which are represented in the *tholos* of Vaphio and the graves, earlier and later, of Mycenae. Even in the later Mycenaean graves iron is found only in the form of finger rings (iron rings were common in late Greece). Iron was scarce in the Cypro-Mycenaean graves of Enkomi. A small knife with a carved handle had left traces of an iron blade. A couple of lumps of iron, one of them apparently the head of a club, were found in Schliemann's "Burned City" at Hissarlik; for the rest, swords, spear-heads, knives, and axes are all of bronze in the age called "Mycenaean." But we do not know whether iron *implements* may not yet be found in the sepulchres of *Thetes*, and other poor and landless men. The latest discoveries in Minoan graves in Crete exhibit tools of bronze.

Iron, we repeat, is in the poems a perfectly familiar metal. Ownership of "bronze, gold, and iron, which requires much labour" (in the smithying or smelting), appears regularly in the recurrent epic formula for describing a man of wealth. Iron, bronze, slaves, and hides are bartered for sea-borne wine at the siege of Troy? Athene, disguised as Mentes, is carrying a cargo of iron to Temesa (Tamasus in Cyprus?), to barter for copper. The poets are certainly not describing an age in which only a man of wealth might indulge in the rare and extravagant luxury of an iron ring: iron was a common commodity, like cattle, hides, slaves, bronze, and other such matters. Common as it was, Homer never once mentions its use for defensive armour, or for swords and spears.

Only in two cases does Homer describe any weapon as of iron. There is to be sure the "iron," the knife with which Antilochus fears Achilles will cut his own throat. But no knife is ever used as a weapon of war: knives are employed in cutting the throats of victims (see *Iliad*, III. 271 and XXIII. 30); the knife is said to be of iron, in this last passage; also Patroclus uses the knife to cut the arrow-head out of the flesh of a wounded friend. It is the *knife* of Achilles that is called "the iron," and on "the iron" perish the cattle in *Iliad*, XXIII. 30. Mr. Leaf says that by "the usual use, the metal" (iron) "is confined to tools of small size." This is incorrect; the Odyssey speaks of *great axes* habitually made of iron. But we do find a knife of bronze, that of Agamemnon, used in sacrificing victims; at least so I infer from Iliad, III. 271-292.

The only two specimens of *weapons* named by Homer as of iron are one arrow-head, used by Pandarus, and one mace, borne, before Nestor's time, by Areithöus. To fight with an iron mace was an amiable and apparently unique eccentricity of Areithbus, and caused his death. On account of his peculiar practice he was named “The Mace man.” The case is mentioned by Nestor as curious and unusual.

Mr. Leaf gets rid of this solitary iron *casse tête* in a pleasant way. Since he wrote his *Companion to the Iliad*, 1902, he has become converted, as we saw, to the theory, demolished by Mr. Monro, Nutzhorn, and Grote, and denounced by Blass, that the origin of our Homer is a text edited by some literary retainer of Pisistratus of Athens (about 560-540 B.C.). The editor arranged current lays, “altered” freely, and “wrote in” as much as he pleased. Probably he wrote this passage in which Nestor describes the man of the iron mace, for “the tales of Nestor’s youthful exploits, all of which bear the mark of late work, are introduced with no special applicability to the context, but rather with the intention of glorifying the ancestor of Pisistratus.” If Pisistratus was pleased with the ancestral portrait, nobody has a right to interfere, but we need hardly linger over this hypothesis (cf. p-288).

Iron axes are offered as prizes by Achilles, and we have the iron axes of Odysseus, who shot an arrow through the apertures in the blades, at the close of the Odyssey. But all these axes, as we shall show, were not weapons, but *peaceful implements*.

As a matter of certain fact the swords and spears of Homer’s warriors are invariably said by the poet to be of bronze, not of iron, in cases where the metal of the weapons is specified.

Except for an arrow-head (to which we shall return) and the one iron mace, noted as an eccentricity, no weapon in Homer is ever said to be of iron.

The richest men use swords of bronze. Not one chooses to indulge in a sword said to be of iron. The god, Hephaestus, makes a bronze sword for Achilles, whose own bronze sword was lent to Patroclus, and lost by him to Hector. This bronze sword, at least, Achilles uses, after receiving the divine armour of the god. The sword of Paris is of bronze, as is the sword of Odysseus in the Odyssey. Bronze is the sword which he brought from Troy, and bronze is the sword presented to him by Euryalus in Phaeacia, and bronze is the spear with which he fought under the walls of Ilios. There are other examples of bronze swords, while spears are invariably said to be of bronze, when the metal of the spear is specified.

Here we are on the ground of solid certainty: we see that the Homeric warrior has regularly spear and sword of bronze. If any man used a spear or sword of iron, Homer never once mentions the fact. If the poets, in an age of iron weapons, always spoke of bronze, out of deference to tradition, they must have puzzled their iron-using military patrons.

Thus, as regards weapons, the Homeric heroes are in the age of bronze, like them who slept in the tombs of the Mycenaean age. When Homer speaks of the use of cutting instruments of iron, he is always concerned, except in the two cases given, not with but with *implements*, which really were of iron. The wheelwright fells a tree “with the iron,” that is, with an axe; Antilochus fears that Achilles “will cut his own throat with the iron,” that is, with his knife, a thing never used in battle; the cattle struggle when slain with “the iron,” that is, the butcher’s knife; and Odysseus shoots “through the iron,” that is, through the holes in the blade of the iron axes. Thus Homer never says that this or that was done “with the iron” in the case of any but one weapon of war. Pandarus “drew the bow-string to his breast and to the bow.” Whoever wrote that line was writing in an age, we may think, when arrow-heads were commonly of iron; but in Homer, when the metal of the arrow-head is mentioned, except, in this one case, it is always bronze. The iron arrow-tip of Pandarus was of an early type, the shaft did not run into the socket of the arrow-head; the tang of the arrow-head, on the other hand, entered the shaft, and was whipped on with sinew. Pretty primitive this method, still the iron is an advance on the uniform bronze of Homer. The line about Pandarus and the iron arrow-head may really be early enough, for the arrow-head is of a primitive kind — socketless — and primitive is the attitude of the archer: he “drew the arrow to his breast.” On the Mycenaean silver bowl, representing a siege, the archers draw to the breast, in the primitive style, as does the archer on the bronze dagger with a representation of a lion hunt. The Assyrians and Khita drew to the ear, as the monuments prove, and so does the “Cypro-Mycenaean” archer of the ivory draught-box from Enkomi. In these circumstances we cannot deny that the poet may have known iron arrow-heads.

We now take the case of axes. We never hear from Homer of the use of an iron axe in battle, and warlike use of an axe only occurs twice. In *Iliad,* XV. 711, in a battle at and on the ships, “they were fighting with sharp axes and battle-axes” () “and with great swords, and spears armed at butt and tip.” At and on the ships, men would set hand to whatever tool of cutting edge was accessible. Seiler thinks that only the Trojans used the battle-axe; perhaps for damaging the ships: he follows the scholiast. , however, may perhaps be rendered “battle-axe,” as a Trojan, Peisandros, fights with an , and this is the only place in the *Iliad*, except XV. 711, where the thing is said to be used as a weapon. But it is not an *iron* axe; it is “of fine bronze.” Only one bronze *battle-axe,* according to Dr. Joseph Anderson, is known to have been found in Scotland, though there are many bronze heads of axes which were tools.

Axes () were *implements*, tools of the carpenter, woodcutter, shipwright, and so on; they were not weapons of war of the Achaeans.

As implements they are, with very rare exceptions, of iron. The wheelwright fells trees “with the gleaming iron,” iron being a synonym for axe and for knife. In *Iliad*, XIII. 391, the shipwrights cut timber with axes. In *Iliad*, XXIII. 114, woodcutters’ axes are employed in tree-felling, but the results are said to be produced , “by the long-edged bronze,” where the word is borrowed from the usual epithet of swords; “the long edge” is quite inappropriate to a woodcutter’s axe. On Calypso’s isle Calypso gives to Odysseus a bronze axe for his raft-making. Butcher’s work is done with an axe. The axes offered by Achilles as a prize for archers and the axes through which Odysseus shot are *implements* of iron.

In the Odyssey, when the poet describes the process of tempering iron, we read, “as when a smith dips a great axe or an adze in chill water, for thus men temper iron.” He is not using iron to make a sword or spear, but a tool-adze or axe. The poet is perfectly consistent. There are also examples both of bronze axes and, apparently, of bronze knives. Thus, though the woodcutter’s or carpenter’s axe is of bronze in two passages cited, iron is the usual material of the axe or adze. Again we saw, when Achilles gives a mass of iron as a prize in the games, he does not mean the armourer to fashion it into sword or spear, but says that it will serve the shepherd or ploughman for domestic implements, so that the men need not, on an upland farm, go to the city for iron implements. In commenting upon this Mr. Leaf is scarcely at the proper point of view. He says, “the idea of a state of things when the ploughman and shepherd forge their own tools from a lump of raw iron has a suspicious appearance of a deliberate attempt to represent from the inner consciousness an archaic state of civilisation. In Homeric times the is already specialised as a worker in metals….” However, Homer does not say that the ploughman and shepherd “forge their own tools.” A Homeric chief, far from a town, would have his own smithy, just as the laird of Runraurie (now Urrard) had his smithy at the time of the battle of Killicrankie (1689). Mackay’s forces left their *impedimenta* “at the laird’s smithy,” says an eye-witness.

The idea of a late Homeric poet trying to reconstruct from his fancy a prehistoric state of civilisation is out of the question. Even historical novelists of the eighteenth century A.D. scarcely attempted such an effort.

This was the regular state of things in the Highlands during the eighteenth century, when many chiefs, and most of the clans, lived far from any town. But these rural smiths did not make sword-blades, which Prince Charles, as late as 1750, bought on the Continent. The Andrea Ferrara-marked broadsword blades of the clans were of foreign manufacture. The Highland smiths did such rough iron work as was needed for rural purposes. Perhaps the Homeric chief may have sometimes been a craftsman like the heroes of the Sagas, great sword-smiths. Odysseus himself, notably an excellent carpenter, may have been as good a sword-smith, but every hero was not so accomplished.

In searching with microscopes for Homeric discrepancies and interpolations, critics are apt to forget the ways of old rural society.

The Homeric poems, whether composed in one age or throughout five centuries, are thus entirely uniform in allotting bronze as the material for all sorts of warlike gear, down to the solitary battle-axe mentioned; and iron as the usual metal for heavy tools, knives, carpenters' axes, adzes, and agricultural implements, with the rare exceptions which we have cited in the case of bronze knives and axes. Either this distinction — iron for tools and implements; bronze for armour, swords, and spears — prevailed throughout the period of the Homeric poets or poet; or the poets invented such a stage of culture; or poets, some centuries later, deliberately kept bronze for weapons only, while introducing iron for implements. In that case they were showing archaeological conscientiousness in following the presumed earlier poets of the bronze age, the age of the Mycenaean graves.

Now early poets are never studious archaeologists. Examining the certainly based on old lays and legends which survive in the Edda, we find that the poets of the *Nibelungenlied* introduce chivalrous and Christian manners. They do not archaeologise. The poets of the French *Chansons de Geste* (eleventh to thirteenth centuries) bring their own weapons, and even armorial bearings, into the 'remote age of Charlemagne, which they know from legends and *cantilènes*. Again, the later *remanieurs* of the earliest *Chansons de Geste* modernise the details of these poems. But, *per impossibile*, and for the sake of argument, suppose that the later interpolators and continuators of the Homeric lays were antiquarian precisians, or, on the other hand, "deliberately attempted to reproduce from their inner consciousness an archaic state of civilisation." Suppose that, though they lived in an age of iron weapons, they knew, as Hesiod knew, that the old heroes "had warlike gear of bronze, and ploughed with bronze, and there was no black iron." In that case, why did the later interpolating poets introduce iron as the special material of tools and implements, knives and axes, in an age when they knew that there was no iron? Savants such as, by this theory, the later poets of the full-blown age of iron were, they must have known that the knives and axes of the old heroes were made of bronze. In old votive offerings in temples and in any Mycenaean graves which might be opened, the learned poets of 800-600 B.C. saw with their eyes knives and axes of bronze. The knife of Agamemnon (), which hangs from his girdle, beside his sword, corresponds to the knives found in Grave IV. at Mycenae; the handles of these dirks have a ring for suspension.

But these knives, in Mycenaean graves, are of bronze, and of bronze are the axes in the Mycenaean deposits and the dagger of Enkomi.

Why, then, did the late poetic interpolators, who knew that the spears and swords of the old warriors were of bronze, and who describe them as of bronze, not know that their knives and axes were also of bronze? Why did they describe the old knives and axes as of iron, while Hesiod knew, and could have told them — did tell them, in fact — that they were of bronze? Clearly the theory that Homeric poets were archaeological precisians is impossible. They describe arms as of bronze, tools usually as of iron, because they see them to be such in practice.

The poems, in fact, depict a very extraordinary condition of affairs, such as no poets could invent and adhere to with uniformity. We are accustomed in archaeology to seeing the bronze sword pass by a gradual transition into the iron sword; but, in Homer, people with abundance of iron never, in any one specified case, use iron sword blades or spears. The greatest chiefs, men said to be rich in gold and iron, always use swords and spears of *bronze* in *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

The usual process of transition from bronze to iron swords, in a prehistoric European age, is traced by Mr. Ridgeway at Hallstatt, “in the heart of the Austrian Alps,” where a thousand old graves have been explored. The swords pass from bronze to iron with bronze hilts, and, finally, are wholly of iron. Weapons of bronze are fitted with iron edges. Axes of iron were much more common than axes of bronze. The axes were fashioned in the old shapes of the age of bronze, were not of the *bipennis* Mycenaean model — the double axe — nor of the shape of the letter D, very thick, with two round apertures in the blade, like the bronze axe of Vaphio. Probably the axes through which Odysseus shot an arrow were of this kind, as Mr. Monro, and, much earlier, Mr. Butcher and I have argued.

At Hallstatt there was the *normal* evolution from bronze swords and axes to iron swords and axes. Why, then, had Homer’s men in his time not made this step, seeing that they were familiar with the use of iron? Why do they use bronze for swords and spears, iron for tools? The obvious answer is that they could temper bronze for military purposes much better than they could temper iron. Now Mr. Ridgeway quotes Polybius (ii. 30; ii. 33) for the truly execrable quality of the iron of the Celtic invaders of Italy as late as 225 B.C. Their swords were as bad as, or worse than, British bayonets; they *always* “doubled up.” “Their long iron swords were easily bent, and could only give one downward stroke with any effect; but after this the edges got so turned and the blades so bent that, unless they had time to straighten them with the foot against the ground, they could not deliver a second blow.” If the heroes in Homer’s time possessed iron as badly tempered as that of the Celts of 225 B.C., they had every reason to prefer, as they did, excellent bronze for all their military weapons, while reserving iron for pacific purposes. A woodcutter’s axe might have any amount of weight and thickness of iron behind the edge; not so a sword blade or a spear point.

In the *Iliad* we hear of swords breaking at the hilt in dealing a stroke at shield or helmet, a thing most incident to bronze swords, especially of the early type, with a thin bronze tang inserted in a hilt of wood, ivory, or amber, or with a slight shelf of the bronze hilt riveted with three nails on to the bronze blade.

Lycaon struck Peneleos on the socket of his helmet crest, “and his sword brake at the hilt.” The sword of Menelaus broke into three or four pieces when he smote the helmet ridge of Paris. Iron of the Celtic sort described by Polybius would have bent, not broken. There is no doubt on that head: if Polybius is not romancing, the Celtic sword of 225 B.C. doubled up at every stroke, like a piece of hoop iron. But Mr. Leaf tells us that, “by primitive modes of smelting,” iron is made “hard and brittle, like cast iron.” If so, it would be even less trustworthy for a sword than bronze. Perhaps the Celts of 225 B.C. did not smelt iron by primitive methods, but discovered some process for making it not hard and brittle, but flabby.

The swords of the Mycenaean graves, we know, were all of bronze, and, in three intaglios on rings from the graves, the point, not the edge, is used, once against a lion, once over the rim of a shield which covers the whole body of an enemy, and once at too close quarters to permit the use of the edge. It does not follow from these three cases (as critics argue) that no bronze sword could be used for a swashing blow, and there are just half as many thrusts as strokes with the bronze sword in the *Iliad*. As the poet constantly dwells on the “long edge” of the *bronze* swords and makes heroes use both point and edge, how can we argue that Homeric swords were of iron and ill fitted to give point? The Highlanders at Clifton (1746) were obliged, contrary to their common practice, to use the point against Cumberland’s dragoons. They, like the Achaeans, had heavy cut and thrust swords, but theirs were of steel.

If the Achaeans had thoroughly excellent bronze, and had iron as bad as that of the Celts a thousand years later, their preference for bronze over iron for weapons is explained. In Homer the fighters do not very often come to sword strokes; they fight mainly with the spear, except in pursuit, now and then. But when they do strike, they cleave heads and cut off arms. They could not do this with bronze rapiers, such as those with which men give point over the rim of the shield on two Mycenaean gems. But Mr. Myres writes, “From the shaft graves (of Mycenae) onwards there are two types of swords in the Mycenaean world —

one an exaggerated dagger riveted into the front end of the hilt, the other with a flat flanged tang running the whole length of the hilt, and covered on either face by ornamental grip plates riveted on. This sword, though still of bronze, can deal a very effective cut; and, as the Mycenaeans had no armour for body or head," (?) "the danger of breaking or bending the sword on a cuirass or helmet did not arise." The danger did exist in Homer's time, as we have seen. But a bronze sword, published by Tsountas and Manatt (*Mycenaean Age*, , fig. 88), is emphatically meant to give both point and edge, having a solid handle — a continuation of the blade — and a very broad blade, coming to a very fine point. Even in Grave V. at Mycenae, we have a sword blade so massive at the top that it was certainly capable of a swashing blow. The sword of the charioteer on the *stêlê* of Grave V. is equally good for cut and thrust. A pleasanter cut and thrust bronze sword than the one found at Ialysus no gentleman could wish to handle. Homer, in any case, says that his heroes used bronze swords, well adapted to strike. If his age had really good bronze, and iron as bad as that of the Celts of Polybius, a thousand years later, their preference of bronze over iron for weapons needs no explanation. If their iron was not so bad as that of the Celts, their military conservatism might retain bronze for weapons, while in civil life they often used iron for implements.

The uniform evidence of the Homeric poems can only be explained on the supposition that men had plenty of iron; but, while they used it for implements, did not yet, with a natural conservatism, trust life and victory to iron spears and swords. Unluckily, we cannot test the temper of the earliest known iron swords found in Greece, for rust hath consumed them, and I know not that the temper of the Mycenaean bronze swords has been tested against helmets of bronze. I can thus give no evidence from experiment.

There is just one line in Homer which disregards the distinction — iron for implements, bronze for weapons; it is in *Odyssey*, XVI. 294; XIX. 13. Telemachus is told to remove the warlike harness of Odysseus from the hall, lest the wooers use it in the coming fray. He is to explain the removal by saying that it has been done, "Lest you fall to strife in your cups, and harm each other, and shame the feast, and *this* wooing; *for iron of himself draweth a man to him*." The proverb is manifestly of an age when iron was almost universally used for weapons, and thus was, as in Thucydides, synonymous with all warlike gear; but throughout the poems no single article of warlike gear is of iron except one eccentric mace and one arrow-head of primitive type. The line in the Odyssey must therefore be a very late addition; it may be removed without injuring the sense of the passage in which it occurs. If, on the other hand, the line be as old as the oldest parts of the poem, the author for once forgets his usual antiquarian precision.

We are thus led to the conclusion that either there was in early Greece an age when weapons were all of bronze while implements were often of iron, or that the poet, or crowd of poets, invented that state of things. Now early poets never invent in this way; singing to an audience of warriors, critical on such a point, they speak of what the warriors know to be actual, except when, in a recognised form of decorative exaggeration, they introduce

“Masts of the beaten gold
 And sails of taffetie.”

Our theory is, then, that in the age when the Homeric poems were composed iron, though well known, was on its probation. Men of the sword preferred bronze for all their military purposes, just as fifteenth-century soldiers found the long-bow and cross-bow much more effective than guns, or as the Duke of Wellington forbade the arming of all our men with rifles in place of muskets … for reasons not devoid of plausibility.

Sir John Evans supposes that, in the seventh century, the Carian and Ionian invaders of Egypt were still using offensive arms of bronze, not of iron. Sir John remarks that “for a considerable time after the Homeric period, bronze remained in use for offensive weapons,” especially for “spears, lances, and arrows.” Hesiod, quite unlike his contemporaries, the “later” poets of Iliad and *Odyssey*, gives to Heracles an iron helmet and sword. Hesiod knew better, but was not a consistent archaiser. Sir John thinks that as early as 500 or even 600 B.C. iron and steel were in common use for weapons in Greece, but not yet had they altogether superseded bronze battle-axes and spears. By Sir John’s showing, iron for offensive weapons superseded bronze very slowly indeed in Greece; and, if my argument be correct, it had not done so when the Homeric poems were composed. Iron merely served for utensils, and the poems reflect that stage of transition which no poet could dream of inventing.

These pages had been written before my attention was directed to M. Bérard’s book, *Les Pheniciens et l’Odyssée* (Paris, 1902). M. Bérard has anticipated and rather outrun my ideas. “I might almost say,” he remarks, “that iron is the popular metal, native and rustic… the shepherd and ploughman can extract and work it without going to the town.” The chief’s smith could work iron, if he had iron to work, and this iron Achilles gave as a prize. “With rustic methods of working it iron is always impure; it has ‘straws’ in it, and is brittle. It may be the metal for peace and for implements. In our fields we see the reaper sit down and repair his sickle. In war is needed a metal less hard, perhaps, but more tough and not so easily broken. You cannot sit down in the field of battle, as in a field of barley, to beat your sword straight….”

So the Celts found, if we believe Polybius.

On the other hand, iron swords did supersede bronze swords in the long run. Apparently they had not done so in the age of the poet, but iron had certainly ceased to be “a precious metal”; knives and woodcutters’ axes are never made of a metal that is precious and rare. I am thus led, on a general view, to suppose that the poems took shape when iron was very well known, but was not yet, as in the “Dipylon” period in Crete, commonly used by sword-smiths.

The ideas here stated are not unlike those of Paul Cauer. I do not, however, find the mentions of iron useful as a test of “early” and “late” lays, which it is his theory that they are. Thus he says: —

(1) Iron is often mentioned as part of a man’s personal property, while we are not told how he means to use it. It is named with bronze, gold, and girls. The poet has no definite picture before his eyes; he is vague about iron. But, we reply, his picture of iron in these passages is neither more nor less definite than his mental picture of the other commodities. He calls iron “hard to smithy,” “grey,” “dark-hued”; he knows, in fact, all about it. He does not tell us what the owner is going to do with the gold and the bronze and the girls, any more than he tells us what is to be done with the iron. Such information was rather in the nature of a luxury than a necessity. Every hearer knew the uses of all four commodities. This does not seem to have occurred to Cauer.

(2) Iron is spoken of as an emblem of hard things, as, to take a modern example, in Mr. Swinburne’s “armed and iron maidenhood “ — said of Atalanta. Hearts are “iron,” strength is “iron,” flesh is not “iron,” an “iron” noise goes up to the heaven of bronze. It may not follow, Cauer thinks, from these phrases that iron was used in any way. Men are supposed to marvel at its strange properties; it was “new and rare.” I see no ground for this inference.

(3) We have the “iron gates” of Tartarus, and the “iron bonds” in which Odysseus was possibly lying; it does not follow that chains or gates were made of iron any more than that gates were of chrysoprase in the days of St. John.

(4) Next, we have mention of implements, not weapons, of iron — a remarkable trait of culture. Greek ploughs and axes were made of iron before spears and swords were of iron.

(5) We have mention of iron weapons, namely, the unique iron mace of Areithous and the solitary iron arrow-head of Pandarus, and what Cauer calls the iron swords (more probably knives) of Achilles and others. It is objected to the “iron” of Achilles that Antilochus fears he will cut his throat with it on hearing of the death of Patroclus, while there is no other mention of suicide in the *Iliad*.

It does not follow that suicide was unheard of; indeed, Achilles may be thinking of suicide presently, in XIII. 98, when he says to his mother: “Let me die at once, since it was not my lot to succour my comrade.”

(6) We have the iron-making spoken of in Book IX. 393 of the *Odyssey*.

It does not appear to us that the use of iron as an epithet bespeaks an age when iron was a mysterious thing, known mainly by reputation, “a costly possession.” The epithets “iron strength,” and so on, may as readily be used in our own age or any other. If iron were at first a “precious” metal, it is odd that Homeric men first used it, as Cauer sees that they did, to make points to ploughshares and “tools of agriculture and handiwork.” “Then people took to working iron for weapons.” Just so, but we cannot divide the *Iliad* into earlier and later portions in proportion to the various mentions of iron in various Books. These statistics are of no value for separatist purposes. It is impossible to believe that men when they spoke of “iron strength,” “iron hearts,” “grey iron,” “iron hard to smithy,” did so because iron was, first, an almost unknown legendary mineral, next, “a precious metal,” then the metal of drudgery, and finally the metal of weapons.

The real point of interest is, as Cauer sees, that domestic preceded military uses of iron among the Achaeans. He seems, however, to think that the confinement of the use of bronze to weapons is a matter of traditional style. But, in the early days of the waxing epics, tools as well as weapons were, as in Homer they occasionally are, of bronze. Why, then, do the supposed late continuators represent tools, not weapons, as of iron? Why do they not cleave to the traditional term — bronze — in the case of tools, as the same men do in the case of weapons?

Helbig offers an apparently untenable explanation of this fact. He has proposed an interpretation of the uses of bronze and iron in the poems entirely different from that which I offer. Unfortunately, one can scarcely criticise his theory without entering again into the whole question of the construction of the Epics. He thinks that the origin of the poems dates from “the Mycenaean period,” and that the later continuators of the poems retained the traditions of that remote age. Thus they thrice call Mycenae “golden,” though, in the changed economic conditions of their own period, Mycenae could no longer be “golden”; and I presume that, if possible, the city would have issued a papyrus currency without a metallic basis. However this may be, “in the description of customs the epic poets did their best to avoid everything modern.” Here we have again that unprecedented phenomenon — early poets who are archaeologically precise.

We have first to suppose that the kernel of the *Iliad* originated in the Mycenaean age, the age of bronze. We are next to believe that this kernel was expanded into the actual Epic in later and changed times, but that the later poets adhered in their descriptions to the Mycenaean standard, avoiding "everything modern." That poets of an uncritical period, when treating of the themes of ancient legend or song, carefully avoid everything modern is an opinion not warranted by the usage of the authors of the *Chansons de Geste*, of *Beowulf*, and of the *Nibelungenlied*. These poets, we must repeat, invariably introduce in their chants concerning ancient days the customs, costume, armour, religion, and weapons of their own time. Dr. Helbig supposes that the late Greek poets, however, who added to the *Iliad*, carefully avoided doing what other poets of uncritical ages have always done.

This is his position in his text (). In his note 1 to page 50, however, he occupies the precisely contrary position. "The epic poems were chanted, as a rule, in the houses of more or less warlike chiefs. It is, then, *à priori* probable that the later poets took into account the *contemporary* military state of things. Their audience would have been much perturbed (*bien chequés*) if they had heard the poet mention nothing but arms and forms of attack and defence to which they were unaccustomed." If so, when iron weapons came in the poets would substitute iron for bronze, in lays new and old, but they never do. However, this is Helbig's opinion in his note. But in his text he says that the poets, carefully avoiding the contemporary, "the modern," make the heroes fight, not on horseback, but from chariots. Their listeners, according to his note, must have been *bien chequés*, for there came a time when *they* were not accustomed to war chariots.

Thus the poets who, in Dr. Helbig's text, "avoid as far as possible all that is modern," in his note, on the same page, "take account of the contemporary state of things," and are as modern as possible where weapons *are* concerned. Their audience would be sadly put out (*bien chequés*) "if they heard talk only of arms … to which they were unaccustomed"; talk of large suspended shields, of uncorsleted heroes, and of bronze weapons. They had to endure it, whether they liked it or not, *teste* Reichel. Dr. Helbig seems to speak correctly in his note; in his text his contradictory opinion appears to be wrong. Experience teaches us that the poets of an uncritical age — Shakespeare, for example — introduce the weapons of their own period into works dealing with remote ages. Hamlet uses the Elizabethan rapier.

In his argument on bronze and iron, unluckily, Dr. Helbig deserts the judicious opinions of his note for the opposite theory of his text. His late poets, in the age of iron, always say that the weapons of the heroes are made of bronze. They thus, "as far as possible avoid what is modern." But, of course, warriors of the age of iron, when they heard the poet talk only of weapons of bronze, "*aurient été bien choqués*" (as Dr. Helbig truly says in his note), on hearing of nothing but “*armes auxquels ils n’étaient pas habitués,*” — arms always of bronze.

Though Dr. Helbig in his text is of the opposite opinion, I must agree entirely with the view which he states so clearly in his note. It follows that if a poet speaks invariably of weapons of bronze, he is living in an age when weapons are made of no other material. In his text, however, Dr. Helbig maintains that the poets of later ages “as far as possible avoid everything modern,” and, therefore, mention none but bronze weapons. But, as he has pointed out, they do mention iron tools and implements. Why do they desert the traditional bronze? Because “it occasionally happened that a poet, when thinking of an entirely new subject, wholly emancipated himself from traditional forms,”

The examples given in proof are the offer by Achilles of a lump of iron as the prize for archery — the iron, as we saw, being destined for the manufacture of pastoral and agricultural implements, in which Dr. Helbig includes the lances of shepherds and ploughmen, though the poet never says that they were of iron. There are also the axes through which Odysseus shoots his arrow. “The poet here treated an entirely new subject, in the development of which he had perfect liberty.” So he speaks freely of iron. “But,” we exclaim, “tools and implements, axes and knives, are not a perfectly new subject!” They were extremely familiar to the age of bronze, the Mycenaean age. Examples of bronze tools, arrow-heads, and implements are discovered in excavations on Mycenaean sites. There was nothing new about bronze tools and implements. Men had bronze tips to their ploughshares, bronze knives, bronze axes, bronze arrow-heads before they used iron.

Perhaps we are to understand that feats of archery, non-military contests in bowmanship, are *un sujet à fait nouveau*: a theme so very modern that a poet, in singing of it, could let himself go, and dare to speak of iron implements. But where was the novelty? All peoples who use the bow in war practise archery in time of peace. The poet, moreover, speaks of bronze tools, axes and knives, in other parts of the *Iliad*; neither tools nor bronze tools constitute *un sujet tout à fait nouveau*. There was nothing new in shooting with a bow and nothing new in the existence of axes. Bows and axes were as familiar to the age of stone and to the age of bronze as to the age of iron. Dr. Helbig’s explanation, therefore, explains nothing, and, unless a better explanation is offered, we return to the theory, rejected by Dr. Helbig, that implements and tools were often, not always, of iron, while weapons were of bronze in the age of the poet. Dr. Helbig rejects this opinion. He writes: “We cannot in any way admit that, at a period when the socks of the plough, the lance points of shepherds” (which the poet never describes as of iron), “and axe-heads were of iron, warriors still used weapons of bronze.” But it is logically possible to admit that this was the real state of affairs, while it is logically impossible to admit that bows and tools were "new subjects"; and that late poets, when they sang of military gear, "*tenaient compte de l'armement contemporain,*" carefully avoiding the peril of bewildering their hearers by speaking of antiquated arms, and, at the same time, spoke of nothing but antiquated arms — weapons of bronze — and of war chariots, to fighting men who did not use war chariots and did use weapons of iron.

These logical contradictions beset all arguments in which it is maintained that "the late poets" are anxious archaisers, and at the same time are eagerly introducing the armour and equipment of their own age. The critics are in the same quandary as to iron and bronze as traps them in the case of large shields, small bucklers, greaves, and corslets. They are obliged to assign contradictory attitudes to their "late poets." It does not seem possible to admit that a poet, who often describes axes as of iron in various passages, does so in his account of a peaceful contest in bowmanship, because contests in bowmanship are *UN sujet TOUT à FAIT NOUVEAU;* and so he feels at liberty to describe axes as of iron, while he adheres to bronze as the metal for weapons. He, or one of the Odyssean poets, had already asserted (Odyssey, IX. 391) that iron *was* the metal for adzes and axes.

Dr. Helbig's argument does not explain the facts. The bow of Eurytus and the uses to which Odysseus is to put it have been in the poet's mind all through the conduct of his plot, and there is nothing to suggest that the exploit of bowmanship is a very new lay, tacked on to the Odyssey.

After writing this chapter, I observed that my opinion had been anticipated by S. H. Naber. "Quod Herodoti diserto testimonio novimus, Homeri restate ferruminatio nondum inventa erat necdum bene noverant mortales, uti opinor, *acuere* ferrum. Hinc pauperes homines ubi possunt, ferro utuntur; sed in plerisque rebus turn domi turn militiae imprimis coguntur uti aere…."

The theory of Mr. Ridgeway as to the relative uses of iron and bronze is not, by myself, very easily to be understood. "The Homeric warrior … has regularly, as we have seen, spear and sword of iron." As no spear or sword of iron is ever mentioned in the *Iliad* or Odyssey, as both weapons are always of bronze when the metal is specified, I have not "seen" that they are "regularly," or ever, of iron. In proof, Mr. Ridgeway cites the axes and knives already mentioned — which are not spears or swords, and are sometimes of bronze. He also quotes the line in the Odyssey, "Iron of itself doth attract a man." But if this line is genuine and original, it does not apply to the state of things in the *Iliad,* while it contradicts the whole Odyssey, in which swords and spears are *ALWAYS* of bronze when their metal is mentioned. If the line reveals the true state of things, then throughout the Odyssey, if not throughout the *Iliad*, the poets when they invariably speak of bronze swords and spears invariably say what they do not mean. If they do this, how are we to know when they mean what they say, and of what value can their evidence on points of culture be reckoned? They may always be retaining traditional terms as to usages and customs in an age when these are obsolete.

If the Achaeans were, as in Mr. Ridgeway's theory, a northern people—"Celts" — who conquered with iron weapons a Pelasgian bronze-using Mycenaean people, it is not credible to me that Achaean or Pelasgian poets habitually used the traditional Pelasgian term for the metal of weapons, namely, bronze, in songs chanted before victors who had won their triumph with iron. The traditional phrase of a conquered bronze-using race could not thus survive and flourish in the poetry of an outlandish iron-using race of conquerors.

Mr. Ridgeway cites the Odyssey, wherein we are told that "Euryalus, the Phaeacian, presented to Odysseus a bronze sword, though, as we have seen" (Mr. Ridgeway has seen), "the usual material for all such weapons is iron. But the Phoeacians both belonged to the older race and lived in a remote island, and therefore swords of bronze may well have continued in use in such out-of-the-world places long after iron swords were in use everywhere else in Greece. The man who could not afford iron had to be satisfied with bronze." Here the poet is allowed to mean what he says. The Phaeacian sword is really of bronze, with silver studs, probably on the hilt (Odyssey, VIII. 401-407), which was of ivory. The "out-of-the-world" islanders could afford ivory, not iron. But when the same poet tells us that the sword which Odysseus brought from Troy was "a great silver-studded bronze sword" (Odyssey, X. 261, 262), then Mr. Ridgeway does not allow the poet to mean what he says. The poet is now using an epic formula older than the age of iron swords.

That Mr. Ridgeway adopts Helbig's theory — the poet says "bronze," by a survival of the diction of the bronze age, when he means iron — I infer from the following passage: "*Chalkos* is the name for the older metal, of which cutting weapons were made, and it thus lingered in many phrases of the Epic dialect; 'to smite with the *chalkos*' was equivalent to our phrase 'to smite with the steel.'" But we certainly do smite with the steel, while the question is, "*DID* Homer's men smite with the iron?" Homer says not; he does not merely use "an epic phrase" "to smite with the *CHALKOS*," but he carefully describes swords, spears, and usually arrow-heads as being of bronze (*CHALKOS*), while axes, adzes, and knives are frequently described by him as of iron.

Mr. Ridgeway has an illustrative argument with some one, who says: "The dress and weapons of the Saxons given in the lay of *Beowulf* fitted exactly the bronze weapons in England, for they had shields, and spears, and battle-axes, and swords.” If you pointed out to him that the Saxon poem spoke of these weapons as made of iron, he would say, “I admit that it is a difficulty, but the resemblances are so many that the discrepancies may be jettisoned.”

Now, if the supposed controversialist were a Homeric critic, he would not admit any difficulty. He would say, “Yes; in *Beowulf* the weapons are said to be of iron, but that is the work of the Christian *remanieur,* or *bearbeiter*, who introduced all the Christian morality into the old heathen lay, and who also, not to puzzle his iron-using audience, changed the bronze into iron weapons.”

We may prove anything if we argue, now that the poets retain the tradition of obsolete things, now that they modernise as much as they please. Into this method of reasoning, after duly considering it, I am unable to come with enthusiasm, being wedded to the belief that the poets say what they mean. Were it otherwise, did they not mean what they say, their evidence would be of no value; they might be dealing throughout in terms for things which were unrepresented in their own age. To prove this possible, it would be necessary to adduce convincing and sufficient examples of early national poets who habitually use the terminology of an age long prior to their own in descriptions of objects, customs, and usages. Meanwhile, it is obvious that my whole argument has no archaeological support. We may find “Mycenaean” corslets and greaves, but they are not in cremation burials. No Homeric cairn with Homeric contents has ever been discovered; and if we did find examples of Homeric cairns, it appears, from the poems, that they would very seldom contain the arms of the dead.

Nowhere, again, do we find graves containing bronze swords and iron axes and adzes. I know nothing nearer in discoveries to my supposed age of bronze weapons and iron tools than a grave of the early iron and geometrical ornament age of Crete — a *tholos* tomb, with a bronze spear-head and a set of iron tools, among others a double axe and a pick of iron. But these were in company with iron swords? To myself the crowning mystery is, what has become of the Homeric tumuli with their contents? One can but say that only within the last thirty years have we found, or, finding, have recognised Mycenaean burial records. As to the badness of the iron of the North for military purposes, and the probable badness of all early iron weapons, we have testimony two thousand years later than Homer and some twelve hundred years later than Polybius. In the Eyrbyggja Saga (Morris and Maguússon, chap, xxiv.) we read that Steinthor “was girt with a sword that was cunningly wrought; the hilts were white with silver, and the grip wrapped round with the same, but the strings thereof were gilded.” This was a splendid sword, described with the Homeric delight in such things; but the battle-cry arises, and then “the fair-wrought sword bit not when it smote armour, and Steinthor must *straighten it under* his *foot.*” Messrs. Morris and Maguússon add in a note: “This is a very common experience in Scandinavian weapons, and for the first time heard of at the battle of Aquae Sextiae between Marius and the Teutons.” “In the North weapon-smiths who knew how to forge tempered or steel-laminated weapons were, if not unknown, at least very rare.” When such skill was unknown or rare in Homer’s time, nothing was more natural than that bronze should hold its own, as the metal for swords and spears, after iron was commonly used for axes and ploughshares.

CHAPTER X

THE HOMERIC HOUSE

If the Homeric poems be, as we maintain, the work of a peculiar age, the Homeric house will also, in all likelihood, be peculiar. It will not be the Hellenic house of classical times. Manifestly the dwelling of a military-prince in the heroic age would be evolved to meet his needs, which were not the needs of later Hellenic citizens. In time of peace the later Greeks are weaponless men, not surrounded by and entertaining throngs of armed retainers, like the Homeric chief. The women of later Greece, moreover, are in the background of life, dwelling in the women's chambers, behind those of the men, in seclusion. The Homeric women also, at least in the house of Odysseus, have their separate chambers, which the men seem not to enter except on invitation, though the ladies freely honour by their presence the hall of the warriors. The circumstances, however, were peculiar — Penelope being unprotected in the absence of her lord.

The whole domestic situation in the Homeric poems — the free equality of the women, the military conditions, the life of the chiefs and retainers — closely resembles, allowing for differences of climate, that of the rich landowners of early Iceland as described in the sagas. There can be no doubt that the house of the Icelandic chief was analogous to the house of the Homeric prince. Societies remarkably similar in mode of life were accommodated in dwellings similarly arranged. Though the Icelanders owned no Over-Lord, and, indeed, left their native Scandinavia to escape the sway of Harold Fairhair, yet each wealthy and powerful chief lived in the manner of a Homeric "king." His lands and thralls, horses and cattle, occupied his attention when he did not chance to be on Viking adventure— "bearing bane to alien men." He always carried sword and spear, and often had occasion to use them. He entertained many guests, and needed a large hall and ample sleeping accommodation for strangers and servants. His women were as free and as much respected as the ladies in Homer; and for a husband to slap a wife was to run the risk of her deadly feud. Thus, far away in the frosts of the north, the life of the chief was like that of the Homeric prince, and their houses were alike.

It is our intention to use this parallel in the discussion of the Homeric house. All Icelandic chiefs' houses in the tenth and eleventh centuries were not precisely uniform in structure and accommodation, and saga writers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, living more comfortably than their forefathers, sometimes confuse matters by introducing the arrangements of their own into the tale of past times. But, in any case, one Icelandic house of the tenth or eleventh century might differ from another in certain details. It is not safe, therefore, to argue that difference of detail in Homer's accounts of various houses means that the varying descriptions were composed in different ages. In the *Odyssey* the plot demands that the poet must enter into domestic details much more freely than he ever has occasion to do in the Iliad. He may mention upper chambers freely, for example; it will not follow that in the *Iliad* upper chambers do not exist because they are only mentioned twice in that Epic.

It is even more important to note that in the house of Odysseus we have an unparalleled domestic situation. The lady of the house is beset by more than a hundred wooers— "sorning" on her, in the old Scots legal phrase — making it impossible for her to inhabit her own hall, and desirable to keep the women as much as possible apart from the men. Thus the Homeric house of which we know most, that of Odysseus, is a house in a most abnormal condition.

For the sake of brevity we omit the old theory that the Homeric house was practically that of historical Greece, with the men's hall approached by a door from the courtyard; while a door at the upper end of the men's hall yields direct access to the quarters where the women dwelt apart, at the rear of the men's hall.

That opinion has not survived the essay by Mr. J. L. Myres on the "Plan of the Homeric House." Quite apart from arguments that rest on the ground plans of palaces at Mycenae and Tiryns, Mr. Myres has proved, by an exact reading of the poet's words, that the descriptions in the *Odyssey* cannot be made intelligible on the theory that the poet has in his mind a house of the Hellenic pattern. But in his essay he hardly touches on any Homeric house except that of Odysseus, in which the circumstances were unusual. A later critic, Ferdinand Noack, has demonstrated that we must take other Homeric houses into consideration. The prae-Mycenaean house is, according to Mr. Myres, on the whole of the same plan as the Hellenic house of historic days; between these comes the Mycenaean and Homeric house; "so that the Mycenaean house stands out *as an intrusive phenomenon*, of comparatively late arrival *and short of duration*…" Noack goes further; he draws a line between the Mycenaean houses on one hand and the houses described by Homer on the other; while he thinks that the "*late* Homeric house," that of the closing Books of the Odyssey, is widely sundered from the Homeric house of the *Iliad* and from the houses of Menelaus and Alcinous in earlier Books of the *Odyssey*.

In this case the Iliadic and earlier Odyssean houses are those of a single definite age, neither Mycenaean of the prime, nor Hellenic — a fact which entirely suits our argument. But it is not so certain, that the house of Odysseus is severed from the other Homeric houses by the later addition of an upper storey, as Noack supposes, and of women's quarters, and of separate sleeping chambers for the heads of the family.

The *Iliad,* save in two passages, and earlier Books of the *Odyssey* may not mention upper storeys because they have no occasion, or only rare occasion, to do so; and some houses may have had upper sleeping chambers while others of the same period had not, as we shall prove from the Icelandic parallel.

Mr. Myres's idea of the Homeric house, or, at least, of the house of Odysseus, is that the women had a *meguron,* or common hall, apart from that of the men, with other chambers. These did not lie to the direct rear of the men's hall, nor were they entered by a door that opened in the back wall of the men's hall. Penelope has a chamber, in which she sleeps and does woman's work, upstairs; her connubial chamber, unoccupied during her lord's absence, is certainly on the ground floor. The women's rooms are severed from the men's hall by a courtyard; in the courtyard are chambers. Telemachus has his , or chamber, in the men's courtyard. All this appears plain from the poet's words; and Mr. Myres corroborates, by the ground plans of the palaces of Tiryns and Mycenae, a point on which Mr. Monro had doubts, as regards Tiryns, while he accepted it for Mycenae.

Noack does not, however, agree.

There appears to be no doubt that in the centre of the great halls of Tiryns and of Mycenae, as of the houses in Homer, was the hearth, with two tall pillars on each side, supporting a *louvre* higher than the rest of the roof, and permitting some, at least, of the smoke of the fire to escape. Beside the fire were the seats of the master and mistress of the house, of the minstrel, and of honoured guests. The place of honour was not on a dais at the inmost end of the hall, like the high table in college halls. Mr. Myres holds that in the Homeric house the , or "forehouse," was a chamber, and was not identical with the , or portico, though he admits that the two words "are used indifferently to describe the sleeping place of a guest." This was the case at Tiryns; and in the house of the father of Phoenix, in the *Iliad*, the *prodomos*, or forehouse, and the *aethousa*, or portico, are certainly separate things (Iliad, IX. 473). Noack does not accept the Tiryns evidence for the Homeric house.

On Mr. Myres's showing, the women in the house of Odysseus had distinct and separate quarters into which no man goes uninvited. Odysseus when at home has, with his wife, a separate bedroom; and in his absence Penelope sleeps upstairs, where there are several chambers for various purposes.

Granting that all this is so, how do the pictures of the house given in the final part of the *Odyssey* compare with those in the and with the accounts of the dwellings of Menelaus and Alcinous in the Odyssey? Noack argues that the house of Odysseus is unlike the other Homeric houses, because in these, he reasons, the women have no separate quarters, and the lord and lady of the house sleep in the great hall, and have no other bedroom, while there are no upper chambers in the houses of the *Iliad*, except in two passages dismissed as “late.”

If all this be so, then the Homeric period, as regards houses and domestic life, belongs to an age apart, not truly Mycenaean, and still less later Hellenic.

It must be remembered that Noack regards the Odyssey as a composite and in parts very late mosaic (a view on which I have said what I think in *Homer and the Epic*). According to this theory (Kirchhoff is the exponent of a popular form thereof) the first Book of the Odyssey belongs to “the latest stratum,” and is the “copy” of the general “worker-up,” whether he was the editor employed by Pisistratus or a laborious amateur. This theory is opposed by Sittl, who makes his point by cutting out, as interpolations, whatever passages do not suit his ideas, and do suit Kirchhoff’s — this is the regular method of Homeric criticism. The whole cruise of Telemachus (Book IV.) is also regarded as a late addition: on this point English scholars hitherto have been of the opposite opinion.

The method of all parties is to regard repetitions of phrases as examples of borrowing, except, of course, in the case of the earliest poet from whom the others pilfer, and in other cases of prae-Homeric surviving epic formulae. Critics then dispute as to which recurrent passage is the earlier, deciding, of course, as may happen to suit their own general theory. In our opinion these passages are traditional formulae, as in our own old ballads and in the *Chansons de Geste*, and Noack also takes this view every now and then. They may well be older, in many cases, than *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; or the poet, having found his own formula, economically used it wherever similar circumstances occurred. Such passages, so considered, are no tests of earlier composition in one place, of later composition in another.

We now look into Noack’s theory of the Homeric house. Where do the lord and lady sleep? *Not*, he says, as Odysseus and Penelope do (when Odysseus is at home), in a separate chamber (*thalamos*) on the ground floor, nor, like Gunnar and Halgerda (Njal’s Saga), in an upper chamber. They sleep *mucho domou*; that is, not in a separate recess in the *house*, but in a recess of the great hall or *megaron*. Thus, in the hall of Alcinous, the whole space runs from the threshold to the *muchos*, the innermost part (*Odyssey*, VII. 87-96). In the hall of Odysseus, the Wooers retreat to the *muchos*, “the innermost part of the hall” (*Odyssey*, XXII. 270). “The *muchos*, in Homer, never denotes a separate chamber.”

In Odyssey, XI. 373, Alcinous says it is not yet time to sleep *ev megaro,* "in the hall." Alcinous and Arete, his wife, sleep "in the recess of the lofty *domos*," that is, in the recess of the *hall*, not of "the house" (Odyssey, VII. 346). The same words are used of Helen and Menelaus (Odyssey, IV. 304). But when Menelaus goes forth next morning, he goes *ek thalamoio,* "out of his *chamber*" (*Odyssey*, IV. 310). But this, says Noack, is a mere borrowing of Odyssey, II 2-5, where the same words are used of Telemachus, leaving his chamber, which undeniably was a separate chamber in the court: Eurycleia lighted him thither at night (Odyssey, I. 428). In Odyssey, IV. 121, Helen enters the hall "from her fragrant, lofty chamber," so she *had* a chamber, not in the hall. But, says Noack, this verse "is not original." The late poet of *Odyssey*, IV. has cribbed it from the early poet who composed *Odyssey, XIX. 53.* In that passage Penelope "comes from her chamber, like Artemis or golden Aphrodite." Penelope *had* a chamber — being "a lone lorn woman," who could not sleep in a hall where the Wooers sat up late drinking — and the latest poet transfers this chamber to Helen. But however late and larcenous he may have been, the poet of IV. 121 certainly did not crib the words of the poet of XIX. 53, for he says, "Helen came out of her *fragrant, high-roofed* chamber." The *hall* was not precisely "fragrant"! However, Noack supposes that the late poet of Book IV. let Helen have a chamber apart, to lead up to the striking scene of her entry to the hall where her guests are sitting. May Helen not even have a boudoir? In *Odyssey*, IV. 263, Helen speaks remorsefully of having abandoned her "chamber," and husband, and child, with Paris; but the late poet says this, according to Noack, because he finds that he is in for a chamber, so to speak, at all events, as a result of his having previously cribbed the word "chamber" from Odyssey, XIX. 53. Otherwise, we presume Helen would have said that she regretted having left "the recess of the lofty hall" where she really did sleep.

The merit of this method of arguing may be left to the judgment of the reader, who will remark that wedded pairs are not described as leaving the hall when they go to bed; they sleep in "a recess of the lofty house," the innermost part. Is this the same as the "recess of the *hall*" or is it an innermost part of the *house?* Who can be certain?

The bridal chamber, built so cunningly, with the trunk of a tree for the support of the bed, by Odysseus (odyssey, XXIII. 177-204), is, according to Noack, an exception, a solitary freak of Odysseus. But we may reply that the *thalamos,* the separate chamber, is no freak; the freak, by knowledge of which Odysseus proves his identity, is the use of the tree in the construction of the bed. was highly original.

That separate chambers are needed for grown-up children, *BECAUSE* the parents sleep in the hall, is no strong argument. If the parents had a separate chamber, the young people, unless they slept in the hall, would still need their own. The girls, of course, could not sleep in the hall; and, in the absence of both Penelope and Odysseus from the hall, ever since Telemachus was a baby, Telemachus could have slept there. But it will be replied that the Wooers did not beset the hall, and Penelope did not retire to a separate chamber, till Telemachus was a big boy of sixteen. Noack argues that he had a separate chamber, though the hall was free, *tradition*.

Where does Noack think that, in a normal Homeric house, the girls of the family slept? *They* could not sleep in the hall, and on the two occasions when the *Iliad* has to mention the chambers of the young ladies they are "upper chambers," as is natural. But as Noack wants to prove the house of Odysseus, with its upper chambers, to be a late peculiar house, he, of course, expunges the two mentions of girls' upper chambers in the *Odyssey*. The process is simple and easy.

We find (*Iliad*, XVII. 36) that a son, wedding in his father's and mother's life-time, has a *thalamos* built for him, and a *muchos* in the *THALAMOS*, where he leaves his wife when he goes to war. This dwelling of grown-up married children, as in the case of the sons of Priam, has a *thalamos*, or *doma*, and a courtyard — is a house, in fact (*Iliad*, VI. 3 16). Here we seem to distinguish the bedchamber from the *doma*, which is the hall. Noack objects that when Odysseus fumigates his house, after slaying the Wooers, he thus treats the *megaron*, *AND* the *doma*, *AND* the courtyard. Therefore, Noack argues, the *megaron*, or hall, is one thing; the *doma* is another. Mr. Monro writes, "*doma* usually means *megaron*," and he supposes a slip from another reading, *thalamon* for *megaron*, which is not satisfactory. But if *doma* here be not equivalent to *megaron*, what room can it possibly be? Who was killed in another place? what place therefore needed purification except the hall and courtyard? No other places needed purifying; there is therefore clearly a defect in the lines which cannot be used in the argument.

Noack, in any case, maintains that Paris has but one place to live in by day and to sleep in by night — his . There he sleeps, eats, and polishes his weapons and armour. There Hector finds him looking to his gear; Helen and the maids are all there (*Iliad*, VI. 321-323). Is this quite certain? Are Helen and the maids in the , where Paris is polishing his corslet and looking to his bow, or in an adjacent room? If not in another room, why, when Hector is in the room talking to Paris, does Helen ask him to "come in"? (*Iliad*, VI. 354). He is in, is there another room whence she can hear him?

The minuteness of these inquiries is tedious!

In *Iliad,* III. 125, Iris finds Helen “in the hall” weaving. She summons her to come to Priam on the gate. Helen dresses in outdoor costume, and goes forth “from the chamber,” (III. 141-142). Are hall and chamber the same room, or did not Helen dress “in the chamber”? In the same Book (III. 174) she repents having left the of Menelaus, not his hall: the passage is not a repetition in words of her speech in the Odyssey.

The gods, of course, are lodged like men. When we find that Zeus has really a separate sleeping chamber, built by Hephaestus, as Odysseus has (*Iliad,* XIV. 166-167), we are told that this is a late interpolation. Mr. Leaf, who has a high opinion of this scene, “the Beguiling of Zeus,” places it in the “second expansions”; he finds no “late Odyssean” elements in the language. In *Iliad,* I. 608-611, Zeus “departed to his couch”; he seems not to have stayed and slept in the hall.

Here a quaint problem occurs. Of all late things in the Odyssey the latest is said to be the song of Demodocus about the loves of Ares and Aphrodite in the house of Hephaestus. We shall show that this opinion is far from certainly correct. Hephaestus sets a snare round the bed in his and catches the guilty lovers. *Now*, was his or bedroom, also his dining-room? If so, the author of the song, though so “late,” knows what Noack knows, and what the poets who assign sleeping chambers to wedded folks do not know, namely, that neither married gods nor married men have separate bedrooms. This is plain, for he makes Hephaestus stand at the front door of his house, and shout to the gods to come and see the sinful lovers. They all come and look on *from the front door* (*Odyssey*, VII. 325), which leads into the , the hall. If the lovers are in bed in the hall, then hall and bedroom are all one, and the terribly late poet who made this lay knows it, though the late poets of the *Odyssey* and *Iliad* do not.

It would appear that the author of the lay is not “late,” as we shall prove in another case.

Noack, then, will not allow man or god to have a separate wedding chamber, nor women, before the late parts of the *Odyssey,* to have separate quarters, except in the house of Odysseus. Women’s chambers do not exist in the Homeric house. If so, how remote is the true Homeric house from the house of historical Greece!

As for upper chambers, those of the daughter of the house (*Iliad,* II. 514; XVI. 184), both passages are “late,” as we saw (Noack, p.). In the *Odyssey* Penelope both sleeps and works at the shroud in an upper chamber. But the whole arrangement of upper chambers as women’s apartments is as late, says Noack, as the time of the poets and “redactors” (whoever they may have been) of the Odyssey, XXI., XXII., XXIII. At the earliest these Books are said to be of the eighth century B.C. Here the late poets have their innings at last, and do modernise the Homeric house.

To prove the absence of upper rooms in the *Iliad* we have to abolish II. 514, where Astyoche meets her divine lover in her upper chamber, and XVI. 184, where Polymêlê celebrates her amour with Hermes “in the upper chambers.” The places where these two passages occur, *Catalogue* (Book II.) and the *Catalogue* of the *Myrmidons* (Book XVI.) are, indeed, both called “late,” but the author of the latter knows the early law of bride-price, which is supposed to be unknown to the authors of “late” passages in the Odyssey (XVI. 190).

Stated briefly, such are the ideas of Noack. They leave us, at least, with permission to hold that the whole of the Epics, except Books XXI., XXII., and XXIII. of the Odyssey, bear, as regards the house, the marks of a distinct peculiar age, coming between the period of Mycenae and Tiryns on one hand and the eighth century B.C. on the other.

This is the point for which we have contended, and this suits our argument very well, though we are sorry to see that Odyssey, Books XXI., XXII., and XXIII., are no older than the eighth century B.C. But we have not been quite convinced that Helen had not her separate chamber, that Zeus had not his separate chamber, and that the upper chambers of the daughters of the house in the Iliad are “late.” Where, if not in upper chambers, did the young princesses repose? Again, the marked separation of the women in the house of Odysseus may be the result of Penelope’s care in unusual circumstances, though she certainly would not build a separate hall for them. There are over a hundred handsome young scoundrels in her house all day long and deep into the night; she would, vainly, do her best to keep her girls apart.

It stands to reason that young girls of princely families would have bedrooms in the house, not in the courtyard-bedrooms out of the way of enterprising young men. What safer place could be found for them than in upper chambers, as in the Iliad? But, if their lovers were gods, we know that none “can see a god coming or going against his will.” The arrangements of houses may and do vary in different cases in the same age.

As examples we turn to the parallel afforded by the Icelandic sagas and their pictures of houses of the eleventh century B.C. The present author long ago pointed out the parallel of the houses in the sagas and in Homer. He took his facts from Dasent’s translation of the Njal Saga (1861, vol. i. pcviii., ciii., with diagrams). As far as he is aware, no critic looked into the matter till Mr. Monro (1901), being apparently unacquainted with Dasent’s researches, found similar lore in works by Dr. Valtyr Gudmundsson The roof of the hall is supported by four rows of columns, the two inner rows are taller, and between them is the hearth, with seats of honour for the chief guests and the lord. The fire was in a kind of trench down the hall; and in very cold weather, we learn from Dasent, long fires could be lit through the extent of the hall. The chief had a raised seat; the guests sat on benches. The high seats were at the centre; not till later times on the dais, as in a college hall. The tables were relatively small, and, as in Homer, could be removed after a meal. The part of the hall with the dais in later days was partitioned off as a *stofa* or parlour. In early times cooking was done in the hall.

Dr. Gudmundsson, if I understand him, varies from Dasent in some respects. I quote an abstract of his statement.

"About the year 1000 houses generally consisted of, at least, four rooms; often a fifth was added, the so-called bathroom. The oldest form for houses was that of one long line or row of separate rooms united by wooden or clay corridors or partitions, and each covered with a roof. Later, this was considered unpractical, and they began building some of the houses or rooms behind the others, which facilitated the access from one to another, and diminished the number of outer doors and corridors."

"Towards the latter part of the tenth century the *skaal* was used as common sleeping-room for the whole family, including servants and serfs; it was fitted up in the same way as the hall. Like this, it was divided in three naves by rows of wooden pillars; the middle floor was lower than that of the two side naves. In these were placed the so-called *saet* or bed-places, not running the whole length of the from gable to gable, but sideways, filling about a third part. Each *saet* was enclosed by broad, strong planks joined into the pillars, but not nailed on, so they might easily be taken out. These planks, called *SATTESTOKKE*, could also be turned sideways and used as benches during the day; they were often beautifully carved, and consequently highly valued."

"When settling abroad the people took away with them these planks, and put them up in their new home as a symbol of domestic happiness. The *saet* was occupied by the servants of the farm as sleeping-rooms; generally it was screened by hangings and low panels, which partitioned it off like huge separate boxes, used as beds."

"All beds were filled with hay or straw; servants and serfs slept on this without any bedclothes, sometimes a sleeping-bag was used, or they covered themselves with deerskins or a mantle. The family had bedclothes, but only in very wealthy houses were they also provided for the servants. Moveable beds were extremely rare, but are sometimes mentioned. Generally two people slept in each bed."

"In the further end of the *skaal*, facing the door, opened out one or several small bedrooms, destined for the husband with wife and children, besides other members of the family, including guests of a higher standing. These small dormitories were separated by partitions of planks into bedrooms with one or several beds, and shut away from the outer *SKAAL* either by a sliding-door in the wall or by an ordinary door shutting with a hasp. Sometimes only a hanging covered the opening."

"In some farms were found underground passages, leading from the master's bedside to an outside house, or even as far as a wood or another sheltered place in the neighbourhood, to enable the inhabitants to save themselves during a night attack. For the same reason each man had his arms suspended over his bed."

"*Ildhus* or fire-house was the kitchen, often used besides as a sleeping-room when the farms were very small. This was quite abolished after the year 1000."

"*Buret* was the provision house."

"The bathroom was heated from a stone oven; the stones were heated red-hot and cold water thrown upon them, which developed a quantity of vapour. As the heat and the steam mounted, the people — men and women — crawled up to a shelf under the roof and remained there as in a Turkish bath."

"In large and wealthy houses there was also a women's room, with a fireplace built low down in the middle, as in the hall, where the women used to sit with their handiwork all day. The men were allowed to come in and talk to them, also beggar-women and other vagabonds, who brought them the news from other places. Towards evening and for meals all assembled together in the hall."

On this showing, people did not sleep in cabins partitioned off the dining-hall, but in the *skaale*; and two similar and similarly situated rooms, one the common dining-hall, the other the common sleeping-hall, have been confused by writers on the sagas. Can there be a similar confusion in the uses of *megaron*, *doma*, and *domos*?

In the Eyrbyggja Saga we have descriptions of the "fire-hall," *skáli* or *eldhús*. "The fire-hall was the common sleeping-room in Icelandic homesteads." Guests and strangers slept there; not in the portico, as in Homer. "Here were the lock-beds." There were butteries; one of these was reached by a ladder. The walls were panelled. Thorgunna had a "berth," apparently partitioned off, in the hall. As in Homer the hall was entered from the courtyard, in which were separate rooms for stores and other purposes. In the courtyard also, in the houses of Gunnar of Lithend and Gisli at Hawkdale, and doubtless in other cases, were the *dyngfur*, or ladies' chambers, their "bowers" (*Thalamos*, like that of Telemachus in the courtyard), where they sat spinning and gossiping. The *dyngja* was originally called *búr*, our "bower"; the ballads say "in bower and hall." In the ballad of *MARGARET*, her parents are said to put her in the way of deadly sin by building her a bower, apparently separate from the main building; she would have been safer in an upper chamber, though, even there, not safe — at least, if a god wooed her! It does not appear that all houses had these chambers for ladies apart from the main building. You did not enter the main hall in Iceland from the court directly in front, but by the "man's door" at the west side, whence you walked through the porch or outer hall (*prodomos*, *aithonsa*), in the centre of which, to the right, were the doors of the hall. The women entered by the women's door, at the eastern extremity.

Guests did not sleep, as in Homer, in the *prodomos*, or the portico — the climate did not permit it — but in one or other hall. The hall was wainscotted; the walls were hung with shields and weapons, like the hall of Odysseus. The heads of the family usually slept in the aisles, in chambers entered through the wainscot of the hall. Such a chamber might be called *muchos*; it was private from the hall though under the same roof. It appears not improbable that some Homeric halls had sleeping places of this kind; such a *muchos* in Iceland seems to have had windows.

Gunnar himself, however, slept with his wife, Halegerda, in an upper chamber; his mother, who lived with him, also had a room upstairs.

In Njal's house, too, there was an upper chamber, wherein the foes of Njal threw fire. But Njal and Bergthora, his wife, when all hope was ended, went into their own bride-chamber in the separate aisle of the hall "and gave over their souls into God's hand." Under a hide they lay; and when men raised up the hide, after the fire had done its work, "they were unburnt under it. All praised God for that, and thought it was a *GREAT* token." In this house was a weaving room for the women.

It thus appears that Icelandic houses of the heroic age, as regards structural arrangements, were practically identical with the house of Odysseus, allowing for a separate sleeping-hall, while the differences between that and other Homeric houses may be no more than the differences between various Icelandic dwellings. The parents might sleep in bedchambers off the hall or in upper chambers. Ladies might have bowers in the courtyard or might have none. The — each passage outside the hall — yielded sleeping rooms for servants; and there were store-rooms behind the passage at the top end of the hall, as well as separate chambers for stores in the courtyard. Mr. Leaf judiciously reconstructs the Homeric house in its "public rooms," of which we hear most, while he leaves the residential portion with "details and limits probably very variable."

Given variability, which is natural and to be expected, and given the absence of detail about the "residential portion" of other houses than that of Odysseus in the poems, it does not seem to us that this house is conspicuously "late," still less that it is the house of historical Greece. Manifestly, in all respects it more resembles the houses of Njal and Gunnar of Lithend in the heroic age of Iceland.

In the house, as in the uses of iron and bronze, the weapons, armour, relations of the sexes, customary laws, and everything else, Homer gives us an harmonious picture of a single and peculiar age. We find no stronger mark of change than in the Odyssean house, if that be changed, which we show reason to doubt.

CHAPTER XI

NOTES OF CHANGE IN THE “ODYSSEY”

If the Homeric descriptions of details of life contain anachronisms, points of detail inserted in later progressive ages, these must be peculiarly conspicuous in the Odyssey. Longinus regarded it as the work of Homer’s advanced life, the sunset of his genius, and nobody denies that it assumes the existence of the *Iliad* and is posterior to that epic. In the Odyssey, then, we are to look, if anywhere, for indications of a changed society. That the language of the *Odyssey*, and of four Books of the *Iliad* (IX., X., XXIII., XXIV.), exhibits signs of change is a critical commonplace, but the language is matter for a separate discussion; we are here concerned with the ideas, manners, customary laws, weapons, implements, and so forth of the Epics.

Taking as a text Mr. Monro’s essay, *The Relation of the Odyssey to the Iliad*, we examine the notes of difference which he finds between the twin Epics. As to the passages in which he discovers “borrowing or close imitation of passages” in the *Iliad* by the poet of the *Odyssey*, we shall not dwell on the matter, because we know so little about the laws regulating the repetition of epic formulae. It is tempting, indeed, to criticise Mr. Monro’s list of twenty-four Odyssean “borrowings,” and we might arrive at some curious results. For example, we could show that the *Klôthes*, the spinning women who “spae” the fate of each new-born child, are not later, but, as less abstract, are if anything earlier than “the simple *Aisa* of the *Iliad*.” But our proof would require an excursion into the beliefs of savage and barbaric peoples who have their *Klôthes*, spae-women attending each birth, but who are not known to have developed the idea of *Aisa* or Fate.

We might also urge that “to send a spear through the back of a stag” is not, as Mr. Monro thought, “an improbable feat,” and that a man wounded to death as Leiocritus was wounded, would not, as Mr. Monro argued, fall backwards. He supposes that the poet of the *Odyssey* borrowed the forward fall from a passage in the *Iliad*, where the fall is in keeping. But, to make good our proof, it might be necessary to spear a human being in the same way as Leiocritus was speared.

The repetitions of the Epic, at all events, are not the result of the weakness of a poet who had to steal his expressions like a schoolboy. They have some other cause than the indolence or inefficiency of a *cento* — making undergraduate.

Indeed, a poet who used the many terms in the *Odyssey* which do not occur in the *Iliad* was not constrained to borrow from any predecessor.

It is needless to dwell on the Odyssean novelties in vocabulary, which were naturally employed by a poet who had to sing of peace, not of war, and whose epic, as Aristotle says, is "ethical," not military. The poet's rich vocabulary is appropriate to his novel subject, that is all.

Coming to Religion (I) we find Mr. Leaf assigning to his original *Achilleis*— "the kernel" — the very same religious ideas as Mr. Monro takes to be marks of "lateness" and of advance when he finds them in the Odyssey!

In the original oldest part of the *Iliad*, says Mr. Leaf, "the gods show themselves just so much as to let us know what are the powers which control mankind from heaven…. Their interference is such as becomes the rulers of the world, not partisans in the battle." It is the later poets of the *Iliad*, in Mr. Leaf's view, who introduce the meddlesome, undignified, and extremely unsportsmanlike gods. The original early poet of the *Iliad* had the nobler religious conceptions.

In that case — the *Odyssey* being later than the original kernel of the Iliad — the *Odyssey* ought to give us gods as undignified and unworthy as those exhibited by the later continuators of the *Iliad*.

But the reverse is the case. The gods behave fairly well in Book XXIV. of the *Iliad*, which, we are to believe, is the latest, or nearly the latest, portion. They are all wroth with the abominable behaviour of Achilles to dead Hector (XXIV. 134). They console and protect Priam. As for the *Odyssey*, Mr. Monro finds that in this late Epic the gods are just what Mr. Leaf proclaims them to have been in his old original kernel. "There is now an Olympian concert that carries on something like a moral government of the world. It is very different in the Iliad…."

But it was not very different; it was just the same, in Mr. Leaf's genuine old original germ of the *Iliad*. In fact, the gods are "very much like you and me." When their *ichor* is up, they misbehave as we do when our blood is up, during the fury of war. When Hector is dead and when the war is over, the gods give play to their higher nature, as men do. There is no difference of religious conception to sever the *Odyssey* from the later but not from the original parts of the *Iliad*. It is all an affair of the circumstances in each case.

The *Odyssey* is calmer, more reflective, more *religious* than the *Iliad*, being a poem of peace. The *Iliad*, a poem of war, is more *mythological* than the *Odyssey*: the gods in the *Iliad* are excited, like the men, by the great war and behave accordingly. That neither gods nor men show any real sense of the moral weakness of Agamemnon or Achilles, or of the moral superiority of Hector, is an unacceptable statement. Even Achilles and Agamemnon are judged by men and by the poet according to their own standard of ethics and of customary law. There is really no doubt on this point. Too much (2) is made of the supposed different views of Olympus — a mountain in Thessaly in the *Iliad*; a snowless, windless, supra-mundane place in *Odyssey*, V. 41-47. Of the Odyssean passage Mr. Merry justly says, “the actual description is not irreconcilable with the general Homeric picture of Olympus.” It is “an idealised mountain,” and conceptions of it vary, with the variations which are essential to and inseparable from all mythological ideas. As Mr. Leaf says, “heaven, *ouranos* and Olympus, if not identical, are at least closely connected.” In V. 753, the poet “regarded the summit of Olympus as a half-way stage between heaven and earth,” thus “departing from the oldest Homeric tradition, which made the earthly mountain Olympus, and not any aerial region, the dwelling of the gods.” But precisely the same confusion of mythical ideas occurs among a people so backward as the Australian south-eastern tribes, whose All Father is now seated on a hill-top and now “above the sky.” In *ILIAD*, VIII. 25, 26, the poet is again said to have “entirely lost the real Epic conception of Olympus as a mountain in Thessaly,” and to “follow the later conception, which removed it from earth to heaven.” In *Iliad*, XI. 184, “from heaven” means “from the summit of Olympus, which, though Homer does not identify it with *oupavos*, still, as a mountain, reached into heaven” (Leaf). The poet of Iliad, XI. 184, says plainly that Zeus descended “*from* heaven” to Mount Ida. In fact, all that is said of Olympus, of heaven, of the home of the gods, is poetical, is mythical, and so is necessarily subject to the variations of conception inseparable from mythology. This is certain if there be any certainty in mythological science, and here no hard and fast line can be drawn between *ODYSSEY* and *Iliad*.

(3) The next point of difference is that, “we hear no more of Iris as the messenger of Zeus;” in the Odyssey, “the agent of the will of Zeus is now Hermes, as in the Twenty-fourth Book of the *Iliad*,” a late “Odyssean” Book. But what does that matter, seeing that *ILIAD*, Book VIII, is declared to be one of the latest additions; yet in Book VIII. Iris, not Hermes, is the messenger (VIII. 409-425). If in late times Hermes, not Iris, is the messenger, why, in a very “late” Book (VIII.) is Iris the messenger, not Hermes? *Iliad*, Book XXIII., is also a late “Odyssean” Book, but here Iris goes on her messages (XXIII. 199) moved merely by the prayers of Achilles. In the late Odyssean Book (XXIV.) of the *Iliad*, Iris runs on messages from Zeus both to Priam and to Achilles. If Iris, in “Odyssean” times, had resigned office and been succeeded by Hermes, why did Achilles pray, not to Hermes, but to Iris? There is nothing in the argument about Hermes and Iris. There is nothing in the facts but the variability of mythical and

poetical conceptions. Moreover, the conception of Iris as the messenger certainly existed through the age of the Odyssey, and later. In the Odyssey the beggar man is called "Irus," a male Iris, because he carries messages; and Iris does her usual duty as messenger in the Homeric Hymns, as well as in the so-called late Odyssean Books of the *Iliad*. The poet of the Odyssey knew all about Iris; there had arisen no change of belief; he merely employed Hermes as messenger, not of the one god, but of the divine Assembly.

(4) Another difference is that in the *Iliad* the wife of Hephaestus is one of the Graces; in the Odyssey she is Aphrodite. This is one of the inconsistencies which are the essence of mythology. Mr. Leaf points out that when Hephaestus is about exercising his craft, in making arms for Achilles, Charis "is made wife of Hephaestus by a more transparent allegory than we find elsewhere in Homer," whereas, when Aphrodite appears in a comic song by Demodocus (Odyssey, VIII. 266-366), "that passage is later and un-Homeric."

Of this we do not accept the doctrine that the lay is un-Homeric. The difference comes to no more than *that;* the accustomed discrepancy of mythology, of story-telling about the gods. But as to the lay of Demodocus being un-Homeric and late, the poet at least knows the regular Homeric practice of the bride-price, and its return by the bride's father to the husband of an adulterous wife (Odyssey, VIII. 318, 319). The poet of this lay, which Mr. Merry defends as Homeric, was intimately familiar with Homeric customary law. Now, according to Paul Cauer, as we shall see, other "Odyssean" poets were living in an age of changed law, later than that of the author of the lay of Demodocus. All these so-called differences between *Iliad* and Odyssey do not point to the fact that the *Odyssey* belongs to a late and changed period of culture, of belief and customs. There is nothing in the evidence to prove that contention.

There (5) are two references to local oracles in the *Odyssey,* that of Dodona (XIV. 327; XIX. 296) and that of Pytho (VIII. 80). This is the old name of Delphi. Pytho occurs in *Iliad,* IX. 404, as a very rich temple of Apollo — the oracle is not named, but the oracle brought in the treasures. Achilles (XVI. 233) prays to Pelasgian Zeus of Dodona, whose priests were thickly tabued, but says nothing of the oracle of Dodona. Neither when in leaguer round Troy, nor when wandering in fairy lands forlorn, had the Achaeans or Odysseus much to do with the local oracles of Greece; perhaps not, in Homer's time, so important as they were later, and little indeed is said about them in either Epic.

(6) "The geographical knowledge shown in the Odyssey goes beyond that of the *Iliad* … especially in regard to Egypt and Sicily." But a poet of a widely wandering hero of Western Greece has naturally more occasion than the poet of a fixed army in Asia to show geographical knowledge. Egyptian Thebes is

named, in *ILIAD*, IX., as a city very rich, especially in chariots; while in the *ODYSSEY* the poet has occasion to show more knowledge of the way to Egypt and of Viking descents from Crete on the coast (Odyssey, III. 300; IV. 351; XIV. 257; XVII. 426). Archaeology shows that the Mycenaean age was in close commercial relation with Egypt, and that the Mycenaean civilisation extended to most Mediterranean lands and islands, and to Italy and Sicily. There is nothing suspicious, as "late," in the mention of Sicily by Odysseus in Ithaca (Odyssey, XX. 383; XXIV. 307). In the same way, if the poet of a western poem does not dilate on the Troad and the people of Asia Minor as the poet of the *ILIAD* does, that is simply because the scene of the *ILIAD* is in Asia and the scene of the Odyssey is in the west, when it is not in No Man's land. From the same cause the poet of sea-faring has more occasion to speak of the Phoenicians, great seafarers, than the poet of the Trojan leaguer.

(7) We know so little about land tenure in Homeric times — and, indeed, early land tenure is a subject so complex and obscure that it is not easy to prove advance towards separate property in the *Odyssey* — beyond what was the rule in the time of the *ILIAD*. In the Making of the Arms (XVIII. 541-549) we find many men ploughing a field, and this may have been a common field. But in what sense? Many ploughs were at work at once on a Scottish runrig field, and each farmer had his own strip on several common fields, but each farmer held by rent, or by rent and services, from the laird. These common fields were not common property. In XII. 422 we have "a common field," and men measuring a strip and quarrelling about the marking-stones, across the "baulk," but it does not follow that they are owners; they may be tenants. Such quarrels were common in Scotland when the runrig system of common fields, each man with his strip, prevailed.

A man had a or lot (*ILIAD*, XV. 448), but what was a "lot"? At first, probably, a share in land periodically shifted-& *partage noir* of the Russian peasants. Kings and men who deserve public gratitude receive a a piece of public land, as Bellerophon did from the Lycians (VI. 194). In the case of Melager such an estate is offered to him, but by whom? Not by the people at large, but by the (IX. 574).

Who are the ? They are not ordinary men of the people; they are, in fact, the gentry. In an age so advanced from tribal conditions as is the Homeric time — far advanced beyond ancient tribal Scotland or Ireland — we conceive that, as in these countries during the tribal period, the (in Celtic, the *Flaith*) held in POSSESSION, if not in accordance with the letter of the law, as property, much more land than a single "lot." The Irish tribal freeman had a right to a "lot," redistributed by rotation. Wealth consisted of cattle; and a *bogire*, a man of many kine, let *them* out to tenants. Such a rich man, a *flatha*, would, in accordance with human nature, use his influence with kineless dependents to acquire in possession several lots, avoid the partition, and keep the lots in possession though not legally in property. Such men were the Irish *flaith*, gentry under the *RI*, or king, his , each with his *ciniod*, or near kinsmen, to back his cause.

"*Flaith* seems clearly to mean land-owners," or squires, says Sir James Ramsay. If land, contrary to the tribal ideal, came into private hands in early Ireland, we can hardly suppose that, in the more advanced and settled Homeric society, no man but the king held land equivalent in extent to a number of "lots." The , the gentry, the chariot-owning warriors, of whom there are hundreds not of kingly rank in Homer (as in Ireland there were many *flaith* to one *Ri*) probably, in an informal but tight grip, held considerable lands. When we note their position in the *Iliad*, high above the nameless host, can we imagine that they did not hold more land than the simple, perhaps periodically shifting, "lot"? There were "lotless" men (Odyssey, XL 490), lotless *freemen*, and what had become of their lots? Had they not fallen into the hands of the or the *flaith*?

Mr. Ridgeway in a very able essay holds different opinions. He points out that among a man's possessions, in the *Iliad*, we hear only of personal property and live stock. It is in one passage only in the Odyssey (XIV. 211) that we meet with men holding several lots of land; but *they*, we remark, occur in Cretean isle, as we know, of very advanced civilisation from of old.

Mr. Ridgeway also asks whether the lotless men may not be "outsiders," such as are attached to certain villages of Central and Southern India; or they may answer to the *Fuidhir*, or "broken men," of early Ireland, fugitives from one to another tribe. They would be "settled on the waste lands of a community." If so, they would not be lotless; they would have new lots.

Laertes, though a king, is supposed to have won his farm by his own labours from the waste (Odyssey, XXIV. 207). Mr. Monro says, "the land having thus been won from the wastes (the of *H., Ven.* 123), was a or separate possession of Laertes." The passage is in the rejected conclusion of the Odyssey; and if any man might go and squat in the waste, any man might have a lot, or better than one lot. In *Iliad*, XXIII. 832-835, Achilles says that his offered prize of iron will be useful to a man "whose rich fields are very remote from any town," Teucer and Meriones compete for the prize: probably they had such rich remote fields, not each a mere lot in a common field. These remote fields they are supposed to hold in perpetuity, apart from the *temenos*, which, in Mr. Ridgeway's opinion, reverted, on the death of each holder, to the community, save where kingship was hereditary. Now, if had come to mean "a lot of land," as we say "a building lot,” obviously men like Teucer and Meriones had many lots, rich fields, which at death might sometimes pass to their heirs. Thus there was separate landed property in the *Iliad*; but the passage is denounced, though not by Mr. Ridgeway, as “late.”

The absence of enclosures () proves nothing about absence of several property in land. In Scotland the laird’s lands were unenclosed till deep in the eighteenth century.

My own case for land in private possession, in Homeric times, rests mainly on human nature in such an advanced society. Such possession as I plead for is in accordance with human nature, in a society so distinguished by degrees of wealth as is the Homeric.

Unless we are able to suppose that all the gentry of the *Iliad* held no “rich fields remote from towns,” each having but one rotatory lot apiece, there is no difference in Iliadic and Odyssean land tenure, though we get clearer lights on it in the *Odyssey*.

The position of the man of several lots may have been indefensible, if the ideal of tribal law were ever made real, but wealth in growing societies universally tends to override such law. Mr. Keller justly warns us against the attempt “to apply universally certain fixed rules of property development. The passages in Homer upon which opinions diverge most are isolated ones, occurring in similes and fragmentary descriptions. Under such conditions the formulation of theories or the attempt rigorously to classify can be little more than an intellectual exercise.”

We have not the materials for a scientific knowledge of Homeric real property; and, with all our materials in Irish law books, how hard it is for us to understand the early state of such affairs in Ireland! But does any one seriously suppose that the knightly class of the *Iliad*, the chariot-driving gentlemen, held no more land — legally or by permitted custom — than the two Homeric swains who vituperate each other across a baulk about the right to a few feet of a strip of a runrig field? Whosoever can believe that may also believe that the practice of adding “lot” to “lot” began in the period between the finished composition of the *Iliad* (or of the parts of it which allude to land tenure) and the beginning of the *Odyssey* (or of the parts of it which refer to land tenure). The inference is that, though the fact is not explicitly stated in the *Iliad*, there were men who held more “lots” than one in Iliadic times as well as in the Odyssean times, when, in a solitary passage of the Odyssey, we do hear of such men in Crete. But whosoever has pored over early European land tenures knows how dim our knowledge is, and will not rush to employ his lore in discriminating between the date of the *Iliad* and the date of the Odyssey.

Not much proof of change in institutions between Iliadic and Odyssean times can be extracted from two passages about the ethna, or bride-price of Penelope. The rule in both *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is that the wooer gives a bride-price to the father of the bride, ethna. This was the rule known even to that painfully late and un-Homeric poet who made the Song of Demodocus about the loves of Ares and Aphrodite. In that song the injured husband, Hephaestus, claims back the bride-price which he had paid to the father of his wife, Zeus. This is the accepted custom throughout the *Odyssey* (VI. 159; XVI. 77; XX. 335; XXI. 162; XV. 17, &c.). So far there is no change of manners, no introduction of the later practice, a dowry given with the bride, in place of a bride-price given to the father by the bridegroom. But Penelope was neither maid, wife, nor widow; her husband's fate, alive or dead, was uncertain, and her son was so anxious to get her out of the house that he says he offered gifts *with* her (XX. 342). In the same way, to buy back the goodwill of Achilles, Agamemnon offers to give him his daughter without bride-price, and to add great gifts (*Iliad*, IX. l47) — the term for the gifts is . People, of course, could make their own bargain; take as much for their daughter as they could get, or let the gifts go from husband to bride, and then return to the husband's home with her (as in Germany in the time of Tacitus, *Germania*, 18), or do that, and throw in more gifts. But in Odyssey, II. 53, Telemachus says that the Wooers shrink from going to the house of Penelope's father, Icarius, who would endow (?) his daughter () And again (*Odyssey*, I. 277; II. 196), her father's folk will furnish a bridal feast, and "array the , many, such as should accompany a dear daughter." Some critics think that the gifts here are *dowry*, a later institution than bride-price; others, that the father of the dear daughter merely chose to be generous, and returned the bride-price, or its equivalent, in whole or part. If the former view be correct, these passages in Odyssey, I., II. are later than the exceedingly "late" song of Demodocus. If the latter theory be correct the father is merely showing goodwill, and doing as the Germans did when they were in a stage of culture much earlier than the Homeric.

The position of Penelope is very unstable and legally perplexing. Has her father her marriage? has her son her marriage? is she not perhaps still a married woman with a living husband? Telemachus would give much to have her off his hands, but he refuses to send her to her father's house, where the old man might be ready enough to return the bride-price to her new husband, and get rid of her with honour. For if Telemachus sends his mother away against her will he will have to pay a heavy fine to her father, and to thole his mother's curse, and lose his character among men (odyssey, II. 130-138). The Icelanders of the saga period gave dowries with their daughters. But when Njal wanted Hildigunna for his foster-son, Hauskuld, he offered to give . “I will lay down as much money as will seem fitting to thy niece and thyself,” he says to Flosi, “if thou wilt think of making this match.”

Circumstances alter cases, and we must be hard pressed to discover signs of change of manners in the Odyssey as compared with the *Iliad* if we have to rely on a solitary mention of “men of many lots” in Crete, and on the perplexed proposals for the second marriage of Penelope. We must not be told that the many other supposed signs of change, Iris, Olympus, and the rest, have “cumulative weight.” If we have disposed of each individual supposed note of change in beliefs and manners in its turn, then these proofs have, in each case, no individual weight and, cumulatively, are not more ponderous than a feather.

CHAPTER XII

LINGUISTIC PROOFS OF VARIOUS DATES

The great strength of the theory that the poems are the work of several ages is the existence in them of various strata of languages, earlier and later.

Not to speak of differences of vocabulary, Mr. Monro and Mr. Leaf, with many scholars, detect two strata of earlier and later *grammar* in Iliad and Odyssey. In the *Iliad* four or five Books are infected by “the later grammar,” while the Odyssey in general seems to be contaminated. Mr. Leafs words are: “When we regard the Epos in large masses, we see that we can roughly arrange the inconsistent elements towards one end or the other of a line of development both linguistic and historical. The main division, that of *Iliad* and Odyssey, shows a distinct advance along this line; and the distinction is still more marked if we group with the *Odyssey* four Books of the *Iliad* whose Odyssean physiognomy is well marked. Taking as our main guide the dissection of the plot as shown in its episodes, we find that marks of lateness, though nowhere entirely absent, group themselves most numerously in the later additions …” We are here concerned with *linguistic* examples of “lateness.” The “four Books whose Odyssean physiognomy” and language seem “well marked,” are IX., X., XXIII., XXIV. Here Mr. Leaf, Mr. Monro, and many authorities are agreed. But to these four Odyssean Books of the *Iliad* Mr. Leaf adds *Iliad*, XI. 664-772: “probably a later addition,” says Mr. Monro. “It is notably Odyssean in character,” says Mr. Leaf; and the author “is ignorant of the geography of the Western Peloponnesus. No doubt the author was an Asiatic Greek.” The value of this discovery is elsewhere discussed (see *The Interpolations of Nestor*).

The Odyssean notes in this passage of a hundred lines (*Iliad*, XI. 670-762) are the occurrence of “a purely Odyssean word” (677), an Attic form of an epic word, and a “forbidden trochaic caesura in the fourth foot”; an Odyssean word for carving meat, applied in a *non*-Odyssean sense (688), a verb for “insulting,” not elsewhere found in the *Iliad* (though the noun is in the *Iliad*) (695), an Odyssean epithet of the sun, “four times in the *Odyssey*” (735). It is also possible that there is an allusion to a four-horse chariot (699).

These are the proofs of Odyssean lateness.

The real difficulty about Odyssean words and grammar in the *Iliad* is that, if they were in vigorous poetic existence down to the time of Pisistratus (as the

Odysseanism of the Asiatic editor proves that they were), and if every rhapsodist could add to and alter the materials at the disposal of the Pisistratean editor at will, we are not told how the fashionable Odysseanisms were kept, on the whole, out of twenty Books of the Iliad.

This is a point on which we cannot insist too strongly, as an argument against the theory that, till the middle of the sixth century B.C., the *Iliad* scarcely survived save in the memory of strolling rhapsodists. If that were so, all the Books of the *Iliad* would, in the course of recitation of old and composition of new passages, be equally contaminated with late Odyssean linguistic style. It could not be otherwise; all the Books would be equally modified in passing through the lips of modern reciters and composers. Therefore, if twenty out of twenty-four Books are pure, or pure in the main, from Odysseanisms, while four are deeply stained with them, the twenty must not only be earlier than the four, but must have been specially preserved, and kept uncontaminated, in some manner inconsistent with the theory that all alike scarcely existed save in the memory or invention of late strolling reciters.

How the twenty Books relatively pure “in grammatical forms, in syntax, and in vocabulary,” could be kept thus clean without the aid of written texts, I am unable to imagine. If left merely to human memory and at the mercy of reciters and new poets, they would have become stained with “the defining article” — and, indeed, an employment of the article which startles grammarians, appears even in the eleventh line of the First Book of the *Iliad*?

Left merely to human memory and the human voice, the twenty more or less innocent Books would have abounded, like the Odyssey, in with the dative meaning “about,” and with “in consequence of,” and “the extension of the use of clauses as final and objective clauses,” and similar marks of lateness, so interesting to grammarians. But the twenty Books are almost, or quite, inoffensive in these respects.

Now, even in ages of writing, it has been found difficult or impossible to keep linguistic novelties and novelties of metre out of old epics. We later refer (*Archaeology of the Epic*) to the *Chancun de Willame*, of which an unknown benefactor printed two hundred copies in 1903. Mr. Raymond Weeks, in *Romania*, describes *Willame* as taking a place beside the *Chanson de Roland* in the earliest rank of *Chansons de Geste*. If the text can be entirely restored, the poem will appear as “the most primitive” of French epics of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. But it has passed from copy to copy in the course of generations. The methods of versification change, and, after line 2647, “there are traces of change in the language. The word *ço,* followed by a vowel, hitherto frequent, never again reappears. The vowel *i*, of *li*, nominative masculine of the article" (*li Reis*, "the king"), "never occurs in the text after line 2647. Up to that point it is elided or not at pleasure…. There is a progressive tendency towards hiatus. After line 1980 the system of assonance changes. *An* and en have been kept distinct hitherto; this ceases to be the case."

The poem is also notable, like the *Iliad*, for textual repetition of passages, but that is common to all early poetry, which many Homeric critics appear not to understand. In this example we see how apt novelties in grammar and metre are to steal into even written copies of epics, composed in and handed down through uncritical ages; and we are confirmed in the opinion that the relatively pure and orthodox grammar and metre of the twenty Books must have been preserved by written texts carefully 'executed. The other four Books, if equally old, were less fortunate. Their grammar and metre, we learn, belong to a later stratum of language.

These opinions of grammarians are not compatible with the hypothesis that *all* of the *Iliad*, even the "earliest" parts, are loaded with interpolations, forced in at different places and in any age from 1000 B.C. to 540 B.C.; for if that theory were true, the whole of the *Iliad* would equally be infected with the later Odyssean grammar. According to Mr. Monro and Sir Richard Jebb, it is not.

But suppose, on the other hand, that the later Odyssean grammar abounds all through the whole *Iliad*, then that grammar is not more Odyssean than it is Iliadic. The alleged distinction of early Iliadic grammar, late Odyssean grammar, in that case vanishes. Mr. Leaf is more keen than Mr. Monro and Sir Richard Jebb in detecting late grammar in the *Iliad* beyond the bounds of Books IX., X., XXIII., XXIV. But he does not carry these discoveries so far as to make the late grammar no less Iliadic than Odyssean. In Book VIII. of the *Iliad*, which he thinks was only made for the purpose of introducing Book IX., we ought to find the late Odyssean grammar just as much as we do in Book IX., for it is of the very same date, and probably by one or more of the same authors as Book IX. But we do not find the Odyssean grammar in Book VIII.

Mr. Leaf says, "The peculiar character" of Book VIII. "is easily understood, when we recognise the fact that Book VIII. is intended to serve only as a means for the introduction of Book IX…." which is "late" and "Odyssean." Then Book VIII., intended to introduce Book IX., must be at least as late as Book IX. and might be expected to be at least as Odyssean, indeed one would think it could not be otherwise. Yet it is not so.

Mr. Leaf's theory has thus to face the difficulty that while the whole *Iliad*, by his view, for more than four centuries, was stuffed with late interpolations, in the course of oral recital through all Greek lands, and was crammed with original "copy" by a sycophant of Pisistratus about 540 B.C., the late grammar concentrated itself in only some four Books. Till some reasonable answer is given to this question — how did twenty Books of the Iliad preserve so creditably the ancient grammar through centuries of change, and of recitation by rhapsodists who used the Odyssean grammar, which infected the four other Books, and the whole of the *Odyssey?* — it seems hardly worth while to discuss this linguistic test.

Any scholar who looks at these pages knows all about the proofs of grammar of a late date in the *Odyssey* and the four contaminated Books of the *Iliad*. But it may be well to give a few specimens, for the enlightenment of less learned readers of Homer.

The use of , with the dative, meaning "about," when *thinking* or *speaking* "about" Odysseus or anything else, is peculiar to the *Odyssey*. But how has it not crept into the four Odyssean contaminated Books of the *Iliad*?

, with the genitive, "follows verbs meaning to speak or know *about* a person," but only in the *Odyssey*. What preposition follows such verbs in the *Iliad*?

Here, again, we ask: how did the contaminated Books of the *Iliad* escape the stain of , with the genitive, after verbs meaning to speak or know? What phrase do they use in the *Iliad* for speaking or asking *about* anybody?

, with the genitive, meaning "among" or "with," comes twice in the Odyssey (X. 320; XVI. 140) and thrice in the *Iliad* (XIII. 700; XXI. 458; XXIV. 400); but all these passages in the *Iliad* are disposed of as "late" parts of the poem.

, with the accusative, meaning *towards* a person, comes often in the *Iliad*; once in the Odyssey. But it comes four times in *Iliad*, Book X., which almost every critic scouts as very "late" indeed. If so, why does the "late" *Odyssey* not deal in this grammatical usage so common in the "late" Book X. of the *Iliad*?

, with the accusative, "meaning *extent* (without *motion*)," is chiefly found in the *Odyssey*, and in the Iliad, IX., X., XXIV. On consulting grammarians one thinks that there is not much in this.

with the dative, meaning "in addition to," occurs only once (*Odyssey, X. 68*). If it occurs only once, there is little to be learned from the circumstance.

with the genitive, is only in *Odyssey*, only thrice, always of going on board a ship. There are not many ship-farings in the *Iliad*. Odysseus and his men are not described as going on board their ship, in so many words, in *Iliad*, Book I. The usage occurs in the poem where the incidents of seafaring occur frequently, as is to be expected? It is not worth while to persevere with these tithes of mint and cummin. If "Neglect of Position" be commoner — like "Hiatus in the Bucolic Diaeresis" — in the *Odyssey* and in *Iliad*, XXIII., XXIV., why do the failings not beset *Iliad*, IX., X., these being such extremely "late" books? As to the later use of the Article in the *Odyssey* and the Odyssean Books of the *Iliad*, it appears to us that Book I. of the *Iliad* uses the article as it is used in Book X.; but on this topic we must refer to a special treatise on the language of *Iliad*, Book X., which is promised.

Turning to the vocabulary: “words expressive of civilisation” are bound to be more frequent, as they are, in the Odyssey, a poem of peaceful life, than in a poem about an army in action, like the *Iliad*. Out of all this no clue to the distance of years dividing the two poems can be found. As to words concerning religion, the same holds good. The Odyssey is more frequently *religious* (see the case of Eumaeus) than the *Iliad*.

In morals the term is more used in the *Odyssey*, also (“just” and “lawless”). But that is partly because the Odyssey has to contrast civilised (“just”) with wild outlandish people — Cyclopes and Laestrygons, who are “lawless.” The *Iliad* has no occasion to touch on savages; but, as the of the Wooers is a standing topic in the Odyssey (an ethical poem, says Aristotle), the word is of frequent occurrence in the *Odyssey*, in just the same sense as it bears in *Iliad*, I 214 — the insolence of Agamemnon. Yet when Achilles has occasion to speak of Agamemnon’s insolence in *Iliad*, Book IX., he does not use the *word* , though Book IX. is so very “late” and “Odyssean.” It would be easy to go through the words for moral ideas in the *Odyssey*, and to show that they occur in the numerous moral situations which do not arise, or arise much less frequently, in the *Iliad*. There is not difference enough in the moral standard of the two poems to justify us in assuming that centuries of ethical progress had intervened between their dates of composition. If the *Iliad*, again, were really, like the *Odyssey*, a thing of growth through several centuries, which overlapped the centuries in which the *Odyssey* grew, the moral ideas of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* would necessarily be much the same, would be indistinguishable. But, as a matter of fact, it would be easy to show that the moral standard of the *Iliad* is higher, in many places, than the moral standard of the *Odyssey*; and that, therefore, by the critical hypothesis, the *Iliad* is the later poem of the twain. For example, the behaviour of Achilles is most obnoxious to the moralist in *Iliad*, Book IX., where he refuses gifts of conciliation. But by the critical hypothesis this is not the fault of the *Iliad*, for Book IX. is declared to be “late,” and of the same date as late parts of the *Odyssey*. Achilles is not less open to moral reproach in his abominable cruelty and impiety, as shown in his sacrifice of prisoners of war and his treatment of dead Hector, in *Iliad*, XXIII., XXIV. But these Books also are said to be as late as the *Odyssey*.

The solitary “realistic” or “naturalistic” passage in Homer, with which a lover of modern “problem novels” feels happy and at home, is the story of Phoenix, about his seduction of his father’s mistress at the request of his mother. What a charming situation! But that occurs in an “Odyssean” Book of the *Iliad,* Book IX.; and thus Odyssean seems lower, not more advanced, than Iliadic taste in morals. To be sure, the poet disapproves of all these immoralities.

In the Odyssey the hero, to the delight of Athene, lies often and freely and with glee. The Achilles of the *Iliad* hates a liar “like the gates of Hades”; but he says so in an “Odyssean” Book (Book IX.), so there were obviously different standards in Odyssean ethics.

As to the Odyssey being the work of “a milder age,” consider the hanging of Penelope’s maids and the abominable torture of Melanthius. There is no torturing in the for the *Iliad* happens not to deal with treacherous thralls.

Enfin, there is no appreciable moral advance in the *ODYSSEY* on the moral standard of the *ILIAD.* It is rather the other way. Odysseus, in the *ODYSSEY,* tries to procure poison for his arrow-heads. The person to whom he applies is too moral to oblige him. We never learn that a hero of the *Iliad* would use poisoned arrows. The poet himself obviously disapproves; in both poems the poet is always on the side of morality and of the highest ethical standard of his age. The standard in both Epics is the same; in both some heroes fall short of the standard.

To return to linguistic tests, it is hard indeed to discover what Mr. Leaf’s opinion of the value of linguistic tests of lateness really is. “It is on such fundamental discrepancies” — as he has found in Books IX., XVI.— “that we can depend, *AND ON THESE ALONE,* when we come to dissect the *ILIAD* … Some critics have attempted to base their analysis on evidences from language, but I do not think they are sufficient to bear the superstructure which has been raised on them.”

He goes on, still placing a low value on linguistic tests alone, to say: “It is on the broad grounds of the construction and motives of the poem, *AND NOT ON ANY MERELY linguistic CONSIDERATIONS,* that a decision must be sought.”

But he contradicts these comfortable words when he comes to “the latest expansions,” such as Books XXIII., XXIV. “The latest expansions are thoroughly in the spirit of those which precede, *them ON ACCOUNT OF linguistic EVIDENCE,* which definitely classes them with the *ODYSSEY* rather than the rest of the *ILIAD.*”

Now as Mr. Leaf has told us that we must depend on “fundamental discrepancies,” “on these alone,” when we want to dissect the *ILIAD;* as he has told us that linguistic tests alone are “not sufficient to bear the superstructure,” &c., how can we lop off two Books “only on account of linguistic evidence”? It would appear that on this point, as on others, Mr. Leaf has entirely changed his mind. But, even in the *Companion* (), he had amputated Book XXIV. for no “fundamental discrepancy,” but because of “its close kinship to the *ODYSSEY,* as in the whole language of the Book.”

Here, as in many other passages, if we are to account for discrepancies by the theory of multiplex authorship, we must decide that Mr. Leaf’s books are the work of several critics, not of one critic only. But there is excellent evidence to prove that here we would be mistaken.

Confessedly and regretfully no grammarian, I remain unable, in face of what seem contradictory assertions about the value of linguistic tests, to ascertain what they are really worth, and what, if anything, they really prove.

Mr. Monro allows much for “the long insensible influence of Attic recitation upon the Homeric text;” … “many Attic peculiarities may be noted” (so much so that Aristarchus thought Homer must have been an Athenian!). “The poems suffered a gradual and unsystematic because generally unconscious process of modernising, the chief agents in which were the rhapsodists” (reciters in a later democratic age), “who wandered over all parts of Greece, and were likely to be influenced by all the chief forms of literature.”

Then, wherefore insist so much on tests of language?

Mr. Monro was not only a great grammarian; he had a keen appreciation of poetry. Thus he was conspicuously uneasy in his hypothesis, based on words and grammar, that the two last Books of the *Iliad* are by a late hand. After quoting Shelley’s remark that, in these two Books, “Homer truly begins to be himself,” Mr. Monro writes, “in face of such testimony can we say that the Book in which the climax is reached, in which the last discords of the *Iliad* are dissolved in chivalrous pity and regret, is not the work of the original poet, but of some Homerid or rhapsodist?”

Mr. Monro, with a struggle, finally voted for grammar, and other indications of lateness, against Shelley and against his own sense of poetry. In a letter to me of May 1905, Mr. Monro sketched a theory that Book IX. (without which he said that he deemed an *Achilleis* hardly possible) might be a *remanié* representative of an earlier lay to the same general effect. Some Greek Shakespeare, then, treated an older poem on the theme of Book IX. as Shakespeare treated old plays, namely, as a canvas to work over with a master’s hand. Probably Mr. Monro would not have gone *so* far in the case of Book XXIV., *The Repentance* of Achilles. He thought it in too keen contrast with the brutality of Book XXII. (obviously forgetting that in Book XXIV. Achilles is infinitely more brutal than in Book XXII.), and thought it inconsistent with the refusal of Achilles to grant burial at the prayer of the dying Hector, and with his criminal treatment of the dead body of his chivalrous enemy. But in Book XXIV. his ferocity is increased. Mr. Leaf shares Mr. Monro’s view; but Mr. Leaf thinks that a Greek audience forgave Achilles, because he was doing “the will of heaven,” and “fighting the great fight of Hellenism against barbarism." But the Achzeans were not Puritans of the sixteenth century! Moreover, the Trojans are as "Hellenic" as the Achzeans. They converse, clearly, in the same language. They worship the same gods. The Achzeans cannot regard them (unless on account of the breach of truce, by no Trojan, but an ally) as the Covenanters regarded "malignants," their name for loyal cavaliers, whom they also styled "Amalekites," and treated as Samuel treated Agag. The Achaeans to whom Homer sang had none of this sanguinary Pharisaism.

Others must decide on the exact value and import of Odyssean grammar as a test of lateness, and must estimate the probable amount of time required for the development of such linguistic differences as they find in the *Odyssey* and *Iliad*. In undertaking this task they may compare the literary language of America as it was before 1860 and as it is now. The language of English literature has also been greatly modified in the last forty years, but our times are actively progressive in many directions; linguistic variations might arise more slowly in the Greece of the Epics. We have already shown, in the more appropriate instance of the *Chancun de Willame*, that considerable varieties in diction and metre occur in a single MS. of that poem, a MS. written probably within less than a century of the date of the poem's composition.

We can also trace, in *remaniements* of the *Chanson DE ROLAND*, comparatively rapid and quite revolutionary variations from the oldest — the Oxford — manuscript. Rhyme is substituted for assonance; the process entails frequent modernisations, and yet the basis of thirteenth-century texts continues to be the version of the eleventh century. It may be worth the while of scholars to consider these parallels carefully, as regards the language and prosody of the Odyssean Books of the *Iliad*, and to ask themselves whether the processes of alteration in the course of transmission, which we know to have occurred in the history of the Old French, may not also have affected the *ILIAD*, though why the effect is mainly confined to four Books remains a puzzle. It is enough for us to have shown that if Odyssean varies from Iliadic language, in all other respects the two poems bear the marks of the same age. Meanwhile, a Homeric scholar so eminent as Mr. T. W. Allen, says that "the linguistic attack upon their age" (that of the Homeric poems) "may be said to have at last definitely failed, and archaeology has erected an apparently indestructible buttress for their defence."

CHAPTER XIII

THE “DOLONEIA”

“ILIAD,” BOOK X.

Of all Books in the Book X., called the *Doloneia,* is most generally scouted and rejected. The Book, in fact, could be omitted, and only a minutely analytic reader would perceive the lacuna. He would remark that in Iliad, IX. 65-84, certain military preparations are made which, if we suppress Book X., lead up to nothing, and that in *Iliad*, XIV. 9-11, we find Nestor with the shield of his son, Thrasymedes, while Thrasymedes has his father’s shield, a fact not explained, though the poet certainly meant something by it. The explanation in both cases is found in Book X., which may also be thought to explain why the Achaeans, so disconsolate in Book IX., and why Agamemnon, so demoralised, so gaily assume the offensive in Book XI. Some ancient critics, Scholiast T and Eustathius, attributed the *DOLONEIA* to Homer, but supposed it to have been a separate composition of his added to the *Iliad* by Pisistratus. This merely proves that they did not find any necessity for the existence of the *DOLONEIA*. Mr. Allen, who thinks that “it always held its present place,” says, “the *DOLONEIA* is persistently written down.”

To understand the problem of the *DOLONEIA*, we must make a summary of its contents. In Book IX. 65-84, at the end of the disastrous fighting of Book VIII, the Achaeans, by Nestor’s advice, station an advanced guard of “*the young men*” between the fosse and wall; 700 youths are posted there, under Meriones, the squire of Idomeneus, and Thrasymedes, the son of Nestor. All this is preparation for Book X., as Mr. Leaf remarks, though in any case an advanced guard was needed. Their business is to remain awake, under arms, in case the Trojans, who are encamped on the plain, attempt a night attack. At their station the young men will be under arms till dawn; they light fires and cook their provisions; the Trojans also surround their own watchfires.

The Achaean chiefs then hold council, and Agamemnon sends the embassy to Achilles. The envoys bring back his bitter answer; and all men go to sleep in their huts, deeply discouraged, as even Odysseus avowed.

Here the Tenth Book begins, and it is manifest that the poet is thoroughly well acquainted with the Ninth Book. Without the arrangements made in the Ninth Book, and without the despairing situation of that Book, his lay is impossible. It will be seen that critics suppose him, alternately, to have "quite failed to realise the conditions of life of the heroes of whom he sang" (that is, if certain lines are genuine), and also to be a peculiarly learned archaeologist and a valuable authority on weapons. He is addicted to introducing fanciful "touches of heroic simplicity," says Mr. Leaf, and is altogether a puzzling personage to the critics.

The Book opens with the picture of Agamemnon, sleepless from anxiety, while the other chiefs, save Menelaus, are sleeping. He "hears the music of the joyous Trojan pipes and flutes" and sees the reflected glow of their camp-fires, we must suppose, for he could not see the fires themselves through the new wall of his own camp, as critics very wisely remark. He tears out his hair before Zeus; no one else does so, in the *Iliad*, but no one else is Agamemnon, alone and in despair.

He rises to consult Nestor, throwing a lion's skin over his *chiton*, and grasping a spear. Much noise is made about the furs, such as this lion's pelt, which the heroes, in Book X., throw about their shoulders when suddenly aroused. That sportsmen like the heroes should keep the pelts of animals slain by them for use as coverlets, and should throw on one of the pelts when aroused in a hurry, is a marvellous thing to the critics. They know that fleeces were used for coverlets of beds (IX. 661), and pelts of wild animals, slain by Anchises, cover his bed in the Hymn to Aphrodite.

But the facts do not enlighten critics. Yet no facts could be more natural. A scientific critic, moreover, never reflects that the poet is dealing with an unexampled situation — heroes wakened and called into the cold air in a night of dread, but not called to battle. Thus Reichel says: "The poet knows so little about true heroic costume that he drapes the princes in skins of lions and panthers, like giants…. But about a corslet he never thinks."

The simple explanation is that the poet has not hitherto had to tell us about men who are called up, not to fight, on a night that must have been chilly. In war they do not wear skins, though Paris, in archer's equipment, wears a pard's skin (III. 17). Naturally, the men throw over themselves their fur coverlets; but Nestor, a chilly veteran, prefers a *chiton* and a wide, double-folded, fleecy purple cloak. The cloak lay ready to his hand, for such cloaks were used as blankets (XXIV. 646; Odyssey, III. 349, 351; IV. 299; II. 189). We hear more of such bed-coverings in the Odyssey than in the merely because in the *ODYSSEY* we have more references to beds and to people in bed. That a sportsman may have (as many folk have now) a fur coverlet, and may throw it over him as a kind of dressing-gown or "bed-gown," is a simple circumstance which bewilders the critical mind and perplexed Reichel.

If the poet knew so little as Reichel supposed his omission of corslets is explained. Living in an age of corslets (seventh century), he, being a literary man, knew nothing about corslets, or, as he is also an acute archaeologist, he knew too much; he knew that they were not worn in the Mycenaean prime, so he did not introduce them. The science of this remarkable ignoramus, in *this* view, accounts for his being aware that pelts of animals were in vogue as coverlets, just as fur dressing-gowns were worn in the sixteenth century, and he introduces them precisely as he leaves corslets out, because he knows that pelts of fur were in use, and that, in the Mycenaean prime, corslets were not worn.

In speaking to Nestor, Agamemnon awakens sympathy: “Me, of all the Achaeans, Zeus has set in toil and labour ceaselessly.” They are almost the very words of Charlemagne in the *Chanson de Roland: “Deus, Dist li Reis, si peneuse est ma vie.”* The author of the *Doloneia* consistently conforms to the character of Agamemnon as drawn in the rest of the *Iliad*. He is over-anxious; he is demoralising in his fits of gloom, but all the burden of the host hangs on him — sipeneuse *est ma via*.

To turn to higher things. Menelaus, too, was awake, anxious about the Argives, who risked their lives in his cause alone. He got up, put on a pard’s skin and a bronze helmet (here the poet forgets, what he ought to have known, that no bronze helmets have been found in the Mycenaean graves). Menelaus takes a spear, and goes to look for Agamemnon, whom he finds arming himself beside his ship. He discovers that Agamemnon means to get Nestor to go and speak to the advanced guard, as his son is their commander, and they will obey Nestor. Agamemnon’s pride has fallen very low! He tells Menelaus to waken the other chief with all possible formal courtesy, for, brutally rude when in high heart, at present Agamemnon cowers to everybody. He himself finds Nestor in bed, his *shield*, two spears, and helmet beside him, also his glittering *zoster*. His corslet is not named; perhaps the poet knew that the *zoster*, or broad metallic belt, had been evolved, but that the corslet had not been invented; or perhaps he “knows so little about the costume of the heroes” that he is unaware of the existence of corslets. Nestor asks Agamemnon what he wants; and Agamemnon says that his is a toilsome life, that he cannot sleep, that his knees tremble, and that he wants Nestor to come and visit the outposts.

There is really nothing absurd in this. Napoleon often visited his outposts in the night before Waterloo, and Cromwell rode along his lines all through the night before Dunbar, biting his lips till the blood dropped on his linen bands. In all three cases hostile armies were arrayed within striking distance of each other, and the generals were careworn.

Nestor admits that it is an anxious night, and rather blames Menelaus for not rousing the other chiefs; but Agamemnon explains and defends his brother. Nestor then puts on the comfortable cloak already described, and picks up a spear, *in HIS QUARTERS*.

As for Odysseus, he merely throws a shield over his shoulders. The company of Diomede are sleeping with their heads on their shields. Thence Reichel (see “The Shield”) infers that the late poet of Book X. gave them small Ionian round bucklers; but it has been shown that no such inference is legitimate. Their spears were erect by their sides, fixed in the ground by the *sauroter*, or butt-spike, used by the men of the late “warrior vase” found at Mycenae. To arrange the spears thus, we have seen, was a point of drill that, in Aristotle’s time, survived among the Illyrians. The practice is also alluded to in *Iliad*, III 135. During a truce “the tall spears are planted by their sides.” The poet, whether ignorant or learned, knew that point of war, later obsolete in Greece, but still extant in Illyria.

Nestor aroused Diomede, whose night apparel was the pelt of a lion; he took his spear, and they came to the outposts, where the men were awake, and kept a keen watch on all movements among the Trojans. Nestor praised them, and the princes, taking Nestor’s son, Thrasymedes, and Meriones with them, went out into the open in view of the Trojan camp, sat down, and held a consultation.

Nestor asked if any one would volunteer to go as a spy among the Trojans and pick up intelligence. His reward will be “a black ewe with her lamb at her foot,” from their chiefs— “nothing like her for value” — and he will be remembered in songs at feasts, *or* will be admitted to feasts and wine parties of the chiefs. The proposal is very odd; what do the princes want with black ewes, while at feasts they always have honoured places? Can Nestor be thinking of sending out any brave swift-footed young member of the outpost party, to whom the reward would be appropriate?

After silence, Diomede volunteers to go, with a comrade, though this kind of work is very seldom undertaken in any army of any age by a chief, and by his remark about admission to wine parties it is clear that Nestor was not thinking of a princely spy. Many others volunteer, but Agamemnon bids Diomede choose his own companion, with a very broad hint not to take Menelaus. *HIS* death, Agamemnon knows, would mean the disgraceful return of the host to Greece; besides he is, throughout the *ILIAD*, deeply attached to his brother.

The poet of Book X., however late, knows the *ILIAD* well, for he keeps up the uniform treatment of the character of the Over-Lord. As he knows the *ILIAD* well, how can he be ignorant of the conditions of life of the heroes? How can he dream of “introducing a note of heroic simplicity” (Mr. Leaf’s phrase), when he must be as well aware as we are of the way in which the heroes lived? We cannot explain the black ewes, if meant as a princely reward, but we do not know everything about Homeric life.

Diomede chooses Odysseus, "whom Pallas Athene loveth"; she was also the patroness of Diomede himself, in Books V., VI.

As they are unarmed — all of the chiefs hastily aroused were unarmed, save for a spear there or a sword here — Thrasymedes gives to Diomede his two-edged sword, *his* shield, and "a helm of bull's hide, without horns or crest, that is called a skull-cap (knap-skull), and keeps the heads of strong young men." All the advanced guard were young men, as we saw in Book IX. 77. Obviously, Thrasymedes must then send back to camp, though we are not told it, for another shield, sword, and helmet, as he is to lie all night under arms. We shall hear of the shield later.

Meriones, who is an archer (XIII. 650), lends to Odysseus his bow and quiver and a sword. He also gives him "a helm made of leather; and with many a thong it was stiffly wrought within, while without the white teeth of a boar of flashing tusks were arrayed, thick set on either side well and cunningly… ." Here Reichel perceives that the ignorant poet is describing a piece of ancient headgear represented in Mycenaean art, while the boars' teeth were found by Schliemann, to the number of sixty, in Grave IV. at Mycenae. Each of them had "the reverse side cut perfectly flat, and with the borings to attach them to some other object." They were "in a veritable funereal armoury." The manner of setting the tusks on the cap is shown on an ivory head of a warrior from Mycenae.

Reichel recognises that the poet's description in Book X. is excellent, "*ebenso klar als eingehend*." He publishes another ivory head from Spata, with the same helmet set with boars' tusks. Mr. Leaf decides that this description by the poet, wholly ignorant of heroic costume, as Reichel thinks him, must be "another instance of the archaic and archaeologising tendency so notable in Book X."

At the same time, according to Reichel and Mr. Leaf, the poet of Book X. introduces the small round Ionian buckler, thus showing his utter ignorance of the great Mycenaean shield. The ignorance was most unusual and quite inexcusable, for any one who reads the rest of the *Iliad* (which the poet of Book X. knew well) is aware that the Homeric shields were huge, often covering body and legs. This fact the poet of Book X. did not know, in Reichel's opinion.

How are we to understand this poet? He is such an erudite archaeologist that, in the seventh century, he knows and carefully describes a helmet of the Mycenaean prime. Did he excavate it? and had the leather interior lasted with the felt cap through seven centuries? Or did he see a sample in an old temple of the Mycenaean prime, or in a museum of his own period? Or had he heard of it in a lost Mycenaean poem? Yet, careful as he was, so pedantic that he must have puzzled his seventh-century audience, who never saw such caps, the poet knew nothing of the shields and costumes of the heroes, though he might have found out all that is known about them in the then existing Iliadic lays with which he was perfectly familiar — see his portrait of Agamemnon. He was well aware that corslets were, in Homeric poetry, anachronisms, for he gave Nestor none; yet he fully believed, in his ignorance, that small Ionian bucklers loveth; (which need the aid of corslets badly) were the only wear among the heroes!

Criticism has, as we often observe, no right to throw the first stone at the inconsistencies of Homer. As we cannot possibly believe that one poet knew so much which his contemporaries did not know (and how, in the seventh century, could he know it?), and that he also knew so little, knew nothing in fact, we take our own view. The poet of Book X. sings of *a* fresh topic, a confused night of dread; of young men wearing the headgear which, he says, young men *do* wear; of pelts of fur such as suddenly wakened men, roused, but not roused for battle, would be likely to throw over their bodies against the chill air. He describes things of his own day; things with which he is familiar. He is said to "take quite a peculiar delight in the minute description of dress and weapons." We do not observe that he does describe weapons or shields minutely; but Homer always loves to describe weapons and costume — scores of examples prove it — and here he happens to be describing such costume as he nowhere else has occasion to mention. By an accident of archaeological discovery, we find that there were such caps set with boars' tusks as he introduces. They had survived, for young men on night duty, into the poet's age. We really cannot believe that a poet of the seventh century had made excavations in Mycenaean graves. If he did and put the results into his lay, his audience — not wearing boars' tusks — would have asked, "What nonsense is the man talking?"

Erhardt, remarking on the furs which the heroes throw over their shoulders when aroused, says that this kind of wrap is very late. It was Peisander who, in the second half of the seventh century, clothed Herakles in a lion's skin. Peisander brought this costume into poetry, and the author of the *Doloneia* knew no better than to follow Peisander. The poet of the *Doloneia* was thus much better acquainted with Peisander than with the Homeric lays, which could have taught him that a hero would never wear a fur coverlet when aroused — not to fight — from slumber. Yet he knew about leathern caps set with boars' tusks. He must have been an erudite excavator, but, in literature, a reader only of recent minor poetry.

Having procured arms, without corslets (*with* corslets, according to Carl Robert) — whether, if they had none, because the poet knew that corslets were anachronisms, or because spies usually go as lightly burdened as possible —

Odysseus and Diomede approach the Trojan camp. The hour is the darkest hour before dawn. They hear, but do not see, a heron sent by Athene as an omen, and pray to the goddess, with promise of sacrifice.

In the Trojan camp Hector has called a council, and asked for a volunteer spy to seek intelligence among the Achaeans. He offers no black ewes as a reward, but the best horses of the enemy. This allures Dolon, son of a rich Trojan, “an only son among five sisters,” a poltroon, a weak lad, ugly, but swift of foot, and an enthusiastic lover of horses. He asks for the steeds of Achilles, which Hector swears to give him; and to be lightly clad he takes merely spear and bow and a cap of ferret skin, with the pelt of a wolf for covering. Odysseus sees him approach; he and Diomede lie down among the dead till Dolon passes, then they chase him towards the Achaean camp and catch him. He offers ransom, which before these last days of the war was often accepted. Odysseus replies evasively, and asks for information. Dolon, thinking that the bitterness of death is past, explains that only the Trojans have watchfires; the allies, more careless, have none. At the extreme flank of the host sleep the newly arrived Thracians, under their king, Rhesus, who has golden armour, and “the fairest horses that ever I beheld” (the ruling passion for horses is strong in Dolon), “and the greatest, whiter than snow, and for speed like the winds.”

Having learned all that he needs to know, Diomede ruthlessly slays Dolon. Odysseus thanks Athene, and hides the poor spoils of the dead, marking the place. They then creep into the dark camp of the sleeping Thracians, and as Diomede slays them Odysseus drags each body aside, to leave a clear path for the horses, that they may not plunge and tremble when they are led forth, “for they were not yet used to dead men.” No line in Homer shows more intimate knowledge and realisation of horses and of war. Odysseus drives the horses of Rhesus out of the camp with the bow of Meriones; he has forgotten to take the whip from the chariot. Diomede, having slain King Rhesus asleep, thinks whether he shall lift out the chariot (war chariots were very light) or drag it by the pole; but Athene warns him to be going. He “springs upon the steeds,” and they make for their camp. It is not clearly indicated whether they ride or drive (X., 5 I 3, 527-528, 541); but, suppose that they ride, are we to conclude that the fact proves “lateness”? The heroes always drive in Homer, but it is inconceivable that they could not ride in cases of necessity, as here, if Diomede has thought it wiser not to bring out the chariot and harness the horses. Riding is mentioned in *Iliad,* XV. 679, in a simile; again, in a simile, *Odyssey,* V. 37 I. It is not the custom for heroes to ride; the chariot is used in war and in travelling, but, when there are horses and no chariot, men could not be so imbecile as not to mount the horses, nor could the poet be so pedantic as not to make them do so.

The shields would cause no difficulty; they would be slung sideways, like the shields of knights in the early Middle Ages. The pair, picking up Dolon’s spoils as they pass, hurry back to the chiefs, where Nestor welcomes them. The others laugh and are encouraged (to encourage them and his audience is the aim of the poet); while the pair go to Diomede’s quarters, wash off the blood and sweat from their limbs in the sea, and then “enter the polished baths,” common in the *Odyssey*, unnamed in the Iliad. But on no other occasion in the Iliad are we admitted to view this part of heroic toilette. Nowhere else, in fact, do we accompany a hero to his quarters and his tub after the day’s work is over. Achilles, however, refuses to wash, after fighting, in his grief for Patroclus, though plenty of water was being heated for the purpose, and it is to be presumed that a bath was ready for the water (*Iliad*, XXIII. 40). See, too, for Hector’s bath, XXII. 444.

The two heroes then refresh themselves; breakfast, in fact, and drink, as is natural. By this time the dawn must have been in the sky, and in Book XI. men are stirring with the dawn. Such is the story of Book X. The reader may decide as to whether it is “*Very* late; barely Homeric,” or a late and deliberate piece of burlesque, or whether it is very Homeric, though the whole set of situations — a night of terror, an anxious chief, a nocturnal adventure — are unexampled in the poem.

The poet’s audience of warriors must have been familiar with such situations, and must have appreciated the humorous, ruthless treatment of Dolon, the spoiled only brother of five sisters. Mr. Monro admitted that Dolon is Shakespearian, but added, “too Shakespearian for Homer.” One may as well say that Agincourt, in Henry V., is “too Homeric for Shakespeare.”

Mr. Monro argued that “the Tenth Book comes in awkwardly after the Ninth.” Nitzsche thinks just the reverse. The patriotic warrior audience would delight in the *Doloneia* after the anguish of Book IX.; would laugh with Odysseus at the close of his adventure, and rejoice with the other Achaeans (X. 505).

“The introductory part of the Book is cumbrous,” says Mr. Monro. To us it is, if we wish to get straight to the adventure, just as the customary delays in Book XIX., before Achilles is allowed to fight, are tedious to us. But the poet’s audience did not necessarily share our tastes, and might take pleasure (as I do) in the curious details of the opening of Book X. The poet was thinking of his audience, not of modern professors.

“We hear no more of Rhesus and his Thracians.” Of Rhesus there was no more to hear, and his people probably went home, like Glenbuckie’s Stewarts after the mysterious death of their chief in Amprior’s house of Leny before Prestonpans (1745). Glenbuckie was mysteriously pistolled in the night. “The style and tone is unlike that of the Iliad … It is rather akin to comedy of a rough farcical kind.” But it was time for “comic relief.” If the story of Dolon be comic, it is comic with the practical humour of the sagas. In an isolated nocturnal adventure and massacre we cannot expect the style of an heroic battle under the sunlight. Is the poet not to be allowed to be various, and is the scene of the Porter in *Macbeth,* “in style and tone,” like the rest of the drama? (*Macbeth,* Act ii. sc. 3). Here, of course, Shakespeare indulges infinitely more in “comedy of a rough practical kind” than does the author of the *Doloneia*.

The humour and the cruelty do not exceed what is exhibited in many of the *gabes*, or insulting boasts of heroes over dead foes in other parts of the *Iliad*; such as the taunting comparison of a warrior falling from his chariot to a diver after oysters, or as “one of the Argives hath caught the spear in his flesh, and leaning thereon for a staff, methinks that he will go down within the house of Hades” (XIV. 455-457). The *Iliad*, like the sagas, is rich in this extremely practical humour.

Mr. Leaf says that the Book “must have been composed before the *Iliad* had reached its present form, for it cannot have been meant to follow on Book IX. It is rather another case of a parallel rival to that Book, coupled with it only in the final literary redaction,” which Mr. Leaf dates in the middle of the sixth century. “The Book must have been composed before the *Iliad* had reached its present form,” It is not easy to understand this decision; for, as Mr. Leaf had previously written, about Book IX. 60-68, “the posting of the watch is at least not necessary to the story, and it has a suspicious air of being merely a preparation for the next Book, which is much later, and which turns entirely upon a visit to the sentinels.”

Now a military audience would not have pardoned the poet of Book IX. if, in the circumstances of defeat, with a confident enemy encamped within striking distance, he had not made the Achaeans throw forth their outposts. The thing was inevitable and is not suspicious; but the poet purposely makes the advanced guard consist of young men under Nestor’s son and Meriones. He needs them for Book X. Therefore the poet of Book IX. is the poet of Book X. preparing his effect in advance; or the poet of Book X. is a man who cleverly takes advantage of Book IX., or he composed his poem of “a night of terror and adventure,” “in the air,” and the editor of 540 B.C., having heard it recited and copied it out, went back to Book IX. and inserted the advanced guard, under Thrasymedes and Meriones, to lead up to Book X.

On Mr. Leafs present theory, Book X., we presume, was meant, not to follow Book IX., but to follow the end of Book VII, being an alternative to Book VIII. (composed, he says, to lead up to Book IX.) and Book IX. But Book VII. closes with the Achaean refusal of the compromise offered by Paris — the restoration of the property but not of the wife of Menelaus. The Trojans and Achaeans feast all night; the Trojans feast in the city. There is therefore no place here for Book X. after Book VII, and the Achaeans cannot roam about all night, as they are feasting; nor can Agamemnon be in the state of anxiety exhibited by him in Book X.

Book X. could not exist without Book IX., and *must* have been "meant to follow on it." Mr. Leaf sees that, in his preface to Book IX., "The placing of sentinels" (in Book IX. 80, 84) "is needed as an introduction to Book X. but has nothing to do with this Book" (IX.). But, we have said, it was inevitable, given the new situation in Book IX. (an Achaean repulse, and the enemy camped in front), that an advanced guard must be placed, even if there proved to be no need of their services. We presume that Mr. Leaf's literary editor, finding that Book X. existed and that the advanced guard was a necessity of its action, went back to Book IX. and introduced an advanced guard of young men, with its captains, Thrasymedes and Meriones. Even after this the editor had much to do, if Book IX. originally exhibited Agamemnon as not in terror and despair, as it now does.

We need not throw the burden of all this work on the editor. As Mr. Leaf elsewhere writes, in a different mind, the Tenth Book "is obviously adapted to its present place in the *Iliad*, for it assumes a moment when Achilles is absent from the field, and when the Greeks are in deep dejection from a recent defeat. These conditions are exactly fulfilled by the situation at the end of Book IX."

This is certainly the case. The Tenth Book could not exist without the Ninth; yet Mr. Leaf's new opinion is that it "cannot have been meant to follow on Book IX." He was better inspired when he held the precisely opposite opinion.

Dr. Adolf Kiene accepts Book XI. as originally composed to fill its present place in the *Iliad.* He points out the despondency of the chiefs after receiving the reply of Achilles, and supposes that even Diomede (IX. 708) only urges Agamemnon to "array before the ships thy folk and horsemen," for defensive battle. But, encouraged by the success of the night adventure, Agamemnon next day assumes the offensive. To consider thus is perhaps to consider too curiously. But it is clear that the Achaeans have been much encouraged by the events of Book X., especially Agamemnon, whose character, as Kiene observes, is very subtly and consistently treated, and "lies near the poet's heart." This is the point which we keep urging. Agamemnon's care for Menelaus is strictly preserved in Book X.

Nitzsche (I 897) writes, “Between Book IX. and Book XI there is a gap; that gap the *Doloneia* fills: it must have been composed to be part of the *ILIAD*.” But he thinks that the *Doloneia* has taken the place of an earlier lay which filled the gap. That the Book is never referred to later in the *Iliad*, even if it be true, is no great argument against its authenticity. For when later references are made to Book IX., they are dismissed as clever late interpolations. If the horses of Rhesus took part, as they do not, in the sports at the funeral of Patroclus, the passage would be called a clever interpolation: in fact, Diomede had better horses, divine horses to run. However, it is certainly remarkable that the interpolation was not made by one of the interpolators of critical theory.

Meanwhile there is, we think, a reference to Book X. in Book XIV.

In *Iliad*, XIV. 9-11, we read that Nestor, in his quarters with the wounded Machaon, on the day following the night of Dolon’s death, hears the cry of battle and goes out to see what is happening. “He took the well-wrought shield of his son, horse-taming Thrasymedes, which was lying in the hut, all glistening with bronze, but *the son had the shield of his father*.”

Why had Thrasymedes the shield of his father? At about 3 A.M. before dawn the shield of Nestor was lying beside him in his own bedroom (Book X. 76), and at the same moment his son Thrasymedes *was* on outpost duty, and had his own shield with him (Book IX. 81).

When, then, did father and son exchange shields, and why? Mr. Leaf says, “It is useless to inquire why father and son had thus changed shields, as the scholiasts of course do.”

The scholiasts merely babble. Homer, of course, meant *something* by this exchange of shields, which occurred late in the night of Book IX. or very early in the following day, that of Books XI-XVI.

Let us follow again the sequence of events. On the night before the day when Nestor had Thrasymedes’ shield and Thrasymedes had Nestor’s, Thrasymedes was sent out, with shield and all, in command of one of the seven companies of an advanced guard, posted between fosse and wall, in case of a camisade by the Trojans, who were encamped on the plain (IX. 81). With him in command were Meriones and five other young men less notable. They had supplies with them and whatever was needed: they cooked supper in bivouac.

In the *Doloneia* the wakeful princes, after inspecting the advanced guard, go forward within view of the Trojan ranks and consult. With them they take Nestor’s son, Thrasymedes, and Meriones (X. 196). The two young men, being on active service, are armed; the princes are not. Diomede, having been suddenly roused out of sleep, with no intention to fight, merely threw on his dressing-gown, a lion’s skin. Nestor wore a thick, double, purple dressing-gown.

Odysseus had cast his shield about his shoulders. It was decided that Odysseus and Diomede should enter the Trojan camp and “prove a jeopardy.” Diomede had no weapon but his spear; so Thrasymedes, who is armed as we saw, lends him his bull’s-hide cap, “that keeps the heads of stalwart youths,” his sword (for that of Diomede “was left at the ships”), and his shield.

Diomede and Odysseus successfully achieve their adventure and return to the chiefs, where they talk with Nestor; and then they go to Diomede’s hut and drink. The outposts remain, of course, at their stations.

Meanwhile, Thrasymedes, having lent his shield to Diomede, has none of his own. Naturally, as he was to pass the night under arms, he would send to his father’s quarters for the old man’s shield, a sword, and a helmet. He would remain at his post (his men had provisions) till the general *reveillez* at dawn, and would then breakfast at his post and go into the fray. Nestor, therefore, missing his shield, would send round to Diomede’s quarters for the shield of Thrasymedes, which had been lent overnight to Diomede, would take it into the fight, and would bring it back to his own hut when he carried the wounded Machaon thither out of the battle. When he arms to go out and seek for information, he picks up the shield of Thrasymedes.

Nothing can be more obvious; the poet, being a man of imagination, not a professor, sees it all, and casually mentions that the son had the father’s and the father had the son’s shield. His audience, men of the sword, see the case as clearly as the poet does: only we moderns and the scholiasts, almost as modern as ourselves, are puzzled.

It may also be argued, though we lay no stress on it, that in Book XI. 312, when Agamemnon has been wounded, we find Odysseus and Diomede alone together, without their contingents, because they have not separated since they breakfasted together, after returning from the adventure of Book X., and thus they have come rather late to the field. They find the Achaeans demoralised by the wounding of Agamemnon, and they make a stand. “What ails us,” asks Odysseus, “that we forget our impetuous valour?” The passage appears to take up the companionship of Odysseus and Diomede, who were left breakfasting together at the end of Book X. and are not mentioned till we meet them again in this scene of Book XI., as if they had just come on the field.

As to the linguistic tests of lateness “there are exceptionally numerous traces of later formation,” says Mr. Monro; while Fick, tout *contraire,* writes, “clumsy Ionisms are not common, and, as a rule, occur in these parts which on older grounds show themselves to be late interpolations.” “The cases of agreement” (between Fick and Mr. Monro), “are few, and the passages thus condemned are not more numerous in the *Doloneia* than in any average book.” The six examples of “a post-Homeric use of the article” do not seem so very post-Homeric to an ordinary intelligence — parallels occur in Book I. — and “Perfects in from derivative verbs” do not destroy the impression of antiquity and unity which is left by the treatment of character; by the celebrated cap with boars’ tusks, which no human being could archaeologically reconstruct in the seventh century; and by the Homeric vigour in such touches as the horses unused to dead men. As the *Iliad* certainly passed through centuries in which its language could not but be affected by linguistic changes, as it could not escape from *remaniements,* consciously or unconsciously introduced by reciters and copyists, the linguistic objections are not strongly felt by us. An unphilological reader of Homer notes that Duntzer thinks the *Doloneia* “older than the oldest portion of the Odyssey,” while Gemoll thinks that the author of the *Doloneia*. was familiar with the *Odyssey*.

Meanwhile, one thing seems plain to us: when the author of Book IX. posted the guards under Thrasymedes, he was deliberately leading up to Book X.; while the casual remark in Book XIV. about the exchange of shields between father and son, Nestor and Thrasymedes, glances back at Book X. and possibly refers to some lost and more explicit statement.

It is not always remembered that, if things could drop into the interpolations, things could also drop out of the *ILIAD,* causing *lacunae,* during the dark backward of its early existence.

If the *Doloneia* be “barely Homeric,” as Father Browne holds, this opinion was not shared by the listeners or readers of the sixth century. The vase painters often illustrate the *Doloneia;* but it does not follow that “the story was fresh” because it was “popular,” as Mr. Leaf suggests, and “was treated as public property in a different way” (namely, in a comic way) “from the consecrated early legends” (*Iliad,* II 424, 425). The sixth century vase painters illustrated many passages in Homer, not the *Doloneia* alone. The “comic way” was the ruthless humour of two strong warriors capturing one weak coward. Much later, wild caricature was applied in vase painting to the most romantic scenes in the Odyssey, which were “consecrated” enough.

CHAPTER XIV

THE INTERPOLATIONS OF NESTOR

That several of the passages in which Nestor speaks are very late interpolations, meant to glorify Pisistratus, himself of Nestor’s line, is a critical opinion to which we have more than once alluded. The first example is in *Iliad,* II. 530-568. This passage “is meant at once to present Nestor as the leading counsellor of the Greek army, and to introduce the coming *Catalogue*.” Now the *Catalogue* “originally formed an introduction to the whole Cycle.” But, to repeat an earlier observation, surely the whole Cycle was much later than the period of Pisistratus and his sons; that is, the compilation of the Homeric and Cyclic poems into one body of verse, named “The Cycle,” is believed to have been much later.

It is objected that Nestor’s advice in this passage, “Separate thy warriors by tribes and clans” (), “is out of place in the last year of the war”; but this suggestion for military reorganisation may be admitted as a mere piece of poetical perspective, like Helen’s description of the Achaean chiefs in Book III, or Nestor may wish to return to an obsolete system of clan regiments. The Athenians had “tribes” and “clans,” political institutions, and Nestor’s advice is noted as a touch of late Attic influence; but about the nature and origin of these social divisions we know so little that it is vain to argue about them. The advice of Nestor is an appeal to the clan spirit — a very serviceable military spirit, as the Highlanders have often proved — but we have no information as to whether it existed in Achaean times. Nestor speaks as the aged Lochiel spoke to Claverhouse before Killiecrankie. Did the Athenian army of the sixth century fight in clan regiments? The device seems to belong to an earlier civilisation, whether it survived in sixth century Athens or not. It is, of course, notorious that tribes and clans are most flourishing among the most backward people, though they were welded into the constitution of Athens. The passage, therefore, cannot with any certainty be dismissed as very late, for the words for “tribe” and “clan” could not be novel Athenian inventions, the institutions designated being of prehistoric origin.

Nestor shows his tactics again in IV. 303-309, offers his “inopportune tactical lucubrations, doubtless under Athenian (Pisistratean) influence.” The poet is here denied a sense of humour. That a veteran military Polonius should talk as inopportunely about tactics as Dugald Dalgetty does about the sconce of

Drumsnab is an essential part of the humour of the character of Nestor. This is what Nestor’s critics do not see; the inopportune nature of his tactical remarks is the point of them, just as in the case of the laird of Drumthwacket, “that should be.” Scott knew little of Homer, but coincided in the Nestorian humour by mere congruity of genius. The Pisistratidze must have been humourless if they did not see that the poet smiled as he composed Nestor’s speeches, glorifying old deeds of his own and old ways of fighting. He arrays his Pylians with chariots in front, footmen in the rear. In the the princely heroes dismounted to fight, the chariots following close behind them. In the same way during the Hundred Years’ War the English knights dismounted and defeated the French chivalry till, under Jeanne d’Arc and La Hire, the French learned the lesson, and imitated the English practice. On the other hand, Egyptian wall-paintings show the Egyptian chariotry advancing in neat lines and serried squadrons. According to Nestor these had of old been the Achaean tactics, and he preferred the old way. Nestor’s advice in Book IV. is *not* to dismount or break the line of chariots; these, he says, were the old tactics: “Even so is the far better way; thus, moreover, did men of old time lay low cities and walls.” There was to be no rushing of individuals from the ranks, no dismounting. Nestor’s were not the tactics of the heroes — they usually dismount and do single valiances; but Nestor, commanding his local contingent, recommends the methods of the old school, . What can be more natural and characteristic?

The poet’s meaning seems quite clear. He is not flattering Pisistratus, but, with quiet humour, offers the portrait of a vain, worthy veteran. It is difficult to see how this point can be missed; it never was missed before Nestor’s speeches seemed serviceable to the Pisistratean theory of the composition of the *ILIAD*. In his first edition Mr. Leaf regarded the interpolations as intended “to glorify Nestor” without reference to Pisistratus, whom Mr. Leaf did not then recognise as the master of a sycophantic editor. The passages are really meant to display the old man’s habit of glorifying himself and past times. Pisistratus could not feel flattered by passages intended to exhibit his ancestor as a conceited and inopportune old babbler. I ventured in 1896 to suggest that the interpolator was trying to please Pisistratus, but this was said in a spirit of mockery.

Of all the characters in Homer that of Nestor is most familiar to the unlearned world, merely because Nestor’s is a “character part,” very broadly drawn.

The third interpolation of flattery to Pisistratus in the person of Nestor is found in VII. 125-160. The Achaean chiefs are loath to accept the challenge of Hector to single combat. Only Menelaus rises and arms himself, moved by the strong sense of honour which distinguishes a warrior notoriously deficient in bodily strength. Agamemnon refuses to let him fight; the other peers make no movement, and Nestor rebukes them. It is entirely in nature that he should fall back on his memory of a similar situation in his youth; when the Arcadian champion, Ereuthalion, challenged any prince of the Pylians, and when “no man plucked up heart” to meet him except Nestor himself. Had there never been any Pisistratus, any poet who created the part of a worthy and wordy veteran must have made Nestor speak just as he does speak. Ereuthalion “was the tallest and strongest of men that I have slain!” and Nestor, being what he is, offers copious and interesting details about the armour of Ereuthalion and about its former owners. The passage is like those in which the Icelandic sagamen dwelt lovingly on the history of a good sword, or the Maoris on the old possessors of an ancient jade *patu*. An objection is now taken to Nestor’s geography: he is said not to know the towns and burns of his own country. He speaks of the swift stream Keladon, the streams of Iardanus, and the walls of Pheia. Pheia “is no doubt the same as Pheai” (Odyssey, XV. 297), “but that was a maritime town not near Arkadia. There is nothing known of a Keladon or Iardanus anywhere near it.” Now Didymus (Schol. A) “is said to have read for ,” following Pherekydes. M. Victor Bérard, who has made an elaborate study of Elian topography, says that “Pheia is a cape, not a town,” and adopts the reading “Phera,” the of the journey of Telemachus, in the Odyssey. He thinks that the of Nestor is the Aliphera of Polybius, and believes that the topography of Nestor and of the journey of Telemachus is correct. The Keladon is now the river or burn of Saint Isidore; the Iardanus is at the foot of Mount Kaiapha. Keladon has obviously the same sense as the Gaelic Altgarbh, “the rough and brawling stream.” Iardanus is also a stream in Crete, and Mr. Leaf thinks it Semitic— “*Yarden*, from yarad to flow”; but the Semites did not give the *Yar* to the *Yarrow* nor to the Australian *Yarra Yarra*.

The country, says M. Bérard, is a network of rivers, burns, and rivulets; and we cannot have any certainty, we may add, as the same river and burn names recur in many parts of the same country; many of them, in England, are plainly prae-Celtic.

While the correct geography may, on this showing, be that of Homer, we cannot give up Homer’s claim to Nestor’s speech. As to Nestor’s tale about the armour of Ereuthalion, it is manifest that the first owner of the armour of Ereuthalion, namely Are’ithous, “the Maceman,” so called because he had the singularity of fighting with an iron *casse-tête*, as Nestor explains (VII. 138-140), was a famous character in legendary history. He appears “as Prince Areithous, the Maceman,” father (or grandfather?) of an Areithous slain by Hector (VII. 8-10). In Greece, it was not unusual for the grandson to bear the grandfather’s name, and, if the Maceman was grandfather of Hector’s victim, there is no chronological difficulty. The chronological difficulty, in any case, if Hector's victim is the son of the Maceman, is not at all beyond a poetic narrator's possibility of error in genealogy. If Nestor's speech is a late interpolation, if its late author borrowed his vivid account of the Maceman and his *casse-tête* from the mere word "maceman" in VII. 9, he must be credited with a lively poetic imagination.

Few or none of these reminiscences of Nestor are really "inapplicable to the context." Here the context demands encouragement for heroes who shun a challenge. Nestor mentions an "applicable" and apposite instance of similar want of courage, and, as his character demands, he is the hero of his own story. His brag, or *gabe,* about "he was the tallest and strongest of all the men I ever slew," is deliciously in keeping, and reminds us of the college don who said of the Czar, "he is the nicest emperor I ever met." The poet is sketching an innocent vanity; he is not flattering Pisistratus.

The next case is the long narrative of Nestor to the hurried Patroclus, who has been sent by Achilles to bring news of the wounded Machaon (XI. 604-702). Nestor on this occasion has useful advice to give, namely, that Achilles, if he will not fight, should send his men, under Patroclus, to turn the tide of Trojan victory. But the poet wishes to provide an interval of time and of yet more dire disaster before the return of Patroclus to Achilles. By an obvious literary artifice he makes Nestor detain the reluctant Patroclus with a long story of his own early feats of arms. It is a story of a "hot-trod," so called in Border law; the Eleians had driven a *creagh* of cattle from the Pylians, who pursued, and Nestor killed the Eleian leader, Itymoneus. The speech is an Achaean parallel to the Border ballad of "Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead," in editing which Scott has been accused of making a singular and most obvious and puzzling blunder in the topography of his own sheriffdom of the Forest. On Scott's showing the scene of the raid is in upper Ettrickdale, not, as critics aver, in upper Teviotdale; thus the narrative of the ballad would be impossible.

The Pisistratean editor is accused of a similar error. "No doubt he was an Asiatic Greek, completely ignorant of the Peloponnesus." It is something to know that Pisistratus employed an editor, or that his editor employed a collaborator who was an Asiatic Greek!

Meanwhile, nothing is less secure than arguments based on the *Catalogue*. We have already shown how Mr. Leaf's opinions as to the date and historical merits of the *Catalogue* have widely varied, while M. Bérard appears to have vindicated the topography of Nestor. Of the *Catalogue* Mr. Allen writes, "As a table, according to regions, of Agamemnon's forces it bears every mark of venerable antiquity," showing "a state of things which never recurred in later history, and which no one had any interest to invent, or even the means for inventing.” He makes a vigorous defence of the *Catalogue,* as regards the dominion of Achilles, against Mr. Leaf. Into the details we need not go, but it is not questions of Homeric topography, obscure as they are, that can shake our faith in the humorous portrait of old Nestor, or make us suppose that the sympathetic mockery of the poet is the sycophantic adulation of the editor to his statesman employer, Pisistratus. If any question may be left to literary discrimination it is the authentic originality of the portrayal of Nestor.

CHAPTER XV

THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EARLY EPICS

Though comparison is the method of Science, the comparative study of the national poetry of warlike aristocracies, its conditions of growth and decadence, has been much neglected by Homeric critics. Sir Richard Jebb touched on the theme, and, after devoting four pages to a sketch of Sanskrit, Finnish, Persian, and early Teutonic heroic poetry and *SAGA*, decided that “in our country, as in others, we fail to find any true parallel to the case of the Homeric poems. These poems must be studied in themselves, without looking for aid, in this sense, to the comparative method.” Part of this conclusion seems to us rather hasty. In a brief manual Sir Richard had not space for a thorough comparative study of old heroic poetry at large. His quoted sources are: for India, Lassen; for France, Mr. Saintsbury’s Short History of *FRENCH LITERATURE* (sixteen pages on this topic), and a work unknown to me, by “M. Paul”; for Iceland he only quoted *THE Encyclopedia BRITANNICA* (Mr. Edmund Gosse); for Germany, Lachmann and Bartsch; for the Finnish *Kalewala*, the *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA* (Mr. Sime and Mr. Keltie); and for England, a *PRIMER OF ENGLISH LITERATURE* by Mr. Stopford Brooke.

These sources appear less than adequate, and Celtic heroic romance is entirely omitted. A much deeper and wider comparative criticism of early heroic national poetry is needed, before any one has a right to say that the study cannot aid our critical examination of the Homeric problem. Many peoples have passed through a stage of culture closely analogous to that of Achaean society as described in the *Iliad* and Odyssey. Every society of this kind has had its ruling military class, its ancient legends, and its minstrels who on these legends have based their songs. The similarity of human nature under similar conditions makes it certain that comparison will discover useful parallels between the poetry of societies separated in time and space but practically identical in culture. It is not much to the credit of modern criticism that a topic so rich and interesting has been, at least in England, almost entirely neglected by Homeric scholars.

Meanwhile, it is perfectly correct to say, as Sir Richard observes, that “we fail to find any true parallel to the case of the Homeric poems,” for we nowhere find the legends of an heroic age handled by a very great poet — the greatest of all poets — except in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But, on the other hand, the critics refuse to believe that, in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, we possess the heroic Achaean legends handled by one great poet. They find a composite by many hands, good and bad, and of many ages, they say; sometimes the whole composition and part of the poems are ascribed to a late *littérateur*. Now to that supposed state of things we do find several "true parallels," in Germany, in Finland, in Ireland. But the results of work by these many hands in many ages are anything but "a true parallel" to the results which lie before us in the *Iliad* and *ODYSSEY*. Where the processes of composite authorship throughout many *AGES* certainly occur, as in Germany and Ireland, there we find no true parallel to the Homeric poems. It follows that, in all probability, no such processes as the critics postulate produced the *Iliad* and Odyssey, for where the processes existed, beyond doubt they failed egregiously to produce the results.

Sir Richard's argument would have been logical if many efforts by many hands, in many ages, in England, Finland, Ireland, Iceland, and Germany did actually produce true parallels to the Achaean epics. They did not, and why not? Simply because these other races had no Homer. All the other necessary conditions were present, the legendary material, the heroic society, the Court minstrels, all — except the great poet. In all the countries mentioned, except Finland, there existed military aristocracies with their courts, castles, and minstrels, while the minstrels had rich material in legendary history and in myth, and *Märchen*, and old songs. But none of the minstrels was adequate to the production of an English, German, or Irish *ILIAD* or *ODYSSEY*, or even of a true artistic equivalent in France.

We have tried to show that the critics, rejecting a Homer, have been unable to advance any adequate hypothesis to account for the existence of the *ILIAD* and *ODYSSEY*. Now we see that, where such conditions of production as they postulate existed but where there was no great epic genius, they can find no true parallels to the Epics. Their logic thus breaks down at both ends.

It may be replied that in non-Greek lands one condition found in Greek society failed: the succession of a reading age to an age of heroic listeners. But this is not so. In France and Germany an age of readers duly began, but they did not mainly read copies of the old heroic poems. They turned to lyric poetry, as in Greece, and they recast the heroic songs into modern and popular forms in verse and prose, when they took any notice of the old heroic poems at all.

One merit of the Greek epics is a picture of "a certain phase of early civilisation," and that picture is "a naturally harmonious whole," with "unity of impression," says Sir Richard Jebb. Certainly we can find no true parallel, on an Homeric scale, to this "harmonious picture" in the epics of Germany and England or in the early literature of Ireland. Sir Richard, for England, omits notice of *Beowulf*; but we know that *Beowulf*, a long heroic poem, is a mass of anachronisms — a heathen legend in a Christian setting. The hero, that great heathen champion, has his epic filled full of Christian allusions and Christian morals, because the clerical redactor, in Christian England, could not but intrude these things into old pagan legends evolved by the continental ancestors of our race. He had no "painful anxiety," like the supposed Ionic continuators of the Achaean poems (when they are not said to have done precisely the reverse), to preserve harmony of ancient ideas. Such archaeological anxieties are purely modern.

If we take the *Nibelungenlied,* we find that it is a thing of many rehandlings, even in existing manuscripts. For example, the Greeks clung to the hexameter in Homer. Not so did the Germans adhere to old metres. The poem that, in the oldest MS., is written in assonances, in later MSS. is reduced to regular rhymes and is retouched in many essential respects. The matter of the *Nibelungenlied* is of heathen origin. We see the real state of heathen affairs in the Icelandic versions of the same tale, for the Icelanders were peculiar in preserving ancient lays; and, when these were woven into a prose saga, the archaic and heathen features were retained. Had the post-Christian prose author of the *Volsunga* been a great poet, we might find in his work a true parallel to the *Iliad*. But, though he preserves the harmony of his picture of pre-Christian princely life (save in the savage beginnings of his story), he is not a poet; so the true parallel to the Greek epic fails, noble as is the saga in many passages. In the German *Nibelungenlied* all is modernised; the characters are Christian, the manners are chivalrous, and *Märchen* older than Homer are forced into a wandering mediaeval chronicle-poem. The Germans, in short, had no early poet of genius, and therefore could not produce a true parallel to *ILIAD* or Odyssey. The mediaeval poets, of course, never dreamed of archaeological anxiety, as the supposed Ionian continuators are sometimes said to have done, any more than did the French and late Welsh handlers of the ancient Celtic Arthurian materials. The late German *bearbeiter* of the *Nibelungenlied* has no idea of unity of plot — *enfin*, Germany, having excellent and ancient legendary material for an epic, but producing no parallel to *ILIAD* and Odyssey, only proves how absolutely essential a Homer was to the Greek epics.

"If any inference could properly be drawn from the Edda" (the Icelandic collection of heroic lays), says Sir Richard Jebb, "it would be that short separate poems on cognate subjects can long exist as a collection *without* coalescing into such an artistic whole as the Iliad or the Odyssey."

It is our own argument that Sir Richard states. "Short separate poems on cognate subjects" can certainly co-exist for long anywhere, but they cannot automatically and they cannot by aid of an editor become a long epic. Nobody can stitch and vamp them into a poem like the *ILIAD* or Odyssey. To produce a poem like either of these a great poetic genius must arise, and fuse the ancient materials, as Hephaestus fused copper and tin, and then cast the mass into a mould of his own making. A small poet may reduce the legends and lays into a very inartistic whole, a very inharmonious whole, as in the *Nibelungenlied*, but a controlling poet, not a mere redactor or editor, is needed to perform even that feat.

Where a man who is not a poet undertakes to produce the coalescence, as Dr. Lönnrot (1835-1849) did in the case of the peasant, not courtly, lays of Finland, he “fails to prove that mere combining and editing can form an artistic whole out of originally distinct songs, even though concerned with closely related themes,” says Sir Richard Jebb.

This is perfectly true; much as Lönnrot botched and vamped the Finnish lays he made no epic out of them. But, as it is true, how did the late Athenian drudge of Pisistratus succeed where Lönnrot failed? “In the dovetailing of the *ODYSSEY* we see the work of one mind,” says Sir Richard. This mind cannot have been the property of any one but a great poet, obviously, as the *Odyssey* is confessedly “an artistic whole.” Consequently the disintegrators of the Odyssey, when they are logical, are reduced to averring that the poem is an exceedingly inartistic whole, a whole not artistic at all. While Mr. Leaf calls it “a model of skilful construction,” Wilamowitz Mollendorff denounces it as the work of “a slenderly-gifted botcher,” of about 650 B.C., a century previous to Mr. Leaf’s Athenian editor.

Thus we come, after all, to a crisis in which mere literary appreciation is the only test of the truth about a work of literature. The Odyssey is an admirable piece of artistic composition, or it is the very reverse. Blass, Mr. Leaf, Sir Richard Jebb, and the opinion of the ages declare that the composition is excellent. A crowd of German critics and Father Browne, S.J., hold that the composition is feeble. The criterion is the literary taste of each party to the dispute. Kirchhoff and Wilamowitz Möllendorff see a late bad patchwork, where Mr. Leaf, Sir Richard Jebb, Blass, Wolf, and the verdict of all mankind see a masterpiece of excellent construction. The world has judged: the *Odyssey* is a marvel of construction: therefore is not the work of a late botcher of disparate materials, but of a great early poet. Yet Sir Richard Jebb, while recognising the *Odyssey* as “an artistic whole” and an harmonious picture, and recognising Lönnrot’s failure “to prove that mere combining and editing can form an artistic whole out of originally distinct songs, even though concerned with closely related themes,” thinks that Kirchhoff has made the essence of his theory of late combination of distinct strata of poetical material from different sources and periods, in the *Odyssey*, “in the highest degree probable.”

It is, of course, possible that Mr. Leaf, who has not edited the *Odyssey*, may now, in deference to his belief in the Pisistratean editor, have changed his opinion of the merits of the poem. If the *Odyssey*, like the *Iliad*, was, till about 540 B.C., a chaos of lays of all ages, variously known in various *répertoires* of the rhapsodists, and patched up by the Pisistratean editor, then of two things one — either Mr. Leaf abides by his enthusiastic belief in the excellency of the composition, or he does not. If he does still believe that the composition of the *Odyssey* is a masterpiece, then the Pisistratean editor was a great master of construction. If he now, on the other hand, agrees with Wilamowitz Möllendorff that the *Odyssey* is cobbler’s work, then his literary opinions are unstable.

CHAPTER XVI

HOMER AND THE FRENCH MEDIAEVAL EPICS

Sir Richard Jebb remarks, with truth, that “before any definite solution of the Homeric problem could derive scientific support from such analogies” (with epics of other peoples), “it would be necessary to show that the particular conditions under which the Homeric poems appear in early Greece had been reproduced with sufficient closeness elsewhere.” Now we can show that the particular conditions under which the Homeric poems confessedly arose were “reproduced with sufficient closeness elsewhere,” except that no really great poet was elsewhere present.

This occurred among the Germanic aristocracy, “the Franks of France,” in the eleventh, twelfth, and early thirteenth centuries of our era. The closeness of the whole parallel, allowing for the admitted absence in France of a very great and truly artistic poet, is astonishing.

We have first, in France, answering to the Achaean aristocracy, the Frankish noblesse of warriors dwelling in princely courts and strong castles, dominating an older population, owing a practically doubtful fealty to an Over-Lord, the King, passing their days in the chace, in private war, or in revolt against the Over-Lord, and, for all literary entertainment, depending on the recitations of epic poems by *jongleurs*, who in some cases are of gentle birth, and are the authors of the poems which they recite.

“This national poetry,” says M. Gaston Paris, “was born and mainly developed among the warlike class, princes, lords, and their courts…. At first, no doubt, some of these men of the sword themselves composed and chanted lays” (like Achilles), “but soon there arose a special class of poets … They went from court to court, from castle … Later, when the townsfolk began to be interested in their chants, they sank a degree, and took their stand in public open places …”

In the *Iliad* we hear of no minstrels in camp: in the *Odyssey* a prince has a minstrel among his retainers — Demodocus, at the court of Phaeacia; Phemius, in the house of Odysseus. In Ionia, when princes had passed away, rhapsodists recited for gain in marketplaces and at fairs. The parallel with France is so far complete.

The French national epics, like those of the Achaeans, deal mainly with legends of a long past legendary age. To the French authors the greatness and the fortunes of the Emperor Charles and other heroic heads of great Houses provide a theme. The topics of song are his wars, and the prowess and the quarrels of his peers with the Emperor and among themselves. These are seen magnified through a mist of legend; Saracens are substituted for Gascon foes, and the great Charles, so nobly venerable a figure in the oldest French epic (the *Chanson de Roland, circ.* 1050-1070 in its earliest extant form), is more degraded, in the later epics, than Agamemnon himself. The “machinery” of the gods in Homer is replaced by the machinery of angels, but the machinery of dreams is in vogue, as in the Iliad and *Odyssey*. The sources are traditional and legendary.

We know that brief early lays of Charles and other heroes had existed, and they may have been familiar to the French epic poets, but they were not merely patched into the epics. The form of verse is not ballad-like, but a series of *laisses* of decasyllabic lines, each *laisse* presenting one assonance, not rhyme. As time went on, rhyme and Alexandrine lines were introduced, and the old epics were expanded, altered, condensed, *remaniés*, with progressive changes in taste, metre, language, manners, and ways of life.

Finally, an age of Cyclic poems began; authors took new characters, whom they attached by false genealogies to the older heroes, and they chanted the adventures of the sons of the former heroes, like the Cyclic poet who sang of the son of Odysseus by Circe. All these conditions are undeniably “true parallels” to “the conditions under which the Homeric poems appeared.” The only obvious point of difference vanishes if we admit, with Sir Richard Jebb and M. Salomon Reinach, the possibility of the existence of written texts in the Greece of the early iron age.

We do not mean texts prepared for a *reading* public. In France such a public, demanding texts for reading, did not arise till the decadence of the epic. The oldest French texts of their epics are small volumes, each page containing some thirty lines in one column. Such volumes were carried about by the *jongleurs*, who chanted their own or other men’s verses. They were not in the hands of readers.

An example of an author-reciter, Jendeus de Brie (he was the maker of the first version of the *Bataille Loquifer*, twelfth century) is instructive. Of Jendeus de Brie it is said that “he wrote the poem, kept it very carefully, taught it to no man, made much gain out of it in Sicily where he sojourned, and left it to his son when he died.” Similar statements are made in *Renaus de Montauban* (the existing late version is of the thirteenth century) about Huon de Villeneuve, who would not part with his poem for horses or furs, or for any price, and about other poets.

These early *jongleurs* were men of position and distinction; their theme was the *gestes* of princes; they were not under the ban with which the Church pursued vulgar strollers, men like the Greek rhapsodists. Pindar's story that Homer wrote the *Cypria* and gave the copy, as the dowry of his daughter, to Stasinus who married her, could only have arisen in Greece in circumstances exactly like those of Jendeus de Brie. Jendeus lived on his poem by reciting it, and left it to his son when he died. The story of Homer and Stasinus could only have been invented in an age when the possession of the solitary text of a poem was a source of maintenance to the poet. This condition of things could not exist, either when there were no written texts or when such texts were multiplied to serve the wants of a reading public.

Again, a poet in the fortunate position of Jendeus would not teach his Epic in a "school" of reciters unless he were extremely well paid. In later years, after his death, his poem came, through copies good or bad, into circulation.

Late, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, we hear of a "school" of *jongleurs* at Beauvais. In Lent they might not ply their profession, so they gathered at Beauvais, where they could learn *cantilenae*, new lays. But by that time the epic was decadent and dying?

The audiences of the *jongleurs*, too, were no longer, by that time, what they had been. The rich and great, now, had library copies of the epics; not small *jongleurs'* copies, but folios, richly illuminated and bound, with two or three columns of matter on each page.

The age of recitations from a text in princely halls was ending or ended; the age of a reading public was begun. The earlier condition of the *jongleur* who was his own poet, and carefully guarded his copyright in spite of all temptations to permit the copying of his MS., is regarded by Sir Richard Jebb as quite a possible feature of early Greece. He thinks that there was "no wide circulation of writings by numerous copies for a reading public" before the end of the fifth century B.C. As Greek mercenaries could write, and write well, in the seventh to sixth centuries, I incline to think that there may then, and earlier, have been a reading public. However, long before that a man might commit his poems to writing. "Wolf allows that some men did, as early at least as 776 B.C. The verses might never be read by anybody except himself" (the author) "or those to whom he privately bequeathed them" (as Jendeus de Brie bequeathed his poem to his son), "but his end would have been gained."

Recent discoveries as to the very early date of linear non-Phoenician writing in Crete of course increase the probability of this opinion, which is corroborated by the story of the *Cypria*, given as a dowry with the author's daughter. Thus "the particular conditions under which the Homeric poems appeared" "been reproduced with sufficient closeness" in every respect, with surprising closeness, in the France of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. The social conditions are the same; the legendary materials are of identical character; the method of publication by recitation is identical; the cyclic decadence occurs in both cases, the *monomanie cyclique*. In the Greece of Homer we have the four necessary conditions of the epic, as found by M. Léon Gautier in mediaeval France. We have: — (1) An uncritical age confusing history by legend.

(2) We have a national *milieu* with religious uniformity.

(3) We have poems dealing with — ”Old unhappy far-off things
And battles long ago.”

(4) We have representative heroes, the Over-Lord, and his peers or paladins.

It may be added that in Greece, as in France, some poets adapt into the adventures of their heroes world-old *Märchen*, as in the Odyssey, and in the cycle of the parents of Charles.

In the French, as in the Greek epics, we have such early traits of poetry as the textual repetition of speeches, and the recurring epithets, “swift-footed Achilles,” “Charles of the white beard,” “blameless heroes” (however blamable). Ladies, however old, are always “of the clear face.” Thus the technical manners of the French and Greek epics are closely parallel; they only differ in the exquisite art of Homer, to which no approach is made by the French poets.

The French authors of epic, even more than Homer, abound in episodes much more distracting than those of the *Iliad*. Of blood and wounds, of course, both the French and the Greek are profuse: they were writing for men of the sword, not for modern critics. Indeed, the battle pieces of France almost translate those of Homer. The Achaean “does on his goodly corslet”; the French knight “*sur ses espalles son halberc li colad*.” The Achaean, with his great sword, shears off an arm at the shoulder. The French knight — “*Trenchad le braz, Parmi leschine sun grant espee li passe*.”

The huge shield of Aias becomes *cele grant targe duble* in France, and the warriors boast over their slain in France, as in the *Iliad*. In France, as in Greece, a favourite epic theme was “The Wrath” of a hero, of Achilles, of Roland, of Ganelon, of Odysseus and Achilles wrangling at a feast to the joy of Agamemnon, “glad that the bravest of his peers were at strife.” .]

Of all the many parallels between the Greek and French epics, the most extraordinary is the coincidence between Charles with his peers and Agamemnon with his princes. The same historical conditions occurred, at an interval of more than two thousand years. Agamemnon is the Bretwalda, the Over-Lord, as Mr. Freeman used to say, of the Achaeans: he is the suzerain. Charles in the French epics holds the same position, but the French poets regard him in different lights. In the earliest epic, the *Chanson* de Roland, a divinity doth hedge the famous Emperor, whom Jeanne d'Arc styled "St. Charlemagne." He was, in fact, a man of thirty-seven at the date of the disaster of Roncesvaux, where Roland fell (778 A.D.). But in the tradition that has reached the poet of the *chanson* he is a white-bearded warrior, as vigorous as he is venerable. As he rules by advice of his council, he bids them deliberate on the proposals of the Paynim King, Marsile — to accept or refuse them. Roland, the counterpart of Achilles in all respects (Oliver is his Patroclus), is for refusing: Ganelon appears to have the rest with him when he speaks in favour of peace and return to France out of Spain. So, in the *Iliad* (II.), the Achaeans lend a ready ear to Agamemnon when he proposes the abandonment of the siege of Troy. Each host, French and Achaean, is heartily homesick.

Ganelon's advice prevailing, it is necessary to send an envoy to the Saracen court. It is a dangerous mission; other envoys have been sent and been murdered. The Peers, however, volunteer, beginning with the aged Naismes, the Nestor of the Franks. His offer is not accepted, nor are those of Oliver, Roland, and Turpin. Roland then proposes that Ganelon shall be sent; and hence arises the Wrath of Ganelon, which was the ruin of Roland and the peers who stood by him. The warriors attack each other in speeches of Homeric fury. Charles preserves his dignity, and Ganelon departs on his mission. He deliberately sells himself, and seals the fate of the peers whom he detests: the surprise of the rearguard under Roland, the deadly battle, and the revenge of Charles make up the rest of the poem. Not even in victory is Charles allowed repose; the trumpet again summons him to war. He is of those whom Heaven has called to endless combat — "Their whole lives long to be winding
Skeins of grievous wars, till every soul of them perish,"

in the words of Diomede.

Such is the picture of the imperial Charles in one of the oldest of the French epics. The heart of the poet is with the aged, but unbroken and truly imperial, figure of St. Charlemagne — wise, just, and brave, a true "shepherd of the people," regarded as the conqueror of all the known kingdoms of the world. He is, among his fierce paladins, like "the conscience of a knight among his warring members." "The greatness of Charlemagne has entered even into his name;" but as time went on and the feudal princes began the long struggle against the French king, the poets gratified their patrons by degrading the character of the Emperor. They created a second type of Charles, and it is the second type that on the whole most resembles the Agamemnon of the *Iliad.*

We ask why the widely ruling lord of golden Mycenae is so skilfully and persistently represented as respectable, indeed, by reason of his office, but detestable, on the whole, in character?

The answer is that just as the second type of Charles is the result of feudal jealousies of the king, so the character of Agamemnon reflects the princely hatreds of what we may call the feudal age of Greece. The masterly portrait of Agamemnon could only have been designed to win the sympathies of feudal listeners, princes with an Over-Lord whom they cannot repudiate, for whose office they have a traditional reverence, but whose power they submit to with no good will, and whose person and character some of them can barely tolerate.

an historical unity. The poem deals with what may be called a feudal society, and the attitudes of the Achaean Bretwalda and of his peers are, from beginning to end of the *Iliad* and in every Book of it, those of the peers and king in the later *Chansons de Geste*.

Returning to the decadent Charles of the French epics, we lay no stress on the story of his incest with his sister, Gilain, "whence sprang Roland." The House of Thyestes, whence Agamemnon sprang, is marked by even blacker legends. The scandal is mythical, like the same scandal about the King Arthur, who in romance is so much inferior to his knights, a reflection of feudal jealousies and hatreds. In places the reproaches hurled by the peers at Charles read like paraphrases of those which the Achaean princes cast at Agamemnon. Even Naismes, the Nestor of the French epics, cries: "It is for you that we have left our lands and fiefs, our fair wives and our children … But, by the Apostle to whom they pray in Rome, were it not that we should be guilty before God we would go back to sweet France, and thin would be your host." In the lines quoted we seem to hear the voice of the angered Achilles: "We came not hither in our own quarrel, thou shameless one, but to please thee! But now go I back to Phthia with my ships — the better part."

Agamemnon answers that Zeus is on his side, just as even the angry Naismes admits that duty to God demands obedience to Charles. There cannot be parallels more close and true than these, between poems born at a distance from each other of more than two thousand years, but born in similar historical conditions.

In Guide *Bourgogne*, a poem of the twelfth century, Ogier cries, "They say that Charlemagne is the conqueror of kingdoms: they lie, it is Roland who conquers them with Oliver, Naismes of the long beard, and myself. As to Charles, he eats." Compare Achilles to Agamemnon, "Thou, heavy with wine, with dog's eyes and heart of deer, never hast thou dared to arm thee for war with the host …" It is Achilles or Roland who stakes his life in war and captures cities; it is Agamemnon or Charles who camps by the wine. Charles, in the *Chanson de Saisnes*, abases himself before Herapois, even more abjectly than

Agamemnon in his offer of atonement to Achilles. Charles is as arrogant as Agamemnon: he strikes Roland with his glove, for an uncommanded victory, and then he loses heart and weeps as copiously as the penitent Agamemnon often does when he rues his arrogance.

The poet of the *Iliad* is a great and sober artist. He does not make Agamemnon endure the lowest disgraces which the latest French epic poets heap on Charles. But we see how close is the parallel between Agamemnon and the Charles of the decadent type. Both characters are reflections of feudal jealousy of the Over-Lord; both reflect real antique historical conditions, and these were the conditions of the Achaeans in Europe, not of the Ionians in Asia.

The treatment of Agamemnon's character is harmonious throughout. It is not as if in "the original poem" Agamemnon were revered like St. Charlemagne in the *Chanson de Roland*, and in the "later" parts of the *Iliad* were reduced to the contemptible estate of the Charles of the decadent *Chanson de Geste*. In the *Iliad* Agamemnon's character is consistently presented from beginning to end, presented, I think, as it could only be by a great poet of the feudal Achaean society in Europe. The Ionians— "democratic to the core," says Mr. Leaf — would either have taken no interest in the figure of the Over-Lord, or would have utterly degraded him below the level of the Charles of the latest *Chansons*. Or the late rhapsodists, in their irresponsible lays, would have presented a wavering and worthless portrait.

The conditions under which the *Chansons* arose were truly parallel to the conditions under which the Homeric poems arose, and the poems, French and Achaean, are also true parallels, except in genius. The French have no Homer: *cared vate sacro*. It follows that a Homer was necessary to the evolution of the Greek epics.

It may, perhaps, be replied to this argument that our *Iliad* is only a very late *remaniement*, like the fourteenth century *Chansons de Geste*, of something much earlier and nobler. But in France, in the age of *remaniement*, even the versification had changed from assonance to rhyme, from the decasyllabic line to the Alexandrine in the decadence, while a plentiful lack of seriousness and a love of purely fanciful adventures in fairyland take the place of the austere spirit of war. Ladies "in a coming on humour" abound, and Charles is involved with his Paladins in *gauloiseries* of a Rabelaisian cast. The French language has become a new thing through and through, and manners and weapons are of a new sort; but the high seriousness of the *Iliad* is maintained throughout, except in the burlesque battle of the gods: the versification is the stately hexameter, linguistic alterations are present, extant, but inconspicuous. That the armour and weapons are uniform in character throughout we have tried to prove, while the state of society and of religion is certainly throughout harmonious. Our parallel, then, between the French and the Greek national epics appears as perfect as such a thing can be, surprisingly perfect, while the great point of difference in degree of art is accounted for by the existence of an Achaean poet of supreme genius. Not such, certainly, were the composers of the Cyclic poems, men contemporary with the supposed later poets of the *Iliad*.

CHAPTER XVII

CONCLUSION

The conclusion at which we arrive is that the *Iliad*, as a whole, is the work of one age. That it has reached us without interpolations and *lacunae* and *remaniements* perhaps no person of ordinary sense will allege. But that the mass of the Epic is of one age appears to be a natural inference from the breakdown of the hypotheses which attempt to explain it as a late mosaic. We have also endeavoured to prove, quite apart from the failure of theories of expansion and compilation, that the *Iliad* presents an historical unity, unity of character, unity of customary law, and unity in its archaeology. If we are right, we must have an opinion as to how the Epic was preserved.

If we had evidence for an Homeric school, we might imagine that the Epic was composed by dint of memory, and preserved, like the Sanskrit Hymns of the Rig Veda, and the Hymns of the Maoris, the Zuñis, and other peoples in the lower or middle stage of barbarism, by the exertions and teaching of schools. But religious hymns and mythical hymns — the care of a priesthood — are one thing; a great secular epic is another. Priests will not devote themselves from age to age to its conservation. It cannot be conserved, with its unity of tone and character, and, on the whole, even of language, by generations of paid strollers, who recite new lays of their own, as well as any old lays that they may remember, which they alter at pleasure.

We are thus driven back to the theory of early written texts, not intended to meet the wants of a reading public, but for the use of the poet himself and of those to whom he may bequeath his work. That this has been a method in which orally published epics were composed and preserved in a non-reading age we have proved in our chapter on the French Chansons *de Geste*. Unhappily, the argument that what was done in mediaeval France might be done in sub-Mycenaean Greece, is based on probabilities, and these are differently estimated by critics of different schools. All seems to depend on each individual's sense of what is "likely." In that case science has nothing to make in the matter. Nitzsche thought that writing might go back to the time of Homer. Mr. Monro thought it "probable enough that writing, even if known at the time of Homer, was not used for literary purposes." Sir Richard Jebb, as we saw, took a much more favourable view of the probability of early written texts. M. Salomon Reinach, arguing from the linear written clay tablets of Knossos and from a Knossian cup with writing on it in ink, thinks that there may have existed whole “Minoan” libraries — manuscripts executed on perishable materials, palm leaves, papyrus, or parchment. Mr. Leaf, while admitting that “writing was known in some form through the whole period of epic development,” holds that “it is in the highest degree unlikely that it was ever employed to form a standard text of the Epic or any portion of it…. At best there was a continuous tradition of those portions of the poems which were especially popular …” Father Browne dates the employment of writing for the preservation of the Epic “from the sixth century onwards.” He also says that “it is difficult to suppose that the Mycenaeans, who were certainly in contact with this form of writing” (the Cretan linear), “should not have used it much more freely than our direct evidence warrants us in asserting.” He then mentions the Knossian cup “with writing inscribed on it apparently in pen and ink … The conclusion is that ordinary writing was in use, but that the materials, probably palm leaves, have disappeared.”

Why it should be unlikely that a people confessedly familiar with writing used it for the preservation of literature, when we know that even the Red Indians preserve their songs by means of pictographs, while West African tribes use incised characters, is certainly not obvious. Many sorts of prae-Phoenician writing were current during the Mycenaean age in Asia, Egypt, Assyria, and in Cyprus. As these other peoples used writing of their own sort for literary purposes, it is not easy to see why the Cretans, for example, should not have done the same thing. Indeed, Father Browne supposes that the Mycenaeans used “ordinary writing,” and used it freely. Nevertheless, the Epic was not written, he says, till the sixth century B.C. Cauer, indeed, remarks that “the Finnish epic” existed unwritten till Lbnnrot, its Pisistratus, first collected it from oral recitation. But there is not, and never was, any “Finnish epic.” There were cosmogonic songs, as among the Maoris and Zuñis — songs of the beginnings of things; there were magical songs, songs of weddings, a song based on the same popular tale that underlies the legend of the Argonauts. There were songs of the Culture Hero, songs of burial and feast, and of labour. Lönnrot collected these, and tried by interpolations to make an epic out of them; but the point, as Comparetti has proved, is that he failed. There is no Finnish epic, only a mass of *Volkslieder.* Cauer’s other argument, that the German popular tales, Grimm’s tales, were unwritten till 1812, is as remote from the point at issue. Nothing can be less like an epic than a volume of *Märchen.*

As usual we are driven back upon a literary judgment. Is the *Iliad* a patchwork of metrical *Märchen* or is it an epic nobly constructed? If it is the former, writing was not needed; if it is the latter, in the absence of Homeric guilds or colleges, only writing can account for its preservation.

It is impossible to argue against a critic’s subjective sense of what is likely. Possibly that sense is born of the feeling that the Cretan linear script, for example, or the Cyprian syllabary, looks very odd and outlandish. The critic’s imagination boggles at the idea of an epic written in such scripts. In that case his is not the scientific imagination; he is checked merely by the unfamiliar. Or his sense of unlikelihood may be a subconscious survival of Wolf’s opinion, formed by him at a time when the existence of the many scripts of the old world was unknown.

Our own sense of probability leads us to the conclusion that, in an age when people could write, people wrote down the Epic. If they applied their art to literature, then the preservation of the Epic is explained. Written first in a prae-Phoenician script, it continued to be written in the Greek adaptation of the Phoenician alphabet. There was not yet, probably, a reading public, but there were a few clerkly men.

That the Cretans, at least, could write long before the age of Homer, Mr. Arthur Evans has demonstrated by his discoveries. Prom my remote undergraduate days I was of the opinion which he has proved to be correct, starting, like him, from what I knew about savage pictographs.

M. Reinach and Mr. Evans have pointed out that in this matter tradition joins hands with discovery. Diodorus Siculus, speaking of the Cretan Zeus and probably on Cretan authority, says: “As to those who hold that the Syrians invented letters, from whom the Phoenicians received them and handed them on to the Greeks, … and that for this reason the Greeks call letters ‘Phoenician,’ some reply that the Phoenicians did not letters, but merely modified (transposed 3) the forms of the letters, and that most men use this form of script, and thus letters came to be styled ‘Phoenician.’” In fact, the alphabet is a collection of signs of palaeolithic antiquity and of vast diffusion.

Thus the use of writing for the conservation of the Epic cannot seem to me to be unlikely, but rather probable; and here one must leave the question, as the subjective element plays so great a part in every man’s sense of what is likely or unlikely. That writing cannot have been used for this literary purpose, that the thing is impossible, nobody will now assert.

My supposition is, then, that the text of the Epic existed in AEgean script till Greece adapted to her own tongue the “Phoenician letters,” which I think she did not later than the ninth to eighth centuries; “at the beginning of the ninth century,” says Professor Bury. This may seem an audaciously early date, but when we find vases of the eighth to seventh centuries bearing inscriptions, we may infer that a knowledge of reading and writing was reasonably common.

When such a humble class of hirelings or slaves as the pot-painters can sign their work, expecting their signatures to be read, reading and writing must be very common accomplishments among the more fortunate classes.

If Mr. Gardner is right in dating a number of incised inscriptions on early pottery at Naucratis before the middle of the seventh century, we reach the same conclusion. In fact, if these inscriptions be of a century earlier than the Abu Simbel inscriptions, of date 590 B.C., we reach 690 B.C. Wherefore, as writing does not become common in a moment, it must have existed in the eighth century B.C. We are not dealing here with a special learned class, but with ordinary persons who could write.

Interesting for our purpose is the verse incised on a Dipylon vase, found at Athens in 1880. It is of an ordinary cream-jug shape, with a neck, a handle, a spout, and a round belly. On the neck, within a zigzag "geometrical" pattern, is a doe, feeding, and a tall water-fowl. On the shoulder is scratched with a point, in very antique Attic characters running from right to left, . "This is the jug of him who is the most delicately sportive of all dancers of our time." The jug is attributed to the eighth century.

Taking the vase, with Mr. Walters, as of the eighth century, I do not suppose that the amateur who gave it to a dancer and scratched the hexameter was of a later generation than the jug itself. The vase may have cost him sixpence: he would give his friend a *new* vase; it is improbable that old jugs were sold at curiosity shops in these days, and given by amateurs to artists. The inscription proves that, in the eighth to seventh centuries, at a time of very archaic characters (the Alpha is lying down on its side, the aspirate is an oblong with closed ends and a stroke across the middle, and the Iota is curved at each end), people could write with ease, and would put verse into writing. The general accomplishment of reading is taken for granted.

Reading is also taken for granted by the Gortyn (Cretan) inscription of twelve columns long, *boustro-phedon* (running alternately from left to right, and from right to left). In this inscribed code of laws, incised on stone, money is not mentioned in the more ancient part, but fines and prices are calculated in "chalders" and "bolls" (and), as in Scotland when coin was scarce indeed. Whether the law contemplated the value of the vessels themselves, or, as in Scotland, of their contents in grain, I know not. The later inscriptions deal with coined money. If coin came in about 650 B.C., the older parts of the inscription may easily be of 700 B.C.

The Gortyn inscription implies the power of writing out a long code of laws, and it implies that persons about to go to law could read the public inscription, as we can read a proclamation posted up on a wall, or could have it read to them.

The alphabets inscribed on vases of the seventh century (Abecedaria), with “the archaic Greek forms of every one of the twenty-two Phoenician letters arranged precisely in the received Semitic order,” were, one supposes, gifts for boys and girls who were learning to read, just like our English alphabets on gingerbread.

Among inscriptions on tombstones of the end of the seventh century, there is the epitaph of a daughter of a potter. These writings testify to the general knowledge of reading, just as much as our epitaphs testify to the same state of education. The Athenian potter’s daughter of the seventh century B.C. had her epitaph, but the grave-stones of highlanders, chiefs or commoners, were usually uninscribed till about the end of the eighteenth century, in deference to custom, itself arising from the illiteracy of the highlanders in times past. I find no difficulty, therefore, in supposing that there were some Greek readers and writers in the eighth century, and that primary education was common in the seventh. In these circumstances my sense of the probable is not revolted by the idea of a written epic, in characters, even in the eighth century, but the notion that there was no such thing till the middle of the sixth century seems highly improbable. All the conditions were present which make for the composition and preservation of literary works in written texts. That there were many early written copies of Homer in the eighth century I am not inclined to believe. The Greeks were early a people who could read, but were not a reading people. Setting newspapers aside, there is no such thing as a reading *people*.

The Greeks preferred to listen to recitations, but my hypothesis is that the rhapsodists who recited had texts, like the *jongleurs*’ books of their epics in France, and that they occasionally, for definite purposes, interpolated matter into their texts. There were also texts, known in later times as “city texts” (), which Aristarchus knew, but he did not adopt the various readings.

Athens had a text in Solon’s time, if he entered the decree that the whole Epic should be recited in due order, every five years, at the Panathenaic festival. “This implies the possession of a complete text.”

Cauer remarks that the possibility of “interpolation” “began only after the fixing of the text by Pisistratus.” But surely if every poet and reciter could thrust any new lines which he chose to make into any old lays which he happened to know, that was interpolation, whether he had a book of the words or had none. Such interpolations would fill the orally recited lays which the supposed Pisistratean editor must have written down from recitation before he began his colossal task of making the *Iliad* out of them. If, on the other hand, reciters had books of the words, they could interpolate at pleasure into *them*, and such books may have been among the materials used in the construction of a text for the

Athenian book market. But if our theory be right, there must always have been a few copies of better texts than those of the late reciters' books, and the effort of the editors for the book market would be to keep the parts in which most manuscripts were agreed.

But how did Athens, or any other city, come to possess a text? One can only conjecture; but my conjecture is that there had always been texts — copied out in successive generations — in the hands of the curious; for example, in the hands of the Cyclic poets, who knew our *Iliad* as the late French Cyclic poets knew the earlier *Chansons de Geste*. They certainly knew it, for they avoided interference with it; they worked at epics which led up to it, as in the *Cypria;* they borrowed *motifs* from hints and references in the *Iliad,* and they carried on the story from the death of Hector, in the *AEthiopis* of Arctinus of Miletus. This epic ended with the death of Achilles, when *The Little Iliad* produced the tale to the bringing in of the wooden horse. Arctinus goes on with his *Sack* of *Ilios*, others wrote of *The Return* of *the Heroes,* and the *Telegonia* is a sequel to the Odyssey. The authors of these poems knew the *Iliad*, then, as a whole, and how could they have known it thus if it only existed in the casual *repertoire* of strolling reciters? The Cyclic poets more probably had texts of Homer, and themselves wrote their own poems — how it paid, whether they recited them and collected rewards or not, is, of course, unknown.

The Cyclic poems, to quote Sir Richard Jebb, "help to fix the lowest limit for the age of the Homeric poems. The earliest Cyclic poems, dating from about 776 B.C., presuppose the *Iliad,* being planned to introduce or continue it…. It would appear, then, that the *Iliad* must have existed in something like its present compass as early as 800 B.C.; indeed a considerably earlier date will seem probable, if due time is allowed for the poem to have grown into such fame as would incite the effort to continue it and to prelude to it"

Sir Richard then takes the point on which we have already insisted, namely, that the Cyclic poets of the eighth century B.C. live in an age of ideas, religions, ritual, and so forth which are absent from the *Iliad*

Thus the *Iliad* existed with its characteristics that are prior to 800 B.C., and in its present compass, and was renowned before 800 B.C. As it could not possibly have thus existed in the *repertoire* of irresponsible strolling minstrels and reciters, and as there is no evidence for a college, school, or guild which preserved the Epic by a system of mnemonic teaching, while no one can deny at least the possibility of written texts, we are driven to the hypothesis that written texts there were, whence descended, for example, the text of Athens.

We can scarcely suppose, however, that such texts were perfect in all respects, for we know how, several centuries later, in a reading age, papyrus fragments of the *Iliad* display unwarrantable interpolation. But Plato's frequent quotations, of course made at an earlier date, show that "whatever interpolated texts of Homer were then current, the copy from which Plato quoted was not one of them." Plato had something much better.

When a reading public for Homer arose — and, from the evidences of the widespread early knowledge of reading, such a small public may have come into existence sooner than is commonly supposed — Athens was the centre of the book trade. To Athens must be due the prae-Alexandrian Vulgate, or prevalent text, practically the same as our own. Some person or persons must have made that text — not by taking down from recitation all the lays which they could collect, as Herd, Scott, Mrs. Brown, and others collected much of the *Border Minstrelsy*, and not by then tacking the lays into a newly-composed whole. They must have done their best with such texts as were accessible to them, and among these were probably the copies used by reciters and rhapsodists, answering to the MS. books of the mediaeval *jongleurs.*

Mr. Jevons has justly and acutely remarked that "we do not know, and there is no external evidence of any description which leads us to suppose, that the *Iliad* was ever expanded" (*J. H. S,* vii. 291-308).

That it was expanded is a mere hypothesis based on the idea that "if there was an *Iliad* at all in the ninth century, its length must have been such as was compatible with the conditions of an oral delivery,"— "a poem or poems short enough to be recited at a single sitting."

But we have proved, with Mr. Jevons and Blass, and by the analogy of the Chansons that, given a court audience (and a court audience is granted), there were no such narrow limits imposed on the length of a poem orally recited from night to night.

The length of the *Iliad* yields, therefore, no argument for expansions throughout several centuries. That theory, suggested by the notion that the original poem *MUST* have been short, is next supposed to be warranted by the inconsistencies and discrepancies. But we argue that these are only visible, as a rule, to "the analytical reader," for whom the poet certainly was not composing; that they occur in all long works of fictitious narrative; that the discrepancies often are not discrepancies; and, finally, that they are not nearly so glaring as the inconsistencies in the theories of each separatist critic. A theory, in such matter as this, is itself an explanatory myth, or the plot of a story which the critic invents to account for the facts in the case. These critical plots, we have shown, do not account for the facts of the case, for the critics do not excel in constructing plots. They wander into unperceived self-contradictions which they would not pardon in the poet. These contradictions are visible to "the analytical reader," who concludes that a very early poet may have been, though Homer seldom is, as inconsistent as a modern critic.

Meanwhile, though we have no external evidence that the *Iliad* was ever expanded — that it was expanded is an explanatory myth of the critics— "we do know, on good evidence," says Mr. Jevons, "that the *Iliad* was rhapsodised." The rhapsodists were men, as a rule, of one day recitations, though at a prolonged festival at Athens there was time for the whole *Iliad* to be recited. "They chose for recitation such incidents as could be readily detached, were interesting in themselves, and did not take too long to recite." Mr. Jevons suggests that the many brief poems collected in the Homeric hymns are invocations which the rhapsodists preluded to their recitals. The practice seems to have been for the rhapsodist first to pay his reverence to the god, "to begin from the god," at whose festival the recitation was being given (the short proems collected in the Hymns pay this reverence), "and then proceed with his rhapsody" — with his selected passage from the *Iliad*, "Beginning with thee" (the god of the festival), "I will go on to another lay," that is, to his selection from the Epic. Another conclusion of the proem often is, "I will be mindful both of thee and of another lay," meaning, says Mr. Jevons, that "the local deity will figure in the recitation from Homer which the rhapsodist is about to deliver."

These explanations, at all events, yield good sense. The invocation of Athene (Hymns, XI., XXVIII.) would serve as the proem of invocation to the recital of *Iliad*, V., VI. 1-311, the day of valour of Diomede, spurred on by the wanton rebuke of Agamemnon, and aided by Athene. The invocation of Hephaestus (Hymn XX.), would prelude to a recital of the *Making of the Awns of Achilles*, and so on.

But the rhapsodist may be reciting at a festival of Dionysus, about whom there is practically nothing said in the *Iliad*; for it is a proof of the antiquity of the *Iliad* that, when it was composed, Dionysus had not been raised to the Olympian peerage, being still a folk-god only. The rhapsodist, at a feast of Dionysus in later times, has to introduce the god into his recitation. The god is not in his text, but he adds him.

Why should any mortal have made this interpolation? Mr. Jevons's theory supplies the answer. The rhapsodist added the passages to suit the Dionysus feast, at which he was reciting.

The same explanation is offered for the long story of the *Birth* of which Agamemnon tells in his speech of apology and reconciliation. There is an invocation to Heracles (Hymns, XV.), and the author may have added this speech to his rhapsody of the Reconciliation, recited at a feast of Heracles. Perhaps the remark of Mr. Leaf offers the real explanation of the presence of this long story in the speech of Agamemnon: “Many speakers with a bad case take refuge in telling stories.” Agamemnon shows, says Mr. Leaf, “the peevish nervousness of a man who feels that he has been in the wrong,” and who follows a frank speaker like Achilles, only eager for Agamemnon to give the word to form and charge. So Agamemnon takes refuge in a long story, throwing the blame of his conduct on Destiny.

We do not need, then, the theory of a rhapsodist’s interpolation, but it is quite plausible in itself.

Local heroes, as well as gods, had their feasts in post-Homeric times, and a reciter at a feast of AEneas, or of his mother, Aphrodite, may have foisted in the very futile discourse of Achilles and AEneas, with its reference to Erichthonius, an Athenian hero.

In other cases the rhapsodist rounded off his selected passage by a few lines, as in *Iliad*, XIII. 656-659, where a hero is brought to follow his son’s dead body to the grave, though the father had been killed in *V. 576*. “It is really such a slip as is often made by authors who write,” says Mr. Leaf; and, in *Esmond*, Thackeray makes similar errors. The passage in XVI. 69-80, about which so much is said, as if it contradicted Book IX. (*The Embassy to Achilles*), is also, Mr. Jevons thinks, to be explained as “inserted by a rhapsodist wishing to make his extract complete in itself.” Another example — the confusion in the beginning of Book II. — we have already discussed (see Chapter IV.), and do not think that any explanation is needed, when we understand that Agamemnon, once wide-awake, had no confidence in his dream. However, Mr. Jevons thinks that rhapsodists, anxious to recite straight on from the dream to the battle, added II. 35-41, “the only lines which represent Agamemnon as believing confidently in his dream.” We have argued that he only believed *till he awoke*, and then, as always, wavered.

Thus, in our way of looking at these things, interpolations by rhapsodists are not often needed as explanations of difficulties. Still, granted that the rhapsodists, like the *jongleurs*, had texts, and that these were studied by the makers of the Vulgate, interpolations and errors might creep in by this way. As to changes in language, “a poetical dialect… is liable to be gradually modified by the influence of the ever-changing colloquial speech. And, in the early times, when writing was little used, this influence would be especially operative.”

To conclude, the hypothesis of a school of mnemonic teaching of the *Iliad* would account for the preservation of so long a poem in an age destitute of writing, when memory would be well cultivated. There may have been such schools. We only lack evidence for their existence. But against the hypothesis of the existence of early texts, there is nothing except the feeling of some critics that it is not likely. “They are dangerous guides, the feelings.”

In any case the opinion that the *Iliad* was a whole, centuries before Pisistratus, is the hypothesis which is by far the least fertile in difficulties, and, consequently, in inconsistent solutions of the problems which the theory of expansion first raises, and then, like an unskilled magician, fails to lay.

SIR WALTER SCOTT AND THE BORDER MINSTRELSY

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PREFACE

Persons not much interested in, or cognisant of, “antiquarian old womanries,” as Sir Walter called them, may ask “what all the pother is about,” in this little tractate. On my side it is “about” the veracity of Sir Walter Scott. He has been suspected of helping to compose, and of issuing as a genuine antique, a ballad, Auld Maitland. He also wrote about the ballad, as a thing obtained from recitation, to two friends and fellow-antiquaries. If to Scott’s knowledge it was a modern imitation, Sir Walter deliberately lied.

He did not: he did obtain the whole ballad from Hogg, who got it from recitation — as I believe, and try to prove, and as Scott certainly believed. The facts in the case exist in published works, and in manuscript letters of Ritson to Scott, and Hogg to Scott, and in the original MS. of the song, with a note by Hogg to Laidlaw. If we are interested in the truth about the matter, we ought at least to read the very accessible material before bringing charges against the Sheriff and the Shepherd of Ettrick.

Whether Auld Maitland be a good or a bad ballad is not part of the question. It was a favourite of mine in childhood, and I agree with Scott in thinking that it has strong dramatic situations. If it is a bad ballad, such as many people could compose, then it is not by Sir Walter.

The Ballad of Otterburne is said to have been constructed from Herd’s version, tempered by Percy’s version, with additions from a modern imagination. We have merely to read Professor Child’s edition of Otterburne, with Hogg’s letter covering his MS. copy of Otterburne from recitation, to see that this is a wholly erroneous view of the matter. We have all the materials for forming a judgment accessible to us in print, and have no excuse for preferring our own conjectures.

“No one now believes,” it may be said, “in the aged persons who lived at the head of Ettrick,” and recited Otterburne to Hogg. Colonel Elliot disbelieves, but he shows no signs of having read Hogg’s curious letter, in two parts, about these “old parties”; a letter written on the day when Hogg, he says, twice “pumped their memories.”

I print this letter, and, if any one chooses to think that it is a crafty fabrication, I can only say that its craft would have beguiled myself as it beguiled Scott.

It is a common, cheap, and ignorant scepticism that disbelieves in the existence, in Scott’s day, or in ours, of persons who know and can recite variants of our traditional ballads. The strange song of The Bitter Withy, unknown to Professor Child, was recovered from recitation but lately, in several English counties. The ignoble lay of Johnny Johnston has also been recovered: it is widely diffused. I myself obtained a genuine version of Where Goudie rins, through the kindness of Lady Mary Glyn; and a friend of Lady Rosalind Northcote procured the low English version of Young Beichan, or Lord Bateman, from an old woman in a rural workhouse. In Shropshire my friend Miss Burne, the president of the Folk-Lore Society, received from Mr. Hubert Smith, in 1883, a very remarkable variant, undoubtedly antique, of The Wife of Usher's Well. In 1896 Miss Backus found, in the hills of Polk County, North Carolina, another variant, intermediate between the Shropshire and the ordinary version.

There are many other examples of this persistence of ballads in the popular memory, even in our day, and only persons ignorant of the facts can suppose that, a century ago, there were no reciters at the head of Ettrick, and elsewhere in Scotland. Not even now has the halfpenny newspaper wholly destroyed the memories of traditional poetry and of traditional tales even in the English-speaking parts of our islands, while in the Highlands a rich harvest awaits the reapers.

I could not have produced the facts, about Auld Maitland especially, and in some other cases, without the kind and ungrudging aid, freely given to a stranger, of Mr. William Macmath, whose knowledge of ballad-lore, and especially of the ballad manuscripts at Abbotsford, is unrivalled. As to Auld Maitland, Mr. T. F. Henderson, in his edition of the Minstrelsy (Blackwood, 1892), also made due use of Hogg's MS., and his edition is most valuable to every student of Scott's method of editing, being based on the Abbotsford MSS. Mr. Henderson suspects, more than I do, the veracity of the Shepherd.

I am under obligations to Colonel Elliot's book, as it has drawn my attention anew to Auld Maitland, a topic which I had studied "somewhat lazily," like Quintus Smyrnaeus. I supposed that there was an inconsistency in two of Scott's accounts as to how he obtained the ballad. As Colonel Elliot points out, there was no inconsistency. Scott had two copies. One was Hogg's MS.: the other was derived from the recitation of Hogg's mother.

This trifle is addressed to lovers of Scott, of the Border, and of ballads, et non aultres.

It is curious to see how facts make havoc of the conjectures of the Higher Criticism in the case of Auld Maitland. If Hogg was the forger of that ballad, I asked, how did he know the traditions about Maitland and his three sons, which we only know from poems of about 1576 in the manuscripts of Sir Richard

Maitland? These poems in 1802 were, as far as I am aware, still unpublished.

Colonel Elliot urged that Leyden would know the poems, and must have known Hogg. From Leyden, then, Hogg would get the information. In the text I have urged that Leyden did not know Hogg. I am able now to prove that Hogg and Leyden never met till after Laidlaw gave the manuscript of Auld Maitland to Hogg.

The fact is given in the original manuscript of Laidlaw's Recollections of Sir Walter Scott (among the Laing MSS. in the library of the University of Edinburgh). Carruthers, in publishing Laidlaw's reminiscences, omitted the following passage. After Scott had read Auld Maitland aloud to Leyden and Laird Laidlaw, the three rode together to dine at Whitehope.

"Near the Craigbents," says Laidlaw, "Mr. Scott and Leyden drew together in a close and seemingly private conversation. I, of course, fell back. After a minute or two, Leyden reined in his horse (a black horse that Mr. Scott's servant used to ride) and let me come up. 'This Hogg,' said he, 'writes verses, I understand.' I assured him that he wrote very beautiful verses, and with great facility. 'But I trust,' he replied, 'that there is no fear of his passing off any of his own upon Scott for old ballads.' I again assured him that he would never think of such a thing; and neither would he at that period of his life.

"'Let him beware of forgery,' cried Leyden with great force and energy, and in, I suppose, what Mr. Scott used afterwards to call the SAW TONES OF HIS VOICE."

This proves that Leyden had no personal knowledge of "this Hogg," and did not supply the shepherd with the traditions about Auld Maitland.

Mr. W. J. Kennedy, of Hawick, pointed out to me this passage in Laidlaw's Recollections, edited from the MS. by Mr. James Sinton, as reprinted from the Transactions of the Hawick Archaeological Society, 1905.

SCOTT AND THE BALLADS

It was through his collecting and editing of The Border Minstrelsy that Sir Walter Scott glided from law into literature. The history of the conception and completion of his task, "a labour of love truly, if ever such there was," says Lockhart, is well known, but the tale must be briefly told if we are to understand the following essays in defence of Scott's literary morality.

Late in 1799 Scott wrote to James Ballantyne, then a printer in Kelso, "I have been for years collecting Border ballads," and he thought that he could put together "such a selection as might make a neat little volume, to sell for four or five shillings." In December 1799 Scott received the office of Sheriff of Selkirkshire, or, as he preferred to say, of Ettrick Forest. In the Forest, as was natural, he found much of his materials. The people at the head of Ettrick were still, says Hogg, like many of the Highlanders even now, in that they cheered the long winter nights with the telling of old tales; and some aged people still remembered, no doubt in a defective and corrupted state, many old ballads. Some of these, especially the ballads of Border raids and rescues, may never even have been written down by the original authors. The Borderers, says Lesley, Bishop of Ross, writing in 1578, "take much pleasure in their old music and chanted songs, which they themselves compose, whether about the deeds of their ancestors, or about ingenious raiding tricks and stratagems."

The historical ballads about the deeds of their ancestors would be far more romantic than scientifically accurate. The verses, as they passed from mouth to mouth and from generation to generation, would be in a constant state of flux and change. When a man forgot a verse, he would make something to take its place. A more or less appropriate stanza from another ballad would slip in; or the reciter would tell in prose the matter of which he forgot the versified form.

Again, in the towns, street ballads on remarkable events, as early at least as the age of Henry VIII., were written or printed. Knox speaks of ballads on Queen Mary's four Maries. Of these ballads only one is left, and it is a libel. The hanging of a French apothecary of the Queen, and a French waiting-maid, for child murder, has been transferred to one of the Maries, or rather to an apocryphal Mary Hamilton, with Darnley for her lover. Of this ballad twenty-eight variants — and extremely various they are — were collected by Professor Child in his English and Scottish Popular Ballads (ten parts, 1882-1898). In one mangled form or another such ballads would drift at last even to Ettrick Forest.

A ballad may be found in a form which the first author could scarcely recognise, dozens of hands, in various generations, having been at work on it. At any period, especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the cheap press might print a sheet of the ballads, edited and interpolated by the very lowest of printer's hacks; that copy would circulate, be lost, and become in turn a traditional source, though full of modernisms. Or an educated person might make a written copy, filling up gaps himself in late seventeenth or in eighteenth century ballad style, and this might pass into the memory of the children and servants of the house, and so to the herds and to the farm lasses. I suspect that this process may have occurred in the cases of Auld Maitland and of The Outlaw Murray— "these two bores" Mr. Child is said to have styled them.

When Allan Ramsay, about 1720, took up and printed a ballad, he altered it if he pleased. More faithful to his texts (wherever he got them), was David Herd, in his collection of 1776, but his version did not reach, as we shall see, old reciters in Ettrick. If Scott found any traditional ballads in Ettrick, as his collectors certainly did, they had passed through the processes described. They needed re-editing of some sort if they were to be intelligible, and readable with pleasure.

In 1800, apparently, while Scott made only brief flying visits from the little inn of Clovenfords, on Tweed, to his sheriffdom, he found a coadjutor. Richard Heber, the wealthy and luxurious antiquary and collector, looked into Constable's first little bookselling shop, and saw a strange, poor young student prowling among the books. This was John Leyden, son of a shepherd in Roxburghshire, a lad living in extreme poverty.

Leyden, in 1800, was making himself a savant. Heber spoke with him, found that he was rich in ballad-lore, and carried him to Scott. He was presently introduced into the best society in Edinburgh (which would not happen in our time), and a casual note of Scott's proves that he did not leave Leyden in poverty. Early in 1802, Leyden got the promise of an East Indian appointment, read medicine furiously, and sailed for the East in the beginning of 1803. It does not appear that Leyden went ballad-hunting in Ettrick before he rode thither with Scott in the spring of 1802. He was busy with books, with editorial work, and in aiding Scott in Edinburgh. It was he who insisted that a small volume at five shillings was far too narrow for the materials collected.

Scott also corresponded with the aged Percy, Bishop of Dromore, editor of the Reliques, and with Joseph Ritson, the precise collector, Percy's bitter foe. Unfortunately the correspondence on ballads with Ritson, who died in 1803, is but scanty; nor has most of the correspondence with another student, George Ellis, been published. Even in Mr. Douglas's edition of Scott's Familiar Letters, the portion of an important letter of Hogg's which deals with ballad-lore is omitted. I shall give the letter in full.

In 1800-01, "The Minstrelsy formed the editor's chief occupation," says Lockhart; but later, up to April 1801, the Forest and Liddesdale had yielded little material. In fact, I do not know that Scott ever procured much in Liddesdale, where he had no Hogg or Laidlaw always on the spot, and in touch with the old people. It was in spring, 1802, that Scott first met his lifelong friend, William Laidlaw, farmer in Blackhouse, on Douglasburn, in Yarrow. Laidlaw, as is later proved completely, introduced Scott to Hogg, then a very unsophisticated shepherd. "Laidlaw," says Lockhart, "took care that Scott should see, without delay, James Hogg." These two men, Hogg and Laidlaw, knowing the country people well, were Scott's chief sources of recited balladry; and probably they sometimes improved, in making their copies, the materials won from the failing memories of the old. Thus Laidlaw, while tenant in Traquair Knowe, obtained from recitation, The Daemon Lover. Scott does not tell us whether or not he knew the fact that Laidlaw wrote in stanza 6 (half of it traditional), stanza 12 (also a ballad formula), stanzas 17 and 18 (necessary to complete the sense; the last two lines of 18 are purely and romantically modern).

We shall later quote Hogg's account of his own dealings with his raw materials from recitation.

In January 1802 Scott published the two first volumes of The Minstrelsy. Lockhart describes the enthusiasm of dukes, fine ladies, and antiquarians. In the end of April 1803 the third volume appeared, including ballads obtained through Hogg and Laidlaw in spring 1802. Scott, by his store of historic anecdote in his introductions and notes, by his way of vivifying the past, and by his method of editing, revived, but did not create, the interest in the romance of ballad poetry.

It had always existed. We all know Sidney's words on "The Douglas and the Percy"; Addison's on folk-poetry; Mr. Pepys' ballad collection; the ballads in Tom Durfey's and other miscellanies; Allan Ramsay's Evergreen; Bishop Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry; Herd's ballad volumes of 1776; Evans' collections; Burns' remakings of old songs; Ritson's publications, and so forth. But the genius of Burns, while it transfigured many old songs, was not often exercised on old narrative ballads, and when Scott produced The Minstrelsy, the taste for ballads was confined to amateurs of early literature, and to country folk.

Sir Walter's method of editing, of presenting his traditional materials, was literary, and, usually, not scientific. A modern collector would publish things — legends, ballads, or folk-tales — exactly as he found them in old broadsides, or in MS. copies, or received them from oral recitation. He would give the names and residences and circumstances of the reciters or narrators (Herd, in 1776, gave no such information). He would fill up no gaps with his own inventions, would add no stanzas of his own, and the circulation of his work would arrive at some two or three hundred copies given away!

As Lockhart says, “Scott’s diligent zeal had put him in possession of a variety of copies in various stages of preservation, and to the task of selecting a standard text among such a diversity of materials he brought a knowledge of old manners and phraseology, and a manly simplicity of taste, such as had never before been united in the person of a poetical antiquary.”

Lockhart speaks of “The editor’s conscientious fidelity . . . which prevented the introduction of anything new, and his pure taste in the balancing of discordant recitations.” He had already written that “Scott had, I firmly believe, interpolated hardly a line or even an epithet of his own.”

It is clear that Lockhart had not compared the texts in The Minstrelsy with the mass of manuscript materials which are still at Abbotsford. These, copied by the accurate Mr. Macmath, have been published in the monumental collection of English and Scottish Popular Ballads, in ten parts, by the late Professor Child of Harvard, the greatest of scholars in ballad-lore. From his book we often know exactly what kinds of copies of ballads Scott possessed, and what alterations he made in his copies. The Ballad of Otterburne is especially instructive, as we shall see later. But of the most famous of Border historical ballads, Kinmont Willie, and its companion, Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead, Scott has left no original manuscript texts. Now into each of these ballads Scott has written (if internal evidence be worth anything) verses of his own; stanzas unmistakably marked by his own spirit, energy, sense of romance, and, occasionally, by a somewhat inflated rhetoric. On this point doubt is not easy. When he met the names of his chief, Buccleuch, and of his favourite ancestor, Wat of Warden, Scott did, in two cases, for those heroes what, by his own confession, he did for anecdotes that came in his way — he decked them out “with a cocked hat and a sword.”

Sir Walter knew perfectly well that he was not “playing the game” in a truly scientific spirit. He explains his ideas in his “Essay on Popular Poetry” as late as 1830. He mentions Joseph Ritson’s “extreme attachment to the severity of truth,” and his attacks on Bishop Percy’s purely literary treatment of the materials of his Reliques of Ancient Poetry (1765).

As Scott says, “by Percy words were altered, phrases improved, and whole verses were inserted or omitted at pleasure.” Percy “accommodated” the ballads “with such emendations as might recommend them to the modern taste.” Ritson cried “forgery,” but Percy, says Scott, had to win a hearing from his age, and confessed (in general terms) to his additions and decorations.

Scott then speaks reprovingly of Pinkerton's wholesale fabrication of ENTIRE BALLADS (1783), a crime acknowledged later by the culprit (1786). Scott applauds Ritson's accuracy, but regrets his preference of the worst to the better readings, as if their inferiority was a security for their being genuine. Scott preferred the best, the most poetical readings.

In 1830, Scott also wrote an essay on "Imitations of the Ancient Ballads," and spoke very leniently of imitations passed off as authentic. "There is no small degree of cant in the violent invectives with which impostors of this nature have been assailed." As to Hardyknute, the favourite poem of his infancy, "the first that I ever learned and the last that I shall forget," he says, "the public is surely more enriched by the contribution than injured by the deception." Besides, he says, the deception almost never deceives.

His method in The Minstrelsy, he writes, was "to imitate the plan and style of Bishop Percy, observing only more strict fidelity concerning my originals." That is to say, he avowedly made up texts out of a variety of copies, when he had more copies than one. This is frequently acknowledged by Scott; what he does not acknowledge is his own occasional interpolation of stanzas. A good example is The Gay Gosshawk. He had a MS. of his own "of some antiquity," a MS. of Mrs. Brown, a famous reciter and collector of the eighteenth century; and the Abbotsford MSS. show isolated stanzas from Hogg, and a copy from Will Laidlaw. Mr. T. F. Henderson's notes display the methods of selection, combination, emendation, and possible interpolation.

By these methods Scott composed "a standard text," now the classical text, of the ballads which he published. Ballad lovers, who are not specialists, go to The Minstrelsy for their favourite fare, and for historical elucidation and anecdote.

Scott often mentions his sources of all kinds, such as MSS. of Herd and Mrs. Brown; "an old person"; "an old woman at Kirkhill, West Lothian"; "an ostler at Carlisle"; Allan Ramsay's Tea-Table Miscellany; Surtees of Mainsforth (these ballads are by Surtees himself: Scott never suspected him); Caw's Hawick Museum (1774); Ritson's copies, others from Leyden; the Glenriddell MSS. (collected by the friend of Burns); on several occasions copies from recitations procured by James Hogg or Will Laidlaw, and possibly or probably each of these men emended the copy he obtained; while Scott combined and emended all in his published text.

Sometimes Scott gives no source at all, and in these cases research finds variants in old broadsides, or elsewhere.

In thirteen cases he gives no source, or "from tradition," which is the same thing; though "tradition in Ettrick Forest" may sometimes imply, once certainly does, the intermediary Hogg, or Will Laidlaw.

We now understand Scott's methods as editor. They are not scientific; they are literary. We also acknowledge (on internal evidence) his interpolation of his own stanzas in Kinmont Willie and Jamie Telfer, where he exalts his chief and ancestor. We cannot do otherwise (as scholars) than regret and condemn Scott's interpolations, never confessed. As lovers of poetry we acknowledge that, without Scott's interpolation, we could have no more of Kinmont Willie than verses, "much mangled by reciters," as Scott says, of a ballad perhaps no more poetical than Jock o' the Side. Scott says that "some conjectural emendations have been absolutely necessary to render it intelligible." As it is now very intelligible, to say "conjectural emendations" is a way of saying "interpolations."

But while thus confessing Scott's sins, I cannot believe that he, like Pinkerton, palmed off on the world any ballad or ballads of his own sole manufacture, or any ballad which he knew to be forged.

The truth is that Scott was easily deceived by a modern imitation, if he liked the poetry. Surtees hoaxed him not only with Barthram's Dirge and Anthony Featherstonhaugh, but with a long prose excerpt from a non-existent manuscript about a phantom knight. Scott made the plot of Marmion hinge on this myth, in the encounter of Marmion with Wilfred as the phantasmal cavalier. He tells us that in The Flowers of the Forest "the manner of the ancient minstrels is so happily imitated, that it required the most positive evidence to convince the editor that the song was of modern date." Really the author was Miss Jane Elliot (1747-1805), daughter of Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto. Herd published a made-up copy in 1776. The tune, Scott says, is old, and he has heard an imperfect verse of the original ballad -

"I ride single on my saddle,
For the flowers o' the forest are a' wede awa'"

The CONSTANT use of double rhymes within the line -

"At e'en, in the gloaming, nae younkers are roaming,"

an artifice rare in genuine ballads, might alone have proved to Scott that the poem of Miss Elliot is not popular and ancient.

I have cleared my conscience by confessing Scott's literary sins. His interpolations, elsewhere mere stopgaps, are mainly to be found in Kinmont Willie and Jamie Telfer. His duty was to say, in his preface to each ballad, "The editor has interpolated stanza" so and so; if he made up the last verses of Kinmont Willie from the conclusion of a version of Archie o' Ca'field, he should have said so; as he does acknowledge two stopgap interpolations by Hogg in Auld Maitland. But as to the conclusion of Kinmont Willie, he did, we shall see, make confession.

Professor Kittredge, who edited Child's last part (X.), says in his excellent abridged edition of Child (1905), "It was no doubt the feeling that the popular ballad is a fluid and unstable thing that has prompted so many editors — among them Sir Walter Scott, whom it is impossible to assail, however much the scholarly conscience may disapprove — to deal freely with the versions that came into their hands."

Twenty-five years after the appearance of The Border Minstrelsy, in 1827, appeared Motherwell's Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern. Motherwell was in favour of scientific methods of editing. Given two copies of a ballad, he says, "perhaps they may not have a single stanza which is mutual property, except certain commonplaces which seem an integral portion of the original mechanism of all our ancient ballads . . . " By selecting the most beautiful and striking passages from each copy, and making those cohere, an editor, he says, may produce a more perfect and ornate version than any that exists in tradition. Of the originals "the individuality entirely disappears."

Motherwell disapproved of this method, which, as a rule, is Scott's, and, scientifically, the method is not defensible. Thus, having three ballads of rescues, in similar circumstances, with a river to ford, Scott confessedly places that incident where he thinks it most "poetically appropriate"; and in all probability, by a single touch, he gives poetry in place of rough humour. Of all this Motherwell disapproved. (See Kinmont Willie, infra.)

Aytoun, in The Ballads of Scotland, thought Motherwell hypercritical; and also, in his practice inconsistent with his preaching. Aytoun observed, "with much regret and not a little indignation" (1859), "that later editors insinuated a doubt as to the fidelity of Sir Walter's rendering. My firm belief, resting on documentary evidence, is that Scott was most scrupulous in adhering to the very letter of his transcripts, whenever copies of ballads, previously taken down, were submitted to him." As an example, Aytoun, using a now lost MS. copy of about 1689-1702, of The Outlaw Murray, says "Sir Walter has given it throughout just as he received it." Yet Scott's copy, mainly from a lost Cockburn MS., contains a humorous passage on Buccleuch which Child half suspects to be by Sir Walter himself. It is impossible for me to know whether Child's hesitating conjecture is right or wrong. Certainly we shall see, when Scott had but one MS. copy, as of Auld Maitland, his editing left little or nothing to be desired.

But now Scott is assailed, both where he deserves, and where, in my opinion, he does not deserve censure.

Scott did no more than his confessed following of Percy's method implies, to his original text of the Ballad of Otterburne. This I shall prove from his original text, published by Child from the Abbotsford MSS., and by a letter from the collector of the ballad, the Ettrick Shepherd.

The facts, in this instance, apparently are utterly unknown to Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. Fitzwilliam Elliot, in his Further Essays on Border Ballads (1910), p-45.

Again, I am absolutely certain, and can demonstrate, that Scott did not (as Colonel Elliot believes) detect Hogg in forging Auld Maitland, join with him in this fraud, and palm the ballad off on the public. Nothing of the kind occurred. Scott did not lie in this matter, both to the world and to his intimate friends, in private letters.

Once more, without better evidence than we possess, I do not believe that, in Jamie Telfer, Scott transferred the glory from the Elliots to the Scotts, and the shame from Buccleuch to Elliot of Stobs. The discussion leads us into very curious matter. But here, with our present materials, neither absolute proof nor disproof is possible.

Finally, as to Kinmont Willie, I merely give such reasons as I can find for thinking that Scott HAD “mangled” fragments of an old ballad before him, and did not merely paraphrase the narrative of Walter Scott of Satchells, in his doggerel True History of the Name of Scott (1688).

The positions of Colonel Elliot are in each case the reverse of mine. In the instance of Auld Maitland (where Scott’s conduct would be unpardonable if Colonel Elliot’s view were correct), I have absolute proof that he is entirely mistaken. For Otterburne I am equally fortunate; that is, I can show that Scott’s part went no further than “the making of a standard text” on his avowed principles. For Jamie Telfer, having no original manuscript, I admit DECORATIVE interpolations, and for the rest, argue on internal evidence, no other being accessible. For Kinmont Willie, I confess that the poem, as it stands, is Scott’s, but give reasons for thinking that he had ballad fragments in his mind, if not on paper.

It will be understood that Colonel Elliot does not, I conceive, say that his charges are PROVED, but he thinks that the evidence points to these conclusions. He “hopes that I will give reasons for my disbelief” in his theories; and “hopes, though he cannot expect that they will completely dispose of” his views about Jamie Telfer.

I give my reasons, though I entertain but slight hope of convincing my courteous opponent. That is always a task rather desperate. But the task leads me, in defence of a great memory, into a countryside, and into old times on the Border, which are so alluring that, like Socrates, I must follow where the logos guides me. To one conclusion it guides me, which startles myself, but I must follow the logos, even against the verdict of Professor Child, notre maitre a tous. In some instances, I repeat, positive proof of the correctness of my views is impossible; all that I can do is to show that Colonel Elliot’s contrary opinions also fall far short of demonstration, or are demonstrably erroneous.

AULD MAITLAND

The ballad of Auld Maitland holds in The Border Minstrelsy a place like that of the Doloneia, or Tenth Book, in the Iliad. Every professor of the Higher Criticism throws his stone at the Doloneia in passing, and every ballad-editor does as much to Auld Maitland. Professor Child excluded it from his monumental collection of “English and Scottish Popular Ballads,” fragments, and variants, for which Mr. Child and his friends and helpers ransacked every attainable collection of ballads in manuscript, and ballads in print, as they listened to the last murmurings of ballad tradition from the lips of old or young.

Mr. Child, says his friend and pupil, Professor Kittredge, “possessed a kind of instinct” for distinguishing what is genuine and traditional, or modern, or manipulated, or, if I may say so, “faked” in a ballad.

“This instinct, trained by thirty years of study, had become wonderfully swift in its operations, and almost infallible. A forged or retouched piece could not escape him for a moment: he detected the slightest jar in the ballad ring.”

But all old traditional ballads are masses of “retouches,” made through centuries, by reciters, copyists, editors, and so forth. Unluckily, Child never gave in detail his reasons for rejecting that treasure of Sir Walter’s, Auld Maitland. Child excluded the poem sans phrase. If he did this, like Falstaff “on instinct,” one can only say that antiquarian instincts are never infallible. We must apply our reason to the problem, “What is Auld Maitland?”

Colonel Elliot has taken this course. By far the most blighting of the many charges made by Colonel Elliot against Sir Walter Scott are concerned with the ballad of Auld Maitland. After stating that, in his opinion, “several stanzas” of the ballad are by Sir Walter himself, Colonel Elliot sums up his own ideas thus:

“My view is that Hogg, in the first instance, tried to palm off the ballad on Scott, and failed; and then Scott palmed it off on the public, and succeeded . . . let us, as gentlemen and honest judges, admit that the responsibility of the deception rests rather on the laird (Scott) than on the herd” (Hogg.)

If Colonel Elliot’s “views” were correct (and it is absolutely erroneous), the guilt of “the laird” would be great. Scott conspires with a shepherd, a stranger, to palm off a forgery on the public. Scott issues the forgery, and, what is worse, in a private letter to a learned friend, he utters what I must borrow words for: he utters “cold and calculated falsehoods” about the manner in which, and the person from whom, he obtained what he calls “my first copy” of the song. If

Hogg and Scott forged the poem, then when Scott told his tale of its acquisition by himself from Laidlaw, Scott lied.

Colonel Elliot is ignorant of the facts in the case. He gropes his way under the misleading light of a false date, and of fragments torn from the context of a letter which, in its complete form, has never till now been published. Where positive and published information exists, it has not always come within the range of the critic's researches; had it done so, he would have taken the information into account, but he does not. Of the existence of Scott's "first copy" of the ballad in manuscript our critic seems never to have heard; certainly he has not studied the MS. Had he done so he would not assign (on grounds like those of Homeric critics) this verse to Hogg and that to Scott. He would know that Scott did not interpolate a single stanza; that spelling, punctuation, and some slight verbal corrections, with an admirable emendation, were the sum of his industry: that he did not even excise two stanzas of, at earliest, eighteenth century work.

I must now clear up misconceptions which have imposed themselves on all critics of the ballad, on myself, for example, no less than on Colonel Elliot: and must tell the whole story of how the existence of the ballad first became known to Scott's collector and friend, William Laidlaw, how he procured the copy which he presented to Sir Walter, and how Sir Walter obtained, from recitation, his "second copy," that which he printed in The Minstrelsy in 1803.

In 1801 Scott, who was collecting ballads, gave a list of songs which he wanted to Mr. Andrew Mercer, of Selkirk. Mercer knew young Will Laidlaw, farmer in Blackhouse on Yarrow, where Hogg had been a shepherd for ten years. Laidlaw applied for two ballads, one of them The Outlaw Murray, to Hogg, then shepherding at Ettrick House, at the head of Ettrick, above Thirlestane. Hogg replied on 20th July 1801. He could get but a few verses of The Outlaw from his maternal uncle, Will Laidlaw of Phawhope. He said that, from traditions known to him, he could make good songs, "but without Mr. Scott's permission this would be an imposition, neither could I undertake it without an order from him in his own handwriting . . . " Laidlaw went on trying to collect songs for Scott. We now take his own account of Auld Maitland from a manuscript left by him.

"I heard from one of the servant girls, who had all the turn and qualifications for a collector, of a ballad called Auld Maitland, that a grandfather (maternal) of Hogg could repeat, and she herself had several of the first stanzas, which I took a note of, and have still the copy. This greatly aroused my anxiety to procure the whole, for this was a ballad not even hinted at by Mercer in his list of desiderata received from Mr. Scott. I forthwith wrote to Hogg himself, requesting him to endeavour to procure the whole ballad. In a week or two I received his reply, containing Auld Maitland exactly as he had received it from the recitation of his uncle Will of Phawhope, corroborated by his mother, who both said they learned it from their father, a still older Will of Phawhope, and an old man called Andrew Muir, who had been servant to the famous Mr. Boston, minister of Ettrick.” Concerning Laidlaw’s evidence, Colonel Elliot says not a word.

This copy of Auld Maitland, with the superscription outside -

all in Hogg’s hand, is now at Abbotsford. We next have, through Carruthers using Laidlaw’s manuscript, an account of the arrival of Scott and Leyden at Blackhouse, of Laidlaw’s presentation of Hogg’s manuscript, which Scott read aloud, and of their surprise and delight. Scott was excited, so that his burr became very perceptible.

The time of year when Scott and Leyden visited Yarrow was not the AUTUMN vacation of 1802, as Lockhart erroneously writes, but the SPRING vacation of 1802. The spring vacation, Mr. Macmath informs me, ran from 11th March to 12th May in 1802. In May, apparently, Scott having obtained the Auld Maitland MS. in the vernal vacation of the Court of Session, gave his account of his discovery to his friend Ellis (Lockhart does not date the letter, but wrongly puts it after the return to Edinburgh in November 1802).

Scott wrote thus:— “We” (John Leyden and himself) “have just concluded an excursion of two or three weeks through my jurisdiction of Selkirkshire, where, in defiance of mountains, rivers, and bogs, damp and dry, we have penetrated the very recesses of Ettrick Forest . . . I have . . . returned LOADED with the treasures of oral tradition. The principal result of our inquiries has been a complete and perfect copy of “Maitland with his Auld Berd Graie,” referred to by Douglas in his Palice of Honour (1503), along with John the Reef and other popular characters, and celebrated in the poems from the Maitland MS.” (circ. 1575). You may guess the surprise of Leyden and myself when this was presented to us, copied down from the recitation of an old shepherd, by a country farmer . . . Many of the old words are retained, which neither the reciter nor the copyer understood. Such are the military engines, sowies, SPRINGWALLS (springalds), and many others . . . “

That Scott got the ballad in spring 1802 is easily proved. On 10th April 1802, Joseph Ritson, the crabbed, ill-tempered, but meticulously accurate scholar, who thought that ballad-forging should be made a capital offence, wrote thus to Scott:-

“I have the pleasure of enclosing my copy of a very ancient poem, which appears to me to be the original of The Wee Wee Man, and which I learn from Mr. Ellis you are desirous to see.” In Scott’s letter to Ellis, just quoted, he says: “I have lately had from him” (Ritson) “A COPIE of ‘Ye litel wee man,’ of which I think I can make some use. In return, I have sent him a sight of Auld Maitland, the original MS . . . I wish him to see it in puris naturalibus." "The precaution here taken was very natural," says Lockhart, considering Ritson's temper and hatred of literary forgeries. Scott, when he wrote to Ellis, had received Ritson's The Wee Wee Man "lately": it was sent to him by Ritson on 10th April 1802. Scott had already, when he wrote to Ellis, got "the original MS. of Auld Maitland" (now in Abbotsford Library). By 10th June 1802 Ritson wrote saying, "You may depend on my taking the utmost care of Old Maitland, and returning it in health and safety. I would not use the liberty of transcribing it into my manuscript copy of Mrs. Brown's ballads, but if you will signify your permission, I shall be highly gratified." "Your ancient and curious ballad," he styles the piece.

Thus Scott had Auld Maitland in May 1802; he sent the original MS. to Ritson; Ritson received it graciously; he had, on 10th April 1802, sent Scott another MS., The Wee Wee Man: and when Scott wrote to Ellis about his surprise at getting "a complete and perfect copy of Maitland," he had but lately received The Wee Wee Man, sent by Ritson on 10th April 1802. He had made a spring, not an autumn, raid into the Forest.

We now know the external history of the ballad. Laidlaw, hearing his servant repeat some stanzas, asks Hogg for the full copy, which Hogg sends with a pedigree from which he never wavered. Auld Andrew Muir taught the song to Hogg's mother and uncle. Hogg took it from his uncle's recitation, and sent it, directed outside, and Laidlaw gave it to Scott, in March 12-May 12, 1802. But Scott, publishing the ballad in The Minstrelsy (1803), says it is given “as written down from the recitation of the mother of Mr. James Hogg, who sings, or rather chants, it with great animation” (manifestly he had heard the recitation which he describes).

It seems that Scott, before he wrote to Ellis in May 1802, had misgivings about the ballad. Says Carruthers, he “made another visit to Blackhouse for the purpose of getting Laidlaw as a guide to Ettrick,” being “curious to see the poetical shepherd.”

Laidlaw’s MS., used by Carruthers, describes the wild ride by the marshes at the head of the Loch of the Lowes, through the bogs on the knees of the hills, down a footpath to Ramseycleuch in Ettrick. They sent to Ettrick House for Hogg; Scott was surprised and pleased with James’s appearance. They had a delightful evening: “the qualities of Hogg came out at every instant, and his unaffected simplicity and fearless frankness both surprised and pleased the Sheriff.” Next morning they visited Hogg and his mother at her cottage, and Hogg tells how the old lady recited Auld Maitland. Hogg gave the story in prose, with great vivacity and humour, in his Domestic Manners of Sir Walter Scott (1834).

In an earlier poetical address to Scott, congratulating him on his elevation to the baronetcy (1818), the Shepherd says -

When Maitland’s song first met your ear,
How the furled visage up did clear.
Beaming delight! though now a shade
Of doubt would darken into dread,
That some unskilled presumptuous arm
Had marred tradition’s mighty charm.
Scarce grew thy lurking dread the less,
Till she, the ancient Minstreless,
With fervid voice and kindling eye,
And withered arms waving on high,
Sung forth these words in eldritch shriek,
While tears stood on thy nut-brown cheek:
“Na, we are nane o’ the lads o’ France,
Nor e’er pretend to be;

We be three lads of fair Scotland,
Auld Maitland's sons a' three."

(Stanza xliii. as printed. In Hogg's MS. copy, given to Laidlaw there are two verbal differences, in lines 1 and 4.)

Then says Hogg -

Thy fist made all the table ring,
By -, sir, but that is the thing!

Hogg could not thus describe the scene in addressing Scott himself, in 1818, if his story were not true. It thus follows that his mother knew the sixty-five stanzas of the ballad by heart. Does any one believe that, as a woman of seventy-two, she learned the poem to back Hogg's hoax? That he wrote the poem, and caused her to learn it by rote, so as to corroborate his imposture?

This is absurd.

But now comes the source of Colonel Elliot's theory of a conspiracy between Scott and Hogg, to forge a ballad and issue the forgery. Colonel Elliot knows scraps of a letter to Hogg of 30th June 1802. He has read parts, not bearing on the question, in Mr. Douglas's Familiar Letters of Sir Walter Scott (vol. i. p-15), and another scrap, in which Hogg says that "I am surprised to hear that Auld Maitland is suspected by some to be a modern forgery." This part of Hogg's letter of 30th June 1802 was published by Scott himself in the third volume of The Minstrelsy (April 1803).

Not having the context of the letter, Colonel Elliot seems to argue, "Scott says he got his first copy in autumn 1802" (Lockhart's mistake), "yet here are Hogg and Scott corresponding about the ballad long before autumn, in June 1802. This is very suspicious." I give what appears to be Colonel Elliot's line of reflection in my own words. He decides that, as early as June 1802, "Hogg"(in the Colonel's 'view'), "in the first instance, tried to palm off the ballad on Scott, and failed; and that then Scott palmed it off on the public, and succeeded."

This is all a mare's nest. Scott, in March-May 1802, had the whole of the ballad except one stanza, which Hogg sent to him on 30th June.

I now print, for the first time, the whole of Hogg's letter of 30th June, with its shrewd criticism on ballads, hitherto omitted, and I italicise the passage about Auld Maitland:-

ETTRICK HOUSE, June 30.

Dear Sir, — I have been perusing your minstrelsy very diligently for a while past, and it being the first book I ever perused which was written by a person I had seen and conversed with, the consequence hath been to me a most sensible pleasure; for in fact it is the remarks and modern pieces that I have delighted most in, being as it were personally acquainted with many of the modern pieces formerly. My mother is actually a living miscellany of old songs. I never believed that she had half so many until I came to a trial. There are some (sic) in your collection of which she hath not a part, and I should by this time had a great number written for your amusement, thinking them all of great antiquity and lost to posterity, had I not luckily lighted upon a collection of songs in two volumes, published by I know not who, in which I recognised about half-a-score of my mother's best songs, almost word for word. No doubt I was piqued, but it saved me much trouble, paper, and ink; for I am carefully avoiding anything which I have seen or heard of being in print, although I have no doubt that I shall err, being acquainted with almost no collections of that sort, but I am not afraid that you too will mistake. I am still at a loss with respect to some: such as the Battle of Flodden beginning, "From Spey to the Border," a long poetical piece on the battle of Bannockburn, I fear modern: The Battle of the Boyne, Young Bateman's Ghost, all of which, and others which I cannot mind, I could mostly recover for a few miles' travel were I certain they could be of any use concerning the above; and I might have mentioned May Cohn and a duel between two friends, Graham and Bewick, undoubtedly very old. You must give me information in your answer. I have already scraped together a considerable quantity — suspend your curiosity, Mr. Scott, you will see them when I see you, of which I am as impatient as you can be to see the songs for your life. But as I suppose you have no personal acquaintance in this parish, it would be presumption in me to expect that you will visit my cottage, but I will attend you in any part of the Forest if you will send me word. I am far from supposing that a person of your discernment, — d-n it, I'll blot out that, 'tis so like flattery. I say I don't think you would despise a shepherd's "humble cot an' hamely fare," as Burns hath it, yet though I would be extremely proud of a visit, yet hang me if I would know what to do wi' ye. I am surprised to find that the songs in your collection differ so widely from my mother's. Is Mr. Herd's MS. genuine? I suspect it. Jamie Telfer differs in many particulars. Johnny Armstrong of Gilnockie is another song altogether. I have seen a verse of my mother's way called Johny Armstrong's last good-night cited in the Spectator, and another in Boswell's Journal. It begins, "Is there ne'er a man in fair Scotland?" Do you know if this is in print, Mr. Scott? In the Tale of Tomlin the whole of the interlude about the horse and the hawk is a distinct song altogether. Clerk Saunders is nearly the same with my mother's, until that stanza which ends, “was in the tower last night wi’ me,” then with another verse or two which are not in yours, ends Clerk Saunders. All the rest of the song in your edition is another song altogether, which my mother hath mostly likewise, and I am persuaded from the change in the stile that she is right, for it is scarce consistent with the forepart of the ballad. I have made several additions and variations out, to the printed songs, for your inspection, but only when they could be inserted without disjointing the songs as they are at present; to have written all the variations would scarcely be possible, and I thought would embarrass you exceedingly. I HAVE RECOVERED ANOTHER HALF VERSE OF OLD MAITLAN, AND HAVE RHYMED IT THUS -

REMEMBER FIERY OF THE SCOT
HATH COWR’D ANEATH THY HAND;
For ilka drap o’ Maitlen’s blood
I’ll gie THEE rigs o’ land. -

THE TWO LAST LINES ONLY ARE ORIGINAL; YOU WILL EASILY PERCEIVE THAT THEY OCCUR IN THE VERY PLACE WHERE WE SUSPECTED A WANT. I AM SURPRISED TO HEAR THAT THIS SONG IS SUSPECTED BY SOME TO BE A MODERN FORGERY; THIS WILL BE BEST PROVED BY MOST OF THE OLD PEOPLE HEREABOUTS HAVING A GREAT PART OF IT BY HEART; many, indeed, are not aware of the manners of this place, it is but lately emerged from barbarity, and till this present age the poor illiterate people in these glens knew of no other entertainment in the long winter nights than in repeating and listening to these feats of their ancestors, which I believe to be handed down inviolate from father to son, for many generations, although no doubt, had a copy been taken of them at the end of every fifty years, there must have been some difference, which the repeaters would have insensibly fallen into merely by the change of terms in that period. I believe that it is thus that many very ancient songs have been modernised, which yet to a connoisseur will bear visible marks of antiquity. The Maitlen, for instance, exclusive of its mode of description, is all composed of words, which would mostly every one spell and pronounce in the very same dialect that was spoken some centuries ago.

Pardon, my dear Sir, the freedom I have taken in addressing you — it is my nature; and I could not resist the impulse of writing to you any longer. Let me hear from you as soon as this comes to your hand, and tell me when you will be in Ettrick Forest, and suffer me to subscribe myself, Sir, your most humble and affectionate servant,

JAMES HOGG.

In Scott's printed text of the ballad, two interpolations, of two lines each, are acknowledged in notes. They occur in stanzas vii., xlvi., and are attributed to Hogg. In fact, Hogg sent one of them (vii.) to Laidlaw in his manuscript. The other he sent to Scott on 30th June 1802.

Colonel Elliot, in the spirit of the Higher Criticism (chimaera bombinans in vacuo), writes, "Few will doubt that the footnotes" (on these interpolations) "were inserted with the purpose of leading the public to think that Hogg made no other interpolations; but I am afraid I must go further than this and say that, since they were inserted on the editor's responsibility, the intention must have been to make it appear as if no other interpolations by any other hand had been inserted."

But no other interpolations by another hand WERE inserted! Some verbal emendations were made by Scott, but he never put in a stanza or two lines of his own.

Colonel Elliot provides us with six pages of the Higher Criticism. He knows how to distinguish between verses by Hogg, and verses by Scott! But, save when Scott puts one line, a ballad formula, where Hogg has another line, Scott makes no interpolations, and the ballad formula he probably took, with other things of no more importance, from Mrs. Hogg's recitation. Oh, Higher Criticism!

I now print the ballad as Hogg sent it to Laidlaw, between August 1801 and March 1802, in all probability.

OLD MAITLAND A VERY ANTIENT SONG

There lived a king in southern land
King Edward hecht his name
Unwordily he wore the crown
Till fifty years was gane.

He had a sister's son o's ain
Was large o' blood and bane
And afterwards when he came up,
Young Edward hecht his name.

One day he came before the king,
And kneeld low on his knee
A boon a boon my good uncle,
I crave to ask of thee

"At our lang wars i' fair Scotland
I lang hae lang'd to be
If fifteen hunder wale wight men
You'll grant to ride wi' me."

"Thou sal hae thae thou sal hae mae
I say it sickerly;
And I mysel an auld grey man
Arrayd your host sal see." -

King Edward rade King Edward ran -
I wish him dool and pain!
Till he had fifteen hundred men
Assembled on the Tyne.
And twice as many at North Berwick
Was a' for battle bound

They lighted on the banks of Tweed
   And blew their coals sae het
And fired the Merce and Tevidale
   All in an evening late

As they far'd up o'er Lammermor
   They burn'd baith tower and town
Until they came to a derksome house,
   Some call it Leaders Town

Whae hauds this house young Edward crys,
   Or whae gae'st ower to me
A grey haired knight set up his head
   And cracked right crousely

Of Scotlands King I haud my house
   He pays me meat and fee
And I will keep my goud auld house
   While my house will keep me

They laid their sowies to the wall
   Wi' mony heavy peal
But he threw ower to them again
   Baith piech and tar barille

With springs: wall stanes, and good of ern,
   Among them fast he threw
Till mony of the Englishmen
   About the wall he slew.

Full fifteen days that braid host lay
   Sieging old Maitlen keen
Then they hae left him safe and hale
   Within his strength o' stane

Then fifteen barks, all gaily good,
   Met themen on a day,
Which they did lade with as much spoil

As they could bear away.

"England's our ain by heritage;
And whae can us gainstand,
When we hae conquerd fair Scotland
Wi' bow, buckler, and brande" -

Then they are on to th' land o' france,
Where auld King Edward lay,
Burning each town and castle strong
That ance cam in his way.

Untill he cam unto that town
Which some call Billop-Grace
There were old Maitlen's sons a' three
Learning at School alas

The eldest to the others said,
O see ye what I see
If a' be true yon standard says,
We're fatherless a' three

For Scotland's conquerd up and down
Landsmen we'll never be:
Now will you go my brethren two,
And try some jeopardy

Then they hae saddled two black horse,
Two black horse and a grey
And they are on to Edwardes host
Before the dawn of day

When they arriv'd before the host
They hover'd on the ley
Will you lend me our King's standard
To carry a little way

Where was thou bred where was thou born
   Wherein in what country -
In the north of England I was born
   What needed him to lie.

A knight me got a lady bare
   I'm a squire of high renown
I well may bear't to any king,
   That ever yet wore crown.

He ne'er came of an Englishman
   Had sic an ee or bree
But thou art likest auld Maitlen
   That ever I did see

But sic a gloom inon ae browhead
   Grant's ne'er see again
For many of our men he slew
   And many put to pain

When Maitlan heard his father's name,
   An angry man was he
Then lifting up a gilt dager
   Hung low down by his kee

He stab'd the knight the standard bore,
   He stabb'd him cruelly;
Then caught the standard by the neuk,
   And fast away rade he.

Now is't na time brothers he cry'd
   Now, is't na time to flee
Ay by my soothe they baith reply'd,
   We'll bear you company

The youngest turn'd him in a path

And drew a burnish’d brand
And fifteen o’ the foremost slew
Till back the lave did stand

He spurr’d the grey unto the path
Till baith her sides they bled
Grey! thou maun carry me away
Or my life lies in wed

The captain lookit owr the wa’
Before the break o day
There he beheld the three Scots lads
Pursued alongst the way

Pull up portculzies down draw briggs
My nephews are at hame
And they shall lodge wi’ me to-night,
In spite of all England

Whene’er they came within the gate
They thrust their horse them frae
And took three lang spears in their hands,
Saying, here sal come nae mae

And they shott out and they shott in,
Till it was fairly day
When many of the Englishmen
About the draw brigg lay.

Then they hae yoked carts and wains
To ca’ their dead away
And shot auld dykes aboon the lave
In gutters where they lay

The king in his pavilion door
Was heard aloud to say
Last night three o’ the lads o’ France
My standard stole away

Wi’ a fause tale disguis’d they came
   And wi’ a fauser train
And to regain my gaye standard
   These men were a’ down slaine

It ill befits the youngest said
   A crowned king to lie
But or that I taste meat and drink,
   Reproved shall he be.

He went before King Edward straight
   And kneel’d low on his knee
I wad hae leave my liege he said,
   To speak a word wi’ thee

The king he turn’d him round about
   And wistna what to say
Quo’ he, Man, thou’s hae leave to speak
   Though thou should speak a day.

You said that three young lads o’ France,
   Your standard stole away
Wi’ a fause tale and fauser train,
   And mony men did slay

But we are nane the lads o’ France
   Nor e’er pretend to be
We are three lads o’ fair Scotland,
   Auld Maitlen’s sons a’ three

Nor is there men in a your host,
   Dare fight us three to three
Now by my sooth young Edward cry’d,
   Weel fitted sall ye be!

Piercy sall with the eldest fight
   And Ethert Lunn wi’ thee

William of Lancastar the third
   And bring your fourth to me

He clanked Piercy owr the head
   A deep wound and a sair
Till the best blood o’ his body
   Came rinnen owr his hair.

Now I’ve slain one slay ye the two;
   And that’s good company
And if the two should slay ye baith,
   Ye’se get na help frae me

But Ethert Lunn a baited bear
   Had many battles seen
He set the youngest wonder sair,
   Till the eldest he grew keen

I am nae king nor nae sic thing
   My word it sanna stand
For Ethert shall a buffet bide,
   Come he aneath my brand.

He clanked Ethert owr the head,
   A deep wound and a sair
Till a’ the blood of his body
   Came rinnen owr his hair

Now I’ve slayne two slay ye the one;
   Isna that gude company
And tho’ the one should slay ye both
   Ye’se get nae help o’ me.

The twasome they hae slayn the one
   They maul’d them cruelly
Then hang them owr the drawbridge,
   That a’ the host might see

They rade their horse they ran their horse,
Then hover'd on the ley
We be three lads o' fair Scotland,
We fain wad fighting see

This boasting when young Edward heard,
To's uncle thus said he,
I'll take yon lad I'll bind yon lad,
And bring him bound to thee

But God forbid King Edward said
That ever thou should try
Three worthy leaders we hae lost,
And you the fourth shall be.

If thou wert hung owr yon drawbrigg
Blythe wad I never be
But wi' the pole-axe in his hand,
Outower the bridge sprang he

The first stroke that young Edward gae
He struck wi might and main
He clove the Maitlen's helmet stout,
And near had pierced his brain.

When Matlen saw his ain blood fa,
An angry man was he
He let his weapon frae him fa'
And at his neck did flee

And thrice about he did him swing,
Till on the ground he light
Where he has halden young Edward
Tho' he was great in might

Now let him up, King Edward cry'd,
And let him come to me
And for the deed that ye hae done

Ye shal hae earldoms three

It’s ne’er be said in France nor Ire
In Scotland when I’m hame
That Edward once was under me,
And yet wan up again

He stabb’d him thro and thro the hear
He maul’d him cruelly
Then hung him ower the drawbridge
Beside the other three

Now take from me that feather bed
Make me a bed o’ strae
I wish I neer had seen this day
To mak my heart fu’ wae

If I were once at London Tower,
Where I was wont to be
I never mair should gang frae hame,
Till borne on a bier-tree

At the end of his copy Hogg writes (probably of stanza vii.)— “You may insert the two following lines anywhere you think it needs them, or substitute two better -

And marching south with curst Dunbar
A ready welcome found.”

II — WHAT IS AULD MAITLAND?

Is Auld Maitland a sheer forgery by Hogg, or is it in any sense, and if so, in what sense, antique and traditional? That Hogg made the whole of it is to me incredible. He had told Laidlaw on 20th July 1801, that he would make no ballads on traditions without Scott’s permission, written in Scott’s hand. Moreover, how could he have any traditions about “Auld Maitland, his noble Sonnis three,” personages of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries? Scott had read about them in poems of about 1580, but these poems then lay in crabbed manuscripts. Again, Hogg wrote in words (“springs, wall-stanes”) of whose meaning he had no idea; he took it as he heard it in recitation. Finally, the style is not that of Hogg when he attempts the ballad. Scott observed that “this ballad, notwithstanding its present appearance, has a claim to very high antiquity.” The language, except for a few technical terms, is modern, but what else could it be if handed down orally? The language of undoubted ballads is often more modern than that which was spoken in my boyhood in Ettrick Forest. As Sir Walter Scott remarked, a poem of 1570-1580, which he quotes from the Maitland MSS., “would run as smoothly, and appear as modern, as any verse in the ballad (with a few exceptions) if divested of its antique spelling.”

We now turn to the historical characters in the ballad.

Sir Richard Maitland of Lauder, or Thirlestane, says Scott, was already in his lands, and making donations to the Church in 1249. If, in 1296, forty-seven years later, he held his castle against Edward I., as in the ballad, he must have been a man of, say, seventy-five. By about 1574 his descendant, Sir Richard Maitland, was consoled for his family misfortunes (his famous son, Lethington, having died after the long siege of Edinburgh Castle, which he and Kirkcaldy of Grange held for Queen Mary), by a poet who reminded him that his ancestor, in the thirteenth century, lost all his sons— “peerless pearls” — save one, “Burdallane.” The Sir Richard of 1575 has also one son left (John, the minister of James VI.).

From this evidence, in 1802 in MS. unpublished, and from other Maitland MSS., we learn that, in the sixteenth century, the Auld Maitland of the ballad was an eminent character in the legends of that period, and in the ballads of the people. His

  Nobill sonnis three,
Ar sung in monie far countrie,

Pinkerton published, in 1786, none of the pieces to which Scott refers in his extracts from the Maitland MSS. How, then, did Hogg, if Hogg forged the ballad, know of Maitland and his “three noble sons”? Except Colonel Elliot, to whose explanation we return, I am not aware that any critic has tried to answer this question.

It seems to me that if the Ballad of Otterburne, extant in 1550 in England, survived in Scottish memory till Herd’s fragment appeared in 1776, a tradition of Maitland, who was popular in the ballads of 1575, and known to Gawain Douglas seventy years earlier, may also have persisted. There is no impossibility.

Looking next at Scott’s Auld Maitland the story is that King Edward I. reigned for fifty years. He had a nephew Edward (an apocryphal person: such figures are common in ballads), who wished to take part in the invasion of Scotland. The English are repulsed by old Maitland from his “darksome house” on the Leader. The English, however, (stanza xv.) conquer Scotland, and join Edward I. in France. They besiege that town,

Which some call Billop-Grace (xviii.).

Here Maitland’s three sons are learning at school, as Scots often were educated in France. They see that Edward’s standard quarters the arms of France, and infer that he has conquered their country. They “will try some jeopardy.” Persuading the English that they are themselves Englishmen, they ask leave to carry the royal flag. The eldest is told that he is singularly like Auld Maitland. In anger he stabs the standard-bearer, seizes the flag, and, with his brothers, spurs to Billop-Grace, where the French captain receives them. There is fighting at the gate. The King says that three disguised lads of France have stolen his flag. The Maitlands apparently heard of this; the youngest goes to Edward, and explains that they are Maitland’s sons, and Scots; they challenge any three Englishmen; a thing in the manner of the period. The three Scots are victorious. Young Edward then challenges one of the dauntless three, who slays him. Edward wishes himself home at London Tower.

Such is the story. It is out of the regular line of ballad narrative, but it does not follow that, in the sixteenth century, some such tale was not told “in rural rhyme” about Maitland’s “three noble sons.” That it is not historically true is nothing, of course, and that it is not in the Scots of the thirteenth century is nothing.

Colonel Elliot asks, What in the ballad raised suspicion of forgery (in 1802-03)? The historical inaccuracies are common to all historical ballads. (In an English ballad known to me of 1578, Henry Darnley is “hanged on a tree”!)

Next, “there are occasional lines, and even stanzas, which jar in style to such a degree that they must have been written by two separate hands.”

But this, also, is a common feature. In “Professor Child and the Ballad,” Mr. W. M. Hart gives a list of Professor Child’s notes on the multiplicity of hands, which he, and every critic, detect in some ballads with a genuinely antique substratum.

Colonel Elliot quotes, as in his opinion the best, stanzas viii., ix., x., xi., while he thinks xv., xviii. the worst. I give these stanzas -

VIII.

They lighted on the banks o’ Tweed,
And blew their coals sae het,
And fired the Merse and Teviotdale,
All in an evening late.

IX.

As they fared up o’er Lammermoor,
They burned baith up and doun,
Until they came to a darksome house,
Some call it Leader Town.

X.

“Wha hauds this house?” young Edward cried,
”Or wha gi’est ower to me?”
A grey-hair’d knight set up his head,
And crackit right crousely:

XI.

“Of Scotland’s king I haud my house,
   He pays me meat and fee;
And I will keep my guid auld house,
   While my house will keep me.”

I cannot, I admit, find any fault with these stanzas: cannot see any reason why they should not be traditional.

Then Colonel Elliot cites, as the worst -

XV.

Then fifteen barks, all gaily good,
   Met them upon a day,
Which they did lade with as much spoil
   As they could take away.

XVIII.

Until we came unto that town
   Which some call Billop-Grace;
There were Auld Maitland’s sons, a’ three,
   Learning at school, alas!

Now, if I venture to differ from Colonel Elliot here, I may plead that I am practised in the art of ballad-faking, and can produce high testimonials of skill! To me stanzas xv., xviii. seem to differ much from viii.-xi., but not in such a way as Hogg would have differed, had he made them. Hogg’s error would have lain, as Scott’s did, in being, as Scott said of Mrs. Hemans, TOO POETICAL.

Neither Hogg nor Scott, I think, was crafty enough to imitate the prosaic drawl of the printed broadside ballad, or the feeble interpolations with which the “gangrel scrape-gut,” or bankelsanger, supplied gaps in his memory. The modern complete ballad-faker WOULD introduce such abject verses, but Scott and Hogg desired to decorate, not to debase, ballads with which they intermeddled, and we track them by their modern romantic touch when they interpolate. I take it, for this reason, that Hogg did not write stanzas xv., xviii. It was hardly in nature for Hogg, if he knew Ville de Grace in Normandy (a thing not very probable), to invent "Billop-Grace" as a popular corruption of the name — and a popular corruption it is, I think. Probably the original maker of this stanza wrote, in line 4, "alace," an old spelling — not "alas" — to rhyme with "grace."

Colonel Elliot then assigns xv., xviii. as most likely of all to be by
Hogg. On that I have given my opinion, with my reasons.

These verses, with xviii., lead us to France, and whereas Scott here suspects that some verses have been lost (see his note to stanza xviii.), Colonel Elliot suspects that the stanzas relating to France have been interpolated. But the French scenes occupy the whole poem from xvi. to lxv., the end.

What, if Hogg were the forger, were his sources? He MAY have known Douglas's Palice of Honour, which, of course, existed in print, with its mention of Maitland's grey beard. But how did he know Maitland's "three noble sons," in 1801-1802, lying unsunned in the Maitland MSS.?

This is a point which critics of Auld Maitland studiously ignore, yet it is the essential point. How did the Shepherd know about the three young Maitlands, whose existence, in legend, is only revealed to us through a manuscript unpublished in 1802? Colonel Elliot does not evade the point. "We may be sure," he says, that Leyden, before 1802, knew Hogg, and Hogg might have obtained from him sufficient information to enable him to compose the ballad. But it was from Laidlaw, not from Leyden, that Scott, after receiving his first copy at Blackhouse, in spring 1802, obtained Hogg's address. There is no hint that before spring 1802 Leyden ever saw Hogg. Had he known him, and his ballad-lore, he would have brought him and Scott together. In 1801-02, Leyden was very busy in Edinburgh helping Scott to edit Sir Tristram, copying Arthour, seeking for an East India appointment, and going into society. Scott's letters prove all this.

That Hogg, in 1802, was very capable of writing a ballad, I admit; also that, through Blind Harry's Wallace, he may have known all about "sowies," and "portculize," and springwalls, or springald's, or springalls, mediaeval balistas for throwing heavy stones and darts. But Hogg did not know or guess what a springwall was. In his stanza xiii. (in the MS. given to Laidlaw), Hogg wrote -

With springs; wall stanes, and good o'ern
  Among them fast he threw.

Scott saw the real meaning of this nonsense, and read -

With springalds, stones, and gads o' airn.

In his preface he says that many words in the ballad, "which the reciters have retained without understanding them, still preserve traces of their antiquity." For instance, springalls, corruptedly pronounced springwalls. Hogg, hearing the pronunciation, and not understanding, wrote, "with springs: wall stanes." A leader would not throw "wall stanes" till he had exhausted his ammunition. Hogg heard "with springwalls stones, he threw," and wrote it, "with springs: wall stones he threw."

Hogg could not know of Auld Maitland "and his three noble sons" except through an informant familiar with the Maitland MSS. in Edinburgh University Library. On the theory of a conspiracy to forge, Scott taught him, but that theory is crushed.

Hogg says, in Domestic Manners of Sir Walter Scott, that when his mother met Scott she told him that her brother and she learned the ballad from auld Andrew Muir, and he from "auld Babby Mettlin," housekeeper of the first ("Anderson") laird of Tushielaw. This first Anderson, laird of Tushielaw, reigned from 1688 to 1721 (?) or 1724. Hogg's mother was born in 1730, and was only one remove — filled up by Andrew Muir — from Babby, who was "ither than a gude yin," and knew many songs. Does any one think Hogg crafty enough to have invented Babby Maitland as the source of a song about the Maitlands, and to have introduced her into his narrative in 1834? I conjecture that this Maitland woman knew a Maitland song, modernised in time, and perhaps copied out and emended by one of the Maitland family, possibly one of the descendants of Lethington. We know that, under James I., about 1620, Lethington's impoverished son, James, had several children; and that Lauderdale was still supporting them (or THEIR children) during the Restoration. Only a century before, ballads on the Maitlands had certainly been popular, and there is nothing impossible in the suggestion that one such ballad survived in the Lauderdale or Lethington family, and came through Babby Maitland to Andrew Muir, then to Hogg's mother, to Hogg, and to Scott.

If a manuscript copy ever existed, and was Babby's ultimate source, it would be of the late seventeenth century. That is the ascertained date of the oldest known MS. of The Outlaw Murray, as is proved from an allusion in a note appended to a copy, referring to a Judge of Session, Lord Philiphaugh, as then alive. The copy was of 1689-1702.

Granting a MS. of Auld Maitland existing in any branch of the Maitland family in 1680-1700, Babby Mettlin's knowledge of the ballad, and its few modernisms, are explained.

As Lockhart truly says, Hogg "was the most extraordinary man that ever wore the maud of a shepherd." He had none of Burns' education. In 1802 he was young, and ignorant of cities, and always was innocent of research in the crabbed MSS. of the sixteenth century. Yet he gets at legendary persons known to us only through these MSS. He makes a ballad named Auld Maitland about them. Through him a farm-lass at Blackhouse acquires some stanzas which Laidlaw copies. In a fortnight Hogg sends Laidlaw the whole ballad, with the pedigree — his uncle, his mother, their father, and old Andrew Muir, servant to the famous Rev. Mr. Boston of Ettrick. The copy takes in Scott and Leyden. Later, Ritson makes no objection. Mrs. Hogg recites it to Scott, and, according to Hogg, gives a casual "auld Babby Maitland" as the original source.

Is the whole fraud conceivable? Hogg, we must believe, puts in two stanzas (xv., xviii.), of the lowliest order of printed stall-copy or "gangrel scrape-gut" style, and the same with intent to deceive. He introduces "Billop-Grace" as a deceptive popular corruption of Ville de Grace. This is far beyond any craft that I have found in the most artful modern "fakers." One stanza (xlix.) -

But Ethert Lunn, a baited bear,
Had many battles seen -

seems to me very recent, whoever made it. Scott, in lxii., gives a variant of "some reciters," for "That Edward once lay under me," they read "That Englishman lay under me." This, if a false story, was an example of an art more delicate than Scott elsewhere exhibits.

One does not know what Professor Child would have said to my arguments. He never gave a criticism in detail of the ballad and of the circumstances in which Scott acquired it. A man most reasonable, most open to conviction, he would, I think, have confessed his perplexity.

Scott did not interpolate a single stanza, even where, as Hogg wrote, he suspected a lacuna in the text. He neither cut out nor improved the cryingly modern stanzas. He kept them, as he kept several stanzas in Tamlane, which, so he told Laidlaw, were obviously recent, but were in a copy which he procured through Lady Dalkeith.

By neither adding to nor subtracting from his MS. copy of Auld Maitland, Scott proved, I think, his respect for a poem which, in its primal form, he believed to be very ancient. We know, at all events, that ballads on the Maitland heroes were current about 1580. So, late in the sixteenth century, were the ballads quoted by Hume of Godscroft, on the murder of the Knight of Liddesdale

(1354), the murder of the young Earl of Douglas in Edinburgh Castle (1440), and the battle of Otterburn. Of these three, only Otterburne was recovered by Herd, published in 1776. The other two are lost; and there is no prima facie reason why a Maitland ballad, of the sort current in 1580, should not, in favourable circumstances, have survived till 1802.

As regards the Shepherd's ideas of honesty in ballad-collecting at this early period, I have quoted his letter to Laidlaw of 20th July 1802.

Again, in the case of his text from recitation of the Ballad of Otterburne (published by Scott in The Minstrelsy of 1806), he gave the Sheriff a full account of his mode of handling his materials, and Scott could get more minute details by questioning him.

To this text of Otterburne, freely attacked by Colonel Elliot, in apparent ignorance, as before, of the published facts of the case, and of the manuscript, we next turn our attention. In the meantime, Scott no more conspired to forge Auld Maitland than he conspired to forge the Pentateuch. That Hogg did not forge Auld Maitland I think I have made as nearly certain as anything in this region can be. I think that the results are a lesson to professors of the Higher Criticism of Homer.

THE BALLAD OF OTTERBURNE

Scott’s version of the Ballad of Otterburne, as given first in The Minstrelsy of 1806, comes under Colonel Elliot’s most severe censure. He concludes in favour of “the view that it consists partly of stanzas from Percy’s Reliques, which have undergone emendations calculated to disguise the source from which they came, partly of stanzas of modern fabrication, and partly of a very few stanzas and lines from Herd’s version” (1776).

As a matter of fact we know, though Colonel Elliot does not, the whole process of construction of the Otterburne in The Minstrelsy of 1806. Professor Child published all the texts with a letter. It is a pity that Colonel Elliot overlooks facts in favour of conjecture. Concerning historical facts he is not more thorough in research. The story, in Percy’s Reliques, of the slaying of Douglas by Percy, “is, so far as I know, supported neither by history nor by tradition.” If unfamiliar with the English chroniclers (in Latin) of the end of the fourteenth century, Colonel Elliot could find them cited by Professor Child. Knyghton, Walsingham, and the continuator of Higden (Malverne), all assert that Percy killed Douglas with his own hand. The English ballad of Otterburne (in MS. of about 1550) gives this version of Douglas’s death. It is erroneous. Froissart, a contemporary, had accounts of the battle from combatants, both English and Scottish. Douglas, fighting in the front of the van, on a moonlight night, was slain by three lance-wounds received in the mellay. The English knew not whom they had slain.

The interesting point is that, while the Scottish ballads give either the English version of Percy’s death (in Minstrelsy, 1806) or another account mentioned by Hume of Godscroft (circ. 1610), that he was slain by one of his own men, the Scottish versions are ALL deeply affected in an important point by Froissart’s contemporary narrative, which has not affected the English versions. The point is that the death of Douglas was by his order concealed from both parties.

When both the English version in Percy’s Reliques (from a MS. of about 1550), and Scott’s version of 1806, mention a “challenge to battle” between Percy and Douglas, Colonel Elliot calls this incident “probably purely fanciful and imaginary,” and suspects Scott’s version of being made up and altered from the English text. But the challenge which resulted in the battle of Otterburn is not fanciful and imaginary!

It is mentioned by Froissart. Douglas, he says, took Percy’s pennon in an encounter under Newcastle. Percy vowed that Douglas would never carry the pennon out of Northumberland; Douglas challenged him to come and take it from his tent door that night; but Percy was constrained not to accept the challenge. The Scots then marched homewards, but Douglas insisted on besieging Otterburn Castle; here he passed some days on purpose to give Percy a chance of a fight; Percy's force surprised the Scots; they were warned, as in the ballads, suddenly, by a man who galloped up; the fight began; and so on.

Now Herd's version says nothing of Douglas at Newcastle; the whole scene is at Otterburn. On the other hand, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe's MS. text DID bring Douglas to Newcastle. Of this Colonel Elliot says nothing. The English version says NOTHING OF PERCY'S LOSS OF HIS PENNON TO DOUGLAS (nor does Sharpe's), and gives the challenge and tryst. Scott's version says nothing of Percy's pennon, but Douglas takes Percy's SWORD and vows to carry it home. Percy's challenge, in the English version, is accompanied by a gross absurdity. He bids Douglas wait at Otterburn, where, pour tout potage to an army absurdly stated at 40,000 men, Percy suggests venison and pheasants! In the Scottish version Percy offers tryst at Otterburn. Douglas answers that, though Otterburn has no supplies — nothing but deer and wild birds — he will there tarry for Percy. This is chivalrous, and, in Scott's version, Douglas understands war. In the English version Percy does not. (To these facts I return, giving more details.) Colonel Elliot supposes some one (Scott, I daresay) to have taken Percy's, — the English version, — altered it to taste, concealed the alterations, as in this part of the challenge, by inverting the speeches and writing new stanzas of the fight at Otterburn, used a very little of Herd (which is true), and inserted modern stanzas.

Now, first, as regards pilfering from the English version, that version, and Herd's undisputed version, have undeniably a common source. Neither, as it stands, is "original"; of an ORIGINAL contemporary Otterburn ballad we have no trace. By 1550, when such ballads were certainly current both in England and Scotland, they were late, confused by tradition, and, of what we possess, say Herd's, and the English MS. of 1550, all were interblended.

The Scots ballad version, known to Hume of Godscroft (1610), may have been taken from the English, and altered, as Child thought, or the English, as Motherwell maintained, may have been borrowed from the Scots, and altered. One or the other process undeniably occurred; the second poet, who made the changes, introduced the events most favourable to his country, and left out the less favourable. By Scott's time, or Herd's, the versions were much degraded through decay of memory, bad penny broadsides (lost), and uneducated reciters. Herd's version has forgotten the historic affair of the capture of Percy's pennon (and of the whole movement on Newcastle, preserved in Sharpe’s and Scott’s); Scott’s remembers the encounter at Newcastle, forgets the pennon, and substitutes the capture by Douglas of Percy’s sword. The Englishman deliberately omits the capture of the pennon. The Scots version (here altered by Sir Walter) makes Percy wound Douglas at Otterburn -

Till backward he did flee.

Now Colonel Elliot has no right, I conceive, to argue that this Scots version, with the Newcastle incident, the captured sword, the challenge, the “backward flight” of Douglas, were introduced by a modern (Scott?) who was deliberately “faking” the English version. There is no reason why tradition should NOT have retained historical incidents in the Scottish form; it is a mere assumption that a modern borrowed and travestied these incidents from Percy’s Reliques. We possess Hogg’s UNEDITED original of Scott’s version of 1806 (an original MS. never hinted at by Colonel Elliot), and it retains clear traces of being contaminated with a version of The Huntiss of Chevet, popular in 1459, as we read in The Complaynte of Scotland of that date. There is also an old English version of The Hunting of the Cheviot (1550 or later, Bodleian Library). The UNEDITED text of Scott’s Otterburne then contained traces of The Huntiss of Chevet; the two were mixed in popular memory. In short, Scott’s text, manipulated slightly by him in a way which I shall describe, was A THING SURVIVING IN POPULAR MEMORY: how confusedly will be explained.

The differences between the English version of 1550 and the Scots (collected for Scott by Hogg), are of old standing. I am not sure that there was not, before 1550, a Scottish ballad, which the English ballad-monger of that date annexed and altered. The English version of 1550 is not “popular”; it is the work of a humble literary man.

The English is a very long ballad, in seventy quatrains; it greatly exaggerates the number of the Scots engaged (40,000), and it is the work of a professional author who uses the stereotyped prosaic stopgaps of the cheap hack -

I tell you withouten dread,

is his favourite phrase, and he cites historical authority -

The cronykle wyll not layne (lie).

Scottish ballads do not appeal to chroniclers! A patriotic and imbecile effort is made by the Englishman to represent Percy as captured, indeed, but released without ransom -

There was then a Scottysh prisoner tayne,
Sir Hew Mongomery was his name;
For sooth as I yow saye,

He borrowed the Persey home agayne.

This is obscure, and in any case false. Percy WAS taken, and towards his ransom Richard II. paid 3000 pounds.

It may be well to quote the openings of each ballad, English and Scots.

ENGLISH (1550)

I.

It fell about the Lammas tyde,
   When husbands win their hay,
The doughty Douglas bound him to ride,
   In England to take a prey.

II.

The Earl of Fife, withouten strife,
   He bound him over Solway;
The great would ever together ride
   That race they may rue for aye.

III.

Over Hoppertop hill they came in,
   And so down by Rodcliff crag,
Upon Green Linton they lighted down,
   Stirring many a stag.

IV.

And boldly brent Northumberland,
   And harried many a town,
They did our Englishmen great wrong,
   To battle that were not boune.

V.

Then spake a berne upon the bent . .

SCOTTISH, HERD (1776)

I.

It fell and about the Lammas time,
   When hushandmen do win their hay;
Earl Douglas is to the English woods,
   And a’ with him to fetch a prey.

II.

He has chosen the Lindsays light,
   With them the gallant Gordons gay;
And the Earl of Fyfe, withouten strife,
   And Hugh Montgomery upon a grey.
(THE LAST LINE IS OBVIOUSLY A RECITER’S STOPGAP.)

III.

They have taken Northumberland,
   And sae hae they THE NORTH SHIRE,
And the Otterdale they hae burned hale,
   And set it a’ into fire.

IV.

Out then spak a bonny boy;

Manifestly these copies, so far, are not independent. But now Herd’s copy begins to vary much from the English.

In both ballads a boy or “berne” speaks up. In the English he recommends to the Scots an attack on Newcastle; in the Scots he announces the approach of an English host. Douglas promises to reward the boy if his tale be true, to hang him if it be false. THE SCENE IS OTTERBURN. The boy stabs Douglas, in a stanza which is a common ballad formula of frequent occurrence -

The boy's taen out his little pen knife,
  That hanget low down by his gare,
And he gaed Earl Douglas a deadly wound,
  Alack! a deep wound and a sare.

Douglas then says to Sir Hugh Montgomery -

  Take THOU the vanguard of the three,
And bury me at yon bracken bush,
  That stands upon yon lilly lea. (Herd, 4-8.)

Hume of Godscroft (about 1610), author of the History of the Douglases, was fond of quoting ballads. He gives a form of the first verse in Otterburn which is common to Herd and the English copy. He says that, according to some, Douglas was treacherously slain by one of his own men whom he had offended. "But this narration is not so probable," and the fact is fairly meaningless in Herd's fragment (the boy has no motive for stabbing Douglas, for if his report is true, he will be rewarded). The deed is probably based on the tradition which Godscroft thought "less probable," — the treacherous murder of the Earl.

In the English ballad, Douglas marches on Newcastle, where Percy, without fighting, makes a tryst to meet and combat him at Otterburn, on his way home from Newcastle to Scotland. Thither Douglas goes, and is warned by a Scottish knight of Percy's approach: as in Herd, he is sceptical, but is convinced by facts. (This warning of Douglas by a scout who gallops up is narrated by Froissart, from witnesses engaged in the battle.) After various incidents, Percy and Douglas encounter each other, and Douglas is slain. After a desperate fight, Sir Hugh Montgomery, a prisoner of the English,

Borrowed the Percy home again.

This is absurd. The Scots fought on, took Percy, and won the day.
Walsingham, the contemporary English chronicler (in Latin), says that
Percy slew Douglas, so do Knyghton and the continuator of Higden.

Meanwhile we observe that the English ballad says nothing of Douglas's chivalrous fortitude, and soldier-like desire to have his death concealed. Here every Scottish version follows Froissart. In Herd's fragment, Montgomery now attacks Percy, and bids him “yield thee to yon bracken bush,” where the dead Douglas’s body lies concealed. Percy does yield — to Sir Hugh Montgomery. The fragment has but fourteen stanzas.

In 1802, Scott, correcting by another MS., published Herd’s copy. In 1806 he gave another version, for “fortunately two copies have since been obtained from the recitation of old persons residing at the head of Ettrick Forest.”

Colonel Elliot devotes a long digression to the trivial value of recitations, so styled, and gives his suggestions about the copy being made up from the Reliques. When Scott’s copy of 1806 agrees with the English version, Colonel Elliot surmises that a modern person, familiar with the English, has written the coincident verses in WITH DIFFERENCES. Percy and Douglas, for example, change speeches, each saying what, in the English, the other said in substance, not in the actual words. When Scott’s version touches on an incident known in history, but not given in the English version, the encounter between Douglas and Percy at Newcastle (Scott, vii., viii.), Colonel Elliot suspects the interpolator (and well he may, for the verses are mawkish and modern, not earlier than the eighteenth century imitations or remaniements which occur in many ballads traditional in essence).

So Colonel Elliot says, “We are not told, either in The Minstrelsy or in any of Scott’s works or writings, who the reciters were, and who the transcribers were.” We very seldom are told by Scott who the reciters were and who the transcribers, but our critic’s information is here mournfully limited — by his own lack of study. Colonel Elliot goes on to criticise a very curious feature in Scott’s version of 1806, and finds certain lines “beautiful” but “without a note of antiquity,” that he can detect, while the sentiment “is hardly of the kind met with in old ballads.”

To understand the position we must remember that, IN THE ENGLISH, Percy and Douglas fight each other thus (1.) -

The Percy and the Douglas met,
  That either of other was fain,
They swapped together while that they sweat,
  With swords of fine Collayne. (Cologne steel.)

Douglas bids Percy yield, but Percy slays Douglas (as in Walsingham’s and other contemporary chronicles, stanzas li.-lvi.). The Scottish losses are then enumerated (only eighteen Scots were left alive!), and stanza lix. runs -

This fray began at Otterburn
  Between the night and the day.

There the Douglas lost his life,
   And the Percy was led away.

Herd ends -

This deed was done at Otterburn,
   About the breaking of the day,
Earl Douglas was buried at the bracken bush,
   And Percy led captive away.

Manifestly, either the maker of Herd's version knew the English, and altered at pleasure, or the Englishman knew a Scots version, and altered at pleasure. The perversion is of ancient standing, undeniably. But when Scott's original text exhibits the same phenomena of perversion, in a part of the ballad missing in Herd's brief lay, Colonel Elliot supposes that NOW the exchanges are by a modern ballad-forger, shall we say Sir Walter? By Sir Walter they certainly are NOT! One tiny hint of Scots originality is dubious. In the English, and in all Scots versions, men "win their hay" at Lammastide. In Scotland the hay harvest is often much later. But if the English ballad be NORTHUMBRIAN, little can be made out of that proof of Scottish origin. If the English version be a southern version (for the minstrel is a professional), then Lammastide for hay-making is borrowed from the Scots.

The Scots version (Herd's) insists on Douglas's burial "by the bracken bush," to which Montgomery bids Percy surrender. This is obviously done to hide his body and keep his death secret from both parties, AS IN FROISSART HE BIDS HIS FRIENDS DO. The verse of the English (l.) on the fight between Douglas and Percy, is borrowed by, or is borrowed from, the Scottish stanza (ix.) in Herd, where Sir Hugh Montgomery fights Percy.

Then Percy and Montgomery met,
   And weel a wot they warna fain;
They swaped swords, and they twa swat,
   And ay the blood ran down between.

The Persses and the Mongomry met,

as quoted, is already familiar in The Complaynte of Scotland (about 1549), and this line is not in the English ballad. So far it seems as if the English balladist borrowed the scene from a Scots version, and perverted it into a description of a fight, between Percy, who wins, and Douglas — in place of the

Scots version, the victory over Percy of Sir Hugh Montgomery.

This transference of incidents in the English and Scottish ballads is a phenomenon which we are to meet again in the ballad of Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead. One “maker” or the other has, in old times, pirated and perverted the ballad of another “maker.”

SCOTT'S TRADITIONAL COPY AND HOW HE EDITED IT

As early as December 1802-January 1803, Scott was "so anxious to have a complete Scottish Otterburn that I will omit the ballad entirely in the first volume (of 1803), hoping to recover it in time for insertion in the third."

The letter is undated, but is determined by Scott's expressed interest "about the Tushielaw lines, which, from what you mention, must be worth recovering." In a letter (Abbotsford MSS.) from Hogg to Scott (marked in copy, "January 7, 1803") Hogg encloses "the Tushielaw lines," which were popular in Ettrick, but were verses of the eighteenth century. They were orally repeated, but literary in origin.

Scott, who wanted "a complete Scottish Otterburn" in winter 1802, did not sit down and make one. He waited till he got a text from Hogg, in 1805, and published an edited version in 1806.

SCOTT'S PUBLISHED stanza i. is Herd's stanza i., with slight verbal changes taken from the Hogg MS. text of 1805. (?) Hogg's MS. and Scott, in stanza ii., give Herd's lines on the Lindsays and Gordons, adding the Grahams, and, in place of Herd's

The Earl of Fife,
And Sir Hugh Montgomery upon a grey,

they end thus -

But the Jardines wald not wi' him ride,
And they rue it to this day.

This is from Hogg's copy; it is a natural Border variant. No Earl of Fife is named, but a reproach to a Border clan is conveyed.

For Herd's iii. (they take Northumberland, and burn "the North shire," and the Otter dale), Hogg's reciters gave -

And he has burned the dales o' Tyne,
And part o' ALMONSHIRE,

And three good towers in Roxburgh fells,
He left them all on fire.

Hogg, in his letter accompanying his copy, says that “Almonshire” may stand for the “Bamborowshire” of the English vi., but that he leaves in “Almonshire,” as both reciters insist on it. Scott printed “Bambroughshire,” as in the English version (vi.).

Now here is proof that Hogg had a copy, from reciters — a copy which he could not understand. “Almonshire” is “Alneshire,” or “Alnwickshire,” where is the Percy’s Alnwick Castle. In Froissart the Scots burn and waste the region of Alneshire, all round Alnwick, but the Earl of Northumberland holds out in the castle, unattacked, and sends his sons, Henry and Ralph Percy, to Newcastle to gather forces, and take the retreating Scots between two fires, Newcastle and Alnwick. But the Scots were not such poor strategists as to return by the way they had come. In a skirmish or joust at Newcastle, says Froissart, Douglas captured Percy’s lance and pennon, with his blazon of arms, and vowed that he would set it up over his castle of Dalkeith. Percy replied that he would never carry it out of England. To give Percy a chivalrous chance of recovering his pennon and making good his word, Douglas insists on waiting at Otterburn to besiege the castle there; and he is taken by surprise (as in the ballads) when a mounted man brings news of Percy’s approach. No tryst is made by Percy and Douglas at Otterburn in Froissart; Douglas merely tarried there by the courtesy of Scotland.

In Hogg’s version we have a reason why Douglas should tarry at Otterburn; in the English ballad we have none very definite. No captured pennon of Percy’s is mentioned, no encounter of the heroes “at the barriers” of Newcastle. Percy, from the castle wall, merely threatens Douglas vaguely; Douglas says, “Where will you meet me?” and Percy appoints Otterburn as we said. He makes the absurd remark that, by way of supplies (for 40,000 men), Douglas will find abundance of pheasants and red deer.

We see that the English balladist is an unwarlike literary hack. The author of the Ettrick version knew better the nature of war, as we shall see, and his Douglas objects to Otterburn as a place destitute of supplies; nothing is there but wild beasts and birds. If the original poem is the sensible poem, the Scott version is the original which the English hath perverted.

In Hogg, Douglas jousts with Percy at Newcastle, and gives him a fall. Then come two verses (viii.-ix.). The second is especially modern and mawkish -

But O how pale his lady look’d,
   Frae off the castle wa’,
When down before the Scottish spear
   She saw brave Percy fa’!
How pale and wan his lady look’d,
   Frae off the castle hieght,
When she beheld her Percy yield
   To doughty Douglas’ might.

Colonel Elliot asks, “Can any one believe that these stanzas are really ancient and have come down orally through many generations?”

Certainly not! But Colonel Elliot does not allow for the fact, insisted on by Professor Child, that traditional ballads, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, were often printed on broad-sheets as edited by the cheapest broadside-vendors’ hacks; that the hacks interpolated and messed their originals; and that, after the broadside was worn out, lost, or burned, oral memory kept it alive in tradition. For examples of this process we have only to look at William’s Ghost in Herd’s copy of 1776. This is a traditional ballad; it is included in Scott’s Clerk Saunders, but, as Hogg told him, is a quite distinct song. In Herd’s copy it ends thus -

“Oh, stay, my only true love, stay,”
   The constant Marg’ret cry’d;
Wan grew her cheeks, she closed her eyes,
   Stretched her soft limbs, and dy’d.

Let THIS get into tradition, and be taken down from recitation, and the ballad will be denounced as modern. But it is essentially ancient.

These two modern stanzas, in Hogg’s copy, are rather too bad for Hogg’s making; and I do not know whether they are his (he practically says they are not, we shall see), or whether they are remembered by reciters from a stall-copy of the period of Lady Wardlaw’s Hardyknute.

After that, Hogg’s copy becomes more natural. Douglas says to the discomfited Percy (x.) -

Had we twa been upon the green,
   And never an eye to see,
I should hae had ye flesh and fell,

But your sword shall gae wi’ me.

That rings true! Moreover, had either Hogg or Scott tampered here (Scott excised), either would have made Douglas carry off — not Percy’s SWORD, but the historic captured PENNON of Percy. Scott really could not have resisted the temptation had he been interpolating a son devis.

But your PENNON shall gae wi’ me!
It was easy to write in that!
Percy had challenged Douglas thus -

But gae ye up to Otterburn,
And there wait days three (xi.),

as in the English (xiii.). In the English, Percy, we saw, promises game enough there; in Hogg, Douglas demurs (xii., xiii., xiv.). There are no supplies at Otterburn, he says -
To feed my men and me.

The deer rins wild frae dale to dale,
The birds fly wild frae tree to tree,
And there is neither bread nor kale,
To fend my men and me.

These seem to me sound true ballad lines, like -

My hounds may a’ rin masterless
My hawks may fly frae tree to tree,

in Child’s variant of Young Beichan. The speakers, we see, are “inverted.” Percy, in the English, promises Douglas’s men pheasants — absurd provision for the army of 40,000 men of the English ballad. In the Ettrick text Douglas says that there are no supplies, merely ferae naturae, but he will wait at Otterburn to give Percy his chance.

Colonel Elliot takes the inversion of parts as a proof of modern pilfering and deliberate change to hide the theft; at least he mentions them, and the “prettier verses,” with a note of exclamation (!). But there are, we repeat, similar inversions in the English and in Herd’s old copy, and nobody says that Scott or Hogg or any modern faker made the inversions in Herd’s text. The differences and inversions in the English and in Herd are very ancient; by 1550 “the Percy and the Montgomery met,” in the line quoted in The Complaynte of Scotland. At about the same period (1550) it was the Percy and the Douglas who met, in the English version. Manifestly there pre-existed, by 1550, an old ballad, which either a Scot then perverted from the English text, or an Englishman from the Scots. Thus the inversions in the Ettrick and English version need not be due (they are not due) to a MODERN “faker.”

In the Hogg MS. (xxiii.), Percy wounds Douglas “till backwards he did flee.” Hogg was too good a Scot to interpolate the flight of Douglas; and Scott was so good a Scot that — what do you suppose he did? — he excised “till backwards he did flee” from Hogg’s text, and inserted “that he fell to the ground” FROM THE ENGLISH TEXT!

In the Hogg MS. (xviii., xix.), in Scott xvii., xviii., Douglas, at Otterburn, is roused from sleep by his page with news of Percy’s approach. Douglas says that the page lies (compare Herd, where Douglas doubts the page) -

For Percy hadna’ men yestreen
To dight my men and me.

There is nothing in this to surprise any one who knows the innumerable variants in traditional ballads. But now comes in a very curious variation (Hogg MS. xx., Scott, xix.). Douglas says (Hogg MS. xx.) -

But I have seen a dreary dream
   Beyond the Isle o’ Skye,
I saw a dead man won the fight,
   And I think that man was I.

Here is something not in Herd, and as remote from the manner of the
English poet, with his

The Chronicle will not lie,

as Heine is remote from, say, — Milman. The verse is magical, it has haunted my memory since I was ten years old. Godscroft, who does not approve of the story of Douglas’s murder by one of his men, writes that the dying leader said:-

“First do yee keep my death both from our own folke and from the enemy” (Froissart, “Let neither friend nor foe know of my estate”); “then that ye suffer not my standard to be lost or cast downe” (Froissart, “Up with my standard and call DOUGLAS!”;) “and last, that ye avenge my death” (also in Froissart).

“Bury me at Melrose Abbey with my father. If I could hope for these things I should die with the greater contentment; for long since I HEARD A PROPHESIE THAT A DEAD MAN SHOULD WINNE A FIELD, AND I HOPE IN GOD IT SHALL BE I.”

I saw a dead man won the fight,
   And I think that man was I!

Godscroft, up to the mention of Melrose and the prophecy, took his tale direct from Froissart, or, if he took it from George Buchanan’s Latin History, Buchanan’s source was Froissart, but Froissart’s was evidence from Scots who were in the battle.

But who changed the prophecy to a dream of Douglas, and who versified Godscroft’s “a dead man shall winne a field, and I hope in God it shall be I”? Did Godscroft take that from the ballad current in his time and quoted by him? Or did a remanieur of Godscroft turn HIS words into

I saw a dead man win the fight,
   And I think that man was I?

Scott did not make these two noble lines out of Godscroft, he found them in Hogg’s copy from recitation, only altering “I saw” into “I dreamed,” and the ungrammatic “won” into “win”; and “THE fight” into “A fight.”

The whole dream stanza occurs in a part of the ballad where Hogg confesses to no alteration or interpolation, and I doubt if the Shepherd of Ettrick had read a rare old book like Godscroft. If he had not, this stanza is purely traditional; if he had, he showed great genius in his use of Godscroft.

In Hogg’s Ettrick copy, Douglas, after telling his dream, rushes into battle, is wounded by Percy, and “backward flees.” Scott (xx.), following a historical version (Wyntoun’s Cronykil), makes

Douglas forget the helmit good
   That should have kept his brain.

Being wounded, in Hogg’s version, and “backward fleeing,” Douglas sends his page to bring Montgomery (Hogg), and from stanza xxiv. to xxxiv., in Hogg, all is made up by himself, he says, — from facts given “in plain prose” by his reciters, with here and there a line or two given in verse. Scott omitted some verses here, amended others slightly, by help of Herd's version, LEFT OUT A BROKEN LAST STANZA (xl.) and put in Herd's concluding lines (stanza lxviii. in the English text).

This deed was done at the Otterburn. (Herd.)

The fraye began at Otterburn. (English.)

Now what was the broken Ettrick stanza that Scott omitted in his published Otterburne (1806)? It referred to Sir Hugh Montgomery, who, in Herd, captured Percy after a fight; in the English version is a prisoner apparently exchanged for Percy. In the Ettrick MS. the omitted verse is

He left not an Englishman on the field
. . .
That he hadna either killed or taen
Ere his heart's blood was cauld.

Scott ended with Herd's last stanza; in the English version the last but two.

Now the death, at Otterburn, of Sir Hugh, is recorded in an English ballad styled The Hunting of the Cheviot. By 1540-50 it was among the popular songs north of Tweed. The Complaynte of Scotland (1549) mentions among "The Songis of Natural Music of the Antiquitie" (volkslieder), The Hunttis of Chevet. Our copy of the English version is in the Bodleian (MS. Ashmole, 48). It ends: "Expliceth, quod Rychard Sheale," a minstrel who recited ballads and tales at Tamworth (circ. 1559). The text was part of his stock-in-trade.

The Cheviot ballad, in a Scots form popular in 1549, is later in many ways than the English Battle of Otterburne. It begins with a brag of Percy, a vow that, despite Douglas, he will hunt in the Cheviot hills. While Percy is hunting with a strong force, Douglas arrives with another. Douglas offers to decide the quarrel by single combat with Percy, who accepts. Richard Witherington refuses to look on quietly, and a general engagement ensues.

At last the Duglas and the Perse met,
Lyk to Captayns of myght and of mayne,
They swapte together tylle they both swat
With swordes that wear of fyn myllan."

We are back in stanza I. of the English Otterburne, in stanza xxxv. (substituting Hugh Montgomery for Douglas) of the Hogg MS. In The Hunting, Douglas is slain by an English arrow (xxxvi.-xxxviii.).

Sir Hugh Montgomery now charges and slays Percy (who, of course, was merely taken prisoner). An archer of Northumberland sends an arrow through good Sir Hugh Montgomery (xliii.-xlvi.). Stanza lxvi. has

At Otterburn begane this spurne,
  Upon a Monnynday;
There was the doughte Douglas slean,
  The Perse never went away.

This is a form of Herd’s stanza xiv. of the English Otterburn (lxviii.), made soon after the battle. We see that the ORIGINAL ballad has protean variants; in time all is mixed in tradition.

Now the curious and interesting point is that Hogg, when he collected the ballad from two reciters, himself noticed that the Cheviot ballad had merged, in some way, into the Otterburn ballad, and pointed this out to Scott. I now publish Hogg’s letter to Scott, in which, as usual, he does not give the year-date: I think it was 1805.

ETTRICK HOUSE, Sept. 10, .

Dear Sir, — Though I have used all diligence in my power to recover the old song about which you seemed anxious, I am afraid it will arrive too late to be of any use. I cannot at this time have Grame and Bewick; the only person who hath it being absent at a harvest; and as for the scraps of Otterburn which you have got, THEY SEEM TO HAVE BEEN SOME CONFUSED JUMBLE MADE BY SOME PERSON WHO HAD LEARNED BOTH THE SONGS YOU HAVE, AND IN TIME HAD BEEN STRAITENED TO MAKE ONE OUT OF THEM BOTH. But you shall have it as I had it, saving that, as usual, I have sometimes helped the metre without altering one original word.

Hogg here gives his version from recitation as far as stanza xxiv.

Here Hogg stops and writes:-

The ballad, which I have collected from two different people, a crazy old man and a woman deranged in her mind, seems hitherto considerably entire; but now, when it becomes most interesting, they have both failed me, and I have been obliged to take much of it in plain prose. However, as none of them seemed to know anything of the history save what they had learned from the song, I took it the more kindly. Any few verses which follow are to me unintelligible.

He told Sir Hugh that he was dying, and ordered him to conceal his body, and neither let his own men nor Piercy’s know; which he did, and the battle went on headed by Sir Hugh Montgomery, and at length -

Here follow stanzas up to xxxviii.

Hogg then goes on thus:-

Piercy seems to have been fighting devilishly in the dark. Indeed my narrators added no more, but told me that Sir Hugh died on the field, but that

He left not an Englishman on the field,
. . .
That he hadna either killed or ta’en
Ere his heart’s blood was cauld.

Almonshire (Stanza iii.) may probably be a corruption of Bamburghshire, but as both my narrators called it so I thought proper to preserve it. The towers in Roxburgh fells (Stanza iii.) may not be so improper as we were thinking, there may have been some strength on the very borders. — I remain, Dear Sir, your most faithful and affectionate servant, JAMES HOGG.

Hogg adds a postscript:

Not being able to get the letter away to the post, I have taken the opportunity of again pumping my old friend’s memory, and have recovered some more lines and half lines of Otterburn, of which I am becoming somewhat enamoured. These I have been obliged to arrange somewhat myself, as you will see below, but so mixed are they with original lines and sentences that I think, if you pleased, they might pass without any acknowledgment. Sure no man will like an old song the worse of being somewhat harmonious. After stanza xxiv. you may read stanzas xxv. to xxxiv. Then after xxxviii. read xxxix.

Now we know all that can be known about the copy of the ballad which, in 1805, Scott received from Hogg. Up to stanza xxiv. it is as given by the two old reciters. The crazy man may be the daft man who recited to Hogg Burns’s Tam o’ Shanter, and inspired him with the ambition to be a poet. The deranged woman, like mad Madge Wildfire, was rich in ballad scraps. From stanza xxv. to xxxiv., Hogg confessedly “harmonises” what he got in plain prose intermixed with verse. Stanza xxxix. is apparently Hogg’s. The last broken stanza, as Hogg said, is a reminiscence of the Hunting of the Cheviot, in a Scots form, long lost.

Hogg was not a scientific collector: had he been, he would have taken down “the plain prose” and the broken lines and stanzas verbally. But Hogg has done his best.

We have next to ask, How did Scott treat the material thus placed before him? He dropped five stanzas sent by Hogg, mainly from the part made up from "plain prose"; he placed in a stanza and a line or two from Herd's text; he remade a stanza and adopted a line from the English of 1550, and inserted an incident from Wyntoun's Cronykil (about 1430). He did these things in the effort to construct what Lockhart calls "a standard text."

1. In stanza i., for Hogg's "Douglas WENT," Scott put "bound him to
ride."
2. (H) "With the Lindsays."
   (S.) "With THEM the Lindesays."
3. (H) "Almonshire."
   (S.) "Bamboroughshire."
   (H) "Roxburgh."
   (S.) "Reidswire."
6. (H.) "The border again.
   (S.) "The border fells."
7. (H) "MOST furiously."
   (S.) "RIGHT furiouslie."
9. (H.) A modernised stanza.
   (S.) Scott deletes it.
15. (H) Scott rewrites the stanza thus,
   (H.)
But I will stay at Otterburn,
   Where you shall welcome be;
And if ye come not at three days end,
   A coward I'll call thee.
   (S.)
"Thither will I come," proud Percy said,
   "By the might of Our Ladye."
"There will I bide thee," said the Douglas,
   "My troth I'll plight to thee."
19. (H.) "I have SEEN a dreary dream."
20. (S.) "I have DREAMED a dreary dream."
21. (H)
Where he met with the stout Percy
   And a' his goodly train.
21. (S.)
But he forgot the helmet good
That should have kept his brain.
(From Wyntoun.)

22. (H.) Line 2. “Right keen.”
(S.) Line 2. “Fu’ fain.”
Line 4.
The blood ran down like rain.
Line 4.
The blood ran them between.
23. (H.)
But Piercy wi’ his good broadsword
Was made o’ the metal free,
Has wounded Douglas on the brow
Till backward did he flee.
24. (S.)
But Piercy wi’ his broadsword good
That could so sharply wound,
Has wounded Douglas on the brow,
Till he fell to the ground.
25. (H.) Here Hogg has mixed prose and verse, and does his best.
Scott deletes Hogg’s 25.
27. (H.) Douglas repeats the story of his dream. Scott deletes the stanza.
28. In Hogg’s second line,
Nae mair I’ll fighting see.
Scott gives, from Herd,
Take thou the vanguard of the three.
29. Hogg’s verse is
But tell na ane of my brave men
That I lie bleeding wan,
But let the name of Douglas still
Be shouted in the van.

This is precisely what Douglas does say, in Froissart, but Scott deletes the stanza. Probably Hogg got the fact from his reciters, “in plain prose,” with a phrase or two in verse.

31. (H.) Line 4.
On yonder lily lee.
27. (S.)
That his merrie men might not see.

33. (H) Scott deletes the stanza.
35. (H)
When stout Sir Hugh wi’ Piercy met.
30. (S.)
The Percy and Montgomery met.
36. (H.)
“O yield thee, Piercy,” said Sir Hugh,
”O yield, or ye shall die!”
“Fain would I yield,” proud Percy said,
”But ne’er to loon like thee.”
31. (S.)
“Now yield thee, yield thee, Percy,” he said,
”Or else I vow I’ll lay thee low,”
“To whom must I yield,” quoth Earl Percy,
”Now that I see it must be so?”

Scott took this from Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe’s MS. copy.

38. (H) 38. (S.) Scott makes a slight verbal alteration. 39. (H) Line 1. 34. (S.) Line 1. Scott substitutes Herd’s As soon as he knew it was Montgomery.

40. (H) Hogg’s broken stanza on the death of Montgomery, derived from a lost form of the Huntiss of Chevets, named in The Complaynte of Scotland.

35. (S.) Scott omits giving the formula common to the English of 1550 and to Herd. This was the whole of Scott’s editorial alteration. Any one may discover the facts from Professor Kittredge’s useful abbreviation of Child’s collection into a single volume (Nutt. London, 1905). Colonel Elliot quotes Professor Kittredge’s book three or four times, but in place of looking at the facts he abounds in the Higher Criticism. Colonel Elliot says that Scott does not tell us of a single line having been borrowed from Percy’s version. Scott has only “a single line” to tell of, the fourth line in his stanza xxii., “Till he fell to the ground.”

For the rest, the old English version and Herd’s have many inter-borrowings of stanzas, but we do not know whether a Scot borrowed from an Englishman, or vice versa. Thus, in another and longer traditional version — Hogg’s — more correspondence must be expected than in Herd’s fourteen stanzas. It is, of course, open to scepticism to allege that Hogg merely made his text, invented the two crazy old reciters, and the whole story about them, and his second “pumping of their memories,” invented “Almonshire,” which he could not understand, and invented his last broken stanza on the death of Montgomery, to give the idea that The Huntiss of Chevets was mingled in the recollections of the reciters with The

Battle of Otterburn. He also gave the sword in place of the pennon of Percy as the trophy of Douglas, "and the same with intent to deceive," just as he pretended, in Auld Maitland, not to know what "springwalls" were, and wrote "springs: wall-stanes." If this probable theory be correct, then Scott was the dupe of Truthful James. At all events, though for three years Scott was moving heaven and earth and Ettrick Forest to find a copy of a Scottish ballad of Otterburn, he did not sit down and make one, as, in Colonel Elliot's system, he easily could and probably would have done.

Before studying his next ill deed, we must repeat that the Otterburn ballads prove that in early times one nation certainly pirated a ballad of a rival nation, and very ingeniously altered it and inverted the parts of the heroes.

We have next to examine a case in a later generation, in which a maker who was interested in one clan, pirated, perverted, and introverted the roles of the heroes in a ballad by a maker interested in another clan. Either an Elliotophile perverted a ballad by a Scottophile, or a Scottophile perverted a ballad by an Elliotophile.

This might be done at the time when the ballad was made (say 1620-60). But Colonel Elliot believes that the perversion was inflicted on an Elliotophile ballad by a Scottophile impostor about 1800-1802. The name of this desperate and unscrupulous character was Walter Scott, Sheriff of Ettrick Forest, commonly called Selkirkshire.

In this instance I have no manuscript evidence. The name of "Jamie of the Fair Dodhead," the ballad, appears in a list of twenty-two ballads in Sir Walter's hand, written in a commonplace book about 1800-1801. Eleven are marked X. "Jamie" is one of that eleven. Kinmont Willie is among the eleven not marked X. We may conjecture that he had obtained the first eleven, and was hunting for the second eleven, — some of which he never got, or never published.

THE MYSTERY OF THE BALLAD OF JAMIE TELFER

I — A RIDING SONG

The Ballad of Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead has many charms for lovers of the Border. The swift and simple stanzas carry us through a great tract of country, which remains not unlike what it was in the days when Scotts, Armstrongs, and Elliots rode the hills in jack and knapscap, with sword and lance. The song leads us first, with a foraging party of English riders, from Bewcastle, an English hold, east of the Border stream of the Liddel; then through the Armstrong tribe, on the north bank; then through more Armstrongs north across Tarras water (“Tarras for the good bull trout”); then north up Ewes water, that springs from the feet of the changeless green hills and the pastorum loca vasta, where now only the shepherd or the angler wakens the cry of the curlews, but where then the Armstrongs were in force. We ride on, as it were, and look down into the dale of the stripling Teviot, electro clarior (then held by the Scotts); we descend and ford “Borthwick’s roaring strand,” as Leyden sings, though the burn is usually a purling brook even where it joins Teviot, three miles above Hawick.

Next we pass across the green waves of moorlands that rise to the heights over Ettrick (held by the Scotts), whence the foragers of the song gallop down to “The Fair Dodhead,” now a heap of grass-covered stones, but in their day a peel tower, occupied, ACCORDING TO THE BALLAD, by one James Telfer. The English rob the peel tower, they drive away ten cows, and urge them southwards over Borthwick water, then across Teviot at Coultart Cleugh (say seven miles above Hawick), then up the Frostily burn, and so down Ewes water as before; but the Scottish pursuers meet them before they cross the Liddel again into English bounds. The English are defeated, their captain is shot through the head (which in no way affects his power of making speeches); he is taken, twenty or thirty of his men are killed or wounded, his own cattle are seized, and his victim Telfer, returns rejoicing to Dodhead in distant Ettrick.

C’est magnifique, mais ce n’est pas la guerre! These events never occurred, as we shall see later, yet the poet has the old reiving spirit, the full sense of the fierce manly times, and possesses a traditional knowledge of the historical personages of the day, and knows the country, — more or less.

The poem has raised as many difficulties as Nestor’s long story about raided cattle in the eleventh book of the Iliad. Historical Greece knew but dimly the places which were familiar to Nestor, the towns that time had ruined, the hill where Athene “turned the people again.” We, too, have to seek in documents of the end of the sixteenth century, or in an old map of 1654 (drawn about 1600), to find Dodhead, Catslack, or Catloch, or Catlock hill, and Preakinhaugh, places essential to our inquiry.

I see the student who has ventured so far into my tract wax wan! He does not, — she does not, — wish to hear about dusty documents and ancient maps. For him or for her the ballad is enough, and a very good ballad it is. I would shake the faith of no man in the accuracy of the ballad tale, if it were not necessary for me to defend the character of Sir Walter Scott, which, on occasion of this and other ballads, is impugned by Colonel the Hon. FitzWilliam Elliot. He “hopes, though he cannot expect,” that I will give my reasons for not sharing his belief that Sir Walter did a certain thing which I could not easily palliate.’

II — THE BALLAD IMPOSSIBLE

My attempts to relieve Colonel Elliot from his painful convictions about Sir Walter’s unsportsmanlike behaviour must begin with proof that the ballad, as it stands, cannot conceivably be other than “a pack o’ lees.” Here Colonel Elliot, to a great extent and on an essential point, agrees with me. In sketching rapidly the story of the ballad, — the raid from England into Ettrick, the return of the raiders, the pursuit, — I omitted the clou, the pivot, the central point of dramatic interest. It is this: in one version of the ballad, — call it A for the present, — the unfortunate Telfer runs to ask aid from the laird of Buccleuch, at Branksome Hall, some three and a half or four miles above Hawick, on the Teviot. From the Dodhead it was a stiff run of eight miles, through new-fallen snow. The farmer of Dodhead, in the centre of the Scott country, naturally went for help to the nearest of his neighbours, the greatest chief in the mid-Border. In version A (which I shall call “the Elliot version”), “auld Buccleuch” (who was a man of about thirty in fact) was deaf to Telfer’s prayer.

Gae seek your succour frae Martin Elliot,
  For succour ye’s get nane frae me,
Gae seek your succour where ye paid blackmail,
  For, man, ye ne’er paid money to me.

This is impossibly absurd! As Colonel Elliot writes, “I pointed out in my book” (The Trustworthiness of Border Ballads) “that the allegation that Buccleuch had refused to strike a blow at a party of English raiders, who had insolently ridden some twenty-five miles into Scottish ground and into the very middle of his own territory, was too absurd to be believed . . . “

Certainly; and the story is the more ridiculous as Buccleuch (who has taken Telfer’s protection-money, or “blackmail”) pretends to believe that Telfer — living in Ettrick, about nine miles from Selkirk — pays protection-money to Martin Elliot, residing at Preakinhaugh, high up the water of Liddel. Martin was too small a potentate, and far too remote to be chosen as protector by a man living near the farm of Singlee on Ettrick, and near the bold Buccleuch.

All this is nonsense. Colonel Elliot sees that, and suggests that all this is not by the original poet, but has been “inserted at some later period.” But, if so, WHAT WAS THE ORIGINAL BALLAD BEFORE THE INSERTION? As it stands, all hinges on this impossible refusal of Buccleuch to help his neighbour and retainer, James Telfer. If Colonel Elliot excises Buccleuch's refusal of aid as a later interpolation, and if he allows Telfer to reach Branksome and receive the aid which Buccleuch would rejoice to give, then the Elliot version of the ballad cannot take a further step. It becomes a Scott ballad, Buccleuch sends out his Scotts to pursue the English raiders, and the Elliots, if they come in at all, must only be subordinates. But as the Elliot version stands, it is Buccleuch's refusal to do his duty that compels poor Jamie to run to his brother-in-law, "auld Jock Grieve" in Coultartcleugh, four miles higher on Teviot than Branksome. Jock gives him a mount, and he rides to "Martin's Hab" at "Catlockhill," a place unknown to research thereabout. Thence they both ride to Martin Elliot at Preakinhaugh, high up in Liddesdale, and the Elliots under Martin rescue Jamie's kye.

Now the original ballad, if it did not contain Buccleuch's refusal of aid to Telfer (which refusal is a thing "too absurd to be believed") must merely have told about the rescue of Jamie's kye by the Scotts, Wat of Harden, and the rest. If Buccleuch did not refuse help he gave it, and there was no ride by Telfer to Martin Elliot. Therefore, without a passage "too absurd to be believed" (Buccleuch's refusal), THERE COULD BE NO ELLIOTS IN THE STORY. The alternative is, that Telfer in Ettrick DID pay blackmail to a man so remote as Elliot of Preakinhaugh, though Buccleuch was his chief and his neighbour. This is absurd. Yet Colonel Elliot firmly maintains that the version, in which the Elliots have all the glory and Buccleuch all the shame, is the original version, and is true on essential points.

That is only possible if we cut out the verses about Buccleuch and make an Ettrick man not appeal to him, but go direct to a Liddesdale man for succour. He must run from Dodhead to Coultartcleugh, get a horse from Jock Grieve (Buccleuch's man and tenant), and then ride into Liddesdale to Martin. But an Ettrick man, in a country of Scotts, would inevitably go to his chief and neighbour, Buccleuch: it is inconceivable that he should choose the remote Martin Elliot as his protector, and go to HIM.

Thus, as a corollary from Colonel Elliot's own disbelief in the Buccleuch incident, the Elliot version of the ballad must be absolutely false and foolish.

If Colonel Elliot leaves in the verses on Buccleuch's refusal, he leaves in what he calls "too absurd to be believed." If he cuts out these verses as an interpolation, then Buccleuch lent aid to Telfer, and there was no occasion to approach Martin Elliot. Or, by a third course, the Elliot ballad originally made an Ettrick man, a neighbour of the great Buccleuch, never dream of appealing to HIM for help, but run to Coultartcleugh, four miles above Buccleuch's house, and thence make his way over to distant Liddesdale to Martin Elliot! Yet

Colonel Elliot says that in what I call “the Elliot version,” “the story defies criticism.” Now, however you take it, — I give you three choices, — the story is absolutely impossible.

This Elliot version was unknown to lovers of the ballads, till the late Professor Child of Harvard, the greatest master of British ballad-lore that ever lived, in his beautiful English and Scottish Popular Ballads, printed it from a manuscript belonging to Mr. Macmath, which had previously been the property of a friend of Scott, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe. This version is entitled “Jamie Telfer IN the Fair Dodhead,” not “OF”: Jamie was a tenant (there was no Jamie Telfer tenant of Dodhead in 1570-1609, but concerning that I have more to say). Jamie was no laird.

Before Professor Child’s publication of the Elliot version, we had only that given by Scott in The Border Minstrelsy of 1802. Now Scott’s version is at least as absurdly incredible as the Elliot version. In Scott’s version the unhappy Jamie runs, not to Branksome and Buccleuch, to meet a refusal; but to “the Stobs’s Ha’”(on Slitterick above Hawick) and to “auld Gibby Elliot,” the laird. Elliot bids him go to Branksome and the laird of Buccleuch,

For, man, ye never paid money to me!

Naturally Telfer did not pay to Elliot: he paid to Buccleuch, if to any one. More, till after the Union of 1603, and the end of Border raids, Gilbert Elliot, a cousin and friend of Buccleuch, WAS NOT THE OWNER OF STOBS. The Hon. George Elliot pointed out this fact in his Border Elliots and the Family of Minto: Colonel Elliot rightly insists on this point.

The Scott version is therefore as hopelessly false as the Elliot version. The Elliot version, with the Buccleuch incident, is “too absurd to be believed,” and could not have been written (except in banter of Buccleuch), while men remembered the customs of the sixteenth century. The Scott version, again, could not be composed before the tradition arose that Gilbert Elliot WAS laird of Stobs before the Union of the Crowns in 1603. Now that tradition was in full force on the Border before 1688. We know that (see chapter on Kinmont Willie, infra), for, in 1688, a man born in 1613, Captain Walter Scott of Satchells, in his Metrical History of the Honourable Families of the Names of Scott and Elliot, represents Gilbert Elliot of Stobs as riding with Buccleuch in the rescue of Kinmont Willie, in 1596. Now Satchells’s own father rode in that fray, he says, and he gives a minute genealogy of the Elliots of Stobs.

Thus the belief that Gilbert Elliot was laird of Stobs by 1596 was current in the traditions of a man born seventeen years after 1596. THE SCOTT VERSION RESTS ON THAT TRADITION, and is not earlier than the rise of that erroneous belief.

Neither the Scott nor Elliot version is other than historically false. But the Scott version, if we cut out the reference to auld Gibby Elliot, offers a conceivable, though not an actual, course of events. The Elliot version, if we excise the Buccleuch incident, does not. Cutting out the Buccleuch incident, Telfer goes all the way from Ettrick to Liddesdale, seeking help in that remote country, and never thinks of asking aid from Buccleuch, his neighbour and chief. This is idiotic. In the Scott version, if we cut out the refusal of Gilbert Elliot of Stobs, Telfer goes straight to his brother-in-law, auld Jock Grieve, within four miles of Buccleuch at Branksome; thence to another friend, William's Wat, at Catslockhill (now Branksome-braes), and so to Buccleuch at Branksome. This is absurd enough. Telfer would have gone straight to Branksome and Buccleuch, unless he were a poor shy small farmer, WHO WANTED SPONSORS, known to Buccleuch. Jock Grieve and William's Wat, both of them retainers and near neighbours of Buccleuch, were such sponsors. Granting this, the Scott version runs smoothly, Telfer goes to his sponsors, and with his sponsors to Buccleuch, and Buccleuch's men rescue his kye.

III — COLONEL ELLIOT'S CHARGE AGAINST SIR WALTER SCOTT

Colonel Elliot believes generally in the historical character of the ballad as given in the Elliot version, but "is inclined to think that" the original poet "never wrote the stanza" (the stanza with Buccleuch's refusal) "at all, and that it has been inserted at some later period." In that case Colonel Elliot is "inclined to think" that an Ettrick farmer, robbed by the English, never dreamed of going to his neighbour and potent chief, but went all the way to Martin Elliot, high up in Liddesdale, to seek redress! Surely few can share the Colonel's inclination. Why should a farmer in Ettrick "choose to lord" a remote Elliot, when he had the Cock of the Border, the heroic Buccleuch, within eight miles of his home?

Holding these opinions, Colonel Elliot, with deep regret -

I wat the tear blinded his ee -

accuses Sir Walter Scott of having taken the Elliot version — till then the only version — and of having altered stanzas vii.-xi. (in which Jamie goes to Branksome, and is refused succour) into his own stanzas vii.-xi., in which Jamie goes to Stobs and is refused succour. This evil thing Scott did, thinks Colonel Elliot. Scott had no copy, he thinks, of the ballad except an Elliot copy, which he deliberately perverted.

We must look into the facts of the case. I know no older published copy of the ballad than that of Scott, in Border Minstrelsy, vol. i. et seqq. (1802). Professor Child quotes a letter from the Ettrick shepherd to Scott of "June 30, 1802" thus: "I am surprised to find that the songs in your collection differ so widely from my mother's; Jamie Telfer differs in many particulars." (This is an incomplete quotation. I give the MS. version later.)

Scott himself, before Hogg wrote thus, had said, in the prefatory note to his Jamie Telfer: "There is another ballad, under the same title as the following, in which nearly the same incidents are narrated, with little difference, except that the honour of rescuing the cattle is attributed to the Liddesdale Elliots, headed by a chief there called Martin Elliot of the Preakin Tower, whose son, Simm, is said to have fallen in the action. It is very possible that both the Teviotdale Scotts and the Elliots were engaged in the affair, and that each claimed the honour of the victory."

Old Mrs. Hogg's version, "differing in many particulars" from Scott's, must have been the Elliot version, published by Professor Child, as "A*," "Jamie

Telfer IN” (not “OF”) “the Fair Dodhead,” “from a MS. written about the beginning of the nineteenth century, and now in the possession of Mr. William Macmath”; it had previously belonged to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe.

There is one great point of difference between the two forms. In Sir Walter’s variant, verse 26 summons the Scotts of Teviotdale, including Wat of Harden. In his 28 the Scotts ride with the slogan “Rise for Branksome readily.” Scott’s verses 34, 36, and the two first lines of 38, are, if there be such a thing as internal evidence, from his own pen. Such lines as

The Dinlay snaw was ne’er mair white
Nor the lyart locks o’ Harden’s hair

are cryingly modern and “Scottesque.”

That Sir Walter knew the other version, as in Mr. Macmath’s MS. of the early nineteenth century, is certain; he describes that version in his preface. That he effected the whole transposition of Scotts for Elliots is Colonel Elliot’s opinion.

If Scott did, I am not the man to defend his conduct; I regret and condemn it; and shall try to prove that he found the matter in his copy. I shall first prove, beyond possibility of doubt, that the ballad is, from end to end, utterly unhistorical, though based on certain real incidents of 1596-97. I shall next show that the Elliot version is probably later than the Scott version. Finally, I shall make it certain (or so it seems to me) that Scott worked on an old copy which was NOT the copy that belonged to Kirkpatrick Sharpe, but contained points of difference, NOT those inserted by Sir Walter Scott about “Dinlay snaw,” and so forth.

IV — WHO WAS THE FARMER IN THE DODHEAD IN 1580-1609?

Colonel Elliot has made no attempt to prove that one Telfer was tenant of the Dodhead in 1580-1603, which must, we shall see, include the years in which the alleged incidents occur. On this question — was there a Telfer in the Dodhead in 1580-1603? — I consulted my friend, Mr. T. Craig Brown, author of an excellent History of Selkirkshire. In that work (vol. i.) the author writes: “Dodhead or Scotsbank; Dodhead was one of the four stedes of Redefurd in 1455. In 1609 Robert Scot of Satchells (ancestor of the poet-captain) obtained a Crown charter of the lands of Dodbank.” For the statement that Dodhead was one of the three stedes in 1455, Mr. Craig Brown quotes “The Retoured Extent of 1628,” “an unimpeachable authority.” For the Crown charter of 1609, we have only to look up “Dodbank” in the Register of the Great Seal of 1609. The charter is of November 24, 1609, and gratifies “Robert Scott of Satscheillis” (father of the Captain Walter Scott who composed the Metrical History of the Scotts in 1688) with the lands, which have been occupied by him and his forefathers “from a time past human memory.” Thus, writes Mr. Craig Brown to me, “Scott of Satchells was undoubtedly Scott of Dodhead also in 1609.”

In “The Retoured Extent of 1628,” “Dodhead or Dodbank” appears as Harden’s property. Thus in 1628 the place was “Dodhead or Dodbank,” a farm that had been tenanted by Scotts “from beyond human memory.” But Mr. Craig Brown proves from record that one Simpson farmed it in 1510.

So where does Jamie Telfer come in?

The farmers were Scotts, it was to their chief, Buccleuch, that they went when they needed aid.

Thus vanishes the hero of the ballad, Jamie Telfer in the Fair Dodhead, and thus the ballad is pure fiction from end to end.

V — MORE IMPOSSIBILITIES IN THE BALLAD

This is only one of the impossibilities in the ballad. That the Captain of Bewcastle, an English hold, stated in a letter of the period to be distant three miles from the frontier, the Liddel water, should seek “to drive a prey from the Ettrick, far through the bounds of his neighbours and foes, Grahams, Armstrongs, Scotts, and Elliots, is a ridiculously absurd circumstance.

Colonel Elliot attempts to meet this difficulty by his theory of the route taken by the Captain, which he illustrates by a map. The ballad gives no details except that the Captain found his first guide “high up in Hardhaughswire,” which Colonel Elliot cannot identify. The second guide was “laigh down in Borthwick water.” If this means on the lower course of the Borthwick, the Captain was perilously near Branksome Hall and Harden, and his ride was foolhardy. But “laigh down,” I think, means merely “on lower ground than Hardhaughswire.”

The Captain, as soon as he crossed the Ritterford after leaving Bewcastle, was in hostile and very watchful Armstrong country. This initial difficulty Colonel Elliot meets by marking on his map, as Armstrong country, the north bank of the Liddel down to Kershope burn; and the Captain crosses Liddel below that burn at Ritterford. Thence he goes north by west, across Tarras water, up Ewes water, up Mickledale burn, by Merrylaw and Ramscleugh and so on to Howpasley, which is not on the lower but the upper Borthwick.

Looking at Colonel Elliot’s chart of the Captain’s route, all seems easy enough for the Captain. He does not try to ride into Teviotdale, for which he is making, up the Liddel water, and thence by the Hermitage tributary on his left. Colonel Elliot studs that region with names of Armstrong and Elliot strongholds. He makes the Captain, crossing Liddel by the Ritterford, bear to his left, through a space empty of hostile habitations, in his map. This seems prudent, but the region thus left blank was full of the fiercest and most warlike of the Armstrong name. That road was closed to the Captain!

Colonel Elliot has failed to observe this fact, which I go on to prove, from a memoir addressed in 1583 to Burleigh, by Thomas Musgrave, the active son of the aged Captain of Bewcastle, Sir Simon Musgrave. Thomas describes the topography of the Middle Marches. He says that the Armstrongs hold both banks of Liddel as far south as “Kershope foot” (the junction of the Kershope with the Liddel), and hold the north side of the Liddel as far as its junction with the Esk. Thus on crossing Liddel by the Ritterford, the Captain had at once to pass through the hostile Armstrongs. Thereby also were Grahams with whom the Musgraves of Bewcastle were in deadly feud. Farther down Esk, west of Esk, dwelt Kinmont Willie, an Armstrong, “at a place called Morton.” If he did pass so far through Armstrongs, the Captain met them again, farther north, on Tarras side, where Runyen Armstrong lived at Thornythaite. Near him was Armstrong of Hollhouse, Musgrave’s great enemy. North of Tarras the Captain rode through Ewesdale; there he had to deal with three hundred Armstrong men of the spear. When he reached Ramscleuch (which he never could have done), the Colonel’s map makes the Captain ride past Ramscleuch, then farmed by the Grieves, retainers of Buccleuch, who would warn Branksome. When the Captain reached Howpasley on Borthwick water, he would be observed by the men of Scott of Howpasley, the Grieves, who could send a rider some six miles to warn Branksome.

We get the same information as to the perils of the Captain’s path from the places marked on Blaeu’s map of 1600-54. There are Hollhouse and Thornythaite, Armstrong towers, and the active John Armstrong of Langholm can come at a summons.

It seems to be a great error to suppose that the route chosen for the Captain by Colonel Elliot could lead him into anything better than a death-trap. I must insist that it would have been madness for a Captain of Bewcastle to ride far through Armstrong country, deep into Buccleuch’s country, and return on another line through Scott, and near Elliot, and through Armstrong country — and all for no purpose but to steal ten cows in remote Selkirkshire!

Here I may save the reader trouble, by omitting a great mass of detail as to the deplorable condition of Bewcastle itself in 1580-96. Sir Simon, the Captain, declares himself old and weary. The hold is “utterly decayed,” the riders are only thirty-seven men fairly equipped. Soldiers are asked for, sometimes fifty are sent from the garrison of Berwick, then they are withdrawn. Bewcastle is forayed almost daily; “March Bills” minutely describe the cattle, horses, and personal property taken from the Captain and the people by the Armstrongs and Elliots.

Once, in 1582, Thomas Musgrave slew Arthur Graham, a near neighbour, and took one hundred and sixty kye, but this only caused such a feud that the Musgraves could not stir safely from home. From 1586 onwards, Thomas Musgrave, officially or unofficially, was acting Captain of Bewcastle. He had no strength to justify him in raiding to remote Ettrick, through enemies who penned him in at Bewcastle.

I look on Musgrave as the Captain whose existence is known to the ballad-maker, and I find the origin of the tale of his defeat and capture in the ballad, in a distorted memory of his actual capture.

On 3rd July 1596, Thomas (having got Scrope’s permission, without which he dared not cross the Border on affairs of war) attempted a retaliatory raid on Armstrongs within seven miles of the Border, the Armstrongs of Hollace, or Hollhouse. “He found only empty houses;” he “sought a prey” in vain; he let his men straggle, and returning homeward, with some fifteen companions, he was ambushed by the Armstrongs near Bewcastle, was refused shelter by a Graham, was taken prisoner, and was sent to Buccleuch at Branksome. On 15th July he came home under a bond of 200 pounds for ransom. As every one did, in his circumstances, the Captain made out his Bill for Damages. It was indented on 28th April 1597. We learn that John (Armstrong) of Langholm, Will of Kinmont (not Liddesdale men), and others, who took him, are in the Captain’s debt for “24 horses and mares, himself prisoner, and ransomed to 200 pounds, and 16 other prisoners, and slaughter.” The charges are admitted by the accused; the Captain is to get 400 pounds.

In my opinion this capture of the Captain of Bewcastle and others, poetically handled, is, with other incidents, the basis of the ballad. Colonel Elliot says that the incident “is no proof that a Captain of Bewcastle was not also taken or killed at some other place or at some other time.” But WHAT Captain, and when? Sir Simon, in 1586, had been Captain, he says, for thirty years. Thenceforth till near the Union of the Crowns, Thomas was Captain, or acting Captain.

So considerable an event as the taking of a Captain of Bewcastle, who, in the ballad, was shot through the head and elsewhere, could not escape record in dispatches, and the periodical “March Bills,” or statements of wrongs to be redressed. Colonel Elliot’s reply takes the shape of the argument that the ballad may speak of some other Captain, at some other time; and that, in one way or another, the sufferings and losses of THAT Captain may have escaped mention in the English dispatches from the Border. These dispatches are full of minute details, down to the theft of a single mare. I am content to let historians familiar with the dispatches decide as to whether the Captain’s mad ride into Ettrick, with his dangerous wounds, loss of property, and loss of seventeen men killed and wounded (as in the ballad), could escape mention.

The capture of Thomas Musgrave, I think, and two other incidents, — confused in course of tradition, and handled by the poet with poetic freedom, — are the materials of Jamie Telfer. One of the other incidents is of April 1597. Here Buccleuch in person, on the Sabbath, burned twenty houses in Tynedale, and “slew fourteen men who had been in Scotland and brought away their booty.” Here we have Buccleuch “on the hot trod,” pursuing English reivers, recovering the spoils probably, and slaying as many of the raiders as the Captain lost, in the ballad. Again, not a SON of Elliot of Preakinhaugh (as I had erroneously said), but a NEPHEW named Martin, was slain in a Tynedale raid into Liddesdale. Soldiers aided the English raiders. A confused memory of this death of Elliot’s nephew in 1597 may be the source of the story of the death of his son, Simmy, in the ballad.

Our traditional ballads all arise out of some germs of history, all handle the facts romantically, and all appear to have been composed, in their extant shapes, at a considerable time after the events. I may cite Mary Hamilton; The Laird of Logie is another case in point; there are many others.

Colonel Elliot does not agree with me. So be it.

Colonel Elliot writes that, — in place of my saying that Jamie Telfer “is a mere mythical perversion of carefully recorded facts,”— “it would surely be more correct to say that it is a fairly true, though jumbled, account of actual incidents, separated from each other by only short periods of time . . . “ If he means, or thinks that I mean, that the actual facts were the capture of Musgrave near Bewcastle in 1596 by the Armstrongs, with Buccleuch’s hot-trod, and Martin Elliot’s slaying in 1597, I entirely agree with him that the facts are ‘‘jumbled.” But as to the opinion that the ballad is “fairly true” about the raid to Ettrick (the Captain could not ride a mile beyond the Border without the Warden’s permission), about the nonexistent Jamie Telfer, about the shooting, taking, and plundering of the Captain, about his loss of seventeen men wounded and slain (he lost about as many prisoners), — I have given reasons for my disbelief.

VI — IS THE SCOTT VERSION, WITH ELLIOTS AND SCOTTS TRANSPOSED, THE LATER VERSION?

We now come to the important question, Is the Scott version of the ballad (apart from Sir Walter's decorative stanzas) necessarily LATER than the Elliot version in Sharpe's copy? The chief argument for the lateness of the Scott version, the presence of a Gilbert Elliot of Stobs at a date when this gentleman had not yet acquired Stobs, I have already treated. If the ballad is no earlier than the date when Elliot was believed (as by Satchells) to have obtained Stobs before 1596, the argument falls to the ground.

Starting from that point, and granting that a minstrel fond of the Scotts wants to banter the Elliots, he may make Telfer ask aid at Stobs. After that, which version is better in its topography? Bidden by Stobs to seek Buccleuch, Telfer runs to Teviot, to Coultartcleugh, some four miles above Branksome. Branksome was nearer, but Telfer was shy, let us say, and did not know Buccleuch; while at Coultartcleugh, Jock Grieve was his brother-in-law. Jock gives him a mount, and takes him to "Catslockhill."

Now, no Catslockhill is known anywhere, to me or to Colonel Elliot. Mr. Henderson, in a note to the ballad, speaks of "Catslack in Branxholm," and cites the Register of the Privy Seal for 4th June 1554, and the Register of the Privy Council for 14th October 1592. The records are full of THAT Catslack, but it is not in Branksome. Blaeu's map (1600-54) gives it, with its appurtenances, on the north side of St. Mary's Loch. There is a Catslack on the north side of Yarrow, near Ladhope, on the southern side. Neither Catslack is the Catslockhill of the Scott ballad. But on evidence, "and it is good evidence," says Colonel Elliot, I prove that, in 1802, a place called "Catlochill" existed between Coultartcleugh and Branksome. The place (Mrs. Grieve, Branksome Park, informs me) is now called Branksome-braes. On his copy of The Minstrelsy of 1802, Mr. Grieve, then tenant of Branksome Park, made a marginal note. Catlochill was still known to him; it was in a commanding site, and had been strengthened by the art of man. His note I have seen and read.

Thus, on good evidence, there was a Catlochill, or Catlockhill, between Coultartcleugh and Branksome. The Scott version is right in its topography.

This fact was unknown to Colonel Elliot. Not knowing a Catslackhill or Catslockhill in Teviot, he made Scott's Telfer go to an apocryphal Catlockhill in

Liddesdale. Professor Veitch had said that the Catslockhill of the ballad “IS TO BE SOUGHT” in some locality between Coultartcleugh and Branxholm. Colonel Elliot calls this “a really preposterously cool suggestion.” Why “really preposterously cool”? Being sought, the place is found where it had always been. Jamie Telfer found it, and in it his friend “William’s Wat,” who took him to the laird of Buccleuch at Branksome.

In the Elliot version, when refused aid by Buccleuch, Jamie ran to Coultartcleugh, — as in Scott’s, — on his way to Martin Elliot at Preakinhaugh on the Liddel. Jamie next “takes the fray” to “the Catlockhill,” and is there remounted by “Martin’s Hab,” an Elliot (not by William’s Wat), and THEY “take the fray” to Martin Elliot at Preakinhaugh in Liddesdale. This is very well, but where IS this “Catlockhill” in Liddesdale? Is it even a real place?

Colonel Elliot has found no such place; nor can I find it in the Registrum Magni Sigilli, nor in Blaeu’s map of 1600-54.

Colonel Elliot’s argument has been that the Elliot version, the version of the Sharpe MS., is the earlier, for, among other reasons, its topography is correct. It makes Telfer run from Dodhead to Branksome for aid, because that was the comparatively near residence of the powerful Buccleuch. Told by Buccleuch to seek aid from Martin Elliot in Liddesdale, Telfer does so. He runs up Teviot four miles to his brother-in-law, Jock Grieve, who mounts him. He then rides off at a right angle, from Teviot to Catlockhill, says the Elliot ballad, where he is rehorsed by Martin’s Hab. The pair then take the fray to Martin Elliot at Preakinhaugh on Liddel water, and Martin summons and leads the pursuers of the Captain.

This, to Colonel Elliot’s mind, is all plain sailing, all is feasible and natural. And so it IS feasible and natural, if Colonel Elliot can find a Catlockhill anywhere between Coultartcleugh and Preakinhaugh. On that line, in Mr. Veitch’s words, Catlockhill “is to be sought.” But just as Mr. Veitch could find no Catslockhill between Coultartcleugh and Branksome, so Colonel Elliot can find no Catlockhill between Coultartcleugh and Preakinhaugh. He tells us indeed of “Catlockhill on Hermitage water.” But there is no such place known! Colonel Elliot’s method is to take a place which, he says, is given as “Catlie” Hill, “between Dinlay burn and Hermitage water, on Blaeu’s map of 1654.” We may murmur that Catlie Hill is one thing and Catlock another, but Colonel Elliot points out that “lock” means “the meeting of waters,” and that Catlie Hill is near the meeting of Dinlay burn and the Hermitage water. But then why does Blaeu call it, not Catlockhill, nor Catlie hill, nor “Catlie” even, but “Gatlie,” for so it is distinctly printed on my copy of the map? Really we cannot take a place called “Gatlie Hill” and pronounce that we have found “Catlockhill”! Would Colonel Elliot have permitted Mr. Veitch — if Mr. Veitch had found “Gatlie Hill” near Branksome, in Blaeu — to aver that he had found Catslockhill near Branksome?

Thus, till Colonel Elliot produces on good evidence a Catlockhill between Coultartcleugh and Preakinhaugh, the topography of the Elliot ballad, of the Sharpe copy of the ballad, is nowhere, for neither Catliehill nor Gatliehill is Catlockhill. That does not look as if the Elliot were older than the Scott version. (There was a Sim ARMSTRONG of the CATHILL, slain by a Ridley of Hartswell in 1597.)

We now take the Scott version where Telfer has arrived at Branksome. Scott’s stanza xxv. is Sharpe’s xxiv. In Scott, Buccleuch; in Sharpe, Martin Elliot bids his men “warn the waterside” (Sharpe), “warn the water braid and wide” (Scott). Scott’s stanza xxvi. is probably his own, or may be, for he bids them warn Wat o’ Harden, Borthwick water, and the Teviot Scotts, and Gilmanscleuch — which is remote. Then, in xxvii., Buccleuch says -

Ride by the gate of Priesthaughswire,
   And warn the Currors o’ the Lee,
As ye come down the Hermitage slack
   Warn doughty Wiliie o’ Gorrinberry.

All this is plain sailing, by the pass of Priesthaughswire the Scotts will ride from Teviot into Hermitage water, and, near the Slack, they will pass Gorrinberry, will call Will, and gallop down Hermitage water to the Liddel, where they will nick the returning Captain at the Ritterford.

The Sharpe version makes Martin order the warning of the waterside (xxiv.), and then Martin says (xxv.) -

When ye come in at the Hermitage Slack,
Warn doughty Will o’ Gorranherry.

Colonel Elliot supposes Martin (if I follow his meaning) to send Simmy with his command, BACK OVER ALL THE COURSE THAT TELFER AND MARTIN’S HAB HAVE ALREADY RIDDEN: back past Shaws, near Braidley (a house of Martin’s), past “Catlockhill,” to Gorranberry, to “warn the waterside.” But surely Telfer, who passed Gorranberry gates, and with Hab passed the other places, had “taken the fray,” and warned the water quite sufficiently already. If this be granted, the Sharpe version is taking from the Scott version the stanza, so natural there, about the Hermitage Slack and Gorranberry. But Colonel Elliot infers, from stanzas xxvi., xxx., xxxi., that Simmy has warned the water as far as Gorranberry (AGAIN), has come in touch with the Captain, “between the Frostily and the Ritterford,” and that this is “consistent only with his having moved up the Hermitage water.”

Meanwhile Martin, he thinks, rode with his men down Liddel water. But here we get into a maze of topographical conjecture, including the hypothesis that perhaps the Liddel came down in flood, and caused the English to make for Kershope ford instead of Ritterford, and here they were met by Martin’s men on the Hermitage line of advance. I cannot find this elegant combined movement in the ballad; all this seems to me hypothesis upon hypothesis, even granting that Martin sent Simmy back up Hermitage that he might thence cut sooner across the enemy’s path. Colonel Elliot himself writes: “It is certain that after the news of the raid reached Catlockhill” (AND Gorranberry, Telfer passed it), “it must have spread rapidly through Hermitage water, and it is most unlikely for the men of this district to have delayed taking action until they received instructions from their chief.”’

That is exactly what I say; but Martin says, “When ye come in at the Hermitage Slack, warn doughty Will o’ Gorranberry.” Why go to warn him, when, as Colonel Elliot says, the news is running through Hermitage water, and the men are most probably acting on it, — as they certainly would do?

Martin’s orders, in Sharpe xxv., are taken, I think, from Buccleuch’s, in Scott’s xxvii.

The point is that Martin had no need to warn men so far away as Gorranberry, — they were roused already. Yet he orders them to be warned, and about a combined movement of Martin and Simmy on different lines the ballad says not a word. All this is inference merely, inference not from historical facts, but from what may be guessed to have been in the mind of the poet.

Thus the Elliot or Sharpe version has topography that will not hold water, while the Scott topography does hold water; and the Elliot song seems to borrow the lines on the Hermitage Slack and Gorranberry from a form of the Scott version. This being the case, the original version on which Scott worked is earlier than the Elliot version. In the Scott version the rescuers must come down the Hermitage Slack: in the Elliot they have no reason for riding BACK to that place.

VII — SCOTT HAD A COPY OF THE BALLAD WHICH WAS NOT THE SHARPE COPY

Did Scott know no other version than that of the Sharpe MS.? In Scott's version, stanza xlix., the last, is absent from the Elliot version, which concludes triumphantly, thus -

Now on they came to the fair Dodhead,
   They were a welcome sight to see,
And instead of his ain ten milk-kye
   Jamie Telfer's gotten thirty and three.

Scott too gives this, but ends with a verse not in Sharpe -

And he has paid the rescue shot
   Baith wi' goud and white money,
And at the burial o' Willie Scott
   I wat was mony a weeping ee.

Did Scott add this? Proof is impossible; but the verse is so prosaic, and so injurious to the triumphant preceding verse, that I think Scott found it in his copy: in which case he had another copy than Sharpe's.

Scott (stanza xviii.) reads "Catslockhill" where the Sharpe MS. reads "Catlockhill." In Scott's time it was a mound, but the name was then known to Mr. Grieve, the tenant of Branksome Park. To-day I cannot find the mound; is it likely that Scott, before making the change, sought diligently for the mound and its name? If so, he found "CATLOCHILL," for so Mr. Grieve writes it, not Catslockhill.

Meanwhile Colonel Elliot, we know, has no Catlockhill where he wants it; he has only Gatliehill, unless his Blaeu varies from my copy, and Gatliehill is not Catlockhill.

Scott gives (xlviii.) the speech of the Captain after he is shot through the head and in another dangerous part of his frame -

"Hae back thy kye!" the Captain said,
   "Dear kye, I trow, to some they be,

For gin I suld live a hundred years,
There will ne’er fair lady smile on me.”

This is not in Sharpe’s MS., and I attribute this redundant stanza to Scott’s copy. The Captain, remember, has a shot “through his head,” and another which must have caused excruciating torture. In these circumstances would a poet like Scott put in his mouth a speech which merely reiterates the previous verse? No! But the verse was in Scott’s copy.

Colonel Elliot has himself noted a more important point than these: he quotes Scott’s stanza xii., which is absent from the Sharpe MS. -

My hounds may a’ rin masterless,
My hawks may fly frae tree to tree,
My lord may grip my vassal lands,
For there again maun I never be!

“They are, doubtless, beautiful lines, but their very beauty jars like a false note. One feels they were written by another hand, by an artist of a higher stamp than a Border ‘ballad-maker.’ And not only is it their beauty that jars, but so also does their inapplicability to Jamie Telfer and to the circumstances in which he found himself — so much so, indeed, that it may well occur to one that the stanza belongs to some other ballad, and has accidentally been pitchforked into this one. It would not have been out of place in the ballad of The Battle of Otterbourne, and, indeed, it bears some resemblance to a stanza in that ballad.” Here the Colonel says that the lines “one feels were written by another hand, by an artist of a higher stamp than a Border ballad-maker.” But “it may also occur to one that the stanza belongs to some other ballad, and has ACCIDENTALLY” (my italics) “been pitchforked into this”: a very sound inference.

Now if Scott had only the Sharpe version, he was the last man to “pitchfork” into it, “accidentally,” a stanza from “some other ballad,” that stanza being as Colonel Elliot says “inapplicable” to Telfer and his circumstances. Poor Jamie, a small tenant-farmer, with ten cows, and, as far as we learn, not one horse, had no hawks and hounds; no “vassal lands,” and no reason to say that at the Dodhead he “maun never be again.” He could return from his long run! Scott certainly did not compose these lines; and he could not have pitchforked them into Jamie Telfer, either by accident or design.

Professor Child remarked on all this: “Stanza xii. is not only found elsewhere (compare Young Beichan, E vi.), but could not be more inappropriately brought in than here; Scott, however, is not responsible for that.”

The hawk that flies from tree to tree

is a formula; it comes in the Kinloch MS. copy of the ballad of Jamie Douglas, date about 1690.

I know no proof that Scott was acquainted with variant E of Young Beichan. If he had been, he could not have introduced into Jamie Telfer lines so utterly out of keeping with Telfer’s circumstances, as Colonel Elliot himself says that stanza xii. is. It may be argued, “if Scott DID find stanza xii. in his copy, it was in his power to cut it out; he treated his copies as he pleased.” This is true, but my position is that, of the two, Scott is more likely to have let the stanza abide where he found it (as he did with his MS. of Tamlane, retaining its absurdities) in his copy, than to “pitchfork it in,” from an obscure variant of Young Beichan, which we cannot prove that he had ever heard or read. But as we can never tell that Scott did NOT know any rhyme, we ask, why did he “pitchfork in” the stanza, where it was quite out of place? Child absolves him from this absurdity.

Thus Scott had before him another than the Sharpe copy; had a copy containing stanza xii. That copy presented the perversion — the transposition of Scott’s and Elliot’s — and into that copy Scott wrote the stanzas which bear his modern romantic mark. Colonel Elliot, we saw, is uncertain whether to attribute stanza xii. to “another hand, an artist of higher stamp than a Border ballad-maker,” or to regard it as belonging “to some other ballad,” and as having been “accidentally pitchforked into this one.” The stanza is, in fact, an old floating ballad stanza, attracted into the cantefable of Susie Pye, and the ballad of Young Beichan (E), and partly into Jamie Douglas. Thus Scott did not MAKE the stanza, and we cannot suppose that, if he knew the stanza in any form, he either “accidentally pitchforked” or wilfully inserted into Jamie Telfer anything so absurdly inappropriate. The inference is that Scott worked on another copy, not the Sharpe copy.

If Scott had not a copy other than Sharpe’s, why should he alter
Sharpe’s (vii.)

The moon was up and the sun was down,

into

The sun wasna up but the moon was down?

What did he gain by that? WHY DID HE MAKE JAMIE “OF” NOT “IN” THE DODHEAD, IF HE FOUND “IN” IN HIS COPY? “In” means “tenant in,” “of” means “laird of,” as nobody knew better than Scott. Jamie is evidently no laird, but “of” was in Scott’s copy.

If the question were about two Greek texts, the learned would admit that these points in A (Scott) are not derived from B (Sharpe). Scott’s additions have an obvious motive, they add picturesqueness to his clan. But the differences which I have noticed do nothing of that kind. When they affect the poetry they spoil the poetry, when they do not affect the poetry they are quite motiveless, whence I conclude that Scott followed his copy in these cases, and that his copy was not the Sharpe MS.

If I have satisfied the reader on that point I need not touch on Colonel Elliot’s long and intricate argument to prove, or suggest, that Scott had before him no copy of the ballad except one supposed by the Colonel to have been taken by James Hogg from his mother’s recitation, while that copy, again, is supposed to be the Sharpe MS. — all sheer conjecture. Not that I fear to encounter Colonel Elliot on this ground, but argufying on it is dull, and apt to be inconclusive.

In the letter of Hogg to Scott (June 30, 1803) as given by Mr. Douglas in Familiar Letters, Hogg says, “I am surprised to find that the songs in your collection differ so widely from my mother’s . . . Jamie Telfer differs in many particulars.” The marks of omission were all filled up in Hogg’s MS. letter thus: “Is Mr. Herd’s MS. genuine? I suspect it.” Then it runs on, “Jamie Telfer differs in many particulars.”

I owe this information to the kindness of Mr. Macmath. What does Hogg mean? Does “Is Mr. Herd’s MS. genuine?” mean all Herd’s MS. copies used by Scott? Or does it refer to Jamie Telfer in especial?

Mr. Macmath, who possesses C. K. Sharpe’s MS. copy of the Elliot version, believes that it is Herd’s hand as affected by age. Mr. Macmath and I independently reached the conclusion that by “Mr. Herd’s MS.” Hogg meant all Herd’s MSS., which Scott quoted in The Minstrelsy of 1803. Their readings varied from Mrs. Hogg’s; therefore Hogg misdoubted them. He adds that Jamie Telfer differs from his mother’s version, without meaning that, for Jamie, Scott used a Herd MS.

CONCLUSION

I have now proved, I hope, that the ballad of Jamie Telfer is entirely mythical except for a few suggestions derived from historical events of 1596-97. I have shown, and Colonel Elliot agrees, that refusal of aid by Buccleuch (or by Elliot of Stobs) is impossible, and that the ballad, if it existed without this incident, must have been a Scott, and could not be an Elliot ballad. No farmer in Ettrick would pay protection-money to an Elliot on Liddel, while he had a Scott at Branksome. I have also disproved the existence of a Jamie Telfer as farmer at "Dodhead or Dodbank" in the late sixteenth century.

As to the character of Sir Walter Scott, I have proved, I hope, that he worked on a copy of the ballad which was not the Elliot version, or the Sharpe copy; so that this copy may have represented the Scotts as taking the leading part; while for the reasons given, it is apparently earlier than the Elliot version — cannot, at least, be proved to be later — and is topographically the more correct of the two. I have given antique examples of the same sort of perversions in Otterburn. If I am right, Colonel Elliot's charge against Scott lacks its base — that Scott knew none but the Sharpe copy, whence it is inferred that he not only decorated the song (as is undeniable), but perverted it in a way far from sportsmanlike.

I may have shaken Colonel Elliot's belief in the historicity of the ballad. His suspicions of Scott I cannot hope to remove, and they are very natural suspicions, due to Scott's method of editing ballads and habit of "giving them a cocked hat and a sword," as he did to stories which he heard; and repeated, much improved.

Absolute proof that Scott did, or did not, pervert the ballad, and turn a false Elliot into a false Scott version, cannot be obtained unless new documents bearing on the matter are discovered.

But, I repeat, as may be read in the chapter on The Ballad of Otterburne, such inversions and perversions of ballads occurred freely in the sixteenth century, and, in the seventeenth, the process may have been applied to Jamie Telfer.

KINMONT WILLIE

If there be, in The Border Minstrelsy, a ballad which is still popular, or, at least, is still not forgotten, it is Kinmont Willie. This hero was an Armstrong, and one of the most active of that unbridled clan. He was taken prisoner, contrary to Border law, on a day of “Warden’s Truce,” by Salkeld of Corby on the Eden, deputy of Lord Scrope, the English Warden; and, despite the written remonstrances of Buccleuch, he was shut up in Carlisle Castle. Diplomacy failing, Buccleuch resorted to force, and, by a sudden and daring march, he surprised Carlisle Castle, rescued Willie, and returned to Branksome. The date of the rescue is 13th April 1596. The dispatches of the period are full of this event, and of the subsequent negotiations, with which we are not concerned.

The ballad is worthy of the cool yet romantic gallantry of the achievement. Kinmont Willie was a ruffian, but he had been unlawfully seized. This was one of many studied insults passed by Elizabeth’s officials on Scotland at that time, when the English Government, leagued with the furious pulpiteers of the Kirk, and with Francis Stewart, the wild Earl of Bothwell, was persecuting and personally affronting James VI.

In Buccleuch, the Warden of the March, England insulted the man who was least likely to pocket a wrong. Without causing the loss of an English life, Buccleuch repaid the affront, recovered the prisoner, broke the strong Castle of Carlisle, made Scrope ridiculous and Elizabeth frantic.

In addition to Kinmont Willie there survive two other ballads on rescues of prisoners in similar circumstances. One is Jock o’ the Side, of which there is an English version in the Percy MSS., John a Side. Scott’s version, in The Border Minstrelsy, is from Caw’s Museum, published at Hawick in 1784. Scott leaves out Caw’s last stanza about a punch-bowl. There are other variations. Four Armstrongs break into Newcastle Tower. Jock, heavily ironed, is carried downstairs on the back of one of them; they ride a river in spait, where the English dare not follow.

Archie o’ Cafield, another rescue, Scott printed in 1802 from a MS. of Mr. Riddell of Glenriddell, a great collector, the friend of Burns. He omitted six stanzas, and “made many editorial improvements, besides Scotticising the spelling.” In the edition published after his death (1833) he “has been enabled to add several stanzas from recitation.” Leyden appears to have collected the copy whence the additional stanzas came; the MS., at Abbotsford, is in his hand. In this ballad the Halls, noted freebooters, rescue Archie o’ Cafield from prison in Dumfries. As in Jock o’ the Side and Kinmont Willie, they speak to their friend, asking how he sleeps; they carry him downstairs, irons and all, and, as in the two other ballads, they are pursued, cross a flooded river, banter the English, and then, in a version in the Percy MSS., “communicated to Percy by Miss Fisher, 1780,” the English lieutenant says -

I think some witch has bore thee, Dicky,
  Or some devil in hell been thy daddy.
I would not swam that wan water, double-horsed,
  For a’ the gold in Christenty.

Manifestly here was a form of Lord Scrope’s reply to Buccleuch, in the last stanza of Kinmont Willie -

He is either himself a devil frae hell,
  Or else his mother a witch may be,
I wadna hae ridden that wan water
  For a’ the gowd in Christentie.

Scott writes, in a preface to Archie o’ Cafield and Jock o’ the Side, that there are, with Kinmont Willie, three ballads of rescues, “the incidents in which nearly resemble each other; though the poetical description is so different, that the editor did not feel himself at liberty to reject any one of them, as borrowed from the others. As, however, there are several verses, which, in recitation, are common to all these three songs, the editor, to prevent unnecessary and disagreeable repetition, has used the freedom of appropriating them to that in which they have the best poetical effect.”

Consequently the verse quoted from the Percy MS. of Archie o’ Cafield may be improved and placed in the lips of Lord Scrope, in Kinmont Willie. But there is no evidence that Scott ever saw or even heard of this Percy MS., and probably he got the verse from recitation.

Now the affair of the rescue of Kinmont Willie was much more important and resonant than the two other rescues, and was certain to give rise to a ballad, which would contain much the same formulae as the other two. The ballad-maker, like Homer, always uses a formula if he can find one. But Kinmont Willie is so much superior to the two others, so epic in its speed and concentration of incidents, that the question rises, had Scott even fragments of an original ballad of the Kinmont, “much mangled by reciters,” as he admits, or did he compose the whole? No MS. copies exist at Abbotsford. There is only one hint. In a list of twenty-two ballads, pasted into a commonplace book, eleven are marked X (as if he had obtained them), and eleven others are unmarked, as if they were still to seek. Unmarked is Kinmount Willie.

Did he find it, or did he make it all?

In 1888, in a note to Kinmont Willie, I wrote: “There is a prose account very like the ballad in Scott of Satchells’ History of the Name of Scott” (1688). Satchells’ long-winded story is partly in unrhymed and unmetrical lines, partly in rhymes of various metres. The man, born in 1613, was old, had passed his life as a soldier; certainly could not write, possibly could not read.

Colonel Elliot “believes that Sir Walter wrote the whole from beginning to end, and that it is, in fact, a clever and extremely beautiful paraphrase of Satchells’ rhymes.”

This thorough scepticism is not a novelty, as Colonel Elliot quotes me I had written years ago, “In Kinmont Willie, Scott has been suspected of making the whole ballad.” I did not, as the Colonel says, “mention the names of the sceptics or the grounds of their suspicions.” “The sceptics,” or one of them, was myself: I had “suspected” on much the same grounds as Colonel Elliot’s own, and I shall give my reasons for adopting a more conservative opinion. One reason is merely subjective. As a man, by long familiarity with ancient works of art, Greek gems, for example, acquires a sense of their authenticity, or the reverse, so he does in the case of ballads — or thinks he does — but of course this result of experience is no ground of argument: experts are often gulled. The ballad varies in many points from Satchells’, which Colonel Elliot explains thus: “I think that the cause for the narrative at times diverging from that recorded by the rhymes (of Satchells), is due, partly to artistic considerations, partly to the author having wished to bring it more or less into conformity with history.”

Colonel Elliot quotes Scott’s preface to the ballad: “In many things Satchells agrees with the ballads current in his time” (1643-88), “from which in all probability he derived most of his information as to past events, and from which he occasionally pirates whole verses, as we noticed in the annotations upon the Raid of the Reidswire. In the present instance he mentions the prisoner’s large spurs (alluding to fetters), and some other little incidents noticed in the ballad, which therefore was probably well known in his day.”

As Satchells was born in 1613, while the rescue of Kinmont Willie by Buccleuch, out of Carlisle Castle, was in 1596, and as Satchells’ father was in that adventure (or so Satchells says) he probably knew much about the affair from fresh tradition. Colonel Elliot notices this, and says: “The probability of Satchells having obtained information from a hypothetical ballad is really quite an inadmissible argument.”

This comes near to begging the question. As contemporary incidents much less striking and famous than the rescue of Kinmont Willie were certainly recorded in ballads, the opinion that there was a ballad of Kinmont Willie is a legitimate hypothesis, which must be tested on its merits. For example, we shall ask, Does Satchells' version yield any traces of ballad sources?

My own opinion has been anticipated by Mr. Frank Miller in his The Poets of Dumfriesshire (, 1910), and in ballad-lore Mr. Miller is well equipped. He says: "The balance of probability seems to be in favour of the originality of Kinmont Willie," rather than of Satchells (he means, not of our Kinmont Willie as Scott gives it, but of a ballad concerning the Kinmont). "Captain Walter Scott's" (of Satchells) "True History was certainly gathered out of the ballads current in his day, as well as out of formal histories, and his account of the assault on the Castle reads like a narrative largely due to suggestions from some popular lay."

Does Satchells' version, then, show traces of a memory of such a lay?
Undoubtedly it does.

Satchells' prolix narrative occasionally drops or rises into ballad lines, as in the opening about Kinmont Willie -

It fell about the Martinmas
When kine was in the prime

that Willie "brought a prey out of Northumberland." The old ballad, disregarding dates, may well have opened with this common formula. Lord Scrope vowed vengence:-

Took Kinmont the self-same night.

If he had had but ten men more,
That had been as stout as he,
Lord Scroup had not the Kinmont ta'en
With all his company.

Scott's ballad (stanza i.) says that "fause Sakelde" and Scrope took
Willie (as in fact Salkeld of Corby DID), and

Had Willie had but twenty men,
But twenty men as stout as he,
Fause Sakelde had never the Kinmont ta'en,

Wi’ eight score in his cumpanie.

Manifestly either Satchells is here “pirating” a verse of a ballad (as Scott holds) or Scott, if he had NO ballad fragments before him, is “pirating” a verse from Satchells, as Colonel Elliot must suppose.

In my opinion, Satchells had a memory of a Kinmont ballad beginning like Jamie Telfer, “It fell about the Martinmas tyde,” or, like Otterburn, “It fell about the Lammas tide,” and he opened with this formula, broke away from it, and came back to the ballad in the stanza, “If he had had but ten men more,” which differs but slightly from stanza ii. of Scott’s ballad. That this is so, and that, later, Satchells is again reminiscent of a ballad, is no improbable opinion.

In the ballad (iii.-viii.) we learn how Willie is brought a prisoner across Liddel to Carlisle; we have his altercation with Lord Scrope, and the arrival of the news at Branksome, where Buccleuch is at table. Satchells also gives the altercation. In both versions Willie promises to “take his leave” of Scrope before he quits the Castle.

In Scott’s ballad (Scrope speaks) (stanza vi.).

Before ye cross my castle yate,
I trow ye shall take fareweel o’ me.

Willie replies -

I never yet lodged in a hostelrie,
But I paid my lawing before I gaed.

In Satchells, Lord Scrope says -

“Before thou goest away thou must
Even take thy leave of me?”
“By the cross of my sword,” says Willie then,
”I’ll take my leave of thee.”

Now, had Scott been pirating Satchells, I think he would have kept “By the cross of my sword,” which is picturesque and probable, Willie being no good Presbyterian. In Otterburne, Scott, ALTERING HOGG’S COPY, makes Douglas swear “By the might of Our Ladye.”

It is a question of opinion; but I do think that if Scott were merely paraphrasing and pirating Satchells, he could not have helped putting into his version the Catholic, "'By the cross of my sword,' then Willy said," as given by Satchells. To do this was safe, as Scott had said that Satchells does pirate ballads. On the other hand, Satchells, composing in black 1688, when Catholicism had been stamped out on the Scottish Border, was not apt to invent "By the cross of my sword." It LOOKS like Scott's work, for he, of course, knew how Catholicism lingered among the spears of Bothwell, himself a Catholic, in 1596. But it is NOT Scott's work, it is in Satchells. In both Satchells and the ballad, news comes to Buccleuch. Here Satchells again balladises -

"It is that way?" Buckcleugh did say;
   "Lord Scrope must understand
That he has not only done me wrong
   But my Sovereign, James of Scotland.

"My Sovereign Lord, King of Scotland,
   Thinks not his cousin Queen,
Will offer to invade his land
   Without leave asked and gi'en."

I do not see how Satchells could either invent or glean from tradition the gist of Buccleuch's diplomatic remonstrances, first with Salkeld, for Scrope was absent at the time of Willie's capture, then with Scrope. Buccleuch, in fact, wrote that the taking of Willie was "to the touch of the King," a stain on his honour, says a contemporary manuscript.

In a CONTEMPORARY ballad, a kind of rhymed news-sheet, the facts would be known and reported. But at this point (at Buccleuch's reception of the news of Kinmont), Scott is perhaps overmastered by his opportunity, and, I think, himself composes stanzas ix., x., xi., xii.

O is my basnet a widow's curch?
Or my lance a wand o' the willow tree?

and so on. Child and Mr. Henderson are of the same opinion; but it is only sense of style that guides us in such a matter, nor can I give other grounds for supposing that the original ballad appears again in stanza xiii.

O were there war between the lands,
   As well I wot that there is none,

I would slight Carlisle castle high,
  Tho' it were built o' marble stone!

Thence, I think, the original ballad (doubtless made "harmonious," as Hogg put it) ran into stanza xxxi., where Scott probably introduced the Elliot tune (if it be ancient) -

O wha dare meddle wi' me?

Satchells next, through a hundred and forty lines, describes Buccleuch's correspondence with Scrope, his counsels with his clansmen, and gives all their names and estates, with remarks on their relationships. He thinks himself a historian and a genealogist. The stuff is partly in prose lines, partly in rhymed couplets of various lengths. There are two or three more or less ballad-like stanzas at the beginning, but they are too bad for any author but Satchells.

Scott's ballad "cuts" all that, omits even what Satchells gives — mentions of Harden, and goes on (xv.) -

He has called him forty marchmen bauld,
  I trow they were of his own name.
Except Sir Gilbert Elliot called
  The Laird of Stubs, I mean the same.

Now I would stake a large sum that Sir Walter never wrote that "stall-copy" stanza! Colonel Elliot replies that I have said the ballad-faker should avoid being too poetical. The ballad-faker SHOULD shun being too poetical, as he would shun kippered sturgeon; but Scott did not know this, nor did Hogg. We can always track them by their too decorative, too literary interpolations. On this I lay much stress.

The ballad next gives (xvi.-xxv.) the spirited stanzas on the ride to the Border -

There were five and five before them a',
  Wi' hunting horns and bugles bright;
And five and five came wi' Buccleuch,
  Like Warden's men arrayed for fight.

And five and five like a mason gang,

That carried the ladders lang and hie;
And five and five like broken men,
And so they reached the Woodhouselee.

- a house in Scotland, within "a lang mile" of Netherby, in England, the seat of the Grahams, who were partial, for private reasons, to the Scottish cause. They were at deadly feud with Thomas Musgrave, Captain of Bewcastle, and Willie had married a Graham.

Now in my opinion, up to stanza xxvi., all the evasive answers given to Salkeld by each gang, till Dicky o' Dryhope (a real person) replies with a spear-thrust -

"For never a word o' lear had he,"

are not an invention of Scott's (who knew that Salkeld was not met and slain), but a fantasy of the original ballad. Here I have only familiarity with the romantic perversion of facts that marks all ballads on historical themes to guide me.

Salkeld is met -

"As we crossed the Batable land,
When to the English side we held."

The ballad does not specify the crossing of Esk, nor say that Salkeld was on the English side; nor is there any blunder in the reply of the "mason gang" -

"We gang to harry a corbie's nest,
That wons not far frae Woodhouselee."

Whether on English or Scottish soil the masons say not, and their pretence is derisive, bitterly ironical.

Colonel Elliot makes much of the absence of mention of the Esk, and says "it is AFTER they are in England that the false reports are spread." But the ballad does not say so — read it! All passes with judicious vagueness.

"As we crossed the Batable land,
When to the English side we held."

Satchells knows that the ladders were made at Woodhouselee; it took till nightfall to finish them. The ballad, swift and poetical, takes the ladders for granted — as a matter of fact, chronicled in the dispatches, the Grahams of Netherby harboured Buccleuch: Netherby was his base.

"I could nought have done that matter without great friendship of the Grames of Eske," wrote Buccleuch, in a letter which Scrope intercepted.

In Satchells, Buccleuch leaves half his men at the "Stonish bank" (Staneshaw bank) "FOR FEAR THEY HAD MADE NOISE OR DIN." An old soldier should have known better, and the ballad (his probable half-remembered source here) DOES know better -

"And there the laird garr'd leave our STEEDS,
For fear that they should stamp and nie,"

and alarm the castle garrison. Each man of the post on the ford would hold two horses, and also keep the ford open for the retreat of the advanced party. The ballad gives the probable version; Satchells, when offering as a reason for leaving half the force, lest they should make "noise or din," is maundering. Colonel Elliot does not seem to perceive this obvious fact, though he does perceive Buccleuch's motive for dividing his force, "presumably with the object of protecting his line of retreat," and also to keep the horses out of earshot, as the ballad says.

In Satchells the river is "in no great rage." In the ballad it is "great and meikle o' spait." And it really was so. The MS. already cited, which Scott had not seen when he published the song, says that Buccleuch arrived at the "Stoniebank beneath Carleile brig, the water being at the tyme, through raines that had fallen, weill thick."

In Scott's ORIGINAL this river, he says, was the Esk, in Satchells it is the Eden, and Scott says he made this necessary correction in the ballad. In Satchells the storming party

Broke a sheet of leid on the castle top.

In the ballad they

Cut a hole through a sheet o’ lead.

Both stories are erroneous; the ladders were too short; the rescuers broke into a postern door. Scrope told this to his Government on the day after the deed, 14th April.

In xxxi. the ballad makes Buccleuch sound trumpets when the castle-roof was scaled; in fact it was not scaled. The ladders were too short, and the Scots broke in a postern door. The Warden’s trumpet blew “O wha dare meddle wi’ me,” and here, as has been said, I think Scott is the author. Here Colonel Elliot enters into learning about “Wha dare meddle wi’ me?” a “Liddesdale tune,” and in the poem an adaptation, by Scott, of Satchells’ “the trumpets sounded ‘Come if ye dare.’”

Satchells makes the trumpets sound when the rescuers bring Kinmont Willie to the castle-top on the ladder (which they did not), and again when the rescuers reach the ground by the ladder. They made no use at all of the ladders, which were too short, and Willie, says the ballad, lay “in the LOWER prison.” They came in and went out by a door; but the trumpets are not apocryphal. They, and the shortness of the ladders, are mentioned in a MS. quoted by Scott, and in Birrell’s contemporary Diary, i. . In the MS. Buccleuch causes the trumpets to be sounded from below, by a detachment “in the plain field,” securing the retreat. His motive is to encourage his party, “and to terrify both castle and town by imagination of a greater force.” Buccleuch again “sounds up his trumpet before taking the river,” in the MS. Colonel Elliot may claim stanza xxxi. for Scott, and also the tune “Wha dare meddle wi’ me?” he may even claim here a suggestion from Satchells’ “Come if ye dare.” Colonel Elliot says that no tune of this title ever existed, a thing not easy to prove.

In the conclusion, with differences, there are resemblances in the ballad and Satchells. Colonel Elliot goes into them very minutely. For example, he says that Kinmont is “made to ride off; not on horseback, but on Red Rowan’s back!”

The ballad says not a word to that effect. Kinmont’s speech about Red Rowan as “a rough beast” to ride, is made immediately after the stanza,

“Then shoulder high, with shout and cry,
  We bore him down the ladder lang;
At every stride Red Rowan made,
  I wot the Kinmont’s airns played clang.”

After this verse Kinmont makes his speech (xl.-xli.). But if he DID ride on

Red Rowan's back to Staneshaw bank, it was the best thing that a heavily ironed man could do. In the ballad (xxvii.) no horses of the party were waiting at the castle, ALL horses were left behind at Staneshaw bank (Satchells brings horses, or at least a horse for Willie, to the castle). On what could Willie "ride off," except on Red Rowan?

Stanzas xxxv., xxxvi. and xliv. are related, we have seen, to passages in Jock o' the Side and Archie o' Cafield, but ballads, like Homer, employ the same formulae to describe the same circumstances: a note of archaism, as in Gaelic poetic passages in Marchen.

I do not pretend always to know how far Scott kept and emended old stanzas mangled by reciters: there are places in which I am quite at a loss to tell whether he is "making" or copying.

I incline to hold that Satchells was occasionally reminiscent of a ballad for the reasons and traces given, and I think that Scott when his and Satchells' versions coincide, did not borrow direct from Satchells, but that both men had a ballad source.

That ballad was later than the popular belief, held by Satchells, that Gilbert Elliot was at the time (1596) laird of Stobs, which he did not acquire till after the Union (1603), and that he (the only man not a Scot, says Satchells, wrongly) rode with Buccleuch. Elliot is not accused of doing so in Scrope's dispatches, but he may have come as far as Staneshaw bank, where half the company were left behind, says Satchells, with the horses, which were also left, says the ballad. In that case Elliot would not be observed in or near the Castle. Yet it may have been known in Scotland that he was of the party.

He was, as Satchells says, a cousin, he was also a friend of Buccleuch's, and he may conceivably have taken a part in this glorious adventure, though he could not, AT THE MOMENT, be called laird of Stobs. Were I an Elliot, this opinion would be welcome to me! Really, Salkeld was in a good position to know whether Elliot rode with Buccleuch or not.

The whole question is not one on which I can speak dogmatically. A person who suspects Scott intensely may believe that there were no ballad fragments of Kinmont in his possession. The person who, like myself, thinks Satchells, with his "It fell about the Martinmas," knew a ballad vaguely, believes that Satchells HAD some ballad sources bemuddled in his old memory.

A person who cannot conceive that Scott wrote

Except Sir Gilbert Elliot, called
  The laird of Stobs, I mean the same,

will hold that Scott knew some ballad fragments, disjecta membra. But I quite agree with Colonel Elliot, that the ballad, AS IT STANDS (with the exception, to my mind, of some thirty stanzas, themselves emended), “belongs to the early nineteenth century, not to the early seventeenth.” The time for supposing the poem, AS IT STANDS, to be “saturated with the folk-spirit” all through is past; the poem is far too much contaminated by the genius of Scott itself; like Burns’ transfiguration of “the folk-spirit” at its best.

Near the beginning of this paper I said, in answer to a question of Colonel Elliot’s, that I myself was the person who had suspected Scott of composing the whole of Kinmont Willie, and I have given my reasons for not remaining constant to my suspicions. But in a work which Colonel Elliot quotes, the abridged edition of Child’s great book by Mrs. Child-Sargent and Professor Kittredge (1905), the learned professor writes, “Kinmont Willie is under vehement suspicion of being the work of Sir Walter Scott.” Mr. Kittredge’s entire passage on the matter is worth quoting. He first says— “The traditional ballad appears to be inimitable by any person of literary cultivation,” “the efforts of poets and poetasters” end in “invariable failure.”

I do not think that they need end in failure except for one reason. The poet or poetaster cannot, now, except by flat lying and laborious forgery of old papers, produce any documentary evidence to prove the AUTHENTICITY of his attempt at imitation. Without documentary evidence of antiquity, no critic can approach the imitation except in a spirit of determined scepticism. He knows, certainly, that the ballad is modern, and, knowing that, he easily finds proofs of modernism even where they do not really exist. I am convinced that to imitate a ballad that would, except for the lack of documentary evidence, beguile the expert, is perfectly feasible. I even venture to offer examples of my own manufacture at the close of this volume. I can find nothing suspicious in them, except the deliberate insertion of formulae which occur in genuine ballads. Such wiederholungen are not reasons for rejection, in my opinion; but they are SUSPECT with people who do not understand that they are a natural and necessary feature of archaic poetry, and this fact Mr. Kittredge does understand.

Mr. Kittredge speaks of Sir Walter’s unique success with Kinmont Willie; but is Sir Walter successful? Some of his stanzas I, for one, can hardly accept, even as emended traditional verses.

Mr. Kittredge writes— “Sir Walter’s success, however, in a special kind of balladry for which he was better adapted by nature and habit of mind than for any other, would only emphasise the universal failure. And it must not be forgotten that Kinmont Willie, if it be Scott's work, is not made out of whole cloth; it is a working over of one of the best traditional ballads known (Jock o' the Side), with the intention of fitting it to an historical exploit of Buccleuch. Further, the subject itself was of such a nature that it might well have been celebrated in a ballad, — indeed, one is tempted to say, it must have been so celebrated."

Not a doubt of THAT!

"And, finally, Sir Walter Scott felt towards 'the Kinmont' and 'the bold Buccleuch' precisely as the moss-trooping author of such a ballad would have felt. For once, then, the miraculous happened. . . . " Or did not happen, for the exception is "solitary though doubtful," and "under vehement suspicion." But Mr. Kittredge must remember that no known Scottish ballad "is made out of whole cloth." All have, in various degrees, the successive modifications wrought by centuries of oral tradition, itself, in some cases, modifying a much modified printed "stall-copy" or "broadside."

Take Jock o' the Side. The oldest version is in the Percy MS.
As Mr. Henderson says, "it contains many evident corruptions,"

"Jock on his lively bay, Wat's on his white horse behind."

There is an example of what the original author could not have written!

We do not know how good Jock was when he left his poet's hands; and Scott has not touched him up. We cannot estimate the original excellence of any traditional poem by the state in which we find it,

Corrupt by every beggar-man,
And soiled by all ignoble use.

CONCLUSIONS

We have now examined critically the four essentially Border ballads which Sir Walter is suspected of having “edited” in an unrighteous manner. Now he helps to forge, and issues Auld Maitland. Now he, or somebody, makes up Otterburne, “partly of stanzas from Percy’s Reliques, which have undergone emendations calculated to disguise the source from which they came, partly of stanzas of modern fabrication, and partly of a few stanzas and lines from Herd’s version.” Thirdly, Scott, it is suggested, knew only what I call “the Elliot version” of Jamie Telfer, perverted that by transposing the roles of Buccleuch and Stobs, and added picturesque stanzas in glorification of his ancestor, Wat of Harden. Fourthly, he is suspected of “writing the whole ballad” of Kinmont Willie, “from beginning to end.”

Of these four charges the first, and most disastrous, we have absolutely disproved. Scott did not write one verse of the Auld Maitland; he edited it with unusual scrupulosity, for he had but one copy, and an almost identical recitation. He could not “eke and alter” by adding verses from other texts, as he did in Otterburne.

Secondly, Scott did not make up Otterburne in the way suggested by his critic. He took Hogg’s MS., and I have shown minutely what that MS. was, and he edited it in accordance with his professed principles. He made “a standard text.” It is only to be regretted that Hogg did not take down VERBATIM the words of his two reciters and narrators, and that Scott did not publish Hogg’s version, with his letter, in his notes; but that was not his method, nor the method of his contemporaries.

Thirdly, as to Jamie Telfer, long ago I wrote, opposite

“The lyart locks of Harden’s hair,”

aut Jacobus aut Diabolus, meaning that either James Hogg or the devil composed that stanza. I was wrong. Hogg had nothing to do with it; on internal evidence Scott was the maker. But that he transposed the Scott and Elliot roles is incapable of proof; and I have shown that such perversions were made in very early times, where national, not clan prejudices were concerned. I have also shown that Scott’s version contains matter not in the Elliot version, matter injurious to the poem, as in one stanza, certainly not composed by himself, the stanza being an inappropriate stray formula from other ballads. But, in the absence of manuscript materials I can only produce presumptions, not proofs.

Lastly, Kinmont Willie, and Scott’s share in it, is matter of presumption, not of proof. He had been in quest of the ballad, as we know from his list of desiderata; he says that what he got was “mangled” by reciters, and that, in what he got, one river was mentioned where topography requires another. He also admits that, in the three ballads of rescues, he placed passages where they had most poetical appropriateness. My arguments to show that Satchells had memory of a Kinmont ballad will doubtless appeal with more or less success, or with none, to different students. That an indefinite quantity of the ballad, and improvements on the rest, are Scott’s, I cannot doubt, from evidence of style.

“Sir Walter Scott it is impossible to assail, however much the scholarly conscience may disapprove,” says Mr. Kittredge. Not much is to be taken by assailing him! “Business first, pleasure afterwards,” as, according to Sam Weller, Richard III. said, when he killed Henry VI. before smothering the princes in the Tower. I proceed to pleasure in the way of presenting imitations of “the traditional ballad” which “appears to be inimitable by any person of literary cultivation,” according to Mr. Kittredge.

IMITATIONS OF BALLADS

The three following ballads are exhibited in connection with Mr. Kittredge’s opinion that neither poet nor poetaster can imitate, to-day, the traditional ballad. Of course, not one of my three could now take in an expert, for he would ask for documentary evidence of their antiquity. But I doubt if Mr. Kittredge can find any points in my three imitations which infallibly betray their modernity

The first, Simmy o’ Whythaugh, is based on facts in the Border despatches. Historically the attempt to escape from York Castle failed; after the prisoners had got out they were recaptured.

The second ballad, The Young Ruthven, gives the traditional view of the slaying of the Ruthvens in their own house in Perth, on 5th August 1600.

The third, The Dead Man’s Dance, combines the horror of the ballads of Lizzy Wan and The Bonny Hind, with that of the Romaic ballad, in English, The Suffolk Miracle (Child, No. 272).

I — SIMMY O’ WHYTHAUGH

O, will ye hear o’ the Bishop o’ York,
   O, will ye hear o’ the Armstrongs true,
How they hae broken the Bishop’s castle,
   And carried himsel’ to the bauld Buccleuch?

They were but four o’ the Lariston kin,
   They were but four o’ the Armstrong name,
Wi’ stout Sim Armstrong to lead the band,
   The Laird o’ Whythaugh, I mean the same.

They had done nae man an injury,
   They had na robbed, they had na slain,
In pledge were they laid for the Border peace,
   In the Bishop’s castle to dree their pain.

The Bishop he was a crafty carle,
   He has ta’en their red and their white monie,
But the muddy water was a’ their drink,
   And dry was the bread their meat maun be.

“Wi’ a ged o’ airn,” did Simmy say,
   ”And ilka man wi’ a horse to ride,
We aucht wad break the Bishop’s castle,
   And carry himsel’ to the Liddel side.

“The banks o’ Whythaugh I sall na see,
   I never sall look upon wife and bairn;
I wad pawn my saul for my gude mear, Jean,
   I wad pawn my saul for a ged o’ airn.”

There was ane that brocht them their water and bread;
His gude sire, he was a kindly Scot,
Says “Your errand I’ll rin to the Laird o’ Cessford,
If ye’ll swear to pay me the rescue shot.”

Then Simmy has gi’en him his seal and ring,
To the Laird o’ Cessford has ridden he -
I trow when Sir Robert had heard his word
The tear it stood in Sir Robert’s e’e.

“And saIl they starve him, Simmy o’ Whythaugh,
And sall his bed be the rotten strae?
I trow I’ll spare neither life nor gear,
Or ever I live to see that day!

“Gar bring up my horses,” Sir Robert he said,
”I bid ye bring them by three and three,
And ane by ane at St. George’s close,
At York gate gather your companie.”

Oh, some rade like corn-cadger men,
And some like merchants o’ linen and hose;
They slept by day and they rade by nicht,
Till they a’ convened at St. George’s close.

Ilka mounted man led a bridded mear,
I trow they had won on the English way;
Ilka belted man had a brace o’ swords,
To help their friends to fend the fray.

Then Simmy he heard a hoolet cry
In the chamber strang wi’ never a licht;
“That’s a hoolet, I ken,” did Simmy say,
”And I trow that Teviotdale’s here the nicht!”

They hae grippit a bench was clamped wi’ steel,
   Wi’ micht and main hae they wrought, they four,
They hae burst it free, and rammed wi’ the bench,
   Till they brake a hole in the chamber door.

“Lift strae frae the beds,” did Simmy say;
   To the gallery window Simmy sped,
He has set his strength to a window bar,
   And bursten it out o’ the binding lead.

He has bursten the bolts o’ the Elliot men,
   Out ower the window the strae cast he,
For they bid to loup frae the window high,
   And licht on the strae their fa’ would be.

To the Bishop’s chamber Simmy ran;
   ”Oh, sleep ye saft, my Lord!” says he;
“Fu’ weary am I o’ your bread and water,
   Ye’se hae wine and meat when ye dine wi’ me.”

He has lifted the loon across his shoulder;
   ”We maun leave the hoose by the readiest way!”
He has cast him doon frae the window high,
   And a’ to hansel the new fa’n strae!

Then twa by twa the Elliots louped,
   The Armstrongs louped by twa and twa.
“I trow, if we licht on the auld fat Bishop,
   That nane the harder will be the fa’!”

They rade by nicht and they slept by day;
   I wot they rade by an unkenned track;
“The Bishop was licht as a flea,” said Sim,
   ”Or ever we cam’ to the Liddel rack.”

Then “Welcome, my Lord,” did Simmy say,
   ”We’ll win to Whythaugh afore we dine,
We hae drunk o’ your cauld and ate o’ your dry,
   But ye’ll taste o’ our Liddesdale beef and wine.”

II — THE YOUNG RUTHVEN

The King has gi’en the Queen a gift,
For her May-day’s propine,
He’s gi’en her a band o’ the diamond-stane,
Set in the siller fine.

The Queen she walked in Falkland yaird,
Beside the hollans green,
And there she saw the bonniest man
That ever her eyes had seen.

His coat was the Ruthven white and red,
Sae sound asleep was he
The Queen she cried on May Beatrix,
That bonny lad to see.

“Oh! wha sleeps here, May Beatnix,
Without the leave o’ me?”
“Oh! wha suld it be but my young brother
Frae Padua ower the sea!

“My father was the Earl Gowrie,
An Earl o’ high degree,
But they hae slain him by fause treason,
And gar’d my brothers flee.

“At Padua hae they learned their leir
In the fields o’ Italie;
And they hae crossed the saut sea-faem.
And a’ for love o’ me!”

The Queen has cuist her siller band
   About his craig o’ snaw;
But still he slept and naething kenned,
   Aneth the hollans shaw.

The King was walking thro’ the yaird,
   He saw the siller shine;
“And wha,” quo’ he, “is this galliard
   That wears yon gift o’ mine?”

The King has gane till the Queen’s ain bower,
   An angry man that day;
But bye there cam’ May Beatrix
   And stole the band away.

And she’s run in by the little black yett,
   Straight till the Queen ran she:
“Oh! tak ye back your siller band,
   On it gar my brother dee!”

The Queen has linked her siller band
   About her middle sma’;
And then she heard her ain gudeman
   Come sounding through the ha’.

“Oh! whare,” he cried, “is the siller band
   I gied ye late yestreen?
The knops was a’ o’ the diamond-stane,
   Set in the siller sheen.”

“Ye hae camped birling at the wine,
   A’ nicht till the day did daw;
Or ye wad ken your siller band
   About my middle sma’!”

The King he stude, the King he glowered,
   Sae hard as a man micht stare:
“Deil hae me! Like is a richt ill mark, -
   Or I saw it itherwhere!

“I saw it round young Ruthven’s neck
   As he lay sleeping still;
And, faith, but the wine was wondrous guid,
   Or my wife is wondrous ill!”

There was na gane a week, a week,
   A week but barely three;
The King has hounded John Ramsay out,
   To gar young Ruthven dee!

They took him in his brother’s house,
   Nae sword was in his hand,
And they hae slain him, young Ruthven,
   The bonniest in the land!

And they hae slain his fair brother,
   And laid him on the green,
And a’ for a band o’ the siller fine
   And a blink o’ the eye o’ the Queen!

Oh! had they set him man to man,
   Or even ae man to three,
There was na a knight o’ the Ramsay bluid
   Had gar’d Earl Gowrie dee!

III — THE DEAD MAN’S DANCE

“The dance is in the castle ha’,
   And wha will dance wi’ me?”
“There’s never a man o’ living men,
   Will dance the nicht wi’ thee!”

Then Margaret’s gane within her bower,
   Put ashes on her hair,
And ashes on her bonny breast
   And on hen shoulders bare.

There cam’ a knock to her bower-door,
   And blythe she let him in;
It was her brother frae the wars,
   She lo’ed abune her kin.

“Oh, Willie, is the battle won?
   Or are you fled?” said she,
“This nicht the field was won and lost,
   A’ in a far countrie.

“This nicht the field was lost and won,
   A’ in a far countrie,
And here am I within your bower,
   For nane will dance with thee.”

“Put gold upon your head, Margaret,
   Put gold upon your hair,
And gold upon your girdle-band,
   And on your breast so fair!”

“Nay, nae gold for my breast, Willie,
   Nay, nae gold for my hair,
It’s ashes o’ oak and dust o’ earth,
   That you and I maun wear!

“I canna dance, I mauna dance,
   I daurna dance with thee.
To dance atween the quick and the deid,
   Is nae good companie.”

*

The fire it took upon her cheek,
   It took upon her chin,
Nae Mass was sung, nor bells was rung,
   For they twa died in deidly sin.

A SHORT HISTORY OF SCOTLAND

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CHAPTER I. SCOTLAND AND THE ROMANS.

If we could see in a magic mirror the country now called Scotland as it was when the Romans under Agricola (81 A.D.) crossed the Border, we should recognise little but the familiar hills and mountains. The rivers, in the plains, overflowed their present banks; dense forests of oak and pine, haunted by great red deer, elks, and boars, covered land that has long been arable. There were lakes and lagoons where for centuries there have been fields of corn. On the oldest sites of our towns were groups of huts made of clay and wattle, and dominated, perhaps, by the large stockaded house of the tribal prince. In the lochs, natural islands, or artificial islets made of piles (crannogs), afforded standing-ground and protection to villages, if indeed these lake-dwellings are earlier in Scotland than the age of war that followed the withdrawal of the Romans.

The natives were far beyond the savage stage of culture. They lived in an age of iron tools and weapons and of wheeled vehicles; and were in what is called the Late Celtic condition of art and culture, familiar to us from beautiful objects in bronze work, more commonly found in Ireland than in Scotland, and from the oldest Irish romances and poems.

In these “epics” the manners much resemble those described by Homer. Like his heroes, the men in the Cuchullain sagas fight from light chariots, drawn by two ponies, and we know that so fought the tribes in Scotland encountered by Agricola the Roman General (81-85 A.D.) It is even said in the Irish epics that Cuchullain learned his chariotry in *Alba* — that is, in our Scotland. The warriors had “mighty limbs and flaming hair,” says Tacitus. Their weapons were heavy iron swords, in bronze sheaths beautifully decorated, and iron-headed spears; they had large round bronze-studded shields, and battle-axes. The dress consisted of two upper garments: first, the smock, of linen or other fabric — in battle, often of tanned hides of animals, — and the mantle, or plaid, with its brooch. Golden torques and heavy gold bracelets were worn by the chiefs; the women had bronze ornaments with brightly coloured enamelled decoration.

Agriculture was practised, and corn was ground in the circular querns of stone, of which the use so long survived. The women span and wove the gay smocks and darker cloaks of the warriors.

Of the religion, we only know that it was a form of polytheism; that sacrifices were made, and that Druids existed; they were soothsayers, magicians, perhaps priests, and were attendant on kings.

Such were the people in Alba whom we can dimly descry around Agricola's fortified frontier between the firths of Forth and Clyde, about 81-82 A.D. When Agricola pushed north of the Forth and Tay he still met men who had considerable knowledge of the art of war. In his battle at Mons Graupius (perhaps at the junction of Isla and Tay), his cavalry had the better of the native chariotry in the plain; and the native infantry, descending from their position on the heights, were attacked by his horsemen in their attempt to assail his rear. But they were swift of foot, the woods sheltered and the hills defended them. He made no more effectual pursuit than Cumberland did at Culloden.

Agricola was recalled by Domitian after seven years' warfare, and his garrisons did not long hold their forts on his lines or frontier, which stretched across the country from Forth to Clyde; roughly speaking, from Graham's Dyke, east of Borrowstounnis on the Firth of Forth, to Old Kilpatrick on Clyde. The region is now full of coal-mines, foundries, and villages; but excavations at Bar Hill, Castlecary, and Roughcastle disclose traces of Agricola's works, with their earthen ramparts. The Roman station at Camelon, north-west of Falkirk, was connected with the southern passes of the Highland hills by a road with a chain of forts. The remains of Roman pottery at Camelon are of the first century.

Two generations after Agricola, about 140-145, the Roman Governor, Lollius Urbicus, refortified the line of Forth to Clyde with a wall of sods and a ditch, and forts much larger than those constructed by Agricola. His line, "the Antonine Vallum," had its works on commanding ridges; and fire-signals, in case of attack by the natives, flashed the news "from one sea to the other sea," while the troops of occupation could be provisioned from the Roman fleet. Judging by the coins found by the excavators, the line was abandoned about 190, and the forts were wrecked and dismantled, perhaps by the retreating Romans.

After the retreat from the Antonine Vallum, about 190, we hear of the vigorous "unrest" of the Meatæ and Caledonians; the latter people are said, on very poor authority, to have been little better than savages. Against them Severus (208) made an expedition indefinitely far to the north, but the enemy shunned a general engagement, cut off small detachments, and caused the Romans terrible losses in this march to a non-existent Moscow.

Not till 306 do we hear of the Picts, about whom there is infinite learning but little knowledge. They must have spoken Gaelic by Severus's time (208), whatever their original language; and were long recognised in Galloway, where the hill and river names are Gaelic.

The later years of the Romans, who abandoned Britain in 410, were perturbed by attacks of the Scoti (Scots) from Ireland, and it is to a settlement in Argyll of "Dalriadic" Scots from Ireland about 500 A.D. that our country owes the name of Scotland.

Rome has left traces of her presence on Scottish soil — vestiges of the forts and vallum wall between the firths; a station rich in antiquities under the Eildons at Newstead; another, Ardoch, near Sheriffmuir; a third near Solway Moss (Birrenswark); and others less extensive, with some roads extending towards the Moray Firth; and a villa at Musselburgh, found in the reign of James VI.

CHAPTER II. CHRISTIANITY — THE RIVAL KINGDOMS.

To the Scots, through St Columba, who, about 563, settled in Iona, and converted the Picts as far north as Inverness, we owe the introduction of Christianity, for though the Roman Church of St Ninian (397), at Whithern in Galloway, left embers of the faith not extinct near Glasgow, St Kentigern’s country, till Columba’s time, the rites of Christian Scotland were partly of the Celtic Irish type, even after St Wilfrid’s victory at the Synod of Whitby (664).

St Columba himself was of the royal line in Ulster, was learned, as learning was then reckoned, and, if he had previously been turbulent, he now desired to spread the Gospel. With twelve companions he settled in Iona, established his cloister of cells, and journeyed to Inverness, the capital of Pictland. Here his miracles overcame the magic of the King’s druids; and his Majesty, Brude, came into the fold, his people following him. Columba was no less of a diplomatist than of an evangelist. In a crystal he saw revealed the name of the rightful king of the Dalriad Scots in Argyll — namely, Aidan — and in 575, at Drumceat in North Ireland, he procured the recognition of Aidan, and brought the King of the Picts also to confess Aidan’s independent royalty.

In the ‘Life of Columba,’ by Adamnan, we get a clear and complete view of everyday existence in the Highlands during that age. We are among the red deer, and the salmon, and the cattle in the hills, among the second-sighted men, too, of whom Columba was far the foremost. We see the saint’s inkpot upset by a clumsy but enthusiastic convert; we even make acquaintance with the old white pony of the monastery, who mourned when St Columba was dying; while among secular men we observe the differences in rank, measured by degrees of wealth in cattle. Many centuries elapse before, in Froissart, we find a picture of Scotland so distinct as that painted by Adamnan.

The discipline of St Columba was of the monastic model. There were settlements of clerics in fortified villages; the clerics were a kind of monks, with more regard for abbots than for their many bishops, and with peculiar tonsures, and a peculiar way of reckoning the date of Easter. Each missionary was popularly called a Saint, and the *Kil*, or cell, of many a Celtic missionary survives in hundreds of place-names.

The salt-water Loch Leven in Argyll was on the west the south frontier of “Pictland,” which, on the east, included all the country north of the Firth of

Forth. From Loch Leven south to Kintyre, a large cantle, including the isles, was the land of the Scots from Ireland, the Dalriadic kingdom. The south-west, from Dumbarton, including our modern Cumberland and Westmorland, was named Strathclyde, and was peopled by British folk, speaking an ancient form of Welsh. On the east, from Ettrick forest into Lothian, the land was part of the early English kingdom of Bernicia; here the invading Angles were already settled — though river-names here remain Gaelic, and hill-names are often either Gaelic or Welsh. The great Northern Pictland was divided into seven provinces, or sub-kingdoms, while there was an over-King, or Ardrigh, with his capital at Inverness and, later, in Angus or Forfarshire. The country about Edinburgh was partly English, partly Cymric or Welsh. The south-west corner, Galloway, was called Pictish, and was peopled by Gaelic-speaking tribes.

In the course of time and events the dynasty of the Argyll Scoti from Ireland gave its name to Scotland, while the English element gave its language to the Lowlands; it was adopted by the Celtic kings of the whole country and became dominant, while the Celtic speech withdrew into the hills of the north and northwest.

The nation was thus evolved out of alien and hostile elements, Irish, Pictish, Gaelic, Cymric, English, and on the northern and western shores, Scandinavian.

CHAPTER III. EARLY WARS OF RACES.

In a work of this scope, it is impossible to describe all the wars between the petty kingdoms peopled by races of various languages, which occupied Scotland. In 603, in the wild moors at Degsastane, between the Liddel burn and the passes of the Upper Tyne, the English Aethelfrith of Deira, with an army of the still pagan ancestors of the Borderers, utterly defeated Aidan, King of Argyll, with the Christian converted Scots. Henceforth, for more than a century, the English between Forth and Humber feared neither Scot of the west nor Pict of the north.

On the death of Aethelfrith (617), the Christian west and north exercised their influences; one of Aethelfrith’s exiled sons married a Pictish princess, and became father of a Pictish king, another, Oswald, was baptised at Iona; and the new king of the northern English of Lothian, Edwin, was converted by Paullinus (627), and held Edinburgh as his capital. Later, after an age of war and ruin, Oswald, the convert of Iona, restored Christianity in northern England; and, after his fall, his brother, Oswiu, consolidated the north English. In 685 Oswiu’s son Egfrith crossed the Forth and invaded Pictland with a Northumbrian army, but was routed with great loss, and was slain at Nectan’s Mere, in Forfarshire. Thenceforth, till 761, the Picts were dominant, as against Scots and north English, Angus MacFergus being then their leader (731-761).

Now the invaders and settlers from Scandinavia, the Northmen on the west coast, ravaged the Christian Scots of the west, and burned Iona: finally, in 844-860, Kenneth MacAlpine of Kintyre, a Scot of Dalriada on the paternal, a Pict on the mother’s side, defeated the Picts and obtained their throne. By Pictish law the crown descended in the maternal line, which probably facilitated the coronation of Kenneth. To the Scots and “to all Europe” he was a Scot; to the Picts, as son of a royal Pictish mother, he was a Pict. With him, at all events, Scots and Picts were interfused, and there began the *Scottish* dynasty, supplanting the Pictish, though it is only in popular tales that the Picts were exterminated.

Owing to pressure from the Northmen sea-rovers in the west, the capital and the seat of the chief bishop, under Kenneth MacAlpine (844-860), were moved eastwards from Iona to Scone, near Perth, and after an interval at Dunkeld, to St Andrews in Fife.

The line of Kenneth MacAlpine, though disturbed by quarrels over the succession, and by Northmen in the west, north, and east, none the less in some way “held a good grip o’ the gear” against Vikings, English of Lothian, and Welsh of Strathclyde. In consequence of a marriage with a Welsh princess of Strathclyde, or Cumberland, a Scottish prince, Donald, brother of Constantine II., became king of that realm (908), and his branch of the family of MacAlpin held Cumbria for a century.

ENGLISH CLAIMS OVER SCOTLAND.

In 924 the first claim by an English king, Edward, to the over-lordship of Scotland appears in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. The entry contains a manifest error, and the topic causes war between modern historians, English and Scottish. In fact, there are several such entries of Scottish acceptance of English suzerainty under Constantine II., and later, but they all end in the statement, “this held not long.” The “submission” of Malcolm I. to Edmund (945) is not a submission but an alliance; the old English word for “fellow-worker,” or “ally,” designates Malcolm as fellow-worker with Edward of England.

This word (midwyrhta) was translated *fidelis* (one who gives fealty) in the Latin of English chroniclers two centuries later, but Malcolm I. held Cumberland as an ally, not as a subject prince of England. In 1092 an English chronicle represents Malcolm III. as holding Cumberland “by conquest.”

The main fact is that out of these and similar dim transactions arose the claims of Edward I. to the over-lordship of Scotland, — claims that were urged by Queen Elizabeth’s minister, Cecil, in 1568, and were boldly denied by Maitland of Lethington. From these misty pretensions came the centuries of war that made the hardy character of the folk of Scotland.

THE SCOTTISH ACQUISITION OF LOTHIAN.

We cannot pretend within our scope to follow chronologically “the fightings and flockings of kites and crows,” in “a wolf-age, a war-age,” when the Northmen from all Scandinavian lands, and the Danes, who had acquired much of Ireland, were flying at the throat of England and hanging on the flanks of Scotland; while the Britons of Strathclyde struck in, and the Scottish kings again and again raided or sought to occupy the fertile region of Lothian between Forth and Tweed. If the dynasty of MacAlpin could win rich Lothian, with its English-speaking folk, they were “made men,” they held the granary of the North. By degrees and by methods not clearly defined they did win the Castle of the Maidens, the acropolis of Dunedin, Edinburgh; and fifty years later, in some way, apparently by the sword, at the battle of Carham (1018), in which a Scottish king of Cumberland fought by his side, Malcolm II. took possession of Lothian, the whole south-east region, by this time entirely anglified, and this was the greatest step in the making of Scotland. The Celtic dynasty now held the most fertile district between Forth and Tweed, a district already English in blood and speech, the centre and focus of the English civilisation accepted by the Celtic kings. Under this Malcolm, too, his grandson, Duncan, became ruler of Strathclyde — that is, practically, of Cumberland.

Malcolm is said to have been murdered at haunted Glamis, in Forfarshire, in 1034; the room where he died is pointed out by legend in the ancient castle. His rightful heir, by the strange system of the Scots, should have been, not his own grandson, Duncan, but the grandson of Kenneth III. The rule was that the crown went alternately to a descendant of the House of Constantine (863-877), son of Kenneth MacAlpine, and to a descendant of Constantine’s brother, Aodh (877-888). These alternations went on till the crowning of Malcolm II. (1005-1034), and then ceased, for Malcolm II. had slain the unnamed male heir of the House of Aodh, a son of Boedhe, in order to open the succession to his own grandson, “the gracious Duncan.” Boedhe had left a daughter, Gruach; she had by the Mormaor, or under-king of the province of Murray, a son, Lulach. On the death of the Mormaor she married Macbeth, and when Macbeth slew Duncan (1040), he was removing a usurper — as he understood it — and he ruled in the name of his stepson, Lulach. The power of Duncan had been weakened by repeated defeats at the hands of the Northmen under Thorfinn. In 1057 Macbeth was slain in battle at Lumphanan, in Aberdeenshire, and Malcolm Canmore, son of

Duncan, after returning from England, whither he had fled from Macbeth, succeeded to the throne. But he and his descendants for long were opposed by the House of Murray, descendants of Lulach, who himself had died in 1058.

The world will always believe Shakespeare’s version of these events, and suppose the gracious Duncan to have been a venerable old man, and Macbeth an ambitious Thane, with a bloodthirsty wife, he himself being urged on by the predictions of witches. He was, in fact, Mormaor of Murray, and upheld the claims of his stepson Lulach, who was son of a daughter of the wrongfully extruded House of Aodh.

Malcolm Canmore, Duncan’s grandson, on the other hand, represented the European custom of direct lineal succession against the ancient Scots’ mode.

CHAPTER IV. MALCOLM CANMORE — NORMAN CONQUEST.

The reign of Malcolm Canmore (1057-1093) brought Scotland into closer connection with western Europe and western Christianity. The Norman Conquest (1066) increased the tendency of the English-speaking people of Lothian to acquiesce in the rule of a Celtic king, rather than in that of the adventurers who followed William of Normandy. Norman operations did not at first reach Cumberland, which Malcolm held; and, on the death of his Norse wife, the widow of Duncan's foe, Thorfinn (she left a son, Duncan), Malcolm allied himself with the English Royal House by marrying Margaret, sister of Eadgar Ætheling, then engaged in the hopeless effort to rescue northern England from the Normans. The dates are confused: Malcolm may have won the beautiful sister of Edgar, rightful king of England, in 1068, or at the time (1070) of his raid, said to have been of savage ferocity, into Northumberland, and his yet more cruel reprisals for Gospatric's harrying of Cumberland. In either case, St Margaret's biographer, who had lived at her Court, whether or not he was her Confessor, Turgot, represents the Saint as subduing the savagery of Malcolm, who passed wakeful nights in weeping for his sins. A lover of books, which Malcolm could not read, an expert in "the delicate, and gracious, and bright works of women," Margaret brought her own gentleness and courtesy among a rude people, built the abbey church of Dunfermline, and presented the churches with many beautiful golden reliquaries and fine sacramental plate.

In 1072, to avenge a raid of Malcolm (1070), the Conqueror, with an army and a fleet, came to Abernethy on Tay, where Malcolm, in exchange for English manors, "became his man" *for them*, and handed over his son Duncan as a hostage for peace. The English view is that Malcolm became William's "man for all that he had" — or for all south of Tay.

After various raidings of northern England, and after the death of the Conqueror, Malcolm renewed, in Lothian, the treaty of Abernethy, being secured in his twelve English manors (1091). William Rufus then took and fortified Carlisle, seized part of Malcolm's lands in Cumberland, and summoned him to Gloucester, where the two Kings, after all, quarrelled and did not meet. No sooner had Malcolm returned home than he led an army into Northumberland, where he was defeated and slain, near Alnwick (Nov. 13, 1093). His son Edward fell with him, and his wife, St Margaret, died in Edinburgh Castle: her body, under cloud of night, was carried through the host of rebel Celts and buried at Dunfermline.

Margaret, a beautiful and saintly Englishwoman, had been the ruling spirit of the reign in domestic and ecclesiastical affairs. She had civilised the Court, in matters of costume at least; she had read books to the devoted Malcolm, who could not read; and he had been her interpreter in her discussions with the Celtic-speaking clergy, whose ideas of ritual differed from her own. The famous Culdees, originally ascetic hermits, had before this day united in groups living under canonical rules, and, according to English observers, had ceased to be bachelors. Masses are said to have been celebrated by them in some "barbarous rite"; Saturday was Sabbath; on Sunday men worked. Lent began, not on Ash Wednesday, but on the Monday following. We have no clearer account of the Culdee peculiarities that St Margaret reformed. The hereditary tenure of benefices by lay protectors she did not reform, but she restored the ruined cells of Iona, and established *hospitia* for pilgrims. She was decidedly unpopular with her Celtic subjects, who now made a struggle against English influences.

In the year of her death died Fothadh, the last Celtic bishop of St Andrews, and the Celtic clergy were gradually superseded and replaced by monks of English name, English speech, and English ideas — or rather the ideas of western Europe. Scotland, under Margaret's influence, became more Catholic; the celibacy of the clergy was more strictly enforced (it had almost lapsed), but it will be observed throughout that, of all western Europe, Scotland was least overawed by Rome. Yet for centuries the Scottish Church was, in a peculiar degree, "the daughter of Rome," for not till about 1470 had she a Metropolitan, the Archbishop of St Andrews.

On the deaths, in one year, of Malcolm, Margaret, and Fothadh, the last Celtic bishop of St Andrews, the see for many years was vacant or merely filled by transient bishops. York and Canterbury were at feud for their superiority over the Scottish Church; and the other sees were not constituted and provided with bishops till the years 1115 (Glasgow), 1150, — Argyll not having a bishop till 1200. In the absence of a Metropolitan, episcopal elections had to be confirmed at Rome, which would grant no Metropolitan, but forbade the Archbishop of York to claim a superiority which would have implied, or prepared the way for, English superiority over Scotland. Meanwhile the expenses and delays of appeals from bishops direct to Rome did not stimulate the affection of the Scottish "daughter of Rome." The rights of the chapters of the Cathedrals to elect their bishops, and other appointments to ecclesiastical offices, in course of time were transferred to the Pope, who negotiated with the king, and thus all manner of jobbery increased, the nobles influencing the king in favour of their own needy younger sons, and the Pope being amenable to various secular persuasions, so that in every way the relations of Scotland with the Holy Father were anomalous and irksome.

Scotland was, indeed, a country predestined to much ill fortune, to tribulations against which human foresight could erect no defence. But the marriage of the Celtic Malcolm with the English Margaret, and the friendly arrival of great nobles from the south, enabled Scotland to receive the new ideas of feudal law in pacific fashion. They were not violently forced upon the English-speaking people of Lothian.

DYNASTY OF MALCOLM.

On the death of Malcolm the contest for the Crown lay between his brother, Donald Ban, supported by the Celts; his son Duncan by his first wife, a Norse woman (Duncan being then a hostage at the English Court, who was backed by William Rufus); and thirdly, Malcolm's eldest son by Margaret, Eadmund, the favourite with the anglicised south of the country. Donald Ban, after a brief period of power, was driven out by Duncan (1094); Duncan was then slain by the Celts (1094). Donald was next restored, north of Forth, Eadmund ruling in the south, but was dispossessed and blinded by Malcolm's son Eadgar, who reigned for ten years (1097-1107), while Eadmund died in an English cloister. Eadgar had trouble enough on all sides, but the process of anglicising continued, under himself, and later, under his brother, Alexander I., who ruled north of Forth and Clyde; while the youngest brother, David, held Lothian and Cumberland, with the title of Earl. The sister of those sons of Malcolm, Eadgyth (Matilda), married Henry I. of England in 1100. There seemed a chance that, north of Clyde and Forth, there would be a Celtic kingdom; while Lothian and Cumbria would be merged in England. Alexander was mainly engaged in fighting the Moray claimants of his crown in the north and in planting his religious houses, notably St Andrews, with English Augustinian canons from York. Canterbury and York contended for ecclesiastical superiority over Scotland; after various adventures, Robert, the prior of the Augustinians at Scone, was made Bishop of St Andrews, being consecrated by Canterbury, in 1124; while York consecrated David's bishop in Glasgow. Thanks to the quarrels of the sees of York and Canterbury, the Scottish clergy managed to secure their ecclesiastical independence from either English see; and became, finally, the most useful combatants in the long struggle for the independence of the nation. Rome, on the whole, backed that cause. The Scottish Catholic churchmen, in fact, pursued the old patriotic policy of resistance to England till the years just preceding the Reformation, when the people leaned to the reformed doctrines, and when Scottish national freedom was endangered more by France than by England.

CHAPTER V. DAVID I. AND HIS TIMES.

With the death of Alexander I. (April 25, 1124) and the accession of his brother, David I., the deliberate Royal policy of introducing into Scotland English law and English institutions, as modified by the Norman rulers, was fulfilled. David, before Alexander's death, was Earl of the most English part of Lothian, the country held by Scottish kings, and Cumbria; and resided much at the court of his brother-in-law, Henry I. He associated, when Earl, with nobles of Anglo-Norman race and language, such as Moreville, Umfraville, Somerville, Gospatric, Bruce, Balliol, and others; men with a stake in both countries, England and Scotland. On coming to the throne, David endowed these men with charters of lands in Scotland. With him came a cadet of the great Anglo-Breton House of FitzAlan, who obtained the hereditary office of Seneschal or *Steward* of Scotland. His patronymic, FitzAlan, merged in Stewart (later Stuart), and the family cognizance, the *fesse chequy* in azure and argent, represents the Board of Exchequer. The earliest Stewart holdings of land were mainly in Renfrewshire; those of the Bruces were in Annandale. These two Anglo-Norman houses between them were to found the Stewart dynasty.

The wife of David, Matilda, widow of Simon de St Liz, was heiress of Waltheof, sometime the Conqueror's Earl in Northumberland; and to gain, through that connection, Northumberland for himself was the chief aim of David's foreign policy, — an aim fertile in contentions.

We have not space to disentangle the intricacies of David's first great domestic struggles; briefly, there was eternal dispeace caused by the Celts, headed by claimants to the throne, the MacHeths, representing the rights of Lulach, the ward of Macbeth. In 1130 the Celts were defeated, and their leader, Angus, Earl of Moray, fell in fight near the North Esk in Forfarshire. His brother, Malcolm, by aid of David's Anglo-Norman friends, was taken and imprisoned in Roxburgh Castle. The result of this rising was that David declared the great and ancient Celtic Earldom of Moray — the home of his dynastic Celtic rivals — forfeit to the Crown. He planted the region with English, Anglo-Norman, and Lowland landholders, a great step in the anglicisation of his kingdom. Thereafter, for several centuries, the strength of the Celts lay in the west in Moidart, Knoydart, Morar, Mamore, Lochaber, and Kintyre, and in the western islands, which fell into the hands of "the sons of Somerled," the Macdonalds.

In 1135-1136, on the death of Henry I., David, backing his own niece, Matilda, as Queen of England in opposition to Stephen, crossed the Border in arms, but was bought off. His son Henry received the Honour of Huntingdom, with the Castle of Carlisle, and a vague promise of consideration of his claim to Northumberland. In 1138, after a disturbed interval, David led the whole force of his realm, from Orkney to Galloway, into Yorkshire. His Anglo-Norman friends, the Balliols and Bruces, with the Archbishop of York, now opposed him and his son Prince Henry. On August 22, 1138, at Cowton Moor, near Northallerton, was fought the great battle, named from the huge English sacred banner, “The Battle of the Standard.”

In a military sense, the fact that here the men-at-arms and knights of England fought as dismounted infantry, their horses being held apart in reserve, is notable as preluding to the similar English tactics in their French wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Thus arrayed, the English received the impetuous charge of the wild Galloway men, not in armour, who claimed the right to form the van, and broke through the first line only to die beneath the spears of the second. But Prince David with his heavy cavalry scattered the force opposed to him, and stampeded the horses of the English that were held in reserve. This should have been fatal to the English, but Henry, like Rupert at Marston Moor, pursued too far, and the discipline of the Scots was broken by the cry that their King had fallen, and they fled. David fought his way to Carlisle in a series of rearguard actions, and at Carlisle was joined by Prince Henry with the remnant of his men-at-arms. It was no decisive victory for England.

In the following year (1139) David got what he wanted. His son Henry, by peaceful arrangement, received the Earldom of Northumberland, without the two strong places, Bamborough and Newcastle.

Through the anarchic weakness of Stephen’s reign, Scotland advanced in strength and civilisation despite a Celtic rising headed by a strange pretender to the rights of the MacHeths, a “brother Wimund”; but all went with the death of David’s son, Prince Henry, in 1152. Of the prince’s three sons, the eldest, Malcolm, was but ten years old; next came his brothers William (“the Lion”) and little David, Earl of Huntingdon. From this David’s daughters descended the chief claimants to the Scottish throne in 1292 — namely, Balliol, Bruce, and Comyn: the last also was descended, in the female line, from King Donald Ban, son of Malcolm Canmore.

David had done all that man might do to settle the crown on his grandson Malcolm; his success meant that standing curse of Scotland, “Woe to the kingdom whose king is a child,” — when, in a year, David died at Carlisle (May

24, 1153).

SCOTLAND BECOMES FEUDAL.

The result of the domestic policy of David was to bring all accessible territory under the social and political system of western Europe, “the Feudal System.” Its principles had been perfectly familiar to Celtic Scotland, but had rested on a body of traditional customs (as in Homeric Greece), rather than on written laws and charters signed and sealed. Among the Celts the local tribe had been, theoretically, the sole source of property in land. In proportion as they were near of kin to the recognised tribal chief, families held lands by a tenure of three generations; but if they managed to acquire abundance of oxen, which they let out to poorer men for rents in kind and labour, they were apt to turn the lands which they held only temporarily, “in possession,” into real permanent *property*. The poorer tribesmen paid rent in labour or “services,” also in supplies of food and manure.

The Celtic tenants also paid military service to their superiors. The remotest kinsmen of each lord of land, poor as they might be, were valued for their swords, and were billeted on the unfree or servile tenants, who gave them free quarters.

In the feudal system of western Europe these old traditional customs had long been modified and stereotyped by written charters. The King gave gifts of land to his kinsmen or officers, who were bound to be “faithful” (*fideles*); in return the inferior did homage, while he received protection. From grade to grade of rank and wealth each inferior did homage to and received protection from his superior, who was also his judge. In this process, what had been the Celtic tribe became the new “thanage”; the Celtic king (*righ*) of the tribe became the thane; the province or group of tribes (say Moray) became the earldom; the Celtic Mormaer of the province became the earl; and the Crown appointed *vice-comites*, sub-earls, that is sheriffs, who administered the King’s justice in the earldom.

But there were regions, notably the west Highlands and isles, where the new system penetrated slowly and with difficulty through a mountainous and almost townless land. The law, and written leases, “came slowly up that way.”

Under David, where his rule extended, society was divided broadly into three classes — Nobles, Free, Unfree. All holders of “a Knight’s fee,” or part of one, holding by *free* service, hereditarily, and by charter, constituted the *communitas* of the realm (we are to hear of the *communitas* later), and were free, noble, or gentle, — men of coat armour. The “ignoble,” “not noble,” men with no charter from the Crown, or Earl, Thane, or Church, were, if lease-holders, though not “noble,” still “free.” Beneath them were the “unfree” *nativi*, sold or given with the soil.

The old Celtic landholders were not expropriated, as a rule, except where Celtic risings, in Galloway and Moray, were put down, and the lands were left in the King’s hands. Often, when we find territorial surnames of families, “*de*” “of” this place or that, — the lords are really of Celtic blood with Celtic names; disguised under territorial titles; and finally disused. But in Galloway and Ayrshire the ruling Celtic name, Kennedy, remains Celtic, while the true Highlands of the west and northwest retained their native magnates. Thus the Anglicisation, except in very rebellious regions, was gradual. There was much less expropriation of the Celt than disguising of the Celt under new family names and regulation of the Celt under written charters and leases.

CHURCH LANDS.

David I. was, according to James VI., nearly five centuries later, “a sair saint for the Crown.” He gave Crown-lands in the southern lowlands to the religious orders with their priories and abbeys; for example, Holyrood, Melrose, Jedburgh, Kelso, and Dryburgh — centres of learning and art and of skilled agriculture. Probably the best service of the regular clergy to the State was its orderliness and attention to agriculture, for the monasteries did not, as in England, produce many careful chroniclers and historians.

Each abbey had its lands divided into baronies, captained by a lay “Church baron” to lead its levies in war. The civil centre of the barony was the great farm or grange, with its mill, for in the thirteenth century the Lowlands had water-mills which to the west Highlands were scarcely known in 1745, when the Highland husbandmen were still using the primitive hand-quern of two circular stones. Near the mill was a hamlet of some forty cottages; each head of a family had a holding of eight or nine acres and pasturage for two cows, and paid a small money rent and many arduous services to the Abbey.

The tenure of these cottars was, and under lay landlords long remained, extremely precarious; but the tenure of the “bonnet laird” (*hosbernus*) was hereditary. Below even the free cottars were the unfree serfs or *nativi*, who were handed over, with the lands they tilled, to the abbeys by benefactors: the Church was forward in emancipating these serfs; nor were lay landlords backward, for the freed man was useful as a spear-man in war.

We have only to look at the many now ruined abbeys of the Border to see the extent of civilisation under David I., and the relatively peaceful condition, then, of that region which later became the cockpit of the English wars, and the home of the raiding clans, Scotts, Elliots, and Armstrongs, Bells, Nixons, Robsons, and Croziers.

THE BURGHS.

David and his son and successor, William the Lion, introduced a stable middle and urban class by fostering, confirming, and regulating the rights, privileges, and duties of the already existing free towns. These became *burghs*, royal, seignorial, or ecclesiastical. In origin the towns may have been settlements that grew up under the shelter of a military castle. Their fairs, markets, rights of trading, internal organisation, and primitive police, were now, mainly under William the Lion, David's successor, regulated by charters; the burghers obtained the right to elect their own magistrates, and held their own burgh-courts; all was done after the English model. As the State had its "good men" (*probi homines*), who formed its recognised "community," so had the borough. Not by any means all dwellers in a burgh were free burghers; these free burghers had to do service in guarding the royal castle — later this was commuted for a payment in money. Though with power to elect their own chief magistrate, the burghers commonly took as Provost the head of some friendly local noble family, in which the office was apt to become practically hereditary. The noble was the leader and protector of the town. As to police, the burghers, each in his turn, provided men to keep watch and ward from curfew bell to cock-crow. Each ward in the town had its own elected Bailie. Each burgh had exclusive rights of trading in its area, and of taking toll on merchants coming within its *Octroi*. An association of four burghs, Berwick, Roxburgh, Edinburgh, and Stirling, was the root of the existing "Convention of Burghs."

JUSTICE.

In early societies, justice is, in many respects, an affair to be settled between the kindreds of the plaintiff, so to speak, and the defendant. A man is wounded, killed, robbed, wronged in any way; his kin retaliate on the offender and *his* kindred. The blood-feud, the taking of blood for blood, endured for centuries in Scotland after the peace of the whole realm became, under David I., “the King’s peace.” Homicides, for example, were very frequently pardoned by Royal grace, but “the pardon was of no avail unless it had been issued with the full knowledge of the kin of the slaughtered man, who otherwise retained their *legal* right of vengeance on the homicide.” They might accept pecuniary compensation, the blood-fine, or they might not, as in Homer’s time.   At all events, under David, offences became offences against the King, not merely against this or that kindred. David introduced the “Judgment of the Country” or *Visnet del Pais* for the settlement of pleas. Every free man, in his degree, was “tried by his peers,” but the old ordeal by fire and Trial by Combat or duel were not abolished. Nor did “compurgation” cease wholly till Queen Mary’s reign. A powerful man, when accused, was then attended at his trial by hosts of armed backers. Men so unlike each other as Knox, Bothwell, and Lethington took advantage of this usage. All lords had their own Courts, but murder, rape, arson, and robbery could now only be tried in the royal Courts; these were “The Four Pleas of the Crown.”

THE COURTS.

As there was no fixed capital, the King's Court, in David's time, followed the King in his annual circuits through his realm, between Dumfries and Inverness. Later, the regions of Scotia (north of Forth), Lothian, and the lawless realm of Galloway, had their Grand Justiciaries, who held the Four Pleas. The other pleas were heard in "Courts of Royalty" and by earls, bishops, abbots, down to the baron, with his "right of pit and gallows." At such courts, by a law of 1180, the Sheriff of the shire, or an agent of his, ought to be present; so that royal and central justice was extending itself over the minor local courts. But if the sheriff or his sergeant did not attend when summoned, local justice took its course.

The process initiated by David's son, William the Lion, was very slowly substituting the royal authority, the royal sheriffs of shires, juries, and witnesses, for the wild justice of revenge; and trial by ordeal, and trial by combat. But hereditary jurisdictions of nobles and gentry were not wholly abolished till after the battle of Culloden! Where Abbots held courts, their procedure, in civil cases, was based on laws sanctioned by popes and general councils. But, alas! the Abbot might give just judgment; to execute it, we know from a curious instance, was not within his power, if the offender laughed at a sentence of excommunication.

David and his successors, till the end of the thirteenth century, made Scotland a more civilised and kept it a much less disturbed country than it was to remain during the long war of Independence, while the beautiful abbeys with their churches and schools attested a high stage of art and education.

CHAPTER VI. MALCOLM THE MAIDEN.

The prominent facts in the brief reign of David’s son Malcolm the Maiden, crowned (1153) at the age of eleven, were, first, a Celtic rising by Donald, a son of Malcolm MacHeth (now a prisoner in Roxburgh Castle), and a nephew of the famous Somerled Macgillebride of Argyll. Somerled won from the Norse the Isle of Man and the Southern Hebrides; from his sons descend the great Macdonald Lords of the Isles, always the leaders of the long Celtic resistance to the central authority in Scotland. Again, Malcolm resigned to Henry II. of England the northern counties held by David I.; and died after subduing Galloway, and (on the death of Somerled, said to have been assassinated) the tribes of the isles in 1165.

WILLIAM THE LION.

Ambition to recover the northern English counties revealed itself in the overtures of William the Lion, — Malcolm's brother and successor, — for an alliance between Scotland and France. "The auld Alliance" now dawned, with rich promise of good and evil. In hopes of French aid, William invaded Northumberland, later laid siege to Carlisle, and on July 13, 1174, was surprised in a morning mist and captured at Alnwick. Scotland was now kingless; Galloway rebelled, and William, taken a captive to Falaise in Normandy, surrendered absolutely the independence of his country, which, for fifteen years, really was a fief of England. When William was allowed to go home, it was to fight the Celts of Galloway, and subdue the pretensions, in Moray, of the MacWilliams, descendants of William, son of Duncan, son of Malcolm Canmore.

During William's reign (1188) Pope Clement III. decided that the Scottish Church was subject, not to York or Canterbury, but to Rome. Seven years earlier, defending his own candidate for the see of St Andrews against the chosen of the Pope, William had been excommunicated, and his country and he had unconcernedly taken the issue of an Interdict. The Pope was too far away, and William feared him no more than Robert Bruce was to do.

By 1188, William refused to pay to Henry II. a "Saladin Tithe" for a crusade, and in 1189 he bought from Richard I., who needed money for a crusade, the abrogation of the Treaty of Falaise. He was still disturbed by Celts in Galloway and the north, he still hankered after Northumberland, but, after preparations for war, he paid a fine and drifted into friendship with King John, who entertained his little daughters royally, and knighted his son Alexander. William died on December 4, 1214. He was buried at the Abbey of Arbroath, founded by him in honour of St Thomas of Canterbury, who had worked a strange posthumous miracle in Scotland. William was succeeded by his son, Alexander II. (1214-1249).

ALEXANDER II.

Under this Prince, who successfully put down the usual northern risings, the old suit about the claims to Northumberland was finally abandoned for a trifling compensation (1237). Alexander had married Joanna, daughter of King John, and his brother-in-law, Henry III., did not press his demand for homage for Scotland. The usual Celtic pretenders to the throne were for ever crushed. Argyll became a sheriffdom, Galloway was brought into order, and Alexander, who died in the Isle of Kerrera in the bay of Oban (1249), well deserved his title of “a King of Peace.” He was buried in Melrose Abbey. In his reign the clergy were allowed to hold Provincial or Synodal Councils without the presence of a papal Legate (1225), and the Dominicans and Franciscans appeared in Scotland.

ALEXANDER III.

The term King of Peace was also applied to Alexander III., son of the second wife of Alexander II., Marie de Coucy. Alexander came to the throne (1249) at the age of eight. As a child he was taken and held (like James II., James III., James V., and James VI.) by contending factions of the nobles, Henry of England intervening. In 1251 he wedded another child, Margaret, daughter of Henry III. of England, but Henry neither forced a claim to hold Scotland during the boy's minority (his right if Scotland were his fief), nor in other respects pressed his advantage. In February 1261-1262 a girl was born to Alexander at Windsor; she was Margaret, later wife of Eric of Norway. Her daughter, on the death of Alexander III. (March 19, 1286), was the sole direct descendant in the male line.

After the birth of this heiress, Alexander won from Norway the isles of the western coast of Scotland in which Norse chieftains had long held sway. They complained to Hakon of Norway concerning raids made on them by the Earl of Ross, a Celtic potentate. Alexander's envoys to Hakon were detained, and in 1263, Hakon, with a great fleet, sailed through the islands. A storm blew most of his Armada to shore near Largs, where his men were defeated by the Scots. Hakon collected his ships, sailed north, and (December 15) died at Kirkwall. Alexander now brought the island princes, including the Lord of Man, into subjection; and by Treaty, in 1266, placed them under the Crown. In 1275 Benemund de Vicci (called Bagimont), at a council in Perth, compelled the clergy to pay a tithe for a crusade, the Pope insisting that the money should be assessed on the true value of benefices — that is, on "Bagimont's Roll," — thenceforth recognised as the basis of clerical taxation. In 1278 Edward I. laboured to extract from Alexander an acknowledgment that he was England's vassal. Edward signally failed; but a palpably false account of Alexander's homage was fabricated, and dated September 29, 1278. This was not the only forgery by which England was wont to back her claims.

A series of bereavements (1281-1283) deprived Alexander of all his children save his little grandchild, "the Maid of Norway." She was recognised by a great national assembly at Scone as heiress of the throne; and Alexander had no issue by his second wife, a daughter of the Comte de Dreux. On the night of March 19, 1285, while Alexander was riding from Edinburgh to visit his bride at Kinghorn, his horse slipped over a cliff and the rider was slain.

CHAPTER VII. ENCROACHMENTS OF EDWARD I. — WALLACE.

The Estates of Scotland met at Scone (April 11, 1286) and swore loyalty to their child queen, “the Maid of Norway,” granddaughter of Alexander III. Six guardians of the kingdom were appointed on April 11, 1286. They were the Bishops of St Andrews and Glasgow, two Comyns (Buchan and Badenoch), the Earl of Fife, and Lord James, the Steward of Scotland. No Bruce or Baliol was among the Custodians. Instantly a “band,” or covenant, was made by the Bruces, Earls of Annandale and Carrick, to support their claims (failing the Maid) to the throne; and there were acts of war on their part against another probable candidate, John Balliol. Edward (like Henry VIII. in the case of Mary Stuart) moved for the marriage of the infant queen to his son. A Treaty safeguarding all Scottish liberties as against England was made by clerical influences at Birgham (July 18, 1290), but by October 7 news of the death of the young queen reached Scotland: she had perished during her voyage from Norway. Private war now broke out between the Bruces and Balliols; and the party of Balliol appealed to Edward, through Fraser, Bishop of St Andrews, asking the English king to prevent civil war, and recommending Balliol as a person to be carefully treated. Next the Seven Earls, alleging some dim elective right, recommended Bruce, and appealed to Edward as their legal superior.

Edward came to Norham-on-Tweed in May 1291, proclaimed himself Lord Paramount, and was accepted as such by the twelve candidates for the Crown (June 3). The great nobles thus, to serve their ambitions, betrayed their country: *the communitas* (whatever that term may here mean) made a futile protest.

As lord among his vassals, Edward heard the pleadings and evidence in autumn 1292; and out of the descendants, in the female line, of David Earl of Huntingdon, youngest son of David I., he finally (November 17, 1292) preferred John Balliol (*great-grandson* of the earl through his eldest daughter) to Bruce the Old, grandfather of the famous Robert Bruce, and *grandson* of Earl David’s second daughter. The decision, according to our ideas, was just; no modern court could set it aside. But Balliol was an unpopular weakling— “an empty tabard,” the people said — and Edward at once subjected him, king as he was, to all the humiliations of a petty vassal. He was summoned into his Lord’s Court on the score of the bills of tradesmen. If Edward’s deliberate policy was to goad Balliol into resistance and then conquer Scotland absolutely, in the first of these aims he succeeded.

In 1294 Balliol was summoned, with his Peers, to attend Edward in Gascony. Balliol, by advice of a council (1295), sought a French alliance and a French marriage for his son, named Edward; he gave the Annandale lands of his enemy Robert Bruce (father of the king to be) to Comyn, Earl of Buchan. He besieged Carlisle, while Edward took Berwick, massacred the people, and captured Sir William Douglas, father of the good Lord James.

In the war which followed, Edward broke down resistance by a sanguinary victory at Dunbar, captured John Comyn of Badenoch (the Red Comyn), received from Balliol (July 7, 1296) the surrender of his royal claims, and took the oaths of the Steward of Scotland and the Bruces, father and son. He carried to Westminster the Black Rood of St Margaret and the famous stone of Scone, a relic of the early Irish dynasty of the Scots; as far north as Elgin he rode, receiving the oaths of all persons of note and influence — except William Wallace. *His* name does not appear in the list of submissions called “The Ragman’s Roll.” Between April and October 1296 the country was subjugated; the castles were garrisoned by Englishmen. But by January 1297, Edward’s governor, Warenne, Earl of Surrey, and Ormsby, his Chief Justice, found the country in an uproar, and at midsummer 1297 the levies of the northern counties of England were ordered to put down the disorders.

THE YEAR OF WALLACE.

In May the *commune* of Scotland (whatever the term may here mean) had chosen Wallace as their leader; probably this younger son of Sir Malcolm Wallace of Elderslie, in Renfrewshire, had already been distinguished for his success in skirmishes against the English, as well as for strength and courage. The popular account of his early adventures given in the poem by Blind Harry (1490?) is of no historical value. His men destroyed the English at Lanark (May 1297); he was abetted by Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow, and the Steward; but by July 7, Percy and Clifford, leading the English army, admitted the Steward, Robert Bruce (the future king), and Wishart to the English peace at Irvine in Ayrshire. But the North was up under Sir Andrew Murray, and “that thief Wallace” (to quote an English contemporary) left the siege of Dundee Castle which he was conducting to face Warenne on the north bank of the Forth. On September 11, the English, under Warenne, manœuvred vaguely at Stirling Bridge, and were caught on the flank by Wallace’s army before they could deploy on the northern side of the river. They were cut to pieces, Cressingham was slain, and Warenne galloped to Berwick, while the Scots harried Northumberland with great ferocity, which Wallace seems to have been willing but not often able to control. By the end of March 1298 he appears with Andrew Murray as Guardian of the Kingdom for the exiled Balliol. This attitude must have aroused the jealousy of the nobles, and especially of Robert Bruce, who aimed at securing the crown, and who, after several changes of side, by June 1298 was busy in Edward’s service in Galloway.

Edward then crossed the Border with a great army of perhaps 40,000 men, met the spearmen of Wallace in their serried phalanxes at Falkirk, broke the “schiltrom” or clump of spears by the arrows of his archers; slaughtered the archers of Ettrick Forest; scattered the mounted nobles, and avenged the rout of Stirling (July 22, 1298). The country remained unsubdued, but its leaders were at odds among themselves, and Wallace had retired to France, probably to ask for aid; he may also conceivably have visited Rome. The Bishop of St Andrews, Lamberton, with Bruce and the Red Comyn — deadly rivals — were Guardians of the Kingdom in 1299. But in June 1300, Edward, undeterred by remonstrances from the Pope, entered Scotland; an armistice, however, was accorded to the Holy Father, and the war, in which the Scots scored a victory at Roslin in February 1293, dragged on from summer to summer till July 1304. In these years Bruce alternately served Edward and conspired against him; the intricacies of his perfidy are deplorable.

Bruce served Edward during the siege of Stirling, then the central key of the country. On its surrender Edward admitted all men to his peace, on condition of oaths of fealty, except “Messire Williame le Waleys.” Men of the noblest Scottish names stooped to pursue the hero: he was taken near Glasgow, and handed over to Sir John Menteith, a Stewart, and son of the Earl of Menteith. As Sheriff of Dumbartonshire, Menteith had no choice but to send the hero in bonds to England. But, if Menteith desired to escape the disgrace with which tradition brands his name, he ought to have refused the English blood-price for the capture of Wallace. He made no such refusal. As an outlaw, Wallace was hanged at London; his limbs, like those of the great Montrose, were impaled on the gates of various towns.

What we really know about the chief popular hero of his country, from documents and chronicles, is fragmentary; and it is hard to find anything trustworthy in Blind Harry’s rhyming “Wallace” (1490), plagiarised as it is from Barbour’s earlier poem (1370) on Bruce. But Wallace was truly brave, disinterested, and indomitable. Alone among the leaders he never turned his coat, never swore and broke oaths to Edward. He arises from obscurity, like Jeanne d’Arc; like her, he is greatly victorious; like her, he awakens a whole people; like her, he is deserted, and is unlawfully put to death; while his limbs, like her ashes, are scattered by the English. The ravens had not pyked his bones bare before the Scots were up again for freedom.

CHAPTER VIII. BRUCE AND THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE.

The position towards France of Edward I. made it really more desirable for him that Scotland should be independent and friendly, than half subdued and hostile to his rule. While she was hostile, England, in attacking France, always left an enemy in her rear. But Edward supposed that by clemency to all the Scottish leaders except Wallace, by giving them great appointments and trusting them fully, and by calling them to his Parliament in London, he could combine England and Scotland in affectionate union. He repaired the ruins of war in Scotland; he began to study her laws and customs; he hastily ran up for her a new constitution, and appointed his nephew, John of Brittany, as governor. But he had overlooked two facts: the Scottish clergy, from the highest to the lowest, were irreconcilably opposed to union with England; and the greatest and most warlike of the Scottish nobles, if not patriotic, were fickle and insatiably ambitious. It is hard to reckon how often Robert Bruce had turned his coat, and how often the Bishop of St Andrews had taken the oath to Edward. Both men were in Edward's favour in June 1304, but in that month they made against him a treasonable secret covenant. Through 1305 Bruce prospered in Edward's service, on February 10, 1306, Edward was conferring on him a new favour, little guessing that Bruce, after some negotiation with his old rival, the Red Comyn, had slain him (an uncle of his was also butchered) before the high altar of the Church of the Franciscans in Dumfries. Apparently Bruce had tried to enlist Comyn in his conspiracy, and had found him recalcitrant, or feared that he would be treacherous (February 10, 1306).

The sacrilegious homicide made it impossible for Bruce again to waver. He could not hope for pardon; he must be victorious or share the fate of Wallace. He summoned his adherents, including young James Douglas, received the support of the Bishops of St Andrews and Glasgow, hurried to Scone, and there was hastily crowned with a slight coronet, in the presence of but two earls and three bishops.

Edward made vast warlike preparations and forswore leniency, while Bruce, under papal excommunication, which he slighted, collected a few nobles, such as Lennox, Atholl, Errol, and a brother of the chief of the Frazers. Other chiefs, kinsmen of the slain Comyn, among them Macdowal of Argyll, banded to avenge the victim; Bruce's little force was defeated at Methven Wood, near

Perth, by Aymer de Valence, and prisoners of all ranks were hanged as traitors, while two bishops were placed in irons. Bruce took to the heather, pursued by the Macdowals no less than by the English; his queen was captured, his brother Nigel was executed; he cut his way to the wild west coast, aided only by Sir Nial Campbell of Loch Awe, who thus founded the fortune of his house, and by the Macdonalds, under Angus Og of Islay. He wintered in the isle of Rathlin (some think he even went to Norway), and in spring, after surprising the English garrison in his own castle of Turnberry, he roamed, now lonely, now with a mobile little force, in Galloway, always evading and sometimes defeating his English pursuers. At Loch Trool and at London Hill (Drumclog) he dealt them heavy blows, while on June 7, 1307, his great enemy Edward died at Borough-on-Sands, leaving the crown and the war to the weakling Edward II.

Fortune had turned. We cannot follow Bruce through his campaign in the north, where he ruined the country of the Comyns (1308), and through the victories in Galloway of his hard-fighting brother Edward. With enemies on every side, Bruce took them in detail; early in March 1309 he routed the Macdowals at the west end of the Pass of Brander. Edward II. was involved in disputes with his own barons, and Bruce was recognised by his country’s Church in 1310 and aided by his great lieutenants, Sir James Douglas and Thomas Randolph, Earl of Murray. By August 1311 Bruce was carrying the war into England, sacking Durham and Chester, failing at Carlisle, but in January 1313, capturing Perth. In summer, Edward Bruce, in the spirit of chivalry, gave to Stirling Castle (Randolph had taken Edinburgh Castle) a set day, Midsummer Day 1314, to be relieved or to surrender; and Bruce kept tryst with Edward II. and his English and Irish levies, and all his adventurous chivalry from France, Hainault, Bretagne, Gascony, and Aquitaine. All the world knows the story of the first battle, the Scottish Quatre Bras; the success of Randolph on the right; the slaying of Bohun when Bruce broke his battle-axe. Next day Bruce’s position was strong; beneath the towers of Stirling the Bannockburn protected his front; morasses only to be crossed by narrow paths impeded the English advance. Edward Bruce commanded the right wing; Randolph the centre; Douglas and the Steward the left; Bruce the reserve, the Islesmen. His strength lay in his spearmen’s “dark impenetrable wood”; his archers were ill-trained; of horse he had but a handful under Keith, the Marischal. But the heavy English cavalry could not break the squares of spears; Keith cut up the archers of England; the main body could not deploy, and the slow, relentless advance of the whole Scottish line covered the plain with the dying and the flying. A panic arose, caused by the sight of an approaching cloud of camp-followers on the Gillie’s hill; Edward fled, and hundreds of noble prisoners, with all the waggons and supplies of England, fell into the hands of the Scots. In eight strenuous years the generalship of Bruce and his war-leaders, the resolution of the people, hardened by the cruelties of Edward, the sermons of the clergy, and the utter incompetence of Edward II., had redeemed a desperate chance. From a fief of England, Scotland had become an indomitable nation.

LATER DAYS OF BRUCE.

Bruce continued to prosper, despite an ill-advised attempt to win Ireland, in which Edward Bruce fell (1318.) This left the succession, if Bruce had no male issue, to the children of his daughter, Marjory, and her husband, the Steward. In 1318 Scotland recovered Berwick, in 1319 routed the English at Mytton-on-Swale. In a Parliament at Aberbrothock (April 6, 1320) the Scots announced to the Pope, who had been interfering, that, while a hundred of them survive, they will never yield to England. In October 1322 Bruce utterly routed the English at Byland Abbey, in the heart of Yorkshire, and chased Edward II. into York. In March 1324 a son was born to Bruce named David; on May 4, 1328, by the Treaty of Northampton, the independence of Scotland was recognised. In July the infant David married Joanna, daughter of Edward II.

On June 7, 1329, Bruce died and was buried at Dunfermline; his heart, by his order, was carried by Douglas towards the Holy Land, and when Douglas fell in a battle with the Moors in Spain, the heart was brought back by Sir Simon Lockhart of the Lee. The later career of Bruce, after he had been excommunicated, is that of the foremost knight and most sagacious man of action who ever wore the crown of Scotland. The staunchness with which the clergy and estates disregarded papal fulminations (indeed under William the Lion they had treated an interdict as waste-paper) indicated a kind of protestant tendency to independence of the Holy See.

Bruce’s inclusion of representatives of the Burghs in the first regular Scottish Parliament (at Cambuskenneth in 1326) was a great step forward in the constitutional existence of the country. The king, in Scotland, was expected to “live of his own,” but in 1326 the expenses of the war with England compelled Bruce to seek permission for taxation.

CHAPTER IX. DECADENCE AND DISASTERS — REIGN OF DAVID II.

The heroic generation of Scotland was passing off the stage. The King was a child. The forfeiture by Bruce of the lands of hostile or treacherous lords, and his bestowal of the estates on his partisans, had made the disinherited nobles the enemies of Scotland, and had fed too full the House of Douglas. As the star of Scotland was thus clouded — she had no strong man for a King during the next ninety years — the sun of England rose red and glorious under a warrior like Edward III. The Scottish nobles in many cases ceased to be true to their proud boast that they would never submit to England. A very brief summary of the wretched reign of David II. must here suffice.

First, the son of John Balliol, Edward, went to the English Court, and thither thronged the disinherited and forfeited lords, arranging a raid to recover their lands. Edward III., of course, connived at their preparations.

After Randolph's death (July 20, 1332), when Mar — a sister's son of Bruce — was Regent, the disinherited lords, under Balliol, invaded Scotland, and Mar, with young Randolph, Menteith, and a bastard of Bruce, "Robert of Carrick," leading a very great host, fell under the shafts of the English archers of Umfraville, Wake, the English Earl of Atholl, Talbot, Ferrers, and Zouche, at Dupplin, on the Earn (August 12, 1332). Rolled up by arrows loosed on the flanks of their charging columns, they fell, and their dead bodies lay in heaps as tall as a lance.

On September 24, Edward Balliol was crowned King at Scone. Later, Andrew Murray, perhaps a son of the Murray who had been Wallace's companion-in-arms, was taken, and Balliol acknowledged Edward III. as his liege-lord at Roxburgh. In December the second son of Randolph, with Archibald, the new Regent, brother of the great Black Douglas, drove Balliol, flying in his shirt, from Annan across the Border. He returned, and was opposed by this Archibald Douglas, called Tineman, the Unlucky, and on July 19, 1333, Tineman suffered, at Halidon Hill, near Berwick, a defeat as terrible as Flodden; Berwick, too, was lost, practically for ever, Tineman fell, and Sir William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale, was a prisoner. These Scots defeats were always due to rash frontal attacks on strong positions, the assailants passing between lines of English bowmen who loosed into their flanks. The boy king, David, was carried to France (1334) for safety, while Balliol delivered to

Edward Berwick and the chief southern counties, including that of Edinburgh, with their castles.

There followed internal wars between Balliol's partisans, while the patriots were led by young Randolph, by the young Steward, by Sir Andrew Murray, and the wavering and cruel Douglas, called the Knight of Liddesdale, now returned from captivity. In the desperate state of things, with Balliol and Edward ravaging Scotland at will, none showed more resolution than Bruce's sister, who held Kildrummie Castle; and Randolph's daughter, "Black Agnes," who commanded that of Dunbar. By vast gifts Balliol won over John, Lord of the Isles. The Celts turned to the English party; Edward III. harried the province of Moray, but, in 1337, he began to undo his successes by formally claiming the crown of France: France and Scotland together could always throw off the English yoke.

Thus diverted from Scotland, Edward lost strength there while he warred with Scotland's ally: in 1341 the Douglas, Knight of Liddesdale, recovered Edinburgh Castle by a romantic surprise. But David returned home in 1341, a boy of eighteen, full of the foibles of chivalry, rash, sensual, extravagant, who at once gave deadly offence to the Knight of Liddesdale by preferring to him, as sheriff of Teviotdale, the brave Sir Alexander Ramsay, who had driven the English from the siege of Dunbar Castle. Douglas threw Ramsay into Hermitage Castle in Liddesdale and starved him to death.

In 1343 the Knight began to intrigue traitorously with Edward III.; after a truce, David led his whole force into England, where his rash chivalry caused his utter defeat at Neville's Cross, near Durham (October 17, 1346). He was taken, as was the Bishop of St Andrews; his ransom became the central question between England and Scotland. In 1353 Douglas, Knight of Liddesdale, was slain at Williamshope on Yarrow by his godson, William, Lord Douglas: the fact is commemorated in a fragment of perhaps our oldest narrative Border ballad. French men-at-arms now helped the Scots to recover Berwick, merely to lose it again in 1356; in 1357 David was set free: his ransom, 100,000 merks, was to be paid by instalment. The country was heavily taxed, but the full sum was never paid. Meanwhile the Steward had been Regent; between him, the heir of the Crown failing issue to David, and the King, jealousies arose. David was suspected of betraying the kingdom to England; in October 1363 he and the Earl of Douglas visited London and made a treaty adopting a son of Edward as king on David's demise, and on his ransom being remitted, but in March 1364 his Estates rejected the proposal, to which Douglas had assented. Till 1369 all was poverty and internal disunion; the feud, to be so often renewed, of the Douglas and the Steward raged. David was made contemptible by a second marriage with Margaret Logie, but the war with France drove Edward III. to accept a fourteen years' truce with Scotland. On February 22, 1371, David died in Edinburgh Castle, being succeeded, without opposition, by the Steward, Robert II., son of Walter, and of Marjorie, daughter of Robert Bruce. This Robert II., somewhat outworn by many years of honourable war in his country's cause, and the father of a family, by Elizabeth Mure of Rowallan, which could hardly be rendered legitimate by any number of Papal dispensations, *was the first of the Royal Stewart line*. In him a cadet branch of the English FitzAlans, themselves of a very ancient Breton stock, blossomed into Royalty.

PARLIAMENT AND THE CROWN.

With the coming of a dynasty which endured for three centuries, we must sketch the relations, in Scotland, of Crown and Parliament till the days of the Covenant and the Revolution of 1688. Scotland had but little of the constitutional evolution so conspicuous in the history of England. The reason is that while the English kings, with their fiefs and wars in France, had constantly to be asking their parliaments for money, and while Parliament first exacted the redress of grievances, in Scotland the king was expected "to live of his own" on the revenue of crown-lands, rents, feudal aids, fines exacted in Courts of Law, and duties on merchandise. No "tenths" or "fifteenths" were exacted from clergy and people. There could be no "constitutional resistance" when the Crown made no unconstitutional demands.

In Scotland the germ of Parliament is the King's court of vassals of the Crown. To the assemblies, held now in one place, now in another, would usually come the vassals of the district, with such officers of state as the Chancellor, the Chamberlain, the Steward, the Constable or Commander-in-Chief, the Justiciar, and the Marischal, and such Bishops, Abbots, Priors, Earls, Barons, and tenants-in-chief as chose to attend. At these meetings public business was done, charters were granted, and statutes were passed; assent was made to such feudal aids as money for the king's ransom in the case of William the Lion. In 1295 the seals of six Royal burghs are appended to the record of a negotiation; in 1326 burgesses, as we saw, were consulted by Bruce on questions of finance.

The misfortunes and extravagance of David II. had to be paid for, and Parliament interfered with the Royal prerogative in coinage and currency, directed the administration of justice, dictated terms of peace with England, called to account even hereditary officers of the Crown (such as the Steward, Constable, and Marischal), controlled the King's expenditure (or tried to do so), and denounced the execution of Royal warrants against the Statutes and common form of law. They summarily rejected David's attempt to alter the succession of the Crown.

At the same time, as attendance of multitudes during protracted Parliaments was irksome and expensive, arose the habit of intrusting business to a mere "Committee of Articles," later "The Lords of the Articles," selected in varying ways from the Three Estates — Spiritual, Noble, and Commons. These

Committees saved the members of Parliament from the trouble and expense of attendance, but obviously tended to become an abuse, being selected and packed to carry out the designs of the Crown or of the party of nobles in power. All members, of whatever Estate, sat together in the same chamber. There were no elected Knights of the Shires, no representative system.

The reign of David II. saw two Scottish authors or three, whose works are extant. Barbour wrote the chivalrous rhymed epic-chronicle ‘The Brus’; Wyntoun, an unpoetic rhymed “cronykil”; and “Hucheoun of the Awle Ryal” produced works of more genius, if all that he is credited with be his own.

CHAPTER X. EARLY STEWART KINGS: ROBERT II. (1371-1390).

Robert II. was crowned at Scone on March 26, 1371. He was elderly, jovial, pacific, and had little to fear from England when the deaths of Edward III. and the Black Prince left the crown to the infant Richard II. There was fighting against isolated English castles within the Scottish border, to amuse the warlike Douglases and Percies, and there were truces, irregular and ill kept. In 1384 great English and Scottish raids were made, and gentlemen of France, who came over for sport, were scurvily entertained, and (1385) saw more plundering than honest fighting under James, Earl of Douglas, who merely showed them an army that, under Richard II., burned Melrose Abbey and fired Edinburgh, Perth, and Dundee. Edinburgh was a town of 400 houses. Richard insisted that not more than a third of his huge force should be English Borderers, who had no idea of hitting their Scottish neighbours, fathers-in-law and brothers-in-law, too hard. The one famous fight, that of Otterburn (August 15, 1388), was a great and joyous passage of arms by moonlight. The Douglas fell, the Percy was led captive away; the survivors gained advancement in renown and the hearty applause of the chivalrous chronicler, Froissart. The oldest ballads extant on this affair were current in 1550, and show traces of the reading of Froissart and the English chroniclers.

In 1390 died Robert II. Only his youth was glorious. The reign of his son, Robert III. (crowned August 14, 1390), was that of a weakling who let power fall into the hands of his brother, the Duke of Albany, or his son David, Duke of Rothesay, who held the reins after the Parliament (a Parliament that bitterly blamed the Government) of January 1399. (With these two princes the title of Duke first appears in Scotland.) The follies of young David alienated all: he broke his betrothal to the daughter of the Earl of March; March retired to England, becoming the man of Henry IV.; and though Rothesay wedded the daughter of the Earl of Douglas, he was arrested by Albany and Douglas and was starved to death (or died of dysentery) in Falkland Castle (1402). The Highlanders had been in anarchy throughout the reign; their blood was let in the great clan duel of thirty against thirty, on the Inch of Perth, in 1396. Probably clans Cameron and Chattan were the combatants.

On Rothesay’s death Albany was Governor, while Douglas was taken prisoner in the great Border defeat of Homildon Hill, not far from Flodden. But then

(1403) came the alliance of Douglas with Percy; Percy's quarrel with Henry IV. and their defeat; and Hotspur's death, Douglas's capture at Shrewsbury. Between Shakespeare, in "Henry IV.," and Scott, in 'The Fair Maid of Perth,' the most notable events in the reign of Robert III. are immortalised. The King's last misfortune was the capture by the English at sea, on the way to France, of his son James in February-March 1406. On April 4, 1406, Robert went to his rest, one of the most unhappy of the fated princes of his line.

THE REGENCY OF ALBANY.

The Regency of Albany, uncle of the captured James, lasted for fourteen years, ending with his death in 1420. He occasionally negotiated for his king's release, but more successfully for that of his son Murdoch. That James suspected Albany's ambition, and was irritated by his conduct, appears in his letters, written in Scots, to Albany and to Douglas, released in 1408, and now free in Scotland. The letters are of 1416.

The most important points to note during James's English captivity are the lawlessness and oppression which prevailed in Scotland, and the beginning of Lollard heresies, nascent Protestantism, nascent Socialism, even "free love." The Parliament of 1399, which had inveighed against the laxity of Government under Robert II., also demanded the extirpation of heresies, in accordance with the Coronation Oath. One Resby, a heretical English priest, was arraigned and burned at Perth in 1407, under Laurence of Lindores, the Dominican Inquisitor into heresies, who himself was active in promoting Scotland's oldest University, St Andrews. The foundation was by Henry Wardlaw, Bishop of St Andrews, by virtue of a bull from the anti-pope Benedict XIII., of February 1414. Lollard ideas were not suppressed; the chronicler, Bower, speaks of their existence in 1445; they sprang from envy of the wealth, and indignation against the corruptions of the clergy, and the embers of Lollardism in Kyle were not cold when, under James V., the flame of the Reformation was rekindled.

The Celtic North, never quiet, made its last united effort in 1411, when Donald, Lord of the Isles, who was in touch with the English Government, claimed the earldom of Ross, in right of his wife, as against the Earl of Buchan, a son of Albany; mustered all the wild clans of the west and the isles at Ardtornish Castle on the Sound of Mull; marched through Ross to Dingwall; defeated the great northern clan of Mackay, and was hurrying to sack Aberdeen when he was met by Alexander Stewart, Earl of Mar, the gentry of the northern Lowlands, mounted knights, and the burgesses of the towns, some eighteen miles from Aberdeen, at Harlaw. There was a pitched battle with great slaughter, but the Celts had no cavalry, and the end was that Donald withdrew to his fastnesses. The event is commemorated by an old literary ballad, and in Elspeth's ballad in Scott's novel, 'The Antiquary.'

In the year of Albany's death, at a great age (1420), in compliance with the prayer of Charles VII. of France, the Earl of Buchan, Archibald, Douglas's eldest son, and Sir John Stewart of Derneley, led a force of some 7000 to 10,000 men to war for France. Henry V. then compelled the captive James I. to join him, and (1421) at Baugé Bridge the Scots, with the famed La Hire, routed the army of Henry's brother, the Duke of Clarence, who, with 2000 of the English, fell in the action. The victory was fruitless; at Crevant (1423) the Scots were defeated; at Verneuil (1424) they were almost exterminated. None the less the remnant, with fresh levies, continued to war for their old ally, and, under Sir Hugh Kennedy and others, suffered at Rouvray (February 1429), and were with the victorious French at Orleans (May 1429) under the leadership of Jeanne d'Arc. The combination of Scots and French, at the last push, always saved the independence of both kingdoms.

The character of Albany, who, under his father, Robert III., and during the captivity of James I., ruled Scotland so long, is enigmatic. He is well spoken of by the contemporary Wyntoun, author of a chronicle in rhyme; and in the Latin of Wyntoun's continuator, Bower. He kept on friendly terms with the Douglases, he was popular in so far as he was averse to imposing taxation; and perhaps the anarchy and oppression which preceded the return of James I. to Scotland were due not to the weakness of Albany but to that of his son and successor, Murdoch, and to the iniquities of Murdoch's sons.

The death of Henry V. (1422) and the ambition of Cardinal Beaufort, determined to wed his niece Jane Beaufort to a crowned king, may have been among the motives which led the English Government (their own king, Henry VI., being a child) to set free the royal captive (1424).

CHAPTER XI. JAMES I.

On March 28, 1424, James I. was released, on a ransom of £40,000, and after his marriage with Jane Beaufort, grand-daughter of John of Gaunt, son of Edward III. The story of their wooing (of course in the allegorical manner of the age, and with poetical conventions in place of actual details) is told in James's poem, "The King's Quair," a beautiful composition in the school of Chaucer, of which literary scepticism has vainly tried to rob the royal author. James was the ablest and not the most scrupulous of the Stuarts. His captivity had given him an English education, a belief in order, and in English parliamentary methods, and a fiery determination to put down the oppression of the nobles. "If God gives me but a dog's life," he said, "I will make the key keep the castle and the bracken bush keep the cow." Before his first Parliament, in May 1424, James arrested Murdoch's eldest son, Sir Walter Fleming of Cumbernauld, and the younger Boyd of Kilmarnock. The Parliament left a Committee of the Estates ("The Lords of the Articles") to carry out the royal policy. Taxes for the payment of James's ransom were imposed; to impose them was easy, "passive resistance" was easier; the money was never paid, and James's noble hostages languished in England. He next arrested the old Earl of Lennox, and Sir Robert Graham of the Kincardine family, later his murderer.

These were causes of unpopularity. During a new Parliament (1425) James imprisoned the new Duke of Albany (Murdoch) and his son Alexander, and seized their castles. The Albanys and Lennox were executed; their estates were forfeited; but resentment dogged a king who was too fierce and too hurried a reformer, perhaps too cruel an avenger of his own wrongs.

Our knowledge of the events of his reign is vague; but a king of Scotland could never, with safety, treat any of his nobles as criminals; the whole order was concerned to prevent or avenge severity of justice.

At a Parliament in Inverness (1427) he seized the greatest of the Highland magnates whom he had summoned; they were hanged or imprisoned, and, after resistance, Alastair, the new Lord of the Isles, did penance at Holyrood, before being immured in Tantallon Castle. His cousin, Donald Balloch, defeated Mar at Inverlochy (where Montrose later routed Argyll) (1431). Not long afterwards Donald fled to Ireland, whence a head, said to be his, was sent to James, but Donald lived to fight another day.

Without a standing army to garrison the inaccessible Highlands, the Crown could neither preserve peace in those regions nor promote justice. The system of violent and perfidious punishments merely threw the Celts into the arms of England.

Execution itself was less terrible to the nobles than the forfeiting of their lands and the disinheriting of their families. None the less, James (1425-1427) seized the lands of the late Earl of Lennox, made Malise Graham surrender the earldom of Strathearn in exchange for the barren title of Earl of Menteith, and sent the sufferer as a hostage into England. The Earl of March, son of the Earl who, under Robert III., had gone over to the English cause, was imprisoned and stripped of his ancient domains on the Eastern Border; and James, disinheriting Lord Erskine, annexed the earldom of Mar to the Crown.

In a Parliament at Perth (March 1428) James permitted the minor barons and freeholders to abstain from these costly assemblies on the condition of sending two “wise men” to represent each sheriffdom: a Speaker was to be elected, and the shires were to pay the expenses of the wise men. But the measure was unpopular, and in practice lapsed. Excellent laws were passed, but were not enforced.

In July-November 1428 a marriage was arranged between Margaret the infant daughter of James and the son (later Louis XI.) of the still uncrowned Dauphin, Charles VIII. of France. Charles announced to his subjects early in 1429 that an army of 6000 Scots was to land in France; that James himself, if necessary, would follow; but Jeanne d’Arc declared that there was no help from Scotland, none save from God and herself. She was right: no sooner had she won her victories at Orleans, Jargeau, Pathay, and elsewhere (May-June 1429) than James made a truce with England which enabled Cardinal Beaufort to throw his large force of anti-Hussite crusaders into France, where they secured Normandy. The Scots in France, nevertheless, fought under the Maid in her last successful action, at Lagny (April 1430).

An heir to the Crown, James, was born in October 1430, while the King was at strife with the Pope, and asserting for King and Parliament power over the Provincial Councils of the Church. An interdict was threatened, James menaced the rich and lax religious orders with secular reformation; settled the Carthusians at Perth, to show an example of holy living; and pursued his severities against many of his nobles.

His treatment of the Earl of Strathearn (despoiled and sent as a hostage to England) aroused the wrath of the Earl’s uncle, Robert Graham, who bearded James in Parliament, was confiscated, fled across the Highland line, and, on February 20, 1437, aided, it is said by the old Earl of Atholl (a grandson of Robert II. by his second marriage), led a force against the King in the monastery of the Black Friars at Perth, surprised him, and butchered him. The energy of his Queen brought the murderers, and Atholl himself, to die under unspeakable torments.

James’s reforms were hurried, violent, and, as a rule, incapable of surviving the anarchy of his son’s minority: his new Court of Session, sitting in judgment thrice a-year, was his most fortunate innovation.

CHAPTER XII. JAMES II.

Scone, with its sacred stone, being so near Perth and the Highlands, was perilous, and the coronation of James II. was therefore held at Holyrood (March 25, 1437). The child, who was but seven years of age, was bandied to and fro like a shuttlecock between rival adventurers. The Earl of Douglas (Archibald, fifth Earl, died 1439) took no leading part in the strife of factions: one of them led by Sir William Crichton, who held the important post of Commander of Edinburgh Castle; the other by Sir Alexander Livingstone of Callendar.

The great old Houses had been shaken by the severities of James I., at least for the time. In a Government of factions influenced by private greed, there was no important difference in policy, and we need not follow the transference of the royal person from Crichton in Edinburgh to Livingstone in Stirling Castle; the coalitions between these worthies, the battles between the Boyds of Kilmarnock and the Stewarts, who had to avenge Stewart of Derneley, Constable of the Scottish contingent in France, who was slain by Sir Thomas Boyd. The queen-mother married Sir James Stewart, the Black Knight of Lorne, and (August 3, 1439) she was captured by Livingstone, while her husband, in the mysterious words of the chronicler, was “put in a pitt and bollit.” In a month Jane Beaufort gave Livingstone an amnesty; he, not the Stewart family, not the queen-mother, now held James.

To all this the new young Earl of Douglas, a boy of eighteen, tacitly assented. He was the most powerful and wealthiest subject in Scotland; in France he was Duc de Touraine; he was descended in lawful wedlock from Robert II.; “he micht ha’e been the king,” as the ballad says of the bonny Earl of Moray. But he held proudly aloof from both Livingstone and Crichton, who were stealing the king alternately: they then combined, invited Douglas to Edinburgh Castle, with his brother David, and served up the ominous bull’s head at that “black dinner” recorded in a ballad fragment.   They decapitated the two Douglas boys; the earldom fell to their granduncle, James the Fat, and presently, on *his* death (1443), to young William Douglas, after which “bands,” or illegal covenants, between the various leaders of factions, led to private wars of shifting fortune. Kennedy, Bishop of St Andrews, opposed the Douglas party, now strong both in lands newly acquired, till (July 3, 1449) James married Mary of Gueldres, imprisoned the Livingstones, and relied on the Bishop of St Andrews and the clergy. While Douglas was visiting Rome in 1450, the Livingstones had been forfeited, and Crichton became Chancellor.

FALL OF THE BLACK DOUGLASES.

The Douglases, through a royal marriage of an ancestor to a daughter of the more legitimate marriage of Robert II., had a kind of claim to the throne which they never put forward. The country was thus spared dynastic wars, like those of the White and Red Roses in England; but, none the less, the Douglases were too rich and powerful for subjects.

The Earl at the moment held Galloway and Annandale, two of his brothers were Earls of Moray and Ormond; in October 1448, Ormond had distinguished himself by defeating and taking Percy, urging a raid into Scotland, at a bloody battle on the Water of Sark, near Gretna.

During the Earl of Douglas's absence in Rome, James had put down some of his unruly retainers, and even after his return (1451) had persevered in this course. Later in the year Douglas resigned, and received back his lands, a not uncommon formula showing submission on the vassal's favour on the lord's part, as when Charles VII., at the request of Jeanne d'Arc, made this resignation to God!

Douglas, however, was suspected of intriguing with England and with the Lord of the Isles, while he had a secret covenant or "band" with the Earls of Crawford and Ross. If all this were true, he was planning a most dangerous enterprise.

He was invited to Stirling to meet the king under a safe-conduct, and there (February 22, 1452) was dirked by his king at the sacred table of hospitality.

Whether this crime was premeditated or merely passionate is unknown, as in the case of Bruce's murder of the Red Comyn before the high altar. Parliament absolved James on slender grounds. James, the brother of the slain earl, publicly defied his king, gave his allegiance to Henry VI. of England, withdrew it, intrigued, and, after his brothers had been routed at Arkinholm, near Langholm (May 18, 1455), fled to England. His House was proclaimed traitorous; their wide lands in southern and south-western Scotland were forfeited and redistributed, the Scotts of Buccleuch profiting largely in the long-run. The leader of the Royal forces at Arkinholm, near Langholm, was another Douglas, one of "the Red Douglases," the Earl of Angus; and till the execution of the Earl of Morton, under James VI., the Red Douglases were as powerful, turbulent, and treacherous as the Black Douglases had been in their day. When attacked and defeated, these Douglases, red or black, always allied themselves with England

and with the Lords of the Isles, the hereditary foes of the royal authority.

Meanwhile Edward IV. wrote of the Scots as “his rebels of Scotland,” and in the alternations of fortune between the Houses of York and Lancaster, James held with Henry VI. When Henry was defeated and taken at Northampton (July 10, 1460), James besieged Roxburgh Castle, an English hold on the Border, and (August 3, 1460) was slain by the explosion of a great bombard.

James was but thirty years of age at his death. By the dagger, by the law, and by the aid of the Red Douglases, he had ruined his most powerful nobles — and his own reputation. His early training, like that of James VI., was received while he was in the hands of the most treacherous, bloody, and unscrupulous of mankind; later, he met them with their own weapons. The foundation of the University of Glasgow (1451), and the building and endowment of St Salvator’s College in St Andrews, by Bishop Kennedy, are the most permanent proofs of advancing culture in the reign of James.

Many laws of excellent tendency, including sumptuary laws, which suggest the existence of unexpected wealth and luxury, were passed; but such laws were never firmly and regularly enforced. By one rule, which does seem to have been carried out, no poisons were to be imported: Scottish chemical science was incapable of manufacturing them. Much later, under James VI., we find a parcel of arsenic, to be used for political purposes, successfully stopped at Leith.

CHAPTER XIII. JAMES III.

James II. left three sons; the eldest, James III., aged nine, was crowned at Kelso (August 10, 1460); his brothers, bearing the titles of Albany and Mar, were not to be his supports. His mother, Mary of Gueldres, had the charge of the boys, and, as she was won over by her uncle, Philip of Burgundy, to the cause of the House of York, while Kennedy and the Earl of Angus stood for the House of Lancaster, there was strife between them and the queen-mother and nobles. Kennedy relied on France (Louis XL), and his opponents on England.

The battle of Towton (March 30, 1461) drove Henry VI. and his queen across the Border, where Kennedy entertained the melancholy exile in the Castle of St Andrews. The grateful Henry restored Berwick to the Scots, who could not hold it long. In June 1461, while the Scots were failing to take Carlisle, Edward IV. was crowned, and sent his adherent, the exiled Earl of Douglas, to treat for an alliance with the Celts, under John, Lord of the Isles, and that Donald Balloch who was falsely believed to have long before been slain in Ireland.

It is curious to think of the Lord of the Isles dealing as an independent prince, through a renegade Douglas, with the English king. A treaty was made at John's Castle of Ardtornish — now a shell of crumbling stone on the sea-shore of the Morvern side of the Sound of Mull — with the English monarch at Westminster. The Highland chiefs promise allegiance to Edward, and, if successful, the Celts are to recover the ancient kingdom from Caithness to the Forth, while Douglas is to be all-powerful from the Forth to the Border!

But other intrigues prevailed. The queen-mother and her son, in the most friendly manner, met the kingmaker Warwick at Dumfries, and again at Carlisle, and Douglas was disgraced by Edward, though restored to favour when Bishop Kennedy declined to treat with Edward's commissioners. The Treaty of England with Douglas and the Celts was then ratified; but Douglas, advancing in front of Edward's army to the Border, met old Bishop Kennedy in helmet and corslet, and was defeated. Louis XI., however, now deserted the Red for the White Rose. Kennedy followed his example; and peace was made between England and Scotland in October 1464. Kennedy died in the summer of 1465.

There followed the usual struggles between confederations of the nobles, and, in July 1466, James was seized, being then aged fourteen, by the party of the Boyds, Flemings, and Kennedys, aided by Hepburn of Hailes (ancestor of the turbulent Earl of Bothwell), and by the head of the Border House of Cessford, Andrew Ker.

It was a repetition of the struggles of Livingstone and Crichton, and now the great Border lairds begin to take their place in history. Boyd made himself Governor to the king, his son married the king's eldest sister, Mary, and became Earl of Arran. But brief was the triumph of the Boyds. In 1469 James married Margaret of Norway; Orkney and Shetland were her dower; but while Arran negotiated the affair abroad, at home the fall of his house was arranged. Boyd fled the country; the king's sister, divorced from young Arran, married the Lord Hamilton; and his family, who were Lords of Cadzow under Robert Bruce, and had been allies of the Black Douglases till their fall, became the nearest heirs of the royal Stewarts, if that family were extinct. The Hamiltons, the wealthiest house in Scotland, never produced a man of great ability, but their nearness to the throne and their ambition were storm-centres in the time of Mary Stuart and James VI., and even as late as the Union in 1707.

The fortunes of a nephew of Bishop Kennedy, Patrick Graham, Kennedy's successor as Bishop of St Andrews, now perplex the historian. Graham dealt for himself with the Pope, obtained the rank of Archbishop for the Bishop of St Andrews (1472), and thus offended the king and country, always jealous of interference from Rome. But he was reported on as more or less insane by a Papal Nuncio, and was deposed. Had he been defending (as used to be said) the right of election of Bishop for the Canons against the greed of the nobles, the Nuncio might not have taken an unfavourable view of his intellect. In any case, whether the clergy, backed by Rome, elected their bishops, or whether the king and nobles made their profit out of the Church appointments, jobbery was the universal rule. Ecclesiastical corruption and, as a rule, ignorance, were attaining their lowest level. By 1476 the Lord of the Isles, the Celtic ally of Edward IV., was reduced by Argyll, Huntly, and Crawford, and lost the sheriffdom of Inverness, and the earldom of Ross, which was attached to the Crown (1476). His treaty of Ardtornish had come to light. But his bastard, Angus Og, filled the north and west with fire and tumult from Ross to Tobermory (1480-1490), while James's devotion to the arts — a thing intolerable — and to the society of low-born favourites, especially Thomas Cockburn, "a stone-cutter," prepared the sorrows and the end of his reign.

The intrigues which follow, and the truth about the character of James, are exceedingly obscure. We have no Scottish chronicle written at the time; the later histories, by Ferrerius, an Italian, and, much later, by Queen Mary's Bishop Lesley, and by George Buchanan, are full of rumours and contradictions, while the State Papers and Treaties of England merely prove the extreme treachery of James's brother Albany, and no evidence tells us how James contrived to get the better of the traitor. James’s brothers Albany and Mar were popular; were good horsemen, men of their hands, and Cochrane is accused of persuading James to arrest Mar on a charge of treason and black magic. Many witches are said to have been burned: perhaps the only such case before the Reformation. However it fell out — all is obscure — Mar died in prison; while Albany, also a prisoner on charges of treasonable intrigues with the inveterate Earl of Douglas, in the English interest, escaped to France.

Douglas (1482) brought him to England, where he swore allegiance to Edward IV., under whom, like Edward Balliol, he would hold Scotland if crowned. He was advancing on the Border with Edward’s support and with the Duke of Gloucester (Richard III.), and James had gone to Lauder to encounter him, when the Earl of Angus headed a conspiracy of nobles, such as Huntly, Lennox, and Buchan, seized Cochrane and other favourites of James, and hanged them over Lauder Bridge. The most tangible grievance was the increasing debasement of the coinage. James was immured at Edinburgh, but, by a compromise, Albany was restored to rank and estates. Meanwhile Gloucester captured Berwick, never to be recovered by Scotland. In 1483 Albany renewed, with many of the nobles, his intrigues with Edward for the betrayal of Scotland. In some unknown way James separated Albany from his confederates Atholl, Buchan, and Angus; Albany went to England, betrayed the Castle of Dunbar to England, and was only checked in his treasons by the death of Edward IV. (April 9, 1483), after which a full Parliament (July 7, 1483) condemned him and forfeited him in his absence. On July 22, 1484, he invaded Scotland with his ally, Douglas; they were routed at Lochmaben, Douglas was taken, and, by singular clemency, was merely placed in seclusion in the Monastery of Lindores, while Albany, escaping to France, perished in a tournament, leaving a descendant, who later, in the minority of James V., makes a figure in history.

The death of Richard III. (August 18, 1485) and the accession of the prudent Henry VII. gave James a moment of safety. He turned his attention to the Church, and determined to prosecute for treason such Scottish clerics as purchased benefices through Rome. He negotiated for three English marriages, including that of his son James, Duke of Rothesay, to a daughter of Edward IV.; he also negotiated for the recovery of Berwick, taken by Gloucester during Albany’s invasion of 1482. After his death, and before it, James was accused, for these reasons, of disloyal dealings with England; and such nobles as Angus, up to the neck as they were in treason and rebellion, raised a party against him on the score that he was acting as they did. The almost aimless treachery of the Douglases, Red or Black, endured for centuries from the reign of David II. to that of James VI. Many nobles had received no amnesty for the outrage of

Lauder Bridge; their hopes turned to the heir of the Crown, James, Duke of Rothesay. We see them offering peace for an indemnity in a Parliament of October 1487; the Estates refused all such pardons for a space of seven years; the king's party was manifestly the stronger. He was not to be intimidated; he offended Home and the Humes by annexing the Priory of Coldingham (which they regarded as their own) to the Royal Chapel at Stirling. The inveterate Angus, with others, induced Prince James to join them under arms. James took the Chancellorship from Argyll and sent envoys to England.

The rebels, proclaiming the prince as king, intrigued with Henry VII.; James was driven across the Forth, and was supported in the north by his uncle, Atholl, and by Huntly, Crawford, and Lord Lindsay of the Byres, Errol, Glamis, Forbes, and Tullibardine, and the chivalry of Angus and Strathtay. Attempts at pacification failed; Stirling Castle was betrayed to the rebels, and James's host, swollen by the loyal burgesses of the towns, met the Border spears of Home and Hepburn, the Galloway men, and the levies of Angus at Sauchie Burn, near Bannockburn.

In some way not understood, James, riding without a single knight or squire, fell from his horse, which had apparently run away with him, at Beaton's Mill, and was slain in bed, it was rumoured, by a priest, feigned or false, who heard his confession. The obscurity of his reign hangs darkest over his death, and the virulent Buchanan slandered him in his grave. Under his reign, Henryson, the greatest of the Chaucerian school in Scotland, produced his admirable poems. Many other poets whose works are lost were flourishing; and *The Wallace*, that elaborate plagiarism from Barbour's 'The Brus,' was composed, and attributed to Blind Harry, a paid minstrel about the Court.

CHAPTER XIV. JAMES IV.

The new king, with Angus for his Governor, Argyll for his Chancellor, and with the Kers and Hepburns in office, was crowned at Scone about June 25, 1488. He was nearly seventeen, no child, but energetic in business as in pleasure, though lifelong remorse for his rebellion gnawed at his heart. He promptly put down a rebellion of the late king's friends and of the late king's foe, Lennox, then strong in the possession of Dumbarton Castle, which, as it commands the sea-entrance by Clyde, is of great importance in the reign of Mary and James VI. James III. must have paid attention to the navy, which, under Sir Andrew Wood, already faced English pirates triumphantly. James IV. spent much money on his fleet, buying timber from France, for he was determined to make Scotland a power of weight in Europe. But at the pinch his navy vanished like a mist.

Spanish envoys and envoys from the Duchess of Burgundy visited James in 1488-1489; he was in close relations with France and Denmark, and caused anxieties to the first Tudor king, Henry VII., who kept up the Douglas alliance with Angus, and bought over Scottish politicians. While James, as his account-books show, was playing cards with Angus, that traitor was also negotiating the sale of Hermitage Castle, the main hold of the Middle Border, to England. He was detected, and the castle was intrusted to a Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell; it was still held by Queen Mary's Bothwell in 1567. The Hepburns rose to the earldom of Bothwell on the death of Ramsay, a favourite of James III., who (1491) had arranged to kidnap James IV. with his brother, and hand them over to Henry VII., for £277, 13s. 4d.! Nothing came of this, and a truce with England was arranged in 1491. Through four reigns, till James VI. came to the English throne, the Tudor policy was to buy Scottish traitors, and attempt to secure the person of the Scottish monarch.

Meanwhile, the Church was rent by jealousies between the holder of the newly-created Archbishop of Glasgow (1491) and the Archbishop of St Andrews, and disturbed by the Lollards, in the region which was later the centre of the fiercest Covenanters, — Kyle in Ayrshire. But James laughed away the charges against the heretics (1494), whose views were, on many points, those of John Knox. In 1493-1495 James dealt in the usual way with the Highlanders and "the wicked blood of the Isles": some were hanged, some imprisoned, some became sureties for the peacefulness of their clans. In 1495, by way of tit-for-tat against English schemes, James began to back the claims of Perkin Warbeck, pretending to be Richard, Duke of York, escaped from the assassins employed by Richard III. Perkin, whoever he was, had probably been intriguing between Ireland and Burgundy since 1488. He was welcomed by James at Stirling in November 1495, and was wedded to the king's cousin, Catherine Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Huntly, now supreme in the north. Rejecting a daughter of England, and Spanish efforts at pacification, James prepared to invade England in Perkin's cause; the scheme was sold by Ramsay, the would-be kidnapper, and came to no more than a useless raid of September 1496, followed by a futile attempt and a retreat in July 1497. The Spanish envoy, de Ayala, negotiated a seven-years' truce in September, after Perkin had failed and been taken at Taunton.

The Celts had again risen while James was busy in the Border; he put them down, and made Argyll Lieutenant of the Isles. Between the Campbells and the Huntly Gordons, as custodians of the peace, the fighting clans were expected to be more orderly. On the other hand, a son of Angus Og, himself usually reckoned a bastard of the Lord of the Isles, gave much trouble. Angus had married a daughter of the Argyll of his day; their son, Donald Dubh, was kidnapped (or, rather, his mother was kidnapped before his birth) for Argyll; he now escaped, and in 1503, found allies among the chiefs, did much scathe, was taken in 1506, but was as active as ever forty years later.

The central source of these endless Highland feuds was the family of the Macdonalds, Lords of the Isles, claiming the earldom of Ross, resisting the Lowland influences and those of the Gordons and Campbells (Huntly and Argyll), and seeking aid from England. With the capture of Donald Dubh (1506) the Highlanders became for the while comparatively quiescent; under Lennox and Argyll they suffered in the defeat of Flodden.

From 1497 to 1503 Henry VII. was negotiating for the marriage of James to his daughter Margaret Tudor; the marriage was celebrated on August 8, 1503, and a century later the great grandson of Margaret, James VI. came to the English throne. But marriage does not make friendship. There had existed since 1491 a secret alliance by which Scotland was bound to defend France if attacked by England. Henry's negotiations for the kidnapping of James were of April of the same year. Margaret, the young queen, after her marriage, was soon involved in bitter quarrels over her dowry with her own family; the slaying of a Sir Robert Ker, Warden of the Marches, by a Heron in a Border fray (1508), left an unhealed sore, as England would not give up Heron and his accomplice. Henry VII. had been pacific, but his death, in 1509, left James to face his hostile brother-in-law, the fiery young Henry VIII.

In 1511 the Holy League under the Pope, against France, imperilled James's

French ally. He began to build great ships of war; his sea-captain, Barton, pirating about, was defeated and slain by ships under two of the Howards, sons of the Earl of Surrey (August 1511). James remonstrated, Henry was firm, and the Border feud of Ker and Heron was festering; moreover, Henry was a party to the League against France, and France was urging James to attack England. He saw, and wrote to the King of Denmark, that, if France were down, the turn of Scotland to fall would follow. In March 1513, an English diplomatist, West, found James in a wild mood, distraught "like a fey man."

Chivalry, and even national safety, called him to war; while his old remorse drove him into a religious retreat, and he was on hostile terms with the Pope. On May 24th, in a letter to Henry, he made a last attempt to obtain a truce, but on June 30th Henry invaded France. The French queen despatched to James, as to her true knight, a letter and a ring. He sent his fleet to sea; it vanished like a dream. He challenged Henry through a herald on July 26th, and, in face of strange and evil omens, summoned the whole force of his kingdom, crossed the Border on August 22nd, took Norham Castle on Tweed, with the holds of Eital, Chillingham, and Ford, which he made his headquarters, and awaited the approach of Surrey and the levies of the Stanleys. On September 5th he demolished Ford Castle, and took position on the crest of Flodden Edge, with the deep and sluggish water of Till at its feet. Surrey, commanding an army all but destitute of supplies, outmanœuvred James, led his men unseen behind a range of hills to a position where, if he could maintain himself, he was upon James's line of communications, and thence marched against him to Branxton Ridge, under Flodden Edge.

James was ignorant of Surrey's movement till he saw the approach of his standards. In place of retaining his position, he hurled his force down to Branxton, his gunners could not manage their new French ordnance, and though Home with the Border spears and Huntly had a success on the right, the Borderers made no more efforts, and, on the left, the Celts fled swiftly after the fall of Lennox and Argyll. In the centre Crawford and Rothes were slain, and James, with the steady spearmen of his command, drove straight at Surrey. James, as the Spaniard Ayala said, "was no general: he was a fighting man." He was outflanked by the Admiral (Howard) and Dacre; his force was surrounded by charging horse and foot, and rained on by arrows. But

"The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,"

when James rushed from the ranks, hewed his way to within a lance's length of Surrey (so Surrey writes), and died, riddled with arrows, his neck gashed by a bill-stroke, his left hand almost sundered from his body. Night fell on the unbroken Scottish phalanx, but when dawn arrived only a force of Border prickers was hovering on the fringes of the field. Thirteen dead earls lay in a ring about their master; there too lay his natural son, the young Archbishop of St Andrews, and the Bishops of Caithness and the Isles. Scarce a noble or gentle house of the Lowlands but reckons an ancestor slain at Flodden.

Surrey did not pursue his victory, which was won, despite sore lack of supplies, by his clever tactics, by the superior discipline of his men, by their marching powers, and by the glorious rashness of the Scottish king. It is easy, and it is customary, to blame James's adherence to the French alliance as if it were born of a foolish chivalry. But he had passed through long stress of mind concerning this matter. If he rejected the allurements of France, if France were overwhelmed, he knew well that the turn of Scotland would come soon. The ambitions and the claims of Henry VIII. were those of the first Edwards. England was bent on the conquest of Scotland at the earliest opportunity, and through the entire Tudor period England was the home and her monarch the ally of every domestic foe and traitor to the Scottish Crown.

Scotland, under James, had much prospered in wealth and even in comfort. Ayala might flatter in some degree, but he attests the great increase in comfort and in wealth.

In 1495 Bishop Elphinstone founded the University of Aberdeen, while (1496) Parliament decreed a course of school and college for the sons of barons and freeholders of competent estate. Prior Hepburn founded the College of St Leonard's in the University of St Andrews; and in 1507 Chepman received a royal patent as a printer. Meanwhile Dunbar, reckoned by some the chief poet of Scotland before Burns, was already denouncing the luxury and vice of the clergy, though his own life set them a bad example. But with Dunbar, Henryson, and others, Scotland had a school of poets much superior to any that England had reared since the death of Chaucer. Scotland now enjoyed her brief glimpse of the Revival of Learning; and James, like Charles II., fostered the early movements of chemistry and physical science. But Flodden ruined all, and the country, under the long minority of James V., was robbed and distracted by English intrigues; by the follies and loves of Margaret Tudor; by actual warfare between rival candidates for ecclesiastical place; by the ambitions and treasons of the Douglases and other nobles; and by the arrival from France of the son of Albany, that rebel brother of James III.

The truth of the saying, "Woe to the kingdom whose king is a child," was never more bitterly proved than in Scotland between the day of Flodden and the day of the return of Mary Stuart from France (1513-1561). James V. was not only a child and fatherless; he had a mother whose passions and passionate changes in love resembled those of her brother Henry VIII. Consequently, when the inevitable problem arose, was Scotland during the minority to side with England or with France? the queen-mother wavered ceaselessly between the party of her brother, the English king, and the party of France; while Henry VIII. could not be trusted, and the policy of France in regard to England did not permit her to offer any stable support to the cause of Scottish independence. The great nobles changed sides constantly, each “fighting for his own hand,” and for the spoils of a Church in which benefices were struggled for and sold like stocks in the Exchange.

The question, Was Scotland to ally herself with England or with France? later came to mean, Was Scotland to break with Rome or to cling to Rome? Owing mainly to the selfish and unscrupulous perfidy of Henry VIII., James V. was condemned, as the least of two evils, to adopt the Catholic side in the great religious revolution; while the statesmanship of the Beatons, Archbishops of St Andrews, preserved Scotland from English domination, thereby preventing the country from adopting Henry’s Church, the Anglican, and giving Calvinism and Presbyterianism the opportunity which was resolutely taken and held.

The real issue of the complex faction fight during James’s minority was thus of the most essential importance; but the constant shiftings of parties and persons cannot be dealt with fully in our space. James’s mother had a natural claim to the guardianship of her son, and was left Regent by the will of James IV., but she was the sister of Scotland’s enemy, Henry VIII. Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow (later of St Andrews), with the Earl of Arran (now the title of the Hamiltons), Huntly, and Angus were to advise the queen till the arrival of Albany (son of the brother of James III.), who was summoned from France. Albany, of course, stood for the French alliance, but when the queen-mother (August 6, 1514) married the new young Earl of Angus, the grandson and successor of the aged traitor, “Bell the Cat,” the earl began to carry on the usual unpatriotic policy of his house. The appointment to the see of St Andrews was competed for by the Poet Gawain Douglas, uncle of the new Earl of Angus; and himself of the English party; by Hepburn, Prior of St Andrews, who fortified the Abbey; and by Forman, Bishop of Moray, a partisan of France, and a man accused of having induced James IV. to declare war against England.

After long and scandalous intrigues, Forman obtained the see. Albany was Regent for a while, and at intervals he repaired to France; he was in the favour of the queen-mother when later she quarrelled with her husband, Angus. At one moment, Margaret and Angus fled to England where was born her daughter

Margaret, later Lady Lennox and mother of Henry Darnley.

Angus, with Home, now recrossed the Border (1516), and was reconciled to Albany; against all unity in Scotland Henry intrigued, bribing with a free hand, his main object being to get Albany sent out of the country. In early autumn, 1516, Home, the leader of the Borderers at Flodden, and his brother were executed for treason; in June, 1517, Albany went to seek aid and counsel in France; when the queen-mother returned from England to Scotland, where, if she retained any influence, she might be useful to her brother's schemes. But, contrary to Henry's interests, in this year Albany renewed the old alliance with France; while, in 1518, the queen-mother desired to divorce Angus. But Angus was a serviceable tool of Henry, who prevented his sister from having her way; and now the heads of the parties in the distracted country were Arran, chief of the Hamiltons, and Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, standing for France; and Angus representing the English party.

Their forces met at Edinburgh in the street battle of "Cleanse the Causeway," wherein the Archbishop of Glasgow wore armour, and the Douglases beat the Hamiltons out of the town (April 30, 1520). Albany returned (1521), but the nobles would not join with him in an English war (1522). Again he went to France, while Surrey devastated the Scottish Border (1523). Albany returned while Surrey was burning Jedburgh, was once more deserted by the Scottish forces on the Tweed, and left the country for ever in 1524. Angus now returned from England; but the queen-mother cast her affections on young Henry Stewart (Lord Methven), while Angus got possession of the boy king (June 1526) and held him, a reluctant ward, in the English interest.

Lennox was now the chief foe of Arran, and Angus, with whom Arran had coalesced; and Lennox desired to deliver James out of Angus's hands. On July 26, 1526, not far from Melrose, Walter Scott of Buccleuch attacked the forces guarding the prince; among them was Ker of Cessford, who was slain by an Elliot when Buccleuch's men rallied at the rock called "Turn Again." Hence sprang a long-enduring blood-feud of Scotts and Kers; but Angus retained the prince, and in a later fight in the cause of James's delivery, Lennox was slain by the Hamiltons, near Linlithgow. The spring of 1528 was marked by the burning of a Hamilton, Patrick, Abbot of Ferne, at St Andrews, for his Lutheran opinions. Angus had been making futile attacks on the Border thieves, mainly the Armstrongs, who now became very prominent and picturesque robbers. He meant to carry James with him on one of these expeditions; but in June 1528 the young king escaped from Edinburgh Castle, and rode to Stirling, where he was welcomed by his mother and her partisans. Among them were Arran, Argyll, Moray, Bothwell, and other nobles, with Maxwell and the Laird of Buccleuch, Sir Walter Scott. Angus and his kin were forfeited; he was driven across the Border in November, to work what mischief he might against his country; he did not return till the death of James V. Meanwhile James was at peace with his uncle, Henry VIII. He (1529-1530) attempted to bring the Border into his peace, and hanged Johnnie Armstrong of Gilnockie, with circumstances of treachery, says the ballad, — as a ballad-maker was certain to say.

Campbells, Macleans, and Macdonalds had all this while been burning each other's lands, and cutting each other's throats. James visited them, and partly quieted them, incarcerating the Earl of Argyll.

Bothwell and Angus now conspired together to crown Henry VIII. in Edinburgh; but, in May 1534, a treaty of peace was made, to last till the death of either monarch and a year longer.

CHAPTER XV. JAMES V. AND THE REFORMATION.

The new times were at the door. In 1425 the Scottish Parliament had forbidden Lutheran books to be imported. But they were, of course, smuggled in; and the seed of religious revolution fell on minds disgusted by the greed and anarchy of the clerical fighters and jobbers of benefices.

James V., after he had shaken off the Douglases and become “a free king,” had to deal with a political and religious situation, out of which we may say in the Scots phrase, “there was no outgait.” His was the dilemma of his father before Flodden. How, against the perfidious ambition, the force in war, and the purchasing powers of Henry VIII., was James to preserve the national independence of Scotland? His problem was even harder than that of his father, because when Henry broke with Rome and robbed the religious houses a large minority, at least, of the Scottish nobles, gentry, and middle classes were, so far, heartily on the anti-Roman side. They were tired of Rome, tired of the profligacy, ignorance, and insatiable greed of the ecclesiastical dignitaries who, too often, were reckless cadets of the noble families. Many Scots had read the Lutheran books and disbelieved in transubstantiation; thought that money paid for prayers to the dead was money wasted; preferred a married and preaching to a celibate and licentious clergy who celebrated Mass; were convinced that saintly images were idols, that saintly miracles were impostures. Above all, the nobles coveted the lands of the Church, the spoils of the religious houses.

In Scotland, as elsewhere, the causes of the religious revolution were many. The wealth and luxury of the higher clergy, and of the dwellers in the abbeys, had long been the butt of satire and of the fiercer indignation of the people. Benefices, great and small, were jobbed on every side between the popes, the kings, and the great nobles. Ignorant and profligate cadets of the great houses were appointed to high ecclesiastical offices, while the minor clergy were inconceivably ignorant just at the moment when the new critical learning, with knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, was revolutionising the study of the sacred books. The celibacy of the clergy had become a mere farce; and they got dispensations enabling them to obtain ecclesiastical livings for their bastards. The kings set the worst example: both James IV. and James V. secured the richest abbeys, and, in the case of James IV., the Primacy, for their bastard sons. All these abuses were of old standing. “Early in the thirteenth century certain of the abbots of Jedburgh, supported by their chapters, had granted certain of their appropriate churches to priests with a right of succession to their sons" (see 'The Mediæval Church in Scotland,' by the late Bishop Dowden, cha. Mac-Lehose, 1910.) Oppressive customs by which "the upmost claith," or a pecuniary equivalent, was extorted as a kind of death-duty by the clergy, were sanctioned by excommunication: no grievance was more bitterly felt by the poor. The once-dreaded curses on evil-doers became a popular jest: purgatory was a mere excuse for getting money for masses.

In short, the whole mediæval system was morally rotten; the statements drawn up by councils which made vain attempts to check the stereotyped abuses are as candid and copious concerning all these things as the satires of Sir David Lyndsay.

Then came disbelief in mediæval dogmas: the Lutheran and other heretical books were secretly purchased and their contents assimilated. Intercession of saints, images, pilgrimages, the doctrine of the Eucharist, all fell into contempt.

As early as February 1428, as we have seen, the first Scottish martyr for evangelical religion, Patrick Hamilton, was burned at St Andrews. This sufferer was the son of a bastard of that Lord Hamilton who married the sister of James III. As was usual, he obtained, when a little boy, an abbey, that of Ferne in Ross-shire. He drew the revenues, but did not wear the costume of his place; in fact, he was an example of the ordinary abuses. Educated at Paris and Louvain, he came in contact with the criticism of Erasmus and the Lutheran controversy. He next read at St Andrews, and he married. Suspected of heresy in 1427, he retired to Germany; he wrote theses called 'Patrick's Places,' which were reckoned heretical; he was arrested, was offered by Archbishop Beaton a chance to escape, disdained it, and was burned with unusual cruelty, — as a rule, heretics in Scotland were strangled before burning. There were other similar cases, nor could James interfere — he was bound by his Coronation Oath; again, he found in the bishops his best diplomatists, and they, of course, were all for the French alliance, in the cause of the independence of their country and Church as against Henry VIII.

Thus James, in justifiable dread of the unscrupulous ambition of Henry VIII., could not run the English course, could not accept the varying creeds which Henry, who was his own Pope, put forward as his spirit moved him. James was thus inevitably committed to the losing cause — the cause of Catholicism and of France — while the intelligence no less than the avarice of his nobles and gentry ran the English course.

James had practically no choice. In 1536 Henry proposed a meeting with James "as far within England as possible." Knowing, as we do, that Henry was making repeated attempts to have James kidnapped and Archbishop Beaton also, we are surprised that James was apparently delighted at the hope of an interview with his uncle — in England. Henry declined to explain why he desired a meeting when James put the question to his envoy. James said, in effect, that he must act by advice of his Council, which, so far as it was clerical, opposed the scheme. Henry justified the views of the Council, later, when James, returning from a visit to France, asked permission to pass through England. “It is the king’s honour not to receive the King of Scots in his realm except as a vassal, for there never came King of Scots into England in peaceful manner otherwise.” Certain it is that, however James might enter England, he would leave it only as a vassal. Nevertheless his Council, especially his clergy, are blamed for embroiling James with Henry by dissuading him from meeting his uncle in England. Manifestly they had no choice. Henry had shown his hand too often.

At this time James, by Margaret Erskine, became the father of James, later the Regent Moray. Strange tragedies would never have occurred had the king first married Margaret Erskine, who, by 1536, was the wife of Douglas of Loch Leven. He is said to have wished for her a divorce that he might marry her; this could not be: he visited France, and on New Year’s Day, 1537, wedded Madeline, daughter of Francis I. Six months later she died in Scotland.

Marriage for the king was necessary, and David Beaton, later Cardinal Beaton and Archbishop of St Andrews, obtained for his lord a lady coveted by Henry VIII., Mary, of the great Catholic house of Lorraine, widow of the Duc de Longueville, and sister of the popular and ambitious Guises. The pair were wedded on June 10, 1538; there was fresh offence to Henry and a closer tie to the Catholic cause. The appointment of Cardinal Beaton (1539) to the see of St Andrews, in succession to his uncle, gave James a servant of high ecclesiastical rank, great subtlety, and indomitable resolution, but remote from chastity of life and from clemency to heretics. Martyrdoms became more frequent, and George Buchanan, who had been tutor of James’s son by Margaret Erskine, thought well to open a window in a house where he was confined, walk out, and depart to the Continent. Meanwhile Henry, no less than Beaton, was busily burning his own martyrs. In 1539 Henry renewed his intercourse with James, attempting to shake his faith in David Beaton, and to make him rob his Church. James replied that he preferred to try to reform it; and he enjoyed, in 1540, Sir David Lyndsay’s satirical play on the vices of the clergy, and, indeed, of all orders of men. In 1540 James ratified the College of Justice, the fifteen Lords of Session, sitting as judges in Edinburgh.

In 1541 the idea of a meeting between James and Henry was again mooted, and Henry actually went to York, where James did not appear. Henry, who had expected him, was furious. In August 1542, on a futile pretext, he sent Norfolk with a great force to harry the Border. The English had the worse at the battle of Hadden Rig; negotiations followed; Henry proclaimed that Scottish kings had always been vassals of England, and horrified his Council by openly proposing to kidnap James. Henry's forces were now wrecking an abbey and killing women on the Border. James tried to retaliate, but his levies (October 31) at Fala Moor declined to follow him across the Border: they remembered Flodden, moreover they could not risk the person of a childless king. James prepared, however, for a raid on a great scale on the western Border, but the fact had been divulged by Sir George Douglas, Angus's brother, and had also been sold to Dacre, cheap, by another Scot. The English despatches prove that Wharton had full time for preparation, and led a competent force of horse, which, near Arthuret, charged on the right flank of the Scots, who slowly retreated, till they were entangled between the Esk and a morass, and lost their formation and their artillery, with 1200 men: a few were slain, most were drowned or were taken prisoners. The raid was no secret of the king and the priests, as Knox absurdly states; nobles of the Reforming no less than of the Catholic party were engaged; the English had full warning and a force of 3000 men, not of 400 farmers; the Scots were beaten through their own ignorance of the ground in which they had been burning and plundering. As to confusion caused by the claim of Oliver Sinclair to be commander, it is not corroborated by contemporary despatches, though Sir George Douglas reports James's lament for the conduct of his favourite, "Fled Oliver! fled Oliver!" The misfortune broke the heart of James. He went to Edinburgh, did some business, retired for a week to Linlithgow, where his queen was awaiting her delivery, and thence went to Falkland, and died of nothing more specific than shame, grief, and despair. He lived to hear of the birth of his daughter, Mary (December 8, 1542). "It came with a lass and it will go with a lass," he is said to have muttered.

On December 14th James passed away, broken by his impossible task, lost in the bewildering paths from which there was no outgait.

James was personally popular for his gaiety and his adventures while he wandered in disguise. Humorous poems are attributed to him. A man of greater genius than his might have failed when confronted by a tyrant so wealthy, ambitious, cruel, and destitute of honour as Henry VIII.; constantly engaged with James's traitors in efforts to seize or slay him and his advisers. It is an easy thing to attack James because he would not trust Henry, a man who ruined all that did trust to his seeming favour.

CHAPTER XVI. THE MINORITY OF MARY STUART.

When James died, Henry VIII. seemed to hold in his hand all the winning cards in the game of which Scotland was the stake. He held Angus and his brother George Douglas; when he slipped them they would again wield the whole force of their House in the interests of England and of Henry's religion. Moreover, he held many noble prisoners taken at Solway — Glencairn, Maxwell, Cassilis, Fleming, Grey, and others, — and all of these, save Sir George Douglas, "have not sticked," says Henry himself, "to take upon them to set the crown of Scotland on our head." Henry's object was to get "the child, the person of the Cardinal, and of such as be chief hindrances to our purpose, and also the chief holds and fortresses into our hands." By sheer brigandage the Reformer king hoped to succeed where the Edwards had failed. He took the oaths of his prisoners, making them swear to secure for him the child, Beaton, and the castles, and later released them to do his bidding.

Henry's failure was due to the genius and resolution of Cardinal Beaton, heading the Catholic party.

What occurred in Scotland on James's death is obscure. Later, Beaton was said to have made the dying king's hand subscribe a blank paper filled up by appointment of Beaton himself as one of a Regency Council of four or five. There is no evidence for the tale. What actually occurred was the proclamation of the Earls of Arran, Argyll, Huntly, Moray, and of Beaton as Regents (December 19, 1542). Arran, the chief of the Hamiltons, was, we know, unless ousted by Henry VIII., the next heir to the throne after the new-born Mary. He was a good-hearted man, but the weakest of mortals, and his constant veerings from the Catholic and national to the English and reforming side were probably caused by his knowledge of his very doubtful legitimacy. Either party could bring up the doubt; Beaton, having the ear of the Pope, could be specially dangerous, but so could the opposite party if once firmly seated in office. Arran, in any case, presently ousted the Archbishop of Glasgow from the Chancellorship and gave the seals to Beaton — the man whom he presently accused of a shameless forgery of James's will.

The Regency soon came into Arran's own hands: the Solway Moss prisoners, learning this as they journeyed north, began to repent of their oaths of treachery, especially as their oaths were known or suspected in Scotland. George Douglas prevailed on Arran to seize and imprison Beaton till he answered certain charges; but no charges were ever made public, none were produced. The clergy refused to christen or bury during his captivity. Parliament met (March 12, 1543), and still there was silence as to the nature of the accusations against Beaton; and by March 22 George Douglas himself released the Cardinal (of course for a consideration) and carried him to his own strong castle of St Andrews.

Parliament permitted the reading but forbade the discussion of the Bible in English. Arran was posing as a kind of Protestant. Ambassadors were sent to Henry to negotiate a marriage between his son Edward and the baby Queen; but Scotland would not give up a fortress, would never resign her independence, would not place Mary in Henry's hands, would never submit to any but a native ruler.

The airy castle of Henry's hopes fell into dust, built as it was on the oaths of traitors. Love of such a religion as Henry professed, retaining the Mass and making free use of the stake and the gibbet, was not, even to Protestants, so attractive as to make them run the English course and submit to the English Lord Paramount. Some time was needed to make Scots, whatever their religious opinions, lick the English rod. But the scale was soon to turn; for every reforming sermon was apt to produce the harrying of religious houses, and every punishment of the robbers was persecution intolerable against which men sought English protection.

Henry VIII. now turned to Arran for support. To Arran he offered the hand of his daughter, the Princess Elizabeth, who should later marry the heir of the Hamiltons. But by mid-April Arran was under the influence of his bastard brother, the Abbot of Paisley (later Archbishop Hamilton). The Earl of Lennox, a Stuart, and Keeper of Dumbarton Castle, arrived from France. He was hostile to Arran; for, if Arran were illegitimate, Lennox was next heir to the crown after Mary: he was thus, for the moment, the ally of Beaton against Arran. George Douglas visited Henry, and returned with his terms — Mary to be handed over to England at the age of ten, and to marry Prince Edward at twelve; Arran (by a prior arrangement) was to receive Scotland north of Forth, an auxiliary English army, and the hand of Elizabeth for his son. To the English contingent Arran preferred £5000 in ready money — that was his price.

Sadleyr, Henry's envoy, saw Mary of Guise, and saw her little daughter unclothed; he admired the child, but could not disentangle the cross-webs of intrigue. The national party — the Catholic party — was strongest, because least disunited. When the Scottish ambassadors who went to Henry in spring returned (July 21), the national party seized Mary and carried her to Stirling, where they offered Arran a meeting, and (he said) the child queen's hand for his son. But Arran's own partisans, Glencairn and Cassilis, told Sadleyr that he fabled freely. Representatives of both parties accepted Henry's terms, but delayed the ratification. Henry insisted that it should be ratified by August 24, but on August 16 he seized six Scottish merchant ships. Though the Treaty was ratified on August 25, Arran was compelled to insist on compensation for the ships, but on August 28 he proclaimed Beaton a traitor. In the beginning of September Arran favoured the wrecking of the Franciscan monastery in Edinburgh; and at Dundee the mob, moved by sermons from the celebrated martyr George Wishart, did sack the houses of the Franciscans and the Dominicans; Beaton's Abbey of Arbroath and the Abbey of Lindores were also plundered. Clearly it was believed that Beaton was down, and that church-pillage was authorised by Arran. Yet on September 3 Arran joined hands with Beaton! The Cardinal, by threatening to disprove Arran's legitimacy and ruin his hopes of the crown, or in some other way, had dominated the waverer, while Henry (August 29) was mobilising an army of 20,000 men for the invasion of Scotland. On September 9 Mary was crowned at Stirling. But Beaton could not hold both Arran and his rival Lennox, who committed an act of disgraceful treachery. With Glencairn he seized large supplies of money and stores sent by France to Dumbarton Castle. In 1544 he fled to England and to the protection of Henry, and married Margaret, daughter of Angus and Margaret Tudor, widow of James IV. He became the father of Darnley, Mary's husband in later years, and the fortunes of Scotland were fatally involved in the feud between the Lennox Stewarts and the House of Hamilton.

Meanwhile (November 1543) Arran and Beaton together broke and persecuted the abbey robbers of Perthshire and Angus, making "martyrs" and incurring, on Beaton's part, fatal feuds with Leslies, Greys, Learmonths, and Kirkcaldys. Parliament (December 11) declared the treaty with England void; the party of the Douglases, equally suspected by Henry and by Beaton, was crushed, and George Douglas was held a hostage, still betraying his country in letters to England. Martyrs were burned in Perth and Dundee, which merely infuriated the populace. In April 1544, while Henry was giving the most cruel orders to his army of invasion, one Wishart visited him with offers, which were accepted, for the murder of the Cardinal. Early in May the English army under Hertford took Leith, "raised a jolly fire," says Hertford, in Edinburgh; he burned the towns on his line of march, and retired.

On May 17 Lennox and Glencairn sold themselves to Henry; for ample rewards they were to secure the teaching of God's word "as the mere and only foundation whence proceeds all truth and honour"! Arran defeated Glencairn when he attempted his godly task, and Lennox was driven back into England.

In June Mary of Guise fell into the hands of nobles led by Angus, while the Fife, Perthshire, and Angus lairds, lately Beaton's deadly foes, came into the Cardinal's party. With him and Arran, in November, were banded the Protestants who were to be his murderers, while the Douglases, in December, were cleared by Parliament of all their offences, and Henry offered 3000 crowns for their "trapping." Angus, in February 1545, protested that he loved Henry "best of all men," and would make Lennox Governor of Scotland, while Wharton, for Henry, was trying to kidnap Angus. Enraged by the English desecration of his ancestors' graves at Melrose Abbey, Angus united with Arran, Norman Leslie, and Buccleuch to annihilate an English force at Ancrum Moor, where Henry's men lost 800 slain and 2000 prisoners. The loyalty of Angus to his country was now, by innocents like Arran, thought assured. The plot for Beaton's murder was in 1545 negotiated between Henry and Cassilis, backed by George Douglas; and Crichton of Brunston, as before, was engaged, a godly laird in Lothian. In August the Douglases boast that, as Henry's friends, they have frustrated an invasion of England with a large French contingent, which they pretended to lead, while they secured its failure. Meanwhile, after forty years, Donald Dubh, and all the great western chiefs, none of whom could write, renewed the alliance of 1463 with England, calling themselves "auld enemies of Scotland." Their religious predilections, however, were not Protestant. They promised to destroy or reduce half of Scotland, and hailed Lennox as Governor, as in Angus's offer to Henry in spring 1545. Lennox did make an attempt against Dumbarton in November with Donald Dubh. They failed, and Donald died, without legitimate issue, at Drogheda. The Macleans, Macleods, and Macneils then came into the national party.

In September 1545 Hertford, with an English force, destroyed the religious houses at Melrose, Kelso, Dryburgh, and Jedburgh. Meanwhile the two Douglases skulked with the murderous traitor Cassilis in Ayrshire, and Henry tried to induce French deserters from the Scottish flag to murder Beaton and Arran.

Beaton could scarcely escape for ever from so many plots. His capture, in January 1546, of George Wishart, an eminently learned and virtuous Protestant preacher, and an intimate associate of the murderous, double-dyed traitor Brunston and of other Lothian pietists of the English party; and his burning of Wishart at St Andrews, on March 1, 1546, sealed the Cardinal's doom. On May 29th he was surprised in his castle of St Andrews and slain by his former ally, Norman Leslie, Master of Rothes, with Kirkcaldy of Grange, and James Melville who seems to have dealt the final stab after preaching at his powerless victim.

They insulted the corpse, and held St Andrews Castle against all comers.

How gallant a fight Beaton had waged against adversaries how many and multifarious, how murderous, self-seeking, treacherous, and hypocritical, we have seen. He maintained the independence of Scotland against the most recklessly unscrupulous of assailants, though probably he was rather bent on defending the lost cause of a Church entirely and intolerably corrupt.

The two causes were at the moment inseparable, and, whatever we may think of the Church of Rome, it was not more bloodily inclined than the Church of which Henry was Pope, while it was less illogical, not being the creature of a secular tyrant. If Henry and his party had won their game, the Church of Scotland would have been Henry's Church — would have been Anglican. Thus it was Beaton who, by defeating Henry, made Presbyterian Calvinism possible in Scotland.

CHAPTER XVII. REGENCY OF ARRAN.

The death of Cardinal Beaton left Scotland and the Church without a skilled and resolute defender. His successor in the see, Archbishop Hamilton, a half-brother of the Regent, was more licentious than the Cardinal (who seems to have been constant to Mariotte Ogilvy), and had little of his political genius. The murderers, with others of their party, held St Andrews Castle, strong in its new fortifications, which the queen-mother and Arran, the Regent, were unable to reduce. Receiving supplies from England by sea, and abetted by Henry VIII., the murderers were in treaty with him to work all his will, while some nobles, like Argyll and Huntly, wavered; though the Douglases now renounced their compact with England, and their promise to give the child queen in marriage to Henry's son. At the end of November, despairing of success in the siege, Arran asked France to send men and ships to take St Andrews Castle from the assassins, who, in December, obtained an armistice. They would surrender, they said, when they got a pardon for their guilt from the Pope; but they begged Henry VIII. to move the Emperor to move the Pope to give no pardon! The remission, none the less, arrived early in April 1547, but was mocked at by the garrison of the castle.

The garrison and inmates of the castle presently welcomed the arrival of John Knox and some of his pupils. Knox (born in Haddington, 1513-1515?), a priest and notary, had borne a two-handed sword and been of the body-guard of Wishart. He was now invited by John Rough, the chaplain, to take on him the office of preacher, which he did, weeping, so strong was his sense of the solemnity of his duties. He also preached and disputed with feeble clerical opponents in the town. The congregation in the castle, though devout, were ruffianly in their lives, nor did he spare rebukes to his flock.

Before Knox arrived, Henry VIII. and Francis II. had died; the successor of Francis, Henri II., sent to Scotland Monsieur d'Oysel, who became the right-hand man of Mary of Guise in the Government. Meanwhile the advance of an English force against the Border, where they occupied Langholm, caused Arran to lead thither the national levies. But this gave no great relief to the besieged in the castle of St Andrews. In mid-July a well-equipped French fleet swept up the east coast; men were landed with guns; French artillery was planted on the cathedral roof and the steeple of St Salvator's College, and poured a plunging fire into the castle. In a day or two, on the last of July, the garrison surrendered.

Knox, with many of his associates, was placed in the galleys and carried captive to France. On one occasion the galleys were within sight of St Andrews, and the Reformer predicted (so he says) that he would again preach there — as he did, to some purpose.

But the castle had not fallen before the English party among the nobles had arranged to betray Scottish fortresses to England; and to lead 2000 Scottish "favourers of the Word of God" to fight under the flag of St George against their country. An English host of 15,000 was assembled, and marched north accompanied by a fleet. On the 9th of September 1547 the leader, Somerset, found the Scottish army occupying a well-chosen position near Musselburgh: on their left lay the Firth, on their front a marsh and the river Esk. But next day the Scots, as when Cromwell defeated them at Dunbar, left an impregnable position in their eagerness to cut Somerset off from his ships, and were routed with great slaughter in the battle of Pinkie. Somerset made no great use of his victory: he took and held Broughty Castle on Tay, fortified Inchcolme in the Firth of Forth, and devastated Holyrood. Mischief he did, to little purpose.

The child queen was conveyed to an isle in the loch of Menteith, where she was safe, and her marriage with the Dauphin was negotiated. In June 1548 a large French force under the Sieur d'Essé arrived, and later captured Haddington, held by the English, while, despite some Franco-Scottish successes in the field, Mary was sent with her Four Maries to France, where she landed in August, the only passenger who had not been sea-sick! By April 1550 the English made peace, abandoning all their holds in Scotland. The great essential prize, the child queen, had escaped them.

The clergy burned a martyr in 1550; in 1549 they had passed measures for their own reformation: too late and futile was the scheme. Early in 1549 Knox returned from France to England, where he was minister at Berwick and at Newcastle, a chaplain of the child Edward VI., and a successful opponent of Cranmer as regards kneeling at the celebration of the Holy Communion. He refused a bishopric, foreseeing trouble under Mary Tudor, from whom he fled to the Continent. In 1550-51 Mary of Guise, visiting France, procured for Arran the Duchy of Châtelherault, and for his eldest son the command of the Scottish Archer Guard, and, by way of exchange, in 1554 took from him the Regency, surrounding herself with French advisers, notably De Roubay and d'Oysel.

CHAPTER XVIII. REGENCY OF MARY OF GUISE.

In England, on the death of Edward VI., Catholicism rejoiced in the accession of Mary Tudor, which, by driving Scottish Protestant refugees back into their own country, strengthened there the party of revolt against the Church, while the queen-mother's preference of French over Scottish advisers, and her small force of trained French soldiers in garrisons, caused even the Scottish Catholics to hold France in fear and suspicion. The French counsellors (1556) urged increased taxation for purposes of national defence against England; but the nobles would rather be invaded every year than tolerate a standing army in place of their old irregular feudal levies. Their own independence of the Crown was dearer to the nobles and gentry than safety from their old enemy. They might have reflected that a standing army of Scots, officered by themselves, would be a check on the French soldiers in garrison.

Perplexed and opposed by the great clan of Hamilton, whose chief, Arran, was nearest heir to the crown, Mary of Guise was now anxious to conciliate the Protestants, and there was a "blink," as the Covenanters later said, — a lull in persecution.

After Knox's release from the French galleys in 1549, he had played, as we saw, a considerable part in the affairs of the English Church, and in the making of the second Prayer-Book of Edward VI., but had fled abroad on the accession of Mary Tudor. From Dieppe he had sent a tract to England, praying God to stir up some Phineas or Jehu to shed the blood of "abominable idolaters," — obviously of Mary of England and Philip of Spain. On earlier occasions he had followed Calvin in deprecating such sanguinary measures. The Scot, after a stormy period of quarrels with Anglican refugees in Frankfort, moved to Geneva, where the city was under a despotism of preachers and of Calvin. Here Knox found the model of Church government which, in a form if possible more extreme, he later planted in Scotland.

There, in 1549-52, the Church, under Archbishop Hamilton, Beaton's successor, had been confessing her iniquities in Provincial Councils, and attempting to purify herself on the lines of the tolerant and charitable Catechism issued by the Archbishop in 1552. Apparently a *modus vivendi* was being sought, and Protestants were inclined to think that they might be "occasional conformists" and attend Mass without being false to their convictions. But in this brief lull Knox came over to Scotland at the end of harvest, in 1555. On this point of occasional conformity he was fixed. The Mass was idolatry, and idolatry, by the law of God, was a capital offence. Idolaters must be converted or exterminated; they were no better than Amalekites.

This was the central rock of Knox's position: tolerance was impossible. He remained in Scotland, preaching and administering the Sacrament in the Genevan way, till June 1556. He associated with the future leaders of the religious revolution: Erskine of Dun, Lord Lorne (in 1558, fifth Earl of Argyll), James Stewart, bastard of James V., and lay Prior of St Andrews, and of Macon in France; and the Earl of Glencairn. William Maitland of Lethington, "the flower of the wits of Scotland," was to Knox a less congenial acquaintance. Not till May 1556 was Knox summoned to trial in Edinburgh, but he had a strong backing of the laity, as was the custom in Scotland, where justice was overawed by armed gatherings, and no trial was held. By July 1556 he was in France, on his way to Geneva.

The fruits of Knox's labours followed him, in March 1557, in the shape of a letter, signed by Glencairn, Lorne, Lord Erskine, and James Stewart, Mary's bastard brother. They prayed Knox to return. They were ready "to jeopardy lives and goods in the forward setting of the glory of God." This has all the air of risking civil war. Knox was not eager. It was October before he reached Dieppe on his homeward way. Meanwhile there had been hostilities between England and Scotland (as ally of France, then at odds with Philip of Spain, consort King of England), and there were Protestant tumults in Edinburgh. Knox had scruples as to raising civil war by preaching at home. The Scottish nobles had no zeal for the English war; but Knox, who received at Dieppe discouraging letters from unknown correspondents, did not cross the sea. He remained at Dieppe, preaching, till the spring of 1558.

In Knox's absence even James Stewart and Erskine of Dun agreed to hurry on the marriage between Mary, Queen of Scots, and Francis, Dauphin of France, a feeble boy, younger than herself. Their faces are pitiably young as represented in their coronation medal.

While negotiations for the marriage were begun in October, on December 3, 1557, a godly "band" or covenant for mutual aid was signed by Argyll (then near his death, in 1558); his son, Lorne; the Earl of Morton (son of the traitor, Sir George Douglas); Glencairn; and Erskine of Dun, one of the commissioners who were to visit France for the Royal marriage. They vow to risk their lives against "the Congregation of Satan" (the Church), and in defence of faithful Protestant preachers. They will establish "the blessed Word of God and His Congregation," and henceforth the Protestant party was commonly styled "The

Congregation."

Parliament (November 29, 1557) had accepted the French marriage, all the ancient liberties of Scotland being secured, and the right to the throne, if Mary died without issue, being confirmed to the House of Hamilton, not to the Dauphin. The marriage-contract (April 19, 1558) did ratify these just demands; but, on April 4, Mary had been induced to sign them all away to France, leaving Scotland and her own claims to the English crown to the French king.

The marriage was celebrated on April 24, 1558. In that week the last Protestant martyr, Walter Milne, an aged priest and a married man, was burned for heresy at St Andrews. This only increased the zeal of the Congregation.

Among the Protestant preachers then in Scotland, of whom Willock, an Englishman, seems to have been the most reasonable, a certain Paul Methuen, a baker, was prominent. He had been summoned (July 28) to stand his trial for heresy, but his backing of friends was considerable, and they came before Mary of Guise in armour and with a bullying demeanour. She tried to temporise, and on September 3 a great riot broke out in Edinburgh, the image of St Giles was broken, and the mob violently assaulted a procession of priests. The country was seething with discontent, and the death of Mary Tudor (November 17, 1558), with the accession of the Protestant Elizabeth, encouraged the Congregation. Mary of Guise made large concessions: only she desired that there should be no public meetings in the capital. On January 1, 1559, church doors were placarded with "The Beggars' Warning." The Beggars (really the Brethren in their name) claimed the wealth of the religious orders. Threats were pronounced, revolution was menaced at a given date, Whitsunday, and the threats were fulfilled.

All this was the result of a plan, not of accident. Mary of Guise was intending to visit France, not longing to burn heretics. But she fell into the worst of health, and her recovery was doubted, in April 1559. Willock and Methuen had been summoned to trial (February 2, 1559), for their preachings were always apt to lead to violence on the part of their hearers. The summons was again postponed in deference to renewed menaces: a Convention had met at Edinburgh to seek for some remedy, and the last Provincial Council of the Scottish Church (March 1559) had considered vainly some proposals by moderate Catholics for internal reform.

Again the preachers were summoned to Stirling for May 10, but just a week earlier Knox arrived in Scotland. The leader of the French Protestant preachers, Morel, expressed to Calvin his fear that Knox "may fill Scotland with his madness." Now was his opportunity: the Regent was weak and ill; the Congregation was in great force; England was at least not unfavourable to its cause. From Dundee Knox marched with many gentlemen — unarmed, he says — accompanying the preachers to Perth: Erskine of Dun went as an envoy to the Regent at Stirling; she is accused by Knox of treacherous dealing (other contemporary Protestant evidence says nothing of treachery); at all events, on May 10 the preachers were outlawed for non-appearance to stand their trial. The Brethren, "the whole multitude with their preachers," says Knox, who were in Perth were infuriated, and, after a sermon from the Reformer, wrecked the church, sacked the monasteries, and, says Knox, denounced death against any priest who celebrated Mass (a circumstance usually ignored by our historians), at the same time protesting, "We require nothing but liberty of conscience"!

On May 31 a composition was made between the Regent and the insurgents, whom Argyll and James Stewart promised to join if the Regent broke the conditions. Henceforth the pretext that she had broken faith was made whenever it seemed convenient, while the Congregation permitted itself a godly liberty in construing the terms of treaties. A "band" was signed for "the destruction of idolatry" by Argyll, James Stewart, Glencairn, and others; and the Brethren scattered from Perth, breaking down altars and "idols" on their way home. Mary of Guise had promised not to leave a French garrison in Perth. She did leave some Scots in French pay, and on this slim pretext of her treachery, Argyll and James Stewart proclaimed the Regent perfidious, deserted her cause, and joined the crusade against "idolatry."

NOTE.

It is far from my purpose to represent Mary of Guise as a kind of stainless Una with a milk-white lamb. I am apt to believe that she caused to be forged a letter, which she attributed to Arran. See my ‘John Knox and the Reformation,’ p, 281, where the evidence is discussed. But the critical student of Knox’s chapters on these events, generally accepted as historical evidence, cannot but perceive his personal hatred of Mary of Guise, whether shown in thinly veiled hints that Cardinal Beaton was her paramour; or in charges of treacherous breach of promise, which rest primarily on his word. Again, that “the Brethren” wrecked the religious houses of Perth is what he reports to a lady, Mrs Locke; that “the rascal multitude” was guilty is the tale he tells “to all Europe” in his History. I have done my best to compare Knox’s stories with contemporary documents, including his own letters. These documents throw a lurid light on his versions of events, as given in this part of his History, which is merely a partisan pamphlet of autumn 1559. The evidence is criticised in my ‘John Knox and the Reformation,’ p-157 (1905). Unhappily the letter of Mary of Guise to Henri II., after the outbreak at Perth, is missing from the archives of France.

CHAPTER XIX. THE GREAT PILLAGE.

The revolution was now under weigh, and as it had begun so it continued. There was practically no resistance by the Catholic nobility and gentry: in the Lowlands, apparently, almost all were of the new persuasion. The Duc de Châtelherault might hesitate while his son, the Protestant Earl of Arran, who had been in France as Captain of the Scots Guard, was escaping into Switzerland, and thence to England; but, on Arran's arrival there, the Hamiltons saw their chance of succeeding to the crown in place of the Catholic Mary. The Regent had but a small body of professional French soldiers. But the other side could not keep their feudal levies in the field, and they could not coin the supplies of church plate which must have fallen into their hands, until they had seized the Mint at Edinburgh, so money was scarce with them. It was plain to Knox and Kirkcaldy of Grange, and it soon became obvious to Maitland of Lethington, who, of course, forsook the Regent, that aid from England must be sought, —aid in money, and if possible in men and ships.

Meanwhile the reformers dealt with the ecclesiastical buildings of St Andrews as they had done at Perth, Knox urging them on by his sermons. We may presume that the boys broke the windows and images with a sanctified joy. A mutilated head of the Redeemer has been found in a *latrine* of the monastic buildings. As Commendator, or lay Prior, James Stewart may have secured the golden sheath of the arm-bone of the Apostle, presented by Edward I., and the other precious things, the sacred plate of the Church in a fane which had been the Delphi of Scotland. Lethington appears to have obtained most of the portable property of St Salvator's College except that beautiful monument of idolatry, the great silver mace presented by Kennedy, the Founder, work of a Parisian silversmith, in 1461: this, with maces of rude native work, escaped the spoilers. The monastery of the Franciscans is now levelled with the earth; of the Dominicans' chapel a small fragment remains. Of the residential part of the abbey a house was left: when the lead had been stripped from the roof of the church it became a quarry.

"All churchmen's goods were spoiled and reft from them . . . for every man for the most part that could get anything pertaining to any churchmen thought the same well-won gear," says a contemporary Diary. Arran himself, when he arrived in Scotland, robbed a priest of all that he had, for which Châtelherault made compensation.

By the middle of June the Regent was compelled to remove almost all her French soldiers out of Fife. Perth was evacuated. The abbey of Scone and the palace were sacked. The Congregation entered Edinburgh: they seem to have found the monasteries already swept bare, but they seized Holyrood, and the stamps at the Mint. The Regent proclaimed that this was flat rebellion, and that the rebels were intriguing with England.

Knox denied it, in the first part of his History (in origin a contemporary tract written in the autumn), but the charge was true, and Knox and Kirkcaldy were, since June, the negotiators. Already his party were offering Arran (the heir of the crown after Mary) as a husband for Elizabeth, who saw him but rejected his suit. Arran's father, Châtelherault, later openly deserted the Regent (July 1). The death of Henri II., wounded in a tournament, did not accelerate the arrival of French reinforcements for the Regent. The weaker Brethren, however, waxed weary; money was scarce, and on July 24, the Congregation evacuated Edinburgh and Leith, after a treaty which they misrepresented, broke, and accused the Regent of breaking.

Knox visited England, about August 1, but felt dissatisfied with his qualification for diplomacy. Nothing, so far, was gained from Elizabeth, save a secret supply of £3000. On the other hand, fresh French forces arrived at Leith: the place was fortified; the Regent was again accused of perfidy by the perfidious; and on October 21 the Congregation proclaimed her deposition on the alleged authority of her daughter, now Queen of France, whose seal they forged and used in their documents. One Cokky was the forger; he saw Arran use the seal on public papers. Cokky had made a die for the coins of the Congregation — a crown of thorns, with the words *Verbum Dei*. Leith, manned by French soldiers, was, till in the summer of 1560 it surrendered to the Congregation and their English allies, the centre of Catholic resistance.

In November the Congregation, after a severe defeat, fled in grief from Edinburgh to Stirling, where Knox reanimated them, and they sent Lethington to England to crave assistance. Lethington, who had been in the service of the Regent, is henceforth the central figure of every intrigue. Witty, eloquent, subtle, he was indispensable, and he had one great ruling motive, to unite the crowns and peoples of England and Scotland. Unfortunately he loved the crafty exercise of his dominion over men's minds for its own sake, and when, in some inscrutable way, he entered the clumsy plot to murder Darnley, and knew that Mary could prove his guilt, his shiftings and changes puzzle historians. In Scotland he was called Michael Wily, that is, Macchiavelli, and "the necessary evil."

In his mission to England Lethington was successful. By December 21 the

English diplomatist, Sadleyr, informed Arran that a fleet was on its way to aid the Congregation, who were sacking Paisley Abbey, and issuing proclamations in the names of Francis and Mary. The fleet arrived while the French were about to seize St Andrews (January 23, 1560), and the French plans were ruined. The Regent, who was dying, found shelter in Edinburgh Castle, which stood neutral. On February 27, 1560, at Berwick, the Congregation entered into a regular league with England, Elizabeth appearing as Protectress of Scotland, while the marriage of Mary and Francis endured.

Meanwhile, owing to the Huguenot disturbances in France (such as the Tumult of Amboise, directed against the lives of Mary's uncles the Cardinal and Duc de Guise), Mary and Francis could not help the Regent, and Huntly, a Catholic, presently, as if in fear of the western clans, joined the Congregation. Mary of Guise had found the great northern chief treacherous, and had disgraced him, and untrustworthy he continued to be. On May 7 the garrison of Leith defeated with heavy loss an Anglo-Scottish attack on the walls; but on June 16 the Regent made a good end, in peace with all men. She saw Châtelherault, James Stewart, and the Earl Marischal; she listened patiently to the preacher Willock; she bade farewell to all, and died, a notable woman, crushed by an impossible task. The garrison of Leith, meanwhile, was starving on rats and horseflesh: negotiations began, and ended in the Treaty of Edinburgh (July 6, 1560).

This Treaty, as between Mary, Queen of France and Scotland, on one hand, and England on the other, was never ratified by Mary Stuart: she appears to have thought that one clause implied her abandonment of all her claims to the English succession, typified by her quartering of the Royal English arms on her own shield. Thus there never was nor could be amity between her and her sister and her foe, Elizabeth, who was justly aggrieved by her assumption of the English arms, while Elizabeth quartered the arms of France. Again, the ratification of the Treaty as regarded Mary's rebels depended on their fulfilling certain clauses which, in fact, they instantly violated.

Preachers were planted in the larger town, some of which had already secured their services; Knox took Edinburgh. "Superintendents," — by no means bishops — were appointed, an order which soon ceased to exist in the Kirk: their duties were to wander about in their provinces, superintending and preaching. By request of the Convention (which was crowded by persons not used to attend), some preachers drew up, in four days, a Confession of Faith, on the lines of Calvin's rule at Geneva: this was approved and passed on August 17. The makers of the document profess their readiness to satisfy any critic of any point "from the mouth of God" (out of the Bible), but the pace was so good that either no criticism was offered or it was very rapidly "satisfied." On August 24 four acts were passed in which the authority of "The Bishop of Rome" was repudiated. All previous legislation, not consistent with the new Confession, was rescinded. Against celebrants and attendants of the Mass were threatened (1) confiscation and corporal punishment; (2) exile; and (3) for the third offence, Death. The death sentence is not known to have been carried out in more than one or two cases. (Prof. Hume-Brown writes that "the penalties attached to the breach of these enactments" (namely, the abjuration of Papal jurisdiction, the condemnation of all practices and doctrines contrary to the new creed, and of the celebration of Mass in Scotland) "were those approved and sanctioned by the example of every country in Christendom." But not, surely, for the same offences, such as "the saying or hearing of Mass"?—' History of Scotland,' ii. 71, 72: 1902.) Suits in ecclesiastical were removed into secular courts (August 29).

In the Confession the theology was that of Calvin. Civil rulers were admitted to be of divine institution, their duty is to "suppress idolatry," and they are not to be resisted "when doing that which pertains to their charge." But a Catholic ruler, like Mary, or a tolerant ruler, as James VI. would fain have been, apparently may be resisted for his tolerance. Resisted James was, as we shall see, whenever he attempted to be lenient to Catholics.

The Book of Discipline, by Knox and other preachers, never was ratified by the Estates, as the Confession of Faith had been. It made admirable provisions for the payment of preachers and teachers, for the Universities, and for the poor; but somebody, probably Lethington, spoke of the proposals as "devout imaginations." The Book of Discipline approved of what was later accepted by the General Assembly, The Book of Common Order in Public Worship. This book was not a stereotyped Liturgy, but it was a kind of guide to the ministers in public prayers: the minister may repeat the prayers, or "say something like in effect." On the whole, he prayed "as the Spirit moved him," and he really seems to have been regarded as inspired; his prayers were frequently political addresses. To silence these the infatuated policy of Charles I. thrust the Laudian Liturgy on the nation.

The preachers were to be chosen by popular election, after examination in knowledge and as to morals. There was to be no ordination "by laying on of hands." "Seeing the miracle is ceased, the using of the ceremony we deem not necessary"; but, if the preachers were inspired, the miracle had not ceased, and the ceremony was soon reinstated. Contrary to Genevan practice, such festivals as Christmas and Easter were abolished. The Scottish Sabbath was established in great majesty. One "rag of Rome" was retained, clerical excommunication —

the Sword of Church Discipline. It was the cutting off from Christ of the excommunicated, who were handed over to the devil, and it was attended by civil penalties equivalent to universal boycotting, practical outlawry, and followed by hell fire: “which sentence, lawfully pronounced on earth, is ratified in heaven.” The strength of the preachers lay in this terrible weapon, borrowed from the armoury of Rome.

Private morals were watched by the elders, and offenders were judged in kirk-sessions. Witchcraft, Sabbath desecration, and sexual laxities were the most prominent and popular sins. The mainstay of the system is the idea that the Bible is literally inspired; that the preachers are the perhaps inspired interpreters of the Bible, and that the country must imitate the old Hebrew persecution of “idolaters,” that is, mainly Catholics. All this meant a theocracy of preachers elected by the populace, and governing the nation by their General Assembly in which nobles and other laymen sat as elders. These peculiar institutions came hot from Geneva, and the country could never have been blessed with them, as we have observed, but for that instrument of Providence, Cardinal Beaton. Had he disposed of himself and Scotland to Henry VIII. (who would not have tolerated Presbyterian claims for an hour), Scotland would not have received the Genevan discipline, and the Kirk would have groaned under bishops.

The Reformation supplied Scotland with a class of preachers who were pure in their lives, who were not accessible to bribes (a virtue in which they stood almost alone), who were firm in their faith, and soon had learning enough to defend it; who were constant in their parish work, and of whom many were credited with prophetic and healing powers. They could exorcise ghosts from houses, devils from men possessed.

The baldness of the services, the stern nature of the creed, were congenial to the people. The drawbacks were the intolerance, the spiritual pretensions of the preachers to interference in secular affairs, and the superstition which credited men like Knox, and later, Bruce, with the gifts of prophecy and other miraculous workings, and insisted on the burning of witches and warlocks, whereof the writer knows scarcely an instance in Scotland before the Reformation.

The pulpit may be said to have discharged the functions of the press (a press which was all on one side). When, in 1562, Ninian Winzet, a Catholic priest and ex-schoolmaster, was printing a controversial tractate addressed to Knox, the magistrates seized the manuscript at the printer’s house, and the author was fortunate in making his escape. The nature of the Confession of Faith, and of the claims of the ministers to interfere in secular affairs, with divine authority, was certain to cause war between the Crown and the Kirk. That war, whether open and armed, or a conflict in words, endured till, in 1690, the weapon of excommunication with civil penalties was quietly removed from the ecclesiastical armoury. Such were the results of a religious revolution hurriedly effected.

The Lords now sent an embassy to Elizabeth about the time of the death of Amy Robsart, and while Amy's husband, Robert Dudley, was very dear to the English queen, to urge, vainly, her marriage with Arran. On December 5, 1560, Francis II. died, leaving Mary Stuart a mere dowager; while her kinsmen, the Guises, lost power, which fell into the unfriendly hands of Catherine de Medici. At once Arran, who made Knox his confidant, began to woo Mary with a letter and a ring. Her reply perhaps increased his tendency to madness, which soon became open and incurable by the science of the day.

Here we must try to sketch Mary, *la, Reine blanche*, in her white royal mourning. Her education had been that of the learned ladies of her age; she had some knowledge of Latin, and knew French and Italian. French was to her almost a mother-tongue, but not quite; she had retained her Scots, and her attempts to write English are, at first, curiously imperfect. She had lived in a profligate Court, but she was not the wanton of hostile slanders. She had all the guile of statesmanship, said the English envoy, Randolph; and she long exercised great patience under daily insults to her religion and provocations from Elizabeth. She was generous, pitiful, naturally honourable, and most loyal to all who served her. But her passions, whether of love or hate, once roused, were tyrannical. In person she was tall, like her mother, and graceful, with beautiful hands. Her face was somewhat long, the nose long and straight, the lips and chin beautifully moulded, the eyebrows very slender, the eyes of a reddish brown, long and narrow. Her hair was russet, drawn back from a lofty brow; her smile was captivating; she was rather fascinating than beautiful; her courage and her love of courage in others were universally confessed.

In January, 1561, the Estates of Scotland ordered James Stuart, Mary's natural brother, to visit her in France. In spring she met him, and an envoy from Huntly (Lesley, later Bishop of Ross), who represented the Catholic party, and asked Mary to land in Aberdeen, and march south at the head of the Gordons and certain northern clans. The proposal came from noblemen of Perthshire, Angus, and the north, whose forces could not have faced a Lowland army. Mary, who had learned from her mother that Huntly was treacherous, preferred to take her chance with her brother, who, returning by way of England, moved Elizabeth to recognise the Scottish queen as her heir. But Elizabeth would never settle the succession, and, as Mary refused to ratify the Treaty of Edinburgh, forbade her to travel home through England.

CHAPTER XX. MARY IN SCOTLAND.

On August 19, 1561, in a dense fog, and almost unexpected and unwelcomed, Mary landed in Leith. She had told the English ambassador to France that she would constrain none of her subjects in religion, and hoped to be unconstrained. Her first act was to pardon some artisans, under censure for a Robin Hood frolic: her motive, says Knox, was her knowledge that they had acted "in despite of religion."

The Lord James had stipulated that she might have her Mass in her private chapel. Her priest was mobbed by the godly; on the following Sunday Knox denounced her Mass, and had his first interview with her later. In vain she spoke of her conscience; Knox said that it was unenlightened. Lethington wished that he would "deal more gently with a young princess unpersuaded." There were three or four later interviews, but Knox, strengthened by a marriage with a girl of sixteen, daughter of Lord Ochiltree, a Stewart, was proof against the queen's fascination. In spite of insults to her faith offered even at pageants of welcome, Mary kept her temper, and, for long, cast in her lot with Lethington and her brother, whose hope was to reconcile her with Elizabeth.

The Court was gay with riotous young French nobles, well mated with Bothwell, who, though a Protestant, had sided with Mary of Guise during the brawls of 1559. He was now a man of twenty-seven, profligate, reckless, a conqueror of hearts, a speaker of French, a ruffian, and well educated.

In December it was arranged that the old bishops and other high clerics should keep two-thirds of their revenues, the other third to be divided between the preachers and the queen, "between God and the devil," says Knox. Thenceforth there was a rift between the preachers and the politicians, Lethington and Lord James (now Earl of Mar), on whom Mary leaned. The new Earl of Mar was furtively created Earl of Murray and enjoyed the gift after the overthrow of Huntly.

In January 1562 Mary asked for an interview with Elizabeth. Certainly Lethington hoped that Elizabeth "would be able to do much with Mary in religion," meaning that, if Mary's claims to succeed Elizabeth were granted, she might turn Anglican. The request for a meeting, dallied with but never granted, occupied diplomatists, while, at home, Arran (March 31) accused Bothwell of training him into a plot to seize Mary's person. Arran probably told truth, but he now went mad; Bothwell was imprisoned in the castle till his escape to England in August 1562. Lethington, in June, was negotiating for Mary's interview with Elizabeth; Knox bitterly opposed it; the preachers feared that the queen would turn Anglican, and bishops might be let loose in Scotland. The masques for Mary's reception were actually being organised, when, in July, Elizabeth, on the pretext of persecutions by the Guises in France, broke off the negotiations.

The rest of the year was occupied by an affair of which the origins are obscure. Mary, with her brother and Lethington, made a progress into the north, were affronted by and attacked Huntly, who died suddenly (October 28) at the fight of Corrichie; seized a son of his, who was executed (November 2), and spoiled his castle which contained much of the property of the Church of Aberdeen. Mary's motives for destroying her chief Catholic subject are not certainly known. Her brother, Lord James, in February made Earl of Mar, now received the lands and title of Earl of Murray. At some date in this year Knox preached against Mary because she gave a dance. He chose to connect her dance with some attack on the Huguenots in France. According to 'The Book of Discipline' he should have remonstrated privately, as Mary told him. The dates are inextricable. (See my 'John Knox and the Reformation,' p-218.) Till the spring of 1565 the main business was the question of the queen's marriage. This continued to divide the ruling Protestant nobles from the preachers. Knox dreaded an alliance with Spain, a marriage with Don Carlos. But Elizabeth, to waste time, offered Mary the hand of Lord Robert Dudley (Leicester), and, strange as it appears, Mary would probably have accepted him, as late as 1565, for Elizabeth let it be understood that to marry a Catholic prince would be the signal for war, while Mary hoped that, if she accepted Elizabeth's favourite, Dudley, she would be acknowledged as Elizabeth's heiress. Mary was young, and showed little knowledge of the nature of woman.

In 1563 came the affair of Châtelard, a French minor poet, a Huguenot apparently, who, whether in mere fatuity or to discredit Mary, hid himself under her bed at Holyrood, and again at Burntisland. Mary had listened to his rhymes, had danced with him, and smiled on him, but Châtelard went too far. He was decapitated in the market street of St Andrews (Feb. 22, 1563). It is clear, if we may trust Knox's account, singularly unlike Brantôme's, that Châtelard was a Huguenot.

About Easter priests were locked up in Ayrshire, the centre of Presbyterian fanaticism, for celebrating Mass. This was in accordance with law, and to soften Knox the girl queen tried her personal influence. He resisted "the devil"; Mary yielded, and allowed Archbishop Hamilton and some fifty other clerics to be placed "in prison courteous." The Estates, which met on May 27 for the first time since the queen landed, were mollified, but were as far as ever from passing the Book of Discipline. They did pass a law condemning witches to death, a source of unspeakable cruelties. Knox and Murray now ceased to be on terms till their common interests brought them together in 1565.

In June 1563 Elizabeth requested Mary to permit the return to Scotland of Lennox (the traitor to the national cause and to Cardinal Beaton, and the rival of the Hamiltons for the succession to the thrones), apparently for the very purpose of entangling Mary in a marriage with Lennox's son Darnley, and then thwarting it. (It was not Mary who asked Elizabeth to send Lennox.) Knox's favourite candidate was Lord Robert Dudley: despite his notorious character he sometimes favoured the English Puritans. When Holyrood had been invaded by a mob who, in Mary's absence in autumn 1563, broke up the Catholic attendants on Mass (such attendance, in Mary's absence, was illegal), and when both parties were summoned to trial, Knox called together the godly. The Council cleared him of the charge of making an unlawful convocation (they might want to make one, any day, themselves), and he was supported by the General Assembly. Similar conduct of the preachers thirty years later gave James VI. the opportunity to triumph over the Kirk.

In June 1564 there was still discord between the Kirk and the Lords, and, in a long argument with Lethington, Knox maintained the right of the godly to imitate the slayings of idolaters by Phineas and Jehu: the doctrine bore blood-red fruits among the later Covenanters. Elizabeth, in May 1564, in vain asked Mary to withdraw the permission (previously asked for by her) to allow Lennox to visit Scotland and plead for the restitution of his lands. The objection to Lennox's appearance had come, through Randolph, from Knox. "You may cause us to take the Lord Darnley," wrote Kirkcaldy to Cecil, to stop Elizabeth's systems of delays; and Sir James Melville, after going on a mission to Elizabeth, warned Mary that she would never part with her minion, now Earl of Leicester.

Lennox, in autumn 1564, arrived and was restored to his estates, while Leicester and Cecil worked for the sending of his son Darnley to Scotland. Leicester had no desire to desert Elizabeth's Court and his chance of touching her maiden heart.

The intrigues of Cecil, Leicester, and Elizabeth resemble rather a chapter in a novel than a page in history. Elizabeth notoriously hated and, when she could, thwarted all marriages. She desired that Mary should never marry: a union with a Catholic prince she vetoed, threatening war; and Leicester she offered merely "to drive time." But Mary, evasively tempted by hints, later withdrawn, of her recognition as Elizabeth's successor, was, till the end of March 1565, encouraged by Randolph, the English ambassador at her Court, to remain in hope of wedding Leicester.

Randolph himself was not in the secret of the English intrigue, which was to slip Darnley at Mary. He came (February 1565): Cecil and Leicester had "used earnest means" to ensure his coming. On March 17 Mary was informed that she would never be recognised as Elizabeth's successor till events should occur which never could occur. On receiving this news Mary wept; she also was indignant at the long and humiliating series of Elizabeth's treacheries. Her patience broke down; she turned to Darnley, thereby, as the English intriguers designed, breaking up the concord of her nobles. To marry Darnley involved the feud of the Hamiltons, and the return of Murray (whom Darnley had offended), of Châtelherault, Argyll, and many other nobles to the party of Knox and the preachers. Leicester would have been welcome to Knox; Darnley was a Catholic, if anything, and a weak passionate young fool. Mary, in the clash of interests, was a lost woman, as Randolph truly said, with sincere pity. Her long endurance, her attempts to "run the English course," were wasted.

David Riccio, who came to Scotland as a musician in 1561, was now high in her and in Darnley's favour. Murray was accused of a conspiracy to seize Darnley and Lennox; the godly began to organise an armed force (June 1565); Mary summoned from exile Bothwell, a man of the sword. On July 29th she married Darnley, and on August 6th Murray, who had refused to appear to answer the charges of treason brought against him, though a safe-conduct was offered, was outlawed and proclaimed a rebel, while Huntly's son, Lord George, was to be restored to his estates. Thus everything seemed to indicate that Mary had been exasperated into breaking with the party of moderation, the party of Murray and Lethington, and been driven into courses where her support, if any, must come from France and Rome. Yet she married without waiting for the necessary dispensation from the Pope. Her policy was henceforth influenced by her favour to Riccio, and by the jealous and arrogant temper of her husband. Mary well knew that Elizabeth had sent money to her rebels, whom she now pursued all through the south of Scotland; they fled from Edinburgh, where the valiant Brethren, brave enough in throwing stones at pilloried priests, refused to join them; and despite the feuds in her own camp, where Bothwell and Darnley were already on the worst terms, Mary drove the rebel lords across the Border at Carlisle on October 8.

Mary seemed triumphant, but the men with her — Lethington, and Morton the Chancellor — were disaffected; Darnley was mutinous: he thought himself neglected; he and his father resented Mary's leniency to Châtelherault, who had submitted and been sent to France; all parties hated Riccio. There was to be a Parliament early in March 1566. In February Mary sent the Bishop of Dunblane to Rome to ask for a subsidy; she intended to reintroduce the Spiritual Estate into the House as electors of the Lords of the Articles, “tending to have done some good anent the restoring of the old religion.” The Nuncio who was to have brought the Pope’s money later insisted that Mary should take the heads of Murray, Argyle, Morton, and Lethington! Whether she aimed at securing more than tolerance for Catholics is uncertain; but the Parliament, in which the exiled Lords were to be forfeited, was never held. The other nobles would never permit such a measure.

George Douglas, a stirring cadet of the great House was exciting Darnley’s jealousy of Riccio, but already Randolph (February 5, 1566) had written to Cecil that “the wisest were aiming at putting all in hazard” to restore the exiled Lords. The nobles, in the last resort, would all stand by each other: there was now a Douglas plot of the old sort to bring back the exiles; and Darnley, with his jealous desire to murder Riccio, was but the cat’s-paw to light the train and explode Mary and her Government. Ruthven, whom Mary had always distrusted, came into the conspiracy. Through Randolph all was known in England. “Bands” were drawn up, signed by Argyll (safe in his own hills), Murray, Glencairn, Rothes, Boyd, Ochiltree (the father of Knox’s young wife), and Darnley. His name was put forward; his rights and succession were secured against the Hamiltons; Protestantism, too, was to be defended. Many Douglases, many of the Lothian gentry, were in the plot. Murray was to arrive from England as soon as Riccio had been slain and Mary had been seized.

Randolph knew all and reported to Elizabeth’s ministers.

The plan worked with mechanical precision. On March 9 Morton and his company occupied Holyrood, going up the great staircase about eight at night; while Darnley and Ruthven, a dying man, entered the queen’s supper-room by a privy stair. Morton’s men burst in, Riccio was dragged forth, and died under forty daggers. Bothwell, Atholl, and Huntly, partisans of Mary, escaped from the palace; with them Mary managed to communicate on the morrow, when she also held talk with Murray, who had returned with the other exiles. She had worked on the fears and passions of Darnley; by promises of amnesty the Lords were induced to withdraw their guards next day, and in the following night, by a secret passage, and through the tombs of kings, Mary and Darnley reached the horses brought by Arthur Erskine.

It was a long dark ride to Dunbar, but there Mary was safe. She pardoned and won over Glencairn, whom she liked, and Rothes; Bothwell and Huntly joined her with a sufficient force, Ruthven and Morton fled to Berwick (Ruthven was to die in England), and Knox hastened into Kyle in Ayrshire. Darnley, who declared his own innocence and betrayed his accomplices, was now equally hated and despised by his late allies and by the queen and Murray, — indeed, by all men, chiefly by Morton and Argyll. Lethington was in hiding; but he was indispensable, and in September was reconciled to Mary.

On June 19, in Edinburgh Castle, she bore her child, later James VI.; on her recovery Darnley was insolent, and was the more detested, while Bothwell was high in favour. In October most of the Lords signed, with Murray, a band for setting Darnley aside — *not* for his murder. He is said to have denounced Mary to Spain, France, and Rome for neglecting Catholic interests. In mid-October Mary was seriously ill at Jedburgh, where Bothwell, wounded in an encounter with a Border reiver, was welcomed, while Darnley, coldly received, went to his father's house on the Forth. On her recovery Mary resided in the last days of November at Craigmillar Castle, near Edinburgh. Here Murray, Argyll, Bothwell, Huntly, and Lethington held counsel with her as to Darnley. Lethington said that "a way would be found," a way that Parliament would approve, while Murray would "look through his fingers." Lennox believed that the plan was to arrest Darnley on some charge, and slay him if he resisted.

At Stirling (December 17), when the young prince was baptised with Catholic rites, Darnley did not appear; he sulked in his own rooms. A week later, the exiles guilty of Riccio's murder were recalled, among them Morton; and Darnley, finding all his enemies about to be united, went to Glasgow, where he fell ill of smallpox. Mary offered a visit (she had had the malady as a child), and was rudely rebuffed (January 1-13, 1567), but she was with him by January 21. From Glasgow, at this time, was written the long and fatal letter to Bothwell, which places Mary's guilt in luring Darnley to his death beyond doubt, if we accept the letters as authentic.

Darnley was carried in a litter to the lonely house of Kirk o' Field, on the south wall of Edinburgh. Here Mary attended him in his sickness. On Sunday morning, February 9, Murray left Edinburgh for Fife. In the night of Sunday 9-Monday 10, the house where Darnley lay was blown up by gunpowder, and he, with an attendant, was found dead in the garden: how he was slain is not known.

That Bothwell, in accordance with a band signed by himself, Huntly, Argyll, and Lethington, and aided by some Border ruffians, laid and exploded the powder is certain. Morton was apprised by Lethington and Bothwell of the plot, but refused to join it without Mary's written commission, which he did not obtain. Against the queen there is no trustworthy direct evidence (if we distrust her alleged letters to Bothwell), but her conduct in protecting and marrying Bothwell (who was really in love with his wife) shows that she did not disapprove. The trial of Bothwell was a farce; Mary's abduction by him (April 24) and retreat with him to Dunbar was collusive. She married Bothwell on May 15. Her nobles, many of whom had signed a document urging her to marry

Bothwell, rose against her; on June 15, 1567, she surrendered to them at Carberry Hill, while they, several of them deep in the murder plot, were not sorry to let Bothwell escape to Dunbar. After some piratical adventures, being pursued by Kirkcaldy he made his way to Denmark, where he died a prisoner.

Mary, first carried to Edinburgh and there insulted by the populace, was next hurried to Lochleven Castle. Her alleged letters to Bothwell were betrayed to the Lords (June 21), probably through Sir James Balfour, who commanded in Edinburgh Castle. Perhaps Murray (who had left for France before the marriage to Bothwell), perhaps fear of Elizabeth, or human pity, induced her captors, contrary to the counsel of Lethington, to spare her life, when she had signed her abdication, while they crowned her infant son. Murray accepted the Regency; a Parliament in December established the Kirk; acquitted themselves of rebellion; and announced that they had proof of Mary's guilt in her own writing. Her romantic escape from Lochleven (May 2, 1568) gave her but an hour of freedom. Defeated on her march to Dumbarton Castle in the battle of Langside Hill, she lost heart and fled to the coast of Galloway; on May 16 crossed the Solway to Workington in Cumberland; and in a few days was Elizabeth's prisoner in Carlisle Castle.

Mary had hitherto been a convinced but not a very obedient daughter of the Church; for example, it appears that she married Darnley before the arrival of the Pope's dispensation. At this moment Philip of Spain, the French envoy to Scotland, and the French Court had no faith in her innocence of Darnley's death; and the Pope said "he knew not which of these ladies were the better" — Mary or Elizabeth. But from this time, while a captive in England, Mary was the centre of the hopes of English Catholics: in miniatures she appears as queen, quartering the English arms; she might further the ends of Spain, of France, of Rome, of English rebels, while her existence was a nightmare to the Protestants of Scotland and a peril to Elizabeth.

After Mary's flight, Murray was, as has been said, Regent for the crowned baby James. In his council were the sensual, brutal, but vigorous Morton, with Mar, later himself Regent, a man of milder nature; Glencairn; Ruthven, whom Mary detested — he had tried to make unwelcome love to her at Lochleven; and "the necessary evil," Lethington. How a man so wily became a party to the murder of Darnley cannot be known: now he began to perceive that, if Mary were restored, as he believed that she would be, his only safety lay in securing her gratitude by secret services.

On the other side were the Hamiltons with their ablest man, the Archbishop; the Border spears who were loyal to Bothwell; and two of the conspirators in the murder of Darnley, Argyll and Huntly; with Fleming and Herries, who were much attached to Mary. The two parties, influenced by Elizabeth, did not now come to blows, but awaited the results of English inquiries into Mary's guilt, and of Elizabeth's consequent action.

CHAPTER XXI. MINORITY OF JAMES VI.

"Let none of them escape" was Elizabeth's message to the gaolers of Mary and her companions at Carlisle. The unhappy queen prayed to see her in whose hospitality she had confided, or to be allowed to depart free. Elizabeth's policy was to lead her into consenting to reply to her subjects' accusations, and Mary drifted into the shuffling English inquiries at York in October, while she was lodged at Bolton Castle. Murray, George Buchanan, Lethington (now distrusted by Murray), and Morton produced, for Norfolk and other English Commissioners at York, copies, at least, of the incriminating letters which horrified the Duke of Norfolk. Yet, probably through the guile of Lethington, he changed his mind, and became a suitor for Mary's hand. He bade her refuse compromise, whereas compromise was Lethington's hope: a full and free inquiry would reveal his own guilt in Darnley's murder. The inquiry was shifted to London in December, Mary always being refused permission to appear and speak for herself; nay, she was not allowed even to see the letters which she was accused of having written. Her own Commissioners, Lord Herries and Bishop Lesley, who (as Mary knew in Herries's case) had no faith in her innocence, showed their want of confidence by proposing a compromise; this was not admitted. Morton explained how he got the silver casket with the fatal letters, poems to Bothwell, and other papers; they were read in translations, English and Scots; handwritings were compared, with no known result; evidence was heard, and Elizabeth, at last, merely decided — that she could not admit Mary to her presence. The English Lords agreed, "as the case does now stand," and presently many of them were supporting Norfolk in his desire to marry the accused. Murray was told (January 10, 1669) that he had proved nothing which could make Elizabeth "take any evil opinion of the queen, her good sister," nevertheless, Elizabeth would support him in his government of Scotland, while declining to recognise James VI. as king.

All compromises Mary now utterly refused: she would live and die a queen. Henceforth the tangled intrigues cannot be disengaged in a work of this scope. Elizabeth made various proposals to Mary, all involving her resignation as queen, or at least the suspension of her rights. Mary refused to listen; her party in Scotland, led by Châtelherault, Herries, Huntly, and Argyll, did not venture to meet Murray and his party in war, and was counselled by Lethington, who still, in semblance, was of Murray's faction. Lethington was convinced that, sooner or later, Mary would return; and he did not wish to incur “her *particular* ill-will.” He knew that Mary, as she said, “had that in black and white which would hang him” for the murder of Darnley. Now Lethington, Huntly, and Argyll were daunted, without stroke of sword, by Murray, and a Convention to discuss messages from Elizabeth and Mary met at Perth (July 25-28, 1569), and refused to allow the annulment of her marriage with Bothwell, though previously they had insisted on its annulment. Presently Lethington was publicly accused of Darnley’s murder by Crawford, a retainer of Lennox; was imprisoned, but was released by Kirkcaldy, commander in Edinburgh Castle, which henceforth became the fortress of Mary’s cause.

The secret of Norfolk’s plan to marry the Scottish queen now reached Elizabeth, making her more hostile to Mary; an insurrection in the North broke out; the Earl of Northumberland was driven into Scotland, was betrayed by Hecky Armstrong, and imprisoned at Loch Leven. Murray offered to hand over Northumberland to Elizabeth in exchange for Mary, her life to be guaranteed by hostages, but, on January 23, 1570, Murray was shot by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh from a window of a house in Linlithgow belonging to Archbishop Hamilton. The murderer escaped and joined his clan. During his brief regency, Murray had practically detached Huntly and Argyll from armed support of Mary’s cause; he had reduced the Border to temporary quiet by the free use of the gibbet; but he had not ventured to face Lethington’s friends and bring him to trial: if he had, many others would have been compromised. Murray was sly and avaricious, but, had he been legitimate, Scotland would have been well governed under his vigour and caution.

REGENCIES OF LENNOX, MAR, AND MORTON.

Randolph was now sent to Edinburgh to make peace between Mary's party and her foes impossible. He succeeded; the parties took up arms, and Sussex ravaged the Border in revenge of a raid by Buccleuch. On May 14, Lennox, with an English force, was sent north: he devastated the Hamilton country; was made Regent in July; and, in April 1571, had his revenge on Archbishop Hamilton, who was taken at the capture, by Crawford, of Dumbarton Castle, held by Lord Fleming, a post of vital moment to the Marians; and was hanged at Stirling for complicity in the slaying of Murray. George Buchanan, Mary's old tutor, took advantage of these facts to publish quite a fresh account of Darnley's murder: the guilt of the Hamiltons now made that of Bothwell almost invisible!

Edinburgh Castle, under Kirkcaldy with Lethington, held out; Knox reluctantly retired from Edinburgh to St Andrews, where he was unpopular; but many of Mary's Lords deserted her, and though Lennox was shot (September 4) in an attack by Buccleuch and Ker of Ferniehirst on Stirling Castle, where he was holding a Parliament, he was succeeded by Mar, who was inspired by Morton, a far stronger man. Presently the discovery of a plot between Mary, Norfolk, the English Catholics, and Spain, caused the Duke's execution, and more severe incarceration for Mary.

In Scotland there was no chance of peace. Morton and his associates would not resign the lands of the Hamiltons, Lethington, and Kirkcaldy; Lethington knew that no amnesty would cover his guilt (though he had been nominally cleared) in the slaying of Darnley. One after the other of Mary's adherents made their peace; but Kirkcaldy and Lethington, in Edinburgh Castle, seemed safe while money and supplies held out. Knox had prophesied that Kirkcaldy would be hanged, but did not live to see his desire on his enemy, or on Mary, whom Elizabeth was about to hand over to Mar for instant execution. Knox died on November 24, 1572; Mar, the Regent, had predeceased him by a month, leaving Morton in power. On May 28, 1573, the castle, attacked by guns and engineers from England, and cut off from water, struck its flag. The brave Kirkcaldy was hanged; Lethington, who had long been moribund, escaped by an opportune death. The best soldier in Scotland and the most modern of her wits thus perished together. Concerning Knox, the opinions of his contemporaries differed. By his own account the leaders of his party deemed him "too extreme," and David Hume finds his ferocious delight in chronicling the murders of his foes “rather amusing,” though sad! Quarrels of religion apart, Knox was a very good-hearted man; but where religion was concerned, his temper was remote from the Christian. He was a perfect agitator; he knew no tolerance, he spared no violence of language, and in diplomacy, when he diplomatised, he was no more scrupulous than another. Admirably vigorous and personal as literature, his History needs constant correction from documents. While to his secretary, Bannatyne, Knox seemed “a man of God, the light of Scotland, the mirror of godliness”; many silent, douce folk among whom he laboured probably agreed in the allegation quoted by a diarist of the day, that Knox “had, as was alleged, the most part of the blame of all the sorrows of Scotland since the slaughter of the late Cardinal.”

In these years of violence, of “the Douglas wars” as they were called, two new tendencies may be observed. In January 1572, Morton induced an assembly of preachers at Leith to accept one of his clan, John Douglas, as Archbishop of St Andrews: other bishops were appointed, called *Tulchan* bishops, from the *tulchan* or effigy of a calf employed to induce cows to yield their milk. The Church revenues were drawn through these unapostolic prelates, and came into the hands of the State, or at least of Morton. With these bishops, superintendents co-existed, but not for long. “The horns of the mitre” already began to peer above Presbyterian parity, and Morton is said to have remarked that there would never be peace in Scotland till some preachers were hanged. In fact, there never was peace between Kirk and State till a deplorable number of preachers were hanged by the Governments of Charles II. and James II.

A meeting of preachers in Edinburgh, after the Bartholomew massacre, in the autumn of 1572, demanded that “it shall be lawful to all the subjects in this realm to invade them and every one of them to the death.” The persons to be “invaded to the death” are recalcitrant Catholics, “grit or small,” persisting in remaining in Scotland.

The alarmed demands of the preachers were merely disregarded by the Privy Council. The ruling nobles, as Bishop Lesley says, would never gratify the preachers by carrying out the bloody penal Acts to their full extent against Catholics. There was no expulsion of all Catholics who dared to stay; no popular massacre of all who declined to go. While Morton was in power he kept the preachers well in hand. He did worse: he starved the ministers, and thrust into the best livings wanton young gentlemen, of whom his kinsman, Archibald Douglas, an accomplice in Darnley’s death and a trebly-dyed traitor, was the worst. But in 1575, the great Andrew Melville, an erudite scholar and a most determined person, began to protest against the very name of bishop in the Kirk; and in Adamson, made by Morton successor of John Douglas at St Andrews, Melville found a mark and a victim. In economics, as an English diplomatist wrote to Cecil in November 1572, the country, despite the civil war, was thriving; “the noblemen’s great credit decaying, . . . the ministry and religion increaseth, and the desire in them to prevent the practice of the Papists.” The Englishman, in November, may refer to the petition for persecution of October 20, 1572.

The death of old Châtelherault now left the headship of the Hamiltons in more resolute hands; Morton was confronted by opposition from Argyll, Atholl, Buchan, and Mar; and Morton, in 1576-1577, made approaches to Mary. When the young James VI. came to his majority Morton’s enemies would charge him with his guilty foreknowledge, through Both well, of Darnley’s murder, so he made advances to Mary in hope of an amnesty. She suspected a trap and held aloof.

CHAPTER XXII. REIGN OF JAMES VI.

On March 4, 1578, a strong band of nobles, led by Argyll, presented so firm a front that Morton resigned the Regency; but in April 1578, a Douglas plot, backed by Angus and Morton, secured for the Earl of Mar the command of Stirling Castle and custody of the King; in June 1578, after an appearance of civil war, Morton was as strong as ever. After dining with him, in April 1579, Atholl, the main hope of Mary in Scotland, died suddenly, and suspicion of poison fell on his host. But Morton’s ensuing success in expelling from Scotland the Hamilton leaders, Lord Claude and Arbroath, brought down his own doom. With them Sir James Balfour, deep in the secrets of Darnley’s death, was exiled; he opened a correspondence with Mary, and presently procured for her “a contented revenge” on Morton.

Two new characters in the long intrigue of vengeance now come on the scene. Both were Stewarts, and as such were concerned in the feud against the Hamiltons. The first was a cousin of Darnley, brought up in France, namely Esme Stuart d’Aubigny, son of John, a brother of Lennox. He had all the accomplishments likely to charm the boy king, now in his fourteenth year.

James had hitherto been sternly educated by George Buchanan, more mildly by Peter Young. Buchanan and others had not quite succeeded in bringing him to scorn and hate his mother; Lady Mar, who was very kind to him, had exercised a gentler influence. The boy had read much, had hunted yet more eagerly, and had learned dissimulation and distrust, so natural to a child weak and ungainly in body and the conscious centre of the intrigues of violent men. A favourite of his was James Stewart, son of Lord Ochiltree, and brother-in-law of John Knox. Stewart was Captain of the Guard, a man of learning, who had been in foreign service; he was skilled in all bodily feats, was ambitious, reckless, and resolute, and no friend of the preachers. The two Stewarts, d’Aubigny and the Captain, became allies.

In a Parliament at Edinburgh (November 1579) their foes, the chiefs of the Hamiltons, were forfeited (they had been driven to seek shelter with Elizabeth), while d’Aubigny got their lands and the key of Scotland, Dumbarton Castle, on the estuary of Clyde. The Kirk, regarding d’Aubigny, now Earl of Lennox, despite his Protestant professions, as a Papist or an atheist, had little joy in Morton, who was denounced in a printed placard as guilty in Darnley’s murder: Sir James Balfour could show his signature to the band to slay Darnley, signed by Huntly, Bothwell, Argyll, and Lethington. This was not true. Balfour knew much, was himself involved, but had not the band to show, or did not dare to produce it.

To strengthen himself, Lennox was reconciled to the Kirk; to help the Hamiltons, Elizabeth sent Bowes to intrigue against Lennox, who was conspiring in Mary's interest, or in that of the Guises, or in his own. When Lennox succeeded in getting Dumbarton Castle, an open door for France, into his power, Bowes was urged by Elizabeth to join with Morton and "lay violent hands" on Lennox (August 31, 1580), but in a month Elizabeth cancelled her orders.

Bowes was recalled; Morton, to whom English aid had been promised, was left to take his chances. Morton had warning from Lord Robert Stewart, Mary's half-brother, to fly the country, for Sir James Balfour, with his information, had landed. On December 31, 1580, Captain Stewart accused Morton, in presence of the Council, of complicity in Darnley's murder. He was put in ward; Elizabeth threatened war; the preachers stormed against Lennox; a plot to murder him (a Douglas plot) and to seize James was discovered; Randolph, who now represented Elizabeth, was fired at, and fled to Berwick; James Stewart was created Earl of Arran. In March 1581 the king and Lennox tried to propitiate the preachers by signing a negative Covenant against Rome, later made into a precedent for the famous Covenant of 1638. On June 1 Morton was tried for guilty foreknowledge of Darnley's death. He was executed deservedly, and his head was stuck on a spike of the Tolbooth. The death of this avaricious, licentious, and resolute though unamiable Protestant was a heavy blow to the preachers and their party, and a crook in the lot of Elizabeth.

THE WAR OF KIRK AND KING.

The next twenty years were occupied with the strife of Kirk and King, whence arose "all the cumber of Scotland" till 1689. The preachers, led by the learned and turbulent Andrew Melville, had an ever-present terror of a restoration of Catholicism, the creed of a number of the nobles and of an unknown proportion of the people. The Reformation of 1559-1560 had been met by no Catholic resistance; we might suppose that the enormous majority of the people were Protestants, though the reverse has been asserted. But whatever the theological preferences of the country may have been, the justifiable fear of practical annexation by France had overpowered all other considerations. By 1580 it does not seem that there was any good reason for the Protestant nervousness, even if some northern counties and northern and Border peers preferred Catholicism. The king himself, a firm believer in his own theological learning and acuteness, was thoroughly Protestant.

But the preachers would scarcely allow him to remain a Protestant. Their claims, as formulated by Andrew Melville, were inconsistent with the right of the State to be mistress in her own house. In a General Assembly at Glasgow (1581) Presbyteries were established; Episcopacy was condemned; the Kirk claimed for herself a separate jurisdiction, uninvadable by the State. Elizabeth, though for State reasons she usually backed the Presbyterians against James, also warned him of "a sect of dangerous consequence, which would have no king but a presbytery." The Kirk, with her sword of excommunication, and with the inspired violence of the political sermons and prayers, invaded the secular authority whenever and wherever she pleased, and supported the preachers in their claims to be tried first, when accused of treasonable libels, in their own ecclesiastical courts. These were certain to acquit them.

James, if not pressed in this fashion, had no particular reason for desiring Episcopal government of the Kirk, but being so pressed he saw no refuge save in bishops. Meanwhile his chief advisers — d'Aubigny, now Duke of Lennox, and James Stewart, the destroyer of Morton, now, to the prejudice of the Hamiltons, Earl of Arran — were men whose private life, at least in Arran's case, was scandalous. If Arran were a Protestant, he was impatient of the rule of the pulpiteers; and Lennox was working, if not sincerely in Mary's interests, certainly in his own and for those of the Catholic House of Guise. At the same time he favoured the king's Episcopal schemes, and, late in 1581, appointed a preacher named Montgomery to the recently vacant Archbishopric of Glasgow, while he himself, like Morton, drew most of the revenues. Hence arose tumults, and, late in 1581 and in 1582, priestly and Jesuit emissaries went and came, intriguing for a Catholic rising, to be supported by a large foreign force which they had not the slightest chance of obtaining from any quarter. Archbishop Montgomery was excommunicated by the Kirk, and James, as we saw, had signed "A Negative Confession" (1581).

In 1582 Elizabeth was backing the exiled Presbyterian Earl of Angus and the Earl of Gowrie (Ruthven), while Lennox was contemplating a *coup d'état* in Edinburgh (August 27). Gowrie, with the connivance of England, struck the first blow. He, Mar, and their accomplices captured James at Ruthven Castle, near Perth (August 23, "the Raid of Ruthven"), with the approval of the General Assembly of the Kirk. It was a Douglas plot managed by Angus and Elizabeth. James Stewart of the Guard (now Earl of Arran) was made prisoner; Lennox fled the country. In October 1582, in a Parliament at Holyrood, the conspirators passed Acts indemnifying themselves, and the General Assembly approved them. These Acts were rescinded later, and James had learned for life his hatred of the Presbyterians who had treacherously seized and insulted their king.

In May 1583 Lennox died in Paris, leaving an heir. On June 27 James made his escape, "a free king," to the castle of St Andrews: he proclaimed an amnesty and feigned reconciliation with his captor, the Earl of Gowrie, chief of the house so hateful to Mary — the Ruthvens. At the same time James placed himself in friendly relations with his kinsfolk, the Guises, the terror of Protestants. He had already been suspected, on account of Lennox, as inclined to Rome: in fact, he was always a Protestant, but baited on every side — by England, by the Kirk, by a faction of his nobles: he intrigued for allies in every direction.

The secret history of his intrigues has never been written. We find the persecuted and astute lad either in communication with Rome, or represented by shady adventurers as employing them to establish such communications. At one time, as has been recently discovered, a young man giving himself out as James's bastard brother (a son of Darnley begotten in England) was professing to bear letters from James to the Pope. He was arrested on the Continent, and James could not be brought either to avow or disclaim his kinsman!

A new Lennox, son of the last, was created a duke; a new Bothwell, Francis Stewart (nephew of Mary's Bothwell), began to rival his uncle in turbulence. Knowing that Anglo-Scottish plots to capture him again were being woven daily by Angus and others, James, in February 1584, wrote a friendly and compromising letter to the Pope. In April, Arran (James Stewart) crushed a conspiracy by seizing Gowrie at Dundee, and then routing a force with which

Mar and Angus had entered Scotland. Gowrie, confessing his guilt as a conspirator, was executed at Stirling (May 2, 1584), leaving, of course, his feud to his widow and son. The chief preachers fled; Andrew Melville was already in exile, with several others, in England. Melville, in February, had been charged with preaching seditious sermons, had brandished a Hebrew Bible at the Privy Council, had refused secular jurisdiction and appealed to a spiritual court, by which he was certain to be acquitted. Henceforward, when charged with uttering treasonable libels from the pulpit, the preachers were wont to appeal, in the first instance, to a court of their own cloth, and on this point James in the long-run triumphed over the Kirk.

In a Parliament of May 18, 1584, such declinature of royal jurisdiction was, by "The Black Acts," made treason: Episcopacy was established; the heirs of Gowrie were disinherited; Angus, Mar, and other rebels were forfeited. But such forfeitures never held long in Scotland.

In August 1584 a new turn was given to James's policy by Arran, who was Protestant, if anything, in belief, and hoped to win over Elizabeth, the harbourer of all enemies of James. Arran's instrument was the beautiful young Master of Gray, in France a Catholic, a partisan of Mary, and leagued with the Guises. He was sent to persuade Elizabeth to banish James's exiled rebels, but, like a Lethington on a smaller scale, he set himself to obtain the restoration of these lords as against Arran, while he gratified Elizabeth by betraying to her the secrets of Mary. This man was the adoring friend of the flower of chivalry, Sir Philip Sidney!

As against Arran the plot succeeded. Making Berwick, on English soil, their base, in November 1585 the exiles, lay and secular, backed by England, returned, captured James at Stirling, and drove Arran to lurk about the country, till, many years after, Douglas of Parkhead met and slew him, avenging Morton; and, when opportunity offered, Douglas was himself slain by an avenging Stewart at the Cross of Edinburgh. The age reeked with such blood feuds, of which the preachers could not cure their fiery flocks.

In December 1585 Parliament restored Gowrie's forfeited family to their own (henceforth they were constantly conspiring against James), and the exiled preachers returned to their manses and pulpits. But bishops were not abolished, though the Kirk, through the Synod of Fife, excommunicated the Archbishop of St Andrews, Adamson, who replied in kind. He was charged with witchcraft, and in the long-run was dragged down and reduced to poverty, being accused of dealings with witches — and hares!

In July 1586 England and Scotland formed an alliance, and Elizabeth promised to make James an allowance of £4000 a-year. This, it may be feared, was the blood-price of James's mother: from her son, and any hope of aid from her son, Mary was now cut off. Walsingham laid the snares into which she fell, deliberately providing for her means of communication with Babington and his company, and deciphering and copying the letters which passed through the channel which he had contrived. A trifle of forgery was also done by his agent, Phelipps. Mary, knowing herself deserted by her son, was determined, as James knew, to disinherit him. For this reason, and for the £4000, he made no strong protest against her trial. One of his agents in London — the wretched accomplice in his father's murder, Archibald Douglas — was consenting to her execution. James himself thought that strict imprisonment was the best course; but the Presbyterian Angus declared that Mary "could not be blamed if she had caused the Queen of England's throat to be cut for detaining her so unjustly imprisoned." The natural man within us entirely agrees with Angus!

A mission was sent from Holyrood, including James's handsome new favourite, the Master of Gray, with his cousin, Logan of Restalrig, who sold the Master to Walsingham. The envoys were to beg for Mary's life. The Master had previously betrayed her; but he was not wholly lost, and in London he did his best, contrary to what is commonly stated, to secure her life. He thus incurred the enmity of his former allies in the English Court, and, as he had foreseen, he was ruined in Scotland — his *previous* letters, hostile to Mary, being betrayed by his aforesaid cousin, Logan of Restalrig.

On February 8, 1567, ended the lifelong tragedy of Mary Stuart. The woman whom Elizabeth vainly moved Amyas Paulet to murder was publicly decapitated at Fotheringay. James vowed that he would not accept from Elizabeth "the price of his mother's blood." But despite the fury of his nobles James sat still and took the money, at most some £4000 annually, — when he could get it.

During the next fifteen years the reign of James, and his struggle for freedom from the Kirk, was perturbed by a long series of intrigues of which the details are too obscure and complex for presentation here. His chief Minister was now John Maitland, a brother of Lethington, and as versatile, unscrupulous, and intelligent as the rest of that House. Maitland had actually been present, as Lethington's representative, at the tragedy of the Kirk-o'-Field. He was Protestant, and favoured the party of England. In the State the chief parties were the Presbyterian nobles, the majority of the gentry or lairds, and the preachers on one side; and the great Catholic families of Huntly, Morton (the title being now held by a Maxwell), Errol, and Crawford on the other. Bothwell (a sister's son of Mary's Bothwell) flitted meteor-like, more Catholic than anything else, but always plotting to seize James's person; and in this he was backed by the widow of Gowrie and the preachers, and encouraged by Elizabeth. In her fear that

James would join the Catholic nobles, whom the preachers eternally urged him to persecute, Elizabeth smiled on the Protestant plots — thereby, of course, fostering any inclination which James may have felt to seek Catholic aid at home and abroad. The plots of Mary were perpetually confused by intrigues of priestly emissaries, who interfered with the schemes of Spain and mixed in the interests of the Guises.

A fact which proved to be of the highest importance was the passing, in July 1587, of an Act by which much of the ecclesiastical property of the ancient Church was attached to the Crown, to be employed in providing for the maintenance of the clergy. But James used much of it in making temporal lordships: for example, at the time of the mysterious Gowrie Conspiracy (August 1600), we find that the Earl of Gowrie had obtained the Church lands of the Abbey of Scone, which his brother, the Master of Ruthven, desired. With the large revenues now at his disposal James could buy the support of the baronage, who, after the execution in 1584 of the Earl of Gowrie (the father of the Gowrie of the conspiracy of 1600), are not found leading and siding with the ministers in a resolute way. By 1600 young Gowrie was the only hope of the preachers, and probably James's ability to enrich the nobles helped to make them stand aloof. Meanwhile, fears and hopes of the success of the Spanish Armada held the minds of the Protestants and of the Catholic earls. "In this world-wolter," as James said, no Scot moved for Spain except that Lord Maxwell who had first received and then been deprived of the Earldom of Morton. James advanced against him in Dumfriesshire and caused his flight. As for the Armada, many ships drifted north round Scotland, and one great vessel, blown up in Tobermory Bay by Lachlan Maclean of Duart, still invites the attention of treasure-hunters (1911).

THE CATHOLIC EARLS.

Early in 1589 Elizabeth became mistress of some letters which proved that the Catholic earls, Huntly and Errol, were intriguing with Spain. The offence was lightly passed over, but when the earls, with Crawford and Montrose, drew to a head in the north, James, with much more than his usual spirit, headed the army which advanced against them: they fled from him near Aberdeen, surrendered, and were for a brief time imprisoned. As nobody knows how Fortune's wheel may turn, and as James, hard pressed by the preachers, could neglect no chance of support, he would never gratify the Kirk by crushing the Catholic earls, by temperament he was no persecutor. His calculated leniency caused him years of trouble.

Meanwhile James, after issuing a grotesque proclamation about the causes of his spirited resolve, sailed in October to woo a sea-king's daughter over the foam, the Princess Anne of Denmark. After happy months passed, he wrote, "in drinking and driving ower," he returned with his bride in May 1590.

The General Assembly then ordered prayers for the Puritans oppressed in England; none the less Elizabeth, the oppressor, continued to patronise the plots of the Puritans of Scotland. They now lent their approval to the foe of James's minister, Maitland, namely, the wild Francis Stewart, Earl of Bothwell, a sister's son of Mary's Bothwell. This young man had the engaging quality of gay and absolute recklessness; he was dear to ladies and the wild young gentry of Lothian and the Borders; he broke prisons, released friends, dealt with wizards, aided by Lady Gowrie stole into Holyrood, his ruling ambition being to capture the king. The preachers prayed for "sanctified plagues" against James, and regarded Bothwell favourably as a sanctified plague.

A strange conspiracy within Clan Campbell, in which Huntly and Maitland were implicated, now led to the murder, among others, of the bonny Earl of Murray by Huntly in partnership with Maitland (February 1592).

James was accused of having instigated this crime, from suspicion of Murray as a partner in the wild enterprises of Bothwell, and was so hard pressed by sermons that, in the early summer of 1592, he allowed the Black Acts to be abrogated, and "the Charter of the liberties of the Kirk" to be passed. One of these liberties was to persecute Catholics in accordance with the penal Acts of 1560. The Kirk was almost an *imperium in imperio,* but was still prohibited from appointing the time and place of its own General Assemblies without Royal assent. This weak point in their defences enabled James to vanquish them, but, in June, Bothwell attacked him in the Palace of Falkland and put him in considerable peril.

The end of 1592 and the opening of 1593 were remarkable for the discovery of “The Spanish Blanks,” papers addressed to Philip of Spain, signed by Huntly, the new Earl of Angus, and Errol, to be filled up with an oral message requesting military aid for Scottish Catholics. Such proceedings make our historians hold up obtesting hands against the perfidy of idolaters. But clearly, if Knox and the congregation were acting rightly when they besought the aid of England against Mary of Guise, then Errol and Huntly are not to blame for inviting Spain to free them from persecution. Some inkling of the scheme had reached James, and a paper in which he weighed the pros and cons is in existence. His suspected understanding with the Catholic earls, whom he merely did not wish to estrange hopelessly, was punished by a sanctified plague. On July 24, 1593, by aid of the late Earl Gowrie’s daughter, Bothwell entered Holyrood, seized the king, extorted his own terms, went and amazed the Dean of Durham by his narrative of the adventure, and seemed to have the connivance of Elizabeth. But in September James found himself in a position to repudiate his forced engagement. Bothwell now allied himself with the Catholic earls, and, as a Catholic, had no longer the prayers of the preachers. James ordered levies to attack the earls, while Argyll led his clan and the Macleans against Huntly, only to be defeated by the Gordon horse at the battle of Glenrinnes (October 3). Huntly and his allies, however, dared not encounter King James and Andrew Melville, who marched together against them, and they were obliged to fly to the Continent. Bothwell, with his retainer, Colville, continued, with Cecil’s connivance, to make desperate plots for seizing James; indeed, Cecil was intriguing with them and other desperadoes even after 1600. Throughout all the Tudor period, from Henry VII. to 1601, England was engaged in a series of conspiracies against the persons of the princes of Scotland. The Catholics of the south of Scotland now lost Lord Maxwell, slain by a “Lockerby Lick” in a great clan battle with the Johnstones at Dryfe Sands.

In 1595, James’s minister, John Maitland, brother of Lethington, died, and early in 1596 an organisation called “the Octavians” was made to regulate the distracted finance of the country. On April 13, 1596, Walter Scott of Buccleuch made himself an everlasting name by the bloodless rescue of Kinmont Willie, an Armstrong reiver, from the Castle of Carlisle, where he was illegally held by Lord Scrope. The period was notable for the endless raids by the clans on both sides of the Border, celebrated in ballads.

James had determined to recall the exiled Catholic earls, undeterred by the eloquence of “the last of all our sincere Assemblies,” held with deep emotion in March 1596. The earls came home; in September at Falkland Palace Andrew Melville seized James by the sleeve, called him “God’s silly vassal,” and warned him that Christ and his Kirk were the king’s overlords. Soon afterwards Mr David Black of St Andrews spoke against Elizabeth in a sermon which caused diplomatic remonstrances. Black would be tried, in the first instance, only by a Spiritual Court of his brethren. There was a long struggle, the ministers appointed a kind of standing Committee of Safety; James issued a proclamation dissolving it, and, on December 17, inflammatory sermons led a deputation to try to visit James, who was with the Lords of Session in the Tolbooth. Whether under an alarm of a Popish plot or not, the crowd became so fierce and menacing that the great Lachlan Maclean of Duart rode to Stirling to bring up Argyll in the king’s defence with such forces as he could muster. The king retired to Linlithgow; the Rev. Mr Bruce, a famous preacher credited with powers of prophecy, in vain appealed to the Duke of Hamilton to lead the godly. By threatening to withdraw the Court and Courts of Justice from Edinburgh James brought the citizens to their knees, and was able to take order with the preachers.

CHAPTER XXIII. THE GOWRIE CONSPIRACY.

James, in reducing the Kirk, relied as much on his cunning and “kingcraft” as on his prerogative. He summoned a Convention of preachers and of the Estates to Perth at the end of February 1597, and thither he brought many ministers from the north, men unlike the zealots of Lothian and the Lowlands. He persuaded them to vote themselves a General Assembly; and they admitted his right to propose modifications in Church government, to forbid unusual convocations (as in Edinburgh during the autumn of 1596); they were not to preach against Acts of Parliament or of Council, nor appoint preachers in the great towns without the Royal assent, and were not to attack individuals from the pulpit. An attempt was to be made to convert the Catholic lords. A General Assembly at Dundee in May ratified these decisions, to the wrath of Andrew Melville, and the Catholic earls were more or less reconciled to the Kirk, which at this period had not one supporter among the nobility. James had made large grants of Church lands among the noblesse, and they abstained from their wonted conspiracies for a while. The king occupied himself much in encouraging the persecution of witches, but even that did not endear him to the preachers.

In the Assembly of March 1598 certain ministers were allowed to sit and vote in Parliament. In 1598-1599 a privately printed book by James, the ‘Basilicon Doron,’ came to the knowledge of the clergy: it revealed his opinions on the right of kings to rule the Church, and on the tendency of the preachers to introduce a democracy “with themselves as Tribunes of the People,” a very fair definition of their policy. It was to stop them that he gradually introduced a bastard kind of bishops, police to keep the pulpiteers in order. They were refusing, in face of the king’s licence, to permit a company of English players to act in Edinburgh, for they took various powers into their hands.

Meanwhile James’s relations with England, where Elizabeth saw with dismay his victory over her allies, his clergy, were unfriendly. Plots were encouraged against him, but it is not probable that England was aware of the famous and mysterious conspiracy of the young Earl of Gowrie, who was warmly welcomed by Elizabeth on his return from Padua, by way of Paris. He had been summoned by Bruce, James’s chief clerical adversary, and the Kirk had high hopes of the son of the man of the Raid of Ruthven. He led the opposition to taxation for national defence in a convention of June-July 1600. On August 5, in his own house at Perth, where James, summoned thither by Gowrie’s younger brother, had dined with him, Gowrie and his brother were slain by John Ramsay, a page to the king.

This affair was mysterious. The preachers, and especially Bruce, refused to accept James's own account of the events, at first, and this was not surprising. Gowrie was their one hope among the peers, and the story which James told is so strange that nothing could be stranger or less credible except the various and manifestly mendacious versions of the Gowrie party.

James's version of the occurrences must be as much as possible condensed, and there is no room for the corroborating evidence of Lennox and others. As the king was leaving Falkland to hunt a buck early on August 5, the Master of Ruthven, who had ridden over from his brother's house in Perth, accosted him. The Master declared that he had on the previous evening arrested a man carrying a pot of gold; had said nothing to Gowrie; had locked up the man and his gold in a room, and now wished James to come instantly and examine the fellow. The king's curiosity and cupidity were less powerful than his love of sport: he would first kill his buck. During the chase James told the story to Lennox, who corroborated. Ruthven sent a companion to inform his brother; none the less, when the king, with a considerable following, did appear at Gowrie's house, no preparation for his reception had been made.

The Master was now in a quandary: he had no prisoner and no pot of gold. During dinner Gowrie was very nervous; after it James and the Master slipped upstairs together while Gowrie took the gentlemen into the garden to eat cherries. Ruthven finally led James into a turret off the long gallery; he locked the door, and pointing to a man in armour with a dagger, said that he "had the king at his will." The man, however, fell a-trembling, James made a speech, and the Master went to seek Gowrie, locking the door behind him. At or about this moment, as was fully attested, Cranstoun, a retainer of Gowrie, reported to him and the gentlemen that the king had ridden away. They all rushed to the gate, where the porter, to whom Gowrie gave the lie, swore that the king had not left the place. The gentlemen going to the stables passed under the turret-window, whence appeared the king, red in the face, bellowing "treason!" The gentlemen, with Lennox, rushed upstairs, and through the gallery, but could not force open the door giving on the turret. But young Ramsay had run up a narrow stair in the tower, burst open the turret-door opening on the stair, found James struggling with the Master, wounded the Master, and pushed him downstairs. In the confusion, while the king's falcon flew wildly about the turret till James set his foot on its chain, the man with the dagger vanished. The Master was slain by two of James's attendants; the Earl, rushing with four or five men up the turret-stair, fell in fight by Ramsay's rapier.

Lennox and his company now broke through the door between the gallery and the turret, and all was over except a riotous assemblage of the town's folk. The man with the dagger had fled: he later came in and gave himself up; he was Gowrie's steward; his name was Henderson; it was he who rode with the Master to Falkland and back to Perth to warn Gowrie of James's approach. He confessed that Gowrie had then bidden him put on armour, on a false pretence, and the Master had stationed him in the turret. The fact that Henderson had arrived (from Falkland) at Gowrie's house by half-past ten was amply proved, yet Gowrie had made no preparations for the royal visit. If Henderson was not the man in the turret, his sudden and secret flight from Perth is unexplained. Moreover, Robert Oliphant, M.A., said, in private talk, that the part of the man in the turret had, some time earlier, been offered to him by Gowrie; he refused and left the Earl's service. It is manifest that James could not have arranged this set of circumstances: the thing is impossible. Therefore the two Ruthvens plotted to get him into their hands early in the day; and, when he arrived late, with a considerable train, they endeavoured to send these gentlemen after the king, by averring that he had ridden homewards. The dead Ruthvens with their house were forfeited.

Among the preachers who refused publicly to accept James's account of the events in Gowrie's house on August 5, Mr Bruce was the most eminent and the most obstinate. He had, on the day after the famous riot of December 1596, written to Hamilton asking him to countenance, as a chief nobleman, "the godly barons and others who had convened themselves," at that time, in the cause of the Kirk. Bruce admitted that he knew Hamilton to be ambitious, but Hamilton's ambition did not induce him to appear as captain of a new congregation. The chief need of the ministers' party was a leader among the great nobles. Now, in 1593, the young Earl of Gowrie had leagued himself with the madcap Bothwell. In April 1594, Gowrie, Bothwell, and Atholl had addressed the Kirk, asking her to favour and direct their enterprise. Bothwell made an armed demonstration and failed; Gowrie then went abroad, to Padua and Rome, and, apparently in 1600, Mr Bruce sailed to France, "for the calling," he says, "of the Master of Gowrie" — he clearly means "the Earl of Gowrie." The Earl came, wove his plot, and perished. Mr Bruce, therefore, was averse to accepting James's account of the affair at Gowrie House. After a long series of negotiations Bruce was exiled north of Tay.

UNION OF THE CROWNS.

In 1600 James imposed three bishops on the Kirk. Early in 1601 broke out Essex's rebellion of one day against Elizabeth, a futile attempt to imitate Scottish methods as exhibited in the many raids against James. Essex had been intriguing with the Scottish king, but to what extent James knew of and encouraged his enterprise is unknown. He was on ill terms with Cecil, who, in 1601, was dealing with several men that intended no good to James. Cecil is said to have received a sufficient warning as to how James, on ascending the English throne, would treat him; and he came to terms, secretly, with Mar and Kinloss, the king's envoys to Elizabeth. Their correspondence is extant, and proves that Cecil, at last, was "running the Scottish course," and making smooth the way for James's accession. (The correspondence begins in June 1601.)

Very early on Thursday, March 24, 1603, Elizabeth went to her account, and James received the news from Sir Robert Carey, who reached Holyrood on the Saturday night, March 26. James entered London on May 6, and England was free from the fear of many years concerning a war for the succession. The Catholics hoped for lenient usage: disappointment led some desperate men to engage in the Gunpowder Plot. James was not more satisfactory to the Puritans.

Encouraged by the fulsome adulation which grew up under the Tudor dynasty, and free from dread of personal danger, James henceforth governed Scotland "with the pen," as he said, through the Privy Council. This method of ruling the ancient kingdom endured till the Union of 1707, and was fraught with many dangers. The king was no longer in touch with his subjects. His best action was the establishment of a small force of mounted constabulary which did more to put down the eternal homicides, robberies, and family feuds than all the sermons could achieve.

The persons most notable in the Privy Council were Seton (later Lord Dunfermline), Hume, created Earl of Dunbar, and the king's advocate, Thomas Hamilton, later Earl of Haddington. Bishops, with Spottiswoode, the historian, Archbishop of Glasgow, sat in the Privy Council, and their progressive elevation, as hateful to the nobles as to the Kirk, was among the causes of the civil war under Charles I. By craft and by illegal measures James continued to depress the Kirk. A General Assembly, proclaimed by James for July 1604 in Aberdeen, was prorogued; again, unconstitutionally, it was prorogued in July 1605. Nineteen ministers, disobeying a royal order, appeared and constituted the

Assembly. Joined by ten others, they kept open the right of way. James insisted that the Council should prosecute them: they, by fixing a new date for an Assembly, without royal consent; and James, by letting years pass without an Assembly, broke the charter of the Kirk of 1592.

The preachers, when summoned to the trial, declined the jurisdiction. This was violently construed as treason, and a jury, threatened by the legal officers with secular, and by the preachers with future spiritual punishment, by a small majority condemned some of the ministers (January 1606). This roused the wrath of all classes. James wished for more prosecutions; the Council, in terror, prevailed on him to desist. He continued to grant no Assemblies till 1608, and would not allow "caveats" (limiting the powers of Bishops) to be enforced. He summoned (1606) the two Melvilles, Andrew and his nephew James, to London, where Andrew bullied in his own violent style, and was, quite illegally, first imprisoned and then banished to France.

In December 1606 a convention of preachers was persuaded to allow the appointment of "constant Moderators" to keep the presbyteries in order; and then James recognised the convention as a General Assembly. Suspected ministers were confined to their parishes or locked up in Blackness Castle. In 1608 a General Assembly was permitted the pleasure of excommunicating Huntly. In 1610 an Assembly established Episcopacy, and no excommunications not ratified by the Bishop were allowed: the only comfort of the godly was the violent persecution of Catholics, who were nosed out by the "constant Moderators," excommunicated if they refused to conform, confiscated, and banished.

James could succeed in these measures, but his plan for uniting the two kingdoms into one, Great Britain, though supported by the wisdom and eloquence of Bacon, was frustrated by the jealousies of both peoples. Persons born after James's accession (the *post nati*) were, however, admitted to equal privileges in either kingdom (1608). In 1610 James had two of his bishops, and Spottiswoode, consecrated by three English bishops, but he did not yet venture to interfere with the forms of Presbyterian public worship.

In 1610 James established two Courts of High Commission (in 1615 united in one Court) to try offences in morals and religion. The Archbishops presided, laity and clergy formed the body of the Court, and it was regarded as vexatious and tyrannical. The same terms, to be sure, would now be applied to the interference of preachers and presbyteries with private life and opinion. By 1612 the king had established Episcopacy, which, for one reason or another, became equally hateful to the nobles, the gentry, and the populace. James's motives were motives of police. Long experience had taught him the inconveniences of presbyterial government as it then existed in Scotland.

To a Church organised in the presbyterian manner, as it has been practised since 1689, James had, originally at least, no objection. But the combination of "presbyterian Hildebrandism" with factions of the turbulent *noblesse*; the alliance of the Power of the Keys with the sword and lance, was inconsistent with the freedom of the State and of the individual. "The absolutism of James," says Professor Hume Brown, "was forced upon him in large degree by the excessive claims of the Presbyterian clergy."

Meanwhile the thievish Border clans, especially the Armstrongs, were assailed by hangings and banishments, and Ulster was planted by Scottish settlers, willing or reluctant, attracted by promise of lands, or planted out, that they might not give trouble on the Border.

Persecution of Catholics was violent, and in spring 1615 Father Ogilvie was hanged after very cruel treatment directed by Archbishop Spottiswoode. In this year the two ecclesiastical Courts of High Commission were fused into one, and an Assembly was coerced into passing what James called "Hotch-potch resolutions" about changes in public worship. James wanted greater changes, but deferred them till he visited Scotland in 1617, when he was attended by the luckless figure of Laud, who went to a funeral — in a surplice! James had many personal bickerings with preachers, but his five main points, "The Articles of Perth" (of these the most detested were: (1) Communicants must kneel, not sit, at the Communion; (4) Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost must be observed; and (5) Confirmation must be introduced), were accepted by an Assembly in 1618. They could not be enforced, but were sanctioned by Parliament in 1621. The day was called Black Saturday, and omens were drawn by both parties from a thunderstorm which occurred at the time of the ratification of the Articles of Perth by Parliament in Edinburgh (August 4, 1621).

By enforcing these Articles James passed the limit of his subjects' endurance. In their opinion, as in Knox's, to kneel at the celebration of the Holy Communion was an act of idolatry, was "Baal worship," and no pressure could compel them to kneel. The three great festivals of the Christian Church, whether Roman, Genevan, or Lutheran, had no certain warrant in Holy Scripture, but were rather repugnant to the Word of God. The king did not live to see the bloodshed and misery caused by his reckless assault on the liberties and consciences of his subjects; he died on March 27, 1625, just before the Easter season in which it was intended to enforce his decrees.

The ungainliness of James's person, his lack of courage on certain occasions (he was by no means a constant coward), and the feebleness of his limbs might be attributed to pre-natal influences; he was injured before he was born by the sufferings of his mother at the time of Riccio’s murder. His deep dissimulation he learnt in his bitter childhood and harassed youth. His ingenious mind was trained to pedantry; he did nothing worse, and nothing more congenial to the cruel superstitions of his age, than in his encouragement of witch trials and witch burnings promoted by the Scottish clergy down to the early part of the eighteenth century.

His plantation of Ulster by Scottish settlers has greatly affected history down to our own times, while the most permanent result of the awards by which he stimulated the colonisation of Nova Scotia has been the creation of hereditary knighthoods or baronetcies.

His encouragement of learning left its mark in the foundation of the Town’s College of Edinburgh, on the site of Kirk-o’-Field, the scene of his father’s murder.

The south-western Highlands, from Lochaber to Islay and Cantyre, were, in his reign, the scene of constant clan feuds and repressions, resulting in the fall of the Macdonalds, and the rise of the Campbell chief, Argyll, to the perilous power later wielded by the Marquis against Charles I. Many of the sons of the dispossessed Macdonalds, driven into Ireland, were to constitute the nucleus of the army of Montrose. In the Orkneys and Shetlands the constant turbulence of Earl Patrick and his family ended in the annexation of the islands to the Crown (1612), and the Earl’s execution (1615).

CHAPTER XXIV. CHARLES I.

The reign of Charles I. opened with every sign of the tempests which were to follow. England and Scotland were both seething with religious fears and hatreds. Both parties in England, Puritans and Anglicans, could be satisfied with nothing less than complete domination. In England the extreme Puritans, with their yearning after the Genevan presbyterian discipline, had been threatening civil war even under Elizabeth. James had treated them with a high hand and a proud heart. Under Charles, wedded to a "Jezebel," a Catholic wife, Henrietta Maria, the Puritan hatred of such prelates as Laud expressed itself in threats of murder; while heavy fines and cruel mutilations were inflicted by the party in power. The Protestant panic, the fear of a violent restoration of Catholicism in Scotland, never slumbered. In Scotland Catholics were at this time bitterly persecuted, and believed that a presbyterian general massacre of them all was being organised. By the people the Anglican bishops and the prayer-book were as much detested as priests and the Mass. When Charles placed six prelates on his Privy Council, and recognised the Archbishop of St Andrews, Spottiswoode, as first in precedence among his subjects, the nobles were angry and jealous. Charles would not do away with the infatuated Articles of Perth. James, as he used to say, had "governed Scotland by the pen" through his Privy Council. Charles knew much less than James of the temper of the Scots, among whom he had never come since his infancy, and *his* Privy Council with six bishops was apt to be even more than commonly subservient.

In Scotland as in England the expenses of national defence were a cause of anger; and the mismanagement of military affairs by the king's favourite, Buckingham, increased the irritation. It was brought to a head in Scotland by the "Act of Revocation," under which all Church lands and Crown lands bestowed since 1542 were to be restored to the Crown. This Act once more united in opposition the nobles and the preachers; since 1596 they had not been in harmony. In 1587, as we saw, James VI. had annexed much of the old ecclesiastical property to the Crown; but he had granted most of it to nobles and barons as "temporal lordships." Now, by Charles, the temporal lords who held such lands were menaced, the judges ("Lords of Session") who would have defended their interests were removed from the Privy Council (March 1626), and, in August, the temporal lords remonstrated with the king through deputations.

In fact, they took little harm — redeeming their holdings at the rate of ten years' purchase. The main result was that landowners were empowered to buy the tithes on their own lands from the multitude of "titulars of tithes" (1629) who had rapaciously and oppressively extorted these tenths of the harvest every year. The ministers had a safe provision at last, secured on the tithes, in Scotland styled "teinds," but this did not reconcile most of them to bishops and to the Articles of Perth. Several of the bishops were, in fact, "latitudinarian" or "Arminian" in doctrine, wanderers from the severity of Knox and Calvin. With them began, perhaps, the "Moderatism" which later invaded the Kirk; though their ideal slumbered during the civil war, to awaken again, with the teaching of Archbishop Leighton, under the Restoration. Meanwhile the nobles and gentry had been alarmed and mulcted, and were ready to join hands with the Kirk in its day of resistance.

In June 1633 Charles at last visited his ancient kingdom, accompanied by Laud. His subjects were alarmed and horrified by the sight of prelates in lawn sleeves, candles in chapel, and even a tapestry showing the crucifixion. To this the bishops are said to have bowed, — plain idolatry. In the Parliament of June 18 the eight representatives of each Estate, who were practically all-powerful as Lords of the Articles, were chosen, not from each Estate by its own members, but on a method instituted, or rather revived, by James VI. in 1609. The nobles made the choice from the bishops, the bishops from the nobles, and the elected sixteen from the barons and burghers. The twenty-four were all thus episcopally minded: they drew up the bills, and the bills were voted on without debate. The grant of supply made in these circumstances was liberal, and James's ecclesiastical legislation, including the sanction of the "rags of Rome" worn by the bishops, was ratified. Remonstrances from the ministers of the old Kirk party were disregarded; and — the thin end of the wedge — the English Liturgy was introduced in the Royal Chapel of Holyrood and in that of St Salvator's College, St Andrews, where it has been read once, on a funeral occasion, in recent years.

In 1634-35, on the information of Archbishop Spottiswoode, Lord Balmerino was tried for treason because he possessed a supplication or petition which the Lords of the minority, in the late Parliament, had drawn up but had not presented. He was found guilty, but spared: the proceeding showed of what nature the bishops were, and alienated and alarmed the populace and the nobles and gentry. A remonstrance in a manly spirit by Drummond of Hawthornden, the poet, was disregarded.

In 1635 Charles authorised a Book of Canons, heralding the imposition of a Liturgy, which scarcely varied, and when it varied was thought to differ for the worse, from that of the Church of England. By these canons, the most nakedly despotic of innovations, the preachers could not use their sword of excommunication without the assent of the Bishops. James VI. had ever regarded with horror and dread the licence of "conceived prayers," spoken by the minister, and believed to be extemporary or directly inspired. There is an old story that one minister prayed that James might break his leg: certainly prayers for "sanctified plagues" on that prince were publicly offered, at the will of the minister. Even a very firm Presbyterian, the Laird of Brodie, when he had once heard the Anglican service in London, confided to his journal that he had suffered much from the nonsense of "conceived prayers." They were a dangerous weapon, in Charles's opinion: he was determined to abolish them, rather that he might be free from the agitation of the pulpit than for reasons of ritual, and to proclaim his own headship of the Kirk of "King Christ."

This, in the opinion of the great majority of the preachers and populace, was flat blasphemy, an assumption of "the Crown Honours of Christ." The Liturgy was "an ill-mumbled Mass," the Mass was idolatry, and idolatry was a capital offence. However strange these convictions may appear, they were essential parts of the national belief. Yet, with the most extreme folly, Charles, acting like Henry VIII. as his own Pope, thrust the canons and this Liturgy upon the Kirk and country. No sentimental arguments can palliate such open tyranny.

The Liturgy was to be used in St Giles' Church, the town kirk of Edinburgh (cleansed and restored by Charles himself), on July 23, 1637. The result was a furious brawl, begun by the women, of all presbyterians the fiercest, and, it was said, by men disguised as women. A gentleman was struck on the ear by a woman for the offence of saying "Amen," and the famous Jenny Geddes is traditionally reported to have thrown her stool at the Dean's head. The service was interrupted, the Bishop was the mark of stones, and "the Bishops' War," the Civil War, began in this brawl. James VI., being on the spot, had thoroughly quieted Edinburgh after a more serious riot, on December 17, 1596. But Charles was far away; the city had not to fear the loss of the Court and its custom, as on the earlier occasion (the removal of the Council to Linlithgow in October 1637 was a trifle), and the Council had to face a storm of petitions from all classes of the community. Their prayer was that the Liturgy should be withdrawn. From the country, multitudes of all classes flocked into Edinburgh and formed themselves into a committee of public safety, "The Four Tables," containing sixteen persons.

The Tables now demanded the removal of the bishops from the Privy Council (December 21, 1637). The question was: Who were to govern the country, the Council or the Tables? The logic of the Presbyterians was not always consistent. The king must not force the Liturgy on them, but later, their quarrel with him was that he would not, at their desire, force the absence of the Liturgy on England. If the king had the right to inflict Presbyterianism on England, he had the right to thrust the Liturgy on Scotland: of course he had neither one right nor the other. On February 19, 1638, Charles's proclamation, refusing the prayers of the supplication of December, was read at Stirling. Nobles and people replied with protestations to every royal proclamation. Foremost on the popular side was the young Earl of Montrose: "you will not rest," said Rothes, a more sober leader, "till you be lifted up above the lave in three fathoms of rope." Rothes was a true prophet; but Montrose did not die for the cause that did "his green unknowing youth engage."

The Presbyterians now desired yearly General Assemblies (of which James VI. had unlawfully robbed the Kirk); the enforcement of an old brief-lived system of restrictions (*caveats*) on the bishops; the abolition of the Articles of Perth; and, as always, of the Liturgy. If he granted all this Charles might have had trouble with the preachers, as James VI. had of old. Yet the demands were constitutional; and in Charles's position he would have done well to assent. He was obstinate in refusal.

The Scots now "fell upon the consideration of a band of union to be made legally," says Rothes, their leader, the chief of the House of Leslie (the family of Norman Leslie, the slayer of Cardinal Beaton). Now a "band" of this kind could not, by old Scots law, be legally made; such bands, like those for the murder of Riccio and of Darnley, and for many other enterprises, were not smiled upon by the law. But, in 1581, as we saw, James VI. had signed a covenant against popery; its tenor was imitated in that of 1638, and there was added "a general band for the maintenance of true religion" (Presbyterianism) "*and of the King's person*." That part of the band was scarcely kept when the Covenanting army surrendered Charles to the English. They had vowed, in their band, to "stand to the defence of our dread Sovereign the King's Majesty, his person and authority." They kept this vow by hanging men who held the king's commission. The words as to defending the king's authority were followed by "in the defence and preservation of the aforesaid true religion." This appears to mean that only a presbyterian king is to be defended. In any case the preachers assumed the right to interpret the Covenant, which finally led to the conquest of Scotland by Cromwell. As the Covenant was made between God and the Covenanters, on ancient Hebrew precedent it was declared to be binding on all succeeding generations. Had Scotland resisted tyranny without this would-be biblical pettifogging Covenant, her condition would have been the more gracious. The signing of the band began at Edinburgh in Greyfriars' Churchyard on February 28, 1638.

This Covenant was a most potent instrument for the day, but the fruits thereof were blood and tears and desolation: for fifty-one years common-sense did not come to her own again. In 1689 the Covenant was silently dropped, when the Kirk was restored.

This two-edged insatiable sword was drawn: great multitudes signed with enthusiasm, and they who would not sign were, of course, persecuted. As they said, "it looked not like a thing approved of God, which was begun and carried on with fury and madness, and obtruded on people with threatenings, tearing of clothes, and drawing of blood." Resistance to the king — if need were, armed resistance — was necessary, was laudable, but the terms of the Covenant were, in the highest degree impolitic and unstatesmanlike. The country was handed over to the preachers; the Scots, as their great leader Argyll was to discover, were "distracted men in distracted times."

Charles wavered and sent down the Marquis of Hamilton to represent his waverings. The Marquis was as unsettled as his predecessor, Arran, in the minority of Queen Mary. He dared not promulgate the proclamations; he dared not risk civil war; he knew that Charles, who said he was ready, was unprepared in his mutinous English kingdom. He granted, at last, a General Assembly and a free Parliament, and produced another Covenant, "the King's Covenant," which of course failed to thwart that of the country.

The Assembly, at Glasgow (November 21, 1638), including noblemen and gentlemen as elders, was necessarily revolutionary, and needlessly riotous and profane. It arraigned and condemned the bishops in their absence. Hamilton, as Royal Commissioner, dissolved the Assembly, which continued to sit. The meeting was in the Cathedral, where, says a sincere Covenanter, Baillie, whose letters are a valuable source, "our rascals, without shame, in great numbers, made din and clamour." All the unconstitutional ecclesiastical legislation of the last forty years was rescinded, — as all the new presbyterian legislation was to be rescinded at the Restoration. Some bishops were excommunicated, the rest were deposed. The press was put under the censorship of the fanatical lawyer, Johnston of Waristoun, clerk of the Assembly.

On December 20 the Assembly, which sat on after Hamilton dissolved it, broke up. Among the Covenanters were to be reckoned the Earl of Argyll (later the only Marquis of his House), and the Earl, later Marquis, of Montrose. They did not stand long together. The Scottish Revolution produced no man at once great and successful, but, in Montrose, it had one man of genius who gave his life for honour's sake; in Argyll, an astute man, not physically courageous, whose "timidity in the field was equalled by his timidity in the Council," says

Mr Gardiner.

In spring (1639) war began. Charles was to move in force on the Border; the fleet was to watch the coasts; Hamilton, with some 5000 men, was to join hands with Huntly (both men were wavering and incompetent); Antrim, from north Ireland, was to attack and contain Argyll; Ruthven was to hold Edinburgh Castle. But Alexander Leslie took that castle for the Covenanters; they took Dumbarton; they fortified Leith; Argyll ravaged Huntly's lands; Montrose and Leslie occupied Aberdeen; and their party, in circumstances supposed to be discreditable to Montrose, carried Huntly to Edinburgh. (The evidence is confused. Was Huntly unwilling to go? Charles (York, April 23, 1639) calls him "feeble and false." Mr Gardiner says that, in this case, and in this alone, Montrose stooped to a mean action.) Hamilton merely dawdled and did nothing: Montrose had entered Aberdeen (June 19), and then came news of negotiations between the king and the Covenanters.

As Charles approached from the south, Alexander Leslie, a Continental veteran (very many of the Covenant's officers were Dugald Dalgettys from the foreign wars), occupied Dunse Law, with a numerous army in great difficulties as to supplies. "A natural mind might despair," wrote Waristoun, who "was brought low before God indeed." Leslie was in a strait; but, on the other side, so was Charles, for a reconnaissance of Leslie's position was repulsed; the king lacked money and supplies; neither side was of a high fighting heart; and offers to negotiate came from the king, informally. The Scots sent in "a supplication," and on June 18 signed a treaty which was a mere futile truce. There were to be a new Assembly, and a new Parliament in August and September.

Charles should have fought: if he fell he would fall with honour; and if he survived defeat "all England behoved to have risen in revenge," says the Covenanting letter-writer, Baillie, later Principal of Glasgow University. The Covenanters at this time could not have invaded England, could not have supported themselves if they did, and were far from being harmonious among themselves. The defeat of Charles at this moment would have aroused English pride and united the country. Charles set out from Berwick for London on July 29, leaving many fresh causes of quarrel behind him.

Charles supposed that he was merely "giving way for the present" when he accepted the ratification by the new Assembly of all the Acts of that of 1638. He never had a later chance to recover his ground. The new Assembly made the Privy Council pass an Act rendering signature of the Covenant compulsory on all men: "the new freedom is worse than the old slavery," a looker-on remarked. The Parliament discussed the method of electing the Lords of the Articles — a method which, in fact, though of prime importance, had varied and continued to vary in practice. Argyll protested that the constitutional course was for each Estate to elect its own members. Montrose was already suspected of being influenced by Charles. Charles refused to call Episcopacy unlawful, or to rescind the old Acts establishing it. Traquair, as Commissioner, dissolved the Parliament; later Charles refused to meet envoys sent from Scotland, who were actually trying, as their party also tried, to gain French mediation or assistance, — help from "idolaters"!

In spring 1640 the Scots, by an instrument called "The Blind Band," imposed taxation for military purposes; while Charles in England called The Short Parliament to provide Supply. The Parliament refused and was prorogued; words used by Strafford about the use of the army in Ireland to suppress Scotland were hoarded up against him. The Scots Parliament, though the king had prorogued it, met in June, despite the opposition of Montrose. The Parliament, when it ceased to meet, appointed a Standing Committee of some forty members of all ranks, including Montrose and his friends Lord Napier and Stirling of Keir. Argyll refused to be a member, but acted on a commission of fire and sword "to root out of the country" the northern recusants against the Covenant. It was now that Argyll burned Lord Ogilvy's Bonny House of Airlie and Forthes; the cattle were driven into his own country; all this against, and perhaps in consequence of, the intercession of Ogilvy's friend and neighbour, Montrose.

Meanwhile the Scots were intriguing with discontented English peers, who could only give sympathy; Saville, however, forged a letter from six of them inviting a Scottish invasion. There was a movement for making Argyll practically Dictator in the North; Montrose thwarted it, and in August, while Charles with a reluctant and disorderly force was marching on York Montrose at Cumbernauld, the house of the Earl of Wigtoun made a secret band with the Earls Marischal, Wigtoun, Home, Atholl, Mar, Perth, Boyd, Galloway, and others, for their mutual defence against the scheme of dictatorship for Argyll. On August 20 Montrose, the foremost, forded Tweed, and led his regiment into England. On August 30, almost unopposed, the Scots entered Newcastle, having routed a force which met them at Newburn-on-Tyne.

They again pressed their demands on the king; simultaneously twelve English peers petitioned for a parliament and the trial of the king's Ministers. Charles gave way. At Ripon Scottish and English commissioners met; the Scots received "brotherly assistance" in money and supplies (a daily £850), and stayed where they were; while the Long Parliament met in November, and in April 1641 condemned the great Strafford: Laud soon shared his doom. On August 10 the demands of the Scots were granted: as a sympathetic historian writes, they had lived for a year at free quarters, “and recrossed the Border with the handsome sum of £200,000 to their credit.”

During the absence of the army the Kirk exhibited symptoms not favourable to its own peace. Amateur theologians held private religious gatherings, which, it was feared, tended towards the heresy of the English Independents and to the “break up of the whole Kirk,” some of whose representatives forbade these conventicles, while “the rigid sort” asserted that the conventiclers “were esteemed the godly of the land.” An Act of the General Assembly was passed against the meetings; we observe that here are the beginnings of strife between the most godly and the rather moderately pious.

The secret of Montrose’s Cumbernauld band had come to light after November 1640: nothing worse, at the moment, befell than the burning of the band by the Committee of Estates, to whom Argyll referred the matter. On May 21, 1641, the Committee was disturbed, for Montrose was collecting evidence as to the words and deeds of Argyll when he used his commission of fire and sword at the Bonny House of Airlie and in other places. Montrose had spoken of the matter to a preacher, he to another, and the news reached the Committee. Montrose had learned from a prisoner of Argyll, Stewart the younger of Ladywell, that Argyll had held counsels to discuss the deposition of the king. Ladywell produced to the Committee his written statement that Argyll had spoken before him of these consultations of lawyers and divines. He was placed in the castle, and was so worked on that he “cleared” Argyll and confessed that, advised by Montrose, he had reported Argyll’s remarks to the king. Papers with hints and names in cypher were found in possession of the messenger.

The whole affair is enigmatic; in any case Ladywell was hanged for “leasing-making” (spreading false reports), an offence not previously capital, and Montrose with his friends was imprisoned in the castle. Doubtless he had meant to accuse Argyll before Parliament of treason. On July 27, 1641, being arraigned before Parliament, he said, “My resolution is to carry with me fidelity and honour to the grave.” He lay in prison when the king, vainly hoping for support against the English Parliament, visited Edinburgh (August 14-November 17, 1641).

Charles was now servile to his Scottish Parliament, accepting an Act by which it must consent to his nominations of officers of State. Hamilton with his brother, Lanark, had courted the alliance and lived in the intimacy of Argyll. On October 12 Charles told the House “a very strange story.” On the previous day Hamilton had asked leave to retire from Court, in fear of his enemies. On the day of the king’s speaking, Hamilton, Argyll, and Lanark had actually retired. On October 22, from their retreat, the brothers said that they had heard of a conspiracy, by nobles and others in the king's favour, to cut their throats. The evidence is very confused and contradictory: Hamilton and Argyll were said to have collected a force of 5000 men in the town, and, on October 5, such a gathering was denounced in a proclamation. Charles in vain asked for a public inquiry into the affair before the whole House. He now raised some of his opponents a step in the peerage: Argyll became a marquis, and Montrose was released from prison. On October 28 Charles announced the untoward news of an Irish rising and massacre. He was, of course, accused of having caused it, and the massacre was in turn the cause of, or pretext for, the shooting and hanging of Irish prisoners — men and women — in Scotland during the civil war. On November 18 he left Scotland for ever.

The events in England of the spring in 1642, the attempted arrest of the five members (January 4), the retreat of the queen to France, Charles's retiral to York, indicated civil war, and the king set up his standard at Nottingham on August 22. The Covenanters had received from Charles all that they asked; they had no quarrel with him, but they argued that if he were victorious in England he would use his strength and withdraw his concessions to Scotland.

Sir Walter Scott "leaves it to casuists to decide whether one contracting party is justified in breaking a solemn treaty upon the suspicion that in future contingencies it might be infringed by the other." He suggests that to the needy nobles and Dugald Dalgettys of the Covenant "the good pay and free quarters" and "handsome sums" of England were an irresistible temptation, while the preachers thought they would be allowed to set up "the golden candlestick" of presbytery in England ('Legend of Montrose,' chapter i.) Of the two the preachers were the more grievously disappointed.

A General Assembly of July-August 1642 was, as usual, concerned with politics, for politics and religion were inextricably intermixed. The Assembly appointed a Standing Commission to represent it, and the powers of the Commission were of so high a strain that "to some it is terrible already," says the Covenanting letter-writer Baillie. A letter from the Kirk was carried to the English Parliament which acquiesced in the abolition of Episcopacy. In November 1642 the English Parliament, unsuccessful in war, appealed to Scotland for armed aid; in December Charles took the same course.

The Commission of the General Assembly, and the body of administrators called Conservators of the Peace, overpowered the Privy Council, put down a petition of Montrose's party (who declared that they were bound by the Covenant to defend the king), and would obviously arm on the side of the English Parliament if England would adopt Presbyterian government. They held a Convention of the Estates (June 22, 1643); they discovered a Popish plot for an attack on Argyll’s country by the Macdonalds in Ireland, once driven from Kintyre by the Campbells, and now to be led by young Colkitto. While thus excited, they received in the General Assembly (August 7) a deputation from the English Parliament; and now was framed a new band between the English Parliament and Scotland. It was an alliance, “The Solemn League and Covenant,” by which Episcopacy was to be abolished and religion established “according to the Word of God.” To the Covenanters this phrase meant that England would establish Presbyterianism, but they were disappointed. The ideas of the Independents, such as Cromwell, were almost as much opposed to presbytery as to episcopacy, and though the Covenanters took the pay and fought the battles of the Parliament against their king, they never received what they had meant to stipulate for, — the establishment of presbytery in England. Far from that, Cromwell, like James VI., was to deprive them of their ecclesiastical palladium, the General Assembly.

Foreseeing nothing, the Scots were delighted when the English accepted the new band. Their army, under Alexander Leslie (Earl of Leven), now too old for his post, crossed Tweed in January 1644. They might never have crossed had Charles, in the autumn of 1643, listened to Montrose and allowed him to attack the Covenanters in Scotland. In December 1643, Hamilton and Lanark, who had opposed Montrose’s views and confirmed the king in his waverings, came to him at Oxford. Montrose refused to serve with them, rather he would go abroad; and Hamilton was imprisoned on charges of treason: in fact, he had been double-minded, inconstant, and incompetent. Montrose’s scheme implied clan warfare, the use of exiled Macdonalds, who were Catholics, against the Campbells. The obvious objections were very strong; but “needs must when the devil drives”: the Hanoverian kings employed foreign soldiers against their subjects in 1715 and 1745; but the Macdonalds were subjects of King Charles.

Hamilton’s brother, Lanark, escaped, and now frankly joined the Covenanters. Montrose was promoted to a Marquisate, and received the Royal Commission as Lieutenant-General (February 1644), which alienated old Huntly, chief of the Gordons, who now and again divided and paralysed that gallant clan. Montrose rode north, where, in February 1644, old Leslie, with twenty regiments of foot, three thousand horse, and many guns, was besieging Newcastle. With him was the prototype of Scott’s Dugald Dalgetty, Sir James Turner, who records examples of Leslie’s senile incompetency. Leslie, at least, forced the Marquis of Newcastle to a retreat, and a movement of Montrose on Dumfries was paralysed by the cowardice or imbecility of the Scottish magnates on the western Border. He returned, took Morpeth, was summoned by Prince Rupert, and reached him the day after the disaster of Marston Moor (July 2, 1644), from which Buccleuch's Covenanting regiment ran without stroke of sword, while Alexander Leslie also fled, carrying news of his own defeat. It appears that the Scottish horse, under David Leslie, were at Marston Moor, as always, the pick of their army.

Rupert took over Montrose's men, and the great Marquis, disguised as a groom, rode hard to the house of a kinsman, near Tay, between Perth and Dunkeld. Alone and comfortless, in a little wood, Montrose met a man who was carrying the Fiery Cross, and summoning the country to resist the Irish Scots of Alastair Macdonald (Colkitto), who had landed with a force of 1500 musketeers in Argyll, and was believed to be descending on Atholl, pursued by Seaforth and Argyll, and faced by the men of Badenoch. The two armies were confronting each other when Montrose, in plaid and kilt, approached Colkitto and showed him his commission. Instantly the two opposed forces combined into one, and with 2500 men, some armed with bows and arrows, and others having only one charge for each musket, Montrose began his year of victories.

The temptation to describe in detail his extraordinary series of successes and of unexampled marches over snow-clad and pathless mountains must be resisted. The mobility and daring of Montrose's irregular and capricious levies, with his own versatile military genius and the heroic valour of Colkitto, enabled him to defeat a large Covenanting force at Tippermuir, near Perth: here he had but his 2500 men (September 1); to repeat his victory at Aberdeen (September 13), to evade and discourage Argyll, who retired to Inveraray; to winter in and ravage Argyll's country, and to turn on his tracks from a northern retreat and destroy the Campbells at Inverlochy, where Argyll looked on from his galley (February 2, 1645).

General Baillie, a trained soldier, took the command of the Covenanting levies and regular troops ("Red coats"), and nearly surprised Montrose in Dundee. By a retreat showing even more genius than his victories, he escaped, appeared on the north-east coast, and scattered a Covenanting force under Hurry, at Auldearn, near Inverness (May 9, 1645).

Such victories as Montrose's were more than counterbalanced by Cromwell's defeat of Rupert and Charles at Naseby (June 14, 1645); while presbytery suffered a blow from Cromwell's demand, that the English Parliament should grant "freedom of conscience," not for Anglican or Catholic, of course, but for religions non-Presbyterian. The "bloody sectaries," as the Presbyterians called Cromwell's Independents, were now masters of the field: never would the blue banner of the Covenant be set up south of Tweed.

Meanwhile General Baillie marched against Montrose, who outmanœuvred him all over the eastern Highlands, and finally gave him battle at Alford on the

Don. Montrose had not here Colkitto and the western clans, but his Gordon horse, his Irish, the Farquharsons, and the Badenoch men were triumphantly successful. Unfortunately, Lord Gordon was slain: he alone could bring out and lead the clan of Huntly. Only by joining hands with Charles could Montrose do anything decisive. The king, hoping for no more than a death in the field “with honour and a good conscience,” pushed as far north as Doncaster, where he was between Poyntz’s army and a great cavalry force, led by David Leslie, from Hereford, to launch against Montrose. The hero snatched a final victory. He had but a hundred horse, but he had Colkitto and the flower of the fighting clans, including the invincible Macleans. Baillie, in command of new levies of some 10,000 men, was thwarted by a committee of Argyll and other noble amateurs. He met the enemy south of Forth, at Kilsyth, between Stirling and Glasgow. The fiery Argyll made Baillie desert an admirable position — Montrose was on the plain, Baillie was on the heights — and expose his flank by a march across Montrose’s front. The Macleans and Macdonalds, on the lower slope of the hill, without orders, saw their chance, and racing up a difficult glen, plunged into the Covenanting flank. Meanwhile the more advanced part of the Covenanting force were driving back some Gordons from a hill on Montrose’s left, who were rescued by a desperate charge of Aboyne’s handful of horse among the red coats; Airlie charged with the Ogilvies; the advanced force of the Covenant was routed, and the Macleans and Macdonalds completed the work they had begun (August 15). Few of the unmounted Covenanters escaped from Kilsyth; and Argyll, taking boat in the Forth, hurried to Newcastle, where David Leslie, coming north, obtained infantry regiments to back his 4000 cavalry.

In a year Montrose, with forces so irregular and so apt to go home after every battle, had actually cleared militant Covenanters out of Scotland. But the end had come. He would not permit the sack of Glasgow. Three thousand clansmen left him; Colkitto went away to harry Kintyre. Aboyne and the Gordons rode home on some private pique; and Montrose relied on men whom he had already proved to be broken reeds, the Homes and Kers (Roxburgh) of the Border, and the futile and timid Traquair. When he came among them they forsook him and fled; on September 10, at Kelso, Sir Robert Spottiswoode recognised the desertion and the danger.

Meanwhile Leslie, with an overpowering force of seasoned soldiers, horse and foot, marched with Argyll, not to Edinburgh, but down Gala to Tweed; while Montrose had withdrawn from Kelso, up Ettrick to Philiphaugh, on the left of Ettrick, within a mile of Selkirk. He had but 500 Irish, who entrenched themselves, and an uncertain number of mounted Border lairds with their servants and tenants. Charteris of Hempsfield, who had been scouting, reported that Leslie was but two or three miles distant, at Sunderland Hall, where Tweed and Ettrick meet; but the news was not carried to Montrose, who lay at Selkirk. At breakfast, on September 13, Montrose learned that Leslie was attacking. What followed is uncertain in its details. A so-called "contemporary ballad" is incredibly impossible in its anachronisms, and is modern. In this egregious doggerel we are told that a veteran who had fought at Solway Moss a century earlier, and at "cursed Dunbar" a few years later (or under Edward I.?), advised Leslie to make a turning movement behind Linglie Hill. This is not evidence. Though Leslie may have made such a movement, he describes his victory as very easy: and so it should have been, as Montrose had only the remnant of his Antrim men and a rabble of reluctant Border recruits.

A news letter from Haddington, of September 16, represents the Cavaliers as making a good fight. The mounted Border lairds galloped away. Most of the Irish fell fighting: the rest were massacred, whether after promise of quarter or not is disputed. *Their captured women were hanged in cold blood some months later*. Montrose, the Napiers, and some forty horse either cut their way through or evaded Leslie's overpowering cavalry, and galloped across the hills of Yarrow to the Tweed. He had lost only the remnant of his Scoto-Irish; but the Gordons, when Montrose was presently menacing Glasgow, were held back by Huntly, and Colkitto pursued his private adventures. Montrose had been deserted by the clans, and lured to ruin by the perfidious promises of the Border lords and lairds. The aim of his strategy had been to relieve the Royalists of England by a diversion that would deprive the Parliamentarians of their paid Scottish allies, and what man might do Montrose had done.

After his first victory Montrose, an excommunicated man, fought under an offer of £1500 for his murder, and the Covenanters welcomed the assassin of his friend, Lord Kilpont.

The result of Montrose's victories was hostility between the Covenanting army in England and the English, who regarded them as expensive and inefficient. Indeed, they seldom, save for the command of David Leslie, displayed military qualities, and later, were invariably defeated when they encountered the English under Cromwell and Lambert.

Montrose never slew a prisoner, but the Convention at St Andrews, in November 1645, sentenced to death their Cavalier prisoners (Lord Ogilvy escaped disguised in his sister's dress), and they ordered the hanging of captives and of the women who had accompanied the Irish. "It was certain of the clergy who pressed for the extremest measures." They had revived the barbarous belief, retained in the law of ancient Greece, that the land had been polluted by, and must be cleansed by, blood, under penalty of divine wrath. As even the

Covenanting Baillie wrote, “to this day no man in England has been executed for bearing arms against the Parliament.” The preachers argued that to keep the promises of quarter which had been given to the prisoners was “*to violate the oath of the Covenant*.”

The prime object of the English opponents of the king was now “to hustle the Scots out of England.” Meanwhile Charles, not captured but hopeless, was negotiating with all the parties, and ready to yield on every point except that of forcing presbytery on England — a matter which, said Montereuil, the French ambassador, “did not concern them but their neighbours.” Charles finally trusted the Scots with his person, and the question is, had he or had he not assurance that he would be well received? If he had any assurance it was merely verbal, “a shadow of a security,” wrote Montereuil. Charles was valuable to the Scots only as a pledge for the payment of their arrears of wages. There was much chicanery and shuffling on both sides, and probably there were misconceptions on both sides. A letter of Montereuil (April 26, 1646) convinced Charles that he might trust the Scots; they verbally promised “safety, honour, and conscience,” but refused to sign a copy of their words. Charles trusted them, rode out of Oxford, joined them at Southwell, and, says Sir James Turner, who was present, was commanded by Lothian to sign the Covenant, and “barbarously used.” They took Charles to Newcastle, denying their assurance to him. “With unblushing falsehood,” says Mr Gardiner, they in other respects lied to the English Parliament. On May 19 Charles bade Montrose leave the country, which he succeeded in doing, despite the treacherous endeavours of his enemies to detain him till his day of safety (August 31) was passed.

The Scots of the army were in a quandary. The preachers, their masters, would not permit them to bring to Scotland an uncovenanted king. They could not stay penniless in England. For £200,000 down and a promise, never kept, of a similar sum later, they left Charles in English hands, with some assurances for his safety, and early in February 1647 crossed Tweed with their thirty-six cartloads of money. The act was hateful to very many Scots, but the Estates, under the command of the preachers, had refused to let the king, while uncovenanted, cross into his native kingdom, and to bring him meant war with England. But *that* must ensue in any case. The hope of making England presbyterian, as under the Solemn League and Covenant, had already perished.

Leslie, with the part of the army still kept up, chased Colkitto, and, at Dunavertie, under the influence of Nevoy, a preacher, put 300 Irish prisoners to the sword.

The parties in Scotland were now: (1) the Kirk, Argyll, the two Leslies, and most of the Commons; (2) Hamilton, Lanark, and Lauderdale, who had no longer anything to fear, as regards their estates, from Charles or from bishops, and who were ashamed of his surrender to the English; (3) Royalists in general. With Charles (December 27, 1647) in his prison at Carisbrooke, Lauderdale, Loudoun, and Lanark made a secret treaty, *The Engagement*, which they buried in the garden, for if it were discovered the Independents of the army would have attacked Scotland.

An Assembly of the Scots Estates on March 3, 1648, had a large majority of nobles, gentry, and many burgesses in favour of aiding the captive king; on the other side Argyll was backed by the omnipotent Commission of the General Assembly, and by the full force of prayers and sermons. The letter-writer, Baillie, now deemed "that it were for the good of the world that churchmen did meddle with ecclesiastical affairs only." The Engagers insisted on establishing presbytery in England, which neither satisfied the Kirk nor the Cavaliers and Independents. Nothing more futile could have been devised.

The Estates, in May, began to raise an army; the preachers denounced them: there was a battle between armed communicants of the preachers' party and the soldiers of the State at Mauchline. Invading England on July 8, Hamilton had Lambert and Cromwell to face him, and left Argyll, the preachers, and their "slashing communicants" in his rear. Lanark had vainly urged that the west country fanatics should be crushed before the Border was crossed. By a march worthy of Montrose across the fells into Lanarkshire, Cromwell reached Preston; cut in between the northern parts of Hamilton's army; defeated the English Royalists and Langdale, and cut to pieces or captured the Scots, disunited as their generals were, at Wigan and Warrington (August 17-19). Hamilton was taken and was decapitated later. The force that recrossed the Border consisted of such mounted men as escaped, with the detachment of Monro which had not joined Hamilton.

The godly in Scotland rejoiced at the defeat of their army: the levies of the western shires of Ayr, Renfrew, and Lanark occupied Edinburgh: Argyll and the Kirk party were masters, and when Cromwell arrived in Edinburgh early in October he was entertained at dinner by Argyll. The left wing of the Covenant was now allied with the Independents — the deadly foes of presbytery! To the ordinary mind this looks like a new breach of the Covenant, that impossible treaty with Omnipotence. Charles had written that the divisions of parties were probably "God's way to punish them for their many rebellions and perfidies." The punishment was now beginning in earnest, and the alliance of extreme Covenanters with "bloody sectaries" could not be maintained. Yet historians admire the statesmanship of Argyll!

If the edge which the sword of the Covenant turned against the English enemies of presbytery were blunted, the edge that smote Covenanters less extreme than Argyll and the preachers was whetted afresh. In the Estates of January 5, 1649, Argyll, whose party had a large majority, and the fanatical Johnston of Waristoun (who made private covenants with Jehovah) demanded disenabling Acts against all who had in any degree been tainted by the *Engagement* for the rescue of the king. The Engagers were divided into four “Classes,” who were rendered incapable by “The Act of Classes” of holding any office, civil or military. This Act deprived the country of the services of thousands of men, just at the moment when the English army, the Independents, Argyll’s allies, were holding the Trial of Charles I.; and, in defiance of timid remonstrances from the Scottish Commissioners in England, cut off “that comely head” (January 30, 1649), which meant war with Scotland.

SCOTLAND AND CHARLES II.

This was certain, for, on February 5, on the news of the deed done at Whitehall, the Estates proclaimed Charles II. as Scottish King — if he took the Covenant. By an ingenious intrigue Argyll allowed Lauderdale and Lanark, whom the Estates had intended to arrest, to escape to Holland, where Charles was residing, and their business was to bring that uncovenanted prince to sign the Covenant, and to overcome the influence of Montrose, who, with Clarendon, of course resisted such a trebly dishonourable act of perjured hypocrisy. During the whole struggle, since Montrose took the king's side, he had been thwarted by the Hamiltons. They invariably wavered: now they were for a futile policy of dishonour, in which they involved their young king, Argyll, and Scotland. Montrose stood for honour and no Covenant; Argyll, the Hamiltons, Lauderdale, and the majority of the preachers stood for the Covenant with dishonour and perjury; the left wing of the preachers stood for the Covenant, but not for its dishonourable and foresworn acceptance by Charles.

As a Covenanter, Charles II. would be the official foe of the English Independents and army; Scotland would need every sword in the kingdom, and the kingdom's best general, Montrose, yet the Act of Classes, under the dictation of the preachers, rejected every man tainted with participation in or approval of the Engagement — or of neglecting family prayers!

Charles, in fact, began (February 22) by appointing Montrose his Lieutenant-Governor and Captain-General in Scotland, though Lauderdale and Lanark "abate not an ace of their damned Covenant in all their discourses," wrote Hyde. The dispute between Montrose, on the side of honour, and that of Lanark, Lauderdale, and other Scottish envoys, ended as — given the character of Charles II. and his destitution — it must end. Charles (January 22, 1650) despatched Montrose to fight for him in Scotland, and sent him the Garter. Montrose knew his doom: he replied, "With the more alacrity shall I abandon still my life to search my death for the interests of your Majesty's honour and service." He searched his death, and soon he found it.

On May 1, Charles, by the Treaty of Breda, vowed to sign the Covenant; a week earlier Montrose, not joined by the Mackenzies, had been defeated by Strachan at Carbisdale, on the south of the Kyle, opposite Invershin, in Sutherlandshire. He was presently captured, and crowned a glorious life of honour by a more glorious death on the gibbet (May 21). He had kept his promise; he had searched his death; he had loyally defended, like Jeanne d'Arc, a disloyal king; he had "carried fidelity and honour with him to the grave." His body was mutilated, his limbs were exposed, — they now lie in St Giles' Church, Edinburgh, where is his beautiful monument.

Montrose's last words to Charles (March 26, from Kirkwall) implored that Prince "to be just to himself," — not to perjure himself by signing the Covenant. The voice of honour is not always that of worldly wisdom, but events proved that Charles and Scotland could have lost nothing and must have gained much had the king listened to Montrose. He submitted, we saw, to commissioners sent to him from Scotland. Says one of these gentlemen, "*He* . . . sinfully complied with what *we* most sinfully pressed upon him, . . . *our* sin was more than *his*."

While his subjects in Scotland were executing his loyal servants taken prisoners in Montrose's last defeat, Charles crossed the sea, signing the Covenants on board ship, and landed at the mouth of Spey. What he gained by his dishonour was the guilt of perjury; and the consequent distrust of the wilder but more honest Covenanters, who knew that he had perjured himself, and deemed his reception a cause of divine wrath and disastrous judgments. Next he was separated from most of his false friends, who had urged him to his guilt, and from all Royalists; and he was not allowed to be with his army, which the preachers kept "purging" of all who did not come up to their standard of sanctity.

Their hopeful scheme was to propitiate the Deity and avert wrath by purging out officers of experience, while filling up their places with godly but incompetent novices in war, "ministers' sons, clerks, and such other sanctified creatures." This final and fatal absurdity was the result of playing at being the Israel described in the early historic books of the Old Testament, a policy initiated by Knox in spite of the humorous protests of Lethington.

For the surer purging of that Achan, Charles, and to conciliate the party who deemed him the greatest cause of wrath of all, the king had to sign a false and disgraceful declaration that he was "afflicted in spirit before God because of the impieties of his father and mother"! He was helpless in the hands of Argyll, David Leslie, and the rest: he knew they would desert him if he did not sign, and he yielded (August 16). Meanwhile Cromwell, with Lambert, Monk, 16,000 foot and horse, and a victualling fleet, had reached Musselburgh, near Edinburgh, by July 28.

David Leslie very artfully evaded every attempt to force a fight, but hung about him in all his movements. Cromwell was obliged to retreat for lack of supplies in a devastated country, and on September 1 reached Dunbar by the coast road. Leslie, marching parallel along the hill-ridges, occupied Doonhill and secured a long, deep, and steep ravine, "the Peaths," near Cockburnspath, barring Cromwell's line of march. On September 2 the controlling clerical Committee was still busily purging and depleting the Scottish army. The night of September 2-3 was very wet, the officers deserted their regiments to take shelter. Says Leslie himself, "We might as easily have beaten them as we did James Graham at Philiphaugh, if the officers had stayed by their own troops and regiments." Several witnesses, and Cromwell himself, asserted that, owing to the insistence of the preachers, Leslie moved his men to the lower slopes on the afternoon of September 2. "The Lord hath delivered them into our hands," Cromwell is reported to have said. They now occupied a position where the banks of the lower Broxburn were flat and assailable, not steep and forming a strong natural moat, as on the higher level. All night Cromwell rode along and among his regiments of horse, biting his lip till the blood ran down his chin. Leslie thought to surprise Cromwell; Cromwell surprised Leslie, crossed the Broxburn on the low level, before dawn, and drove into the Scots who were all unready, the matches of their muskets being wet and unlighted. The centre made a good stand, but a flank charge by English cavalry cut up the Scots foot, and Leslie fled with the nobles, gentry, and mounted men. In killed, wounded, and prisoners the Scots are said to have lost 14,000 men, a manifest exaggeration. It was an utter defeat.

"Surely," wrote Cromwell, "it is probable the Kirk has done her do." The Kirk thought not; purging must go on, "nobody must blame the Covenant." Neglect of family prayers was selected as one cause of the defeat! Strachan and Ker, two extreme whigamores of the left wing of the godly, went to raise a western force that would neither acknowledge Charles nor join Cromwell, who now took Edinburgh Castle. Charles was reduced by Argyll to make to him the most slavish promises, including the payment of £40,000, the part of the price of Charles I. which Argyll had not yet touched.

On October 4 Charles made "the Start"; he fled to the Royalists of Angus, — Ogilvy and Airlie: he was caught, brought back, and preached at. Then came fighting between the Royalists and the Estates. Middleton, a good soldier, Atholl, and others, declared that they must and would fight for Scotland, though they were purged out by the preachers. The Estates (November 4) gave them an indemnity. On this point the Kirk split into twain: the wilder men, led by the Rev. James Guthrie, refused reconciliation (the Remonstrants); the less fanatical would consent to it, on terms (the Resolutioners). The Committee of Estates dared to resist the Remonstrants: even the Commissioners of the General Assembly "cannot be against the raising of all fencible persons," — and at last adopted the attitude of all sensible persons. By May 21, 1651, the Estates rescinded the insane Act of Classes, but the strife between clerical Remonstrants and Resolutioners persisted till after the Restoration, the *Remonstrants* being later named *Protesters*.

Charles had been crowned at Scone on January 1, again signing the Covenants. Leslie now occupied Stirling, avoiding an engagement. In July, while a General Assembly saw the strife of the two sects, came news that Lambert had crossed the Forth at Queensferry, and defeated a Scots force at Inverkeithing, where the Macleans fell almost to a man; Monk captured a number of the General Assembly, and, as Cromwell, moving to Perth, could now assail Leslie and the main Scottish force at Stirling, they, by a desperate resolution, with 4000 horse and 9000 foot, invaded England by the west marches, "laughing," says one of them, "at the ridiculousness of our own condition." On September 1 Monk stormed and sacked Dundee as Montrose sacked Aberdeen, but if he made a massacre like that by Edward I. at Berwick, history is lenient to the crime.

On August 22 Charles, with his army, reached Worcester, whither Cromwell marched with a force twice as great as that of the king. Worcester was a Sedan: Charles could neither hold it nor, though he charged gallantly, could he break through Cromwell's lines. Before nightfall on September 3 Charles was a fugitive: he had no army; Hamilton was slain, Middleton and David Leslie with thousands more were prisoners. Monk had already captured, at Alyth (August 28), the whole of the Government, the Committee of Estates, and had also caught some preachers, including James Sharp, later Archbishop of St Andrews. England had conquered Scotland at last, after twelve years of government by preachers acting as interpreters of the Covenant between Scotland and Jehovah.

CHAPTER XXV. CONQUERED SCOTLAND.

During the nine years of the English military occupation of Scotland everything was merely provisional; nothing decisive could occur. In the first place (October 1651), eight English Commissioners, including three soldiers, Monk, Lambert, and Deane, undertook the administration of the conquered country. They announced tolerance in religion (except for Catholicism and Anglicanism, of course), and during their occupation the English never wavered on a point so odious to the Kirk. The English rulers also, as much as they could, protected the women and men whom the lairds and preachers smelled out and tortured and burned for witchcraft. By way of compensation for the expenses of war all the estates of men who had sided with Charles were confiscated. Taxation also was heavy. On four several occasions attempts were made to establish the Union of the two countries; Scotland, finally, was to return thirty members to sit in the English Parliament. But as that Parliament, under Cromwell, was subject to strange and sudden changes, and as the Scottish representatives were usually men sold to the English side, the experiment was not promising. In its first stage it collapsed with Cromwell's dismissal of the Long Parliament on April 20, 1653. Argyll meanwhile had submitted, retaining his estates (August 1652); but of five garrisons in his country three were recaptured, not without his goodwill, by the Highlanders; and in these events began Monk's aversion, finally fatal, to the Marquis as a man whom none could trust, and in whom finally nobody trusted.

An English Commission of Justice, established in May 1652, was confessedly more fair and impartial than any Scotland had known, which was explained by the fact that the English judges "were kinless loons." Northern cavaliers were relieved by Monk's forbidding civil magistrates to outlaw and plunder persons lying under Presbyterian excommunication, and sanitary measures did something to remove from Edinburgh the ancient reproach of filth, for the time. While the Protesters and Resolutioners kept up their quarrel, the Protesters claiming to be the only genuine representatives of Kirk and Covenant, the General Assembly of the Resolutioners was broken up (July 21, 1653) by Lilburne, with a few soldiers, and henceforth the Kirk, having no General Assembly, was less capable of promoting civil broils. Lilburne suspected that the Assembly was in touch with new stirrings towards a rising in the Highlands, to lead which Charles had, in 1652, promised to send Middleton, who had escaped from an English prison, as general. It was always hard to find any one under whom the great chiefs would serve, and Glencairn, with Kenmure, was unable to check their jealousies.

Charles heard that Argyll would appear in arms for the Crown, when he deemed the occasion good; meanwhile his heir, Lord Lorne, would join the rising. He did so in July 1653, under the curse of Argyll, who, by letters to Lilburne and Monk, and by giving useful information to the English, fatally committed himself as treasonable to the Royal cause. Examples of his conduct were known to Glencairn, who communicated them to Charles.

At the end of February 1654 Middleton arrived in Sutherland to head the insurrection: but Monk chased the small and disunited force from county to county, and in July Morgan defeated and scattered its remnants at Loch Garry, just south of Dalnaspidal. The Armstrongs and other Border clans, who had been moss-trooping in their ancient way, were also reduced, and new fortresses and garrisons bridled the fighting clans of the west. With Cromwell as protector in 1654, Free Trade with England was offered to the Scots with reduced taxation: an attempt to legislate for the Union failed. In 1655-1656 a Council of State and a Commission of Justice included two or three Scottish members, and burghs were allowed to elect magistrates who would swear loyalty to Cromwell. Cromwell died on the day of his fortunate star (September 3, 1658), and twenty-one members for Scotland sat in Richard Cromwell’s Parliament. When that was dissolved, and when the Rump was reinstated, a new Bill of Union was introduced, and, by reason of the provisions for religious toleration (a thing absolutely impious in Presbyterian eyes), was delayed till (October 1659) the Rump was sent to its account. Conventions of Burghs and Shires were now held by Monk, who, leading his army of occupation south in January 1660, left the Resolutioners and Protesters standing at gaze, as hostile as ever, awaiting what thing should befall. Both parties still cherished the Covenants, and so long as these documents were held to be for ever binding on all generations, so long as the king’s authority was to be resisted in defence of these treaties with Omnipotence, it was plain that in Scotland there could neither be content nor peace. For twenty-eight years, during a generation of profligacy and turmoil, cruelty and corruption, the Kirk and country were to reap what they had sown in 1638.

CHAPTER XXVI. THE RESTORATION.

There was “dancing and derray” in Scotland among the laity when the king came to his own again. The darkest page in the national history seemed to have been turned; the conquering English were gone with their abominable tolerance, their craze for soap and water, their aversion to witch-burnings. The nobles and gentry would recover their lands and compensation for their losses; there would be offices to win, and “the spoils of office.”

It seems that in Scotland none of the lessons of misfortune had been learned. Since January the chiefs of the milder party of preachers, the Resolutioners, — they who had been reconciled with the Engagers, — were employing the Rev. James Sharp, who had been a prisoner in England, as their agent with Monk, with Lauderdale, in April, with Charles in Holland, and, again, in London. Sharp was no fanatic. From the first he assured his brethren, Douglas of Edinburgh, Baillie, and the rest, that there was no chance for “rigid Presbyterianism.” They could conceive of no Presbyterianism which was not rigid, in the manner of Andrew Melville, to whom his king was “Christ’s silly vassal.” Sharp warned them early that in face of the irreconcilable Protesters, “moderate Episcopacy” would be preferred; and Douglas himself assured Sharp that the new generation in Scotland “bore a heart-hatred to the Covenant,” and are “wearied of the yoke of presbyterial government.”

This was true: the ruling classes had seen too much of presbyterial government, and would prefer bishops as long as they were not pampered and all-powerful. On the other hand the lesser gentry, still more their godly wives, the farmers and burgesses, and the preachers, regarded the very shadow of Episcopacy as a breach of the Covenant and an insult to the Almighty. The Covenanters had forced the Covenant on the consciences of thousands, from the king downwards, who in soul and conscience loathed it. They were to drink of the same cup — Episcopacy was to be forced on them by fines and imprisonments. Scotland, her people and rulers were moving in a vicious circle. The Resolutioners admitted that to allow the Protesters to have any hand in affairs was “to breed continual distemper and disorders,” and Baillie was for banishing the leaders of the Protesters, irreconcilables like the Rev. James Guthrie, to the Orkney islands. But the Resolutioners, on the other hand, were no less eager to stop the use of the liturgy in Charles’s own household, and to persecute every sort of Catholic, Dissenter, Sectary, and Quaker in Scotland.

Meanwhile Argyll, in debt, despised on all sides, and yet dreaded, was holding a great open-air Communion meeting of Protesters at Paisley, in the heart of the wildest Covenanting region (May 27, 1660). He was still dangerous; he was trying to make himself trusted by the Protesters, who were opposed to Charles. It may be doubted if any great potentate in Scotland except the Marquis wished to revive the constitutional triumphs of Argyll's party in the last Parliament of Charles I. Charles now named his Privy Council and Ministers without waiting for parliamentary assent — though his first Parliament would have assented to anything. He chose only his late supporters: Glencairn who raised his standard in 1653; Rothes, a humorous and not a cruel voluptuary; and, as Secretary for Scotland in London, Lauderdale, who had urged him to take the Covenant, and who for twenty years was to be his buffoon, his favourite, and his wavering and unscrupulous adviser. Among these greedy and treacherous profligates there would, had he survived, have been no place for Montrose.

In defiance of warnings from omens, second-sighted men, and sensible men, Argyll left the safe sanctuary of his mountains and sea-straits, and betook himself to London, "a fey man." Most of his past was covered by an Act of Indemnity, but not his doings in 1653. He was arrested before he saw the king's face (July 8, 1660), and lay in the Tower till, in December, he was taken to be tried for treason in Scotland.

Sharp's friends were anxious to interfere in favour of establishing Presbyterianism in England; he told them that the hope was vain; he repeatedly asked for leave to return home, and, while an English preacher assured Charles that the rout of Worcester had been God's vengeance for his taking of the Covenant, Sharp (June 25) told his Resolutioners that "the Protesters' doom is dight."

Administration in Scotland was intrusted to the Committee of Estates whom Monk (1650) had captured at Alyth, and with them Glencairn, as Chancellor, entered Edinburgh on August 22. Next day, while the Committee was busy, James Guthrie and some Protester preachers met, and, in the old way, drew up a "supplication." They denounced religious toleration, and asked for the establishment of Presbytery in England, and the filling of all offices with Covenanters. They were all arrested and accused of attempting to "rekindle civil war," which would assuredly have followed had their prayer been accepted. Next year Guthrie was hanged. But ten days after his arrest Sharp had brought down a letter of Charles to the Edinburgh Presbytery, promising to "protect and preserve the government of the Church of Scotland as it is established by law." Had the words run "as it may be established by law" (in Parliament) it would not have been a dishonourable quibble — as it was.

Parliament opened on New Year’s Day 1661, with Middleton as Commissioner. In the words of Sir George Mackenzie, then a very young advocate and man of letters, “never was Parliament so obsequious.” The king was declared “supreme Governor over all persons and in all causes” (a blow at Kirk judicature), and all Acts between 1633 and 1661 were rescinded, just as thirty years of ecclesiastical legislation had been rescinded by the Covenanters. A sum of £40,000 yearly was settled on the king. Argyll was tried, was defended by young George Mackenzie, and, when he seemed safe, his doom was fixed by the arrival of a Campbell from London bearing some of his letters to Lilburne and Monk (1653-1655) which the Indemnity of 1651 did not cover. He died, by the axe (not the rope, like Montrose), with dignity and courage.

The question of Church government in Scotland was left to Charles and his advisers. The problem presented to the Government of the Restoration by the Kirk was much more difficult and complicated than historians usually suppose. The pretensions which the preachers had inherited from Knox and Andrew Melville were practically incompatible, as had been proved, with the existence of the State. In the southern and western shires, — such as those of Dumfries, Galloway, Ayr, Renfrew, and Lanark, — the forces which attacked the Engagers had been mustered; these shires had backed Strachan and Ker and Guthrie in the agitation against the king, the Estates, and the less violent clergy, after Dunbar. But without Argyll, and with no probable noble leaders, they could do little harm; they had done none under the English occupation, which abolished the General Assembly. To have restored the Assembly, or rather two Assemblies — that of the Protesters and that of the Resolutionists, — would certainly have been perilous. Probably the wisest plan would have been to grant a General Assembly, to meet *after* the session of Parliament; not, as had been the custom, to meet before it and influence or coerce the Estates. Had that measure proved perilous to peace it need not have been repeated, — the Kirk might have been left in the state to which the English had reduced it.

This measure would not have so much infuriated the devout as did the introduction of “black prelacy,” and the ejection of some 300 adored ministers, chiefly in the south-west, and “the making of a desert first, and then peopling it with owls and satyrs” (the curates), as Archbishop Leighton described the action of 1663. There ensued the finings of all who would not attend the ministrations of “owls and satyrs,” — a grievance which produced two rebellions (1666 and 1679) and a doctrine of anarchism, and was only worn down by eternal and cruel persecutions.

By violence the Restoration achieved its aim: the Revolution of 1688 entered into the results; it was a bitter moment in the evolution of Scotland — a moment that need never have existed. Episcopacy was restored, four bishops were consecrated, and Sharp accepted (as might have long been foreseen) the See of St Andrews. He was henceforth reckoned a Judas, and assuredly he had ruined his character for honour: he became a puppet of Government, despised by his masters, loathed by the rest of Scotland.

In May-September 1662, Parliament ratified the change to Episcopacy. It seems to have been thought that few preachers except the Protesters would be recalcitrant, refuse collation from bishops, and leave their manses. In point of fact, though they were allowed to consult their consciences till February 1663, nearly 300 ministers preferred their consciences to their livings. They remained centres of the devotion of their flocks, and the "curates," hastily gathered, who took their places, were stigmatised as ignorant and profligate, while, as they were resisted, rabbled, and daily insulted, the country was full of disorder.

The Government thus mortally offended the devout classes, though no attempt was made to introduce a liturgy. In the churches the services were exactly, or almost exactly, what they had been; but excommunications could now only be done by sanction of the bishops. Witch-burnings, in spite of the opposition of George Mackenzie and the Council, were soon as common as under the Covenant. Oaths declaring it unlawful to enter into Covenants or take up arms against the king were imposed on all persons in office.

Middleton, of his own authority, now proposed the ostracism, by parliamentary ballot, of twelve persons reckoned dangerous. Lauderdale was mainly aimed at (it is a pity that the bullet did not find its billet), with Crawford, Cassilis, Tweeddale, Lothian, and other peers who did not approve of the recent measures. But Lauderdale, in London, seeing Charles daily, won his favour; Middleton was recalled (March 1663), and Lauderdale entered freely on his wavering, unscrupulous, corrupt, and disastrous period of power.

The Parliament of June 1663, meeting under Rothes, was packed by the least constitutional method of choosing the Lords of the Articles. Waristoun was brought from France, tried, and hanged, "expressing more fear than I ever saw," wrote Lauderdale, whose Act "against Separation and Disobedience to Ecclesiastical Authority" fined abstainers from services in their parish churches. In 1664, Sharp, who was despised by Lauderdale and Glencairn, obtained the erection of that old grievance — a Court of High Commission, including bishops, to punish nonconformists. Sir James Turner was intrusted with the task of dragooning them, by fining and the quartering of soldiers on those who would not attend the curates and would keep conventicles. Turner was naturally clement and good-natured, but wine often deprived him of his wits, and his soldiery behaved brutally. Their excesses increased discontent, and war with

Holland (1664) gave them hopes of a Dutch ally. Conventicles became common; they had an organisation of scouts and sentinels. The malcontents intrigued with Holland in 1666, and schemed to capture the three Keys of the Kingdom — the castles of Stirling, Dumbarton, and Edinburgh. The States-General promised, when this was done, to send ammunition and 150,000 gulden (July 1666).

When rebellion did break out it had no foreign aid, and a casual origin. In the south-west Turner commanded but seventy soldiers, scattered all about the country. On November 14 some of them mishandled an old man in the clachan of Dalry, on the Ken. A soldier was shot in revenge (Mackenzie speaks as if a conventicle was going on in the neighbourhood); people gathered in arms, with the Laird of Corsack, young Maxwell of Monreith, and M’Lennan; caught Turner, undressed, in Dumfries, and carried him with them as they “went conventicling about,” as Mackenzie writes, holding prayer-meetings, led by Wallace, an old soldier of the Covenant. At Lanark they renewed the Covenant. Dalziel of Binns, who had learned war in Russia, led a pursuing force. The rebels were disappointed in hopes of Dutch or native help at Edinburgh; they turned, when within three miles of the town, into the passes of the Pentland Hills, and at Bullion Green, on November 28, displayed fine soldierly qualities and courage, but fled, broken, at nightfall. The soldiers and countryfolk, who were unsympathetic, took a number of prisoners, preachers and laymen, on whom the Council, under the presidency of Sharp, exercised a cruelty bred of terror. The prisoners were defended by George Mackenzie: it has been strangely stated that he was Lord Advocate, and persecuted them! Fifteen rebels were hanged: the use of torture to extract information was a return, under Fletcher, the King’s Advocate, to a practice of Scottish law which had been almost in abeyance since 1638 — except, of course, in the case of witches. Turner vainly tried to save from the Boot the Laird of Corsack, who had protected his life from the fanatics. “The executioner favoured Mr Mackail,” says the Rev. Mr Kirkton, himself a sufferer later. This Mr Mackail, when a lad of twenty-one (1662), had already denounced the rulers, in a sermon, as on the moral level of Haman and Judas.

It is entirely untrue that Sharp concealed a letter from the king commanding that no blood should be shed (Charles detested hanging people). If any one concealed his letter, it was Burnet, Archbishop of Glasgow. Dalziel now sent Ballantyne to supersede Turner and to exceed him in ferocity; and Bellenden and Tweeddale wrote to Lauderdale deprecating the cruelties and rapacity of the reaction, and avowing contempt of Sharp. He was “snibbed,” confined to his diocese, and “cast down, yea, lower than the dust,” wrote Rothes to Lauderdale.

He was held to have exaggerated in his reports the forces of the spirit of revolt; but Tweeddale, Sir Robert Murray, and Kincardine found when in power that matters were really much more serious than they had supposed. In the disturbed districts — mainly the old Strathclyde and Pictish Galloway — the conformist ministers were perpetually threatened, insulted, and robbed.

According to a sympathetic historian, "on the day when Charles should abolish bishops and permit free General Assemblies, the western Whigs would become his law-abiding subjects; but till that day they would be irreconcilable." But a Government is not always well advised in yielding to violence. Moreover, when Government had deserted its clergy, and had granted free General Assemblies, the two Covenants would re-arise, and the pretensions of the clergy to dominate the State would be revived. Lauderdale drifted into a policy of alternate "Indulgences" or tolerations, and of repression, which had the desired effect, at the maximum of cost to justice and decency. Before England drove James II. from the throne, but a small remnant of fanatics were in active resistance, and the Covenants had ceased to be dangerous.

A scheme of partial toleration was mooted in 1667, and Rothes was removed from his practical dictatorship, while Turner was made the scapegoat of Rothes, Sharp, and Dalziel. The result of the scheme of toleration was an increase in disorder. Bishop Leighton had a plan for abolishing all but a shadow of Episcopacy; but the temper of the recalcitrants displayed itself in a book, 'Naphtali,' advocating the right of the godly to murder their oppressors. This work contained provocations to anarchism, and, in Knox's spirit, encouraged any Phinehas conscious of a "call" from Heaven to do justice on such persons as he found guilty of troubling the godly.

Fired by such Christian doctrines, on July 11, 1668, one Mitchell— "a preacher of the Gospel, and a youth of much zeal and piety," says Wodrow the historian — shot at Sharp, wounded the Bishop of Orkney in the street of Edinburgh, and escaped. This event delayed the project of conciliation, but in July 1669 the first Indulgence was promulgated. On making certain concessions, outed ministers were to be restored. Two-and-forty came in, including the Resolutioner Douglas, in 1660 the correspondent of Sharp. The Indulgence allowed the indulged to reject Episcopal collation; but while brethren exiled in Holland denounced the scheme (these brethren, led by Mr MacWard, opposed all attempts at reconciliation), it also offended the Archbishops, who issued a Remonstrance. Sharp was silenced; Burnet of Glasgow was superseded, and the see was given to the saintly but unpractical Leighton. By 1670 conventiclers met in arms, and "a clanking Act," as Lauderdale called it, menaced them with death: Charles II. resented but did not rescind it. In fact, the disorders and attacks on conformist ministers were of a violence much overlooked by our historians. In 1672 a second Indulgence split the Kirk into factions — the exiles in Holland maintaining that preachers who accepted it should be held men unholy, false brethren. But the Indulged increased in numbers, and finally in influence.

To such a man as Leighton the whole quarrel seemed "a scuffle of drunken men in the dark." An Englishman entering a Scottish church at this time found no sort of liturgy; prayers and sermons were what the minister chose to make them — in fact, there was no persecution for religion, says Sir George Mackenzie. But if men thought even a shadow of Episcopacy an offence to Omnipotence, and the king's authority in ecclesiastical cases a usurping of "the Crown Honours of Christ"; if they consequently broke the law by attending armed conventicles and assailing conformist preachers, and then were fined or imprisoned, — from their point of view they were being persecuted for their religion. Meanwhile they bullied and "rabbled" the "curates" for *their* religion: such was Leighton's "drunken scuffle in the dark."

In 1672 Lauderdale married the rapacious and tyrannical daughter of Will Murray — of old the whipping-boy of Charles I., later a disreputable intriguer. Lauderdale's own ferocity of temper and his greed had created so much dislike that in the Parliament of 1673 he was met by a constitutional opposition headed by the Duke of Hamilton, and with Sir George Mackenzie as its orator. Lauderdale consented to withdraw monopolies on salt, tobacco, and brandy; to other grievances he would not listen (the distresses of the Kirk were not brought forward), and he dissolved the Parliament. The opposition tried to get at him through the English Commons, who brought against him charges like those which were fatal to Strafford. They failed; and Lauderdale, holding seven offices himself, while his brother Haltoun was Master of the Mint, ruled through a kind of clique of kinsmen and creatures.

Leighton, in despair, resigned his see: the irreconcilables of the Kirk had crowned him with insults. The Kirk, he said, "abounded in furious zeal and endless debates about the empty name and shadow of a difference in government, in the meanwhile not having of solemn and orderly public worship as much as a shadow."

Wodrow, the historian of the sufferings of the Kirk, declares that through the riotous proceedings of the religious malcontents "the country resembled war as much as peace." But an Act of Council of 1677 bidding landowners sign a bond for the peaceable behaviour of all on their lands was refused obedience by many western lairds. They could not enforce order, they said: hence it seemed to follow that there was much disorder. Those who refused were, by a stretch of the law of "law-burrows," bound over to keep the peace of the Government. Lauderdale, having nothing that we would call a police, little money, and a small insufficient force of regulars, called in "the Highland Host," the retainers of Atholl, Glenorchy, Mar, Moray, and Airlie, and other northern lords, and quartered them on the disturbed districts for a month. They were then sent home bearing their spoils (February 1678). Atholl and Perth (later to be the Catholic minister of James II.) now went over to "the Party," the opposition, Hamilton's party; Hamilton and others rode to London to complain against Lauderdale, but he, aided by the silver tongue of Mackenzie, who had changed sides, won over Charles, and Lauderdale's assailants were helpless.

Great unpopularity and disgrace were achieved by the treatment of the pious Mitchell, who, we have seen, missed Sharp and shot the Bishop of Orkney in 1668. In 1674 he was taken, and confessed before the Council, after receiving from Rothes, then Chancellor, assurance of his life: this with Lauderdale's consent. But when brought before the judges, he retracted his confession. He was kept a prisoner on the Bass Rock; in 1676 was tortured; in January 1678 was again tried. Haltoun (who in a letter of 1674 had mentioned the assurance of life), Rothes, Sharp, and Lauderdale, all swore that, to their memory, no assurance had been given in 1674. Mitchell's counsel asked to be allowed to examine the Register of the Council, but, for some invisible technical reasons, the Lords of the Justiciary refused; the request, they said, came too late. Mackenzie prosecuted; he had been Mitchell's counsel in 1674, and it is impossible to follow the reasoning by which he justifies the condemnation and hanging of Mitchell in January 1678. Sharp was supposed to have urged Mitchell's trial, and to have perjured himself, which is far from certain. Though Mitchell was guilty, the manner of his taking off was flagrantly unjust and most discreditable to all concerned.

Huge armed conventicles, and others led by Welsh, a preacher, marched about through the country in December 1678 to May 1679. In April 1679 two soldiers were murdered while in bed; next day John Graham of Claverhouse, who had served under the Prince of Orange with credit, and now comes upon the scene, reported that Welsh was organising an armed rebellion, and that the peasants were seizing the weapons of the militia. Balfour of Kinloch (Burley) and Robert Hamilton, a laird in Fife, were the leaders of that extreme sect which was feared as much by the indulged preachers as by the curates, and, on May 2, 1679, Balfour, with Hackstoun of Rathillet (who merely looked on), and other pious desperadoes, passed half an hour in clumsily hacking Sharp to death, in the presence of his daughter, at Magus Moor near St Andrews.

The slayers, says one of them, thanked the Lord "for leading them by His

Holy Spirit in every step they stepped in that matter," and it is obvious that mere argument was unavailing with gentlemen who cherished such opinions. In the portraits of Sharp we see a face of refined goodness which makes the physiognomist distrust his art. From very early times Cromwell had styled Sharp "Sharp of that ilk." He was subtle, he had no fanaticism, he warned his brethren in 1660 of the impossibility of restoring their old authority and discipline. But when he accepted an archbishopric he sold his honour; his servility to Charles and Lauderdale was disgusting; fear made him cruel; his conduct at Mitchell's last trial is, at best, ambiguous; and the hatred in which he was held is proved by the falsehoods which his enemies told about his private life and his sorceries.

The murderers crossed the country, joined the armed fanatics of the west, under Robert Hamilton, and on Restoration Day (May 29) burned Acts of the Government at Rutherglen. Claverhouse rode out of Glasgow with a small force, to inquire into this proceeding; met the armed insurgents in a strong position defended by marshes and small lochs; sent to Lord Ross at Glasgow for reinforcements which did not arrive; and has himself told how he was defeated, pursued, and driven back into Glasgow. "This may be accounted the beginning of the rebellion in my opinion."

Hamilton shot with his own hand one of the prisoners, and reckoned the sparing of the others "one of our first steppings aside." Men so conscientious as Hamilton were rare in his party, which was ruined presently by its own distracted counsels.

The forces of the victors of Drumclog were swollen by their success, but they were repulsed with loss in an attack on Glasgow. The commands of Ross and Claverhouse were then withdrawn to Stirling, and when Livingstone joined them at Larbert, the whole army mustered but 1800 men — so weak were the regulars. The militia was raised, and the king sent down his illegitimate son, Monmouth, husband of the heiress of Buccleuch, at the head of several regiments of redcoats. Argyll was not of service; he was engaged in private war with the Macleans, who refused an appeal for help from the rebels. They, in Glasgow and at Hamilton, were quarrelling over the Indulgence: the extremists called Mr Welsh's party "rotten-hearted" — Welsh would not reject the king's authority — the Welshites were the more numerous. On June 22 the Clyde, at Bothwell Bridge, separated the rebels — whose preachers were inveighing against each other — from Monmouth's army. Monmouth refused to negotiate till the others laid down their arms, and after a brief artillery duel, the Royal infantry carried the bridge, and the rest of the affair was pursuit by the cavalry. The rival Covenanting leaders, Russel, one of Sharp's murderers, and Ure, give varying accounts of the affair, and each party blames the other. The rebel force is reckoned at from five to seven thousand, the Royal army was of 2300 according to Russel. "Some hundreds" of the Covenanters fell, and "many hundreds," the Privy Council reported, were taken.

The battle of Bothwell Bridge severed the extremists, Robert Hamilton, Richard Cameron and Cargill, the famous preachers, and the rest, from the majority of the Covenanters. They dwindled to the "Remnant," growing the fiercer as their numbers decreased. Only two ministers were hanged; hundreds of prisoners were banished, like Cromwell's prisoners after Dunbar, to the American colonies. Of these some two hundred were drowned in the wreck of their vessel off the Orkneys. The main body were penned up in Greyfriars Churchyard; many escaped; more signed a promise to remain peaceful, and shun conventicles. There was more of cruel carelessness than of the deliberate cruelty displayed in the massacres and hangings of women after Philiphaugh and Dunaverty. But the avaricious and corrupt rulers, after 1679, headed by James, Duke of York (Lauderdale being removed), made the rising of Bothwell Bridge the pretext for fining and ruining hundreds of persons, especially lairds, who were accused of helping or harbouring rebels. The officials were rapacious for their own profit. The records of scores of trials prosecuted for the sake of spoil, and disgraced by torture and injustice, make miserable reading. Between the trials of the accused and the struggle with the small minority of extremists led by Richard Cameron and the aged Mr Cargill, the history of the country is monotonously wretched. It was in prosecuting lairds and peasants and preachers that Sir George Mackenzie, by nature a lenient man and a lover of literature, gained the name of "the bluidy advocate."

Cameron and his followers rode about after issuing the wildest manifestoes, as at Sanquhar in the shire of Dumfries (June 22, 1680). Bruce of Earlshall was sent with a party of horse to pursue, and, in the wild marshes of Airs Moss, in Ayrshire, Cameron "fell praying and fighting"; while Hackstoun of Rathillet, less fortunate, was taken, and the murder of Sharp was avenged on him with unspeakable cruelties. The Remnant now formed itself into organised and armed societies; their conduct made them feared and detested by the majority of the preachers, who longed for a quiet life, not for the establishment of a Mosaic commonwealth, and "the execution of righteous judgments" on "malignants." Cargill was now the leader of the Remnant, and Cargill, in a conventicle at Torwood, of his own authority excommunicated the king, the Duke of York, Lauderdale, Rothes, Dalziel, and Mackenzie, whom he accused of leniency to witches, among other sins. The Government apparently thought that excommunication, to the mind of Cargill and his adherents, meant outlawry, and that outlawry might mean the assassination of the excommunicated. Cargill was hunted, and (July 12, 1681) was captured by "wild Bonshaw." It was believed by his party that the decision to execute Cargill was carried by the vote of Argyll, in the Privy Council, and that Cargill told Rothes (who had signed the Covenant with him in their youth) that Rothes would be the first to die. Rothes died on July 26, Cargill was hanged on July 27.

On the following day James, Duke of York, as Royal Commissioner, opened the first Parliament since 1673-74. James secured an Act making the right of succession to the Crown independent of differences of religion; he, of course, was a Catholic. The Test Act was also passed, a thing so self-contradictory in its terms that any man might take it whose sense of humour overcame his sense of honour. Many refused, including a number of the conformist ministers. Argyll took the Test "as far as it is consistent with itself and with the Protestant religion."

Argyll, the son of the executed Marquis, had recovered his lands, and acquired the title of Earl mainly through the help of Lauderdale. During the religious troubles from 1660 onwards he had taken no great part, but had sided with the Government, and approved of the torture of preachers. But what ruined him now (though the facts have been little noticed) was his disregard of the claims of his creditors, and his obtaining the lands of the Macleans in Mull and Morven, in discharge of an enormous debt of the Maclean chief to the Marquis, executed in 1661. The Macleans had vainly attempted to prove that the debt was vastly inflated by familiar processes, and had resisted in arms the invasion of the Campbells. They had friends in Seaforth, the Mackenzies, and in the Earl of Errol and other nobles.

These men, especially Mackenzie of Tarbet, an astute intriguer, seized their chance when Argyll took the Test "with a qualification," and though, at first, he satisfied and was reconciled to the Duke of York, they won over the Duke, accused Argyll to the king, brought him before a jury, and had him condemned of treason and incarcerated. The object may have been to intimidate him, and destroy his almost royal power in the west and the islands. In any case, after a trial for treason, in which one vote settled his doom, he escaped in disguise as a footman (perhaps by collusion, as was suspected), fled to England, conspired there with Scottish exiles and a Covenanting refugee, Mr Veitch, and, as Charles would not allow him to be searched for, he easily escaped to Holland. (For details, see my book, 'Sir George Mackenzie.')

It was, in fact, clan hatred that dragged down Argyll. His condemnation was an infamous perversion of justice, but as Charles would not allow him to be captured in London, it is most improbable that he would have permitted the unjust capital sentence to be carried out. The escape was probably collusive, and the sole result of these intricate iniquities was to create for the Government an enemy who would have been dangerous if he had been trusted by the extreme Presbyterians. In England no less than in Scotland the supreme and odious injustice of Argyll's trial excited general indignation. The Earl of Aberdeen (Gordon of Haddo) was now Chancellor, and Queensberry was Treasurer for a while; both were intrigued against at Court by the Earl of Perth and his brother, later Lord Melfort, and probably by far the worst of all the knaves of the Restoration.

Increasing outrages by the Remnant, now headed by the Rev. Mr James Renwick, a very young man, led to more furious repression, especially as in 1683 Government detected a double plot — the wilder English aim being to raise the rabble and to take or slay Charles and his brother at the Rye House; while the more respectable conspirators, English and Scots, were believed to be acquainted with, though not engaged in, this design. The Rev. Mr Carstares was going and coming between Argyll and the exiles in Holland and the intriguers at home. They intended as usual first to surprise Edinburgh Castle. In England Algernon Sidney, Lord Russell, and others were arrested, while Baillie of Jerviswoode and Carstares were apprehended — Carstares in England. He was sent to Scotland, where he could be tortured. The trial of Jerviswoode was if possible more unjust than even the common run of these affairs, and he was executed (December 24, 1684).

The conspiracy was, in fact, a very serious affair: Carstares was confessedly aware of its criminal aspect, and was in the closest confidence of the ministers of William of Orange. What his dealings were with them in later years he would never divulge. But it is clear that if the plotters slew Charles and James, the hour had struck for the Dutch deliverer's appearance. If we describe the Rye House Plot as aiming merely at "the exclusion of the Duke of York from the throne," we shut our eyes to evidence and make ourselves incapable of understanding the events. There were plotters of every degree and rank, and they were intriguing with Argyll, and, through Carstares who knew, though he refused a part in the murder plot, were in touch at once with Argyll and the intimates of William of Orange.

Meanwhile "the hill men," the adherents of Renwick, in October 1684, declared a war of assassination against their opponents, and announced that they would try malignants in courts of their own. Their manifesto ("The Apologetical Declaration") caused an extraordinary measure of repression. A test — the abjuration of the *criminal* parts of Renwick's declaration — was to be offered by military authority to all and sundry. Refusal to abjure entailed military execution. The test was only obnoxious to sincere fanatics; but among them must have been hundreds of persons who had no criminal designs, and merely deemed it a point of honour not to "homologate" any act of a Government which was corrupt, prelatic, and unholy.

Later victims of this view of duty were Margaret Lauchleson and Margaret Wilson — an old woman and a young girl — cruelly drowned by the local authorities at Wigtown (May 1685). A myth represents Claverhouse as having been present. The shooting of John Brown, "the Christian Carrier," by Claverhouse in the previous week was an affair of another character. Claverhouse did not exceed his orders, and ammunition and treasonable papers were in Brown's possession; he was also sheltering a red-handed rebel. Brown was not shot merely "because he was a Nonconformist," nor was he shot by the hand of Claverhouse.

These incidents of "the killing time" were in the reign of James II.; Charles II. had died, to the sincere grief of most of his subjects, on February 2, 1685. "Lecherous and treacherous" as he was, he was humorous and good-humoured. The expected invasion of Scotland by Argyll, of England by Monmouth, did not encourage the Government to use respective lenity in the Covenanting region, from Lanarkshire to Galloway.

Argyll, who sailed from Holland on May 2, had a council of Lowlanders who thwarted him. His interests were in his own principality, but he found it occupied by Atholl and his clansmen, and the cadets of his own House as a rule would not rally to him. The Lowlanders with him, Sir Patrick Hume, Sir John Cochrane, and the rest, wished to move south and join hands with the Remnant in the west and in Galloway; but the Remnant distrusted the sudden religious zeal of Argyll, and were cowed by Claverhouse. The coasts were watched by Government vessels of war, and when, after vain movements round about his own castle, Inveraray, Argyll was obliged by his Lowlanders to move on Glasgow, he was checked at every turn; the leaders, weary and lost in the marshes, scattered from Kilpatrick on Clyde; Argyll crossed the river, and was captured by servants of Sir John Shaw of Greenock. He was not put to trial nor to torture; he was executed on the verdict of 1681. About 200 suspected persons were lodged by Government in Dunottar Castle at the time and treated with abominable cruelty.

The Covenanters were now effectually put down, though Renwick was not taken and hanged till 1688. The preachers were anxious for peace and quiet, and were bitterly hostile to Renwick. The Covenant was a dead letter as far as power to do mischief was concerned. It was not persecution of the Kirk, but demand for toleration of Catholics and a manifest desire to restore the Church, that in two years lost James his kingdoms.

On April 29, 1686, James's message to the Scots Parliament asked toleration for "our innocent subjects" the Catholics. He had substituted Perth's brother, now entitled Earl of Melfort, for Queensberry; Perth was now Chancellor; both men had adopted their king's religion, and the infamous Melfort can hardly be supposed to have done so honestly. Their families lost all in the event except their faith. With the request for toleration James sent promises of free trade with England, and he asked for no supplies. Perth had introduced Catholic vestments and furnishings in Holyrood chapel, which provoked a No Popery riot. Parliament would not permit toleration; James removed many of the Council and filled their places with Catholics. Sir George Mackenzie's conscience "dirled"; he refused to vote for toleration and he lost the Lord Advocateship, being superseded by Sir James Dalrymple, an old Covenanting opponent of Claverhouse in Galloway.

In August James, by prerogative, did what the Estates would not do, and he deprived the Archbishop of Glasgow and the Bishop of Dunkeld of their Sees: though a Catholic, he was the king-pope of a Protestant church! In a decree of July 1687 he extended toleration to the Kirk, and a meeting of preachers at Edinburgh expressed "a deep sense of your Majesty's gracious and surprising favour." The Kirk was indeed broken, and, when the Revolution came, was at last ready for a compromise from which the Covenants were omitted. On February 17, 1688, Mr Renwick was hanged at Edinburgh: he had been prosecuted by Dalrymple. On the same day Mackenzie superseded Dalrymple as Lord Advocate.

After the birth of the White Rose Prince of Wales (June 10, 1688), Scotland, like England, apprehended that a Catholic king would be followed by a Catholic son. The various contradictory lies about the child's birth flourished, all the more because James ventured to select the magistrates of the royal burghs. It became certain that the Prince of Orange would invade, and Melfort madly withdrew the regular troops, with Claverhouse (now Viscount Dundee) to aid in resisting William in England, though Balcarres proposed a safer way of holding down the English northern counties by volunteers, the Highland clans, and new levies. Thus the Privy Council in Scotland were left at the mercy of the populace.

Of the Scottish army in England all were disbanded when James fled to France, except a handful of cavalry, whom Dundee kept with him. Perth fled from Edinburgh, but was taken and held a prisoner for four years; the town train-band, with the mob and some Cameronians, took Holyrood, slaying such of the guard as they did not imprison; "many died of their wounds and hunger." The chapel and Catholic houses were sacked, and gangs of the armed Cameronian societies went about in the south-west, rabbling, robbing, and driving away ministers of the Episcopalian sort. Atholl was in power in Edinburgh; in London, where James's Scots friends met, the Duke of Hamilton was made President of Council, and power was left till the assembling of a Convention at Edinburgh (March 1689) in the hands of William.

In Edinburgh Castle the wavering Duke of Gordon was induced to remain by Dundee and Balcarres; while Dundee proposed to call a Jacobite convention in Stirling. Melfort induced James to send a letter contrary to the desires of his party; Atholl, who had promised to join them, broke away; the life of Dundee was threatened by the fanatics, and on March 18, seeing his party headless and heartless, Dundee rode north, going "wherever might lead him the shade of Montrose."

Mackay now brought to Edinburgh regiments from Holland, which overawed the Jacobites, and he secured for William the key of the north, the castle of Stirling. With Hamilton as President, the Convention, with only four adverse votes, declared against James and his son; and Hamilton (April 3) proclaimed at the cross the reign of William and Mary. The claim of rights was passed and declared Episcopacy intolerable. Balcarres was thrown into prison: on May 11 William took the Coronation oath for Scotland, merely protesting that he would not "root out heretics," as the oath enjoined.

This was "the end o' an auld sang," the end of the Stuart dynasty, and of the equally "divine rights" of kings and of preachers.

In a sketch it is impossible to convey any idea of the sufferings of Scotland, at least of Covenanting Scotland, under the Restoration. There was contest, unrest, and dragoonings, and the quartering of a brutal and licentious soldiery on suspected persons. Law, especially since 1679, had been twisted for the conviction of persons whom the administration desired to rob. The greed and corruption of the rulers, from Lauderdale, his wife, and his brother Haltoun, to Perth and his brother, the Earl of Melfort, whose very title was the name of an unjustly confiscated estate, is almost inconceivable. Few of the foremost men in power, except Sir George Mackenzie and Claverhouse, were free from personal profligacy of every sort. Claverhouse has left on record his aversion to severities against the peasantry; he was for prosecuting such gentry as the Dalrymples. As constable of Dundee he refused to inflict capital punishment on petty offenders, and Mackenzie went as far as he dared in opposing the ferocities of the inquisition of witches. But in cases of alleged treason Mackenzie knew no mercy.

Torture, legal in Scotland, was used with barbarism unprecedented there after each plot or rising, to extract secrets which, save in one or two cases like that of Carstares, the victims did not possess. They were peasants, preachers, and a few country gentlemen: the nobles had no inclination to suffer for the cause of the Covenants. The Covenants continued to be the idols of the societies of Cameronians, and of many preachers who were no longer inclined to die for these documents, — the expression of such strange doctrines, the causes of so many sorrows and of so many martyrdoms. However little we may sympathise with the doctrines, none the less the sufferers were idealists, and, no less than Montrose, preferred honour to life.

With all its sins, the Restoration so far pulverised the pretensions which, since 1560, the preachers had made, that William of Orange was not obliged to renew the conflict with the spiritual sons of Knox and Andrew Melville.

This fact is not so generally recognised as it might be. It is therefore proper to quote the corroborative opinion of the learned Historiographer-Royal of Scotland, Professor Hume Brown. "By concession and repression the once mighty force of Scottish Presbyterianism had been broken. Most deadly of the weapons in the accomplishment of this result had been the three Acts of Indulgence which had successively cut so deep into the ranks of uniformity. In succumbing to the threats and promises of the Government, the Indulged ministers had undoubtedly compromised the fundamental principles of Presbyterianism. . . . The compliance of these ministers was, in truth, the first and necessary step towards that religious and political compromise which the force of circumstances was gradually imposing on the Scottish people," and "the example of the Indulged ministers, who composed the great mass of the Presbyterian clergy, was of the most potent effect in substituting the idea of toleration for that of the religious absolutism of Knox and Melville."

It may be added that the pretensions of Knox and Melville and all their followers were no essential part of Presbyterial Church government, but were merely the continuation or survival of the clerical claims of apostolic authority, as enforced by such popes as Hildebrand and such martyrs as St Thomas of Canterbury.

CHAPTER XXVII. WILLIAM AND MARY.

While Claverhouse hovered in the north the Convention (declared to be a Parliament by William on June 5) took on, for the first time in Scotland since the reign of Charles I, the aspect of an English Parliament, and demanded English constitutional freedom of debate. The Secretary in Scotland was William, Earl of Melville; that hereditary waverer, the Duke of Hamilton, was Royal Commissioner; but some official supporters of William, especially Sir James and Sir John Dalrymple, were criticised and thwarted by “the club” of more extreme Liberals. They were led by the Lowland ally who had vexed Argyll, Hume of Polwarth; and by Montgomery of Skelmorley, who, disappointed in his desire of place, soon engaged in a Jacobite plot.

The club wished to hasten the grant of Parliamentary liberties which William was anxious not to give; and to take vengeance on officials such as Sir James Dalrymple, and his son, Sir John, now Lord Advocate, as he had been under James II. To these two men, foes of Claverhouse, William clung while he could. The council obtained, but did not need to use, permission to torture Jacobite prisoners, “Cavaliers” as at this time they were styled; but Chieseley of Dalry, who murdered Sir George Lockhart, President of the College of Justice, was tortured.

The advanced Liberal Acts which were passed did not receive the touch of the sceptre from Hamilton, William’s Commissioner: thus they were “vetoed,” and of no effect. The old packed committee, “The Lords of the Articles,” was denounced as a grievance; the king was to be permitted to appoint no officers of State without Parliament’s approbation. Hamilton offered compromises, for William clung to “the Articles”; but he abandoned them in the following year, and thenceforth till the Union (1707) the Scottish was “a Free Parliament.” Various measures of legislation for the Kirk- — some to emancipate it as in its palmy days, some to keep it from meddling in politics — were proposed; some measures to abolish, some to retain lay patronage of livings, were mooted. The advanced party for a while put a stop to the appointment of judges, but in August came news of the Viscount Dundee in the north which terrified parliamentary politicians.

Edinburgh Castle had been tamely yielded by the Duke of Gordon; Balcarres, the associate of Dundee, had been imprisoned; but Dundee himself, after being declared a rebel, in April raised the standard of King James. As against him the

Whigs relied on Mackay, a brave officer who had been in Dutch service, and now commanded regiments of the Scots Brigade of Holland. Mackay pursued Dundee, as Baillie had pursued Montrose, through the north: at Inverness, Dundee picked up some Macdonalds under Keppoch, but Keppoch was not satisfactory, being something of a freebooter. The Viscount now rode to the centre of his hopes, to the Macdonalds of Glengarry, the Camerons of Lochiel, and the Macleans who had been robbed of their lands by the Earl of Argyll, executed in 1685. Dundee summoned them to Lochiel's house on Loch Arkaig for May 18; he visited Atholl and Badenoch; found a few mounted men as recruits at Dundee; returned through the wilds to Lochaber, and sent round that old summons to a rising, the Fiery Cross, charred and dipped in a goat's blood.

Much time was spent in preliminary manœuvring and sparring between Mackay, now reinforced by English regulars, and Dundee, who for a time disbanded his levies, while Mackay went to receive fresh forces and to consult the Government at Edinburgh. He decided to march to the west and bridle the clans by erecting a strong fort at Inverlochy, where Montrose routed Argyll. A stronghold at Inverlochy menaced the Macdonalds to the north, and the Camerons in Lochaber, and, southwards, the Stewarts in Appin. But to reach Inverlochy Mackay had to march up the Tay, past Blair Atholl, and so westward through very wild mountainous country. To oppose him Dundee had collected 4000 of the clansmen, and awaited ammunition and men from James, then in Ireland. By the advice of the great Lochiel, a man over seventy but miraculously athletic, Dundee decided to let the clans fight in their old way, — a rush, a volley at close quarters, and then the claymore. By June 28 Dundee had received no aid from James, — of money "we have not twenty pounds"; and he was between the Earl of Argyll (son of the martyr of 1685) and Mackay with his 4000 foot and eight troops of horse.

On July 23 Dundee seized the castle of Blair Atholl, which had been the base of Montrose in his campaigns, and was the key of the country between the Tay and Lochaber. The Atholl clans, Murrays and Stewarts, breaking away from the son of their chief, the fickle Marquis of Atholl, were led by Stewart of Ballechin, but did not swell Dundee's force at the moment. From James Dundee now received but a battalion of half-starved Irishmen, under the futile General Cannon.

On July 27, at Blair, Dundee learned that Mackay's force had already entered the steep and narrow pass of Killiecrankie, where the road skirted the brawling waters of the Garry. Dundee had not time to defend the pass; he marched his men from Blair, keeping the heights, while Mackay emerged from the gorge, and let his forces rest on the wide level haugh beside the Garry, under the house of

Runraurie, now called Urrard, with the deep and rapid river in their rear. On this haugh the tourist sees the tall standing stone which, since 1735 at least, has been known as “Dundee’s stone.” From the haugh rises a steep acclivity, leading to the plateau where the house of Runraurie stood. Mackay feared that Dundee would occupy this plateau, and that the fire thence would break up his own men on the haugh below. He therefore seized the plateau, which was an unfortunate manœuvre. He was so superior in numbers that both of his wings extended beyond Dundee’s, who had but forty ill-horsed gentlemen by way of cavalry. After distracting Mackay by movements along the heights, as if to cut off his communications with the south, Dundee, who had resisted the prayers of the chiefs that he would be sparing of his person, gave the word to charge as the sun sank behind the western hills. Rushing down hill, under heavy fire and losing many men, the clans, when they came to the shock, swept the enemy from the plateau, drove them over the declivity, forced many to attempt crossing the Garry, where they were drowned, and followed, slaying, through the pass. Half of Hastings’ regiment, untouched by the Highland charge, and all of Leven’s men, stood their ground, and were standing there when sixteen of Dundee’s horse returned from the pursuit. Mackay, who had lost his army, stole across the Garry with this remnant and made for Stirling. He knew not that Dundee lay on the field, dying in the arms of Victory. Precisely when and in what manner Dundee was slain is unknown; there is even a fair presumption, from letters of the English Government, that he was murdered by two men sent from England on some very secret mission. When last seen by his men, Dundee was plunged in the battle smoke, sword in hand, in advance of his horse.

When the Whigs — terrified by the defeat and expecting Dundee at Stirling with the clans and the cavaliers of the Lowlands — heard of his fall, their sorrow was changed into rejoicing. The cause of King James was mortally wounded by the death of “the glory of the Grahams,” who alone could lead and keep together a Highland host. Deprived of his leadership and distrustful of his successor, General Cannon, the clans gradually left the Royal Standard. The Cameronian regiment, recruited from the young men of the organised societies, had been ordered to occupy Dunkeld. Here they were left isolated, “in the air,” by Mackay or his subordinates, and on August 21 these raw recruits, under Colonel Cleland, who had fought at Drumclog, had to receive the attack of the Highlanders. Cleland had fortified the Abbey church and the “castle,” and his Cameronians fired from behind walls and from loopholes with such success that Cannon called off the clansmen, or could not bring them to a second attack: both versions are given. Cleland fell in the fight; the clans disbanded, and Mackay occupied the castle of Blair.

Three weeks later the Cameronians, being unpaid, mutinied; and Ross, Annandale, and Polwarth, urging their demands for constitutional rights, threw the Lowlands into a ferment. Crawford, whose manner of speech was sanctimonious, was evicting from their parishes ministers who remained true to Episcopacy, and would not pray for William and Mary. Polwarth now went to London with an address to these Sovereigns framed by "the Club," the party of liberty. But the other leaders of that party, Annandale, Ross, and Montgomery of Skelmorley, all of them eager for place and office, entered into a conspiracy of intrigue with the Jacobites for James's restoration. In February 1690 the Club was distracted; and to Melville, as Commissioner in the Scottish Parliament, William gave orders that the Acts for re-establishing Presbytery and abolishing lay patronage of livings were to be passed. Montgomery was obliged to bid yet higher for the favour of the more extreme preachers and devotees, — but he failed. In April the Lords of the Articles were abolished at last, and freedom of parliamentary debate was thus secured. The Westminster Confession was reinstated, and in May, after the last remnants of a Jacobite force in the north had been surprised and scattered or captured by Sir Thomas Livingstone at Cromdale Haugh (May 1), the alliance of Jacobites and of the Club broke down, and the leaders of the Club saved themselves by playing the part of informers.

The new Act regarding the Kirk permitted the holding of Synods and General Assemblies, to be summoned by permission of William or of the Privy Council, with a Royal Commissioner present to restrain the preachers from meddling, as a body, with secular politics. The Kirk was to be organised by the "Sixty Bishops," the survivors of the ministers ejected in 1663. The benefices of ejected Episcopalian conformists were declared to be vacant. Lay patronage was annulled: the congregations had the right to approve or disapprove of presentees. But the Kirk was deprived of her old weapon, the attachment of civil penalties (that is practical outlawry) to her sentences of excommunication (July 19, 1690). The Covenant was silently dropped.

Thus ended, practically, the war between Kirk and State which had raged for nearly a hundred and twenty years. The cruel torturing of Nevile Payne, an English Jacobite taken in Scotland, showed that the new sovereigns and Privy Council retained the passions and methods of the old, but this was the last occasion of judicial torture for political offences in Scotland. Payne was silent, but was illegally imprisoned till his death.

The proceedings of the restored General Assembly were awaited with anxiety by the Government. The extremists of the Remnant, the "Cameronians," sent deputies to the Kirk. They were opposed to acknowledging sovereigns who were "the head of the Prelatics" in England, and they, not being supported by the

Assembly, remained apart from the Kirk and true to the Covenants.

Much had passed which William disliked — the abolition of patronage, the persecution of Episcopalians — and Melville, in 1691, was removed by the king from the Commissionership.

The Highlands were still unsettled. In June 1691 Breadalbane, at heart a Jacobite, attempted to appease the chiefs by promises of money in settlement of various feuds, especially that of the dispossessed Macleans against the occupant of their lands, Argyll. Breadalbane was known by Hill, the commander of Fort William at Inverlochy, to be dealing between the clans and James, as well as between William and the clans. William, then campaigning in Flanders, was informed of this fact, thought it of no importance, and accepted a truce from July 1 to October 1 with Buchan, who commanded such feeble forces as still stood for James in the north. At the same time William threatened the clans, in the usual terms, with “fire and sword,” if the chiefs did not take the oaths to his Government by January 1, 1692. Money and titles under the rank of earldoms were to be offered to Macdonald of Sleat, Maclean of Dowart, Lochiel, Glengarry, and Clanranald, if they would come in. All declined the bait — if Breadalbane really fished with it. It is plain, contrary to Lord Macaulay’s statement, that Sir John Dalrymple, William’s trusted man for Scotland, at this time hoped for Breadalbane’s success in pacifying the clans. But Dalrymple, by December 1691, wrote, “I think the Clan Donell must be rooted out, and Lochiel.” He could not mean that he hoped to massacre so large a part of the population. He probably meant by “punitive expeditions” in the modern phrase — by “fire and sword,” in the style current then — to break up the recalcitrants. Meanwhile it was Dalrymple’s hope to settle ancient quarrels about the “superiorities” of Argyll over the Camerons, and the question of compensation for the lands reft by the Argyll family from the Macleans.

Before December 31, in fear of “fire and sword,” the chiefs submitted, except the greatest, Glengarry, and the least in power, MacIan or Macdonald, with his narrow realm of Glencoe, whence his men were used to plunder the cattle of their powerful neighbour, Breadalbane. Dalrymple now desired not peace, but the sword. By January 9, 1692, Dalrymple, in London, heard that Glencoe had come in (he had accidentally failed to come in by January 1), and Dalrymple was “sorry.” By January 11 Dalrymple knew that Glencoe had not taken the oath before January 1, and rejoiced in the chance to “root out that damnable sect.” In fact, in the end of December Glencoe had gone to Fort William to take the oaths before Colonel Hill, but found that he must do so before the Sheriff of the shire at remote Inveraray. Various accidents of weather delayed him; the Sheriff also was not at Inveraray when Glencoe arrived, but administered the oaths on

January 6. The document was taken to Edinburgh, where Lord Stair, Dalrymple's father, and others caused it to be deleted. Glengarry was still unsworn, but Glengarry was too strong to be "rooted out"; William ordered his commanding officer, Livingstone, "to extirpate that sect of thieves," the Glencoe men (January 16). On the same day Dalrymple sent down orders to hem in the MacIans, and to guard all the passes, by land or water, from their glen. Of the actual *method* of massacre employed Dalrymple may have been ignorant; but orders "from Court" to "spare none," and to take no prisoners, were received by Livingstone on January 23.

On February 1, Campbell of Glenlyon, with 120 men, was hospitably received by MacIan, whose son, Alexander, had married Glenlyon's niece. On February 12, Hill sent 400 of his Inverlochy garrison to Glencoe to join hands with 400 of Argyll's regiment, under Major Duncanson. These troops were to guard the southern passes out of Glencoe, while Hamilton was to sweep the passes from the north.

At 5 A.M. on February 13 the soldier-guests of MacIan began to slay and plunder. Men, women, and children were shot or bayoneted, 1000 head of cattle were driven away; but Hamilton arrived too late. Though the aged chief had been shot at once, his sons took to the hills, and the greater part of the population escaped with their lives, thanks to Hamilton's dilatoriness. "All I regret is that any of the sect got away," wrote Dalrymple on March 5, "and there is necessity to prosecute them to the utmost." News had already reached London "that they are murdered in their beds." The newspapers, however, were silenced, and the story was first given to Europe in April by the 'Paris Gazette.' The crime was unprecedented: it had no precedent, admits of no apology. Many an expedition of "fire and sword" had occurred, but never had there been a midnight massacre "under trust" of hosts by guests. King William, on March 6, went off to his glorious wars on the Continent, probably hoping to hear that the fugitive MacIans were still being "prosecuted" — if, indeed, he thought of them at all. But by October they were received into his peace.

William was more troubled by the General Assembly, which refused to take oaths of allegiance to him and his wife, and actually appointed a date for an Assembly without his consent. When he gave it, it was on condition that the members should take the oaths of allegiance. They refused: it was the old deadlock, but William at the last moment withdrew from the imposition of oaths of allegiance — moved, it is said, by Mr Carstares, "Cardinal Carstares," who had been privy to the Rye House Plot. Under Queen Anne, however, the conscientious preachers were compelled to take the oaths like mere laymen.

CHAPTER XXVIII. DARIEN.

The Scottish Parliament of May-July 1695, held while William was abroad, saw the beginning of evils for Scotland. The affair of Glencoe was examined into by a Commission, headed by Tweeddale, William's Commissioner: several Judges sat in it. Their report cleared William himself: Dalrymple, it was found, had "exceeded his instructions." Hill was exonerated. Hamilton, who commanded the detachment that arrived too late, fled the country. William was asked to send home for trial Duncanson and other butchers who were with his army. The king was also invited to deal with Dalrymple as he thought fit. He thought fit to give Dalrymple an indemnity, and made him Viscount Stair, with a grant of money, but did not retain him in office. He did not send the subaltern butchers home for trial. Many years later, in 1745, the MacIans insisted on acting as guards of the house and family of the descendant of Campbell of Glenlyon, the guest and murderer of the chief of Glencoe.

Perhaps by way of a sop to the Scots, William allowed an Act for the Establishment of a Scottish East India Company to be passed on June 20, 1695. He afterwards protested that in this matter he had been "badly served," probably meaning "misinformed." The result was the Darien Expedition, a great financial disaster for Scotland, and a terrible grievance. Hitherto since the Union of the Crowns all Scottish efforts to found trading companies, as in England, had been wrecked on English jealousy: there had always been, and to this new East India Company there was, a rival, a pre-existing English company. Scottish Acts for protection of home industries were met by English retaliation in a war of tariffs. Scotland had prohibited the exportation of her raw materials, such as wool, but was cut off from English and other foreign markets for her cloths. The Scots were more successful in secret and unlegalised trading with their kinsmen in the American colonies.

The Scottish East India Company's aim was to sell Scottish goods in many places, India for example; and it was secretly meant to found a factory and central mart on the isthmus of Panama. For these ends capital was withdrawn from the new and unsuccessful manufacturing companies. The great scheme was the idea of William Paterson (born 1658), the far-travelled and financially-speculative son of a farmer in Dumfriesshire. He was the "projector," or one of the projectors, of the Bank of England of 1694, investing £2000. He kept the Darien part of his scheme for an East India Company in the background, and it seems that William, when he granted a patent to that company, knew nothing of this design to settle in or near the Panama isthmus, which was quite clearly within the Spanish sphere of influence. When the philosopher John Locke heard of the scheme, he wished England to steal the idea and seize a port in Darien: it thus appears that he too was unaware that to do so was to inflict an insult and injury on Spain. There is reason to suppose that the grant of the patent to the East India Company was obtained by bribing some Scottish politician or politicians unnamed, though one name is not beyond probable conjecture.

In any case Paterson admitted English capitalists, who took up half of the shares, as the Act of Patent permitted them to do. By December William was writing that he "had been ill-served by some of my Ministers." He had no notice of the details of the Act of Patent till he had returned to England, and found English capitalists and the English Parliament in a fury. The Act committed William to interposing his authority if the ships of the company were detained by foreign powers, and gave the adventurers leave to take "reparation" by force from their assailants (this they later did when they captured in the Firth of Forth an English vessel, the *Worcester*).

On the opening of the books of the new company in London (October 1695) there had been a panic, and a fall of twenty points in the shares of the English East India Company. The English Parliament had addressed William in opposition to the Scots Company. The English subscribers of half the paid up capital were terrorised, and sold out. Later, Hamburg investments were cancelled through William's influence. All lowland Scotland hurried to invest — in the dark — for the Darien part of the scheme was practically a secret: it was vaguely announced that there was to be a settlement somewhere, "in Africa or the Indies, or both." Materials of trade, such as wigs, combs, Bibles, fish-hooks, and kid-gloves, were accumulated. Offices were built — later used as an asylum for pauper lunatics.

When, in July 1697, the secret of Panama came out, the English Council of Trade examined Dampier, the voyager, and (September) announced that the territory had never been Spain's, and that England ought to anticipate Scotland by seizing Golden Island and the port on the mainland.

In July 1698 the Council of the intended Scots colony was elected, bought three ships and two tenders, and despatched 1200 settlers with two preachers, but with most inadequate provisions, and flour as bad as that paid to Assynt for the person of Montrose. On October 30, in the Gulf of Darien they found natives who spoke Spanish; they learned that the nearest gold mines were in Spanish hands, and that the chiefs were carrying Spanish insignia of office. By February 1699 the Scots and Spaniards were exchanging shots. Presently a Scottish ship, cruising in search of supplies, was seized by the Spanish at Carthagena; the men lay in irons at Seville till 1700. Spain complained to William, and the Scots seized a merchant ship. The English Governor of Jamaica forbade his people, by virtue of a letter addressed by the English Government to all the colonies, to grant supplies to the starving Scots, most of whom sailed away from the colony in June, and suffered terrible things by sea and land. Paterson returned to Scotland. A new expedition which left Leith on May 12, 1699, found at Darien some Scots in two ships, and remained on the scene, distracted by quarrels, till February 1700, when Campbell of Fonab, sent with provisions in the *Speedy Return* from Scotland, arrived to find the Spaniards assailing the adventurers. He cleared the Spaniards out of their fort in fifteen minutes, but the Colonial Council learned that Spain was launching a small but adequate armada against them. After an honourable resistance the garrison capitulated, and marched out with colours flying (March 30). This occurred just when Scotland was celebrating the arrival of the news of Fonab's gallant feat of arms.

At home the country was full of discontent: William's agent at Hamburg had prevented foreigners from investing in the Scots company. English colonists had been forbidden to aid the Scottish adventurers. Two hundred thousand pounds, several ships, and many lives had been lost. "It is very like 1641," wrote an onlooker, so fierce were the passions that raged against William. The news of the surrender of the colonists increased the indignation. The king refused (November 1700) to gratify the Estates by regarding the Darien colony as a legal enterprise. To do so was to incur war with Spain and the anger of his English subjects. Yet the colony had been legally founded in accordance with the terms of the Act of Patent. While the Scots dwelt on this fact, William replied that the colony being extinct, circumstances were altered. The Estates voted that Darien *was* a lawful colony, and (1701) in an address to the Crown demanded compensation for the nation's financial losses. William replied with expressions of sympathy and hopes that the two kingdoms would consider a scheme of Union. A Bill for Union brought in through the English Lords was rejected by the English Commons.

There was hardly an alternative between Union and War between the two nations. War there would have been had the exiled Prince of Wales been brought up as a Presbyterian. His father James VII. died a few months before William III. passed away on March 7, 1702. Louis XIV. acknowledged James, Prince of Wales, as James III. of England and Ireland and VIII, of Scotland; and Anne, the boy's aunt, ascended the throne. As a Stuart she was not unwelcome to the Jacobites, who hoped for various chances, as Anne was believed to be friendly to her nephew.

In 1701 was passed an Act for preventing wrongous imprisonment and against undue delay in trials. But Nevile Payne continued to be untried and illegally imprisoned. Offenders, generally, could “run their letters” and protest, if kept in durance untried for sixty days.

The Revolution of 1688-89, with William’s very reluctant concessions, had placed Scotland in entirely new relations with England. Scotland could now no longer be “governed by the pen” from London; Parliament could no longer be bridled and led, at English will, by the Lords of the Articles. As the religious mainspring of Scottish political life, the domination of the preachers had been weakened by the new settlement of the Kirk; as the country was now set on commercial enterprises, which England everywhere thwarted, it was plain that the two kingdoms could not live together on the existing terms. Union there must be, or conquest, as under Cromwell; yet an English war of conquest was impossible, because it was impossible for Scotland to resist. Never would the country renew, as in the old days, the alliance of France, for a French alliance meant the acceptance by Scotland of a Catholic king.

England, on her side, if Union came, was accepting a partner with very poor material resources. As regards agriculture, for example, vast regions were untilled, or tilled only in the straths and fertile spots by the hardy clansmen, who could not raise oats enough for their own subsistence, and periodically endured famines. In “the ill years” of William, years of untoward weather, distress had been extreme. In the fertile Lowlands that old grievance, insecurity of tenure, and the raising of rents in proportion to improvements made by the tenants, had baffled agriculture. Enclosures were necessary for the protection of the crops, but even if tenants or landlords had the energy or capital to make enclosures, the neighbours destroyed them under cloud of night. The old labour-services were still extorted; the tenant’s time and strength were not his own. Land was exhausted by absence of fallows and lack of manure. The country was undrained, lochs and morasses covered what is now fertile land, and hillsides now in pasture were under the plough. The once prosperous linen trade had suffered from the war of tariffs.

The life of the burghs, political and municipal and trading, was little advanced on the mediæval model. The independent Scot steadily resisted instruction from foreign and English craftsmen in most of the mechanical arts. Laws for the encouragement of trades were passed and bore little fruit. Companies were founded and were ruined by English tariffs and English competition. The most energetic of the population went abroad, here they prospered in commerce and in military service, while an enormous class of beggars lived on the hospitality of their neighbours at home. In such conditions of inequality it was plain that, if there was to be a Union, the adjustment of proportions of taxation and of representation in Parliament would require very delicate handling, while the differences of Church Government were certain to cause jealousies and opposition.

CHAPTER XXIX. PRELIMINARIES TO THE UNION.

The Scottish Parliament was not dissolved at William’s death, nor did it meet at the time when, legally, it ought to have met. Anne, in a message, expressed hopes that it would assent to Union, and promised to concur in any reasonable scheme for compensating the losers by the Darien scheme. When Parliament met, Queensberry, being Commissioner, soon found it necessary (June 30, 1702) to adjourn. New officers of State were then appointed, and there was a futile meeting between English and Scottish Commissioners chosen by the Queen to consider the Union.

Then came a General Election (1703), which gave birth to the last Scottish Parliament. The Commissioner, Queensberry, and the other officers of State, “the Court party,” were of course for Union; among them was prominent that wavering Earl of Mar who was so active in promoting the Union, and later precipitated the Jacobite rising of 1715. There were in Parliament the party of Courtiers, friends of England and Union; the party of Cavaliers, that is Jacobites; and the Country party, led by the Duke of Hamilton, who was in touch with the Jacobites, but was quite untrustworthy, and much suspected of desiring the Crown of Scotland for himself.

Queensberry cozened the Cavaliers — by promises of tolerating their Episcopalian religion — into voting a Bill recognising Anne, and then broke his promise. The Bill for tolerating worship as practised by the Episcopalians was dropped; for the Commissioner of the General Assembly of the Kirk declared that such toleration was “the establishment of iniquity by law.”

Queensberry’s one aim was to get Supply voted, for war with France had begun. But the Country and the Cavalier parties refused Supply till an Act of Security for religion, liberty, law, and trade should be passed. The majority decided that, on the death of Anne, the Estates should name as king of Scotland a Protestant representative of the House of Stewart, who should not be the successor to the English crown, save under conditions guaranteeing Scotland as a sovereign state, with frequent Parliaments, and security for Scottish navigation, colonies, trade, and religion (the Act of Security).

It was also decided that landholders and the burghs should drill and arm their tenants and dependants — if Protestant. Queensberry refused to pass this Act of Security; Supply, on the other side, was denied, and after a stormy scene

Queensberry prorogued Parliament (September 16, 1703).

In the excitement, Atholl had deserted the Court party and voted with the majority. He had a great Highland following, he might throw it on the Jacobite side, and the infamous intriguer, Simon Frazer (the Lord Lovat of 1745), came over from France and betrayed to Queensberry a real or a feigned intrigue of Atholl with France and with the Ministers of James VIII., called "The Pretender."

Atholl was the enemy of Frazer, a canting, astute, and unscrupulous ruffian. Queensberry conceived that in a letter given to him by Lovat he had irrefutable evidence against Atholl as a conspirator, and he allowed Lovat to return to France, where he was promptly imprisoned as a traitor. Atholl convinced Anne of his own innocence, and Queensberry fell under ridicule and suspicion, lost his office of Commissioner, and was superseded by Tweeddale. In England the whole complex affair of Lovat's revelations was known as "The Scottish Plot"; Hamilton was involved, or feared he might be involved, and therefore favoured the new proposals of the Courtiers and English party for placing limits on the prerogative of Anne's successor, whoever he might be.

In the Estates (July 1704), after months passed in constitutional chicanery, the last year's Act of Security was passed and touched with the sceptre; and the House voted Supply for six months. But owing to a fierce dispute on private business — namely, the raising of the question, "Who were the persons accused in England of being engaged in the 'Scottish Plot'?" — no hint of listening to proposals for Union was uttered. Who could propose, as Commissioners to arrange Union, men who were involved — or in England had been accused of being involved — in the plot? Scotland had not yet consented that whoever succeeded Anne in England should also succeed in Scotland. They retained a means of putting pressure on England, the threat of having a separate king; they had made and were making military preparations (drill once a-month!), and England took up the gauntlet. The menacing attitude of Scotland was debated on with much heat in the English Upper House (November 29), and a Bill passed by the Commons declared the retaliatory measures which England was ready to adopt.

It was at once proved that England could put a much harder pinch on Scotland than Scotland could inflict on England. Scottish drovers were no longer to sell cattle south of the Border, Scottish ships trading with France were to be seized, Scottish coals and linen were to be excluded, and regiments of regular troops were to be sent to the Border if Scotland did not accept the Hanoverian succession before Christmas 1705. If it came to war, Scotland could expect no help from her ancient ally, France, unless she raised the standard of King James.

As he was a Catholic, the Kirk would prohibit this measure, so it was perfectly clear to every plain man that Scotland must accept the Union and make the best bargain she could.

In spring 1705 the new Duke of Argyll, "Red John of the Battles," a man of the sword and an accomplished orator, was made Commissioner, and, of course, favoured the Union, as did Queensberry and the other officers of State. Friction between the two countries arose in spring, when an Edinburgh jury convicted, and the mob insisted on the execution of, an English Captain Green, whose ship, the *Worcester*, had been seized in the Forth by Roderick Mackenzie, Secretary of the Scottish East India Company. Green was supposed to have captured and destroyed a ship of the Company's, the *Speedy Return*, which never did return. It was not proved that this ship had been Green's victim, but that he had committed acts of piracy is certain. The hanging of Green increased the animosity of the sister kingdoms.

When Parliament met, June 28, 1705, it was a parliament of groups. Tweeddale and others, turned out of office in favour of Argyll's Government, formed the Flying Squadron (*Squadrone volante*), voting in whatever way would most annoy the Government. Argyll opened by proposing, as did the Queen's Message, the instant discussion of the Union (July 3). The House preferred to deliberate on anything else, and the leader of the Jacobites or Cavaliers, Lockhart of Carnwath, a very able sardonic man, saw that this was, for Jacobite ends, a tactical error. The more time was expended the more chance had Queensberry to win votes for the Union. Fletcher of Saltoun, an independent and eloquent patriot and republican, wasted time by impossible proposals. Hamilton brought forward, and by only two votes lost, a proposal which England would never have dreamed of accepting. Canny Jacobites, however, abstained from voting, and thence Lockhart dates the ruin of his country. Supply, at all events, was granted, and on that Argyll adjourned. The queen was to select Commissioners of both countries to negotiate the Treaty of Union; among the Commissioners Lockhart was the only Cavalier, and he was merely to watch the case in the Jacobite interest.

The meetings of the two sets of Commissioners began at Whitehall on April 16. It was arranged that all proposals, modifications, and results should pass in writing, and secrecy was to be complete.

The Scots desired Union with Home Rule, with a separate Parliament. The English would negotiate only on the lines that the Union was to be complete, "incorporating," with one Parliament for both peoples. By April 25, 1706, the Scots Commissioners saw that on this point they must acquiesce; the defeat of the French at Ramilies (May 23) proved that, even if they could have leaned on the French, France was a broken reed. International reciprocity in trade, complete freedom of trade at home and abroad, they did obtain.

As England, thanks to William III. with his incessant Continental wars, had already a great National debt, of which Scotland owed nothing, and as taxation in England was high, while Scottish taxes under the Union would rise to the same level, and to compensate for the Darien losses, the English granted a pecuniary "Equivalent" (May 10). They also did not raise the Scottish taxes on windows, lights, coal, malt, and salt to the English level, that of war-taxation. The Equivalent was to purchase the Scottish shares in the East India Company, with interest at five per cent up to May 1, 1707. That grievance of the shareholders was thus healed, what public debt Scotland owed was to be paid (the Equivalent was about £400,000), and any part of the money unspent was to be given to improve fisheries and manufactures.

The number of Scottish members of the British Parliament was fixed at forty-five. On this point the Scots felt that they were hardly used; the number of their elected representatives of peers in the Lords was sixteen. Scotland retained her Courts of Law; the feudal jurisdictions which gave to Argyll and others almost princely powers were retained, and Scottish procedure in trials continued to vary much from the English model. Appeals from the Court of Session had previously been brought before the Parliament of Scotland; henceforth they were to be heard by the Judges, Scots and English, in the British House of Lords. On July 23, 1706, the treaty was completed; on October 3 the Scottish Parliament met to debate on it, with Queensberry as Commissioner. Harley, the English Minister, sent down the author of 'Robinson Crusoe' to watch, spy, argue, persuade, and secretly report, and De Foe's letters contain the history of the session.

The parties in Parliament were thus variously disposed: the Cavaliers, including Hamilton, had been approached by Louis XIV. and King James (the Pretender), but had not committed themselves. Queensberry always knew every risky step taken by Hamilton, who began to take several, but in each case received a friendly warning which he dared not disregard. At the opposite pole, the Cameronians and other extreme Presbyterians loathed the Union, and at last (November-December) a scheme for the Cameronians and the clans of Angus and Perthshire to meet in arms in Edinburgh and clear out the Parliament caused much alarm. But Hamilton, before the arrangement came to a head, was terrorised, and the intentions of the Cameronians, as far as their records prove, had never been officially ratified by their leaders. There was plenty of popular rioting during the session, but Argyll rode into Edinburgh at the head of the Horse Guards, and Leven held all the gates with drafts from the garrison of the castle. The Commissioners of the General Assembly made protests on various points, but were pacified after the security of the Kirk had been guaranteed. Finally, Hamilton prepared a parliamentary mine, which would have blown the Treaty of Union sky-high, but on the night when he should have appeared in the House and set the match to his petard — he had toothache! This was the third occasion on which he had deserted the Cavaliers; the Opposition fell to pieces. The *Squadrone volante* and the majority of the peers supported the Bill, which was passed. On January 16, 1707, the Treaty of Union was touched with the sceptre, "and there is the end of an auld sang," said Seafield. In May 1707 a solemn service was held at St Paul's to commemorate the Union.

There was much friction in the first year of the Union over excisemen and tax-collectors: smuggling began to be a recognised profession. Meanwhile, since 1707, a Colonel Hooke had been acting in Scotland, nominally in Jacobite, really rather in French interests. Hooke's intrigues were in part betrayed by De Foe's agent, Ker of Kersland, an amusingly impudent knave, and were thwarted by jealousies of Argyll and Hamilton. By deceptive promises (for he was himself deceived into expecting the aid of the Ulster Protestants) Hooke induced Louis XIV. to send five men-of-war, twenty-one frigates, and only two transports, to land James in Scotland (March 1708). The equinoctial gales and the severe illness of James, who insisted on sailing, delayed the start; the men on the outlook for the fleet were intoxicated, and Forbin, the French commander, observing English ships of war coming towards the Firth of Forth, fled, refusing James's urgent entreaties to be landed anywhere on the coast (March 24). It was believed that had he landed only with a valet the discontented country would have risen for their native king.

In Parliament (1710-1711) the Cavalier Scottish members, by Tory support, secured the release from prison of a Rev. Mr Greenshields, an Episcopalian who prayed for Queen Anne, indeed, but had used the liturgy. The preachers were also galled by the imposition on them of an abjuration oath, compelling them to pray for prelatical Queen Anne. Lay patronage of livings was also restored (1712) after many vicissitudes, and this thorn rankled in the Kirk, causing ever-widening strife for more than a century.

The imposition of a malt tax produced so much discontent that even Argyll, with all the Scottish members of Parliament, was eager for the repeal of the Act of Union, and proposed it in the House of Peers, when it was defeated by a small majority. In 1712, when about to start on a mission to France, Hamilton was slain in a duel by Lord Mohun. According to a statement of Lockhart's, "Cavaliers were to look for the best" from Hamilton's mission: it is fairly clear that he was to bring over James in disguise to England, as in Thackeray's novel, ‘Esmond.’ But the sword of Mohun broke the Jacobite plans. Other hopes expired when Bolingbroke and Harley quarrelled, and Queen Anne died (August 1, 1714). “The best cause in Europe was lost,” cried Bishop Atterbury, “for want of spirit.” He would have proclaimed James as king, but no man supported him, and the Elector of Hanover, George I., peacefully accepted the throne.

CHAPTER XXX. GEORGE I.

For a year the Scottish Jacobites, and Bolingbroke, who fled to France and became James's Minister, mismanaged the affairs of that most unfortunate of princes. By February 1715 the Earl of Mar, who had been distrusted and disgraced by George I., was arranging with the clans for a rising, while aid from Charles XII. of Sweden was expected from March to August 1715. It is notable that Charles had invited Dean Swift to visit his Court, when Swift was allied with Bolingbroke and Oxford. From the author of 'Gulliver' Charles no doubt hoped to get a trustworthy account of their policy. The fated rising of 1715 was occasioned by the Duke of Berwick's advice to James that he must set forth to Scotland or lose his honour. The prince therefore, acting hastily on news which, two or three days later, proved to be false, in a letter to Mar fixed August 10 for a rising. The orders were at once countermanded, when news proving their futility was received, but James's messenger, Allan Cameron, was detained on the road, and Mar, not waiting for James's answer to his own last despatch advising delay, left London for Scotland without a commission; on August 27 held an Assembly of the chiefs, and, *still without a commission from James*, raised the standard of the king on September 6.

The folly of Mar was consummate. He knew that Ormonde, the hope of the English Jacobites, had deserted his post and had fled to France.

Meanwhile Louis XIV. was dying; he died on August 30, and the Regent d'Orléans, at the utmost, would only connive at, not assist, James's enterprise.

Everything was contrary, everywhere was ignorance and confusion. Lord John Drummond's hopeful scheme for seizing Edinburgh Castle (September 8) was quieted *pulveris exigui jactu*, "the gentlemen were powdering their hair" — drinking at a tavern — and bungled the business. The folly of Government offered a chance: in Scotland they had but 2000 regulars at Stirling, where "Forth bridles the wild Highlandman." Mar, who promptly occupied Perth, though he had some 12,000 broadswords, continued till the end to make Perth his headquarters. A Montrose, a Dundee, even a Prince Charles, would have "masked" Argyll at Stirling and seized Edinburgh. In October 21-November 3, Berwick, while urging James to sail, absolutely refused to accompany him. The plans of Ormonde for a descent on England were betrayed by Colonel Maclean, in French service (November 4). In disguise and narrowly escaping from murderous agents of Stair (British ambassador to France) on his road, James journeyed to St Malo (November 8).

In Scotland the Macgregors made a futile attempt on Dumbarton Castle, while Glengarry and the Macleans advanced on Inveraray Castle, negotiated with Argyll's brother, the Earl of Islay, and marched back to Strathfillan. In Northumberland Forster and Derwentwater, with some Catholic fox-hunters, in Galloway the pacific Viscount Kenmure, cruised vaguely about and joined forces. Mackintosh of Borlum, by a well-concealed movement, carried a Highland detachment of 1600 men across the Firth of Forth by boats (October 12-13), with orders to join Forster and Kenmure and arouse the Border. But on approaching Edinburgh Mackintosh found Argyll with 500 dragoons ready to welcome him; Mar took no advantage of Argyll's absence from Stirling, and Mackintosh, when Argyll returned thither, joined Kenmure and Forster, occupied Kelso, and marched into Lancashire. The Jacobite forces were pitifully ill-supplied, they had very little ammunition (the great charge against Bolingbroke was that he sent none from France), they seem to have had no idea that powder could be made by the art of man; they were torn by jealousies, and dispirited by their observation of Mar's incompetence.

We cannot pursue in detail the story of the futile campaign. On November 12 the mixed Highland, Lowland, and English command found itself cooped up in Preston, and after a very gallant defence of the town the English leaders surrendered to the king's mercy, after arranging an armistice which made it impossible for Mackintosh to cut his way through the English ranks and retreat to the north. About 1600 prisoners were taken. Derwentwater and Kenmure were later executed. Forster and Nithsdale made escapes; Charles Wogan, a kinsman of the chivalrous Wogan of 1650, and Mackintosh, with six others, forced their way out of Newgate prison on the night before their trial. Wogan was to make himself heard of again. Mar had thrown away his Highlanders, with little ammunition and without orders, on a perfectly aimless and hopeless enterprise.

Meanwhile he himself, at Perth, had been doing nothing, while in the north, Simon Frazer (Lord Lovat) escaped from his French prison, raised his clan and took the castle of Inverness for King George. He thus earned a pardon for his private and public crimes, and he lived to ruin the Jacobite cause and lose his own head in 1745-46.

While the north, Ross-shire and Inverness, were daunted and thwarted by the success of Lovat, Mar led his whole force from Perth to Dunblane, apparently in search of a ford over Forth. His Frazers and many of his Gordons deserted on November 11; on November 12 Mar, at Ardoch (the site of an old Roman camp), learned that Argyll was marching through Dunblane to meet him. Next day

Mar’s force occupied the crest of rising ground on the wide swell of Sheriffmuir: his left was all disorderly; horse mixed with foot; his right, with the fighting clans, was well ordered, but the nature of the ground hid the two wings of the army from each other. On the right the Macdonalds and Macleans saw Clanranald fall, and on Glengarry’s cry, “Vengeance to-day!” they charged with the claymore and swept away the regulars of Argyll as at Killiecrankie and Prestonpans. But, as the clans pursued and slew, their officers whispered that their own centre and left were broken and flying. Argyll had driven them to Allan Water; his force, returning, came within close range of the victorious right of Mar. “Oh, for one hour of Dundee!” cried Gordon of Glenbucket, but neither party advanced to the shock. Argyll retired safely to Dunblane, while Mar deserted his guns and powder-carts, and hurried to Perth. He had lost the gallant young Earl of Strathmore and the brave Clanranald; on Argyll’s side his brother Islay was wounded, and the Earl of Forfar was slain. Though it was a drawn battle, it proved that Mar could not move: his forces began to scatter; Huntly was said to have behaved ill. It was known that Dutch auxiliaries were to reinforce Argyll, and men began to try to make terms of surrender. Huntly rode off to his own country, and on December 22 (old style) James landed at Peterhead.

James had no lack of personal courage. He had charged again and again at Malplaquet with the Household cavalry of Louis XIV., and he had encountered great dangers of assassination on his way to St Malo. But constant adversity had made him despondent and resigned, while he saw facts as they really were with a sad lucidity. When he arrived in his kingdom the Whig clans of the north had daunted Seaforth’s Mackenzies, while in the south Argyll, with his Dutch and other fresh reinforcements, had driven Mar’s men out of Fife. Writing to Bolingbroke, James described the situation. Mar, with scarcely any ammunition, was facing Argyll with 11,000 men; the north was held in force by the Whig clans, Mackays, Rosses, Munroes, and Frazers; deep snow alone delayed the advance of Argyll, now stimulated by the hostile Cadogan, Marlborough’s favourite, and it was perfectly plain that all was lost.

For the head of James £100,000 was offered by Hanoverian chivalry: he was suffering from fever and ague; the Spanish gold that had at last been sent to him was lost at sea off Dundee, and it is no wonder that James, never gay, presented to his troops a disconsolate and discouraging aspect.

On January 29 his army evacuated Perth; James wept at the order to burn the villages on Argyll’s line of march, and made a futile effort to compensate the people injured. From Montrose (February 3-14) he wrote for aid to the French Regent, but next day, urged by Mar, and unknown to his army, he, with Mar, set sail for France. This evasion was doubtless caused by a circumstance unusual in warfare: there was a price of £100,000 on James's head, moreover his force had not one day's supply of powder. Marshal Keith (brother of the Earl Marischal who retreated to the isles) says that perhaps one day's supply of powder might be found at Aberdeen. Nevertheless the fighting clans were eager to meet Argyll, and would have sold their lives at a high price. They scattered to their western fastnesses. The main political result, apart from executions and the passing of forfeited estates into the management of that noted economist, Sir Richard Steele, and other commissioners, was — the disgrace of Argyll. He, who with a petty force had saved Scotland, was represented by Cadogan and by his political enemies as dilatory and disaffected! The Duke lost all his posts, and in 1716 (when James had hopes from Sweden) Islay, Argyll's brother, was negotiating with Jacobite agents. James was creating him a peer of England!

In Scotland much indignation was aroused by the sending of Scottish prisoners of war out of the kingdom for trial — namely, to Carlisle — and by other severities. The Union had never been more unpopular: the country looked on itself as conquered, and had no means of resistance, for James, now residing at Avignon, was a Catholic, and any insults and injuries from England were more tolerable than a restored nationality with a Catholic king.

Into the Jacobite hopes and intrigues, the eternal web which from 1689 to 1763 was ever being woven and broken, it is impossible here to enter, though, in the now published Stuart Papers, the details are well known. James was driven from Avignon to Italy, to Spain, finally to live a pensioner at Rome. The luckless attempt of the Earl Marischal, Keith, his brother, and Lord George Murray, brother of the Duke of Atholl, to invade Scotland on the west with a small Spanish force, was crushed on June 10, 1719, in the pass of Glenshiel.

Two or three months later, James, returning from Spain, married the fair and hapless Princess Clementina Sobieska, whom Charles Wogan, in an enterprise truly romantic, had rescued from prison at Innspruck and conveyed across the Alps. From this wedding, made wretched by the disappointment of the bride with her melancholy lord, — always busied with political secrets from which she was excluded, — was born, on December 31, 1720, Charles Edward Stuart: from his infancy the hope of the Jacobite party; from his cradle surrounded by the intrigues, the jealousies, the adulations of an exiled Court, and the quarrels of Protestants and Catholics, Irish, Scottish, and English. Thus, among changes of tutors and ministers, as the discovery or suspicion of treachery, the bigotry of Clementina, and the pressure of other necessities might permit, was that child reared whose name, at least, has received the crown of Scottish affection and innumerable tributes of Scottish song.

CHAPTER XXXI. THE ARGATHELIANS AND THE SQUADRONE.

Leaving the fortunes of the Jacobite party at their lowest ebb, and turning to the domestic politics of Scotland, after 1719, we find that if it be happiness to have no history, Scotland had much reason to be content. There was but a dull personal strife between the faction of Argyll and his brother Islay (called the "Argathelians," from the Latinised *Argathelia*, or Argyll), and the other faction known, since the Union, as the *Squadrone volante*, or Flying Squadron, who professed to be patriotically independent. As to Argyll, he had done all that man might do for George I. But, as we saw, the reports of Cadogan and the jealousy of George (who is said to have deemed Argyll too friendly with his detested heir) caused the disgrace of the Duke in 1716, and the *Squadrone* held the spoils of office. But in February-April 1719 George reversed his policy, heaped Argyll with favours, made him, as Duke of Greenwich, a peer of England, and gave him the High Stewardship of the Household.

At this time all the sixteen representative peers of Scotland favoured, for various reasons of their own, a proposed Peerage Bill. The Prince of Wales might, when he came to the throne, swamp the Lords by large new creations in his own interest, and the Bill laid down that, henceforth, not more than six peers, exclusive of members of the Royal Family, should be created by any sovereign; while in place of sixteen *representative* Scotland should have twenty-five *permanent* peers. From his new hatred of the Prince of Wales, Argyll favoured the Bill, as did the others of the sixteen of the moment, because they would be among the permanencies. The Scottish Jacobite peers (not representatives) and the Commons of both countries opposed the Bill. The election of a Scottish representative peer at this juncture led to negotiations between Argyll and Lockhart as leader of the suffering Jacobites, but terms were not arrived at; the Government secured a large Whig majority in a general election (1722), and Walpole began his long tenure of office.

ENCLOSURE RIOTS.

In 1724 there were some popular discontents. Enclosures, as we saw, had scarcely been known in Scotland; when they were made, men, women, and children took pleasure in destroying them under cloud of night. Enclosures might keep a man’s cattle on his own ground, keep other men’s off it, and secure for the farmer his own manure. That good Jacobite, Mackintosh of Borlum, who in 1715 led the Highlanders to Preston, in 1729 wrote a book recommending enclosures and plantations. But when, in 1724, the lairds of Galloway and Dumfriesshire anticipated and acted on his plan, which in this case involved evictions of very indolent and ruinous farmers, the tenants rose. Multitudes of “Levellers” destroyed the loose stone dykes and slaughtered cattle. They had already been passive resisters of rent; the military were called in; women were in the forefront of the brawls, which were not quieted till the middle of 1725, when Lord Stair made an effort to introduce manufactures.

MALT RIOTS.

Other disturbances began in a resolution of the House of Commons, at the end of 1724, *not* to impose a Malt Tax equal to that of England (this had been successfully resisted in 1713), but to levy an additional sixpence on every barrel of ale, and to remove the bounties on exported grain. At the Union Scotland had, for the time, been exempted from the Malt Tax, specially devised to meet the expenses of the French war of that date. Now, in 1724-1725, Scotland was up in arms to resist the attempt "to rob a poor man of his beer." But Walpole could put force on the Scottish Members of Parliament,— "a parcel of low people that could not subsist," says Lockhart, "without their board wages." Walpole threatened to withdraw the ten guineas hitherto paid weekly by Government to those legislators. He offered to drop the sixpence on beer and put threepence on every bushel of malt, a half of the English tax. On June 23, 1725, the tax was to be exacted. The consequence was an attack on the military by the mob of Glasgow, who wrecked the house of their Member in Parliament, Campbell of Shawfield. Some of the assailants were shot: General Wade and the Lord Advocate, Forbes of Culloden, marched a force on Glasgow, the magistrates of the town were imprisoned but released on bail, while in Edinburgh the master brewers, ordered by the Court of Session to raise the price of their ale, struck for a week; some were imprisoned, others were threatened or cajoled and deserted their Union. The one result was that the chief of the Squadrone, the Duke of Roxburgh, lost his Secretaryship for Scotland, and Argyll's brother, Islay, with the resolute Forbes of Culloden, became practically the governors of the country. The Secretaryship, indeed, was for a time abolished, but Islay practically wielded the power that had so long been in the hands of the Secretary as agent of the Court.

THE HIGHLANDS.

The clans had not been disarmed after 1715, moreover 6000 muskets had been brought in during the affair that ended at Glenshiel in 1719. General Wade was commissioned in 1724 to examine and report on the Highlands: Lovat had already sent in a report. He pointed out that Lowlanders paid blackmail for protection to Highland raiders, and that independent companies of Highlanders, paid by Government, had been useful, but were broken up in 1717. What Lovat wanted was a company and pay for himself. Wade represented the force of the clans as about 22,000 claymores, half Whig (the extreme north and the Campbells), half Jacobite. The commandants of forts should have independent companies: cavalry should be quartered between Inverness and Perth, and Quarter Sessions should be held at Fort William and Ruthven in Badenoch. In 1725 Wade disarmed Seaforth's clan, the Mackenzies, easily, for Seaforth, then in exile, was on bad terms with James, and wished to come home with a pardon. Glengarry, Clanranald, Glencoe, Appin, Lochiel, Clan Vourich, and the Gordons affected submission — but only handed over two thousand rusty weapons of every sort. Lovat did obtain an independent company, later withdrawn — with results. The clans were by no means disarmed, but Wade did, from 1725 to 1736, construct his famous military roads and bridges, interconnecting the forts.

The death of George I. (June 11, 1727) induced James to hurry to Lorraine and communicate with Lockhart. But there was nothing to be done. Clementina had discredited her husband, even in Scotland, much more in England, by her hysterical complaints, and her hatred of every man employed by James inflamed the petty jealousies and feuds among the exiles of his Court. No man whom he could select would have been approved of by the party.

To the bishops of the persecuted Episcopalian remnant, quarrelling over details of ritual called "the Usages," James vainly recommended "forbearance in love." Lockhart, disgusted with the clergy, and siding with Clementina against her husband, believed that some of the wrangling churchmen betrayed the channel of his communications with his king (1727). Islay gave Lockhart a hint to disappear, and he sailed from Scotland for Holland on April 8, 1727.

Since James dismissed Bolingbroke, every one of his Ministers was suspected, by one faction or another of the party, as a traitor. Atterbury denounced Mar, Lockhart denounced Hay (titular Earl of Inverness), Clementina told feminine tales for which even the angry Lockhart could find no evidence. James was the butt of every slanderous tongue; but absolutely nothing against his moral character, or his efforts to do his best, or his tolerance and lack of suspiciousness, can be wrung from documents.

By 1734 the elder of James’s two sons, Prince Charles, was old enough to show courage and to thrust himself under fire in the siege of Gaeta, where his cousin, the Duc de Liria, was besieging the Imperialists. He won golden opinions from the army, but was already too strong for his tutors — Murray and Sir Thomas Sheridan. He had both Protestant and Catholic governors; between them he learned to spell execrably in three languages, and sat loose to Catholic doctrines. In January 1735 died his mother, who had found refuge from her troubles in devotion. The grief of James and of the boys was acute.

In 1736 Lovat was looking towards the rising sun of Prince Charles; was accused by a witness of enabling John Roy Stewart, Jacobite and poet, to break prison at Inverness, and of sending by him a message of devotion to James, from whom he expected a dukedom. Lovat therefore lost his sheriffship and his independent company, and tried to attach himself to Argyll, when the affair of the Porteous Riot caused a coldness between Argyll and the English Government (1736-1737).

THE PORTEOUS RIOT.

The affair of Porteous is so admirably well described in ‘The Heart of Mid-Lothian,’ and recent research has thrown so little light on the mystery (if mystery there were), that a brief summary of the tale may suffice.

In the spring of 1736 two noted smugglers, Wilson and Robertson, were condemned to death. They had, while in prison, managed to widen the space between the window-bars of their cell, and would have escaped; but Wilson, a very stoutly built man, went first and stuck in the aperture, so that Robertson had no chance. The pair determined to attack their guards in church, where, as usual, they were to be paraded and preached at on the Sunday preceding their execution. Robertson leaped up and fled, with the full sympathy of a large and interested congregation, while Wilson grasped a guard with each hand and a third with his teeth. Thus Robertson got clean away — to Holland, it was said, — while Wilson was to be hanged on April 14. The acting lieutenant of the Town Guard — an unpopular body, mainly Highlanders — was John Porteous, famous as a golfer, but, by the account of his enemies, notorious as a brutal and callous ruffian. The crowd in the Grassmarket was great, but there was no attempt at a rescue. The mob, however, threw large stones at the Guard, who fired, killing or wounding, as usual, harmless spectators. The case for Porteous, as reported in ‘The State Trials,’ was that the attack was dangerous; that the plan was to cut down and resuscitate Wilson; that Porteous did not order, but tried to prevent, the firing; and that neither at first nor in a later skirmish at the West Bow did he fire himself. There was much “cross swearing” at the trial of Porteous (July 20); the jury found him guilty, and he was sentenced to be hanged on September 8. A petition from him to Queen Caroline (George II. was abroad) drew attention to palpable discrepancies in the hostile evidence. Both parties in Parliament backed his application, and on August 28 a delay of justice for six weeks was granted.

Indignation was intense. An intended attack on the Tolbooth, where Porteous lay, had been matter of rumour three days earlier: the prisoner should have been placed in the Castle. At 10 P.M. on the night of September 7 the magistrates heard that boys were beating a drum, and ordered the Town Guard under arms; but the mob, who had already secured the town’s gates, disarmed the veterans. Mr Lindsay, lately Provost, escaped by the Potter Row gate (near the old fatal Kirk-o’-Field), and warned General Moyle in the Castle. But Moyle could not introduce soldiers without a warrant. Before a warrant could arrive the mob had burned down the door of the Tolbooth, captured Porteous — who was hiding up the chimney, — carried him to the Grassmarket, and hanged him to a dyer's pole. The only apparent sign that persons of rank above that of the mob were concerned, was the leaving of a guinea in a shop whence they took the necessary rope. The magistrates had been guilty of gross negligence. The mob was merely a resolute mob; but Islay, in London, suspected that the political foes of the Government were engaged, or that the Cameronians, who had been renewing the Covenants, were concerned.

Islay hurried to Edinburgh, where no evidence could be extracted. "The High Flyers of our Scottish Church," he wrote, "have made this infamous murder a point of conscience. . . . All the lower rank of the people who have distinguished themselves by the pretensions of superior sanctity speak of this murder as the hand of God doing justice." They went by the precedent of the murder of Archbishop Sharp, it appears. In the Lords (February 1737) a Bill was passed for disabling the Provost — one Wilson — for public employment, destroying the Town Charter, abolishing the Town Guard, and throwing down the gate of the Nether Bow. Argyll opposed the Bill; in the Commons all Scottish members were against it; Walpole gave way. Wilson was dismissed, and a fine of £2000 was levied and presented to the widow of Porteous. An Act commanding preachers to read monthly for a year, in church, a proclamation bidding their hearers aid the cause of justice against the murderers, was an insult to the Kirk, from an Assembly containing bishops. It is said that at least half of the ministers disobeyed with impunity. It was impossible, of course, to evict half of the preachers in the country.

Argyll now went into opposition against Walpole, and, at least, listened to Keith — later the great Field-Marshal of Frederick the Great, and brother of the exiled Earl Marischal.

In 1737 the Jacobites began to stir again: a committee of five Chiefs and Lords was formed to manage their affairs. John Murray of Broughton went to Rome, and lost his heart to Prince Charles — now a tall handsome lad of seventeen, with large brown eyes, and, when he pleased, a very attractive manner. To Murray, more than to any other man, was due the Rising of 1745.

Meanwhile, in secular affairs, Scotland showed nothing more remarkable than the increasing dislike, strengthened by Argyll, of Walpole's Government.

CHAPTER XXXII. THE FIRST SECESSION.

For long we have heard little of the Kirk, which between 1720 and 1740 passed through a cycle of internal storms. She had been little vexed, either during her years of triumph or defeat, by heresy or schism. But now the doctrines of Antoinette Bourignon, a French lady mystic, reached Scotland, and won the sympathies of some students of divinity — including the Rev. John Simson, of an old clerical family which had been notorious since the Reformation for the turbulence of its members. In 1714, and again in 1717, Mr Simson was acquitted by the Assembly on the charges of being a Jesuit, a Socinian, and an Arminian, but was warned against “a tendency to attribute too much to natural reason.” In 1726-29 he was accused of minimising the doctrines of the creed of St Athanasius, and tending to the Arian heresy,— “lately raked out of hell,” said the Kirk-session of Portmoak (1725), addressing the sympathetic Presbytery of Kirkcaldy. At the Assembly of 1726 that Presbytery, with others, assailed Mr Simson, who was in bad health, and “could talk of nothing but the Council of Nice.” A committee, including Mar’s brother, Lord Grange (who took such strong measures with his wife, Lady Grange, forcibly translating her to the isle of St Kilda), inquired into the views of Mr Simson’s own Presbytery — that of Glasgow. This Presbytery cross-examined Mr Simson’s pupils, and Mr Simson observed that the proceedings were “an unfruitful work of darkness.” Moreover, Mr Simson was of the party of the *Squadrone*, while his assailants were Argathelians. A large majority of the Assembly gave the verdict that Mr Simson was a heretic. Finally, though in 1728 his answers to questions would have satisfied good St Athanasius, Mr Simson found himself in the ideal position of being released from his academic duties but confirmed in his salary. The lenient good-nature of this decision, with some other grievances, set fire to a mine which blew the Kirk in twain.

The Presbytery of Auchterarder had set up a kind of “standard” of their own— “The Auchterarder Creed” — which included this formula: “It is not sound or orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ, and instating us in Covenant with God.” The General Assembly condemned this part of the Creed of Auchterarder. The Rev. Mr Hog, looking for weapons in defence of Auchterarder, republished part of a forgotten book of 1646, ‘The Marrow of Modern Divinity.’ The work appears to have been written by a speculative hairdresser, an Independent. A copy of the Marrow was found by the famous Mr Boston of Ettrick in the cottage of a parishioner. From the Marrow he sucked much advantage: its doctrines were grateful to the sympathisers with Auchterarder, and the republication of the book rent the Kirk.

In 1720 a Committee of the General Assembly condemned a set of propositions in the Marrow as tending to Antinomianism (the doctrine that the saints cannot sin, professed by Trusty Tompkins in 'Woodstock'). But — as in the case of the five condemned propositions of Jansenius — the Auchterarder party denied that the heresies could be found in the Marrow.

It was the old quarrel between Faith and Works. The clerical petitioners in favour of the Marrow were rebuked by the Assembly (May 21, 1722); they protested: against a merely human majority in the Assembly they appealed to "The Word of God," to which the majority also appealed; and there was a period of passion, but schism had not yet arrived.

The five or six friends of the Marrow really disliked moral preaching, as opposed to weekly discourses on the legal technicalities of justification, sanctification, and adoption. They were also opposed to the working of the Act which, in 1712, restored lay patronage. If the Assembly enforced the law of the land in this matter (and it did), the Assembly sinned against the divine right of congregations to elect their own preachers. Men of this way of thinking were led by the Rev. Mr Ebenezer Erskine, a poet who, in 1714, addressed an Ode to George I. He therein denounced "subverting patronage" and

”the woful dubious Abjuration
Which gave the clergy ground for speculation."

But a Jacobite song struck the same note —

"Let not the Abjuration
Impose upon the nation!"

and George was deaf to the muse of Mr Erskine.

In 1732, 1733, Mr Erskine, in sermons concerning patronage, offended the Assembly; would not apologise, appeared (to a lay reader) to claim direct inspiration, and with three other brethren constituted himself and them into a Presbytery. Among their causes of separation (or rather of deciding that the Kirk had separated from them) was the salary of Emeritus Professor Simson. The new Presbytery declared that the Covenants were still and were eternally binding on Scotland; in fact, these preachers were "platonically" for going back to the old ecclesiastical claims, with the old war of Church and State. They naturally denounced the Act of 1736, which abolished the burning of witches. After a period of long-suffering patience and conciliatory efforts, in 1740 the Assembly deposed the Seceders.

In 1747 a party among the Seceders excommunicated Mr Erskine and his brother; one of those who handed Mr Erskine over to Satan (if the old formula were retained) was his son-in-law.

The feuds of Burghers and Antiburghers (persons who were ready to take or refused to take the Burgess oath), New Lights and Old Lights, lasted very long and had evil consequences. As the populace love the headiest doctrines, they preferred preachers in proportion as they leaned towards the Marrow, while lay patrons preferred candidates of the opposite views. The Assembly must either keep the law and back the patrons, or break the law and cease to be a State Church. The corruption of patronage was often notorious on one side; on the other the desirability of burning witches and the belief in the eternity of the Covenants were articles of faith; and such articles were not to the taste of the "Moderates," educated clergymen of the new school. Thus arose the war of "High Flyers" and "Moderates" within the Kirk, — a war conducing to the great Disruption of 1843, in which gallant little Auchterarder was again in the foremost line.

CHAPTER XXXIII. THE LAST JACOBITE RISING.

While the Kirk was vainly striving to assuage the tempers of Mr Erskine and his friends, the Jacobites were preparing to fish in troubled waters. In 1739 Walpole was forced to declare war against Spain, and Walpole had previously sounded James as to his own chances of being trusted by that exiled prince. James thought that Walpole was merely angling for information. Meanwhile Jacobite affairs were managed by two rivals, Macgregor (calling himself Drummond) of Balhaldy and Murray of Broughton. The sanguine Balhaldy induced France to suppose that the Jacobites in England and Scotland were much more united, powerful, and ready for action than they really were, when Argyll left office in 1742, while Walpole fell from power, Carteret and the Duke of Newcastle succeeding. In 1743 Murray found that France, though now at war with England over the Spanish Succession, was holding aloof from the Jacobite cause, though plied with flourishing and fabulous reports from Balhaldy and the Jacobite Lord Sempill. But, in December 1743, on the strength of alleged Jacobite energy in England, Balhaldy obtained leave from France to visit Rome and bring Prince Charles. The Prince had kept himself in training for war and was eager. Taking leave of his father for the last time, Charles drove out of Rome on January 9, 1744; evaded, in disguise, every trap that was set for him, and landed at Antibes, reaching Paris on February 10. Louis did not receive him openly, if he received him at all; the Prince lurked at Gravelines in disguise, with the Earl Marischal, while winds and waves half ruined, and the approach of a British fleet drove into port, a French fleet of invasion under Roqueville (March 6, 7, 1744).

The Prince wrote to Sempill that he was ready and willing to sail for Scotland in an open boat. In July 1744 he told Murray that he would come next summer “if he had no other companion than his valet.” He nearly kept his word; nor did Murray resolutely oppose his will. At the end of May 1745 Murray’s servant brought a letter from the Prince; “fall back, fall edge,” he would land in the Highlands in July. Lochiel regretted the decision, but said that, as a man of honour, he would join his Prince if he arrived.

On July 2 the Prince left Nantes in the *Dutillet* (usually styled *La Doutelle*). He brought some money (he had pawned the Sobieski rubies), some arms, Tullibardine, his Governor Sheridan, Parson Kelly, the titular Duke of Atholl, Sir John Macdonald, a banker, Sullivan, and one Buchanan — the Seven Men of

Moidart.

On July 20 his consort, *The Elizabeth,* fought *The Lion* (Captain Brett) off the Lizard; both antagonists were crippled. On Charles passed the night on the little isle of Eriskay; appealed vainly to Macleod and Macdonald of Sleat; was urged, at Kinlochmoidart, by the Macdonalds, to return to France, but swept them off their feet by his resolution; and with Lochiel and the Macdonalds raised the standard at the head of Glenfinnan on August .

The English Government had already offered £30,000 for the Prince's head. The clans had nothing to gain; they held that they had honour to preserve; they remembered Montrose; they put it to the touch, and followed Prince Charlie.

The strength of the Prince's force was, first, the Macdonalds. On August 16 Keppoch had cut off two companies of the Royal Scots near Loch Lochy. But the chief of Glengarry was old and wavering; young Glengarry, captured on his way from France, could not be with his clan; his young brother Æneas led till his accidental death after the battle of Falkirk.

Of the Camerons it is enough to say that their leader was the gentle Lochiel, and that they were worthy of their chief. The Macphersons came in rather late, under Cluny. The Frazers were held back by the crafty Lovat, whose double-dealing, with the abstention of Macleod (who was sworn to the cause) and of Macdonald of Sleat, ruined the enterprise. Clan Chattan was headed by the beautiful Lady Mackintosh, whose husband adhered to King George. Of the dispossessed Macleans, some 250 were gathered (under Maclean of Drimnin), and of that resolute band some fifty survived Culloden. These western clans (including 220 Stewarts of Appin under Ardshiel) were the steel point of Charles's weapon; to them should be added the Macgregors under James Mor, son of Rob Roy, a shifty character but a hero in fight.

To resist these clans, the earliest to join, Sir John Cope, commanding in Scotland, had about an equal force of all arms, say 2500 to 3000 men, scattered in all quarters, and with very few field-pieces. Tweeddale, holding the revived office of Secretary for Scotland, was on the worst terms, as leader of the *Squadrone,* with his Argathelian rival, Islay, now (through the recent death of his brother, Red Ian of the Battles) Duke of Argyll. Scottish Whigs were not encouraged to arm.

The Prince marched south, while Cope, who had concentrated at Stirling, marched north to intercept him. At Dalnacardoch he learned that Charles was advancing to meet him in Corryarrick Pass (here came in Ardshiel, Glencoe, and a Glengarry reinforcement). At Dalwhinnie, Cope found that the clans held the pass, which is very defensible. He dared not face them, and moved by Ruthven in Badenoch to Inverness, where he vainly expected to be met by the great Whig clans of the north.

Joined now by Cluny, Charles moved on that old base of Montrose, the Castle of Blair of Atholl, where the exiled duke (commonly called Marquis of Tullibardine) was received with enthusiasm. In the mid-region between Highland and Lowland, the ladies, Lady Lude and the rest, simply forced their sons, brothers, and lovers into arms. While Charles danced and made friends, and tasted his first pine-apple at Blair, James Mor took the fort of Inversnaid. At Perth (September 4-10) Charles was joined by the Duke of Perth, the Ogilvys under Lord Ogilvy, some Drummonds under Lord Strathallan, the Oliphants of Gask, and 200 Robertsons of Struan. Lord George Murray, brother of the Duke of Atholl, who had been out in 1715, out in 1719, and later was *un reconcilié*, came in, and with him came Discord. He had dealt as a friend and ally with Cope at Crieff; his loyalty to either side was thus not unnaturally dubious; he was suspected by Murray of Broughton; envied by Sullivan, a soldier of some experience; and though he was loyal to the last, — the best organiser, and the most daring leader, — Charles never trusted him, and his temper was always crossing that of the Prince.

The race for Edinburgh now began, Cope bringing his troops by sea from Aberdeen, and Charles doing what Mar, in 1715, had never ventured. He crossed the Forth by the fords of Frew, six miles above Stirling, passed within gunshot of the castle, and now there was no force between him and Edinburgh save the demoralised dragoons of Colonel Gardiner. The sole use of the dragoons was, wherever they came, to let the world know that the clans were at their heels. On September 16 Charles reached Corstorphine, and Gardiner's dragoons fell back on Coltbridge.

On the previous day the town had been terribly perturbed. The old walls, never sound, were dilapidated, and commanded by houses on the outside. Volunteers were scarce, and knew not how to load a musket. On Sunday, September 15, during sermon-time, "The bells were rung backwards, the drums they were beat," the volunteers, being told to march against the clans, listened to the voices of mothers and aunts and of their own hearts, and melted like a mist. Hamilton's dragoons and ninety of the late Porteous's Town Guard sallied forth, joining Gardiner's men at Coltbridge. A few of the mounted Jacobite gentry, such as Lord Elcho, eldest son of the Earl of Wemyss, trotted up to inspect the dragoons, who fled and drew bridle only at Musselburgh, six miles east of Edinburgh.

The magistrates treated through a caddie or street-messenger with the Prince. He demanded surrender, the bailies went and came, in a hackney coach, between Charles's quarters, Gray's Mill, and Edinburgh, but on their return about 3 A.M.

Lochiel with the Camerons rushed in when the Nether Bow gate was opened to admit the cab of the magistrates. Murray had guided the clan round by Merchiston. At noon Charles entered “that unhappy palace of his race,” Holyrood; and King James was proclaimed at Edinburgh Cross, while the beautiful Mrs Murray, mounted, distributed white cockades. Edinburgh provided but few volunteers, though the ladies tried to “force them out.”

Meanwhile Cope was landing his men at Dunbar; from Mr John Home (author of ‘Douglas, a Tragedy’) he learnt that Charles’s force was under 2000 strong. He himself had, counting the dragoons, an almost equal strength, with six field-pieces manned by sailors.

On September 20 Cope advanced from Haddington, while Charles, with all the carriages he could collect for ambulance duty, set forth from his camp at Duddingston Loch, under Arthur’s Seat. Cope took the low road near the sea, while Charles took the high road, holding the ridge, till from Birsley brae he beheld Cope on the low level plain, between Seaton and Prestonpans. The manœuvres of the clans forced Cope to change his front, but wherever he went, his men were more or less cooped up and confined to the defensive, with the park wall on their rear.

Meanwhile Mr Anderson of Whitburgh, a local sportsman who had shot ducks in the morass on Cope’s left, brought to Charles news of a practicable path through that marsh. Even so, the path was wet as high as the knee, says Ker of Graden, who had reconnoitred the British under fire. He was a Roxburghshire laird, and there was with the Prince no better officer.

In the grey dawn the clans waded through the marsh and leaped the ditch; Charles was forced to come with the second line fifty yards behind the first. The Macdonalds held the right, as they said they had done at Bannockburn; the Camerons and Macgregors were on the left they “cast their plaids, drew their blades,” and, after enduring an irregular fire, swept the red-coat ranks away; “they ran like rabets,” wrote Charles in a genuine letter to James. Gardiner was cut down, his entire troop having fled, while he was directing a small force of foot which stood its ground. Charles stated his losses at a hundred killed and wounded, all by gunshot. Only two of the six field-pieces were discharged, by Colonel Whitefoord, who was captured. Friends and foes agree in saying that the Prince devoted himself to the care of the wounded of both sides. Lord George Murray states Cope’s losses, killed, wounded, and taken, at 3000, Murray, at under 1000.

The Prince would fain have marched on England, but his force was thinned by desertions, and English reinforcements would have been landed in his rear. For a month he had to hold court in Edinburgh, adored by the ladies to whom he behaved with a coldness of which Charles II. would not have approved. “These are my beauties,” he said, pointing to a burly-bearded Highland sentry. He “requisitioned” public money, and such horses and fodder as he could procure; but to spare the townsfolk from the guns of the castle he was obliged to withdraw his blockade. He sent messengers to France, asking for aid, but received little, though the Marquis Boyer d’Eguilles was granted as a kind of representative of Louis XV. His envoys to Sleat and Macleod sped ill, and Lovat only dallied, France only hesitated, while Dutch and English regiments landed in the Thames and marched to join General Wade at Newcastle. Charles himself received reinforcements amounting to some 1500 men, under Lord Ogilvy, old Lord Pitsligo, the Master of Strathallan (Drummond), the brave Lord Balmerino, and the Viscount Dundee. A treaty of alliance with France, made at Fontainebleau, neutralised, under the Treaty of Tournay, 6000 Dutch who might not, by that treaty, fight against the ally of France.

The Prince entertained no illusions. Without French forces, he told D’Eguilles, “I cannot resist English, Dutch, Hessians, and Swiss.” On October he wrote his last extant letter from Scotland to King James. He puts his force at 8000 (more truly 6000), with 300 horse. “With these, as matters stand, I shal have one decisive stroke for’t, but iff the French” (do not?) “land, perhaps none. . . . As matters stand I must either conquer or perish in a little while.”

Defeated in the heart of England, and with a prize of £30,000 offered for his head, he could not hope to escape. A victory for him would mean a landing of French troops, and his invasion of England had for its aim to force the hand of France. Her troops, with Prince Henry among them, dallied at Dunkirk till Christmas, and were then dispersed, while the Duke of Cumberland arrived in England from Flanders on October 19.

On October 30 the Prince held a council of war. French supplies and guns had been landed at Stonehaven, and news came that 6000 French were ready at Dunkirk: at Dunkirk they were, but they never were ready. The news probably decided Charles to cross the Border; while it appears that his men preferred to be content with simply making Scotland again an independent kingdom, with a Catholic king. But to do this, with French aid, was to return to the state of things under Mary of Guise!

The Prince, judging correctly, wished to deal his “decisive stroke” near home, at the old and now futile Wade in Northumberland. A victory would have disheartened England, and left Newcastle open to France. If Charles were defeated, his own escape by sea, in a country where he had many well-wishers, was possible, and the clans would have retreated through the Cheviots. Lord George Murray insisted on a march by the western road, Lancashire being expected to rise and join the Prince. But this plan left Wade, with a superior force, on Charles's flank! The one difficulty, that of holding a bridge, say Kelso Bridge, over Tweed, was not insuperable. Rivers could not stop the Highlanders. Macdonald of Morar thought Charles the best general in the army, and to the layman, considering the necessity for an *instant* stroke, and the advantages of the east, as regards France, the Prince's strategy appears better than Lord George's. But Lord George had his way.

On October 31, Charles, reinforced by Cluny with 400 Macphersons, concentrated at Dalkeith. On November 1, the less trusted part of his force, under Tullibardine, with the Atholl men, moved south by Peebles and Moffat to Lockerbie, menacing Carlisle; while the Prince, Lord George, and the fighting clans marched to Kelso — a feint to deceive Wade. The main body then moved by Jedburgh, up Rule Water and down through Liddesdale, joining hands with Tullibardine on November 9, and bivouacking within two miles of Carlisle. On the 10th the Atholl men went to work at the trenches; on the 11th the army moved seven miles towards Newcastle, hoping to discuss Wade at Brampton on hilly ground. But Wade did not gratify them by arriving.

On the 13th the Atholl men were kept at their spade-work, and Lord George in dudgeon resigned his command (November 14), but at night Carlisle surrendered, Murray and Perth negotiating. Lord George expressed his anger and jealousy to his brother, Tullibardine, but Perth resigned his command to pacify his rival. Wade feebly tried to cross country, failed, and went back to Newcastle. On November 10, with some 4500 men (there had been many desertions), the march through Lancashire was decreed. Save for Mr Townley and two Vaughans, the Catholics did not stir. Charles marched on foot in the van; he was a trained pedestrian; the townspeople stared at him and his Highlanders, but only at Manchester (November 29-30) had he a welcome, enlisting about 150 doomed men. On November 27 Cumberland took over command at Lichfield; his foot were distributed between Tamworth and Stafford; his cavalry was at Newcastle-under-Lyme. Lord George was moving on Derby, but learning Cumberland's dispositions he led a column to Congleton, inducing Cumberland to concentrate at Lichfield, while he himself, by way of Leek and Ashburn, joined the Prince at Derby.

The army was in the highest spirits. The Duke of Richmond on the other side wrote from Lichfield (December 5), "If the enemy please to cut us off from the main army, they may; and also, if they please to give us the slip and march to London, I fear they may, before even this *avant garde* can come up with them; . . . there is no pass to defend, . . . the camp at Finchley is confined to paper plans" — and Wales was ready to join the Prince! Lord George did not know what

Richmond knew. Despite the entreaties of the Prince, his Council decided to retreat. On December 6 the clans, uttering cries of rage, were set with their faces to the north.

The Prince was now an altered man. Full of distrust, he marched not with Lord George in the rear, he rode in the van.

Meanwhile Lord John Drummond, who, on November 22, had landed at Montrose with 800 French soldiers, was ordered by Charles to advance with large Highland levies now collected and meet him as he moved north. Lord John disobeyed orders (received about December 18). Expecting his advance, Charles most unhappily left the Manchester men and others to hold Carlisle, to which he would return. Cumberland took them all, — many were hanged.

In the north, Lord Lewis Gordon routed Macleod at Inverurie (December 23), and defeated his effort to secure Aberdeen. Admirably commanded by Lord George, and behaving admirably for an irregular retreating force, the army reached Penrith on December 18, and at Clifton, Lord George and Cluny defeated Cumberland's dragoons in a rearguard action.

On December 19 Carlisle was reached, and, as we saw, a force was left to guard the castle; all were taken. On December 20 the army forded the flooded Esk; the ladies, of whom several had been with them, rode it on their horses: the men waded breast-high, as, had there been need, they would have forded Tweed if the eastern route had been chosen, and if retreat had been necessary. Cumberland returned to London on January 5, and Horace Walpole no longer dreaded "a rebellion that runs away." By different routes Charles and Lord George met (December 26) at Hamilton Palace. Charles stayed a night at Dumfries. Dumfries was hostile, and was fined; Glasgow was also disaffected, the ladies were unfriendly. At Glasgow, Charles heard that Seaforth, chief of the Mackenzies, was aiding the Hanoverians in the north, combining with the great Whig clans, with Macleod, the Munroes, Lord Loudoun commanding some 2000 men, and the Mackays of Sutherland and Caithness.

Meanwhile Lord John Drummond, Strathallan, and Lord Lewis Gordon, with Lord Macleod, were concentrating to meet the Prince at Stirling, the purpose being the hopeless one of capturing the castle, the key of the north. With weak artillery, and a futile and foolish French engineer officer to direct the siege, they had no chance of success. The Prince, in bad health, stayed (January 4-10) at Sir Hugh Paterson's place, Bannockburn House.

At Stirling, with his northern reinforcements, Charles may have had some seven or eight thousand men wherewith to meet General Hawley (a veteran of Sheriffmuir) advancing from Edinburgh. Hawley encamped at Falkirk, and while the Atholl men were deserting by scores, Lord George skilfully deceived him, arrived on the Falkirk moor unobserved, and held the ridge above Hawley's position, while the General was lunching with Lady Kilmarnock. In the first line of the Prince's force the Macdonalds held the right wing, the Camerons (whom the great Wolfe describes as the bravest of the brave) held the left; with Stewarts of Appin, Frazers, and Macphersons in the centre. In the second line were the Atholl men, Lord Lewis Gordon's levies, and Lord Ogilvy's. The Lowland horse and Drummond's French details were in the rear. The ground was made up of eminences and ravines, so that in the second line the various bodies were invisible to each other, as at Sheriffmuir — with similar results. When Hawley found that he had been surprised he arrayed his thirteen battalions of regulars and 1000 men of Argyll on the plain, with three regiments of dragoons, by whose charge he expected to sweep away Charles's right wing; behind his cavalry were the luckless militia of Glasgow and the Lothians. In all, he had from 10,000 to 12,000 men against, perhaps, 7000 at most, for 1200 of Charles's force were left to contain Blakeney in Stirling Castle. Both sides, on account of the heavy roads, failed to bring forward their guns.

Hawley then advanced his cavalry up hill: their left faced Keppoch's Macdonalds; their right faced the Frazers, under the Master of Lovat, in Charles's centre. Hawley then launched his cavalry, which were met at close range by the reserved fire of the Macdonalds and Frazers. Through the mist and rain the townsfolk, looking on, saw in five minutes "the break in the battle." Hamilton's and Ligonier's cavalry turned and fled, Cobham's wheeled and rode across the Highland left under fire, while the Macdonalds and Frazers pursuing the cavalry found themselves among the Glasgow militia, whom they followed, slaying. Lord George had no pipers to sound the recall; they had flung their pipes to their gillies and gone in with the claymore.

Thus the Prince's right, far beyond his front, were lost in the tempest; while his left had discharged their muskets at Cobham's Horse, and could not load again, their powder being drenched with rain. They received the fire of Hawley's right, and charged with the claymore, but were outflanked and enfiladed by some battalions drawn up *en potence*. Many of the second line had blindly followed the first: the rest shunned the action; Hawley's officers led away some regiments in an orderly retreat; night fell; no man knew what had really occurred till young Gask and young Strathallan, with the French and Atholl men, ventured into Falkirk, and found Hawley's camp deserted. The darkness, the rain, the nature of the ground, and the clans' want of discipline, prevented the annihilation of Hawley's army; while the behaviour of his cavalry showed that the Prince might have defeated Cumberland's advanced force beyond Derby with the greatest ease, as the Duke of Richmond had anticipated.

Perhaps the right course now was to advance on Edinburgh, but the hopeless siege of Stirling Castle was continued — Charles perhaps hoping much from Hawley’s captured guns.

The accidental shooting of young Æneas Macdonnell, second son of Glengarry, by a Clanranald man, begat a kind of blood feud between the clans, and the unhappy cause of the accident had to be shot. Lochgarry, writing to young Glengarry after Culloden, says that “there was a general desertion in the whole army,” and this was the view of the chiefs, who, on news of Cumberland’s approach, told Charles (January 29) that the army was depleted and resistance impossible.

The chiefs were mistaken in point of fact: a review at Crieff later showed that even then only 1000 men were missing. As at Derby, and with right on his side, Charles insisted on meeting Cumberland. He did well, his men were flushed with victory, had sufficient supplies, were to encounter an army not yet encouraged by a refusal to face it, and, if defeated had the gates of the hills open behind them. In a very temperately written memorial Charles placed these ideas before the chiefs. “Having told you my thoughts, I am too sensible of what you have already ventured and done for me, not to yield to your unanimous resolution if you persist.”

Lord George, Lovat, Lochgarry, Keppoch, Ardshiel, and Cluny did persist; the fatal die was cast; and the men who — well fed and confident — might have routed Cumberland, fled in confusion rather than retreated, — to be ruined later, when, starving, out-wearied, and with many of their best forces absent, they staggered his army at Culloden. Charles had told the chiefs, “I can see nothing but ruin and destruction to us in case we should retreat.”

This retreat embittered Charles’s feelings against Lord George, who may have been mistaken — who, indeed, at Crieff, seems to have recognised his error (February 5); but he had taken his part, and during the campaign, henceforth, as at Culloden, distinguished himself by every virtue of a soldier.

After the retreat Lord George moved on Aberdeen; Charles to Blair in Atholl; thence to Moy, the house of Lady Mackintosh, where a blacksmith and four or five men ingeniously scattered Loudoun and the Macleods, advancing to take him by a night surprise. This was the famous Rout of Moy.

Charles next (February 20) took Inverness Castle, and Loudoun was driven into Sutherland, and cut off by Lord George’s dispositions from any chance of joining hands with Cumberland. The Duke had now 5000 Hessian soldiers at his disposal: these he would not have commanded had the Prince’s army met him near Stirling.

Charles was now at or near Inverness: he lost, through illness, the services of

Murray, whose successor, Hay, was impotent as an officer of Commissariat. A gallant movement of Lord George into Atholl, where he surprised all Cumberland's posts, but was foiled by the resistance of his brother's castle, was interrupted by a recall to the north, and, on April 2, he retreated to the line of the Spey. Forbes of Culloden and Macleod had been driven to take refuge in Skye; but 1500 men of the Prince's best had been sent into Sutherland, when Cumberland arrived at Nairn (April 14), and Charles concentrated his starving forces on Culloden Moor. The Macphersons, the Frazers, the 1500 Macdonalds, and others in Sutherland were absent on various duties when "the wicked day of destiny" approached.

The men on Culloden Moor, a flat waste unsuited to the tactics of the clans, had but one biscuit apiece on the eve of the battle. Lord George "did not like the ground," and proposed to surprise by a night attack Cumberland's force at Nairn. The Prince eagerly agreed, and, according to him, Clanranald's advanced men were in touch with Cumberland's outposts before Lord George convinced the Prince that retreat was necessary. The advance was lagging; the way had been missed in the dark; dawn was at hand. There are other versions: in any case the hungry men were so outworn that many are said to have slept through next day's battle.

A great mistake was made next day, if Lochgarry, who commanded the Macdonalds of Glengarry, and Maxwell of Kirkconnel are correct in saying that Lord George insisted on placing his Atholl men on the right wing. The Macdonalds had an old claim to the right wing, but as far as research enlightens us, their failure on this fatal day was not due to jealous anger. The battle might have been avoided, but to retreat was to lose Inverness and all chance of supplies. On the Highland right was the water of Nairn, and they were guarded by a wall which the Campbells pulled down, enabling Cumberland's cavalry to take them in flank. Cumberland had about 9000 men, including the Campbells. Charles, according to his muster-master, had 5000; of horse he had but a handful.

The battle began with an artillery duel, during which the clans lost heavily, while their few guns were useless, and their right flank was exposed by the breaking down of the protecting wall. After some unexplained and dangerous delay, Lord George gave the word to charge, in face of a blinding tempest of sleet, and himself went in, as did Lochiel, claymore in hand. But though the order was conveyed by Ker of Graden first to the Macdonalds on the left, as they had to charge over a wider space of ground, the Camerons, Clan Chattan, and Macleans came first to the shock. "Nothing could be more desperate than their attack, or more properly received," says Whitefoord. The assailants were enfiladed by Wolfe's regiment, which moved up and took position at right angles, like the fifty-second on the flank of the last charge of the French Guard at Waterloo. The Highland right broke through Barrel's regiment, swept over the guns, and died on the bayonets of the second line. They had thrown down their muskets after one fire, and, says Cumberland, stood "and threw stones for at least a minute or two before their total rout began." Probably the fall of Lochiel, who was wounded and carried out of action, determined the flight. Meanwhile the left, the Macdonalds, menaced on the flank by cavalry, were plied at a hundred yards by grape. They saw their leaders, the gallant Keppoch and Macdonnell of Scothouse, with many others, fall under the grape-shot: they saw the right wing broken, and they did not come to the shock. If we may believe four sworn witnesses in a court of justice (July 24, 1752), whose testimony was accepted as the basis of a judicial decreet (January 10, 1756), Keppoch was wounded while giving his orders to some of his men not to outrun the line in advancing, and was shot dead as a friend was supporting him. When all retreated they passed the dead body of Keppoch.

The tradition constantly given in various forms that Keppoch charged alone, "deserted by the children of his clan," is worthless if sworn evidence may be trusted.

As for the unhappy Charles, by the evidence of Sir Robert Strange, who was with him, he had "ridden along the line to the right animating the soldiers," and "endeavoured to rally the soldiers, who, annoyed by the enemy's fire, were beginning to quit the field." He "was got off the field when the men in general were betaking themselves precipitately to flight; nor was there any possibility of their being rallied." Yorke, an English officer, says that the Prince did not leave the field till after the retreat of the second line.

So far the Prince's conduct was honourable and worthy of his name. But presently, on the advice of his Irish entourage, Sullivan and Sheridan, who always suggested suspicions, and doubtless not forgetting the great price on his head, he took his own way towards the west coast in place of joining Lord George and the remnant with him at Ruthven in Badenoch. On April 26 he sailed from Borradale in a boat, and began that course of wanderings and hairbreadth escapes in which only the loyalty of Highland hearts enabled him at last to escape the ships that watched the isles and the troops that netted the hills.

Some years later General Wolfe, then residing at Inverness, reviewed the occurrences, and made up his mind that the battle had been a dangerous risk for Cumberland, while the pursuit (though ruthlessly cruel) was inefficient.

Despite Cumberland's insistent orders to give no quarter (orders justified by the absolutely false pretext that Prince Charles had set the example), Lochgarry reported that the army had not lost more than a thousand men. Fire and sword and torture, the destruction of tilled lands, and even of the shell-fish on the shore, did not break the spirit of the Highlanders. Many bands held out in arms, and Lochgarry was only prevented by the Prince's command from laying an ambush for Cumberland. The Campbells and the Macleods under their recreant chief, the Whig Macdonalds under Sir Alexander of Sleat, ravaged the lands of the Jacobite clansmen; but the spies of Albemarle, who now commanded in Scotland, reported the Macleans, the Grants of Glenmoriston, with the Macphersons, Glengarry's men, and Lochiel's Camerons, as all eager "to do it again" if France would only help.

But France was helpless, and when Lochiel sailed for France with the Prince only Cluny remained, hunted like a partridge in the mountains, to keep up the spirit of the Cause. Old Lovat met a long-deserved death by the executioner's axe, though it needed the evidence of Murray of Broughton, turned informer, to convict that fox. Kilmarnock and Balmerino also were executed; the good and brave Duke of Perth died on his way to France; the aged Tullibardine in the Tower; many gallant gentlemen were hanged; Lord George escaped, and is the ancestor of the present Duke of Atholl; many gentlemen took French service; others fought in other alien armies; three or four in the Highlands or abroad took the wages of spies upon the Prince. The £30,000 of French gold, buried near Loch Arkaig, caused endless feuds, kinsman denouncing kinsman. The secrets of the years 1746-1760 are to be sought in the Cumberland and Stuart MSS. in Windsor Castle and the Record Office.

Legislation, intended to scotch the snake of Jacobitism, began with religious persecution. The Episcopalian clergy had no reason to love triumphant Presbyterianism, and actively, or in sympathy, were favourers of the exiled dynasty. Episcopalian chapels, sometimes mere rooms in private houses, were burned, or their humble furniture was destroyed. All Episcopalian ministers were bidden to take the oath and pray for King George by September 1746, or suffer for the second offence transportation for life to the American colonies. Later, the orders conferred by Scottish bishops were made of no avail. Only with great difficulty and danger could parents obtain the rite of baptism for their children. Very little is said in our histories about the sufferings of the Episcopalians when it was their turn to be under the harrow. They were not violent, they murdered no Moderator of the General Assembly. Other measures were the Disarming Act, the prohibition to wear the Highland dress, and the abolition of "hereditable jurisdictions," and the chief's right to call out his clansmen in arms. Compensation in money was paid, from £21,000 to the Duke of Argyll to £13, 6s. 8d. to the clerks of the Registrar of Aberbrothock. The whole sum was £152,237, 15s. 4d.

In 1754 an Act "annexed the forfeited estates of the Jacobites who had been out (or many of them) inalienably to the Crown." The estates were restored in 1784; meanwhile the profits were to be used for the improvement of the Highlands. If submissive tenants received better terms and larger leases than of old, Jacobite tenants were evicted for not being punctual with rent. Therefore, on May 14, 1752, some person unknown shot Campbell of Glenure, who was about evicting the tenants on the lands of Lochiel and Stewart of Ardshiel in Appin. Campbell rode down from Fort William to Ballachulish ferry, and when he had crossed it said, "I am safe now I am out of my mother's country." But as he drove along the old road through the wood of Lettermore, perhaps a mile and a half south of Ballachulish House, the fatal shot was fired. For this crime James Stewart of the Glens was tried by a Campbell jury at Inveraray, with the Duke on the bench, and was, of course, convicted, and hanged on the top of a knoll above Ballachulish ferry. James was innocent, but Allan Breck Stewart was certainly an accomplice of the man with the gun, which, by the way, was the property neither of James Stewart nor of Stewart of Fasnacloich. The murderer was anxious to save James by avowing the deed, but his kinsfolk, saying, "They will only hang both James and you," bound him hand and foot and locked him up in the kitchen on the day of James's execution. Allan lay for some weeks at the house of a kinsman in Rannoch, and escaped to France, where he had a fight with James Mor Macgregor, then a spy in the service of the Duke of Newcastle.

This murder of "the Red Fox" caused all the more excitement, and is all the better remembered in Lochaber and Glencoe, because agrarian violence in revenge for eviction has scarcely another example in the history of the Highlands.

CONCLUSION.

Space does not permit an account of the assimilation of Scotland to England in the years between the Forty-five and our own time: moreover, the history of this age cannot well be written without a dangerously close approach to many "burning questions" of our day. The History of the Highlands, from 1752 to the emigrations witnessed by Dr Johnson (1760-1780), and of the later evictions in the interests of sheep farms and deer forests, has never been studied as it ought to be in the rich manuscript materials which are easily accessible. The great literary Renaissance of Scotland, from 1745 to the death of Sir Walter Scott; the years of Hume, a pioneer in philosophy and in history, and of the Rev. Principal Robertson (with him and Hume, Gibbon professed, very modestly, that he did not rank); the times of Adam Smith, of Burns, and of Sir Walter, not to speak of the Rev. John Home, that foremost tragic poet, may be studied in many a history of literature. According to Voltaire, Scotland led the world in all studies, from metaphysics to gardening. We think of Watt, and add engineering.

The brief and inglorious administration of the Earl of Bute at once gave openings in the public service to Scots of ability, and excited that English hatred of these northern rivals which glows in Churchill's 'Satires,' while this English jealousy aroused that Scottish hatred of England which is the one passion that disturbs the placid letters of David Hume.

The later alliance of Pitt with Henry Dundas made Dundas far more powerful than any Secretary for Scotland had been since Lauderdale, and confirmed the connection of Scotland with the services in India. But, politically, Scotland, till the Reform Bill, had scarcely a recognisable existence. The electorate was tiny, and great landholders controlled the votes, whether genuine or created by legal fiction— "faggot votes." Municipal administration in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was terribly corrupt, and reform was demanded, but the French Revolution, producing associations of Friends of the People, who were prosecuted and grievously punished in trials for sedition, did not afford a fortunate moment for peaceful reforms.

But early in the nineteenth century Jeffrey, editor of 'The Edinburgh Review,' made it the organ of Liberalism, and no less potent in England than in Scotland; while Scott, on the Tory side, led a following of Scottish penmen across the Border in the service of 'The Quarterly Review.' With 'Blackwood's Magazine' and Wilson, Hogg, and Lockhart; with Jeffrey and 'The Edinburgh,' the Scottish metropolis almost rivalled London as the literary capital.

About 1818 Lockhart recognised the superiority of the Whig wits in literature; but against them all Scott is a more than sufficient set-off. The years of stress between Waterloo (1815) and the Reform Bill (1832) made Radicalism (fostered by economic causes, the enormous commercial and industrial growth, and the unequal distribution of its rewards) perhaps even more pronounced north than south of the Tweed. In 1820 "the Radical war" led to actual encounters between the yeomanry and the people. The ruffianism of the Tory paper 'The Beacon' caused one fatal duel, and was within an inch of leading to another, in which a person of the very highest consequence would have "gone on the sod." For the Reform Bill the mass of Scottish opinion, so long not really represented at all, was as eager as for the Covenant. So triumphant was the first Whig or Radical majority under the new system, that Jeffrey, the Whig pontiff, perceived that the real struggle was to be "between property and no property," between Capital and Socialism. This circumstance had always been perfectly clear to Scott and the Tories.

The watchword of the eighteenth century in literature, religion, and politics had been "no enthusiasm." But throughout the century, since 1740, "enthusiasm," "the return to nature," had gradually conquered till the rise of the Romantic school with Coleridge and Scott. In religion the enthusiastic movement of the Wesleys had altered the face of the Church in England, while in Scotland the "Moderates" had lost position, and "zeal" or enthusiasm pervaded the Kirk. The question of lay patronage of livings had passed through many phases since Knox wrote, "It pertaineth to the people, and to every several congregation, to elect their minister." In 1833, immediately after the passing of the Reform Bill, the return to the primitive Knoxian rule was advocated by the "Evangelical" or "High Flying" opponents of the Moderates. Dr Chalmers, a most eloquent person, whom Scott regarded as truly a man of genius, was the leader of the movement. The Veto Act, by which the votes of a majority of heads of families were to be fatal to the claims of a patron's presentee, had been passed by the General Assembly; it was contrary to Queen Anne's Patronage Act of 1711, — a measure carried, contrary to Harley's policy, by a coalition of English Churchmen and Scottish Jacobite members of Parliament. The rejection, under the Veto Act, of a presentee by the church of Auchterarder, was declared illegal by the Court of Session and the judges in the House of Lords (May 1839); the Strathbogie imbroglio, "with two Presbyteries, one taking its orders from the Court of Session, the other from the General Assembly" (1837-1841), brought the Assembly into direct conflict with the law of the land. Dr Chalmers would not allow the spiritual claims of the Kirk to be suppressed by the State. “King Christ’s Crown Honours” were once more in question. On May 18, 1843, the followers of the principles of Knox and Andrew Melville marched out of the Assembly into Tanfield Hall, and made Dr Chalmers Moderator, and themselves “The Free Church of Scotland.” In 1847 the hitherto separated synods of various dissenting bodies came together as United Presbyterians, and in 1902 they united with the Free Church as “the United Free Church,” while a small minority, mainly Highland, of the former Free Church, now retains that title, and apparently represents Knoxian ideals. Thus the Knoxian ideals have modified, even to this day, the ecclesiastical life of Scotland, while the Church of James I., never by persecution extinguished (*nec tamen consumebatur*), has continued to exist and develop, perhaps more in consequence of love of the Liturgy than from any other cause.

Meanwhile, and not least in the United Free Church, extreme tenacity of dogma has yielded place to very advanced Biblical criticism; and Knox, could he revisit Scotland with all his old opinions, might not be wholly satisfied by the changes wrought in the course of more than three centuries. The Scottish universities, discouraged and almost destitute of pious benefactors since the end of the sixteenth century, have profited by the increase of wealth and a comparatively recent outburst of generosity. They always provided the cheapest, and now they provide the cheapest and most efficient education that is offered by any homes of learning of mediæval foundation.

SHAKESPEARE, BACON, AND THE GREAT UNKNOWN

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INTRODUCTION

The theory that Francis Bacon was, in the main, the author of “Shakespeare’s plays,” has now been for fifty years before the learned world. Its advocates have met with less support than they had reason to expect. Their methods, their logic, and their hypotheses closely resemble those applied by many British and foreign scholars to Homer; and by critics of the very Highest School to Holy Writ. Yet the Baconian theory is universally rejected in England by the professors and historians of English literature; and generally by students who have no profession save that of Letters. The Baconians, however, do not lack the countenance and assistance of highly distinguished persons, whose names are famous where those of mere men of letters are unknown; and in circles where the title of “Professor” is not duly respected.

The partisans of Bacon aver (or one of them avers) that “Lord Penzance, Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Palmerston, Judge Webb, Judge Holmes (of Kentucky, U.S.), Prince Bismarck, John Bright, and innumerable most *thoughtful scholars eminent in many walks of life, and especially in the legal profession* . . . “ have been Baconians, or, at least, opposed to Will Shakspere’s authorship. To these names of scholars I must add that of my late friend, Samuel Clemens, D.Litt. of Oxford; better known to many as Mark Twain. Dr. Clemens was, indeed, no mean literary critic; witness his epoch-making study of Prof. Dowden’s *Life of Shelley*, while his researches into the biography of Jeanne d’Arc were most conscientious.

With the deepest respect for the political wisdom and literary taste of Lord Palmerston, Prince Bismarck, Lord Beaconsfield, and the late Mr. John Bright; and with every desire to humble myself before the judicial verdicts of Judges Holmes, Webb, and Lord Penzance; with sincere admiration of my late friend, Dr. Clemens, I cannot regard them as, in the first place and professionally, trained students of literary history.

They were no more specially trained students of Elizabethan literature than myself; they were amateurs in this province, as I am an amateur, who differ from all of them in opinion. Difference of opinion concerning points of literary history ought not to make “our angry passions rise.” Yet this controversy has been extremely bitter.

I abstain from quoting the “sweetmeats,” in Captain MacTurk’s phrase, which have been exchanged by the combatants. Charges of ignorance and monomania have been answered by charges of forgery, lying, “scandalous literary dishonesty,” and even inaccuracy. Now no mortal is infallibly accurate, but we are all sane and “indifferent honest.” There have been forgeries in matters Shakespearean, alas, but not in connection with the Baconian controversy.

It is an argument of the Baconians, and generally of the impugners of good Will’s authorship of the plays vulgarly attributed to him, that the advocates of William Shakspere, Gent, as author of the plays, differ like the Kilkenny cats among themselves on many points. All do not believe, with Mr. J. C. Collins, that Will knew Sophocles, Euripides, and Æschylus (but not Aristophanes) as well as Mr. Swinburne did, or knew them at all - for that matter. Mr. Pollard differs very widely from Sir Sidney Lee on points concerning the First Folio and the Quartos: my sympathies are with Mr. Pollard. Few, if any, partisans of Will agree with Mrs. Stopes (herself no Baconian) about the history of the Stratford monument of the poet. About Will’s authorship of *Titus Andronicus*, and *Henry VI*, Part I, the friends of Will, like the friends of Bacon, are at odds among themselves. These and other divergencies of opinion cause the Baconians to laugh, as if *they* were a harmonious circle . . . ! For the Baconian camp is not less divided against itself than the camp of the “Stratfordians.” Not all Baconians hold that Bacon was the legitimate son of “that Imperial votaress” Queen Elizabeth. Not all believe in the Cryptogram of Mr. Ignatius Donnelly, or in any other cryptograms. Not all maintain that Bacon, in the Sonnets, was inspired by a passion for the Earl of Essex, for Queen Elizabeth, or for an early miniature of himself. Not all regard him as the author of the plays of Kit Marlowe. Not all suppose him to be a Rosicrucian, who possibly died at the age of a hundred and six, or, perhaps, may be “still running.” Not all aver that he wrote thirteen plays before 1593. But one party holds that, in the main, Will was the author of the plays, while the other party votes for Bacon - or for Bungay, a Great Unknown. I use Bungay as an endearing term for the mysterious being who was the Author if Francis Bacon was not. Friar Bungay was the rival of Friar Bacon, as the Unknown (if he was not Francis Bacon) is the rival of “the inventor of Inductive reasoning.”

I could never have expected that I should take a part in this controversy; but acquaintance with *The Shakespeare Problem Restated* (503 pp.), (1908), and later works of Mr. G. G. Greenwood, M.P., has tempted me to enter the lists.

Mr. Greenwood is worth fighting; he is cunning of fence, is learned (and I cannot conceal my opinion that Mr. Donnelly and Judge Holmes were rather ignorant). He is not over “the threshold of Eld” (as were Judge Webb and Lord Penzance when they took up Shakespearean criticism). His knowledge of Elizabethan literature is vastly superior to mine, for I speak merely, in Matthew

Arnold’s words, as “a belletristic trifler.”

Moreover, Mr. Greenwood, as a practising barrister, is a judge of legal evidence; and, being a man of sense, does not “hold a brief for Bacon” as the author of the Shakespearean plays and poems, and does not value Baconian cryptograms. In the following chapters I make endeavours, conscientious if fallible, to state the theory of Mr. Greenwood. It is a negative theory. He denies that Will Shakspere (or Shaxbere, or Shagspur, and so on) was the author of the plays and poems. Some other party was, *in the main*, with other hands, the author. Mr. Greenwood cannot, or does not, offer a guess as to who this ingenious Somebody was. He does not affirm, and he does not deny, that Bacon had a share, greater or less, in the undertaking.

In my brief tractate I have not room to consider every argument; to traverse every field. In philology I am all unlearned, and cannot pretend to discuss the language of Shakespeare, any more than I can analyse the language of Homer into proto-Arcadian and Cyprian, and so on. Again, I cannot pretend to have an opinion, based on internal evidence, about the genuine Shakespearean character of such plays as *Titus Andronicus*, *Henry VI*, Part I, and *Troilus and Cressida*. About them different views are held *within* both camps.

I am no lawyer or naturalist (as Partridge said, *Non omnia possumus omnes*), and cannot imagine why our Author is so accurate in his frequent use of terms of law - if he be Will; and so totally at sea in natural history - if he be Francis, who “took all knowledge for his province.”

How can a layman pretend to deal with Shakespeare’s legal attainments, after he has read the work of the learned Recorder of Bristol, Mr. Castle, K.C.? To his legal mind it seems that in some of Will’s plays he had the aid of an expert in law, and then his technicalities were correct. In other plays he had no such tutor, and then he was sadly to seek in his legal jargon. I understand Mr. Greenwood to disagree on this point. Mr. Castle says, “I think Shakespeare would have had no difficulty in getting aid from several sources. There is therefore no *prima facie* reason why we should suppose the information was supplied by Bacon.”

Of course there is not!

“In fact, there are some reasons why one should attribute the legal assistance, say, to Coke, rather than to Bacon.”

The truth is, that Bacon seems not to have been lawyer enough for Will’s purposes. “We have no reason to believe that Bacon was particularly well read in the technicalities of our law; he never seems to have seriously followed his profession.”

Now we have Mr. Greenwood’s testimonial in favour of Mr. Castle, “Who really does know something about law.” Mr. Castle thinks that Bacon really did not know enough about law, and suggests Sir Edward Coke, of all human beings, as conceivably Will's "coach" on legal technicalities. Perhaps Will consulted the Archbishop of Canterbury on theological niceties?

Que sçais je? In some plays, says Mr. Castle, Will's law is all right, in other plays it is all wrong. As to Will's law, when Mr. Greenwood and Mr. Castle differ, a layman dare not intervene.

Concerning legend and tradition about our Will, it seems that, in each case, we should do our best to trace the *Quellen*, to discover the original sources, and the steps by which the tale arrived at its late recorders in print; and then each man's view as to the veracity of the story will rest on his sense of probability; and on his bias, his wish to believe or to disbelieve.

There exists, I believe, only one personal anecdote of Will, the actor, and on it the Baconians base an argument against the contemporary recognition of him as a dramatic author. I take the criticism of Mr. Greenwood (who is not a Baconian). One John Manningham, Barrister-at-Law, "a well-educated and cultured man," notes in his Diary (February 2, 1601) that "at our feast we had a play called Twelve Night or What you Will, much like the Comedy of Errors, or Menæchmi in Plautus, but most like and near to that in Italian called *Inganni.*" He confides to his Diary the tricks played on Malvolio as "a good practice." That is all.

About the authorship he says nothing: perhaps he neither knew nor cared who the author was. In our day the majority of people who tell me about a play which they have seen, cannot tell me the name of the author. Yet it is usually printed on the playbill, though in modest type. The public does not care a straw about the author's name, unless he be deservedly famous for writing letters to the newspapers on things in general; for his genius as an orator; his enthusiasm as a moralist, or in any other extraneous way. Dr. Forman in his queer account of the plot of "Mack Beth" does not allude to the name of the author (April 20, 1610). *Twelfth Night* was not published till 1623, in the Folio: there was no quarto to enlighten Manningham about the author's name. We do not hear of printed playbills, with author's names inserted, at that period. It seems probable that occasional playgoers knew and cared no more about authors than they do at present. The world of the wits, the critics (such as Francis Meres), poets, playwrights, and players, did know and care about the authors; apparently Manningham did not. But he heard a piquant anecdote of two players and (March 13, 1601) inserted it in his Diary.

Shakespeare once anticipated Richard Burbage at an amorous tryst with a citizen's wife. Burbage had, by the way, been playing the part of Richard III. While Will was engaged in illicit dalliance, the message was brought (what a moment for bringing messages!) that Richard III was at the door, and Will "caused return to be made that William the Conqueror was before Richard III. *Shakespeare's name William*." (My italics.) Mr. Greenwood argues that if "Shakspere the player was known to the world as the author of the plays of Shakespeare, it does seem extremely remarkable" that Manningham should have thought it needful to add "Shakespeare's name William."

But *was* "Shakspere," or any man, "known to the world as the author of the plays of Shakespeare"? No! for Mr. Greenwood writes, "nobody, outside a very small circle, troubled his head as to who the dramatist or dramatists might be." To that "very small circle" we have no reason to suppose that Manningham belonged, despite his remarkable opinion that *Twelfth Night* resembles the *Menæchmi*. Consequently, it is *not* "extremely remarkable" that Manningham wrote "Shakespeare's name William," to explain to posterity the joke about "William the Conqueror," instead of saying, "the brilliant author of the Twelfth Night play which so much amused me at our feast a few weeks ago." "Remarkable" out of all hooping it would have been had Manningham written in the style of Mr. Greenwood. But Manningham apparently did not "trouble his head as to who the dramatist or dramatists might be." "Nobody, outside a very small circle," *did* trouble his poor head about that point. Yet Mr. Greenwood thinks "it does seem extremely remarkable" that Manningham did not mention the author.

Later, on the publication of the Folio (1623), the world seems to have taken more interest in literary matters. Mr. Greenwood says that then while "the multitude" would take Ben Jonson's noble panegyric on Shakespeare as a poet "*au pied de la lettre*," "the enlightened few would recognise that it had an esoteric meaning." Then, it seems, "the world" - the "multitude" - regarded the actor as the author. Only "the enlightened few" were aware that when Ben *said* "Shakespeare," and "Swan of Avon," he *meant* - somebody else.

Quite different inferences are drawn from the same facts by persons of different mental conditions. For example, in 1635 or 1636, Cuthbert Burbage, brother of Richard, the famous actor, Will's comrade, petitioned Lord Pembroke, then Lord Chamberlain, for consideration in a quarrel about certain theatres. Telling the history of the houses, he mentions that the Burbages "to ourselves joined those deserving men, Shakspere, Heminge, Condell, Phillips and others." Cuthbert is arguing his case solely from the point of the original owners or lease-holders of the houses, and of the well-known actors to whom they joined themselves. Judge Webb and Mr. Greenwood think that "it does indeed seem strange . . . that the proprietor of the playhouses which had been made famous by the production of the Shakespearean plays, should, in 1635 - twelve years after the publication of the great Folio - describe their reputed author to the survivor of the Incomparable Pair, as merely a ‘man-player’ and ‘a deserving man.’” Why did he not remind the Lord Chamberlain that this “deserving man” was the author of all these famous dramas? Was it because he was aware that the Earl of Pembroke “knew better than that”?

These arguments are regarded by some Baconians as proof positive of their case.

Cuthbert Burbage, in 1635 or 1636, did not remind the Earl of what the Earl knew very well, that the Folio had been dedicated, in 1623, to him and his brother, by Will’s friends, Heminge and Condell, as they had been patrons of the late William Shakspere and admirers of his plays. The terms of this dedication are to be cited in the text, later. *We* all *now* would have reminded the Earl of what he very well knew. Cuthbert did not.

The intelligence of Cuthbert Burbage may be gauged by anyone who will read p-484 in *William Shakespeare, His Family and Friends*, by the late Mr. Charles Elton, Q.C., of White Staunton. Cuthbert was a puzzle-pated old boy. The silence as to Will’s authorship on the part of this muddle-headed old Cuthbert, in 1635-36, cannot outweigh the explicit and positive public testimony to his authorship, signed by his friends and fellow-actors in 1623.

Men believe what they may; but I prefer positive evidence for the affirmative to negative evidence from silence, the silence of Cuthbert Burbage.

One may read through Mr. Greenwood’s three books and note the engaging varieties of his views; they vary as suits his argument; but he is unaware of it, or can justify his varyings. Thus, in 1610, one John Davies wrote rhymes in which he speaks of “our English Terence, Mr. Will Shakespeare”; “good Will.” In his period patriotic English critics called a comic dramatist “the English Terence,” or “the English Plautus,” precisely as American critics used to call Mr. Bryant “the American Wordsworth,” or Cooper “the American Scott”; and as Scots called the Rev. Mr. Thomson “the Scottish Turner.” Somewhere, I believe, exists “the Belgian Shakespeare.”

Following this practice, Davies had to call Will either “our English Terence,” or “our English Plautus.” Aristophanes would not have been generally recognised; and Will was no more like one of these ancient authors than another. Thus Davies was apt to choose either Plautus or Terence; it was even betting which he selected. But he chanced to choose Terence; and this is “curious,” and suggests suspicions to Mr. Greenwood - and the Baconians. They are so very full of suspicions!

It does not suit the Baconians, or Mr. Greenwood, to find contemporary recognition of Will as an author. Consequently, Mr. Greenwood finds Davies’s “curious, and at first sight, inappropriate comparison of ‘Shakespeare’ to Terence worthy of remark, for Terence is the very author whose name is alleged to have been used as a mask-name, or *nom de plume*, for the writings of great men who wished to keep the fact of their authorship concealed.”

Now Davies felt bound to bring in *some* Roman parallel to Shakespeare; and had only the choice of Terence or Plautus. Meres (1598) used Plautus; Davies used Terence. Mr. Greenwood shows us that Plautus would not do. “Could *he*” (Shakespeare) “write only of courtesans and *cocottes*, and not of ladies highly born, cultured, and refined? . . .”

“The supposed parallel” (Plautus and Shakespeare) “breaks down at every point.” Thus, on Mr. Greenwood’s showing, Plautus could not serve Davies, or should not serve him, in his search for a Roman parallel to “good Will.” But Mr. Greenwood also writes, “if he” (Shakespeare) “was to be likened to a Latin comedian, surely Plautus is the writer with whom he should have been compared.” Yet Plautus was the very man who cannot be used as a parallel to Shakespeare. Of course no Roman nor any other comic dramatist closely resembles the *author* of *As You Like It*. They who selected either Plautus or Terence meant no more than that both were celebrated comic dramatists. Plautus was no parallel to Will. Yet “surely Plautus is the author to whom he should have been compared” by Davies, says Mr. Greenwood. If Davies tried Plautus, the comparison was bad; if Terence, it was “curious,” as Terence was absurdly accused of being the “*nom de plume*” of some great “concealed poets” of Rome. “From all the known facts about Terence,” says a Baconian critic (who has consulted Smith’s *Biographical Dictionary*), “it is an almost unavoidable inference that John Davies made the comparison to Shakspere because he knew of the point common to both cases.” The common point is taken to be, not that both men were famous comic dramatists, but that Roman literary gossips said, and that Baconians and Mr. Greenwood say, that “Terence” was said to be a “mask-name,” and that “Shakespeare” is a mask-name. Of the second opinion there is not a hint in literature of the time of good Will.

What surprises one most in this controversy is that men eminent in the legal profession should be “anti-Shakesperean,” if not overtly Baconian. For the evidence for the contemporary faith in Will’s authorship is all positive; from his own age comes not a whisper of doubt, not even a murmur of surprise. It is incredible to me that his fellow-actors and fellow-playwrights should have been deceived, especially when they were such men as Ben Jonson and Tom Heywood. One would expect lawyers, of all people, to have been most impatient of the surprising attempts made to explain away Ben Jonson’s testimony, by aid, first, of quite a false analogy (Scott’s denial of his own authorship of his novels), and, secondly, by the suppression of such a familiar fact as the constant inconsistency of Ben's judgments of his contemporaries in literature. Mr. Greenwood must have forgotten the many examples of this inconsistency; but I have met a Baconian author who knew nothing of the fact. Mr. Greenwood, it is proper to say, does not seem to be satisfied that he has solved what he calls "the Jonsonian riddle." Really, there is no riddle. About Will, as about other authors, his contemporaries and even his friends, on occasion, Ben "spoke with two voices," now in terms of hyperbolical praise, now in carping tones of censure. That is the obvious solution of "the Jonsonian riddle."

I must apologise if I have in places spelled the name of the Swan of Avon "Shakespeare" where Mr. Greenwood would write "Shakspere," and *vice versa*. He uses "Shakespeare" where he means the Author; "Shakspere" where he means Will; and is vexed with some people who write the name of Will as "Shakespeare." As Will, in the opinion of a considerable portion of the human race, and of myself, *was* the Author, one is apt to write his name as "Shakespeare" in the usual way. But difficult cases occur, as in quotations, and in conditional sentences. By any spelling of the name I always mean the undivided personality of "Him who sleeps by Avon."

CHAPTER I: THE BACONIAN AND ANTI-WILLIAN POSITIONS

Till the years 1856-7 no voice was raised against the current belief about Shakespeare (1564-1616). He was the author in the main of the plays usually printed as his. In some cases other authors, one or more, may have had fingers in his dramas; in other cases, Shakespeare may have "written over" and transfigured earlier plays, of himself and of others; he may have contributed, more or less, to several plays mainly by other men. Separately printed dramas published during his time carry his name on their title-pages, but are not included in the first collected edition of his dramas, "The First Folio," put forth by two of his friends and fellow-actors, in 1623, seven years after his death.

On all these matters did commentators, critics, and antiquarians for long dispute; but none denied that the actor, Will Shakspere (spelled as heaven pleased), was in the main the author of most of the plays of 1623, and the sole author of *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, and the Sonnets.

Even now, in England at least, it would be perhaps impossible to find one special and professed student of Elizabethan literature, and of the classical and European literatures, who does not hold by the ancient belief, the belief of Shakespeare's contemporaries and intimates, the belief that he was, in the sense explained above, the author of the plays.

But ours is not a generation to be overawed by "Authority" (as it is called). A small but eager company of scholars have convinced themselves that Francis Bacon wrote the Shakespearean plays. That is the point of agreement among these enthusiasts: points of difference are numerous: some very wild little sects exist. Meanwhile multitudes of earnest and intelligent men and women, having read notices in newspapers of the Baconian books, or heard of them at lectures and tea-parties, disbelieve in the authorship of "the Stratford rustic," and look down on the faithful of Will Shakespere with extreme contempt.

From the Baconians we receive a plain straightforward theory, "Bacon wrote Shakespeare," as one of their own prophets has said. Since we have plenty of evidence for Bacon's life and occupations during the period of Shakespearean poetic activity, we can compare what he was doing as a man, a student, a Crown lawyer, a pleader in the Courts, a political pamphleteer, essayist, courtier, active member of Parliament, and so on, with what he is said to have been doing - by the Baconians; namely, writing two dramas yearly.

But there is another "Anti-Willian" theory, which would dethrone Will Shakspere, and put but a Shadow in his place. Conceive a "concealed poet," of high social position, contemporary with Bacon and Shakespeare. Let him be so fond of the Law that he cannot keep legal "shop" out of his love Sonnets even. Make him a courtier; a statesman; a philosopher; a scholar who does not blench even from the difficult Latin of Ovid and Plautus. Let this almost omniscient being possess supreme poetic genius, extensive classical attainments, and a tendency to make false quantities. Then conceive him to live through the reigns of "Eliza and our James," without leaving in history, in science, in society, in law, in politics or scholarship, a single trace of his existence. He left nothing but the poems and plays usually attributed to Will. As to the date of his decease, we only know that it must necessarily have been later than the composition of the last genuine Shakespearean play - for this paragon wrote it.

Such is the Being who occupies, in the theory of the non-Baconian, *but not Anti-Baconian*, Anti-Willians, the intellectual throne filled, in the Will Shakespeare theory, by Will; and in the Baconian, by Bacon - two kings of Brentford on one throne.

We are to be much engaged by the form of this theory which is held by Mr. G. G. Greenwood in his *The Shakespeare Problem Restated*. In attempting to explain what he means I feel that I am skating on very thin ice. Already, in two volumes (*In Re Shakespeare*, 1909, and *The Vindicators of Shakespeare*), Mr. Greenwood has accused his critics of frequently misconceiving and misrepresenting his ideas: wherefore I also tremble. I am perfectly confident in saying that he "holds no brief for the Baconians." He is *not* a Baconian. His position is negative merely: Will of Stratford is *not* the author of the Shakespearean plays and poems. Then who is? Mr. Greenwood believes that work by an unknown number of hands exists in the plays first published all together in 1623. Here few will differ from him. But, setting aside this aspect of the case, Mr. Greenwood appears to me to believe in an entity named "Shakespeare," or "the Author," who is the predominating partner; though Mr. Greenwood does not credit him with all the plays in the Folio of 1623 (nor, perhaps, with the absolute entirety of any given play). "The Author" or "Shakespeare" is not a syndicate (like the Homer of many critics), but an individual human being, apparently of the male sex. As to the name by which he was called on earth, Mr. Greenwood is "agnostic." He himself is not Anti-Baconian. He does not oust Bacon and put the Unknown in his place. He neither affirms nor denies that Bacon may have contributed, more or less, to the bulk of Shakespearean work. To put it briefly: Mr. Greenwood backs the field against the favourite (our Will), and Bacon *may* be in the field. If he has any part in the whole I suspect that it is “the lion’s part,” but Mr. Greenwood does not commit himself to anything positive. We shall find (if I am not mistaken) that Mr. Greenwood regards the hypothesis of the Baconians as “an extremely reasonable one,” and that for his purposes it would be an extremely serviceable one, if not even essential. For as Bacon was a genius to whose potentialities one can set no limit, he is something to stand by, whereas we cannot easily believe - I cannot believe - that the actual “Author,” the “Shakespeare” lived and died and left no trace of his existence except his share in the works called Shakespearean.

However, the idea of the Great Unknown has, for its partisans, this advantage, that as the life of the august Shade is wholly unknown, we cannot, as in Bacon’s case, show how he was occupied while the plays were being composed. He *must,* however, have been much at Court, we learn, and deep in the mysteries of legal terminology. Was he Sir Edward Coke? Was he James VI and I?

It is hard, indeed, to set forth the views of the Baconians and of the “Anti-Willians” in a shape which will satisfy them. The task, especially when undertaken by an unsympathetic person, is perhaps impossible. I can only summarise their views in my own words as far as I presume to understand them. I conceive the Baconians to cry that “the world possesses a mass of transcendent literature, attributed to a man named William *Shakespeare*.” Of a man named William *Shakspere* (there are many varieties of spelling) we certainly know that he was born (1564) and bred in Stratford-on-Avon, a peculiarly dirty, stagnant, and ignorant country town. There is absolutely no evidence that he (or any Stratford boy of his standing) ever went to Stratford school. His father, his mother, and his daughter could not write, but, in signing, made their marks; and if he could write, which some of us deny, he wrote a terribly bad hand. As far as late traditions of seventy or eighty years after his death inform us, he was a butcher’s apprentice; and also a schoolmaster “who knew Latin pretty well”; and a poacher. He made, before he was nineteen, a marriage tainted with what Meg Dods calls “ante-nup.” He early had three children, whom he deserted, as he deserted his wife. He came to London, we do not know when (about 1582, according to the “guess” of an antiquary of 1680); held horses at the door of a theatre (so tradition says), was promoted to the rank of “servitor” (whatever that may mean), became an actor (a vagabond under the Act), and by 1594 played before Queen Elizabeth. He put money in his pocket (heaven knows how), for by 1597 he was bargaining for the best house in his native *bourgade.* He obtained, by nefarious genealogical falsehoods (too common, alas, in heraldry), the right to bear arms; and went on acting. In 1610-11 (?) he retired to his native place. He never took any interest in his unprinted manuscript plays; though rapacious, he never troubled himself about his valuable copyrights; never dreamed of making a collected edition of his works. He died in 1616, probably of drink taken. Legal documents prove him to have been a lender of small sums, an avid creditor, a would-be encloser of commons. In his will he does not bequeath or mention any books, manuscripts, copyrights, and so forth. It is utterly incredible, then, that this man wrote the poems and plays, so rich in poetry, thought, scholarship, and knowledge, which are attributed to "William Shakespeare." These must be the works of "a concealed poet," a philosopher, a courtier moving in the highest circles, a supreme legist, and, necessarily, a great poet, and student of the classics.

No known person of the age but one, Bacon, was a genius, a legist, a scholar, a great poet, and brilliant courtier, with all the other qualifications so the author of the plays either was Francis Bacon - or some person unknown, who was in all respects equally distinguished, but kept his light under a bushel. Consequently the name "William Shakespeare" is a pseudonym or "pen-name" wisely adopted by Bacon (or the other man) as early as 1593, at a time when William Shakspere was notoriously an actor in the company which produced the plays of the genius styling himself "William Shakespeare."

Let me repeat that, to the best of my powers of understanding and of expression, and in my own words, so as to misquote nobody, I have now summarised the views of the Baconians *sans phrase*, and of the more cautious or more credulous "Anti-Willians," as I may style the party who deny to Will the actor any share in the authorship of the plays, but do not overtly assign it to Francis Bacon.

Beyond all comparison the best work on the Anti-Willian side of the controversy is *The Shakespeare Problem Restated*, by Mr. G. G. Greenwood (see my Introduction). To this volume I turn for the exposition of the theory that "Will Shakspere" (with many other spellings) is an actor from the country - a man of very scanty education, in all probability, and wholly destitute of books; while "William Shakespeare," or with the hyphen, "Shakespeare," is a "*nom de plume*" adopted by the Great Unknown "concealed poet."

When I use the word "author" here, I understand Mr. Greenwood to mean that in the plays called "Shakespearean" there exists work from many pens: owing to the curious literary manners, methods, and ethics of dramatic writing in, say, 1589-1611. In my own poor opinion this is certainly true of several plays in the first collected edition, "The Folio," produced seven years after Will's death, namely in 1623. These curious "collective" methods of play-writing are to be considered later.

Matters become much more perplexing when we examine the theory that "William Shakespeare" (with or without the hyphen), on the title-pages of plays, or when signed to the dedications of poems, is the chosen pen-name, or "*nom de plume*," of Bacon or of the Unknown.

Here I must endeavour to summarise what Mr. Greenwood has written on the name of the actor, and the "*nom de plume*" of the unknown author who, by the theory, was not the actor. Let me first confess my firm belief that there is no cause for all the copious writing about the spellings "Shakespeare" or "Shakespeare" - as indicating the true but "concealed poet" - and "Shakspere" (&c.), as indicating the Warwickshire rustic. At Stratford and in Warwickshire the clan-name was spelled in scores of ways, was spelled in different ways within a single document. If the actor himself uniformly wrote "Shakspere" (it seems that we have but five signatures), he was accustomed to seeing the name spelled variously in documents concerning him and his affairs. In London the printers aimed at a kind of uniformity, "Shakespeare" or "Shakespeare": and even if he wrote his own name otherwise, to him it was indifferent. Lawyers and printers might choose their own mode of spelling - and there is no more in the matter.

I must now summarise briefly, in my own words, save where quotations are indicated in the usual way, the results of Mr. Greenwood's researches. "The family of William Shakspere of Stratford" (perhaps it were safer to say "the members of his name") "wrote their name in many different ways - some sixty, I believe, have been noted . . . but the form 'Shakespeare' seems never to have been employed by them"; and, according to Mr. Spedding, "Shakspere of Stratford never so wrote his name 'in any known case.'" (According to many Baconians he never wrote his name in his life.) On the other hand, the dedications of *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and of *Lucrece* (1594) are inscribed "William Shakespeare" (without the hyphen). In 1598, the title-page of *Love's Labour's Lost* "bore the name W. Shakespere," while in the same year *Richard II* and *Richard III* bear "William Shakespeare," with the hyphen (not without it, as in the two dedications by the Author). "The name which appears in the body of the conveyance and of the mortgage bearing" (the actor's) "signature is 'Shakespeare,' while 'Shackspeare' appears in the will, prepared, as we must presume, by or under the directions of Francis Collyns, the Stratford solicitor, who was one of the witnesses thereto" (and received a legacy of £13, 6*s*. 8*d*.).

Thus, at Stratford even, the name was spelled, in legal papers, as it is spelled in the two dedications, and in most of the title-pages - and also is spelled otherwise, as "Shackspeare." In March 1594 the actor's name is spelled "Shakespeare" in Treasury accounts. The legal and the literary and Treasury spellings (and conveyances and mortgages and wills are *not* literature) are Shakespeare, Shackspeare, Shakespeare, Shakespere - all four are used, but we must regard the actor as never signing “Shakespeare” in any of these varieties of spelling - if sign he ever did; at all events he is not known to have used the *a* in the last syllable.

I now give the essence of Mr. Greenwood’s words concerning the *nom de plume* of the “concealed poet,” whoever he was.

“And now a word upon the name ‘Shakespeare.’ That in this form, and more especially with a hyphen, Shakespeare, the word makes an excellent *nom de plume* is obvious. As old Thomas Fuller remarks, the name suggests *Martial* in its warlike sound, ‘Hasti-vibrans or Shakespeare.’ It is of course further suggestive of Pallas Minerva, the goddess of Wisdom, for Pallas also was a spear-shaker (Pallas ±À¿ Ä¿Å À±»»µ¹½ Ä¿ ´¿ÁÅ); and all will remember Ben Jonson’s verses . . . “ on Shakespeare’s “true-filed lines” -

“In each of which he seems to shake a lance,
As brandished at the eyes of ignorance.”

There is more about Pallas in book-titles (to which additions can easily be made), and about “Jonson’s Cri-spinus or Cri-spinas,” but perhaps we have now the gist of Mr. Greenwood’s remarks on the “excellent *nom de plume*” (*cf.* p-37. On the whole of this, *cf. The Shakespeare Problem Restated*, p-295; a *nom de plume* called a “pseudonym,” p, 312; Shakespeare “a mask name,” ; a “pseudonym,” ; “*nom de plume*,”).

Now why was the “*nom de plume*” or “pseudonym” “William Shakespeare” “an excellent *nom de plume*” for a concealed author, courtier, lawyer, scholar, and so forth? If “Shakespeare” suggested Pallas Athene, goddess of wisdom and of many other things, and so was appropriate, why add “William”?

In 1593, when the “pseudonym” first appears in *Venus and Adonis*, a country actor whose name, in legal documents - presumably drawn up by or for his friend, Francis Collyns at Stratford - is written “William Shakespeare,” was before the town as an actor in the leading company, that of the Lord Chamberlain. This company produced the plays some of which, by 1598, bear “W. Shakespere,” or “William Shakespeare” on their title-pages. Thus, even if the actor habitually spelled his name “Shakspere,” “William Shakespeare” was, practically (on the Baconian theory), not only a pseudonym of one man, a poet, but also the real name of another man, a well-known actor, who was *not* the “concealed poet.”

“William Shakespeare” or “Shakespere” was thus, in my view, the ideally worst pseudonym which a poet who wished to be “concealed” could possibly have had the fatuity to select. His plays and poems would be, as they were, universally attributed to the actor, who is represented as a person conspicuously incapable of writing them. With Mr. Greenwood's arguments against the certainty of this attribution I deal later.

Had the actor been a man of rare wit, and of good education and wide reading, the choice of name might have been judicious. A "concealed poet" of high social standing, with a strange fancy for rewriting the plays of contemporary playwrights, might obtain the manuscript copies from their owners, the Lord Chamberlain's Company, through that knowledgeable, witty, and venal member of the company, Will Shakspere. He might then rewrite and improve them, more or less, as it was his whim to do. The actor might make fair copies in his own hand, give them to his company, and say that the improved works were from his own pen and genius. The lie might pass, but only if the actor, in his life and witty talk, seemed very capable of doing what he pretended to have done. But if the actor, according to some Baconians, could not write even his own name, he was impossible as a mask for the poet. He was also impossible, I think, if he were what Mr. Greenwood describes him to be.

Mr. Greenwood, in his view of the actor as he was when he came to London, does not deny to him the gift of being able to sign his name. But, if he were educated at Stratford Free School (of which there is no documentary record), according to Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps "he was removed from school long before the usual age," "in all probability" when "he was about thirteen" (an age at which some boys, later well known, went up to their universities). If we send him to school at seven or so, "it appears that he could only have enjoyed such advantages as it may be supposed to have provided for a period of five or six years at the outside. He was then withdrawn, and, as it seems, put to calf-slaughtering."

What the advantages may have been we try to estimate later.

Mr. Greenwood, with Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, thinks that Will "could have learned but little there. No doubt boys at Elizabethan grammar schools, if they remained long enough, had a good deal of Latin driven into them. Latin, indeed, was the one subject that was taught; and an industrious boy who had gone through the course and attained to the higher classes would generally be able to write fair Latin prose. But he would learn very little else" (except to write fair Latin prose?). "What we now call 'culture' certainly did not enter into the 'curriculum,' nor 'English,' nor modern languages, nor 'literature.'" Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps says that "removed prematurely from school, residing with illiterate relatives in a bookless neighbourhood, thrown into the midst of occupations adverse to scholastic progress - it is difficult to believe that when he first left Stratford he was not all but destitute of polished accomplishments." Mr. Greenwood adds the apprenticeship to a butcher or draper, but doubts the poaching, and the frequent whippings and imprisonments, as in the story told by the Rev. R. Davies in 1708.

That this promising young man, "when he came to London, spoke the Warwickshire dialect or *patois* is, then, as certain as anything can be that is incapable of mathematical proof." "Here is the young Warwickshire provincial . . . " producing, apparently five or six years after his arrival in town, *Venus and Adonis* . . . "Is it conceivable that this was the work of the Stratford Player of whom we know so little, but of whom we know so much too much? If so we have here a veritable sixteenth-century miracle." Moreover, "our great supposed poet and dramatist had at his death neither book nor manuscript in his possession, or to which he was legally entitled, or in which he had any interest whatever."

If it be not conceivable now that the rustic speaking in a *patois* could write *Venus and Adonis,* manifestly it was inconceivable in 1593, when *Venus and Adonis* was signed "William Shakespeare." No man who knew the actor (as described) could believe that he was the author, but there does not exist the most shadowy hint proving that the faintest doubt was thrown on the actor's authorship; ignorant as he was, bookless, and rude of speech. For such a Will as Mr. Greenwood describes to persuade the literary and dramatic world of his age that he *did* write the plays, would have been a miracle. Consequently Mr. Greenwood has to try to persuade us that there is no sufficient evidence that Will *did* persuade, say Ben Jonson, of his authorship and we shall see whether or not he works this twentieth-century miracle of persuasion.

Of course if Will were unable to write even his name, as an enthusiastic Baconian asserts, Mr. Greenwood sees that Will could not easily pass for the Author. But his own bookless actor with a *patois* seems to him, as author of *Venus and Adonis,* almost inconceivable. Yet, despite Will's bookless rusticity, this poem with *Lucrece,* which displays knowledge of a work of Ovid not translated into English by 1593, was regarded as his own. I must suppose, therefore, that Will was *not* manifestly so ignorant of Latin as Mr. Greenwood thinks. "I think it highly probable," says this critic, "that he attended the Grammar School at Stratford" (where nothing but Latin was taught) "for four or five years, and that, later in life, after some years in London, he was probably able to 'bumbast out a line,' and perhaps to pose as 'Poet-Ape that would be thought our chief.' Nay, I am not at all sure that he would not have been capable of collaborating with such a man as George Wilkins, and perhaps of writing quite as well as he, if not even better. But it does not follow from this that he was the author either of *Venus and Adonis* or of *Hamlet*."

Nothing follows from all this: we merely see that, in Mr. Greenwood's private opinion, the actor might write even better than George Wilkins, but could not write *Venus and Adonis*. Will, therefore, though bookless, is not debarred here from the pursuits of literature, in partnership with Wilkins. We have merely the critic's opinion that Will could not write *Hamlet*, even if, like Wordsworth, "he had the mind," even if the gods had made him more poetical than Wilkins.

Again, "he had had but little schooling; he had 'small Latin and less Greek'" (as Ben Jonson truly says), "but he was a good *Johannes Factotum;* he could arrange a scene, and, when necessary, 'bumbast out a blank verse.'"

The "*Johannes Factotum*," who could "bumbast out a blank verse," is taken from Robert Greene's hackneyed attack on an actor-poet, "Shake-scene," published in 1592. "Poet-Ape that would be thought our chief," is from an epigram on an actor-poet by Ben Jonson (1601-16?). If the allusions by Greene and Jonson are to our Will, he, by 1592, had a literary ambition so towering that he thought his own work in the new art of dramatic blank verse was equal to that of Marlowe (not to speak of Wilkins), and Greene reckoned him a dangerous rival to three of his playwright friends, of whom Marlowe is one, apparently.

If Jonson's "Poet-Ape" be meant for Will, by 1601 Will would fain "be thought the chief" of contemporary dramatists. His vanity soared far above George Wilkins! Greene's phrases and Jonson's are dictated by spite, jealousy, and envy; and from them a true view of the work of the man whom they envy, the actor-poet, cannot be obtained. We might as well judge Molière in the spirit of the author of *Elomire Hypocondre*, and of de Visé! The Anti-Willian arguments keep on appearing, going behind the scenes, and reappearing, like a stage army. To avoid this phenomenon I reserve what is to be said about "Shake-scene" and "Poet-Ape" for another place (p-145 *infra*). But I must give the reader a warning. Concerning "William Shakespeare" as a "*nom de plume,*" or pseudonym, Mr. Greenwood says, "Some, indeed, would see through it, and roundly accuse the player of putting forth the works of others as his own. To such he would be a 'Poet-Ape,' or 'an upstart crow' (Shake-scene) 'beautified with the feathers of other writers.'"

If this be true, if "some would see through" (Mr. Greenwood, apparently, means *did* "see through") the "*nom de plume*," the case of the Anti-Willians is promising. But, in this matter, Mr. Greenwood *se trompe*. Neither Greene nor Jonson accused "Shake-scene" or "Poet-Ape" of "putting forth the works of others as his own." That is quite certain, as far as the scorns of Jonson and Greene have reached us. (See p-145 *infra*.)

If an actor, obviously incapable of wit and poetry, were credited with the plays, the keenest curiosity would arise in “the profession,” and among rival playwrights who envied the wealth and “glory” of the actors. This curiosity, prompting the wits and players to watch and “shadow” Will, would, to put it mildly, most seriously imperil the secret of the concealed author who had the folly to sign himself “William Shakespeare.” Human nature could not rest under such a provocation as the “concealed poet” offered.

This is so obvious that had one desired to prove Bacon or the Unknown to be the concealed author, one must have credited his mask, Will, with abundance of wit and fancy, and, as for learning - with about as much as he probably possessed. But the Baconians make him an illiterate yokel, and we have quoted Mr. Greenwood’s estimate of the young Warwickshire provincial.

We all have our personal equations in the way of belief. That the plot of the “*nom de plume*” should have evaded discovery for a week, if the actor were the untutored countryman of the hypotheses, is to me, for one, absolutely incredible. A “concealed poet” looking about for a “*nom de plume*” and a mask behind which he could be hidden, would not have selected the name, or the nearest possible approach to the name, of an ignorant unread actor. As he was never suspected of not being the author of the plays and poems, Will cannot have been a country ignoramus, manifestly incapable of poetry, wit, and such learning as the plays exhibit. Every one must judge for himself. Mr. Greenwood fervently believes in what I disbelieve.

“Very few Englishmen . . . in Elizabethan times, concerned themselves at all, or cared one brass farthing, about the authorship of plays . . . “ says Mr. Greenwood.

Very few care now. They know the actors’ names: in vain, as a rule, do I ask playgoers for the name of the author of their entertainment. But in Elizabeth’s time the few who cared were apt to care very much, and they would inquire intensely when the Stratford actor, a bookless, untaught man, was announced as the author of plays which were among the most popular of their day. The seekers never found any other author. They left no hint that they suspected the existence of any other author. Hence I venture to infer that Will seemed to them no unread rustic, but a fellow of infinite fancy, - no scholar to be sure, but very capable of writing the pieces which he fathered.

They may all have been mistaken. Nobody can prove that Heywood and Ben Jonson, and the actors of the Company, were not mistaken. But certain it is that they thought the Will whom they knew capable of the works which were attributed to him. Therefore he cannot possibly have been the man who could not write, of the more impulsive Baconians; or the bookless, and probably all but Latinless, man of Mr. Greenwood’s theory. The positions already seem to me to be untenable.

CHAPTER II: THE “SILENCE” ABOUT SHAKESPEARE

Before proceeding further to examine Mr. Greenwood’s book, and the Baconian theories, with the careful attention which they deserve, we must clear the ground by explaining two points which appear to puzzle Baconians, though, to be sure, they have their own solutions of the problems.

The first question is: Why, considering that Shakespeare, by the consent of the learned of most of the polite foreign nations, was one of the world’s very greatest poets, have we received so few and such brief notices of him from the pens of his contemporaries?

“It is wonderful,” exclaims Mr. Crouch-Batchelor, “that hundreds of persons should not have left records of him. We know nearly as much about the most insignificant writer of the period as we know of him, but fifty times more about most of his contemporaries. It is senseless to try to account for this otherwise than by recognising that the man was not the author.”

Mr. Crouch-Batchelor is too innocent. He sees the sixteenth century in the colours of the twentieth. We know nothing, except a few dates of birth, death, entrance at school, College, the Inns of Court, and so forth, concerning several of Shakespeare’s illustrious contemporaries and successors in the art of dramatic poetry. The Baconians do not quite understand, or, at least, keep steadily before their minds, one immense difference between the Elizabethan age and later times. In 1590-1630, there was no public excitement about the characters, personalities, and anecdotage of merely literary men, poets, and playwrights, who held no position in public affairs, as Spenser did; or in Court, Society, and War, as Sidney did; who did not write about their own feuds and friendships, like Greene and Nash; who did not expand into prefaces and reminiscences, and satires, like Ben Jonson; who never killed anybody, as Ben did; nor were killed, like Marlowe; nor were involved, like him, in charges of atheism, and so forth; nor imprisoned with every chance of having their ears and noses slit, like Marston. Consequently, silence and night obscure the lives and personalities of Kyd, Chapman, Beaumont, Fletcher, Dekker, Webster, and several others, as night and silence hide Shakespeare from our view.

He was popular on the stage; some of his plays were circulated separately in cheap and very perishable quartos. No collected edition of his plays appeared during his life; without that he could not be studied, and recognised in his greatness. He withdrew to the country and died. There was no enthusiastic curiosity about him; nobody Boswellised any playwright of his time. The Folio of 1623 gave the first opportunity of studying him as alone he can be studied. The Civil Wars and the Reign of the Saints distracted men's minds and depressed or destroyed the Stage.

Sir William Davenant, a boy when Shakespeare died, used to see the actor at his father's inn at Oxford, was interested in him, and cherished the embers of the drama, which were fading before the theatres were closed. Davenant collected what he could in the way of information from old people of the stage; he told Shakespearean anecdotes in conversation; a few reached the late day when uncritical inquiries began, say 1680-90 at earliest. The memories of ancient people of the theatre and clerks and sextons at Stratford were ransacked, to very little purpose.

As these things were so, how can we expect biographical materials about Shakespeare? As to the man, as to how his character impressed contemporaries, we have but the current epithets: "friendly," "gentle," and "sweet," the praise of his worth by two of the actors in his company (published in 1623), and the brief prose note of Ben Jonson, - this is more than we have for the then so widely admired Beaumont, Ben Jonson's friend, or Chapman, or the adored Fletcher. "Into the dark go one and all," Shakespeare and the others. To be puzzled by and found theories on the silence about Shakespeare is to show an innocence very odd in learned disputants.

The Baconians, as usual, make a puzzle and a mystery out of their own misappreciation of the literary and social conditions of Shakespeare's time. That world could not possibly appreciate his works as we do; the world, till 1623, possessed only a portion of his plays in cheap pamphlets, in several of these his text was mangled and in places unintelligible. And in not a single instance were anecdotes and biographical traits of playwrights recorded, except when the men published matter about themselves, or when they became notorious in some way unconnected with their literary works. Drummond, in Scotland, made brief notes of Ben Jonson's talk; Shakespeare he never met.

That age was not widely and enthusiastically appreciative of literary merit in playwrights who were merely dramatists, and in no other way notorious or eminent. Mr. Greenwood justly says "the contemporary eulogies of the poet afford proof that there were some cultured critics of that day of sufficient taste and acumen to recognise, or partly recognise, his excellence . . . " (Here I omit some words, presently to be restored to the text.) From such critics the poet received such applause as has reached us. We also know that the plays were popular; but the audiences have not rushed to pen and ink to record their satisfaction. With them, as with all audiences, the actors and the *spectacle*, much more than the "cackle," were the attractions. When Dr. Ingleby says that "the bard of our admiration was unknown to the men of that age," he uses hyperbole, and means, I presume, that he was unknown, as all authors are, to the great majority; and that those who knew him in part made no modern fuss about him.

The second puzzle is, - Why did Shakespeare, conscious of his great powers, never secure for his collected plays the permanence of print and publication? We cannot be sure that he and his company, in fact, did not provide publishers with the copy for the better Quartos or pamphlets of separate plays, as Mr. Pollard argues on good grounds that they sometimes did. For the rest, no dramatic author edited a complete edition of his works before Ben Jonson, a scholarly man, set the example in the year of Shakespeare's, and of Beaumont's death (1616). Neither Beaumont nor Fletcher collected and published their works for the Stage. The idea was unheard of before Jonson set the example, and much of his work lay unprinted till years after his death. We must remember the conditions of play-writing in Shakespeare's time.

There were then many poets of no mean merit, all capable of admirable verse on occasion; and in various degrees possessed of the lofty, vigorous, and vivid style of that great age. The theatre, and writing for the theatre, afforded to many men of talent a means of livelihood analogous to that offered by journalism among ourselves. They were apt to work collectively, several hands hurrying out a single play; and in twos or threes, or fours or fives, they often collaborated.

As a general rule a play when finished was sold by the author or authors to a company of players, or to a speculator like the notorious Philip Henslowe, and the new owners, "the grand possessors," were usually averse to the publication of the work, lest other companies might act it. The plays were primarily written to be acted. The company in possession could have the play altered as they pleased by a literary man in their employment.

To follow Mr. Greenwood's summary of the situation "it would seem that an author could restrain any person from publishing his manuscript, or could bring an action against him for so doing, so long as he had not disposed of his right to it; and that the publisher could prevent any other publisher from issuing the work. At the same time it is clear that the law was frequently violated . . . whether because of the difficulty of enforcing it, or through the supineness of authors; and that in consequence authors were frequently defrauded by surreptitious copies of their works being issued by piratical publishers."

It may appear that to "authors" we should, in the case of plays, add "owners," such as theatrical companies, for no case is cited in which such a company brings an action against the publisher of a play which they own. The two players of Shakespeare's company who sign the preface to the first edition of his collected plays (1623, "The First Folio") complain that "divers stolen and surreptitious copies" of single plays have been put forth, "maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious impostors." They speak as if they were unable to prevent, or had not the energy to prevent, these frauds. In the accounts of the aforesaid Henslowe, we find him paying forty shillings to a printer to stop or "stay" the printing of a play, *Patient Grizel*, by three of his hacks.

We perhaps come across an effort of the company to prevent or delay the publication of *The Merchant of Venice*, on July 17, 1598, in the *Stationers*' *Register*. James Robertes, and all other printers, are forbidden to print the book without previous permission from the Lord Chamberlain, the protector of Will Shakespeare's company. Two years passed before Robertes issued the book. As is well known, Heywood, a most prolific playwright, boasts that he never made a double sale of his pieces to the players and the press. Others occasionally did, which Heywood clearly thought less than honest.

As an author who was also an actor, and a shareholder in his company, Will's interests were the same as theirs. It is therefore curious that some of his pieces were early printed, in quartos, from very good copies; while others appeared in very bad copies, clearly surreptitious. Probably the company gave a good MS. copy, sometimes, to a printer who offered satisfactory terms, after the gloss of novelty was off the acted play. In any case, we see that the custom and interests of the owners of manuscript plays ran contrary to their early publication. In 1619 even Ben Jonson, who loved publication, told Drummond that half of his comedies were still unprinted.

These times were not as our own, and must not be judged by ours. Whoever wrote the plays, the actor, or Bacon, or the Man in the Moon; whoever legally owned the manuscripts, was equally incurious and negligent about the preservation of a correct text. As we shall see later, while Baconians urge without any evidence that Bacon himself edited, or gave to Ben Jonson the duty of editing, the first collected edition (1623), the work has been done in an indescribably negligent and reckless manner, and, as Mr. Greenwood repeatedly states, the edition, in his opinion, contains at least two plays not by his "Shakespeare" - that "concealed poet" - and masses of "non-Shakespearean" work.

How this could happen, if Bacon (as on one hypothesis) either revised the plays himself, or entrusted the task to so strict an Editor as Ben Jonson, I cannot imagine. This is also one of the difficulties in Mr. Greenwood's theory. Thus we cannot argue, "if the actor were the author, he must have been conscious of his great powers. Therefore the actor cannot have been the author, for the actor wholly neglected to collect his printed and to print his manuscript works."

This argument is equally potent against the authorship of the plays by Bacon. He, too, left the manuscripts unpublished till 1623. "But he could not avow his authorship," cry Baconians, giving various exquisite reasons. Indeed, if Bacon were the author, he might not care to divulge his long association with "a cry of players," and a man like Will of Stratford. But he had no occasion to avow it. He had merely to suggest to the players, through any safe channel, that they should collect and publish the works of their old friend Will Shakspere.

Thus indifferent was the main author of the plays, whether he were actor or statesman; and the actor, at least, is not to blame for the chaos of the first collected edition, made while he was in his grave, and while Bacon was busy in revising and superintending Latin translations of his works on scientific subjects.

We now understand why there are so few contemporary records of Shakspere the man; and see that the neglect of his texts was extreme, whether or not he were the author. The neglect was characteristic of the playwrights of his own and the next generation. In those days it was no marvel; few cared. Nine years passed before a second edition of the collected plays appeared: thirty-two years went by before a third edition was issued - years of war and tumult, yet they saw the posthumous publication of the collected plays of Beaumont and Fletcher.

There remains one more mystery connected with publication. When the first collected edition of the plays appeared, it purported to contain "All His Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies." According to the postulate of the Baconians it was edited by the Author, or by Jonson acting for him. It contains several plays which, according to many critics, are not the author's. This, if true, is mysterious, and so is the fact that a few plays were published, as by Shakespeare, in the lifetime both of the actor and of Bacon; plays which neither acknowledged for his own, for we hear of no remonstrance from - whoever "William Shakespeare" was. It is impossible for me to say why there was no remonstrance.

Suppose that Will merely supplied Bacon's plays, under his own name, with a slight difference in spelling, to his company. It was as much his interest, in that case, to protest when Bacon's pen-name was taken in vain, as if he had spelled his own surname with an *a* in the second syllable.

There is another instance which Mr. Greenwood discusses twice. In 1599 Jaggard published "*The Passionate Pilgrim;* W. Shakespeare." Out of twenty poems, five only were by W. S. In 1612, Jaggard added two poems by Tom Heywood, retaining W. Shakespeare's name as sole author. "Heywood protested" in print, "and stated that *Shakespeare* was offended, and," says Mr.

Greenwood, “very probably he was so; but as he was, so I conceive, ‘a concealed poet,’ writing under a *nom de plume*, he seems to have only made known his annoyance through the medium of Heywood.”

If so, Heywood knew who the concealed poet was. Turning to p, 349, we find Mr. Greenwood repeating the same story, with this addition, that the author of the poems published by Jaggard, “to do himself right, hath since published them in his own name.” That is, W. Shakespeare has since published under his own name such pieces of *The Passionate Pilgrim* as are his own. “The author, I know,” adds Heywood, “was much offended with Mr. Jaggard that (altogether unknown to him) presumed to make so bold with his name.”

Why was the author so slack when Jaggard, in 1599, published W. S.’s poems with others *not* by W. S.?

How can anyone explain, by any theory? It was as open to him in 1599 as in 1612 to publish his own pieces under his own name, or pen-name.

“Here we observe,” says Mr. Greenwood, “that Heywood does nothing to identify ‘the author with the player.’” This is, we shall see, the eternal argument. Why should Heywood, speaking of W. Shakespeare, explain what all the world knew? There was no other W. Shakespeare (with or without the *e* and *a*) but one, the actor, in the world of letters of Elizabeth and James. Who the author was Heywood himself has told us, elsewhere: the author was - Will!

But why Shakespeare was so indifferent to the use of his name, or, when he was moved, acted so mildly, it is not for me or anyone to explain. We do not know the nature of the circumstances in detail; we do not know that the poet saw hopes of stopping the sale of the works falsely attributed to him. I do not even feel certain that he had not a finger in some of them. Knowing so little, a more soaring wit than mine might fly to the explanation that “Shakespeare” was the “*nom de plume*” of Bacon or his unknown equivalent, and that he preferred to “let sleeping dogs lie,” or, as Mr. Greenwood might quote the Latin tag, said *ne moveas Camarinam.*

CHAPTER III: THAT IMPOSSIBLE HE - THE SCHOOLING OF SHAKESPEARE

The banner-cry of the Baconians is the word "Impossible!" It is impossible that the actor from Stratford (as they think of him, a bookless, untutored lad, speaking in *patois*) should have possessed the wide, deep, and accurate scholarship displayed by the author of the plays and poems. It is impossible that at the little Free School of Stratford (if he attended it), he should have gained his wide knowledge of the literatures of Greece and Rome. To these arguments, the orthodox Stratfordian is apt to reply, that he finds in the plays and poems plenty of inaccurate general information on classical subjects, information in which the whole literature of England then abounded. He also finds in the plays some knowledge of certain Latin authors, which cannot be proved to have been translated at the date when Shakespeare drew on them. How much Latin Shakespeare knew, in our opinion, will presently be explained.

But, in reply to the Baconians and the Anti-Willians, we must say that while the author of the plays had some lore which scholars also possessed, he did not use his knowledge like a scholar. We do not see how a scholar could make, as the scansion of his blank verse proves that the author did make, the second syllable of the name of Posthumus, in *Cymbeline*, *long*. He must have read a famous line in Horace thus,

"*Eheu fugaces Posthoome, Posthoome*!"

which could scarce 'scape whipping, even at Stratford Free School. In the same way he makes the penultimate syllable of Andronicus short, equally impossible.

Mr. Greenwood, we shall see, denies to him *Titus Andronicus*, but also appears to credit it to him, as one of the older plays which he "revised, improved, and dressed," and *that* is taken to have been all his "authorship" in several cases. A scholar would have corrected, not accepted, false quantities. In other cases, as when Greeks and Trojans cite Plato and Aristotle in *Troilus and Cressida*, while Plato and Aristotle lived more than a thousand years after the latest conceivable date of the siege of Troy, I cannot possibly suppose that a scholar would have permitted to himself the freak, any more than that in *The Winter's Tale* he should have borrowed from an earlier novel the absurdity of calling Delphi “Delphos” (a non-existent word), of confusing “Delphos” with Delos, and placing the Delphian Oracle in an island. In the same play the author, quite needlessly, makes the artist Giulio Romano (1492-1546) contemporary with the flourishing age of the oracle of the Pythian Apollo. This, at least, would not be ignorance.

We have, I think, sufficient testimony to Ben’s inability to refrain from gibes at Shakspere’s want of scholarship. Rowe, who had traditions of Davenant’s, tells how, in conversation with Suckling, Davenant, Endymion Porter, and Hales of Eton, Ben harped on Will’s want of learning; and how Hales snubbed him. Indeed, Ben could have made mirth enough out of *The Winter’s Tale*. For, granting to Mr. Greenwood that “the mention of Delphos suggests the Bohemia of a much earlier date, and under the reign of Ottocar (1255-78) Bohemia extended from the Adriatic to the shores of the Baltic,” that only makes matters far worse. “Delphos” never was a place-name; there was no oracle on the isle of “Delphos”; there were no Oracles in 1255-78 (A.D.); and Perdita, who could have sat for her portrait to Giulio Romano, was contemporary with an Oracle at *Delphos*, but not with Ottocar.

There never was so mad a mixture, not even in *Ivanhoe;* not even in *Kenilworth*. Scott erred deliberately, as he says in his prefaces; but Will took the insular oracle of Delphos from Greene, inserted Giulio Romano “for his personal diversion,” never heard of Ottocar (no more than I), and made a delightful congeries of errors in gaiety of heart. Nobody shall convince me that Francis Bacon was so charmingly irresponsible; but I cannot speak so confidently of Mr. Greenwood’s Great Unknown, a severe scholar, but perhaps a frisky soul. There was no region called Bohemia when the Delphic oracle was in vigour; - this apology (apparently contrived by Sir Edward Sullivan) is the most comic of erudite reflections.

Some cruel critic has censured the lovely speech of Perdita, concerning the flowers which Proserpine let fall, when she was carried off by Dis. How could she, brought up in the hut of a Bohemian shepherd, know anything of the Rape of Proserpine? Why not, as she lived in the days of the Delphic Oracle - and Giulio Romano, and of printed ballads.

It is impossible, Baconians cry, that the rabbit-stealer, brought up among the Audreys and Jaquenettas of Warwickshire, should have created the noble and witty ladies of the Court; and known the style of his Armado; and understood how dukes and kings talk among themselves - usually in blank verse, it appears.

It is impossible that the home-keeping yokel should have heard of the “obscure” (*sic*!) Court of Navarre; and known that at Venice there was a place called the Rialto, and a “common ferry” called “the tranect.” It is impossible that he should have had “an intimate knowledge of the castle of Elsinore,” though an English *troupe* of actors visited Denmark in 1587. To Will all this knowledge was *impossible;* for these and many more exquisite reasons the yokel’s authorship of the plays is a physical impossibility. But scholars neither invent nor tolerate such strange liberties with time and place, with history, geography, and common sense. Will Shakspere either did not know what was right, or, more probably, did not care, and supposed, like Fielding in the old anecdote, that the audience “would not find it out.” How could a scholar do any of these things? He was as incapable of them as Ben Jonson. Such sins no scholar is inclined to; they have, for him, no temptations.

As to Shakspere’s schooling, the Baconians point at the current ignorance of Stratford-on-Avon, where many topping burgesses, even aldermen, “made their marks,” in place of signing their names to documents. Shakespeare’s father, wife, and daughter “made their marks,” in place of signing. So did Lady Jane Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Huntly, when she married the cultivated Earl of Bothwell (1566).

There is no evidence, from a roll of schoolboys at Stratford Free Grammar School, about 1564-77, that any given boy attended it; for no roll exists. Consequently there is no evidence that Will was a pupil.

“In the Appendix to Malone’s *Life of Shakespeare* will be found two Latin letters, written by alumni of Stratford School contemporary with Shakespeare,” says Mr. Collins. But though the writers were Stratford boys contemporary with Shakespeare, in later life his associates, as there is no roll of pupils’ names how do we know, the Baconians may ask, that these men were educated at Stratford School? Why not at Winchester, Eton, St. Paul’s, or anywhere? Need one reply?

Mr. Collins goes on, in his simple confiding way, to state that “one letter is by Abraham Sturley, afterwards an alderman of Stratford . . . “ Pursuing the facts, we find that Sturley wrote in Latin to “Richard Quiney, Shakespeare’s friend,” who, if he could read Sturley’s letter, could read Latin. Then *young* Richard Quiney, apparently aged eleven, wrote in Latin to his father. If young Richard Quiney be the son of Shakespeare’s friend, Richard Quiney, then, of course, his Latin at the age of eleven would only prove that, if he were a schoolboy at Stratford, *one* Stratford boy could write Latin in the generation following that of Shakespeare. Thus may reason the Baconians.

Perhaps, however, we may say that if Stratford boys contemporary with Shakspere, in his own rank and known to him, learned Latin, which they retained in manhood, Shakspere, if he went to school with them, may have done as much.

Concerning the school, a Free Grammar School, we know that during

Shakespeare’s boyhood the Mastership was not disdained by Walter Roche, perhaps a Fellow of what was then the most progressive College in learning of those at Oxford, namely, Corpus Christi. That Shakespeare could have been his pupil is uncertain; the dates are rather difficult. I think it probable that he was not, and we do not know the qualifications of the two or three succeeding Masters.

As to the methods of teaching and the books read at Grammar Schools, abundance of information has been collected. We know what the use was in one very good school, Ipswich, from 1528; in another in 1611; but as we do not possess any special information about Stratford School, Mr. Greenwood opposes the admission of evidence from other academies. A man might think that, however much the quality of the teaching varied in various free schools, the nominal curriculum would be fairly uniform.

As to the teacher, a good endowment would be apt to attract a capable man. What was the endowment of Stratford School? It was derived from the bequest of Thomas Jolyffe (died 1482), a bequest of lands in Stratford and Dodwell, and before the Reformation the Brethren of the Guild were “to find a priest fit and able in knowledge to teach grammar freely to all scholars coming to him, taking nothing for their teaching . . . “ “The Founder’s liberal endowment made it possible to secure an income for the Master by deed. Under the Reformation, Somerset’s Commission found that the School Master had £10 yearly by patent; the school was well conducted, and was not confiscated.”

Baconians can compare the yearly £20 (the salary in 1570-6, which then went much further than it does now) with the incomes of other masters of Grammar Schools, and thereby find out if the Head-Master was very cheap. Mr. Elton (who knew his subject intimately) calls the provision “liberal.” The Head-Master of Westminster had £20 and a house.

As to the method of teaching, it was colloquial; questions were asked and answered in Latin. This method, according to Dr. Rouse of Perse School, brings boys on much more rapidly than does our current fashion, as may readily be imagined; but experts vary in opinion. The method, I conceive, should give a pupil a vocabulary. Lilly’s Latin Grammar was universally used, and was learned by rote, as by George Borrow, in the last century. See *Lavengro* for details. Conversation books, *Sententiæ Pueriles*, were in use; with easy books, such as Corderius’s *Colloquia*, and so on, for boys were taught to *speak* Latin, the common language of the educated in Europe. Waifs of the Armada, Spaniards wrecked on the Irish coast, met “a savage who knew Latin,” and thus could converse with him. The Eclogues of Mantuanus, a Latin poet of the Renaissance (the “Old Mantuan” of *Love’s Labour’s Lost*), were used, with

Erasmus's *Colloquia*, and, says Mr. Collins, "such books as Ovid's Metamorphoses" (and other works of his), "the Æneid, selected comedies of Terence and Plautus, and portions of Cæsar, Sallust, Cicero, and Livy."

"Pro-di-gi-ous!" exclaims Mr. Greenwood, referring to what Mr. Collins says Will had read at school. But precocious Latinity was not thought "prodigious" in an age when nothing but Latin was taught to boys - not even cricket. Nor is it to be supposed that every boy read in all of these authors, still less read all of their works, but these were the works of which portions were read. It is not prodigious. I myself, according to my class-master, was "a bad and careless little boy" at thirteen, incurably idle, but I well remember reading in Ovid and Cæsar, and Sallust, while the rest of my time was devoted to the total neglect of the mathematics, English "as she was taught," History, and whatsoever else was expected from me. Shakespeare's time was not thus frittered away; Latin was all he learned (if he went to school), and, as he was (on my theory) a very clever, imaginative kind of boy, I can conceive that he was intensely interested in the stories told by Ovid, and in Catiline's Conspiracy (thrilling, if you know your Sallust); and if his interest were once aroused, he would make rapid progress. My own early hatred of Greek was hissing and malignant, but as soon as I opened Homer, all was changed. One was intensely interested!

Mr. Greenwood will not, in the matter of books, go beyond Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps, "Lilly's Grammar, and a few classical works chained to the desks of the free schools." Mr. Collins himself gives but "a few classical books," of which *portions* were read. The chains were in all the free schools, if Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps is right. The chains, if authentic, do not count as objections.

Here it must be noted that Mr. Greenwood's opinion of Will's knowledge and attainments is not easily to be ascertained with precision. He sees, of course, that the pretension of the extreme Baconians - Will could not even write his name - is absurd. If he could not write, he could not pass as the author. Mr. Greenwood "fears that the arguments" (of a most extreme Baconian) "would drive many wandering sheep back to the Stratfordian fold."

He has therefore to find a *via media*, to present, as the pseudo-author, a Will who possessed neither books nor manuscripts when he made his Testament; a rustic, bookless Will, speaking a patois, who could none the less pass himself off as the author. So "I think it highly probable," says Mr. Greenwood, "that he attended the Grammar School at Stratford for four or five years, and that, later in life, after some years in London, he was probably able to 'bumbast out a line,' and perhaps to pose as 'Poet-Ape who would be thought our chief.'" Again, "He had had but little schooling; he had 'small Latin and less Greek'; but he was a good *Johannes Factotum*, he could arrange a scene, and, when necessary, ‘bumbast out a blank verse.’”

But this is almost to abandon Mr. Greenwood’s case. Will appears to me to be now perilously near acceptance as Greene’s “Shake-scene,” who was a formidable rival to Greene’s three professional playwrights: and quite as near to Ben’s Poet-Ape “that would be thought our chief,” who began by re-making old plays; then won “some little wealth and credit on the scene,” who had his “works” printed (for Ben expects them to reach posterity), and whom Ben accused of plagiarism from himself and his contemporaries. But this Shake-scene, this Poet-Ape, is merely our Will Shakespeare as described by bitterly jealous and envious rivals. Where are now the “works” of “Poet-Ape” if they are not the works of Shakespeare which Ben so nobly applauded later, if they are not in the blank verse of Greene’s Shake-scene? “Shakespeare’s plays” we call them.

When was it “necessary” for the “Stratford rustic” to “bumbast out a blank verse”? Where are the blank verses which he bumbasted out? For what purposes were they bumbasted? By 1592 “Shake-scene” was ambitious, and thought his blank verse as good as the best that Greene’s friends, including Marlowe, could write. He had plenty of time to practise before the date when, as Ben wrote, “he would be thought our chief.” He would not cease to do that in which he conceived himself to excel; to write for the stage.

When once Mr. Greenwood deems it “highly probable” that Will had four or five years of education at a Latin school, Will has as much of “grounding” in Latin, I think, as would account for all the knowledge of the Roman tongue which he displays. His amount of teaching at school would carry and tempt even a boy who was merely clever, and loved to read romantic tales and comic plays, into Ovid and Plautus - English books being to him not very accessible.

Here I may speak from my own memories, for though utterly idle where set school tasks were concerned, I tried very early to worry the sense out of Aristophanes - because he was said to contain good reading.

To this amount of taste and curiosity, nowise unexampled in an ordinary clever boy, add *Genius*, and I feel no difficulty as to Will’s “learning,” such as, at best, it was. “The Stratfordian,” says Mr. Greenwood, “will ingeminate ‘Genius! Genius!’” I *do* say “Genius,” and stand by it. The ordinary clever boy, in the supposed circumstances, could read and admire his Ovid (though Shakespeare used cribs also), the man of genius could write *Venus and Adonis.*

Had I to maintain the Baconian hypothesis, I would not weigh heavily on bookless Will’s rusticity and patois. Accepting Ben Jonson’s account of his “excellent phantasy, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility . . . ,” accepting the tradition of his lively wit; admitting that he had some Latin and literature, I would find in him a sufficiently plausible mask for that immense Unknown with a strange taste for furbishing up older plays. I would merely deny to Will his *genius*, and hand *that* over to Bacon - or Bungay. Believe me, Mr. Greenwood, this is your easiest way! - perhaps this *is* your way? - the plot of the unscrupulous Will, and of your astute Bungay, might thus more conceivably escape detection from the pack of envious playwrights.

According to "all tradition," says Mr. Greenwood, Shakespeare was taken from school at the age of thirteen. Those late long-descended traditions of Shakespeare's youth are of little value as evidence; but, if it pleases Mr. Greenwood, I will, for the sake of argument, accept the whole of them. Assuredly I shall not arbitrarily choose among the traditions: all depends on the genealogical steps by which they reach us, as far as these can be discovered.

According to the tattle of Aubrey the antiquary, publishing in 1680, an opinion concerning Shakspere's education reached him. It came thus; there had been an actor in Shakspere's company, one Phillips, who, dying in 1605, left to Shakspere the usual thirty-shilling piece of gold; and the same "to my servant, Christopher Beeston." Christopher's son, William, in 1640, became deputy to Davenant in the management of "the King's and Queen's Young Company", and through Beeston, according to Aubrey, Davenant learned; through Beeston Aubrey learned, that Shakespeare "understood Latin pretty well, for he had been in his younger days a school-master in the country." Aubrey writes that "old Mr. Beeston, whom Mr. Dryden calls 'the chronicle of the stage,'" died in 1682.

This is a fair example of the genealogy of the traditions. Phillips, a friend of Shakspere, dies in 1605, leaving a servant, Christopher Beeston (he, too, was a versifier), whose son, William, dies in 1682; he is "the chronicle of the stage." Through him Davenant gets the story, through him Aubrey gets the story, that Shakspere "knew Latin pretty well," and had been a rural dominie. Mr. Greenwood devotes much space to disparaging Aubrey (and I do not think him a scientific authority, *moult s'en faut*), but Mr. Greenwood here says not a word as to the steps in the descent of the tradition. He frequently repeats himself, thereby forcing me to more iteration than I like. He had already disparaged Aubrey in note I to , but there he approached so closely to historical method as to say that "Aubrey quotes Beeston, a seventeenth-century actor, as his authority." On he dismisses the anecdote (which does not suit his book) as "a mere myth." "*He* knows, *he* knows" which traditions are mythical, and which possess a certain historical value.

My own opinion is that Shakspere did "know Latin pretty well," and was no *scholar*, as his contemporaries reckoned scholarship. He left school, if tradition speak true, by a year later than the age, twelve, when Bacon went to Cambridge.

Will, a clever kind of lad (on my theory), left school at an age when some other clever lads became freshmen. Why not? Gilbert Burnet (of whom you may have heard as Bishop of Salisbury under William III) took his degree at the age of fourteen.

Taking Shakspere as an extremely quick, imaginative boy, with nothing to learn but Latin, and by the readiest road, the colloquial, I conceive him to have discovered that, in Ovid especially, were to be found the most wonderful and delightful stories, and poetry which could not but please his "green unknowing youth." In the years before he left Stratford, and after he left school (1577-87?), I can easily suppose that he was not *always* butchering calves, poaching, and making love; and that, if he could get books in no other way, this graceless fellow might be detected on a summer evening, knitting his brows over the stories and jests of the chained Ovid and Plautus on his old schoolroom desk. *Moi qui parle*, I am no genius; but stories, romance, and humour would certainly have dragged me back to the old desks - if better might not be, and why not Shakspere? Put yourself in his place, if you have ever been a lad, and if, as a lad, you liked to steal away into the world of romance, into fairyland.

If Will wrote the plays, he (and indeed whoever wrote the plays) was a marvel of genius. But I am not here claiming for him genius, but merely stating my opinion that if he were fond of stories and romance, had no English books of poetry and romance, and had acquired as much power of reading Latin as a lively, curious boy could easily gain in four years of exclusively Latin education, he might continue his studies as he pleased, yet be, so far, no prodigy.

I am contemplating Will in the conditions on which the Baconians insist; if they will indeed let us assume that for a few years he was at a Latin school. I credit the graceless loon with the curiosity, the prompt acquisitiveness, the love of poetry and romance, which the author of the plays must have possessed in youth. "Tradition says nothing of all that," the Baconian answers, and he may now, if he likes, turn to my reply in *The Traditional Shakespeare*. Meanwhile, how can you expect old clerks and sextons, a century after date, in a place where literature was *not* of supreme interest, to retain a tradition that Will used to read sometimes (if he did), in circumstances of privacy? As far as I am able to judge, had I been a boy at Stratford school for four years, had been taught nothing but Latin, and had little or no access to English books of poetry and romance, I should have acquired about the same amount of Latin as I suppose Shakspere to have possessed. Yet I could scarcely, like him, have made the second syllable in "Posthumus" long! Sir Walter Scott, however, was guilty of similar false quantities: he and Shakspere were about equally scholarly.

I suppose, then, that Shakspere's "small Latin" (as Jonson called it) enabled him to read in the works of the Roman clerks; to read sufficient for his uses. As a fact, he made use of English translations, and also of Latin texts. Scholars like Bacon do not use bad translations of easy Latin authors. If Bacon wanted Plutarch, he went to Plutarch in Greek, not to an English translation of a French translation of a Latin translation.

Some works of Shakespeare, the *Lucrece*, for example, and *The Comedy of Errors* (if he were not working over an earlier canvas from a more learned hand), and other passages, show knowledge of Latin texts which in his day had not appeared in published translations, or had not been translated at all as far as we know. In my opinion Will had Latin enough to puzzle out the sense of the Latin, never difficult, for himself. He could also "get a construe," when in London, or help in reading, from a more academic acquaintance: or buy a construe at no high ransom from some poor scholar. No contemporary calls him scholarly; the generation of men who were small boys when he died held him for no scholar. The current English literature of his day was saturated with every kind of classical information; its readers, even if Latinless, knew, or might know a world of lore with which the modern man is seldom acquainted. The ignorant Baconian marvels: the classically educated Baconian who is not familiar with Elizabethan literature is amazed. Really there is nothing worthy of their wonder.

Does any contemporary literary allusion to Shakespeare call him "*learned*"? He is "sweet," "honey-tongued," "mellifluous," and so forth, but I ask for any contemporary who flattered him with the compliment of "learned." What Ben Jonson thought of his learning (but Ben's standard was very high), what Milton and Fuller, boys of eight when he died, thought of his learning, we know. They thought him "Fancy's child" (Milton) and with no claims to scholarship (Fuller), with "small Latin and less Greek" (Jonson). They speak of Shakespeare the author and actor; not yet had any man divided the persons.

Elizabethan and Jacobean scholarly poets were widely read in the classics. They were not usually, however, scholars in the same sense as our modern scholarly poets and men of letters; such as Mr. Swinburne among the dead, and Mr. Mackail and Sir Gilbert Murray - if I may be pardoned for mentioning contemporary names. But Elizabethan scholarly poets, and Milton, never regarded Shakespeare as learned. Perhaps few modern men of letters who are scholars differ from them. The opinion of Mr. Collins is to be discussed presently, but even he thought Shakespeare's scholarship "inexact," as we shall see.

I conceive that Shakspere "knew Latin pretty well," and, on Ben Jonson's evidence, he knew "less Greek." That he knew *any* Greek is surprising. Apparently he did, to judge from Ben's words. My attitude must, to the

Baconians, seem frivolous, vexatious, and evasive. I cannot pretend to know what was Shakspere's precise amount of proficiency in Latin when he was writing the plays. That between his own knowledge, and construes given to him, he might easily get at the meaning of all the Latin, not yet translated, which he certainly knew, I believe.

Mr. Greenwood says "the amount of reading which the lad Shakspere must have done, and assimilated, during his brief sojourn at the Free School is positively amazing." But I have shown how an imaginative boy, with little or no access to English poetry and romances, might continue to read Latin "for human pleasure" after he left school. As a professional writer, in a London where Latinists were as common as now they are rare in literary society, he might read more, and be helped in his reading. Any clever man might do as much, not to speak of a man of genius. "And yet, alas, there is no record or tradition of all this prodigious industry. . . . " I am not speaking of "prodigious industry," and of that - at school. In a region so non-literary as, by his account, was Stratford, Mr. Greenwood ought not to expect traditions of Will's early reading (even if he studied much more deeply than I have supposed) to exist, from fifty to seventy years after Will was dead, in the memories of the sons and grandsons of country people who cared for none of these things. The thing is not reasonable.

Let me take one example of what Mr. E. A. Sonnenschein is quoted as saying (somewhere) about Shakespeare's debt to Seneca's then untranslated paper *De Clementia* (1, 3, 3; I, 7, 2; I, 6, I). It inspires Portia's speech about Mercy. Here I give a version of the Latin.

"Clemency becometh, of all men, none more than the King or chief magistrate (*principem*) . . . No one can think of anything more becoming to a ruler than clemency . . . which will be confessed the fairer and more goodly in proportion as it is exhibited in the higher office . . . But if the placable and just gods punish not instantly with their thunderbolts the sins of the powerful, how much more just it is that a man set over men should gently exercise his power. What? Holds not he the place nearest to the gods, who, bearing himself like the gods, is kind, and generous, and uses his power for the better? . . . Think . . . what a lone desert and waste Rome would be, were nothing left, and none, save such as a severe judge would absolve."

The last sentence is fitted with this parallel in Portia's speech:

"Consider this
That in the course of Justice none of us
Should see salvation."

Here, at least, Protestant theology, not Seneca, inspires Portia's eloquence.

Now take Portia:

"The quality of Mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes;"

(Not much Seneca, so far!)

"'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But Mercy is above this sceptred sway,
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice . . ."

There follows the passage about none of us seeing salvation, already cited, and theological in origin.

Whether Shakespeare could or could not have written these reflections, without having read Seneca's *De Clementia*, whether, if he could not conceive the ideas "out of his own head," he might not hear Seneca's words translated in a sermon, or in conversation, or read them cited in an English book, each reader must decide for himself. Nor do I doubt that Shakespeare could pick out what he wanted from the Latin if he cast his eye over the essay of the tutor of Nero.

My view of Shakespeare's Latinity is much like that of Sir Walter Raleigh. As far as I am aware, it is the opinion usually held by people who approach the subject, and who have had a classical education. An exception was the late Mr. Churton Collins, whose ideas are discussed in the following chapter.

In his youth, and in the country, Will could do what Hogg and Burns did (and Hogg had no education at all; he was self-taught, even in writing). Will could pick up traditional, oral, popular literature. “His plays,” says Sir Walter Raleigh, “are extraordinarily rich in the floating debris of popular literature, - scraps and tags and broken ends of songs and ballads and romances and proverbs. In this respect he is notable even among his contemporaries. . . . Edgar and Iago, Petruchio and Benedick, Sir Toby and Pistol, the Fool in *Lear* and the Grave-digger in *Hamlet*, even Ophelia and Desdemona, are all alike singers of old songs. . . . “ He is rich in rural proverbs *not* recorded in Bacon’s *Promus.*

Shakespeare in the country, like Scott in Liddesdale, “was making himself all the time.”

The Baconian will exclaim that Bacon was familiar with many now obsolete rural words. Bacon, too, may have had a memory rich in all the tags of song, ballad, story, and *dicton*. But so may Shakespeare.

CHAPTER IV: MR. COLLINS ON SHAKESPEARE’S LEARNING

That Shakspere, whether “scholar” or not, had a very wide and deep knowledge both of Roman literature and, still more, of the whole field of the tragic literature of Athens, is a theory which Mr. Greenwood seems to admire in that “violent Stratfordian,” Mr. Churton Collins. I think that Mr. Collins did not persuade classical scholars who have never given a thought to the Baconian belief, but who consider on their merits the questions: Does Shakespeare show wide classical knowledge? Does he use his knowledge as a scholar would use it?

My friend, Mr. Collins, as I may have to say again, was a very wide reader of poetry, with a memory like Macaulay’s. It was his native tendency to find coincidences in poetic passages (which, to some, to me for example, did not often seem coincidental); and to explain coincidences by conscious or subconscious borrowing. One remarked in him these tendencies long before he wrote on the classical acquirements of Shakespeare.

While Mr. Collins tended to account for similarities in the work of authors by borrowing, my tendency was to explain them as undesigned coincidences. The question is of the widest range. Some inquirers explain the often minute coincidences in myths, popular tales, proverbs, and riddles, found all over the world, by diffusion from a single centre (usually India). Others, like myself, do not deny cases of transmission, but in other cases see spontaneous and independent, though coincident invention. I do not believe that the Arunta of Central Australia borrowed from Plutarch the central feature of the myth of Isis and Osiris.

It is not on Shakespeare’s use, now and then, of Greek and Latin models and sources, but on coincidences detected by Mr. Collins himself, and not earlier remarked, that he bases his belief in the saturation of Shakespeare’s mind with Roman and Athenian literature. Consequently we can only do justice to Mr. Collins’s system, if we compare example after example of his supposed instances of Shakespeare’s borrowing. This is a long and irksome task; and the only fair plan is for the reader to peruse Mr. Collins’s *Studies in Shakespeare*, compare the Greek and Roman texts, and weigh each example of supposed borrowing for himself. Baconians must delight in this labour.

I shall waive the question whether it were not possible for Shakespeare to obtain a view of the manuscript translation of plays of Plautus made by Warner for his unlearned friends, and so to use the *Menæchmi* as the model of *The Comedy of Errors*. He does not borrow phrases from it, as he does from North's *Plutarch.*

Venus and Adonis owes to Ovid, at most, but ideas for three purple patches, scattered in different parts of the *Metamorphoses. Lucrece* is based on the then untranslated *Fasti* of Ovid. I do not think Shakespeare incapable of reading such easy Latin for himself; or too proud to ask help from a friend, or buy it from some poor young University man in London. That is a simple and natural means by which he could help himself when in search of a subject for a play or poem; and ought not to be overlooked.

Mr. Collins, in his rapturous account of Shakespeare's wide and profound knowledge of the classics, opens with the remark: "Nothing which Shakespeare has left us warrants us in pronouncing with certainty that he read the Greek classics in the original, or even that he possessed enough Greek to follow the Latin versions of those classics in the Greek text." In that case, how did Shakespeare's English become contaminated, as Mr. Collins says it did, with Greek *idioms*, while he only knew the Greek plays through Latin translations?

However this is to be answered, Mr. Collins proceeds to prove Shakespeare's close familiarity with Latin and with Greek dramatic literature by a method of which he knows the perils - "it is always perilous to infer direct imitation from parallel passages which may be mere coincidences." Yet this method is what he practises throughout; with what amount of success every reader must judge for himself.

He thinks it "surely not unlikely" that Polonius's "Neither a borrower nor a lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,"

may be a terse reminiscence of seven lines in Plautus (*Trinummus*, iv. 3). Why, Polonius is a coiner of commonplaces, and if ever there were a well-known reflection from experience it is this of the borrowers and lenders.

Next, take this of Plautus (*Pseudolus*, I, iv. 7-10), "But just as the poet when he has taken up his tablets seeks what exists nowhere among men, and yet finds it, and makes that like truth which is mere fiction." We are to take this as the possible germ of Theseus's theory of the origin of the belief in fairies: "And as imagination bodies forth
The *forms* of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to *shapes*, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

The reasoning is odd; imagination bodies forth *forms*, and the poet's pen turns them to *shapes*. But to suppose that Shakespeare here borrowed from Plautus appears highly superfluous.

These are samples of Mr. Collins's methods throughout.

Of Terence there were translations - first in part; later, in 1598, of the whole. Of Seneca there was an English version (1581). Mr. Collins labours to show that one passage "almost certainly" implies Shakespeare's use of the Latin; but it was used "by an inexact scholar," - a terribly inexact scholar, if he thought that "*alienus*" ("what belongs to another") meant "slippery"!

Most of the passages are from plays (*Titus Andronicus* and *Henry VI*, i., ii., iii.), which Mr. Greenwood denies (usually) to *his* author, the Great Unknown. Throughout these early plays Mr. Collins takes Shakespeare's to resemble Seneca's *Latin* style: Shakespeare, then, took up Greek tragedy in later life; after the early period when he dealt with Seneca. Here is a sample of borrowing from Horace, "*Persicos odi puer apparatus*" (*Odes*. I, xxxviii. I). Mr. Collins quotes *Lear* (III, vi. 85) thus, "You will say they are *Persian attire*." Really, Lear in his wild way says to Edgar, "I do not like the fashion of your garments: you will say they are Persian; but let them be changed." Mr. Collins changes this into "you will say they are *Persian attire*," a phrase "which could only have occurred to a classical scholar." The phrase is not in Shakespeare, and Lear's wandering mind might as easily select "Persian" as any other absurdity.

So it is throughout. Two great poets write on the fear of death, on the cries of new-born children, on dissolution and recombination in nature, on old age; they have ideas in common, obvious ideas, glorified by poetry, - and Shakespeare, we are told, is borrowing from Lucretius or Juvenal; while the critic leaves his reader to find out and study the Latin passages which he does not quote. So arbitrary is taste in these matters that Mr. Collins, like Mr. Grant White, but independently, finds Shakespeare putting a thought from the *Alcibiades I* of Plato into the mouth of Achilles in *Troilus and Cressida*, while Mr. J. M. Robertson suggests that the borrowing is from Seneca - where Mr. Collins does not find "the smallest parallel." Mr. Collins is certainly right; the author of *Troilus* makes Ulysses quote Plato as "the author" of a remark, and makes Achilles take up the quotation, which Ulysses goes on to criticise.

Thus, in this play, not only Aristotle (as Hector says) but Plato are taken to have lived before the Trojan war, and to have been read by the Achæans!

There were Latin translations of Plato; the *Alcibiades I* was published apart, from Ficinus' version, in 1560, with the sub-title, *Concerning the Nature of*

Man. Who had read it? - Shakespeare, or one of the two authors (Dekker and Chettle) of another *Troilus and Cressida* (now lost), or Bacon, or Mr. Greenwood's Unknown? Which of these Platonists chose to say that Plato and Aristotle lived long before Homer? Which of them followed the Ionic and mediæval anti-Achæan view of Homer's heroes, as given in the Troy Books of the Middle Ages, and yet knew Iliad, Book VII, and admired Odysseus, whom the Ionian tradition abhors? *Troilus and Cressida* is indeed a mystery, but Somebody concerned in it had read Ficinus' version of the *Alcibiades*; and yet made the monstrous anachronism of dating Aristotle and Plato before the Trojan war. "That was his fun," as Charles Lamb said in another connection.

Mr. Collins, it is plain, goes much further than the "small Latin" with which his age (like myself) credited Shakespeare. He could read Latin, Mr. Collins thinks, as easily as an educated Briton reads French - that is, as easily as he reads English. Still further, Shakespeare, through Latin translations, was so saturated with the Greek drama "that the characteristics which differentiate his work from the work of his contemporaries and recall in essentials the work of the Greek dramatists are actually attributable to these dramatists."

Ben Jonson, and all the more or less well-taught University wits, as far as I remember, like Greene, Marlowe, and Lyly, do not show much acquaintance with Euripides, Æschylus, Sophocles, and do not often remind us of these masters. Shakespeare does remind us of them - the only question is, do the resemblances arise from his possession of a genius akin to that of Greece, or was his memory so stored with all the treasures of their art that the waters of Helicon kept bubbling up through the wells of Avon?

But does Mr. Collins prove (what, as he admits, *cannot* be demonstrated) that Shakespeare was familiar with the Attic tragedians? He begins by saying that he will not bottom his case "on the ground of parallels in sentiment and reflection, which, as they express commonplaces, are likely to be" (fortuitous) "coincidences." Three pages of such parallels, all from Sophocles, therefore follow. "Curiously close similarities of expression" are also barred. Four pages of examples therefore follow, from Sophocles and Æschylus, plays and fragments, Euripides, and Homer too (once!). Again, "identities of sentiment under similar circumstances" are not to be cited; two pages *are* cited; and "similarities, however striking they may be in metaphorical expression," cannot safely be used; several pages of them follow.

Finally, Mr. Collins chooses a single play, the *Aias* of Sophocles, and tests Shakespeare by that, unluckily in part from *Titus Andronicus*, which Mr. Greenwood regards (usually) as non-Shakespearean, or not by his unknown great author. *Troilus and Cressida*, whatever part Shakespeare may have had in it, does suggest to me that the author or authors knew of Homer no more than the few books of the Iliad, first translated by Chapman and published in 1598. But he or they did know the *Aias* of Sophocles, according to Mr. Collins: so did the author of *Romeo and Juliet.*

Now all these sorts of parallels between Shakespeare and the Greeks are, Mr. Collins tells us, not to count as proofs that Shakespeare knew the Greek tragedians. "We have obviously to be on our guard" against three kinds of such parallels, which "may be mere coincidences," fortuitous coincidences. But these coincidences against which "we must be on our guard" fill sixteen pages (p-63). These pages must necessarily produce a considerable effect in the way of persuading the reader that Shakespeare knew the Greek tragedians as intimately as Mr. Collins did. Mr. Greenwood is obliged to leave these parallels to readers of Mr. Collins's essay. Indeed, what more can we do? Who would read through a criticism of each instance? Two or three may be given. The Queen in *Hamlet* reminds that prince, grieving for his father's death, that "all that live must die": "That loss is common to the race,
And common is the commonplace."

The Greek Chorus offers the commonplace to Electra, - and here is a parallel! Again, two Greeks agree with Shakespeare that anxious expectation of evil is worse than actual experience thereof. Greece agrees with Shakespeare that ill-gotten gains do not thrive, or that it is not lucky to be "a corby messenger" of bad news; or that all goes ill when a man acts against his better nature; or that we suffer most from the harm which we bring on ourselves; or that there is strength in a righteous cause; or that blood calls for blood (an idea common to Semites, Greeks, and English readers of the Bible); or that, having lost a very good man, you will not soon see his like again, - and so on as long as you please. Of such wisdom are proverbs made, and savages and Europeans have many parallel proverbs. *Vestigia nulla retrorsum* is as well known to Bushmen as to Latinists. Manifestly nothing in this kind proves, or even suggests, that Shakespeare was saturated in Greek tragedy. But page on page of such facts as that both Shakespeare and Sophocles talk, one of "the belly-pinched wolf," the other of "the empty-bellied wolf," are apt to impress the reader - and verily both Shakespeare and Æschylus talk of "the heart dancing for joy." Mr. Collins repeats that such things are no proof, but he keeps on piling them up. It was a theory of Shakespeare's time that the apparent ghost of a dead man might be an impersonation of him by the devil. Hamlet knows this -

"The spirit that I have seen may be the devil."

Orestes (*Electra*, Euripides) asks whether it may not be an avenging dæmon (*alastor*) in the shape of a god, that bids him avenge his father. Is Shakespeare borrowing from Euripides, or from a sermon, or any contemporary work on ghosts, such as that of Lavater?

A girl dies or is sacrificed before her marriage, and characters in *Romeo and Juliet*, and in Euripides, both say that Death is her bridegroom. Anyone might say that, anywhere, as in the Greek Anthology -

"For Death not for Love hast thou loosened thy zone."

One needs the space of a book wherein to consider such parallels. But confessedly, though a parade is made of them, they do not prove that Shakespeare constantly read Greek tragedies in Latin translations.

To let the truth out, the resemblances are mainly found in such commonplaces: as when both Aias and Antony address the Sun of their latest day in life; or when John of Gaunt and Aias both pun on their own names.

The situations, in *Hamlet* and the *Choephoræ* and *Electra*, are so close that resemblances in some passages must and do occur, and Mr. Collins does not comment specially upon the closest resemblance of all: the English case is here the murder of Duncan, the Greek is the murder of Agamemnon.

Now it would be easy for me to bring forward many close parallels between Homer and the old Irish epic story of Cuchulainn, between Homer and *Beowulf* and the Njal's saga, yet Norsemen and the early Irish were not students of Homer! The parallel passages in Homer, on one side, and the Old Irish *Tain Bo Cualgne*, and the Anglo-Saxon epics, are so numerous and close that the theory of borrowing from Homer has actually occurred to a distinguished Greek scholar. But no student of Irish and Anglo-Saxon heroic poetry has been found, I think, to suggest that Early Irish and Anglo-Saxon Court minstrels knew Greek. The curious may consult Mr. Munro Chadwick's *The Heroic Age* (1912), especially Chapter XV, "The Common Characteristics of Teutonic and Greek Heroic Poetry," and to what Mr. Chadwick says much might be added.

But, to be short, Mr. Collins's case can only be judged by readers of his most interesting *Studies in Shakespeare*. To me, Hamlet's soliloquy on death resembles a fragment from the *Phœnix* of Euripides no more closely than two sets of reflections by great poets on the text that "of death we know nothing" are bound to do, - though Shakespeare's are infinitely the richer. For Shakespeare's reflections on death, save where Christians die in a Christian spirit, are as agnostic as those of the post-Æschylean Greek and early Anglo-Saxon poets. In many respects, as Mr. Collins proves, Shakespeare's highest and deepest musings are Greek in tone. But of all English poets he who came nearest to Greece in his art was Keats, who of Greek knew nothing. In the same way, a peculiar vein of Anglo-Saxon thought, in relation to Destiny and Death, is purely Homeric, though necessarily unborrowed; nor were a native Fijian poet's lines on old age, *sine amore jocisque*, borrowed from Mimnermus! There is such a thing as congruity of genius. Mr. Collins states the hypothesis - not his own - "that *by a certain natural affinity* Shakespeare caught also the accent and tone as well as some of the most striking characteristics of Greek tragedy."

Though far from accepting most of Mr. Collins's long array of Greek parallels, I do hold that by "natural affinity," by congruity of genius, Shakespeare approached and resembled the great Athenians.

One thing seems certain to me. If Shakspere read and borrowed from Greek poetry, he knew it as well (except Homer) as Mr. Collins knew it; and remembered what he knew with Mr. Collins's extraordinary tenacity of memory.

Now if "Shakespeare" did all that, he was not the actor. The author, on Mr. Collins's showing, must have been a very sedulous and diligent student of Greek poetry, above all of the drama, down to its fragments. The Baconians assuredly ought to try to prove, from Bacon's works, that he was such a student.

Mr. Collins, "a violent Stratfordian," overproved his case. If his proofs be accepted, Shakspere the actor knew the Greek tragedians as well as did Mr. Swinburne. If the author of the plays were so learned, the actor was not the author, in my opinion - he *was*, in the opinion of Mr. Collins.

If Shakespeare's spirit and those of Sophocles and Æschylus meet, it is because they move on the same heights, and thence survey with "the poet's sad lucidity" the same "pageant of men's miseries." But how dissimilar in expression Shakespeare can be, how luxuriant and apart from the austerity of Greece, we observe in one of Mr. Collins's parallels.

Polynices, in the *Phœnissæ* of Euripides (504-506), exclaims: "To the stars' risings, and the sun's I'd go,
And dive 'neath earth, - if I could do this thing, -
Possess Heaven's highest boon of sovereignty."

Then compare Hotspur:

"By Heaven, methinks it were an easy leap
To pluck bright honour from the pale faced moon,

Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,
And pluck up drownèd honour by the locks,
So he that doth redeem her thence, might wear
Without corrival all her dignities.”

What a hurrying crowd of pictures rush through Hotspur’s mind! Is Shakespeare thinking of the *Phœnissæ*, or is he speaking only on the promptings of his genius?

CHAPTER V: SHAKESPEARE, GENIUS, AND SOCIETY

A phrase has been used to explain the Greek element in Shakespeare's work, namely, "congruity of genius," which is apt to be resented by Baconians. Perhaps they have a right to resent it, for "genius" is hard to define, and genius is invoked by some wild wits to explain feats of Shakespeare's which (to Baconians) appear "miracles." A "miracle" also is notoriously hard to define; but we may take it ("under all reserves") to stand for the occurrence of an event, or the performance of an action which, to the speaker who applies the word "miracle," seems "impossible." The speaker therefore says, "The event is impossible; miracles do not happen: therefore the reported event never occurred. The alleged performance, the writing of the plays by the actor, was impossible, was a miracle, therefore was done by some person or persons other than the actor." This idea of the *impossibility* of the player's authorship is the foundation of the Baconian edifice.

I have, to the best of my ability, tried to describe Mr. Greenwood's view of the young provincial from Warwickshire, Will Shakspere. If Will were what Mr. Greenwood thinks he was, then Will's authorship of the plays seems to me, "humanly speaking," impossible. But then Mr. Greenwood appeared to omit from his calculations the circumstance that Will *may* have been, not merely "a sharp boy" but a boy of great parts; and not without a love of stories and poetry: a passion which, in a bookless region, could only be gratified through folk-song, folk-tale, and such easy Latin as he might take the trouble to read. If we add to these very unusual but not wholly impossible tastes and abilities, that Will *may* have been a lad of genius, there is no more "miracle" in his case than in other supreme examples of genius. "But genius cannot work miracles, cannot do what is impossible." Do what is impossible to whom? To the critics, the men of common sense.

Alas, all this way of talking about "miracles," and "the impossible," and "genius" is quite vague and popular. What do we mean by "genius"? The Latin term originally designates, not a man's everyday intellect, but a spirit from without which inspires him, like the "Dæmon," or, in Latin, "Genius" of Socrates, or the *lutin* which rode the pen of Molière. "Genius" is claimed for Shakespeare in an inscription on his Stratford monument, erected at latest some six years after his death. Following this path of thought we come to "inspiration": the notion of it, as familiar to Australian savages as to any modern minds, is that, to the poet, what he produces is *given* by some power greater than himself, by the *Boilyas* (spirits) or Pundjel, the Father of all. This palæolithic psychology, of course, is now quite discredited, yet the term "genius" is still (perhaps superstitiously) applied to the rare persons whose intellectual faculties lightly outrun those of ordinary mortals, and who do marvels with means apparently inadequate.

In recent times some philosophers, like Mr. F. W. H. Myers, put - in place of the Muses or the *Boilyas*, or the Genius - what they call the "Subliminal Self," something "far more deeply interfused than the everyday intellect." This subconscious self, capable of far more than the conscious intelligence, is genius.

On the other side, genius may fairly be regarded as faculty, only higher in degree, and not at all different in kind, from the everyday intellect which, for example, pens this page.

Thus as soon as we begin to speak of "genius," we are involved in speculations, psychological, psychical, physical, and metaphysical; in difficulties of all sorts not at present to be solved either by physiological science or experimental psychology, or by psychical research, or by the study of heredity. When I speak of "the genius of Shakespeare," of Jeanne d'Arc, of Bacon, even of Wellington, I possibly have a meaning which is not in all respects the meaning of Mr. Greenwood, when he uses the term "genius"; so we are apt to misunderstand each other. Yet we all glibly use the term "genius," without definition and without discussion.

At once, too, in this quest, we jostle against "that fool of a word," as Napoleon said, "impossible." At once, on either side, we assume that we know what is possible and what is impossible, - and so pretend to omniscience.

Thus some "Stratfordians," or defenders of the actor's authorship, profess to know - from all the signed work of Bacon, and from all that has reached us about Bacon's occupations and preoccupations, from 1590 to 1605 - that the theory of Bacon's authorship of the plays is "impossible." I, however, do not profess this omniscience.

On the other side the Baconian, arguing from all that *he* knows, or thinks he knows, or can imagine, of the actor's education, conditions of life, and opportunities, argues that the authorship of the actor is "impossible."

Both sides assume to be omniscient, but we incontestably know much more about Bacon, in his works, his aims, his inclinations, and in his life, than we know about the actor; while about "the potentialities of genius," we know - very little.

Thus, with all Bacon's occupations and preoccupations, he had, the Baconians will allow, *genius*. By the miracle of genius he *may* have found time and developed inclination, to begin by furbishing up older plays for a company of actors: he did it extremely well, but what a quaint taste for a courtier and scholar! The eccentricities of genius *may* account for his choice of a "*nom de plume*," which, if he desired concealment, was the last that was likely to serve his turn. He may also have divined all the Doll Tearsheets and Mrs. Quicklys and Pistols, whom, conceivably, he did not much frequent.

I am not one of those who deny that Bacon might have written *Hamlet* "if he had the mind," as Charles Lamb said of Wordsworth. Not at all; I am the last to limit the potentialities of genius.

But suppose, merely for the sake of argument, that Will Shakspere too had genius in that amazing degree which, in *Henry V*, the Bishop of Ely and the Archbishop of Canterbury describe and discuss in the case of the young king. In this passage we perceive that the poet had brooded over and been puzzled by the "miracle" (he uses the word) of genius. Says Canterbury speaking of the Prince's wild youth, "Never was such a sudden scholar made."

One Baconian objection to Shakespeare's authorship is that during his early years in London (say 1587-92) he was "such a sudden scholar made" in various things.

The young king's

”addiction was to courses vain,
His companies unletter'd, rude, and shallow,"

precisely like Shakespeare's courses and companions at Stratford

"Had never noted in him any study."

Stratford tradition, a century after Shakespeare left the town, did not remember "any study" in him; none had been "noted," nor could have been remembered. To return to Henry, he shines in divinity, knowledge of "commonwealth affairs,"

"You would say, it hath been all in all his study."

He is as intimate with the art of war; to him "Gordian knots of policy" are "familiar as his garter." He *must* have

“The art and practic part of life,”

as “mistress to this theorie,”

“Which is a wonder how his Grace should glean it,”

as his youth was riotous, and was lived in all men’s gaze,

“And never noted in him any study,
Any retirement, any sequestration
From open haunts and popularity.”

The Bishop of Ely can only suggest that Henry’s study or “contemplation”

“Grew like the summer grass, fastest by night,
Unseen,”

and Canterbury says

"It must be so, for miracles are ceased."

And thus the miracle of genius baffles the poet, for Henry's had been "noisy nights," notoriously noisy.

Now, as we shall later show, Bacon's rapid production of the plays, considering his other contemporary activities and varied but always absorbing interests, was as much a miracle as the sudden blossoming of Henry's knowledge and accomplishments; for all Bacon's known exertions and occupations, and his deepest and most absorbing interest, were remote from the art of tragedy and comedy. If we are to admit the marvel of genius in Bacon, of whose life and pursuits we know much, by parity of reasoning we may grant that the actor, of whom we know much less, may have had genius: had powers and could use opportunities in a way for which Baconians make no allowance.

We now turn to Mr. Greenwood's chapter, "Shakespeare and 'Genius.'" It opens with the accustomed list of poor Will's disqualifications, "a boy born of illiterate parents," but we need not rehearse the list. He "comes to town" (date unknown) "a needy adventurer"; in 1593 appeared the poem *Venus and Adonis*, author's name being printed as "W. Shakespeare." Then comes *Lucrece* (1594). In 1598 *Love's Labour's Lost*, printed as "corrected and augmented" by "W. Shakespere." And so on with all the rest. Criticism of the learning and splendour of the two poems follows. To *Love's Labour's Lost*, and the amusing things written about it by Baconians, I return; and to Shakespeare's "impossible" knowledge of courtly society, his "polish and urbanity," his familiar acquaintance with contemporary French politics, foreign proverbs, and "the gossip of the Court" of Elizabeth: these points are made by His Honour Judge Webb.

All this lore to Shakespeare is "impossible" - he could not read, say some Baconians, or had no Latin, or had next to none; on these points I have said my say. The omniscient Baconians know that all the early works ascribed to the actor were impossible, to a man of, say thirty - who *was* no more, and *knew* no more, than they know that the actor was and knew; and as for "Genius," it cannot work miracles. Genius "bestows upon no one a knowledge of facts," "Shakespeare, however favoured by nature, could impart only what he had learned."

Precisely, but genius as I understand it (and even cleverness) has a way of acquiring knowledge of facts where the ordinary "dull intelligent man" gains none. Keen interest, keen curiosity, swift observation, even the power of tearing out the things essential from a book, the gift of rapid reading; the faculty of being alive to the fingertips, - these, with a tenacious memory, may enable a small boy to know more facts of many sorts than his elders and betters and all the neighbours. They are puzzled, if they make the discovery of his knowledge. Scott was such a small boy; whether we think him a man of genius or not. Shakspere, even the actor, was, perhaps, a man of genius, and possessed this power of rapid acquisition and vivid retention of all manner of experience and information. To what I suppose to have been his opportunities in London, I shall return. Meanwhile, let the doubter take up any popular English books of Shakespeare's day: he will find them replete with much knowledge wholly new to him - which he will also find in Shakespeare.

A good example is this: Judge Webb proclaimed that in points of scientific lore (the lore of that age) Shakespeare and Bacon were much on a level. Professor Tyrrell, in a newspaper, said that the facts staggered him, as a "Stratfordian." A friend told me that he too was equally moved. I replied that these pseudoscientific "facts" had long been commonplaces. Pliny was a rich source of them. Professor Dowden took the matter up, with full knowledge, and reconverted Mr. Tyrrell, who wrote: "I am not versed in the literature of the Shakespearian era, and I assumed that the Baconians who put forward the parallelisms had satisfied themselves that the coincidences were peculiar to the writings of the philosopher and the poet. Professor Dowden has proved that this is not so."

Were I to enter seriously on this point of genius, I should begin by requesting my adversaries to read Mr. F. W. H. Myers's papers on "The Mechanism of Genius" (in his *Human Personality*), and to consider the humble problem of "Calculating Boys," which is touched on also by Cardinal Newman. How do they, at the age of innocence, arrive at their amazing results? How did the child Pascal, ignorant of Euclid, work out the Euclidean propositions of "bars and rounds," as he called lines and circles? Science has no solution!

Transport the problem into the region of poetry and knowledge of human nature, take Will in place of Pascal and Gauss, and (in manners and matter of war) Jeanne d'Arc; - and science, I fancy, is much to seek for a reply.

Mr. Greenwood considers, among others, the case of Robert Burns. The parallel is very interesting, and does not, I think, turn so much to Mr. Greenwood's advantage as he supposes. The genius of Burns, of course, is far indeed below the level of that of the author of the Shakespearean plays. But that author and Burns have this in common with each other (and obviously with Homer), that their work arises from a basis of older materials, already manipulated by earlier artists. Burns almost always has a key-note already touched, as confessedly in the poems of his predecessor, Fergusson; of Hamilton of Gilbertfield; in songs, popular or artistic, and so forth. He "alchemised" his materials, as Mr. Greenwood says of his author of the plays; turned dross into gold, brick into marble. Notoriously much Shakespearean work is of the same nature.

The education of Burns he owed to his peasant father, to his parish school (in many such schools he might have acquired Latin and Greek; in fact he did not), to a tutor who read with him some English and French; and he knew a modernised version of Blind Harry's *Wallace;* Locke's *Essay; The Spectator*, novels of the day, and vernacular Scots poets of his century, with a world of old Scots songs. These things, and such as these, were Burns's given literary materials. He used them in the only way open to him, in poems written for a rural audience, and published for an Edinburgh public. No classical, no theatrical materials were given; or, if he read the old drama, he could not, in his rural conditions, and in a Scotland where the theatre was in a very small way, venture on producing plays, for which there was no demand, while he had no knowledge of the Stage. Burns found and filled the only channels open to him, in a printed book, and in music books for which he transmuted old songs.

The bookish materials offered to Will, in London, were crammed with reminiscences from the classics, were mainly romantic and theatrical; and, from his profession of actor, by far the best channel open to him was the theatre. Badly as it paid the outside author, there was nothing that paid better. *Venus and Adonis* brought "more praise than pudding," if one may venture a guess. With the freedom of the theatre Will could soar to all heights and plumb all depths. No such opportunity had Burns, even if he could have used it, and, owing to a variety of causes, his spirit soon ceased to soar high or wing wide.

I take Shakespeare, in London at least, to have read the current Elizabethan light literature - *Euphues*, Lyly's Court comedies, novels full of the classics and of social life; Spenser, Sidney - his *Defence of Poesy*, and *Arcadia* (1590) - with scores of tales translated from the Italian, French, and Spanish, all full of foreign society, and discourses of knights and ladies. He saw the plays of the day, perhaps as one of "the groundlings." He often beheld Society, from without, when acting before the Queen and at great houses. He had thus, if I am right, sufficient examples of style and manner, and knowledge of how the great were supposed (in books) to comport and conduct themselves. The books were cheap, and could be borrowed, and turned over at the booksellers' stalls. The

Elizabethan style was omnipresent. Suppose that Shakespeare was a clever man, a lover of reading, a rapid reader with an excellent memory, easily influenced, like Burns, by what he read, and I really think that my conjectures are not too audacious. Not only "the man in the street," but "the reading public" (so loved by Coleridge), have not the beginning of a guess as to the way in which a quick man reads. Watch them poring for hours over a newspaper! Let me quote what Sir Walter Raleigh says: "Shakespeare was one of those swift and masterly readers who know what they want of a book; they scorn nothing that is dressed in print, but turn over the pages with a quick discernment of all that brings them new information, or jumps with their thought, or tickles their fancy. Such a reader will have done with a volume in a few minutes, yet what he has taken from it he keeps for years. He is a live man; and is sometimes judged by slower wits to be a learned man."

I am taking Shakespeare to have been a reader of this kind, as was Dr. Johnson, as are not a few men who have no pretensions to genius. The accomplishment is only a marvel to - well, I need not be particular about the kind of person to whom it is a marvel!

Here, in fairness, the reader should be asked to consider an eloquent passage of comparison between the knowledge of Burns and of Will, quoted by Mr. Greenwood from Mr. Morgan.

Genius, says Mr. Morgan, "did not guide Burns's untaught pen to write of Troy or Egypt, of Athens and Cyprus." No! that was not Burns's lay; nor would he have found a public had he emulated the contemporary St. Andrews professor, Mr. Wilkie, who wrote *The Epigoniad*, and sang of Cadmeian Thebes, to the delight of David Hume, his friend. The public of 1780-90 did not want new epics of heroic Greece from Mossgiel; nor was the literature accessible to Burns full of the mediæval legends of Troy and Athens. But the popular literature accessible to Will was full of the *mediæval* legends of Thebes, Troy, and Athens; and of these, *not* of Homer, Will made his market. Egypt he knew only in the new English version of Plutarch's *Lives;* of Homer, he (or the author of *Troilus and Cressida*) used only Iliad VII., in Chapman's new translation (1598). For the rest he had Lydgate (perhaps), and, certainly, Caxton's *Destruction of Troy*, still reprinted as a *popular* book as late as 1713. Will did not, as Mr. Morgan says, "reproduce the very counterfeit civilisations and manners of nations born and buried and passed into history a thousand years before he had been begotten. . . " He bestowed the manners of mediæval chivalrous romance on his Trojans and Greeks. He accommodated prehistoric Athens with a Duke. He gave Scotland cannon three hundred years too early; and made Cleopatra play at billiards. Look at his notion of "the very manners" of early post-Roman Britain in *Cymbeline* and *King Lear*! Concerning "the anomalous status of a King of Scotland under one of its primitive Kings" the author of *Macbeth* knew no more than what he read in Holinshed; of the actual truth concerning Duncan (that old prince was, in fact, a young man slain in a blacksmith's bothy), and of the whole affair, the author knew nothing but a tissue of sophisticated legends. The author of the plays had no knowledge (as Mr. Morgan inexplicably declares that he had) of "matters of curious and occult research for antiquaries or dilettanti to dig out of old romances or treaties or statutes rather than for historians to treat of or schools to teach!"

Mon Dieu! do historians *not* treat of "matters of curious research" and of statutes and of treaties? As for "old romances," they were current and popular. The "occult" sources of *King Lear* are a popular tale attached to legendary "history" and a story in Sidney's *Arcadia*. Will, whom Mr. Morgan describes as "a letterless peasant lad," or the Author, whoever he was, is not "invested with all the love" (*sic*, *v.1.* "lore"), "which the ages behind him had shut up in clasped books and buried and forgotten."

"Our friend's style has flowery components," Mr. Greenwood adds to this deliciously eloquent passage from his American author, "and yet Shakespeare who did all this," *et cætera*. But Shakespeare did *not* do "all this"! We know the sources of the plays well enough: novels in one of which "Delphos" is the insular seat of an oracle of Apollo; Holinshed, with his contaminated legends; North's *Plutarch*, done out of the French; older plays, and the rest of it. Shakespeare does not go to Tighernach and the *Hennskringla* for Macbeth; or for Hamlet to the saga which is the source of Saxo; or for his English chronicle-plays to the State Papers. Shakespeare did not, like William of Deloraine, dig up "clasped books, buried and forgotten." There is no original research; the author uses the romances, novels, ballads, and popular books of uncritical history which were current in his day. Mr. Greenwood knows that; Mr. Morgan, perhaps, knew it, but forgot what he knew; hurried away by the Muse of Eloquence. And the common Baconian may believe Mr. Morgan.

But Mr. Greenwood asks "what was the poetic output?" in Burns's case. It was what we know, and *that* was what suited his age and his circumstances. It was lyric, idyll, song, and satire; it was not drama, for to the Stage he had no access, he who passed but one winter in Edinburgh, where the theatre was not the centre of literature.

Shakespeare came, with genius and with such materials as I have suggested, to an entirely different market, the Elizabethan theatre. I have tried to show how easily his mind might be steeped in the all-pervading classicism and foreign romance of the period, with the wide, sketchy, general information, the commonly known fragments from the great banquet of the classics, - with such history, wholly uncritical, as Holinshed and Stow, and other such English chroniclers, could copiously provide; with the courtly manners mirrored in scores of romances and Court plays; and in the current popular *Morte d'Arthur* and *Destruction of Troy.*

I can agree with Mr. Greenwood, when he says that "Genius is a potentiality, and whether it will ever become an actuality, and what it will produce, depends upon the moral qualities with which it is associated, and the opportunities that are open to it - in a word, on the circumstances of its environment."

Of course by "moral qualities," a character without spot or stain is not intended: we may take that for granted. Otherwise, I agree; and think that Shakespeare of Stratford had genius, and that what it produced was in accordance with the opportunities open to it, and with "the circumstances of its environment." Without the "environment," no Jeanne d'Arc, - without the environment, no Shakespeare.

To come to his own, Shakespeare needed the environment of "the light people," the crowd of wits living from hand to mouth by literature, like Greene and Nash; and he needed that pell-mell of the productions of their pens: the novels, the poems, the pamphlets, and, above all, the plays, and the wine, the wild talk, the wit, the travellers' tales, the seamen's company, the vision of the Court, the gallants, the beauties; and he needed the People, of whom he does not speak in the terms of such a philanthropist as Bacon professedly was. Not as an aristocrat, a courtier, but as a simple literary man, William does not like, though he thoroughly understands, the mob. Like Alceste (in *Le Misanthrope* of Poquelin), he might say, "*L'Ami du genre humain n'est point du tout mon fait.*"

In London, not in Stratford, he could and did find his mob. This reminds one to ask, how did the Court-haunting, or the study-haunting, or law-court, and chamber of criminal examination-rooms haunting Bacon make acquaintance with Mrs. Quickly, and Doll Tearsheet, and drawers, and carters, and Bardolph, and Pistol, and copper captains, and all Shakespeare's crowd of people hanging loose on the town?

It is much easier to discover how Shakespeare found the tone and manners of courtly society (which, by the way, are purely poetic and conventional), than to find out where Bacon got his immense knowledge of what is called "low life."

If you reply, as regards Bacon, "his genius divined the Costards and Audreys, the Doll Tearsheets and tapsters, and drawers, and Bardolphs, and carters, from a hint or two, a glance," I answer that Will had much better sources for *them* in his own experience of life, and had conventional poetic sources for his courtiers - of whom, in the quick, he saw quite as much as Molière did of his *Marquis.*

But one Baconian has found out a more excellent way of accounting for Bacon's pictures of rude rustic life, and he is backed by Lord Penzance, that aged Judge. The way is short. These pictures of rural life and character were interpolated into the plays of Bacon by his collaborator, William Shakspere, actor, "who prepared the plays for the stage." This brilliant suggestion is borrowed from Mr. Appleton Morgan.

Thus have these two Baconians perceived that it *is* difficult to see how Bacon obtained his knowledge of certain worlds and aspects of character which he could scarcely draw "from the life." I am willing to ascribe miracles to the genius of Bacon; but the Baconians cited give the honour to the actor, "who prepared the plays for the stage."

Take it as you please, my Baconian friends who do not believe as I believe in "Genius." Shakespeare and Molière did not live in "Society," though both rubbed shoulders with it, or looked at it over the invisible barrier between the actor and the great people in whose houses or palaces he takes the part of Entertainer. The rest they divined, by genius.

Bacon did not, perhaps, study the society of carters, drawers, Mrs. Quickly, and Doll Tearsheet; of copper captains and their boys; not at Court, not in the study, did he meet them. How then did he create his multitude of very low-lived persons? Rustics and rural constables he *may* have lovingly studied at Gorhambury, but for his collection of other very loose fish Bacon must have kept queer company. So you have to admit "Genius," - the miracle of "Genius" in your Bacon, - to an even greater extent than I need it in the case of my Will; or, like Lord Penzance, you may suggest that Will collaborated with Bacon.

Try to imagine that Will was a born poet, like Burns, but with a very different genius, education, and environment. Burns could easily get at the Press, and be published: that was impossible for Shakespeare at Stratford, if he had written any lyrics. Suppose him to be a poet, an observer, a wit, a humorist. Tradition at Stratford says something about the humorist, and tradition, *in similar circumstances*, would have remembered no more of Burns, after the lapse of seventy years.

Imagine Will, then, to have the nature of a poet (that much I am obliged to assume), and for nine or ten years, after leaving school at thirteen, to hang about Stratford, observing nature and man, flowers and foibles, with thoughts incommunicable to Sturley and Quiney. Some sorts of park-palings, as he was married at eighteen, he could not break so lightly as Burns did, - some outlying deer he could not so readily shoot at, perhaps, but I am not surprised if he assailed other deer, and was in troubles many. Unlike Burns, he had a keen eye for the main chance. Everything was going to ruin with his father; school-mastering, if he tried it (I merely follow tradition), was not satisfactory. His opinion of dominies, if he wrote the plays, was identical with that frequently expressed, in fiction and privately, by Sir Walter Scott.

Something must be done! Perhaps the straitest Baconian will not deny that companies of players visited Stratford, or even that he may have seen and talked with them, and been attracted. He was a practical man, and he made for London, and, by tradition, we first find him heading straight for the theatre, holding horses at the door, and organising a small brigade of boys as his deputies. According to Ben Jonson he shone in conversation; he was good company, despite his rustic accent, that terrible bar! The actors find that out; he is admitted within the house as a "servitor" - a call-boy, if you like; an apprentice, if you please.

By 1592, when Greene wrote his *Groatsworth*, "Shakescene" thinks he can bombast out a blank verse with the best; he is an actor, he is also an author, or a furbisher of older plays, and, as a member of the company, is a rival to be dreaded by Greene's three author friends: whoever they were, they were professional University playwrights; the critics think that Marlowe, so near his death, was one of them.

Will, supposing him to come upon the town in 1587, has now had, say, five years of such opportunities as were open to a man connected with the stage. Among these, in that age, we may, perhaps, reckon a good deal of very mixed society - writing men, bookish young blades, young blades who haunt the theatre, and sit on the stage, as was the custom of the gallants.

What follows? Chaff follows, a kind of intimacy, a supper, perhaps, after the play, if an actor seems to be good company. This is quite natural; the most modish young gallants are not so very dainty as to stand aloof from any amusing company. They found it among prize-fighters, when Byron was young, and extremely conscious of the fact that he was a lord. Moreover there were no women on the stage to distract the attention of the gallants. The players, says Asinius Lupus, in Jonson's *Poetaster*, "corrupt young gentry very much, I know it." I take the quotation from Mr. Greenwood. They could not corrupt the young gentry, if they were not pretty intimate with them. From Ben's *Poetaster*, which bristles with envy of the players, Mr. Greenwood also quotes a railing address by a copper captain to Histrio, a poor actor, "There are some of you players honest, gentlemanlike scoundrels, and suspected to ha' some wit, as well as your poets, both at drinking and breaking of jests; *and are companions for gallants*. A man may skelder ye, now and then, of half a dozen shillings or so."

We think of Nigel Olifaunt in *The Fortunes of Nigel;* but better gallants might choose to have some acquaintance with Shakespeare.

To suppose that young men of position would not form a playhouse acquaintanceship with an amusing and interesting actor seems to me to show misunderstanding of human nature. The players were, when unprotected by men of rank, "vagabonds." The citizens of London, mainly Puritans, hated them mortally, but the young gallants were not Puritans. The Court patronised the actors who performed Masques in palaces and great houses. The wealth and splendid attire of the actors, their acquisition of land and of coats of arms infuriated the sweated playwrights. Envy of the actors appears in the Cambridge "Parnassus" plays of *c*. 1600-2. In the mouth of Will Kempe, who acted Dogberry in Shakespeare's company, and was in favour, says Heywood, with Queen Elizabeth, the Cambridge authors put this brag: "For Londoners, who of more report than Dick Burbage and Will Kempe? He is not counted a gentleman that knows not Dick Burbage and Will Kempe." It is not my opinion that Shakespeare was, as Ben Jonson came to be, as much "in Society" as is possible for a mere literary man. I do not, in fancy, see him wooing a Maid of Honour. He was a man's man, a peer might be interested in him as easily as in a jockey, a fencer, a tennis-player, a musician, *que sçais-je*? Southampton, discovering his qualities, may have been more interested, interested in a better way.

In such circumstances which are certainly in accordance with human nature, I suppose the actor to have been noticed by the young, handsome, popular Earl of Southampton; who found him interesting, and interested himself in the poet. There followed the dedication to the Earl of *Venus and Adonis;* a poem likely to please any young amorist (1693).

Mr. Greenwood cries out at the audacity of a player dedicating to an Earl, without even saying that he has asked leave to dedicate. The mere fact that the dedication was accepted, and followed by that of *Lucrece*, proves that the Earl did not share the surprise of Mr. Greenwood. He, conceivably, will argue that the Earl knew the real concealed author, and the secret of the pseudonym. But of the hypothesis of such a choice of a pseudonym, enough has been said. Whatever happened, whatever the Earl knew, if it were discreditable to be dedicated to by an actor, Southampton was discredited; for we are to prove that all in the world of letters and theatre who have left any notice of Shakespeare identified the actor with the poet.

This appears to me to be the natural way of looking at the affair. But, says Mr. Greenwood, of this intimacy or "patronage" of Southampton "not a scrap of evidence exists." Where would Mr. Greenwood expect to find a scrap of evidence? In literary anecdote? Of contemporary literary anecdote about

Shakespeare, as about Beaumont, Dekker, Chapman, Heywood, and Fletcher, there is none, or next to none. There is the tradition that Southampton gave the poet £1000 towards a purchase to which he had a mind. (Rowe seems to have got this from Davenant, - through Betterton.) In what documents would the critic expect to find a scrap of evidence? Perhaps in Southampton's book of his expenditure, and that does not exist. It is in the accounts of Prince Charlie that I find him, poor as he was, giving money to Jean Jacques Rousseau.

As to the chances of an actor's knowing "smart people," Heywood, who knew all that world, tells us that "Tarleton, in his time, was gracious with the Queen, his sovereign," Queen Elizabeth. "Will Kempe was in the favour of his sovereign."

They had advantages, they were not literary men, but low comedians. I am not pretending that, though his "flights upon the banks of Thames
So did take Eliza and our James,"

Will Shakspere "was gracious with the Queen."

We may compare the dedication of the Folio of 1623; here two players address the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery. They have the audacity to say nothing about having asked and received permission to dedicate. They say that the Earls "have prosecuted both the plays and their authour living" (while in life) "with much favour." They "have collected and published the works of 'the dead' . . . only to keep alive the memory of so worthy a Friend, and Fellow" (associate) "as was our Shakespeare, 'your servant Shakespeare.'"

Nothing can possibly be more explicit, both as to the actor's authorship of the plays, and as to the favour in which the two Earls held him. Mr. Greenwood supposes that Jonson wrote the Preface, which contains an allusion to a well-known ode of Horace, and to a phrase of Pliny. Be that as it may, the Preface signed by the two players speaks to Pembroke and Montgomery. To *them* it cannot lie; *they* know whether they patronised the actor or not; whether they believed, or not, that the plays were their "servant's." How is Mr. Greenwood to overcome this certain testimony of the Actors, to the identity of their late "Fellow" the player, with the author; and to the patronage which the Earls bestowed on him and his compositions? Mr. Greenwood says nothing except that we may reasonably suppose Ben to have written the dedication which the players signed.

Whether or not the two Earls had a personal knowledge of Shakespeare, the dedication does not say in so many words. They had seen his plays and had "favoured" both him and them, with so much favour, had "used indulgence" to the author. That is not nearly explicit enough for the precise Baconians. But the Earls knew whether what was said were true or false. I am not sure whether the Baconians regard them as having been duped as to the authorship, or as fellow-conspirators with Ben in the great Baconian joke and mystery - that "William Shakespeare" the author is not the actor whose Stratford friend, Collyns, has his name written in legal documents as "William Shakespeare."

Anyone, however, may prefer to believe that, while William Shakspere was acting in a company (1592-3), Bacon, or who you please, wrote *Venus and Adonis*, and, signing "W. Shakspeare," dedicated it to his young friend, the Earl, promising to add "some graver labour," a promise fulfilled in *Lucrece*. In 1593, Bacon was chiefly occupied, we shall see, with the affairs of a young and beautiful Earl - the Earl of Essex, not of Southampton: to Essex he did not dedicate his two poems (if *Venus* and *Lucrece* were his). He "did nothing but ruminate" (he tells the world) on Essex. How Mr. Greenwood's Unknown was occupied in 1593-4, of course we cannot possibly be aware.

I have thus tried to show that Will Shakspere, if he had as much schooling as I suggest; and if he had four or five years of life in London, about the theatre, and, above all, had genius, might, by 1592, be the rising player-author alluded to as "Shakescene." There remains a difficulty. By 1592 Will had not time to be guilty of *thirteen* plays, or even of six. But I have not credited him with the authorship, between, say, 1587 and 1593, of eleven plays, namely, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *King John*, the three plays of *Henry VI*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Mr. Greenwood cites Judge Webb for the fact that between the end of 1587 and the end of 1592 "some half-dozen Shakespearean dramas had been written," and for Dr. Furnivall's opinion that eleven had been composed.

If I believed that half a dozen, or eleven Shakespearean plays, as we have them, had been written or composed, between 1587 and 1592, I should be obliged to say that, in my opinion, they were not composed, in these five years, by Will. Mr. Greenwood writes, "Some of the dates are disputable"; and, for himself, would omit "*Titus Andronicus*, the three plays of *Henry VI*, and possibly also *The Taming of the Shrew*, while the reference to *Hamlet* also is, as I have elsewhere shown, of very doubtful force." This leaves us with six of Dr. Furnivall's list of earliest plays put out of action. The miracle is decomposing, but plays numerous enough to stagger my credulity remain.

I cannot believe that the author even of the five plays before 1592-3 was the ex-butcher's boy. Meanwhile these five plays, written by somebody before 1593, meet the reader on the threshold of Mr. Greenwood's book with Dr.

Furnivall’s eleven; and they fairly frighten him, if he be a “Stratfordian.” “Will, even Will,” says the Stratfordian, “could not have composed the five, much less the eleven, much less Mr. Edwin Reed’s thirteen ‘before 1592.’” But, at the close of his work Mr. Greenwood reviews and disbands that unlucky troop of thirteen Shakespearean plays “before 1592” as mustered by Mr. Reed, a Baconian of whom Mr. Collins wrote in terms worthy of *feu* Mr. Bludyer of *The Tomahawk.*

From the five plays left to Shakespeare’s account in , *King John* (as we know it) is now eliminated. “I find it impossible to believe that the same man was the author of the drama” (*The Troublesome Reign of King John*) “published in 1591, and that which, so far as we know, first saw the light in the Folio of 1623 . . . Hardly a single line of the original version reappears in the *King John* of Shakespeare.” “I think it is a mistake to endeavour to fortify the argument against him” (my Will, *toi que j’aime*), “by ascribing to Shakespeare such old plays as the *King John* of 1591 or the primitive *Hamlet*.”

I thought so too, when I read , and saw *King John* apparently still “coloured on the card” among “Shakespeare’s lot.” We are now left with *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Comedy of Errors*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, out of Dr. Furnivall’s list of plays up to 1593. The phantom force of miraculously early plays is “following darkness like a dream.” We do not know the date of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, we do not know the date of *Romeo and Juliet*. Mr. Gollancz dates the former “about 1592,” and the latter “at 1591.” This is a mere personal speculation. Of *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, we only know that our version is one “corrected and augmented” by William Shakespeare in 1598. I dare say it is as early as 1591-2, in its older form. Of *The Comedy of Errors*, Mr. Collins wrote, “It is all but certain that it was written between 1589 and 1592, and it is quite certain that it was written before the end of 1594.”

The legion of Shakespearean plays of date before 1593 has vanished. The miracle is very considerably abated. In place of introducing the airy hosts of plays before 1592, in , it would have been, perhaps, more instructive to write that, as far as we can calculate, Shakespeare’s earliest trials of his pinions as a dramatist may be placed about 1591-3. There would then have been no specious appearance of miracles to be credited by Stratfordians to Will. But even so, we have sufficient to “give us pause,” says Mr. Greenwood, with justice. It gives *me* “pause,” if I am to believe that, between 1587 and 1592, Will wrote *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. There is a limit even to my gullibility, and if anyone wrote all these plays, as we now possess them, before 1593, I do not suppose that Will was the man. But the dates, in fact, are unknown: the miracle is apocryphal.

CHAPTER VI: THE COURTLY PLAYS: "LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST"

We now come to consider another "miracle" discovered in the plays, - a miracle if the actor be the author. The new portent is the courtliness and refinement (too often, alas! the noblest ladies make the coarsest jokes) and wit of the speeches of the noble gentlemen and ladies in the plays. To be sure the refinement in the jests is often conspicuously absent. How could the rude actor learn his quips and pretty phrases, and farfetched conceits? This question I have tried to answer already, - the whole of these fashions abound in the literature of the day.

Here let us get rid of the assumption that a poet could not make the ladies and gentlemen of his plays converse as they do converse, whether in quips and airs and graces, or in loftier style, unless he himself frequented their society. Marlowe did not frequent the best society; *he* was no courtier, but there is the high courtly style in the speeches of the great and noble in *Edward II*. Courtiers and kings never did speak in this manner, any more than they spoke in blank verse. The style is a poetical convention, while the quips and conceits, the airs and graces, ran riot through the literature of the age of Lyly and his *Euphues* and his comedies, the age of the *Arcadia*.

A cheap and probable source of Will's courtliness is to be found in the courtly comedies of John Lyly, five of which were separately printed between 1584 and 1592. Lyly's "real significance is that he was the first to bring together on the English stage the elements of high comedy, thereby preparing the way for Shakespeare's *Much Ado about Nothing* and *As You Like It*" (and *Love's Labour's Lost*, one may add). "Whoever knows his Shakespeare and his Lyly well can hardly miss the many evidences that Shakespeare had read Lyly's plays almost as closely as Lyly had read Pliny's *Natural History*. . . . One could hardly imagine *Love's Labour's Lost* as existent in the period from 1590 to 1600, had not Lyly's work just preceded it."

"It is to Lyly's plays," writes Dr. Landmann, "that Shakespeare owes so much in the liveliness of his dialogues, in smartness of expression, and especially in that predilection for witticisms, quibbles, and playing upon words which he shows in his comedies as well as in his tragedies." There follows a dissertation on the affected styles of Guevara and Gongora, of the *Pléiade* in France, and generally of the artificial manner in Europe, till in England we reach Lyly, "in whose comedies," says Dr. Furness, "I think we should look for motives which appeared later in Shakespeare."

The Baconians who think that a poet could not derive from books and court plays his knowledge of fashions far more prevalent in literature than at Court, decide that the poet of *Love's Labour's Lost* was not Will, but the courtly "concealed poet." No doubt Baconians may argue with Mr. R. M. Theobald that "Bacon wrote Marlowe," and, by parity of reasoning many urge, though Mr. Theobald does not, that Bacon wrote Lyly, pouring into Lyly's comedies the grace and wit, the quips and conceits of his own courtly youth. "What for no?" The hypothesis is as good as the other hypotheses, "Bacon wrote Marlowe," "Bacon wrote Shakespeare."

The less impulsive Baconians and the Anti-Willians appear to ignore the well-known affected novels which were open to all the world, and are noted even in short educational histories of English literature. Shakespeare, in London, had only to look at the books on the stalls, to read or, if he had the chance, to see Lyly's plays, and read the poems of the time. I am taking him not to be a dullard but a poet. It was not hard for him, if he were a poet of genius, not only to catch the manner of Lyly's Court comedies, and "Marlowe's mighty line" (Marlowe was not "brought up on the knees of Marchionesses"!), but to improve on them. People did not commonly talk in the poetical way, heaven knows; people did not write in the poetic convention. Certainly Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth talked and wrote, as a rule (we have abundance of their letters), like women of this world. There is a curious exception in Letter VIII of the Casket Letters from Mary to Bothwell. In this (we have a copy of the original French), Mary plunges into the affected and figured style already practised by *Les Précieuses* of her day; and expands into symbolisms in a fantastic jargon. If courtiers of both sexes conversed in the style of *Euphues* (which is improbable), they learned the trick of it from *Euphues;* not the author of *Euphues* from them. Lyly's most popular prose was accessible to Shakespeare. The whole convention as to how the great should speak and bear themselves was accessible in poetry and the drama. A man of genius naturally made his ladies and courtiers more witty, more "conceited," more eloquent, more gracious than any human beings ever were anywhere, in daily life.

It seems scarcely credible that one should be obliged to urge facts so obvious against the Baconian argument that only a Bacon, intimately familiar with the society of the great, could make the great speak as, in the plays, they do - and as in real life they probably did *not*!

We now look at *Love's Labour's Lost*, published in quarto, in 1598, as "corrected and augmented by W. Shakespere." The date of composition is unknown, but the many varieties of versification, with some allusions, mark it as among the earliest of the dramas. Supposing that Shakespeare obtained his knowledge of fine manners and speech, and of the tedious quips and conceits which he satirises, from the contemporary poems, plays, and novels which abounded in them, and from *précieux* and *précieuses* who imitated them, as I suggest, even then *Love's Labour's Lost* is an extremely eccentric piece. I cannot imagine how a man who knew the foreign politics of his age as Bacon did, could have dreamed of writing anything so eccentric, that is, if it has any connection with foreign politics of the time.

The scene is the Court of *Ferdinand*, King of Navarre. In 1589-93, the eyes of England were fixed on the Court of her ally, *Henri* of Navarre, in his struggle with the League and the Guises; the War of Religion. But the poet calls the King "Ferdinand," taking perhaps from some story this non-existent son of Charles III of Navarre (died 1425): to whom, according to Monstrelet, the Burgundian chronicler of that time, the French king owed 200,000 ducats of gold. This is a transaction of the early fifteenth century, and leads to the presence of the princess of France as an envoy at the Court of Navarre in the play; the whole thing is quite unhistorical, and has the air of being borrowed from some lost story or brief novel. Bacon's brother, Anthony, was English minister at the Court of Navarre. What could tempt Bacon to pick out a non-historical King Ferdinand of Navarre, plant him in the distant days of Jeanne d'Arc, and make him, at that period, found an Academe for three years of austere study and absence of women? But, if Bacon did this, what could induce him to give to the non-existent Ferdinand, as companions, the Maréchal de Biron with de Longueville (both of them, in 1589-93, the chief adherents of Henri of Navarre), and add to them "Dumain," that is, the Duc de Mayenne, one of the Guises, the deadly foes of Henri and of the Huguenots? Even in the unhistorically minded Shakespeare, the freak is of the most eccentric, - but in Bacon this friskiness is indeed strange. I cannot, like Mr. Greenwood, find any "allusions to the Civil War of France." France and Navarre, in the play, are in full peace.

The actual date of the fabulous King Ferdinand would have been about 1430. By introducing Biron, Longueville, and the Duc de Mayenne, and Bankes's celebrated educated horse, the author shifts the date to 1591. But the Navarre of the play is a region "out of space, out of time," a fairy world of projected Academes (like that of the four young men in de la Primaudaye's *L'Académie Française*, Englished in 1586) and of peace, while the actual King of Navarre of 1591 was engaged in a struggle for life and faith; and in his ceaseless amours.

Many of Shakespeare's anachronisms are easily intelligible. He takes a novel or story about any remote period, or he chooses, as for the *Midsummer Night's*

Dream, a period earlier than that of the Trojan war. He gives to the Athens contemporary with the "Late Minoan III" period (1600 B.C.?) a Duke, and his personages live like English nobles and rustics of his own day, among the fairies of English folk-lore. It is the manner of Chaucer and of the poets and painters of any age before the end of the eighteenth century. The resulting anachronisms are natural and intelligible. We do not expect war-chariots in *Troilus and Cressida;* it is when the author makes the bronze-clad Achæans familiar with Plato and Aristotle that we are surprised. In *Love's Labour's Lost* we do not expect the author to introduce the manners of the early fifteenth century, the date of the affair of the 200,000 ducats. Let the play reflect the men and manners of 1589-93, - but why place Mayenne, a fanatical Catholic foe of Navarre, among the courtiers of the Huguenot King of Navarre?

As for de Mayenne (under the English spelling of the day Dumain) appearing as a courtier of his hated adversary Henri, Bacon, of all men, could not have made that absurd error. It was Shakespeare who took but an absent-minded interest in foreign politics. If Bacon is building his play on an affair, the ducats, of 1425-35 (roughly speaking), he should not bring in a performing horse, trained by Bankes, a Staffordshire man, which was performing its tricks at Shrewsbury - in 1591. Thus early we find that great scholar mixing up chronology in a way which, in Shakespeare even, surprises; but, in Bacon, seems quite out of keeping.

Shakespeare, as Sir Sidney Lee says, gives Mayenne as "Dumain," - Mayenne, "whose name was so frequently mentioned in popular accounts of French affairs in connection with Navarre's movements that Shakespeare was led to number him also among his supporters." Bacon would not have been so led! As Mayenne and Henri fought against each other at Ivry, in 1590, this was carrying nonsense far, even for Will, but for the earnestly instructive Bacon!

"The habits of the author could not have been more scholastic," so Judge Webb is quoted, "if he had, like Bacon, spent three years in the University of Cambridge . . . " Bacon, or whoever corrected the play in 1598, might have corrected "primater" into "pia mater," unless Bacon intended the blunder for a malapropism of "Nathaniel, a Curate." Either Will or Bacon, either in fun or ignorance, makes Nathaniel turn a common Italian proverb on Venice into gibberish. It was familiar in Florio's *Second Frutes* (1591), and *First Frutes* (1578), with the English translation. The books were as accessible to Shakspere as to Bacon. Either author might also draw from James Sandford's *Garden of Pleasure*, done out of the Italian in 1573-6.

Where the scholastic habits of Bacon at Cambridge are to be discovered in this play, I know not, unless it be in Biron's witty speech against study. If the wit implies in the author a Cambridge education, Costard and Dull and Holofernes imply familiarity with rustics and country schoolmasters. Where the author proves that he "could not have been more familiar with French politics if, like Bacon, he had spent three years in the train of an Ambassador to France," I cannot conjecture. *There are no French politics in the piece*, any more than there are "mysteries of fashionable life," such as Bacon might have heard of from Essex and Southampton. There is no "familiarity with all the gossip of the Court"; there is no greater knowledge of foreign proverbs than could be got from common English books. There is abundance, indeed overabundance of ridicule of affected styles, and quips, with which the literature of the day was crammed: call it Gongorism, Euphuism, or what you please. One does not understand how or where Judge Webb (in extreme old age) made all these discoveries, sympathetically quoted by Mr. Greenwood. "Like Bacon, the author of the play must have had a large command of books; he must have had his "Horace," his "Ovidius Naso," and his "good old 'Mantuan.'" What a prodigious "command of books"! Country schoolmasters confessedly had these books on the school desks. It was not even necessary for the author to "have access to the *Chronicles* of Monstrelet." It is not known, we have said, whether or not such plot as the play possesses, with King Ferdinand and the 100,000 ducats, or 200,000 ducats (needed to bring the Princess and the mythical King Ferdinand of Navarre together), were not adapted by the poet from an undiscovered *conte*, partly based on a passage in Monstrelet.

Perhaps it will be conceded that *Love's Labour's Lost* is not a play which can easily be attributed to Bacon. We do not know how much of the play existed before Shakespeare "augmented" it in 1598. We do not know whether what he then corrected and augmented was an early work of his own or from another hand, though probably it was his own. Molière certainly corrected and augmented and transfigured, in his illustrious career in Paris, several of the brief early sketches which he had written when he was the chief of a strolling *troupe* in Southern France.

Mr. Greenwood does not attribute the wit (such as it is), the quips, the conceits, the affectations satirised in *Love's Labour's Lost*, to Will's knowledge of the artificial style then prevalent in all the literatures of Western Europe, and in England most pleasingly used in Lyly's comedies. No, "the author must have been not only a man of high intellectual culture, but one who was intimately acquainted with the ways of the Court, and the fashionable society of his time, as also with contemporary foreign politics."

I search the play once more for the faintest hint of knowledge of foreign politics. The embassy of the daughter of the King of France (who, by the date of the affair of the ducats, should be Charles VII) has been compared to a diplomatic sally of the mother of the childless actual King of France (Henri III), in 1586, when Catherine de Medici was no chicken. I do not see in the embassy of the Princess of the story any "intimate acquaintance with contemporary foreign politics" about 1591-3. The introduction of Mayenne as an adherent of the King of Navarre, shows either a most confused ignorance of foreign politics on the part of the author, or a freakish contempt for his public. I am not aware that the author shows any "intimate acquaintance with the ways" of Elizabeth's Court, or of any other fashionable society, except the Courts which Fancy held in plays.

Mr. Greenwood appears to be repeating "the case as to this very remarkable play" as "well summed up by the late Judge Webb in his *Mystery of William Shakespeare*" (). In that paralysing judicial summary, as we have seen, "the author could not have been more familiar with French politics if, like Bacon, he had spent three years in the train of an Ambassador to France." The French politics, in the play, are to send the daughter of a King of France (the contemporary King Henri III was childless) to conduct a negotiation about 200,000 ducats, at the Court, steeped in peace, of a King of Navarre, a scholar who would fain be a recluse from women, in an Academe of his own device. Such was not the Navarre of Henri in his war with the Guises, and Henri did not shun the sex!

Such are the "contemporary foreign politics," the "French politics" which the author knows - as intimately as Bacon might have known them. They are not foreign politics, they are not French politics, they are politics of fairy-land: with which Will was at least as familiar as Bacon.

These, then, are the arguments in favour of Bacon, or the Great Unknown, which are offered with perfect solemnity of assurance: and the Baconians repeat them in their little books of popularisation and propaganda. *Quantula sapientia*!

CHAPTER VII: CONTEMPORARY RECOGNITION OF WILL AS AUTHOR

It is absolutely impossible to prove that Will, or Bacon, or the Man in the Moon, was the author of the Shakespearean plays and poems. But it is easy to prove that Will was recognised as the author, by Ben Jonson, Heywood, and Heminge and Condell the actors, to take the best witnesses. Meanwhile we have received no hint that any man except Will was ever suspected of being the author till 1856, when the twin stars of Miss Delia Bacon and Mr. Smith arose. The evidence of Ben Jonson and the rest can only prove that professed playwrights and actors, who knew Will both on and off the stage, saw nothing in him not compatible with his work. Had he been the kind of letterless country fellow, or bookless fellow whom the Baconians and Mr. Greenwood describe, the contemporary witnesses cited must have detected Will in a day; and the story of the "Concealed Poet" who really, at first, did the additions and changes in the Company's older manuscript plays, and of the inconceivably impudent pretences of Will of Stratford, would have kept the town merry for a month. Five or six threadbare scholars would have sat down at a long table in a tavern room, and, after their manner, dashed off a Comedy of Errors on the real and the false playwright.

Baconians never seem to think of the mechanical difficulties in their assumed literary hoax. If Will, like the old Hermit of Prague who never saw pen and ink, could not even write, the hoax was a physical impossibility. If he could write, but was a rough bookless man, his condition would be scarcely the more gracious, even if he were able to copy in his scrawl the fine Roman hand of the concealed poet. I am surprised that the Baconians have never made that point. Will's "copy" was almost without blot or erasion, the other actors were wont to boast. Really the absence of erasions and corrections is too easily explained on the theory that Will was *not* the author. Will merely copied the fair copies handed to him by the concealed poet. The farce was played for some twenty years, and was either undetected or all concerned kept the dread secret - and all the other companies and rival authors were concerned in exposing the imposture.

The whole story is like the dream of a child. We therefore expect the Anti-Willians to endeavour to disable the evidence of Jonson, Heywood, Heminge, and Condell. Their attempts take the shape of the most extravagant and complex conjectures; with certain petty objections to Ben's various estimates of the *merits* of the plays. He is constant in his witness to the authorship. To these efforts of despair we return later, when we hope to justify what is here deliberately advanced.

Meanwhile we study Mr. Greenwood's attempts to destroy or weaken the testimony of contemporary literary allusions, in prose or verse, to the plays as the work of the actor. Mr. Greenwood rests on an argument which perhaps could only have occurred to legal minds, originally, perhaps to the mind of Judge Webb, not in the prime vigour of his faculties. Not very many literary allusions remain, made during Will's life-time, to the plays of Shakespeare. The writers, usually, speak of "Shakespeare," or "W. Shakespeare," or "Will Shakespeare," and leave it there. In the same way, when they speak of other contemporaries, they name them, - and leave it there, without telling us "who" (Frank) Beaumont, or (Kit) Marlowe, or (Robin) Greene, or (Jack) Fletcher, or any of the others "were." All interested readers knew who they were: and also knew who "Shakespeare" or "Will Shakespeare" was. No other Will Shak(&c.) was prominently before the literary and dramatic world, in 1592-1616, except the Warwickshire provincial who played with Burbage.

But though the mere names of the poets, Ben Jonson, Kit Marlowe, Frank Beaumont, Harry Chettle, and so forth, are accepted as indicating the well-known men whom they designate, this evidence to identity does not satisfy Mr. Greenwood, and the Baconians, where Will is concerned. "We should expect to find allusions to dramatic and poetical works published under the name of 'Shakespeare'; we should expect to find Shakespeare spoken of as a poet and a dramatist; we should expect, further, to find some few allusions to Shakespeare or Shakspere the player. And these, of course, we do find; but these are not the objects of our quest. What we require is evidence to establish the identity of the player with the poet and dramatist; to prove that the player was the author of the *Plays* and *Poems*. *That* is the proposition to be established, and *that* the allusions fail, as it appears to me, to prove," says Mr. Greenwood. He adds, "At any rate they do not disprove the theory that the true authorship was hidden under a pseudonym" - which raises an entirely different question.

Makers of allusions to the plays must identify Shakespeare with the actor, explicitly; must tell us who this Shakespeare was, though they need not, and usually do not, tell us who the other authors mentioned were; and though the world of letters and the Stage knew but one William Shakspere or Shakespeare, who was far too familiar to them to require further identification. But even if the makers of allusions did all this, and said, "by W. Shakespeare the poet, we mean W. Shakespeare the actor" - *that* is not enough. For they may all be deceived, may all believe that a bookless, untutored man is the author. So we cannot get evidence correct enough for Mr. Greenwood.

Destitute as I am of legal training, I leave this notable way of disposing of the evidence to the judgement of the Bench and the Bar, a layman intermeddleth not with it. Still, I am, like other readers, on the Jury addressed, - I do not accept the arguments. *Miror magis*, as Mr. Greenwood might quote Latin. We have already seen one example of this argument, when Heywood speaks of the author of poems by Shakespeare, published in *The Passionate Pilgrim*. Heywood does nothing to identify the actor Shakspere with the author Shakespeare, says Mr. Greenwood. I shall prove that, elsewhere, Heywood does identify them, and no man knew more of the world of playwrights and actors than Heywood. I add that in his remarks on *The Passionate Pilgrim*, Heywood had no need to say "by W. Shakespeare I mean the well-known actor in the King's Company." There was no other William Shakspere or Shakespeare known to his public.

It is to no purpose that Mr. Greenwood denies, as we have seen above, that the allusions "disprove the theory that the true authorship was hidden under a pseudonym." That is an entirely different question. He is now starting quite another hare. Men of letters who alluded to the plays and poems of William Shakespeare, meant the actor; that is my position. That they may all have been mistaken: that "William Shakespeare" was Bacon's, or any one's pseudonym, is, I repeat, a wholly different question; and we must not allow the critic to glide away into it through an "at any rate"; as he does three or four times. So far, then, Mr. Greenwood's theory that it was impossible for the actor Shakspere to have been the author of the plays, encounters the difficulty that no contemporary attributed them to any other hand: that none is known to have said, "This Warwickshire man cannot be the author."

"Let us, however, examine some of these allusions to Shakspere, real or supposed," says the critic. He begins with the hackneyed words of the dying man of letters, Robert Greene, in *A Groatsworth of Wit* (1592). The pamphlet is addressed to Gentlemen of his acquaintance "that spend their wits in making plays"; he "wisheth them a better exercise," and better fortunes than his own. (Marlowe is supposed to be one of the three Gentlemen playwrights, but such suppositions do not here concern us.) Greene's is the ancient feud between the players and the authors, between capital and labour. The players are the capitalists, and buy the plays out and out, - cheap. The author has no royalties; and no control over the future of his work, which a Shakspere or a Bacon, a Jonson or a Chettle, or any handyman of the company owning the play, may alter as he pleases. It is highly probable that the actors also acquired most of the popular renown, for, even now, playgoers have much to say about the players in a piece, while they seldom know the name of the playwright. Women fall in love with the actors, not with the authors; but with "those puppets," as Greene says, "that speake from our mouths, these anticks, garnished in our colours." Ben Jonson, we shall see, makes some of the same complaints, - most natural in the circumstances: though he managed to retain the control of his dramas; how, I do not know. Greene adds that in his misfortunes, illness, and poverty, he is ungratefully "forsaken," by the players, and warns his friends that such may be *their* lot; advising them to seek "some better exercise." He then writes - and his meaning cannot easily be misunderstood, I think, but misunderstood it has been - "Yes, trust them not" (trust not the players), "FOR there is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tyger's heart wrapt in a Player's hide*" ("Player's" in place of "woman's," in an old play, *The Tragedy of Richard, Duke of York*, &c.), "supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blank verse as the best of you; and being an absolute *Johannes Factotum*, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country."

The meaning is pellucid. "Do not trust the players, my fellow playwrights, for the reasons already given, for they, in addition to their glory gained by mouthing *our* words, and their ingratitude, may now forsake you for one of themselves, a player, who thinks his blank verse as good as the best of yours" (including Marlowe's, probably). "The man is ready at their call ("an absolute *Johannes Factotum*"). "In his own conceit" he is "the only Shake-scene in a country." "Seek you better masters," than these players, who have now an author among themselves, "the only Shake-scene," where the pun on Shakespeare does not look like a fortuitous coincidence. But it may be, anything may happen.

The sense, I repeat, is pellucid. But Mr. Greenwood writes that if Shake-scene be an allusion to Shakespeare "it seems clear that it is as an actor rather than as an author he is attacked." As an *actor* the person alluded to is merely assailed with the other actors, his "fellows." But he is picked out as presenting another and a new reason why authors should distrust the players, "*for* there is" among themselves, "in a player's hide," "an upstart crow" - who thinks his blank verse as good as the best of theirs. He is, therefore, necessarily a playwright, and being a *factotum*, can readily be employed by the players to the prejudice of Greene's three friends, who are professed playwrights.

Mr. Greenwood says that "we do not know why Greene should have been so particularly bitter against the players, and why he should have thought it necessary so seriously to warn his fellow playwrights against them." But we cannot help knowing; for Greene has told us. In addition to gaining renown solely through mouthing "*our*" words, wearing "*our* feathers," they have been bitterly ungrateful to Greene in his poverty and sickness; they will, in the same circumstances, as cruelly forsake his friends; "yes, for they now have" an author, and to the playwrights a dangerous rival, in their own fellowship. Thus we know with absolute certainty why Greene wrote as he did. He says nothing about the superior financial gains of the players, which Mr. Greenwood suspects to have been the "only" cause of his bitterness. Greene gives its causes in the plainest possible terms, as did Ben Jonson later, in his verses "Poet-Ape" (Playwright-Actor). Moreover, Mr. Greenwood gives Greene's obvious motives on the very page where he says that we do not know them.

Even Mr. Greenwood, anxious as he is to prove Shake-scene to be attacked as an actor, admits that the words "supposes himself as well able to bumbast out a blank verse as the best of you," "do seem to have that implication," namely, that "Shake-scene" is a dramatic author: what else can the words mean; why, if not for the Stage, should Shake-scene write blank verse?

Finally Mr. Greenwood, after saying "it is clear that it is as an actor rather than as an author that 'Shake-scene' is attacked," concedes that it "certainly looks as if he" (Greene) "meant to suggest that this Shake-scene supposed himself able to compose, as well as to mouth verses." Nothing else can possibly be meant. "The rest of you" were authors, not actors.

If not, why, in a whole company of actors, should "Shake-scene" alone be selected for a special victim? Shake-scene is chosen out because, as an author, a factotum always ready at need, he is more apt than the professed playwrights to be employed as author by his company: this is a new reason for not trusting the players.

I am not going to take the trouble to argue as to whether, in the circumstances of the case, "Shake-scene" is meant by Greene for a pun on "Shakespeare," or not. If he had some other rising player-author, the Factotum of a cry of players, in his mind, Baconians may search for that personage in the records of the stage. That other player-author may have died young, or faded into obscurity. The term "the only Shake-scene" may be one of those curious coincidences which do occur. The presumption lies rather on the other side. I demur, when Mr. Greenwood courageously struggling for his case says that, even assuming the validity of the surmise that there is an allusion to Shakspere, "the utmost that we should be entitled to say is that Greene here accuses Player Shakspere of putting forward, as his own, some work, or perhaps some parts of a work, for which he was really indebted to another" (the Great Unknown?). I do more than demur, I defy any man to exhibit that sense in Greene's words.

"The utmost that we should be entitled to say," is, in my opinion, what we have no shadow of a title to say. Look at the poor hackneyed, tortured words of Greene again. "Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tyger's heart wrapped in a player's hide*, supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blank verse as the best of you; and being an absolute *Johannes Factotum*, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country."

How can mortal man squeeze from these words the charge that "Player Shakspere" is "putting forward, as his own, some work, or perhaps some parts of a work, for which he was really indebted to another"? It is as an actor, with other actors, that the player is "beautified with *our* feathers," - not with the feathers of some one *not* ourselves, Bacon or Mr. Greenwood's Unknown. Mr. Greenwood even says that Shake-scene is referred to "as beautified with the feathers *which he has stolen* from the dramatic writers" ("our feathers").

Greene says absolutely nothing about feathers "*which he has stolen*." The "feathers," the words of the plays, were bought, not stolen, by the actors, "anticks garnished in our colours."

Tedious it is to write many words about words so few and simple as those of Greene; meaning "do not trust the players, for one of them writes blank verse which he thinks as good as the best of yours, and fancies himself the only Shake-scene in a country."

But "Greene here accuses Player Shakspere of putting forward, as his own, some work, or perhaps some parts of a work, for which he was really indebted to another," this is "the utmost we should be entitled to say," even if the allusion be to Shakspere. How does Mr. Greenwood get the Anti-Willian hypothesis out of Greene's few and plain words?

It is much safer for him to say that "Shake-scene" is not meant for Shakespeare. Nobody can prove that it *is;* the pun *may* be a strange coincidence, - or any one may say that he thinks it nothing more; if he pleases.

Greene nowhere "refers to this Shake-scene as being an impostor, an upstart crow beautified with the feathers *which he has stolen from the dramatic writers* ("our feathers")" - that is, Greene makes no such reference to Shake-scene in his capacity of writer of blank verse. Like all players, who are all "anticks garnisht in our colours," Shake-scene, *as player*, is "beautified with our feathers." It is Mr. Greenwood who adds "beautified with the feathers which he has *stolen* from the dramatic writers." Greene does not even remotely hint at plagiarism on the part of Shake-scene: and the feathers, the plays of Greene and his friends, were not stolen but bought. We must take Greene's evidence as we find it, - it proves that by "Shake-scene" he means a "poet-ape," a playwright-actor; for Greene, like Jonson, speaks of actors as "apes." Both men saw in a certain actor and dramatist a suspected rival. Only one such successful practising actor-playwright is known to us at this date (1592-1601), - and he is Shakespeare. Unless another such existed, Greene, in 1592, alludes to William Shak(&c.) as a player and playwright. This proves that the actor from Stratford was accepted in Greene's world as an author of plays in blank verse. He cannot, therefore, have seemed incapable of his poetry.

Let us now briefly consider other contemporary allusions to Shakespeare selected by Mr. Greenwood himself. No allusion can prove that Shakespeare was the author of the work attributed to him in the allusions. The plays and poems *may* have been by James VI and I, "a parcel-poet." The allusions can prove no more than that, by his contemporaries, Shakespeare was believed to be the poet, which is impossible if he were a mere rustic ignoramus, as the Baconians aver. Omitting some remarks by Chettle on Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit*, as, if grammar goes for all, they do not refer to Shakespeare, we have the Cambridge farce or comedy on contemporary literature, the *Return from Parnassus* (1602?). The University wits laugh at Shakespeare, - not an university man, as the favourite poet, in his *Venus and Adonis*, of a silly braggart pretender to literature, Gullio.

They also introduce Kempe, the low comedy man of Shakespeare's company, speaking to Burbage, the chief tragic actor, of Shakespeare as a member of their company, who, *as an author of plays*, "puts down" the University wits "and Ben Jonson too." The date is not earlier than that of Ben's satiric play on the poets, *The Poetaster* (1601), to which reference is made. Since Kempe is to be represented as wholly ignorant, his opinion of Shakespeare's pre-eminent merit only proves, as in the case of Gullio, that the University wits decried the excellences of Shakespeare. In him they saw no scholar.

The point is that Kempe recognises Shakespeare as both actor and author.

All this "is quite consistent with the theory that Shakespeare was a pseudonym," says Mr. Greenwood. Of course it is, but it is *not* consistent with the theory that Shakespeare was an uneducated, bookless rustic, for, in that case, his mask would have fallen off in a day, in an hour. Of course the Cambridge author only proves, if you will, that *he* thought that *Kempe* thought, that his fellow player was the author. But we have better evidence of what the actors thought than in the Cambridge play.

In 1598, as we saw, Francis Meres in *Palladis Tamia* credits Shakespeare with *Venus and Adonis*, with privately circulated sonnets, and with a number of the comedies and tragedies. How the allusions "negative the hypothesis that Shakespeare was a *nom de plume* is not apparent," says Mr. Greenwood, always constant to his method. I repeat that he wanders from the point, which is, here, that the only William Shak(&c.) known to us at the time, in London, was credited with the plays and poems on all sides, which proves that no incompatibility between the man and the works was recognised.

Then Weaver (1599) alludes to him as author of *Venus*, *Lucrece*, *Romeo*, *Richard*, “more whose names I know not.” Davies (1610) calls him “our English Terence” (the famous comedian), and mentions him as having “played some Kingly parts in sport.” Freeman (1614) credits him with *Venus* and *Lucrece*. “Besides in plays thy wit winds like Meander.” I repeat Heywood’s evidence. Thomas Heywood, author of that remarkable domestic play, *A Woman Killed with Kindness,* was, from the old days of Henslowe, in the fifteen-nineties, a playwright and an actor; he survived into the reign of Charles I. Writing on the familiar names of the poets, “Jack Fletcher,” “Frank Beaumont,” “Kit Marlowe,” “Tom Nash,” he says,

“Mellifluous Shakespeare whose enchanting quill
Commanded mirth and passion, was but ‘Will.’”

Does Heywood not identify the actor with the author? No quibbles serve against the evidence.

We need not pursue the allusions later than Shakespeare’s death, or invoke, at present, Ben Jonson’s panegyric of 1623. As to Davies, his dull and obscure epigram is addressed “To our English Terence, Mr. Will Shakespeare.” He accosts Shakespeare as “Good Will.” He remarks that, “as some say,” if Will “had not played some Kingly parts in sport,” he had been “a companion for a *King*,” and “been a King among the meaner sort.” Nobody, now, can see the allusion and the joke. Shakespeare’s company, in 1604, acted a play on the Gowrie Conspiracy of 1600. King James suppressed the play after the second night, as, of course, he was brought on the stage throughout the action: and in very droll and dreadful situations. Did Will take the King’s part, and annoy gentle King Jamie, “as some say”? Nobody knows. But Mr. Greenwood, to disable Davies’s recognition of Mr. Will as a playwright, “Our English Terence,” quotes, from Florio’s *Montaigne*, a silly old piece of Roman literary gossip, Terence’s plays were written by Scipio and Laelius. In fact, Terence alludes in his prologue to the *Adelphi*, to a spiteful report that he was aided by great persons. The prologue may be the source of the fable - that does not matter. Davies might get the fable in Montaigne, and, knowing that some Great One wrote Will’s plays, might therefore, in irony, address him as “Our English Terence.” This is a pretty free conjecture! In Roman comedy he had only two names known to him to choose from; he took Terence, not Plautus. But if Davies was in the great Secret, a world of others must have shared *le Secret de Polichinelle*. Yet none hints at it, and only a very weak cause could catch at so tiny a straw as the off-chance that Davies *knew*, and used “Terence” as a gibe.

The allusions, even the few selected, cannot prove that the actor wrote the plays, but do prove that he was believed to have done so, and therefore that he was not so ignorant and bookless as to demonstrate that he was incapable of the poetry and the knowledge displayed in his works. Mr. Greenwood himself observes that a Baconian critic goes too far when he makes Will incapable of writing. Such a Will could deceive no mortal. But does Mr. Greenwood, who finds in the Author of the plays “much learning, and remarkable classical attainments,” or “a wide familiarity with the classics,” suppose that his absolutely bookless Will could have persuaded his intimates that he was the author of plays exhibiting “a wide familiarity with the classics,” or “remarkable classical attainments.” The thing is wholly impossible.

I do not remember that a single contemporary allusion to Shakespeare speaks of him as “learned,” erudite, scholarly, and so forth. The epithets for him are “sweet,” “gentle,” “honeyed,” “sugared,” “honey-tongued” - this is the convention. The tradition followed by Milton, who was eight years of age when Shakespeare died, and who wrote *L’Allegro* just after leaving Cambridge, makes Shakespeare “sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy’s child,” with “native wood-notes wild”; and gives to Jonson “the *learned* sock.” Fuller, like Milton, was born eight years before the death of Shakespeare, namely, in 1608. Like Milton he was a Cambridge man. The First Folio of Shakespeare’s works appeared when each of these two bookish men was aged fifteen. It would necessarily revive interest in Shakespeare, now first known as far as about half of his plays went: he would be discussed among lovers of literature at Cambridge. Mr. Greenwood quotes Fuller’s remark that Shakespeare’s “learning was very little,” that, if alive, he would confess himself “to be never any scholar.” I cannot grant that Fuller is dividing the persons of actor and author. Men of Shakespeare’s generation, such as Jonson, did not think him learned; nor did men of the next generation. If Mr. Collins’s view be correct, the men of Shakespeare’s and of Milton’s generations were too ignorant to perceive that Shakespeare was deeply learned in the literature of Rome, and in the literature of Greece. Every one was too ignorant, till Mr. Collins came.

CHAPTER VIII: “THE SILENCE OF PHILIP HENSLOWE”

When Shakespeare is mentioned as an author by contemporary writers, the Baconian stratagem, we have seen, is to cry, “Ah, but you cannot prove the author mentioned to be the actor.” We have seen that Meres (1598) speaks of Shakespeare as the leading tragic and comic poet (“Poor poet-ape that would be thought our chief,” quoth Jonson), as author of *Venus and Adonis*, and as a sonneteer. “All this does nothing whatever to support the idea that the Stratford player was the author of the plays and poems alluded to,” says Mr. Greenwood, playing that card again.

The allusions, I repeat, *do* prove that Shak(&c.), the actor, was believed to be the author, till any other noted William Shak(&c.) is found to have been conspicuously before the town. “There is nothing at all to prove that Meres, native of Lincolnshire, had any personal knowledge of Shakespeare.” There is nothing at all to prove that Meres, native of Lincolnshire, had any personal knowledge of nine-tenths of the English authors, famous or forgotten, whom he mentions. “On the question - who was Shakespeare? - he throws no light.” He “throws no light on the question” “who was?” any of the poets mentioned by him, except one, quite forgotten, whose College he names . . . To myself this “sad repeated air,” - “critics who praise Shakespeare do not say *who Shakespeare* was,” - would appear to be, not an argument, but a subterfuge: though Mr. Greenwood honestly believes it to be an argument, - otherwise he would not use it: much less would he repeat it with frequent iteration. The more a man was notorious, as was Will Shakspere the actor, the less the need for any critic to tell his public “who Shakespeare was.”

As Mr. Greenwood tries to disable the evidence when Shakespeare is alluded to as an author, so he tries to better his case when, in the account-book of Philip Henslowe, an owner of theatres, money-lender, pawn-broker, purchaser of plays from authors, and so forth, Shakespeare is *not* mentioned at all. Here is a mystery which, properly handled, may advance the great cause. Henslowe has notes of loans of money to several actors, some of them of Shakespeare’s company, “The Lord Chamberlain’s.” There is no such note of a loan to Shakespeare. Does this prove that he was not an actor? If so, Burbage was not an actor; Henslowe never names him.

There are notes of payments of money to Henslowe after each performance of any play in one of his theatres. In these notes *the name of Shakespeare is never once mentioned as the author of any play*. How weird! But in *these* notes the names of the authors of the plays acted are never mentioned. Does this suggest that Bacon wrote all these plays?

On the other hand, there are frequent mentions of advances of money to authors who were working at plays for Henslowe, singly, or in pairs, threes, fours, or fives. We find Drayton, Dekker, Chapman, and nine authors now forgotten by all but antiquarians. We have also Ben Jonson (1597), Marston, Munday, Middleton, Webster, and others, authors in Henslowe's pay. *But the same of Shakespeare never appears*. Mysterious! The other men's names, writes Dr. Furness, occur "because they were all writers for Henslowe's theatre, but we must wait at all events for the discovery of some other similar record, before we can produce corresponding memoranda regarding Shaksper" (*sic*) "and his productions."

The natural mind of the ordinary man explains all by saying, "Henslowe records no loans of money to Shakspere the actor, because he lent him no money. He records no payments for plays to Shakespeare the author-actor, because to Henslowe the actor sold no plays." That is the whole explanation of the Silence of Philip Henslowe. If Shakspere did sell a play to Henslowe, why should that financier omit the fact from his accounts? Suppose that the actor was illiterate as Baconians fervently believe, and sold Bacon's plays, what prevented him from selling a play of Bacon's (under his own name, as usual) to Henslowe? To obtain a Baconian reply you must wander into conjecture, and imagine that Bacon forbade the transaction. Then *why* did he forbid it? Because he could get a better price from Shakspere's company? The same cause would produce the same effect on Shakspere himself; whether he were the author, or were Bacon's, or any man's go-between. On any score but that of money, why was Henslowe good enough for Ben Jonson, Dekker, Heywood, Middleton, and Webster, and not good enough for Bacon, who did not appear in the matter at all, but was represented in it by the actor, Will? As a gentleman and a man of the Court, Bacon would be as much discredited if he were known to sell (for £6 on an average) his noble works to the Lord Chamberlain's Company, as if he sold them to Henslowe.

I know not whether the great lawyer, courtier, scholar, and philosopher is supposed by Baconians to have given Will Shakspere a commission on his sales of plays; or to have let him keep the whole sum in each case. I know not whether the players paid Shakspere a sum down for his (or Bacon's) plays, or whether Will received a double share, or other, or any share of the profits on them, as Henslowe did when he let a house to the players. Nobody knows any of these things.

"If Shakspere the player had been a dramatist, surely Henslowe would have employed him also, like the others, in that behalf." Henslowe would, if he could have got the "copy" cheap enough. Was any one of "the others," the playwrights, a player, holding a share in his company? If not, the fact makes an essential difference, for Shakspere *was* a shareholder. Collier, in his preface to Henslowe's so-called "Diary," mentions a playwright who was bound to scribble for Henslowe only (Henry Porter), and another, Chettle, who was bound to write only for the company protected by the Earl of Nottingham. Modern publishers and managers sometimes make the same terms with novelists and playwrights.

It appears to me that Shakspere's company would be likely, as his plays were very popular, to make the same sort of agreement with him, and to give him such terms as he would be glad to accept, - whether the wares were his own - or Bacon's. He was a keen man of business. In such a case, he would not write for Henslowe's pittance. He had a better market. The plays, whether written by himself, or Bacon, or the Man in the Moon, were at his disposal, and he did not dispose of them to Henslowe, wherefore Henslowe cannot mention him in his accounts. That is all.

Quoting an American Judge (Dr. Stotsenburg, apparently), Mr. Greenwood cites the circumstance that, in two volumes of Alleyn's papers "there is not one mention of such a poet as William Shaksper in his list of actors, poets, and theatrical comrades." If this means that Shakspere is not mentioned by Alleyn among actors, are we to infer that William was not an actor? Even Baconians insist that he was an actor. "How strange, how more than strange," cries Mr. Greenwood, "that Henslowe should make no mention in all this long diary, embracing all the time from 1591 to 1609, of the actor-author . . . No matter. *Credo quia impossibile*!" *Credo* what? and what is *impossible*? Henslowe's volume is no Diary; he does not tell a single anecdote of any description; he merely enters loans, gains, payments. Does Henslowe mention, say, Ben Jonson, *when he is not doing business with Ben*? Does he mention any actor or author except in connection with money matters? Then, if he did no business with Shakspere the actor, in borrowing or lending, and did no business with Shakespeare the author, in borrowing, lending, buying or selling, "How strange, how more than strange" it would be if Henslowe *did* mention Shakespeare! He was not keeping a journal of literary and dramatic jottings. He was keeping an account of his expenses and receipts. He never names Richard Burbage any more than he mentions Shakespeare.

Mr. Greenwood again expresses his views about this dark suspicious mystery, the absence of Shakespeare or Shakspere (or Shak, as you like it), from

Henslowe's accounts, if Shak(&c.) wrote plays. But the mystery, if mystery there be, is just as obscure if the actor were the channel through which Bacon's plays reached the stage, for the pretended author of these masterpieces. Shak - was not the man to do all the troking, bargaining, lying, going here and there, and making himself a motley to the view for £0, 0s, 0*d*. If he were a sham, a figure-head, a liar, a fetcher-and-carrier of manuscripts, *he would be paid for it.* But he did not deal with Henslowe in his bargainings, and *that* is why Henslowe does not mention him. Mr. Greenwood, in one place, agrees, so far, with me. "Why did Henslowe not mention Shakespeare as the writer of other plays" (than *Titus Andronicus* and *Henry VI*)? "I think the answer is simple enough." (So do I.) "Neither Shakspere nor 'Shakespeare' ever wrote for Henslowe!" The obvious is perceived at last; and the reason given is "that he was above Henslowe's 'skyline,'" "he" being the Author. We only differ as to *why* the author was above Henslowe's "skyline." I say, because good Will had a better market, that of his Company. I understand Mr. Greenwood to think, - because the Great Unknown was too great a man to deal with Henslowe. If to write for the stage were discreditable, to deal (unknown) with Henslowe was no more disgraceful than to deal with "a cry of players"; and as (unknown) Will did the bargaining, the Great Unknown was as safe with Will in one case as in the other. If Will did not receive anything for the plays from his own company (who firmly believed in his authorship), they must have said, "Will! dost thou serve the Muses and thy obliged fellows for naught? Dost thou give us two popular plays yearly, - gratis?"

Do you not see that, in the interests of the Great Secret itself, Will *had* to take the pay for the plays (pretended his) from somebody. Will Shakspere making his dear fellows and friends a present of two masterpieces yearly was too incredible. So I suppose he did have royalties on the receipts, or otherwise got his money; and, as he certainly did not get them from Henslowe, Henslowe had no conceivable reason for entering Will's name in his accounts.

Such are the reflections of a plain man, but to an imaginative soul there seems to be a brooding mist, with a heart of fire, which half conceals and half reveals the darkened chamber wherein abides "The Silence of Philip Henslowe." "The Silence of Philip Henslowe," Mr. Greenwood writes, "is a very remarkable phenomenon . . . " It is a phenomenon precisely as remarkable as the absence of Mr. Greenwood's name from the accounts of a boot-maker with whom he has never had any dealings.

"If, however, there was a man in high position, 'a concealed poet,'" who "took the works of others and rewrote and transformed them, besides bringing out original plays of his own . . . then it is natural enough that his name should not appear among those for the most part impecunious dramatists to whom Henslowe paid money for playwriting." Nothing can be more natural, and, in fact, the name of Bacon, or Southampton, or James VI, or Sir John Ramsay, or Sir Walter Raleigh, or Sir Fulke Greville, or any other "man in high position," does *not* appear in Henslowe's accounts. Nor does the name of William Shak(&c.). But why should it not appear if Will sold either his own plays, or those of the noble friend to whom he lent his name and personality - to Henslowe? Why not?

Then consider the figure, to my mind impossible, of the great "concealed poet" "of high position," who can "bring out original plays of his own," and yet "takes the works of others," say of "sporting Kyd," or of Dekker and Chettle, and such poor devils, - *takes* them as a Yankee pirate-publisher takes my rhymes, - and "rewrites and transforms them."

Bacon (or Bungay) *cannot* "take" them without permission of their legal owners, - Shakspere's or any other company; - of any one, in short, who, as Ben Jonson says, "buys up reversions of old plays." How is he to manage these shabby dealings? Apparently he employs Will Shakspere, spells his own "*nom de plume*" "Shakespeare," and has his rewritings and transformations of the destitute author's work acted by Will's company. What a situation for Bacon, or Sir Fulke Greville, or James VI, or any "man in high position" whom fancy can suggest! The plays by the original authors, whoever they were, could only be obtained by the "concealed poet" and "man in high position" from the legal owners, Shakspere's company, usually. The concealed poet had to negotiate with the owners, and Bacon (or whoever he was) employed that scamp Will Shakspere, first, I think, to extract the plays from the owners, and then to pretend that he himself, even Will, had "rewritten and transformed them."

What an associate was our Will for the concealed poet; how certain it was that Will would blackmail the "man in high position"! "Doubtless" he did: we find Bacon arrested for debt, more than once, while Will buys New Place, in Stratford, with the money extorted from the concealed poet of high position. Bacon did associate with that serpent Phillips, a reptile of Walsingham, who forged a postscript to Mary Stuart's letter to Babington. But now, if not Bacon, then some other concealed poet of high position, with a mysterious passion for rewriting and transforming plays by sad, needy authors, is in close contact with Will Shakspere, the Warwickshire poacher and ignorant butcher's boy, country schoolmaster, draper's apprentice, *enfin, tout le tremblement.*

"How strange, how more than strange!"

The sum of the matter seems to me to be that from as early as March 3, 1591, we find Henslowe receiving small sums of money for the performances of many plays. He was paid as owner or lessee of the House used by this or that company. On March 3, 1591, the play acted by “Lord Strange’s (Derby’s) men” was *Henry VI*. Several other plays with names familiar in Shakespeare’s Works, such as *Titus Andronicus*, all the three parts of *Henry VI*, *King Leare* (April 6, 1593), *Henry V* (May 14, 1592), *The Taming of a Shrew* (June 11, 1594), and *Hamlet*, paid toll to Henslowe. He “received” so much, on each occasion, when they were acted in a theatre of his. But he never records his purchase of these plays; and it is not generally believed that Shakespeare was the author of all these plays, in the form which they bore in 1591-4: though there is much difference of opinion.

There is one rather interesting case. On August 25, 1594, Henslowe enters “*ne*” (that is, “a new play”) “Received at the Venesyon Comodey, eighteen pence.” That was his share of the receipts. The Lord Chamberlain’s Company, that of Shakespeare, was playing in Henslowe’s theatre at Newington Butts. If the “Venesyon Comodey” (Venetian Comedy) were *The Merchant of Venice*, this is the first mention of it. But nobody knows what Henslowe meant by “the Venesyon Comodey.” He does not mention the author’s name, because, in this part of his accounts he never does mention the author or authors. He only names them when he buys from, or lends to, or has other money dealings with the authors. He had none with Shakespeare, hence the Silence of Philip Henslowe.

CHAPTER IX: THE LATER LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE - HIS MONUMENT AND PORTRAITS

In the chapter on the Preoccupations of Bacon the reader may find help in making up his mind as to whether Bacon, with his many and onerous duties and occupations, his scientific studies, and his absorbing scientific preoccupation, is a probable author of the Shakespearean plays. Mr. Greenwood finds the young Shakspere impossible - because of his ignorance - which made him such a really good pseudo-author, and such a successful mask for Bacon, or Bacon's unknown equivalent. The Shakspere of later life, the well-to-do Shakspere, the purchaser of the right to bear arms; so bad at paying one debt at least; so eager a creditor; a would-be encloser of a common; a man totally bookless, is, to Mr. Greenwood's mind, an impossible author of the later plays.

Here, first, are moral objections on the ground of character as revealed in some legal documents concerning business. Now, I am very ready to confess that William's dealings with his debtors, and with one creditor, are wholly unlike what I should expect from the author of the plays. Moreover, the conduct of Shelley in regard to his wife was, in my opinion, very mean and cruel, and the last thing that we could have expected from one who, in verse, was such a tender philanthropist, and in life was - women apart - the best-hearted of men. The conduct of Robert Burns, alas, too often disappoints the lover of his *Cottar's Saturday Night* and other moral pieces. He was an inconsistent walker.

I sincerely wish that Shakespeare had been less hard in money matters, just as I wish that in financial matters Scott had been more like himself, that he had not done the last things that we should have expected him to do. As a member of the Scottish Bar it was inconsistent with his honour to be the secret proprietor of a publishing and a printing business. This is the unexplained moral paradox in the career of a man of chivalrous honour and strict probity: but the fault did not prevent Scott from writing his novels and poems. Why, then, should the few bare records of Shakspere's monetary transactions make *his* authorship impossible? The objection seems weakly sentimental.

Macaulay scolds Scott as fiercely as Mr. Greenwood scolds Shakspere, - for the more part, ignorantly and unjustly. Still, there is matter to cause surprise and regret. Both Scott and Shakspere are accused of writing for gain, and of spending money on lands and houses with the desire to found families. But in the mysterious mixture of each human personality, any sober soul who reflects on his own sins and failings will not think other men's failings incompatible with intellectual excellence. Bacon's own conduct in money matters was that of a man equally grasping and extravagant. Ben Jonson thus describes Shakespeare as a social character: "He was indeed honest, and of an open and free nature . . . I loved the man and do honour his memory on this side idolatry as much as any." Perhaps Ben never owed money to Shakspere and refused to pay!

We must not judge a man's whole intellectual character, and declare him to be incapable of poetry, on the score of a few legal papers about matters of business. Apparently Shakspere helped that Elizabethan Mr. Micawber, his father, out of a pecuniary slough of despond, in which the ex-High Bailiff of the town was floundering, - pursued by the distraint of one of the friendly family of Quiney - Adrian Quiney. They were neighbours and made a common dunghill in Henley Street. I do not, like Mr. Greenwood, see anything "at all out of the way" in the circumstance "that a man should be writing *Hamlet*, and at the same time bringing actions for petty sums lent on loan at some unspecified interest." Nor do I see anything at all out of the way in Bacon's prosecution of his friend and benefactor, Essex (1601), while Bacon was writing *Hamlet*. Indeed, Shakspere's case is the less "out of the way" of the two. He wanted his loan to be repaid, and told his lawyer to bring an action. Bacon wanted to keep his head (of inestimable value) on his shoulders; or to keep his body out of the Tower; or he merely, as he declares, wanted to do his duty as a lawyer of the Crown. In any case, Bacon was in a tragic position almost unexampled; and was at once overwhelmed by work, and, one must suppose, by acute distress of mind, in the case of Essex. He must have felt this the more keenly, if, as some Baconians vow, *he wrote the Sonnets to Essex*. Whether he were writing his *Hamlet* when engaged in Essex's case (1601), or any other of his dramatic masterpieces, even this astonishing man must have been sorely bestead to combine so many branches of business.

Thus I would reply to Mr. Greenwood's amazement that Shakspere, a hard creditor, and so forth, should none the less have been able to write his plays. But if it is meant that a few business transactions must have absorbed the whole consciousness of Shakespeare, and left him neither time nor inclination for poetry, consider the scientific preoccupation of Bacon, his parliamentary duties, his ceaseless activity as "one of the legal body-guard of the Queen" at a time when he had often to be examining persons accused of conspiracy, - and do not forget his long and poignant anxiety about Essex, his constant efforts to reconcile him with Elizabeth, and to advocate his cause without losing her favour; and, finally, the anguish of prosecuting his friend, and of knowing how hardly the world judged his own conduct. Follow him into his relations with James I; his eager pursuit of favour, the multiplicity of his affairs, his pecuniary distresses, and the profound study and severe labour entailed by the preparation for and the composition of *The Advancement of Learning* (1603-5). He must be a stout-hearted Baconian who can believe that, between 1599 and 1605, Bacon was writing *Hamlet*, and other masterpieces of tragedy or comedy. But all is possible to genius. What Mr. Greenwood's Great Unknown was doing at this period, "neither does he know, nor do I know, but he only." He, no doubt, had abundance of leisure.

At last Shakspere died (1616), and had not the mead of one melodious tear, as far as we know, from the London wits, in the shape of obituary verses. This fills Mr. Greenwood with amazement. "Was it because 'the friends of the Muses' were for the most part aware that Shakespeare had not died with Shakspere?" Did Jonson perchance think that his idea might be realised when he wrote,

”What a sight it were,
To see thee in our waters yet appear"?

and so on. Did Jonson expect and hope to see the genuine "Shakespeare" return to the stage, seven years after the death of Shakspere the actor, the Swan of Avon? As Jonson was fairly sane, we can no more suspect him of having hoped for this miracle than believe that most of the poets knew the actor not to be the author. Moreover Jonson, while desiring that Shakespeare might "shine forth" again and cheer the drooping stage, added,

"Which since thy flight from hence hath mourned like Night,
And despairs day, but for thy volume's light,"

that is - the Folio of 1623. Ben did not weave the amazing tissue of involved and contradictory falsities attributed to him by Baconians. Beaumont died in the same year as Shakspere, who died in the depths of the country, weary of London. Has Mr. Greenwood found obituary poems dropped on the grave of the famous Beaumont? Did Fletcher, did Jonson, produce one melodious tear for the loss of their friend; in Fletcher's case his constant partner? No? Were the poets, then, aware that Beaumont was a humbug, whose poems and plays were written by Bacon?

I am not to discuss Shakespeare's Will, the "second-best bed," and so forth.

But as Shakespeare's Will says not a word about his books, it is decided by Mr. Greenwood that he had no books. Mr. Greenwood is a lawyer; so was my late friend Mr. Charles Elton, Q.C., of White Staunton, who remarks that Shakespeare bequeathed "all the rest of my goods, chattels, leases, &c., to my son-in-law, John Hall, gent." (He really *was* a "gent." with authentic coat-armour.)

It is with Mr. Elton's opinion, not with my ignorance, that Mr. Greenwood must argue in proof of the view that "goods" are necessarily exclusive of books, for Mr. Elton takes it as a quite natural fact that Shakespeare's books passed, with his other goods, to Mr. Hall, and thence to a Mr. Nash, to whom Mr. Hall left "my study of books" (library). I only give this as a lawyer's opinion.

There is in the Bodleian an Aldine Ovid, "with Shakespeare's" signature (merely Wm. She.), and a note, "This little volume of Ovid was given to me by W. Hall, who sayd it was once Will Shakespeare's." I do not know that the signature (like that on Florio's *Montaigne*, in the British Museum) has been detected as a forgery; nor do I know that Shakespeare's not specially mentioning his books proves that he had none. Lawyers appear to differ as to this inference: both Mr. Elton and Mr. Greenwood seem equally confident. But if it were perfectly natural that the actor, Shakspere, should have no books, then he certainly made no effort, by the local colour of owning a few volumes, to persuade mankind that he *was* the author. Yet they believed that he was - really there is no wriggling out of it. As regards any of his own MSS. which Shakespeare may have had (one would expect them to be at his theatre), and their monetary value, if they were not, as usual, the property of his company, and of him as a member thereof, we can discuss that question in the section headed "The First Folio."

It appears that Shakespeare's daughter, Judith, could write no more than her grandfather. Nor, I repeat, could the Lady Jane Gordon, daughter of the great Earl of Huntly, when she was married to the Earl of Bothwell in 1566. At all events, Lady Jane "made her mark." It may be feared that Judith, brought up in that very illiterate town of Stratford, under an illiterate mother, was neglected in her education. Sad, but very common in women of her rank, and scarcely a proof that her father did not write the plays.

As "nothing is known of the disposition and character" of Shakespeare's granddaughter, Lady Barnard, who died in 1670, it is not so paralysingly strange that nothing is known of any relics or anecdotes of Shakespeare which she may have possessed. Mr. Greenwood "would have supposed that she would have had much to say about the great poet," exhibited his books (if any), and so forth. Perhaps she did, - but how, if we "know nothing about her disposition and character," can we tell? No interviewers rushed to her house (Abington Hall, Northampton-shire) with pencils and notebooks to record her utterances; no reporter interviewed her for the press. It is surprising, is it not?

The inference might be drawn, in the Baconian manner, that, during the Commonwealth and Restoration, "the friends of the Muses" knew that the actor was *not* the author, and therefore did not interview his granddaughter in the country.

"But, at any rate, we have the Stratford monument," says Mr. Greenwood, and delves into this problem. Even the Stratford monument of Shakespeare in the parish church is haunted by Baconian mysteries. If the gentle reader will throw his eye over the photograph of the monument as it now exists, he may not be able to say to the face of the poet -

"Thou wast that all to me, Will,
For which my soul did pine."

But if he has any knowledge of Jacobean busts on monuments, he will probably agree with me in saying, "This effigy, though executed by somebody who was not a Pheidias, and who perhaps worked merely from descriptions, is, at all events, Jacobean." The same may assuredly be said of the monument; it is in good Jacobean style: the pillars with their capitals are graceful: all the rest is in keeping; and the two inscriptions are in the square capital letters of inscriptions of the period; not in italic characters. Distrusting my own *expertise*, I have consulted Sir Sidney Colvin, and Mr. Holmes of the National Portrait Gallery. They, with Mr. Spielmann, think the work to be of the early seventeenth century.

Next, glance at the figure opposite. This is a reproduction of "the earliest representation of the Bust" (and monument) in Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656). Compare the two objects, point by point, from the potato on top with holes in it, of Dugdale, which is meant for a skull, through all the details, - bust and all. Does Dugdale's print, whether engraved by Hollar or not, represent a Jacobean work? Look at the two ludicrous children, their legs dangling in air; at the lions' heads above the capitals of the pillars; at the lettering of the two visible words of the inscription, and at the gloomy hypochondriac or lunatic, clasping a cushion to his abdomen. That hideous design was not executed by an artist who "had his eye on the object," if the object were a Jacobean monument: while the actual monument was fashioned in no period of art but the Jacobean. From Digges' rhymes in the Folio of 1623, we know that Shakespeare already had his "Stratford monument." *The existing* *object is what he had;* the monument in Dugdale is what, I hope, no architect of 1616-23 could have imagined or designed.

Dugdale's engraving is not a correct copy of any genuine Jacobean work of art. Is Dugdale accurate in his reproductions of other monuments in Stratford Church? To satisfy himself on this point, Sir George Trevelyan, as he wrote to me (June 13, 1912), "made a sketch of the Carew Renaissance monument in Stratford Church, and found that the discrepancies between the original tomb and the representation in Dugdale's *Warwickshire* are far and away greater than in the monument to William Shakespeare."

Mr. Greenwood, while justly observing that "the little sitting figures . . . are placed as no monumental sculptor would place them," "on the whole sees no reason at all why we should doubt the substantial accuracy of Dugdale's figure . . . It is impossible to suppose that Hollar would have drawn and that Dugdale would have published a mere travesty of the Stratford Monument."

I do not know who drew the design, but a travesty of Jacobean work it is in every detail of the monument. A travesty is what Dugdale gives as a representation of the Carew monument. Mr. Greenwood, elsewhere, repeating his criticism of the impossible figures of children, says: "This is certainly mere matter of detail, and, in the absence of other evidence, would give us no warrant for doubting the substantial accuracy of Dugdale's presentment of the 'Shakespeare' bust."

Why are we to believe that Dugdale's artist was merely fantastic in his design of the children (and also remote from Jacobean taste in every detail), and yet to credit him with "substantial accuracy" in his half-length of a gloomy creature clutching a cushion to his stomach? With his inaccuracies as to the Carew monument, why are we to accept him as accurate in his representation of the bust? Moreover, other evidence is not wanting. It is positively certain that the monument existing in 1748, was then known as "the original monument," and that no other monument was put in its place, at that date or later.

Now Mrs. Stopes argues that in 1748 the monument was "entirely reconstructed," and so must have become no longer what Dugdale's man drew, but what we see to-day. It is positively certain that her opinion is erroneous.

If ever what we see to-day was substituted for anything like what Dugdale's man drew, the date of the substitution is unknown.

Mrs. Stopes herself discovered the documents which disprove her theory. They were known to Halliwell-Phillipps, who quotes an unnamed "contemporary account." This account Mrs. Stopes, with her tireless industry, found in the Wheler manuscripts, among papers of the Rev. Joseph Greene, in 1746 Head Master of the Grammar School. In one paper of September 1740 "the original monument" is said to be "much impaired and decayed." There was a scheme for making "a new monument" in Westminster Abbey. *That*, I venture to think, would have been in Hanoverian, not in Jacobean taste and style. But there was no money for a new monument. Mrs. Stopes also found a paper of November 20, 1748, showing that in September 1746, Mr. Ward (grandfather of Mrs. Siddons) was at Stratford with "a cry of players." He devoted the proceeds of a performance of *Othello* to the reparation of the then existing monument. The amount was twelve pounds ten shillings. The affair dragged on, one of the Churchwardens, a blacksmith, held the £12, 10*s*., and was troublesome. The document of November 20, 1748, was drawn up to be signed, but was not signed, by the persons who appear to be chiefly concerned in the matter. It directed that Mr. Hall, a local limner or painter, is to "take care, according to his ability, that the monument shall become as like as possible to what it was when first erected." This appears to have been the idea of Mr. Greene. Another form of words was later adopted, directing Mr. Hall, the painter, "to repair and beautify, or to have the direction of repairing and beautifying, *the original monument* of Shakespeare the poet." Mrs. Stopes infers, justly in my opinion, that Hall "would fill up the gaps, restore what was amissing as he thought it ought to be, and finally repaint it according to the original colours, traces of which he might still be able to see." In his *History and Antiquities of Stratford-on-Avon*, Mr. Wheler tells us that this was what Hall did. "In the year 1748 the monument was carefully repaired, and the original colours of the bust, &c., as much as possible preserved by Mr. John Hall, limner, of Stratford."

It follows that we see the original monument and bust, but the painting is of 1861, for the bust, says Wheler, was in 1793 "painted in white," to please Malone. It was repainted in 1861.

Mrs. Stopes, unluckily, is not content with what Hall was told to do, and what, according to Wheler, he did. She writes: "It would only be giving good value for his money" (£12, 10*s*.) "to his churchwardens if Hall added (*sic*) a cloak, a pen, and manuscript." He "could not help changing" the face, and so on.

Now it was physically impossible to *add* a cloak, a pen, and manuscript to such a stone bust as Dugdale's man shows; to take away the cushion pressed to the stomach, and to alter the head. Mr. Hall, if he was to give us the present bust, had to make an entirely new bust, and, to give us the present monument in place of that shown in Dugdale's print, had to construct an entirely new monument. Now Hall was a painter, not (like Giulio Romano) also an architect and sculptor. *Pour tout potage* he had but £12, 10*s*. He could not do, and he did not do these things! he did not destroy "the original monument" and make a new monument in Jacobean style. He was straitly ordered to "repair and beautify the original monument"; he did repair it, and repainted the colours. That is all. I do not quote what Halliwell-Phillipps tells us about the repairing of the forefinger and thumb of the right hand, and the pen; work which, he says, had to be renewed by William Roberts of Oxford in 1790. He gives no authority, and Baconians may say that he was hoaxed, or "lied with circumstance."

Mr. Greenwood quotes Halliwell-Phillipps's *Works of Shakespeare* (1853), in which he says that the design in Dugdale's book "is evidently too inaccurate to be of any authority; the probability being that it was not taken from the monument itself." Indeed the designer is so inaccurate that he gives the first word of the Latin inscription as "Judicyo," just as Oudry blunders in the Latin inscription of a portrait of Mary Stuart which he copied badly. Mr. Greenwood proceeds: "In his *Outlines* Halliwell simply ignores Dugdale. His engraving was doubtless too inconvenient to be brought to public notice!" Here Halliwell is accused of suppressing the truth; if he invented his minute details about the repeated reparation of the writing hand, - not represented in Dugdale's design, - he also lied with circumstance. But he certainly quoted a genuine "contemporary account" of the orders for repairing and beautifying the original monument in 1748, and I presume that he also had records for what he says about reparations of the hand and pen. He speaks, too, of substitutions for decayed alabaster parts of the monument, though not in his *Outlines;* and I observe that, in Mrs. Stopes's papers, there is record of a meeting on December 20, 1748, at which mention was made of "the materials" which Hall was to use for repairs.

To me the evidence of the style as to the date of both monument and bust speaks so loudly for their accepted date (1616-23) and against the Georgian date of 1748, that I need no other evidence; nor do I suppose that any one familiar with the monumental style of 1590-1620 can be of a different opinion. In the same way I do not expect any artist or engraver to take the engraving of the monument in Rowe's *Shakespeare* (1709), and that by Grignion so late as 1786, for anything but copies of the design in Dugdale, with modifications made *à plaisir*. In Pope's edition (1725) Vertue gives the monument with some approach to accuracy, but for the bald plump face of the bust presents a top-heavy and sculpturally impossible face borrowed from "the Chandos portrait," which, in my opinion, is of no more authority than any other portrait of Shakespeare. None of them, I conceive, was painted from the life.

The Baconians show a wistful longing to suppose the original bust, copied in Dugdale, to have been meant for Bacon; but we need not waste words over this speculation. Mr. Greenwood writes that "if I should be told that Dugdale's effigy represented an elderly farmer deploring an exceptionally bad harvest, 'I should not feel it to be strange!’ Neither should I feel it at all strange if I were told that it was the presentment of a philosopher and Lord Chancellor, who had fallen from high estate and recognised that all things are but vanity.”

“*I* should not feel it to be strange” if a Baconian told me that the effigy of a living ex-Chancellor were placed in the monument of the dead Will Shakspere, and if, on asking why the alteration was made, I were asked in reply, in Mr. Greenwood’s words, “Was Dugdale’s bust thought to bear too much resemblance to one who was not Shakspere of Stratford? Or was it thought that the presence of a woolsack” (the cushion) “might be taken as indicating that Shakspere of Stratford was indebted for support to a certain Lord Chancellor?” Such, indeed, are the things that Baconians might readily say: do say, I believe.

Dugdale’s engraving reproduces the first words of a Latin inscription, still on the monument:

Judicio Pylium, genio Socratem, arte Maronem
Terra tegit, populus mæret, Olympus habet:

“Earth covers, Olympus” (heaven? or the Muses’ Hill?) “holds him who was a Nestor in counsel; in poetic art, a Virgil; a Socrates for his Dæmon” (“Genius”). As for the “Genius,” or dæmon of Socrates, and the permitted false quantity in making the first syllable of Socrates short; and the use of *Olympus* for heaven in epitaphs, it is sufficient to consult the learning of Mr. Elton. The poet who made such notable false quantities in his plays had no cause to object to another on his monument. We do not know who erected the monument, and paid for it, or who wrote or adapted the epitaph; but it was somebody who thought Shakespeare (or Bacon?) “a clayver man.” The monument (if a trembling conjecture may be humbly put forth) was conceivably erected by the piety of Shakespeare’s daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Hall. They exhibit a taste for the mortuary memorial and the queer Latin inscription. Mrs. Hall gratified the Manes of her poor mother, Mrs. Shakespeare, with one of the oddest of Latin epitaphs. It opens like an epigram in the Greek Anthology, and ends in an unusual strain of Christian mysticism. Mr. Hall possesses, perhaps arranged for himself, a few Latin elegiacs as an epitaph.

The famous “Good friend for Jesus’ sake forbear,” and so on, on the stone in the chancel, beneath which the sacred dust of Shakespeare lies, or lay, is the first of “the last lines written, we are told,” “by the author of *Hamlet*.” Who tells us that Shakespeare wrote the four lines of doggerel? Is it conceivable that the authority for Shakespeare's authorship of the doggerel is a tradition gleaned by Mr. Dowdall of Queen's in 1693, from a parish clerk, aged over eighty, he says, - criticism makes the clerk twenty years younger. For Baconians the lines are bad enough to be the work of William Shakspere of Stratford.

Meanwhile, in 1649, when Will's daughter, Mrs. Hall, died, her epitaph spoke quite respectfully of her father's intelligence.

"Witty above her sex, but that's not all,
Wise to salvation was good Mistris Hall,
Something of Shakespeare was in *that*, but *this*
Wholly of Him with whom she's now in bliss."

Thirty-three years after Shakespeare's death he was still thought "witty" in Stratford. But what could Stratford know? Milton and Charles I were of the same opinion; so was Suckling, and the rest of the generation after Shakespeare. But they did not know, how should they, that Bacon (or his equivalent) was the genuine author of the plays and poems. The secret, perhaps, so widely spread among "the friends of the Muses" in 1616, was singularly well kept by a set of men rather given to blab as a general rule.

I confess to be passing weary of the Baconian hatred of Will, which pursues him beyond his death with sneers and fantastic suspicions about his monument and his grave, and asks if he "died with a curse upon his lips, an imprecation against any man who might *move his bones*? A mean and vulgar curse indeed!"

And the authority for the circumstance that he died with a mean and vulgar curse upon his lips?

About 1694, a year after Mr. Dowdall in 1693, and eighty years almost after Shakespeare's death, W. Hall, a Queen's man, Oxford (the W. Hall, perhaps, who gave the Bodleian Aldine Ovid, with Shakespeare's signature, true or forged, to its unknown owner), went to Stratford, and wrote about his pilgrimage to his friend Mr. Thwaites, a Fellow of Queen's. Mr. Hall heard the story that Shakespeare was the author of the mean and vulgar curse. He adds that there was a great ossuary or bone-house in the church, where all the bones dug up were piled, "they would load a great number of waggons." Not desiring this promiscuity, Shakespeare wrote the Curse in a style intelligible to clerks and sextons, "for the most part a very ignorant sort of people."

If Shakespeare *did*, that accommodation of himself to his audience was the last stroke of his wisdom, or his wit. Of course there is no evidence that he wrote the mean and vulgar curse: that he did is only the pious hope of the Baconians and Anti-Willians.

Into the question of the alleged portraits of Shakespeare I cannot enter. Ben spoke well of the engraving prefixed to the First Folio, but Ben, as Mr. Greenwood says, was anxious to give the Folio "a good send-off." The engraving is choicely bad; we do not know from what actual portrait, if from any, it was executed. Richard Burbage is known to have amused himself with the art of design; possibly he tried his hand on a likeness of his old friend and fellow-actor. If so, he may have succeeded no better than Mary Stuart's embroiderer, Oudry, in his copy of the portrait of her Majesty.

That Ben Jonson was painted by Honthorst and others, while Shakespeare, as far as we know, was not, has nothing to do with the authorship of the plays. Ben was a scholar, the darling of both Universities; constantly employed about the Court in arranging Masques; his learning and his Scottish blood may have led James I to notice him. Ben, in his later years, was much in society; fashionable and literary. He was the father of the literary "tribe of Ben." Thus he naturally sat for his portrait. In the same way George Buchanan has, and had, nothing like the fame of Knox. But as a scholar he was of European reputation; haunted the Court as tutor of his King, and was the "good pen" of the anti-Marian nobles, Murray, Morton, and the rest. Therefore Buchanan's portrait was painted, while of Knox we have only a woodcut, done, apparently, after his death, from descriptions, for Beza's *Icones*. The Folio engraving may have no better source. Without much minute research it is hard to find authentic portraits of Mary Stuart, and, just as in Shakespeare's case, the market, in her own day and in the eighteenth century, was flooded with "mock-originals," not even derived (in any case known to me) from genuine and authentic contemporary works.

One thing is certain about the Stratford bust. Baconians will believe that Dugdale's man correctly represented the bust as it was in his time; and that the actual bust is of 1748, in spite of proofs of Dugdale's man's fantastic inaccuracy; in spite of the evidence of style; and in spite of documentary evidence that "the original monument" was not to be destroyed and replaced by the actual monument, but was merely "repaired and beautified" (painted afresh) by a local painter.

CHAPTER X: "THE TRADITIONAL SHAKSPERE"

In perusing the copious arguments of the Anti-Shakesperean but Non-Baconian Mr. Greenwood, I am often tempted, in Socratic phrase, to address him thus: Best of men, let me implore you, first, to keep in memory these statements on which you have most eloquently and abundantly insisted, namely, that society in Stratford was not only not literary, but was illiterate. Next pardon me for asking you to remember that the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth century did not resemble our fortunate age. Some people read Shakespeare's, Beaumont's, and Fletcher's plays. This exercise is now very rarely practised. But nobody cared to chronicle literary gossip about the private lives and personal traits of these and several other Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights, in the modern manner. Of Shakespeare (pardon, I mean Shakspere), the actor, there is one contemporary anecdote, in my poor opinion a baseless waggery. Of Beaumont there is none. Of a hand-maid of Fletcher, who drank sack in a tumbler, one anecdote appears at the end of the seventeenth century, - nothing better. Meanwhile of Shakspere the "traditions" must be sought either at Stratford or in connection with the London Stage; and in both cases the traditions began to be in demand very late.

As Stratford was not literary, indeed was terribly illiterate, any traditions that survived cannot conceivably have been literary. That is absolutely certain. Natives at Stratford had, by your own hypothesis, scant interest in literary anecdote. Fifty years after Shakespeare's death, no native was likely to cherish tales of any sprouts of wit (though it was remembered in 1649, that he was "witty"), or any "wood-notes wild," which he may have displayed or chirped at an early age.

Such things were of no interest to Stratford. If he made a speech when he killed a calf, or poached, or ran away to town, the circumstance might descend from one gaffer to another; he might even be remembered as "the best of his family," - the least inefficient. Given your non-literary and illiterate Stratford, and you can expect nothing more, and nothing better, than we receive.

Let me illustrate by a modern example. In 1866 I was an undergraduate of a year's standing at Balliol College, Oxford, certainly not an unlettered academy. In that year, the early and the best poems of a considerable Balliol poet were published: he had "gone down" some eight years before. Being young and green I eagerly sought for traditions about Mr. Swinburne. One of his contemporaries, who took a First in the final Classical Schools, told me that “he was a smug.” Another, that, as Mr. Swinburne and his friend (later a Scotch professor) were not cricketers, they proposed that they should combine to pay but a single subscription to the Cricket Club. A third, a tutor of the highest reputation as a moralist and metaphysician, merely smiled at my early enthusiasm, - and told me nothing. A white-haired College servant said that “Mr. Swinburne was a very quiet gentleman.”

Then you take us to dirty illiterate Stratford, from fifty to eighty years after Shakspere’s death, - a Civil War and the Reign of the Saints, a Restoration and a Revolution having intervened, - and ask us to be surprised that no anecdotes of Shakspere’s early brilliance, a century before, survived at Stratford.

A very humble parallel may follow. Some foolish person went seeking early anecdotes of myself at my native town, Selkirk on the Ettrick. From an intelligent townsman he gathered much that was true and interesting about my younger brothers, who delighted in horses and dogs, hunted, shot, and fished, and played cricket; one of them bowled for Gloucestershire and Oxford. But about me the inquiring literary snipe only heard that “Andra was aye the stupid ane o’ the fam’ly.” Yet, I, too, had bowled for the local club, *non sine gloria*! Even *that* was forgotten.

Try to remember, best of men, that literary anecdotes of a fellow townsman’s youth do not dwell in the memories of his neighbours from sixty to a hundred years after date. It is not in human nature that what was incomprehensible to the grandsire should be remembered by the grandson. Go to “Thrums” and ask for literary memories of the youth of Mr. Barrie.

Yet the learned Malone seems to have been sorry that little of Shakespeare but the calf-killing and the poaching, and the dying of a fever after drink taken (*where*, I ask you?), with Ben and Drayton, was remembered, so long after date, at Stratford, of all dirty ignorant places. Bah! how could these people have heard of Drayton and Ben? Remember that we are dealing with human nature, in a peculiarly malodorous and densely ignorant *bourgade*, where, however, the “wit” of Shakespeare was not forgotten (in the family) in 1649. See the epithet on the tomb of his daughter, Mrs. Hall.

You give us the Rev. John Ward, vicar of Stratford (1661-3), who has heard that the actor was “a natural wit,” and contracted and died of a fever, after a bout with Drayton and Ben. I can scarcely believe that *these* were local traditions. How could these *rustauds* have an opinion about “natural wit,” how could they have known the names of Ben and Drayton?

When you come to Aubrey, publishing in 1680, sixty years after Shakespeare’s death, you neglect to trace the steps in the descent of his tradition. As has been stated, Beeston, "the chronicle of the Stage" (died 1682), gave him the story of the school-mastering; Beeston being the son of a servitor of Phillips, an actor and friend of Shakespeare, who died eleven years before that player. The story of the school-mastering and of Shakespeare "knowing Latin pretty well," is of no value to me. I think that he had some knowledge of Latin, as he must have had, if he were what I fancy him to have been, and if (which is mere hypothesis) he went for four years to a Latin School. But the story does not suit you, and you call it "a mere myth," which, "of course, will be believed by those who wish to believe it." But, most excellent of mortals, will it not, by parity of reasoning, "of course be disbelieved by those who do *not* wish to believe it"?

And do you want to believe it?

To several stage anecdotes of the actor as an excellent instructor of younger players, you refer slightingly. They do not weigh with me: still, the Stage would remember Shakspere (or Shakespeare) best in stage affairs. In reference to a very elliptic statement that, "in *Hamlet* Betterton benefited by Shakespeare's coaching," you write, "This is astonishing, seeing that Shakspere had been in his grave nearly twenty years when Betterton was born. The explanation is that Taylor, of the Black Fryars Company, was, according to Sir William Davenant, instructed by Shakspere, and Davenant, who had seen Taylor act, according to Downes, instructed Betterton. There is a similar story about Betterton playing King Henry VIII. Betterton was said to have been instructed by Sir William, who was instructed by Lowen, who was instructed by Shakspere!"

Why a note of exclamation? Who was Downes, and what were his opportunities of acquiring information? He "was for many years book-keeper in the Duke's Company, first under Davenant in the old house . . . " Davenant was notoriously the main link between "the first and second Temple," the theatre of Shakespeare whom, as a boy, he knew, and the Restoration theatre. Devoted to the traditions of the stage, he collected Shakespearean and other anecdotes; he revived the theatre, cautiously, during the last years of Puritan rule, and told his stories to the players of the early Restoration. As his Book-keeper with the Duke of York's Company, Downes heard what Davenant had to tell; he also, for his *Roscius Anglicanus*, had notes from Charles Booth, prompter at Drury Lane. On May 28, 1663, Davenant reproduced *Hamlet*, with young Betterton as the Prince of Denmark. Davenant, says Charles Booth, "had seen the part taken by Taylor, of the Black Fryars Company, and Taylor had been instructed by the author, (not Bacon but) "Mr. William Shakespeare," and Davenant "taught Mr. Betterton in every particle of it." Mr. Elton adds, "We cannot be sure that Taylor was taught by Shakespeare himself. He is believed to have been a member of the King's Company before 1613, and to have left it for a time before Shakespeare's death." His name is in the list in the Folio of "the principall Actors in all these plays," but I cannot pretend to be certain that he played in them in Will's time.

It is Mr. Pepys (December 30, 1668) who chronicles Davenant's splendid revival of *Henry VIII*, in which Betterton, as the King, was instructed by Sir William Davenant, who had it from old Mr. Lowen, that had his instruction "from Mr. Shakespear himself." Lowin, or Lowen, joined Shakespeare's Company in 1604, being then a man of twenty-eight. Burbage was the natural man for Hamlet and Henry VIII; but it is not unusual for actors to have "understudies."

The stage is notoriously tenacious of such traditions.

When we come with you to Mr. W. Fulman, about 1688, and the additions to his notes made about 1690-1708, we are concerned with evidence much too remote, and, in your own classical style, "all this is just a little mixed." With what Mr. Dowdall heard in 1693, and Mr. William Hall (1694) heard from a clerk or sexton, or other illiterate dotard at Stratford, I have already dealt. I do not habitually believe in what I hear from "the oldest aunt telling the saddest tale," - no, not even if she tells a ghost story, or an anecdote about the presentation by Queen Mary of her portrait to the ancestor of the Laird, - the portrait being dated 1768, and representing her Majesty in the bloom of girlhood. Nor do I care for what Rowe said (on Betterton's information), in 1709, about Shakespeare's schooling; nor for what Dr. Furnivall said that Plume wrote; nor for what anybody said that Sir John Mennes (Menzies?) said. But I do care for what Ben Jonson and Shakespeare's fellow-actors said; and for what his literary contemporaries have left on record. But this evidence you explain away by ætiological guesses, absolutely modern, and, I conceive, to anyone familiar with historical inquiry, not more valuable as history than other explanatory myths.

What Will Shakspere had to his literary credit when he died, was men's impressions of the seeing of his acted plays; with their knowledge, if they had any, of fugitive, cheap, perishable, and often bad reprints, in quartos, of about half of the plays. Men also had *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, and the Sonnets, which sold very poorly, and I do not wonder at it. Of the genius of Shakespeare England could form no conception, till the publication of the Folio (1623), not in a large edition; it struggled into a Third Edition in 1664. The *engouement* about the poet, the search for personal details, did not manifest itself with any vigour till nearly thirty years after 1664 - and we are to wonder that the gleanings, at illiterate Stratford, and in Stage tradition, are so scanty and so valueless. What could have been picked up, by 1680-90, about Bacon at Gorhambury, or in the Courts of Law, I wonder.

CHAPTER XI: THE FIRST FOLIO

“The First Folio” is the name commonly given to the first collected edition of Shakespeare’s plays. The volume includes a Preface signed by two of the actors, Heminge and Condell, panegyrical verses by Ben Jonson and others, and a bad engraved portrait. The book has been microscopically examined by Baconians, hunting for cyphered messages from their idol in italics, capital letters, misprints, and everywhere. Their various discoveries do not win the assent of writers like the late Lord Penzance and Mr. Greenwood.

The mystery as to the sources, editing, and selection of plays in the Folio (1623) appears to be impenetrable. The title-page says that *all* the contents are published “according to the true original copies.” If *only* MS. copies are meant, this is untrue; in some cases the best quartos were the chief source, supplemented by MSS. The Baconians, following Malone, think that Ben Jonson wrote the Preface (and certainly it looks like his work), speaking in the name of the two actors who sign it. They say that Shakespeare’s friends “have collected and published” the plays, have so published them “that whereas you were abus’d with divers stolne and surreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealthes of injurious impostors that exposed them: *even those*” (namely, the pieces previously ill-produced by pirates) “are now offered to your view cur’d, and perfect of their limbes; and *all the rest*” (that is, all the plays which had not been piratically debased), “absolute in their numbers, as he conceived them.” So obscure is the Preface that not *all* previously published separate plays are explicitly said to be stolen and deformed, but “*divers* stolen copies” are denounced. Mr. Pollard makes the same point in *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos,* (1909).

Now, as a matter of fact, while some of the quarto editions of separate plays are very bad texts, others are so good that the Folio sometimes practically reprints them, with some tinkerings, from manuscripts. Some quartos, like that of *Hamlet* of 1604, are excellent, and how they came to be printed from good texts, and whether or not the texts were given to the press by Shakespeare’s Company, or were sold, or stolen, is the question. Mr. Pollard argues, on grounds almost certain, that “we have strong *prima facie* evidence that the sale to publishers of plays afterwards duly entered on the Stationers’ Registers was regulated by their lawful owners.”

The Preface does not explicitly deny that some of the separately printed texts were good, but says that “divers” of them were stolen and deformed. My view of the meaning of the Preface is not generally held. Dr. H. H. Furness, in his preface to *Much Ado about Nothing* (), says, “We all know that these two friends of Shakespeare assert in their Preface to the Folio that they had used the Author’s manuscripts, and in the same breath denounce the Quartos as stolen and surreptitious.” I cannot see, I repeat, that the Preface denounces *all* the Quartos. It could be truly said that *divers* stolen and maimed copies had been foisted on “abused” purchasers, and really no more *is* said. Dr. Furness writes, “When we now find them using as ‘copy’ one of these very Quartos” (*Much Ado about Nothing,* 1600), “we need not impute to them a wilful falsehood if we suppose that in using what they knew had been printed from the original text, howsoever obtained, they held it to be the same as the manuscript itself . . . “ That *was* their meaning, I think, the Quarto of *Much Ado* had *not* been “maimed” and “deformed,” as divers other quartos, stolen and surreptitious, had been.

Shakspere, unlike most of the other playwrights, was a member of his Company. I presume that his play was thus the common good of his Company and himself. If they sold a copy to the press, the price would go into their common stock; unless they, in good will, allowed the author to pocket the money.

It will be observed that I understand the words of the Preface otherwise than do the distinguished Editors of the Cambridge edition. They write, “The natural inference to be drawn from this statement” (in the Preface) “is that *all* the separate editions of Shakespeare’s plays were ‘stolen,’ ‘surreptitious’ and imperfect, *and that all those published in the Folio were printed from the author’s own manuscripts*” (my italics). The Editors agree with Dr. Furness, not with Mr. Pollard, whose learned opinion coincides with my own.

Perhaps it should be said that I reached my own construction of the sense of this passage in the Preface by the light of nature, before Mr. Pollard’s valuable book, based on the widest and most minute research, came into my hands. By the results of that research he backs his opinion (and mine), that some of the quartos are surreptitious and bad, while others are good “and were honestly obtained.” The Preface never denies this; never says that all the quartos contain maimed and disfigured texts. The Preface draws a distinction to this effect, “even those” (even the stolen and deformed copies) “are now cured and perfect in their limbs,” - that is, have been carefully edited, while “*all the rest*” are “absolute in their numbers as he conceived them.” This does not allege that all the rest are printed from Shakespeare’s own holograph copies.

Among the plays spoken of as “all the rest,” namely, those not hitherto published and not deformed by the fraudulent, are, *Tempest, Two Gentlemen*, *Measure for Measure*, *Comedy of Errors*, *As You Like It*, *All's Well*, *Twelfth Night*, *Winter's Tale*, *Henry VI*, iii., *Henry VIII*, *Coriolanus*, *Timon*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Cymbeline*. Also *Henry VI*, i., ii., *King John*, and *Taming of the Shrew*, appeared now in other form than in the hitherto published Quartos bearing these or closely similar names. We have, moreover, no previous information as to *The Shrew*, *Timon*, *Julius Cæsar*, *All's Well*, and *Henry VIII*. The Preface adds the remarkable statement that, whatever Shakespeare thought, "he uttered with that easinesse, that wee have scarce received from him a blot in his papers."

It is plain that the many dramas previously unpublished could only be recovered from manuscripts of one sort or another, because they existed in no other form. The Preface takes it for granted that the selected manuscripts contain the plays "absolute in their numbers as he conceived them." But the Preface does not commit itself, I repeat, to the statement that all of these many plays are printed from Shakespeare's own handwriting. After "as he conceived them," it goes on, "Who, as he was a most happy imitator of nature, was a most gentle expresser of it. His mind and hand went together: and what he thought he uttered with that easiness, that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers."

This may be meant to *suggest*, but does not *affirm*, that the actors *have* "all the rest" of the plays in Shakespeare's own handwriting. They may have, or may have had, some of his manuscripts, and believed that other manuscripts accessible to them, and used by them, contain his very words. Whether from cunning or design, or from the Elizabethan inability to tell a plain tale plainly, the authors or author of the Preface have everywhere left themselves loopholes and ways of evasion and escape. It is not possible to pin them down to any plain statement of facts concerning the sources for the hitherto unpublished plays, "the rest" of the plays.

These, at least, were from manuscript sources which the actors thought accurate, and some may have been "fair copies" in Shakespeare's own hand. (Scott, as regards his novels, sent his *prima cura*, his first writing down, to the press, and his pages are nearly free from blot or erasion. In one case at least, Shelley's first draft of a poem is described as like a marsh of reeds in water, with wild ducks, but he made very elegant fair copies for the press.) Let it be supposed that Ben Jonson wrote all this Preface, in accordance with the wishes and instructions of the two actors who sign it. He took their word for the almost blotless MSS. which they received from Shakespeare. He remarks, in his posthumously published *Discoveries* (notes, memories, brief essays), "I remember the players have *often* mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare, that in his writing (whatsoever he penned) he never blotted out a line." And Ben gives, we shall later see, his habitual reply to this habitual boast.

As to the sources of such plays as had been "maimed and deformed by injurious impostors," and are now "offered cur'd and perfect of their limbs," "it can be proved to demonstration," say the Cambridge Editors, "that several plays in the Folio were printed from earlier quarto editions" (but the players secured a retreat on this point), "and that in other cases the quarto is more correctly printed, or from a better manuscript than the Folio text, and therefore of higher authority." *Hamlet*, in the Folio of 1623, when it differs from the quarto of 1604, "differs for the worse in forty-seven places, while it differs for the better in twenty places."

Can the wit of man suggest any other explanation than that the editing of the Folio was carelessly done; out of the best quartos and MSS. in the theatre for acting purposes, and, - if the players did not lie in what they "often said," and if they kept the originals, - out of some MSS. received from Shakspere? Whether the two players themselves threw into the press, after some hasty botchings, whatever materials they had, or whether they employed an Editor, a very wretched Editor, or Editors, or whether the great Author, Bacon, himself was his own Editor, the preparation of a text was infamously done. The two actors, probably, I think, never read through the proof-sheets, and took the word of the man whom they employed to edit their materials, for gospel. The editing of the Folio is so exquisitely careless that twelve printer's errors in a quarto of 1622, of *Richard III*, appear in the Folio of 1623. Again, the *Merry Wives* of the Folio, is nearly twice as long as the quarto of 1619, yet keeps old errors.

How can we explain the reckless retention of errors, and also the large additions and improvements? Did the true author (Bacon or Bungay) now edit his work, add much matter, and go wrong forty-seven times where the quarto was right, and go right twenty times when the quarto was wrong? Did he, for the Folio of 1623, nearly double *The Merry Wives* in extent, and also leave all the errors of the fourth quarto uncorrected?

In that case how negligent was Bacon of his immortal works! Now Bacon was a scholar, and this absurd conduct cannot be imputed, I hope, to him.

Mr. Pollard is much more lenient than his fellow-scholars towards the Editor or Editors of the Folio. He concludes that "manuscript copies of the plays were easily procurable." Sixteen out of the thirty-six plays existed in quartos. Eight of the sixteen were not used for the Folio; five were used, "with additions, corrections, or alterations" (which must have been made from manuscripts). Three quartos only were reprinted as they stood. The Editors greatly preferred to use manuscript copies; and showed this, Mr. Pollard thinks, by placing plays, never before printed, in the most salient parts of the three sets of dramas in their book. They did make an attempt to divide their plays into Acts and Scenes, whereas the quartos, as a general rule, had been undivided. But the Editors, I must say, had not the energy to carry out their good intentions fully - or Bacon or Bungay, if the author, wearied in well-doing. The work is least ill done in the Comedies, and grows worse and worse as the Editor, or Bacon, or Bungay becomes intolerably slack.

A great living author, who had a decent regard for his own works, could never have made or passed this slovenly Folio. Yet Mr. Greenwood argues that probably Bungay was still alive and active, after Shakspere was dead and buried. (Mr. Greenwood, of course, does not speak of Bungay, which I use as short for his Great Unknown.) Thus, *Richard III* from 1597 to 1622 appeared in six quartos. It is immensely improved in the Folio, and so are several other plays. Who made the improvements, which the Editors could only obtain in manuscripts? If we say that Shakespeare made them in MS., Mr. Greenwood asks, “What had he to work upon, since, after selling his plays to his company, he did not preserve his manuscript?” Now I do not know that he did sell his plays to his company. We are sure that Will got money for them, but we do not know what arrangement he made with his company. He may have had an author’s rights in addition to a sum down, as later was customary, and he had his regular share in the profits. Nor am I possessed of information that “he did not preserve his manuscript.” How can we know that? He may have kept his first draft, he may have made a fair copy for himself, as well as for the players, or may have had one made. He may have worked on a copy possessed by the players; and the publisher of the quartos of 1605, 1612, 1622, may not have been allowed to use, or may not have asked for the latest manuscript revised copy. The *Richard III* of the Folio contains, with much new matter, the printer’s errors of the quarto of 1622. I would account for this by supposing that the casual Editor had just sense enough to add the new parts in a revised manuscript to the quarto, and was far too lazy to correct the printer’s errors in the quarto. But Mr. Greenwood asks whether “the natural conclusion is not that ‘some person unknown’ took the Quarto of 1622, revised it, added the new passages, and thus put it into the form in which it appeared in 1623.” This natural conclusion means that the author, Bungay, was alive in 1622, and put his additions and improvements of recent date into the quarto of 1622, but never took the trouble to correct the errors in the quarto. And so on in other plays similarly treated. “Is it not a more natural conclusion that ‘Shakespeare’” (Bungay) “himself revised its publication, and that some part of this revision, at any rate, was done after 1616 and before 1623.”

Mr. Greenwood, after criticising other systems, writes, "There is, of course, another hypothesis. It is that Shakespeare" (meaning the real author) "did not die in 1616," and here follows the usual notion that "Shakespeare" was the "*nom de plume*" of that transcendent genius, "moving in Court circles among the highest of his day (as assuredly Shakespeare must have moved) - who wished to conceal his identity."

I have not the shadow of assurance that the Author "moved in Court circles," though Will would see a good deal when he played at Court, and in the houses of nobles, before "Eliza and our James." I never moved in Court circles: Mr. Greenwood must know them better than I do, and I have explained (see *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *Shakespeare, Genius, and Society*) how Will picked up his notions of courtly ways.

"Another hypothesis," the Baconian hypothesis, - "*nom de plume*" and all, - Mr. Greenwood thinks "an extremely reasonable one": I cannot easily conceive of one more unreasonable.

"Supposing that there was such an author as I have suggested, he may well have conceived the idea of publishing a collected edition of the plays which had been written under the name of Shakespeare, and being himself busy with other matters, he may have entrusted the business to some 'literary man,' to some 'good pen,' who was at the time doing work for him; and why not to the man who wrote the commendatory verses, the 'Lines to the Reader'" (opposite to the engraving), "and, as seems certain, the Preface, 'to the great variety of Readers'?"

That man, that "good pen," was Ben Jonson. On the "supposing" of Mr. Greenwood, Ben is "doing work for" the Great Unknown at the time when "the business" following on the "idea of publishing a collected edition of the plays which had been written under the name of Shakespeare" occurred to the illustrious but unknown owner of that "*nom de plume*." In plain words of my own, - the Author may have entrusted "the business," and what was that business if not the editing of the Folio? - to Ben Jonson - "who was at the time doing work for him" - for the Author.

Here is a clue! We only need to know for what man of "transcendent genius, universal culture, world-wide philosophy . . . moving in Court circles," and so on, Ben "was working" about 1621-3, the Folio appearing in 1623.

The heart beats with anticipation of a discovery! "On January 22, 1621, Bacon celebrated his sixtieth birthday with great state at York House. Jonson was present," and wrote an ode, with something about the Genius of the House (*Lar* or Brownie), "Thou stand'st as if some mystery thou didst."

Mr. Greenwood does not know what this can mean; nor do I.

"Jonson, it appears" (on what authority?), "was Bacon's guest at Gorhambury, and was one of those good 'pens,'" of whom Bacon speaks as assisting him in the translation of some of his books into Latin.

Bacon, writing to Toby Mathew, June 26, 1623, mentions the help of "some good pens," Ben Jonson he does not mention. But Judge Webb does. "It is an undoubted fact," says Judge Webb, "that the Latin of the *De Augmentis*, which was published in 1623, was the work of Jonson." To whom Mr. Collins replies, "There is not a particle of evidence that Jonson gave to Bacon the smallest assistance in translating any of his works into Latin."

Très bien, on Judge Webb's assurance the person for whom Ben was working, in 1623, was Bacon. Meanwhile, Mr. Greenwood's "supposing" is "that there was such an author" (of transcendent genius, and so on), who "may have entrusted the editing of his collected plays" to some "good pen," who was at the time "doing work for him," and "why not to" - Ben Jonson. Now the man for whom Ben, in 1623, was "doing work" - was BACON, - so Judge Webb says.

Therefore, by this hypothesis of Mr. Greenwood, the Great Unknown was Bacon, - just the hypothesis of the common Baconian.

Is my reasoning erroneous? Is the "supposing" suggested by Mr. Greenwood any other than that of Miss Delia Bacon, and Judge Webb? True, Mr. Greenwood's Baconian "supposing" is only a working hypothesis: not a confirmed belief. But it is useful to his argument (see "Ben Jonson and Shakespeare") when he wants to explain away Ben's evidence, in his verses in the Folio, to the Stratford actor as the Author.

Mr. Greenwood writes, in the first page of his Preface: "It is no part of my plan or intention to defend that theory," "the Baconian theory." Apparently it pops out contrary to the intention of Mr. Greenwood. But pop out it does: at least I can find no flaw in the reasoning of my detection of Bacon: I see no way out of it except this: after recapitulating what is said about Ben as one of Bacon's "good pens" with other details, Mr. Greenwood says, "But no doubt that way madness lies!" Ah no! not madness, no, but Baconism "lies that way." However, "let it be granted" (as Euclid says in his sportsmanlike way) that Mr. Greenwood by no means thinks that his "concealed poet" is Bacon - only some one similar and similarly situated and still active in 1623, and occupied with other business than supervising a collected edition of plays written under his "*nom de plume*" of Shakespeare. Bacon, too, was busy, with supervising, or toiling at the Latin translation of his scientific works, and Ben (according to Judge Webb) was busy in turning the *Advancement of Learning* into Latin prose. Mr. Greenwood quotes, without reference, Archbishop Tenison as saying that Ben helped Bacon in doing his works into Latin. Tenison is a very late witness. The prophetic soul of Bacon did not quite trust English to last as long as Latin, or he thought Latin, the *lingua franca* of Europe in his day, more easily accessible to foreign students, as, of course, it was. Thus Bacon was very busy; so was Ben. The sad consequence of Ben's business, perhaps, is that the editing of the Folio is notoriously bad; whether Ben were the Editor or not, it is infamously bad.

Conceivably Mr. Greenwood is of the same opinion. He says, "It stands admitted that a very large part of that volume" (the Folio) "consists of work that is not 'Shakespeare's' at all."

How strange, if Ben edited it for the Great Unknown - who knew, if any human being knew, what work was "Shakespeare's"! On Mr. Greenwood's hypothesis, or "supposing," the Unknown Author "may well have conceived the idea of publishing a collected edition of the plays which had been written" (not "published," *written*) "under the name of Shakespeare, and, being himself busy with other matters, he may have entrusted the business to" some "good pen," "and why not to" - Ben. Nevertheless "a very large part of that volume consists of work that is not 'Shakespeare's' at all." How did this occur? The book is "that very doubtful 'canon.'" How, if "Shakespeare's" man edited it for "Shakespeare"? Did "Shakespeare" not care what stuff was placed under his immortal "*nom de plume*"?

It is not my fault if I think that Mr. Greenwood's hypotheses - the genuine "Shakespeare" either revised his own works, or put Ben on the editorial task - are absolutely contradicted by his statements in another part of his book. For the genuine "Shakespeare" knew what plays he had written, knew what he could honestly put forth as his own, as "Shakespeare's." Or, if he placed the task of editing in Ben's hands, he must have told Ben what plays were of his own making. In either case the Folio would contain these, and no others. But - "the *plat contraire*," - the very reverse, - is stated by Mr. Greenwood. "It stands admitted that a very large portion of that volume" (the Folio) "consists of work that is not 'Shakespeare's'" (is not Bacon's, or the other man's) "at all." Then away fly the hypotheses that the auto-Shakespeare, or that Ben, employed by the auto-Shakespeare (apparently Bacon) revised, edited, and prepared for publication the auto-Shakespearean plays. For Mr. Greenwood "has already dealt with *Titus* (*Andronicus*) and *Henry VI*," and proved them not to be auto-Shakespearean - and he adds "there are many other plays in that very doubtful 'canon'" (the Folio) "which, by universal admission, contain much non-Shakespearean composition." Perhaps! but if so the two hypotheses, that either the genuine Shakespeare revised ("is it not a more natural solution that 'Shakespeare' himself revised his works for publication, and that some part, at any rate, of this revision was done after 1616 and before 1623?"), or that he gave Ben (who was working, by the conjecture, for Bacon) the task of editing the Folio, - are annihilated. For neither the auto-Shakespeare (if honest), nor Ben (if sober), could have stuffed the Folio full of non-Shakespearean work, - including four "non-Shakespearean" plays, - nor could the Folio be "that very doubtful canon." Again, if either the auto-Shakespeare or Ben following his instructions, were Editor, neither could have, as the Folio Editor had "evidently no little doubt about" *Troilus and Cressida.*

Neither Ben, nor the actual Simon Pure, the author, the auto-Shakespeare, could fail to know the truth about *Trodus and Cressida*. But the Editor did *not* know the truth, the whole canon is "doubtful." Therefore the hypothesis, the "supposing," that the actual author did the revising, and the other hypothesis that he gave Ben the work, seem to me wholly impossible. But Mr. Greenwood needs the "supposings" of p, 293; and as he rejects *Titus Andronicus* and *Henry VI* (both in the Folio), he also needs the contradictory views of p, 358. On which set of supposings and averments does he stand to win?

Perhaps he thinks to find a way out of what appears to me to be a dilemma in the following fashion: He will not accept *Titus Andronicus* and *Henry VI*, though both are in the Folio, as the work of *his* "Shakespeare," his Unknown, the Bacon of the Baconians. Well, we ask, if your Unknown, or Bacon, or Ben, - instructed by Bacon, or by the Unknown, - edited the Folio, how could any one of the three insert *Titus*, and *Henry VI*, and be "in no little doubt about" *Troilus and Cressida*? Bacon, or the Unknown, or the Editor employed by either, knew perfectly well which plays either man could honestly claim as his own work, done under the "*nom de plume*" of "William Shakespeare" (with or without the hyphen). Yet the Editor of the Folio does not know - and Mr. Greenwood does know - *Henry VI* and *Titus* are "wrong ones."

Mr. Greenwood's way out, if I follow him, is this: "Judge Stotsenburg asks, 'Who wrote *The Taming of a Shrew* printed in 1594, and who wrote *Titus Andronicus*, *Henry VI*, or *King Lear* referred to in the Diary?'" (Henslowe's). The Judge continues: "Neither Collier nor any of the Shaxper commentators make (*sic*) any claim to their authorship in behalf of William Shaxper. Since these plays have the same names as those included in the Folio of 1623 the presumption is that they are the same plays until the contrary is shown. Of course it may be shown, either that those in the Folio are entirely different except in name, or that these plays were revised, improved, and dressed by some one whom they" (who?) "called Shakespeare."

Mr. Greenwood says, “My own conviction is that . . . these plays were ‘revised, improved, and dressed by some one whom they called Shakespeare.’” (Whom *who* called Shakespeare?) In that case these plays, - say *Titus Andronicus* and *Henry VI,* Part 1, - which Mr. Greenwood denies to *his* “Shakespeare” were just as much *his* Shakespeare’s plays as any other plays (and there are several), which *his* Shakespeare “revised, improved, and dressed.” Yet *his* Shakespeare is *not* author of *Henry VI,* not the author of *Titus Andronicus*. “Mr. Anders,” writes Mr. Greenwood, “makes what I think to be a great error in citing *Henry VI* and *Titus* as genuine plays of Shakespeare.”

He hammers at this denial in nineteen references in his Index to *Titus Andronicus*. Yet Ben, or Bacon, or the Unknown thought that these plays *were* “genuine plays” of “Shakespeare,” the concealed author - Bacon or Mr. Greenwood’s man. It appears that the immense poet who used the “*nom de plume*” of “Shakespeare” did not know the plays of which he could rightfully call himself the author; that (not foreseeing Mr. Greenwood’s constantly repeated objections) he boldly annexed four plays, or two certainly, which Mr. Greenwood denies to him, and another about which “the Folio Editor was in no little doubt.”

Finally, Mr. Greenwood is “convinced,” “it is my conviction” that some plays which he often denies to his “Shakespeare” were “revised, improved, and dressed by some one whom they called Shakespeare.” That some one, if he edited or caused to be edited the Folio, thought that his revision, improvement, and dressing up of the plays gave him a right to claim their authorship - and Mr. Greenwood, a dozen times and more, denies to him their authorship.

One is seriously puzzled to discover the critic’s meaning. *The Taming of a Shrew*, *Titus*, *Henry VI*, and *King Lear*, referred to in Henslowe’s “Diary,” are not “Shakespearean,” we are repeatedly told. But “my own conviction is that . . . “ these plays were “revised, improved, and dressed by some one whom they called Shakespeare.” But to be revised, improved, and dressed by some one whom they called Shakespeare, is to be as truly “Shakespearean” work as is any play so handled “by Shakespeare.” Thus the plays mentioned are as truly “Shakespearean” as any others in which “Shakespeare” worked on an earlier canvas, and also *Titus* “is not *Shakespearean* at all.” Mr. Greenwood, I repeat, constantly denies the “Shakespearean” character to *Titus* and *Henry VI*. “The conclusion of the whole matter is that *Titus* and *The Trilogy of Henry VI* are not the work of Shakespeare: that his hand is probably not to be found at all in *Titus*, and only once or twice, if at all, in *Henry VI*, Part I, but that he it probably was who altered and remodelled the two parts of the old *Contention of the Houses of York and Lancaster*, thereby producing *Henry VI*, Parts II and III.”

Yet *Titus* and *Henry VI* appear as “revised, improved, and dressed” by the mysterious “some one whom they called Shakespeare.” If Mr. Greenwood’s conclusion be correct, “Shakespeare” had no right to place *Henry VI*, Part I, and *Titus* in his Folio. If his “conviction” be correct, Shakespeare had as good a right to them as to any of the plays which he revised, and improved, and dressed. They *must* be “Shakespearean” if Mr. Greenwood is right in his suggestion that “Shakespeare” either revised his works for publication between 1616 and 1623, or set his man, Ben Jonson, upon that business. Yet neither one nor the other knew what to make of *Troilus and Cressida*. “The Folio Editor had, evidently, no little doubt about that play.”

So neither “Shakespeare” nor Ben, instructed by him, can have been “the Folio Editor.” Consequently Mr. Greenwood must abandon his suggestion that either man was the Editor, and may return to his rejection of *Titus* and *Henry VI*, Part I. But he clings to it. He finds in Henslowe’s Diary “references to, and records of the writing of, such plays” as, among others, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Henry VI*.

Mr. Greenwood, after rejecting a theory of some one, says, “Far more likely does it appear that there was a great man of the time whose genius was capable of ‘transforming dross into gold,’ who took these plays, and, in great part, rewrote and revised them, leaving sometimes more, and sometimes less of the original work; and that so rewritten, revised, and transformed they appeared as the plays of ‘Shakespeare.’”

This statement is made about “these plays,” including *Titus Andronicus* and *Henry VI*, while “*Titus* and the *Trilogy of Henry VI* are not the work of Shakespeare . . . his hand is probably not to be found at all in *Titus*, and only once or twice in *Henry VI*, Part I,” though he probably made Parts II and III out of older plays.

I do not know where to have the critic. If *Henry VI*, Part I, and *Titus* are in no sense by “Shakespeare,” then neither “Shakespeare nor Ben for him edited or had anything to do with the editing of the Folio. If either or both had to do with the editing, as the critic suggests, then he is wrong in denying Shakespearean origin to *Titus* and *Henry VI*, Part I.

Of course one sees a way out of the dilemma for the great auto-Shakespeare himself, who, by one hypothesis, handed over the editing of his plays to Ben (*he*, by Mr. Greenwood’s “supposing,” was deviling at literary jobs for Bacon). The auto-Shakespeare merely tells Ben to edit his plays, and never even gives him a list of them. Then Ben brings him the Folio, and the author looks at the list of Plays.

“Mr. Jonson,” he says, “I have hitherto held thee for an honest scholar and a deserving man in the quality thou dost profess. But thou hast brought me a maimed and deformed printed copy of that which I did write for my own recreation, not wishful to be known for so light a thing as a poet. Moreover, thou hast placed among these my trifles, four plays to which I never put a finger, and others in which I had no more than a thumb. The Seneschal, Mr. Jonson, will pay thee what is due to thee; thy fardels shall be sent whithersoever thou wilt, and, Mary! Mr. Jonson, I bid thee never more be officer of mine."

This painful discourse must have been held at Gorhambury, - if Ben edited the Folio - for Francis.

It is manifest, I hope, that about the Folio Mr. Greenwood speaks with two voices, and these very discordant. It is also manifest that, whoever wrote the plays left his materials in deep neglect, and that, when they were collected, some one gathered them up in extreme disorder. It is extraordinary that the Baconians and Mr. Greenwood do not see the fallacy of their own reasoning in this matter of the Folio. They constantly ridicule the old view that the actor, Will Shakspere (if, by miracle, he were the author of the plays), could have left them to take their fortunes. They are asked, what did other playwrights do in that age? They often parted with their whole copyright to the actors of this or that company, or to Henslowe. The new owners could alter the plays at will, and were notoriously anxious to keep them out of print, lest other companies should act them. As Mr. Greenwood writes, "Such, we are told, was the universal custom with dramatists of the day; they 'kept no copies' of their plays, and thought no more about them. It will, I suppose, be set down to fanaticism that I should doubt the truth of this proposition, that I doubt if it be consonant with the known facts of human nature." But whom, except Jonson, does Mr. Greenwood find editing and publishing his plays? Beaumont, Fletcher, Heywood? No!

If the Great Unknown were dead in 1623, his negligence was as bad as Will's. If he were alive and revised his own work for publication, he did it as the office cat might have done it in hours of play. If, on the other side, he handed the editorial task over to Ben, then he did not even give Ben a list of his genuine works. Mr. Greenwood cites the case of Ben Jonson, a notorious and, I think, solitary exception. Ben was and often proclaimed himself to be essentially a scholar. He took as much pains in prefacing, editing, and annotating his plays, as he would have taken had the texts been those of Greek tragedians.

Finally, all Baconians cry out against the sottish behaviour of the actor, Will, if being really the author of the plays, he did not bestir himself, and bring them out in a collected edition. Yet no English dramatist ventured on doing such a thing, till Ben thus collected his "works" (and was laughed at) in 1616. The example might have encouraged Will to be up and doing, but he died early in 1616. If Will were *not* the author, what care was Bacon, or the Unknown, taking of his many manuscript plays, and for the proper editing of those which had appeared separately in pamphlets? As indolent and casual as Will, the great Author, Bacon or another, left the plays to take their chances. Mr. Greenwood says that "*if the author*" (Bacon or somebody very like him) "*had been careless about keeping copies of his manuscripts* . . . " What an "if" in the case of the great Author! This gross neglect, infamous in Will, may thus have been practised by the Great Unknown himself.

In 1911 Mr. Greenwood writes, "There is overwhelming authority for the view that *Titus Andronicus* is not *Shakespearean* at all." In that case, neither Bacon, nor the Unknown, nor Ben, acting for either, can have been the person who put *Titus* into the Folio.

CHAPTER XII: BEN JONSON AND SHAKESPEARE

The evidence of Ben Jonson to the identity of Shakespeare the author with Shakspere the actor, is "the strength of the Stratfordian faith," says Mr. Greenwood. "But I think it will be admitted that the various Jonsonian utterances with regard to 'Shakespeare' are by no means easy to reconcile one with the other."

It is difficult to reply briefly to Mr. Greenwood's forty-seven pages about the evidence of Jonson. But, first, whenever in written words or in reported conversation, Ben speaks of Shakespeare by name, he speaks of his *works:* in 1619 to Drummond of Hawthornden; in 1623 in commendatory verses to the Folio; while, about 1630, probably, in his posthumously published *Discourses*, he writes on Shakespeare as the friend and "fellow" of the players, on Shakespeare as his own friend, and as a dramatist. On each of these three occasions, Ben's *tone* varies. In 1619 he said no more to Drummond of Hawthornden (apparently on two separate occasions) than that Shakespeare "lacked art," and made the mistake about a wreck on the sea-coast of Bohemia.

In 1619, Ben spoke gruffly and briefly of Shakespeare, as to Drummond he also spoke disparagingly of Beaumont, whom he had panegyrised in an epigram in his own folio of 1616, and was again to praise in the commendatory verses in the Folio. He spoke still more harshly of Drayton, whom in 1616 he had compared to Homer, Virgil, Theocritus, and Tyræus! He told an unkind anecdote of Marston, with whom he had first quarrelled and then made friends, collaborating with him in a play; and very generously and to his great peril, sharing his imprisonment. To Drummond, Jonson merely said that he "beat Marston and took away his pistol." Of Sir John Beaumont, brother of the dramatist, Ben had written a most hyperbolical eulogy in verse; luckily for Sir John, to Drummond Ben did not speak of him. Such was Ben, in panegyric verse hyperbolical; in conversation "a despiser of others, and praiser of himself." Compare Ben's three remarks about Donne, all made to Drummond. Donne deserved hanging for breaking metre; Donne would perish for not being understood: and Donne was in some points the first of living poets.

Mr. Greenwood's effort to disable Jonson's evidence rests on the contradictions in his estimates of Shakespeare's poetry, in notices scattered through some thirty years. Jonson, it is argued, cannot on each occasion mean

Will. He must now mean Will, now the Great Unknown, and now - both at once. Yet I have proved that Ben was the least consistent of critics, all depended on the occasion, and on his humour at the moment. This is a commonplace of literary history. The Baconians do not know it; Mr. Greenwood, if he knows it, ignores it, and bases his argument on facts which may be unknown to his readers. We have noted Ben's words of 1619, and touched on his panegyric of 1623. Thirdly, about 1630 probably, Ben wrote in his manuscript book *Discourses* an affectionate but critical page on Shakespeare as a man and an author. Always, in prose, and in verse, and in recorded conversation, Ben explicitly identified Shakspere (William, of Stratford) with the author of the plays usually ascribed to him. But the Baconian Judge Webb (in extreme old age), and the anti-Shakespearean Mr. Greenwood and others, choose to interpret Ben's words on the theory that, in 1623, he "had his tongue in his cheek"; that, like Odysseus, he "mingled things false with true," that *they* know what is true from what is false, and can undo the many knots which Ben tied in his tongue. How they succeed we shall see.

In addition to his three known mentions of Shakespeare by name (1619, 1623, 1630?), Ben certainly appears to satirise his rival at a much earlier date; especially as Pantalabus, a playwright in *The Poetaster* (1601), and as actor, poet, and plagiarist in an epigram, *Poet-Ape*, published in his collected works of 1616; but probably written as early as 1602. It is well known that in 1598 Shakespeare's company acted Ben's *Every Man in His Humour*. It appears that he conceived some grudge against the actors, and apparently against Shakespeare and other playwrights, for, in 1601, his *Poetaster* is a satire both on playwrights and on actors, whom he calls "apes." The apparent attacks on Shakespeare are just such as Ben, if angry and envious, would direct against him; while we know of no other poet-player of the period to whom they could apply. For example, in *The Poetaster*, Histrio, the actor, is advised to ingratiate himself with *Pantalabus*, "gent'man parcel-poet, his father was a man of worship, I tell thee." This is perhaps unmistakably a blow at Shakespeare, who had recently acquired for his father and himself arms, and the pleasure of writing himself "gentleman." This "parcel-poet gent'man" "pens lofty, in a new stalking style," - he is thus an author, he "pens," and in a high style. He is called *Pantalabus*, from the Greek words for "to *take up all*," which means that, as poet, he is a plagiarist. Jonson repeats this charge in his verses called *Poet-Ape* -

"*He takes up all*," makes each man's wit his own,
And told of this, he slights it."

In a scene added to *The Poetaster* in 1616, the author (Ben) is advised not

"With a sad and serious verse to wound
Pantalabus, railing in his saucy jests,"

and obviously slighting the charges of plagiarism. Perhaps Ben is glancing at Shakespeare, who, if accused of plagiary by an angry rival, would merely laugh.

A reply to the *Poetaster*, namely *Satiromastix* (by Dekker and Marston?), introduces Jonson himself as babbling darkly about "Mr. Justice Shallow," and "an Innocent Moor" (Othello?). Here is question of "administering strong pills" to Jonson; *then*,

"What lumps of hard and indigested stuff,
Of bitter *Satirism*, of *Arrogance*,
Of *Self-love*, of *Detraction*, of a black
And stinking *Insolence* should we fetch up!"

This "pill" is a reply to Ben's "purge" for the poets in his *Poetaster*. Oh, the sad old stuff!

Referring to Jonson's *Poetaster*, and to *Satiromastix*, the counter-attack, we find a passage in the Cambridge play, *The Return from Parnassus* (about 1602). Burbage, the tragic actor, and Kempe, the low-comedy man of Shakespeare's company, are introduced, discussing the possible merits of Cambridge wits as playwrights. Kempe rejects them as they "smell too much of that writer Ovid, and that writer Metamorphosis . . . " The purpose, of course, is to laugh at the ignorance of the low-comedy man, who thinks "Metamorphosis" a writer, and does not suspect - how should he? - that Shakespeare "smells of Ovid." Kempe innocently goes on, "Why, here's our fellow" (comrade) "Shakespeare puts them all down" (all the University playwrights), "aye, and Ben Jonson too. O that Ben Jonson is a pestilent fellow, he brought up Horace" (in *The Poetaster*) "giving the poets a pill, but our fellow Shakespeare hath given him a purge . . ."

The Cambridge author, perhaps, is thinking of the pill (not purge) which, in *Satiromastix*, might be administered to Jonson. The Cambridge author may have thought that Shakespeare wrote the passage on the pill which was to "fetch up" masses of Ben's insolence, self-love, arrogance, and detraction. If this be not the sequence of ideas, it is not easy to understand how or why Kempe is made to say that Shakespeare has given Jonson a purge. Stupid old nonsense! There are other more or less obscure indications of Jonson’s spite, during the stage-quarrel, against Shakespeare, but the most unmistakable proof lies in his verses in “Poet-Ape.” I am aware that Ben’s intention here to hit at Shakespeare has been denied, for example by Mr. Collins with his usual vigour of language. But though I would fain agree with him, the object of attack can be no known person save Will. Jonson was already, in *The Poetaster*, using the term “*Poet-Ape*,” for he calls the actors at large “apes.”

Jonson thought so well of his rhymes that he included them in the Epigrams of his first Folio (1616). By that date, the year of Shakespeare’s death, if he really loved Shakespeare, as he says, in verse and prose, Ben might have suppressed the verses. But (as Drummond noted) he preferred his jest, such as it was, to his friend; who was not, as usually understood, a man apt to resent a very blunt shaft of very obsolete wit. Like Molière, Shakespeare had outlived the charge of plagiarism, made long ago by the jealous Ben.

Poet-Ape is an actor-playwright “*that would be thought our chief*” - words which, by 1601, could only apply to Shakespeare; there was no rival, save Ben, near his throne. The playwright-actor, too, has now confessedly

”grown
To a little wealth and credit in the scene,”

of no other actor-playwright could this be said.

He is the author of “works” (Jonson was laughed at for calling his own plays “works”), but these works are “the frippery of wit,” that is, a tissue of plagiarisms, as in the case of *Pantalabus*. But “told of this he slights it,” as most successful authors, when accused, as they often are, of plagiarism by jealous rivals, wisely do; - so did Molière. This Poet-Ape began his career by “picking and gleaning” and “buying reversions of old plays.” This means that Shakespeare *did* work over earlier plays which his company had acquired; or, if Shakespeare did not, - then, I presume, - Bacon did!

That, with much bad humour, is the gist of the rhymes on Poet-Ape. Ben thinks Shakespeare’s “works” very larcenous, but still, the “works,” as such, are those of the poet-actor. I hope it is now clear that Poet-Ape, who, like *Pantalabus*, “takes up all”; who has “grown to a little wealth and credit in the scene,” and who “thinks himself the chief” of contemporary dramatists, can be nobody but Shakespeare. Hence it follows that the “works” of Poet-Ape, are the works of Shakespeare. Ben admits, nay, asserts the existence of the works, says that they may reach "the after-time," but he calls them a mass of plagiarisms, - because he is in a jealous rage.

But this view does not at all suit Mr. Greenwood, for it shows Ben regarding Shakespeare as the "Ape," or Actor, and also as the "Poet" and author of the "works." Yet Ben's words mean nothing if not that an actor is the author of works which Ben accuses of plagiarism. Mr. Greenwood thinks that the epigram proves merely that "Jonson looked upon Shakspere (if, indeed, he refers to him) as one who put forward the writings of others as his own, or, in plain English, an impostor." "The work which goes in his name is, in truth, the work of somebody else." Mr. Greenwood put the same interpretation on Greene's words about "Shakescene," and we showed that the interpretation was impossible. "The utmost we should be entitled to say" (if Shakescene be meant for Shakspere) "is that Greene accuses Player Shakspere of putting forward, as his own, some work or perhaps some parts of a work, for which he was really indebted to another." We proved, by quoting Greene's words, that he said nothing which could be tortured into this sense. In the same way Ben's words cannot be tortured into the sense that "the work which goes in his" (Poet-Ape's) "name is, in truth, the work of somebody else." Mr. Greenwood tries to find the Anti-Willian hypothesis in Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit* and in Ben's epigram. It is in neither.

Jonson is not accusing Shakespeare of pretending to be the author of plays written by somebody else, but of "making *each man's* wit his own," and the *men* are the other dramatists of the day. Thus the future "may judge" Shakespeare's work "to be his as well as *ours*."

It is "we," the living and recognised dramatists, whom Shakespeare is said to plagiarise from; so boldly that

"*We, the robbed*, leave rage, and pity it."

Ben does not mean that Shakespeare is publishing, as his own, whole plays by some other author, but that his works are tissues of scraps stolen from his contemporaries, from "us, the robbed." Where are to be found or heard of any works by a player-poet of 1601, the would-be chief dramatist of the day, except those signed William Shak(&c.). There are none, and thus Ben, at this date, is identifying Will Shakspere, the actor, with the author of the Shakespearean plays, which he expects to reach posterity; "after times may judge them to be his," as after times do to this hour.

Thus Ben expresses, in accordance with his humour on each occasion, most discrepant opinions of Will's works, but he never varies from his identification of Will with the author of the plays.

The "works" of which Ben wrote so splenetically in *Poet-Ape*, were the works of a Playwright-Actor, who could be nobody but the actor Shakespeare, as far as Ben then knew. If later, and in altered circumstances, he wrote of the very same works in very different terms, his "utterances" are "not easily reconcilable" with each other, - *whoever* the real author of the works may be. If Bacon, or Mr. Greenwood's anonymous equivalent for Bacon, were the author, and if Ben came to know it, his attitudes towards the *works* are still as irreconcilable as ever.

Perhaps Baconians and Mr. Greenwood might say, "as long as Ben believed that the works were those of an Actor-Playwright, he thought them execrable. But when he learned that they were the works of Bacon (or of some Great One), he declared them to be more than excellent" - *but not to Drummond*. I am reluctant to think that Jonson was the falsest and meanest of snobs. I think that when his old rival, by his own account his dear friend, was dead, and when (1623) Ben was writing panegyric verses about the first collected edition of his plays (the Folio), then between generosity and his habitual hyperbolical manner when he was composing commendatory verses, he said, - not too much in the way of praise, - but a good deal more than he later said (1630?), in prose, and in cold blood. I am only taking Ben as I find him and as I understand him. Every step in my argument rests on well-known facts. Ben notoriously, in his many panegyric verses, wrote in a style of inflated praise. In conversation with Drummond he censured, in brief blunt phrases, the men whom, in verse, he had extolled. The Baconian who has not read all Ben's panegyrics in verse, and the whole of his conversations with Drummond, argues in ignorance.

We now come to Ben's panegyrics in the Folio of 1623. Ben heads the lines,

"TO THE MEMORY OF MY BELOVED
THE AUTHOR
MR. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
AND
WHAT HE HATH LEFT US."

Words cannot be more explicit. Bacon was alive (I do not know when Mr. Greenwood's hidden genius died), and Ben goes on to speak of the Author, Shakespeare, as dead, and buried. He calls on him thus:

”Soul of the Age!
The applause! delight! the wonder of our Stage!
My Shakespear rise: I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
A little further, to make thee a room:
Thou art a monument, without a tomb,
And art alive still, while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read, and praise to give.”

Beaumont, by the way, died in the same year as Shakespeare, 1616, and, while Ben here names him with Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare, his contemporaries have left no anecdotes, no biographical hints. In the panegyric follow the lines:

“And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,
From thence to honour thee I would not seek
For names, but call forth thund’ring Æschylus,”

and the other glories of the Roman and Attic stage, to see and hear how Shakespeare bore comparison with all that the classic dramatists did, or that “did from their ashes come.”

Jonson means, “despite your lack of Greek and Latin I would not shrink from challenging the greatest Greek and Roman tragedians to see how you bear comparison with themselves”?

Mr. Greenwood and the Baconians believe that the author of the plays abounded in Latin and Greek. In my opinion his classical scholarship must have seemed slight indeed to Ben, so learned and so vain of his learning: but this is part of a vexed question, already examined. So far, Ben’s verses have brought not a hint to suggest that he does not identify the actor, his Beloved, with the author. Nothing is gained when Ben, in commendatory verses, praises “Thy Art,” whereas, speaking to Drummond of Hawthornden (1619), he said that Shakespeare “wanted art.” Ben is not now growling to Drummond of Hawthornden: he is writing a panegyric, and applauds Shakespeare’s “well-turned and true-filed lines,” adding that, “to write a living line” a man “must sweat,” and “strike the second heat upon the Muses’ anvil.”

To produce such lines requires labour, requires conscious “art.” So Shakespeare *had* “art,” after all, despite what Ben had said to Drummond:

"Shakespeare lacked art." There is no more in the matter; the "inconsistency" is that of Ben's humours on two perfectly different occasions, now grumbling to Drummond; and now writing hyperbolically in commendatory verses. But the contrast makes Mr. Greenwood exclaim, "Can anything be more astonishing and at the same time more unsatisfactory than this?"

Can anything be more like Ben Jonson?

Did he know the secret of the authorship in 1619? If so, why did he say nothing about the plays of the Great Unknown (whom he called Shakespeare), save what Drummond reports, "want of art," ignorance of Bohemian geography. Or did Ben *not* know the secret till, say, 1623, and then heap on the very works which he had previously scouted praise for the very quality which he had said they lacked? If so, Ben was as absolutely inconsistent, as before. There is no way out of this dilemma. On neither choice are Ben's utterances "easy to reconcile one with the other," except on the ground that Ben was - Ben, and his comments varied with his varying humours and occasions. I believe that, in the commendatory verses, Ben allowed his Muse to carry him up to heights of hyperbolical praise which he never came near in cold blood. He was warmed with the heat of poetic composition and wound up to heights of eulogy, though even *now* he could not forget the small Latin and less Greek!

We now turn to Mr. Greenwood's views about the commendatory verses. On mature consideration I say nothing of his remarks on Ben's couplets about the bad engraved portrait. They are concerned with the supposed "*original* bust," as represented in Dugdale's engraving of 1656. What the Baconians hope to make out of "the *original* bust" I am quite unable to understand. Again, I leave untouched some witticisms on Jonson's lines about Spenser, Chaucer, and Beaumont in their tombs - lines either suggested by, or suggestive of others by an uncertain W. Basse, "but the evidence of authorship seems somewhat doubtful. How the date is determined I do not know . . . " As Mr. Greenwood knows so little, and as the discussion merely adds dust to the dust, and fog to the mist of his attempt to disable Ben's evidence, I glance and pass by.

"Then follow these memorable words, which I have already discussed:

"'And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek . . . '"

In "these memorable words," every non-Baconian sees Ben's opinion about his friend's lack of scholarship. According to his own excellent Index, Mr. Greenwood has already adverted often to "these memorable words."

(1) P. 40. " . . . if this testimony is to be explained away as not seriously written, then are we justified in applying the same methods of interpretation to Jonson's other utterances as published in the Folio of 1623. But I shall have more to say as to that further on."

(2) P. 88. Nothing of importance.

(3) P. 220. Quotation from Dr. Johnson. Ben, "who had no imaginable temptation to falsehood," wrote the memorable words. But Mr. Greenwood has to imagine a "temptation to falsehood," - and he does.

(4) P. 222. "And we have recognised that Jonson's 'small Latin and less Greek' must be explained away" (a quotation from somebody).

(5) P. 225. Allusion to anecdote of "Latin (latten) spoons."

(6) P, 383. "Some of us" (some of whom?) "have long looked upon it as axiomatic . . . that Jonson's 'small Latin and less Greek,' if meant to be taken seriously, can only be applicable to Shakspere of Stratford and not to Shakespeare," that is, not to the Unknown author. Unluckily Ben, in 1623, is addressing the shade of the "sweet Swan of Avon," meaning Stratford-on-Avon.

(7) The next references in the laudable Index are to p, 475. "Then follow these memorable words, which I have already discussed:

"'And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,'

words which those who see how singularly inappropriate they are to the author of the *Plays* and *Poems* of Shakespeare have been at such infinite pains to explain away without impeaching the credit of the author, or assuming that he is here indulging in a little Socratic irony."

I do not want to "explain" Ben's words "away": I want to know how on earth Mr. Greenwood explains them away. My view is that Ben meant what he said, that Will, whose shade he is addressing, was no scholar (which he assuredly was not). I diligently search Mr. Greenwood's scriptures, asking How does he explain Ben's "memorable words" away? On of *The Shakespeare Problem Restated* I seem to catch a glimmer of his method. "Once let the Stratfordians" (every human and non-Baconian person of education) "admit that Jonson when he penned the words 'small Latin and less Greek' was really writing 'with his tongue in his cheek.' . . ."

Once admit that vulgarism concerning a great English poet engaged on a poem of Pindaric flight, and of prophetic vision! No, we leave the admission to Mr. Greenwood and his allies.

To consider thus is to consider too seriously. The Baconians and Anti-Willians have ceased to deserve serious attention (if ever they did deserve it), and virtuous indignation, and all that kind of thing, when they ask people who care for poetry to "admit" that Ben wrote his verses "with his tongue in his cheek." Elsewhere, in place of Ben's "tongue in his cheek," Mr. Greenwood prefers to suggest that Ben "is here indulging in a little Socratic irony." Socrates "with his tongue in his cheek"! Say "talking through his throat," if one may accept the evidence of the author of *Raffles*, as to the idioms of burglars.

To return to criticism, we are to admit that Jonson was really writing "with his tongue in his cheek," knowing that, as a fact, "*Shakespeare*" (the Great Unknown, the Bacon of the Baconians) "had remarkable classical attainments, and they, of course, open the door to the suggestion that the entire poem is capable of an ironical construction and esoteric interpretation."

So this is Mr. Greenwood's method of "explaining away" the memorable words. He seems to conjecture that Will was not *Shakespeare*, not the author of the plays; that Jonson knew it; that his poem is, as a whole, addressed to Bacon, or to the Great Unknown, under his "*nom de plume*" of "William Shakespeare"; that the address to the "Swan of Avon" is a mere blind; and that Ben only alludes to his "Beloved," the Stratford actor, when he tells his Beloved that his Beloved has "small Latin and less Greek." All the praise is for Bacon, or the Great Unknown (Mr. Harris), the jeer is for "his Beloved, the Author, Mr. William Shakespeare, And what he hath left Us."

As far as I presume to understand this theory of the "tongue in the cheek," of the "Socratic irony," this is what Mr. Greenwood has to propose towards "explaining away" the evidence of Ben Jonson, in his famous commendatory verses. When we can see through the dust of words we find that the "esoteric interpretation" of the commendatory verses is merely a reassertion of the general theory: a man with small Latin and less Greek could not have written the plays and poems. Therefore when Ben explicitly states that his Beloved, Mr. Shakespeare of Stratford, the Swan of Avon *did* write the plays, and had small Latin and less Greek, Ben meant that he did *not* write them, that they were written by somebody else who had plenty of Greek and Latin. It is a strange logical method! Mr. Greenwood merely reasserts his paradox, and proves it, like certain Biblical critics of more orthodoxy than sense, by aid of his private "esoteric method of interpretation." Ben, we say, about 1630, in prose and in cold blood, and in a humour of criticism without the old rancour and envy, or the transitory poetic enthusiasm, pens a note on Shakespeare in a volume styled "Timber, or Discoveries, made upon men and Matter, as they have flowed out of his daily Readings; or had their reflux to his peculiar Notion of the Times." Ben died in 1637; his MS. collection of notes and brief essays, and reflections, was published in 1641. Bacon, of whom he wrote his impressions in this manuscript, had died in 1626. Ben was no longer young: he says, among these notes, that his memory, once unusually strong, after he was past forty "is much decayed in me . . . It was wont to be faithful to me, but shaken with age now . . . (I copy the extract as given by Mr. Greenwood.) He spoke sooth: he attributes to Orpheus, in "Timber," a line from Homer, and quotes from Homer what is not in that poet's "works."

In this manuscript occurs, then, a brief prose note, headed, *De Shakespeare nostrati*, on our countryman Shakespeare. It is an anecdote of the Players and their ignorance, with a few critical and personal remarks on Shakespeare. "I remember the players have often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare that (whatsoever he penned) he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been, 'Would he had blotted a thousand,' which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this but for their ignorance who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by (that) wherein he most faulted; and to justify mine own candour, for I loved the man, and do honour his memory on this side idolatry as much as any. He was, indeed, honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent phantasy, brave notions and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped. '*Sufflaminandus erat*,' as Augustus said of Haterius. His wit was in his own power; would the rule of it had been so too! Many times he fell into those things could not escape laughter, as when he said in the person of Cæsar, one speaking to him, 'Caesar, thou dost me wrong.' He replied, 'Cæsar did never wrong but with just cause'; and such like, which were ridiculous. But he redeemed his vices with his virtues. There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned." Baconians actually maintain that Ben is here speaking of Bacon.

Of whom is Ben writing? Of the author of *Julius Cæsar*, - certainly, from which, his memory failing, he misquotes a line. If Ben be in the great secret - that the author was Bacon, or Mr. Greenwood's Great Unknown, he is here no more enthusiastic about the Shadow or the Statesman, than about Shakespeare; no less cool and critical, whoever may be the subject of his comments. Whether, in the commendatory verses, he referred to the Actor-Author, or Bacon, or the Shining Shadow, or all of them at once, he is now in a mood very much more cool and critical. If to be so cool and critical is violently inconsistent in the case of the Stratford actor, it is not less so if Ben has Bacon or the Shadow in his mind. Meanwhile the person of whom he speaks *is here the actor-author*, whom the players, his friends, commended "wherein he faulted," namely, in not "blotting" where, in a thousand cases, Ben wishes that he *had* blotted. Can the most enthusiastic Baconian believe that when Ben wrote about the players' ignorant applause of Shakespeare's, of their friend's lack of care in correction, Ben had Bacon in his mind?

As for Mr. Greenwood, he says that in Ben's sentence about the players and their ignorant commendation, "we have it on Jonson's testimony that the players looked upon William Shakspere the actor as the author of the plays and praised him for never blotting out a line." We have it, and how is the critic to get over or round the fact? Thus, "We know that this statement" (about the almost blotless lines) "is ridiculous; that if the players had any unblotted manuscripts in their hands (which is by no means probable) they were merely fair copies . . ."

Perhaps, but the Baconians appear to assume that a "fair copy" is not, and cannot be, a copy in the handwriting of the author.

As I have said before, the Players knew Will's handwriting, if he could write. If they received his copy in a hand not his own, and were not idiots, they could not praise him and his unerring speed and accuracy in penning his thoughts. If, on the other hand, Will could not write, in their long friendship with Will, the Players must have known the fact, and could not possibly believe, as they certainly did, "on Jonson's testimony" in his authorship.

To finish Mr. Greenwood's observations, "if they" (the players) "really thought that the author of the plays wrote them off *currente calamo*, and never" (or "hardly ever") "blotted a line, never revised, never made any alterations, they knew nothing whatever concerning the real Shakespeare."

Nothing whatever? What they did not know was merely that Will gave them fair copies in his own hand, as, before the typewriting machine was invented, authors were wont to do. Within the last fortnight I heard the error attributed to the players made by an English scholar who is foremost in his own field of learning. He and I were looking at some of Dickens's MSS. They were full of erasions and corrections. I said, "How unlike Scott!" whose first draft of his novels exactly answered to the players' description of Will's "copy." My friend said, "Browning scarcely made an erasion or change in writing his poems," and referred to Mr. Browning's MSS. for the press, of which examples were lying near us. "But Browning must have made clean copies for the press," I said: which was as new an idea to my learned friend as it was undreamed of by the Players:- if what they received from him were his clean copies.

The Players' testimony, through Jonson, cannot be destroyed by the "easy stratagem" of Mr. Greenwood.

Mr. Greenwood now nearly falls back on Bacon, though he constantly professes that he "is not the advocate of Bacon's authorship." The author was some great man, as like Bacon as one pea to another. Mr. Greenwood says that

Jonson looked on the issue of the First Folio "as a very special occasion." Well, it *was* a very special occasion; no literary occasion could be more "special." Without the Folio, badly as it is executed, we should perhaps never have had many of Shakespeare's plays. The occasion was special in the highest degree.

But, says Mr. Greenwood, "if we could only get to the back of Jonson's mind, we should find that there was some efficient cause operating to induce him to give the best possible sendoff to that celebrated venture."

Ben was much in the habit of giving "sendoffs" of great eloquence to poetic "ventures" now forgotten. What could "the efficient cause" be in the case of the Folio? At once Mr. Greenwood has recourse to Bacon; he cannot, do what he will, keep Bacon "out of the Memorial." Ben was with Bacon at Gorhambury, on Bacon's sixtieth birthday (January 22, 1621). Ben wrote verses about the Genius of the old house,

"Thou stand'st as if some mystery thou didst."

"What was that 'mystery'?" asks Mr. Greenwood. What indeed? And what has all this to do with Ben's commendatory verses for the Folio, two years later? Mr. Greenwood also surmises, as we have seen, that Jonson was with Bacon, helping to translate *The Advancement of Learning* in June, 1623.

Let us suppose that he was: what has that to do with Ben's verses for the Folio? Does Mr. Greenwood mean to hint that *Bacon* was the "efficient cause operating to induce" Ben "to give the best possible sendoff" to the Folio? One does not see what interest Bacon had in stimulating the enthusiasm of Ben, unless we accept Bacon as author of the plays, which Mr. Greenwood does not. If Mr. Greenwood thinks that Bacon was the author of the plays, then the facts are suitable to his belief. But if he does not, - "I hold no brief for the Baconians," he says, - how is all this passage on Ben's visits to Bacon concerned with the subject in hand?

Between the passage on some "efficient cause" "at the back of Ben's mind," and the passage on Ben's visits to Bacon in 1621-3, six pages intervene, and blur the supposed connection between the "efficient cause" of Ben's verses of 1623, and his visits to Bacon in 1621-3. These intercalary pages are concerned with Ben's laudations of Bacon, by name, in his *Discoveries*. The first is entirely confined to praise of Bacon as an orator. Bacon is next mentioned in a Catalogue of Writers as "*he who hath filled up all numbers*, and performed that in our tongue which may be preferred or compared either to *insolent Greece or haughty Rome*," words used of Shakespeare by Jonson in the Folio verses.

Mr. Greenwood remarks that Jonson's Catalogue, to judge by the names he cites (More, Chaloner, Smith, Sir Nicholas Bacon, Sidney, Hooker, Essex, Raleigh, Savile, Sandys, and so on), suggests that "he is thinking mainly of wits and orators of his own and the preceding generation," not of poets specially. This is obvious; why should Ben name Shakespeare with More, Smith, Chaloner, Eliot, Bishop Gardiner, Egerton, Sandys, and Savile? Yet "it is remarkable that no mention should be made of the great dramatist." Where is Spenser named, or Beaumont, or Chaucer, with whom Ben ranked Shakespeare? Ben quoted of Bacon the line he wrote long before of Shakespeare as a poet, about "insolent Greece," and all this is "remarkable," and Mr. Greenwood finds it "not surprising" that the Baconians dwell on the "extraordinary coincidence of expression," as if Ben were incapable of repeating a happy phrase from himself, and as if we should wonder at anything the Baconians may say or do.

Another startling coincidence is that, in *Discoveries*, Ben said of Shakespeare "his wit was in his own power," and wished that "the rule of it had been so too." Of Bacon, Ben wrote, "his language, where he could spare or pass by a jest, was nobly censorious." Thus Bacon *had* "the rule of his own wit," Bacon "*could* spare or pass by a jest," whereas Shakespeare apparently could not - so like were the two Dromios in this particular! Strong in these convincing arguments, the Baconians ask (not so Mr. Greenwood, he is no Baconian), "were there then *two* writers of whom this description was appropriate . . . Was there only one, and was it of Bacon, under the name of "Shakespeare," that Ben wrote *De Shakespeare nostrati*?

Read it again, substituting "Bacon" for "Shakespeare." "I remember the players," and so on, and what has Bacon to do here? "Sometimes it was necessary that *Bacon* should be stopped." "Many times *Bacon* fell into those things could not escape laughter," such as Cæsar's supposed line, "and such like, which were ridiculous." "*Bacon* redeemed his vices with his virtues. There was ever more in *Bacon* to be praised than to be pardoned."

Thus freely, according to the Baconians, speaks Ben of Bacon, whom he here styles "Shakespeare," - Heaven knows why! while crediting him with the players as his friends. Ben could not think or speak thus of Bacon. Mr. Greenwood occupies his space with these sagacities of the Baconians; one marvels why he takes the trouble. We are asked why Ben wrote so little and that so cool ("I loved him on this side idolatry as much as any") about Shakespeare. Read through Ben's *Discoveries:* what has he to say about any one of his great contemporary dramatists, from Marlowe to Beaumont? He says nothing about any of them; though he had panegyrised them, as he panegyrised Beaumont, in verse. In his prose *Discoveries* he speaks, among English dramatists, of

Shakespeare alone.

We are also asked by the Baconians to believe that his remarks on Bacon under the name of Shakespeare are really an addition to his more copious and infinitely more reverential observations on Bacon, named by his own name; "I have and do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper to himself." Also (where Bacon is spoken of as Shakespeare) "He redeemed his vices by his virtues. There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned . . . Sometimes it was necessary that he should be stopped . . . Many times he fell into those things that could not escape laughter."

These two views of Bacon are, if you like, incongruous. The person spoken of is in both cases Bacon, say the Baconians, and Mr. Greenwood sympathetically alludes to their ideas, which I cannot qualify in courteous terms. Baconians "would, of course, explain the difficulty by saying that however sphinx-like were Jonson's utterances, he had clearly distinct in his own mind two different personages, *viz.* Shakspere the player, and Shakespeare the real author of the plays and poems, and that if in the perplexing passage quoted from the *Discoveries* he appears to confound one with the other, it is because the solemn seal of secrecy had been imposed on him." They *would* say, they *do* say all that. Ben is not to let out that Bacon is the author. So he tells us of Bacon that he often made himself ridiculous, and so forth, - but he *pretends* that he is speaking of Shakespeare.

All this wedge of wisdom, remember, is inserted between the search for "the efficient cause" of Ben's panegyric (1623), in the Folio, on his Beloved Mr. William Shakespeare, and the discovery of Ben's visits to Bacon in 1621-3.

Does Mr. Greenwood mean that Ben, in 1623 (or earlier), knew the secret of Bacon's authorship, and, stimulated by his hospitality, applauded his works in the Folio, while, as he must not disclose the secret, he throughout speaks of Bacon as Shakespeare, puns on that name in the line about seeming "to shake a lance," and salutes the Lord of Gorhambury as "Sweet Swan of Avon"? Mr. Greenwood cannot mean that; for he is not a Baconian. What *does* he mean?

Put together his pages 483, 489-491. On the former we find how "it would appear" that Jonson thought the issue of the Folio (1623) "a very special occasion," and that perhaps if we could only "get to the back of his mind, we should find that there was some efficient cause operating to induce him to give the best possible sendoff to that celebrated venture." Then skip to p-491, and you find very special occasions: Bacon's birthday feast with its" mystery"; Ben as one of Bacon's "good pens," in 1623. "The best of these good pens, it seems, was Jonson." On what evidence does it "seem"? The opinion of Judge Webb.

Is this supposed collaboration with Bacon in 1623, "the efficient cause operating to induce" Ben "to give the best possible sendoff" to the Folio? How could this be the "efficient cause" if Bacon were not the author of the plays?

Mr. Greenwood, like the Genius at the birthday supper,

"Stands as if some mystery he did."

On a trifling point of honour, namely, as to whether Ben were a man likely to lie, tortuously, hypocritically, to be elaborately false about the authorship of the Shakespearean plays, it is hopelessly impossible to bring the Baconians and Mr. Greenwood (who "holds no brief for the Baconians") to my point of view. Mr. Greenwood rides off thus - what the Baconians do is unimportant.

"There are, as everybody knows, many falsehoods that are justifiable, some that it is actually a duty to tell." It may be so; I pray that I may never tell any of them (or any more of them).

Among justifiable lies I do not reckon that of Scott if ever he plumply denied that he wrote the *Waverley* novels. I do not judge Sir Walter. Heaven forbid! But if, in Mr. Greenwood's words, he, "we are told, thought it perfectly justifiable for a writer who wished to preserve his anonymity, to deny, when questioned, the authorship of a work, since the interrogator had no right to put such a question to him," I disagree with Sir Walter. Many other measures, in accordance with the conditions of each case, were open to him. Some are formulated by his own Bucklaw, in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, as regards questions about what occurred on his bridal night. Bucklaw would challenge the man, and cut the lady, who asked questions. But Scott's case, as cited, applies only to Bacon (or Mr. Greenwood's Unknown), if *he* were asked whether or not he were the author of the plays. No idiot, at that date, was likely to put the question! But, if anyone did ask, Bacon must either evade, or deny, or tell the truth.

On the parallel of Scott, Bacon could thus deny, evade, or tell the truth. But the parallel of Scott is not applicable to any other person except to the author who wishes to preserve his anonymity, and is questioned. The parallel does not apply to Ben. *He* had not written the Shakespearean plays. Nobody was asking *him* if he had written them. If he knew that the author was Bacon, and knew it under pledge of secrecy, and was asked (*per impossibile*) "Who wrote these plays?" he had only to say, "Look at the title-page." But no mortal was asking Ben the question. But we are to suppose that, in the panegyric and in *Discoveries*, Ben chooses to assert, first, that Shakespeare was his Beloved, his Sweet Swan of Avon; and that he "loved him, on this side idolatry, as much as any." There is no evidence that he did love Shakespeare, except his own statement, when, according to the Baconians, he is really speaking of Bacon, and, according to Mr. Greenwood, of an unknown person, singularly like Bacon. Consequently, unless we can prove that Ben really loved the actor, he is telling a disgustingly hypocritical and wholly needless falsehood, both before and after the death of Bacon. To be silent about the authorship of a book, an authorship which is the secret of your friend and patron, is one thing and a blameless thing. All the friends, some twenty, to whom Scott confided the secret of his authorship were silent. But not one of them publicly averred that the author was their very dear friend, So-and-so, who was not Scott, and perhaps not their friend at all. That was Ben's line. Thus the parallel with Scott drawn by Mr. Greenwood, twice, is no parallel. It has no kind of analogy with Ben's alleged falsehoods, so elaborate, so incomprehensible except by Baconians, and, if he did not love the actor Shakspere dearly, so detestably hypocritical, and open to instant detection.

It is not easy to find a parallel to the conduct with which Ben is charged. But suppose that Scott lived unsuspected of writing his novels, which, let us say, he signed "James Hogg," and died without confessing his secret, and without taking his elaborate precautions for its preservation on record.

Next, imagine that Lockhart knew Scott's secret, under vow of silence, and was determined to keep it at any cost. He therefore, writing after the death of Hogg of Ettrick, and in Scott's lifetime, publishes verses declaring that Hogg was his "beloved" (an enormous fib), and that Hogg, "Sweet Swan of Ettrick," was the author of the *Waverley* novels.

To complete the parallels, Lockhart, after Scott's death, leaves a note in prose to the effect that, while he loved Hogg on this side idolatry (again, a monstrous fable), he must confess that Hogg, author of the *Waverley* novels, often fell into things that were ridiculous; and often needed to have a stopper put on him for all these remarks. Lockhart, while speaking of Hogg, is thinking of Scott - and he makes the remarks solely to conceal Scott's authorship of the novels - of which, on the hypothesis, nobody suspected Scott to be the author. Lockhart must then have been what the Baconian Mr. Theobald calls Mr. Churton Collins, "a measureless liar," - all for no reason.

Mr. Greenwood, starting as usual from the case, which is no parallel, of Scott's denying his own authorship, goes on, "for all we know, Jonson might have seen nothing in the least objectionable in the publication by some great personage of his dramatic works under a pseudonym" (under another man's name really), "even though that pseudonym led to a wrong conception as to the authorship; and that, if, being a friend of that great personage, and working in his service" (Ben worked, by the theory, in Bacon's), "he had solemnly engaged to preserve the secret inviolate, and not to reveal it even to posterity, then *doubtless* ('I thank thee, Jew' (meaning Sir Sidney Lee), 'for teaching me that word'!) he would have remained true to that solemn pledge."

To remain "true," Ben had only to hold his peace. But he lied up and down, and right and left, and even declared that Bacon was a friend of the players, and needed to be shut up, and made himself a laughing-stock in his plays, - styling Bacon" Shakespeare." All this, and much more of the same sort, we must steadfastly believe before we can be Baconians, for only by believing these doctrines can we get rid of Ben Jonson's testimony to the authorship of Will Shakspere, Gent.

CHAPTER XIII: THE PREOCCUPATIONS OF BACON

Let us now examine a miracle and mystery in which the Baconians find nothing strange; nothing that is not perfectly normal. Bacon was the author of the Shakespearean plays, they tell us. Let us look rapidly at his biography, after which we may ask, does not his poetic supremacy, and imaginative fertility, border on the miraculous, when we consider his occupations and his ruling passion?

Bacon, born in 1561, had a prodigious genius, was well aware of it, and had his own ideal as to the task which he was born to do. While still at Cambridge, and therefore before he was fifteen, he was utterly dissatisfied, as he himself informed Dr. Rawley, with the scientific doctrines of the Schools. In the study of nature they reasoned from certain accepted ideas, *a priori* principles, not from what he came to call "interrogation of Nature." There were, indeed, and had long been experimental philosophers, but the school doctors went not beyond Aristotle; and discovered nothing. As Mr. Spedding puts it, the boy Bacon asked himself, "If our study of nature be thus barren, our method of study must be wrong; might not a better method be found? . . . Upon the conviction 'This may be done,' followed at once the question, *How* may it be done? Upon that question answered followed the resolution to try and do it."

This was, in religious phrase, the Conversion of Bacon, "the event which had a greater influence than any other upon his character and future course. From that moment he had a vocation which employed and stimulated him . . . an object to live for as wide as humanity, as immortal as the human race; an idea to live in vast and lofty enough to fill the soul for ever with religious and heroic aspirations." The vocation, the idea, the object, were not poetical.

In addition to this ceaseless scientific preoccupation, Bacon was much concerned with the cause of reformed religion (then at stake in France, and supposed to be in danger at home), and with the good government of his native country. He could only aid that cause by the favour of Elizabeth and James; by his services in Parliament, where, despite his desire for advancement, he conscientiously opposed the Queen. He was obliged to work at such tasks of various sorts, legal and polemical literature, as were set him by people in power. With these three great objects filling his heart, inspiring his ambition, and occupying his energies and time, we cannot easily believe, without direct external evidence, that he, or any mortal, could have leisure and detachment from his main objects (to which we may add his own advancement) sufficient to enable him to compose the works ascribed to Shakespeare.

Thus, at the age of twenty-two (1583), when, if ever, he might have penned sonnets to his mistress's eyebrow, he reports that he wrote "his first essay on the Instauration of Philosophy, which he called *Temporis Partus Maximus,* 'The Greatest Birth of Time,'" and "we need not doubt that between Law and Philosophy he found enough to do." For the Baconians take Bacon to have been a very great lawyer (of which I am no judge), and Law is a hard mistress, rapacious of a man's hours. In 1584 he entered Parliament, but we do not hear anything very important of his occupations before 1589, when he wrote a long pamphlet, "Touching the Controversies of the Church of England." He had then leisure enough; that he was not anonymously supplying the stage with plays I can neither prove nor disprove: but there is no proof that he wrote *Love's Labour's Lost*! By 1591-2, we learn much of him from his letter to Cecil, who never would give him a place wherein he could meditate his philosophy. He was apparently hard at scientific work. "I account my ordinary course of study and meditation to be more painful than most parts of action are." He adds, "The contemplative planet carries me away wholly," and by contemplation I conceive him to mean what he calls "vast contemplative ends." These he proceeds to describe: he does *not* mean the writing of *Venus and Adonis* (1593), nor of *Lucrece* (1594), nor of comedies! "I have taken all knowledge to be my province," and he recurs to his protest against the pseudo-science of his period. "If I could purge knowledge of two sorts of rovers whereof the one, with frivolous disputations, confutations, and verbosities; the other with blind experiments, and auricular traditions and impostures, hath committed so many spoils, I hope I should bring in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries . . . This, whether it be curiosity, or vainglory, or nature, or (if one take it favourably) philanthropy, is so fixed in my mind that it cannot be removed." If Cecil cannot help him to a post, if he cannot serve the truth, he will reduce himself, like Anaxagoras, to voluntary poverty, " . . . and become some sorry bookmaker, or a true pioneer in that mine of truth . . . " Really, from first to last he was the prince of begging-letter writers, endlessly asking for place, pensions, reversions, money, and more money.

Though his years were thirty-one, Bacon was as young at heart as Shelley at eighteen, when he wrote thus to Cecil, "my Lord Treasurer Burghley." What did Cecil care for his youngish kinsman's philanthropy, and "vast speculative ends" (how *modern* it all is!), and the rest of it? But just because Bacon, at thirty-one, *is* so extremely "green," going to "take all knowledge for his province (if some one will only subsidise him, and endow his research), I conceive that he was in earnest about his reformation of science. Surely no Baconian will deny it! Being so deeply in earnest, taking his "study and meditation" so hard, I cannot see him as the author of *Venus and Adonis*, and whatever plays of the period, - say, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Henry VI*, Part I, - are attributed to him, about this time, by Baconians. Of course my view is merely personal or "subjective." The Baconians' view is also "subjective." I regard Bacon, in 1591, and later, as intellectually preoccupied by his vast speculative aims:- what he says that he desires to do, in science, is what he *did*, as far as he was able. His other desires, his personal advancement, money, a share in the conduct of affairs, he also hotly pursued, not much to his own or the public profit. There seems to be no room left, no inclination left, for competition in their own line with Marlowe, Greene, Nash, and half a dozen other professed playwrights: no room for plays done under the absurd pseudonym of an ignorant actor.

You see these things as the Baconians do, or as I do. Argument is unavailing. I take Bacon to have been sincere in his effusive letter to Cecil. Not so the Baconians; he concealed, they think, a vast *literary* aim. They must take his alternative - to be "some sorry bookmaker, *or* a pioneer in that mine of truth," as meaning that he would either be the literary hack of a company of players, *or* the founder of a regenerating philosophy. But, at that date, playwrights could not well be called "bookmakers," for the owners of the plays did their best to keep them from appearing as printed books. If Bacon by "bookmaker" meant "playwright," he put a modest value on his poetical work!

Meanwhile (1591-2), Bacon attached himself to the young, beautiful, and famous Essex, on the way to be a Favourite, and gave him much excellent advice, as he always did, and, as always, his advice was not taken. It is not a novel suggestion, that Essex is the young man to whom Bacon is so passionately attached in the Sonnets traditionally attributed to Shakespeare. "I applied myself to him" (that is, to Essex), says Bacon, "in a manner which, I think, happeneth rarely among men." The poet of the Sonnets applies himself to the Beloved Youth, in a manner which (luckily) "happeneth rarely among men."

It is difficult to fit the Sonnets into Bacon's life. But, if you pursue the context of what Bacon says concerning Essex, you find that he does not speak *openly* of a tenderly passionate attachment to that young man; not more than *this*, "I did nothing but advise and ruminate with myself, to the best of my understanding, propositions and memorials of anything that might concern his Lordship's honour, fortune, or service." As Bacon did nothing but these things (1591-2), he had no great leisure for writing poetry and plays. Moreover, speaking as a poet, in the Sonnets, he might poetically exaggerate his intense amatory devotion to Essex into the symbolism of his passionate verse. *Was Essex then a married man*? If so, the Sonneteer's insistence on his marrying must be symbolical of - anything else you please.

We know that Bacon, at this period, "did nothing" but "ruminate" about Essex. The words are his own! (1604). No plays, no *Venus and Adonis*, nothing but enthusiastic service of Essex and the Sonnets. Mr. Spedding, indeed, thinks that, to adorn some pageant of Essex (November 17, 1592), Bacon kindly contributed such matter as "Mr. Bacon in Praise of Knowledge" (containing his usual views about regenerating science), and "Mr. Bacon's Discourse in Praise of his Sovereign." Both are excellent, though, for a Court festival, not very gay.

He also, very early in 1593, wrote an answer to Father Parson's (?) famous indictment of Elizabeth's Government, in *Observations on a Libel*. What with ruminating on Essex, and this essay, he was not solely devoted to *Venus and Adonis* and to furbishing-up old plays, though, no doubt, he *may* have unpacked his bosom in the Sonnets, and indulged his luscious imaginations in *Venus and Adonis*. I would not limit the potentialities of his genius. But, certainly, this amazing man was busy in quite other matters than poetry; not to mention his severe "study and meditation" on science.

All these activities of Bacon, in the year of *Venus and Adonis*, do not exhaust his exercises. Bacon, living laborious days, plunged into the debate in the Commons on Supply and fell into Elizabeth's disgrace, and vainly competed with Coke for the Attorney-Generalship, and went on to write a pamphlet on the conspiracy of Lopez, and to try to gain the office of Solicitor-General, to manage Essex's affairs, to plead at the Bar, to do Crown work as a lawyer, to urge his suit for the Solicitorship; to trifle with the composition of "Formularies and Elegancies" (January 1595), to write his Essays, to try for the Mastership of the Rolls, to struggle with the affairs of the doomed Essex (1600-1), while always "labouring in secret" at that vast aim of the reorganisation of natural science, which ever preoccupied him, he says, and distracted his attention from his practice and from affairs of State. Of these State affairs the projected Union with Scotland was the most onerous. He was also writing *The Advancement of Learning* (1605). "I do confess," he wrote to Sir Thomas Bodley, "since I was of any understanding, my mind hath in effect been absent from that I have done." His mind was with his beloved Reformation of Learning: this came between him and his legal, his political labours, his pamphlet-writing, and his private schemes and suits. To this burden of Atlas the Baconians add the vamping-up of old plays for Shakespeare's company, and the inditing of new plays, poems, and the Sonnets. Even without this considerable addition to his tasks, Bacon is wonderful enough, but with it - he needs the sturdy faith of the Rationalist to accept him and his plot - to write plays under the pseudonym of "William Shakespeare."

Talk of miracles as things which do not happen! The activities of Bacon from 1591 to 1605; the strain on that man's mind and heart, - especially his heart, when we remember that he had to prosecute his passionately adored Essex to the death; all this makes it seem, to me, improbable that, as Mrs. Pott and her school of Baconians hold, he lived to be at least a hundred and six, if not much older. No wonder that he turned to tragedy, *Lear, Macbeth, Othello,* and saw life *en noir:* man delighted him not, nor woman either.

The occupations, and, even more, the scientific preoccupation of Bacon, do not make his authorship of the plays a physical impossibility. But they make it an intellectual miracle. Perhaps I may be allowed to set off this marvel against that other portent, Will Shakspere's knowledge and frequent use of terms of Law. I do not pretend to understand how Will came to have them at the tip of his pen. Thus it may be argued that the Sonnets are by Bacon and no other man, because the Law is so familiar to the author, and his legal terms are always used with so nice an accuracy, that only Bacon can have been capable of these mysterious productions. (But why was Bacon so wofully inaccurate in points of scholarship and history?)

By precisely the same argument Lord Penzance proves that Bacon (not Ben, as Mr. Greenwood holds) wrote for the players the Dedication of the Folio. "If it should be the case that Francis Bacon wrote the plays, he would, probably, afterwards have written the Dedication of the Folio, and the style of it" (stuffed with terms of law) "would be accounted for." Mr. Greenwood thinks that Jonson wrote the Dedication; so Ben, too, was fond of using legal terms in literature. "Legal terms abounded in all plays and poems of the period," says Sir Sidney Lee, and Mr. Greenwood pounces on the word "all." However he says, "We must admit that this use of legal jargon is frequently found in lay-writers, poets, and others of the Elizabethan period - in sonnets for example, where it seems to us intolerable." Examples are given from Barnabe Barnes. The lawyers all agree, however, that Shakespeare does the legal style "more natural," and more accurately than the rest. And yet I cannot even argue that, if he did use legal terms at all, he would be sure to do it pretty well.

For on this point of Will's use of legal phraseology I frankly profess myself entirely at a loss. To use it in poetry was part of the worse side of taste at that period. The lawyers with one voice declare that Will's use of it is copious and correct, and that their "mystery" is difficult, their jargon hard to master; "there is nothing so dangerous," wrote Lord Campbell, "as for one not of the craft to tamper with our freemasonry." I have not tampered with it. Perhaps a man of genius who found it interesting might have learned the technical terms more readily than lawyers deem possible. But Will, so accurate in his legal terms, is so inaccurate on many other points; for example, in civil and natural history, and in classic lore. Mr. Greenwood proves him to be totally at sea as a naturalist. On the habits of bees, for example, "his natural history of the insect is as limited as it is inaccurate." Virgil, though not a Lord Avebury, was a great entomologist, compared with Will. About the cuckoo Will was recklessly misinformed. His Natural History was folklore, or was taken from that great mediæval storehouse of absurdities, the popular work of Pliny. "He went to contemporary error or antiquated fancy for his facts, not to nature," says a critic quoted by Mr. Greenwood. Was that worthy of Bacon?

All these charges against *le vieux Williams* (as Théophile Gautier calls our Will) I admit. But Will was no Bacon; Will had not "taken all knowledge for his province." Bacon, I hope, had not neglected Bees! Thus the problem, why is Will accurate in his legal terminology, and reckless of accuracy in quantity, in history, in classic matters, is not by me to be solved. I can only surmise that from curiosity, or for some other unknown reason, he had read law-books, or drawn information from Templars about the meaning of their jargon, and that, for once, he was technically accurate.

We have now passed in review the chief Baconian and Anti-Willian arguments against Will Shakespeare's authorship of the plays and poems. Their chief argument for Bacon is *aut Diabolus*, *aut Franciscus*, which, freely interpreted, means, "If Bacon is not the author, who the devil is?"

We reply, that man is the author (in the main) to whom the works are attributed by every voice of his own generation which mentions them, namely, the only William Shakespeare that, from 1593 to the early years of the second decade of the following century, held a prominent place in the world of the drama. His authorship is explicitly vouched for by his fellow-players, Heminge and Condell, to whom he left bequests in his will; and by his sometime rival, later friend, and always critic, Ben Jonson; Heywood, player and playwright and pamphleteer, who had been one of Henslowe's "hands," and lived into the Great Rebellion, knew the stage and authors for the stage from within, and *his* "mellifluous Shakespeare" is "Will," as his Beaumont was "Frank," his Marlowe "Kit," his Fletcher, "Jack." The author of *Daiphantus* (1604), mentioning the popularity of *Hamlet*, styles it "one of friendly Shakespeare's tragedies." Shakespeare, to him, was our Will clearly, a man of known and friendly character. The other authors of allusions did not need to say *who* their "Shakespeare" was, any more than they needed to say *who* Marlowe or any other poet was. We have examined the possibly unprecedented argument which demands that they who mention Shakespeare as the poet must, if they would enlighten us, add explicitly that he is also the actor.

"But all may have been deceived" by the long conspiracy of the astute Bacon, or the Nameless One. To believe this possible, considering the eager and suspicious jealousy and volubility of rival playwrights, is to be credulous indeed. The Baconians, representing Will almost as incapable of the use of pen and ink as "the old hermit of Prague," destroy their own case. A Will who had to make his mark, like his father, could not pose as an author even to the call-boy of his company. Mr. Greenwood's bookless Will, with some crumbs of Latin, and some power of "bumbasting out a blank verse," is a rather less impossible pretender, indeed; but why and when did the speaker of patois, the bookless one, write blank verse, from 1592 onwards, and where are his blank verses? Where are the "works" of Poet-Ape? As to the man, even Will by tradition, whatever it may be worth, he was "a handsome, well-shaped man; very good company, and of a very ready and pleasant, smooth wit." To his fellow-actors he was "so worthy a friend and fellow" (associate). To Jonson, "he was, indeed, honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent phantasy, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed so freely that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped." If Jonson here refers, as I suppose he does, to his conversation, it had that extraordinary affluence of thoughts, each mating itself with as remarkable originality of richly figured expressions, which is so characteristic of the style of Shakespeare's plays. In this prodigality he was remote indeed from the style of the Greeks; "panting Time toils after him in vain," and even the reader, much more the listener, might say, *sufflaminandus est;* "he needs to have the brake put on."

Such, according to unimpeachable evidence, was Will. Only despair can venture the sad suggestion that, under the name of Shakespeare, Ben is here speaking of Bacon, as "falling into those things which could not escape laughter . . . which were ridiculous." But to this last poor shift and fantastic guess were the Anti-Willians and Baconians reduced.

Such was Shakespeare, according to a rival.

But it is "impossible" that a man should have known so much, especially of classical literature and courtly ways, and foreign manners and phrases, if he had no more, at most, than four or five years at a Latin school, and five or six years in that forcing-house of faculty, the London of the stage, in the flush of the triumph over the Armada.

"With innumerable sorts of English books and infinite fardles of printed pamphlets this country is pestered, all shops stuffed, and every study furnished," says a contemporary. If a doubter will look at the cheap and common books of that day (a play in quarto, and the Sonnets of Shakespeare, when new, were sold for fippence) in any great collection; he will not marvel that to a lover of books, poor as he might be, many were accessible. Such a man cannot be kept from books.

If the reader will look into "the translations and imitations of the classics which poured from the press . . . the poems and love-pamphlets and plays of the University wits" (when these chanced to be printed), "the tracts and dialogues in the prevailing taste," he will understand the literary soil in which the genius of Shakespeare blossomed as rapidly as the flowers in "Adonis' garden." The whole literature was, to an extent which we find tedious, saturated with classical myths, anecdotes, philosophic *dicta* - a world of knowledge of a kind then "in widest commonalty spread," but now so much forgotten that, to Baconians and the public, such lore seems recondite learning.

The gallants who haunted the stage, and such University wits as could get the money, or had talent (like Crichton) to "dispute their way through Europe," made the Italian tour, and, notoriously, were "Italianate." They would not be chary of reminiscences of Florence, Venice, and Rome. Actors visited Denmark and Germany. No man at home was far to seek for knowledge of Elsinore, the mysterious Venetian "tranect or common ferry," the gondolas, and the Rialto. There was no lack of soldiers fresh and voluble from the foreign wars. Only dullards, or the unthinking, can be surprised by the ease with which a quick-witted man, having some knowledge of Latin, can learn to read a novel in French, Italian, or Spanish. That Shakespeare was the very reverse of a dullard, of the clod of Baconian fancy, is proved by the fact that he was thought capable of his works. For courtly manners he had the literary convention and Lyly's Court Comedies, with what he saw when playing at the Court and in the houses of the great. As to untaught nobility of manners, there came to the Court of France in 1429, from a small pig-breeding village on the marches of Lorraine, one whose manners were deemed of exquisite grace, propriety, and charm, by all who saw and heard her: of her manners and swift wit and repartee, the official record of her trial bears concordant evidence. Other untaught gifts she possessed, and the historic record is unimpeached as regards that child of genius, Jeanne d'Arc.

"*Ne me dites jamais cette bête de mot, impossible*," said Napoleon: it is indeed a stupid word where genius is concerned.

If intellectual "miracles" were impossible to genius, even Bacon could not have been and done all that he was and did, and also the author of the Shakespearean plays and poems; even Ben could not have been the scholar that he was. For the rest, I need not return on my tracks and explain once more such shallow mysteries as the "Silence of Philip Henslowe," and the lack of literary anecdotage about Shakespeare in a stupendously illiterate country town. Had Will, not Ben, visited Drummond of Hawthornden, we should have matter enough of the kind desired.

"We have the epics of Homer," people say, "what matters it whether they be by a Man, or by a Syndicate that was in business through seven centuries? We have the plays of Shakespeare, what matters it whether he, or Bacon, or X. were, in the main, the author?"

It matters to us, if we hold such doubts to be fantastic pedantries, such guesses contrary to the nature of things; while we wish to give love and praise and gratitude where they are due; to that Achæan "Father of the rest"; and to "friendly Shakespeare."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: “TROILUS AND CRESSIDA”

To myself *Troilus and Cressida* is, with *Henry VI*, Part I, the most mysterious among the Shakespearean plays. Here we find, if Will wrote it, or had any hand in it, the greatest poet of the modern world in touch with the heroes of the greatest poet of the ancient world; but the English author’s eyes are dimmed by the mists and dust of post-Homeric perversions of the Tale of Troy. The work of perversion began, we know, in the eighth century before our era, when, by the author of the *Cypria*, these favourite heroes of Homer, Odysseus and Diomede, were represented as scoundrels, assassins, and cowards.

In the Prologue to the play (whosoever wrote it) we see that the writer is no scholar. He makes the Achæan fleet muster in “the port of *Athens*,” of all places. Even Ovid gave the Homeric trysting-place, Aulis, in Bœotia. (This Prologue is not in the Folio of 1623.) Six gates hath the Englishman’s Troy, and the Scæan is not one of them.

The loves of Troilus and Cressida, with Pandarus as go-between, are from the mediæval Troy books, and were wholly unknown to Homer, whose Pandarus is only notable for loosing a traitor’s shaft at Menelaus, in time of truce, and for his death at the hand of Diomede. The play begins after the duel (Iliad, III) between Paris and Menelaus: in the play, not in Homer, Paris “retires hurt,” as is at first reported. Hector has a special grudge against the Telamonian Aias. As in the Iliad there is a view of the Achæans, taken from the walls by Priam and Helen; so, in the play, Pandarus and Cressida review the Trojans re-entering the city. Paris turns out not to be hurt after all.

In Act i. Scene 3, the Achæans hold council, and regret the disaffection of Achilles. Here comes Ulysses’ great speech on discipline, in armies, and in states, the gradations of rank and duty; commonly thought to be a leaf in Shakespeare’s crown of bays. The speeches of Agamemnon and Nestor are dignified; indeed the poet treats Agamemnon much more kindly than Homer is wont to do. But the poet represents Achilles as laughing in his quarters at Patroclus’s imitation of the cough and other infirmities of old Nestor, to which Homer, naturally, never alludes. Throughout, the English poet regards Achilles with the eyes of his most infamous late Greek and ignorant mediæval detractors. The Homeric sequence of events is so far preserved that, on the day of the duel between Paris and Menelaus, comes (through Æneas) the challenge by Hector to fight any Greek in “gentle and joyous passage of arms” (Iliad, VII). As in the Iliad, the Greeks decide by lot who is to oppose Hector; but by the contrivance of Odysseus (not by chance, as in Homer) the lot falls on Aias. In the Iliad Aias is as strong and sympathetic as Porthos in *Les Trois Mousquetaires*. The play makes him as great an eater of beef, and as stupid as Sir Andrew Aguecheek. Achilles, save in a passage quite out of accord with the rest of the piece, is nearly as dull as Aias, is discourteous, and is cowardly! No poet and no scholar who knew Homer’s heroes in Homer’s Greek, could thus degrade them; and the whole of the revilings of Thersites are loathsome in their profusion of filthy thoughts. It does not follow that Will did not write the part of Thersites. Some of the most beautiful and Shakespearean pieces of verse adorn the play; one would say that no man but Will could have written them. Troilus and Cressida, at first, appear “to dally with the innocence of love”; and nothing can be nobler and more dramatic than the lines in which Cressida, compelled to go to her father, Calchas, in the Greek camp, in exchange for Antenor, professes her loyalty in love. But the Homeric and the alien later elements, - the story of false love, - cannot be successfully combined. The poet, whoever he was, appears to weary and to break down. He ends, indeed, as the Iliad ends, with the death of Hector, but Hector, in the play, is murdered, while resting unarmed, without shield and helmet, after stripping a suit of sumptuous mail from a nameless runaway. In the play he has slain Patroclus, but has not stripped him of the armour of Achilles, which, in Homer, he is wearing. Achilles then meets Hector, but far from rushing to avenge on him Patroclus, he retires like a coward, musters his men, and makes them surround and slay the defenceless Hector.

Cressida, who is sent to her father Calchas, in the Greek camp, in a day becomes “the sluttish spoil of opportunity,” and of Diomede, and the comedy praised by the preface-writer of a quarto of 1609, is a squalid tragedy reeking of Thersites and Pandarus, of a light o’ love, and the base victory of cruel cowardice over knightly Hector. Yet there seemed to be muffled notes from the music, and broken lights from the splendour of Homer. When Achilles eyes Hector all over, during a truce, and insultingly says that he is thinking in what part of his body he shall drive the spear, we are reminded of Iliad, XXII, 320-326, where Achilles searches his own armour, worn by Patroclus, stripped by Hector from him, and worn by Hector, for a chink in the mail. Yet, after all, these points are taken, not from the Iliad, but from Caxton’s popular Troy Book.

Once more, when Hector is dead, and Achilles bids his men to ”cry amain,
Achilles hath the mighty Hector slain,”

we think of Iliad, XXII, 390-393, where Achilles commands the Myrmidons to go singing the pæan

“Glory have we won, we have slain great Hector!”

The sumptuous armour stripped by Hector from a nameless man, recalls his winning of the arms of Achilles from Patroclus. But, in fact, this passage is also borrowed, with the murder of Hector, from Caxton, except as regards the pæan.

It may be worth noting that Chapman’s first instalment of his translation of the Iliad, containing Books I, II, and VII-XI, appeared in 1598, and thence the author could adapt the passages from Iliad, Book VII. In or about 1598-9 occurred, in *Histriomastix*, by Marston and others, a burlesque speech in which Troilus, addressing Cressida, speaks of “thy knight,” who “*Shakes* his furious *Speare*,” while in April 1599, Henslowe’s account-book contains entries of money paid to Dekker and Chettle for a play on Troilus and Cressida, for the Earl of Nottingham’s Company. Of this play no more is known, nor can we be sure that Chapman’s seven Books of the Iliad (I, II, VII-XI) of 1598 attracted the attention of playwrights, from Shakespeare to Chettle and Dekker, to Trojan affairs. The coincidences at least are curious. If “*Shakes* his furious *Speare*” in *Histriomastix* refers to Shakespeare in connection with Cressida, while, in 1599, Dekker and Chettle were doing a *Troilus and Cressida* for a company not Shakespeare’s, then there were *two Troilus and Cressida* in the field. A licence to print a *Troilus and Cressida* was obtained in 1602-3, but the quarto of our play, the Shakespearean play, is of 1609, “as it is acted by my Lord Chamberlain’s men,” that is, by Shakespeare’s Company. Now Dekker and Chettle wrote, apparently, for Lord Nottingham’s Company. One quarto of 1609 declares, in a Preface, that the play has “never been staled with the stage”; another edition of the same year, from the same publishers, has not the Preface, but declares that the piece “was acted by the King’s Majesty’s servants *at the Globe*.” The author of the Preface (Ben Jonson, Mr. Greenwood thinks,) speaks only of a single author, who has written other admirable comedies. “When he is gone, and his comedies out of sale, you will scramble for them, and set up a new English Inquisition.” Why? The whole affair is a puzzle. But if the author of the Preface is right about the single author of *Troilus and Cressida*, and if Shakespeare is alluded to in connection with Cressida, in *Histriomastix* (1599), then it appears to me that Shakespeare, in 1598-9, after Chapman’s portion of the Iliad appeared, was author of one *Troilus and Cressida*, extant in 1602-3 (when its publication was barred till the publisher “got authority”), while

Chettle and Dekker, in April 1599, were busy with another *Troilus and Cressida*, as why should they not be? In an age so lax about copyright, if their play was of their own original making, are we to suppose that there was copyright in the names of the leading persons of the piece, Troilus and Cressida?

Perhaps not: but meanwhile Mr. Greenwood cites Judge Stotsenburg's opinion that Henslowe's entries of April 1599 "refute the Shakespearean claim to the authorship of *Troilus and Cressida*," which exhibits "the collaboration of two men," as "leading commentators" hold that it does. But the learned Judge mentions as a conceivable alternative that "there were two plays on the subject with the same name," and, really, it looks as if there were! The Judge does not agree "with Webb and other gifted writers that Bacon wrote this play." So far the Court is quite with him. He goes on however, "It was, in my opinion, based on the foregoing facts, originally the production of Dekker and Chettle, added to and philosophically dressed by Francis Bacon." But, according to Mr. Greenwood, "it is admitted not only that the different writing of two authors is apparent in the Folio play, but also that 'Shakespeare' must have had at least some share in a play of *Troilus and Cressida* as early as the very year 1599, in the spring of which Dekker and Chettle are found engaged in writing their play of that name," on the evidence of *Histriomastix*. How that evidence proves that "a play of *Troilus and Cressida* had been *published* as by 'Shakespeare' about 1599," I know not. Perhaps "published" means "acted"? "And it is not unreasonable to suppose that this play" ("published as by Shakespeare") "was the one to which Henslowe alludes" - as being written in April 1599, by Dekker and Chettle.

If so, the play must show the hands of three, not two, men, Dekker, Chettle, and "Shakespeare," the Great Unknown, or Bacon. He collaborates with Dekker and Chettle, in a play for Lord Nottingham's men (according to Sir Sidney Lee), but it is, later at least, played by Shakespeare's company; and perhaps Bacon gets none of the £4 paid to Dekker and Chettle. Henslowe does not record his sale of the Dekker and Chettle play to Shakespeare's or to any company or purchaser. Without an entry of the careful Henslowe recording his receipts for the sale of the Dekker and Chettle play to any purchaser, it is not easy to see how Shakespeare's company procured the manuscript, and thus enabled him to refashion it. Perhaps no reader will fail to recognise his hand in the beautiful blank verse of many passages. I am not familiar enough with the works of Dekker and Chettle to assign to them the less desirable passages. Thersites is beastly: a Yahoo of Swift's might poison with such phrases as his the name and nature of love, loyalty, and military courage. But whatsoever Shakespeare did, he did thoroughly, and if he were weary, if man delighted him not, nor woman either, he may have written the whole piece, in which love perishes for the whim of “a daughter of the game,” and the knightly Hector is butchered to sate the vanity of his cowardly Achilles. If Shakespeare read the books translated by Chapman, he must have read them in the same spirit as Keats, and was likely to find that the poetry of the Achæan could not be combined with the Ionian, Athenian, and Roman perversions, as he knew them in the mediæval books of Troy, in the English of Lydgate and Caxton. The chivalrous example of Chaucer he did not follow. Probably Will looked on the play as one of his failures. The Editor, if we can speak of an Editor, of the Folio clearly thrust the play in late, so confusedly that it is not paged, and is not mentioned in the table of the contents.

“The Grand Possessors” of the play referred to in the Preface to one of the two quartos of 1609 we may suppose to be Shakespeare’s Company. In this case the owners would not permit the publication of the play if they could prevent it. The title provokes Mr. Greenwood to say, “Why these worthies should be so styled is not apparent; indeed the supposition seems not a little ridiculous.” Of course, if the players were the possessors, “grand” is merely a jeer, by a person advertising a successful piracy. And in regard to Tieck’s conjecture that James I is alluded to as “the grand possessor, for whom the play was expressly written,” the autocratic James was very capable of protecting himself against larcenous publishers.

APPENDIX II - CHETTLE’S SUPPOSED ALLUSION TO WILL SHAKSPERE

In discussing contemporary allusions to William Shakspere or Shakespeare (or however you spell the name), I have not relied on Chettle’s remarks (in *Kind-Hart’s Dreame,* 1592) concerning Greene’s *Groatsworth of Wit*. Chettle speaks of it, saying, “in which a letter, written to divers playmakers, is offensively by one or two of them taken.” It appears that by “one or two” Chettle means *two*. “With *neither* of them that take offence was I acquainted” (at the time when he edited the *Groatsworth),* “and with one of them I care not if I never be.” We do not know who “the Gentlemen his Quondam acquaintance,” addressed by Greene, were. They are usually supposed to have been Marlowe, Peele, and Lodge, or Nash. We do not know which of the two who take offence is the man with whom Chettle did not care to be acquainted. Of “the other,” according to Chettle, “myself have seen his demeanour no less civil than he is excellent in the quality he professes” (that is, “in his profession,” as we say), “besides divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty; and his facetious grace in writing that approves his art.”

Speaking from his own observation, Chettle avers that the person of whom he speaks is civil in his demeanour, and *(apparently)* that he is "excellent in the quality he professes" - in his profession. Speaking on the evidence of "divers of worship," the same man is said to possess "facetious grace in writing." Had his writings been then published, Chettle, a bookish man, would have read them and formed his own opinion. Works of Lodge, Peele, and Marlowe had been published. Writing is *not* "the quality he professes," is not the "profession" of the man to whom Chettle refers. On the other hand, the profession of Greene's "Quondam acquaintance" *was* writing, "they spend their wits in making Plays." Thus the man who wrote, but whose profession was not that of writing, does not, so far, appear to have been one of those addressed by Greene. It seems undeniable that Greene addresses gentlemen who are "playmakers," who "spend their wits in making Plays," and who are *not* actors; for Greene's purpose is to warn them against the rich, ungrateful actors. If Greene's friends, at the moment when he wrote, were, or if any one of them then was, by profession an actor, Greene's warning to him against actors, directed to an actor, is not, to me, intelligible. But Mr. Greenwood writes, "As I have shown, George Peele was one of the playwrights addressed by Greene, and Peele was a successful player as well as playwright, and might quite truly have been alluded to both as having 'facetious grace in writing,' and being 'excellent in the quality he professed,' that is, as a professional actor."

I confess that I did not know that George Peele, M.A., of Oxford, had ever been a player, and a successful player. But one may ask, - in 1592 did George Peele "profess the quality" of an actor; was he then a professional actor, and only an occasional playwright? If so, I am not apt to believe that Greene seriously advised him not to put faith in the members of his own profession. From them, as a successful member of their profession (a profession which, as Greene complains, "exploited" dramatic authors), Peele stood in no danger. Thus I do not see how Chettle's professional actor, reported to have facetious grace in writing, can be identified with Peele. The identification seems to me impossible. Peele and Marlowe, in 1592, were literary gentlemen; Lodge, in 1592, was filibustering, though a literary man; he had not yet become a physician. In 1592, none of the three had any profession but that of literature, so far as I am aware. The man who had a special profession, and also wrote, was not one of these three; nor was he Tom Nash, a mere literary gentleman, pamphleteer and playwright.

I do not know the name of any one of the three to whom Greene addressed the *Groatsworth*, though the atheistic writer of tragedies seems meant, and disgracefully meant, for Marlowe. I only know that Chettle is expressing his regrets for Greene's language to some one whom he applauded as to his exercise of his profession; and who, according to "divers of worship," had also "facetious grace in writing." "Myself have seen him no less civil than he is excellent in the quality he professes"; whether or not this means that Chettle has *seen* his excellence in his profession, I cannot tell for certain; but Chettle's remark is, at least, contrasted with what he gives merely from report - "the facetious grace in writing" of the man in question. *His* writing is not part of his profession, so he is not, in 1592 (I conceive), Lodge, Peele, Marlowe, or Nash.

Who, then, is this mysterious personage? Malone, Dyce, Steevens, Collier, Halliwell-Phillipps, Knight, Sir Sidney Lee, Messrs. Gosse and Garnett, and Mr. J. C. Collins say that he is Will Shakspere. But Mr. Fleay and Mr. Castle, whose "mind" is "legal," have pointed out that this weird being cannot be Shake-scene (or Shakspere, if Greene meant Shakspere), attacked by Greene. For Chettle says that in the *Groatsworth of Wit* "a letter, written to divers playmakers, is offensively by one or two of them taken." The mysterious one is, therefore, one of the playwrights addressed by Greene. Consequently all the followers of Malone, who wrote before Messrs. Fleay and Castle, are mistaken; and what Mr. Greenwood has to say about Sir Sidney Lee, J. C. Collins, and Dr. Garnett, and Mr. Gosse, in the way of moral reprobation, may be read by the curious in his pages.

Meanwhile, if we take Chettle to have been a strict grammarian, by his words - "a letter, written to divers playmakers, is offensively by one or two of them taken," Will is excluded; the letter was most assuredly not written to *him*. But I, whose mind is not legal, am not certain that Chettle does not mean that the letter, written to divers playmakers, was by one or two makers of plays offensively taken.

This opinion seems the less improbable, as the person to whom Chettle is most apologetic excels in a quality or profession, which is contrasted with, and is not identical with, "his facetious grace in writing" - a *parergon,* or " bye-work," in his case. Whoever this person was, he certainly was not Marlowe, Peele, Lodge, or Nash. We must look for some other person who had a profession, and also was reported to have facetious grace in writing.

If Chettle is to be held tight to grammar, Greene referred to some one unknown, some one who wrote for the stage, but had another profession. If Chettle is not to be thus tautly construed, I confess that to myself he seems to have had Shakspere, even Will, in his mind. For Will in 1592 had "a quality which he professed," that of an actor; and also (I conceive) was reported to have " facetious grace in writing." But other gentlemen may have combined these attributes; wherefore I lay no stress on the statements of Chettle, as if they referred to our Will Shakspere.

The Biographies

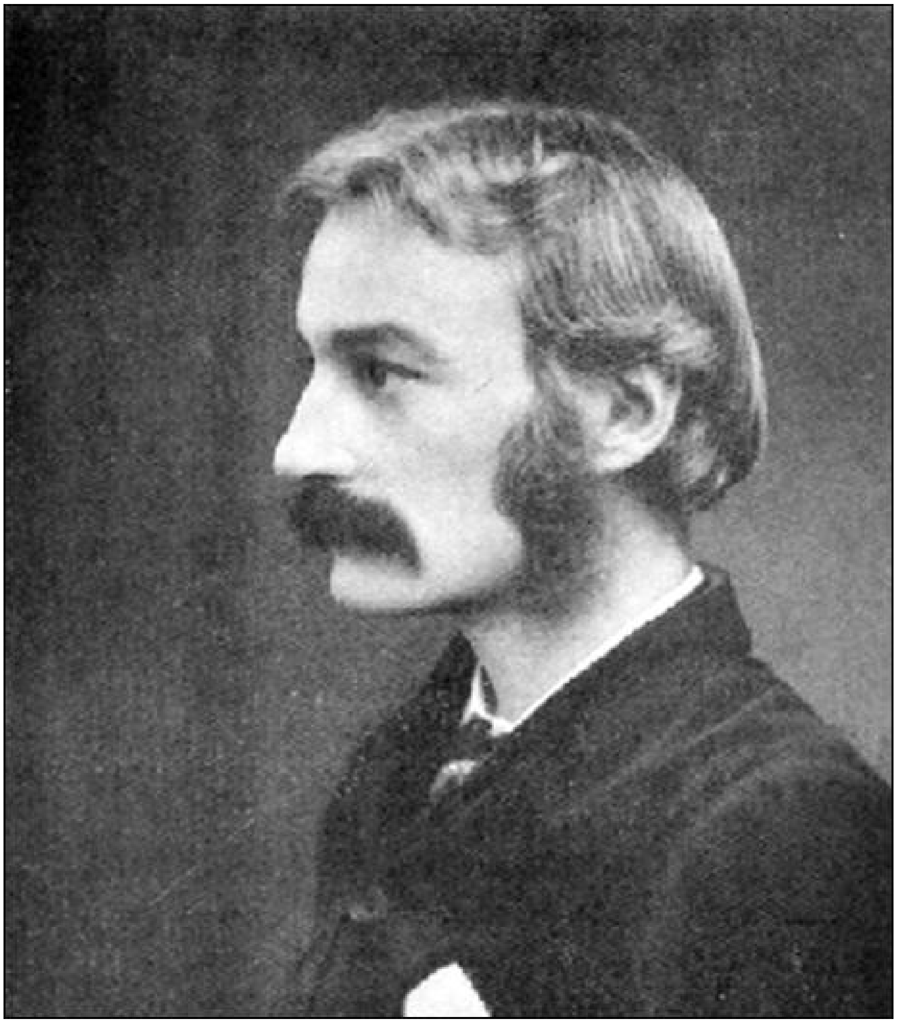

Lang in his twenties

ANDREW LANG by Edmund Gosse

Sir Edmund William Gosse (1849–1928) was an English poet, author and critic; as well as a close friend of Andrew Lang. This 1912 essay was taken from Gosse's seminal work *Portraits and Sketches*, which offers the critic's personal recollections of Lang and his intellectual achievements during the 1880s, portraying his fellow writer as "a man of letters who laboured without cessation from boyhood to the grave."

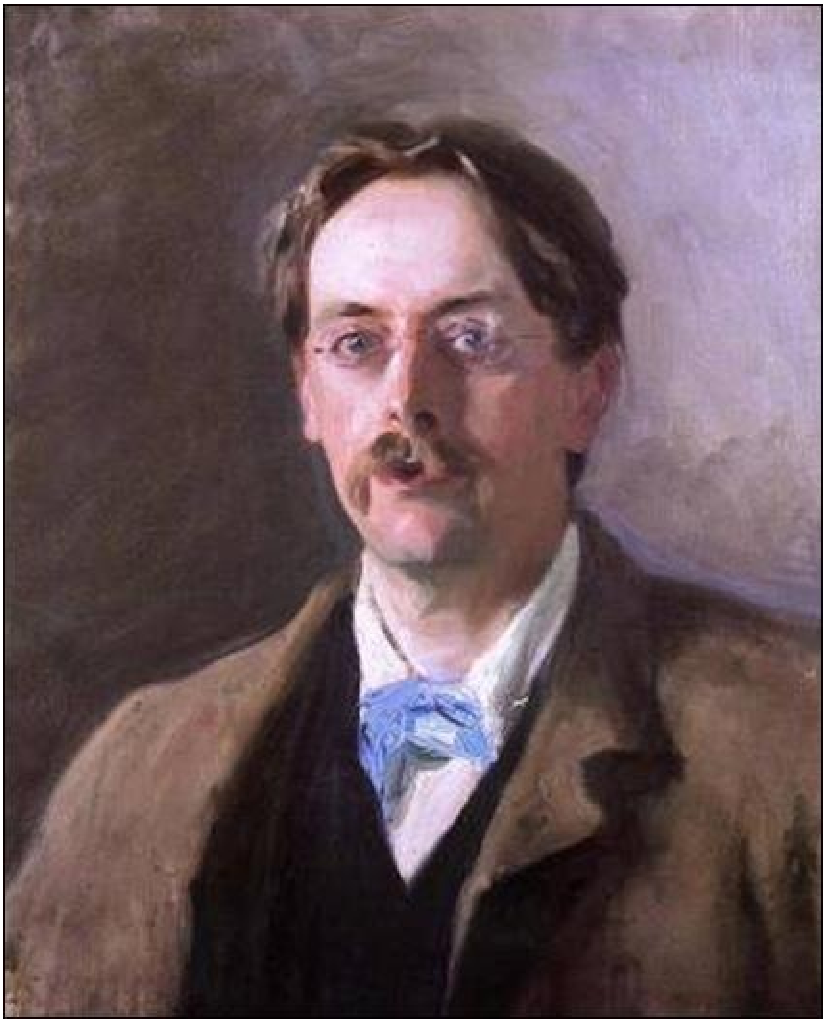

Edmund Gosse by John Singer Sargent, 1886

ANDREW LANG

Invited to note down some of my recollections of Andrew Lang, I find myself suspended between the sudden blow of his death and the slow development of memory, now extending in unbroken friendship over thirty-five years. The magnitude and multitude of Lang’s performances, public and private, during that considerable length of time almost paralyse expression; it is difficult to know where to begin or where to stop. Just as his written works are so extremely numerous as to make a pathway through them a formidable task in bibliography, no one book standing out predominant, so his character, intellectual and moral, was full of so many apparent inconsistencies, so many pitfalls for rash assertion, so many queer caprices of impulse, that in a whole volume of analysis, which would be tedious, one could scarcely do justice to them all. I will venture to put down, almost at haphazard, what I remember that seems to me to have been overlooked, or inexactly stated, by those who wrote, often very sympathetically, at the moment of his death, always premising that I speak rather of a Lang of from 1877 to 1890, when I saw him very frequently, than of a Lang whom younger people met chiefly in Scotland.

When he died, all the newspapers were loud in proclaiming his “versatility.” But I am not sure that he was not the very opposite of versatile. I take “versatile” to mean changeable, fickle, constantly ready to alter direction with the weather-cock. The great instance of versatility in literature is Ruskin, who adopted diametrically different views of the same subject at different times of his life, and defended them with equal ardour. To be versatile seems to be unsteady, variable. But Lang was through his long career singularly unaltered; he never changed his point of view; what he liked and admired as a youth he liked and admired as an elderly man. It is true that his interests and knowledge were vividly drawn along a surprisingly large number of channels, but while there was abundance there does not seem to me to have been versatility. If a huge body of water boils up from a crater, it may pour down a dozen paths, but these will always be the same; unless there is an earthquake, new cascades will not form nor old rivulets run dry. In some authors earthquakes do take place — as in Tolstoy, for instance, and in S. T. Coleridge — but nothing of this kind was ever manifest in Lang, who was extraordinarily multiform, yet in his varieties strictly consistent from Oxford to the grave. As this is not generally perceived, I will take the liberty of expanding my view of his intellectual development.

To a superficial observer in late life the genius of Andrew Lang had the characteristics which we are in the habit of identifying with precocity. Yet he had not been, as a writer, precocious in his youth. One slender volume of verses represents all that he published in book-form before his thirty-fifth year. No doubt we shall learn in good time what he was doing before he flashed upon the world of journalism in all his panoply of graces, in 1876, at the close of his Merton fellowship. He was then, at all events, the finest finished product of his age, with the bright armour of Oxford burnished on his body to such a brilliance that humdrum eyes could hardly bear the radiance of it. Of the terms behind, of the fifteen years then dividing him from St. Andrews, we know as yet but little; they were years of insatiable acquirement, incessant reading, and talking, and observing — gay preparation for a life to be devoted, as no other life in our time has been, to the stimulation of other people's observation and talk and reading. There was no cloistered virtue about the bright and petulant Merton don. He was already flouting and jesting, laughing with Ariosto in the sunshine, performing with a snap of his fingers tasks which might break the back of a pedant, and concealing under an affectation of carelessness a literary ambition which knew no definite bounds.

In those days, and when he appeared for the first time in London, the poet was paramount in him. Jowett is said to have predicted that he would be greatly famous in this line, but I know not what evidence Jowett had before him. Unless I am much mistaken, it was not until Lang left Balliol that his peculiar bent became obvious. Up to that time he had been a promiscuous browser upon books, much occupied, moreover, in the struggle with ancient Greek, and immersed in Aristotle and Homer. But in the early days of his settlement at Merton he began to concentrate his powers, and I think there were certain influences which were instant and far-reaching. Among them one was pre-eminent. When Andrew Lang came up from St. Andrews he had found Matthew Arnold occupying the ancient chair of poetry at Oxford. He was a listener at some at least of the famous lectures which, in 1865, were collected as *Essays in Criticism*; while one of his latest experiences as a Balliol undergraduate was hearing Matthew Arnold lecture on the study of Celtic literature. His conscience was profoundly stirred by *Culture and Anarchy* (1869); his sense of prose-form largely determined by *Friendship's Garland* (1871). I have no hesitation in saying that the teaching and example of Matthew Arnold prevailed over all other Oxford influences upon the intellectual nature of Lang, while, although I think that his personal acquaintance with Arnold was very slight, yet in his social manner there was, in early days, not a little imitation of Arnold's aloofness and superfine delicacy of address. It was unconscious, of course, and nothing would have enraged Lang more than to have been accused of "imitating Uncle Matt."

The structure which his own individuality now began to build on the basis supplied by the learning of Oxford, and in particular by the study of the Greeks, and "dressed" by courses of Matthew Arnold, was from the first eclectic. Lang eschewed as completely what was not sympathetic to him as he assimilated what was attractive to him. Those who speak of his "versatility" should recollect what large tracts of the literature of the world, and even of England, existed outside the dimmest apprehension of Andrew Lang. It is, however, more useful to consider what he did apprehend; and there were two English books, published in his Oxford days, which permanently impressed him: one of these was *The Earthly Paradise,* the other D. G. Rossetti's *Poems.* In after years he tried to divest himself of the traces of these volumes, but he had fed upon their honey-dew and it had permeated his veins.

Not less important an element in the garnishing of a mind already prepared for it by academic and æsthetic studies was the absorption of the romantic part of French literature. Andrew Lang in this, as in everything else, was selective. He dipped into the wonderful lucky-bag of France wherever he saw the glitter of romance. Hence his approach, in the early seventies, was threefold: towards the mediæval *lais* and *chansons,* towards the sixteenth-century Pléiade, and towards the school of which Victor Hugo was the leader in the nineteenth century. For a long time Ronsard was Lang's poet of intensest predilection; and I think that his definite ambition was to be the Ronsard of modern England, introducing a new poetical dexterity founded on a revival of pure humanism. He had in those days what he lost, or at least dispersed, in the weariness and growing melancholia of later years — a splendid belief in poetry as a part of the renown of England, as a heritage to be received in reverence from our fathers, and to be passed on, if possible, in a brighter flame. This honest and beautiful ambition to shine as one of the permanent benefactors to national verse, in the attitude so nobly sustained four hundred years ago by Du Bellay and Ronsard, was unquestionably felt by Andrew Lang through his bright intellectual April, and supported him from Oxford times until 1882, when he published *Helen of Troy.* The cool reception of that epic by the principal judges of poetry caused him acute disappointment, and from that time forth he became less eager and less serious as a poet, more and more petulantly expending his wonderful technical gift on fugitive subjects. And here again, when one comes to think of it, the whole history repeated itself, since in *Helen of Troy* Lang simply suffered as Ronsard had done in the "Franciade." But the fact that 1882 was his year of crisis, and the tomb of his brightest ambition, must be recognised by every one who closely followed his fortunes at that time.

Lang's habit of picking out of literature and of life the plums of romance, and these alone, comes to be, to the dazzled observer of his extraordinarily vivid intellectual career, the principal guiding line. This determination to dwell, to the exclusion of all other sides of any question, on its romantic side is alone enough to rebut the charge of versatility. Lang was in a sense encyclopædic; but the vast dictionary of his knowledge had blank pages, or pages pasted down, on which he would not, or could not, read what experience had printed. Absurd as it sounds, there was always something maidenly about his mind, and he glossed over ugly matters, sordid and dull conditions, so that they made no impression whatever upon him. He had a trick, which often exasperated his acquaintances, of declaring that he had "never heard" of things that everybody else was very well aware of. He had "never heard the name" of people he disliked, of books that he thought tiresome, of events that bored him; but, more than this, he used the formula for things and persons whom he did not wish to discuss. I remember meeting in the street a famous professor, who advanced with uplifted hands, and greeted me with "What *do* you think Lang says now? That he has never heard of Pascal!" This merely signified that Lang, not interested (at all events for the moment) in Pascal nor in the professor, thus closed at once all possibility of discussion.

It must not be forgotten that we have lived to see him, always wonderful indeed, and always passionately devoted to perfection and purity, but worn, tired, harassed by the unceasing struggle, the lifelong slinging of sentences from that inexhaustible ink-pot. In one of the most perfect of his poems, "Natural Theology," Lang speaks of Cagn, the great hunter, who once was kind and good, but who was spoiled by fighting many things. Lang was never "spoiled," but he was injured; the surface of the radiant coin was rubbed by the vast and interminable handling of journalism. He was jaded by the toil of writing many things. Hence it is not possible but that those who knew him intimately in his later youth and early middle-age should prefer to look back at those years when he was the freshest, the most exhilarating figure in living literature, when a star seemed to dance upon the crest of his already silvering hair. Baudelaire exclaimed of Théophile Gautier: "Homme heureux! homme digne d'envie! il n'a jamais aimé que le Beau!" and of Andrew Lang in those brilliant days the same might have been said. As long as he had confidence in beauty he was safe and strong; and much that, with all affection and all respect, we must admit was rasping and disappointing in his attitude to literature in his later years, seems to have been due to a decreasing sense of confidence in the intellectual sources of beauty. It is dangerous, in the end it must be fatal, to sustain the entire structure of life and thought on the illusions of romance. But that was what Lang did — he built his house upon the rainbow.

The charm of Andrew Lang’s person and company was founded upon a certain lightness, an essential gentleness and elegance which were relieved by a sharp touch; just as a very dainty fruit may be preserved from mawkishness by something delicately acid in the rind of it. His nature was slightly inhuman; it was unwise to count upon its sympathy beyond a point which was very easily reached in social intercourse. If any simple soul showed an inclination, in eighteenth-century phrase, to “repose on the bosom” of Lang, that support was immediately withdrawn, and the confiding one fell among thorns. Lang was like an Angora cat, whose gentleness and soft fur, and general aspect of pure amenity, invite to caresses, which are suddenly met by the outspread paw with claws awake. This uncertain and freakish humour was the embarrassment of his friends, who, however, were preserved from despair by the fact that no malice was meant, and that the weapons were instantly sheathed again in velvet. Only, the instinct to give a sudden slap, half in play, half in fretful caprice, was incorrigible. No one among Lang’s intimate friends but had suffered from this feline impulse, which did not spare even the serenity of Robert Louis Stevenson. But, tiresome as it sometimes was, this irritable humour seldom cost Lang a friend who was worth preserving. Those who really knew him recognised that he was always shy and usually tired.

His own swift spirit never brooded upon an offence, and could not conceive that any one else should mind what he himself minded so little and forgot so soon. Impressions swept over him very rapidly, and injuries passed completely out of his memory. Indeed, all his emotions were too fleeting, and in this there was something fairy-like; quick and keen and blithe as he was, he did not seem altogether like an ordinary mortal, nor could the appeal to gross human experience be made to him with much chance of success. This, doubtless, is why almost all imaginative literature which is founded upon the darker parts of life, all squalid and painful tragedy, all stories that “don’t end well,” all religious experiences, all that is not superficial and romantic, was irksome to him. He tried sometimes to reconcile his mind to the consideration of real life; he concentrated his matchless powers on it; but he always disliked it. He could persuade himself to be partly just to Ibsen or Hardy or Dostoieff-sky, but what he really enjoyed was Dumas *père,* because that fertile romance-writer rose serene above the phenomena of actual human experience. We have seen more of this type in English literature than the Continental nations have in theirs, but even we have seen no instance of its strength and weakness so eminent as Andrew Lang. He was the fairy in our midst, the wonder-working, incorporeal, and tricksy fay of letters, who paid for all his wonderful gifts and charms by being not quite a man of like passions with the rest of us. In some verses which he scribbled to R. L. S.

and threw away, twenty years ago, he acknowledged this unearthly character, and, speaking of the depredations of his kin, he said:

Faith, they might steal me, wi' ma will,
And, ken'd I ony Fairy hill,
I'd lay me down there, snod and still,
Their land to win;
For, man, I've maistly had my fill
O' this world's din.

His wit had something disconcerting in its impishness. Its rapidity and sparkle were dazzling, but it was not quite human; that is to say, it conceded too little to the exigencies of flesh and blood. If we can conceive a seraph being funny, it would be in the manner of Andrew Lang. Moreover, his wit usually danced over the surface of things, and rarely penetrated them. In verbal parry, in ironic misunderstanding, in breathless agility of topsy-turvy movement, Lang was like one of Milton's "yellow-skirted fays," sporting with the helpless, moon-bewildered traveller. His wit often had a depressing, a humiliating effect, against which one's mind presently revolted. I recollect an instance which may be thought to be apposite: I was passing through a phase of enthusiasm for Emerson, whom Lang very characteristically detested, and I was so ill-advised as to show him the famous epigram called "Brahma." Lang read it with a snort of derision (it appeared to be new to him), and immediately he improvised this parody:

If the wild bowler thinks he bowls,
Or if the batsman thinks he's bowled,
They know not, poor misguided souls,
They, too, shall perish unconsoled.
I *am the batsman and the bat,*
I *am the bowler and the ball,*
The umpire, the pavilion cat,
The roller, pitch, and stumps, and all.

This would make a pavilion cat laugh, and I felt that Emerson was done for. But when Lang had left me, and I was once more master of my mind, I reflected that the parody was but a parody, wonderful for its neatness and quickness, and for its seizure of what was awkward in the roll of Emerson's diction, but essentially superficial. However, what would wit be if it were profound? I must leave it there, feeling that I have not explained why Lang's extraordinary drollery in conversation so often left on the memory a certain sensation of distress.

But this was not the characteristic of his humour at its best, as it was displayed throughout the happiest period of his work. If, as seems possible, it is as an essayist that he will ultimately take his place in English literature, this element will continue to delight fresh generations of enchanted readers. I cannot imagine that the preface to his translation of *Theocritus,Letters to Dead Authors, In the Wrong Paradise, Old Friends,* and *Essays in Little* will ever lose their charm; but future admirers will have to pick their way to them through a tangle of history and anthropology and mythology, where there may be left no perfume and no sweetness. I am impatient to see this vast mass of writing reduced to the limits of its author's delicate, true, but somewhat evasive and ephemeral genius. However, as far as the circumstances of his temperament permitted, Andrew Lang has left with us the memory of one of our most surprising contemporaries, a man of letters who laboured without cessation from boyhood to the grave, who pursued his ideal with indomitable activity and perseverance, and who was never betrayed except by the loftiness of his own endeavour. Lang's only misfortune was not to be completely in contact with life, and his work will survive exactly where he was most faithful to his innermost illusions.

SPENCER WALPOLE AND ANDREW LANG by Horace G. Hutchinson

English critic Horace Gordon Hutchinson (1859–1932) published this comparative essay on Lang and Walpole in his 1920 book *Portraits of the Eighties.* In the essay, Hutchinson reflects on Lang's personality, his work and the author's role as a historian.

ANDREW LANG

I hardly know why I thus couple up Andrew Lang with Spencer Walpole, unless it be that both were historians — of a sort. But it was of a widely different sort, and they would not have jogged in double harness together. Walpole's rank and mode as an historian I have just discussed. Andrew Lang was historian by accident rather — the accident that some of the people who caught his quick fancy and incited him to write about them were engaged in great historical drama — Mary Queen of Scots most notably, also *Pickle the Spy*, and others. Andrew Lang was a number of things intellectually, for the versatility and range of his mind were extraordinary, but of all things that which he was not was an historian at all of the type of Spencer Walpole. He did not care a bit about the measures or the political games in which the people that interested him were taking in hand, or cared only in so far as they were the setting, the scenery, for his actors. It was the actors themselves and their doings that appealed to him. And yet here again we have to make a qualification: he was interested in the activities of these persons, in the scrapes into which they fell and in the puzzles, as in a detective story, which they presented; but he was not really very interested in their characters and their motives. As he himself confessed to me once, "I can do nothing with human nature." He meant, as a writer of the novel. He was quite right in his estimate of himself. Few people probably are aware that he ever tried his hand at a novel; but he did, and very bad it was. I think it was called *The Brand of Cain,* or something of that kind, and I well remember his amazement to discover that I had read it. It was not altogether gratified amazement either. He was actually sorry that any one for whose opinion he cared even the least bit should have read it, so convinced was he of its badness. Of course it was only because it had his name to it that it ever got itself published.

To be sure, he wrote *The Disentanglers,* an ingenious idea, ingeniously worked; but it is hardly to be called a novel, or a study in humanity. He collaborated with Rider Haggard, too, in *The World's Desire,* but his personal share is not obvious; and, after all, its theme is a type only, and perhaps not a very probable type. And all this disability to "make anything" of human nature arose, in all likelihood, from the fact that motives and character did not present problems of real interest to him. He did not go probing down deeply into the springs of conduct; he found much more excitement in the material and the obvious. It is singular that it should be so, with his very acute intellect, but so it was.

It appears to me that I am, so far, saying everything that is negative about Lang, recording everything that he was not. It is a way, like another, of sketching a portrait, to begin with determining the lines to be left out, and having thus begun, I may continue. He was, then, as unlike as possible to Spencer Walpole, because he had not the real historian's bent of mind, he had not the weighing, judicial sense. With all my deep admiration for Andrew Lang — and let me say at once that I did admire and love him greatly — he was the last man to whom I would go for a judicious opinion on men, women, or affairs. He lived in a curious detachment, although he touched at so many points the various interests of very different men. His was, in truth, one of the most remarkable personalities and intellects that we shall find in all this portrait gallery. He touched at so many points, and yet he drove in deeply at none of them; he was really aloof all the while; and he made this merely surface contact in spite of possessing an intellect most penetrating and incisive. So, in his historical studies, if we call them so, though we should be more right in saying "studies of historical persons," he picked the actors up, let his graceful fancy, his fine intellect, and his delightful style play about with them for a time, and then dropped them back again into the welter of history for the true historian to deal with them. I have heard the term "scrappy" applied to his methods, and it was not misapplied. He himself confessed to habits of carelessness and inaccuracy in detail. I think that he exaggerated this inaccuracy: he was really far more conscientious as a writer than he gave himself the credit of being; but it is certainly impossible to think of Andrew Lang going over his proofs three times, and verifying and re-verifying his figures and citations, as Spencer Walpole did. He wrote as easily as Walpole wrote laboriously. He was indeed the quickest writer that I have ever known. I have heard him say: "Is it humanly speaking possible to write an article before dinner?" — taking out his watch— "Twenty minutes before we need go and dress! Yes, I think it just is." And off he would go — I think it was for the *Daily News* that he was writing at this time occasional articles about all things in general, and a few more — and scribble down the article, and as a rule these lightning articles of his were the best: these forked-lightning articles, perhaps we should say, for all his writing had the speed of merely common electricity. The reading of them did not go quite so fast. For days I have kept a letter of Andrew Lang's by me, wondering at its meaning, making intelligent guesses from time to time, and usually, at each new look, discovering the significance of some new hieroglyphic, until all was unravelled. But it was a very tangled skein, and my pity for his compositors was sore.

In its own way, Andrew Lang's intellect was the most brilliant and the most delightful that I have had the luck to encounter. I say that deliberately and with no hesitation. His fancy was so graceful, his taste so perfect. The world in which his spirit really lived was a kind of fairy-land. He came down to this terrestrial business only now and then, always with a spectator's interest in it rather than an actor's. There was a pathetic side to this. He had a great leaning to the athletic and to the primitive; the life of the savage and of the gipsy appealed to him. I am not sure but that he had some strain of gipsy blood in him. His singularly handsome dark face and large dreaming eyes gave suggestion of it, and gipsies, even of royal race, moved a good deal among the Border Scottish families to which the Langs were akin. He was thus drawn by his disposition; and yet his health was always delicate, so that the life even of the ordinary athletic man of civilisation was forbidden him. He had to be very careful in his diet; he could not travel very long distances in a day, I think because the rattle and jolt of a long train journey were too much for his head. It was all a very delicately balanced organisation, of the very finest constituents. I believe he had once been a fair bowler, with a slingy, fast action: never more than moderately good, I imagine, and less effective than his brother T. W., who was in the Oxford Eleven as a medium-paced bowler. But with this exception I can think of no form of athletics in which he took part.

And yet there was no form that did not interest him. He wrote delightfully of golf, of cricket, of fishing — he was something of a trout-fisher, by the way, though very rarely catching a trout — especially he wrote well of golf, so far as a man can write well of a game which he cannot play at all. Even a stroke a hole handicap would have complimented him too highly. But it was always the writing of an artist, though his art was not golf, but literature. He loved Sagas, and all deeds of derring-do. He loved the classics, such as Homer, because they tell stories of heroes, and he loved them even better than the Sagas, because they are heroic stories told with art, while the Sagas are absolutely artless. He would have been perfectly at home had he lived in ancient Greece, or in the Iceland of the Vikings, or in the Provence of the Troubadours — only, he would not have lived, for the climatic and sanitary conditions would have been his immediate death. But in any one of these environments he would have been more at home than in modern England, and especially in modern London. "Why people live in London," he wrote to me once, "I wonder; and my wonder ever grows." Yet he lived there, and in Marloes Road, Kensington — not one of the most romantic streets. "Where is Marloes Road?" I heard some one ask him, who wished to call on him. "You go along the Cromwell Road till you drop," said Andrew Lang. "It's there!"

So there he lived and wrote and dreamed; and it was in his dreams — by

which I mean waking dreams, of course — that he was happy. He lived in Kensington, and I think that if one had asked him what life he would like best to have lived or be living — he might have said that he wished to be going with Herodotus, the old father of history, on that pilgrimage to Egypt, about which he tells us in his fourth book: He left the land of youth, he left the young,
The smiling Gods of Greece; he passed the isle
Where Jason loitered and where Sappho sung;
He sought the secret-founted wave of Nile,
Of that old world, half dead a weary while;
Heard the Priests murmur in their mystic tongue,
And through the fanes went voyaging, among
Dark tribes that worshipped Cat and Crocodile.

He learned the tales of death Divine and birth,
Strange loves of hawk and serpent, Sky and Earth,
The marriage and the slaying of the Sun;
The shrines of ghosts and beasts he wandered through,
And mocked not of their godhead, for he knew
Behind all creeds the Spirit that is One.

That is how Lang himself writes of this bewitching adventure in the sonnet which he prefaces to a reprint of an old translation of that fourth book. The sonnet gives us a good deal of the real Lang and of his psychical cravings. He would go with the traveller for the very adventure’s sake, for the brine and the tossing of the sea, for the peril by water and by land. And he would go to satisfy his yearning intellect with knowledge. He would hear stories. He would learn folk-lore, and that was of deep interest to him. Finally he would be living in a fairy-land, as remote from Marloes Road as may be.

He made up, in a measure, for Marloes Road, by going to St. Andrews in the winter — in the winter of all seasons for the East Neuk of Fife. Yet it had its delights, I know, because he used to let me come and stay with him there. The house that he took stood right on the cliff, with the splendid old ruin of the Castle on its eastern side, and northward the Firth of Tay, and Forfarshire opposite. That was a fitter habitation for a man who was dreaming of going a-Viking. He went from London, but he never went for a holiday. A holiday would be impossible for a man whose imagination worked so perpetually, and whose artistic impulse drove him to constant expression in words. He must write, and he did write, whether at St. Andrews or elsewhere. He also had the air of abundant leisure; he was always ready to talk and to idle: he took his work and his art with so little apparent seriousness that he actually never had a study, apart, to write in, either in London or anywhere else. He always seemed to regard himself rather in the light of an amateur, whose production was worth very little, so that it did not matter a jot to the world whether it was produced or not. He said to me once: “People ask me why I do not write some big book. Why should I write a big book? I have no particular message for the world.”

Perhaps he had not, unless it be the common message of all artists, to make the world realise the beauty of the world as it never would do without the artist and his revelations. And yet it always made me angry to hear people talking of Andrew Lang as if he were a literary trifler, a minor poet, a writer of *Ballads in Blue China,* and no more. He was all this, but he was a great deal more besides. People who judged him thus had forgotten, or did not know, those serious books of his on ancient religious ceremony and so on: *Custom and Myth,* and *Myth, Ritual, and Religion.* They did not know, or did not think of, his share with Butcher and Leaf and Myers in the translations of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad.* They did not remember his brilliant record at Oxford, nor recognise the range of his learning, stored and kept brightly ready for use by a very retentive memory. He knew old French literature, both prose and verse, better than any other man I ever met, though of course he made no speciality of it, nor of any other one subject of study. The truth is that he was so very quick of apprehension that he could grasp a subject with about half the attention that a common mind had to apply to achieve anything like the same mastery. But he worked far harder than people thought, and was far more conscientious than they supposed. For instance, I happen to know that he toiled for weeks and months over a projected history of the Jewish tribes. He did not like the point of view of Renan in his *Histoire des Peuples d’Israël,* although he had an unbounded admiration for it as a work of art and storehouse of knowledge. I had left him keenly engaged in this. A short while after I met him again and asked: “Well, how are the children of Israel? Are they out of the desert yet?” He had been humorously bemoaning the apparently quite unnecessary length of their sojourn in those inhospitable arenas. “Oh,” he said lightly, “I have given it up, given up all idea of it; I have torn up what I had written. I have come to the conclusion that no man ought to write about it who does not know Hebrew.”

He spoke thus lightly, but it was no light sacrifice that he had made. He had sacrificed months of toil, and destroyed MS. that any publisher would certainly have given good money for, even in its fragmentary style. But money, and what most men regard as the good things of this life, interested him hardly at all. Folk-lore, crystal gazing, psychical research, and old story of all kinds were the things of the spirit which really seemed to him to matter. A certain material comfort he was obliged to have, if he was to live, by reason of his delicacy of constitution, and the devoted love of Mrs. Lang assured him these, without any personal attention of his own. She shared, too, in all his literary interests, and published several books, of which *Dissolving Views* probably won most fame.

I do not suppose that it is possible for any one to have the least knowledge of Lang and of his work without realising the brilliance of his intellect. What I do not think has been nearly enough recognised is the warmth and kindliness of his heart. It is to be admitted of him that he was at times impatient and even petulant. Much of this, doubtless, may be put down to the score of his always rather indifferent health. It is true, however, that he habitually suffered fools badly, very badly; and also that fools were apt to suffer badly from the caustic wit which ran so readily from his pen. But there are scores of writers alive and at work today who would bear witness to the help which his kindly encouragement gave them at a time when their inexperience was in much need of such aid; and he was as liberal of his money as of his counsel. The contributors to his *Red* [*The Red Fairy Book*], *Blue* [*The Blue Fairy Book*], and all sorts of coloured *Fairy Books* were rewarded with a generosity which left very little balance for the editor, and the assistants of his musings under “The Sign of the Ship” in *Longman’s Magazine* often ate up all the guineas that the publishers gave him for this monthly “feature.”

His interests ranged widely, but two of the sides of life which are the main concern of very many men, politics and finance, appealed to him not at all, and when either of these came on the *tapis* he made not the slightest effort, not even so much as mere courtesy might demand, to conceal his boredom. In some ways he was more like a supernaturally brilliant child than a grown man — possibly a slightly spoilt child. It was a child’s world in which his spirit moved, and moved with a whimsical fancy quite delightful.

Some of his *obiter dicta* are worth quoting: “This book is good, though powerful,” was the opening sentence of one of his reviews of a novel in the *Saturday.* Of another he wrote: “A touch of the supernatural is added by the hero finding the book he wants in the London Library.” This was in the early days of that admirable and now very well-equipped institution; and we may well believe that Lang, in his quest for old and little-known books on old French literature and the like, may have been a sore thorn in the side of the librarian and his ever attentive staff. He was appointed Gibbon Lecturer in Natural Theology at St. Andrews. “What line did he take?” I asked Rider Haggard, who had been at the opening lecture. “He commenced,” Haggard answered, “with ‘Once it began to thunder; and men began to wonder.’” It was a characteristic start for Andrew

Lang to make, and perhaps the large and vague topic could not be broached much more auspiciously.

I had heard nothing of his last illness until its fatal end, and the news was very grievous. It seemed as if an element of lightness went with him from the world. But he had little reserve of strength to fight any serious attack, and, for all his gaiety and wit, he was by nature disposed to melancholy. I should imagine that his vitality was always rather below the normal. Many others have made a larger figure in the world, but there have been few in our generation of such an interesting and attractive personality.

St. Andrews Cathedral – Lang’s final resting place

Inside the Cathedral, close to Lang's grave